



2010 Early Childhood Community Profile

Summary sheet for the Shire of Towong

Local demographics for young children aged 0 to 8 years and their families.¹

- There were 54 births notified to the local Maternal and Child Health services in Towong during 2008-09. This represents a decrease of 9.3 per cent since 2006-07 and a decrease of 14.3 per cent since 2000-01. This compares to an increase in birth notifications across Victoria of 2.3 per cent since 2006-07 and 18.6 per cent since 2000-01.
- At 30 June 2008, there was an estimated 6,273 people residing in Towong. Of these, 585 were aged between 0 to 8 years, representing 9.3 per cent of Towong's total population.
- The population aged 0 to 8 years in Towong is projected to decrease by 21.9 per cent by 2026, while the total population in Towong is expected to decrease by 3.6 per cent over this period.
- Using the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage, Towong was ranked 45 out of 79 LGAs in Victoria. A rank of 1 was assigned to the most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria.
- Of the 345 families with children aged between 0 and 8 years in Towong, 86.1 per cent were couple families and 13.9 per cent were one parent families.
- There were 47 Aboriginal persons in Towong, representing 0.8 per cent of the total population. 27.7 per cent of the Aboriginal population in Towong were aged 0 to 8 years.

Health, learning, wellbeing, development and safety indicators for children in the local area.²

- 65.5 per cent of infants in Towong were fully breastfed at 3 months and 40.0 per cent of infants were fully breastfed at 6 months.
- 88.3 per cent of children in Towong were fully immunised at 12-<15 months, 100.0 per cent were fully immunised at 24-<27 months and 85.7 per cent were fully immunised at 60-<63 months.
- 68 Prep children were surveyed in the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) in Towong during 2009. Of these, 27.7 per cent were vulnerable on one or more domains and 10.8 per cent were vulnerable on two or more domains.
- In 2008, 92.3% students enrolled in government schools in Towong were achieving a reading accuracy score of 90% or more on Level 5 texts, 90.5% of Year 1 students were reading Level 15 texts with over 90% accuracy and 96.1% of Year 2 students were achieving 90% accuracy or higher on Level 20 texts.

Families in Towong.

- Based on the 2009 VCHWS survey results, 47.2% of children aged 6 months to 12 years were reported to have been read to almost every day in the Hume region. This was less than, but not significantly different to the proportion of children being read to almost every day across Victoria (48.3%).
- Based on the 2009 VCHWS, 4.3% of main carer's of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Hume region were classified as being of high risk of psychological distress. This proportion was higher, but not significantly different to that reported across Victoria (3.7%).
- In 2008 - 2009, the number of substantiated cases of child abuse in Towong were suppressed due to small numbers and therefore a rate of child abuse substantiations could not be derived. This compares to a rate of 7.0 per 1000 children across Victoria.
- Over 2007 - 2008, the number of families with children aged 0 to 8 years in Towong who remained in public housing 12 months or more after initial allocation was suppressed due to small numbers.



Indicators relating to the local community.³

- 95.6% of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Hume region were from households who reported being able to get support from friends, family and neighbours in times of crisis/need. This proportion was similar to the proportion reported across Victoria (95.2%).
- 97.3% of parents of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Hume region reported that having someone they could turn to for advice when having problems. This proportion was similar to the proportion reported across Victoria (97.1%).
- 96.0% of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Hume region were from households where the parent or guardian agreed that their neighbourhood was safe. This proportion was higher than, but not significantly different to the proportion reported across Victoria (95.1%).

Supports and services in Towong.

- During 2008 - 2009, there were 13.4 hospital separations for gastroenteritis per 1,000 children aged 0 to 1 in Towong. This is greater than the rate of hospital separations in Victoria (9.5 per 1,000 children aged under 1) .
- In 2008 - 2009, 90.6 per cent of infants in Towong received a home consultation visit and 91.7 per cent of children in Towong attended the 3.5 year key ages and stages visit.
- The kindergarten participation rate in Towong during 2009 was 107.8%. This was greater than the kindergarten participation rate in Victoria (92.7%).
- Prep students attending government schools in Towong were absent for an average 16.8 days over the 2009 school year. Year 1 students were absent for an average 15.6 days and Year 2 students were absent for an average 13.9 days over the 2009 school year.

Early childhood services for families in Towong.

- As at August 2010, there were 10 primary school education providers in Towong - 8 government, 2 Catholic and 0 independent.
- In 2009, there were 4 funded kindergarten programs in Towong. Of these, none were kindergarten programs located within a long day care setting.
- As at 22 July 2010, Towong had no multi-service Children's Centres completed or under development, funded by state and local government.

Data sourced from the 2010 Early Childhood Community Profiles - DEECD

1 2006 Census data unless otherwise specified

2 Reporting period is 2008-09 financial year unless otherwise specified

3 Sourced from 2009 VCHWS survey