

# Key Stats Snapshot 3: Demographics of Children and Young People with Disability



Demographic data can help build a clear picture of who children and young people with disability in Australia are.

It includes information on the population, like how many disabled children and young people live in Australia, what type of disability they have, the kind of everyday help they need, and what their family situations look like.

## Disability prevalence and status

There are more than 946,000 people with disability aged 24 or under in Australia, with rates steadily growing since 2015. Of everyone in that age range:



**More than one in 10** have disability (12.1%)



**One in sixteen** have a profound or severe disability



**68%** need help with everyday activities

Disability is more common in:



**Boys and young men** (13.7%)



**Young people between 15 and 24** (13.9%)

Autism is ten times more common among those under 25 than in older generations.

## Disability types

People aged 24 or under have many different types of disability, with rates increasing since 2018.



**6.6%** have learning and understanding disability



**5.7%** have psychosocial disability



**4%** have physical disability

This also differs by gender and age.



**Boys and young men are more likely** to have learning and understanding or sensory and speech disability



**Young people aged 15 to 24** are more likely to have psychosocial or physical disability

## Co-existing disability

Having multiple disabilities is more common among people aged 24 or under with disability than it was in 2018.

**2+** **51.6%** have two or more disabilities

**3+** **27.7%** have three or more disabilities


Rates of co-existing disability are almost twice as high for people aged 24 or under with profound or severe disability (70.8%) as those with moderate or mild disability (38.6%)

## Need for assistance


More than 641,000 – or one in two – children and young people aged 24 or under need help with at least one activity. Of these:

 **Nine in 10** receive some form of support (89.9%)

 **Six in 10** say they need more help (61.7%)

 **3%** say they do not get any help

Top areas for support include:

 **Cognitive or emotional tasks (52.8%)**

 **Mobility (33.7%)**

 **Verbal communication (31.6%)**


The following groups are more likely to need assistance:

 **Boys and young men (71.5%)**

 **Children aged 0-14 (70.9%)**

## Family and carer characteristics


Nearly 700,000 families have at least one child or young person with disability aged 24 or under, an increase of 200,000 since 2018. Of these:

 **One in five** have more than one child or young person with disability

 **60.5%** are couple-parent families

 **29.8%** are one-parent families

For young people with disability aged 15 to 24:

 **Nearly one in four** live in other family types, like with a partner or alone

 **Two in five** are also likely to have a parent with disability

There are also three million carers in Australia



**1.2 million** are primary carers



**Nearly half** have disability themselves



**391,300** are aged 24 or under

## Intersectional experiences

Nearly 67,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged five to 20 have reported disability. Of these:



**Six in 10** have learning and understanding disability



**Four in 10** have psychosocial disability



**One in four** have either sensory/speech disability, or physical disability

The LGBTIQ+ population is young, with six in ten (59.4%) aged between 16-34. Also:



**Nearly one in 20** people with disability identify as LGBTIQ+



**One in three** LGBTIQ+ people report a disability

## Data gaps remain

We need better ways to connect different datasets to understand disability over the lifespan.

This is because data is collected in different ways. For example, some sources let people self-identify disability, while others use fixed categories.

Gender, sex and race also impact representation. Girls with disability can be incorrectly or underdiagnosed, while diverse communities may define or view disability differently.



## Find out more

Explore CYDA's full Key Statistics Report for more in-depth data, analysis, and sources.

<https://cyda.org.au/key-statistics/>