

Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)

Domains Fact Sheet



Australian Early Development Index

The AEDI measures five areas (or 'domains') of early childhood development. These five domains are closely linked to the predictors of good adult health, education and social outcomes. Teachers complete AEDI Checklists for children in their first year of full-time school across these five domains. The following table provides explanations of each of the domains in relation to children who would be considered developmentally *on track* or *vulnerable* within each domain.

	Children on track	Children developmentally vulnerable
Physical health and wellbeing		
Physical readiness for school day	Never or almost never experience being dressed inappropriately for school activities, and do not come to school late, hungry or tired.	Have at least sometimes experienced coming unprepared for school by being dressed inappropriately, coming to school late, hungry or tired.
Physical independence	Are independent regarding their own needs, have an established hand preference and are well coordinated.	Range from those who have not developed independence, handedness, or coordination, to those who have not developed any of these skills.
Gross and fine motor skills	Have an excellent ability to physically tackle the school day and have excellent or good gross and fine motor skills.	Range from those who have an average ability to perform skills requiring gross and fine motor competence and good or average overall energy levels, to those who have poor fine and gross motor skills, poor overall energy levels and physical skills.
Social competence		
Overall social competence	Have excellent or good overall social development, very good ability to get along with other children and play with various children, usually cooperative and self-confident.	Have average to poor overall social skills, low self-confidence and are rarely able to play with various children and interact cooperatively.
Responsibility and respect	Always or most of the time show respect for others and for property, follow rules, take care of materials, accept responsibility for actions, and show self-control.	Only sometimes or never accept responsibility for actions, show respect for others and for property, demonstrate self-control, and are rarely able to follow rules and take care of materials.
Approaches to learning	Always or most of the time work neatly, independently, solve problems, follow instructions and class routines, and easily adjust to changes.	Only sometimes or never work neatly, independently, are rarely able to solve problems, follow class routines and do not easily adjust to changes in routines.
Readiness to explore new things	Are curious about the surrounding world, and are eager to explore new books, toys or unfamiliar objects and games.	Only sometimes or never show curiosity about the world, and are rarely eager to explore new books, toys or unfamiliar objects and games.

	Children on track	Children developmentally vulnerable
Emotional maturity		
Pro-social and helping behaviour	Often show helping behaviours including helping someone hurt, sick or upset, offering to help spontaneously, and invite others to join in.	Never or almost never show most of the helping behaviours including helping someone hurt, sick or upset, offering to help spontaneously, and inviting others to join in.
Anxious and fearful behaviour	Rarely or never show anxious behaviours, are happy and able to enjoy school, and are comfortable being left at school.	Often show most of the anxious behaviours; they could be worried, unhappy, nervous, sad or excessively shy, indecisive; and they can be upset when left at school.
Aggressive behaviour	Rarely or never show aggressive behaviours and do not use aggression as a means of solving a conflict, do not have temper tantrums, and are not mean to others.	Often show most of the aggressive behaviours; they get into physical fights, kick or bite others, take other people's things, are disobedient or have temper tantrums.
Hyperactivity and inattention	Never show hyperactive behaviours and are able to concentrate, settle to chosen activities, wait their turn, and most of the time think before doing something.	Often show most of the hyperactive behaviours; they could be restless, distractible, impulsive; they fidget and have difficulty settling to activities.
Language and cognitive skills (school-based)		
Basic literacy	Have all the basic literacy skills including how to handle a book, are able to identify some letters and attach sounds to some letters, show awareness of rhyming words, know the writing directions, and are able to write their own name.	Do not have most of the basic literacy skills; they have problems with identifying letters or attaching sounds to them, rhyming, may not know the writing directions and how to write their own name.
Interest in literacy/numeracy and memory	Show interest in books and reading, maths and numbers, and have no difficulty with remembering things.	May not show interest in books and reading and/or maths and number games, and may have difficulty remembering things.
Advanced literacy	Have at least half of the advanced literacy skills such as reading simple words or sentences, and writing simple words or sentences.	Have only up to one of the advanced literacy skills; cannot read or write simple words or sentences, and rarely write voluntarily.
Basic numeracy	Have all the basic numeracy skills and can count to 20, recognise shapes and numbers, compare numbers, sort and classify, use one-to-one correspondence, and understand simple time concepts.	Have marked difficulty with numbers, cannot count, compare or recognise numbers, may not be able to name all the shapes and may have difficulty with time concepts.
Communication skills and general knowledge		
Communication skills and general knowledge	Have excellent or very good communication skills and can communicate easily and effectively, can participate in story-telling or imaginative play, articulate clearly and show adequate general knowledge.	Range from being average to very poor in effective communication, may have difficulty in participating in games involving the use of language, may be difficult to understand and/or have difficulty in understanding others and may show little general knowledge.

