



Early Education and Care Services Survey Results

SURVEY CLOSED 16 NOVEMBER 2018

Background

Wyndham City recognises that access to early education and care services comes down to a family's individual circumstances and the availability of appropriate services. Whether it's kindergarten, three-year-old programs, long day care, family day care or other care options, a family will choose the services most closely aligned with their needs.

The Early Education and Care Services Survey was designed to provide additional insights into why and how families use Council and non-Council operated early education and care services across the municipality. This feedback will feed into planning for the provision of early education and care service models that best meet the needs of families into the future – both from Council's own services and by working closely with the sector to ensure a range of service options are available.

Responses were limited in this instance, with 53 people completing the survey. Wyndham City will consider releasing the survey again at a later date to broaden its research.

Key Findings

The online survey was divided into four sections.

- Four-year-old kindergarten
- Three-year-old kindergarten and pre-kindergarten
- Child care
- Occasional care

A summary of the key findings is as follows.

Four-year-old kindergarten

- 43% of respondents have children who currently attend, or have attended, four-year-old kindergarten. Of these:
 - 60% attended Council-operated sessional kindergarten
 - 15% attended sessional kindergarten operated by a non-Council provider
 - 20% attended funded kindergarten in long day care
 - 5% didn't know which type of kindergarten they accessed
- 50% of those who attended a Council-operated sessional kindergarten were in a 2 x 7 hour group.
 - Of these, 67% would have been interested in wraparound child care if it had been available
 - 87% of potential future users indicated they may be interested in wraparound child care.
- All four respondents who accessed kindergarten in long day care were not aware of the difference between a funded and non-funded kindergarten program in long day care
- The reasons for choosing a kindergarten, in order of importance, were as follows for current and past users (percentages refer to the number of respondents who selected the criteria; they could select multiple):
 - 50% - Within driving distance from home
 - 39% - Fits in with my work hours
 - 39% - Close to the school I intend to send my child/ren to
 - 33% - Convenient timetable
 - 28% - On my way to work
 - 17% - Within walking distance from home
 - 17% - Staff
 - 11% - Reputation
 - 6% - Sibling/s previously attended the service
 - 6% - Price
 - 0% - Wraparound childcare is available i.e. hours either side of sessions
 - 0% - I didn't receive my first preference elsewhere
 - 11% - Other
- 56% of respondents intend to access four-year-old kindergarten in the future.
- The most important criteria for choosing a kindergarten for future users varied slightly from current/past users. These were as follows (percentages refer to the number of respondents who selected the criteria; they could select multiple):
 - 77% - Reputation

- 62% - Fits in with my work hours
- 58% - Staff
- 54% - Convenient timetable
- 54% - Within walking distance from home
- 46% - Price
- 35% - Close to the school I intend to send my child/ren to
- 31% - Within driving distance from home
- 31% - On my way to work
- 27% - Wraparound childcare is available i.e. hours either side of sessions
- 4% - Sibling/s previously attended the service
- 12% - Other
- Responses indicate future users intend to use the following types of kindergarten:
 - 31% - Council-operated sessional kindergarten
 - 12% - Sessional kindergarten by a non-Council provider
 - 19% - Funded kindergarten in long day care
 - 38% - I don't know
- Of those who nominated options other than kindergarten in long day care:
 - 55% said they may consider this as an option
 - 25% said they would not consider it
 - 20% said they did not know the difference between kindergarten in long day care versus a sessional timetable
- When asked about potential barriers, if any, to sending their child/ren to a four-year-old kindergarten program in long day care, non-users specified the following:
 - 50% - Cost
 - 35% - I believe the quality of a sessional program is better
 - 25% - The hours are too long
 - 15% - I prefer a sessional timetable
 - 15% - No barriers

Three-year-old kindergarten and pre-kindergarten

- 67% of respondents have child/ren who attended or will attend three-year-old kindergarten in the future. 33% do not intend to access this type of service.
- 55% of respondents said they may be enticed to travel outside of their local area to access three-year-old kindergarten or a 3+ activity group for the following reasons:
 - 33% - Wraparound child care is available i.e. hours either side of sessions

- 31% - A timetable that best suits my family i.e. those session times are not available at any other service
- 31% - Subsidised fees

Child care

- 42 people responded when asked whether they have accessed any of the following care options. Of these, the following proportion responded with:
 - 64% - Long Day Care
 - 24% - Family Day Care
 - 45% - Out of School Hours Care
 - 41% - Holiday Programs
 - 24% - Occasional Care
 - 12% - I don't use or intend to use any of the listed care options
- 90% said they are aware that the Government assists eligible families with their child care fees through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). When asked whether they claim the CCS for any of the following services:
 - 29% - do not claim the CCS
 - 5% - Occasional Care
 - 2% - 3+ Activity Group
 - 56% - Long Day Care
 - 15% - Family Day Care
 - 10% - Out of School Hours Care
 - 0% - In Home Care
- When asked whether they have been impacted by the introduction of the new CCS, which replaced the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate, responses were as follows:
 - 13% - I receive less funding now
 - 20% - I receive more funding now
 - 33% - No change
 - 3% - I'm not eligible for funding
 - 33% - I don't know

Occasional Care

- 39% of respondents said Occasional Care is a service that would be of value to their family now or in the future, and a further 32% said it may be of value.

- 63% of respondents were not aware that Wyndham City Council operates an Occasional Care service at its Hoppers Crossing Children's Centre (HCCC) on Heaths Road.
- 68% did not know that Wyndham City's Occasional Care program attracts the CCS for eligible families.
- No respondents had ever used Occasional Care at the HCCC.
- 12% had used an Occasional Care service elsewhere.
- 76% of respondents said they may consider travelling outside of their local area to access Occasional Care at the HCCC.