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Health and Welfare**

Child protection Australia

2011–12

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**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

*Authoritative information and statistics
to promote better health and wellbeing*

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Number 55

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2011–12

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- Department for Child Protection, Western Australia
- Department for Education and Child Development, South Australia
- Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania
- Community Services Directorate, Australian Capital Territory
- Office of Children and Families, Northern Territory.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CDSMAC	Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee
CDSMC	Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
NFIWG	National Framework Implementation Working Group
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
SCCDSAC	Standing Council on Community & Disability Services Advisory Council
SCCDS	Standing Council on Community and Disability Services
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
Tas	Tasmania
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Symbols

–	rounded to zero
..	not applicable
n.a.	not available
n.p.	Not publishable because of small numbers, confidentiality or other concerns about the quality of data.

Technical notes

1. Percentages in tables may exclude unknowns.
2. Percentages in tables may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Summary

Child protection Australia 2011–12 is the sixteenth annual comprehensive report on child protection. It provides detailed statistical information on state and territory child protection and support services, and some of the characteristics of the children receiving these services. Key findings are outlined below.

Substantiated child abuse and neglect has increased

Over the past 12 months, the number of children who were the subject of substantiations increased from 31,527 to 37,781 (6.1 to 7.4 per 1,000 children). This increase was found across most jurisdictions and could be influenced by a range of factors – including legislative changes, enhanced public awareness and inquiries into child protection processes, along with real increases in abuse and neglect. This has reversed the previous downward trend which showed the rate of children in substantiations decrease from 6.5 per 1,000 children in 2007–08 to 6.1 in 2011–12.

Very young children are the most likely to be the subject of substantiated abuse and neglect

In 2011–12, children aged under 1 year were most likely to be the subject of a substantiation (13.2 per 1,000 children) and those aged 15–17 were least likely (3.2 per 1,000 children). Over the past 12 months, the rate of children aged under 1 year who were the subject of a substantiation increased from 12.0 to 13.2 per 1,000 children.

The numbers of children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders have increased

Over the past 12 months, the number of children discharged from orders increased by 27% – from 7,480 in 2010–11 to 9,478 in 2011–12. This compares with a smaller (3%) increase in the number of children admitted to orders over the same period – from 13,830 to 14,191. Of the 14,191 children admitted to orders, about two-fifths (39%) had previously been admitted to an order. Almost half (45%) of children admitted to orders were aged under 5.

The majority of children in out-of-home care were placed for more than a year

At 30 June 2012, there were 39,621 children in out-of-home care. Between 2011 and 2012, the rate of children in out-of-home care at 30 June had increased from 7.3 per 1,000 children in 2011 to 7.7 in 2012. Almost 1 in 5 (19%) children had been in their current placement for less than 1 year. Almost one-third (30%) had been in a continuous placement for between 2 and 5 years, while a further 38% had been in a continuous placement for 5 years or more. Most (90%) children in out-of-home care were on care and protection orders.

More than half of foster carer households had multiple foster children

During 2011–12, there were 11,664 foster carer households and more than 12,278 relative/kinship households that had one or more children placed with them. At 30 June 2012, 49% of foster carer households with a placement had one child placed with them; 46% had between two and four foster children and 4% had five or more.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be over-represented

In 2011–12, 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 41.9 and 5.4 per 1,000 children, respectively).

1 Introduction

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 have been, or are at risk 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 about \$3 billion in 2011–12, a real increase of \$100.5 million (3.5%) from 2010–11 (SCRGSP 2013).

Child protection processes

Across Australia, the broad processes in child protection systems are similar. A simplified version of the main processes used is shown in Figure 1.1. These processes are outlined in more detail in this chapter.

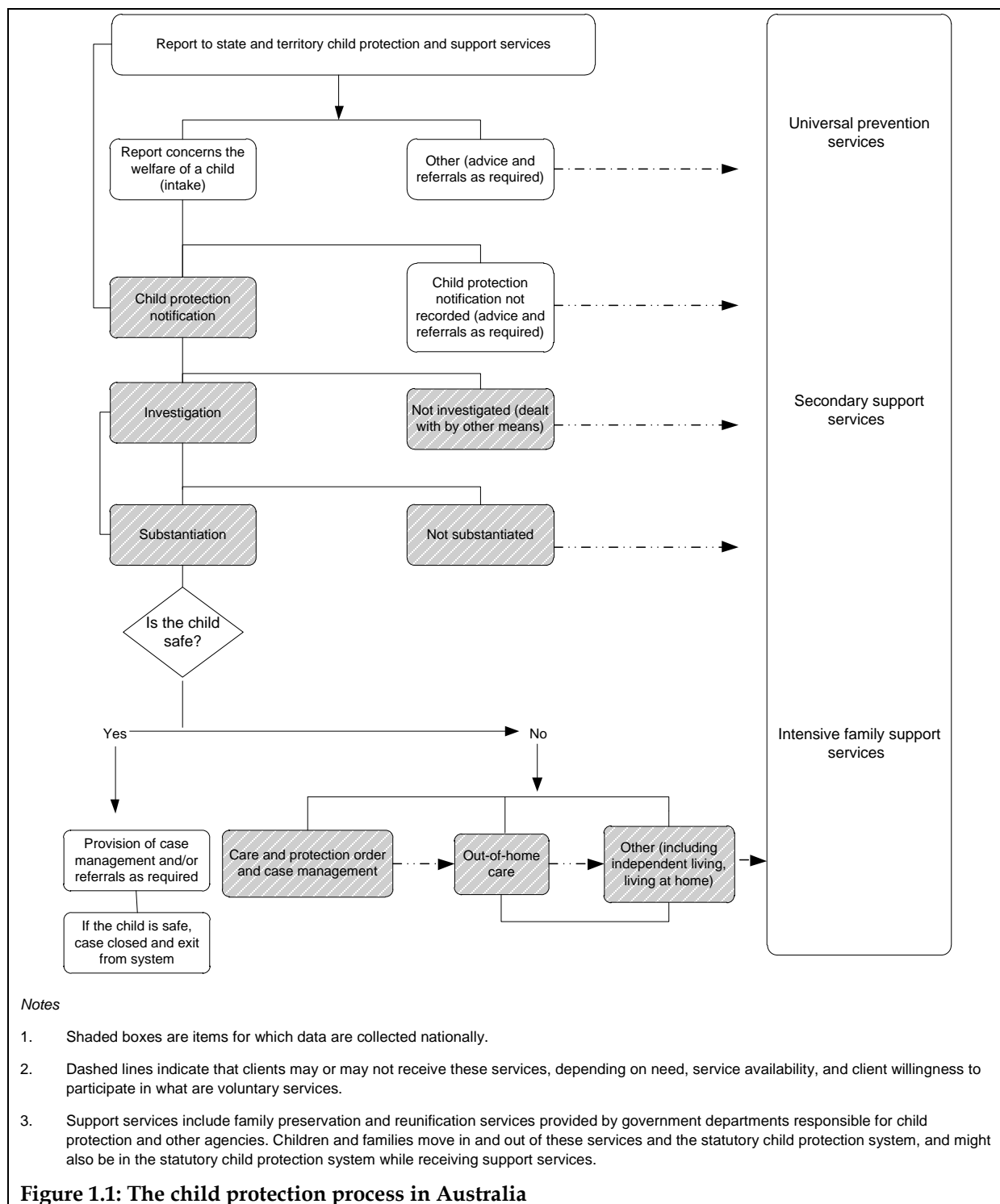
Child protection intake processes

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 assessed to determine whether an investigation is required, if referral to support services is more appropriate, or if no further protective action is necessary. The aim of an investigation is to obtain more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification and to determine whether the notification is

'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. A substantiation indicates there is sufficient reason (after an investigation) to believe the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. The relevant department will then attempt to ensure the safety of the child or children through an appropriate level of continued involvement, including the provision of support services to the child and family.

Care and protection orders

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. The level of departmental involvement mandated by a care and protection order will vary depending on the type of order.

Out-of-home care

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 to be consistent with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (see Section 4.2).

Family support services

At any point in the child protection process, departments may refer children and their families to family support services. Family support services can include programs that seek to prevent the occurrence of family dysfunction and child maltreatment, that provide treatment, support and advice to families, and more intensive programs to assist the most vulnerable families (COAG 2009). Family support services may be used instead of, or as a complementary service to, a statutory child protection response. Examples include parenting and household skills development, therapeutic care and family reunification services. Information on intensive family support services (one type of treatment and/or support service) is in Chapter 6.

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 help prevent 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 here. Further details relating to each jurisdiction's policy and practice are in Appendixes D-G.

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 others 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 in Appendix D.

Notifications

The policies that provide the framework for assessing child protection notifications vary broadly 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.

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 changes affect the comparability of data included in this report. Legislative, policy and definitional differences between jurisdictions are further discussed in Appendixes E and F, respectively. Detailed information on recent policy and practice changes is in Appendix G.

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 target of 'a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse

and neglect in Australia' has been set. 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.

Twenty-nine indicators of change were originally developed to measure the extent to which the supporting outcomes are being achieved (COAG 2010). The most recent annual report to COAG on the status of the first 3-year action plan was released in March 2012 (COAG 2012a).

In the lead-up to the beginning of the second 3-year action plan, the existing indicators were reviewed by the National Framework Implementation Working Group (NFIWG). A revised set of indicators have been endorsed by the ministers and are included in the second 3-year action plan (FaHCSIA 2012).

The Second Action Plan will build on, and strengthen delivery of, the six significant National Priorities from the First Action Plan. The focus of the second plan is 'working together' across governments and non-government sectors to improve the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children. Other new priorities in the areas of early childhood, education, domestic and family violence, health and mental health, disability, sector development and community and business will also be explored (FaHCSIA 2012).

The National Standards for Out-of-Home Care are another priority area under the second plan and were designed to deliver consistency and drive improvements in the quality of care provided to children and young people (FaHCSIA 2011). Available data for a subset of measures were reported in the 2010–11 annual report to COAG on the National Framework (COAG 2012a).

On 12 November 2012, the Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, MP, recommended the establishment of a Royal Commission into institutional responses to instances and allegations of child sexual abuse in Australia (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2012).

All governments support the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts. COAG agreed that it is a national priority to identify what further systemic responses are necessary to protect children from sexual abuse in institutional contexts and to ensure appropriate responses to any such abuse (COAG 2012b).

On 11 January 2013, the Governor-General, Her Excellency Quentin Bryce, appointed a six-member Royal Commission to investigate Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission will prepare an interim report by 30 June 2014 (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2012).

Further details on Australian and international child protection developments are in Appendix J.

1.2 Child protection data collections

Data sources

All data in 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 seven 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
- national standards for out-of-home care.

Data from these collections are analysed and published annually in:

- *Child protection Australia* (this report)
- The Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services* (SCRGSP 2013)
- The annual report to COAG on the progress of implementing the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020.

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 for 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 unit record (child level) data collection, which will replace the current aggregate collection from July 2013 (see Appendix J 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 (AIHW 2012). 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 before 2009–10.

The data systems used by jurisdictions can be upgraded and changed between reporting cycles. Details regarding jurisdictions' data systems and any significant changes from the previous year are in Appendix H.

2 Notifications, investigations and substantiations

2.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2011–12, there were 252,962 notifications involving 173,502 children, a rate of 34.0 per 1,000 children in Australia. Of the notifications, 46% (116,528) were investigated, with 48,420 substantiations (after investigation) relating to 37,781 children – a rate of 7.4 per 1,000 children in Australia (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Key notifications, investigations and substantiations statistics, 2011–12

	Number	Rate per 1,000 children
Notifications (cases)	252,962	..
Investigations (cases)	116,528	..
Substantiations (cases)	48,420	..
Children subject of notifications	173,502	34.0
Children subject of substantiations	37,781	7.4

.. 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 2012.

This chapter contains information on the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations (see Box 2.1) and the number of children who were the subject of these.

Box 2.1: Notifications, investigations and substantiations

- **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 2011 and 30 June 2012, but relating to different events, these are counted as separate notifications.
- **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 2011 and 30 June 2012. 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.
- **Substantiations** of notifications received during the current reporting year refer to child protection notifications made to relevant authorities during the year ended 30 June 2012 that were investigated, and the investigation was finalised by 31 August 2012, 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.

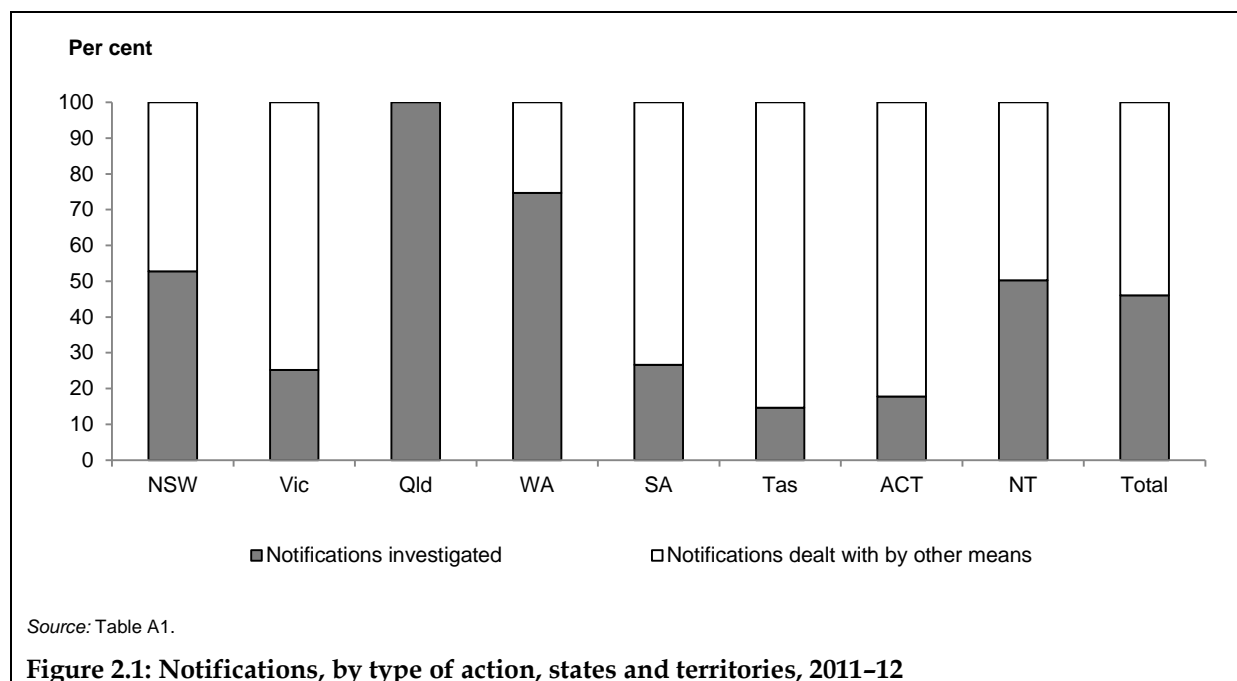
The data in this chapter relate to notifications received by departments responsible for child protection between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012. Finalised investigations are those notifications made during 2011–12 that were investigated and had an outcome of either substantiated or not substantiated recorded by 31 August 2012. 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 after this cut-off (6%, or 6,958, in 2011–12) 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.

2.2 Cases

Notifications and investigations

Of the 252,962 notifications, 46% (116,528) were further investigated while the remaining 54% (136,434) were dealt with by other means, such as being referred to a support service. The proportion of notifications that were investigated ranged from 15% in Tasmania to 100% in Queensland, where the policy is to investigate all notifications (Figure 2.1).



Nationally, 109,570 of the notifications investigated (94%) were reported as closed as of 31 August 2012. Closed investigations include those considered finalised and those recorded as closed with no outcome possible (106,754 and 2,816, respectively). The remaining 6% of investigations (6,958) were in process at the time of reporting (Table A1).

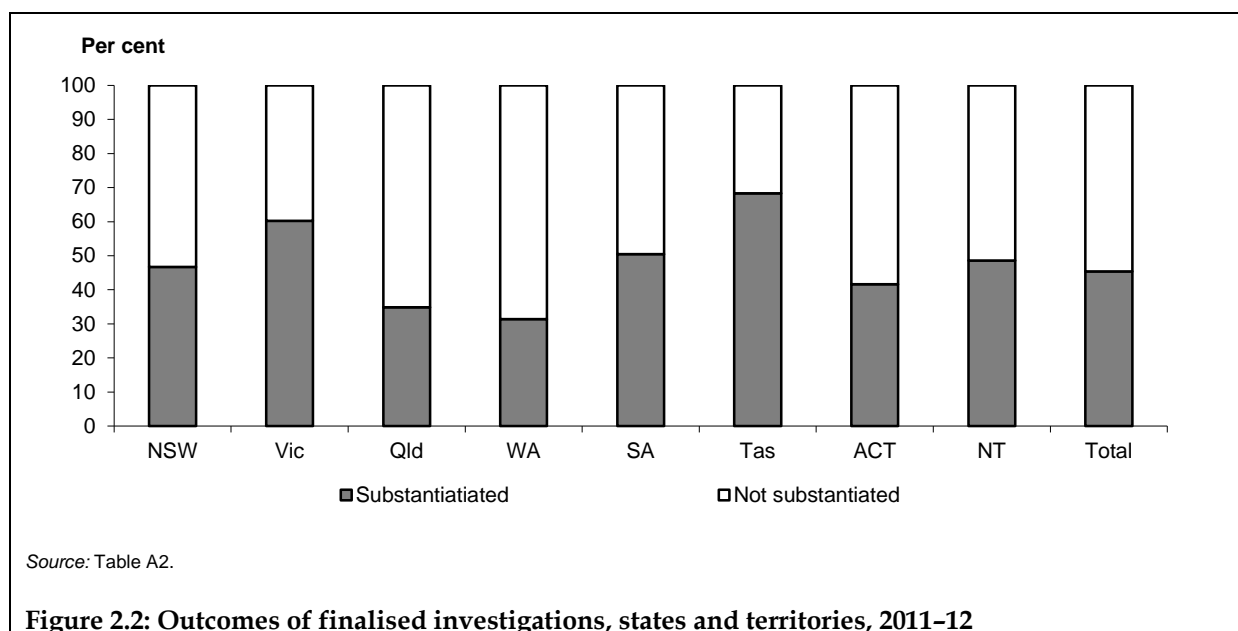
Source of notifications for investigations

For investigations in 2011-12, the most common source of the related notification was police (25%). This was the case in all jurisdictions. Nationally, the least common sources of a notification for investigations were from the subject child and child care personnel (0.4% and 1.2%, respectively) (Table A4).

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

Substantiations

Overall, 45% of the 106,754 finalised investigations resulted in a substantiated notification (48,420). The proportion varied across the jurisdictions from 31% in Western Australia to 68% in Tasmania (Figure 2.2).

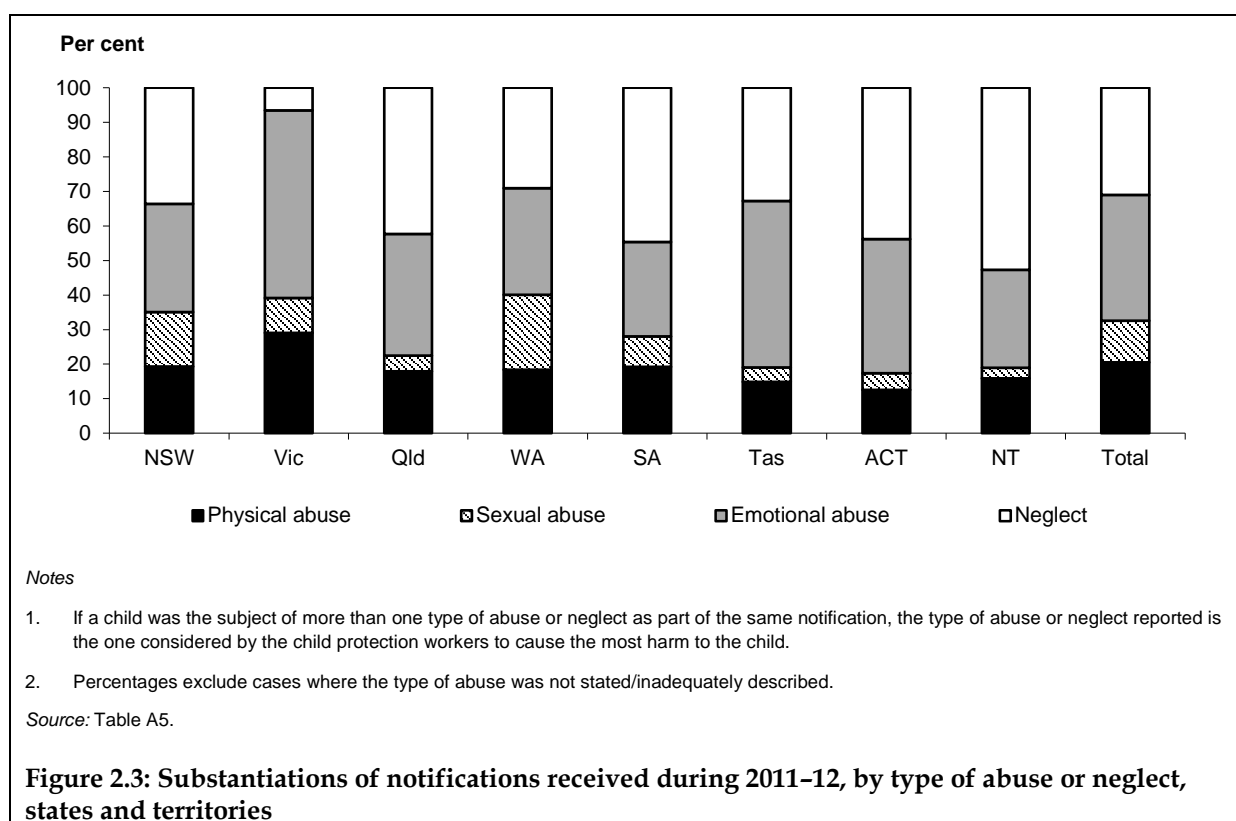


Types of abuse or neglect

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 in the Glossary.

Nationally, the most common type of substantiated abuse was emotional (36%), followed by neglect (31%) (Figure 2.3). However, neglect was the most common type of substantiated abuse for New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Across Australia, 12% of substantiations related to sexual abuse – ranging from 3% in the Northern Territory to 22% in Western Australia. There was also variation across jurisdictions regarding the proportion of substantiations that related to physical abuse – ranging from 13% in the Australian Capital Territory to 29% in Victoria. Differences may be partially due to the varying mandatory reporting requirements across jurisdictions (see Appendix D).

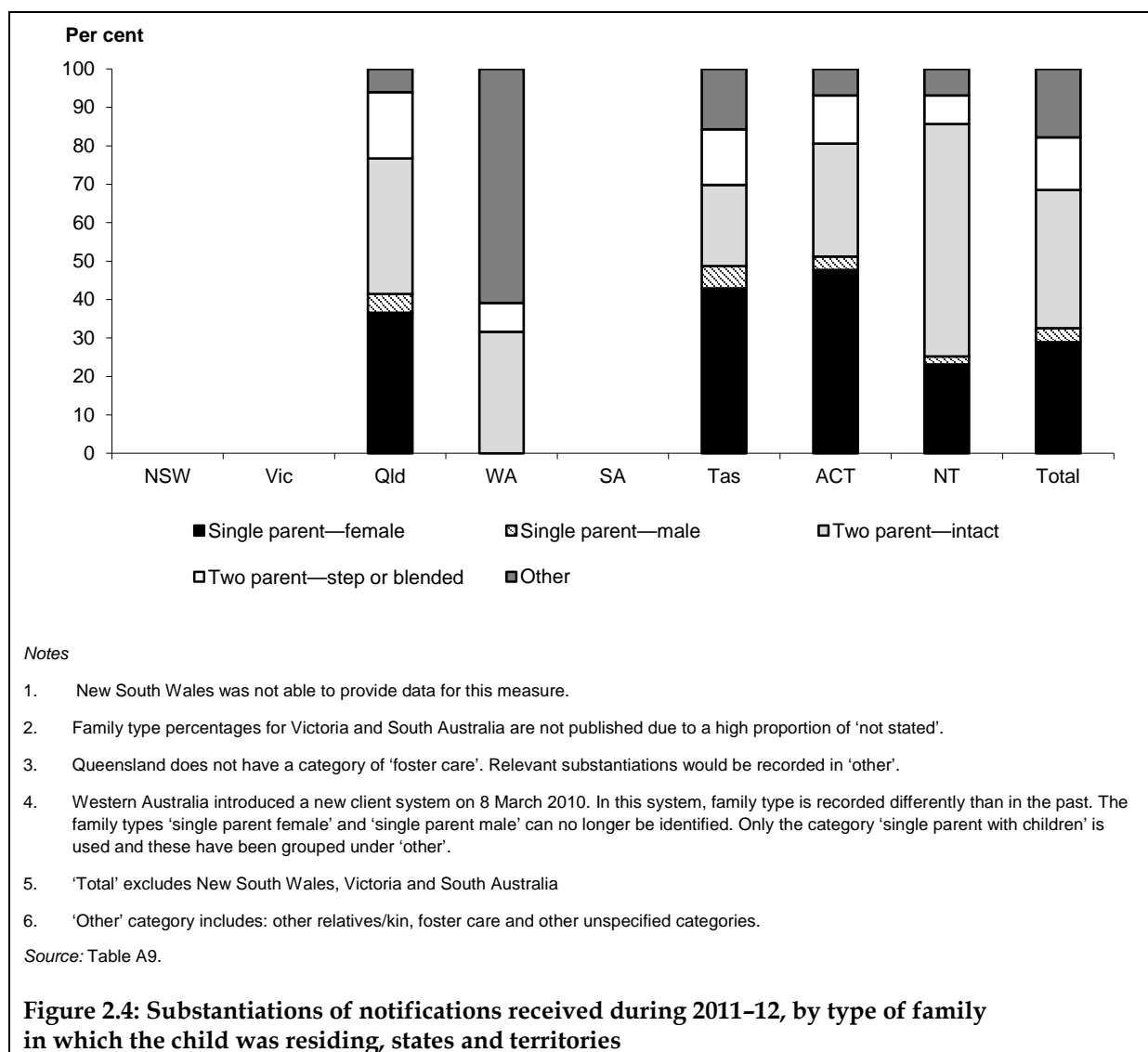


Family type

Across jurisdictions with available data of sufficient quality, intact two-parent families had the highest proportion of substantiations (36%), closely followed by female single-parent families (29%) (Figure 2.4). This varies when compared with the general population – in 2009-10, 73% of families with children aged 0-17 in Australia were in intact families, 19% were in one-parent families (17% lone mothers, 3% lone fathers) and 7% were step or blended families (ABS 2011a). However, these comparisons must be interpreted with caution due to the methodological limitations of the child protection data.

There is limited research into whether some family structures expose children to a higher risk of child maltreatment, and the available research has produced ambiguous and conflicting results (AIFS 2012).

These data also need to be interpreted with caution due to variations in data systems and methodologies used across jurisdictions. For example, Victoria and South Australia report a large proportion of family types in the 'not stated' category and, as such, have not been included in the total. Western Australia also records single-parent families in the 'other' category. Information on family structure can also be recorded at different times; at the time the abuse or neglect took place, or at the time of the notification, investigation, or substantiation.



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. In addition, children may also receive a combination of government intervention services, including being placed on care and protection orders, in out-of-home care and/or referral to intensive family support services.

Across Australia in 2011-12, the total number of notifications (252,962) and substantiations (48,420) involved 173,502 and 37,781 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; 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, 2011–12, states and territories

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children in notifications	61,308	46,712	21,909	11,854	12,189	7,752	6,036	5,742	173,502
Total notifications	99,283	63,830	24,823	13,745	19,056	11,836	12,419	7,970	252,962
Children in substantiations	14,667	8,741	6,974	2,583	1,810	939	554	1,513	37,781
Total substantiations	23,175	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	48,420

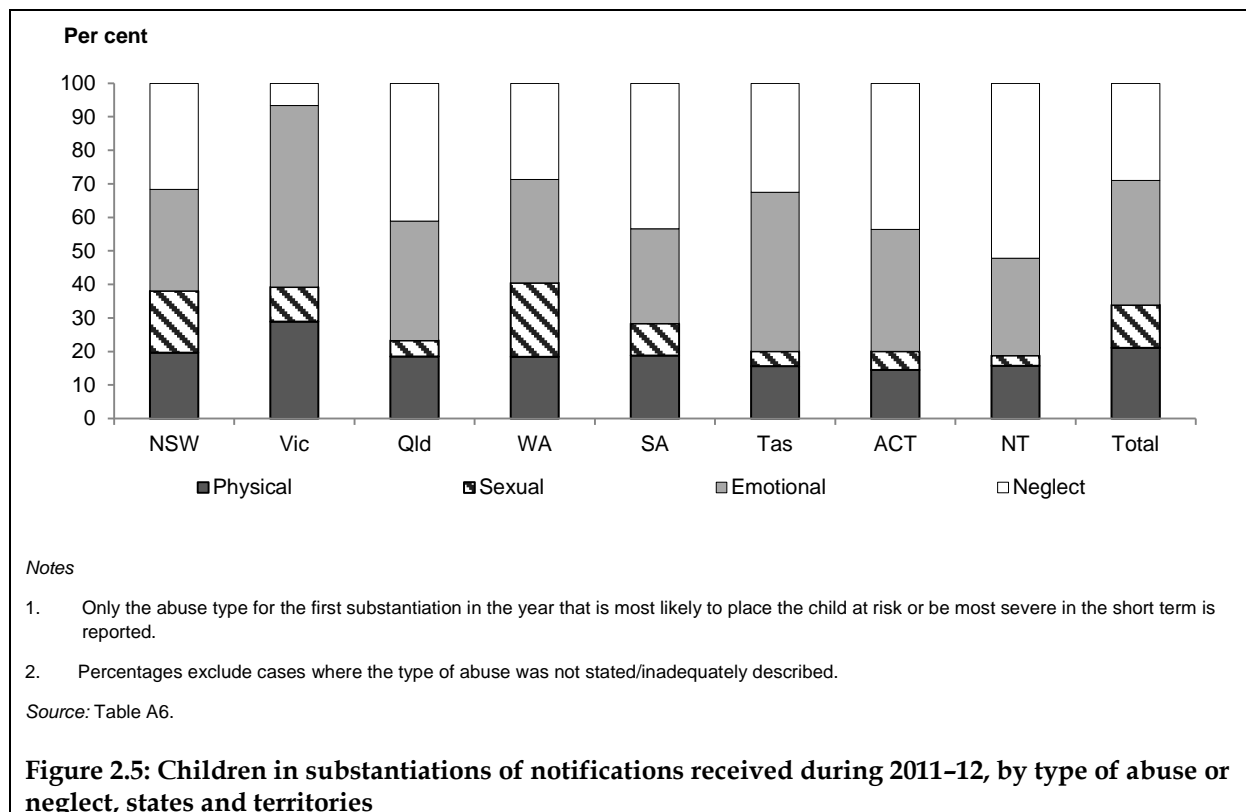
(a) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2011–12 where the primary concern of the initial inquiry for the child was emotional, psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Types of abuse and neglect

Consistent with the patterns in substantiated cases nationally (see Section 2.2), emotional abuse was the most common substantiation type for children (37%), followed by neglect (29%). However, neglect was the most common type for children in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Across Australia, 21% of children who were the subject of substantiations were substantiated for physical abuse. This ranged from 15% in the Australian Capital Territory to 29% in Victoria. Thirteen per cent of children who were the subject of substantiations were substantiated for sexual abuse. This ranged from 3% in the Northern Territory to 22% in Western Australia (Figure 2.5).



Characteristics of children

Age and sex profile

Across Australia in 2011–12, children in younger age groups were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation than those in older age groups. Children aged under 1 were most likely (13.2 per 1,000 children) and those aged 15–17 were least likely (3.2 per 1,000 children) to be the subject of a substantiation. This pattern was consistent across all jurisdictions (Table 2.3).

The rate of children aged under 1 who were the subject of a substantiation ranged from 7.3 per 1,000 children in Western Australia to 53.1 in the Northern Territory. Overall, the Northern Territory rates were higher than other jurisdictions for all age categories; conversely Western Australia had the lowest rates for all age categories under 10 (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 them. 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, FaHCSIA 2012).

Table 2.3: Rates of children aged 0–17 in substantiations of notifications received 2011–12, by age, states and territories (number per 1,000 children)

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	14.6	12.5	10.8	7.3	18.6	12.0	14.2	53.1	13.2
1–4	10.5	7.7	7.0	5.1	6.1	10.4	8.6	31.6	8.4
5–9	9.1	6.9	6.7	5.0	5.0	8.3	7.2	24.4	7.5
10–14	8.0	7.0	5.9	4.8	4.2	6.8	5.9	19.7	6.8
15–17	3.9	3.6	2.7	2.0	1.3	3.1	2.5	10.1	3.2
0–17	8.6	6.9	6.1	4.6	5.1	7.6	6.8	24.4	7.1
All children	9.0	7.1	6.5	4.7	5.1	8.1	6.9	24.4	7.4

(a) 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

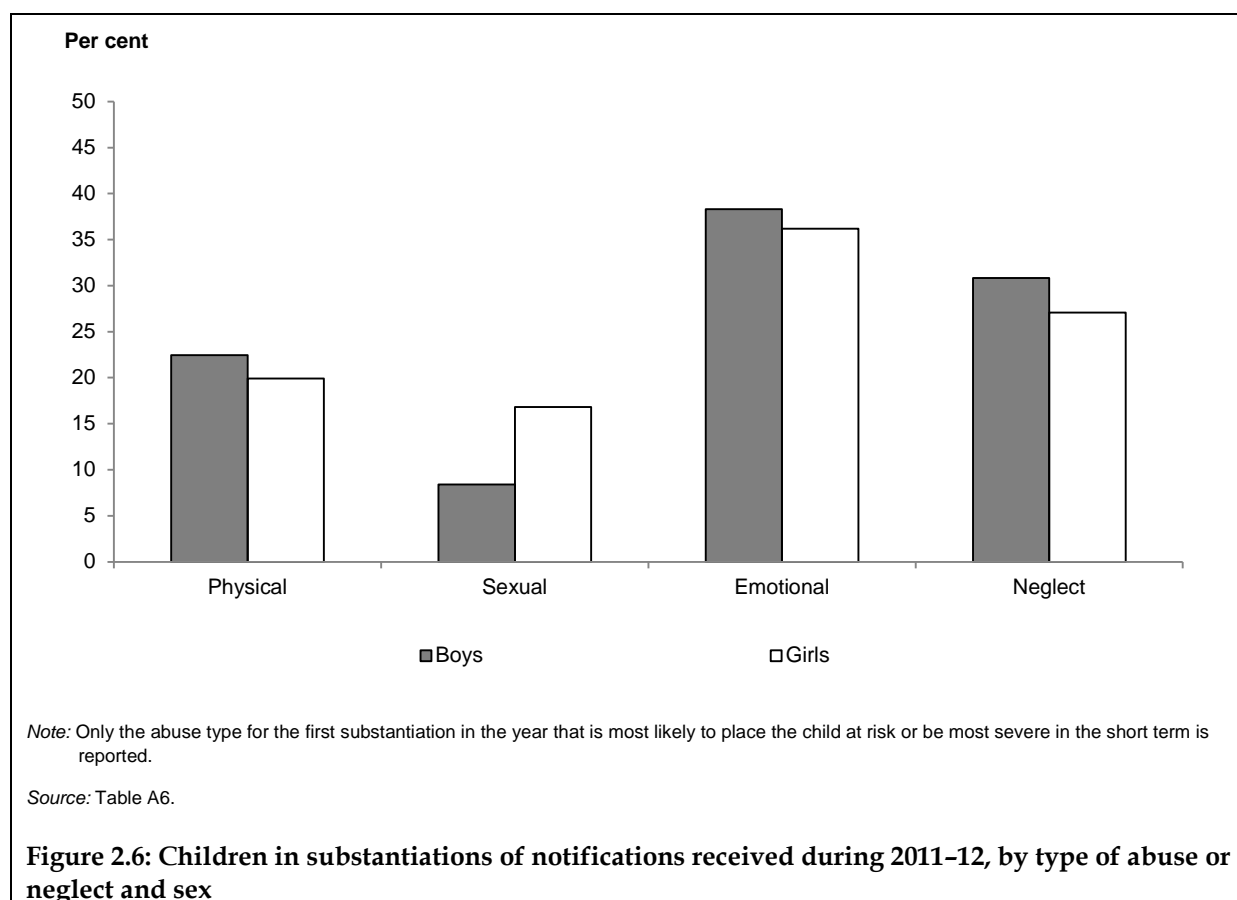
1. Refer to Table A7 for numbers for this table and to Table A39 for the population data.
2. Unborn children are excluded in rate calculations for the 'less than 1' and '0–17' categories and included in the 'All children' rates.
3. 'All children' includes children of unknown age.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Overall, just over half (51%) of children who were the subject of a substantiation were girls (19,343 compared with 18,134 boys). However, in Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, slightly more boys than girls were the subject of substantiations (Table A6).

In all jurisdictions, girls were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation of sexual abuse than boys (17% and 8%, respectively) (Figure 2.6). This is consistent with recorded crime statistics for sexual assault (ABS 2011b).

In contrast, boys were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation of neglect in all jurisdictions. Nationally, boys also had higher proportions of substantiations for physical and emotional abuse (22% and 38%, respectively), although this varied at the jurisdictional level (Table A6).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Children in substantiations

In 2011-12, 10,058 (41.9 per 1,000) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subject of a child protection substantiation. Compared with non-Indigenous children, Indigenous children were almost 8 times as likely to be the subject of a child protection substantiation (41.9 per 1,000 compared with 5.4 per 1,000) (Table 2.4). Data should be interpreted with caution due to the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status was unknown in Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

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, lower socioeconomic status and perceptions arising from cultural differences in child-rearing practices are all underlying causes for their over-representation in the child welfare system (HREOC 1997).

Table 2.4: Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by Indigenous status, states and territories (number and number per 1,000 children)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			Rate ratio Indigenous/ non- Indigenous
	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	Unknown %	All children	Indigenous	Non- Indigenous	All children	
NSW	4,247	10,387	0.2	14,667	59.4	6.6	9.0	9.0
Vic	963	7,778	0.0	8,741	62.5	6.4	7.1	9.7
Qld	2,002	4,670	4.3	6,974	28.0	4.6	6.5	6.0
WA ^{(a)(b)}	763	944	33.9	2,583	24.4	1.8	4.7	13.4
SA	530	1,219	3.4	1,810	41.5	3.6	5.1	11.6
Tas ^(b)	136	645	16.8	939	16.2	6.0	8.1	2.7
ACT ^(b)	113	331	19.9	554	57.8	4.2	6.9	13.8
NT	1,304	209	0.0	1,513	47.3	6.0	24.4	7.8
Total	10,058	26,183	4.1	37,781	41.9	5.4	7.4	7.8

(a) 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.

(b) In Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data. Rate ratios should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Notes

1. Refer to Table A37 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 2012.

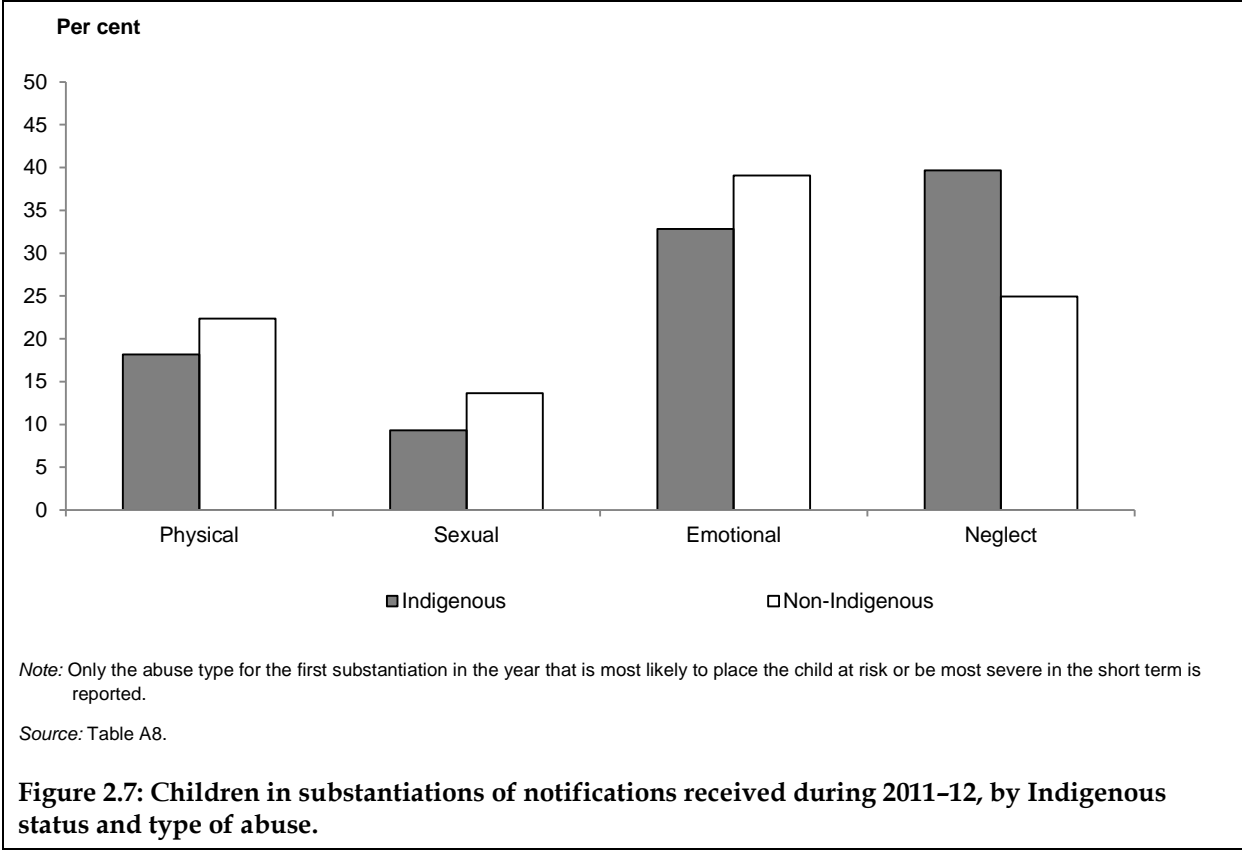
Abuse and neglect type

Overall, the most common type of substantiated abuse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was neglect, which represented 40% of substantiations, compared with 25% for non-Indigenous children. The proportion of substantiations for all other abuse types was higher for non-Indigenous children (Figure 2.7). Nationally, the second most common substantiation type for Indigenous children was emotional abuse, which was 33% compared with 39% 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 55% in the Northern Territory (Table A8). Variation across jurisdictions was also reflected in the proportions of Indigenous children substantiated for emotional abuse – ranging from 27% in Queensland to 65% in Victoria.

Overall, sexual abuse was the least common type of substantiation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (9%). This was consistent across all jurisdictions except Western

Australia; this is likely to be at least partially due to differences in the mandatory reporting requirements for sexual abuse within Western Australia (refer to Appendix D). Sexual abuse was also the least common type of substantiation for non-Indigenous children in Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

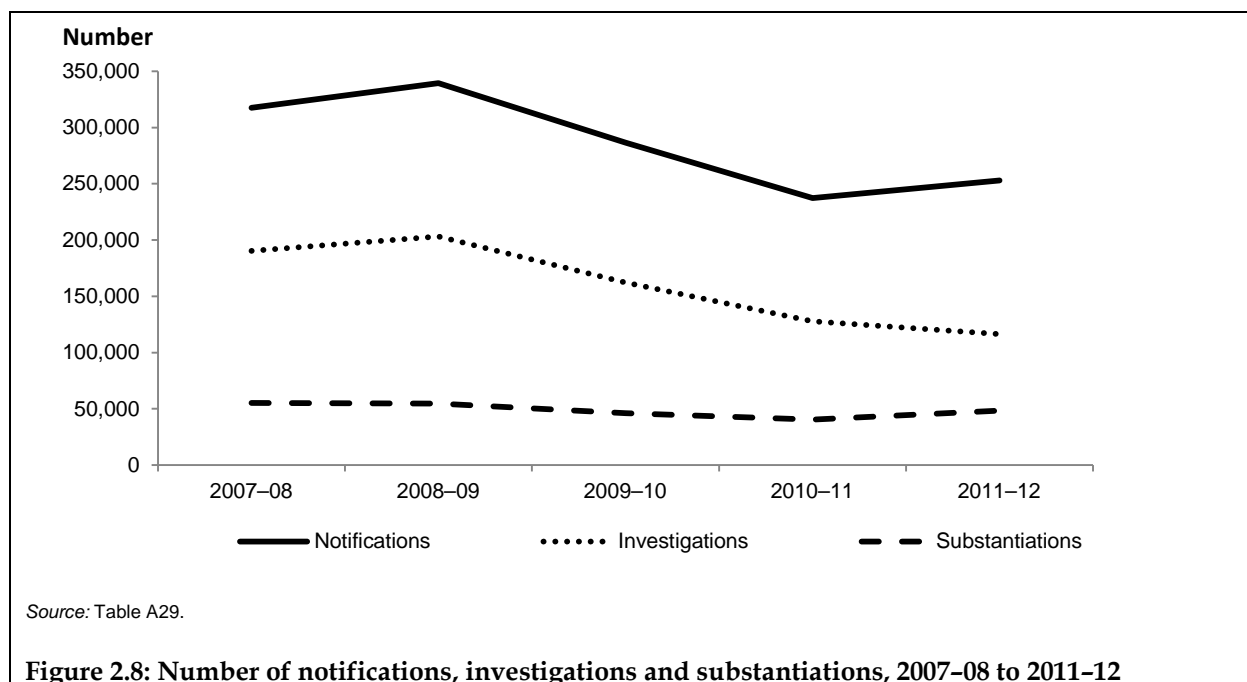


2.4 National trends

Trends in number of cases

Overall, the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations has declined since 2007–08. Notifications and investigations began to decline after a peak in 2008–09, while substantiations showed a declining trend since 2007–08. In contrast with this declining trend, the number of notifications and substantiations increased over the past year (by 7% and 20%, respectively).

The decline in investigations since 2008–09, coupled with an increase in substantiations over the past 12 months, has narrowed the gap between the number of investigations and substantiations. This coincides with the increasing proportion of finalised investigations that have been substantiated, from 37% in 2007–08 (AIHW 2009) to 45% in 2011–12.



Although nationally there was a decrease in notifications over the 5 years, the size and direction of change varied across jurisdictions (Table 2.5). New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania showed declines and Victoria, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory showed increases.

Between 2010–11 and 2011–12, the number of notifications increased in all jurisdictions, except South Australia. The proportional increase ranged from less than 1% in New South Wales to 25% in Western Australia. South Australia showed a 10% decline in the number of notifications.

Increases in the number of notifications and substantiations could be influenced by legislative changes, enhanced public awareness and inquiries into child protection processes, along with real increases in abuse and neglect.

Appendix I 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, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(b)(c)}	SA ^(d)	Tas ^(e)	ACT	NT	Total
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
2011–12	99,283	63,830	24,823	13,745	19,056	11,836	12,419	7,970	252,962

- (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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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 2011–12 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 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Most jurisdictions showed an increase in the number of substantiations over the previous year (Table 2.6). The largest proportional increases were in Western Australia (45%), the Australian Capital Territory (35%) and New South Wales (25%). Substantiations decreased in Tasmania and South Australia (by 16% and 4%, respectively).

Table 2.6: Number of substantiations of notifications received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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
2011–12	23,175	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	48,420

- (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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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) During 2011–12, additional staff focused on investigations and assessments were deployed across Queensland. This resulted in a decrease in the number of investigations not yet finalised, and an increase in the number of investigations with a finalised outcome of substantiated, unsubstantiated or no investigation and assessment outcome.
- (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.

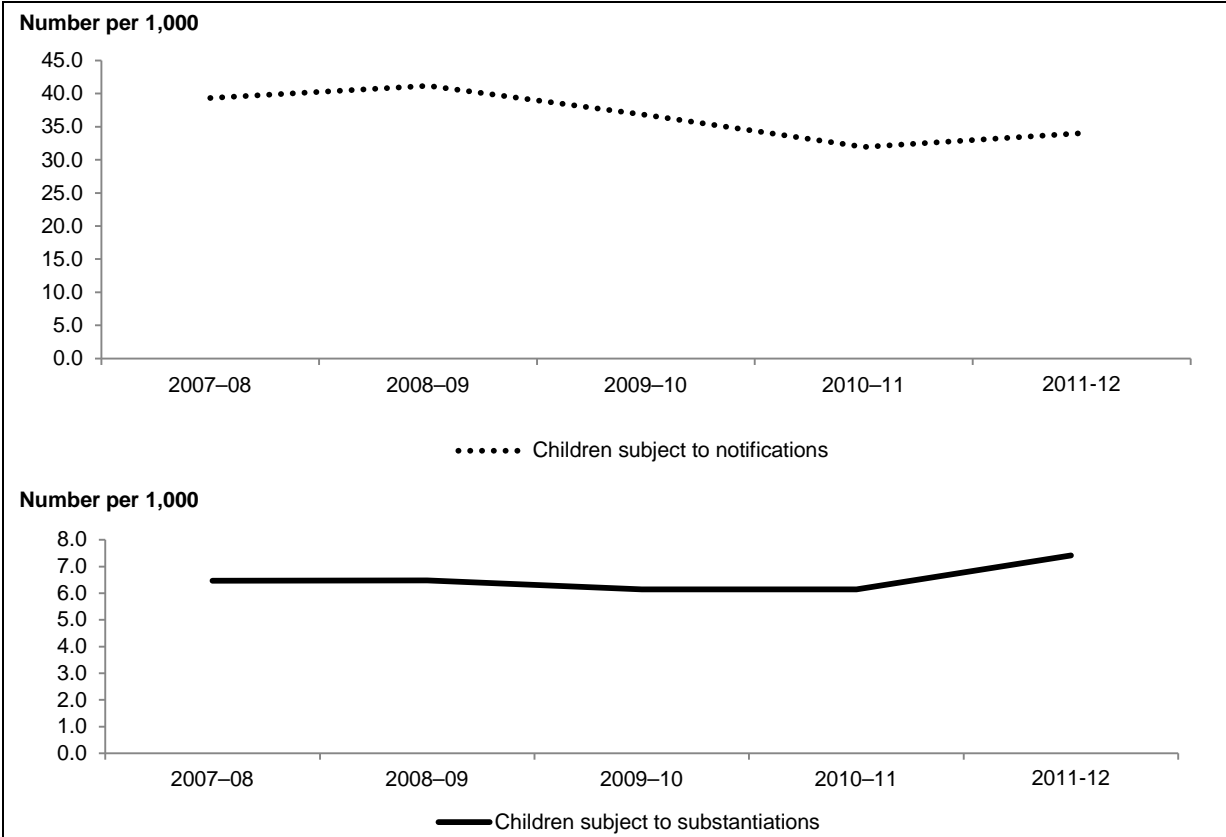
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Trends relating to children

Over the past 5 years, the rates of children who were the subject of notifications have fluctuated. Over the past year, the rate of children who were the subject of notifications has increased from 31.9 per 1,000 children in 2010–11 to 34.0 in 2011–12. Overall, the trend over the past 5 years has demonstrated a decrease in children who were the subject of notifications, with the rate falling from 39.3 per 1,000 children in 2007–08 to 34.0 in 2011–12 (Figure 2.9).

The rate of children who were the subject of substantiations showed a slight downward trend from 6.5 per 1,000 children in 2007–08 and 2008–09 to 6.1 in 2009–10 and 2010–11. However, over the past year there has been a 20% increase in the number of children who were subject of substantiations, rising from 31,527 in 2010–11 to 37,781 in 2011–12 (Table A29). This has reversed the downward trend, resulting in an increase in the rate from 6.1 per 1,000 children in 2010–11 to 7.4 per 1,000 in 2011–12.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2011–12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.



Source: Table A29 and ABS population estimates 2007–2011.

Note: The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2011–12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 2.9: Children who were the subject of children protection notifications and substantiations, 2007–08 to 2011–12 (rate)

Across states and territories, rates of children who were the subject of substantiations have fluctuated over the last 5 years. Since 2007–08, rates have increased for New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory and decreased for Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory (Table 2.7). The largest increase over this period was for the Northern Territory (from 11.4 per 1,000 children in 2007–08 to 24.4 in 2011–12). Over the past 12 months, rates have increased in all jurisdictions except South Australia (remained stable at 5.1) and Tasmania (fell from 9.5 to 8.1 per 1,000 children).

Table 2.7: Rates of children who were the subject of substantiation of a notification received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2007–08 to 2011–12 (number per 1,000 children)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^{(c)(d)}	SA ^(e)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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
2011–12 ^(f)	9.0	7.1	6.5	4.7	5.1	8.1 ^(g)	6.9	24.4	7.4

- (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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Only the more serious cases that 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) During 2011–12, additional staff focused on investigations and assessments were deployed across Queensland. This resulted in a decrease in the number of investigations not yet finalised, and an increase in the number of investigations with a finalised outcome of substantiated, unsubstantiated or no investigation and assessment outcome.
- (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) 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.
- (e) 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.
- (f) The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2011–12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.
- (g) Rates for 2012 for Tasmania should not be compared with previous years due to the change in methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population.

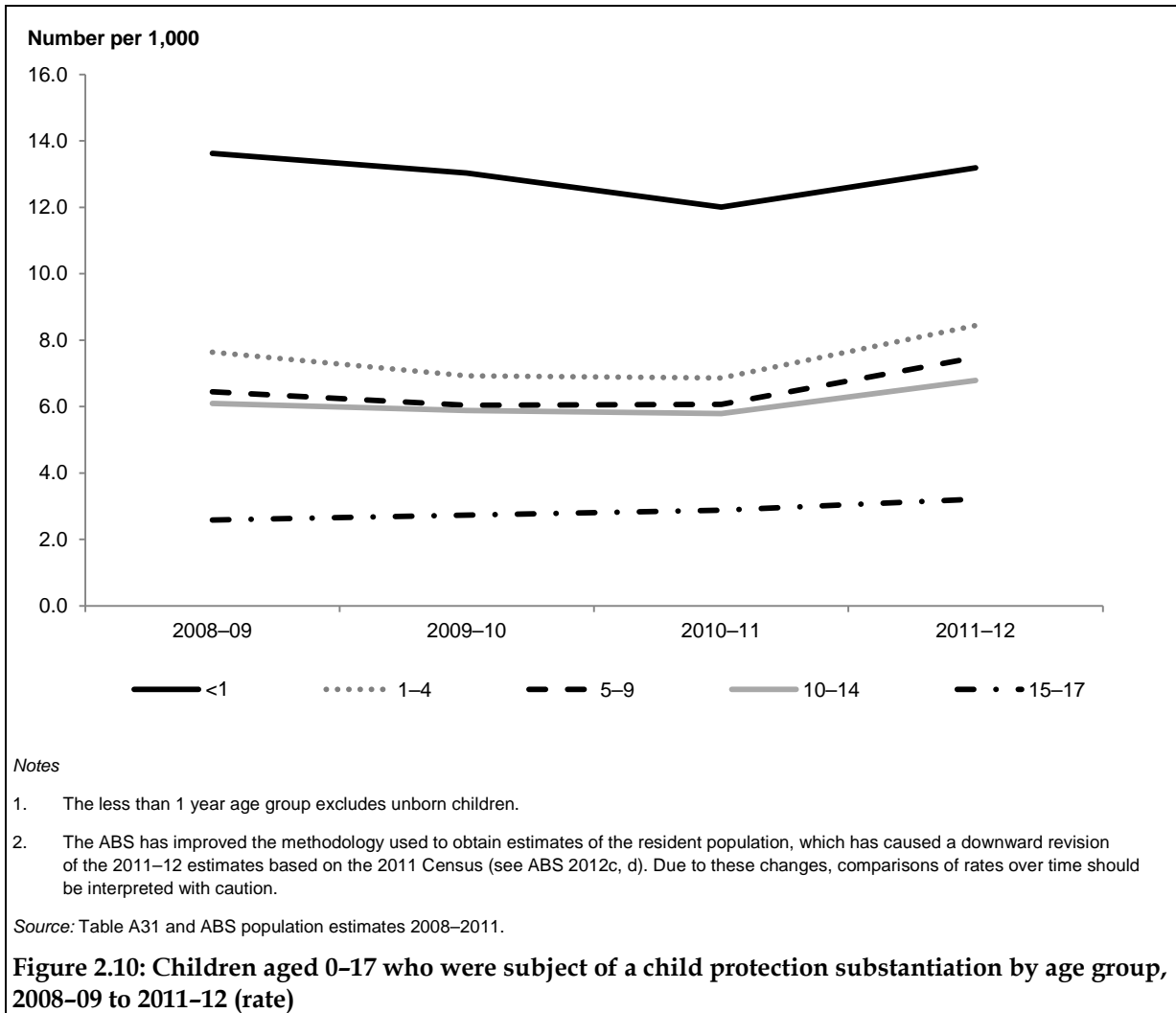
Notes

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 2007–08 to 2011–12 and ABS population estimates 2008–2012.

Age profile

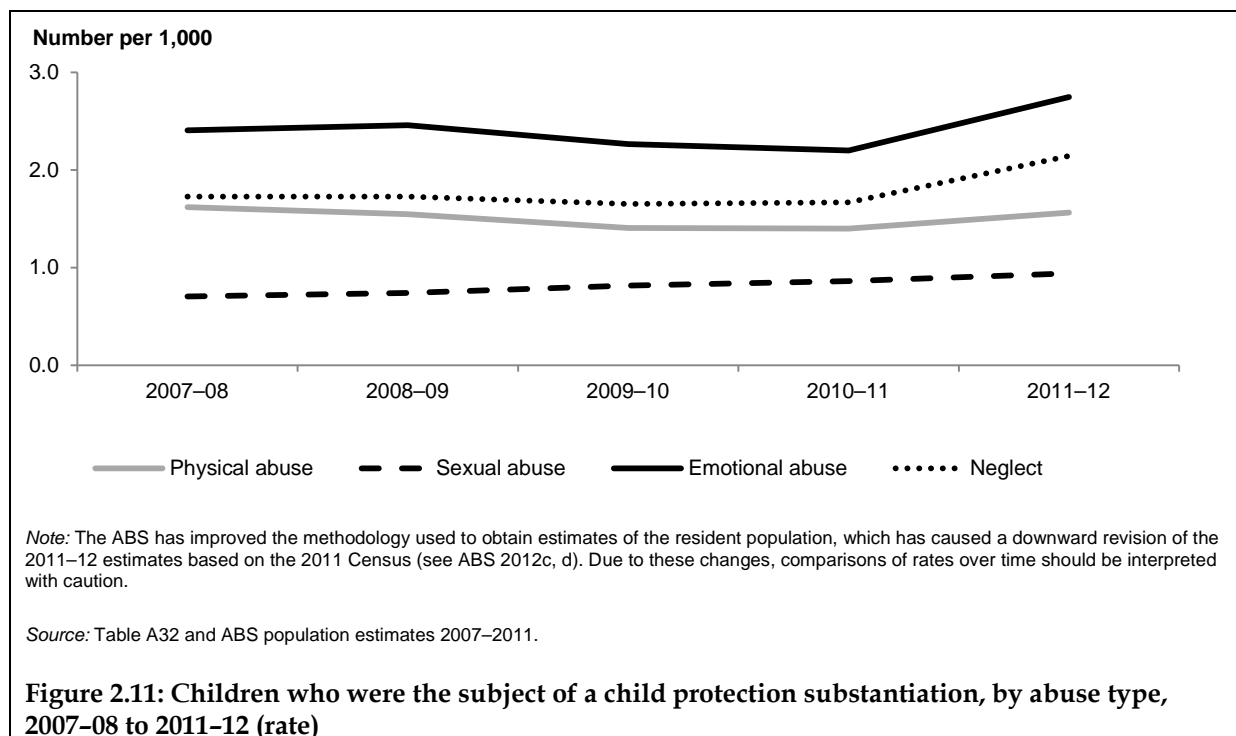
Between 2008–09 and 2010–11, the rate of children under 1 year who were the subject of a substantiation steadily decreased (from 13.6 to 12.0 per 1,000 children). However, over the past year the rate has increased from 12.0 in 2010–11 to 13.2 in 2011–12. All other age groups have also showed increases over the past year (Figure 2.10).



Abuse and neglect type

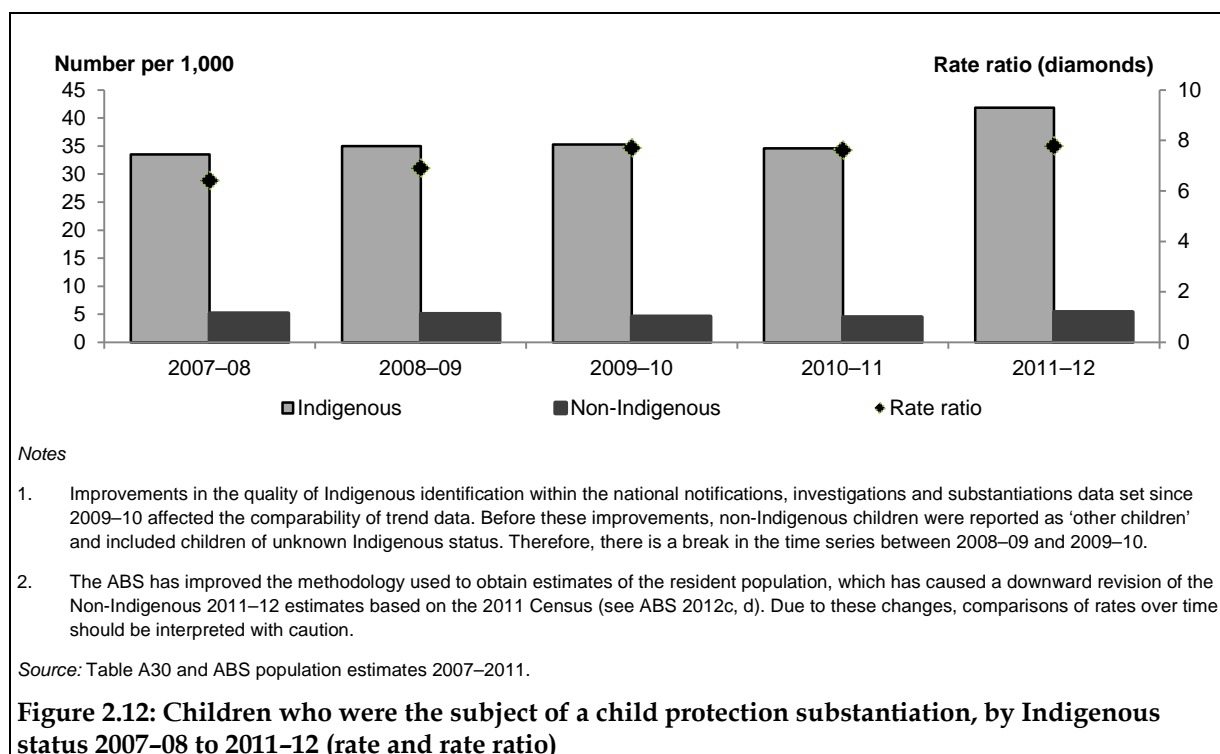
From 2007-08 to 2011-12, the rates of children who were the subject of substantiations for sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect have all increased slightly. The rate of children subject to substantiations of physical abuse has remained relatively stable.

Since 2010-11, the rate of children who were the subject of substantiations of emotional abuse has increased from 2.2 to 2.8 per 1,000 children. The rate of children who were the subject of substantiations of neglect also increased from 1.7 to 2.1 per 1,000 children (Figure 2.11).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The substantiation rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children have both increased since 2010-11, from 34.6 to 41.9 per 1,000 and from 4.5 to 5.4 per 1,000, respectively. The rate ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous children has increased slightly, from 7.6 in 2010-11 to 7.8 in 2011-12 (Figure 2.12).



3 Care and protection orders

3.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2011–12, there were 23,303 care and protection orders issued across jurisdictions with available data, with 14,191 children admitted to an order during that time. Nationally, in 2011–12, more children were admitted to care and protection orders than were discharged from orders (14,191 compared with 9,478). At 30 June 2012, 40,962 children were on a care and protection order – a rate of 8 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Key care and protection order statistics, 2011–12

	Number	Rate (number per 1,000 children)
Care and protection orders issued	23,303	..
Children admitted to an order	14,191	2.8
Children discharged from an order	9,478	1.9
Children on a care and protection order (at 30 June 2012)	40,962	8.0

.. not applicable.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Care and protection orders are legal orders or arrangements that give child protection departments some responsibility for a child’s welfare (see Box 3.1 for national categories).

For this report, 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 2012. If a child was on more than one order at 30 June 2012, 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 interventionist).

Box 3.1: National care and protection order types

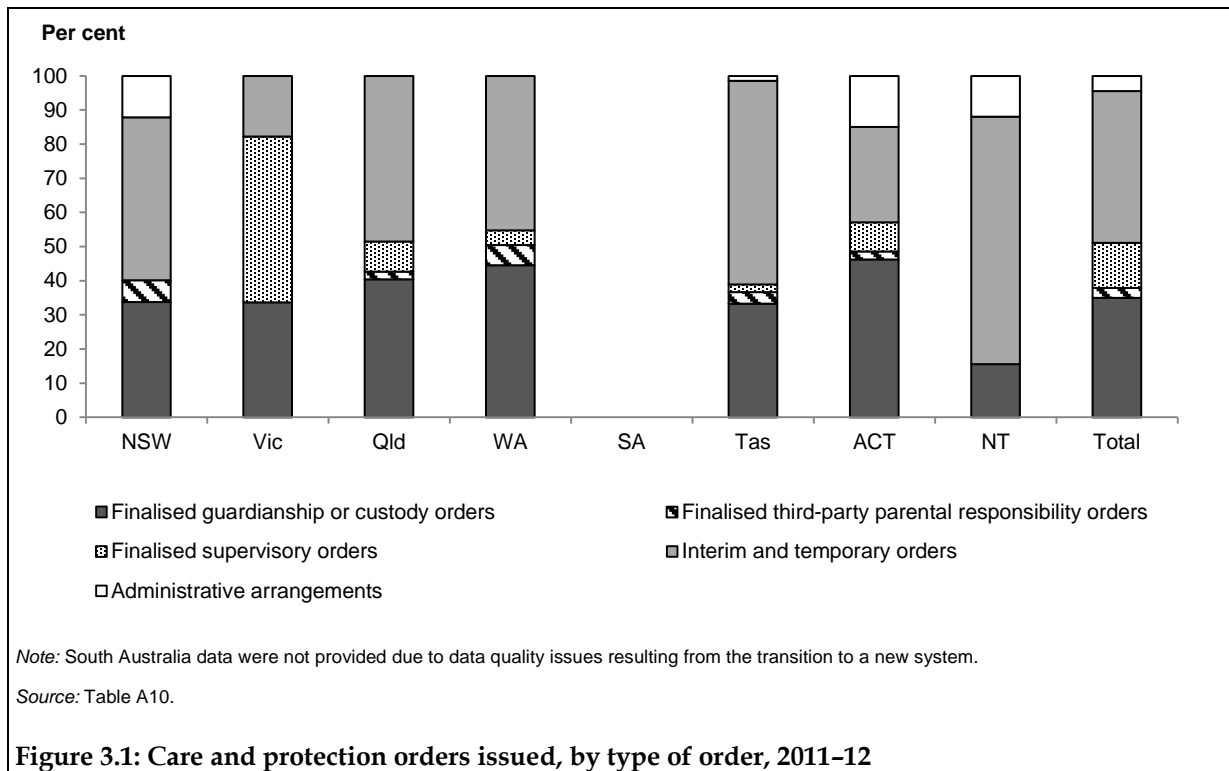
- **Finalised guardianship or custody orders:** *Guardianship orders* involve the transfer of legal guardianship to the relevant state or territory department or non-government agency. These orders involve considerable intervention in the child's life and that of their family, and are sought only as a last resort. *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.
- **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.
- **Finalised supervisory orders:** 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.
- **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.
- **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.

Children are 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.

3.2 Types of orders

For jurisdictions with available data, almost half (45%, or 10,366) of the 23,303 care and protection orders issued in 2011–12 were interim and temporary orders and 35% (8,167) 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 and the Australian Capital Territory, interim and temporary orders were the most commonly issued type of order (comprising about 48% to 73% of orders issued). In Victoria, finalised supervisory orders were most common (49%), while in the Australian Capital Territory, finalised guardianship or custody orders were most common (46%).



3.3 Children

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

A total of 14,191 children were admitted to orders in 2011-12. Among this group, about 2 in 5 (39%) children had been previously admitted to an order. The proportion of children admitted for the first time ranged from 38% in Queensland to 85% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders, states and territories, 2011–12

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children admitted to orders	3,017	3,118	4,282	1,619	936	638	183	398	14,191
Children admitted for the first time	2,474	2,204	1,618	1,154	522	261	155	310	8,698
<i>Percentage of all admissions</i>	<i>82.0</i>	<i>70.7</i>	<i>37.8</i>	<i>71.3</i>	<i>55.8</i>	<i>40.9</i>	<i>84.7</i>	<i>77.9</i>	<i>61.3</i>
Children discharged from orders	2,238	3,017	2,603	361	420	356	134	349	9,478

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders. New South Wales is working to improve the way it counts admissions to care and protection orders. New South Wales currently does not strictly conform to the national counting rules.

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

Notes

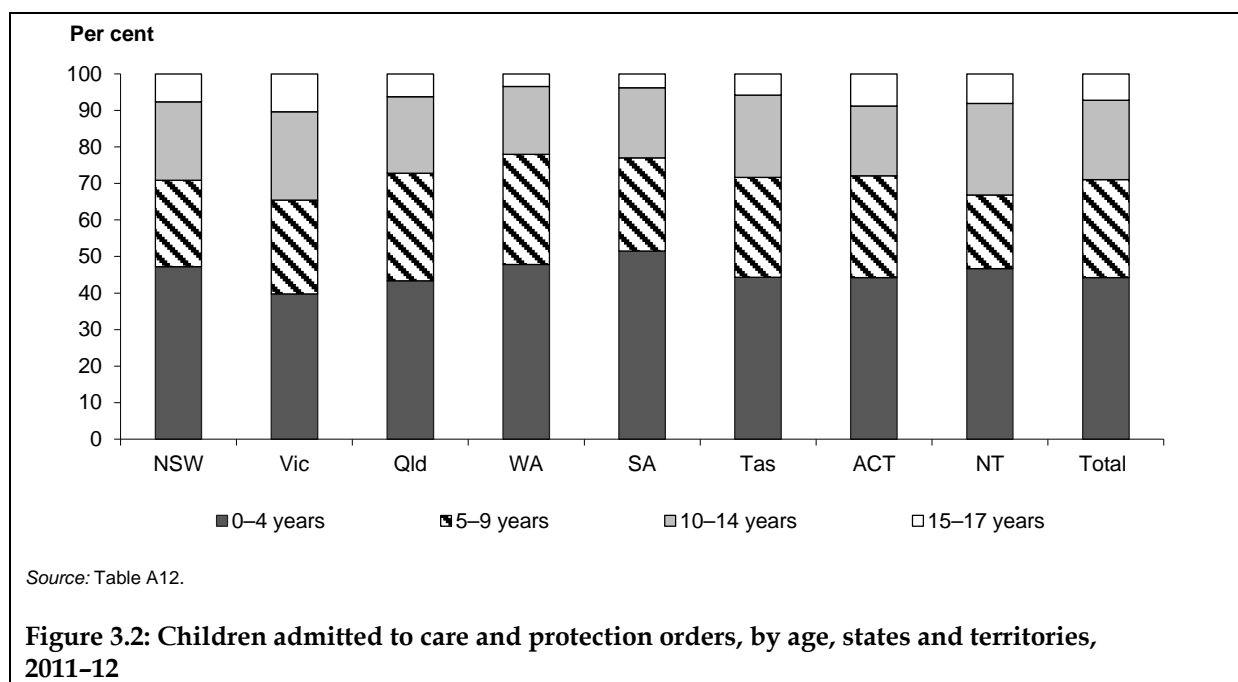
1. Data may include children who were discharged around the age of 18.
2. If a new care and protection order is applied in 5 days or less of discharge, then a discharge is not counted.
3. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. However, a change to an order is counted as an admission.
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. If a child is admitted to, or discharged from, multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, the child is only counted for one admission and/or one discharge for the year.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

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. The proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation in 2010–11, and who were subsequently placed on a care and protection order within 12 months, ranged from 11% in the Northern Territory to 38% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table A11).

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 (45%) of children admitted to orders in 2011–12 were aged between 0 and 4; this ranged from 42% in Victoria to 51% in South Australia (Figure 3.2). Age patterns were similar to those for substantiations of notifications, with a decreasing proportion as age increased (Table A7).

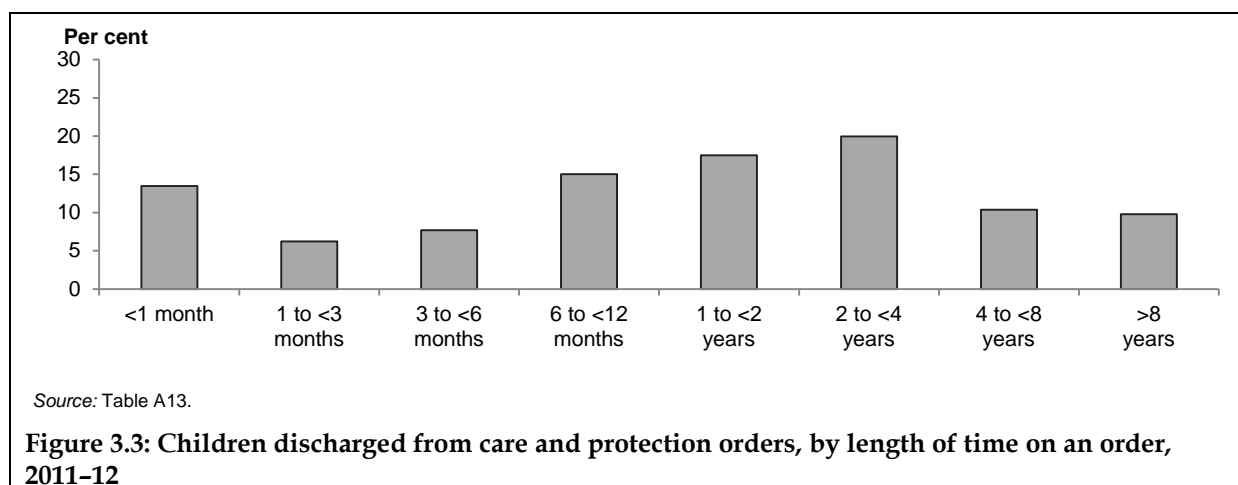


Length of time on an order at discharge

Some 9,478 children were discharged from a care and protection order in 2011-12. More than half of this group (58%) 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 Victoria (47%) and the Northern Territory (21%) (Table A13).

In 2011-12, 20% 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 65% 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, 10% 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 22% in Western Australia (Table A13).



Children on orders

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the 40,962 Australian children who were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2012 were on finalised guardianship or custody orders (Table 3.3). Across states and territories, the proportion ranged from 66% in New South Wales to 93% in South Australia.

There was greater variation among the jurisdictions in terms of other types of orders. For example, in New South Wales, 23% of children were on finalised third-party parental responsibility arrangements compared with 11% or less in other jurisdictions. In Victoria, 27% of children were on finalised supervisory orders compared with 6% overall. With the exception of Victoria and South Australia, about 10% to 17% of children were on interim or temporary orders. Overall, only a small proportion of children (less than 1%) were on administrative arrangements that did not require intervention by the courts.

Table 3.3: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship/custody	10,552	5,100	6,405	2,766	2,484	955	490	610	29,362
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	3,649	..	985	286	48	94	51	..	5,113
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,927	356	73	13	19	65	..	2,453
Interim and temporary orders	1,659	235	1,117	367	99	114	96	134	3,821
Administrative arrangements	121	..	..	..	36	3	17	36	213
Total	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962
Per cent									
Finalised guardianship/custody	66.0	70.2	72.3	..	92.7	80.6	68.2	78.2	71.7
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.8	..	11.1	..	1.8	7.9	7.1	..	12.5
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	26.5	4.0	..	0.5	1.6	9.0	..	6.0
Interim and temporary orders	10.4	3.2	12.6	..	3.7	9.6	13.4	17.2	9.3
Administrative arrangements	0.8	..	..	..	1.3	0.3	2.4	4.6	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.

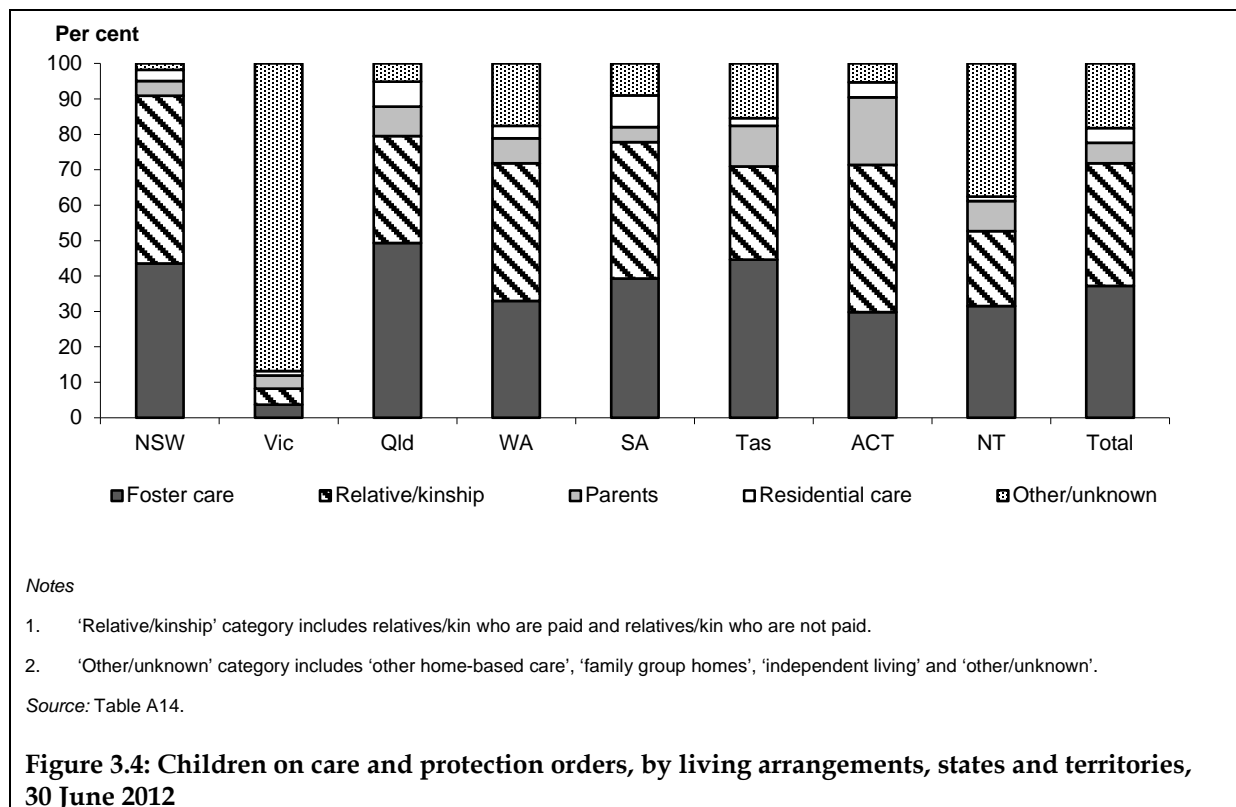
(b) In Western Australia, the application for a care and protection order to be issued for a child is counted as an interim order for national reporting purposes. However, there is in fact no order issued during this stage. It is thus not valid to compare the number of orders by a percentage basis.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Living arrangements

At 30 June 2012, the majority of children on orders lived in either foster care (36%) or with relative/kinship carers (34%). Across Australia, a relatively smaller proportion of children on orders were living with their parents (6%) or in residential care (4%) (Figure 3.4).



The living arrangements of children on orders reflected the age of the child (Table A15). Across Australia, 95% of children on orders who were living independently were aged 15–17, while 81% 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 similar across the jurisdictions. The proportion of children on orders who were aged less than 5 ranged from 23% in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania to 26% in Western Australia. The proportion of children in the 15–17 age group ranged from 13% in Western Australia to 20% in Victoria (Table A16).

The age distribution of children admitted to orders during 2011–12 was considerably younger than that for all children on orders at 30 June 2012 – 45% of children admitted to orders were aged less than 5, compared with 24% of children on orders at 30 June. Conversely, only 7% of children admitted to orders were aged 15–17, compared with 16% of children on orders at 30 June. This difference reflects the fact that many children are on long-term orders and that the count of children on orders at 30 June 2012 includes children admitted during previous years (Tables A12 and A16).

Overall, there were slightly more boys (52%) than girls (48%) on care and protection orders (Table A17). This was consistent across all jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory (where 51% were girls).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2012, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders was nearly 10 times that of non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Indigenous children on orders was higher than the rate for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 3.3 in Tasmania to 15.2 in Western Australia (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 2012

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)	5,299	10,661	15,981	73.8	6.8	9.7	10.9
Vic	1,150	6,100	7,262	74.3	5.0	5.9	14.8
Qld	3,374	5,446	8,863	46.9	5.4	8.2	8.7
WA	1,650	1,813	3,492	52.7	3.5	6.3	15.2
SA	744	1,901	2,680	57.9	5.6	7.6	10.4
Tas	241	933	1,185	28.6	8.7	10.2	3.3
ACT	164	543	719	83.2	6.9	8.9	12.1
NT	646	134	780	23.4	3.9	12.5	6.1
Total	13,268	27,531	40,962	54.9	5.6	8.0	9.7

(a) Includes 163 children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

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

Notes

1. Refer to Table A38 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were on a care and protection order by the unrounded 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 Collection 2012.

Of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders, nearly three-quarters (73%) were on finalised guardianship and custody orders (Table A18). 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 orders (10% and 9%, respectively) (Table A18).

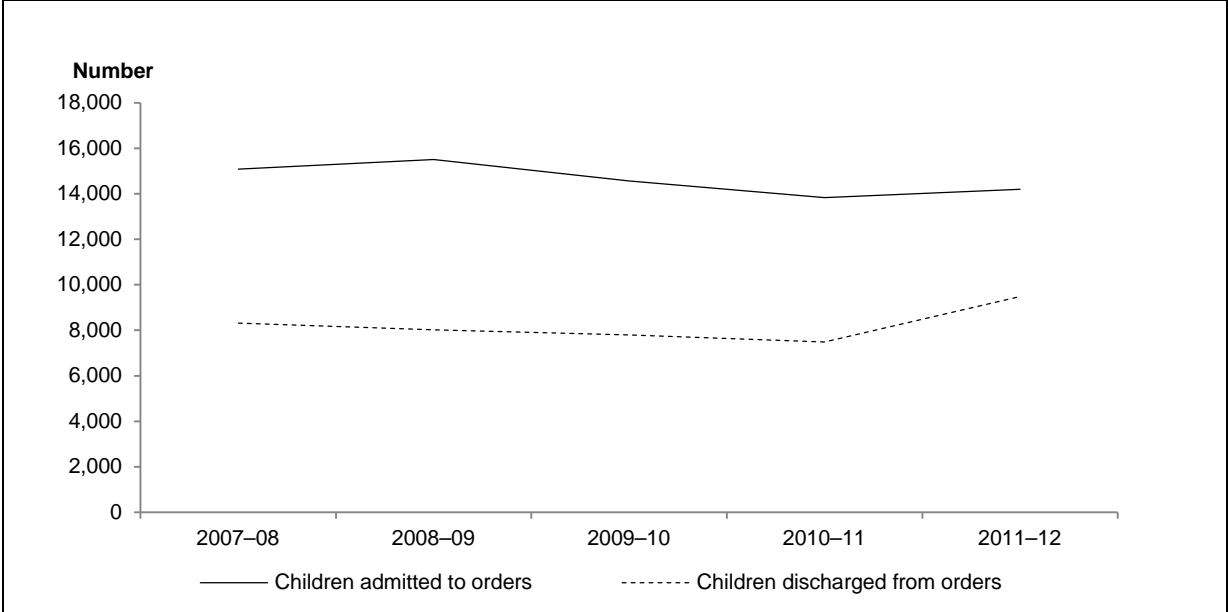
3.4 National trends

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

Between 2008–09 and 2010–11, the number of children admitted to orders decreased by 11% – from 15,509 to 13,830. However, in 2011–12, there was an increase of 3%, reversing the 2-year downward trend. This increase was largely driven by the increase in Western Australia, with admissions increasing by 31% over the past 12 months. Slight increases also

occurred in Tasmania and the Northern Territory (12% and 17%, respectively). New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia remained relatively stable, while a 12% decrease was observed in the Australian Capital Territory (Table A34).

In 2011-12, the number of children discharged from orders increased by 27% – from 7,480 to 9,478. This change was largely driven by the increase in the number of children discharged from orders in Victoria and Tasmania (82% and 61% increases, respectively) (Table A35).



Source: Tables A34 and A35.

Note: The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2011-12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 3.5: Children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders, 2007-08 to 2011-12

Between 2007-08 and 2011-12, the number of children admitted to orders has remained consistently higher than the number discharged (Figure 3.5); however, over the past 5 years, the difference has decreased. In 2007-08, there were 6,766 more children admitted than discharged, whereas in 2011-12, 4,713 more children were admitted than discharged.

Children on care and protection orders

From 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2012, the rate of children aged 0–17 on orders increased from 6.6 to 8.0 per 1,000 (Table 3.5). There were increases in all jurisdictions, with the largest increase in the Northern Territory (from 8.4 per 1,000 in 2008 to 12.5 in 2012).

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 3.5: Rates of children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2012 (number per 1,000)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld	WA ^(c)	SA ^(d)	Tas ^(e)	ACT	NT	Total
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
2012 ^(f)	9.7	5.9	8.2	6.3	7.6	10.2 ^(g)	8.9	12.5	8.0

(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 previous years.

(e) Data for Tasmania may not be comparable year to year due to considerable data lag with the recording of order status.

(f) The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2012 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

(g) Rates for 2012 for Tasmania should not be compared with previous years due to the change in methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population.

Notes

1. Some rates may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.

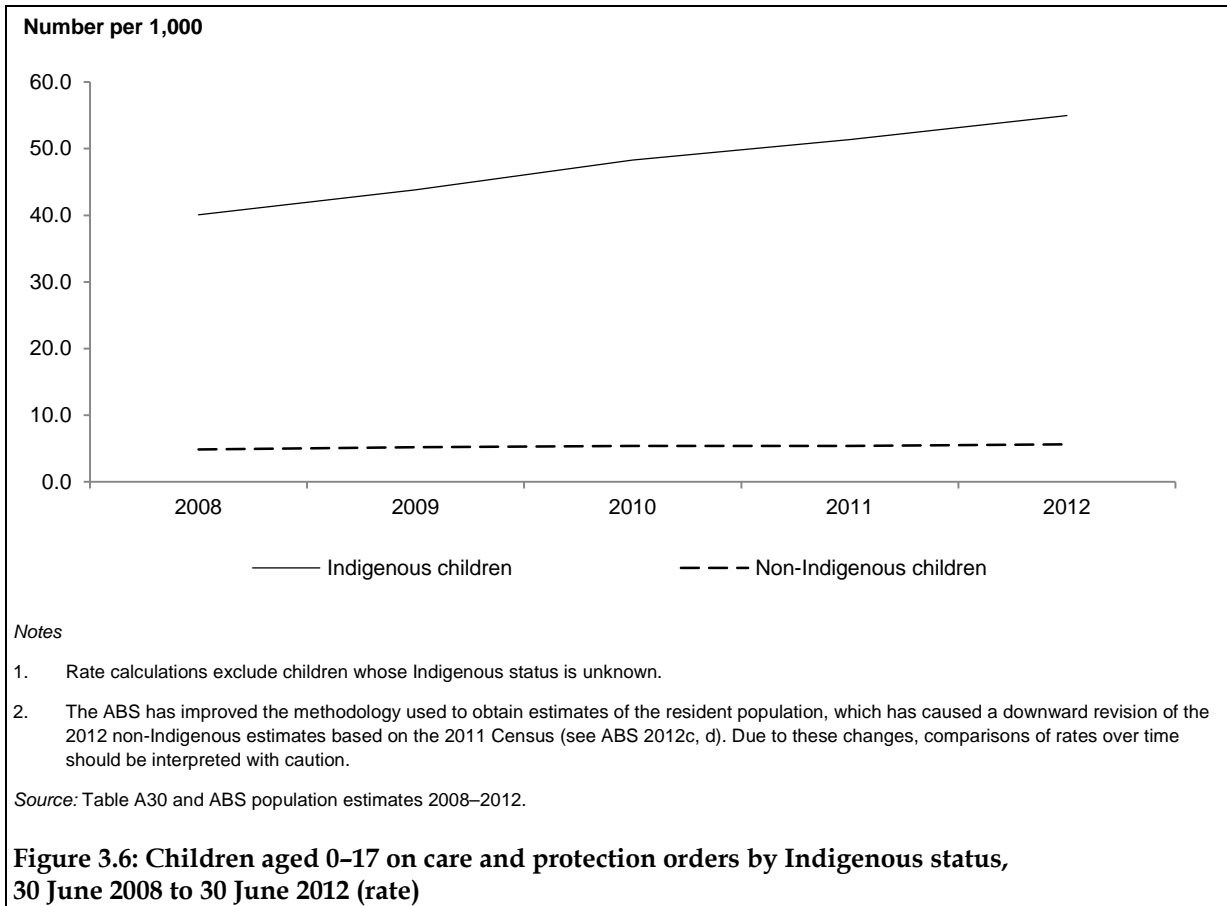
2. Refer to Table A33 for the numbers used to calculate these rates.

3. Rates were calculated using ABS population estimates 2008–2012.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

From 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2012, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders has increased steadily (from 40.1 to 54.9 per 1,000), while the non-Indigenous rate has remained relatively unchanged (increasing slightly from 4.9 to 5.6 per 1,000) (Figure 3.6).



4 Out-of-home care

4.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2011–12, 12,240 children were admitted to out-of-home care, while 9,304 children were discharged. At 30 June 2012, there were 39,621 children in out-of-home care, a rate of 7.7 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Key out-of-home care statistics, 2011–12

	Number	Number per 1,000 children
Children admitted to out-of-home care	12,240	2.4
Children discharged from out-of-home care	9,304	1.8
Children in out-of-home care ^(a)	39,621	7.7

(a) Children in out-of-home care are counted as at 30 June 2012.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Out-of-home care is overnight care for children aged 0–17 years, where the state or territory makes a financial payment or where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the carer (see Box 4.1 for types of out-of-home care).

Box 4.1: Types of out-of-home care

- **Residential care** – where placement is in a residential building whose purpose is to provide placements for children and where there are paid staff.
- **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.
- **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: relative/kinship care, foster care and other home-based out-of-home care.
- **Independent living** – including private board and lead tenant households.
- **Other** – includes placements that do not fit into the above categories and unknown placement types. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and the defence force.
- 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.

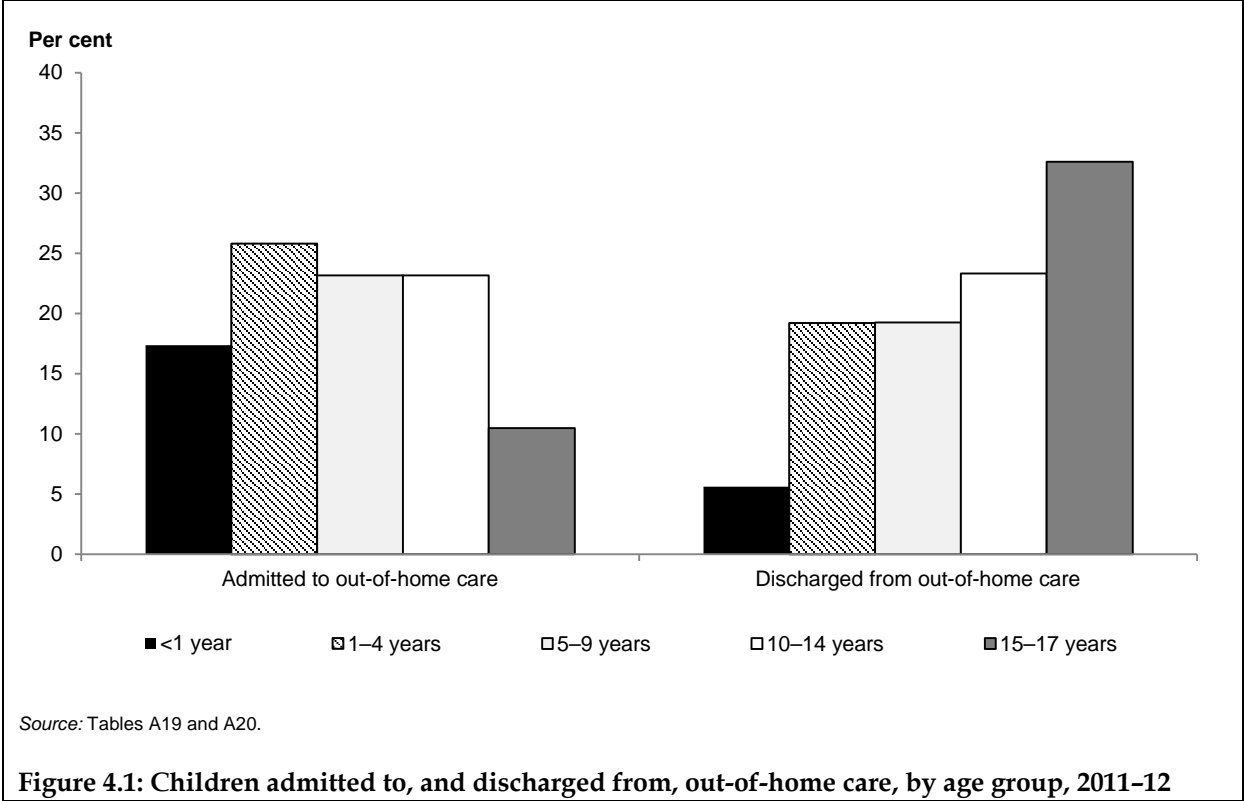
4.2 Children

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

Of the 12,240 children admitted to out-of-home care during 2011–12, 5,286 (43%) were aged less than 5. Almost one-quarter (23%, or 2,835) were aged between 5 and 9 and a further

quarter (23%, or 2,835) between 10 and 14. Children aged 15–17 represented 11% (1,284) of all children admitted to out-of-home care in 2011–12 (Table A19).

The age distribution of children discharged from care was older than that of children admitted to out-of-home care (Figure 4.1). Nationally, 33% of those discharged were aged 15–17, compared with 11% admitted to out-of-home care. This reflects children being admitted to out-of-home care at a younger age and remaining there for longer.



Children in out-of-home care

Nationally, the rate of children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2012 was 7.7 per 1,000 children, ranging from 5.1 per 1,000 in Victoria to 11.2 in the Northern Territory (Figure 4.2).

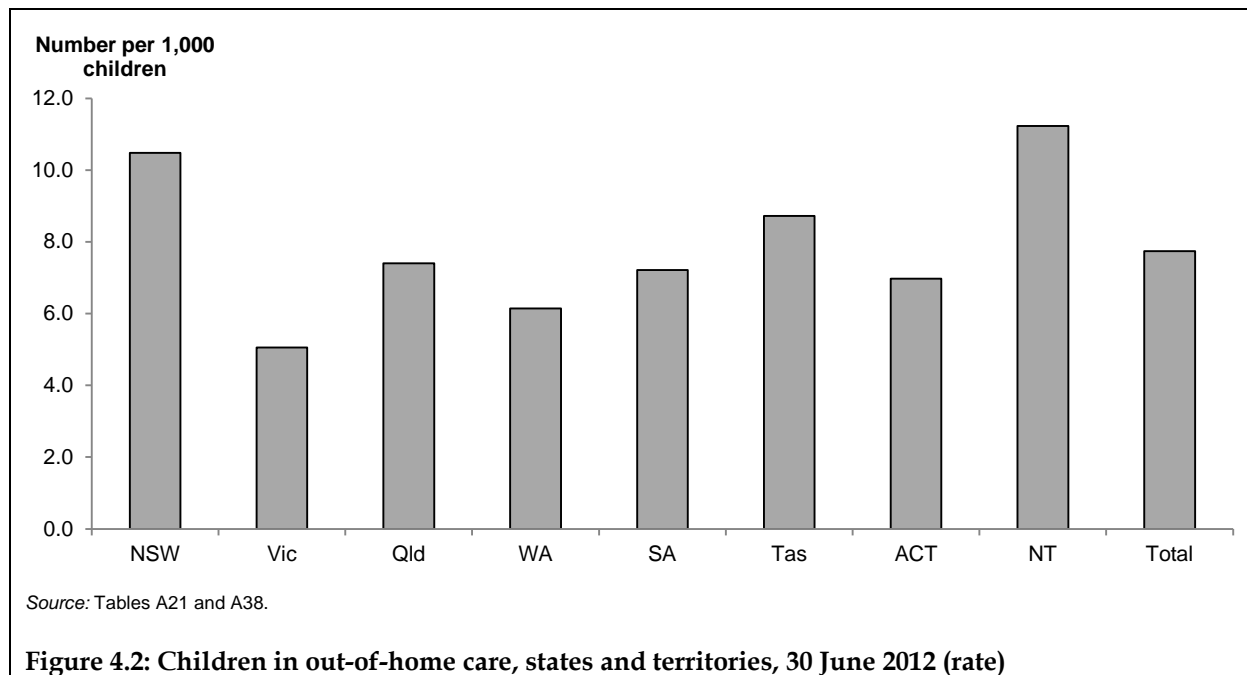


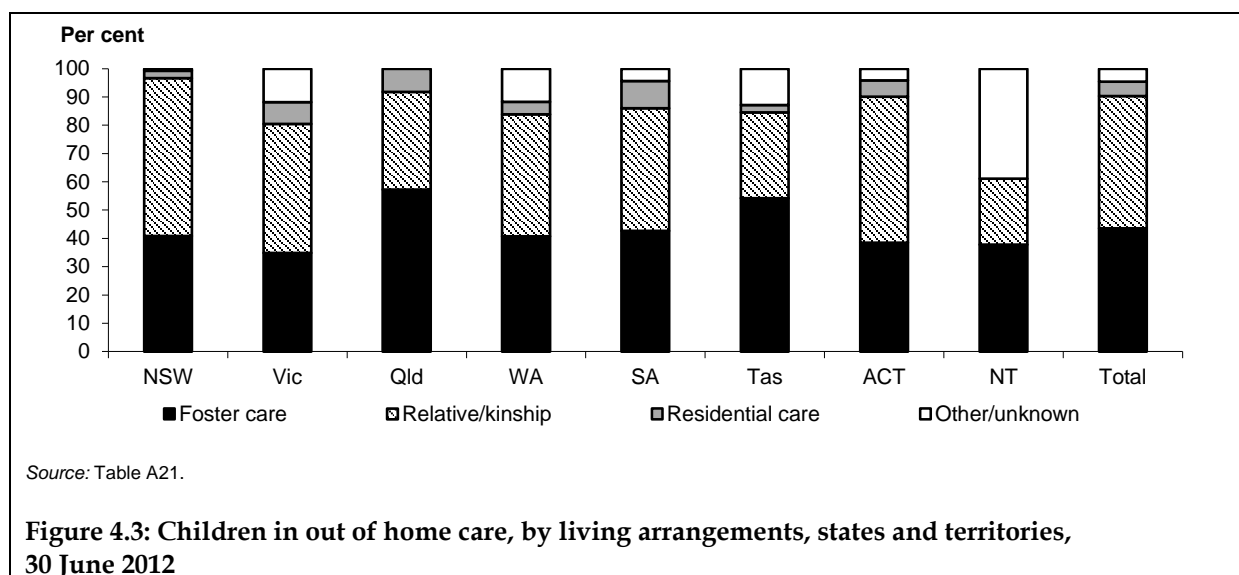
Figure 4.2: Children in out-of-home care, states and territories, 30 June 2012 (rate)

Types of placement

The majority of children (93%) in out-of-home care at 30 June 2012 were in home-based care – 44% in foster care, 47% in relative/kinship care and 2% in other types of home-based care (Table A21). This follows a similar pattern to that observed in previous years. 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 35% in Victoria to 57% in Queensland (Figure 4.3). Placement with relatives or kin also varied across the jurisdictions – from 23% in the Northern Territory to 56% in New South Wales.

Nationally, 1 in 20 children in out-of-home care was living in residential care (Figure 4.3). Of those jurisdictions with children in residential care, the proportions ranged from 3% in New South Wales and Tasmania to 10% in South Australia. No children were in residential care in the Northern Territory. 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 2012, about 4 in 5 children (81%) had been in their current out-of-home care placement for more than 1 year – ranging from 72% of children in Victoria to 88% in South Australia. Almost one-third (30%) had been in a continuous placement for between 2 and 5 years, while a further 38% had been in a continuous placement for 5 years or more (Table 4.2). However, 19% of children had been in their current placement for less than 1 year.

Table 4.2: Children in out-of-home care, by length of time in continuous placement, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Time in continuous placement	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
<1 month ^(a)	255	196	191	75	13	16	12	26	784
1 month to <6 months	1,145	810	731	344	157	73	41	78	3,379
6 months to <1 year	1,157	740	740	311	137	109	66	76	3,336
1 year to <2 years	2,016	860	1,147	537	307	151	74	125	5,217
2 years to <5 years	6,105	1,617	2,330	961	223	322	194	229	11,981
5 years or more	6,514	1,984	2,860	1,172	1,711	338	179	166	14,924
Total	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
	Per cent								
<1 month	1.5	3.2	2.4	2.2	0.5	1.6	2.1	3.7	2.0
1 month to <6 months	6.7	13.0	9.1	10.1	6.2	7.2	7.2	11.1	8.5
6 months to <1 year	6.7	11.9	9.3	9.1	5.4	10.8	11.7	10.9	8.4
1 year to <2 years	11.7	13.9	14.3	15.8	12.0	15.0	13.1	17.9	13.2
2 years to <5 years	35.5	26.1	29.1	28.3	8.8	31.9	34.3	32.7	30.2
5 years or more	37.9	32.0	35.8	34.5	67.2	33.5	31.6	23.7	37.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Not all jurisdictions are able to identify whether children are in respite care. However, where it was known that children were in respite care, they were included in the 'less than 1 month' category.

Notes

1. If a child has a return home or break of less than 60 days before returning to the same or different placement, they are considered to be continuously in care during this period.
2. Percentages exclude cases where the length of time in a continuous placement was not stated or unknown.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Children on a care and protection order

Nationally, 90% 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 80% in Victoria to 99% in Western Australia (Table 4.3). In South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, a small proportion 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 2012

Order status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
On care and protection order	15,071	4,953	7,677	3,371	2,441	978	556	700	35,747
On another type of order	—	—	—	—	81	—	1	—	82
<i>Total children on orders</i>	15,071	4,953	7,677	3,371	2,522	978	557	700	35,829
Not on an order	2,121	1,254	322	29	26	31	9	—	3,792
Total	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
Per cent									
On care and protection order	87.7	79.8	96.0	99.1	95.8	96.9	98.2	100.0	90.2
On another type of order	—	—	—	—	3.2	—	0.2	—	0.2
<i>Total children on orders</i>	87.7	79.8	96.0	99.1	99.0	96.9	98.4	100.0	90.4
Not on an order	12.3	20.2	4.0	0.9	1.0	3.1	1.6	—	9.6
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) Children not on an order are children in negotiated placements, placement service and those awaiting prospective adoption.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Age and sex profile

Almost one-third (32%) of children in out-of-home care were aged 5 to 9 and a similar proportion (30%) were aged 10 to 14 (Table A22). In line with the general population distribution, just over half (52%) of all children in out-of-home care were boys (Table A23).

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—83% 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 A24). Five per cent of children in residential care or family group homes in Australia were aged less than 5, compared with 24% of those in home-based care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2012, there were 13,299 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, a rate of 55.1 per 1,000 children. These rates ranged from 20.7 per 1,000 in the Northern Territory to 83.4 per 1,000 in New South Wales (Table 4.4).

Nationally, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was 10 times the rate for non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was higher than for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 3.4 in Tasmania to 15.8 in Victoria.

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 2012

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 ^(a)	
NSW	5,991	11,177	17,192	83.4	7.1	10.5	11.7
Vic	1,028	5,106	6,207	66.4	4.2	5.1	15.8
Qld	3,041	4,919	7,999	42.2	4.9	7.4	8.7
WA	1,614	1,760	3,400	51.6	3.4	6.1	15.3
SA	706	1,828	2,548	55.0	5.4	7.2	10.2
Tas	212	789	1,009	25.1	7.4	8.7	3.4
ACT	134	421	566	68.0	5.3	7.0	12.8
NT	573	127	700	20.7	3.7	11.2	5.7
Total	13,299	26,127	39,621	55.1	5.4	7.7	10.3

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

Notes

1. Refer to Table A38 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 unrounded 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 Collection 2012.

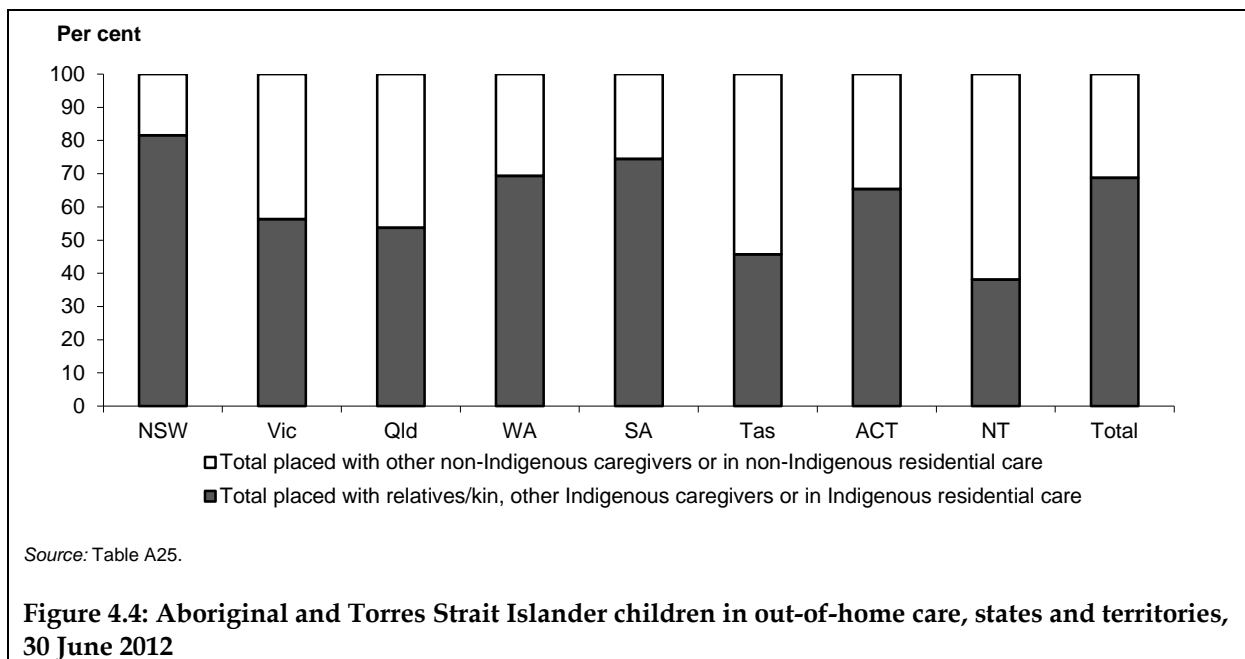
The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

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.

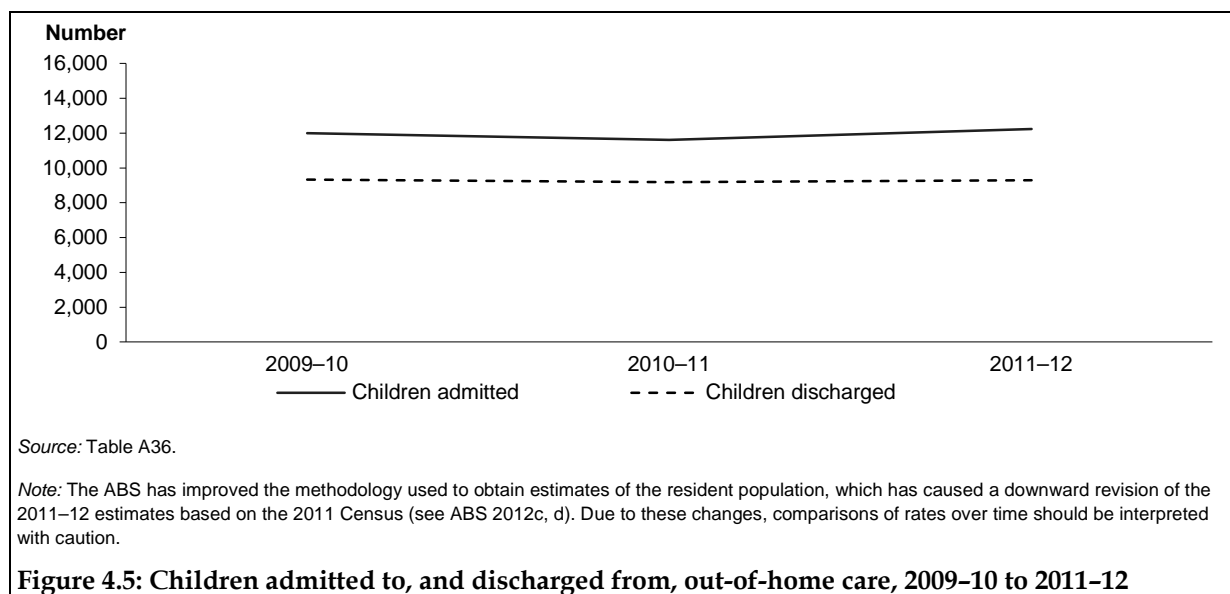


4.3 National trends

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

Over the past 3 years, the numbers of children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care have remained relatively stable. Over the past year, the number of children admitted to out-of-home care has increased by 5% from 11,613 in 2010–11 to 12,240 in 2011–12 (Table 4.5).

The number of admissions has consistently outnumbered discharges; in 2011–12, just over 2,900 more children were admitted to out-of-home care than were discharged (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, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. All other jurisdictions had decreases (ranging from 5% in South Australia to 24% in New South Wales).

Table 4.5: Children admitted to out-of-home care, states and territories, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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
2011–12	3,407	3,526	2,671	1,088	618	284	247	399	12,240

(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: This table includes all children admitted to out-of-home care for the first time in the period, as well as those children returning to care who had exited care 60 days or more 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 Collection 2012.

Children in out-of-home care

Nationally, the rate of children in out-of-home care in Australia at 30 June has increased each year between 2008 and 2012—from 6.3 to 7.7 per 1,000 (Table 4.6). Overall, 8,455 more children (an increase of 27%) were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2012 compared with 30 June 2008.

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 in 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 in the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care.

Table 4.6: Children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care, states and territories, 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2012 (number and number per 1,000)

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(a)(b)}	SA ^(c)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
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
2012	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
Number per 1,000 children									
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
2012 ^(d)	10.5	5.1	7.4	6.1	7.2	8.7 ^(e)	7.0	11.2	7.7

- (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.
- (d) The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2012 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.
- (e) Rates for 2012 for Tasmania should not be compared with previous years due to the change in methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population.

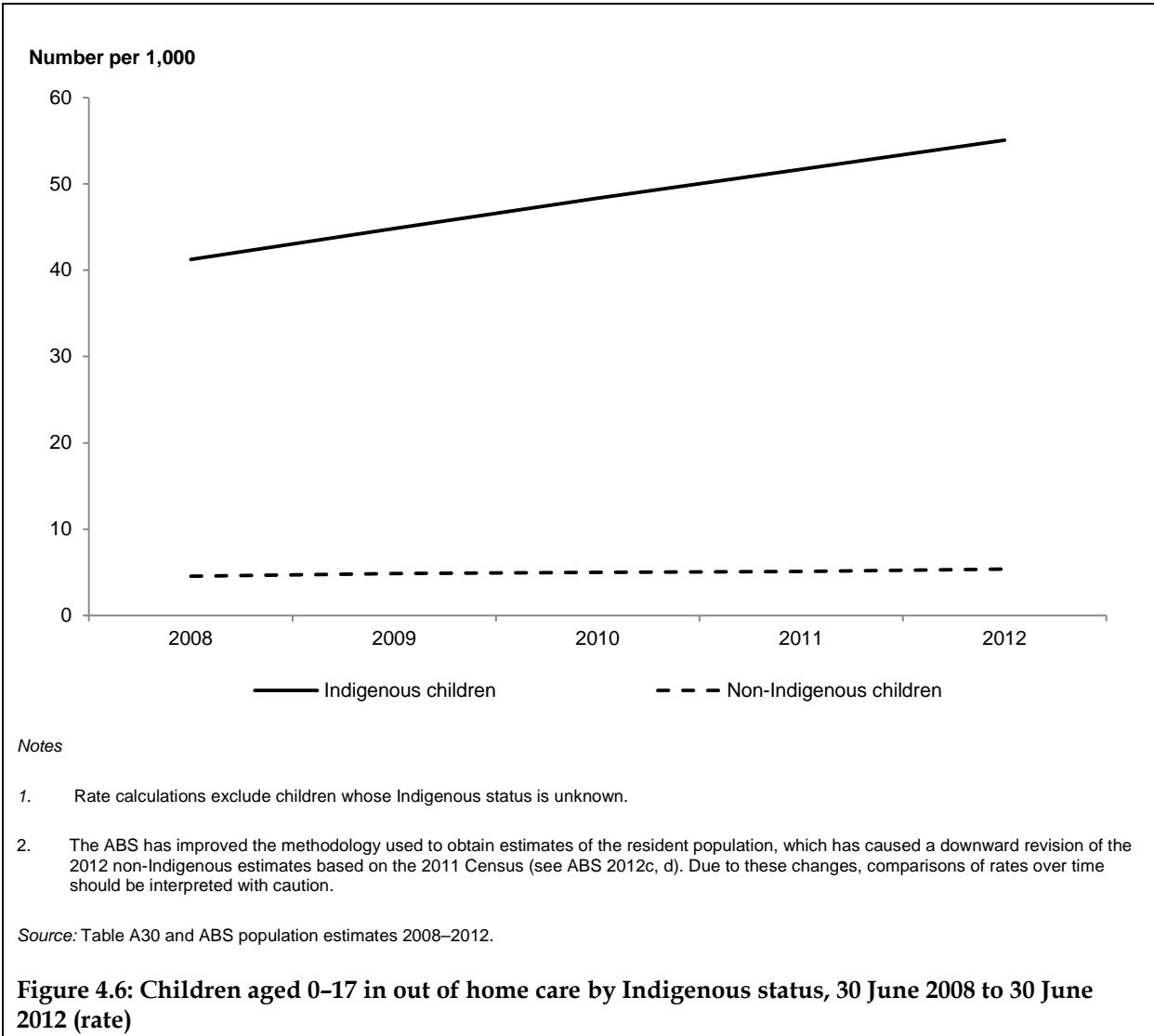
Notes

1. Some rates may not match those published in previous publications of *Child protection Australia* due to retrospective updates to data.
2. Refer to Table A38 for the population used in the calculation of rates for 2012.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

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 2008 from 41.3 to 55.1 per 1,000 children, while the non-Indigenous rate has increased slightly from 4.5 to 5.4 per 1,000 children (Figure 4.6).



5 Foster and relative/kinship carers

5.1 Overview and key statistics

At 30 June 2012, there were 8,824 foster carer households and 11,106 relative/kinship households that had one or more children placed with them (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Key foster and relative/kinship carer statistics, at 30 June 2012 and during 2011–12

	Number
Foster carer household with a placement at 30 June 2012	8,824
Foster carer households with a placement during 2011–12	11,664
Relative/kinship carer household with a placement at 30 June 2012	11,106
Relative/kinship carer households with a placement during 2011–12	12,278

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Across Australia, the vast majority (93%) of children in out-of-home care are placed in home-based care with foster carers or with relatives/kin (see Chapter 4). Foster care and relative/kinship care are forms of 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 parents (see Box 5.1).

Box 5.1: Foster and relative/kinship care

- **Foster care** is where the caregiver is authorised and reimbursed (or was offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child. These substitute parents are generally called 'foster carers'. There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.
- **Relative/kinship care** is where the caregiver is a relative (other than parents), considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person's community (in accordance with their culture) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child.

The information in this chapter describes foster and relative/kinship carer households at 30 June 2012 and commencements and exits during 2011–12. 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.
- Where a carer is authorised to provide both foster and relative/kinship care, they may be included in the count of both foster and relative/kinship carers.
- 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 these collections.

5.2 Foster carer households

At 30 June 2012, there were 8,824 households with one or more foster care placements (Table 5.2). Nationally, during 2011–12 there were 11,664 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 2012 and during 2011–12

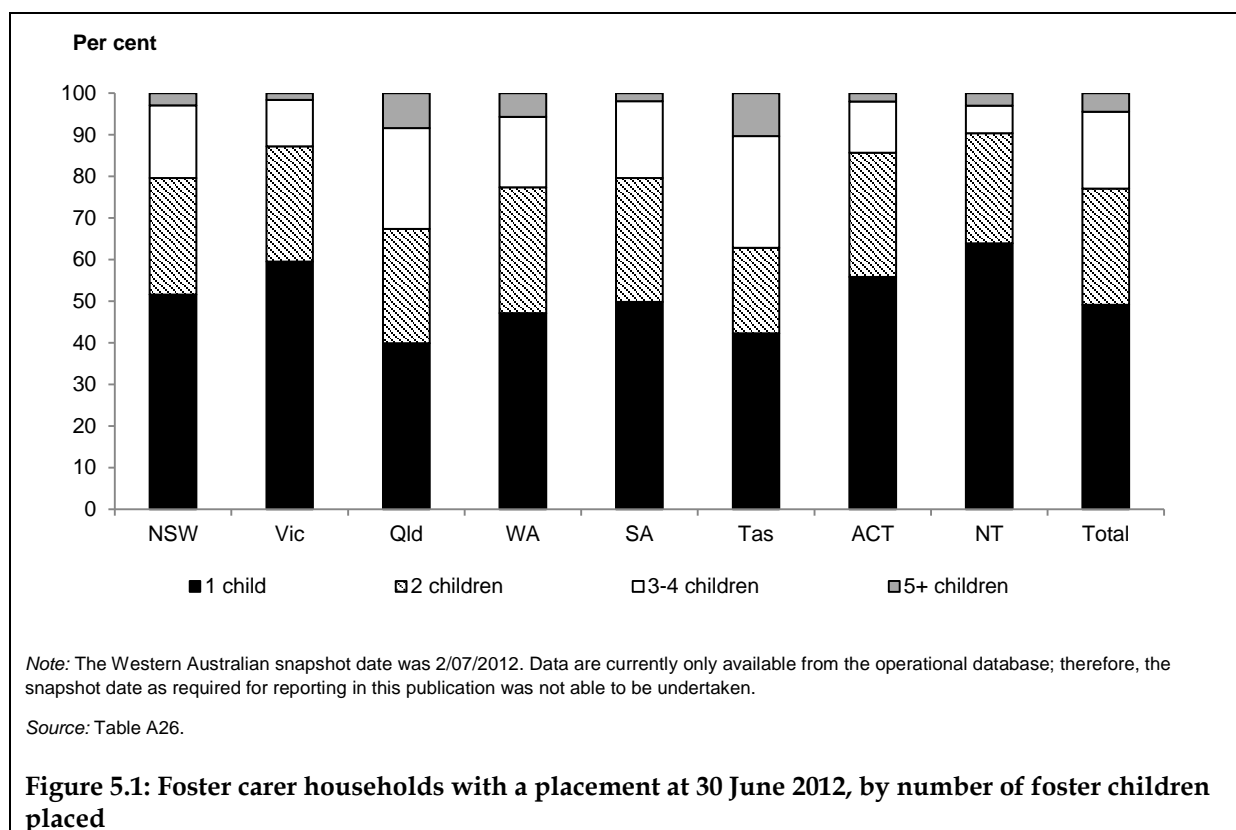
Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2012	3,886	932	2,201	687	634	194	154	136	8,824
Household with a placement during 2011–12	4,797	1,615	2,697	1,024	786	291	249	205	11,664

- (a) In New South Wales, the total number of foster carer households are those that had a placement in the last 2 years. 'Households with a placement at 30 June' includes those households that only had a short-term respite placement during the year. Counts of foster carer households are slightly understated as complete information is not available for some non-government agencies.
- (b) Queensland data excludes provisionally approved carer households.
- (c) The Western Australian snapshot date was 2/07/2012. Data are currently only available 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. For the purpose of reporting active foster care households, if no termination date is recorded, a foster care household that has not had a placement in 12 months is considered to be no longer active.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Number of children in placements

More than half (51%) of all foster carer households with a placement had multiple children placed with them at 30 June 2012 – ranging from 36% in the Northern Territory to 60% in Queensland. Across Australia, 46% of households with a placement had between two and four foster children placed and 4% had five or more (Figure 5.1).



Household commencements and exits

Among those jurisdictions with available data, 2,117 households commenced foster care and 1,416 exited foster care in 2011–12 (Table 5.3). In Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, a greater number of households commenced than exited foster care, while for Victoria and Western Australia, 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, 2011–12

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Households commencing foster care	572	434	539	166	131	88	37	150	2,117
Households exiting foster care	n.a.	453	443	236	108	59	18	99	1,416

n.a. not available.

- (a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency foster carer households. This count excludes some 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 2011–12.
- (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 2/07/2012. Data are currently only available 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 Collection 2012.

5.3 Relative/kinship carer households

At 30 June 2012, there were 11,106 households with one or more relative/kinship care placements (Table 5.4). There were 12,278 households that had a relative/kinship placement during 2011–12 (for jurisdictions where data were available).

Table 5.4: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement, state and territories, at 30 June 2012 and during 2011–12

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT ^(e)	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2012	5,903	2,046	1,155	873	724	211	194	n.a.	11,106
Household with a placement during 2011–12	6,875	2,761	n.a.	1,199	910	324	209	n.a.	12,278

n.a. not available.

(a) In New South Wales, the total number of relative/kinship carer households are those who had a placement in the last 2 years. 'Households with a placement at 30 June' includes those households that only had a short-term respite placement during the year.

(b) Queensland data exclude provisionally approved carer households.

(c) The Western Australian snapshot date was 2/07/2012. Data are currently only available from the operational database; therefore, the snapshot date as required for reporting in this publication was not able to be undertaken.

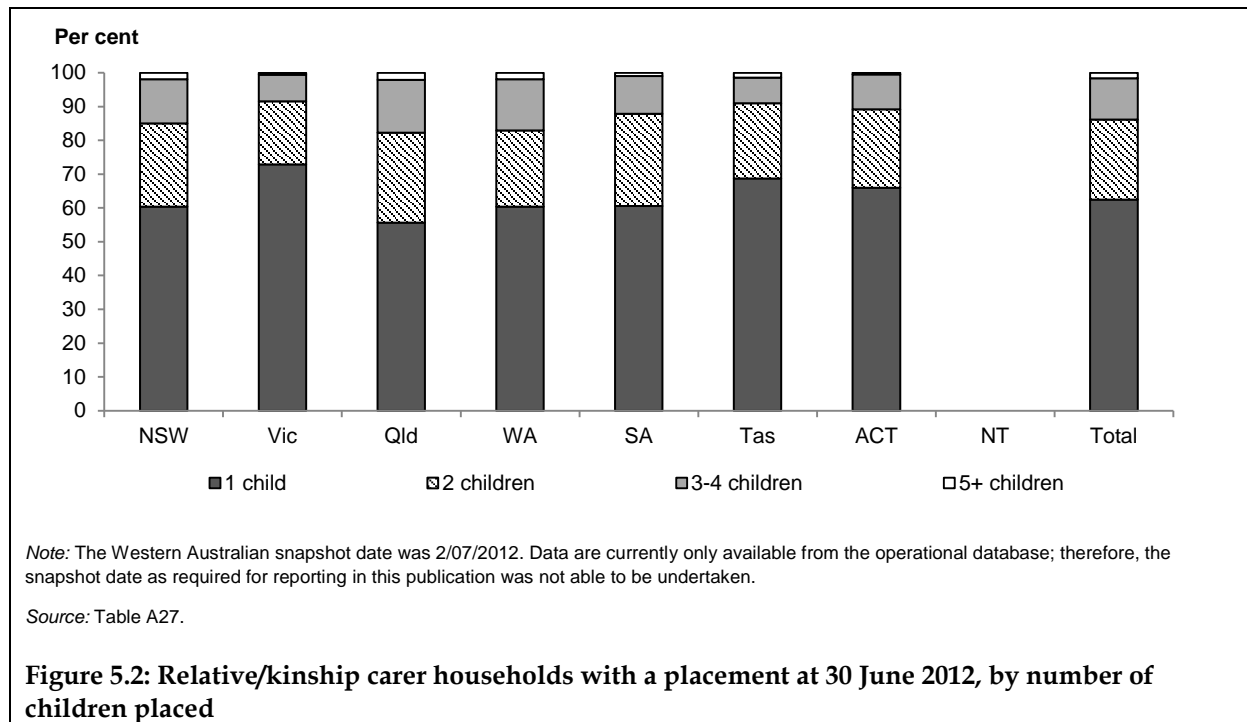
(d) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. As such, the number of relative/kinship carer households reported in this table is considered to be higher than the actual number. For the purpose of reporting active relative/kinship care households, if no termination date is recorded, a relative/kinship care household that has not had a placement in 12 months is considered to be no longer active.

(e) The Northern Territory is not able to provide these data for 2011–12.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Number of children in placements

Almost two-thirds (63%) of all relative/kinship carer households with a placement had one child placed with them at 30 June 2012. The proportion of relative/kinship carer households with one child ranged from 56% 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 (Figure 5.2). This may partially reflect the fact that in many jurisdictions priority is given to keeping siblings together.



Household commencements and exits

Among those jurisdictions with available data, 4,270 households commenced relative/kinship care and 2,453 exited relative/kinship care in 2011–12. 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, 2011–12

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT ^(e)	Total
Households commencing relative/kinship care	1,043	1,652	606	478	265	139	87	n.a.	4,270
Households exiting relative/kinship care	n.a.	1,198	426	485	214	69	61	n.a.	2,453

n.a. not available.

- (a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency relative/kinship carer households. New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2011–12 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 2/07/2012. Data are currently only available 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 relative/kinship care.
- (e) The Northern Territory is not able to provide these data for 2011–12.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

6 Intensive family support services

6.1 Overview and key statistics

Key statistics

In 2011–12, across jurisdictions for which data were available, there were 277 intensive family support service providers (Table 6.1). The services were delivered across 304 locations, most of which (70%) were in capital cities or other urban centres (AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012). In those jurisdictions with available data (excluding Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory), 19,742 children commenced intensive family support services during 2011–12 (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Key intensive family support services statistics, 2011–12

	Number
Number of intensive family support services	277
Number of children commencing intensive family support services	19,742

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Intensive family support services aim to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers because of child protection concerns, and reunify families where separation has already occurred.

This chapter provides information on children commencing intensive family support services in 2011–12 that are funded by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. Currently, the national data collection is limited to intensive family support services (see Box 6.1). Work is under way 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 J for further information).

Box 6.1: Intensive family support services

To be included in the intensive family support services data collection, services must meet all the following criteria:

- they are provided explicitly to work to prevent separation or to reunify families
- a range of services are provided as part of an integrated strategy focussing on improving family functioning and skills, rather than just one type of service, such as emergency or respite care
- they are intensive in nature, averaging at least 4 hours of service provision per week for a specified short-term period (usually less than 180 days)
- 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.

6.2 Children commencing services

Age profile

Almost half (47%) of children commencing intensive family support services were aged less than 5 (among those jurisdictions with available data). However, the age distribution varied across jurisdictions – the proportion of children aged 0–4 commencing intensive family support services ranged from 39% in Victoria to 55% in New South Wales (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Number of children aged 0–17 commencing intensive family support services, by age at commencement of service, states and territories, 2011–12

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA ^(a)	Tas ^(b)	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
Number									
0–4	4,854	2,269	1,381	440	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	57	9,001
5–9	2,547	1,523	1,056	305	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	36	5,467
10–17	1,461	2,012	847	250	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	28	4,598
Total^(d)	8,872	5,818	3,334	1,013	584	n.a.	n.a.	121	19,742
Per cent									
0–4	54.8	39.1	42.1	44.2	..	..	..	47.1	47.2
5–9	28.7	26.2	32.2	30.7	..	..	..	29.8	28.7
10–17	16.5	34.7	25.8	25.1	..	..	..	23.1	24.1
Total	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 these data for 2011–12.

(c) The Australian Capital Territory is not able to provide these data for 2011–12.

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

Notes

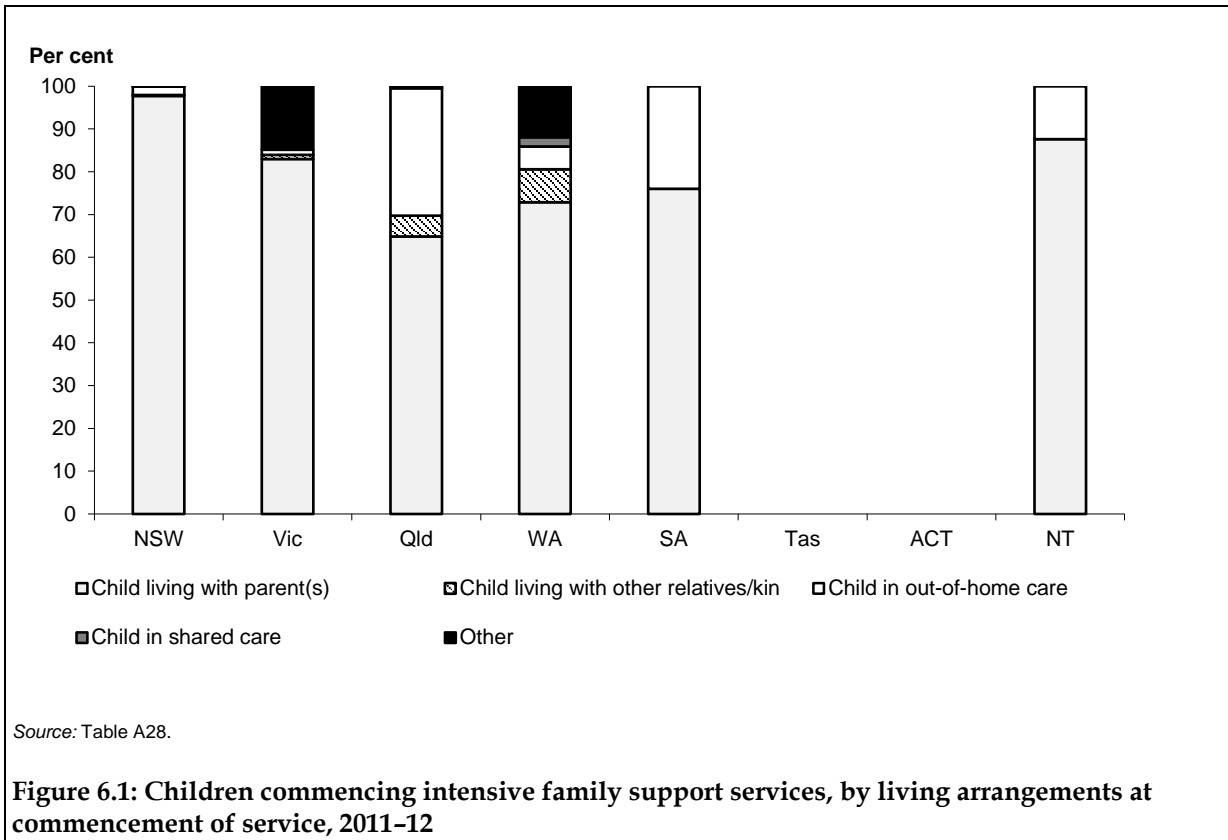
1. Percentages exclude children of unknown age.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

The majority of children (86%) who commenced an intensive family support service were living with their parents. For those jurisdictions with available data, this ranged from 65% of children in Queensland to 98% of children in New South Wales (Figure 6.1).

Queensland and South Australia had a higher proportion of children in out-of-home care – 30% and 24%, respectively, compared with 8% overall.



Appendix A Detailed tables

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Table A1: Notifications, by type of action, states and territories, 2011-12

Type of action	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA ^(d)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Investigations finalised ^(e)	49,564	15,070	22,023	8,780	4,240	1,500	2,067	3,510	106,754
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	444	0	871	577	366	136	85	337	2,816
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>50,008</i>	<i>15,070</i>	<i>22,894</i>	<i>9,357</i>	<i>4,606</i>	<i>1,636</i>	<i>2,152</i>	<i>3,847</i>	<i>109,570</i>
Investigations in process ^(f)	2,344	1,002	1,929	905	476	92	51	159	6,958
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>52,352</i>	<i>16,072</i>	<i>24,823</i>	<i>10,262</i>	<i>5,082</i>	<i>1,728</i>	<i>2,203</i>	<i>4,006</i>	<i>116,528</i>
Notifications in process	1,055	12	..	71	101	49	0	0	1,288
Notifications resolved without investigation	45,876	47,746	..	3,412	13,873	10,059	10,216	3,964	135,146
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(g)</i>	<i>46,931</i>	<i>47,758</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>3,483</i>	<i>13,974</i>	<i>10,108</i>	<i>10,216</i>	<i>3,964</i>	<i>136,434</i>
Total notifications	99,283	63,830	24,823	13,745	19,056	11,836	12,419	7,970	252,962
Per cent									
Investigations finalised ^(e)	49.9	23.6	88.7	63.9	22.3	12.7	16.6	44.0	42.2
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	0.4	0.0	3.5	4.2	1.9	1.1	0.7	4.2	1.1
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>50.4</i>	<i>23.6</i>	<i>92.2</i>	<i>68.1</i>	<i>24.2</i>	<i>13.8</i>	<i>17.3</i>	<i>48.3</i>	<i>43.3</i>
Investigations in process ^(f)	2.4	1.6	7.8	6.6	2.5	0.8	0.4	2.0	2.8
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>52.7</i>	<i>25.2</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>74.7</i>	<i>26.7</i>	<i>14.6</i>	<i>17.7</i>	<i>50.3</i>	<i>46.1</i>
Notifications in process	1.1	0.0	..	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.5
Notifications resolved without investigation	46.2	74.8	..	24.8	72.8	85.0	82.3	49.7	53.4
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(g)</i>	<i>47.3</i>	<i>74.8</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>25.3</i>	<i>73.3</i>	<i>85.4</i>	<i>82.3</i>	<i>49.7</i>	<i>53.9</i>

.. not applicable.

(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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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'. Data for New South Wales relating to 'Notifications investigated', 'Notifications resolved without investigations' and 'finalised investigations' for 2011–12 are not comparable to previous years. The counting rules changed for 2011–12 data to better account for recent practice changes.
- (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 2011–12 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 2012.
- (f) 'Investigations in process' are investigations that were begun, but not completed, by 31 August 2012.
- (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 Collection 2012.

Table A2: Outcomes of finalised investigations, states and territories, 2011–12

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Substantiated	23,175	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	48,420
Not substantiated	26,389	5,995	14,342	6,021	2,101	475	1,206	1,805	58,334
Total finalised investigations	49,564	15,070	22,023	8,780	4,240	1,500	2,067	3,510	106,754
22,894^(c)									
Per cent									
Substantiated	46.8	60.2	34.9	31.4	50.4	68.3	41.7	48.6	45.4
Not substantiated	53.2	39.8	65.1	68.6	49.6	31.7	58.3	51.4	54.6
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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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'. Data for New South Wales relating to 'Notifications investigated', 'Notifications resolved without investigations' and 'finalised investigations' for 2011–12 are not comparable to previous years. The counting rules changed for 2011–12 data to better account for recent practice changes.

- (b) In Western Australia, initial inquiries for a child that commenced during 2011–12 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 (22,894) includes 871 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 2012.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012

Table A3: Number of investigations, by source of notification, states and territories, 2011–12

Source of notification	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Police	9,991	4,421	7,950	2,567	843	459	432	1,103	27,766
School personnel	8,505	1,833	3,355	1,486	482	281	409	626	16,977
Hospital/health centre	3,230	912	..	321	221	46	132	617	5,479
Parent/guardian	2,892	927	1,614	730	143	48	134	129	6,617
Non-government organisation	2,677	1,177	1,284	0	306	9	295	278	6,026
Sibling/other relative	3,489	850	1,650	714	146	89	123	196	7,257
Other ^(d)	2,242	2,080	1,059	1,092	136	67	66	144	6,886
Anonymous	2,989	0	681	0	116	43	14	83	3,926
Friend/neighbour	2,910	611	1,402	313	179	96	110	178	5,799
Social worker	8,095	70	..	1,174	235	397	22	75	10,068
Medical practitioner	1,177	462	4,159	433	134	62	63	67	6,557
Departmental officer	1,359	61	1,283	809	281	11	262	399	4,465
Other health personnel	1,611	827	..	135	279	105	96	97	3,150
Child care personnel	987	0	180	54	40	8	33	12	1,314
Subject child	198	0	158	70	1	7	12	2	448
Not stated	0	1,841	48	364	1,540	0	0	0	3,793
Total	52,352	16,072	24,823	10,262	5,082	1,728	2,203	4,006	116,528

.. not applicable.

- (a) Data for New South Wales relating to 'Notifications investigated', 'Notifications resolved without investigations' and 'Investigations in process' for 2011–12 are not comparable to previous years. The counting rules changed for 2011–12 data to better account for recent practice changes. 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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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 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 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.
- (d) '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 Collection 2012.

Table A4: Investigations, by source of notification, states and territories, 2011–12(per cent)

Source of notification	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Police	19.1	31.1	32.1	25.9	23.8	26.6	19.6	27.5	24.6
School personnel	16.2	12.9	13.5	15.0	13.6	16.3	18.6	15.6	15.1
Hospital/health centre	6.2	6.4	..	3.2	6.2	2.7	6.0	15.4	4.9
Parent/guardian	5.5	6.5	6.5	7.4	4.0	2.8	6.1	3.2	5.9
Non-government organisation	5.1	8.3	5.2	0.0	8.6	0.5	13.4	6.9	5.3
Sibling/other relative	6.7	6.0	6.7	7.2	4.1	5.2	5.6	4.9	6.4
Other ^(d)	4.3	14.6	4.3	11.0	3.8	3.9	3.0	3.6	6.1
Anonymous	5.7	0.0	2.7	0.0	3.3	2.5	0.6	2.1	3.5
Friend/neighbour	5.6	4.3	5.7	3.2	5.1	5.6	5.0	4.4	5.1
Social worker	15.5	0.5	..	11.9	6.6	23.0	1.0	1.9	8.9
Medical practitioner	2.2	3.2	16.8	4.4	3.8	3.6	2.9	1.7	5.8
Departmental officer	2.6	0.4	5.2	8.2	7.9	0.6	11.9	10.0	4.0
Other health personnel	3.1	5.8	..	1.4	7.9	6.1	4.4	2.4	2.8
Childcare personnel	1.9	0.0	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.5	1.5	0.3	1.2
Subject child	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.5	0.0	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) Data for New South Wales relating to 'Notifications investigated', 'Notifications resolved without investigations' and 'Investigations in process' for 2011–12 are not comparable to previous years. The counting rules changed for 2011–12 data to better account for recent practice changes. 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 over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). 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 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.
- (d) 'Other' category may include the person responsible.

Notes

- Investigations include 'investigations finalised', 'investigations in process' and 'investigations closed—no outcome possible'.
- Refer to Table A3 for the numbers for this table.
- Numbers and percentages exclude cases where the source of notification was not stated.
- Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A5: Substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by type of abuse or neglect, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA ^(b)	Tas ^(b)	ACT ^(b)	NT	Total
Number									
Physical abuse	4,475	2,636	1,375	508	409	151	103	270	9,927
Sexual abuse	3,644	912	350	598	189	43	39	53	5,828
Emotional abuse	7,264	4,936	2,702	850	584	491	319	483	17,629
Neglect	7,792	591	3,254	803	952	334	359	899	14,984
Total	23,175	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	48,420
Per cent									
Physical abuse	19.3	29.0	17.9	18.4	19.2	14.8	12.6	15.8	20.5
Sexual abuse	15.7	10.0	4.6	21.7	8.9	4.2	4.8	3.1	12.0
Emotional abuse	31.3	54.4	35.2	30.8	27.4	48.2	38.9	28.3	36.4
Neglect	33.6	6.5	42.4	29.1	44.6	32.8	43.8	52.7	31.0
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 South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as '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 2012.
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.
3. Percentages exclude cases where the abuse type was recorded as 'not stated'.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A6: Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, 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	1,467	1,287	674	241	182	62	36	116	4,065
Sexual	779	409	97	139	60	15	12	14	1,525
Emotional	2,183	2,353	1,228	390	240	224	104	218	6,940
Neglect	2,336	317	1,436	395	403	165	119	416	5,587
Total	6,765	4,366	3,435	1,165	885	468	286	764	18,134
Girls									
Physical	1,394	1,239	600	219	155	79	40	122	3,848
Sexual	1,913	491	237	419	114	26	17	33	3,250
Emotional	2,203	2,375	1,245	379	266	217	86	220	6,991
Neglect	2,257	263	1,378	341	377	132	109	374	5,231
Total	7,767	4,368	3,460	1,358	916	457	268	749	19,343
All children^(d)									
Physical	2,886	2,528	1,292	475	339	146	76	238	7,980
Sexual	2,704	901	335	570	174	41	29	47	4,801
Emotional	4,432	4,732	2,482	797	510	443	190	438	14,024
Neglect	4,645	580	2,865	741	783	304	228	790	10,936
Total	14,667	8,741	6,974	2,583	1,810	939	554	1,513	37,781

(continued)

Table A6 (continued): Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, 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	21.7	29.5	19.6	20.7	20.6	13.3	13.3	15.2	22.4
Sexual	11.5	9.4	2.8	11.9	6.8	3.2	4.4	1.8	8.4
Emotional	32.3	53.9	35.7	33.5	27.1	48.1	38.4	28.5	38.3
Neglect	34.5	7.3	41.8	33.9	45.5	35.4	43.9	54.5	30.8
Girls									
Physical	17.9	28.4	17.3	16.1	17.0	17.4	15.9	16.3	19.9
Sexual	24.6	11.2	6.8	30.9	12.5	5.7	6.7	4.4	16.8
Emotional	28.4	54.4	36.0	27.9	29.2	47.8	34.1	29.4	36.2
Neglect	29.1	6.0	39.8	25.1	41.3	29.1	43.3	49.9	27.1
All children									
Physical	19.7	28.9	18.5	18.4	18.8	15.6	14.5	15.7	21.1
Sexual	18.4	10.3	4.8	22.1	9.6	4.4	5.5	3.1	12.7
Emotional	30.2	54.1	35.6	30.9	28.2	47.4	36.3	28.9	37.2
Neglect	31.7	6.6	41.1	28.7	43.4	32.5	43.6	52.2	29.0

(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 South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as '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

- 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 2012.
- 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. As such, only the abuse type for the first substantiation in the year that is most likely to place the child at risk or be most severe in the short term is reported.
- Percentages include children whose sex was unknown.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A7: Children in substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by age and Indigenous status, states and territories

Age group (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^{(b)(c)}	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
<1	447	127	249	66	114	11	16	187	1,217
1–4	1,245	281	554	185	140	28	44	415	2,892
5–9	1,179	256	525	228	130	32	36	356	2,742
10–14	906	189	422	219	118	42	14	267	2,177
15–17	258	52	88	42	24	13	2	79	558
Total	4,247	963	2,002	763	530	136	113	1,304	10,058
Non-Indigenous children									
<1	921	760	388	48	215	51	30	9	2,422
1–4	2,737	1,893	1,114	209	326	191	92	52	6,614
5–9	2,896	2,032	1,348	304	341	187	95	70	7,273
10–14	2,633	2,110	1,259	284	283	149	89	59	6,866
15–17	817	699	371	80	54	35	23	19	2,098
Total	10,387	7,778	4,670	944	1,219	645	331	209	26,183
All children^(d)									
<1	1,371	887	661	234	367	76	70	196	3,862
1–4	3,987	2,174	1,725	642	480	265	168	467	9,908
5–9	4,075	2,288	1,958	745	475	256	157	426	10,380
10–14	3,543	2,299	1,747	715	405	223	123	326	9,381
15–17	1,077	751	484	186	79	63	33	98	2,771
Total	14,667	8,741	6,974	2,583	1,810	939	554	1,513	37,781

(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 Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data.

(d) 'All children' includes children whose Indigenous status was 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 2012.
2. Totals include children of unknown age.
3. The 'less than 1' category excludes unborn children for New South Wales (598), Queensland (399), Western Australia (61), Tasmania (55) and the Australian Capital Territory (3). These children are included in the totals.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A8: Children aged 0-17 who were the subject of a substantiation of a notification received during 2011-12, 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	842	189	386	111	88	24	5	184	1,829
Sexual	553	74	98	128	38	3	4	37	935
Emotional	1,236	621	533	278	157	65	48	365	3,303
Neglect	1,616	79	985	246	247	44	55	718	3,990
Total	4,247	963	2,002	763	530	136	113	1,304	10,058
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	2,037	2,339	831	189	241	93	61	54	5,845
Sexual	2,140	827	226	199	130	22	20	10	3,574
Emotional	3,188	4,111	1,827	275	333	310	103	73	10,220
Neglect	3,022	501	1,786	281	511	217	129	72	6,519
Total	10,387	7,778	4,670	944	1,219	645	331	209	26,183
All children^(d)									
Physical	2,886	2,528	1,292	475	339	146	76	238	7,980
Sexual	2,704	901	335	570	174	41	29	47	4,801
Emotional	4,432	4,732	2,482	797	510	443	190	438	14,024
Neglect	4,645	580	2,865	741	783	304	228	790	10,936
Total	14,667	8,741	6,974	2,583	1,810	939	554	1,513	37,781

(continued)

Table A8 (continued): Children aged 0–17 who were the subject of a substantiation of a notification received during 2011–12, 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	19.8	19.6	19.3	14.5	16.6	17.6	4.5	14.1	18.2
Sexual	13.0	7.7	4.9	16.8	7.2	2.2	3.6	2.8	9.3
Emotional	29.1	64.5	26.6	36.4	29.6	47.8	42.9	28.0	32.8
Neglect	38.1	8.2	49.2	32.2	46.6	32.4	49.1	55.1	39.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	19.6	30.1	17.8	20.0	19.8	14.5	19.5	25.8	22.3
Sexual	20.6	10.6	4.8	21.1	10.7	3.4	6.4	4.8	13.7
Emotional	30.7	52.9	39.1	29.1	27.4	48.3	32.9	34.9	39.1
Neglect	29.1	6.4	38.2	29.8	42.1	33.8	41.2	34.4	24.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children^(d)									
Physical	19.7	28.9	18.5	18.4	18.8	15.6	14.5	15.7	21.1
Sexual	18.4	10.3	4.8	22.1	9.6	4.4	5.5	3.1	12.7
Emotional	30.2	54.1	35.6	30.9	28.2	47.4	36.3	28.9	37.2
Neglect	31.7	6.6	41.1	28.7	43.4	32.5	43.6	52.2	29.0
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 South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the abuse type for some substantiations was recorded as '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 2012.
- 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 Collection 2012.

Table A9: Substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by type of family in which the child was residing, states and territories

Family type	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA ^(d)	SA ^(b)	Tas ^(e)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Two parent—intact	n.a.	100	2,705	874	363	216	252	948	5,458
Two parent—step or blended	n.a.	35	1,321	207	172	148	108	116	2,107
Single parent—female	n.a.	93	2,806	0	498	440	410	363	4,610
Single parent—male	n.a.	18	376	0	50	59	30	33	566
Other relatives/kin	n.a.	6	102	92	0	59	15	56	330
Foster	n.a.	0	..	13	0	62	15	9	99
Other	n.a.	10	363	1,573	10	40	29	43	2,068
Not stated	n.a.	8,813	8	0	1,046	1	2	137	10,007
Total	n.a.	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	25,245
Per cent									
Two parent—intact	..	n.p.	35.3	31.7	n.p.	21.1	29.3	60.5	36.0
Two parent—step or blended	..	n.p.	17.2	7.5	n.p.	14.5	12.6	7.4	13.7
Single parent—female	..	n.p.	36.6	0.0	n.p.	43.0	47.7	23.2	28.9
Single parent—male	..	n.p.	4.9	0.0	n.p.	5.8	3.5	2.1	3.6
Other relatives/kin	..	n.p.	1.3	3.3	n.p.	5.8	1.7	3.6	2.3
Foster	..	n.p.	..	0.5	n.p.	6.1	1.7	0.6	0.7
Other	..	n.p.	4.7	57.0	n.p.	3.9	3.4	2.7	14.8
Total	..	n.p.	100.0	100.0	n.p.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

n.p. not published.

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

(b) Family type percentages for Victoria and South Australia are not published due to a high proportion of 'not stated'.

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

(d) 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'.

(e) Due to the introduction of a new Child Protection Information System in Tasmania in 2010, the family type at the time of notification has not been 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 is considerably over-inflated for Tasmania and the relevant figure in this table is an incorrect representation of the true 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. 'Total' excludes New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.
3. Percentages exclude cases where the family type was not stated.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Care and protection orders

Table A10: Care and protection orders issued, by type of order, states and territories, 2011–12

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA ^(c)	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	1,712	1,586	2,908	872	n.a	422	275	392	8,167
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	326	..	163	116	n.a	43	14	n.a.	662
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	2,286	635	84	n.a	28	51	0	3,084
Interim and temporary orders	2,416	835	3,484	885	n.a	755	166	1,825	10,366
Administrative arrangements	616	..	..	..	n.a	18	89	301	1,024
Total	5,070	4,707	7,190	1,957	n.a	1,266	595	2,518	23,303
Per cent									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	33.8	33.7	40.4	..	..	33.3	46.2	15.6	35.0
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	6.4	..	2.3	..	..	3.4	2.4	—	2.8
Finalised supervisory orders	..	48.6	8.8	..	..	2.2	8.6	—	13.2
Interim and temporary orders	47.7	17.7	48.5	..	..	59.6	27.9	72.5	44.5
Administrative arrangements	12.1	..	..	..	..	1.4	15.0	12.0	4.4
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.

(c) South Australia data were not provided due to data quality issues resulting from the transition to a new system.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A11: Children substantiated in 2010–11 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 2010–11
New South Wales ^(a)	n.a.	..
Victoria	1,986	29.8
Queensland	2,044	27.3
Western Australia	659	32.4
South Australia	469	26.7
Tasmania	336	26.6
Australian Capital Territory	179	37.9
Northern Territory	179	11.4
Total	5,852	27.5

n.a. not available.

.. not applicable.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

**Table A12: Children admitted to care and protection orders, by age, states and territories, 2011–12
(number and per cent)**

Age (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	644	459	523	225	173	76	35	65	2,200
1–4	780	862	1,334	550	309	206	46	121	4,208
5–9	716	750	1,263	487	239	174	51	80	3,760
10–14	646	747	895	301	180	143	35	100	3,047
15–17	231	300	267	56	35	37	16	32	974
Total^(c)	3,017	3,118	4,282	1,619	936	638	183	398	14,191
Per cent									
<1	21.3	14.7	12.2	13.9	18.5	11.9	19.1	16.3	15.5
1–4	25.9	27.6	31.2	34.0	33.0	32.4	25.1	30.4	29.7
5–9	23.7	24.1	29.5	30.1	25.5	27.4	27.9	20.1	26.5
10–14	21.4	24.0	20.9	18.6	19.2	22.5	19.1	25.1	21.5
15–17	7.7	9.6	6.2	3.5	3.7	5.8	8.7	8.0	6.9
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) 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 exclude children of unknown age.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A13: Children discharged from care and protection orders, by length of time on an order, states and territories, 2011–12

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)	606	108	183	252	378	307	404	2,238
Victoria	179	471	935	607	458	224	143	3,017
Queensland	601	66	217	519	726	278	196	2,603
Western Australia	1	0	12	42	156	72	78	361
South Australia	115	28	15	101	56	48	57	420
Tasmania	109	13	47	95	54	20	18	356
Australian Capital Territory	31	6	1	21	37	17	21	134
Northern Territory	226	36	13	22	27	16	9	349
Total	1,868	728	1,423	1,659	1,892	982	926	9,478
	Per cent							
New South Wales	27.1	4.8	8.2	11.3	16.9	13.7	18.1	100.0
Victoria	5.9	15.6	31.0	20.1	15.2	7.4	4.7	100.0
Queensland	23.1	2.5	8.3	19.9	27.9	10.7	7.5	100.0
Western Australia	0.3	—	3.3	11.6	43.2	19.9	21.6	100.0
South Australia	27.4	6.7	3.6	24.0	13.3	11.4	13.6	100.0
Tasmania	30.6	3.7	13.2	26.7	15.2	5.6	5.1	100.0
Australian Capital Territory	23.1	4.5	0.7	15.7	27.6	12.7	15.7	100.0
Northern Territory	64.8	10.3	3.7	6.3	7.7	4.6	2.6	100.0
Total	19.7	7.7	15.0	17.5	20.0	10.4	9.8	100.0

— nil or rounded to zero.

(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 in 5 days or less of the discharge, the orders are deemed to be consecutive (that is, 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 Collection 2012.

Table A14: Children on care and protection orders, by living arrangements, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Living arrangements	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Parents	653	211	732	247	93	136	137	66	2,275
Relatives/kin ^(b)	0	0	..	110	49	14	11	37	221
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>653</i>	<i>211</i>	<i>732</i>	<i>357</i>	<i>142</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>2,496</i>
Foster care ^(c)	6,959	328	4,369	1,152	1,077	529	214	246	14,874
Relatives/kin ^{(c)(d)}	7,572	576	2,679	1,247	1,000	297	288	128	13,787
Other	0	372	..	0	0	82	22	177	653
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>14,531</i>	<i>1,276</i>	<i>7,048</i>	<i>2,399</i>	<i>2,077</i>	<i>908</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>551</i>	<i>29,314</i>
Residential care	512	55	629	123	247	26	31	10	1,633
Family group homes	30	0	..	136	0	16	0	58	240
Independent living ^(e)	217	10	59	10	38	23	3	2	362
Other/unknown	38	5,710	395	467	176	62	13	56	6,917
Total	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962
Per cent									
Parents	4.1	2.9	8.3	7.1	3.5	11.5	19.1	8.5	5.6
Relatives/kin ^(b)	—	—	..	3.2	1.8	1.2	1.5	4.7	0.5
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>8.3</i>	<i>10.2</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>12.7</i>	<i>20.6</i>	<i>13.2</i>	<i>6.1</i>
Foster care ^(c)	43.5	4.5	49.3	33.0	40.2	44.6	29.8	31.5	36.3
Relatives/kin ^{(c)(d)}	47.4	7.9	30.2	35.7	37.3	25.1	40.1	16.4	33.7
Other	—	5.1	..	—	0.0	6.9	3.1	22.7	1.6
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>90.9</i>	<i>17.6</i>	<i>79.5</i>	<i>68.7</i>	<i>77.5</i>	<i>76.6</i>	<i>72.9</i>	<i>70.6</i>	<i>71.6</i>
Residential care	3.2	0.8	7.1	3.5	9.2	2.2	4.3	1.3	4.0
Family group homes	0.2	—	..	3.9	0.0	1.4	—	7.4	0.6
Independent living ^(e)	1.4	0.1	0.7	0.3	1.4	1.9	0.4	0.3	0.9
Other/unknown	0.2	78.6	4.5	13.4	6.6	5.2	1.8	7.2	16.9
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.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Table A15: Children on care and protection orders, by age and living arrangements, 30 June 2012

Age (years)	Family care ^(a)	Home-based out-of-home care ^(b)	Residential care	Family group homes	Independent living ^(c)	Other	Total
<1	94	872	7	1	0	259	1,233
1–4	538	6,301	74	14	0	1,515	8,442
5–9	625	10,063	164	69	0	1,763	12,684
10–14	719	8,776	639	112	17	1,826	12,088
15–17	520	3,301	749	44	344	1,555	6,514
Total^(d)	2,496	29,314	1,633	240	361	6,918	40,962
Per cent							
<1	3.8	3.0	0.4	0.4	0.0	3.7	3.0
1–4	21.6	21.5	4.5	5.8	0.0	21.9	20.6
5–9	25.0	34.3	10.0	28.8	0.0	25.5	31.0
10–14	28.8	29.9	39.1	46.7	4.7	26.4	29.5
15–17	20.8	11.3	45.9	18.3	95.3	22.5	15.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total living arrangements	6.1	71.6	4.0	0.6	0.9	16.9	100.0

(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 one child 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 Collection 2012.

Table A16: Children on care and protection orders, by age, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Age (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	448	221	270	132	94	30	21	17	1,233
1–4	3,251	1,481	1,824	771	550	237	148	180	8,442
5–9	5,139	1,989	2,774	1,126	845	363	225	223	12,684
10–14	4,844	2,100	2,550	1,024	762	368	196	244	12,088
15–17	2,298	1,471	1,445	439	429	187	129	116	6,514
Total^(b)	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962
Per cent									
<1	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.8	3.5	2.5	2.9	2.2	3.0
1–4	20.3	20.4	20.6	22.1	20.5	20.0	20.6	23.1	20.6
5–9	32.2	27.4	31.3	32.2	31.5	30.6	31.3	28.6	31.0
10–14	30.3	28.9	28.8	29.3	28.4	31.1	27.3	31.3	29.5
15–17	14.4	20.3	16.3	12.6	16.0	15.8	17.9	14.9	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 one child 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 Collection 2012.

Table A17: Children on care and protection orders, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Sex of child	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	8,355	3,675	4,507	1,814	1,405	624	389	380	21,149
Girls	7,626	3,586	4,356	1,674	1,273	561	330	400	19,806
Unknown	0	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	7
Persons	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962
Per cent									
Boys	52.3	50.6	50.9	52.0	52.5	52.7	54.1	48.7	51.6
Girls	47.7	49.4	49.1	48.0	47.5	47.3	45.9	51.3	48.4
Persons	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.

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 Collection 2012.

Table A18: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	3,521	802	2,485	1,326	696	206	103	506	9,645
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	1,229	..	286	129	10	11	13	0	1,678
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	333	123	28	0	5	8	0	497
Interim and temporary orders	524	15	480	167	33	19	38	108	1,384
Administrative arrangements	25	..	..	..	5	0	2	32	64
Total	5,299	1,150	3,374	1,650	744	241	164	646	13,268
Non-Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	7,010	4,286	3,901	1,436	1,764	745	379	104	19,625
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	2,420	..	698	157	38	83	38	0	3,434
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,594	227	33	10	14	57	0	1,935
Interim and temporary orders	1,135	220	620	187	60	88	57	26	2,393
Administrative arrangements	96	..	..	..	29	3	12	4	144
Total	10,661	6,100	5,446	1,813	1,901	933	543	134	27,531
All children^(c)									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	10,552	5,100	6,405	2,766	2,484	955	490	610	29,362
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	3,649	..	985	286	48	94	51	0	5,113
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,927	356	73	13	19	65	0	2,453
Interim and temporary orders	1,659	235	1,117	367	99	114	96	134	3,821
Administrative arrangements	121	..	..	..	36	3	17	36	213
Total	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962

(continued)

Table A18 (continued): Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Per cent									
Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	66.4	69.7	73.7	..	93.5	85.5	62.8	78.3	72.7
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	23.2	..	8.5	..	1.3	4.6	7.9	—	12.6
Finalised supervisory orders	..	29.0	3.6	..	—	2.1	4.9	—	3.7
Interim and temporary orders	9.9	1.3	14.2	..	4.4	7.9	23.2	16.7	10.4
Administrative arrangements	0.5	..	..	..	0.7	—	1.2	5.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	65.8	70.3	71.6	..	92.8	79.8	69.8	77.6	71.3
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.7	..	12.8	..	2.0	8.9	7.0	—	12.5
Finalised supervisory orders	..	26.1	4.2	..	0.5	1.5	10.5	—	7.0
Interim and temporary orders	10.6	3.6	11.4	..	3.2	9.4	10.5	19.4	8.7
Administrative arrangements	0.9	..	..	..	1.5	0.3	2.2	3.0	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children^(c)									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	66.0	70.2	72.3	..	92.7	80.6	68.2	78.2	71.7
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.8	..	11.1	..	1.8	7.9	7.1	—	12.5
Finalised supervisory orders	..	26.5	4.0	..	0.5	1.6	9.0	—	6.0
Interim and temporary orders	10.4	3.2	12.6	..	3.7	9.6	13.4	17.2	9.3
Administrative arrangements	0.8	..	..	..	1.3	0.3	2.4	4.6	0.5
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) 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 158 children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Out-of-home care

Table A19: Children admitted to out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2011–12

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	653	490	473	245	133	45	26	62	2,127
1–4	870	842	702	338	146	73	73	115	3,159
5–9	829	841	576	254	123	66	68	78	2,835
10–14	749	880	629	203	146	72	49	107	2,835
15–17	306	473	291	48	70	28	31	37	1,284
Total	3,407	3,526	2,671	1,088	618	284	247	399	12,240
Per cent									
<1	19.2	13.9	17.7	22.5	21.5	15.8	10.5	15.5	17.4
1–4	25.5	23.9	26.3	31.1	23.6	25.7	29.6	28.8	25.8
5–9	24.3	23.9	21.6	23.3	19.9	23.2	27.5	19.5	23.2
10–14	22.0	25.0	23.5	18.7	23.6	25.4	19.8	26.8	23.2
15–17	9.0	13.4	10.9	4.4	11.3	9.9	12.6	9.3	10.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

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 60 days or more 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 Collection 2012.

Table A20: Children discharged from out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2011–12

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	126	223	63	44	13	11	5	37	522
1–4	449	675	228	197	50	58	29	101	1,787
5–9	481	684	234	196	44	46	38	69	1,792
10–14	726	684	307	184	60	59	44	105	2,169
15–17	1,199	857	518	89	194	67	52	58	3,034
Total	2,981	3,123	1,350	710	361	241	168	370	9,304
Per cent									
<1	4.2	7.1	4.7	6.2	3.6	4.6	3.0	10.0	5.6
1–4	15.1	21.6	16.9	27.7	13.9	24.1	17.3	27.3	19.2
5–9	16.1	21.9	17.3	27.6	12.2	19.1	22.6	18.6	19.3
10–14	24.4	21.9	22.7	25.9	16.6	24.5	26.2	28.4	23.3
15–17	40.2	27.4	38.4	12.5	53.7	27.8	31.0	15.7	32.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. The data for children exiting care include those who left care and had not returned in less than 60 days. 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 Collection 2012.

Table A21: Children in out-of-home care, by type of placement, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Type of placement	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Foster care ^(a)	7,026	2,166	4,579	1,386	1,087	547	218	265	17,274
Relatives/kin ^(a)	9,586	2,832	2,767	1,465	1,104	306	292	163	18,515
Other home-based care	0	690	..	0	5	82	22	162	961
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>16,612</i>	<i>5,688</i>	<i>7,346</i>	<i>2,851</i>	<i>2,196</i>	<i>935</i>	<i>532</i>	<i>590</i>	<i>36,750</i>
Family group homes	30	0	..	170	0	17	0	55	272
Residential care	455	478	653	150	246	27	33	0	2,042
Independent living	88	38	..	13	26	8	1	1	175
Other/unknown	7	3	..	216	80	22	0	54	382
Total	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
Per cent									
Foster care	40.9	34.9	57.2	40.8	42.7	54.2	38.5	37.9	43.6
Relatives/kin	55.8	45.6	34.6	43.1	43.3	30.3	51.6	23.3	46.7
Other home-based care	..	11.1	..	..	0.2	8.1	3.9	23.1	2.4
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>96.6</i>	<i>91.6</i>	<i>91.8</i>	<i>83.9</i>	<i>86.2</i>	<i>92.7</i>	<i>94.0</i>	<i>84.3</i>	<i>92.8</i>
Family group homes	0.2	..	..	5.0	..	1.7	..	7.9	0.7
Residential care	2.6	7.7	8.2	4.4	9.7	2.7	5.8	..	5.2
Independent living	0.5	0.6	..	0.4	1.0	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.4
Other/unknown	—	—	..	6.4	3.1	2.2	..	7.7	1.0
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 Collection 2012.

Table A22: Children in out-of-home care, by age, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	427	219	249	145	87	24	17	17	1,185
1–4	3,256	1,171	1,733	789	531	207	120	168	7,975
5–9	5,540	1,686	2,644	1,106	832	329	184	207	12,528
10–14	5,489	1,851	2,338	939	730	326	157	217	12,047
15–17	2,479	1,280	1,035	421	368	123	88	91	5,885
Total^(a)	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
Per cent									
<1	2.5	3.5	3.1	4.3	3.4	2.4	3.0	2.4	3.0
1–4	18.9	18.9	21.7	23.2	20.8	20.5	21.2	24.0	20.1
5–9	32.2	27.2	33.1	32.5	32.7	32.6	32.5	29.6	31.6
10–14	31.9	29.8	29.2	27.6	28.6	32.3	27.7	31.0	30.4
15–17	14.4	20.6	12.9	12.4	14.4	12.2	15.5	13.0	14.9
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 Collection 2012.

Table A23: Children in out-of-home care, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Sex of child	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	8,970	3,101	4,095	1,763	1,340	536	302	333	20,440
Girls	8,222	3,099	3,904	1,637	1,202	473	264	367	19,168
Unknown	0	7	0	0	6	0	0	0	13
Persons	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
Per cent									
Boys	52.2	50.0	51.2	51.9	52.7	53.1	53.4	47.6	51.6
Girls	47.8	50.0	48.8	48.1	47.3	46.9	46.6	52.4	48.4
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 Collection 2012.

Table A24: Children in out-of-home care, by age and type of placement, 30 June 2012 (per cent)

Age (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Home-based									
<1	2.6	3.8	3.3	4.5	3.9	2.6	3.2	2.9	3.2
1–4	19.6	20.4	23.3	25.5	22.4	22.0	22.6	27.3	21.3
5–9	33.2	29.0	35.1	35.2	34.2	34.2	34.2	31.2	33.2
10–14	31.9	29.2	28.3	25.7	27.6	31.3	27.3	28.3	29.9
15–17	12.8	17.6	10.0	9.0	11.9	9.8	12.8	10.3	12.5
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	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
1–4	0.8	2.1	3.4	11.3	11.8	2.3	0.0	5.5	4.5
5–9	4.5	6.9	9.6	26.9	22.8	11.4	6.1	23.6	12.1
10–14	40.4	40.0	40.0	41.6	40.7	50.0	36.4	50.9	40.8
15–17	54.0	50.6	46.4	19.4	24.4	36.4	57.6	20.0	42.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

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 Collection 2012.

Table A25: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status and relationship of carer, states and territories, 30 June 2012

Relationship	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous relative/kin	2,922	275	659	670	275	24	64	158	5,047
Other Indigenous caregiver	1,065	65	593	231	118	25	13	59	2,169
Other relative/kin	886	238	382	193	110	47	10	0	1,866
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>4,873</i>	<i>578</i>	<i>1,634</i>	<i>1,094</i>	<i>503</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>217</i>	<i>9,082</i>
Other caregiver	1,097	449	1,407	484	173	114	46	352	4,122
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>1,097</i>	<i>449</i>	<i>1,407</i>	<i>484</i>	<i>173</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>352</i>	<i>4,122</i>
Total	5,970	1,027	3,041	1,578	676	210	133	569	13,204
Per cent									
Indigenous relative/kin	48.9	26.8	21.7	42.5	40.7	11.4	48.1	27.8	38.2
Other Indigenous caregiver	17.8	6.3	19.5	14.6	17.5	11.9	9.8	10.4	16.4
Other relative/kin	14.8	23.2	12.6	12.2	16.3	22.4	7.5	0.0	14.1
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>81.6</i>	<i>56.3</i>	<i>53.7</i>	<i>69.3</i>	<i>74.4</i>	<i>45.7</i>	<i>65.4</i>	<i>38.1</i>	<i>68.8</i>
Other caregiver	18.4	43.7	46.3	30.7	25.6	54.3	34.6	61.9	31.2
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>18.4</i>	<i>43.7</i>	<i>46.3</i>	<i>30.7</i>	<i>25.6</i>	<i>54.3</i>	<i>34.6</i>	<i>61.9</i>	<i>31.2</i>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

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 Collection 2012.

Foster and relative/kinship carers

Table A26: Foster carer households with a placement at 30 June 2012, by number of foster children placed

Number of children	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
1 child	2,007	555	879	323	316	82	86	87	4,335
2 children	1,087	258	605	207	189	40	46	36	2,468
3–4 children	681	104	533	116	117	52	19	9	1,631
5+ children	111	15	184	39	12	20	3	4	388
Total households with a placement^(c)	3,886	932	2,201	687	634	194	154	136	8,824
	Per cent								
1 child	51.6	59.5	39.9	47.2	49.8	42.3	55.8	64.0	49.1
2 children	28.0	27.7	27.5	30.2	29.8	20.6	29.9	26.5	28.0
3–4 children	17.5	11.2	24.2	16.9	18.5	26.8	12.3	6.6	18.5
5+ children	2.9	1.6	8.4	5.7	1.9	10.3	1.9	2.9	4.4
Total households with a placement	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Queensland data excludes provisionally approved carer households.

(b) The Western Australian snapshot date was 2/07/2012. 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) Total includes two households where the number of children placed was unknown.

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 Collection 2012.

Table A27: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement at 30 June 2012, by number of children placed

Number of children	NSW	Vic	Qld^(a)	WA^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT^(c)	Total
Number									
1 child	3,563	1,491	643	527	439	145	128	n.a.	6,936
2 children	1,455	382	307	197	197	47	45	n.a.	2,630
3–4 children	771	162	181	132	81	16	20	n.a.	1,363
5+ children	114	11	24	17	7	3	1	n.a.	177
Total households	5,903	2,046	1,155	873	724	211	194	n.a.	11,106
Per cent									
1 child	60.4	72.9	55.7	60.4	60.6	68.7	66.0	..	62.5
2 children	24.6	18.7	26.6	22.6	27.2	22.3	23.2	..	23.7
3–4 children	13.1	7.9	15.7	15.1	11.2	7.6	10.3	..	12.3
5+ children	1.9	0.5	2.1	1.9	1.0	1.4	0.5	..	1.6
Total households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0

.. not applicable.

n.a. not available.

(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 2/07/2012. 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 2011–12.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2012.

Intensive family support services

Table A28: Children commencing intensive family support services, by living arrangements at commencement of service, states and territories, 2011–12 (per cent)

Living situation	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^(a)	ACT ^(b)	NT	Total
Family care									
Child living with parent(s)	97.7	83.0	64.8	72.9	76.0	..	..	87.6	86.1
Child living with other relatives/kin	0.2	1.0	4.9	7.7	..	..	..	..	1.6
Child in out-of-home care	1.9	1.2	29.8	5.3	24.0	..	..	12.4	7.6
Child in shared care	0.1	..	0.3	2.2	..	..	..	..	0.2
Other	..	14.9	0.2	11.9	..	..	..	..	4.5
Total	100.0	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	..	100.0	100.0

.. not applicable.

(a) Tasmania is not able to provide these data for 2011–12.

(b) The Australian Capital Territory is not able to provide these data for 2011–12.

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 Collection 2012.

National trend data

Table A29: National child protection trend data, 2007–08 to 2011–12

	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12 ^(a)
	Number				
Notifications	317,526	339,454	286,437	237,273	252,962
Investigations	190,423	203,225	162,321	127,759	116,528
Substantiations	55,120	54,621	46,187	40,466	48,420
Children in notifications	195,387	207,462	187,314	163,767	173,502
Children in substantiations	32,098	32,641	31,295	31,527	37,781
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	32,642	35,409	37,730	39,058	40,962
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	31,166	34,069	35,895	37,648	39,621
	Number per 1,000 children				
Notifications	..	..	..	..	..
Investigations	..	..	..	..	..
Substantiations	..	..	..	..	..
Children in notifications	39.3	41.2	36.8	31.9	34.0
Children in substantiations	6.5	6.5	6.1	6.1	7.4
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	6.6	7.0	7.4	7.6	8.0
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	6.3	6.7	7.0	7.3	7.7

.. not applicable.

(a) The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population which has caused a downward revision of the 2011–12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A30: Children in the child protection system, by Indigenous status, 2008 to 2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
	Number				
	Indigenous children				
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	7,340	8,172	8,334	8,231	10,058
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	8,809	10,271	11,451	12,280	13,268
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	9,070	10,512	11,468	12,358	13,299
	Non-Indigenous children				
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	24,758	24,469	22,335	22,144	26,183
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	23,179	25,052	26,215	26,531	27,531
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	21,539	23,374	24,279	24,929	26,127
	All children^(d)				
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	32,098	32,641	31,295	31,527	37,781
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	32,642	35,409	37,730	39,058	40,962
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	31,166	34,069	35,895	37,648	39,621

(continued)

Table A30 (continued): Children in the child protection system, by Indigenous status, 2008 to 2012

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 ^(e)
Number per 1,000 children					
Indigenous children					
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	33.5	35.0	35.3	34.6	41.9
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	40.1	43.8	48.3	51.4	54.9
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	41.3	44.8	48.4	51.7	55.1
Non-Indigenous children					
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	5.2	5.1	4.6	4.5	5.4
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	4.9	5.2	5.4	5.4	5.6
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	4.5	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.4
All children^(d)					
Children in substantiations ^{(a)(b)}	6.5	6.5	6.1	6.1	7.4
Children on care and protection orders ^(c)	6.6	7.0	7.4	7.6	8.0
Children in out-of-home care ^(c)	6.3	6.7	7.0	7.3	7.7

(a) Children in substantiations are measured in financial years (2007–08, 2008–09, 2009–10, 2010–11 and 2011–12).

(b) Substantiations data for non-Indigenous children for 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) Children on care and protection orders and in out-of-care are measured as at 30 June each year.

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

(e) The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of the 2012 Non-Indigenous and All children estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

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 Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A31: Children in substantiations, by age group, 2008–09 to 2011–12

Age (years)	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12
<1	4,086	3,919	3,562	3,862
1–4	8,439	7,935	8,054	9,908
5–9	8,713	8,227	8,338	10,380
10–14	8,551	8,263	8,130	9,381
15–17	2,258	2,405	2,536	2,771
0–17	32,641	31,295	31,527	37,781

Notes

1. Some data may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.
2. Total 0–17 age group includes children of unknown age and may not equal the sum of age categories.
3. The 'less than 1' category excludes unborn children.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2008–09 to 2011–12.

Table A32: Children in substantiations, by abuse type and sex, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Type of abuse or neglect	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12
Boys					
Physical abuse	4,111	4,079	3,652	3,681	4,065
Sexual abuse	1,000	1,002	1,134	1,305	1,525
Emotional abuse	5,940	6,143	5,823	5,571	6,940
Neglect	4,480	4,505	4,416	4,473	5,587
Girls					
Physical abuse	3,882	3,678	3,473	3,442	3,848
Sexual abuse	2,504	2,728	3,010	3,101	3,250
Emotional abuse	5,931	6,176	5,658	5,646	6,991
Neglect	4,039	4,124	3,927	4,008	5,231
All children^(a)					
Physical abuse	8,054	7,801	7,169	7,186	7,980
Sexual abuse	3,511	3,735	4,155	4,427	4,801
Emotional abuse	11,954	12,397	11,549	11,290	14,024
Neglect	8,579	8,708	8,422	8,570	10,936

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A33: Trends in children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2008 to 30 June 2012

Year	NSW	Vic ^(a)	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA ^(c)	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
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
2012	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962

(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.

(d) Data for Tasmania may not be comparable year to year due to considerable data lag with the recording of order status.

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 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A34: Trends in children admitted to care and protection orders, states and territories, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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
2011–12	3,017	3,118	4,282	1,619	936	638	183	398	14,191

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders. New South Wales is working to improve the way it counts admissions to care and protection orders. New South Wales currently does not strictly conform to the national counting rules.

(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 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A35: Trends in children discharged from care and protection orders, states and territories, 2007–08 to 2011–12

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
2007–08	2,045	2,186	2,427	442	494	281	160	279	8,314
2008–09	2,114	1,777	2,268	547	539	274	175	333	8,027
2009–10	2,003	1,663	2,363	627	495	188	160	292	7,791
2010–11	2,086	1,662	2,185	397	512	221	128	289	7,480
2011–12	2,238	3,017	2,603	361	420	356	134	349	9,478

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

(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) Data for Tasmania may not be comparable year to year due to considerable data lag with the recording of order status.

Note: 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.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Table A36: Children admitted to and discharged from out-of-home care, 2007–08 to 2011–12

	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12
Admitted	12,891	12,833	12,002	11,613	12,240
Discharged	8,323 ^(a)	8,653 ^(a)	9,330	9,183	9,304

(a) Excludes the Northern Territory as data were not available.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2007–08 to 2011–12.

Population data

Table A37: Population of children aged 0–17, by age and Indigenous status, December 2011

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children^(a)									
0–4	21,807	4,543	21,581	9,031	3,694	2,571	601	7,993	71,819
5–9	18,907	4,138	19,348	8,380	3,388	2,130	516	7,691	64,497
10–14	19,036	4,177	19,206	8,793	3,578	2,241	515	7,598	65,143
15–17	11,772	2,540	11,329	5,032	2,115	1,451	323 ^(b)	4,266	38,827
0–17	71,521	15,397	71,463	31,236	12,774	8,393	1,954	27,548	240,285
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	452,029	349,619	285,594	149,693	94,423	29,296	23,806	10,481	1,394,939
5–9	427,831	328,676	274,701	140,664	91,199	28,608	21,365	9,741	1,322,784
10–14	423,862	324,476	274,486	140,380	93,936	30,332	20,500	8,909	1,316,880
15–17	262,655	205,868	170,155	87,289	60,136	19,124	13,129	5,453	823,807
0–17	1,566,376	1,208,638	1,004,935	518,026	339,693	107,360	78,799	34,584	4,858,409
All children									
0–4	473,835	354,162	307,175	158,723	98,116	31,867	24,406	18,474	1,466,758
5–9	446,738	332,814	294,048	149,044	94,586	30,738	21,880	17,432	1,387,280
10–14	442,898	328,652	293,692	149,173	97,513	32,572	21,015	16,507	1,382,022
15–17	274,426	208,407	181,483	92,321	62,251	20,575	13,452	9,719	862,634
0–17	1,637,897	1,224,035	1,076,398	549,261	352,466	115,752	80,753	62,132	5,098,694

(a) The December 2011 population for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is the average of 30 June 2011 and 30 June 2012 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) Due to small Indigenous population counts in the ACT, an estimate of the number of 15–17 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is not available directly from ABS population projections. It is derived from data for the 15–19 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections by taking the 15–19 year 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 2009, 2012b.

Table A38: Population of children aged 0–17, by age and Indigenous status, March 2012

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children^(a)									
0–4	22,127	4,616	21,914	9,133	3,743	2,624	606	8,033	72,796
5–9	19,027	4,144	19,472	8,356	3,396	2,144	526	7,654	64,719
10–14	18,950	4,190	19,234	8,806	3,587	2,222	516	7,728	65,233
15–17	11,744	2,533	11,370	4,993	2,119	1,443	323 ^(b)	4,223	38,748
0–17	71,848	15,483	71,990	31,288	12,845	8,433	1,971	27,638	241,496
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	452,190	352,319	286,289	151,401	94,969	29,307	24,119	10,546	1,401,140
5–9	429,845	330,697	276,422	142,486	91,616	28,596	21,549	9,824	1,331,035
10–14	423,734	324,413	275,050	140,934	93,806	30,203	20,504	8,860	1,317,504
15–17	263,038	206,079	170,578	87,685	60,153	19,166	13,050	5,496	825,245
0–17	1,568,807	1,213,508	1,008,339	522,506	340,544	107,272	79,222	34,726	4,874,924
All children									
0–4	474,317	356,935	308,203	160,534	98,712	31,931	24,725	18,579	1,473,936
5–9	448,872	334,841	295,894	150,842	95,012	30,740	22,075	17,478	1,395,754
10–14	442,684	328,603	294,284	149,740	97,393	32,425	21,020	16,588	1,382,737
15–17	274,782	208,612	181,948	92,678	62,272	20,609	13,373	9,719	863,993
0–17	1,640,655	1,228,991	1,080,329	553,794	353,389	115,705	81,193	62,364	5,116,420

(a) The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for March 2012 is the 30 June 2012 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projection.

(b) Due to small Indigenous population counts in the ACT, an estimate of the number of 15–17 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is not available directly from ABS population projections. It is derived from data for the 15–19 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population projections by taking the 15–19 year 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 2009, 2012b.

Table A39: Population of all children aged 0–17, by age, December 2011

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
All children									
<1	94,044	70,908	61,181	31,935	19,718	6,312	4,932	3,689	292,719
1–4	379,791	283,254	245,994	126,788	78,398	25,555	19,474	14,785	1,174,039
5–9	446,738	332,814	294,048	149,044	94,586	30,738	21,880	17,432	1,387,280
10–14	442,898	328,652	293,692	149,173	97,513	32,572	21,015	16,507	1,382,022
15–17	274,426	208,407	181,483	92,321	62,251	20,575	13,452	9,719	862,634
0–17	1,637,897	1,224,035	1,076,398	549,261	352,466	115,752	80,753	62,132	5,098,694

Source: ABS 2012a.

Table A40: Population of all children aged 0–17, by age, March 2012

Age of child (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
All children									
<1	93,341	72,385	60,976	32,424	20,003	6,396	5,035	3,760	294,320
1–4	380,976	284,550	247,227	128,110	78,709	25,535	19,690	14,819	1,179,616
5–9	448,872	334,841	295,894	150,842	95,012	30,740	22,075	17,478	1,395,754
10–14	442,684	328,603	294,284	149,740	97,393	32,425	21,020	16,588	1,382,737
15–17	274,782	208,612	181,948	92,678	62,272	20,609	13,373	9,719	863,993
0–17	1,640,655	1,228,991	1,080,329	553,794	353,389	115,705	81,193	62,364	5,116,420

Source: ABS 2012b.

Appendix B 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 2012 (ABS 2012b). The rates of children who were the subjects of child protection substantiations during 2011–12 were calculated using the ABS population estimates for 31 December 2011 (ABS 2012a).

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

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 on care and protection orders at 30 June 2012}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0–17 at 31 March 2012}} \times 1,000$$

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

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care at 30 June 2012}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0–17 at 31 March 2012}} \times 1,000$$

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

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 who were the subject of substantiations in 2011–12}}{\text{ABS estimated population aged 0–17 at 31 December 2011}} \times 1,000$$

The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of 2011–12 estimates based on the 2011 Census (see ABS 2012c, d). Due to these changes, comparisons of rates of Non-Indigenous and All children over time should be interpreted with caution.

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 2009).

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 before 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 C Data quality statement: National child protection data collection

Summary of key issues

- The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) child protection data collection contains information on:
 - notifications, investigations and substantiations
 - care and protection orders
 - out-of-home care
 - foster carers
 - relative/kinship carers
 - intensive family support services.
- The AIHW compiles the national collection each year using data extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for child protection.
- Differences in jurisdictional policy, practice, legislation and data systems must be taken into consideration when interpreting all child protection data (see Appendices D-H of *Child Protection Australia 2011–12*).
- Overall, the quality and coverage of data in the child protection data collection are good. However, data availability issues mean a small number of tables in the collection do not provide fully national data; and in some jurisdictions there is a high proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown in relation to substantiated child abuse and neglect.
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of estimates based on the 2011 Census. Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

Description

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 data for this collection are collected from each of the eight state and territory departments responsible for child protection, and collated and analysed by the AIHW. The data are extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments

according to definitions and technical specifications agreed to by those departments and the AIHW. This data collection represents the only national source of child protection data.

The collection is a part of the child welfare series. The agreement for ongoing funding of this series forms Schedule 3 of the National Community Services Information Infrastructure Agreement (NCSIIA). This agreement operates under the auspices of the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC), formerly the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee (CDSMAC).

Institutional environment

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent statutory authority established in 1987, governed by a management Board, and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health and Ageing portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, and mental health, to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The Institute also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The Institute works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national datasets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse these datasets and disseminate information and statistics.

The *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*, in conjunction with compliance to the *Privacy Act 1988*, (Cth) ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information see the AIHW website <www.aihw.gov.au>.

Timeliness

The reference period for the 2011–12 child protection collection is from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. Data relating to child protection investigations includes investigation outcomes recorded up until 31 August 2012, to maximise the currency of these data items.

The state and territory departments responsible for child protection provide data to the AIHW annually, after the end of each financial year. For the 2011–12 collection, the first iteration of data was due to the AIHW by 26 September 2012, and data were finalised for all states and territories in November 2012. Data from the 2011–12 child protection collection were published in March 2013.

The data for each collection period are released in the AIHW's *Child protection Australia* annual publication.

Accessibility

Publications containing national child protection data, including the annual *Child protection Australia* reports, are available on the AIHW website <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection/>>. These reports are available free of charge. Concurrent with the annual publication, key findings are also presented online.

Requests for unpublished data can be made by contacting the AIHW on (02) 6244 1000 or via email to info@aihw.gov.au. A cost-recovery charge may apply to requests that take substantial resources to compile. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may require approval from the state and territory data custodians and/or the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General inquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Communications, Media and Marketing Unit on (02) 6244 1032 or via email to info@aihw.gov.au.

Interpretability

Supporting information on relevant mandatory reporting requirements, legislation, jurisdictional policy and data systems are presented in the appendixes of the *Child protection Australia* reports. Supporting information is also provided in the footnotes accompanying tables and the report Glossary. Chapter 1 of the report provides an overview of the child protection process and data collection. Readers are advised to consider all supporting and contextual information to ensure appropriate interpretation of analyses presented by the AIHW.

Metadata for the child protection collection is currently being updated for entry on to METeOR, the AIHW's online metadata repository.

Relevance

The child protection collection is the authoritative source of national Australian child protection data.

The collection includes several modules on notifications, investigations, substantiations; care and protection orders; out-of-home care, foster and relative/kinship carers; and intensive family support services. Where available, these collections provide information on children within each system and the child protection cases, placements and households relating to children.

The three primary modules (notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care) include a range of information about children who come into contact with the child protection system, including their age, sex, Indigenous status and living arrangements. Data are also collected on the main type of substantiated abuse or neglect that has occurred: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect.

The collection also includes numbers of admissions to, and discharges from, care and protection orders and out-of-home care; and information on households providing foster and relative/kinship care placements.

In addition to providing information on the current collection period, the collection also allows for some trends to be examined. As part of the 'child welfare' schedule under the National Community Services Information Infrastructure Agreement, the collection is a

valuable source for monitoring various components of the child protection system. Overall, these data give a detailed view of statutory child protection in Australia.

Data sourced from national child protection collections are used for reporting under the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's children 2009–2020* and in the annual *Report on Government Services*.

Accuracy

Data for the child protection data collections are extracted each year from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for child protection in Australia, according to definitions and technical specifications agreed to by the departments and the AIHW. Overall, the quality and coverage of data in the child protection data collection are good.

Scope and coverage

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 they were also referred to departments responsible for child protection.

There are significant links and overlaps between the notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care data modules. 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 modules. A unique count of children in the child protection system cannot be obtained using the current methodology.

Each year a number of children are the subject of more than one notification and/or substantiation during the year. However, the current available aggregate 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.

Work is 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 unit record (child level) data collection, which will replace the current aggregate collection from July 2013 (see Appendix J of *Child Protection Australia 2011–12* for details).

Data quality

Overall, the quality and coverage of data in the child protection data collection are good. However, data availability affects the interpretability of some data presented:

- For data on *substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by type of abuse or neglect*, Victoria and South Australia report a large proportion of family types in the 'not stated' category (97% and 49%, respectively) and, as such, have not been included in the total. Data are also not available for New South Wales.
- *Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2011–12, by Indigenous status* should be interpreted with caution due to the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status was unknown in Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania (34%, 20% and 17%, respectively).

- Care and protection orders issued, by type of order are not available for South Australia.
- Children substantiated in 2010–11 and subsequently placed on care and protection orders within 12 months are not available for New South Wales.
- Households exiting foster care are not available for New South Wales.
- Relative/kinship carer households with a placement at 30 June are not available for the Northern Territory.
- Relative/kinship carer households with a placement during the year are not available for Queensland and the Northern Territory.
- Households commencing relative/kinship care are not available for the Northern Territory.
- Households exiting relative/kinship care are not available for New South Wales and the Northern Territory.
- Number of children aged 0–17 commencing intensive family support services are not available for Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

Coherence

National child protection data has been provided to the AIHW since 1993 under the agreement between the Commonwealth, the states and territories and the AIHW concerning the provision of data on welfare services. In 1993, separate reports were published on child abuse and neglect (*Child abuse and neglect Australia 1990–91*) and care and protection orders (*Children under care and protection orders Australia 1990–91*).

Child protection Australia 1996–97 contained consolidated information on several child protection modules (notifications, investigations, substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care) for the first time. *Child protection Australia* has subsequently been released as an annual report in that format. Limited data on intensive family support services were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2003–04*. Data on foster carer households were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2009–10* and relative/kinship carer data were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2010–11*.

It is standard practice to present 5-year trends in data, as changes in state and territory legislation, policy/practice and information management systems reduce the ability to accurately compare data over longer periods. Changes that have an impact on the data are provided as caveats to the data and in relevant appendixes to *Child Protection Australia* reports.

Notifications, investigations and substantiations data for non-Indigenous children before 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 for children in substantiations by Indigenous status between 2008–09 and 2009–10.

The ABS has improved the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population, which has caused a downward revision of estimates based on the 2011 Census. Due to these changes, comparisons of rates over time should be interpreted with caution.

Appendix D Mandatory reporting requirements

Commonwealth

Family Law Act (1975)

Subdivision D – Allegations of child abuse 67Z where party to proceedings makes allegation of child abuse.

(1) This section applies if a party to proceedings under this Act alleges that a child to whom the proceedings relate has been abused or is at risk of being abused.

(2) The party must file a notice in the prescribed form in the court hearing the proceedings, and serve a true copy of the notice upon the person who is alleged to have abused the child or from whom the child is alleged to be at risk of abuse.

(3) If a notice under subsection (2) is filed in a court, the Registry Manager must, as soon as practicable, notify a prescribed child welfare authority.

(4) In this section:

prescribed form means the form prescribed by the applicable Rules of Court.

Registry Manager means:

(a) in relation to the Family Court – the Registry Manager of the Registry of the Court; and

(b) in relation to the Family Court of Western Australia – the Principal Registrar, a Registrar or a Deputy Registrar, of the court; and

(c) in relation to any other court – the principal officer of that court.

67ZA Where member of the Court personnel, family counsellor, family dispute resolution practitioner or arbitrator suspects child abuse etc.

(1) This section applies to a person in the course of performing duties or functions, or exercising powers, as:

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(a) the Registrar or a Deputy Registrar of a Registry of the Family Court of Australia; or

(b) the Registrar or a Deputy Registrar of the Family Court of Western Australia; or

(c) a Registrar of the Federal Magistrates Court; or

(d) a family consultant; or

(e) a family counsellor; or

(f) a family dispute resolution practitioner; or

(g) an arbitrator; or

- (h) a lawyer independently representing a child's interests.
- (2) If the person has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a child has been abused, or is at risk of being abused, the person must, as soon as practicable, notify a prescribed child welfare authority of his or her suspicion and the basis for the suspicion.
- (3) If the person has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a child:
- (a) has been ill treated, or is at risk of being ill treated; or
 - (b) has been exposed or subjected, or is at risk of being exposed or subjected, to behaviour which psychologically harms the child; the person may notify a prescribed child welfare authority of his or her suspicion and the basis for the suspicion.
- (4) The person need not notify a prescribed child welfare authority of his or her suspicion that a child has been abused, or is at risk of being abused, if the person knows that the authority has previously been notified about the abuse or risk under subsection (2) or subsection 67Z(3), but the person may notify the authority of his or her suspicion.
- (5) If notice under this section is given orally, written notice confirming the oral notice is to be given to the prescribed child welfare authority as soon as practicable after the oral notice.
- (6) If the person notifies a prescribed child welfare authority under this section or subsection 67Z(3), the person may make such disclosures of other information as the person reasonably believes are necessary to enable the authority to properly manage the matter the subject of the notification.

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 guidelines. The Child Wellbeing and Child Protection – New South Wales Interagency Guidelines detail 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 New South Wales Keep Them Safe reforms.

To align with this reporting threshold, New South Wales developed a Mandatory Reporter Guide during 2009 with the United States-based Children's Research Centre and a wide range of human services and justice agencies across the government and non-government sectors. From 23 December 2009, the interactive, online MRG became available for sector familiarisation and formally commenced from 24 January 2010, when mandatory reporters were encouraged to use this resource to guide their decision-making, such as whether or not to report a concern to the New South Wales Child Protection Helpline under the new risk of significant harm threshold.

Using the online interactive tool and after 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) were also 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 mandatory reporters, required by law to report child protection concerns to Child Safety Services:

- An authorised officer, employee of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services 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. 25, *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, separate representatives and counsellors who suspect child abuse (s. 67ZA *Family Law Act 1975*, Commonwealth).

Western Australia

Amendments to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* (Division 9A of the Act) that introduced the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse by certain professionals in Western Australia came into effect on 1 January 2009. 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 Western Australia 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. Mandatory reporters who know of a child aged 14 and over with a diagnosed STI, and who form a belief that sexual abuse has occurred or is occurring to the child, are required to submit a mandatory report under Division 9A of the Act.

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 the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services (or delegate, in this case Child Protection Services).

During 2004–05, as a result of the Tasmanian Government's Safe @ Home framework implementation, an amendment was made to the CYPF Act to extend the definition of abuse and neglect to include a child affected by family violence.

In August 2009, further amendments came into effect to permit prescribed persons to report concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child to Community-Based Intake Services or to Child Protection Services. These amendments were to allow for earlier intervention via community funded services if a statutory response was not warranted. At the same time, and again to allow earlier intervention via appropriate services to occur, amendments were made to allow 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. It is mandatory for anyone to report a child aged less than 14 years who has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence and mandatory for anyone to report a child who has been or is likely to be a victim of an offence against section 128 of the Criminal Code.

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 E 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

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.'

The Act uses several definitions of 'parent', depending on the part of the Act the definition applies to. During an investigation and assessment, 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'. When applying for a court order, the definition of parent is limited to those people with legal parental responsibility for the child including 'the child's mother or father; a person whose favour a residence order or contact order for the child is in operation under the *Family Law Act 1975*; as a person having custody or guardianship; and a long-term guardian 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'.

It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm to a child may include: physical, psychological, or emotional abuse; or neglect; or sexual abuse or exploitation and can be singular or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

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 under 16 years of age and does not, without lawful excuse, attend school, or other educational or training institution, regularly.

Child Protection 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 30 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 (defined as a child whose safety, psychological wellbeing or interests are affected or likely to be 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 F 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 is in the policy frameworks used by states and territories for 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 time frame. Where a report does not meet the risk of significant harm threshold, information on alternative referral pathways will be offered where possible.
- In Victoria, a person may make a report if the person has a significant concern for the wellbeing of the child or believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. This includes provisions to make a report regarding wellbeing of the child after his/her birth. Reports are then classified as 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 and/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 guardianship and custody of a child to a third party are issued in most, but not all, jurisdictions and, depending on the level of involvement of the Department, may or may not be recorded in the data. For Victoria, the Permanent Care Order is included in this data collection in the category 'guardianship and custody orders'. New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory are the other jurisdictions that are able to report children on orders where guardianship and custody (or parental responsibility) is 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.
- In Tasmania, the information system has allowed for reporting of third-party parental responsibility orders since August 2010. Previously, this feature was not available and children under the guardianship or custody of a person or persons approved by a court who were not the Secretary or the child's parents were included under 'guardianship or custody orders'.
- 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, 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 Australian Capital Territory 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 G 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.

New South Wales

'Keep Them Safe: a shared approach to child well-being' is an existing 5-year program that aims to reshape the way family and community services are provided to support vulnerable children, young people and their families. *Keep Them Safe* focuses on:

- strengthening early intervention services that will help prevent abuse and neglect and work to prevent the need for children to enter the child protection system
- the care and responsibility of children and young people is a shared responsibility among government and non-government partner agencies.
- the powers of the statutory child protection system on those who are most likely to need the intervention and protective powers of the State, thereby raising the threshold for both mandatory and voluntary reporting to Community Services from 'risk of harm' to 'risk of significant harm'. 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 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 the out-of-home care system in New South Wales. This commitment has seen considerable advances in this area most notably:

- In January 2012, non-government agencies assumed the responsibility for the delivery of the Brighter Futures early intervention program. They began to focus the delivery to those vulnerable families most likely to benefit from the model of case management and tailored services provided by the program. Lead Agencies now make decisions about which families are offered Brighter Futures and are working directly with a range of agencies and referral sources to ensure that the program is offered to very vulnerable families at high risk of entering the statutory child protection system.
- In January 2012, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services commenced the Strengthening Families program which targets eligible families where the risk of significant harm reporting threshold has been met and whose children, though able to be safe at home for now, are at the highest risk of future abuse or neglect.
- The continued delivery of the Early Intervention Placement Prevention Program aimed at reducing the likelihood of children and young people entering or remaining in out-of-home care. This program provides services along a continuum from lower-level parenting and youth support to intensive family and youth interventions.
- Significant work is being undertaken to develop targeted responses to protect disengaged teenagers whose needs are not being met at home, school or by the child protection system as it is currently configured. New Adolescent Teams in the regions

will provide case management for adolescents aged 12-17 years at risk of significant harm, or those who are the subject of a request for assistance.

The New South Wales Government's Out of Home Care Reform strategy will significantly increase the number of children and young people being cared for by non-government agencies. In March 2012, a tender was launched, inviting new and existing non-government organisations to deliver more out of home care services from 2012-13. The transitioning process of Community Services-managed children and young people in statutory out-of-home care to non-government agencies has already commenced.

In addition, from 1 July 2012, the Government will provide incentives to improve permanent outcomes (such as family restoration or open adoption) for children and young people currently in out-of-home care when it is in their best interest.

The New South Wales Out of Home Care Reform strategy is also aimed at reducing out-of-home care numbers in the future by:

- making decisions about child safety quicker and earlier
- helping parents be responsible to reduce the risks for their children including parent responsibility contracts and alternative enforcement approaches, including parenting education
- better matching at risk families to the right services and support
- trialling new ways to keep teenage children out of care
- earlier decision making about permanent care arrangements.

To promote innovation and provide additional resources for social services, the New South Wales Government is undertaking a trial of Social Benefit Bonds – a first of its kind in Australia. A Social Benefit Bond is a new financial instrument in which private investors provide up-front funding to service providers to deliver improved social benefits. If these outcomes are delivered, the Government will be able to redirect funds away from acute services towards early intervention and prevention programs. This, in turn, supports pay-back of the investors' up-front funding as well as providing a return on that investment.

The focus of the out-of-home care Social Benefit Bond pilots will be to offer parents support to take care of their children without the need for foster 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 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 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. 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.

Although front-end child protection demand has exhibited significant growth in recent years, the enhanced availability of diversionary services, especially through referrals to Child FIRST (Child and Family Information, Referral and Support Teams), has meant that the number of children entering out-of-home care has been falling.

Child protection and out-of-home care services were the subject of Ombudsman Victoria inquiries between 2009 and 2011, and a number of operational improvements have been made in response to the recommendations from those inquiries.

In addition to a 2009 funding boost to child protection operations, further ongoing government funding was provided in 2010–11 to progress reform of the out-of-home care system.

These funds are being used to build additional placement capacity, and provide 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.

In June 2011, *Protecting children, changing lives: Supporting the child protection workforce* (Victorian Government Department of Human Services 2011) outlined proposals for a new child protection operating model. The new model, to commence in November 2012, aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- a more experienced and skilled workforce
- better supported staff benefiting from more supervision, co-working and mentoring
- putting case practice at the centre of work with children young people and families
- reduced case transitions and devolved decision-making to better support outcomes
- improved career pathways and staff retention.

Under the model, child protection will be delivered through 21 areas across Victoria that are aligned with the local Child FIRST catchment

In February 2012, the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry (PVVCI) report was tabled in parliament. The inquiry had been established in January 2011 and was tasked with investigating systemic problems in Victoria's child protection system and making recommendations to strengthen and improve the protection and support of vulnerable young Victorians.

The report contained 90 recommendations. It focussed on major system reforms with the aim of reducing both the incidence and impact of child abuse and neglect, reducing the number of children and young people in out-of-home care, and clearer and transparent public accountability.

A significant reform agenda has been initiated in relation to vulnerable child as a result of this report. The *Victoria's Vulnerable Children: Our Shared Responsibility* directions paper, released in May 2012, provides details of the Victorian Government's first-year initiatives, longer-term commitments and areas requiring further consideration as a result of the PVVCI. (Victorian Government 2012).

The paper details an extensive reform agenda, with current key action areas being building effective and connected services, enhancing education and building capacity, making a child-friendly legal system, providing safe, stable and supportive out-of-home care, and introducing accountability and transparency

The 2012–13 Victorian State Budget set out a range of initiatives that will protect, support and assist vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians. Almost \$336 million of the total 2012–13 State Budget was allocated to strengthen support and protection for the State's vulnerable children. More frontline workers, greater help for families, improved intervention and diversion programs, expansion of places in therapeutic out-of-home care and innovative reform of the Children's Court are some of the initiatives.

Key highlights of the reforms include:

- establishment of a new Children's Court at Broadmeadows Court
- further support for Child protection workforce reform
- focus on placement stability and therapy
- focus on connected services
- establishment of a Commission for Children and Young People.

A number of reforms are already under way, including the continued funding of the Specialist Intervention Team to provide targeted specialists to areas of high operational demand, and the expanded use of Family Group Conferences and Aboriginal Family Decision Making where abuse has been substantiated.

Three Multi-Disciplinary Centres that co-locate specialist police investigators, child protection practitioners and sexual assault counsellors will provide a holistic response from a single location to victims of sexual assault and child abuse, and their families.

In the area of early intervention and prevention, the Cradle to Kinder program is establishing intensive ante- and postnatal support for vulnerable expectant mothers to build their parenting skills and prevent the need for statutory child protection involvement.

To further strengthen the legal underpinnings of child protection, a new Children's Court will be established in Broadmeadows in a move to introduce a less adversarial approach to ensuring the best interests of the child.

The existing program of therapeutic residential care will be expanded in an effort to better meet the needs of children through a therapeutic and trauma informed approach to care.

A new Commission for Children and Young People independent of government is to be established with the task of providing advice about policies, practices and the provision of services to vulnerable children and young people.

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 March 2012, Queensland's state election resulted in a change of government. Machinery of Government changes were initiated in April 2012 for the Department of Communities – now the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services – and, as a result, responsibility for youth justice has been transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

The Queensland Government committed during the 2012 election campaign to establish a new Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection to review the progress of outcomes related to the 1999 Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions (the Forde Inquiry) and the 2004 Crime and Misconduct Commission Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Foster Care, and to chart a new road map for child protection for the next decade. Public hearings commenced in July 2012, with a written report due to the Premier by 30 April 2013.

Also progressed in 2011-12, was the Helping Out Families initiative. This initiative is designed to provide support to families where there are concerns about the care or wellbeing of a child but where a statutory child protection intervention is not necessary. Under this initiative, currently being piloted in Beenleigh-Eagleby-Nerang, Logan and South Gold Coast, the department makes referrals to the Family Support Alliance which works with families to link them to Intensive Family Support Services.

The Intensive Family Support Services undertake a needs assessment of families, provide case management and practical assistance around parenting, home management, budgeting, meal preparation and life management skills, as well as individual and family counselling. The Helping Out Families initiative also includes additional investment in domestic and family violence services and an enhanced Health Home Visiting Service that provides additional targeted support for mothers and their babies and infants up to 3 years old.

An evaluation of the Helping Out Families initiative is due in late 2014.

Amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999* have been completed, enhancing the administration of the Act to focus on children's immediate safety, long-term wellbeing and best interests. These changes include:

- Extending the definition of harm so it is clear that harm can be the cumulative result of a number of incidents of abuse and neglect.
- Introducing temporary custody orders and introducing a new transition order, specifically:
 - A temporary custody order – may be made when a child who is in need of protection is at unacceptable risk of harm and needs to be taken into immediate custody. Within three business days, the chief executive will decide the action required to meet the child's ongoing protection and care needs and will start taking action.
 - A transition order – continues an existing child protection order for a period of not more than 28 days, to enable the gradual transition of the child to the care of the child's parents.
- Introducing more flexible arrangements for case planning and working with families where the child has a long-term guardian who is not the chief executive in recognition of responsibility already provided to the child's long-term guardian.

- Clarifying the obligations to inform police of suspected criminal offences.

Western Australia

Since the Review of the (former) Department for Community Development in 2007, the Department has undergone fundamental reform encompassing its organisation, its resources, its procedures and its support for its people, all underpinned by the ethos of working in partnership.

At this time, the focus of the Department is on consolidating these reforms, building on partnerships to further integrate its work with community sector and other government agencies, while streamlining its business and administrative systems, wherever practicable.

Consolidation focuses on the Department continuing to develop and build its capacity in line with the service frameworks that guide how we work. In child protection, this is the Signs of Safety, an approach to child protection work developed in Western Australia, and now in use in the United Kingdom, Europe, the United States of America, Canada, Japan and New Zealand. It is a holistic theoretical and practical framework, encompassing principles, disciplines, processes and tools, based on what child protection workers do that is effective in the most challenging cases.

The Department's Foster Care Partnership and Residential Care (Sanctuary) Framework also provide sound theoretical and practical bases to guide work with abused children whose trauma severely impacts their behaviour and development.

In the broad area of family support, undertaken most substantially by contracted community sector organisations, the Department's own services target the most 'hard to reach' families, whose older children are committing crimes or are engaged in serious anti-social behaviour. This work is carried out in partnership with youth justice services, and is guided by the Family Support (Responsible Parenting) Framework.

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 Signs of Safety Gathering in November 2012, which will build on the previous Gathering held in 2011 by providing 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 has continued to consolidate the development of a shared understanding of the core principles and disciplines to 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 conferences are a collaborative project between the Department, Legal Aid Western Australia (LAWA) and the Court. The conferences are facilitated by a pool of specially trained, Court-appointed convenors, drawn from a combined pool of practice leaders, LAWA and private practice lawyers and alternative

dispute-resolution mediators. The initiative was expanded to some country regions during 2011–12.

The Department for Child Protection's childFIRST Child Assessment Interview Team (joint response with the Western Australia Police) developed the RESET model to tackle suspected under-reporting of child sexual abuse in regional and remote communities. The model was recognised as innovative practice that delivered improved outcomes for victims. Operation RESET received a Meritorious Police Certificate as the State winner of the 2011 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards.

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 including the following:

- Implementation of a health care planning pathway as a joint initiative between the Department for Child Protection and the Department of Health that supports the child's physical development, emotional and psychological wellbeing via assessments that are conducted on entry to care and thereafter annually.
- Implementation of documented education plans completed at least annually to support optimal education planning and achievement.
- Restructure of the Department's residential care services are being reorganised 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.
- A 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.
- Support for care leavers has been reviewed and strengthened to enable earlier assessment of the young person's needs and referral to services. Planning for leaving care now begins when the young person turns 15 years of age and incorporates three phases: preparation, transition and after-care support that is available until they reach 25 years of age.
- Leaving care supports now also include waiver of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) fees to encourage young people to participate in further education; funding of all phases of attaining a motor driver's licence; and waitlisting for priority housing from 15 years of age to prevent young people exiting care to homelessness.

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 2008a). The response aims to further strengthen 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 43 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.

Amendments to the child safe environments provisions of the *Children's Protection Act 1993* commenced in January 2011. These provisions are contributing to increased awareness of issues relating to children and young people's safety and wellbeing 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.

During 2011–12, 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 Keeping 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.

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 focused 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 2011–12, there has been greater emphasis placed upon transitioning from care, with particular attention to education and training opportunities.

The High Risk Infant service (Southern and Northern metropolitan region) has continued to collaborate with key government and non-government organisations. Overall, the High Risk Infant service aims to identify risk factors for infants and intervene early to reduce the impact of abuse and neglect. Work with infants and their families is undertaken in an endeavour to prevent the infant's entry into alternative care. In the Southern region, robust interagency networks are in place to identify high-risk pregnant women and their families

and coordinate support and counselling services prior to the birth of the infant. Similar networks are being established in the Northern High Risk Infant service response.

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 Development and Parenting and working in partnership with the former Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) and SA Health, particularly the Child, Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS), now included in the new Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). 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-six Children's Centres are currently operational across South Australia. An additional four Aboriginal Children and Family Centres are being established.

In 2011–12, strategic initiatives incorporating the placement needs of children and young people in care have included:

- 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.
- Implementation 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
- Implementation of the Step by Step SA carer assessment tool across the out-of-home care sector.
- Implementation 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, a new Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) was created, bringing together education, child protection and some child health services into one agency focused on supporting South Australian children to achieve their best.

Tasmania

In May 2012, the Tasmania Government announced its response to the Tasmanian Parliament's Select Committee of Enquiry into Child Protection. The response not only addresses the Select Committee's recommendations, but also draws together the recommendations from previous reports to create a strategic approach that addresses the needed changes within a public health framework. A newly established Cabinet Sub-Committee will oversee these whole-of-government activities and drive the reform agenda

To assist in focusing resources on the achievement of high-order outcomes, the recommendations of the Select Committee, and other recommendations outstanding from previous reviews, were consolidated into six key areas for action.

The areas for action focus on matters that are recognised as important to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families, the areas (and supporting actions) are:

1. Continue system reform

- Better integration and coordination of services across child protection, family violence, youth justice and other services to ensure better outcomes for children and their families.
- Improved data linkage between Agencies through the development of a whole-of-government business intelligence data warehouse for children and young people that draws on information from multiple data systems to support better service planning and delivery.

2. Building and strengthening relationships

- Continue to pursue collaborative service responses, such as *Collaborative Case Conferencing* (CCC) which, for children in trouble with the police, unites all the workers supporting a young person in the community to help prevent their detention in Ashley Youth Detention Centre.
- Continue to work with communities regarding the establishment of the Child and Family Centres in identified areas throughout Tasmania.

3. Improving the legislative framework

- Continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that the child protection legislation is used as effectively as possible and reflects current child protection theory and practice.

4. Ensuring transparency and accountability

- Develop a cross-agency strategy for the engagement of children and young people in the decisions that affect them.

5. Reforming out-of-home care

- Implement the National Standards for Out-of-Home Care across the Tasmanian out-of-home care system.

- Increase placement options to best meet the needs of children and young people who require out-of-home care services.
- Provide additional support for carers to allow them to better meet the needs of children in their care.
- Focus on reducing the number of children in out-of-home care where possible, supporting reunification, and improving alternative permanence and stability arrangements for children not able to return to their families.

6. Increasing education, training and professional development

- Improved provision of coordinated and structured training for staff across the range of services provided through Children and Youth Services.
- Pursue opportunities for cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary training wherever possible. Multi-disciplinary training opportunities enable the sharing of knowledge and experience, and building and strengthening respectful and trusting professional relationships.

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 2011–12 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 agencies.

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 2011-12, 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

The Office of Children and Families is continuing to implement its response to the 2010 Board of Inquiry into the child protection system in the Northern Territory. Considerable progress has been made; as of 30 June 2012, of the 147 recommendations, 40 were complete and 107 are in various stages of completion. The aim of the reforms is to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children by supporting families more effectively to prevent them entering into the statutory system. Significant investment has commenced to strengthen and rebuild the Northern Territory's child protection and family support system within Government services, as well as supporting the non-government sector to strengthen its service capacity. There is a focus on integrating services that are available in the community, with an emphasis on strengthening services in remote communities.

Reform initiatives achieved in 2011-12 include:

- Regionalisation of the Department's functions, ensuring a localised response to child protection issues and improved service delivery to remote areas.
- Introduction of an information sharing framework under the Care and Protection of Children Act to allow authorised bodies and individuals, people such as teachers, registered foster carers, doctors and child care workers, to share information relating to the safety and wellbeing of a child.
- Amendment to the Care and Protection of Children Act to expand the roles and functions of the Children's Commissioner.
- Implementation of four Structured Decision-Making (Safety, Family Strengths and Needs, and Risk Assessment and Reassessment) Tools across all service centres.

- Establishment of Multi-Agency Assessment and Co-ordination Teams in Darwin and Alice Springs to provide an interagency response for children who have been admitted to hospital, and where significant abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred, or the child is at risk.
- Construction of two secure care facilities for young people requiring intensive residential therapeutic services in Darwin and Alice Springs.
- Roll-out of Community Child Safety and Wellbeing Teams – marking, for the first time, child protection professionals living and working in remote Aboriginal communities.
- Improved staff retention and delivery of new staff support initiatives, such as a Supervision Framework and comprehensive package of accredited and non-accredited learning and development opportunities.
- Introduction of a new tiered system of foster carer payments recognising that the costs of caring increase with the age of the child, and are influenced by the complexity of need of the child.
- Establishment of an Aboriginal Collaboration Engagement and Strategy Unit within the Department to provide cross-divisional advice, and engage the Aboriginal workforce, including staff in remote areas.
- Commencement of the Darwin Youth Safe Place service to provide an after-hours emergency response to at risk youth on the streets.
- Introduction of Working with Children Clearances making it mandatory for those who work with children to undergo the necessary clearance checks.
- Implementation of a whole-of-government Child Safety and Wellbeing Plan for 2012.
- Supporting the establishment of a new peak body for vulnerable Aboriginal children, young people and their families – Strong Aboriginal Families, Together.

The Department's priorities for 2012-13 include progressing reform of the out-of-home care system, improving foster carer recruitment and retention, embedding Family Decision Making as core front-line practice, and establishing a staff cultural competency framework.

Appendix H Jurisdictions' data systems

Key differences

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 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 during the investigation and assessment.

Relevant changes in data systems

New South Wales

The New South Wales Government response to the *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW* (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.

Following the NSW Keep Them Safe reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the NSW *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.

Changes to business practice in New South Wales designed to assist caseworkers in focusing on the most urgent cases has required changes to counting rules. These changes mean that the counts for ‘Notifications investigated’, ‘Notifications resolved without investigations’ and ‘Notifications dealt with by other means’ for 2011–12 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 started 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 2011–12, a snap shot of data (July snapshot) was provided for foster care and relative/kinship care.

South Australia

During financial years 2009–10 and 2011–12, South Australia successfully implemented the first stage of a project to replace its legacy Client Information System. The new Connected Client Case Management System has now been fully implemented across the state to record client and case-management responses for child protection clients. This has 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

Tasmania implemented a new information system called the Child Protection Information System (CPIS) in two stages, during 2007–08 and 2009–10. CPIS consists of a single, centrally administered database to store, manage and provide state-wide access to child protection data. While stage one focused on improved support for intake and assessment functionality, stage two involved a complete redesign and now CPIS supports intake, assessment, case-management, and out-of-home care functions. Other changes included decentralisation of intake services, and updated notification processes so that only the initial contact was counted as a notification, and any contacts received in relation to an open case of abuse or neglect are recorded as case notes.

During 2011–12, work has been undertaken to comply with new National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) requirements, including the first run of the Child Protection NMDS Unit Record collection, and the first experimental collection for the Treatment and Support Services NMDS.

Additionally, in 2010–11 Tasmania has developed and implemented a range of business intelligence dashboards and innovative reports to support management and front-line staff. In particular, this functionality aims to support staff working with clients who access multiple services and have complex needs.

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.

Northern Territory

In 2010, the Department of Children and Families (now the Office of Children and Families) commenced the implementation of Structured Decision-Making (SDM) assessment tools. The SDM intake Screening and Response Priority Assessments were introduced on 1 July 2010. The intake assessments are applied to all child protection reports and assist in decision-making regarding whether a report should be accepted for investigation (screening) and, if so, how quickly DCF should respond (response priority). The SDM intake assessment tools have changed the way DCF assess which cases are accepted for investigation but has not affected availability of comparable data.

Appendix I 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.
The NSW Ombudsman's *Keep Them Safe?* Report was tabled in Parliament on 30 August 2011 (New South Wales Ombudsman 2011).
- *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.
- *Inquiry into the circumstances of a 12 year old child under Guardianship of the Secretary* (Commissioner for Children Tasmania 2010) – Tasmania.
- *Select Committee on Child Protection, Final Report* (Parliament of Tasmania 2011) – 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.

- *Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry 2012* (State Government of Victoria 2012) – Victoria

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 to affect the reported data, because departments often respond to inquiries by introducing new, or modifying existing, policies and practices.

Appendix J 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 (CDSMC¹) recognised that child protection required a comprehensive national approach.

Through a dedicated working group, the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Committee (CDSMAC²) 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.

¹ Now the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services (SCCDS)

² Now the Standing Council on Community & Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC)

Framework plans

First action plan: 2009–2012

For the duration of the first 3-year action plan, COAG received an annual report card from SCCDSAC (formally CDSMAC) containing high-level information on the status of each action under the National Framework. This information has been released publicly to ensure the Australian community can also track the progress of these actions. Over the life of the first action plan, significant achievements were noted across a large number of priority projects, including the establishment of the first National Children's Commissioner and the development of National Standards for Out-of-Home Care. These achievements were achieved through collaborative work between governments at all levels and the non-government sector.

Second Action Plan: 2012–2015

The critical focus of the Second Action Plan is 'working together' across governments and non-government sectors to improve the safety and wellbeing of Australia's children. This will be achieved by strengthening families, early intervention, prevention and collaboration through joining child protection service delivery with mental health, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol, education and health.

The Second Action Plan will also emphasise the development of local partnerships for local solutions, recognising that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach does not work across Australia's diverse communities and that Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities need strategies that are sensitive to their needs and circumstances.

The Second Action Plan will build on and strengthen delivery of six significant National Priorities from the First Action Plan:

- National Standards for Out-of-Home Care (see below)
- Transitioning to Independence
- Joining up Service Delivery
- Closing the Gap
- Improving Support for Carers
- Responding to Sexual Abuse

Unit record file development

For more than 20 years national child protection data have been collected in aggregate (tabular) format. To date, using aggregate data, there has been 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 has been undergoing significant change. From 2012–13, national child protection data will be collected and analysed at the unit record (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 committed to the development of a unit record data collection as a major project under the National Framework. Following a pilot study in 2010–11, the states and territories and the AIHW are conducting a full-scale test of the unit record data during 2012–13, with full implementation expected by July 2013. During 2013–14, unit record child protection data, including a module relating to carers, will be analysed and reported. Unit record modules relating to education, support services and child outcomes may be developed in the future.

Treatment and support services development

Specifications have been developed for a national minimum data set for 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 on 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 being investigated. This work will build on the previous work in this area (see, for example, AIHW 2011).

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. Available data for a subset of measures was reported for the first time in the 2010–11 annual report to COAG on the National Framework (COAG 2012a). The AIHW is working with the Australian Government, 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 69 countries representing all world regions (ISPCAN 2012):

- 54% of respondents maintained an official count of child maltreatment cases
- two-thirds reported having mandated reporting
- 90% indicated that their country had an official child maltreatment policy but only one-third reported the policies to be widely implemented

- 31% of respondents indicated 'major government funding', 17% indicated 'major funding' from non-government agencies and 13% reported 'no government funding' (ISPCAN 2012)
- of the 40 respondents who reported that their country officially documented child abuse cases, all included physical and sexual abuse, and the majority included psychological maltreatment and child neglect.

Data on recorded cases of neglect across six countries is in Table J1. While some countries share similar approaches to child protection, there are significant differences in mandatory reporting, the systems used to collect and report child maltreatment data, the definitions used, and the demographics and income levels of the populations. As such, international comparisons should be interpreted with caution. Further information on international child protection data is available in the 10th edition of *World Perspectives on Child Abuse* (ISPCAN 2012).

Table J1: Neglect data across six countries

Country	Year	Proportion of substantiated abuse
Australia	2010–11	29% of substantiations of notifications.
New Zealand	2011	21% of the total number of official findings for all types of maltreatment.
Belgium (Flanders)	2010	21% of reported child maltreatment.
England	2011	44% of children who were the subject of a multi-agency child protection plan.
United States	2011	78% of substantiated or indicated maltreatment.
Canada	2011	36% of maltreatment substantiated by child protection workers.

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

Source: ISPCAN 2012.

The AIHW is a member of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) Working Group on Child Maltreatment data collection. This working group contributes to publications, including the *World Perspectives on Child Abuse and Neglect* (ISPCAN 2012). Several countries are represented on the working group including Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, Italy, Lebanon, New Zealand, Philippines and the United States of America. The working group 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

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.

age: The age of a person in completed years or 'unborn' for those in utero and 'less than 1 year' where age is between live birth and less than 1 year. The tables containing information for notifications, investigations and substantiations show age at the time of notification. The tables containing information on children on orders by type of living arrangements and children in out-of-home care at 30 June show age at 30 June 2012; tables containing information on admissions or discharges show age at the time of first admission or discharge. For intensive family support services, age is shown as at the commencement of the service.

agency: A body funded by state and territory departments responsible for child protection to provide services.

anonymous: A person who does not give his or her name.

capital city: Refers to state or territory capital city.

care and protection orders: Legal orders or arrangements that give child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare. See also: **finalised guardianship or custody orders, finalised third-party parental responsibility orders, finalised supervisory orders, interim and temporary orders** and **administrative arrangements**.

child: A person aged 0–17 years.

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

child concern reports: Reports to community services departments regarding concerns about a child, where there is no indication that a child may have been, or is at risk of being, harmed through abuse or neglect. This may include concerns 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.

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

child protection notifications: 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.

children subject to orders: Any child aged 0–17 on a care and protection order or other formal arrangement or children aged 18 or under who were discharged from those care and protection orders/arrangements. See also **care and protection orders**.

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 two categories – see also **notifications in process** and **notifications resolved without investigation**.

departmental officer: Any person who is employed by a state or territory department responsible for child protection who is not classified by any other source of notification category.

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.

family care Where the child is residing with parents (natural or adoptive) or other relatives/kin (other than parents) who are not reimbursed. See also: **two parent – intact, two parent – step or blended, single parent – female, single parent – male** and **relatives or kin (other than parents) who are not reimbursed**.

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.

family of residence: 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 – see also **two parent – intact, two parent – step or blended, single parent – female, single parent – male, other relatives/kin, foster care, other** and **not stated**.

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 investigation: A notification received between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012 that was investigated, and where the investigation was completed and an outcome recorded by 31 August 2012. 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 into two categories – see also **substantiated** and **not substantiated**.

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.

finalised third-party parental responsibility orders: 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.

foster care: A form of out-of-home 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.

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.

foster carer household: 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.

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.

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. There are three categories of home-based out-of-home care – see also **relatives/kin who are reimbursed, foster care** and **other home-based out-of-home care**.

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

independent living: Including private board and lead tenant households.

Indigenous status: Whether a person identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives. See also **Indigenous, non-Indigenous** and **unknown Indigenous status**

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

intensive family support services: 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.

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.

investigation: 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 2011 and 30 June 2012. 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. See also: **investigation in process**, **investigation closed – no outcome possible** and **finalised investigation**.

investigation in process: A notification received between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012 that was investigated, but where the investigation was not completed and an investigation outcome was not recorded by 31 August 2012.

investigation closed – no outcome possible: A notification made between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012 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 2011 and 30 June 2012.

living arrangements: The type of care in which a child on an order was residing. See also: **residential care**, **foster care**, **family group homes**, **home-based out-of-home care** and **family care**.

living situation: The living situation of the child/ren in the family at the time of case commencement for intensive family support services. See also **family care**, **out-of-home care**, **formal shared care** and **other living arrangement**.

location: 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.

medical practitioner: Registered medical practitioners. This includes both general practitioners and specialists in hospitals or in the community.

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.

non-government organisation: Any non-government organisation that provides services to the community on a non-profit-making basis that is not classified by any other source of notification category.

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.

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.

not stated: Where information was not recorded or unknown.

not substantiated: A notification received between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012 where an investigation concluded that there was no reasonable cause to suspect prior, current or future abuse, neglect or harm to the child.

other family of residence: Family of residence not otherwise categorised. This includes non-family situations, such as hostels and institutional accommodation.

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.

other home-based out-of-home care: Where the child was in home-based out-of-home care, other than relatives/kin who are reimbursed and foster care.

other living arrangements: Includes living arrangements not otherwise classified and unknown living arrangements. For children on orders, this also includes any placements made in disability services, psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, specialist homelessness services 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.

other out-of-home care: Includes out-of-home care placements that are not otherwise categorised and unknown placement types. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and the defence force.

other relative: 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.

other relatives/kin: Includes relatives other than parents and Indigenous kinship arrangements.

other source of notification: All other persons or organisations not classified by any other source of notification category (for example, ministers of religion or government agencies and instrumentalities not classified above).

other urban: Refers to cities and towns other than the capital city.

out-of-home care: Overnight care for children aged 0–17 years, where the state makes a financial payment or where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the carer. See also: **residential care, family group homes, foster care, relative/kinship care, independent living** and **other out-of-home care**.

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.

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

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

prevention services: Services specifically aimed at assisting families in order to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers for child protection reasons.

relative kinship care: A form of out-of-home care where the caregiver is a relative (other than parents), considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person's community (in accordance with their culture) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/ territory for the care of the child. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group.

relative/kinship carer household: A private household containing one or more relative/kinship carers:

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

relatives/kin who are not reimbursed Relatives/kin (other than parents) who are not reimbursed by the state/territory for the care of the child.

relatives/kin who are reimbursed Where the caregiver is a relative (other than parents), considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person's community (in accordance with their culture) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/ territory for the care of the child. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group.

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

respite care: Respite care is a form of out-of-home care that is used to provide short-term accommodation for children and young people where the intention is for the child to return to their prior place of residence. Respite placements include:

- respite from birth family, where a child is placed in out-of-home care on a temporary basis for reasons other than child protection (for example, the child's parents are ill or unable to care for them on a temporary basis; or as a family support mechanism to prevent entry into full-time care, as part of the reunification process, as a shared cared arrangement)
- respite from placement, where a child spends regular, short and agreed periods of time with another carer other than their primary carer.

reunification services: Services that seek to reunify families where separation of children from their primary caregivers has already occurred for child protection reasons.

rural or remote: Refers to those areas outside the cities and towns.

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.

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.

sibling: A natural (that is, biological), adopted, foster, step-brother or half-brother or sister.

single parent – female: Families with a female single parent. The parent may be the biological, step or adoptive parent.

single parent – male: Families with a male single parent. The parent may be the biological, step or adoptive parent.

social worker/welfare worker/psychologist/other trained welfare worker: Any person engaged in providing a social or welfare work service in the community.

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 reported into 16 categories – see also **parent/guardian, sibling, other relative, friend/neighbour, medical practitioner, other health personnel, hospital/health centre personnel, social worker/welfare worker/psychologist/other trained welfare worker, school personnel, child care personnel, police, departmental officer, non-government organisation, anonymous, other** and **not stated**.

substantiated: A notification received between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012 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). See also **substantiations of notifications**.

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 2012, which were investigated and the investigation was finalised by 31 August 2012, 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.

two parent – intact: Two-parent families where both parents are either the biological or adoptive parents of the child.

two parent – step or blended: Blended and reconstituted families (one biological parent and one step parent).

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. See also **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse** and **neglect**.

type of action for notifications: Actions taken by the department responsible for child protection to respond to notifications. See also **investigation** and **dealt with by other means**.

type of placement: The type of out-of-home care in which a child was residing. See also: **residential care, family group homes, home-based out-of-home care, independent living and other out-of-home care.**

unknown Indigenous status: Includes children of unknown Indigenous status.

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Related publications

This report, *Child protection Australia 2011–12*, is part of an annual series. Earlier editions can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website: < <http://www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection-publications/>>. 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.
- AIHW 2011. *Headline indicators for children's health, development and wellbeing, 2011*. Cat. no. PHE 144. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. *National outcome measures for early childhood development: development of indicator based reporting framework*. Cat. no. PHE 134. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. *Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2011*. Cat. no. PHE 140. Canberra: AIHW.

This report contains comprehensive information on state and territory child protection and support services, and the characteristics of Australian children within the child protection system.

Key findings include:

- Between 2010–11 and 2011–12, the number of children who were the subject of substantiations increased from 31,527 to 37,781 (an increase in the rate from 6.1 to 7.4 per 1,000 children).
- There were 14,191 children admitted to orders during 2011–12; about two-fifths (39%) of these children had previously been admitted to an order.
- The rate of children in out-of-home care at 30 June increased from 7.3 per 1,000 children in 2011 to 7.7 in 2012.