

Trends in child protection notifications and children living in out-of-home care in Australia: 1989–90 to 2013–14

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Year	Total population of children in Australia (0-17 years)	Notifications to statutory child protection authority *		Children living in out-of-home care at 30 June					
				All Children [‡]		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children		Non-Indigenous Children	
		Number	Rate per 1,000 [§]	Number	Rate per 1,000	Number	Rate per 1,000	Number	Rate per 1,000
1989–90	4,188,795	42,695**	10.2	12,406***	3.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	4,766,920	107,134	22.5	16,923	3.6	3,496	18.3	13,427	3.0
2009–10	5,092,806	286,437	56.2	35,895	7.0	11,468	40.4	24,279	5.1
2013–14	5,286,000 [#]	304,097	57.5	43,009	8.1	14,991	51.4	27,827	5.6

Sources: Child population data: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010; 2014). Notifications and out-of-home care data: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001, 2011); Productivity Commission (2015; Tables 15A.5 & 15A.18); WELSTAT (1991).

Notes: Data were updated from those originally cited in Higgins (2011).

* 'Notifications' refers to the total number of reports received by child protection departments about children in need of protection, not to the number of unique children about whom there might have been multiple concerns notified during the financial year.

** The number of notifications for 1989-90 excludes Tasmania and ACT, for whom data were not available. Therefore comparing the number and rate with other years should be interpreted with caution.

*** WELSTAT (1991) data for 1989-90 are for all children on care and protection orders, including those in residential care, boarding school, juvenile justice facilities, foster care, living other parent or other relative or other adult care, independent living, or unauthorised absence. Data are not provided separately by Indigenous status. For information on counting rules used in subsequent AIHW data collation, see: <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection-counting-rules/>>.

[#] This is a preliminary population estimate – subject to revision in future release of this ABS Catalogue.

[§] As the number of notifications may include multiple notifications relating to the same child, the rate should be interpreted with caution.

[‡] Includes a small number children for whom Indigenous /non-Indigenous status was unknown (148 in 2009-10, and 191 in 2013-14).