

2010 Early Childhood Community Profile

Summary sheet for the City of Whittlesea



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

- There were 2,076 births notified to the local Maternal and Child Health services in Whittlesea during 2008-09. This represents an increase of 8.2 per cent since 2006-07 and an increase of 18.8 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 139,250 people residing in Whittlesea. Of these, 17,615 were aged between 0 to 8 years, representing 12.6 per cent of Whittlesea's total population.
- The population aged 0 to 8 years in Whittlesea is projected to increase by 101.4 per cent by 2026, while the total population in Whittlesea is expected to increase by 91.5 per cent over this period.
- Using the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage, Whittlesea was ranked 27 out of 79 LGAs in Victoria. A rank of 1 was assigned to the most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria.
- Of the 9,873 families with children aged between 0 and 8 years in Whittlesea, 83.6 per cent were couple families and 16.4 per cent were one parent families.
- There were 845 Aboriginal persons in Whittlesea, representing 0.7 per cent of the total population. 21.8 per cent of the Aboriginal population in Whittlesea were aged 0 to 8 years.

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

- 38.6 per cent of infants in Whittlesea were fully breastfed at 3 months and 25.8 per cent of infants were fully breastfed at 6 months.
- 92.7 per cent of children in Whittlesea were fully immunised at 12-<15 months, 94.7 per cent were fully immunised at 24-<27 months and 88.8 per cent were fully immunised at 60-<63 months.
- 1,948 Prep children were surveyed in the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) in Whittlesea during 2009. Of these, 22.4 per cent were vulnerable on one or more domains and 10.7 per cent were vulnerable on two or more domains.
- In 2008, 79.9% students enrolled in government schools in Whittlesea were achieving a reading accuracy score of 90% or more on Level 5 texts, 89.5% of Year 1 students were reading Level 15 texts with over 90% accuracy and 95.1% of Year 2 students were achieving 90% accuracy or higher on Level 20 texts.

Families in Whittlesea.

- Based on the 2009 VCHWS survey results, 43.8% of children aged 6 months to 12 years were reported to have been read to almost every day in the Northern Metropolitan 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, 5.5% of main carer's of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Northern Metropolitan 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, 101 substantiated cases of child abuse were recorded in Whittlesea, representing a rate of 5.7 per 1,000 children aged 0 to 8 years in the area. This compares to a rate of 7.0 per 1000 children across Victoria.
- Over 2007 - 2008, 100.0% of families with children aged 0 to 8 in Whittlesea remained in public housing 12 months or more after initial allocation. This was greater than the percentage in Victoria (87.3%).

Indicators relating to the local community.³



- 95.2% of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Northern Metropolitan 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%).
- 97.8% of parents of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Northern Metropolitan region reported that having someone they could turn to for advice when having problems. This proportion was higher than, but not significantly different to the proportion reported across Victoria (97.1%).
- 91.5% of children aged 0 to 12 years in the Northern Metropolitan region were from households where the parent or guardian agreed that their neighbourhood was safe. This proportion was significantly lower than the proportion reported across Victoria (95.1%).

Supports and services in Whittlesea.

- During 2008 - 2009, there were 9.5 hospital separations for gastroenteritis per 1,000 children aged 0 to 1 in Whittlesea. This is similar to the rate of hospital separations in Victoria (9.5 per 1,000 children aged under 1) .
- In 2008 - 2009, 97.3 per cent of infants in Whittlesea received a home consultation visit and 68.7 per cent of children in Whittlesea attended the 3.5 year key ages and stages visit.
- The kindergarten participation rate in Whittlesea during 2009 was 90.7%. This was less than the kindergarten participation rate in Victoria (92.7%).
- Prep students attending government schools in Whittlesea were absent for an average 15.3 days over the 2009 school year. Year 1 students were absent for an average 15.2 days and Year 2 students were absent for an average 15.0 days over the 2009 school year.

Early childhood services for families in Whittlesea.

- As at August 2010, there were 35 primary school education providers in Whittlesea - 22 government, 10 Catholic and 3 independent.
- In 2009, there were 37 funded kindergarten programs in Whittlesea. Of these, 13 were kindergarten programs located within a long day care setting.
- As at 22 July 2010, Whittlesea had 4 multi-service Children's Centres completed or under development, funded by state and local government. These were:

Name of Children's Centre

Status

Mill Park Lakes Preschool, South Morang

Licensed and Operating

Laurimar Community Activity Centre

Design phase is complete

Mernda Villages Community Activity Centre

Licensed and Operating

Whittlesea Child Care Centre and Laurel Street Preschool

In design stage

- There is a Best Start partnership operating in the LGA of Whittlesea.

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