

Footprints in Time 2015

Community Feedback

# Regional and Remote Top End

## Introduction

Welcome to the 2015 Footprints in Time community fact sheets update, sharing the latest findings from the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children for your community. Interviews for Wave 7 of the study were completed in 2014 with the help of 1,253 families like yours. Our seventh round of interviews included 84 families from the Regional and Remote Top End region. This fact sheet looks at the Footprints in Time families living in Regional and Remote Top End and compares them with families in other sites of the study.

We thank all the children and their families who continue to participate in the Footprints in Time study. Allowing us to be part of your life helps us learn more about what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children need to have the best start in life and grow up strong.

## School

All children in our study were of school age in 2014. The younger group of children (born in 2006–2008) were mostly in Year 1 or Year 2 at school, and most of the older children (born in 2003–2005) were in Year 4 or Year 5.

Most study children in Regional and Remote Top End attended a government school (92%). In addition, very few children went to a Catholic school (2%) or to an independent or private school (1%), and the remaining children (4%) went to other types of school. Children in Regional and Remote Top End were more likely to go to a public school and less likely to go to a Catholic or an independent or private school than children in other locations of our study.

## Did you know?

Children are pretty **happy about going to school:**Nearly all children in Regional and Remote Top End (95%) said they are happy to go to school most of the time, and a few more (4%) said they are happy to go to school sometimes.

However, sometimes children **wish they didn’t have to go to school:**Seven out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (71%) said they sometimes wish they didn’t have to go to school.

Children thought that **their teacher is nice** to them:  
Almost eight out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (76%) said their teacher is nice to them.

Children also said that other **children at school are nice** to them:  
Around eight out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (78%) said other children at school are nice to them most of the time, and more than one in 10 (15%) said other children are nice to them sometimes.

But overall, most children said that they feel **safe and secure at school:**Nine out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (90%) said they feel safe and secure at school most times, and a further 5% said they feel safe and secure sometimes. Only four children (5%) said they do not feel safe at school.

## After-school activities

Kids lead busy lives both in school and out. We asked parents what the children usually did on weekdays after school. Some of the children went straight home from school every weekday and didn’t go to any other activities ---— 24% of children in Regional and Remote Top End did this. However, most children in our study usually did some activities after school at least once a week. Many children in Regional and Remote Top End went to a friend’s or relative’s house after school (40% of children did this at least once a week), and about three out of 10 children (32%) stayed for activities at school. Children in other locations of the study were more likely to go to activities away from school at least once a week, compared to children in the in Regional and Remote Top End area.

| **After school activities** | **Regional and remote Top End** | **Other sites** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Goes straight home (only) | 24% | 28% |
| Stays for activities at school | 32% | 17% |
| Goes to activities away from school | 13% | 34% |
| Goes to relative's or friend's house | 40% | 32% |
| Goes to river, park, playground | 29% | 18% |
| Goes to shops | 26% | 30% |

## Be act**ive for life!**

Being physically active is good for children’s health, and creates opportunities for making new friends and developing physical and social skills. The Department of Health recommends for all children aged 5–12 years:

* At least one hour of moderate to intensive physical activity every day.
* On at least three days per week, activities that strengthen muscle and bone (such as jumping, running, playing tug-o-war, or climbing).
* Minimise the time the children spend sitting every day:

– Limit use of electronic entertainment (e.g. TV, seated electronic games and computer use) to no more than two hours a day – lower levels are even better!

– Break up long periods of sitting as often as possible.

Source:Department of Health 2014, *Australia’s Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Children (5-12 years),* available from [the Australian Government Department of Health website](http://www.health.gov.au/).

We asked parents in our study how many hours a day the children watched TV, played electronic games, and did physical activities.

Eight out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (80%) watched TV for 2 hours or less on weekdays and two out of 10 (20%) watched TV for more than 2 hours. In other locations of our study, almost three out of 10 children (28%) watched TV for more than 2 hours a day. We also found that older children in our study watched TV for about the same amount of time as the younger children.

Most children in our study played electronic games for less than 2 hours on a typical weekday, and in Regional and Remote Top End about one in 10 children (12%) played electronic games for more than 2 hours on a weekday. This is very similar to other study sites (13%). We also found that older children spent more time playing electronic games than younger children.

Nearly all study children in Regional and Remote Top End (98%) spent at least one hour on a weekday in active play, sport or exercise, and very few (2%) were active for less than one hour a day. This is a great result, and similar to what we find for other sites in the study, where 91% of children were active for at least one hour each day.

TV, electronic games and physical activity on a weekday

| TV, games and activities on weekdays | Regional and remote Top End | Other sites |
| --- | --- | --- |
| TV: 2 hours or less | 80% | 72% |
| TV: more than 2 hours | 20% | 28% |
| Electronic games: 2 hours or less | 88% | 87% |
| Electronic games: more than 2 hours | 12% | 13% |
| Physical activity: less than 1 hour | 2% | 9% |
| Physical activity: 1 hour or more | 98% | 91% |

## Did you know?

We asked the older children in our study about their parents and family. Here is what they told us.

Children told us that **parents expect them to follow family rules:**Nearly all children in Regional and Remote Top End (94%) said their Mum or Dad expect them to follow family rules. This was similar in other locations of the study.

Children also said that **Mum or Dad show or tell them how to do better:**  
Almost nine out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (89%) said this, compared to 82% elsewhere.

**Mums and Dads like to know when something is wrong:**Fewer than 4 out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (36%) said that Mum or Dad won’t let them get away with things. However, in other locations of our study most children (92%) said that parents won’t let them get away with things.

When the children are doing well, **parents will praise them:**Nine out of 10 children in Regional and Remote Top End (91%) said that Mum or Dad will tell them when they have done something well. Most children in other sites agree with this too (86%).

## What children do for fun with their parents

We asked the older children in the study what they like to do for fun with Mum or Dad. Here are some of the things the children told us.

* I cook and help Mum. I help Mum clean up
* Playing football with Dad and fishing and hunting
* Cooking food with Mum and helping her with breakfast
* I go to Football training with Dad
* Mum and I go fishing and shopping together
* Dad and I tell each other bad jokes and mess around
* I like going shopping with my Nana
* Fishing, hunting, learning culture, singing are the things I like to do with Dad
* Going to the shops and to church with Mum
* Dad and I go swimming in the billabong

## *Footprints in Time* data in policy development

More than 200 researchers from government departments and universities all over Australia have used Footprints in Time data for interesting and important research projects. This research adds to our knowledge about what helps Indigenous children grow up strong. The findings are then used in reports which the government responds to in various ways to introduce new policies and programs. Some of the topics that governments have looked at using the Footprints in Time data include health, human rights, paid parental leave and income management. For example, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2014 Report includes research you have contributed to. Footprints in Time becomes more valuable for both researchers and policy makers each year you answer our questions.

Did you know that Footprints in Time is only one of four longitudinal studies run by the Department of Social Services? The Department of Social Services has recently established the National Centre for Longitudinal Data to make sure we have the best evidence possible from longitudinal data.

## Keeping in touch

If you are a *Footprints in Time* family, we need to keep in touch with you. If you have moved or are going to move, please let us know on the free-call number 1800 106 235 or contact your local RAO.