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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair

Dr Andrew Refshauge

Director

David Kalisch

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Communications, Media and Marketing Unit

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 6244 1032

Email: info@aihw.gov.au

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CPO	Care and Protection Orders
CDSMAC	Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee
CDSMC	Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
IFSS	Intensive family support services
NIS	Notifications, investigations and substantiations
RKC	Relative/kinship carers
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

Symbols

–	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
n.a.	not available
0	legitimate zero

Technical notes

1. Percentages in tables may exclude unknowns.
2. Percentages in tables may not add to 100 due to rounding.
3. All tables in this report use data provided by state and territory child protection and support services.
4. Tables with the prefix 'A' in the title are located in Appendixes.

Main findings

Child Protection Australia 2010–11 is the fifteenth annual comprehensive report on child protection. The report provides detailed statistical information on state and territory child protection and support services, and some of the characteristics of the children receiving these services. In Australia, child protection is a state and territory government responsibility, and there are significant differences in how each deals with and reports child protection issues. These differences should be taken into account when making comparisons.

Notifications decreased while substantiations remained stable

Since 2009–10, the number of children subject to a notification decreased by 13% from 187,314 to 163,767. During the same period, the number of children subject to a substantiation of a notification remained relatively stable (increasing by less than 1%) from 31,295 to 31,527. Since 2006–07, the number of children subject to a substantiation of a notification has decreased by 7% from 34,028 to 31,527 (6.9 to 6.1 per 1,000 children).

Number of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care continues to rise

Since 2009–10, the number of children on care and protection orders increased by 4% from 37,730 to 39,058 (7.4 to 7.6 per 1,000 children). This increase is consistent with the trend over the last 5 years (increasing by 35% from 28,954 in 2007).

The number of children in out-of-home care has increased by 5% from 35,895 in 2010 to 37,648 in 2011. Since 2007, the number of children in out-of-home care rose by 33% from 28,379 to 37,648 (5.8 to 7.3 per 1,000 children).

The majority of children (93%) in out-of-home care at 30 June 2011 were in home-based care – 45% in foster care, 46% in relative/kinship care and 2.5% in other types of home-based care. This follows a similar pattern observed in previous years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be over-represented in the child protection system

In 2010–11, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were almost 8 times as likely to be the subject of substantiated child abuse and neglect as non-Indigenous children (rates of 34.6 and 4.5 per 1,000 children, respectively).

At 30 June 2011, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders was over 9 times the rate of non-Indigenous children (rates of 51.4 and 5.4 per 1,000 children, respectively). Similarly, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care was 10 times the rate of non-Indigenous children (rate of 51.7 and 5.1 per 1,000 children, respectively).

1 The Australian child protection system

1.1 Child protection overview

In Australia, statutory child protection is the responsibility of state and territory governments. Each state and territory department responsible for child protection provides assistance to vulnerable children who are suspected of being abused, neglected, or otherwise harmed, or whose parents are unable to provide adequate care or protection.

A number of government and non-government organisations share a common duty of care towards the protection of children and young people. Departments responsible for child protection investigate, process and oversee the handling of child protection cases. Assistance is provided to children and their families through the provision of, or referral to, a wide range of services.

The national recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services was approximately \$2.8 billion in 2010–11, a real increase of \$137.7 million (5.1%) from 2009–10 (SCRGSP forthcoming).

Child protection policies and practices

Child protection policies and practices are under continual development. In recent years there has been increasing national focus on early intervention and family support services to assist in preventing families entering or re-entering the child protection system and to help minimise the need for more intrusive interventions (AIFS: Bromfield & Holzer 2008a). Cross-departmental strategies have also been introduced in a number of jurisdictions. These strategies attempt to assist families in a more holistic way, by coordinating service delivery and providing better access to different types of child and family services.

Jurisdictional policy context

Although the processes used by each jurisdiction to protect children are broadly similar (AIFS: Bromfield & Higgins 2005), there are some important differences between jurisdictions' child protection policies and practices that should be taken into account when making comparisons across jurisdictions. Key differences across jurisdictional policy are briefly discussed below. Further details relating to each jurisdiction's policy and practice are located in Appendices 3–6.

Mandatory reporting

All jurisdictions have legislative requirements governing the reporting of suspected child abuse. In some jurisdictions, only those in selected professions are mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect, whereas in other jurisdictions anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect is legally obliged to report it to the appropriate authority. Commonwealth legislation (*Family Law Act 1975*) also contains provisions mandating certain court personnel to report suspected incidences of child abuse. Further details about mandatory reporting requirements in each state and territory are provided in Appendix 3.

Notifications

The policies that provide the framework for assessing child protection notifications vary broadly across jurisdictions. For example, in some jurisdictions, such as Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, all contacts to the department regarding concerns for children

are immediately classified as notifications. In other jurisdictions, such as New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, a screening process occurs where reports relating to concerns about children are first classified as 'child and young person concerns'. These concerns are then further assessed to determine the appropriate action.

Substantiation threshold

Thresholds for what is substantiated vary – some jurisdictions substantiate the harm or risk of harm to the child, and others substantiate actions by parents or incidents that cause harm. In considering harm to the child, the focus of the child protection systems in many jurisdictions has shifted away from the actions of parents to the outcomes for the child.

In addition to variation in policy at the jurisdictional level the definition of what constitutes child abuse and neglect has also broadened at a national level over time (AIFS: Bromfield & Holzer 2008b). These and other differences across jurisdictions affect the comparability of data included in this report. Legislative and policy and definitional differences between jurisdictions are further discussed in Appendices 4 and 5, respectively. Detailed information on recent policy and practice changes is located in Appendix 6.

National policy context

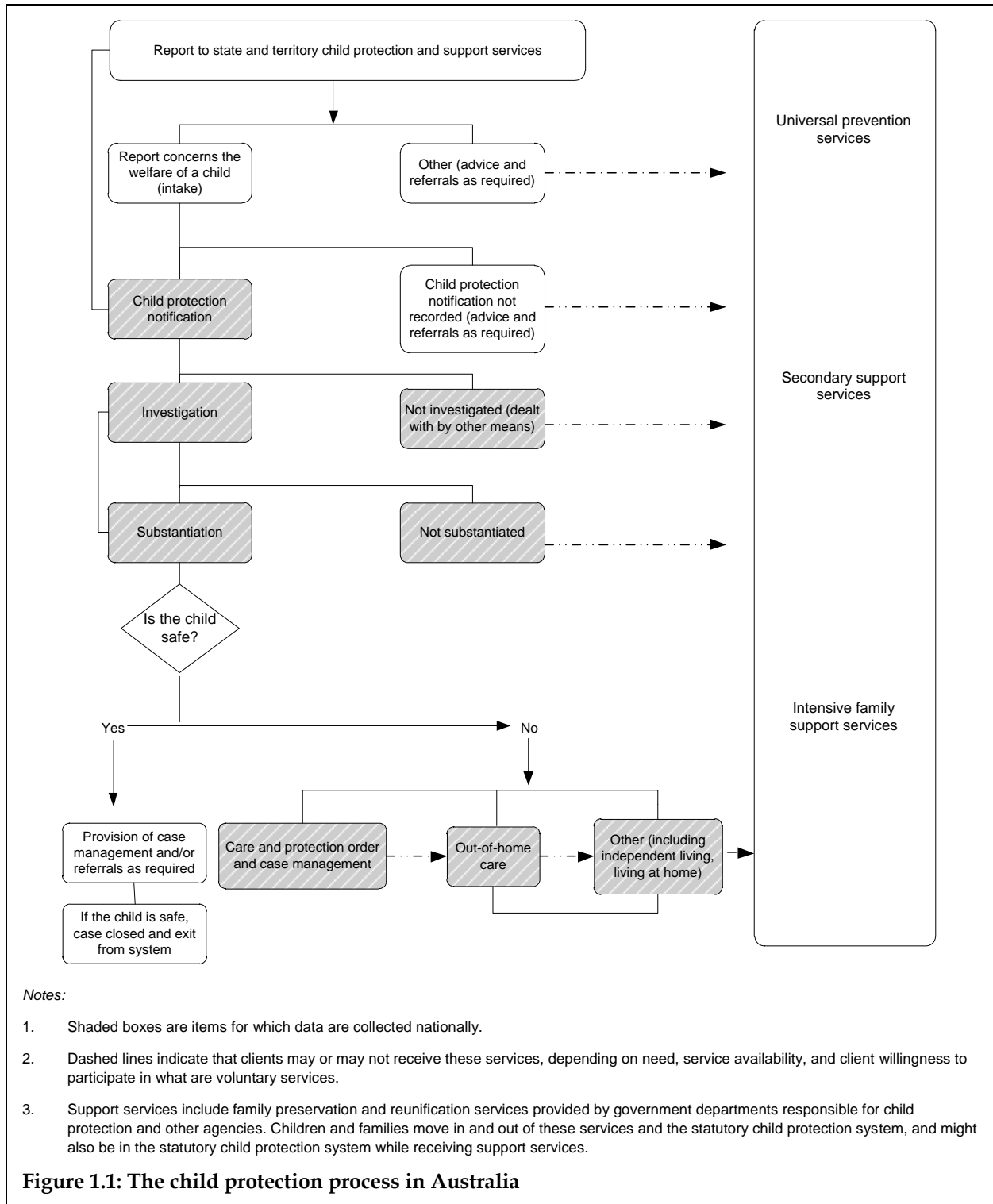
In consultation with the states and territories, the non-government sector, academics, carers and young people, the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee (CDSMAC) developed the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020* (COAG 2009). The National Framework is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), and has the aim of ensuring Australia's children are safe and well. As a measure of this outcome *a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia* has been set as a target. There are six broad supporting outcome areas under the National Framework:

- Children live in safe and supportive communities.
- Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early.
- Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed.
- Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing.
- Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities.
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support.

These supporting outcomes focus effort and actions in order to reach the high-level outcome. Twenty-eight indicators of change have been developed to measure the extent to which the supporting outcomes are being achieved. Some of the indicators rely on data that are currently collected, while others will require data development before robust data are available for reporting. The first report to COAG was released in 2011 (COAG 2010). More details on the *National Framework*, Australian developments and the international child protection arena can be found in Appendix 9.

Child protection reporting processes

Irrespective of the policy and legislative differences between jurisdictions, the main processes in child protection systems across Australia are similar. A simplified version of these processes is shown in Figure 1.1.



Child protection intake processes

Child concern reports

Children in need of protection can come into contact with departments responsible for child protection through a number of avenues. Reports of concern about a child may be made by community members, professionals (for example police or health practitioners), organisations, the child themselves, their parent(s) or another relative. These reports may

relate to abuse and neglect or to broader family concerns such as economic problems or social isolation.

Child protection intake services across states and territories screen incoming reports to determine whether further action is required. The defined threshold for intervention varies across jurisdictions and this can lead to jurisdictional differences in the responses taken to initial reports. Reports that are deemed to require further action are generally classified as either a 'family support issue' or a 'child protection notification'.

Reports classified as requiring family support are further assessed and may be referred to support services. The national child protection data collection does not include those reports that are not classified as child protection notifications.

Child protection statutory processes

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Child protection notifications are dealt with through a separate process that could include an investigation and/or referral to support services. The aim of an investigation is to determine whether notifications are 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. A substantiation indicates there is sufficient reason (following an investigation) to believe the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. An appropriate level of continued involvement by the child protection and family support services then occurs, including the provision of support and treatment to children and families.

Care and protection orders and out-of-home care placements

In situations where further intervention is required, the child may be placed on a care and protection order and/or in out-of-home care (including foster care and relative/kinship care). Children and families may be referred to family support services at any time during the child protection process. The different components of the child protection process are further defined in the Glossary.

1.2 Child protection data collections

Data sources

All data within this report are drawn from state and territory child protection administrative data sets according to nationally agreed definitions and technical specifications. The state and territory departments and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) jointly fund the annual collation, analysis and publication of child protection data.

The AIHW, in collaboration with states and territories, annually reviews the national technical specifications and definitional materials associated with the collections. Any required changes are agreed to by the AIHW and the states and territories. The jurisdictions provide aggregate data to the AIHW for six national child protection collections:

- notifications, investigations and substantiations
- care and protection orders
- out-of-home care
- foster carers
- relative/kinship carers
- intensive family support services.

Data from each of these collections are analysed and published in *Child protection Australia* and some data are reported in the Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services* (SCRGSP forthcoming).

Data limitations

National child protection data are only based on those cases reported to departments responsible for child protection and therefore are likely to understate the true prevalence of child abuse and neglect across Australia. Further, notifications made to other organisations, such as the police or non-government welfare agencies, are only included if these notifications were also referred to departments responsible for child protection.

There are significant links and overlaps between the notification, investigation and substantiation; care and protection order; and out-of-home care data collections included in this report. For example, children who are the subject of substantiations may be placed on care and protection orders, and many children on care and protection orders are also in out-of-home care. However, very limited national data are available on the movement of children through the child protection system or the overlaps between the separate data collections. For counts of children during the year, there may be some small level of double-counting due to inter-jurisdictional movement. Work is currently being undertaken to broaden the scope of the national data collection and to improve comparability of data across jurisdictions – primarily through the development of a confidential unit record (child level) data collection (see Appendix 9 for details).

The practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children in the child protection system vary across states and territories. Over the last few years, several jurisdictions have introduced measures to improve the identification of Indigenous clients. However, in some jurisdictions, the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown still affects the quality of data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Improvements to the quality of Indigenous identification in the national notifications, investigations and substantiations data set have affected the comparability of these data prior to 2009–10. The data systems used by jurisdictions can undergo upgrades and changes between reporting cycles. Details regarding jurisdictions' data systems and any significant changes from the previous year can be found in Appendix 7.

1.3 Structure of this report

The remaining chapters of the report present information on various aspects of the child protection system, as follows:

- notifications, investigations and substantiations (Chapter 2)
- care and protection orders (Chapter 3)
- out-of-home care (Chapter 4)
- foster and relative/kinship care (Chapter 5) and
- intensive family support services (Chapter 6).

Detailed data tables (Appendix 1), technical notes (Appendix 2) and information regarding national and state and territory legislation, policies and practices (Appendix 3–9) are included in the appendixes. National definitions for the terms used in this report are presented in the Glossary.

2 Notifications, investigations and substantiations

2.1 Overview

This section contains information on the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations that occurred and the number of children who were the subject of these.

The data in this section relate to those notifications received by departments responsible for child protection between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011. Finalised investigations are those notifications made during 2010–11 that were investigated and had an outcome of either substantiated or not substantiated recorded by 31 August 2011. The cut-off point of 31 August is applied to allow time for investigating notifications made close to the end of the financial year. The outcomes of investigations that are still in process following this cut-off (8% or 10,156 in 2010–11) are not able to be reported in the data for this or subsequent reporting periods. It is important to note that substantiations as reported here (that is, substantiations of notifications received during the year) are therefore an undercount of the actual number of substantiations made during the year due to the use of this methodology in preceding reporting periods.

Instances of alleged abuse or neglect by family members other than parents/guardians and non-family members are generally included in the count of notifications if the notification was referred to the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. These cases are only included in counts of investigations and substantiations where there has been a finding or allegation of a failure to protect by the parent or guardian.

Key statistics

In 2010–11 there were 237,273 notifications involving 163,767 children, a rate of 31.9 per 1,000 children in Australia. Of the 237,273 notifications, 54% (127,759) were investigated with 40,466 substantiations (following investigation) relating to 31,527 children – a rate of 6.1 per 1,000 children in Australia (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Key notifications, investigations and substantiations statistics, 2010–11

	Number	Rate per 1,000 children
Notifications (cases)	237,273	..
Investigations (cases)	127,759	..
Substantiations (cases)	40,466	..
Children subject to notifications	163,767	31.9
Children subject to substantiations	31,527	6.1

.. not applicable.

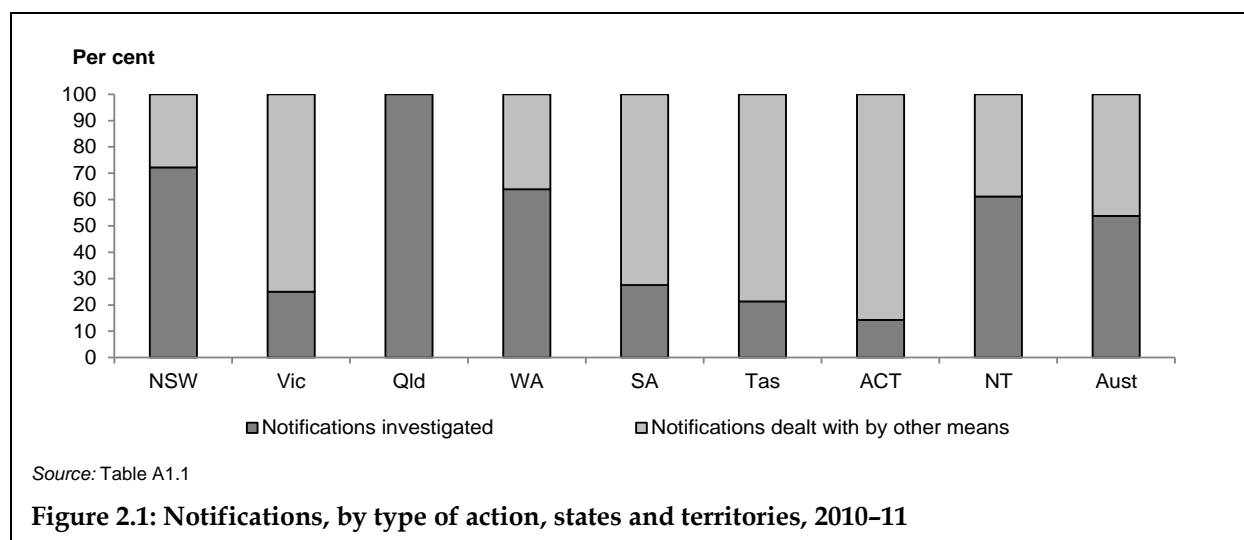
Note: Notifications, investigations and substantiations data are for children aged 0–17 and include, where available, unborn children.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2011.

2.2 Cases

Notifications and investigations

Of the 237,273 notifications, 54% (127,759) were further investigated while the remaining 46% (109,514) were dealt with by other means, such as being referred to a support service. The proportion of notifications that were investigated ranged from 14% in the Australian Capital Territory to 100% in Queensland (Figure 2.1).



Nationally, almost 118,000 of the notifications investigated (92%) were reported as closed as of 31 August 2011. Closed investigations include those considered finalised and those recorded as closed with no outcome possible (99,649 and 17,954, respectively). The remaining 8% of investigations (10,156) were in process at the time of reporting (Table A1.1).

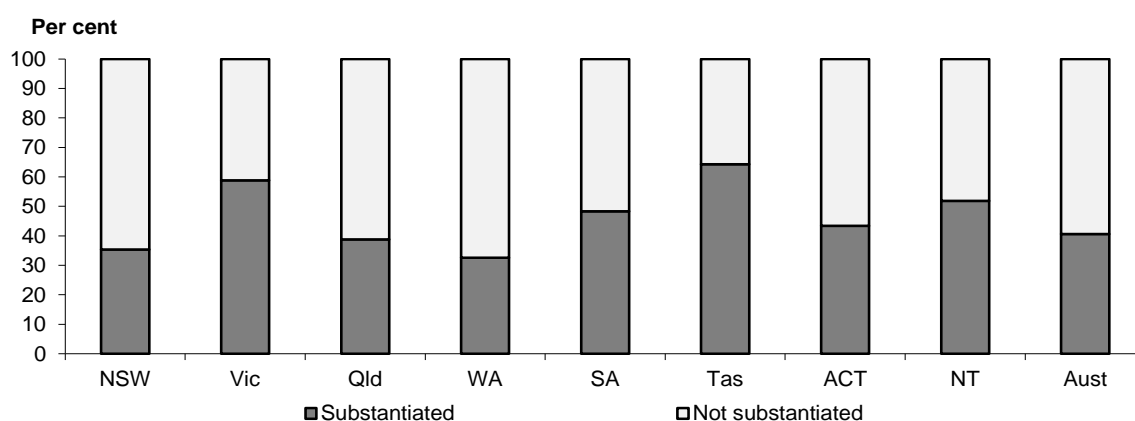
Source of notifications for investigations

For investigations in 2010-11, the most common source of the related notification was police (23%). This was the case in all jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory where school personnel were the most common (20% compared with 18% for police). Nationally, the least common sources of a notification for investigations were from the subject child and childcare personnel (0.4% and 1.3%, respectively) (Table A1.3).

Notifications to departments responsible for child protection come from a range of sources and legislation relating to mandatory reporting varies across states and territories and should be taken into consideration when interpreting these data (See Appendix 3 for details).

Substantiations

Overall, 41% of the 99,649 finalised investigations resulted in a substantiated notification (40,466). The proportion varied across the jurisdictions from 33% in Western Australia to 64% in Tasmania (Figure 2.2).



Source: Table A1.2.

Figure 2.2: Outcomes of finalised investigations, states and territories, 2010-11

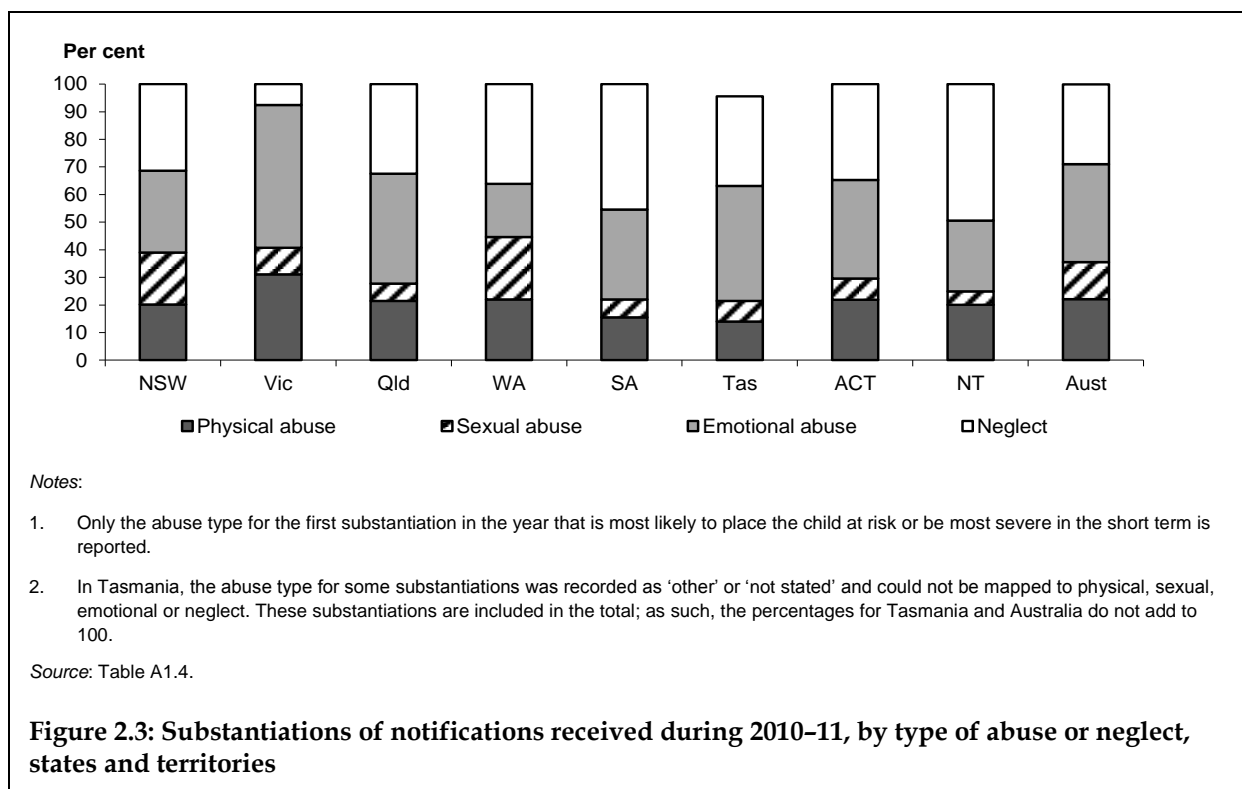
Types of abuse or neglect

Substantiations of notifications received during the year are classified nationally into one of the following four categories depending on the main type of abuse or neglect that has occurred: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. Definitions for these categories are included in the Glossary.

Nationally, the most common type of substantiated abuse was emotional (36%) – ranging from 19% in Western Australia to 52% in Victoria, followed by neglect (29%) – ranging from 8% in Victoria to 49% in the Northern Territory (Figure 2.3).

The proportion of substantiations that related to sexual abuse was much smaller nationally (14%) and in most jurisdictions – ranging from 5% in the Northern Territory to 23% in Western Australia. There was also variation across jurisdictions regarding the proportion of substantiations that related to physical abuse – ranging from 14% in Tasmania to 31% in Victoria.

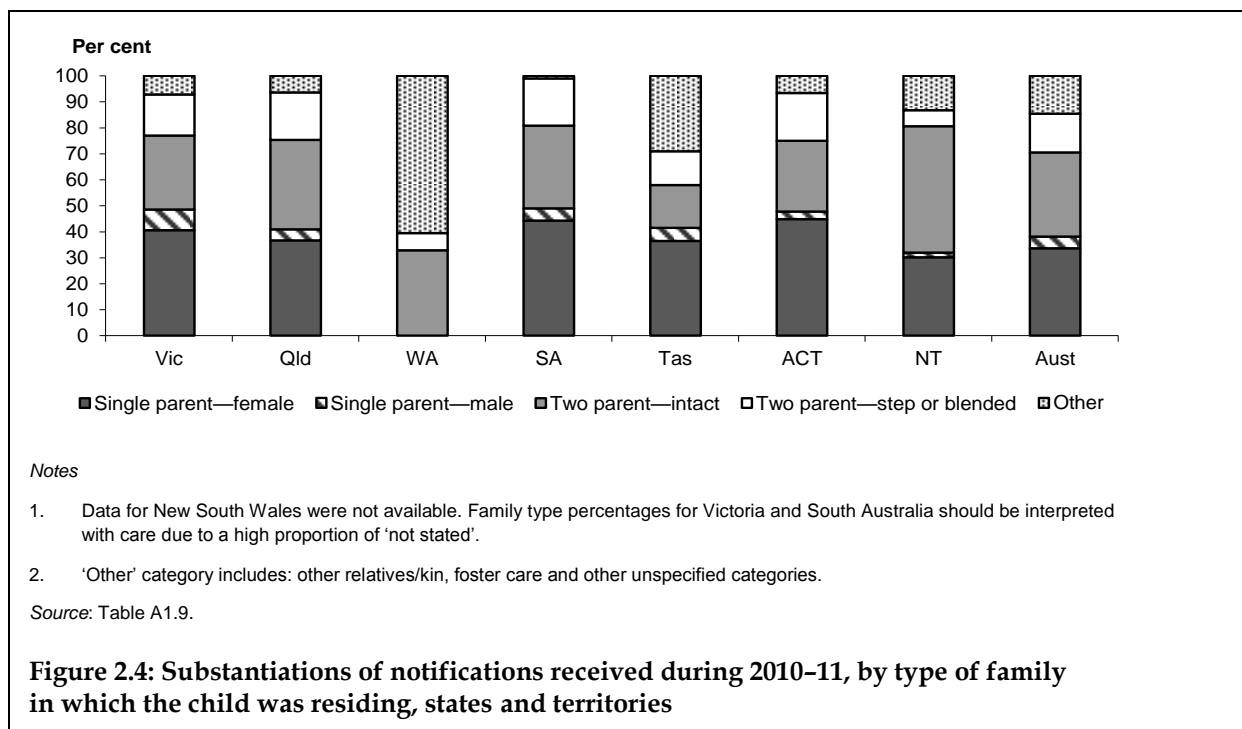
Differences may be partially due to the varying mandatory reporting requirements across jurisdictions (see Appendix 3).



Family type

Female single parent families represented around a third (34%) of the family types that children were residing in at the time of investigation, closely followed by two parent intact families (32%) (Figure 2.4). This varied dramatically compared with the general population in 2009-10, where 73% of families with children aged 0-17 in Australia were in intact families, 17% were one-parent families and 9% were step or blended families (ABS 2011a).

Female single parent families may be over-represented because they are more likely to have low incomes, be financially stressed (Saunders & Adelman 2006) and suffer from social isolation (Loman 2006; Saunders & Adelman 2006). These factors have all been associated with child abuse and neglect (Black et al. 2001; Coohy 1996). However, the data reported here describes the composition of the family within which the child was residing at the time of notification and does not necessarily reflect that the notification related to the residing parent.



2.3 Children within the child protection system

Children within the child protection system may be involved in multiple statutory child protection cases during any given year. An individual child may therefore account for more than one child protection event. For example, a single child may be the focus of multiple notifications, investigations and/or substantiations in any given year. In addition, children may also receive a combination of government intervention services including being placed on a care and protection order, out-of-home care placements and/or referral to intensive family support services.

Across Australia in 2010-11, the total number of notifications (237,273) and substantiations (40,466) involved 163,767 and 31,527 children, respectively (Table 2.2). These data reflect the fact that a number of children were the subject of more than one notification and/or substantiation during 2010-11; however, the current available data do not allow the calculation of the exact proportion of children who were the subject of more than one notification or substantiation in any given year.

Table 2.2: Number of notifications, substantiations of notifications and number of children who were the subject of a notification and/or substantiation of a notification, 2010–11, states and territories

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children in notifications	61,132	41,459	19,353	9,734	13,996	7,487	5,768	4,838	163,767
Total notifications	98,845	55,718	21,655	10,976	21,145	10,689	11,712	6,533	237,273
Children in substantiations	11,536	7,327	5,941	1,870	1,831	1,132	465	1,425	31,527
Total substantiations	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	40,466

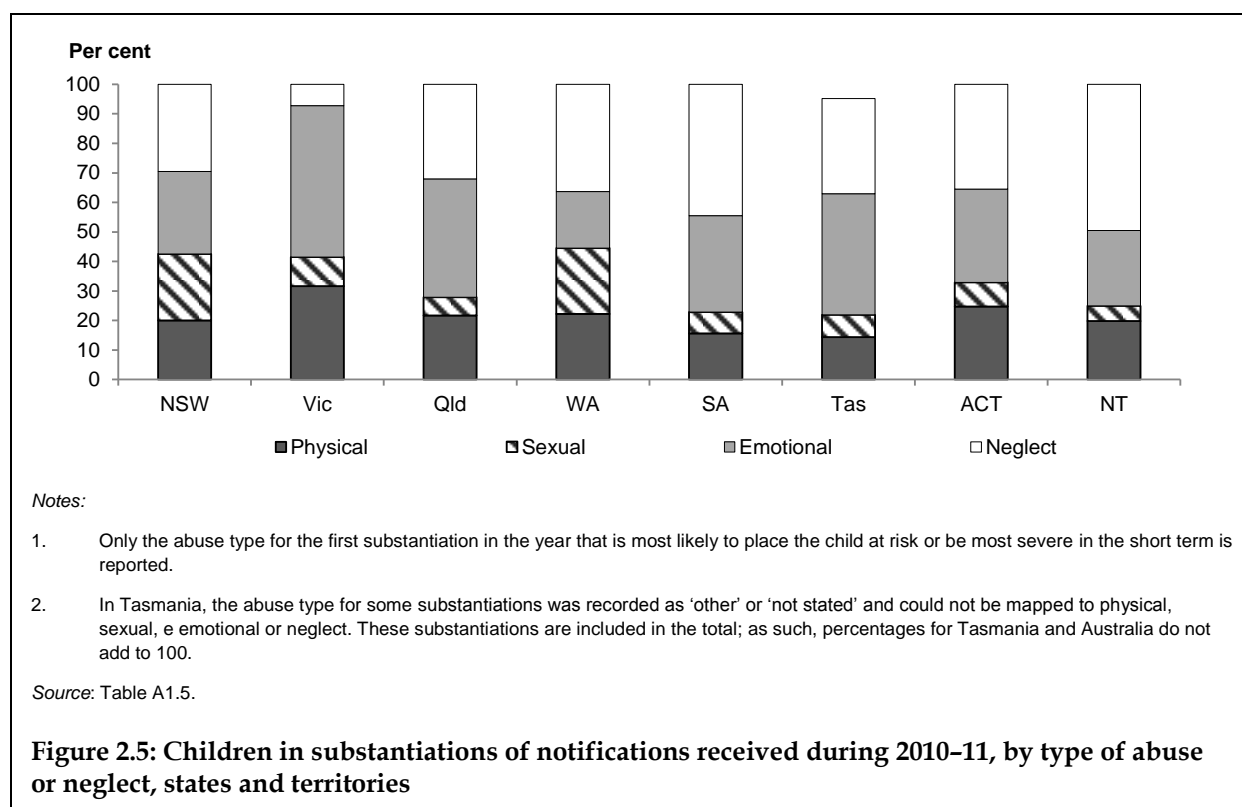
(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2010–11 where the primary concern of the initial inquiry for the child was emotional, psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Types of abuse and neglect

Consistent with the patterns in substantiated cases (see Section 2.2) nationally, emotional abuse was the most common substantiation type for children (36%) – ranging from 19% in Western Australia to 51% in Victoria. This was followed by neglect (27%) – ranging from 7% in Victoria to 50% in the Northern Territory (Figure 2.5). As with the proportions of substantiated cases, children were least likely to be substantiated for sexual abuse nationally (14%) and in most jurisdictions – ranging from 5% in the Northern Territory to 23% in New South Wales.



Characteristics of children

Age and sex profile

Across Australia in 2010–11, children aged under 12 months were most likely to be the subject of a substantiation (12.0 per 1,000 children) and children aged 15–17 were least likely (2.9 per 1,000 children). This pattern was consistent across all jurisdictions. Overall, the Northern Territory rates were higher than other jurisdictions for all age categories; conversely Western Australia had the lowest rate for nearly all age categories (Table 2.3).

Age is one of the factors that child protection workers take into consideration when determining the time taken to respond to a notification, the type of response and whether a notification will be substantiated. Younger children are regarded as the most vulnerable, and most jurisdictions have specific policies and procedures in place to protect younger children. There has also been an increased focus nationally on early intervention and the provision of services early in a child's life to improve long-term outcomes and reduce the negative impacts of trauma and harm (COAG 2009).

Table 2.3: Children aged 0–17 in substantiations of notifications received 2010–11, by age, states and territories (number per 1,000 children)

Age (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	11.2	14.5	9.3	5.4	17.5	17.4	12.1	48.3	12.0
1–4	7.8	6.3	5.7	4.1	6.5	11.9	6.3	29.4	6.9
5–9	6.8	5.7	5.4	3.8	5.5	10.0	5.2	22.9	6.1
10–14	6.9	5.9	4.9	3.3	3.7	7.9	5.8	19.2	5.8
15–17	3.6	3.0	2.5	1.3	1.1	3.9	3.2	9.1	2.9
0–17	6.8	5.9	5.1	3.4	5.1	9.2	5.7	22.8	6.0
All children	7.0	5.9	5.4	3.4	5.1	9.5	5.8	22.8	6.1

(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

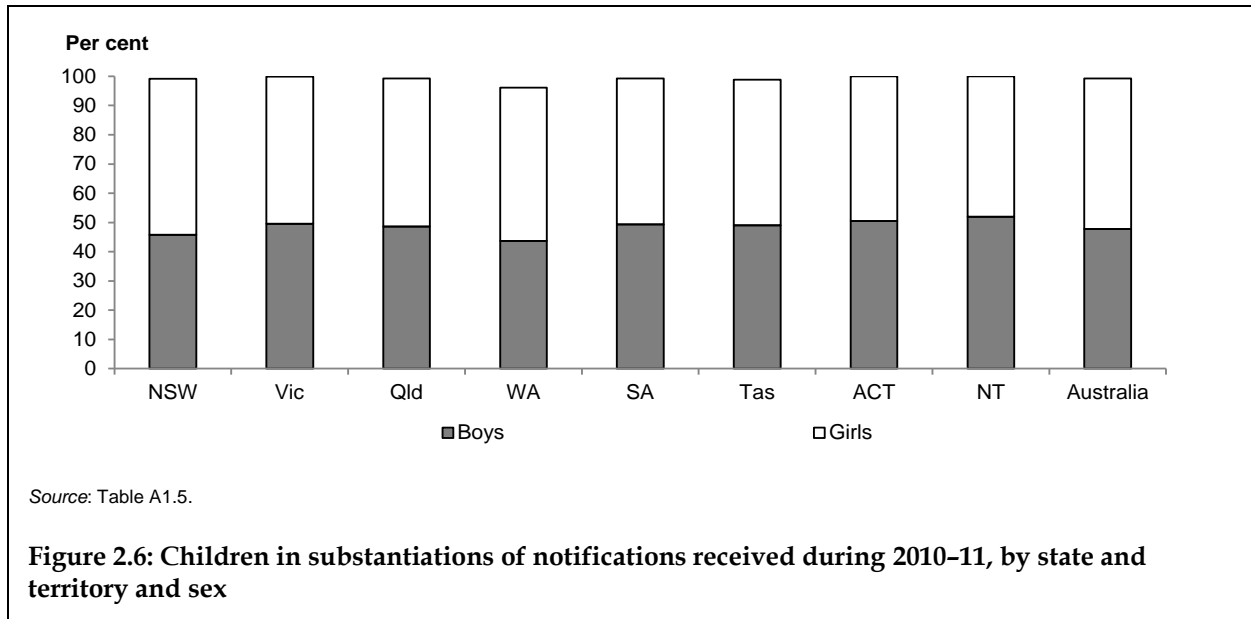
(b) Western Australia is currently unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.

Notes:

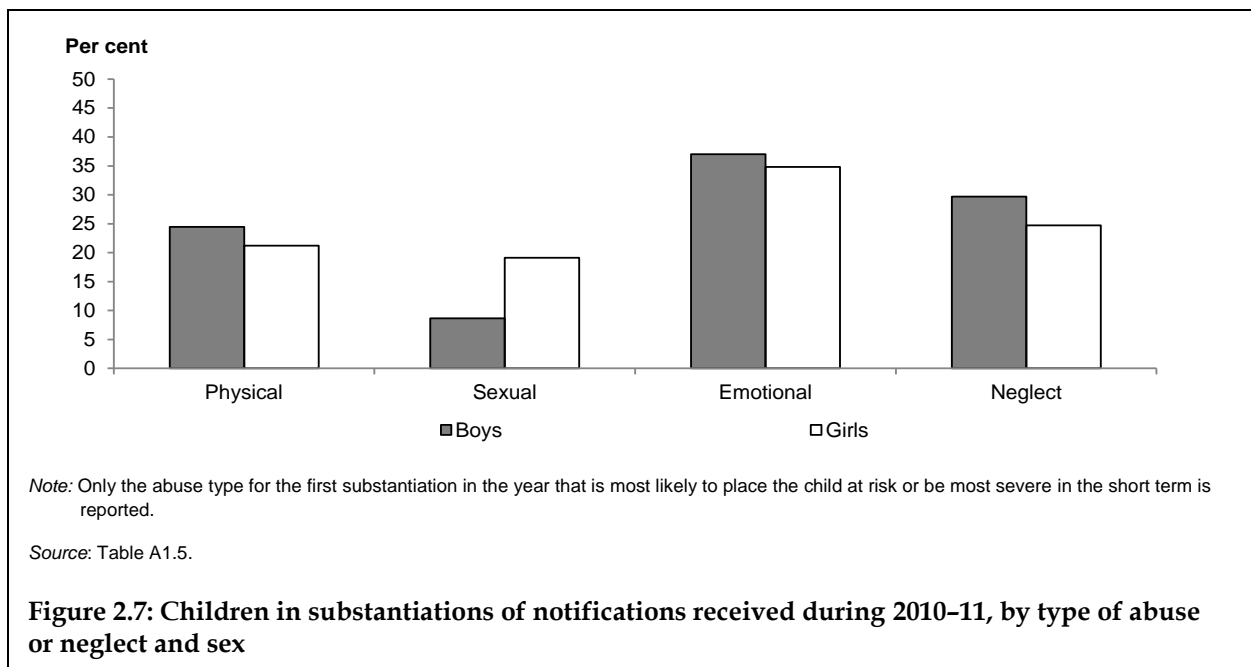
1. Refer to Table A1.6 for numbers for this table and to Table A1.36 for the population data.
2. Unborn children are excluded in rate calculations for the 'less than 1' and '0–17' categories and included in the 'All children' rates.
3. 'All children' includes children of unknown age.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Overall just over half (52%) of the children subject to a substantiation were girls (16,224 compared with 15,057 boys). This was consistent in all jurisdictions except for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory where slightly more boys than girls were the subject of substantiations (Figure 2.6).



In all jurisdictions, girls were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation of sexual abuse than boys (Figure 2.7). This is consistent with victimisation studies of sexual assault (Carmody & Carrington 2000; Cook et al. 2001). In contrast, boys were slightly more likely to be the subject of a substantiation of neglect in all jurisdictions. Nationally, boys also had slightly higher proportions of substantiations for physical and emotional abuse, although this varied at the jurisdictional level (Table A1.5).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Children in substantiations

As at 31 December 2010, there were an estimated 238,100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0–17 living in Australia. In 2010–11, 8,231 (34.6 per 1,000) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subject of a child protection substantiation. Compared with non-Indigenous children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were seven and a half times more likely to be the subject of a child protection substantiation (34.6 per 1,000 compared with 4.5 per 1,000) (Table 2.4).

The reasons for the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection substantiations are complex. The legacy of past policies of forced removal, intergenerational effects of previous separations from family and culture, poor socioeconomic status and perceptions arising from cultural differences in child-rearing practices are all underlying causes for over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child welfare system (HREOC 1997).

Abuse and neglect type

Overall, the most common type of substantiated abuse type for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was neglect, which was 38% compared with 23% for non-Indigenous children. The proportion of children in substantiations for all other abuse types was higher for non-Indigenous children (Figure 2.8). Nationally, the second most common substantiation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was emotional abuse, which was 32% compared with 38% for non-Indigenous children.

There was significant variation across jurisdictions in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children substantiated for neglect – ranging from 8% in Victoria to 54% in South Australia and the Northern Territory (Table A1.7). This variation was also reflected in the proportions across jurisdictions for emotional abuse – ranging from 19% in Western Australia to 56% in Victoria. In Tasmania, there were similar proportions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and non-Indigenous children who were subject to a substantiation for neglect and emotional abuse.

Overall, sexual abuse was the least common type of substantiation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (10%). This was consistent across all jurisdictions except Western Australia; this is likely due to differences in the mandatory reporting requirements for sexual abuse within Western Australia (Refer to Appendix 3). Sexual abuse was also the least common type of substantiation for non-Indigenous children in all jurisdictions except New South Wales and Victoria.

Table 2.4: Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by Indigenous status, states and territories (number and number per 1,000 children)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	All children	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All children	Rate ratio Indigenous/non-Indigenous
NSW ^(a)	3,303	8,194	39	11,536	46.5	5.2	7.0	8.9
Vic	768	6,557	2	7,327	50.4	5.4	5.9	9.4
Qld	1,731	4,032	178	5,941	24.6	3.9	5.4	6.2
WA ^(b)	539	695	636	1,870	17.3	1.4	3.4	12.7
SA	452	1,334	45	1,831	35.7	3.9	5.1	9.2
Tas ^(c)	146	771	215	1,132	17.5	7.0	9.5	2.5
ACT	106	329	30	465	54.8	4.2	5.8	13.1
NT	1,186	232	7	1,425	43.3	6.6	22.8	6.6
Australia	8,231	22,144	1,152	31,527	34.6	4.5	6.1	7.6

a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'

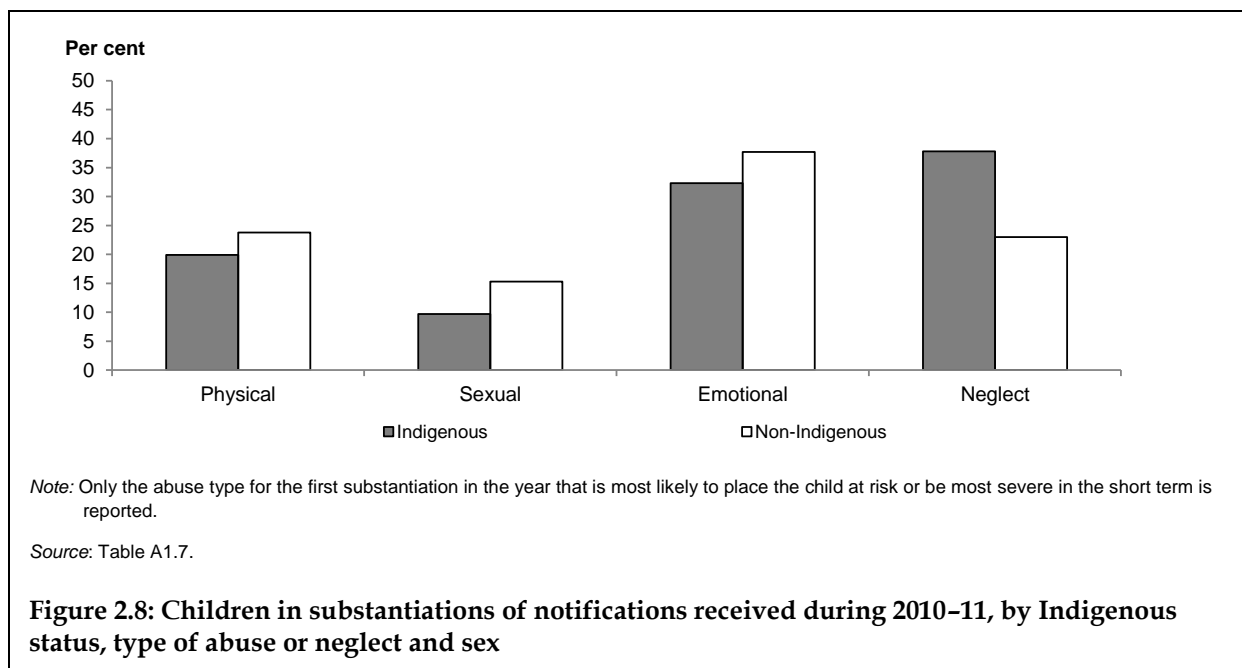
(b) Western Australia is currently unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.

(c) In Tasmania, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data.

Notes

1. Refer to Table A1.34 for the populations used in the calculation of rates. Rate calculations include unborn children and children of unknown age.
2. Legislation and practice differs across jurisdictions in relation to children aged 17. In some jurisdictions, children aged 17 are not substantiated and this means the number per 1,000 children who were the subject of a substantiation may be lower for those jurisdictions.
3. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the un-rounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subject of substantiations by the un-rounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were the subject of substantiations. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subjects of substantiation for every non-Indigenous child who was the subject of substantiation.
4. Percentage of unknown is the percentage of 'All children' in each state/territory.

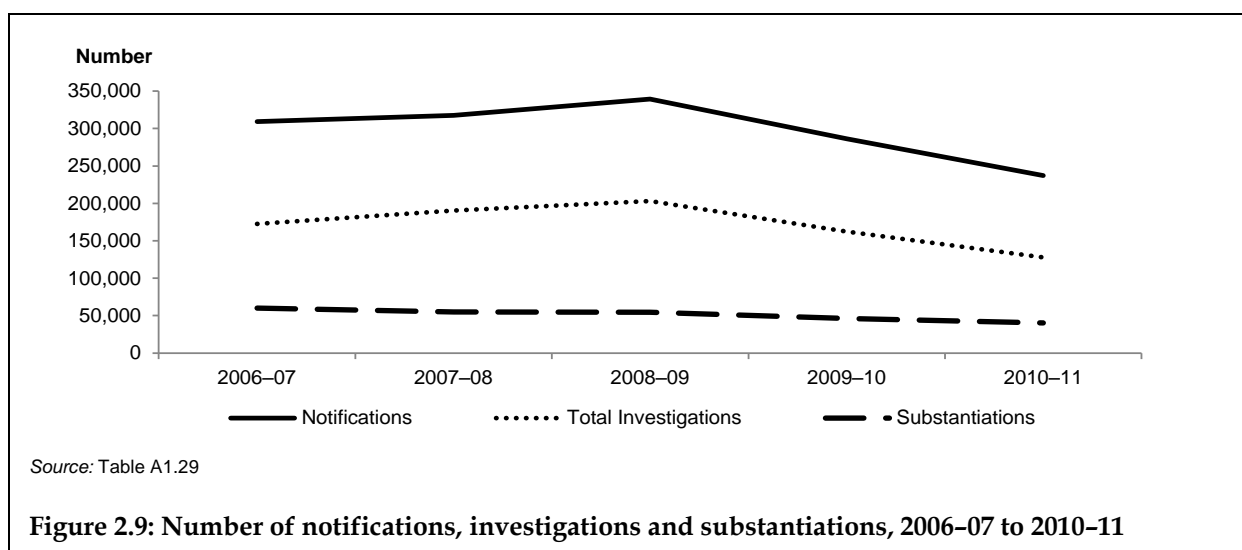
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2011.



2.4 National trends

Trends in number of cases

The number of substantiations has been steadily decreasing from 2006-07, (33% – from 60,230 to 40,466), while the number of notifications and investigations did not begin to show a declining trend until after a peak in 2008-09 (Figure 2.9). Regardless of changes in the total annual number of notifications received between 2006-07 and 2010-11, relative investigation and substantiation rates are stable. Over half the notifications each year were subsequently investigated and between 30 and 40% of investigations were substantiated.



Although nationally there was a decrease in notifications over the 5 years, the size and direction of change varied across jurisdictions (Table 2.5). From 2009-10 to 2010-11, the largest reported decrease in notifications was in New South Wales (37%) where the

threshold for mandatory reporting was raised from including children deemed at 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'. Other jurisdictions reporting decreases in the number of notifications included Western Australia (10%), Queensland (1%) and the Northern Territory (1%).

From 2009-10 to 2010-11, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania showed an increase in notifications (15%, 9%, and 8% respectively), which may be the result of legislative changes, enhanced public awareness stemming from awareness campaigns or inquiries into child protection processes. Appendix 8 provides details on the various inquiries into state and territory child protection services that may have enhanced public awareness.

Table 2.5: Number of notifications, states and territories, 2006-07 to 2010-11

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(b)(c)}	SA ^(d)	Tas ^(e)	ACT	NT	Total
2006-07	189,928	38,675	28,511	7,700	18,434	14,498	8,710	2,992	309,448
2007-08	195,599	41,607	25,003	8,977	20,847	12,863	8,970	3,660	317,526
2008-09	213,686	42,851	23,408	10,159	23,221	10,345	9,595	6,189	339,454
2009-10	156,465	48,369	21,885	12,160	20,298	9,895	10,780	6,585	286,437
2010-11	98,845	55,718	21,655	10,976	21,145	10,689	11,712	6,533	237,273

- (a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken at two levels of intensity. Only the more serious cases which receive the higher level response may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010-11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.
- (b) Data for 2009-10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.
- (c) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2010-11 where the primary concern of the initial inquiry for the child was emotional, psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.
- (d) During 2009-10, South Australia implemented a new client information system and this was accompanied by policy and practice changes. Therefore data for this year are not fully comparable with previous years' data.
- (e) In Tasmania, from February 2008, there was a change in the processes for recording notifications. New contacts made about similar concerns during an open notification/investigation period, within the first 6 weeks, were added to the notification as a 'case note'. Case notes are not included in the count of notifications, hence comparison between values from 2007-08 to 2008-09 should be interpreted with caution.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2006-07 to 2010-11.

In line with the decrease in notifications in 2010-11, the total number of substantiations resulting from finalised investigations fell 12% from the previous year, from 46,187 to 40,466 (Table 2.6). The largest decrease was observed in New South Wales (29%), which is likely due to both flow on effects of the large decrease in notifications and in changes to reporting practices associated with the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, which have affected the comparability of New South Wales data from the previous year (See Appendix 5).

Substantiations also decreased in the Australian Capital Territory (by 14%) and Queensland (5%). All other jurisdictions recorded increases in the number of substantiations. The largest increase was for the Northern Territory (32%) (Table 2.6). This increase may reflect more than a real rise in substantiated cases; for example, it is likely that the recent activities undertaken by the Northern Territory Department of Children and Families as part of the child protection system reform have affected these data (see Appendix 6).

Table 2.6: Number of substantiations of notifications received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2006–07	37,094	6,828	10,108	1,233	2,242	1,252	852	621	60,230
2007–08	34,135	6,365	8,028	1,464	2,331	1,214	827	756	55,120
2008–09	34,078	6,344	7,315	1,523	2,419	1,188	896	858	54,621
2009–10	26,248	6,603	6,922	1,652	1,815	963	741	1,243	46,187
2010–11	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	40,466

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken at two levels of intensity. Only the more serious cases which receive the higher level response may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

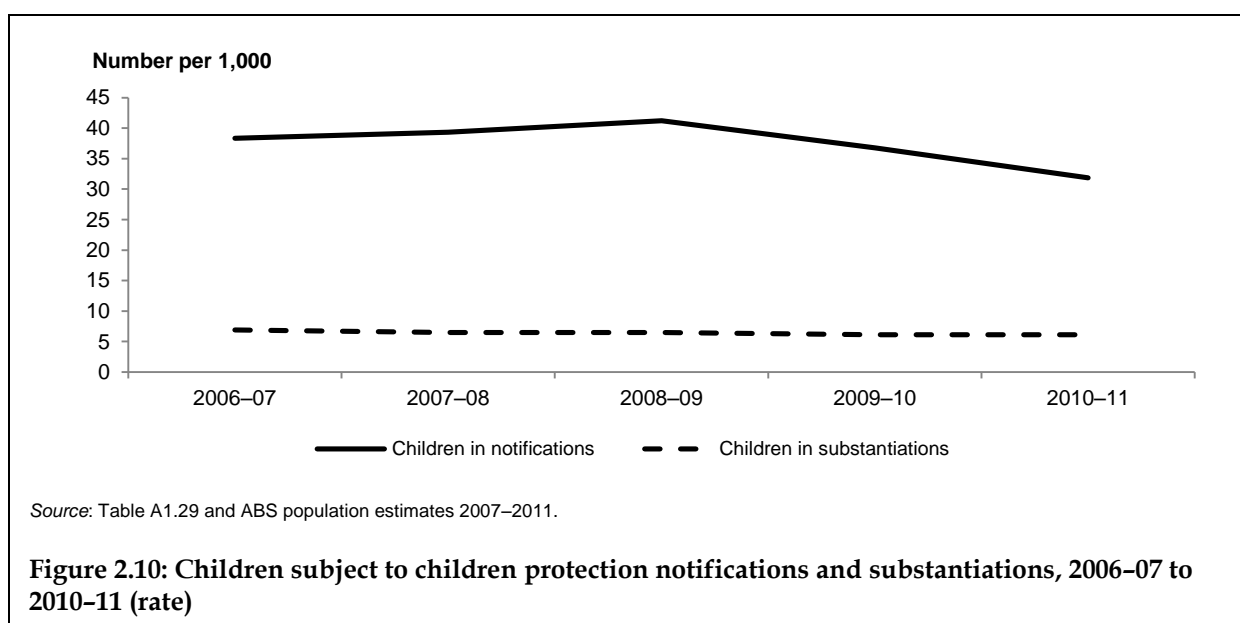
(b) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2006–07 to 2010–11.

Trends relating to children

Between 2006–07 and 2010–11, the number of children subject to a notification in Australia decreased by 13% (from 188,666 to 163,767). The number of children who were the subject of a substantiation of a notification in Australia decreased by 7% over the same time period (from 34,028 to 31,527) (Figure 2.10).

Rates of child protection notifications increased from 2006–07 until 2008–09 (from 38.4 to 41.2 per 1,000, respectively), but have declined over the past 2 years (to 31.9 per 1,000 in 2010–11). Throughout the same period, the rate of children subject to a substantiated notification has decreased from 6.9 to 6.1 per 1,000 children (Figure 2.10).



Since 2006–07, rates have increased for Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory; decreased for New South Wales, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory; and remained relatively stable for South Australia (Table 2.7). As with the increases noted in substantiation cases, the largest increase in the rate of children subject to a substantiation was for the Northern Territory (from 8.8 in 2006–07 to 22.8 in 2010–11).

Table 2.7: Rates of children who were the subject of substantiation of a notification received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2006–07 to 2010–11 (number per 1,000 children)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(b)(c)}	SA ^(d)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2006–07	8.5	5.6	8.7	2.3	5.0	6.8	7.4	8.8	6.9
2007–08	8.2	5.1	7.1	2.7	5.2	7.9	7.1	11.4	6.5
2008–09	8.7	5.0	6.3	2.8	5.4	9.1	7.8	12.3	6.5
2009–10	8.0	5.2	5.7	2.9	4.2	7.4	7.0	16.6	6.1
2010–11	7.0	5.9	5.4	3.4	5.1	9.5	5.8	22.8	6.1

- (a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken at two levels of intensity. Only the more serious cases which receive the higher level response may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'
- (b) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.
- (c) For 2010–11, Western Australia was unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.
- (d) During 2009–10, South Australia implemented a new client information system and this was accompanied by policy and practice changes. Therefore data for this year are not fully comparable with previous years' data.

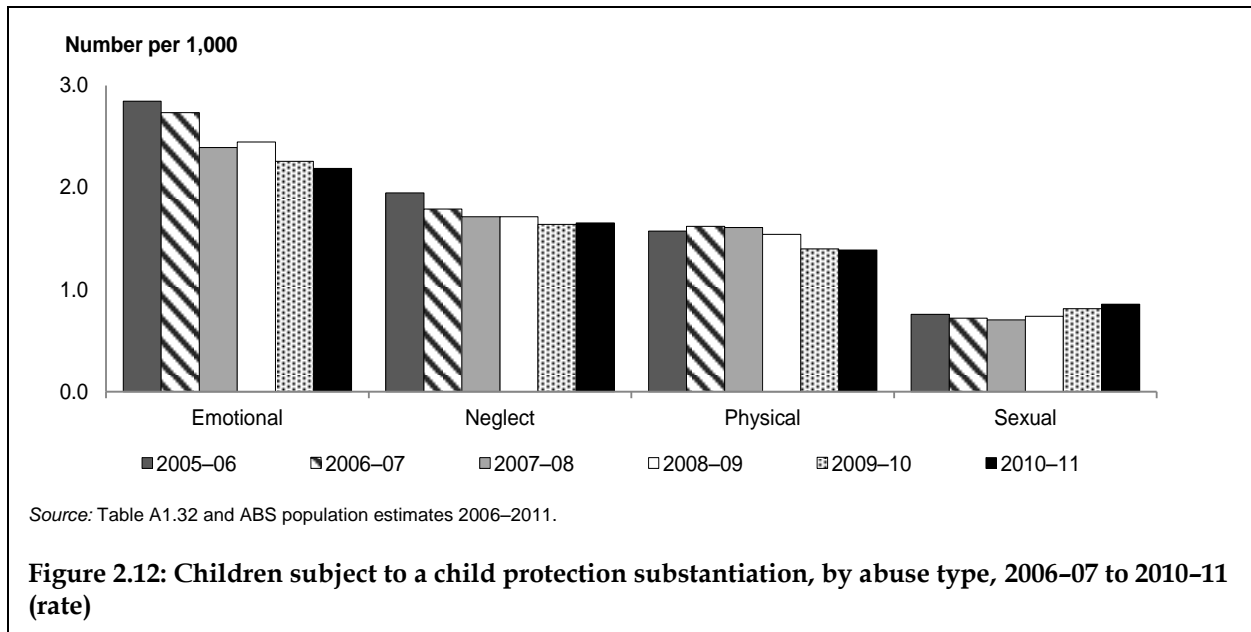
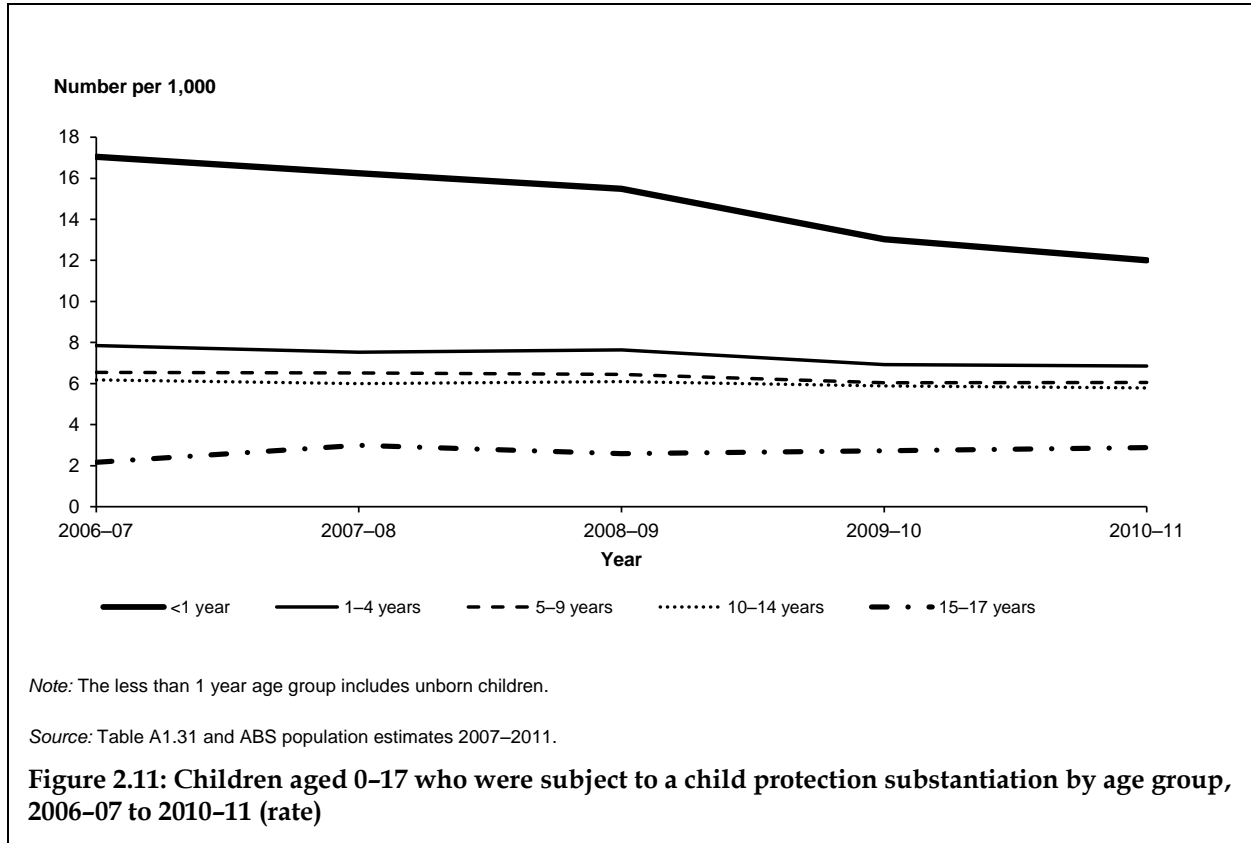
Notes:

1. Unborn children are included in rate calculations.
2. Children may have been the subject of more than one substantiation.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2006–07 to 2010–11 and ABS population estimates 2007–2011.

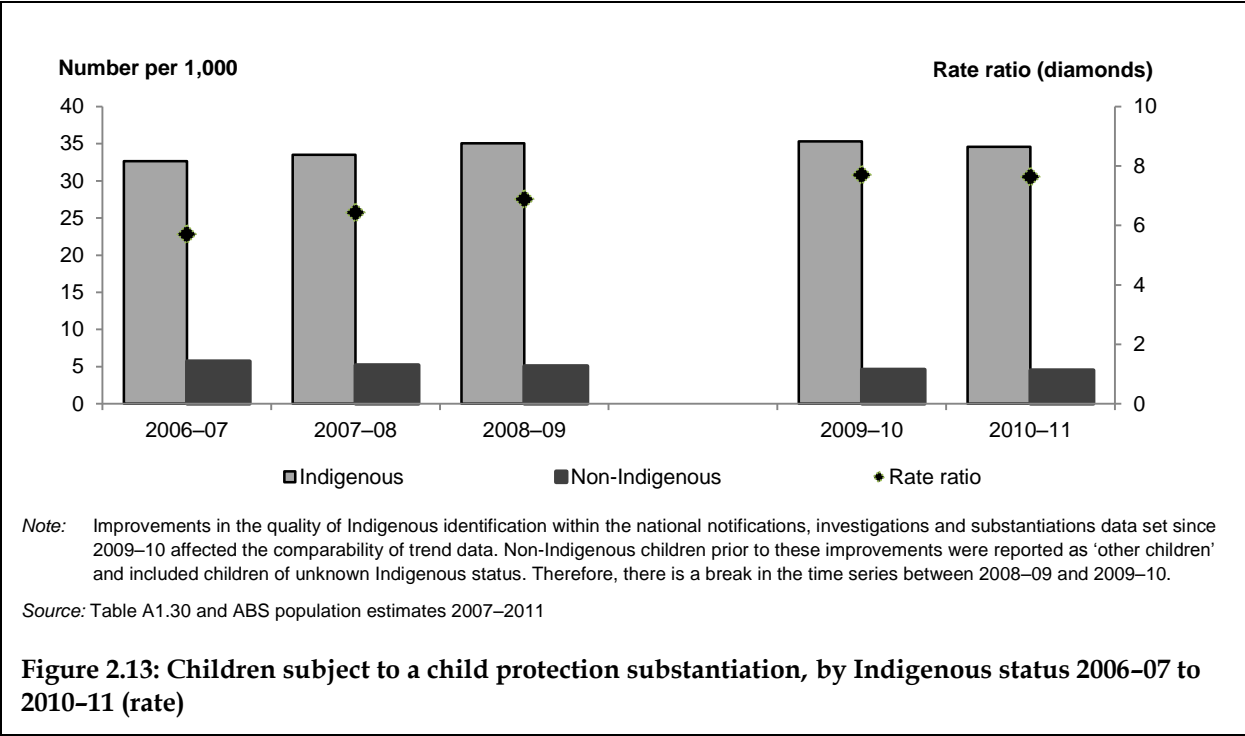
Age and sex profile

Since 2006–07, consistent with the overall trend, the rate of child protection substantiations has fallen across most age groups. In particular, the substantiation rate for children aged less than 12 months has fallen from 17.0 to 12.0 per 1,000. All other age groups had slight decreases (Figure 2.11).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The substantiation rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous children have both marginally decreased since 2009–10; from 35.3 to 34.6 per 1,000 and from 4.6 to 4.5 per 1,000 respectively. The rate ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous children has also decreased slightly since 2009–10; from 7.7 to 7.6 in 2010–11 (Figure 2.13).



3 Care and protection orders

3.1 Overview

Care and protection orders are legal orders or arrangements that give child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare. This chapter focuses on: children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders during 2010–11; orders issued during 2010–11; characteristics of children on orders at 30 June 2011; and trend data.

Children are counted only once, even if they were admitted to, or discharged from, more than one order, or were on more than one order at 30 June 2011. If a child was on more than one order at 30 June 2011, then the child is counted as being on the order that implies the highest level of intervention by the department (with finalised guardianship or custody orders being the most interventionist, and interim and temporary orders the least).

Key statistics

In 2010–11 there were 23,591 care and protection orders issued across Australia, with 13,830 children admitted to an order during that time. Nationally, in 2010–11, more children were admitted to care and protection orders than discharged from orders (13,830 compared with 7,480). As at 30 June 2011, over 39,000 children were on a care and protection order – a rate of 7.6 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Key care and protection order statistics, 2010–11

	Number	Rate (number per 1,000 children)
Care and protection orders issued	23,591	..
Children admitted to an order	13,830	2.7
Children discharged from an order	7,480	1.5
Children on a care and protection order ^(a)	39,058	7.6

.. not applicable.

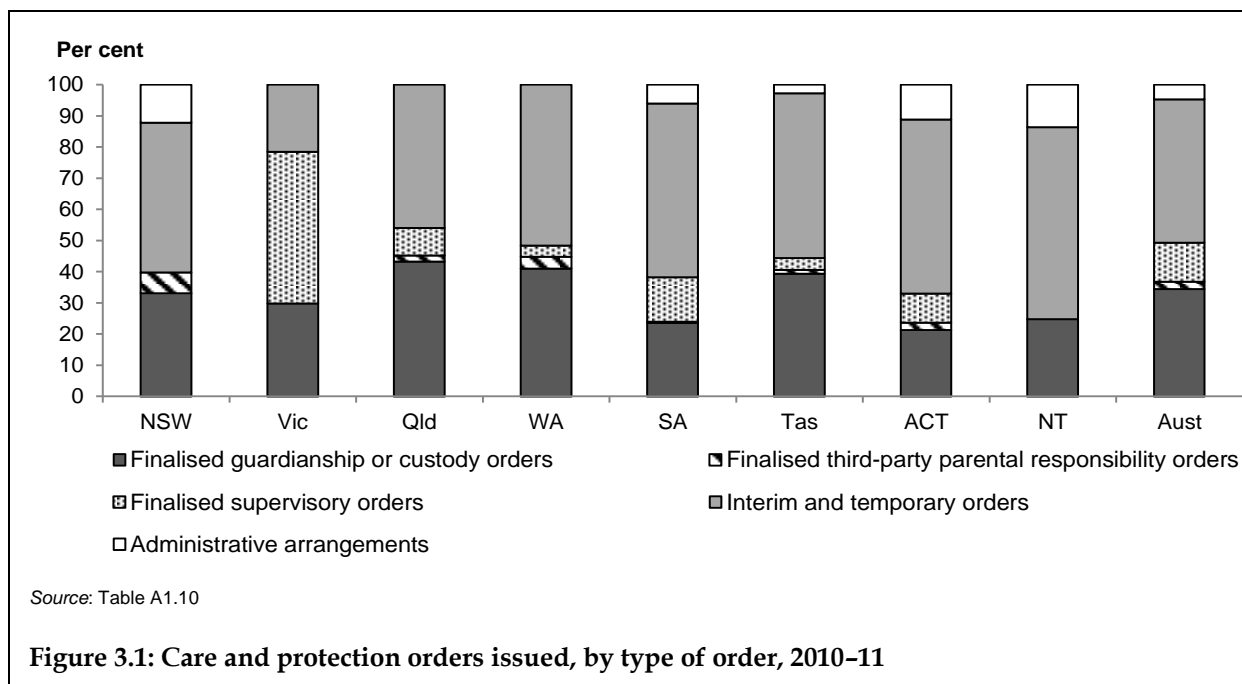
(a) Children on a care and protection order are counted as at 30 June 2011.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2010–11.

3.2 Orders

Almost half (46% or 10,817) of the 23,591 care and protection orders issued in 2010–11 were interim and temporary orders and 34% (8,124) were finalised guardianship or custody orders (Figure 3.1). The types of care and protection orders issued varied across jurisdictions, reflecting both the different types of orders available and the different policies and practices in putting them into effect.

In all jurisdictions except Victoria, interim and temporary orders were the most commonly issued type of order (comprising 46% to 62% of orders issued). In Victoria, finalised supervisory orders were most common (49%).



3.3 Children

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

A total of 13,830 children were admitted to orders in 2010-11. Among this group, around two in five (42%) children had been previously admitted to an order. The proportion of children admitted for the first time ranged from 35% in Tasmania to 82% in New South Wales (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders, states and territories, 2010-11

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children admitted to orders	3,006	3,151	4,353	1,238	966	570	207	339	13,830
Children admitted for the first time	2,469	1,719	1,674	981	494	199	161	260	7,957
<i>Percentage of all admissions</i>	<i>82.1</i>	<i>54.6</i>	<i>38.5</i>	<i>79.2</i>	<i>51.1</i>	<i>34.9</i>	<i>77.8</i>	<i>76.7</i>	<i>57.5</i>
Children discharged from orders	2,086	1,662	2,185	397	512	221	128	289	7,480

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) In Queensland, previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

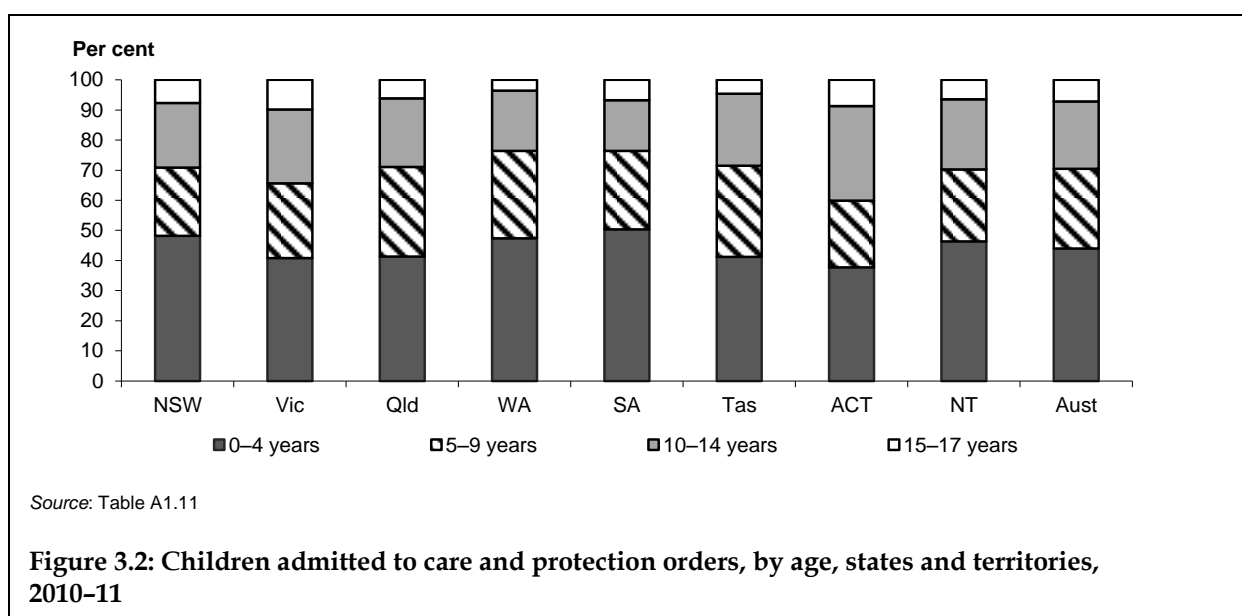
Notes

1. Data may include children who were discharged around the age of 18.
2. If a new care and protection order is applied within 5 days of discharge, then a discharge is not counted.
3. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. However, a change to an order is counted as an admission.
4. If a child is on multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, all orders/arrangements must be discharged before a discharge for the purposes of this table is counted.
5. Each child is counted for one admission and/or one discharge for the year.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Children may be admitted (or re-admitted) to a care and protection order for a number of reasons including substantiated abuse, irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the child and their parents, or where parents were unwilling and/or unable to adequately care for the child. A re-admission to a care and protection order can also reflect a change in order type; for example, from a temporary order to a longer-term order to ensure a child's continuing safety.

Almost half (44%) of children admitted to orders in 2010–11 were aged between 0 and 4; this ranged from 38% in the Australian Capital Territory to 50% in South Australia (Figure 3.2). Age patterns were similar to those for substantiations of notifications, with a decreasing proportion as age increased.

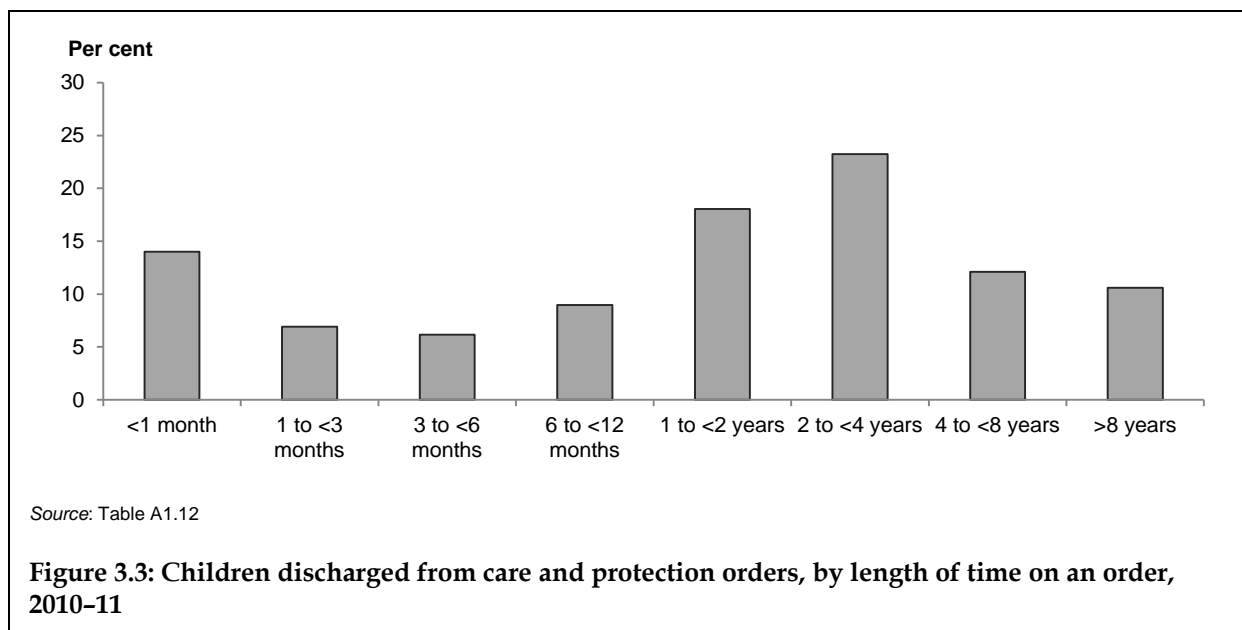


Length of time on an order at discharge

Some 7,480 children were discharged from a care and protection order in 2010–11. Nearly two-thirds of this group (64%) had been continuously on an order for 1 year or more (Figure 3.3). This pattern was consistent across most jurisdictions, with the exception of the Northern Territory where 75% of all children discharged had been continuously on an order for less than 1 year (Table A1.12).

In 2010–11, 21% of children who were discharged had been on an order continuously for less than 3 months; this ranged from less than 1% of children discharged in Western Australia to 59% in the Northern Territory. Some of these children may have been on interim or temporary orders and later have more permanent order arrangements applied.

At the other end of the spectrum, 11% of children who were discharged from an order had been continuously on an order for 8 years or more. There was considerable variation across jurisdictions – ranging from 3% in the Northern Territory to 17% in New South Wales (Table A1.12).



Children on orders

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the 39,058 Australian children who were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2011 were on finalised guardianship or custody orders (Table 3.3). This was relatively consistent across states and territories, ranging from 66% in New South Wales to 92% in South Australia. There was greater variation among the jurisdictions in terms of other types of orders. For example, in New South Wales, 22% of children were on finalised third-party parental responsibility arrangements compared with less than 10% in other jurisdictions. In Victoria, 25% of children were on finalised supervisory orders compared with 2% in Tasmania. With the exception of Victoria and South Australia, 10% to 11% of children were on interim or temporary orders. Overall, only a small proportion (less than 1%) of children were on administrative arrangements that do not require intervention by the courts.

Table 3.3: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship/custody	10,153	4,880	6,266	2,713	2,411	998	515	607	28,543
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	3,376	..	841	187	56	27	43	0	4,530
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,654	408	78	0	22	77	0	2,239
Interim and temporary orders	1,710	201	941	299	117	132	75	80	3,555
Administrative arrangements	100	..	..	..	36	7	13	35	191
Total	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
Per cent									
Finalised guardianship/custody	66.2	72.5	74.1	..	92.0	84.1	71.2	84.1	73.1
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.0	..	9.9	..	2.1	2.3	5.9	—	11.6
Finalised supervisory orders	..	24.6	4.8	..	0.0	1.9	10.7	—	5.7
Interim and temporary orders	11.1	3.0	11.1	..	4.5	11.1	10.4	11.1	9.1
Administrative arrangements	0.7	..	..	..	1.4	0.6	1.8	4.8	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable

n.a. not available.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders

(b) In Western Australia, the application for a care and protection order to be issued for a child, is counted as an interim order for national reporting purposes. However, there is in fact, no order issued during this stage. It is thus not valid to compare the number of orders by a percentage basis.

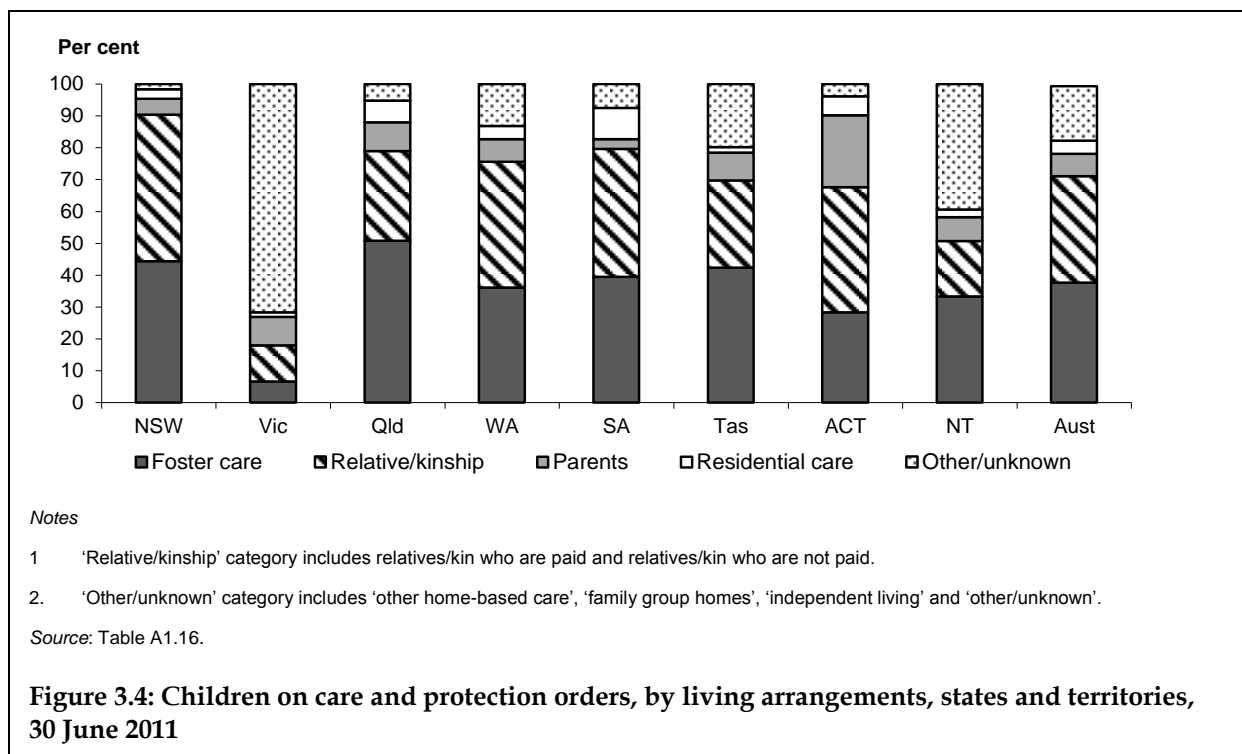
Note: Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Living arrangements

The majority of children on orders at 30 June lived in either foster care or with relative/kinship carers (71%). This was consistent across all jurisdictions except Victoria – ranging from 48% in the Northern Territory to 90% in New South Wales. In Victoria the majority of children on orders were reported as living in the ‘other/unknown’ category (70%) (Figure 3.4).

A small proportion of children on orders were living with their parents (7%). Across jurisdictions this proportion was 9% or less in all states and territories except the Australian Capital Territory (23%). Overall, children on orders were least likely to be living in residential care (4%); this was consistent in all jurisdictions except South Australia – ranging from 2% in Victoria to 7% in Queensland. In South Australia children on orders were more likely to be living in residential care than with their parents (10% compared with 3%) (Figure 3.4).



The living arrangements of children on orders reflected the relationship with the age of the child (Table A1.17). Across Australia, 87% of children on orders who were living independently were aged 15–17, while 83% of children on orders aged less than 5 were living in family care or home-based care.

Age and sex

The age profile of children on orders was very similar across the jurisdictions. The proportion of children on orders who were aged less than 5 ranged from 23% in Victoria to 26% in Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. The proportion of children in the 15–17 age group ranged from 12% in the Northern Territory to 20% in Victoria (Table A1.15).

The age distribution of children admitted to orders during 2010–11 was considerably younger than that for all children on orders at 30 June 2011. This difference reflects the fact that many children are on long-term orders. Those on orders at 30 June 2011 include those admitted during previous years and not yet discharged (Tables A1.11 and A1.15).

Overall, there were slightly more boys (52%) than girls (48%) on care and protection orders (Table A1.14). This was consistent across all jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2011, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders was nine and a half times that of non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders was higher than the rate for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 3.3 in Tasmania to 14.9 in Victoria (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Children on care and protection orders, by number and number per 1,000 children aged 0–17 and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2011

State/ territory	Number of children			Number per 1,000 children			Rate ratio Indigenous/ non- Indigenous
	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	All children ^(a)	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	All children	
NSW ^(b)	4,900	10,435	15,339	68.8	6.7	9.4	10.3
Vic	1,060	5,665	6,735	69.2	4.6	5.4	14.9
Qld	3,181	5,247	8,456	44.8	5.1	7.7	8.7
WA	1,496	1,663	3,277	48.0	3.2	6.0	14.8
SA	658	1,904	2,620	51.8	5.5	7.3	9.4
Tas	234	936	1,186	28.0	8.5	10.0	3.3
ACT	176	535	723	90.9	6.8	9.0	13.3
NT	575	146	722	20.9	4.2	11.6	5.0
Australia	12,280	26,531	39,058	51.4	5.4	7.6	9.5

(a) Includes 247 children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

(b) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

Notes

1. Refer to Table A1.35 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the un-rounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were on a care and protection order by the un-rounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were on a care and protection order. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were on a care and protection order for every non-Indigenous child who was on a care and protection order.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders, nearly three-quarters (73%) were on finalised guardianship and custody orders (Table A1.18). This is consistent with the proportion of all children on finalised guardianship or custody orders (Table 3.3). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous children were generally on similar types of orders; however, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were less likely to be on finalised supervisory orders than non-Indigenous children (4% and 7%, respectively) and more likely to be on interim and temporary order (11% and 8%, respectively) (Table A1.18).

3.4 National trends

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

Between 2006–07 and 2008–09 the number of children admitted to orders in Australia increased by 12% – from 13,824 to 15,509 (Table 3.5). However, by 2010–11 numbers returned to 2006–07 levels. Compared with 2006–07, slight increases occurred in Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory in 2010–11 – ranging from 7% in Victoria to 12% in the Northern Territory.

The other jurisdictions saw a decrease in the number of children admitted to care and protection orders during this time, with the largest proportional decrease occurring in the Australian Capital Territory (by 21%) (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5: Children admitted to care and protection orders, states and territories, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2006–07	3,495	2,934	3,998	1,362	888	582	261	304	13,824
2007–08	3,614	3,289	4,312	1,568	1,162	573	241	321	15,080
2008–09	3,827	3,241	4,647	1,355	1,087	627	381	344	15,509
2009–10	3,381	3,057	4,318	1,364	1,095	622	331	396	14,564
2010–11	3,006	3,151	4,353	1,238	966	570	207	339	13,830

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) In Queensland, previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

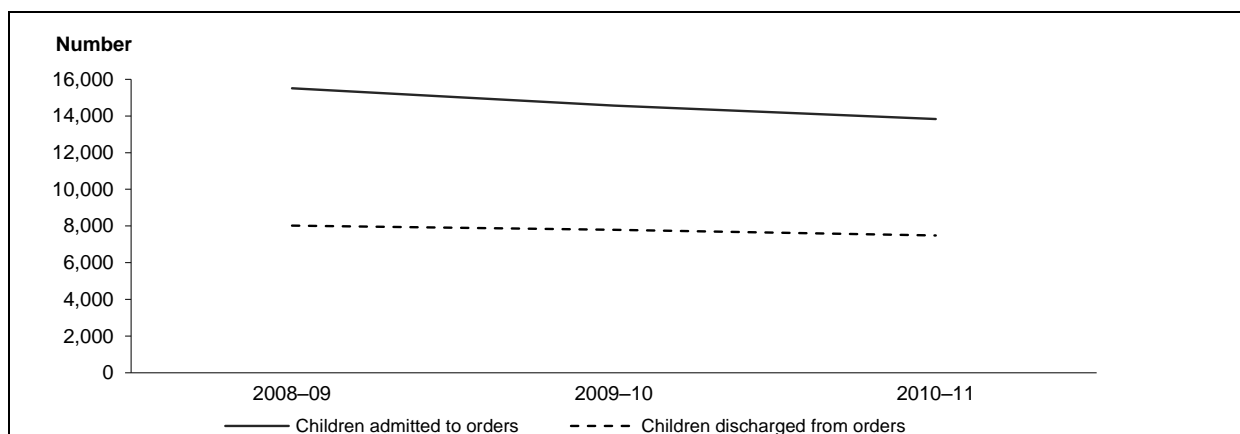
(c) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

Notes

1. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. However, a change to an order is counted as an admission.
2. Each child is counted for one admission for the year.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Between 2008–09 and 2010–11 the number of children admitted to orders in Australia has remained consistently higher than the number of children discharged from orders (Figure 3.5). However, during this time the number of children admitted to orders has been decreasing, while the number of children discharged has remained relatively stable.



Source: AIHW (2009, 2010, 2011).

Figure 3.5: Children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders, 2008–09 to 2010–11

Children on care and protection orders

From 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2011, the rate of children aged 0–17 on orders in Australia increased from 5.9 to 7.6 per 1,000 (Table 3.6). There were increases in all jurisdictions with the largest increase occurring in the Northern Territory (from 7.3 per 1,000 in 2007 to 11.6 in 2011).

The increases in the overall number of children on care and protection orders during this period are being driven by the substantial increase in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders.

Table 3.6: Trends in children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2011 (number per 1,000)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld	WA ^(c)	SA ^(d)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2007	6.6	4.6	6.3	5.2	5.4	7.6	7.5	7.3	5.9
2008	7.5	5.2	6.8	6.0	6.2	7.8	7.1	8.4	6.6
2009	8.3	5.0	7.4	6.3	6.7	8.4	7.8	9.2	7.0
2010	9.0	5.3	7.4	6.4	7.1	9.4	8.2	11.1	7.4
2011	9.4	5.4	7.7	6.0	7.3	10.0	9.0	11.6	7.6

- (a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.
 (b) The data for Victoria for previous years were updated in 2009. This data may not match that published in publications of *Child protection Australia*. Note that this has also affected the 'totals'.
 (c) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.
 (d) In 2008, South Australia has included, for the first time in this collection, the number of children who were placed on third-party parental responsibility orders and administrative arrangements. Therefore data from 2008 onwards are not comparable with 2007 data.

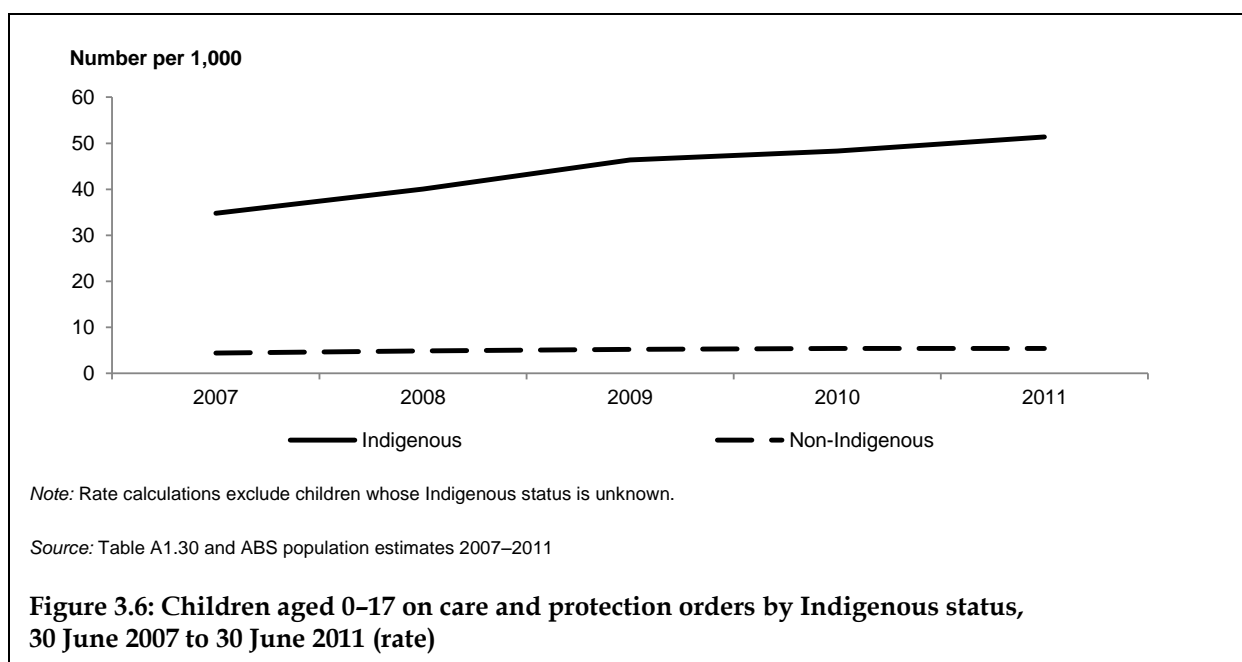
Notes

1. Some rates may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.
2. Refer to Table A1.33 for the numbers used to calculate these rates.
3. Rates were calculated using ABS population estimates 2007–2011.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

From 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2011, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders has increased steadily (from 34.8 to 51.4 per 1,000); while the non-Indigenous rate has remained relatively unchanged (increasing slightly from 4.4 to 5.4 per 1,000) (Figure 3.6).



4 Out-of-home care

4.1 Overview

This section presents information on children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care during 2010–11 and all the children who were in out-of-home care on the night of 30 June 2011. In addition, the chapter includes information relating to carers who were offered financial reimbursement but declined a financial payment by a state or territory, and placements with relatives (other than parents). Placements solely funded by disability services, medical or psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, overnight child care services or supported accommodation assistance placements, and children in placements with parents where the jurisdiction makes a financial payment, are excluded from this analysis.

Key statistics

In 2010–11, 11,613 children were admitted to out-of-home care, while 9,183 children were discharged from out-of-home care. At 30 June 2011, there were 37,648 children in out-of-home care, a rate of 7.3 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Key out-of-home care statistics, 2010–11

	Number	Rate per 1,000 children
Children admitted to out-of-home care	11,613	2.3
Children discharged from out-of-home care	9,183	1.8
Children in out-of-home care ^(a)	37,648	7.3

.. not applicable.

(a) Children in out-of-home care are counted as at 30 June 2011.

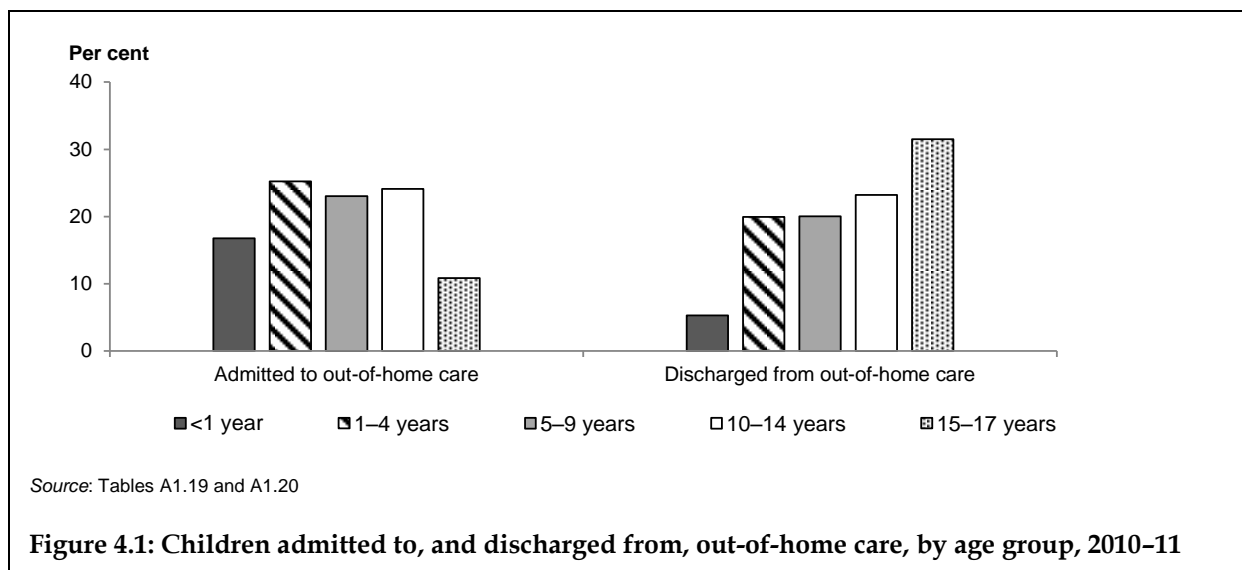
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2010–11.

4.2 Children

Children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care

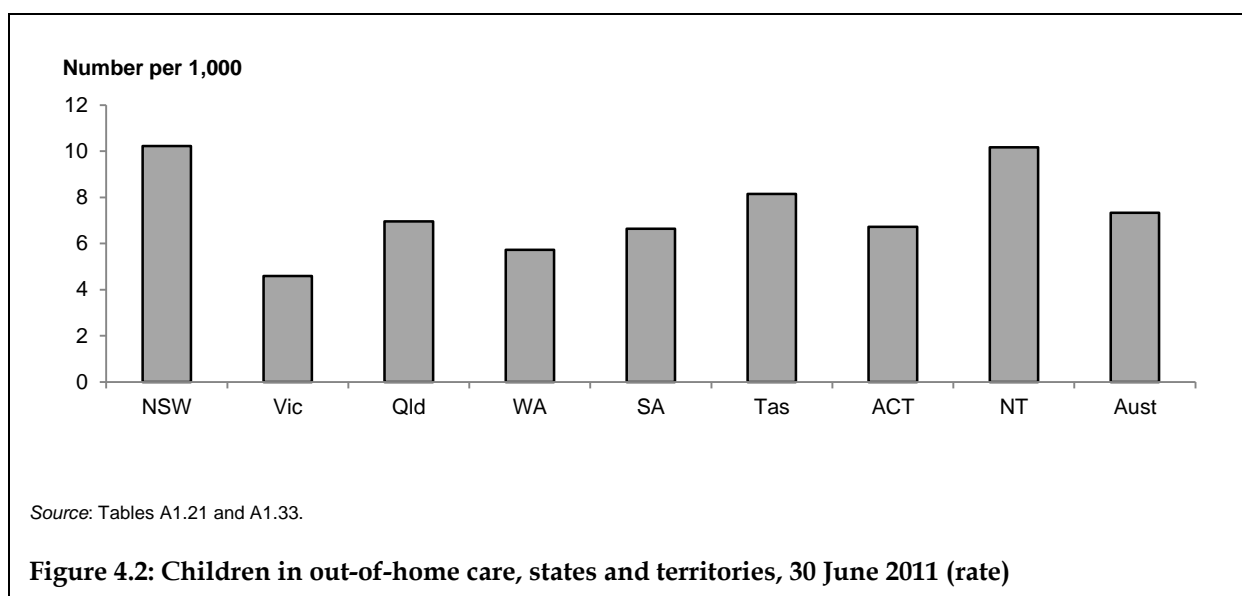
Of the 11,613 children admitted to out-of-home care during 2010–11, 42% were aged less than 5 (4,879). Almost one-quarter (23% or 2,677) were aged between 5 and 9 and a further quarter (24% or 2,798) between 10 and 14. Children aged 15–17 represented only 11% (1,258) of all children admitted to out-of-home care in 2010–11 (Table A1.19).

The age distribution of children discharged from care was considerably older than that of children admitted to out-of-home care (Figure 4.1). Nationally, 32% of those discharged from out-of-home-care were aged 15–17, compared with 11% admitted to out-of-home care.



Children in out-of-home care

Nationally, the rate of children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2011 was 7.3 per 1,000 children, ranging from 4.6 per 1,000 in Victoria to 10.2 in New South Wales and the Northern Territory (Figure 4.2).



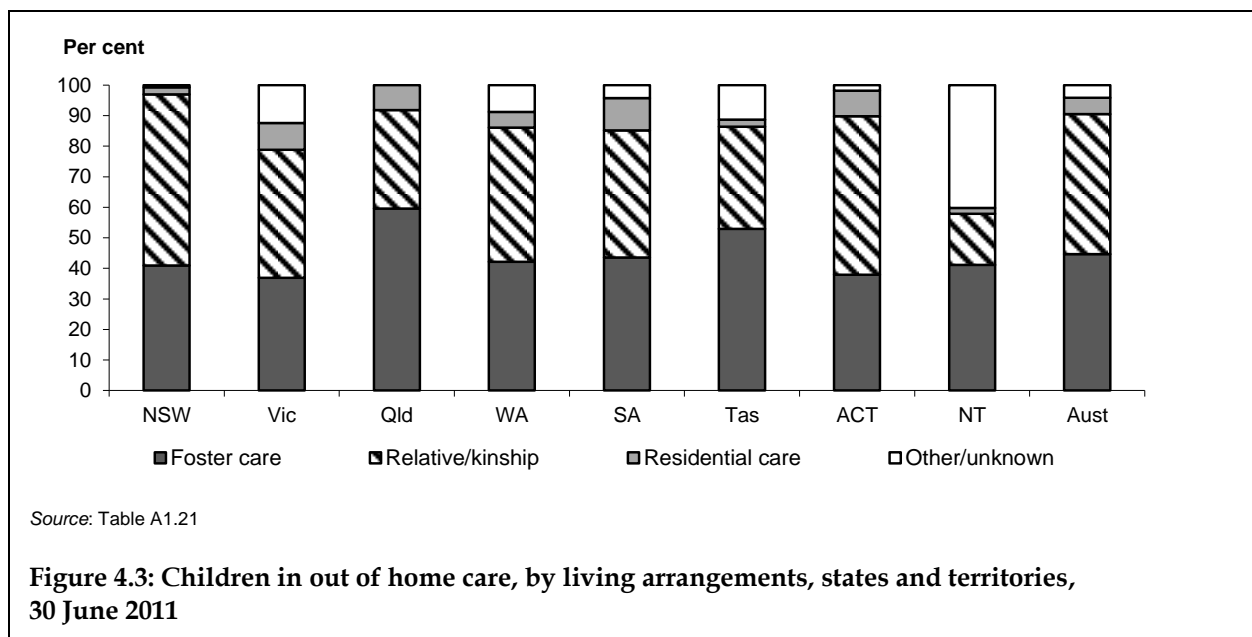
Types of placement

The majority of children (93%) in out-of-home care at 30 June 2011 were in home-based care—45% in foster care, 46% in relative/kinship care and 2.5% in other types of home-based care. This follows a similar pattern observed in previous years (Table A1.21). The high proportion of children in home-based care reflects the trends in recent decades of increased

use of placements with relatives and kin or foster carers, and decreased use of placements in residential care (Johnstone 2001).

The proportion of children in foster care ranged from 37% in Victoria to 60% in Queensland (Figure 4.3). Placement with relatives or kin also varied across the jurisdictions – from 17% in the Northern Territory to 56% in New South Wales.

Nationally, just one in 20 children in out-of-home care was living in residential care (Figure 4.3). This ranged from 2% in the Northern Territory to 11% in South Australia. Residential care is mainly used for children who have complex needs. However, in many jurisdictions, priority is given to keeping siblings together, which sometimes results in periods of residential care for larger family groups.



Length of time in continuous placement

Nationally, at 30 June 2011, around four in five children (82%) had been in their current out-of-home care placements for more than 1 year – ranging from 69% of children in the Northern Territory to 88% in South Australia. Almost one-third (31%) had been in a continuous placement for between 2 and 5 years, while a further 36% had been in a continuous placement for 5 years or more (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Children in out-of-home care, by length of time in continuous placement, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Time in continuous placement	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1 month ^(a)	246	189	162	42	13	21	18	24	715
1 month to <6 months	1,210	652	708	291	141	94	53	94	3,243
6 months to <1 year	1,119	549	690	299	131	93	42	78	3,001
1 year to <2 years	2,318	944	1,139	404	239	166	78	143	5,431
2 years to <5 years	6,085	1,432	2,319	1,028	251	308	196	169	11,788
5 years or more	5,762	1,912	2,584	1,056	1,593	284	153	126	13,470
Total	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Per cent									
<1 month	1.5	3.3	2.1	1.3	0.5	2.2	3.3	3.8	1.9
1 month to <6 months	7.2	11.5	9.3	9.3	6.0	9.7	9.8	14.8	8.6
6 months to <1 year	6.7	9.7	9.1	9.6	5.5	9.6	7.8	12.3	8.0
1 year to <2 years	13.8	16.6	15.0	12.9	10.1	17.2	14.4	22.6	14.4
2 years to <5 years	36.4	25.2	30.5	32.9	10.6	31.9	36.3	26.7	31.3
5 years or more	34.4	33.7	34.0	33.8	67.3	29.4	28.3	19.9	35.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The less than 1 month category can include respite and non-respite placements. However, Western Australia are not able to distinguish between respite and non-respite care. 'Less than 1 month' excludes respite care for Queensland because the data are not available.

Notes

1. If a child has a return home or break of 2 months or less before returning to the same or different placement they are considered to be continuously in care during this period.
2. Respite care refers to out-of-home care that is provided on a temporary basis for reasons other than child protection: for example, when parents are ill or unable to care for the child for short periods of time. Not all jurisdictions could identify whether children were in respite care. However, where it was known that children were in respite care, they were included in the 'less than 1 month' category.
3. Percentages exclude cases where the length of time in a continuous placement was not stated or unknown.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Children on a care and protection order

Nationally, 89% of children in out-of-home care were also on care and protection orders. In the Northern Territory, all children in out-of-home care are required to be on care and protection orders. In other jurisdictions, the proportion of children in out-of-home care who were on care and protection orders ranged from 81% in Victoria to 99% in Western Australia and almost 100% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 4.3). In South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, a small proportion (around 1%) of children in out-of-home care were on orders other than care and protection orders (for example, offence orders).

Table 4.3: Children in out-of-home care, order status, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Order status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
On care and protection order	14,309	4,586	7,257	3,077	2,259	941	535	634	33,598
On another type of order	0	0	0	0	27	0	3	0	30
<i>Total children on orders</i>	<i>14,309</i>	<i>4,586</i>	<i>7,257</i>	<i>3,077</i>	<i>2,286</i>	<i>941</i>	<i>538</i>	<i>634</i>	<i>33,628</i>
Not on an order	2,431	1,092	345	43	82	25	2	0	4,020
Total	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Per cent									
On care and protection order	85.5	80.8	95.5	98.6	95.4	97.4	99.1	100.0	89.2
On another type of order	—	—	—	—	1.1	—	0.6	—	0.1
<i>Total children on orders</i>	<i>85.5</i>	<i>80.8</i>	<i>95.5</i>	<i>98.6</i>	<i>96.5</i>	<i>97.4</i>	<i>99.6</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>89.3</i>
Not on an order	14.5	19.2	4.5	1.4	3.5	2.6	0.4	—	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Age and sex profile

Almost one-third (31%) of children in out-of-home care were aged 5 to 9 and a similar proportion (30%) were aged 10 to 14 (Table A1.22). Just over half (52%) of all children in out-of-home care were boys (Table A1.23).

Living arrangements for children in out-of-home care were similar across age groups to children on care and protection orders. Children in residential care were older than children in home-based care – 84% of children in residential care or family group homes were aged 10 or older. The corresponding proportion of children aged over 10 in home-based care was 42% (Table A1.24). Only 5% of children in residential care or family group homes in Australia were aged less than 5, compared with 25% of those in home-based care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2011, there were 12,358 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, a rate of 51.7 per 1,000 children. These rates ranged from 18.2 per 1,000 in the Northern Territory to 80.6 in New South Wales (Table 4.4).

Nationally, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care was 10 times the rate for non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care was higher than for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 3.4 in Tasmania to 15.6 in Western Australia.

Table 4.4: Children in out-of-home care, by number and number per 1,000 children aged 0–17 and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2011

State/ territory	Number of children			Number per 1,000 children			Rate ratio Indigenous/ non- Indigenous
	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	All children ^(a)	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	All children	
NSW	5,737	10,994	16,740	80.6	7.0	10.2	11.5
Vic	877	4,701	5,678	57.3	3.8	4.6	14.9
Qld	2,850	4,722	7,602	40.2	4.6	7.0	8.7
WA	1,448	1,527	3,120	46.4	3.0	5.7	15.6
SA	630	1,690	2,368	49.6	4.9	6.6	10.1
Tas	196	754	966	23.5	6.8	8.1	3.4
ACT	119	409	540	61.4	5.2	6.7	11.8
NT	501	132	634	18.2	3.8	10.2	4.8
Australia	12,358	24,929	37,648	51.7	5.1	7.3	10.1

(a) 'All children' includes children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

Notes

1. Refer to Table A1.35 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the un-rounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were in out-of-home care by the un-rounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were in out-of-home care. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were in out-of-home care for every non-Indigenous child who was in out-of-home care.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

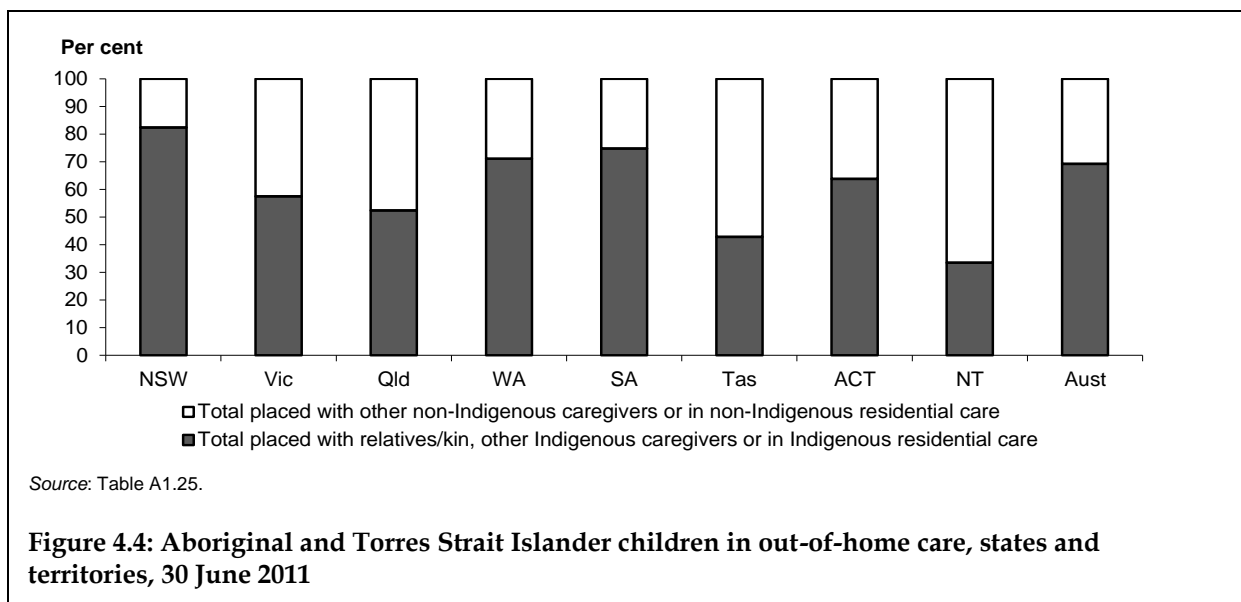
The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle outlines a preference for the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when they are placed outside their family (Lock 1997:50). The Principle has the following order of preference for the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children:

- with the child's extended family
- within the child's Indigenous community
- with other Indigenous people.

All jurisdictions have adopted the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle in legislation and policy. The impact of the Principle is reflected in the relatively high proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were placed either with Indigenous caregivers or with relatives in many jurisdictions (Figure 4.4). Across Australia, 69% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care.

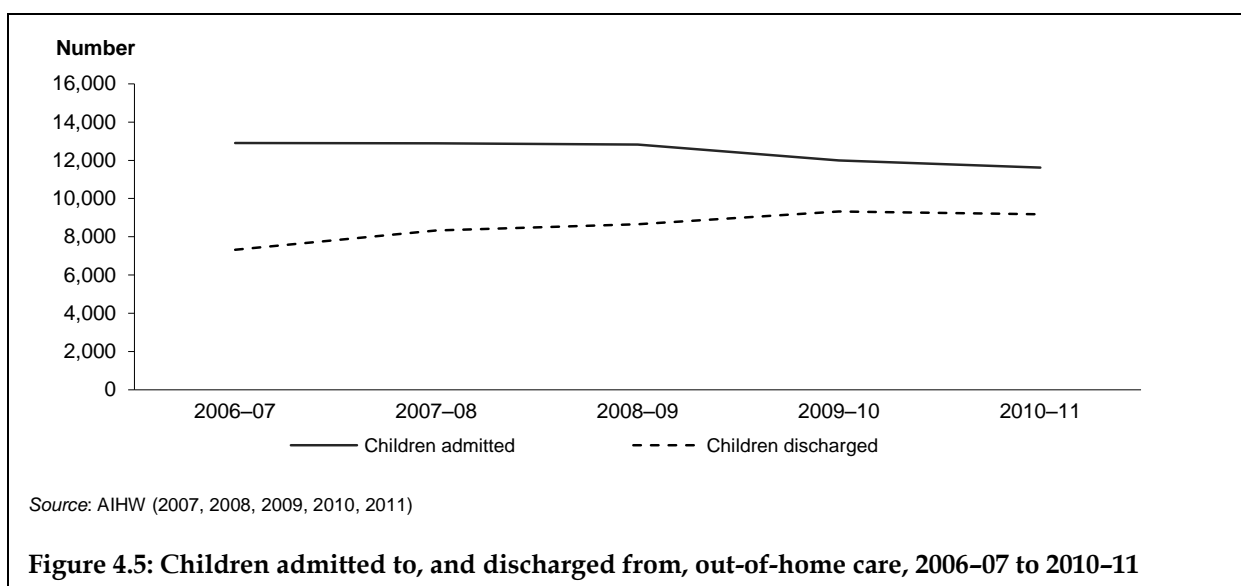
The Principle is just one of the many considerations taken into account when making decisions on placements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Where placement options outlined in the Principle are not optimal for a child's safety and wellbeing, the child may be placed in an alternative care arrangement; this is usually only done after extensive consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and/or organisations.



4.3 National trends

Children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care

Over the past 5 years, the number of children admitted to out-of-home care in Australia decreased by 10% – from 12,906 in 2006–07 to 11,613 in 2010–11. In contrast, the number of children discharged from out-of-home care has been increasing, with admissions continuing to outnumber discharges; however, the gap over the 5 year reporting period is contracting (Figure 4.5).



Trends in admissions over the past 5 years varied across jurisdictions (Table 4.5). The number of children admitted to out-of-home care in this period increased in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. All other jurisdictions had decreases over the same period.

Table 4.5: Children admitted to out-of-home care, states and territories, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2006–07	4,334	2,994	2,897	990	728	372	207	384	12,906
2007–08	4,467	3,027	3,146	855	652	301	167	276	12,891
2008–09	4,564	2,936	3,015	797	660	349	194	318	12,833
2009–10	3,922	3,112	2,618	838	644	334	168	366	12,002
2010–11	3,542	3,067	2,644	879	583	298	244	356	11,613

(a) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

Note: The table includes all children admitted to out-of-home care for the first time, as well as those children returning to care who had exited care more than 2 months previously. Children admitted to out-of-home care more than once during the year were only counted at the first admission.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Children in out-of-home care

Nationally, the overall rate of children in out-of-home care in Australia at 30 June has increased each year since 2007 – from 5.8 to 7.3 per 1,000 (Table 4.6). Overall, 9,269 more children (an increase of 33%) were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2011 compared with 30 June 2007. On average, the number of children in out-of-home care has increased by 7%, each year, over the past 5 years.

Table 4.6: Children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care, states and territories, 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2011

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(a)(b)}	SA ^(c)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
2007	11,843	5,052	5,972	2,371	1,678	667	399	397	28,379
2008	13,566	5,056	6,670	2,546	1,841	664	425	398	31,166
2009	15,211	5,283	7,093	2,682	2,016	808	494	482	34,069
2010	16,175	5,469	7,350	2,737	2,188	893	532	551	35,895
2011	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Number per 1,000 children									
2007	7.3	4.3	5.8	4.7	4.8	5.7	5.2	6.4	5.8
2008	8.4	4.2	6.4	5.0	5.2	5.6	5.5	6.4	6.3
2009	9.4	4.3	6.7	5.1	5.7	6.8	6.3	7.7	6.7
2010	9.9	4.4	6.8	5.1	6.1	7.5	6.7	8.8	7.0
2011	10.2	4.6	7.0	5.7	6.6	8.1	6.7	10.2	7.3

(a) Data for 2008 onwards is not strictly comparable with earlier figures for Western Australia because they previously included children whose whereabouts were unknown or who were living with relatives who were not reimbursed.

(b) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

(c) South Australia could only provide the number of children in out-of-home care where the Department is making a financial contribution to the care of a child.

Notes

- Some rates may not match those published in previous publications of *Child protection Australia* due to retrospective updates to data.
- Refer to Table A1.35 for the population used in the calculation of rates for 2011.

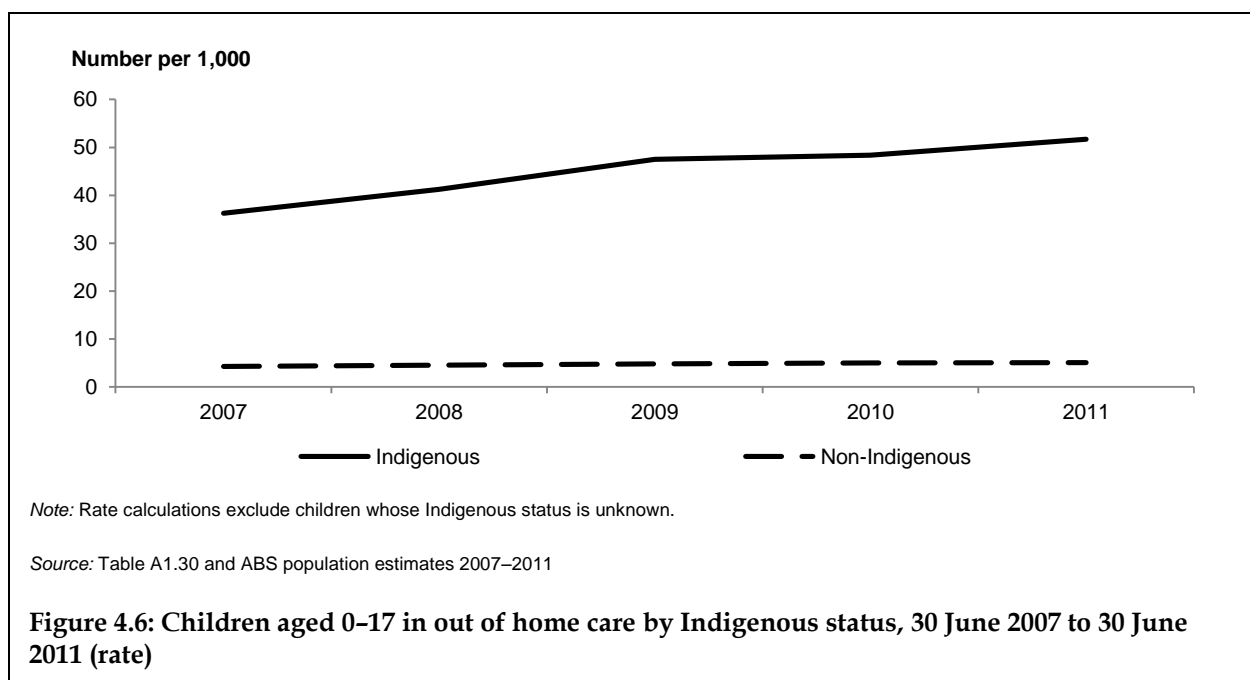
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Increases may reflect the cumulative impact of children being admitted to, and remaining in, out-of-home care. Increases in the number of children in out-of-home care may also be related to the increasingly complex family situations of children associated with parental substance abuse, mental health and family violence (Dawe et al 2008). Intergenerational cycles of abuse may also contribute to the growth the numbers of children in out-of-home care (Pears & Capaldi 2001). These factors can also affect the length of time children remain in care.

As with the number of children on care and protection orders (see Chapter 3), the overall increase in the number of children in out-of-home care is largely driven by the increase reflected in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed in out of home care has steadily increased since 2007 from 36.3 to 51.7 per 1,000 children; while the non-Indigenous rate has increased slightly from 4.2 to 5.1 per 1,000 children (Figure 4.6).



5 Foster and relative/kinship carers

5.1 Overview

Across Australia, a large proportion of children in out-of-home care are placed in home-based care with foster carers or with relatives/kin (see Chapter 4). The information in this chapter describes foster and relative/kinship carer households at 30 June 2011 and entrances and exits during 2010–11. State and territory differences in policies and practices in relation to foster care and relative/kinship care should be taken into account when interpreting the data. Notable differences include:

- There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers. For example, some carers are paid a wage beyond the reimbursement of expenses.
- In some jurisdictions, relative/kinship carers are not authorised to provide 'general foster care' but are instead registered as a distinct type of carer.
- In some jurisdictions, respite carers known to the department are registered as either general foster carers or relative carers and therefore may be included in the scope of this collection.

Key statistics

Across Australia at 30 June 2011, there were 8,449 foster carer households and 10,407 relative/kinship households who had one or more children placed with them (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Key foster and relative/kinship carer statistics, at 30 June 2011 and during 2010–11

	Number
Foster care household with a placement at 30 June 2011	8,449
Foster care households with a placement during 2010–11	11,163
Relative/kinship care household with a placement at 30 June 2011	10,407
Relative/kinship care households with a placement during 2010–11	11,452

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2010–11.

5.2 Foster carer households

Foster carer households

At 30 June 2011, there were 8,449 households with one or more foster care placements (Table 5.2). Nationally, during 2010–11 there were 11,163 households that had one or more foster care placements at some point during the year (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Foster carer households with a placement, states and territories, at 30 June 2011 and during 2010–11

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2011	3,735	899	2,090	685	584	204	117	135	8,449
Household with a placement during 2010–11	4,579	1,574	2,583	1,006	752	283	170	216	11,163

- (a) In New South Wales, the total number of foster carer households are those who had a placement in the last 2 years. 'Households with a placement at 30 June' includes those households who only had a short-term respite placement during the year.
- (b) Queensland data excludes provisionally approved carer households.
- (c) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date as required for reporting in this publication was not able to be undertaken.
- (d) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. As such, the number of foster carer households reported in this table is considered to be higher than the actual number.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Placements

Over half (51%) of all foster carer households with a placement had multiple children placed with them at 30 June 2011 – ranging from 39% in Victoria to 62% in Tasmania. Across Australia, 46% of households with a placement had between two and four foster children placed and 5% had five or more children (Table A1.26 and Figure 5.1).

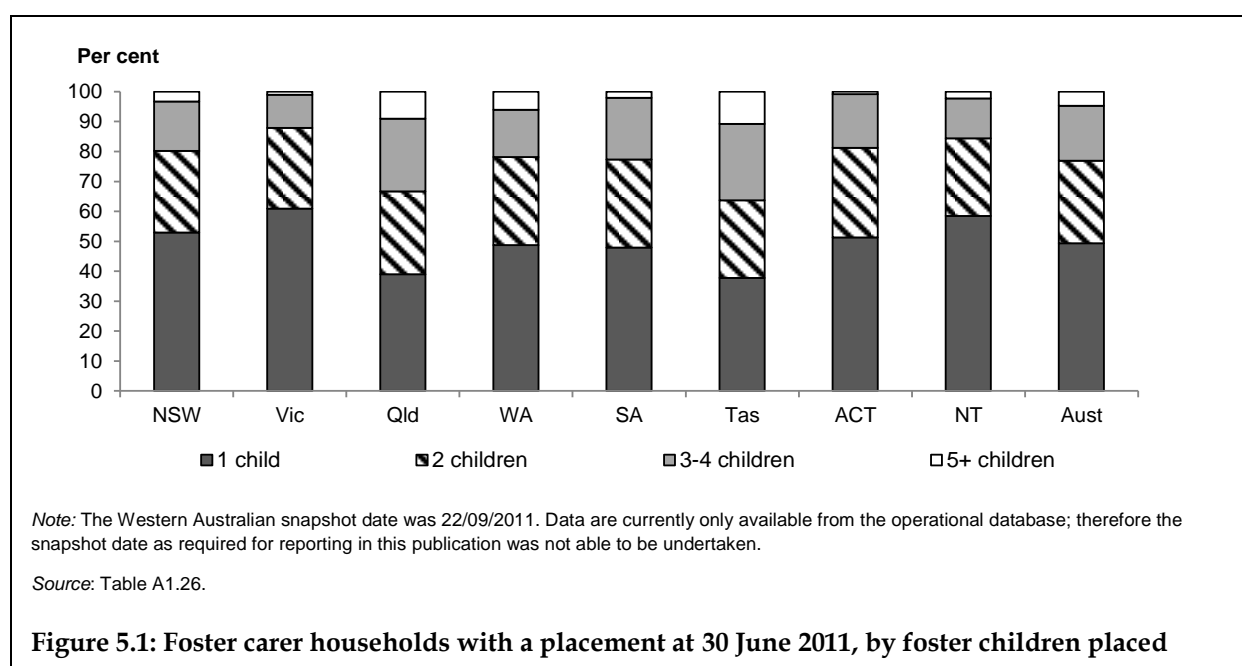


Figure 5.1: Foster carer households with a placement at 30 June 2011, by foster children placed

Household commencements and exits

Among those jurisdictions with available data, 1,676 households commenced foster care and 1,192 exited foster care in 2010–11 (Table 5.3). In Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, a greater number of households commenced foster care than exited foster care, while for Victoria, Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, the opposite was true (Table 5.3). With the need for foster carers increasing, the attraction

and retention of appropriately skilled foster carers is a high-priority across Australia (COAG 2009).

Table 5.3: Number of households commencing and exiting foster care, 2010–11

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Households commencing foster care	585	226	338	251	86	53	24	113	1,676
Households exiting foster care	n.a.	291	439	195	53	33	53	128	1,192

n.a. not available

(a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency foster carer households. This count excludes about 8% of non-government agency carer households because there is no information collected on their commencement date. For households exiting foster care, New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2010–11.

(b) Queensland data do not include provisionally approved carer households that have commenced providing foster care but are yet to receive approval as a foster carer.

(c) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date as required for reporting in this publication was not able to be undertaken.

(d) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements, resulting in an under-count of the number of carers exiting foster care.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

5.3 Relative/kinship carer households

Relative/kinship carer households

At 30 June 2011, there were 10,407 households with one or more relative/kinship care placements (Table 5.4). There were 11,452 households that had a relative/kinship placement during 2010–11 (for jurisdictions where data were available).

Table 5.4: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement, state and territories, at 30 June 2011 and during 2010–11

Households	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT ^(d)	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2011	5,851	1,707	1,012	814	630	209	184	n.a.	10,407
Household with a placement during 2010–11	6,763	2,275	n.a.	1,126	809	288	191	n.a.	11,452

n.a. not available

(a) Queensland data exclude provisionally approved carer households. Queensland data only includes those kinship carers where there is an open placement event for a child on the reference date. In some cases, a child can have more than one open placement event, for example as part of respite care arrangements where more than one kin is approved to care for the child.

(b) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date as required for reporting in this publication was not able to be undertaken.

(c) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. As such, the number of relative/kinship carer households reported in this table is considered to be higher than the actual number.

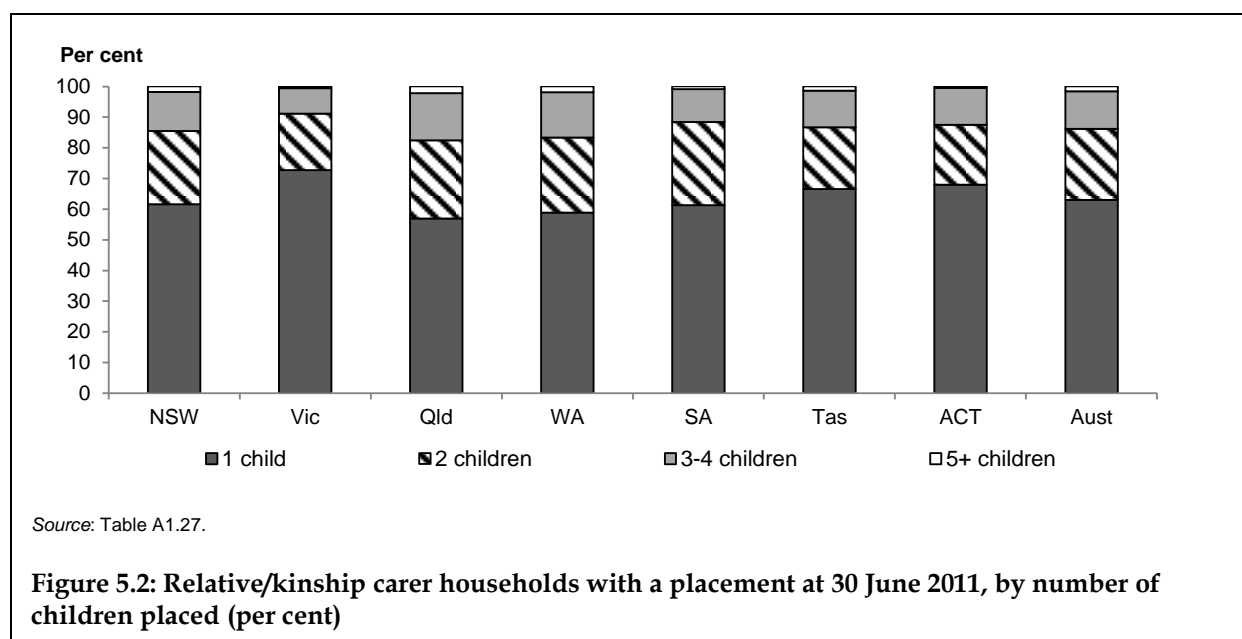
(d) The Northern Territory is not able to provide this data for 2010–11.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Placements

Almost two-thirds (63%) of all relative/kinship carer households with a placement had one child placed with them at 30 June 2011. The proportion of relative/kinship carer households with one child ranged from 57% of all relative/kinship carer households in Queensland to

73% in Victoria. Across Australia, 36% of households with a placement had between two and four children placed and 2% had five or more children (Figure 5.2).



Household commencements and exits

Among those jurisdictions with available data, 3,346 households commenced relative/kinship care and 2,133 exited relative/kinship care in 2010–11. In most jurisdictions, a greater number of households commenced than exited relative/kinship care (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Number of households commencing and exiting relative/kinship care, 2010–11

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Households commencing relative/kinship care	1,100	1,215	199	407	255	93	77	n.a.	3,346
Households exiting relative/kinship care	n.a.	1,041	434	323	157	118	60	n.a.	2,133

n.a. not available

(a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency relative/kinship carer households. This count excludes some non-government agency carer households because there is no information collected on their commencement date. New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2010–11 for 'Households exiting relative/kinship care'.

(b) Queensland data do not include provisionally approved carer households that have commenced providing relative/kinship care but are yet to receive approval as a relative/kinship carer.

(c) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date as required for reporting in this publication was not able to be undertaken.

(d) In Tasmania, with the implementation of the new Child Protection Information System, data cleansing has resulted in a significant over count of the number of carers exiting relative/kinship care during 2010–11.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

6 Intensive family support services

6.1 Overview

Where notifications do not involve child maltreatment, children and their families are increasingly being referred to family support services rather than being investigated. In some states and territories, these cases are streamed into family support services instead of being recorded as a notification. This chapter provides information on children commencing intensive family support services in 2010–11 that are funded by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. Some limited information about the services is also provided. Work is currently underway to expand the scope of national reporting on family support services to include all treatment and support services in the context of child protection (see Appendix 9 for further information).

Key statistics

In 2010–11, across jurisdictions for which data were available, there were 109 intensive family support service providers reported (Table 6.1). Two-thirds (66%) of these services were aimed at both preventing the separation of the child from their family and assisting with the reunification of the child into the family. The 116 intensive family support services were delivered across 120 locations, most of which (73%) were in capital cities or other urban centres. In those jurisdictions with available data (excluding Victoria and Tasmania), 11,384 children commenced intensive family support services during the 2010–11 financial year (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Key intensive family support services statistics, 2010–11

	Number
Number of intensive family support services	116
Number of children commencing intensive family support services	11,384

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2010–11.

6.2 Children commencing services

Age and sex profile

Over half (55%) of children commencing intensive family support services were aged less than 5. However, the age distribution varied across jurisdictions – the proportion of children aged 0–4 commencing intensive family support services ranged from 28% in the Northern Territory to 61% in New South Wales (Table 6.2).

Across Australia, the majority of children (87%) who commenced an intensive family support service were living with their parents. For those jurisdictions with available data, this ranged from 60% of children in Western Australia to almost 100% of children in New South Wales (Figure 6.1).

Table 6.2: Number of children aged 0–17 commencing intensive family support services, by age at commencement of service, states and territories, 2010–11

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA ^(a)	Tas ^(b)	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
Number									
0–4	3,997	n.a.	1,314	487	n.a.	n.a.	81	21	5,900
5–9	1,738	n.a.	932	279	n.a.	n.a.	66	25	3,040
10–17	894	n.a.	689	249	n.a.	n.a.	59	28	1,874
Total^(d)	6,584	n.a.	2,966	1,032	522	n.a.	206	74	11,384
Per cent									
0–4	60.7	..	44.8	48.0	..	..	39.3	28.4	54.6
5–9	26.4	..	31.8	27.5	..	..	32.0	33.8	28.1
10–17	12.9	..	23.5	24.5	..	..	28.6	37.8	17.3
Total	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0

n.a. not available

.. not applicable

(a) South Australia was not able to provide an age breakdown.

(b) Tasmania is not able to provide this data for 2010–11.

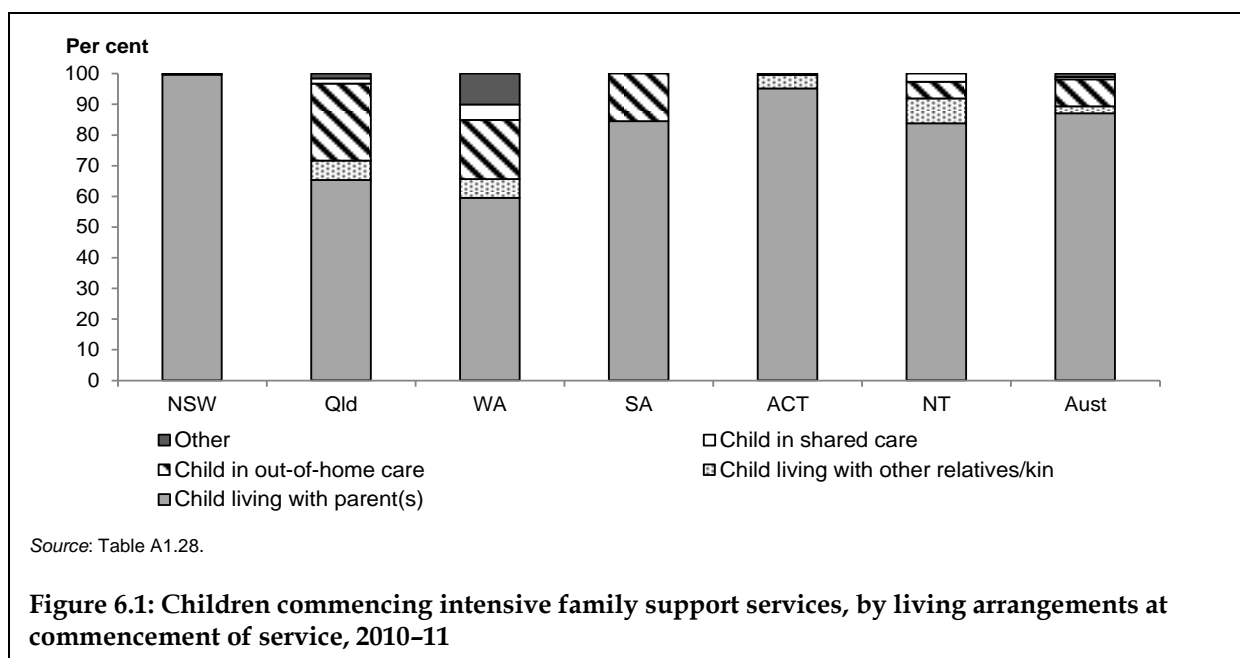
(c) Australian Capital Territory data systems for intensive family support services were changed last year and are still undergoing refinement. The data for the Australian Capital Territory should be treated with caution.

(d) The total includes children of unknown age and, as such, will not equal the sum of the age groups.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.



Appendix 1: Detailed tables

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Table A1.1: Notifications, by type of action, states and territories, 2010–11

Type of action	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA ^(d)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Investigations finalised ^(e)	52,656	12,979	17,027	5,861	4,594	1,906	1,464	3,162	99,649
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	16,194	..	545	343	0	214	170	488	17,954
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>68,850</i>	<i>12,979</i>	<i>17,572</i>	<i>6,204</i>	<i>4,594</i>	<i>2,120</i>	<i>1,634</i>	<i>3,650</i>	<i>117,603</i>
Investigations in process ^(f)	2,539	962	4,083	811	1,221	158	38	344	10,156
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>71,389</i>	<i>13,941</i>	<i>21,655</i>	<i>7,015</i>	<i>5,815</i>	<i>2,278</i>	<i>1,672</i>	<i>3,994</i>	<i>127,759</i>
Notifications in process	1,098	31	..	56	0	10	0	0	1,195
Notifications resolved without investigation	26,358	41,746	..	3,905	15,330	8,401	10,040	2,539	108,319
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(g)</i>	<i>27,456</i>	<i>41,777</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>3,961</i>	<i>15,330</i>	<i>8,411</i>	<i>10,040</i>	<i>2,539</i>	<i>109,514</i>
Total notifications	98,845	55,718	21,655	10,976	21,145	10,689	11,712	6,533	237,273
Per cent									
Investigations finalised ^(e)	53.3	23.3	78.6	53.4	21.7	17.8	12.5	48.4	42.0
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	16.4	..	2.5	3.1	—	2.0	1.5	7.5	7.6
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>69.7</i>	<i>23.3</i>	<i>81.1</i>	<i>56.5</i>	<i>21.7</i>	<i>19.8</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>55.9</i>	<i>49.6</i>
Investigations in process ^(f)	2.6	1.7	18.9	7.4	5.8	1.5	0.3	5.3	4.3
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>72.2</i>	<i>25.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>63.9</i>	<i>27.5</i>	<i>21.3</i>	<i>14.3</i>	<i>61.1</i>	<i>53.8</i>
Notifications in process	1.1	—	..	0.5	—	0.1	—	—	0.5
Notifications resolved without investigation	26.7	74.9	..	35.6	72.5	78.6	85.7	38.9	45.7
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(g)</i>	<i>27.8</i>	<i>75.0</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>36.1</i>	<i>72.5</i>	<i>78.7</i>	<i>85.7</i>	<i>38.9</i>	<i>46.2</i>

(continued)

- (a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken at two levels of intensity. Only the more serious cases, which receive the higher level response, may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.
- (b) In Victoria, there is not category identified as 'dealt with by other means'. All notifications are either investigations, investigations in process or resolved without investigation. For the purposes of national reporting 'dealt with by other means' is the total of 'notifications in process' and 'notifications resolved without investigations'.
- (c) In Queensland, 'investigation closed—no outcome possible' is considered to be a finalised investigation. This category includes notifications where there was insufficient information to enable an assessment outcome of substantiated or unsubstantiated to be determined. This may occur in situations where the family was unable to be identified/located or moved overseas and the investigation is considered finalised and closed.
- (d) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2010–11 where the primary concern on the initial inquiry for child was emotional/psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect and the next action is a safety and wellbeing assessment, are counted as notifications in this table.
- (e) 'Investigations finalised' are investigations that were completed and an outcome of substantiated or not substantiated recorded by 31 August 2011.
- (f) 'Investigations in process' are investigations that were begun, but not completed, by 31 August 2011.
- (g) 'Total dealt with by other means' includes notifications that were responded to by means other than an investigation, such as referral to police, referral to family services or provision of advice. 'Dealt with by other means' also includes some cases that were previously reported as 'no investigation possible/no action'.

Note: Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Data Collections 2011.

Table A1.2: Outcomes of finalised investigations, states and territories, 2010–11

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Substantiated	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	40,466
Not substantiated	34,060	5,336	10,429	3,954	2,374	681	828	1,521	59,183
Total finalised investigations	52,656	12,979	17,027	5,861	4,594	1,906	1,464	3,162	99,649
			<i>17,572^(c)</i>						
Per cent									
Substantiated	35.3	58.9	38.8	32.5	48.3	64.3	43.4	51.9	40.6
Not substantiated	64.7	41.1	61.2	67.5	51.7	35.7	56.6	48.1	59.4
Total finalised investigations	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

- (a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken at two levels of intensity. Only the more serious cases, which receive the higher level response, may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.
- (b) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2010–11 where the primary concern on the initial inquiry for child was emotional/psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect and the next action is a safety and wellbeing assessment, are counted as notifications in this table.
- (c) For Queensland, the secondary total for finalised investigations (17,572) includes 545 finalised investigations where there was an assessment outcome of 'no investigation and assessment outcome'. In Queensland, 'investigation closed—no outcome possible' is considered to be a finalised investigation. This category includes notifications where there was insufficient information to enable an assessment outcome of substantiated or unsubstantiated to be determined. This may occur in situations where the family was unable to be identified, located or has moved overseas and the investigation is therefore finalised and closed.

Note: Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2011.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Data Collections 2011.

Table A1.3: Investigations, by source of notification, states and territories, 2010–11(per cent)

Source of notification	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Police	20.1	28.3	29.9	24.6	22.5	24.5	17.8	22.9	23.1
School personnel	16.9	12.7	14.1	14.4	14.7	14.1	19.5	15.1	15.7
Hospital/health centre	7.0	6.5	..	1.8	8.1	2.7	9.0	18.2	5.8
Parent/guardian	6.3	6.7	7.1	6.6	4.5	5.4	6.2	4.1	6.3
Non-government organisation	4.4	8.2	3.9	..	9.2	0.7	11.7	6.6	4.8
Sibling/other relative	6.3	6.5	6.6	8.2	5.7	6.9	4.2	5.8	6.4
Other	4.0	14.9	5.0	10.5	2.0	5.8	5.5	4.0	5.5
Anonymous	5.7	—	2.5	1.7	4.1	1.2	1.5	3.0	4.1
Friend/neighbour	5.4	4.8	6.1	2.5	5.0	4.1	2.1	4.1	5.2
Social worker	14.1	0.6	..	19.8	0.5	17.4	1.1	2.0	9.6
Medical practitioner	2.1	3.7	17.2	3.9	0.2	2.2	1.6	2.6	4.9
Departmental officer	2.3	0.3	6.4	0.7	11.1	9.3	16.4	9.5	3.6
Other health personnel	3.2	6.7	..	3.8	10.8	4.6	1.1	1.7	3.3
Childcare personnel	1.8	—	0.8	0.3	1.6	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.3
Subject child	0.4	—	0.6	1.1	0.1	0.2	1.0	0.1	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of investigations	71,389	13,941	21,655	7,015	5,815	2,278	1,672	3,994	127,759

.. not applicable.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) In Queensland, with the introduction of the Integrated Client Management System (ICMS) in March 2007, the primary source categories of 'social worker', 'hospital/health centre' and 'other health' were discontinued. From March 2007, social workers are primarily recorded in the 'departmental officer' or 'non-government organisation' categories, and health sources are primarily recorded in the 'medical practitioner' category.

(b) Western Australia introduced a new client system on 8 March 2010. In this system, the source of notification is recorded differently than in the past. The source 'non-government organisation' can no longer be identified. The source 'social worker' can now be identified separately, which could not be reported in the past.

(c) Data reported for Tasmania aligns with the AIHW technical specifications except in the case of notifications received from departmental officers that could also be classified in another category (for example, social worker). Notifications from departmental officers were assigned to the category of departmental officer regardless of whether the source of notification could be classified in other categories.

Notes

1. Investigations include 'investigations finalised', 'investigations in process' and 'investigations closed—no outcome possible'.
2. Refer to Table A1.8 for the numbers for this table.
3. Numbers and percentages exclude cases where the source of notification was not stated.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.4: Substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by type of abuse or neglect, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Physical abuse	3,750	2,376	1,416	420	343	171	139	328	8,943
Sexual abuse	3,492	731	416	431	145	92	49	81	5,437
Emotional abuse	5,518	3,961	2,621	366	724	510	227	421	14,348
Neglect	5,836	575	2,145	690	1,008	397	221	811	11,683
Total	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225^(b)	636	1,641	40,466^(b)
Per cent									
Physical abuse	20.2	31.1	21.5	22.0	15.5	14.0	21.9	20.0	22.1
Sexual abuse	18.8	9.6	6.3	22.6	6.5	7.5	7.7	4.9	13.5
Emotional abuse	29.7	51.8	39.7	19.2	32.6	41.6	35.7	25.7	35.5
Neglect	31.4	7.5	32.5	36.2	45.4	32.4	34.7	49.4	28.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'

(b) In Tasmania, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as 'other' or 'not stated' and could not be mapped to physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. These substantiations are included in the totals: as such, totals may not equal the sum of categories.

Notes

1. Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2011.
2. If a child was the subject of more than one type of abuse or neglect as part of the same notification, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one considered by the child protection workers to cause the most harm to the child. Where a child is the subject of more than one substantiation during the year, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one associated with the substantiation decision for the earliest notification during the year.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.5: Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by type of abuse or neglect and sex, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys									
Physical	1,215	1,187	659	213	142	71	60	134	3,681
Sexual	695	310	105	83	48	36	11	17	1,305
Emotional	1,597	1,855	1,155	172	298	228	72	194	5,571
Neglect	1,780	281	966	349	416	193	92	396	4,473
Total	5,287	3,633	2,885	817	904	555	235	741	15,057^(c)
Girls									
Physical	1,084	1,132	613	177	142	91	55	148	3,442
Sexual	1,897	404	260	323	85	49	27	56	3,101
Emotional	1,584	1,901	1,222	170	295	229	75	170	5,646
Neglect	1,585	251	919	311	391	168	73	310	4,008
Total	6,150	3,688	3,014	981	913	564	230	684	16,224^(c)
All children^(d)									
Physical	2,316	2,321	1,287	416	286	163	115	282	7,186
Sexual	2,595	716	370	417	133	85	38	73	4,427
Emotional	3,220	3,758	2,382	358	597	464	147	364	11,290
Neglect	3,405	532	1,902	679	815	366	165	706	8,570
Total	11,536	7,327	5,941	1,870	1,831	1,132	465	1,425	31,527^(c)

(continued)

Table A1.5 (continued): Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by type of abuse or neglect and sex, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Per cent									
Boys									
Physical	23.0	32.7	22.8	26.1	15.7	12.8	25.5	18.1	24.4
Sexual	13.1	8.5	3.6	10.2	5.3	6.5	4.7	2.3	8.7
Emotional	30.2	51.1	40.0	21.1	33.0	41.1	30.6	26.2	37.0
Neglect	33.7	7.7	33.5	42.7	46.0	34.8	39.1	53.4	29.7
Girls									
Physical	17.6	30.7	20.3	18.0	15.6	16.1	23.9	21.6	21.2
Sexual	30.8	11.0	8.6	32.9	9.3	8.7	11.7	8.2	19.1
Emotional	25.8	51.5	40.5	17.3	32.3	40.6	32.6	24.9	34.8
Neglect	25.8	6.8	30.5	31.7	42.8	29.8	31.7	45.3	24.7
All children									
Physical	20.1	31.7	21.7	22.2	15.6	14.4	24.7	19.8	22.8
Sexual	22.5	9.8	6.2	22.3	7.3	7.5	8.2	5.1	14.0
Emotional	27.9	51.3	40.1	19.1	32.6	41.0	31.6	25.5	35.8
Neglect	29.5	7.3	32.0	36.3	44.5	32.3	35.5	49.5	27.2

(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Western Australia is currently unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result, a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.

(c) In Tasmania, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as 'other' or 'not stated' and could not be mapped to physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. These substantiations are included in the totals: as such, totals may not equal the sum of categories.

(d) 'All children' includes 246 children whose sex is unknown.

Notes

1. Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2011.
2. If a child was the subject of more than one type of abuse or neglect as part of the same notification, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one considered by the child protection workers to cause the most harm to the child. Where a child is the subject of more than one substantiation during the year, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one associated with the first substantiation decision relating to the earliest notification during the year.
3. Percentages include children whose sex was unknown.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.6: Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by age and Indigenous status, states and territories

Age group (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
<1	503	154	370	42	87	19	17	165	1,357
1–4	911	209	468	152	117	44	30	381	2,312
5–9	899	198	440	166	151	44	22	336	2,256
10–14	773	157	369	153	83	32	28	243	1,838
15–17	217	49	84	26	13	7	9	61	466
Total	3,303	768	1,731	539	452	146	106	1,186	8,231
Non-Indigenous children									
<1	961	883	577	38	238	100	42	13	2,852
1–4	1,980	1,593	948	173	389	218	84	56	5,441
5–9	2,105	1,678	1,094	213	359	226	85	60	5,820
10–14	2,342	1,814	1,055	215	288	174	85	74	6,047
15–17	806	589	358	56	59	53	33	29	1,983
Total	8,194	6,557	4,032	695	1,334	771	329	232	22,144
All children									
<1	1,486	1,038	981	211	348	154	66	178	4,462
1–4	2,894	1,803	1,451	506	516	325	122	437	8,054
5–9	3,008	1,876	1,573	542	519	310	111	399	8,338
10–14	3,120	1,971	1,472	490	374	260	122	321	8,130
15–17	1,025	638	464	121	72	82	44	90	2,536
Total	11,536	7,327	5,941	1,870	1,831	1,132	465	1,425	31,527

(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Western Australia is currently unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result, a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.

(c) In Tasmania, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data.

Notes

1. Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2011.
2. 'All children' includes children whose Indigenous status was unknown.
3. Totals include children of unknown age.
4. The 'less than 1' category includes unborn children for New South Wales (428), Queensland (384), Western Australia (42), Tasmania (42) and the Australian Capital Territory (4). These children are included in the totals.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.7: Children aged 0–17 who were the subject of a substantiation of a notification received during 2010–11, by type of abuse or neglect and Indigenous status, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous children									
Physical	652	233	370	110	50	10	27	189	1,641
Sexual	476	40	86	111	25	6	7	51	802
Emotional	932	431	643	101	134	65	43	310	2,659
Neglect	1,243	64	632	217	243	49	29	636	3,113
Total	3,303	768	1,731	539	452	146	106	1,186	8,231
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	1,658	2,088	868	154	227	98	83	89	5,265
Sexual	2,113	676	267	126	106	59	31	20	3,398
Emotional	2,277	3,325	1,667	161	454	311	91	53	8,339
Neglect	2,146	468	1,230	254	547	265	124	70	5,104
Total	8,194	6,557	4,032	695	1,334	771	329	232	22,144
All children^(d)									
Physical	2,316	2,321	1,287	416	286	163	115	282	7,186
Sexual	2,595	716	370	417	133	85	38	73	4,427
Emotional	3,220	3,758	2,382	358	597	464	147	364	11,290
Neglect	3,405	532	1,902	679	815	366	165	706	8,570
Total	11,536	7,327	5,941	1,870	1,831	1,132	465	1,425	31,527

(continued)

Table A1.7 (continued): Children aged 0–17 who were the subject of a substantiation of a notification received during 2010–11, by type of abuse or neglect and Indigenous status, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Per cent									
Indigenous children									
Physical	19.7	30.3	21.4	20.4	11.1	6.8	25.5	15.9	19.9
Sexual	14.4	5.2	5.0	20.6	5.5	4.1	6.6	4.3	9.7
Emotional	28.2	56.1	37.1	18.7	29.6	44.5	40.6	26.1	32.3
Neglect	37.6	8.3	36.5	40.3	53.8	33.6	27.4	53.6	37.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	20.2	31.8	21.5	22.2	17.0	12.7	25.2	38.4	23.8
Sexual	25.8	10.3	6.6	18.1	7.9	7.7	9.4	8.6	15.3
Emotional	27.8	50.7	41.3	23.2	34.0	44.5	27.7	22.8	37.7
Neglect	26.2	7.1	30.5	36.5	41.0	34.4	37.7	30.2	23.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children^(d)									
Physical	20.1	31.7	21.7	22.2	15.6	14.4	24.7	19.8	22.8
Sexual	22.5	9.8	6.2	22.3	7.3	7.5	8.2	5.1	14.0
Emotional	27.9	51.3	40.1	19.1	32.6	41.0	31.6	25.5	35.8
Neglect	29.5	7.3	32.0	36.3	44.5	32.3	35.5	49.5	27.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Western Australia is currently unable to report a child's characteristics based on their first substantiation. As a result, a small number of children may be double-counted in this table where they have more than one substantiation and the notifications had differing characteristics such as age or abuse type.

(c) In Tasmania, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as 'other' or 'not stated' and could not be mapped to physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. These substantiations are included in the totals: as such, totals may not equal the sum of categories. The proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data. As such, comparisons to previous year's data should be made with caution.

(d) 'All children' includes 1,152 children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

Notes

- Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2011.
- If a child was the subject of more than one type of abuse or neglect as part of the same notification, then the abuse and/or neglect is the one considered by the child protection workers to cause the most harm to the child. Where a child is the subject of more than one substantiation during the year, then the type of abuse reported in this table is the type of abuse and/or neglect associated with the substantiation decision relating to the earliest notification during the year.
- In Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subject of a substantiation should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers.
- Percentages include children whose Indigenous status was unknown.
- Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.8: Number of investigations, by source of notification, states and territories, 2010–11

Source of notification	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Police	14,353	3,432	6,456	1,664	1,292	540	298	913	28,948
School personnel	12,050	1,541	3,045	976	841	312	326	603	19,694
Hospital/health centre	4,981	794	..	123	463	60	151	727	7,299
Parent/guardian	4,530	818	1,531	449	256	119	103	162	7,968
Non-government organisation	3,132	996	842	n.a.	525	15	196	263	5,969
Sibling/other relative	4,491	783	1,415	557	326	152	70	230	8,024
Other ^(e)	2,841	1,805	1,073	709	116	129	92	159	6,924
Anonymous	4,070	0	540	115	234	26	25	119	5,129
Friend/neighbour	3,877	580	1,307	170	289	90	35	162	6,510
Social worker	10,076	76	..	1,341	27	383	19	79	12,001
Medical practitioner	1,477	445	3,710	264	12	49	27	103	6,087
Departmental officer	1,618	40	1,377	50	634	205	275	378	4,577
Other health personnel	2,275	818	..	259	621	101	19	69	4,162
Child care personnel	1,313	0	169	20	89	21	19	20	1,651
Subject child	305	0	132	74	8	4	17	4	544
Not stated	0	1,813	58	244	82	72	0	3	2,272
Total	71,389	13,941	21,655	7,015	5,815	2,278	1,672	3,994	127,759

.. not applicable.

- (a) Following the New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.
- (b) In Queensland, with the introduction of the Integrated Client Management System (ICMS) in March 2007, the primary source categories of 'social worker', 'hospital/health centre' and 'other health' were discontinued. From March 2007, social workers are primarily recorded in the 'departmental officer' or 'non-government organisation' categories, and health sources are primarily recorded in the 'medical practitioner' category.
- (c) Western Australia introduced a new client system on 8 March 2010. In this system, the source of notification is recorded differently than in the past. The source 'non-government organisation' can no longer be identified. The source 'social worker' can now be identified separately, which could not be reported in the past.
- (d) Data reported for Tasmania aligns with the AIHW technical specifications except in the case of notifications received from departmental officers which could also be classified in another category (for example, social worker). Notifications from departmental officers were assigned to the category of departmental officer regardless of whether the source of notification could be classified in other categories.
- (e) 'Other' category may include the person responsible.

Note: Investigations include 'investigations finalised', 'investigations in process' and 'investigations closed—no outcome possible'.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.9: Substantiations of notifications received during 2010–11, by type of family in which the child was residing, states and territories

Family type	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Two parent—intact	n.a.	1,122	2,269	624	338	196	173	727	5,449
Two parent—step or blended	n.a.	624	1,201	125	193	155	117	92	2,507
Single parent—female	n.a.	1,602	2,417	..	471	434	285	451	5,660
Single parent—male	n.a.	313	285	..	49	60	19	26	752
Other relatives/kin	n.a.	102	121	81	3	122	26	154	609
Foster	n.a.	0	..	11	0	142	8	6	167
Other	n.a.	180	304	1,054	8	81	8	38	1,673
Not stated	n.a.	3,700	1	12	1,158	35	0	147	5,053
Total	n.a.	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	21,870
Per cent									
Two parent—intact	..	28.5	34.4	32.9	31.8	16.5	27.2	48.7	32.4
Two parent—step or blended	..	15.8	18.2	6.6	18.2	13.0	18.4	6.2	14.9
Single parent—female	..	40.6	36.6	..	44.4	36.5	44.8	30.2	33.7
Single parent—male	..	7.9	4.3	..	4.6	5.0	3.0	1.7	4.5
Other relatives/kin	..	2.6	1.8	4.3	0.3	10.3	4.1	10.3	3.6
Foster	..	—	..	0.6	—	11.9	1.3	0.4	1.0
Other	..	4.6	4.6	55.6	0.8	6.8	1.3	2.5	9.9
Total	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales was not able to provide data for this measure.

(b) Queensland does not have a category of 'foster care'. Relevant substantiations would be recorded in 'other'.

(c) Western Australia introduced a new client system on 8 March 2010. In this system, family type is recorded differently than in the past. The family types 'single parent female' and 'single parent male' can no longer be identified. Only the category 'single parent with children' is used and these have been grouped under 'other'.

(d) Due to the introduction of a new Child Protection Information System in Tasmania in 2010, the family type at the time of notification was not entered correctly for a significant number of substantiations. For many of these cases if the child was placed in care either during the investigation or at finalisation then a family type of 'foster' was recorded even though the abuse or neglect did not occur in foster care. For this reason the substantiations with a family type of 'foster' reported above overstates the actual number of substantiated notifications where the abuse or neglect occurred in foster care.

Notes

1. The type of family in which the child was living is recorded at different points for each jurisdiction. In Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, it is categorised as where the child was living at the time of the investigation. In Tasmania, it is categorised as where the child was living when the abuse, neglect or harm occurred. In Western Australia, it is at the time of the notification. For Victoria and South Australia, it is at the time of the substantiation.
2. Percentages exclude cases where the family type was not stated.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Care and protection orders

Table A1.10: Care and protection orders issued, by type of order, states and territories, 2010–11

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	1,647	1,102	3,083	623	658	428	116	467	8,124
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	329	..	137	58	10	13	13	0	560
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,793	631	54	397	42	51	0	2,968
Interim and temporary orders	2,384	796	3,272	784	1,550	573	303	1,155	10,817
Administrative arrangements	607	..	..	..	167	30	61	257	1,122
Total	4,967	3,691	7,123	1,519	2,782	1,086	544	1,879	23,591
Per cent									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	33.2	29.9	43.3	..	23.7	39.4	21.3	24.9	34.4
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	6.6	..	1.9	..	0.4	1.2	2.4	—	2.4
Finalised supervisory orders	..	48.6	8.9	..	14.3	3.9	9.4	—	12.6
Interim and temporary orders	48.0	21.6	45.9	..	55.7	52.8	55.7	61.5	45.9
Administrative arrangements	12.2	..	..	..	6.0	2.8	11.2	13.7	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) In Western Australia, the application for a care and protection order to be issued for a child is counted as an interim order for national reporting purposes. However, there is, in fact, no order issued during this stage. It is thus not valid to compare the number of orders by a percentage basis.

Note: Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.11: Children admitted to care and protection orders, by age, states and territories, 2010–11 (number and per cent)

Age (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	676	346	477	185	149	63	33	57	1,986
1–4	773	938	1,322	401	337	171	45	100	4,087
5–9	682	783	1,295	360	252	172	46	81	3,671
10–14	644	772	990	248	163	136	65	79	3,097
15–17	231	312	269	44	65	26	18	22	987
Total^(c)	3,006	3,151	4,353	1,238	966	570	207	339	13,830
Per cent									
<1	22.5	11.0	11.0	14.9	15.4	11.1	15.9	16.8	14.4
1–4	25.7	29.8	30.4	32.4	34.9	30.1	21.7	29.5	29.6
5–9	22.7	24.8	29.7	29.1	26.1	30.3	22.2	23.9	26.5
10–14	21.4	24.5	22.7	20.0	16.9	23.9	31.4	23.3	22.4
15–17	7.7	9.9	6.2	3.6	6.7	4.6	8.7	6.5	7.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) In Queensland, previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

(c) Total includes two children of unknown age.

Notes

1. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission.
2. Children are counted for only one admission and discharge during the year. However, a change to an order is counted as an admission.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.12: Children discharged from care and protection orders, by length of time on an order, states and territories, 2010–11

State/territory	Length of time continually on an order at time of discharge							Total
	Months			Years				
	<3	3 to <6	6 to <12	1 to <2	2 to <4	4 to <8	8 or more	
	Number							
New South Wales ^(a)	663	109	131	246	352	222	363	2,086
Victoria	26	183	209	385	485	287	87	1,662
Queensland	444	67	258	432	559	249	176	2,185
Western Australia	1	3	7	81	190	65	50	397
South Australia	142	47	35	116	63	33	76	512
Tasmania	75	8	10	54	47	14	13	221
Australian Capital Territory	42	12	6	12	19	18	19	128
Northern Territory	171	30	15	25	23	16	9	289
Total	1,564	459	671	1,351	1,738	904	793	7,480
	Per cent							
New South Wales	31.8	5.2	6.3	11.8	16.9	10.6	17.4	100.0
Victoria	1.6	11.0	12.6	23.2	29.2	17.3	5.2	100.0
Queensland	20.3	3.1	11.8	19.8	25.6	11.4	8.1	100.0
Western Australia	0.3	0.8	1.8	20.4	47.9	16.4	12.6	100.0
South Australia	27.7	9.2	6.8	22.7	12.3	6.4	14.8	100.0
Tasmania	33.9	3.6	4.5	24.4	21.3	6.3	5.9	100.0
Australian Capital Territory	32.8	9.4	4.7	9.4	14.8	14.1	14.8	100.0
Northern Territory	59.2	10.4	5.2	8.7	8.0	5.5	3.1	100.0
Total	20.9	6.1	9.0	18.1	23.2	12.1	10.6	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

Notes

1. If a child is discharged from an order and a new care and protection order/arrangement is applied within 5 days of the discharge, the orders are deemed to be consecutive (i.e. the length of time continuously on an order will include both orders).
2. If a child is on multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, all orders/arrangements must be discharged before a discharge, for the purposes of this table, is counted.
3. The length of time continuously on an order is counted only for the first order/arrangement that the child is discharged from during the year.
4. Totals exclude discharges of unknown length.
5. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.13: Children substantiated in 2009–10 and subsequently placed on care and protection orders within 12 months, states and territories

State/territory	Number subsequently placed on a care and protection order	Percentage of all children substantiated in 2009–10
New South Wales ^(a)	n.a.	..
Victoria	2,270	33.1
Queensland	2,064	26.7
Western Australia	531	31.1
South Australia	430	25.8
Tasmania	288	29.2
Australian Capital Territory	161	28.5
Northern Territory	208	18.4
Total	5,952	28.8

n.a. not available

.. not applicable

(a) New South Wales were unable to provide these data.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.14: Children on care and protection orders, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Sex of child	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	8,024	3,452	4,335	1,721	1,372	625	391	351	20,271
Girls	7,315	3,280	4,121	1,551	1,191	560	332	371	18,721
Unknown	0	3	0	5	57	1	0	0	66
Persons	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
Per cent									
Boys	52.3	51.3	51.3	52.6	53.5	52.7	54.1	48.6	52.0
Girls	47.7	48.7	48.7	47.4	46.5	47.3	45.9	51.4	48.0
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown sex.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.15: Children on care and protection orders, by age, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Age (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	458	166	250	106	70	39	21	21	1,131
1–4	3,319	1,390	1,783	747	550	243	166	169	8,367
5–9	4,830	1,876	2,613	1,035	801	356	199	217	11,927
10–14	4,554	1,953	2,416	940	723	376	210	230	11,402
15–17	2,176	1,350	1,394	449	476	172	127	85	6,229
Total^(b)	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
Per cent									
<1	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.9
1–4	21.6	20.6	21.1	22.8	21.0	20.5	23.0	23.4	21.4
5–9	31.5	27.9	30.9	31.6	30.6	30.0	27.5	30.1	30.5
10–14	29.7	29.0	28.6	28.7	27.6	31.7	29.0	31.9	29.2
15–17	14.2	20.0	16.5	13.7	18.2	14.5	17.6	11.8	15.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Total includes two children of unknown age.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.16: Children on care and protection orders, by living arrangements, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Living arrangements	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Parents	771	602	763	231	80	104	163	54	2,768
Relatives/kin ^(b)	0	0	..	92	119	13	7	18	249
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>771</i>	<i>602</i>	<i>763</i>	<i>323</i>	<i>199</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>3,017</i>
Foster care ^(c)	6,803	446	4,294	1,184	1,035	502	205	241	14,710
Relatives/kin ^{(c) (d)}	7,063	762	2,387	1,203	933	312	277	107	13,044
Other	0	499	..	0	2	57	9	185	752
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>13,866</i>	<i>1,707</i>	<i>6,681</i>	<i>2,387</i>	<i>1,970</i>	<i>871</i>	<i>491</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>28,506</i>
Residential care	455	100	576	135	256	20	43	18	1,603
Family group homes	30	0	..	111	..	25	0	50	216
Independent living ^(e)	192	19	56	22	96	33	7	5	430
Other/unknown	25	4,307	380	299	99	120	12	44	5,286
Total	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
Per cent									
Parents	5.0	8.9	9.0	7.0	3.1	8.8	22.5	7.5	7.1
Relatives/kin ^(b)	—	—	..	2.8	4.5	1.1	1.0	2.5	0.6
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>8.9</i>	<i>9.0</i>	<i>9.9</i>	<i>7.6</i>	<i>9.9</i>	<i>23.5</i>	<i>10.0</i>	<i>7.7</i>
Foster care ^(c)	44.4	6.6	50.8	36.1	39.5	42.3	28.4	33.4	37.7
Relatives/kin ^{(c) (d)}	46.0	11.3	28.2	36.7	35.6	26.3	38.3	14.8	33.4
Other	—	7.4	..	—	0.1	4.8	1.2	25.6	1.9
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>90.4</i>	<i>25.3</i>	<i>79.0</i>	<i>72.8</i>	<i>75.2</i>	<i>73.4</i>	<i>67.9</i>	<i>73.8</i>	<i>73.0</i>
Residential care	3.0	1.5	6.8	4.1	9.8	1.7	5.9	2.5	4.1
Family group homes	0.2	—	..	3.4	—	2.1	—	6.9	0.6
Independent living ^(e)	1.3	0.3	0.7	0.7	3.7	2.8	1.0	0.7	1.1
Other/unknown	0.2	63.9	4.5	9.1	3.8	10.1	1.7	6.1	13.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders

(b) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were not reimbursed.

(c) Some foster carers may be relatives of the child being cared for and some relative carers may actually be fully assessed as registered foster carers.

(d) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were reimbursed.

(e) This category includes private board.

Notes

1. Percentages include children on care and protection orders in 'other home-based care'.

2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.17: Children on care and protection orders, by age and living arrangements, 30 June 2011

Age (years)	Family care ^(a)	Home-based out-of-home care ^(b)	Residential care	Family group homes	Independent living ^(c)	Other	Total
Number							
<1	93	825	7	0	7	199	1,131
1–4	635	6,324	67	18	12	1,311	8,367
5–9	852	9,564	131	62	6	1,312	11,927
10–14	862	8,469	634	95	31	1,311	11,402
15–17	575	3,323	764	41	373	1,153	6,229
Total^(d)	3,017	28,506	1,603	216	430	5,286	39,058
Per cent							
<1	3.1	2.9	0.4	—	1.6	3.8	2.9
1–4	21.0	22.2	4.2	8.3	2.8	24.8	21.4
5–9	28.2	33.6	8.2	28.7	1.4	24.8	30.5
10–14	28.6	29.7	39.6	44.0	7.2	24.8	29.2
15–17	19.1	11.7	47.7	19.0	86.9	21.8	15.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total living arrangements	7.7	73.0	4.1	0.6	1.1	13.5	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were not reimbursed.

(b) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were reimbursed.

(c) This category includes private board.

(d) Total includes two children of unknown age.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.

2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.18: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	3,231	732	2,368	1,263	594	205	121	470	8,984
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	1,120	..	234	75	12	6	10	0	1,457
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	290	142	34	0	2	15	0	483
Interim and temporary orders	535	38	437	124	35	20	24	76	1,289
Administrative arrangements	14	..	..	..	17	1	6	29	67
Total	4,900	1,060	3,181	1,496	658	234	176	575	12,280
Non-Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	6,919	4,138	3,882	1,401	1,768	790	387	137	19,422
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	2,256	..	605	111	44	21	32	0	3,069
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,364	263	39	0	20	62	0	1,748
Interim and temporary orders	1,174	163	497	112	74	102	49	4	2,175
Administrative arrangements	86	..	..	..	18	3	5	5	117
Total	10,435	5,665	5,247	1,663	1,904	936	535	146	26,531
All children^(c)									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	10,153	4,880	6,266	2,713	2,411	998	515	607	28,543
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	3,376	..	841	187	56	27	43	0	4,530
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,654	408	78	0	22	77	0	2,239
Interim and temporary orders	1,710	201	941	299	117	132	75	80	3,555
Administrative arrangements	100	..	..	..	36	7	13	35	191
Total	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058

(continued)

Table A1.18 (continued): Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Per cent									
Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	65.9	69.1	74.4	..	90.3	87.6	68.8	81.7	73.2
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.9	..	7.4	..	1.8	2.6	5.7	—	11.9
Finalised supervisory orders	..	27.4	4.5	..	0.0	0.9	8.5	—	3.9
Interim and temporary orders	10.9	3.6	13.7	..	5.3	8.5	13.6	13.2	10.5
Administrative arrangements	0.3	..	..	..	2.6	0.4	3.4	5.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	66.3	73.0	74.0	..	92.9	84.4	72.3	93.8	73.2
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	21.6	..	11.5	..	2.3	2.2	6.0	—	11.6
Finalised supervisory orders	..	24.1	5.0	..	0.0	2.1	11.6	—	6.6
Interim and temporary orders	11.3	2.9	9.5	..	3.9	10.9	9.2	2.7	8.2
Administrative arrangements	0.8	..	..	..	0.9	0.3	0.9	3.4	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children^(c)									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	66.2	72.5	74.1	..	92.0	84.1	71.2	84.1	73.1
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.0	..	9.9	..	2.1	2.3	5.9	—	11.6
Finalised supervisory orders	..	24.6	4.8	..	—	1.9	10.7	—	5.7
Interim and temporary orders	11.1	3.0	11.1	..	4.5	11.1	10.4	11.1	9.1
Administrative arrangements	0.7	..	..	..	1.4	0.6	1.8	4.8	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders

(b) In Western Australia, the application for a care and protection order to be issued for a child is counted as an interim order for national reporting purposes. However, there is, in fact, no order issued during this stage. It is thus not valid to compare the number of orders by a percentage basis.

(c) Includes 247 children whose Indigenous status was unknown

Note: Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Out-of-home care

Table A1.19: Children admitted to out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2010–11

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	674	387	468	174	109	56	30	51	1,949
1–4	885	751	668	256	144	77	56	93	2,930
5–9	865	666	589	206	143	68	55	85	2,677
10–14	804	834	617	199	104	73	74	93	2,798
15–17	314	429	302	44	83	23	29	34	1,258
Total	3,542	3,067	2,644	879	583	298	244	356	11,613^(a)
Per cent									
<1	19.0	12.6	17.7	19.8	18.7	18.9	12.3	14.3	16.8
1–4	25.0	24.5	25.3	29.1	24.7	25.9	23.0	26.1	25.2
5–9	24.4	21.7	22.3	23.4	24.5	22.9	22.5	23.9	23.1
10–14	22.7	27.2	23.3	22.6	17.8	24.6	30.3	26.1	24.1
15–17	8.9	14.0	11.4	5.0	14.2	7.7	11.9	9.6	10.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Total includes one child of unknown age.

Notes

1. The table includes all children admitted to out-of-home care for the first time, as well as those children returning to care who had exited care more than 2 months previously. Children admitted to out-of-home care more than once during the year were only counted at the first admission.
2. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.20: Children discharged from out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2010–11

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	140	172	61	43	26	11	9	26	488
1–4	483	679	323	142	63	48	20	74	1,832
5–9	526	644	342	155	52	49	20	53	1,841
10–14	734	646	375	145	69	58	33	70	2,130
15–17	1,151	803	527	72	166	53	58	59	2,889
Total	3,034	2,944	1,628	557	376	222	140	282	9,183^(a)
Per cent									
<1	4.6	5.8	3.7	7.7	6.9	5.0	6.4	9.2	5.3
1–4	15.9	23.1	19.8	25.5	16.8	21.9	14.3	26.2	20.0
5–9	17.3	21.9	21.0	27.8	13.8	22.4	14.3	18.8	20.1
10–14	24.2	21.9	23.0	26.0	18.4	26.5	23.6	24.8	23.2
15–17	37.9	27.3	32.4	12.9	44.1	24.2	41.4	20.9	31.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Total includes three children of unknown age.

Notes

1. The data for children exiting care include those who left care and had not returned within 2 months. Where a child exits care more than once during the year, the last discharge is counted.
2. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.21: Children in out-of-home care, by type of placement, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Type of placement	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Foster care ^(a)	6,856	2,096	4,528	1,316	1,032	511	205	261	16,806
Relatives/kin ^(a)	9,374	2,383	2,455	1,369	985	324	280	106	17,276
Other home-based care	0	671	..	100	4	57	9	164	1,005
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>16,230</i>	<i>5,150</i>	<i>6,983</i>	<i>2,785</i>	<i>2,021</i>	<i>892</i>	<i>494</i>	<i>531</i>	<i>35,086</i>
Family group homes	30	0	..	150	0	25	0	44	249
Residential care	392	496	619	163	250	22	45	12	1,999
Independent living	81	31	..	22	26	3	0	4	167
Other/unknown	7	1	..	0	71	24	1	43	147
Total	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Per cent									
Foster care	41.0	36.9	59.6	42.2	43.6	52.9	38.0	41.2	44.6
Relatives/kin	56.0	42.0	32.3	43.9	41.6	33.5	51.9	16.7	45.9
Other home-based care	—	11.8	..	3.2	0.2	5.9	1.7	25.9	2.7
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>97.0</i>	<i>90.7</i>	<i>91.9</i>	<i>89.3</i>	<i>85.3</i>	<i>92.3</i>	<i>91.5</i>	<i>83.8</i>	<i>93.2</i>
Family group homes	0.2	—	..	4.8	—	2.6	—	6.9	0.7
Residential care	2.3	8.7	8.1	5.2	10.6	2.3	8.3	1.9	5.9
Independent living	0.5	0.5	..	0.7	1.1	0.3	—	0.6	0.4
Other/unknown	—	—	..	—	3.0	2.5	0.2	6.8	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) Where a child is placed with a relative who is also fully registered to provide foster care for other children, they are counted in the foster care category for Victoria and Western Australia, whereas they are counted in the relatives/kin category in Queensland and South Australia. Relatives/kin in some jurisdictions undergo assessment, registration and review processes similar to foster carers under the national definition, and is considered as (relative) foster carers in local practice, policy and reporting.

Notes

1. Percentages include children with other/unknown living arrangements
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.22: Children in out-of-home care, by age, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	435	176	237	98	61	37	17	17	1,078
1–4	3,345	1,065	1,677	763	507	206	124	150	7,837
5–9	5,287	1,521	2,470	995	766	305	152	201	11,697
10–14	5,250	1,725	2,211	872	668	314	163	202	11,405
15–17	2,422	1,191	1,007	392	366	104	84	64	5,630
Total^(a)	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Per cent									
<1	2.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.6	3.8	3.1	2.7	2.9
1–4	20.0	18.8	22.1	24.5	21.4	21.3	23.0	23.7	20.8
5–9	31.6	26.8	32.5	31.9	32.3	31.6	28.1	31.7	31.1
10–14	31.4	30.4	29.1	27.9	28.2	32.5	30.2	31.9	30.3
15–17	14.5	21.0	13.2	12.6	15.5	10.8	15.6	10.1	15.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Total includes one child whose age was unknown.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.23: Children in out-of-home care, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Sex of child	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	8,714	2,882	3,926	1,608	1,254	510	281	302	19,477
Girls	8,026	2,789	3,676	1,506	1,064	456	259	332	18,108
Unknown	0	7	0	6	50	0	0	0	63
Persons	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
Per cent									
Boys	52.1	50.8	51.6	51.6	54.1	52.8	52.0	47.6	51.8
Girls	47.9	49.2	48.4	48.4	45.9	47.2	48.0	52.4	48.2
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children of unknown sex.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.24: Children in out-of-home care, by age and type of placement, 30 June 2011

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Home-based									
<1	435	170	233	95	60	37	17	17	1,064
1–4	3,343	1,057	1,665	715	467	202	123	141	7,713
5–9	5,272	1,489	2,421	918	700	296	150	179	11,425
10–14	5,069	1,540	1,952	747	531	283	146	160	10,428
15–17	2,110	894	712	310	263	74	58	34	4,455
Total^(a)	16,230	5,150	6,983	2,785	2,021	892	494	531	35,086
Residential (including family group homes)									
<1	0	5	4	3	1	0	0	0	13
1–4	2	8	12	48	28	4	1	1	104
5–9	15	32	49	77	48	6	2	10	239
10–14	173	185	259	123	109	19	17	30	915
15–17	232	266	295	62	64	18	25	15	977
Total	422	496	619	313	250	47	45	56	2,248
Per cent									
Home-based									
<1	2.7	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.0	4.1	3.4	3.2	3.0
1–4	20.6	20.5	23.8	25.7	23.1	22.6	24.9	26.6	22.0
5–9	32.5	28.9	34.7	33.0	34.6	33.2	30.4	33.7	32.6
10–14	31.2	29.9	28.0	26.8	26.3	31.7	29.6	30.1	29.7
15–17	13.0	17.4	10.2	11.1	13.0	8.3	11.7	6.4	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Residential (including family group homes)									
<1	—	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.4	—	—	—	0.6
1–4	0.5	1.6	1.9	15.3	11.2	8.5	2.2	1.8	4.6
5–9	3.6	6.5	7.9	24.6	19.2	12.8	4.4	17.9	10.6
10–14	41.0	37.3	41.8	39.3	43.6	40.4	37.8	53.6	40.7
15–17	55.0	53.6	47.7	19.8	25.6	38.3	55.6	26.8	43.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) Total includes one child of unknown age.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children who were living independently or whose living arrangements were classified as 'other' (including unknown); and children of unknown age.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.25: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status and relationship of carer, states and territories, 30 June 2011

Relationship	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous relative/kin	2,887	216	605	654	247	26	54	114	4,803
Other Indigenous caregiver	1,024	57	570	204	118	17	13	52	2,055
Other relative/kin	796	231	320	171	89	41	9	0	1,657
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>4,707</i>	<i>504</i>	<i>1,495</i>	<i>1,029</i>	<i>454</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>8,515</i>
Other caregiver	1,005	373	1,355	417	153	112	43	330	3,788
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>1,005</i>	<i>373</i>	<i>1,355</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>330</i>	<i>3,788</i>
Total	5,712	877	2,850	1,446	607	196	119	496	12,303
Per cent									
Indigenous relative/kin	50.5	24.6	21.2	45.2	40.7	13.3	45.4	23.0	39.0
Other Indigenous caregiver	17.9	6.5	20.0	14.1	19.4	8.7	10.9	10.5	16.7
Other relative/kin	13.9	26.3	11.2	11.8	14.7	20.9	7.6	—	13.5
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>82.4</i>	<i>57.5</i>	<i>52.5</i>	<i>71.2</i>	<i>74.8</i>	<i>42.9</i>	<i>63.9</i>	<i>33.5</i>	<i>69.2</i>
Other caregiver	17.6	42.5	47.5	28.8	25.2	57.1	36.1	66.5	30.8
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>17.6</i>	<i>42.5</i>	<i>47.5</i>	<i>28.8</i>	<i>25.2</i>	<i>57.1</i>	<i>36.1</i>	<i>66.5</i>	<i>30.8</i>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

Notes

1. This table does not include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were living independently or whose living arrangements were unknown.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.
3. Family group homes and residential care are reported under other caregiver.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Foster and relative/kinship carers

Table A1.26: Foster carer households with a placement at 30 June 2011, by number of foster children placed

Number of children	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
1 child	1,979	548	815	333	280	77	60	79	4,171
2 children	1,016	242	578	201	172	53	35	35	2,332
3 children	443	76	328	72	90	31	16	10	1,066
4 children	173	24	180	36	30	21	5	8	477
5–8 children	124	9	181	40	12	21	1	3	391
9+ children	0	0	8	1	0	1	0	0	10
Total households	3,735	899	2,090	685	584	204	117	135	8,449
Per cent									
1 child	53.0	61.0	39.0	48.6	47.9	37.7	51.3	58.5	49.4
2 children	27.2	26.9	27.7	29.3	29.5	26.0	29.9	25.9	27.6
3 children	11.9	8.5	15.7	10.5	15.4	15.2	13.7	7.4	12.6
4 children	4.6	2.7	8.6	5.3	5.1	10.3	4.3	5.9	5.6
5–8 children	3.3	1.0	8.7	5.8	2.1	10.3	0.9	2.2	4.6
9+ children	—	—	0.4	0.1	—	0.5	—	—	0.1
Total households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) Queensland data excludes provisionally approved carer households.

(b) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date, as required for reporting in this publication, was not able to be undertaken.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude households where the number of children placed was unknown.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Table A1.27: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement at 30 June 2011, by number of children placed

Number of children	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(c)	Total
Number									
1 child	3,603	1,240	576	479	386	139	125	n.a.	6,548
2 children	1,394	315	258	199	171	42	36	n.a.	2,415
3 children	537	109	111	85	47	15	18	n.a.	922
4 children	209	32	44	35	20	10	4	n.a.	354
5–8 children	105	11	22	15	6	3	1	n.a.	163
9+ children	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	n.a.	5
Total households	5,851	1,707	1,012	814	630	209	184	n.a.	10,407
Per cent									
1 child	61.6	72.6	56.9	58.8	61.3	66.5	67.9	..	62.9
2 children	23.8	18.5	25.5	24.4	27.1	20.1	19.6	..	23.2
3 children	9.2	6.4	11.0	10.4	7.5	7.2	9.8	..	8.9
4 children	3.6	1.9	4.3	4.3	3.2	4.8	2.2	..	3.4
5–8 children	1.8	0.6	2.2	1.8	1.0	1.4	0.5	..	1.6
9+ children	0.1	—	0.1	0.1	—	—	—	..	—
Total households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) Queensland data excludes provisionally approved carer households. Queensland data only includes those kinship carers where there is an open placement event for a child on the reference date. In some cases, a child can have more than one open placement event: for example as part of respite care arrangements where more than one kin is approved to care for the child.

(b) The Western Australian snapshot date was 22/09/2011. Data are currently available only from the operational database; therefore the snapshot date, as required for reporting in this publication, was not able to be undertaken.

(c) Northern Territory was unable to provide relative/kinship care data in 2010–11.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude households where the number of children placed was unknown.

2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Intensive family support services

Table A1.28: Children commencing intensive family support services, by living arrangements at commencement of service, states and territories, 2010–11

Living situation	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
Number									
Family care									
Child living with parent(s)	6,521	n.a.	1,826	424	441	n.a.	196	62	9,470
Child living with other relatives/kin	6	n.a.	177	44	0	n.a.	9	6	242
Child in out-of-home care	57	n.a.	702	137	81	n.a.	1	4	982
Child in shared care	0	n.a.	49	36	0	n.a.	0	2	87
Other	0	n.a.	43	72	0	n.a.	0	0	115
Not available	0	n.a.	169	319	0	n.a.	0	0	488
Total	6,584	n.a.	2,966	1,032	522	n.a.	206	74	11,384
Per cent									
Family care									
Child living with parent(s)	99.7	..	65.3	59.5	84.5	..	95.1	83.8	87.1
Child living with other relatives/kin	—	..	6.3	6.2	—	..	4.4	8.1	2.2
Child in out-of-home care	0.3	..	25.1	19.2	15.5	..	0.5	5.4	8.8
Child in shared care	—	..	1.8	5.0	—	..	—	2.7	0.8
Other	—	..	1.5	10.1	—	..	—	—	1.1
Total	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

— nil or rounded to zero.

(a) New South Wales excludes community services managed intensive family based service centres.

(b) Tasmania is not able to provide this data for 2010–11.

(c) The Australian Capital Territory data systems for intensive family support services were changed last year and are still undergoing refinement. The data for the Australian Capital Territory should be treated with caution.

Notes

1. Percentages exclude children for which the living arrangement was not available.

2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Australian trend data

Table A1.29: Australian child protection trend data, 2006–07 to 2010–11

	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
	Number				
Notifications	309,448	317,526	339,454	286,437	237,273
Investigations	172,690	190,423	203,225	162,321	127,759
Substantiations	60,230	55,120	54,621	46,187	40,466
Children in notifications	188,666	195,387	207,462	187,314	163,767
Children in substantiations	34,028	32,098	32,641	31,295	31,527
Children on care and protection orders ^(a)	28,954	32,642	35,409	37,730	39,058
Children in out-of-home care ^(a)	28,379	31,166	34,069	35,895	37,648

(a) Children on care and protection orders and in out-of-care are measured as at 30 June each year.

Source: AIHW child protection data collections.

Table A1.30: Children in the child protection system, by Indigenous status, 2007 to 2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	Indigenous children				
Children in substantiations ^(a)	7,100	7,340	8,172	8,334	8,231
Children on care and protection orders	7,591	8,809	10,271	11,451	12,280
Children in out-of-home care	7,917	9,070	10,512	11,468	12,358
	Non-Indigenous children				
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	26,928	24,758	24,469	22,335	22,144
Children on care and protection orders	20,876	23,179	25,052	26,215	26,531
Children in out-of-home care	20,036	21,539	23,374	24,279	24,929
	All children^(c)				
Children in substantiations ^(a)	34,028	32,098	32,641	31,295	31,527
Children on care and protection orders	28,954	32,642	35,409	37,730	39,058
Children in out-of-home care	28,379	31,166	34,069	35,895	37,648

(a) Children in substantiations are measured in financial years (2006–07, 2007–08, 2008–09, 2009–10 and 2010–11).

(b) Substantiations data for non-Indigenous children for 2006–07, 2007–08 and 2008–09 include children of unknown Indigenous status. Therefore there is a break in the time series for children in substantiations between 2008–09 and 2009–10.

(c) 'All children' includes children of unknown Indigenous status: as such, total may not equal the sum of categories.

Notes

1. 'Children in substantiations' includes unborn children and children of unknown age.

2. 'Children on care and protection orders' and 'children in out-of-home care' include children of unknown age.

Source: AIHW child protection data collections.

Table A1.31: Children in substantiations, by age group, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Age (years)	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
<1	4,608	4,616	4,645	3,919	3,562
1–4	8,238	8,066	8,439	7,935	8,054
5–9	8,781	8,754	8,713	8,227	8,338
10–14	8,650	8,393	8,551	8,263	8,130
15–17	1,858	2,145	2,258	2,405	2,536
0–17	34,028	32,098	32,641	31,295	31,527

Notes

1. Total 0–17 age group includes children of unknown age and may not equal the sum of age categories.
2. The 'less than 1' category includes unborn children.

Source: AIHW child protection data collections.

Table A1.32: Children in substantiations, by abuse type and sex, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Type of abuse or neglect	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11
Boys					
Physical abuse	4,106	4,111	4,079	3,652	3,681
Sexual abuse	1,015	1,000	1,002	1,134	1,305
Emotional abuse	6,717	5,940	6,143	5,823	5,571
Neglect	4,715	4,480	4,505	4,416	4,473
Girls					
Physical abuse	3,854	3,882	3,678	3,473	3,442
Sexual abuse	2,540	2,504	2,728	3,010	3,101
Emotional abuse	6,714	5,931	6,176	5,658	5,646
Neglect	4,091	4,039	4,124	3,927	4,008
All children^(a)					
Physical abuse	8,022	8,054	7,801	7,169	7,186
Sexual abuse	3,567	3,511	3,735	4,155	4,427
Emotional abuse	13,539	11,954	12,397	11,549	11,290
Neglect	8,900	8,579	8,708	8,422	8,570

(a) 'All children' includes children whose sex was unknown.

Source: AIHW child protection data collections.

Table A1.33: Trends in children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2007 to 30 June 2011

Year	NSW	Vic ^(a)	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA ^(c)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
2007	10,639	5,492	6,391	2,629	1,881	897	574	451	28,954
2008	12,086	6,239	7,040	3,094	2,197	914	552	520	32,642
2009	13,491	6,100	7,942	3,337	2,361	991	610	577	35,409
2010	14,689	6,515	8,090	3,432	2,543	1,112	653	696	37,730
2011	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058

(a) The data for Victoria for previous years were updated in 2009. This data may not match that published in publications of *Child protection Australia*. Note that this has also affected the 'Totals'.

(b) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

(c) In 2008, South Australia has included, for the first time in this collection, the number of children who were placed on third-party parental responsibility orders and administrative arrangements. Therefore data from 2008 onwards are not comparable with 2007 data.

Notes

1. Some data may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.
2. New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2011.

Population data

Table A1.34: Population of children aged 0–17, by age and Indigenous status, December 2010

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children^(a)									
0–4	21,202	4,417	20,922	8,870	3,590	2,493	588	7,902	69,982
5–9	18,745	4,118	19,209	8,438	3,386	2,096	503	7,813	64,307
10–14	19,204	4,153	19,102	8,761	3,568	2,255	517	7,349	64,909
15–17 ^(b)	11,807	2,562	11,271	5,061	2,105	1,478	325	4,314	38,921
0–17	70,958	15,250	70,503	31,128	12,648	8,322	1,933	27,378	238,118
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	442,755	352,252	296,200	147,161	96,016	31,194	23,765	10,637	1,399,978
5–9	425,170	326,571	272,280	135,375	90,644	28,955	20,749	9,618	1,309,361
10–14	431,025	331,720	279,006	140,507	96,201	30,737	20,512	9,383	1,339,091
15–17	269,124	210,436	175,121	87,874	61,143	19,422	13,294	5,577	841,989
0–17	1,568,074	1,220,979	1,022,606	510,915	344,003	110,308	78,319	35,215	4,890,417
All children									
0–4	463,957	356,668	317,121	156,030	99,606	33,686	24,352	18,539	1,469,959
5–9	443,915	330,689	291,488	143,812	94,029	31,051	21,252	17,431	1,373,667
10–14	450,229	335,873	298,108	149,267	99,769	32,992	21,029	16,732	1,403,999
15–17	280,930	212,998	186,391	92,934	63,247	20,900	13,619	9,891	880,910
0–17	1,639,031	1,236,228	1,093,108	542,043	356,651	118,629	80,252	62,593	5,128,535

(a) The December 2010 population for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is the average of 30 June 2010 and 30 June 2011 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections. This methodology may result in the sum of age groups not equalling the total due to rounding.

(b) The 15–17 year old age group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is derived from data for the 15–19 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections. It is calculated by taking the 15–19 year old age group, dividing this by five and then multiplying by three, based on the assumption that there is a fairly even distribution of children in each single year of age between 15 and 19.

Sources: ABS 2011b, 2011d.

Table A1.35: Population of children aged 0–17, by age and Indigenous status, March 2011

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children^(a)									
0–4	21,486	4,470	21,248	8,928	3,644	2,518	595	7,953	70,842
5–9	18,787	4,132	19,223	8,404	3,379	2,116	505	7,728	64,274
10–14	19,122	4,163	19,178	8,780	3,568	2,259	514	7,468	65,052
15–17 ^(b)	11,799	2,546	11,287	5,071	2,111	1,459	323	4,309	38,905
0–17	71,194	15,311	70,936	31,183	12,702	8,352	1,937	27,458	239,073
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	440,543	352,468	293,657	148,168	95,924	31,139	23,748	10,445	1,396,092
5–9	426,267	328,033	273,228	136,261	90,820	29,029	20,916	9,657	1,314,211
10–14	431,371	331,732	279,512	140,837	95,908	30,644	20,533	9,292	1,339,829
15–17	268,843	210,539	175,224	88,044	61,187	19,476	13,277	5,543	842,133
0–17	1,567,024	1,222,772	1,021,621	513,310	343,839	110,288	78,474	34,937	4,892,265
All children									
0–4	462,029	356,938	314,905	157,096	99,568	33,657	24,343	18,398	1,466,934
5–9	445,054	332,165	292,451	144,665	94,199	31,145	21,421	17,385	1,378,485
10–14	450,493	335,895	298,690	149,617	99,476	32,903	21,047	16,760	1,404,881
15–17	280,642	213,085	186,511	93,115	63,298	20,935	13,600	9,852	881,038
0–17	1,638,218	1,238,083	1,092,557	544,493	356,541	118,640	80,411	62,395	5,131,338

(a) The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for March 2011 is the 30 June 2011 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projection.

(b) The 15–17 year old age group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is derived from data for the 15–19 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections. It is calculated by taking the 15–19 year old age group, dividing this by five and then multiplying by three, based on the assumption that there is a fairly even distribution of children in each single year of age between 15 and 19.

Sources: ABS 2011c, 2011d.

Table A1.36: Population of all children aged 0–17, by age, December 2010

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
All children									
<1	94,586	71,371	64,387	31,095	19,942	6,437	5,104	3,685	296,607
1–4	369,371	285,297	252,734	124,935	79,664	27,249	19,248	14,854	1,173,352
5–9	443,915	330,689	291,488	143,812	94,029	31,051	21,252	17,431	1,373,667
10–14	450,229	335,873	298,108	149,267	99,769	32,992	21,029	16,732	1,403,999
15–17	280,930	212,998	186,391	92,934	63,247	20,900	13,619	9,891	880,910
0–17	1,639,031	1,236,228	1,093,108	542,043	356,651	118,629	80,252	62,593	5,128,535

Source: ABS 2011b.

Table A1.37: Population of all children aged 0-17, by age, March 2011

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
All children									
<1	93,732	71,526	63,025	31,372	19,676	6,543	4,959	3,607	294,440
1-4	368,297	285,412	251,880	125,724	79,892	27,114	19,384	14,791	1,172,494
5-9	445,054	332,165	292,451	144,665	94,199	31,145	21,421	17,385	1,378,485
10-14	450,493	335,895	298,690	149,617	99,476	32,903	21,047	16,760	1,404,881
15-17	280,642	213,085	186,511	93,115	63,298	20,935	13,600	9,852	881,038
0-17	1,638,218	1,238,083	1,092,557	544,493	356,541	118,640	80,411	62,395	5,131,338

Source: ABS 2011c.

Appendix 2: Technical notes

Calculation of rates

The rates of children on care and protection orders and children in out-of-home care were calculated using the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) most recent population estimates for 31 March 2011 (ABS 2011c). The rates of children subject to child protection substantiations during 2010–11 were calculated using the ABS population estimates for 31 December 2010 (ABS 2011b).

Rates of children on care and protection orders were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0-17 on care and protection orders at 30 June 2011}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0-17 at 31 March 2011}} \times 1,000$$

Rates of children in out-of-home care were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care at 30 June 2011}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0-17 at 31 March 2011}} \times 1,000$$

Rates of children who were the subjects of child protection substantiations were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0-17 who were the subjects of substantiations in 2010-11}}{\text{ABS estimated population aged 0-17 at 31 December 2010}} \times 1,000$$

Legislation and practice differs across jurisdictions in relation to children aged 17. In some jurisdictions, children aged 17 are not substantiated and this means the number per 1,000 children who were the subject of a substantiation may be lower for those jurisdictions. Where substantiation rates are calculated for the 'less than 1' and '0-17' year age groups', unborn children are excluded; these children are included in the calculation of substantiation rates for 'all children'.

Rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The same basic method outlined above was used to calculate rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Population projections based on the ABS 2006 census were used for the denominator (ABS 2011d).

Rates for states and territories with small numbers of children in their child protection data and small Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations (notably the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania) should be interpreted carefully. Small changes in the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection systems, or in population estimates, can have a major impact on rates.

Identification of Indigenous status

Children

The practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children vary across states and territories, with some jurisdictions recording large numbers of unknowns. No state or territory can validate the data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by other means and the quality of the data is therefore unknown.

In this collection, children are counted as Indigenous if they are identified as such in the state and territory data collections. Children whose Indigenous status is recorded as 'unknown' are excluded, where possible, from calculations of rates and proportions. The counts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are therefore likely to be an underestimate of the actual number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.

Break in times series for children in notifications, investigations and substantiations

Notifications, investigations and substantiations data for non-Indigenous children prior to 2009–10 included children of unknown Indigenous status. Following improvements to the data collection methodology in 2009–10, these children are able to separately identified and excluded from the non-Indigenous count. Therefore there is a break in the time series presented in this report for children in substantiations between 2008–09 and 2009–10.

Caregivers

In the out-of-home care data collection, the Indigenous status of caregivers was collected as well as the Indigenous status of children in out-of-home care. Carers who are identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are included in the Indigenous category. Where the Indigenous children were living in facility-based care specifically for Indigenous children, the caregiver was counted as Indigenous. Where children were living in other types of facility-based care, the caregiver was not counted as Indigenous.

Appendix 3: Mandatory reporting requirements

New South Wales

Since 1977, medical practitioners have been required by law to report physical and sexual abuse. This was expanded under the *Children (Care and Protection) Act 1987* to encompass other categories of mandatory reporters and what needed to be reported. From 18 December 2000, the category of mandatory reporters was changed to anyone who:

- (a) in the course of his or her professional work or other paid employment delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement wholly or partly to children under the age of 16
- (b) holds a management position in an organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for or direct supervision of a person referred to in (a), and that person has reasonable grounds (that arise as a consequence of their employment) to suspect that a child is at risk of harm.

Since 1998, agencies have also been required to report allegations about or convictions for child abuse against a person doing work for the agency, together with information on the action being taken by the agency, to the New South Wales Ombudsman.

These statutory obligations are supplemented and supported by the Child Wellbeing and Child Protection – NSW Interagency Guidelines detailing each agency's role, responsibilities and actions required in all aspects of child wellbeing and child protection intervention.

The 'risk of harm' reporting threshold was amended to 'risk of significant harm' from 24 January 2010, in accordance with the NSW Keep Them Safe reforms.

To align with this reporting threshold, NSW developed a Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) during 2009 with the US-based Children's Research Centre and a wide range of human services and justice agencies across the government and non-government sectors. From 24 January 2010 the interactive, online MRG became available for mandatory reporters who are encouraged to use this resource to guide their decision making, such as whether or not to report a concern to the NSW Child Protection Helpline under the new risk of significant harm threshold.

Using the online interactive tool and following the completion of a series of questions, a Decision Report is produced for the reporter, clarifying the appropriate course of action and detailing the rationale for the decision from the user's responses to each question.

Child Wellbeing Units (CWUs) have also been established in the key government reporting agencies of Health, Education, Family and Community Services and Police to progress the reshaping of agency responses to child wellbeing and child protection concerns. CWUs provide advice, training and support to staff working with children or families to help determine when a child is at risk of significant harm and report matters to the Child Protection Helpline. In less serious cases, CWUs assist in the identification of potential agency responses, to the extent possible within agency resources and capabilities, and support appropriate local action or referral for the child and family, and, over time, drive better alignment and coordination of agency service systems.

Victoria

In 1993, the Victorian Government proposed legislative changes to the *Children and Young Persons Act 1989*, which would mandate specific professional groups to notify suspected cases of child physical and sexual abuse. Doctors, nurses and police were mandated on 4 November 1993 to report child physical and sexual abuse. Primary and secondary school teachers and principals were mandated on 18 July 1994. Section 182 a–e of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* lists the above professional groups as mandatory reporters.

Queensland

In Queensland, the following persons are mandated notifiers, required by law to report child protection concerns:

- An authorised officer, employee of the Department of Communities who is involved in administering the *Child Protection Act 1999*, or a person employed in a departmental care service or licensed care service who becomes aware of, or reasonably suspects harm to, a child in the care of a departmental care service or a licensee (s. 148, *Child Protection Act 1999*).
- Staff of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (s. 20, *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*).
- A doctor or registered nurse who becomes aware, or reasonably suspects, during the practice of his or her profession that a child has been, is being or is likely to be harmed (s. 191 and 192, *Public Health Act 2005*).
- Family court personnel and counsellors who suspect child abuse (s. 67ZA *Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)*).

Western Australia

Amendments to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* that introduced the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse by certain professionals in Western Australia came into effect on 1 January 2009. Under the new requirements, police officers, teachers, doctors, nurses and midwives are required to make a report to the Department for Child Protection if they form a belief, on reasonable grounds, in the course of their work, that a child has been the subject of sexual abuse on or after 1 January 2009, or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.

Other mandatory reporting provisions in WA include: provisions in the *Western Australian Family Court Act 1997*, which require Court personnel, counsellors and mediators to report allegations or suspicions of child abuse in Family Court cases; and regulations under the *Child Care Services Act 2007*, which require licensed providers of child care, family day care, outside school hours family day care or outside-school-hours care services to report abuse that occurs in a child care service.

Western Australia also operates under agreed protocols between the Department of Health, Department for Child Protection and the Western Australia Police, which require the reporting of all incidents of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in children aged under 14 and in children aged 14 and over where it is believed the STI was acquired through abuse.

South Australia

Under Sections 11(1) and (2) of the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, the following persons are required to notify Families SA via the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child/young person has been or is being, abused and/or neglected and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work (whether paid or voluntary) or in carrying out official duties: medical practitioners; nurses; dentists; pharmacists; psychologists; police officers; community corrections officers; social workers; ministers of religion; persons who are employees of or volunteers in an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes; teachers; family day care providers; and employees of, or volunteers in, government or non-government organisations (including local government) that provide health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children (if the person is engaged in the actual delivery of the service to children or holds a management position that include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children).

In recognition of the shared community responsibility for promoting children's safety and protection, the Act also states that a person does not necessarily exhaust his or her duty to a child by giving a notification under Section 11.

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* was recently amended in response to a recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry: Children in State Care report to make clear that a person must not threaten or intimidate, or cause damage, loss or disadvantage to, a person because the person has discharged, or proposes to discharge, his or her duty to notify suspected child abuse or neglect (maximum penalty \$10,000).

The Department of Education and Child Development manages the delivery of a 7-hour training program entitled 'Child safe environments: reporting child abuse and neglect' and refresher courses to educate mandated notifiers about their obligations.

Tasmania

In Tasmania, the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (CYPF Act) emphasises that everyone in the community has a responsibility to ensure children are safe and protected. Registered medical practitioners, nurses, dentists, police officers, psychologists, departmental employees within the *Police Regulation Act 1898*, probation officers, school principals and teachers, persons who manage child care services or provide child care for a fee or reward, and employees and volunteers in government agencies or government-funded agencies that provide health, welfare, education, or care wholly or partly for children are 'prescribed persons' under the CYPF Act and must report cases of child abuse or neglect to Child Protection Services.

During 2004–05, an amendment was made to the CYPF Act to extend the definition of abuse and neglect to include a child affected by family violence. Further amendments came into effect on 1 August 2009. These amendments permit prescribed persons to report concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child to Community-Based Intake Services as well as to Child Protection Services, and also allow these services to receive notifications in relation to pregnant women if the notifier believes there is a likelihood of abuse or neglect once the child is born.

Australian Capital Territory

Mandatory reporting was introduced on 1 June 1997. Section 356 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008* states that the following people are mandated reporters:

- (a) a doctor
- (b) a dentist
- (c) a nurse
- (d) an enrolled nurse
- (e) a midwife
- (f) a teacher at a school; this includes a teacher's assistant or aide if the assistant or aide is in paid employment at the school
- (g) a person providing education to a child or young person who is registered or provisionally registered, for home education under the *Education Act 2004*
- (h) a police officer
- (i) a person employed to counsel children or young people at a school
- (j) a person caring for a child at a childcare centre
- (k) a person coordinating or monitoring home-based care for a family day care scheme proprietor
- (l) a public servant who, in the course of employment as a public servant, works with, or provides services personally to, children and young people or families
- (m) the public advocate
- (n) the official visitor
- (o) a person who, in the course of the person's employment, has contact with or provides services to children, young people and their families as is prescribed by regulation.

Northern Territory

It is mandatory for any person who reasonably believes a child has been or is likely to be, harmed or exploited to notify Northern Territory Families and Children or a police officer. The *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* provides legal protection against civil or criminal liability for people who make reports in good faith. The Act also makes it clear that making a report does not breach any requirements of confidentiality or professional ethics.

Amendments were made to Section 26 of the Act on 20 August 2009 to change the reporting obligations regarding sexual offences involving children. These changes were made in response to community concerns that previous reporting requirements may have prevented some young people who were not at risk of harm or exploitation from accessing medical advice or treatment in relation to their sexual activity.

Under the new provisions, registered health practitioners have an additional responsibility to report to the Department or the police if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child aged 14 or 15 has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence and the age difference between the child and the sexual offender is greater than 2 years. The amendments to the Act came into effect on 1 September 2009.

Appendix 4: Legislation

Child protection legislation

Commonwealth

Family Law Act 1975

New South Wales

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Victoria

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Queensland

Child Protection Act 1999

Public Health Act 2005

Western Australia

Children and Community Services Act 2004

The Family Court Act 1975

South Australia

Family and Community Services Act 1972

Children's Protection Act 1993

Tasmania

Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997

Children, Young Persons and Their Families Amendment Act 2009

Australian Capital Territory

Children and Young People Act 2008

Northern Territory

Care and Protection of Children Act 2007

Legislative definition of ‘in need of care and protection’

For a child to be placed under an order, a court needs to determine whether the child is in need of care and/or protection. Each state and territory has legislation defining ‘in need of care and protection’.

New South Wales

In New South Wales, a child or young person may be found under section 71(1) of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* to be in need of care and protection for any reason including, without limitation, any of the following:

- i. where there is no parent available to care for the child or young person as a result of death or incapacity or for any other reason
- ii. the parents acknowledge that they have serious difficulties in caring for the child or young person and, as a consequence, the child or young person is in need of care and protection
- iii. the child or young person has been, or is likely to be, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated
- iv. subject to subsection (2), the child’s or young person’s basic physical, psychological or educational needs may not be met, or are likely not to be met, by his or her parents or primary care givers
- v. the child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer serious developmental impairment or serious psychological harm as a consequence of the domestic environment in which he or she is living
- vi. in the case of a child who is under the age of 14, the child has exhibited sexually abusive behaviours and an order of the Children’s Court is necessary to ensure his or her access to, or attendance at, an appropriate therapeutic service
- vii. the child or young person is subject to a care and protection order of another state or territory that is not being complied with
- viii. Section 171(1) applies in respect of the child or young person
- ix. in the case where the application for the order is made by filing a contract breach notice – any presumption arising from the operation of s.38E(4) that the child or young person is in need of care and protection has not been rebutted.

Section 170 (1A) states that If the Children’s Court makes a care order in relation to a reason not listed in subsection (1), the Court may only do so if the Director-General pleads the reason in the care application.

Section 170 (2) provides that the Children’s Court cannot conclude that the basic needs of a child or young person are likely not to be met only because of:

- (a) a parent’s or primary care-giver’s disability, or
- (b) poverty.

Victoria

In Victoria, Section 162 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* indicates that a child is in need of protection if any of the following grounds exist:

Section 162

- (1)
 - (a) the child has been abandoned and after reasonable inquiries the parent(s) cannot be found, and no other suitable person can be found who is willing and able to care for the child
 - (b) the child's parent(s) are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person willing and able to care for the child
 - (c) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury and the child's parent(s) have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type
 - (d) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type
 - (e) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged and the child's parent(s) have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type
 - (f) the child's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be, significantly harmed and the child's parent(s) have not provided, arranged or allowed the provision of, or are unlikely to provide, arrange, or allow the provision of, basic care or effective medical, surgical or other remedial care.
- (2) For the purposes of sub-sections (1)(c) to (1)(e), the harm may be constituted by a single act, omission or circumstance or accumulate through a series of continuing acts, omissions or circumstances.

Queensland

In Queensland, the *Child Protection Act 1999* defines a child 'in need of protection' as: 'a child who has suffered harm, is suffering harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering harm; and does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.'

'Parent' is defined broadly to include persons 'having or exercising parental responsibility for the child' and includes a person who, under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tradition or custom, is regarded as a parent of the child.

A 'child' is an individual aged under 18.

'Harm' is defined as 'any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing'.

Western Australia

In Western Australia, the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (s.28) states that a child is 'in need of protection' if:

- (a) the child has been abandoned by his or her parents and, after reasonable inquiries:

- (i) the parents cannot be found and
 - (ii) no suitable adult relative or other suitable adult can be found who is willing and able to care for the child
- (b) the child's parents are dead or incapacitated and, after reasonable inquiries, no suitable adult relative or other suitable adult can be found who is willing and able to care for the child;
- (c) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, harm as a result of any one or more of the following
- (i) physical abuse
 - (ii) sexual abuse
 - (iii) emotional abuse
 - (iv) psychological abuse
 - (v) neglect,
- and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely or unable to protect, the child from harm, or further harm, of that kind or
- (d) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, harm as a result of
- (i) the child's parents being unable to provide, or arrange the provision of, adequate care for the child or
 - (ii) the child's parents being unable to provide, or arrange the provision of, effective medical, therapeutic or other remedial treatment for the child.

'Harm', in relation to a child, means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's wellbeing.

South Australia

In South Australia, under the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, an application for a care and protection order may be made to the Youth Court when the Minister is of the opinion that:

- (a) the child is at risk and an order should be made to secure the child's care and protection
- (b) disruption of existing arrangements for the child would be likely to cause the child psychological injury and it would be in the best interest of the child for the arrangement to be the subject of a care and protection order.

An application for an order must be made to the Youth Court when the Minister knows or suspects on reasonable grounds that:

- a child is at risk as a result of drug abuse by a parent, guardian or other person; and
- that the cause of the child being at risk is not being adequately addressed;

and is of the opinion that the most appropriate response is to apply for an order for one or more of the following purposes:

- (i) to ensure that the parent, guardian or other person undergoes appropriate treatment for drug abuse

- (ii) to ensure that the parent, guardian or other person submits to periodic testing for drug abuse
- (iii) to authorise or require the release of information regarding the treatment or the results of the test to the Chief Executive.

Under Section 6 (2) of the Act, a child is at risk if:

- (a) there is a significant risk that the child will suffer serious harm to his or her physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing against which he or she should have, but does not have, proper protection; or
- (b) the child has been, or is being, abused or neglected; or
- (c) a person with whom the child resides (whether a guardian of the child or not)
 - (i) has threatened to kill or injure the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out; or
 - (ii) has killed, abused or neglected some other child or children and there is a reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person; or
- (d) the guardians of the child
 - (i) are unable to care for and protect the child, or are unable to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child
 - (ii) are unwilling to care for and protect the child, or are unwilling to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child; or
 - (iii) are dead, have abandoned the child, or cannot, after reasonable inquiry, be found; or
- (e) the child is of compulsory school age but has been persistently absent from school without satisfactory explanation of the absence; or
- (f) the child is aged under 15 and of no fixed address.

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* also covers the practice of female genital mutilation. Under Section 26A(1), female genital mutilation means:

- (a) clitoridectomy
- (b) excision of any other part of the female genital organs
- (c) a procedure to narrow or close the vaginal opening
- (d) any other mutilation of the female genital organs,

but does not include a sexual reassignment procedure or a medical procedure that has a genuine therapeutic purpose.

Under Section 26B(1), on the protection of children at risk of genital mutilation, if the court is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the child may be at risk of female genital mutilation, the court may make orders for the protection of the child – for example, preventing a person from taking the child from the state, or requiring that the child's passport be held by the court for a period specified in the order or until further order, or providing for periodic examination of the child to ensure that the child is not subject to female genital mutilation.

Part 5 of the *Children's Protection Act 1993* also states that family care meetings should be convened in respect of the child if the Minister believes that a child is at risk and that arrangements should be made to secure the child's care and protection. The Minister cannot make an application for an order granting custody of the child or placing the child under guardianship before a family care meeting has been held unless satisfied that:

- (a) it has not been possible to hold a meeting despite reasonable endeavours to do so
- (b) an order should be made without delay
- (c) the guardians of the child consent to the making of the application
- (d) there is another good reason to do so.

The department will consider taking court action for a care and protection order only when no other intervention can safely protect a child who is at risk by definition of the Act. There are powers which the Youth Court may exercise when it finds that a child is in need of care and protection.

New care and protection orders tend to be for no longer than 12 months, although a second or subsequent order can be granted to complete a reunification process. The child may then be placed under the guardianship of the minister or such other person or persons the court thinks appropriate, until aged 18. The *Children's Protection Act 1993* encourages early decision making for children's long-term care:

Section 38 (2a) – If a child is to be placed in guardianship the Court must consider the importance of settled and stable living arrangements for the child and, as a general rule, a long-term guardianship order is to be preferred to a series of temporary arrangements for the custody or guardianship of the child.

Tasmania

In Tasmania, the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* defines abuse or neglect as:

- (a) sexual abuse
- (b) physical or emotional injury or other abuse, or neglect, to the extent that
 - (i) the injured, abused or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person's wellbeing
 - (ii) the injured, abused or neglected person's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.

The Act provides the following definition of a child at risk:

- (a) the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused or neglected
- (b) any person with whom the child resides or who has frequent contact with the child (whether the person is or is not a guardian of the child):
 - (i) has threatened to kill or abuse or neglect the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out
 - (ii) has killed or abused or neglected some other child or an adult and there is a reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person
- (c) the child is an affected child within the meaning of the *Family Violence Act 2004*

- (d) the guardians of the child are:
 - (i) unable to maintain the child
 - (ii) unable to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child
 - (iii) unwilling to maintain the child
 - (iv) unwilling to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child
 - (v) dead, have abandoned the child or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry
 - (vi) are unwilling or unable to prevent the child from suffering abuse or neglect
- (e) the child is aged under 16 and does not, without lawful excuse, attend school regularly.

Child and Family Services staff make a decision about whether a child is at risk through a process of gathering, confirming and analysing information, and using their expertise and, where necessary, that of other professional people.

The *Family Violence Act 2004* was proclaimed on 31 March 2005. The introduction of this legislation has significantly increased child protection notifications from Tasmania Police because it has amended the definition of a child at risk of abuse and neglect to include a child affected by family violence.

Australian Capital Territory

In the Australian Capital Territory, Section 345 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008* states:

1. that a child is in need of care and protection if:
 - (a) the child or young person:
 - (i) has been abused or neglected
 - (ii) is being abused or neglected
 - (iii) is at risk of abuse or neglect and
 - (b) no-one with parental responsibility for the child or young person is willing and able to protect the child or young person from the abuse and neglect or the risk of abuse or neglect.
2. Without limiting subsection (1), a child /young person is in need of care and protection if:
 - (a) there is a serious or persistent conflict between the child or young person and the people with parental responsibility for him or her (other than the Chief Executive) to the extent that the care arrangements for the child or young person are, or are likely to be, seriously disrupted
 - (b) the people with parental responsibility for the child or young person are dead, have abandoned the child or young person or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry
 - (c) the people with parental responsibility for the child or young person are sexually or financially exploiting the child or young person or not willing and able to keep him or her from being sexually or financially exploited.

Abuse in relation to a child or young person means:

- (a) physical abuse
- (b) sexual abuse
- (c) emotional abuse (including psychological abuse) if the child or young person has experienced the abuse or is experiencing the abuse in a way that has caused or is causing significant harm to his or her wellbeing or development
- (d) emotional abuse (including psychological abuse) if:
 - (i) the child or young person has seen or heard the physical, sexual or psychological abuse of a person with whom the child or young person has a domestic relationship, the exposure to which has caused or is causing significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child or young person
 - (ii) the child or young person has been put at risk of seeing or hearing abuse mentioned in subparagraph (i), the exposure to which would cause significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child or young person.

Neglect of a child or a young person, means a failure to provide the child or young person with a necessity of life if the failure has been caused or is causing significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child or young person. *Examples – Necessities of life:* (1) food (2) shelter (3) clothing (4) health-care treatment.

Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, Section 20 of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* states that a child is in need of care and protection if:

- (a) the child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation because of an act or omission of a parent of the child
- (b) the child is abandoned and no family member of the child is willing and able to care for the child
- (c) the parents of the child are dead or unable or unwilling to care for the child and no other family member of the child is able and willing to do so
- (d) the child is not under the control of any person and is engaged in conduct that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child or other persons.

For the purpose of Part 1.4 Section 15 of the *Care and protection of Children Act 2007*:

- (1) Harm to a child is any significant detrimental effect caused by an act, omission or circumstance on:
 - (a) the physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing of the child
 - (b) the physical, psychological or emotional development of the child.
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), harm can be caused by the following:
 - (a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect of the child
 - (b) sexual abuse or other sexual exploitation of the child
 - (c) exposure of the child to physical violence.

Example – A child witnessing violence between the child’s parents at home.

Under Part 1.4 Section 16 of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*:

- (1) Exploitation of a child includes sexual and any other forms of exploitation of the child.
- (2) Without limiting subsection (1), sexual exploitation of a child includes:
 - (a) sexual abuse of the child
 - (b) involving the child as a participant or spectator in any of the following:
 - (i) an act of a sexual nature
 - (ii) prostitution
 - (iii) a pornographic performance.

Appendix 5: Policy and practice differences in states and territories

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Although there are differences between states and territories that affect the comparability of the data on children in out-of-home care and on care and protection orders, the differences between jurisdictions are greatest in relation to child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations.

One of the main differences between jurisdictions is in the policy frameworks used by states and territories in relation to notifications. In some jurisdictions, such as New South Wales, under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* reports to Community Services relating to abuse by a stranger may be classified as a notification, but in other jurisdictions they are not.

- In New South Wales, all reports received at the Child Protection Helpline and classified as ‘child and young person concern’ reports are screened to determine whether or not they reach the ‘risk of significant harm’ (the statutory threshold) and to determine the appropriate action and response priority timeframe. Where a report does not meet the risk of significant harm threshold, information on alternative referral pathways will be offered where possible.
- In Victoria, the definition of a ‘notification’ is very broad and includes some reports that may not be classified as a notification in other jurisdictions. With the enactment of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* in Victoria in April 2007, this process changed to receipt of a ‘report’, which will then be classified into a child wellbeing report or a protective intervention report.
- Queensland and South Australia screen reports and can refer cases to other agencies or provide family support services if it is assessed that a child protection investigation is not required to protect a child from abuse or neglect. This approach, which is referred to as a differential response, relies on voluntary participation from families. It seeks to consider lower-level needs and risks without the need for families to enter or further enter into the statutory child protection system.
- The above is also true for Western Australia, except for mandatory reports of child sexual abuse, which are classified as child protection notifications without prior screening.
- Tasmania also has a differential response, with members of the public and mandated reporters being able to report care and protection concerns to Community Based Intake Services (known as Gateway Services) or to Child Protection Intake. All reports to Child Protection Intake about the safety or wellbeing of a child are recorded as notifications. Reports to the Gateway Services are not recorded as notifications unless they are referred to Child Protection Intake for intervention.
- In 2002, the Australian Capital Territory screened reports in a similar manner to South Australia and Queensland, but in 2003 the definition was changed to incorporate all contacts regarding concerns for children as child protection reports. With the introduction of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, notifications continue to include child concerns and child protection reports.

Care and protection orders

There are large variations across states and territories in the types of care and protection orders that can be issued. Some of the major differences between jurisdictions, and recent changes to care and protection orders within jurisdictions, are outlined below.

Finalised guardianship and custody orders

- In Western Australia, the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* enables the Children's Court to make four types of protection orders according to the needs and circumstances of the child or young person: protection order (supervision); protection order (time limited); protection order (until age 18); and protection order (special guardianship). These orders have been in place since 1 March 2006, apart from protection orders (special guardianship), which replaced protection orders (enduring parental responsibility) in legislative amendments that came into effect on 31 January 2011.
- With the introduction of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* on 1 March 2006, the concept of 'guardianship' was replaced with 'parental responsibility', which refers to all the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority, which, by law, parents have in relation to children. Protection orders (time limited) and protection orders (until age 18) confer parental responsibility on the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department for Child Protection, and protection orders (special guardianship) confer parental responsibility on a third party.
- In Western Australia, this category also includes unaccompanied humanitarian minors whose guardianship is delegated to the Department for Child Protection by the Commonwealth. The CEO of the Department for Child Protection has parental responsibility (guardianship/custody) for these children.
- In New South Wales, these types of orders relate to 'parental responsibility' rather than 'guardianship' and can be issued to individuals as well as to an officer of the state.
- For Queensland, this category includes finalised child protection orders and court assessment orders where custody or guardianship of the child has been granted to the Chief Executive.
- In Tasmania, guardianship and custody orders place children under the guardianship or custody of either the Secretary or a person or persons approved by a court. This category includes children under the guardianship of the Secretary or their delegate, children who have moved to Tasmania while on an order made in another state or territory, and children on a custody order where the custodian is the CEO of a non-government organisation or the Secretary of the Department.
- Under the new legislation in the Northern Territory (*Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*), these types of orders refer to 'parental responsibility' rather than 'guardianship' and can be issued to a specified person.
- In the Australian Capital Territory under the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, these types of orders are also referred to as 'parental responsibility' orders and can be issued to the Chief Executive solely, shared between the Chief Executive and other parties or can be issued to individuals on a long-term basis.
- In South Australia, the Youth Court can make custody orders (not exceeding 12 months) to place children under the custody of either the Minister or a person that the court thinks appropriate in the circumstances of the case. The Youth Court may also make short-term or long-term guardianship orders to place children under the guardianship of

the Minister or a person or persons (not exceeding two) that the court thinks appropriate in the circumstances of the case.

Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders

- Orders that grant permanent guardianship and custody of a child to a third party are issued only in some jurisdictions and, depending on the level of involvement of the Department, may or may not be recorded in the data. In Victoria, the Permanent Care Order was introduced in 1996–97 and is included in this data collection in the category ‘guardianship and custody orders’. Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia are the other jurisdictions that are able to report children on orders where guardianship and custody (or parental responsibility) is permanently transferred to a third party.
- In Western Australia and in the Australian Capital Territory, in the case of a protection order (special guardianship) and protection order (enduring parental responsibility), respectively, a person other than the CEO of the Department for Child Protection (and other than the child’s parents) is named as the person who has parental responsibility for the child until they reach the age of 18.
- Previously, the information system used in Tasmania did not provide for children to be recorded under a third-party parental responsibility arrangement. Children under the guardianship or custody of a person or persons approved by a court who is not the Secretary or the child’s parents were included under ‘guardianship or custody orders’. August 2010 saw the implementation of the new version of the information system, allowing third-party parental responsibility orders to now be reported.
- In the Northern Territory, third-party parental responsibility orders are not counted because they are not recorded as such.

Finalised supervisory orders

- Data on supervisory and other finalised orders are not available from New South Wales.
- For Queensland, this category includes finalised orders requiring the Chief Executive to supervise matters, direct parents actions regarding the child’s protection or contact arrangements with the child.
- In Western Australia, the protection order (supervision) enables the Department for Child Protection to provide supervision of the wellbeing of the child for a specified period of time, not exceeding 2 years. A protection order (supervision) does not affect the parental responsibility for the child, except to the extent necessary to give effect to the order.
- In Tasmania and South Australia, children on orders that require them or their guardian to meet specified conditions for a period not greater than 12 months are included in this category.
- In the Australian Capital Territory, a supervision order places the child or young person for the period stated in the order under the supervision of the Chief Executive and allows Care and Protection Services to monitor and supervise the health and wellbeing of that child or young person during that period.

Interim and temporary orders

- For Queensland, this category includes all interim orders made on the adjournment of a proceeding for a child protection order or a court assessment order.
- In Western Australia, this category includes all pending protection applications for children, regardless of what type of order is sought, whether the child is in the

Department's provisional protection and care or whether the Court has made an interim order.

- In Tasmania, this category covers children who require a response while a substantive order is being processed. This includes children who have been named in a requirement, a warrant, or an order, such as an assessment order, interim assessment order, or interim care and protection order.
- In the Australian Capital Territory, an interim order is issued when an application for a care and protection order for the child or young person has been made to the court but not finally decided, and the court believes on reasonable grounds that the child or young person is in need of care and protection or would be in need of care and protection if the interim care and protection order was not made.

Administrative arrangements

- In Tasmania, this category includes children under a voluntary care agreement between the guardian of the child and the Secretary for a period of up to 3 months, and longer by extension.
- South Australia also includes children in this category who are placed under a voluntary custody agreement between the guardian of the child and the Minister, for a period of up to 3 months. This agreement may be extended, but only for a further period of 3 months.
- This category is also applicable for voluntary care agreements in the ACT where parental responsibility is shared between the parent/guardian of the child and the Chief Executive for a period of up to 6 months within any 12 month period. The voluntary agreement can be extended for a longer period if the young person is 15 or over.

Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care and court orders

Children can be placed in out-of-home care voluntarily or through some type of court order. Such orders include care and protection orders, including formal administrative arrangements and other legal orders such as juvenile justice orders (see Chapter 4). There is considerable variety between the jurisdictions:

- In New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, children in out-of-home care can be placed on a range of different orders or authorities.
- In Western Australia from 1 March 2006, children in out-of-home care may either be subject to a court order or placed pursuant to some other form of authority under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*, such as a negotiated placement agreement for short-term family support reasons, or the child may be in receipt of a placement service as a general social service provided to the child.
- In South Australia, all children in out-of-home care were on a court order or some other form of legal authority.
- In the Northern Territory, where the family voluntarily agrees to departmental intervention, the child can be placed under a temporary protection agreement, rather than the Department making an application to the Family Matters Jurisdiction of the Local Court for a protection order.

Although a child may be in out-of-home care in conjunction with being on an order, the order does not necessarily specify where the child must reside or that the child be placed in care.

Other state and territory differences

There are some differences between the states and territories in the scope and coverage of out-of-home care data. For example, the data from Victoria include children on permanent care orders, because this state makes an ongoing payment for the care of these children.

Appendix 6: Recent state and territory policy changes

This section outlines the major child protection policy changes that have occurred in recent years. The various child protection authorities in the states and territories have provided this information. Legislation relating to specific jurisdictions is listed in Appendix 4.

New South Wales

In March 2009, the then Premier of New South Wales and the Minister for Community Services announced a detailed package of reforms to the New South Wales child protection system in response to the Report of Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in New South Wales (the Wood Inquiry). A central theme of the Wood Inquiry recommendations was that the care and protection of children and young people is a shared responsibility.

In response to the Wood Inquiry recommendations, the New South Wales Government is progressively implementing a suite of reforms across early intervention, child protection and out-of-home care in partnership with other government agencies and the non-government sector.

To focus the powers of the statutory child protection system on those who are most likely to need the intervention and protection powers of the State, the Special Commission of Inquiry recommended that the threshold for both mandatory and voluntary reporting to Community Services be raised to 'risk of significant harm' so that only those children who are likely to need the intervention and protection powers of the state under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* are subject to it being exercised. The subsequent legislative changes to the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* to give effect to the new reporting threshold came into effect on 24 January 2010.

The Wood Inquiry also recommended the implementation of structured decision making (SDM) tools to support shared and consistent child protection across New South Wales. To achieve this, the Mandatory Reporter Guide was introduced in New South Wales to help mandatory reporters respond appropriately to children and young people who they think may be at risk of harm. SDM tools have also been customised for use at the Child Protection Helpline and in Community Service Centres to assist in reaching consistency in decision making across the agency and to target resources to families who are most in need. Progressive state-wide implementation of SDM safety and risk reassessment tools commenced in May 2011.

The New South Wales Government believes a greater focus on prevention and early intervention is essential in reducing the number of reports of children at risk and the number of children entering out-of-home care. Both new and expanded services have been rolled out to enable more families to receive support. This includes extending the Brighter Futures early intervention program to support vulnerable families with children aged 0–9 by providing access to a range of services such as child care, case management, parenting programs and home visits. As a result of the Wood recommendations, the NSW Government has allocated growth funding to the non-government sector to create an additional 200 places for families in the Brighter Futures program over the next 4 years.

During the year, existing and newly funded services were realigned to form the Early Intervention Placement Prevention Program (EIPP). The EIPP consists of three sub-programs: child and family support; intensive family support; and intensive family preservation. Services funded under the EIPP form part of an integrated system aimed at reducing the likelihood of children and young people entering or remaining in out-of-home care. EIPP provides services along a continuum from lower-level parenting and youth support to intensive family and youth interventions.

New South Wales is responding to the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system by better supporting Indigenous children and families. Two new intensive family based services have been established and a further two have been planned in high need areas of the state to provide intensive, time limited, home based support to Aboriginal families where children and young people are at risk of entering the out-of-home care system, or are currently in care and a restoration plan is in place. The Department is also trialling the Protecting Aboriginal Children Together initiative to seek Aboriginal community input and involvement on the approach to individual child protection decisions involving Aboriginal children.

In response to the higher risk of poor educational achievement and health outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care, coordinators have been established across New South Wales to facilitate health assessments and individual education plans for children and young people entering care.

Victoria

Victoria's legislative foundation is provided by the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (which is the framework legislation for services for all children) and the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*. The new legislation, which commenced operation in April 2007, provides a unifying framework for:

- family and placement services delivered by community service organisations
- child protection services delivered by the Department of Human Services
- decision making by the Children's Court.

The Act provides the necessary legal foundations for Victoria's 'every child every chance' reforms, which create an integrated system of child protection, placement and family services focused on vulnerable children's safety, health, learning, wellbeing and development. The Act explicitly places children's best interests at the heart of all decision making and service delivery. The legislation was amended in 2009 to extend the scope of Child Death Inquiries and to provide for the Minister to refer other matters of concern to the Child Safety Commissioner for review.

The Department of Human Services is working closely with community service organisations and Aboriginal services to strengthen support services for vulnerable families. Strong focus is given to keeping Aboriginal children connected to their culture and community. Cultural advice is provided to child protection workers by Aboriginal organisations for significant decisions concerning Aboriginal children. A cultural plan program has been funded and Aboriginal organisations are taking greater responsibility for kinship care and case management of out-of-home care placements. The Department is currently in the process of working with Aboriginal organisations to develop the policy framework and service capacity to enable the transfer of responsibility for Aboriginal

children subject to court orders from the Secretary to the principal officer of an Aboriginal organisation under Section 18 of the Act.

Significant additional funds were provided in September 2009 to child protection and community services to increase service system capacity. An additional 101 child protection workers, team leaders and case support staff were funded. Funds were also provided to increase Child FIRST capacity, fund new early childhood development workers in Child FIRST and enable the case management of kinship care cases by community services. Two new Principal Practitioners were also funded to further strengthen trauma informed, therapeutic approaches to the care of vulnerable children and young people. A specialist intervention team has also been established to support regions, address operational challenges and improve business practices.

Although front-end child protection demand has exhibited some growth in recent years, the enhanced availability of diversionary services, especially through referrals to Child FIRST, has meant that the number of children entering out-of-home care has been falling.

As part of a separate package, further ongoing government funding has also been provided in 2010–11 to progress reform of the out-of-home care system.

New policy directions, Directions for Out-of-Home Care (Victorian Government Department of Human Services 2009) outlined seven key reform directions focused on strengthening family capacity, redesigning care services and delivering better outcomes for children placed in out-of-home care. The new funds will build additional placement capacity, providing a broader range of placement options while working to orient the system of care to deliver trauma-informed therapeutic responses to children and young people. Four new family coaching pilots have also been developed as part of strengthening family capacity, to support, where safety can be assured, earlier reunification of children in out-of-home care and prevention of children entering out-of-home care.

Child protection and placement services have been the subject of Ombudsman Victoria inquiries during 2010–11, and a number of operational improvements are being made in response to the recommendations from those inquiries.

Stronger quality assurance and improvement processes are being embedded in the service system. An independently chaired Child Protection Practice Standards and Compliance Committee has been established.

Machinery of government changes introduced in August 2009 resulted in the creation of a new Department of Human Services, bringing together child protection, youth justice and housing services and so enabling an exclusive focus on providing services to vulnerable members of the community. The new department has also established a separate Service Delivery and Performance Division to oversee service delivery performance.

Child protection practitioners are being further supported in their practice by the development of the Best Interests Case Practice Model and improved specialist practice resources such as the well regarded Child Development and Trauma Guide.

The Victorian Law Reform Commission has undertaken a review of the operation of the Children's Court of Victoria Family Division to provide the Government with a range of options for reform to minimise disputation and maintain a focus on the best interests of children.

Victoria is a signatory to the COAG-endorsed National Framework. A range of work is underway to support the actions described in this framework.

Queensland

In 2010, the Queensland Parliament passed the *Child Protection and Other Acts Amendment Act 2010*. One key focus of the amendments was to enhance the capacity of non-government services to intervene earlier and more effectively with at-risk families.

These legislative amendments enable the Department of Communities to link at-risk children or families to support services or other assistance before their issues escalate and they become involved in the statutory child protection system.

The amendments enable the introduction of the Helping Out Families initiative, which is delivering support services to help those families who have been referred to child protection services, but who do not need tertiary intervention. The Queensland Government has allocated funding of \$55 million over 4 years for this initiative.

Since its introduction in south-east Queensland from October 2010, the Helping Out Families initiative has delivered three new Family Support Alliances covering the Beenleigh/Eagleby/Nerang areas, Logan and the Gold Coast. At 30 June 2011, these services had received 1,478 referrals and were working with 322 families to identify their needs and refer them to support services.

Helping Out Families also introduced new intensive family support services, providing holistic needs assessments and case management, practical in-home support, individual and family counselling and specialist services to 276 families as at 30 June 2011.

It has also delivered enhanced domestic and family violence services, which include counselling and support for victims, men's perpetrator behaviour change programs, children's counselling services and court support services.

The Helping Out Families initiative has also supported an enhanced Home Health Visiting program delivered by Queensland Health. The program offers six contacts for babies and children aged 3 and under, and targeted services comprising of 15 contacts in the first 12 months of a child's life for families with high needs. As at 30 June 2011, over 5,000 children had been registered in this program.

To tackle Indigenous over-representation in the child protection system, in December 2010, the Queensland Minister for Child Safety released the *Blueprint for implementation strategy – reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland's child protection system*. The Blueprint Strategy has been developed on the premise that the care, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is a shared responsibility and that all children have the right to grow up in a safe and supportive family environment. The Blueprint Strategy focuses on the following key areas:

- supporting families earlier through prevention and early intervention services such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family support services
- strengthening the non-government sector services to ensure they are an effective safety net for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families
- partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the sector to achieve sustainable change for families and communities
- scoping, reviewing and reforming components of the child protection system that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, and ensuring implementation is monitored and evaluated

- taking a holistic, collaborative and inclusive approach in policy planning and service implementation, including social disadvantage factors such as housing, education, health and wellbeing.

The Queensland Government has commenced implementation of the Blueprint Strategy, which will be monitored by a high level advisory committee.

Western Australia

2010–11 is the third year since the Department for Child Protection commenced its reforms following the Ford Review in 2007. The Department is embedding the reforms and continues to make substantial progress on the following strategic priorities:

- to continue to build the capacity of core service delivery, policy and corporate support
- to deliver and improve critical child protection and family support performance through establishing high standards and continuous improvement in service delivery
- to deliver continuing and targeted developments to improve performance of service delivery, policy and corporate support
- to continue to develop the department as a learning organisation.

Amendments to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* came into effect on 31 January 2011. Key features of the amendments include:

- the introduction of protection orders (special guardianship)
- the provision of safe, short term crisis stabilisation ('secure care') for children and young people aged 12 or over, who are in the CEO's care, in specific circumstances, for a period of 21 days
- the principle regarding placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has been reinforced to ensure that the best interests of the child remain paramount when the principle is applied
- provisions that enable the Children's Court to make orders for determination of parentage, which may be necessary in circumstances where the parentage of a child, subject of protection proceedings, is in question
- exchange of information provisions between prescribed public authorities
- strengthening the Department's capacity to respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a child before the child is born
- the prohibition of intimate body piercing for people aged less than 18, irrespective of parental consent. Other forms of body piercing are prohibited for people aged less than 18, unless written parental consent is provided. The only exclusion is for children aged 16 or over who are able to have their ears pierced without their parent's consent.

Greater powers to protect children in the workplace by issuing a notice to an employer or prospective employer prohibiting or imposing limitations on the employment of children in a particular business if the wellbeing of the child is likely to be jeopardised because of the nature of the business or work involved.

The Signs of Safety Child Protection Practice Framework continued to be integrated across all aspects of service delivery. Some of the key initiatives include:

- The Department held its inaugural Signs of Safety Gathering in May 2011, which provided the opportunity for staff from across the state to present examples of their work using the Framework and to hear about work being done overseas where Signs of

Safety is used. A comprehensive implementation plan for 2011–12 will support the development of a shared understanding of the core principles and disciplines consolidate existing good practice and grow practice depth.

- The Signs of Safety pre-birth planning meetings continue to be refined to ensure effective planning and intervention with pregnant mothers whose babies may be at risk. Collaboration continues with King Edward Memorial Hospital, Legal Aid WA and other partner agencies. Early intervention for unborn children has resulted in the majority of babies going home to parents with a safety plan and without statutory action being required. The model has been implemented in the metropolitan area and is currently being extended to country hospitals.
- The Signs of Safety pre-hearing pilot project, involving the Perth Children’s Court, Legal Aid WA and the Department, is in its final stages. During the pilot period, from December 2009 to December 2010, a total of 123 conferences/meetings were held. The evaluation indicated that families were attending, engaging and feeling supported in the conferences and meetings. In addition, these forums provided clarity about the Department’s concerns and those of other agencies.

As part of the ongoing commitment to streamlining practice, policy and administrative requirements, the Department revised its policy on assessment and investigation processes in June 2011. The policy aims to improve the Department’s differential response model, through better targeting of responses to children with increased vulnerability to abuse and neglect, children who have been harmed through abuse or neglect (but parents are protective) and children in need of protection who require intervention action. District-based training has been developed to reinforce the streamlined processes.

As a result of the Ford Report’s findings, the Department for Child Protection has implemented a range of measures to improve outcomes for children in the Chief Executive Officer’s (CEO’s) care:

- The Department for Child Protection is working collaboratively with the Departments of Health and Education to further implement health and education assessments and plans for children in the CEO’s care.
- The Department’s residential care services are being restructured into three tiers of service delivery to respond to the different levels of need in children. Amendments to the Children and Community Services Act 2004 to introduce the third tier facility for secure care for children and young people at extreme risk came into effect on 31 January 2011 and the facility became operational on 30 May 2011.
- The Department’s secure care practice model is consistent with recognised therapeutic models of intervention, involving admission to a secure facility to stabilise and keep the young person safe while developing a suitable plan to consider his or her needs in readiness for a return to the community.
- The Department’s Permanency Planning policy was introduced in July 2010 which aims to promote an understanding of permanency planning and to ensure timely consideration is given to whether children in the CEO’s care can be reunified with their birth family or whether alternative long-term care options need to be considered.

South Australia

The Government of South Australia is continuing to implement its response to recommendations of the Children in State Care Commission of Inquiry report (Mullighan

2008b). The response aims to strengthen further South Australia's child protection system and increase protections for children, as they access services in the community.

The South Australian Government has accepted or partially accepted 52 of the 54 recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry and has implemented its response to 34 of these recommendations. A key outcome of the Government's response to recommendations of the Mullighan Inquiry has been amendments to the *Children's Protection Act 1993*, which were assented to in December 2009.

During 2010–11 amendments to the child safe environments provisions of the *Children's Protection Act 1993* commenced. These provisions are contributing to increased awareness of issues relating to children and young people's safety and well-being across affected organisations and supporting a whole-of-community response to child protection.

The amendments to the *Children's Protection Act 1993* in 2009 also included changes to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle to formally include Torres Strait Islander children. The purpose of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is to enhance and preserve Aboriginal children's sense of identity as Aboriginal, by ensuring that Aboriginal children and young people are maintained within their own biological family, extended family, local Aboriginal community, wider Aboriginal community and their Aboriginal culture.

In 2010–11 practice guidelines were finalised to ensure the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is consistently applied for all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.

During 2010–11 reform of South Australia's child protection system has continued to progress, to integrate the safety of children and young people with a broader approach to strengthening child, family and community wellbeing, as well as key partnerships between Government agencies and the community. South Australia will continue to build on the strong foundation provided by its Keep Them Safe reform program through the development of a new strategic agenda for child protection.

The Department of Education and Child Development (Families SA) has continued to work in collaboration with partners across government, and key non-government agencies through the continued implementation of whole of government and non-government *Information sharing: guidelines for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and their families* (ISG). The guidelines allow all government agencies and key non-government agencies who work with vulnerable families, children and young people to share information when they believe that adverse outcomes can be predicted unless service provision is coordinated. The ISG enable partnership approaches between services and facilitate early intervention to support child safety and wellbeing.

In 2010–11 the ISG were implemented across five government departments and a number of non-government organisations and the ISG Education Program and Plan were implemented.

In September 2010, a protocol was finalised between Families SA and South Australia Police (SAPOL) to facilitate effective inter-agency relationships when children and young people under guardianship go missing from their places of residence with cause for concern. The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that partnership arrangements exist between Families SA and SAPOL that enable interagency communication and a collaborative approach when responding to those guardianship children or young people who go missing.

The Across Government Guardianship (Rapid Response) Whole of Government Services for Children and Young People under the guardianship of the Minister continues to ensure children and young people under guardianship have priority access to health, housing, education (including vocational/tertiary), welfare services and employment. The scope of

the work is focussed on providing a holistic, coordinated approach to all aspects of a child or young person's life, including their physical, psychological and emotional health, their developmental progress, disability needs, education, housing options and transitioning to independence, including post-guardianship supports and services. In 2010–11, there has been greater emphasis placed upon transitioning from care, with particular attention to education and training opportunities.

The High Risk Infant Programs (Southern and Northern) have continued to collaborate with key government and non-government organisations. Overall, the High Risk Infant Program aims to identify risk factors for infants and intervene early, to reduce the impact of abuse and neglect. In particular, the Southern Program has a network in place that identifies high-risk pregnant women and their families and coordinates services prior to the birth of the infant, to connect them to support networks and counselling services. This is in addition to working with infants and their families in an endeavour to prevent the infant's entry into alternative care.

Implementation of the Stronger Families, Safer Children Program aims to support families in contact with the statutory child protection and care system. The program provides interventions to at-risk children and their families, to prevent their progression through the child protection system and/or the possible removal of children, as well as the reunification of children who have been separated from their primary caregivers. This program comprises three streams: Targeted Early Intervention, Intensive Placement Prevention and Reunification Services. Services provided through the Program are delivered by non-government organisations, in close partnership with Families SA Offices, and are based in metropolitan and rural areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are a focus, with two Aboriginal agencies providing direct service delivery.

The needs of families and children at risk have continued to be met through connecting them to Children's Centres for Early Childhood and working in partnership with the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) and SA Health, particularly the Child, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS). This program has continued to strengthen relationships between agencies, to intervene early to consider the needs of children and their families who are at risk.

Children's Centres are an innovative concept in the delivery of early childhood services. Services and programs reflect community needs and include care and education, from birth through to the early years of school, parent information and education, parenting networks, family support and links to health services. The South Australian Government has committed to the establishment of a further 10 Children's Centres for children from birth to age 8 and their families, building on the initial commitment to 24 Children's Centres. Twenty-three Children's Centres are currently operational across South Australia. Four Aboriginal Children and Family Centres are proposed.

In 2010–11, strategic initiatives incorporating the placement needs of children and young people in care have included:

- the development of a Care Planning Policy
- the development of the Directions for Alternative Care in South Australia 2011–15, in an endeavour to move the alternative care sector forward with a shared vision and purpose. The Directions builds on the work already occurring to increase placement options for children and young people in care and will consider both the immediate and future demand on the South Australian alternative care sector.

- The development of the Other Person Guardianship Program, aimed at transferring guardianship to the child's long-term carer to enhance the child's long-term security and stability
- the continued development by the Family Based Care Project of a competency based generic foster care assessment tool and training package for carers to be used across the alternative care sector. Consultation on the draft packages is occurring with the alternative care sector.
- the development of a reunification initiative, which aims to provide targeted and intensive family support to achieve positive outcomes for children through preservation of children within their homes where it is safe to do so as well as facilitate the safe and long-term return of children in care to their families. Services provided under this initiative will include providing improved court supported interventions.
- On 21 October 2011, Families SA was brought together with the education and child development functions of the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Key Families SA programs of adoption, alternative care, child protection services, foster caring and post care services moved to this department.

Tasmania

Tasmania has been reforming its child protection system since November 2006, following the release of the Report on Child Protection Services in Tasmania. During 2010–11, there has been a continuation of the reform process. This involved introduction of amendments to the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Amendment Act 1997* in 2009, which included: the establishment of Community-Based Intake Services (Gateway Services) to receive and respond to reports about the wellbeing of children; improvements to information sharing options; and the capacity for notifications to be made where there are concerns about unborn children. Additional amendments to the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* planned for 2010–11 have been delayed pending the findings of a Parliamentary inquiry into child protection.

Significant reform initiatives, reported in previous editions of *Child Protection Australia* remain in place. These include:

- funding the Australian Childhood Foundation to provide therapeutic services for children involved in the child protection system
- the establishment of therapeutic residential care services across Tasmania
- funding for youth at risk programs
- the establishment of an on-line Child Protection Practice Manual.

In addition, the Signs of Safety (SoS) approach is being rolled out across children and youth services. The benefit to the child is that the focus is on securing safety for the child within a multidisciplinary framework that includes the child, the family, professionals and the community around the family.

As reported previously, the Department has been working to link grandparents who care for their grandchildren into the broader family support infrastructure that has been established in Tasmania. Funding for 'Gateways Supporting Grandparent Carers' commenced in April 2011. Under this new program, grandparents and other relative carers caring for related children who are not on care and protection orders, can access support and financial assistance from the Gateway Services.

In February 2011, the Pathway Home Program was funded on a recurrent basis to work with parents during the period when children in care are being reunified with their immediate family.

Australian Capital Territory

Through 2009–2010, the Office for Children Youth and Family Support consolidated the implementation of new legislation with ongoing training. Care and Protection Service's policies and procedures continue to be reviewed and developed to enhance service delivery. Changes to practice and initiatives introduced in 2010–11 included:

- commencement in November 2009 of a case-conferencing pilot. The case conferencing model focuses on assessment, planning and support for child protection clients and improving participation of children and young people in decision making. Partner agencies have participated well and responded positively to requests for their involvement. The pilot was successful and has now been introduced into core business.
- implementation of a systematic audit process to review compliance and quality processes. This is an ongoing program. To date, audits of completion of annual reviews, urinalysis testing, cultural plans and care plans have been implemented.
- implementation of the Australian Capital Territory Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care in November 2009. All children in out-of-home care and foster and kinship carers have been provided with information about the charter.
- a further roll out of a Common Assessment Framework to government and non-government agencies to enable accurate and standardised information gathering for families who need support and/or are at risk of entering the statutory care and protection system.
- a continued focus on the needs of vulnerable families, with systems being put in place for families who are at risk of coming into the care and protection system to ensure a response is provided in a timely manner
- a focus on the impact of neglect on children and young people
- procurement of new model of out-of-home care service delivery
- commencement of the building of a third Child and Family Centre, which will have a focus on appropriate provision of services for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and enable more outreach services to be provided.

Practice continues to be guided by:

- a quality assurance framework
- a supervision framework, which focuses on professional development and engagement with children, families and other agencies
- a case management framework to improve and integrate service delivery across agency.

The Australian Capital Territory continues to participate in related national initiatives, including:

- the development of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children
- the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership
- National Early Childhood Development Strategy and quality reforms.

Work continued on a number of priorities to improve outcomes for young people involved in the youth justice system in 2010–11 including:

- further development of a policy and procedures manual to promote continuity in case management and practice between community and custody areas of youth justice
- completing professional training and implementation of an evidence-based risk assessment tool, which will play an important role in diverting identified ‘low-risk’ young people away from youth justice intervention and assist in the development of a case management plan for those placed on a community based orders
- continued development of data systems in order to meet current and future data reporting requirements.

Northern Territory

In November 2009, in response to growing evidence that the child protection system in the Northern Territory was not working in the best interests of Territory children and families, the Northern Territory Government commissioned a Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System. The Board of Inquiry was wide ranging, receiving more than 200 submissions from organisations and individuals. It incorporated consultation within communities and regional centres and pulled together evidence from a range of reports and a reference panel comprised of experts from around Australia.

In October 2010, the Board of Inquiry presented its report to the Northern Territory Government. The report, *Growing Them Strong*, contained 147 recommendations for fundamental reform to all areas of the child protection system in the Northern Territory. All recommendations were given a level of urgency for the commencement of implementation—urgent (within 6 months), semi-urgent (within 18 months), and important but not urgent (within 2 to 3 years).

The Northern Territory Government immediately announced in-principle support for the recommendations and directed the then-Department of Health and Families to start implementing these recommendations. This included establishing a new agency dedicated to child safety and wellbeing in order to better respond to the Board of Inquiry’s recommendations—the Department of Children and Families. The Government further directed the Department of Children and Families to develop a comprehensive response to the Board of Inquiry recommendations, including a plan for their implementation over the 5 year period from 2011 to 2015.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was established 1 January 2011 and a new strategic reform team was created to work within the new Department to co-ordinate the implementation, and report against, the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry. A Child Protection External Monitoring and Reporting Committee was established by ministerial appointment and met for the first time in February 2011. *Safe Children, Bright Futures Strategic Framework 2011 to 2015* was launched at Parliament House on 21 February 2011. Developed by DCF, it reflects the Northern Territory Government’s response to the report of the Board on Inquiry into the child protection system in the Northern Territory. The Strategic Framework includes seven main areas of reform:

- Supporting and Strengthening Families—enhance family support system
- Keeping Kids Safe—statutory intervention and out of home care
- A Strong and Effective Legal Framework—legislation change and court reform

- Working Together–community collaboration
- Our People–workforce
- Healing, Growing, Walking Together–Aboriginal service sector and community capacity building
- Building a Stronger, Better, More Accountable System–governance and regionalisation.

As of 30 June 2011, significant activities have been undertaken in response to the Board of Inquiry recommendations. Notably, the backlog of child protection investigations identified by the Board of Inquiry was reduced from 870 cases in October 2010 to zero by the end of May 2011 through secondment of New Zealand child protection workers to the Department. Additional front-line child protection workers have been recruited to the Department and new positions have been created to meet child protection needs. Legislative changes have been made to the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* to extend the powers of the Children's Commissioner and a major review of this Act started in June 2011. The Department provided funding to the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT) to support the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, youth and families peak body. This peak body will support the development of Aboriginal child and family wellbeing and safety, and child protection agencies.

Appendix 7: Jurisdictions' data systems

Key differences between jurisdictions' data systems

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Abuse in care

Cases of alleged abuse in care are included in the data for the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations for New South Wales, Western Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. The standard reporting of cases of alleged abuse in care only formally commenced in Tasmania in December 2005. In Victoria and South Australia, cases of alleged abuse in care are not included in the data. In Queensland, cases of abuse in care where there is custody or guardianship to the Director-General are not reported in the count of notifications, investigations and substantiations from March 2007, but recorded separately as Matters of Concern.

No suitable caregiver

In some cases where the department responsible for child protection conducts an investigation, they may record an outcome of 'no suitable caregiver' (that is, no suitable parent or other legal guardian). This can include situations where a child's parent(s) have died, been incapacitated due to illness/injury or are otherwise unavailable (for example, due to being imprisoned).

All jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory, include cases of 'no suitable caregiver' in the data for notifications. However, the subsequent reporting of these cases differs, for example:

- Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania report these cases as substantiated neglect. In Western Australia, all cases of 'no suitable caregiver' are recorded in the 'dealt with by other means' category, as are deceased parents in the Australian Capital Territory.
- In the Northern Territory, cases of 'no suitable caregiver' are not part of the child protection intake system – they are streamed directly into substitute care.
- In Queensland, cases of 'no suitable caregiver' are reported as substantiated neglect if no other harm type was identified in the intake system.

Relevant changes in data systems

New South Wales

The Government response to the Wood Commission recommendations and reform program effectively went live on 24 January 2010, with the proclamation of legislation to introduce a series of key reforms. The legislation sets a new mandatory reporting threshold: risk of significant harm. Other major changes to the child protection system in New South Wales aim to share the responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children across the government and non-government sector, allowing Community Services caseworkers to concentrate on the most serious cases. Indications are that they are beginning to reduce the high level of reporting to the 24-hour Child Protection Helpline.

The data reported for part of 2010–11 reflect legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010.

This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'. Data are not comparable with previous years.

Victoria

During 2006–07, Victoria introduced a major new data system, which was rolled out across the state in mid-2008. In parallel, the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, which commenced in April 2007, introduced new service pathways and processes in Victorian child protection and family services to support earlier intervention and prevention for vulnerable children and their families. Due to these new service and data reporting arrangements, the Victorian child protection data for 2006–07 onwards may not be fully comparable with data from previous years.

Queensland

In Queensland, the number of notifications decreased in 2005–06 because of a change in recording practice. From March 2005, reports responded to by way of protective advice are recorded as a child concern report rather than a notification. All notifications now require an investigation response.

Further changes in recording practice were introduced in Queensland in March 2007 with the introduction of the Integrated Client Management System (ICMS). Any new child protection concerns received by the department that relate to an open notification or investigation and assessment are recorded as an additional concern and linked to the open notification/investigation and assessment. Prior to the introduction of the ICMS, any new child protection concerns received by the department were recorded as an additional notification. This change in recording practice has had the effect of decreasing the number of notifications recorded in Queensland.

In addition, matters of concern (reports of alleged abuse in care) that result in a notification and/or substantiation are reported separately from 2007–08 in recognition that they relate to children who are in out-of-home care and in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive.

Western Australia

In March 2010, Western Australia implemented a new client information system; however, the delivery of the associated reporting data warehouse was delayed. The delay affected data for 2009–10 (a March snapshot of data were provided); as such, 2009–10 data are not comparable with other years. In 2010–11, a snap shot of data (September snapshot) was provided for foster care and relative/kinship care.

South Australia

During financial years 2009–10 and 2010–11, South Australia successfully implemented the first stage of a project to replace its Client Information System. The new Connected Client Case Management System has been incrementally implemented across the state to record client and case management responses for child protection and youth justice clients. This implementation resulted in changes to recording practices and therefore the South Australian child protection data for 2009–10 onwards is not fully comparable with data from previous years.

Tasmania

During 2007–08, Tasmania successfully implemented the first stage of a project to replace its existing information system. The new Child Protection Information System (CPIS) consisted of a single, centrally administered database to store, manage and provide state-wide access to child protection information. The completion of stage one delivered improved support for intake and assessment functions. At approximately the same time, Tasmania decentralised its intake service and introduced changes to the process for recording notifications. With the implementation of CPIS, only the initial contact was counted as a notification and contacts received in relation to an open case of abuse or neglect were recorded as case notes.

During 2009–10 Tasmania successfully implemented the second stage of the CPIS, following a complete redesign of the existing information system. The new system supports the intake, assessment, case management, and out-of-home care functions of child protection.

Australian Capital Territory

In the Australian Capital Territory, the introduction of a differential response system has resulted in a reduction in the number of reports recorded as investigations. Children and young people receiving a differential response are recorded as receiving support rather than being appraised (investigated) and are provided with a range of support strategies, which may include ongoing contact with the Department for a limited time on a voluntary basis.

Appendix 8: Inquiries into child protection services

Various inquiries into child protection services have been conducted in a number of jurisdictions in the past few years. These include:

- *Growing them strong, together: promoting the safety and wellbeing of the Northern Territory's children, Report of the Board of Inquiry into the child protection system in the Northern Territory 2010*. The Inquiry was announced by the then Minister for Child Protection, the Hon. Malarndirri McCarthy, on 11 November 2009 and the Board of Inquiry was appointed by the Chief Minister, the Hon Paul Henderson, on 9 December 2009. This broad-ranging public Inquiry reviewed the child protection system and made recommendations on ways to strengthen and improve it. This report was released in October 2010 (See Northern Territory Government 2010).
- *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW* (Wood 2008) – New South Wales.
- *Children in State Care: commission of inquiry* (Mullighan 2008a) – South Australia.
- *Children on Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands: commission of inquiry* (Mullighan 2008b) – South Australia.
- *Review of the Department for Community Development* (Ford 2007) – Western Australia.
- *Report on child protection services in Tasmania* (Jacob & Fanning 2006) – Tasmania.
- *The Territory as a parent: a review of the safety of children in care in the ACT and of ACT child protection management* (Commissioner for Public Administration 2004a) – Australian Capital Territory.
- *The Territory's children: ensuring safety and quality care for children and young people. Report on the audit and case review* (Commissioner for Public Administration 2004b) – Australian Capital Territory.
- *Report of the Commission of inquiry into the abuse of children in Queensland institutions* (Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland 1999) – Queensland.
- *Protecting children: an inquiry into the abuse of children in foster care* (Crime and Misconduct Commission 2004) – Queensland.
- *Our best investment: a state plan to protect and advance the interests of children* (Layton 2003) – South Australia.
- *Care and support: final report on child protection services* (Standing Committee on Social Issues 2002) – New South Wales.
- *Putting the picture together: inquiry into response by government agencies to complaints of family violence and child abuse in Aboriginal communities* (Gordon et al. 2002) – Western Australia.

These inquiries generate much media interest, both locally and nationally, which heightens public interest, reinforces the need to protect children, and may in turn affect the willingness of the general public to report suspected instances of child abuse. They also have the potential of making an impact on the reported data, because departments often respond to these inquiries by introducing new, or modifying existing, policies and practices.

Appendix 9: Australian developments and the international snapshot

Australian developments

The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020

In response to the increasing rates of reported child abuse and neglect, members of the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (CDSMC) recognised that child protection required a comprehensive national approach.

Through a dedicated working group, the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee (CDSMAC) worked closely with the states and territories, the non-government sector, academics, carers and young people to develop the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (2009–2020)* (COAG 2009). The National Framework was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on 30 April 2009, demonstrating all governments' commitment to achieving a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia.

Framework principles

The *National Framework* is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right of all children to grow up in an environment free from neglect and abuse (OHCHR 1989). Under the *National Framework*, state and territory governments retain responsibility for statutory child protection; that is, those aspects authorised by law. However, the *National Framework* also recognises that protecting children is a shared responsibility, within families, and across communities, professions, services, and all levels of government.

The *National Framework* also advocates a 'public health model', which focuses on providing early intervention and support to families to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring. Specialist support services, however, remain essential for the most vulnerable families and children.

To tackle the over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system, the *National Framework* outlines specific strategies to support Indigenous children, families and communities. These strategies aim to promote safe, strong, and thriving Indigenous families and communities and culturally appropriate support for those children and families in child protection systems.

Framework reporting

For the duration of the first three-year action plan, COAG will receive an annual report card from CDSMAC containing high-level information on the status of each action under the *National Framework*. This information will be released publicly to ensure the Australian community can also track the progress of these actions.

Unit record file development

Currently the child protection data for national reporting are provided to the AIHW in aggregate (tabular) format. However, using aggregate data, there is no way of determining

the overlap between the notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care collections, nor is there any way of determining how many children appear within the system on multiple occasions. To help overcome these and other limitations generated by reporting from aggregate data, the method of collecting national child protection data is undergoing significant change, and is moving to a unit record level collection, allowing data to be collected and analysed at the child level. There are also several other notable benefits of moving to a unit record level for child protection including:

- a wider range of policy-relevant data analysis (including longitudinal)
- collecting and reporting of data that more accurately reflect the level of service activity occurring over a period of time
- the opportunity to improve the comparability of data across jurisdictions.

All jurisdictions are committed to the development of a unit record data collection as a major project under the *National Framework*. Preparation of new data specifications to support this collection has progressed after a number of data development workshops and meetings of a unit record working group. Work continues with states and territories and the AIHW to progress the national child protection unit record collection through a full-scale test of the unit record data, to be conducted in the second half of 2012. A unit record module relating to carers of children within the child protection system is also currently under parallel development.

Treatment and support services development

Specifications are being developed for a national minimum data set in relation to treatment and support services in the context of child protection. This work should improve the availability of current information on the use of such services across Australia and broaden availability of data regarding intensive family support services.

Educational outcomes for children

Options for a regular national data collection in relation to the educational outcomes children who are under the guardianship/custody of the Minister or Chief Executive are currently being investigated. This work will build on the previous work in this area (see, for example, AIHW 2011b).

National Out-of-Home Care Standards

The introduction of National Out-of-Home Care Standards is a major milestone achievement during the first 3-year implementation of the National Framework. The AIHW is working with the Commonwealth, states and territories and the non-government sector to develop the measures required for reporting against the standards.

International snapshot

The collection, analysis and reporting of child protection data are recognised in many countries as essential to the development of policies and practices aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The key framework for international child protection is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (OHCHR 1989). Measuring the progress of the convention is undertaken through a series of key child protection indicators. These include information relating to: birth registration; child marriage; child labour; female genitalia mutilation; attitudes towards domestic violence; child discipline; and child disability (see UNICEF 2009 for further information).

According to an international survey of 23 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and Oceania, 14 countries have national child protection data collection programs, mostly operated by governmental agencies (ISPCAN 2010). Eight of the 23 countries reported an annual data collection procedure. These data collections were reported to vary considerably in their configuration, purpose and allocation of responsibilities. Internationally, these data collections cut across a variety of sectors including social services, health services and the criminal, juvenile and family court systems. As a result, many countries report difficulties in the coordination and collaboration between different systems, services and organisations.

While some countries share similar approaches to child protection, there are significant differences in the systems used to collect and report child maltreatment data, the definitions used and the demographics of the population groups. As such, international comparisons should be interpreted with caution.

A snapshot of the number per 1,000 children in substantiations of maltreatment in six countries is presented in Table A9.1. Further information on international child protection data is available in the 9th edition of *World Perspectives on Child Abuse* (ISPCAN 2010).

Table A9.1: Children in substantiations of maltreatment, Australia, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Israel, United States and Canada (number per 1,000 children)

Country	Number per 1,000 children
Australia	7.1 (2005)
United Kingdom	2.3 (2002)
Netherlands	3.8 (2005)
Israel	12.3 (2005)
United States	17.8 (2000)
Canada	21.7 (2003)

Note: Comparisons of prevalence figures should be interpreted with care as collection systems, definitions and population groups are not directly comparable.

Source: ISPCAN 2010.

The AIHW is a member of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Working Group on Child Maltreatment data collection (ISPCAN WGCMD). The ISPCAN WGCMD contributes to publications including the *World Perspectives on Child Abuse and Neglect*, the most recent of which was launched in 2010 at the ISPCAN Congress. Several countries are represented on the working group including Australia, United States of America, England, New Zealand, Belgium, Canada, Philippines and France. The ISPCAN WGCMD provides a forum for members to share information relating to child protection data development, collection, analysis and reporting. The group aims to promote the use of quality data in policy and practice decisions across the world and provides advice and support to countries that are developing a national data collection.

Glossary

General definitions

Child protection and support services

Refers to those departments in each state and territory that are responsible for child protection matters.

Indigenous status

Indigenous

Includes children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent who are identified as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Non-Indigenous

Includes children who have not been identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; this excludes children of unknown Indigenous status.

Unknown

Includes children of unknown Indigenous status.

Definitions for child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations

Age of child

Unless otherwise specified, age refers to age at the time of notification. Age is shown in completed years, or as 'unborn' for those in utero and 'less than 1 year' where age is between live birth and less than 1 year.

Child concern reports

Reports to community services departments regarding concerns about a child, as distinct from child protection notifications. This category is relevant to states and territories that can differentiate reports regarding child concerns from child protection notifications. For example, Western Australia distinguishes child concern reports from child maltreatment allegations. Similarly, New South Wales can separate reports of child concerns from child protection notifications.

The distinction between what is classified as a notification, as opposed to child concern, differs across jurisdictions. However, as a guide, using the Western Australian definition, a child concern report is a report about a child to a community services department where there is no indication that a child may have been, or is at risk of being, harmed through abuse or neglect. In Western Australia, this classification is assigned to referrals regarding concern about a child's welfare related to the quality of his or her home environment or the

standard of care that he or she is receiving, and where the precise nature of the issue or problem is unclear and requires further assessment.

The response to a child concern report is not to investigate child abuse or neglect or harm to a child. It is to assess the concern for the child, the family's circumstances, the need for services, to support the family and to assist them to access services. In contrast, a response to a notification has the primary goal of determining whether or not child abuse or neglect or harm has occurred and of protecting the child.

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

What constitutes a notification may vary across jurisdictions. For example, in some jurisdictions notifications are 'caller-defined'; that is, all contacts to the authorised department regarding concerns for children (and child protection reports) are considered to be a notification. In other jurisdictions, notifications are 'agency-defined'. In these cases, the initial report is subject to an assessment and considered a notification only when the information received suggests that a child needs care or protection.

Departments responsible for child protection assess a child protection notification to determine whether it requires an investigation, whether it should be dealt with by other means – such as referral to other organisations or to family support services, or whether no further protective action is necessary (or possible). An investigation is the process whereby the department responsible for child protection obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification, and makes an assessment of the degree of harm, or risk of harm, for the child. After an investigation is completed, a notification will either be 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'.

A notification will be substantiated where it is concluded (after investigation) that the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. All jurisdictions substantiate situations where children have experienced significant harm from abuse or neglect through the actions of parents. Some jurisdictions also substantiate on the basis of the occurrence of abuse or neglect, independent of whether the child was harmed. In some jurisdictions, substantiations are also made on the basis of the child being at risk of harm.

National definitions

Child protection notifications

Notifications consist of contacts made to an authorised department by persons or other bodies making allegations of child abuse or neglect, child maltreatment or harm to a child. A notification can only involve one child. Where it is claimed that two children have been abused or neglected or harmed, this is counted as two notifications, even if the children are from one family. Where there is more than one notification about the same 'event' involving a child, this is counted as one notification. Where there is more than one notification between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011, but relating to different events (for example, a different type of abuse or neglect or a different person believed responsible), these are counted as separate notifications.

Notifications are classified according to the 'type of action' taken by the department responsible for child protection to respond to them. The categories used are:

- **Investigation** – see definitions below.

- **Dealt with by other means** – a notification that was responded to by means other than an investigation, such as the provision of advice or referral to services. Notifications dealt with by other means are divided into:
 - **notifications in process** – notifications where the decision to investigate has not been reached
 - **notifications resolved without investigation** – notifications that were responded to by means other than an investigation such as provision of advice or referral to services.

Investigations

Investigations are the process whereby the relevant department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification received between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011. Departmental staff make an assessment about the harm or degree of harm to the child and their protective needs. An investigation includes the sighting or interviewing of the child where it is practical to do so. Investigations include a number of categories, outlined below:

- **Investigation in process** – a notification received between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 that was investigated, but where the investigation was not completed and an investigation outcome was not recorded by 31 August 2011.
- **Investigation closed – no outcome possible** – a notification made between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 that was investigated, but where the investigation was not able to be finalised in order to reach the outcome of substantiated or not substantiated and files were closed for administrative purposes. This may happen, for example, in cases where the family have relocated. These investigations would be completed between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011.
- **Finalised investigation** – a notification received between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 that was investigated, and where the investigation was completed and an outcome recorded by 31 August 2011. The cut-off point of 31 August is applied to allow time for investigating notifications made close to the end of the financial year.

The 'outcomes of finalised investigations' are classified as follows:

- **Substantiated** – a notification received between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 that was investigated and where there was reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, was being or was likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiation does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that treatment or case management was provided (see definition of substantiations of notifications below).
- **Not substantiated** – a notification received between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 where an investigation concluded that there was no reasonable cause to suspect prior, current or future abuse, neglect or harm to the child.

Substantiations of notifications

Substantiations of notifications received during the current reporting year refer to child protection notifications made to relevant authorities during the year ended 30 June 2011, which were investigated and the investigation was finalised by 31 August 2011, and it was concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, was being, or was likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiations may also include cases where there is no suitable caregiver, such as children who have been abandoned or whose parents are deceased.

Substantiation of a notification received during the year

Substantiations of notifications received during the current reporting year refer to child protection notifications made to relevant authorities during the year ended 30 June 2011, which were investigated and the investigation was finalised by 31 August 2011, and it was concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, was being or was likely to be abused or neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiations may also include cases where there is no suitable caregiver, such as children who have been abandoned or whose parents are deceased.

Type of abuse or neglect

Substantiations are classified into four categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Each category includes findings of actual harm or significant risk of harm. Where more than one type of abuse or neglect has occurred, the substantiation should be classified to the type most likely to be the most severe in the short term or most likely to place the child at risk in the short term or, if such an assessment is not possible, to as the most obvious form of abuse or neglect.

(a) Physical abuse

Any non-accidental physical act inflicted upon a child by a person having the care of a child.

(b) Sexual abuse

Any act by a person having the care of the child that exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards.

(c) Emotional abuse

Any act by a person having the care of a child that results in the child suffering any kind of significant emotional deprivation or trauma.

(d) Neglect

Any serious omissions or commissions by a person having the care of a child that, within the bounds of cultural tradition, constitute a failure to provide conditions that are essential for the healthy, physical and emotional development of a child.

Source of notification

The source of a notification is the person who, or organisation that, initially made a child protection notification to the relevant authority. The source is classified according to the relationship to the child allegedly abused or neglected or harmed.

The source of notification is categorised as follows:

(a) Parent/guardian

A natural or substitute parent, spouse of a natural parent, adoptive parent or spouse of an adoptive parent or any other person who has an ongoing legal responsibility for the care and protection of a child.

(b) Sibling

A natural (i.e. biological), adopted, foster, step-brother or half-brother or sister.

(c) Other relative

This category includes a grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin. The relationship can be full, half or step, or through adoption, and can be traced through, or to, a person whose parents were not married to each other at the time of his or her birth. This category also includes members of Indigenous communities who are accepted by that community as being related to the child.

(d) Friend/neighbour

An unrelated person or acquaintance who is known to, or lives in close proximity to, the subject child or their family, or to the person believed responsible for the abuse or neglect.

(e) Medical practitioner

This category includes only registered medical practitioners. This includes both general practitioners and specialists in hospitals or in the community.

(f) Other health personnel

Any person engaged in supplementary, paramedical and/or ancillary medical services. This includes nurses, infant welfare sisters, dentists, radiographers, physiotherapists, pharmacists, etc. It does not include social workers and non-medical hospital/health centre personnel.

(g) Hospital/health centre personnel

Any person not elsewhere classified who is employed at a public or private hospital or other health centre or clinic.

(h) Social worker/welfare worker/psychologist/other trained welfare worker

Any person engaged in providing a social or welfare work service in the community.

(i) School personnel

Any appropriately trained person involved in the instruction of, or imparting of knowledge to, children or providing direct support for this education. This includes teachers, teachers' aides, school principals and counsellors who work in preschool, kindergarten, primary, secondary, technical, sporting or art and crafts education.

(j) Child care personnel

Any person engaged in providing occasional, part-time or full-time day care for children.

(k) Police

Any member of a Commonwealth, state or territory law enforcement agency.

(l) Departmental officer

Any person, not classified above, who is employed by a state or territory community services department.

(m) Non-government organisation

Any non-government organisation not classified above that provides services to the community on a non-profit-making basis.

(n) Anonymous

This category covers all those notifications received from a person who does not give his or her name.

(o) Other

All other persons or organisations not classified above (e.g. ministers of religion or government agencies and instrumentalities not classified above).

(p) Not stated

This category includes all reports that are received from an unknown source.

Family of residence

This item refers to the family type in which a child is residing at the time of notification of child abuse or neglect. The family type of a child is classified into eight main categories:

(a) Two parent—intact

This category includes all two parent families where both parents are either the biological or adoptive parents of the child.

(b) Two parent—step or blended

This category includes blended and reconstituted families (one biological parent and one step parent).

(c) Single parent—female

This category includes all families with a female single parent. The parent may be the biological, step or adoptive parent.

(d) Single parent—male

This category includes all families with a male single parent. The parent may be the biological, step or adoptive parent.

(e) Other relatives/kin

Includes relatives other than those referred to above. Also includes Indigenous kinship arrangements.

(f) Foster care

This category includes situations in which a child is living with foster parent(s) who are offered a foster allowance from a government or non-government organisation for the care of a child (excluding children in family group homes). There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.

(g) Other

This category includes all those not mentioned above. It includes non-family situations, such as hostels and institutional accommodation.

(h) Not stated

This category is used when the family in which a child lives was not recorded or was unknown.

Definitions for care and protection orders

Age of child

Age is the age of a person in completed years. The tables containing information on type of living arrangements show age at 30 June 2011; tables containing information on admissions or discharges show age at the time of first admission or discharge.

Children who are in need of care and protection

If, after thorough assessment, it is determined that there has been harm, or there is risk of harm, to a child or children, state and territory child protection and support services will generally have continued involvement with the family. The relevant department will attempt to ensure safety of the child or children through the provision of appropriate support services to the child and family. In situations where further intervention is required, the department may apply to the relevant court to place the child on a care and protection order. Recourse to the court is usually a last resort—for example, where the families are unable to provide safe care, where other avenues for resolution of the situation have been exhausted, or where extended family is unable to provide safe alternatives for care of children.

In most jurisdictions, the relevant department makes applications for care and protection orders to the Children's Court. In South Australia, applications are made to the Youth Court and in the Northern Territory to the Family Matters Court. A small number of applications may also be brought before the Family Court, or the state or territory Supreme Court, but orders granted by these courts are only included for some jurisdictions. Not all applications for an order will be granted. State and territory child protection and support services may also need to assume responsibility for children and place them on a care and protection order for reasons other than a child protection substantiation. This may occur in situations where there is family conflict and 'time out' is needed, where there is an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the child and his or her parents, or where the parents are unwilling or unable to adequately care for the child.

Children subject to orders

This covers any child on an order or other formal arrangement. The scope comprises children aged 0–17 on the following care and protection orders/arrangements (or children aged 18 or under who were discharged from those care and protection orders/arrangements):

- finalised guardianship or custody orders
- finalised third-party parental responsibility
- finalised supervisory orders
- interim and temporary orders
- administrative arrangements.

Children should be counted in the state or territory where the order is operative, regardless of where the child is residing.

The following are excluded from the collection:

- children on offence orders, unless they are also on a care and protection order (as defined above).
- administrative and voluntary arrangements with the community services department that do not have the effect of transferring custody or guardianship.

Care and protection orders

At any point in the child protection process (from notification, through investigation to substantiation), the department responsible for child protection can apply to the relevant court to place a child on a care and protection order. Such action is usually taken only as a last resort in situations where the department believes that continued involvement with the child is warranted. This may occur in situations where the family resists supervision and counselling, where other avenues for resolution of the situation have been exhausted, or where removal of a child into out-of-home care requires legal authorisation. The scope of departmental involvement mandated by a care and protection order is dependent on the type of order.

National Definitions

Finalised guardianship or custody orders

Involve the transfer of legal guardianship to the relevant state or territory department or non-government agency. These orders involve considerable intervention in the child's life and that of their family, and are sought only as a last resort. Guardianship orders convey responsibility for the welfare of the child to the guardian (for example, regarding the child's education, health, religion, accommodation and financial matters). They do not necessarily grant the right to the daily care and control of the child, or the right to make decisions about the daily care and control of the child, which are granted under custody orders.

Custody orders generally refer to orders that place children in the custody of the state or territory, or department responsible for child protection or non-government agency. These orders usually involve the child protection department being responsible for the daily care and requirements of the child, while the parent retains legal guardianship. Custody alone does not bestow any responsibility regarding the long-term welfare of the child.

Finalised third-party parental responsibility

Transfer all duties, powers, responsibilities and authority parents are entitled to by law, to a nominated person(s) considered appropriate by the court. The nominated person may be an individual such as a relative or an officer of the state or territory department. Third-party parental responsibility may be ordered in the event that a parent is unable to care for a child, and as such parental responsibility is transferred to a relative. 'Permanent care orders' are an example of a third-party parental responsibility order and involve the transfer of guardianship to a third-party carer. Such orders can also be applied to the achievement of a stable arrangement under a long-term guardianship order to the age of 18 without guardianships being transferred to a third party. These orders are only applicable in some jurisdictions.

Finalised supervisory orders

Give the department responsible for child protection some responsibility for a child's welfare. Under these orders, the department supervises and/or directs the level and type of care that is to be provided to the child. Children under supervisory orders are generally under the responsibility of their parents and the guardianship or custody of the child is unaffected.

Finalised supervisory orders are therefore less interventionist than finalised guardianship or custody orders, but require the child's parent or guardian to meet specified conditions, such as medical care of the child.

Interim and temporary orders

Generally cover the provisions of a limited period of supervision and/or placement of a child. Parental responsibility under these orders may reside with the parents or with the department responsible for child protection. Unfinalised orders (such as applications to the court for care and protection orders) are also included in this category, unless another finalised order is in place.

Administrative arrangements

Agreements with the child protection departments, which have the same effect as a court order of transferring custody or guardianship. These arrangements can also allow a child to be placed in out-of-home care without going through the courts.

Living arrangements

The type of care in which a child spent the night of 30 June 2011 (except those on authorised absence or outing who should be counted according to their usual type of living arrangement).

The categories are:

(a) Residential care

Where the placement is in a residential building whose purpose is to provide placements for children and where there are paid staff.

(b) Family group homes

Provide care to children in a departmentally or community sector agency provided home. These homes have live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for the provision of care.

(c) Home-based out-of-home care

Where placement is in the home of a carer who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) for the cost of care of the child including:

(i) relatives or kin who are reimbursed (other than parents) by the state/territory for the care of the child

(ii) foster care – Where the caregiver is authorised and reimbursed (or was offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child (excludes relatives/kin who are reimbursed). There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.

(iii) other home-based care out-of-home care.

(d) Family care—including:

(i) parents – (natural or adoptive)

(ii) relatives or kin who are NOT reimbursed (other than parents).

(e) Independent living

Including private board and lead tenant households.

(f) Other living arrangements

Including living arrangements that don't fit into the above categories and unknown living arrangements. The other category also includes any placements made in disability services, psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) and over-night child-care services, boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and defence force. These living arrangements may have rostered and/or paid staff, and are generally not a home-like environment.

Definitions for out-of-home care

Age of child

The age of a child in completed years. For children in 'out-of-home care' at 30 June 2011, age is given at that date. For children admitted to care during the year, age is counted at the time of the first admission for the year.

Respite care

Respite care is a form of out-of-home care that is used to provide short-term accommodation for children whose parents are ill or unable to care for them on a temporary basis. Not all jurisdictions can identify which children in out-of-home care are in respite care. Children may also be placed in respite care while being placed with a foster carer.

Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care is one of a range of programs provided to children and young people aged under 18 who are in need of care and protection. This program provides alternative overnight accommodation for children and young people who are unable to live with their parents. These arrangements include foster care, placements with relatives or kin and residential care. In most cases, children in out-of-home care are also on a care and protection order of some kind.

Some children are placed in out-of-home care because they were the subject of a child protection substantiation and require a more protective environment. Other situations in which a child may be placed in out-of-home care include those where parents are incapable of providing adequate care for the child, or where alternative accommodation is needed during times of family conflict. However, there are no national data available on the reasons children are placed in out-of-home care.

Out-of-home care is considered an intervention of last resort, with the current emphasis being to keep children with their families wherever possible. Where children, for various

reasons, need to be placed in out-of-home care, the practice is to attempt to reunite children with their families. If it is necessary to remove a child from his or her family, then placement within the wider family or community is preferred. This is particularly the case with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in order to be consistent with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (see Section 4.2).

Type of placement

Placement type is divided into the following categories:

(a) Residential care

Where placement is in a residential building whose purpose is to provide placements for children and where there are paid staff.

(b) Family group homes

Provide care to children in a departmentally or community sector agency provided home. These homes have live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for the provision of care.

(c) Home-based care

Where placement is in the home of a carer who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) for expenses for the care of the child. This is broken down into the three subcategories:

(i) relative/kinship care—includes family members (other than parents) or a person well known to the child and/or family (based on a pre-existing relationship) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child.

(ii) foster care—where the care is authorised and carers are reimbursed (or were offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory and supported by an approved agency. There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.

(iii) other—home-based care that does not fall into either of the above two categories.

(d) Independent living

Including private board and lead tenant households.

(e) Other

Includes placements that do not fit into the above categories and unknown living arrangements. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and defence force.

Definitions for foster care and relative/kinship care

Child

A child is defined as a person aged 0–17.

Foster care and relative/kinship care

Foster care and relative/kinship care are two of the most common types of out-of-home care placements across Australia.

National definitions

Foster care

Foster care is one form of out-of-home care; it is overnight care provided by one or more adults in a private household to a child who is living apart from his/her natural or adoptive parent(s) – these substitute parents are generally called ‘foster carers’.

The authorised department or non-government organisation provides training to the foster carer before a child is placed with the family, and continuing supervision or support while the child remains in their care.

A ‘**foster carer household**’ is a private household containing one or more foster carers:

- who have undergone the relevant screening/selection and approval process
- who have received authorisation from the relevant department or agency to enable a child to be placed in their care
- for whom reimbursement is available from the state or territory government for expenses incurred in caring for the child (there are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers)
- who are part of an ongoing review process.

Relative kinship care

Relative/kinship carers are family members other than parents, or a person well known to the child and/or family (based on a pre-existing relationship). Some relative/kinship carers may also be authorised to provide general foster care, which may require additional training and approval processes. Only relative/kinship carers who have completed the relevant screening and approval process and have received authorisation as a general foster carer are included in the scope of this collection.

More comprehensive relative/kinship data are in the preliminary stages of annual national collection. Jurisdictions and the AIHW are working to improve the quality of data for this collection, with the aim of publishing the data in future *Child protection Australia* reports.

Definitions for intensive family support services

Age

Age is the age of a person in completed years. Age is calculated at the commencement of the service.

Agency

The agency is the body funded by state and territory community service departments to provide the service.

Indigenous

A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community with which he or she lives.

Prevention and Support Services

Prevention and support services can include programs that seek to prevent the occurrence of family dysfunction and child maltreatment, the provision of treatment, support and advice to families, and more intensive programs to assist the most vulnerable families (COAG 2009). At any point in the child protection process, departments may choose to divert children and their families into prevention and/or support services. Support services may be used instead of, or as a complementary service to, a statutory child protection response. Currently the national data collection is limited to information and statistics relating to intensive family support services.

National definitions

Intensive family support services

Intensive family support services are defined as those services that aim to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers because of child protection concerns, and those services that aim to reunify families where separation has already occurred. To be included in the intensive family support services data collection, services must meet all of the following criteria. They are:

- provided explicitly to work to prevent separation or to reunify families
- comprised of a range of services, making up part of an integrated strategy focusing on improving family functioning and skills, rather than just one type of service such as emergency or respite care
- intensive in nature, averaging at least 4 hours of service provision per week for a specified short-term period (usually less than 6 months).

Generally, referrals will come from the statutory agency and will have been identified through the child protection process. Most cases will have been the subject of a child protection substantiation.

Type of service

- (a) Prevention services – those services specifically aimed at assisting families in order to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers for child protection reasons.
- (b) Reunification services – services that seek to reunify families where separation of children from their primary caregivers has already occurred for child protection reasons.
- (c) Combination – include both prevention and reunification services.

Living situation

The following categories are used to classify the living situation of the child/ren in the family at the time of case commencement:

- Family care – including:
 - child/ren living with parent(s)
 - child/ren living with other relatives/kin who are not reimbursed by the state for their care.
- Out-of-home care – out-of-home overnight care where the state makes a financial payment, or where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the

carer. This includes placements with relatives or kin (other than parents) who are reimbursed (or who have been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child, foster care and residential care.

- Child/ren in formal shared care – where a case plan exists for children to live in family care and to have regular planned periods in out-of-home care.
- Other – includes living situations that do not fit into the above categories and unknown living arrangements.

Location

The location refers to the site at which the intensive family support service workers are based. If an agency has more than one location, each location must be counted. For example, if Barnados in New South Wales was funded to provide services in Sydney and Newcastle, this would be counted as two locations.

Geographic area

- (a) Capital city – refers to state or territory capital city.
- (b) Other urban – refers to cities and towns other than the capital city.
- (c) Rural or remote – refers to those areas outside the cities and towns.

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Related publications

This report, *Child protection Australia 2010–11*, is part of an annual series. Earlier editions can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website:

<<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/series/405>>. The website also includes information on ordering printed copies.

The following AIHW publications relating to children, youth and families might also be of interest:

- AIHW 2011. Australia's welfare 2011. Cat. no. AUS 117. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. Educational outcomes of children under guardianship or custody orders: a pilot study, stage 2. Child welfare series no. 49. Cat. no. CWS 37. Canberra: AIHW.
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