



Australian Government  
Department of Social Services

## FOOTPRINTS IN TIME 2015



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

## Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland

### 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 92 families from the Mount Isa area and Remote Western Queensland (which includes Doomadgee, Normanton and Mornington Island). This fact sheet looks at the *Footprints in Time* families living in the Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland area 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.

Almost all study children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland attended a government school (95%). In addition, a small number of children (4%) went to a Catholic school. Children in the Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland region were more likely to go to a public school than children in other locations of our study.



## Did you know?

Children are pretty **happy about going to school**:

*Slightly fewer than eight out of 10 (76%) of children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland said they are happy to go to school most of the time, and one in 10 (10%) said they are happy to go to school sometimes.*

However, sometimes children **wish they didn't have to go to school**:

*Six out of 10 children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (59%) said they sometimes wish they didn't have to go to school.*

Children thought that **their teacher is nice** to them:

*Nine out of 10 children (91%) in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland said their teacher is nice to them.*

Children also said that other **children at school are nice** to them:

*Seven out of 10 children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (70%) said other children at school are nice to them most of the time, and one in 10 (13%) said other children are nice to them sometimes.*

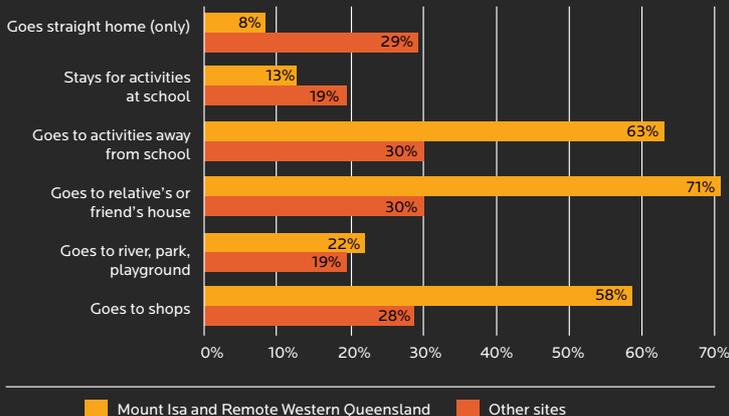
But overall, most children said that they feel **safe and secure at school**:

*Nine out of 10 children (92%) in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland said they feel safe and secure at school most times, and a few more (3%) said they feel safe and secure sometimes. Only four children (4%) 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 – 8% of children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland did this. However, most children in our study usually did some activities after school at least once a week. Most children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland went to a friend's or relative's house after school (71% of children did this at least once a week). In addition, more than six out of 10 children (63%) went to activities away from school and more than half (58%) went to the shops at least once a week. Children in other locations of the study were more likely to go straight home from school each weekday afternoon, compared to children in the Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland area.



## Be active 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 [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).



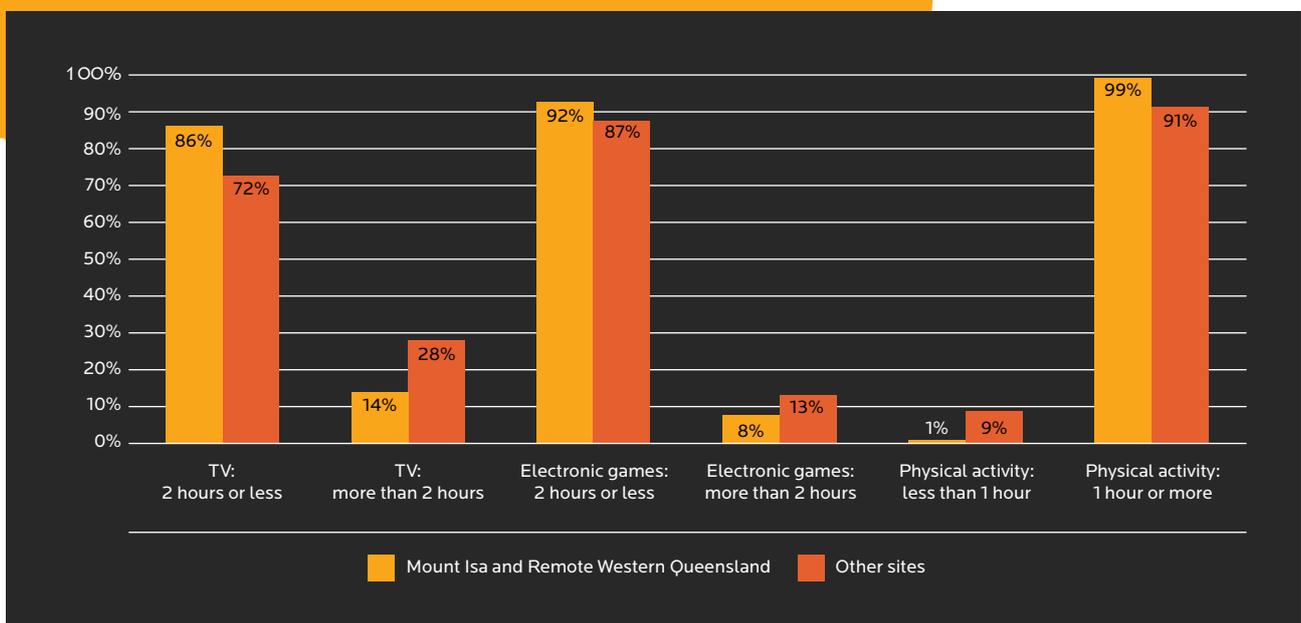
We asked parents in our study how many hours a day the children watched TV, played electronic games, and did physical activities.

Almost nine out of 10 children (86%) in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland watched TV for 2 hours or less on a weekday, and a bit more than one in 10 (14%) watched TV for more than 2 hours. Compared to other sites, children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland are less likely to watch TV for longer: 14% of children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland watched TV for 2 hours or more, compared to 28% in other sites. 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 Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland fewer than one in 10 children (8%) played electronic games for more than 2 hours on a weekday. Compared to other locations of the study, children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland spent less time playing electronic games. We also found that older children spent more time playing electronic games than younger children.

Almost all study children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (99%) spent at least one hour on a weekday in active play, sport or exercise. This is a great result, and similar to what we found for other sites in the study, where nine out of 10 children (91%) were active for one hour or more on a weekday.

### TV, electronic games and physical activity on a weekday





## 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:**

*All children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (100%) said their Mum or Dad expect them to follow family rules. This was higher than in other locations of the study, where nine out of 10 children (89%) said Mum or Dad expect them to follow rules.*

Children also said that **Mum or Dad show or tell them how to do better:**

*More than eight out of 10 children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (84%) said this, similar to other study sites.*

**Mums and Dads like to know when something is wrong:**

*Eight out of 10 children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (79%) said that Mum or Dad want to be told when the children are worried or have a problem. In other study locations, 86% of children said so.*

When the children are doing well, **parents will praise them:**

*Seven out of 10 children in Mount Isa and Remote Western Queensland (74%) said that Mum or Dad will tell them when they have done something well. Children in other sites agree with this too (87%).*

## 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.

- > Mum and I watch movies, read books and tell each other stories
- > I play football and video games with Dad
- > I help Mum cook dinner
- > Dad and I like playing elimination with the netball
- > We go to the beach and fishing with Mum
- > Dad and I tell each other bad jokes and mess around
- > Mum and I go to the swimming pool
- > I help Mum make clap sticks
- > Dad and I ride on our bikes
- > Mum and I go to the park to play

## 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.