
15 Protection and support services

Protection and support services aim to assist individuals and families who are in crisis or experiencing difficulties that hinder personal or family functioning. These services assist by alleviating the difficulties and reducing the potential for their recurrence.

This chapter reports on:

- *child protection services*: the 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 that aim to promote community safety and reduce youth offending by assisting young people to address their offending behaviour
- *supported accommodation and assistance services*: services to assist young people, adults and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. (Only limited updated data were available for this section for this Report).

Indigenous data in the protection and support services chapter

The protection and support services chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2009* (2009 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- children who were the subject of a substantiation (number and rate per 1000 children), 2007-08
- children who were on care and protection orders (number and rate per 1000 children), 30 June 2008
- children who were in out-of-home care (number and rate per 1000 children), 30 June 2008

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- proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, at 30 June, 2005–2008
 - proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care and in a home-based placement, by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
 - placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, 30 June 2008
 - average rate of detention of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people, 2006-07
 - Proportion of Indigenous people among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2006-07 ;
 - Indigenous clients, by met and unmet support needs, 2006-07
 - Changes in labour force status of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain employment and training before/after SAAP support, 2006-07 for all SAAP clients and Indigenous SAAP clients
 - Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2006-07
 - Accommodation type before and after SAAP support, for clients who requests assistance with obtaining or maintaining housing, 2006-07 for all SAAP clients and Indigenous SAAP clients

The protection and support services attachment contains additional data relating to Indigenous people including:

- children who were the subject of notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status (number and rate per 1000), 2007-08
- number of children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, 2007-08
- number of children on care and protection orders by type of order and Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
- children who were on care and protection orders (number and rate per 1000 children) by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
- children in out-of-home care (number and rate per 1000 children) and placement type by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
- children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order (number), 30 June 2008
- children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care (number), 30 June 2008

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- children who exited care during 2007-08, by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care (number)
 - Indigenous children in out-of-home care by relationship of caregiver, 30 June 2008
 - number of children aged 0–17 years commencing intensive family support services by Indigenous status and gender
 - daily average population of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention (number)
 - support periods, by the existence of a support plan, Indigenous clients, 2006-07
 - support needs of Indigenous clients, met and unmet, 2006-07
 - change in type of housing as a result of SAAP support, Indigenous clients 2006 - 07
 - Labour force status of Indigenous clients who needed employment and training assistance, before and after SAAP support, 2006-07
 - Indigenous SAAP clients who exited from the service and who returned to SAAP agencies before the end of that year, 2006-07
 - source of income immediately before and after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2006-07.

Attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within the protection and support services chapter of this compendium are contained in attachment 15A of the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3 is table 3 in the protection and support services attachment). As the data are directly sourced from the 2009 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2009 Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to '2009 Report, p. 15.15' this is page 15 of chapter 15 of the 2009 Report, and '2009 Report, table 15A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 15A of the 2009 Report.

Child protection and out-of-home care 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.

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 came into contact with the protection and support services system (Department of Human Services 2002).

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 2006a). ‘Little Children are Sacred’, 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 Western Australian (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.

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 court ordered.

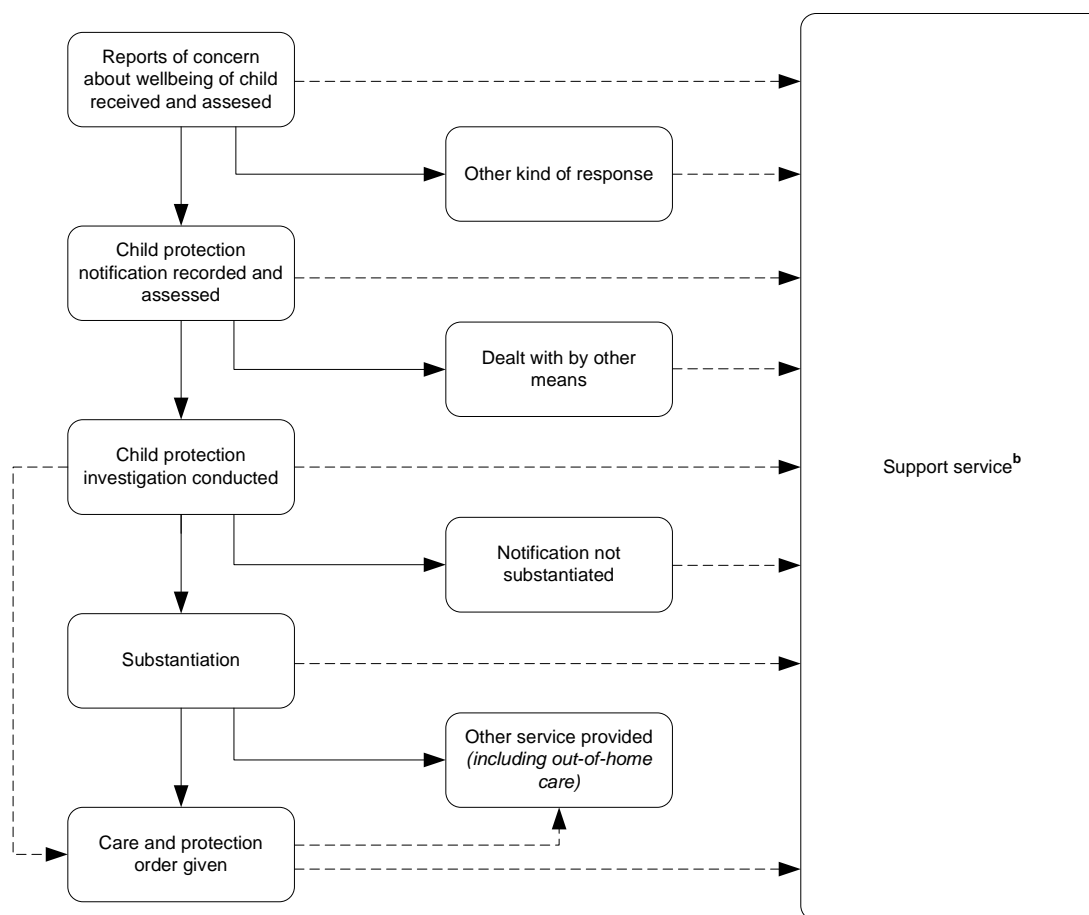
The child protection system

Child protection legislation, policies and practices vary across jurisdictions, but the broad processes employed by 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 the states and territories, and may include medical practitioners, police services, school teachers and principals. Reports are assessed and classified as child protection

notifications, child concern reports, or matters requiring some other kind of response. The most common sources of notifications that result in finalised investigations in 2007-08 were school personnel, police, hospitals and other health centres (AIHW 2009).

Figure 15.1 The child protection system^a



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

Source: 2009 Report, figure 15.1, p. 15.10.

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.¹

¹ Child protection services, care and protection orders and out-of-home care relate to children aged 0–17 years. However, rates of children subject to notifications, investigations and substantiations, are calculated for children aged 0–16 years, given differences in jurisdictions’ legislation, policies and practices regarding children aged 17 years. Rates of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care are calculated for children aged 0–17 years.

All jurisdictions except Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory screen incoming reports before deciding whether they will be counted as a notification, thus reducing the proportion of reports that become notifications.

In all jurisdictions, notifications are investigated, based on the policies and practices in that 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/case planning with agencies and individuals, 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. The investigation process determines whether the notification is substantiated or not substantiated (figure 15.1).

The total number of notifications for each jurisdiction for 2007-08 (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.1.

Data on the number of notifications are collected early in the child protection process and often before the agency has full knowledge of the 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 criteria for substantiation vary across jurisdictions. In the past, 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 is now shifting 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 to the child, and the child's needs.

If an investigation results in substantiation, intervention by the relevant department may 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.

Nationally, 7313 Indigenous and 24 602 non-Indigenous children were the subject of a substantiation in 2007-08. The rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–16 years was 35.3 for Indigenous children and 5.5 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.4).

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, 9011 Indigenous and 25 268 non-Indigenous children were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2008. The rate of children on care and protection orders per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 41.0 for Indigenous children and 5.3 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.4).

Further information on children on care and protection orders is included in the attachment tables to this Report. Table 15A.2 identifies the number of children admitted to, and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, 2007-08. Table 15A.3 identifies the number of children on care and protection orders by type of order and Indigenous status at 30 June 2008.

Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care is one of a range of services provided to families and children where there is a need to provide safe care for a child. The services are intended to place a child in out-of-home care only if this will improve the outcome for the child and only when it is not possible to maintain the child within his or her family. If it is necessary to remove the child from his or her home, then placement with the wider family or community is sought where possible, particularly in the case of Indigenous children (AIHW 2006b). 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, 9070 Indigenous children and 22 096 non-Indigenous children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2008. The rate of children in out-of-home care per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 41.3 for Indigenous children and 4.6 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.5).

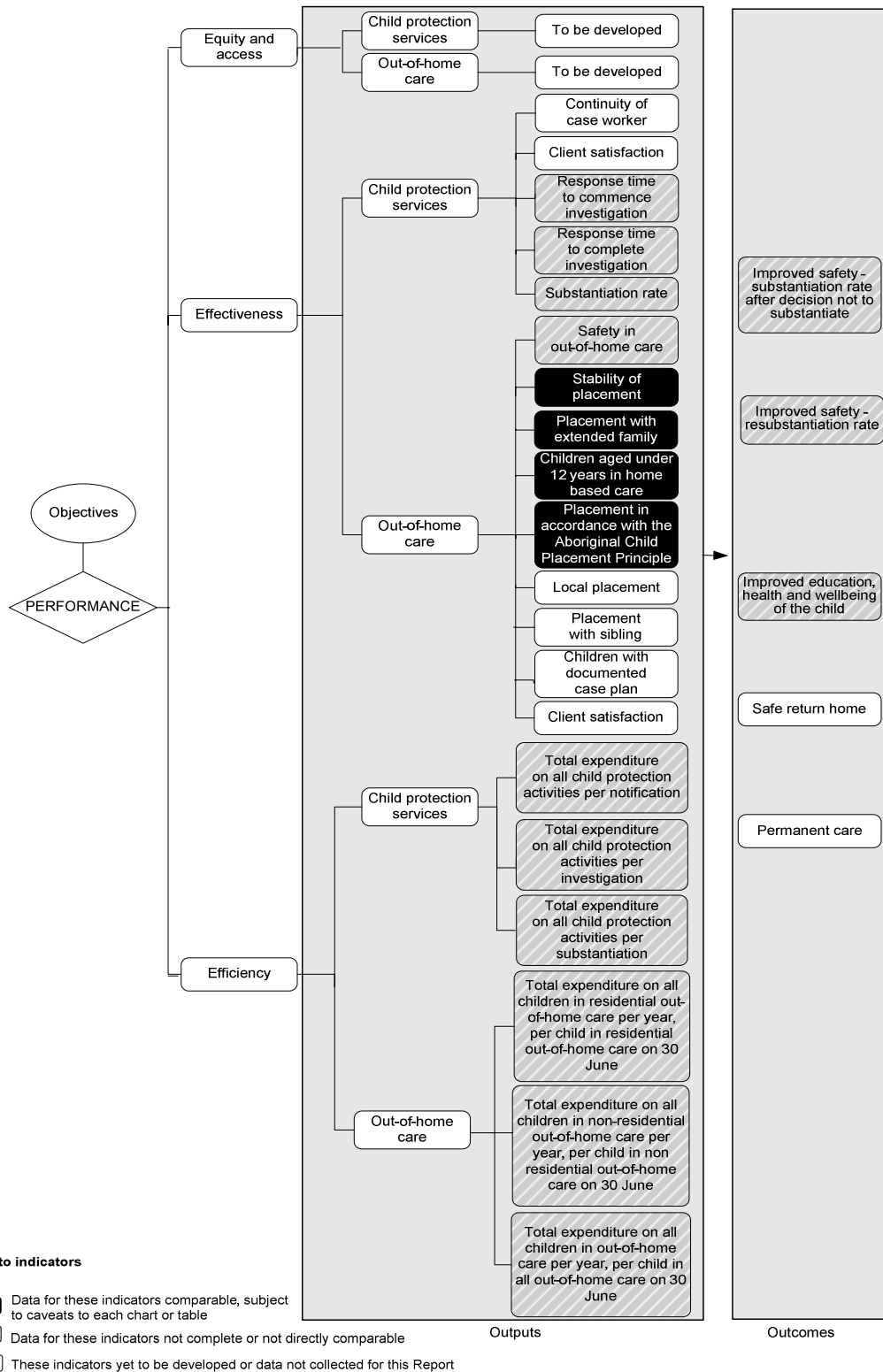
Further information on children in out-of-home care is included in the attachment tables to this Report. Table 15A.6 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and placement type at 30 June 2008. Table 15A.7 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and whether they were on a care and protection order at 30 June 2008. Table 15A.8 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 2008. Table 15A.9 identifies the number of children who exited care during 2007-08, by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care.

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

Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services in the 2009 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 15.2. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Figure 15.2 Performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services



Source: 2009 Report, figure 15.3, p. 15.17.

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 the recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.1).

Box 15.1 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 reasonably high rate for this indicator is considered 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.

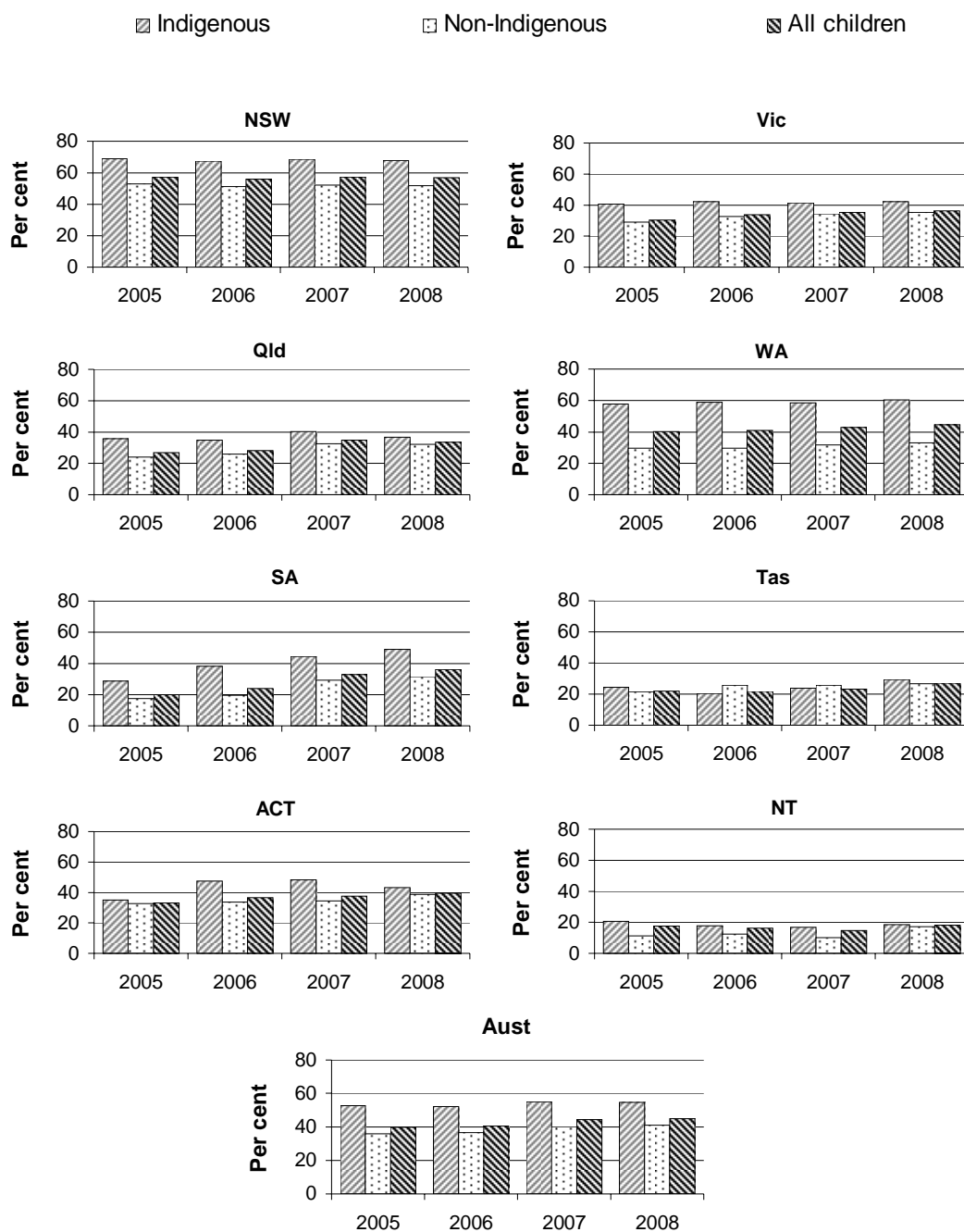
Placements with extended family may not always be the best option. Long standing family dynamics may undermine the pursuit of case goals such as reunification, and the possibility of intergenerational abuse needs to be considered. In addition, depending on the individual circumstances of children, it 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.

Figure 15.3 shows the proportion of children placed with relatives or kin by Indigenous status for the past four years. 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 2008 was greater for Indigenous children than for non-Indigenous children in all jurisdictions and nationally (figure 15.3).

In addition, the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle places additional emphasis on the placement of Indigenous children with extended family. This principle is discussed in box 15.3.

Figure 15.3 Proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, 30 June^a



^a Non-Indigenous status includes children whose Indigenous status is unknown or not stated.

Source: AIHW *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection (unpublished); 2009 Report, table 15A.10; 2009 Report, figure 15.9, p. 15.30.

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 the recipients (box 15.2).

Box 15.2 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 under 12 years of age placed in home-based care divided by the total number of children under 12 years in out-of-home care.

A high rate for this indicator is considered desirable.

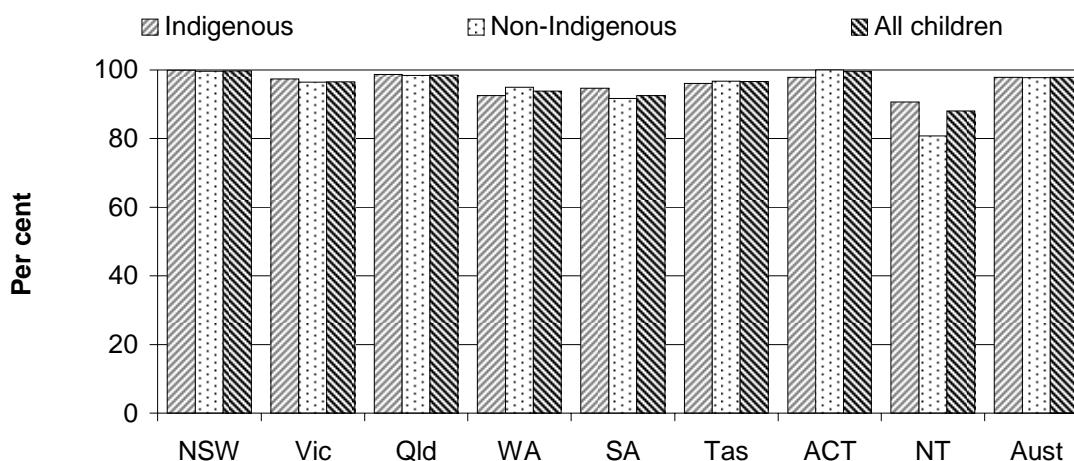
Placing children in home-based care is generally considered to be in their best interests, particularly for younger children. Children will generally make better developmental progress (and have more ready access to normal childhood experiences) in family settings rather than in residential care.

This indicator should be interpreted in conjunction with other placement indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

The proportion of all children aged under 12 years in care who were placed in home-based care (excluding family group homes) at 30 June 2008 was 97.8 per cent nationally. In all 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, within seven percentage points (figure 15.4).

Figure 15.4 Proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care and in a home-based placement, by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008^{a, b}



^a Family group homes are not classified as being home-based care. ^b Non-Indigenous status includes children whose Indigenous status is unknown or not stated.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.12; 2009 Report, figure 15.10, p. 15.32.

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 the cultural ties and identity of Indigenous children in out-of-home care (box 15.3). Subject to an over-riding concern for the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children, the principle supports the maintenance of the Indigenous child’s cultural ties and identity while in out-of-home care.

According to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (NSW Law Reform Commission 1997), the following hierarchy or placement preference 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.

Box 15.3 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 other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and (iii) not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or 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, consultation with and involvement of appropriate Indigenous individuals or organisations occurs in the placement decision.

If the preferred options are not available, the child may be placed (after appropriate consultation) with a non-Indigenous family or 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, may be the most appropriate placement for the child.

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

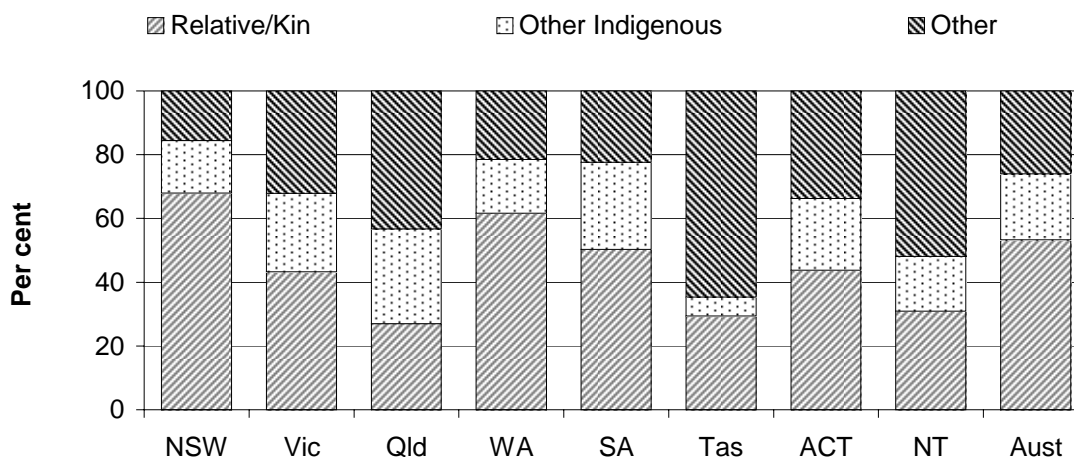
This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as the current measure is a proxy measure for compliance with the principle, as it reports the placement outcome of the Indigenous child rather than compliance with the principle. The indicator does not report whether the hierarchy was followed in the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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, at 30 June 2008, 53.3 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with a relative/kin, 20.6 per cent placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and 26.0 per cent were not placed with relative/kin, or other Indigenous residential care (figure 15.5).

The proportion of Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2008 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 15.5).

Figure 15.5 **Placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, 30 June 2008^{a, b}**



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. ^a Excludes Indigenous children living independently and those whose living arrangements were unknown. ^b Data for Tasmania and the ACT relate to a small number of Indigenous children (102 and 81 respectively) in care at 30 June 2008.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.11; 2009 Report, figure 15.11 p. 15.34.

Profile of juvenile justice services

Juvenile justice services 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. In doing this, juvenile justice services recognise the importance of the families and communities of young offenders, particularly Indigenous communities, in the provision of services. Consequently, services are designed to maximise opportunities to maintain offending free lifestyles by rehabilitating young people who commit offences and reintegrating them into their community.

The responsibility for juvenile justice in Australia resides with State and Territory governments. The relevant department within each state and territory in 2007-08 responsible for funding and/or providing juvenile justice services is listed in the 2009 Report, box 15.29. 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.

The juvenile justice system in each jurisdiction comprises several organisations, each with a different primary role and responsibility in dealing with young people. These include police, courts and juvenile justice agencies.

Juvenile justice agencies are responsible for the supervision and case management of young people on a range of community-based legal arrangements and in detention, and for the provision of a wide range of services aimed at crime prevention and reduction. Many of the services provided by juvenile justice agencies are aimed at: rehabilitating young people; minimising the level and future involvement of young people in the juvenile justice system; reducing the over representation of Indigenous young people in the justice system; maintaining the young person's connection with family, culture and community; providing young people with an appropriate level of care and safety (duty of care); increasing young people's accountability to victims; improving community safety; and providing pre-sentence reports for young people to the courts as required.

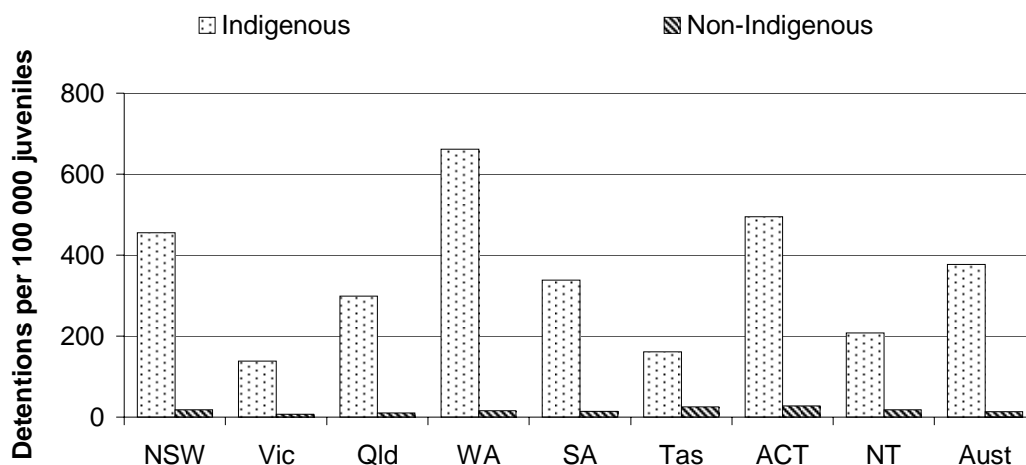
Numbers and rates of Indigenous young people placed in detention

The daily average number of Indigenous young people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile detention centres was 400 in 2006-07 (table 15A.113). Nationally, the daily average detention rate for Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in 2006-07 was 376.9 per 100 000 Indigenous people aged 10–17 years. The rate for the non-Indigenous population aged 10–17 years in 2006-07 was 13.7 per 100 000 non-Indigenous people aged 10-17 years (table 15A.114).

Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, especially for those states and territories with low Indigenous populations, where small number effects can introduce statistical variations that do not accurately represent trends over time or consistent differences from other jurisdictions. The AIC uses ABS experimental projections for its estimates of the Indigenous population (ABS 2004). These data include a range of estimates (low and high). The AIC data are based on high level estimates, unlike other sections of this Report, which use the low level estimates.

The over-representation of Indigenous young people in detention across jurisdictions in 2006-07 is shown in figure 15.6.

Figure 15.6 **Average rate of detention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people, 2006-07^{a, b}**



^a Rates of detention for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in NSW in each quarter in 2006-07 include young people in the care of both the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services. ^b The 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.114 should also be taken into account.

Source: AIC (unpublished); table 15A.114; 2009 Report, figure 15.17, p. 15.57.

Performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services

The framework of performance indicators for juvenile justice is based on a set of shared government objectives (box 15.4). However, juvenile justice services in each state and territory operate under their own legislation. Consequently there are different emphases with respect to aims and objectives.

Box 15.4 Objectives for juvenile justice services

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

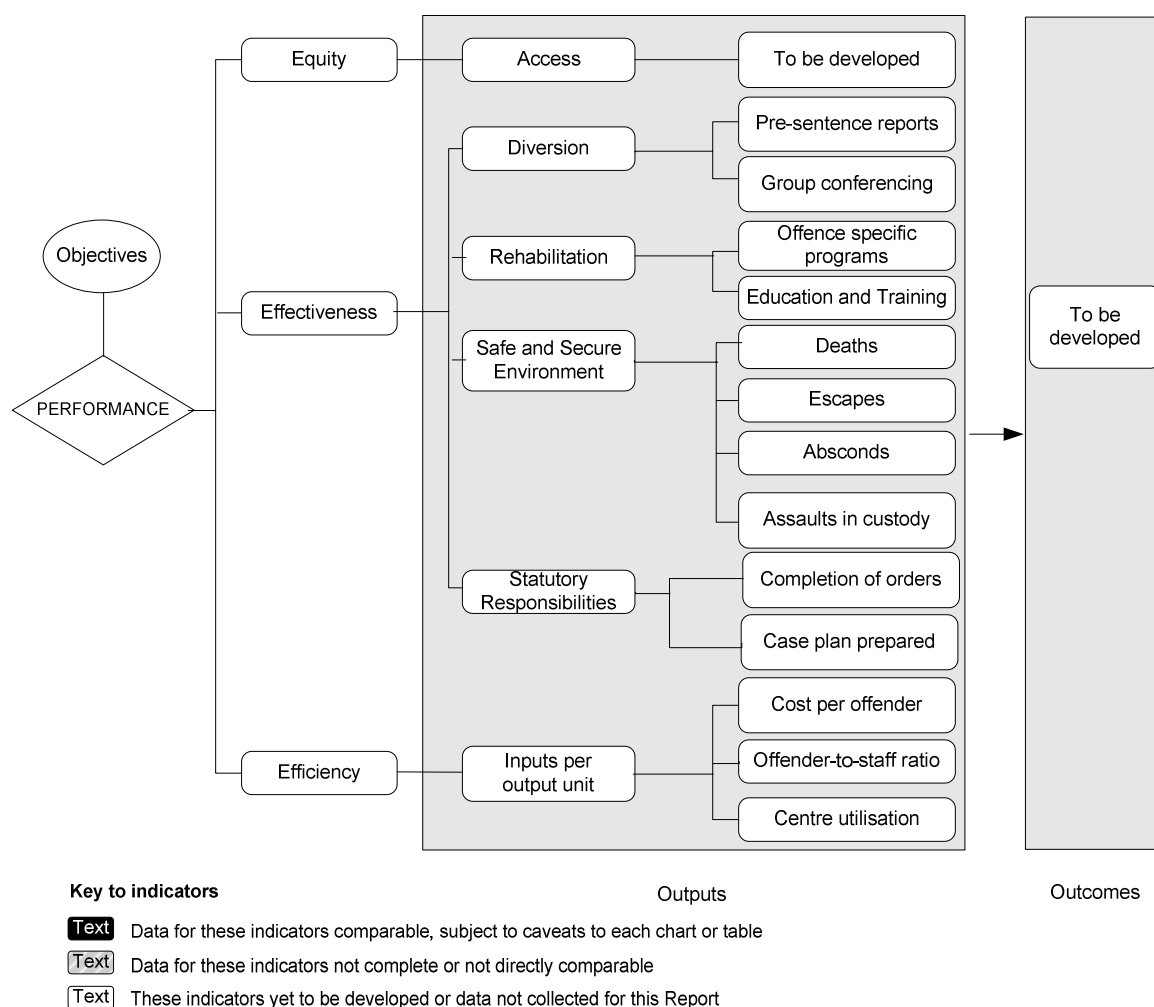
- assisting young people to address their offending behaviour and take responsibility for the effect their behaviour has on victims and the wider community
- enabling the interests and views of victims to be heard
- contributing to the diversion of young offenders to alternative services
- recognising the importance of the families and communities of young offenders, particularly Indigenous communities, in the provision of services and programmes

providing services that are designed to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community.

Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators for juvenile justice in the 2009 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 15.7. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

The performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services is included for the first time in the 2009 Report (figure 15.7).

Figure 15.7 Performance indicators for juvenile justice services



Source: 2009 Report, figure 15.18, p. 15.59.

Supported accommodation and assistance services

Supported accommodation and assistance services aim to assist people who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless as a result of a crisis, including women and children escaping domestic violence.

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was established in 1985 to bring homelessness programs funded by individual State and Territory governments and the Australian Government under one nationally coordinated program. The current program (SAAP V) is governed by the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*. This specifies that the overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to assist homeless people achieve the maximum degree of self-reliance and independence (AIHW 2008b).

Performance indicator framework for supported accommodation and assistance services

Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators for SAAP services in the 2009 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 15.8. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

The framework of performance indicators for supported accommodation and assistance services is based on the shared government objectives for SAAP services (box 15.5).

Box 15.5 Objectives for SAAP services

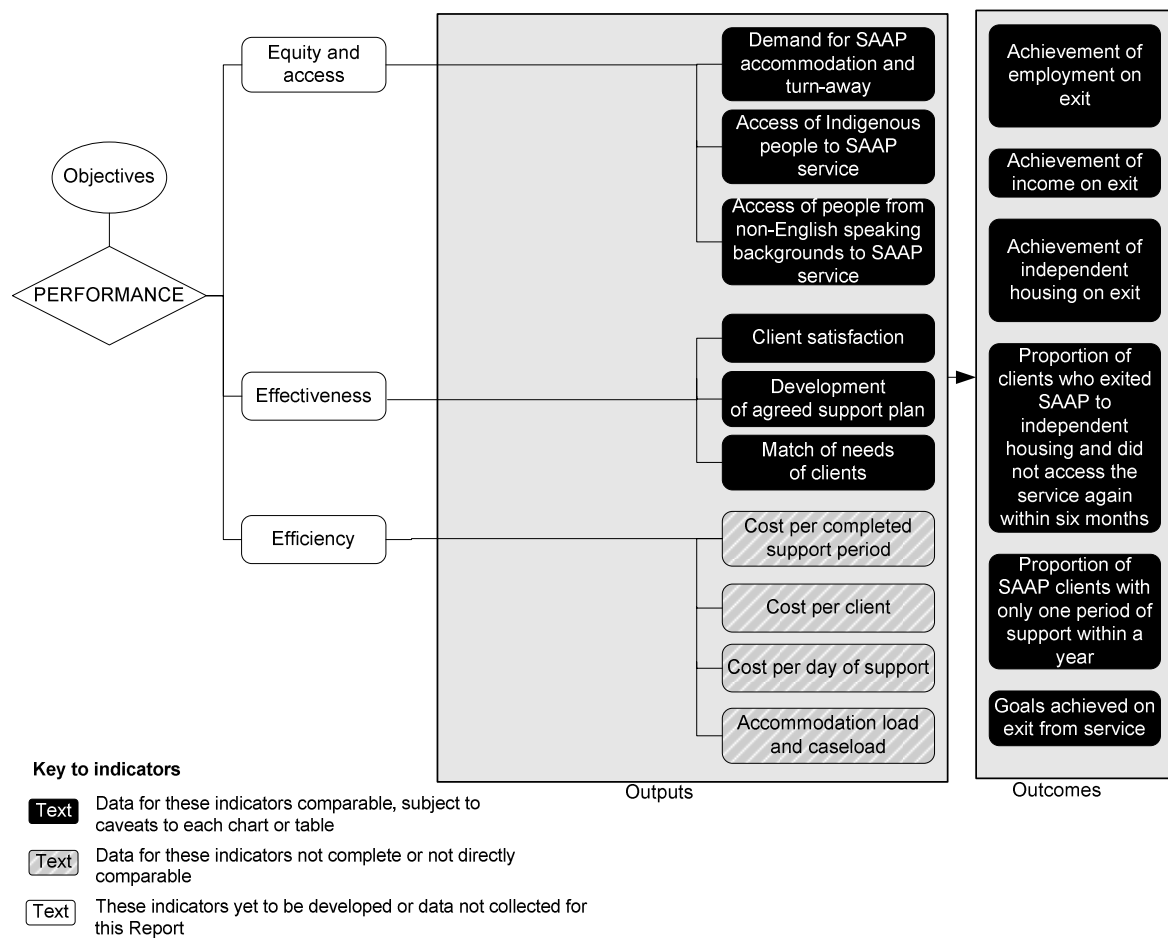
The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and a range of related support services, to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. Within this aim, the goals are to:

- resolve crises
- re-establish family links where appropriate
- re-establish the capacity of clients to live independently of SAAP.

SAAP services should be provided in an equitable and efficient manner.

The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of SAAP services (figure 15.8).

Figure 15.8 Performance indicators for SAAP services



Source: 2009 Report, figure 15.21, p. 15.72.

The SAAP data collection measures the number of clients and the number and types of services provided to clients, but is subject to some limitations (box 15.6).

Box 15.6 Information to be considered when analysing SAAP data

The following information needs to be considered when analysing SAAP data.

- Informed consent is an essential component of the integrity of the data. The principle of client/consumer rights (which underpins informed consent) recognises that clients do not receive services under a mandatory order. They have the right to accept or reject the services offered and they have the right to provide or not provide information while receiving SAAP services.
- Clients consented to provide personal details for the SAAP client collection for 81.1 per cent of support periods in 2006-07. A weighting system has been developed to adjust for agency non-participation (87.2 per cent of agencies participated in the client collection) and non-consent (AIHW 2008b).
- Agency participation is essential to ensure accurate reflection of the work done under the SAAP program. While the majority of jurisdictions had participation rates of 90 per cent or more in 2006-07, the ACT and Victoria had participation rates of 76 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. These lower participation rates were the result of restructuring and consolidation of services in the ACT and creation of new agencies in Victoria. A number of services affected by these changes did not submit data. Weighting for participation assumes that agencies operated a full year. Partial year participation will result in a variation in the number of support periods and clients. This assumption has a more significant impact on smaller jurisdictions.

Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service

‘Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have equitable access to SAAP services on the basis of relative need (box 15.7).

Box 15.7 Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service

'Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service' is defined as the comparison between the representation of Indigenous people among all people whose valid requests for SAAP accommodation were unmet and their representation among SAAP clients who were accommodated during the year.

A high and equivalent proportion of valid requests receiving assistance is desirable.

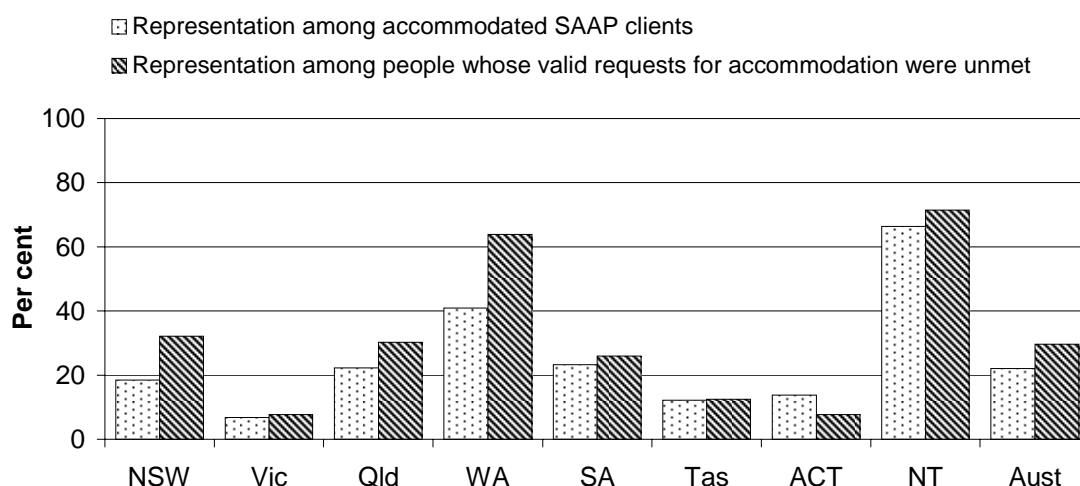
The indicator measures the extent to which the demand for assistance from Indigenous people is met or unmet. Unmet demand occurs when a homeless person expressly asking for supported accommodation, or support, cannot be provided with that assistance (although one-off assistance may be provided).

Supported accommodation and assistance services target homeless people in general, but access by special needs groups (such as Indigenous people) is particularly important.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, Indigenous people made up 29.7 per cent of all people whose valid requests for accommodation did not result in accommodation assistance in 2006-07 — a proportion greater than Indigenous clients among all accommodated SAAP clients (22.1 per cent). This result varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.9).

Figure 15.9 Proportion of Indigenous people among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2006-07^a



^a See notes to table 15A.116 for details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA *Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections* (unpublished); AIHW (2008) *Demand for SAAP accommodation by Homeless People 2006-07: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. SAAP NDCA report series 12. Cat. No. HOU 186; table 15A.116; 2009 Report, figure 15.24, p. 15.77.

Development of agreed support plan

'Development of agreed support plan' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that are appropriately targeted to meet the needs of SAAP clients (box 15.8).

Box 15.8 Development of agreed support plan

'Development of agreed support plan' is defined as the number of closed support periods with an agreed support plan divided by the total number of closed support periods. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

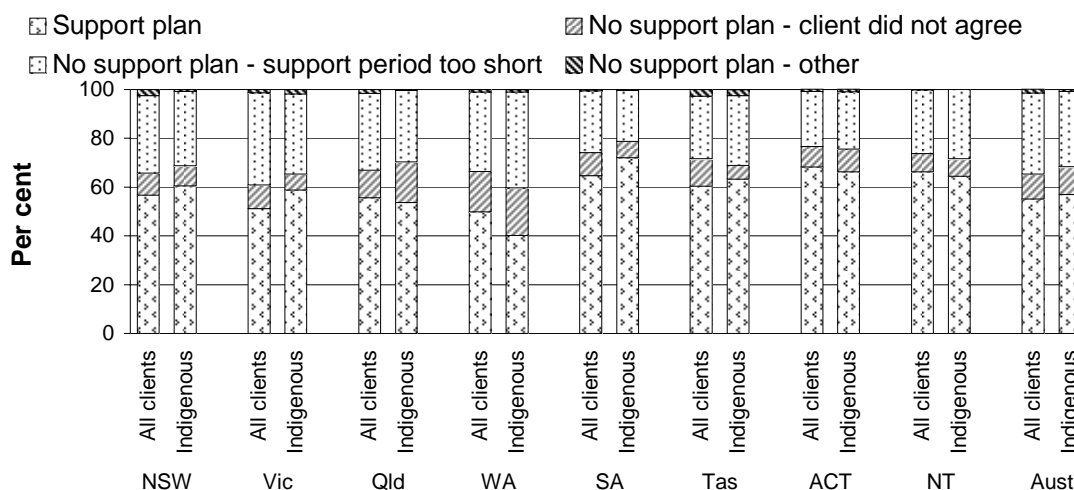
A higher proportion of support periods with agreed support plans is desirable.

However, in some instances, a support plan may be judged to be inappropriate (such as when a support period is short term).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, there was an agreed support plan for 55.1 per cent of closed support periods for all clients in 2006-07 (compared to 57.0 per cent for Indigenous clients). These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.10).

Figure 15.10 Support periods, by the existence of a support plan, 2006-07^a



^a See notes to table 15A.117 and 2009 Report, table 15A.185 for more details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.117 and 2009 Report, table 15A.185; 2009 Report, figure 15.26, p. 15.80.

Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that SAAP services meet their client's individual needs (box 15.9).

Box 15.9 Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is defined as the number of distinct services required by the clients that are provided as well as those referred to another agency, divided by the total number of distinct services required by SAAP clients.

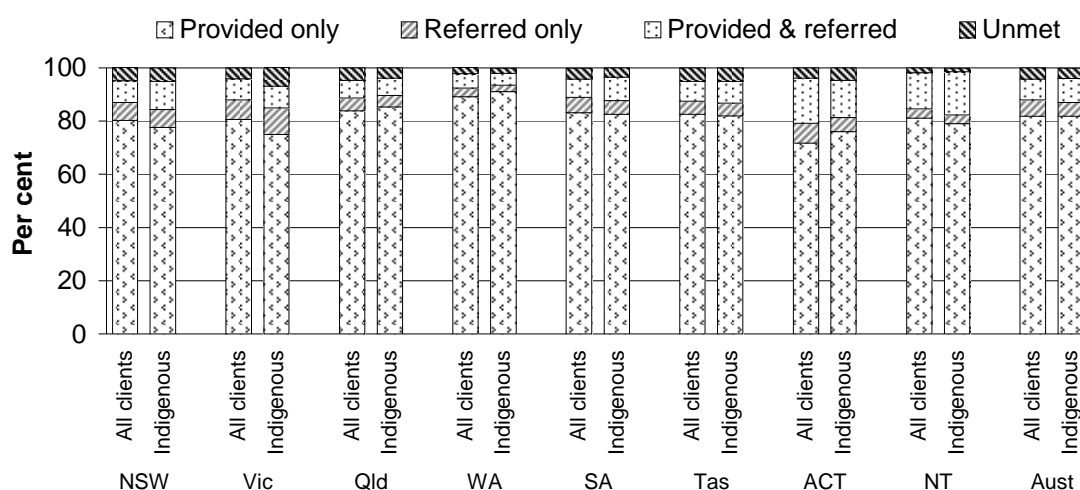
A higher proportion of clients who received services they needed, or who were referred to another agency, is desirable.

The range of services needed is broad (ranging from meals to laundry facilities to long term accommodation), so the effect of not providing these services varies. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

The proportions for Indigenous clients (96.0 per cent) who received services in 2006-07 were similar to that for all clients. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.11).

Figure 15.11 Indigenous clients, by met and unmet support needs, 2006-07



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.118 and 2009 Report, table 15A.188; 2009 Report, figure 15.28, p. 15.82.

Outcomes

In its report *Measuring the Impact of SAAP-funded Homelessness Services on Client Self-reliance* (FaHCSIA 2008) the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) found that, on a ten-point scale representing the concept of ‘getting back on my feet’, two-thirds of respondents perceived they were at point eight or beyond. Only five per cent of respondents perceived they had made no progress at all. The factor that most influenced how respondents perceived their self-reliance was the length of time they had been accessing the service. There were no significant differences in outcomes at the average level between Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients, or between clients from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and non-CALD clients. The report showed that SAAP clients perceive SAAP to be effective in helping them move towards self-reliance. However, the report also found that many of the problems and barriers that led clients into homelessness are not quickly and easily fixed and instead may take considerable time, effort and resources to overcome.

Achievement of employment on exit

‘Achievement of employment on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate as productive and self-reliant members of society at the end of their support period (box 15.10).

Box 15.10 Achievement of employment on exit

‘Achievement of employment on exit’ is defined as the number of closed support periods for SAAP clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training, and achieved employment after SAAP support, divided by the total number of closed support periods for clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment. Support periods reported relate to these clients only.

Higher proportions of achievement of employment are desirable.

This indicator compares these clients’ employment status before and after they requested SAAP support. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

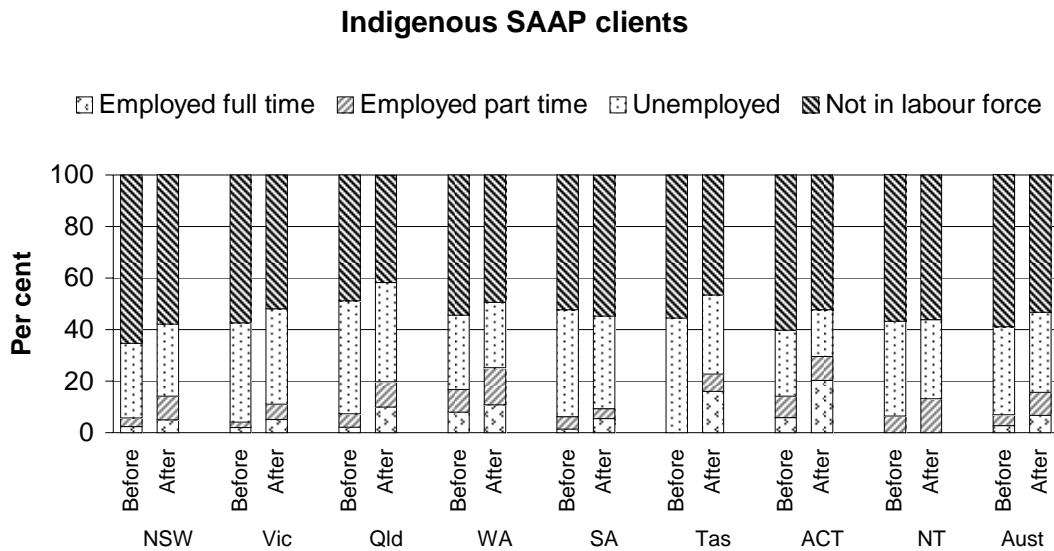
This indicator relates to relatively short term outcomes — that is, outcomes for clients immediately after their support period. Longer term outcomes are important, but more difficult to measure.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, of those Indigenous clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training when entering SAAP in 2006-07, the proportion of clients

who were employed either full time or part time increased from 7.0 per cent before support to 15.7 per cent after support (6.7 per cent full time and 9.0 per cent part time). The proportion of clients who were unemployed decreased from 34.1 per cent before support to 31.0 per cent after support. The proportion of clients who were not in the labour force decreased from 59.0 per cent before support to 53.3 per cent after support. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.12 and table 15A.119).

Figure 15.12 Changes in labour force status of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain employment and training before/after SAAP support, 2006-07^a



^a Data are for people who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining employment when entering SAAP services.

Source: SAAP NDCA *Client Collection* (unpublished); table 15A.120; 2009 Report, figure 15.34(b), p. 15.89.

Achievement of income on exit

‘Achievement of income on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate independently in society at the end of their support period (box 15.11).

Box 15.11 Achievement of income on exit

'Achievement of income on exit' is defined as the number of closed support periods for SAAP clients who requested assistance to obtain or maintain a pension or benefit and exited SAAP with an income source, divided by the total number of closed support periods for clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain a pension or benefit. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

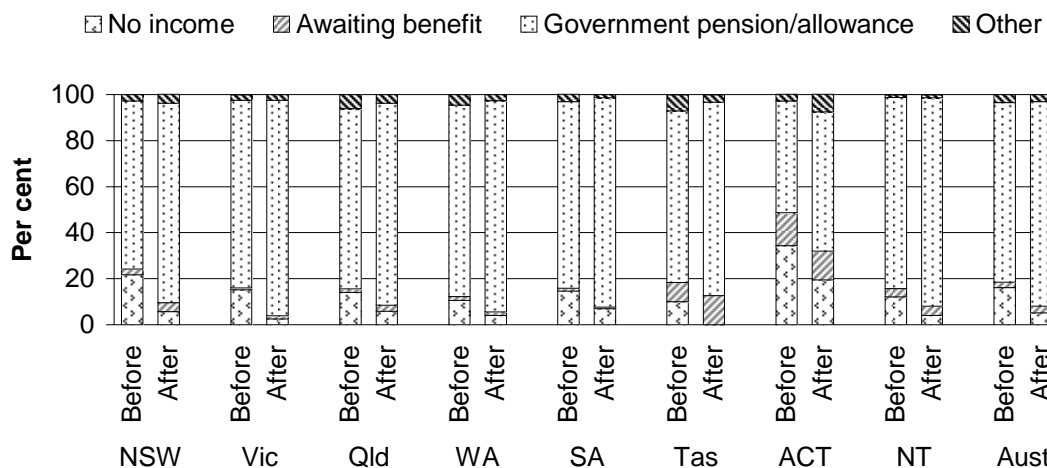
A high proportion of clients who requested income assistance and exited SAAP with an income source is desirable.

This indicator compares these clients' income status before and after they received SAAP support. A client's independence and self-reliance is enhanced when the client experiences a positive change in income source (for example, from having no income support to obtaining some income, including wages and/or benefits) on exit from SAAP services.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, in 2006-07 the proportion of Indigenous clients who did not have income and requested income assistance also decreased after SAAP assistance (from 16.2 per cent to 5.1 per cent nationally) (figure 15.13). Both before and after SAAP assistance, the income source for the majority of SAAP clients was a government pension/allowance (figure 15.13).

Figure 15.13 Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2006-07



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.122; 2009 Report, figure 15.36, p. 15.91.

Achievement of independent housing on exit

‘Achievement of independent housing on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate as productive and self-reliant members of society at the end of their support period (box 15.12).

Box 15.12 Achievement of independent housing on exit

‘Achievement of independent housing on exit’ is defined as the number of support periods of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieving independent housing at the end of a support period, divided by the total number of completed support periods of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing.

Higher proportions of clients who are in independent housing are desirable.

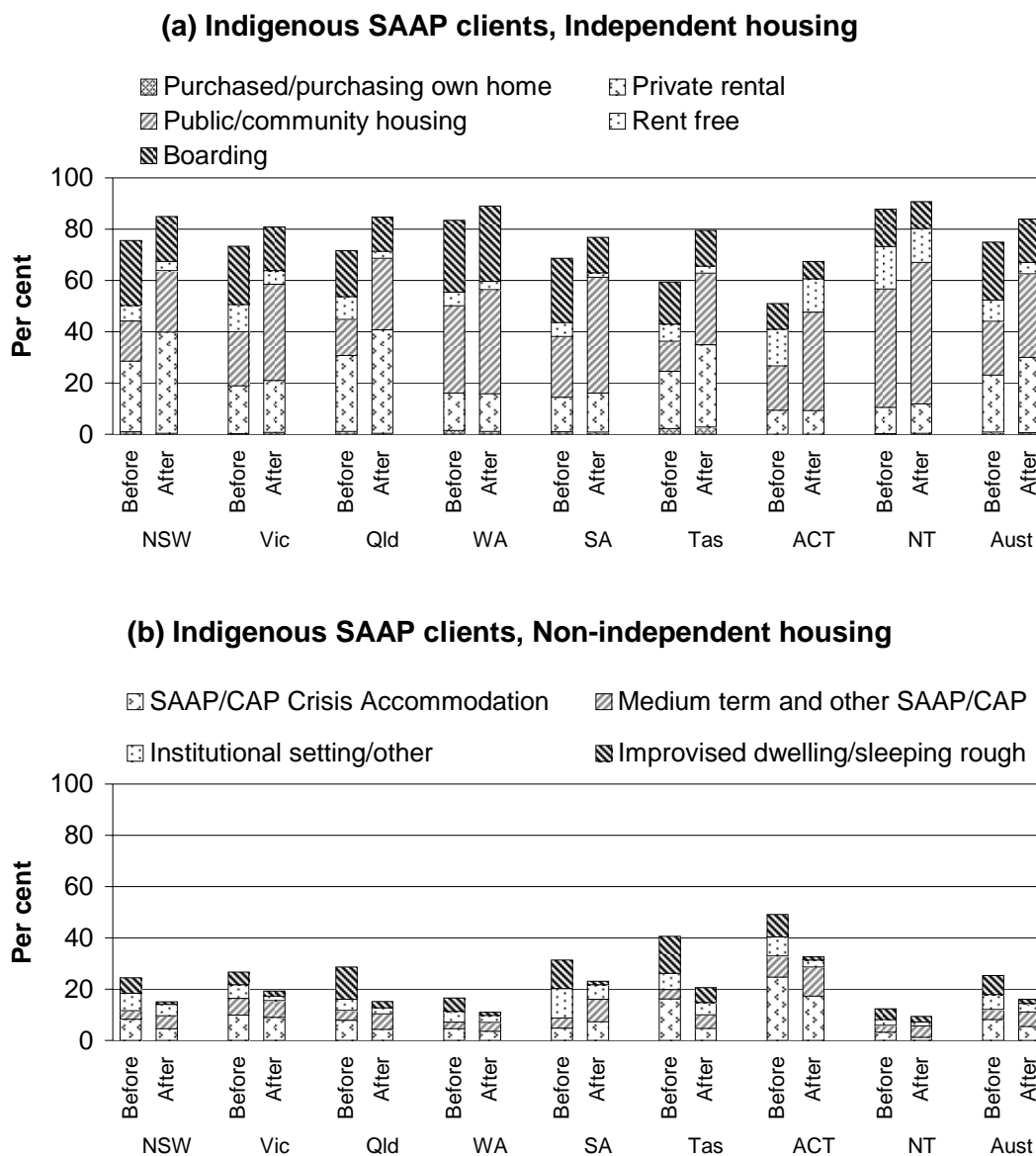
This indicator compares the proportion of clients who were in independent housing before and after they received SAAP support. It relates to relatively short term outcomes — that is, outcomes for clients immediately after their support period. Longer term outcomes are important, but more difficult to measure. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, 83.9 per cent of indigenous clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing at the end of a support period in 2006-07, including those who moved or returned to private rental housing (29.4 per cent), to public rental housing (25.5 per cent), and who were boarding (16.9 per cent) (figure 15.14(a)).

Clients who did not achieve independent housing at the end of a support period in 2006-07 included those who moved to, or continued to live in, short to medium term SAAP accommodation and other forms of non-independent accommodation (figure 15.14(b)).

Figure 15.14 Accommodation type before and after SAAP support, for clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining housing, 2006-07



Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 15A.119; 2009 Report, figure 15.37 (c) and 15.37 (d), p. 15.94.

Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year

‘Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate independently in society at the end of their support period (box 15.13).

Box 15.13 Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year

'Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year' is defined as the number of clients with only one support period during the year, divided by the total number of SAAP clients. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

A higher proportion of clients with only one support period during the year is desirable.

It may be appropriate for some clients to receive more than one support period in a given period of time (for example, moving from crisis accommodation to medium term accommodation). One group that makes multiple use of SAAP is single adults, especially older single men. A number of SAAP clients who need long term assistance may access SAAP services a number of times before their needs are met on a permanent basis. Ongoing contact with SAAP agencies may also lead to an improvement in living skills and self-reliance.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, 72.8 per cent of SAAP clients had only one support period in 2006-07. The proportion for Indigenous clients was similar (72.1 per cent) (table 15A.121).

Attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3 is table 3 in the protection and support attachment). The tables included in the attachment are listed below.

All jurisdiction data

Table 15A.1	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, 2007-08
Table 15A.2	Children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, 2007-08 (number)
Table 15A.3	Children on care and protection orders by type of order and Indigenous status, at 30 June 2008 (number)
Table 15A.4	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, 2007-08
Table 15A.5	Children in out-of-home care: number and rate per 1000 children aged 0–17 years by Indigenous status, 2007-08
Table 15A.6	Children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and placement type, 30 June 2008 (number)
Table 15A.7	Children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, 30 June 2008 (number)
Table 15A.8	Children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, 30 June 2008 (number)
Table 15A.9	Children who exited care during the year 2007-08 by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care (number)
Table 15A.10	Children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin by Indigenous status, 30 June
Table 15A.11	Indigenous children in out-of-home care by relationship of caregiver, 30 June 2008
Table 15A.12	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care and in a home-based placement by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
Table 15A.13	Intensive family support services: number of children aged 0–17 years commencing intensive family support services by Indigenous status and gender
Table 15A.14	Target population data used for annual data, December ('000)
Table 15A.15	Target population data used for end of financial year data, March ('000)

Single jurisdiction data NSW

Table 15A.16	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, New South Wales
Table 15A.17	Children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, New South Wales (number)

Table 15A.18	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, New South Wales (number)
Table 15A.19	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: Number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, New South Wales
Table 15A.20	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June: number and rate per 1000 children aged 0–17 years, by Indigenous status, New South Wales
Table 15A.21	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, New South Wales (number)
Table 15A.22	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, New South Wales (number)
Table 15A.23	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, New South Wales (number)
Table 15A.24	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, New South Wales (number)
Table 15A.25	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, New South Wales
Table 15A.26	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, New South Wales
Table 15A.27	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home based placement at 30 June, by Indigenous status, New South Wales
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Table 15A.28	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, Victoria
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Table 15A.30	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Victoria (number)
Table 15A.31	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: Number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, Victoria
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Table 15A.33	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, Victoria (number)
Table 15A.34	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Victoria (number)
Table 15A.35	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Victoria (number)
Table 15A.36	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, Victoria (number)
Table 15A.37	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, Victoria

Table 15A.38	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Victoria
Table 15A.39	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home based placement at 30 June, by Indigenous status, Victoria
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Table 15A.42	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Queensland (number)
Table 15A.43	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: Number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, Queensland
Table 15A.44	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June: number and rate per 1000 children aged 0–17 years, by Indigenous status, Queensland
Table 15A.45	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, Queensland (number)
Table 15A.46	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Queensland (number)
Table 15A.47	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Queensland (number)
Table 15A.48	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, Queensland (number)
Table 15A.49	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, Queensland
Table 15A.50	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Queensland
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Table 15A.52	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, Western Australia
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Table 15A.54	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Western Australia (number)
Table 15A.55	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: Number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, Western Australia
Table 15A.56	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June: number and rate per 1000 children aged 0–17 years, by Indigenous status, Western Australia

Table 15A.57	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, Western Australia (number)
Table 15A.58	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Western Australia (number)
Table 15A.59	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Western Australia (number)
Table 15A.60	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, Western Australia (number)
Table 15A.61	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, Western Australia
Table 15A.62	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Western Australia
Table 15A.63	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home based placement at 30 June, by Indigenous status, Western Australia

Single jurisdiction data SA

Table 15A.64	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, South Australia
Table 15A.65	Children admitted to and discharged from care and protection orders by Indigenous status, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.66	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.67	Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: Number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, South Australia
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Table 15A.69	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.70	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.71	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.72	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, South Australia (number)
Table 15A.73	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, South Australia
Table 15A.74	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, South Australia
Table 15A.75	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home based placement at 30 June, by Indigenous status, South Australia

Single jurisdiction data Tas

Table 15A.76	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, Tasmania
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Table 15A.78	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Tasmania (number)
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Table 15A.82	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Tasmania (number)
Table 15A.83	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Tasmania (number)
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Table 15A.90	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Australian Capital Territory (number)
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Table 15A.93	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, Australian Capital Territory (number)
Table 15A.94	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Australian Capital Territory (number)
Table 15A.95	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Australian Capital Territory (number)
Table 15A.96	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, Australian Capital Territory (number)

Table 15A.97	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, Australian Capital Territory
Table 15A.98	Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June by Indigenous status and relationship of caregiver, Australian Capital Territory
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Single jurisdiction data NT

Table 15A.100	Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations by Indigenous status, Northern Territory
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Table 15A.102	Children on care and protection orders at 30 June by type of order and Indigenous status, Northern Territory (number)
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Table 15A.104	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June: number and rate per 1000 children aged 0–17 years, by Indigenous status, Northern Territory
Table 15A.105	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and placement type, Northern Territory (number)
Table 15A.106	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and whether on a care and protection order, Northern Territory (number)
Table 15A.107	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June, by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care, Northern Territory (number)
Table 15A.108	Children who exited care during the year by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care, Northern Territory (number)
Table 15A.109	Children in out-of-home care at 30 June placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, Northern Territory
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Table 15A.111	Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care in a home based placement at 30 June, by Indigenous status, Northern Territory

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Table 15A.112	Average rate of detention of people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people aged 10–17 years
Table 15A.113	Daily average population of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention (number)
Table 15A.114	Average rates of detention and Indigenous rate ratio, young people aged 10-17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people

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Table 15A.121	Indigenous SAAP clients who exited from the service and who returned to SAAP agencies before the end of that year
Table 15A.122	Source of income immediately before and after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit

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