Embedding the AEDC in Tasmanian Early Years evidence-based decision making

Michael Dempsey
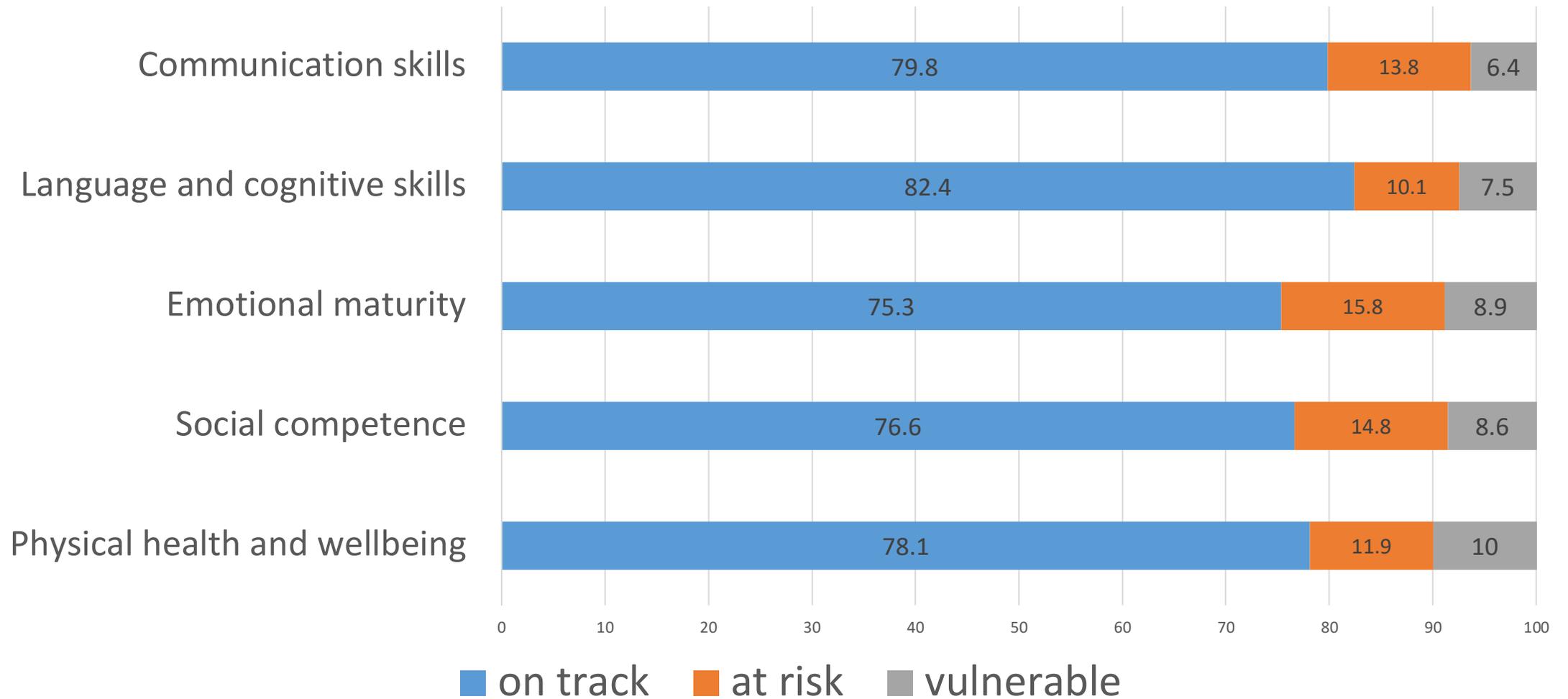
Manager, Early Years Research and Data

Christine Woolley
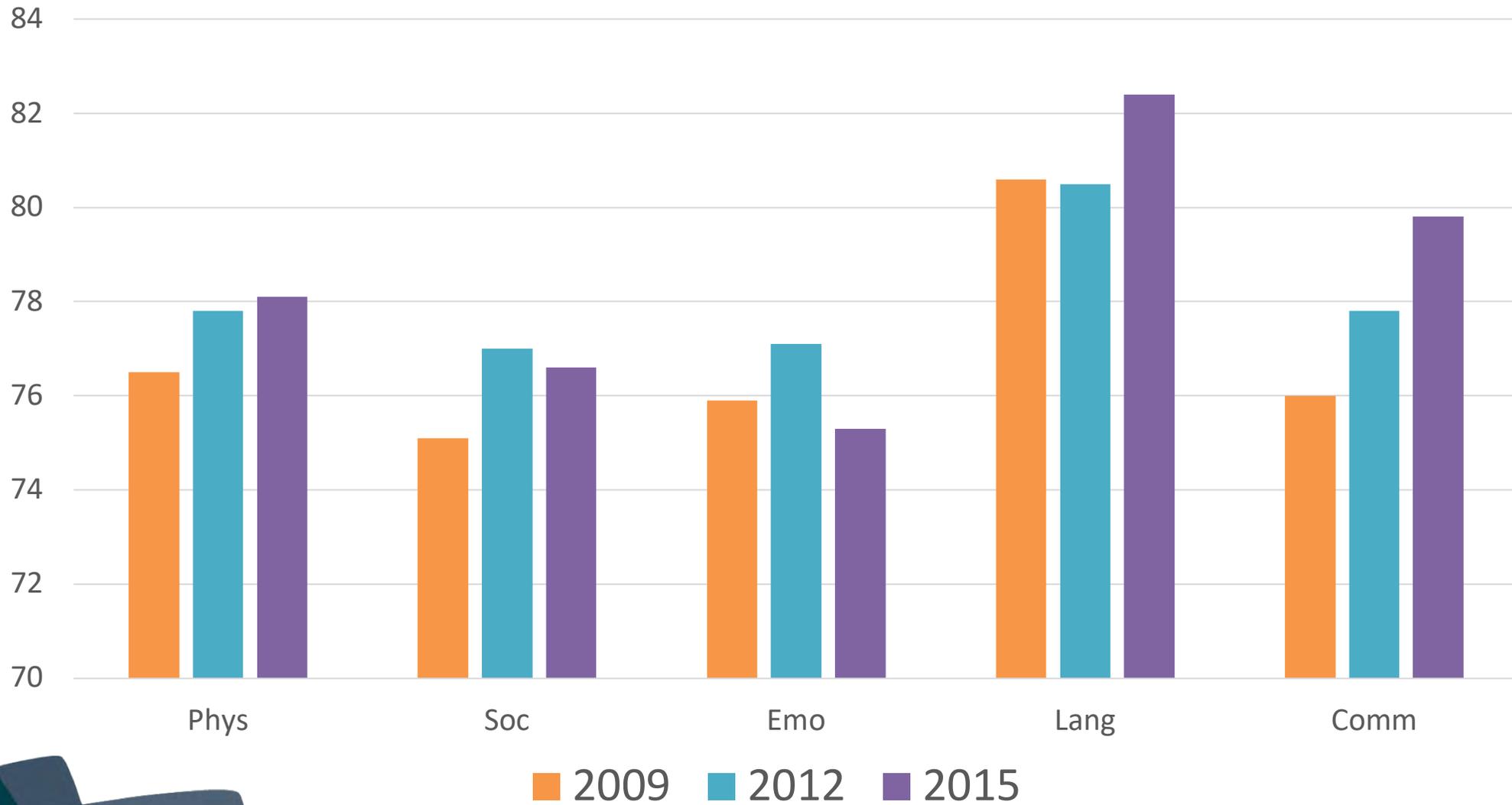
Tasmanian AEDC Co-ordinator

Thursday 15 March 2018

2015 Tasmanian AEDC results

On track - over time

	Phys	Soc	Emo	Lang	Comm
2009	76.5	75.1	75.9	80.6	76.0
2012	77.8	77.0	77.1	80.5	77.8
2015	78.1	76.6	75.3	82.4	79.8

Tasmania compared to Australia

2015 AEDC Results	Tasmania Developmentally vulnerable (%)	Australia Developmentally vulnerable (%)
Physical health and wellbeing	10.0	9.7
Social competence	8.6	9.9
Emotional maturity	8.9	8.4
Language and cognitive skills(school-based)	7.5	6.5
Communication skills and general knowledge.	6.4	8.5
Vulnerable on one or more domains	21.0	22.0
Vulnerable on two or more domains	10.7	11.1

Disadvantage - Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (cumulative)

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
Quintile 1 (most disadvantaged)	21%	16%	17%	24%	12%	31%	26%	1%	18%
Quintile 1 and 2	40%	33%	37%	48%	28%	56%	39%	6%	36%
Quintile 1 to 3	58%	55%	58%	68%	46%	77%	58%	18%	56%
Quintile 1 to 4	76%	79%	79%	87%	70%	91%	78%	43%	77%
Quintile 1 to 5 (least disadvantaged)	100%	100%	99%	100%	96%	100%	95%	98%	99%
Not stated	0.4%	0.3%	1.4%	0.0%	4.4%	0.1%	5.0%	1.8%	1.0%

Tasmanian Early Years programs and initiatives

- Kindergarten (4 years olds) delivered in a school setting for 3 days a week – 100% participation

- Child and Family Centres – 12 centres in our most disadvantaged communities

- Launching into Learning (LiL) is a parental engagement program in Government schools from birth to four years of age

- Learning in Families Together (LIFT) is a parental engagement program in Government schools from Kinder to Year 2

- Tasmania's Strategy for Children- Pregnancy to Eight Years 2018-2021– whole of government strategy for early childhood

- B4 Early Years Coalition– Collective Impact project with early years partners from whole of government level to service providers

- Refocus teaching and learning up to Year 2 using the Early Years Learning Framework

- Working Together for 3 Year Olds Initiative

    *Tas DoE Improvement Strategy – Scan and assess inquiry to drive student outcomes.

Foundations and genesis of project

- 'Why Bother?' for the AEDC communities and schools.

- Need to move from Data Collection to

➜ Data Awareness

➜ Data Utilisation

➜ Local changes

- Develop AEDC 'local champions' with marketing resources

- Build Inquiry (through Action Reflection) capacity

Why 'Action Reflection', and not 'Action Research'?

Deliberate decision because:

- Action Reflection is shorter than Action Research
- "Research is scary" important to acknowledge when building inquiry capacity
- Longer timeframes means more risks that projects won't be completed
- Action Research can be more expensive – so shorter projects with scarce resources can involve more organisations
- Creates quick win ripple effects

Grant preparation and planning

- Information sessions for grants – None held, but organisations were supported if requested to assist with applications

- Grant Expression of Interest (EoI) documentation – distributed to a wide range of providers, who were not always connected to established network

- Collect baseline data on expectations and capacity – none collected initially

- Collect follow up data – not planed for initially

- 29 Expressions of Interest received

- 12 grants funded

- About $460K EoIs received, and funded $185K

To secure funding, the project outcomes are to:

- be based on a demonstration of need (using AEDC data and other supportive evidence)

- show how AEDC has shaped programs for families in the early years

- provide documentation, sharing narratives of the program/s showing the impact for families and their communities in the early years

- increase awareness of the AEDC in local Tasmanian communities

- be universal and/or targeted

- have clear evaluation and reporting processes.

Additionally, project participants must agree to:

- write the project up as a community or school story to be placed on the AEDC website (approximately 500 words);

- be filmed with the possibility of the information being placed on Tasmanian educational websites

- be designated as an AEDC 'local champion'.

Grant quality

- Good analysis of data and local context – data utilisation good

- Solid program design – clear capacity to produce

- Evaluation processes missing/light in applications – is this because of cultural expectations that evaluation is not a priority?

- Good connections with service providers and creating ripple effects

- Feedback from the process – need to build capacity about grant expectations and information sessions held with organisations <u>before</u> program EoIs are called for.

What matters in the 'central' office?

- 'Transparency', 'Risk management' and 'delivering the goods' – public accountability

- Keeping in touch (risk mitigation before projects stall),

- Visit in person – established relationships, this was possible as a small state all were accessible

- Provided coaching if necessary, not micro-managing (they are the experts and is their projects, not ours)

- Specific progress report expectations

A ripple effect for AEDC co-ordinator was to identify strategic networks to meet with for example LGAs, school networks, NGOs, and other sectors

Progress report requirements – accountable and purposeful

- What direct impact on children, families and community or staff have you observed so far? (large and/or small)?

- How has awareness of AEDC data increased within your organisation/ school/community?

- Have you made any changes to the original program/project, if so, why, and what have you learnt through that process?

- Can you see any future challenges in achieving the aims of the project/program? How might you overcome them or do you need any assistance?

Focused on risk mitigation, identify if coaching is needed, and still able to demonstrate results achieved, without report writing being a major focus

And those communities who were not successful in receiving a grant – what did we do?

* Obviously every community can undertake an action reflection project – did we do anything off the side of the desk to support them?

* Feedback and discussion about the process important for next round

* Inform them of other grants available in Tasmania

Learnings

Charismatic energetic leader - selecting the right skills set to connect with organisations

Build capacity in community before applying for grants by:

- Holding regional information forums

- Provide community with list of resources – grant writing tools and additional grant fund sources

- Collect baseline and progress data on project processes and capacity changes

- Survey providers who didn't apply to find out why they didn't submit EoIs – build grant application capacity

- Build capacity about Independent evaluations.

Focus on communication strategy to build momentum toward to wider AEDC and data aims.

Build a learning community with round one participants to sustain their learnings

Strategically share celebration videos and stories in other mediums (written, podcast) to build momentum and utilisation for the AEDC and data inquiry more broadly

AEDC Action Reflection Projects

Franklin Primary School

Tasmanian AEDC Contacts and Resources

Michael Dempsey

Michael.dempsey@education.tas.gov.au

03 6165 5696

Christine Woolley

Christine.j.woolley@education.tas.gov.au

03 6165 5708

Tasmanian AEDC Webpage

https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/assessment-programs/australian-early-development-census-aedc-2/