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Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare

Homeless children in SAAP 2004–05

48 Bulletin

Introduction

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is a major part of Australia's overall response to homelessness and represents a broader social safety net designed to help people in crisis in the community. The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. Further within this aim, the goals are to resolve crisis; to re-establish family links; and to re-establish a capacity to live independently of SAAP. Each day SAAP supports a diverse range of people, including parent(s) or guardian(s) with children accompanying them (accompanied children) and children who present independently of a parent or guardian (unaccompanied children).

This bulletin, the fifth thematic report from the SAAP National Data Collection (NDC), focuses on children aged 17 years and under in SAAP. It is well documented that children who are homeless, whether as part of a family unit or on their own, experience a number of negative social and health consequences. These can include early school leaving, behavioural problems, and psychological problems such as depression and low self-esteem (AIHW 2005). Many homeless children have experienced or witnessed domestic violence, have been victims of other crime, or have been involved in criminal activities themselves. Research has also shown that children who are homeless are more likely to perpetuate that state into adulthood and that homelessness can become a way of life (Chamberlain & MacKenzie 2003). SAAP agencies thus have an important role to play to help improve the lives of homeless children and to prevent them from being caught up in the cycle of homelessness.

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For more information on the definitions used in this bulletin, please refer to the publication *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2004–05 Australia* (AIHW 2006a). State and territory supplementary tables to this bulletin and a summary of the findings are available via the AIHW website <www.aihw.gov.au>.

Main findings

- A large proportion of the people who access SAAP services are children. Children accounted for over two-fifths (43% or 68,100) of the 157,200 people who accessed a SAAP service in 2004–05, either as children accompanying a parent or guardian who was being supported (36% or 56,800 were accompanied children) or directly as clients independently of a parent or guardian (7% or 11,300 were unaccompanied children aged 17 years and under).
- The majority of children in SAAP were children who accompanied a parent or guardian who was a client of a SAAP agency (83% of children in SAAP were accompanied children). A large proportion of these accompanied children were in SAAP because their female parent or guardian was escaping domestic violence.
- The majority of accompanied children were aged 12 years and under (88%) and there was little difference in gender. In contrast, the majority of unaccompanied children were aged 14–17 years (92%) and there were more female than male unaccompanied children (62% were female).
- Five per cent of the children who presented independently of a parent or guardian had children accompanying them. Whether these were their own children or siblings they had guardianship over cannot be determined from the data.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples made up a relatively large proportion of the children in SAAP. Nearly a quarter (23%) of accompanied children presented with a parent or guardian who identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and 18% of unaccompanied children were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- Children, whether on their own or in a family group, were often in SAAP because of difficulties in their interpersonal relationships. In particular, clients with children most commonly presented because of domestic violence, and unaccompanied children commonly sought support because of relationship or family breakdown.
- In general, SAAP does a good job of meeting the support needs of both groups of children, with requested services able to be provided directly in almost all cases both overall and for each of the broad service types. However, unaccompanied children reported a relatively high level of unmet need for some services when compared with accompanied children and SAAP clients overall.
- Requests for specialist services by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years with a mental health problem remained unmet in a relatively high proportion of cases (15%), had the highest level of referrals made (32%), and had the lowest proportion of direct service provision (52%) of all the groups of unaccompanied children examined in this bulletin.

- SAAP does help clients with children to obtain or maintain independent housing such as private rental accommodation and public or community housing. Clients with children were more likely than clients without children to enter support from and exit support to public or community housing or private rental accommodation.
- The vast majority of SAAP clients with children were not in the labour force, and hence not actively seeking employment, and reported a government pension or benefit as their main source of income. These proportions were relatively unchanged after exiting SAAP support.
- Lower proportions of unaccompanied children who were living with their parent(s) before entering SAAP returned to live with their parent(s) after receiving SAAP support, particularly in the older age groups. In addition, the proportion of unaccompanied children who were living with their parent(s) immediately before seeking support decreased with age, with a high proportion of 14–17 year-olds living instead with friends or other unrelated people before seeking SAAP support.
- The majority of unaccompanied 12–13 year-olds who accessed SAAP entered and exited as a primary or secondary school student (85% of closed support periods). However, around one-third of unaccompanied 14–15 year-olds and over half of unaccompanied 16–17 year-olds who accessed SAAP were not in the education system. There was little change in the proportions in education after support, indicating that, although SAAP agencies are able to maintain the participation of unaccompanied children who entered SAAP support while in the education system, they are not able to increase participation. The educational status of children accompanying SAAP clients is not collected.
- Generally, longer lengths of support resulted in more positive outcomes for both groups of children in SAAP.

Children in SAAP

The SAAP National Data Collection Client Collection gathers annual data on children aged 17 years and under who present on their own (unaccompanied children) as well as children who accompany SAAP clients (accompanied children). When these two groups of children are considered together, they accounted for 43% (or 68,100) of the 157,200 people supported by SAAP agencies in 2004–05 (derived from Tables 1 and 2; AIHW 2006a:9). These children had 96,700 periods of support provided to them (derived from Tables 1 and 2).

Data on people who request SAAP accommodation but are turned away are collected via the Demand for Accommodation Collection for a 2-week period each year. Data from the 2003–04 collection showed that family groups and accompanied children were the most likely groups to be turned away from SAAP accommodation that they required within the next 24 hours (AIHW 2006b). Therefore, although many children were supported by SAAP, the demand for SAAP accommodation for children and families was not able to be completely met. More work on the Demand for Accommodation Collection is required to assess how much additional capacity is needed to meet this excess demand. Other strategies, such as intervention before a child becomes homeless and post-crisis support to prevent another period of homelessness, may also reduce the demand for crisis accommodation. Data on the demand for accommodation for 2004–05 is due to be released in 2006.

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Accompanied children

Accompanied (or accompanying) children are children aged 17 years and under who present to a SAAP agency in the company of their parent(s) or guardian(s)¹. In 2004–05, 56,800 children accompanied a parent or guardian who received substantial SAAP support (Table 1). The majority of accompanied children were aged 0–12 years (87%), with 44% aged 0–4 years and 42% aged 5–12 years (AIHW 2006a:22). The remaining 13% were aged 13–17 years. There was little difference between the number of boys and girls (Table 1).

When looked at in terms of how many accompanied children were in SAAP compared with children in the general Australian population, 1 in every 85 children² aged 0–17 years accompanied a parent or guardian who was a SAAP client. According to the age of accompanied children, the highest rate of use of SAAP services was by children aged 0–4 years, with around 1 in every 51 children² (or almost 2% of Australian children) in this age bracket accompanying a SAAP client during 2004–05 (derived from Table 1).

According to the cultural and linguistic diversity of their parent or guardian, the majority of children accompanied 'other Australian-born' clients (59%) (Table 1). Nearly a quarter (23%) of children accompanied a client who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, 12% accompanied a client who was born overseas in a predominantly non-English-speaking country (EP groups 2–4), just under 4% accompanied a client who was born overseas in a predominantly English-speaking country (EP group 1), and 3% accompanied a client of unknown cultural and linguistic diversity.

Children accompanying SAAP clients were supported on 78,500 occasions (accompanied child support periods). On these occasions, children most often accompanied a female parent or guardian who was supported without a partner (in 86% of accompanied child support periods), followed by children accompanying couples (10%), and children accompanying a single male parent or guardian (4%) (AIHW 2006a:34).

Unaccompanied children

In addition to children who accompanied a parent or guardian, 11,300 children aged 17 years and under became SAAP clients in their own right by presenting independently of a parent or guardian (Table 2). Of these, 68% were aged 16–17 years, 24% were aged 14–15 years, 4% were aged 12–13 years, and 4% were aged 11 years and under³ (derived from Table 2). There were more female than male children who presented independently (7,000 or 62% were female).

When looked at in terms of how many unaccompanied children were in SAAP compared with children in the general Australian population, the highest rate of SAAP use by unaccompanied children was by children aged 16–17 years, with around 1 in every 70 children (or just over 1% of Australian children) in this age bracket becoming a SAAP client in 2004–05 (derived from Table 2).

The majority of unaccompanied children aged 17 years and under were 'other Australian-born' (73%), 18% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, 4% were born overseas in a

1 Note that accompanied children are recorded on only one client form if they presented with more than one parent or guardian.

2 Calculated by dividing 10,000 by the presented 'per 10,000 population' number.

3 It is likely that some of the unaccompanied children recorded as being under 12 years of age should have been recorded as accompanying children.

predominantly non-English-speaking country (EP groups 2–4), 2% were born overseas in a predominantly English-speaking country (EP group 1), and just under 4% were of unknown cultural and linguistic diversity (Table 2).

Children who presented independently had 18,200 periods of support. It is interesting to note that in 5% (or 900) of their support periods, clients aged 17 years and under presented to a SAAP agency with children accompanying them (AIHW unpublished data).

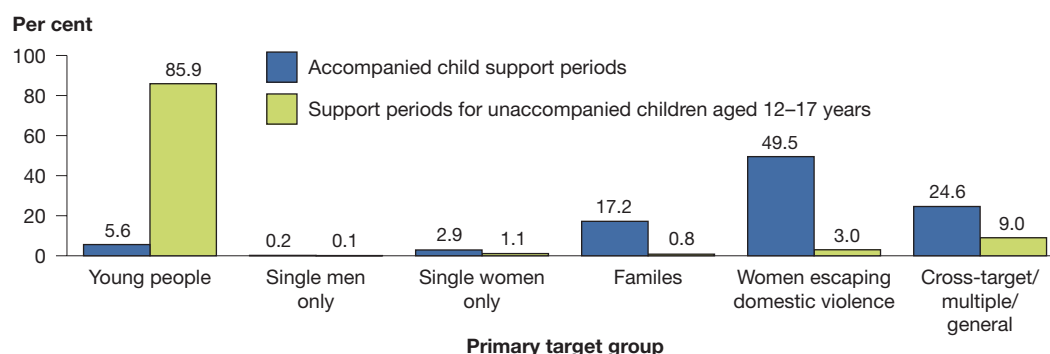
For the remainder of this bulletin, the analysis for children who presented independently of a parent or guardian focuses on those aged 12–17 years (inclusive).

Type of agency attended

As part of its funding agreement with individual agencies, SAAP sets agencies up to mainly focus on a particular client group. These groups are young people; single men; single women; families; women and children escaping domestic violence (DV); and cross-target, multiple and general agencies. Cross-target, multiple and general agencies are set up to accept clients from a variety of client groups. Some agencies with a specific primary target group do, however, accept limited numbers of people from outside their target groups. For example, agencies aimed at providing services primarily to single women may occasionally accept a woman with children.

Accompanied children

Children who accompanied a SAAP client most commonly attended agencies primarily targeted at women and children escaping domestic violence (in 50% of their support periods), followed by cross-target agencies (25%), and family targeted agencies (17%) (Figure 1). Accompanied children were accepted into agencies that were set up to provide services mainly to young people in 6% of their support periods, and in 3% accompanied children attended an agency that was primarily targeted at single women.



Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 0. Note that there were 647 support periods where age was not specified.
2. Accompanying child support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation; support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Figure 1: SAAP accompanied child support periods and support periods for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, by primary target group of agency, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

Homeless children in SAAP 2004–05

Unaccompanied children

Not surprisingly, children aged 12–17 years who presented independently of a parent or guardian overwhelmingly attended agencies that were primarily targeted at assisting young people (in 86% of their support periods) (Figure 1). The next most common type of agency attended was cross-target (in 9% of their support periods).

Main reason for seeking assistance

The reasons children require support can vary depending on whether the child presented to a SAAP agency independently or was an accompanied child, and as such part of a family unit that was homeless or at risk of homelessness due to the circumstances of their parent(s) or guardian(s). Note that the main reason does not reflect all the reasons that children are homeless, only the predominant one.

Accompanied children

The reasons for seeking assistance are not collected separately for accompanied children. However, as accompanied children are generally homeless or at risk of homelessness owing to the circumstances of their parent or guardian, the reasons that accompanied children are in SAAP are analysed based on the main reason their parent or guardian recorded.

Clients with children most commonly sought support because of issues in their interpersonal relationships (58%) and in a far higher proportion than reported by clients without children (34%) (Table 3). Notably, within this group of reasons, domestic violence accounted for nearly 41% of the support periods for clients who had children accompanying them. Research shows that children who are subjected to or witness domestic violence may suffer severe psychological trauma. They display high levels of distress, low self-esteem and, in many cases, behavioural problems such as depression (Rogers 2003; Stone 2003).

The next most common group of main reasons for seeking assistance reported by clients with children were accommodation issues (19%) (Table 3). This was, however, reported in a lower proportion of support periods than reported for clients without children (25%).

There were some differences according to gender for people who presented with children accompanying them. People who presented with children were predominantly female⁴ (around 82%) and these female clients with children commonly presented because of domestic violence (in 49% of their support periods) (AIHW 2006a:36). Male clients with children, on the other hand, were more likely to seek assistance because of financial difficulty (in 23% of their support periods).

Unaccompanied children

Children aged 12–17 years who presented independently to a SAAP agency most commonly sought support because of issues in their interpersonal relationships (52%), most notably family or relationship breakdown (24%) and time out from family or other situation (13%) (Table 3). Accommodation issues were also among the more commonly reported main reasons (31%)—these refer to situations where the child's usual accommodation was

⁴ Note that this excludes clients who had children accompanying them and who presented in the 'Other' client group or who did not record their presenting group.

temporarily unavailable (16%), where the child was evicted or their previous accommodation was ended (13%) (including situations where the child was asked to leave home), or where emergency accommodation ended (2%).

There were some gender differences reported in the reasons children aged 12–17 years sought support independently of a parent or guardian. In particular, males aged 12–17 years were more likely to seek support because of accommodation-related issues than females aged 12–17 years (in 36% of support periods for males compared with 28% for females). Females aged 12–17 years were more likely than their male counterparts to seek support because of interpersonal-related issues (in 57% of support periods compared with 45% for males) (AIHW unpublished data).

The reasons that children sought support independently of a parent or guardian also varied depending on the age of the child. Broken down by finer age groups, interpersonal-related reasons for seeking assistance were more prevalent among children aged 12–15 years, with 12–13 year-olds reporting these reasons in 69% of their support periods and 14–15 year-olds in 63% (Table 3). Unaccompanied children aged 16–17 years reported interpersonal-related reasons in 48% of their support periods. As the age of unaccompanied children increased, accommodation-related reasons for seeking assistance became more common—they were reported as the main reason for seeking assistance in 18% of support periods for 12–13 year-olds, in 24% for 14–15 year-olds, and in 34% for 16–17 year-olds.

As age can be a determining factor in a young person's ability to access services and in the types of services they require, it is not surprising that the main reasons children sought support varied depending on their age. It does, however, highlight the fact that different responses may be needed depending on the age and circumstance of the child. For example, early intervention and family counselling may work well for younger children where family reconciliation is still possible and a homeless state is not yet entrenched as a way of life. However, as unaccompanied children get older and family ties become more eroded more intensive support may be required (Chamberlain & MacKenzie 2003). That the family connections for older children have been eroded is demonstrated by the reduced proportion of older children who leave support to live with their parent(s) (see 'Outcomes for children').

Meeting the needs of children

SAAP agencies play an important role in securing accommodation and providing support for families and children in crisis. As mentioned, children can enter SAAP in two ways, either in the company of a parent or guardian who is homeless or at risk of homelessness or as a client presenting independently. The types of support collected for these two groups of children reflect this and as such are different.

In the context of examining whether the needs of children are met, it is important to note that the number of times a service is requested, provided, referred or remained unmet⁵ is not reported in the SAAP Client Collection. For example, a client may request a meal three times within a support period but the Client Collection shows only that a meal was requested sometime during that client's support, not that it was requested three times. The same is true for provision and referral. Note also that there is no information about outcomes from

⁵ An unmet need occurs when a need for a particular support service is either directly or indirectly acknowledged and that service is neither provided nor referred on before the ending of support.



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referrals. While in the context of the National Data Collection, a referral means that an agency (SAAP or non-SAAP) has accepted the client or accompanying child for an appointment or interview, there is no guarantee that their needs will then be met.

The ability of SAAP agencies to meet the needs of children can be measured only after a child has finished receiving support. Therefore, it is necessary to look at closed support periods—support periods that finished on or before 30 June 2005—when examining the provision of requested services.

Accompanied children

Not all children who accompanied a SAAP client required direct support, although they may have indirectly benefited from the support provided to their parent or guardian. In around 41% of their support periods, accompanied children either did not directly require any support services (33%) or had no information recorded on the types of services they required or received (8%) (AIHW unpublished data).

When services were requested for accompanied children, they were able to be provided directly in the majority of cases (in 94% of cases overall) (AIHW 2006a:Table 7.4). Services for accompanied children were referred on in a further 5% of cases when they could not be provided directly, leaving under 2% where a requested service was neither provided nor referred on (unmet need).

The most common unmet need expressed by accompanied children was for counselling-related services—this broad group of services was provided directly in 86% of cases, referred on in 10% and remained unmet in 5% of cases. In particular, at the individual service type level, sexual and physical abuse counselling or support remained unmet following 9% of closed support periods in which it was requested, was referred on in 25% and was provided directly in 67%.

The broad group of services that were least likely to be provided directly were specialist services (provided in 81% of cases), however, this broad group of services had the highest level of referral (17%), leaving requests unmet in 2% of cases. In particular, at the individual service type level, health and medical services were provided directly in 67% of closed support periods in which it was requested, was referred on in 30% and remained unmet in 3%.

Children accompanying a parent or guardian who experienced domestic violence, who had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem, or who had a mental health problem

Children accompanying a parent or guardian who, in addition to being homeless, had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem, who had a mental health problem or who were homeless because they were escaping domestic violence are examined below. Note that children may appear in one or more of these groups (with the exception of the group 'other'). Although the number of accompanied child support periods for children accompanying clients in each group is presented for information, the analysis of the needs of children focuses on closed accompanied child support periods for children who required direct assistance.

The largest number of accompanied child support periods by the selected groups were where children accompanied a parent or guardian who experienced domestic violence (49,700) (Table 4). Children accompanied a client with a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem on 6,300 occasions and a client with a mental health problem on 4,200 occasions.

Overall, children accompanying a parent or guardian with these problems had requested services provided directly in the majority of cases (94%, 93% and 91% respectively). Further, requests for services that could not be provided directly by the agency were referred on in between 4% and 8% of cases. This left requests for services unmet in 2% of cases or less.

According to the broad service type, the most common unmet need expressed for these children was for counselling-related services. This broad group of services remained unmet in 4% of cases for children accompanying a client with a mental health problem, in 5% of cases for children accompanying a client who experienced domestic violence, and in 6% of cases for children accompanying a client with a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem. Children accompanying a client with a mental health problem reported a relatively high level of referrals for counselling services (15%).

When examined in terms of the services that SAAP is able to provide directly to these groups of accompanied children (as opposed to referring on), specialist services was the broad service type least likely to be provided directly when requested. This was due to the high level of referrals made (between 14% and 28%). In particular, children accompanying clients with a mental health problem were the group of accompanied children least likely to have specialist services provided directly when they were requested (provided directly in 69% of cases and referred on in 28%).

Unaccompanied children

Services requested by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years were provided directly in the majority of cases (just under 90% overall) (Table 5). Services that could not be provided directly were referred on in 5% of cases, leaving 6% unmet.

By broad service type, the most common unmet need expressed by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years was for housing or accommodation-related services. Housing or accommodation services remained unmet in 11% (or 1,900) of the 17,400 distinct accommodation services requested (derived from Table 5). In particular, on the individual housing or accommodation service type level, requests for assistance to obtain or maintain short-term accommodation remained unmet following 20% of support periods and requests for assistance to obtain or maintain independent housing remained unmet following 14%. SAAP or Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) accommodation, however, was provided directly or referred on in a relatively high proportion of closed support periods (94%), leaving 6% unmet (Table 5).

Requests for specialist services also remained unmet in around 11% of cases. In addition, this broad group of services was less often provided directly when requested because of the high level of referrals made (provided directly in 68% of cases and referred on in 21%) (Table 5). On the individual specialist service level, requests for drug or alcohol support or intervention services remained unmet in 16% of closed support periods, were referred on in 14% and could be provided directly in 70%; and requests for health or medical services were referred on in 25%, provided directly in 68% and remained unmet in 7%.

Note that some of the individual service types that had the highest proportion of cases where requested services remained unmet, such as physical disability services (40%) and assistance with problem gambling (57%), were also the services that were requested least often (these particular services were requested in less than 50 closed support periods each).

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The overall proportion of unmet need expressed by unaccompanied children was higher than that reported by all SAAP clients (3%) and that reported for accompanied children (2%) (AIHW 2006a: Tables 7.3 and Table 7.4). In particular, unaccompanied children reported a relatively high level of unmet need for some services when compared with accompanied children and SAAP clients overall. For example, requests for accommodation remained unmet in 1% of cases for accompanied children, in 6% of cases for all SAAP clients, and in 11% of cases for unaccompanied children (AIHW 2006a: Tables 7.3 and Table 7.4; Table 5). Similarly, requests for specialist services remained unmet in 2% of cases for accompanied children, in 7% of cases for clients overall, and in 11% of cases for unaccompanied children. Unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years also reported higher levels of unmet need for counselling-related services (8%) than accompanied children (5%) and clients overall (4%).

Unaccompanied children who experienced domestic violence, who had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem, or who had a mental health problem

Unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years with a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem or a mental health problem or who were homeless because they were escaping domestic violence are examined below. Note that children may appear in one or more of these groups (with the exception of the group 'other'). Although the number of support periods for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years in each group are presented for information, the analysis of the needs of unaccompanied children focuses on closed support periods for children who reported the types of assistance they required.

Relatively small numbers of support periods were recorded for children who experienced domestic violence (2,400), who had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem (2,300), or who had a mental health problem (1,100) (Table 6). However, drug, alcohol and substance use is commonly linked with homelessness for young people. Although the SAAP data on children's main reason for seeking support also show a very small proportion of support periods where children who presented independently cited drug, alcohol and/or substance use as their main reason for seeking assistance (1%), issues in interpersonal relationships featured strongly (52%) (Table 3). Research indicates a relationship between family conflict, drug use and homelessness for young people, and it is likely that some of the children presented in this bulletin viewed interpersonal difficulties as the main reason that they sought support rather than their drug or alcohol use, although the two can be interrelated. For example, a study of homeless young people in Melbourne in 2001 that examined the links between homelessness and drug use indicated that, for a fair proportion of the group the study spoke to, either drug use caused their family conflict and resulting homelessness (38%), family conflict led to their drug use and subsequent homelessness (19%) or family conflict preceded their homelessness and drug use (17%) (Mallet et al. 2003). Similarly, it is likely that mental health as a reason for seeking assistance is understated because of the well-documented stigma attached to mental illness and the fact that the children may not attribute a mental illness as their reason for seeking assistance.

The most common unmet need expressed by children aged 12–17 years who experienced domestic violence, who had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem, or who had a mental health problem was for specialist services, with this broad service type remaining unmet in 13% of cases for those who experienced domestic violence and those who had a drug, alcohol and/or substance use problem and in 15% of cases for those who had a mental health problem (Table 6). Specialist

services was also the broad service type that was referred on the most often when it could not be provided directly (between 20% and 32%), resulting in it being provided directly in between 52% and 67% of cases where services of this type were requested. The highest level of referral for specialist services (32%) and the lowest level of direct service provision of specialist services (52%) recorded out of all the groups of unaccompanied 12–17 year-olds was recorded by children with a mental health problem.

Outcomes for children

Positive outcomes for children can be difficult to quantify and can also depend on whether the child is part of a family unit that is homeless or has sought support independently. For example, a good outcome for children who present as part of a family unit might include a stable source of income and independent housing for their parent or guardian, whereas for children who present independently it might be family reconciliation accompanied by appropriate support. That being said, whether the children are part of a family unit or are on their own, the goal is the same—to ensure that children are in a safe and secure environment.

The outcomes for children in SAAP are again analysed separately for the two groups of children.

Accompanied children

The SAAP National Data Collection does not collect outcomes for accompanied children separately. However, the wellbeing of accompanied children is obviously affected by the outcomes their parent or guardian achieves and it is assumed that the child accompanies the parent or guardian when they exit SAAP support. For this reason, outcomes for accompanied children are examined based on the outcomes recorded for their parent or guardian. The outcome measures reported for accompanied children in this bulletin are accommodation, income and employment for the child's parent or guardian.

Accommodation

Children without access to safe, secure and adequate housing face enormous social and health disadvantages. For example, insecurity of tenure adds to the stress on the household and overcrowded housing or housing with inadequate access to the basic facilities, such as running water, can severely affect the health of children (AIHW 2002, 2003).

In a far higher proportion of closed support periods than reported for clients without children, clients with children were living in public or community housing on entry to and exit from SAAP support (22% before support and 27% after support for clients with children compared with 12% before and 14% after for clients without children) (Table 7). Further a higher proportion of clients with children exited to public or community housing than entered from that type of accommodation.

A longer length of support generally improved the public or community housing accommodation outcomes for clients with children. For example, clients with children who stayed for up to 3 months exited SAAP support to live in public or community housing in 24% of closed support periods and the proportions increased the longer the client received SAAP support, reaching 54% for those who stayed longer than 1 year (Table 8).



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Clients with children had a higher proportion of closed support periods where they entered SAAP support from and exited SAAP support to live in private rental accommodation than clients without children (27% before and after support for clients with children compared with 14% before support and 15% after support for clients without children) (Table 7). There was no discernable increase in the proportions exiting to private rental accommodation for clients with children. It may be that families are facing barriers in getting into private accommodation that they can afford given the reported lack of affordable housing (Yates & Gabriel 2006; AIHW 2005).

Interestingly, the proportion of closed support periods in which clients with children exited SAAP support to live in private rental accommodation started to decrease after a period of 6 months, making it difficult to determine whether a longer length of support improved client outcomes (Table 8). The reasons for this decrease are not clear.

A higher proportion of clients with children exited SAAP support to live in SAAP-funded accommodation provided by another agency or other emergency accommodation than entered support from that type of accommodation (12% before and 17% after support) (Table 7). This could indicate that clients with children are moving between SAAP agencies in order to secure accommodation. However, the proportions exiting SAAP support to live in SAAP-funded accommodation at another agency or other emergency accommodation decreased the longer a client with children was supported, falling from 19% for clients with children who were supported for up to 3 months to 9% for clients with children who were supported for longer than 1 year (Table 8).

Income and employment

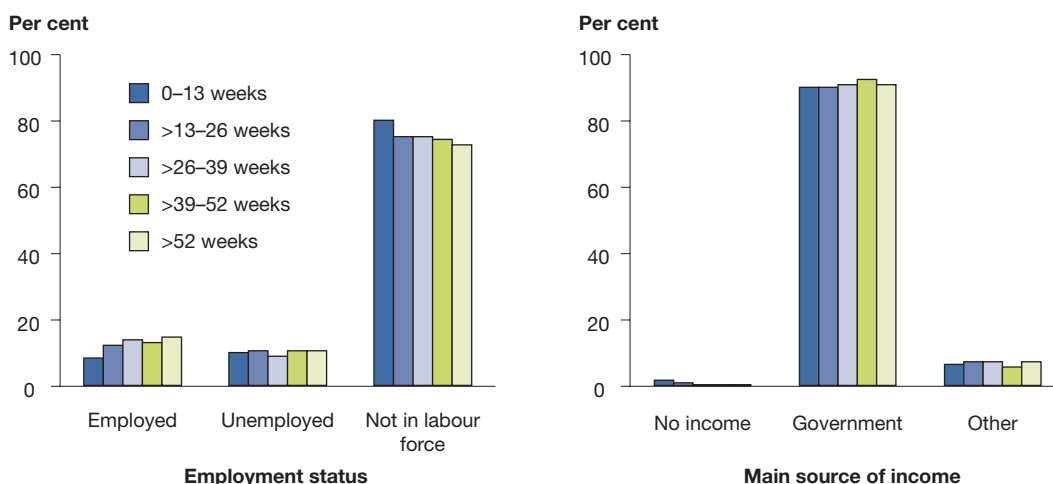
It is well accepted that the physical and emotional wellbeing of children is affected by the economic participation of their parents and that children who grow up in low-income and jobless households are at a higher risk of disadvantage than other children (AIHW 2005). Children who grow up in a low-income or jobless household also have an increased probability of attaining a lower level of education and having a low income or being jobless in adulthood (FaCS 2003; AIHW 2005). Because part of the aim of SAAP is to help people achieve independence and self-reliance, it is essential that people leaving SAAP obtain an adequate source of income and/or employment. The SAAP National Data Collection does not collect data on the levels of income, so whether clients with children are exiting SAAP support on an income that is adequate to support their families is not known.

There was very little change after support in the main source of income reported for clients who presented with children accompanying them. In the majority of completed support periods, clients with children were on a government pension or benefit both before and after support (89% before support and 91% after) (Table 7). Clients who presented with children had a lower proportion of closed support periods where they had no income before and after support than reported for clients who had no children accompanying them (3% before support and 2% after support for clients with children compared with 10% before support and 8% after support for clients without children).

There was also little change after support in the employment status of clients with accompanying children. The vast majority of clients with children were not in the labour force both before and after support (80% of closed support periods both before and after

support). The proportion of this group not in the labour force was much higher than that reported for clients who presented without accompanying children (59% before support and 58% after support). Correspondingly, clients with children had a far lower proportion of closed support periods where they were unemployed but looking for work both before and after support (11% before and after support compared with 33% before and 31% after support for clients without children).

Generally, the income and employment outcomes for clients with children improved the longer they were supported. For example, Figure 2 shows the increase in the proportion employed either full time, part time or casually after support as the length of support increased (from 9% of closed support periods for those supported for up to 3 months to 16% for those supported for longer than 1 year) and the decrease in the proportion not in the labour force (from 81% to 73%). The proportion of closed support periods in which clients with children had no income after leaving support decreased slightly from 2% for those supported for up to 3 months to less than 1% for those supported for longer than 1 year.



Source: Derived from Table 8.

Figure 2: SAAP closed support periods: employment status and main source of income after support for clients with accompanying children, by length of support, Australia, 2004-05 (per cent)

Unaccompanied children

Research has shown that family conflict, poverty, unemployment and lack of affordable housing are important determinants of youth homelessness (AIHW 2003). The outcome measures selected in this bulletin for children aged 12-17 years who presented independently of a parent or guardian are accommodation, income, employment, living situation and education.

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Accommodation

As mentioned, children without access to safe, secure and adequate housing are severely disadvantaged. It can be particularly difficult for unaccompanied children to secure appropriate housing and independent living outcomes. Some of the reasons for this include legal restrictions and the fact that they might require an environment with more support structures in place.

The most common accommodation type occupied by unaccompanied 12–17 year-olds on entry to and exit from SAAP support was living rent-free in a house or flat (in 40% of closed support periods before support and 35% after) (Table 9). However, it was far more common for 12–13 year-olds than for the older age groups and, as age increased, lower proportions of unaccompanied children were living rent-free in a house or flat both before and after support—decreasing from 60% of closed support periods before and 59% after support for clients aged 12–13 years to 55% before and 52% after support for clients aged 14–15 years and again to 35% before and 28% after support for clients aged 16–17 years. This decrease corresponds to the decrease in the proportion living with a parent or parents before or after support as the age of children increased (see ‘Living situation’).

The next most common accommodation type was living in SAAP or other emergency housing, with over one-fifth reporting this type of accommodation before and after support (22% before and 23% after). This, combined with the small amount of change in circumstance after support, may indicate that unaccompanied children have few other accommodation options and are moving between SAAP services to maintain a roof over their heads.

There was a large increase in the proportion of closed support periods where children were boarding in a private home as the age of children increased—increasing from 6% before and 5% after support for 12–13 year-olds, to 8% before and 10% after support for 14–15 year-olds, and again to 19% both before and after support for 16–17 year-olds. This, again, corresponds to the changed living arrangements of unaccompanied children as age increased (see ‘Living situation’).

Children who presented independently generally had improved independent housing outcomes if they were supported for longer periods by SAAP. For example, the proportion who exited support to live in public or community housing generally increased the longer the child was supported, whereas the proportion of unaccompanied children who exited support to live in SAAP-funded or other emergency accommodation generally decreased the longer the child was supported (Table 10).

Income and employment

Unaccompanied children aged 12–13 years most often had no main source of income either before or after support (in 92% of closed support periods both before and after support) (Table 9). This is not surprising given the legal restrictions around paid work and receipt of benefits for minors. However, the older age groups reported lower proportions where they had no income both before and after support and also improved income outcomes, with lower proportions having no income after exiting SAAP support. In 77% of their closed support periods, 14–15 year-olds entered SAAP support with no income, which decreased to 70% after receiving SAAP support. Similarly, 16–17 year-olds reported that they had no income on entering SAAP support in 26% of their closed support periods. This decreased to 18% after support for that age group.

There were corresponding increases in the proportions of unaccompanied children who were receiving a government pension or benefit after receiving SAAP support, particularly in the older age groups. In 19% of closed support periods, unaccompanied children aged 14–15 years reported that their main source of income immediately before entering SAAP support was a government pension or benefit. This increased to 26% after support. In 69% of closed support periods, unaccompanied children aged 16–17 years reported that their main source of income immediately before entering SAAP support was a government pension or benefit. This increased to 76% after support.

Generally, a longer length of support improved income and employment outcomes for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, although there were some slight fluctuations. The proportion of closed support periods in which these children exited support with some source of income rose from 64% for those supported for up to 3 months to 81% for those supported for longer than 1 year; and the proportion of closed support periods in which these children exited support with some form of employment increased from 10% for those supported for up to 3 months to 27% for those supported for longer than 1 year (derived from Table 10).

Living situation

As one of the goals of SAAP is to re-establish family links where appropriate, it is worth noting that the majority of 12–13 year-olds were still living with, or returned to live with their parent or parents after SAAP support (in 62% of closed support periods before support and 58% after) (Table 9). There was, however, a decrease after support with a corresponding increase in the proportion living with relatives (from 10% before support to 13% after support) or living with unrelated persons (from 11% before to 13% after support). It is important to note that returning a child to the family home may not always be the best outcome, for example where physical, emotional or sexual abuse is occurring. In only small proportions of closed support periods were 12–13 year-olds living with friends either before or after support (4% before and 3% after).

Unaccompanied children aged 14–15 years also reported that the most common living situation before and after support was with their parent(s) (in 47% of closed support periods before support and 43% after). However, the proportion was lower than that reported for 12–13 year-olds and far higher proportions were living with friends both before and after support (13% before support and 12% after). Like 12–13 year-olds there was a decrease in the proportion living with their parent(s) after support and an increase in the proportion living with other unrelated persons (17% before and 22% after) or living with relatives (11% before and 13% after).

Unlike 12–15 year-olds, the opportunity to re-establish links with their parents seems to have passed to some extent for 16–17 year-olds, with only around a quarter living with their parent(s) before support and a decreasing proportion living with their parent(s) after support (28% of closed support periods before support and 23% after). The fact that a large proportion (just over 54%) of this age group were living with relatives (12%), with friends (20%) or with other unrelated persons (23%) before seeking SAAP assistance further supports this.

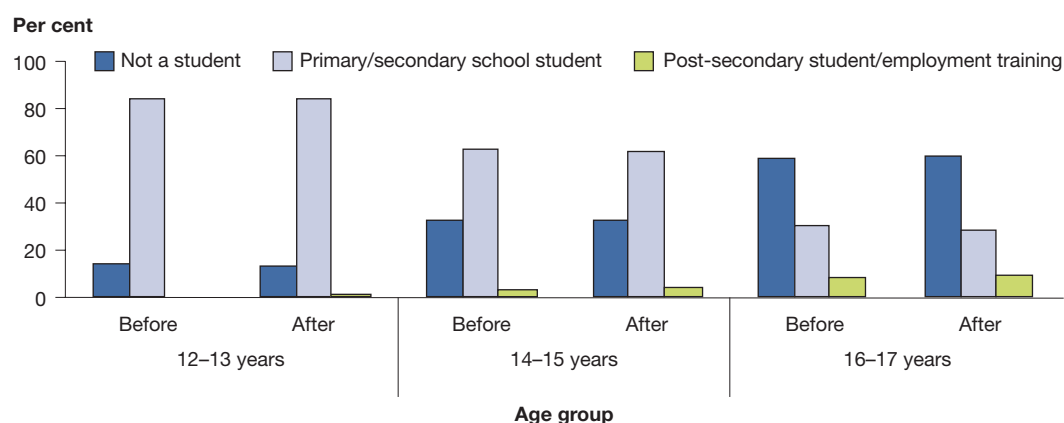
Education

Education plays an important role in developing the skills necessary to participate fully and productively in society. It is well documented that children who leave school early find it more difficult to compete in the labour market and are more likely to experience long-term

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unemployment (McKenzie & Lamb 2001). Not surprisingly, children who are homeless can find participating in education particularly difficult and many of these children leave school early or drop out. There is, however, evidence to suggest that with appropriate support, children are able to remain at school while homeless (Chamberlain & MacKenzie 2003). This makes it essential that SAAP agencies that deal with homeless children have strategies in place to help them continue their education.

The ability of the SAAP program to help homeless children to remain in education is demonstrated by the small amount of movement between those in education before support and those in education after (Table 9). However, this also highlights that there was little change in the proportions who were not in education. Figure 3 illustrates that the proportion of closed support periods where unaccompanied children were not students increased as children got older, with a large proportion, particularly in the older age groups, leaving education early. The proportion not students rose from 15% before support and 14% after support for 12–13 year-olds, to 34% before support and 33% after support for 14–15 year-olds, and to around 60% both before and after support for 16–17 year-olds.



Source: Table 9.

Figure 3: SAAP closed support periods: student status before and after support for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, by age group, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

It is hard to determine whether a longer length of support improves the educational outcomes of homeless children (Table 10). The proportion of closed support periods in which unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years exited support to continue or start post-secondary education or employment training increased from 8% for those supported for up to 3 months to 13% for those supported for over 1 year. However, the proportion who exited SAAP support to continue or start primary or secondary education and those who were not students on exiting SAAP support fluctuated. Unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years who were supported for up to 3 months exited support to start or continue primary or secondary education in 39% of closed support periods, increasing to 44% for those supported for 3–6 months, before falling to 38% for those supported 6–9 months, rising to 43% for those supported 9–12 months, before falling again to 35% for those supported for longer than 1 year. A corresponding reversed pattern was seen for those who were not students.

Appendix 1: Statistical tables

Table 1: Accompanied children in SAAP: summary table by the cultural and linguistic diversity of their parent or guardian, Australia, 2004–05 (number)

	Indigenous Australians	Other Australian- born people	People born overseas, EP group 1 ^(a)	People born overseas, EP groups 2–4 ^(a)	Unknown	Total	Per 10,000 population ^(b)
Total accompanied children	13,600	34,200	2,100	6,800	1,700	56,800	118
Total %	23.2	58.6	3.5	11.7	3.0	..	..
Gender							
Male	6,600	17,100	1,000	3,500	900	28,300	115
Female	7,000	17,100	1,000	3,300	900	28,400	122
Age							
0–4 years	6,400	15,100	800	2,700	700	25,000	198
5–12 years	5,800	14,300	900	2,900	700	23,900	111
13–15 years	1,000	3,400	300	800	200	5,500	66
16–17 years	300	1,200	100	400	100	2,000	37
Total accompanied child support periods	18,400	47,000	2,600	8,700	1,900	78,500	..
Accompanied child support periods <i>without</i> accommodation	5,600	27,500	1,200	4,500	1,000	39,800	..
Accompanied child support periods <i>with</i> accommodation	12,700	19,500	1,400	4,200	900	38,700	..
Median length of support (days)^{(c) (d)}	7	28	28	35	17	21	..
Median length of accommodation (days)^{(c) (d) (e)}	5	28	30	31	15	16	..

(a) The English proficiency (EP) status of clients is determined by their country of birth. Refer to AIHW 2006a:Appendix A1.4 for more detail.

(b) Per 10,000 population shows how many children out of every 10,000 children in the general population accompanied a SAAP client. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP accompanied children in the applicable age or gender group with the estimated resident population in that age or gender group as at 30 June 2004 (preliminary estimates).

(c) Dates of support and accommodation are not recorded for accompanied children. For the purposes of calculating the length of support and the length of accommodation, it is assumed that children had the same lengths of support and accommodation as their parent or guardian.

(d) Median length of support and accommodation are calculated using closed accompanied child support periods.

(e) Median length of accommodation excludes accommodation that started and ended on the same day.

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for accompanied children (weighted): 75 gender; 336 age.

2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for accompanied child support periods (weighted): 0.

3. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for closed accompanied child support periods (weighted): 0 length of support; 1,431 length of accommodation.

4. Children may accompany a different parent or guardian in each of their support periods, therefore the total number of accompanied children is not the sum of the number of accompanied children in each group.

5. Accompanied children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

6. Accompanying child support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent (calibrated).

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2005.

Table 2: Unaccompanied children aged 0–17 years in SAAP: summary table by cultural and linguistic diversity, Australia, 2004–05 (number)

	Indigenous Australians	Other Australian- born people	People born overseas, EP group 1 ^(a)	People born overseas, EP groups 2–4 ^(a)	Unknown	Total	Per 10,000 population ^(b)
Total unaccompanied children	2,100	8,200	200	400	400	11,300	24
Total %	18.2	72.7	2.0	3.6	3.5	100.0	..
Gender							
Male	700	3,100	100	200	200	4,200	17
Female	1,400	5,100	100	200	200	7,000	30
Age							
Under 12 years	100	200	<50	<50	<50	400	1
12–13 years	100	300	<50	<50	<50	500	9
14–15 years	500	1,900	100	100	100	2,700	49
16–17 years	1,300	5,700	200	300	200	7,700	142
Total support periods	3,300	13,400	400	600	600	18,200	..
Support periods <i>without</i> accommodation	1,200	6,300	100	200	400	8,200	..
Support periods <i>with</i> accommodation	2,000	7,100	300	300	200	10,000	..
Median length of support (days)^(c)	8	21	12	29	21	17	..
Median length of accommodation (days)^{(c) (d)}	5	12	12	28	6	10	..

(a) The English proficiency (EP) status of clients is determined by their country of birth. Refer to AIHW 2006a:Appendix A1.4 for more detail.

(b) Per 10,000 population shows how many children out of every 10,000 children in the general population became a SAAP client. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP unaccompanied children in the applicable age or gender group with the estimated resident population in that age or gender group as at 30 June 2004 (preliminary estimates).

(c) Median length of support and accommodation are calculated using closed support periods.

(d) Median length of accommodation excludes accommodation that started and ended on the same day.

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for unaccompanied children aged 0–17 years (weighted): 0 gender; 0 age. Note that there were 550 clients where age was not specified.
2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for support periods for unaccompanied children aged 0–17 years (weighted): 0. Note that there were 647 support periods where age was not specified.
3. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for closed support periods for unaccompanied children aged 0–17 years (weighted): 0 length of support; 246 length of accommodation. Note that there were 597 closed support periods where age was not specified.
4. Unaccompanied children (client) figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.
5. Support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2005.

Table 3: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by clients with and without children and by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

Main reason for seeking assistance	Support periods for clients with and without children				Support periods for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years				
	Without children	With children	Total		12–13 years	14–15 years	16–17 years	Total	
			%	Number				%	Number
Accommodation	24.9	18.9	23.1	37,500	17.6	24.0	34.1	31.1	5,300
Usual accommodation unavailable	13.2	7.1	11.3	18,400	12.6	13.6	16.5	15.7	2,700
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	9.7	10.4	9.9	16,100	4.4	9.1	15.0	13.2	2,300
Emergency accommodation ended	2.0	1.4	1.9	3,000	0.5	1.3	2.6	2.3	400
Interpersonal relationships	34.3	57.9	41.4	67,200	69.4	63.0	47.9	52.2	8,900
Time out from family/other situation	7.0	3.8	6.1	9,800	23.6	17.6	11.4	13.3	2,300
Relationship/family breakdown	9.6	7.1	8.8	14,400	19.9	28.8	23.2	24.3	4,200
Interpersonal conflict	3.1	1.8	2.7	4,400	13.7	7.6	5.6	6.4	1,100
Domestic violence	11.8	40.5	20.4	33,200	4.8	3.4	4.0	3.9	700
Physical/emotional abuse	2.2	4.1	2.8	4,500	3.9	3.8	2.9	3.1	500
Sexual abuse	0.6	0.5	0.6	1,000	3.5	1.7	0.9	1.2	200
Financial	12.8	11.2	12.3	20,000	1.7	1.6	4.8	3.9	700
Financial difficulty	12.5	11.1	12.1	19,600	1.5	1.6	4.8	3.9	700
Gambling	0.3	0.1	0.2	400	0.3	0.1	—	—	<50
Health	10.0	1.4	7.4	12,000	1.2	1.3	1.9	1.7	300
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	7.6	1.1	5.6	9,200	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.2	200
Psychiatric illness	2.4	0.3	1.8	2,900	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	100
Other	18.0	10.7	15.8	25,700	10.0	10.1	11.4	11.0	1,900
Recently left institution	2.1	0.4	1.6	2,500	—	1.2	1.4	1.3	200
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	6.1	3.5	5.3	8,600	1.1	1.9	2.6	2.4	400
Itinerant	3.2	1.4	2.6	4,300	1.1	1.4	2.8	2.4	400
Other	6.7	5.4	6.3	10,200	7.9	5.7	4.6	5.0	900
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	70.1	29.9	100.0	..	4.0	22.7	73.3	100.0	..
Total (number)	113,900	48,600	..	162,500	700	3,900	12,600	..	17,100

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions in main reason (weighted): 10,641 (support periods); 614 (support periods 12–17 year-olds)—note that there were 647 support periods where age was not specified.

2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 4: SAAP services requested for accompanied children in closed support periods, by provision and characteristics of parent or guardian, Australia, 2004-05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Drug/alcohol/substance use ^(a)			Mental health ^(b)			Domestic violence ^(c)			Other ^(d)						
	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total				
Accommodation	1.0	3.2	95.8	100.0	1.4	3.7	94.9	100.0	1.2	6.2	92.6	100.0	2.1	8.9	89.0	100.0
School liaison/child care	2.4	8.7	88.9	100.0	2.0	9.6	88.5	100.0	2.1	5.7	92.2	100.0	3.5	19.1	77.3	100.0
Counselling	6.0	10.1	83.9	100.0	4.4	14.7	80.8	100.0	4.5	8.8	86.6	100.0	4.4	12.4	83.2	100.0
General support/advocacy	2.0	2.8	95.1	100.0	2.0	4.3	93.6	100.0	1.6	3.1	95.4	100.0	2.1	2.4	95.5	100.0
Specialist services	2.7	25.2	72.1	100.0	2.5	28.2	69.3	100.0	2.0	13.7	84.2	100.0	2.3	31.4	66.3	100.0
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.0	1.5	97.5	100.0	1.0	2.3	96.7	100.0	0.7	1.4	98.0	100.0	1.0	4.9	94.1	100.0
Total (%)	2.0	5.1	92.9	100.0	2.0	7.5	90.5	100.0	1.4	4.1	94.4	100.0	2.0	8.7	89.3	100.0
Total (number)	400	1,000	17,500	18,800	300	1,000	11,800	13,000	1,900	5,400	123,400	130,600	400	1,600	16,500	18,500
Associated closed accompanied child support periods (number)	..	..	..	3,700	..	..	..	2,200	..	..	..	29,500	..	..	..	7,500
Total accompanied child support periods^(e)	..	..	..	6,300	..	..	..	4,200	..	..	..	49,700	..	..	..	26,100

(a) 'Drug/alcohol/substance use' refers to clients who reported that they sought assistance because of drug, alcohol or substance use; or who needed, were provided with or were referred on for drug or alcohol support or intervention services; or who entered or exited support to a detoxification unit or rehabilitation centre.

(b) 'Mental health' refers to clients who reported that they were referred from a psychiatric unit; or who sought support because of a psychiatric illness; or who needed, were provided with or were referred on for psychological or psychiatric services.

(c) 'Domestic violence' refers to clients who approached agencies that were primarily targeted at supporting women and children escaping domestic violence; or who reported that they sought assistance because of domestic violence; or who needed, were provided with or were referred on for domestic violence counselling or support services.

(d) 'Other' refers to clients who did not meet the criteria of the above mentioned groupings (a) to (c).

(e) 'Total accompanied child support periods' refers to all accompanied child support periods, that is, it includes accompanied child support periods that had not ended by 30 June 2005 and closed accompanied child support periods where services were not requested but were provided or referred and where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.

Notes

- Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted); 28,145 closed accompanied child support periods where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.
- Please refer to AIHW 2006a:58-59 for the total services requested for accompanied children according to the individual service types and broad service type categories.
- A client may present in one or more of the above categories (excluding 'Other'). Therefore, the sum by client characteristics will not add to the total.
- In groups of service types, an accompanying child may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs and not to accompanied child support periods.
- Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5: SAAP services requested by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years in closed support periods, by provision, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

Type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	
				%	Number
Housing/accommodation	10.8	8.5	80.7	100.0	17,400
SAAP/CAP accommodation	5.9	5.2	88.9	100.0	9,800
Assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation	19.7	10.7	69.6	100.0	3,700
Assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing	14.4	14.6	71.0	100.0	4,000
Financial/employment	9.1	11.2	79.8	100.0	9,800
Assistance to obtain/maintain government payment	9.4	15.4	75.3	100.0	2,600
Employment/training assistance	14.5	21.5	64.0	100.0	2,100
Financial assistance/material aid	4.6	4.5	90.9	100.0	3,700
Financial counselling	12.2	4.3	83.5	100.0	1,300
Counselling	7.8	5.9	86.3	100.0	13,100
Incest/sexual assault	17.4	24.9	57.6	100.0	500
Domestic violence	15.2	11.4	73.5	100.0	1,000
Family/relationship	12.9	9.8	77.3	100.0	3,800
Emotional/other	3.5	2.0	94.5	100.0	7,700
Assistance with problem gambling	57.5	6.9	35.6	100.0	<50
General support/advocacy	2.7	1.3	96.0	100.0	25,700
Living skills/personal development	4.5	0.7	94.8	100.0	6,000
Assistance with legal issues/court support	9.6	12.0	78.4	100.0	1,200
Advice/information	0.8	0.3	99.0	100.0	9,600
Retrieval/storage/removal of belongings	3.4	0.7	95.9	100.0	2,800
Advocacy/liaison on behalf of client	1.5	0.5	97.9	100.0	5,000
Brokerage services	5.1	7.7	87.2	100.0	1,000
Specialist services	10.5	21.4	68.1	100.0	6,300
Psychological services	22.5	39.3	38.2	100.0	500
Psychiatric services	17.2	47.0	35.8	100.0	300
Pregnancy support	6.5	17.0	76.5	100.0	400
Family planning support	11.1	18.1	70.8	100.0	300
Drug/alcohol support or intervention	15.6	14.1	70.2	100.0	1,300
Physical disability services	40.2	24.0	35.9	100.0	<50
Intellectual disability services	28.8	27.9	43.3	100.0	100
Culturally appropriate support	2.7	5.1	92.2	100.0	900
Interpreter services	0.0	14.9	85.1	100.0	<50
Assistance with immigration issues	6.3	44.3	49.3	100.0	<50
Health/medical services	7.4	24.9	67.7	100.0	2,500
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.6	0.4	98.1	100.0	30,200
Meals	1.1	0.3	98.6	100.0	7,900
Laundry/shower facilities	1.3	—	98.7	100.0	7,200
Recreation	2.2	0.5	97.3	100.0	5,800
Transport	2.3	0.5	97.2	100.0	6,800
Other	0.4	1.3	98.3	100.0	2,500
Total distinct services (%)	5.5	5.0	89.5	100.0	..
Total distinct services (number)	5,600	5,200	91,800	..	102,600
Associated closed support periods (number)	..	..	..	..	14,800
Total support periods^(a)	..	..	..	..	17,700

(a) 'Total support periods' refers to all support periods for 12–17 year-olds, that is, it includes support periods for 12–17 year-olds that had not ended by 30 June 2005 and closed support periods for 12–17 year-olds where services were not requested but were provided or referred and where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for 12–17 year-olds (weighted): 302 closed support periods where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.
2. Note that there were 597 closed support periods and 647 support periods where age was not specified (weighted).
3. In groups of service types, a client may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs (distinct services needed) and not to support periods. For individual types of services, a need can be recorded only once within a support period, so percentages relate to support periods.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 6: SAAP services requested by unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years in closed support periods, by provision and client characteristics, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Drug/alcohol/substance use			Mental health			Domestic violence			Other						
	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total			
Housing/accommodation	8.1	8.5	83.4	100.0	5.9	9.1	85.1	100.0	7.6	8.7	83.7	100.0	12.3	8.5	79.2	100.0
Financial/employment	9.6	11.2	79.2	100.0	9.4	12.6	78.0	100.0	12.1	11.3	76.6	100.0	8.4	11.3	80.4	100.0
Counselling	11.0	7.0	82.0	100.0	11.5	10.6	77.9	100.0	11.8	9.1	79.1	100.0	5.7	4.3	90.1	100.0
General support/advocacy	3.6	1.7	94.7	100.0	2.4	2.2	95.5	100.0	3.5	1.9	94.6	100.0	2.3	1.0	96.6	100.0
Specialist services	13.1	20.2	66.7	100.0	15.4	32.4	52.2	100.0	13.1	24.1	62.8	100.0	6.6	18.3	75.1	100.0
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.4	0.3	98.3	100.0	1.7	0.5	97.8	100.0	1.7	0.4	98.0	100.0	1.6	0.4	98.0	100.0
Total (%)	6.4	6.3	87.3	100.0	6.8	9.8	83.5	100.0	6.8	6.5	86.7	100.0	5.1	4.1	90.8	100.0
Total (number)	1,400	1,400	19,100	21,900	700	1,000	8,500	10,100	1,300	1,300	16,800	19,400	3,200	2,600	56,800	62,500
Associated closed support periods (number)	..	..	..	1,900	..	..	..	900	..	..	..	2,000	..	..	..	10,800
Total support periods^(a)	..	..	..	2,300	..	..	..	1,100	..	..	..	2,400	..	..	..	13,000

(a) 'Total support periods' refers to all support periods for 12–17 year-olds, that is, it includes support periods for 12–17 year-olds that had not ended by 30 June 2005 and closed support periods for 12–17 year-olds where services were not requested but were provided or referred and where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for 12–17 year-olds (weighted): 302 closed support periods where no information on service requirements or provision was recorded.
2. Note that there were 597 closed support periods and 647 support periods where age was not specified (weighted).
3. Please refer to the Table 4 footnotes for the composition of the client characteristic categories.
4. In groups of service types, a client may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs and not to support periods.
5. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 7: SAAP closed support periods: selected measures before and after a support period, by whether the client presented with or without accompanying children, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

	Without accompanying children		With accompanying children	
	Before	After	Before	After
Type of accommodation				
SAAP or other emergency housing	14.8	16.6	12.1	17.0
Living rent-free in house/flat	13.7	11.4	9.0	6.6
Private rental	13.6	15.3	27.1	27.4
Public or community housing	11.8	13.8	21.6	27.1
Rooming house/hostel/hotel/caravan	12.3	14.1	5.2	4.5
Boarding in a private home	11.6	10.5	12.9	8.9
Own home	2.9	2.2	7.1	4.8
Living in a car/tent/park/street/squat	12.2	8.6	2.6	1.2
Institutional	5.5	5.5	0.9	1.1
Other	1.6	1.9	1.4	1.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	72,300	72,300	35,600	35,600
Main source of income				
No income	10.0	7.5	3.2	1.9
Government pension/benefit	84.2	85.5	89.0	90.9
Other	5.8	6.9	7.8	7.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	90,300	90,300	37,900	37,900
Employment status				
Employed full time	2.6	3.8	2.7	2.8
Employed part time/casual	5.8	7.1	6.3	7.1
Unemployed (looking for work)	32.5	31.1	10.8	10.6
Not in labour force	59.1	58.1	80.3	79.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	81,400	81,400	36,200	36,200

Notes

1. Table includes only those records where information was provided for both before and after support. Number excluded due to errors and omissions before and after support (weighted): 47,380 type of accommodation; 27,110 main source of income; 37,600 employment status.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 8: SAAP closed support periods: client circumstances after support by length of support for clients who presented with accompanying children, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

After support	0–13 weeks	>13–26 weeks	>26–39 weeks	>39–52 weeks	>52 weeks	Total	
						%	Number
Type of accommodation							
SAAP or other emergency housing	18.8	12.3	11.3	11.6	9.3	17.2	6,200
Living rent-free in house/flat	7.3	5.2	3.2	2.9	1.4	6.6	2,400
Private rental	26.9	32.7	27.9	25.3	22.8	27.4	9,900
Public or community housing	23.7	31.7	41.9	43.4	53.5	27.1	9,800
Rooming house/hostel/hotel/caravan	5.1	2.2	2.5	2.9	1.2	4.5	1,600
Boarding in a private home	9.4	7.6	6.4	7.2	5.8	8.8	3,200
Own home	4.8	5.2	4.2	3.1	3.1	4.7	1,700
Living in a car/tent/park/street/squat	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.6	1.1	400
Institutional	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.2	400
Other	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.0	1.5	500
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	78.3	10.5	4.6	2.6	4.1	100.0	..
Total (number)	28,300	3,800	1,700	900	1,500	..	36,200
Main source of income							
No income	2.3	1.4	0.5	0.8	0.7	2.0	800
Government payments	90.8	90.7	91.6	93.2	91.1	90.9	34,700
Other	7.0	7.8	7.9	6.0	8.1	7.1	2,700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	79.3	10.0	4.3	2.5	3.8	100.0	..
Total (number)	30,300	3,800	1,700	1,000	1,500	..	38,200
Employment status							
Employed full time	2.8	2.9	2.4	3.0	4.2	2.8	1,000
Employed part time/casual	6.0	10.4	12.2	11.0	11.4	7.1	2,600
Unemployed (looking for work)	10.4	11.3	9.8	11.2	11.4	10.5	3,800
Not in labour force	80.8	75.4	75.7	74.9	73.1	79.6	28,900
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	79.0	10.3	4.4	2.4	4.0	100.0	..
Total (number)	28,700	3,700	1,600	900	1,400	..	36,400

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 8,778 type of accommodation after support and length of support; 6,803 main source of income after support and length of support; 8,615 employment status after support and length of support.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 9: SAAP closed support periods: selected measures before and after a support period for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, by age group, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

	12–13 years		14–15 years		16–17 years		Total	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Type of accommodation								
SAAP or other emergency housing	13.0	14.5	18.7	20.6	22.8	23.6	21.5	22.5
Living rent-free in house/flat	59.9	58.6	54.7	51.6	34.7	28.0	40.5	34.8
Private rental	3.3	4.2	1.6	1.8	5.9	10.0	4.8	7.9
Public or community housing	8.1	8.0	3.7	3.6	4.2	6.4	4.2	5.8
Rooming house/hostel/hotel/caravan	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.9	3.4	3.9	2.8	3.3
Boarding in a private home	5.7	5.4	8.1	9.9	19.0	19.2	15.9	16.5
Own home	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5
Living in a car/tent/park/street/squat	3.4	2.2	4.2	1.8	4.5	2.3	4.3	2.2
Institutional	3.6	4.4	4.3	5.2	3.6	4.1	3.8	4.4
Other	0.8	0.8	2.5	2.4	1.6	2.1	1.7	2.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	400	400	2,500	2,500	7,700	7,700	10,700	10,700
Main source of income								
No income	92.4	91.7	77.0	69.6	25.9	17.9	40.7	33.2
Government pension/benefit	6.8	7.3	19.0	25.8	68.8	75.7	54.5	61.1
Other	0.7	1.0	4.0	4.7	5.4	6.4	4.8	5.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	500	500	3,000	3,000	9,100	9,100	12,600	12,600
Employment status								
Employed full time	0.2	0.2	0.6	1.0	2.2	3.6	1.7	2.9
Employed part time/casual	0.5	0.6	4.8	5.6	9.0	10.5	7.6	8.9
Unemployed (looking for work)	2.6	3.3	11.6	12.5	34.1	33.4	27.3	27.0
Not in labour force	96.7	95.9	83.0	80.9	54.8	52.5	63.4	61.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	500	500	3,000	3,000	8,700	8,700	12,200	12,200
Living situation								
With parent(s)	61.7	57.7	47.4	42.6	27.9	23.0	34.0	29.2
With relatives	10.4	13.4	11.0	13.1	11.9	12.1	11.6	12.4
With foster family	6.9	7.0	5.2	4.9	2.4	1.7	3.3	2.7
With spouse/partner with/without children	1.1	0.6	1.1	0.8	6.0	6.6	4.6	5.0
Alone/alone with children	3.6	4.9	3.9	3.7	8.3	11.6	7.1	9.4
With friends	3.7	2.5	13.3	11.9	19.9	17.7	17.6	15.7
With other unrelated persons	11.4	12.7	17.0	21.6	22.5	25.9	20.7	24.3
Other	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	500	500	2,700	2,700	8,100	8,100	11,300	11,300
Student status								
Not a student	15.0	14.1	33.5	33.2	59.7	60.3	51.4	51.7
Primary/secondary school student	84.7	84.9	63.6	62.7	31.5	29.1	41.6	39.7
Post-secondary student/employment training	0.2	1.0	3.0	4.1	8.7	10.6	7.0	8.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total (number)	500	500	3,000	3,000	8,700	8,700	12,200	12,200

Notes

1. Table includes only those records where information was provided for both before and after support. Number excluded due to errors and omissions for 12–17 year-olds before and after support (weighted): 4,666 type of accommodation; 2,778 main source of income; 3,111 employment status; 4,068 living situation; 3,147 student status.
2. Note that there were 597 closed support periods where age was not specified (weighted).
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 10: SAAP closed support periods: client circumstances after support by length of support for unaccompanied children aged 12–17 years, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent)

After support	0–13	>13–26	>26–39	>39–52	>52	Total	
	weeks	weeks	weeks	weeks	weeks	%	Number
Type of accommodation							
SAAP or other emergency housing	24.9	16.1	11.2	10.6	11.3	22.7	2,500
Living rent-free in house/flat	34.9	35.9	24.2	32.9	31.2	34.4	3,800
Private rental	6.5	9.9	16.3	19.5	17.1	7.8	900
Public or community housing	4.6	7.7	17.2	12.9	14.4	6.0	700
Rooming house/hostel/hotel/caravan	3.6	1.9	2.3	1.4	2.3	3.3	400
Boarding in a private home	15.5	21.0	21.7	17.6	18.4	16.4	1,800
Own home	0.5	1.1	0.8	—	—	0.5	100
Living in a car/tent/park/street/squat	2.5	0.6	0.5	2.1	—	2.1	200
Institutional	4.9	3.3	3.3	1.9	4.0	4.6	500
Other	2.1	2.5	2.4	1.0	1.2	2.1	200
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	80.3	10.2	4.4	2.3	2.9	100.0	..
Total (number)	8,800	1,100	500	300	300	..	10,900
Main source of income							
No income	35.7	22.4	16.7	22.6	18.7	33.1	4,200
Government payments	59.1	69.8	74.0	64.7	71.0	61.1	7,800
Other	5.1	7.9	9.2	12.7	10.3	5.8	700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	82.4	9.3	3.7	2.0	2.5	100.0	..
Total (number)	10,500	1,200	500	300	300	..	12,700
Employment status							
Employed full time	2.3	4.7	3.8	6.4	9.6	2.8	400
Employed part time/casual	7.7	12.3	16.7	17.4	17.2	8.9	1,100
Unemployed (looking for work)	27.7	22.9	26.0	23.2	24.8	27.0	3,300
Not in labour force	62.4	60.1	53.5	53.1	48.4	61.3	7,500
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	82.4	9.3	3.8	2.0	2.5	100.0	..
Total (number)	10,100	1,100	500	200	300	..	12,300
Living situation							
With parent(s)	28.0	35.6	29.1	38.6	31.0	29.1	3,300
With relatives	12.5	13.9	8.6	11.1	11.8	12.4	1,400
With foster family	2.8	2.7	1.5	1.8	3.2	2.7	300
With spouse/partner with/without children	4.1	6.6	13.7	7.7	9.1	5.0	600
Alone/alone with children	8.9	9.2	13.9	10.8	17.2	9.4	1,100
With friends	15.8	13.5	18.9	17.9	12.4	15.6	1,800
With other unrelated persons	26.5	17.4	13.5	12.0	14.1	24.3	2,800
Other	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.0	1.1	1.4	200
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	80.2	10.3	4.3	2.4	2.8	100.0	..
Total (number)	9,100	1,200	500	300	300	..	11,400
Student status							
Not a student	52.6	45.6	51.0	45.5	52.2	51.7	6,400
Primary/secondary school student	39.2	44.3	38.1	43.4	34.8	39.6	4,900
Post-secondary student/employment training	8.2	10.1	10.9	11.1	13.0	8.7	1,100
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	82.4	9.3	3.8	2.1	2.4	100.0	..
Total (number)	10,100	1,100	500	300	300	..	12,300

Notes

- Number excluded due to errors and omissions for 12–17 year-olds (weighted): 4,413 type of accommodation after support and length of support; 2,665 main source of income after support and length of support; 3,044 employment status after support and length of support; 3,971 living situation after support and length of support; 3,065 student status after support and length of support.
 - Note that there were 597 closed support periods where age was not specified (weighted).
 - Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.
- Source: SAAP Client Collection.

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