

Child protection Australia 2001–02

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These agencies contributed substantially to the content of this report.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
FACS	Family and Community Services Program (Northern Territory)
NCPASS	National Child Protection and Support Services Data Group

Symbols used in the tables

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

Notes

1. Percentages in all tables exclude unknowns.
2. Percentages in tables may not add to 100 due to rounding.
3. All tables in this report use data provided by State and Territory community services departments.

Summary

This report is based on the following three national child protection data collections:

- child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations
- children on care and protection orders
- children in out-of-home care.

These data are collected each year by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) from the community services departments in each State and Territory. Most of the data in this report cover the 2001–02 financial year, although data on trends in child protection are also included.

Each State and Territory has its own legislation, policies and practices in relation to child protection, so there are differences between jurisdictions in the data provided. Australian totals have not been provided for those data that are least comparable across the States and Territories.

The main points of interest in the report are:

- Over the last two years the number of child protection notifications in Australia increased from 107,134 in 1999–00 to 137,938 in 2001–02. The number of notifications increased in all jurisdictions except South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory (Table 2.3).
- The number of substantiations in Australia also increased over the last two years, rising from 24,732 in 1999–00 to 30,473 in 2001–02. This was largely due to increases in the number of substantiations in New South Wales and Queensland (Table 2.4).
- Rates of children who were the subjects of child protection substantiations in 2001–02 ranged from 1.4 per 1,000 children aged 0–16 years in Tasmania to 8.3 per 1,000 in Queensland (Table 2.7).
- There was a continuing upward trend Australia-wide in the numbers of children on care and protection orders, and the numbers in out-of-home care. The numbers of children on care and protection orders increased from 15,718 at 30 June 1997 to 20,557 at 30 June 2002, while the numbers of children in out-of-home care increased from 14,078 to 18,880 over the same period (Tables 3.5 and 4.3).
- At 30 June 2002 there were 4.3 children aged 0–17 years per 1,000 on care and protection orders and 3.9 per 1,000 in out-of-home care (Tables 3.9 and 4.7).
- While the quality of the data on Indigenous status varies between States and Territories, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were clearly over-represented in the child protection system.
- The rate of Indigenous children who were the subjects of substantiations, for example, was nearly eight times the rate for other children in Victoria and Western Australia (Table 2.9). Across Australia the rate of Indigenous children on care and protection orders and the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was around six times the rate for other Australian children (Tables 3.10 and 4.8).

