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# D Community services

## **Part D: Community services preface**

Families are the principal providers of care for children, older people and people with a disability (ABS 2001). Community services aim to help families to undertake this role and can fulfil this role when families are not in a position to provide care. Community services covered by this Report encompass aged care services (see chapter 12), services for people with a disability (see chapter 13), children's services (see chapter 14), and protection and support services (child protection, supported placements, and supported accommodation and assistance) (see chapter 15).

Community service activities (box CSP.1) typically include those activities 'which assist or support members of the community in personal functioning as individuals or as members of the wider community' (AIHW 1997, p. 3). They may include financial assistance and relief to people in crisis, and housing assistance of a short term or transitional nature, but they exclude acute health care services (see chapters 9–11), long term housing assistance (see chapter 16) and income support (such as social security pensions and allowances). The definition of community service activities contained in this preface is based on the National Classification of Community Services, developed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW 2003) (box CSP.1).

Performance information on community services as a whole is not currently reported. While there are many interactions among the various community services, the services and their funding and delivery systems are too varied to enable aggregate community services reporting.

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### Box CSP.1 **Community service activities**

*Personal and social support* activities that provide support for personal or social functioning — in daily life. Such activities promote the development of personal skills for successful functioning as individuals, family members and members of the wider community. Personal and social support includes the provision of information, advice and referral, personal advocacy, counselling, domestic assistance and personal assistance. The purpose of such support may be to enable individuals to live and function in their own homes or normal places of residence.

*Support for children, families and carers* the provision of care, educational, developmental — and recreational activities for children (usually aged 0–12 years) by paid workers. Activities are included that seek to protect children from child abuse and neglect or harm, through statutory intervention and support for families.

*Training, vocational rehabilitation and employment* activities that assist people who are — disadvantaged in the labour market by providing training, job search skills, help in finding work, placement and support in open employment or, where appropriate, supported employment.

*Financial and material assistance* activities that enhance personal functioning and facilitate — access to community services, through the provision of emergency or immediate financial assistance and material goods.

*Residential care and supported accommodation* activities provided in special purpose — residential facilities, including accommodation in conjunction with other types of support, such as assistance with necessary day-to-day living tasks and intensive forms of care such as nursing care.

*Corrective services* activities — that involve correctional and rehabilitative supervision and the protection of public safety, through corrective arrangements and advice to courts and parole boards, in relation to young people and people with intellectual and psychiatric disabilities on court orders.

*Service and community development and support* activities that provide support aimed at — articulating and promoting improved social policies; promoting greater public awareness of social issues; developing and supporting community-based activities, special interest and cultural groups; and developing and facilitating the delivery of quality community services. Activities include the development of public policy submissions, social planning and social action, the provision of expert advice, coordination, training, staff and volunteer development, and management support to service providers.

Source: AIHW (2003).

Some of the performance indicators in the following chapters were also reported as key indicators in the report on *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2003*. The Indigenous Disadvantage framework included the following indicators relating to community services:

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- Juvenile diversions as a proportion of all juvenile offenders.
  - Substantiated child protection notifications.
  - Children on long term care and protection orders.

There is a new edition of the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2005* report publication coming out in May 2005.

### *Indigenous data in the community services preface*

The community services preface in the *Report on Government Services 2005* (2005 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- Average daily population of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile corrective institutions (number), 1998-99 to 2002-03.
- Average annual rate of detention per 100 000 Indigenous people aged 10-17 years in juvenile corrective institutions (number), 1998-99 to 2002-03.
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous detention rates, 2002-03.

## **Juvenile justice**

The juvenile justice system is responsible for dealing with young people (predominantly aged 10–17 years) who have committed or allegedly committed an offence while considered by law to be a juvenile. Each jurisdiction has its own legislation that dictates the policies and practices of its juvenile justice system.

In most jurisdictions the majority of young offenders are diverted through a range of mechanisms such as police caution, conferences and unsupervised orders, and do not become clients of juvenile justice departments.

The juvenile justice system in each jurisdiction comprises several organisations, with each having a different primary role and responsibility in dealing with young offenders. Among other components, these include juvenile justice agencies, which are responsible for the supervision and case management of juveniles 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 diversion. Many of the services provided by juvenile justice agencies are aimed at: rehabilitating offenders; minimising the level of, and future involvement of, young people in the justice system; reducing the over-representation of Indigenous young people in the justice system; maintaining the clients' connection with family, culture and community; providing clients with an appropriate level of care and safety (duty of care); increasing client accountability to victims; and improving community safety.

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The juvenile justice system in each jurisdiction comprises several organisations, with each having a different primary role and responsibility in dealing with young offenders. These include:

- police, who are usually the young person's first point of contact with the system. Where considered appropriate, the police may administer warnings or cautions and, in some jurisdictions, use conferencing to divert the juvenile from proceeding to court;
- courts (usually a special children's or youth court), where matters relating to the charges against the young person are heard. The courts are largely responsible for decisions regarding bail (and remand) and sentencing options if the young person admits guilt or is found guilty by the court;
- juvenile justice agencies, which are responsible for the supervision and case management of juveniles 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 diversion. Many of the services provided by juvenile justice agencies are aimed at: rehabilitating offenders; minimising the level of, and future involvement of, young people in the justice system; reducing the over-representation of Indigenous young people in the justice system; maintaining the clients' connection with family, culture and community; providing clients with an appropriate level of care and safety (duty of care); increasing client accountability to victims; and improving community safety.

### *Juvenile detentions*

Detailed national data are currently only available on the number of young people held in juvenile detention centres (either on remand or sentenced) at the end of each quarter. Hence, this is the only data that are published in this Report. Detention data, however, illustrates only one aspect of the juvenile justice system, and are not representative of the full workload or breadth of services provided by the juvenile justice system or even juvenile justice departments.

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) uses ABS experimental projections for its estimates of the Indigenous population (ABS 2004). These data include a range of estimates (low and high), and data in this Report are based on high level estimates.

Nationally, the average daily number of people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile corrective institutions fell from 716 to 616 between 1998-99 and 2002-03 (2005 Report, p. F.10, table F.3). The national rate of detention of people aged 10–17 years in juvenile corrective institutions fell from 34.0 per 100 000 in 1998-99 to 28.1 per 100 000 in 2002-03, although there were substantial differences across jurisdictions (2005 Report, table F.3).

The daily average number of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile corrective institutions was 295 in 2002-03 (table CSP.1).

**Table CSP.1 Daily average population of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile corrective institutions (number)<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>
1998-99	96	9	77	80	14	na	2	17	295
1999-2000	91	8	60	77	13	na	2	10	261
2000-01	86	7	53	71	13	na	4	12	246
2001-02	92	7	53	71	19	na	5	12	259
2002-03	98	10	54	80	28	na	4	19	295

<sup>a</sup> Average based on population of juvenile corrective institutions on the last day of each quarter of the financial year. **na** Not available.

Source: AIC (unpublished); 2005 Report, p. F.11, table F.5.

Nationally, the daily average detention rate for Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in 2002-03 was 326.6 per 100 000 Indigenous people (table CSP.2). This rate compared to 14.9 per 100 000 people for the non-Indigenous population aged 10–17 years (figure CSP.1).

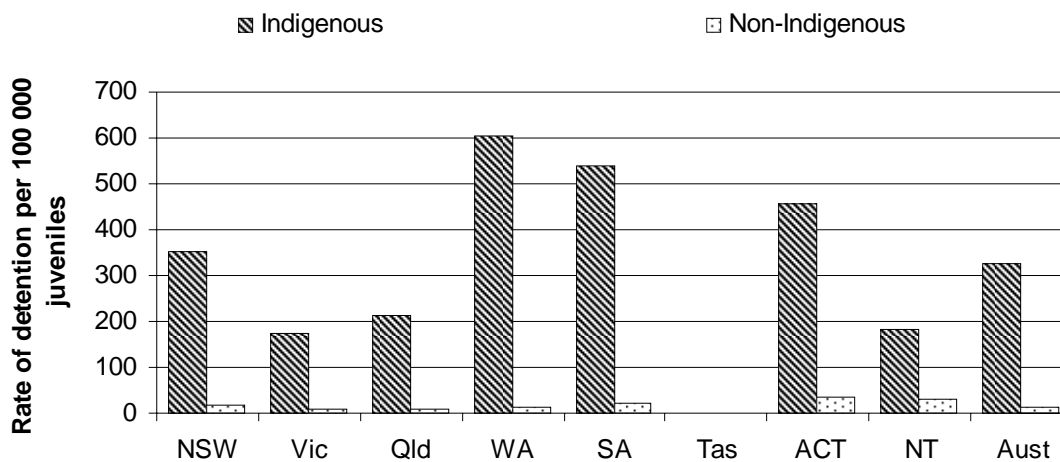
**Table CSP.2 Average rate of detention of Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile corrective institutions, per 100 000 people<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
1998-99	393.9	201.8	347.1	677.7	314.7	na	236.1	173.5	378.6
1999-2000	343.5	181.9	250.8	624.1	266.2	na	284.1	97.6	315.1
2000-01	324.9	142.4	222.2	565.4	265.9	na	524.7	121.4	294.5
2001-02	351.4	135.8	221.1	555.6	388.2	na	624.4	119.9	307.9
2002-03	353.8	173.6	212.0	604.7	538.1	na	458.6	182.6	326.6

<sup>a</sup> Detention rates based on average population of juvenile corrective institutions on the last day of each quarter of the financial year. <sup>b</sup> Note that Indigenous rates for 2001, 2002 and 2003 were calculated using high series population data provided by the ABS. Any variation in derived rates may be due to the assumptions and limitations of the base population data. **na** Not available.

Source: AIC (unpublished); 2005 Report, p. F11, table F.6.

**Figure CSP.1 Average rate of detention of juveniles aged 10–17 years, per 100 000 people, 2002-03<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Detention rate is based on the average population of juvenile corrective institutions on the last day of each quarter of the financial year. <sup>b</sup> Note that Indigenous rates for 2001, 2002 and 2003 were calculated using high series population data provided by the ABS. Any variation in derived rates may be due to the assumptions and limitations of the base population data. <sup>c</sup> 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. <sup>d</sup> Data were not available for Tasmania.

Source: AIC (unpublished); 2005 Report, p. F12, figure F.3.

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## References

- ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2001, *Community Services, 1999-2000*, Cat. no. 8696.0, Canberra.
- 2004, *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991-2009*, Cat. no. 3238.0, Canberra.
- AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 1997, *National Classification of Community Services, Version 1.0*, Cat. no. HWI 7, Canberra.
- 2003, *National Classifications of Community Services, Version 2.0*, Cat. no. HWI-40, Canberra.