



Budget Statement – National Treasury 24th February 2021

The Minister of Finance delivered the annual budget statement. While the headline figure for ECD suggested an increase in spending on the ECD conditional grant over the MTEF period (to R3.5 billion), the detailed figures indicate that the value of the per child subsidy will now decrease in real terms between 2020/21 and 2023/24.

The table below shows the figures provided in Vote 19 (Social Development) of this year's Budget, and compares the subsidy forecasts with those in Vote 19 of the 2020 Budget.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Budget 2021: ECD conditional grant - R 000s	915,149	1,056,661	1,191,918	1,242,500
Year on year difference - R 000s		141,512	135,257	50,582
% growth		15%	13%	4%
Budget 2020 per child per day subsidy projection (R)	17	17.77	18.57	
Budget 2021 per child per day subsidy projection (R)	17			17.50
Budget 2020 estimate of total # children subsidised			692,469	
Budget 2021 estimate of total # children subsidised	668,518			717,767

- The ECD conditional grant budget will rise by 4% between 2022 and 2023 (an inflationary increase).
- 50,000 more children are forecast to receive the ECD subsidy between 2020 and 2024.
- The annual increases in the per child subsidy have been revised downwards from last year's budget.

The ECD conditional grant budget will be R1.2 billion in 2023/24. By way of comparison the basic education (schools) budget will be R279 billion in the same year.

[2021 Budget statement](#)

[Vote 19 \(Social Development\)](#)

ABOUT SMARTSTART SmartStart is taking quality and affordable early learning opportunities to tens of thousands of children. Our vision is to achieve population-level change in access to early learning by building an integrated national delivery platform which can unlock system capacity. Our innovative social franchise model harnesses the experience of implementing partners, who license and support a network of early learning practitioners to deliver the same quality programme for 3-5 year-olds. Find out more at smartstart.org.za.

Education Series Volume VII: Children's education and well-being in South Africa, 2018 – Statistics South Africa

25th February 2021

The government has published volume VII in their education series, entitled, 'Children's education and well-being in South Africa, 2018'. The analysis is based on data from the General Household Survey 2018, and does not take into account the later data from GHS 2019.

The findings below relate to the 0-6 year-old age group – this means they include Grade R and Grade 1 and therefore overall access is higher than for 0-4 year-olds alone.

- While school/ECD access for the 0-6 year-old group increased overall, between 2016 and 2018:
 - access for 4 and 5 year-olds decreased slightly
 - access to ECD centres specifically (i.e. not schools) was stagnant
- Comparing provinces between 2016 and 2018:
 - The gap in school/ECD access for 0-6 year-olds between the highest (Gauteng) and lowest (KZN) provinces remained the same.
 - There was a decline in the proportion of 0-6 year-olds attending ECD centres (nurseries, creches and pre-schools) in 6 out of 9 provinces.
- In 2018, a significant proportion of 5 year-olds (34.5%) and 6 year-olds (17.8%) still attended ECD centres (not school).
- In 2018, 54.5% of parents reported not paying any fees for their 0-6 year-old to attend ECD/school. A further 27% reported spending a monthly fee of between R1 and R300.
- 41% of all 0-6 year-olds were never read/told stories at home by someone in their household.
- 30% of all 0-6 year-olds had parents reporting that they never talked to their children about things they had done.
- In 2018, 68% of all children received the Child Support Grant. Children living in Limpopo, KZN and Eastern Cape were most likely to receive the Child Support Grant.
- In 2018, only 40% of 0-4 year-olds lived with their biological father, compared to 86% who lived with their biological mother.

[Children's education and well-being in South Africa 2018](#)

Wave 3 of National Income Dynamics Study – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (NIDS-CRAM)

17th February 2021

The findings of Wave 3 of the National Income Dynamics Study – Coronavirus Rapid Mobile Survey (NIDS-CRAM) were published. This is a broadly representative panel survey of South Africans which includes specific analysis of access to ECD.

The study found that despite the notable recovery from quarter three to quarter four of 2020, ECD attendance had not recovered to pre-lockdown levels.

- Among respondents interviewed in Nov/Dec 2020 and living with children aged 0-6, 28% reported at least one child attending an ECD programme in the past 7 days. This is up from just 7% in July/Aug.
- Extrapolating these responses to the level of the child suggests that about 31% of children aged 0-6 were enrolled in ECD programmes by Nov/Dec, compared to at most 15% in July/August.

The report also found that demand-side factors are constraining access to ECD programmes. More respondents (48%) gave a demand-side reason (e.g. can't pay fees) for not returning than a supply-side reason (e.g. programme temporarily closed) (44%).

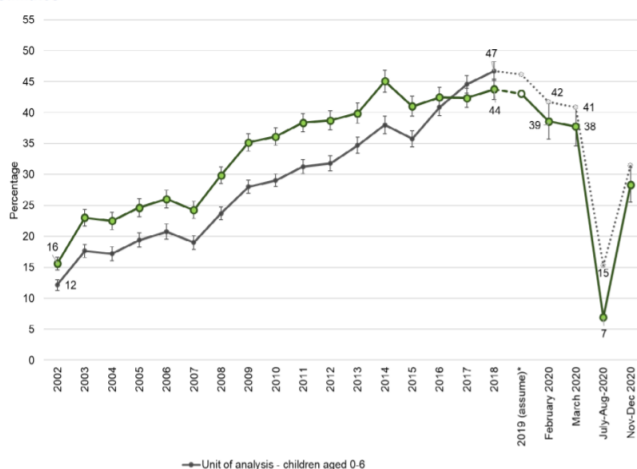
However, programme closure remained a significant reason for the non-return of children to programmes. Of respondents living with children attending ECD in February but not in the past 7 days, roughly 31% cited temporary closures of centres as the main reason for non-attendance and a further 6% indicated that the centre closed permanently.

The researchers found that ability to pay ECD fees was likely a key constraint to a larger recovery of the ECD system towards the end of 2020. Among respondents paying fees pre-lockdown, almost half (48%) indicate that they couldn't afford ECD fees in October.

'In conclusion, the twin goals of increasing both access to ECD services and improving the quality of these services remains under threat in South Africa.'

[NIDS-CRAM Wave 3 - all reports](#)

Figure 1: ECD attendance rates of children aged 0-6 from 2002-2018 (GHS) against 2020 NIDS-CRAM estimates



General Household Survey 2019 – Statistics South Africa

15th December 2020

The General Household Survey figures for 2019 were published (delayed from last May). The main data on access to ECD is shown in the table below:

Table 4.1: Percentage of children aged 0–4 years using different child care arrangements by province, 2019

Care arrangements for children aged 0–4 years	Province (Per cent)									
	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	RSA
Grade R, Pre-school, nursery school, crèche, edu-care centre	37,3	33,4	25,2	46,9	27,0	32,6	46,8	35,6	38,9	36,8
Day mother	6,4	2,5	4,8	4,3	2,3	0,3	6,1	1,5	5,3	3,9
At home with parent or guardian	46,9	56,5	60,7	41,0	57,0	61,2	40,6	54,8	46,0	50,2
At home with another adult	7,1	6,3	7,5	5,2	12,5	4,8	5,0	7,1	8,0	7,5
At home with someone younger than 18 years	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,1	0,1
At somebody else's dwelling	2,3	1,0	1,4	2,2	1,0	1,2	0,8	1,0	1,3	1,2
Other	0,0	0,3	0,5	0,4	0,2	0,0	0,6	0,0	0,5	0,3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

These figures indicate a decline in the number of 0-4 year-olds attending ECD programmes, *before* the onset of Covid-19. Access to ECD programmes in 2019 was lower than it was in both 2018 and 2017.

The table below consolidates categories and compares 2019 with previous years:

	Pre-school, creche, educare, day mother	At home with parent or another adult
2019	40.7	57.7
2018	43.9	55.1
2017	41.9	56.9
2016	40	58.5

[General Household Survey 2019](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Useful links:

[Government of RSA](#)

[Parliament of RSA](#)

[Parliamentary Monitoring Group](#)

Useful resources:

[Children's Act](#)

[National Integrated ECD Policy](#)

[Children Count \(UCT\)](#)