



This factsheet provides information about young people aged 0-11 years and their parents, living in the City of Whitehorse. In the early childhood years, children acquire more skills and knowledge than at any other period in their lives, making these years the most critical. The importance of the early years on the long-term development and health and wellbeing of individuals and community is well documented.

### BIRTH AND FERTILITY RATES

The birth rate is calculated by the number of live births per 1,000 of the population. In 2015, the fertility rate (the number of live births per 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 44 years) was 1.59, lower than the Victorian State average of 1.73. This figure is below replacement level (2.1), i.e. the average number of babies born to a woman throughout her reproductive life is insufficient to replace herself and her partner.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD POPULATION

Children aged 0-11 years account for 13.4 per cent of the total Whitehorse population, slightly less than Greater Melbourne at 14.9 per cent.

### MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Child health assessments are routinely undertaken by the Maternal and Child Health Service in Victoria to monitor child health and development. Ten visits are anticipated according to key ages and stages until a child reaches 3.5 years of age. Data relating to the activities of the Maternal and Child Health Service are collated on a financial year basis by the Department of Education and Training.

The rate of participation for children eligible for an assessment at 3.5 years was 67.8 per cent in Whitehorse, slightly higher than the Victorian State average of 66.1 per cent<sup>2</sup>.

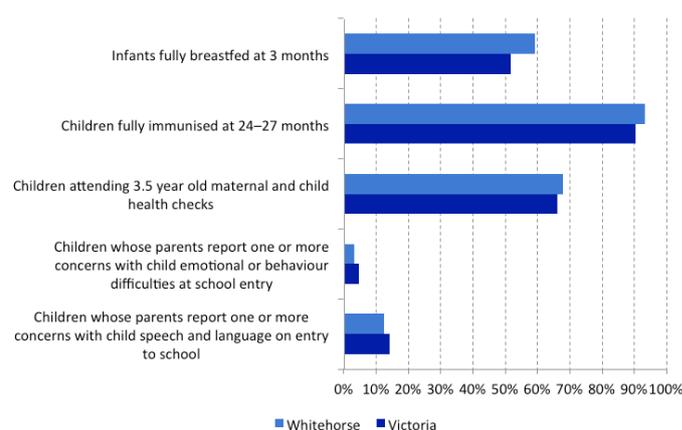
Whitehorse also recorded higher than the average Victorian rates of fully breastfed children at three months (59.3 per cent compared to 51.8 per cent) and fully immunised children at 24-27 months (93.2 per cent compared to 90.5 per cent).

### SCHOOL READINESS

In 2015 the kindergarten participation rate in Whitehorse was 100.6 per cent (with some children coming from outside the municipality). That same year, rates of children with emotional or behavioural problems at school entry in Whitehorse were lower than Victoria, at 2.4 per cent and 4.6 per cent respectively.

Similarly, Whitehorse recorded lower rates of speech or language problems at school entry (12.7 per cent), in comparison to the Victorian State average (14.2 per cent).

Figure 1 – Children health characteristics, 2015



Source: Department of Health and Human Services (2015), Local Government Area Profiles, Whitehorse Community Profile

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, this factsheet is based on Place of Usual Residence data from the 2016 Census

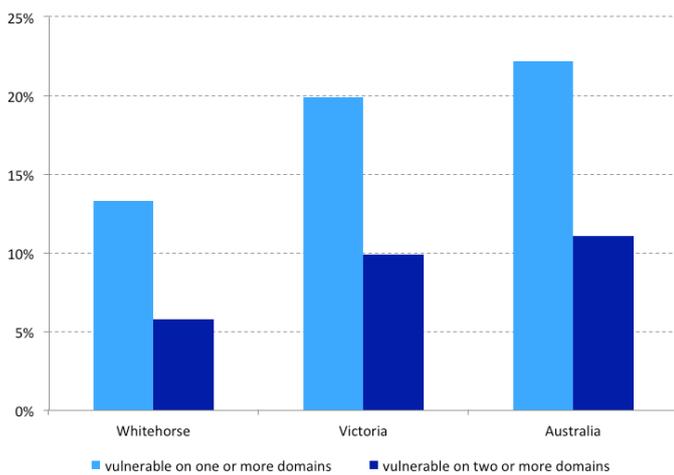
## CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) measures how children have developed by the time they start school. It looks at five areas of early childhood development domains: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge.

In 2015, 13.3 per cent of Whitehorse children were considered vulnerable on one or more domains, in comparison to the Victorian State average of 19.9 and Australian average of 22.2.

A further 5.8 per cent of Whitehorse children were considered vulnerable on two or more domains, in comparison to the Victorian average of 9.9 and Australian average of 11.1.

Figure 2 – Vulnerability at time of school entry, 2015



Source: Australian Early Development Census (2015), Community Profile 2015: AEDC results for local communities

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTHY EATING

The inner-eastern Melbourne area recorded lower levels of children who do the recommended amount of physical activity, 57.4 per cent, when compared to the Victorian average of 62.2 per cent. Females were less inclined to achieve the recommended amount than males.

A slightly higher proportion of children ate the recommended serves of fruit and vegetables (11.8 per cent compared to the Victorian average of 10.6 per cent).

## BULLYING

Fewer children in inner-eastern Melbourne reported experiencing recent bullying than the Victorian average (37.6 per cent and 45 per cent respectively). Females were slightly more inclined to report experiencing bullying than males (47.5 per cent and 42.7 per cent respectively), however underreporting by male children may be a factor.

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## MORE INFORMATION

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For more information about **EARLY YEARS** in the City of Whitehorse refer to:

City of Whitehorse Community Profile: [profile.id.com.au/whitehorse](http://profile.id.com.au/whitehorse)

City of Whitehorse Community Atlas: [atlas.id.com.au/whitehorse](http://atlas.id.com.au/whitehorse)

Australian Bureau of Statistics: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System: [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/vcams.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/Pages/vcams.aspx)

Social Statistics: [www.socialstatistics.com.au](http://www.socialstatistics.com.au)

You can also contact the **Social Policy Officer**, Whitehorse City Council on **9262 6333**.

Updated April 2018.

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## CONTACTING COUNCIL

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(Telephone Interpreter Service. Call and ask to be connected to Whitehorse City Council)

**Email:** [customer.service@whitehorse.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer.service@whitehorse.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au](http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au)

### SERVICE CENTRES

#### Whitehorse Civic Centre

(main Service Centre)  
379-397 Whitehorse Road  
Nunawading 3131

#### Box Hill Service Centre

Box Hill Town Hall  
1022 Whitehorse Road  
Box Hill 3128

#### Forest Hill Service Centre

Shop 130,  
Forest Hill Chase Shopping Centre  
Canterbury Road  
Forest Hill 3131

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