

# 1 SAAP use by accompanying children

In 2002–03 approximately 53,800 children accompanied their parent or guardian to a SAAP agency or received assistance because their parent or guardian was a client of an agency (Table 1.1). These children had approximately 71,250 support periods. These figures relate to children recorded on general client forms, which contain detailed information about accompanying children (see Appendix 3).

Some agencies that have a very high client turnover use high-volume forms. The number of children recorded on high-volume forms cannot be given because the weighting system used to estimate the number of children is based on records where a valid alpha code was obtained for the child, and child alpha codes are not collected on the high volume form. The total number of accompanying child support periods including high volume records was 75,750 in 2002–03.

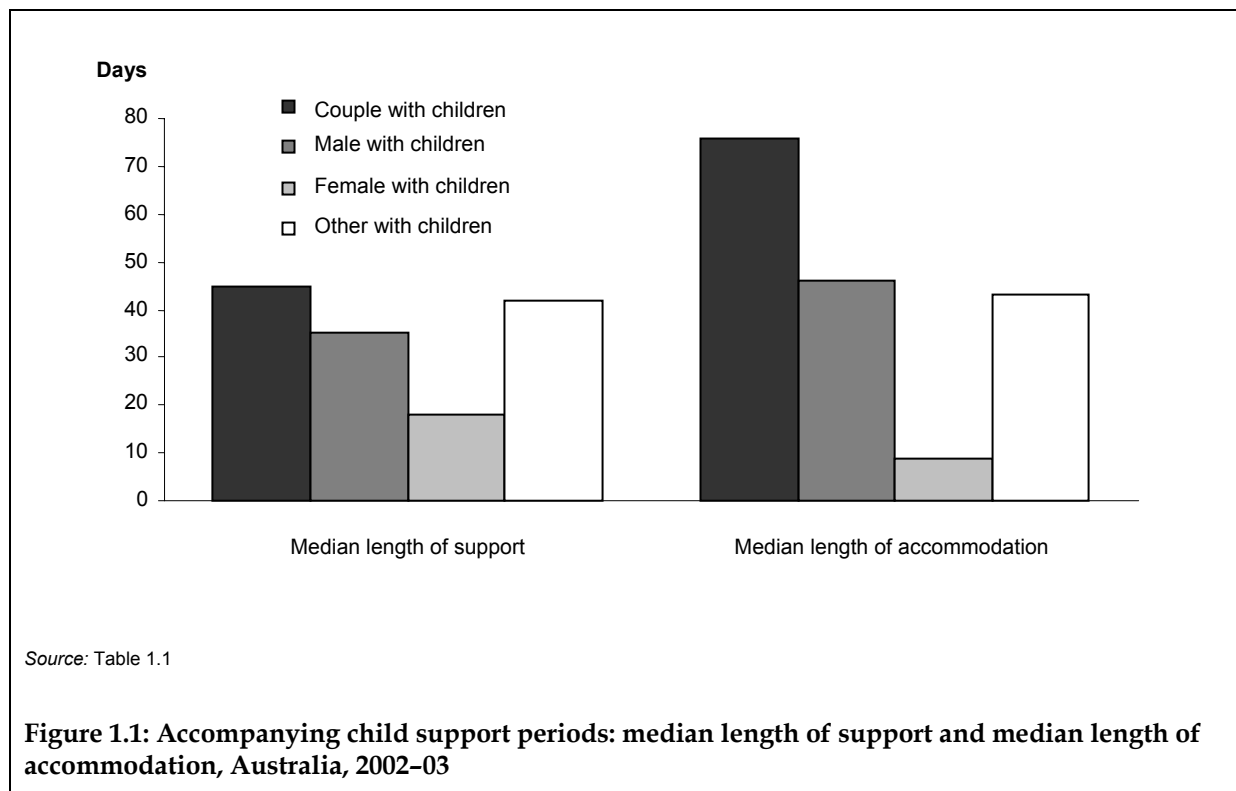
Fifty-five per cent of accompanying child support periods recorded on general client forms involved SAAP accommodation for at least part of the support period (derived from Table 1.1). It should be noted that the number of accompanying child support periods is larger than the number of children, as a child may accompany a parent or guardian in more than one period of support. It should also be noted that data about the start and end dates of support (and supported accommodation, when this occurs) are not collected for accompanying children. It is therefore assumed in this report that children were supported for the same lengths of time as their parent or guardian.

## Family group

Based on general form records only, the majority of children (46,600) accompanied their mother or female guardian to a SAAP agency (Table 1.1). These children accounted for 85% (60,750) of accompanying child support periods. A further 9% (6,350) of accompanying child support periods were for children accompanying a couple while 4% (2,500) were for children accompanying their father or male guardian. In addition to general form records, there were 4,500 accompanying child support periods recorded on high-volume forms.

There was some variation in the pattern of usage among children accompanying different client groups. Children accompanying a female client were more likely to be accommodated (in 57% of their support periods) than children accompanying a couple (43%) or a male client (36%). Repeat use of SAAP services was marginally higher among children accompanying a female client. These children averaged 1.3 support periods each while children accompanying a male client or a couple had an average of 1.2 support periods each.

Although, on average, children accompanying female clients were slightly more likely to return to SAAP than other children, their duration of support was likely to be much shorter. Children accompanying female clients had a median length of support of 18 days, while children accompanying a male client or a couple had median lengths of support of 35 and 45 days, respectively. Where accommodation was provided, children accompanying couples (76 days) stayed much longer than those accompanying other client groups (46 days for children accompanying a male client and 9 days for children accompanying a female client).



## Daily support

Table 1.2 indicates the total daily average demand for SAAP services in 2001-02. Including high volume records, the average daily number of accompanying child support periods was 14,650. When this figure is added to the daily average number of support periods for clients (that is, adults or unaccompanied children, 20,100), accompanying child support periods make up 42% of the total number of occasions of support provided by SAAP each day (Table 1.2; AIHW 2002:9).

In addition to ongoing support, SAAP agencies also provide one-off assistance. This includes assistance such as meals, showers, transport and financial aid that generally takes less than one hour of an agency worker's time. This type of activity is measured in SAAP by the Casual Client Collection. During the 2001-02 Casual Client Collection period, there was a daily average of 400 contacts by groups with accompanying children. One-off assistance was provided to an accompanying child in these contacts on around 800 occasions. Contacts by couples with children involved an average of 2.2 children, while contacts by an individual with children involved an average of 1.8 children. The small proportion of 'other' groups with children had an average of 3 children per contact (derived from Table 1.2).

## Unmet demand for accommodation

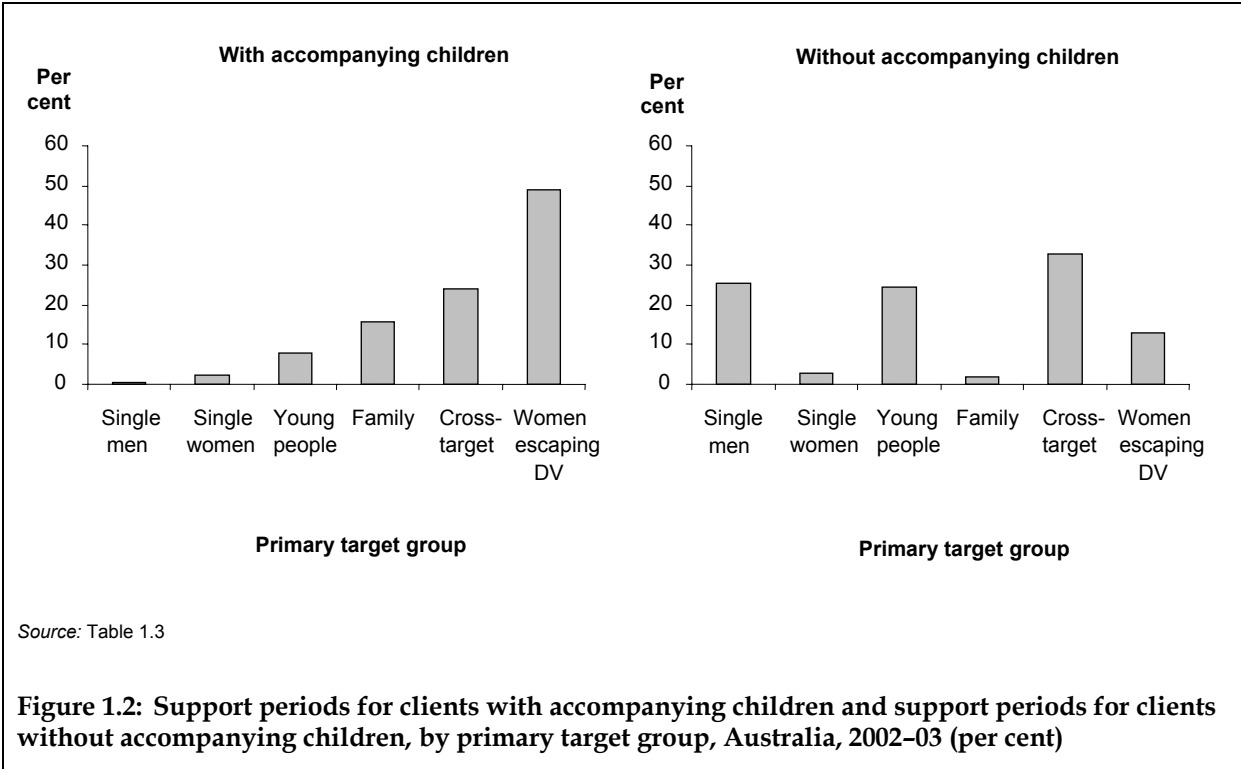
People may be turned away from a SAAP agency for a variety of reasons. These reasons are classified to determine whether a request is valid or invalid. Valid unmet requests for accommodation include people requesting assistance from an agency with an appropriate target group; a request made at an agency providing accommodation; or where the offer of accommodation by the agency is not refused by the person requesting assistance. During the 2001-02 Unmet Demand Collection period, a daily average of at least 100 valid unmet

requests for immediate accommodation were made by groups with accompanying children. These requests related to a daily average of at least 200 accompanying children.<sup>1</sup>

The turn-away rates for different requesting groups suggest that SAAP had more difficulty in meeting the immediate requests for accommodation from people with children. Although they represented only a small proportion of the total number of people requesting immediate accommodation, couples with children had considerable difficulty in obtaining SAAP accommodation: at the end of each day, 83% of couples with children making a request for immediate accommodation were turned away (AIHW 2003a: 47). For individuals presenting with children, the turn-away rate was 65%, while people who presented on their own had the lowest daily turn-away rate (49%).

**Types of agency used by clients with accompanying children**

In 2002-03, SAAP agencies provided 176,300 support periods to clients. Of these, 44,000 (25%) were for clients with accompanying children compared to 132,300 (75%) for clients without accompanying children. Table 1.3 shows that the majority of support periods with accompanying children were provided by agencies targeting women escaping domestic violence (49%). Agencies targeting families provided 16% of support periods with accompanying children.



<sup>1</sup> The term 'at least' is used because these figures underestimate the level of activity in SAAP agencies. In order to calculate turn-away rates, only data from agencies that participated in all three Collections (the Client Collection, Met Demand Collection and the Unmet Demand Collection) can be used to produce unmet demand for accommodation figures.

## 1.1 Tables

**Table 1.1: Accompanying children in SAAP: Client Collection summary table, Australia, 2002–03 (number)**

	<b>Couple with children</b>	<b>Male with children</b>	<b>Female with children</b>	<b>Other with children</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total number</b>
<b>Client Collection (ongoing)</b>						
<i>General form records only</i>						
<b>Accompanying children</b>	<b>5,400</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>46,600</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>53,800</b>
Accompanying child support periods <i>without</i> accommodation	3,600	1,600	26,050	150	850	32,250
Accompanying child support periods with accommodation	2,750	900	34,700	150	500	39,000
<b>Total accompanying child support periods (general form)</b>	<b>6,350</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>60,750</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>71,250</b>
Mean number support periods per child	1.17	1.17	1.32	1.06	1.09	1.32
Median length of support (days)	45	35	18	42	19	21
Median length of accommodation (days)	76	46	9	43	8	10
<b>Accompanying child support periods (including high-volume records)</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>64,900</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>75,750</b>

*Notes*

1. Cases excluded due to missing data (weighted): 0 accompanying children.
2. Cases excluded due to missing data (weighted): 0 accompanying child support periods.
3. Children may accompany a different client group in each of their support periods, therefore the total number of accompanying children is not the sum of the number of accompanying children in each client group.
4. 'Other with children' includes siblings presenting together with accompanying children and multi-generational families eg. a family group that consists of more than two generations, for example a mother, daughter and a grandchild.
5. Accompanying child support periods have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
6. Accompanying children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 1.2: Accompanying children in SAAP: daily average summary table, Australia, 2001-02 (number)**

	Couple with children	Person with children	Other with children	Total
<b>Client Collection</b>				
Accompanying child support periods (general form records only)	1,500	10,400	100	12,000
Accompanying child support periods (including high volume records)	1,600	12,900	150	14,650
<b>Casual Client Collection (21 February–6 March 2002)</b>				
Casual client contacts by groups with accompanying children	60	340	10	400
Number of accompanying children involved in casual client contacts	130	640	30	800
<b>Demand for Accommodation (22–28 August 2001 and 8–14 May 2002)</b>				
Valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation by groups with accompanying children	10	90	—	100
Accompanying children with valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation	30	170	—	200

*Notes*

1. Cases excluded due to missing data (weighted): 173 accompanying child support periods.
2. Cases excluded due to missing data: 234 casual client contacts by groups with children.
3. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0 unmet requests.
4. 'Other with children' includes siblings presenting together with accompanying children and multi-generational families eg. a family group that consists of more than two generations, for example a mother, daughter and a grandchild.
5. Adjustments have been made for missing data from the Demand for Accommodation Collection (see Appendix 1 in AIHW 2003a).
6. Accompanying child support periods have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
7. Figures from the Demand for Accommodation Collection and Casual Client Collections are unweighted.
8. Demand for Accommodation Collection data includes only data from agencies that participated in all three collections (the Client Collection, the Unmet Demand Collection and the Met Demand Collection). The figures thus understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.

*Sources:* SAAP Client Collection, Casual Client Collection and Demand for Accommodation Collection.

**Table 1.3: SAAP support periods with accompanying children and without accompanying children, by primary target group, Australia, 2002-03 (per cent)**

Primary target group of agency attended	With accompanying children	Without accompanying children	Total	
			%	Number
Young people	8.0	24.5	20.4	36,000
Single men only	0.6	25.4	19.2	33,900
Single women only	2.5	2.6	2.6	4,600
Families	15.8	1.7	5.2	9,200
Women escaping DV	49.1	12.8	21.9	38,500
Cross-target/multiple/general	24.0	32.9	30.7	54,100
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>44,000</b>	<b>132,300</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>176,300</b>

*Notes*

1. Support periods excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Support periods have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
3. Table includes high volume records.

*Source:* SAAP Client Collection.



## 2 Characteristics of accompanying children and their parents/guardians

This chapter focuses on the age, gender and country of birth of accompanying children and their parents or guardians. It should be noted that data in this chapter relate to general form records only as these characteristics are not all included on the high-volume form.

### Age, gender and country of birth of accompanying children

In 2002–03, at least 53,800 accompanying children received around 71,250 support periods (AIHW 2003a:58). The majority of accompanying children (88%) were 12 years of age or under, with children aged 4 years or under accounting for slightly more accompanying children than 5–12 year-olds (44% compared with 43%). Nine per cent of accompanying children were aged 13–15 years while the remaining 3% of children were aged 16–17 years. Accompanying child support periods showed a similar distribution for age. Accompanying children and accompanying child support periods were divided evenly between girls and boys. Just under 95% of accompanying children were born in Australia (AIHW 2003b:59). Slightly less than 2% per cent of children were born in Oceania. All other birthplaces accounted for the remaining 4% of accompanying children.

### Clients with accompanying children by client group and age of client

Table 2.1 shows the number of clients with accompanying children by the age group of the client. In each age group, females with children were considerably more likely to use SAAP services than other client groups with children. Overall, clients aged 25–44 years made up nearly 68% of all clients with accompanying children. In comparison, clients aged 17 and under made up around 2%, 18–24 year-olds made up 22% and clients aged over 65 years made up less than 0.2%. However, males with children were more likely to be 45–64 years of age than other client groups, with 17% being in this age group, compared to 6% of females and 7% of couples with children.

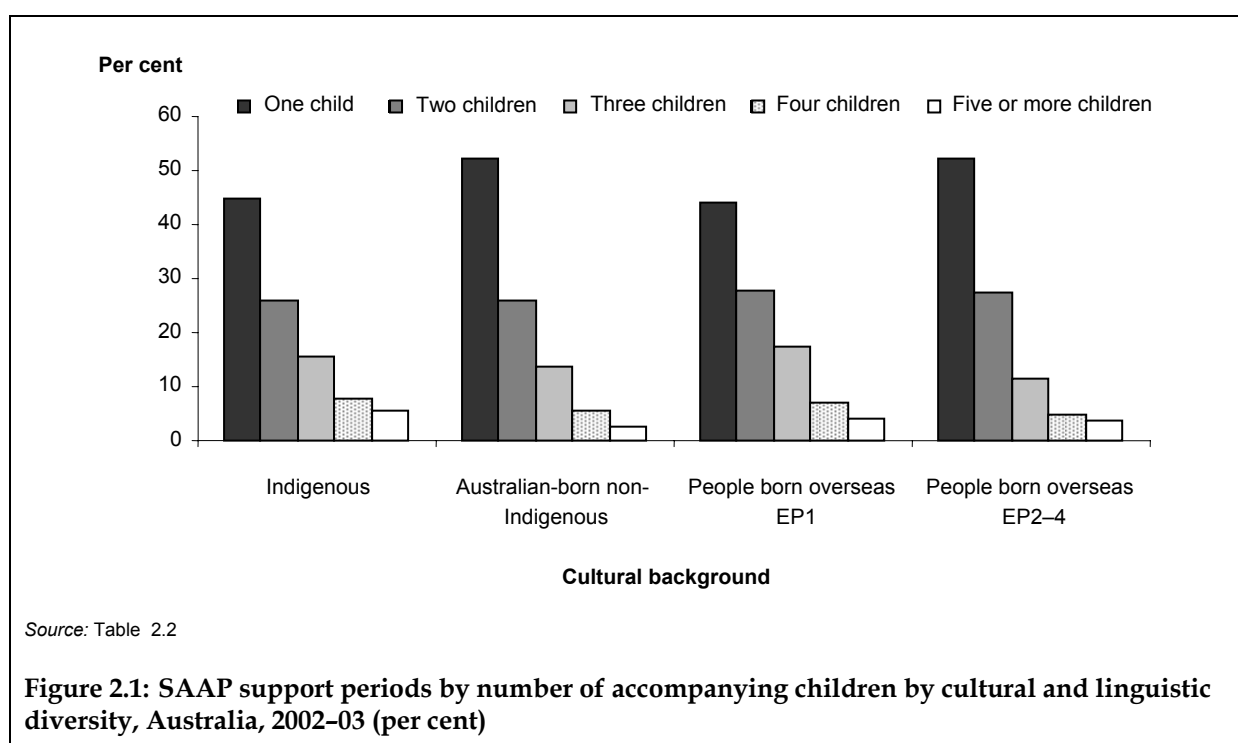
### Cultural background of SAAP clients and number of children

Sixty-two percent of clients with accompanying children were Australian born non-Indigenous and 22% were Indigenous Australians (Table 2.2). A higher proportion of Indigenous Australians were represented in the population of clients with accompanying children than they were in the total SAAP population (18%), and Indigenous Australians have a higher representation in SAAP than they do in the Australian population aged over 10 years (2%) (AIHW 2003b:19).

Twelve per cent of clients with accompanying children were born in predominantly non-English speaking countries (English proficiency group 2–4 countries) and clients from this background also made up a higher proportion of clients with accompanying children than they did in the total SAAP population (10%), although this is less than in Australian population overall (16%). Four per cent of clients with accompanying children were born overseas in predominantly English-speaking countries (English proficiency group 1 countries).

Table 2.2 also shows the number of children associated with support periods for clients in each cultural and linguistic group. It should be noted that, as clients may present with a different number of children in different support periods, the number of children per cultural group is presented at the support period level. For all cultural groups with children, there was only 1 child associated with a support period in 50% of cases. As the number of children increased, the number of support periods decreased, so that there were 2 accompanying children in 26% of support periods and 5 or more children in 4% of support periods.

The proportion of support periods with 1 child ranged from 44% for clients born in English Proficiency group 1 countries to 52% for Australian-born non-Indigenous clients and clients born in English proficiency group 2-4 countries. People born in English proficiency group 1 countries were more likely to be accompanied by 2 or 3 children than other cultural groups, while Indigenous clients were more likely to be accompanied by 4 or more children. The proportion of support periods for Indigenous clients accompanied by five or more children was more than twice that of Australian-born non-Indigenous clients.



## 2.1 Tables

**Table 2.1: SAAP clients with accompanying children, age of client by client group, Australia, 2002–03 (number)**

	<b>Couple with children</b>	<b>Male with children</b>	<b>Female with children</b>	<b>Other with children</b>	<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>Total (number)</b>
<b>Age of client</b>						
Under 17 years	100	50	450	—	2.0	600
18–24 years	1,150	150	5,350	50	22.4	6,550
25–44 years	2,600	1,000	16,450	50	68.0	20,000
45–64 years	300	250	1,500	—	6.8	2,000
65 years and over	—	—	50	—	0.2	50
<b>Total %</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>81.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,150</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>23,800</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>29,250</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 162 clients.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Clients may present in different client groups in each of their support periods, therefore the total number of clients in each client group is not the sum of the number in each client group.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 2.2: SAAP support periods for clients with accompanying children by number of accompanying children and cultural and linguistic diversity, and SAAP clients with accompanying children, by cultural and linguistic diversity, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent)**

	<b>Indigenous</b>	<b>Australian- born non- Indigenous</b>	<b>People born overseas EP1</b>	<b>People born overseas EP2–4</b>	<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Support periods for clients with accompanying children</b>				<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Number of children</b>						
One child	44.9	52.1	43.9	52.4	50.1	20,200
Two children	26.0	25.9	27.6	27.4	26.2	10,550
Three children	15.5	13.6	17.3	11.4	13.9	5,600
Four children	7.9	5.7	7.0	5.0	6.2	2,500
Five or more children	5.7	2.7	4.1	3.7	3.6	1,450
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>9,650</b>	<b>24,400</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>4,750</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>40,300</b>
<b>Clients with accompanying children</b>						
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>28,550</b>

*Notes*

1. Number of support periods excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 1,238.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Number of clients excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 875.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.



# 3 Service provision and unmet needs

SAAP agencies provide a wide range of services to accompanying children. In 2002-03, SAAP or CAP accommodation was the most commonly provided type of service, being provided in 73% of accompanying child support periods (AIHW 2003b:54). Meals (in 48% of cases) was the next most commonly provided type of service, followed by transport (47%). The types of services provided least often were sexual or physical abuse counselling, skills education, assistance with access arrangements, and brokerage services – all provided in 4% or less of accompanying child support periods.

Sometimes it is not possible for an agency to provide the requested support directly to an accompanying child, although a referral may be arranged. Overall, agencies did not provide any services directly to children in 4% (or 1,800) of accompanying child support periods in which information was provided on service requirements or provision. In the remaining 40,500, children received direct support.

The overall number of services provided, however, should be analysed in conjunction with unmet needs for each service type in order to assess SAAP's performance in relation to accompanying children. This chapter therefore discusses the level of met and unmet needs for children of different age groups for the 17 distinct services listed on the general client form. Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 at the end of this chapter form the basis of this discussion. Further discussion of the met and unmet needs of accompanying children is contained in Chapter 4, where service provision is analysed in the context of the reasons why clients with accompanying children sought SAAP support.

It should be noted that the requested services can be reported only once for an accompanying child in a particular support period: the total number of times a particular service is requested, provided or referred is not recorded. For example, a child may receive child care 3 times during their support period, but the Client Collection shows only that child care was provided, not that it was provided 3 times.

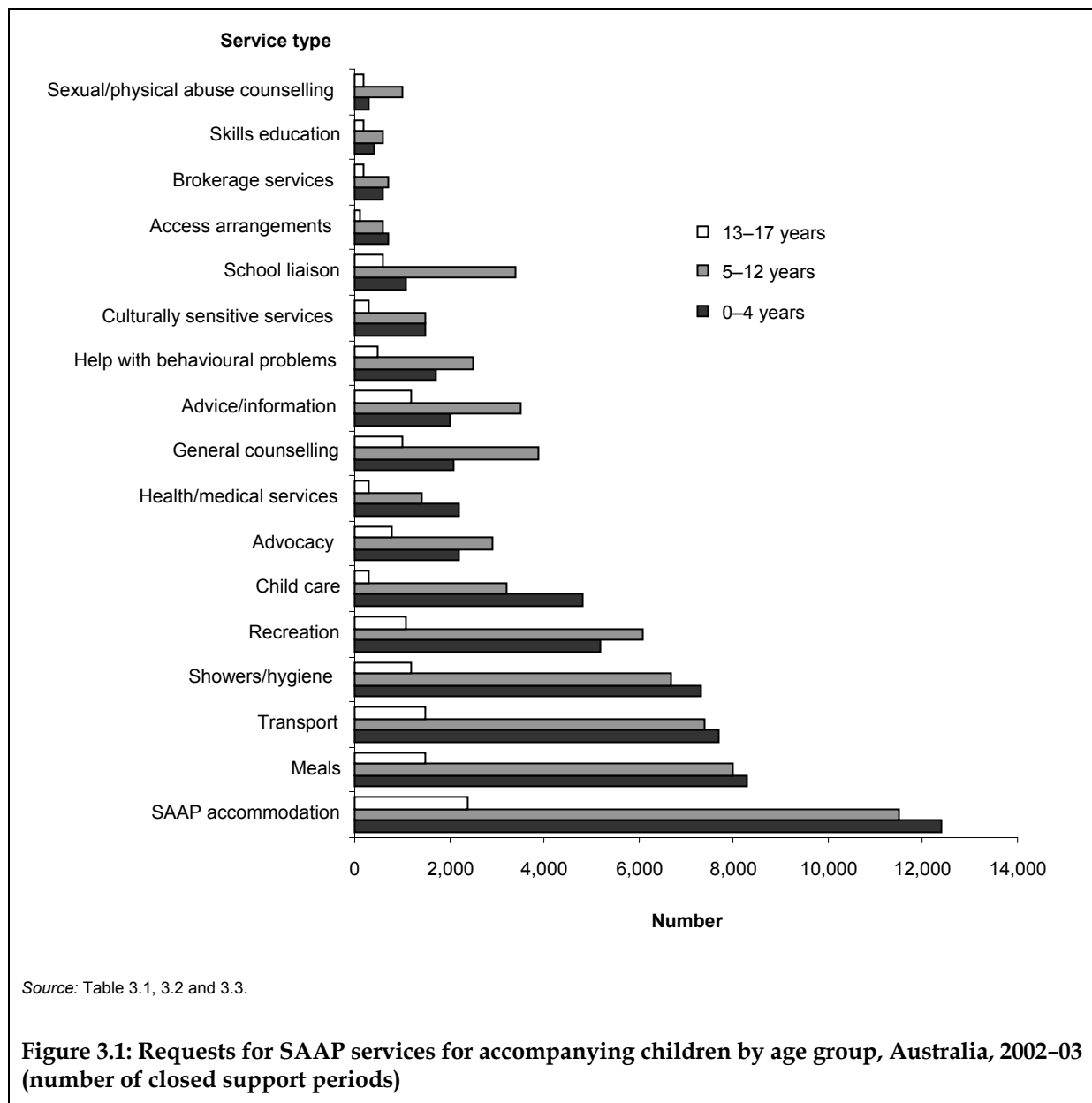
It is only after clients stop receiving support from an agency that we can examine which of their needs were met and which were not. For this reason, only closed support periods are considered when examining the services requested for accompanying children.

## Services needed by accompanying children

Figure 3.1 shows the number of closed support periods in which a need was identified for each service type by age group. The majority of needs for all service types were for children aged 0-4 years or 5-12 years, reflecting the much greater proportion of support periods for accompanying children in these age groups (90%) (derived from Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3). Children aged 13-17 years had only 10% of all accompanying child support periods, therefore it is not surprising that they had lower numbers of reported needs for every service type than the younger children.

Although children aged 0-4 years and 5-12 years had similar proportions of support periods (46% and 44%, respectively), they had different patterns of service type use. Accompanying children aged 0-4 years had the highest number of support periods with identified needs for assistance with access arrangements, health or medical services, child care, showers or

hygiene, transport, meals and SAAP or CAP accommodation. Accompanying children aged 5–12 years had higher number of support periods with identified needs for sexual or physical abuse counselling, skills education, brokerage services, school liaison, help with behavioural problems, advice or information, general counselling or support, and recreation.



### Meeting children's needs

Based on the proportion of support periods where needs were identified, the majority of service types were provided directly by the agency for all age groups.

Where SAAP or CAP accommodation was needed, agencies were able to provide this service in 96% of cases for 0–4 year-olds and 5–12 year-olds, and in 95% of cases for 13–17 year-olds. Basic support and services such as meals, showers and hygiene, recreation and transport also had high levels of direct provision, and were provided in at least 96% of cases. Similarly, for

all age groups, general support or advocacy services (except for assistance with access arrangements) were provided in at least 94% of cases where they were needed.

Culturally sensitive services were provided in at least 92% of cases where they were needed for all age groups. School liaison was requested in more support periods for children aged 0–4 years (1,100) and 5–12 years (3,400) than children aged 13–17 years (600). Service provision occurred in 86% of cases for 0–4 year-olds 88% of cases for the older children.

There was some variation in the provision of services across age groups for some service types. Child care was provided least often for children aged 0–4 years, with just under 85% of the 4,800 requests for this service being met directly by the agency. This service was unable to be provided directly for these children in 7% of cases, with a further 9% referred on. For older children, child care was provided in 91% and 93% of cases for 5–12 year-olds and 13–17 year-olds in 3,200 and 300 support periods, respectively. Correspondingly, there were fewer unmet needs and referrals for children in these age groups.

The provision of skills education and general counselling also differed across age groups. Skills education was provided in 93% of support periods in which it was needed for 0–4 year-olds, 88% for 5–12 year-olds and 80% for 13–17 year-olds. General counselling or support was provided most frequently for children aged 0–4 years (94%), and in 89% of cases for 5–12 year-olds and 88% for 13–17 year-olds.

## **Unmet needs**

The provision of help with behavioural problems, sexual or physical abuse counselling or support, health or medical services and assistance with access arrangements varied across age groups, but in general were the services which were least likely to be provided and therefore had the highest levels of unmet needs. In general, however, the services that were provided least often were more likely to be referred on. Whether the requested service was provided once it was referred is unknown, but it should be noted that referrals reported in the National Data Collection are formal arrangements between the referring agency and the referred agency.

Help with behavioural problems was provided in 87% of support periods where the service was requested for children aged 0–4 years, with 6% of needs going unmet at the end of support and 7% referred. For children aged 5–12 years, this service was provided in 81% of support periods, with 8% of needs remaining unmet and 12% referred. For older children, this need was met in 79% of cases, with 8% remaining unmet and 13% referred.

Sexual or physical abuse counselling or support was provided in 70% of cases where it was needed for 0–4 year-olds, with 12% of cases remaining unmet and 18% referred. For 5–12 year-olds, 66% of needs were met directly by the agency, with 11% of needs remaining unmet and 23% referred. For 13–17 year-olds, 68% of identified needs were met, with 8% going unmet and 24% referred.

Requests for health or medical services were met directly by the agency in 67% of support periods for 0–4 year-olds. Seven per cent of needs for this service were unmet at the end of support and 26% were referred. For 5–12 year-olds, 68% of needs were met, 8% unmet and 25% referred. For 13–17 year-olds, health or medical services were met in 66% of cases, 11% were unmet and 23% referred.

Assistance with access arrangements was provided proportionately more often to children aged 13–17 years (80%), followed by 5–12 year-olds (74%) and 0–4 year-olds (68%). For children aged 0–4 years, referrals were arranged for assistance with access arrangements in

23% of cases, with 9% of needs going unmet. For 5–12 year-olds, 19% of cases were referred and 8% of needs were unmet. The corresponding figures for 13–17 year-olds were 14% and 6%.

## 3.1 Tables

**Table 3.1: SAAP services requested for accompanying children aged 0–4 years in closed support periods, by provision, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent closed accompanying child support periods)**

Type of service	Not provided			Provided			Total	Child support periods in which services were requested (number)
	Neither provided nor referred	Referred	Subtotal	Provided only	Provided and referred	Subtotal		
<b>Accommodation</b>								
SAAP/CAP accommodation	1.6	2.6	4.2	92.9	2.9	95.8	100.0	12,400
<b>School liaison/child care</b>								
School liaison	7.0	6.9	13.9	74.5	11.5	86.0	100.0	1,100
Child care	6.6	8.9	15.5	76.4	8.1	84.5	100.0	4,800
<b>Counselling</b>								
Help with behavioural problems	6.1	6.9	13.0	75.5	11.5	87.0	100.0	1,700
Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	11.9	17.7	29.6	51.7	18.7	70.4	100.0	300
Skills education	5.4	1.4	6.8	78.1	15.0	93.1	100.0	400
General counselling/support	3.5	3.0	6.5	86.5	7.0	93.5	100.0	2,100
<b>General support/advocacy</b>								
Access arrangements	8.6	23.0	31.6	53.1	15.2	68.3	100.0	700
Advice/information	3.1	1.0	4.1	87.5	8.4	95.9	100.0	2,000
Brokerage services	2.2	4.0	6.2	83.9	9.9	93.8	100.0	600
Advocacy	2.4	1.3	3.7	85.9	10.3	96.2	100.0	2,200
<b>Specialist services</b>								
Culturally sensitive services	2.0	3.7	5.7	89.1	5.2	94.3	100.0	1,500
Health/medical services	7.0	26.1	33.1	42.2	24.7	66.9	100.0	2,200
<b>Basic support and other services n.e.s.</b>								
Meals	1.1	0.6	1.7	97.2	1.2	98.4	100.0	8,300
Showers/hygiene	1.1	0.1	1.2	98.5	0.3	98.8	100.0	7,300
Recreation	1.5	0.3	1.8	97.2	1.1	98.3	100.0	5,200
Transport	1.3	0.3	1.6	97.1	1.3	98.4	100.0	7,700
Other	1.3	4.1	5.4	84.3	10.3	94.6	100.0	2,550
<b>Total services requested</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>56,400</b>	<b>3,100</b>	<b>59,500</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>63,200</b>
<b>Associated closed accompanying child support periods</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>15,700</b>

**Table 3.2: SAAP services requested for accompanying children aged 5–12 years in closed support periods, by provision, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent closed accompanying child support periods)**

Type of service	Not provided			Provided			Total	Child support periods in which services were requested (number)
	Neither provided nor referred	Referred	Subtotal	Provided only	Provided and referred	Subtotal		
<b>Accommodation</b>								
SAAP/CAP accommodation	1.6	2.5	4.1	92.2	3.6	95.8	100.0	11,500
<b>School liaison/child care</b>								
School liaison	6.6	5.1	11.7	77.2	11.0	88.2	100.0	3,400
Child care	5.2	3.6	8.8	86.1	5.1	91.2	100.0	3,200
<b>Counselling</b>								
Help with behavioural problems	7.6	11.9	19.5	67.3	13.2	80.5	100.0	2,500
Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	10.7	23.2	33.9	45.9	20.3	66.2	100.0	1,000
Skills education	8.6	3.9	12.5	78.6	8.9	87.5	100.0	600
General counselling/support	5.1	5.8	10.9	81.4	7.8	89.2	100.0	3,900
<b>General support/advocacy</b>								
Access arrangements	7.7	18.5	26.2	57.4	16.3	73.7	100.0	600
Advice/information	2.9	0.8	3.7	89.3	7.0	96.3	100.0	3,500
Brokerage services	2.0	3.1	5.1	82.0	12.9	94.9	100.0	700
Advocacy	2.7	1.1	3.8	85.4	10.8	96.2	100.0	2,900
<b>Specialist services</b>								
Culturally sensitive services	4.5	3.7	8.2	85.8	6.0	91.8	100.0	1,500
Health/medical services	7.5	25.0	32.5	44.6	23.0	67.6	100.0	1,400
<b>Basic support and other services n.e.s.</b>								
Meals	0.9	0.7	1.6	97.1	1.3	98.4	100.0	8,000
Showers/hygiene	1.0	0.2	1.2	98.6	0.3	98.9	100.0	6,700
Recreation	2.0	0.8	2.8	95.1	2.2	97.3	100.0	6,100
Transport	1.2	0.3	1.5	96.7	1.8	98.5	100.0	7,400
Other	2.7	4.3	7.0	83.0	10.0	93.0	100.0	2,250
<b>Associated closed accompanying child support periods</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>14,950</b>

**Table 3.3: SAAP services requested for accompanying children aged 13–17 years in closed support periods, by provision, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent closed accompanying child support periods)**

Type of service	Not provided			Provided			Total	Closed child support periods in which services were requested (number)
	Neither provided nor referred	Referred	Subtotal	Provided only	Provided and referred	Subtotal		
<b>Accommodation</b>								
SAAP/CAP accommodation	2.5	3.0	5.5	90.8	3.8	94.6	100.0	2,400
<b>School liaison/child care</b>								
School liaison	6.1	6.2	12.3	72.0	15.7	87.7	100.0	600
Child care	3.8	3.2	7.0	87.6	5.4	93.0	100.0	300
<b>Counselling</b>								
Help with behavioural problems	8.0	12.7	20.7	62.4	17.0	79.4	100.0	500
Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	7.6	24.2	31.8	46.7	21.5	68.2	100.0	200
Skills education	9.1	11.3	20.4	62.6	17.0	79.6	100.0	200
General counselling/support	5.5	6.6	12.1	79.8	8.1	87.9	100.0	1,000
<b>General support/advocacy</b>								
Access arrangements	6.3	13.7	20.0	59.6	20.4	80.0	100.0	100
Advice/information	2.1	1.1	3.2	88.0	8.8	96.8	100.0	1,200
Brokerage services	2.7	3.2	5.9	80.5	13.5	94.0	100.0	200
Advocacy	2.7	1.2	3.9	80.9	15.2	96.1	100.0	800
<b>Specialist services</b>								
Culturally sensitive services	3.8	3.4	7.2	82.6	10.1	92.7	100.0	300
Health/medical services	11.1	22.6	33.7	44.8	21.5	66.3	100.0	300
<b>Basic support and other services n.e.s.</b>								
Meals	0.8	0.4	1.2	96.7	2.1	98.8	100.0	1,500
Showers/hygiene	1.2	0.2	1.4	98.1	0.5	98.6	100.0	1,200
Recreation	2.3	1.5	3.8	93.3	2.9	96.2	100.0	1,100
Transport	2.0	0.3	2.3	95.9	1.7	97.6	100.0	1,500
Other	4.1	7.6	11.7	81.1	7.2	88.3	100.0	450
<b>Associated closed accompanying child support periods</b>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	<b>3,350</b>

Notes to tables 3.1 to 3.3:

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 24,224 closed accompanying child support periods (including cases with no information on service requirements or provision).
2. Tables excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. For individual types of services, a need can be recorded only once within a support period, so percentages relate to accompanying child support periods.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

## 4 Domestic violence

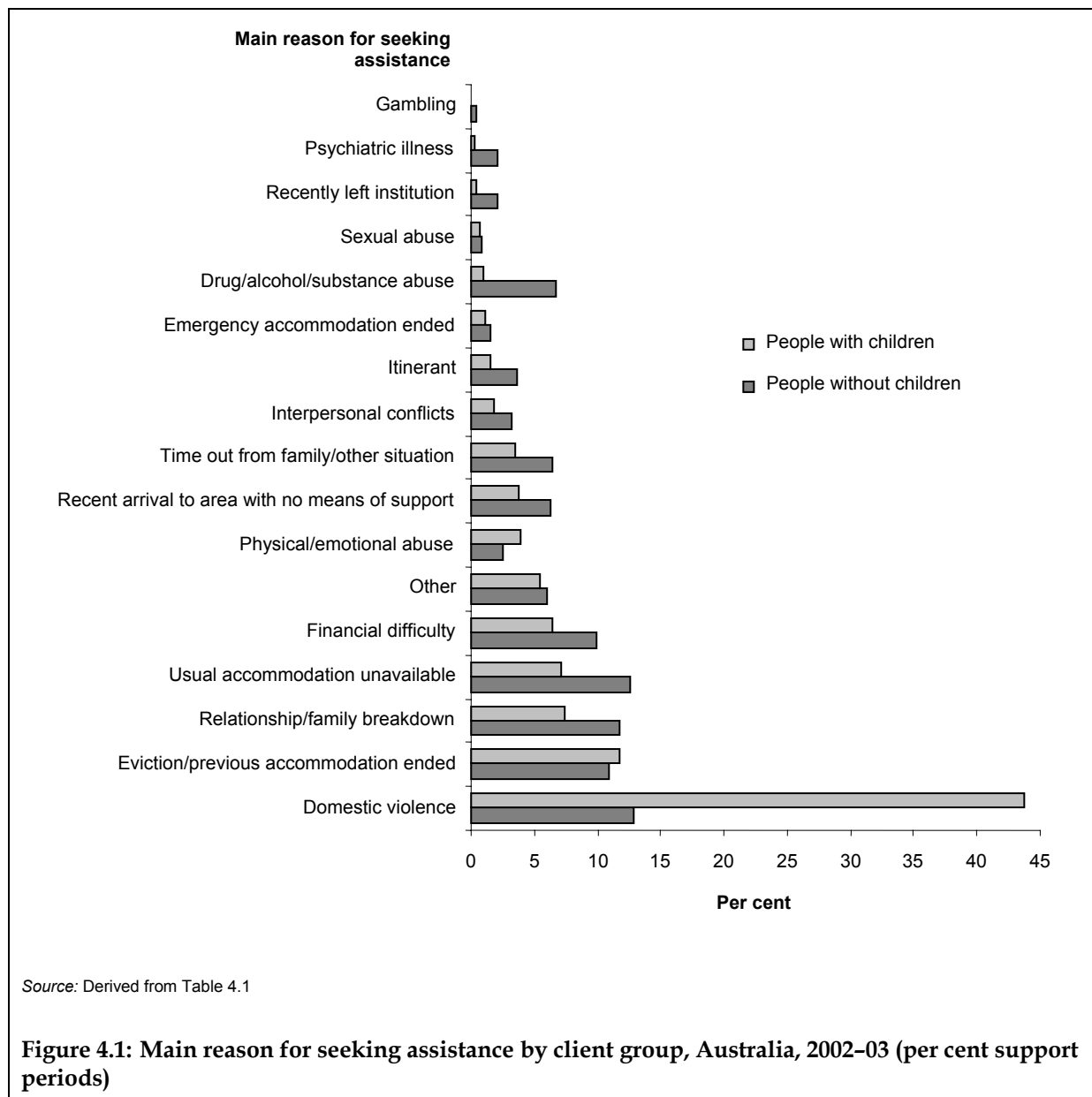
For client groups with children, domestic violence was the most common reason for seeking assistance, and around two-thirds (39,700) of accompanying child support periods were provided where the parent or guardian needed assistance due to domestic violence. Domestic violence therefore affects a large proportion of children in SAAP. Children who witness or experience domestic violence may suffer severe psychological trauma and have very specific needs. They display high levels of distress, low self-esteem and, in many cases, behavioural problems such as depression (Rogers 2003; Stone 2003). The ability of SAAP agencies to meet the needs of children who are in SAAP due to domestic violence is therefore of particular importance. The second section of this chapter focuses on service provision to children who accompanied a client who sought SAAP assistance due to domestic violence, and compares this with service provision to children who accompanied clients with other reasons for seeking assistance.

### Main reason by client group

Table 4.1 compares the main reasons for seeking assistance of groups with children and groups without children. Overall, domestic violence was cited as the main reason for seeking assistance in 22% of all support periods (Table 4.1). This figure is influenced by the large number of support periods for women with children (32,650). These clients reported domestic violence as their main reason for seeking assistance in 52%, or 16,900 of their support periods (Table 4.1). The next most common main reason for women with children was eviction or the ending of previous accommodation, reported in only 9% of support periods, followed by relationship or family breakdown (7%). Domestic violence was also the most common main reason for women without children, but was cited relatively less often (in 28%, or 11,100 support periods) than for women with children.

People who presented as a couple with children had similar reasons for seeking assistance to couples without children. Couples with children cited eviction or the ending of previous accommodation as their main reason in 27% of support periods, followed by usual accommodation unavailable (14%), financial difficulty (14%) and recent arrival to area with no means of support (12%). Couples without children also cited eviction (22%) as their most common main reason, followed by usual accommodation unavailable (17%) and financial difficulty (16%).

For males with children, the most common main reason was also eviction (21%), followed by relationship or family breakdown (18%) and usual accommodation unavailable (14%). For males without children, the most common main reason was that their usual accommodation was unavailable (16%), followed by financial difficulty (13%), eviction (12%) and relationship or family breakdown (11%).



### Domestic violence and services provided to accompanying children

For the purpose of the analysis in the remainder of this chapter, the term domestic violence refers to clients with any of the following circumstances:

- clients who gave domestic violence as a reason for seeking assistance
- clients who attended domestic violence agencies
- clients who were provided with domestic violence counselling.

Children accompanying clients who presented due to domestic violence had the majority of accompanying child support periods (39,700, or 67%). This figure is derived from Table 4.2: 27,100 support periods with information on service requirements and provision plus 12,600 support periods where no assistance was needed for the accompanying child or where information on service requirements and provision was missing.

Table 4.2 summarises the met and unmet needs of children accompanying a client who presented at a SAAP agency due to domestic violence and those who accompanied clients

with other reasons. Of the accompanying child support periods where there was information about service requirements and provision, 78% (27,100) were provided to children who were in SAAP due to domestic violence. This compares to 7,300 support periods provided to children accompanying clients with other reasons.

Accompanying children who were in SAAP due to domestic violence had higher levels of provision, and therefore fewer unmet needs, than other children for every service type except for brokerage services. In particular, needs for child care (90% compared to 68%), help with behavioural problems (86% compared to 61%), skills education (90% compared to 71%) and culturally sensitive services (95% compared to 78%), were provided in proportionately more cases for children who were in SAAP due to domestic violence compared with other children. SAAP or CAP accommodation was also provided in proportionately more cases for children who were in SAAP due to domestic violence (97%) compared to children who were in SAAP due to other reasons (91%). As domestic violence agencies provide the majority of accompanying child support periods (see Table A1.2), this indicates that this agency type is better able to provide for the needs of children than other agency types.

The highest proportions of unmet needs for both groups of children were sexual or physical abuse counselling or support (30% for children in SAAP due to domestic violence and 50% for other children), access arrangements (28% and 37%), and health or medical services (30% and 49%). However, it should be noted that large proportions of these unmet needs are instances where the agency was not able to provide the service directly but referred the child to another type of service (see AIHW 2003b:61).

## 4.1 Tables

**Table 4.1: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by client group, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent)**

Main reason for seeking assistance	Without accompanying children				With accompanying children				Total
	Male without children	Female without children	Couple without children	Other without children	Male with children	Female with children	Couple with children	Other with children	
Usual accommodation unavailable	15.7	8.3	16.8	16.5	13.8	5.8	14.1	10.0	10.9
Time out from family/other situation	6.4	6.8	4.6	7.5	3.8	3.4	4.2	3.6	5.6
Relationship/family breakdown	10.7	13.5	8.3	12.7	17.8	7.1	5.6	15.3	10.5
Interpersonal conflict	3.2	3.4	2.2	3.2	2.7	1.7	2.9	—	2.8
Physical/emotional abuse	1.0	4.5	1.5	3.6	1.4	4.5	1.1	5.7	3.0
Domestic violence	0.9	28.4	2.0	10.6	5.2	51.8	3.1	14.8	22.1
Sexual abuse	0.2	1.7	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.5	2.0	0.8
Financial difficulty	13.2	5.6	16.3	8.8	11.0	5.1	13.8	3.4	8.9
Gambling	0.6	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	—	0.3
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	12.0	8.5	22.2	12.0	20.9	9.1	26.7	21.4	11.2
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	9.6	3.7	3.0	2.7	2.8	0.8	1.3	1.8	5.0
Emergency accommodation ended	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.0	2.5	—	1.4
Recently left institution	3.2	1.2	0.9	0.2	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.9	1.6
Psychiatric illness	2.8	1.6	0.4	2.2	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.6
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	8.7	3.3	7.4	6.5	6.1	2.4	11.7	9.5	5.5
Itinerant	4.4	2.7	4.8	3.5	3.4	1.2	2.9	3.7	3.0
Other	6.2	5.5	7.9	8.0	8.4	4.8	8.6	6.9	5.8
<i>Total</i>	36.2	29.9	2.7	1.2	1.3	25.0	3.7	0.1	100.0
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>47,400</b>	<b>39,100</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>32,650</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>130,900</b>

### Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 9,214.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 4.2: SAAP services requested for accompanying children, by provision, Australia, 2002-03  
(per cent closed accompanying child support periods)**

Type of service	Domestic violence			Reasons other than domestic violence		
	Not provided	Provided	Closed child support periods in which services were requested (number)	Not provided	Provided	Closed child support periods in which services were requested (number)
<b>Accommodation</b>						
SAAP/CAP accommodation	3.2	96.8	21,900	9.5	90.5	4,750
<b>School liaison/child care</b>						
School liaison	10.6	89.3	4,100	19.5	80.5	950
Child care	10.2	89.8	7,450	32.4	67.5	900
<b>Counselling</b>						
Help with behavioural problems	14.1	86.0	4,200	39.0	61.0	650
Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	30.2	69.8	1,350	49.6	50.4	200
Skills education	9.6	90.4	1,050	29.1	70.9	150
General counselling/support	8.3	91.7	6,150	19.0	81.0	950
<b>General support/advocacy</b>						
Access arrangements	27.6	72.4	1,250	36.9	63.1	150
Advice/information	3.5	96.5	5,600	4.9	95.2	1,200
Brokerage services	6.2	93.8	850	4.6	95.4	600
Advocacy	3.2	96.7	4,700	6.0	94.0	1,250
<b>Specialist services</b>						
Culturally sensitive services	5.4	94.5	3,050	22.4	77.6	300
Health/medical services	29.4	70.7	3,250	48.6	51.4	700
<b>Basic support and other services n.e.s.</b>						
Meals	1.3	98.7	16,250	4.8	95.2	1,650
Showers/hygiene	1.1	98.9	14,400	2.7	97.3	1,000
Recreation	1.9	98.1	11,450	7.8	92.3	1,050
Transport	1.5	98.5	14,850	2.9	97.0	1,800
Other	5.1	94.9	4,200	12.5	87.6	1,100
<b>Associated closed accompanying child support periods</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>27,100</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>7,300</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 12,600 closed accompanying child support periods for domestic violence and 12,350 support periods for other reasons (including cases where no assistance was needed or where there was no information on service requirements or provision).
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. In groups of service types, an accompanying child may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs and not to support periods. For individual types of services, a need can be recorded only once within a support period, so percentages relate to accompanying child support periods.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.



# 5 Circumstances of accompanying children before and after support

This chapter examines some of the pathways people with children take into SAAP, and the outcomes for these people and their children following SAAP support. Clients with accompanying children are likely to have different social and economic circumstances than those without children, so the discussion in this chapter compares the accommodation and living situations of clients with children to those of clients without children.

Data on the type of accommodation and living arrangements immediately before and after a support period are collected in the Client Collection. There are, however, limitations in this data because high-volume agencies, which accounted for 21% of support periods in 2002–03 (AIHW 2003b: 80), do not collect information about client circumstances after support. In addition, there is a large amount of missing information for client status after support. For this reason, data in this chapter contain only those support periods where information was provided both before and after support. Data in this chapter relate to closed support periods only.

## **Type of accommodation before and after support**

In order to assess if people with accompanying children have more or less difficulty in obtaining independent housing after SAAP support, support period information for these clients is compared to clients without accompanying children.

Before support, clients with accompanying children were living in SAAP accommodation in 17% of support periods. After support, this figure increased to 19%. For clients without accompanying children, the corresponding figures were 20% and 21%.

Clients with accompanying children were more likely than clients without accompanying children to be in more independent forms of housing both before and after support. Before and after support, clients with accompanying children were in private rental housing in 25% of support periods. The proportion of support periods for these clients renting public or community housing increased from 18% before support to 25% after support. For clients without children, the proportion in private rental increased from 12% before support to 15% after support, and for public or community housing the proportion increased from 9% before support to 12% after support.

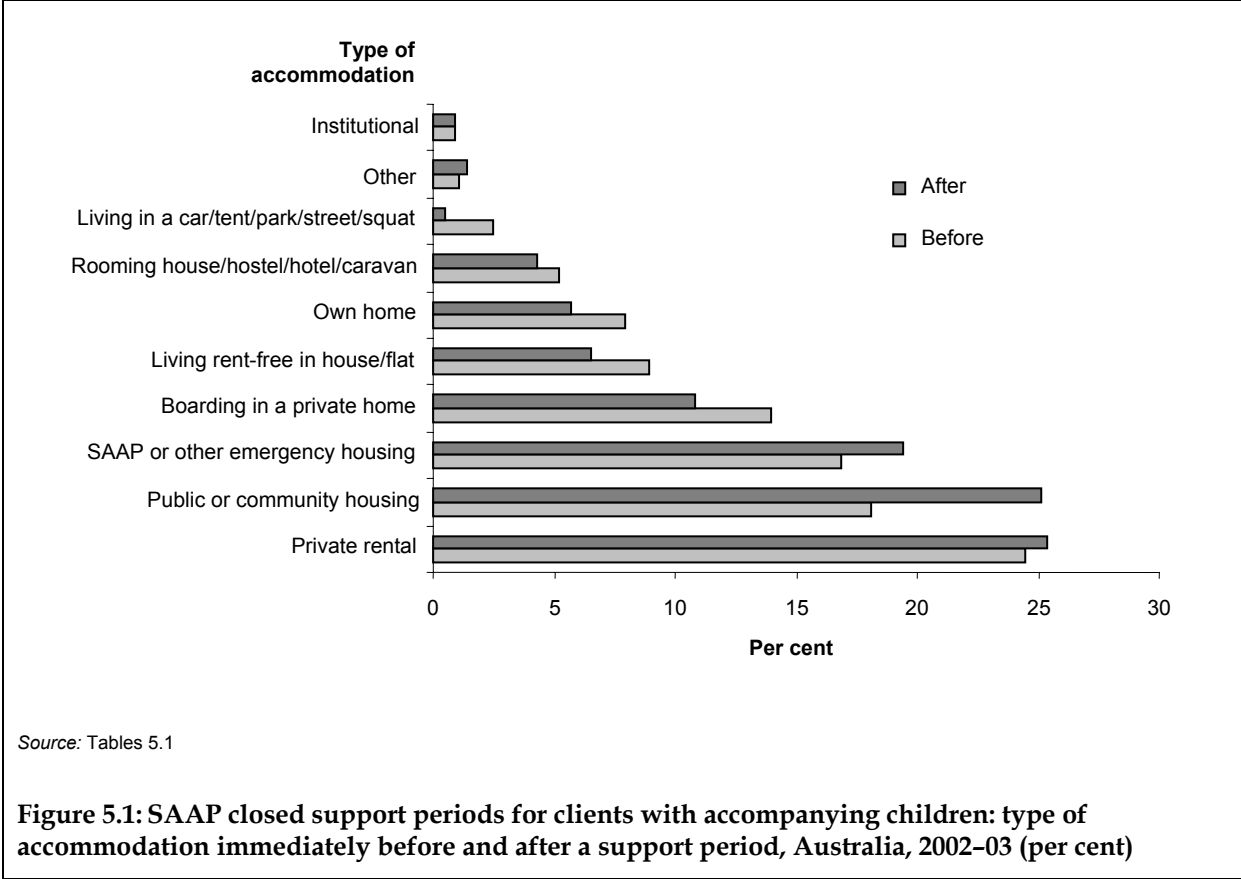
Clients with accompanying children were less likely to be living in a car, tent, park, street or squat before or after support than clients without children. The proportions decreased after support for both client groups, however, from 3% to less than 1% for clients with children, and from 10% to 4% for clients without children.

## **Living situation before and after support**

There was a considerable change in the living situations of clients with accompanying children before and after SAAP support. Of the 40% of support periods for clients with accompanying children who lived with a spouse or partner before support, only 23% returned to that situation after support. On the other hand, the proportion of support periods where clients were living alone with their children increased from 32% before support to 50%

after support. The high proportion of female clients with children escaping domestic violence contributed to this change from before support to after support.

For people without accompanying children, there was a decrease in the proportion of support periods where the client was living with a spouse or partner before support (17%) to after support (12%) and an increase in those who were living alone from before support (28%) to after support (33%). These changes were influenced by the relatively high proportion of people who were seeking assistance due to relationship or family breakdown.



## 5.1 Tables

**Table 5.1: SAAP closed support periods: type of accommodation immediately before and after a support period, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent)**

Type of accommodation	Support periods with accompanying children		Support periods without accompanying children	
	Before	After	Before	After
SAAP or other emergency housing	16.9	19.4	19.5	20.5
Living rent-free in house/flat	8.9	6.5	16.3	13.9
Private rental	24.5	25.4	12.4	15.4
Public or community housing	18.1	25.1	8.9	12.2
Rooming house/hostel/hotel/caravan	5.2	4.3	8.7	10.4
Boarding in a private home	14.0	10.8	13.8	12.8
Own home	7.9	5.7	3.5	2.8
Living in a car/tent/park/street/squat	2.5	0.5	9.8	4.4
Institutional	0.9	0.9	5.8	5.6
Other	1.1	1.4	1.2	2.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>49,600</b>	<b>49,600</b>

*Notes*

1. Number of support periods excluded due to missing before and/or after information (weighted): 9,348 (support periods with children).
2. Number of support periods excluded due to missing before and/or after information (weighted): 37,460 (support periods without children).
3. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

*Source:* SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 5.2: SAAP closed support periods: living situation immediately before and after a support period, Australia, 2002–03 (per cent)**

Living situation	Support periods with accompanying children		Support periods without accompanying children	
	Before	After	Before	After
With parent(s)	5.0	3.3	12.7	10.3
With foster family	—	0.1	0.7	0.5
With relatives/friends short-term	15.4	12.7	16.8	14.2
With relatives/friends long-term	2.3	2.8	4.7	6.7
With spouse/partner with/without children	39.6	23.1	16.6	11.8
Alone with children	31.6	49.6	2.6	3.2
Alone	1.8	2.3	28.4	33.0
With other unrelated persons	3.2	3.7	16.7	19.3
Other	1.1	2.3	0.8	1.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>51,300</b>	<b>51,300</b>

*Notes*

1. Number of support periods excluded due to missing before and/or after information (weighted): 9,163 (support periods with children).
2. Number of support periods excluded due to missing before and/or after information (weighted): 35,838 (support periods without children).
3. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

*Source:* SAAP Client Collection.