

The Hive, United Way Australia

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Report 2023

March 2023

This report is a collaborative effort of the Together in 2770 Collective



Executive Summary

Population-level data provides key insights into trends in Mount Druitt that inform The Hive's work.

Increased developmental vulnerability



The number of developmentally vulnerable children in Mount Druitt has increased over the past three years (Australian Early Development Census 2018; 2021).



Analysis suggests that developmental vulnerability increased across the board during the COVID period – but that this was more pronounced in areas with high levels of disadvantage.



Higher developmental vulnerability could mean we need to deepen our support if recipient needs become more acute.

Increase in attendance and quality of Early Childhood and Education Centres (ECECs)



The percentage of children attending preschool in Mount Druitt has increased over the past 5 years (ABS, 2016; 2021). The number of ECECs 'Meeting' or 'Exceeding' the National Quality Standards (NQS) has also increased (ACECQA, 2023).



The Hive has contributed to this by supporting families to remain engaged with ECECs; and ECECs to meet the NQS.



The Hive will continue our Early Learner Linker Program and ECEC Network.

Primary data collected from The Hive and collective programs and interventions in Mount Druitt also provides key insights to inform The Hive's programming decisions.

Consistently high demand for child health checks



The Hive's Check Ups Before School (CUBS) program has seen consistently high demand for child health checks over the course of the program.



CUBS data on referrals offers insights into the types of services most in need in Mount Druitt (e.g. speech pathology, NDIS).



The NSW Government is drawing on data and experience from CUBS to mainstream elements of The Hive's approach in Mount Druitt and elsewhere in NSW.

ECEC staff feel more equipped and connected



The majority of educators agreed that the ECEC Network has improved their knowledge, skills, and made them feel more equipped and connected to other educators.



The Hive supports ECECs in Mount Druitt through its ECEC network, which met or exceeded all annual targets, indicating continued high demand for these services.



The Hive aims to continue our ECEC Network due to the continued high demand and clear impact.

Collaboration partners and service providers are adapting their practice



Collective partners are committed to being part of the Collective and have adapted their practice to meet community needs.



Services are strongly aligning to the 7 'Collective Principles' in their work.



A future focus is improving First Nations participation in the collective leadership.

Community have increased knowledge and trust in, and access to, services



Community has expressed increased knowledge and greater trust in services, and that services are better meeting their needs.



The Hive is working to improve how we collect community feedback in ways that maintain trust with community.



The Hive is continuing to strengthen our approach to data collection and engaging community in this process.

About The Hive

The Hive is the backbone for one of Australia's most established and effective place-based collective impact initiatives, Together in 2770.

Who we are:



The Hive has a goal for all children in Mount Druitt to start school well, with equal opportunity to learn, be healthy and participate in quality community life.

Since 2015, we have been embedded in the Mount Druitt community, helping bring community aspirations to life. Our staff live and work in and around the community and are committed to long-term change. The Hive is part of United Way Australia (UWA).

What we do:

Collaboration and partnership building

- Facilitating collaboration between all stakeholders to drive a shared purpose and 'collective impact'
- Capability building with partners
- Convening working groups on early education and health

Planning and innovation

- Management and incubation of on-the-ground delivery projects
- Project and resource planning

Leadership and advocacy

- Advocating for change at a local, state, federal and sector level
- Leading strategy and securing investment

Learning

- Collecting data, commissioning independent evaluations and leading continuous quality improvement

Our approach is centred in our connection with community:

Sustained change only happens when communities are empowered, and initiatives are driven by what really matters to people.

Our community development informs and drives all our work:



Together in 2770:

The Hive is the backbone organisation for the collective impact initiative, Together In 2770 ('the Collective'). The Collective identifies local priorities, collaborates on innovative solutions and advocates for system-wide change. This initiative is a collaboration of local residents and services in Mount Druitt with a leadership group consisting of: The Hive, BaptistCare HopeStreet, Jesuit Social Services, Salvation Army Greater West, Bidwill Uniting, HIPPY, Blacktown City Council, Connect Child and Family Services, NGROO Education and the Smith Family. Together in 2770 works in close partnership with a wide range of other stakeholders including local schools, ECECs, residents, service providers and businesses that come together with the goal of seeing all children in Mount Druitt start school well.

The purpose of this document

The MEL Report presents key insights from data that The Hive collects and shows how these insights inform our work.

The purpose of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning at The Hive

The MEL Framework and Plan were commissioned by United Way Australia and are intended for The Hive backbone team and our funding and local collaboration partners.

The purpose of The Hive's Measurement, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) is:

- For United Way Australia (The Hive backbone team) and The Hive collaboration (Together in 2770) partners to have real-time data on what is working well and on track; and what adaptations and improvements are needed to create the intended impact.
- For upward accountability to funders of United Way Australia for The Hive.
- For sideways and downwards accountability to collaboration partners and community about the contribution of The Hive to community outcomes.

Content of the MEL Framework

The MEL Framework sets out the data that The Hive will collect on a regular basis, specifying both indicators (what is the change being measured) and sources (where does the evidence come from). This data includes both:

- *Population-level data:* Data that is routinely collected from public sources.
- *Primary data:* Data collected by The Hive and collective partners.

These indicators should not be viewed as performance measures for The Hive. In most cases, The Hive is not accountable in its own right, but is contributing to a broader set of collaborative efforts in a broader system.

The framework specifies 31 indicators, which relate to 10 high-level outcomes (see Data Dashboard). The indicators also map against 5 Influence Domains.

Influence Domains

Child and Family (CF)

Community Mobilisation (CM)

Collective Impact Approach / Systems Change (CIA)

Governance and Advocacy (GA)

Measurement and Evaluation (ME)

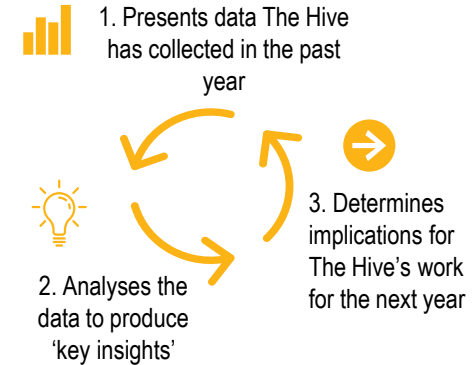
The purpose of this document

The MEL Report presents key insights from the data that The Hive collects during the year and shows how these insights inform our work going forward.

It is produced annually, and is an opportunity to share insights with communities, partners and funders on:

- What is changing in Mount Druitt?
- How is the work of The Hive and our collective partners contributing to that change?
- How can The Hive capture and apply lessons learned from these changes in its future programming?

The MEL Report is produced as part of an annual cycle:



Data in the 2023 report is from reporting period October 2021 – September 2022

MEL Report: Key principles

- *Timeliness:* The Hive seeks to ensure its MEL approach is meaningful and timely, so that partners, funders and communities understand what is changing and why.
- *Accessibility:* The Hive seeks to ensure its MEL approach is culturally inclusive, appropriate, ethical, user-friendly, clear and practical.
- *Mix of quantitative and qualitative data:* The MEL Report draws on a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, seeking to triangulate data wherever possible.
- *Continuous improvement:* We are building up our MEL capacity and capability and refining our approach to data collection and analysis over time. (For example, where it was not possible to collect a particular dataset for the 2023 report, we will consider new sources for 2024).

Data dashboard

Population-level data

The Hive tracks population-level data in Mount Druitt. While The Hive and Collective Partners do not have control over population-level outcomes, this data can provide valuable insights into trends to help inform programming in Mount Druitt.

Outcomes	Indicators	How indicator score was assigned	Data source(s)
All children in Mount Druitt start school well	% of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (CF1)	Whether Mount Druitt improved in comparison to NSW on this indicator during last reporting period	Australian Early Development Census, 2021; 2018, 2021
	Schools say that children are supported by families so that child health and development is improving in suburbs and across the postcode (CF2)	Data not collected during reporting period	Not applicable
	The number of children at risk of significant harm (CF3)	Data not collected during reporting period	Not applicable
Families are thriving	Unemployment rate of families - % of Mount Druitt families not in education or employment compared to state / national average (CF8)	Whether Mount Druitt improved in comparison to NSW on this indicator during last reporting period	Census 2021; 2016
Children have access to high quality early learning in Mount Druitt	% of Mount Druitt ECECs ranked at each level of attainment (CF10)	Whether % of all Mount Druitt ECECs ranked as 'Meeting NQS' or 'Exceeding NQS' increased during last reporting period	ACECQA National Qualification Standards data, 2022; 2021
	Increased number / rate of children attending those ECECs within Mount Druitt (CF6)	Whether % of children in Mount Druitt attending preschool improved in comparison to NSW during last reporting period	Census 2021; 2016 The Hive: New family database (annual data collection)
Mount Druitt is more inclusive and connected	Transport is accessible for community (CM1)	Whether Mount Druitt suburbs improve Accessibility Ranking	(Urban Living Observatory Index) [Assigned score 'No change to data in past 12 months because the Index is new']
	Mount Druitt shows positive economic and livability indicators (CM2)	Whether Mount Druitt suburbs improve Overall Ranking	(Urban Living Observatory Index) [Assigned score 'No change to data in past 12 months because the Index is new']

Key: Indicator has improved since data last collected No change to data since last collected Indicator has declined since data last collected Not applicable/data not collected

Intervention-level data (1)

The Hive also tracks progress against indicators relating to The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions. These indicators provide insights into whether The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions are achieving their outcomes (though in many cases, achievement of indicators is not entirely within The Hive's control).





Outcomes	Indicators	How indicator score was assigned	Data source/s
Children and young people are equipped with the opportunities and resources needed to thrive and succeed (health and education)	Increased number of children receiving their health screenings (CF4)	CUBS data (Number of health checks delivered year on year and number of Aboriginal children receiving health checks) and links (5 variables)	Check Ups Before School program data
	Families [say that they] have greater access to opportunities and resources for their child's development (CF5)	Hive staff assessment of qualitative feedback for this reporting period	Stakeholder survey, Literacy consultations
	Increased number of children are enrolled in early learning (Linker program) (CF6)	Early learner linker (Number of health checks delivered year-on-year and number of Aboriginal children receiving health checks) and links (3 variables)	New family database, Early learner linker dataset
	The number of children who receive a diagnosis and/or support before starting school that would not have otherwise (CF7)	Health Linker dataset (Number of health checks delivered year on-year and number of Aboriginal children receiving a diagnosis) and links (12 variables)	Health Linker dataset
Children have access to high quality early learning in Mount Druitt	% of Mount Druitt ECECs ranked at each level of attainment (subset of ECECs the Hive works with directly) (CF10)	Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority National Quality Standards 2. Proportion of Mount Druitt ECECs with ranked at Exceeding or Meeting (subset The Hive works with)	ACECQA National Qualification Standards data, 2022; 2021
	Teachers and educators change their practice (CF11)	ECEC Network survey (Proportion of respondents who answered 'yes', maintained or increased year-on-year)	ECEC Network survey
	ECEC services improve quantity as a result of skills and knowledge built through Hive ECEC quality program (CF12)	ECEC Network survey (Proportion of respondents who answered 'yes', maintained or increased year-on-year)	ECEC Network survey
	Teachers and educators are more equipped and connected (CF13)	ECEC Network survey (Proportion of respondents who answered 'yes', maintained or increased year-on-year)	ECEC Network survey

Key: Strong evidence of indicator being achieved Some evidence of indicator being achieved No evidence of indicator being achieved Too early to tell (awaiting data)

Intervention-level data (2)

The Hive also tracks progress against indicators relating to The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions. These indicators provide insights into whether The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions are achieving their outcomes (though in many cases, achievement of indicators is not entirely within The Hive's control).

Outcomes	Indicators	How indicator score was assigned	Data source/s
Mount Druitt is more inclusive and connected	Community members within key suburbs say that they have greater trust of services (connected to the Collective) (CM3)	Impact Yarns, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Linger Listen Learn
Community members are taking up opportunities to contribute to and lead community change	Community members report spending more time with others, experiencing less isolation and having a say in what happens in their community (CM4)	Impact Yarns, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Linger Listen Learn
	Community members feel as though they have made a positive difference in their community (CM5)	Impact Yarns, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Linger Listen Learn
	The percentage of backbone, governance and working group members that are local residents (GA3)	Meeting attendance overall and at suburb level	Participation in working group
Services are of high quality, accessible and visible to community members and are strategically designed to support them	Community members say that services are more accessible and that services are better meeting their needs (services within the Collective) (CM6)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, Linger Listen Learn
	Families, community members and stakeholders in Mount Druitt say that they feel included, are connected to each other and supported (CM7)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, Linger Listen Learn
Suburb work is having an impact across the postcode	Community members describe having increased knowledge of services in key suburbs and feel safe to connect with the services (CM8)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, LLL (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Impact Yarns, Stakeholder survey, Linger Listen Learn

Key:  Strong evidence of indicator being achieved  Some evidence of indicator being achieved  No evidence of indicator being achieved  Too early to tell (awaiting data)

Intervention-level data (3)

The Hive also tracks progress against indicators relating to The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions. These indicators provide insights into whether The Hive and Collective Partners programs / interventions are achieving their outcomes (though in many cases, achievement of indicators is not entirely within The Hive's control).

Outcomes	Indicators	How the indicator was sourced	Data source/s
A data driven approach to social innovation and systems change is embedded and thriving in targeted suburbs	Collaboration members and other service providers say they are learning and adapting their practice in response to suburb and postcode work (CIA1)	Stakeholder survey (Improvement year-on-year of proportion of 'yes' responses)	Stakeholder survey
	Resources within the Collective are being allocated to priorities defined by the strategic working groups and priorities arising from community conversations (CIA2)	Stakeholder survey (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Stakeholder survey
	Services are adapting their practice according to shared data and learnings (i.e. Community voice / experience) (CIA3)	Stakeholder survey (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Stakeholder survey
	Number of strategic advocacy activities undertaken by The Hive and collaboration (GA4)	Reflection sessions with collective partners and The Hive team (Mix of qualitative and quantitative, view to understanding number of advocacy activities maintained and/or increased year-on-year)	Reflection sessions with collective partners and The Hive team
	The percentage of advocacy areas that have made changes aligned with the desired changes articulated by families (GA5)	Data not collected during reporting period	Reflection sessions with collective partners and The Hive team
	Suburb work plans are developed and acted upon based on community input (ME1)	Data not collected during reporting period	Reflection sessions with stakeholders
Services are high quality, accessible and visible to community members and are strategically designed to support them	Stakeholders say that services within the Collective and facilitates are of high quality, well integrated and effective (CIA4)	Stakeholder survey (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Stakeholder survey
Together in 2770 has First Nations led governance	First Nations collaboration members say that they feel heard, respected and can meaningfully contribute to change (GA1)	Stakeholder survey (Qualitative, determined by The Hive team if met based on qualitative inputs, themes and analysis)	Stakeholder survey
	The percentage of backbone, governance and working group members who are First Nations (GA2)	Meeting attendance overall and at suburb level	Participating in working group

Key: Strong evidence of indicator being achieved Some evidence of indicator being achieved No evidence of indicator being achieved Too early to tell (awaiting data)

Deep dives

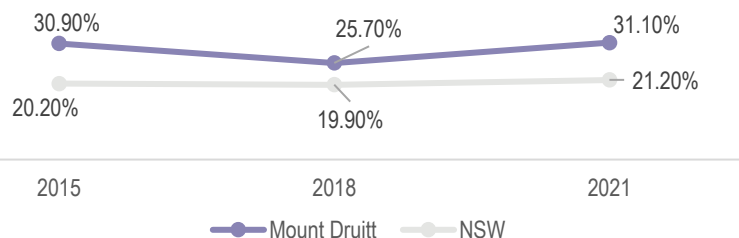
Developmental vulnerability

The percentage of developmentally vulnerable children has increased across NSW – but the increase has been more pronounced in Mount Druiitt. Higher levels of developmental vulnerability shows The Hive’s work on the ground is still needed.

What the data says

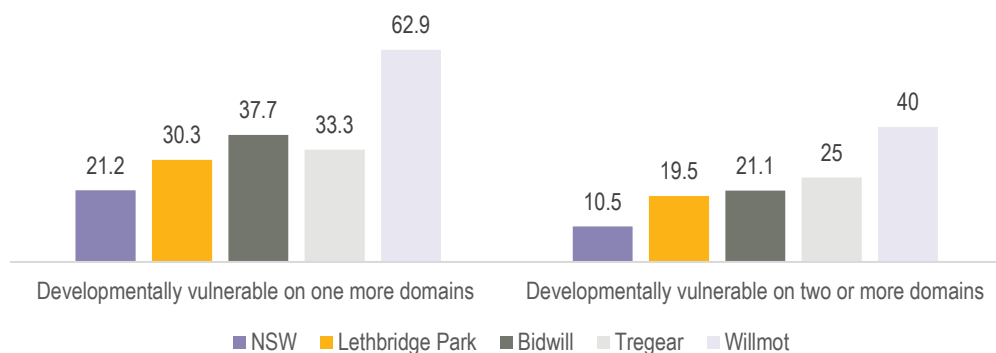
The percentage of children in Mount Druiitt who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains has increased between 2018 and 2021 – and the gap between Mount Druiitt and NSW has also increased.

Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains (Australian Early Development Census, 2015, 2018, 2021)



Suburbs in Mount Druiitt have a higher percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable than NSW. The suburb of Mount Druiitt with the highest percentage of developmentally vulnerable children is Willmot.

Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable (Australian Early Development Census, 2021)



Key insights from data

- The number of children in Mount Druiitt who are developmentally vulnerable in one or more domains has increased since 2018.
 - This trend is also reflected in NSW, but to a lesser extent.
- A greater percentage of children are developmentally vulnerable in the communication domain since 2018 across NSW.
 - This trend was exacerbated in Mount Druiitt.
- Analysis suggests that developmental vulnerability increased across the board during the COVID period – but that this was more pronounced in areas with high levels of disadvantage. This could be because of social isolation during COVID-19 lockdowns, possibly as a result of reduced access to early childhood education and the limits placed on social interaction.
- The percentage of children in 2021 is the highest percentage of children who have been developmentally vulnerable in Mount Druiitt since 2015.**

Implications for The Hive’s work going forward

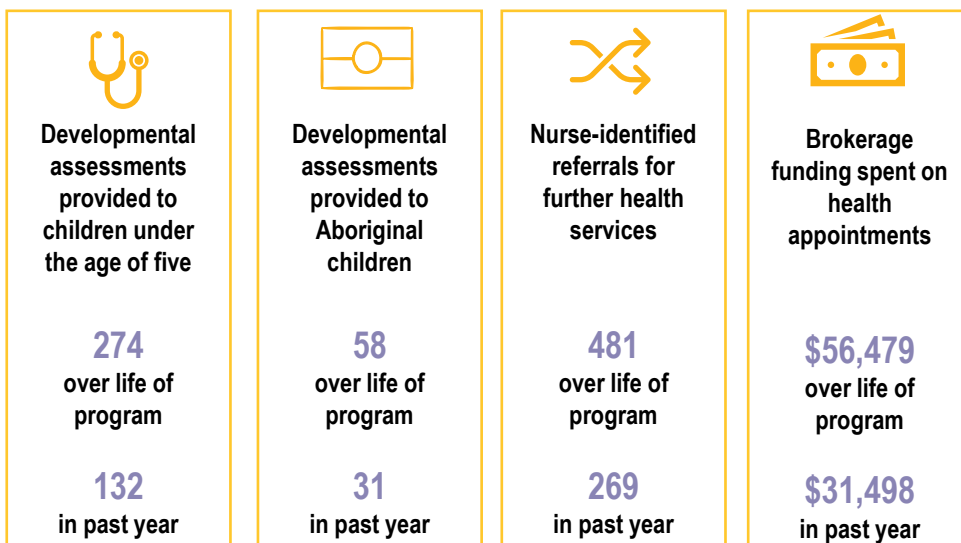
- ✓ This data shows that The Hive’s work continues to be needed, and there may be a need to deepen services if the needs of the children The Hive supports become more acute (e.g. working with ECECs to anticipate supporting children with higher levels of developmental vulnerability; advocating for more locally accessible health services given the likelihood of increased health referrals).
- ✓ The Hive will draw on this data to advocate for broader systems change and increased support for Mount Druiitt, based on these findings.
- ✓ The Hive will consider targeting future interventions to suburbs of increased need, for example given the concentration of developmental vulnerability in Willmot.

Early Years Incubator: Health screenings

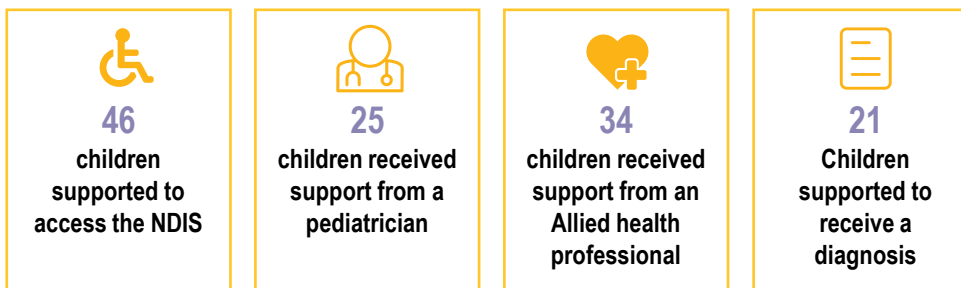
CUBS data has continued to show strong demand for health screenings and proof of concept for The Hive's approach, leading to the NSW government embedding these activities in their own service delivery.

What the data says

Data from CUBS collected since the program's inception shows that it has delivered:



The Hive's Child Health Linker program was developed as a result of learnings from the CUBS program. The Health Linker provides assistance to families to overcome barriers and navigate the health system. In the past year, the Health Linker has enabled children to be connected to the following services:



Key insights from data

- The Check Ups Before School (CUBS) program has enabled hundreds of children in Mount Druitt to receive developmental assessments at their early learning centre, with the goal of ensuring they start school well.
- The level of demand for CUBS health checks have exceeded The Hive's annual targets, remaining consistently strong throughout the program's history.
- The data that The Hive collects on the referrals that are received during health checks provides insights into demand for other health services in Mount Druitt (for example, high levels of demand for NDIS, pediatrics and speech pathology).

Implications for The Hive's work going forward:

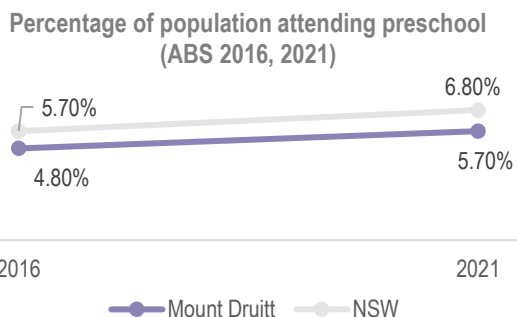
- ✓ Through three years of delivering CUBS, The Hive has confirmed the program's ongoing hypotheses that there is significant unmet need for developmental assessments in the Mount Druitt community, that there is significant demand for the CUBS program and a flexible, equitable and place-based approach to accessing health services.
- ✓ The Hive has continued to iterate its approach in response to lessons learned (e.g. moving to a multi-disciplinary team approach (with a Nurse, a Speech Pathologist, and a Health Linker)).
- ✓ Given the sustained demand, elements of the CUBS program are currently being mainstreamed into NSW Health in consultation with The Hive. The NSW Government is also drawing from evidence from CUBS to roll out embedded health checks in other parts of NSW under the NSW government initiative, Brighter Beginnings.
- ✓ Going forward, The Hive will play a supportive role (i.e. brokering of relationships with ECECs).

ECEC enrolment and quality

Population-level data shows that the percentage of children attending preschool in Mount Druitt has increased; and more ECECs are 'meeting' or 'exceeding' the National Quality Standards (NQS).

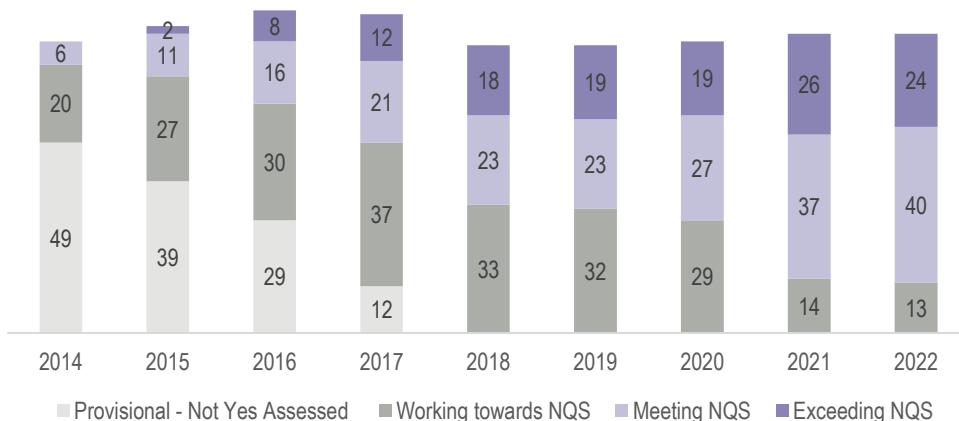
What the data says

According to Census data, the percentage of the population attending preschool in Mount Druitt increased between 2016 and 2021.



The number of ECECs 'Meeting' or 'Exceeding' the NQS in the 2770 postcode has steadily increased in recent years, and the number 'Working towards' the NQS has dropped.

Number of ECECs ranked at each level of attainment of the National Quality Standards (NQS) in Mount Druitt



Key insights from data

- The overall percentage of children in Mount Druitt attending preschool has increased from 2016 to 2021 (though at a slightly lower rate than NSW).
- The number of ECECs across Mount Druitt that are 'Meeting' or 'Exceeding' ACECQA's National Quality Standards (NQSs) has significantly increased – indicating that overall ECEC quality is improving in Mount Druitt.
- While The Hive and Collective partners are not accountable for changes in data at the population level, The Hive has contributed directly to improvements in ECEC and quality enrolment data through its programs:
 - The Early Learning Linker program supports families to enrol and remain engaged with ECECs in the Mount Druitt area and surrounds.
 - The ECEC Network supports ECECs in Mount Druitt to improve quality (see next page).
 - Over the past year, The Hive's Early Learning Linker has provided direct support on strengthening quality to two centres that have since received a status improvement.

Implications for The Hive's work going forward:

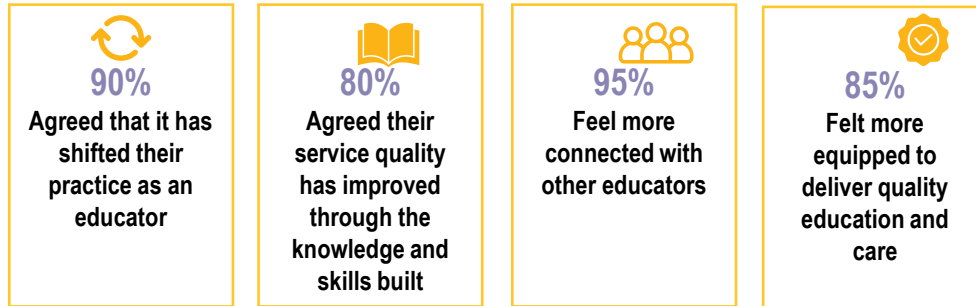
- ✓ Higher levels of enrolment and increasing quality of ECEC mean that The Hive is delivering its programs against an improving baseline. The Hive will take this overall baseline into account in considering design, delivery and evaluation of its programs.
- ✓ Continuing to deliver the Early Learner Linker Program and ECEC Network will be important to ensure improvements are sustained.
- ✓ Given the success of the ECEC Network and the improved ECEC ratings, The Hive will consider how it communicates these improvements to the community and how it communicates the effectiveness of this approach for the purpose of advocacy work.

The role and impact of the ECEC Network

The Hive’s primary data shows demand for the support we provide through the ECEC Network remains high and is having an impact on educators practice and the delivery of quality education and care.

What the data says

The Hive’s 2022 survey of educators engaged with the ECEC Network found the following:



The Hive exceeded its annual targets for services / educators engaged in the network – indicating strong demand:

The Hive was able to provide targeted support to address additional needs identified by ECEC staff:

	Target	Result
Educator’s Network sessions held	5	5
Additional PD sessions	20	20
Services participating	20	26
Teachers and educators attending	97	131

ECEC staff were not aware of where to direct families in need of additional support, so The Hive invited the Department of Education and NDIS to share information which helped educators to support children and families.

To overcome access barriers for early intervention support, The Hive trained 13 local educators, across 3 centres as ‘linkers’. This training helped educators connect families with early intervention pathways and better support families.

Key insights from data

- The Hive targeted their support to ECECs to address community need.
- The vast majority of ECECs educators agreed that the ECEC Network has improved their practice, made them feel more equipped to deliver quality care and education and feel more connected to other educators.
- The number of educators engaged in the ECEC Network has increased from 97 to 131. This has ensured that training is not just being delivered to one individual at each centre but is being shared across centres.
- The Hive has exceeded its annual target for the number of services participating in the ECEC Network and delivered on its targets for the number of educator ECEC Network Sessions and the number of additional professional development opportunities.
 - This indicates that demand for the services provided by the ECEC Network remains high.

Implications for The Hive’s work going forward:

- ✓ The Hive will continue the ECEC Network due to the high demand and impact it is having on teachers, educators and ECECs in Mount Druitt.
- ✓ The Hive aims to scale up the ECEC Network to engage all centres in Mount Druitt in the network, with a focus on those who are not currently meeting the National Quality Standards.
- ✓ The Hive aims to expand our bespoke and targeted approach to professional development, based on stakeholder survey feedback, as well as continuing to focus on upskilling of centres with specific needs, or those who require targeted support in meeting the criteria for assessment in the coming year.

Collaboration

The Hive's Stakeholder Survey showed that collaboration partners value being part of the Collective*, and are delivering in line with Collective principles. Going forward, The Hive's focus is on improving First Nations participation in Collective leadership.

What the data says

The Hive's Stakeholder Survey indicated partners' attitudes towards the Collective:

84%

Believe their organisation's work is dependent on being part of the Collective 'Together in 2770'

67%

Believe their organisation allocates resources as a result of priorities defined by the Collective

Qualitative survey responses revealed how partners are adapting to better meet community needs, guided by the Collectives' seven key principles:

We are place-based

"We advocate and coordinate for other services to offer **place-based** support."

"We are **place-based**, present and embed ourselves across the existing ecosystem of community."

We are community-led and relationship based

"We are **relational** and utilise **community engagement** practices to build trust with residents."

"Asking **community** what they want to see."

We are holistic and strengths-based

"We use **equity funding** to reduce costs, or fully fund activities and programs to ensure children's access to educational experiences is not impacted by financial disadvantage. Our staff are trained in **trauma informed practice** and... Aboriginal Education policy, history and culture to improve knowledge and capacity to create **culturally safe** classrooms and a more **welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment**."

We are collaborative

"We have capacity to offer **flexible hours of support** when needed, to ensure that we can be **responsive, adaptable and consistent to needs and concerns**."

"We try to be at most community events, near the school, meet in homes, **spend time in the community, flexible with working hours** [and] allow for children to be involved in family meetings."

We use an Ecological Framework (for a child to thrive, their whole environment needs to thrive)

"We have designed new facilities to address **gaps in access** for our community in the local area, including our playground, library and yarning circle. We adopt a **place-based** approach to planning and innovation, involving parents and students in decision making."

"We provide **taxi pick up and drop off** so our families can attend group gatherings and excursions. We provide **childcare** at all of our events."



Key insights from data

- The Hive's Stakeholder Survey was run in March and October 2022, and received 10 responses in March and 18 in October. All respondents were members of the Collective (either workers with a Collective organisation, or community volunteers).
- Results from the Stakeholder Survey show that the majority of organisations believe their work is dependent on being part of the Collective and allocate resources according to Collective priorities.
 - This approach in Mount Druitt is still relatively new, with the 'Together in 2770' Collective having been formed in 2016.
 - This data indicates that organisations believe the approach is working well.
- The shared 'Collective Principles' (e.g., 'we are place-based', 'we are relationship based etc) were developed over the past 18 months by the Collaboration's governance group.
 - Qualitative survey responses showed how services are aligning to these principles in their work.



Implications for The Hive's work going forward:

- ✓ The Hive will continue to test attitudes toward the Collective over time as the approach continues to mature.
- ✓ The Hive will continue providing backbone services to the Collective, strengthening and deepening its operations in Mount Druitt (including improving First Nations participation in leadership of the Collective).
- ✓ It is key The Hive and partner organisations are delivering in line with the Collective principles, to ensure services in Mount Druitt are coordinated and responsive to the needs of community.

*For more information on the 'Together in 2770' Collective, see page 2.

Community and Services

Through its 'impact yarns' and 'linger, listen, learn' activities, The Collective has emerging evidence of community members expressing increased knowledge, access and trust in services in key suburbs. The Hive is committed to continually improving how it gathers perspectives from the Mount Druitt community.

What the data says

Through its listening activities (Impact Yarns and Linger, Listen, Learn), The Hive has captured qualitative data indicating that members of the Mount Druitt community derive benefit from The Hive and the 'Together in 2770' Collective:

Families, community members and stakeholders in Mount Druitt say that they feel included, are connected to each other and supported (CM7)

"I think they knew I was looking for companionship outside of my home, and other people to connect with."

"It has made me feel more confident. Like I belong and I fit into my community."

Community members within key suburbs say that they have greater trust of services (connected to the Collective) (CM3)

"There have been big changes (in my suburb). When I can I love to go to the Salvos, to the Letho meetings, attending the coffee program. It's helped me attend more things and I've met more people like Josh and Lorelle (Salvos)."

"I can't recommend them enough. They're lovely people, they're compassionate, and they really have the ability to help you, but if they can't they'll find someone to help you."

Community members say that services are more accessible and that services are better meeting their needs (services within the Collective) (CM6)

"(Before the Hive/Collective was here) They didn't really have things going on. There weren't activities for kids before. It is hard to remember what it was like before."



Key insights from data

- Some qualitative evidence collected from community members indicates that key indicators are being achieved:
 - Families, community members and stakeholders in Mount Druitt say that they feel included, are connected to each other and supported.
 - Community members within key suburbs say that they have greater trust of services (connected to the Collective).
 - Community members say that services are more accessible and that services are better meeting their needs (services within the Collective).



Implications for The Hive's work going forward:

- ✓ Evidence is captured from The Hive's direct engagements with members of the Mount Druitt community through activities such as 'Impact Yarns' and 'Linger, Listen, Learn'. These provide qualitative data for The Hive to feed into our programming.
- ✓ The Hive understands the value of quantitative data collection. However, we are also mindful of the risk of over-surveying the Mount Druitt community and for this reason choose Impact Yarns to receive feedback through open conversation with the community who we have built trusted relationships with. However, this approach does make collecting a larger number of responses from community and services more challenging.
- ✓ The Hive is committed to continuous improvement in monitoring, evaluation and learning, and will continue to consider how best to strengthen data collection without increasing the burden on community (including, for example, undertaking streamlined data collection together with other organisations and finding new ways to undertake analysis of qualitative data).

Advocacy outcomes

Across all of our activities, The Hive has been able to take what we have learned in Mount Druitt through programming and data collection and use it to successfully advocate for broader changes.

Transitioning CUBS into Health (plus Brighter Beginnings announcement)

What was the problem? There was a need for accessible developmental assessments for children in Mount Druitt to ensure they start school well, given many children were failing to get their blue book checks.

How did The Hive advocate for change? The Hive developed CUBS as a pilot with the goal of embedding the model into mainstream service delivery. We collaborated with NSW Health with this intention and enlisted Western Sydney University to conduct an evaluation to show program effectiveness. This data, and internal program data, supported strategic conversations with NSW Health to discuss the possibility of embedding the program into Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) service delivery. We also launched our 'Insight Series' papers, one of which was about the CUBS Program. Senior NSW Health representatives and Minister for Early Education Sarah Mitchell attended and acknowledged the CUBS Program in the Brighter Beginnings roll out, which will embed nurses in preschool settings in other parts of NSW to increase blue book checks before starting school.

What was the outcome? At the end of 2022, WSLHD took over operating CUBS with the hope of integrating other specialist services into the program such as occupational therapy & audiometry and introducing the program to new preschools.

Willmot Paediatrician Clinic

What was the problem? Willmot has the highest percentage of developmentally vulnerable children in Mount Druitt. This results in widespread developmental delays, compounded by barriers to access to paediatric assessments due to long waitlists, fear of services, and transport and financial barriers.

How did The Hive advocate for change? The Willmot Collective expressed the need for a place-based paediatrician in Willmot. The Hive were directed to the Director for Paediatrics in WSLHD and reached out to request a collaboration. The Hive held a workshop with Mount Druitt/Blacktown Hospital Paediatricians and members of the Willmot Collective to gather data on the number of children requiring diagnostic assessments and the current support provided by individual services, including the Hive Health Linker & CUBS data.

What was the outcome? We completed a grant application and received interim funding for a pilot of the paediatric outreach model. The Willmot Community Hub launched in early 2023. Funding has been granted until June while we await the outcome of the grant or demonstrate the necessity for the clinic's continuation.

'Equity in Early Ed' at Blacktown City Council

What was the problem? There was a need to ensure early childhood education and care was more accessible in Mount Druitt.

How did The Hive advocate for change? The Hive has led an advocacy working group of collective partners since 2019, called Equity in Early Ed. It advocates for changes to the Blacktown City Council (BCC) Kids' Early Learning (KEL) centres to make early childhood education more accessible. We provided data and stories for BCC from the Early Learning Linker program and on the developmental vulnerability of children in Mount Druitt to argue that BCC needed to improve their practices. In the last year, the group worked with the UWA CEO and senior leaders from Jesuit Social Services, The Smith Family and Connect Child and Family Services to request a meeting with BCC staff.

What was the outcome? The meeting occurred in November 2022 with the Children Services Manager and Head of City Living. We learned more about how Council operates in the space and why they have been unwilling to set a precedent for Mount Druitt KELs. The Council responded positively to the request for a Linker for the Willmot KEL and started seeking approvals for this role as a 'pilot' initiative.

ECEC Network

What was the problem? A number of ECECs in Mount Druitt were not meeting the National Quality Standards and needed additional support.

How did The Hive advocate for change? Through the growing relationships in the ECEC Network, we worked alongside 3 different services who were 'working towards' the National Quality Standards. We provided coaching, support and advice to these services during their assessment process. The Network has also focused on the importance of linking children to allied health services.

What was the outcome? All 3 of those centres have now moved to 'meeting' the national quality standards. One is now engaging a speech therapist to come into their centre and work directly with children. The Hive also provided coaching regarding their educational program, which they have now applied. The ECEC Network has continued to grow and is bringing in not just early childhood educators, but other early childhood practitioners within the broader system. Regular participants in the network now include representatives from the KEYS Network, KU Inclusion Support and Life Start playgroup, as well as Blacktown City Council children's services.