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Health and Welfare**

Child protection Australia 2014–15

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**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

*Authoritative information and statistics
to promote better health and wellbeing*

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- Department for Education and Child Development, South Australia
- Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania
- Community Services Directorate, Australian Capital Territory
- Department of Children and Families, Northern Territory.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CP NMDS	Child Protection National Minimum Data Set
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
RoGS	Report on Government Services
SA	South Australia
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
Tas	Tasmania
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Symbols

0	zero
—	rounded to zero
..	not applicable
n.a.	not available

Summary

Child protection Australia 2014–15 is the nineteenth annual comprehensive report on child protection. This report includes detailed statistical information on state and territory child protection and support services, and some of the characteristics of children receiving these services. Key findings are outlined below.

1 in 35 children received child protection services, with 73% being repeat clients

- In 2014–15, 151,980 children received child protection services. This equates to 1 in 35 Australian children aged 0–17 who had an investigation, care and protection order and/or were placed in out-of-home care.
- This was a 6% rise over the past 12 months, from 143,023 children in 2013–14.
- Three (3) in 5 (60%) of these children were the subject of an investigation only (that is, they were not subsequently placed on an order or in out-of-home care), while 8% were involved in all three components of the system.
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of these children were repeat clients in 2014–15; that is, they had been the subject of an investigation, care and protection order and/or out-of-home care placement in a previous financial year.

Substantiation rates were stable despite longer term increases in numbers

- Rates of substantiated child abuse and neglect have remained relatively stable since 2012–13, at around 8.0 per 1,000 children. This is despite an increase in the number of children who were the subject of substantiations, which has risen by 35% since 2010–11 (from 31,527 to 42,457 in 2014–15).
- One (1) in 5 children were the subjects of multiple substantiations in 2014–15.

Rates of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care continued to rise

- From 30 June 2011 to 2015, the rate of children aged 0–17 on orders rose from 7.7 to 9.1 per 1,000. There were over 48,700 children on a care and protection order at 30 June 2015.
- Over the same period, the rate of children in out-of-home care increased from 7.4 to 8.1 per 1,000. There were almost 43,400 children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continued to be over-represented

- In 2014–15, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were 7 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to be receiving child protection services (146.4 per 1,000 children compared with 20.5 for non-Indigenous children).

Emotional abuse and neglect were the most common types of abuse/neglect

- Emotional abuse and neglect were the most common primary and co-occurring types of substantiated abuse and neglect.

Large proportions of carer households had multiple children placed

- During 2014–15, there were 12,948 foster carer households and 18,401 relative/kinship carer households with a placement.
- Just over half (52%) of foster carer households and almost two-fifths (39%) of relative/kinship carer households had more than 1 child placed with them at 30 June 2015.

1 Introduction

1.1 Child protection overview

In Australia, state and territory governments are responsible for statutory child protection. Each responsible department assists vulnerable children who have been, or are at risk of being, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed, or whose parents and young people are unable to provide adequate care or protection. Children and young people are those aged under 18. This includes unborn children in jurisdictions where they are covered under the child protection legislation. Unborn children are reported as a separate age group in tables disaggregated by age (where applicable).

A number of government and non-government organisations share a common duty of care towards the protection of children and young people. Departments responsible for child protection investigate, process and oversee the management of child protection cases. Children and their families are assisted by being provided with, or referred to, a wide range of services.

The national recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services was about \$3.6 billion in 2014–15, a real increase of \$228.4 million (6.7%) from 2013–14 (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2016).

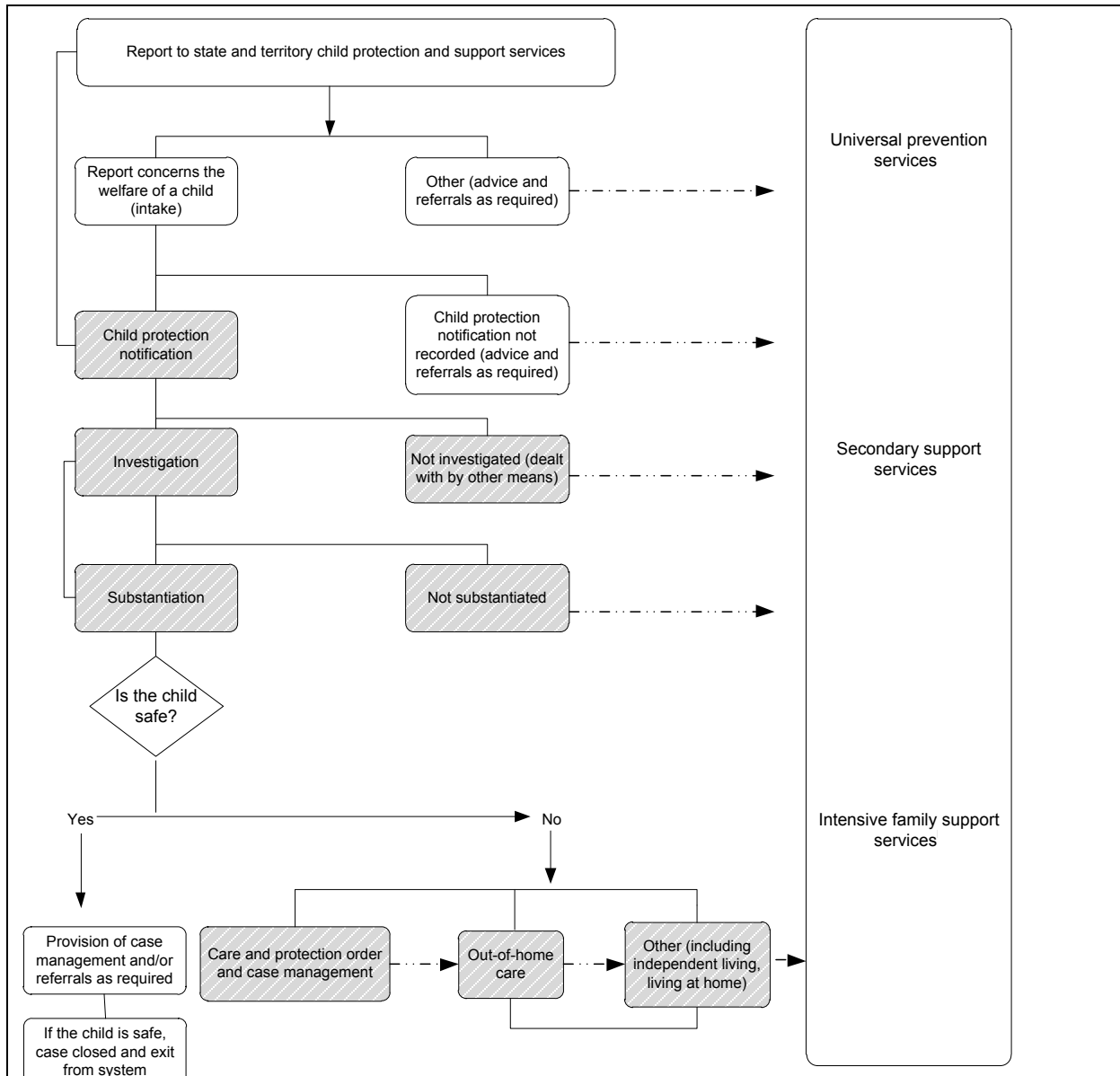
Child protection processes

Across Australia, the broad processes in child protection systems are similar. A simplified version of the main processes is shown in Figure 1.1. These processes are described in more detail in Box 1.1.

Children in need of protection can come into contact with departments responsible for child protection through a number of avenues. Reports of concern about a child may be made by community members, professionals (for example, police, school personnel or health practitioners), the children themselves, their parent(s) or another relative. These reports may relate to abuse and neglect or to broader family concerns, such as economic problems or social isolation.

Child protection intake services screen incoming reports to determine whether further action is required. The defined threshold for intervention varies across jurisdictions and this can lead to jurisdictional differences in the responses taken to initial reports. Reports that are deemed to require further action are generally classified as either a 'family support issue' or a 'child protection notification'.

Reports classified as requiring family support are further reviewed and may be referred to support services. The National Child Protection Data Collection does not include those reports that are not classified as child protection notifications.



Notes

1. Shaded boxes are items for which data are collected nationally.
2. Dashed lines indicate that clients may or may not receive these services, depending on need, service availability and client willingness to participate in what are voluntary services.
3. Support services include family preservation and reunification services provided by government departments responsible for child protection, and other agencies. Children and families move in and out of these services and the statutory child protection system, and might also be in the statutory child protection system while receiving support services.

Figure 1.1: Child protection process in Australia

Box 1.1 Child protection statutory processes

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Child protection notifications are assessed to determine whether an investigation is required, if referral to support services is more appropriate or if no further protective action is necessary.

An investigation aims to obtain more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification and to determine whether the notification is 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'.

A substantiation indicates there is sufficient reason (after an investigation) to believe the child has been, is being or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. The relevant department will then attempt to ensure the safety of the child or children through an appropriate level of continued involvement, including providing support services to the child and family.

Care and protection orders

In situations where further intervention is required, the department may apply to the relevant court to place the child on a care and protection order. Court is usually a last resort – for example, where the families are unable to provide safe care, where other avenues for resolving the situation have been exhausted, or where the extended family is unable to provide safe alternatives for care of children. The level of departmental involvement that a care and protection order mandates will vary depending on the type of order (see Box 4.1).

Out-of-home care

Some children are placed in out-of-home care because they were the subject of a child protection substantiation and require a more protective environment. Children may also be placed in out-of-home care when their parents are incapable of providing adequate care for them, or where alternative accommodation is needed during times of family conflict. However, there are no national data available on the reasons children are placed in out-of-home care. See Box 5.1 for the national categories of out-of-home care.

Out-of-home care is considered an intervention of last resort, with the current emphasis being to keep children with their families wherever possible. Where children need to be placed in out-of-home care, an attempt is made to subsequently reunite children with their families. If it is necessary to remove a child from their family, placement within the wider family or community is preferred. This is particularly the case with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as is outlined in the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (see Section 5.2, particularly Box 5.3).

Family support services

Family support services include programs that seek to prevent family dysfunction and child maltreatment occurring; that provide treatment, support and advice to families; and that offer more intensive programs to assist the most vulnerable families (COAG 2009). Family support services may be used instead of, or as a complementary service to, a statutory child protection response, and may include developing parenting and household skills, therapeutic care, and family reunification services.

Child protection policies and practices

Child protection policies and practices are under continual development on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis. In recent years, there has been an increasing national focus on early intervention and family support services to help prevent families entering or re-entering the child protection system and to help minimise the need for more intrusive interventions (AIFS: Bromfield & Holzer 2008).

Most jurisdictions have enacted strategies that attempt to assist families in a more holistic way by coordinating service delivery and by providing better access to different types of child and family services (COAG 2014).

Jurisdictional policy context

Although the processes that each jurisdiction uses to protect children are broadly similar (AIFS: Bromfield & Higgins 2005; Figure 1.1), there are some important differences between jurisdictions' child protection policies and practices that should be taken into account when making cross-jurisdiction comparisons. Key differences across jurisdictional policy are briefly discussed here. Further details relating to each jurisdiction's policy and practice are at Appendixes D-I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>.

Mandatory reporting

Commonwealth and jurisdiction-specific legislation govern the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. However, there is variation with regard to who is legally obliged to report it to the appropriate authority. Further details about mandatory reporting are at Appendixes D-I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>.

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

The policies for assessing child protection notifications vary broadly across jurisdictions. This may result in higher levels of notifications being recorded in jurisdictions where all reports are recorded as notifications ('caller-defined') than in jurisdictions where the initial report is considered a notification only when the information received suggests that a child needs care or protection ('agency-defined').

Between initial reports and substantiation, a range of activities take place that are broadly categorised as investigations. In jurisdictions where a preliminary assessment has occurred, activities tend to assess risk of significant harm and focus on formal investigation. In jurisdictions where all initial contacts are recorded as notifications, a preliminary assessment will often occur to determine the need for formal investigation, followed by a formal investigation if it is concluded that a child may have been, or is, at risk of harm. Formal investigation, as conducted in each jurisdiction, will determine whether the notification has been substantiated.

Thresholds for what is substantiated vary – some jurisdictions substantiate the harm or risk of harm to the child, and others substantiate actions by parents or incidents that may cause harm. In considering harm to the child, the focus of the child protection systems in many jurisdictions has shifted away from the actions of parents to the outcomes for the child.

As well as policy variation at the jurisdictional level, the definition of what constitutes child abuse and neglect has broadened at a national level over time (AIFS: Holzer & Bromfield 2008). These changes affect the comparability of data included in this report. Legislative,

policy and definitional differences between jurisdictions and detailed information on recent policy and practices changes are outlined at Appendixes D-I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>.

National policy context

The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020 (COAG 2009) aims to ensure Australia's children are safe and well. As a measure of this outcome, a target of 'a substantial and sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia' has been set. The National Framework is composed of a series of 3-year action plans, and progress against agreed measures is reported annually to the COAG. Available data for these measures were reported in the 2010–11, 2011–12, 2012–13 and 2013–14 annual reports to COAG (COAG 2012, 2013, 2014, forthcoming). Several new measures were reported for the first time in 2015, including an indicator relating to out-of-home carer retention. More information and the latest data on a range of National Framework indicators are available on the AIHW website <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/nfpac/>>.

Developing and implementing National Standards for Out-of-Home Care was a priority area under the second action plan, for 2012–2015. These standards were designed to deliver consistency and to drive improvements in the quality of out-of-home care provided to children and young people (FaHCSIA 2011). The third action plan, for 2015–2018, strongly emphasises prevention and early intervention, with a focus on targeting assistance to those communities who have most contact with the child protection system (Department of Social Services 2015).

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

On 11 January 2013, the then Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, appointed a 6-member Royal Commission to investigate Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission released an interim report on 30 June 2015 (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2015a). Related research released later in 2014 included reports relating to child protection legislation, residential care, and previous inquiries into institutions providing care for children in Australia (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2015b).

Out-of-home care, as defined in the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set (CP NMDS), is an institution for the purposes of the Royal Commission. A public hearing was held from 10–20 March 2015 to examine child sexual abuse in out-of-home care. Some jurisdictions include cases of alleged abuse in care in the data in this report for the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations; see Appendix H in Appendixes D-I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>. However, these cases are not able to be separately identified in the national data. The work of the Royal Commission was initially due for completion by the end of 2015; however, additional funding has been granted to extend the completion date to 15 December 2017.

Senate Inquiry into Out-of-Home Care

On 17 July 2014, the Senate referred matters relating to out-of-home care to the Community Affairs References Committee for inquiry and report. These matters included drivers of the increase in the number of children in out-of-home care, demographics of children in care, outcomes for children in out-of-home care, models for out-of-home care, and consistency of approach around Australia. The report, which was released in August 2015, included

39 recommendations, several of which relate specifically to the CP NMDS (Senate Community Affairs Committee Secretariat 2015).

1.2 Child protection data components

Data sources

National child protection data

The state and territory departments and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) jointly fund the annual collation, analysis and publication of child protection data. Data in this report are largely drawn from the CP NMDS, implemented for reporting from 2012–13. The CP NMDS consists of a number of unit record (child-level) files extracted from state and territory child protection administrative data sets according to nationally agreed definitions and technical specifications. The CP NMDS, by definition, includes all items that jurisdictions have agreed to provide to the AIHW for national child protection reporting. More information about the development and implementation of the CP NMDS can be found in the AIHW working paper *A new approach to national child protection data: implementation of the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set* (AIHW 2014a).

The AIHW, in collaboration with jurisdictions, annually reviews the national technical specifications and definitional materials associated with the CP NMDS. The AIHW and the states and territories then agree to any required changes.

The jurisdictions provide data to the AIHW across seven broad components:

- notifications, investigations and substantiations
- care and protection orders
- out-of-home care
- foster carers
- relative/kinship carers
- intensive family support services
- National Standards for Out-of-Home care.

Data for these components have been based on unit record level data for all jurisdictions except New South Wales. (Data for New South Wales are based on aggregate data, using the methodology from previous years.) Other jurisdictions also supplied data in aggregate format for tables where unit record data were not available. This includes all data relating to the use of intensive family support services for all jurisdictions.

National child protection data are analysed and published annually in:

- *Child protection Australia* (this report)
- the annual report to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on progress in implementing the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020*
- the Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services* (RoGS) (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2016). For all jurisdictions except New South Wales, most data reported for 2014–15 in the *Report on Government Services 2016* were produced from the CP NMDS for that report. Data for New South

Wales were based on aggregate data that this jurisdiction supplied to the Productivity Commission. Some data included in this report may not match data reported in the RoGS due to retrospective updates to state/territory data and differences in the data extraction and analysis methodologies.

Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match state and territory figures published elsewhere. Queensland supplied unit record files for the first time in 2014–15. Queensland data for 2014-15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Population estimates used for rate calculations

All rates in this report, including historical rates, have been calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census. This may have resulted in revisions to rates published in previous editions of *Child protection Australia*. The population estimates used in calculating historical rates are available in online supplementary tables (tables S1 and S2). These can be downloaded free of charge from the AIHW website <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728&tab=3>>.

Indigenous populations and associated rates presented in this report are calculated using the revised Indigenous population estimates and projections based on the 2011 Census. See Box 1.2 for further details.

Box 1.2 Indigenous Australians—population and rates

On 30 April 2014, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released new Indigenous population estimates based on the 2011 Census. These included revised back-cast estimates of the Indigenous population for the years before 2012, as well as population projections for 2012 onwards. There was an increase in estimates of the number of Indigenous Australians for those based on the 2011 Census compared with the 2006 Census-based estimates. This means that any rates calculated with Indigenous population estimates based on the 2011 Census are lower than those based on the 2006 Census.

Following a review of the impact of the revised Indigenous population projections, the AIHW has adopted a methodology for reporting Indigenous populations and their associated rates. This methodology uses the Series B Indigenous population projections for reporting from 2011 onwards and back-casts historical trend data using the 2011 Census-based series of back-cast estimates for the Indigenous population. (See Appendix B for more information regarding the calculation of rates.)

All Indigenous rates in this report are calculated using the revised Indigenous population estimates and projections, based on the 2011 Census, and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Scope and limitations of the CP NMDS

National child protection data are based on those cases reported to departments responsible for child protection and, therefore, are likely to understate the true prevalence of child abuse and neglect across Australia. Further, notifications made to other organisations, such as the police or non-government welfare agencies, are included only if these notifications were also referred to departments responsible for child protection.

For child-based counts in this report, children are counted only once in the relevant table, regardless of the number of contacts the child had with the component of child protection being reported. For example, if a child was the subject of more than one substantiation during the reporting period, he or she is counted only once in tables reporting the number of children in substantiations. However, there may be some small level of double-counting due to movement between jurisdictions.

Not all jurisdictions were able to supply unit record level data for all tables included in this report. As such, some tables include aggregated data provided by jurisdictions. Footnotes have been included to identify tables where aggregate data are included (in addition to New South Wales data, which were based entirely on aggregate data in 2014–15).

The practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children in the child protection system vary across states and territories. Over the last few years, several jurisdictions have introduced measures to improve the identification of Indigenous clients (AIHW 2012). However, in some jurisdictions, the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown still affects the quality of data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (as footnoted for relevant tables).

The data systems that jurisdictions use can be upgraded and changed between reporting cycles. Details regarding jurisdictions' data systems and any key changes from the previous year are at Appendixes D–I (online)

<<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>.

'Average day' measures have been included for children on orders (Box 4.2, Table A17) or in out-of-home care (Box 5.2; Table A30) and for carer households approved/authorised to provide funded out-of-home care placements (Box 6.2; Table A40). Average day measures are calculated by summing the number of days that each person was subject to the same event during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year. This provides a view of the data that accounts for each day during the year, rather than a snapshot for a single day (for example, 30 June, which is typically reported). These data are presented in boxes and appendix tables only due to known issues with data availability and quality.

2 Children receiving child protection services

For the purpose of this report, children receiving child protection services are defined as those children who, in the reporting period, were:

- the subject of an investigation of a notification, and/or
- on a care and protection order, and/or
- in out-of-home care.

2.1 Overview and key statistics

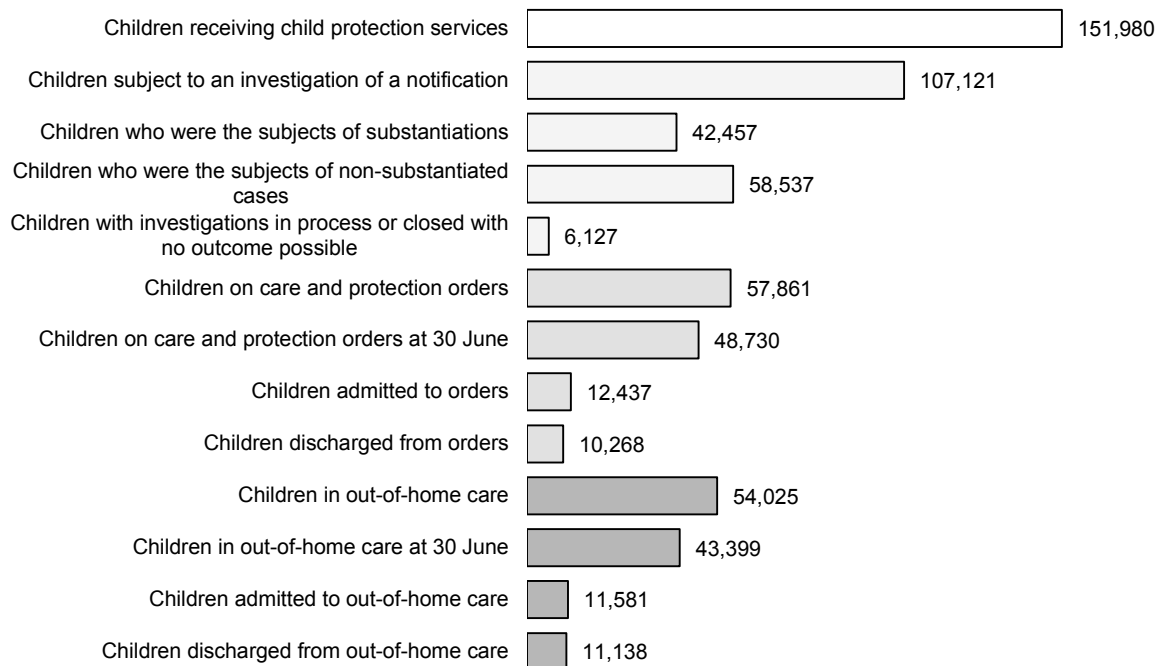
In 2014–15, almost 152,000 children received child protection services – around 107,100 were the subject of an investigation, 57,900 were on a care and protection order and 54,000 were in out-of-home care (Figure 2.1). Note that individual components do not sum to the total children receiving child protection services as children may be involved in more than one component of the system (see Note 2 of Figure 2.1).

2.2 Child protection services received

Figure 2.1 shows that 151,980 children received child protection services in 2014–15, a rate of 28.6 per 1,000 children aged 0–17 in the general population.

Of children receiving child protection services in 2014–15, 107,121 were the subject of an investigation (20.2 per 1,000), 57,861 were on a care and protection order (10.9 per 1,000) and 54,025 were in out-of-home care (10.2 per 1,000). These rates varied across jurisdictions (Table 2.1). The key differences that can affect these data are outlined on page 4 and at Appendix F (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>. Children may be involved in more than one component of the system. As such, the components do not sum to the total children receiving child protection services (see Figure 2.2 for the overlap of services received).

Children who were only the subject of a notification that was not subsequently investigated have not been included in this analysis. This is because, apart from an initial risk assessment, it is expected that the department responsible for child protection would have a limited level of involvement with these children and their families. Children who received intensive family support services only have not been included in this section as unit record level data were not available for national reporting. See Chapter 7 for information about children receiving intensive family support services.



Notes

1. Numbers presented in this figure refer to protection services during 2014–15 except for two counts: children on care and protection orders at 30 June 2015, and children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015.
2. Children may be involved in more than one component of the system. As such, the components do not sum to the total children receiving child protection services.
3. Children may be the subject of multiple investigations and decisions to substantiate or not substantiate within the reporting period. However, the numbers reported for 'children who were the subjects of substantiations' and 'children who were the subjects of non-substantiated cases' are mutually exclusive—children can be counted only for the highest level of intervention provided in the period (that is, substantiation or not a substantiation).
4. Refer to the Glossary for definitions.

Sources: Tables 2.1, 4.1, 5.1 and A6.

Figure 2.1: Children receiving child protection services in Australia during 2014–15

Table 2.1: Children receiving child protection services, by number and number per 1,000 children, states and territories, 2014–15

Child protection component	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
Children who were the subject of an investigation of a notification	43,574	22,827	17,748	11,758	3,552	1,369	1,054	5,239	107,121
Children on care and protection orders	20,506	14,028	10,812	5,489	3,457	1,393	873	1,303	57,861
Children in out-of-home care	21,426	11,017	10,257	4,725	3,273	1,245	831	1,251	54,025
Children receiving child protection services	59,092	33,430	27,163	15,909	6,309	2,560	1,703	5,814	151,980
	Number per 1,000 children								
Children who were the subject of an investigation of a notification	25.8	17.8	15.8	20.0	9.9	12.0	12.3	82.4	20.2
Children on care and protection orders	12.1	10.9	9.6	9.3	9.6	12.2	10.2	20.5	10.9
Children in out-of-home care	12.7	8.6	9.1	8.0	9.1	10.9	9.7	19.7	10.2
Children receiving child protection services	35.0	26.0	24.2	27.0	17.6	22.4	19.8	91.5	28.6

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

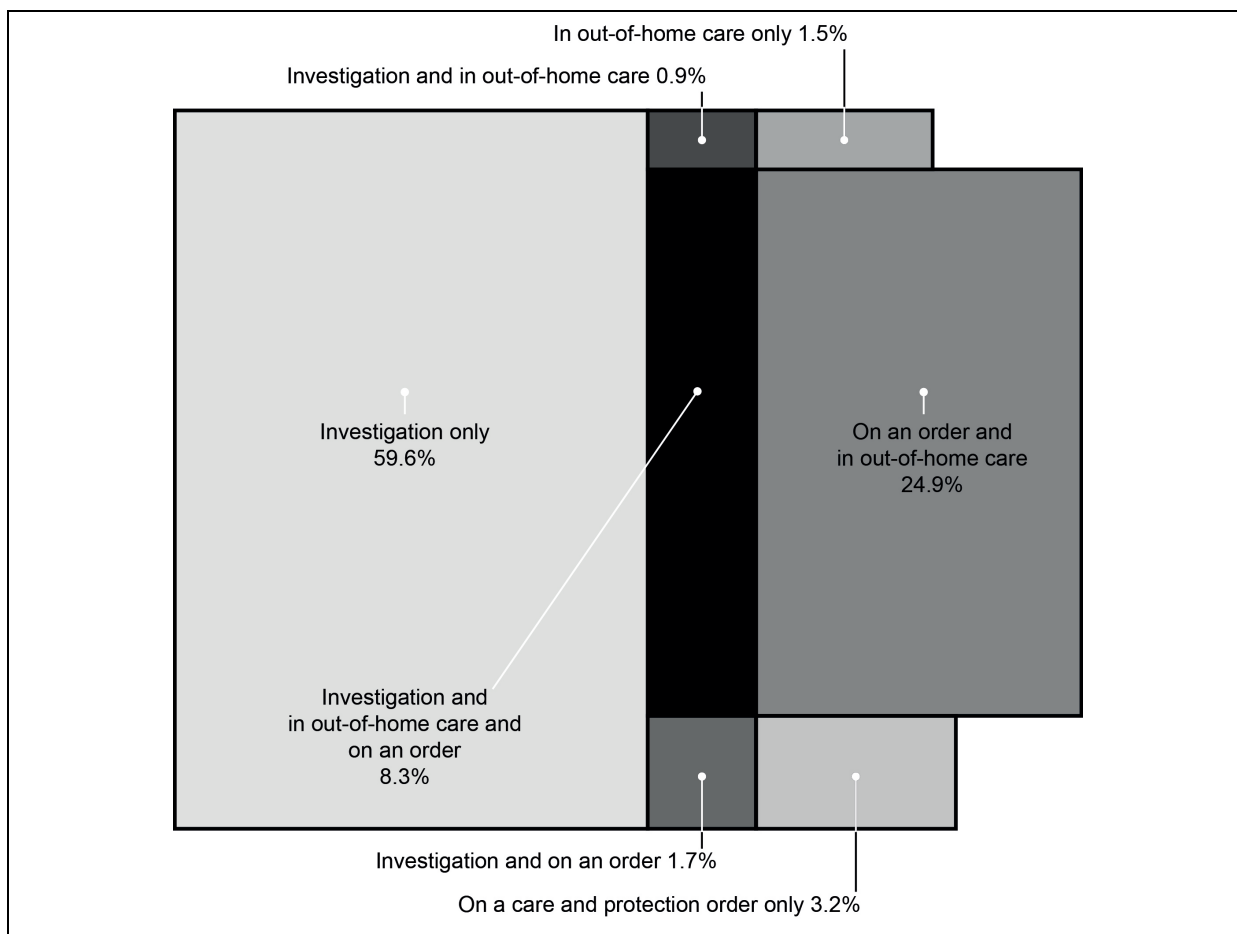
Notes

1. 'Children receiving child protection services' is defined as one or more of the following occurring within the reporting period: an investigation of a notification, being on a care and protection order, or being in out-of-home care. It is not a total count of these three areas; it is a count of unique children across the three areas.
2. Refer to Table A46 for the population data.
3. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Children may receive a combination of child protection services. As such, there are links and overlaps between the data for the notification, investigation and substantiation; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care data collections. The overlap between the separate data collections has been analysed, drawing on unit record data from the majority of jurisdictions (and aggregate information specifically provided by New South Wales).

Figure 2.2 shows that three-fifths (60%) of children receiving child protection services during 2014–15 were the subject of an investigation only. One-quarter (25%) of children were both on an order and in out-of-home care. Overall, 8% of children were involved in all three components of the system. These findings are similar to those for 2013–14 (AIHW 2015).



Source: Table A1.

Figure 2.2: Children receiving child protection services by component of services received, 2014-15

Children who were the subject of an investigation only represent a large component of the analysis of unique children receiving services. Note that almost two-thirds (64%) of these children were not the subjects of substantiations in 2014-15 (Table 2.2). However this varied markedly across jurisdictions, with higher proportions of substantiations in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania (53%, 53% and 68%, respectively).

Table 2.2: Children who were the subject of a finalised investigation only in 2014–15, by investigation outcome, states and territories

Investigation outcome	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
Substantiated	11,238	9,279	4,208	2,439	1,294	650	201	1,392	30,701
Not substantiated	24,662	8,311	10,881	6,156	1,136	301	480	2,122	54,049
<i>Total children in finalised investigations</i>	<i>35,900</i>	<i>17,590</i>	<i>15,089</i>	<i>8,595</i>	<i>2,430</i>	<i>951</i>	<i>681</i>	<i>3,514</i>	<i>84,750</i>
	%								
Substantiated	31.3	52.8	27.9	28.4	53.3	68.3	29.5	39.6	36.2
Not substantiated	68.7	47.2	72.1	71.6	46.7	31.7	70.5	60.4	63.8
<i>Total children in finalised investigations</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Total children who were the subject of an investigation only	36,729	18,506	15,817	10,280	2,779	1,146	775	4,511	90,543

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Note: This table includes data for children whose only contact with child protection services during 2014–15 was an investigation. It excludes those children who had an investigation *and* involvement in another area of the system, such as care and protection orders and/or out-of-home care. The data relating to investigation outcome are further restricted to include only those for whom an investigation was finalised in the reporting period, thus excluding investigations in process or closed with no outcome possible.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

The CP NMDS will be used in future to provide more detailed analyses regarding the movement of children within the child protection system (for example, identifying the number of children who are the subject of a substantiation who are subsequently placed on care and protection orders and/or in out-of-home care).

2.3 Characteristics of children receiving child protection services

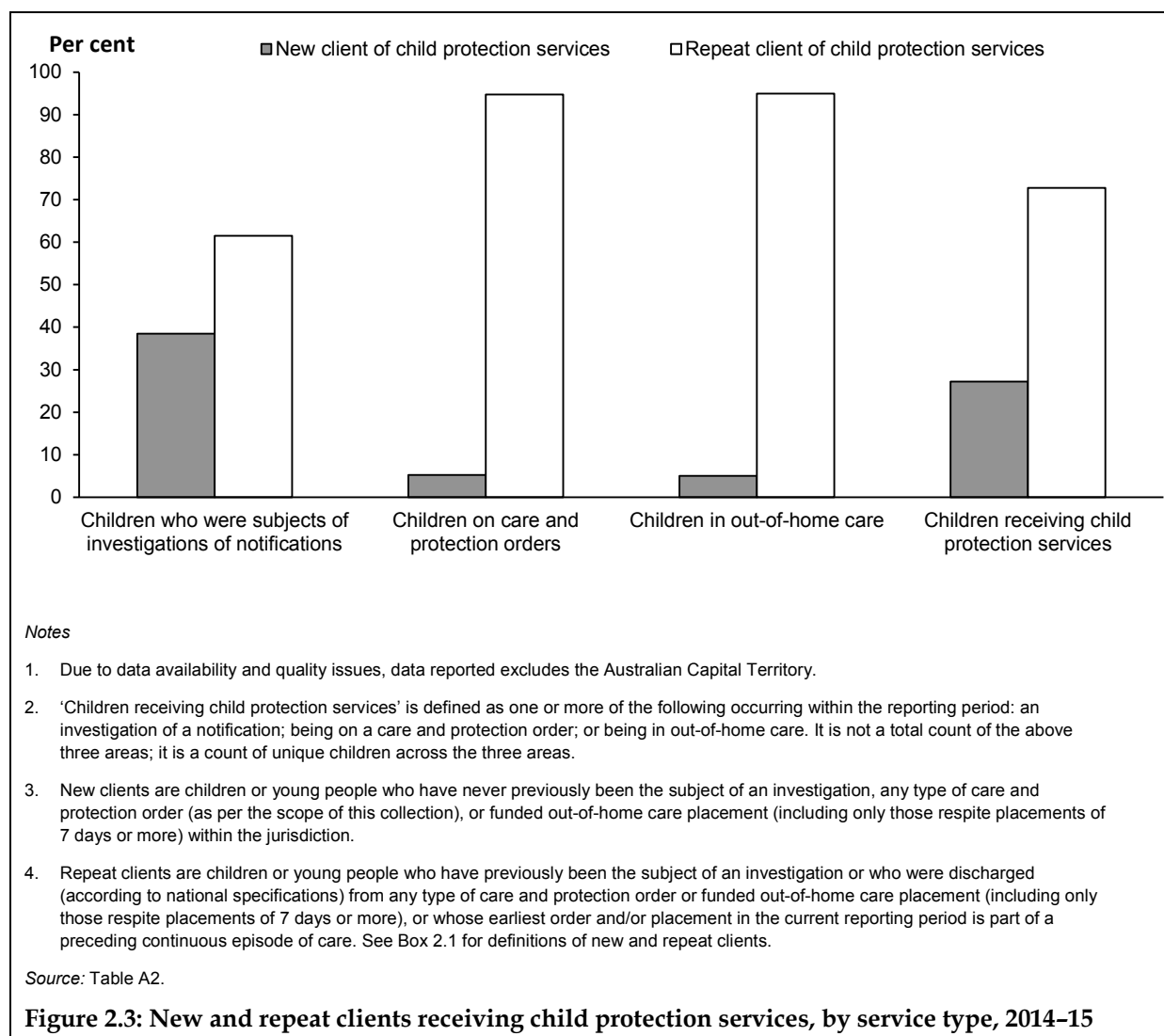
New and repeat clients

Examining data on whether children were new or repeat clients of the reporting jurisdiction provides some insight into whether child protection service clients are primarily new children or those with prior involvement with the child protection system, and whether this differs across the system components. Definitions of new and repeat clients are provided in Box 2.1.

Box 2.1 Definition of new and repeat clients

- 'New clients' are children or young people who have never previously been the subject of an investigation, any type of care and protection order (as per the scope of this collection), or funded out-of-home care placement (excluding respite placements lasting less than 7 days) within the jurisdiction.
- 'Repeat clients' are children or young people who have previously been the subject of an investigation, or who were discharged (according to national specifications) from any type of care and protection order or funded out-of-home care placement (excluding respite placements lasting less than 7 days), or whose earliest order and/or placement in the current reporting period is part of a preceding continuous episode of care.

In 2014–15, almost three-quarters (73%) of children receiving child protection services were repeat clients (Figure 2.3). However, the proportion of repeat clients was substantially higher for those on an order or in out-of-home care (both around 95%) than for those who were the subject of investigations (62%).



Age

Across Australia in 2014–15, infants (children aged under 1) were most likely (35.1 per 1,000 children) to be receiving child protection services and those aged 15–17 were least likely (19.4 per 1,000 children). This pattern was consistent across all jurisdictions except New South Wales, where children aged 5–9 were most likely to be receiving child protection services (36.5 per 1,000 children; see Table 2.3). The median age of children receiving services was 7.

These findings reflect the fact that younger children are regarded as the most vulnerable, and most jurisdictions have specific policies and procedures in place to protect them. There has also been an increased focus nationally on early intervention and on providing services early in a child's life to improve long-term outcomes and reduce the negative impacts of trauma and harm (COAG 2009; FaHCSIA 2012).

Table 2.3: Rates of children receiving child protection services, by age group, states and territories, 2014–15 (number per 1,000 children)

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	34.3	40.7	28.4	29.6	34.7	28.9	29.7	125.4	35.1
1–4	32.8	26.5	25.0	27.0	17.9	23.4	18.4	94.0	28.3
5–9	36.5	27.1	25.4	30.2	19.1	24.2	20.1	98.4	30.2
10–14	35.5	26.3	24.1	27.0	16.7	21.4	21.3	94.4	28.8
15–17	26.0	18.0	15.1	15.8	10.3	13.7	14.5	55.6	19.4
0–17	33.6	26.0	23.4	26.3	17.6	21.7	19.7	91.5	27.9
All children	35.0	26.0	24.2	27.0	17.6	22.4	19.8	91.5	28.6
Children receiving child protection services	59,092	33,430	27,163	15,909	6,309	2,560	1,703	5,814	151,980

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

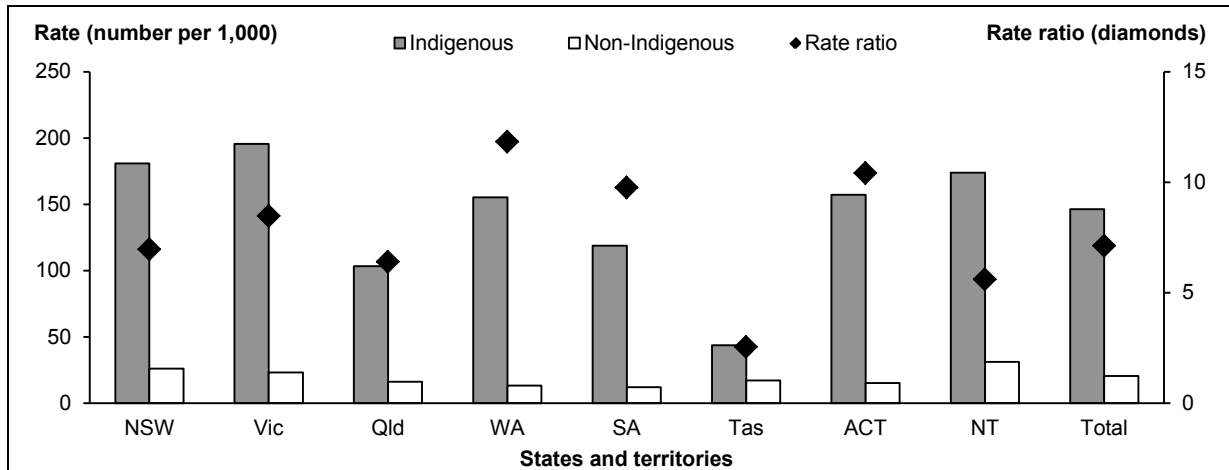
Notes

1. Refer to Table A4 for numbers of children receiving child protection services for this table and to Table A48 for population data.
2. Unborn children may be covered under the child protection legislation and are therefore included in this report. However, they are excluded in rate calculations for the 'less than 1' and '0–17' age categories. Unborn children are included in the 'All children' rates.
3. 'All children' includes children of unknown age.
4. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

During 2014–15, 42,913 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children received child protection services – a rate of 146.4 per 1,000 children compared with a rate of 20.5 per 1,000 for non-Indigenous children. Overall, Indigenous children were 7 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to have received child protection services. However, the rate ratio varied substantially across the jurisdictions – from 3 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to be receiving child protection services in Tasmania to nearly 12 times as likely in Western Australia (Figure 2.4). This measure may be affected by the higher proportion of children with unknown Indigenous status in these jurisdictions.



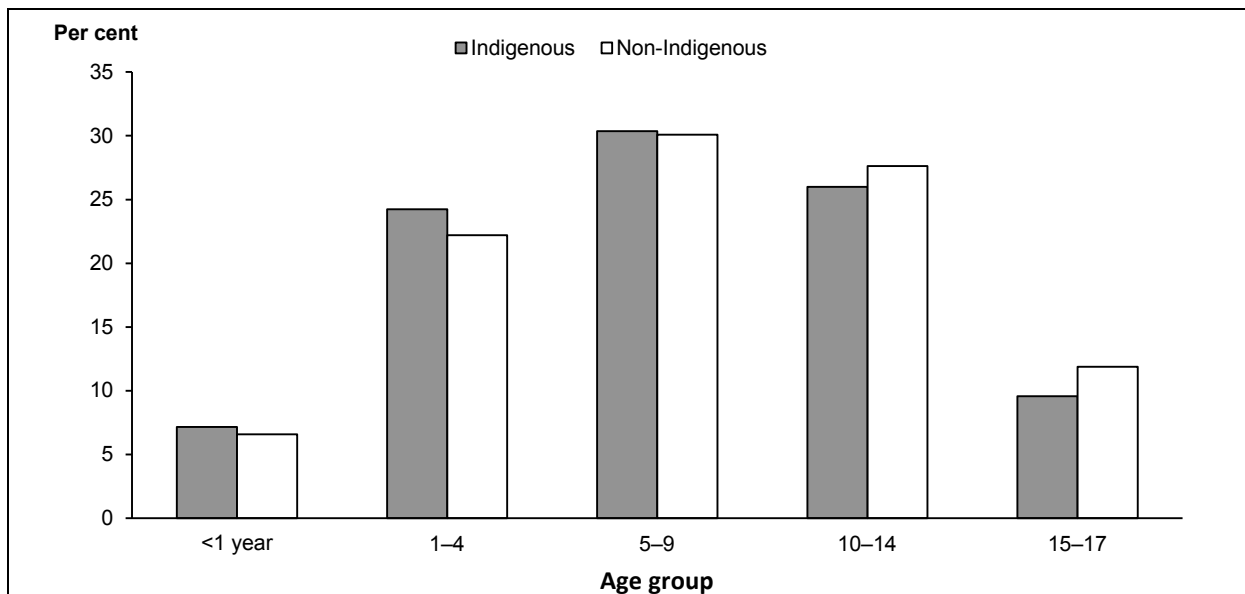
Notes

1. Rate and rate ratio calculations include unborn children and children of unknown age but exclude children of unknown Indigenous status.
2. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.
3. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who received child protection services by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who received child protection services. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children received child protection services for every non-Indigenous child who received child protection services. Children whose Indigenous status is unknown are excluded from the calculations.

Source: Table A3.

Figure 2.4: Children receiving child protection services by Indigenous status, states and territories, 2014-15 (rate and rate ratio)

On average, Indigenous children receiving child protection services were slightly younger than non-Indigenous children, with median ages of 7 and 8, respectively. Additionally, 62% of Indigenous children were aged under 10, compared with 59% of non-Indigenous children (Figure 2.5).



Source: Table A4.

Figure 2.5: Children receiving child protection services by age group and Indigenous status, 2014-15

2.4 National trends

Trends relating to children

The number of children receiving child protection services rose by around 13% – from 135,139 children in 2012–13 to 151,980 children in 2014–15. The rate of children receiving child protection services in Australia increased from 26.0 per 1,000 in 2012–13 to 28.6 per 1,000 in 2014–15 (Table 2.4).

Since 2012–13, rates have increased overall for all jurisdictions except Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

Table 2.4: Children receiving child protection services, by number and number per 1,000, states and territories, 2012–13 to 2014–15

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
2012–13	48,399	27,272	30,389	13,657	6,380	2,947	2,215	3,880	135,139
2013–14	53,250	28,949	29,585	15,385	7,083	2,609	1,635	4,527	143,023
2014–15	59,092	33,430	27,163	15,909	6,309	2,560	1,703	5,814	151,980
Number per 1,000 children									
2012–13	29.1	21.8	27.6	24.0	17.9	25.5	26.7	61.3	26.0
2013–14	31.7	22.9	26.6	26.5	19.8	22.7	19.3	71.3	27.2
2014–15	35.0	26.0	24.2	27.0	17.6	22.4	19.8	91.5	28.6

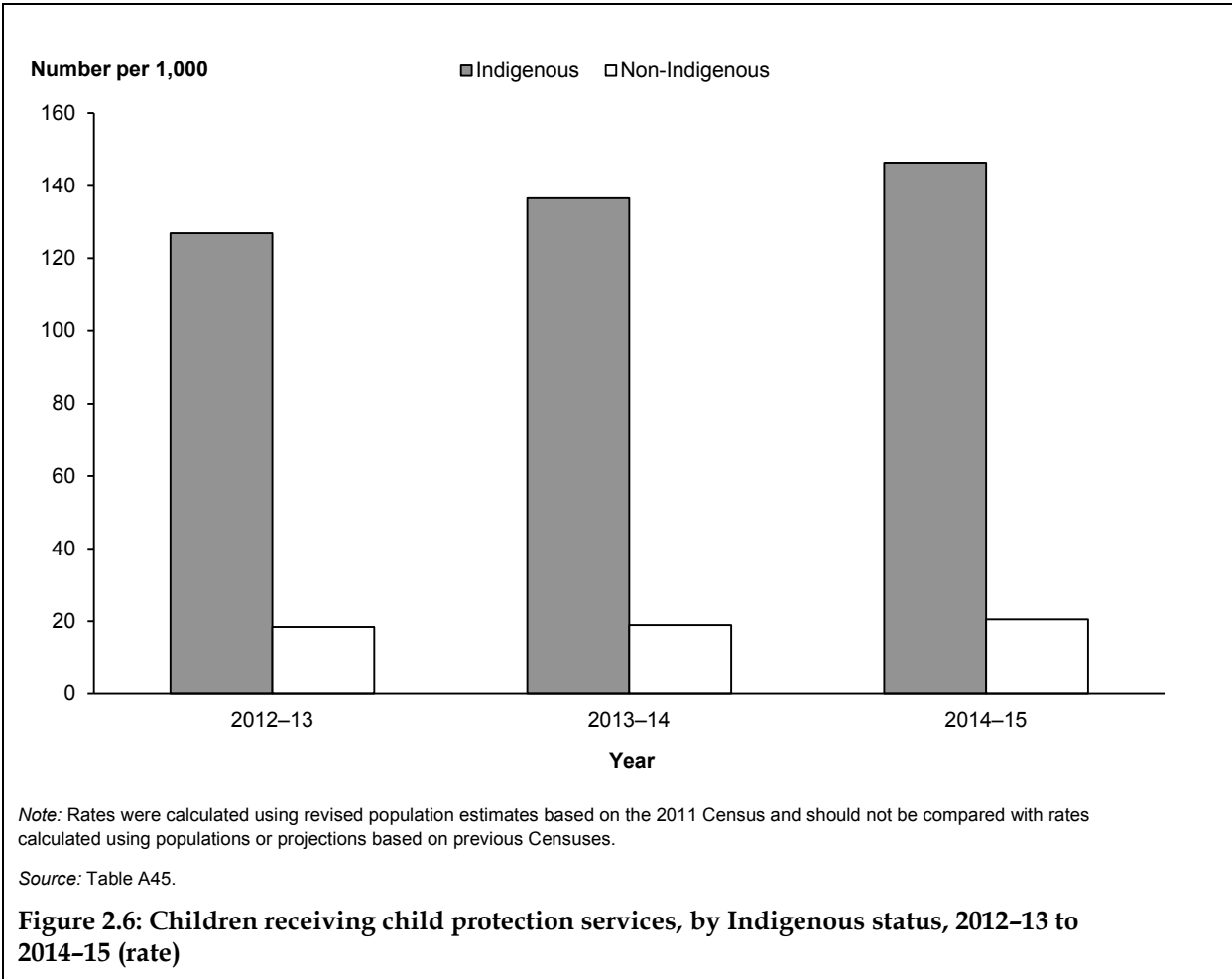
(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Note: Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Over the past 3 years, the rate of children receiving child protection services has increased for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children – from 126.9 to 146.4 per 1,000 and from 18.5 to 20.5 per 1,000, respectively (Figure 2.6).



3 Notifications, investigations and substantiations

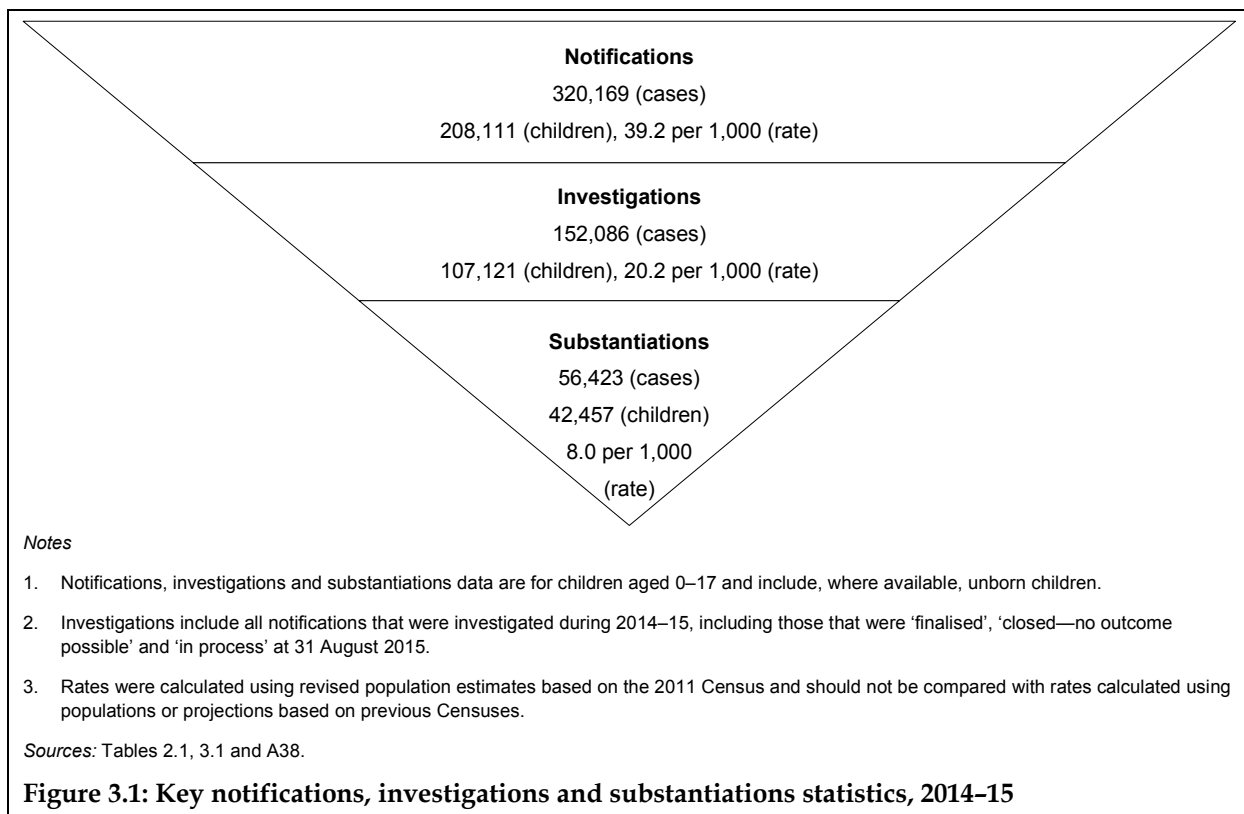
This chapter contains information on the number of notifications, investigations and substantiations (see Box 3.1) and the number of children who were the subject of these. ‘Children and young people’ are defined as those under the age of 18. In some jurisdictions, this may include pregnant women where there are concerns about their unborn children (where unborn children are covered under the child protection legislation).

The data in this chapter relate to notifications that departments responsible for child protection received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015. See Box 3.1 for further details.

3.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2014–15, there were almost 320,200 notifications involving around 208,100 children, a rate of 39.2 per 1,000 children in Australia. The number of children in notifications is higher than the unique number of children receiving child protection services reported in Chapter 2. This is because the unique count of children receiving child protection services does not include children in notifications who did not have a subsequent investigation. These children are included in the count of all children in notifications.

Of the notifications, 48% (almost 152,100) were investigated, with 56,400 substantiations (after investigation) relating to around 42,500 children – a rate of 8.0 per 1,000 children (Figure 3.1).



Box 3.1: Notifications, investigations and substantiations

- **Notifications** consist of contacts made to an authorised department by persons or other bodies alleging child abuse or neglect, child maltreatment or harm to a child. The National Child Protection Data Collection does not include those reports that are not classified as child protection notifications.
A notification can only involve 1 child. Where it is claimed that 2 children have been abused or neglected or harmed, this is counted as 2 notifications, even if the children are from 1 family. Where there is more than 1 notification about the same 'event' involving a child, this is counted as 1 notification. Where there is more than 1 notification between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015, but relating to different events, these are counted as separate notifications.
- **Investigations** are the processes whereby the relevant department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015. Departmental staff assess the harm or degree of harm to the child, and their protective needs. An investigation includes sighting or interviewing the child where it is practical to do so.
- **Finalised investigations** are those notifications made during 2014–15 that were investigated and had an outcome of either 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' recorded by 31 August 2015. The cut-off point of 31 August allows time for investigating notifications made close to the end of the financial year. The outcomes of investigations that are still in process after this cut-off (4%, or 6,282 in 2014–15) are not reported in the data for this or subsequent reporting periods. It is important to note that substantiations as reported here (that is, substantiations of notifications received during the year) are therefore an under-count of the actual number of substantiations made during the year, due to the use of this methodology in preceding reporting periods.
- **Substantiations** of notifications received during the current reporting year refer to child protection notifications made to relevant authorities during the year ended 30 June 2015 that were investigated, for which the investigation was finalised by 31 August 2015, and for which it was concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, was being, or was likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiations may also include cases where there is no suitable caregiver, such as children who have been abandoned or whose parents are deceased.

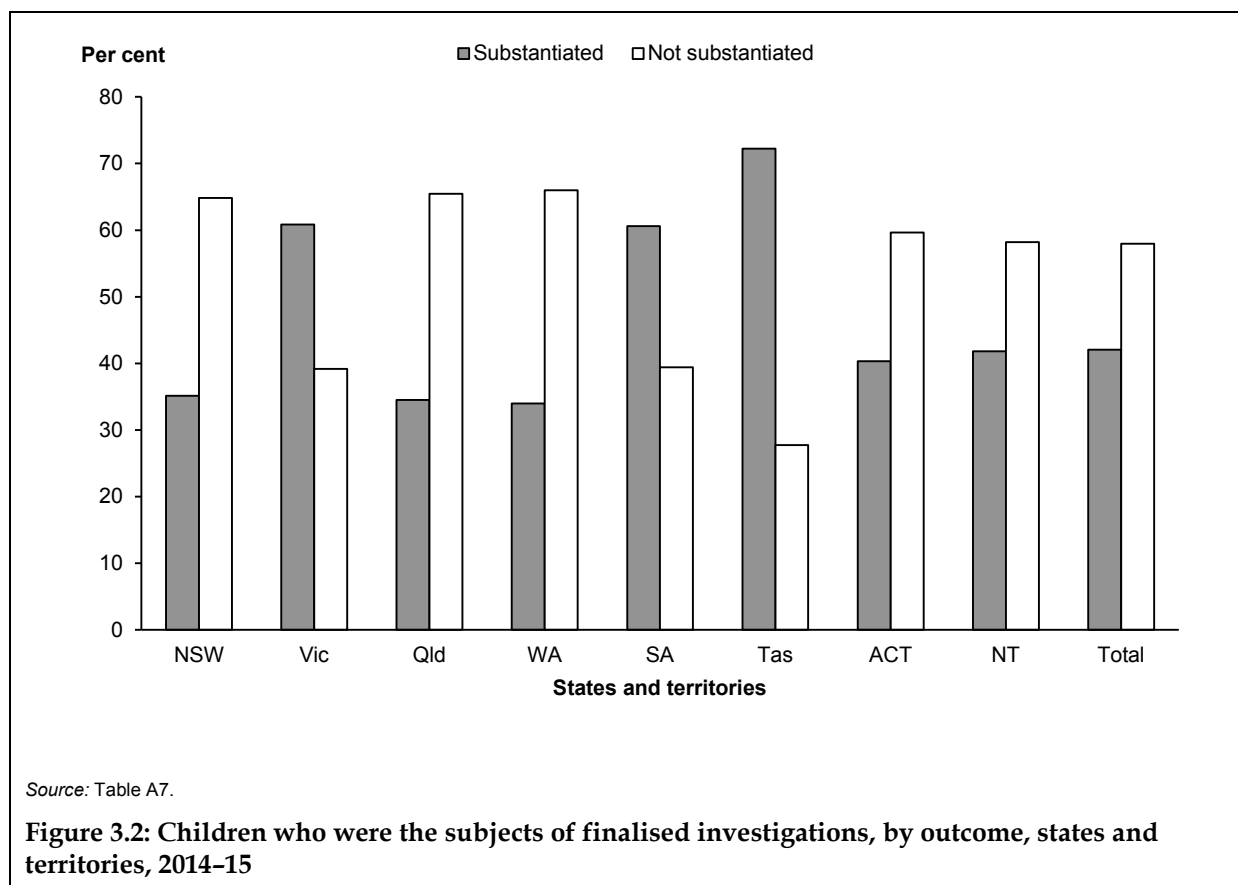
Instances of alleged abuse or neglect by family members (other than parents/guardians) and non-family members are generally included in the count of notifications if the notification was referred to the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. These cases are included in counts of investigations and substantiations only where there has been a finding or allegation of a failure to protect by the parent or guardian.

3.2 Cases and the children involved

Of the 320,169 notifications in 2014–15, 152,086 (48%) were assessed as requiring further investigation while the remaining 168,083 (53%) were dealt with by other means, such as by being referred to a support service (Table A5). The number of notifications and the percentage of those notifications investigated are not comparable across jurisdictions. This is because legislation and the policies that provide the framework for assessing child protection notifications vary broadly across jurisdictions.

For investigations in 2014–15, the most common source of the related notification was police (22%), followed by school personnel (17%). Nationally, only 0.3% of notifications came directly from the child involved (Table A6). Notifications to departments responsible for child protection come from a range of sources, and legislation relating to mandatory reporting varies across jurisdictions. This should be taken into consideration when interpreting these data (see Appendixes D–I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>>, for details).

Overall, 42% of the 100,994 children in finalised investigations were the subjects of substantiations in 2014–15. The proportion varied across the jurisdictions, from 34% in Western Australia to 72% in Tasmania (Figure 3.2).



Children within the child protection system may be involved in multiple statutory child protection cases during any given year. Across Australia, in 2014–15, the total number of notifications (320,169) and substantiations (56,423) involved 208,111 and 42,457 children, respectively (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Number of notifications, substantiations of notifications and number of children who were the subject of a notification and/or substantiation of a notification, states and territories, 2014–15

	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children in notifications	73,522	62,785	19,488	14,367	13,841	8,804	5,405	9,899	208,111
Total notifications	126,146	91,586	22,350	16,828	22,040	13,560	10,633	17,026	320,169
Children in substantiations	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457
Total substantiations	26,424	14,115	6,435	3,623	2,335	904	595	1,992	56,423

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In Western Australia, notifications where the primary concern at notification was emotional/psychological, physical, sexual abuse, or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

These data reflect the fact that a number of children were the subject of more than 1 notification and/or substantiation. Table 3.2 shows that about 1 in 5 children (19%) who were the subject of any substantiation during the year were the subject of more than 1 substantiation.

Table 3.2: Number of substantiations per child, states and territories, 2014–15 (%)

Number of substantiations	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1	60.0	94.1	91.0	93.8	83.5	91.7	69.4	88.4	80.6
2	22.7	5.7	8.3	5.4	12.4	8.0	15.5	10.0	12.7
3	8.9	0.2	0.6	0.8	2.9	0.2	9.6	1.3	3.6
4+	8.4	0.0	0.1	0.1	1.2	0.0	5.4	0.3	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Children in substantiations	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

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

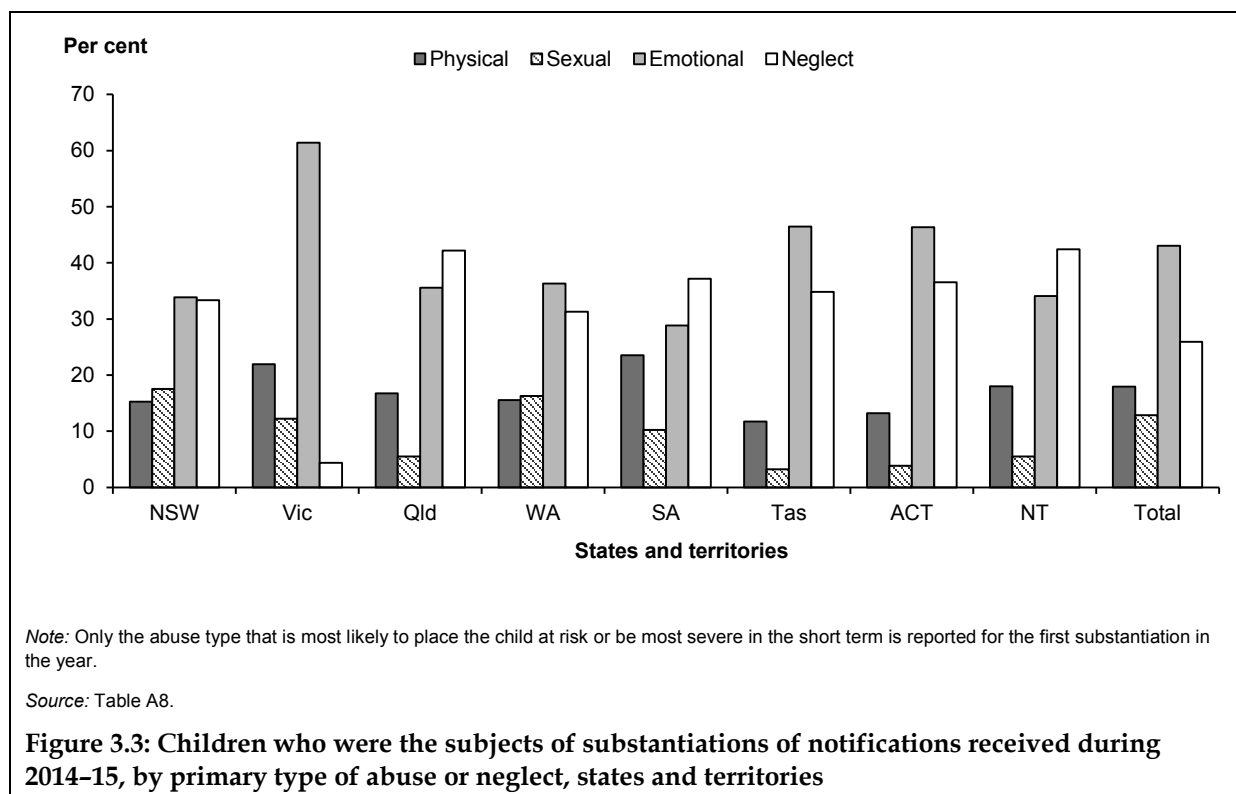
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Types of abuse and neglect

The type of abuse or neglect reported for children who were subjects of substantiations is the one considered most likely to place the child at risk or be most severe in the short term – generally known as the ‘primary’ type of abuse or neglect.

Nationally, emotional abuse was the most common primary type of abuse or neglect substantiated for children (43%), followed by neglect (26%). However, there was some variation between jurisdictions, with neglect being the most common type substantiated for children in Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory (Figure 3.3).

Across Australia, physical abuse was the primary type substantiated for 18% of children who were the subject of substantiations. This ranged from 12% in Tasmania to 24% in South Australia. Sexual abuse was the reason for substantiation for 13% of children (Figure 3.3).



Other types of abuse or neglect may also be recorded as part of the substantiation. The co-occurrence of abuse and neglect refers to substantiations where both primary and other types of abuse are recorded.

Table 3.3 shows the co-occurrence of primary types of abuse or neglect with other types of abuse or neglect that were recorded. As well as being the most common primary types reported, emotional abuse and neglect were also the most likely types to co-occur, with average co-occurrences of 32% and 28%, respectively. Emotional abuse co-occurred in about half (52%) of all substantiations where physical abuse was the primary type of substantiated abuse or neglect and in over one-quarter (29%) of substantiations where sexual abuse was the primary type. Neglect co-occurred in 32% of cases where emotional abuse was the primary type of substantiated abuse and in 27% of substantiations where physical abuse was the primary type. The co-occurrence of sexual abuse was much lower than all other types of abuse or neglect, with an average co-occurrence of less than 2% (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Co-occurrence of substantiated types of abuse and neglect, by primary type of abuse or neglect, 2014–15 (%)

Primary type of abuse or neglect	Co-occurring type of abuse or neglect ^{(a)(b)}				Total substantiations ^(c)
	Physical abuse	Sexual abuse	Emotional abuse	Neglect	
Physical abuse	..	2.7	51.9	27.1	9,652
Sexual abuse	7.1	..	28.8	13.7	6,973
Emotional abuse	21.5	1.7	..	32.4	23,678
Neglect	6.3	1.6	20.3	..	16,060
Average co-occurrence^(d)	14.1	1.8	31.5	27.9	56,363

(a) Excludes 3,556 cases for Queensland where the same type of abuse/neglect was recorded as both a primary and co-occurring type of abuse/neglect.

(b) Not all jurisdictions were able to provide data for all types of co-occurring abuse or neglect—some jurisdictions are able to report only primary and secondary types. Therefore, the proportion of co-occurring abuse types may be understated.

(c) Excludes 60 cases where the primary type of abuse was unknown. As such, the total number of substantiations reported does not match the number reported in Table 3.1.

(d) 'Average co-occurrence' is equal to the total number of cases where the type of abuse or neglect of interest was identified as co-occurring, divided by the total number of substantiations where the given type of abuse or neglect was not the primary type.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Characteristics of children

Age

Age is one of the factors that child protection workers consider when determining the time taken to respond to a notification, the type of response and whether a notification will be substantiated.

Across Australia in 2014–15, children in younger age groups were more likely to be the subjects of substantiations than those in older age groups. Infants (children aged under 1) were most likely (14.7 per 1,000 children) to be the subjects of substantiations and those aged 15–17 were least likely (3.7 per 1,000 children). This pattern was consistent across all jurisdictions (Table 3.4).

The rate of infants who were the subjects of substantiations ranged from 7.6 per 1,000 children in Western Australia to 50.0 in the Northern Territory. Overall, the Northern Territory rates were higher than those for other jurisdictions for all age categories. Western Australia had the lowest rates for the 'less than 1' category, the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest rates for children aged 1–4 and 5–9 and South Australia had the lowest rates for children aged 10–14 and 15–17 (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Rates of children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by age group, states and territories (number per 1,000 children)

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	14.1	21.5	7.9	7.6	18.8	16.3	11.6	50.0	14.7
1–4	9.5	11.2	5.4	5.6	6.5	9.4	4.6	31.8	8.6
5–9	8.7	10.8	5.2	6.6	5.4	7.0	4.3	28.6	8.1
10–14	8.4	10.0	5.0	5.7	3.8	6.0	3.9	27.0	7.5
15–17	4.5	5.0	2.2	2.4	1.5	2.4	2.3	11.4	3.7
0–17	8.4	10.4	4.9	5.5	5.3	6.9	4.5	27.6	7.7
All children	8.9	10.4	5.2	5.7	5.3	7.3	4.5	27.6	8.0
Children in substantiations	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Notes

1. Refer to Table A9 for the numbers used to calculate these rates and to Table A48 for population data.
2. Unborn children may be covered under the child protection legislation and are therefore included in this report. However, they are excluded in rate calculations for the 'less than 1' and '0–17' categories. Unborn children are included in the 'All children' rates.
3. 'All children' includes children of unknown age.
4. Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year and finalised by 31 August 2015. This excludes finalised investigations that were notified in a previous reporting period (see also Box 3.1 for the definition of a finalised investigation).
5. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

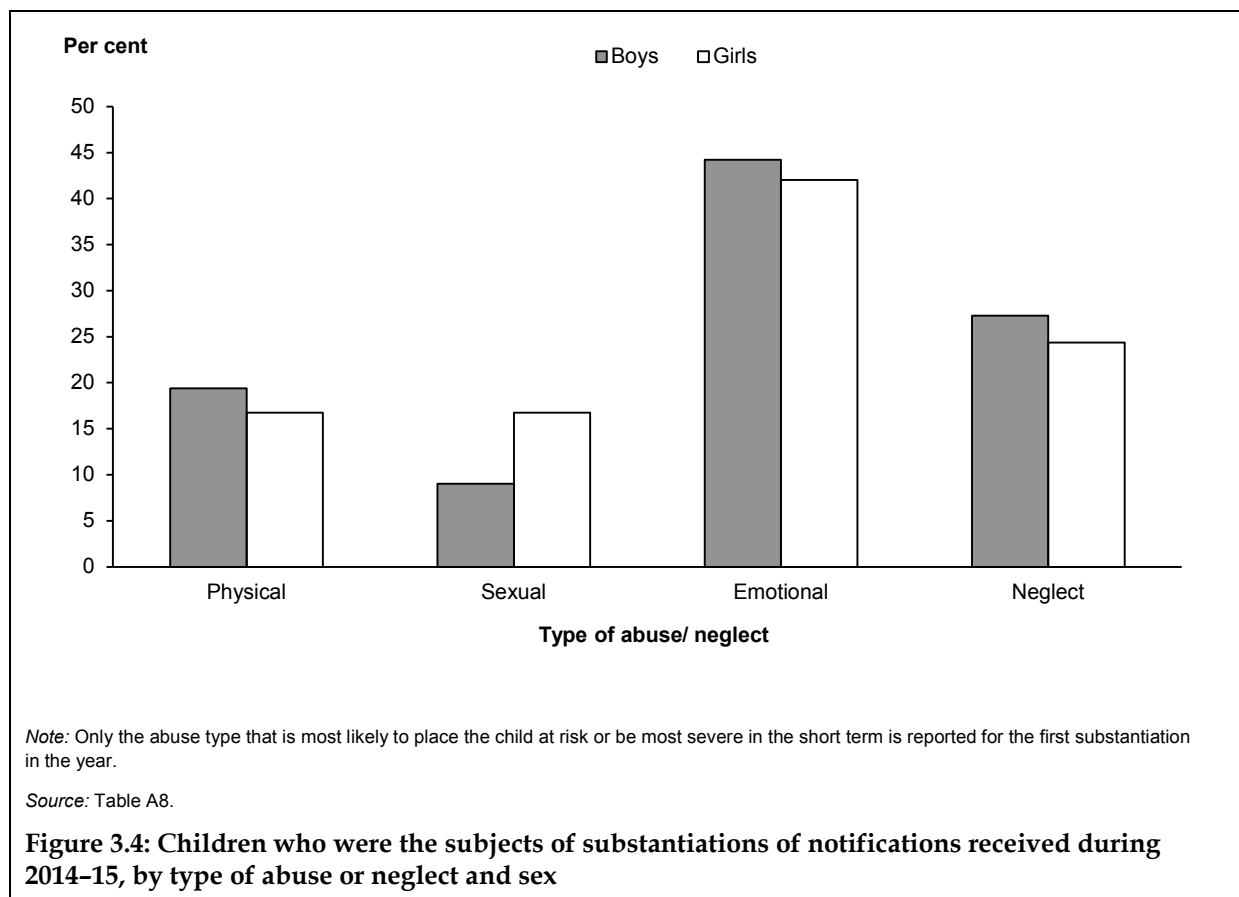
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Sex

Overall, just over half (51%) of children who were the subjects of substantiations were girls (21,445 compared with 20,633 boys). However, in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia slightly more boys than girls were the subjects of substantiations (Table A8).

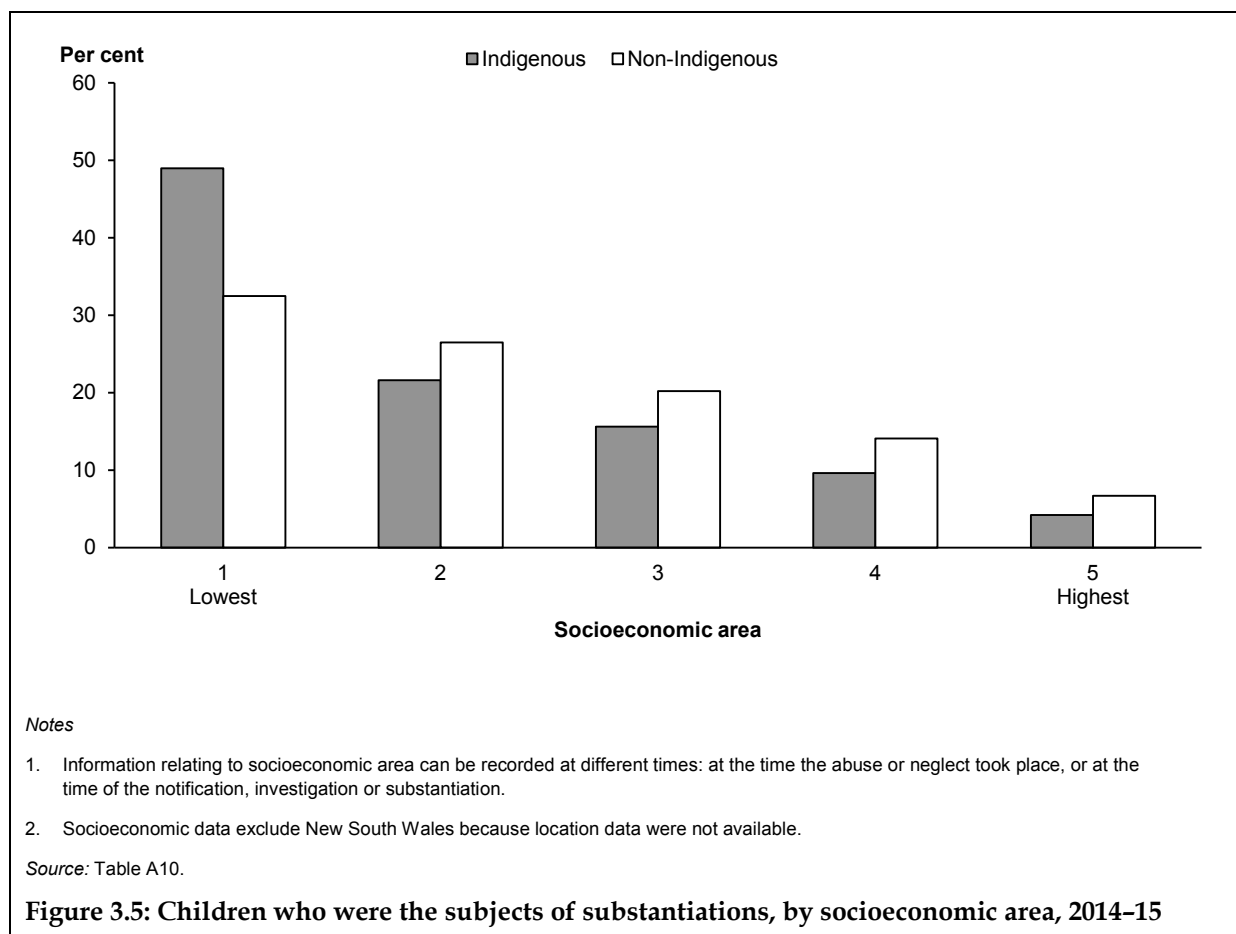
In all jurisdictions, girls were more likely to be the subjects of substantiations of sexual abuse than boys (17% and 9%, respectively) (Figure 3.4). This is consistent with recorded crime statistics for sexual assault (ABS 2015c).

In contrast, boys were more likely to be the subjects of substantiations of physical abuse in all jurisdictions except South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. Nationally, boys also had slightly higher proportions of substantiations for neglect and emotional abuse (27% and 44%, respectively, compared with 24% and 42%, respectively, for girls). This, however, varied at the jurisdictional level (Table A8).



Socioeconomic areas

Across jurisdictions with available data (representing 62% of children in substantiations), 37% of these 26,503 children were from the lowest socioeconomic areas (based on postcode at the time of the first notification that was substantiated) (Table A10). Indigenous children were far more likely to be from the lowest socioeconomic areas – 49%, compared with 33% for non-Indigenous children (Figure 3.5).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Children in substantiations

In 2014–15, 11,675 (39.8 per 1,000) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subject of a child protection substantiation—almost 7 times the rate of non-Indigenous children (5.9 per 1,000) (Table 3.5). This is consistent with findings for previous years (see Figure 3.11).

The reasons for the over-representation of Indigenous children in child protection substantiations are complex. The legacy of past policies of forced removal, intergenerational effects of previous separations from family and culture, lower SES, and perceptions arising from cultural differences in child-rearing practices are all underlying causes for their over-representation in child protection services (HREOC 1997). Drug and alcohol abuse and family violence may also be contributing factors (Scott & Nair 2013). Indigenous children are also over-represented in other areas related to child safety, including hospital admissions for injuries and assault; experiences of homelessness; and involvement in the youth justice system (AIHW 2014b).

Table 3.5: Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by Indigenous status, states and territories (number and number per 1,000 children)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	All children	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All children	Rate ratio Indigenous/non-Indigenous
NSW	4,691	10,299	32	15,022	51.1	6.4	8.9	7.9
Vic	1,415	11,880	5	13,300	67.4	9.4	10.4	7.2
Qld ^(a)	2,019	3,601	249	5,869	23.1	3.5	5.2	6.7
WA ^(b)	1,315	1,591	476	3,382	35.4	2.9	5.7	12.3
SA	575	1,237	96	1,908	35.8	3.6	5.3	9.9
Tas ^(b)	123	537	173	833	11.5	5.2	7.3	2.2
ACT	98	273	15	386	40.2	3.3	4.5	12.3
NT	1,439	315	3	1,757	53.9	8.5	27.6	6.3
Total	11,675	29,733	1,049	42,457	39.8	5.9	8.0	6.7

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In Western Australia and Tasmania, the higher proportion of children with unknown Indigenous status may affect the reliability of the rate ratio calculation. Rate ratios should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Notes

1. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to Table A46 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate calculations include unborn children and children of unknown age.
3. Legislation and practice differ across jurisdictions in relation to children aged 17. In some jurisdictions, children aged 17 are not substantiated and this means the number per 1,000 children who were the subjects of substantiations may be lower for those jurisdictions.
4. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subject of substantiations by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were the subject of substantiations. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subjects of substantiations for every non-Indigenous child who was the subject of substantiation.

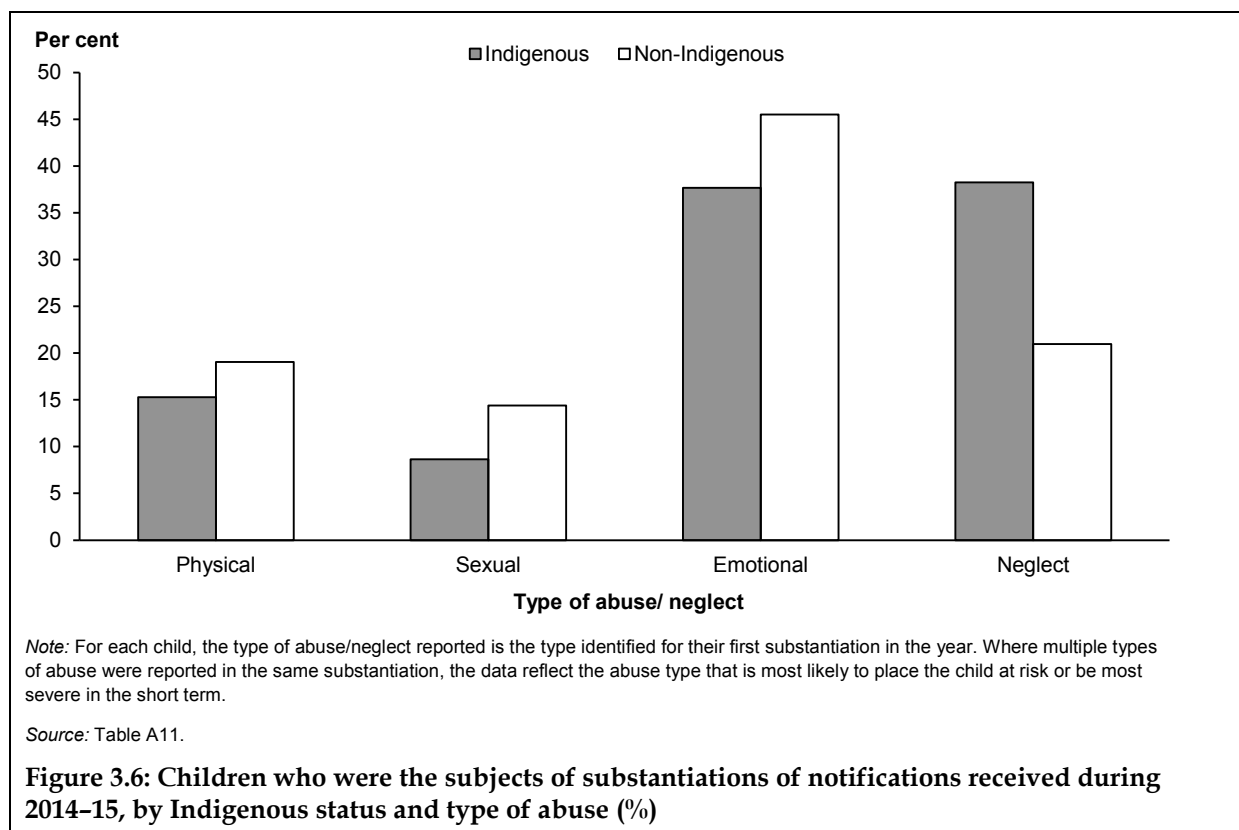
Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Abuse and neglect type

Overall, neglect and emotional abuse were the most common types of substantiated abuse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, each representing around 38% of children in substantiations. This compares with 21% and 46%, respectively, for non-Indigenous children. The proportion of substantiations for other abuse types was higher for non-Indigenous children (Figure 3.6).

The proportion of Indigenous children substantiated for neglect varied substantially across jurisdictions – ranging from 7% in Victoria to 50% in Queensland (Table A11). Variation across jurisdictions was also reflected in the proportion of Indigenous children substantiated for emotional abuse – ranging from 28% in South Australia to 67% in Victoria.

Across all jurisdictions except New South Wales, sexual abuse was the least common type of substantiation for Indigenous children (9% nationally). Sexual abuse was also the least common type of substantiation for non-Indigenous children in all jurisdictions except New South Wales and Victoria.



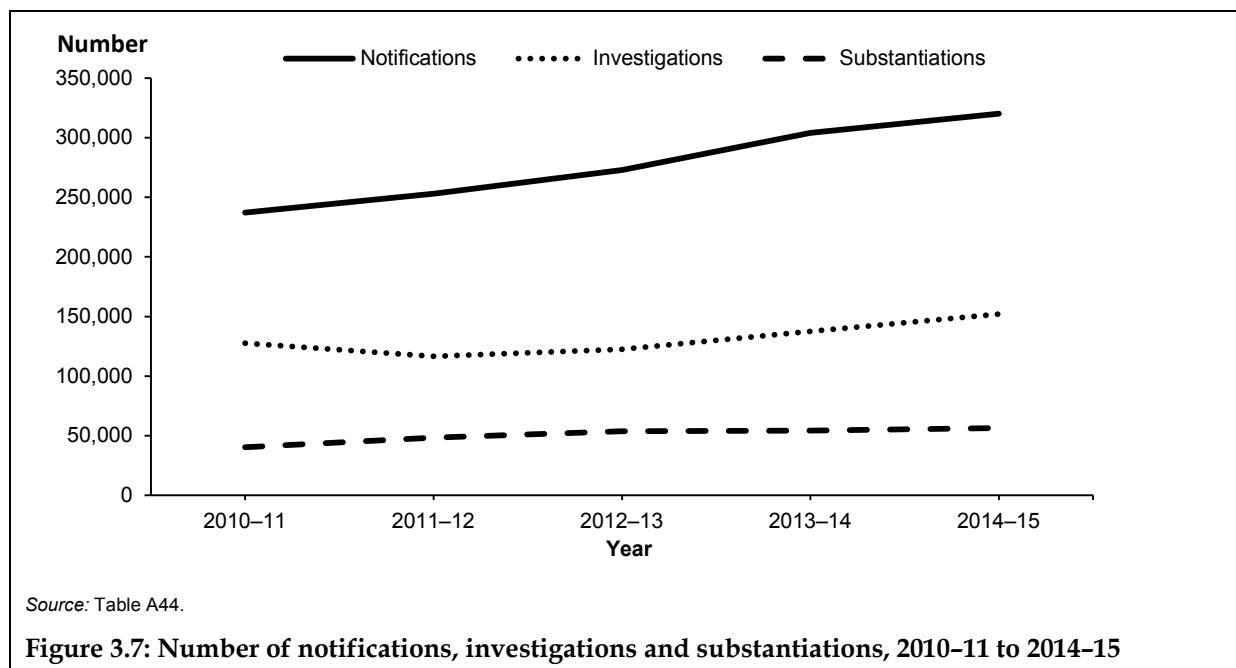
3.3 National trends

Trends in number of cases

Overall, since 2010-11 the numbers of notifications, investigations and substantiations have risen. The number of notifications has risen steadily, from 237,273 in 2010-11 to 320,169 in 2014-15. The number of investigations fell from 127,759 in 2010-11 to 116,528 in 2011-12 and then gradually increased to 152,086 in 2014-15. The number of substantiations rose steadily from 40,466 in 2010-11 to 56,423 in 2014-15 (Figure 3.7).

Although, nationally, there was an increase in notifications and substantiations over the 5 years, the size and direction of change varied across jurisdictions (tables A12 and A13).

The sharper increase in investigations compared with substantiations over the last 2 years has widened the gap between the number of investigations and substantiations.



Trends relating to children

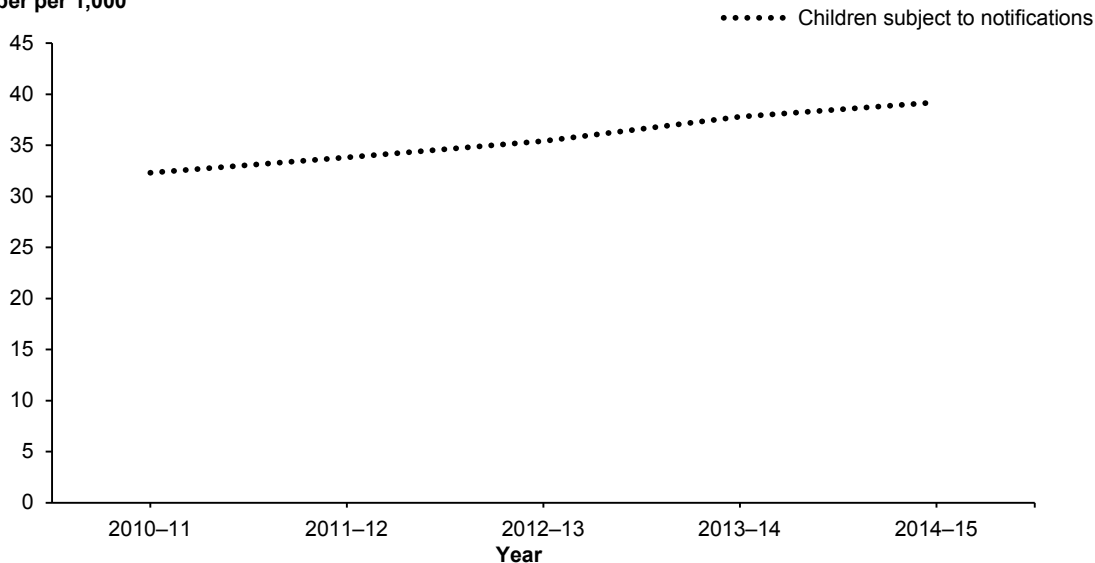
The rate of children who were the subjects of notifications rose steadily from 32.3 per 1,000 children in 2010-11 to 39.2 per 1,000 in 2014-15 (Figure 3.8).

The rate of children who were the subjects of substantiations rose sharply from 6.2 per 1,000 children in 2010-11 to 7.8 per 1,000 children in 2012-13 and then remained stable between 2012-13 and 2014-15, at around 8.0 per 1,000 children. Over the 5-year period, there has been a 35% increase in the number of children who were the subjects of substantiations, rising from 31,527 in 2010-11 to 42,457 in 2014-15 (Table A44).

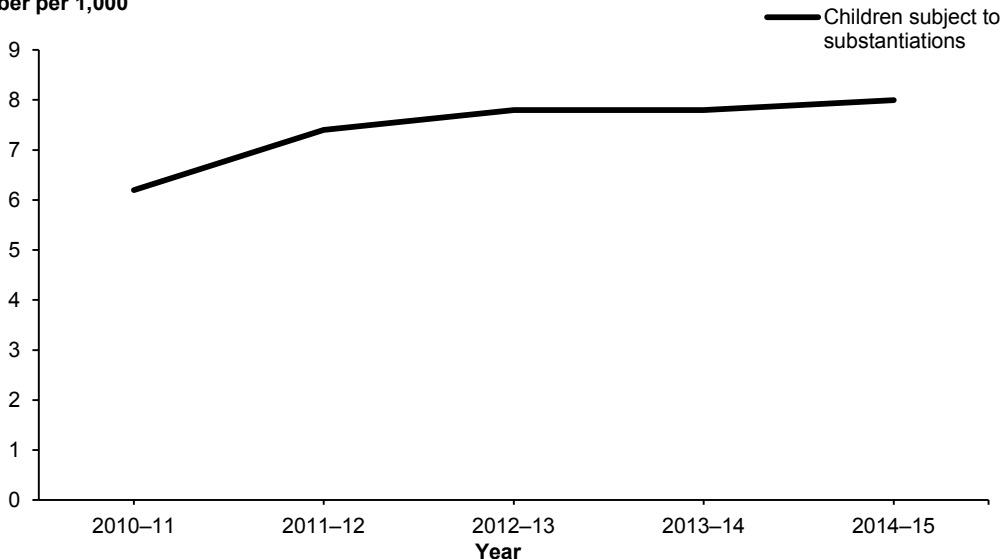
Legislative changes, enhanced public awareness and inquiries into child protection processes, along with real rises in abuse and neglect, could influence increases in the number of notifications and substantiations, and the children who were the subject of them. Additionally, recent increases could be related to an increased focus on providing statutory responses to those who are most likely to need intervention and protection. This may have resulted in a more targeted approach to investigations and a rise in the number of children who were the subjects of substantiations.

Information on state and territory policies and practices and the various inquiries into state and territory child protection services that may have enhanced public awareness is provided at Appendixes D-I (online) <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>.

Number per 1,000



Number per 1,000



Note: Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

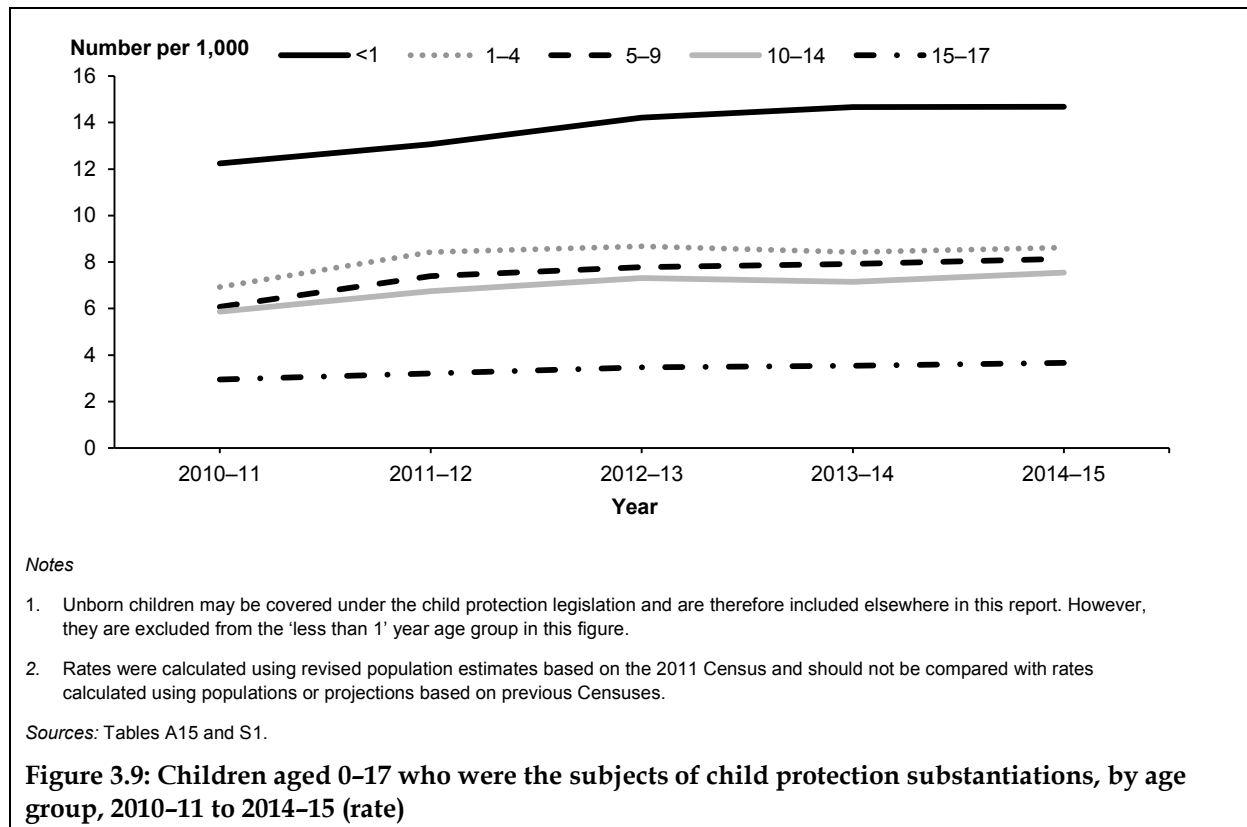
Source: Tables A44 and S1.

Figure 3.8: Children who were the subjects of child protection notifications and substantiations, 2010-11 to 2014-15 (rate)

Across states and territories, rates of children who were the subjects of substantiations have fluctuated over the past 5 years. Since 2010-11, rates have increased overall for all jurisdictions except Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. The largest increase over this period was for the Northern Territory (from 22.9 per 1,000 children in 2010-11 to 27.6 in 2014-15). Over the past 12 months, rates have risen in Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory and dropped in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia (Table A14).

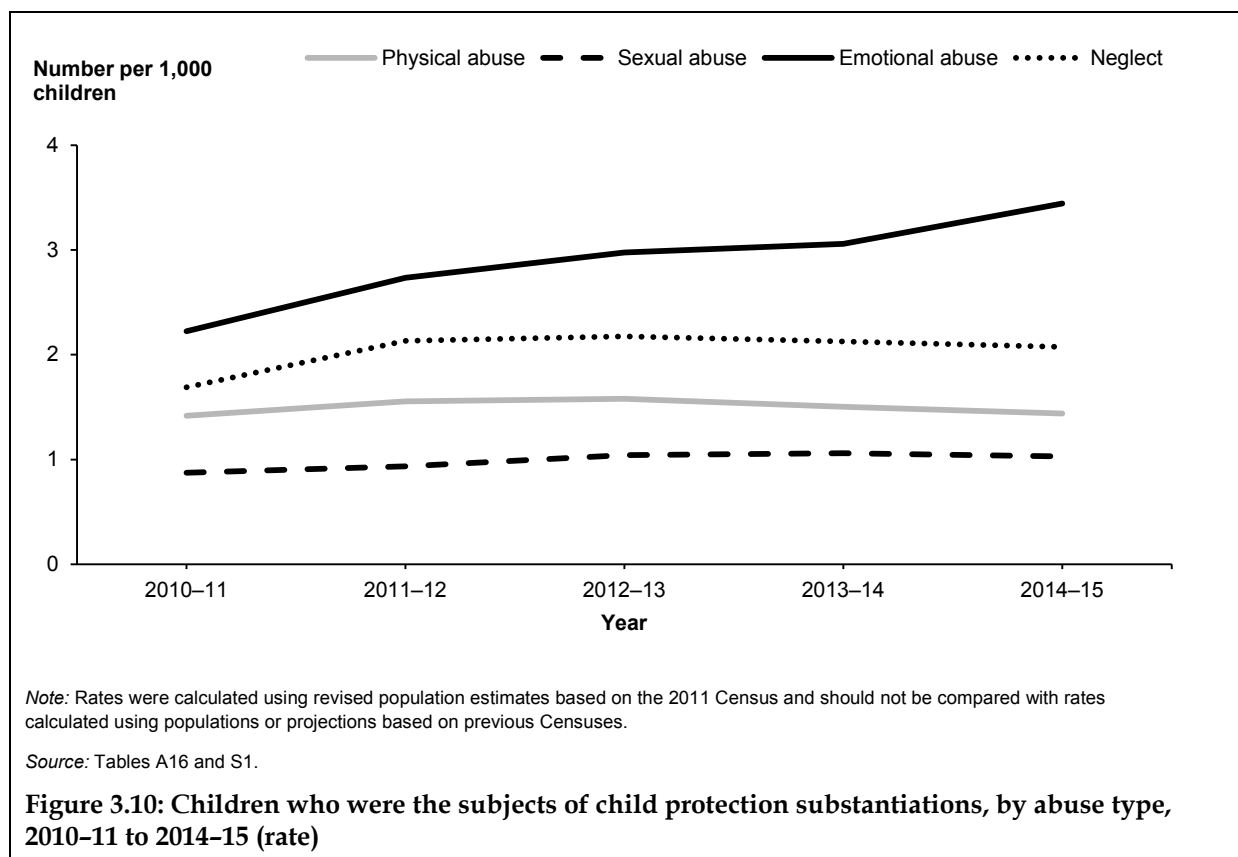
Age profile

Over the 5 years since 2010–11, the rates of children aged under 1 who were the subjects of substantiations were consistently higher than the rates for any other age group. The rate of children aged under 1 who were the subjects of substantiations has risen steadily from 12.2 to 14.7 per 1,000 children over this 5-year period. The rates for other age groups have also risen slightly over the 5-year period. For most age groups, rates rose between 2010–11 and 2011–12, and then were fairly stable from 2011–12 to 2014–15 (Figure 3.9). This is consistent with the stability for rates of all children in substantiations, particularly over the past 3 years.



Abuse and neglect type

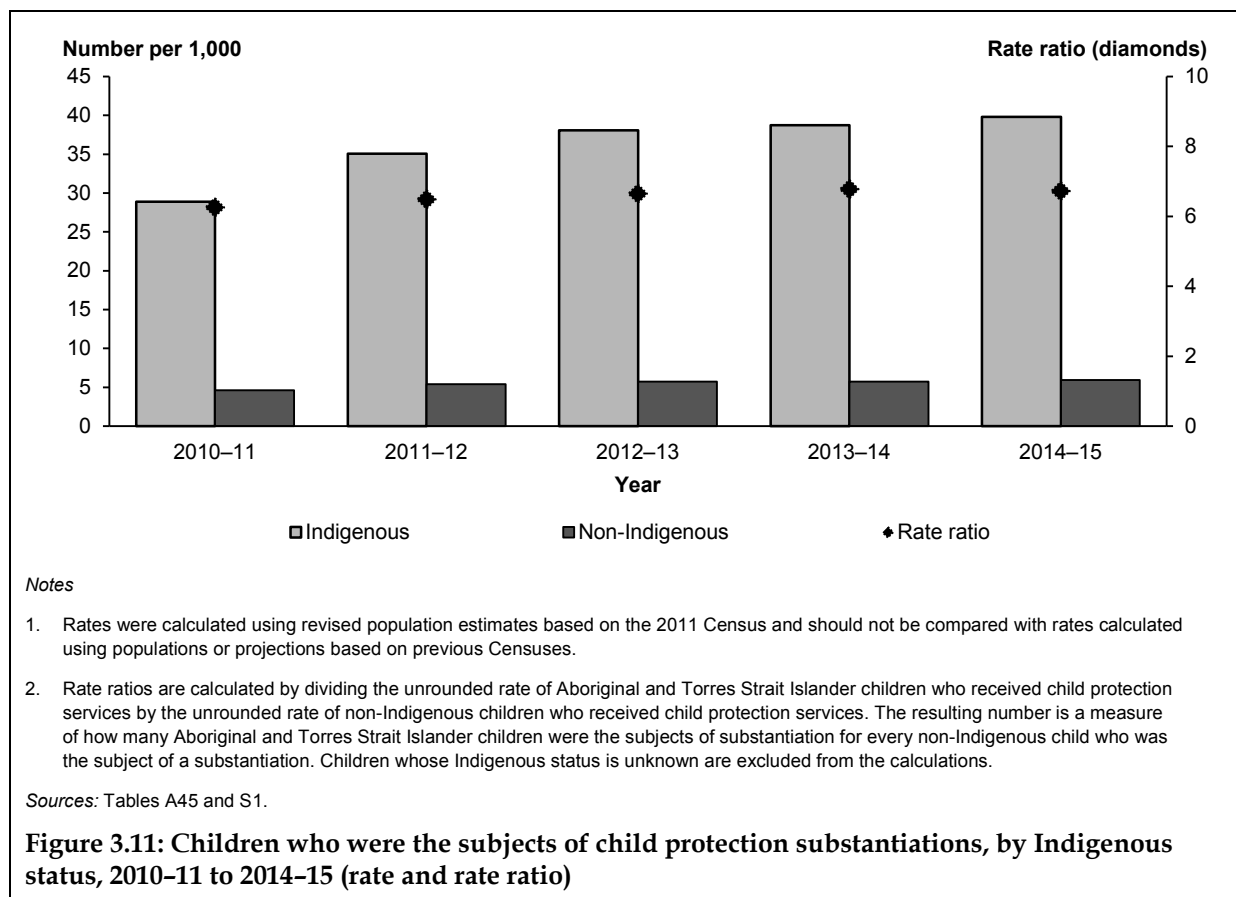
Between 2010–11 and 2014–15, the rates of children who were the subjects of substantiation for emotional abuse were the highest of all types of abuse or neglect. Rates of emotional abuse have also shown the greatest increase of all types of abuse or neglect (from 2.2 to 3.4 per 1,000 children) over this time. In line with stable rates overall, the rates for all other types of abuse and neglect have remained fairly stable for the 5 years to 2014–15 (Figure 3.10).



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Over the past 5 years, the substantiation rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children have both increased, from 28.9 to 39.8 per 1,000 for Indigenous children and from 4.6 to 5.9 per 1,000 for non-Indigenous children. The rate ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous children has risen slightly since 2010-11, from 6.2 to 6.7 in 2014-15 (Figure 3.11).

Note that all rates for the period 2010-11 to 2014-15 have been calculated using the 2011 Census-based population estimates, including back-cast historical estimates. Therefore, rates presented in this report are not comparable with rates calculated using estimates based on the 2006 Census.



4 Care and protection orders

Care and protection orders are legal orders or arrangements that give child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare (see Box 4.1 for national categories).

4.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2014–15, almost 35,000 care and protection orders were issued across jurisdictions (excluding New South Wales), with around 12,400 children admitted to an order during that time. Nationally, in 2014–15, more children were admitted to care and protection orders (12,400) than were discharged from orders (10,300). At 30 June 2015, more than 48,700 children were on a care and protection order – a rate of 9.2 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Key care and protection order statistics, 2014–15

	Number	Rate (number per 1,000 children)
Care and protection orders issued during 2014–15	34,757	. .
Children admitted to an order during 2014–15	12,437	2.3
Children discharged from an order during 2014–15	10,268	1.9
Children on a care and protection order during 2014–15	57,861	10.9
Children on a care and protection order at 30 June 2015	48,730	9.1

Note: 'Care and protection orders issued during 2014–15' excludes New South Wales for whom data were not available due to a data quality issue.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

For this report, children are counted only once, even if they were admitted to, or discharged from, more than one order, or were on more than one order at 30 June 2015. If a child was on more than one order at 30 June 2015, the child is counted as being on the order that implies the highest level of intervention by the department (with finalised guardianship or custody orders being the most interventionist, and interim and temporary orders the least interventionist).

Box 4.1: National care and protection order types

- **Finalised guardianship or custody orders:** Guardianship orders involve the transfer of legal guardianship to the relevant state or territory department or non-government agency. These orders involve considerable intervention in the child's life and that of their family, and are sought only as a last resort.
Custody orders generally refer to orders that place children in the custody of the state or territory department responsible for child protection or a non-government agency. These orders usually involve the child protection department being responsible for the daily care and requirements of the child, while the parent retains legal guardianship.
- **Finalised third-party parental responsibility:** These orders transfer all duties, powers, responsibilities and authority to which parents are entitled by law to a nominated person(s) whom the court considers appropriate. The nominated person may be an individual such as a relative or an officer of the state or territory department.
- **Finalised supervisory orders:** 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.
- **Interim and temporary orders:** These orders cover the provisions 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.
- **Administrative arrangements:** These are agreements with child protection departments, which have the same effect as a court order of 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 in the state or territory where the order is operative, regardless of where the child is residing. The following are excluded from the collection:

- children on offence orders, unless they are also on a care and protection order (as defined above)
- administrative and voluntary arrangements with the departments responsible for child protection that do not have the effect of transferring custody or guardianship.

The number of children on a care and protection order on an average day (for jurisdictions with available data) is reported in Box 4.2.

Box 4.2 Children on an order on an average day in 2014–15

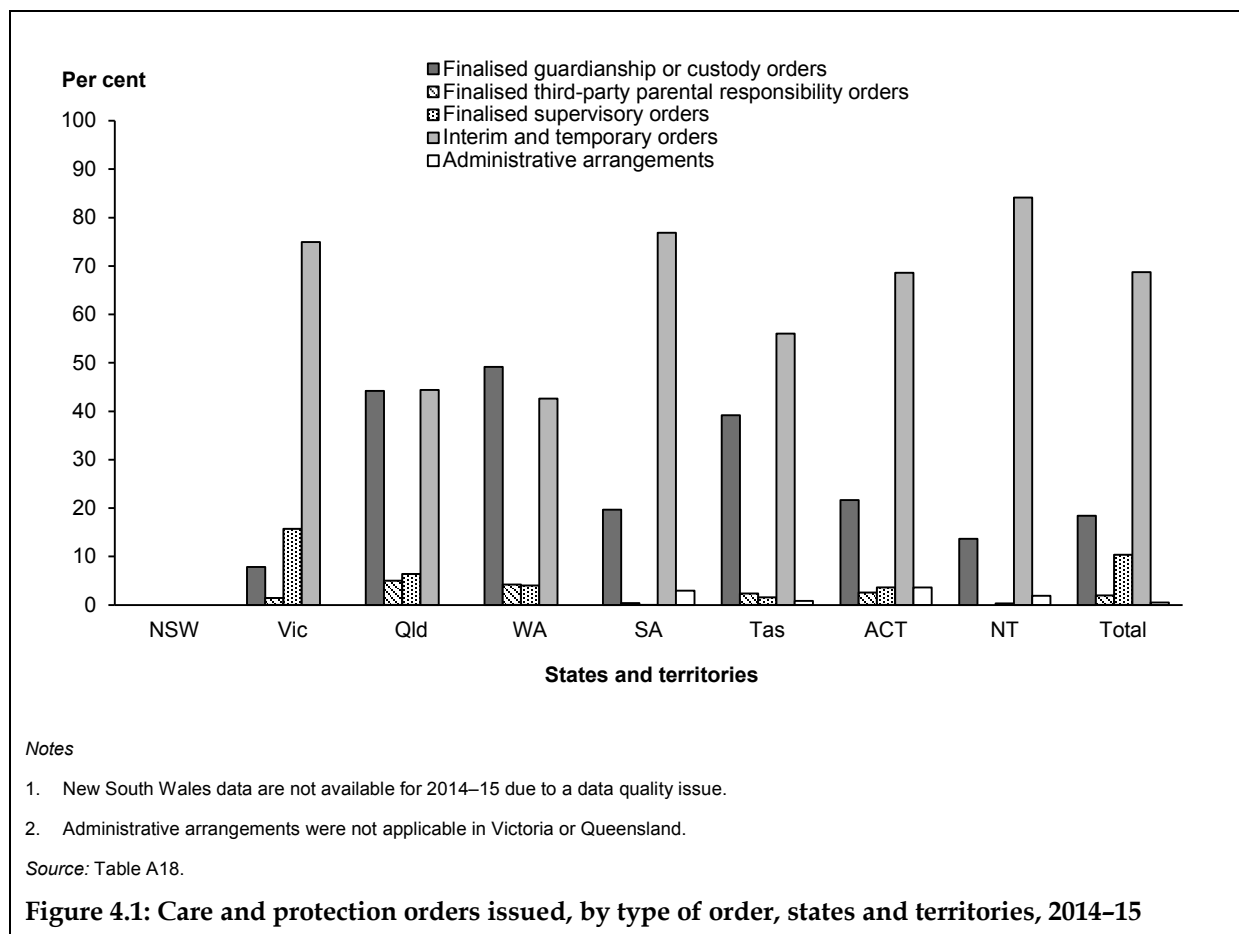
'Average day' measures are calculated by summing the number of days each person was subject to the same event during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year. This provides a view of the data that accounts for each day during the year, rather than a snapshot for a single day (for example, 30 June, which is typically reported). See Appendix B for more detail.

Average day analyses for 2014–15 exclude New South Wales. For all other jurisdictions, on an average day in 2014–15, there were 29,798 children on a care and protection order. This compares with 30,234 children at 30 June 2015 (excluding New South Wales). Similar to counts of orders at 30 June 2015, on an average day in 2014–15, the largest number were on guardianship or custody orders (63%), followed by finalised third-party parental responsibility orders (15%) (Table A17). Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.

4.2 Types of orders issued

Of the 34,757 care and protection orders issued in 2014–15 (excluding New South Wales), most were interim and temporary orders (69%, or 23,885) or finalised guardianship or custody orders (18%, or 6,409) (Figure 4.1).

The types of care and protection orders issued varied across jurisdictions, reflecting both the different types of orders available and the different policies and practices putting them into effect. In all jurisdictions except Western Australia, interim and temporary orders were the most commonly issued type of order (comprising about 43% to 84% of orders issued). In Western Australia, finalised guardianship or custody orders were the most common (49%).



4.3 Children and orders

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

A total of 12,437 children were admitted to orders in 2014–15. Among this group, three-quarters (76%) were admitted to an order for the first time. The proportion of children admitted for the first time ranged from 64% in Western Australia to 91% in South Australia (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders, states and territories, 2014–15

	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Children admitted to orders	3,229	4,745	1,841	1,181	676	267	176	322	12,437
Children admitted for the first time	2,721	3,425	1,405	756	614	179	152	250	9,502
<i>Percentage of all admissions</i>	<i>84.3</i>	<i>72.2</i>	<i>76.3</i>	<i>64.0</i>	<i>90.8</i>	<i>67.0</i>	<i>86.4</i>	<i>77.6</i>	<i>76.4</i>
Children discharged from orders	1,957	4,444	1,841	872	483	298	131	242	10,268

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders. New South Wales is working to improve the way it counts admissions to care and protection orders, but currently does not strictly conform to the national counting rules.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

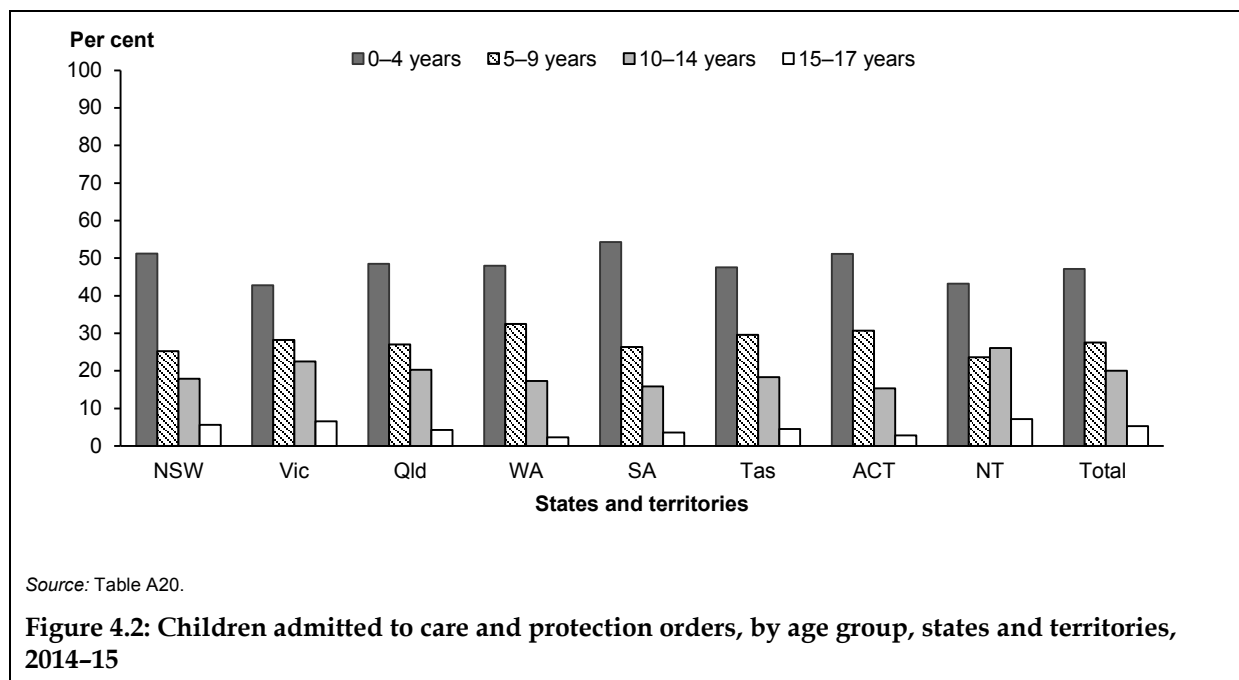
Notes

1. Data may include children who were discharged on their eighteenth birthday.
2. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. A change to an order is counted as an admission. However, if a new care and protection order is applied in 5 days or less of the discharge of another order (regardless of the type of order), neither an admission nor a discharge are counted.
3. If a child is on multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, all orders/arrangements must be discharged before a discharge for the purposes of this table is counted.
4. If a child is admitted to, or discharged from, multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, the child is counted for only 1 admission and/or 1 discharge for the year.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Children may be admitted (or re-admitted) to a care and protection order for a number of reasons, including substantiated abuse, irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between the child and their parents, or where parents were unwilling and/or unable to adequately care for the child. The proportion of children who were the subject of substantiation in 2013–14, and who were subsequently placed on a care and protection order within 12 months, ranged from 21% in Western Australia to 35% in Victoria (Table A19).

Almost half (47%) of children admitted to orders in 2014–15 were aged between 0 and 4, reflecting the previously noted view that younger children are regarded as the most vulnerable. This ranged from 43% in Victoria and the Northern Territory to 54% in South Australia (Figure 4.2). The median age of children admitted to orders was 5. Age patterns were similar to those for substantiations of notifications, with a decreasing proportion as age increased (Table A9).

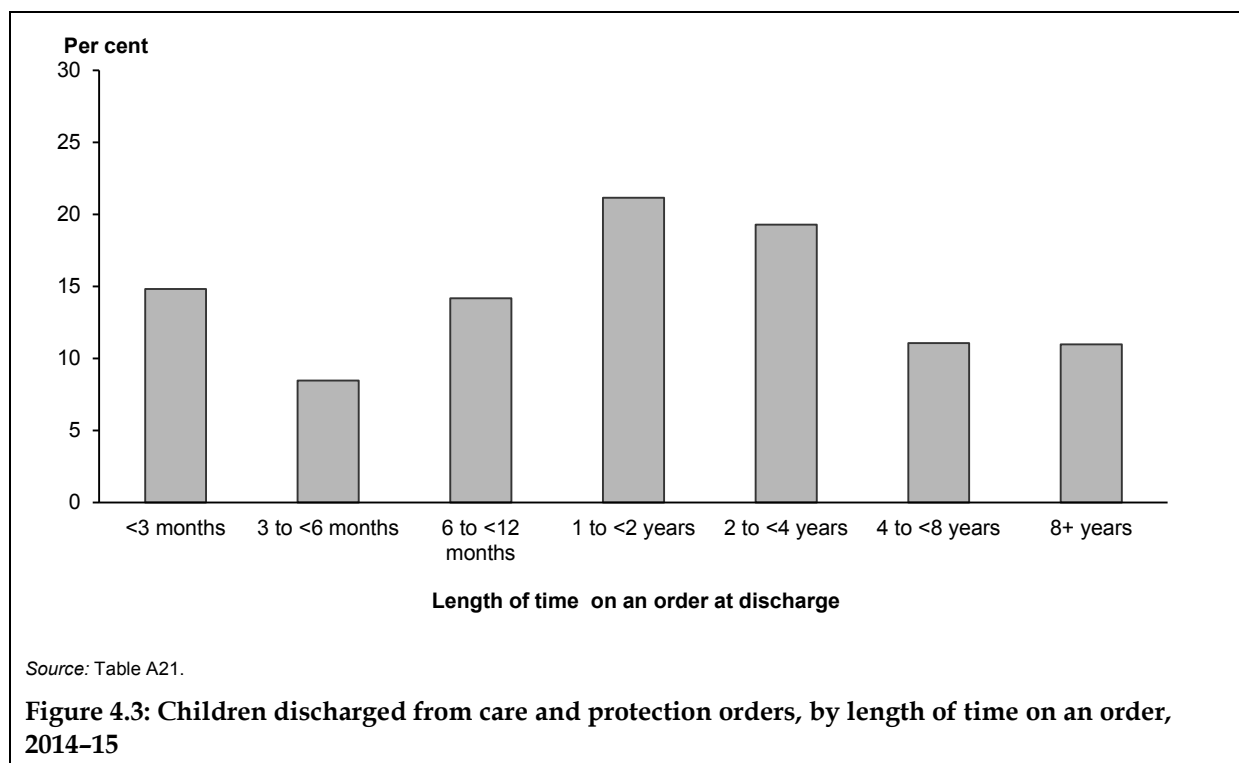


Length of time on an order at discharge

Almost two-thirds (63%) of the children discharged from care and protection orders in 2014-15 had been continuously on an order for 1 year or more (Figure 4.3). This pattern was consistent across most jurisdictions, with lower proportions reported for Victoria (52%), South Australia (57%) and the Northern Territory (46%) (Table A21).

In 2014-15, 15% of children who were discharged had been on an order continuously for less than 3 months, which ranged from 4% of children discharged in Western Australia to 40% in the Northern Territory. Some of these children may have been on interim or temporary orders and have had more permanent order arrangements applied later.

At the other end of the spectrum, 11% of children who were discharged from an order had been continuously on an order for 8 years or more. There was considerable variation across jurisdictions – ranging from no children in the Northern Territory to 28% of children in New South Wales (Table A21).



Children on orders

Of the 48,730 children who were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2015, almost two-thirds (64%, or 31,129) were on finalised guardianship or custody orders (Table 4.3). Across states and territories, the proportion ranged from 36% in Victoria to 89% in South Australia.

For the other types of orders that children were on at 30 June 2015, there was also considerable variation among the jurisdictions. In New South Wales and Victoria, 22–24% of children were on finalised third-party parental responsibility arrangements compared with 17% or less in other jurisdictions. Additionally, Victoria had higher proportions of children on finalised supervisory orders (22% compared with 5% overall) and interim and temporary orders (20% compared with 12% overall). South Australia had lower proportions of children on all other types of orders, except for administrative arrangements. Overall, only a small proportion of children (less than 1%) were on administrative arrangements that did not require court intervention.

Table 4.3: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship/ custody	12,061	3,690	6,730	3,641	2,691	886	537	893	31,129
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	4,415	2,233	1,542	485	114	205	76	..	9,070
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	2,178	262	74	3	15	21	1	2,554
Interim and temporary orders	1,891	2,034	735	608	193	75	112	174	5,822
Administrative arrangements	129	..	..	0	18	2	1	5	155
Not stated	..	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730
%									
Finalised guardianship/ custody	65.2	36.4	72.6	75.7	89.1	74.9	71.9	83.2	63.9
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	23.9	22.0	16.6	10.1	3.8	17.3	10.2	..	18.6
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	21.5	2.8	1.5	0.1	1.3	2.8	0.1	5.2
Interim and temporary orders	10.2	20.1	7.9	12.6	6.4	6.3	15.0	16.2	11.9
Administrative arrangements	0.7	..	..	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Prior to 2013–14, third-party parental responsibility orders were included in finalised guardianship or custody orders and only a small minority of Victoria's interim and temporary orders were reported.

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

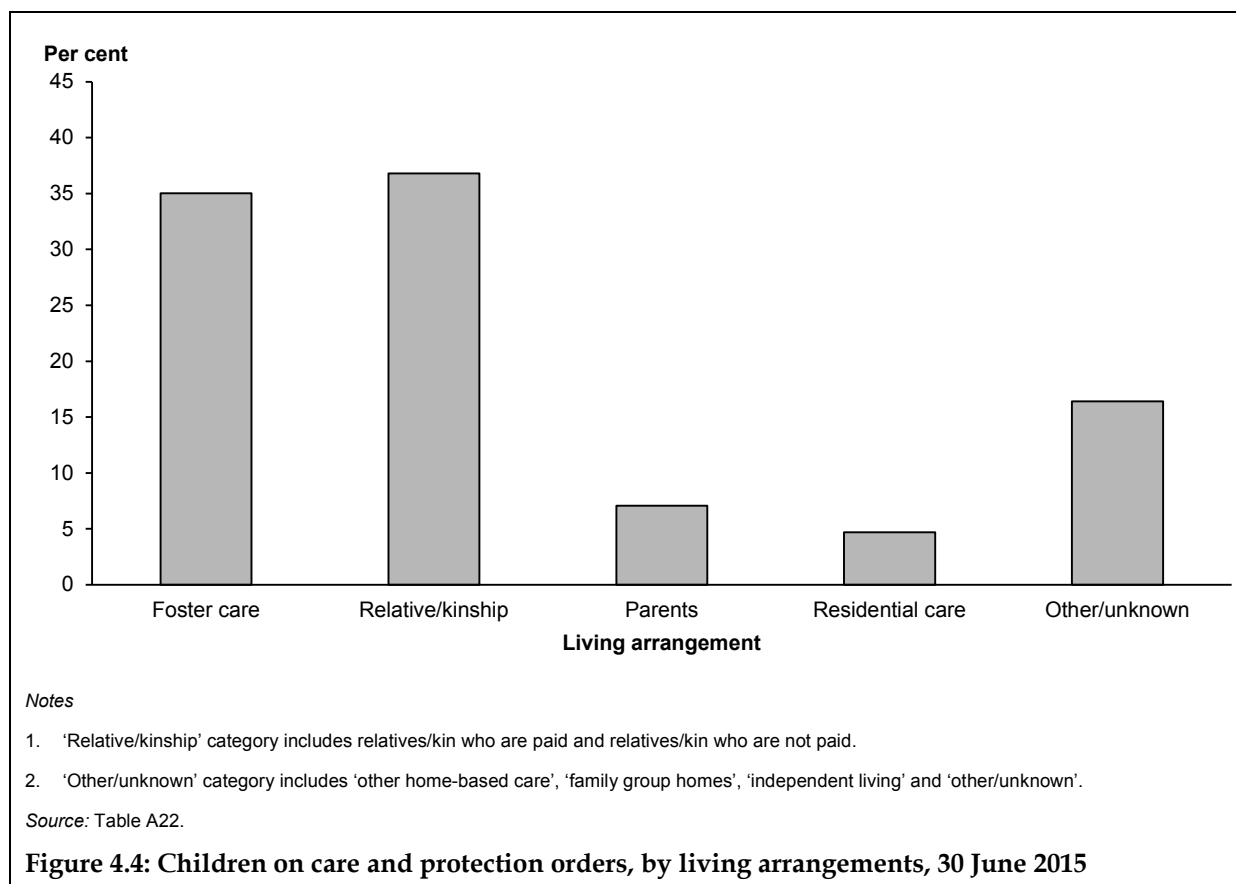
Note: Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Living arrangements

At 30 June 2015, the majority of children on orders lived in funded out-of-home care, either with relative/kinship carers or in foster care (37% and 35% of children, respectively). A relatively smaller proportion of children on orders were living with their parents (7%) or in residential care (5%) (Figure 4.4).

The living arrangements of children on orders generally reflected the expected living arrangements, given the age of the child (Table A23). Across Australia, 95% of children on orders who were living independently were aged 15–17, and 95% of children on orders who were aged under 5 were living in family care or home-based care.



Age and sex

The age profile of children on orders was similar across all jurisdictions. Of all children on care and protection orders, the proportion who were aged under 5 ranged from 21% in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania to 27% in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. The proportion of children aged 15–17 ranged from 13% in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory to 17% in Tasmania (Table A24).

The age distribution of children admitted to orders during 2014–15 was considerably younger than that for all children on orders at 30 June 2015 – 47% of children admitted to orders were aged under 5, compared with 23% of children on orders at 30 June. Conversely, only 5% of children admitted to orders were aged 15–17, compared with 15% of children on orders at 30 June. These differences can be attributed to including in the 30 June count children who were admitted during previous years and remained on an order in 2015 (tables A20 and A24).

Overall, there were slightly more boys (51%) than girls (49%) on care and protection orders (Table A25). This was consistent across all jurisdictions, except the Northern Territory (where 51% were girls).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2015, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on orders was 9 times that for non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Indigenous children on orders was higher than the rate for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 2.8 in Tasmania to 15.9 in Western Australia (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Children on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2015 (number and number per 1,000 children)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	All children	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All children	Rate ratio Indigenous/ non-Indigenous
NSW ^(a)	6,581	11,915	0	18,496	71.5	7.4	10.9	9.7
Vic	1,721	8,408	6	10,135	81.4	6.6	7.8	12.3
Qld ^(b)	3,864	5,353	52	9,269	44.0	5.1	8.2	8.6
WA	2,472	2,323	13	4,808	66.3	4.2	8.1	15.9
SA	895	2,075	49	3,019	55.4	6.0	8.4	9.2
Tas	262	910	11	1,183	24.4	8.8	10.4	2.8
ACT	203	538	6	747	83.0	6.4	8.6	13.0
NT	924	149	0	1,073	34.6	4.0	16.9	8.6
Total	16,922	31,671	137	48,730	57.5	6.3	9.1	9.2

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Notes

1. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to Table A47 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were on a care and protection order by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were on a care and protection order. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were on a care and protection order for every non-Indigenous child who was on a care and protection order.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous children were generally on similar types of orders, with most on finalised guardianship and custody orders at 30 June 2015 (Table A26). The proportion of Indigenous children on finalised guardianship and custody orders was higher than the proportion for non-Indigenous children (70% compared with 61%). However, Indigenous children were less likely to be on all other types of orders, except for interim and temporary orders (Table A26).

4.4 National trends

Children admitted to, and discharged from, orders

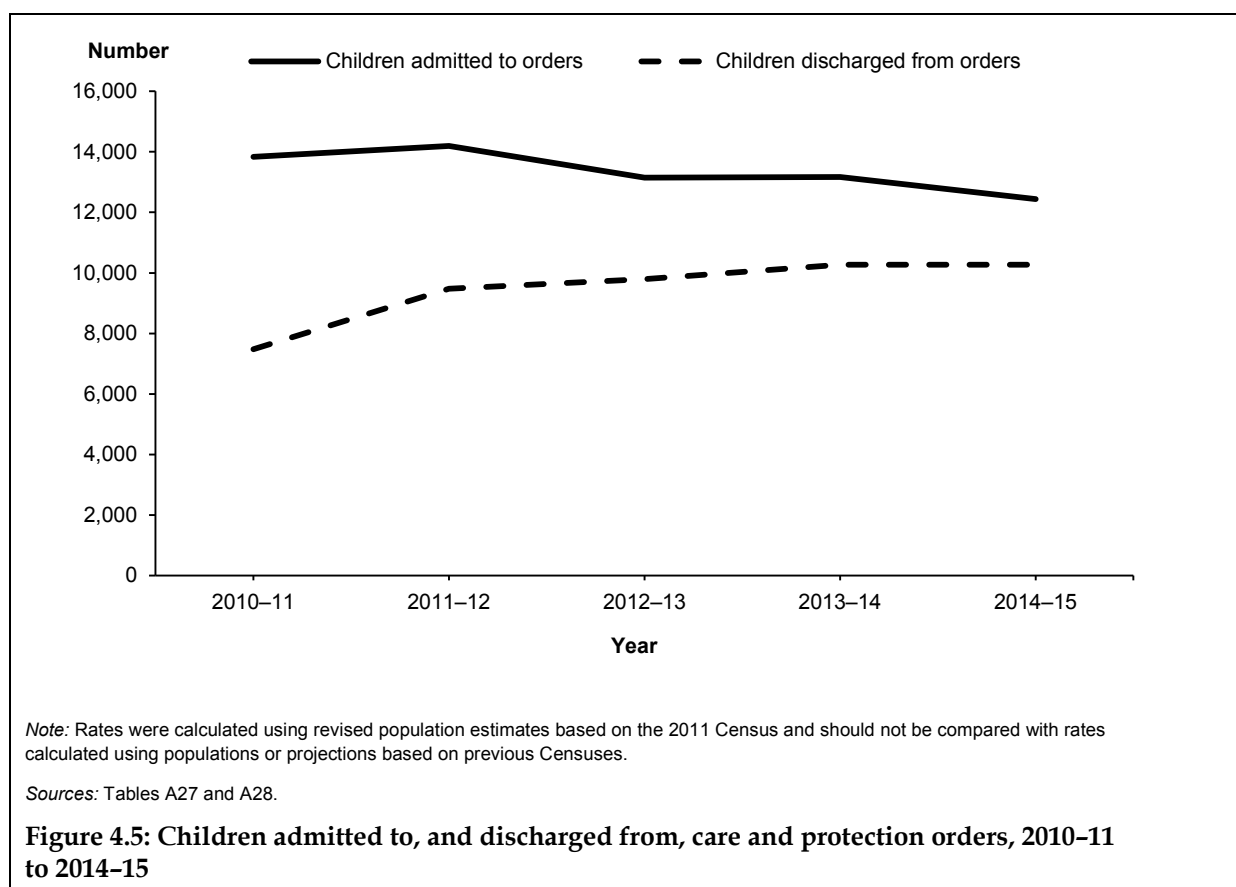
The number of children admitted to, and discharged from, orders has fluctuated over the past 5 years. Between 2010–11 and 2011–12, the number of children admitted to orders rose from 13,830 to 14,191. In 2012–13, there was a 7% decrease to 13,146 followed by a period of relative stability in 2013–14 (13,171). Over the past year, the number of children admitted to orders decreased by 6% to 12,437.

Despite this national decrease, during the past 12 months there was a rise in the number of children admitted to orders in all jurisdictions except Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory (Table A27). Changes in the number of children admitted to orders over time is in part due to the application of national specifications using the CP NMDS for all

jurisdictions except New South Wales and Queensland in 2012–13, and for Queensland from 2014–15.

Between 2010–11 and 2013–14, the number of children discharged from orders rose by 37%, from 7,480 to 10,275. However, over the past 12 months, the number of discharges remained relatively stable at 10,268 children. Changes in the numbers of children discharged in individual jurisdictions over the past 12 months varied considerably – the number of discharges remained relatively stable for South Australia; there were falls in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania; and there were moderate increases across all other jurisdictions (Table A28).

Between 2010–11 and 2014–15, the number of children admitted to orders has remained consistently higher than the number discharged (Figure 4.5); however, over the past 5 years, the difference has decreased. In 2010–11, there were 6,350 more children admitted than discharged, whereas in 2014–15, 2,169 more children were admitted than were discharged (tables A27 and A28).



Children on care and protection orders

From 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2015, the rate of children aged 0–17 on orders increased from 7.7 to 9.1 per 1,000 (Table 4.5). There were increases in all jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory, with the largest increase in the Northern Territory (from 11.6 per 1,000 in 2011 to 16.9 in 2015).

Table 4.5: Rates of children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2015 (number per 1,000)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2011	9.3	5.5	7.9	6.0	7.4	10.2	9.0	11.6	7.7
2012	9.7	5.9	8.1	6.2	7.5	10.2	8.8	12.4	7.9
2013	9.8	6.2	8.3	7.4	7.8	10.9	8.1	12.8	8.2
2014	10.2	7.2	8.2	7.6	7.8	10.4	8.3	15.5	8.7
2015	10.9	7.8	8.2	8.1	8.4	10.4	8.6	16.9	9.1

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

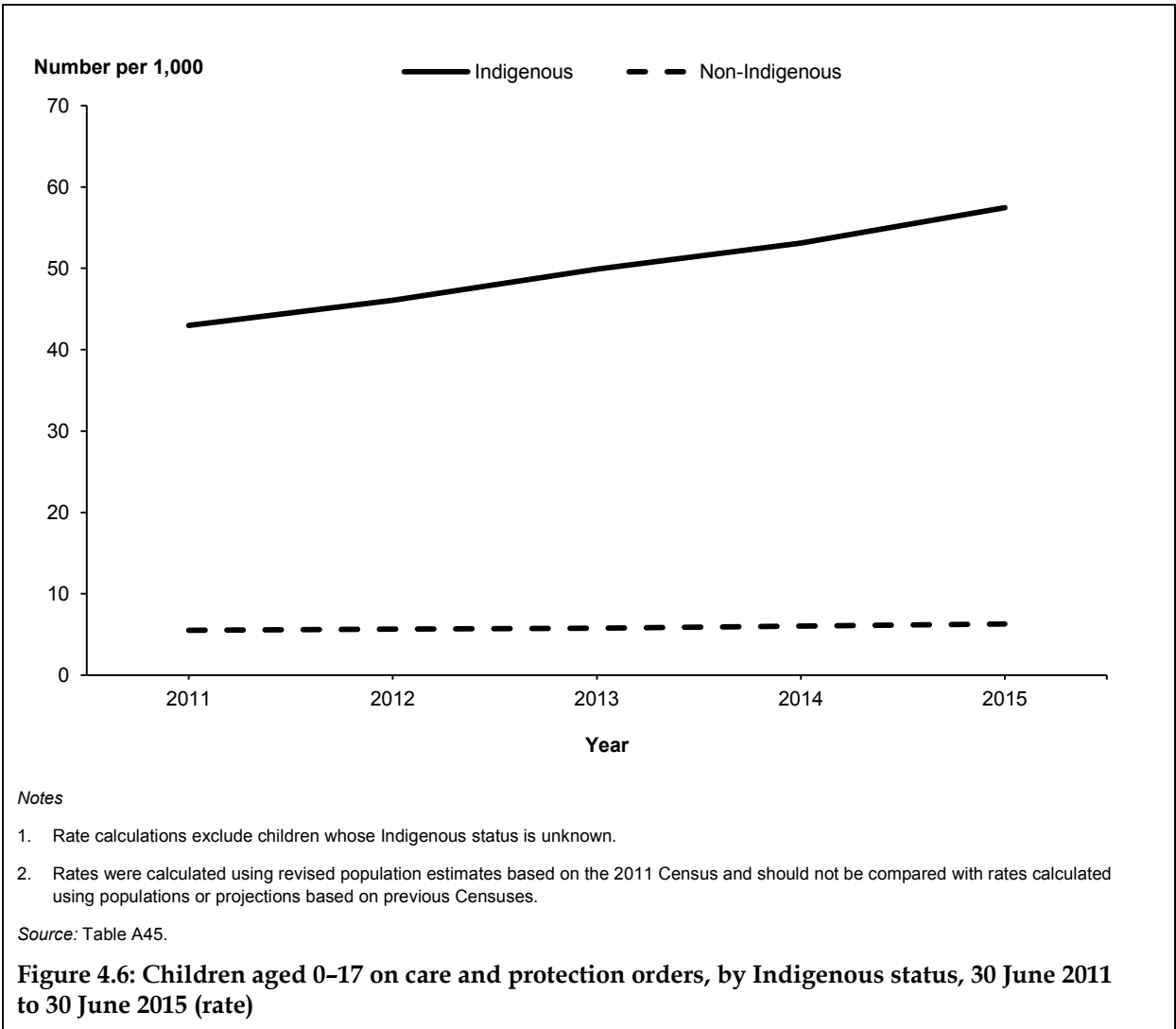
Notes

1. Refer to Table A29 for the numbers used to calculate these rates and to Table A47 for population data.
2. Some rates may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.
3. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

From 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2015, the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders has risen steadily (from 43.0 to 57.5 per 1,000), while the non-Indigenous rate has remained relatively stable (increasing slightly from 5.5 to 6.3 per 1,000) (Figure 4.6).



5 Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care is overnight care for children aged 0–17, where the state or territory makes a financial payment or where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the carer (see Box 5.1 for types of out-of-home care).

5.1 Overview and key statistics

In 2014–15, almost 11,600 children were admitted to out-of-home care, while more than 11,100 children were discharged. At 30 June 2015, there were around 43,400 children in out-of-home care – a rate of 8.1 per 1,000 Australian children (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Key out-of-home care statistics, 2014–15

	Number	Number per 1,000 children
Children admitted to out-of-home care during 2014–15	11,581	2.2
Children discharged from out-of-home care during 2014–15	11,138	2.1
Children in out-of-home care during 2014–15	54,025	10.2
Children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015	43,399	8.1

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Box 5.1: Types of out-of-home care

- **Residential care:** placement in a residential building whose purpose is to provide placements for children and where there are paid staff.
- **Family group homes:** homes for children provided by a department or community-sector agency which have live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for providing care.
- **Home-based care:** placement 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: relative/kinship care, foster care and other home-based out-of-home care.
- **Independent living:** includes private board and lead tenant households.
- **Other:** includes placements that do not fit into the above categories and unknown placement types. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and the defence forces.

Placements for the purpose of respite are included. Respite care is used to provide short-term accommodation for children and young people where the intention is for the child to return to his or her prior place of residence. This includes respite from birth family and respite from placement.

Excluded from these counts are placements solely funded by disability services, medical or psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, overnight child care services or supported accommodation assistance placements, and children in placements with parents where the jurisdiction makes a financial payment.

The number of children in out-of-home care on an average day is reported in Box 5.2.

Box 5.2 Children in out-of-home care on an average day in 2014–15

'Average day' measures are calculated by summing the number of days each person was subject to the same event during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year. This provides a view of the data that accounts for each day during the year, rather than a snapshot for a single day (for example, 30 June, which is typically reported).

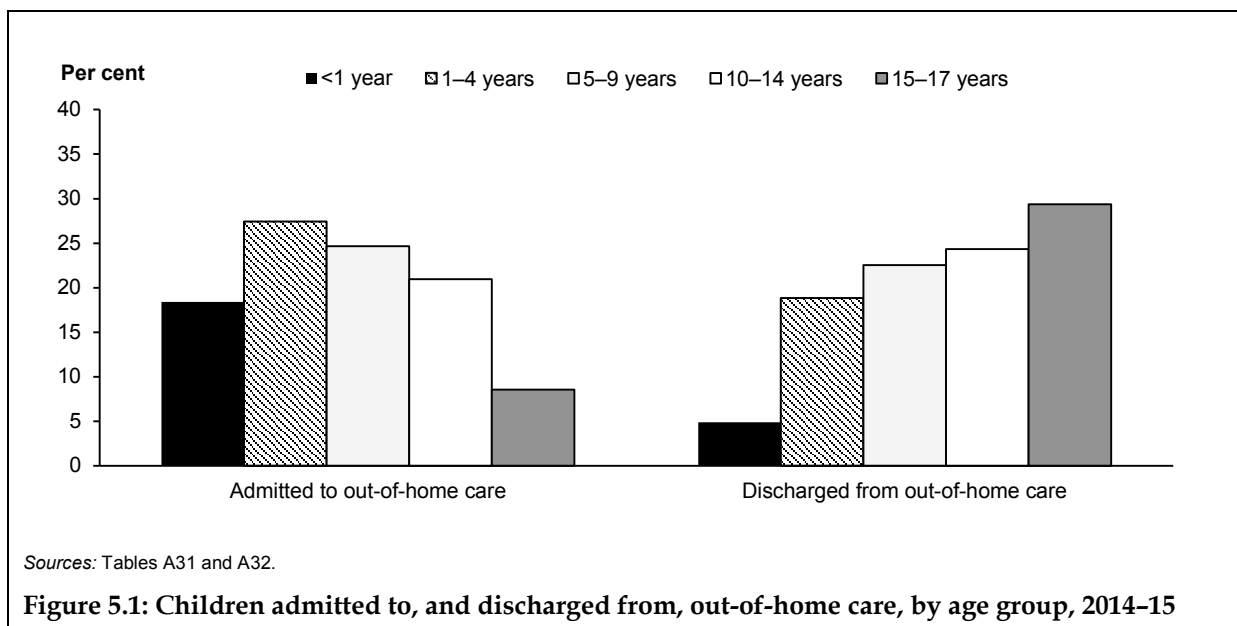
Average day analyses for 2014–15 exclude New South Wales. For all other jurisdictions, on an average day in 2014–15 there were 25,147 children in out-of-home care. This compares with 26,556 children at 30 June 2015 (excluding New South Wales). Most children were placed with relative/kinship carers (46%) or in foster care (36%) (Table A30). These proportions align with those for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 (46% and 36%, respectively, excluding New South Wales). Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.

5.2 Children

Children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care

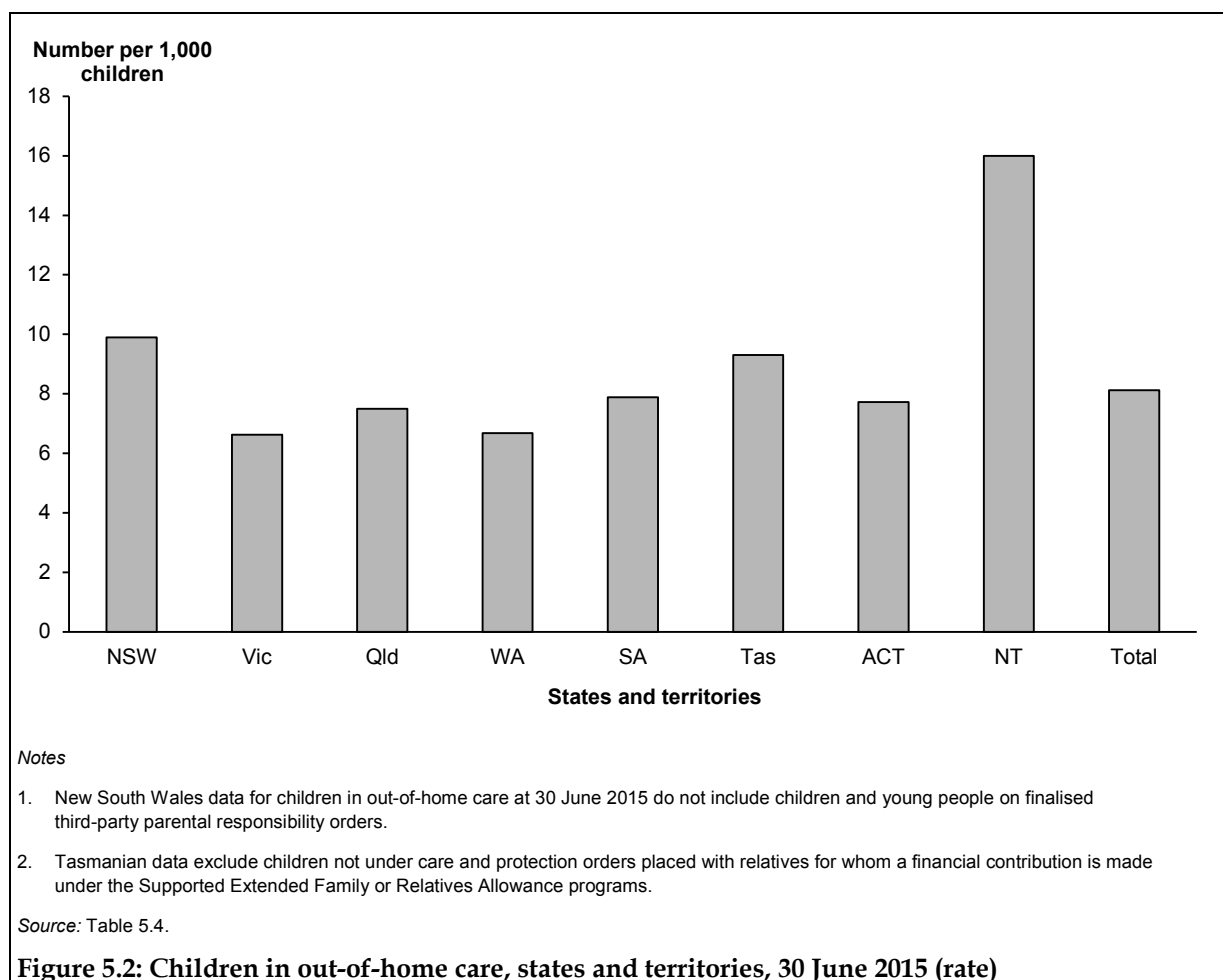
Of the 11,581 children admitted to out-of-home care during 2014–15, 5,307 (46%) were aged under 5. One-quarter (25%, or 2,856) were aged between 5 and 9 and a further 21% (or 2,428 children) were aged between 10 and 14. Children aged 15–17 represented 9% (990) of all children admitted to out-of-home care in 2014–15 (Table A31). The median age of children admitted to out-of-home care was 6.

The age distribution of children discharged from out-of-home care was older than that of children admitted to out-of-home care – the median age of children discharged was 10. Nationally, 29% of those discharged were aged 15–17 (Table A32), compared with 9% admitted to out-of-home care (Figure 5.1). This reflects children being admitted to out-of-home care at a younger age and remaining there for longer, as well as children leaving out-of-home care once they turn 18.



Children in out-of-home care

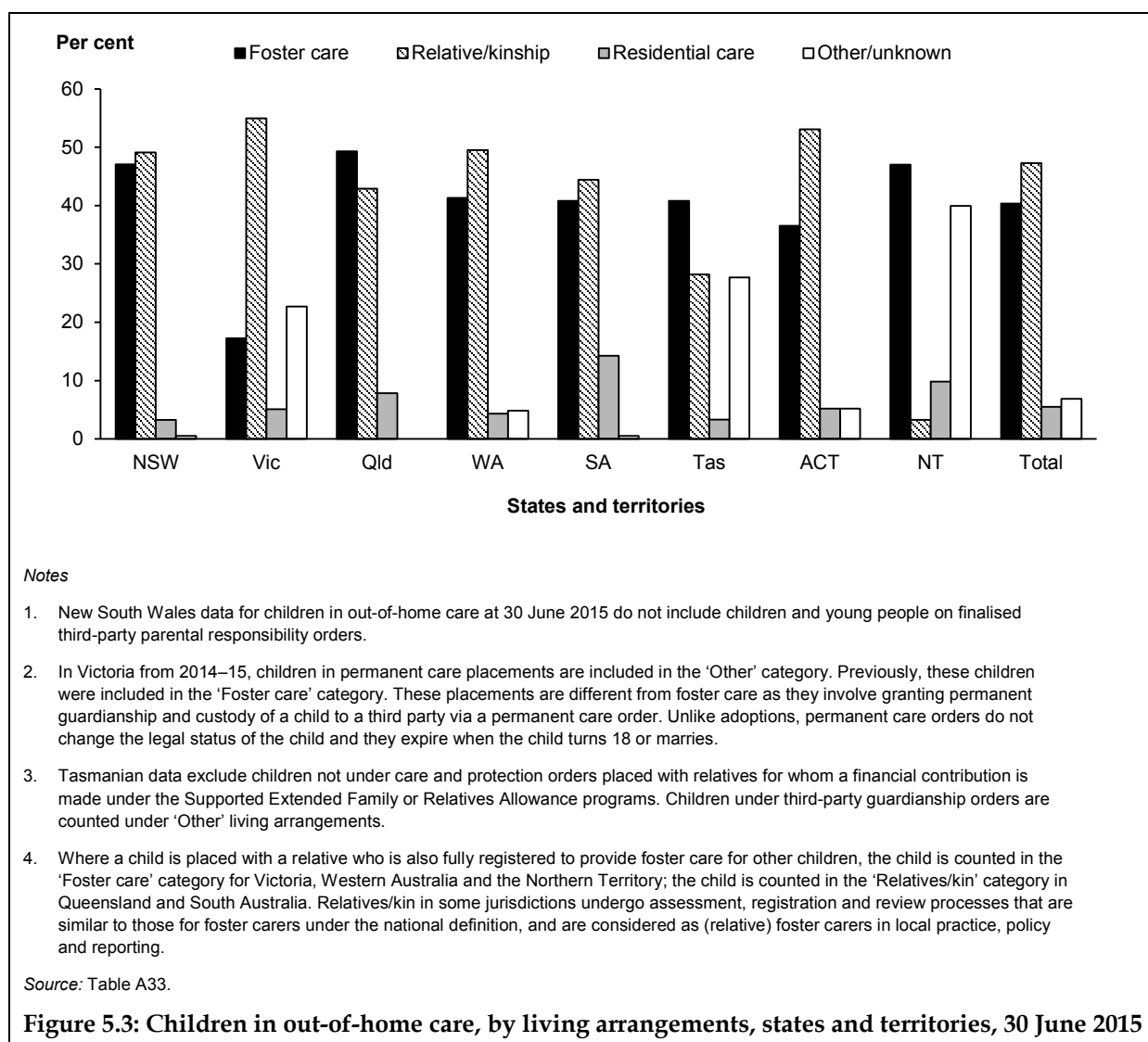
Nationally, the rate of children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 was 8.1 per 1,000 children, ranging from 6.6 per 1,000 in Victoria to 16.0 in the Northern Territory (Figure 5.2).



Types of placement

The vast majority of children (93%) in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 were in home-based care—40% in foster care, 47% in relative/kinship care and 6% in other types of home-based care (Table A33). The proportions varied across jurisdictions; for example, the proportion of children in foster care ranged from 17% in Victoria to 49% in Queensland. Differences across jurisdictions are due, in part, to differences in reporting practices (Figure 5.3).

Nationally, around 1 in 20 children in out-of-home care were living in residential care (Figure 5.3). Higher proportions than the national level of children in residential care were reported in Queensland (8%), South Australia (14%) and the Northern Territory (10%). Residential care is mainly used for children who have complex needs. However, in many jurisdictions, priority is given to keeping siblings together, which sometimes results in periods of residential care for larger family groups.



Length of time continuously in care

Nationally, at 30 June 2015, about 4 in 5 children (81%) had been continuously in out-of-home care for 1 year or more—ranging from 73% of children in Victoria to 85% in

Tasmania (Table 5.2). More than one-quarter (27%) had been in out-of-home care for between 2 and 5 years, while a further 41% had been in out-of-home care for 5 years or more. Almost 20% of children had been in out-of-home care for less than 1 year.

Table 5.2: Children in out-of-home care, by length of time continuously in care, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Time in continuous placement	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
<1 month ^(d)	299	265	131	78	35	11	28	20	867
1 month to <6 months	1,307	1,064	619	376	260	69	64	99	3,858
6 months to <1 year	1,250	1,030	651	361	220	76	44	90	3,722
1 year to <2 years	1,926	1,318	1,041	653	238	107	84	226	5,593
2 years to <5 years	4,127	2,148	2,301	1,252	744	311	161	439	11,483
5 years or more	7,934	2,742	3,705	1,234	1,341	487	290	143	17,876
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
	%								
<1 month ^(d)	1.8	3.1	1.6	2.0	1.2	1.0	4.2	2.0	2.0
1 month to <6 months	7.8	12.4	7.3	9.5	9.2	6.5	9.5	9.7	8.9
6 months to <1 year	7.4	12.0	7.7	9.1	7.8	7.2	6.6	8.8	8.6
1 year to <2 years	11.4	15.4	12.3	16.5	8.4	10.1	12.5	22.2	12.9
2 years to <5 years	24.5	25.1	27.2	31.7	26.2	29.3	24.0	43.2	26.5
5 years or more	47.1	32.0	43.9	31.2	47.3	45.9	43.2	14.1	41.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

(d) Not all jurisdictions were able to identify whether children were in respite care. However, where it was known that children were in respite care, they were included in the relevant time category.

Notes

1. If a child has a return home or break of less than 60 days before returning to the same or different placement, he or she is considered to be continuously in care during this period.
2. Percentages exclude cases where the length of time in a continuous placement was unknown or not stated.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Children on a care and protection order

Nationally, 93% of children in out-of-home care were also on care and protection orders. Across jurisdictions, the proportion of children in out-of-home care who were on care and protection orders ranged from 86% in Victoria to almost 100% in the Northern Territory (Table 5.3). In Western Australia, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, a small proportion of children in out-of-home care were on orders other than care and protection orders (for example, offence orders).

Table 5.3: Children in out-of-home care, by order status, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Order status	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
On care and protection order	15,370	7,346	8,256	3,738	2,782	1,033	660	1,016	40,201
On another type of order	0	0	0	4	56	0	2	0	62
<i>Total children on orders</i>	<i>15,370</i>	<i>7,346</i>	<i>8,256</i>	<i>3,742</i>	<i>2,838</i>	<i>1,033</i>	<i>662</i>	<i>1,016</i>	<i>40,263</i>
Not on an order	1,473	1,221	192	212	0	28	9	1	3,136
Total	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
	%								
On care and protection order	91.3	85.7	97.7	94.5	98.0	97.4	98.4	99.9	92.6
On another type of order	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	2.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1
<i>Total children on orders</i>	<i>91.3</i>	<i>85.7</i>	<i>97.7</i>	<i>94.6</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>97.4</i>	<i>98.7</i>	<i>99.9</i>	<i>92.8</i>
Not on an order	8.7	14.3	2.3	5.4	0.0	2.6	1.3	0.1	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Children not on an order are children in negotiated placements, placement service and those awaiting prospective adoption.

(d) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Age and sex profile

Almost one-third (32%) of children in out-of-home care were aged 5–9 and a similar proportion (31%) were aged 10–14 (Table A34). The median age of children in out-of-home care was 9. In line with the general population distribution, just over half (52%) of all children in out-of-home care were boys (Table A35).

Across age groups, living arrangements for children in out-of-home care were similar to those for children on care and protection orders. Children in residential care were older than children in home-based care – 82% of children in residential care or family group homes were aged 10 or older, with a median age of 14. The corresponding proportion of children aged over 10 in home-based care was 43% (Table A36), with a median age of 8. Four per cent (4%) of children in residential care or family group homes in Australia were aged under 5, compared with 24% of those in home-based care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

At 30 June 2015, there were 15,455 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, a rate of 52.5 per 1,000 children. These rates ranged from 22.5 per 1,000 in Tasmania to 74.8 per 1,000 in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2015 (number and number per 1,000)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	All children ^(a)	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All children ^(a)	Rate ratio Indigenous/non-Indigenous
NSW ^(b)	6,210	10,631	2	16,843	67.4	6.6	9.9	10.2
Vic	1,511	7,049	7	8,567	71.5	5.5	6.6	12.9
Qld ^(c)	3,512	4,879	57	8,448	40.0	4.7	7.5	8.5
WA	2,062	1,890	2	3,954	55.3	3.4	6.7	16.3
SA	844	1,949	45	2,838	52.3	5.7	7.9	9.2
Tas ^(d)	241	812	8	1,061	22.5	7.9	9.3	2.9
ACT	183	482	6	671	74.8	5.7	7.7	13.1
NT	892	125	0	1,017	33.4	3.4	16.0	9.8
Total	15,455	27,817	127	43,399	52.5	5.5	8.1	9.5

(a) 'All children' includes children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

(b) New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(d) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Notes

1. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to Table A47 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were in out-of-home care by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were in out-of-home care. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were in out-of-home care for every non-Indigenous child who was in out-of-home care. Children whose Indigenous status is unknown are excluded from the calculations.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Nationally, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was 9.5 times the rate for non-Indigenous children. In all jurisdictions, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was higher than that for non-Indigenous children, with rate ratios ranging from 2.9 in Tasmania to 16.3 in Western Australia (Table 5.4).

Indigenous children in out-of-home care were over-represented across all age groups and this was particularly evident for Indigenous children aged under 10. For example, Indigenous children aged 1–4 were 11 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to be in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 (Table A37).

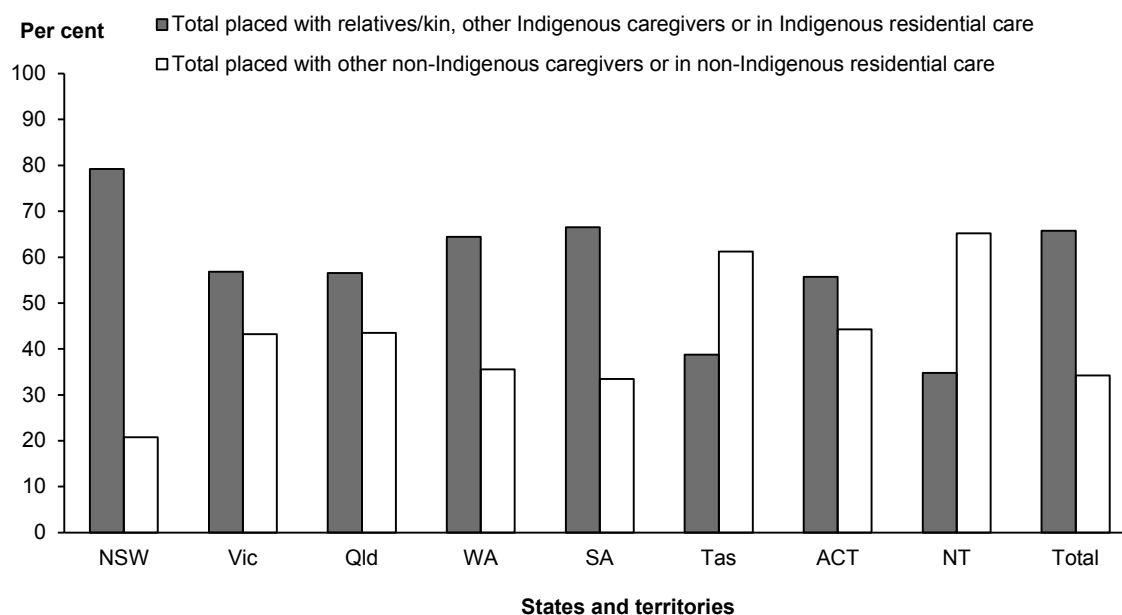
Box 5.3 describes the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, which has been adopted by all jurisdictions in legislation and policy. The impact of the principle is reflected in the relatively high proportions of Indigenous children who were placed either with Indigenous caregivers or with relatives in many jurisdictions (Figure 5.4). Across Australia, in 2014–15, 66% of Indigenous children were placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care; this proportion is similar to that reported in previous years.

Box 5.3: Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle outlines a preference for the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when they are placed outside their family (Lock 1997:50). The principle has the following order of preference for the placement of Indigenous children:

- with the child’s extended family
- within the child’s Indigenous community
- with other Indigenous people.

The principle is just one of the many considerations taken into account when making decisions on placements for Indigenous children. Where placement options outlined in the principle are not optimal for a child’s safety and wellbeing, the child may be placed in an alternative care arrangement. Usually, this is done only after extensive consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and/or organisations.



Notes

1. Aggregate data were provided for New South Wales and the Northern Territory.
2. New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.
3. Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs. A high number of carers whose Indigenous status is unknown may affect the identification of children placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

Source: Table A38.

Figure 5.4: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, relationship of carer, states and territories, 30 June 2015

5.3 National trends

Children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care

Between 2010–11 and 2014–15, the number of children admitted to out-of-home care fluctuated. Over the past year, admissions increased by around 5%, from 11,085 in 2013–14 to 11,581 in 2014–15 (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Trends in children admitted to out-of-home care, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	3,542	3,067	2,644	879	583	298	244	356	11,613
2011–12	3,407	3,526	2,671	1,088	618	284	247	399	12,240
2012–13	3,038	3,204	2,551	1,107	569	304	203	365	11,341
2013–14	3,248	3,210	2,266	1,100	445	208	214	394	11,085
2014–15	3,440	3,545	2,139	1,050	660	194	219	334	11,581

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Note: This table includes all children admitted to out-of-home care for the first time in the period, as well as those children returning to care who had exited care 60 days or more previously. Children admitted to out-of-home care more than once during the year were only counted at the first admission.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

The number of children discharged from out-of-home care remained relatively stable between 2010–11 and 2012–13. This was followed by a decrease of 10%, from 9,360 in 2012–13 to 8,409 in 2013–14. While increases were observed in 2014–15 for all jurisdictions except South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the substantial increase in the total number of children discharged (11,138) is largely due to legislative reforms in New South Wales (Table 5.6).

The number of admissions has consistently outnumbered discharges; however, with the larger increase in discharges in 2014–15, the gap has decreased, with only 443 more children admitted to out-of-home care than were discharged. This compares with a difference of 2,676 children in 2013–14 (AIHW 2015).

Table 5.6: Children discharged from out-of-home care, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	3,034	2,944	1,628	557	376	222	140	282	9,183
2011–12	2,981	3,123	1,350	710	361	241	168	370	9,304
2012–13	2,762	2,950	1,564	884	440	241	209	310	9,360
2013–14	2,467	2,487	1,520	817	485	220	179	234	8,409
2014–15	4,738	2,637	1,907	822	454	188	146	246	11,138

(a) *Safe Home For Life* legislative reforms in New South Wales, effective 29 October 2014, transitioned eligible children/young people to the independent care of their guardian. These children/young people exited out-of-home care.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Notes

1. The data for children exiting care include those who left care and had not returned in less than 60 days.
2. If a child has more than 1 discharge from care, the child is only counted for 1 discharge for the year.
3. Data may include children who were discharged on their eighteenth birthday.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Children in out-of-home care

Nationally, the rate of children in out-of-home care in Australia at 30 June rose between 2011 and 2015, from 7.4 to 8.1 per 1,000 (Table 5.7). Overall, 5,751 more children (an increase of 15%) were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 compared with 30 June 2011.

Increases in the rate of children in out-of-home care may reflect the cumulative impact of children being admitted to, and remaining in, out-of-home care. This is evident in the increasing proportion of children who have been in care for 5 years or more (Table A39).

Table 5.7: Children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care, states and territories, 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2015 (number and number per 1,000)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA ^(c)	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
2011	16,740	5,678	7,602	3,120	2,368	966	540	634	37,648
2012	17,192	6,207	7,999	3,400	2,548	1,009	566	700	39,621
2013	17,422	6,542	8,136	3,425	2,657	1,067	558	742	40,549
2014	18,192	7,710	8,185	3,723	2,631	1,054	606	908	43,009
2015	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
Number per 1,000 children									
2011	10.2	4.6	7.1	5.7	6.7	8.3	6.7	10.2	7.4
2012	10.4	5.0	7.3	6.1	7.2	8.7	6.9	11.1	7.7
2013	10.4	5.2	7.4	5.9	7.4	9.3	6.7	11.6	7.7
2014	10.8	6.0	7.3	6.3	7.3	9.2	7.1	14.3	8.1
2015	9.9	6.6	7.5	6.7	7.9	9.3	7.7	16.0	8.1

(a) New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) South Australia could provide the number of children in out-of-home care only where the department is making a financial contribution to the care of a child (this excludes cases where financial payment was offered and declined).

(d) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

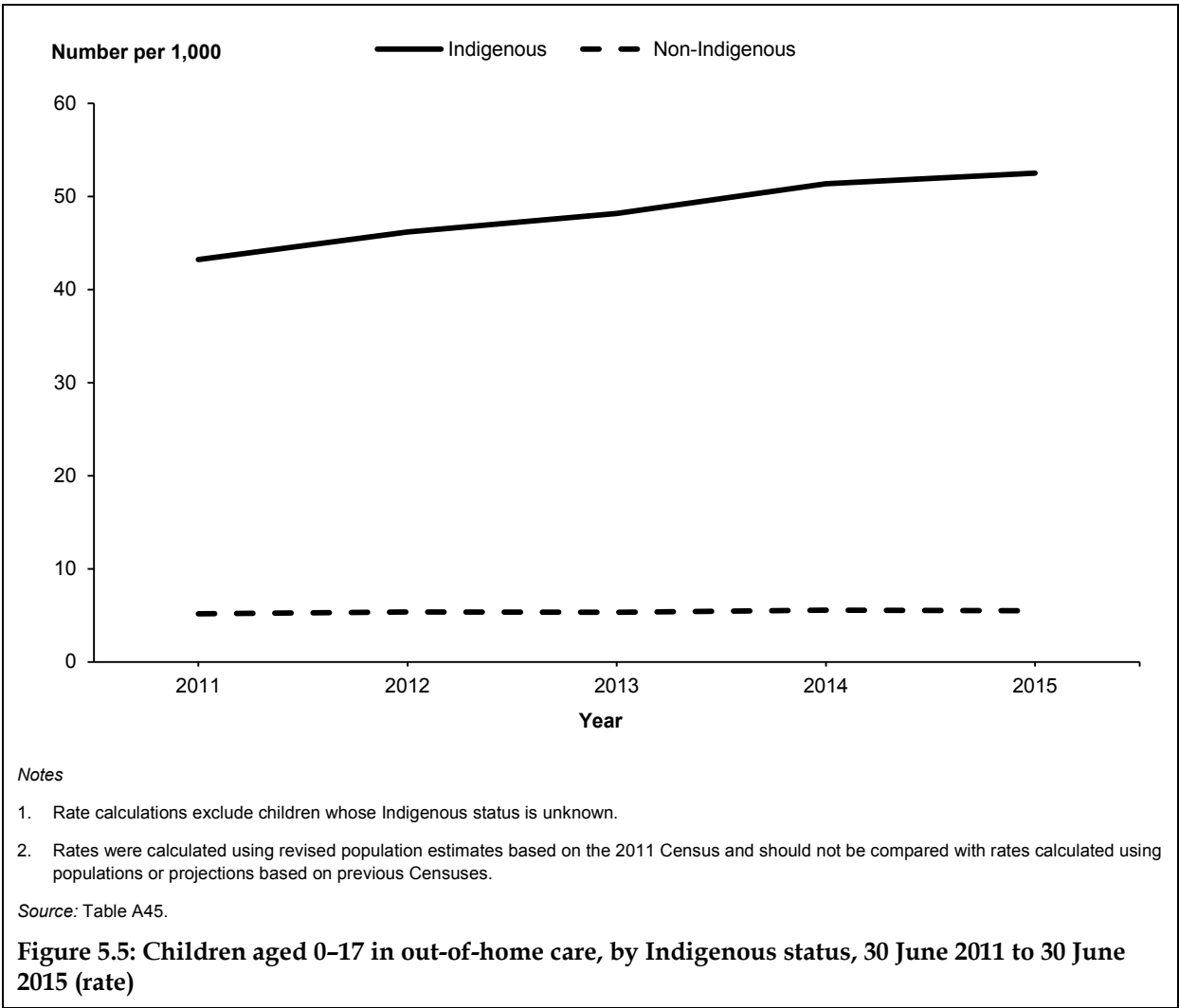
Notes

1. Some numbers and rates may not match those published in previous publications of *Child protection Australia* due to retrospective updates to data.
2. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to tables A47 and S2 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

The rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children placed in out-of-home care has risen steadily since 2011, from 43.2 to 52.5 per 1,000 children, while the non-Indigenous rate has risen slightly from 5.2 to 5.5 per 1,000 children (Figure 5.5).



6 Carers

Across Australia, the vast majority (93%) of children in out-of-home care are placed in home-based care, primarily with foster carers or with relatives/kin (see Chapter 5). This chapter focuses on these carers and their households. Foster care and relative/kinship care are forms of overnight care provided by one or more adults in a private household to a child who is living apart from his/her natural or adoptive parents (see Box 6.1).

6.1 Overview and key statistics

At 30 June 2015, there was almost 9,900 foster carer households and around 13,700 relative/kinship households that had 1 or more children placed with them (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1: Key foster and relative/kinship carer statistics, at 30 June 2015 and during 2014–15

	Number
Foster carer household with a placement at 30 June 2015	9,892
Foster carer households with a placement during 2014–15	12,948
Relative/kinship carer household with a placement at 30 June 2015	13,706
Relative/kinship carer households with a placement during 2014–15	18,401
	Per cent
Foster carer households with multiple children in placements at 30 June 2015	52
Relative/kinship carer households with multiple children in placements at 30 June 2015	39

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Box 6.1: Foster and relative/kinship care

- **Foster care** is where the caregiver is authorised and reimbursed (or was offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child. These substitute parents are generally called ‘foster carers’. There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.
- **Relative/kinship care** is where the caregiver is a relative (other than parents), considered to be family or a close friend, or is a member of the child or young person’s community (in accordance with their culture) who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child.

The information in this chapter describes foster and relative/kinship carer households at 30 June 2015 and commencements and exits during 2014–15. State and territory differences in policies and practices in relation to foster care and relative/kinship care should be taken into account when interpreting the data. Some notable differences include:

- There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers. For example, some carers are paid a wage beyond the reimbursement of expenses.
- Where a carer is authorised to provide both foster and relative/kinship care, he or she may be included in the count of both foster and relative/kinship carers.
- In some jurisdictions, respite carers known to the department are registered as either ‘general foster carers’ or ‘relative carers’ and therefore may be included in the scope of these collections.

The number of households approved/authorised to provide funded out-of-home care placements on an average day is reported in Box 6.2.

Box 6.2 Approved/authorised carer households on an average day in 2014–15

‘Average day’ measures are calculated by summing the number of days each household was subject to the same event during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year. This provides a view of the data that accounts for each day during the year, rather than a snapshot for a single day (for example, 30 June, which is typically reported).

Average day analyses for 2014–15 exclude New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory. For all other jurisdictions, on an average day in 2014–15, there were 12,409 households approved/authorised to provide out-of-home care. Most of these households were approved/authorised to provide foster or relative/kinship care (Table A40). Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.

6.2 Foster carer households

At 30 June 2015, there were 9,892 households with 1 or more foster care placements (Table 6.2). Nationally, during 2014–15, there were 12,948 households that had 1 or more foster care placements at some point during the year (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Foster carer households with a placement, states and territories, at 30 June 2015 and during 2014–15

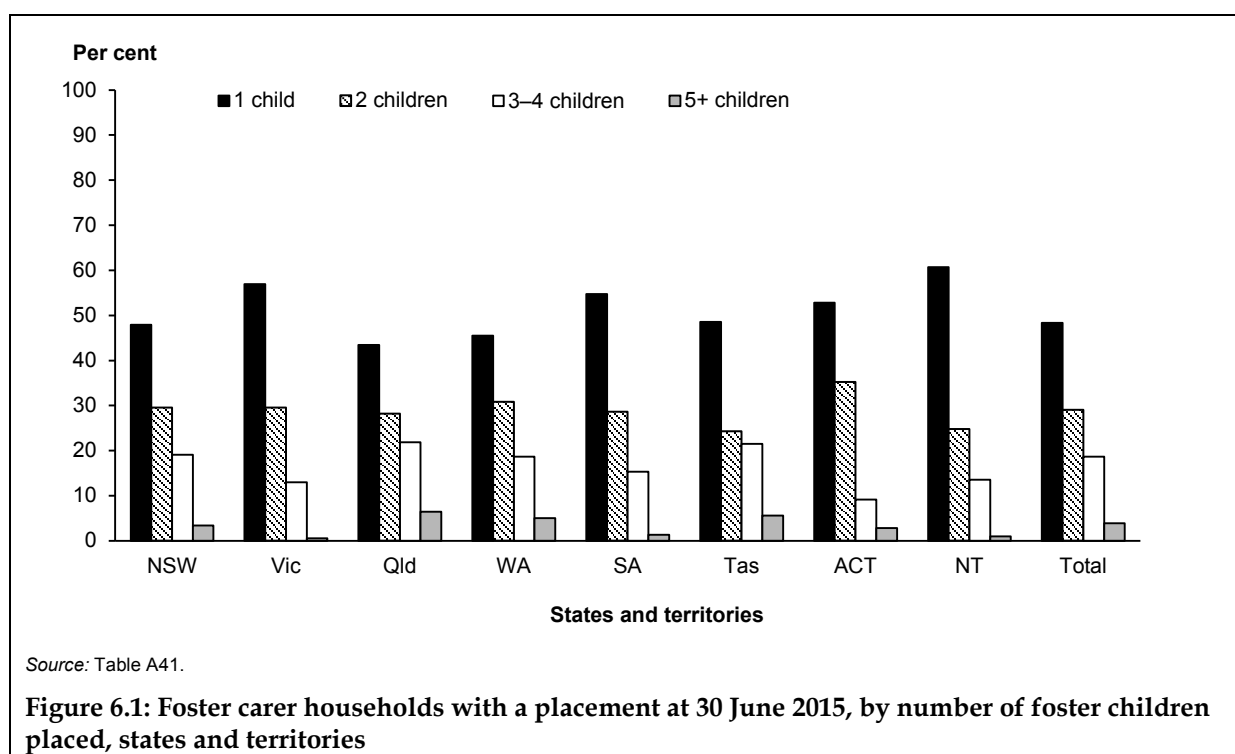
Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(d)	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2015	4,285	887	2,567	809	685	214	142	303	9,892
Household with a placement during 2014–15	5,286	1,494	3,306	1,048	932	266	198	418	12,948

- (a) In New South Wales, the total number of foster carer households are those that had a placement in the past 2 years. 'Households with a placement at 30 June' includes those households that had only a short-term respite placement during the year. Counts of foster carer households are slightly understated as complete information is not available for some non-government agencies.
- (b) In Victoria, from 2014–15, children in permanent care placements are recorded as 'Other home-based care' placements. Previously, these children were recorded as 'Foster care' placements. This change in recording practice has resulted in a decrease in the number of foster carer households with a placement for Victoria.
- (c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. From 2014–15, Queensland data include provisionally approved carer households.
- (d) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Number of children in placements

Across jurisdictions, 52% of foster carer households with a placement had multiple children placed with them at 30 June 2015. The proportion of carer households with multiple children placed with them ranged from 39% in the Northern Territory to 57% in Queensland. Most households with multiple placements had between 2 and 4 foster children placed, while nearly 4% had 5 or more children (Figure 6.1). Households with multiple children placed with them may partially reflect the fact that in many jurisdictions priority is given to keeping siblings together.



Household commencements and exits

Among jurisdictions with available data, 2,113 households commenced foster care and 1,688 exited foster care in 2014–15 (Table 6.3). In Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, more households exited than commenced foster care. With the need for foster carers increasing, the attraction and retention of appropriately skilled foster carers is a high priority across Australia (COAG 2009).

Table 6.3: Number of households commencing and exiting foster care, states and territories, 2014–15

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT ^(d)	Total
Households commencing foster care	630	392	486	266	82	58	38	161	2,113
Households exiting foster care	n.a.	620	447	211	138	107	29	136	1,688

(a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency foster carer households. This count excludes some non-government agency carer households because there is no information collected on their commencement date. For households exiting foster care, New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2014–15.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Queensland data do not include provisionally approved carer households that have started providing foster care but are yet to receive approval as a foster carer for this table.

(c) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. For the purpose of reporting households exiting foster care, if no termination date is recorded, a foster carer household that has not had a placement in 12 months is considered to have exited.

(d) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

6.3 Relative/kinship carer households

At 30 June 2015, there were 13,706 households with 1 or more relative/kinship care placement (Table 6.4). There were 18,401 households that had a relative/kinship placement during 2014–15.

Table 6.4: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement, state and territories, at 30 June 2015 and during 2014–15

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT ^(d)	Total
Households with a placement at 30 June 2015	6,598	3,188	1,394	1,126	842	195	220	143	13,706
Household with a placement during 2014–15	7,876	5,029	1,967	1,548	1,217	287	271	206	18,401

(a) In New South Wales, the total number of relative/kinship carer households are those who had a placement in the past 2 years. 'Households with a placement at 30 June' includes those households that had only a short-term respite placement during the year.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. From 2014–15, Queensland data include provisionally approved carer households.

(c) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. As such, the number of relative/kinship carer households reported in this table is considered to be higher than the actual number. For the purpose of reporting active relative/kinship care households, if no termination date is recorded, a relative/kinship care household that has not had a placement in 12 months is considered to be no longer active.

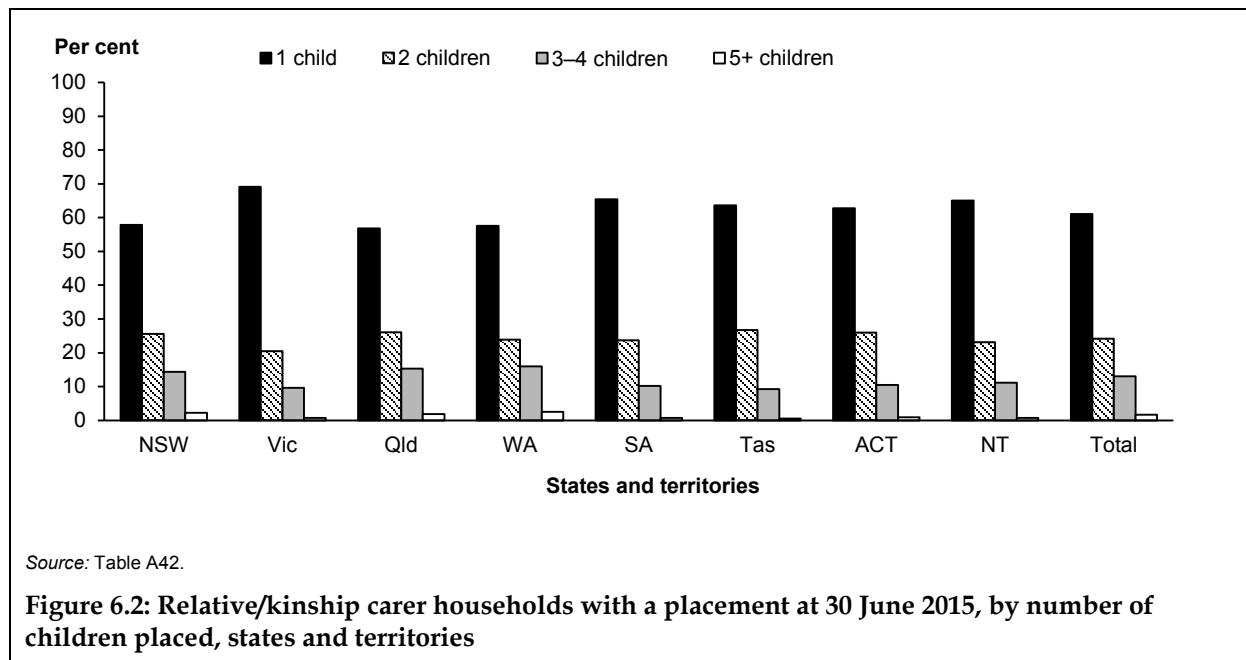
(d) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Number of children in placements

Across jurisdictions, 61% of relative/kinship carer households with a placement had 1 child placed with them at 30 June 2015, compared with 48% of foster carer households. These findings are similar to those for 2013–14 (AIHW 2015).

The proportion of relative/kinship carer households with 1 child ranged from 57% in Queensland to 69% in Victoria. Across Australia, 37% of households with a placement had between 2 and 4 children placed and 2% had 5 or more (Figure 6.2).



Household commencements and exits

Among those jurisdictions with available data, 5,201 households commenced relative/kinship care and 3,263 exited relative/kinship care in 2014–15. In all jurisdictions except Tasmania, a greater number of households commenced than exited relative/kinship care (Table 6.5). A similar trend was observed in 2013–14 (AIHW 2015).

Table 6.5: Number of households commencing and exiting relative/kinship care, states and territories, 2014–15

Households	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT ^(d)	Total
Households commencing relative/kinship care	1,202	2,235	567	617	306	121	65	88	5,201
Households exiting relative/kinship care	n.a.	1,782	565	508	104	179	56	69	3,263

(a) New South Wales data include Community Services and non-government agency relative/kinship carer households. New South Wales was unable to provide data for 2014–15 for 'Households exiting relative/kinship care'.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Queensland data do not include provisionally approved carer households that have started providing relative/kinship care but are yet to receive approval as a relative/kinship carer in this table.

(c) In Tasmania, delays in administrative processes can result in carers being maintained as approved in the system when they are no longer accepting child placements. For the purpose of reporting households exiting relative/kinship care, if no termination date is recorded, a relative/kinship carer household that has not had a placement in 12 months is considered to have exited.

(d) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

7 Intensive family support services

This chapter provides information on children commencing intensive family support services in 2014–15 that are funded by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. Intensive family support services aim to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers due to child protection concerns, and to reunify families where separation has already occurred. See Box 7.1 for the criteria for intensive family support services.

7.1 Overview and key statistics

Key statistics

In 2014–15, there were around 240 intensive family support service providers nationally (Table 7.1). The services were delivered across more than 300 locations, most of which (81%) were in capital cities or other urban centres (AIHW Intensive Family Support Services Aggregate Collection 2014–15). Nationally, almost 25,000 children aged 0–17 commenced intensive family support services during 2014–15 (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Key intensive family support services statistics, 2014–15

	Number
Intensive family support services	239
Children commencing intensive family support services	24,690

Note: Data reported excludes the Northern Territory.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Box 7.1: Intensive family support services

To be included in the intensive family support services data collection, services must meet all the following criteria:

- They are provided explicitly to work to prevent separation or to reunify families.
- A range of services are provided as part of an integrated strategy focusing on improving family functioning and skills, rather than just one type of service, such as emergency or respite care.
- They are intensive in nature, averaging at least 4 hours of service provision per week for a specified short-term period (usually less than 180 days).
- Generally, referrals will come from the statutory agency and will have been identified through the child protection process. Most cases will have been the subject of a child protection substantiation.

Currently, the national data collection is limited to intensive family support services and does not include other types of family support services that do not meet the above criteria. Work was previously undertaken to develop a Treatment and Support Services National Minimum Data Set; however, this has not been implemented for national reporting due to limited data availability and quality.

7.2 Children commencing services

Age profile

Almost half (44%) of children commencing intensive family support services were aged under 5 (among those jurisdictions with available data). However, the age distribution varied across jurisdictions – the proportion of children aged 0–4 commencing intensive family support services ranged from 24% in the Australian Capital Territory to 54% in New South Wales (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Number of children aged 0–17 commencing intensive family support services, by age at commencement of service, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas ^(a)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
0–4	5,173	2,917	1,675	377	243	491	56	n.a.	10,932
5–9	2,839	2,049	1,325	293	197	535	72	n.a.	7,310
10–17	1,581	2,414	1,122	186	165	598	99	n.a.	6,165
Unknown	9	235	19	0	0	10	10	n.a.	283
Total	9,602	7,615	4,141	856	605	1,634	237	n.a.	24,690
%									
0–4	53.9	38.3	40.4	44.0	40.2	30.0	23.6	..	44.3
5–9	29.6	26.9	32.0	34.2	32.6	32.7	30.4	..	29.6
10–17	16.5	31.7	27.1	21.7	27.3	36.6	41.8	..	25.0
Unknown	0.1	3.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.6	4.2	..	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	100.0

(a) Services in Tasmania are provided under the title of Integrated Family Support Services. Tasmanian data are compiled from aggregate data provided by community sector organisations and cannot be validated by the department. It should be noted that as data are not provided by all community sector organisations the reported amounts may understate the true number of clients receiving a service.

Notes

1. Data reported exclude data for the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory does not currently fund services that provide the services as defined as Prevention or Reunification services. New services are being proposed under the Family Intervention Framework that will comply with these stated definitions.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

The vast majority (84%) of children who commenced an intensive family support service were living with their parents. For those jurisdictions with available data, this ranged from 65% of children in Western Australia to 95% of children in New South Wales (Table A43).

In Queensland, a substantially higher proportion of children in out-of-home care used intensive family support services – 28% compared with 8% overall.

Appendix A: Detailed tables

Children receiving child protection services

Table A1: Number of children receiving child protection services, by components of service, states and territories, 2014–15

Service component	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
Investigation only	36,729	18,506	15,817	10,280	2,779	1,146	775	4,511	90,543
On an order and in out-of-home care	13,581	7,819	8,411	3,335	2,548	1,056	536	550	37,836
Investigation, order and out-of-home care	5,988	2,302	1,312	1,250	652	168	240	701	12,613
Care and protection order only	584	2,255	872	747	141	120	62	25	4,806
Out-of-home care only	1,353	529	132	69	68	15	51	0	2,217
Investigation and out-of-home care	504	367	402	71	5	6	4	0	1,359
Investigation and care and protection order	353	1,652	217	157	116	49	35	27	2,606
	%								
Investigation only	62.2	55.4	58.2	64.6	44.0	44.8	45.5	77.6	59.6
On an order and in out-of-home care	23.0	23.4	31.0	21.0	40.4	41.3	31.5	9.5	24.9
Investigation, order and out-of-home care	10.1	6.9	4.8	7.9	10.3	6.6	14.1	12.1	8.3
Care and protection order only	1.0	6.7	3.2	4.7	2.2	4.7	3.6	0.4	3.2
Out-of-home care only	2.3	1.6	0.5	0.4	1.1	0.6	3.0	0.0	1.5
Investigation and out-of-home care	0.9	1.1	1.5	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.9
Investigation and care and protection order	0.6	4.9	0.8	1.0	1.8	1.9	2.1	0.5	1.7
Number of children receiving child protection services	59,092	33,430	27,163	15,909	6,309	2,560	1,703	5,814	151,980

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A2: New and repeat clients receiving child protection services, by service type, 2014–15

Client type	Children receiving child protection services	Children who were the subject of an investigation of a notification	Children on care and protection orders	Children in out-of-home care
	Number			
New client	40,932	40,807	2,981	2,679
Repeat client	109,345	65,260	54,007	50,515
Unknown	0	0	0	0
Total	150,277	106,067	56,988	53,194
	%			
New client	27.2	38.5	5.2	5.0
Repeat client	72.8	61.5	94.8	95.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Due to data availability and quality issues, data reported excludes the Australian Capital Territory.
2. 'Children receiving child protection services' is defined as one or more of the following occurring within the reporting period: an investigation of a notification, being on a care and protection order, or being in out-of-home care. It is not a total count of these three areas; it is a count of unique children across the three areas.
3. New clients are children or young people who have not ever previously been the subject of an investigation: any type of care and protection order (as per the scope of this collection), or funded out-of-home care placement (including only those respite placements of 7 days or more) within the jurisdiction.
4. Repeat clients are children or young people who have previously been the subject of an investigation or were discharged (according to national specifications) from any type of care and protection order or funded out-of-home care placement (including only those respite placements of 7 days or more), or whose earliest order and/or placement in the current reporting period is part of a preceding continuous episode of care.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A3: Children receiving child protection services, by Indigenous status, states and territories, 2014–15 (number and number per 1,000 children)

State/ territory	Number of children				Number per 1,000 children			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	All children	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All children	Rate ratio Indigenous/non-Indigenous
NSW	16,607	41,514	971	59,092	181.0	26.0	35.0	7.0
Vic	4,109	29,194	127	33,430	195.7	23.1	26.0	8.5
Qld ^(a)	9,020	16,730	1,413	27,163	103.4	16.2	24.2	6.4
WA ^(b)	5,773	7,250	2,886	15,909	155.4	13.1	27.0	11.8
SA	1,908	4,173	228	6,309	118.7	12.2	17.6	9.8
Tas ^(b)	468	1,785	307	2,560	43.8	17.2	22.4	2.5
ACT	383	1,263	57	1,703	157.2	15.1	19.8	10.4
NT	4,645	1,143	26	5,814	173.9	31.0	91.5	5.6
Total	42,913	103,052	6,015	151,980	146.4	20.5	28.6	7.1

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In Western Australia and Tasmania, the higher proportion of children with unknown Indigenous status may affect the reliability of the rate ratio calculation. Rate ratios should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Notes

1. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to Table A46 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate and rate ratio calculations include unborn children and children of unknown age but exclude children of unknown Indigenous status.
3. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subject of substantiations by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were the subject of substantiations. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subjects of substantiations for every non-Indigenous child who was the subject of substantiation.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A4: Number of children receiving child protection services, by age group, Indigenous status, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
Unborn	644	0	307	186	..	7	1	..	1,145
<1	997	424	608	364	194	35	34	418	3,074
1–4	3,925	1,079	2,235	1,320	434	104	113	1,188	10,398
5–9	4,902	1,236	2,729	1,903	599	146	108	1,405	13,028
10–14	4,302	993	2,343	1,537	513	135	95	1,239	11,157
15–17	1,837	377	793	463	167	41	32	395	4,105
Unknown	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	6
Total	16,607	4,109	9,020	5,773	1,908	468	383	4,645	42,913
Non-Indigenous children									
Unborn	1,203	0	321	156	..	24	1	..	1,705
<1	2,158	2,539	948	412	424	101	118	66	6,766
1–4	8,818	6,875	3,790	1,554	939	400	268	230	22,874
5–9	12,475	8,565	5,071	2,328	1,278	561	370	352	31,000
10–14	11,605	7,851	4,715	2,025	1,075	481	352	356	28,460
15–17	5,255	3,364	1,880	773	456	218	153	139	12,238
Unknown	0	0	5	2	1	0	1	0	9
Total	41,514	29,194	16,730	7,250	4,173	1,785	1,263	1,143	103,052
Unknown Indigenous status									
Unborn	562	0	188	104	..	51	1	..	906
<1	36	15	229	253	82	35	14	2	666
1–4	124	33	358	839	78	79	13	7	1,531
5–9	103	27	292	818	29	73	10	10	1,362
10–14	96	39	238	611	33	55	11	5	1,088
15–17	50	13	87	261	6	14	7	2	440
Unknown	0	0	21	0	0	0	1	0	22
Total	971	127	1,413	2,886	228	307	57	26	6,015

(continued)

Table A4 (continued): Number of children receiving child protection services by age group, Indigenous status, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
All children									
Unborn	2,409	0	816	446	..	82	3	..	3,756
<1	3,191	2,978	1,785	1,029	700	171	166	486	10,506
1–4	12,867	7,987	6,383	3,713	1,451	583	394	1,425	34,803
5–9	17,480	9,828	8,092	5,049	1,906	780	488	1,767	45,390
10–14	16,003	8,883	7,296	4,173	1,621	671	458	1,600	40,705
15–17	7,142	3,754	2,760	1,497	629	273	192	536	16,783
Unknown	0	0	31	2	2	0	2	0	37
Total	59,092	33,430	27,163	15,909	6,309	2,560	1,703	5,814	151,980

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Notes

1. 'Children receiving child protection services' is defined as one or more of the following occurring within the reporting period: an investigation of a notification, being on a care and protection order, or being in out-of-home care. It is not a total count of these three areas; it is a count of unique children across the three areas.
2. 'All children' includes children of unknown Indigenous status.
3. Age is calculated as at the start of the financial year (that is, 1 July 2014) if the first contact began before the start of the financial year (that is, children continuing on an order or in out-of-home care into the financial year); otherwise, age is calculated as at the date of first contact during the period (that is, date of notification, order start or placement start for children whose contact occurred during the period).

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Notifications, investigations and substantiations

Table A5: Notifications, by type of action, states and territories, 2014–15^(a)

Type of action	NSW ^(b)	Vic ^(c)	Qld ^(d)	WA ^(e)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
Investigations finalised ^(f)	73,802	23,971	19,234	11,074	4,739	1,303	1,451	5,145	140,719
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	1,183	0	944	1,124	242	125	106	1,361	5,085
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>74,985</i>	<i>23,971</i>	<i>20,178</i>	<i>12,198</i>	<i>4,981</i>	<i>1,428</i>	<i>1,557</i>	<i>6,506</i>	<i>145,804</i>
Investigations in process ^(g)	420	1,130	2,172	1,216	539	167	62	576	6,282
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>75,405</i>	<i>25,101</i>	<i>22,350</i>	<i>13,414</i>	<i>5,520</i>	<i>1,595</i>	<i>1,619</i>	<i>7,082</i>	<i>152,086</i>
Notifications in process	191	27	0	115	135	236	1	0	705
Notifications resolved without investigation	50,550	66,458	0	3,299	16,385	11,729	9,013	9,944	167,378
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(h)</i>	<i>50,741</i>	<i>66,485</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>3,414</i>	<i>16,520</i>	<i>11,965</i>	<i>9,014</i>	<i>9,944</i>	<i>168,083</i>
Total notifications	126,146	91,586	22,350	16,828	22,040	13,560	10,633	17,026	320,169
	%								
Investigations finalised ^(f)	58.5	26.2	86.1	65.8	21.5	9.6	13.6	30.2	44.0
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	0.9	0.0	4.2	6.7	1.1	0.9	1.0	8.0	1.6
<i>Total closed investigations</i>	<i>59.4</i>	<i>26.2</i>	<i>90.3</i>	<i>72.5</i>	<i>22.6</i>	<i>10.5</i>	<i>14.6</i>	<i>38.2</i>	<i>45.5</i>
Investigations in process ^(g)	0.3	1.2	9.7	7.2	2.4	1.2	0.6	3.4	2.0
<i>Total investigations</i>	<i>59.8</i>	<i>27.4</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>79.7</i>	<i>25.0</i>	<i>11.8</i>	<i>15.2</i>	<i>41.6</i>	<i>47.5</i>
Notifications in process	0.2	—	0.0	0.7	0.6	1.7	—	0.0	0.2
Notifications resolved without investigation	40.1	72.6	0.0	19.6	74.3	86.5	84.8	58.4	52.3
<i>Total dealt with by other means^(h)</i>	<i>40.2</i>	<i>72.6</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>20.3</i>	<i>75.0</i>	<i>88.2</i>	<i>84.8</i>	<i>58.4</i>	<i>52.5</i>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The number of notifications and the percentage of those notifications investigated are not comparable across jurisdictions. This is because legislation and the policies that provide the framework for assessing child protection notifications vary broadly across jurisdictions.

(b) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Only the more serious cases, which receive the higher level response, may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome.

(c) In Victoria, there is no category identified as 'Dealt with by other means'. All notifications are either 'investigations', 'investigations in process' or 'resolved without investigation'. For the purposes of national reporting, 'Dealt with by other means' is the total of 'notifications in process' and 'notifications resolved without investigations'.

(d) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. In Queensland, 'investigation closed—no outcome possible' is considered to be a finalised investigation. This category includes notifications where there was insufficient information to enable an assessment outcome of 'substantiated' or 'unsubstantiated' to be determined. This may occur in situations where the family was unable to be identified or located, or has moved overseas, and the investigation is considered finalised and closed.

(e) In Western Australia, notifications where the primary concern at notification was emotional/psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.

(f) 'Investigations finalised' are completed investigations, with an outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' recorded by 31 August 2015.

(g) 'Investigations in process' are investigations that were begun but not completed by 31 August 2015.

(h) 'Total dealt with by other means' includes notifications that were responded to by means other than an investigation, such as referral to police, referral to family services or provision of advice. 'Dealt with by other means' also includes some cases that were previously reported as 'no investigation possible/no action'.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A6: Number of investigations, by source of notification, states and territories, 2014–15

Source of notification	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
Police	12,761	8,596	3,650	3,808	1,290	483	291	2,229	33,108
School personnel	14,244	4,599	2,071	1,952	814	322	285	1,168	25,455
Medical/health personnel	7,723	2,287	2,018	1,230	1,077	116	249	1,447	16,147
Family	8,577	2,427	3,359	1,625	410	145	170	401	17,114
Friend/neighbour	3,355	661	1,192	237	141	32	83	161	5,862
Social worker	14,397	837	0	1,523	796	376	13	47	17,989
Non-government organisation personnel	3,829	2,508	785	0	342	12	174	423	8,073
Departmental officer	2,443	0	480	1,018	311	8	164	727	5,151
Child care personnel	1,086	157	159	50	137	18	22	32	1,661
Other ^(d)	6,827	676	1,563	1,081	188	83	165	429	11,012
Subject child	163	0	148	99	10	0	3	17	440
Not stated	0	2,353	6,925	791	4	0	0	1	10,074
Total	75,405	25,101	22,350	13,414	5,520	1,595	1,619	7,082	152,086

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment).

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Data reported for Tasmania aligns with the AIHW technical specifications except in the case of notifications received from departmental officers, which could also be classified in another category (for example, social worker). Notifications from departmental officers were assigned to the category of 'departmental officer' regardless of whether the source of notification could be classified in other categories.

(d) 'Other' category includes where the source of notification was anonymous and may include the person responsible.

Note: Investigations include 'investigations finalised', 'investigations in process' and 'investigations closed—no outcome possible'.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A7: Children who were the subjects of investigations, by outcome, states and territories, 2014–15 (number)

Investigation outcome	NSW^(a)	Vic	Qld^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Substantiated	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457
Not substantiated	27,701	8,567	11,127	6,564	1,241	320	571	2,446	58,537
<i>Total finalised investigations</i>	<i>42,723</i>	<i>21,867</i>	<i>16,996</i>	<i>9,946</i>	<i>3,149</i>	<i>1,153</i>	<i>957</i>	<i>4,203</i>	<i>100,994</i>
Investigations in process	213	960	15	983	259	130	43	467	3,070
Investigation closed—no outcome possible	638	0	737	829	144	86	54	569	3,057
Children in investigations	43,574	22,827	17,748	11,758	3,552	1,369	1,054	5,239	107,121

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Only the more serious cases, which receive the higher level response, may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Note: Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not to the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2015.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A8: Children who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by type of abuse or neglect and sex, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(b)	Total
Number									
Boys									
Physical	1,185	1,520	537	281	234	48	24	169	3,998
Sexual	802	745	70	126	85	6	6	22	1,862
Emotional	2,493	4,159	1,031	584	297	178	91	293	9,126
Neglect	2,542	317	1,264	527	380	143	62	391	5,626
Not stated	0	0	0	7	3	11	0	0	21
Total	7,022	6,741	2,902	1,525	999	386	183	875	20,633
Girls									
Physical	1,094	1,393	436	229	214	48	27	147	3,588
Sexual	1,829	882	251	411	111	20	9	75	3,588
Emotional	2,529	3,987	1,048	600	250	204	88	306	9,012
Neglect	2,394	266	1,161	511	327	136	79	354	5,228
Not stated	0	1	0	10	1	17	0	0	29
Total	7,846	6,529	2,896	1,761	903	425	203	882	21,445
Not stated									
Physical	12	7	9	17	1	2	0	0	48
Sexual	3	4	2	14	0	1	0	0	24
Emotional	64	19	10	45	3	5	0	0	146
Neglect	75	0	50	20	2	11	0	0	158
Not stated	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Total	154	30	71	96	6	22	0	0	379
All children									
Physical	2,291	2,920	982	527	449	98	51	316	7,634
Sexual	2,634	1,631	323	551	196	27	15	97	5,474
Emotional	5,086	8,165	2,089	1,229	550	387	179	599	18,284
Neglect	5,011	583	2,475	1,058	709	290	141	745	11,012
Not stated	0	1	0	17	4	31	0	0	53
Total	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457

(continued)

Table A8 (continued): Children who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by type of abuse or neglect and sex, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(b)	Total
%									
Boys									
Physical	16.9	22.5	18.5	18.4	23.4	12.4	13.1	19.3	19.4
Sexual	11.4	11.1	2.4	8.3	8.5	1.6	3.3	2.5	9.0
Emotional	35.5	61.7	35.5	38.3	29.7	46.1	49.7	33.5	44.2
Neglect	36.2	4.7	43.6	34.6	38.0	37.0	33.9	44.7	27.3
Not stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.3	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Girls									
Physical	13.9	21.3	15.1	13.0	23.7	11.3	13.3	16.7	16.7
Sexual	23.3	13.5	8.7	23.3	12.3	4.7	4.4	8.5	16.7
Emotional	32.2	61.1	36.2	34.1	27.7	48.0	43.3	34.7	42.0
Neglect	30.5	4.1	40.1	29.0	36.2	32.0	38.9	40.1	24.4
Not stated	0.0	—	0.0	0.6	0.1	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children									
Physical	15.3	22.0	16.7	15.6	23.5	11.8	13.2	18.0	18.0
Sexual	17.5	12.3	5.5	16.3	10.3	3.2	3.9	5.5	12.9
Emotional	33.9	61.4	35.6	36.3	28.8	46.5	46.4	34.1	43.1
Neglect	33.4	4.4	42.2	31.3	37.2	34.8	36.5	42.4	25.9
Not stated	0.0	—	0.0	0.5	0.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In the Northern Territory, due to recording issues, sexual exploitation is under-reported. This has been addressed and it is expected that numbers in this area will be similar to those of other jurisdictions in future years.

Notes

- Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not to the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2015.
- If a child was the subject of more than one type of abuse or neglect as part of the same notification, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one considered by the child protection workers to cause the most harm to the child. Where a child is the subject of more than one substantiation during the year, the type of abuse or neglect reported is the one associated with the first substantiation decision relating to the earliest notification during the year. As such, only the abuse type for the first substantiation in the year that is most likely to place the child at risk, or be most severe in the short term, is reported.
- Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A9: Children who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by age group and Indigenous status, states and territories

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^{(b)(c)}	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
Unborn	286	0	184	77	..	3	1	..	551
<1	458	217	205	119	103	20	10	178	1,310
1–4	1,300	387	485	304	166	33	30	414	3,119
5–9	1,289	407	541	424	175	36	28	413	3,313
10–14	1,043	317	489	328	108	25	24	355	2,689
15–17	314	87	113	63	22	6	5	79	689
Not stated	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	4
Total	4,691	1,415	2,019	1,315	575	123	98	1,439	11,675
Non-Indigenous children									
Unborn	478	0	181	54	..	16	0	..	729
<1	857	1,356	255	103	235	53	48	16	2,923
1–4	2,440	2,980	846	343	339	155	68	67	7,238
5–9	2,872	3,520	1,066	545	351	152	74	98	8,678
10–14	2,732	3,078	982	433	243	129	59	103	7,759
15–17	920	946	270	112	68	32	24	31	2,403
Not stated	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Total	10,299	11,880	3,601	1,591	1,237	537	273	315	29,733
Unknown Indigenous status									
Unborn	30	0	55	5	..	23	1	..	114
<1	1	3	39	44	41	23	7	0	158
1–4	0	1	46	122	22	46	1	1	239
5–9	0	0	42	140	11	37	2	2	234
10–14	0	1	49	115	18	34	2	0	219
15–17	0	0	18	50	4	10	2	0	84
Not stated	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	32	5	249	476	96	173	15	3	1,049

(continued)

Table A9 (continued): Children who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by age group and Indigenous status, states and territories

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^{(b)(c)}	ACT ^(c)	NT	Total
All children									
Unborn	794	0	420	136	..	42	2	..	1,394
<1	1,316	1,576	499	266	379	96	65	194	4,391
1–4	3,740	3,368	1,377	769	527	234	99	482	10,596
5–9	4,161	3,927	1,649	1,109	537	225	104	513	12,225
10–14	3,775	3,396	1,520	876	369	188	85	458	10,667
15–17	1,234	1,033	401	225	94	48	31	110	3,176
Not stated	2	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	8
Total	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In Western Australia and Tasmania, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data.

(c) In Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subjects of substantiations should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers.

Note: Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not to the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2015.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A10: Number of children who were the subjects of substantiations by socioeconomic area and Indigenous status, 2014–15

Socioeconomic areas	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Not stated	Total
	Number			
1 Lowest	3,229	6,189	258	9,676
2	1,422	5,035	232	6,689
3	1,025	3,836	175	5,036
4	635	2,688	121	3,444
5 Highest	274	1,268	116	1,658
Total	6,585	19,016	902	26,503
	%			
1 Lowest	49.0	32.5	28.6	36.5
2	21.6	26.5	25.7	25.2
3	15.6	20.2	19.4	19.0
4	9.6	14.1	13.4	13.0
5 Highest	4.2	6.7	12.9	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and disadvantage (IRSAD), used here as a measure of socioeconomic position, broadly assesses 'people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society' (ABS 2013b). For more information see Appendix B or ABS 2013b.
2. Socioeconomic data exclude New South Wales because location data were not available.
3. Of jurisdictions that provided data, 932 records were excluded due either to missing location data, or because they were unable to be mapped to geographical areas to calculate the index.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A11: Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by type of abuse or neglect and Indigenous status, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^{(b)(c)}	ACT ^(c)	NT ^(d)	Total
Number									
Indigenous children									
Physical	597	312	355	169	117	15	5	216	1,786
Sexual	602	67	75	146	45	1	3	71	1,010
Emotional	1,619	944	590	476	160	67	48	492	4,396
Neglect	1,873	92	999	516	250	35	42	660	4,467
Not stated	0	0	0	8	3	5	0	0	16
Total	4,691	1,415	2,019	1,315	575	123	98	1,439	11,675
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	1,691	2,607	589	266	311	59	45	98	5,666
Sexual	2,032	1,564	224	254	142	23	11	26	4,276
Emotional	3,456	7,217	1,416	600	354	255	124	106	13,528
Neglect	3,120	491	1,372	463	429	182	93	85	6,235
Not stated	0	1	0	8	1	18	0	0	28
Total	10,299	11,880	3,601	1,591	1,237	537	273	315	29,733
Unknown Indigenous status									
Physical	3	1	38	92	21	24	1	2	182
Sexual	0	0	24	151	9	3	1	0	188
Emotional	11	4	83	153	36	65	7	1	360
Neglect	18	0	104	79	30	73	6	0	310
Not stated	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	9
Total	32	5	249	476	96	173	15	3	1,049
All children									
Physical	2,291	2,920	982	527	449	98	51	316	7,634
Sexual	2,634	1,631	323	551	196	27	15	97	5,474
Emotional	5,086	8,165	2,089	1,229	550	387	179	599	18,284
Neglect	5,011	583	2,475	1,058	709	290	141	745	11,012
Not stated	0	1	0	17	4	31	0	0	53
Total	15,022	13,300	5,869	3,382	1,908	833	386	1,757	42,457

(continued)

Table A11 (continued): Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by type of abuse or neglect and Indigenous status, states and territories

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA ^(b)	SA	Tas ^{(b)(c)}	ACT ^(c)	NT ^(d)	Total
%									
Indigenous children									
Physical	12.7	22.0	17.6	12.9	20.3	12.2	5.1	15.0	15.3
Sexual	12.8	4.7	3.7	11.1	7.8	0.8	3.1	4.9	8.7
Emotional	34.5	66.7	29.2	36.2	27.8	54.5	49.0	34.2	37.7
Neglect	39.9	6.5	49.5	39.2	43.5	28.5	42.9	45.9	38.3
Not stated	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.5	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Non-Indigenous children									
Physical	16.4	21.9	16.4	16.7	25.1	11.0	16.5	31.1	19.1
Sexual	19.7	13.2	6.2	16.0	11.5	4.3	4.0	8.3	14.4
Emotional	33.6	60.7	39.3	37.7	28.6	47.5	45.4	33.7	45.5
Neglect	30.3	4.1	38.1	29.1	34.7	33.9	34.1	27.0	21.0
Not stated	0.0	—	0.0	0.5	0.1	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All children									
Physical	15.3	22.0	16.7	15.6	23.5	11.8	13.2	18.0	18.0
Sexual	17.5	12.3	5.5	16.3	10.3	3.2	3.9	5.5	12.9
Emotional	33.9	61.4	35.6	36.3	28.8	46.5	46.4	34.1	43.1
Neglect	33.4	4.4	42.2	31.3	37.2	34.8	36.5	42.4	25.9
Not stated	0.0	—	0.0	0.5	0.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) In Western Australia and Tasmania, the proportion of substantiations for children with an unknown Indigenous status affects the reliability of these data.

(c) In Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subjects of substantiations should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers.

(d) In the Northern Territory, due to recording issues, sexual exploitation is under-reported. This has been addressed and it is expected numbers in this area will be similar to those of other jurisdictions in future years.

Notes

- Finalised investigations, and thus substantiations, refer only to cases that were notified during the year, not to the total number of investigations finalised by 31 August 2015.
- If a child was the subject of more than one type of abuse or neglect as part of the same notification, the abuse and/or neglect reported is the one considered by the child protection workers to cause the most harm to the child. Where a child is the subject of more than one substantiation during the year, the type of abuse reported in this table is the type of abuse and/or neglect associated with the substantiation decision relating to the earliest notification during the year.
- In Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subjects of substantiations should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers.
- Percentages include children whose Indigenous status was unknown.
- Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A12: Number of notifications, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	98,845	55,718	21,655	10,976	21,145	10,689	11,712	6,533	237,273
2011–12	99,283	63,830	24,823	13,745	19,056	11,836	12,419	7,970	252,962
2012–13	104,817	73,265	24,763	15,201	19,120	12,311	13,518	9,985	272,980
2013–14	125,994	82,056	23,256	16,801	19,578	12,862	10,600	12,950	304,097
2014–15	126,146	91,586	22,350	16,828	22,040	13,560	10,633	17,026	320,169

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Following the New South Wales 'Keep Them Safe' reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) In Western Australia, notifications where the primary concern at notification was emotional/psychological, physical, sexual abuse or neglect are counted as notifications in this table.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A13: Number of substantiations of notifications received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	18,596	7,643	6,598	1,907	2,220	1,225	636	1,641	40,466
2011–12	23,175	9,075	7,681	2,759	2,139	1,025	861	1,705	48,420
2012–13	26,860	10,489	8,069	2,915	2,221	1,035	720	1,357	53,666
2013–14	26,215	11,952	7,406	3,267	2,737	778	449	1,634	54,438
2014–15	26,424	14,115	6,435	3,623	2,335	904	595	1,992	56,423

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Only the more serious cases that receive the higher level response may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales 'Keep Them Safe' reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. During 2011–12, additional staff focused on investigations and assessments were deployed across Queensland. This resulted in a decrease in the number of investigations not yet finalised, and an increase in the number of investigations with a finalised outcome of 'substantiated', 'unsubstantiated' or 'no investigation and assessment' outcome.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A14: Rates of children who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during the relevant year, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15 (number per 1,000 children)

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	7.0	6.0	5.6	3.5	5.2	9.7	5.8	22.9	6.2
2011–12	8.9	7.1	6.5	4.7	5.1	8.1	6.8	24.2	7.4
2012–13	9.8	8.0	6.5	4.7	5.2	8.0	6.0	19.0	7.8
2013–14	9.0	9.0	6.0	5.2	6.1	6.2	4.0	21.9	7.8
2014–15	8.9	10.4	5.2	5.7	5.3	7.3	4.5	27.6	8.0

(a) New South Wales figures are not comparable with those of other jurisdictions. New South Wales has a differential investigation response whereby an investigation can be undertaken over two stages (stage 1—information gathering; stage 2—assessment). Only the more serious cases that receive the higher level response may lead to a recorded substantiation outcome. Following the New South Wales 'Keep Them Safe' reforms, the 2010–11 data reflect the first full year of reporting under legislative changes to the New South Wales *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, proclaimed on 24 January 2010. This includes raising the reporting threshold from 'risk of harm' to the new 'risk of significant harm'.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. During 2011–12, additional staff, focused on investigations and assessments, were deployed across Queensland. This resulted in a decrease in the number of investigations not yet finalised, and an increase in the number of investigations with a finalised outcome of 'substantiated', 'unsubstantiated' or 'no investigation and assessment' outcome.

Notes

1. Unborn children are included in rate calculations.
2. Children may have been the subject of more than one substantiation.
3. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15; Table S1.

Table A15: Children who were the subjects of substantiations, by age group, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Age group (years)	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
<1	3,562	3,862	4,356	4,488	4,391
1–4	8,054	9,908	10,368	10,268	10,596
5–9	8,338	10,380	11,192	11,665	12,225
10–14	8,130	9,381	10,205	10,039	10,667
15–17	2,536	2,771	2,997	3,065	3,176
0–17	31,527	37,781	40,571	40,844	42,457

Notes

1. Some data may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.
2. The 'less than 1' category excludes unborn children.
3. Total for the 0–17 age group includes children of unknown age and may not equal the sum of age categories.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A16: Children who were the subjects of substantiations, by abuse type and sex, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Type of abuse or neglect	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
Boys					
Physical abuse	3,681	4,065	4,299	4,135	3,998
Sexual abuse	1,305	1,525	1,842	1,874	1,862
Emotional abuse	5,571	6,940	7,627	7,959	9,126
Neglect	4,473	5,587	5,745	5,727	5,626
Girls					
Physical abuse	3,442	3,848	3,848	3,709	3,588
Sexual abuse	3,101	3,250	3,563	3,679	3,588
Emotional abuse	5,646	6,991	7,712	7,982	9,012
Neglect	4,008	5,231	5,385	5,294	5,228
All children^(a)					
Physical abuse	7,186	7,980	8,214	7,906	7,634
Sexual abuse	4,427	4,801	5,421	5,581	5,474
Emotional abuse	11,290	14,024	15,464	16,093	18,284
Neglect	8,570	10,936	11,303	11,194	11,012

(a) 'All children' includes children whose sex was unknown.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Care and protection orders

Table A17: Children on care and protection orders, on an average day, by type of order, 2014–15

Type of order	Number	%
Finalised guardianship/custody	18,936	63.1
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	4,490	15.0
Finalised supervisory orders	2,538	8.5
Interim and temporary orders ^(a)	4,010	13.4
Administrative arrangements	24	0.1
Not stated	0	—
Total children on an order on an average day	29,798	..

(a) Includes assessment orders.

Notes

1. Excludes New South Wales.
2. The number of children by type of order on an average day does not sum to the total number of children, as children may be on more than one type of order at the same time.
3. Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A18: Care and protection orders issued, by type of order, states and territories, 2014–15

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	n.a.	1,568	2,326	987	721	371	102	334	6,409
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	n.a.	290	263	84	14	22	12	..	685
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	3,139	336	80	5	15	17	8	3,600
Interim and temporary orders	n.a.	14,967	2,337	856	2,814	531	323	2,057	23,885
Administrative arrangements	n.a.	..	..	0	107	8	17	46	178
Not stated	n.a.	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	n.a.	19,964	5,262	2,007	3,661	947	471	2,445	34,757
%									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	..	7.9	44.2	49.2	19.7	39.2	21.7	13.7	18.4
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	..	1.5	5.0	4.2	0.4	2.3	2.5	..	2.0
Finalised supervisory orders	..	15.7	6.4	4.0	0.1	1.6	3.6	0.3	10.4
Interim and temporary orders	..	75.0	44.4	42.7	76.9	56.1	68.6	84.1	68.7
Administrative arrangements	..	..	..	0.0	2.9	0.8	3.6	1.9	0.5
Total	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data are not available for 2014–15 due to a data quality issue.

(b) Prior to 2013–14, third-party parental responsibility orders were included in finalised guardianship or custody orders and only a small minority of Victoria's interim and temporary orders were reported.

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Data on 'Administrative arrangements' is not applicable for Queensland.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A19: Children substantiated in 2013–14 and subsequently placed on care and protection orders within 12 months, states and territories

State/territory	Number subsequently placed on a care and protection order	Percentage of all children substantiated in 2013–14
New South Wales ^(a)	n.a.	..
Victoria	4,101	35.3
Queensland ^(b)	1,775	23.9
Western Australia	442	20.7
South Australia	775	25.0
Tasmania	185	23.7
Australian Capital Territory	293	23.0
Northern Territory	117	31.8
Total	7,688	28.8

(a) New South Wales was unable to provide these data.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A20: Children admitted to care and protection orders, by age group, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	723	760	363	203	165	53	47	55	2,369
1–4	932	1,269	529	364	202	74	43	84	3,497
5–9	815	1,340	498	383	178	79	54	76	3,423
10–14	577	1,066	373	204	107	49	27	84	2,487
15–17	182	310	78	27	24	12	5	23	661
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,229	4,745	1,841	1,181	676	267	176	322	12,437
%									
<1	22.4	16.0	19.7	17.2	24.4	19.9	26.7	17.1	19.0
1–4	28.9	26.7	28.7	30.8	29.9	27.7	24.4	26.1	28.1
5–9	25.2	28.2	27.1	32.4	26.3	29.6	30.7	23.6	27.5
10–14	17.9	22.5	20.3	17.3	15.8	18.4	15.3	26.1	20.0
15–17	5.6	6.5	4.2	2.3	3.6	4.5	2.8	7.1	5.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. In Queensland, previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

Notes

1. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. A change to an order is counted as an admission. However, if a new care and protection order is applied in 5 days or less of the discharge of another order (regardless of the type of order), an admission is not counted.
2. Children are counted for only one admission and discharge during the year.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A21: Children discharged from care and protection orders, by length of time on an order, states and territories, 2014–15

State/territory	Length of time continually on an order at time of discharge							Total
	Months			Years				
	<3	3 to <6	6 to <12	1 to <2	2 to <4	4 to <8	8 or more	
	Number							
New South Wales ^(a)	411	107	151	167	199	373	549	1,957
Victoria	431	607	1,075	1,197	662	262	210	4,444
Queensland ^(b)	266	72	125	492	414	289	183	1,841
Western Australia	38	26	52	118	513	81	44	872
South Australia	180	18	9	74	51	66	85	483
Tasmania	76	10	25	71	56	18	42	298
Australian Capital Territory	25	9	6	21	26	29	15	131
Northern Territory	96	21	14	32	61	18	0	242
Total	1,523	870	1,457	2,172	1,982	1,136	1,128	10,268
	%							
New South Wales	21.0	5.5	7.7	8.5	10.2	19.1	28.1	100.0
Victoria	9.7	13.7	24.2	26.9	14.9	5.9	4.7	100.0
Queensland	14.4	3.9	6.8	26.7	22.5	15.7	9.9	100.0
Western Australia	4.4	3.0	6.0	13.5	58.8	9.3	5.0	100.0
South Australia	37.3	3.7	1.9	15.3	10.6	13.7	17.6	100.0
Tasmania	25.5	3.4	8.4	23.8	18.8	6.0	14.1	100.0
Australian Capital Territory	19.1	6.9	4.6	16.0	19.8	22.1	11.5	100.0
Northern Territory	39.7	8.7	5.8	13.2	25.2	7.4	0.0	100.0
Total	14.8	8.5	14.2	21.2	19.3	11.1	11.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

Notes

1. If a child is discharged from an order and a new care and protection order/arrangement is applied in 5 days or less of the discharge, the orders are deemed to be consecutive (that is, the length of time continuously on an order will include both orders).
2. If a child is on multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, all orders/arrangements must be discharged before a discharge, for the purposes of this table, is counted.
3. The length of time continuously on an order is counted only for the first order/arrangement from which the child is discharged during the year.
4. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A22: Children on care and protection orders, by living arrangements, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Living arrangements	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA ^(d)	SA ^(e)	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT ^(f)	Total
Number									
Parents	521	2,283	186	245	n.a.	77	71	56	3,439
Relatives/kin ^(g)	0	0	0	0	n.a.	3	6	30	39
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>521</i>	<i>2,283</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>3,478</i>
Foster care ^(h)	7,843	1,330	4,056	1,549	1,150	424	243	478	17,073
Relatives/kin ^{(h)(i)}	6,865	3,744	3,573	1,850	1,215	288	350	3	17,888
Other	0	1,839	0	0	0	237	31	325	2,432
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>14,708</i>	<i>6,913</i>	<i>7,629</i>	<i>3,399</i>	<i>2,365</i>	<i>949</i>	<i>624</i>	<i>806</i>	<i>37,393</i>
Residential care	549	387	627	158	403	35	34	100	2,293
Family group homes	13	0	0	181	0	28	0	5	227
Independent living ^(j)	176	46	23	23	14	33	7	1	323
Other/unknown	2,529	506	804	802	237	58	5	75	5,016
Total	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730
%									
Parents	2.8	22.5	2.0	5.1	..	6.5	9.5	5.2	7.1
Relatives/kin ^(g)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	..	0.3	0.8	2.8	0.1
<i>Total family care</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>22.5</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>6.8</i>	<i>10.3</i>	<i>8.0</i>	<i>7.1</i>
Foster care ^(h)	42.4	13.1	43.8	32.2	38.1	35.8	32.5	44.5	35.0
Relatives/kin ^{(h)(i)}	37.1	36.9	38.5	38.5	40.2	24.3	46.9	0.3	36.7
Other	0.0	18.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	4.1	30.3	5.0
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>79.5</i>	<i>68.2</i>	<i>82.3</i>	<i>70.7</i>	<i>78.3</i>	<i>80.2</i>	<i>83.5</i>	<i>75.1</i>	<i>76.7</i>
Residential care	3.0	3.8	6.8	3.3	13.3	3.0	4.6	9.3	4.7
Family group homes	0.1	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.5	0.5
Independent living ^(j)	1.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	2.8	0.9	0.1	0.7
Other/unknown	13.7	5.0	8.7	16.7	7.9	4.9	0.7	7.0	10.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders and include only funded out-of-home care placements. The 'other/unknown' category for New South Wales includes children on orders for whom a living arrangement was not provided. As well, *Safe Home for Life* reforms in New South Wales, effective 29 October 2014, transitioned children to Guardianship Orders. The 'Other/unknown' category includes 2,418 children in the care of a guardian. These children are not in out-of-home care.

(b) In Victoria and Tasmania, children under third-party guardianship orders are counted under 'Other home-based care' living arrangements.

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(d) The 'Other/unknown' category for Western Australia includes children under third-party guardianship orders.

(e) Data for South Australia include only funded out-of-home care placements. The 'Other/unknown' category for South Australia includes children on orders for whom a living arrangement was not provided.

(f) In the Northern Territory's client information system, the majority of children in a relative/kinship placement are captured in the 'Foster care' placement type.

(g) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were not reimbursed.

(h) Some foster carers may be relatives of the child being cared for and some relative carers may be fully assessed as registered foster carers.

(i) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were reimbursed.

(j) 'Independent living' includes private board.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A23: Children on care and protection orders, by age group and living arrangements, 30 June 2015

Age group (years)	Family care ^(a)	Home-based out-of-home care ^(b)	Residential care	Family group homes	Independent living ^(c)	Other	Total
Number							
<1	213	1,216	14	0	0	88	1,531
1–4	964	8,188	80	14	0	329	9,575
5–9	1,004	13,491	260	84	2	554	15,395
10–14	893	12,280	880	95	13	724	14,885
15–17	404	4,636	1,059	34	308	903	7,344
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,478	39,811	2,293	227	323	2,598	48,730
%							
<1	6.1	3.1	0.6	0.0	0.0	3.4	3.1
1–4	27.7	20.6	3.5	6.2	0.0	12.7	19.6
5–9	28.9	33.9	11.3	37.0	0.6	21.3	31.6
10–14	25.7	30.8	38.4	41.9	4.0	27.9	30.5
15–17	11.6	11.6	46.2	15.0	95.4	34.8	15.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total living arrangements	7.1	81.7	4.7	0.5	0.7	5.3	100.0

(a) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were not reimbursed.

(b) This category includes relatives/kin, other than parents, who were reimbursed.

(c) This category includes private board.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A24: Children on care and protection orders, by age group, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Age group (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	508	454	216	160	103	31	31	28	1,531
1–4	3,397	2,276	1,720	1,024	566	214	169	209	9,575
5–9	6,038	3,002	2,861	1,576	966	362	245	345	15,395
10–14	5,799	2,829	3,000	1,416	938	373	204	326	14,885
15–17	2,754	1,574	1,472	632	446	203	98	165	7,344
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730
%									
<1	2.7	4.5	2.3	3.3	3.4	2.6	4.1	2.6	3.1
1–4	18.4	22.5	18.6	21.3	18.7	18.1	22.6	19.5	19.6
5–9	32.6	29.6	30.9	32.8	32.0	30.6	32.8	32.2	31.6
10–14	31.4	27.9	32.4	29.5	31.1	31.5	27.3	30.4	30.5
15–17	14.9	15.5	15.9	13.1	14.8	17.2	13.1	15.4	15.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A25: Children on care and protection orders, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Sex	NSW^(a)	Vic	Qld^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	9,585	5,201	4,745	2,460	1,553	596	398	531	25,069
Girls	8,911	4,934	4,523	2,344	1,461	587	349	542	23,651
Unknown	0	0	1	4	5	0	0	0	10
Persons	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730
%									
Boys	51.8	51.3	51.2	51.2	51.4	50.4	53.3	49.5	51.4
Girls	48.2	48.7	48.8	48.8	48.4	49.6	46.7	50.5	48.5
Unknown	0.0	0.0	—	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	—
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A26: Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	4,338	806	2,897	1,900	801	204	144	756	11,846
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	1,475	242	537	240	11	42	18	..	2,565
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	332	87	20	1	1	8	1	450
Interim and temporary orders	735	341	343	312	80	15	33	162	2,021
Administrative arrangements	33	..	..	0	2	0	0	5	40
Not stated	..	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6,581	1,721	3,864	2,472	895	262	203	924	16,922
Non-Indigenous children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	7,723	2,884	3,802	1,741	1,853	680	393	137	19,213
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	2,940	1,986	1,004	244	103	163	58	..	6,498
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1,845	170	46	2	11	13	0	2,087
Interim and temporary orders	1,156	1,693	377	292	104	56	73	12	3,763
Administrative arrangements	96	..	..	0	13	0	1	0	110
Not stated	..	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11,915	8,408	5,353	2,323	2,075	910	538	149	31,671
Unknown Indigenous status									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	0	0	31	0	37	2	0	0	70
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	0	5	1	1	0	0	0	..	7
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	1	5	8	0	3	0	0	17
Interim and temporary orders	0	0	15	4	9	4	6	0	38
Administrative arrangements	0	..	..	0	3	2	0	0	5
Not stated	..	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	6	52	13	49	11	6	0	137
All children									
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	12,061	3,690	6,730	3,641	2,691	886	537	893	31,129
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	4,415	2,233	1,542	485	114	205	76	..	9,070
Finalised supervisory orders	n.a.	2,178	262	74	3	15	21	1	2,554
Interim and temporary orders	1,891	2,034	735	608	193	75	112	174	5,822
Administrative arrangements	129	..	..	0	18	2	1	5	155
Not stated	..	0	..	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730

(continued)

Table A26 (continued): Children on care and protection orders, by type of order and Indigenous status, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Type of order	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	%								
	Indigenous children								
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	65.9	46.8	75.0	76.9	89.5	77.9	70.9	81.8	70.0
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	22.4	14.1	13.9	9.7	1.2	16.0	8.9	..	15.2
Finalised supervisory orders	..	19.3	2.3	0.8	0.1	0.4	3.9	0.1	2.7
Interim and temporary orders	11.2	19.8	8.9	12.6	8.9	5.7	16.3	17.5	11.9
Administrative arrangements	0.5	..	..	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Non-Indigenous children								
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	64.8	34.3	71.0	74.9	89.3	74.7	73.0	91.9	60.7
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	24.7	23.6	18.8	10.5	5.0	17.9	10.8	..	20.5
Finalised supervisory orders	..	21.9	3.2	2.0	0.1	1.2	2.4	0.0	6.6
Interim and temporary orders	9.7	20.1	7.0	12.6	5.0	6.2	13.6	8.1	11.9
Administrative arrangements	0.8	..	..	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	All children								
Finalised guardianship or custody orders	65.2	36.4	72.6	75.7	89.1	74.9	71.9	83.2	63.9
Finalised third-party parental responsibility orders	23.9	22.0	16.6	10.1	3.8	17.3	10.2	..	18.6
Finalised supervisory orders	..	21.5	2.8	1.5	0.1	1.3	2.8	0.1	5.2
Interim and temporary orders	10.2	20.1	7.9	12.6	6.4	6.3	15.0	16.2	11.9
Administrative arrangements	0.7	..	..	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Prior to 2013–14, third-party parental responsibility orders were included in finalised guardianship or custody orders and only a small minority of Victoria's interim and temporary orders were reported.

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Data on 'Administrative arrangements' is not applicable for Queensland.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A27: Trends in children admitted to care and protection orders, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	3,006	3,151	4,353	1,238	966	570	207	339	13,830
2011–12	3,017	3,118	4,282	1,619	936	638	183	398	14,191
2012–13 ^(c)	2,756	3,741	4,368	926	513	381	128	333	13,146
2013–14	2,995	4,210	3,808	908	457	282	141	370	13,171
2014–15	3,229	4,745	1,841	1,181	676	267	176	322	12,437

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders. New South Wales is working to improve the way it counts admissions to care and protection orders. New South Wales currently does not strictly conform to the national counting rules.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. In Queensland, previous admissions to care and protection orders in other jurisdictions could not be counted.

(c) Data prior to 2012–13 may not be comparable with data for subsequent years due to a difference in the methodology used for determining admissions from 2012–13 onwards.

Notes

1. A renewal of an existing order is not counted as an admission. A change to an order is counted as an admission. However, if a new care and protection order is applied in 5 days or less of the discharge of another order (regardless of the type of order), an admission is not counted.
2. Each child is counted for one admission for the year.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A28: Trends in children discharged from care and protection orders, states and territories, 2010–11 to 2014–15

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
2010–11	2,086	1,662	2,185	397	512	221	128	289	7,480
2011–12	2,238	3,017	2,603	361	420	356	134	349	9,478
2012–13	2,060	3,680	2,018	713	465	375	175	309	9,795
2013–14	2,052	4,154	2,091	770	494	381	111	222	10,275
2014–15	1,957	4,444	1,841	872	483	298	131	242	10,268

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. In Queensland, during 2012–13, reporting on children subject to an order continued under Section 99 of the *Child Protection Act 1999* was enhanced. When a child is subject to an order granting custody or guardianship to the Chief Executive or to a member of the child's family, Section 99 allows for the original order to continue until an application is decided by the court for an extension or for another order. Previously, some children subject to orders continued under Section 99 were not included in the count. As a result, the number of children discharged from orders has decreased and is not comparable with numbers for previous years.

(c) Data for Tasmania may not be comparable year to year due to considerable data lag with the recording of order status.

Note: For the purposes of this table, if a child is on multiple care and protection orders/arrangements, all orders/arrangements must be discharged before a discharge is counted. If a new care and protection order is applied in 5 days or less of the discharge of another order (regardless of the type of order), a discharge is not counted.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A29: Trends in children on care and protection orders, states and territories, 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2015

Year	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA ^(c)	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
2011	15,339	6,735	8,456	3,277	2,620	1,186	723	722	39,058
2012	15,981	7,262	8,863	3,492	2,680	1,185	719	780	40,962
2013	16,373	7,751	9,211	4,260	2,798	1,253	674	816	43,136
2014	17,242	9,233	9,131	4,471	2,786	1,188	705	990	45,746
2015	18,496	10,135	9,269	4,808	3,019	1,183	747	1,073	48,730

(a) New South Wales data do not include children on finalised supervisory orders.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Data for 2009–10 for Western Australia are not comparable with data for other years due to the introduction of a new client information system in March 2010. Proxy data were provided for that year.

(d) Data for Tasmania may not be comparable year to year due to considerable data lag with the recording of order status.

Note: Some data may not match those published in previous *Child protection Australia* publications due to retrospective updates to data.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Out-of-home care

Table A30: Children in out-of-home care, on an average day, by living arrangements, 2014–15

Living arrangements	Number	%
Foster care	9,085	36.1
Relatives/kin	11,493	45.6
Other home-based care	2,452	9.7
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>23,030</i>	<i>91.5</i>
Family group homes	227	0.9
Residential care	1,777	7.1
Independent living	71	0.3
Other/unknown	75	0.3
Total children in out-of-home care on an average day	25,147	..

Notes

1. Excludes New South Wales.
2. The number of children by living arrangement on an average day does not sum to the total number of children, as children may have more than one living arrangement recorded at the same time. This may also affect subtotals reported in this table.
3. Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015

Table A31: Children admitted to out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
<1	713	531	400	209	142	40	43	54	2,132
1–4	977	981	536	298	194	50	53	86	3,175
5–9	874	899	461	272	153	52	67	78	2,856
10–14	642	797	515	201	112	40	33	88	2,428
15–17	234	337	227	70	59	12	23	28	990
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,440	3,545	2,139	1,050	660	194	219	334	11,581
%									
<1	20.7	15.0	18.7	19.9	21.5	20.6	19.6	16.2	18.4
1–4	28.4	27.7	25.1	28.4	29.4	25.8	24.2	25.7	27.4
5–9	25.4	25.4	21.6	25.9	23.2	26.8	30.6	23.4	24.7
10–14	18.7	22.5	24.1	19.1	17.0	20.6	15.1	26.3	21.0
15–17	6.8	9.5	10.6	6.7	8.9	6.2	10.5	8.4	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Notes

1. The table includes all children admitted to out-of-home care for the first time, as well as those children returning to care who had exited care 60 days or more previously. Children admitted to out-of-home care more than once during the year were counted only at the first admission.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A32: Children discharged from out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 2014–15

Age group (years)	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas ^(c)	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
<1	139	175	131	41	23	4	12	19	544
1–4	779	622	335	176	84	38	23	42	2,099
5–9	1,216	549	371	198	71	25	30	51	2,511
10–14	1,270	528	481	227	80	41	30	54	2,711
15–17	1,334	763	589	180	196	80	51	80	3,273
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4,738	2,637	1,907	822	454	188	146	246	11,138
	%								
<1	2.9	6.6	6.9	5.0	5.1	2.1	8.2	7.7	4.9
1–4	16.4	23.6	17.6	21.4	18.5	20.2	15.8	17.1	18.8
5–9	25.7	20.8	19.5	24.1	15.6	13.3	20.5	20.7	22.5
10–14	26.8	20.0	25.2	27.6	17.6	21.8	20.5	22.0	24.3
15–17	28.2	28.9	30.9	21.9	43.2	42.6	34.9	32.5	29.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) *Safe Home For Life* legislative reforms, effective 29 October 2014, transitioned eligible children/young people to the independent care of their guardian. These children/young people exited out-of-home care.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(c) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Notes

1. The data for children exiting care include those who left care and had not returned in less than 60 days. Where a child exits care more than once during the year, the last discharge is counted.
2. Children who were discharged from care on their eighteenth birthday are included in the 15–17 age category.
3. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A33: Children in out-of-home care, by type of placement, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Type of placement	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Foster care ^(e)	7,927	1,477	4,165	1,633	1,158	433	245	478	17,516
Relatives/kin ^(e)	8,274	4,707	3,622	1,958	1,261	299	356	33	20,510
Other home-based care	0	1,897	0	0	0	241	33	326	2,497
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>16,201</i>	<i>8,081</i>	<i>7,787</i>	<i>3,591</i>	<i>2,419</i>	<i>973</i>	<i>634</i>	<i>837</i>	<i>40,523</i>
Family group homes	13	0	0	192	n.a.	28	0	5	238
Residential care	550	438	661	171	404	35	35	100	2,394
Independent living	72	48	0	0	15	3	0	1	139
Other/unknown	7	0	0	0	0	22	2	74	105
Total	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
%									
Foster care	47.1	17.2	49.3	41.3	40.8	40.8	36.5	47.0	40.4
Relatives/kin	49.1	54.9	42.9	49.5	44.4	28.2	53.1	3.2	47.3
Other home-based care	0.0	22.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.7	4.9	32.1	5.8
<i>Total home-based care</i>	<i>96.2</i>	<i>94.3</i>	<i>92.2</i>	<i>90.8</i>	<i>85.2</i>	<i>91.7</i>	<i>94.5</i>	<i>82.3</i>	<i>93.4</i>
Family group homes	0.1	0.0	0.0	4.9	..	2.6	0.0	0.5	0.5
Residential care	3.3	5.1	7.8	4.3	14.2	3.3	5.2	9.8	5.5
Independent living	0.4	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3
Other/unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	..	2.1	0.3	7.3	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

- (a) New South Wales data for children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015 do not include children and young people on finalised third-party parental responsibility orders.
- (b) In Victoria, from 2014–15, children in permanent care placements are included in the 'Other home-based care' category. Previously, these children were included in the 'Foster care' category. These placements are different from foster care as they involve granting permanent guardianship and custody of a child to a third party via a permanent care order. Unlike adoptions, permanent care orders do not change the legal status of the child and they expire when the child turns 18 or marries.
- (c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.
- (d) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs. Children under third-party guardianship orders are counted under 'Other home-based care' living arrangements.
- (e) Where a child is placed with a relative who is also fully registered to provide foster care for other children, the child is counted in the 'Foster care' category for Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory; the child is counted in the 'Relatives/kin' category in Queensland and South Australia. Relatives/kin in some jurisdictions undergo assessment, registration and review processes similar to those for foster carers under the national definition, and are considered as (relative) foster carers in local practice, policy and reporting.

Notes

1. Percentages include children with 'other/unknown' living arrangements.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A34: Children in out-of-home care, by age group, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
<1	477	273	225	147	94	24	27	26	1,293
1–4	3,004	1,775	1,620	955	537	196	151	205	8,443
5–9	5,375	2,542	2,684	1,368	934	351	229	328	13,811
10–14	5,405	2,571	2,769	1,090	909	336	183	307	13,570
15–17	2,582	1,406	1,150	394	364	154	81	151	6,282
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
	%								
<1	2.8	3.2	2.7	3.7	3.3	2.3	4.0	2.6	3.0
1–4	17.8	20.7	19.2	24.2	18.9	18.5	22.5	20.2	19.5
5–9	31.9	29.7	31.8	34.6	32.9	33.1	34.1	32.3	31.8
10–14	32.1	30.0	32.8	27.6	32.0	31.7	27.3	30.2	31.3
15–17	15.3	16.4	13.6	10.0	12.8	14.5	12.1	14.8	14.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A35: Children in out-of-home care, by sex, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Sex	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Boys	8,782	4,387	4,325	2,047	1,453	537	370	500	22,401
Girls	8,061	4,179	4,122	1,903	1,381	524	301	517	20,988
Unknown	0	1	1	4	4	0	0	0	10
Persons	16,843	8,567	8,448	3,954	2,838	1,061	671	1,017	43,399
%									
Boys	52.1	51.2	51.2	51.8	51.2	50.6	55.1	49.2	51.6
Girls	47.9	48.8	48.8	48.1	48.7	49.4	44.9	50.8	48.4
Unknown	0.0	—	—	—	—	0.0	0.0	0.0	—
Persons	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A36: Children in out-of-home care, by age group and type of placement, 30 June 2015 (%)

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas ^(b)	ACT	NT	Total
Home-based									
<1	2.9	3.4	2.8	4.0	3.7	2.5	4.1	2.6	3.2
1–4	18.5	22.0	20.6	25.8	20.2	19.6	23.7	23.2	20.6
5–9	33.0	31.3	33.7	35.3	33.8	34.3	35.3	37.2	33.2
10–14	32.0	29.6	32.1	26.1	31.6	31.8	26.3	28.1	30.8
15–17	13.5	13.8	10.8	8.7	10.7	11.8	10.6	9.0	12.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Residential (including family group homes)									
<1	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6	1.2	0.0	2.9	2.9	0.6
1–4	0.2	0.0	2.4	7.7	11.9	4.8	2.9	2.9	3.8
5–9	5.5	3.7	9.5	27.8	28.7	17.5	14.3	15.2	13.6
10–14	37.3	40.6	40.2	41.6	35.9	28.6	40.0	49.5	39.3
15–17	57.0	55.7	47.2	22.3	22.3	49.2	40.0	29.5	42.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(b) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs.

Notes

- Percentages exclude children who were living independently or whose living arrangements were classified as 'other' (including unknown).
- Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A37: Children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status and age group, 30 June 2015

Indigenous status	<1^(a)	1–4	5–9	10–14	15–17	0–17^(b)
	Number					
Indigenous	481	3,255	5,230	4,716	1,773	15,455
Non-Indigenous	767	5,152	8,558	8,835	4,505	27,817
Not stated	45	36	23	19	4	127
All children^(c)	1,293	8,443	13,811	13,570	6,282	43,399
	Number per 1,000 children					
Indigenous	26.5	48.1	62.8	60.0	38.0	52.5
Non-Indigenous	2.7	4.4	6.0	6.6	5.5	5.5
All children	4.3	6.8	9.1	9.6	7.3	8.1
Rate ratio Indigenous/ non-Indigenous	9.8	10.9	10.5	9.1	6.9	9.5

(a) The 'less than 1' category excludes unborn children.

(b) Total for the 0–17 age group includes children of unknown age and may not equal the sum of age categories.

(c) 'All children' includes children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

Notes

1. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses. Refer to Table A50 for the populations used in the calculation of rates.
2. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the unrounded rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were in out-of-home care by the unrounded rate of non-Indigenous children who were in out-of-home care for each age group. The resulting number is a measure of how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in each age group were in out-of-home care for every non-Indigenous child who was in out-of-home care in that age group. Children whose Indigenous status is unknown are excluded from the calculations.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A38: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, relationship of carer, states and territories, 30 June 2015

Relationship	NSW ^(a)	Vic ^(b)	Qld ^(c)	WA	SA	Tas ^(d)	ACT ^(b)	NT ^(a)	Total
	Number								
Indigenous relative/kin	2,533	482	879	900	293	12	65	248	5,412
Other Indigenous caregiver	1,455	73	517	208	116	30	2	54	2,455
Other relative/kin	906	301	589	219	150	51	35	0	2,251
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>4,894</i>	<i>856</i>	<i>1,985</i>	<i>1,327</i>	<i>559</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>302</i>	<i>10,118</i>
Other caregiver	1,285	651	1,527	733	281	147	81	566	5,271
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>1,285</i>	<i>651</i>	<i>1,527</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>281</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>566</i>	<i>5,271</i>
Total	6,179	1,507	3,512	2,060	840	240	183	868	15,389
	%								
Indigenous relative/kin	41.0	32.0	25.0	43.7	34.9	5.0	35.5	28.6	35.2
Other Indigenous caregiver	23.5	4.8	14.7	10.1	13.8	12.5	1.1	6.2	16.0
Other relative/kin	14.7	20.0	16.8	10.6	17.9	21.3	19.1	0.0	14.6
<i>Total placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>79.2</i>	<i>56.8</i>	<i>56.5</i>	<i>64.4</i>	<i>66.5</i>	<i>38.8</i>	<i>55.7</i>	<i>34.8</i>	<i>65.7</i>
Other caregiver	20.8	43.2	43.5	35.6	33.5	61.3	44.3	65.2	34.3
<i>Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care</i>	<i>20.8</i>	<i>43.2</i>	<i>43.5</i>	<i>35.6</i>	<i>33.5</i>	<i>61.3</i>	<i>44.3</i>	<i>65.2</i>	<i>34.3</i>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Aggregate data were provided by New South Wales and the Northern Territory for this table.

(b) Children for whom relationship of carer and/or their Indigenous status were unknown are included in the categories 'Other caregiver' and 'Total not placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care' for Victoria (314) and the Australian Capital Territory (2).

(c) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.

(d) Tasmanian data exclude children not under care and protection orders placed with relatives for whom a financial contribution is made under the Supported Extended Family or Relatives Allowance programs. A high number of carers whose Indigenous status is unknown may affect the identification of children placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

Notes

1. This table does not include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were living independently or for whom relationship of carer and/or their Indigenous status were unknown.
2. Percentages in the table may not add to 100 due to rounding.
3. Family group homes and residential care are reported under 'Other caregiver'.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A39: Children in out-of-home care, by length of time in continuous placement, 30 June 2011 to 2015 (%)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<1 month	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.0
1 month to <6 months	8.6	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.9
6 months to <1 year	8.0	8.4	8.0	7.8	8.6
1 year to <2 years	14.4	13.2	13.3	12.6	12.9
2 years to <5 years	31.3	30.2	29.8	28.3	26.5
5 years or more	35.8	37.7	39.1	41.1	41.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Foster and relative/kinship carers

Table A40: Overview of funded out-of-home carer households, on an average day during 2014–15, by authorisation type

Authorisation type	Number	%
Foster carer	5,515	44.4
Relative/kinship carer	6,539	52.7
Both foster and relative/kinship carer	296	2.4
Respite-only carer	18	0.1
Long-term guardianship	5	—
Not stated	37	0.3
Total carer households on an average day	12,409	..

Notes

1. Excludes New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory.
2. Data quality issues for some jurisdictions may affect these results.
3. The number of approved/authorised carer households on an average day by authorisation type does not sum to the total number of households, as households may have more than one authorisation type recorded at the same time.

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A41: Foster carer households with a placement at 30 June 2015, by number of foster children placed, states and territories

Number of children	NSW	Vic ^(a)	Qld ^(b)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(c)	Total
	Number								
1	2,054	505	1,116	368	375	104	75	184	4,781
2	1,266	262	724	249	196	52	50	75	2,874
3–4	818	115	561	151	105	46	13	41	1,850
5+	147	5	166	41	9	12	4	3	387
Total households with a placement	4,285	887	2,567	809	685	214	142	303	9,892
	%								
1	47.9	56.9	43.5	45.5	54.7	48.6	52.8	60.7	48.3
2	29.5	29.5	28.2	30.8	28.6	24.3	35.2	24.8	29.1
3–4	19.1	13.0	21.9	18.7	15.3	21.5	9.2	13.5	18.7
5+	3.4	0.6	6.5	5.1	1.3	5.6	2.8	1.0	3.9
Total households with a placement	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) In Victoria, from 2014–15, children in permanent care placements are recorded as 'Other home-based care' placements. Previously, these children were recorded as 'Foster care' placements. This change in recording practice has resulted in a decrease in the number of foster carer households with a placement for Victoria.

(b) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Queensland data include provisionally approved carer households.

(c) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Table A42: Relative/kinship carer households with a placement at 30 June 2015, by number of children placed, states and territories

Number of children	NSW	Vic	Qld ^(a)	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(b)	Total
	Number								
1	3,817	2,203	792	648	551	124	138	93	8,366
2	1,687	653	363	269	199	52	57	33	3,313
3–4	947	307	213	180	86	18	23	16	1,790
5+	147	25	26	29	6	1	2	1	237
Total households	6,598	3,188	1,394	1,126	842	195	220	143	13,706
	%								
1	57.9	69.1	56.8	57.5	65.4	63.6	62.7	65.0	61.0
2	25.6	20.5	26.0	23.9	23.6	26.7	25.9	23.1	24.2
3–4	14.4	9.6	15.3	16.0	10.2	9.2	10.5	11.2	13.1
5+	2.2	0.8	1.9	2.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.7
Total households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match Queensland figures published elsewhere. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years. Queensland data include provisionally approved carer households. Queensland data include only those kinship carers where there is an 'open placement' event for a child on the reference date. In some cases, a child can have more than one open placement event (for example, as part of respite care arrangements, where more than one kin is approved to care for the child). Children have been counted only once in this table.

(b) Aggregate data were provided for the Northern Territory.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

Intensive family support services

Table A43: Children commencing intensive family support services, by living arrangements at commencement of service, states and territories, 2014–15 (%)

Living situation	NSW ^(a)	Vic	Qld	WA ^(b)	SA ^(c)	Tas ^{(c)(d)}	ACT	NT ^(c)	Total
Family care									
Children living with parents	94.5	83.8	67.0	64.9	..	..	73.4	..	84.4
Children living with other relatives/kin	0.2	0.7	3.6	17.4	..	..	10.1	..	1.8
Children in out-of-home care	3.5	0.1	28.2	16.1	..	..	14.3	..	7.5
Children in shared care	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.6	..	..	2.1	..	0.2
Other	0.0	7.9	0.3	0.0	..	..	0.0	..	2.7
Unknown	1.8	7.5	0.4	0.0	..	..	0.0	..	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..	..	100.0	..	100.0

(a) Living arrangements data were not available for non-government organisation services in New South Wales in 2014–15.

(b) Data for Western Australia includes 8 children aged 18 and over.

(c) South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory were not able to provide these data for 2014–15.

(d) Services in Tasmania are provided under the title of Integrated Family Support Services.

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

Source: AIHW Child Protection Collection 2015.

National trend data

Table A44: National child protection trend data, 2010–11 to 2014–15^(a)

Child protection component	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15
	Number				
Notifications	237,273	252,962	272,980	304,097	320,169
Investigations	127,759	116,528	122,496	137,585	152,086
Substantiations	40,466	48,420	53,666	54,438	56,423
Children receiving child protection services	n.a.	n.a.	135,139	143,023	151,980
Children in notifications	163,767	173,502	184,216	198,966	208,111
Children in substantiations	31,527	37,781	40,571	40,844	42,457
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	39,058	40,962	43,136	45,746	48,730
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	37,648	39,621	40,549	43,009	43,399
	Number per 1,000 children				
Notifications	..	..	..	..	..
Investigations	..	..	..	..	..
Substantiations	..	..	..	..	..
Children receiving child protection services	..	..	26.0	27.2	28.6
Children in notifications	32.3	33.8	35.4	37.8	39.2
Children in substantiations	6.2	7.4	7.8	7.8	8.0
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	7.7	7.9	8.2	8.7	9.1
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	7.4	7.7	7.7	8.1	8.1

(a) Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census (see tables S1 and S2) and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

(b) Children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care are measured as at 30 June each year.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Table A45: Children in the child protection system, by Indigenous status, 2011 to 2015

Child protection component	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number					
Indigenous children					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	n.a.	n.a.	36,656	39,716	42,913
Children in substantiations ^(a)	8,231	10,058	10,991	11,270	11,675
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	12,280	13,268	14,455	15,504	16,922
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	12,358	13,299	13,952	14,991	15,455
Non-Indigenous children					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	n.a.	n.a.	90,597	94,439	103,052
Children in substantiations ^(a)	22,144	26,183	28,106	28,149	29,733
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	26,531	27,531	28,480	30,034	31,671
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	24,929	26,127	26,422	27,827	27,817
All children^(c)					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	n.a.	n.a.	135,139	142,023	151,980
Children in substantiations ^(a)	31,527	37,781	40,571	40,844	42,457
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	39,058	40,962	43,136	45,746	48,730
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	37,648	39,621	40,549	43,009	43,399
Number per 1,000 children					
Indigenous children					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	..	..	126.9	136.6	146.4
Children in substantiations ^(a)	28.9	35.1	38.1	38.8	39.8
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	43.0	46.1	49.9	53.1	57.5
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	43.2	46.2	48.2	51.4	52.5
Non-Indigenous children					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	..	..	18.5	19.0	20.5
Children in substantiations ^(a)	4.6	5.4	5.7	5.7	5.9
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	5.5	5.6	5.8	6.0	6.3
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	5.2	5.4	5.3	5.6	5.5
All children^(c)					
Children receiving child protection services ^(a)	..	..	26.0	27.2	28.6
Children in substantiations ^(a)	6.2	7.4	7.8	7.8	8.0
Children on care and protection orders ^(b)	7.7	7.9	8.2	8.7	9.1
Children in out-of-home care ^(b)	7.4	7.7	7.7	8.1	8.1

(a) Children receiving child protection services and children in substantiations are measured in financial years (2010–11, 2011–12, 2012–13, 2013–14 and 2014–15).

(b) Children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care are measured as at 30 June each year.

(c) 'All children' includes children of unknown Indigenous status; as such, total may not equal the sum of categories.

Notes

1. 'Children in substantiations' includes unborn children and children of unknown age.
2. 'Children on care and protection orders' and 'Children in out-of-home care' include children of unknown age.
3. Rates were calculated using revised population estimates based on the 2011 Census (see tables S1 and S2) and should not be compared with rates calculated using populations or projections based on previous Censuses.

Sources: AIHW Child Protection Collections 2010–11 to 2014–15.

Population data

Table A46: Population of children aged 0–17, by age group, Indigenous status, states and territories, December 2014

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
0–4	26,621	6,316	25,950	10,421	4,623	3,063	796	7,257	85,075
5–9	25,929	5,822	24,700	10,691	4,534	3,095	620	7,606	83,022
10–14	24,240	5,464	23,234	10,136	4,259	2,775	628	7,610	78,374
15–17	14,986	3,399	13,340	5,904	2,659	1,751	393	4,240	46,686
0–17	91,775	21,000	87,223	37,152	16,074	10,683	2,436	26,712	293,156
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	458,365	368,759	291,661	161,932	96,427	27,755	26,250	11,778	1,443,048
5–9	452,603	356,442	294,349	156,421	95,500	29,107	23,600	10,345	1,418,491
10–14	426,542	332,915	279,749	144,468	92,642	28,563	20,910	9,332	1,335,273
15–17	259,713	205,045	169,867	88,925	58,601	18,188	12,814	5,394	818,633
0–17	1,597,222	1,263,160	1,035,625	551,746	343,169	103,612	83,573	36,848	5,015,444
All children									
0–4	484,985	375,074	317,611	172,353	101,049	30,818	27,045	19,034	1,528,123
5–9	478,531	362,264	319,048	167,112	100,034	32,202	24,219	17,950	1,501,513
10–14	450,782	338,379	302,982	154,604	96,900	31,337	21,537	16,942	1,413,646
15–17	274,698	208,443	183,206	94,828	61,259	19,938	13,207	9,633	865,318
0–17	1,688,996	1,284,160	1,122,847	588,897	359,242	114,295	86,008	63,559	5,308,600

Notes

1. The December 2014 population for Indigenous children is the average of 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015 population projections. This methodology may result in the sum of age groups not equalling the total due to rounding.
2. Totals are not equal to the sum of the state/territory populations as external territories have been included in the totals.

Sources: ABS 2015a, 2014.

Table A47: Population of children aged 0–17, by age group, Indigenous status, states and territories, June 2015

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Indigenous children									
0–4	26,845	6,396	26,194	10,482	4,650	3,090	807	7,287	85,781
5–9	26,009	5,887	24,820	10,707	4,573	3,134	628	7,521	83,306
10–14	24,330	5,462	23,417	10,112	4,239	2,771	617	7,654	78,633
15–17	14,893	3,401	13,330	5,973	2,683	1,738	395	4,259	46,686
0–17	92,077	21,146	87,761	37,274	16,145	10,733	2,447	26,721	294,406
Non-Indigenous children									
0–4	465,012	371,827	292,149	163,004	96,706	27,574	26,452	11,746	1,454,603
5–9	457,042	360,752	296,449	158,149	96,220	29,144	24,039	10,454	1,432,374
10–14	428,142	334,883	281,357	145,321	92,565	28,469	21,131	9,328	1,341,348
15–17	259,774	205,114	170,006	88,744	58,540	18,137	12,843	5,338	818,588
0–17	1,609,970	1,272,576	1,039,961	555,218	344,031	103,324	84,465	36,866	5,046,913
All children									
0–4	491,857	378,223	318,343	173,486	101,356	30,664	27,259	19,033	1,540,384
5–9	483,051	366,639	321,269	168,856	100,793	32,278	24,667	17,975	1,515,680
10–14	452,472	340,345	304,774	155,433	96,804	31,240	21,748	16,982	1,419,981
15–17	274,667	208,515	183,336	94,717	61,223	19,875	13,238	9,597	865,274
0–17	1,702,047	1,293,722	1,127,722	592,492	360,176	114,057	86,912	63,587	5,341,319

Note: Totals are not equal to the sum of the state/territory populations as external territories have been included in the totals.

Sources: ABS 2015b, 2014.

Table A48: Population of all children aged 0–17, by age group, states and territories, December 2014

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	93,035	73,149	62,777	34,780	20,159	5,907	5,594	3,877	299,305
1–4	391,950	301,925	254,834	137,573	80,890	24,911	21,451	15,157	1,228,818
5–9	478,531	362,264	319,048	167,112	100,034	32,202	24,219	17,950	1,501,513
10–14	450,782	338,379	302,982	154,604	96,900	31,337	21,537	16,942	1,413,646
15–17	274,698	208,443	183,206	94,828	61,259	19,938	13,207	9,633	865,318
All children 0–17	1,688,996	1,284,160	1,122,847	588,897	359,242	114,295	86,008	63,559	5,308,600

Note: Totals are not equal to the sum of the state/territory populations as external territories have been included in the totals.

Source: ABS 2015a.

Table A49: Population of all children aged 0–17, by age group, states and territories, June 2015

Age group (years)	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<1	97,918	72,483	62,620	34,992	19,973	5,785	5,602	3,990	303,398
1–4	393,939	305,740	255,723	138,494	81,383	24,879	21,657	15,043	1,236,986
5–9	483,051	366,639	321,269	168,856	100,793	32,278	24,667	17,975	1,515,680
10–14	452,472	340,345	304,774	155,433	96,804	31,240	21,748	16,982	1,419,981
15–17	274,667	208,515	183,336	94,717	61,223	19,875	13,238	9,597	865,274
All children 0–17	1,702,047	1,293,722	1,127,722	592,492	360,176	114,057	86,912	63,587	5,341,319

Note: Totals are not equal to the sum of the state/territory populations as external territories have been included in the totals.

Source: ABS 2015b.

Table A50: Population of children aged 0–17, by Indigenous status, age group, states and territories, June 2015

Indigenous status	<1	1–4	5–9	10–14	15–17	0–17
Indigenous	18,161	67,620	83,306	78,633	46,686	294,406
Non-Indigenous	285,237	1,169,366	1,432,374	1,341,348	818,588	5,046,913
All children	303,398	1,236,986	1,515,680	1,419,981	865,274	5,341,319

Source: ABS 2015b.

Appendix B: Technical notes

Population data

The ABS recently revised the methodology used to obtain estimates of the resident population for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. This resulted in an increase in estimates of the number of Indigenous Australians based on the 2011 Census compared with those based on the 2006 Census (see ABS 2013a). Consequently, rates calculated with the 2011 Indigenous population estimates are lower than those based on the 2006 Census.

To maintain consistency in the denominator and allow comparisons over time, all rates for the period 2010–11 to 2014–15 have been calculated using the 2011 Census-based population estimates. This includes back-cast historical estimates – population estimates used in the calculation of historical rates are available in online supplementary tables (tables S1 and S2). Therefore, rates presented in this report are not comparable with rates calculated using estimates based on the 2006 Census, including those published in editions of *Child protection Australia* prior to *Child protection Australia 2013–14*.

Calculation of rates

Rates for ‘All children’

The rates for ‘All children’ on care and protection orders and ‘All children’ in out-of-home care were calculated using the ABS most recent population estimates for 30 June 2015 (ABS 2015b). The rates of ‘All children’ who were the subjects of child protection substantiations during 2014–15 were calculated using the ABS population estimates for 31 December 2014 (ABS 2015a).

Rates of children on care and protection orders were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 on care and protection orders at 30 June 2015}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0–17 at 30 June 2015}} \times 1,000$$

Rates of children in out-of-home care were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 in out-of-home care at 30 June 2015}}{\text{ABS estimated population of children aged 0–17 at 30 June 2015}} \times 1,000$$

Rates of children who were the subjects of child protection substantiations were calculated in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations in 2014–15}}{\text{ABS estimated population aged 0–17 at 31 December 2014}} \times 1,000$$

Note that legislation and practice differ across jurisdictions in relation to children aged 17. In some jurisdictions, children aged 17 are not substantiated and this means the number per 1,000 children who were the subjects of substantiations may be lower for those jurisdictions. Where substantiation rates are calculated for the ‘less than 1’ and ‘0–17’ age groups, unborn children are excluded; these children are included in the calculation of substantiation rates for ‘All children’. As population estimates do not include unborn children, the ‘All children’ rate may represent a slight overestimate.

Rates for 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous' children

The same basic method outlined above was used to calculate the rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children; however, different methodologies were used to determine the denominators.

Rates for Indigenous children on care and protection orders and Indigenous children in out-of-home care were calculated using the Indigenous population estimates for 30 June 2015 (ABS 2014).

The rate of Indigenous children who were the subjects of child protection substantiations during 2014–15 was calculated using the average of the 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015 Indigenous population estimates (ABS 2014) as a proxy for 31 December 2014.

Non-Indigenous population estimates are derived by subtracting the Indigenous population estimates from the 'All children' population estimates.

Rates for states and territories with small numbers of children in their child protection data and small Indigenous populations (notably the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania) should be interpreted carefully. Small changes in the numbers of Indigenous children in the child protection systems, or in population estimates, can have a large impact on rates.

Rate ratio

Rates can be compared using a rate ratio, which is the ratio of two rates. Rate ratios should be interpreted with caution where there are small denominators or where a large proportion of data is recorded as 'unknown'. In *Child protection Australia* reporting, rate ratios are mainly used to compare Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates and to provide a measure of the level of Indigenous over-representation. Rates are also presented to guide interpretation.

Rate ratios are not calculated where one or both of the rates have fewer than 5 young people in the numerator.

Age

Age is always calculated in whole years. For example, a child who was 5 years and 9 months old is recorded as being aged 5.

Throughout *Child protection Australia 2014–15*, the AIHW has calculated age at different points in time for a child, depending on the analysis in question.

- For 30 June analyses, age is calculated as at 30 June 2015.
- For analyses of events occurring during the year, age is calculated at the relevant point in time during 2014–15:
 - For analyses of children who were the subject of a child protection notification or substantiation, age is calculated at the earliest date of notification during the period.
 - For analyses of children who were admitted to, or discharged from, a care and protection order or an out-of-home care placement, age is calculated at the date of first admission and first discharge during the period.
- For analyses of children receiving child protection services, age is calculated at the earliest point of contact during 2014–15 or at 1 July 2014 if the child was on an ongoing care and protection order or in an ongoing out-of-home care placement at the beginning of the period.

- For ‘average day’ analyses, age is calculated on each day of the event being analysed. This means that a child or young person can potentially contribute to the reported averages for two different ages if the event being analysed spanned either side of their birthday. For example, a 4-year-old child, whose birthday is 19 May, is placed on a care and protection order on 1 May until 31 May. For the days prior to their birthday the child would contribute to the reported average with an age of 4. From the day of their birthday until the end of the order, the child would contribute to the reported average with an age of 5.

Average and median

Two measures of ‘central tendency’ (the central value or typical value for a probability distribution) are reported in *Child protection Australia 2014–15*:

- **Average (mean)** – calculated by summing all the values and dividing by the number of observations. In *Child protection Australia*, averages are used in the reporting of ‘average day’ numbers (see below) and the average co-occurrence of abuse and neglect.
- **Median** – the middle value of a set of observations, when arranged in order of value. Medians are often reported where data are not normally distributed, or include extreme values that would distort the average. In *Child protection Australia*, median age is reported for several aspects of the child protection system, including children receiving child protection services and children admitted to, and discharged from, out-of-home care.

Identification of Indigenous status

Children

The practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children vary across states and territories, with some jurisdictions recording large numbers of unknowns. No state or territory can validate the data on Indigenous children by other means and the quality of the data is therefore unknown.

In this collection, children are counted as Indigenous if they are identified as such in the state and territory data collections. Children whose Indigenous status is recorded as ‘unknown’ are excluded, where possible, from calculations of rates and proportions. The counts for Indigenous children are therefore likely to be an underestimate of the number of Indigenous children in the child protection system.

Prior to 2009–10, notifications, investigations and substantiations data for non-Indigenous children included children of unknown Indigenous status. The compilation of time series data using previously published reports should acknowledge a break in the time series between 2008–09 and 2009–10 when reporting by Indigenous status.

Caregivers

In the out-of-home care data collection, the Indigenous status of caregivers was collected as well as the Indigenous status of children in out-of-home care. Carers who are identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are included in the Indigenous category. Where the Indigenous children were living in facility-based care specifically for Indigenous

children, the caregiver was counted as Indigenous. Where children were living in other types of facility-based care, the caregiver was not counted as Indigenous.

Points of analysis

Average day

Counts of people subject to an event (such as a type of child protection order) on an average day are calculated by summing the number of days each person was subject to the same event during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year.

For example, the number of children and young people subject to a finalised guardianship or custody order on an average day is calculated by summing the number of days each child or young person was on this order type during the year and dividing this total by the number of days in the financial year.

For the number on an average day, components may not sum to the total as:

- people can experience different types of events on the same day (for example, two different, consecutive child protection orders)
- a person's age may change part way through an event
- the number on an average day is rounded to the nearest whole person.

For example, if there are 3.4 girls on an average day and 3.4 boys on an average day, the total is 6.8 children and young people. When these numbers are rounded, the corresponding table would show a count of 3 girls, 3 boys and a total of 7 children and young people.

During the year

Counts of people during the year are calculated by counting each distinct person subject to the event of interest during the financial year. Each person is counted only once, even if that person had multiple occurrences of the event during the year. For example, when calculating the number of children and young people who were the subjects of substantiations of child protection notifications during the year, a child or young person will be counted if a notification received during the financial year was substantiated. That child, however, will only contribute a count of 1 regardless of how many notifications were substantiated for him or her in the financial year.

30 June (at the end of the financial year)

Counts of people at 30 June are calculated by counting each distinct person for whom the event of interest was ongoing at the end of the financial year. Each person is counted only once, even if that person had multiple occurrences of the event ongoing at 30 June. In instances where a child or young person has multiple child protection orders ongoing at 30 June, the child or young person is counted against the national order type that represented the highest level of intervention. In instances where a child or young person has multiple living arrangements ongoing at 30 June, the child or young person is counted against the living arrangement type that is considered their usual placement.

For example, when calculating the number of children and young people on a care and protection order at 30 June, a child or young person will be counted if they were on a care

and protection order during the reporting period and the order had not ended, or ended after 30 June. If the child or young person had an ongoing finalised guardianship order and an ongoing interim order at 30 June, they would be counted in the finalised guardianship order category, as this represents the higher level of intervention of the two orders.

Socioeconomic position

Child protection Australia reporting uses the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), developed by the ABS to analyse socioeconomic position (ABS 2013b).

The SEIFA comprises four indexes that are constructed using information from the 5-yearly Census of Population and Housing. These indexes are the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage, the Index of Economic Resources and the Index of Education and Occupation.

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) is used to compare the average level of socioeconomic advantage and disadvantage. The IRSAD is the SEIFA index used in this report, ranking geographic areas on a continuum from 'most disadvantaged' to 'least disadvantaged' using a combination of income, education, employment, occupation, housing and other Census variables (ABS 2013b). These Census variables relate to both advantage and disadvantage, including low levels of income and education, as well as high levels of education and income. This index can be used to measure both disadvantage and advantage. A high score indicates a relatively high level of advantage and a relatively low level of disadvantage. An area containing some relatively disadvantaged people and some relatively advantaged people may have a low score on the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, due to the levels of disadvantage, but a relatively high score on the IRSAD, due to the existence of both advantage and disadvantage. Population-based quintiles are used.

Socioeconomic position is measured by allocating the relevant SEIFA population-based (2011 population) quintile score to postcode information available for the child or young person. Invalid, missing or unknown postcodes of last known home address were excluded from the analysis.

Some postcode areas were split between two or more areas with different SEIFA scores. Where this was the case, the data were weighted according to the proportion of the population of the postcode area in each SEIFA area.

The SEIFA represents the average of all people living in the area, and not the SES of a particular individual living in the area. Therefore, socioeconomic analyses in *Child protection Australia* reporting indicate the level of socioeconomic advantage and disadvantage in the area corresponding to the postcode information available for the child or young person, not the level of socioeconomic advantage and disadvantage of the child or young person or their family.

If inferences are made about individuals in an area based purely on SEIFA (the characteristics of the area in which they live), they could be misleading. This brings the potential for error in any conclusions, referred to as the ecological fallacy. Area-level and individual-level socioeconomic disadvantage are interrelated but distinct concepts, and thus are measured differently. Using its Socio-Economic Index for Individuals, the ABS found that the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have the greatest proportions of highly socioeconomically diverse neighbourhoods and, as an aggregate

measure, SEIFA captures only a fraction of the true level of disadvantage being experienced in these jurisdictions. SEIFA information used at a suburb or postcode level can have the effect of minimising the actual levels of disadvantage in some areas (ABS 2011).

Appendix C: Data quality statement

Data quality statement Child Protection National Minimum Data Set

Summary of key data quality issues

- The CP NMDS, implemented for reporting from 2012–13, was the main data source for this report.
- The CP NMDS contains information on:
 - notifications, investigations and substantiations
 - care and protection orders
 - out-of-home care
 - foster carers
 - relative/kinship carers.

Data relating to intensive family support services are also reported in *Child protection Australia*, but are based on a separate aggregate collection.

- The AIHW compiles the national collection each year using data extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. Data represent a ‘snapshot’ of the data at the time of extraction and may not include retrospective updates made to data held by state/territory departments. Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match state and territory figures published elsewhere.
- Unit record level data were not available for New South Wales in 2014–15; aggregate data have been reported.
- Queensland supplied unit record files for the first time in 2014–15. Queensland data for 2014–15 onward are not comparable with data for previous years.
- Overall, the quality and coverage of data in the child protection data collection are good. However, data availability issues mean a small number of tables in the collection do not provide fully national data. Further, in relation to substantiated child abuse and neglect, there is a high proportion of children whose Indigenous status is unknown in some jurisdictions.
- Differences in jurisdictional policy, practice, legislation and data systems must be taken into consideration when interpreting all child protection data (see Appendixes D–I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>> of *Child protection Australia 2014–15*).
- All rates in this report were calculated using the 2011 Census-based population estimates, including back-cast historical estimates. Therefore, rates presented in this report are not comparable with rates calculated using estimates based on the 2006 Census, including those published in editions of *Child protection Australia* prior to *Child protection Australia 2013–14*.

- Some data included in this report may not match data reported in the RoGS due to retrospective updates to state/territory data and differences in the data extraction and analysis methodologies.

Description

In Australia, statutory child protection is the responsibility of state and territory governments. Each state and territory department responsible for child protection assists vulnerable children who are suspected of being abused, neglected, or otherwise harmed, or whose parents are unable to provide adequate care or protection.

A number of government and non-government organisations share a common duty of care towards the protection of children and young people. Departments responsible for child protection investigate, process and oversee the handling of child protection cases. Children and their families are assisted by being provided with, or referred to, a wide range of services.

The data for this collection are collected from each of the eight state and territory departments responsible for child protection, and the AIHW collates and analyses these data. The CP NMDS was implemented in 2012–13. The data are extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments according to definitions and technical specifications to which those departments and the AIHW have agreed. This data collection represents the only national source of child protection data.

The collection is a part of the child welfare series of reporting. Ongoing funding of this series is specified in the Memorandum of Understanding between the AIHW and state and territory departments responsible for children and families services and in the associated 3-year Schedule (2014–16) for national child protection work. Work is overseen by informal working groups, including the Children and Families Data Network.

Institutional environment

The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* (Cwlth) to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity established in 1987, governed by a management board and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health and Ageing portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, and mental health, to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The Institute also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The Institute works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national data sets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse these data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

The *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*, in compliance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwlth), ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information see the AIHW website <www.aihw.gov.au>.

Timeliness

The reference period for the 2014–15 National Child Protection Data Collection is from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. Data relating to child protection investigations include investigation outcomes recorded up until 31 August 2015, to maximise the currency of these data items.

The state and territory departments responsible for child protection provide data to the AIHW annually, after the end of each financial year. For the 2014–15 collection, the first iteration of data was due to the AIHW by 30 October 2015, and data were finalised for all states and territories in November 2015. Data from the 2014–15 Child Protection Collection were published in April 2016.

The data for each collection period are released in the AIHW's *Child protection Australia* annual publication.

Accessibility

Publications containing national child protection data, including the annual *Child protection Australia* reports, are available on the AIHW website <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection/>>. These reports are available free of charge. Concurrent with the annual publication, key findings are also presented online.

Requests for unpublished data can be made by contacting the AIHW. See <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/data/>>. Data requests to the AIHW are generally chargeable at an hourly rate on a cost-recovery basis. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may require approval from the state and territory data custodians and/or the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General inquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Digital and Media Communications Unit on (02) 6244 1000 or via email to <info@aihw.gov.au>.

Interpretability

Supporting information on relevant mandatory reporting requirements, legislation, jurisdictional policy and data systems are presented at the Appendixes D–I (online) <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>> of the *Child protection Australia* reports. Supporting information is also provided in the footnotes accompanying tables and the report Glossary. Chapter 1 of the report provides an overview of the child protection process and data collection. Readers are advised to consider all supporting and contextual information to ensure appropriate interpretation of analyses that the AIHW presents.

Metadata for the Child Protection Collection is currently being updated for entry on to METeOR, the AIHW's online metadata repository.

Relevance

The Child Protection Collection is the authoritative source of national Australian child protection data.

The collection includes several modules on notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; out-of-home care, foster and relative/kinship carers; and intensive family support services. Where available, these collections provide information on children within each system and the child protection cases, placements and households relating to children.

The overlaps between the three primary modules (notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care) have also been analysed at the national level. The collection has a range of information about children who come into contact with the child protection system, including their age, sex, Indigenous status and living arrangements. Data are also collected on the main type of substantiated abuse or neglect that has occurred: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect, and the co-occurrence of these types of abuse or neglect.

The collection also includes the numbers of admissions to, and discharges from, care and protection orders and out-of-home care; and information on households providing foster and relative/kinship care placements.

As well as providing information on the current collection period, the collection also enables some trends to be examined, providing a valuable source of data for monitoring various components of the child protection system. Overall, these data give a detailed view of statutory child protection in Australia.

Data sourced from national child protection collections are used for reporting under the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020* (AIHW 2013a) and in the annual RoGS for all jurisdictions except New South Wales.

Accuracy

Data for the child protection collections are extracted each year from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for child protection in Australia, according to definitions and technical specifications agreed to by the departments and the AIHW. Data represent a 'snapshot' of the data at the time of extraction and may not include retrospective updates made to data held by state/territory departments. Data produced from the CP NMDS based on nationally agreed specifications may not match state and territory figures published elsewhere.

Some data included in this report may not match data reported in the RoGS due to retrospective updates to state/territory data and differences in the data extraction and analysis methodologies.

Scope and coverage

National child protection data are based only on those cases reported to departments responsible for child protection and therefore are likely to understate the true prevalence of child abuse and neglect across Australia. Further, notifications made to other organisations, such as the police or non-government welfare agencies, are included only if they were also referred to departments responsible for child protection.

As children may receive a combination of child protection services, there are important links and overlaps between the notifications, investigations and substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care data modules. For example, children who are the subjects of substantiations may be placed on care and protection orders, and many children on care and protection orders are also in out-of-home care. The overall number of children

receiving child protection services—along with the overlaps between the separate data modules—were reported for the first time in 2012–13.

Each year, a number of children are the subjects of more than one notification and/or substantiation during the year. The proportion of children who were the subject of more than one substantiation in the year was reported for the first time in 2012–13.

Ongoing work is being undertaken on the CP NMDs to broaden the scope of the national data collection and to improve comparability of data across jurisdictions.

Data quality

Overall, the quality and coverage of the child protection data collection are good. However, data availability affects the interpretability of some data presented.

- Information on SES can be recorded at different times: at the time the abuse or neglect took place, or at the time of the notification, investigation or substantiation.
- *Children aged 0–17 who were the subjects of substantiations of notifications received during 2014–15, by Indigenous status* should be interpreted with caution due to the high proportion of children whose Indigenous status was unknown in Western Australia and Tasmania (14% and 21%, respectively).
- Data on children substantiated in 2013–14 who were subsequently placed on care and protection orders within 12 months were not available for New South Wales.
- Data on households exiting foster care and relative/kinship care were not available for New South Wales.
- Data on relative/kinship carer households with a placement during the year were not available for Queensland.
- Data on the age of children commencing intensive family support services were not available for South Australia and the Northern Territory.
- Data on the living arrangements of children commencing intensive family support services were not available for South Australia and Tasmania.

Coherence

National child protection data have been provided to the AIHW since 1993 under the agreement between the Australian Government, the states and territories and the AIHW concerning the provision of data on welfare services. In 1993, separate reports were published on child abuse and neglect (*Child abuse and neglect Australia 1990–91*) and care and protection orders (*Children under care and protection orders Australia 1990–91*).

Child protection Australia 1996–97 contained consolidated information on several child protection data modules (notifications, investigations, substantiations; care and protection orders; and out-of-home care) for the first time. *Child protection Australia* has subsequently been released as an annual report in that format. Limited data on intensive family support services were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2003–04*. Data on foster carer households were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2009–10* and relative/kinship carer data were included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2010–11*.

New analyses included for the first time in *Child protection Australia 2012–13* related to:

- unique children receiving child protection services in each jurisdiction
- the number of substantiations per child
- co-occurring types of abuse and neglect
- socioeconomic position
- average day measures of children on orders; children in out-of-home care; and carer households approved/authorised to provide funded out-of-home care placements.

The ability to replicate and expand on existing national reporting was the primary focus of the new unit record level collection, following the implementation of the CP NMDS in 2012–13. Existing national technical specifications were retained and clarified as part of this process.

The following changes were made to national reporting in 2014–15:

- Data relating to *Children who were the subjects of substantiations, by type of family in which the child was residing* are not reported due to data availability and quality concerns.
- The reporting categories used for *Number of investigations by source of notification* have been reduced from 16 to 12 by aggregating data for several related categories.

It is standard practice to present 5-year trends in data, as changes in state and territory legislation, policy/practice and information management systems reduce the ability to accurately compare data over longer periods. Changes that have an impact on the data are provided as caveats to the data and in relevant appendixes to *Child protection Australia* reports.

The revised methodology used by the ABS to obtain estimates of the resident population for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in 2014–15 resulted in an increase in estimates of the number of Indigenous Australians based on the 2011 Census compared with those based on the 2006 Census (see ABS 2013a). This means that rates calculated with the 2011 Indigenous population estimates are lower than those based on the 2006 Census. To maintain consistency in the denominator and allow comparisons over time, all rates for the period 2010–11 to 2014–15 have been calculated using the 2011 Census-based population estimates, including back-cast historical estimates. Therefore, rates presented in this report are not comparable with rates calculated using estimates based on the 2006 Census, including those published in editions of *Child protection Australia* prior to *Child protection Australia 2013–14*.

Glossary

administrative arrangement: An agreement with a child protection department, which has the same effect as a court order of transferring custody or guardianship. This arrangement can also allow a child to be placed in out-of-home care without going through the courts.

age: The age of a person in completed years, or 'unborn' for those in utero and 'less than 1' where age is between live birth and under 1 year. The tables containing information for notifications, investigations and substantiations show age at the time of notification. The tables containing information on children on orders by type of living arrangements and children in out-of-home care at 30 June show age at 30 June 2015. Tables containing information on admissions or discharges show age at the time of first admission or discharge. For intensive family support services, age is shown as at the commencement of the service.

agency: A body funded by state and territory departments responsible for child protection to provide services.

anonymous: Of unknown name.

capital city: A state or territory capital city.

care and protection order: A legal order or arrangement that gives child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare. See also **finalised guardianship or custody order, finalised third-party parental responsibility order, finalised supervisory order, interim and temporary order and administrative arrangement**.

child: A young person aged 0–17.

child care personnel: People engaged in providing occasional, part-time or full-time day care for children.

child concern report: Report to a community services department regarding concerns about a child, where there is no indication that a child may have been, or is at risk of being, harmed through abuse or neglect. This may include concerns about a child's welfare related to the quality of his or her home environment or the standard of care that he or she is receiving.

child protection and support services: Those departments in each state and territory that are responsible for child protection matters.

children receiving child protection services: Children who are the subjects of an investigation of a notification, on a care and protection order, and/or in out-of-home care.

children subject to orders: Children aged 0–17 on a care and protection order or other formal arrangement, or children aged 18 or under who were discharged from those care and protection orders/arrangements. See also **care and protection order**.

custody order: See **finalised guardianship or custody order**.

dealt with by other means: Describes a notification responded to by means other than an investigation, such as by providing advice or referring to services. Notifications dealt with by other means are divided into two categories: **notifications in process and notifications resolved without investigation**.

departmental officer: Any person employed by a state or territory department responsible for child protection who is not classified under any other 'source of notification' category.

emotional abuse: Any act by a person having the care of a child that results in the child suffering any kind of significant emotional deprivation or trauma. Children affected by exposure to family violence are also included in this category.

family: Includes **parent/guardian, sibling** and **other relative/kin**.

family care: A type of care where the child is residing with parents (natural or adoptive) or other relatives/kin (other than parents) who are not reimbursed. See also **two parent – intact, two parent – step or blended, single parent – female, single parent – male** and **relatives/kin who are not reimbursed**.

family group home: A home for children provided by a department or community-sector agency that has live-in, non-salaried carers who are reimbursed and/or subsidised for providing care.

family of residence: The family type with which a child is living at the time of notification of child abuse or neglect. The family type of a child is classified into eight main categories: **two parent – intact, two parent – step or blended, single parent – female, single parent – male, other relatives/kin, foster care, other and not stated**.

finalised guardianship or custody order: Order involving the transfer of legal guardianship to the relevant state or territory department or non-government agency. This order involves considerable intervention in the child's life and that of their family, and is sought only as a last resort. A guardianship order conveys responsibility for the welfare of the child to the guardian (for example, for child's education, health, religion, accommodation and financial matters). It does not necessarily grant the right to the daily care and control of the child, or the right to make decisions about the daily care and control of the child, which are granted under custody orders.

A custody order is generally an order that places a child in the custody of either the state or territory department responsible for child protection, or a non-government agency. It usually involves the child protection department's being responsible for the daily care and requirements of the child, while the parent retains legal guardianship. Custody alone does not bestow any responsibility regarding the long-term welfare of the child.

finalised investigation: A notification received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 that was investigated, with the investigation completed and an outcome recorded by 31 August 2015. The cut-off point of 31 August is applied to allow time for investigating notifications made close to the end of the previous financial year. The 'outcomes of finalised investigations' are classified into two categories: *substantiated* and *not substantiated*.

finalised supervisory order: Order giving the department responsible for child protection some responsibility for a child's welfare. Under this order, the department supervises and/or directs the level and type of care that is to be provided to the child.

A child under a supervisory order is generally under the responsibility of his or her parents and the guardianship or custody of the child is unaffected. Finalised supervisory orders are therefore less interventionist than finalised guardianship or custody orders, but require the child's parent or guardian to meet specified conditions, such as medical care of the child.

finalised third-party parental responsibility order: Order transferring all duties, powers, responsibilities and authority to which parents are entitled by law to a nominated person(s)

whom the court considers appropriate. The nominated person may be an individual such as a relative or an officer of the state or territory department. Third-party parental responsibility may be ordered in the event that a parent is unable to care for a child, with parental responsibility then transferred to a relative.

A 'permanent care order' is an example of a third-party parental responsibility order and involves the transfer of guardianship to a third-party carer. Such an order can also be applied to achieving a stable arrangement under a long-term guardianship order to the age of 18 without guardianships being transferred to a third party. This order applies only in some jurisdictions.

formal shared care: Where a case plan exists for children to live in family care and to have regular planned periods in out-of-home care.

foster care: A form of out-of-home care where the caregiver is authorised and reimbursed (or was offered but declined reimbursement) by the state/territory for the care of the child. (This category excludes relatives/kin who are reimbursed.) There are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers.

foster carer household: A private household containing one or more foster carers:

- who have undergone the relevant screening/selection and approval process
- who have received authorisation from the relevant department or agency to enable a child to be placed in their care
- for whom reimbursement is available from the state or territory government for expenses incurred in caring for the child (there are varying degrees of reimbursement made to foster carers)
- who are part of an ongoing review process.

friend/neighbour: An unrelated person or acquaintance who is known to, or lives in close proximity to, the subject child or their family, or to the person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect.

guardianship order: See **finalised guardianship or custody order**.

home-based out-of-home care: Care provided for a child who is placed in the home of a carer, who is reimbursed (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement) for the cost of care of that child. There are three categories of home-based out-of-home care:

relatives/kin who are reimbursed, foster care and other home-based out-of-home care.

hospital/health centre personnel: Any person not elsewhere classified who is employed at a public or private hospital or other health centre or clinic.

households commencing care: Includes all carer households that, during the year ended 30 June, received authorisation from the relevant department or agency to enable a child to be placed in their care, regardless of whether a child was placed in their care in that period. This includes households that received provisional authorisation (which may be in order to facilitate a placement) while formal approval/registration was being finalised – these households are included only once – at the time of provisional authorisation (and not again when full authorisation is received). Households commencing care for the first time are included. Households whose existing authorisation has been renewed as part of a standard ongoing review process are excluded. Households receiving authorisation to provide respite

care only (and not also authorisation to provide general foster or relative/kinship care) are excluded.

households exiting care: Includes any carer household that, at some point during the year ended 30 June, were no longer authorised by the relevant department or agency to have a child placed in their care. For example, the carer household may have voluntarily withdrawn/deregistered, or the relevant department or agency may have formally revoked their authorisation. Households changing from provisional authorisation to full authorisation are excluded.

independent living: Accommodation including private board and lead tenant households.

Indigenous: Describes children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island descent who identify, and are identified as, an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Indigenous status: The status of a person who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives. See also

Indigenous, non-Indigenous and unknown Indigenous status.

intensive family support services: Services that aim to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers because of child protection concerns, and those services that aim to reunify families where separation has already occurred.

interim and temporary order: Order covering the provision of a limited period of supervision and/or placement of a child. Parental responsibility under this order may reside with the parents or with the department responsible for child protection. 'Unfinalised orders' (such as applications to the court for care and protection orders) are also included in this category, unless another finalised order is in place.

investigation: The process whereby the relevant department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015. Departmental staff assess the harm, or degree of harm, to the child and their protective needs. An investigation includes sighting or interviewing the child where it is practical to do so. See also **investigation in process, investigation closed – no outcome possible and finalised investigation.**

investigation closed – no outcome possible: An investigation begun for a notification made between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 that was not able to be finalised in order to reach the outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' and for which files were closed for administrative purposes. This may happen, for example, in cases where the family has relocated. These investigations were completed between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015.

investigation in process: An investigation begun for a notification received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 which was not completed nor an outcome recorded by 31 August 2015.

living arrangement: The type of care in which a child on an order was residing. See also **residential care, foster care, family group home, home-based out-of-home care and family care.**

living situation: The type of care in which the child or children in the family lived at the time of case commencement for intensive family support services. See also **family care, out-of-home care, formal shared care and other living arrangement.**

location: The site at which the intensive family support service workers are based. If an agency has more than one location, each location must be counted.

medical/health personnel: Includes **medical practitioner, hospital/health centre personnel and other health/personnel.**

medical practitioner: Registered medical practitioner; includes both general practitioners and specialists in hospitals or in the community.

neglect: Any serious act or omission by a person having the care of a child that, within the bounds of cultural tradition, constitute a failure to provide conditions that are essential for the healthy physical and emotional development of a child.

non-government organisation: Any non-government organisation that provides services to the community on a not-for-profit basis, and is not classified under any other 'source of notification' category.

non-Indigenous: Describes children who have not been identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; this excludes children of unknown Indigenous status.

notification: Contact made to an authorised department by persons or other bodies alleging child abuse or neglect, child maltreatment or harm to a child.

notification in process: Notification where the decision to investigate has not been reached.

notification resolved without investigation: Notification responded to by means other than an investigation, such as by providing advice or referring to services.

not stated: Describes information that was unknown or not recorded.

not substantiated: Describes a notification received between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015 where an investigation concluded that there was no reasonable cause to suspect prior, current or future abuse, neglect or harm to the child.

other family of residence: A family of residence not otherwise categorised. This includes non-family situations, such as hostels and institutional accommodation.

other health personnel: Any person engaged in supplementary, paramedical and/or ancillary medical services. This includes nurses, infant welfare sisters, dentists, radiographers, physiotherapists, pharmacists, and so on. It does not include social workers and non-medical hospital/health centre personnel.

other home-based out-of-home care: A care type where the child was in home-based out-of-home care, other than with relatives/kin who are reimbursed or in foster care.

other living arrangement: Living arrangement not otherwise classified, including unknown living arrangement. For children on orders, this includes any placements made in disability services, psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities, specialist homelessness services and overnight child care services, boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and the defence forces. These living arrangements may have rostered and/or paid staff and are generally not a home-like environment.

other out-of-home care: Out-of-home care placements that are not otherwise categorised, including unknown placement types. This includes boarding schools, hospitals, hotels/motels and the defence forces.

other relative/kin: Relative(s) of the child (other than parents), including grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins. The relationship can be full, half or 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 his or her birth. This category also includes members of Indigenous communities who are accepted by that community as being related to the child.

other source of notification: All other persons or organisations not classified by any other source of notification category (for example, ministers of religion or government agencies and instrumentalities not elsewhere classified) and anonymous notifiers.

other urban: Cities and towns other than a capital city.

out-of-home care: Overnight care for children aged 0–17, where the state makes a financial payment or where a financial payment has been offered but has been declined by the carer. See also **residential care, family group home, foster care, relative/kinship care, independent living and other out-of-home care.**

parent/guardian: A natural or substitute parent, spouse of a natural parent, adoptive parent or spouse of an adoptive parent, or any other person who has an ongoing legal responsibility for the care and protection of a child.

permanent care order: See **finalised third-party parental responsibility order.**

physical abuse: Any non-accidental physical act inflicted upon a child by a person having the care of a child.

police: Any member of a Commonwealth, state or territory law enforcement agency.

prevention services: Services specifically aimed at assisting families in order to prevent imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers for child protection reasons.

relative kinship care: A form of out-of-home care where the caregiver is:

- a relative (other than parents)
- considered to be family or a close friend
- a member of the child or young person's community (in accordance with their culture)
- reimbursed by the state/territory for the care of the child (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement).

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group.

relative/kinship carer household: A private household containing one or more relative/kinship carers:

- who have undergone the relevant screening/selection and approval process
- who have received authorisation from the relevant department or agency to enable a relative/kinship child to be placed in their care
- for whom reimbursement is available from a government authority or non-government organisation for expenses incurred in caring for the child (there are varying degrees of reimbursement made to relative/kinship carers)
- who are part of an ongoing review process.

relatives/kin who are not reimbursed: Relatives/kin (other than parents) who are not reimbursed by the state/territory for the care of the child.

relatives/kin who are reimbursed: Where the caregiver is:

- a relative (other than parents)
- considered to be family or a close friend
- a member of the child or young person's community (in accordance with their culture)
- reimbursed by the state/territory for the care of the child (or who has been offered but declined reimbursement).

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, a kinship carer may be another Indigenous person who is a member of their community, a compatible community or from the same language group.

residential care: A type of care where the placement is in a residential building whose purpose is to provide placements for children and where there are paid staff.

respite care: A form of out-of-home care used to provide short-term accommodation for children and young people where the intention is for the child to return to their prior place of residence. Respite placements include:

- respite from birth family, where a child is placed in out-of-home care on a temporary basis for reasons other than child protection (for example, the child's parents are ill or unable to care for them on a temporary basis; as a family support mechanism to prevent entry into full-time care; as part of the reunification process; or as a shared care arrangement)
- respite from placement, where a child spends regular, short and agreed periods of time with a carer other than their primary carer.

reunification services: Services that seek to reunify families where separation of children from their primary caregivers has already occurred for child protection reasons.

rural or remote: Describes areas outside the cities and towns.

school personnel: Any appropriately trained person involved in instructing, or imparting knowledge to, children or in providing direct support for this education. This includes teachers, teachers' aides, school principals and counsellors who work in preschool, kindergarten, primary, secondary, technical, sporting or art-and-crafts education.

sexual abuse: Any act by a person having the care of a child that exposes the child to, or involves the child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards.

sibling: A brother or half-brother, sister or half-sister, whether natural (that is, biological), adopted or foster.

single parent – female: Families with a female single parent, whether biological, step or adoptive.

single parent – male: Families with a male single parent, whether biological, step or adoptive.

social worker/welfare worker/psychologist/other trained welfare worker: Any person engaged in providing a social- or welfare-work service in the community.

source of notification: The person or organisation that initially made a child protection notification to the relevant authority. The source is classified according to the relationship to the child allegedly abused, neglected or harmed. The source of notification is reported under

12 categories: **subject child, family, friend/neighbour, medical/health personnel, social worker, school personnel, child care personnel, police, departmental officer, non-government organisation personnel, other and not stated.**

substantiation of notification: Child protection notification made to relevant authorities during the current year (for example, 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015) that was investigated (with the investigation finalised by 31 August) and where it was concluded that there was reasonable cause to believe that the child had been, was being, or was likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiation does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that treatment or case management were provided. Substantiations may also include cases where there is no suitable caregiver, such as children who have been abandoned or whose parents are deceased.

third-party parental responsibility order: See **finalised third-party parental responsibility order.**

two parent – intact: Describes a two-parent family where both parents are either the biological or adoptive parents of the child.

two parent – step or blended: Describes a blended and reconstituted family (one biological parent and one step-parent).

type of abuse or neglect: One of the four types, or categories, of substantiations: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Each category includes findings of actual harm or significant risk of harm. Where more than one type of abuse or neglect has occurred, the substantiation should be classified to the type likely to be the most severe in the short term or to place the child most at risk in the short term – or, if such an assessment is not possible, classified to the most obvious form of abuse or neglect. See also **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.**

type of action for notification: Action taken by the department responsible for child protection in response to a notification. See also **investigation** and **dealt with by other means.**

type of placement: The type of out-of-home care in which a child was residing. See also **residential care, family group home, home-based out-of-home care, independent living and other out-of-home care.**

unknown Indigenous status: Describes children whose Indigenous status was unknown.

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Related publications

This report, *Child protection Australia 2014–15*, is part of an annual series. Supplementary population data tables (those with a prefix of S) are part of the *Child protection Australia 2014–15* release. These tables, as well as earlier editions of the report, can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website: <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection-publications/>>. The website also includes information on ordering printed copies.

The following AIHW publications relating to children, youth and families might also be of interest:

- AIHW 2015. Australia's welfare 2015. Australia's welfare no. 12. Cat. no. AUS 189. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2015. Developing a linked data collection to report on the relationships between child protection and youth justice supervision. Data linkage series no. 20. Cat. no. CWS 55. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2015. Educational outcomes for children in care: linking 2013 child protection and NAPLAN data. Cat. no. CWS 54. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2014. A new approach to national child protection data: implementation of the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set. Child welfare series no. 59. Cat. no. CWS 50. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2014. Hospitalised injury in children and young people 2011–12. Injury research and statistics series no. 91. Cat. no. INJCAT 167. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2014. Indigenous child safety. Cat. no. IHW 127. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020: technical paper on operational definitions and data issues for key national indicators. Cat. no. CWS 44. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Scoping reportable measures for the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020: supporting outcome 1. Cat. no. CWS 45. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2012. A picture of Australia's children 2012. Cat. no. PHE 167. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. Headline indicators for children's health, development and wellbeing, 2011. Cat. no. PHE 144. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. National outcome measures for early childhood development: development of indicator based reporting framework. Cat. no. PHE 134. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. Young Australians: their health and wellbeing 2011. Cat. no. PHE 140. Canberra: AIHW.

This report contains comprehensive information on state and territory child protection and support services in 2014-15, and on the characteristics of Australian children within the child protection system. This report shows that:

- 151,980 children, a rate of 28.6 per 1,000 children, received child protection services (investigation, care and protection order and/or were in out-of-home care)
- three-quarters (73%) of these children had previously been the subject of an investigation, care and protection order and/or were in out-of-home care
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were 7 times as likely as non-Indigenous children to be receiving child protection services.