ACIL ALLEN

Australian Early Development Census plus: mobilising data across the early life course

About ACIL Allen

ACIL Allen is a leading independent economics, policy and strategy advisory firm, dedicated to helping clients solve complex issues.

Our purpose is to help clients make informed decisions about complex economic and public policy issues.

Our vision is to be Australia's most trusted economics, policy and strategy advisory firm. We are committed and passionate about providing rigorous independent advice that contributes to a better world.

Contents

ACIL ALLEN

Executive summary

The Department of Education and Training engaged ACIL Allen Consulting to outline the policy environment for mobilising Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data and complimentary data across the early life course as part of a comprehensive monitoring system approach.

Building on the AEDC, the comprehensive monitoring system is a suite of eight surveys at approximately three-year age intervals to monitor social and emotional development from infancy to early adulthood. There is a particular interest in school and community use of social and emotional well-being data given limited improvement in AEDC results over time and the potential impacts of COVID-19.

The engagement involved consultations with senior leaders in the Department of Education and Training to understand the policy context and opportunities for data mobilisation. The second aspect of the engagements was to map the policies of government from infancy to adulthood, in particular the years before school, during school and into early post school years.

Government priorities supporting data mobilisation

The consultations identified a supportive environment for data mobilisation in schools, particularly a focus on student social and emotional development. Interest in student social and emotional development has grown through Victoria's Education State reform agenda and is further expanding through the Victorian Mental Health Royal Commission and student wellbeing supports in response to COVID-19. These priorities have led to new resources for schools and an interest in opportunities to better understand the wellbeing of students.

Consultees raised challenges in mobilising use of data in schools. One challenge is that schools can perceive population data (e.g. AEDC data) as intended for use at the community or state level. A further challenge was school familiarity and use of existing data which differs from the AEDC in being collected annually (e.g. Attitudes to School Survey) or directly relates to individual students (e.g. student attendance).

Consultees considered that to improve data mobilisation it would be important to raise the profile of AEDC and life course data and better communicate the value of the data, such as how it connects with other outcomes (e.g. NAPLAN) or the trends in the data occurring over time.

A further opportunity was to embed comprehensive monitoring system data into school and network strategic planning, such that it becomes a feature of the planning data provided to schools and the discussions undertaken during the school planning process.

Policy environment supporting data mobilisation

The intent of the policy mapping was to enable: services to more readily connect data to their day-to-day practice; communities to understand how the competencies fit into service provision; and policy makers to identify where the data may assist policy or resource development.

The mapping explored government policies supporting the social and emotional well-being of children and young people. It used the social and emotional wellbeing competencies and difficulties of the comprehensive monitoring system as the lens for mapping the policies. These are:

— *Physically Well / Healthy Bodies* – i.e. physical wellness, sleep, nutrition and exercise

— *Self-regulation / Trust in self* – i.e. attachment security, relationship quality and support

— *Co-regulation / Trust in others* - i.e. emotional competence, situation and emotion focused coping skills

— *Global citizenship / Sense of meaning* – i.e. development of a social and environmental conscience

— *Difficulties* – i.e. depression/anxiety, conduct and behaviour, substance use (adolescence onwards).

The mapping covered policy for services in which all children and young people are expected to participate covering the early childhood, primary and middle school, and senior and post school life stages. A brief overview of the results of the mapping for each stage is provided below.

Early childhood (birth-5 years of age)

The mapping for the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service highlights the health and development monitoring role of MCH service as a key connection with the social and emotional wellbeing competencies.

The mapping for Early Childhood Education and Care services focuses the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) being the required framework for kindergarten funding. The mapping illustrates the strong alignment between the competencies and the VEYLDF outcomes, in particular:

— Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

— Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

— Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Primary and middle school (5-16 years of age)

The mapping for the primary and middle school years highlights the connection between the competencies and the Victorian Curriculum F-10 in relation to:

— the curriculum learning areas (Health and Physical Education, Humanities)

— the curriculum capabilities (Personal and Social capability, Ethical capability)

— the cross-curriculum priorities (Sustainability).

Of the broader, mandatory school operational policies, the Bullying Prevention and Response policy and Suicide Prevention and Response policy connect to the competencies framework.

Senior and post school (16-21 years of age)

The mapping for the senior and post-school years identifies the connection to the competencies in relation to:

— Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) study designs (Health and Physical Education, Humanities)

— VCE Vocational Education and Training programs (Sport and Recreation; Health)

— Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning strands (Personal Development Skills).

The Bullying Prevention and Response policy and Suicide Prevention and Response policy continue to be mandatory school operational policies in the senior years of school and specifically connect to the competencies framework.

Opportunities

Several opportunities to improve the uptake and use of AEDC and comprehensive monitoring system data are outlined in Table ES 1. below.

Table ES 1   Opportunities to improve data mobilisation

Theme	Opportunity
Building on the current interest in social and emotional wellbeing	*Opportunity 1.* Continue to raise the profile of AEDC data and the comprehensive monitoring approach. The 2021 AEDC results are an upcoming opportunity to communicate with schools and the important influencers with schools (such as the Senior Education Improvement Leaders).
	Opportunity 2. Align communication to the policy (particularly the response to the Mental Health Royal Commission) and pandemic context to draw attention to the meaning of the results.
Offering schools and communities greater value than their current data	*Opportunity 3.* Support schools and communities to track social and emotional wellbeing over the early development life course (birth to early adulthood) through the comprehensive monitoring approach.
	Opportunity 4. Define and communicate the added value of AEDC and comprehensive monitoring data relative to the other data available to schools and communities
	Opportunity 5. Link the data to action by mapping and communicating the connection between the data and available school and community resources.
Embedding activities in schools	*Opportunity 6.* Explore the requirements to embed the comprehensive monitoring data directly in schools, particularly through school strategic planning. For example, use by Senior Education Improvement Leaders and incorporation into resources (e.g. Panorama school data reports) for school strategic planning.

Source: ACIL Allen, 2021.

Introduction 1

This chapter introduces the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) mobilisation project objectives, context, and main sections of the report.

1.1 This engagement

The Department of Education and Training (DET) engaged ACIL Allen Consulting to outline the policy environment for mobilising AEDC data and complimentary data across the early life course as part of a comprehensive monitoring system approach.

The engagement involved consultations with senior leaders in the Department of Education and Training to understand the policy context and opportunities for data mobilisation. The second aspect of the engagements was to map the policies of government from infancy to adulthood, in particular the years before school, during school and into early post school years.

1.2 AEDC and comprehensive monitoring

AEDC background

The AEDC is a nationwide data collection of early childhood development at the time children commence their first year of full-time school. The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and their families by providing evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning. The AEDC is collected every three years in schools across Australia, with collections completed in 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, and a collection to be undertaken in 2021.

DET is supported by the Australian Government to facilitate the collection of AEDC data to achieve a high participation rate. In addition, through its partnership with the Australian Government, Victoria seeks to:

— strengthen awareness of the AEDC among key stakeholders, for example schools, local community organisations, and government agencies

— increase government and community utilisation of the AEDC results in early childhood policy development, service delivery and program management

— support communities with relatively high levels of developmental vulnerability to respond to their AEDC results.

In early 2020, a report was prepared into the utilisation of AEDC among communities, policy makers and research bodies. This work highlighted community interest in working together with policy makers and research groups to use AEDC results to mobilise action that will improve outcomes for children and young people.

Comprehensive monitoring overview

The comprehensive monitoring system seeks to systematically capture and connect knowledge about children and young people's development at key points in their lives.

The importance for communities is to understand whether children and young people are making positive progress and whether efforts and supports are in place to promote children's development as they grow up. It recognises that early developmental progress underpins later adolescent development and the important interplay of child development with family and community environments. Further background on the pathway from the AEDC to comprehensive monitoring is provided in Box 1.1 below.

The comprehensive monitoring system includes a suite of eight surveys across developmental time points from infancy to 21 years of age. The comprehensive monitoring system profiles the development of social and emotional competencies and difficulties over time, as well as the social contexts (family, peer, school, neighbourhoods, communities) that drive these outcomes. The social and emotional wellbeing competencies and difficulties are:

— *Physically Well / Healthy Bodies* – i.e. physical wellness, sleep, nutrition and exercise
— *Self-regulation / Trust in self* – i.e. attachment security, relationship quality and support
— *Co-regulation / Trust in others* - i.e. emotional competence, situation and emotion focused coping skills
— *Global citizenship / Sense of meaning* – i.e. development of a social and environmental conscience
— *Difficulties* – i.e. depression/anxiety, conduct and behaviour, substance use (adolescence onwards).

The suite of eight surveys is currently being tested in targeted locations in Victoria from 2020 to 2022 to complement the national AEDC data collection in 2021. The work is being jointly progressed through a collaboration of international and local experts, including the Centre for Social and Early Emotional Development (SEED) at Deakin University, the Victorian Department of Education and Training, and the Human Early Learning Partnership (University of British Columbia, Canada).

Box 1.1   From the AEDC to comprehensive monitoring: Brief overview

The earliest form of a comprehensive monitoring system was conceptualised by Dr Clyde Hertzman (Founding Director, Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia) in the early 2000s. His vision was to extend and elevate the Canadian Early Development Instrument (the basis for the AEDC) with the addition of a Toddler Development Instrument (TDI, at two years of age) and two Middle Year Development Instruments (MDI, at 10 and 14 years of age). The TDI and MDI have been progressively refined and adapted through consultation and a series of community implementation projects across British Columbia.

In 2015 as part of a larger trans-pacific collaboration, the TDI and MDI were implemented in across five regional and rural local government areas in Victoria, Australia. The MDI was completed in schools across regional and metropolitan Victoria between 2015-2018. Feasibility trials of the Canadian TDI were undertaken with parents and carers of two-year old children cross multiple communities in Maternal and Child Health centres across Victoria between 2015-2019.

These trials were highly successful, with response rates exceeding 90 per cent in many regions, and high community engagement in data collection and usage. As a result, a formal Australian adaptation of the instruments was undertaken to extend their reach to include an infant/family census as well as a late adolescent (18 years) and young adult census (21-24 years), just prior to when parenthood typically commences and thus completing an intergenerational picture.

The Australian adaptation was based on a developmentally sequenced data ontology mirroring that of the Australian Temperament Project (ATP) which is one of Australia's longest running studies of social

and emotional development. Since 1983, the ATP has followed over 2,000 young Australians and their families, from infancy to adulthood, across 15 data collection waves. This data ontology emphasises developmental pathways (positive competences, difficulties) and social climates (family, school, peer, digital, community), based on socioecological theory, social determinants theory, and social capital theory.

Source: Cleary et al, forthcoming

1.3 Project objectives and method

Objectives and scope

The objectives of the engagement are to:

1. examine current progress and priorities for mobilising data
2. map government policies that support the social and emotional wellbeing competencies of children and young people
3. inform DET's consideration for improving AEDC mobilisation in the future.

Method

The project was undertaken in three stages as specified in the Table below.

Table 1.1   Project stages

Stage	Activities
Stage 1: Project mobilisation	An initial meeting was held on project commencement between DET and the project team. This included discussion of the project objectives, scope and expectations, the project methodology and identification of the stakeholders to be consulted.
Stage 2: Data collection and drafting	The main focus of the data collection was to map the policy context for mobilising AEDC data and speak with a small number of senior DET executives to understand the policies and priorities of government.
Stage 3: Final report	At the conclusion of stage 2, a small group discussion was held with DET to test the emerging findings. A draft and final report were prepared.

Source: ACIL Allen, 2021.

1.4 Sections of this document

The sections of this document are:

— Chapter 2 *Government priorities supporting data mobilisation* – presents themes raised through the consultations on the alignment of government policies and priorities with the AEDC and broader data monitoring
— *Chapter 3 Policy environment supporting data mobilisation* – presents the policy mapping and discusses the coverage of policies across the comprehensive monitoring social and emotional competencies
— *Chapter 4 Opportunities* – summarises opportunities arising from the analysis.

Government priorities supporting data mobilisation

2

This Chapter discusses themes raised through the consultations on the alignment of government policies and priorities with the AEDC and comprehensive data monitoring.

2.1 Supports for data mobilisation

Key themes arose through the consultations regarding support for data mobilisation in schools. These are discussed below.

Progress in making social and emotional development of students a priority for government

Consultees noted that making social and emotional development of students was a priority for government.

The Education State reform agenda has raised the prominence of social and emotional wellbeing.

> *Since the Education State [reform plan] was launched in 2015, there is a greater focus on wellbeing, social and emotional development – and measurement targets that connect to that.*

> *The support for social and emotional development of students has become more formalised and structured in recent years. One of the keys to that was the inclusion of broader wellbeing and inclusion [Education State] targets. Currently, schools are still evolving in the way they apply these targets.*

In addition, the Mental Health Royal Commission has added substantial policy focus.

> *In response to the Mental Health Royal Commission, everyone needs a strong social environment to strengthen the referral system that may reflect education plans. Attendance is so hard… especially at the primary level (i.e. preps).*

> *What we have to do is have a funding allocation and menu for people to draw down from (e.g. SRF). I am certainly keen that there is a better measurement framework.*

The policy agendas are leading to new school resources that are focussed on mental health.

> *Schools are giving more focus and attention to the mental health and wellbeing of students, which I think is a pretty good indicator of school evolvement. For example, this year, the rollout of mental health practitioners and GPs in schools signals the increasing role of schools to provide that support.*

COVID-19 has extended this interest with schools supporting the wellbeing of students.

> *Throughout COVID, schools have maintained contact with students and carers, so there would be greater encouragement to seek assistance / referrals.*

> *The impact of the pandemic has been big, particularly in supporting young people in the transition to the stages of schooling. That's really front of mind. There is an opportunity given the pandemic to promote the profile of the AEDC – schools will see the benefits to them.*

Success in generally mobilising data in schools

Consultees noted that there has been substantial work in building general data literacy and schools have become increasingly adept at using data.

Building school data literacy has been a big focus. There's been considerable investment in building principals and assistant principal capacity. Its common now to see data walls in schools, and how individuals are progressing. Like everything it's a bell curve, but there are more people to the right of that bell curve.

Capability to use data has been driven by both expectation and support.

One example is use of data in strategic planning and annual implementation planning. There are new supports, from the SEILs [Senior Education Improvement Leaders], to delve deeply into it.

There are better data tools. The Panorama1 report is one, which gives easy to read and accessible data reports. They need to be able to click and see what they need to.

Schools all get a common data report [Panorama], so they're speaking the same language as their colleagues. They're required to discuss it to develop their action plans.

Data is used by schools to understand individual students and groups of students.

Schools have a large list of individual students who fit the profile for leaving school early, and have data on attendance rates and other indicators of students. There also are many Panorama reports on academic learning as well.

For schools, there is all the AToSS [Attitudes to School Survey] data reports that outline student level attitudes. There are limitations in that, but it does give some indication on the students connectedness to schools and the parents perspectives as well. I think that survey must have been 10 years plus, so its part of the furniture.

2.2 Challenges for data mobilisation

Consultees raised challenges in mobilising use of AEDC data in schools.

Schools have more direct data about students.

It is the classic attendance, literacy, numeracy, completion results that are a key focus. Other areas are student attitude to school, parents attitude to school and teacher opinion surveys. Student attitudes are a proxy for engagement, and there will be interest in that particularly post pandemic.

Part of the benefit of doing the English online assessment is that you get time with kids, then hopefully you're also getting the SEHQ [School Entrant Health Questionnaire] at a reasonable time. Schools will also use the AToSS data. Therefore they are reasonably expected to bundle all that data up.

In a school, you get much more direct measures of what you might do, or how you might intervene through AToSS data.

Schools may perceive that AEDC data is more intended for use at the community or state level.

The only problem I think the data has is that in general, is not perceived to be individualised. Maybe there's a sense that this is a census. Maybe there's a feeling that this is for the department rather than schools.

School levers aren't that big in driving community change unless the local government wants to get involved.

Collaboration across schools differs so, if the AEDC is a community level indicator, it will be used differently.

Collaboration across schools differs by community. Its probably down to two things. One is the capacity of the SEIL to drive the work. But also the culture of collaboration within the area. … There's a challenge in elevating the thinking, and that's the department's job.

Schools are busy and have different priorities.

There's always bandwidth challenges. That's always an issue, but I think its also an issue about 'profile' and where does it fit. I think we need to be a bit more deliberate in showing case studies.

---

[1] An example Panorama report can be found online – for example:
https://www.buckleyparkco.vic.edu.au/uploaded_files/media/supplementary_school_level_2018.pdf ;
http://tarwinvalleyps.vic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/School-Performance-Report.pdf

2.3 Opportunities to embed data

Key opportunities for mobilising data in schools were raised.

It is important to raise the profile and value of AEDC and comprehensive wellbeing data, particularly in highlighting the link between the data and the current policy context.

I think its about the profile. About what value can the AEDC provide to schools and communities. But from a department perspective, how can we promote that profile.

In the current context I am certainly keen that there is a better measurement framework for student wellbeing. I want a better way to know whether schools have a better pro-social environment. There will be more measurement and expectation around having good systems and processes in place and we're going to have to work on a reasonable scope for schools to control that. If we're talking about kids mental health overall, it could be a dashboard to understand how the kids are going. It can't be a scorecard though – it's just about finding that boundary.

Embedding the data into school and network strategic planning is a key way it can be mobilised.

It would be beneficial to link the data with the school review process that occurs every 4 years. The data should be released closer to the review cycle so that the data can address the needs of our communities more closely. It will also help schools inform their strategic planning that occurs on an annual basis

They can use that to inform their strategic planning. More recently schools have received funding for equity reasons, which is based on family's occupation and education backgrounds. It has worked really well. At a senior level, it's worked to say what does this mean for the strategic plan, your workforce, how can we work with you to make a dataset that supports it

When its used effectively, its discussion at a network level, so they can delve deeply into their cohorts.

The principal networks are healthy at the moment. That would certainly be one of the forums but in my own view is that it would be presented very briefly there. It would be better if the data were presented as part of the school review and planning cycle.

We used to do regional performance framework meetings which presented regional / state level data. To have the AEDC reports data readily available at the same time, that would also be helpful

It is important to communicate the patterns and meaning of the data to build school understanding of the data and its use.

The AEDC gives another set of longitudinal data. We'd like to know if areas can be tracked over years. Or whether the data can be linked individually. I'd be keen to see how AEDC can become more embedded into schools over time.

There are natural areas where it would join well. We have assessments, English online assessments, looking at kids literacy abilities, and I don't think we do enough data triangulation around the AEDC and how it can inform the other datasets.

The school entry health questionnaire is an obvious one where AEDC data can be connected. The other one is the English online assessment. When prep students start they do an assessment of where they're at. Schools take great interest because they do it within weeks of starting. Schools are also really much more attuned to where they are in terms of kindergarten and kindergarten participation. They look very closely that can be linked in that they use regularly. They're the key ones in the early years.

And NAPLAN. You can't escape NAPLAN. It's rolling ahead as usual this year so that's a clear area of linkage with current AEDC data.

Alongside schools, consultees raised the importance of continuing work to build understanding and use of the AEDC data in early childhood.

In early childhood, there's increasingly Communities of Practice that provide a basis for discussion. In a prior tole, we asked providers who has heard of AEDC: We only got 10 per cent of hands raised.

The focus of SRF [School Readiness Funding] has changed a lot of dynamic amongst EC providers.

Policy environment supporting data mobilisation

3

This Chapter presents the policy mapping and discusses the coverage of policies across the comprehensive monitoring social and emotional competencies and difficulties.

3.1 Purpose of the policy mapping

The purpose of the mapping is to identify government policies supporting the social and emotional well-being of children and young people. This seeks to enable: services to more readily connect data to their day-to-day practice; communities to understand how the competencies fit into service provision; and policy makers to identify where the data may assist policy or resource development.

The mapping relates to Victoria with 'government policy' defined as 'a Victorian Government or nationally agreed statement of required action[2]'.

The mapping covers whole-of-population policy for services in which all children and young people (birth-21 years of age) are expected to participate.

The specific focus is policies that support the five comprehensive monitoring social and emotional wellbeing competencies and difficulties:

— *Physically Well / Healthy Bodies* – i.e. physical wellness, sleep, nutrition and exercise

— *Self-regulation / Trust in self* – i.e. attachment security, relationship quality and support

— *Co-regulation / Trust in others* - i.e. emotional competence, situation and emotion focused coping skills

— *Global citizenship / Sense of meaning* – i.e. development of a social and environmental conscience

— *Difficulties* – i.e. depression/anxiety, conduct and behaviour, substance use (adolescence onwards).

3.2 Policy mapping

The policy mapping was undertaken in three parts:

— Early childhood (birth-5 years of age) – refer Table 3.1
— Primary and middle school (5-16 years of age) – refer Table 3.2
— Senior and post school (16-21 years of age) – refer Table 3.3.

---

[2] The focus of the mapping is the policy statement of action rather than the underpinning legislation or associated programs, resources, general advice, or outcomes frameworks.

Table 3.1   Early childhood – Social and emotional competencies and difficulties policy map

	1. Physically Well / Healthy Bodies	2. Self-regulation / Trust in self	3. Co-regulation / Trust in others	4. Global citizenship / Sense of meaning	5. Mental health difficulties
Service – direct policy	– **Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Key Age and Stage guidelines*** (Health and development monitoring – PEDS Qns 6-9, Intervention) – **Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)** – Outcome 3**: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (e.g. Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing)	– **MCH Key Age and Stage guidelines** (Health and development monitoring – PEDS Qns 6-9, Intervention) – **VEYLDF – Outcome 1**: Children have a strong sense of identity (e.g. Children feel safe, secure, and supported) – **VEYLDF – Outcome 3**: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (e.g. Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing)	– **MCH Key Age and Stage guidelines** (Health and development monitoring – PEDS Qns 6-9, Intervention) – **VEYLDF – Outcome 2**: Children are connected with and contribute to their world (e.g. Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation)	– **MCH Key Age and Stage guidelines** (Health and development monitoring – PEDS Qns 6-9, Intervention) – **VEYLDF – Outcome 2**: Children are connected with and contribute to their world (e.g. Children respond to diversity with respect, Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment)	– **MCH Key Age and Stage guidelines** (Health and development monitoring – PEDS Qns 6-9, Intervention)

Service – supportive policy	– **School Readiness Funding** (Wellbeing priority for funding use)
	– **National Quality Standard**
	   – Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice (Standard 1.1 Program (i.e. use a Learning Framework), Standard 1.2 Practice, Standard 1.3 Assessment and planning)
	   – Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety (Standard 2.1 Health)
	   – Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children (Standard 5.1 Relationships between educators and children. Standard 5.2 Relationships between children)
	   – Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities (Standard 6.1 Supportive relationships with families, Standard 6.2 Collaborative partnerships)				

Government policy statements	*Recent* – Victorian Education State Early Childhood Reforms – Australian Government Long Term National Health Plan (2019), including a commitment to a National Children's Mental Health Strategy (children under 12). – Australian Government National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People (2020-2030) – Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019–2023) *Emerging* – Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (2021) *Older* – COAG National Framework for Universal Child and Family Health Services (2011) – COAG National Early Childhood Development Strategy (2009) – COAG Healthy, Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health (2015)				

Notes: * The MCH Key Age and Stage Frameworks consists of health and development monitoring, intervention, and health promotion activities. ** The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) sets out outcomes and practices to guide early childhood professionals in their work with all families and their young children from birth to eight years of age. The VEYLDF is an approved early learning framework under the *Education and Care Services National Law*.

Source: ACIL Alen, 2021.

Table 3.2 Primary and middle school – Social and emotional competencies and difficulties policy map

	1. Physically Well / Healthy Bodies	2. Self-regulation / Trust in self	3. Co-regulation / Trust in others	4. Global citizenship / Sense of meaning	5. Mental health difficulties
Service – direct focus	– **Victorian Curriculum Foundation-Year 10 (F-10)***: – *Learning areas*: **Health and Physical Education** learning area (Movement and Physical Activity strand; Personal, Social and Community Health strand); **Technologies** learning area (e.g. nutrition)	– Victorian Curriculum F-10: – *Learning areas*: **Health and Physical Education** learning area (Personal, Social and Community Health strand) – *Capabilities*: **Personal and Social** capability	– Victorian Curriculum F-10: – *Learning areas*: **Health and Physical Education** learning area (Personal, Social and Community Health strand) – *Capabilities*: **Personal and Social** capability	– Victorian Curriculum F-10: – *Learning areas*: **Health and Physical Education** learning area (Personal, Social and Community Health strand), **Humanities** learning area (Civics and Citizenship strand) – *Capabilities*: **Personal and Social** capability, **Ethical** capability – *Cross-curriculum priorities*: **Sustainability**	– **School operations policy****: – *Bullying Prevention and Response* policy – *Suicide Prevention and Response* policy
Service – supportive policy	– **School operations policy**** – *Student Engagement* policy – *Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies* policy – *Mobile Phones – Student Use* policy				
Government policy statements	*Recent* – Victorian Education State Reforms – COAG Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (2020) – COAG Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) – Australian Government Long Term National Health Plan (2019), including a commitment to a National Children's Mental Health Strategy (children under 12). – Australian Government National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People (2020-2030) – Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019–2023) *Emerging* – Victorian Youth Strategy (12 -25 years) Discussion Paper (2021) – Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (2021) *Older* – COAG National Framework for Universal Child and Family Health Services (2011) – COAG National Safe Schools Framework (2010) – COAG Healthy, Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health (2015)				

Notes: * The Victorian Curriculum F-10 consists of Learning areas, Capabilities, and Cross-curriculum priorities. Only mandatory School operational policies related to the competencies are listed.
Source: ACIL Alen, 2021.

Table 3.3   Senior and post school – Social and emotional competencies and difficulties policy map

	1. Physically Well / Healthy Bodies	2. Self-regulation / Trust in self	3. Co-regulation / Trust in others	4. Global citizenship / Sense of meaning	5. Mental health difficulties

Service – direct focus	– **Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)* studies:**
	  – Health and Physical Education study design
	– **VCE Vocational Education and Training (VET)** programs** – Sport and Recreation; Health
	– **Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) strands***** – Personal Development Skills strand
		– **VCE studies**:
		  – Health and Physical Education study design
		  – Humanities study design
		– **VCAL strands** – Personal Development Skills strand
			– **VCE studies**:
			  – Health and Physical Education study design
			  – Humanities study design
			– **VCAL strands** – Personal Development Skills strand
				– **VCE studies**:
				  – Health and Physical Education study design
				  – Humanities study design
				– **VCAL strands** – Personal Development Skills strand
					– **School operations policy**:**
					  – *Bullying Prevention and Response* policy
					  – *Suicide Prevention and Response* policy

Service – supportive policy	– **School operations policy****
	  – *Student Engagement* policy
	  – *Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies* policy
	  – *Mobile Phones – Student Use* policy				

Government policy statements	*Recent* – Victorian Education State Reforms – COAG Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (2020) – COAG Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) – Australian Government Long Term National Health Plan (2019), including a commitment to a National Children's Mental Health Strategy (children under 12). – Australian Government National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People (2020-2030) – Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2019–2023) *Emerging* – Victorian Youth Strategy (12 -25 years) Discussion Paper (2021) – Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (2021) *Older* – Victoria's 10-year mental health plan (2015) – Victorian suicide prevention framework 2016-2025 (2016) – COAG National Safe Schools Framework (2010) – COAG Healthy, Safe and Thriving: National Strategic Framework for Child and Youth Health (2015)				

Notes: * The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) provides diverse pathways to further study or training at university or TAFE and to employment. ** VCE Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs are practical work-oriented programs leading to nationally recognised qualifications and providing credit towards the VCE or VCAL. *** The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a practical option for students in Years 11 and 12. The VCAL has four curriculum areas, called strands.

Source: ACIL Alen, 2021.

Opportunities

4

The analysis has built understanding about the context in which data is used by schools and communities. From the analysis there are several opportunities by which to improve the uptake and use of AEDC and broader comprehensive monitoring data.

Building on the current interest in social and emotional wellbeing

— *Opportunity 1.* Continue to raise the profile of AEDC data and the comprehensive monitoring approach. The 2021 AEDC results are an upcoming opportunity to communicate with schools and the important influencers with schools (such as the SEILs).

— *Opportunity 2.* Align communication to the policy (particularly the response to the Mental Health Royal Commission) and pandemic context to draw attention to the meaning of the results.

Offering schools and communities greater value than their current data

— *Opportunity 3.* Support schools and communities to track social and emotional wellbeing over the early development life course (birth to early adulthood) through the comprehensive monitoring approach.

— *Opportunity 4.* Define and communicate the added value of AEDC and comprehensive monitoring data relative to the other data available to schools and communities

— *Opportunity 5.* Link the data to action by mapping and communicating the connection between the data and available school and community resources.

Embedding activities in schools

— *Opportunity 6.* Explore the requirements to embed the comprehensive monitoring data directly in schools, particularly through school strategic planning. For example, use by SEILs and incorporation into resources (e.g. Panorama reports) for school strategic planning.

Discussion guide

A

The discussion guide provided to participants in the consultations is presented below.

MOBILISING THE AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT CENSUS: DISCUSSION GUIDE

You are invited to participate in an interview about opportunities to improve use of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data in schools and communities.

ACIL Allen Consulting has been engaged to undertake this research for the Victorian Department of Education and Training (the Department).

AEDC utilisation and dissemination

The AEDC is a nationwide data collection of early childhood development at the time children commence their first year of full-time school. The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and their families by providing evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning.

The Department is supported by the Commonwealth Government to facilitate the collection of AEDC data, achieve a high participation rate, and increase government and community utilisation of the AEDC results.

This engagement

The engagement will identify opportunities and practices that support schools and communities to turn AEDC data into action. It also examines the alignment between the AEDC data with government policy to build understanding of the relevance of data in achieving policy goals. There is a particular interest in the social competence and emotional maturity indicators given limited change over time and the potential impacts of COVID-19.

Why am I being asked to participate in this consultation?

As part of the research, ACIL Allen are undertaking consultations with selected participants to explore the strategic intent of AEDC and opportunities to mobilise action in communities and schools.

You are invited to participate in the consultations to explore the alignment between the AEDC and action in schools, including opportunities targeted by government policy. Areas for discussion are included below to assist in guiding the discussion.

What will the consultation involve?

The consultations will be undertaken with you individually by phone. We expect consultations to last approximately 25-30 minutes.

Who do I contact if I have further questions?

If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Watkin Nolan at the Department of Education and Training at catherine.nolan@edumail.vic.gov.au or Tom Peachey, the Project Manager at ACIL Allen Consulting, at t.peachey@acilallen.com.au.

QUESTIONS

Policy context

1. How have the objectives of the Department in supporting the social and emotional development of students evolved over recent years, such as with the Education State focus?
2. How do you expect it to evolve into the future? Are there particular case studies or events which inform your thinking about what can be achieved longer term?

Data as a population monitoring tool

3. In general (i.e. across development domains), in what ways have schools developed in their use of data for:
   a) individual monitoring?
   b) group / population monitoring?
4. Are there learnings from progress made in these areas of school data use that could be applied to encourage use of AEDC data?
5. Schools may see AEDC data as data point in isolation. In what way/s could the data be contextualised or complemented to better assist schools?

Turning data into action

6. What are the constraints on the actions that schools can take in response to such results?

Opportunities

7. Are there other opportunities for the AEDC to be more influential in supporting student social and emotional development in schools and their communities?