



Community Hubs Australia

Social return on investment evaluation of the
National Community Hubs Program, 2023

March 2024

Contents

Section	Page
0. Executive Summary.....	3
1. Background, Purpose, and Approach.....	11
2. The social return on investment of the NCHP.....	15
2.1. Engagement.....	20
2.1.1 The value of increased confidence, social participation, engagement, and connections	21
2.1.2 Value of contributions to hub program delivery and in-school activities	23
2.1.3 Value of school-based activities and initiatives that contribute to cultural inclusion in schools.....	24
2.1.4 Value of outcomes due to improved access to supports for families.....	25
2.2. Early childhood.....	26
2.2.1 Value of improved educational engagement.....	27
2.2.2 Value of reduced need for intensive learning intervention.....	28
2.2.3 Value of family participation and engagement in school activities and the school community.....	29
2.3. English.....	30
2.3.1 Value of increased confidence due to English.....	31
2.4. Vocational pathways.....	33
2.4.1 Value of external paid employment that would be forgone had the hub not existed.....	34
3.0. Conclusion.....	36
4.0. Appendices.....	38
5.0. End notes and references.....	54



Executive Summary | Introduction

This report aims to highlight the impact of the National Community Hubs Program on local communities throughout Australia by estimating the social return on investment of the program in 2023.

Background on the National Community Hubs Program

The National Community Hubs Program (NCHP) is delivered by Community Hubs Australia (CHA) in partnership with local schools across New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria. The program aims to engage and support culturally diverse families who are at risk of limited access to education and services and have limited opportunities for economic independence, and to provide them with the skills and connections to better integrate with, and succeed within, their communities.

The program was first established in 2013 and has grown to support 14,061 families across 100 different hubs in 2023. The NCHP supports families through a range of activities, including through the provision of formal and informal English language classes, playgroups and early education supports, skill development activities, support for people to volunteer and access education, and the provision of a space for people to make friends and engage in their local communities.

Purpose of the report

CHA engaged Deloitte Access Economics to undertake a comprehensive social return on investment (SROI) evaluation of the NCHP in 2023. This evaluation serves as an update to the [2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP](#), undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics in 2021.

Specifically, the SROI evaluation focuses on the impact of the NCHP across four pillars:

- **Engagement:** supporting families to connect and engage with their community.
- **Early childhood:** supporting learning and development of children and preparing children for school.
- **English language:** supporting culturally diverse families to learn and practise English.
- **Vocational pathways:** supporting families to find employment through the development of pathways through volunteering and access to formal and informal training opportunities.

Methodology

This evaluation followed the SROI framework developed by Deloitte Access Economics and CHA in 2021 and updated as part of the Data Collection Strategy Options report, delivered in 2022. This framework provides detailed guidance on how to measure the social impact of the NCHP across the four pillars, including required data collection and measurement approaches.

This SROI evaluation was undertaken using quantitative and qualitative evidence to identify the net social benefit of the NCHP. Data sources used to estimate the net social benefit include:

- **2023 Hub Census:** a census of hub participants over a one-week period in August 2023.
- **English and Childminding evaluation data:** activity and outcomes data related to formal and informal English language programs delivered at community hubs.
- **Hub Portal activity data:** data on hub activities, referrals to external services and the number of families attending hubs, jobs secured and volunteers supporting the hub.
- **Secondary data:** data sourced from Government statistics websites and the 2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP.

Net social benefits that could be monetised were then compared to total program costs (both financial and in-kind contributions) to identify the extent to which the NCHP program had produced a positive social impact in 2023.

Box E.1: What is an SROI evaluation?

A SROI is an analysis to measure the broad social benefits of a program in monetary terms relative to the investment required to deliver the program. A SROI goes beyond financial impacts and includes the measurement of impacts from a social perspective, including impacts that do not result in direct financial benefits.

Executive Summary | The social return on investment of the NCHP

In 2023, the NCHP provided \$65.7 million in social benefits to Australia. This equates to a social return of \$3.5 for every \$1 invested in the program.

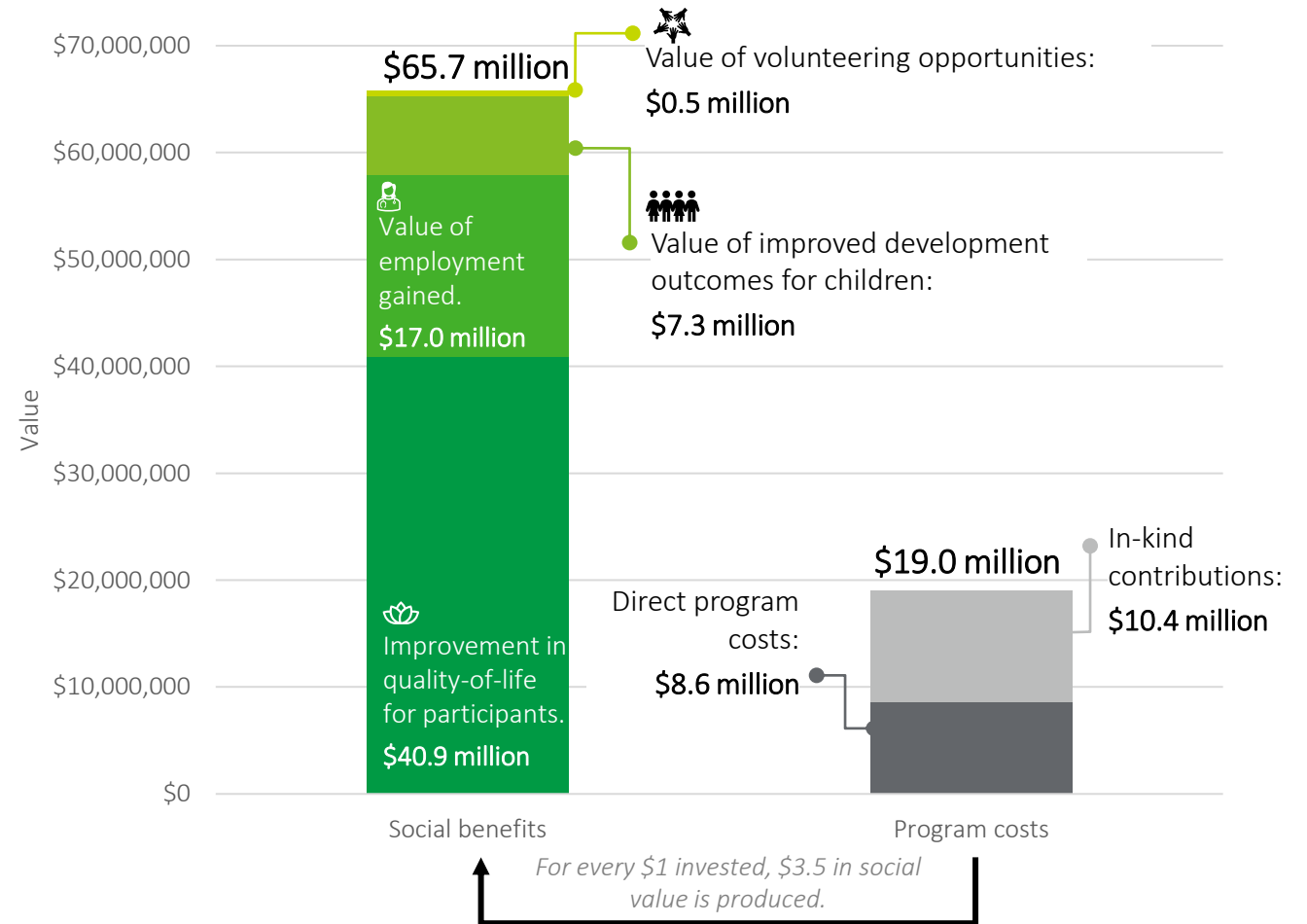
The social return on investment of the NCHP

This evaluation estimates that the NCHP delivered benefits of \$65.7 million to the Australian society in 2023. As the NCHP was delivered with resources valued at \$19.0 million (including direct program costs and in-kind contributions), it is estimated that the program had a SROI of 3.5 in 2023 (Chart E.1). The social impact of the NCHP can be broken down by the following categories:

- **Improvements in quality-of-life for participants:** Through improvements in social connections, access to services and improved confidence and skills, hubs contributed to improved social cohesion and the quality-of-life of participants, valued at \$40.9 million in 2023 (62.2% of total social impact).
- **Value of employment gained by participants:** Hub activities supported participants to find 422 jobs in 2023, generating \$17.0 million in social benefits (25.9% of total social impact).
- **Value of improved development outcomes for children:** The program provided children with access to playgroup, child health nurses and other development supports, generating \$7.3 million in social benefits in 2023 (11.1% of social impact).
- **Value of volunteering opportunities:** Hubs provided 43,236 hours of volunteering opportunities to people throughout the community, generating social benefits of \$0.5 million (0.7% of total social impact).

The social benefits generated by the NCHP is made possible by the significant in-kind contributions of communities. Approximately 55% of the estimated cost of delivering the program is attributable to in-kind contributions, such as volunteering, free services provided in hubs, and school contributions. This highlights the strong community partnership model of the program and how it can generate significant benefits to society.

Chart E.1: Net social benefits and costs of the NCHP in 2023



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024)

Notes: Individual categories may not add to total due to rounding.

Executive Summary | SROI of the NCHP by State

Across states, the SROI ratios of the NCHP varied from \$2.9 to \$3.8 in 2023. This variation does not reflect differences in the quality of hubs but reflects how many families access them, which may be dependent on the population density of the regions where they are located.

SROI of the NCHP by state

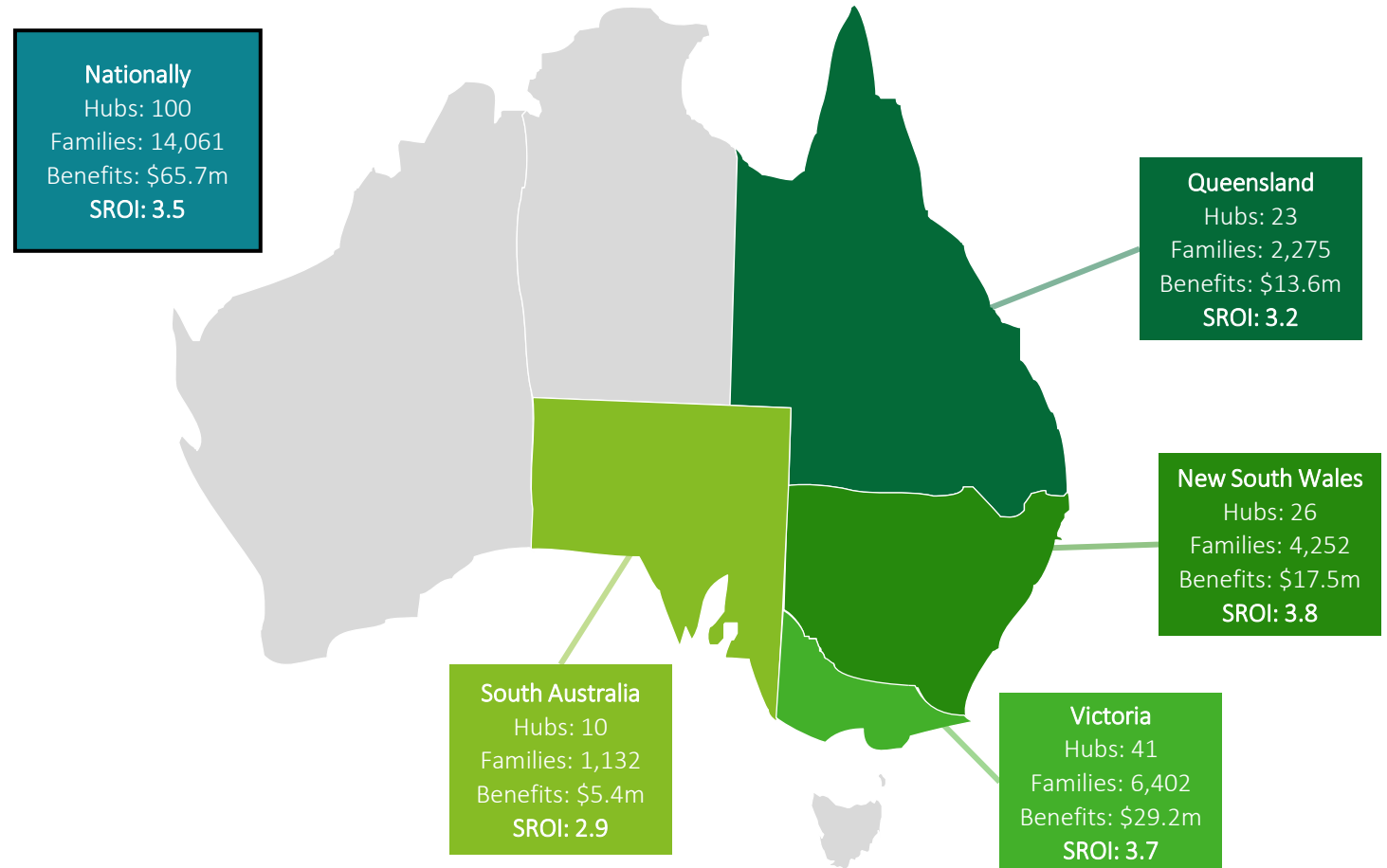
The SROI of the NCHP is disaggregated by state, to show the broad-based impact that the program had in 2023, across Australia.

The SROI ratio of the NCHP in 2023 varied from \$2.9 to \$3.8 across states, per \$1 invested in the program (Figure E.1). This variation is due to differences in the number of families accessing hubs across the states.

For example, when compared to other states, hubs in New South Wales reached the largest number of families on a per-hub basis, providing services to an average of 163 families per hub. In comparison, hubs in South Australia reached an average of approximately 113 families per hub. This difference in the number of families accessing each hub results in New South Wales hubs being able to generate a higher level of social benefits relative to their cost base (in comparison to South Australian hubs).

The causes of the differences in access to hubs across states were not in scope for this evaluation, but a likely explanation is the variation in the size of populations that live near the hubs in different states (i.e., population density).

Figure E.1: Net social benefits and costs of the NCHP in 2023, by state



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024)

Executive Summary | Engagement

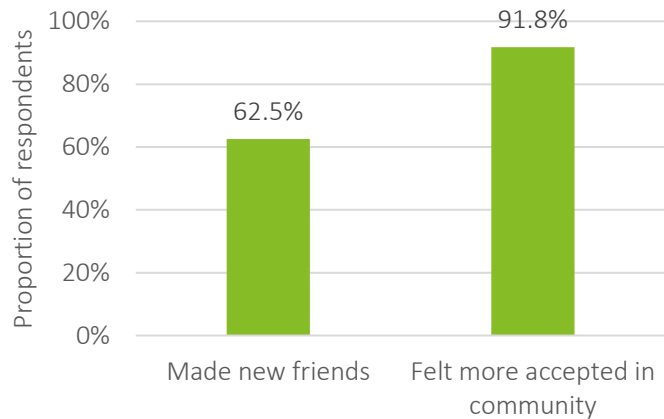
Community hubs had a significant impact on the quality-of-life of culturally diverse families in 2023 by supporting them to feel engaged in their community.

This evaluation found that community hubs made a significant contribution to improved feelings of belonging and engagement in communities for those that participated, generating a monetisable improvement in quality-of-life. Hubs facilitate social connections through their open door and place-based delivery approach and an array of group activities. Through the 2023 Hub Census, most respondents identified that they felt more accepted in their communities (91.8%) and had made new friends (62.5%) due to their engagement with community hubs. Further, hubs provided opportunities for people to engage in volunteering activities, helping hub participants to develop new skills and generate valuable services that provide benefits to the community. This all leads to a tangible improvement in quality-of-life of hub participants which is a direct result of hub participation.

Reduced social isolation and improved community connections

Results from the 2023 Hub Census showed that, since coming to hubs, **62.5% of respondents reported making new friends** that they feel they can talk to, while **91.8% reported feeling more accepted in their communities**.

Chart E.2. Reported outcomes by respondents due to participating in community hubs



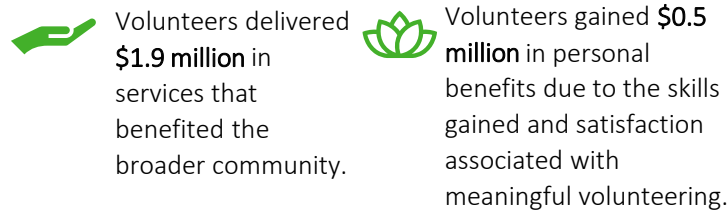
Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census.

Facilitated opportunities to volunteer that benefit broader society

Figure E.2. The impact of volunteering at hubs
Hubs supported community members to volunteer 43,236 hours in 2023:



This led to significant personal benefits generated for the broader community.

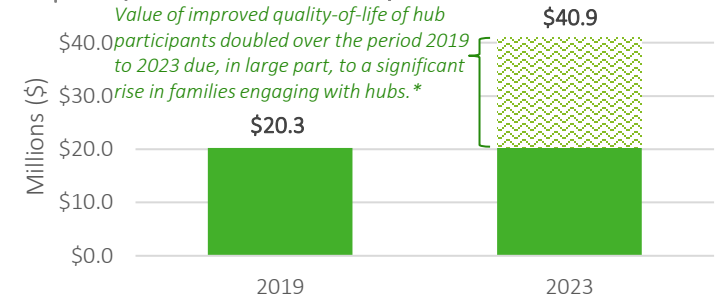


Source: Deloitte Access Economics estimates using Hub Portal activity data.

Improved quality-of-life of participants

This evaluation finds that **community hubs contributed to a 1.1 percentage point improvement in the quality-of-life of adult hub participants in 2023, valued at \$2,007 per participant (totaling \$40.9 million across all hubs)**. This benefit is driven by a range of factors, including improved social connections, improved skills and improved access to services within their community.

Chart E.3. The value of quality-of-life improvements associated with participation at the community in 2019 and 2023



Notes: See Appendix for notes on calculations of this benefit. *Changes in social benefits of the NCHP between 2019 and 2023 are caused by a range of factors, including inflation, slight methodological changes and changes in activity. Therefore, any comparison should be treated with caution.

Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census and 2019 NCHP SROI evaluation.

Executive Summary | Early childhood

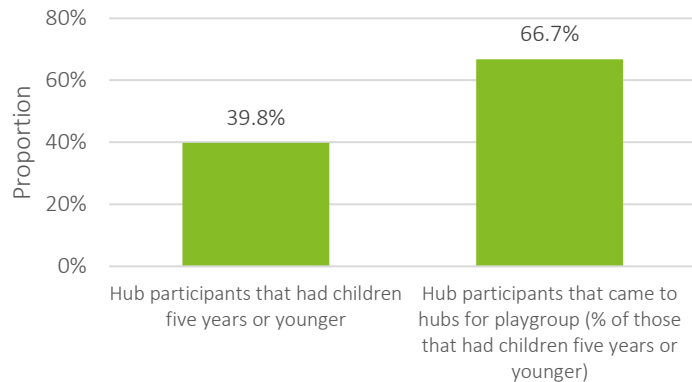
Community hubs improved educational outcomes for children through providing access to playgroups and supporting improved parent engagement in early education.

Child development is a key focus of community hubs throughout Australia. In 2023, 85.3% of census respondents with children aged five years or younger brought their children to the hub. Community hubs assist a child’s development through several pathways. First, hubs deliver playgroups and other services, which have been shown to support the physical, cognitive, and social development of participating children, and improve their school readiness. Hubs also impact a parent’s ability to support their child’s education, including through improved English competency and awareness of the school. Finally, hubs provide important access to support for families through services provided at hubs, and referrals to services such as child health and early intervention. Together, **hub activities are estimated to have contributed to an improvement in outcomes and reduced developmental delays for children participating in hubs, valued at \$7.3 million in 2023.**

Hubs provide access to early childhood programs for culturally diverse families with children

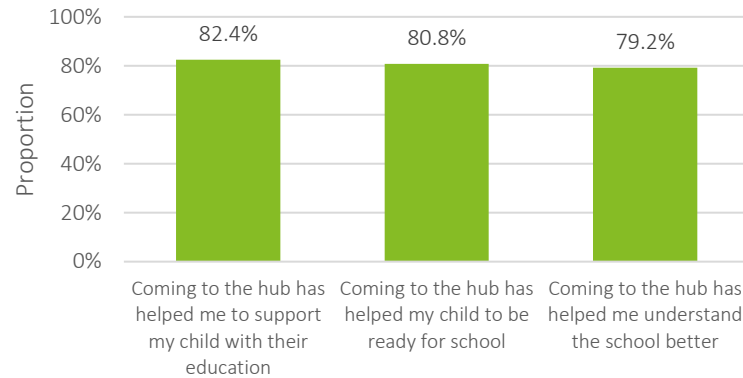
Community hubs play an important role in supporting child development. It is estimated that approximately 4,000 children accessed playgroups for the first time in 2023 through a connection with a community hub. Further, hubs provide support for parents to better engage in their child’s education, including through improved English competency, improved understanding of the school, and improved confidence to engage in their child’s education. Evidence shows that these activities can have significant impacts on a child’s educational outcomes, which leads to improved employment outcomes throughout their life. **In 2023, the NCHP’s impact on improving early childhood outcomes of children who participate in hubs is valued at \$6.5 million.**

Chart E.4. Reported statistics on respondents with children and engagement in playgroups at hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census

Chart E.5. Reported impact of hub participation on school readiness and child engagement for participants with children 5 years or younger

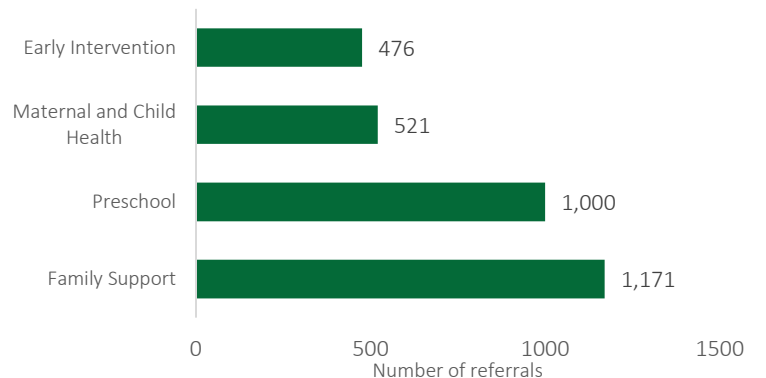


Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census

Hubs provide access to early childhood supports for culturally diverse families with children

Community hubs further support child participants by referring parents to a wide array of supports and services to meet the needs of their children and support their development. In 2023, the NCHP was **estimated to have reduced the need for in-school support for children with developmental delays, valued as a cost-savings of \$0.8 million.**

Chart E.6. Referrals to education and child health services by community hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the Hub Portal activity data

Executive Summary | English

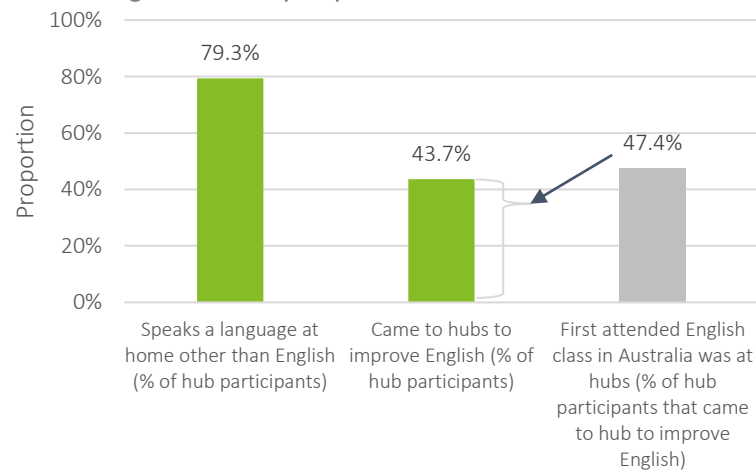
Community hubs provide hub participants with access to English classes through informal and formal activities and increases their exposure to English language conversation through group activities. This exposure improves participants' confidence and competency.

The monetary value of benefits associated with the English language pillar was not estimated in isolation in this evaluation. This is because English language contributes to the other benefits measured, such as social participation and employment. Therefore, the estimated value of other benefits is, in part, attributable to the English language pillar. English language competency is a significant need of families when they first join a community hub. According to the 2023 Hub Census, approximately 43.7% of adults that engage in a community hub do so to learn English, half of which are seeking to engage in English classes for the first time in Australia. As shown in the 2019 SROI evaluation, improvements in English language competency lead to improved outcomes and greater engagement in society, including a greater likelihood of gaining employment, improved understanding and ability to navigate the community and services, and a higher likelihood of being more satisfied with social connections.

Hubs provide access to English classes for culturally diverse families

Community hubs play an important role in providing access to English courses. Approximately 79.3% of census respondents speak English as a second language, or do not speak English. Further, **43.7% of respondents come to hubs to learn English, half of which are accessing English classes for the first time in Australia.**

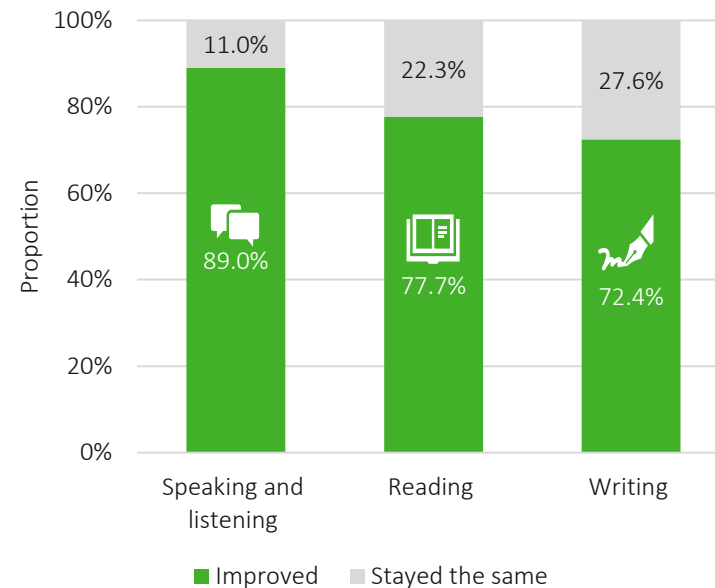
Chart E.7. Reported statistics on use of English and engagement in hubs for English classes by respondents



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census

English classes at hubs lead to improved English competency of participants

Chart E.8. Self-rated improvement in English language due to English learning classes held at hubs

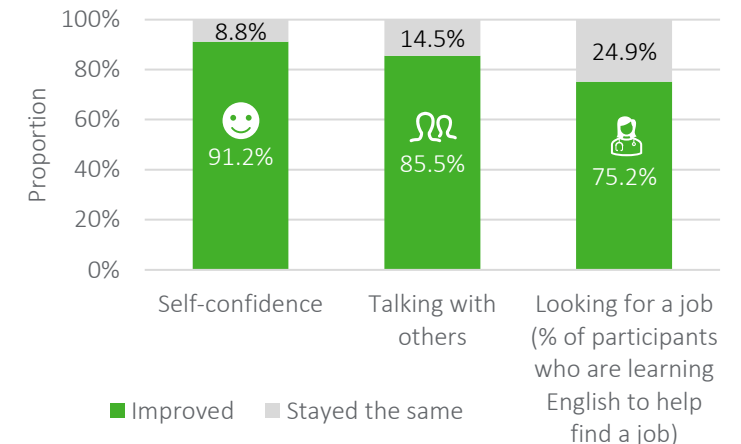


Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 English and Childminding evaluation data

The impact of English competency on the confidence of hub participants

Engagement with English classes at community hubs led to **improved self-confidence, confidence engaging with others and improved job confidence** in 2023. This further contributes to other outcomes, such as improvements in quality-of-life and pathways into employment.

Chart E.9. Self-rated improvement in confidence due to English classes held at hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 English and Childminding evaluation data

Note: totals may not equal 100% due to rounding error

Executive Summary | Vocational pathways

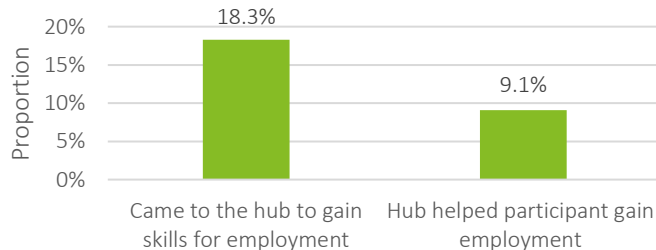
Community hubs support participants to build pathways to employment by encouraging volunteering and providing adults with access to formal and informal training opportunities.

Community hubs play a broad role in supporting culturally diverse families to gain employment. Hubs support participants in learning essential skills such as English language, resume writing and interview skills. Further, hubs support access to training and education, through the provision of courses in floristry and barista training among others, as well as referrals to training and education programs. Hubs also link people with opportunities in the workforce through connections with the local school and other organisations in their communities. **In 2023, it is estimated that the NCHP generated \$17.0 million in social benefits associated with supporting people to find employment.**

The impact of community hubs upon employment outcomes for participants

In 2023, approximately one in five people came to hubs to gain skills to support them to find employment. Hub leaders reported that they directly supported participants to access **422 jobs in 2023, generating a social benefit of \$17.0 million.** Further, through the 2023 Hub Census, 9.1% of respondents identified that the hub helped them gain employment, including through indirect supports (such as skill development). Due to difficulties in identifying attribution, the impact of indirect supports provided by hubs on employment is not monetised.

Chart E.10. Reported statistics on reasons for engaging in hubs and access to employment



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 Hub Census



How community hubs support participants with employment opportunities



Increased confidence

Some culturally diverse families are fully qualified and capable of working but lack the confidence in a new country with a different language. Hubs provide an opportunity for these individuals to gain confidence through English language classes, general conversation and interview role-play.



Exposure to experiences

Through volunteering opportunities, community hubs provide participants with opportunities to gain experience in fields of work they have an interest in, leading to employment outcomes through exposure to work experience.



Direct matching

In some cases, opportunities arise where community hubs can directly match hub participants with employment opportunities, either at the host school or with an associated party.



Higher education support

Some hub participants are supported through community hubs to complete higher education qualifications which bolster their relevant experience. In 2023, hubs made 1,154 referrals to training and education services.



The SROI of the NCHP is 3.5

In 2023, it is estimated that the NCHP produced social benefits of approximately **\$65.7 million**.



Engagement

14,061

families engaging in 100 community hubs in 2023, comprising an estimated 20,376 adults.

Hub participants experienced improved quality-of-life:

1.1%

Improvement in quality-of-life.

Valued at **\$40.9 million**

\$453,900



In value contributed through community hub volunteering.



Early childhood

14,013

Children estimated to have participated in community hubs in 2023.



Children experienced development outcomes,

valued at **\$7.3 million**

Schools saved approximately **\$753,600** due to reduced in-school supports required by students.



English

Community hubs improved the English abilities of participants:

89.0% experience improved speaking and listening skills

77.7% experience improved reading skills

72.4% experience improved writing skills

Community hubs make participants feel more confident to engage in society due to improved English competency:

91.2% experience improved self-confidence.

85.5% experienced improved confidence conversing with others.

75.2% experience improved confidence to find a job.



Vocational pathways

Economic contribution of hub participants who gained employment through community hub involvement:

\$17.0 million

422

Number of jobs gained by hub participants in 2023.



1,154

Number of referrals to training and education services.



1. Background, Purpose, and Approach

Background, Purpose, and Approach | Background and purpose

The National Community Hubs Program is delivered in 100 community hubs throughout Australia. This document provides an overview of the social return on investment of the National Community Hubs Program in 2023.

Background on the National Community Hubs Program

The National Community Hubs Program (NCHP) is delivered by Community Hubs Australia (CHA) in partnership with local schools across New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria. The program aims to engage and support culturally diverse families who are at risk of limited access to education and services and have limited opportunities for economic independence. In doing so, it aims to provide them with the skills and connections to better integrate with, and succeed within, their communities.

Community hubs are physically co-located with primary schools (government, Catholic and independent). The Murdoch Children’s Research Institute found this is an effective strategy to integrate the needs and support of newly arrived communities into established community settings, enhancing the continuum of support across services and settings.¹ Providing a safe and welcoming environment at the hub creates a trusted gateway for hub participants to access the services and support they require.

The flexibility, responsiveness and integrated nature of the community hubs model represents a relatively unique and efficient approach to meeting emerging community needs, taking a strengths-based approach. Core funding supports the employment of a hub leader who collaborates with the school and local health, education, and settlement service providers to identify local needs and services aligned to them. Where there is no clear access to relevant services, hub leaders can request additional funding to commission specific services aligned to NCHP strategic goals.

The program was first established in 2013 and has grown to support 14,061 families across 100 different hubs in 2023. The NCHP supports families through a range of activities, including through the provision of formal and informal English language classes, playgroups and early education supports, skill development activities, support for people to volunteer and access education, and space for people to make friends and engage in their local communities. The NCHP is delivered across four strategic pillars outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Overview of the strategic pillars of the NCHP



Purpose of the report

CHA engaged Deloitte Access Economics to undertake a comprehensive social return on investment (SROI) evaluation of the NCHP in 2023. This evaluation serves as an update to the [2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP](#) (the “2019 SROI evaluation”), undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics in 2021.

This evaluation follows the NCHP SROI evaluation framework developed by Deloitte Access Economics and CHA in 2021 and updated as part of the Data Collection Strategy Options report delivered in 2022 (see Appendix A for the framework). This framework provides detailed guidance on how to measure the social impact of the NCHP across the four pillars (see Figure 1.1), including required data collection and measurement approaches.

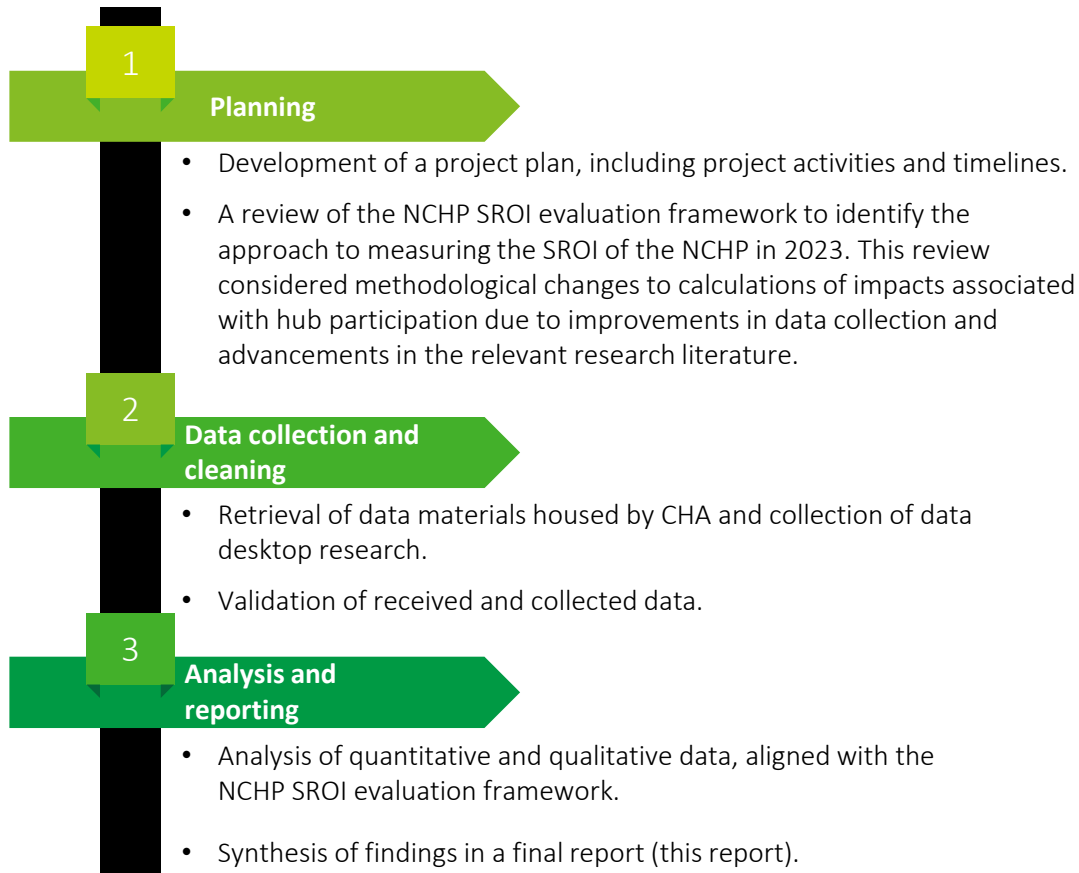
Background, Purpose, and Approach | Approach

The 2023 SROI evaluation of the NCHP was delivered over three distinct phases.

Approach

The 2023 SROI evaluation of the NCHP was delivered over three stages, as shown in Figure 1.2. For further information on the method underpinning the calculations of the 2023 SROI evaluation, see Appendix B or the [2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP](#).

Figure 1.2: Summary of the approach



Data used in this report

The 2023 SROI evaluation was undertaken using data sourced from the following:

- **2023 Hub Census:** A census of hub participants over a one-week period in August 2023.
- **English and Childminding evaluation data:** Activity and outcomes data related to formal and informal English language activities delivered at community hubs.
- **Hub Rapid Reviews:** Qualitative self-reviews, undertaken by hubs annually in Terms 1 and 2, on their outcomes achieved and plans for further impact.
- **Hub Portal activity data:** Data on hub activities, external partnerships, referrals to external services, and the number of families attending hubs, jobs secured, and volunteers supporting the hub.
- **NCHP financial operations data:** Annual data on expenses and sources of investment supporting the operations of the NCHP in 2023.
- **2019 SROI Evaluation:** Where 2023 NCHP data does not sufficiently update necessary inputs from the 2019 SROI evaluation, survey findings from the 2019 analysis are utilised.
- **Secondary data:** Data sourced from Government statistics websites and the 2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP.

No primary data collection was undertaken as part of this project.

Background, Purpose, and Approach | Limitations and considerations

The 2023 SROI evaluation of the NCHP was delivered over three distinct phases.

Limitations and considerations

There are limitations of the analysis presented in this report that should be kept in mind:

- The SROI results presented in this document should be treated as partial and conservative. This is due to the difficulty in assigning attribution of impacts to hub activities in some instances, particularly the impact of hubs on early childhood outcomes, due to the long-term nature in which these impacts are realised.
- Some impacts are measured using inputs from survey tools that rely on hub participants to recall feelings or impacts related to hub activity. Responses provided by hub participants may be impacted by recall bias, which may bias some results.
- While CHA collects significant and robust data on the activities and impacts of the NCHP, some data gaps mean that assumptions are required to enable their measurement. For example, the quality-of-life improvements for adults participating in community hubs is based on survey results collected in 2021 for the 2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP. This measure assumes that adult hub participants in 2023 experience similar benefits to those in 2021.
- Results presented in this report should not be directly compared to previous SROI results of the NCHP due to changes in data collection sources for inputs, slight changes in methodology, and the impacts of inflation on the values of some monetisable impacts. For example, the calculation of the monetisable benefits associated with a reduced need for in-school supports due to child participation in community hubs in 2023 is not directly comparable to the calculation of the same benefit in 2019 due changes in the estimated cost to schools of supporting students with development delays (which is, in part, driven by a change in the Commonwealth Government school funding model).

Structure of this report

This report is structured as follows:

1. **Background, Purpose, and Approach:** This chapter provides the background, purpose, and approach to developing the 2023 SROI evaluation.
2. **The social return on investment of the NCHP:** This chapter presents the 2023 SROI evaluation results of the NCHP. The results are first presented across the entire program, then individually across each of the four pillars; Engagement; Early childhood; English; Vocational pathways.
3. **Conclusion:** The report concludes with a discussion on the results and how SROI evaluations of the NCHP can be further improved in the future.
4. **Appendix:** The NCHP SROI evaluation framework and methodology are in the appendices of this report.

What is an SROI?

A SROI evaluation examines programs through a stakeholder and experience-focused lens to examine and monetise the program's social value against its funding costs. In doing so, the SROI method provides a way to quantify and monetise their impacts in so far as their impacts can be materially measured. Alongside the qualitative and quantitative analysis which contributes to an SROI, a ratio of monetised benefits against program costs is provided.

2. The social return on investment of the NCHP

The social return on investment of the NCHP | About hubs

In 2023, community hubs supported 14,061 unique families from culturally diverse backgrounds.

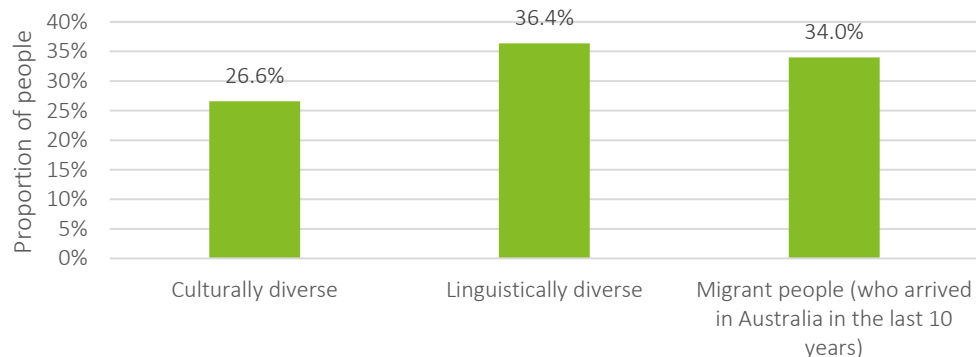
About community hubs

The NCHP that commenced ten years ago in 2013 across nine different sites has now expanded to 100 locations across Australia, supporting 14,061 unique families in 2023. The program now has sites across four Australian states, including New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria.^{2,3}

Community hubs are dedicated to supporting culturally diverse families across Australia. Using ABS Census data (2021) and hub locations in 2023, it is estimated that the following proportion of people live in an LGA that has a community hub (Chart 2.1):

- 26.6% of culturally diverse Australians (defined as people who were born overseas or identify as First Nations Australians).⁴
- 36.4% of linguistically diverse Australians (defined as people who speak a language other than English in the household).
- 34.0% of migrants who arrived in Australia within the last 10 years.

Chart 2.1: Proportion of cohorts in Australian population that live in an LGA that has a community hub



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using ABS Census data (2021)

About the people they impact

Across the 14,061 families, the NCHP supported an estimated 20,376 unique adults and 14,013 unique children in 2023 (see Appendix B for the method used to calculate the unique number of adult and children participants). Participants of community hubs are diverse, mirroring the communities in which hubs are placed, as reflected by their varied characteristics detailed below:³



Language and cultural diversity

- **79.3%** of Hub Census respondents spoke a language other than English at home across more than **80 different languages**.⁵
- **78.5%** of Hub Census respondents migrated to Australia, including **22.7%** within the last five years, originating from more than **118 nations**.⁵



Family

- **91.9%** of Hub Census respondents were women.
- **87.7%** of Hub Census respondents lived with at least one child, and an estimated **41.2%** of these children attended community hubs.



Education and employment

- **64.9%** of Hub Census respondents reported that they do not have a job, **34.3%** of whom reported wanting to work more.
- **47.4%** of Hub Census respondents had completed some tertiary education.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Overview

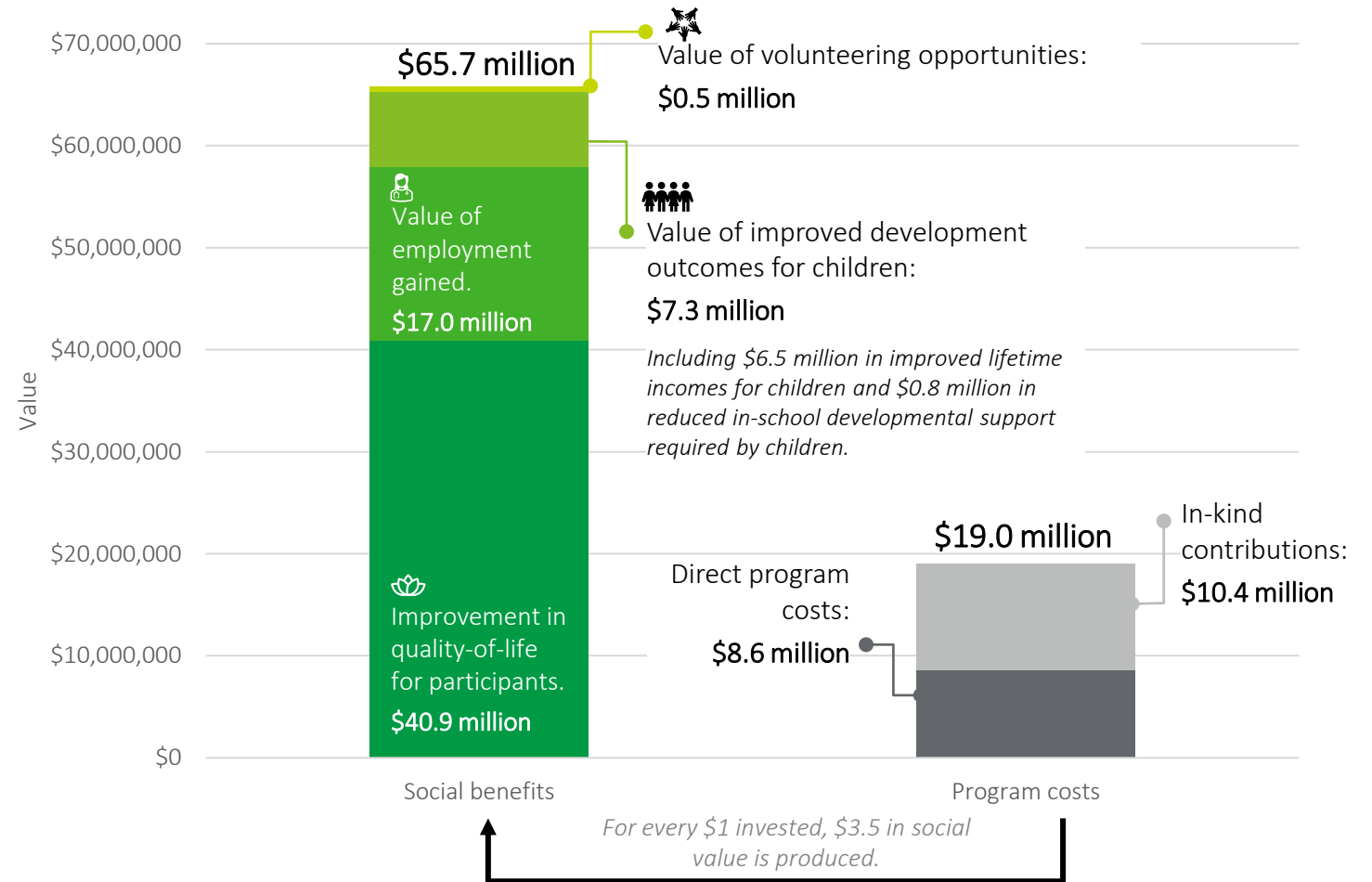
In 2023, the NCHP provided \$65.7 million in social benefits to Australia. This equates to a social return of \$3.5 for every \$1 invested in the program.

The social return on investment of the NCHP

This evaluation estimates that the NCHP delivered benefits of \$65.7 million to the Australian society in 2023. As the NCHP was delivered with resources valued at \$19.0 million (including direct program costs and in-kind contributions), it is estimated that the program had a SROI of 3.5 in 2023 (Chart 2.2). The social impact of the NCHP can be broken down into the following categories:

- **Improvements in quality-of-life for participants:** Through improvements in social connections, access to services and improved confidence and skills, hubs contributed to improved social cohesion and the quality-of-life of participants, valued at \$40.9 million in 2023 (62.2% of total social impact).
- **Value of employment gained by participants:** Hub activities supported participants to find 422 jobs in 2023, generating \$17.0 million in social benefits (25.9% of total social impact).
- **Value of improved development outcomes for children:** The program provided children with access to playgroup, child health nurses and other development supports, generating \$7.3 million in social benefits in 2023 (11.1% of social impact).
- **Value of volunteering opportunities:** Hubs provided 43,000 hours of volunteering opportunities to people throughout the community, generating social benefits of \$0.5 million (0.7% of total social impact).

Chart 2.2: Net social benefits and costs of the NCHP in 2023



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024)
 Notes: Individual categories may not add to total due to rounding.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Program costs and contributions

In 2023, the NCHP cost \$19.0 million in financial expenses and in-kind contributions to deliver.

The social benefits generated by the NCHP are made possible by the collaborative contributions of CHA, schools, Government and the broader community in which they operate.

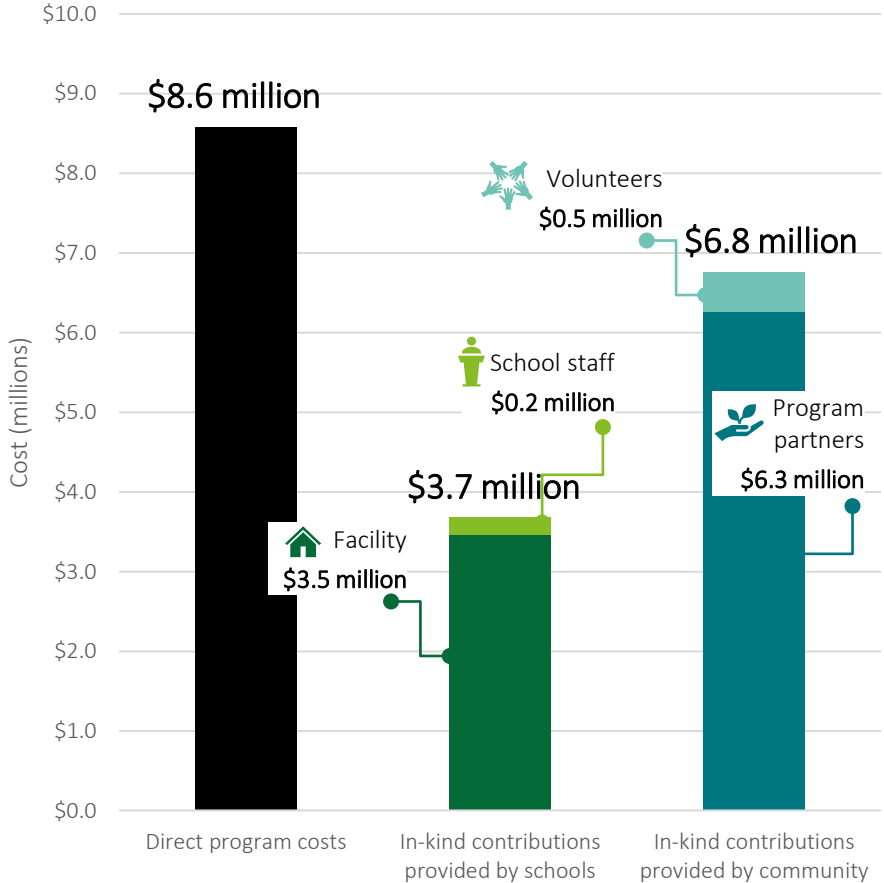
First, the NCHP is directly funded through contributions from Commonwealth Government, State and Territory Governments as well as significant contributions from other philanthropic organisations (Chart 2.4).

This funding directly contributes to the delivery of the NCHP, resulting in \$8.6 million in direct program costs associated with management of the program and salaries of the hub.

However, 54.9% of the estimated economic cost of delivering the program is attributable to in-kind contributions. These contributions come in the form of school contributions through access to facilities and the time spent by school principals and school administration officers to support the program in local communities. In addition, an estimated \$6.3 million is contributed through program partners that provide activities and services at hubs, and \$0.5 million is contributed by volunteers (Chart 2.3).

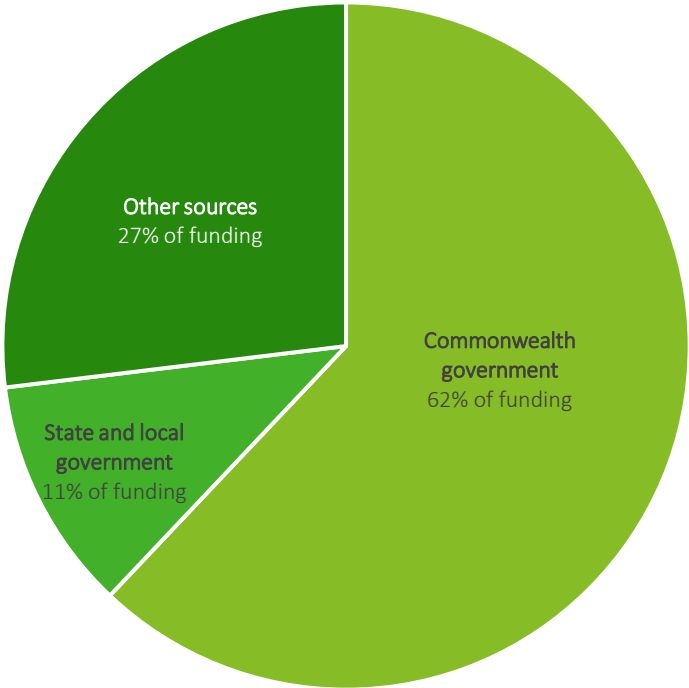
This diversity of contributions to deliver the NCHP highlights the strong community partnership model of the program and how it generates significant benefits to society.

Chart 2.3. Economic costs of delivering the NCHP in 2023



Source: Deloitte Access Economics estimates (2024) using NCHP financial operations data and secondary data
 Notes: Individual categories may not add to total due to rounding. See Appendix B for more information on these calculations.

Chart 2.4. Funding profile of the NCHP (of direct program costs), 2022-23



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using NCHP financial operations data
 Notes: Other sources of funding include philanthropic investment, donations and grants.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | SROI of the NCHP by State

Across states, the SROI ratios of the NCHP varied from \$2.9 to \$3.8 in 2023. This variation does not reflect differences in the quality of hubs but reflects how many families access them, which may be dependent on the population density of the regions where they are located.

SROI of the NCHP by state

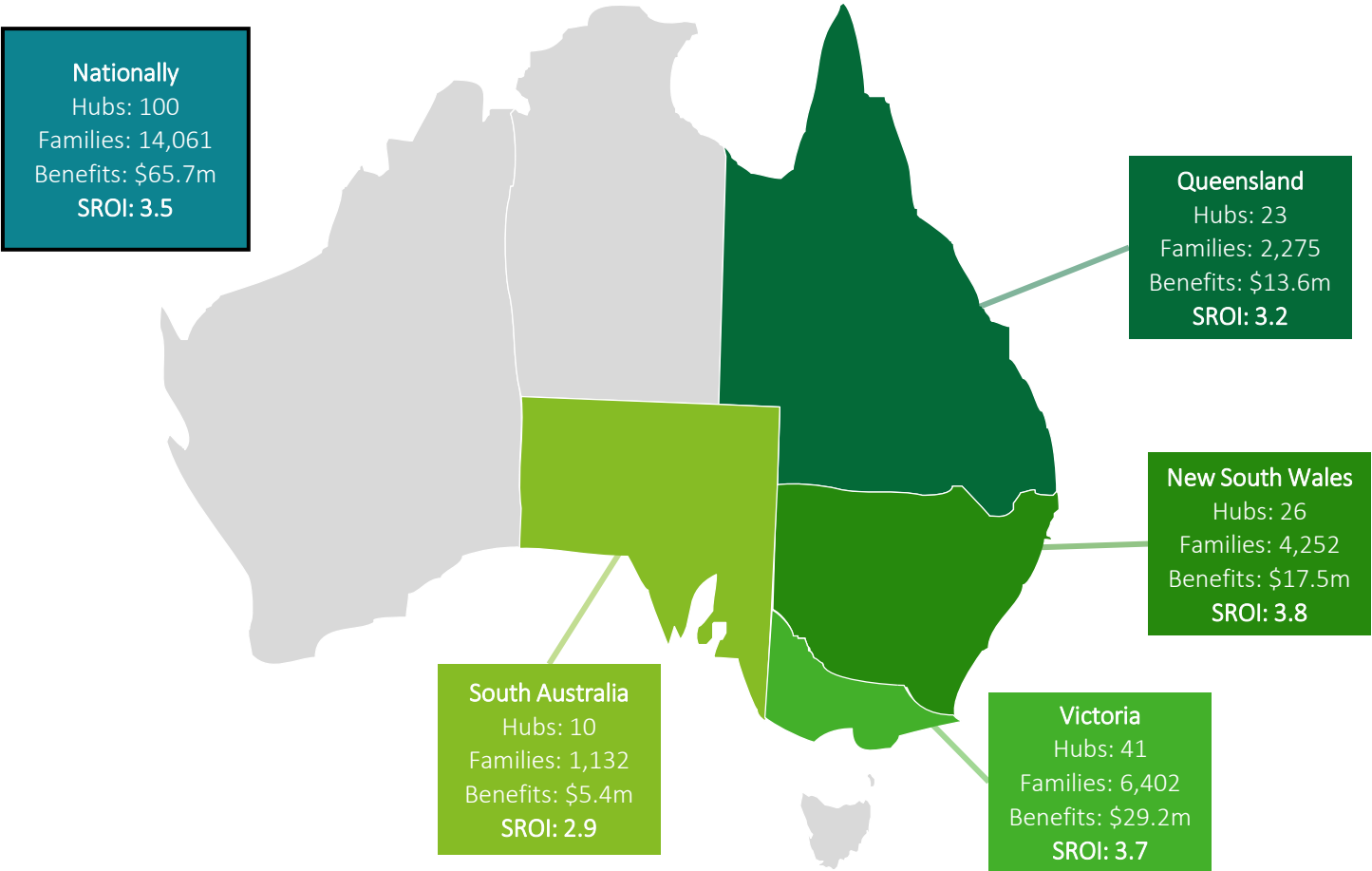
The SROI of the NCHP is disaggregated by state, to show the broad-based impact that the program had in 2023, across Australia.

The SROI ratio of the NCHP in 2023 varied from \$2.9 to \$3.8 across states, per \$1 invested in the program (Figure 2.1). This variation is due to differences in the number of families accessing hubs across the states.

For example, when compared to other states, hubs in New South Wales reached the largest number of families on a per-hub basis, providing services to an average of 163 families per hub. In comparison, hubs in South Australia reached an average of approximately 113 families per hub. This difference in the number of families accessing each hub results in New South Wales hubs being able to generate a higher level of social benefits relative to their cost base (in comparison to South Australian hubs).

The causes of the differences in access to hubs across states were not in scope for this evaluation, but a likely explanation is the variation in the size of populations that live near the hubs in different states (i.e., population density).

Figure 2.1: Net social benefits and costs of the NCHP in 2023, by state



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024)



2.1 Engagement

Supporting families to connect and engage with their community.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Engagement

2.1.1 The value of increased confidence, social participation, engagement, and connections

Finding: Quality-of-life improvements for adults participating in community hubs was valued at \$40.9 million in 2023.

Adult community hubs participants are estimated to have experienced a 1.1% improvement in their quality-of-life, which was worth \$40.9 million in 2023, or \$2,008 per adult participant. This value is based on Figure 2.2.

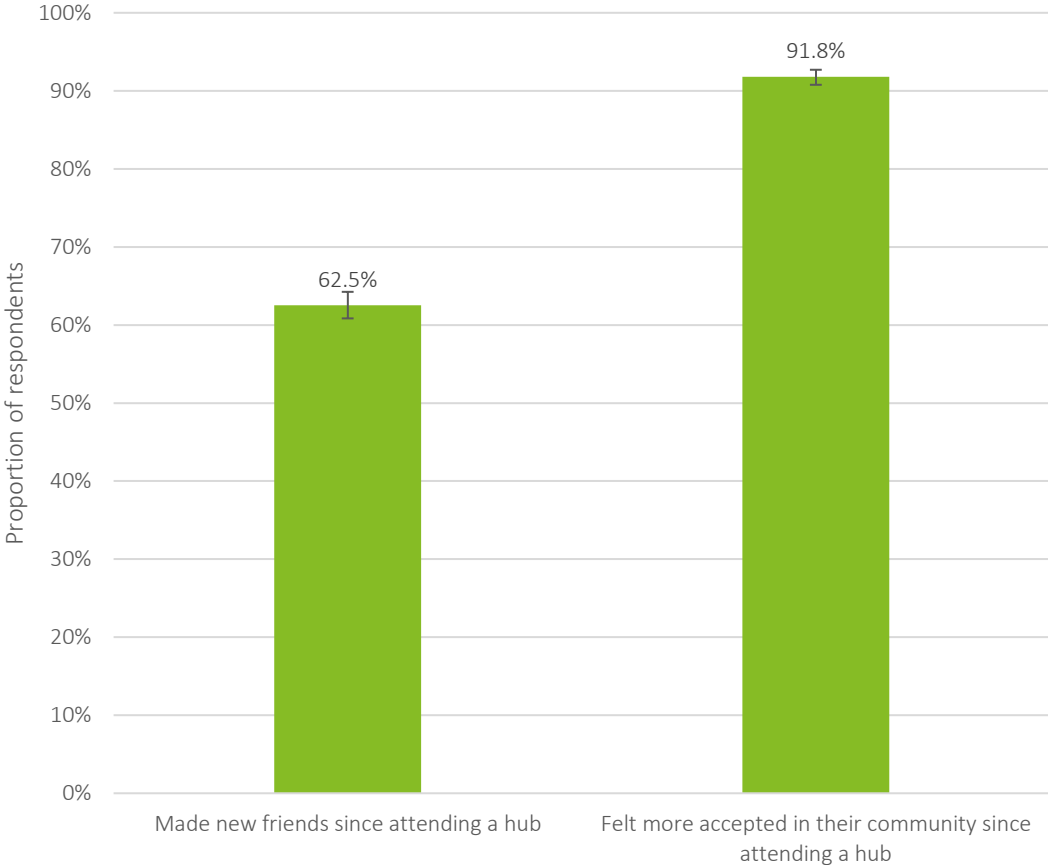
Figure 2.2. The calculation of quality-of-life improvements associated with adult participation in community hubs



Due to the difficult nature of valuing many benefits of participating in community hubs, quality-of-life benefits are intended to capture the broad impact of the program on a person’s wellbeing. For example, the benefits gained through improved social participation and connections, reduced social isolation, improved access to health and social services, improved English competency, and improved skills and pathways into employment, result in an improved feeling of wellbeing. This general improvement in wellbeing is denoted as improvement in a person’s quality-of-life due to participation in community hubs.

As shown in the 2019 SROI evaluation, the biggest contribution hubs make to improvement in quality-of-life is through an improved ability to socialise and make friends, leading to reduced social isolation. Hubs support participants to build meaningful relationships by providing a nonjudgmental space and engaging activities for people who have shared experiences. Results from the 2023 Hub Census showed that 62.5% of respondents had made new friends since coming to the hub, while 91.8% felt more accepted in their community (Chart 2.5).

Chart 2.5. Reported outcomes by respondents of Hub Census



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Engagement

2.1.1 The value of increased confidence, social participation, engagement, and connections (continued)

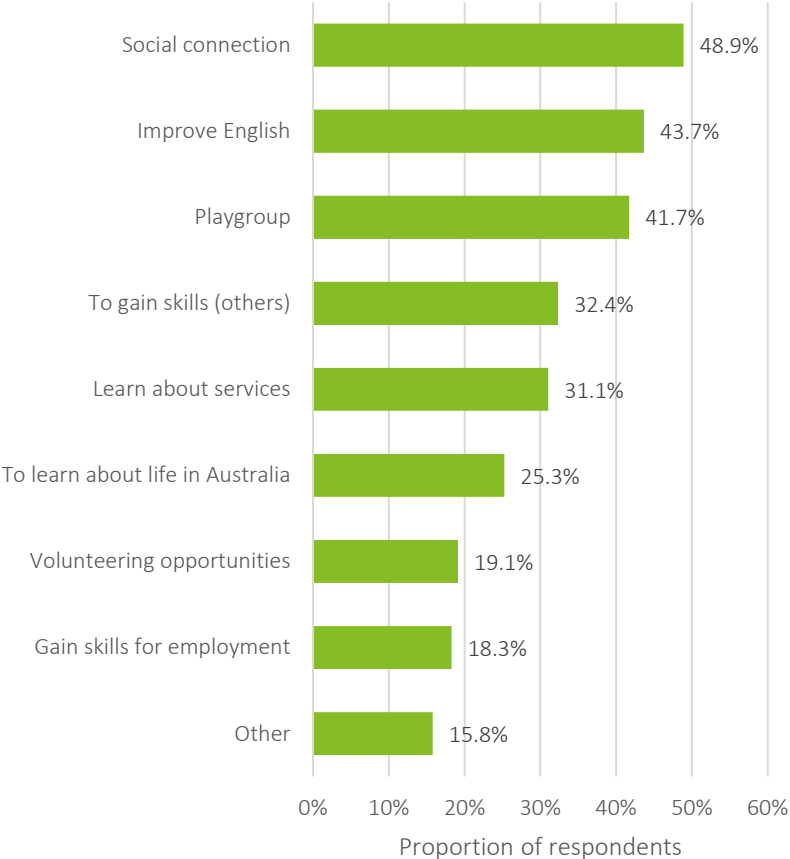
The broad range of services and supports provided by hubs highlights the many ways in which the quality-of-life of hub participants is impacted. In 2023, all census respondents identified at least two reasons for joining a hub, and more than half identified at least three.

The most prominent reasons reported for engaging in hubs were to improve social connections, improve English, and access to playgroups. These reasons were most often paired with other desires of respondents, specifically to learn about life in Australia, learn about services, and to gain skills (Chart 2.6, a).

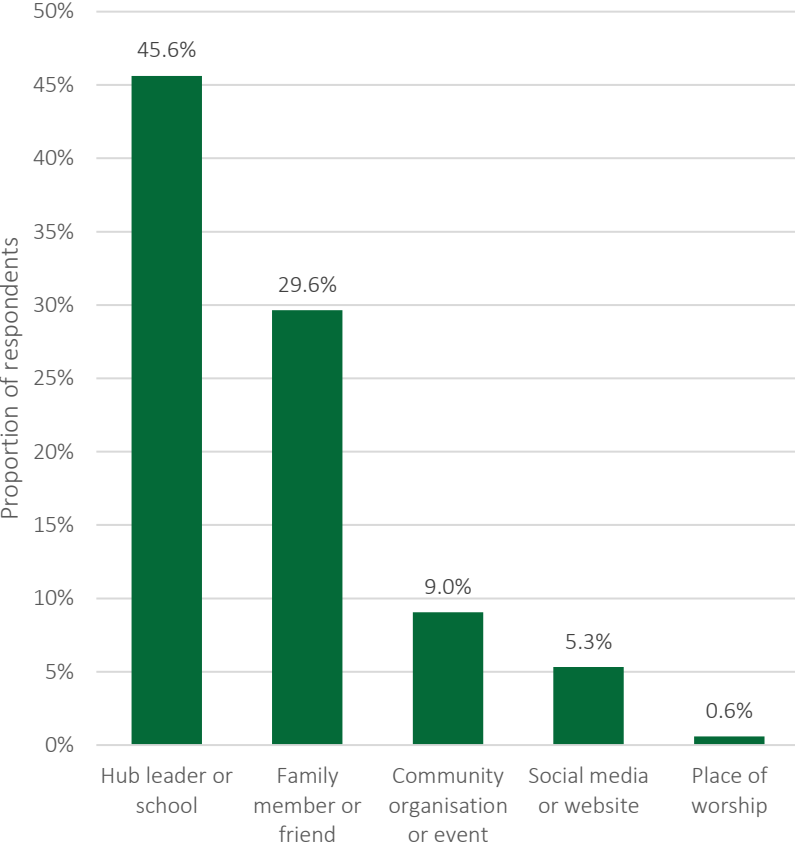
Respondents were also likely to refer friends and family members to hub activities, highlighting the value participants receive from hubs. One in three respondents in 2023 stated that they found out about community hubs from a family member or friend (Chart 2.6, b).

Chart 2.6. How people engaged with community hubs

a) Reasons why people engaged in hubs



b) How people found out about hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
 Notes: Chart 2.6, b categories do not add to 100% as respondents were able to select other, multiple response or did not answer the question.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Engagement

2.1.2 Value of contributions to hub program delivery and in-school activities

Finding: Volunteering opportunities provided by hubs contributed to \$453,900 in improved wellbeing to school and external volunteers.⁶

Community hubs receive volunteer support from hub participants, school staff and parents, as well as external volunteers from the community. Through volunteering, school and external volunteers at community hubs are estimated to have experienced an improvement in their personal wellbeing valued at \$453,900. This value is based on Figure 2.3.

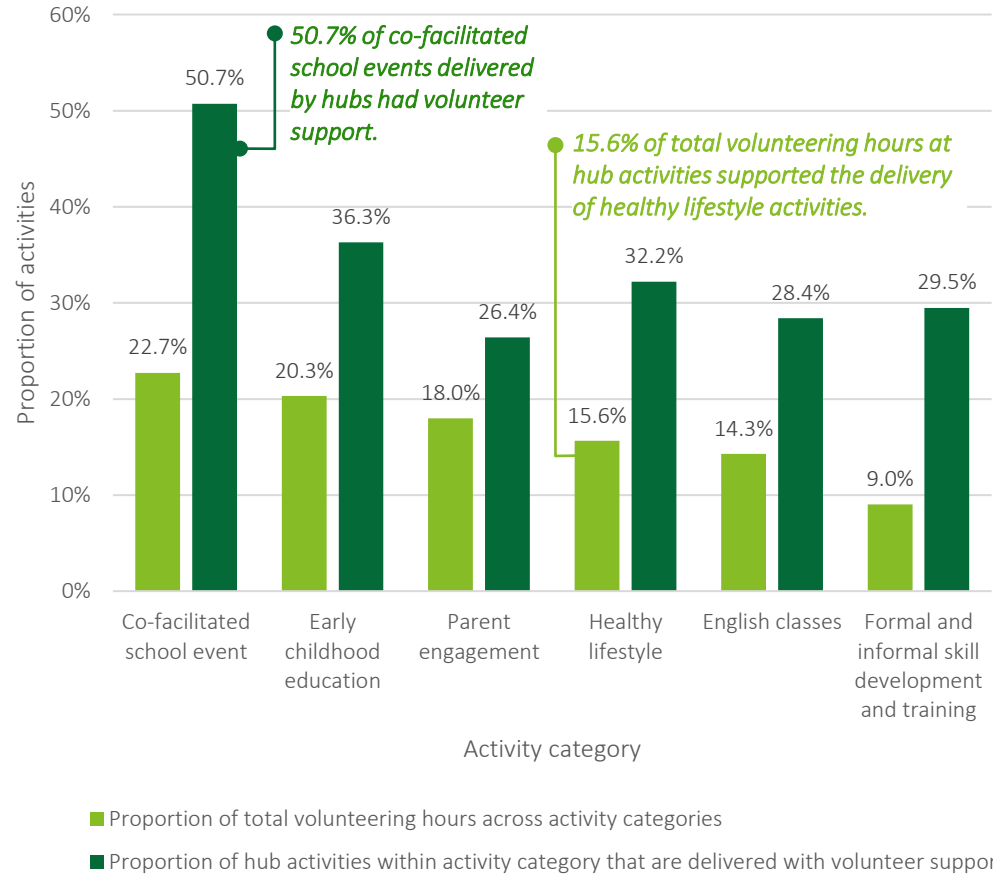
Figure 2.3. The calculation of improvements in wellbeing for school and external volunteers associated with volunteering opportunities at community hubs



Community hubs provide volunteering opportunities for people in the community by delivering hub services and activities, such as running playgroups, delivering classes, and community engagement events. It is estimated that approximately one in three hub activities were delivered with volunteer support in 2023 (Chart 2.7). These services, delivered by volunteers, are valued at \$1.9 million in 2023 across the areas of early childhood education, English classes, and skill development and training.

Research shows that volunteering provides people with significant personal value. First, it can make people more employable through networking opportunities with potential employers, the development of transferrable skills to employment opportunities, and the development of confidence among other factors.^{7,8} Second, research shows that people feel happier by *giving to others*, also known as altruistic value, which leads to an improved sense of wellbeing.⁹

Chart 2.7. The distribution of volunteer time across hub activities and the proportion of hub activities that are delivered with volunteer support, 2023



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using Hub Portal activity and referral data

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Engagement

2.1.3 Value of school-based activities and initiatives that contribute to cultural inclusion in schools

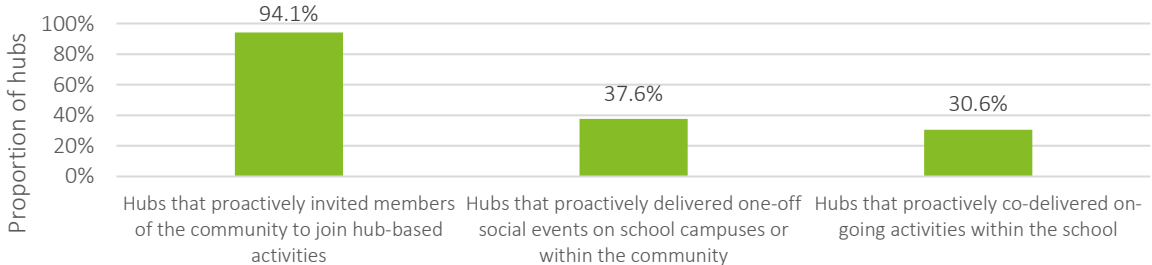
Finding: Hubs enhance the welcoming and culturally inclusive activities of schools through a variety of ways which makes culturally diverse families feel more welcome and engaged in their child’s school.

Evidence from the 2023 Hub Census indicates that hubs played an instrumental role in supporting culturally diverse families to feel more comfortable in their schools. In 2023, almost one in two adult respondents never engaged in school activities or events prior to coming to community hubs (Chart 2.9, a). However, more than two in three of these respondents increased engagement with school activities post coming to the hub (Chart 2.9, b).

A review of qualitative responses through Rapid Reviews shows that hubs contributed to improving the inclusiveness of schools in three specific ways (Chart 2.8):

1. 94.1% of hub leaders reported that they were proactive in inviting community members to attend hub-based activities, enabling people to learn about the hub, engage with other people, and learn about the cultures of other members of their communities.
2. 37.6% of hub leaders reported that they proactively organised and facilitated one-off social events at schools or within communities, such as celebrating Harmony Day.
3. 30.6% of hub leaders reported that they proactively organised and co-facilitated in-school programs, such as breakfast club.

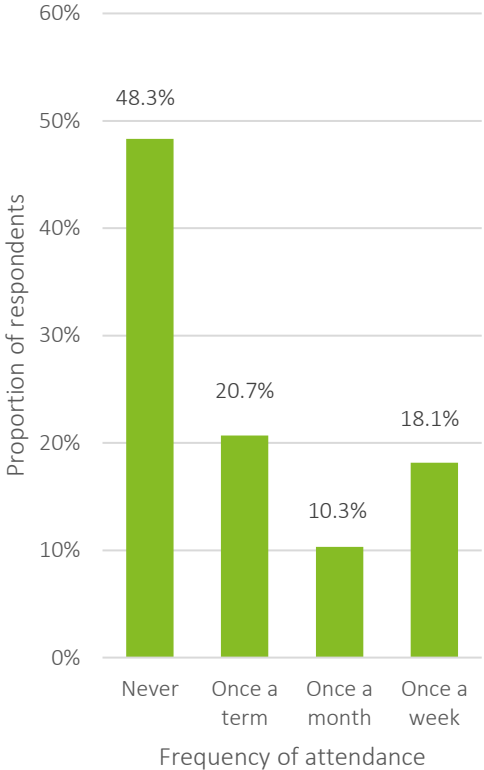
Chart 2.8. Reported approaches of hubs to support schools to increase engagement with culturally diverse families



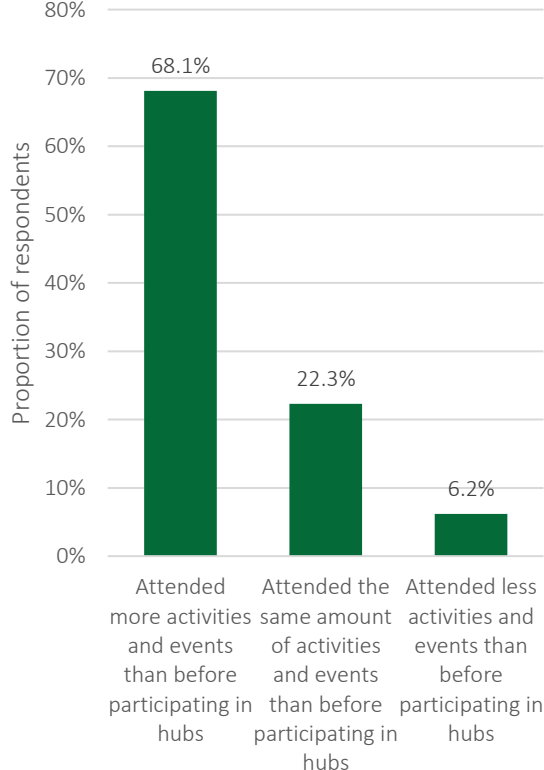
Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using hub Rapid Reviews

Chart 2.9. Engagement of adult respondents in activities at the school; before and after participating in hubs

a) Frequency of attendance at school activities and events prior to coming to hubs



b) Change in the frequency of attendance at school activities and events after coming to hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Engagement

2.1.4 Value of outcomes due to improved access to supports for families

Finding: Community hubs facilitated access to important services for participants across a range of areas.

Community hubs provide access to services for culturally diverse families by hosting some services at hubs, directly referring families to services, or providing information about the services available to families.

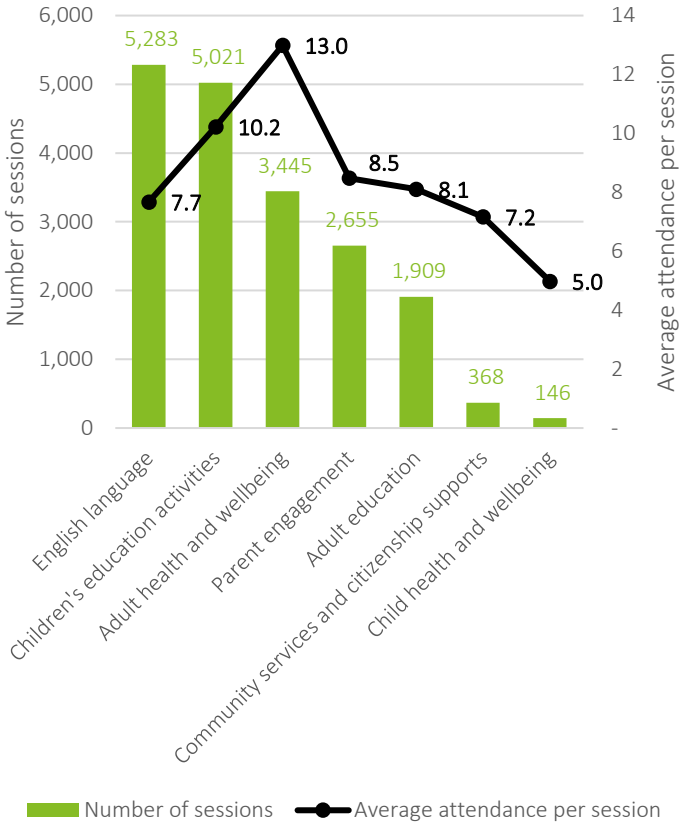
In 2023, hubs directly delivered 18,827 activities across areas such as English language, child’s education, health and wellbeing, and adult education (Chart 2.10, a).

Further, community hubs made 8,952 referrals to social, health, early childhood, and skills and development services (Chart 2.10, b).

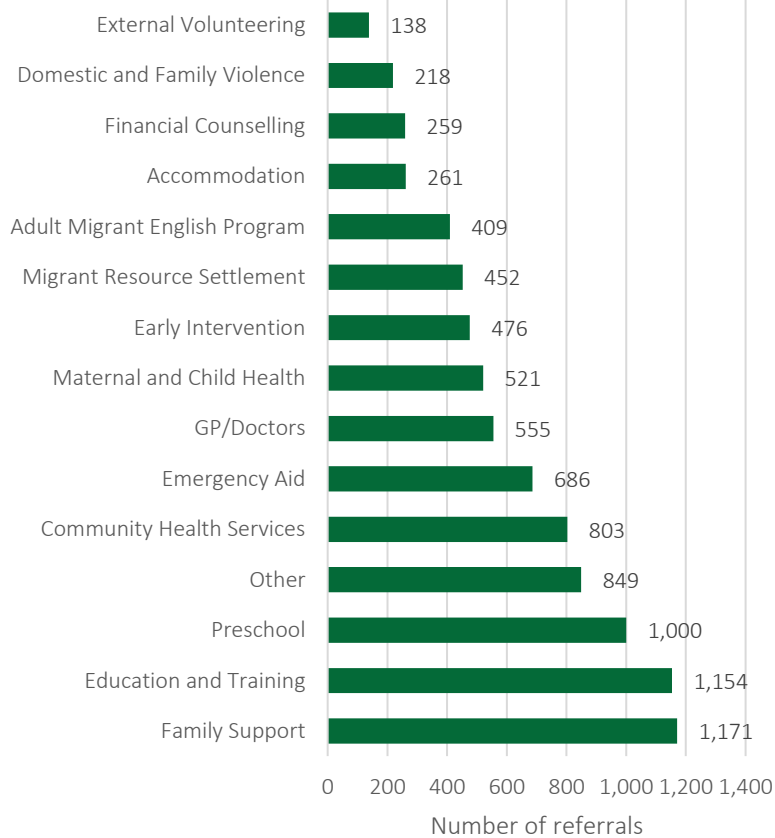
Greater access to health services for people from culturally diverse backgrounds can lead to long-term benefits, such as improved health and quality-of-life, avoided medical costs due to early intervention, and greater productivity through improved abilities to work. However, these long-term impacts were unable to be measured in this evaluation due to data limitations.

Chart 2.10. Access to services and supports through community hubs in 2023

a) Number of sessions of activities held at hubs and attendance by activity category¹⁰



b) Number of services referrals by hubs, across service categories



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using Hub Portal activity and referral data



2.2 Early childhood

Supporting learning and development of children and preparing children for school.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Early Childhood

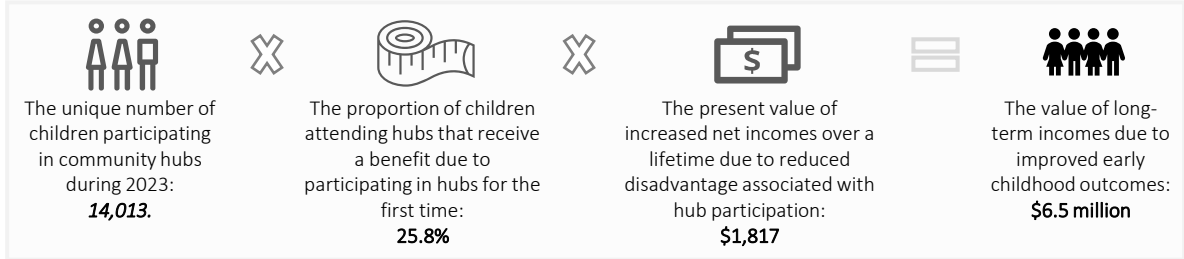
2.2.1 Value of improved educational engagement

Finding: Through participation in community hub activities, children experience lifetime benefits valued at \$6.5 million, related to improved school readiness.

Community hubs are estimated to improve educational outcomes for children through participation in playgroups and improving parent engagement in early education. Overall, the increased lifetime incomes associated with improved educational outcomes are valued at \$6.5 million in 2023, or \$469 per child participant in hubs.

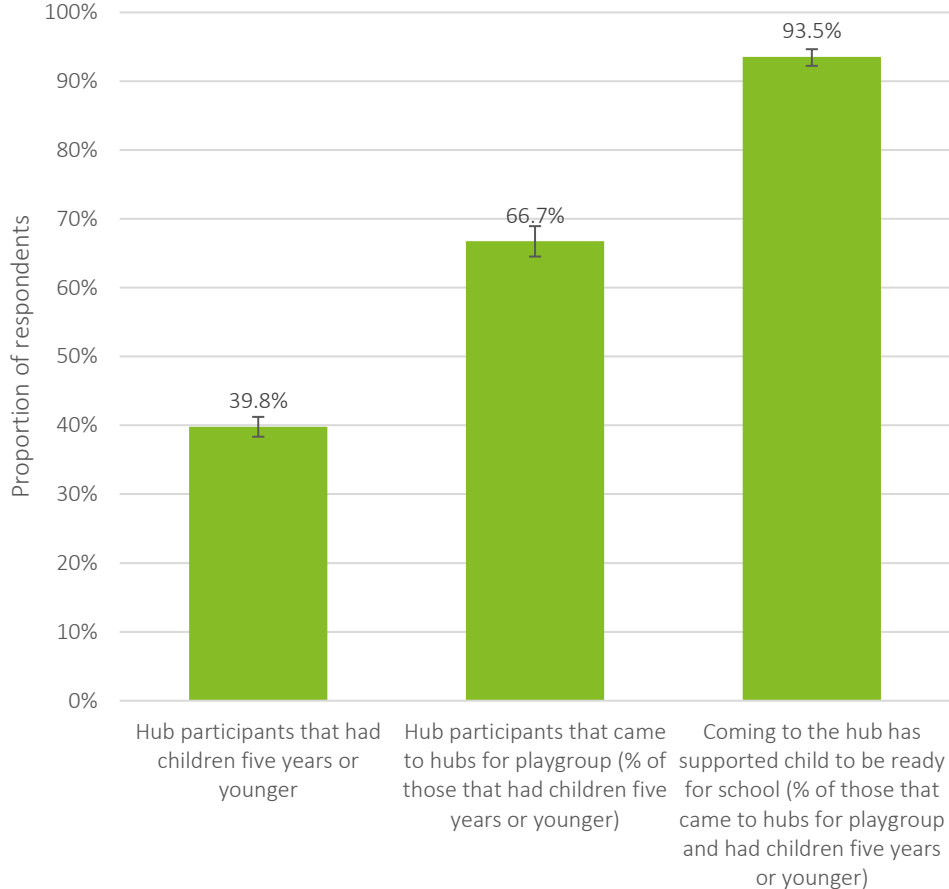
This calculation is based upon research that identifies a link between hub location and improved early childhood outcomes in schools, and literature that shows a clear impact of early childhood programs on long-term outcomes. However, this benefit likely does not capture the totality of the impact of hubs on early childhood development due to the difficulty in measuring benefits for children, particularly benefits that occur later in life. Therefore, the early childhood benefits measured in this report should be treated as conservative.

Figure 2.3. The calculation of educational outcome improvements associated with child participation in community hubs



Hubs impact child development in a range of ways, but most directly by providing free playgroups. There is significant literature evidence highlighting the impact of early education programs such as playgroups on preparing children for school, and long-term educational outcomes.¹⁰ According to the hub census, approximately 39.8% of adults came to hubs to participate in playgroups, increasing to 66.7% when considering respondents that have children five years or younger. Further, 93.5% of respondents who came to hubs for playgroup and had young children agreed that hubs had supported their child to be ready for school (Chart 2.11).

Chart 2.11. Hub Census respondents' reported engagement with, and outcomes from, hub early childhood activities and programs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

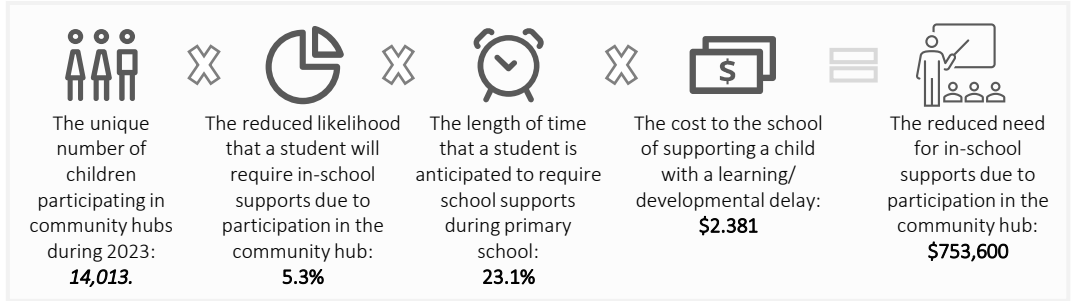
The social return on investment of the NCHP | Early Childhood

2.2.2 Value of reduced need for intensive learning intervention

Finding: Schools are expected to save an estimated \$753,600 due to a reduced need to provide intensive educational supports for children who participated in community hubs in 2023.

Community hubs improve child development by increasing access to health services that facilitate early diagnosis of developmental delays, as well as through educational and parenting programs to support the development of a child prior to commencing school. The calculation to monetise this impact is outlined in Figure 2.4. and is informed by a finding from the 2019 SROI evaluation where surveyed principals reported that 5.3% fewer children faced development delays if they attended community hubs.

Figure 2.4. The calculation of reduced need for in-school supports associated with child participation in community hubs



In addition to playgroups, hubs support early childhood development through referrals to support services. In 2023, a total of 3,168 referrals were provided by hub leaders to education and child health services (Chart 2.12). These included 1,171 (37.0%) to family support services, 1,000 (31.6%) to preschool, 521 (16.4%) to maternal and child health services, and 476 (15.0%) to early intervention services. Further, hubs provide a range of additional activities that impact child development, such as parent education and support activities, school and pre-school transition activities, activities that improve child learning and development, and hosting child health clinics (Chart 2.13).

Chart 2.12. Referrals to education and child health services by community hubs, by type

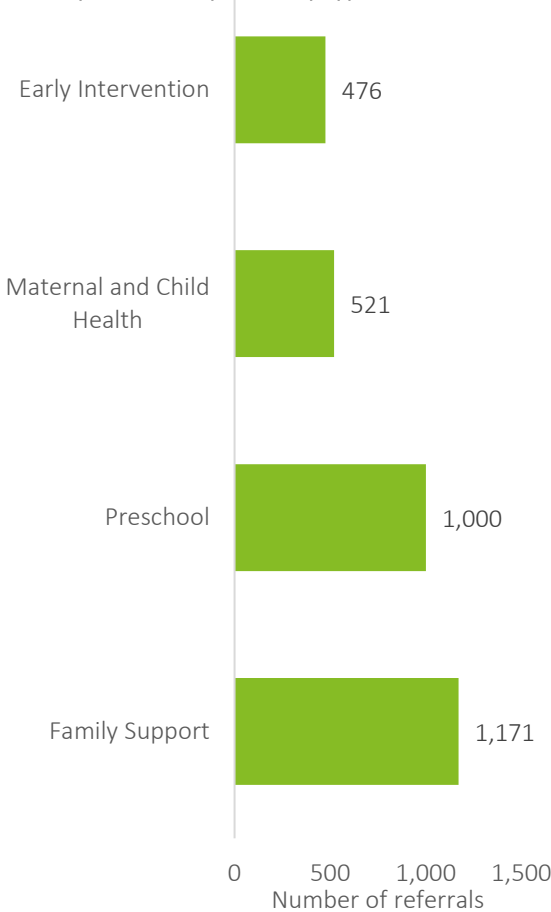
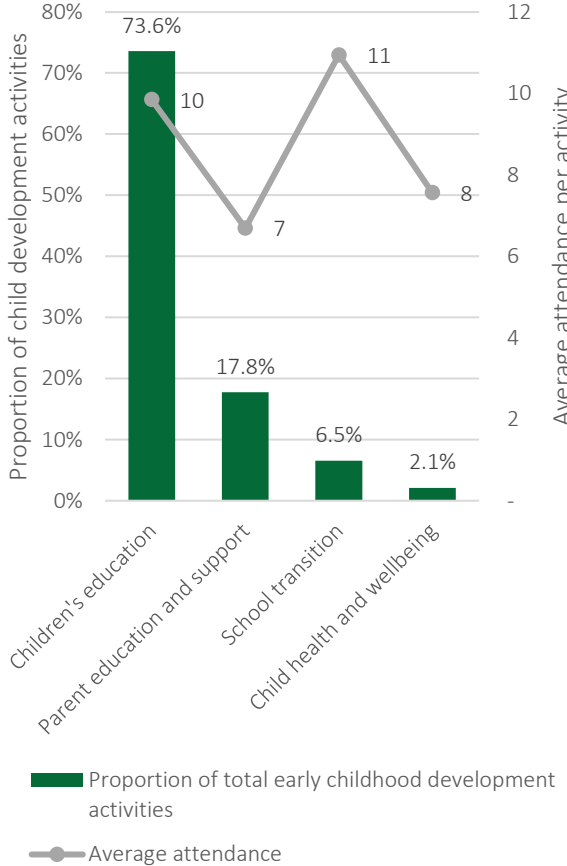


Chart 2.13. Distribution of hub child development activities by type of activity and average attendance¹²



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using Hub Portal activity and referral data

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Early Childhood

2.2.3 Value of family participation and engagement in school activities and the school community

Finding: Evidence suggests that engaging with community hubs improves the school readiness of children and empowers their parents to support them in school.

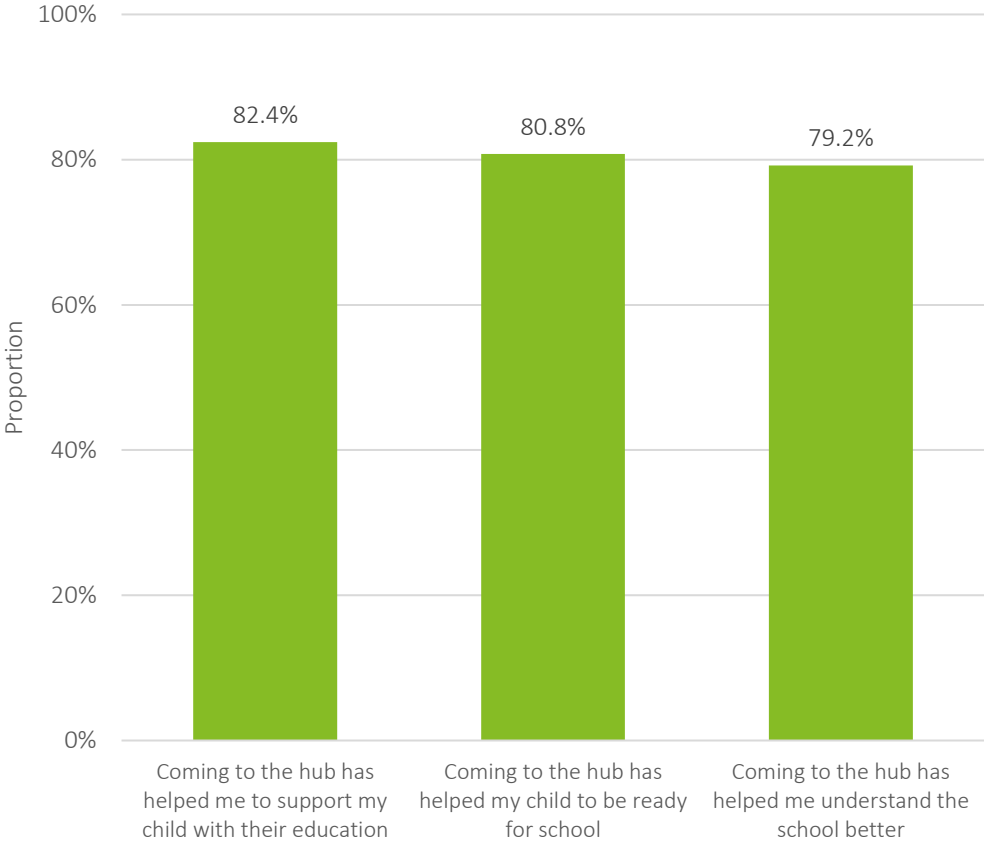
Parent engagement in their child’s education is key to supporting better child development outcomes.¹³ However, as shown in the 2019 SROI evaluation, many hub participants face barriers in providing support to their child due to their confidence in their ability to communicate with teachers, as well as their understanding of their child’s school.

The 2023 Hub Census provides evidence which suggests that services and supports offered by community hubs drive positive outcomes for families as their children commence their education. Specifically, for respondents with children aged five or younger, 82.4% reported that coming to their hub helped them support their child with their education, 80.8% reported that it helped their child be ready for school and 79.2% reported that it helped them to understand their school better (Chart 2.14).

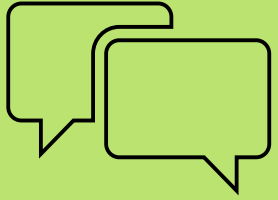
Using Hub Census data, further analysis was undertaken to understand potential factors that enabled hubs to impact feelings of improved school readiness and child engagement reported. This analysis showed that respondents who attended hubs more than once a week were 1.8 times more likely to agree with the statement that “Coming to the hub has helped to support my child with their education” (See Appendix C for more information on this analysis).

In addition, respondents who had recently arrived in Australia and did not have a tertiary education were more likely to agree that hubs had helped to support their child with their education. This is likely due to these hub participants facing more barriers to supporting their child, such as lower confidence in understanding the school.

Chart 2.14. Reported impact of hub participation on school readiness and child engagement for participants with children five years or younger



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census



2.3 English

Supporting culturally diverse families to learn and practise English.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | English

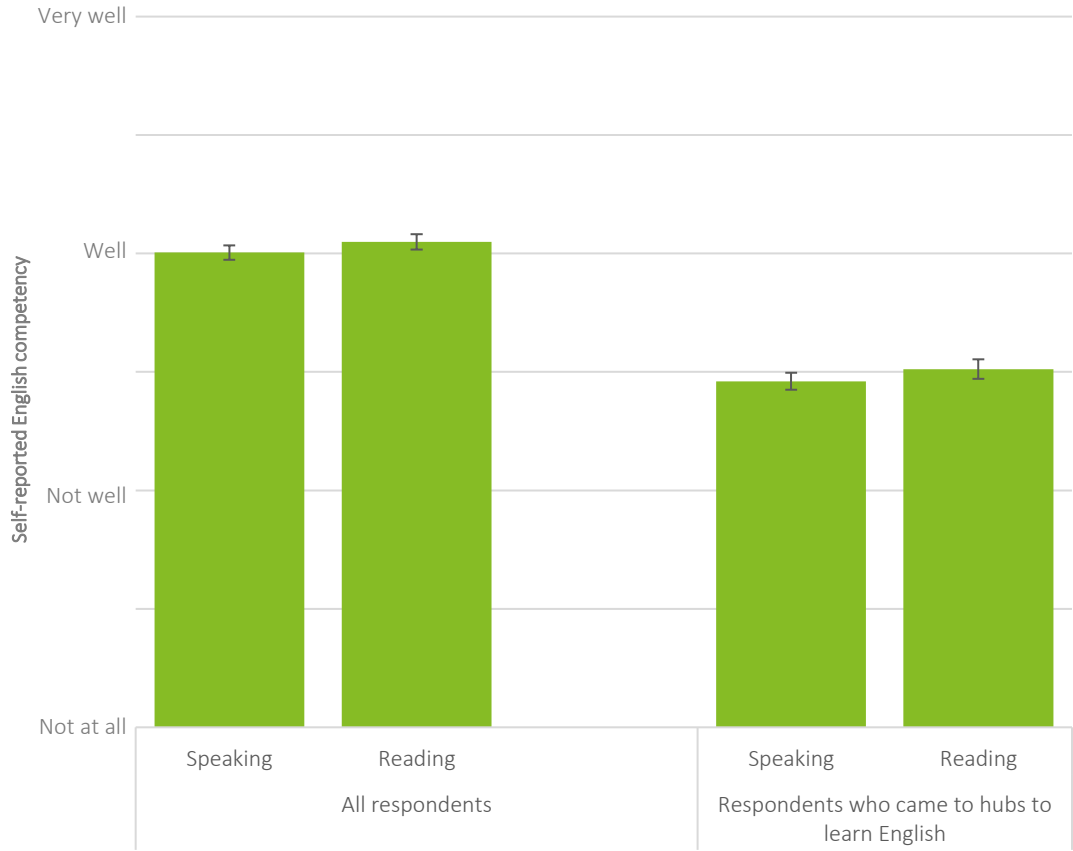
2.3.1 Value of increased confidence due to English

Finding: Community hubs contributed to improved English language competency of hub participants, leading to improved confidence to engage with their communities.

Hubs provide access to formal and informal English language classes for culturally diverse families seeking to improve their English. Of the respondents to the 2023 Hub Census, 43.7% identified that they attended community hubs to learn English. Approximately half of these respondents had not attended an English class outside of community hubs since arriving in Australia.

Informally, greater hub participation is associated with improved self-rated English language competency. Analysis of the 2023 Hub Census shows that people who attended hubs more frequently tended to be 1.3 times more likely to self-rate their English language competency higher than those who attended less frequently, when holding other variables constant (See Appendix C for more information on this analysis). This may be associated with the informal avenues that hubs provide for people to learn English, such as conversations, English courses, and other classes.

Chart 2.15. Self-reported English language competency of respondents



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | English

2.3.1 Value of increased confidence due to English

Hubs also provide access to formal English classes. In 2023, approximately 1,540 people completed formal and informal English programs at hubs.

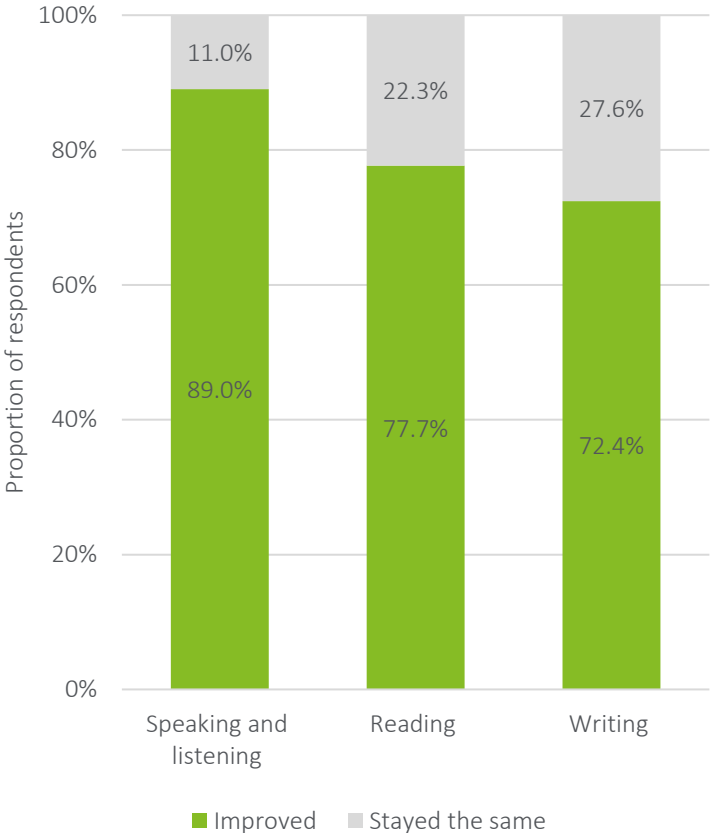
People attending formal English programs tended to see improvements in English language competency at the completion of their courses. Approximately 89.0% of census respondents felt that their speaking and listening skills had improved, while approximately three in four respondents felt that their reading and writing skills had improved post participation (Chart 2.16, a).

Further, improved English language competency tended to result in improved confidence. More than eight in ten respondents felt more self-confident and more confident to talk with others after participating in formal English programs. Further, of those who participated in English programs to seek employment, 75.2% felt more confident in looking for a job post completion of English programs (Chart 2.16, b).

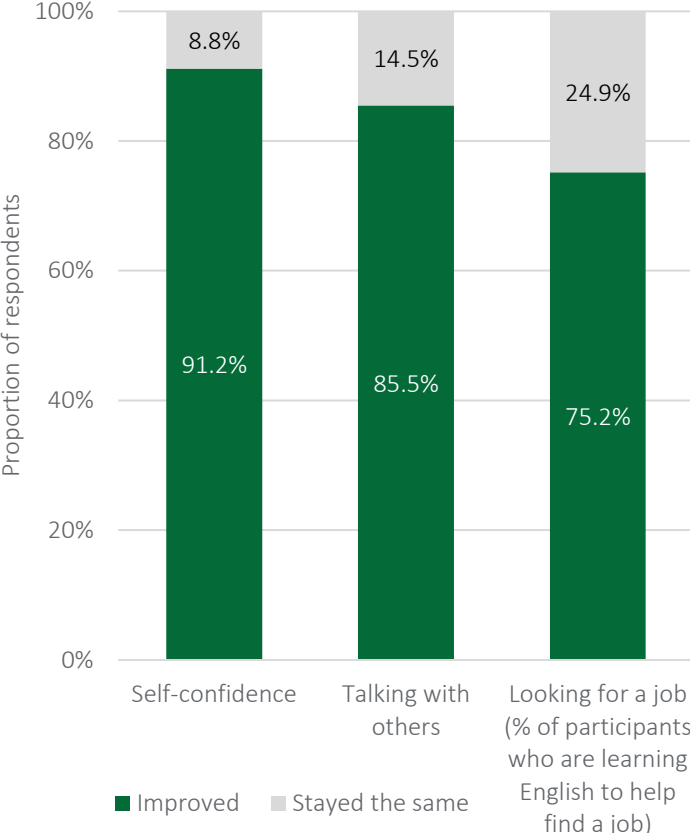
As shown in the 2019 SROI evaluation, improved English language competency and confidence translates into improved outcomes, including improved probability of finding employment, higher likelihood of studying tertiary education, and higher confidence of engaging in community events and activities. Due to the risks in double counting, benefits to hub participants associated with improved English language are not monetised in this evaluation, but are captured in the monetisation of other benefits, such as improved quality-of-life and employment pathways due to hub participation.

Chart 2.16. Self-reported outcomes associated with completing formal and informal English programs at hubs

a) Self-rated improvement in English language due to English learning classes held at hubs



b) Self-rated improvement in confidence due to English classes held at hubs



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis using data from the 2023 English and Childminding evaluation data



2.4 Vocational pathways

Building pathways to volunteering and employment.

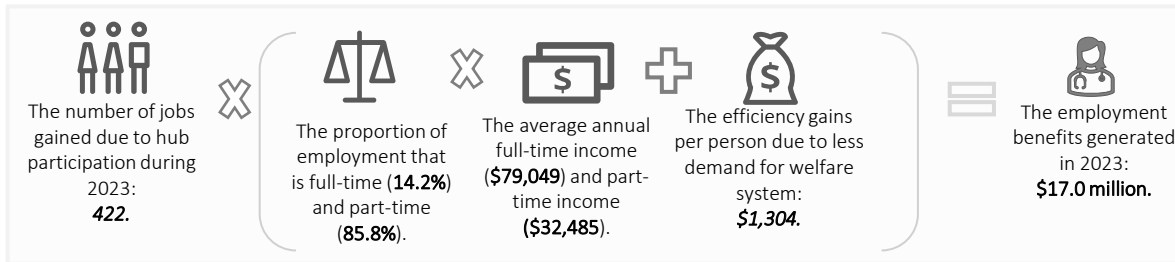
The social return on investment of the NCHP | Vocational pathways

2.4.1 Value of external paid employment that would be forgone had the hub not existed

Finding: Hub participants have gained employment directly due to participation in community hubs. The value of this employment was \$17 million in 2023.

Community hubs directly support hub participants to find 422 jobs in 2023. This employment is valued at \$17.0 million, which includes \$16.5 million in increased wages for the first year of employment, and \$550,127 in economic efficiency gains due to a reduced demand for welfare support from the government. This value is calculated as per Figure 2.5.

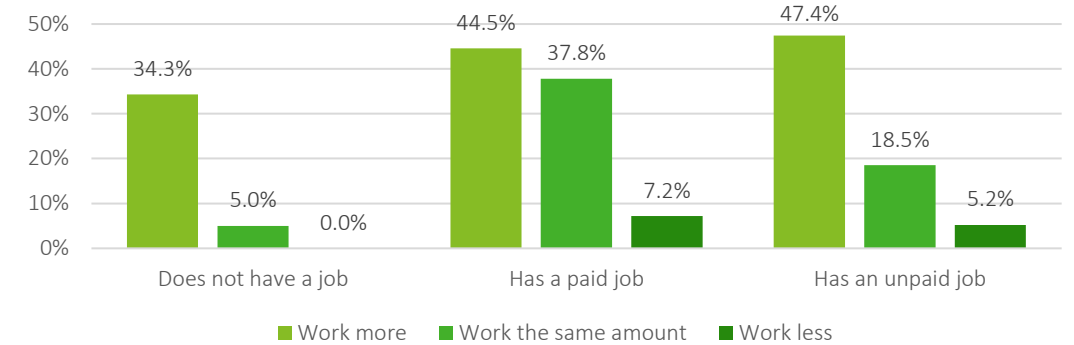
Figure 2.5. The calculation of employment gained associated with adult participation in community hubs



Adult participants who engage in hubs often have a specific desire to gain employment. In 2023, approximately one in three census respondents reported wanting to work more over the coming 12 months, the majority of whom did not have employment at the time of reporting (Chart 2.17). Further, almost two-thirds of people who wanted to work more had a tertiary education level.

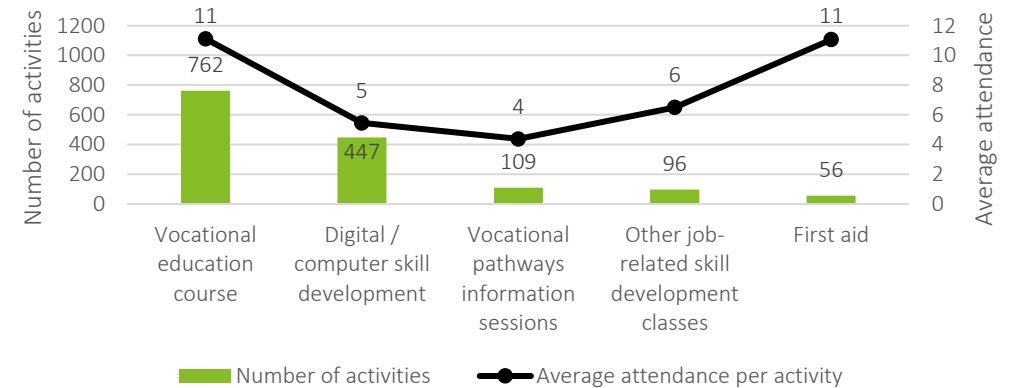
Hubs undertake several activities to support people to find employment. Hubs are an important source of access to tertiary education services, making 1,154 referrals to education and training services in 2023. Further, hubs directly provide or facilitate educational services within hubs, including vocational educational courses (such as barista courses), computer and digital skill development classes, educational sessions on access to tertiary education, and other skill development classes (Chart 2.18).

Chart 2.17. The proportion of respondents that would like to work more, less, or the same amount in 2023



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
 Notes: Values within categories do not add to 100% due to blank and non-applicable responses. There were some responses for people who did not have a job but wanted to work less. These responses were removed for the purpose of this analysis.

Chart 2.18. Number of employment-related activities delivered at hub and average attendance per activity



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using Hub Portal activity and referral data
 Notes: Employment-related activities are categorised through analysis of activity names and descriptions of hub activity data.

The social return on investment of the NCHP | Vocational pathways

2.4.1 Value of external paid employment that would be forgone had the hub not existed (continued)

Hubs also support people to directly find employment. Key methods and strategies used by hubs to directly support people to find employment were identified through qualitative hub leader reports, key examples of which are summarised below:



Increased confidence

Some people from linguistically diverse backgrounds lack the confidence in communicating in English. Hubs provide an opportunity for these individuals to gain confidence through English language classes, general conversation, and interview role-play.



Exposure to experiences

Through volunteering opportunities, community hubs provide participants with opportunities to gain experience in fields of work they have an interest in, leading to employment outcomes through exposure to work experience.



Direct matching

Sometimes community hubs can directly match hub participants with employment opportunities, either at the respective school or with an associated party.



Higher education support

Some hub participants are supported through community hubs to complete higher education qualifications such as community services diplomas or educational aid courses which bolster their relevant experience. In 2023, hubs made 1,154 referrals to education and training services.

Case studies

A mother at a NSW community hub wanted to gain employment at the school. The hub supported her to complete a community services diploma which, in turn, provided her with the necessary skills. The hub then referred her to a position at the school, where she now assists with the implementation of a new reading system for students.

A mother at a Victorian hub had a goal to work in leisure and lifestyle services within an aged care facility. The hub staff are supporting her to complete a Certificate IV in leisure and health and have also provided her with relevant volunteering experience running the hub craft class. This has improved her confidence around running activities and leading a class.

A parent at a QLD community hub was seeking employment after completing a traineeship. The hub leader was made aware of this through a discussion after a tutoring session. In the weeks after, the hub leader had several conversations with the school and negotiated a position for the hub participant as a school groundskeeper.

Two parents at a Victorian community hub had been attending English classes at an intermediate level for a few years which led them to volunteer in their hub at playgroup, childminding, the school canteen, and breakfast club. The hub also supported them in completing qualifications in Early Childhood and Education Support. As a result of their volunteering experience, new qualifications, and increased confidence, they have acquired employment in schools.

3. Conclusion

Conclusion

This report highlights the significant social impact that the NCHP made throughout Australia in 2023. However, there are some implementable actions that could improve the scope of measurable benefits associated with the program in the future.

This evaluation estimates that the NCHP delivered benefits of \$65.7 million to Australian society in 2023, equating to a social return on investment of \$3.5 for every dollar invested in the program. The social impact of community hubs is experienced through a range of factors, including improvement in quality-of-life of hub participants associated with their ability to build social connections, reduce social isolation, opportunities to volunteer, and increase access to services; improved early educational outcomes of children which lead to better employment prospects in the future; and improved pathways to employment. This social impact is made possible by the collaborative contributions of CHA, schools, government, and the broader community in which they operate.

Potential improvements to measuring the SROI of the NCHP over time

While the results of this SROI evaluation are robust, there are some changes that could further improve the confidence in the measured social impacts of the NCHP going forward, such as:

- **Validating and improving the representativeness of the Hub Census:** There is some evidence that suggests that the Hub Census is not fully representative of the broader population that participates in hubs over the course of a year. This may be due to some particular groups opting out of the Census, including those that participate less in hubs, or those that have had a *less positive* experience with hubs. Additionally, the census is conducted over a one-week period, potentially further contributing to these issues. Validating and improving the representativeness of the Hub Census is important for ensuring that results from the census can be extrapolated across the population of hub participants. This can be done in several ways, including by capturing greater demographic data in the Hub Census and Hub Portal activity data to allow for survey weighting of the census during analysis.
- **Collecting indicators of unique access:** There are currently limited data points that capture unique access to hubs for adults and children, or unique access to individual services at hubs. Capturing indicators of unique access would greatly improve the ability to accurately measure the attribution of different impacts.
- **Increased detail on referrals:** Current referral data does not have indicators of unique referral recipients or first-time access to services due to referrals. Collecting more detailed data on referrals could assist in measuring the benefits associated with increasing the access to services due to community hub referrals.

4. Appendix A: Evaluation Framework

Appendix A | Evaluation Framework

Engagement outcomes

#	Outcome	Measure(s)	Measurement
1	Hub participants develop broad social networks within the community	<p>Unique number of adult participants attending CHA</p> <p>Proportion of CHA participants who subsequently participate in broader society</p> <p>Average change in quality-of-life through hub engagement across one year, per person</p> <p>Average time spent engaging with a hub, per person</p> <p>Value of a statistical life year</p>	Monetisable
2	Hub participants feel empowered and confident to take their own initiative in accessing relevant services independently	<p>Unique number of adult participants attending CHA</p> <p>Average number of self-initiated service access episodes per adult hub participant</p>	Quantifiable
3	Families are confident in actively participating in the community and creating connections	<p>Unique number of adult participants attending CHA</p> <p>Proportion of adult participants who are socially isolated</p> <p>Change in quality-of-life through increased social participation</p>	Quantifiable
4	Hub participants advocate hub programs and services to bring in more of the community	<p>Increase in new participants over time, referred by peers</p>	Quantifiable
5	Hub participants demonstrate engagement by actively participating and contributing to delivering programs	<p>Number of hub participants contributing to program delivery (currently measured through Hub Portal)</p> <p>Average number of hours contributed per year (currently measured through Hub Portal)</p> <p>Value of time</p>	Monetisable
6	Schools are better placed to meet the needs of families, being more welcoming and more accessible	<p>Number and nature of culturally appropriate and inclusive activities at the school, involving the community hub</p> <p>Number and nature of culturally appropriate and inclusive practices and process at the school, since the community hub commenced</p> <p>Reported feelings of belonging and inclusion by unique adult participants</p>	Quantifiable
7	Hub participants participate in school activities and take up roles in school support (e.g., participation in P&C, volunteering, breakfast club, or tuckshop roster)	<p>Number of hub participants participating in school-based activities</p> <p>Average number of hours contributed per year</p> <p>Value of time</p>	Monetisable

Appendix A | Evaluation Framework

English outcomes

#	Outcome	Measure(s)	Measurement
8	Improved confidence to become an active citizen within the community	Number of unique hub participants participating in formal English programs (AMEP) Number of unique hub participants participating in other English classes/programs (Non-AMEP) Proportion of participants that experienced improved English language proficiency Change in quality-of-life attributable to confidence and communication due to English proficiency	Quantifiable
9	Improved communication and confidence to seek educational opportunities and support from relevant services	Number of unique hub participants participating in formal English programs (AMEP) Number of unique hub participants participating in other English classes/programs (Non-AMEP) Proportion of unique hub participants that participate in English classes/programs that access external education services due to improved English competency	Quantifiable
10	Improved ability to assist with children's learning at school	Number of unique hub participants participating in formal English programs (AMEP) Number of unique hub participants participating in other English classes/programs (Non-AMEP) Proportion of unique hub participants that participate in English classes/programs that engage more frequently in their child's education due to improved English competency	Quantifiable
11	Increased employment prospects due to improved English	Number of unique hub participants participating in formal English programs (AMEP) Number of unique hub participants participating in other English classes/programs (Non-AMEP) Proportion of unique hub participants that participate in English classes/programs who gained employment without additional hub intervention Nature of employment (ie., full-time/part-time) Average annual wage Efficiency gains due to less demand for welfare system	Quantifiable

Appendix A | Evaluation Framework

Early childhood outcomes

#	Outcome	Measure(s)	Measurement
12	Children have improved educational engagement and achievement	<p>Unique number of children attending CHA</p> <p>Reduced probability of a child that participated in a community hub being identified as developmentally vulnerable on the AEDC communication domain</p> <p>The value of improved net lifetime earnings due to improved educational outcomes</p>	Monetisable
13	Increased participation of families in school activities	<p>Number of hub participants participating in school-based events</p> <p>Average number of events attended per adult attending school-based activities</p>	Quantifiable
14	Timely referral to services and supports (e.g., child health, family services)	<p>Number of referrals per person, by program/service</p>	Quantifiable
15	Connecting families with additional development programs or services (e.g., swimming lessons, library reading groups)	<p>Unique number of external referrals to skills and life skills-based programs or services</p> <p>Number of hub-facilitated programs or services</p> <p>Average number of hub-facilitated unique attendees per program</p>	Quantifiable
16a	Increased access to universal health services (e.g., maternal health, vaccination)	<p>Unique number of referrals to maternal health services</p> <p>Proportion of maternal health services attributable to hub involvement</p> <p>Improved maternal outcomes resulting from appropriate prenatal care</p>	Quantifiable
16b	Increased access to universal health services (e.g., maternal health, vaccination)	<p>Unique number of referrals to vaccination programs</p> <p>Proportion of vaccinations attributable to hub involvement</p> <p>Improved child health outcomes resulting from appropriate immunisation</p>	Quantifiable
16c	Increased access to universal health services (e.g., maternal health, vaccination)	<p>Unique number of referrals to other health services</p> <p>Proportion attributable to hub involvement</p> <p>Improved health outcomes resulting from other health services</p>	Quantifiable
17	Reduced requirement for schools to provide intensive educational support for children with developmental delay	<p>Unique number of children attending community hubs</p> <p>Reduced likelihood that a student will require in-school supports due to participation in the community hub</p> <p>The cost to the school of supporting a child with a learning/developmental delay</p>	Monetisable

Appendix A | Evaluation Framework

Vocational outcomes

#	Outcome	Measure(s)	Measurement
18	Hubs contribute hub participant employment through skills, knowledge, and networks gained at hubs	Number of hub participants who gained employment outside of CHA network Nature of employment (ie., full-time/part-time) Average annual wage (full-time/part-time) Efficiency gains due to less demand for welfare system	Monetisable
19	Hub participants provided opportunities to gain local experience at the hub and/or the school (e.g., volunteering opportunities, child minding duties, breakfast club, P&C)	Number of hub participants who gained employment within CHA network Nature of employment (ie., full-time/part-time) Average annual wage (full-time/part-time) Efficiency gains due to less demand for welfare system	Monetisable

4. Appendix B: Technical appendix

Appendix B | Technical Appendix Overview

Methodology for calculating the SROI of the NCHP in 2023

Appendix B includes details on the following calculation components:

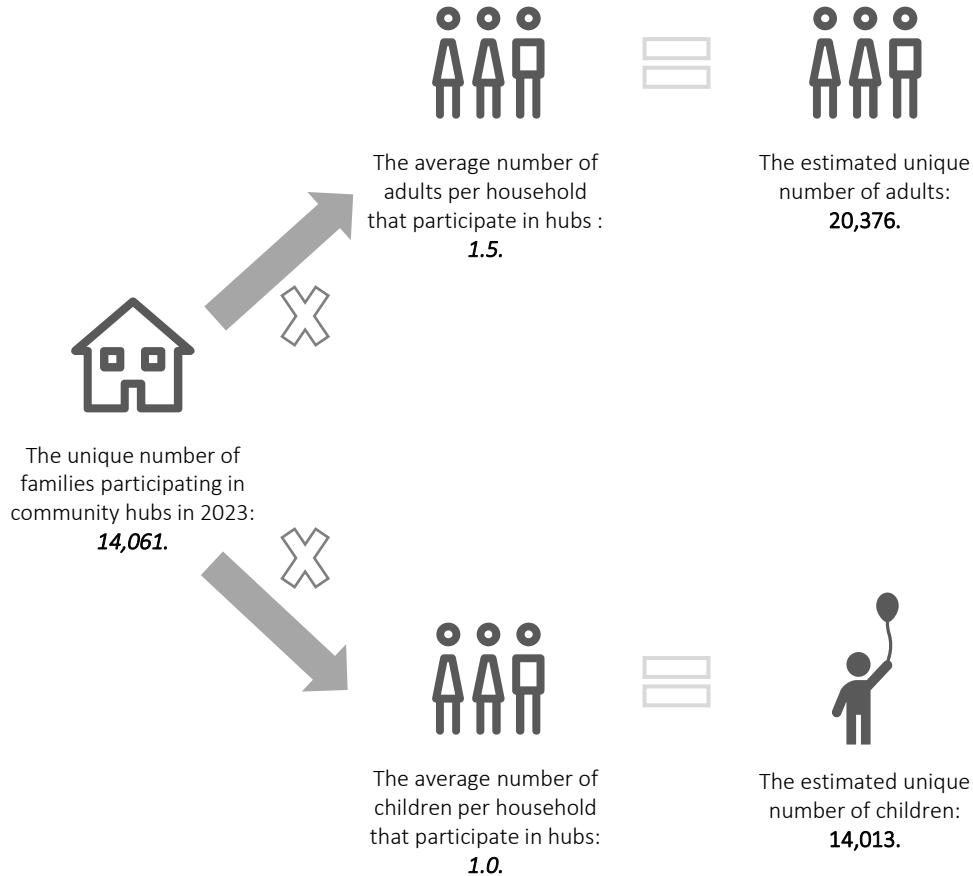
- Estimating unique adults and children,
- Quality-of-life improvements associated with participation at the community hub,
- Value of volunteering in hubs and schools,
- Improved educational outcomes associated with participation at the community hub,
- Reduced need for in-school supports due to participation in the community hub,
- Value of employment gained due to participation at community hubs and,
- In-kind costs of the NCHP.

Further details are also available in the [Technical Appendix of the 2019 SROI Evaluation](#).

Appendix B | Estimating unique adults and children

Calculation methodology

Figure B.1. Approach to estimating unique participants



Unique adult and children participants were estimated as follows (see Figure B.1) :

- **The unique number of families participating in community hubs in 2023:** This figure is an aggregation of the number of families reported by hub leaders to have attended their hub in 2023 through the Hub Portal.
- **The average number of adults per household:** The Hub Census asks the question, “Of the adults who live with you (not including you), how many have come to the hub in the past 12 months?”. Using this survey data, the number of adults per family is scaled according to the total number of adults reported to be from the household. For example, if a person responds that two other adults from their household attend the hub, that person’s family will be attributed three family members. However, there is a chance that the Hub Census was filled out by multiple people from the same household. To account for this, every response reporting at least one other household member is assumed to have a 20% chance of being double-counted – a conservative estimate applied through consultation with CHA.
- **The average number of children per household:** The Hub Census asks the question, “Of those children, how many have come to the hub in the past 12 months?”. Using this survey data, the number of children per family is scaled according to the total number of children reported to be from the household. For example, if a person responds that two children from their household attend the hub, that person’s family will be attributed two children. The same approach to accounting for double-counting is then applied as with the average number of adults per household.

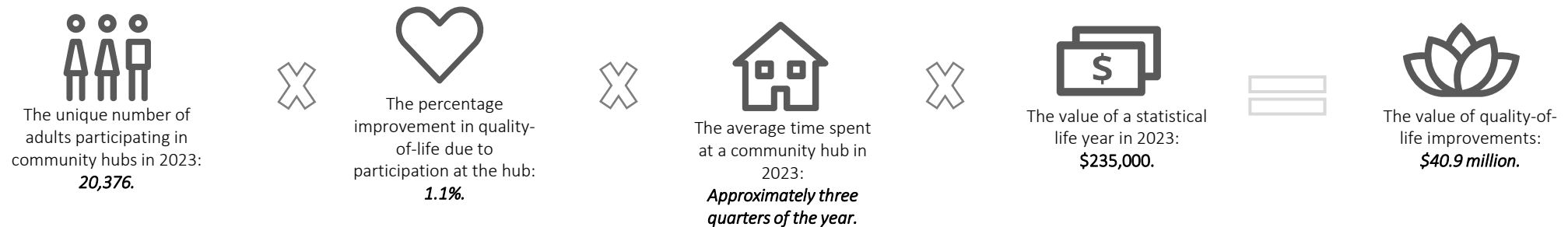
Notes: Due to rounding, multiplying individual components of the equation together may not result in the displayed value.

Appendix B | quality-of-life improvements associated with participation at the community hub

Calculation methodology

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the impact of hub participation on quality-of-life (outcome 2.1.1).

Figure B.2. The calculation of quality-of-life improvements associated with adult participation in community hubs



Notes: Due to rounding, multiplying individual components of the equation together may not result in the displayed value.

Components are calculated as follows:

- **The unique number of adults participating in community hubs in 2023:** The calculation used to derive the unique number of adult participants is described on page 45.
- **The percentage improvement in quality-of-life due to participation at the hub:** This variable is based on the quality-of-life tool implemented as part of the 2019 SROI evaluation. This tool measured how the quality-of-life of participants changed from before they joined a hub to after they joined a hub. The estimate was rebalanced based upon evidence from the 2023 Hub Census, specifically on the length of time hub respondents have been a part of their respective hubs in comparison to survey data from the 2019 survey. See the [2019 SROI evaluation of the NCHP](#) for more information on the definition of quality-of-life and how it was measured.
- **The average time spent at a community hub in 2023:** This variable aims to measure the percentage of a hub participant year that was improved due to participation in a community hub. The variable is estimated based upon the share of all families that joined a given hub in a given term. Families who joined a hub in Term 1 are assumed to have spent the full year with the hub while families who joined in Term 4 are assumed to have only spent the final quarter of the year with the hub.
- **Value of a statistical life year in 2023:** This variable measures the monetary value of improvement in quality-of-life. It is sourced from the Office of Impact Analysis, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.¹⁴

Appendix B | Value of volunteering in hubs and schools

Calculation methodology

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the impact of hub-facilitated volunteering opportunities on volunteer welfare (outcome 2.1.2).

Figure B.3. The calculation of improvements in wellbeing for school and external volunteers associated with volunteering opportunities at community hubs



Notes: Due to rounding, multiplying individual components of the equation together may not result in the displayed value.

Components are calculated as follows:

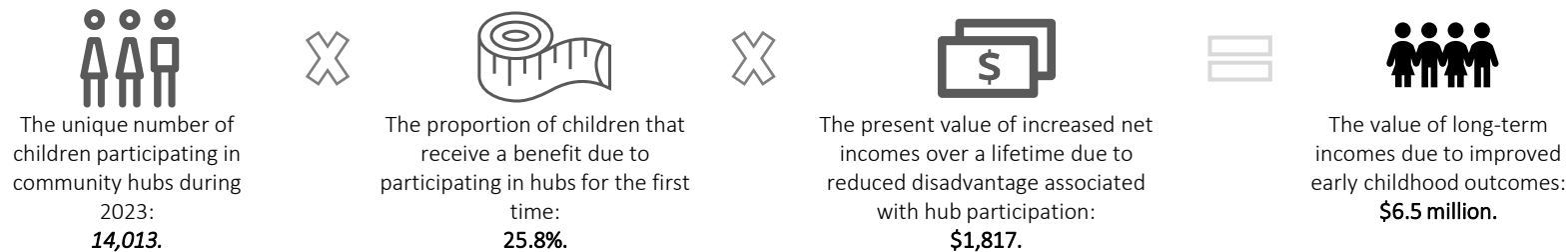
- **The total number of hours spent volunteering at hub activities by school and external volunteers in 2023:** The total number of hours of school and external volunteering in community hubs as recorded by hub leaders through the Hub Portal activity data. Hub participant volunteers were not included in this analysis to reduce the risk of double counting benefits captured in outcome 2.1.1.
- **The estimated value of a volunteer hour:** To measure the improvement in welfare associated with volunteering, the value of a person's leisure time was used. Leisure time is the value that people place on undertaking activities for leisure. In this analysis, it is assumed that people receive an improvement in welfare equal to that of the value of their leisure time. The value of leisure used is sourced from the Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines.¹⁵

Appendix B | Improved educational outcomes associated with participation at the community hub

Calculation methodology

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the educational outcome improvements associated with child participation in community hubs (outcome 2.2.1).

Figure B.4. The calculation of educational outcome improvements associated with child participation in community hubs



Notes: Due to rounding, multiplying individual components of the equation together may not result in the displayed value.

Components are calculated as follows:

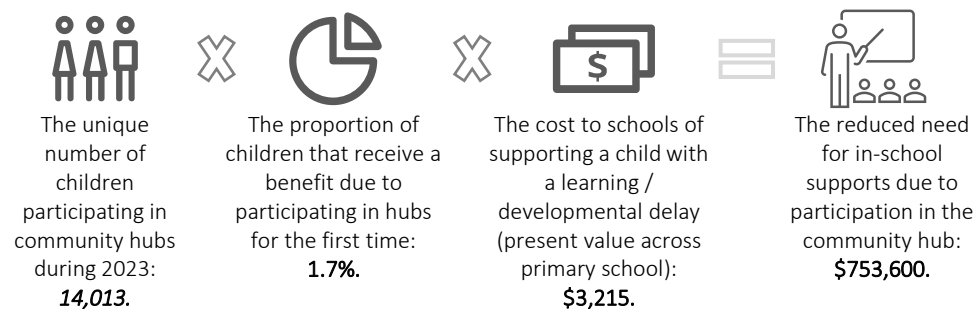
- **The unique number of children participating in community hubs during 2023:** The calculation used to derive the unique number of child participants is described on page 45.
- **Share of children that receive a benefit due to participating in playgroup for the first time:** The impact of hubs on school outcomes is associated with exposure to hubs, not degree or length of exposure to hubs. Therefore, to ensure the analysis is conservative, only children who participate in hubs for the first time in 2023, and participated in playgroups, will receive a benefit. This is calculated by multiplying the unique number of children, the proportion of children that attend playgroup (81.6% - sourced from the 2019 SROI evaluation) and the proportion of children that attend playgroup for the first time in 2023 (31.6% - informed by the length of time that hub participants attend hubs).
- **Present value of increased net incomes over a lifetime due to reduced disadvantage associated with playgroup participation:** Modelling was undertaken in the 2019 SROI evaluation to determine the present value of additional lifetime income due to child participation in hubs. This modelling is informed by research undertaken by Deloitte (through the 2019 SROI evaluation) and other literature. Inputs into this modelling were updated for the purposes of this analysis.

Appendix B | Reduced need for in-school supports due to participation in the community hub

Calculation methodology

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the impact of hubs on reduced need for in-school supports due to participation in the community hubs (outcome 2.2.2).

Figure B.5. The calculation of reduced need for in-school supports associated with child participation in community hubs



Notes: Due to rounding, multiplying individual components of the equation together may not result in the displayed value.

Components are calculated as follows:

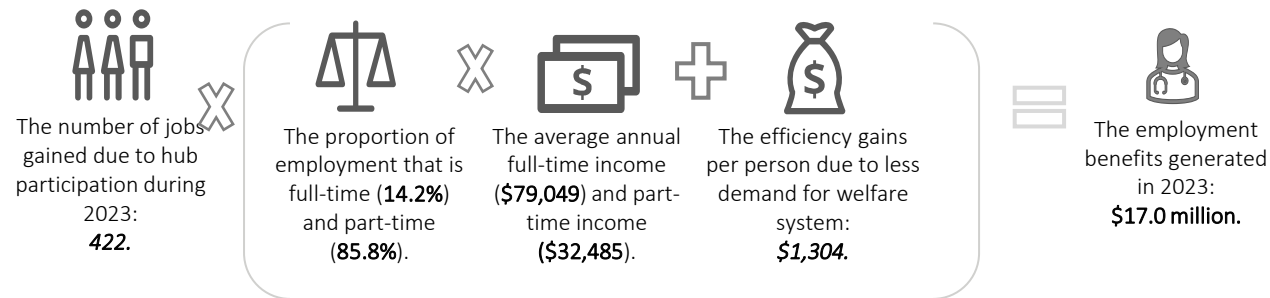
- **The unique number of children participating in community hubs during 2023:** The calculation used to derive the unique number of child participants is described on page 45.
- **The proportion of children that receive a benefit due to participating in hubs for the first time:** The impact of community hubs on the proportion of children from migrant backgrounds that require in-school supports was derived from the school principal survey implemented in the 2019 SROI evaluation. In this survey, school principals were asked to compare the proportion of children who require in-school supports between those who participate in the community hub and those from migrant backgrounds who do not participate. Overall, survey results estimated that community hubs were contributing to a reduction in the proportion of migrant children who need in-school supports by approximately 5.3%. Further, only children who participate in hubs for the first time in 2023 will receive a benefit. This is calculated by multiplying the reduction in the proportion of migrant children who need in-school supports (5.3%) and the proportion of children that attend playgroup for the first time in 2023 (31.6% - informed by the length of time that hub participants attend hubs).
- **The cost to the school of supporting a child with a learning/developmental delay:** The cost of supporting a student with delays in school is sourced from the Commonwealth Government's loadings for students with disability through the Schooling Resource Standard. This analysis assumes that people who may have required disability supports would have been classified as less complex. Therefore, a weighted average of the least complex disability categories as part of the School Resource Standard model is used for this analysis.¹⁷

Appendix B | Employment gained associated with adult participation in community hubs

Calculation methodology

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the impact of hubs on employment gained by hub participants (outcome 2.4.1).

Figure B.6. The calculation of employment gained associated with adult participation in community hubs



Components are calculated as follows:

- **Number of jobs gained:** The number of jobs reported to have been gained across the hubsHP by hub leaders in the Hub Portal activity and referral data.
- **The proportion of employment that is full-time and part-time:** The distribution of hub employment type is sourced from the 2023 Hub Census. It is assumed that people who gained employment in 2023 would have similar employment profiles to other employed hub participants.
- **Average annual full-time and part-time income:** The average incomes of people employed full-time and part-time in Australia in 2023 as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.¹⁸
- **Efficiency gains due to less demand for welfare system:** This measures the improvement in economic activity due to a reduced need for the Government to tax as there are fewer people reliant on Government as a source of income. This is based on evidence that Government income taxation causes some distortions in economic activity associated with impacting incentives to work. Therefore, a reduction on the need for Government income would theoretically be associated with reduced taxation in the future, which would increase economic activity. The calculation for this benefit is informed by the estimated average welfare income of unemployed Australians according to the 2021 ABS census (estimated at \$6,604),¹⁹ as well as an assumption of the marginal excess burden of taxation (0.24).²⁰

Appendix B | In-kind costs of the NCHP

Total cost breakdown

This section details the assumptions used to calculate the program costs and in-kind contributions of hub delivery. These contributions are measured through the opportunity cost of using the resources for the NCHP. An opportunity cost is an economic cost that measures the value of using a resource at the foregone revenue if it was used for an alternative activity.

Table B.1. Assumptions used to calculate the in-kind contributions to hub delivery

Outcome	Value (\$2023)	Method
1) Program costs	\$8,586,783	
1.1) Direct program costs	\$8,586,783	Reported program expenses for the calendar year 2023 as reported by Community Hubs Australia.
2) In-kind contributions provided by schools	\$3,677,517	
2.1) Facility rent costs	\$2,238,540	Valued at the opportunity cost of using a facility for community hubs. The opportunity cost of community hub spaces is assumed to be equal to market rental prices for commercial properties sourced from desktop research.
2.2) Electricity and internet costs	\$1,219,344	Valued at the market value of electricity and internet used by hubs (opportunity cost of resource use). Usage of electricity and internet by hubs is assumed to equate to small commercial properties, sourced from desktop research.
2.3) School principal time (in-kind)	\$160,994	Valued at the market value of a school principal's time (their opportunity cost). It is assumed that school principals engage with hubs, on average, for 18 hours per year.
2.4) Administration time (in-kind)	\$58,640	Valued at the market value of a school administration officer's time (their opportunity cost). It is assumed that school administration officers spend 16 hours per year on undertaking financial reporting for hubs.
3) In-kind costs provided by broader community	\$6,757,806	
3.1) External program delivery	\$6,256,609	Valued at the opportunity cost (i.e., foregone revenue) of external providers in providing services at community hubs.
3.2) Volunteering (in-kind)	\$501,198	Valued at the opportunity cost (i.e., foregone leisure time) of volunteers in contributing to services at community hubs.
Total in-kind contribution (2 + 3)	\$10,435,324	
Total cost (1 + 2 + 3)	\$19,022,107	

4. Appendix C: Additional analysis

Appendix C | Additional analysis

Analysis of factors that correlate with specific outcomes associated with hub participation.

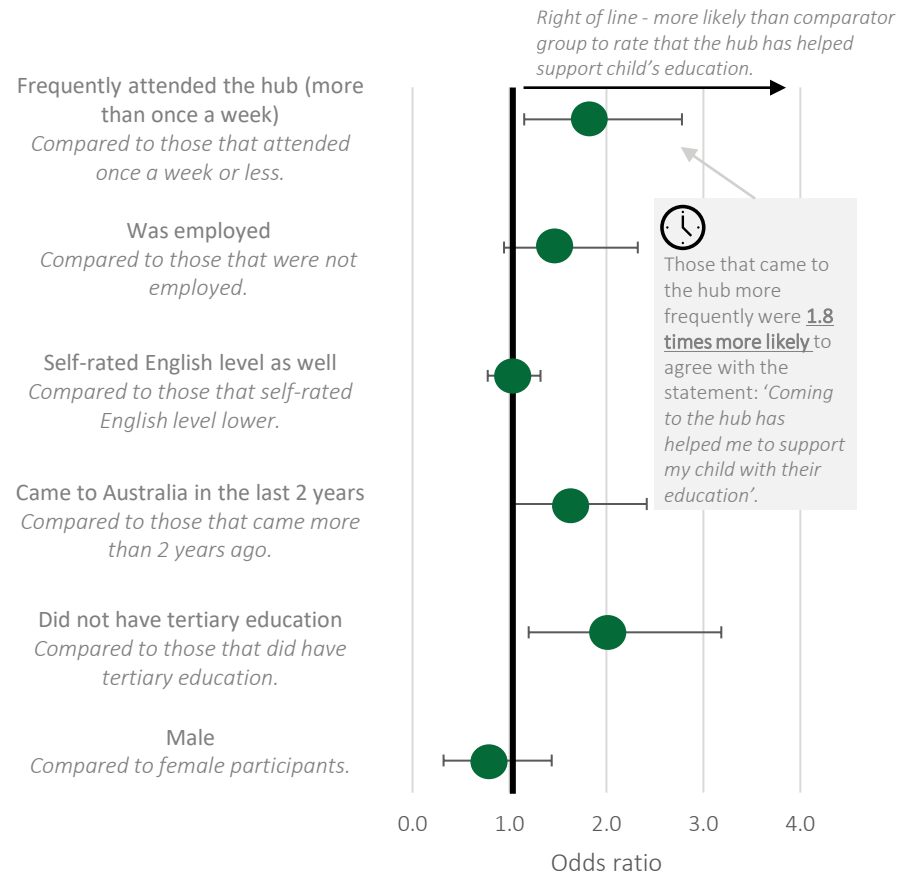
Multinomial logistic regression analysis was undertaken using 2023 Hub Census data to determine factors of hub participant characteristics and interactions with the hub that were associated with two specific outcomes:

1. The extent to which Hub Census respondents agree with the statement: 'Coming to the hub has helped me to support my child with their education' (Chart C.1).
2. The extent to which Hub Census respondents positively rate their English language competency (measured as the average of their self-rated level of English speaking and reading competency) (Chart C.2).

The results of the analysis produce conditional odds ratios, which are a measure of the increased (odds ratio of greater than 1) or decreased (odds ratio of less than 1) likelihood that someone has an outcome, relatively to a comparator population, holding other variables constant.

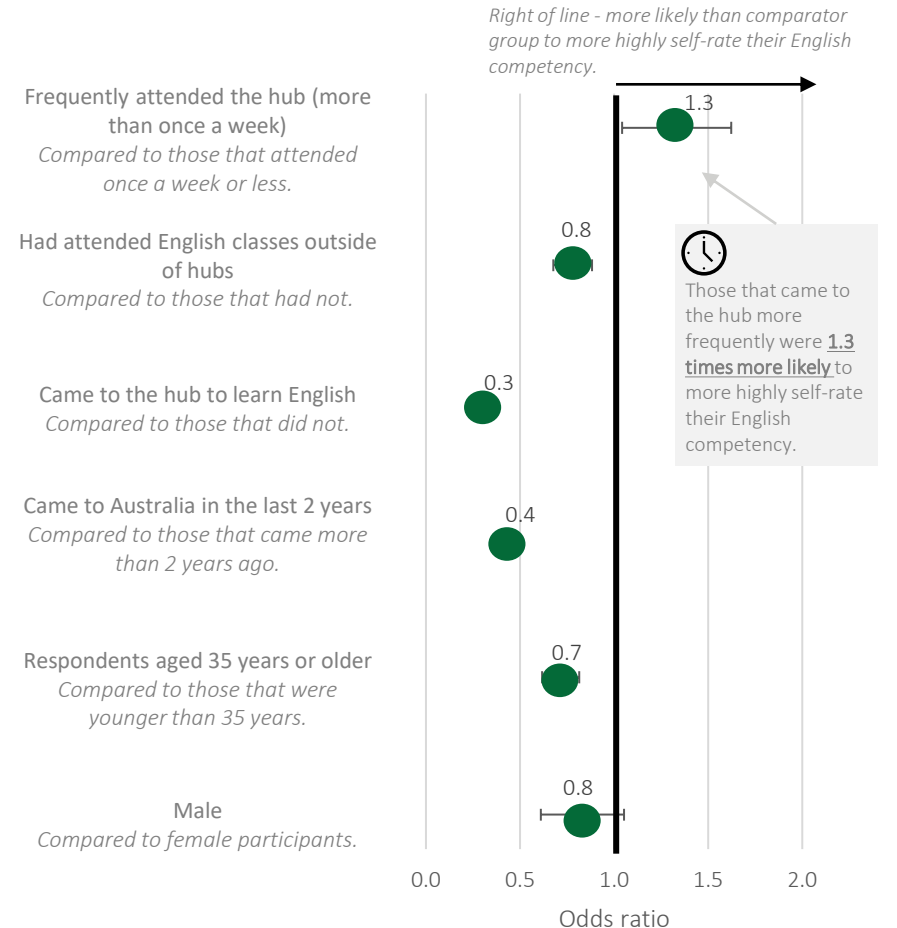
For example, respondents that frequently attended hubs in 2023 were 1.8 times more likely to agree with the statement: 'Coming to the hub has helped me to support my child with their education' than hub participants that attend once or less per week.

Chart C.1. Characteristics of hub participants that are more likely to agree with the statement: Coming to the hub has helped me to support my child with their education



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

Chart C.2. Determinants of self-rated English language competency (average of self-rated English speaking and reading ability)



Source: Deloitte Access Economics analysis (2024) using data from the 2023 Hub Census
Notes: Bars are confidence intervals at the 95% significance level.

5. End notes and references

End notes and references

- 1) Murdoch Children's Research Institute. 2017. *Exploring the impact of Community Hubs of school readiness*.
- 2) Community Hubs Australia. 2022. *2022 NCHP Year in Review*.
- 3) This is based upon Deloitte Access Economics analysis of Hub Portal activities and referrals data.
- 4) The definition of culturally diverse people aligns with the ABS definition, found here <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/cultural-diversity-australia>
- 5) The number of different languages spoken by hub participants and the number of nations from which hub members originate from is sourced from the Hub Program Census 2017-18.
- 6) Improved wellbeing generated by volunteers is measured only for volunteers who do not participate in hub activities. This is done to reduce the risk of double counting of hub participants that also volunteer, as their improvement in wellbeing is measured through improvements in quality-of-life, within outcome 2.1.1. The value of increased confidence, social participation, engagement, and connections.
- 7) Spera, C., Ghertner, R., DiTomaso, A. 2015. *Out of work? Volunteers Have Higher Odds of Getting Back to Work*. Sector Quarterly, 44 (5), 886-907.
- 8) Deloitte. 2013. *2013 Deloitte Volunteer IMPACT Survey*.
- 9) Fujiwara D., Oroyemi, P., McKinnon, E. 2013. *Estimating the value of volunteering using subjective wellbeing data*. UK Department for Work and Pensions and the Cabinet Office.
- 10) The number of activities provided by hubs is calculated by assessing activity names and descriptions. Activities that were assessed to be social events were removed from the analysis. Only activities that were assessed to be services (an activity that is focused on providing a skill or information to participants) is included in the analysis.
- 11) Gregory, T., Sincovich, A., Harman-Smith, Y., & Brinkman, S. 2017. *The reach of Playgroups across Australia and their benefits for children's development: A comparison of 2012 and 2015 AEDC data*. Telethon Kids Institute, South Australia.
- 12) The categorisation of child development activities by type of activity is calculated by assessing activity names and descriptions of child-development related activities provided at hubs.
- 13) Olsen, G., Fuller, M. 2008. *Home-school Relations: Working Successfully with Parents and Families*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- 14) Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. 2023. *Value of statistical life*.
- 15) Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines. 2021. *M1 Public Transport: Parameter Values Technical Report*.
- 16) Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2019. *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2018*.
- 17) Department of Education, Skills and Employment. 2022. *Recurrent funding for schools*.
- 18) Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2022. *Characteristics of Employment, Australia*.
- 19) Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2022. *2021 Census – sources of income*.
- 20) Harrison, M. (2013). *A Critique of the Productivity Commission's Cost-Benefit Analysis in the 'Disability Care and Support' Report*. Journal of Policy Analysis and Reform, 20(2), 77-88.

Limitation of our work

General use restriction

General use restriction

This report is prepared solely for the internal use of Community Hubs Australia. This report is not intended to and should not be used or relied upon by anyone else and we accept no duty of care to any other person or entity. The report has been prepared for the purpose set out in our engagement letter. You should not refer to or use our name or the advice for any other purpose



Deloitte refers to one or more of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited (“DTTL”), its global network of member firms, and their related entities (collectively, the “Deloitte organisation”). DTTL (also referred to as “Deloitte Global”) and each of its member firms and related entities are legally separate and independent entities, which cannot obligate or bind each other in respect of third parties. DTTL and each DTTL member firm and related entity is liable only for its own acts and omissions, and not those of each other. DTTL does not provide services to clients. Please see www.deloitte.com/about to learn more.

Deloitte is a leading global provider of audit and assurance, consulting, financial advisory, risk advisory, tax and related services. Our global network of member firms and related entities in more than 150 countries and territories (collectively, the “Deloitte organisation” serves four out of five Fortune Global 500® companies. Learn how Deloitte’s approximately 312,000 people make an impact that matters at www.deloitte.com.

Deloitte Asia Pacific

Deloitte Asia Pacific Limited is a company limited by guarantee and a member firm of DTTL. Members of Deloitte Asia Pacific Limited and their related entities, each of which are separate and independent legal entities, provide services from more than 100 cities across the region, including Auckland, Bangkok, Beijing, Hanoi, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Melbourne, Osaka, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Sydney, Taipei and Tokyo.

Deloitte Australia

The Australian partnership of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu is a member of Deloitte Asia Pacific Limited and the Deloitte organisation. As one of Australia’s leading professional services firms, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and its affiliates provide audit, tax, consulting, risk advisory, and financial advisory services through approximately 8000 people across the country. Focused on the creation of value and growth, and known as an employer of choice for innovative human resources programs, we are dedicated to helping our clients and our people excel. For more information, please visit our web site at <https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en.html>.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.
Member of Deloitte Asia Pacific Limited and the Deloitte organisation.