

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle indicators

Web report | Last updated: 26 Aug 2022 | Topic: [Child protection](#)

About

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) indicators* report presents the latest available data to assess progress towards the implementation of the ATSICPP. The ATSICPP aims to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection and out-of-home care systems.

Cat. no: CWS 84

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Findings from this report:

- [Between 2017 and 2021, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care increased from 51 per 1,000 to 58 per 1,000.](#)
 - [Since 2017, most Indigenous children in out-of-home care lived with relatives or kin, or Indigenous carers \(around 63%\).](#)
 - [16% of Indigenous children in out-of-home care during 2020-21 were reunified with family.](#)
 - [During 2019-20, 84% of reunified Indigenous children aged 0-16 did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months.](#)
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Summary

Implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) by states and territories is designed to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection and out-of-home care systems. It also aims to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children connected to their family, community, culture and country (SNAICC 2017; Tilbury 2013). At the core of the ATSICPP are the 5 elements of *Prevention, Partnership, Placement, Participation and Connection* (SNAICC 2017).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle indicators

The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) indicators* measure progress towards the implementation of the ATSICPP in child protection and out-of-home care systems and are grouped under each of the 5 core ATSICPP elements (SNAICC 2017).

The indicators presented in this report relate to the ATSICPP elements of *Placement* and *Connection*, and the reporting scope is limited to children living in out-of-home care.

Other indicators relating to *Prevention, Partnership* and *Participation* are under development. Some of the indicators under development relate to other parts of the child protection system (for example, family support services).

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

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in out-of-home care has increased from 16,700 (51 per 1,000) at 30 June 2017 to 19,500 at 30 June 2021 (58 per 1,000) (AIHW 2022).

Key findings for 5 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) indicators, related to the *Placement* and *Connection* elements of the framework, are detailed below.

Measuring Placement

Indicator 1.1: At 30 June 2021, 63% of the 19,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers.



Measuring Connection

Indicator 2.1: At 30 June 2021, 41% of the 19,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers.



Indicator 2.2: At 30 June 2021, 73% of the 17,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care had (and were required to have) a current, documented and approved cultural support plan.



Indicator 2.3: In 2020-21, 16% of the 10,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care (excluding children on long-term guardianship orders) were reunified during the year.



Indicator 2.4: During 2019-20, 84% of the 1,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-16 who were reunified with family, did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months.



References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) (2022) *Child protection Australia 2020-21*, AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 15 June 2022.

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) *Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development*, SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

Tilbury C (2013) *The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: aims and core elements*, SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

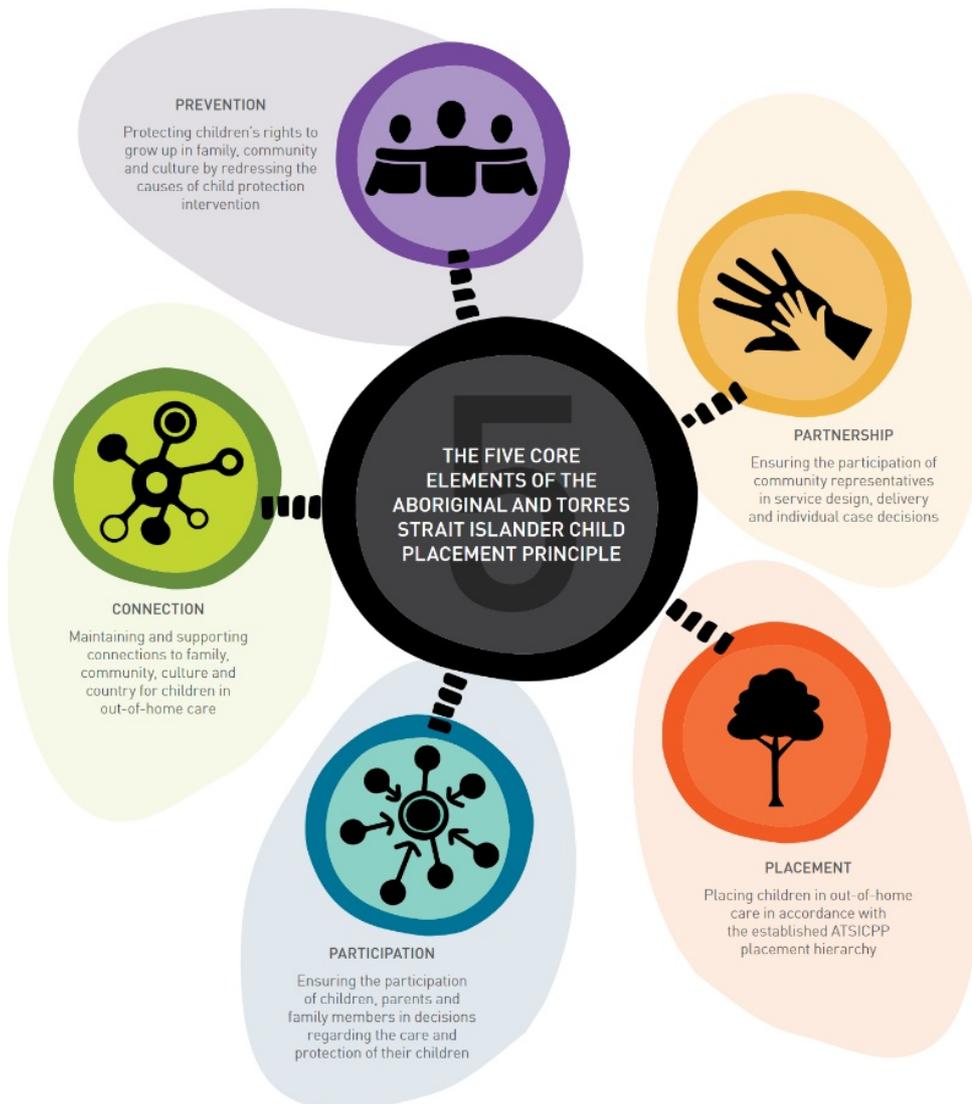
Background

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) aims to:

- promote policy and practice that will reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection and out-of-home care systems; and
- keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children connected to their family, community, culture and country (SNAICC 2017; Tilbury 2013).

At the core of the ATSICPP are the 5 elements: *Prevention*, *Partnership*, *Placement*, *Participation* and *Connection* (SNAICC 2017) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The 5 core elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle



Source: SNAICC (2017). Reproduced with permission.

This report brings together the latest state and territory data on 5 indicators that measure the application of the *Placement* and *Connection* elements of the ATSICPP. Indicators relating to the remaining 3 elements of the ATSICPP (*Prevention*, *Partnership* and *Participation*) are planned for reporting in future through data development.

The 5 elements of the ATSICPP are all equally important in the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle. In interpreting the data contained within this report, it is critical to understand the complex interdependencies between the 5 elements. For example, the *placement* of children in accordance with the established ATSICPP hierarchy is supported and enabled through the *participation* of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in child protection decision-making; so that they are involved in the identification of culturally connected placements.

The *Placement* and *Connection* elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle

The *Placement* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) sets a hierarchy of preferred placement options for carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. The placement hierarchy is designed to ensure the highest possible level of connection to family, community, culture and country is maintained for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in out-of-home care.

The *Connection* element of the ATSICPP relates to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to maintain or re-establish connections to their family, community, culture and country.

Indicators under the *Placement* and *Connection* elements report on children's out-of-home care placement in relation to the placement hierarchy and maintenance of connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and community.

References

DSS (Department of Social Services) (2018) [Protecting Children is Everyone's Business: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 - Fourth Action Plan 2018-20](#), DSS, Australian Government, accessed 16 June 2020.

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

Tilbury C (2013) [The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: aims and core elements](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

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Indicators

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) indicators were developed in partnership by cross-jurisdictional government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations following the release of the Fourth Action Plan of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (DSS 2018). Initial development work resulted in a set of draft indicators being produced in 2018.

This report presents data on the 5 indicators for which data are currently available. These 5 indicators relate to the *Placement* and *Connection* elements of the ATSICPP. The remaining indicators are still undergoing development. These include indicators relating to the *Prevention*, *Partnership* and *Participation* elements, for which data are currently not available for reporting.

Placement

Placing children in out-of-home care in accordance with the established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) placement hierarchy.



Number	Indicator
Indicator 1.1	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in in out-of-home care at 30 June who were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or kin, or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care who were reconnected to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives and kin through placement change
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care who were reconnected to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives and kin through placement change and remained with relatives for 12 months or more
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders relatives or kin for the first time

Connection

Maintaining and supporting connections to family, community, culture and country for children in out-of-home care.



Number	Indicator
Indicator 2.1	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care at 30 June who were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin, or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers
Indicator 2.2	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care at 30 June who have a current, documented and approved cultural support plan
Indicator 2.3	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care (excluding children on long-term guardianship orders) who were reunified in the reporting period
Indicator 2.4	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-16 who exited out-of-home care to reunification in the reporting period and did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with documented genograms
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care living with cultural support plans that include the child's cultural background
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include actions for the maintenance of the child's culture
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were reunified with their birth parents
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were reunified with their relatives or kin
Under development	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reunified, by time from admission

Prevention

Protecting children's rights to grow up in family, community and culture by redressing the causes of child protection intervention.



Number	Indicator
Under development	Expenditure on child protection-related services provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations (ACCOs)
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receiving child protection services from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisation (ACCOs)

Partnership

Ensuring the participation of community representatives in service design, delivery and individual case decisions.



Number	Indicator
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children admitted to out-of-home care for whom an ACCO was consulted regarding placement decisions
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of an ACCO

Participation

Ensuring the participation of children, parents and family members in decisions regarding the care and protection of their children.



Number	Indicator
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children admitted to out-of-home care for whom the input of family regarding placement decisions was collected through a family group conference or family led decision making meeting
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of the child
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of family members
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of family collected through a family group conference or family led decision making meeting

The 5 elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) are all equally important in the implementation of the ATSICPP and, as such, it should be noted that the numbering of these indicators and elements in this report has been chosen only to reflect the order of publication of indicators under these elements, and does not reflect the relative importance of the indicators or elements. As more of the ATSICPP indicators are reported, they will be numbered sequentially.

References

DSS (Department of Social Services) (2018) [Protecting Children is Everyone's Business: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 - Fourth Action Plan 2018-20](#), DSS, Australian Government, accessed 16 June 2020.

Indicators

The *Placement* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) sets a hierarchy of preferred placement options for carers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. The placement hierarchy is designed to ensure the highest possible level of connection to family, community, culture and country is maintained for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child in out-of-home care.



The placement hierarchy

The placement hierarchy is as follows:

1. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or extended family members (kin),
2. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the child's community; or
3. With Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-based carers.

The 3 options above are preferred placement types. If these preferred options are not available, as a last resort, the child may be placed in:

4. Another care arrangement (such as with a non-Indigenous carer or in a residential setting).

If the child is not placed with their relatives or kin (that is, level 1 in the placement hierarchy), the placement should be within close geographic proximity to the child's family (SNAICC 2018).

Application of the *Placement* element means fully exhausting all possible options at the highest level of the placement hierarchy before considering options at the next level down. Best practice application of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) also includes regular review of placements at lower levels of the hierarchy (e.g. those with non-Indigenous carers who are not relatives or kin, or in residential settings) to enable children to be moved to a higher level placement if circumstances change (e.g. to live with relatives or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members).

Measuring *Placement*

The bar chart shows the proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care at 30 June who were living in preferred placements, from 2017 to 2021 and for each state and territory. Preferred placements are defined as living with relatives, kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers. The chart shows that the proportion living in preferred placements at 30 June 2021 is 63% nationally and has remained around 63% since 30 June 2017.

What is the *Placement* element?

This element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) relates to placing children in out-of-home care in accordance with the established ATSICPP placement hierarchy

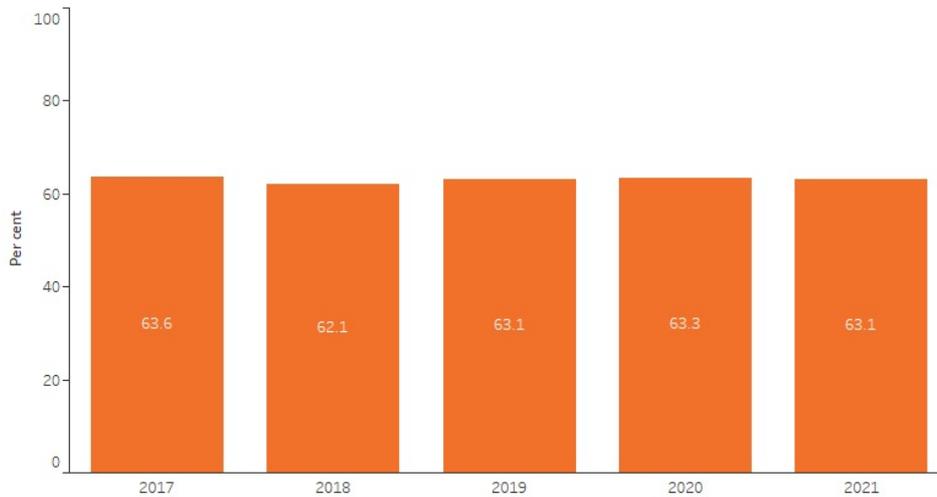


Indicator 1.1

Indicator 1.1: The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care at 30 June who were living with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives or kin, or other Indigenous carers

Select state/territory

Australia



(a) Tasmania data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs. Tasmania is not able to include children in care where a financial payment was offered but was declined by the carer meaning Tasmania's data may be lower than would be the case if the counting rule was strictly applied.
 (b) In Tasmania, the high number of carers whose Indigenous status is unknown may affect the identification of children living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander caregivers.
 (c) For the Northern Territory, counts of children living with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or other Indigenous caregivers only include children for whom the process of making a placement decision was considered by caseworkers to be in accordance with the ATSICPP. This means there may have been a higher number of Indigenous children living with relatives, kin or other Indigenous caregivers than is presented here.

<https://www.aihw.gov.au>

Source: AIHW [Child Protection Data Collection](#)

See the [supplementary data tables](#) for further information and footnotes about these data. See the [background information and technical specifications](#) for information on counting rules for this indicator.

The application of the *Placement* element can be measured by determining the types of carers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care have been placed with; or more specifically, a carer's relationship to the child. This is measured by **indicator 1.1** (to explore data on indicator 1.1, go to the [Tableau dashboard](#)):

At 30 June 2021:

- 63% of the 19,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers.
- in jurisdictions with published data, children living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin made up the largest group of children in preferred placements except in Tasmania.

The proportion of children in preferred placement types (the placements numbered 1, 2 and 3 in the [placement hierarchy](#)) has remained stable since 2017.

Explanatory notes

It should be noted that looking at who a child is eventually placed with is just one way of measuring the application of the *Placement* element. Application of this element also requires that active efforts are made to find a child's family, to consult with a child's family, community representatives and/or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, to inform placement decisions and to provide support to carers to maximise the success of the placement while minimising the chance of placement breakdown (SNAICC 2017).

Active efforts also include ensuring that a child's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status is recorded accurately. The coverage of Indigenous status data for children in out-of-home care is generally very high - at 30 June 2021, Indigenous status was unknown for less than 1% of children in out-of-home care nationally. However, it is unknown whether, or to what extent, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are being incorrectly recorded as non-Indigenous. Active efforts to address this and the other issues highlighted are intended to improve the chance that a preferred placement (that is, the placements numbered 1, 2 and 3 in the [placement hierarchy](#)) will be found for a child. Indicators relating to some of these active efforts are in development.

Placement indicators under development

The following indicators are currently under development under *Placement*:

Number	Indicator
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Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care who were reconnected to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives and kin through placement change
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care who were reconnected to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives and kin through placement change and remained with relatives for 12 months or more
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin for the first time

References

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2018) [The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a guide to support implementation](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

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Indicators

The *Connection* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) relates to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care to maintain or re-establish connections to their family, community, culture and country. This element is considered especially relevant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with non-Indigenous carers (SNAICC 2017).



Measuring *Connection*

Bar charts show each of the *Connection* element indicators, namely, living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers (measured in **indicator 2.1**), the creation and maintenance of cultural support plans (measured in **indicator 2.2**) and efforts to enable a child to safely return to their family (a process referred to as reunification) (measured in **indicators 2.3 and 2.4**) by state and territory. The chart shows that the proportion living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers at 30 June 2021 is 41% nationally and there has been a decrease in the proportion of children in these placement types since 2017 (48%) nationally.



What is the *Connection* element?

This element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) relates to maintaining and supporting connections to family, community, culture and country for children in out-of-home care.



Indicator 2.1

Indicator 2.2

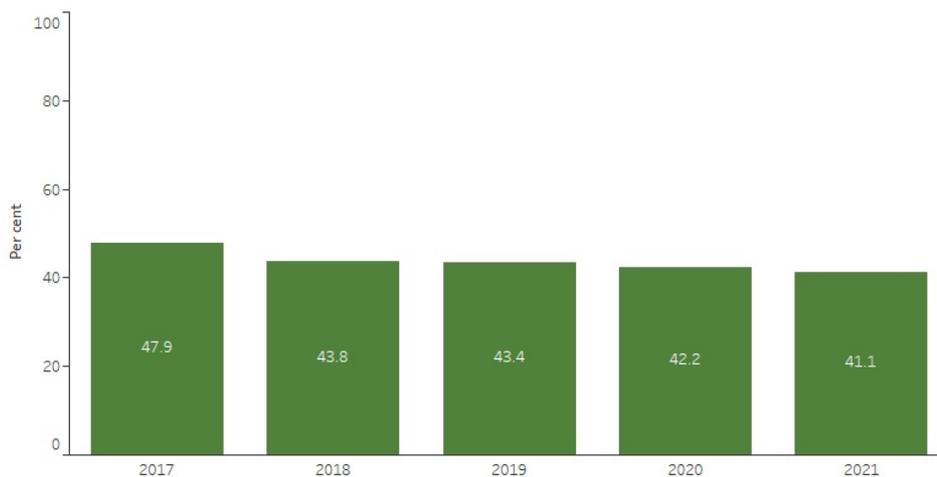
Indicator 2.3

Indicator 2.4

Indicator 2.1: The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care at 30 June who were living with Indigenous relatives or kin, or other Indigenous carers

Select state/territory

Australia



(a) Tasmania data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs. Tasmania is not able to include children in care where a financial payment was offered but was declined by the carer meaning Tasmania's data may be lower than would be the case if the counting rule was strictly applied.

(b) In Tasmania, the high number of carers whose Indigenous status is unknown may affect the identification of children living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander caregivers.

(c) For the Northern Territory, counts of children living with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or other Indigenous caregivers only include children for whom the process of making a placement decision was considered by caseworkers to be in accordance with the ATSICPP. This means there may have been a higher number of Indigenous children living with relatives, kin or other Indigenous caregivers than is presented here.

<https://www.aihw.gov.au>

Source: AIHW [Child Protection Data Collection](#)

See the [supplementary data tables](#) for further information and footnotes about these data. See the [background information and technical specifications](#) for information on counting rules for this indicator.

Connection covers a broad range of actions and supports that can facilitate the maintenance or re-establishment of connection to culture. *Connection* can be measured by reporting on children in out-of-home care living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers (measured in **indicator 2.1** - to explore data on indicator 2.1, go to the [Tableau dashboard](#)).

At 30 June 2021:

- 41% of the 19,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care were living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers.
- New South Wales had the highest proportion (48%) of children in out-of-home care living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relatives or kin or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, while Tasmania had the lowest (16%).

Connection can also be measured by reporting on the creation and maintenance of cultural support plans (measured in **indicator 2.2** - to explore data on indicator 2.2, go to the [Tableau dashboard](#)):

- At 30 June 2021, 73% of the 17,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care had (and were required to have) a current, documented and approved cultural support plan.

Cultural support plans include details such as the child’s cultural background and actions taken to maintain their connection to culture. Only children required to have cultural support plans, as determined by legislation in each state and territory, are reported in this indicator.

Reporting on efforts to enable a child to safely return to their family (a process referred to as *reunification*) is also covered by the *Connection* element (measured in **indicator 2.3** - to explore data on indicator 2.3, go to the [Tableau dashboard](#)):

- In 2020-21, 16% of the 10,300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 in out-of-home care (excluding children on long-term guardianship orders) were reunified during the year.
- Reunifications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have remained at or below 16%, dropping from 18% in 2016-17.

Successful reunification can be measured by looking at whether the child had returned to out-of-home care within a specific period after a reunification had taken place (measured in **indicator 2.4** - to explore data on indicator 2.4, go to the [Tableau dashboard](#)):

- 84% of the 1,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-16 who were reunified with family during 2019-20 did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months.
- In 2019-20, 84% of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children who were reunified did not return to out-of-home care within 12 months. This proportion has remained relatively stable since 2016-17.

Explanatory notes

Indicator 2.1

Indicator 2.1 is a proxy measure of connection to culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Being placed with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander caregiver is more likely to improve the prospects of a child to maintain a cultural connection than placement with non-Indigenous relatives or kin. However, this indicator is not intended to suggest that placement with non-Indigenous kin is never desirable or in the best interests of a particular child.

Indicator 2.2

Cultural support plans are created to develop and maintain a child’s connection to family, community, culture and country. They are individualised and reviewed at least annually. Each jurisdiction has a state-specific cultural support plan template and related development process, as well as a local definition of what is required for a plan to be considered complete and/or approved.

Legislation in each state and territory determines whether children are required to have cultural support plans. Only children required to have cultural support plans are reported in this indicator.

This indicator does not measure the quality of cultural support plans or whether the plan covers the 5 elements of the ATSCPP. Other indicators relating to the quality of cultural support plans are in development.

Indicator 2.3

Reunification is a planned process of safely enabling a child to return to their birth parents, family or former guardian. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, this can mean potentially re-establishing the closest possible connection to their family, community and culture, especially for those children who were placed with non-Indigenous carers who are not relatives or kin. Note that there is no national definition of reunification, and each jurisdiction has reported based on their local definition.

Indicator 2.4

While reunifications only occur where it is judged to be in the child’s best interests, a reunification occurring does not guarantee that a child will not return to out-of-home care.

Connection indicators under development

The following indicators are currently under development under *Connection*:

Number	Indicator
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with documented genograms
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the child’s cultural background
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include actions for the maintenance of the child’s culture
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were reunified with their birth parents

Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were reunified with their relatives or kin
Under development	The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reunified, by time from admission

References

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

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Indicators

The *Prevention* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) relates to supporting families and building capacity in communities to care safely for their children. This will protect future generations from the devastating effects of removal from family, community, culture and country (SNAICC 2017).



To protect the rights of children to be brought up in their families, it is necessary to ensure that families have equitable access to quality service supports including:

- a full range of culturally safe universal early childhood, education, health and other social services;
- targeted and intensive supports to address issues in family functioning, promote healing, and address specific parental issues including trauma, substance misuse, mental health issues, family violence and poverty;
- adequate and appropriate housing;
- culturally safe family violence prevention, legal and support services;
- alternative intake and referral pathways to early intervention prior to families engaging with child protection systems; and
- an integrated and holistic service system that provides vulnerable families with the opportunity to readily engage with the full range of culturally safe service supports they require.

Measuring *Prevention*

The following indicator is currently under development under *Prevention*:

Number	Indicator
Under development	Expenditure on child protection-related services provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receiving child protection services from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)

References

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

Indicators

The *Partnership* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) ensures that participation extends beyond consultation to genuine inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives in the decisions that are made about children at all stages of child and family welfare decision-making (SNAICC 2017).



Protecting the rights of representative participation requires:

- coverage and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to lead holistic, integrated prevention, early intervention and out-of-home care service delivery based on their knowledge of local needs;
- resourced roles to inform the design of child and family welfare policy and service models at local, state and federal levels;
- a resourced legislative role for participation in all child protection decisions;
- empowering community-based organisations to facilitate family decision-making processes for all families where child safety concerns are identified;
- supporting community-based representative child safety structures to promote safety and wellbeing, input to decision-making about the welfare of children and families, and drive local early intervention and prevention strategies;
- building capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and professionals in the sector to deliver the full range of services required; and
- ensuring adequate, culturally safe legal representation opportunities.

Measuring *Partnership*

The following indicators are currently under development under *Partnership*:

Number	Indicator
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children admitted to out-of-home care for whom an ACCO was consulted regarding placement decisions
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of an ACCO

References

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

Indicators

The *Partnership* element of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) ensures the participation of children, parents and family members in decisions regarding the care and protection of their children. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families have the best knowledge about the caring strengths and risks that exist in their own families and communities. Involving family members in decision-making can help to widen circles of support for parents and children, identify placement options with family and community and ensure families take responsibility for plans to address safety concerns that are of their own making (SNAICC 2017).



Ensuring the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families to participate in decisions affecting them requires:

- high cultural competency of professionals to engage families in child protection decision-making processes;
- family participation in case planning; and
- quality family decision-making processes.

In particular, taking into account the expressed wishes of the child requires:

- availability of child advocates ensuring adequate representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; and
- adequate procedures and professional capacity to support participation of children in child protection decision-making.

Measuring Participation

The following indicators are currently under development under *Participation*:

Number	Indicator
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children admitted to out-of-home care for whom the input of family regarding placement decisions was collected through a family group conference or family led decision making meeting
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of the child
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of family members
Under development	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care with cultural support plans that include the input of family collected through a family group conference or family led decision making meeting

References

SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (2017) [Understanding and applying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle: a resource for legislation, policy, and program development](#), SNAICC, accessed 16 June 2020.

Technical notes

Notes on data used for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle indicators

Children in out-of-home care

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle (ATSICPP) indicators were first reported in 2020, with data from 2016-17 onwards included in the report. All data included was based on the nationally consistent definition for out-of-home care, implemented for national reporting in 2018-19. Therefore, historical out-of-home care data presented in this report may not match out-of-home care data published previously or elsewhere.

Children on third party-parental responsibility orders

Children who were on third-party parental responsibility orders (sometimes referred to as permanent care orders) at the time that data was recorded are not included in counts for the ATSICPP indicators as they are not considered to be in out-of-home care. These children are, however, under the legal guardianship of a third-party carer and therefore separated from their birth parents or former guardians. Accordingly, in the context of the ATSICPP, issues around connection to culture and placement are still very relevant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on third-party orders. However, due to data limitations relating to children on third-party orders, insufficient national data is available to report on the ATSICPP indicators for these children.

For more details on the definition of out-of-home care and children on third-party orders, see [Child protection Australia 2018-19](#) (AIHW 2020).

Data source and methods

The data used for the ATSICPP indicators published in this report are sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Child Protection National Minimum Data Set (CP NMDS). The CP NMDS is a national unit record data collection, with data supplied by all states and territories except New South Wales, who provide aggregate child protection data.

Aggregate data was also provided by the Northern Territory for indicators 1.1 and 2.1, which relate to caregiver types for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care. For indicator 2.2 the Australian Capital Territory have supplied aggregate data since 2019-20 and South Australia supplied aggregate data for 2019-20 only.

Additional details on caveats relating to data in the CP NMDS can be found in the supplementary data tables and footnotes from [Child protection Australia](#).

To protect confidentiality within this publication, some cell values have been suppressed and are not available for publication but are included in totals where applicable.

More information

Background information and technical specifications for all indicators can be found at [The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle indicators: background information and technical specifications](#).

Metadata standards for these indicators are stored in Australia's online metadata repository, [METeOR](#), hosted by the AIHW.

References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) (2020) [Child protection Australia 2018-19](#), AIHW, Australian Government.

Glossary

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander: A person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

child: Unless otherwise stated, a young person aged 0-17. For some states and territories, this includes unborn children.

cultural support plan: An individualised, dynamic written plan or a support agreement that aims to develop or maintain children or young people's cultural identity through connection to family, community and culture. Cultural support plans help to ensure that planning and decision-making are culturally appropriate and in the best interests of the child. A current cultural support plan is one that has been approved and/or reviewed within the previous 12 months.

family: Includes parent/guardian, sibling, and other relative or kin.

family group home: A home for children provided by a department or community-sector agency that has live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for the provision of care.

independent living: Accommodation including private board and lead tenant households.

Indigenous: See **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**.

Indigenous relative or kin care: An out-of-home care placement type where the household contains an Indigenous caregiver who was a relative or who had a kinship relationship with the child.

Indigenous status: The status of a person who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and is accepted as such by the community in which they live. See also **Indigenous**, **non-Indigenous**, and **unknown Indigenous status**.

non-Indigenous: A person who has not been identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; this excludes people of unknown Indigenous status.

non-Indigenous relative or kin care: An out-of-home care placement type where the household contains a non-Indigenous caregiver (or a caregiver of unknown Indigenous status) who was a relative or who had a kinship relationship with the child.

other care arrangement: Out-of-home care placements that include non-Indigenous carers who are not relatives or kin, residential care, family group homes or independent living.

other Indigenous caregiver: An out-of-home care placement type where the household contains an Indigenous caregiver who was not a relative and did not have a kinship relationship with the child.

other non-Indigenous caregiver: An out-of-home care placement type where the household contains a non-Indigenous caregiver who was not a relative and did not have a kinship relationship with the child.

out-of-home care: Overnight care for children aged under 18 for whom there is ongoing case management and financial payment (including where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the carer).

placement type: The type of care in which a child in out-of-home care was living. Also referred to as a living arrangement. See also **Indigenous relative or kin care**, **non-Indigenous relative or kin care**, **other care arrangement**, **other Indigenous caregiver**, **other non-Indigenous caregiver**, **residential care**, **family group home**, and **independent living**.

preferred placement: the placements numbered one (with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous relatives or extended family members/kin), 2 (with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the child's community) and 3 (with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family-based carers) in the placement hierarchy.

reunification: A planned process of safely returning and enabling a child to remain at home with their birth parent(s), family, or former guardian after a period of time in care when it is in the child's best interests to do so, and where it will safeguard the child's long-term stability and permanency. In practice, reunification tends to be nearly exclusively with birth parents. Also known as restoration.

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

unknown Indigenous status: Describes people whose Indigenous status was unknown.

Abbreviations

ACCO	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations
ACT	Australian Capital Territory

AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ATSICPP	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle
CP NMDS	Child Protection National Minimum Data Set
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
Tas	Tasmania
SA	South Australia
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia





Data





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