
10 SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN CRISIS

Summary

This chapter covers three main categories of government funded support services: child protection, alternative care, and crisis and supported accommodation. Initial indicator frameworks have been developed for each service and it is intended that improvements will be made in subsequent reports.

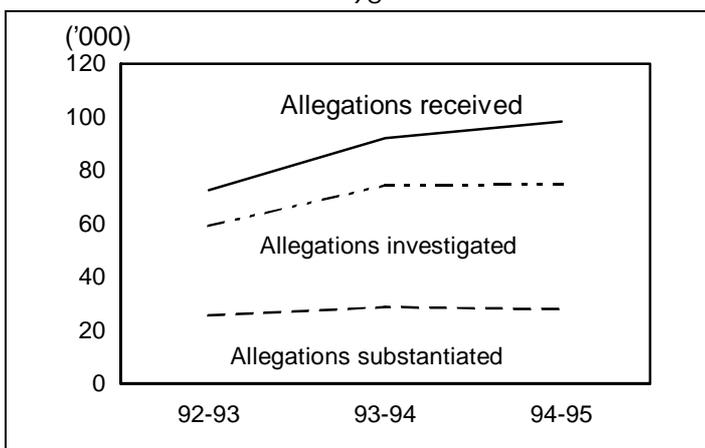
For the purposes of making comparisons, both within and across jurisdictions, there are a number of limitations with the data collected for this Chapter. These are outlined in Section 10.3. Accordingly, data should be treated as indicative, rather than definitive, and caution is required in drawing conclusions based on the information presented.

The following preliminary conclusions are covered in more detail in Section 10.3.

Child Protection

Allegations and substantiations

Allegations, investigations and substantiations, Australia, 1992 – 93 to 1994 – 95

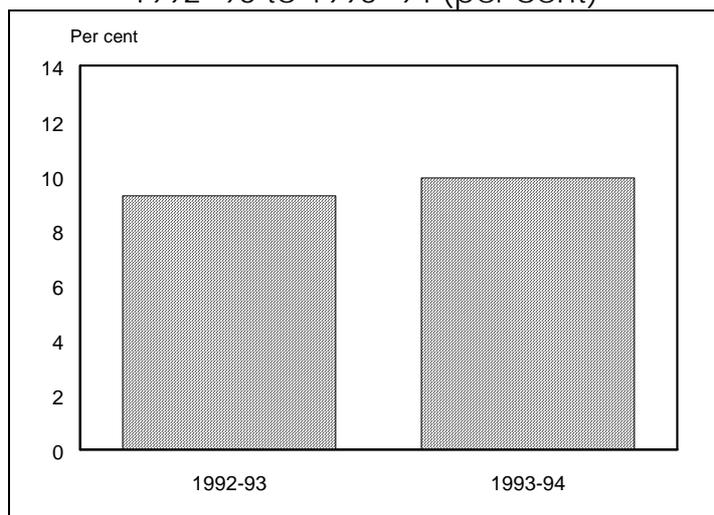


There has been a significant increase in community concern about child welfare, in part reflected in the number of allegations of child abuse and neglect (maltreatment). While the number of allegations and investigations have risen Australia-wide, the rate of substantiation has not risen to the same extent. In cases where the responsible Community Service

Department believes that an allegation warrants an investigation, about 80 per cent of investigations are started within 5 working days.

Limited outcomes data

Repeat maltreatment, within 6 months, Australia, 1992-93 to 1993-94 (per cent)



Note: Substantiated repeat maltreatment rates are defined differently by different jurisdictions and are significantly affected by different counting rules. Australia-wide rates have been calculated as the weighted average of jurisdiction rates. Data were not available for WA and the NT.

Data on outcomes for children are not comprehensive.

Information was collected on repeat maltreatment (children who had a completed and substantiated maltreatment case that was followed by a further substantiated maltreatment notification within a specified period). The number of repeat maltreatment cases within six months as a proportion of all cases was about 9 per cent Australia-wide in 1993-94.

In general, information on the outcomes for children is

very limited. There are no nationally comparable data available at this stage on longer term outcomes for children and response times to complete investigations. Cost data are also very limited at this stage.

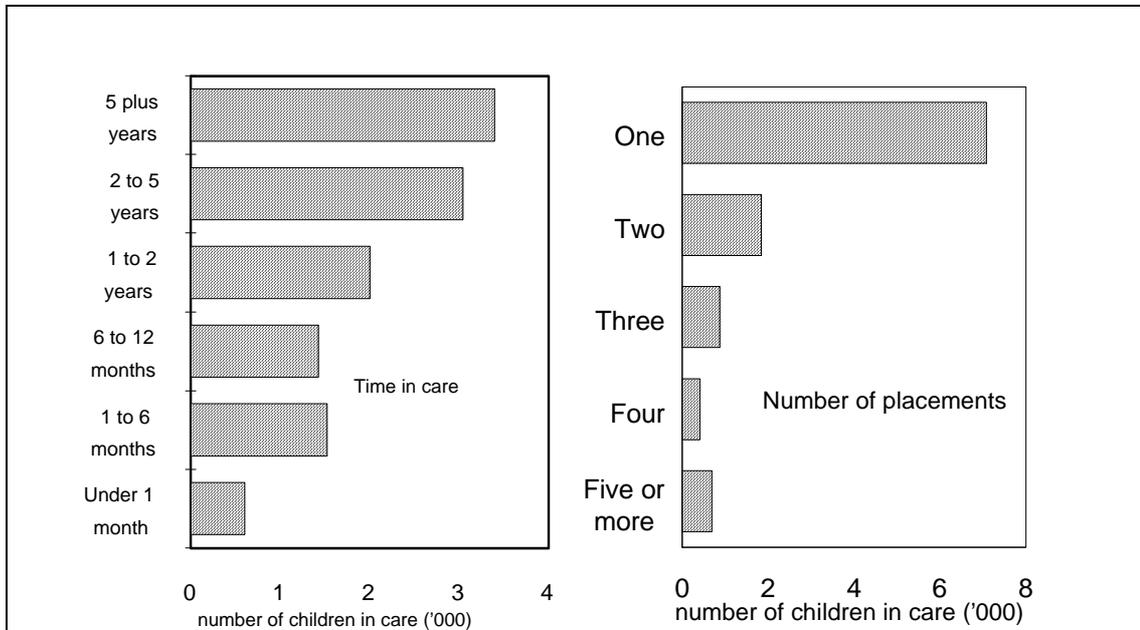
Alternative care for children

Reasons for entry of children into alternative care

Alternative care aims to provide services which meet the various needs of children for care and protection. Information provided by four jurisdictions indicated that of all those children that entered alternative care in 1994-95, about 14 per cent did so directly as a result of substantiated abuse and neglect. It would be expected that this share would be considerably greater if respite placements — for which the reasons for entry tend to be different — were considered separately. Aggregate information on the other reasons for entry to care is currently limited.

Data for six jurisdictions indicate that of those children who enter alternative care, over 50 per cent remain in care for more than 2 years. Of those children who were in alternative care for the entire 1994–95 year, about 65 per cent had one placement.

Length of time in care, and number of placements, Australia, 1994–95



Note: Based on NSW, Qld, WA, SA, Tas and ACT data.

Note: Based on NSW, Qld, WA, SA and ACT data.

Limited data on quality of service

Information on the quality of alternative care is very limited at this stage. Although data were collected on maltreatment while in care, analysis is not straightforward. One reason is the variety of alternative care living situations for children (such as placement with relatives and supervision of children in their own homes) in addition to placement in foster care or other care outside the home.

The main gaps in comparable alternative care data for States and Territories comprise the degree to which goals for children are realised on exit from care, and the costs of delivering services.

Crisis and supported accommodation

A two week Australia-wide census of Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) providers indicated that in September 1994 the average

number accommodated each night averaged 12 000 people. Of all new arrivals requesting accommodation during the period, 44 per cent could be accommodated. Including requests for accommodation from new arrivals and those already accommodated, 6.6 per cent of total requests could not be met during the period. The national average of those that enter SAAP services whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other emergency accommodation was just under 15 per cent (one night censuses held from May 1992 to November 1994).

A new data collection system linked with the objectives of SAAP is currently being developed. This will assist in overcoming some of the reservations held concerning current national data collections.

10.1 Profile of the sector

Support to individuals and families is provided by a range of government and non-government agencies in areas such as community services, health, housing, education, and the justice system. There are a wide variety of services offered by the community services sector which aim to strengthen communities, prevent individual and family crisis, provide effective support when a crisis has occurred, and prevent re-occurrence of crisis. Often, the distinctions between these service categories are blurred.

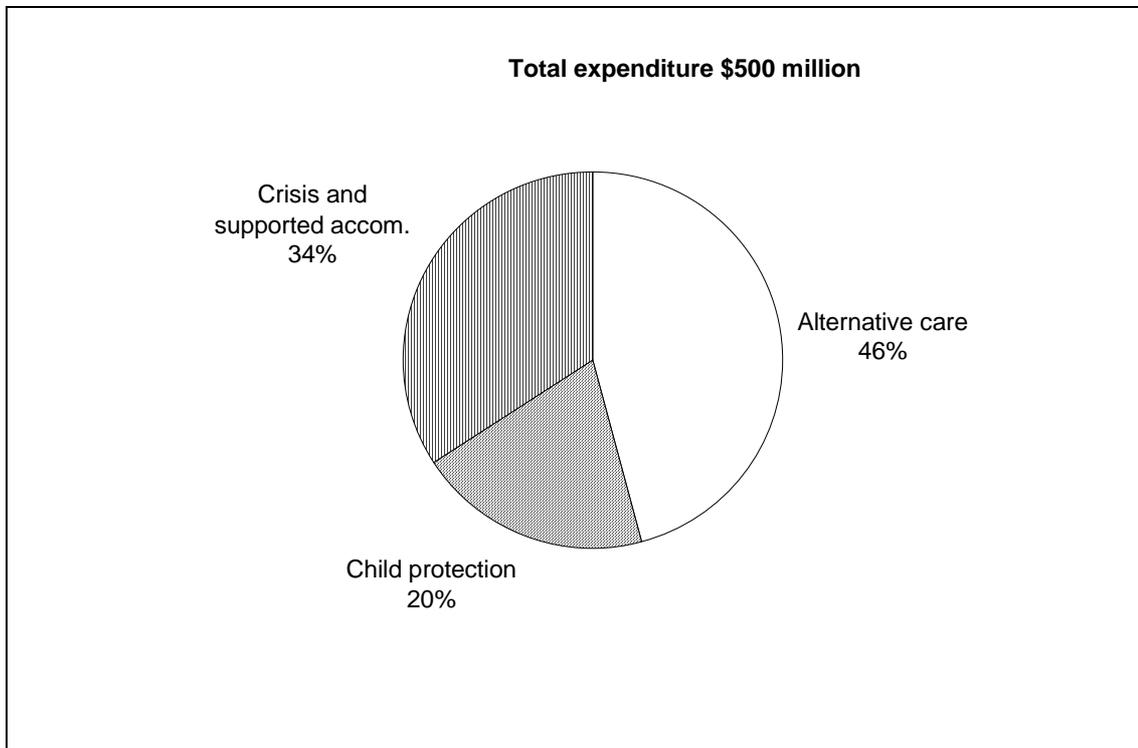
This chapter focuses on the following government funded services:

- **child protection;**
- **alternative care; and**
- **crisis and supported accommodation.**

Each of these services aims to provide assistance to individuals and families in crisis; to stabilise the crisis and alleviate its effects; and to prevent the likelihood of a crisis occurring.

Detailed nationally comparable data on the size of these services are currently not available and efforts to address this are discussed in 'Future directions' (see Section 10.4). However, it is estimated that total recurrent government expenditure for these services was about \$500 million Australia-wide in 1993–94.

Figure 10.1: Recurrent expenditure on child protection, alternative care, and crisis and supported accommodation, Australia, 1993–94 (per cent)



Source: IC estimates, and IC (1995 p. 98).

There are significant linkages between these three services (see Box 1). There are also strong linkages between these and other services, such as juvenile justice.

However, child protection, alternative care, and crisis and supported accommodation are each quite different in terms of their objectives, nature of services, mode of delivery, client base, and the roles of each sphere of government in funding, service delivery and regulation. These distinguishing features are outlined below.

Child protection services

Child protection services aim to:

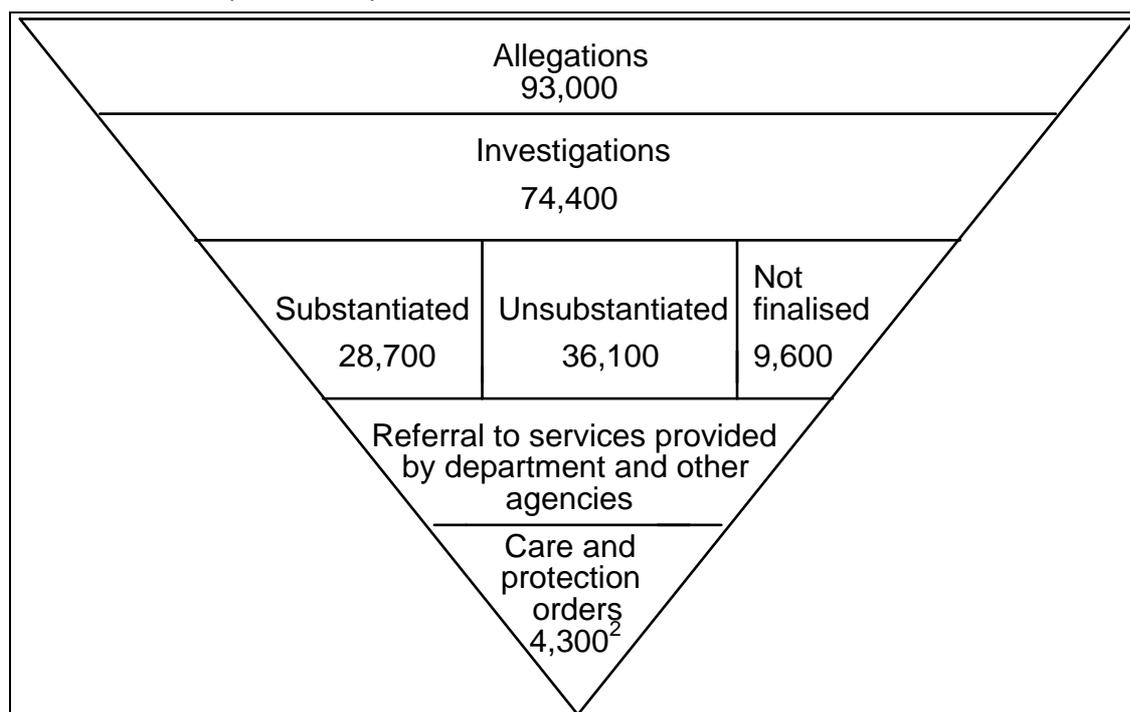
- identify child abuse and neglect (child maltreatment);
- reduce the occurrence and re-occurrence of child maltreatment; and
- minimise its effects on children and families.

These activities include: community education; responding to allegations of child maltreatment; and undertaking investigations subject to the legislative provisions. Further, the States and Territories provide a range of services designed to support families and treat children at risk, and to prevent the occurrence of maltreatment.

In situations where children cannot be safely cared for by their families, the responsible Department assesses the level of risk and possible harm to the child and considers the application of a number of options and strategies to ensure the protection of the child. These include a range of services to support and maintain the child at home and a range of alternative care and treatment services. These can be implemented either with or without the support of a statutory order and supervision.

These features of child protection services are illustrated in Figure 10.2.

Figure 10.2: Child protection and welfare services, Australia, 1993–94 (numbers)



Source: Data on allegations, allegations warranting an investigation, substantiated and unsubstantiated cases (including 'child at risk' category), and 'not finalised' were provided by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

- Notes: 1 The category 'unsubstantiated' includes unsubstantiated, child at risk, and no action possible.
 2 The number of admissions to care and protection orders (guardianship and non-guardianship) in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA, Tasmania and the NT in 1993–94 (Angus and Golley 1995 p. 19). These may relate, in part, to investigations undertaken in 1992–93.

In 1993–94, there were about 93 000 allegations of maltreatment Australia-wide. Of these, there were 74 400 referrals which Departments considered warranted investigation. Of 64 800 cases that were finalised, there were about 28 700 (or 44 per cent) in which Departments determined that child maltreatment had taken place¹.

The number of investigations undertaken into alleged incidents of child maltreatment has continued to increase markedly, rising by 75 per cent over the five year period from 1988–89 to 1993–94. The number of substantiated cases has, however, increased at a lower rate (Angus and Woodward 1995).

These figures should not be interpreted as reflecting the actual incidence or need for child protection services. In examining trends over time the following factors need to be taken into account:

- campaigns to educate the community about child maltreatment, mandatory reporting, and reporting protocols have led to an increase in the number of allegations;
- the State and Territory Community Service Departments have different arrangements, particularly with the police, about which type of referrals are accepted and investigated. An example is that non-familial maltreatment is more likely to be investigated by the police in Queensland and would not be included in Departmental statistics; and
- actual maltreatment is likely to be higher than cases recorded as substantiated. The extent of hidden abuse and neglect is difficult to determine.

Preventing the occurrence or re-occurrence of child maltreatment is, in part, linked to the availability of services that promote effective family functioning and alleviate stress on parents and children. These services include child abuse and neglect prevention programs, child care, child and maternal health services, parenting programs, programs to alleviate problems of alcohol and substance abuse, education, programs aimed at reducing unemployment, social security, public housing, crisis and supported accommodation, and alternative care (for example, for short respite periods).

Institutional arrangements

Responsibility for the funding and provision, as well as the legislative and regulatory framework of child protection services, lies with the States and Territories.

¹ Angus and Woodward (1995). Reported figures have been rounded to the nearest 100. In addition to substantiated and unsubstantiated investigations, some jurisdictions have a category of ‘unsubstantiated but child at risk’ which comprised 4 per cent of the findings.

The Commonwealth has no service provision responsibility in this area, its role being limited to research, information provision, and co-ordination of the National Prevention Strategy (NPS)².

Non-government organisations (NGOs) provide both preventive and special support services to children and families where children have been maltreated or are considered to be at risk of maltreatment. States and Territories contribute to the funding of these types of services. The nature of these prevention and support services that are provided and the government/NGO service provision mix, varies among jurisdictions.

Alternative care

Where children are unable to live with their families for reasons related to their safety or because of family crisis, a range of alternative placement services are provided by State and Territory Community Services Departments. All jurisdictions provide these services only when at-home support services are not adequate to enable families to care safely for their children. There were at least 15 000 children in alternative care across Australia at 30 June 1995³.

The type of alternative care service provided and the intended outcomes vary according to the reasons leading to the child's entry into care and his or her personal and family circumstances.

Reasons for entering care

Of those children who entered alternative care — in four jurisdictions in 1994–95 — for about 14 per cent of children the reason was substantiated child abuse and neglect⁴. Death of parents was a relatively small component (1 per cent). Most children enter care for 'other' reasons (88 per cent of all new admissions);

² This includes the establishment of the National Child Protection Council in 1991 and the development of the National Prevention Strategy (NPS) for child abuse and neglect which provides for \$12 million over the four year period from 1994-95 to 1997-98.

³ Data were not available for the NT and are incomplete for some jurisdictions. NSW data include all children in care (that is, in government provided services and in services provided by NGOs). Data bases for some jurisdictions are not complete as children placed with NGOs are not included. The definition of alternative care in Queensland is different to other jurisdictions. See the general note to Queensland's alternative care data, Section 10.5.

⁴ Data were provided by NSW, WA, SA, and the ACT, although as noted above, these data have been provided using different definitions of alternative care. These jurisdictions represent about 50 per cent of the Australian child population. The exclusion of respite placements, for which reasons for entry tend to be different, from the number of children entering care would be expected to increase the share of those entering care as a result of substantiated abuse and neglect.

however, national data on the composition of this category are not readily available.

A study by the WA Department for Family and Children's Services (prior to 1 July 1995, the Department for Community Development) indicated that the reasons for entry to care in 1994–95 were: to provide respite for a care giver (20 per cent); as a result of a child maltreatment investigation (18 per cent); or because the care giver could not care adequately (13 per cent), or had a physical or psychiatric illness (15 per cent), had a conflict with the child (7 per cent), or was in custody, homeless, or unable to be located (13 per cent) (Family and Children's Services 1995).

Placements

Placements may be either voluntary, often because of family crisis, or the result of a care and protection order. In Victoria, for example, about 21 per cent of all placements are voluntary.

Many placements aim to achieve long term stable care for the child. This can be important in cases where there has been significant harm to the child or where other family members are not available. Other placements aim to contribute to reunification of child and family. They would include planned respite or temporary care.

Period and types of care

The time spent in alternative care — which varies from one or two days to a number of years until the young person reaches 18 years of age — relates to the purpose of the placement, the age of the child entering care, and the extent to which family problems are able to be addressed.

Where possible, Departments prefer to place children in the care of appropriate extended family members. When care by relatives is not suitable, foster family care is the most prevalent form of placement.

Institutional arrangements

As is the case for child protection services, responsibility for the funding and provision of alternative care rests largely with State and Territory governments. However, the role played by NGOs in the provision of alternative care is far greater than in child protection services, with government funding to NGOs comprising about 35 per cent of government alternative care expenditure⁵. In NSW, actual expenditure on non-government services was about 25 per cent of

⁵ IC estimate; and IC (1995).

the alternative care budget. In Victoria, the non-government sector is the major service provider, representing 68 per cent of the total alternative care services budget in 1994–95. In WA, NGOs accounted for about 30 per cent of total expenditure for care of children in 1992–93. Of this NGOs expenditure, governments funded 90 per cent.

Box 1: Relationships between child protection, alternative care, and supported accommodation services

Linkages between child protection and alternative care: These are often seen as two points on the service continuum to support children and families. Alternative care provides both placement and support services for children who cannot remain at home due to the risk of maltreatment or substantiated child abuse and neglect. Where the goal is to reunite the child with their family, services aim to ensure that the child's family remain involved in key decision making and care of the child. Alternative care is also used as part of a process to prevent maltreatment through supporting families and reducing stress. The most obvious link, however, is that children under care and protection orders — particularly guardianship orders (wardship) — are most commonly placed in alternative care.

At 30 June 1994 there were 12 750 children under care and protection orders (both guardianship and non-guardianship) and of these 66 per cent were living in alternative (primarily foster) care.

Linkages between the above crisis services for children, and crisis and supported accommodation: The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is primarily a brokerage program assisting people who are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless and in crisis, to access appropriate support services so that they can move towards or achieve independence.

A large proportion of SAAP clients are children accompanying adults escaping domestic violence or family crisis, although SAAP does not fund services exclusively for children under the official school leaving age. While some young people under school leaving age use SAAP services, this is generally not considered to be an appropriate placement for this younger group. Accordingly, the links between SAAP services and State and Territory welfare services are generally for the purpose of achieving an appropriate placement for the young person.

Crisis and supported accommodation

Before 1985 services to the homeless were provided by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, as well as by NGOs and these services varied greatly in quality, scope, and approach. After a review completed in 1983, the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments negotiated Agreements which encompass the majority of these services entitled the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). While there remain some State and Territory co-ordinated crisis accommodation services this Chapter focuses on the SAAP activities as the largest provider of services to homeless people.

The SAAP provides transitional supported accommodation and associated services to homeless people or people who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless, with the aim of assisting them to achieve greater independence. The accommodation services take a number of forms (such as transitional supported accommodation, refuge, motel/hotel, outreach and community placement). SAAP also includes support for adults and children experiencing, or at risk of, domestic violence. Support services are an integral part of SAAP. They are varied in nature, and include provision of meals, referral services, and assistance with, or advocacy for: long term housing; short term accommodation; financial assistance; living skills; family reconciliation; legal advice; transport; obtaining benefit or pension; drug or alcohol rehabilitation; and employment and training.

The current SAAP agreement is in force for the five years to December 1999. In 1994–95, funding of \$185 million was provided to fund 1600 service outlets. This funding was shared between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments, with the Commonwealth providing 56 per cent (\$105 million).

The program provides for recurrent expenditure, with capital funds being provided by the Commonwealth-funded Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP)⁶.

Expenditure on SAAP has increased strongly since its inception, growing in nominal terms by over 60 per cent over the five year period to 1994–95. The role and function of the program have also expanded with a wide cross-section of the community being eligible for assistance.

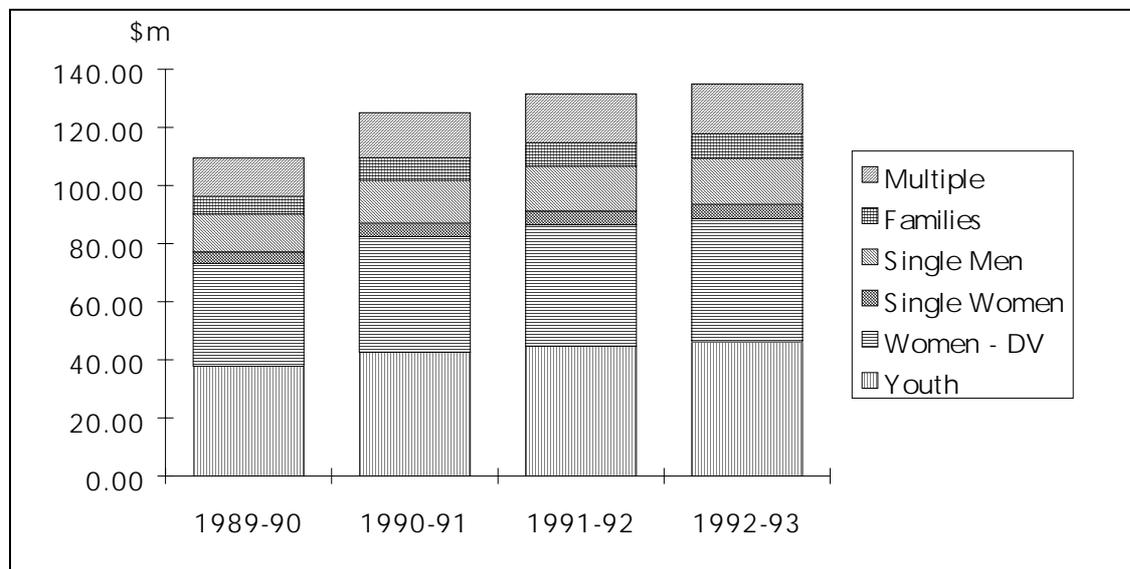
Real expenditure, by target group, is shown in Figure 10.3.

The usage of SAAP services is indicated by the two week Australia-wide census conducted in September 1994. This indicated that on average, about 12 000 people were accommodated each night, representing the provision of about 170 000 bed nights over the 2 week period (Department of Housing and Regional Development). The average length of stay in SAAP accommodation

⁶ The CAP is not included in this chapter.

for those surveyed in the one night census in November 1994 was 42 weeks for males and 19 weeks for females (SAAP 1995b).

Figure 10.3: SAAP real expenditure, by target group, 1989–90 to 1992–93 (\$ million)



Source: Lindsay (1993).

Institutional arrangements

SAAP is a joint Commonwealth-State recurrent funds program. Day to day administration of the program is a State and Territory government responsibility while the Commonwealth responsibilities, in consultation with the States and Territories, include:

- development of agreed national outcomes and associated performance indicators;
- setting of national priorities and objectives through a rolling three year national Strategic Plan;
- national program monitoring and evaluation, including national data collection, analysis and research;
- development of user rights mechanisms; and
- the role of national program financial manager.

Services under SAAP are primarily provided by NGOs with funding from governments.

10.2 Recent developments

There are a number of recent developments that impact on service delivery and the assessment of performance.

Child welfare and child maltreatment

The increase in reported instances of suspected child abuse and neglect combined with a slower rate of increase in substantiations in many jurisdictions have led States and Territories to examine the nature of reports received and review responses to these reports. Such examinations and reviews have occurred, or are occurring, in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA, and SA.

There is, therefore, a range of activities being undertaken aimed at clarifying the role of child protection services within a broader context of child and family welfare. NSW is currently piloting an approach to the intake of child protection matters which focuses on identifying families in need of early intervention and support. Victoria is currently undertaking pilots in four areas to examine the relationship between primary care services and child protection services. The pilots are aimed at removing the need for child and family contact with the child protection system, or preventing their further entry into the system following initial contact. WA is currently piloting a response which differentiates concerns about children and their families from allegations of abuse and neglect which is aimed at more effectively responding to the needs of these two groups for family support and child protection. Queensland, NSW, and Tasmania are currently reviewing their child protection policy and legislation.

Mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect

Mandatory reporting places a legal requirement on mandated professions to report instances where they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. With the exception of WA⁷ and the ACT⁸, all jurisdictions have implemented mandatory reporting of child abuse. Victoria, where mandatory reporting was introduced from 1993, has adopted a staged approach. This has affected the rate of reporting in Victoria from 1992–93.

⁷ WA has comprehensive reporting protocols with other Government Departments and is in the process of developing a Child Maltreatment/Assault and Services Register.

⁸ The ACT will undertake a staged regional approach to the training of various professional groups who will then be mandated to report physical and/or sexual abuse from 1 June 1997.

Emphasis on family and community based care

A development over the last decade or so has been a change in the approach of governments to providing a broader range of options, including alternative care for families, when children cannot live at home. Providing alternative care in a smaller, more personalised, form — rather than the care provided by the larger care institutions of the past — for a limited and planned period can provide positive outcomes for children and families.

Foster care is usually the preferred form of care for particular groups of children, including those aged 0 to 5 years and primary school age children, as it allows children the opportunity to develop relationships with one or two consistent care givers. The option of residential care is required for young people who choose not to live within a family context, and/or whose needs are complex and cannot be addressed within a family environment. There has also been an increased use of voluntary agreements with parents rather than statutory intervention.

Crisis and supported accommodation

A major development is the introduction of a new information framework for the program (see Section 10.4).

10.3 Framework of performance indicators and summary of results

This Section presents a summary of results that are contained in the data tables for each jurisdiction (see Section 10.5). Non-comparable data, including the results of research studies, are presented in the 'Additional performance information' segment for each jurisdiction. Definitions of the indicators and the variables are provided in Section 10.6.

Child protection

Indicator framework

An initial framework of indicators has been developed for child protection (Figure 10.4). As noted above, although it is intended that improvements be made (see Section 10.4), the data collected in this report will provide a base for some comparisons in subsequent years. An example of an area for future development is consideration of indicators that may not be collected on an annual basis.

The development of this initial framework was not straightforward. Some of the complex issues were:

- *inability to determine the incidence of child abuse and neglect.* State and Territory data do not reflect the incidence of child abuse and neglect. The number of incidents substantiated is an indicator only of confirmed incidents reported to Departments. Comparisons between jurisdictions of ‘substantiations per 1000’ should be undertaken only with extreme caution because of the different criteria used for substantiation. The percentage of finalised investigations which are substantiated indicates findings of maltreatment following finalised investigations. In cases where investigations have been finalised but data have not been entered on information systems, the percentage finalised may describe data entry practices rather than the outcome of investigation and assessment;
- *response times to commence and to complete investigations.* These measure the timeliness of response and indicate conformity with good practice. However, the proportion of allegations that are investigated varies across States and Territories due to policy decisions. Further, the actions that constitute an ‘investigation’ also vary across jurisdictions. In addition, some investigations may reasonably be in process at the cut-off date specified for the collection of finalised cases for each period;
- *referral to services.* This indicator of ‘effectiveness’ attempts to capture the referral of non-statutory services to those in need. There are a number of problems with this measure: not all cases that are investigated require or will accept services; there is a wide variation within and between jurisdictions about the definition of ‘service’; whether services are recorded as provided to families or children; and there are differences in how referrals to services are validated. In addition, referrals are likely to be affected by perceptions of the availability of services, particularly in remote and rural areas. This is likely to significantly affect the comparability of this measure across regions;
- *repeat maltreatment.* As a measure of effectiveness, this indicates the degree to which cases that have been completed and substantiated are followed by a further substantiated case of abuse and neglect within specified periods. The form of repeat maltreatment may be different to the nature of that formerly substantiated. In some cases, it may be a different maltreater; and
- *unit cost measure.* It is currently difficult to capture the costs of child protection services as each jurisdiction has different methods of describing and costing its components. In addition, there are varying compositions and resultant costs. For example, providing services to isolated groups

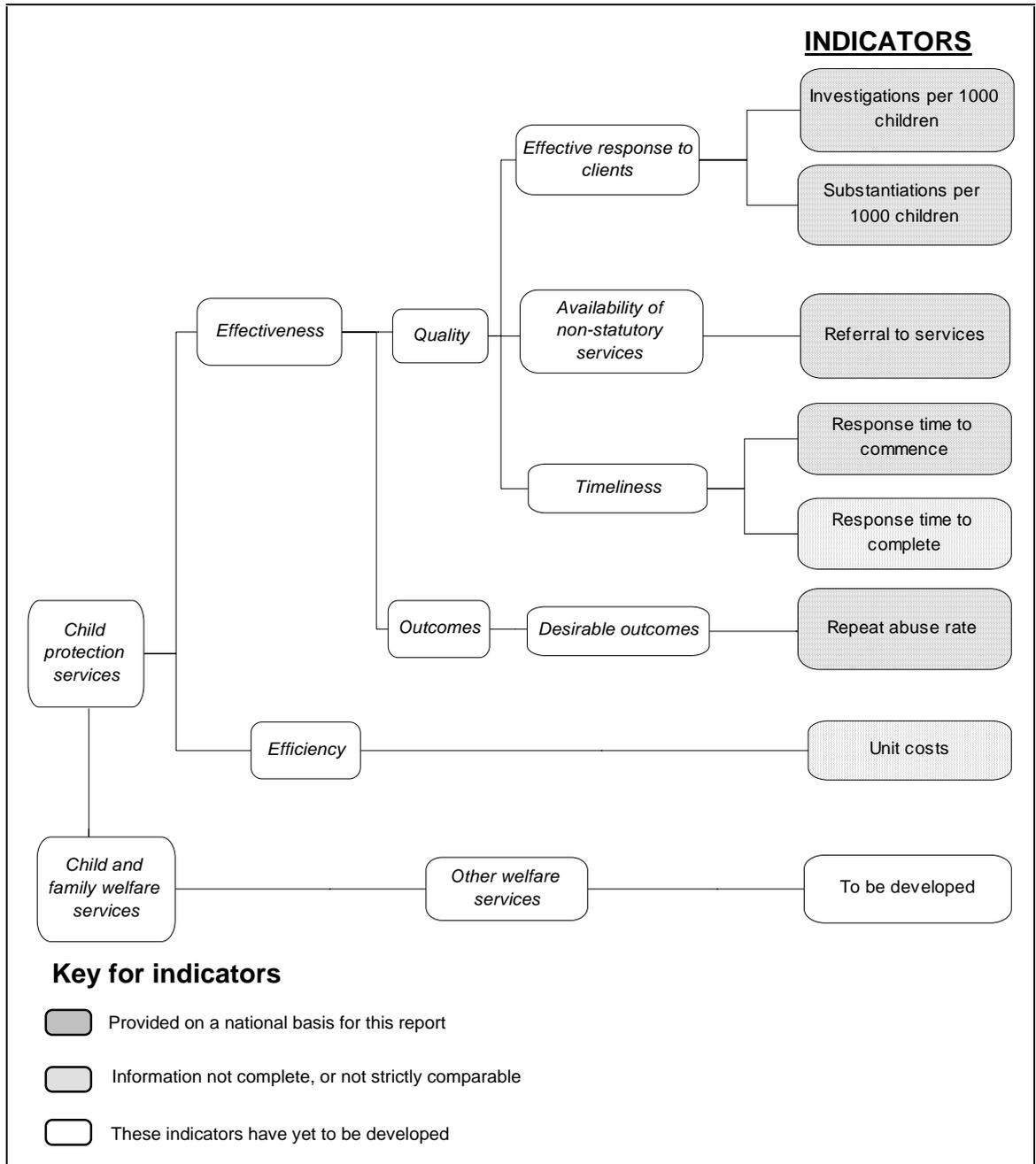
over large distances would be expected to be more expensive. Caution should therefore be taken in comparing the cost data provided (see 'Additional performance information' for each jurisdiction in Section 10.5).

In addition, there are a number of environmental and policy differences between jurisdictions which need to be considered when making comparisons. In particular, the assessment of performance is complicated by two factors: child protection services are in a state of transition which reflect changing views held on the nature of services and their objectives (see Sections 10.2 and 10.4); and services are delivered differently across jurisdictions which affects data availability and comparability. Differences include:

- *processes of investigation, assessment, and legal action.* For example, policy decisions concerning the nature of allegations that warrant investigation, the definition of what is deemed to be an 'investigation', the use of priority ratings assigned to indicate time frames for responding to allegations, and the nature of the outcome decisions that can be made; and
- *client bases.* Where services are considered a client may be an individual or a family. Delivery of services may also be influenced by the cultural background of the population. For example, about three per cent of Australian children aged 0 to 14 years are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (ATSI), yet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children comprise about 11 per cent of substantiated cases of abuse and neglect (predominantly neglect), and account for about 10 per cent of the children under care and protection orders⁹. The relative shares of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population among jurisdictions does not mirror the distribution of the total child population, with implications for the analysis of data disaggregated by jurisdiction.

⁹ Data provided by the States and Territories and Angus and Golley (1995, pp. 12-13).

Figure 10.4: Preliminary framework of indicators for child protection



Child protection – Summary of results

Community awareness and investigatory workload

A common objective is community awareness of the problem of child abuse and neglect. Community education provided by Departments should, however, aim to protect children at risk of harm without leading to increases in reports which result in unnecessary investigation of families. The increase in the number of allegations should, therefore, be considered in conjunction with the substantiation rate.

Over the period 1992–93 to 1994–95, the number of allegations rose by 36 per cent Australia-wide; this ranged from no increase in Tasmania, to 63 per cent in Victoria (where mandatory reporting was introduced, see Section 10.2).

Substantiation rate

Once an allegation is made, Departments decide whether the allegation warrants an investigation. 1994–95 data supplied by States and Territories show that, on average, about 75 per cent of all allegations result in an investigation being undertaken.

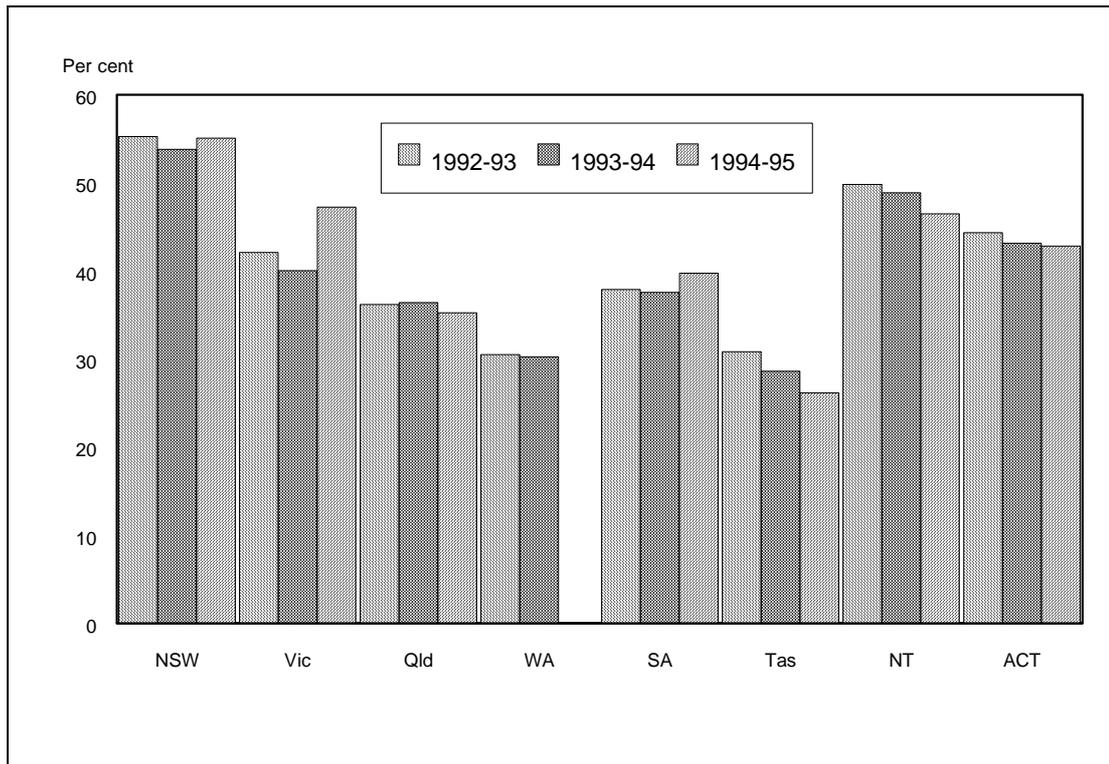
Following an investigation, Departments reach a view on whether child abuse and neglect has taken place. A ‘substantiated’ finding is made in those cases which, in the Department’s view, there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been or is being abused or neglected (Angus and Woodward 1995). Where this criteria is not met, a case is ‘not substantiated’. In four jurisdictions — Queensland, WA, Tasmania, and the ACT — an additional category, ‘unsubstantiated–child at risk’, is also in place. This applies where no abuse and neglect can be substantiated but where reasonable grounds exist to suspect the possibility of prior or future abuse and neglect. In these cases it is considered that continued Department involvement is warranted (Angus and Woodward 1995).

The ratio of substantiations to all completed investigations provides an indication of the degree of incidence of abuse and neglect in those cases where reports are made, investigated, and finalised¹⁰. Figure 10.5 below shows the percentage of finalised investigations in which a substantiated decision is made by the Department. Australia-wide, the number of allegations increased by 36 per cent over the three years to 1994–95; however, over the same period, substantiations rose by 9 per cent. At the jurisdictional level there were

¹⁰ Cases may not be finalised within a period. The definition of finalised used in this Chapter is where an allegation is made in a financial year and the case is not completed within the 2 month period after the end of the financial year.

different patterns. For example, in Victoria, there has been a significant increase in substantiations as well as in allegations. In Victoria, the rate of substantiations arising from allegations from the general community has not substantially increased. However, the rate of substantiations arising from allegations from professionals has increased.

Figure 10.5: Proportion of finalised cases substantiated, by jurisdiction, 1992–93 to 1994–95 (per cent)



Source: Provided by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the States and Territories. WA data for 1994–95 were not available.

Note: 1 In NSW the substantiation figures may also include some children where the incident of maltreatment has not been substantiated but there are other reasons to believe the child may be at risk.

Response times

Complete and comparable data are not available for responses to allegations. The data that are available for the time to commence an investigation indicate that a very high proportion (about 80 per cent) of investigations are commenced within 5 working days. A limitation with this measure is that it does not relate response time to any assessed degree of urgency.

Data from 3 jurisdictions (NSW, Queensland, and the ACT) on the average number of days to commence an investigation indicate that in 1994–95 it was in

the range of 8 to 10 days. In Victoria, the average number of days was considerably less, 2.8 days.

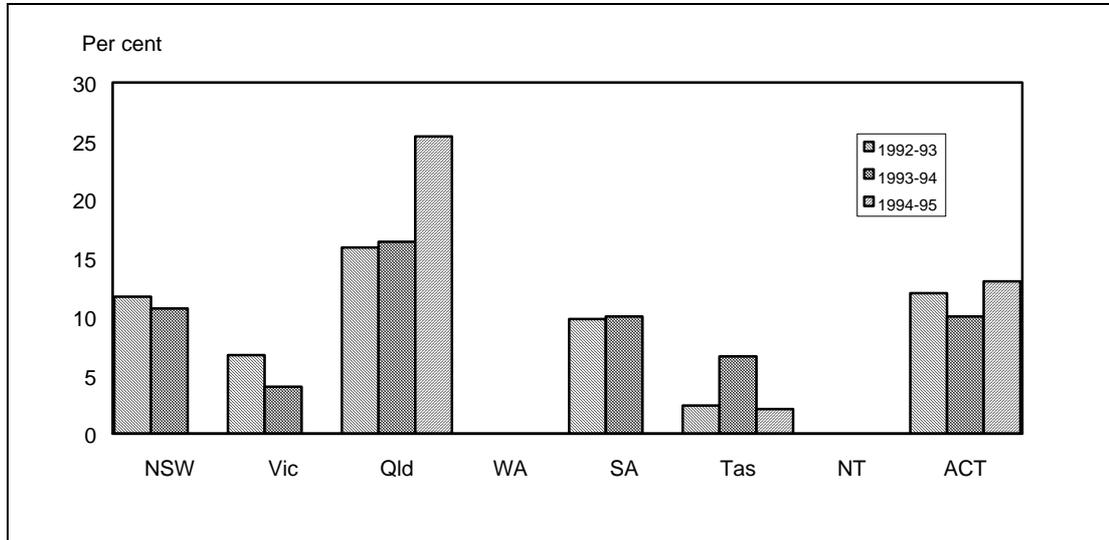
Another response time indicator relates to the time taken to complete an investigation. The data available are not comparable as they relate to each jurisdiction's own benchmark time. In NSW about 91 per cent are completed within its own benchmark time (28 days), in Victoria about 70 per cent are completed (28 days), and in Queensland, 75 per cent are completed (30 days).

Outcomes for children: Repeat maltreatment

Repeat maltreatment was defined to have occurred where a completed and substantiated case was followed by a further substantiated case of abuse and neglect within specified periods (that is, within 6 months, within 1 year, and within 2 years). The rate of repeat maltreatment is the number of repeat maltreatment cases divided by all substantiated cases in the jurisdiction during the financial year.

Figure 10.6 indicates that the rate within 6 months was quite variable both within and across jurisdictions. These differences are due to a number of factors, including differences in recording practices between jurisdictions, differences in definitions of what constitutes repeat maltreatment, and differences in estimation methodology.

Figure 10.6: Maltreated children with a second substantiated maltreatment case within 6 months, by jurisdiction, 1992–93 to 1994–95, (per cent)



Source: NSW, Victoria, Queensland, SA, Tasmania, and the ACT.

Notes: 1 Data for WA and the NT are not available, while data for 1994–95 are unavailable for NSW, Victoria and SA.

2 The rate in Queensland may have increased due to significant increases in workload that occurred in 1992–93 and 1993–94. This led to a backlog of work that flowed over to 1994–95.

Outcomes for children: Further support services

This indicator relates to the availability of non-statutory services to those that need them. Data are very limited on the degree to which other services are involved. In cases where children have had a substantiated maltreatment notification, a small proportion enter alternative care under care and protection orders. Under 10 per cent in NSW and SA; and about 13 per cent in Queensland, WA and the ACT.

Data are even more limited on the extent of referral to, or use of, non-statutory support and other services for those children and their families that come to the notice of Departments through allegations of abuse and neglect. NSW data for 1994–95 indicate that in about 31 per cent of substantiated abuse and neglect cases, referral was made to other services. In non-substantiated cases, about 6 per cent were referred to other services. A referral to services does not indicate whether the services were provided. A study for the WA Department for Community Development indicated that, over the five year period from 1989 to 1994, services were provided after investigation to about 45 per cent of cases substantiated. This included both home based and alternative care services (Cant and Downie 1994).

Cost data

Cost data are not available for all jurisdictions and are not comparable. The data that are available are presented in Section 10.5 (see 'Additional performance information').

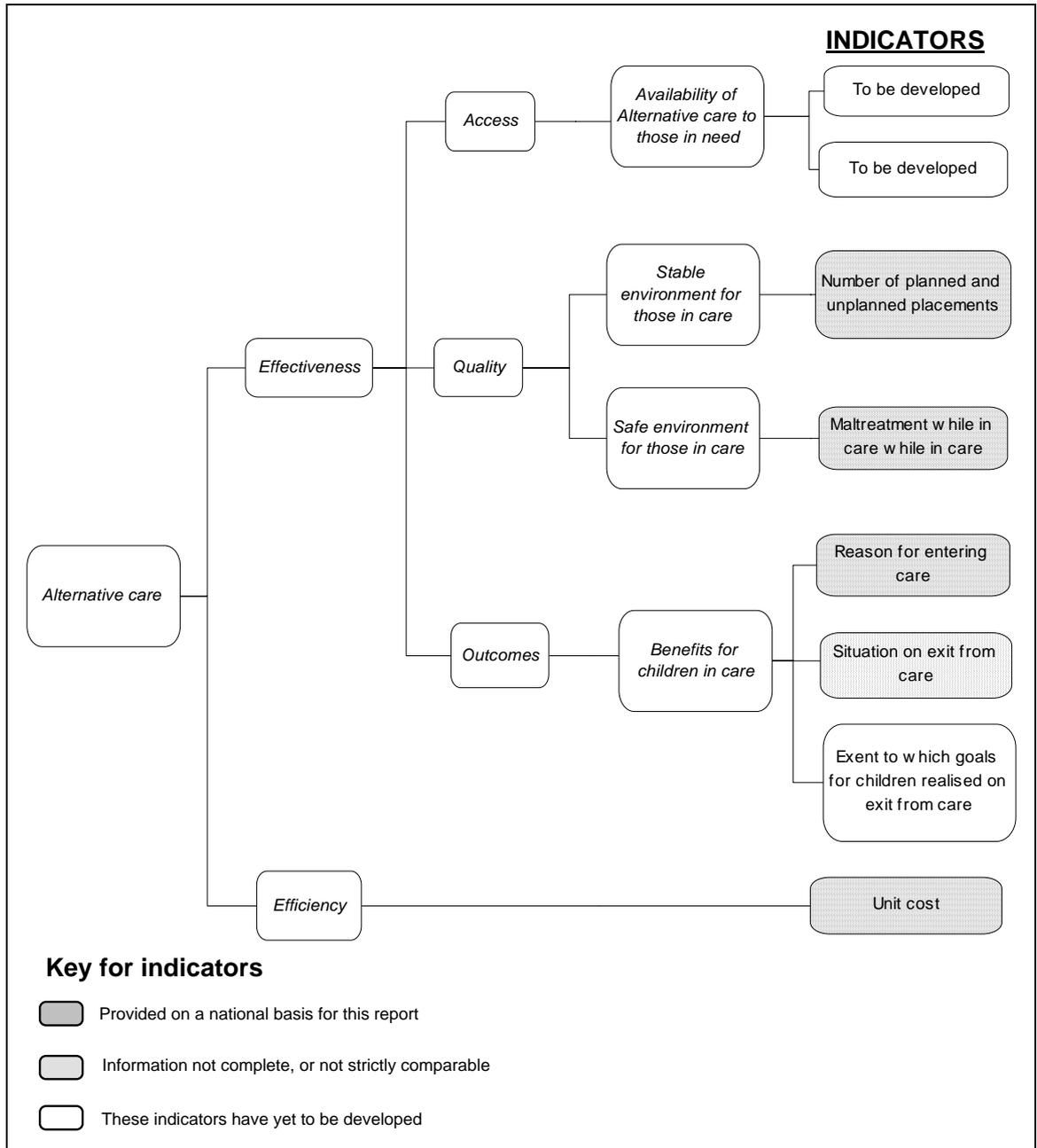
Alternative care

Indicator framework

The indicator framework developed for alternative care is presented in Figure 10.7. A key issue in developing outcome indicators for alternative care is that desired outcomes for different groups of children will vary depending on the reasons for entry to care.

Other caveats relating to specific indicators are raised below. Generally, the ability to draw conclusions based on the available data is further limited due to differences in the legislative policy environment and the mix and the nature of the services.

Figure 10.7: Preliminary framework of indicators for alternative care



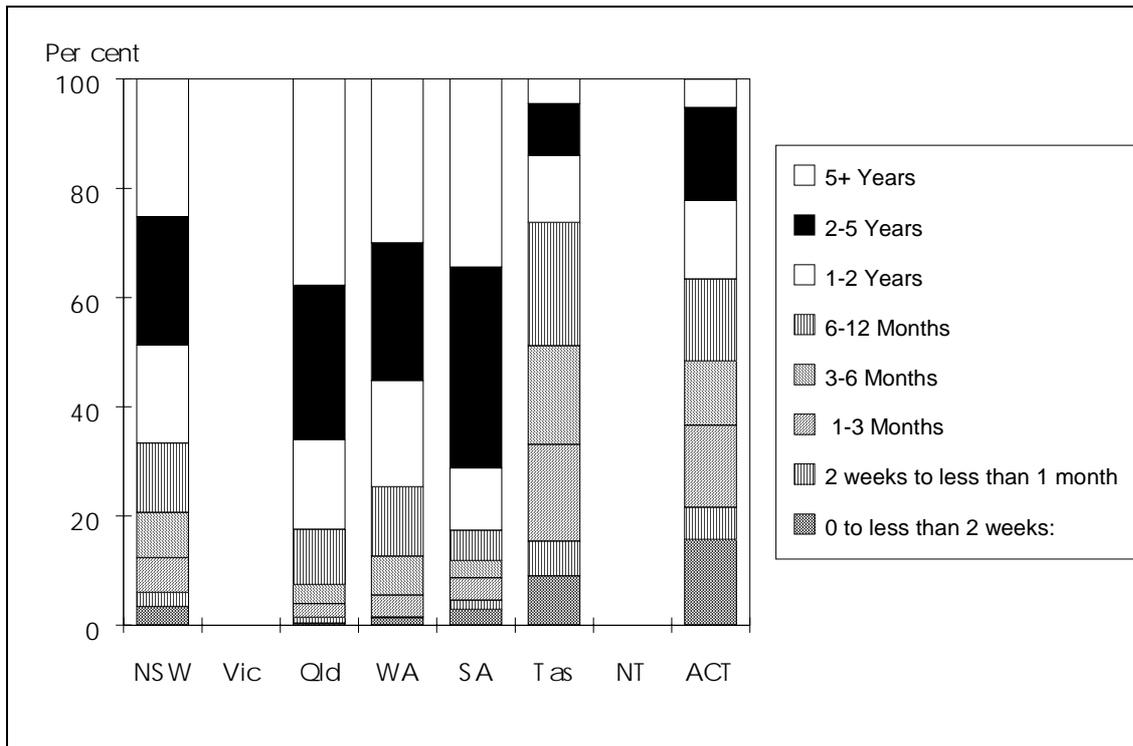
Alternative care – summary of results

Length of time in care

The time in care should be linked to the goal of the placement. Duration in care may reflect the time that children require alternative care prior to reunification with their family, or the time required in a long term stable placement.

Figure 10.8 presents a profile of time in care for those jurisdictions that were able to provide this information. In Tasmania and the ACT, at least 60 per cent of all children in care have been in care for less than one year compared with 20 to 30 per cent in the other States and Territories. This includes short periods of care, likely to be less than one month in duration, to provide respite care for carers. There is a large share of children in NSW, Queensland, WA and SA who have been in care for over 2 years.

Figure 10.8: Length of time in care at June 30, by jurisdiction, 1994–95



Notes: 1 No data are available for Victoria at this stage.
 2 NT provided incomplete data.

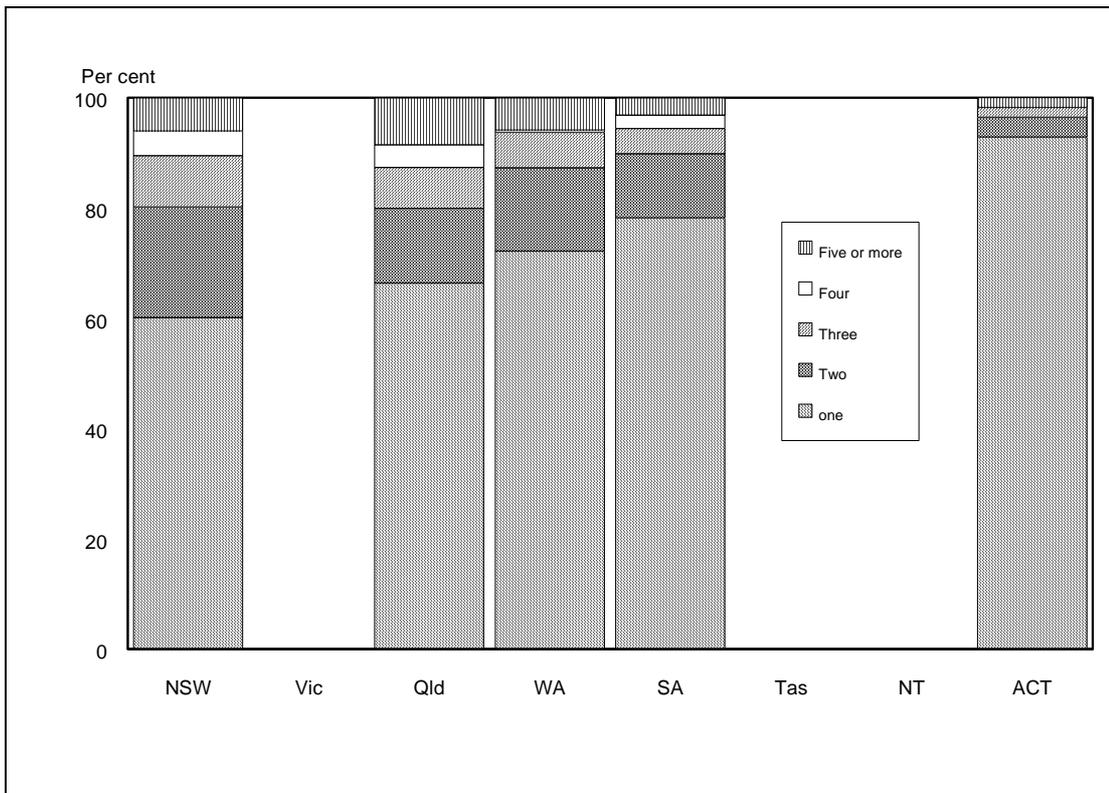
Number of placements

The number of placements for those in care for an entire year may indicate the degree of unplanned movements of children. However, this is clearly not

always the case: a higher number of placements may be part of an effective case management program.

Placements data for 1994–95 for the jurisdictions that could provide information are shown in Figure 10.9. The largest group of children had one placement (in the range of 80 to 90 per cent in SA and the ACT). The share of children in NSW and Queensland with three or more placements was about 20 per cent.

Figure 10.9: Number of placements, by jurisdiction, 1994–95, (per cent)



Note: No data are currently available for Victoria, Tasmania and the NT.

Outcomes for children

Information on outcomes for children in terms of quality of care and the situation on exit of care is not well developed. Two indicators were developed: maltreatment while in care; and living situation on exit from care.

Maltreatment while in care

Analysis of the information provided about maltreatment in care is not straightforward. For example, variations in recorded incidence of maltreatment

may be due to differences in estimation, for example, the method used to calculate the number of children with substantiated maltreatment, and the total number of children in care.

In addition, responsibility for the incidence of maltreatment is not always clear. There are a variety of living situations for children, such as placement with relatives and supervision of children under care and protection orders in their homes. Many children also have contacts with their relatives, including periods in their care, while in out of home placements. Clear information is not available at this stage from all jurisdictions regarding the relationship of the alleged person responsible for maltreatment and the context of the maltreatment (for example, in out of home care or at home).

The data collected indicated the following percentages of children maltreated while in care: NSW, 12 per cent; the NT, 10 per cent; and the ACT, 1 per cent. Information provided by NSW on the maltreater indicated that the shares in 1994–95 were: main caregiver (2 per cent); parent or other family member (41 per cent); and other and not recorded (57 per cent).

Situation on exit

Some information was provided by NSW and the ACT on the living situation of children who left care for whom the State or Territory had been legal guardian for at least 2 years prior to exit (see Section 10.5). However, the number of children who exit care who meet these criteria is relatively small.

The 1994–95 Annual Report of the WA Department reported on goals for children and their situation on exit. The performance indicator identified that 86 per cent of children who exited care, and for whom the goal was ‘return to live with the family’, returned to their families.

Further information for Queensland, SA and WA is provided in Section 10.5 (see ‘Additional performance information’).

Cost data

Alternative care cost data are not complete and not comparable. Information on total outlays were provided by NSW, Victoria, WA, Tasmania, and the ACT (see Section 10.5).

Crisis and supported accommodation

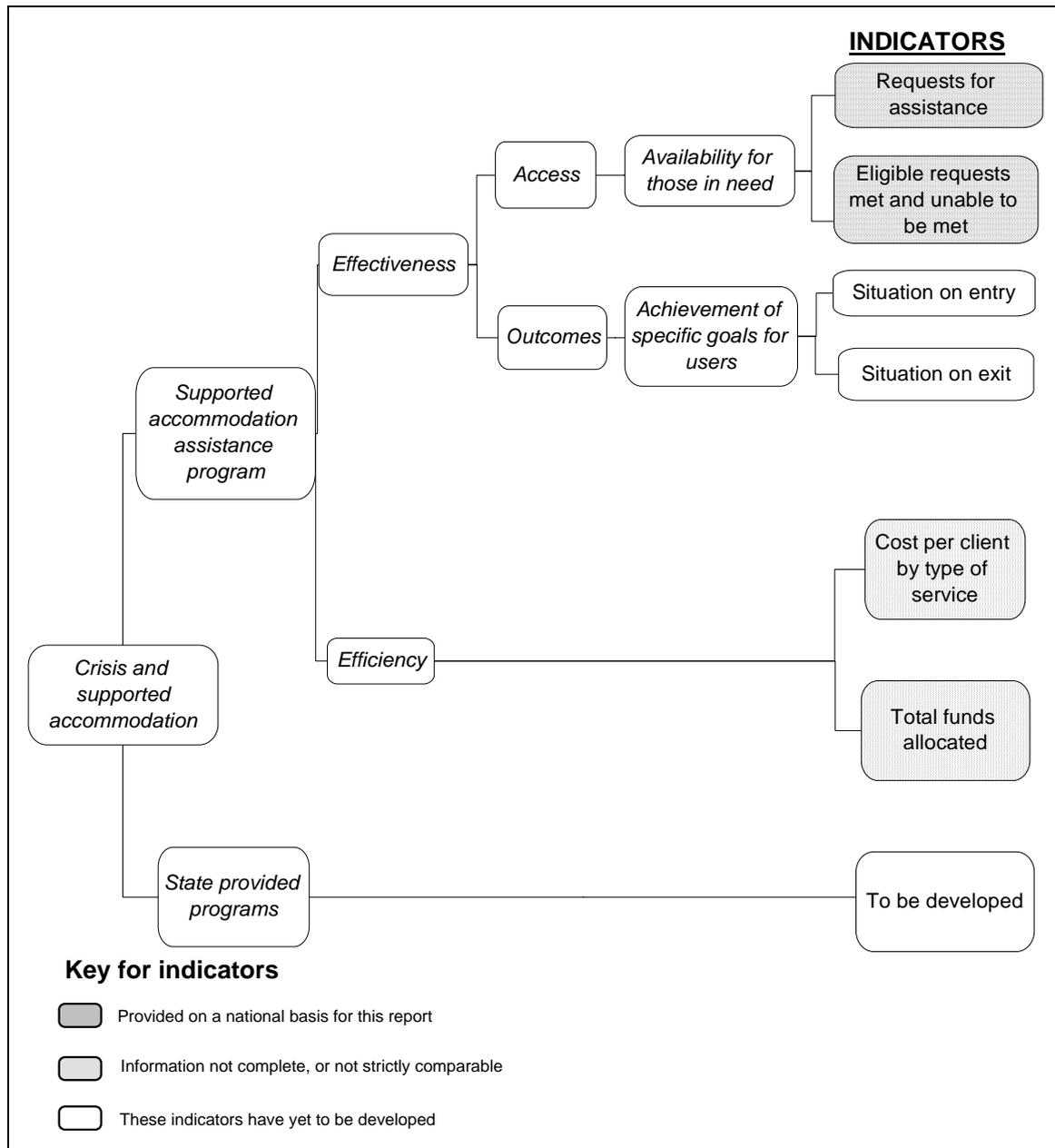
Indicator framework

The initial indicator framework developed for crisis and supported accommodation is shown in Figure 10.10. At present, there is limited information on the outcomes for clients on leaving the service and data on outcomes are restricted to: the ability to meet demand; and the percentage of those entering crisis accommodation who came from other SAAP or crisis accommodation. Developments to improve this are outlined in 'Future directions' (see Section 10.4).

The present data collection has a number of shortcomings. These include:

- response rates differ between census collections. Care needs to be exercised in drawing conclusions based on variations between census periods;
- comparative figures or use of survey data should be treated with caution. Census information is a sample over a particular night or two week period, and may or may not be representative of the full year;
- influence of non respondents. For collections that have not had 100 per cent response, missing data may significantly influence the figure, including the average; and
- there may be some double counting in the data given as the census records each person presenting for accommodation each night for the two week period. The same person approaching more than one SAAP service or the same SAAP service on separate nights, would be counted separately by each SAAP service for each night. It is not possible to determine the extent of such double counting.

Figure 10.10: Preliminary framework of indicators for crisis and supported accommodation

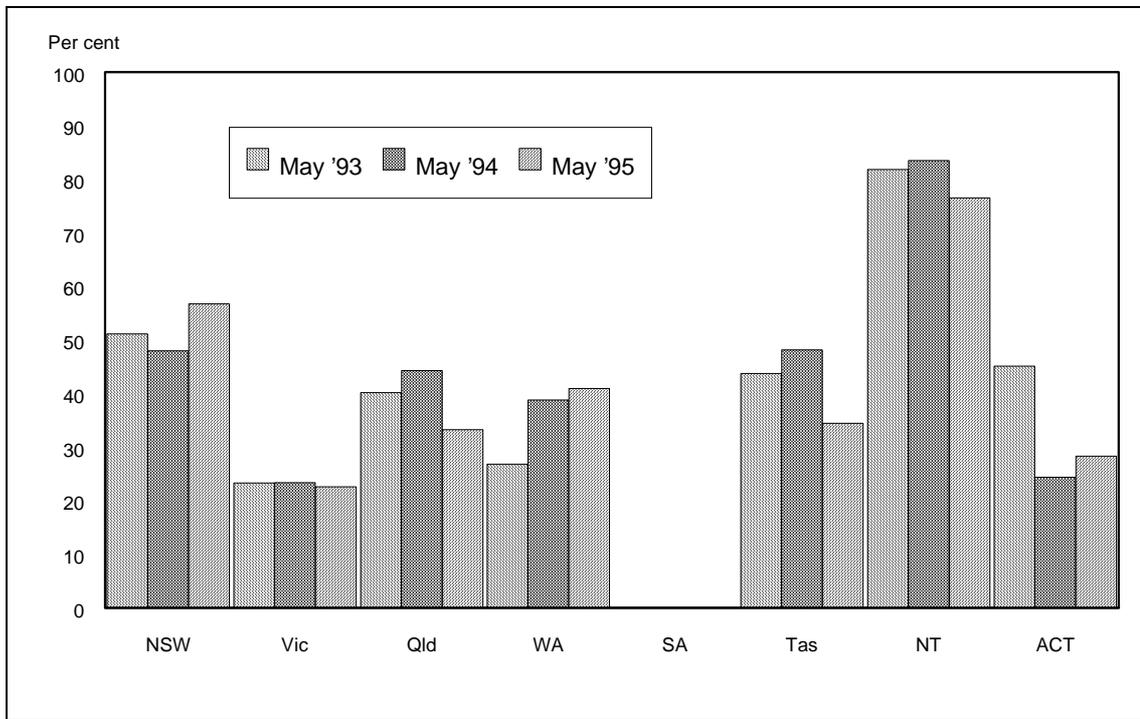


Crisis and Supported Accommodation – summary of results

Ability to meet demand

The percentage of new referrals who requested accommodation and could be accommodated in May 1993 and May 1994 are shown in Figure 10.11. NSW and the NT have the highest shares of new arrivals that could be accommodated. As noted above, there are limitations in making comparisons using these data.

Figure 10.11: Percentage of new arrivals that were accommodated, by jurisdiction, May 1993, May 1994 and May 1995 (per cent)

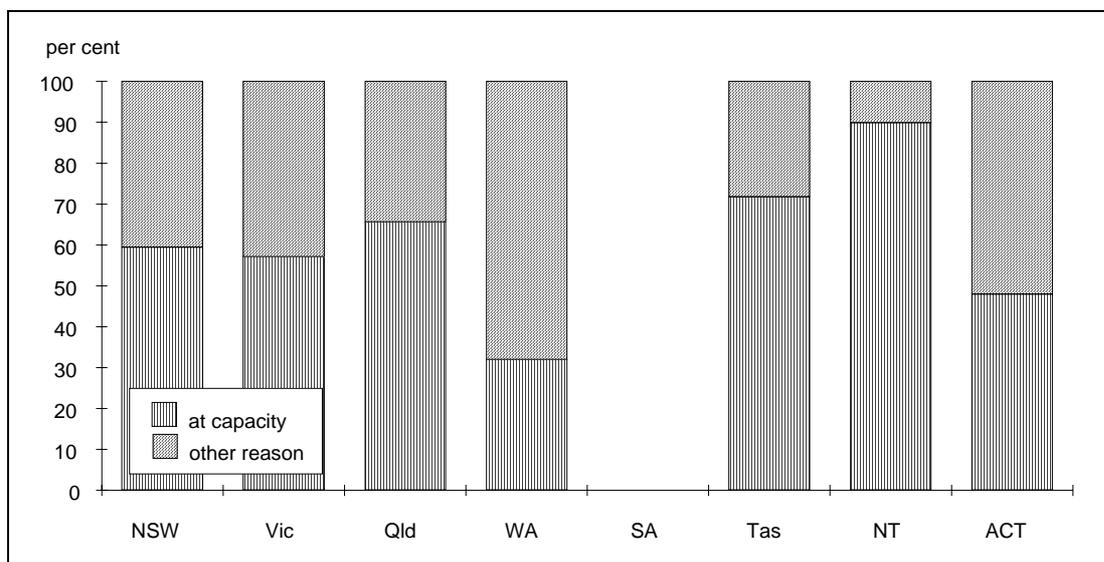


Notes 1 Victoria’s relatively low overall level of new arrivals that were accommodated reflect the practice of referring clients to other support services where this is considered appropriate. These referrals are not counted in the existing data system as reflected in Figure 10.11.

2 SA did not authorise the use of SAAP census data due to concerns about comparability and reliability.

The reasons for refusal of accommodation requests are shown in Figure 10.12.

Figure 10.12: Reason that requests for accommodation were unable to be met, by jurisdiction, May 1995 (per cent)

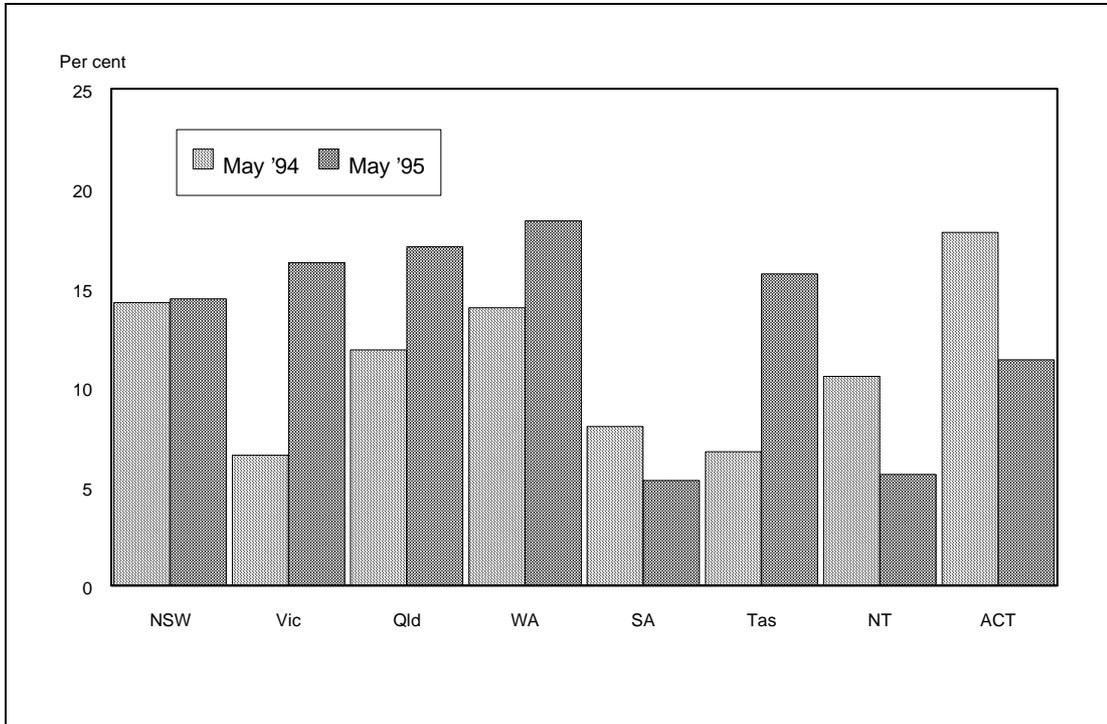


- Notes: 1 SA did not authorise the use of SAAP census data due to concerns about comparability and reliability.
 2 'Other reason' includes 'client was not eligible'.

Previous accommodation

Australia-wide, the average percentage of those that entered SAAP accommodation in November 1994 — whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other short term crisis accommodation — was just under 15 per cent. The data indicate that Victoria, Queensland, WA and Tasmania have above average shares. This may be part of a planned transition through SAAP services towards achieving independent living. There may be a sequential use of services to achieve this goal. Movement between services is not necessarily a negative outcome, but can be indicative of progress in moving from crisis to medium term accommodation.

Figure 10.13: Percentage entering SAAP services whose previous accommodation was other emergency accommodation service, by jurisdiction, May 1994 and May 1995 (per cent)



Notes: 1 SA did not authorise the use of SAAP census data due to concerns about comparability and reliability.

Costs

Very limited data are available. The data that could be provided were total funding levels, disaggregated by target group (see Section 10.5).

10.4 Future directions

This section outlines the improvements that will be made in subsequent reports in terms of:

- improving the framework of indicators (including refinements to the indicators);
- refining definitions for existing indicators; and
- improving the quality and consistency of the data provided.

The lack of comparable data on the size and resources of the community services sector will be addressed over time through a number of activities. These include:

- the 1995–96 survey of the community services sector being undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics;
- the ongoing work of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare; and
- the ongoing work of specialist bodies such as the Protection and Care of Children Sub-Committee of the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators (for child protection and alternative care); and the Data Research Advisory Committee (DRAC) of the National SAAP Co-ordination and Development Committee (for crisis and supported accommodation).

To facilitate a co-ordinated approach, the Review will forge closer links with these bodies over the next twelve months.

Child protection

The Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators (SCCSISA) is currently examining the role of child protection services and the linkages with child and family welfare services. The developments outlined in Section 10.2 are likely to result in significant changes in child protection practice and policy which will impact on the collection and analysis of performance data. The Spring SCCSISA Conference recently endorsed the development of performance indicators which move beyond descriptors of service activity and more adequately reflect the directions in child protection. Indicator development work will involve clarifying definitions of child abuse and neglect and more clearly identifying target populations for child protection services.

Notwithstanding the difficulties outlined in this Chapter, indicators of effectiveness need to focus on outcomes for individuals.

More specifically, the following issues need addressing:

- most States and Territories do not currently collect information that links data on child protection clients with clients that are referred to other services;
- an improved focus on the middle and latter stages of child protection (for example, data on protection applications and court orders). These data were not collected for this report;
- an improved focus on adolescents;

- concerns about the appropriate role of child protection services within the spectrum of support services for families and the impact that this may have on indicators;
- the need to relate outcomes to goals in case management plans; and
- further development of cost indicators. The Victorian experience of benchmarking costs of child protection against two other States has confirmed the difficulty of clarifying the services and the various costs which could be included (for example, the definition of services and the allocation of staff time — and other joint costs — to the provision of these services).

Alternative care

The outcome indicators for alternative care require on-going improvement. However, there are difficulties in framing outcomes because other factors also affect the outcomes of the care experience. A proposed strategy in the United Kingdom to capturing outcomes for children relies on individual assessment and plans across seven dimensions (for example, health, education, family, and peer relationship). Statistical outcome information could focus on the degree to which the goal of placement is achieved. For example, the indicator where the goal of placement is long term stable care, or reunification, could be the proportion of children with that goal for which this is achieved. Another indicator to consider is whether States and Territories have a process in place to review individual outcomes for children. For example, to account for constantly changing situations and the changing needs of clients, the relevant courts in Victoria review all cases with orders which require extension beyond 2 years.

The reasons for entry to care need refinement. At present there is a large ‘other’ category that does not reflect reasons for voluntary placements.

More comprehensive and consistent unit cost data are also required.

Crisis and supported accommodation

A new data collection is planned to commence in 1996 with the aim of overcoming the following deficiencies of the present data collection:

- insufficient information to measure program objectives;
- potential for multiple counting of clients;
- lack of reliable data of un-met need; and
- unaccounted support services component.

Key features of the new collection will be:

- the on-going collection of data rather than intermittent censuses;
- the ability to track clients (using a confidential code) to enable reliable estimates of the number of people receiving services, and to track service usage by individual clients over time at different outlets;
- coverage of a wide range of services provided; and
- a focus on outcomes for clients. For example, data will be collected on case plans and on clients' circumstances before, and on exit from, services.

As part of the development of the new data collection, program indicators of performance have also been developed for the following objectives: resource allocation (the equitable allocation of funds to different geographic regions according to need); appropriateness (conformity of service provision to agreed quality standards); access (promotion and monitoring of strategies to ensure services are accessible to all eligible people in need); quality (promotion of quality standards and the monitoring of service providers' compliance with them); effectiveness (promotion of strategies to achieve positive client outcomes and monitoring of the extent to which the program is effective in achieving its designated program objectives); and efficiency.

A SAAP national research program is also being developed to complement the data collections and provide additional qualitative and longitudinal information. This program will include special purpose research, such as long term outcome data and case studies. Work has commenced on identifying priorities for this program which will be used to inform the development of policies, improve program management, and measure outcomes in SAAP. It is intended that the development and reporting of indicators of performance for SAAP services for this Review will link in with these developments.

10.5 Performance indicators by jurisdiction

The source of the data used in the tables in this section is the jurisdiction(s) itself (themselves) unless otherwise noted.

New South Wales - jurisdiction's own comments

“ **General:** NSW is currently implementing or planning program and cross-program reforms for all three areas discussed in this chapter. As part of the reform process it is also developing new performance indicators for the programs. Thus the information provided in response to the indicators that follow reflects past practice rather than the new NSW program directions.

Child protection: NSW has re-examined its child protection practice in the light of recent findings and developed new strategic directions which will maximise both the support provided to children and families and the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

These future directions recognise that, on investigation, many notifications reveal a range of concerns for children, rather than actual abuse or neglect; and that a more specialised approach is needed to address the different types of concern for the care and protection of children.

An essential feature of the new directions will be the development of effective information systems to provide data which, when appropriately reported and analysed, can underpin the development and review of program objectives and outcomes.

Substitute care: The essential features of the NSW reform to its substitute care system are the development of a range of services identified by means of co-ordinated area planning processes; the replacement of large state run institutions by small, flexible, localised services provided by the non-government sector; and improvements to the substitute care information base.

Crisis support and accommodation: Current data on SAAP is of limited applicability to the third National SAAP Agreement, under which the focus of the program will be accommodation **and** support to people who are homeless and in crisis to assist the move to independent living.

A new National SAAP data collection is due to begin in July 1996 and will provide an integrated information base on SAAP consistent with the present objectives of the program. The framework which has been developed for this purpose could also be used to generate more accurate and appropriate performance indicators than those which follow.”

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.1: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	1,448	1,453	1,457
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2, 3	29,947	35,852	35,494
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2	26,728	32,235	31,837
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		2, 4	18.45	22.19	21.84
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2	14,290	15,128	11,650
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2, 5	30	31	30
5 years and over	%	2	68	67	70
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	2	7	10	10
All 'other'	%	2	93	90	90
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2	24	25	25
Emotional abuse	%	2	30	33	33
Sexual abuse	%	2	27	22	22
Neglect	%	2	19	20	20

Notes: General: All data provided relate to children aged less than 16 (that is, 0 to 15 years inclusive).

1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 For 1994–95, counted as per specified counting rules for this report.

4 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

5 Do not add to 100 per cent. In 1992–93 there were 333 children recorded with age unknown; in 1993–94, 358 children were recorded as such.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.2: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2, 3, 4	10	10	8
Per number of investigations finalised	%	1, 4	55	54	55
Finalisations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		2, 4, 5	18	19	15
Per number of investigations	%	5	97	87	66
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;		6	na	na	3,636
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;		6	na	na	8,014
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;		6	na	na	1,397
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;		6	na	na	8,098

- Notes: 1 The number of children notified within a specified period and child maltreatment was substantiated.
 2 Substantiation rate and finalisation rate, number children equals the number of cases.
 3 See notes 1 and 3 in Table 10.1.
 4 1992–93 and 1993–94 data supplied by the AIHW.
 5 For 1994–95, cases were interpreted as the same as a count of children with completed assessments within the specified period (31 August in the following financial year). This is different from the count which the AIHW use, which is a count of allegations finalised within a specified time period (30 September in the following financial year, for investigations undertaken in 1994–95).
 6 The disaggregation between ATSI and 'other' are: C2 - ATSI: 266, 'other': 3370; C3 ATSI: 870, 'other' 7144; C5 - ATSI: 102, 'other': 1295; C6: ATSI- 590, 'other' -7508.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.3: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%	1	87	86	100
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			28	28	28
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;		2, 3	na	na	0
(b) within 2 to 5 days;		2, 3	na	na	6
(c) in more than 5 days;		2, 3	na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated		2, 3	na	na	10.1
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where child abuse and neglect was again substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	4, 5	12	11	na
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	4, 5	6	5	na
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	4, 5	6	na	na

- Notes: 1 Response time relative to benchmark. This relates to the number of children for whom an allegation was investigated within 28 days.
- 2 For 1994–95, 87 per cent were completed within 1 day, and 95 per cent were completed within 5 days. This relates to the number of children for whom an allegation was investigated and where the investigation commenced (face to face interview with the child) according to the urgency (priority) assigned. Median counts, rather than mean was used for counts because of the confounding influence of a small number of extreme scores.
- 3 In 1994–95, 87 per cent of cases were completed within one day (urgency category 1) and 95 per cent of cases within 2 to 5 days (urgency categories 2 and 3).
- 4 Counted as per specified counting rules. Unable to count backward counts as specified because of an error in the specification supplied. The specifications did not account for the time necessary to close registered cases. Because registered cases may be closed more than one year an initial allegation, the forward and backward counts are not comparable.
- 5 Calculated using the forward approach.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.4: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 See 'Additional performance information' Section.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.5: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care			4,730	5,504	4,385
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			3	4	3
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			786	951	575
(b) death of parents;			23	40	30
(c) other			3,921	4,513	3,780
Total number of children in care		1	4,753	5,472	5,984

Note: 1 At June 30.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.6: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;	1, 2		168	192	206
2 weeks to less than 1 month	1, 2		95	141	153
1 to less than 3 months;	1, 2		298	361	379
3 to less than 6 months;	1, 2		330	507	497
6 to less than 12 months;	1, 2		545	610	760
1 year to less than 2 years;	1, 2		623	830	1,075
2 years to less than 5 years	1, 2		1,189	1,248	1,407
5 or more years	1, 2		1,505	1,583	1,507
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;	1		2,641	3,074	3,597
2 placements;	1		386	282	1,199
3 placements;	1		110	127	559
4 placements;	1		61	75	265
5 or more placements	1		119	103	364
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;	1, 3		na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily	1, 3		na	na	na
(c) returned home;	1		24	32	19
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;	1		18	22	16
(e) other	1		17	24	33

Notes: 1 Counted as per specified counting rules for the report.

2 As at June 30.

3 Unable to provide data.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.7: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Maltreatment while in care					
Proportion of children maltreated while in care	%	1	12	12	10

Note: 1 Unable to count this. NSW have counted allegations investigated relating to a child while in care. The actual type of abuse is not recorded by the system. The maltreatment may have occurred considerably before the allegation was made (that is, when previous maltreatment was discovered — an allegation would still be made at the time of discovery).

Table 10.8: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:		1			
(a) residential care;	\$		na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$		na	na	na
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

Note: 1 Total budget supplied. See 'Additional performance information' Section.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.9: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	9,774	8,696	8,035
(b) support		1	na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note: 1 Data for each date and represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period.

New South Wales, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.10: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	5,001	4,177	4,563
(b) unable to be met		1	4,773	4,519	3,472
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	3,422	2,702	2,063
(b) other reasons		1	1,351	1,817	1,409
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 2	14	14	14

Source: SAAP Two Week Census ;and SAAP One Night Censuses in May 1993, May 1994 and May 1995

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.9.

2 Percentage of people entering SAAP accommodation whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other short term crisis accommodation.

Table 10.11: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes 1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000	1,898
Domestic violence	\$' 000	2,325
Families	\$' 000	415
Single women	\$' 000	404
Single men	\$' 000	108
Multiple	\$' 000	705
Total	\$' 000	5,855

New South Wales, additional performance information

NSW provided cost data on the four main programs included in this chapter.

Table 10.12: Staffing numbers and expenditure by program

	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>1992-93</i>	<i>1993-94</i>	<i>1994-95</i>	<i>1995-96¹</i>
<i>Child protection</i>						
Staffing (number)		FTE	599	672	684	722
Recurrent expenses for:						
direct services	2	\$m	34.0	43.2	48.5	na
funded services	2	\$m	2.1	2.4	2.4	na
Total			36.1	45.6	50.9	na
<i>Substitute care</i>						
Staffing (number)		FTE	720	715	674	619
Recurrent expenses for:						
direct services	2	\$m	55.5	62.5	68.4	na
funded services	2	\$m	13.9	17.1	22.8	na
Total			69.4	79.6	91.2	na
<i>Crisis and support accommodation</i>						
Staffing (number)		FTE	19	57	57	57
Recurrent expenses for:						
direct services	2	\$m	2.0	4.2	4.2	na
funded services	2	\$m	67.0	78.3	56.9	na
Total			69.0	82.5	61.1	na
<i>Support for families</i>						
Staffing (number)		FTE	156	195	202	202
Recurrent expenses for:						
direct services	2	\$m	10.4	67.8	14.8	na
funded services	2	\$m	43.4	14.5	49.6	na
Total			53.8	53.3	64.4	na

Source: NSW Department of Community Services

Notes: 1 Forecast

2 Accrual data

Victoria - jurisdiction's own comments

“ Victoria has reservations about the capacity of some of the indicators included in this chapter to properly reflect the efficiency and effectiveness of Victorian services. For example the indicators do not cover work with children subject to statutory orders. Victoria also believes that counting rules for some areas require refinement. Nevertheless Victoria recognises the value of this report as a first step towards accurate, nationally comparable data on service provision in this important area.

Victoria's actual outlays in child protection and alternative care for 1994–95 were \$40.3 million and \$78.3 million respectively. \$14.8 million was added to the child protection budget during 1993–94 and 1994–95 (representing an increase of 47%) and \$4.5 million was added to the alternative care budget (providing a further 242 places) to accommodate the increasing demands on these services as a result of the introduction of mandatory reporting in 1993.

Placement and support services (alternative care) in Victoria are provided by H&CS (32% in dollar terms) and non-government organisations (68%). Approximately 77% of placements are in various categories of home based care and 23 per cent in residential care. Significant service redevelopment was undertaken in 1993-95 to redistribute the imbalance in funding from high cost residential care services to lower cost home based care services. Continuing redevelopment is occurring to obtain a greater and more cost effective mix of services; to direct funds to clients rather than services; and to achieve a more equitable allocation of resources across the State.

Victoria's supported accommodation and assistance client data collection has operated since 1991 and provides part of the basis for the development of the new National SAAP Data Collection. The Victorian system provides information on the number of clients assisted, their characteristics and the nature of assistance provided (*see also 'Additional performance' data*)

Victoria has a number of strategies to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of services for individuals and families in crisis. These include: the development of a client focused, output based funding system for placement and support services; upgrading the KIDS data systems (*see also additional performance data*); re-development of the Adolescent Services System; a comprehensive review of workload in child protection resulting in the streamlining of staffing to give a better mix of workers in child protection teams and a greater capacity to contract out cases; and the further development of key performance indicators and outcome measures through funding and service agreements with the non-government sector.”

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection**Table 10.13: Descriptors**

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	1,069	1,065	1,062
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2, 3	19,344	26,622	31,619
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		4, 5	9,898	15,144	15,616
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		5, 6	9.26	14.22	14.70
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		4	4,089	5,253	7,326
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	4, 7	34	36	33
5 years and over	%	4, 7	65	64	67

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by Victoria.

3 The number of allegations has increased at a faster rate in Victoria than in other States and Territories. This is due to the introduction of mandatory reporting of Doctors, Nurses and Police on 4 November 1993, and teachers on 18 July 1994. The introduction of mandatory reporting coincided with significant media coverage of child protection and this also significantly influenced reporting rates. Victorian number of allegations per 1000 population are also higher than for some jurisdictions. This in part reflects the comprehensive nature of the computerised data collection system (CASIS) which counts all referrals of child abuse.

4 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

5 The number of investigations in Victoria is significantly lower than the number of allegations. This reflects an emphasis on gate keeping which encourages investigation by protective services only of cases involving serious abuse and neglect. Victoria's data also reflect only face to face investigations whereas some other jurisdictions count phone enquires as investigations. This tends to underestimate the Victorian investigations in comparison to other jurisdictions.

6 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

7 These figures may not add to 100 per cent due to the age of some children being recorded as unknown. In 1992–93, there were 30 children age not known, and 19 children in 1993–94.

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.14: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	1	3	3	3
All 'other'	%	1	97	97	97
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
	%				
Physical abuse	%	1	28	30	29
Emotional abuse	%	1	30	30	34
Sexual abuse	%	1	14	11	9
Neglect	%	1	28	29	28

Note: 1 See note 4 on Table 10.13.

Table 10.15: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	4	5	7
Per number of investigations finalised	%	2	42	40	47
Finalisations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	9	12	15
Per number of investigations	%	2	98	87	99
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%		52	68	70
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			28	28	28

Note: 1 See notes 1 and 6 in Table 10.13.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.16: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;			na	na	na
(b) within 2 to 5 days;			na	na	na
(c) in more than 5 days;			na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated		1	np	2.6	2.8
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where further child maltreatment was substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	2	6.7	4.0	np
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	2	7.9	5.6	np
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	2	10.0	np	np

Note: 1 In 1993–94, 90 per cent of cases were finalised within 5 days and in 1994–95, 91 per cent of cases were finalised within 5 days.

2 Victorian repeat maltreatment data relate to further maltreatment after the case has been closed. It does not include repeat maltreatment while the case is open and the client is receiving a service; hence it understates the incidence of further harm.

Table 10.17: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$000	1	na	na	na

Note 1 See 'Additional performance information' Section.

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care**Table 10.18: Descriptors**

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care			na	na	na
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			na	na	na
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;	1		1,337	2,442	2,664
(b) death of parents;			na	na	na
(c) other			na	na	na
Total number of children in care	2		3,453	3,510	3,702

Notes: 1 These children are classified as 'legal'.

2 At 30 June. These are capacity figures based on targets for providers. Refer to Victoria's 'Additional performance information' Section for information on placement and support clients.

General note: A major redevelopment of financial and budgetary systems, the 'KIDS' data system, is currently in progress and will result in the introduction of Output Based Funding in July 1996. Once operational this system will have a better capacity to deliver the quantitative data requested by the Working Group for this report.

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.19: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;			na	na	na
2 weeks to less than 1 month			na	na	na
1 to less than 3 months;			na	na	na
3 to less than 6 months;			na	na	na
6 to less than 12 months;			na	na	na
1 year to less than 2 years;			na	na	na
2 years to less than 5 years			na	na	na
5 or more years			na	na	na
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;			na	na	na
2 placements;			na	na	na
3 placements;			na	na	na
4 placements;			na	na	na
5 or more placements			na	na	na
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;			na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily			na	na	na
(c) returned home;			na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;			na	na	na
(e) other			na	na	na
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%		na	na	na

Victoria, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care**Table 10.20: Unit cost**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:		1			
(a) residential care;	\$		na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$		na	na	na
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

Note: 1 Refer to Victoria's 'Jurisdictions own comments' Section.

Victoria, 1991-92 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation**Table 10.21: Descriptors**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>Sept 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	3,336	3,006	3,694
(b) support		1	np	np	np

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note: 1 Data for each date represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period.

Victoria, 1991-92 to 1994-95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.22: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>Sept 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	778	703	837
(b) unable to be met		1	2,558	2,303	2,857
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	np	np	np
(b) unable to be met		1	np	np	np
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	1,077	1,295	1,631
(b) other reasons		1	1,481	1,008	1,226
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 2	3	7	16

Source: SAAP Two Week Censuses; and SAAP One Night Censuses in May 1993, May 1994 and May 1995

Note: 1 See note 1 on Table 10.21.

2 Percentage of people entering SAAP accommodation whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other emergency accommodation.

Table 10.23: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992-93</i>	<i>1993-94</i>	<i>1994-95</i>
Youth	\$' 000		12,634	15,511	17,295
Domestic violence	\$' 000		8,214	8,873	9,767
Single women	\$' 000		1,101	1,045	1,349
Single men	\$' 000		3,215	3,103	3,401
Multiple	\$' 000		8,269	10,558	11,365
Total	\$' 000		33,433	39,090	43,177

Victoria, additional performance information

Bench marking Project

Victoria recently initiated a bench marking study of their Child Protection Service against two other States. The project examined and compared the distribution of resources and costs across five core stages of child protection work but did not include the cost of services provided to support child protection such as Placement and Support Services or prevention programs. The report of the project represents a preliminary attempt to introduce bench marking methodology to child protection services. It provides indicative information on the level of resourcing of child protection in the participating States, the relative costs of the service in each State, and the distribution of resources and costs across the five identified stages of child protection work.

The key results of the study were:

- Victoria has a higher rate of notification for the 0-17 year age group than the other two States; however the cost of screening notifications was substantially lower than for either of the bench marking partners;
- Victoria has a lower rate of investigation: however the average cost per investigation undertaken was substantially lower than the cost in Partner One but substantially higher than the cost in Partner Two;
- Victoria's expenditure for both application and intervention activities (that is, court related activity and case management of protective orders) and the average cost per activity were higher than those of the bench marking partners;
- the likelihood of an investigation in Victoria leading to an application to a court is higher; and
- the likelihood of an application in Victoria leading to a new order was higher than Partner One and than for Partner Two.

The Bench marking study indicates strongly that the overall structure and resourcing of the Victorian child protection program is not greatly different from the two partners.

Supported Accommodation and Assistance

In 1992–93 Victorian SAAP services accommodated 10,327 adults and 4,736 accompanying children. By comparison, in 1993–94, Victorian SAAP services accommodated a total of 12,932 adults and 7,534 accompanying children.

Victoria, additional performance information

The Victorian SAAP has undertaken a number of initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services since 1993. These include:

- the introduction of standards of service delivery in 1993 and interim standards of management in 1994;
- introduction of productivity standards in 1994–95 service agreements (requiring funded full-time positions to support a defined minimum number of clients);
- funding of information technology to most funded services by 1995 to support more efficient financial and case management and communication;
- on-going training development strategy involving the definition of key competencies, providing the basis of the training needs analysis;
- key policy work on the reconciliation of young people with their families, case management, program and service linkages and regional strategy framework;
- contribution to the national review of SAAP 2 and the definition of SAAP 3 (for example, case management, outcome definition, performance measurement);
- a comprehensive review of the service system in 1994 (with resultant \$4.7 million funding to implement key recommendations including the highest priority service gaps in each region, allocating grants by tendering, and introducing paid management into services of sufficient size, linked to amalgamations);
- re-development of Domestic Violence services (involving the doubling of outreach support services); and
- ongoing redevelopment of the three main night shelters in Melbourne; and
- completion of the triennial review of each funded service in 1995.

Victoria, additional performance information

Alternative care

Table 10.24: Alternative care, type of service by year, 1992–93 to 1994–95

<i>Type</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Note</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Facility based placement		1	973	890	744
Home based placement		1	2,055	2,150	2,441
Support based services		1	425	470	517
Total		1	3,453	3,510	3,702

Notes: 1 At June 30. These are capacity figures based on targets for providers.

2 During the period 1992–93 to 1994–95, service development in Victoria has emphasised home based care and diversionary strategies. This has reduced the dependency on residential care services.

Table 10.25: Age of cohort by share

<i>Age cohort</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Share of total</i>
0 - 4	%		26
5 - 11	%		37
12 - 16	%		34
17+	%		1
Not known	%		1
Total	%	1	100

Note: 1 Figures may not add due to rounding

Queensland - jurisdiction's own comments

“

General: Queensland acknowledges the preliminary nature of the performance indicators employed for this report but views as problematic a performance assessment system which relies solely on the performance indicator data. This data will raise a number of questions about performance that can only be answered through in depth evaluation which utilises a range of data sources. The unique nature of each jurisdiction's demography also needs to be taken into account. It will effect the demands for services and the nature of the service response. In Queensland's case the relatively high proportion of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in its population combined with a dispersed settlement pattern and high growth rates provide complex challenges for human service provision. Queensland is developing a monitoring, evaluation and review framework to collect performance data across a wide range of programs to improve its capacity to assess performance.

Child protection: Queensland is currently conducting a major review of child protection policy and legislation. This review will result in major reforms to legislation, service delivery and information technology. The average response times to notifications of suspected child abuse and neglect is 8 to 10 days. This is partially explained by delays in completing forms and central data entry. In future client data will be entered directly by service delivery staff which will enable recording practice issues to be addressed. Queensland is also currently examining its re-abuse rate. The increase in 1993–94 may relate to major increases in workload which occurred in 1992–93 and 1993–94. Additional resources were provided in 1993–94 but the impact on practice would not be immediately apparent.

Alternative care: The higher proportion of children in alternative care for more than two years is due to definitional differences between jurisdictions. Queensland uses a much narrower definition than that adopted by the Working Group. As a result its figures are much lower than other jurisdictions and the periods in care tend to be longer as voluntary placements are not included. The variation in placement times between jurisdictions also reflects differences in legislation and the range of dispositions available to Children's Courts across jurisdictions. The limited range of orders available in Queensland will be addressed in the proposed changes to legislation.

Crisis and supported Accommodation: Queensland conducts an ongoing monthly aggregate data collection in addition to the national data collections. Data are collected for both accommodation and non-accommodation services. Data from the national collections have been used in this report, rather than material from the Queensland collection, for comparability reasons.

”

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.26: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	782	795	808
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2	8,496	11,100	13,900
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2, 3	8,496	10,672	12,406
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		3, 4	10.87	13.42	15.36
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2	2,743	3,127	3,851
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2	33	35	33
5 years and over	%	2	67	65	67
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	2	16	17	17
All 'other'	%	2	84	83	83
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2	40	40	37
Emotional abuse	%	2	16	16	16
Sexual abuse	%	2	10	7	6
Neglect	%	2	34	37	41

- Notes: 1 At December 30. Note that in Queensland a young person aged 17 and under may be the subject of a notification of abuse and neglect.
- 2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW. For Queensland an allegation equates to a notification of abuse and neglect.
- 3 Allegations investigated equates to cases notified excluding those where protective advice was given. From 1993–94, the Department provides advice and support and acts as a consultant on child protection matters to the public, family members, community agencies, and other government departments. Protective advice was the response to 428 allegations in 1993–94 and 1494 in 1994–95.
- 4 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.27: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	4	4	5
Per number of investigations finalised	%	2	36	36	35
Finalisations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	10	11	14
Per number of investigations	%	2	89	80	88
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%	3	91	46	75
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			30	30	30

Notes: 1 See notes 1 and 4 in Table 10.26.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 In 1993–94 there was an increase in the notification rate in Queensland which had major resource implications. In addition, there was clarification of a practice regarding the management of child protection investigations. This included new practice directions in Queensland, involving Youth Homelessness protocol, Shared Family Care and the provision of protective advice as a response to allegations of abuse and neglect.

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.28: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Average number of days from notification to commencement was:					
(a) within 1 day;		1	na	na	na
(b) within 2 to 5 days;		1	na	na	na
(c) in more than 5 days;		1	na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated		1	3.1	15.5	8
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where child abuse or neglect was again substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	2	15.9	16.4	25.4
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	2	5.2	5.8	5.6
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	2	6.8	5.8	6.7

Notes: 1 The majority of notifications in Queensland result in the investigation commencing either the same day or the next. The percentages are as follows: 1992–93, 62 per cent; 1993–94, 60.7 per cent; and 1994–95, 57.5 per cent.

2 The method of estimation used is 'backwards'.

Table 10.29: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 The current structure of work groups with responsibility for child protection services is a single work group consisting of a manager and a number of staff who have responsibility for both child protection and juvenile justice service delivery. Detailed budget information is available at this level. However, it is not yet available at a program level. With the establishment of Juvenile Justice within the Department, the type of information sought, relating to costs of child protection will become more accessible.

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.30: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care	1		493	526	na
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			1	1	na
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			na	na	na
(b) death of parents;			na	na	na
(c) other			na	na	na
Total number of children in care	2		2,970	2,947	2,958

Notes: 1 Of those children that entered alternative care in 1992–93 and 1993–94, the number that entered ‘as legal’ were 371 and 412, respectively. The data provided used the definition of ‘as legal’ to be those children placed under the guardianship of the Director-General (that is, those children placed on care and protection or care and control orders for protective reasons); those children that entered as ‘non-legal’ had guardianship retained by the parent or guardian.

2 At 30 June.

General note: The information supplied by Queensland does not comply with the definition requested by the Working Group. Figures included represent those children who had a protective order at 30 June for each of the relevant years. The figures provided for this document do not agree with those previously provided to the AIHW. This arises from the additional information that was requested by the Working Group which necessitated an additional set of figures from the database. As the database is continually updated, information has added with changes for the figures for 30 June. The usual definition of statistics provided for alternative care used within Queensland, is children under protective orders who are placed away from home with approved care providers or in residential funded through the Alternative care and Intervention Services Program. A Shared Family Care collection has been developed in this state which will ultimately be able to provide information relating to children who are in alternative care arrangements but who do not have a protective order. This information collected relates to all non-government shared family care arrangements. These children are currently excluded from the information provided.

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.31: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;			18	29	11
2 weeks to less than 1 month			9	36	31
1 to less than 3 months;			78	103	75
3 to less than 6 months;			109	123	103
6 to less than 12 months;			263	250	300
1 year to less than 2 years;			412	420	486
2 years to less than 5 years			999	917	835
5 or more years			1,082	1,069	1,117
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;			1,965	1,979	1,964
2 placements;			399	396	401
3 placements;			213	239	219
4 placements;			114	130	121
5 or more placements			279	203	253
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;	%		na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily	%		na	na	na
(c) returned home;	%		na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;	%		na	na	na
(e) other	%		na	na	na
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%		na.	na.	na.

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.32: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:					
(a) residential care;	\$	1	na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$	1	na	na	na
(c) other	\$	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 Queensland is unable to provide on definitions available. 1993–94 funds were Alternative Care Intervention Services Program (\$9.2 million), Receiving, Assessment, Placement and Therapy (\$1.4 million), Disability programs (\$49.7 million), Emergency 24 hour care (\$0.3 million).

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.33: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	3,338	3,209	3,400
(b) support		1	na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census data.

Note: 1 Represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period. These do not represent the number of individual people requesting accommodation as the same people could be requesting accommodation on more than one occasion.

Queensland, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.34: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>Nov 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	1,342	1,423	1,131
(b) unable to be met		1	1,996	1,786	2,269
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	1,142	1,173	1,490
(b) other reasons		1	854	613	779
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 2	11	12	17

Source: SAAP Two Week Census; and SAAP One Night Census in May 1993, May 1994 and May 1995.

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.33.

2 Represent the percentage of people entering SAAP accommodation whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other short term crisis accommodation.

Table 10.35: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes 1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000	7,860
Domestic violence	\$' 000	7,779
Families	\$' 000	2,249
Single women	\$' 000	375
Single men	\$' 000	2,370
Multiple	\$' 000	4,594
Total	\$' 000	25,227

Queensland, additional performance information

Child protection research

In 1994–95, Queensland has undertaken two major research projects aimed at reviewing practise and more clearly identifying the outcomes of child protection statutory intervention:

- a comprehensive analysis of the needs of children subject to statutory intervention and the extent to which those needs are met by the child protection system; and
- an examination of departmental practice in intervening with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. This research aims to more clearly identify the issues leading to the need for intervention and the impact of such intervention.

The findings of these two pieces of research are currently being finalised and will be available in early 1996.

Alternative care: transition from care

An evaluation of the Transition From Care program (TFC) undertaken in 1991 and 1993 found that the young people who participated in the program became progressively better prepared for independence over the period of the study.¹¹ The TFC was developed by the Queensland Department of Family and Community Services, with the aims of assisting young people in care to develop the skills necessary to move toward successful independence, and to ensure that on-going supportive networks are in place when the young person leaves care. The young people on the program were considered ‘high risk’ because of experiences of abuse and neglect, high degree of mobility, many placements, lack of support networks in the community, and a lack of participation in employment, education or training. Young people were referred to the program, but had to decide whether or not to become involved. On average, participation in the program was for four to six months.

The TFC had identified ten key areas that were crucial for successful independence following alternative care. These were: situation factors (income, accommodation, employment/training/education, helping agency network); social factors (family networks, social networks); and personal factors (practical living skills, relationship/social issues, personal issues, parenting issues).

¹¹ Wilson, Waterhouse, Simons, Prichard, Moerara, Dorrough (1994)

Queensland, additional performance information

The study measured the progress made in each of the ten target areas. Status was measured at the time of referral (pre-program), at exit from program (ex-program), and six to 12 months after the program (post-program). There were 49 participants.

The main findings were:

- *income* At referral, 57 per cent had an appropriate income. Ex-program this increased to 88 per cent, and to 90 per cent post program;
- *accommodation* On referral, 49 per cent were in stable or very stable accommodation. Ex-program this rose to 73 per cent and to 84 per cent post-program;
- *employment, education and training* On referral, 55 per cent were unemployed. There was little change in these figures at ex-program (49 per cent), and post-program (53 per cent);
- *helping agency network* Young people increased their ability to access services of welfare agencies independently over the period of evaluation; and
- *family and social network* A significant number experienced a strengthening of family relationships and social networks during the evaluation period.

SAAP users consultations, 1993

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) underwent a National Evaluation in 1993. As part of the Queensland contribution to the evaluation of the program in the State, the views of service users were sought through a client survey in the areas of:

- access and referral;
- operation of services;
- childrens' needs;
- exit options; and
- outcomes.

The project was undertaken through face to face interviews with both present and past users of SAAP services. The project was also overseen by a Steering Committee with representation from the then Queensland Department of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services, and non-government organisations. The consultations involved 29 services, with a total of 148 clients

Queensland, additional performance information

interviewed. Of these, 33 were past users of services and 155 were present clients.

The key findings of the survey indicate that while there was general satisfaction with SAAP services, there were some areas that people felt could be enhanced.

“Our own place” - Needs and preferences of older homeless persons on Queensland SAAP services

Funding was allocated in the 1992–93 financial year to undertake a study into the needs and preferences of older homeless people in SAAP services in Queensland known as “Our own place” and to provide advice on longer term supported accommodation options for this group on alternative forms of crisis accommodation and other services where appropriate.

The study involved gathering and analysing information obtained from a variety of sources including current data collection systems and a telephone census of service providers. Submissions were sought from key government and non-government organisations, and consumer representative bodies. Service providers and service users were interviewed and included both metropolitan and non-metropolitan services, accommodation and non-accommodation services, current and former clients of SAAP and users of day and meals centres.

Key outcomes from this study included recommendations relating to the need for an integrated approach to planning of services for older homeless people; restructuring of existing services to recognise the support progression of clients; development of a case management approach; increased service options for older homeless women, couples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and disabled or frail aged. Recommendations were also made in relation to staff training and development, new approaches to funding, and to acknowledge the needs and preferences of older homeless people.

Western Australia - jurisdiction's own comments

Child Protection

“ Western Australia is in a transition stage examining and making improvements to its child protection system. It was considered inappropriate to provide data that did not reflect the new directions. Information about recent study and development is included under **ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**.

Alternative care indicators: Western Australia implemented a new Information System on December 1 1994. This provides increased ability to use alternative care data. Incorporation of new concepts in recording placement information, makes comparison with previous years more difficult. WA has an active alternative care private sector. Placements made with such agencies, either privately or through Family and Children's Services (FCS), are now recorded so that "whole of sector" information and indicators will be available. With respect to the indicators, the following general comments need to be made: **(1)** The number of movements within care is not necessarily indicative of poor performance - goals and movements need to be linked if inferences about performance are to be made. **(2)** The options offered for "reasons for entry into care" need to be expanded to be useful. A recent study of WA information showed that for under 10s, 60% of entries were for "care giver cannot care adequately", "care giver physical illness", "care giver psychiatric illness" and "respite for care giver" while for the children over ten, 42% of the reasons related to "care giver/carer conflict", "homelessness"; and "behavioural problems". If at-home services could prevent entry, especially for young children, indicators around preliminary work with family prior to entry could be explored. **(3)** Where children are placed is important to the quality of the care experience. Placements within the family or extended family are often preferred and the extent that this is obtained should be a performance indicator (see WA additional performance information) **(4)** Indicators need to be developed that reflect the existence of and compliance with formal case planning mechanisms which are a key element of quality practice. WA is looking at developing such an indicator. **(5)** Whilst most children in care have one or 2 placements (87%), a small but significant number are difficult to place or to maintain in a placement (6% had 5 or more placements). The needs of these children are different and perhaps a subset of indicators is required. **(6)** Caution needs to be made in comparing the data across states because of different Legislation/policies and counting rules, (eg respite for foster carers may be considered a new placement by some but not all states).

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.36: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	431	433	435
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2	4,979	7,835	6,237
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2	4,979	6,609	4,326
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		2, 3	11.55	15.27	9.94
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2,	1,519	1,830	1,430
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2, 4	32	34	np
5 years and over	%	2, 4	67	66	np
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	2	25	27	np
All 'other'	%	2	75	73	np
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2, 4, 5	33	34	38
Emotional abuse	%	2, 4, 5	4	5	5
Sexual abuse	%	2, 4, 5	32	24	23
Neglect	%	2, 4, 5	30	36	34

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93, 1993–94: data provided by the AIHW; 1994–95: Department for Community Development, Annual Report 1994–95

3 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

4 Numbers may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

5 See note 2. Type of abuse and neglect: 144 cases 'not recorded' in 1994–95.

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.37: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	4	4	3
Per number of investigations finalised	%	1	31	30	np
Finalisations					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1	12	14	np
Per number of investigations	%	1	100	92	np
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;			np	np	np
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			np	np	np
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			np	np	np
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			np	np	np
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%		np	np	np
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			na	na	na
The percentage of cases where the period from notification to commencement by category of urgency was:					
(a) within 1 day;	%	3	np	np	50
(b) within 2 to 5 days;	%	3, 4	np	np	83
(c) in more than 5 days;	%	3	np	np	np
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated	%	3	np	np	np
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where child abuse or neglect was again substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	5	np	np	np
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	5	np	np	np
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	5	np	np	np

Notes: 1 See note 2 in Table 10.36.

2 See note 3 in Table 10.36.

3 The Department has developed child protection response times which are based on the risk to the child and the need for the child's safety. Priority response times between 1 and 5 days are identified.

4 The response time shown for 2 to 5 days is cumulative and includes 'within 1 working day'.

5 See 'Additional performance information' Section.

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.38: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$000	1	np	np	np

Note: 1 See 'Additional performance information' Section.

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.39: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care		1	1,592	1,738	1,229
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children					
Reason for entering care:		2			
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			217	219	218
(b) death of parents;		3	11	25	12
(c) other			1,364	1,494	999
Total number of children in care		4	na	na	1,258

Note: 1 Department for Community Development, Annual Report, 1994–95. There are more reasons for entering care than actual children as some children have repeat entries.

2 In WA the number of children recorded as entering care includes 17–18 year olds. This will inflate entries as compared with other States. Only Departmental placements, including those in departmental and private agency services, are recorded. Private placements with agencies are not included in this count.

3 The 1994–95 figure for 'death of parents' is derived from the WA reason for entry 'no guardian'.

4 A census of children in 'out of home care' at June 30, 1995. Includes privately placed children with NGOs. Covers departmental foster, country support hostels, education hostels, departmental group homes, non-government, SAAP and other placements. (Department for Community Development Annual Report, 1994–95).

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care**Table 10.40: Effectiveness**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;	1	na	na	na	15
2 weeks to less than 1 month	1	na	na	na	1
1 to less than 3 months;	1	na	na	na	43
3 to less than 6 months;	1	na	na	na	76
6 to less than 12 months;	1	na	na	na	136
1 year to less than 2 years;	1	na	na	na	208
2 years to less than 5 years	1	na	na	na	269
5 or more years	1	na	na	na	321
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;	2	na	na	na	529
2 placements;	2	na	na	na	111
3 placements;	2	na	na	na	47
4 placements;	2	na	na	na	3
5 or more placements	2	na	na	na	43

Notes: 1 At 30 June.

2 Only departmental placements, including those in departmental and private agency services are recorded — private placements with agencies are not included in this count.

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.41: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:		1			
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;			na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily			na	na	na
(c) returned home;			na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;			na	na	na
(e) other			na	na	na
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%		na	na	na

Note: 1 Data on attainment of goals on exit from care are provided in the 'Additional performance information' Section.

Table 10.42: Unit cost:

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:		1			
(a) residential care;	\$		na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$		na	na	na
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

Note: 1 Refer to 'Additional performance information' Section

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.43: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>May 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and			2,285	1,754	1,632
(b) support			na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note: 1 Represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period.

Table 10.44: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>May 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	613	681	672
(b) unable to be met		1	1,672	1073	960
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	1,118	606	307
(b) other reasons		1, 2	554	467	653
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 3	13	14	18

Source: SAAP Two Week Census, and SAAP One Night Censuses in May 1993, May 1994 and May 1995.

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.43.

2 Includes 'client not eligible'.

3 Percentage of people entering crisis accommodation whose previous accommodation was emergency accommodation.

Western Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.45: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes 1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000	np
Domestic violence	\$' 000	np
Families	\$' 000	np
Single women	\$' 000	np
Single men	\$' 000	np
Multiple	\$' 000	np
Total	\$' 000	np

Western Australia, additional performance information

Protection and care of children: evaluation of trends

WA has responded to the exponential growth in allegations (a national and international trend) by commissioning detailed research of child protection data for the period 1989–90 to 1993–94. The major findings of the study were:

- despite the enormous rise in allegations there was no corresponding increase in actual harm to children;
- many of the reports were concerned with parenting difficulties, social disadvantage and community perceptions of the standard of care;
- despite the rise in allegations there was no similar rise in services received; and
- it was evident that in many cases investigation was the wrong type of response and a more appropriate response had to be developed. Departmental staff were themselves requesting that better ways of dealing with child maltreatment allegations be developed.

Western Australia, additional performance information

The response to the findings has been to trial a new system, between 1 June 1995 and 31 August 1995. 'Concerns about children' which require assessment and support services are distinguished from alleged maltreatment of children where investigation and child protection service is an appropriate response. This aims to separate reports of general concern about children and their families from those which indicate children have suffered or are at risk of serious harm and/or injury. For those families where there is general concern, the Department is developing a series of support programs for parents and families.

District Offices reported that before the trial began in June, the research findings had an impact. There was more careful consideration of what constituted child maltreatment and closer consideration of individual family circumstances to ensure disadvantaged families were supported. This new approach is reflected in 1994–95 data which show a drop in child maltreatment allegations — the first in five years. The number dropped 20 per cent from 7,749 in 1993–94 to 6,237 in 1994–95. Confirmed maltreatment investigated by the Department also decreased across all types of maltreatment. This latter result is linked to clearer criteria being developed for substantiation of maltreatment.

The evaluation of these new directions is currently under consideration for possible State-wide implementation.

Protection and care of children (effectiveness indicators)

These indicators are derived from the WA Department's 1994–95 Annual Report.

1. The extent to which children are protected from further harm as shown by:

- the proportion of allegations responded to within one working day, two working days, and five working days. Of those allegations made to the Department in 1994–95 that warranted investigation, 50 per cent were responded to within one working day. Sixty six per cent were responded to within two working days and 83 per cent were responded to within five working days.

The Department has developed child protection response times which are based on the risk to the child and the need to determine the child's safety. Priority response times between 1 and 5 days are identified.

Western Australia, additional performance information

2. The extent to which protection of children is achieved within the family as evidenced by:

- the fact that 89 per cent of children with substantiated maltreatment in 1993–94 were able to remain safely at home during 1994–95 for 12 months (365 days) following the substantiated allegation. This represents 1376 children. The department aims to enable children to live with their families, where this can be achieved safely.

3. The extent to which children who cannot live with their families experience quality out of home or alternative care and continuity of relationships and return to live with family where this is appropriate, as evidenced by:

- the number and proportion of children placed with extended family members during the year.

In 1994–95, 20 per cent of foster and family placements were made with relatives of the children. This equates to 383 placements. This excludes group or hostel placements.

Four hundred and forty eight children, comprising 86 per cent of children with a goal of family reunification, left care to live with their families during 1994–95.

- the number and proportion of foster carers who provided placements that have been appropriately assessed.

In 1994–95, 1,653 placements were made with foster carers and of these, 85 per cent had been fully or partially assessed. This equates to 1,408 placements.

Where children are not placed with ‘professional foster carers’, but are placed with relatives or people otherwise known to the child, a full assessment prior to placement is often not appropriate. It is preferred that children are placed with someone who is familiar to them and full assessment occurs only when placement is for a substantial period of time.

It is, therefore, appropriate that of the 280 placements made with these ‘particular’ carers, 102 or 36 per cent were fully assessed with almost all of the others having been partially assessed.

- **degree to which goals for children were met.** Of the 523 children who entered care with a goal of ‘living with family’, 448 (86 per cent) left care to return to their families.

Western Australia, additional performance information

Protection and Care of Children (efficiency indicators)

The measures of efficiency itemised below include direct costs only. The Department is in the process of developing total costing.

1. The direct care cost per week for children in departmental foster care including the extent to which foster care subsidies are linked to the cost of caring for children as identified by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS).

This will include the direct cost of subsidies, regular allowance and other placement costs. This cost does not include staffing costs.

Direct care costs are closely linked to the type of need and services required by children and variations in costs are to be expected.

In 1994–95, the average direct care cost of children in foster care was approximately \$131 per week. The cost range is from \$67 to \$467. For children under 13, the average cost was \$115 and for children over 13 the average cost was \$168.

In 1994–95 the department completed the final stage of a three year phased linking of foster care subsidies to the benchmark identified by the Australian Institute of Family Studies as the cost of caring for a child.

Expenditure data

Annual Report data on recurrent expenditure in 1994–95 for the protection and care of children program include:

- protective intervention and treatment \$11 million;
- supported care \$28.4 million;
- family and community support \$32.4 million; and
- prevention and development \$30 million.

These costs include the allocation of some corporate services expenditure.

Child protection (evaluation of services)

The Department funds non-government organisations (NGOs) and private practitioners through the Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Services Scheme (CSATSS). It provides a range of therapeutic services to assist children, individuals, and families where intra familial child sexual maltreatment has occurred. Funding in 1994–95 was about \$500,000. In 1995 an outcome

Western Australia, additional performance information

evaluation of the CSATSS was conducted. Consumers were surveyed with the majority (86 per cent) finding the services they received 'very helpful' or 'extremely helpful' in addressing their personal problems. The majority of parents (76 per cent) rated the treatment services received by their children as 'very helpful' or 'extremely helpful' in assisting them to deal with their experiences.

Alternative care (expenditure)

About \$5.58 million was provided in 1994–95 to fund out of home care agencies for placement, prevention and family reunification services for children.

South Australia - jurisdiction's own comments

“**Child protection:** The Children's Protection Act 1993 provides a legislative framework which ascribes a high value to partnership, family support, and maintaining children in their immediate family, and within the networks of kin, culture, and community, wherever possible. South Australia has the oldest and most extensive system of mandatory notification in Australia, the impact of which can be seen in the relatively high rate of allegations and investigations per thousand. Allegations, investigations and substantiations have all increased in recent years, although the rate of substantiation is increasing at a slower rate than that of allegations and investigations. This suggests an increase in the reporting of concerns, rather than simply the incidence of abuse, and a significant increase in workload. South Australia is considering a re-configuration of child protection services in light of these trends, and in a desire to improve effectiveness.

Alternative care: All but a small number of emergency placements in South Australia are accessed through, and supervised by, the Department. Both Government and Non Government agencies provide placements, the great majority of which are in foster care. The system is currently undergoing major restructure which will lead to, among other things, increased diversification of care options, and the establishment of a central brokerage and data monitoring service which will facilitate placement access, and ensure high quality data collection.

Data source: The performance information for child protection and alternative care have been derived from the Department's computerised client information system. The quality of this data is compromised by two major factors: 1) entries often require subjective judgements, and there are unavoidable variations in the way items are interpreted and recorded; 2) not all relevant data is entered onto the system. This is particularly so for alternative care, where significant transactions, eg. the moves of a child between placements may be unrecorded.

Crisis and supported accommodation: Under SAAP, 66 services, with approximately 300 outlets, are funded to provide services to homeless people. Although SA has participated in the annual census of these services, this data is not provided, due to variable rates of participation and problems of data quality, which render the data non-comparable. A separate data base has recently been established for metropolitan youth agencies, and extensive and reliable statistics will become available with the National Data Collection in 1996.”

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.46: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	340	340	340
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2, 3	6,239	6,644	7,110
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		4	5,736	6,158	6,954
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		4	16.88	18.11	20.44
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		5	1,824	2,077	2,547
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	5, 6	24	24	30
5 years and over	%	5, 6	71	70	66
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	5	7	11	9
All 'other'	%	5	93	89	91
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	5, 7	41	39	36
Emotional abuse	%	5, 7	14	14	7
Sexual abuse	%	5, 7	29	28	21
Neglect	%	5, 7	16	20	32

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 data were provided by the AIHW, 1993–94 and 1994–95 were provided by SA.

3 Allegations and notifications are not terms that are used in SA. Data are not recorded for these categories. Data provided are for the number of intakes where the presenting problem is assessed to be child protection. More than one child may be included in each intake.

4 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

5 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

6 Data may not add up to 100 per cent due to a number of children being recorded 'age not known': 87 children in 1992–93, 118 in 1993–94, and 59 in 1994–95.

7 In 1994–95 there were 74 children for which the type of maltreatment was not recorded.

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.47: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	5	6	7
Per number of investigations finalised	%	2	38	38	40
Finalisation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1, 2	14	16	19
Per number of investigations	%	2	84	90	92
Outcomes					
Finalised cases per 1000 children where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%		na	na	na
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			na	na	na
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;			na	na	na
(b) within 2 to 5 days;			na	na	na
(c) in more than 5 days;			na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated			na	na	na
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where further maltreatment was substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%		9.8	10.0	na
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%		na	na	na
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%		na	na	na

Notes: 1 See notes 1 and 4 in Table 10.46.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.48: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$		na	na	na

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.49: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care			846	765	724
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			2	2	2
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;		1	136	100	81
(b) death of parents;		2	3	1	0
(c) other		3	707	664	643
Total number of children in care		4	1,199	1,242	1,217

Notes: 1 The numbers of children who entered care in 1992–93, 1993–94, and 1994–95 that were classified as 'legal' were: 55, 32, and 15, respectively.

2 These children were all classified as 'non-legal'.

3 The numbers of children who entered care in 1992–93; 1993–94; and 1994–95 that were classified as 'non-legal' were: 647; 615; and 613 respectively.

4 At 30 June.

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.50: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;	1		26	22	35
2 weeks to less than 1 month	1		11	21	21
1 to less than 3 months;	1		49	55	50
3 to less than 6 months;	1		65	54	38
6 to less than 12 months;	1		87	95	68
1 year to less than 2 years;	1		273	144	139
2 years to less than 5 years	1		372	483	448
5 or more years	1		316	368	420
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;			941	1,011	952
2 placements;			116	133	141
3 placements;			63	44	56
4 placements;			30	30	30
5 or more placements			49	24	38
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;			na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily			na	na	na
(c) returned home;			na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;			na	na	na
(e) other			na	na	na
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%		na	na	na

Note: 1 At June 30.

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.51: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:					
(a) residential care;	\$		na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$		na	na	na
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.52: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>Sept 94</i>	<i>May 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	np	np	np
(b) support		1	np	np	np

Note: 1 SA did not authorise the use of SAAP census data in the Report due to concerns about comparability and reliability.

South Australia, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.53: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>Sept 94</i>	<i>May 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	np	np	np
(b) unable to be met		1	np	np	np
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	np	np	np
(b) unable to be met		1	np	np	np
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	np	np	np
(b) other reasons		1	np	np	np
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1	np	np	np

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.52.

Table 10.54: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes 1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000	6,500
Divorced	\$' 000	3,832
Families	\$' 000	1,144
Single women	\$' 000	186
Single men	\$' 000	1,692
Multiple	\$' 000	449
Total	\$' 000	13,803

South Australia, additional performance information

Alternative care

In 1993 the Department of Family and Community Services (DFACS) conducted a survey of adolescents under the guardianship of the Minister. The survey found:

- the average number of placements experienced by each child during their time in care was 15.8 for city dwellers and 14.7 for rural dwellers;
- 69.7 per cent presented with a positive self concept, whilst 19.3 per cent described themselves in negative or dubious terms; and
- the adolescents had infrequent contact with their family. The more placements a young person experienced, the less likely they were to have contact with their family of origin.

In 1994–95 research was conducted concerning children in care under short term agreements (up to 6 months). The study included both qualitative and quantitative data. Findings included:

- parents often viewed alternative care as an important and necessary support service;
- most of the parents interviewed were satisfied with the quality of care their children received. The majority, however, did not feel that they received adequate information concerning their child whilst they were in care, and were dissatisfied with the degree to which they were consulted and involved in decisions about their child;
- children experienced on average 2.2 placements during the period, with 45 per cent experiencing more than one placement. Children in regular contact with their families were more likely to have stable placements than those who did not;
- of the survey sample, 34 per cent returned home after their voluntary placement. For those children remaining in care, reunification was intended for 47 per cent and not intended for 35 per cent; and
- the qualitative aspect of research made it clear that outcome evaluation in alternative care is complex and multi faceted, and client evaluations of success may be very different to those of professionals. Remaining in care may be the best outcome for some children and their parents; returning home does not necessarily equate with success.

South Australia, additional performance information

Crisis and supported accommodation

The one night census of SAAP services in May 1994 (in which 72 per cent of services participated) identified 510 clients who spent the night in crisis accommodation. Of those people:

- 8 per cent were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
- 30 per cent were accompanied by children;
- 43 per cent entered the accommodation from previous emergency accommodation and/ or had no fixed address;
- 17 per cent entered the services from hostel accommodation;
- 42 per cent from private rental;
- 17 per cent entered the services from hostel accommodation;
- 42 per cent from private rental; and
- 17 per cent from a home they owned, or were buying.

Most people had stayed for 12 weeks or less in their previous accommodation.

Tasmania - jurisdiction's own comments

“ The current legislation is the *Child Protection Act 1974* and the *Child Welfare Act 1960*. These are to be replaced by *Children and Their Families Bill*, currently at the drafting stage. During the reporting period Child and Family Services operated with two arms of service delivery, one providing child protection and the other child welfare services.

Investigations of abuse were allocated to Child Protection Officers, who are authorised by the Child Protection Board and employed by the Department of Community and Health Services. Child Protection Officers report at weekly meetings to Regional Assessment Committees, which are multi disciplinary and multi agency committees and to whom the Board has delegated some of its functions such as assessment of cases and initiation of legal proceedings.

Children's Services Workers investigated allegations of neglect under the Child Welfare Act. They also provided case management services to children and their families following the finalisation of investigations of abuse if further intervention was required.

Alternative care services are provided for children and families on a short term or long term basis when a child is no longer able to live with his/her natural family. These services are provided in family group homes and through a variety of foster care services. Carers are recruited, assessed, trained, supported and reviewed by departmental staff. Carers receive payment through fortnightly board payments based on the age of the child in care, with the capacity to provide extra payments for children with special needs or challenging behaviours. Some alternative care is provided by the non-government sector with funding provided through a grants program and board payments to individual children.

In anticipation of the implementation of the proposed legislation and with the aim of providing an improved service to families by identifying and meeting their needs better, Child and Family services is moving towards a single entry point to the Department through an intake and assessment process. The outcome of the contact may be: provision of information; referral to other agencies, both government and non-government; family needs assessment which includes needs of the family as well as safety of the child; or investigation where a child/children is suspected to be at risk of harm or neglect.

During the reporting period two data systems existed — the Child Welfare Information System and the Child Protection System. Since July 1 1995 the two systems have been integrated and this will result in improved collection of information to inform policy and practice development and more relevant information for management.”

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.55: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	122	121	121
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2	1,666	1,807	1,690
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2	1,598	1,639	1,672
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		3, 4	13	14	14
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2, 5	416	424	352
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2, 6	22	19	20
5 years and over	%	2, 6	74	66	66
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%		3	2	na
All 'other'	%		97	98	na
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2, 7	48	49	54
Emotional abuse	%	2, 7	4	11	4
Sexual abuse	%	2, 7	34	36	29
Neglect	%	2, 7	14	4	4

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

4 The total number of investigations refers to when a report of child abuse or neglect has been alleged and a decision is reached that an investigation is warranted. Consultations are not counted.

Mandatory reporting: under the Child Protection Order 1977, a number of professionals are mandated to report abuse and neglect of children, such as: social workers, probation officers, school principals, child carers, medical practitioners, Family and Child Health nurses, psychologists.

5 Cases given an outcome of 'substantiated' where there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, or is being, abused or neglected. Substantiation does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that reassessment or case management was, or is to be, provided.

6 There were 49 cases with unknown birth date in 1994–95, 17 in 1992–93, and 66 in 1993–94.

7 Numbers do not add to 100 per cent; there were 32 cases of 'Other' abuse in 1994–95.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.56: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population			3	4	3
Per number of investigations finalised	%		31	29	26
Finalisation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population			11	12	11
Per number of investigations	%	1	84	90	80
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;		2	na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%	3	na	na	na
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			na	na	na
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;		3	na	na	na
(b) within 2 to 5 days;		3	na	na	na
(c) in more than 5 days;		3	na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated		3	na	na	na

Notes: 1 Number of finalised cases refers to a case reported in the financial year and closed by the following 31 August. A case is classified 'not finalised' when it has been reported in the year and not finalised by the following 31 August. The decrease in the number of finalised cases in 1994–95 compared with 1993–94 were mainly due to the lack of human resources as the development of the new system and the testing and training required led to late entry of data for the 1994–95 reporting year.

2 These data can not be collected in the old information system. The new system will produce these data.

3 The old Child Protection system could not report on any of the above indicators. The new system as from 1 July 1995 will be capable of reporting on these indicators. The priority ratings are: *Priority 1* - investigation commenced within half a day; *Priority 2* - investigation commenced within two days; and *Priority 3* - investigation commenced within five days.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.57: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where child abuse or neglect was again substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	1	2.4	6.6	2.1
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	1	4.5	4.0	1.4
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	1	2.4	5.0	1.4

Note: 1 These data were taken from a forward collection of data from the given time frames.

Table 10.58: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost measure					
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$' 000	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 Information will be provided in next year's Report.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.59: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care		1	na	na	na
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			na	na	na
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			na	na	na
(b) death of parents;			na	na	na
(c) other			na	na	na
Total number of children in care		2	529	648	643

Notes: 1 These data are not available. The new data system will enable these data to be reported on in next year's Report.

2 At 30 June.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.60: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:	1				
0 to less than 2 weeks;			23	39	58
2 weeks to less than 1 month			11	37	41
1 to less than 3 months;			29	99	114
3 to less than 6 months;			66	76	116
6 to less than 12 months;			91	133	145
1 year to less than 2 years;			162	104	79
2 years to less than 5 years			103	100	61
5 or more years			44	60	29
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:	2				
1 placement;			na	na	na
2 placements;			na	na	na
3 placements;			na	na	na
4 placements;			na	na	na
5 or more placements			na	na	na
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;			na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily;			na	na	na
(c) returned home;			na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;			na	na	na
(e) other			na	na	na

Notes: 1 As at June 30.

2 Data will be available for next year's Report.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.61: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 Information will be available for next year's Report.

Table 10.62: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:		1			
(a) residential care;	\$		na	6	5
(b) foster care;	\$		na	11	11
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

Note: 1 Estimated by dividing expenditure by number of days care provided.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.63: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	473	471	629
(b) support		1	na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note: 1 Represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period.

Tasmania, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.64: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	207	227	217
(b) unable to be met		1	266	244	412
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	195	133	296
(c) other reasons		1	71	111	116
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 2	6	7	16

Source: SAAP Two Week Census; and SAAP One Night Censuses in May 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Notes: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.63.

2 Represent the percentage of people entering SAAP accommodation whose previous accommodation was SAAP or other short term crisis accommodation.

Table 10.65: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes 1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000	2,236
Domestic violence	\$' 000	1,372
Families	\$' 000	550
Single women	\$' 000	426
Single men	\$' 000	642
Multiple	\$' 000	900
Total	\$' 000	6,126

Tasmania, additional performance information

In 1994–95, recurrent child protection expenditure was \$711,150. This figure does not allocate corporate overhead costs, and does not include other family and child services.

Northern Territory - jurisdiction's own comments

“

Child protection indicators: NT data for these indicators are limited. The quality of the current information system makes collection and aggregation of performance measures which are not already contained in the system, difficult and unreliable. Differences between the child protection and legislation in the NT and that in other States and Territories, further affects the comparability of the data supplied. For example, all notifications received in the NT must be finalised and investigations should commence within 24 hours of the notifications being received. The NT has had mandatory reporting legislation since the *Community Welfare Act 1983* was enacted.

Alternative care indicators: A major review of the NT Substitute Care and Guardianship Program was undertaken during 1995. Implementation of the review recommendations will take place over the next three years and will include the development and implementation of program standards and outcome measures. It is anticipated that more comprehensive data relating to this area will be available in future years.

At present only limited data are able to be supplied for the alternative care indicators. Once again the capacity of the current information system to aggregate information about the performance of the program is limited. Data relating to such indicators as the number of placements for a child during their time in care, was not considered reliable or comparable due to differences in counting rules and legislation.

The majority of substitute care services in the NT are provided by the government program, in comparison to the other States and Territories where a range of NGOs are involved in service delivery. The number of children in care in the NT at the end of each year has remained relatively static for many years. While most of these children are in the guardianship of the Minister, a proportion of children do move in and out of the care system through voluntary admission to the temporary custody of the Minister. Not all children in care experience out of home placements, since some children in care do reside with their parents.

Crisis and supported accommodation: NT data relating to the performance indicators in this section have been supplied by the Commonwealth, and relate to information obtained from SAAP services during the one night and two week census. The new national data collection and case management projects initiated within the SAAP program are expected to provide more comprehensive and useful data related to crisis and supported accommodations services. Agreed Commonwealth and Territory New Directions in the SAAP program are currently initiating substantial change.”

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.66: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	52	52	53
Allegations					
Allegations of child abuse and neglect		2	610	771	770
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2, 3	610	771	770
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		2, 4	11.74	14.69	14.57
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2	304	377	358
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2	36	40	35
5 years and over	%	2, 5	64	60	65
<i>Cultural background</i>		2			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	2	47	50	54
All 'other'	%	2	53	50	46
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2	43	30	29
Emotional abuse	%	2	5	8	8
Sexual abuse	%	2	28	15	15
Neglect	%	2	24	47	48

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 All notifications of child maltreatment in the NT are investigated.

4 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

5 Data relate to children 5 years to less than 16 years.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.67: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1	6	7	7
Per number of investigations finalised	%	2	50	49	46
Finalisation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1	12	15	15
Per number of investigations	%	2	100	100	100
Outcomes					
Finalised cases where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;		3	na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;		3	na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;		3	na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;		3	na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%	4	na	na	na
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			na	na	na
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;		5	na	na	na
(b) within 2 to 5 days;			na	na	na
(c) in more than 5 days;			na	na	na
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated			na	na	na

Notes: 1 See note 3 in Table 10.66.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 This information cannot be collected from the current data system

4 The NT has few benchmarks relating to investigation and none in relation to finalisation times. The Community Welfare Act requires that the Minister receives a child protection report, and that the report shall be investigated as soon as is practicable after receiving the report. This is translated into a procedural requirement that all investigations be commenced within 24 hours of notification. There are no urgency ratings relating to investigation response time.

5 Although data are collected at the time of notification and the time of commencement, this information is not currently accessible. M4 will become available once the data files have been modified to capture the time of notification. This information cannot be collected from the current data system.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.68: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where child abuse or neglect was again substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%		na	na	na
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%		na	na	na
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%		na	na	na

**Table 10.69: Cost
S**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection per 1000 children	\$'000		na	na	na

Note: 1 The Department is currently unable to determine the actual costs of child protection services.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.70: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care			na	na	na
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			na	na	na
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			na	na	na
(b) death of parents;			na	na	na
(c) other			na	na	na
Total number of children in care		1	136	153	150

Notes: General note: Children in care in the NT are either in the guardianship or custody of the Minister by virtue of the Commonwealth Welfare Act. Information is not kept by the Department on children who are in out-of-home placements such as disability services or children who may be receiving respite care from another service.

1 At 30 June.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.71: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;	1, 2		na	na	na
2 weeks to less than 1 month	1, 2		na	na	na
1 to less than 3 months;	1		na	na	8
3 to less than 6 months;	1		na	na	22
6 to less than 12 months;	1		na	na	15
1 year to less than 2 years;	1		na	na	18
2 years to less than 5 years	1		na	na	28
5 or more years	1		na	na	17
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;	3		na	na	na
2 placements;	3		na	na	na
3 placements;	3		na	na	na
4 placements;	3		na	na	na
5 or more placements	3		na	na	na
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;			na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily			na	na	na
(c) returned home;			na	na	na
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;			na	na	na
(e) other			na	na	na

Note: 1 1994–95 data from a census of children in care conducted 1 May 1995.

2 The above census did not distinguish between children aged between nought and two weeks and those aged between two weeks and one month. The total of these two categories was 16.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.72: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%	1	na	na	na

Note: 1 Accurate data cannot be provided. All incidents of abuse in care are currently recorded as child protection notifications and are not separated from other notifications in the information system.

Table 10.73: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:					
(a) residential care;	\$		na	na	na
(b) foster care;	\$		na	na	na
(c) other	\$		na	na	na

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.74: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	661	468	380
(b) support		1	na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note 1 Represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period.

Northern Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.75: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	541	391	291
(b) unable to be met		1	120	77	89
Support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	43	20	80
(b) other reasons		1	77	57	9
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	2, 3	7	11	6

Source: The SAAP Two Week Census; and SAAP One Night Censuses in November 1992, 1993, and 1994.

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.74.

Table 10.76: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000		na
Domestic violence	\$' 000		na
Families	\$' 000		na
Single women	\$' 000		na
Single men	\$' 000		na
Multiple	\$' 000		na
Total	\$' 000		na

Australian Capital Territory - jurisdiction's own comments

“In the ACT, the Family Services area within the Children's, Youth and Family Services Bureau receives and investigates notifications of alleged child abuse and neglect as authorised by the Children's Services Act 1986. It is intended to review this Act within the next two years, to bring it up-to-date in relation to the need to foster the development of children in a safe environment, the obligation of the state to the children as expressed in binding local, national and international instruments; and recent developments in non court options and permanency in planning in child protection.

It is proposed to introduce mandatory reporting in the ACT from 1 June 1997. The groups to be mandated are doctors, dentists, nurses, police officers, teachers, school counsellors, public servants working in the child welfare area and licensed child care providers. It is intended to train these groups through a staged regional approach, thereby gaining an accurate picture of the potential increase in notifications and also hopefully avoiding the sudden peak of notifications experienced by other jurisdictions on the introduction of mandatory reporting.

Changes are also taking place in alternative care, with Family Services recently out-sourcing its last remaining directly provided child protection residential shelter to the non-government sector. The out-sourcing of the Family Services' foster care program will proceed in the current financial year.

The ACT shares the concerns expressed by other jurisdictions about the comparability of data, particularly given the lack of clarity around counting rules as well as major differences in practices and procedures.

The recent referral, of concerns about the performance indicators used in this report, by the Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators to its Care and Protection Sub-committee will hopefully result in a more comparable and relevant data set for the next report.”

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.77: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Resident children aged 0 to 16 years	000	1	77	76	76
Allegations		2			
Allegations of child abuse and neglect			1,277	1,474	1,539
Allegations investigated					
Allegations investigated		2	1,077	1,208	1,173
Allegations investigated per 1000 children		2, 3	14.03	15.87	15.53
Substantiated abuse and neglect					
Total number of substantiated cases		2	445	495	397
Substantiated Cases					
<i>Age</i>					
0 to less than 5 years	%	2, 4	38	40	37
5 years and over	%	2, 4	56	58	56
Unknown	%	2, 4	6	2	7
<i>Cultural background</i>					
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	%	2	10	8	7
All 'other'	%	2	90	92	93
<i>Type abuse and neglect</i>					
Physical abuse	%	2, 4	30	25	42
Emotional abuse	%	2, 4	33	37	23
Sexual abuse	%	2, 4	12	7	7
Neglect	%	2, 4	25	30	29

Notes: 1 At December 30.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data were provided by the AIHW.

3 The numbers of resident children reported above have been used to calculate the 'per 1000 children' estimates.

4 These figures may not add to 100 per cent due to rounding.

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.78: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Substantiation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population		1	6	7	5
Per number of investigations finalised	%		44	43	43
Finalisation rate					
Per 1,000 resident children population			13	15	12
Per number of investigations	%	2	93	95	79
Outcomes					
Finalised where harm was:					
(a) confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(b) confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
(c) not confirmed and referral made to services;			na	na	na
(d) not confirmed and not referred to services;			na	na	na
Response time					
Proportion of cases finalised within State/Territory benchmark period	%	3	78	78	63
Benchmark (working days) for State for investigation and finalisation			na	na	na
Mean number of working days from notification to commencement by category of urgency:					
(a) within 1 day;		4	1	2	2
(b) within 2 to 5 days;		4	5	5	11
(c) in more than 5 days;		4	9	11	22
The average period from notification to commencement for all cases investigated		4	4	6	10

Notes: 1 See note 3 in Table 10.77.

2 1992–93 and 1993–94 data provided by AIHW.

3 The benchmark in the ACT is the percentage of cases where an investigation is commenced within the allocated time frame. The Department of Family Services does not have a benchmark for the finalisation of cases. The benchmarks for commencement of an investigation are: Priority 1 (immediate); Priority 2 (within 24 hours); priority 3 (within 5 days) Priority 4 (within 14 days).

4 'Within 1 day' is a combination of Family Services immediate and 24 hour benchmarks; 'within 2 to 5 days' is the 5 day benchmark; 'in more than 5 days' is the 14 day benchmark.

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, child protection

Table 10.79: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Repeat maltreatment					
Proportion of cases substantiated where further maltreatment was substantiated within:					
(a) 6 months;	%	1	12.0	10.0	13.0
(b) 6 to 12 months;	%	1	7.0	5.0	5.0
(c) 12 months to 2 years	%	1	10.0	9.0	5.0

Note 1 1992–93 data were calculated using forward estimation and 1993–94 and 1994–95 data were calculated using backward estimation.

Table 10.80: Effectiveness by same and different types of maltreatment (per cent)

	<i>1992–93</i>		<i>1993–94</i>		<i>1994–95</i>	
	<i>Same</i>	<i>Different</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Different</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Different</i>
6 months	7	5	8	2	8	4
12 months	5	2	4	2	3	2
2 years	2	7	3	6	1	4

Table 10.81: Costs

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Total costs for child protection:					
Direct service delivery	\$' 000		1,827.8	1,855.0	2,169.0
Other costs	\$' 000		736.7	852.2	869.0
For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	\$' 000		205.2	189.5	151.9
For 'other' people	\$' 000	1	2,359.3	2,517.7	2,886.1

Note: 1 Direct service delivery costs includes salaries and other operating costs. Other operating costs include repairs and maintenance, corporate support, and major plant and equipment.

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.82: Descriptors

<i>Descriptors</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Children entering care					
Total number of children entering alternative care	1		344	399	447
Total number of children entering care per 1000 children			4	5	6
Reason for entering care:					
(a) substantiated abuse and neglect;			72	86	68
(b) death of parents;			2	0	2
(c) other			270	313	377
Total number of children in care	2		68	98	119

Notes: 1 Total number of children entering care during the year includes placement with any funded care agency, and placement with extended family or friends who are receiving payment from ACT Family Services.

2 At June 30

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.83: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Length of time in care					
No. of children in care for:					
0 to less than 2 weeks;	1		6	20	24
2 weeks to less than 1 month	1		7	8	9
1 to less than 3 months;	1		11	18	23
3 to less than 6 months;	1		10	18	18
6 to less than 12 months;	1		18	21	23
1 year to less than 2 years;	1		16	13	22
2 years to less than 5 years	1		25	22	26
5 or more years	1		4	4	8
Number of placements					
Children who have been placed in care for the entire year and have had:					
1 placement;			42	39	52
2 placements;			1	0	2
3 placements;			2	1	1
4 placements;			0	0	0
5 or more placements			0	0	1
Situation on exit of care					
For those children aged 12 years and over for whom the State has been legal guardian for at least 2 years and who are leaving alternative care, the numbers who are:					
(a) in education and training and/or paid employment;	2		na	na	na
(b) supported by social security primarily	2		na	na	na
(c) returned home;	3		2	0	2
(d) found permanent alternative accommodation and/or living independently;	3		3	2	3
(e) other	3		0	4	2

Notes: 1 At June 30.

2 Family Services does not hold data on events after the child leaves alternative care.

3 The number of children 12 years or over discharged from care during the financial year that were Wards for the two years prior to the financial year.

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, alternative care

Table 10.84: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Abuse while in care					
Proportion of children abused while in care.	%	2	2	0.7	1

Notes: 1 At June 30. A full data set were provided and these are partially reported on in Section 10.4. Total time in care is continuous if the child had been placed prior to the counting year or a total of all placements if there had been several placements during the financial year.

2 The data set related to the number of children placed during the financial year plus the number of children placed prior to the financial year that were still in care during the financial year.

Table 10.85: Unit cost

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1992–93</i>	<i>1993–94</i>	<i>1994–95</i>
Cost per care day					
Cost per day by type of placement:		1			
(a) residential care;	\$		309	297	353
(b) foster care;	\$		55	70	77
(c) other	\$	2	0	0	0

Notes: 1 Actual expenditure is divided by the total number of days of care provided. The total days of care is calculated on placements made in the financial year plus placements made prior to the financial year but still in care during the financial year.

2 There are no figures for 'other' care as figures for children placed with extended family or friends are included in the Foster Care budget and cannot be disaggregated.

Table 10.86: Descriptors

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Requests for assistance					
Total number of requests:					
(a) accommodation; and		1	237	250	349
(b) support		1	na	na	na

Source: SAAP Two Week Census.

Note 1 Represent the total number of new arrivals requesting accommodation at the services for each night during the census collection period. These do not represent the number of individual people requesting accommodation as the same people could be requesting accommodation on more than one occasion.

Australian Capital Territory, 1992–93 to 1994–95, crisis and supported accommodation

Table 10.87: Effectiveness

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>May 93</i>	<i>May 94</i>	<i>June 95</i>
Demand					
Eligible accommodation requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	107	61	99
(b) unable to be met		1	130	189	250
Eligible support requests that were:					
(a) met;		1	na	na	na
(b) unable to be met		1	na	na	na
Accommodation requests un-met, because:					
(a) service was at capacity;		1	74	123	120
(b) other reasons		1	56	66	130
Entering crisis care					
Percentage of people re-entering crisis accommodation	%	1, 2	27	18	11

Source: SAAP Two Week Census; and SAAP One Night Censuses in May 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Note: 1 See note 1 in Table 10.86.

2 Represent the percentage of people entering SAAP accommodation whose previous accommodation was SAAP or short term crisis accommodation.

Table 10.88: Approved funding level

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>1993–94</i>
Youth	\$' 000		np
Domestic violence	\$' 000		np
Families	\$' 000		np
Single women	\$' 000		np
Single men	\$' 000		np
Multiple	\$' 000		np
Total	\$' 000		np

10.6 Definitions and explanatory notes

Definition of descriptors and effectiveness indicators

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explanation/definition</i>
The number of resident children aged 0–16	The mid-point financial year estimates for December 1992 and December 1993 are each an average of the opening June and closing June figures for the financial year (ABS, Cat. No. 3201.0). The June 1995 population estimate will not be available from the ABS until 1996. The December 1994 population was estimated as the average of the June 1994 population (available from the ABS) and the estimated June 1995 population (the June 1994 figure was multiplied by the average annual growth rate of the population aged 0 to 16 years over the preceding five years).
The number of allegations investigated	The number of allegations that are investigated by the relevant authority during the year ended 30 June. However, the nature of what constitutes an ‘investigation’ differs across jurisdictions.
Total number of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect	The outcome of an investigation is designated as ‘substantiated abuse or neglect’ “where there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been or is being abused or neglected. Substantiation does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution.” (Zabar and Angus 1994)
The number of substantiations per 1,000 resident children	The number of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 resident children.
The number substantiations per total number of investigations finalised	Proportion of substantiated cases (where ‘substantiated’ cases are as defined above) to the total number of finalised cases. A finalised case is one reported in the reporting year and closed by the following 31 August.
Number of investigations finalised to total number of investigations	Proportion of cases finalised (that is, cases reported in the reporting year and closed by the following 31 August) to total number of investigations (as defined above).
The number of finalised cases where:	Rate of finalised cases (as defined above) per 1000 resident children (defined in variables section below)
(a) harm was confirmed and referral made to services;	The term “harm was confirmed” refers to a substantiated case of child abuse and neglect (see definition above). The term “referral made to” indicates that a referral was made, not that services were necessarily available or that the client presented for services. The term “services” refers to non-statutory support services.
(b) harm was confirmed and not referred to services;	The term “harm was confirmed” refers to substantiated child maltreatment (see definition above). The term “not referred to services” indicates that the relevant authority did not refer the client on to additional non-statutory family services. Clients may, however, avail themselves of services even though a referral was not made.
(c) harm not confirmed and referral made to services;	The term “harm was not confirmed” refers the outcome of an investigation being that there being no reasonable cause to suspect prior, current or future abuse or neglect of the child. The terms “referral made to” and “services” are defined above.

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explanation/definition</i>
(d) harm not confirmed and referral made to services	The term "harm was not confirmed" refers to the outcome of an investigation where there is no reasonable cause to suspect prior, current or future abuse or neglect of the child. The terms "referral made to" and "services" are defined above.
Percentage of cases finalised that meet own State/Territory benchmark for average length of time for investigation and completion over the financial year	This refers to the percentage of all cases for which an investigation is commenced in the financial year that meet the jurisdiction's own target time from the commencement to the completion of an investigation.
The mean number of working days from notification of child abuse or neglect of child to the commencement of an investigation, by category of urgency:	The average number of working days from the date of the receipt of a notification to the commencement of an investigation. This indicator is shown by category of urgency for those jurisdictions that place a priority or urgency rating on notifications.
(a) that case should be looked at within 1 day;	where 'within one day' refers to a period of within 24 hours of receipt of notification, or within the same working day.
(b) that case should be looked at within 2 to 5 days;	where '2 to 5 days' refers to within 2 to 5 working days.
(c) that case should be looked into in more than 5 days;	where 'in more than 5 days' refers to in more than 5 working days.
(d) for all investigations	The average length of time from notification and the commencement of an investigation for all cases.
Percentage of cases substantiated where further maltreatment was substantiated within:	Percentage of all completed investigations for a particular period, those in which there was a further (if forward estimation) (or prior, if backward) confirmed case within the period specified. The forward method estimates, of all the completed investigations in a particular period, those in which a further confirmed case occurs within a specified period. The backward method estimates, of all the completed investigations within a particular period, those cases that had a prior confirmed finding.
(a) within 6 months;	
(b) within 6 to 12 months;	
(c) within 1 to 2 years	

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explanation/definition</i>
<p>Alternative care</p> <p>Number of children who entered alternative care during the financial year, per 1000 resident children aged 0 to 16 years, as a result of:</p> <p>(a) substantiated child abuse and neglect;</p> <p>(b) death of parents;</p> <p>(c) other</p>	<p>Alternative care means being placed out of home; may or may not mean they are under an order. The number of children who entered alternative care during the financial year, by reason for entering alternative care. The reason ‘substantiated child abuse and neglect’ refers to entry to care that occurs within three months of an assessment decision made a the conclusion of a child protection investigation. ‘Entry to care’ refers to entry to the system; a movement in placements of a child already in care while already in care is not deemed entry to care.</p> <p>There may be two types of entry to care/being in care. These are: legal, and non-legal. Legal care is defined here to be all children under the age of 18 years for whom the legal responsibility for care has been transferred to a licensed and/or authorised alternative care service provider (ACSP) under the relevant Acts in the jurisdiction. Children are deemed to be in alternative care when the legal responsibility for care of the child has been transferred under one of the Acts of the jurisdiction. Includes voluntary transfers of legal responsibility as well as non-voluntary transfers (for example court orders).</p> <p>Non-legal care is defined as care that does not involve a legal orders (such as guardianship or supervision order) but includes situations where the State assumes a duty of care towards a child by placing the child in accommodation that is alternative to their normal place of residence, and assumes responsibility for the quality and standard of care, and financial support of the child.</p> <p>Includes government and, where data are available, non-government service providers.</p> <p>In relation to children with disabilities and young offenders, it excludes those that are not under care and protection orders (that is, includes if under care and protection orders).</p>
<p>For those children in care at 30 June, the number of children that have been in alternative care for:</p> <p>0 to less than 2 weeks;</p> <p>2 weeks to less than 1 month</p> <p>1 to less than 3 months;</p> <p>3 to less than 6 months;</p> <p>6 to less than 12 months;</p> <p>1 year to less than 2 years;</p> <p>2 years to less than 5 years</p> <p>5 or more years</p>	<p>Indicates the length of time that children have been in alternative care, as at the 30 of June. Relates to continuous periods of time in alternative care. Where a child has been in alternative care prior to current period of care, only relates to the current period of time in care.</p>

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explanation/definition</i>
Crisis and Supported Accommodation	
Total number of requests for (a) accommodation and (b) for support services for the 2 week census period	Total number of requests for (a) a bed and (b) support (non-accommodation) services at SAAP funded service providers for the two weeks of the census period. Support (non-accommodation) services include; meals, referral services, and assistance and, or advocacy with long term housing, financial assistance, living skills, family reconciliation, legal advice, transport, obtaining benefit or pension, drug or alcohol rehabilitation, and employment and training.
Total number of requests for accommodation that were: (a) met; (b) unable to be met	A request for accommodation (that is, a bed) is said to have been met when the request is satisfied in full. A request is unable to be met when the request is partially or not satisfied.
Total number of requests for support services that were: (a) met; (b) unable to be met	The definitions for 'support services', 'met', and 'unable to be met' are as defined above. Aggregates of numbers unable to be accommodated include an unknown level of double counting of clients who seek assistance at a number of different SAAP services on the same day. Double counting is more likely to occur in the centres of larger cities where services are close together (SAAP 1995a).
Total number of (a) accommodation requests, and (b) support services requests that were unable to be met, disaggregated by reason for refusal: (a) service was at capacity; (b) other reasons	Where 'accommodation service was at capacity' is defined as the situation where no beds are available because they are all occupied. 'Other reasons' are all those reasons that do not fall into the above category, including the reason that the client was not eligible. Where 'support service was at capacity' is defined as being the situation where support resources are already fully utilised.
The percentage of people entering crisis accommodation whose previous accommodation was also SAAP or other crisis accommodation	Percentage entering crisis accommodation whose previous accommodation was other emergency accommodation (as per the SAAP One Night Census).

Definitions of unit cost and productivity indicators

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Explanation/definition</i>
Child Protection	
Total costs for child protection per 1000 resident children aged 0 to 16 years in the jurisdiction	Total child protection costs for direct service delivery of service per 1000 resident children in the jurisdiction.
Alternative Care	
Total government budget for child alternative care for the financial year divided by the total number of days of care provided throughout the financial year ended June 30, by type of placement.	Child alternative care is defined above.

Definitions of variables

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Child abuse and neglect	“Child abuse or neglect occurs when a person (generally having the care of a child) inflicts, or allows to be inflicted on the child a physical injury or deprivation which may create a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or the impairment of either physical health and development or emotional health and development other than by accidental means.” (Zabar and Angus 1994)
Total number of resident children in jurisdiction	Children aged 0 to 16 years. Source: ABS estimates of resident population at 31 December (that is, mid-point) of the financial year.
Child	The age of a child relates to age at the time a report is made. The definition of the a ‘child’ differs across jurisdictions. In NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, a child is aged under 17 years; in Queensland, WA, SA, the ACT and the NT, a child is aged under 18 years.
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	“A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community with which he or she is associated. Following investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect, a subject child is recorded as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander when the child identifies as such, or when that child’s principal care giver identifies the child as such.” (Zabar and Angus 1994).

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Definition</i>
'Other' cultural background	Incorporates all those from cultural backgrounds other than Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
Source of report	“The source of a report is that person or organisation who initially reports child abuse or neglect to a participating authority. The source is classified according to the relationship to the child or children allegedly abused or neglected. If a source can be classified to more than one of these categories, it should be assigned to the category nearest the top of the list. The source of report is categorised as follows: parent/guardian, sibling, relative, friend/neighbour, medical practitioner, other medical personnel, hospital, health centre personnel, social worker/welfare worker/psychologist/other trained welfare worker, school personnel, day care personnel, police, departmental officer, non-government organisation, anonymous, other, not stated.” (Zabar and Angus 1994).
Type of substantiated abuse and neglect classified as: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect	“Where more than one type of abuse and neglect has occurred, the case should be classified to that type most likely to be the most severe in the short term or most likely to place the child at risk in the short term, or if such an assessment is not possible, to the most obvious form of abuse or neglect. <i>Physical abuse</i> : any non-accidental physical injury inflicted upon a child by a person having the care of a child; <i>Emotional abuse</i> : any act by a person having the care of a child which results in the child suffering any kind of significant emotional deprivation or trauma; <i>Sexual abuse</i> : any act by a person having the care of the child which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards; <i>Neglect</i> : any serious omissions or commissions by a person having the care of a child which, within the bounds of cultural tradition, constitute a failure to provide conditions which are essential for the healthy, physical and emotional development of a child.” (Zabar and Angus, 1994)

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