



FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA  
**FAMILY DAY CARE  
SECTOR PROFILE**

JUNE 2021



# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 About Family Day Care Australia	3
1.2 Family Day Care in Action	4
<b>2. State of the Sector</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Educator Member Numbers	6
2.2 Educator Age	7
2.3 Service Numbers	8
<b>3. Location</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Remoteness Area	9
• Educator Members	9
• Services	10
3.2 Socio-economic Disadvantage	11
<b>4. Service Quality Rating</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 Overall Quality Rating	13
4.2 Quality Area Rating	15

# 1. Introduction

Welcome to Family Day Care Australia's (FDCA) latest edition of the Family Day Care Sector Profile.<sup>1</sup> This biannual report provides information and analysis relating to the general profile of the family day care sector, the location of educators and services, educators' age, and services' National Quality Standard (NQS) quality ratings.<sup>2</sup>

This edition consolidates and analyses several data sources for the six-month period 1 January - 30 June 2021 to provide ongoing insight into the nature of the family day care sector. Historical data for the previous 12 months is also presented for comparison purposes. Data is derived from FDCA internal educator member records<sup>3</sup> as well as service data from the Australian Government Child Care Finder, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

In addition to analysis of relevant data, Section 1.2, "*Family Day Care in Action*", shares a story from the field that showcases the unique strengths of family day care in supporting the development of each child's individual qualities and meeting the diverse needs of children and families in Australia. In this edition, we take a look at the holistic approach taken by Choices Family Day Care, located in South-East Queensland, to incorporate nature play, sustainable practices and community connections in their policies and practices.



## 1.2 About Family Day Care Australia

FDCA is an apolitical, independent, not for profit, national member association representing family day care educators and approved family day care services.

Our mission is to represent, support and promote the family day care sector in delivering high quality early childhood education and care to more Australian children. For more information about FDCA go to [familydaycare.com.au](http://familydaycare.com.au)

1 All FDCA Family Day Care Sector Profile reports can be accessed at <http://www.familydaycare.com.au/representing-you/sector-profile>

2 Due to rounding, individual percentages in the tables and figures may not add up to 100%.

3 All FDCA data provided within this report is presented in line with FDCA's Privacy Policy.



## 1.2 Family Day Care in Action

At Choices Family Day Care, in South-East Queensland, nature play, sustainable practices and community connections are fundamental to the service's philosophy, 'Learn, Inspire, Thrive', and educators registered with the service show a strong commitment to integrating these elements into their curriculum, environment and practices.



Outdoor play spaces include lots of natural elements such as plants, dirt, sand, water and, through nature play and use of open-ended materials, children are given the opportunity to direct their own learning and develop a sense of ownership over their play, with only limited direction from educators other than ensuring safe access to the materials and environments. Children are also encouraged to physically challenge themselves by climbing trees and playing in a natural environment, as well as through excursions to local bush or beach settings.

Incorporating ways to protect and nurture the environment is an integral aspect of the service's policies and educators' curriculum and practices, for example through the use of indoor and outdoor areas with built and natural settings, and the reuse of resources, materials and equipment.

Finally, the service's strong focus on community connections enables children to develop a sense of belonging, while promoting a positive sense of identity through the interactions they have with others while developing social and other skills. Educators registered



with Choices Family Day Care model to children and families authentic connections to community, through community projects including working with homeless shelters (e.g. Tony's Community Kitchen), Christmas appeals, and through the service's Aged Care linkage project.

*Choices Family Day Care was named a National Finalist in the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards in 2015 and 2016, and in 2020 took out the title of National Service of the Year.*

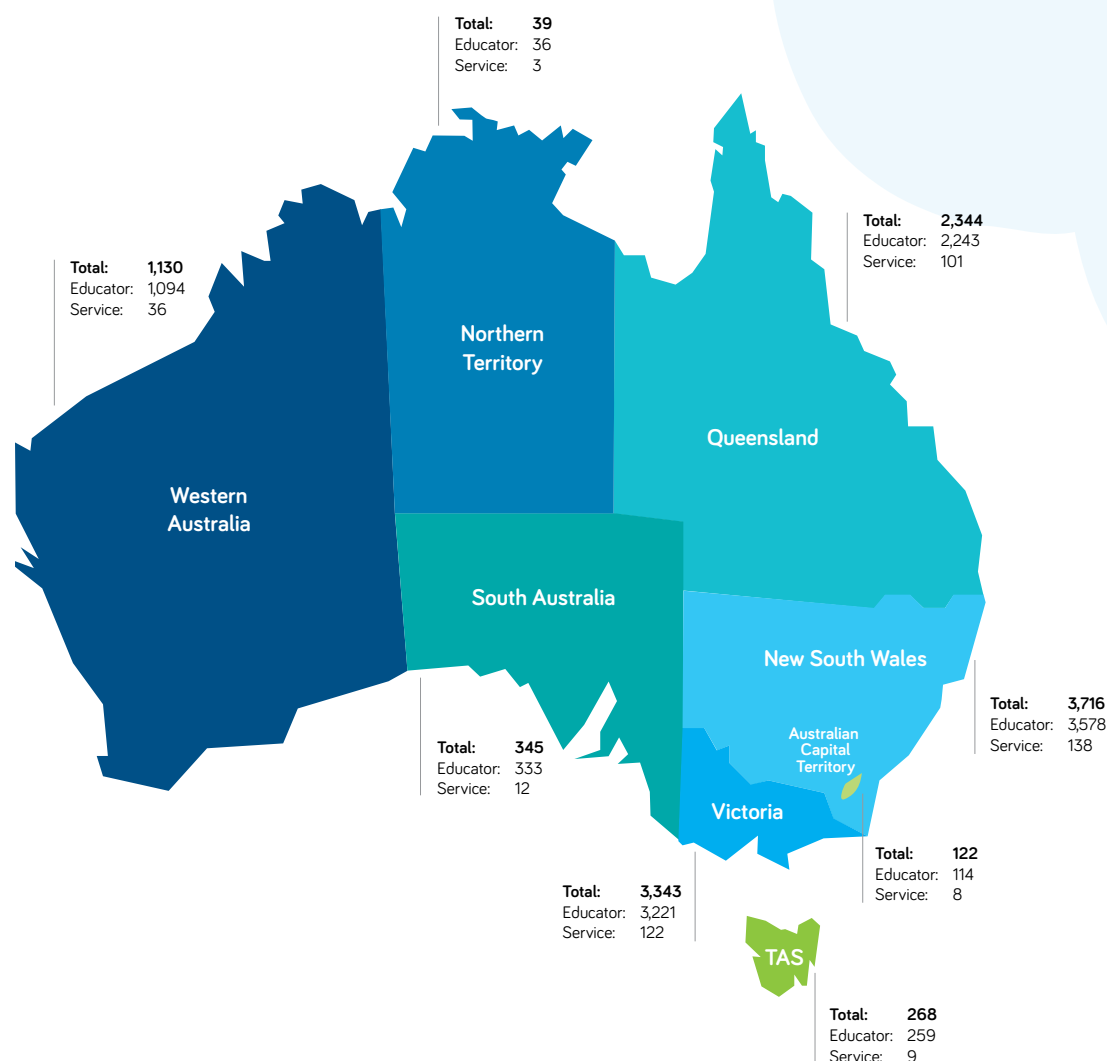


## 2. State of the Sector

Figure 1 below presents the number of family day care services<sup>4</sup> and FDCA educator members,<sup>5</sup> by state and territory. As of 30 June 2021, the total number of family day care services nationally is 429 and FDCA educator members total 10,878.

Victoria and New South Wales continue to be the states with the largest family day care communities, with New South Wales maintaining its lead over Victoria as the state reporting the largest number of educators (3,578, compared to Victoria's 3,221) and services (138 compared to Victoria's 122). The Northern Territory remains the smallest family day care community with 3 services and 36 educators.

**FIGURE 1: NUMBER OF FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICES AND EDUCATORS AS AT 30 JUNE 2021.**



<sup>4</sup> From this edition forward, service numbers are based on the numbers of Child Care Subsidy (CCS) approved services as recorded at the Australian Government Child Care Finder. This edition's figure were sourced 30 June 2021.

<sup>5</sup> According to FDCA educator member records as of 30 June 2021.

## 2.1 Educator Member Numbers

Table 1 below provides a breakdown of FDCA educator members by state and territory from 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Over the last two quarters from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021 there continued to be a decrease in the total number of educator members nationally (4.3%), as well as declines of varying magnitudes across most states and territories. This is consistent with the ongoing general downward trend apparent since 2016. The greatest proportional decrease in educator numbers over the last six-month reporting period occurred in the Northern Territory (12%) with a decline of 5 educators. The next largest proportional decreases occurred in Tasmania (7%) and South Australia (6.5%).

Collectively, New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland continue to hold the largest proportion of family day care educator members nationally, representing 83% of total educator members across the three states. This proportion of total educators has remained relatively stable over the past 12 months, despite continuing declines in educator member numbers.

FDCA continues to be very concerned about the continued downward trend nationally, evident from 2016, in numbers of family day care educators and services. This downturn not only has negative implications for the long-term sustainability of the family day care sector, but it will also impact adversely on Australian families looking to meet their diverse child care needs, including access to flexible sessions and care during non-standard hours.

Family day care educators comprise one of Australia's largest networks of women in small business. With the right form of targeted support from governments, there is room to grow capacity in the family day care sector and at the same time assist the current workforce crisis in the early childhood education and care sector, particularly in regional and remote Australia and in disadvantaged areas.

**TABLE 1: EDUCATOR MEMBER NUMBERS BY STATE AND TERRITORY FROM 30 JUNE 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021.**

State	Jun-20	Dec-20	Jun-21
Queensland	2,388	2,356	2,243
New South Wales	3,909	3,764	3,578
Australian Capital Territory	130	119	114
Victoria	3,550	3,354	3,221
Tasmania	299	278	259
South Australia	373	356	333
Western Australia	1,107	1,096	1,094
Northern Territory	40	41	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,796</b>	<b>11,364</b>	<b>10,878</b>

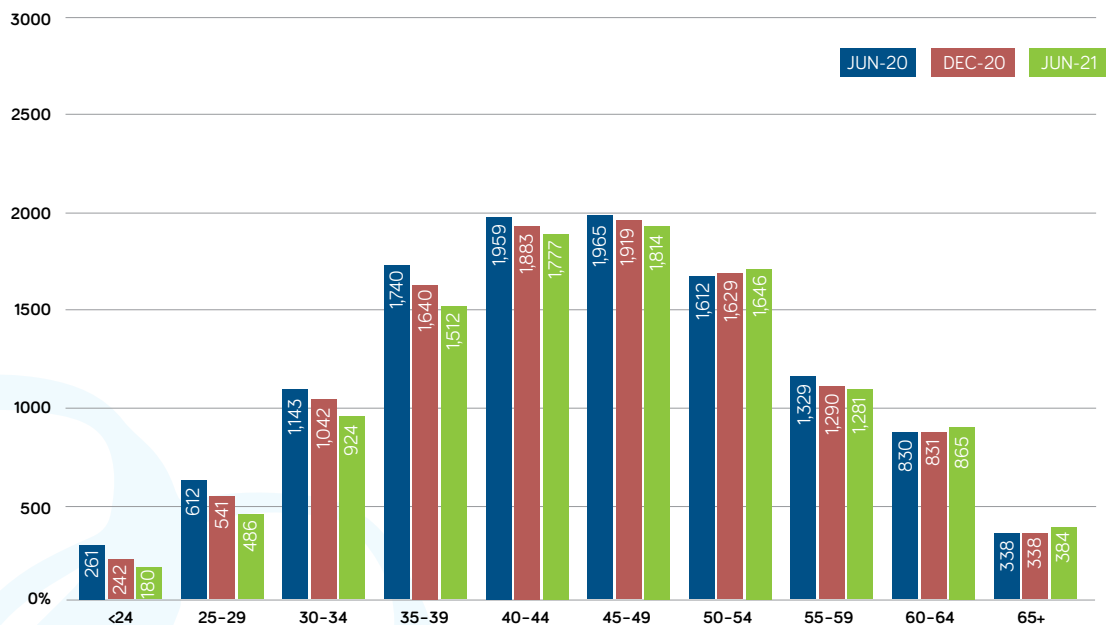


## 2.2 Educator Age

Analysis of data of FDCA's educator members over the two quarters ending 30 June 2021, confirms an increasingly mature age profile (see Figure 2 below) reflecting a gradual, but discernible, trend towards the older age brackets over the past 12 months. The age groups with the highest proportion of educator members remain the 35-39 age bracket (13.9% of all educator members), the 40-44 age group (16.3%), the 45-49 age group (16.7%) and the 50-54 age bracket (15.1%).

From 31 December 2020 – 30 June 2021, there has been a decrease in all educator age brackets, apart from the 50-54, 60-64, and 65+ age groups, which have seen proportional increases of 1%, 4.1% and 13.6% respectively. This reflects the progressively ageing demographic of educators in the family day care sector. During this reporting period, the three largest proportional decreases have occurred in the younger age groups: the <24 age group (25.6%), 25-29 age bracket (10.2%), and the 30-34 age group (11.3%). This continues to reflect the trend, first evident in September 2017, of younger educators exiting the sector at an increased rate, especially those under the age of 30.

**FIGURE 2: EDUCATOR MEMBER NUMBERS BY AGE AS AT 30 JUNE 2021.**



## 2.3 Service Numbers

Table 2 below shows a breakdown of the total number of family day care services<sup>6</sup> by state and territory over 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021.

Over the last two quarters, the total number of family day care services nationally declined by 7.5%. This compares with a decline of 7.2% nationally over the six months to 31 December 2020.

During the current reporting period, the most significant proportional decrease evident was in the state of Victoria (11%), while the states of New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland all suffered moderate declines of less than 10% (8%, 7.7%, 7.7% and 5.6% respectively). There was no change to the numbers of services in Tasmania and the Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory saw a small increase (n=2, or an increase of 33%).

**TABLE 2: SERVICE NUMBERS BY STATE AND TERRITORY FROM 30 JUNE 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021.**

State	Jun-20	Dec-20	Jun-21
Queensland	107	107	101
New South Wales	163	150	138
Australian Capital Territory	9	6	8
Victoria	157	137	122
Tasmania	9	9	9
South Australia	14	13	12
Western Australia	37	39	36
Northern Territory	4	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>429</b>

<sup>6</sup> See Note 4.



## 3. Location

### 3.1 Remoteness Area

#### Educator members

Table 3 below provides a breakdown of FDCA educator members' location by remoteness area from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from *Remote* and *Very Remote Australia*, where numbers grew slightly (n=3 and n=1 respectively), the number of educators in all remoteness categories declined over the 6-month period to 30 June 2021. The category which saw the largest decrease over the past two quarters in actual numbers (n=389) was once again the *Major Cities of Australia*. This was also the category showing the largest decline in terms of percentage change (4.6%). This is not surprising, given that around three quarters of family day care educators nationally reside in a "major city" location. The number of educators in *Inner Regional* and *Outer Regional* areas saw small declines of 4.2% and 2.2% respectively.

Despite the overall decrease in total educator member numbers since the previous quarter, and downward movement in most categories, the remoteness profile of the family day care sector has continued to remain quite stable. As indicated above, the vast majority (74.5%) of educators continue to reside in "Major City" locations, a proportion that is virtually unchanged from the previous reporting period to 31 December 2020 (74.4%) and only slightly varied from the previous 12 months (74.7%). In addition, the overall percentage of educators residing in *Inner Regional* and *Outer Regional* areas (24.4%) remained essentially the same as in the previous reporting period (24.1%) and at 12 months ago, at end of June 2020 (24.2%). Similarly, the share of educators residing in *Remote Australia* and *Very Remote Australia* showed minimal change at 1.1%.

**TABLE 3: EDUCATOR MEMBER NUMBERS BY REMOTENESS AREA FROM 30 JUNE 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021.**

Remoteness Area	Jun-20	Dec-20	Jun-21
Major Cities of Australia	8,814	8,498	8,109
Inner Regional Australia	1,990	1,900	1,820
Outer Regional Australia	869	848	829
Remote Australia	94	96	99
Very Remote Australia	19	15	16
Not Available	10	7	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,796</b>	<b>11,364</b>	<b>10,878</b>

7 ABS catalogue 1270.0.55.005 - Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 5 - Remoteness Structure, July 2016, released 16.3.2018

## Services

Distribution of family day care services by remoteness area from 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2021 is presented in Table 4 below.<sup>8</sup>

Despite some upward and downward movement in actual numbers represented across remoteness categories, there has been little variation in the overall proportion of services located in each category.

The vast majority (67.4%) of all services continue to be located in *Major Cities of Australia*, down slightly from 70.7 % as of 31 December 2020. There has therefore been a corresponding slight increase in the share of services located in *Inner* and *Outer Regional* areas, corresponding to 30.7% of total services, up slightly from 27.4% evident in the second half of 2020. Finally, the proportion of services in *Remote* and *Very Remote Australia* has remained relatively stable at 1.4% of services, compared to 1.5% at end of December 2020.

**TABLE 4: SERVICES BY REMOTENESS AREA FROM 30 JUNE 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021.**

Remoteness Area	Jun-20	Dec-20	Jun-21
Major Cities of Australia	362	328	289
Inner Regional Australia	84	83	84
Outer Regional Australia	42	44	48
Remote Australia	2	4	4
Very Remote Australia	1	3	2
Not Available	9	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>429</b>

<sup>8</sup> ABS catalogue 1270.0.55.005 - Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 5 - Remoteness Structure, July 2016, released 16.3.2018



## 3.2 Socio-economic Disadvantage

### Educator members

Table 5 below illustrates the distribution of FDCA educator members by area of relative socio-economic disadvantage from 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2021.<sup>9</sup>

The data shows that the family day care sector continues to provide much needed early childhood education and care for Australian families and children living in areas of high disadvantage, with 23.8% of educators nationally residing in decile 1 and 2 areas (representing the two areas of highest socio-economic disadvantage). In addition, over half (53.6%) of all educator members are located in areas ranked within the first five deciles of highest socio-economic disadvantage. These proportions represent a slight increase on the previous 12 months to end of June 2020, where the data showed 21.8% of educators residing in decile 1 or 2 locations, and 51.2% of family day care educators in decile 1-5 areas.

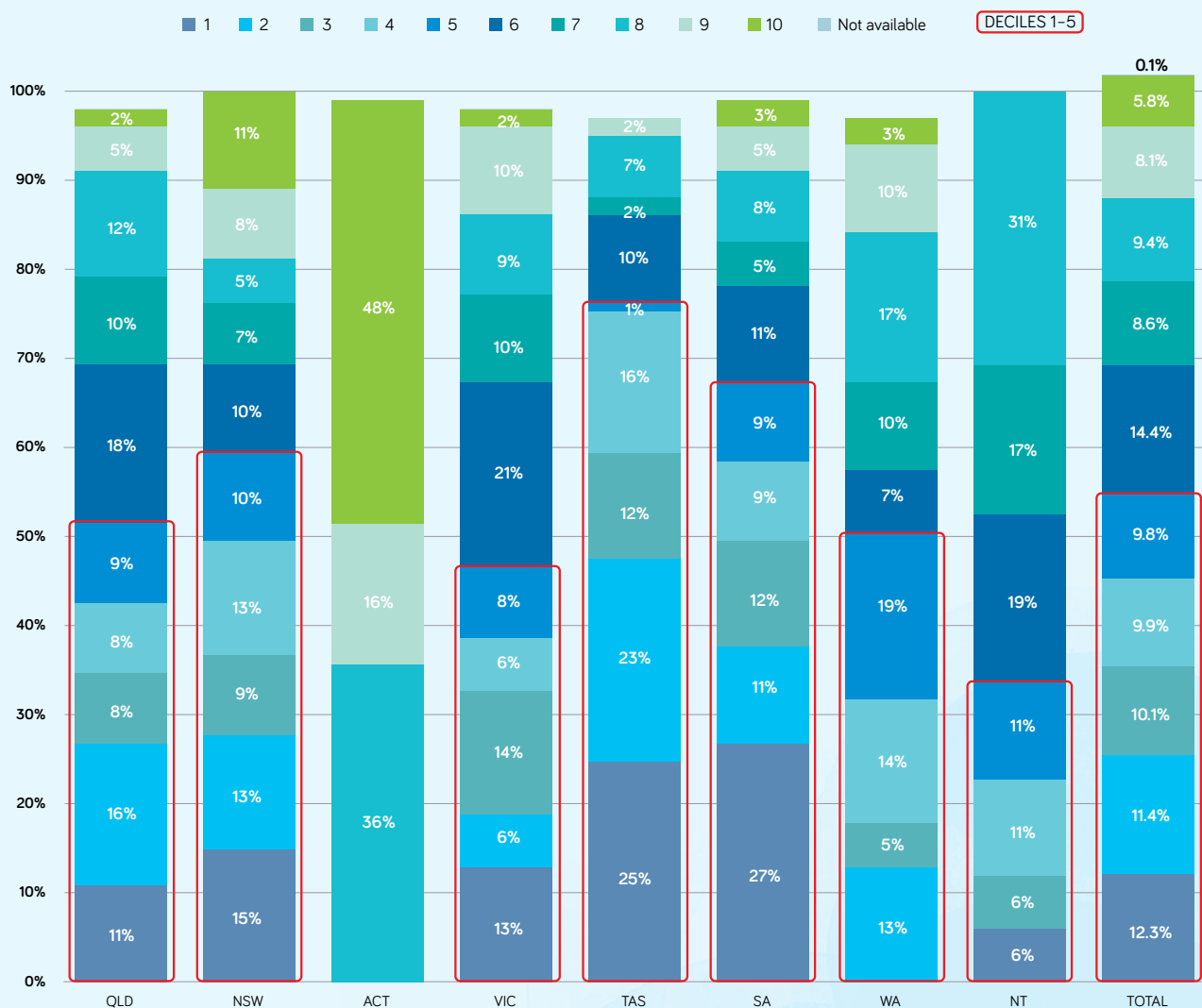
**TABLE 5: EDUCATOR MEMBER NUMBERS BY RELATIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE FROM 30 JUNE 2020 TO 30 JUNE 2021**

Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage	Jun-20	Dec-20	Jun-21
1	1,271	1,218	1,340
2	1,304	1,236	1,244
3	946	935	1,100
4	1,385	1,334	1,081
5	1,134	1,075	1,068
6	1,745	1,680	1,561
7	1,039	996	937
8	1,250	1,223	1,021
9	941	925	878
10	758	722	632
Not Available	23	20	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,796</b>	<b>11,364</b>	<b>10,878</b>

<sup>9</sup> ABS catalogue 2033.0.55.001 - Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2016.

Figure 3 below shows the variation in distribution across states and territories. The states with the largest proportions of educators located in areas ranked within the first five deciles of relative socio-economic disadvantage are Tasmania (77%), South Australia (68%), New South Wales (60%), and Queensland (52%), with Western Australia sitting close behind at 51%. At 27%, South Australia was the state with the highest percentage of its educators located in areas ranked as decile 1 locations, with Tasmania not far behind at 25%.

**FIGURE 3: EDUCATOR MEMBER NUMBERS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE AND STATE AND TERRITORY AS AT 30 JUNE 2021.**



10 ABS catalogue 2033.0.55.001 - Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2016.





## 4. Service Quality Rating

### 4.1 Overall Quality Rating

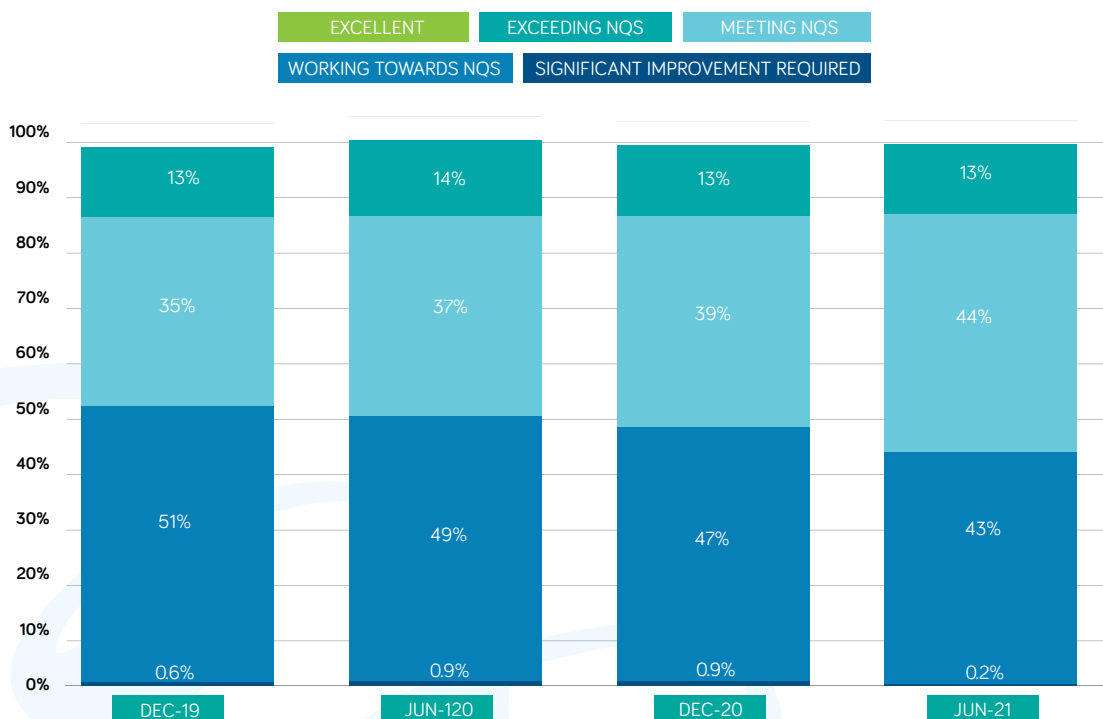
This final section of FDCA's Family Day Care Sector Profile report provides insights into the performance of family day care services under the National Quality Framework, drawing on data provided by ACECQA.

Figure 4 below indicates the proportion of family day care services by overall quality rating from 31 December 2019 to 30 June 2021.

It is pleasing to note that, as of 30 June 2021, an increasing majority of family day care services (57%) hold a ranking of *Meeting NQS* or above, up 5 percentage points over the past six months to 31 December 2020 (52%). The proportion of assessed services now rated as *Meeting NQS* is currently 44%. This is a significant improvement from 12 months ago in June 2020, when the proportion was 37%. Correspondingly, the proportion of services rated as "*Working Towards NQS*" is 43% in June 2021, down 6 points from 49% in June 2020. These changes over the past 12 months reflect the continued steady progress in quality improvements in services' quality ratings. Similarly, the proportion of services rated as *Significant Improvement Required* has also decreased from 0.9% in the previous reporting period.

Over the same time-period, the proportion of services rated *Exceeding NQS* has remained relatively stable, decreasing only 1 percentage point from 14% at end of June 2020 to 13% as of 30 June 2021.

**FIGURE 4:** PROPORTION OF SERVICES BY OVERALL QUALITY RATING<sup>10</sup> FROM 30 DECEMBER 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2021.



<sup>10</sup> ACECQA National Register, as at 30 June 2021

Table 7 below depicts the number of assessed family day care services by overall quality rating and state or territory according to ACECQA's National Register as of 30 June 2021. It also includes numbers of services yet to be assessed.

The Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction where 100% of assessed services are rated *Meeting NQS or above*. The jurisdictions with the next highest proportion of assessed services rated as *Meeting NQS or above*, are the Australian Capital Territory (75%), New South Wales (63.1%), closely followed by Tasmania (55.6%). In contrast, at 33%, Western Australia has the lowest proportion of services rated as *Meeting NQS or above*.

**TABLE 6: NUMBER OF SERVICES BY OVERALL QUALITY RATING<sup>11</sup> AND STATE AND TERRITORY AS AT 30 JUNE 2021.**

State	Excellent	Exceeding NQS	Meeting NQS	Working Towards NQS	Significant Improvement Required	Not yet assessed	Total	Assessed Services
ACT	0	1	5	2			8	100%
NSW	0	14	63	59		2	138	99%
NT	0	1	2				3	100%
QLD	0	18	53	29	1		101	100%
SA	0	1	4	7			12	100%
TAS	0	2	3	4			9	100%
VIC	0	11	50	61			122	100%
WA	0	5	5	20		6	36	83%
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>98%</b>

<sup>11</sup> ACECQA National Register, as at 31 December 2020.



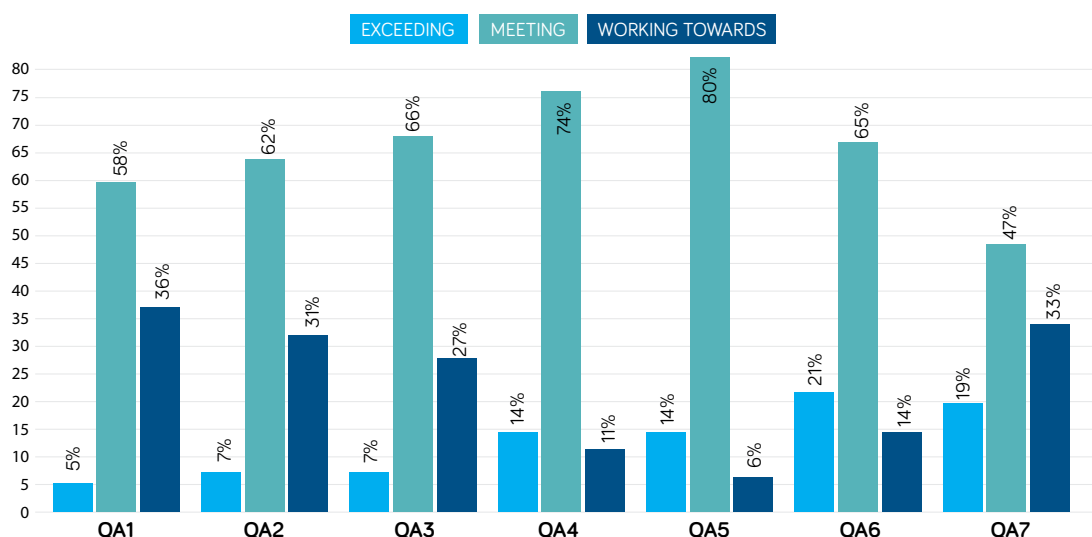
## 4.2 Quality Area Rating

Figure 5 below shows service data by NQS Quality Area rating as of 30 June 2021 as provided by ACECQA. Supplementary data and analysis are available in ACECQA's NQF Snapshot reports and NQF Annual Performance Reports.<sup>12</sup>

As can be seen below, the majority of all assessed family day care services are currently rated *Meeting NQS or above* for each of the seven quality areas, the result of continuous improvement over time. The strongest performance<sup>13</sup> by family day care services remains within QA5 (Relationships with Children), QA4 (Staffing Arrangements), and QA6 (Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities): 94% are rated either *Meeting NQS* or *Exceeding NQS* in QA5; 88% of services fall within these rating categories in QA4; and 86% meet these benchmarks in QA6.

Across the seven categories, the two Quality Areas with the highest proportion of *Exceeding NQS* ratings awarded, continue to be in QA6 (21%) and QA7 (19%). Additionally, the Quality Areas that show the highest proportion of *Working Towards NQS* ratings are QA1 (36%), down from 40% in the last reporting period and QA7 (31%), down from 37% in the six months to December 2020. This again reflects ongoing improvements in quality over time.

**FIGURE 5: SERVICE QUALITY AREA RATING<sup>14</sup> AS AT 30 JUNE 2021.**



<sup>12</sup> See [www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/snapshots](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/snapshots) and [www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/research/apr](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/research/apr)

<sup>13</sup> This performance measure is based on the three Quality Areas with the highest percentages when combining the Meeting NQS and Exceeding NQS Quality Area ratings.

<sup>14</sup> The seven NQS Quality Areas are as follows: QA1- Educational program and practice; QA2 - Children's health and safety; QA3-Physical environment; QA4 - Staffing arrangements; QA5 - Relationships with children; QA6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities; and, QA7 - Governance and leadership.

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Published by Family Day Care Australia  
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