



Why is quality in early learning so important?



Quality early learning gives every child the best possible start in life.

Quality matters

Around 80 per cent of a child's brain development occurs in the first five years. Learning habits and learning problems emerge early with lifelong effects. We know that quality early learning supports children in their transition to school and life by helping them:

- develop good communication and social skills.
- build coping skills, resilience and self-discipline, which are essential for school.
- practice fine and gross motor skills.
- develop basic maths, literacy and general knowledge.

Currently, around 23 per cent of Australian children start school developmentally vulnerable. Children who were developmentally vulnerable in Year 1 are three times more

likely than other children to perform poorly in reading and numeracy NAPLAN tests in Years 3, 5 and even 7.

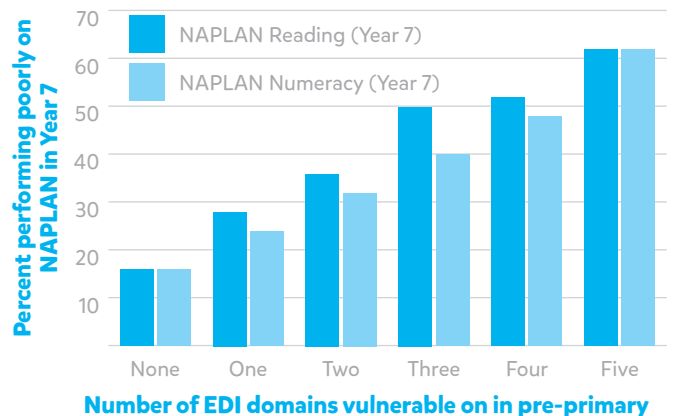
However, children who have had access to quality early learning are a third less likely to start school developmentally vulnerable.

A Victorian study found that children who attended preschool with a qualified teacher scored around 30 points higher on their Year 3 NAPLAN tests.

The length of time spent in quality early learning can make a big difference - International

tests in literacy (PIRLS) and numeracy and science (TIMMS) for Grade 4 found those who had three or more years of early learning scored on average 30-40 points higher in the tests than children who had no early learning, and around 20

Linkage of EDI to Year 7 NAPLAN



Source: The predictive validity of the Early Development Instrument (EDI): Predicting later cognitive and behavioural outcomes, AEDC.

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points higher than those who attended only one year of early learning.

Results like these help explain why developed countries around the world are investing heavily in early learning, and why the OECD has identified participation in early learning as a key policy to promote economic growth, higher productivity and social equality.

What makes for quality early learning?

Young children learn through play, experience and, most importantly, through the interaction with their parents, educators and peers. Quality early learning provides the environment in which this can occur. The interaction between children and their educators is central to quality early learning. A skilled educator will give each child in their care the guidance and nurturing they need to help reach their potential.

Quality early learning involves consideration of children's individual learning needs, family expectations, national benchmarks and curriculum and evidence of best practice. Early learning supports social-emotional and physical wellbeing (ie, self-regulation), thinking skills, language and communication. These are the

“*Goodstart's ambition is to build a world-class early learning organisation. Significant effort and resources are put into this goal each day.*”

core foundations on which later learning can be built. Research shows that quality early learning can advance a child's development in these areas by as much as 6-7 months above average.

The 2009 National Early Childhood Development Strategy has raised the quality of early learning across Australia. The National Quality Framework (NQF), a key reform which flowed from the Strategy, has regulated early learning providers in the delivery of quality, and the Early Years Learning Framework, has provided educators with evidence-based resources to help them deliver quality programs through play-based learning.

What is Goodstart doing to improve the quality of early learning?

Goodstart is working to develop and embed our own unique approach to quality, based on what works best for children,

going beyond the standards set by the National Quality Framework and building on the foundation of the Early Years Learning Framework. As part of this approach we've produced a Practice Guide to help support the work of our educators.

We're also proud of the continuing improvement in the quality of our centres across the nation.

In 2016 Goodstart launched the Storypark platform across our network to improve communication between families and educators. Storypark gives parents real time insights into the early learning occurring in their child's day.

Goodstart's ambition is to build a world-class early learning organisation. Significant effort and resources are put into this goal each day. For example, we're working with the UK-based Innovation Unit to begin conceptualising the future of early learning which will help build the learning skills children will need in a rapidly changing world.

We fund significant professional development, offering high level specialist support of our educators to help them continue to build their skills and proficiency.

Our Vision

is for Australia's children to have the best possible start in life.

Our Purpose

is to ensure children have the learning, development and wellbeing outcomes they need for school and life.



To see how we bring our plan to life, you can view our animation here: <https://vimeo.com/goodstartel/strategic>

**goodstart
early
learning**

Together there's no limit.