

**Child protection and
out-of-home care
performance indicators**

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Abbreviations

ACPP	Aboriginal Child Placement Principle
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CSMAC	Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council
DoCS	Department of Community Services (New South Wales)
DFC	Department for Families and Communities (South Australia)
NCPASS	National Child Protection and Support Services (Data Group)
PSSWG	Protection and Support Services Working Group
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
SCRCSSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision

Symbols used in tables

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

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

Executive summary

Purpose of the report

This report was produced in response to a recommendation by the National Child Protection and Support Services (NCPASS) Data Group to provide a detailed description of performance indicators in the areas of child protection and out-of-home care. The report endeavours to aid interpretation of the national performance indicator data for the years 1999–00 to 2004–05 presented in the *Report on government services* (SCRGSP 2005, 2006).

Content of the report

The report describes the history of child protection and out-of-home care performance indicators as well as the current performance indicator framework used in Australia, where service performance is assessed in terms of effectiveness and efficiency (Chapter 2). Efficiency and effectiveness indicators are reported annually by the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision in the *Report on government services*. The data used to populate these indicators come from a variety of sources. The Productivity Commission, in its role as Secretariat for the Review of Government Service Provision, collects some data directly from the states and territories while other data are supplied via the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Eight effectiveness indicators are discussed in this report (Chapter 3). An overview of how each state and territory is performing in regard to these indicators is provided in Chapter 4. However, not all jurisdictions measure each of the established indicators, and those that do, do not necessarily measure them in the same manner. Given this lack of comparability across jurisdictions, each state and territory is discussed independently. There are numerous variables which might affect the effectiveness of service provision including policy, legislation, funding and resources. Measurement of effectiveness will be affected by method of data collection. Some of these factors will be discussed to help explain data trends within jurisdictions. The report concludes with a discussion of future directions for the performance indicator framework in the area of child protection and out-of-home care in Australia (Chapter 5). Detailed tables are included in Appendix 1 and target population data are included in Appendix 2.

Analysis

Because of the different policies, practices and data recording mechanisms, data from the different jurisdictions cannot be directly compared. In addition, often legislation and practice changes within jurisdictions mean different years within a jurisdiction can not be meaningfully compared. Some information, however, can be gathered from trends across Australia. Across the years there were consistencies across states and territories for a number of indicators. For example, most jurisdictions had a reasonably stable substantiation rate despite the number of notifications and investigations increasing over the years. The consistent substantiation rate within each jurisdiction suggests that the range of severity of reports to the department remained fairly stable across time – that is, the same proportion warranted substantiation (see the Glossary for definitions of terms such as substantiation and resubstantiation).

Summary of findings

The following is a summary of Chapter 4, which provides interpretations for each state and territory's data for the eight performance indicators discussed in this report.

The **substantiation rate** is the proportion of finalised investigations resulting in a conclusion that a child has been or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise suffer harm. Substantiation rates varied between 25% and 74% across the states and territories over the 6 years presented in this report. However, within most jurisdictions rates remained fairly stable over this period. Differences in substantiation rates between jurisdictions is a reflection of the disparity in criteria used to determine whether a notification is investigated or if it is dealt with by referral to another service. Similarly, in jurisdictions where substantiation rates varied during the 6 years, changes in policy and recording systems can be identified which corresponded to fluctuations in the number of substantiations.

Across all years and jurisdictions, **resubstantiation rates** were between 2% and 17% at 3 months and between 4% and 35% at 12 months. The **substantiation rate following a decision not to substantiate** was generally lower than the resubstantiation rate and ranged between less than 1% and 12% at 3 months and between 5% and 35% at 12 months. The higher figures at 12 months reflect the longer time elapsed. In addition, some jurisdictions had very low rates of resubstantiation at 3 months due to policies of not instigating another report while one is still open.

With regards to **safety in out-of-home care**, the proportion of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of substantiation where the person believed responsible was living in the same household was relatively high in Queensland. This proportion increased in Queensland from 2% of all children in out-of-home care in 1999–00 to 8% in 2003–04 and 2004–05, while the other jurisdictions that provided these data all had rates lower than 1%. However, care should be taken in comparing these data across jurisdictions due to variations in recording and collection methods.

In 2004–05, the proportion of **children placed with extended family** varied from 18% in the Northern Territory to 57% in New South Wales. The low rate in the Northern Territory is influenced by the relatively low numbers of non-Indigenous children that were placed with extended family, which may be due to the lack of available relatives in non-Indigenous families. In most jurisdictions, this indicator increased over the years, reflecting recent policies promoting placement of children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, with relatives or kin.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **children placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle** varied considerably across jurisdictions. For example, in 2004–05, the proportion of Indigenous children placed in accordance with the Principle ranged from 27% in Tasmania to 87% in New South Wales. There were also significant differences between states and territories in the proportions of Indigenous children placed with relatives and the proportion placed with other Indigenous carers.

With regards to **stability of placement**, in the states and territories in which this indicator was reported, children who exited care after a longer period in care had typically experienced more placements.

In all jurisdictions except Tasmania, between 88% and 100% of **children under 12 years of age in out-of-home care** were placed in home-based care across the 6 years recorded. In Tasmania, between 73% and 90% were recorded as being placed in home-based care. The generally lower figures in Tasmania are an example of how different policies and practices can influence child protection performance indicator data. Although family group homes are

not included in the AIHW definition of home-based care, in Tasmania a family group home is considered similar to foster care, which is classified as home-based care.

Future directions

NCPASS are currently developing nine new indicators to improve evaluation of the effectiveness of child protection and out-of-home care services (SCRGSP 2005).

Indicators under development are:

- continuity of case worker
- response time to commence investigation
- response time to complete investigation
- local placement
- placement with sibling
- children with documented case plan
- safe return home
- permanent care
- improved education, health and wellbeing of the child.

A description of each of these indicators is presented in Chapter 5.

1 Introduction

This report was produced in response to a recommendation by the National Child Protection and Support Services (NCPASS) Data Group to provide a detailed description of performance indicators in the area of child protection and out-of-home care over a number of years. The report also aims to provide a tool to assist readers in their interpretation of the Australian national performance indicator data presented in the *Report on government services 2006* (SCRGSP 2006).

Some of the discussion of performance indicators from an earlier report, *Guidelines for the interpretation of child protection and out-of-home care performance indicator data* (AIHW 2002), has been incorporated into this report. The *Guidelines* were commissioned by NCPASS and developed through a research project that involved a selective international literature search. This was supplemented by a series of discussion meetings with child protection practitioners, academics and consumer advocates in each state and territory.

This report comes at a time when there is increasing national interest in child protection matters. Child abuse remains a major problem in the Australian community, despite the ongoing efforts of governments to prevent it. Such is the national interest in this area that in 2004, Community and Disability Services Ministers endorsed a new dialogue between the states and territories and the Australian Government to examine a national approach to protecting children. It is hoped that this initiative will establish synergies between the work of NCPASS (particularly on improved standardisation of child protection data) and a proposed work plan for progressing a National Approach for Child Protection. This publication is just one example of the work NCPASS and AIHW are undertaking to enhance the understanding and interpretation of child protection data.

Box 1.1: Key terms used in this report

***Child protection** refers to protecting an individual less than 18 years of age from actions of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect that have resulted in, or are likely to result in, significant harm or injury. The aim of child protection services is to protect children and young people who are at risk of harm or neglect within their families, or whose families do not have the capacity to protect them or care for them.*

***Out-of-home care** refers to the provision of overnight accommodation away from parents or the family home for children and young people aged less than 18 years, where the state or territory makes a financial contribution to the carer. This care may take the form of residential care, foster care, or relative/kinship care, and placements may be either voluntary or legally sanctioned. Children are placed in out-of-home care for reasons of safety or family crisis, including abuse, neglect, parental illness or inability to adequately care for the child.*

See the Glossary for a list of other terms used in this report.

Performance indicators

Performance indicators are measures of services and service delivery. In Australia, the current framework of performance indicators for child protection services was developed by the Protection and Support Services Working Group (PSSWG), a working group of the Steering Committee for the *Report on government service provision* (see Chapter 2). The framework is available in the *Report on government services 2006* (SCRGSP 2006).

This report covers information for the years 1999–00 to 2004–05. Some of the data provided to the AIHW by the states and territories are used to measure the eight child protection and out-of-home care performance indicators:

- substantiation rate
- substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate
- resubstantiation rate
- safety in out-of-home care
- stability of placement
- placement with extended family
- children aged under 12 years in home-based care
- placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

These are described in detail in Chapter 3. Each state and territory has its own legislation, policies and practices in relation to child protection. As a result, there are jurisdictional variations in the collection and reporting of performance indicator data. This makes comparisons between the states and territories impracticable, therefore, each state and territory is discussed independently in the report. Finally, changes in policy, legislation and methods of data collection in the child protection area impact on the ability to compare data from any one jurisdiction over time.

Indigenous children and the child protection system

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are over-represented in the child protection system compared to non-Indigenous children. This is true for the children who were the subject of a substantiation, children who were on orders and those in out-of-home care. Indigenous children are therefore a major focus for analysis and discussion in this report.

The reasons for the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in child protection substantiations are complex. *Bringing them home*, the report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (HREOC 1997), examined the effect of child welfare policies on Indigenous people. It noted that some of the underlying causes of the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child welfare system include:

- the legacy of past policies of the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families
- inter-generational effects of previous separations from family and culture
- poor socioeconomic status
- cultural differences in child-rearing practices.

While there is only one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific indicator – the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, which measures the number of Indigenous children placed with relatives, kin or Indigenous carers – the majority of the other indicators are disaggregated by Indigenous status. Data for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children are therefore presented in this report. Where possible, data for the years 1999–00 to 2004–05 are presented throughout the report to illustrate changes over time.

The practices used to identify and record Indigenous status of children in the child protection system vary across the states and territories. Over the past few years, several jurisdictions have introduced measures to improve the identification of Indigenous clients.

In some jurisdictions, however, there is a significant proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown and this affects the quality of the data on Indigenous status. Consequently, the data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children should be interpreted with care.

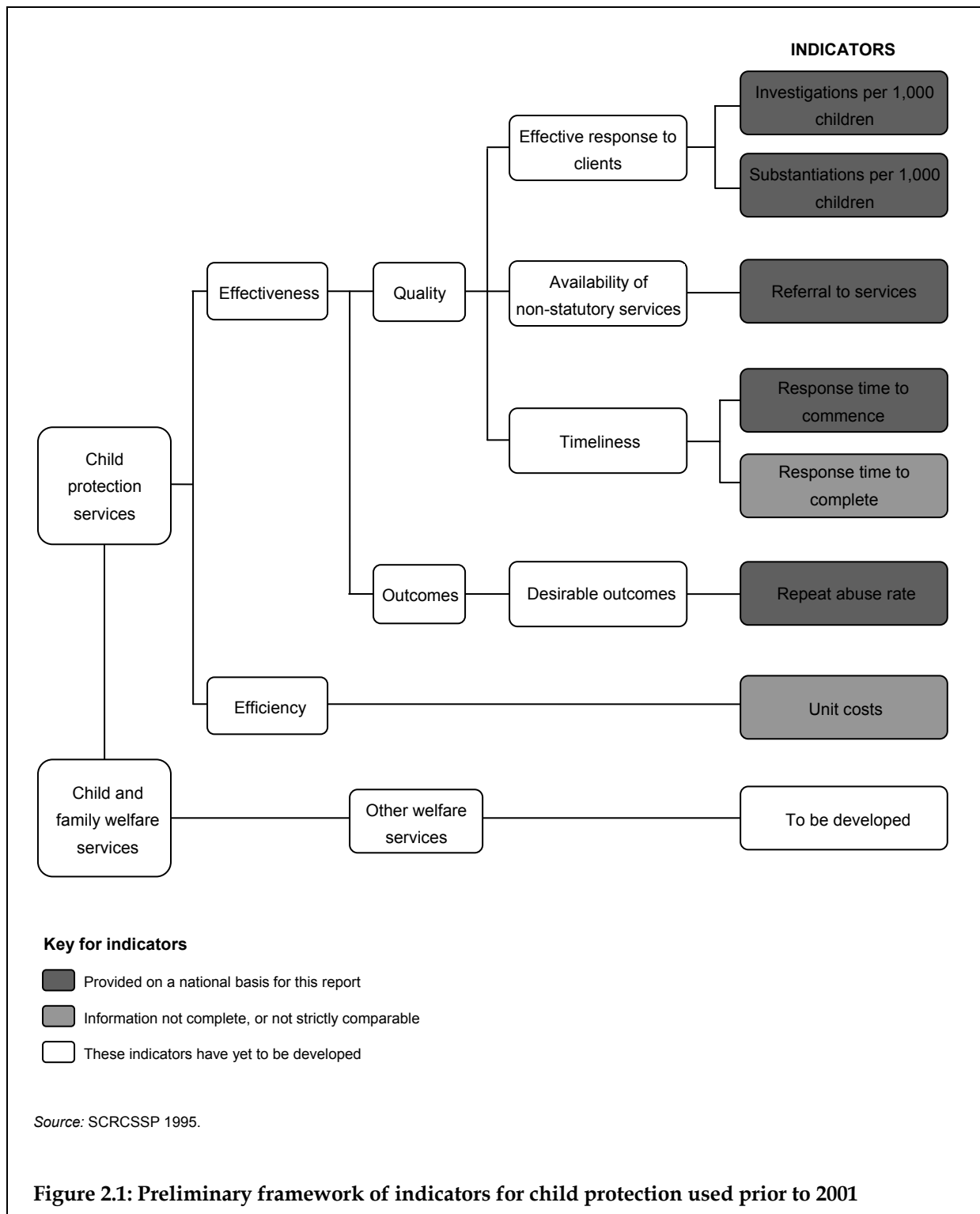
2 History of child protection and out-of-home care performance indicators

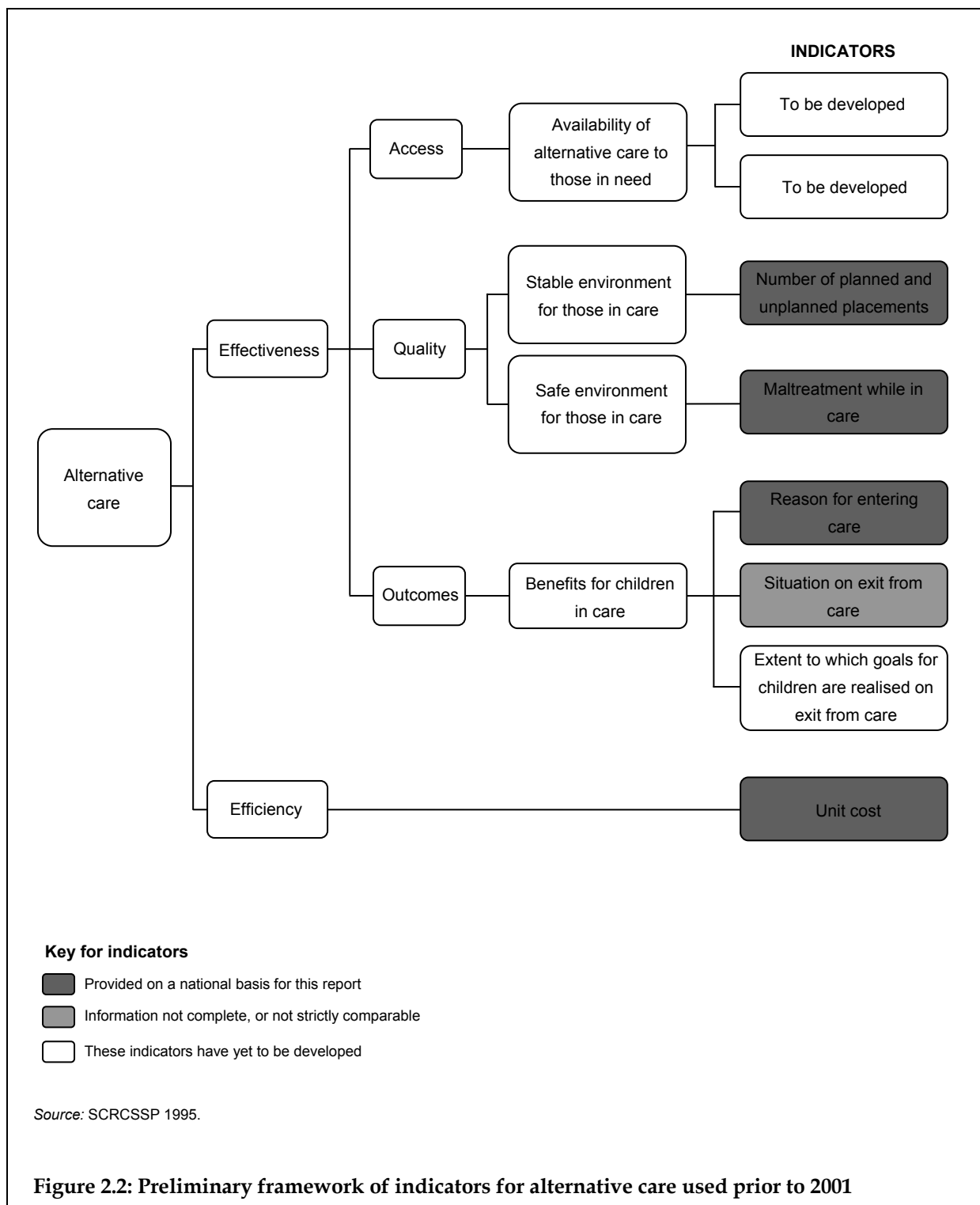
In 1995, Australia began using performance indicators across a broad range of government services to assess service provision, making it one of the first nations to use a performance indicator framework on a national level (AIHW 2002). This chapter provides details about the history of reporting against child protection and out-of-home care performance indicators, including a description of how they evolved over time.

The impetus for the development of the performance indicator framework came from the February 1994 meeting of the Council of Australian Governments about the importance of assessing the performance of government services (SCRCSSP 1995). Consequently, the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision (SCRCSSP) drafted guidelines, and then collaborated with individual working groups to develop the initial performance indicator framework.

The first performance indicator frameworks assessing child welfare services were published in the 1995 *Report on government service provision* (SCRCSSP 1995). There were two frameworks published at this time: one assessed child protection services and the other assessed alternative (out-of-home) care services (Figures 2.1 and 2.2, respectively). These frameworks were developed as a draft proposal of what needed to be collected to adequately assess child welfare services, with the intention that the template would be improved over time (SCRCSSP 1995). The two separate frameworks were used from 1995 to 2000 inclusive (SCRCSSP 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000).

The initial child protection framework contained seven indicators. These were not all comparable across jurisdictions. Although some indicators were shown to be 'provided on a national basis' (Figure 2.1), the SCRCSSP (1995) warned about the problems inherent in cross-jurisdictional comparability due to legislation, policy and practice differences across states and territories. For example, criteria used to calculate substantiation rates differed across states and territories, as did definitions of an investigation. The initial alternative care framework comprised four effectiveness indicators. According to SCRCSSP (1995), three of these indicators were provided on a national basis with the remaining indicator being 'not strictly comparable across jurisdictions'.





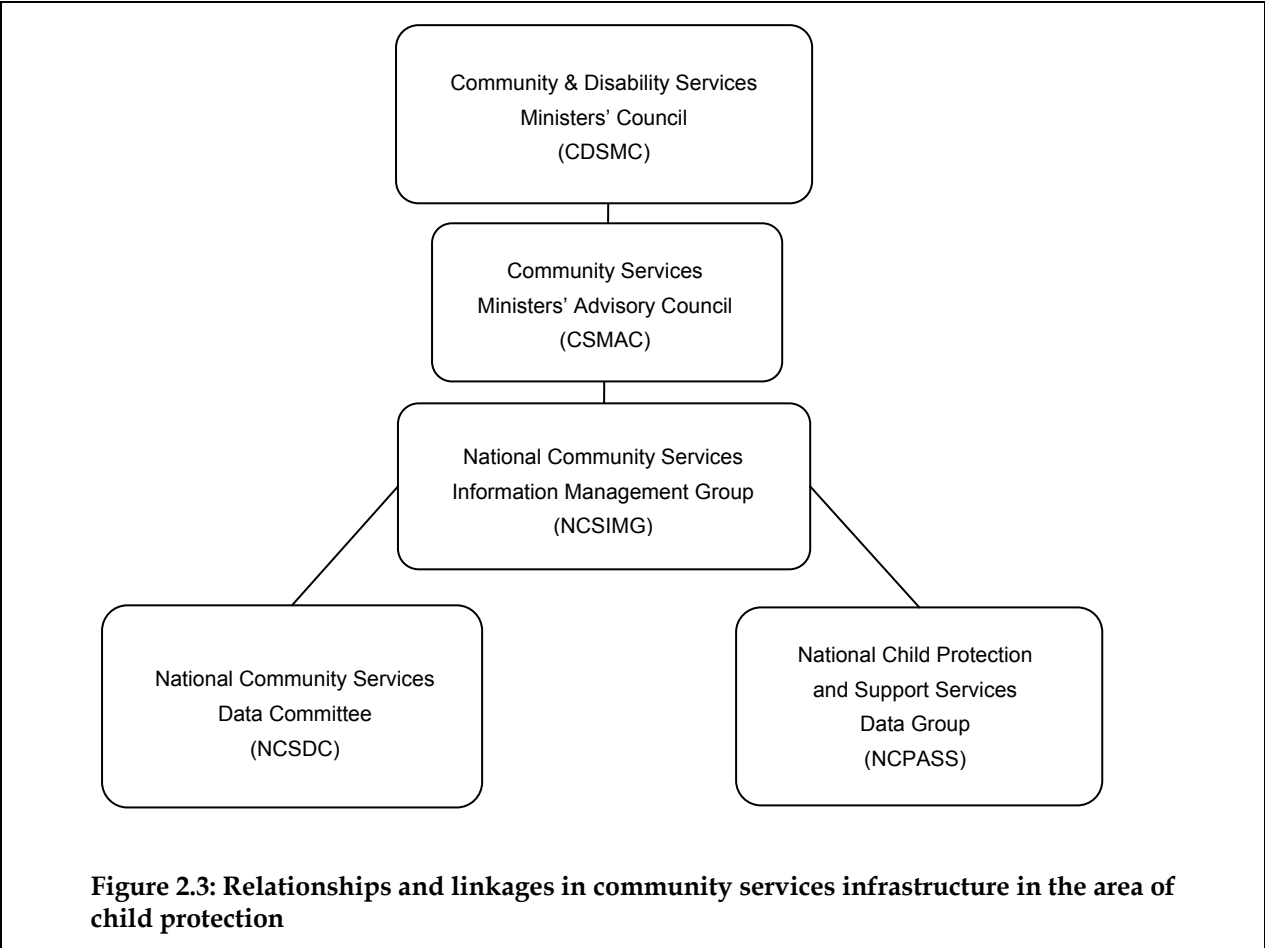
The development of the second set of frameworks in 1997 offered a substantial improvement over the preceding models, reflecting developments in the child welfare arena. These frameworks were used from 1997 to 1999 inclusive (SCRCSSP 1997, 1998, 1999). The model that followed in 2000 offered further improvements to the framework.

Indicator development was aided by a report, *Outcome measurement in child protection*, commissioned by the SCRCSSP (Gain & Young 1998). Among other things, this report

provided recommendations of what indicators should be collected to adequately evaluate child welfare service provision. These recommendations were the impetus for the development of new indicators, and representatives from NCPASS and the AIHW were instrumental in operationalising these indicators (for example, by developing counting rules) to enable them to be accurately assessed on a national level.

At a broader level, it is important to recognise that the development of these indicators was facilitated by gradual improvements to data collection and reporting under the umbrella of the National Community Services Information Agreement. Auspiced by the Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council, the Agreement provides a framework to support the national infrastructure and decision-making processes needed to integrate, plan and coordinate the development of consistent national community services information.

Throughout Australia there is currently substantial data development activity being undertaken in the community services sector. This represents a considerable investment of time and resources by governments and the many agencies involved. For the program area of child protection these agencies include state and territory community services departments, committees such as the National Community Services Information Management Group, the National Community Services Data Committee, NCPASS and the AIHW (Figure 2.3).



In 2000, two new effectiveness indicators were included – substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate, and continuity of case workers – although only the first was able to be collected immediately. In 2001, improvements were made in the reporting of Indigenous people’s access to services, resubstantiation rate, substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate, and service efficiency (SCRCSSP 2001). Data on placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with extended family and children aged under 12 years in home-based care were also reported for the first time.

As previously noted, prior to 2001, two separate frameworks were used to assess child protection and alternative care (SCRCSSP 1995, 1997, 2000). In 2001, a new framework was developed combining the two previously existing frameworks to form a single more streamlined model to assess child welfare (Figure 2.4). The framework was extended to include a variety of new indicators. Although these items were agreed to conceptually, data for many of them were not immediately available (SCRCSSP 2001). In addition, some terminology was revised to maintain consistency with the AIHW national child protection data collection.

The current Australian performance indicator framework was published in 2004 (SCRGSP 2005). This framework has three major objectives for child protection and out-of-home care: equity and access, effectiveness, and efficiency (Figure 2.5). Equity and access was a new objective in the 2004 framework, but indicators are yet to be developed to assess it. Measures are in place to assess effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiency indicators are calculated by the Secretariat for the Review of Government Service Provision based on financial data supplied by jurisdictions and data received through the AIHW, while the AIHW receives data from all Australian jurisdictions to enable reporting on the effectiveness of child protection and out-of-home care services.

Each addition of a new indicator to the performance indicator framework has improved the assessment of child protection and out-of-home care services within Australian jurisdictions. Throughout, the overall objectives of assessing service provision have remained – to provide information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of government services in Australia (SCRGSP 2006). These data can then be used to target improvements to services. Accurate cross-jurisdictional comparison for a number of the individual indicators has remained difficult due to continuing differences in policy and measurement practices. Figure 2.5 shows the comparability of indicators presented in the 2006 Report.

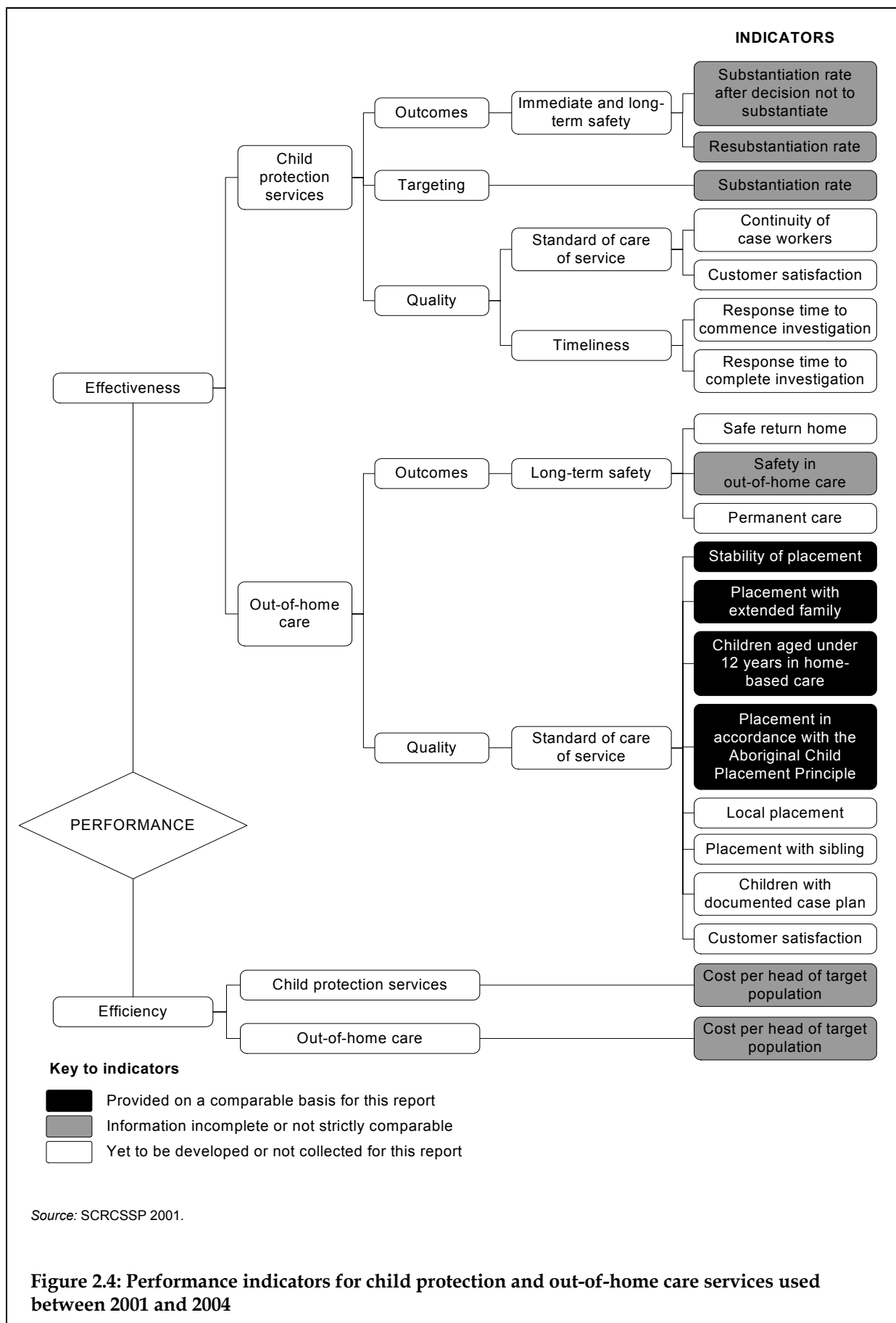
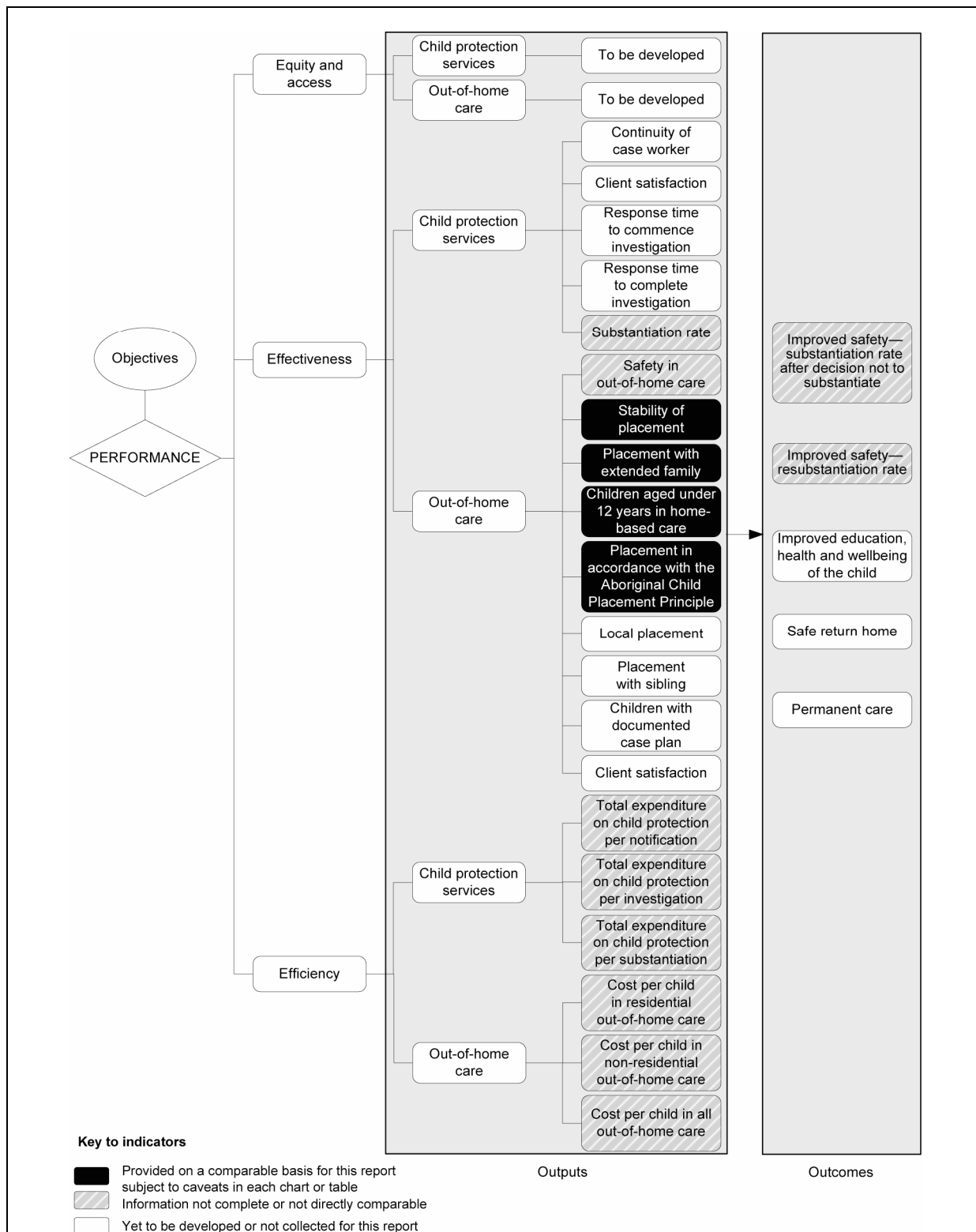


Figure 2.4: Performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services used between 2001 and 2004



Source: SCRGSP 2006.

Figure 2.5: Performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services from 2004

3 Child protection and out-of-home care performance indicators

The current performance indicator framework has three major objectives for child protection and out-of-home care: equity and access, effectiveness, and efficiency (see Figure 2.5). Equity and access was a new objective in the 2004 framework, and indicators have yet to be developed to adequately assess it. Indicators are in place to assess effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiency indicators are calculated by the Secretariat for the Review of Government Service Provision. The AIHW receives data from all jurisdictions to assess the effectiveness of child protection and out-of-home care services and provide these to the Secretariat for the Review of Government Service Provision. These data also provide the basis for the annual AIHW *Child protection Australia* report (see, for example, AIHW 2006).

This report provides details on the eight effectiveness indicators that are currently measured:

- substantiation rate
- resubstantiation rate
- substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate
- safety in out-of-home care
- stability of placement
- placement with extended family
- children aged under 12 years in home-based care
- placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

For each indicator, this chapter provides a brief description, the importance of the indicator and factors affecting interpretation. While various references are cited in this chapter, much of the information contained within the report was derived from a related report sponsored by the Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council (see AIHW 2002).

3.1 Substantiation rate

Description

The substantiation rate is the proportion of finalised investigations where the notification was made in the same reporting year, resulting in a conclusion that a child has been or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise suffer harm. That is, of all incidents of child maltreatment investigated, the proportion for which there was sufficient evidence or cause for concern to establish a corroboration of harm. In some jurisdictions this also includes likely or expected child abuse or neglect (see Bromfield & Higgins 2005 for a review of the differences in legislation and grounds for intervention).

Importance

The substantiation rate provides a measure of the accuracy with which child protection services are targeting cases for investigation. There are two ramifications for incorrect

targeting of investigations. First, if a report of child abuse is deemed not to provide sufficient concern and an investigation is not conducted, there is the risk that the child will be left in an environment where they are at risk of abuse. Second, when an unsubstantiated investigation is conducted there is a risk that the child and/or family is unduly intruded upon, when in fact there is not sufficient risk of harm to the child. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to the costs and benefits associated with investigating a case of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Factors affecting interpretation

A high level of substantiation can be viewed in several ways. It may be seen as positive because it shows that child protection services are correctly targeting investigations to protect children from harm. However, a high substantiation rate may also reflect a tendency for only higher risk cases to be investigated. Alternatively, a high substantiation rate may also indicate that the threshold for 'at risk' is simply too low and the slightest indication of harm results in a substantiation of abuse. The investigation of some cases which do not result in substantiation may help to discount problematic interpretations in this area.

A very low substantiation rate may indicate that services made a large number of incorrect decisions to conduct investigations. As a result, children and families were unjustifiably intruded upon and the limited resources available were wasted. This type of incorrect decision making has been shown to have detrimental long-term consequences for the child and their family (Osborne 2003).

When considering child protection data it should be remembered that there are a number of children who are abused for whom notifications and therefore subsequent investigations are never made. This seems likely in light of Australian research showing one-third of health, welfare and education professionals failed to report a suspected case of child abuse within a 6-month period (Goddard et al. 2002).

There are significant variations across jurisdictions in methods of collecting and reporting substantiation data, making it difficult to compare these data across states and territories. Some jurisdictions measure and focus on potential harm to children in addition to actual harm (for example, New South Wales, Tasmania, Queensland), whereas others only report and focus on cases of actual harm to a child (for example, South Australia). Taking these differences between jurisdictions into consideration suggests substantiation data should not be compared across Australian states and territories.

A common query regarding the substantiation rate is about the denominator that should be used to calculate it. The AIHW calculates the substantiation rate in its *Child protection Australia* reports (see, for example, AIHW 2006) using the total number of finalised investigations as the denominator, rather than the total number of notifications. This method is also used in the *Report on government services*. This is because notifications are defined differently across the jurisdictions. In Tasmania, for example, all child protection reports are recorded as notifications, and may therefore include broader issues that do not require a child protection response. In contrast, in Western Australia each report is assessed at intake, and only those reports where maltreatment is indicated are classified as a notification (Bromfield & Higgins 2005; AIHW 2006). Given the variation across the jurisdictions, the number of notifications can not be accurately used to reflect the performance of the child protection system, either within a jurisdiction or across jurisdictions. Because more information about a child's situation has been obtained at investigation, and cases that do not require a child protection response have been screened out, the total number of investigations is a more reliable denominator than notifications.

3.2 Resubstantiation rate

Description

The resubstantiation rate measures the effectiveness of child protection authorities in keeping a child who is known to be at risk safe from harm in the short and long term. To evaluate this indicator, the AIHW reports data on the proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation in a given year, who were also the subject of a further substantiation (that is, resubstantiation) within a 3-month or a 12-month period and where the investigation was finalised before the end of the reporting year.

Importance

This indicator is considered extremely important in child protection research. If a child protection service has established that a child has been, or is at risk of being harmed, it is expected that necessary actions are taken to ensure that the child is not subjected to further harm or neglect. There is considerable international agreement that the resubstantiation rate is a key indicator, and that reducing the rate of re-occurring child abuse and neglect of children who come into contact with child protection services should be a major aim for the field (DePanfilis & Zuravin 1999; UK DOH 2004; US DHHS 2000).

Factors affecting interpretation

If a resubstantiation of abuse occurs it may be argued that services are not adequately protecting children from harm. Some have argued that jurisdictions are failing to prevent repeated instances of child abuse (Colman & Colman 2002). However, this may not necessarily be the case. It can not be expected that resubstantiation rates could ever be zero.

Various factors affect the likelihood of report and subsequent substantiation. Rates of reporting differ depending on the type of abuse investigated – an abusive incident is more likely to be reported than a stable pattern of neglect (AIHW 2002). First, when there has already been one substantiation, and then a second notification is made, the probability of this being substantiated is greater than for instances where there is no prior child protection history.

Second, this indicator highlights the dilemma of child protection workers who must weigh up the safety and best interests of the child with the right of the child to be cared for by their family (AIHW 2002). In some cases, a decision to meet the protective needs of a child who has been harmed by providing in-home family support services carries a risk of re-abuse. However, if a child is placed on an order immediately following the initial substantiation and has only limited supervised contact with their family, the chance of subsequent abuse by their immediate family would be negligible. On the other hand, by placing children in out-of-home care, statutory protective action can sometimes hinder children's abilities to form life-long emotional attachments with their original family. Assessment of the risks and benefits of maintaining family integrity is central to adequate child protection practice, and the unique circumstances of both the child and their family need to be taken into account.

Finally, it may be that it was safe to have the child remain in the family home at the time of assessment, but because of changes in family dynamics outside of the child protection service's control some time later (for example, illness, job loss, pregnancy), the child was subsequently in danger of being re-abused or neglected. It is also possible that the source of the harm might be different in the subsequent notification, for example, if the first

notification related to neglect inside the family home and the subsequent notification was about sexual abuse by a family member outside the family home. Additionally, families who are involved with the department may come to feel comfortable with the workers, and once this happens, they may then reveal more issues which are then substantiated.

How substantiation is conceptualised may also impact on resubstantiation rates. Definitions and data collection methods for resubstantiation vary across jurisdictions, and as such cross-jurisdictional comparability is not valid. For example, Victoria does not record resubstantiations while a case is open, meaning that their resubstantiation rates are generally lower than other jurisdictions (particularly at the 3-month period).

The 3-month assessment of resubstantiation would be expected to be lower than the 12-month assessment for a number of reasons. First, children who are subject to a resubstantiation within 3 months are included in both the 3-month and 12-month data. Second, because child protection services tend to engage in intensive scrutiny and support of the family initially following a substantiation of abuse, re-abuse is less likely to occur in this period. Resubstantiation within 12 months would therefore be expected to be proportionately greater than resubstantiation within 3 months because there is more time for family circumstances beyond the control of child protection services to change. In addition, resubstantiation rates are affected by the time it takes to complete an investigation. Some investigations can take more than a year to resolve, in which case a subsequent notification would not be possible inside 3 or 12 months in states where a notification can not be made while a case is still open.

The rule for counting this indicator changed as of 2003–04, making comparisons with previous years inappropriate. Under the revised counting rules, a resubstantiation was not counted for a child unless the notification for that substantiation was received after the first investigation had been finalised.

3.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

Description

This indicator measures the proportion of children who were the subject of an investigation that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who, within 3 or 12 months of that decision, were the subject of another notification that was substantiated. That is, it shows the number of children for whom evidence of actual or potential harm or neglect was believed to be insufficient to warrant substantiation, but for whom a subsequent notification was substantiated and the investigation was finalised by the end of the reporting year.

Importance

To ensure that children do not remain at risk of harm, child protection services aim to accurately assess reported instances of child maltreatment. It is expected that services will thoroughly investigate reports of maltreatment, accurately ascertain the level of risk and establish the most appropriate protection for that child. This indicator provides a measure of whether important risk factors may have been missed in a prior investigation (AIHW 2002).

Factors affecting interpretation

Subsequent substantiation after a decision not to substantiate does not always indicate a failing of the system. Substantiating harm or risk of harm to a child is not possible if little evidence exists to warrant such a decision. A further notification of harm to a child may provide greater evidence to enable a substantiation to be made. In some cases child and family circumstances may have changed in the intervening period, and factors such as illness or a new partner may be the reason for the subsequent harm or risk. That is, the original decision not to substantiate may have been correct, and changes since that decision resulted in a new notification being made and a subsequently correct substantiation of harm or neglect.

However, it is also possible that the service did not perform an adequate investigation into the claims of child maltreatment. The service may have failed to thoroughly assess significant signs of abuse and neglect, which resulted in an inaccurate decision not to substantiate the claim of child abuse. Similar to the resubstantiation rate, the rule for counting this indicator changed as of 2003–04, making comparisons with previous years inappropriate.

3.4 Safety in out-of-home care

Description

This indicator assesses the proportion of children in out-of-home care (facility or family based), who were the subject of a substantiated harm or neglect notification while in a funded placement. The person responsible may be a carer or another person living in the household (for example, the child of a carer, a relative of the carer, or other children on placement).

Importance

It is expected that when a child is removed from a harmful setting, they will be placed in a setting which is safe from harm. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the child protection service to adequately assess carers initially and on an ongoing basis once the child has been placed in the new family environment. This indicator provides an insight into how effectively the child protection service keeps children safe from further harm.

Factors affecting interpretation

Although this is an extremely important indicator, there are cross-jurisdictional differences with regard to its reporting. Not all jurisdictions collect the indicator as not all jurisdictions will substantiate abuse in care. Abuse in care may be recorded by some jurisdictions in an 'incidence report' or similar, and not be recorded as a notification or substantiation. The outcomes for the child will not differ, only how the matter was recorded in the data system. Other jurisdictions will record all incidences as substantiations, resulting in levels of abuse in care that appear to be higher.

Data for a particular period represent the number of cases which were notified, investigated and substantiated during the financial year. Figures may include reports relating to historical abuse that has only recently been reported and are therefore not necessarily indicative of current levels of abuse in out-of-home care.

3.5 Stability of placement

Description

Stability of placement measures the number of different placements experienced by a child on a care and protection order during a period of continuous out-of-home care. This indicator represents the residential and familial stability a child experienced during their time in care. Data are collected for children who exit care during the reporting period. If a child placed in care exits on two separate occasions during a reporting period, only the placement changes which occurred during the first episode of care are reported.

Importance

Placement stability is associated with better outcomes for children (AIHW 2002). Research indicates that placement instability (that is, multiple placements) can have negative affects on the child such as poor attachment to primary caregivers, lowered academic performance, and psychopathology such as depression and externalising behaviour disorders (Wulczyn et al. 2003). It is expected that the initial removal from their own family will cause some level of disruption to the child. However, an essential goal of placement is stability for the child and the minimisation of additional disruptions (Wulczyn et al. 2003).

Factors affecting interpretation

This indicator has changed over recent years. Prior to 2001, data were collected for the actual number of placements. That is, if a child in out-of-home care was placed with another carer and then returned to the original carer, the number of placements recorded would have been three. Since 2001 data have been collected on the number of *different* placements, meaning that the child in the above situation would have only two placements recorded.

As with most performance indicators, there are differences in counting across jurisdictions, deeming state and territory data non-comparable. For example, New South Wales currently reports the number of placement types a child experiences (for example, residential care, foster care) while other jurisdictions report on the number of placements.

There are a number of factors which may impinge on placement stability, including time, age, and child-family compatibility. It is common for the first 6 to 12 months of out-of-home care to involve the greatest number of placements for a child, and for placement stability to increase over time (AIHW 2002; Wulczyn et al. 2003). The first placement of a child is often an emergency placement while additional information on the child's long-term needs is ascertained, and a second more stable, long-term placement is found. Age at the time of entering out-of-home care is positively correlated with number of placements. In a sample of New York foster children, Wulczyn and colleagues (2003) showed that adolescents tend to experience a higher rate of placement change than do younger children. This is possibly due to the greater difficulty they have bonding with new families. Also, because there are a limited number of carers, it may be difficult to place an older child in an appropriate family. Therefore, child-family incompatibility may lead to placement breakdown and the ultimate need to re-place the child. Older children may also elect to exit care themselves and in some cases a move towards independent living may be part of their case plan. For children on orders, a move to independent living would be counted as a change in placement.

Finally, stable care does not necessarily equate to quality care. It may be that a child is placed in only one family during their time in out-of-home care, but that family does not provide

the child with a positive and loving environment. Alternatively, a child may be placed with a number of families who all provide outstanding care for that child.

3.6 Placement with extended family

Description

This indicator measures the proportion of children in out-of-home care who are placed with relatives or kin who receive government financial assistance to care for that child. Separate data are recorded for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

Importance

In Australia, the number of children placed with family or kin is increasing (FaCS 2004), and it is believed that this form of placement provides the child with better long-term outcomes due to an increased probability of continuity, familiarity and stability (Patton 2003). Given findings that placement with family members has positive impacts on children in care, the preference is for as many children as possible to be placed with their extended family (Patton 2003).

Factors affecting interpretation

There appears to be substantial informal use of kinship networks within Australia (AIHW 2002). However, the reported numbers of children in kinship out-of-home care are based on figures derived from government records about formalised care arrangements and arrangements in which there is payment for care. Given that a number of children are living with other family members who do not receive government financial support (AIHW 2003; Patton 2003), the data reported for this indicator underestimate the number of children in kinship care. As with many of the indicators, differences across states and territories make the data difficult to compare. In this case differences exist in terms of the policies used to determine the eligibility of carers to payments. This means that the same carer may receive a payment (and be recorded as an instance of kinship care) in one state, but not eligible for a payment if they resided in a different state (meaning they would not be counted as a kinship placement in this jurisdiction).

Low numbers of children being placed in kinship care arrangements may indicate that child protection services are not successful at placing children with family or kin, or that families simply do not want the added responsibility of rearing another child. This may not be the case, however, for a number of reasons. First, the number of kinship placements reported is substantially lower than the number of children in kinship care due to the number of the informal kinship arrangements being used. Second, there may be a lack of available relatives to place the child with, particularly in highly mobile populations, or when there is a need to place a large sibling group. Third, additional time is required to screen relatives for an individual child or sibling group compared to being able to place a child with a carer who has previously been screened, thus in cases where care is needed urgently kinship care is often unable to be used.

Finally, caution must be taken when interpreting these data across Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. Extended family and kinship networks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are often conceived more broadly than for other Australian people. For

example, Indigenous communities often perceive community members as well as biological relatives as extended family, whereas non-Indigenous cultures tend to regard only the latter as such (HREOC 1997). Therefore, higher proportions of Indigenous than non-Indigenous children being placed with extended family might reflect different beliefs regarding the constitution of extended family.

3.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

Description

This indicator measures the proportion of children aged less than 12 years in out-of-home funded placements who are placed in family settings, such as foster care and relative or kinship care.

Importance

There is international consensus that family home settings are generally the most appropriate placement option for young children (AIHW 2002). This opinion is most likely due to the fact that family settings tend to be less restrictive and more likely to resemble normal life than residential care facilities. Family settings are also thought to offer greater stability and continuity of relationships than do residential care setting options.

Factors affecting interpretation

Home-based care may not always be the best setting in which to place a child. Residential-based care may be more appropriate for some children, particularly those with severe challenging behaviours or those requiring specialist facilities. Residential care may be the only option when trying to place large sibling groups.

3.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

Description

This indicator assesses the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with Indigenous carers, with non-Indigenous relatives or kin, or with other non-Indigenous carers, by measuring a department's compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP). According to the NSW Law Reform Commission (2004), the ACPP stipulates that (in preferential order) Indigenous children should be placed with:

- the child's extended family
- the child's Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community
- other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people living in close proximity.

All jurisdictions have adopted either legislation or policies in line with the ACPP (SCRGSP 2006).

Importance

Care arrangements that do not take culture into account can disrupt cultural ties and identity for a child, which may result in even further harm and distress to the child (AIHW 2002). In general, placement with familiar people or within a familiar environment strengthens the stability of a placement (Patton 2003). In particular:

Aboriginal people consider that they, as much as any other people, have the right to raise all their children and to retain them in their community. This arises from a recognition of Aboriginal people as a distinct but varied cultural group, with a right to retain their own heritage, customs, languages and institutions. Aboriginal children provide the link between the past and the future for Aboriginal culture (NSW Law Reform Commission 1997:51).

Considering the over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system (AIHW 2006), this indicator is particularly important.

Factors affecting interpretation

The placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle indicator does not reflect the number of attempts made to place child in accordance with the Principle, or whether it was not possible to place a child in accordance with the Principle despite all possible opportunities being explored.

In their 2005 report, Higgins et al. describe factors that may impact on the ability to place children in accordance with the Principle, in particular, the shortage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers in almost every jurisdiction. This shortage is influenced by the material disadvantage that is experienced in disproportionate numbers by Indigenous people and prohibits many people from becoming carers. The over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system means that many Indigenous people who are willing and able to care for children are already doing so. That is, there are too many Indigenous children needing care for the number of available Indigenous carers. Large sibling groups can also be difficult to place within the one family. Furthermore, some Indigenous people are unwilling to be associated with formal care systems due to trauma associated with past practices involving the removal of Aboriginal children from their parents (the 'stolen generation') (Higgins et al. 2005).

In some jurisdictions, Indigenous status is reported by asking the child and the carer if they identify as such. This information is later verified where possible. While placement in a culturally familiar environment is generally the most beneficial for the Indigenous child, sometimes a non-Indigenous placement is required to best meet the needs of an individual child. For example, some Indigenous people living in an urban environment do not identify as Indigenous and do not necessarily want to be placed with Indigenous carers.

This indicator assesses whether an Indigenous child has been placed with relatives or kin and/or Indigenous carer(s). When this type of placement is not possible, the policies or legislation in line with the ACCP in each jurisdiction may include provisions to place children with other carers. For example, in Queensland, legislation states a hierarchy of preferred situations in which a child should be placed, in order to preserve cultural identity and links. This includes where it is not possible to place a child with relatives, kin or Indigenous carers, to preferentially place the child with carers who have demonstrated the ability and willingness to facilitate the child's continued contact with their cultural group. In this situation, the child would be placed with consideration to Queensland's Indigenous Child Placement Principle, but not necessarily with an Indigenous or relative or kin carer.

3.9 Summary

This section provided information about each of the eight effectiveness performance indicators for which the AIHW collects and reports data. While each indicator is detailed individually in this report, the interaction between these evaluative measures is also important. That is, a positive outcome for one indicator may be related to a negative outcome for another. For example, a low level of resubstantiation may correspond with a high level of substantiation following a decision not to substantiate. There are a number of factors that affect the measurement and recording of performance indicator data, and these extraneous variables must be taken into account when interpreting performance indicator data. There are also significant variations across jurisdictions in methods of collecting and reporting data, making it difficult to compare performance indicators across the states and territories.

4 Data interpretation

This chapter provides data related to each of the eight effectiveness indicators detailed in Chapter 3, although not all jurisdictions were able to report on all indicators. Where possible, trends across the past five reporting periods are reported. Suggestions are made regarding interpretation of the findings, including the possible impact of legislation and policies on the data. Due to differences across jurisdictions in the measurement and reporting of performance indicators, as well as legislative, policy, and practice differences, data for each state and territory are reported separately. These differences make comparison of indicators between states difficult – therefore such discussions are kept to a minimum.

Population data for each of the jurisdictions may be useful in gaining a perspective on the relative numbers of children in the child protection system and are included in Appendix 2. For some indicators, such as notifications, the same child may be the subject of multiple notifications, thus the number of notifications does not necessarily equate to the number of children subject to a notification in each jurisdiction.

4.1 New South Wales

The Department of Community Services (DoCS) is responsible for child protection in New South Wales. The Department works closely with a variety of government and non-government agencies to protect children from harm (DoCS 2004a).

A significant event for DoCS was the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed in December 2000. The Act extended the number of agencies and professionals mandated to report suspected harm to a child, so that anyone employed to deliver health, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement to children under the age of 16 years is mandated to report suspected cases of child maltreatment (DoCS 2005). This legislative change may have increased the number of child protection reports received.

There have also been other major changes to the policies and procedures of DoCS that have made comparing data across reporting periods difficult. For example, in December 2000 the department moved from having 84 centres collecting intake data to a centralised entry point where all cases of suspected child maltreatment are processed (DoCS 2004a). The DoCS helpline is now the single entry point for enquiries and reports on child protection issues (DoCS 2004b). The introduction of this centralised intake point resulted in more standardised practices and improved recording of contacts. This may have increased the number of contacts recorded, but the move toward a centralised intake in itself is unlikely to have altered the demand for service provision. Caution must therefore be taken when comparing data collected before and after the system change.

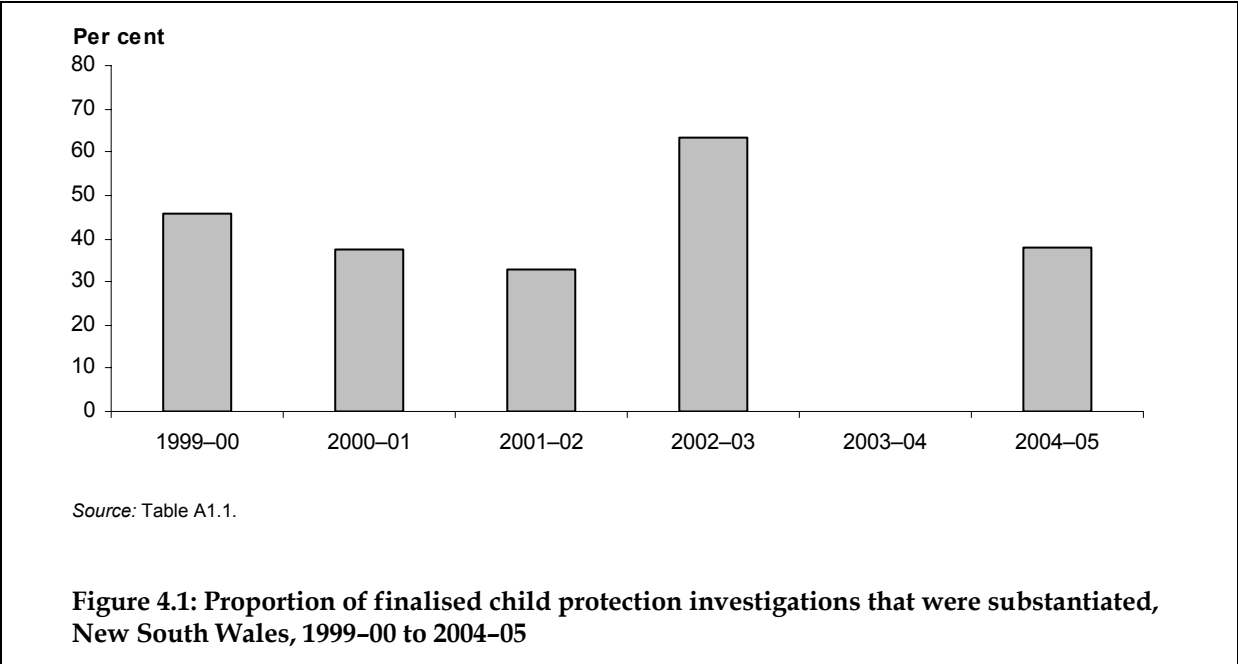
For all contacts made to the DoCS helpline, an initial assessment of risk of harm to the child is undertaken, and a decision is made about further action. Following assessment, notifications are either deemed as there being no risk of harm, or are assigned to the Community Service Centre or Joint Investigation Team for further investigation (DoCS 2004b).

Another change that impacted on the New South Wales data occurred in July 2002. The client information system was upgraded to provide an electronic record of client service and case management in order to bring the data recording more in line with the policy and procedures of the Department. The impact on the data is most notable when comparing the number of notifications before and after the introduction of this system – for example, in 2001–02, there were 55,208 notifications, while in 2002–03, there were 109,498 (AIHW 2004a). This does not indicate that there were twice as many notifications; rather that the method of classifying notifications became more accurate.

New South Wales was able to provide data on all eight performance indicators for this report, except for safety in out-of-home care. Unfortunately, the implementation of a new data system, the Key Information Directory System (KiDS) during 2003–04 meant that New South Wales was unable to provide any usable data to the AIHW for that year, and for two indicators in 2004–05. Therefore data assessing the indicators are only provided for the years 1999–00 to 2002–03 and in most cases 2004–05.

4.1.1 Substantiation rate

The percentage of finalised investigations conducted in New South Wales that resulted in a substantiation (the substantiation rate) is shown in Figure 4.1. The rate decreased from 46% in 1999-00 to 33% in 2001-02, before increasing to 63% in 2002-03. In 2004-05, the rate decreased to 38%.



The variation in substantiation rates is a reflection of the number of substantiated investigations and the number of finalised investigations over the reporting years, as these numbers are used to calculate the substantiation rate (Table A1.1). These numbers have been influenced by policy and procedural changes. The decline in the substantiation rate between 1999-00 and 2001-02 may in part be related to the introduction of the centralised intake service, changes in legislation and recording practices. More significantly, a new category ‘carer/family issues’ was introduced for the years 2000-01 and 2001-02, which was used to record investigations where it was found that no actual harm occurred but carer or family issues were identified that affected the care of the child. A large proportion of investigations (23% in both years) were placed in this category, rather than being substantiated.

The ‘carer/family issues’ category was removed in 2002-03 with the introduction of the interim client system and all notifications determined to involve actual harm or risk of harm, including those previously deemed carer or family issues, were recorded as a substantiation. This increased the number of substantiated cases from 8,606 in 2001-02 to 16,765 in 2002-03. Consequently, the substantiation rate increased substantially in 2002-03 (63% compared to 33% in 2001-02), even though the number of finalised investigations in both years remained around 26,000.

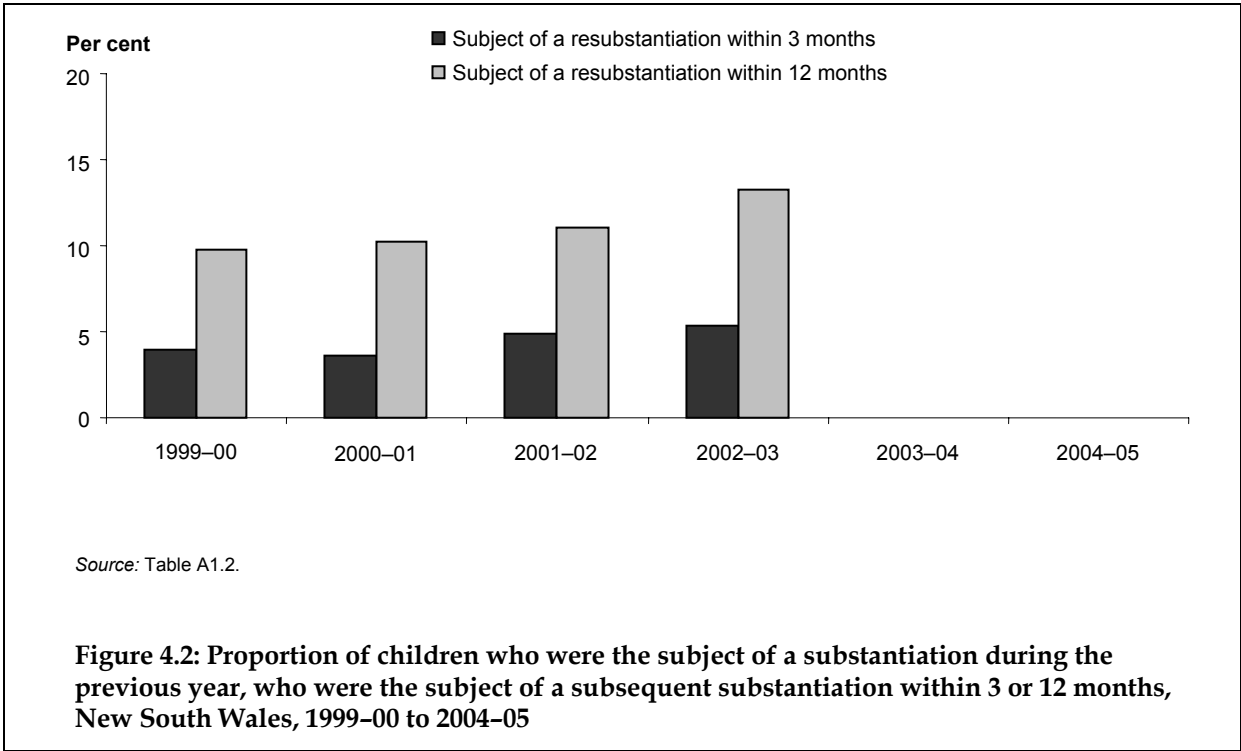
Across the years reported here there have been many changes to policy and recording systems in New South Wales, making interpretation of the data extremely difficult. With the exception of a spike in 2002-03, the substantiation rate has stayed between 33% and 46%.

As already mentioned, a new recording system was implemented in 2003-04, so data could not be reported for that year. With the new system in place, the number of notifications again increased in 2004-05 while the proportion of these substantiated was similar to those in the years 2000-01 and 2001-02. However, it is not possible to make a direct comparison between categories on the old system and those on the new system.

4.1.2 Resubstantiation rate

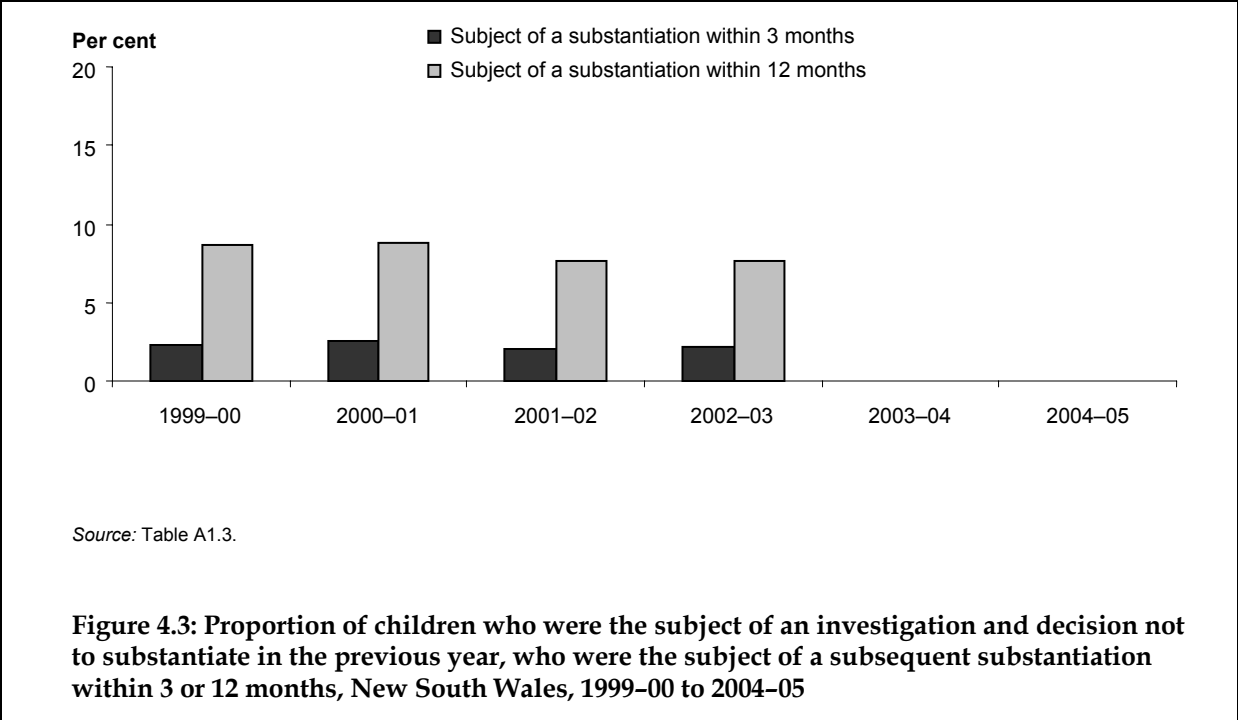
Due to implementation of the data system, New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2003-04 or 2004-05 on the proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation in a given year, and who were also the subject of a further substantiation (that is, resubstantiation) within a 3-month or a 12-month period. From 1999-00 to 2002-03, 4% to 5% of substantiated investigations were followed by resubstantiations being made within 3 months of the initial substantiation (Figure 4.2).

As expected, resubstantiation within 12 months was higher, with rates between 10% and 13% over the 4 years for which data are available.



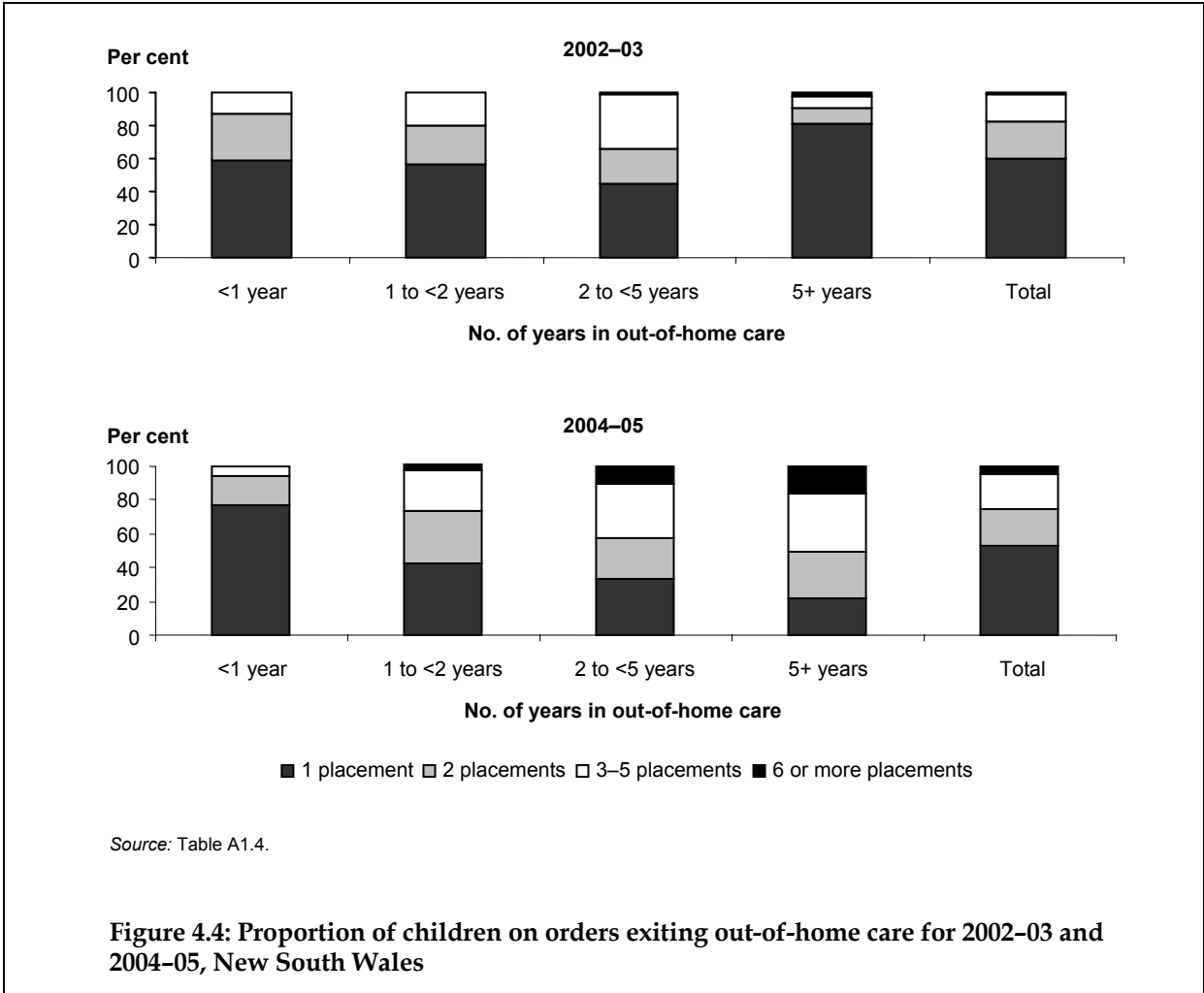
4.1.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

As with the previous indicator, New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2003–04 or 2004–05. From 1999–00 to 2002–03, less than 3% of investigations reported on resulted in a later substantiation being made within 3 months of the initial investigation not being substantiated (Figure 4.3). The proportions were higher for the 12-month period, where 8% to 9% of investigations not resulting in substantiations, were substantiated within the following 12 months.



4.1.4 Stability of placement

The number of out-of-home care placements experienced by children on orders exiting care was not reported by New South Wales for 2003–04 due to the implementation of the Key Information Directory System (KiDS). The two most recent years of available data, 2002–03 and 2004–05, are shown in Figure 4.4. Observation of the numbers of placements for children exiting care in these years shows fairly similar patterns despite a change in reporting method (Figure 4.4). In 2002–03, New South Wales collected data on the types of placements a child was placed in. This meant that if a child moved from foster care to relative or kinship care, this was recorded, but movements between different foster carers were not. As of 2004–05 all moves in care are able to be reported, so the 2 years presented below are not comparable.

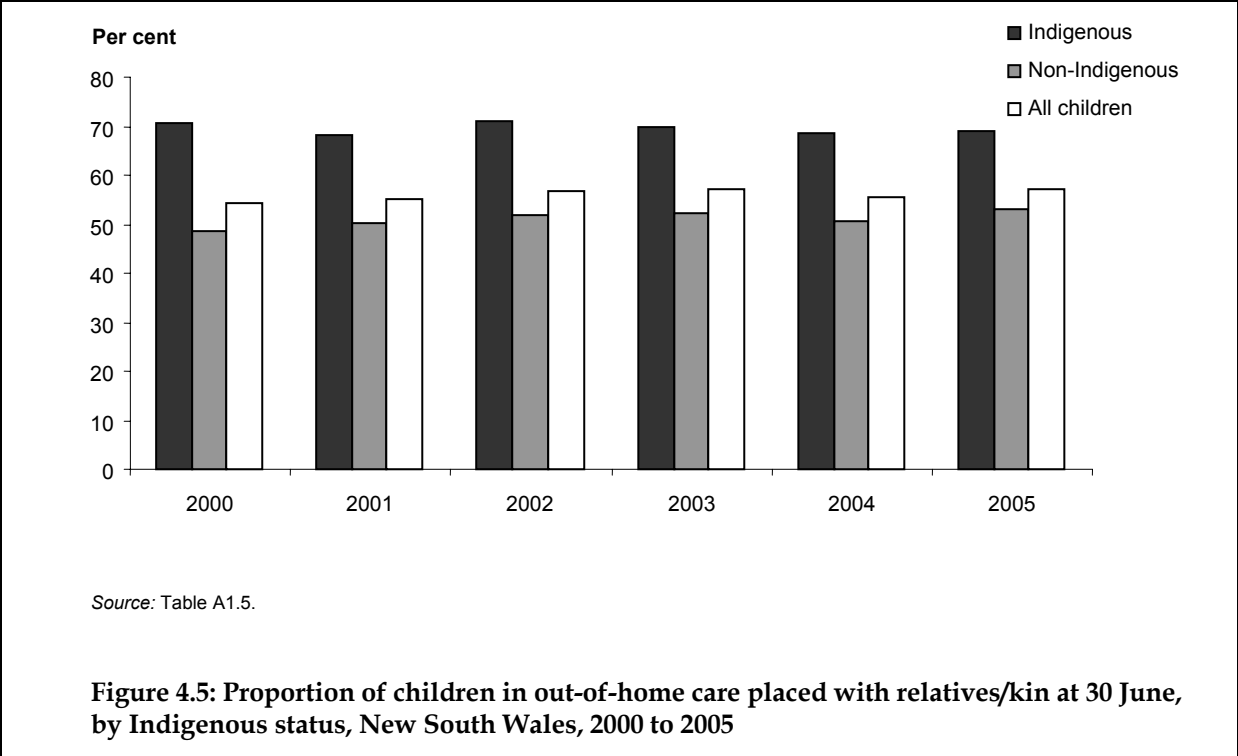


In 2002–03, a higher proportion of children exiting care after at least 5 years were recorded as having only one placement type during their time in care, than those exiting after a smaller number of years. However, due to the constraints of the recording system at the time, a high proportion of children exiting care after five years or more were shown as having one placement when in fact they had experienced more than one placement.

In 2004–05, the number of types of placements experienced by children increased as the length of time in care increased. Very few children who exited care less than one year after entering had six or more placement types. The majority of multiple placement types in excess of six were experienced by children exiting care after a period of at least 2 years, with more placements experienced by those exiting after five years in care.

4.1.5 Placement with extended family

Data are collected on the number of children in out-of-home care who are placed with relatives or kin on 30 June each year. Figure 4.5 shows this data for New South Wales. In all years more than half of all children in care were placed with relatives or kin. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were placed with relatives or kin more often than other children. This is most likely due to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle that makes placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with relatives or kin a priority.

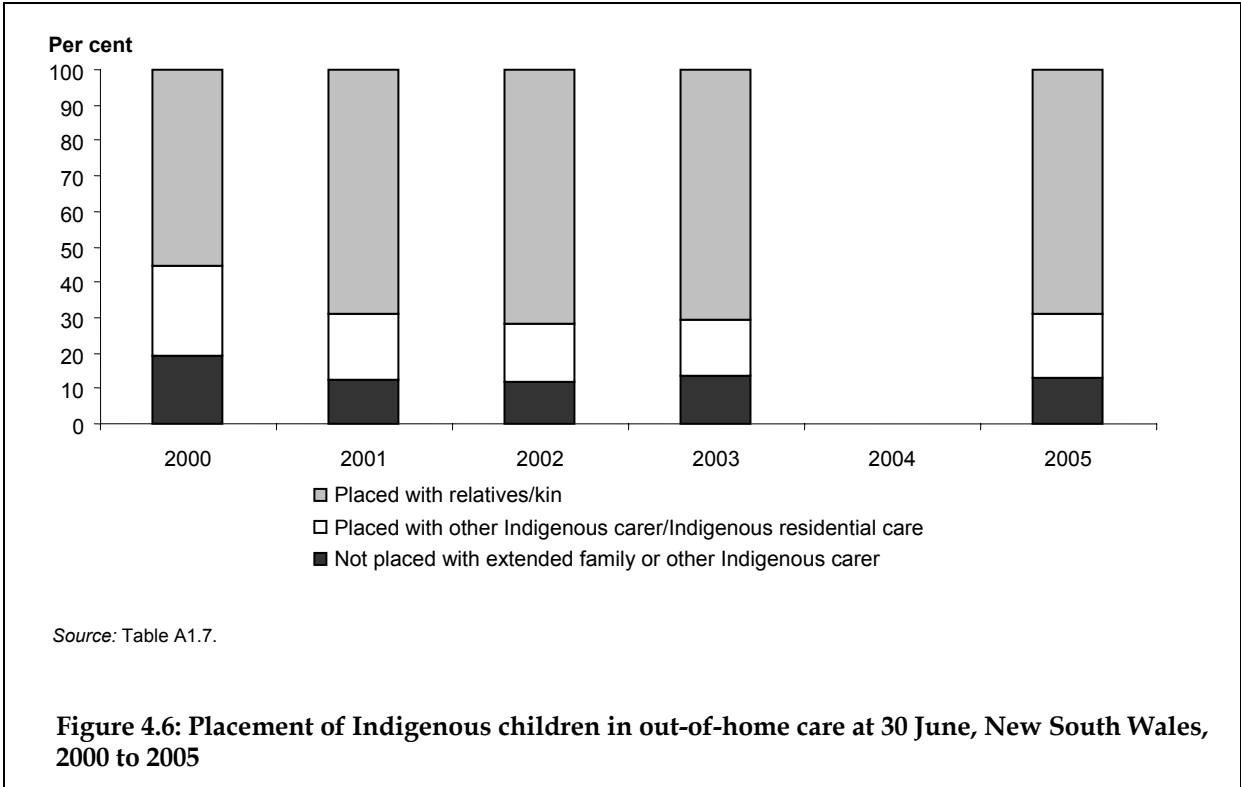


4.1.6 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

Data are collected on 30 June each year to assess the proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care who are placed in home-based care. Almost all young children were placed in home-based care, with little difference between the data for Indigenous and other children (Table A1.6). In all years from 2000 to 2005, at least 96% of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care were in a home-based placement.

4.1.7 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

When an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child is to be placed in out-of-home care, there is a legal requirement that every attempt be made to place that child with extended family or other Indigenous carers. The vast majority of Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June in each of the reporting years presented here (New South Wales was unable to provide data in 2004) were placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP). The number of children placed in accordance with the ACPP has been fairly steady over time. The highest proportion (88%) was reported in 2002 and the lowest (81%) in 2000 (Figure 4.6).



Of the children placed in accordance with the ACPP, most were placed with extended family. In 2000, 68% of children were placed with relatives or kin. This proportion increased to 81% in 2002 and remained stable in the following years (derived from Table A1.7). Those children placed in accordance with the ACPP and who were not placed with extended family, were placed with other Indigenous carers or in Indigenous residential care.

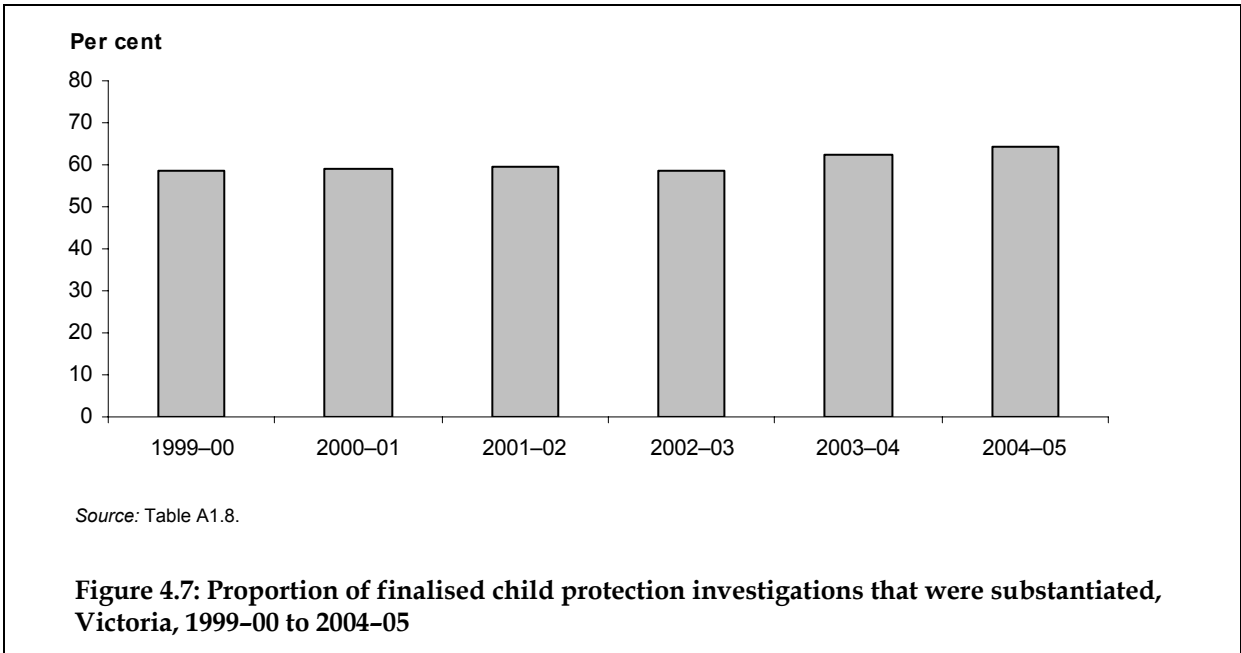
4.2 Victoria

In Victoria, the Department of Human Services oversees a range of child and family services. The Department operates under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, and service provision is structured in three tiers – primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary services aim to promote the best possible outcomes for children and youth by providing support and education to children and families, including antenatal classes, maternal and child health services, and community-wide education programs. Secondary services include in-home family support, respite care and counselling to assist families in need. Tertiary services support families who have been affected by child abuse, and include the investigation of reported cases of suspected abuse, statutory orders, and out-of-home care placements (DHS 2004).

The Department offers some direct service provision as well as allocating funding to other agencies who supply services for at-risk children and their families (Campbell 1998). Victoria was able to provide data on each of the performance indicators. However, they were unable to supply data on Indigenous status for 1999–00 and only limited data for safety in out-of-home care.

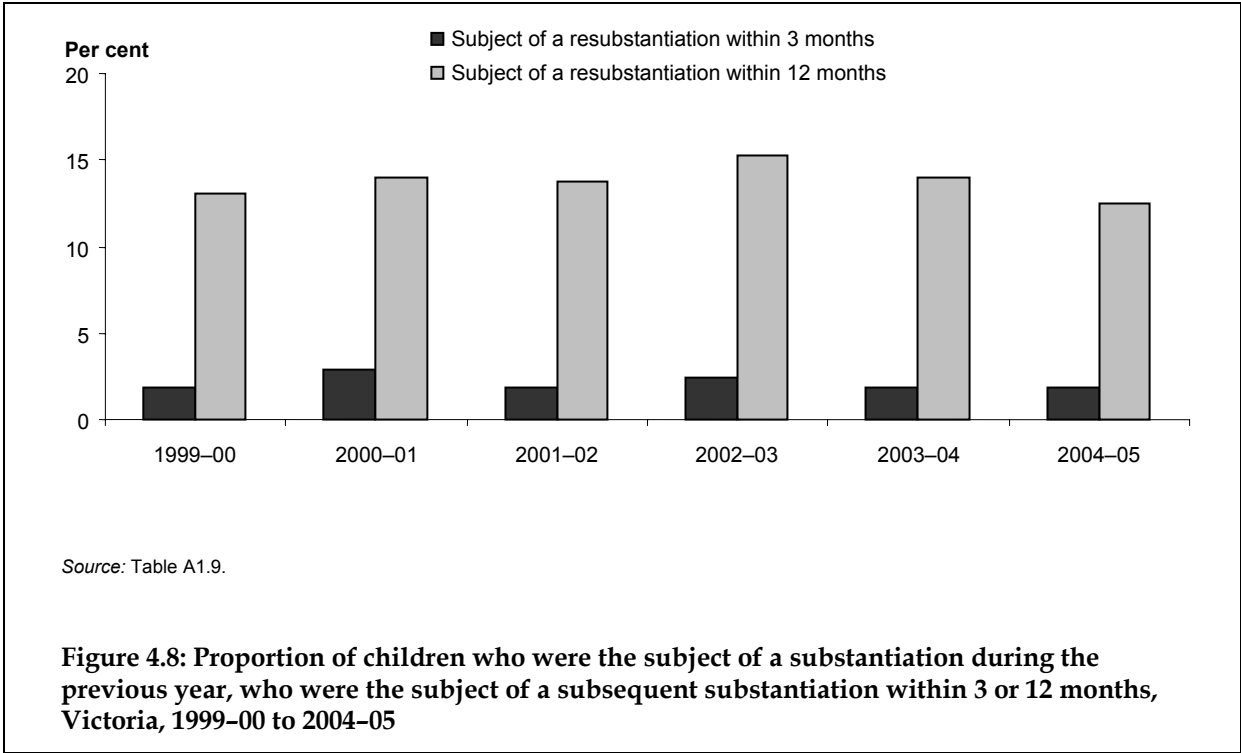
4.2.1 Substantiation rate

The percentage of investigations conducted in Victoria that resulted in substantiations is shown in Figure 4.7. Substantiation rates have remained fairly stable, ranging from 58% in 1999–00 to 64% in 2004–05. This stability is a reflection of the stability in the number of substantiated investigations and the number of finalised investigations over the reporting years, as these numbers are used to calculate the substantiation rate. The number of substantiated investigations ranged from 7,287 in 2002–03 to 7,687 in 2001–02. The total number of investigations each year ranged from 11,486 in 2004–05 to 12,910 in 2000–01 (Table A1.8).



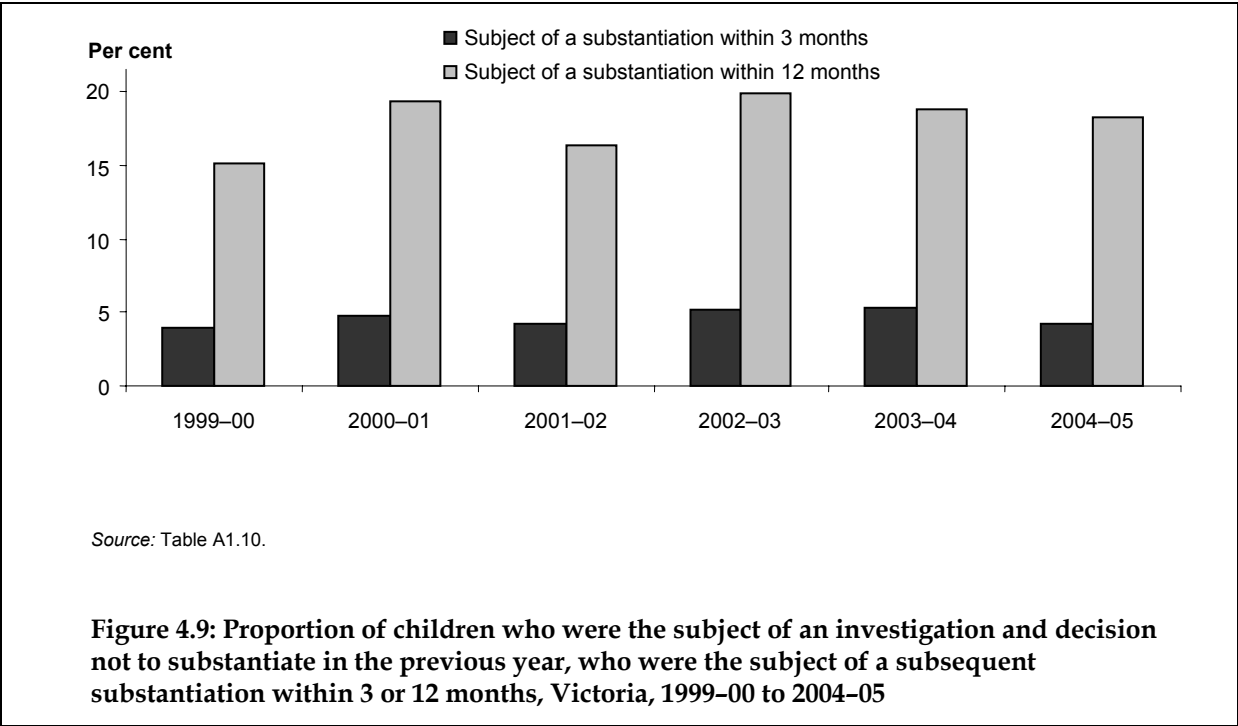
4.2.2 Resubstantiation rate

Across each of the reporting periods less than 3% of children were involved in resubstantiation within 3 months following the initial substantiation in Victoria (Figure 4.8). This low rate is partly due to the fact that under Victorian legislation, a child can not be renotified while a previous case is still open. This means that while the child will still receive the services and support required, the notification will not be recorded. From 1999-00 to 2004-05, between 13% and 15% of cases were resubstantiated within 12 months (Table A1.9).



4.2.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

Figure 4.9 presents the percentage of Victorian children who were the subject of an investigation in the previous financial year that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who were subsequently the subject of a substantiation within either 3 months or 12 months of the initial decision not to substantiate. The substantiation rate at 3 months after a decision not to substantiate has remained fairly stable in the 6 years examined – between 4% and 5%. Between 15% and 20% of children subject to a non-substantiated report were subsequently subject to a substantiated report within 12 months (Table A1.10).

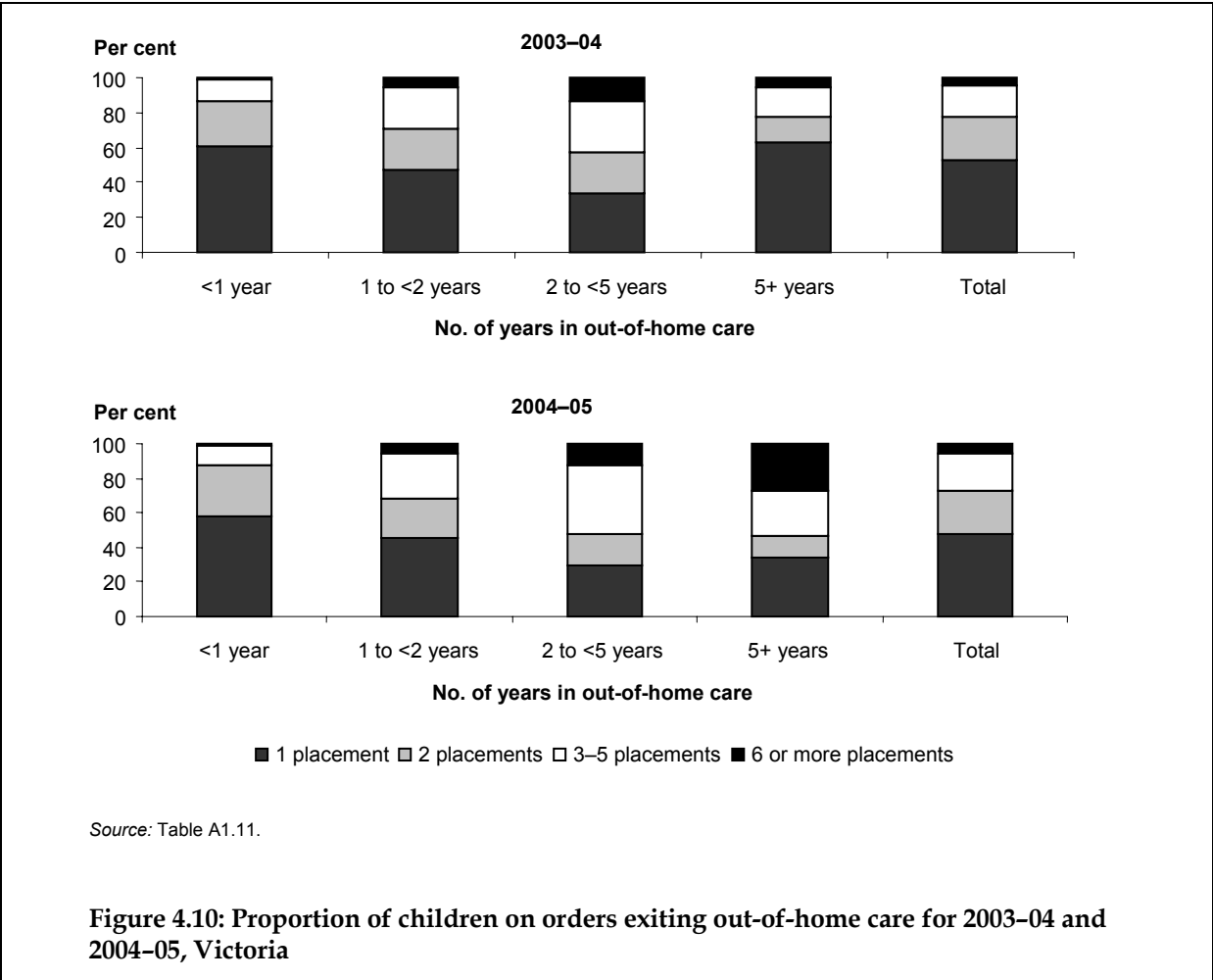


4.2.4 Safety in out-of-home care

Data for this indicator were only available for 2000-01 and 2001-02. For these reporting periods, very few children had substantiated abuse or harm where the person believed responsible was the carer or another person living in the household. It should be noted that Victoria records abuse in care as part of an incident reporting system and this may impact on the numbers recorded.

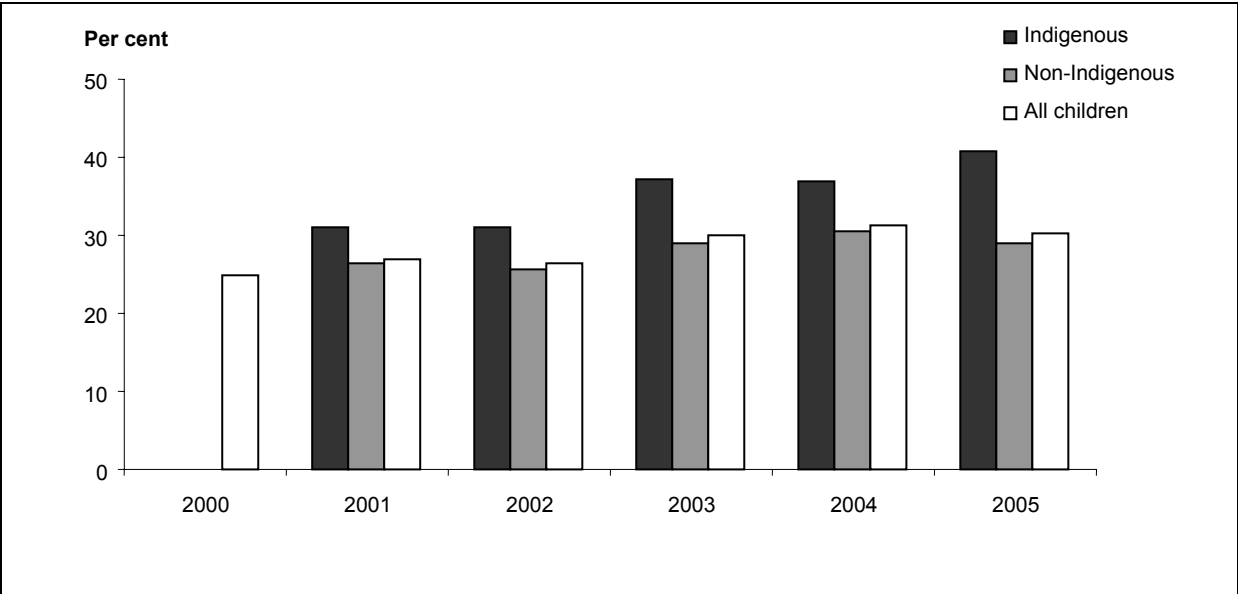
4.2.5 Stability of placement

In Victoria, stability of placement for children who exited out-of-home care showed a similar pattern across 2003-04 and 2004-05 (Figure 4.10). Of those children who were in care for less than one year, most had only one placement, although there were still approximately 12% of children with three to five placements in both 2003-04 and 2004-05. In general, children were more likely to experience more placements if they had been in care longer. However, across both reporting periods, the smallest proportion of children who experienced only one placement were exiting care after between 2 and 5 years. A difference between the years was seen in the greatest proportion of children having experienced six or more placements. In 2004-05 the greatest proportion of children having six or more placements were those exiting care after 5 years, whereas for 2003-04 the proportion was greatest for those exiting care after 2 to 5 years.



4.2.6 Placement with extended family

In each reporting year, between 25% and 31% of all children in out-of-home care were placed with members of their extended family (relatives or kin) (Figure 4.11). The number of children placed with extended family showed a gradual increase between 2001 and 2004, followed by a slight decrease in 2005 (Table A1.12). This increase is more marked for Indigenous children, for whom the proportion placed with relatives or kin increased from 31% in 2001 to 41% in 2005. Indigenous children were more likely to be placed with relatives or kin than other children. Victoria was unable to supply data on Indigenous status for 2000.



Source: Table A1.12.

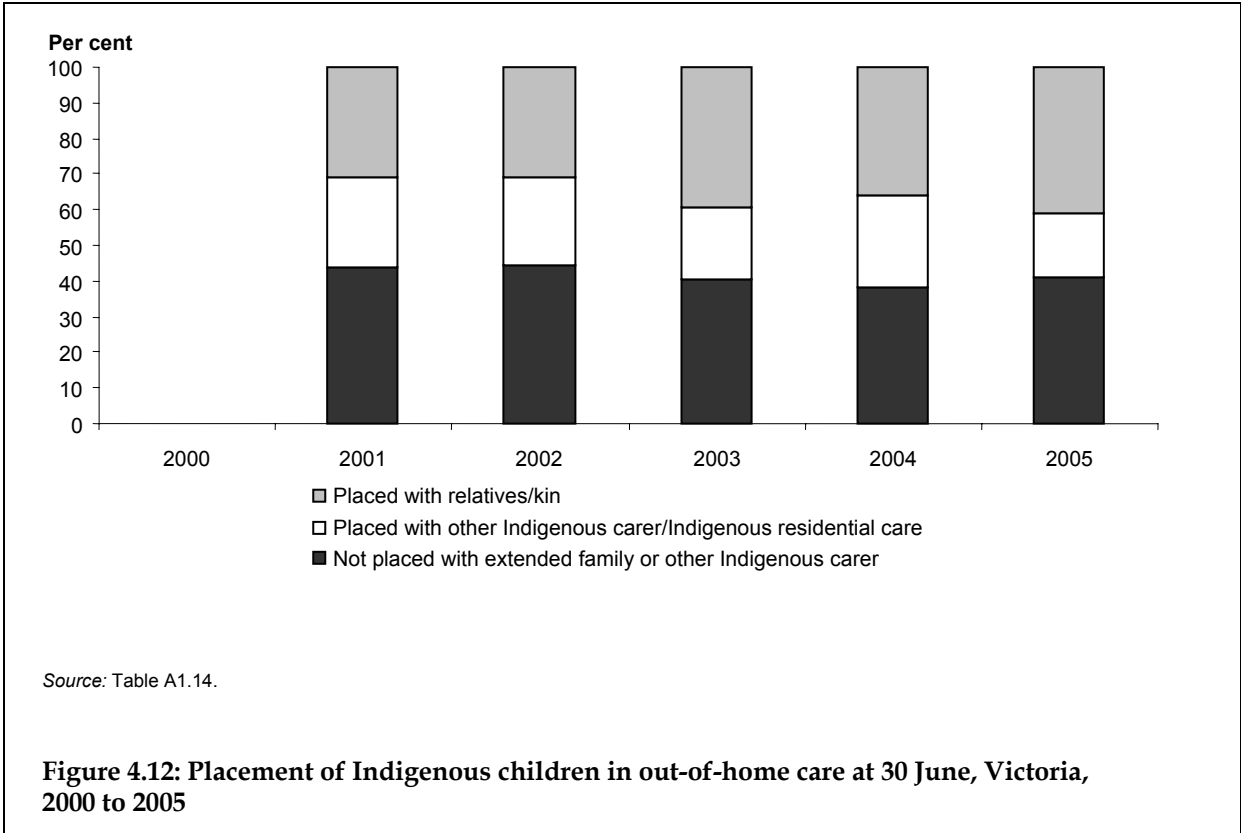
Figure 4.11: Proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin at 30 June, by Indigenous status, Victoria, 2000 to 2005

4.2.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

The vast majority of children in out-of-home care aged less than 12 years were placed in home-based care (Table A1.13). In all years from 2000 to 2005, over 94% of all children in out-of-home care were in home-based care. Between 2001 and 2005, there was little difference in the percentages of Indigenous and other children placed in home-based care.

4.2.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

Data between 2001 and 2005 show little variation in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed with either extended family or other Indigenous carer in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (Figure 4.12). The proportion fluctuated between a low of 55% in 2002 and a high of 62% in 2004. Over the years, placement with relatives or kin increased overall, while placement with other Indigenous caregivers decreased. In 2001, 55% of all children placed in accordance with the Principle were placed with relatives or kin, compared to 70% in 2005. Victoria was unable to supply data on Indigenous status for 2000.



4.3 Queensland

The Department of Child Safety has been responsible for protecting children in Queensland since September 2004 (DChS 2004a). It was established to focus on the wellbeing of children for whom the Queensland Government has statutory responsibility (DChS 2004a). This was previously the responsibility of the then Department of Families. The new department has adopted a child-focused approach with emphasis on decentralised service delivery.

The Department has two major initiatives to promote collaboration and coordination within and between government services and non-government service providers. First, Child Safety Directors in 10 government departments have the role of promoting coordination and collaboration across government. Second, Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Teams including representatives from government departments, police, and other services, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies when appropriate, provide a forum for consultation on complex cases (DChS 2004b). An ongoing monitoring, review and evaluation procedure is in place to assess progress of reforms over time and ensure the services are being delivered to at risk families.

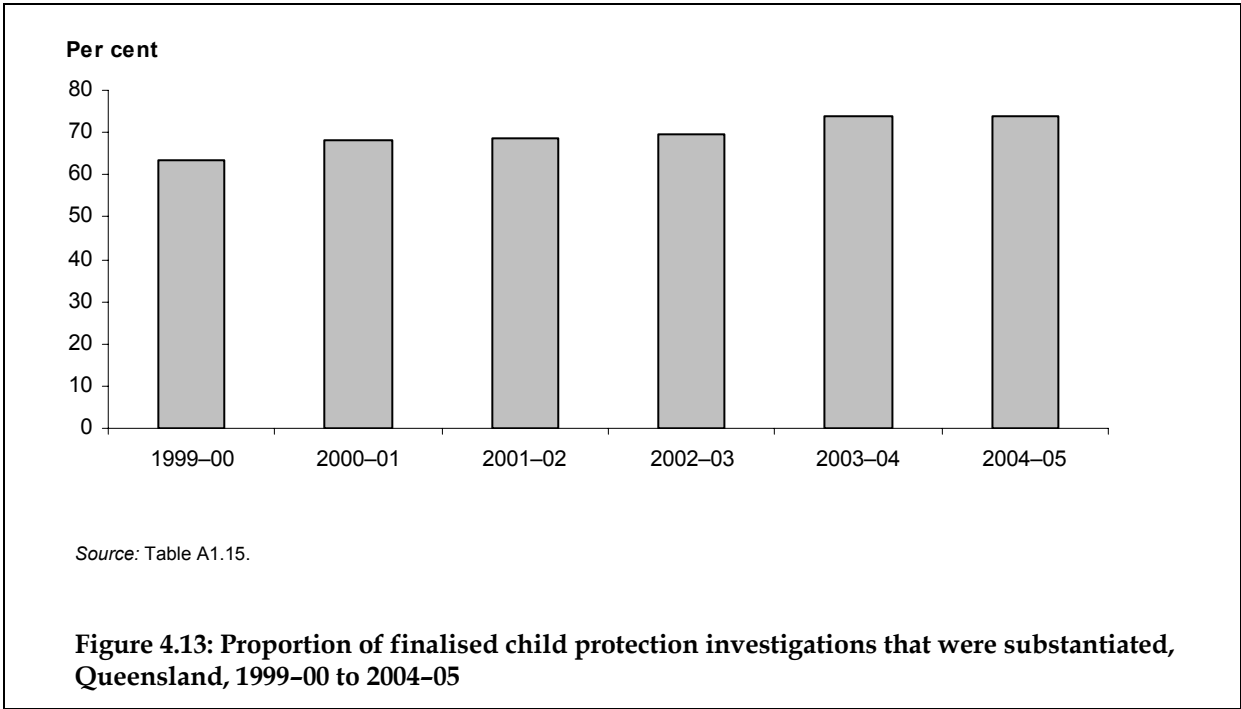
There have been a number of events that have impacted on child protection services in Queensland, and consequently the data collected and reported. First, the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions (the Forde Report) was released in June 1999. In response to the Forde Report, the Department introduced new legislation – the *Child Protection Act 1999* was proclaimed in March 2000. The Act provides for the protection of children by requiring the Department to respond to allegations of harm to children, to provide support services for families, and to arrange appropriate care for children when required. The Act also places particular emphasis on promoting partnerships with other levels of government and external agencies and on the importance of maintaining a child's family, social contacts and identity (DChS 2003).

In January 2004, the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) tabled the *Protecting children: an inquiry into abuse of children in foster care* report to government, recommending a new child safety system for Queensland. In March 2004, the government released a blueprint to guide the implementation of the CMCs recommendations. As part of the blueprint reforms, the Department of Child Safety was created, and it and other responsible government and community agencies have instigated significant changes to the service model and delivery approach for child safety. More consistent service delivery, new policies, practices and procedures, tools and enhanced working relationships are being implemented to create a more responsive and accountable child protection system.

4.3.1 Substantiation rate

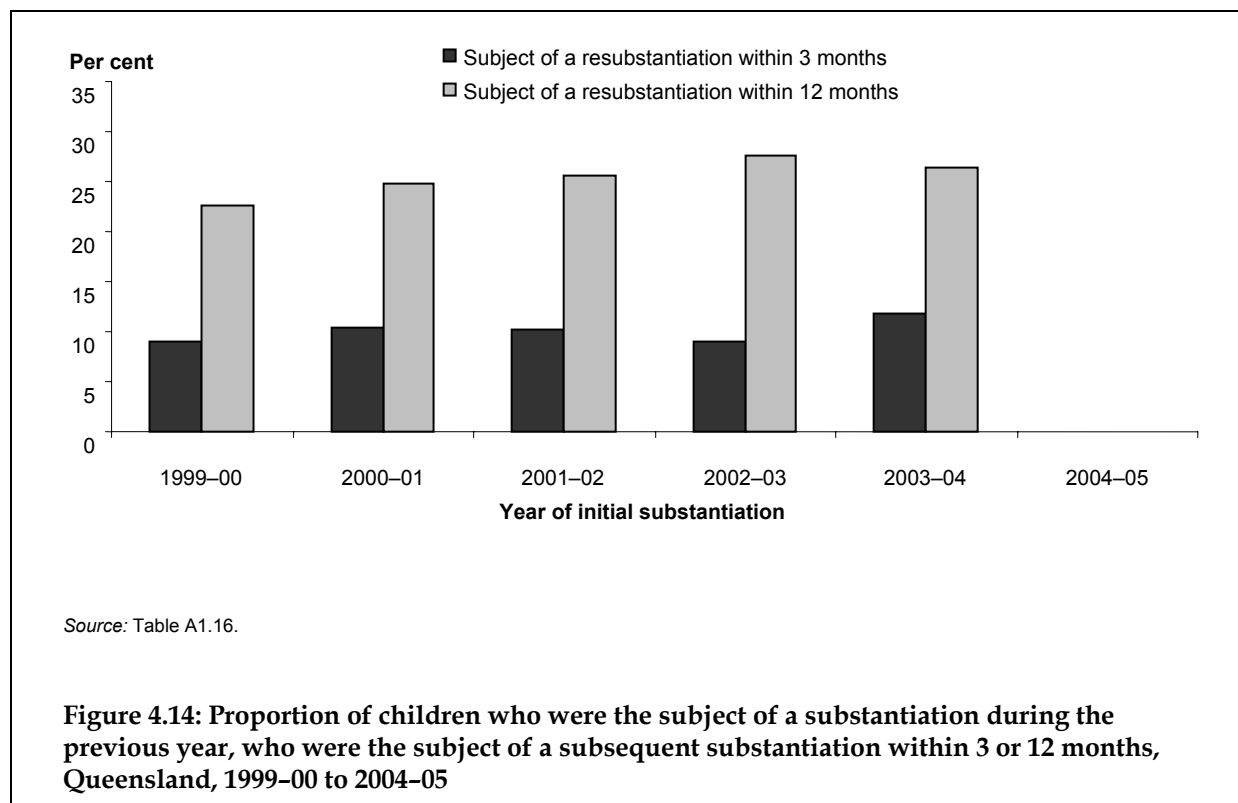
Between 1999-00 and 2003-04, the number of notifications, number of finalised investigations and percentage of investigations substantiated all increased. There was a very small decline in the numbers of finalised investigations and substantiations in 2004-05 (Table A1.15). In 1999-00, 63% of the 10,904 finalised investigations were substantiated. By 2004-05, 74% of the 23,401 finalised investigations were substantiated. Figure 4.13 shows the increase in the substantiation rate over the years.

Factors likely to lead to an increase in number of notifications are: increased community awareness and willingness to report child abuse, increases in child population size, increases in risk factors within families, and an increasing awareness of the connection between domestic violence and child protection (DChS 2004b). The overall increase in the number of finalised investigations may be an indication of the Department providing extra resources to match the increase in notifications, while the increase in the proportion of substantiations may reflect an improvement in the targeting of notifications for investigation.



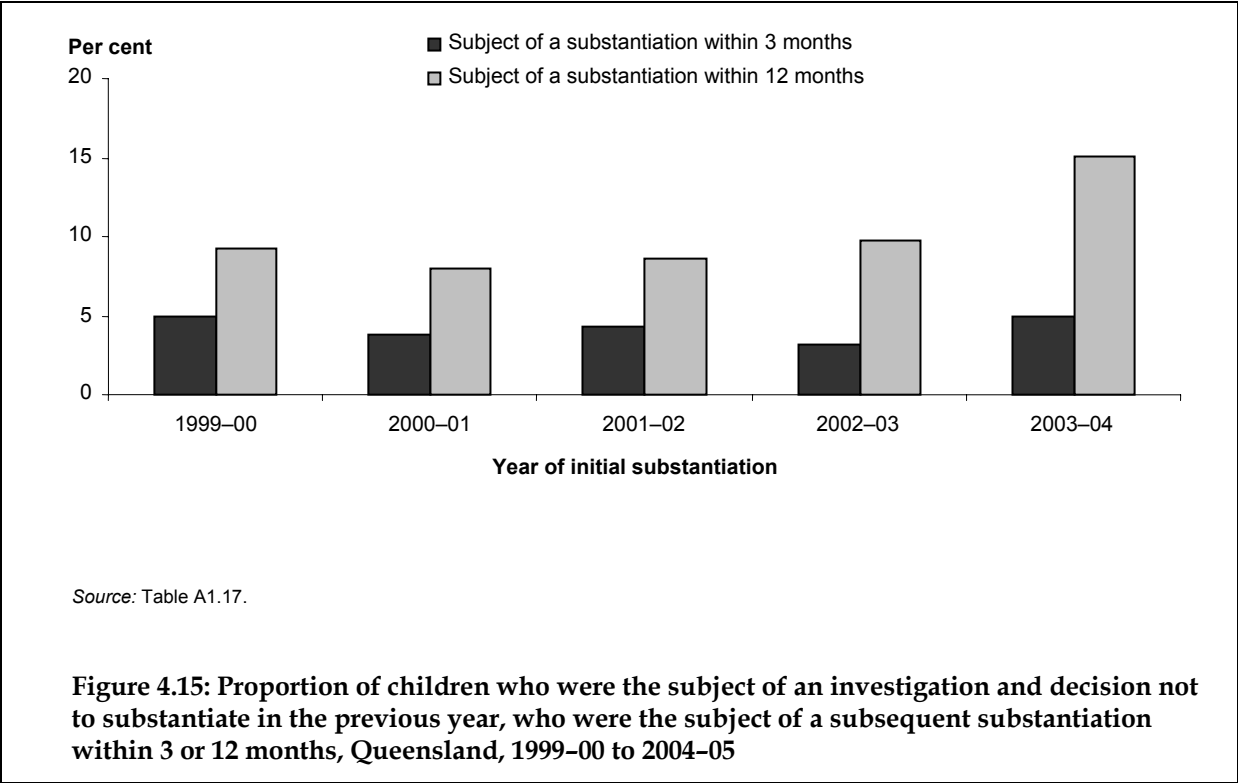
4.3.2 Resubstantiation rate

In Queensland, the proportion of children subject to resubstantiation in the first 3 months following the initial substantiation was between 9% and 12% over the reporting period from 2000-01 to 2003-04 (Figure 4.14). At 12 months following initial substantiation, resubstantiation rates ranged from 23% in 2000-01 to 28% in 2002-03.



4.3.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

In Queensland, the proportion of children subject to a substantiation 3 months after a decision not to substantiate varied between 4% and 5% over the reporting period with no trend in the variation (Figure 4.15). Substantiations 12 months after a decision not to substantiate varied from 12% in 2000-01 to 15% in 2002-03 and 2003-04.

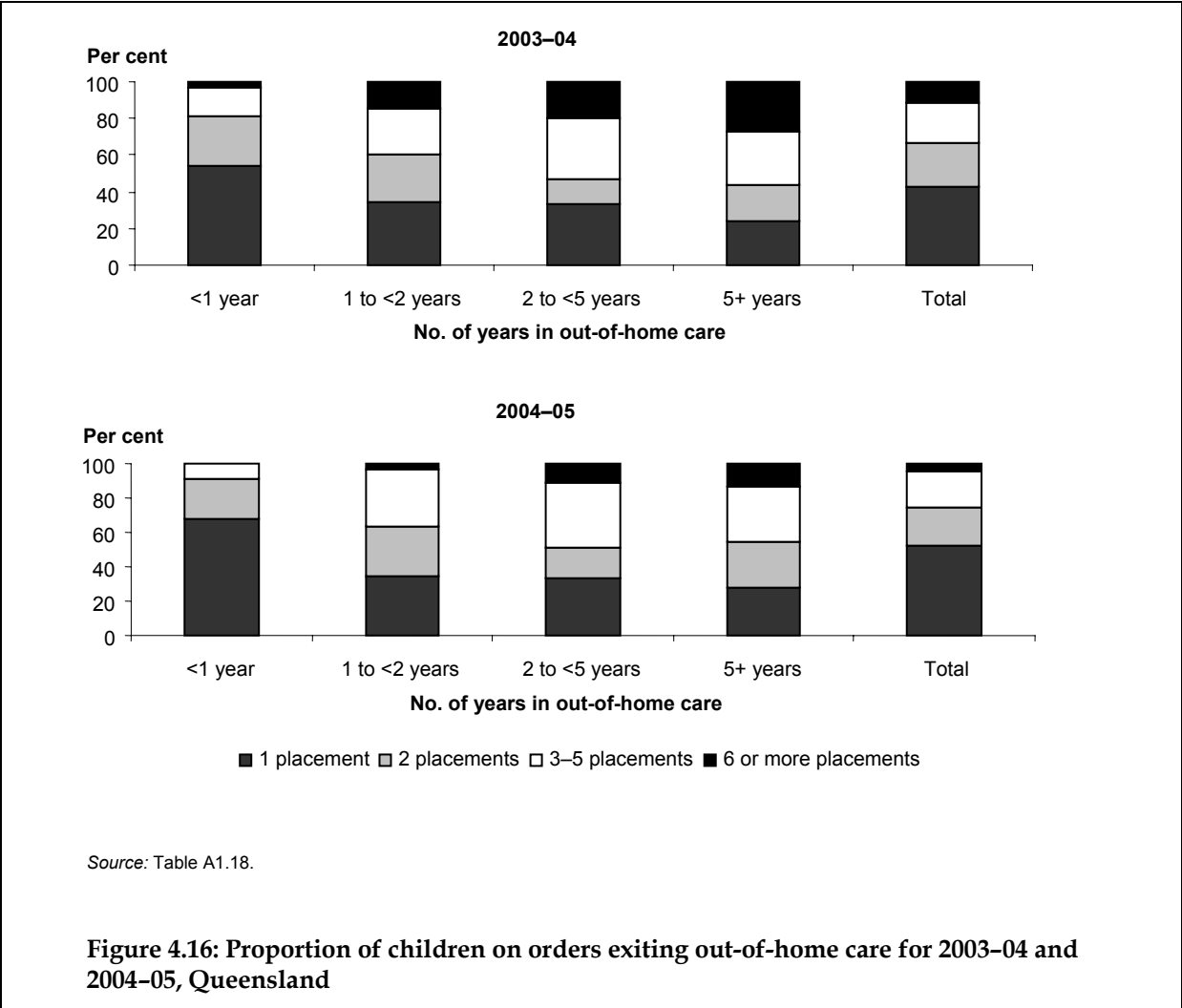


4.3.4 Safety in out-of-home care

The proportion of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of substantiation where the person believed responsible was living in the same household was relatively high in Queensland. This proportion increased in Queensland from 2% of all children in out-of-home care in 1999-00 to 8% in 2003-04 and 2004-05 (SCRGSP 2005, 2006). The other jurisdictions that provided these data all had rates lower than 1%. However, this comparison is of limited reliability due to variations in recording and collection methods across jurisdictions. Recommendations from a recent inquiry into the past abuse of children in foster care by the Crime and Misconduct Commission led to new policies and procedures to decrease the number of children abused in care (CMC 2004). The main recommendation was for the establishment of a comprehensive and coordinated child protection system across the whole of government in partnership with other organisations. It is likely that such changes will lead to an increase in safety for children in out-of-home care.

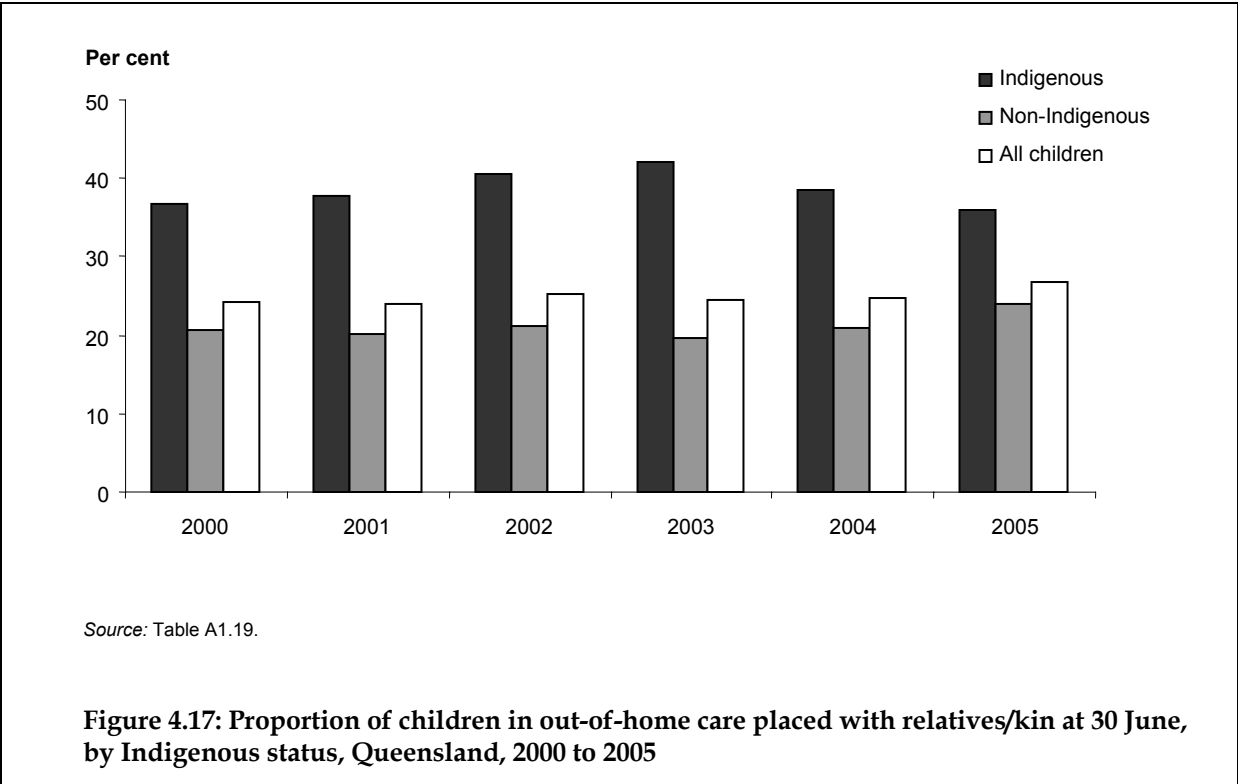
4.3.5 Stability of placement

The pattern of number of placements experienced by children exiting out-of-home care after different numbers of years was similar for 2003–04 and 2004–05 (Figure 4.16). In both years, the number of placements increased with length of time in care. More than half the children exiting care in 2003–04 after less than a year had only one placement, increasing to two-thirds of children in 2004–05. This proportion dropped substantially for children in care for longer periods. Around a quarter of children exiting after 5 years or more had only one placement. The proportion of children exiting care after 5 years or more who experienced six or more placements was 27% in 2003–04 and 13% in 2004–05.



4.3.6 Placement with extended family

Children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families were consistently placed with extended family at higher rates than other children for every year between 2000 and 2005 (Figure 4.17). On 30 June 2000, 24% of all children in care were placed with members of their extended family. This percentage remained fairly constant across the subsequent reporting periods, with the highest being 27% in 2005. Over the reporting periods, between 36% and 42% of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with relatives or kin, compared with 20% to 24% of other children over the same periods.

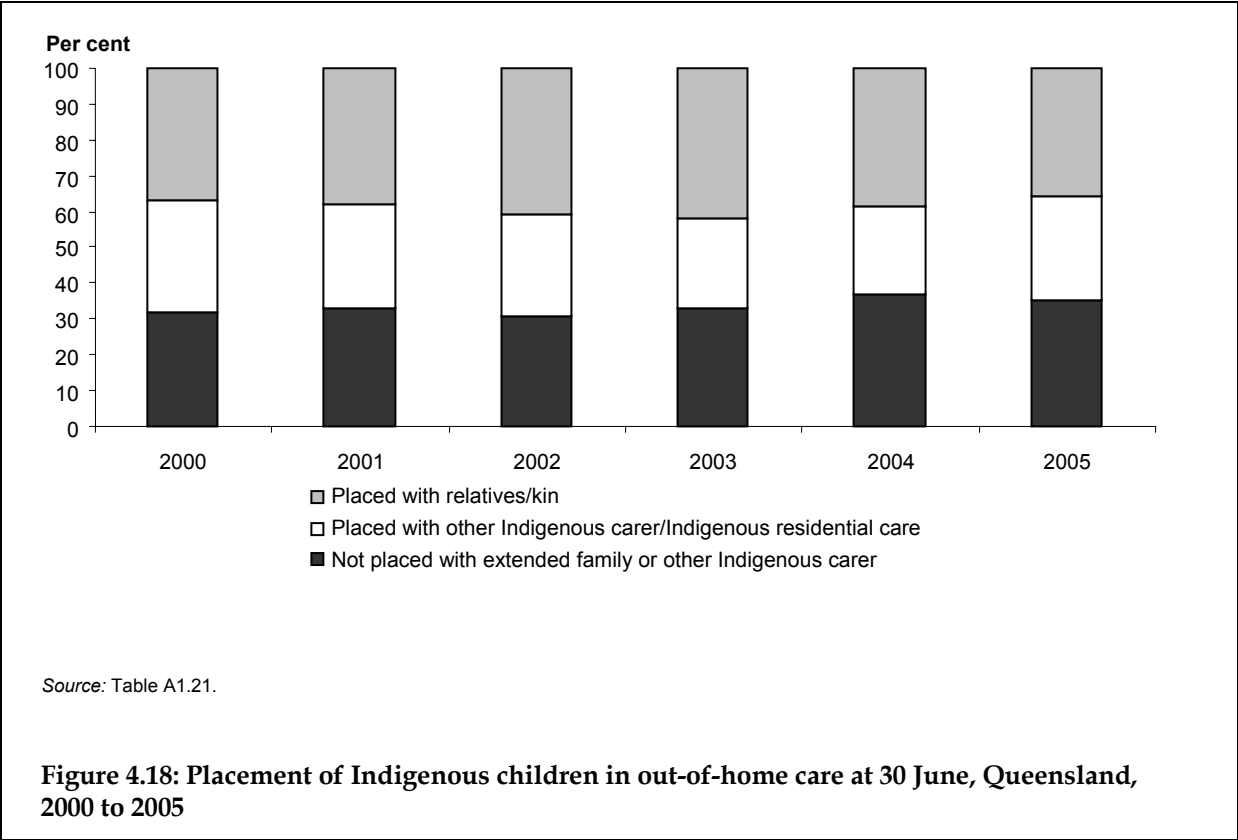


4.3.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

In the years 2000 to 2005, almost all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care were placed in home-based care (Table A1.20). From 2000 to 2002, a marginally lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were in home-based care than other children. However, from 2003 to 2005, over 99% of all children in out-of-home care were in home-based care.

4.3.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

From 2000 to 2005, between 63% and 70% of Indigenous children were placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle. Placement with extended family was the most common placement type (Figure 4.18). In 2000, of those children placed in accordance with the Principle, 54% were placed with extended family. This proportion increased each year until 2003 (63%), then decreased to 55% in 2005 (derived from Table A1.21). Correspondingly, the proportions of children placed with other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care followed an inverse pattern.



4.4 Western Australia

Child protection in Western Australia is the responsibility of the Department for Community Development, previously known as Family and Children's Services. The Department works collaboratively with many non-government organisations within the state.

The policies and practices of the Department differ from many of the other states and territories, and this is clearly reflected in the reported data. In 1996, the then Family and Children's Services introduced the policy framework *New Directions in Child Protection and Family Support* (Family and Children's Services 1996). This approach recognises that initial referral information may indicate that there are concerns for a child's wellbeing, but it is not always clear if they have been or are at risk of harm. Where there is uncertainty, a report may receive an interim Child Concern Report classification to allow time for further inquiries. Child Concern Reports are treated with less intrusive and more supportive methods (Family and Children's Services 1996). The outcome of the inquiry may be the provision of supportive services or a reclassification as a Child Maltreatment Allegation.

Where it is clear that a child has been or is at risk of harm, a child maltreatment classification is made and a child protection investigation conducted. These new policies were introduced after analysis of the Department's data showed that a large number of reports to the Department were about quality of parenting, rather than actual or threatened harm to children.

Implementation of the New Directions framework resulted in an immediate decrease in the numbers of unsubstantiated investigations, indicating that these resources were being better targeted (Family and Children's Services 1997).

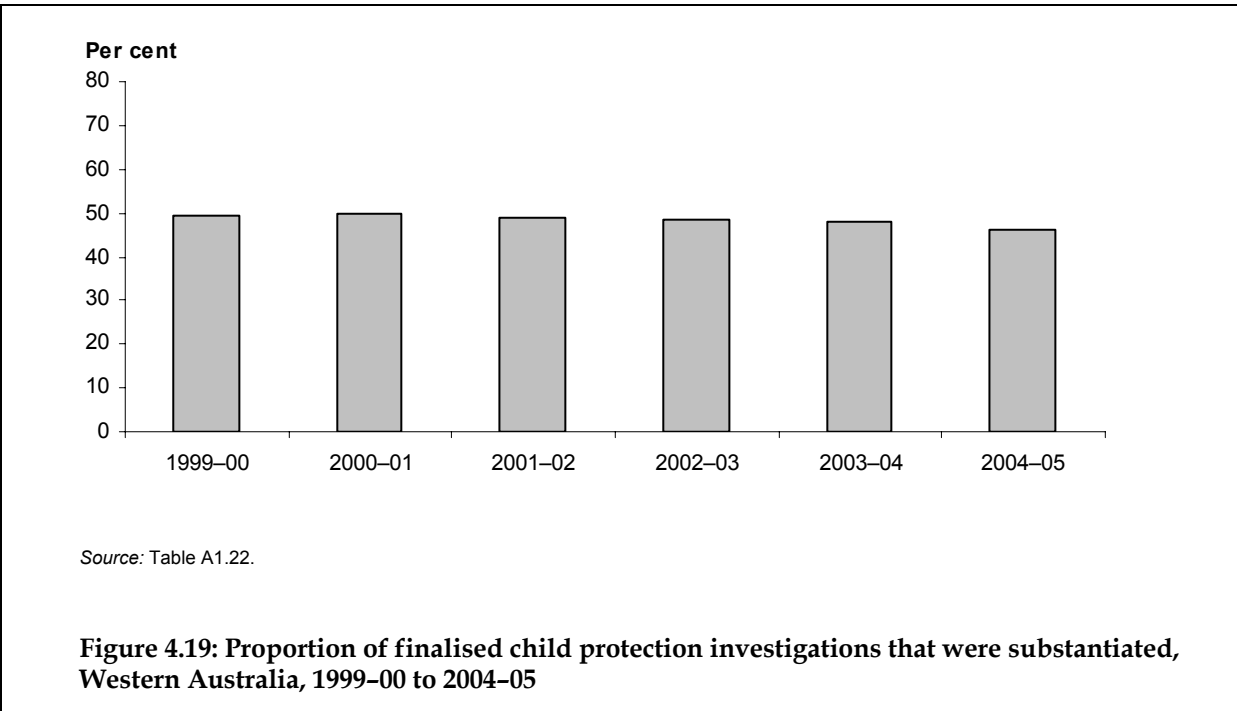
In 2003–04 the Department released its new policy, *Statutory Child Protection: A Policy for the Wellbeing and Safety of the Maltreated Child*, which guides the approach to child protection. An Interagency Collaborative Framework for Protecting Children from harm aims to strengthen relationships between all stakeholders to ensure children and their families receive appropriate services (DCD 2004).

In 2004, the Department engaged independent consultants to quality assure the systems, processes and practices aimed at protecting children in care. The consultant's report – *Quality assurance of the Department for Community Development's systems and processes for children in care* – highlighted significant strengths in processes as well as areas where improvements were required. The report identified several areas for consideration – expanded range of placement options, rigorous recruitment, screening, assessment, training and support for carers, improved training and supervision for staff and increased support for children ensuring a voice for children in care. The government's response, *Protecting children in care: a way forward*, identifies the actions taken to address these areas to enhance the safety and wellbeing of children in care.

Data reported by Western Australia relate only to reports that warranted a child protection response. This makes comparison with other jurisdictions difficult and these practice and recording differences should be carefully noted when looking at the performance indicators. Western Australia is able to report on all eight child protection and out-of-home care indicators.

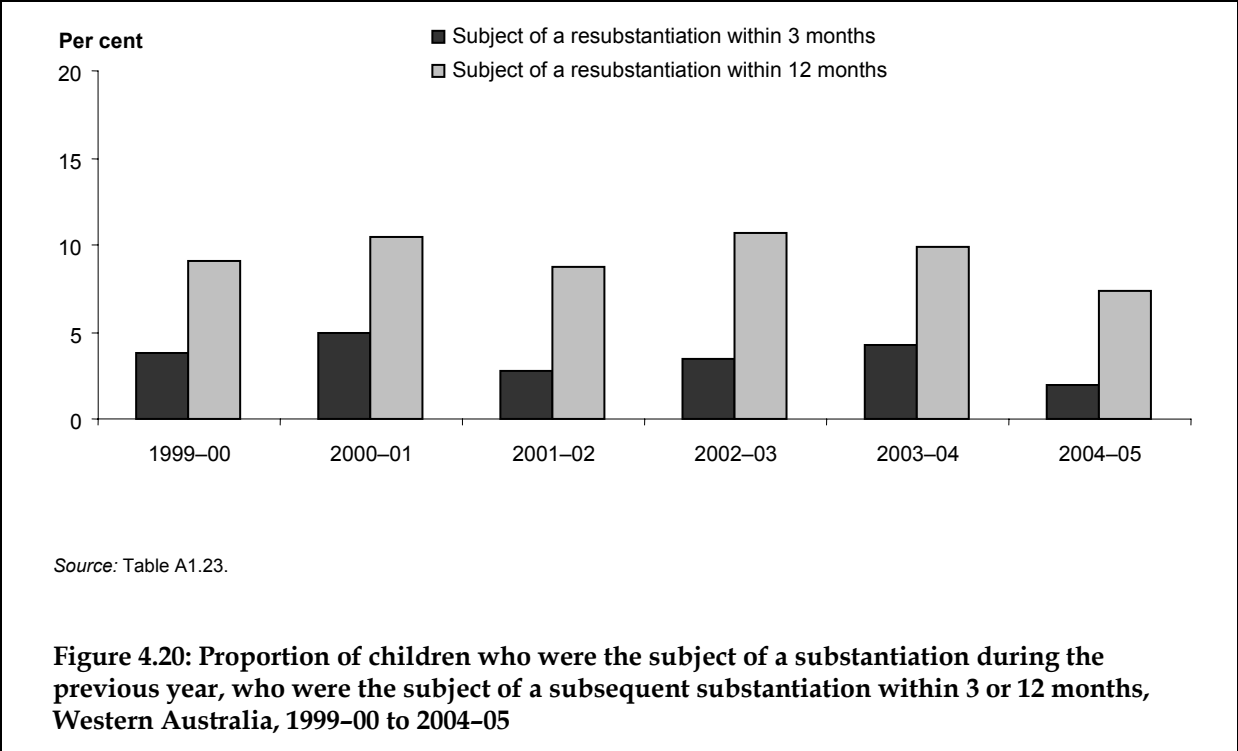
4.4.1 Substantiation rate

The proportion of finalised investigations that were substantiated in Western Australia between 1999-00 and 2004-05 remained fairly constant at just below 50% across the six reporting periods (Figure 4.19). In 1999-00, 49% of the 2,365 finalised investigations were substantiated, while in 2004-05, 46% of 2,391 finalised investigations were substantiated. The most notable aspect of the substantiation rate in Western Australian is the number of finalised investigations. The number of finalised investigations increased between 1999-00 and 2001-02, then dropped by 24% in 2002-03 (Table A1.22). By 2004-05, the number of finalised investigations increased to reach the same level as in 2000-01. The overall decline in finalised investigations reflects a decline in the number of recorded child maltreatment classifications needing investigation. This change was associated with an increased focus on community and family engagement responses to families where there are concerns for the wellbeing of children.



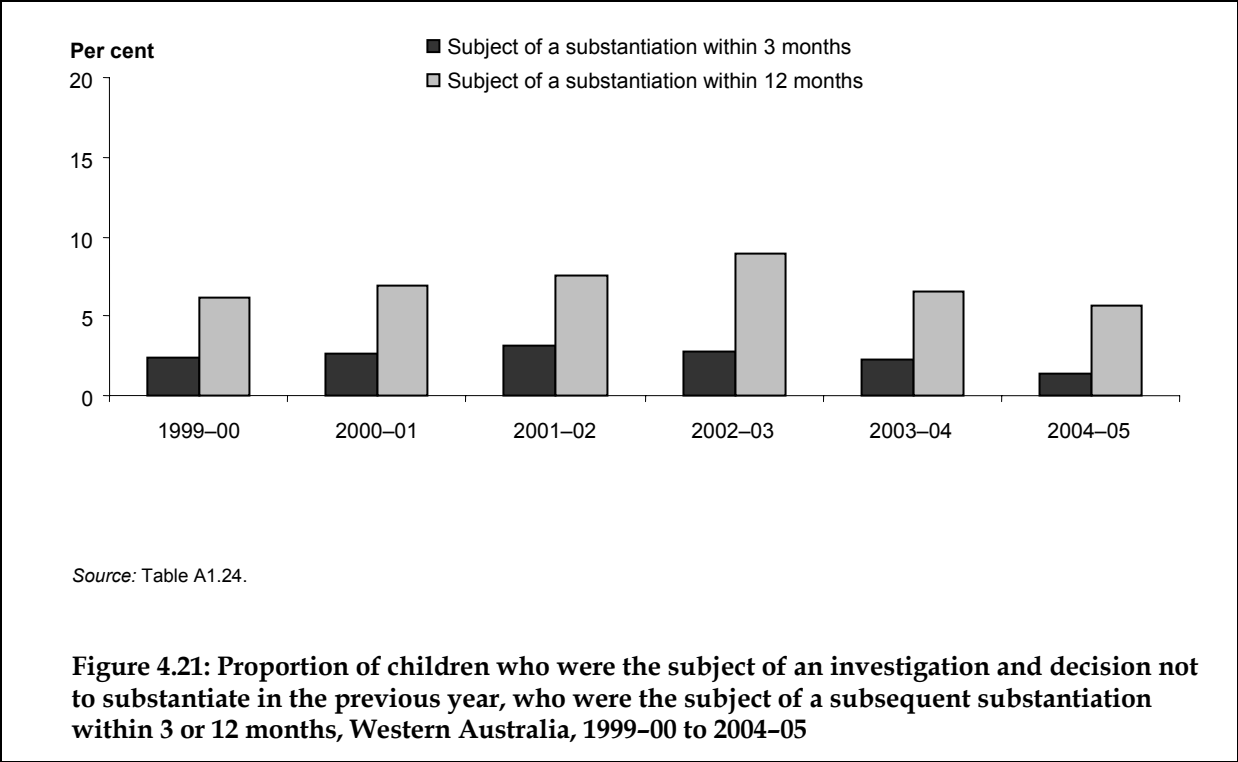
4.4.2 Resubstantiation rate

In Western Australia, less than 5% of cases were resubstantiated within 3 months in any of the 6 years examined, with the lowest resubstantiation rate occurring in 2004–05 (2%) and the highest in 1999–00 (5%) (Figure 4.20). Resubstantiation rates at 12 months were between 7% and 11% in the 6 years examined. Although there were some fluctuations in both the 3- and 12-month resubstantiation rate across the 6-year period reported, these were small and most likely reflect normal variations in the data.



4.4.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

In Western Australia, the proportion of children who were the subject of an investigation in the previous reporting year that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who were subsequently the subject of a substantiation within either 3 or 12 months following the initial substantiation stood at 1% to 3% across the 6 years examined (Figure 4.21). At 12 months, the percentage of cases substantiated subsequent to a decision not to substantiate increased slightly from 6% in 1999-00 to 9% in 2002-03, declining to 6% in 2004-05.



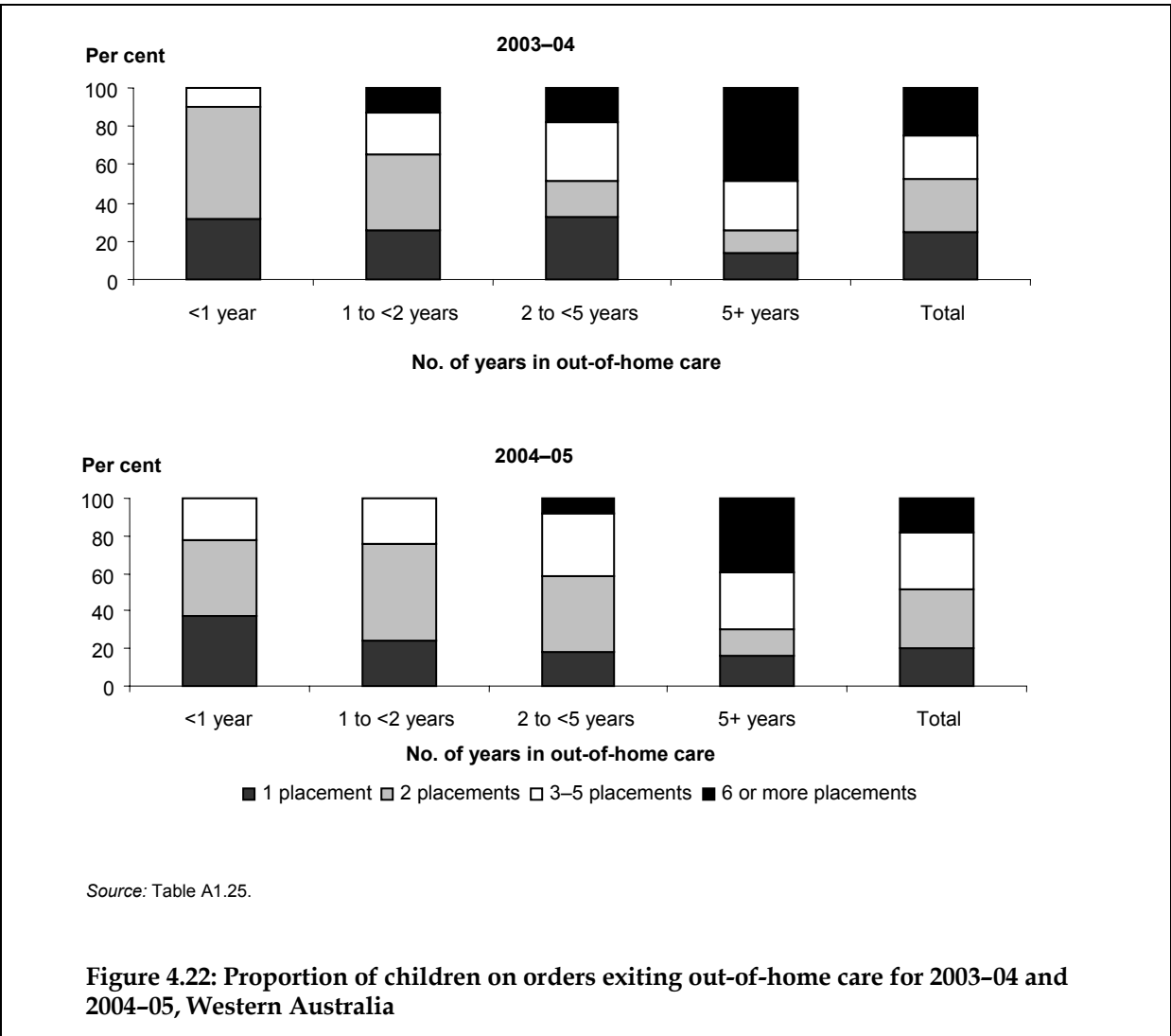
4.4.4 Safety in out-of-home care

The number of children per year in Western Australia who were the subject of a substantiation while residing in out-of-home care ranged from 2 to 15 cases over the 6 years from 1999-00 to 2004-05. In other states, this indicator measures abuse by any person living in the household. However, Western Australian data only include abuse by foster carers and workers in placement services.

4.4.5 Stability of placement

In Western Australia, like other states with smaller numbers of children exiting care, patterns of stability in number of placements can be difficult to assess. Relatively small changes in the number can appear as a large change in percentage. The data for stability of placement for Western Australia should therefore be viewed cautiously, as fluctuations in the percentages of different numbers of placements represent very small differences in numbers of children (Figure 4.22).

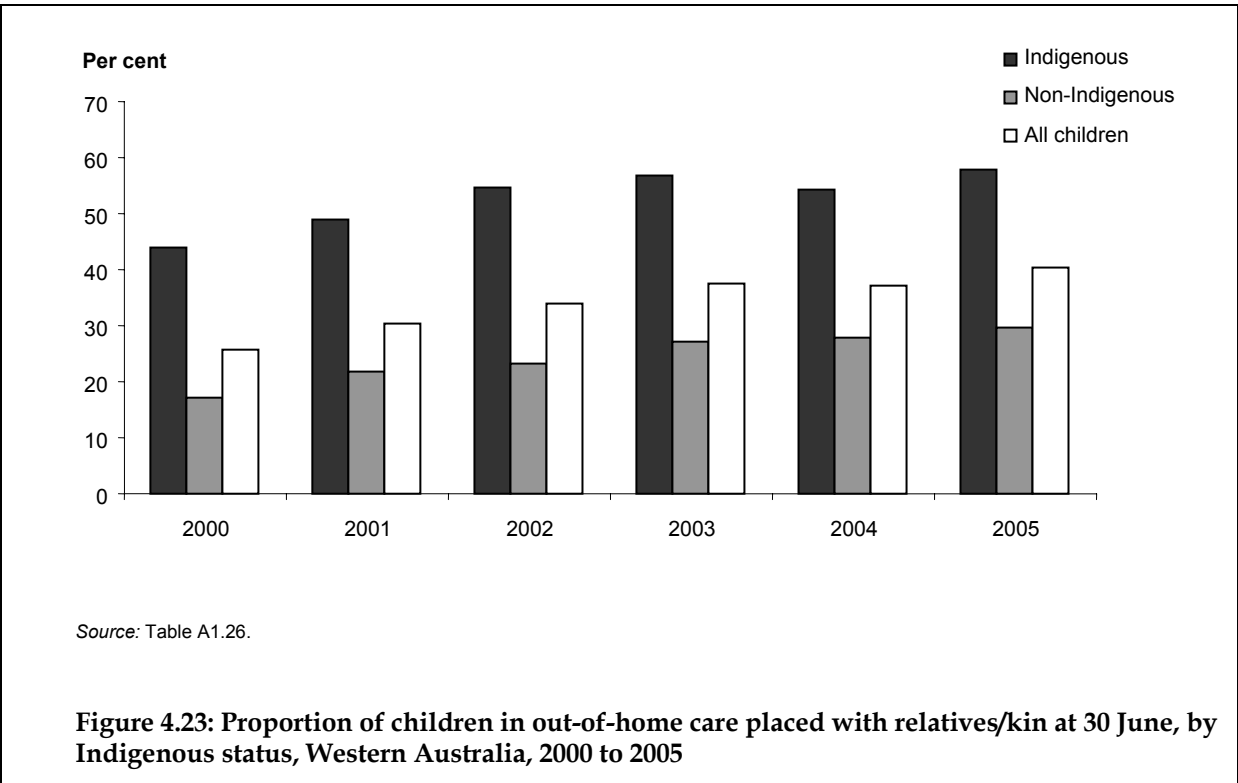
The total number of children exiting care was 156 in 2003–04 and 204 in 2004–05. In both of these years, the data show that the longer Western Australian children were in care, the more placements they were likely to have experienced prior to exiting care.



4.4.6 Placement with extended family

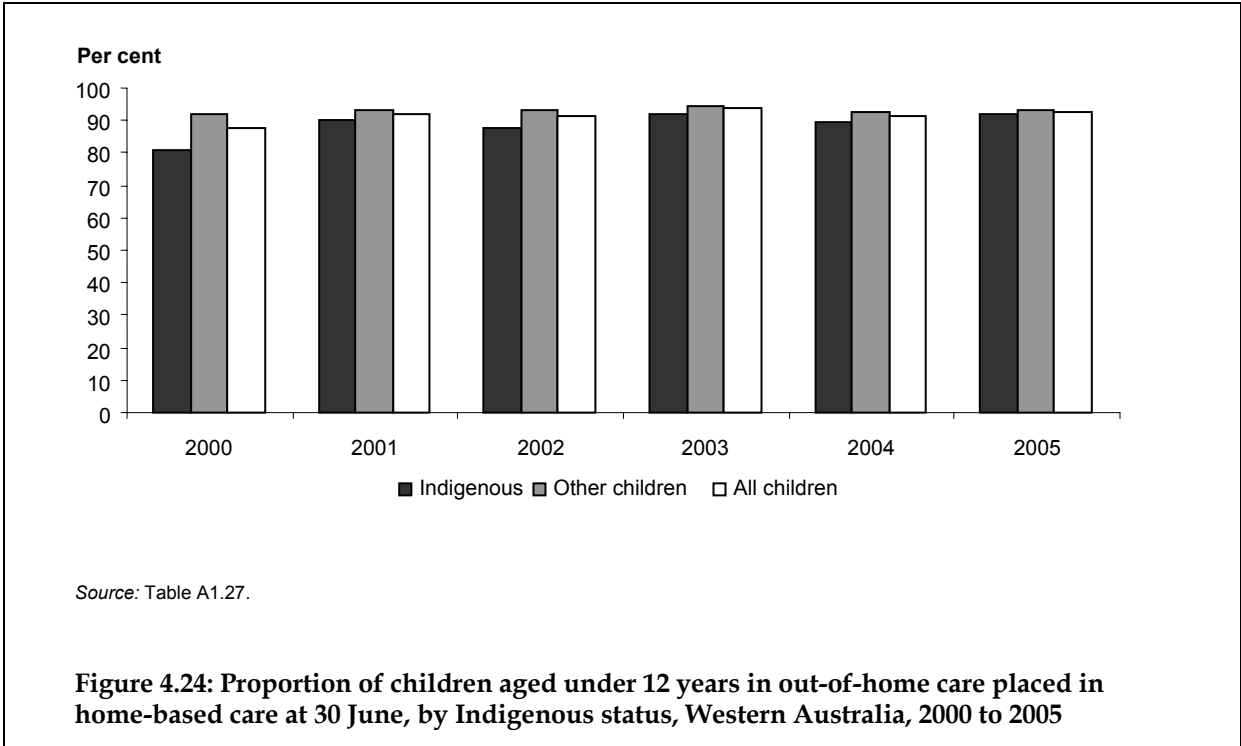
Placing children with relatives is a preferred option and in Western Australia there has been a steady increase in the proportion of children placed with relatives or kin from 26% in 2000 to 40% in 2005 (Figure 4.23). However, during 2001–02 new practices were introduced to improve the identification of Indigenous clients. Much of the increase in the number of Indigenous clients from 2001–02 is likely to be due to the improvements in the recording of Indigenous status rather than an increase in the number of Indigenous clients.

Western Australia has strengthened the provision of relative care by ensuring relative carers undergo the same assessment, registration and review processes, and receive the same preparation training and support as general carers.



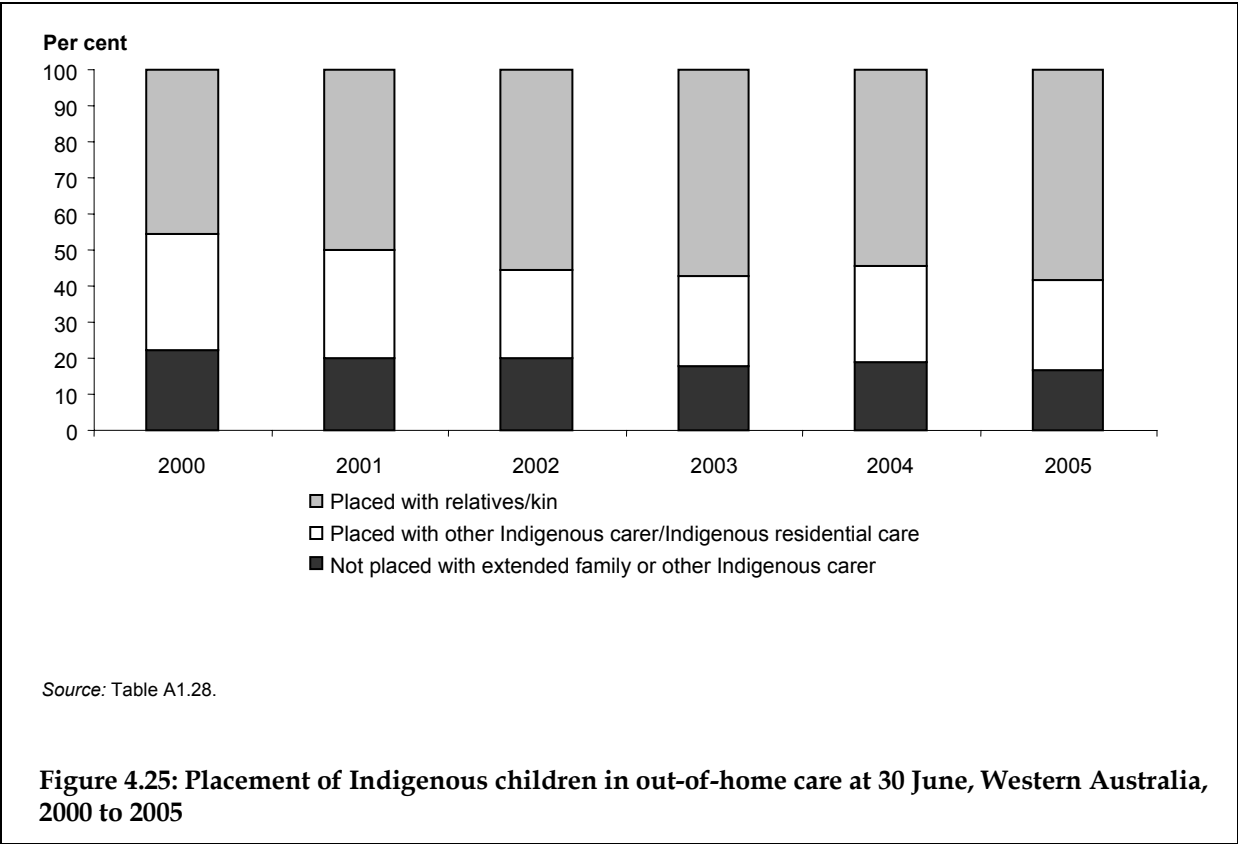
4.4.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

The vast majority of young children in out-of-home care in Western Australia are placed in home-based care settings (Figure 4.24). The proportion of children reported to be in home-based care in Western Australia does not include children who are in family group homes (who are counted as being in residential accommodation). Across all years, young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were placed in home-based care slightly less often than other children, although the gap between the proportion of Indigenous and other children in home-based care has narrowed over the 6 years reported here.



4.4.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP) has increased slightly between 2000 (78%) and 2005 (83%) (Figure 4.25). The proportions of children placed with members of their extended family also generally increased over the years. Of the children placed with accordance with the ACCP, between 59% (in 2000) and 70% (in 2005) were placed with members of their extended family. Those children who were placed according to the ACPP but did not go to live with extended family were placed with other Indigenous carers.



4.5 South Australia

Child protection in South Australia is the responsibility of the Department for Families and Communities (DFC). The DFC was formed on 1 July 2004, following the decommissioning of the Department of Human Services (Government of South Australia 2004a). Within the DFC, Families SA is responsible for the welfare of South Australian children. In particular, this unit provides assistance and support to children (and their families) who are in need of care and protection because of abuse or neglect, risk of poverty or are otherwise vulnerable.

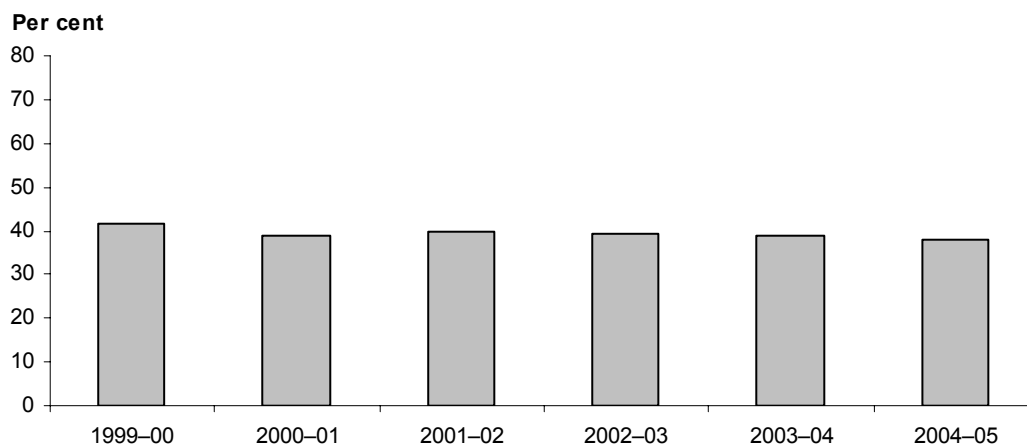
The most recent review of the South Australian Government's child protection system, the *Child protection review 2002*, was designed to ensure that government took a proactive stance to protect children from abuse and neglect (Layton 2002). The Review described a number of shortfalls in government: the task of child protection exceeded the ability of the government to deliver the support and services required; there was inadequate promotion and advocacy for children and young people; and there was a need for more diligence in the care provided to children and young people under the Guardianship of the Minister. The review called for stronger collaboration across government and non-government services involved in the care and protection of children (Layton 2002).

The government's response to the Layton Review has been the establishment of *Keeping them Safe* – a child protection reform agenda that provides for a reorientation of child protection services. A strong cross-government focus was implemented to strengthen support to children and families, provide effective and appropriate interventions, and reform work practices and cultures, with an emphasis on collaborative partnerships and improved accountability. Within the reform agenda, a number of the Layton recommendations have been implemented, for example: a universal home visiting program; intensive intervention with families where infants are at high risk; the establishment of a Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee; and an Office of the Guardian. The Guardian provides independent advice to the Minister on the quality of care for guardianship children (Government of South Australia 2004b).

South Australia was able to report on all eight performance indicators examined in this report.

4.5.1 Substantiation rate

The substantiation rate in South Australia over the six reporting periods has remained relatively stable, ranging from 38% in 2004-05 to 42% in 1999-00 (Figure 4.26). The number of substantiated investigations fluctuated between 1,998 in 2000-01 and 2,490 in 2003-04, while the number of finalised investigations steadily increased from 5,002 in 1999-00 to 6,383 in 2003-04, before decreasing slightly to 6,250 in 2004-05.

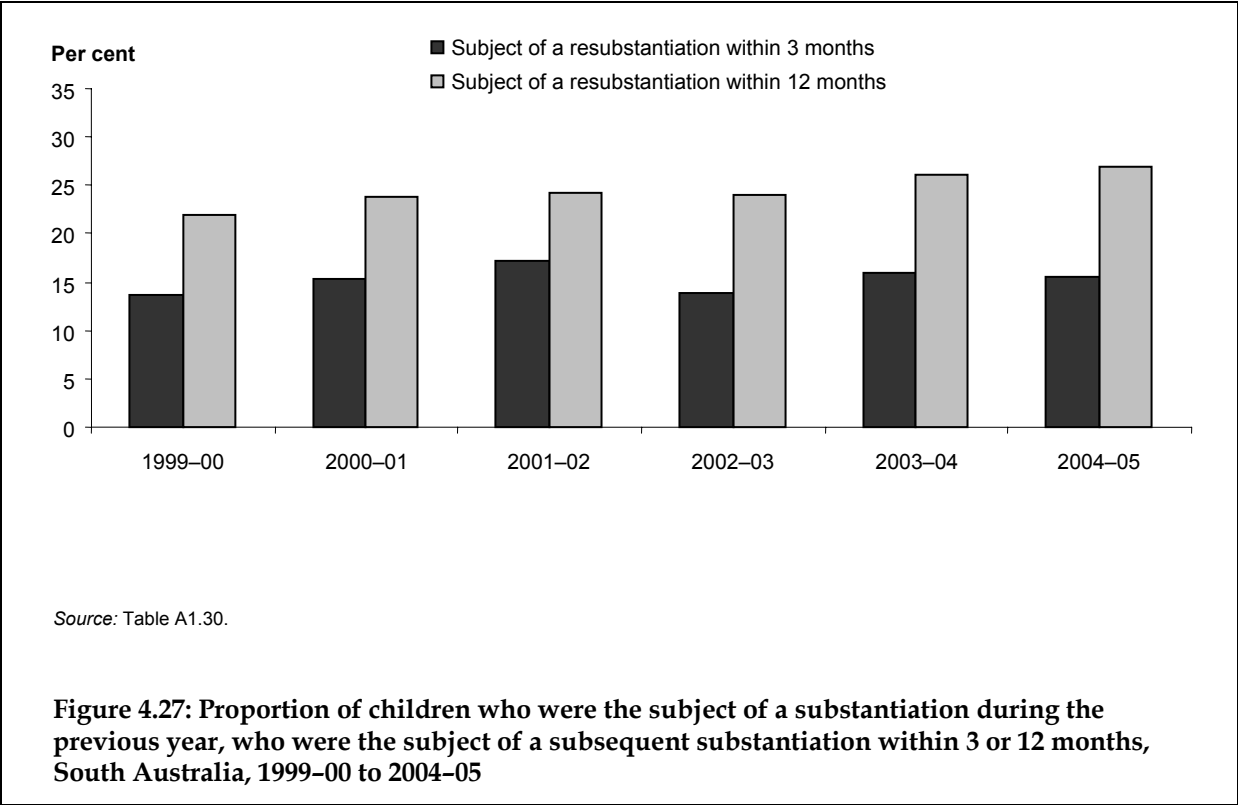


Source: Table A1.29.

Figure 4.26: Proportion of finalised child protection investigations that were substantiated, South Australia, 1999-00 to 2004-05

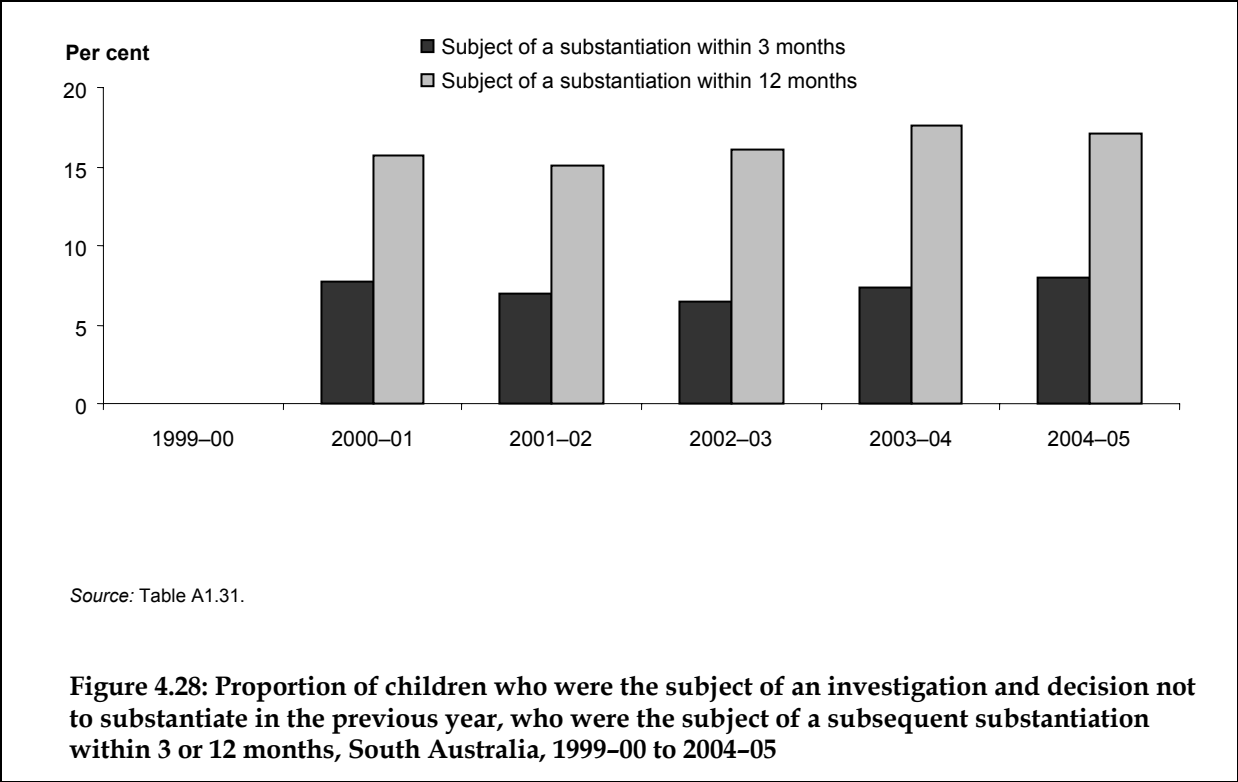
4.5.2 Resubstantiation rate

The resubstantiation rate at 3 months fluctuated between 14% and 17% over the six reporting years (Figure 4.27). The 12-month data shows the resubstantiation rate was 22% in 1999-00, rose slightly to 24% in the following year, remained stable for 2 years, then increased to 26% and 27% in 2003-04 and 2004-05 respectively.



4.5.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

The percentage of children in South Australia who were the subject of an investigation in the previous financial year that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who were subsequently the subject of a substantiation within either 3 or 12 months is shown in Figure 4.28. Data were not available for 1999-00. For the years 2000-01 to 2004-05, the substantiation rate after a decision not to substantiate at 3 months was between 7% and 8%. At 12 months, the substantiation rate after a decision not to substantiate was between 15% and 18%.



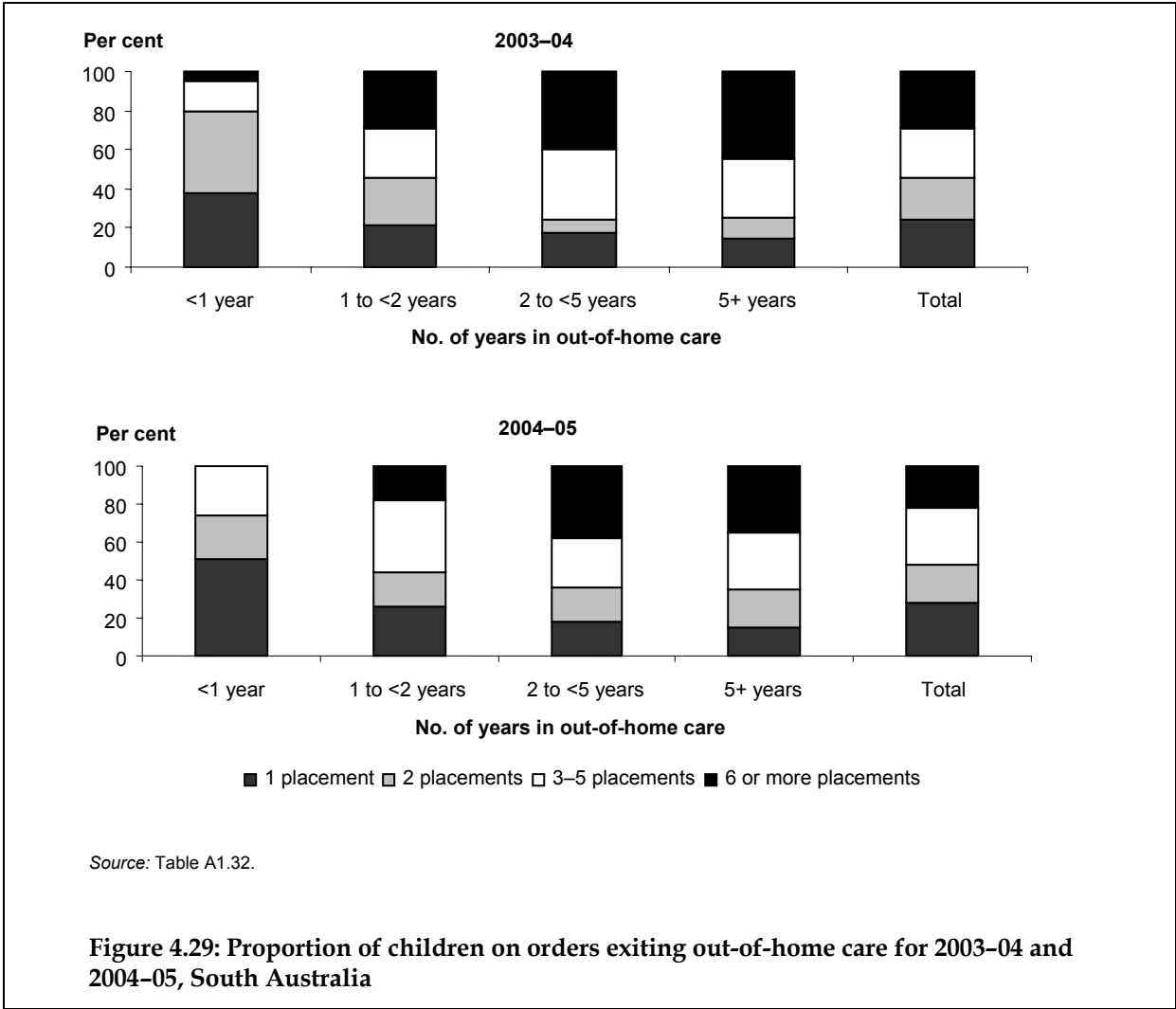
4.5.4 Safety in out-of-home care

In 2004-05, South Australia collected data on the number of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of a substantiation for which the person believed responsible was a carer or another person living in the household. Less than 1% of children in out-of-home care were recorded as experiencing such abuse.

4.5.5 Stability of placement

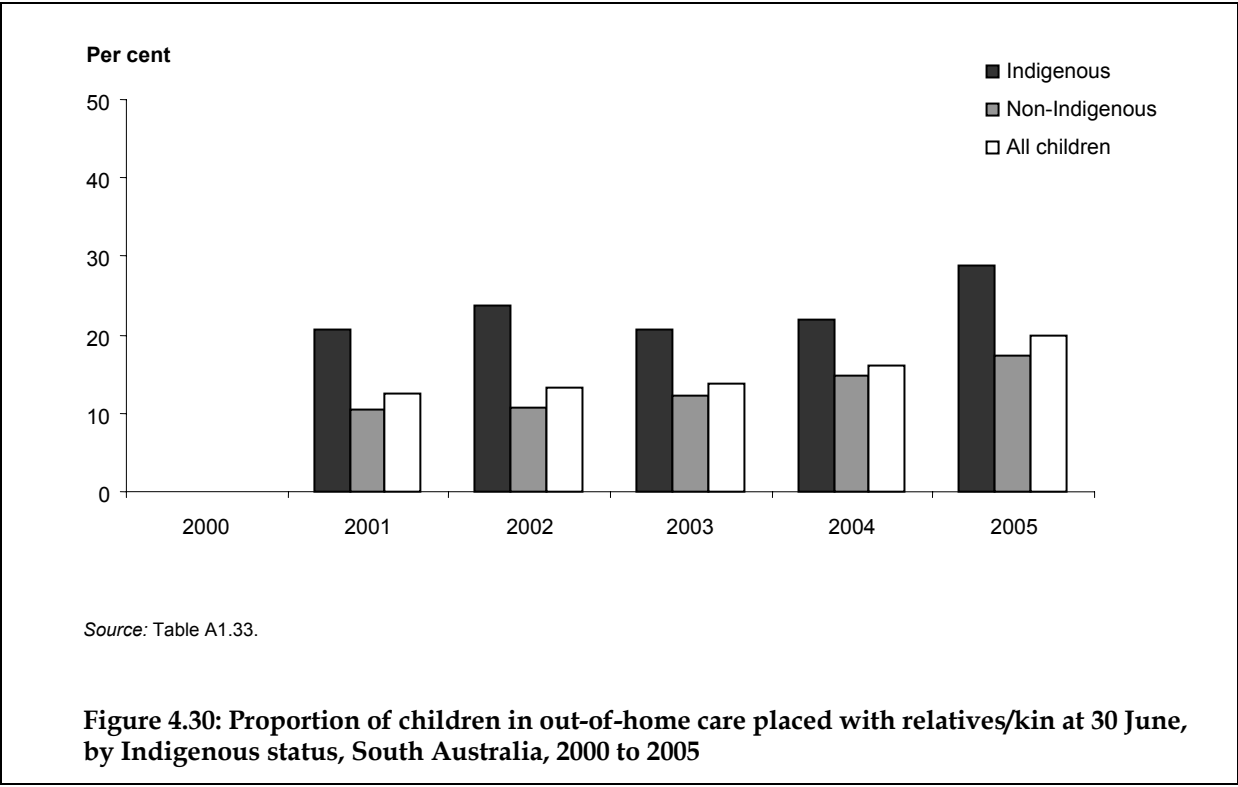
The number of placements experienced by children exiting out-of-home care after different numbers of years gives an idea of placement stability over time. The patterns of placement stability for 2003-04 and 2004-05 are quite similar (Figure 4.29). In general, the longer children were in out-of-home care, the more placements they were likely to have. After 5 years in care, the number of placements children experienced increased very little.

The proportions shown in Figure 4.29 should be interpreted with caution due to the small numbers of children involved. In South Australia, 203 and 163 children exited out-of-home care in 2003-04 and 2004-05, respectively.



4.5.6 Placement with extended family

The proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with members of their extended family is shown in Figure 4.30. Data were not available for 2000. The placement with extended family for all children increased from 13% to 20% between 2001 and 2005, with the proportion of both Indigenous and other children placed with extended family increasing over the period. In each year, the proportion of Indigenous children placed with extended family was greater than for other children.

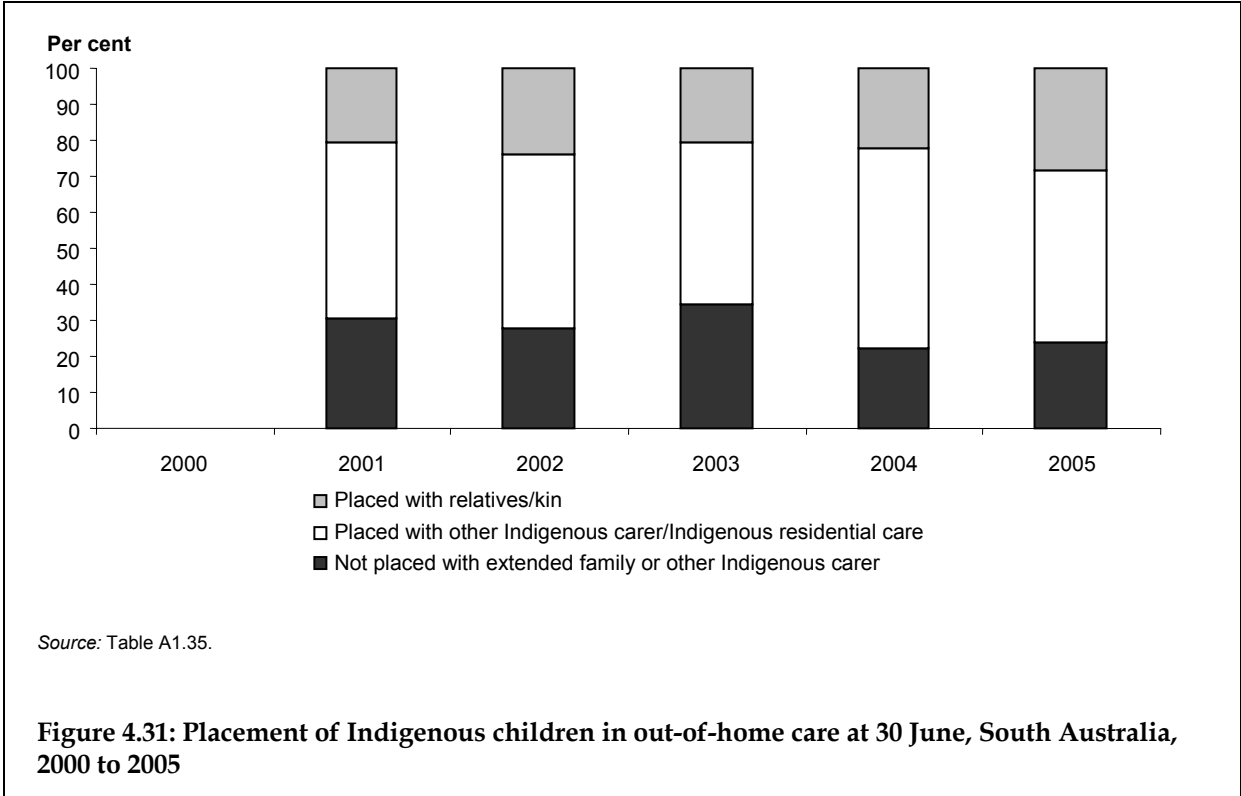


4.5.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

The proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in South Australia who were in home-based placement has remained at or above 98% for each of the last 6 years (Table A1.34). In 2000 and 2001, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and most other children in South Australia were placed in home-based care environments. From 2002 to 2004, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in home-based care remained above 99%. In all years reported here, the proportion of other children in home-based care was at least 98%, except in 2002, when it dropped to 93%.

4.5.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

In the period between 2001 and 2005, between 66% and 78% of Indigenous children were placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (Figure 4.31). However, between 62% and 72% of these children were placed with other Indigenous carers, rather than members of their extended family. It is important to note that from 2002 onwards, these data exclude Indigenous children living independently and those whose living arrangements were unknown, and that the category 'Placed with another Indigenous carer' includes those living in Indigenous residential care. Data were not available to assess this indicator in 2000.



4.6 Tasmania

In Tasmania, child protection services are provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in accordance with the provisions of the *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997*. This legislation provides for the care and protection of children in a manner that maximises their opportunity to grow up in a safe and stable environment and to reach their full potential (DHHS 2004).

Under the Act, suspected incidents of abuse and neglect should be reported to the Department. Section 13 of the Act states that an adult who knows, believes or suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is suffering or likely to suffer abuse or neglect has a responsibility to take steps to prevent current or future occurrence of harm to a child. One step the adult may take to prevent the occurrence of abuse or neglect is to inform the Secretary of the Department of their knowledge, belief or suspicion. Section 14 of the Act states prescribed people must inform the Secretary of the Department if they believe, suspect or know a child has been or is being abused or neglected. Prescribed persons include professionals such as medical practitioners, police officers and teachers, as well as any other person who is employed for, or who is a volunteer in:

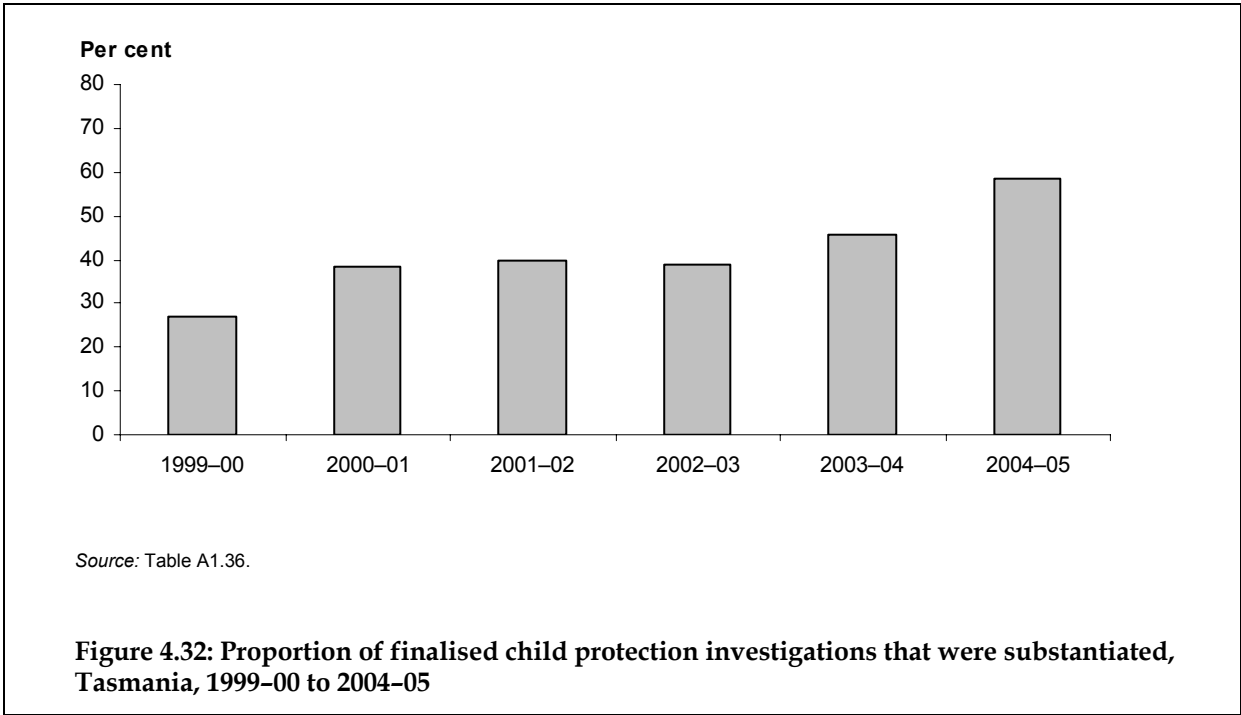
- government agency that provides health, welfare, education, child care or residential services for children
- organisations that receive funding from government for the provision of such services.

On 1 July 2003, the Department changed its method of counting notifications reported to child protection services. Prior to this date, notifications of 'child harm and maltreatment' were included in the collected data but notifications classified as 'child and family concern' were not. Reporting now includes both categories of notifications and, as a consequence, the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations recorded has increased.

Tasmania is currently able to report on seven of the eight performance indicators, and is unable to report on stability of placement. However, it is anticipated that reporting on this indicator will be possible in the future.

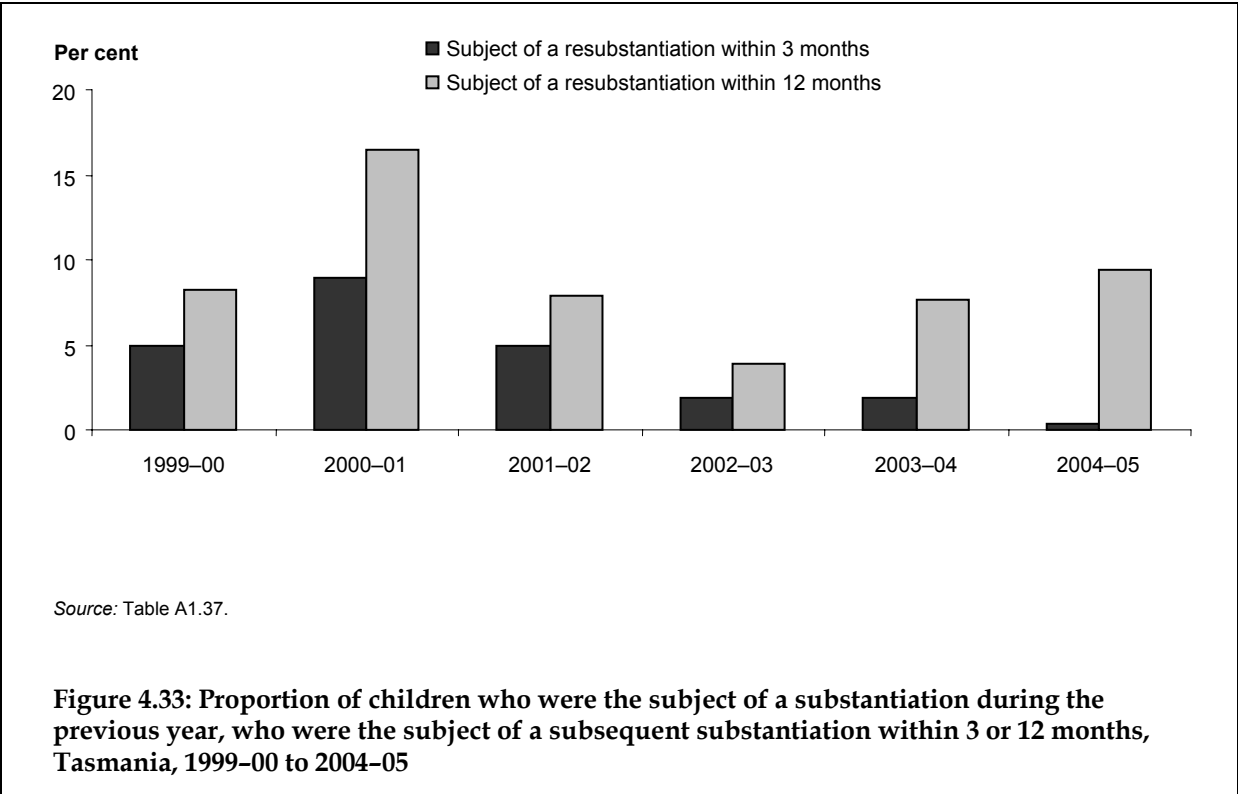
4.6.1 Substantiation rate

The substantiation rate in Tasmania has increased significantly since 1999-00. In that year 27% of the 356 finalised investigations were substantiated, compared with 59% of 1,333 finalised investigations in 2004-05 (Figure 4.32). From 2003-04 onwards, the increase in the substantiation rate is attributed to more consistent application of the term 'substantiation' as defined in the Glossary of this report.



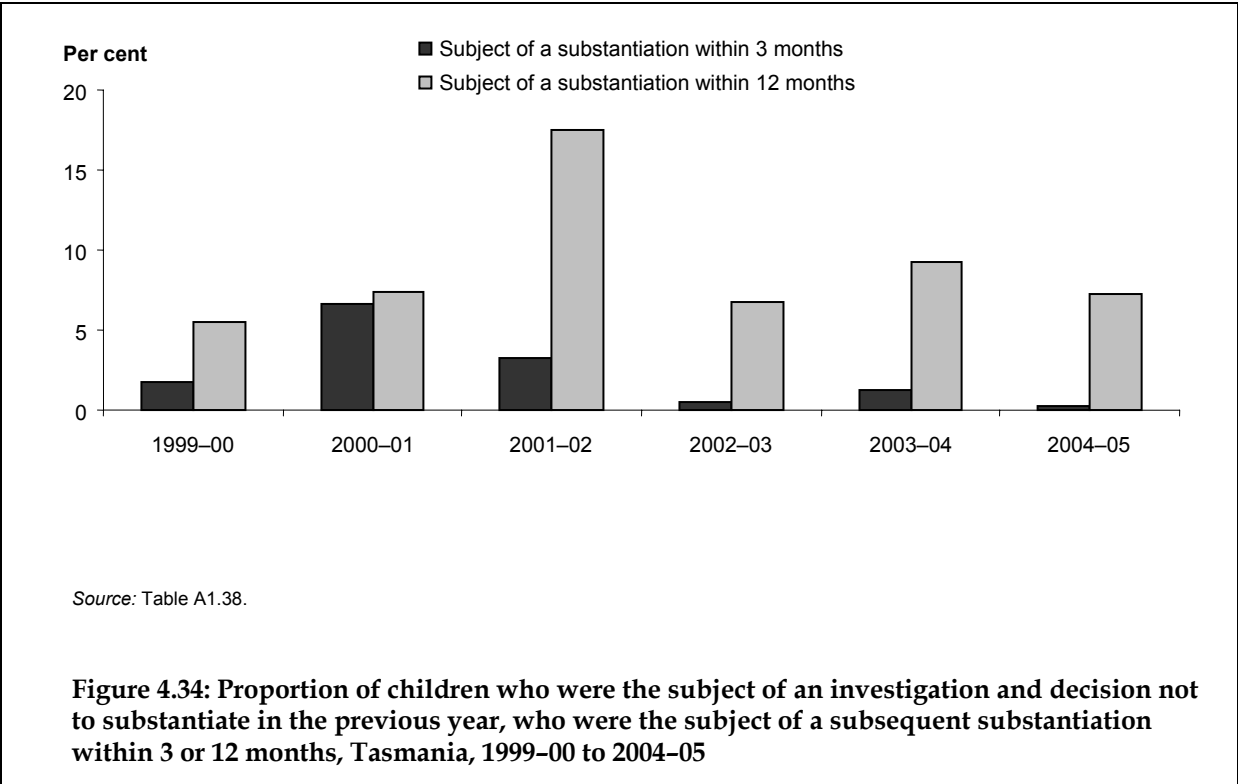
4.6.2 Resubstantiation rate

The 3-month resubstantiation rates in Tasmania for the past 6 years ranged between less than 1% in 2004–05 to 9% in 2000–01 (Figure 4.33). There was a larger range in the 12-month resubstantiation rate – from 4% in 2002–03 to 17% in 2000–01. In Tasmania, the number of children involved in resubstantiations is relatively small, with less than 10 children subject to resubstantiation at 3 months, and less than 35 at 12 months in any year (Table A1.37). Therefore, rates of resubstantiation should be interpreted carefully as a small increase in the number of children who are the subject of a resubstantiation creates a relatively large increase in the rate of resubstantiation. In addition, the AIHW modified its counting rules for this measure as of 2003–04, which may have resulted in lower rates for some jurisdictions from that year onwards. Under the revised counting rules, a resubstantiation was only counted if the notification was received after the first investigation had been finalised.



4.6.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

As for the resubstantiation rate, yearly variations in the substantiation rate after a decision not to substantiate should be interpreted carefully due to the small number of children in the data set (Figure 4.34; Table A1.38). In addition, the AIHW modified its counting rules for this measure as of 2003–04, which may have resulted in lower rates for some jurisdictions from that year onwards. Under the revised counting rules, a substantiation after a decision not to substantiate was not counted for a child unless the notification was received after the first investigation had been finalised.



4.6.4 Safety in out-of-home care

From 1999-00 to 2003-04, Tasmania identified less than three children in each year who were the subject of substantiated abuse in out-of-home care where the person believed responsible was the carer. The number of children identified as being in this category in 2004-05 rose to 11. However, Tasmanian data on this indicator is unreliable as a large proportion of substantiations where the person believed responsible was not recorded in the information system (64% in 2004-05).

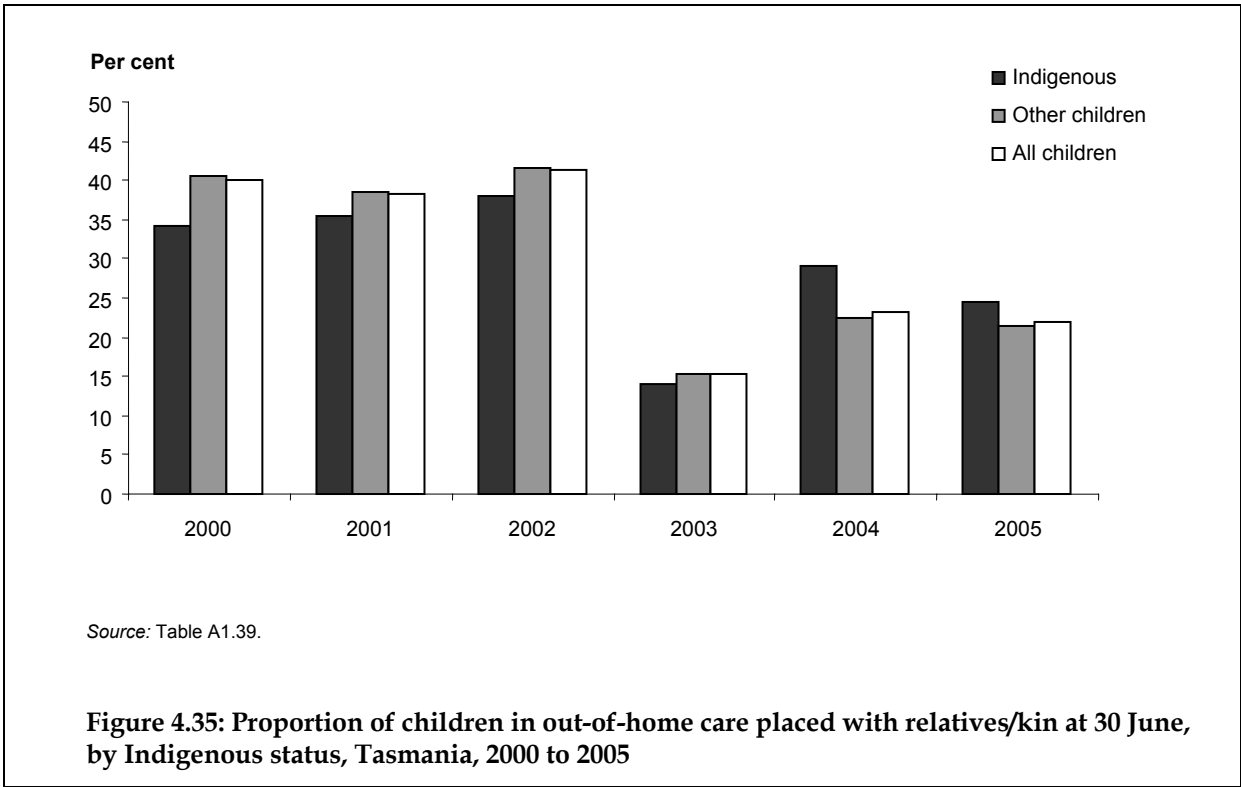
4.6.5 Stability of placement

Tasmania can not currently report on stability of placement. However, work is progressing with a view to reporting on this indicator in the future.

4.6.6 Placement with extended family

From 2000 to 2002, approximately 40% of children in out-of-home care were placed with extended family (Figure 4.35). This included a group of children who did not meet the definition of out-of-home care. That is, they were not on care and protection orders, and their placements were the result of an informal arrangement with the parents and not a formal placement made by out-of-home care services. From 2003, this group of children was excluded from the count and as a consequence, the proportion of children placed with extended family decreased to 15% of all children in out-of-home care. In 2004 and 2005, the proportion increased to above 20% of children in out-of-home care and this reflects an emphasis on the placement of children with extended family where possible.

From 2000 to 2003, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were placed with extended family proportionately less often than other children. For 2004 and 2005, the reverse was the case.



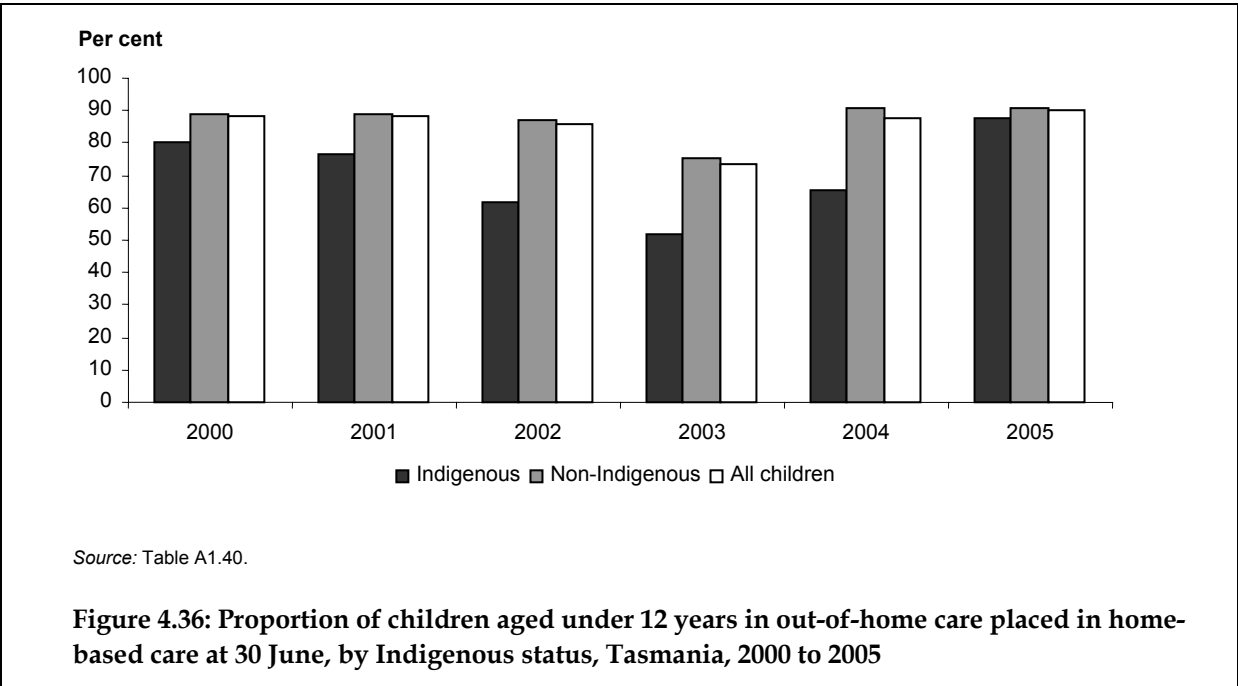
4.6.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

Between 2000 and 2005 in Tasmania, the majority of children in out-of-home care aged under 12 years were placed in home-based care. The proportions ranged from 73% in 2003 to 90% in 2005 (Figure 4.36). The low rate in 2003 may be attributed to the decision described in section 4.6.6, where a number of children placed with extended family who were not on care and protection orders, and whose placement was not arranged by out-of-home care services, were excluded from the count of children in home-based care.

In 2004, the proportion of children placed in home-based care increased to 88%. This increase is attributed to a re-categorisation of placement types in Tasmania. As a consequence, from 2004 onwards, children placed in approved children’s homes were counted as being in other home-based care rather than being in residential care. While carers in this placement type are recruited, trained and supported by a community organisation, these placements are best described as home-based out-of-home care because they are similar to a home-like setting.

Tasmania generally had a lower rate of placement in home-based care than other jurisdictions in all of the reporting periods, and the use of family group homes in Tasmania was a contributing factor to this result. Although family group homes are not included in the AIHW definition of home-based care, in Tasmania a family group home is considered similar to foster care, which is classified as home-based care.

The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed in home-based care is lower than that for other children. However, it is important to interpret the data with caution as they do not include children placed in family group homes. Thus, the proportion of Indigenous children under 12 years of age reported as being in a home-based placement in 2003–04 is considered to be conservative. It is also important to take into account the small number (78 or fewer in each of the years examined) of Indigenous children in out-of-home care when analysing variations in these data.

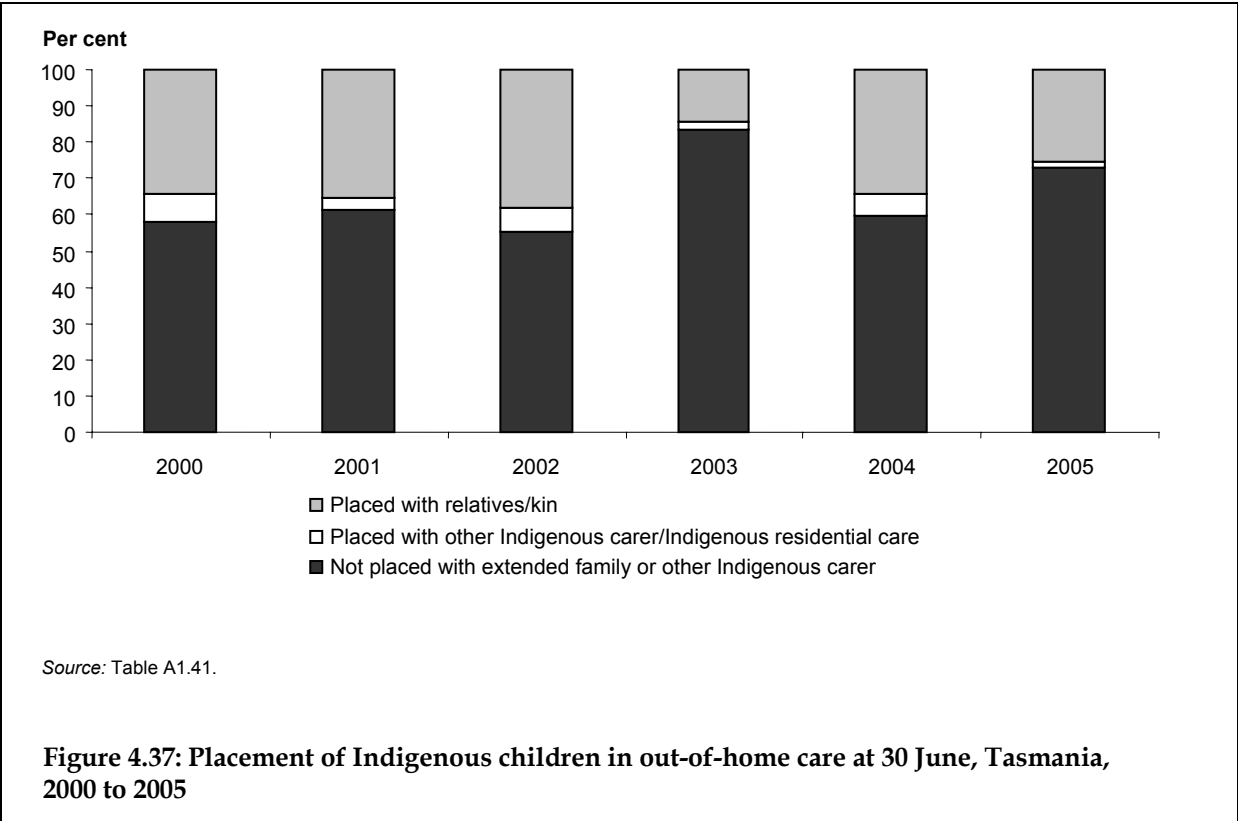


4.6.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

From 2000 to 2002, between 39% and 45% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care were placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (Figure 4.37). In 2003, this proportion declined to 17%. However, the 2003 data should not be compared to the data reported for the previous years. As noted previously, children who were not the subject of a care and protection order and whose placements were not organised by out-of-home care services were excluded from 2003 onwards.

In 2004 and 2005, the proportions of children placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle were approximately 40% and 27% respectively. When analysing variations in the data, it is important to take into account the small number of Indigenous children in out-of-home care (Table A1.41).

Of the children placed in accordance with the Principle, most were placed with relatives or kin. For 2005, 95% of Indigenous children were placed with relatives or kin in Tasmania. However, it should be noted that only one Indigenous child (out of 20 children) was in non-kin Indigenous care.



4.7 Australian Capital Territory

The Office for Children, Youth and Family Support is responsible for the care and protection of children in the Australian Capital Territory, and investigates and substantiates notified cases of suspected child abuse and neglect. The Office was established in May 2004, as a separate administrative unit reporting to the Chief Minister's Department, and is now part of the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (OCYFS 2004).

The most important legislation governing the protection of children in the Australian Capital Territory is the *Children and Young People Act 1999* (OCYFS 2004). The commissioning of this Act is likely to have had an effect on child welfare data, as would amendments made to the Act in 2001 and 2004.

Another important development which may have impacted on the data was the development of the Children's Plan. In June 2002, as a result of the Australian Capital Territory Health Review (the Reid Report), the Australian Capital Territory Government agreed to develop a Children's Plan. The Plan was released in 2004 with the aims of:

- ensuring clarity of the Government's commitment to children and families
- providing a common policy framework for the provision of services
- setting guidelines for the practical implementation of services across government, non-government agencies and the community (OCYFS 2005).

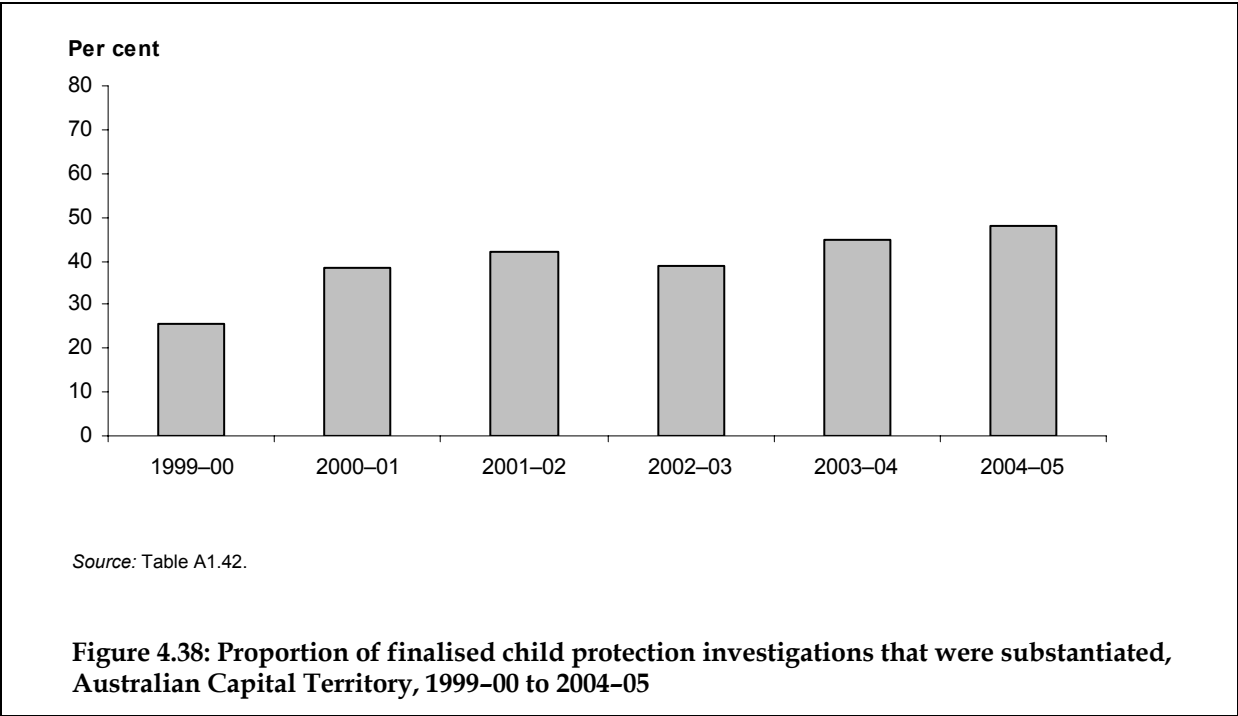
The Australian Capital Territory is able to provide data on each of the eight performance indicators.

4.7.1 Substantiation rate

In the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of finalised investigations that were substantiated gradually increased between 1999-00 and 2004-05 (Figure 4.38). In 1999-00, 25% of the 918 finalised child protection investigations were substantiated. In 2004-05, 48% of the 2,529 finalised investigations were substantiated.

During 1999-00, a new information system was implemented and a number of substantiated cases were not recorded during the implementation period. Thus, the lower substantiation rate in 1999-00 is likely to be incorrect. According to the OCYFS, the data from 2000-01 onward give a more realistic picture of the Australian Capital Territory's substantiation rate than the 1999-00 data.

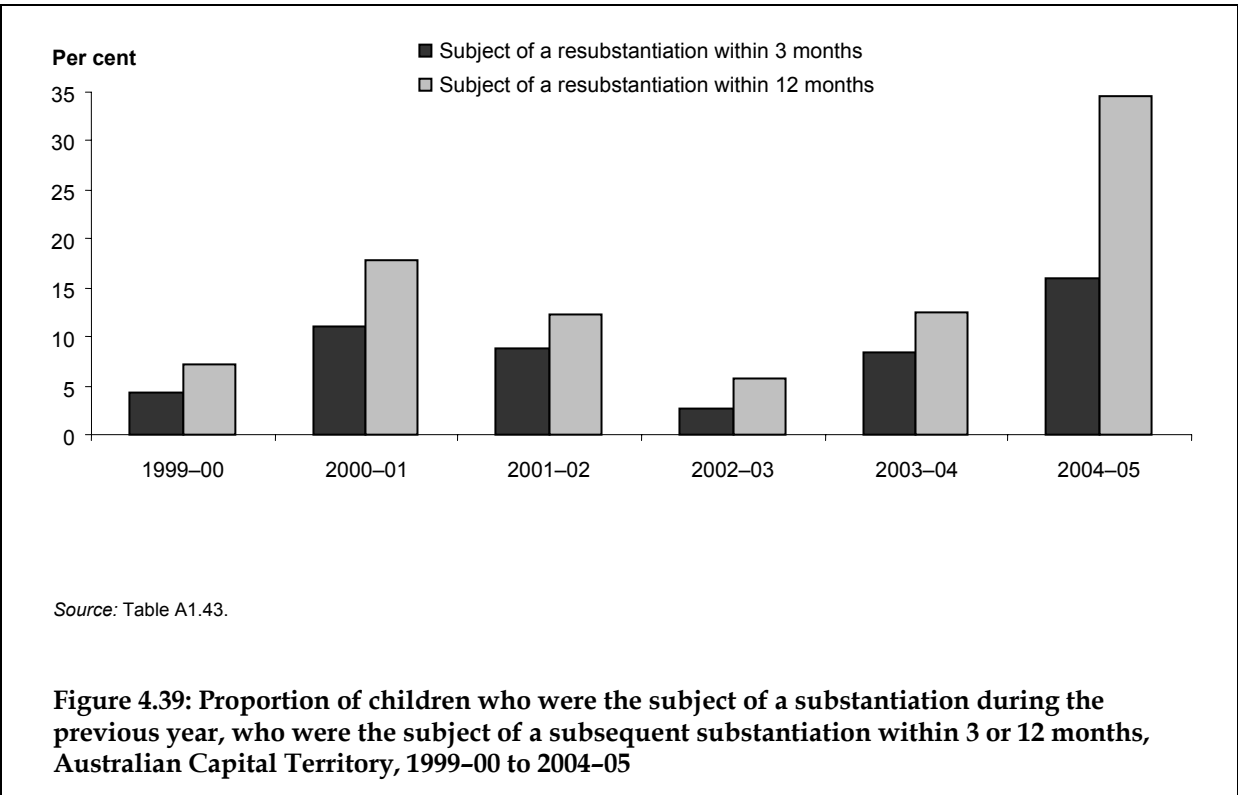
The increasing rate of substantiation reflects better targeting of children at risk through the introduction of a Centralised Intake Service. This has been accompanied by improved risk assessment tools and policy. Increasing child protection reports in the Australian Capital Territory are also likely to have influenced this figure.



4.7.2 Resubstantiation rate

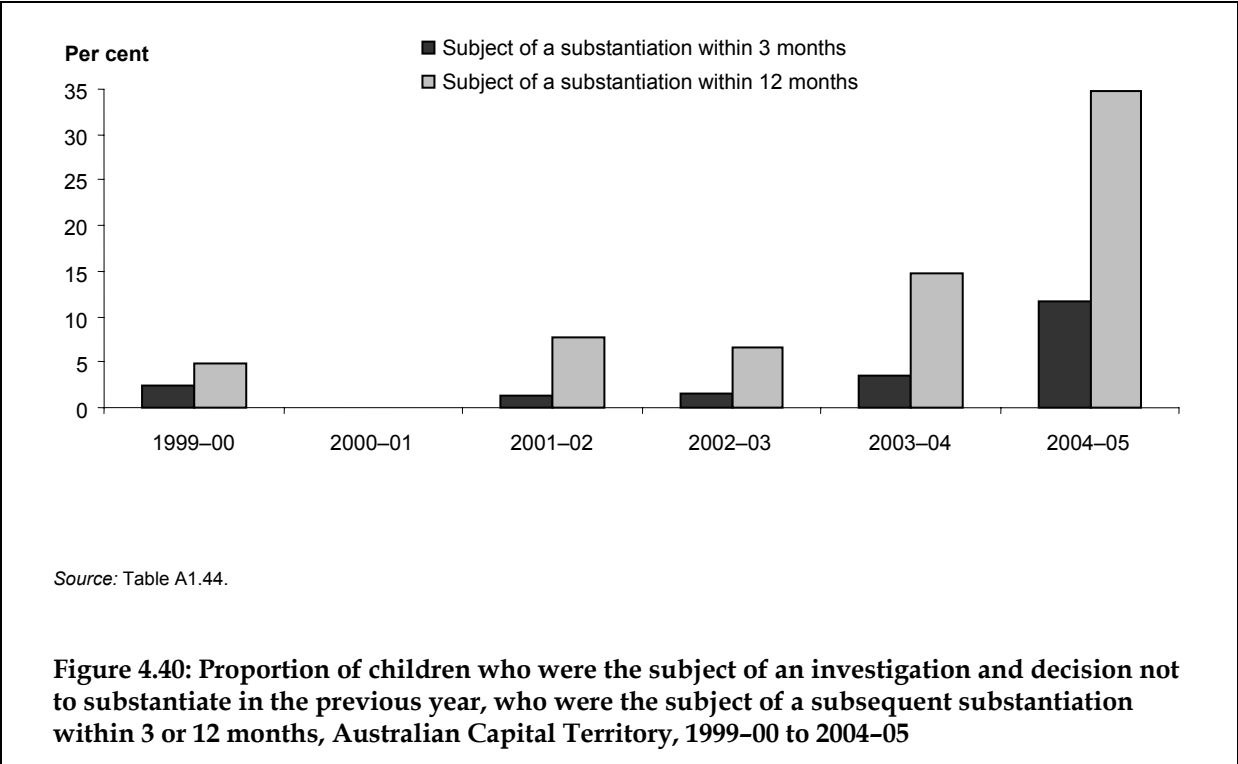
The percentage of children who were the subject of resubstantiation at 3 months ranged from 3% to 16% over the 6-year period (Figure 4.39). As the numbers of children involved were small (between 12 and 22 per year until 2003-04 and 78 in 2004-05), this variation in percentage is of little note. At 12 months, the resubstantiation rate varied between 6% and 35% over the 6-year period. Again, this represents only a small difference in the number of children involved (less than 35 in all years except 2004-05 when there were 169).

The counting rule for this indicator changed in 2003-04, therefore direct comparisons with previous years should be made with caution. Under the revised counting rules, a resubstantiation was only counted if the notification was received after the first investigation had been finalised.



4.7.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

The substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate at 3 months and 12 months in the Australian Capital Territory appears to fluctuate greatly (Figure 4.40). However, as with the resubstantiation rate, the percentage fluctuation over the years represents a small number of children (Table A1.44). Data were not available for 2000–01, and the counting rule was changed in 2003–04, therefore limiting overall comparisons between years.

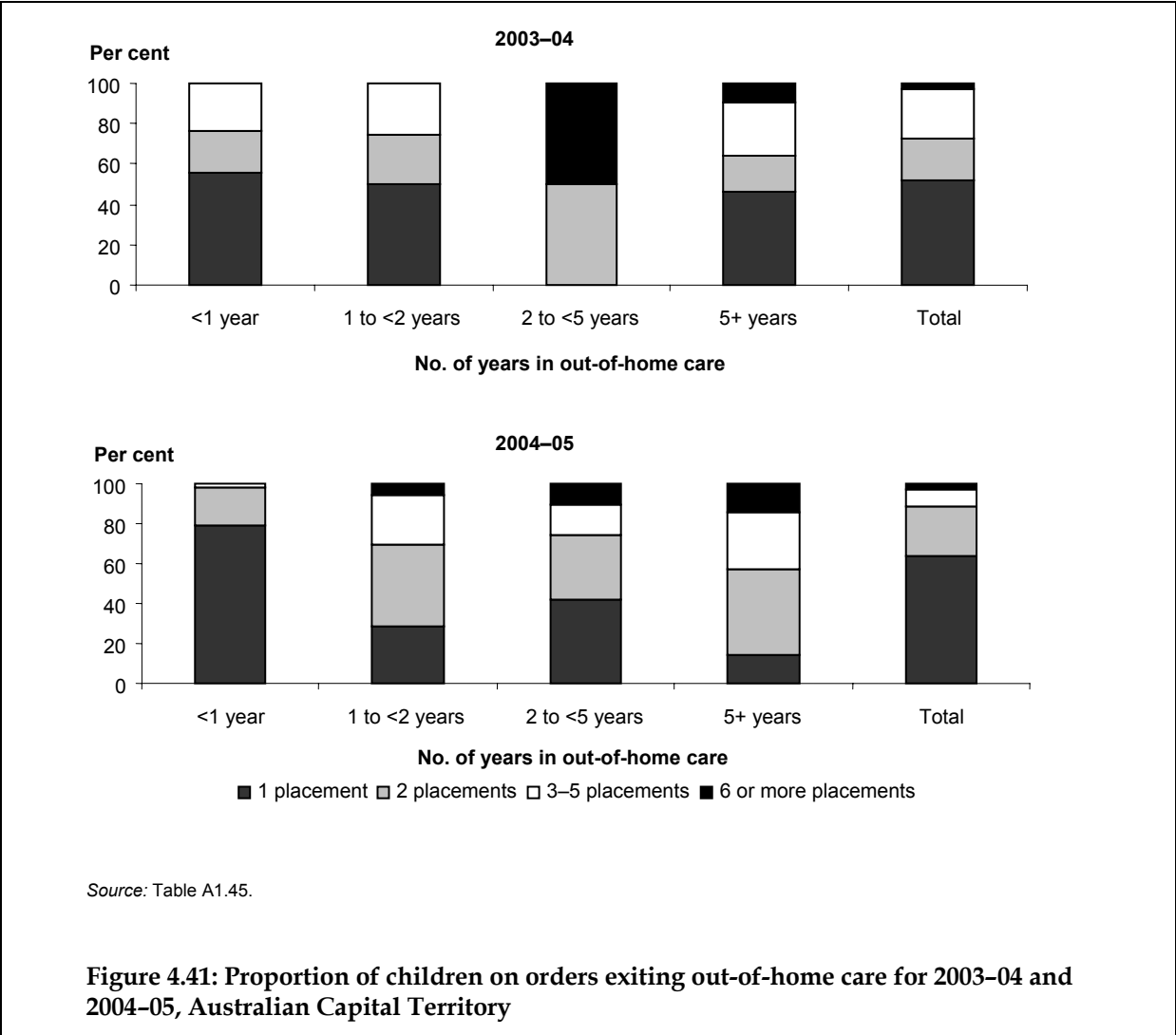


4.7.4 Safety in out-of-home care

Very few children in out-of-home care during the past 5 years were the subject of a substantiation where the person believed responsible was the carer or someone else living in the house, with the number of children ranging from 1 to 11 between 1999–00 and 2004–05 (SCRGSP 2006).

4.7.5 Stability of placement

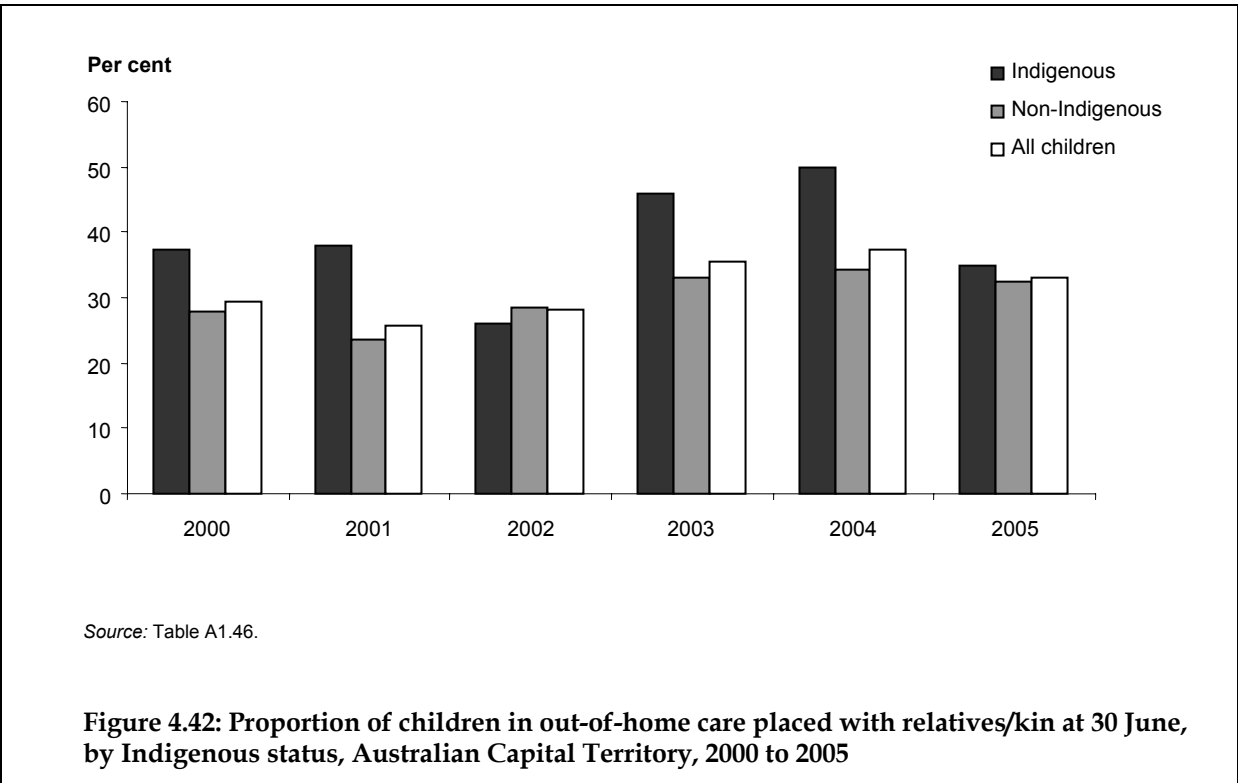
Figure 4.41 shows the proportions of children exiting out-of-home care after different numbers of years for 2003-04 and 2004-05. However, due to the small number of children involved, these proportions should be interpreted with caution. In total, there were 63 children exiting out-of-home care in 2003-04 and 134 exiting in 2004-05. In both years, a large proportion of children exited care after only one placement (52% in 2003-04 and 64% in 2004-05). In 2003-04, 44% of children had between two and five placements, compared to 33% in 2004-05. In both years 3% of children had experienced between six and 10 placements.



4.7.6 Placement with extended family

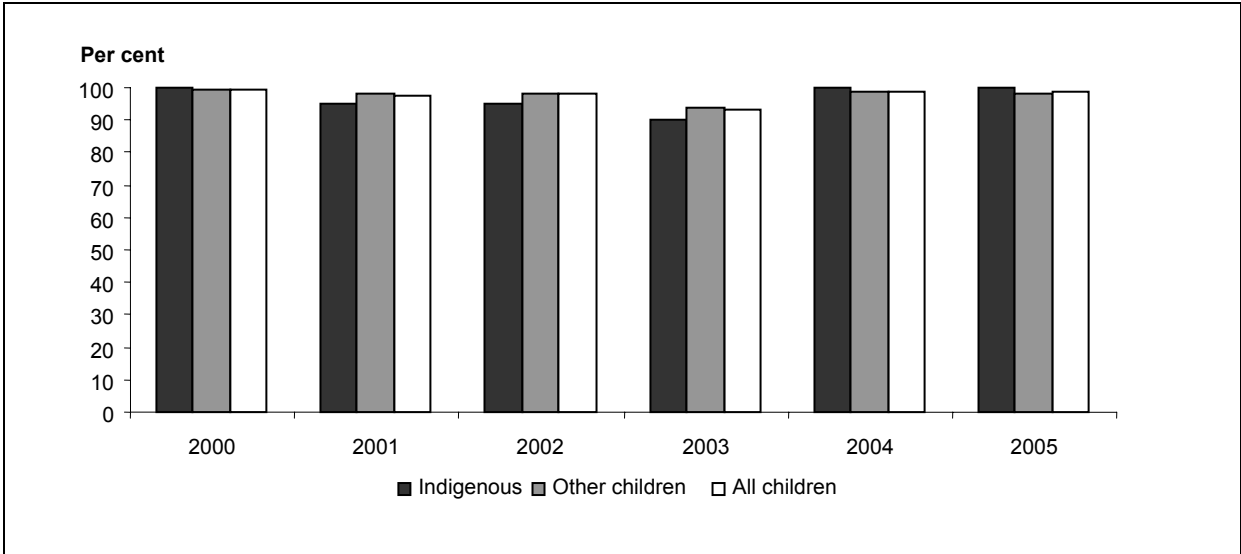
Over the 6 years reported, the proportion of children in out-of-home care in the Australian Capital Territory placed with relatives or kin fluctuated between 26% (in 2001) and 37% (in 2004) (Figure 4.42). The increase from 28% in 2002 to 35% in 2003 may be due to an increase in the use of Family Group Conferencing in 2003 as a means of involving extended family and kin in decision making for children at risk.

In all years except 2002, Indigenous children were proportionately more likely to be placed with relatives than other children. The fluctuations in the proportion of Indigenous children placed with relatives or kin is a reflection of the very small numbers of Indigenous children in care in the Australian Capital Territory (Table A1.46).



4.7.7 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

Around 98% of all children in out-of-home care in the Australian Capital Territory were in home-based care in all years except 2003, when the proportion dropped to 93% (Figure 4.43). There was some variation in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed in home-based care over the reporting years. The proportion varied from 90% in 2003 to 100% in 2000, 2004 and 2005. The proportion for other children remained fairly constant at 98% to 99%, except in 2003 where it dropped to 94%.

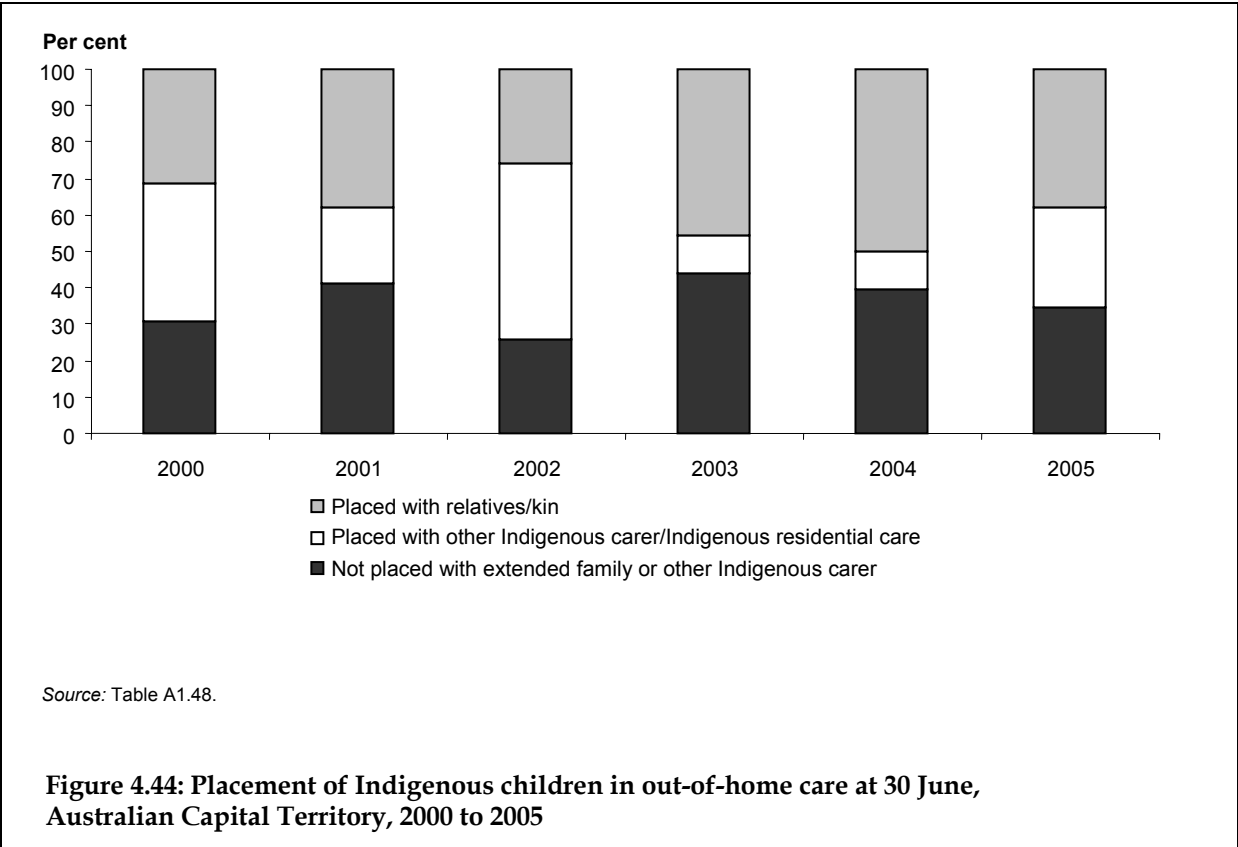


Source: Table A1.47.

Figure 4.43: Proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care placed in home-based care at 30 June, by Indigenous status, Australian Capital Territory, 2000 to 2005

4.7.8 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

The proportion of Indigenous children placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle between 2000 and 2005 ranged between 56% and 74% (Figure 4.44). Caution must be taken regarding these data because of the small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care in the Australian Capital Territory. The number of Indigenous children in care ranged from 27 in 2002, to 60 in 2005.



4.8 Northern Territory

The Department of Health and Community Services is responsible for the care and protection of children in the Northern Territory. Since 2001, a significant amount of additional funding has been injected into child protection services, with more than 40% of this funding being assigned specifically for Indigenous child protection (Northern Territory Government 2004a). It is possible that this additional funding has had an impact on recent child protection data.

Another possible influence on the Northern Territory's data is the recent review of child protection systems (Northern Territory Government 2004b). The Child Protection Systems Reform was carried out to assess child abuse and neglect issues, particularly those related to Indigenous communities. The review advised on three main areas for reform:

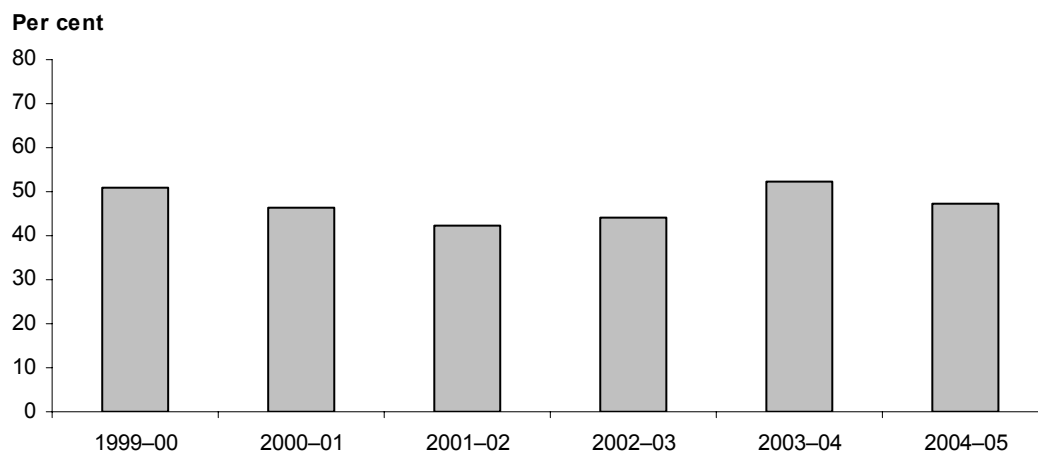
- the need for individually tailored service provision
- the requirement for an all-community approach to best combat child abuse and neglect
- the need for more resources (for hiring qualified staff and foster carers) to adequately protect children.

In the Northern Territory, everyone is legally mandated to report suspected cases of child maltreatment. That is, any person who believes that a child is being, or has been, abused or neglected is required by law to report their concerns (Northern Territory Government 2004c). This differs from most other Australian jurisdictions, where only some professionals are legally mandated to report suspected cases of child abuse.

The Northern Territory was able to report on seven of the eight performance indicators. They were not able to report on safety in out-of-home care.

4.8.1 Substantiation rate

The substantiation rate for the Northern Territory has remained relatively stable across the 6 reporting years, ranging from 42% in 2001-02 to 52% in 2003-04 (Figure 4.45). This is despite the overall number of notifications and finalised investigations slowly increasing from 1,437 and 775 respectively in 1999-00, to 2,101 notifications and 1,003 finalised investigations in 2004-05 (Table A1.49).

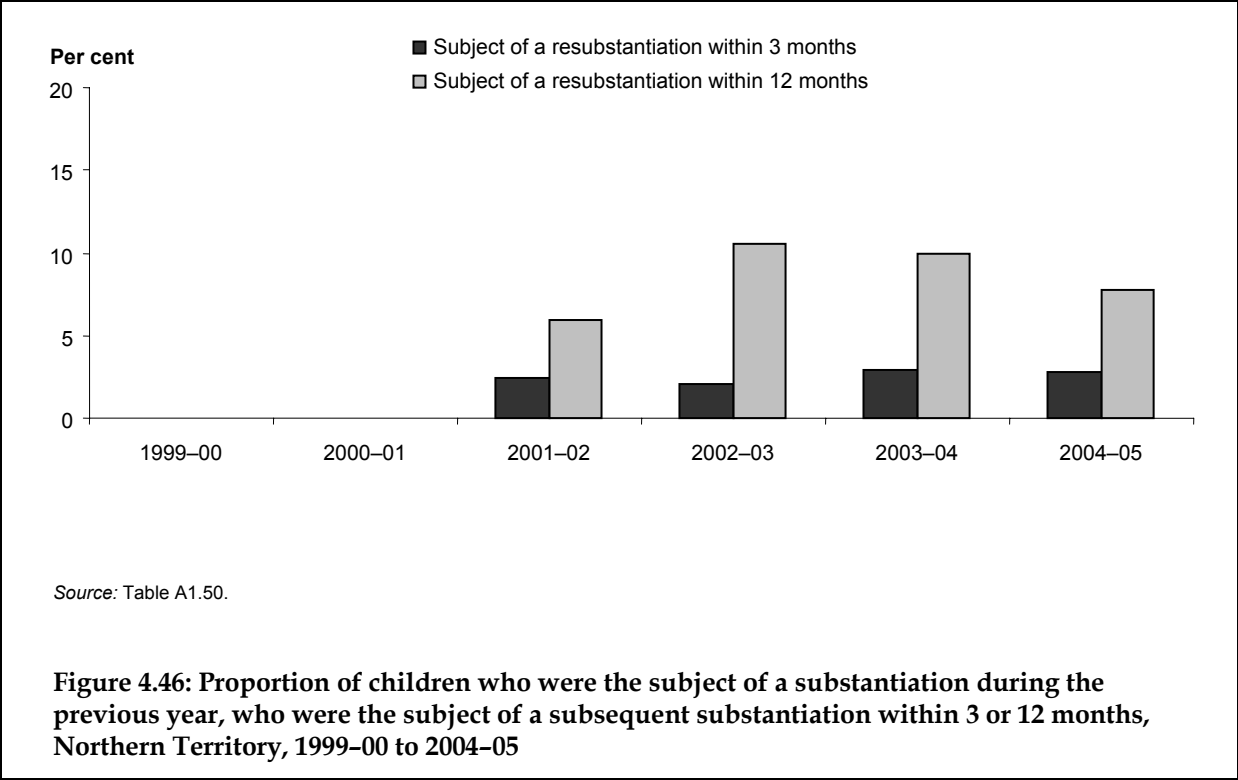


Source: Table A1.49.

Figure 4.45: Proportion of finalised child protection investigations that were substantiated, Northern Territory, 1999-00 to 2004-05

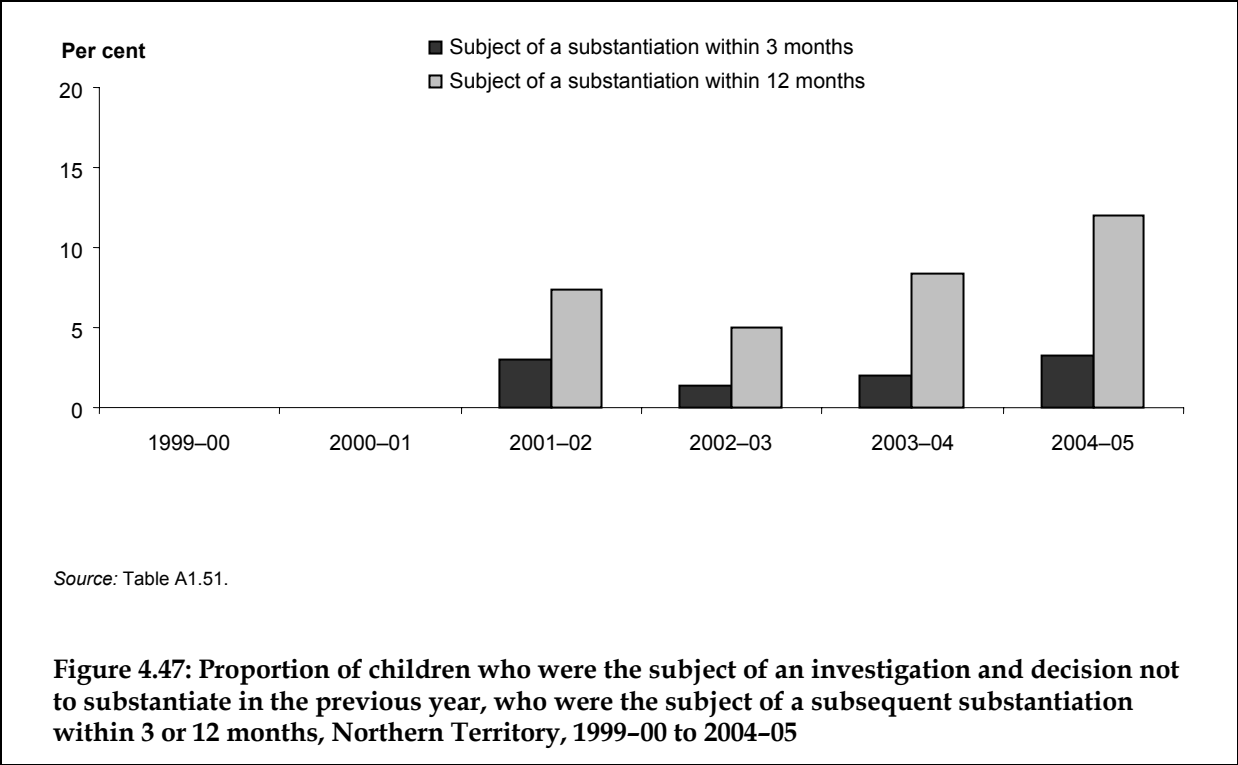
4.8.2 Resubstantiation rate

In the Northern Territory, the 3-month resubstantiation rate was between 2% and 3%, and the 12-month resubstantiation rate was between 6% and 11% in the years between 2001-02 and 2004-05 (Figure 4.46). The number of children involved is small, therefore these changes in percentage represent very small changes in number of children subject to resubstantiation. Consequently, no conclusion about trends should be drawn from these data. Data for 1999-00 and 2000-01 were unavailable for the Northern Territory.



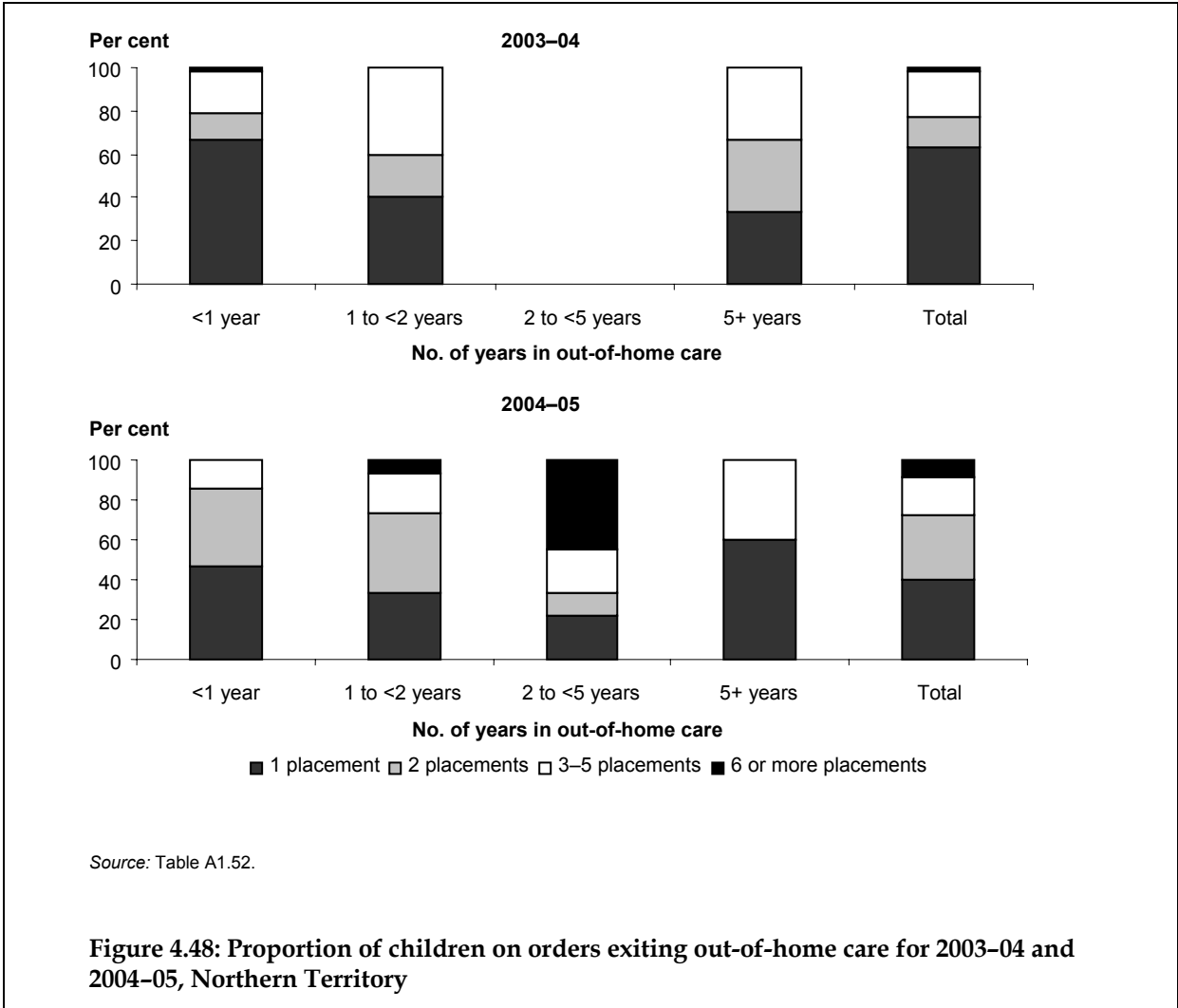
4.8.3 Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

As for the previous indicator, substantiation rates after decision not to substantiate were unavailable for 1999-00 and 2000-01 for the Northern Territory. The 3-month rates ranged between 1% and 3% for the remaining 4 years examined, while the 12-month rates were between 5% and 12% (Figure 4.47). As with the resubstantiation rates, these percentages represent very small fluctuations in the numbers of children involved and should not be regarded as meaningful changes.



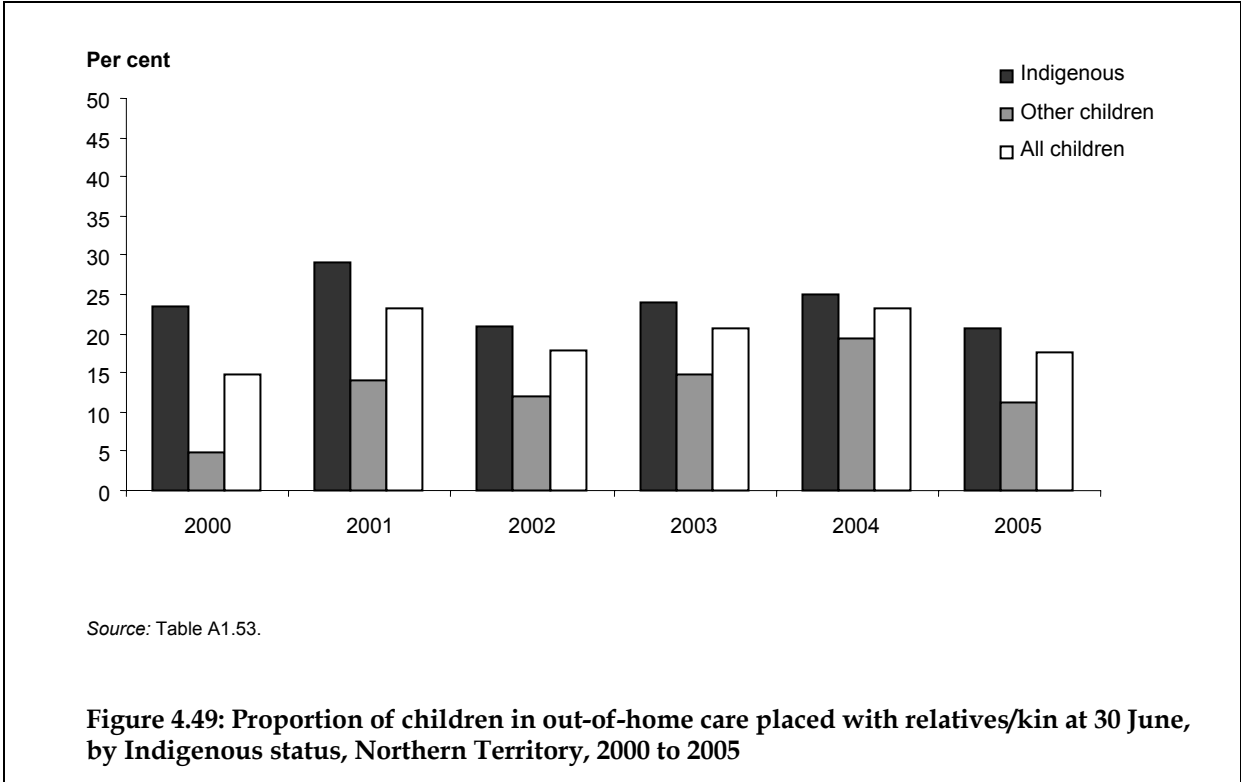
4.8.4 Stability of placement

Similar to the Australian Capital Territory data for children leaving care, the numbers in the Northern Territory are very small, resulting in large fluctuations in proportions of children having different numbers of placements for small changes in the number of children involved (Figure 4.48). Therefore, little meaningful interpretation can be gained from the data breakdown. However, it is useful to examine the total number of children leaving care in each year, keeping in mind the small numbers of children involved (56 in 2003-04 and 57 in 2004-05). For both years, children were more likely to have only one (63% in 2003-04 and 40% in 2004-05) or two (14% in 2003-04 and 32% in 2004-05) placements during their time in care. Very few children have six or more placements.



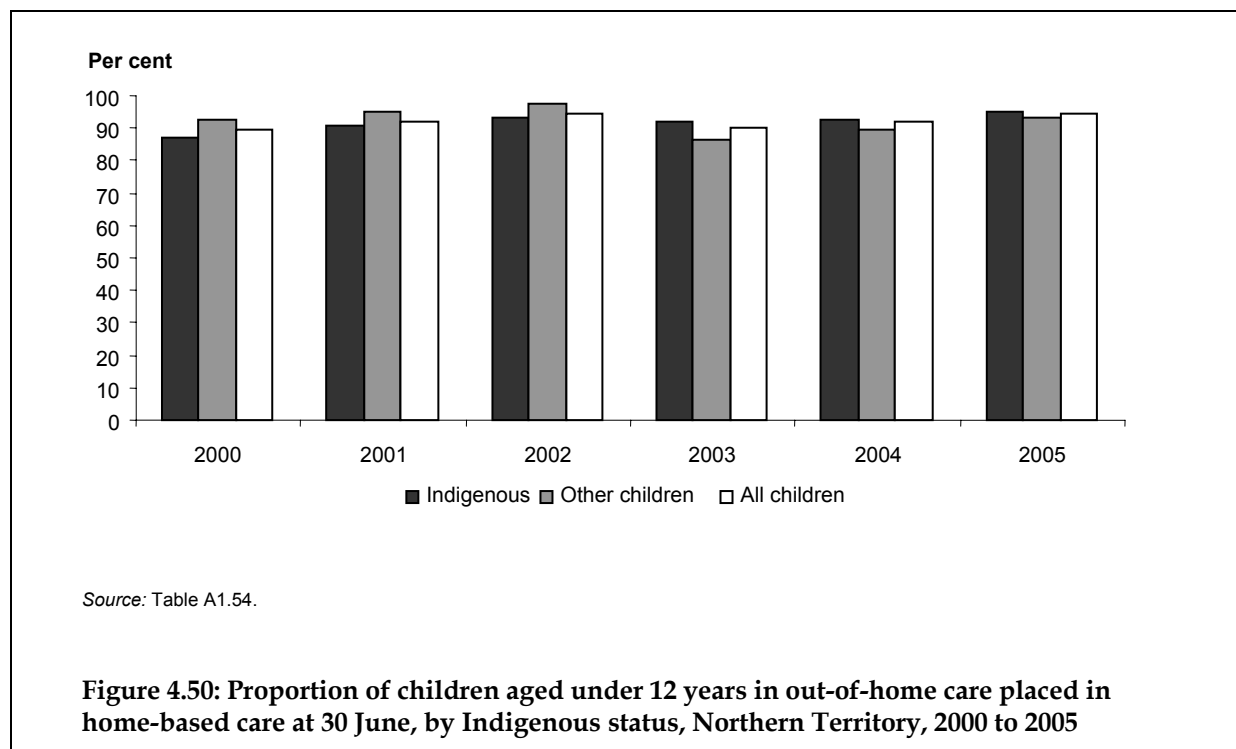
4.8.5 Placement with extended family

From 2000 to 2005, between 15% and 23% of children in out-of-home care in the Northern Territory were placed with relatives or kin. In each of these years, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children were more likely to be placed with extended family than other children (Figure 4.49). In any given year no more than 29% of Indigenous children and 19% of other children were placed with members of their extended family. A reason proposed for the low rates of placement with relatives of other children in the Northern Territory is that non-Indigenous families in the Northern Territory are less likely to have extended family close by than in other parts of Australia.



4.8.6 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

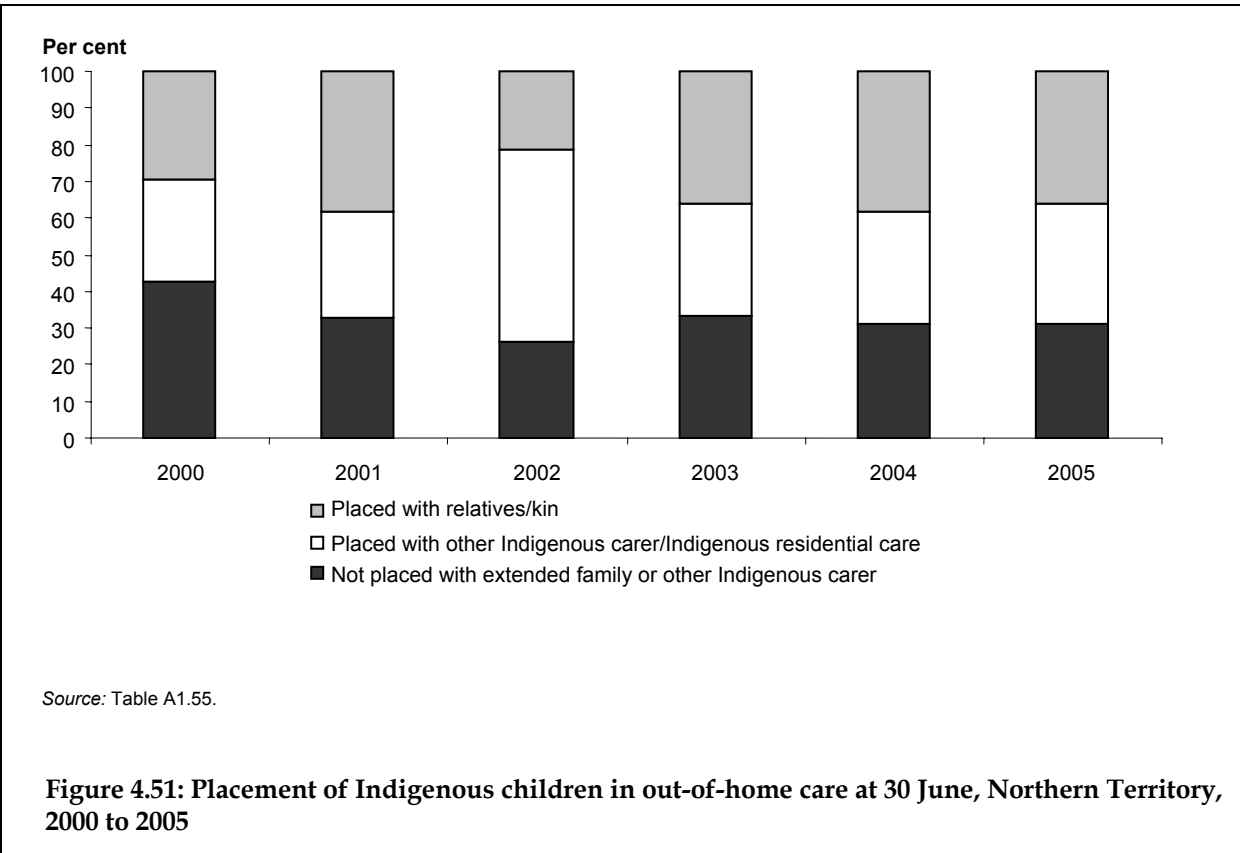
Over 89% of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care were placed in home-based care in every year from 2000 to 2005 (Figure 4.50). For Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, the proportion ranged from 87% in 2000 to 95% in 2005. For other children, the proportion ranged from 87% in 2003, to 97% in 2002.



4.8.7 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

Between 2000 and 2005, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle varied between 57% (in 2000) and 74% (in 2002) (Figure 4.51). In all years except 2002, a higher proportion of children were placed with relatives or kin than other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care.

It should be noted that the definition of relatives or kin used for this indicator is broader than the definition used in other indicators as it includes kin relationships based on customary law.



5 Future directions

In addition to the indicators that have already been established to assess the performance of child protection and out-of-home care services in Australia, there are other indicators that must be considered to enable a thorough assessment of these services. NCPASS is currently developing nine new or revised performance indicators to increase service accountability. This chapter provides a brief summary of each of these indicators.

5.1 Continuity of caseworker

Description

This indicator will report the number of caseworkers that have been responsible for the case management of a child during the child's contact with the child protection system. If a child has had previous contact with the child protection service, the number of caseworkers will be counted for the most recent episode on an order.

Importance

Frequent changes to allocated caseworkers are a highly problematic area in child protection. Not only do children report a desire to maintain continuity of workers (Community Services Commission NSW 2000), interventions are far more effective when rapport has been established and a close relationship exists between the worker, the child and their family (AIHW 2002). This close relationship is difficult to cultivate with frequent changes to caseworkers.

Factors affecting interpretation

Some jurisdictions might employ case managers on short-term contracts or structure workload on a rotating basis, meaning that long-term continued case management is not possible. It is also a feature in some jurisdictions for specialist workers to be employed who undertake investigations and this provides additional expertise to this complex role. Problems in assessing continuity can occur when a caseworker goes on leave and is relieved for a short period. Continuity of workers is likely to have the most positive impact on a child when a good relationship has been established between the worker, the child and their family and when the worker provides continuous focus on addressing the assessed needs of the child or young person (AIHW 2002).

5.2 Response time to commence investigation

Description

This indicator will measure the length of time between a notification being received by a community services department and the department commencing an investigation.

Importance

The promptness of the response to child protection matters will be assessed via this indicator. Most jurisdictions have policy or legislation detailing the time recommended for cases to be investigated, and this indicator will enable assessment of how well departments are meeting these. For example, in some jurisdictions, an investigation should commence within 24 hours for cases where the child is believed to be in serious danger of harm. Children may be in serious danger of being harmed further if investigations are not commenced in a timely fashion.

Factors affecting interpretation

As stated in Chapter 3, jurisdictions have differing definitions for notifications and investigations. These differences will affect the comparability of this performance indicator across jurisdictions. It is likely that data will differ across jurisdictions as a result of policy and legislation differences across the states and territories. Not all cases are equally serious and hence different response times may be appropriate.

5.3 Response time to complete investigation

Description

This indicator will measure the length of time taken to complete an investigation. The measurement will be from the time a notification was received by the statutory child protection service department to the time the department records an investigation outcome decision (that is, whether or not the case was substantiated).

Importance

The actions resulting from an investigation outcome can determine the safety of a child. Therefore, it is imperative that investigations be completed in a timely fashion to protect the child. Further, the disruptive nature of investigations is likely to impact on children and families. It is therefore important that this likely negative impact be as short as possible and that families are notified about investigation outcomes as soon as possible.

Factors affecting interpretation

While investigations should be conducted in a timely manner, it is important that expediency does not overshadow a thorough and accurate assessment of a case. If external agencies (for example, police, schools) are involved in the case, additional time may be added to an investigation that is outside the control of the department. Inability to locate the child and/or their family might be another external reason for investigation delay. There are different policies across jurisdictions regarding the timeline set down for the completion of investigations, and these differences are likely to have an impact on the data.

5.4 Local placement

Description

This indicator will assess the degree to which children placed in out-of-home care are placed in close proximity to their home prior to entering care and continue at the same school. It is proposed that data will be collected for all children entering care in the previous financial year who attend primary or high school. The indicator will be assessed at two time points (3 and 12 months) and will be reported as:

- the proportion of children in the same school 3 months after entering care
- the proportion of children in the same school 12 months after entering care.

Importance

Being placed in the local area enables some stability and familiarity for the child, for example, they are likely to remain at the same school and have the same circle of friends (Community Services Commission NSW 2000). Continued contact with family members is also more likely when the child is placed reasonably close to their residence prior to being placed in care (AIHW 2002).

Factors affecting interpretation

Placement location should be determined in the best interests of the child. A worker may deem that placement with a particular family member might be in the best interest of the child. However, this relative may live a considerable distance from the child's original residence. Therefore, while in the best interest of the child, this placement would be considered to perform poorly on this indicator. Further, in some instances, it may be positive for the child to move from their original locality and school. For example, it may not be safe for the child to remain close to their parents or the child may have experienced significant difficulties with the school they attended. In these instances, placement away from the locality would be a positive move.

5.5 Placement with sibling

Description

When children from the same family are placed in out-of-home care, this indicator will record the number of siblings placed together in the same residence.

Importance

Stability and familiarity are important for all children. Remaining with siblings when taken from one's family home can increase feelings of security for children in care. It is also likely that placement with one's siblings will aid the child's emotional wellbeing and sense of belonging (AIHW 2002).

Factors affecting interpretation

A significant issue with this indicator is the difficulty in defining a sibling. Children with the same biological parents are usually deemed as siblings even if they do not live together. If children have a single biological parent in common, they are also usually regarded as siblings. Where fostered or adopted children fit is not always so clear although they are usually considered a sibling to a carer's biological child. In Indigenous communities, children can be raised by persons other than their biological parents. Questions then arise about the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children raised in the same 'community family' should be classified as siblings. Prior to implementation, these issues will need to be clarified for recording purposes. It is likely that this indicator will become a measure of siblings or significant other children. This would acknowledge the connections with other children that the child felt were important in their life, and thus provide a measure of the disruption that separation would cause.

There are a number of other factors which may affect interpretation of this indicator. First, it might be difficult to place siblings with a substantial age difference together in the same placement as some carers prefer to only have children up to a certain age in their home. Second, large sibling groups are significantly more difficult to place together than smaller groups. Third, the date at which siblings were placed in care might also affect interpretation of this indicator. That is, it might be difficult to place a child with their sibling who has been in care for a considerable amount of time. For example, there may be little benefit to the child by aiming to place them with a sibling who is 5 years older and who has been in care since birth. Finally, it would not be recommended to place siblings together if the substantiated harm was perpetrated by the sibling.

5.6 Children with documented case plan

Description

This indicator will show whether a documented case plan exists for a child on a guardianship or custody order.

Importance

All Australian jurisdictions have legislation or policy detailing the necessity of a case plan for a child in statutory care (AIHW 2002). Case plans generally include goals such as improving the relationship between parent and child, successful reunification or long-term placement with a suitable carer. The plan also details the means by which these goals are hoped to be achieved, for example, scheduling of visits with family members, overnight stays with a parent and professional counselling. Therefore, having a case plan indicates that the department has a well thought out strategy of intervention for the child.

Factors affecting interpretation

It is envisaged that data on this indicator will be easily collected by departments, and given that all jurisdictions have legislation or policy about the importance of having a documented case, comparison between jurisdictions should be possible.

5.7 Safe return home

Description

This indicator will report on the proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation and were placed in out-of-home care within 6 months of the substantiation, and who then returned home and were not the subject of a further substantiation within a specified amount of time. That is, this indicator assesses two important factors: whether children removed from their family home return in a set amount of time, and whether children who return home are the subject of another substantiation following that return. To date, the specified time has not been decided upon, although the usual reporting periods of 3 and 12 months have been suggested. This indicator is different from resubstantiation as resubstantiation includes children whether or not they were removed from their home and is measured in terms of resubstantiation following a previous substantiation or lack of substantiation of a notification. The measure of safe return home would look at the likelihood of substantiation following a reunion with the child's original family.

Importance

A major aim of child protection services is to protect children but maintain family continuity as much as possible. While reunification is frequently cited as the goal of protective intervention, it is paramount that this procedure is safe for the child. That is, it is imperative that the child not be placed back into an unsafe environment where they might be harmed again. This indicator therefore assesses the department's ability to make appropriate decisions regarding the probability of the child being safe from harm once returned home.

Factors affecting interpretation

Once reunified, families usually have less contact with protective services than when their child was in care. Therefore, if the underlying issues that had contributed to the child protection intervention have not adequately been addressed and there is a lack of support from service providers, it is likely that the child will be at risk of re-harm after returning home. However, if services follow up families once a child is returned home, it is more likely that re-abuse will be detected and substantiated thus increasing the resubstantiation rate.

Family circumstances can change. It is possible that it was safe for the child to return home when the reunification decision was reached, but between that time and the time the child returned home, the circumstances of the family changed and the child was no longer safe. For example, a parent became unemployed and was therefore unable to provide for the child, or an abusive de facto partner moved into the family home. Since these changes were subsequent to the department's decision to reunify the child with their family, a resubstantiation in this case should not be seen as a poor reflection on the department's initial decision.

Finally, there are differing definitions of substantiations across jurisdictions meaning that comparability across the states and territories is problematic.

5.8 Permanent care

Description

This indicator will report on the proportion of children who were on a finalised court order and placed in out-of-home care, and who were permanently placed in a family environment within a specified time period. A permanent placement includes being permanently reunited with their family, placed with extended family, or placed in family-based care.

Importance

Children require stability and security, and this indicator will show how well departments are able to provide these requirements to children. A permanent placement can provide a child with continuity and stability, which can aid with their self-esteem, feelings of security and coping skills (AIHW 2002).

Factors affecting interpretation

The length of time taken to place a child in permanent care may not necessarily equate with a positive outcome for the child. That is, a short time may mean that the department has worked expediently, but it may also mean that the department has not put enough time into thoroughly assessing the safety and suitability of the permanent placement. Performance on this indicator might also be related to the age of a child when they entered care (that is, it might be more difficult to place an older than a younger child) and the length of time the child has been in out-of-home care. In addition, jurisdictions have different protective orders for children, and these make comparability of data somewhat difficult.

5.9 Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child

An indicator or indicators to assess the improved education, health and wellbeing of children would be difficult to develop using administrative data in their current form. However, it is recognised that education, health and wellbeing are important measures of outcomes for children in the child protection systems across Australia.

With regard to improved education, the AIHW is currently undertaking a project initiated by NCPASS that assesses the educational outcomes of children on care and protection orders. This project will provide the literacy and numeracy scores of children on orders and will compare these data to benchmark scores within each jurisdiction. There will be a 2-year follow-up of these children and this will enable an assessment of the improvement in children's educational outcomes across time.

As suggested by the AIHW (2004b), children's health and wellbeing can effectively be assessed by measuring mortality, morbidity, disability and mental health. While these suggestions were made in regard to children in general, they could potentially be used to specifically assess the health and wellbeing of children involved in the child protection system.

Appendix 1: Detailed Tables

New South Wales

Table A1.1: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, New South Wales, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03 ^(a)	2003–04 ^(b)	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(c)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	6,477	7,501	8,606	16,765	n.a.	15,493
Carer/family issues	..	4,600	5,944	628	n.a.	n.a.
Not substantiated	7,628	7,812	11,705	9,070	n.a.	25,491
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>14,105</i>	<i>19,913</i>	<i>26,255</i>	<i>26,463</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>40,984</i>
Investigations not finalised	4,002	5,379	7,363	18,802	n.a.	17,588
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>18,107</i>	<i>25,292</i>	<i>33,618</i>	<i>45,265</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>58,572</i>
Other notifications ^(d)	12,291	15,645	21,590	64,233	n.a.	75,064
Total notifications	30,398	40,937	55,208	109,498	115,541	133,636
Proportion of notifications investigated^(c)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	21.3	18.3	15.6	15.3	n.a.	11.6
Carer/family issues	..	11.2	10.8	0.6	n.a.	n.a.
Not substantiated	25.1	19.1	21.2	8.3	n.a.	19.1
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>46.4</i>	<i>48.6</i>	<i>47.6</i>	<i>24.2</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>30.7</i>
Investigations not finalised	13.2	13.1	13.3	17.2	n.a.	13.2
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>59.6</i>	<i>61.8</i>	<i>60.9</i>	<i>41.3</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>43.8</i>
Other notifications ^(d)	40.4	38.2	39.1	58.7	n.a.	56.2
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.a.	100.0

(a) Data from 2002–03 should not be compared to previous years. New South Wales implemented a modification to the data system to support legislation and associated practice changes during 2002–03 which would make any comparisons inaccurate.

(b) In 2003–04, New South Wales was only able to provide limited data due to ongoing implementation of the new reporting system.

(c) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(d) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police).

Note: If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.2: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, New South Wales, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	267	212	326	394	n.a.	n.a.
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	661	600	738	976	n.a.	n.a.
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	4.0	3.6	4.9	5.3	n.a.	n.a.
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	9.8	10.2	11.1	13.2	n.a.	n.a.

Note: In 2003–04 and 2004–05 New South Wales was unable to provide data due to ongoing implementation of a new reporting system.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.3: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, New South Wales, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	167	155	122	221	n.a.	n.a.
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	625	546	436	777	n.a.	n.a.
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	2.3	2.5	2.1	2.2	n.a.	n.a.
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	8.7	8.8	7.6	7.6	n.a.	n.a.

Note: In 2003–04 and 2004–05 New South Wales was unable to provide data due to ongoing implementation of a new reporting system.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.4: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, New South Wales, 2002–03 and 2004–05

	2002–03	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	266	460
2 placements	124	100
3 placements	44	30
4–5 placements	13	7
6–10 placements	1	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	448	597
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	76	84
2 placements	31	58
3 placements	19	31
4–5 placements	8	17
6–10 placements	—	5
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	134	195
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	73	93
2 placements	36	68
3 placements	31	51
4–5 placements	23	42
6–10 placements	2	26
11 or more placements	—	1
Unknown	—	—
Total children	165	281
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	139	51
2 placements	17	64
3 placements	8	34
4–5 placements	4	48
6–10 placements	4	33
11 or more placements	—	6
Unknown	—	—
Total children	172	236
All children		
1 placement	554	688
2 placements	208	290
3 placements	102	146
4–5 placements	48	114
6–10 placements	7	64
11 or more placements	—	7
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	919	1,309

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.5: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, New South Wales, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	1,282	1,458	1,491	1,662	1,685	1,751
Other children	2,530	2,821	3,109	3,267	3,392	3,541
All children	3,812	4,279	4,600	4,929	5,077	5,292
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	70.6	68.2	71.1	70.0	68.5	68.9
Other children	48.4	50.0	51.9	52.2	50.7	53.0
All children	54.1	55.0	56.9	57.1	55.5	57.3

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.6: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, New South Wales, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	1,295	1,520	1,494	1,663	1,769	1,794
Other children	3,405	3,785	4,004	4,122	4,477	4,515
All children	4,700	5,305	5,498	5,785	6,246	6,309
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	96.8	96.7	98.1	97.8	99.3	99.0
Other children	95.4	96.9	96.6	96.6	99.0	99.4
All children	95.8	96.8	97.0	97.0	99.1	99.2

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.7: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, New South Wales, 2000 to 2005

	2000 ^(a)	2001	2002	2003	2004 ^(b)	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(c)	999	1,458	1,491	1,662	n.a.	1,751
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	462	395	348	382	n.a.	450
Total placed in accordance with Principle	1,461	1,853	1,839	2,044	n.a.	2,201
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(d)	342	265	244	314	n.a.	333
Independent living/unknown	..	21	15	17	n.a.	9
Total Indigenous children in care	1,803	2,139	2,098	2,375	2,459	2,543
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(c)	55.4	68.8	71.6	70.5	n.a.	69.1
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	25.6	18.6	16.7	16.2	n.a.	17.8
Total placed in accordance with Principle	81.0	87.5	88.3	86.7	n.a.	86.9
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(d)	19.0	12.5	11.7	13.3	n.a.	13.1
Total Indigenous children in care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	n.a.	100.0

(a) In 2000, there were 12 children where the Indigenous status of the caregiver was unknown. These children were included in the category 'Not placed in accordance with Principle'.

(b) In 2004, New South Wales was unable to provide complete data due to ongoing implementation of the new reporting system.

(c) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(d) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Victoria

Table A1.8: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Victoria, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	7,359	7,608	7,687	7,287	7,412	7,398
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	5,223	5,302	5,181	5,113	4,462	4,088
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>12,582</i>	<i>12,910</i>	<i>12,868</i>	<i>12,400</i>	<i>11,874</i>	<i>11,486</i>
Investigations not finalised	311	295	343	369	385	402
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>12,893</i>	<i>13,205</i>	<i>13,211</i>	<i>12,769</i>	<i>12,259</i>	<i>11,888</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	23,912	23,761	24,765	24,866	24,697	25,635
Total notifications	36,805	36,966	37,976	37,635	36,956	37,523
Proportion of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	20.0	20.6	20.2	19.4	20.1	19.7
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	14.2	14.3	13.6	13.6	12.1	10.9
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>34.2</i>	<i>34.9</i>	<i>33.9</i>	<i>32.9</i>	<i>32.1</i>	<i>30.6</i>
Investigations not finalised	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>35.0</i>	<i>35.7</i>	<i>34.8</i>	<i>33.9</i>	<i>33.2</i>	<i>31.7</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	65.0	64.3	65.2	66.1	66.8	68.3
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(b) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police).

Note: If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.9: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Victoria, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	132	199	139	173	131	132
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	893	960	984	1,106	958	877
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	1.9	2.9	1.9	2.4	1.9	1.9
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	13.1	14.0	13.7	15.3	14.0	12.5

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.10: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Victoria, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	208	204	189	224	225	157
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	779	839	730	850	795	685
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	4.0	4.7	4.2	5.2	5.3	4.2
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	15.1	19.3	16.3	19.9	18.8	18.3

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.11: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, Victoria, 2003–04 and 2004–05

	2003–04	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	322	391
2 placements	132	194
3 placements	41	56
4–5 placements	28	25
6–10 placements	3	4
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	526	670
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	88	110
2 placements	46	57
3 placements	25	28
4–5 placements	18	37
6–10 placements	11	14
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	188	246
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	62	66
2 placements	42	44
3 placements	28	43
4–5 placements	27	46
6–10 placements	19	25
11 or more placements	4	5
Unknown	—	—
Total children	182	229
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	44	30
2 placements	10	11
3 placements	3	10
4–5 placements	9	13
6–10 placements	4	16
11 or more placements	—	8
Unknown	—	—
Total children	70	88
All children		
1 placement	516	597
2 placements	230	306
3 placements	97	137
4–5 placements	82	121
6–10 placements	37	59
11 or more placements	4	13
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	966	1,233

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.12: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Victoria, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	141	151	188	196	214
Other children	n.a.	905	880	1,028	1,149	1,121
All children	962	1,046	1,031	1,216	1,345	1,335
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	31.1	30.9	37.1	36.9	40.7
Other children	n.a.	26.4	25.7	29.0	30.4	28.9
All children	24.9	26.9	26.3	30.1	31.2	30.3

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.13: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Victoria, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	305	304	325	350	343
Other children	n.a.	1,899	1,923	2,012	2,127	2,196
All children	2,153	2,204	2,227	2,337	2,477	2,539
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	94.1	94.1	95.6	96.7	96.9
Other children	n.a.	96.2	96.2	97.0	97.0	97.5
All children	94.2	95.9	95.9	96.8	96.9	97.4

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.14: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Victoria, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001 ^(a)	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	n.a.	141	151	169	179	204
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	n.a.	115	120	87	129	88
Total placed in accordance with Principle	n.a.	256	271	256	308	292
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	n.a.	198	218	174	191	205
Independent living/unknown	n.a.	..	..	77	32	29
Total Indigenous children in care	n.a.	454	489	430	531	526
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	n.a.	31.1	30.9	39.3	35.8	41.1
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	n.a.	25.3	24.5	20.2	25.8	17.7
Total placed in accordance with Principle	n.a.	56.4	55.4	59.5	61.7	58.8
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	n.a.	43.6	44.6	40.5	38.3	41.2
Total Indigenous children in care	n.a.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) In 2001, some children in Indigenous residential care were included in the category 'Not placed in accordance with Principle' (under non-Indigenous residential care).

(b) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(c) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Queensland

Table A1.15: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Queensland, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	6,919	8,395	10,036	12,203	17,473	17,307
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	3,985	3,952	4,602	5,339	6,130	6,094
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>10,904</i>	<i>12,347</i>	<i>14,638</i>	<i>17,542</i>	<i>23,603</i>	<i>23,401</i>
Investigations not finalised	4,394	5,775	8,396	8,645	5,712	11,960
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>15,298</i>	<i>18,122</i>	<i>23,034</i>	<i>26,187</i>	<i>29,315</i>	<i>35,361</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	3,759	3,947	4,558	4,881	5,708	5,468
Total notifications	19,057	22,069	27,592	31,068	35,023	40,829
Proportion of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	36.3	38.0	36.4	39.3	49.9	42.4
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	20.9	17.9	16.7	17.2	17.5	14.9
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>57.2</i>	<i>55.9</i>	<i>53.1</i>	<i>56.5</i>	<i>67.4</i>	<i>57.3</i>
Investigations not finalised	23.1	26.2	30.4	27.8	16.3	29.3
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>80.3</i>	<i>82.1</i>	<i>83.5</i>	<i>84.3</i>	<i>83.7</i>	<i>86.6</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	19.7	17.9	16.5	15.7	16.3	13.4
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(b) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police); and those notifications not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Note: If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.16: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Queensland, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	496	664	806	811	1,450	n.a.
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	1,247	1,587	2,033	2,496	3,235	n.a.
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	9.0	10.4	10.2	9.0	11.9	n.a.
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	22.6	24.8	25.6	27.6	26.5	n.a.

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.17: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Queensland, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01 ^(a)	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(b)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	127	167	186	182	263	n.a.
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	444	462	604	714	811	n.a.
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	3.5	4.7	4.6	3.8	4.9	n.a.
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	12.2	12.9	14.9	15.0	15.1	n.a.

(a) Queensland altered the way in which this counting rule was calculated, resulting in higher numbers of children being recorded as having a subsequent substantiation. Therefore care should be taken when comparing data prior to 2000–01 with data from 2000–01 onwards. This also means that comparison between data for Queensland and other jurisdictions is not valid.

(b) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.18: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, Queensland, 2003–04 and 2004–05

	2003–04	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	220	394
2 placements	108	132
3 placements	50	34
4–5 placements	16	18
6–10 placements	11	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	405	578
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	44	68
2 placements	34	55
3 placements	14	40
4–5 placements	18	27
6–10 placements	18	5
11 or more placements	2	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	130	195
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	42	57
2 placements	18	31
3 placements	21	33
4–5 placements	22	31
6–10 placements	21	18
11 or more placements	5	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	129	170
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	25	35
2 placements	20	33
3 placements	9	19
4–5 placements	21	23
6–10 placements	19	15
11 or more placements	9	1
Unknown	—	—
Total children	103	126
All children		
1 placement	331	554
2 placements	180	251
3 placements	94	126
4–5 placements	77	99
6–10 placements	69	38
11 or more placements	16	1
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	767	1,069

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.19: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	217	241	287	342	368	458
Other children	422	478	537	587	727	1,053
All children	639	719	824	929	1,095	1,511
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	36.7	37.8	40.5	42.1	38.4	35.9
Other children	20.7	20.1	21.1	19.7	21.0	24.0
All children	24.3	23.9	25.3	24.5	24.8	26.7

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.20: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Queensland, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	364	397	476	548	685	923
Other children	1,289	1,540	1,705	2,052	2,426	3,072
All children	1,653	1,937	2,181	2,600	3,111	3,995
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	96.8	96.6	97.9	99.1	99.9	99.9
Other children	98.8	98.9	99.4	99.5	99.6	99.6
All children	98.4	98.4	99.0	99.4	99.6	99.7

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.21: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Queensland, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	217	241	288	342	368	458
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	188	185	204	204	239	368
Total placed in accordance with Principle	405	426	492	546	607	826
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	187	211	216	267	351	449
Independent living/unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Indigenous children in care	592	637	708	813	958	1,275
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	36.6	37.8	40.6	42.0	38.4	35.9
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	31.8	29.0	28.8	25.1	24.9	28.9
Total placed in accordance with Principle	68.4	66.9	69.5	67.2	63.3	64.8
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	31.6	33.1	30.5	32.8	36.7	35.2
Total Indigenous children in care	n.a.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(b) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Western Australia

Table A1.22: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Western Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	1,169	1,191	1,187	888	968	1,104
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	1,196	1,201	1,240	947	1,056	1,287
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>2,365</i>	<i>2,392</i>	<i>2,427</i>	<i>1,835</i>	<i>2,024</i>	<i>2,391</i>
Investigations not finalised	212	367	510	373	294	771
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>2,577</i>	<i>2,759</i>	<i>2,937</i>	<i>2,208</i>	<i>2,318</i>	<i>3,162</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	68	92	108	85	99	44
Total notifications	2,645	2,851	3,045	2,293	2,417	3,206
Proportion of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	44.2	41.8	39.0	38.7	40.0	34.4
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	45.2	42.1	40.7	41.3	43.7	40.1
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>89.4</i>	<i>83.9</i>	<i>79.7</i>	<i>80.0</i>	<i>83.7</i>	<i>74.6</i>
Investigations not finalised	8.0	12.9	16.7	16.3	12.2	24.0
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>97.4</i>	<i>96.8</i>	<i>96.5</i>	<i>96.3</i>	<i>95.9</i>	<i>98.6</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	2.6	3.2	3.5	3.7	4.1	1.4
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(b) 'Other notifications' include those not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Note: If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.23: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Western Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	43	55	32	39	36	19
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	104	119	98	119	84	69
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	3.8	4.9	2.8	3.5	4.3	2.0
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	9.1	10.5	8.7	10.7	9.9	7.4

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.24: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Western Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	24	33	34	31	22	14
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	63	86	81	98	62	57
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	2.4	2.7	3.2	2.8	2.3	1.4
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	6.2	6.9	7.5	8.9	6.5	5.7

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.25: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, Western Australia, 2003-04 and 2004-05

	2003-04	2004-05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	10	10
2 placements	18	11
3 placements	2	2
4-5 placements	1	4
6-10 placements	—	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	31	27
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	6	5
2 placements	9	11
3 placements	3	3
4-5 placements	2	2
6-10 placements	3	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	23	21
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	15	14
2 placements	8	31
3 placements	6	8
4-5 placements	8	17
6-10 placements	7	6
11 or more placements	1	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	45	76
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	8	13
2 placements	7	11
3 placements	5	7
4-5 placements	9	18
6-10 placements	18	18
11 or more placements	10	13
Unknown	—	—
Total children	57	80
All children		
1 placement	39	42
2 placements	42	64
3 placements	16	20
4-5 placements	20	41
6-10 placements	28	24
11 or more placements	11	13
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	156	204

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.26: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Western Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001 ^(a)	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	184	223	280	323	319	400
Other children	157	214	228	284	304	337
All children	341	437	508	607	623	737
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	43.8	48.9	54.8	56.7	54.3	57.8
Other children	17.3	21.8	23.2	27.2	27.8	29.6
All children	25.7	30.4	34.0	37.6	37.1	40.3

(a) During 2001–02 new practices were introduced to improve the identification of Indigenous clients. Much of the increase in the number of Indigenous clients from 2001–02 is likely to be due to the improvements in the recording of Indigenous status rather than an increase in the number of Indigenous clients.

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.27: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Western Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001 ^(a)	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	260	314	347	399	403	480
Other children	524	570	569	631	655	700
All children	784	884	916	1,030	1,058	1,180
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	80.7	90.2	87.8	92.1	89.8	91.8
Other children	91.9	93.1	93.4	94.5	92.4	93.0
All children	87.9	92.1	91.2	93.6	91.4	92.5

(a) During 2001–02 new practices were introduced to improve the identification of Indigenous clients. Much of the increase in the number of Indigenous clients from 2001–02 is likely to be due to the improvements in the recording of Indigenous status rather than an increase in the number of Indigenous clients.

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.28: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Western Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001 ^(a)	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	191	223	280	323	315	400
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	135	136	125	140	155	168
Total placed in accordance with Principle	326	359	405	463	470	568
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	94	89	101	101	110	115
Independent living/unknown	—	8	5	6	7	9
Total Indigenous children in care	420	456	511	570	587	692
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	45.4	49.8	55.3	57.3	54.3	58.6
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	32.1	30.3	24.7	24.8	26.7	24.6
Total placed in accordance with Principle	77.6	80.1	80.0	82.1	81.0	83.2
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	22.4	19.9	20.0	17.9	19.0	16.8
Total Indigenous children in care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) During 2001–02 new practices were introduced to improve the identification of Indigenous clients. Much of the increase in the number of Indigenous clients from 2001–02 is likely to be due to the improvements in the recording of Indigenous status rather than an increase in the number of Indigenous clients.

(b) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(c) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

South Australia

Table A1.29: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, South Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	2,085	1,998	2,230	2,423	2,490	2,384
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	2,917	3,126	3,385	3,705	3,893	3,866
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>5,002</i>	<i>5,124</i>	<i>5,615</i>	<i>6,128</i>	<i>6,383</i>	<i>6,250</i>
Investigations not finalised	16	32	18	47	62	29
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>5,018</i>	<i>5,156</i>	<i>5,633</i>	<i>6,175</i>	<i>6,445</i>	<i>6,279</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	10,163	4,832	5,570	7,267	8,472	11,194
Total notifications	15,181	9,988	11,203	13,442	14,917	17,473
Proportion of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	13.7	20.0	19.9	18.0	16.7	13.6
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	19.2	31.3	30.2	27.6	26.1	22.1
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>32.9</i>	<i>51.3</i>	<i>50.1</i>	<i>45.6</i>	<i>42.8</i>	<i>35.8</i>
Investigations not finalised	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>33.1</i>	<i>51.6</i>	<i>50.3</i>	<i>45.9</i>	<i>43.2</i>	<i>35.9</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	66.9	48.4	49.7	54.1	56.8	64.1
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(b) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police); and those notifications not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Note: If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.30: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, South Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	242	263	286	244	305	304
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	387	408	401	426	497	526
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	13.7	15.4	17.2	13.8	16.0	15.6
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	21.9	23.9	24.2	24.1	26.0	26.9

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.31: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, South Australia, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	n.a.	167	162	165	199	223
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	n.a.	342	353	411	475	476
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	n.a.	7.7	6.9	6.5	7.4	8.0
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	n.a.	15.7	15.1	16.1	17.6	17.1

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.32: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, South Australia, 2003–04 and 2004–05

	2003–04	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	23	20
2 placements	25	9
3 placements	6	8
4–5 placements	3	2
6–10 placements	3	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	60	39
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	10	12
2 placements	12	8
3 placements	7	7
4–5 placements	5	10
6–10 placements	13	7
11 or more placements	1	1
Unknown	—	—
Total children	48	45
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	7	7
2 placements	3	7
3 placements	9	3
4–5 placements	6	7
6–10 placements	15	9
11 or more placements	2	6
Unknown	—	—
Total children	42	39
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	8	6
2 placements	5	8
3 placements	4	8
4–5 placements	12	4
6–10 placements	13	9
11 or more placements	11	5
Unknown	—	—
Total children	53	40
All children		
1 placement	48	45
2 placements	45	32
3 placements	26	26
4–5 placements	26	23
6–10 placements	44	25
11 or more placements	14	12
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	203	163

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.33: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, South Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	47	55	52	52	82
Other children	n.a.	100	104	121	142	182
All children	n.a.	147	159	173	194	264
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	n.a.	20.7	23.7	20.6	22.0	28.7
Other children	n.a.	10.5	10.8	12.2	14.7	17.4
All children	n.a.	12.5	13.3	13.9	16.1	19.9

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.34: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, South Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	144	153	152	167	156	189
Other children	519	538	479	562	590	629
All children	663	691	631	729	746	818
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	100.0	100.0	99.3	99.4	99.4	98.4
Other children	99.8	99.8	93.4	98.4	99.0	97.8
All children	99.8	99.9	99.1	98.6	99.1	98.0

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.35: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, South Australia, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	n.a.	47	55	52	52	82
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	n.a.	111	112	113	131	136
Total placed in accordance with Principle	n.a.	158	167	165	183	218
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	n.a.	69	65	87	53	68
Independent living/unknown	n.a.	—	—	—	—	—
Total Indigenous children in care	n.a.	227	232	252	236	286
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	n.a.	20.7	23.7	20.7	22.1	28.7
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	n.a.	48.9	48.3	44.8	55.5	47.6
Total placed in accordance with Principle	n.a.	69.6	72.0	65.5	77.5	76.2
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	n.a.	30.4	28.0	34.5	22.5	23.8
Total Indigenous children in care	n.a.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(b) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Tasmania

Table A1.36: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Tasmania, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(b)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	97	103	158	213	427	782
Carer/family issues	77	28	19	..	..	..
Not substantiated	182	137	219	335	508	551
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>268</i>	<i>396</i>	<i>548</i>	<i>935</i>	<i>1,333</i>
Investigations not finalised	24	10	57	93	359	500
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>380</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>453</i>	<i>641</i>	<i>1,294</i>	<i>1,833</i>
Other notifications ^(c)	42	37	55	100	5,954	8,955
Total notifications	422	315	508	741	7,248	10,788
Proportion of notifications investigated^(b)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	23.0	32.7	31.1	28.7	5.9	7.2
Carer/family issues	18.2	8.9	3.7	..	..	..
Not substantiated	43.1	43.5	43.1	45.2	7.0	5.1
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>84.4</i>	<i>85.1</i>	<i>78.0</i>	<i>74.0</i>	<i>12.9</i>	<i>12.4</i>
Investigations not finalised	5.7	3.2	11.2	12.6	5.0	4.6
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>90.0</i>	<i>88.3</i>	<i>89.2</i>	<i>86.5</i>	<i>17.9</i>	<i>17.0</i>
Other notifications ^(c)	10.0	11.7	10.8	13.5	82.1	83.0
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data on notifications for 2003–04 should not be compared to previous years. This is because of a change in recording practices due to the centralisation of the intake service. Now every call about a child is recorded as a notification, whereas previously workers made the decision locally about whether the call was a notification.

(b) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(c) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police); and those notifications not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Notes

1. If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.
2. Tasmania introduced new intake and assessment guidelines in July 1997. These new guidelines are likely to be the main reason for the decline in the number of notifications and substantiations between 1999–00 and 2000–01.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.37: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Tasmania, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	6	7	5	3	4	1
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	10	13	8	6	16	31
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	4.9	8.9	5.0	1.9	1.9	0.3
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	8.2	16.5	7.9	3.9	7.7	9.4

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.38: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Tasmania, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	4	9	4	1	3	1
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	13	10	22	15	21	27
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	1.7	6.6	3.2	0.5	1.3	0.3
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	5.5	7.4	17.5	6.8	9.3	7.2

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.39: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Tasmania, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	13	11	11	6	16	19
Other children	207	208	214	65	97	107
All children	220	219	225	71	113	126
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	34.2	35.5	37.9	14.0	29.1	24.4
Other children	40.6	38.4	41.6	15.3	22.5	21.5
All children	40.1	38.3	41.4	15.2	23.2	21.9

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.40: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Tasmania, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	16	13	8	14	21	43
Other children	245	267	257	211	248	296
All children	261	280	265	225	269	339
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	80.0	76.5	61.5	51.9	65.6	87.8
Other children	89.1	88.7	87.1	75.4	90.5	90.8
All children	88.5	88.1	86.0	73.3	87.9	90.4

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.41: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Tasmania, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	13	11	11	6	16	19
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	3	1	2	1	3	1
Total placed in accordance with Principle	16	12	13	7	19	20
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	22	19	16	35	28	54
Independent living/unknown	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1	8	4
Total Indigenous children in care	38	31	29	43	55	78
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	34.2	35.5	37.9	14.3	34.1	25.7
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	7.9	3.2	6.9	2.4	6.4	1.4
Total placed in accordance with Principle	42.1	38.7	44.8	16.7	40.4	27.0
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	57.9	61.3	55.2	83.3	59.6	73.0
Total Indigenous children in care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(b) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Australian Capital Territory

Table A1.42: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australian Capital Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03 ^(a)	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(b)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	233	222	220	310	630	1,213
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	685	355	302	485	770	1,316
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>918</i>	<i>577</i>	<i>522</i>	<i>795</i>	<i>1,400</i>	<i>2,529</i>
Investigations not finalised	113	107	128	452	978	488
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>1,031</i>	<i>684</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>1,247</i>	<i>2,378</i>	<i>3,017</i>
Other notifications ^(c)	158	110	151	877	2,947	4,258
Total notifications	1,189	794	801	2,124	5,325	7,275
Proportion of notifications investigated^(b)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	19.6	28.0	27.5	14.6	11.8	16.7
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	57.6	44.7	37.7	22.8	14.5	18.1
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>77.2</i>	<i>72.7</i>	<i>65.2</i>	<i>37.4</i>	<i>26.3</i>	<i>34.8</i>
Investigations not finalised	9.5	13.5	16.0	21.3	18.4	6.7
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>86.7</i>	<i>86.1</i>	<i>81.1</i>	<i>58.7</i>	<i>44.7</i>	<i>41.5</i>
Other notifications ^(c)	13.3	13.9	18.9	41.3	55.3	58.5
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) In 2002–03, the ACT changed the arrangements for recording reports of concerns about children and young people. This and stricter mandatory reporting guidelines have led to an increase in numbers.

(b) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(c) 'Other notifications' include those dealt with by other means (e.g. provision of advice, referral to support services or referral to the police); and those notifications not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Notes

1. If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.
2. In 1999–00 child protection policies were changed to focus on the level of harm to the child rather than an incident. This change is likely to be the main reason for the decrease in the number of substantiations.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.43: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Australian Capital Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	17	21	18	12	22	78
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	28	34	25	27	33	169
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	4.3	11.1	8.9	2.6	8.3	16.0
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	7.1	17.9	12.3	5.8	12.4	34.6

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.44: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Australian Capital Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	19	n.a.	4	4	14	42
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	38	n.a.	24	17	59	125
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	2.4	n.a.	1.3	1.5	3.5	11.7
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	4.8	n.a.	7.7	6.5	14.8	34.7

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.45: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, Australian Capital Territory, 2003–04 and 2004–05

	2003–04	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	26	72
2 placements	9	17
3 placements	8	2
4–5 placements	3	—
6–10 placements	—	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	46	91
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	2	5
2 placements	1	7
3 placements	—	3
4–5 placements	1	1
6–10 placements	—	1
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	4	17
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	—	8
2 placements	1	6
3 placements	—	1
4–5 placements	—	2
6–10 placements	1	2
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	2	19
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	5	1
2 placements	2	3
3 placements	2	2
4–5 placements	1	—
6–10 placements	1	1
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	11	7
All children		
1 placement	33	86
2 placements	13	33
3 placements	10	8
4–5 placements	5	3
6–10 placements	2	4
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	63	134

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.46: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Australian Capital Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	9	11	7	22	29	21
Other children	42	44	56	76	82	92
All children	51	55	63	98	111	113
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	37.5	37.9	25.9	45.8	50.0	35.0
Other children	28.0	23.7	28.4	33.2	34.2	32.6
All children	29.3	25.6	28.1	35.4	37.2	33.0

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.47: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Australian Capital Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	21	19	20	28	35	36
Other children	109	116	119	137	154	161
All children	130	135	139	165	189	197
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	100.0	95.0	95.2	90.3	100.0	100.0
Other children	99.1	98.3	98.3	93.8	98.7	98.2
All children	99.2	97.8	97.9	93.2	99.0	98.5

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.48: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Australian Capital Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	9	11	7	22	29	22
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	11	6	13	5	6	16
Total placed in accordance with Principle	20	17	20	27	35	38
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	9	12	7	21	23	20
Independent living/unknown	—	—	—	—	—	2
Total Indigenous children in care	29	29	27	48	58	60
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(a)	31.0	37.9	25.9	45.9	50.0	38.0
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	37.9	20.7	48.1	10.4	10.3	27.6
Total placed in accordance with Principle	69.0	58.6	74.1	56.3	60.3	65.5
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(b)	31.0	41.4	25.9	43.8	39.7	34.5
Total Indigenous children in care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(b) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Northern Territory

Table A1.49: Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Northern Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Number of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	393	349	349	327	527	473
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	382	406	475	418	484	530
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>775</i>	<i>755</i>	<i>824</i>	<i>745</i>	<i>1,011</i>	<i>1,003</i>
Investigations not finalised	4	14	11	145	61	177
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>779</i>	<i>769</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>890</i>	<i>1,072</i>	<i>1,180</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	658	782	770	664	885	921
Total notifications	1,437	1,551	1,605	1,554	1,957	2,101
Proportion of notifications investigated^(a)						
Investigations finalised						
Substantiated	27.3	22.5	21.7	21.0	26.9	22.5
Carer/family issues	..	..	..	..	..	..
Not substantiated	26.6	26.2	29.6	26.9	24.7	25.2
<i>Total finalised</i>	<i>53.9</i>	<i>48.7</i>	<i>51.3</i>	<i>47.9</i>	<i>51.7</i>	<i>47.7</i>
Investigations not finalised	0.3	0.9	0.7	9.3	3.1	8.4
<i>Total notifications investigated</i>	<i>54.2</i>	<i>49.6</i>	<i>52.0</i>	<i>57.3</i>	<i>54.8</i>	<i>56.2</i>
Other notifications ^(b)	45.8	50.4	48.0	42.7	45.2	43.8
Total notifications	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Investigations relate to notifications received during the financial year. If the investigation was completed by 31 August it is classified as finalised. If the investigation was not completed by 31 August it is classified as not finalised.

(b) 'Other notifications' include those not investigated or dealt with by other means.

Notes

1. If a child was the subject of more than one notification, investigation or substantiation, then each one of these was counted.
2. The Northern Territory includes child concern reports in child protection notifications.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.50: Children who were the subject of a substantiation during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Northern Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	n.a.	n.a.	8	7	9	14
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	n.a.	n.a.	20	35	31	38
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a resubstantiation within 3 months	n.a.	n.a.	2.4	2.1	2.9	2.8
Subject of a resubstantiation within 12 months	n.a.	n.a.	6.0	10.5	9.9	7.7

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.51: Children who were the subject of a decision not to substantiate during the year, who were the subject of a subsequent substantiation within 3 or 12 months, Northern Territory, 1999–00 to 2004–05

	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04 ^(a)	2004–05
Number of children						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	n.a.	n.a.	10	6	7	14
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	n.a.	n.a.	25	22	30	53
As a proportion of all children who were the subject of a substantiation						
Subject of a substantiation within 3 months	n.a.	n.a.	3.0	1.4	2.0	3.2
Subject of a substantiation within 12 months	n.a.	n.a.	7.4	5.0	8.4	12.0

(a) The counting rule for this indicator has been changed since previous reports, which may have resulted in a lowering of the rate for some jurisdictions in 2003–04. Therefore care should be taken when comparing 2003–04 with previous years.

Source: AIHW Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia data collection.

Table A1.52: Number of children exiting out-of-home care, who were on a care and protection order, by number of placements, by length of time in out-of-home care, Northern Territory, 2003–04 and 2004–05

	2003–04	2004–05
1 month to less than 1 year in out-of-home care		
1 placement	32	13
2 placements	6	11
3 placements	3	2
4–5 placements	6	2
6–10 placements	1	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	48	28
1 year to less than 2 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	2	5
2 placements	1	6
3 placements	1	3
4–5 placements	1	—
6–10 placements	—	1
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	5	15
2 years to less than 5 years in out-of-home care		
1 placement	—	2
2 placements	—	1
3 placements	—	—
4–5 placements	—	2
6–10 placements	—	4
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	—	9
5 years or more in out-of-home care		
1 placement	1	3
2 placements	1	—
3 placements	—	—
4–5 placements	1	2
6–10 placements	—	—
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children	3	5
All children		
1 placement	35	23
2 placements	8	18
3 placements	4	5
4–5 placements	8	6
6–10 placements	1	5
11 or more placements	—	—
Unknown	—	—
Total children exiting out-of-home care	56	57

Notes

1. For number of different placements only new placements in which the child had previously not been placed were counted as a separate placement.
2. Table includes all children exiting care who had been in care for 1 month or more and who had been on a care and protection order at some point in the 6 months prior to exiting care

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.53: Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	22	29	22	34	44	45
Other children	4	9	7	12	16	12
All children	26	38	29	46	60	57
As a proportion of all children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	23.4	29.0	21.0	23.9	25.1	20.6
Other children	4.9	14.1	12.1	14.8	19.3	11.3
All children	14.8	23.2	17.8	20.6	23.3	17.6

Note: The percentage of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives or kin was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.54: Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home-based placement at 30 June by Indigenous status, Northern Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of children at 30 June						
Indigenous	73	76	83	105	131	160
Other children	52	39	38	45	44	69
All children	125	115	121	150	175	229
As a proportion of all children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care by Indigenous status at 30 June						
Indigenous	86.9	90.5	93.3	92.1	92.9	95.2
Other children	92.9	95.1	97.4	86.5	89.8	93.2
All children	89.3	92.0	94.5	90.4	92.1	94.6

Note: The percentage of children aged under 12 years in home-based placements was calculated using as the denominator the total number of children under 12 years old in out-of-home placement, by Indigenous status, at 30 June where placement type was known.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Table A1.55: Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Northern Territory, 2000 to 2005

	2000	2001 ^(a)	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of Indigenous children at 30 June						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	28	38	22	51	67	79
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	26	29	54	43	53	71
Total placed in accordance with Principle	54	67	76	94	120	150
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	40	33	27	47	55	68
Independent living/unknown	n.a.	—	2	1	—	—
Total Indigenous children in care	94	100	105	142	175	218
As a proportion of all Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June (excluding Independent living/unknown)						
Placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Placed with relatives/kin ^(b)	29.8	38.0	21.4	36.2	38.3	36.2
Other Indigenous caregiver/Indigenous residential care	27.7	29.0	52.4	30.5	30.3	32.6
Total placed in accordance with Principle	57.4	67.0	73.8	66.7	68.6	68.8
Not placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle						
Total not placed in accordance with Principle^(c)	42.6	33.0	26.2	33.3	31.4	31.2
Total Indigenous children in care	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) In 2001–02 the number of Indigenous children placed with Indigenous relatives/kin may be under enumerated due to data entry error.

(b) This category includes placement with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives/kin.

(c) This category includes placement with other non-Indigenous caregivers or in non-Indigenous residential care.

Note: The definition of relatives/kin used in this table is broader than the definition in other tables because it includes kin relationships based on customary law.

Source: AIHW Children in out-of-home care, Australia data collection.

Appendix 2: Population data

Table A2.1: Annual target population data for children aged 0–17 years, by state and territory ('000)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Indigenous children						
NSW	61.3	62.3	63.0	63.5	64.0	64.4
Vic	12.4	12.5	12.7	12.8	12.9	13.0
Qld	57.1	58.0	59.0	60.0	60.8	61.6
WA	29.3	29.7	30.1	30.3	30.6	30.7
SA	11.4	11.5	11.6	11.7	11.7	11.8
Tas	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.2	8.2	8.2
ACT	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
NT	23.6	23.9	24.2	24.3	24.5	24.6
Australia	205.0	207.9	210.5	212.7	214.6	216.4
Non-Indigenous children						
NSW	1,539.0	1,550.7	1,545.5	1,537.2	1,529.2	1,527.9
Vic	1,135.9	1,142.9	1,142.5	1,141.8	1,142.4	1,145.3
Qld	860.8	871.5	881.3	891.1	901.0	911.9
WA	454.5	456.2	454.7	453.5	453.5	455.1
SA	344.3	342.6	339.9	337.4	334.7	332.9
Tas	112.6	111.8	110.5	109.8	109.5	108.9
ACT	77.9	77.6	76.8	75.8	74.9	74.0
NT	36.1	36.1	35.5	34.9	34.7	34.9
Australia	4,561.9	4,590.3	4,587.6	4,582.5	4,580.7	4,591.6
All children						
NSW	1,600.3	1,613.0	1,608.5	1,600.7	1,593.2	1,592.3
Vic	1,148.3	1,155.4	1,155.2	1,154.6	1,155.3	1,158.3
Qld	917.9	929.5	940.3	951.1	961.8	973.5
WA	483.8	485.9	484.8	483.8	484.1	485.8
SA	355.7	354.1	351.5	349.1	346.4	344.7
Tas	120.7	119.9	118.6	118.0	117.7	117.1
ACT	79.6	79.4	78.6	77.6	76.7	75.8
NT	59.7	60.0	59.7	59.2	59.2	59.5
Australia	4,766.9	4,798.2	4,798.1	4,795.2	4,795.3	4,808.0

Sources: ABS Australian demographic statistics 30 June, 1982–2005; ABS Indigenous population estimates and projections, 1999–2005.

Table A2.2: Annual target population data for children aged 0–12 years, by state and territory ('000)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Indigenous children						
NSW	46.9	47.3	47.3	47.4	47.3	47.3
Vic	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.3
Qld	44.0	44.5	44.9	45.2	45.4	45.5
WA	8.6	8.5	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6
SA	22.3	22.3	22.3	22.4	22.4	22.5
Tas	6.0	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9
ACT	17.6	17.8	17.9	18.0	18.0	18.0
NT	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4
Australia	156.2	157.3	157.9	158.4	158.3	158.5
Non-Indigenous children						
NSW	1,111.0	1,118.9	1,111.9	1,102.2	1,092.3	1,087.3
Vic	819.4	822.1	820.6	818.2	816.0	814.7
Qld	615.6	625.1	631.4	637.3	642.0	646.9
WA	336.6	337.1	334.9	333.2	332.9	333.5
SA	230.8	229.2	227.2	225.2	222.9	220.4
Tas	79.9	79.5	78.2	77.7	77.3	76.7
ACT	39.0	38.7	38.0	37.1	36.3	35.6
NT	43.4	43.7	43.3	42.9	42.6	42.6
Australia	3,276.2	3,294.6	3,286.1	3,274.4	3,263.1	3,258.4
All children						
NSW	1,157.9	1,166.2	1,159.2	1,149.6	1,139.6	1,134.6
Vic	828.9	831.6	830.1	827.6	825.4	824.0
Qld	659.6	669.6	676.3	682.5	687.4	692.4
WA	345.2	345.6	343.5	341.8	341.5	342.1
SA	253.1	251.5	249.5	247.6	245.3	242.9
Tas	85.9	85.4	84.1	83.6	83.2	82.6
ACT	56.6	56.5	55.9	55.1	54.3	53.6
NT	44.7	45.0	44.6	44.3	44.0	44.0
Australia	3,432.4	3,451.9	3,444.0	3,432.8	3,421.4	3,416.9

Sources: ABS Australian demographic statistics 30 June, 1982–2005; ABS Indigenous population estimates and projections, 1999–2005.

Glossary

Although each jurisdiction has its own legislation, policies and practices in relation to child protection, the processes used to protect children are broadly similar. This glossary provides a simplified version of the main terms used in child protection systems across Australia.

Care and protection order

Refers to a legal order or administrative arrangement issued for protective reasons. A care and protection order involves the community services department with a child over and above what is generally considered normal for most children, or has an assumption that the department will have carriage of the order (or a substantial part of it). The involvement might take the form of total responsibility for the welfare of the child (for example, guardianship); or responsibility for overseeing the actions of the person or authority caring for the child; or responsibility for providing or arranging accommodation or reporting or giving consideration to the child's welfare. Depending on the state or territory regulation under which the order is issued, the order can be from a court, Children's Panel, Minister of the Crown, authorised community services department officer (for example, director) or similar tribunal or officer.

Child protection notification, investigation, substantiation and resubstantiation

Notification

Child protection notifications consist of reports made to an authorised department by persons or other bodies making allegations of child abuse or neglect, child maltreatment or harm to a child. Notifications should not include reports regarding wider concerns about children or families which are classified as child concern reports.

A notification can only involve one child; where it is claimed that two children have been abused or neglected, this is counted as two notifications, even if the children are from one family. Where there is more than one notification about the same 'event', this should be counted as only one notification. Where there is more than one notification between 1 July 1999 and 30 June 2005, but relating to different events (for instance, a different type of abuse or neglect or a different person believed responsible for the abuse or neglect), these notifications should be counted as separate notifications.

Investigation

An investigation is the process whereby the community services department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification and makes an assessment about the harm or degree of harm to the child and their protective needs. An investigation includes the interviewing or sighting of the subject child where it is practicable to do so.

Investigations included in the national data collection included in this report relate to those child protection notifications of children aged 0–17 years that were made to an authorised department between 1 July 1999 and 30 June 2005, and which were subsequently investigated.

Substantiation

A substantiation in the national data collection is a child protection notification made to relevant authorities during the financial year ending 30 June, which was investigated and the

investigation was finalised by 31 August of the following financial year, and it was concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, was being or was likely to be abused or neglected or otherwise harmed.

Resubstantiation

Children who are the subject of a resubstantiation are those who were the subject of a substantiation in a given year, and were also the subject of at least one subsequent notification within the periods specified (3 months and 12 months) that was subsequently substantiated. The subsequent notification must be made after the initial substantiation.

Out-of-home care

Refers to out-of-home overnight care for children and young people under 18 years of age, where the state or territory makes a financial payment to the carer. This includes placements with relatives/kin (other than parents), placements in facility-based or residential care, foster care and independent living arrangements. It does not include placements made in disability services, medical or psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, overnight childcare services or supported accommodation assistance placements. The data exclude children in unfunded placements and also children living with parents where the state makes a financial payment.

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