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# 15 Protection and support services

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### **Attachment tables**

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a '15A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables are available on the Review website at [www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

Protection and support services aim to assist individuals and families who are in crisis or experiencing difficulties that hinder personal or family functioning. These

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services assist by alleviating the difficulties and reducing the potential for their recurrence.

This chapter reports on:

- *child protection services* — functions of government that receive and assess allegations of child abuse and neglect, and/or harm to children and young people, provide and refer clients to family support and other relevant services, and intervene to protect children
- *out-of-home care services* — care for children placed away from their parents for protective or other family welfare reasons
- *juvenile justice services* — services to promote community safety and reduce youth offending by assisting young people to address their offending behaviour.

Improvements to the reporting of protection and support services this year include:

- consistent reporting of child protection activity data for the age range 0-17 years (prior to 2009-10, the rates of children subject to notifications, investigations and substantiations were calculated for children aged 0–16 years, while the rates of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care were calculated for children aged 0-17 years)
- six jurisdictions reporting performance data for the effectiveness indicator ‘safety in out-of-home care’, compared with five previously
- seven jurisdictions reporting proportions of expenditure across child protection Pathway activity groups, compared with five previously
- for the first time, five jurisdictions reporting experimental unit cost data for four Pathways activity groups
- for the first time, reporting a figure for the efficiency indicator ‘Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night’
- the inclusion of updated data regarding the proportion of children in years 3, 5 and 7 on guardianship or custody orders (attending government schools) achieving national reading and numeracy benchmarks relative to all children
- where applicable, child protection, out-of-home care and intensive family support services data are reported, disaggregated by the categories ‘Indigenous’, ‘non-Indigenous’, ‘unknown Indigenous status’ and ‘total children’
- performance data are reported for five new juvenile justice performance indicators, ‘group conferencing outcomes’, ‘assaults in custody’, ‘self-harm and attempted suicide in custody’, ‘completion of orders’, and ‘centre utilisation’
- where data are available, a 10 year time series is reported for all child protection and juvenile justice indicators in attachment tables.

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## 15.1 Profile of child protection and out-of-home care services

### Service overview

#### *Child protection services*

Child protection services are provided to protect children and/or young people aged 0–17 years who are at risk of harm within their families, or whose families do not have the capacity to protect them. These services include:

- receiving and responding to reports of concern about children or young people, including investigation and assessment where appropriate
- providing support services (directly or through referral), where harm or a risk of significant harm is identified, to strengthen the capacity of families to care safely for children
- initiating intervention where necessary, including applying for a care and protection order through a court and, in some situations, placing children or young people in out-of-home care to secure their safety
- ensuring the ongoing safety of children and young people by working with families to resolve protective concerns
- working with families to reunite children (who were removed for safety reasons) with their parents as soon as possible (in some jurisdictions, restoration may occur in voluntary placements as well)
- securing permanent out-of-home care when it is determined that a child is unable to be returned to the care of his or her parents, and working with young people to identify alternative supported living arrangements where family reunification is not possible.

Research suggests that children and families who come into contact with the protection and support services system often share common social and demographic characteristics. Families with low incomes or that are reliant on pensions and benefits, those that experience alcohol and substance abuse, or a psychiatric disability, and those that have a family history of domestic violence are over-represented in the families that come into contact with the protection and support services system (Department of Human Services 2002; The Allen Consulting Group 2008).

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### *Child protection concerns and Indigenous communities*

Studies have highlighted the high incidence of child abuse and neglect within some Indigenous communities, compared with non-Indigenous communities. Indigenous families across Australia have been found to experience high levels of violence, compared with non-Indigenous families (AIHW 2006). The final report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (2007), identified child sexual abuse as a significant issue for many of the remote NT Aboriginal communities consulted as part of the Inquiry. The final report of the WA Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities (Gordon Report 2002), also found high levels of violence and child abuse within Aboriginal communities in WA.

The Report of the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory *Growing them strong, together* also observed the presence of multiple risk factors in Aboriginal communities, including lack of adequate housing, financial security and education. However, Aboriginal communities also possessed protective factors which can safeguard children and families from psychological distress, such as spirituality and connection to land, family and culture (Bamblett, Bath and Roseby 2010).

### *Out-of-home care services*

Out-of-home care services provide care for children and young people aged 0–17 years who are placed away from their parents or family home for reasons of safety or family crisis. These reasons include abuse, neglect or harm, illness of a parent and the inability of parents to provide adequate care. Placements may be voluntary or made in conjunction with care and protection orders.

Out-of-home care services comprise home-based care (for example, foster care, care with a child's extended family or other home-based arrangements), facility-based care (for example, community residential care) or independent living (which is often intensively supported) as a transition to full independence or supported placements. Across jurisdictions, there has been a shift away from the use of facility-based (or residential) care towards foster care and other forms of home-based care, including relative/kinship care.

Intensive family support services are increasingly perceived as an alternative to the removal of a child from his or her home for child protection reasons (box 15.1).

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### **Box 15.1 Intensive family support services**

Intensive family support services are specialist services, established in each jurisdiction, that aim to:

- prevent the imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers as a result of child protection concerns
- reunify families where separation has already occurred.

Intensive family support services differ from other types of child protection and family support services referred to in this chapter, in that they:

- are funded or established explicitly to prevent the separation of, or to reunify, families
- provide a range of services as part of an integrated strategy focusing on improving family functioning and skills, rather than providing a single type of service
- are intensive in nature, averaging at least four hours of service provision per week for a specified short term period (usually less than six months)
- generally receive referrals from a child protection service.

Intensive family support services may use some or all of the following strategies: assessment and case planning; parent education and skill development; individual and family counselling; anger management; respite and emergency care; practical and financial support; mediation, brokerage and referral services; and training in problem solving.

#### *Expenditure on intensive family support services*

Recurrent expenditure on intensive family support services across all jurisdictions was \$277.0 million in 2009-10. This expenditure has increased in real terms each year from \$81.7 million in 2005-06 (table 15A.26). This represents an average annual increase in expenditure of 35.7 per cent over this four year period. Tables 15A.26–29 provide additional information about families and children who were involved with intensive family support services, including the cost of providing these services per child commencing intensive family support services.

#### *Child protection treatment and support services*

A complementary suite of services not included in this Report, but intended for inclusion in future editions, are known as child protection treatment and support services. These services target at-risk families where there are concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children. They may be less intensive in nature and include services that strengthen family relationships in response to concerns about the welfare of a child and may focus on either early intervention or reunification support.

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### Box 15.1 (Continued)

Child protection treatment and support services provide educational services, clinical services including counselling, group work and other therapeutic interventions, and domestic violence services.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), with the support of State and Territory governments, is studying the feasibility of a national data collection for child protection treatment and support services. The AIHW is expected to release a report on this study by end-2010.

*Source:* AIHW (unpublished).

## Roles and responsibilities

State and Territory governments fund child protection, out-of-home care, family support (including intensive family support) and other relevant services (see box 15.2 for responsible State and Territory government departments during 2009-10). These services may be delivered by the government, non-government organisations, and in some cases, by for-profit providers. State and Territory governments, responsible for child protection, investigate and assess reports, provide or refer families to support services, and intervene where necessary (including making court applications when an order is required to protect a child, and placing children in out-of-home care).

### Box 15.2 Child protection and out-of-home care services

<i>NSW</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>Vic</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>Qld</i>	Department of Communities (DoC)
<i>WA</i>	Department for Child Protection (DCP)
<i>SA</i>	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
<i>Tas</i>	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
<i>ACT</i>	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS)
<i>NT</i>	Department of Health and Families (DHF)

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Other areas of government also have roles in child protection and provide services for children who have come into contact with relevant departments for protective reasons. These include:

- education and child care services, which provide services for children and also conduct mandatory reporting and protective behaviours education in some jurisdictions
- health services, which support the assessment of child protection matters and deliver therapeutic, counselling and other services
- police services, which investigate serious allegations of child abuse and neglect, particularly criminal matters, and may also work on child protection assessments with State and Territory departments responsible for child protection
- courts, which decide whether a child will be placed on an order.

A range of appointments, schemes and charters have been introduced by jurisdictions in recent years, to enable additional protection for clients of child protection systems. Examples of these are listed in box 15.3.

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### Box 15.3 Initiatives to enable additional protection for clients

- NSW* The Commission for Children and Young People initiates and influences broad and positive change for children and young people. The Office of the Children's Guardian promotes the best interests and rights of all children in out-of-home care, through accreditation and monitoring of out-of-home care agencies to ensure services are of the highest standard.
- Vic* The Child Safety Commissioner promotes child safe practices and environments across the community through a charter of rights for children in care. Part of the Commissioner's role is to monitor the quality of out-of-home care services.
- Qld* The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian has a range of legislated monitoring and oversight functions for children in the child protection system, including regularly visiting children in out-of-home care, receiving and investigating complaints and monitoring child outcomes. The Department of Communities (Child Safety Services) has a complaints management system so that clients, family members, advocates and members of the public can raise enquiries, concerns, or complaints about their contact and interactions with the Department.
- WA* The Advocate for Children in Care provides advocacy and complaints management services for children and young people in care. The Department's Complaints Management Unit is available to all customers. Formal monitoring of protection and care service standards by a Standards Monitoring Unit began on 1 July 2007. Seventeen Districts are monitored on a two-year cycle and the monitoring regime has been extended across all placement service providers.
- SA* The Office of the Guardian monitors and assesses care, advocates for, and advises on, the circumstances and needs of children and systemic issues affecting the quality of out-of-home care.
- Tas* The Commissioner for Children's functions include promoting the rights and wellbeing of children, examining the policies, practices and services provided for children and any laws affecting the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children.

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**Box 15.3 (Continued)**

**ACT** The Public Advocate of the ACT monitors the provision of services, and protects and advocates for the rights of children and young people. Systemic issues are referred by the Public Advocate to the Commissioner for Children and Young People. The Commissioner consults with and promotes the interests of children. The Official Visitor's role is to visit and inspect places of care, of detention or therapeutic protection, and receive and inquire about complaints made concerning the care provided to children and young people at these locations. In addition, an ACT Charter of Rights for children and young people in out-of-home care was launched in November 2009. The Charter is consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ACT Human Rights Act 2004, and the Children and Young People Act 2008, all of which emphasise the basic human rights to which children and young people are entitled.

**NT** Provisions for the new Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 commenced in 2008 and included establishment of a Children's Commissioner to investigate complaints and oversight administration of the Act, enhanced regulations of children's services, establishment of a Child Deaths Review and Prevention Committee, and additional support for children leaving care.

*Source:* State and Territory governments (unpublished).

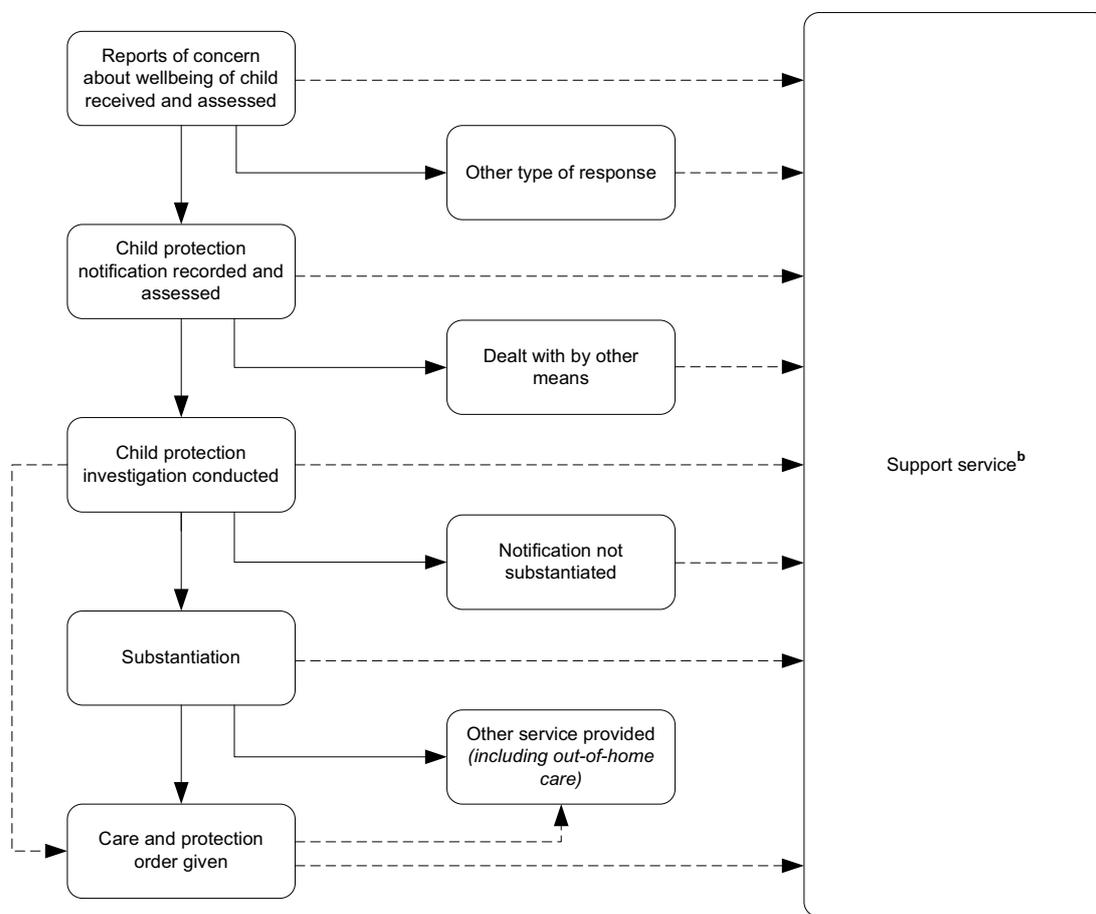
## **Size and scope**

### *The child protection system*

Child protection legislation, policies and practices vary across jurisdictions, which has some implications for the comparability of child protection data (Holzer and Bromfield 2008). However, the broad processes in child protection systems are similar (figure 15.1).

State and Territory departments with responsibility for child protection are advised of concerns about the wellbeing of children through reports to these departments. Reports may be made by people mandated to report or by other members of the community. Individuals and organisations mandated to report vary across states and territories, and may include medical practitioners, police services, school teachers and principals. These reports are assessed and classified as child protection notifications, child concern reports, or matters requiring some other kind of response. In most jurisdictions, police were the most common source of notifications in 2009-10. The second most common source of notifications varied across jurisdictions and included social workers and school personnel (AIHW 2011).

Figure 15.1 The child protection system<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Dashed lines indicate that clients may or may not receive these services, depending on need and service availability. <sup>b</sup> Support services include family support or family preservation services provided by departments responsible for child protection and referrals to other agencies.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

### Notification

Jurisdictions count notifications at different points in the response to a report, ranging from the point of initial contact with the source of the report to the end of a screening and decision making process. This means the number of notifications is not strictly comparable across jurisdictions.

Most jurisdictions assess incoming reports to determine whether they meet the threshold for recording a notification. Notifications are subsequently investigated based on the policies and practices in each jurisdiction. Once it has been decided that an investigation is required, the investigation process is similar across jurisdictions. The department responsible for child protection may obtain further information about the child and his or her family by checking information systems for any previous history, undertaking discussion with agencies and individuals,

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interviewing/sighting the child and/or interviewing the caregivers/parents. At a minimum, the child is sighted whenever practicable, and the child's circumstances and needs are assessed. Where possible, an investigation determines whether a notification is substantiated or not substantiated (figure 15.1).

Prior to 2009-10, the rates of children subject to notifications, investigations and substantiations were calculated for children aged 0–16 years, while the rates of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care were calculated for children aged 0-17 years. From the 2009-10 period onwards, all child protection data are reported for the age range 0-17 years.

Nationally, 187 314 children aged 0–17 years were the subject of child protection notifications in 2009-10. The rate of notifications per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 36.8 in 2009-10 (table 15A.8). The total number of notifications for each jurisdiction for 2009-10 (including cases where a child is the subject of more than one child protection notification) by Indigenous status of the child is reported in table 15A.5.

Notifications data are collected early in the child protection process and often before an agency has full knowledge of a child's family circumstances. This lack of information and the inherent difficulties in identifying Indigenous status mean that data on the number of notifications by Indigenous status need to be interpreted with care.

### *Substantiation*

The legal definition of harm or risk of harm, abuse or risk of abuse are similar across jurisdictions. Traditionally, child protection legislation and policy focused on the identification and investigation of narrowly defined incidents that were broadly grouped as types of abuse or neglect. Across all jurisdictions, the focus has now shifted away from the actions of parents and guardians, toward the desired outcomes for the child, the identification and investigation of actual and/or likely harm or risk to the child, and the child's needs. While the legal criteria for substantiating such matters are now similar across jurisdictions, there remain some differences in practice, including different thresholds for recording a substantiation related to risk of harm.

If an investigation results in a substantiation, intervention by child protection services might be needed to protect the child. This intervention can take a number of forms, including one or more of: referral to other services; supervision and support; an application to court; and a placement in out-of-home care.

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Nationally, 31 295 children aged 0–17 years were the subject of a substantiation in 2009-10. The rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 6.1 (table 15A.8). The number and rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation has fluctuated since 2005-06. Nationally, 34 336 children aged 0-16 were the subject of a substantiation in 2005-06. This represented a rate of 7.6 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–16 years (prior to 2009-10, substantiation data were collected for children aged 0-16 years) (table 15A.8).

Nationally, 8334 Indigenous, 22 335 non-Indigenous children and 626 children of unknown Indigenous status were the subject of substantiations in 2009-10. The rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 35.3 for Indigenous children and 4.6 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.8).

### *Care and protection orders*

Although child protection substantiations are often resolved without the need for a court order (which is usually a last resort) recourse to a court may take place at any point in the child protection investigation process. The types of orders available vary across jurisdictions and may include guardianship or custody orders, supervisory orders, and interim and temporary orders.

Nationally, 37 730 children aged 0–17 years were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2010. The rate of children on care and protection orders per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 7.4 (table 15A.8). The number and rate of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of a care and protection order has increased since 2006. At 30 June 2006, 26 215 children were the subject of a care and protection order, which represented a rate of 5.4 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years (table 15A.8).

Nationally, 11 451 Indigenous, 26 215 non-Indigenous and 64 children of unknown Indigenous status were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2010. The rate of children on care and protection orders per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 48.3 for Indigenous children and 5.4 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.8).

Further information regarding children on care and protection orders is included in the attachment tables. Table 15A.6 identifies the number of children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, 2009-10. Table 15A.7 identifies the number of children on care and protection orders by type of order and Indigenous status at 30 June 2010.

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### *Out-of-home care*

Out-of-home care is one of a range of services provided to children and families where there is a need to provide safe care for a child. Children are placed in out-of-home care as a last resort when it is not in their best interests to remain with their family (for example, because they are not safe or because no one is able or willing to provide care). Where children are placed in out-of-home care, placement with the extended family or community is sought where possible, particularly in the case of Indigenous children (AIHW 2006). Continued emphasis is placed on improving case planning and case management processes to facilitate the safe return home of children in out-of-home care and to maximise case workers' contact time with children and families.

Nationally, 35 895 children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2010. The rate of children in out-of-home care per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 7.0 (table 15A.16). The number and rate of children aged 0–17 years in out-of-home care has increased since 2006. At 30 June 2006, 25 454 children were in out-of-home care. This represented a rate of 5.3 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years (table 15A.16).

Nationally, 11 468 Indigenous children and 24 279 non-Indigenous children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2010. The rate of children in out-of-home care per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 48.4 for Indigenous children and 5.0 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.16).

Further information on children in out-of-home care is included in the attachment tables. Table 15A.17 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and placement type at 30 June 2010. Table 15A.18 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and whether they were on a care and protection order at 30 June 2010. Table 15A.19 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care as at 30 June 2010. Table 15A.20 identifies the number of children who exited care during 2009-10, by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care.

### **Funding**

Recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services was approximately \$2.5 billion across Australia in 2009-10 — a real increase of \$296.3 million (13.2 per cent) from 2008-09. Of this expenditure, out-of-home care services accounted for the majority (64.9 per cent, or \$1.7 billion). Nationally, annual real expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services has

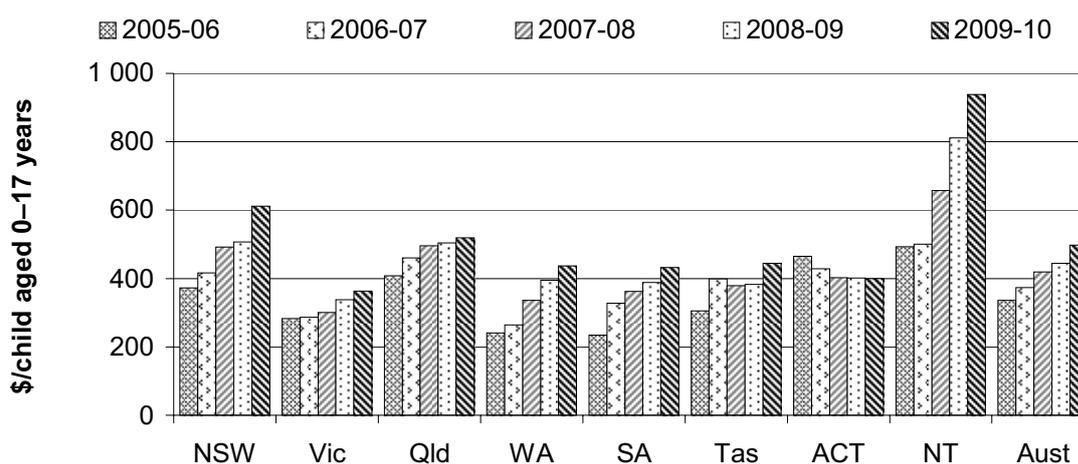
increased by \$921.3 million from \$1.6 billion since 2005-06, an average annual increase over the 4 year period of 11.9 per cent (table 15A.1).

In 2009-10, real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years in child protection and out-of-home care services was \$498 nationally (figure 15.2). Real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years increased in most jurisdictions between 2005-06 and 2009-10 and has increased nationally each year since 2005-06. In 2005-06 the real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years was \$336 (table 15A.1). This represents an average annual increase over the 4 year period of 10.3 per cent.

It is an objective of the Review to report comparable estimates of costs. Ideally, the full range of costs to government would be determined on a comparable basis across jurisdictions. Where full costs cannot be calculated, costs should be estimated on a consistent basis across jurisdictions. However, in the area of child protection, there are differences across jurisdictions in the calculation of expenditure.

Table 15A.4 identifies the level of consistency across jurisdictions for a number of expenditure items. The scope of child protection systems also varies across jurisdictions, and expenditure on some services may be included for some jurisdictions, but not for others.

**Figure 15.2 Real recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services per child (2009-10 dollars)<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.1 for detailed jurisdiction-specific footnotes on expenditure data and table 15A.4 for information on the comparability of expenditure data.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.1.

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## 15.2 Framework of performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services

The framework of performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services is based on shared government objectives (box 15.4).

### Box 15.4 Objectives for child protection and out-of-home care services

The aims of child protection services are to:

- protect children and young people at risk of harm within their family or in circumstances in which the family of the child or young person does not have the capacity to protect them
- assist families to protect children and young people.

The aim of out-of-home care services is to provide quality care for children and young people aged 0–17 years who cannot live with their parents for reasons of safety or family crisis.

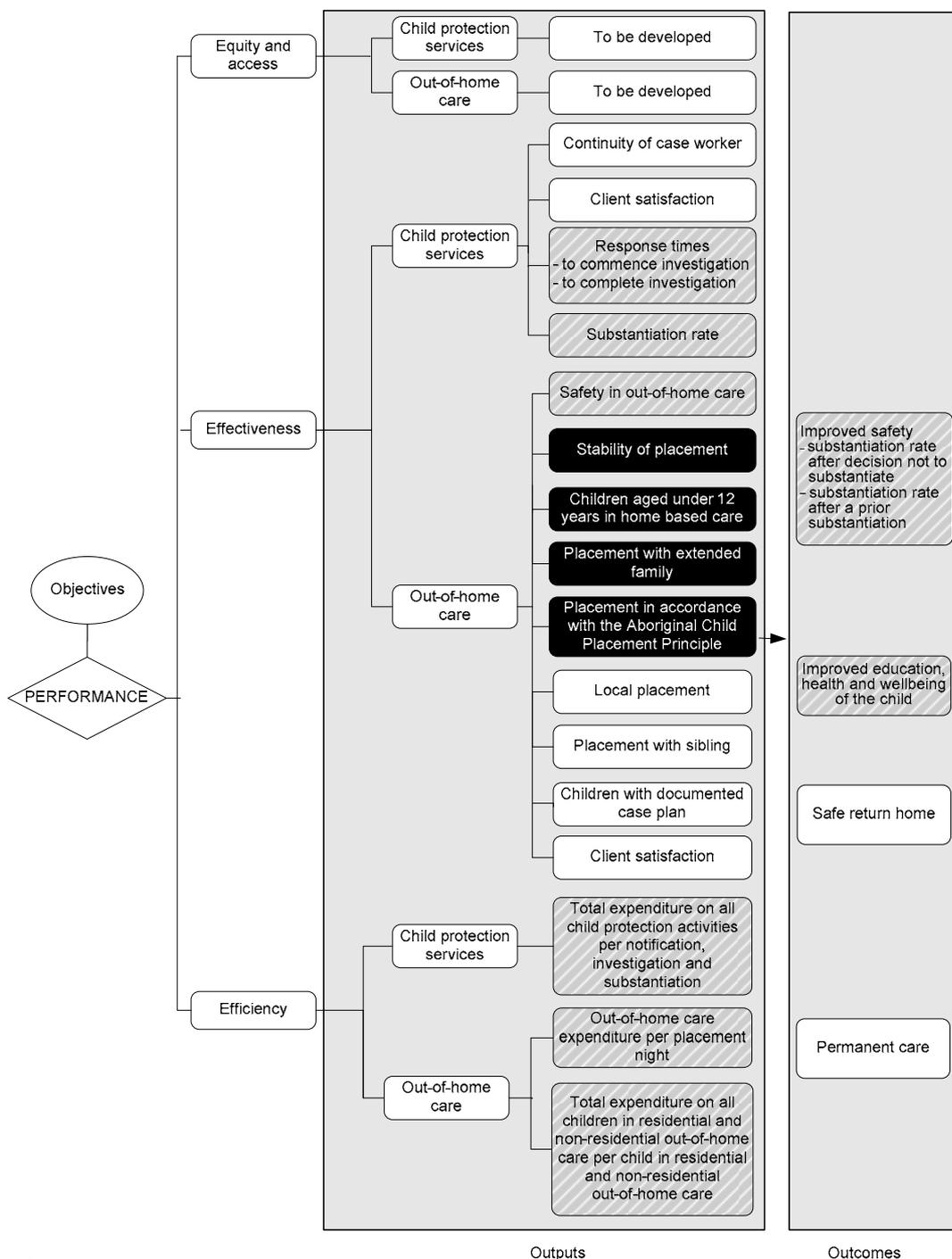
Child protection and out-of-home care services should be provided in an efficient and effective manner.

The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2011 Report (figure 15.3). For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

## 15.3 Key child protection and out-of-home care services performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the equity/access, effectiveness and efficiency of child protection and out-of-home care services. The Report's statistical appendix contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status) (appendix A).

**Figure 15.3 Performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services**



**Key to indicators**

- Text** Data for these indicators comparable, subject to caveats to each chart or table
- Text** Data for these indicators not complete or not directly comparable
- Text** These indicators yet to be developed or data not collected for this Report

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## Outputs

Outputs are the services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

### *Equity and access*

Equity and access indicators are indicators of governments' objective to ensure that all clients have fair and equitable access to services on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.5).

**Box 15.5 Access to child protection and out-of-home care services by equity groups**

'Access to child protection and out-of-home care services by equity groups' are yet to be defined.

These indicators have been identified for development in future reports.

### *Effectiveness*

#### *Child protection services — continuity of case worker*

'Continuity of case worker' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure child protection services are delivered in an effective manner (box 15.6).

**Box 15.6 Continuity of case worker**

'Continuity of case worker' is yet to be defined.

The turnover of workers is a frequent criticism of the quality of child protection services. Effective intervention requires a productive working relationship between the worker and the child and family.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

#### *Child protection services — client satisfaction*

'Client satisfaction' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients (box 15.7).

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### **Box 15.7 Client satisfaction**

'Client satisfaction' is yet to be defined.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Box 15.8 provides examples of steps taken across jurisdictions to monitor, assess and promote client satisfaction with child protection and out-of-home care services.

### **Box 15.8 Developments in client satisfaction**

*NSW* A large scale evaluation is being undertaken of the Brighter Futures early intervention program, which targets vulnerable families with children under 9 years of age. As part of the evaluation, a sample of 2484 families participated in the family survey, which assessed satisfaction with the services provided. The survey was conducted from August 2007 to 30 June 2009. Interviewed families were overwhelmingly positive about the Brighter Futures program, and generally satisfied with the services they received. Respondents were asked (using a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being 'completely dissatisfied' and 5 'completely satisfied'), their degree of service satisfaction. Respondents consistently reported a high level of satisfaction (on average, 5 or 'completely satisfied') with the quality of services and the amount of help they received from Brighter Futures, which was sustained over the three waves of surveys.

*Vic* Survey findings of child protection clients and families in 2001 on their experience of child protection identified areas for practice improvement and a range of strengths in child protection practice, including that in the majority of cases, child protection intervention improved the safety and life circumstances of young people. A further survey of child protection, out-of-home care and intensive family support services clients is to take place in 2010 and again in 2012. Client feedback is also routinely sought by Community Services Organisations as part of meeting Victorian out-of-home care service registration standards.

*Qld* Children in state care in Queensland are visited regularly by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian's Community Visitors (CVs) to independently assess their safety and wellbeing. CVs work to resolve issues locally and are able to escalate more serious concerns. Children are also surveyed every two years by the Commission. Several age-appropriate questionnaires are used to determine satisfaction with current placements, case workers and the child protection system. Information is also gathered on placement histories, education and health needs, participation in decision-making, and planning for transition to independent living for those aged 16 years and over.

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**Box 15.8 (Continued)**

- WA** The Department for Child Protection undertook an on-line survey of foster carers in early 2008 and is responding to the feedback obtained from this stakeholder group. In summary, 63 per cent of carers reported that the department met their needs as a carer in the previous 12 months, while 66 per cent of carers reported that they were confident to manage as a carer in the future. New carers indicated that the most useful additional support they could have received was 'mentoring by an experienced carer'. Where children were new to care, carers indicated that the most useful assistance they could have received was 'better access to caseworkers'. The Department introduced new complaints policy and procedures in March 2008. Formal monitoring of service standards has continued and all districts were assessed by June 2009. A pilot standards monitoring regime for residential and non-government placement services was completed in June 2009. As a result of a positive outcome for 2009-10, residential and placement services completed a self assessment. External on-site monitoring commenced in July 2010. WA's first Commissioner for Children and Young People was appointed in December 2007 and has legislative powers to consult, investigate, research, advise and report independently to the Parliament about issues that concern children and young people and those supporting them.
- SA** The SA Office of the Guardian conducted interviews with children and young people in care to identify what they want from their case workers. Overwhelmingly, children and young people value a positive relationship with their case worker. The Office of the Guardian has developed a *Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care* and this has been tabled in Parliament. Amendments have been made to the *Children's Protection Act 1993* to provide for a Youth Advisory Committee, established and appointed by the Guardian for Children and Young People. A second Foster Carers' Relation Survey was conducted in 2009: a total of 322 carers completed a mail-out survey. The majority of respondents were satisfied with their interactions with the department, reporting that they were treated fairly, thought staff were competent and were provided with the information they needed.

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**Box 15.8 (Continued)**

- Tas** Tasmania engaged the CREATE Foundation to report on the views of children in care as part of the 'Be Heard' project, which concluded on 30 June 2010. Of the 96 children in care who were interviewed, 88 children or 92 per cent reported that they felt very or quite comfortable about their participation in the project. CREATE has prepared a report on the key findings as well as proposing recommendations which seek to improve the experiences of children while in out-of-home care. The Department is working with CREATE to implement these recommendations. In March 2010 the Commissioner for Children commenced a child visitor's pilot. The Commissioner has recruited and trained 12 volunteers who are visiting 18 children in care on a monthly basis. Each visitor asks the child a series of questions based on the Charter of Rights for Tasmanian children and young people in out-of-home care. The visitor also spends time with the child participating in an activity of the child's choice. The pilot is to be undertaken for a period of one year and will be independently evaluated.
- ACT** The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services entered into a research partnership *Community Capacity Building in Child Protection Through Responsive Regulation*. This research, which commenced in 2006, seeks to develop a regulatory framework for child protection that effectively manages escalating notification rates and addresses the challenge of how and when governments can intervene in individuals' lives without undermining the goodwill essential for such interventions to be successful. One of the studies undertaken as part of this research partnership examines parents' experiences of their encounters with the child protection system. This study is scheduled for completion in 2011.
- NT** In June 2008 a Children's Commissioner was appointed. The Children's Commissioner can receive and investigate complaints about services, usually for children for whom care orders are in place. It may also include any child that Northern Territory Families and Children (in the Department of Health and Families) has accepted as requiring further assessment, case management, intervention or support services following a notification.

*Source:* State and Territory governments (unpublished).

### *Child protection services — response time to commence investigation*

'Response time to commence investigation' is an indicator of governments' objective to minimise the risk of harm to children by responding to notifications of possible child protection incidents and commencing investigations in a timely manner (box 15.9).

### Box 15.9 Response time to commence investigation

'Response time to commence investigation' is defined as the length of time (measured in days) between the date a child protection department records a notification and the date an investigation is subsequently commenced.

A short or decreasing length of time between recording a notification and commencing an investigation is desirable. The length of time between recording a notification and commencing an investigation indicates a department's promptness in effectively responding to child protection concerns.

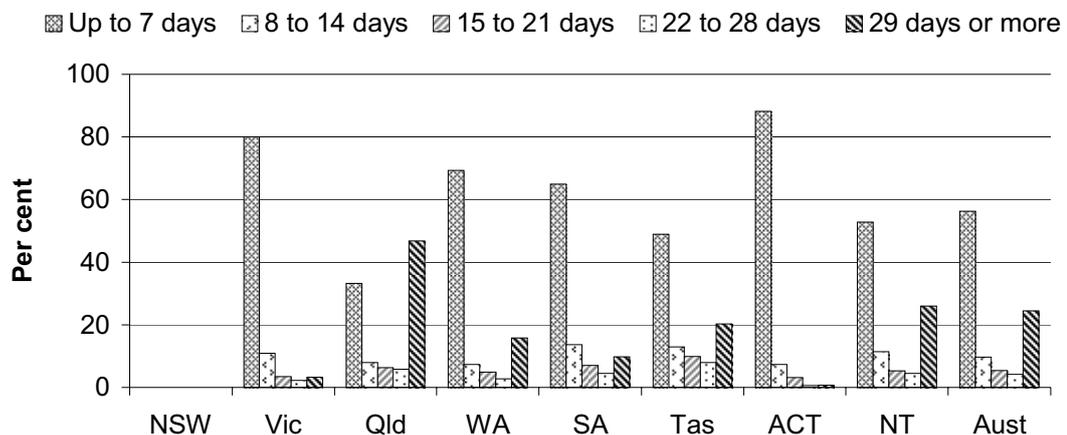
This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as jurisdictions record notifications at different stages in response to a report, and jurisdictions have policy and legislation outlining the time recommended for commencing investigations, based on the seriousness of the child protection concern.

Data reported for this indicator are neither directly comparable nor complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

For most jurisdictions, the majority of investigations were commenced within seven days of notification in 2009-10 (figure 15.4).

Figure 15.4 Proportion of investigations commenced, by time taken to commence investigation (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data for NSW are not available. <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW data collection (unpublished); table 15A.14.

### Child protection services — response time to complete investigation

'Response time to complete investigation' is an indicator of governments' objective to minimise the risk of harm to the child by responding to notifications of possible

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child protection incidents and completing investigations in a timely manner (box 15.10).

#### **Box 15.10 Response time to complete investigation**

'Response time to complete investigation' is defined as the length of time (measured in days) between the date a child protection department records a notification and the date an investigation is completed (that is, the date an investigation outcome is determined by a department).

A short or decreasing length of time between recording a notification and completing an investigation is desirable. The length of time between recording a notification and completing an investigation indicates the effectiveness of the department in conducting investigations in a timely manner.

This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as jurisdictions record notifications at different stages in response to a report, and jurisdictions have policy and legislation outlining the time recommended for commencing investigations, based on the seriousness of the child protection concern. Furthermore, while investigations should be conducted in a timely manner, it is important that expediency does not undermine a thorough and accurate assessment of the case. In addition, a number of factors outside the control of a department can affect the timeliness of investigations, including involvement by external parties (for example, police, schools) and an inability to locate a child and/or family.

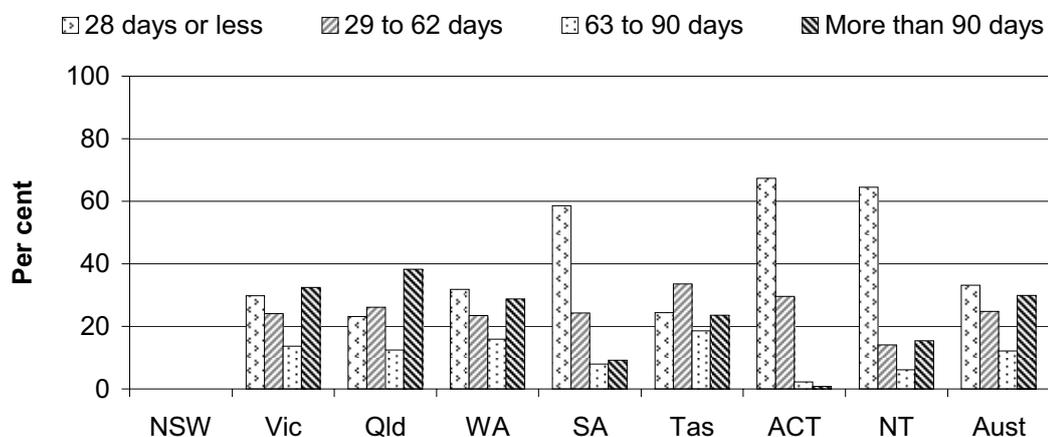
Data reported for this indicator are neither directly comparable nor complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Investigation is the process whereby the relevant department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification and makes an assessment about the harm or degree of harm to the child, and his or her protective needs. An investigation includes sighting or interviewing the subject child where it is practical to do so.

Response times to complete investigations varied across jurisdictions in 2009-10. Nationally, 33.2 per cent of investigations were completed in 28 days or less, followed by 29.9 per cent in more than 90 days, 24.8 per cent in 29 to 62 days, and 12.1 per cent in 63 to 90 days (figure 15.5).

Figure 15.5 Proportion of investigations finalised, by time taken to complete investigation (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data for NSW are not available. <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW data collection (unpublished); table 15A.15.

### *Child protection services — substantiation rate*

‘Substantiation rate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to target investigations to those notifications where a substantive child abuse/neglect incident has occurred or is at risk of occurring (box 15.11).

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### **Box 15.11 Substantiation rate**

'Substantiation rate' is defined as the proportion of finalised investigations where harm or risk of harm was confirmed.

Neither a very high nor very low substantiation rate is desirable. The substantiation rate provides an indication of the extent to which government avoided the human and financial costs of an investigation where no harm had occurred or was at risk of occurring. A very low substantiation rate might indicate that notifications and investigations are not accurately targeted at appropriate cases, with the undesirable consequence of distress to families and undermining the likelihood that families will voluntarily seek support. It might also reflect a greater propensity to substantiate abuse incidents rather than situations of risk. A very high substantiation rate might indicate that either some appropriate cases are being overlooked at notification and/or investigation, or that the criteria for substantiation are unnecessarily bringing 'lower risk' families into the statutory system.

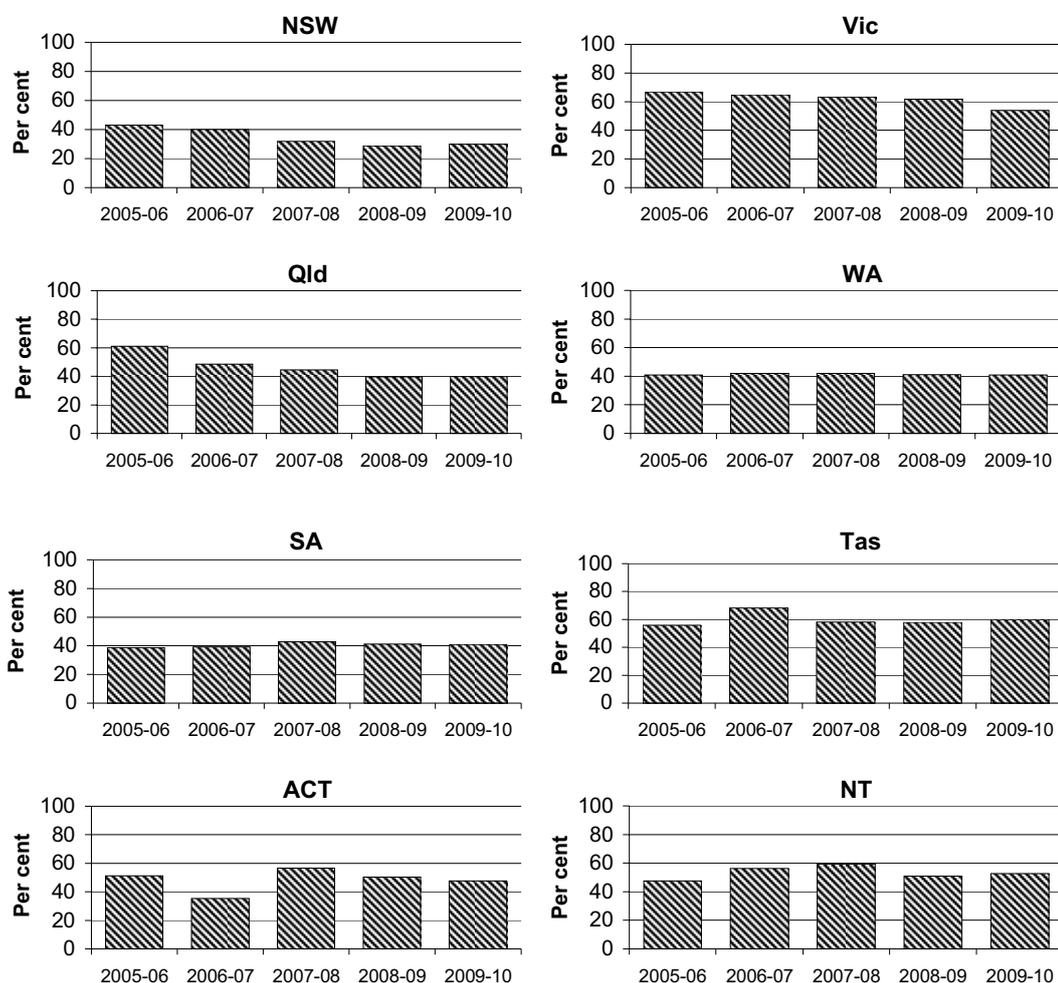
The rate of finalised investigations that were substantiated is influenced by a range of factors and might fluctuate because of policy, funding and practice changes, such as better targeting of investigative resources, the impact of mandatory reporting or other factors such as increased community awareness and willingness to notify suspected instances of child abuse, neglect or harm.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator, because definitions of substantiations vary across jurisdictions. Data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.6).

Figure 15.6 Proportion of finalised child protection investigations that were substantiated<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates should not be compared across jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> See source tables for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.39, 15A.56, 15A.73, 15A.90, 15A.107, 15A.124, 15A.141 and 15A.158.

### *Out-of-home care — safety in out-of-home care*

‘Safety in out-of-home care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide children who are under the care of the State with a safe home environment (box 15.12).

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### **Box 15.12 Safety in out-of-home care**

‘Safety in out-of-home care’ is defined as the proportion of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of a substantiation where the person responsible was living in the household providing out-of-home care.

A low or decreasing proportion of substantiations is desirable.

This indicator reflects the safety of children in care situations. Care should be taken when interpreting this indicator as the threshold for substantiating harm or risk involving children in care is generally lower than that for substantiating harm or risk involving a child in the care of his or her own parents. This is because governments assume a duty of care for children removed from the care of their parents for protective reasons. In addition, care should be taken when interpreting these data as the scope of information captured by jurisdictions differs. Some jurisdictions include substantiations concerning visitors to the home and substantiations where abuse was perpetrated by someone outside the care setting but a carer’s action or inaction contributed to the harm.

Data reported for this indicator are neither complete nor directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, in 2009-10, 0.7 per cent of children in out-of-home care were the subject of a substantiation where the person responsible was living in the household (table 15.1). Proportions varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.1 Rate and number of children in out-of-home care who were the subject of a substantiation and the person responsible was living in the household, 2009-10<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Children in care who were the subject of a substantiation	no.	na	41	228	7	9	23	15	na	323
Children aged 0-17 in at least one care placement during the year	no.	18 967	8 324	8 130	3 537	2 711	1 121	765	820	44 375
Children in care who were the subject of a substantiation as a proportion of all children in care	%	na	0.5	2.8	0.2	0.3	2.1	2.0	na	0.7

<sup>a</sup> Data reported for this indicator are not comparable due to differences in policies, practices and reporting methods. <sup>b</sup> Data are not available for NSW and the NT. <sup>c</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes. **na** Not available. <sup>d</sup> Queensland's data comprise matter of concern substantiations, which refer to children in the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive only. Queensland's consideration of the 'person believed responsible' relates to the overall safety and risk experienced by a child in care. It includes not only allegations of actual harm inflicted by members of a household but also whether their action or inaction contributed to the risk or harm even if the person believed responsible did not reside in the household. Therefore, Queensland's data are broader than the scope of the national counting rule and should not be compared to other jurisdictions' data.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), *Children in Out-of-Home Care, Australia* collection; table 15A.25.

### *Out-of-home care — stability of placement*

'Stability of placement' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.13).

For children placed away from their family for protective reasons, stability of placement is an important indicator of service quality, particularly for those children who require long term placements. Data are collected on the number of different placements for children on a care and protection order who exited out-of-home care in 2009-10. Data are grouped according to the length of time in care (less than 12 months and 12 months or more).

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**Box 15.13 Stability of placement**

'Stability of placement' is defined as the proportion of children who had 1 or 2 placements during a period of continuous out-of-home care.

A low number of child placements (1 or 2) per period of care is desirable, but must be balanced against other placement quality indicators, such as placements in compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, local placements and placements with siblings.

Children can have multiple short term placements for appropriate reasons (for example, an initial placement followed by a longer term placement) or it may be desirable to change placements to achieve better compatibility between a child and family. It is not desirable for a child to stay in an unsatisfactory or unsupportive placement. Also, older children are more likely to have multiple placements as they move towards independence and voluntarily seek alternate placements.

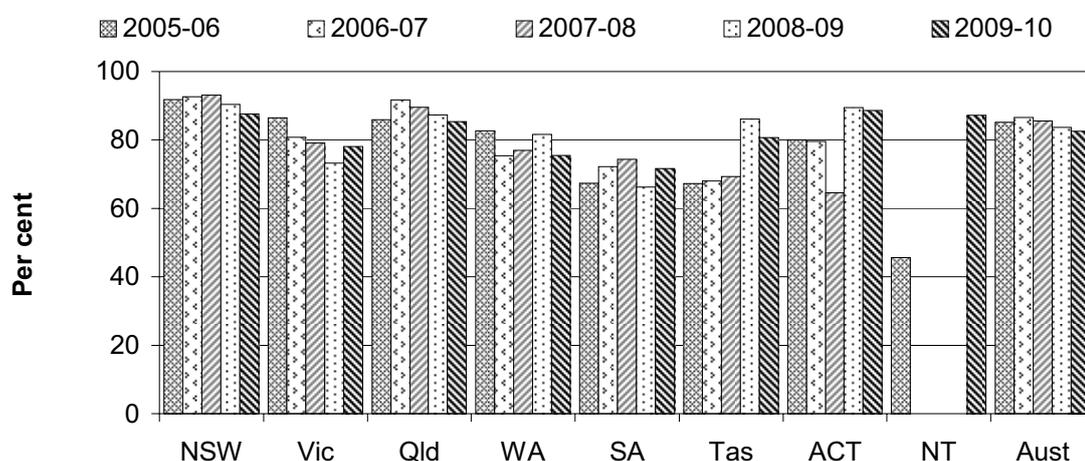
Data are collected only for children who are on orders and who exit care during the reporting period. There are limitations to counting placement stability using a cohort of children on exit from care rather than longitudinally tracking a cohort of children on their entry into care: an exit cohort is biased to children who stayed a relatively short time in care and thus were more likely to have experienced fewer placements.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 82.6 per cent of the children on a care and protection order who exited care after less than 12 months in 2009-10 experienced 1 or 2 placements. This proportion varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.7).

**Figure 15.7 Proportion of children on a care and protection order exiting care after less than 12 months, who had 1 or 2 placements<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>**

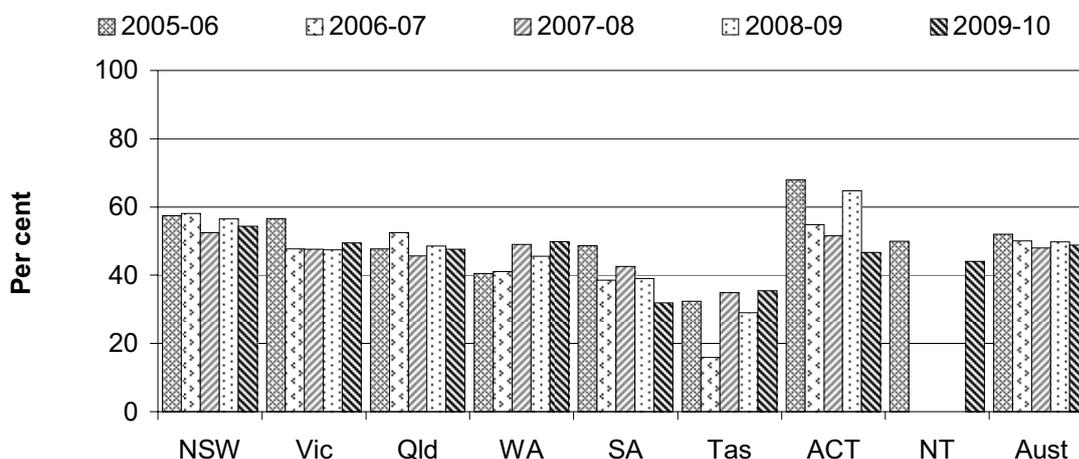


<sup>a</sup> Data refer to children exiting care during the relevant financial year. <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes. <sup>c</sup> During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 onwards may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. <sup>d</sup> The apparent decline in the proportion for the ACT in 2007-08 was impacted on by the small number of children involved and the placement of large sibling groups. <sup>e</sup> NT data for 2006-07 to 2008-09 were not available.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* collection; table 15A.24.

Across jurisdictions, children who had been in out-of-home care longer tended to have had more placements. The proportion of children exiting care in 2009-10 after 12 months or more who had experienced 1 or 2 placements was 48.8 per cent nationally but varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.8).

**Figure 15.8 Proportion of children on a care and protection order exiting care after 12 months or more, who had 1 or 2 placements<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data refer to children exiting care during the relevant financial year. <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes. <sup>c</sup> During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 onwards may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. <sup>d</sup> NT data for 2006-07 to 2008-09 are not available.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* collection; table 15A.24.

### *Out-of-home care — children aged under 12 years in home-based care*

'Children aged under 12 years in home-based care' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide services which meet the needs of recipients (box 15.14).

#### **Box 15.14 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care**

'Children aged under 12 years in home-based care' is defined as the number of children aged under 12 years placed in home-based care divided by the total number of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care.

A high or increasing rate for this indicator is desirable. This indicator should be interpreted in conjunction with other placement indicators.

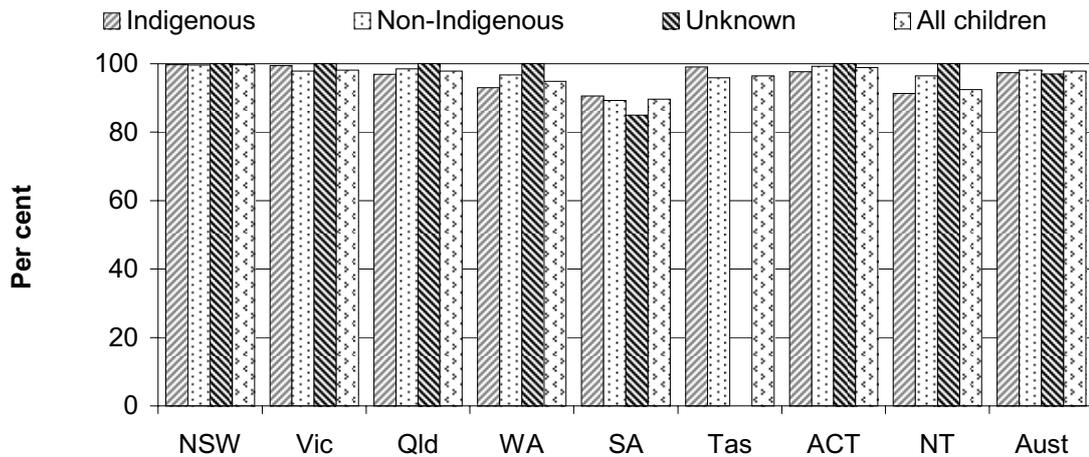
Placing children in home-based care is generally considered to be in their best interests, particularly for younger children. Children will generally make better developmental progress (and have more ready access to normal childhood experiences) in family settings rather than in residential or institutional care environments.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, the proportion of all children aged under 12 years in care who were placed in home-based care at 30 June 2010 was 97.9 per cent. In most jurisdictions the proportion of Indigenous children aged under 12 years who were placed in home-based care was similar to that of non-Indigenous children (figure 15.9).

**Figure 15.9 Proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care who were in a home-based placement, by Indigenous status, 30 June 2010<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* collection; table 15A.23.

### *Out-of-home care — placement with extended family*

‘Placement with extended family’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services that meet the needs of recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.15).

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### **Box 15.15 Placement with extended family**

'Placement with extended family' is defined as the proportion of all children in out-of-home care who are placed with relatives or kin who receive government financial assistance to care for that child.

A high or increasing rate for this indicator is desirable. Placement with extended family needs to be considered with other factors in the placement decision. Placing children with their relatives or kin is generally the preferred out-of-home care placement option. This option is generally associated with better long term outcomes due to increased continuity, familiarity and stability for the child. Relatives are more likely to have or form long term emotional bonds with the child. Placement with familiar people can help to overcome the loss of attachment and belonging that can occur when children are placed in out-of-home care.

Placements with extended family may not always be the best option. Long standing family dynamics can undermine the pursuit of case goals such as reunification, and the possibility of intergenerational abuse needs to be considered. In addition, depending on the individual circumstances of the child, it may be more important to have a local placement that enables continuity at school, for example, rather than a distant placement with relatives.

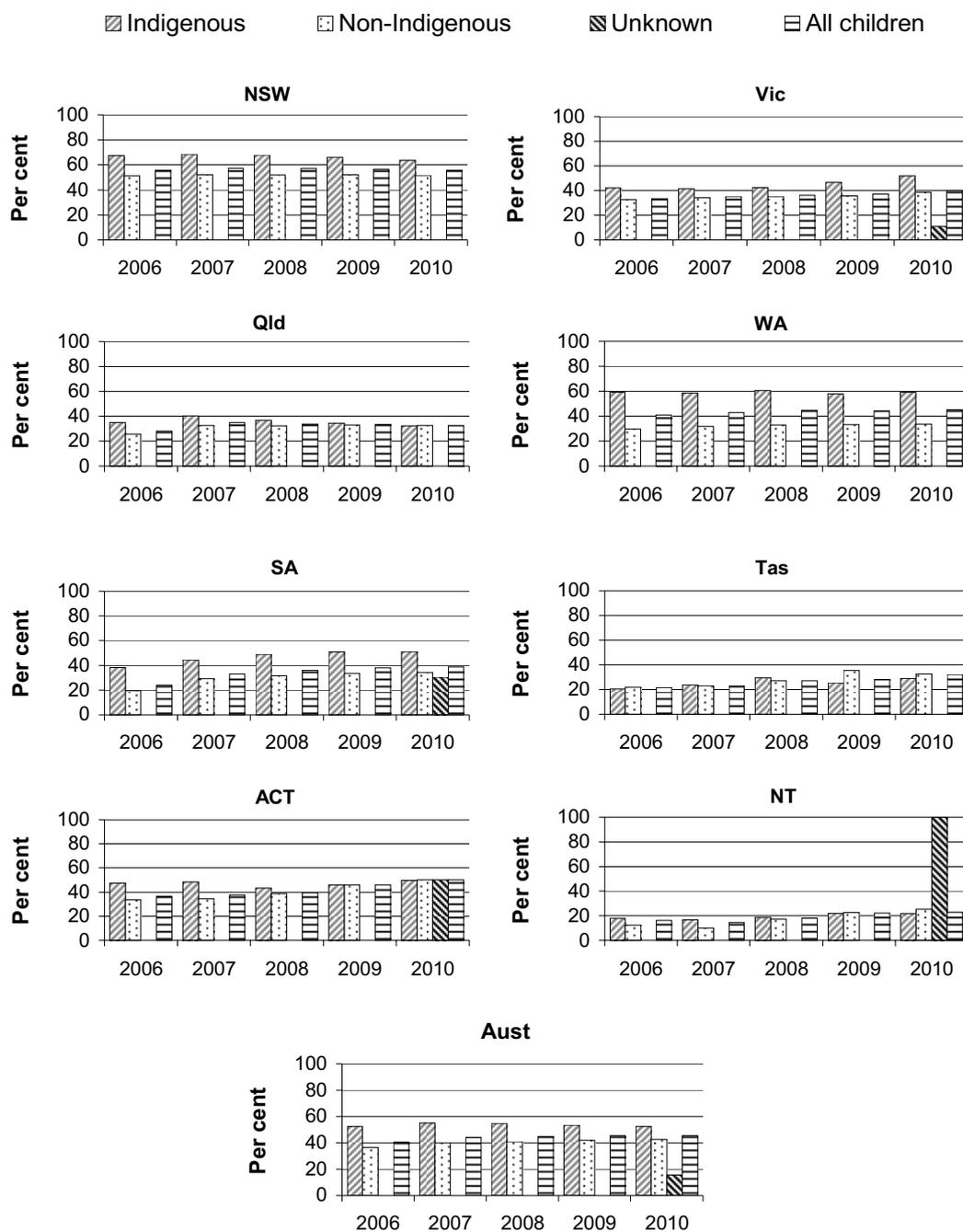
Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Figure 15.10 shows the proportion of children placed with relatives or kin by Indigenous status. Although these data are comparable, each jurisdiction is shown separately for simpler presentation. The proportion of children placed with relatives or kin at 30 June 2010 was greater for Indigenous children than for non-Indigenous children in most jurisdictions (figure 15.10).

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle places considerable emphasis on the placement of Indigenous children with extended family. This principle is discussed in box 15.16.

Figure 15.10 Proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, 30 June<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Prior to 2009-10, non-Indigenous status included children whose Indigenous status was unknown or not stated. From 2009-10 onwards, the category unknown Indigenous status is reported separately. <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes. <sup>c</sup> The NT figure of 100 per cent of children of 'unknown' Indigenous status in home-based care at 30 June 2010 is for two children who were in care at that time.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.21.

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*Out-of-home care — placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle*

‘Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to protect the safety and welfare of Indigenous children while maintaining their cultural ties and identity (box 15.16).

**Box 15.16 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle**

‘Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle’ is defined as the number of Indigenous children placed with the child’s extended family, Indigenous community or other Indigenous people, divided by the total number of Indigenous children in out-of-home care. Data are reported separately for children placed (i) with relative/kin, (ii) with a non-relative Indigenous carer or in Indigenous residential care, and (iii) not placed with relative/kin, a non-relative Indigenous carer or in Indigenous residential care.

Placing Indigenous children in circumstances consistent with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is considered to be in their best interests. However, it is one factor among many considerations for the child’s safety and wellbeing that must be carefully considered in the placement decision. In the application of this principle, departments consult with and involve appropriate Indigenous individuals and/or organisations. If the preferred options are not available, the child may be placed (after appropriate consultation) with a non-Indigenous family or in a residential setting. The principle does not preclude the possibility that in some instances, placement in a non-Indigenous setting, where arrangements are in place for the child’s cultural identity to be preserved, might be the most appropriate placement for the child.

This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as it is a proxy for compliance with the principle. This indicator reports the placement outcomes of Indigenous children rather than compliance with the principle. The indicator does not reflect whether the hierarchy was followed in the consideration of the best placement for the child, nor whether consultation was had with appropriate Indigenous individuals or organisations.

A high or increasing proportion of children placed in accordance with the principle is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

According to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (NSW Law Reform Commission 1997) the following hierarchy of placement options should be pursued in protecting the safety and welfare of Indigenous children:

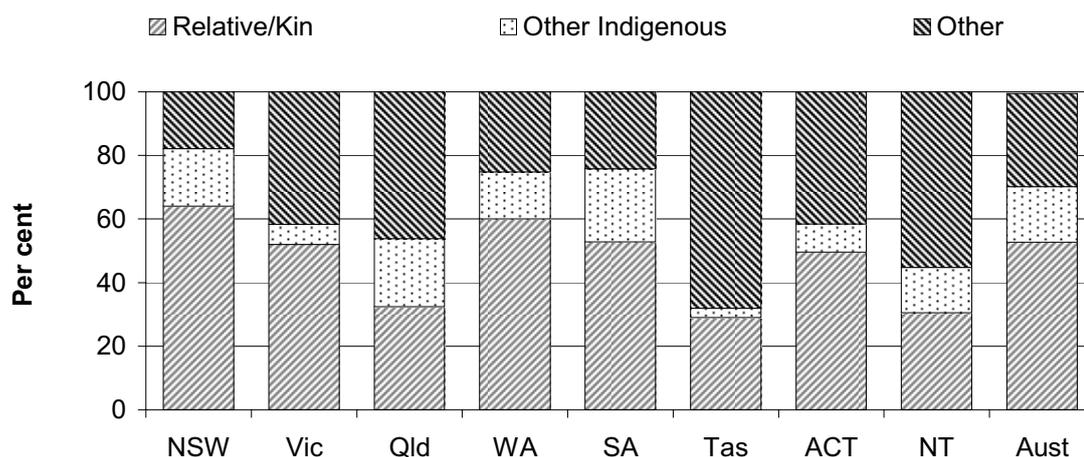
- placement with the child’s extended family (which includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous relatives/kin)
- placement within the child’s Indigenous community
- placement with other Indigenous people.

All jurisdictions have adopted this principle in both legislation and policy.

Nationally, at 30 June 2010, 53.0 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with relatives/kin (40.6 per cent with Indigenous relatives/kin and 12.4 per cent with non-Indigenous relatives/kin). A further 17.5 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with other Indigenous carers or in Indigenous residential care (figure 15.11).

The proportion of Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2010 who were placed with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or with another Indigenous carer or in Indigenous residential care varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.11).

**Figure 15.11 Placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, 30 June 2010<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



Relative/Kin = Placed with relative/kin. Other Indigenous = Placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care. Other = Not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care. <sup>a</sup> Excludes Indigenous children living independently and those whose living arrangements were unknown. <sup>b</sup> Data for Tasmania and the ACT relate to a small number of Indigenous children (138 and 125 respectively) in care at 30 June 2010. <sup>c</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* collection; table 15A.22.

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*Out-of-home care — local placement*

‘Local placement’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services which meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.17).

**Box 15.17 Local placement**

‘Local placement’ is defined as the proportion of children attending the same school that they were attending before entering out-of-home care as after entering out-of-home care.

A high or increasing rate of local placement is desirable.

A placement close to where a child lived prior to entering out-of-home care is considered to enhance the stability, familiarity and security of the child. It enables some elements of the child’s life to remain unchanged (for example, they can continue attending the same school and retain their friendship network). It may also facilitate family contact if the child’s parents continue to live nearby.

This indicator should be balanced against other quality indicators. This is one factor among many that must be considered in the placement decision. For example, placement with a sibling or relative might preclude a local placement. Also, a child might move from a primary school to a secondary school or to a different local school at the same level.

Data will be provided for 3 and 12 months after entering care. Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2011 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

*Out-of-home care — placement with sibling*

‘Placement with sibling’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services which meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.18).

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**Box 15.18 Placement with sibling**

'Placement with sibling' is defined as the proportion of children who are on orders and in out-of-home care at 30 June who have siblings also on orders and in out-of-home care, who are placed with at least one of their siblings.

A high or increasing rate of placement with siblings is desirable. Placement of siblings together promotes stability and continuity. It is a long standing placement principle that siblings should be placed together, where possible, in the interests of their emotional wellbeing. Children are likely to be more secure and have a sense of belonging within their family when placed with siblings.

This is one factor among many that must be considered in the placement decision. In circumstances of sibling abuse, or when a particular child in a family has been singled out as the target for abuse or neglect, keeping siblings together may not be appropriate.

Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2011 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

*Out-of-home care — children with documented case plan*

'Children with documented case plan' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide services that meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.19).

**Box 15.19 Children with documented case plan**

'Children with documented case plan' is defined as the proportion of children on an order and in out-of-home care who have a documented case plan.

A high or increasing rate is desirable because all children should have a case plan. The quality of a case plan must also be considered as the existence of a case plan does not guarantee that appropriate case work to meet a child's needs is occurring.

Case planning is essential to structured and purposeful work to support children's optimal development. Case plans outline intervention goals such as improved parent-child attachments, reunification or other forms of permanency, and set out the means to achieve these goals, such as frequency of family contact and any remedial or special services considered appropriate for the individual child. Case plans also allow for the monitoring of a child's time in care.

Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2011 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

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### *Out-of-home care — client satisfaction*

‘Client satisfaction’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients (box 15.20).

#### **Box 15.20 Client satisfaction**

‘Client satisfaction’ is yet to be defined.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Some information on jurisdictions’ development of initiatives which may assist to measure client satisfaction in the future is included in box 15.8.

### *Efficiency*

Understanding the efficiency of child protection systems broadly — and the different components of child protection systems, such as early intervention and out-of-home care services — enables State and Territory governments to identify key service cost drivers. Efficiency measures coupled with outcome measures ultimately enable State and Territory governments to compare the relative cost effectiveness of broad system approaches and the cost effectiveness of different components of child protection systems.

### *Challenges in reporting efficiency for child protection systems*

Current efficiency data for child protection services have several limitations, including:

- *different systems and priorities across jurisdictions* — child protection systems in Australia have evolved independently under the auspices of State and Territory governments. This has resulted in variations in the processes and emphases placed on different service delivery paradigms, such as different approaches to diversionary options
- *limitations of current information systems* — in most jurisdictions, it is difficult to identify resources directed specifically to child protection services, out-of-home care services and other support services for families. This is due in part to the historic structure of information systems and the embedding of government agencies responsible for child protection services within larger community services departments. Table 15A.4 identifies the level of consistency in expenditure data across jurisdictions.

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As a result of these limitations, cost allocations reflect the historic nature of information systems and do not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of the costs involved in provision of various child protection and out-of-home care services.

In April 2002, the Review initiated a project to improve efficiency data for a national framework of protection and support pathways (the 'Pathways' project) (box 15.21). Until this can be fully implemented, reporting on efficiency has been limited to proxy indicators (box 15.22 and box 15.24).

### **Box 15.21 The 'Pathways' project**

The Pathways project developed and tested a model that will ultimately allow jurisdictions to calculate more meaningful, comparable and robust efficiency measures (the 'pathways method'). The model is based on a top-down application of the activity-based costing method. Eight national pathways have been developed as a high level representation of the services that a protection and support client could receive in any jurisdiction. Each pathway consists of common activity groups which act as the 'building blocks' for each of the pathways. The aggregate cost of each activity group within the pathway will allow the unit cost (including direct and indirect expenditure) of an individual pathway to be determined.

These activity groups and pathways will provide additional utility for jurisdictions in managing the business of child protection services. Implementation of the model has the potential to improve the quality of national reporting of protection and support services efficiency measures. Activity-based data can also result, over time, in measures of the cost savings associated with early intervention strategies.

The activity groups are:

- Activity Group 1 Receipt and assessment of initial information about a potential protection and support issue.
- Activity Group 2 Provision of generic/non-intensive family support services.
- Activity Group 3 Provision of intensive family support services.
- Activity Group 4 Secondary information gathering and assessment.
- Activity Group 5 Provision of short term protective intervention and coordination services for children not on an order.
- Activity Group 6 Seeking an order.
- Activity Group 7 Provision of protective intervention, support and coordination services for children on an order.
- Activity Group 8 Provision of out-of-home care services.

(Continued on next page)

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**Box 15.21 (Continued)**

Detailed definitions of activity groups are included in section 15.13.

Before jurisdictional reporting against the activity groups can be undertaken with confidence, further refinement of activity group definitions and counting rules is required. Development work, including further data testing in these areas will continue.

*Source:* SCRCSSP (2003).

Experimental data relating to the proportion of expenditure across each activity group are included in table 15.2. These data are preliminary and are subject to further analysis and refinement for future Reports. Experimental unit cost data for four Pathways activity groups are presented in table 15.3. Due to different internal management systems, there can be significant variation across jurisdictions in relation to specific activities or expenditures that are included in each activity group.

These data reflect a combination of allocation of direct costs (those costs which can be clearly identified by a jurisdiction to a particular activity group) and indirect costs (which form part of the overall expenditure base, but which cannot be identified in a specific activity group). Indirect allocations have been approximated by jurisdictions across the eight activity groups.

Table 15.2 provides an approximation of the proportionate allocation of expenditure across the eight activity groups for each participating jurisdiction. The proportion of expenditure allocated to Activity group 8 (Out-of-home care) is the most significant and varies from 35 per cent to 62 per cent across reporting jurisdictions.

**Table 15.2 Proportion of expenditure by activity group — experimental estimates (per cent)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

	AG1	AG2 <sup>d</sup>	AG3	AG4	AG5	AG6	AG7	AG8	Total <sup>d</sup>
NSW (2009-10)	5	15	8	9	7	3	7	45	<b>100</b>
Vic (2005-06)	3	24	4	5	4	7	8	44	<b>100</b>
Qld (2009-10)	4	4	10	5	8	8	9	53	<b>100</b>
WA (2008-09) <sup>e</sup>	9	8	5	8	3	4	12	51	<b>100</b>
SA (2005-06)	4	8	4	13	10	8	7	45	<b>100</b>
Tas (2009-10) <sup>f</sup>	3	8	7	8	3	16	21	35	<b>100</b>
ACT (2009-10)	5	11	7	3	2	5	5	62	<b>100</b>
NT (2009-10)	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	<b>100</b>

AG = Activity Group (box 15.21). <sup>a</sup> Data are rounded to the nearest whole number. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding. <sup>b</sup> Participating jurisdictions' experimental data relate to expenditure allocations across different years. AG definitions have been refined over time, therefore, experimental estimates from earlier years are not strictly comparable with more recent data. <sup>c</sup> Experimental percentage allocations are derived from total expenditure allocations which vary from totals used to derive costs presented elsewhere in the chapter. <sup>d</sup> Expenditure items included in calculating proportional expenditure for AG2 can vary across jurisdictions, for example the inclusion/exclusion of expenditure on services outsourced to non-government organisations. <sup>e</sup> The WA Department for Communities funds and provides a substantial amount of AG2 services. These data are not included in the above estimates. It is anticipated that these data will be included in future years. <sup>f</sup> The allocation of indirect expenditure in Tasmania was based on a survey of only one region. There is a need for the survey to be repeated at a State-wide level to reduce the possibility of regional differences distorting results. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Table 15.3 presents experimental unit cost data for four activity groups. Unit cost data will be provided for remaining activity groups once appropriate activity data are agreed.

**Table 15.3 Activity group unit costs — experimental data<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>WA<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>ACT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>
AG1-Cost per notification <sup>e</sup>	\$	435	na	1 047	1 809	na	195	165	na
AG2 <sup>f</sup>	\$	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
AG3 <sup>f</sup>	\$	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
AG4-Cost per investigation <sup>g</sup>	\$	1 129	na	1 316	4 446	na	2 811	575	na
AG5 <sup>f</sup>	\$	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
AG6-Cost per order issued	\$	8 811	na	7 047	5 427	na	6 600	3 177	na
AG7 <sup>f</sup>	\$	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
AG8-Cost per placement night <sup>h</sup>	\$	111	na	129	129	na	70	120	na

AG = Activity Group (box 15.21). <sup>a</sup> Data are rounded to the nearest whole number. <sup>b</sup> Experimental unit costs are based on jurisdictions' total expenditure for each activity group, including direct and indirect costs such as staffing, other overheads etc. <sup>c</sup> Experimental data relate to the 2009-10 financial year. <sup>d</sup> Experimental data relate to the 2008-09 financial year. <sup>e</sup> Jurisdictions count notifications at different points in response to a report, ranging from the point of initial contact with the source of the report to the end of a screening and decision making process. This means the number of notifications and hence the unit cost for notifications is not comparable across jurisdictions. <sup>f</sup> Unit costs for AGs 2, 3, 5 and 7 will be included once appropriate counting rules are agreed. <sup>g</sup> Jurisdictions differ in the way notifications and investigations are defined and the requirements for conducting an investigation. <sup>h</sup> Cost per placement night should be interpreted with caution due to the effect of different proportions of children in residential out-of-home care across jurisdictions. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

*Total expenditure on all child protection activities per notification, investigation and substantiation*

'Total expenditure on all child protection activities, per notification', 'total expenditure on all child protection activities, per investigation', and 'total expenditure on all child protection activities, per substantiation' are reported as proxy indicators of governments' objective to maximise the benefit to the community through the efficient use of public resources (box 15.22).

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**Box 15.22 Total expenditure on all child protection activities per notification, investigation and substantiation**

'Total expenditure on all child protection activities per notification, investigation and substantiation' is defined as:

- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of notifications
- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of investigations
- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of substantiations.

Low or decreasing expenditure per notification/investigation/substantiation can suggest more efficient services but may indicate lower quality or different service delivery models. These indicators are proxy indicators and need to be interpreted with care. Because each of these proxy indicators is based on total expenditure on child protection activities, they do not represent, and cannot be interpreted as, unit costs for notifications, investigations or substantiations. These proxy indicators cannot be added together to determine overall cost of child protection services.

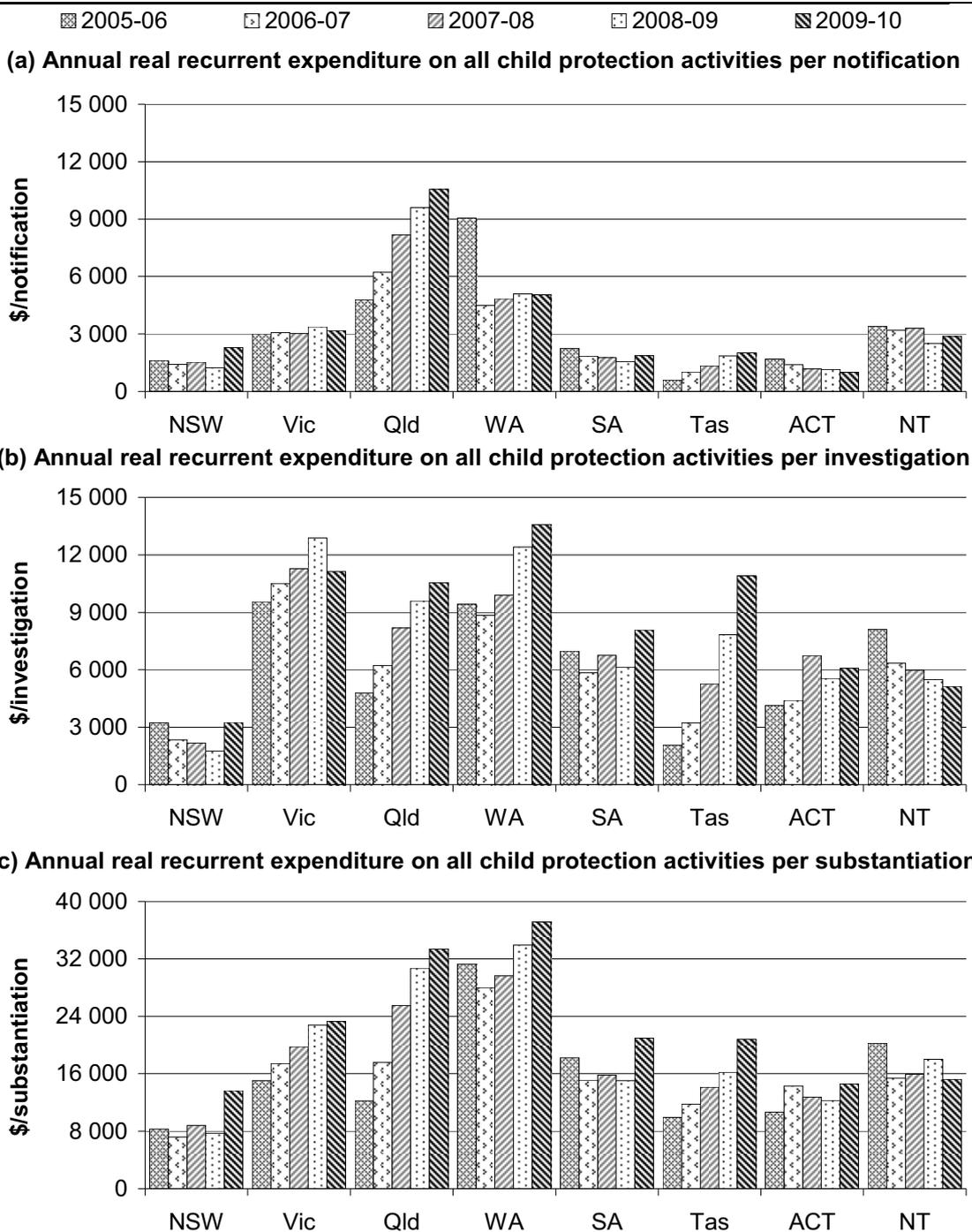
More comprehensive and accurate efficiency indicators would relate expenditure on particular child protection activities to a measure of output of those activities. Work is underway to develop a national activity-based costing method, the Pathways project, that will allow this type of reporting from existing information systems (box 15.21). Experimental data using the Pathways method are included in Table 15.3. The following proxy data will be replaced by Pathways unit cost data once the Pathways method is refined and implemented nationally.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Total expenditure on all child protection activities per notification, per investigation and per substantiation from 2005-06 to 2009-10 varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.12).

Figure 15.12 Child protection efficiency indicators (2009-10 dollars)<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Real expenditure based on ABS gross domestic product price deflator (2009-10 = 100) (table AA.26). <sup>b</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.2.

### Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night

'Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night' is an indicator of governments' objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of public resources (box 15.23).

#### Box 15.23 Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night

'Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night' is defined as total real recurrent expenditure on out-of-home care services divided by the total number of placement nights in out-of-home care.

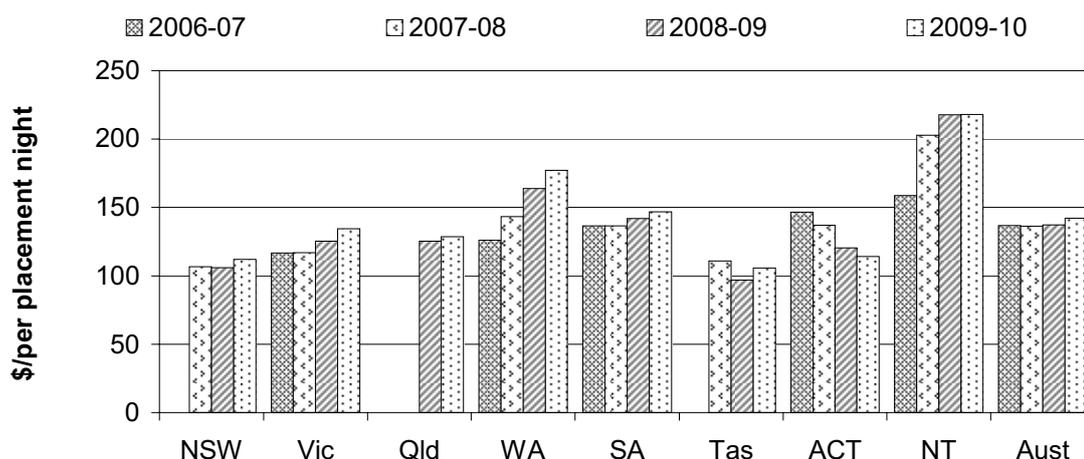
Low or decreasing expenditure per placement night can suggest more efficient services but may indicate lower service quality or different service delivery models. Further, in some cases, efficiencies may not be able to be realised due to remote geographic locations that limit opportunities to reduce overheads through economies of scale.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.13).

Figure 15.13 Out-of-home care expenditure per placement night (2009-10 dollars) <sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> These data should not be interpreted as unit costs for Activity Group 8 as they are derived using reported program expenditure and not activity group expenditure. <sup>b</sup> Caution should be used when interpreting results due to the variety of activities included in out-of-home care services. <sup>c</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.32.

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These indicative unit costs are derived using total real recurrent program expenditure on out-of-home care services (table 15A.1) and not expenditure allocated to an activity group.

*Total expenditure on all out-of-home care services per child in out-of-home care, by residential and non-residential care*

‘Total expenditure on all out-of-home care services per child in out-of-home care, by residential and non-residential care’ are reported as proxy indicators of governments’ objective to maximise the benefit to the community through the efficient use of public resources (box 15.24).

**Box 15.24 Expenditure on all out-of-home care services per child in out-of-home care, by residential and non-residential care**

‘Expenditure on all out-of-home care services per child in out-of-home care, by residential and non-residential care’ is defined as:

- total expenditure on residential out-of-home care divided by the number of children in residential out-of-home care at 30 June
- total expenditure on non-residential out-of-home care divided by the number of children in non-residential out-of-home care at 30 June
- total expenditure on all out-of-home care divided by the number of children in all out-of-home care at 30 June.

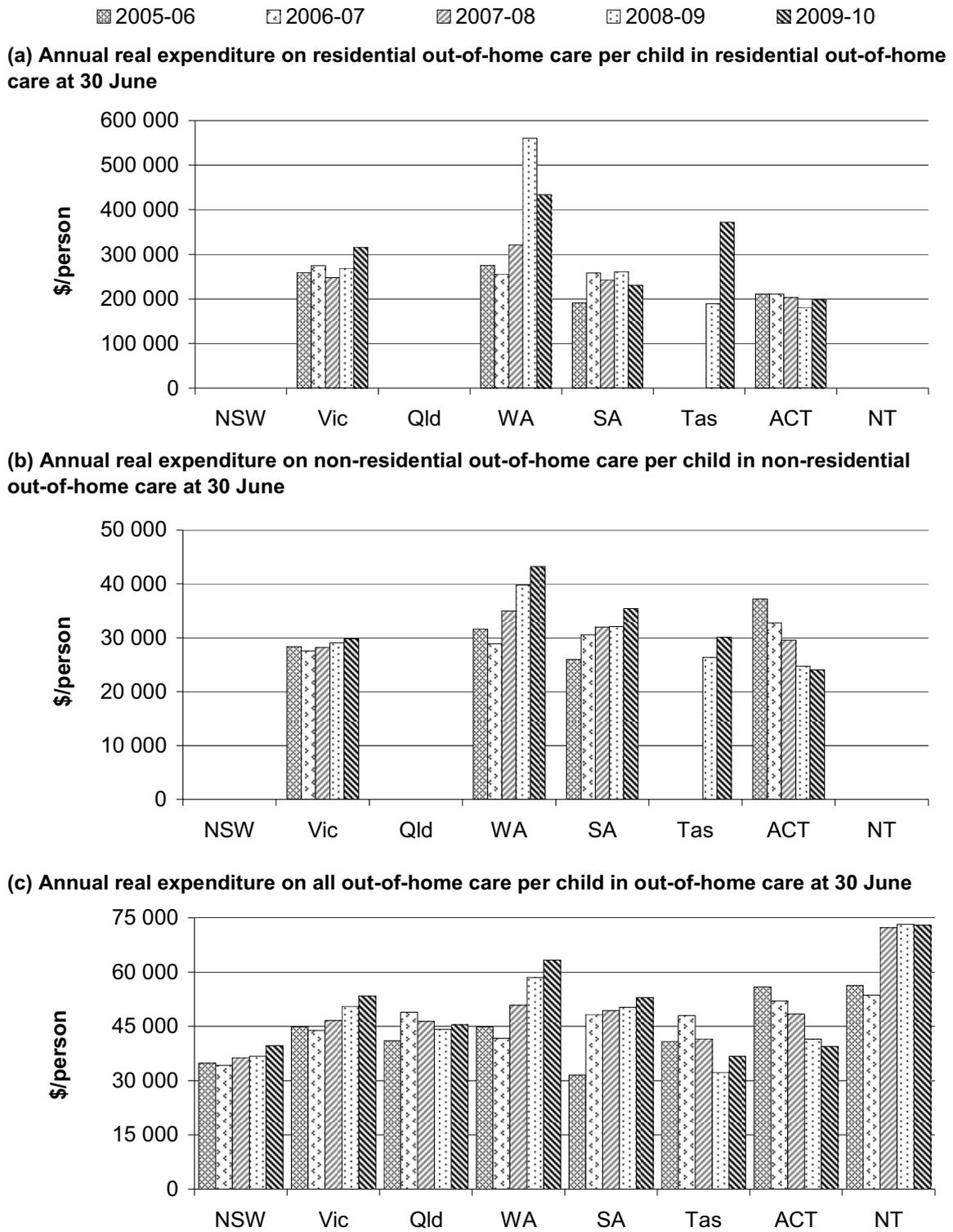
Low or decreasing expenditure per child in care can suggest more efficient services but may indicate lower quality or different service delivery models. These indicators are proxy indicators and need to be interpreted with care as they do not represent a measure of unit costs. Expenditure per child in care at 30 June overstates the cost per child because significantly more children are in care during a year than at a point in time. In addition, the indicator does not reflect the length of time that a child spends in care.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Total expenditure on residential care and non-residential care for the period 2005-06 to 2009-10, per child in residential care and non-residential care at 30 June, varied across jurisdictions (figures 15.14(a) and figure 15.14(b)). Total expenditure on all out-of-home care per child in care at 30 June for 2005-06 to 2009-10 also varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.14(c)).

**Figure 15.14 Out-of-home care efficiency indicators (2009-10 dollars)**  
a, b, c



**a** Real expenditure based on ABS gross domestic product price deflator (2009-10 = 100) (table AA.26).

**b** NSW, Queensland, and the NT could not disaggregate expenditure on out-of-home care. Tasmania could only disaggregate these data from 2008-09 onwards. **c** See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.3.

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## Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

### *Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate*

‘Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the risk of harm to children by appropriately assessing notifications of possible child protection incidents (box 15.25).

#### **Box 15.25 Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate**

‘Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate’ is defined as the proportion of children who were the subject of an investigation in the previous financial year that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who were later the subject of a substantiation within 3 or 12 months of the initial decision not to substantiate. The year reported relates to the year of the initial decision not to substantiate.

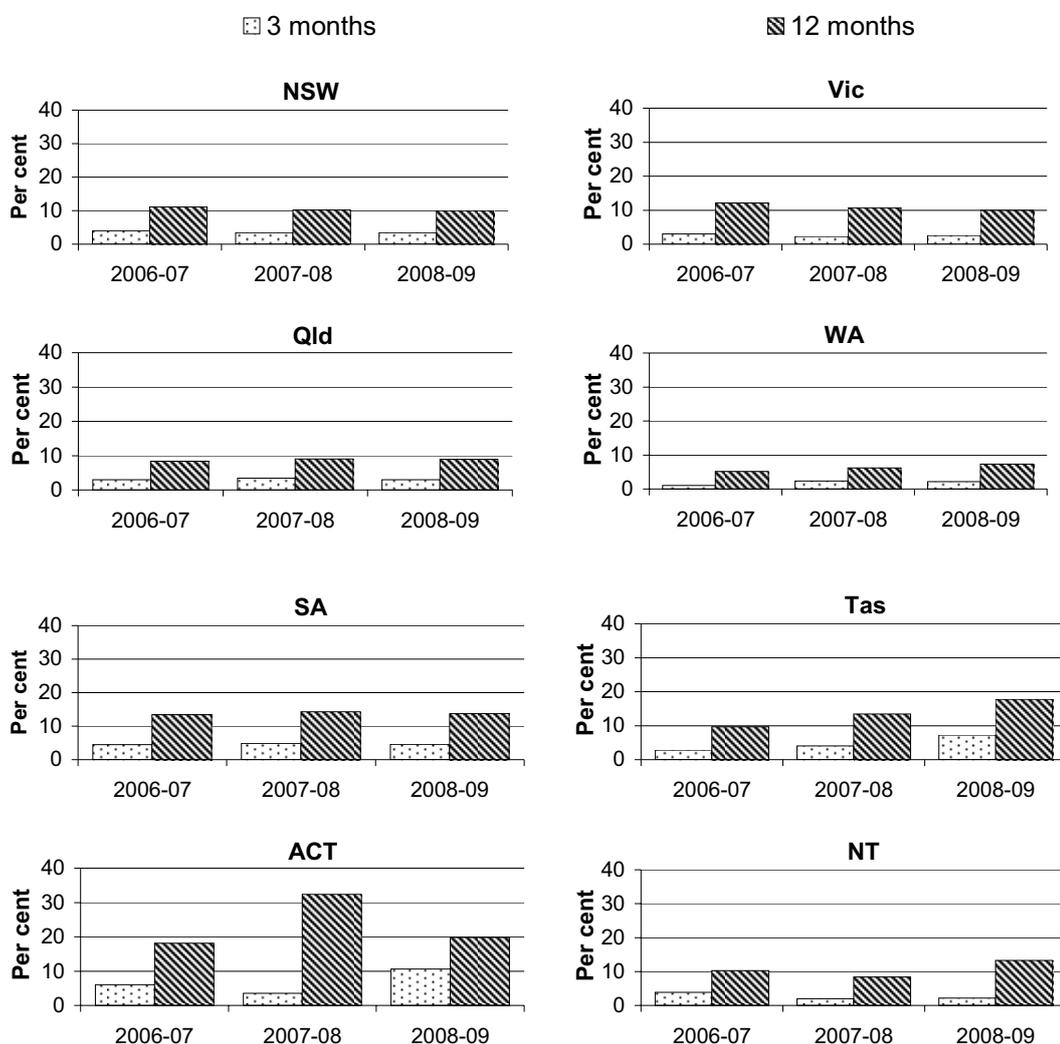
A low or decreasing rate for this indicator is desirable. However, reported results can be affected by the finalisation of investigations, factors beyond the control of child protection services, or a change in circumstances after the initial decision not to substantiate was made. A demonstrable risk of harm might not have existed in the first instance. In addition, this indicator does not distinguish between subsequent substantiations which are related to the initial notification (that is, the same source of risk of harm) and those which are unrelated to the initial notification (that is, a different source of risk of harm). This indicator partly reveals the extent to which an investigation has not succeeded in identifying the risk of harm to a child who is subsequently the subject of substantiated harm. It also provides a measure of the adequacy of interventions offered to children to protect them from further harm. This indicator should be considered with other outcome indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator, because definitions of substantiations vary across jurisdictions. Data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.15).

Figure 15.15 Improved safety — substantiation rate within 3 and/or 12 months after a decision not to substantiate<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates cannot be compared across jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> Data relating to substantiations after a decision not to substantiate in Tasmania for 2006-07 should be interpreted with care due to the high proportion of investigations in process at 31 August 2007. <sup>c</sup> See source tables for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.9, 15A.37, 15A.54, 15A.71, 15A.88, 15A.105, 15A.122, 15A.139 and 15A.156.

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*Improved safety — resubstantiation rate after a prior substantiation*

‘Improved safety — resubstantiation rate after a prior substantiation’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the risk of harm and to prevent the recurrence of abuse and neglect or harm to children (box 15.26).

**Box 15.26 Improved safety — resubstantiation rate after a prior substantiation**

‘Improved safety — resubstantiation rate after a prior substantiation’ is defined as the proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation in the previous financial year, who were subsequently the subject of a further substantiation within the following 3 or 12 months. The year reported relates to the year of the original substantiation.

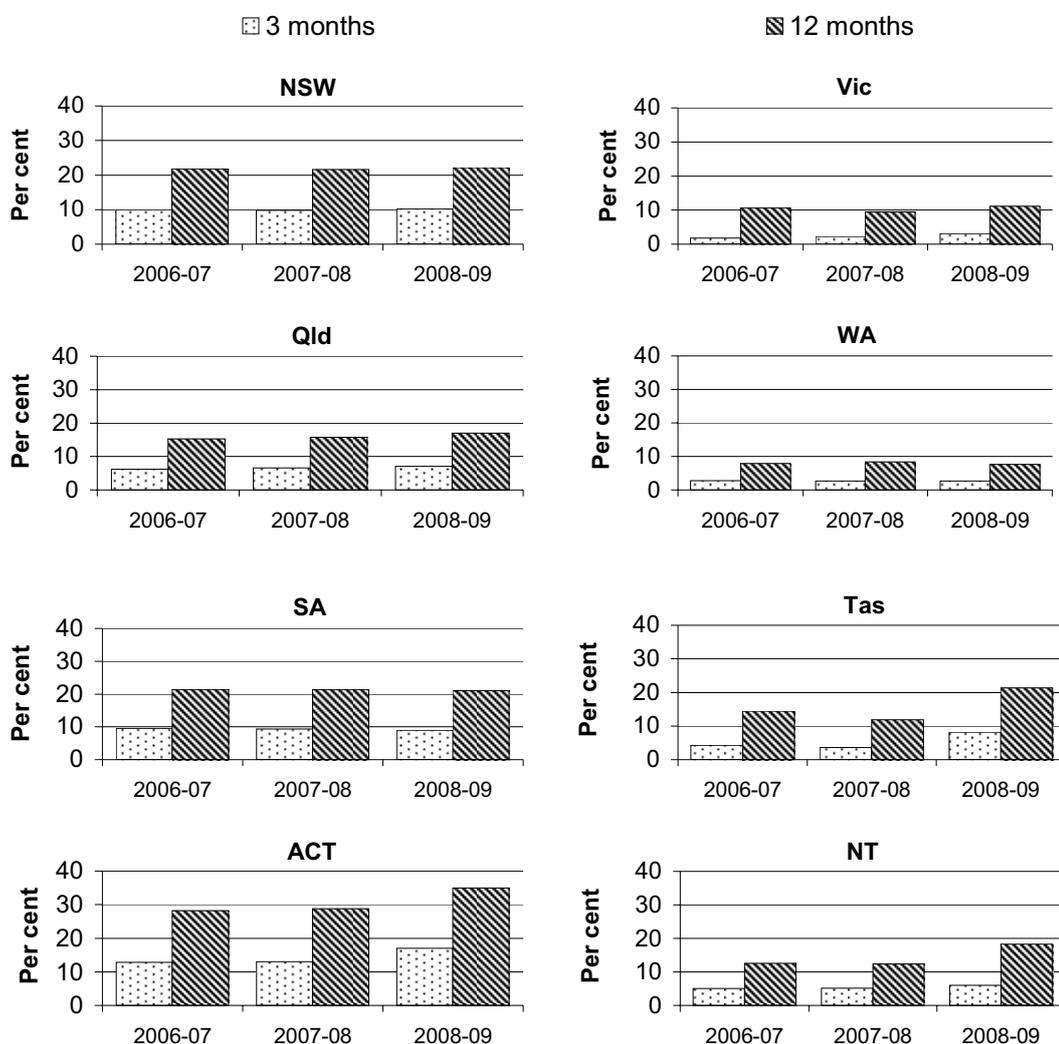
A low or decreasing rate for this indicator is desirable. This indicator partly reveals the extent to which intervention by child protection services has succeeded in preventing further harm. However, reported results can be affected by the finalisation of investigations or factors beyond the control of child protection services, such as changes in the family situation (for example, illness, unemployment or a new partner). In addition, this indicator does not distinguish between subsequent substantiations that are related to the initial notification (that is, the same source of risk of harm) and those that are unrelated to the initial notification (that is, a different source of risk of harm). This indicator should be considered with other outcome indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator, because definitions of substantiations vary across jurisdictions. Data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.16).

Figure 15.16 Improved safety — resubstantiation rate within 3 or 12 months of a prior substantiation<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates cannot be compared across jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> Data relating to resubstantiations in Tasmania for 2006-07 should be interpreted with care due to the high proportion of investigations in process at 31 August 2007. <sup>c</sup> See source table for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.10, 15A.38, 15A.55, 15A.72, 15A.89, 15A.106, 15A.123, 15A.140 and 15A.157.

### *Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child*

‘Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise children’s life chances by ensuring children in care have their educational, health and wellbeing needs met (box 15.27).

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**Box 15.27 Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child**

‘Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child’ is defined as the change over time in the learning outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders.

A high or increasing rate at which children’s educational outcomes are improving is desirable.

However, factors outside the control of protection and support services can also influence the educational outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders, and care needs to be exercised when interpreting results. Further, the change over time in the learning outcomes for children on guardianship or custody orders is a partial measure of this outcome indicator.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

For the 2011 Report, data are reported for the proportion of children in years 3, 5 and 7 on guardianship or custody orders (attending government schools) achieving national reading and numeracy benchmarks in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 relative to all children (attending government and non-government schools). The proportion of children on guardianship or custody orders achieving national reading and numeracy benchmarks in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 varied significantly across jurisdictions (see tables 15A.11–15A.13). However, with few exceptions, the proportion of children on orders achieving national reading and numeracy benchmarks was less — at times significantly less — than all students.

### *Safe return home*

‘Safe return home’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to remove the risk of harm to the child while maintaining family cohesion (box 15.28).

**Box 15.28 Safe return home**

‘Safe return home’ is yet to be defined.

For children who cannot be protected within their family and are removed from home, often the best outcome is when effective intervention to improve their parents’ skills or capacity to care for them enables them to return home.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

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### *Permanent care*

‘Permanent care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide appropriate care for children who cannot be safely reunified with their families (box 15.29).

#### **Box 15.29 Permanent care**

‘Permanent care’ is yet to be defined.

Appropriate services are those that minimise the length of time before stable, permanent placement is achieved.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

## **15.4 Future directions in child protection and out-of-home care services performance reporting**

### **Improving national child protection data**

The Performance and Data Working Group has initiated a number of national projects to improve the gaps in child protection reporting and to monitor the comparability of child protection data. Such projects, approved by the National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG) and funded by the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Council (CDSMC), include: Educational Outcomes for Children on Orders; Scoping of a Treatment and Support Services data collection; and the development of a unit-record based Carer data module. It is expected that these projects, along with the development of a child based unit-record data collection, will improve child protection reporting.

### **COAG developments**

#### *National framework for protecting Australia’s children 2009—2020*

On 30 April 2009, COAG endorsed *Protecting Children is Everyone’s Business: National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020* (“the National Framework”). The National Framework argues that Australia needs to move from seeing ‘protecting children’ as a response to abuse and neglect to one of promoting the safety and wellbeing of children. The National Framework is intended to deliver a more integrated response to protecting Australia’s children and emphasises the

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role of government, the non-government sector, and the community in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children.

The National Framework does not change the responsibilities of governments. State and Territory governments retain responsibility for statutory child protection and the Australian Government retains responsibility for providing income support payments.

The National Framework's main goal is to ensure that Australia's children and young people are safe and well. To measure this high-level outcome, the National Framework sets the following target: a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia over time.

To demonstrate progress towards achieving the target of a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect over time, the National Framework sets out four key measures:

1. Trends in key national indicators of children's health, development and wellbeing.
2. Trends in hospital admissions and emergency department visits for neglect and injuries to children under three years.
3. Trends in substantiated child protection cases.
4. Trends in the number of children in out-of-home care.

The National Framework also identifies six supporting outcomes which are designed to focus efforts and actions under the National Framework in progress towards the high level outcome of ensuring Australia's children and young people are safe and well. The six supporting outcomes are:

1. Children live in safe and supportive families and communities.
2. Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early.
3. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed.
4. Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing.
5. Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities.
6. Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support.

The National Framework acknowledges the inherent difficulties in measuring the specific impact of services and interventions on high-level social outcomes. As

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such, the National Framework contains a broad suite of indicators (“indicators of change”), which will be reported on annually in order to measure progress over the life of the National Framework (2009–2020).

The Report’s child protection and out-of-home care performance indicator framework already includes and reports upon several National Framework performance indicators. In addition, the Steering Committee has previously identified developments for the Report’s child protection and out-of-home care performance indicator framework which are complementary to many of the measures in the National Framework. In further developing the Report’s child protection and out-of-home care performance indicator framework, the Steering Committee will reflect and report consistently with applicable National Framework developments.

#### *National standards for out-of-home care*

Under the National Framework, Australian governments have committed to developing and implementing National Standards for Out-of-Home Care (“the National Standards”). In early-2010, national consultations were undertaken in all capital cities, and five regional locations, to inform the development of the National Standards. In June 2010, Community and Disability Services Ministers agreed to finalise a working document comprising draft National Standards for community consultation. The draft working paper was released in July 2010 (National Framework Implementation Working Group, Community and Disability Services Ministers Advisory Council 2010).

The draft National Standards relate to areas impacting on the outcomes and experiences of children in out-of-home care, including health, education, case planning, connection to family, transitioning from care, training and support for carers, belonging and identity, and stability and safety. The Steering Committee will keep a watching brief on the development of the National Standards, particularly insofar as identifying ways in which the Report’s child protection and out-of-home care performance indicator framework can reflect and report consistently with the National Standards.

#### *Outcomes from review of Report on Government Services*

COAG endorsed recommendations of a review of the Report in December 2009. Those recommendations implemented during 2010 are reflected in the Report.

Further recommendations will be reflected in future Reports, including implementation of Independent Reference Group and Steering Committee

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recommendations arising from the ‘Review of the general performance indicator framework’ and the ‘Review of the performance indicators and their associated measures’. The 2012 Report and later editions will continue:

- lengthening time series data in attachment tables where 10 year time series are not yet reported
- developing data quality information documents for performance indicators
- developing mini-case studies.

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## 15.5 Profile of juvenile justice services

### Service overview

Juvenile justice systems are responsible for attending to young people (predominantly aged 10–17 years) who have committed or allegedly committed an offence while considered by law to be a juvenile. In so doing, juvenile justice systems aim to promote community safety and reduce youth offending by assisting young people to address their offending behaviour and take responsibility for the effect their behaviour has on victims and the wider community.

The juvenile justice system in each State and Territory comprises:

- police, who are usually a young person’s first point of contact with the system
- courts (usually a special children’s or youth court), where matters relating to the charges against young people are heard. The courts are largely responsible for decisions regarding bail, remand and sentencing
- statutory juvenile justice agencies, which are responsible for the supervision and case management of young people on a range of legal and administrative orders, and for the provision of a wide range of services intended to reduce and prevent crime
- non-government and community service providers who may work with juvenile justice agencies to provide services and programs for young people under supervision.

The majority of young people who come into contact with the juvenile justice system do not become clients of statutory juvenile justice agencies. Instead, young people are diverted through a range of mechanisms including contact with police (who have the authority to issue warnings, formal cautions and infringement notices for minor offences) and the courts (which can issue non-supervised orders for minor offences).

The content in this chapter relates to the services provided by statutory juvenile justice agencies that are responsible for the supervision and case management of young people who have committed or allegedly committed an offence.

Most of the juvenile justice information contained in the ‘size and scope’ section of this chapter is sourced from the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS), which is maintained by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). However, in some cases, information is sourced directly from State and Territory governments.

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The performance indicator data contained in section 15.6 are sourced directly from State and Territory governments (box 15.30).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Responsibility for the provision of juvenile justice services in Australia resides with State and Territory governments. The relevant department in each State and Territory responsible for funding and/or providing juvenile justice services in 2009-10 is listed in box 15.30. Each jurisdiction has its own legislation that determines the policies and practices of its juvenile justice system. While this legislation varies in detail, its intent is similar across jurisdictions. National coordination takes place through the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA). The AJJA is a Standing Committee of the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Council (CDSMAC).

### **Box 15.30 Government departments responsible for the delivery of juvenile justice services**

<i>NSW</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>Vic</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>Qld</i>	Department of Communities (DOC)
<i>WA</i>	Department of Corrective Services (DCS)
<i>SA</i>	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
<i>Tas</i>	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
<i>ACT</i>	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS)
<i>NT</i>	Department of Justice (DOJ)

### *Diversion of young offenders*

Responsibility for administering the options available for diverting young people who have committed or allegedly committed relatively minor offences — warnings (informal cautions), formal cautions, and infringement notices — rests mainly with police in all jurisdictions. Responsibility for administering the diversionary processes available for more serious offences lies with juvenile justice authorities and courts. Comparable and extensive national data are not yet available to illustrate the nature or level of diversion undertaken by Australian jurisdictions. However, Police services (chapter 6) provides data on the number of juveniles who are diverted by police, as a proportion of all juvenile offenders formally dealt with by police (table 6.3).

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## Funding

Comparable State and Territory governments' expenditure data on juvenile justice services are not currently available. Comparable juvenile justice funding information is being developed for future reports.

## Size and scope

### *Clients of juvenile justice agencies*

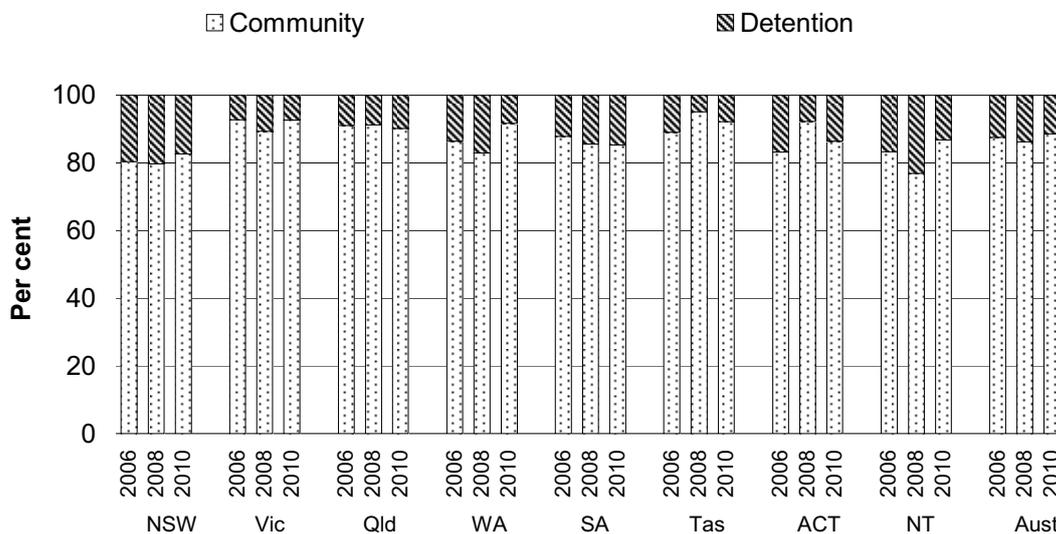
Most young people who are supervised by juvenile justice agencies are on community-based orders, which include supervised bail, probation and parole. During 2008-09, 12 197 young people experienced juvenile justice supervision in Australia. Of these young people, 10 835 experienced community-based supervision, 4714 experienced detention-based supervision, with some young people experiencing both (AIHW forthcoming).<sup>1</sup> During 2008-09, 140 young people experienced juvenile justice detention-based supervision in the NT (NT government unpublished).

Nationally, 88.6 per cent of young people aged 10–17 years who were supervised by juvenile justice services on 30 June 2010 were in the community (figure 15.17). These data do not include juveniles aged 10–17 years who were supervised in the adult correctional system. Further, these data were collected at a point in time, so they need to be interpreted with care, particularly for jurisdictions with smaller populations where a small change to the number of young people in detention can make a significant difference to their relative proportion.

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<sup>1</sup> These Australian totals exclude WA and the NT.

**Figure 15.17 Proportion of juvenile justice clients aged 10–17 years who were supervised in the community and in detention centres, at 30 June<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.169 for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW unpublished (data supplied by State and Territory governments); table 15A.169.

### *Juvenile detention*

As outlined above, the majority of juvenile offenders are supervised in the community. The following data sourced from the JJ NMDS and the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) relate to juvenile detention only (young people both on remand and sentenced). As jurisdictions have different definitions of a juvenile, this may affect the numbers and rates reported.

Nationally, the daily average number of people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention centres increased from 646.8 to 771.0 between 1999-2000 and 2008-09 (table 15.4).

**Table 15.4 Daily average population of people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention (number)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2008-09	361.3	63.3	110.0	128.5	47.0	25.0	10.8	25.3	771.0
2007-08	338.0	63.0	143.3	154.0	55.0	24.0	13.3	23.8	814.3
2006-07	276.5	48.0	138.0	131.5	41.8	19.3	14.3	26.3	695.5
2005-06	243.8	52.5	126.8	115.0	39.0	26.5	12.8	17.3	633.5
2004-05	218.0	52.5	89.0	109.8	57.8	32.5	14.5	21.5	595.5
2003-04	209.0	61.5	90.8	121.5	49.5	26.3	17.8	13.3	589.5
2002-03	220.0	63.8	96.0	106.3	65.3	24.8	16.5	23.5	616.0
2001-02	216.5	62.3	88.5	107.5	55.5	26.8	17.3	15.8	590.0
2000-01	222.5	61.8	87.0	103.0	59.3	43.3	17.0	17.0	610.8
1999-00	251.3	63.3	111.5	116.3	47.3	31.3	11.0	15.0	646.8

<sup>a</sup> Average based on population of juvenile detention centres on the last day of each quarter of the financial year. <sup>b</sup> Due to rounding, the Australian total may differ from the combined total of all jurisdictions. <sup>c</sup> Refer to table 15A.170 for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) (unpublished); AIC Juveniles in detention (unpublished); table 15A.170.

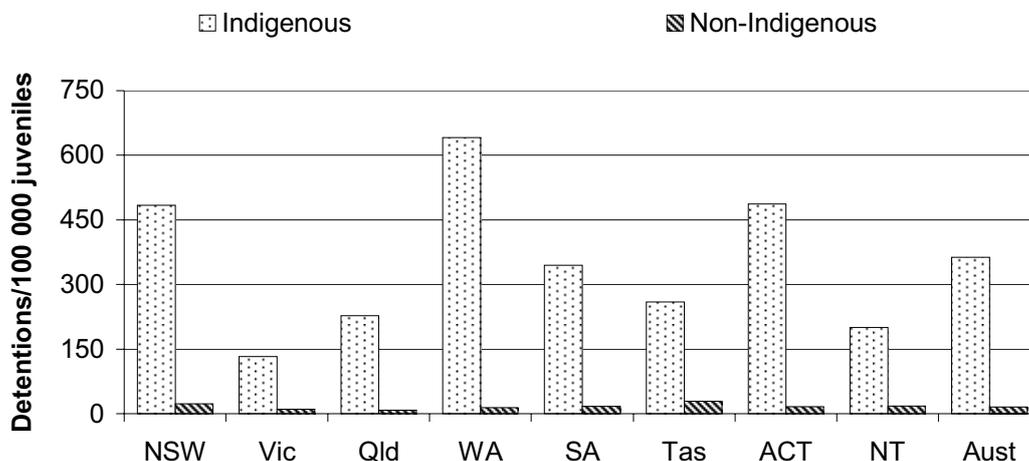
The average rate of detention of young people aged 10–17 years per 100 000 in the population aged 10–17 years increased from 30.4 per 100 000 in 1999-2000 to 33.8 per 100 000 in 2008-09, with rates varying across jurisdictions (table 15A.171).

Nationally, females made up 8.5 per cent of the total population of juvenile detention centres at 30 June 2009. Males made up 91.5 per cent of the total population of juvenile detention centres at 30 June 2009 (table 15A.172).

#### *Numbers and rates of Indigenous young people placed in detention*

The daily average number of Indigenous young people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile detention centres was 411.5 in 2008-09 (table 15A.173). Nationally, the daily average detention rate for Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in 2008-09 was 370.9 per 100 000 Indigenous people aged 10–17 years. The rate for the non-Indigenous population aged 10–17 years in 2008-09 was 16.1 per 100 000 non-Indigenous people aged 10–17 years (table 15A.174). The over-representation of Indigenous young people in detention across jurisdictions in 2008-09 is shown in figure 15.18.

**Figure 15.18 Average rate of detention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people, 2008-09<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Rates of detention for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in NSW in each quarter in 2008-09 include young people in the care of both the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services. <sup>b</sup> The ACT rate for Indigenous young people should be treated with caution due to the small Indigenous population in the ACT. The rate ratio at table 15A.174 should also be taken into account.

Source: AIHW JJ NMDS (unpublished); AIC Juveniles in detention (unpublished); table 15A.174.

## 15.6 Framework of performance indicators for juvenile justice services

The performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services is based on a set of shared government objectives (box 15.31).

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### **Box 15.31 Objectives for juvenile justice services**

Juvenile justice services aim to contribute to a reduction in the frequency or severity of youth offending, recognise the rights of victims and promote community safety. Juvenile justice services seek to achieve these aims by:

- assisting young people to address their offending behaviour and take responsibility for the effect their behaviour has on victims and the wider community
- enabling the interests and views of victims to be heard
- contributing to the diversion of young offenders to alternative services
- recognising the importance of the families and communities of young offenders, particularly Indigenous communities, in the provision of services and programs
- providing services that are designed to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community.

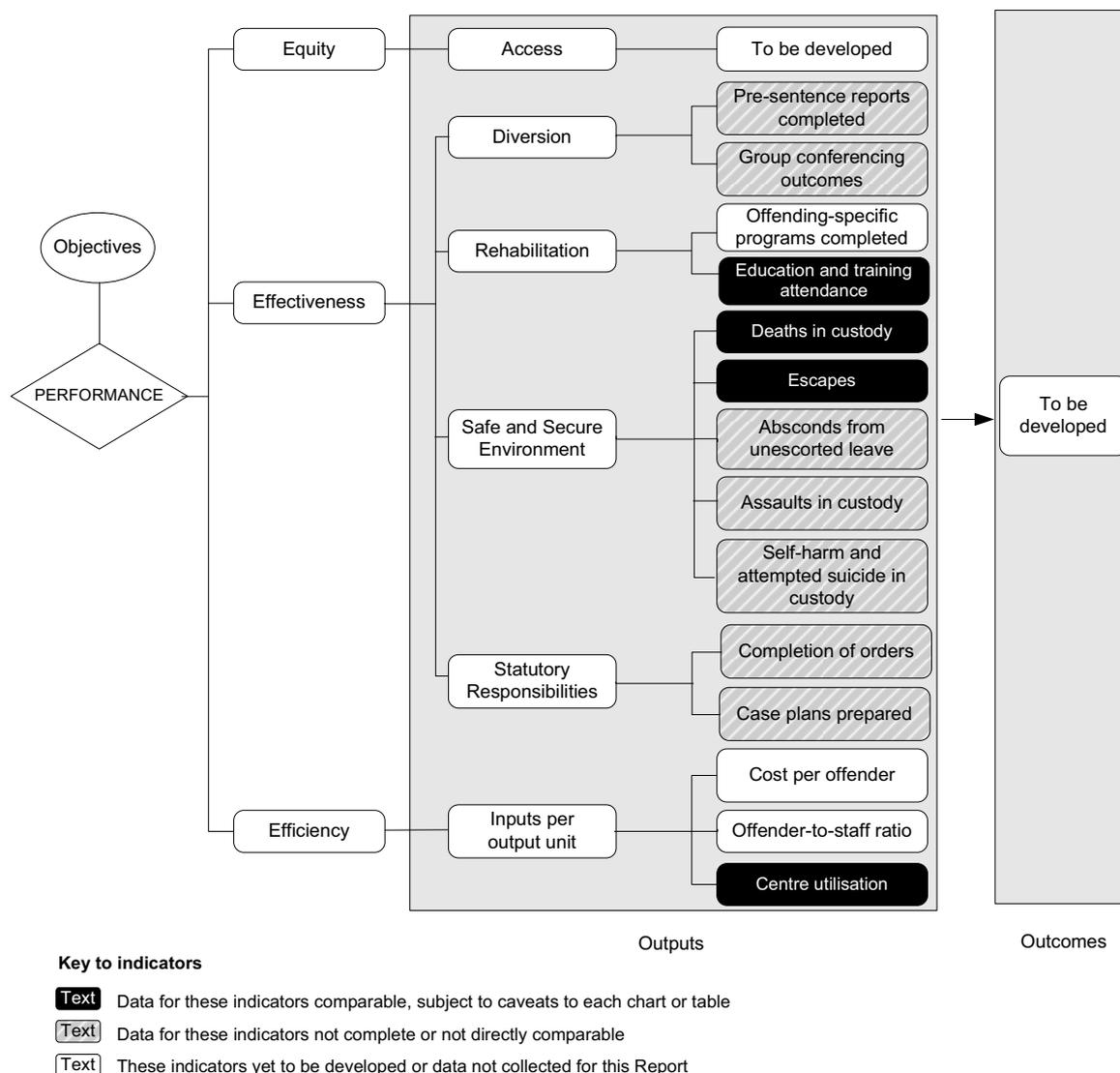
Juvenile justice services should be provided in an equitable, efficient and effective manner.

A performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services was included for the first time in the 2009 Report (figure 15.19). Further development of the framework and reporting for indicators included in the framework is being undertaken according to a staged process. Data for 11 performance indicators are included in this Report along with supporting text which includes relevant caveats and commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

The remaining performance indicators in the juvenile justice performance indicator framework, and additional efficiency and outcome indicators, will be developed for inclusion in future Reports.

The Report's statistical appendix contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status) (appendix A).

**Figure 15.19 Performance indicators for juvenile justice services**



## Outputs

Outputs are the services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

### *Equity and access*

Equity and access indicators are a key area for further development in future reports. These will be indicators of governments' objective to ensure that all clients have fair and equitable access to services on the basis of relative need and available resources. These indicators are under development.

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## Effectiveness

### *Diversion — pre-sentence reports completed*

‘Pre-sentence reports completed’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that accurate and timely advice is provided to the court to inform decision-making (box 15.32).

#### **Box 15.32 Pre-sentence reports completed**

‘Pre-sentence reports completed’ is defined as the number of written reports provided by juvenile justice agencies to a court in response to a request for a pre-sentence report, as a proportion of all court requests to juvenile justice agencies for written pre-sentence reports.

A pre-sentence report is a written report that provides a court with pertinent information about the assessed factors that contributed to a young person’s offence and explores programs and services that could be provided to address a young person’s offending behaviour. A pre-sentence report is prepared when ordered by a court after a young person has pleaded or has been found guilty of an offence.

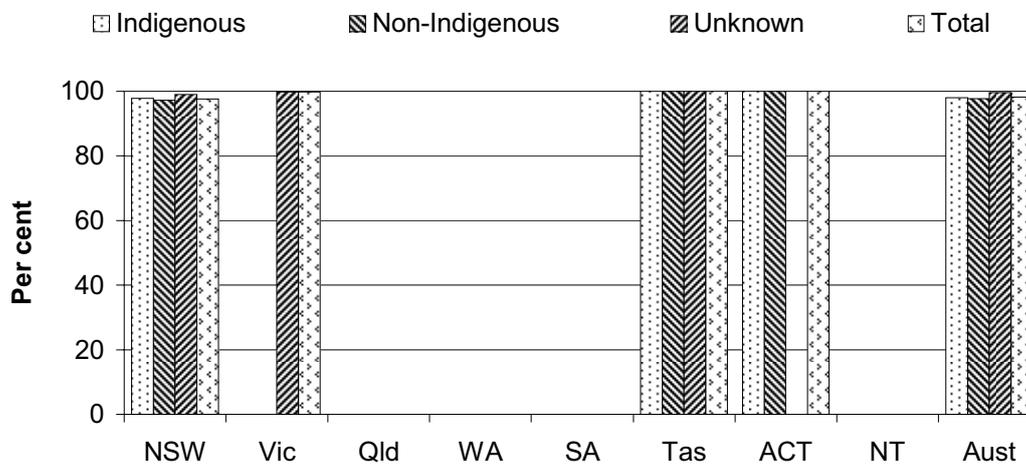
A high or increasing percentage of pre-sentence reports completed is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable but not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

The percentage of pre-sentence reports completed varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.20). Nationally, 98.3 per cent of all court requests for pre-sentence reports were completed.

**Figure 15.20 Proportion of pre-sentence reports completed by juvenile justice agencies, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for SA and the NT. <sup>b</sup> Queensland could not provide the denominator for this indicator, hence proportions could not be calculated. <sup>c</sup> WA data were affected by a time lag which resulted in an artificially greater number of completed court reports than requests for court reports. Consequently, these data are excluded from the national average. <sup>d</sup> Refer to table 15A.176 for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.176.

### *Diversion — group conferencing outcomes*

‘Group conferencing outcomes’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to divert young people from the juvenile justice system and address their offending needs (box 15.33).

### Box 15.33 Group conferencing outcomes

'Group conferencing outcomes' is defined as the number of young people who receive group conferencing and who as a result reach an agreement, as a proportion of all young people who receive group conferencing.

A high or increasing rate for this indicator is desirable.

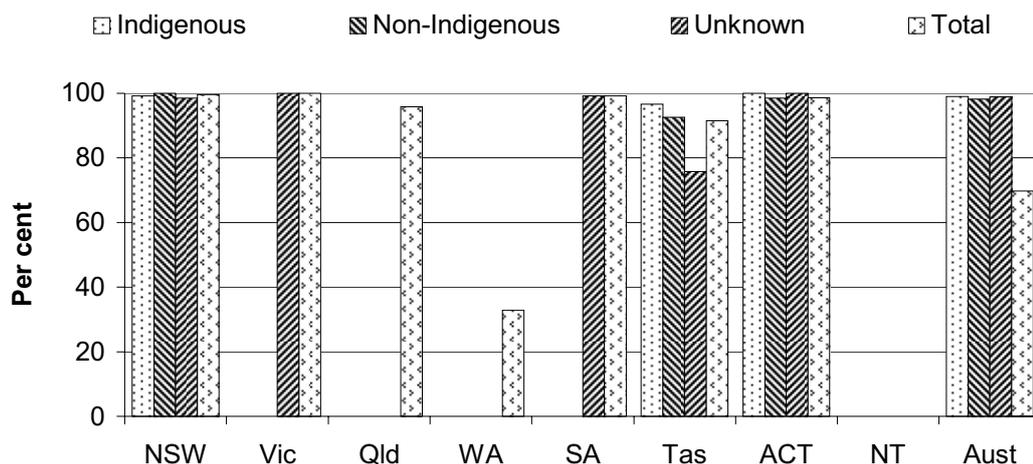
Group conferences are decision-making forums that aim to minimise the progression of young people into the juvenile justice system, and provide restorative justice. Data for this indicator should be interpreted with caution as the provision of group conferencing differs across jurisdictions in relation to: (a) its place in the court process (for example, whether young people are referred by police before court processes begin, or by the court as an alternative to sentencing), (b) the consequences for young people if they do not comply with the outcome plans of a conference, and (c) eligibility for group conferencing.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

The proportion of group conferences resulting in an agreement varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.21). Nationally, 69.8 per cent of all concluded group conferences resulted in an agreement.

Figure 15.21 Proportion of group conferences resulting in an agreement, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for the NT. <sup>b</sup> WA and Qld were able to disaggregate the number of concluded group conferences by Indigenous status, but not the number of group conferences resulting in an agreement by Indigenous status. Therefore, proportions are only calculated for the total number of group conferences resulting in agreement for these jurisdictions. Further, with the exception of the total number of concluded group conferences and total number of group conferences resulting in agreement, disaggregated data for WA and Qld are excluded from national totals. <sup>c</sup> Refer to table 15A.177 for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.177.

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## *Rehabilitation — offending-specific programs completed*

‘Offending-specific programs completed’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide program interventions that are designed to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community (for example, the Changing Habits and Reaching Targets program, drug counselling programs, sex offender treatment programs) (box 15.34).

### **Box 15.34 Offending-specific programs completed**

‘Offending-specific programs completed’ is defined as the percentage of young people who completed an offending-specific program while completing a supervised sentenced order (whether a community-based order or a detention order) as a proportion of all young people completing a supervised sentenced order who were assessed as requiring an offending-specific program to address their criminogenic behaviour.

A high or increasing rate of offending-specific programs completed is desirable.

Data for this indicator were not available for the 2011 Report. Offending-specific programs data are expected to be available for inclusion in the 2012 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Box 15.35 provides information regarding offending-specific programs in operation in each jurisdiction.

### **Box 15.35 Offending-specific programs**

**NSW** The Violence Offender Program (VOP) addresses the criminogenic needs of violent offenders, thereby reducing their offending behaviours, contact with the justice system and rates of recidivism. The Sexual Offending Program (SOP) provides comprehensive, individualised assessment for adolescents convicted of offences of a sexual nature, as well as individual and group interventions. The Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Program aims to address the needs of clients whose pattern of alcohol and other drug use is related to their offending behaviour. The Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) focuses on juveniles who commit serious and/or repeat offences, or whose severe antisocial behaviour increases their likelihood of offending. ISP is based on the Multisystemic Therapy Model that has delivered significant reductions in the long-term rates of re-offending in Western Australia, New Zealand, the US, Canada and nine countries throughout Europe. ‘Dthina Yuwali’ is an Aboriginal-specific staged AOD program based on the relationship between substance use and pathways to offending.

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### Box 15.35 (Continued)

- Vic* Victoria offers a range of offending-specific programs in conjunction with a comprehensive individualised case planning framework (including assessment and client service planning). 'Changing Habits and Reaching Targets' (CHART) is a structured intervention program which challenges offending behaviour. CHART is used as part of casework intervention with individuals or in small groups. The 'Male Adolescent Program for Positive Sexuality' is an intensive individual, group and family treatment program for young people found guilty of sexual offences. The 'Be Real About Violence' and 'Relationships and Violence' programs address violent offending and related behaviours by increasing offenders' understanding of patterns of violence and by their pro-social coping skills. The 'Motor Vehicle Offending Program' is provided in conjunction with the Transport Accident Commission and Road Trauma Support Unit. It addresses specific behaviours related to motor vehicle offences. Victoria is also currently developing a program that addresses knife offending.
- Qld* In the Queensland youth justice system, a young person's risk, needs and protective factors are assessed using the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS-CMI) to determine both suitability for programs and outcome efficacy. Queensland has implemented two State-wide programs in regional service centres and in youth detention that address offending behaviour — CHART and 'Aggression Replacement Training' (ART). Both programs are informed by a sound evidence base and are being evaluated. Additionally, Queensland's two youth detention centres and 16 youth justice service centres develop tailored offending-specific programs that must align with the Queensland Youth Justice Intervention Framework. This framework details the process for the development, implementation and evaluation of programs at a service level. The framework encompasses developmental interventions, support services, court orders and bail support interventions for delivering holistic responses to young people.
- WA* WA offers a range of offending-specific programs to address the needs of young offenders. Programs are run on an as needs basis according to suitability criteria for specific programs. Examples of the offending-specific programs provided in WA include: 'Healthy Relationships', which explores adolescent relationships and issues such as sexism, stereotypes and consent; 'Protective Behaviours', which examines safety warning signs and discusses who young people can turn to for help; 'Drumbeat', a therapeutic program which incorporates music; and other conflict, parenting and sex education programs. These programs can be conducted in community settings, but are most commonly conducted in custodial settings.

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**Box 15.35 (Continued)**

- SA** SA offers offending-specific programs in addition to individualised case management programs to address assessed client risk and need. ‘Systematic Training for Anger Reduction’ (STAR) is based on principles of cognitive behaviour therapy. The program seeks to assist young people to develop awareness about anger and skills of self control. The ‘Problem-solving: Learning Usable Skills’ program (Plus+) employs cognitive-behavioural methods of problem solving, skill-training and self-management, which have been shown to be effective in reducing juvenile offending. The Victim Awareness program raises awareness of the effects of crime on individuals and the community. The ‘Alcohol and Other Drug’ (AOD) program explores the risks of offending while under the influence of AOD. Moral Reconation Therapy (Little and Robinson 1988), which seeks to develop concern for social rules and others, is also used. The SA Police Safe Driving program targets ‘high speed’ drivers with the aim of reducing motor vehicle crime.
- Tas** The Youth Justice Service in Tasmania has used an Electronic Risk Assessment Tool (ERAT) for over eight years. As a replacement for the ERAT, Tasmania will be piloting the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory risk assessment tool as well as the CHART case management tool. These tools will support a structured and integrated supervision model to address offending, conduct formal reviews and trigger further activity. Tasmania has a court mandated diversion program which provides assessment, case management and treatment for offenders with illicit drug problems. Youth Justice provides case management services for young offenders who are eligible for this program. In addition, Tasmania is exploring the possibility of developing a bail options program to address the needs of young people who are placed on bail. In lieu of other offending-specific programs, Tasmania sources expertise from private professionals and programs across a range of Government services.
- ACT** The ACT’s main offending-specific program is CHART, which is designed specifically for young people assessed as moderate to high-risk of re-offending. This behaviour program is used by youth justice staff as part of their casework intervention either with individuals or with small groups of two to three clients. CHART is evidence-based and is informed by the ‘What Works’ approach to offender rehabilitation. This approach is characterised by the application of five basic principles of good practice for effective interventions: risk, needs, responsivity, program integrity and professional discretion. The other ACT offending-specific program is ‘Triple R’—Respectful, Responsible Relationships Program, which is provided by ACT Corrective Services for youth justice clients who have been convicted of sexual offences.

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**Box 15.35 (Continued)**

*NT* The NT's main offending-specific programs are the 'Anger Management Program' and 'Cognitive Skills Program'. Both programs are based on cognitive behavioural therapy and are designed to provide a basic understanding of thoughts, feelings, actions and consequences. In facilitating these programs, caseworkers use a 'hands on' approach incorporating role plays and artwork to discuss issues. Caseworkers take this approach because the vast majority of juveniles undertaking these programs are Indigenous with low literacy levels. Other treatment programs which address sexual offending and alcohol and drug use are also provided either by caseworkers or by external agencies.

*Source:* State and Territory governments (unpublished).

*Rehabilitation — education and training attendance*

'Education and training attendance' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide program interventions in education and training to rehabilitate young offenders and increase their chances of successfully re-integrating into the community (box 15.36).

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### Box 15.36 Education and training attendance

'Education and training attendance' is defined by two measures:

- the number of young people of compulsory school age in detention attending an education course, as a percentage of all young people of compulsory school age in detention
- the number of young people not of compulsory school age in detention attending an education or training course, as a percentage of all young people not of compulsory school age in detention.

Compulsory school age refers to specific State and Territory government requirements for a young person to participate in school which are based primarily on age (see chapter 4 of the Report for further information). Education or training course refers to school education or an accredited education or training course under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

A high or increasing percentage of young people attending education and training is desirable.

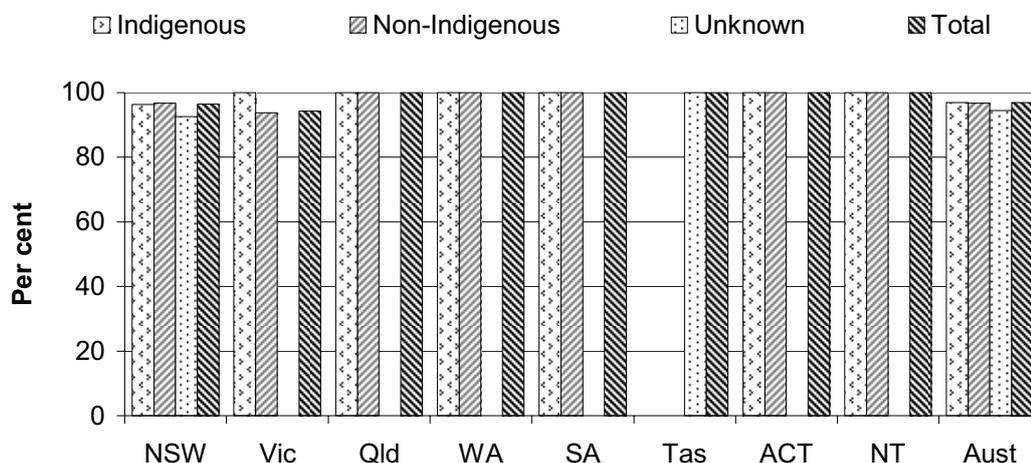
Exclusions include young people not under juvenile justice supervision (for example, in police custody) and young people whose situation might exclude their participation in education programs (including young people who are: on temporary leave such as work release, medically unable to participate, in isolation, and on remand or sentenced for fewer than 7 days).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, all young people of compulsory school age in detention were attending an education course in 2009-10 (table 15A.179). There was variation across jurisdictions in the proportion of young people *not* of compulsory school age attending an accredited education or training course. Nationally, 96.9 per cent of young people in detention not of compulsory school age were attending an accredited education or training course (figure 15.22).

**Figure 15.22 Proportion of young people in detention not of compulsory school age attending an accredited education or training course, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.179 for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.179.

### *Safe and secure environment — deaths in custody*

‘Deaths in custody’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies provide a safe and secure environment for young people in custody (box 15.37).

#### **Box 15.37 Deaths in custody**

‘Deaths in custody’ is defined as the number of young people who died while in custody.

A zero or decreasing deaths in custody rate is desirable.

The scope of this indicator is restricted to those young people who died while in the legal and/or physical custody of a juvenile justice agency and those who died in, or en route to, an external medical facility as a result of becoming ill or being injured in custody (even if not escorted by juvenile justice agency workers).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

No young people died while in the legal or physical custody of an Australian juvenile justice agency in 2009-10 (table 15A.178).

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*Safe and secure environment — escapes*

‘Escapes’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies provide a safe and secure environment for young people in custody, and the community (box 15.38).

**Box 15.38 Escapes**

‘Escapes’ is defined by two measures:

- the number of escapes from a juvenile justice detention centre, as a proportion of all young people in custody
- the number of escapes during periods of escorted movement, as a proportion of all periods of escorted movement.

An escape from a juvenile justice detention centre is defined as a breach of a secure perimeter or defined boundary of a juvenile justice detention centre by a young person under the supervision of the centre.

A period of escorted movement is defined as a period of time during which a young person is in the custody of the juvenile justice agency while outside a detention centre. The period of escorted movement ends when the young person is returned to the detention centre, or is no longer in the legal or physical custody of the juvenile justice agency. An escape from an escorted movement is defined as the failure of a young person to remain in the custody of a supervising juvenile justice worker or approved service provider during a period of escorted movement.

An escape is counted each time a young person escapes. For example, if a young person escapes three times in a counting period, three escapes are recorded. If three young people escape at the same time, three escapes are recorded.

A zero escape rate is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable but not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, there was a total of 11 escapes from juvenile justice detention in 2009-10, which was equivalent to 0.3 escapes per 10 000 young people in juvenile justice detention in 2009-10 (table 15.5). The number of escapes from detention varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.5 Rate and number of escapes from juvenile justice detention centres, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>									
Indigenous	0.4	–	–	–	–	3.4	–	1.0	0.3
Non-Indigenous	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0.3
Unknown	–	1.1	–	–	–	..	..	..	–
Total	0.2	0.9	–	–	–	1.0	–	1.0	0.3
<b>Number of escapes</b>									
Indigenous	3.0	–	–	–	–	1.0	–	1.0	5.0
Non-Indigenous	–	6.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	6.0
Unknown	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	3.0	6.0	–	–	–	1.0	–	1.0	11.0

<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.180 for detailed footnotes. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.180.

Nationally, there was a total of three escapes from escorted movements in 2009-10, which was equivalent to 1.9 escapes per 10 000 periods of escorted movement (table 15.6). The number of escapes from escorted movement varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.6 Rate and number of escapes from escorted movement, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<b>Rate per 10 000 periods of escorted movement</b>									
Indigenous	3.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.6
Non-Indigenous	5.4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2.5
Unknown	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	4.6	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.9
<b>Number of escapes</b>									
Indigenous	1.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.0
Non-Indigenous	2.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2.0
Unknown	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	3.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.0

<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.180 for detailed footnotes. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.180.

### *Safe and secure environment — absconds from unescorted leave*

‘Absconds from unescorted leave’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to appropriately manage young people while they are in the legal custody of a juvenile justice detention centre (box 15.39).

This includes the provision of appropriate assessment, planning and supervision to enable young people to undertake unescorted temporary leave from detention centres. Unescorted leave may be undertaken for the purposes of providing rehabilitation interventions and activities such as education, training and employment.

#### Box 15.39 Absconds from unescorted leave

'Absconds from unescorted leave' is defined as the number of young people who have unescorted temporary leave and fail to return to custody, as a proportion of all young people who have unescorted temporary leave.

A zero or low, or decreasing rate of absconds from unescorted leave is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable but not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, there were two absconds from unescorted leave in 2009-10, which is equivalent to 0.7 absconds from unescorted leave per 1000 periods of unescorted leave (table 15.7).

**Table 15.7 Rate and number of absconds from unescorted leave, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<b>Rate per 1 000 periods of unescorted leave</b>									
Indigenous	–	90.9	..	..	..	–	–	na	1.1
Non-Indigenous	–	–	..	..	55.6	–	–	na	0.6
Unknown	–	–	..	..	..	–	–	na	–
Total	–	1.2	..	..	55.6	–	–	na	0.7
<b>Number of absconds</b>									
Indigenous	–	1.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	1.0
Non-Indigenous	–	–	–	–	1.0	–	–	–	1.0
Unknown	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	–	1.0	–	–	1.0	–	–	–	2.0

<sup>a</sup> Unescorted leave is not undertaken in Queensland or WA. <sup>b</sup> Data for the number of unescorted leaves undertaken were not available from the ACT and the NT. <sup>c</sup> Refer to table 15A.181 for detailed footnotes. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.181.

*Safe and secure environment — assaults in custody*

‘Assaults in custody’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide a custodial environment that is safe and secure in order to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community (box 15.40).

**Box 15.40 Assaults in custody**

‘Assaults in custody’ is defined by two measures:

- the rate of detainees and staff (by Indigenous status) who are seriously assaulted (that is, sustain an injury that requires overnight hospitalisation and any act of sexual assault) due to an act perpetrated by one or more detainees, as a proportion of the number of detainees in custody
- the rate of detainees and staff (by Indigenous status) who are assaulted (that is, sustain an injury, but do not require hospitalisation) due to an act perpetrated by one or more detainees, as a proportion of the number of detainees in custody.

A zero or low, or decreasing assaults in custody rate is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 4 detainees were reported as injured in custody due to a serious assault in 2009-10 (table 15.8). Proportions varied across jurisdictions. No staff were reported as injured due to a serious assault in 2009-10 (table 15A.182).

**Table 15.8 Rate and number of detainees injured as a result of a serious assault, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of detainees injured as a result of a serious assault</b>								
Indigenous	1.0	na	1.0	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	2.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	–	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	3.0	na	1.0	na	na	–	–	–
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	0.1	na	0.3	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	0.2	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	–	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	0.2	na	0.2	na	na	–	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.182.

Nationally, 82 detainees were reported as injured in custody due to an assault in 2009-10 (table 15.9). Proportions varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.9 Rate and number of detainees injured as a result of an assault, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of detainees injured as a result of an assault</b>								
Indigenous	11.0	na	18.0	na	na	na	7.0	10.0
Non-Indigenous	11.0	na	3.0	na	na	na	6.0	1.0
Unknown	1.0	na	–	na	na	14.0	–	–
Total	23.0	na	21.0	na	na	14.0	13.0	11.0
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	1.5	na	6.0	na	na	na	np	10.3
Non-Indigenous	1.4	na	1.4	na	na	na	np	12.3
Unknown	3.3	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	1.4	na	4.1	na	na	13.8	np	10.5

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. <sup>b</sup> Data reported for this indicator are not comparable and need to be interpreted with caution. Methods of data collection vary across jurisdictions (for example, manual case file review compared to the collation of electronic incident reports) and jurisdictions' ability to report on this measure is dependent on relevant incidents having first been documented. <sup>c</sup> The ACT has only one juvenile justice detention centre with relatively small numbers in detention. Data are not converted to a rate per 10 000 custody nights due to the small number of detainees in the ACT. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.183.

Nationally, 64 staff were reported as injured due to an assault while supervising detainees in 2009-10 (table 15.10). Proportions varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.10 Rate and number of staff injured as a result of an assault, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of staff injured as a result of an assault</b>								
Indigenous	3.0	na	6.0	–	na	na	–	2.0
Non-Indigenous	13.0	na	7.0	1.0	na	na	9.0	5.0
Unknown	9.0	na	–	na	na	9.0	–	–
Total	25.0	na	13.0	1.0	na	9.0	9.0	7.0
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	0.4	na	2.0	–	na	na	–	2.1
Non-Indigenous	1.6	na	3.2	0.6	na	na	np	61.7
Unknown	29.8	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	1.6	na	2.5	0.2	na	8.9	np	6.7

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria and SA. <sup>b</sup> Data reported for this indicator are not comparable and need to be interpreted with caution. Methods of data collection vary across jurisdictions (for example, manual case file review compared to the collation of electronic incident reports) and jurisdictions' ability to report on this measure is dependent on relevant incidents having first been documented. <sup>c</sup> Data report the Indigenous status of staff who were reported as injured due to an assault. <sup>d</sup> The ACT has only one juvenile justice detention centre with relatively small numbers in detention. Data are not converted to a rate per 10 000 custody nights due to the small number of detainees in the ACT. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.183.

*Safe and secure environment — self-harm and attempted suicide in custody*

'Self-harm and attempted suicide in custody' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide a custodial environment that is safe and secure in order to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community (box 15.41).

### Box 15.41 Self-harm and attempted suicide in custody

'Self-harm and attempted suicide in custody' is defined by four measures:

- the number of incidents of self-harm or attempted suicide in custody requiring hospitalisation
- the number of incidents of self-harm or attempted suicide in custody that did not require hospitalisation
- the number of detainees who self-harmed or attempted suicide in custody and required hospitalisation
- the number of detainees who self-harmed or attempted suicide in custody but did not require hospitalisation.

The number of incidents of self-harm and the number of detainees who self-harm will differ when one detainee has self-harmed on two or more occasions as each occasion will be counted as a separate incident.

A zero or low, or decreasing self-harm and attempted suicide in custody rate is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 3 detainees in 3 separate incidents were reported as having self-harmed or attempted suicide in custody requiring hospitalisation in 2009-10. Proportions varied across jurisdictions (tables 15.11 and 15.12).

**Table 15.11 Rate and number of detainees who self-harmed in custody and required hospitalisation, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of detainees who self-harmed in custody and required hospitalisation</b>								
Indigenous	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	3.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	0.1	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	0.1	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	3.3	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	0.2	na	–	na	na	–	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. <sup>b</sup> Refer to table 15A.184 for detailed footnotes. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.184.

**Table 15.12 Rate and number of incidents of self-harm in custody that required hospitalisation, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of incidents of self-harm in custody that required hospitalisation</b>								
Indigenous	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	1.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	3.0	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	0.1	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Non-Indigenous	0.1	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Unknown	3.3	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	0.2	na	–	na	na	–	–	–

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. <sup>b</sup> Refer to table 15A.184 for detailed footnotes. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.184.

Nationally, 57 detainees were reported as having self-harmed or attempted suicide in 72 separate incidents during 2009-10, none of which required hospitalisation (tables 15.13 and 15.14). Proportions varied across jurisdictions.

**Table 15.13 Rate and number of detainees who self-harmed in custody but did not require hospitalisation, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of detainees who self-harmed in custody but did not require hospitalisation</b>								
Indigenous	17.0	na	3.0	na	na	–	7.0	2.0
Non-Indigenous	20.0	na	1.0	na	na	–	3.0	na
Unknown	2.0	na	–	na	na	2.0	–	2.0
Total	39.0	na	4.0	na	na	2.0	10.0	2.0
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	2.3	na	1.0	na	na	–	np	2.1
Non-Indigenous	2.5	na	0.5	na	na	–	np	na
Unknown	6.6	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	2.5	na	0.8	na	na	2.0	np	1.9

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. <sup>b</sup> Data reported for this indicator are not comparable and need to be interpreted with caution. Methods of data collection vary across jurisdictions (for example, manual case file review compared to the collation of electronic incident reports) and jurisdictions' ability to report on this measure is dependent on relevant incidents having first been documented. <sup>c</sup> The ACT has only one juvenile justice detention centre with relatively small numbers in detention. Data are not converted to a rate per 10 000 custody nights due to the small number of detainees in the ACT. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.184.

**Table 15.14 Rate and number of incidents of self-harm in custody that did not require hospitalisation, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>
<b>Number of incidents of self-harm in custody that did not require hospitalisation</b>								
Indigenous	17.0	na	5.0	na	na	–	12.0	–
Non-Indigenous	20.0	na	1.0	na	na	–	7.0	–
Unknown	2.0	na	–	na	na	6.0	–	2.0
Total	39.0	na	6.0	na	na	6.0	19.0	2.0
<b>Rate per 10 000 custody nights</b>								
Indigenous	2.3	na	1.7	na	na	–	np	–
Non-Indigenous	2.5	na	0.5	na	na	–	np	–
Unknown	6.6	na	–	na	na	–	–	–
Total	2.5	na	1.2	na	na	5.9	np	1.9

<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for Victoria, WA and SA. <sup>b</sup> Data reported for this indicator are not comparable and need to be interpreted with caution. Methods of data collection vary across jurisdictions (for example, manual case file review compared to the collation of electronic incident reports) and jurisdictions' ability to report on this measure is dependent on relevant incidents having first been documented. <sup>c</sup> The ACT has only one juvenile justice detention centre with relatively small numbers in detention. Data are not converted to a rate per 10 000 custody nights due to the small number of detainees in the ACT. **na** Not available. **np** Not published. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.184.

### *Statutory responsibilities — completion of orders*

'Completion of orders' is an indicator of governments' objective to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community (box 15.42).

#### **Box 15.42 Completion of orders**

'Completion of orders' is defined as the proportion of sentenced community-based supervised orders successfully completed. An order is considered to be successfully completed where the earliest order expiry date or the order termination date is reached and breach is neither pending nor finalised.

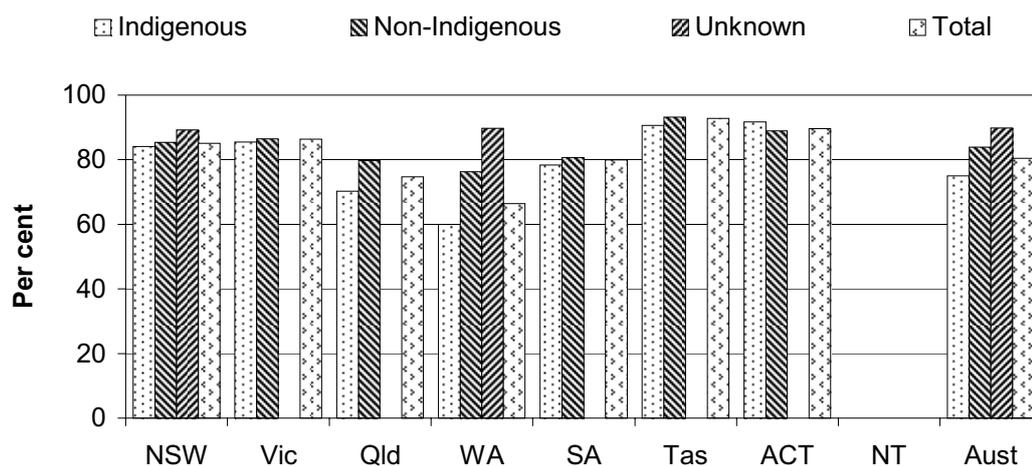
A high or increasing proportion of orders successfully completed is desirable. However, where offenders are non-compliant and pose a risk, breach action (an unsuccessful completion) may be warranted. As a result, a completion rate less than 100 per cent may not necessarily indicate poor performance, and may reflect appropriate supervision of young people on community-based supervision orders.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable but not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 80.4 per cent of community-based orders were successfully completed in 2009-10. The proportion of community-based orders successfully completed varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.25).

**Figure 15.23 Proportion of orders successfully completed, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Data were not available for the NT. <sup>b</sup> Refer to table 15A.185 for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.185.

### *Statutory responsibilities — case plans prepared*

‘Case plans prepared’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies support young people to minimise the likelihood of re-offending by addressing their offending-related needs (box 15.43).

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**Box 15.43 Case plans prepared**

'Case plans prepared' is defined as the number of eligible young people who had a documented case plan prepared or reviewed within six weeks of commencing:

- a sentenced detention order, as a proportion of all young people commencing a sentenced detention order
- a sentenced community-based order, as a proportion of all young people commencing a sentenced community-based order.

An eligible young person is one who is serving a sentenced order that requires case management.

A high or increasing rate of case plans prepared is desirable.

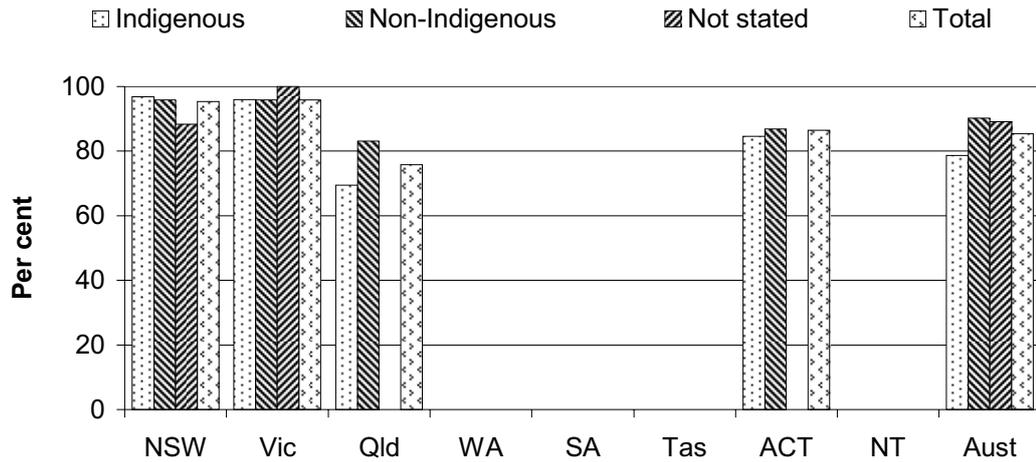
Data reported for this indicator are comparable but not complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

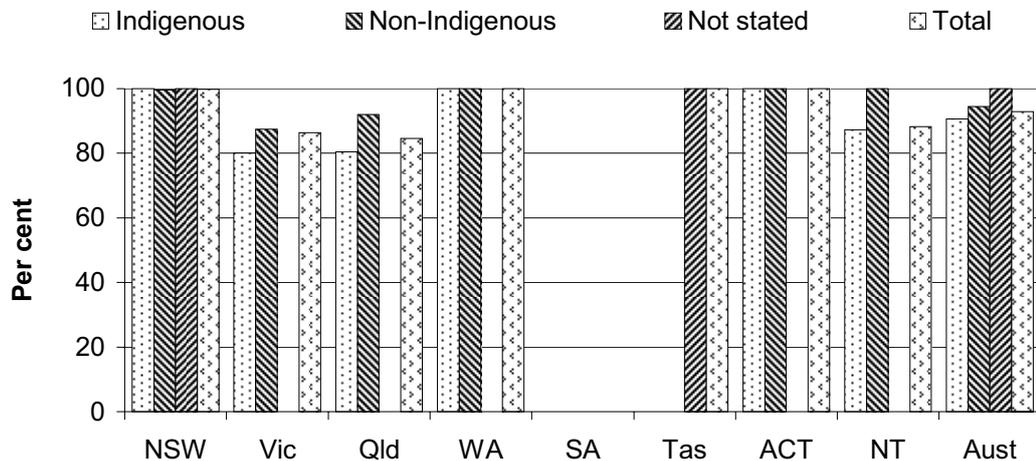
Nationally, 85.4 per cent of case plans were prepared within six weeks of commencing a sentenced community-based order in 2009-10 (figure 15.26(a)). Nationally, 92.9 per cent of case plans were prepared within six weeks of commencing a sentenced detention order in 2009-10 (figure 15.26(b)). Proportions varied across jurisdictions.

**Figure 15.24 Proportion of case plans prepared within 6 weeks of commencing sentenced detention orders and sentenced community-based orders, by Indigenous status (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>**

**(a) Proportion of case plans prepared within 6 weeks of commencing a sentenced community-based order<sup>b</sup>**



**(b) Proportion of case plans prepared within 6-weeks of commencing a sentenced detention order<sup>c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.186 for detailed footnotes. <sup>b</sup> Data for case plans prepared within 6 weeks of commencing a sentenced community-based order were not available for WA, SA, Tasmania and the NT. <sup>c</sup> Data for case plans prepared within 6 weeks of commencing a sentenced detention order were not available for SA.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.186.

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## *Efficiency*

### *Cost per offender*

‘Cost per offender’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide juvenile justice services in an efficient manner (box 15.44).

#### **Box 15.44 Cost per offender**

‘Cost per offender’ is yet to be defined.

Data for this indicator were not available for the 2011 Report. Cost per offender data are expected to be available for inclusion in the 2012 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

### *Offender-to-staff ratio*

‘Offender-to-staff ratio’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide juvenile justice services in an efficient manner (box 15.45).

#### **Box 15.45 Offender-to-staff ratio**

‘Offender-to-staff ratio’ comprises two measures:

- the number of young people requiring community-based supervision relative to the number of community-based staff
- the number of young people in detention relative to the number of detention centre staff.

The number of offenders relative to the number of staff provides a measure of efficient resource management by juvenile justice agencies. A high or increasing ratio (that is, a higher number of offenders per staff member) suggests better performance towards achieving efficient resource management. However, this indicator needs to be interpreted with caution as a lower or decreasing offender-to-staff ratio may result in more effective performance, particularly with high risk young offenders who possess significant offence-related needs. Further, in some cases, efficiencies may not be possible due to remote geographic locations that limit opportunities to reduce overheads through economies of scale.

Data for this indicator were not available for the 2011 Report. Offender-to-staff ratio data are expected to be available for inclusion in the 2012 Report.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

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### *Centre utilisation*

‘Centre utilisation’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide juvenile justice services in an efficient manner (box 15.46).

#### **Box 15.46 Centre utilisation**

‘Centre utilisation’ is defined as the number of detainees in all detention centres as a proportion of the number of permanently funded beds. This indicator partially measures both effective and efficient performance.

Detention centres operating at higher capacities is desirable from an efficient resource management perspective. However, detention centres operating at or above capacity might be ineffective due to the consequences for rehabilitation when centres are over crowded. Centres also need to make provision for separately detaining various classes of young offenders (for example, boys and girls, offenders requiring different security levels, young people of different ages and young people on remand and sentenced). These factors require utilisation rates that are below full capacity.

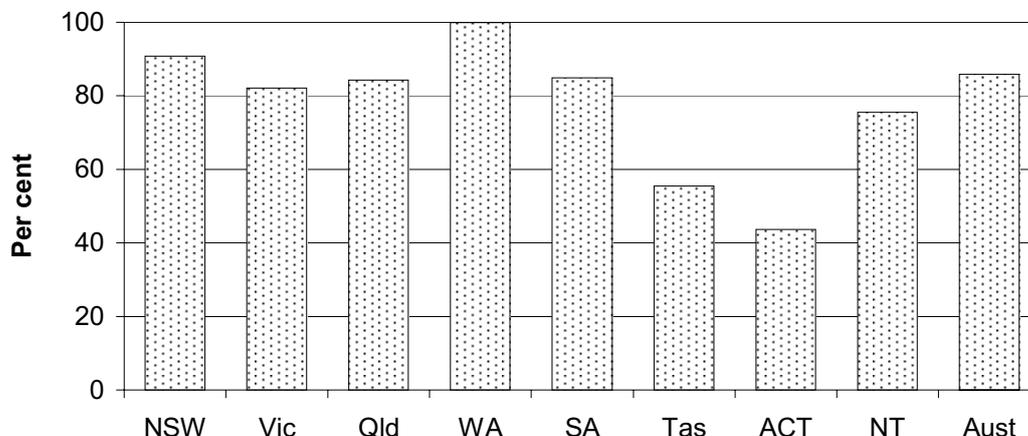
This indicator also has application to the efficient use of publicly funded resources. Centres that are built at a point in time need to be able to justify significant under use, if that occurs in future years, where that under use cannot reasonably be explained by the factors listed above.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable and complete.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 85.8 per cent of centre capacity (that is, permanently funded beds) was utilised in 2009-10. Proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.27).

Figure 15.25 Centre utilisation rate (2009-10)<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Refer to table 15A.187 for detailed footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.187.

## Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Outcome indicators for juvenile justice services are yet to be developed. The Steering Committee has identified outcome indicators as an important element of the juvenile justice performance indicator framework to develop for future reports.

## 15.7 Future directions in juvenile justice reporting

The Juvenile Justice Research and Information Group (JJ RIG), a working group of the AJJA, is responsible for developing national performance indicators for juvenile justice. The indicators are being developed in stages. The remaining items of development include: refinement of reporting for existing indicators, the development and refinement of an expenditure data collection tool to enable comparable, national reporting for agreed efficiency indicators, and the identification of suitable outcome measures for future reporting.

### *Outcomes from review of Report on Government Services*

COAG endorsed recommendations of a review of the RoGS in December 2009. Those recommendations implemented during 2010 are reflected in this Report.

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Further recommendations will be reflected in future Reports, including implementation of Independent Reference Group and Steering Committee recommendations arising from the ‘Review of the general performance indicator framework’ and the ‘Review of the performance indicators and their associated measures’. The 2012 Report and later editions will continue:

- lengthening time series data in attachment tables
- developing data quality information documents for performance indicators
- developing mini-case studies.

## **15.8 Jurisdictions’ comments**

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter.

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## New South Wales Government comments

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### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

On 3 March 2009, the NSW Government launched *Keep Them Safe: A shared approach to child wellbeing*, a five year action plan to reform the child protection system in response to Justice James Wood's *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW*. The NSW Government has allocated \$750 million over five years to implement this plan.

On 24 January 2010 the main provisions of the *Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act 2009* were proclaimed, including:

- new provisions that allow prescribed agencies to directly exchange information relating to child welfare and wellbeing rather than via Community Services
- the new 'risk of significant harm' threshold for child protection intervention
- new indicators relating to non-attendance at school suggesting that a child may be at risk of significant harm
- alternate reporting arrangements through the establishment of Child Wellbeing Units in key mandatory reporting government agencies
- changes to Children's Court processes.

### *Juvenile justice*

In 2009, Juvenile Justice became part of the NSW Department of Human Services, in recognition of the links between social disadvantage and engagement in criminal behaviour.

The juvenile justice system in NSW continued to see significant numbers of young people on remand for short periods of time. Juvenile Justice has increased bail services to assist young people in attaining bail. The Bail Assistance Line was established and community organisations have been contracted to provide support services to young offenders granted bail by police.

The Intensive Supervision Program continued to grow with 38 of 40 families enrolled for the year successfully completing the ISP. Twelve of these families were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and all twelve successfully completed the program. The Intensive Supervision Program is being evaluated by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

NSW is the first jurisdiction in Australia to form its own juvenile justice drug dog detection unit. The dogs were purchased from the Australian Customs breeding program and were trained to undertake searches in juvenile justice detention centres and screen visitors.

Juvenile Justice introduced a new information reporting system during 2009–10. The Strategic Information Service provides a more sophisticated analysis of data for reporting back to the government and the community.

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## Victorian Government comments

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### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

Child protection and placement services have been the subject of external scrutiny during 2009–10 and a number of operational improvements are being made in response to recommendations arising from these inquiries, including stronger quality assurance and improvement processes and an independently chaired Child Protection Practice Standards and Compliance Committee.

Capacity issues have been addressed through significant additional funding for child protection, placement and family services, including Child FIRST. Child protection practitioners are being further supported in their practice by the development of the Best Interests Case Practice Model and improved practice resources such as the well regarded *Child Development and Trauma Guide*.

In 2009–10, Victoria launched *Directions for out-of-home care*, a five year strategic reform agenda for Victoria’s out-of-home care system. The reform strategy is designed to further embed a child-centred service model that meets the individual needs of vulnerable children and families. These comprehensive reforms will see a greater focus on therapeutic care and tailored care responses, which focus on:

- providing intensive family based interventions to divert children from entering care and enhance timelier reunification
- building a broader range of placement options for children requiring care
- improving the outcomes and life chances for children placed in care.

### *Juvenile justice*

The Victorian Government committed \$22 million over four years in the 2010–11 Budget to address the underlying causes of youth crime by intervening earlier with at risk youth and diverting them away from the criminal justice system. This initiative has an emphasis on tackling the increasing street knife culture and aims to better support at risk young people to achieve positive life outcomes. It comprises three key activities: an additional 55 youth workers, including a rapid response service to work with police in youth crime hotspots, a new behaviour change program, and an intensive bail support pilot.

An evaluation of the youth justice group conferencing program has been completed and has delivered positive preliminary findings regarding the program’s effectiveness in relation to diversion and reducing recidivism. Group Conferencing is a restorative justice program for young people appearing in the Children’s Court where the Magistrate is considering imposing a supervised statutory order.

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## Queensland Government comments

### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

“ The Queensland Government allocated \$55 million over four years to the Helping Out Families Initiative to provide appropriate early support to vulnerable families who have been referred to Child Safety Services, but do not require ongoing tertiary intervention. The initiative includes:

- increased family support services
- enhanced domestic and family violence services
- an increased Health Home Visiting program for children 0-3 years
- improved child safety regional intake processes to support practice changes and increase capacity to meet demand.

The Queensland Government has refocused its child protection investment in Indigenous child protection services. The refocus includes \$8.5 million for new early intervention and Indigenous family support programs to help address the challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families early on, thereby reducing the number of Indigenous children placed in out-of-home care. More than \$45 million is also being invested over four years to establish Safe House services in 11 Indigenous communities to keep young people safe and connected to their culture and communities. These facilities will deliver up to 66 additional placements and provide vital family support services in remote Indigenous communities.

### *Juvenile justice*

The Queensland Government continued to address the causes of youth offending through the delivery of evidence based initiatives within a contemporary legislative framework. On 29 March 2010, the amended Youth Justice Act 1992 commenced, resulting in a strengthened approach to the application of curfews, an increase in the minimum detention times for young people sentenced to life imprisonment for multiple murders (from 15 to 20 years) and powers for police to arrest young people and take them to court when Youth Justice Conferencing fails or an agreement is breached.

Offence-focussed programs were delivered by Youth Justice Services and Youth Detention Centres while non-government organisations were funded to deliver specialist counselling services and services to address the developmental needs of young people in the youth justice system. A new, fully supervised accommodation service for young people exiting youth detention was developed and will commence operating in Townsville in late 2010. Implementation of Aggression Replacement Training (ART) and Changing Habits and Reaching Targets (CHART) programs was evaluated during 2009 with findings informing improved program delivery and development of resources for Indigenous young people and young people with low literacy levels. An outcomes evaluation of these two programs has now commenced. The Youth Justice Conferencing program continues to experience growth with a record number of referrals to the program during 2009-10.”

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## Western Australian Government comments

### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

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The Department continued to embed child protection reforms, which began in 2007. Assessment and investigation processes have been revised to promote better targeting of responses to children referred to the Department. This is consistent with the Department’s differential response model, a process supported by the Signs of Safety child protection practice framework.

Key initiatives in child protection and family support included: interagency early intervention for at-risk newborn babies; co-location of domestic violence officers with the Western Australia Police; family and domestic violence case management and coordination services; a pilot of pre-hearing conferences aimed at reaching agreements in protection and care matters; and expansion of the income management child protection measure to all metropolitan districts as a tool to address neglect, reunification, and leaving care matters.

The Department’s residential care services are being reformed and expanded into three tiers of service delivery responding to different children’s need levels. The number of out-of-home care placements provided by the non-government sector in family group homes (tier one) has been increased to 60 places with a further 12 places to open 2010-11. Legislative amendments to introduce a secure care facility are currently before the State Parliament. Health care planning is being rolled out state-wide, to ensure initial and annual health, mental health and dental checks for children in care.

The Permanency Planning framework was implemented on 1 July 2010 to ensure care planning to maximise stability and a sense of permanency for children and young people in the care of the CEO, either through reunification or long term out-of-home care. Legislative amendments enabling the introduction of special guardianship orders are currently before the State Parliament.

### *Juvenile justice*

The WA Department of Corrective Services works to prevent young people from entering the formal justice system through diversion. During 2009–10, Youth Justice Services created four integrated youth justice offices in the metropolitan area through a realignment of Community and Youth Justice and the separation of youth justice services from adult community corrections. Following the success of regional youth justice services in the Kalgoorlie and Geraldton regions, \$43.86 million was provided through the Western Australian Royalties for Regions Program to expand regional youth justice services into the West Kimberley by January 2011, the East Kimberley by April 2011 and the Pilbara by July 2011. The services provided in these regions will include juvenile justice teams to help steer at-risk young people away from the justice system, after hours outreach family support services and after hours bail services.

An across agency Western Australian Youth Justice Framework is near completion and the Department of Corrective Services has developed a range of targets and performance measures for youth justice services.

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## South Australian Government comments

### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

“ South Australia’s *Keeping Them Safe* reform program is built on the premise of a shared responsibility across Government and the whole community to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and that, as far as practicable, all children and young people are cared for in a way that allows them to reach their full potential. To that end, government has committed additional funding for prevention and early intervention through the establishment of Children’s Centres to provide integrated services for vulnerable children and families. The establishment of the Stronger Families, Safer Children program has resulted in government and non-government agencies working together to support families with highly complex needs who are at risk of having their children placed in out-of-home care. Across sector Information Sharing Guidelines are supporting collaborative practice.

The implementation of a new electronic connected client case management system during 2009–10 has been accompanied by policy and practice changes, with a greater emphasis on sustained intervention with families where children’s safety is at high risk.

The Directions for Alternative Care in South Australia 2010–13 has been developed in an endeavour to move the alternative care sector forward with a shared vision and purpose. The Directions builds on the work already occurring to increase placement options for children and young people in care and will address both the immediate and future demand on the alternative care sector. Placement capacity has been increased through the purpose build of two new community residential care facilities.

### *Juvenile justice*

In responding to recommendations arising from the To Break the Cycle Report delivered by Monsignor David Cappo in 2007, DFC has worked with other key stakeholders in delivering significant reform of youth justice in South Australia. The Department for Families and Communities continues to participate in the Community Protection Panel process that ensures effective monitoring and whole of Government management approaches are applied to serious offending by young people.

The Department for Families and Communities has reached agreement with the Youth Court of South Australia and the Magistrates Court of South Australia about trialling Home Detention in Port Augusta.

The Government has investigated options to replace the Magill Youth Training Centre (YTC) and in September 2009, announced that through the sale of the land at Magill and a portion of land adjacent to Sudholz and Grand Junction Roads, the Magill YTC would be replaced with a new facility at Goldsborough Road, Cavan. Construction will commence in late 2010.

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## Tasmanian Government comments

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### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

Reforms to the Tasmanian child protection, family support and out-of-home care (OOHC) services continue to be implemented by Children and Youth Services, with a focus on early intervention by increasing the support infrastructure for vulnerable families.

The Gateway and Integrated Family Support Services have been operating since August 2009, supporting children and families in need through a single point of access within each of the four service delivery areas across the State. This major reform is underpinned by legislative changes that facilitate greater integration of services and improve the exchange of information.

Additional legislative amendments have improved community and statutory services' response to prenatal concerns, and enhanced stability through increased options for permanent care arrangements.

Reform of OOHC services is underway, with rostered care being outsourced in September 2010. Community services, in partnership with experienced interstate agencies, will be providing Therapeutic Residential Care. Children in the statutory child protection system also have increased access to therapeutic interventions to enhance their opportunities to overcome the effects of trauma.

### *Juvenile justice*

Youth justice services in Tasmania are focused on case management practices to meet the needs of young people who engage in youth offending. Evolving partnerships with key stakeholders seek to enhance collaborative and integrated service delivery.

The electronic risk assessment tool YLS/CMI (Youth Level Service/Case Management Inventory) is being piloted, and staff members have undertaken training in the use of this tool. This complements the implementation of the cognitive and behavioural case management tool CHART (Changing Habits and Reaching Targets) across all service centres. The Community Supervision Practice Pilot is further driving the reform of practice supervision and the development of practice guidelines. Quality assurance practices are also being integrated into the delivery of community youth justice services.

Within the community, non-government organisations are being selected to provide Targeted Youth Support Services. This initiative aims to prevent escalation into the statutory system for young people displaying multiple risk factors by providing individualised, intensive, and targeted support.

A review of the Youth Justice Act 1997 has been guided by a Project Steering Committee. The period of consultation with stakeholders and the public has been completed, and revisions to the legislation are currently being drafted. Change to supportive legislation has created an independent advocate for young people in custody.

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## Australian Capital Territory Government comments

### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

- In April 2009, amendments to the Adoptions Act 1993 were passed. These amendments ensured consistency with the *Children and Young People Act 2008* in particular with regard to permanency planning for children and young people in out-of-home care.
- 2009–10 has also seen a continued focus on improving collaborative service delivery, early intervention and a focus on the rights of the child. The ACT Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Out of Home Care was launched. Care and Protection Services also worked with ACT Health to assist families prenatally through maternity services. There has also been a continued focus on the needs of vulnerable families.
- Practice continues to be guided by a quality assurance framework, a supervision framework and a case management framework to improve and integrate service delivery across agencies.
- The ACT also continues to participate in related national initiatives, including the development of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children and the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership.

### *Juvenile justice*

- In 2010, the ACT Government commenced work to strengthen policy and services to support young people on bail and divert them from remand wherever possible. A discussion paper was developed. It reviewed ACT legislation, policy and services relevant to diverting young people from entering or continuing in the justice system. The paper highlighted areas for improvement in the ACT and considered a range of possible measures for adoption by the ACT. This work continues in 2010–11.
- In 2009–10, a risk assessment tool was implemented within Youth Justice. The evidence-based risk assessment tool, the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory, is designed to measure a range of dynamic factors known to be related to recidivism. The use of this tool will assist in developing Youth Justice case management plans, targeting the identified risks/needs of the young person and engaging the young person's identified strengths. It is envisaged this assessment will also assist in identifying those young people considered at low risk of re-offending who may benefit most from diversion from the criminal justice system.
- In 2009–10, the ACT continued its focus on equipping young people in detention at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre with vocational and life skills to enable their successful transition back into the community. Young people have participated in a range of education, training and vocational programs including woodwork, bricklaying, and a barista program and various living skills programs.

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## Northern Territory Government comments

### *Child protection and out-of-home care*

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The Northern Territory's child protection operations were significantly enhanced in 2009–10, in response to further increases in demand and complexity.

Achievements in child protection operations in 2009–10 included the announcement of funding for an additional 76 child protection staff, expansion of the Child Abuse Taskforce, and the implementation of Structured Decision Making tools in the Central Intake System. Targeted family support services were established in partnership with three Aboriginal organisations – the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress in Alice Springs; Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation in Darwin; and Wurili Wurlingjang Aboriginal Health Service in Katherine. These targeted family support services are delivered via the non-government sector with out-posted child protection staff.

Additionally, a key partnership with the Department of Justice's Community Justice Centre saw the commencement of the Northern Territory's first Family Group Conferencing service in Alice Springs. The pilot Family Group Conferencing Service is funded through the Transforming Alice Springs program, and will specifically address issues facing Aboriginal families.

An Interdepartmental Child Protection Policy and Planning Group was established to support inter-agency collaboration in improving the safety and well-being of children in the Northern Territory.

In November 2009, the Board of Inquiry into the Child Protection System in the Northern Territory was established by the Northern Territory Government to investigate and report on the Northern Territory's child protection system. In launching the Inquiry, the Government acknowledged that the system had faced significant challenges and that measures were needed to alleviate mounting pressures. Dr Howard Bath, Professor Muriel Bamblett and Dr Rob Roseby were appointed to the Board of Inquiry.

### *Juvenile justice*

The Family Responsibility Program (FRP), a key initiative of the Northern Territory Government's Youth Justice Strategy, has continued to expand to support families to address youth behavioural problems where family circumstances are causing or contributing to the behavioural issues.

The Darwin and Alice Springs Family Support Centres are fully operational. The Darwin Family Support Centre has secured the co-location of a Police Officer and Department of Education and Training Officer. A Child Protection Practitioner will soon be co-located at the Centre. The new positions will strengthen the whole-of-government approach, building on the collaborative work that has already occurred.

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## 15.9 Definitions of key terms and indicators

### Child protection and out-of-home care services

#### Activity Group 1 (pathways)

Receipt and assessment of initial information about a potential protection or support issue

Activities that are typically associated with receipt and assessment of initial information including receipt and recording of information, review of department databases, initial assessment of information and decisions about the appropriate response. This activity can also include consultation, with possible provision of advice. Activities by non-government organisations (NGO) may be included if appropriate.

#### Activity Group 2 (pathways)

Provision of generic/non-intensive family support services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of lower level family support services at various stages including identification of family needs, provision of support services and diversionary services, some counselling and active linking of the family to support networks. Services are funded by government but can be delivered by either the relevant agency or a NGO. This bundle of services does not involve planned follow-up by the relevant agency after initial service delivery. The services will be delivered under voluntary arrangements between the relevant agency and family. Clients may receive these services more than once.

#### Activity Group 3 (pathways)

Provision of intensive family support services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of complex or intensive family support services including provision of therapeutic and in-home supports such as counselling and mediation, modelling of positive parenting strategies, referrals to intensive support services that may be provided by NGOs, advocacy on behalf of clients and intensive support for a family in a residential setting. This includes protection and treatment support services. These services may be provided if diversionary services are inappropriate to the case and may lead to statutory services being provided to the client.

#### Activity Group 4 (pathways)

Secondary information gathering and assessment

Activities that are typically associated with secondary information gathering and assessment are currently counted as 'investigations' in the Report on Government Services. As part of this activity group a decision may be made to substantiate or not substantiate. Information gathering activities include:

- sighting the child
- contacting people with relevant information about the child or family (for example, teachers, police, support services)
- interviewing the child, sibling(s) and parents
- observing family interactions
- obtaining assessments of the child and/or family
- conducting family group conferences
- liaising with agencies providing services to the child and family
- recording a substantiation or non-substantiation decision
- case conferences with partners and contributors in the investigation and assessment process.

#### Activity Group 5 (pathways)

Provision of short-term protective intervention and coordination services for children not on an order

Activities that are typically associated with provision of short-term protective intervention and coordination services including:

- working with the family to address protective issues
- developing networks of support for the child
- monitoring and reviewing the safety of the child
- monitoring and reviewing family progress against case planning

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**Activity Group 6  
(pathways)**

Seeking an order

goals

- case conferences with agencies providing services to the child and/or family, internal discussions and reviews
- specialist child-focused therapeutic support.

Activities that are typically associated with seeking orders (court orders or voluntary/administrative orders) including:

- preparing applications for the order
- preparing reports for the court
- obtaining assessment reports to submit to the court
- informing parties to the court proceedings, including parents, the child, and lawyers
- informing and briefing legal counsel or internal court groups
- going through internal pre-court review processes
- attending court
- conducting family group conferences.

**Activity Group 7  
(pathways)**

Provision of protective intervention, support and coordination services for children on an order

Activities that are typically associated with provision of longer-term protective intervention and coordination services including:

- monitoring the child or young person's progress and development (for example, social development and education progress) and undertaking activities that facilitate progress and development
- meeting any specific requirements of any court order
- reviewing appropriateness of the order for the circumstances of the child or young person. This usually occurs at intervals established by the court or in legislation
- reporting back to court
- long term cases involving out-of-home care.

**Activity Group 8  
(pathways)**

Provision of out-of-home care services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of out-of-home care services including:

- finding suitable placement(s) for the child
- assisting the child or young person to maintain contact with his/her family
- in some cases, staff payments for recruiting and training carers
- assessing suitability of potential kinship carers
- assisting the child or young person to maintain contact with their family
- working to return the child home
- assisting the child or young person as they prepare to leave care as the end of the order approaches.

**Care and  
protection orders**

Care and protection orders are legal orders or arrangements which give child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare. The scope of departmental involvement mandated by a care and protection order is dependent on the type of order, and can include:

- responsibility for overseeing the actions of the person or authority caring for the child
- reporting or giving consideration to the child's welfare (for example, regarding the child's education, health, religion, accommodation and financial matters).

Types of care and protection orders:

- Finalised guardianship or custody orders – involve the transfer of legal guardianship to the relevant state or territory department or non-government agency. These orders involve considerable

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intervention in a child's life and that of his or her family, and are sought only as a last resort. Guardianship orders convey responsibility for the welfare of a child to a guardian (for example, regarding a child's education, health, religion, accommodation and financial matters). Guardianship orders do not necessarily grant the right to the daily care and control of a child, or the right to make decisions about the daily care and control of a child, which are granted under custody orders. Custody orders generally refer to orders that place children in the custody of the state or territory, or department responsible for child protection or non-government agency. These orders usually involve the child protection department being responsible for the daily care and requirements of a child, while his or her parent retains legal guardianship. Custody alone does not bestow any responsibility regarding the long-term welfare of the child.

- Finalised third party parental responsibility orders – transfer all duties, powers, responsibilities and authority parents are entitled to by law, to a nominated person(s) considered appropriate by the court. The nominated person may be an individual such as a relative or an office of the state or territory department. Third party parental responsibility may be ordered when a parent is unable to care for a child, and as such parental responsibility is transferred to a relative. 'Permanent care orders' are an example of a third party parental responsibility order and involve the transfer of guardianship to a third party carer. It can also be applied to the achievement of a stable arrangement under a long-term guardianship order to 18 years without guardianship being transferred to a third party. These orders are only applicable in some jurisdictions.
- Finalised supervisory orders – give the department responsible for child protection some responsibility for a child's welfare. Under these orders, the department supervises and/or directs the level and type of care that is to be provided to the child. Children under supervisory orders are generally under the responsibility of their parents and the guardianship or custody of the child is unaffected. Finalised supervisory orders are therefore less intrusive than finalised guardianship orders but require the child's parent or guardian to meet specified conditions, such as medical care of the child.
- Interim and temporary orders – generally cover the provision of a limited period of supervision and/or placement of a child. Parental responsibility under these orders may reside with the parents or with the department responsible for child protection. Orders that are not finalised (such as an application to a court for a care and protection order) are also included in this category, unless another finalised order is in place.
- Administrative arrangements – are agreements between a parent (or parents) and the relevant child protection department, which have the same effect as a court order in transferring custody or guardianship. These arrangements can also allow a child to be placed in out-of-home care without going through the courts.

Children are counted only once, even if they are on more than one care and protection order.

## **Child**

A person aged 0–17 years.

## **Child at risk**

A child for whom no abuse or neglect can be substantiated but where there are reasonable grounds to suspect the possibility of

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	prior or future abuse or neglect, and for whom continued departmental involvement is considered warranted.
<b>Child concern reports</b>	Reports to departments responsible for child protection regarding concerns about a child, as distinct from notifications of child abuse and neglect. The distinction between the two differs across and within jurisdictions.
<b>Children in out-of-home care during the year</b>	The total number of children who were in at least one out-of-home care placement at any time during the year. A child who is in more than one placement is counted only once.
<b>Dealt with by other means</b>	A notification that is responded to by means other than an investigation, such as the provision of advice or referral to services.
<b>Exited out-of-home care</b>	Where a child does not return to care within two months.
<b>Family based care</b>	Home-based care (see 'Out-of-home care').
<b>Family group homes</b>	Family group homes are care settings that provide care to children in a departmentally or community sector agency provided home. These homes have live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for the provision of care.
<b>Foster care</b>	Care of a child who is living apart from his or her natural or adoptive parents in a private household, by one or more adults who act as 'foster parents' and are paid a regular allowance by a government authority or non-government organisation for the child's support. The authorised department or non-government organisation provides continuing supervision or support while the child remains in the care of foster parents.
<b>Foster parent</b>	Any person (or such a person's spouse) who is being paid a foster allowance by a government or non-government organisation for the care of a child (excluding children in family group homes).
<b>Guardian</b>	Any person who has the legal and ongoing care and responsibility for the protection of a child.
<b>Indigenous person</b>	Person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community with which he or she is associated. If Indigenous status is unknown, then a person is considered to be non-Indigenous.
<b>Investigation</b>	An investigation of child abuse and neglect that involves identifying harm or risk of harm to the child, determining an outcome and assessing protective needs. It includes the interviewing or sighting of the subject child where practicable.
<b>Investigation finalised</b>	Where an investigation is completed and an outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' is recorded by 31 August.
<b>Investigation in process</b>	Where an investigation is commenced but an outcome is not recorded by 31 August.
<b>Investigation closed – no outcome possible</b>	Where an investigation is commenced but is not able to be finalised in order to reach the outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. These files would be closed for administrative purposes. This may happen in instances where the family has relocated.
<b>Length of time in continuous out-of-</b>	The length of time for which a child is in out-of-home care on a continuous basis. A return home of less than seven days is not

<b>home care</b>	considered to break the continuity of placement.
<b>Non-respite care</b>	Out-of-home care for children for child protection reasons.
<b>Notification</b>	Contact with an authorised department by persons or other bodies making allegations of child abuse or neglect, or harm to a child. Notifications can be counted at different points in the response to a report, ranging from the point of initial contact with the source of the report to the end of a screening and decision making process.
<b>Other relative</b>	A grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin, whether the relationship is half, full, step or through adoption, and can be traced through or to a person whose parents were not married to each other at the time of the child's birth. This category includes members of Aboriginal communities who are accepted by that community as being related to the child.
<b>Out-of-home care</b>	<p>Overnight care, including placement with relatives (other than parents) where the government makes a financial payment. Includes care of children in legal and voluntary placements (that is, children on and not on a legal order) but excludes placements made in disability services, psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities and overnight child care services.</p> <p>There are five main out-of-home care placement types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential care – where placement is in a residential building with paid staff.</li> <li>• Family group homes – provide care to children in a departmentally or community sector agency provided home. These homes have live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for the provision of care.</li> <li>• Home-based care – where placement is in the home of a carer who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) for expenses for the care of the child. This is broken down into three subcategories: (1) <i>Relative/kinship care</i> – includes family members (other than parents) or a person well known to the child and/or family (based on a pre-existing relationship) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child; (2) <i>foster care</i> – where the care is authorised and carers are reimbursed (or were offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory and supported by an approved agency. There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers; (3) <i>other</i> – home-based care which does not fall into either of the above categories.</li> <li>• Independent living – including private board and lead tenant households.</li> <li>• Other – includes placements that do not fit into the above categories and unknown living arrangements. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and defence force.</li> </ul>
<b>Relatives/kin</b>	Family members other than parents, or a person well known to the child and/or family (based on an existing relationship).
<b>Respite care</b>	Respite care is a form of out-of-home care that is used to provide short-term accommodation for children whose parents are ill or unable to care for them on a temporary basis. Not all jurisdictions can identify which children in out-of-home care are in respite care. Children may also be placed in respite care while being placed with a foster carer.

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**Stability of placement** Number of placements for children who have exited out-of-home care and do not return within two months. Placements exclude respite or temporary placements lasting less than seven days. Placements are counted separately where there is:

- a change in the placement type — for example, from a home-based to a facility-based placement
- within placement type, a change in venue or a change from one home-based placement to a different home-based placement.

A particular placement is counted only once, so a return to a previous placement is another placement.

**Substantiation** Notification for which an investigation concludes there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, is being or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. It does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that treatment or case management is, or is to be, provided.

## **Juvenile justice services**

**Juvenile justice centre** A place administered and operated by a juvenile justice department, where young people are detained whilst under the supervision of the relevant juvenile justice department on a remand or sentenced detention episode.

**Juvenile justice department** Refers to those departments in each State and Territory that are responsible for juvenile justice matters.

**Supervision period** A period of time during which a young person is continuously under juvenile justice supervision of one type or another. A supervision period is made up of one or more contiguous episodes.

**Police caution** Refers to when a police officer administers a caution to the child instead of bringing the child before a court for the offence.

**Pre-sentence community** Pre-sentence arrangements where the juvenile justice department is responsible for the case management or supervision of a young person (such as supervised or conditional bail where the juvenile justice department is involved with monitoring or supervising a young person).

**Pre-sentence detention** Remanded or held in a juvenile justice centre or police watch house prior to appearing in court or to being sentenced.

**Sentenced community-based supervision** Includes probation, recognisance and community service orders which are supervised or case managed by the juvenile justice department. May be supervision with or without additional mandated requirements, requiring some form of obligation or additional element that a young person is required to meet. This obligation could be community work such as in a community service order, a developmental activity or program attendance. The juvenile justice department may or may not directly supervise any additional mandated requirements, but remains responsible for the overall case management of a young person.

**Youth justice conference / group conference** A youth justice conference is a facilitated meeting resulting in a formal agreement to repair the harm caused by the offence. Participants can include the victim, offender, convenor, police and other key stakeholders. Referrals may be initiated by the police or the courts.

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## 15.10 List of attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an '15A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3 is table 3). Attachment tables are provided on the Review website ([www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp)). Users without access to the website can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

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**Single jurisdiction data SA**

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