

# Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee

## Missing and Murdered First Nations Women and Children

### *Answers to Questions Taken on Notice*

**Question: How many of those children, do you think—I don't need you to have the figure; I'm happy for you to provide it on notice for us—have been removed on the basis of domestic violence?**

Answer: The Commission for Children and Young People do not have access to data that indicates the reasons for child removal, so cannot provide definitive answer on the number on children removed on the basis of domestic violence.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department) is the owner of Child Protection data, and we refer you to the department to provide up to date data to respond to this question.

**Question: Apart from Taskforce 1000, is there any continued work on a more longitudinal basis that's looking at what children's experiences have been of being in contact with the system, whether they were in out of home care, they ended up in the justice system or they were reported missing or absent? Is there any of that work currently?**

The Commission has not conducted longitudinal inquiries. While we are not necessarily looking at the same children and young people, our systemic inquiries do often touch on how similar cohorts experience both youth justice and out-of-home care over time.

The Commission for Children and Young People (The Commission) can conduct inquiries into services provided to children and young people by:

- child protection services
- youth justice services
- community services
- health services
- human services
- schools.

This power is detailed in section 39 of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012.

The Commission has conducted twelve systemic inquiries since 2015, with our most recent inquiry, *Let us Learn inquiry into the educational experiences of children and young people in out-of-home care tabled to the Victorian Parliament on 16 November 2023*.

*A list and brief description of each systemic inquiry published by the Commission is included below.*

| Year | Inquiry name                                     | Description  | # of recs |
|------|--|--|-----------|
| 2015 | As a good parent would                           | <i>...as a good parent would...</i> reviewed the adequacy of the provision of residential care services to Victorian children and young people who have been subject to sexual abuse or sexual exploitation whilst residing in residential care. | 9         |
| 2016 | In the Child's Best Interest                     | <i>In the Child's Best Interest</i> is a systemic review of the Victorian child protection system's compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.  | 54        |
| 2016 | <i>Always was, always will be Koori children</i> | <i>Always was, always will be Koori children</i> is the report of an investigation into the circumstances of 980 Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care in Victoria.   | 77        |
| 2016 | <i>Neither seen nor heard</i>                    | <i>Neither seen nor heard</i> examined a sample of child death   | 13        |

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|      |   | inquiries where children had experienced family violence. The inquiry identified a number of recurring problems and system failings. It also found that services commonly overlooked risks and underestimated the impact of family violence on children. Child victims were not engaged and given the support they needed to address their trauma. |    |
| 2017 | <i>The Same Four Walls: inquiry into the use of isolation, separation and lockdowns in the Victorian youth justice system</i>                 | <i>The Same Four Walls: inquiry into the use of isolation, separation and lockdowns in the Victorian youth justice system</i> found that children and young people in Victoria's youth justice centres were subjected to unacceptable levels of isolation and routinely 'locked down' or isolated due to staffing issues.                          | 21 |
| 2017 | <i>Safe and wanted: An inquiry into the implementation of permanency arrangements</i>   | <i>Safe and wanted</i> reviewed how the new amendments were working in their first six months of operation.<br><br>The Commission was asked to review early evidence to determine whether the permanency amendments were achieving their objectives  |    |
| 2021 | <i>Our youth, our way: Inquiry into the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the Victorian youth justice system</i> | Our Youth Our Way sought to understand the lived experiences of Aboriginal children and young people in Victoria and the factors contributing to their over-representation in the youth justice system.  | 75 |
| 2021 | Out of sight: Systemic inquiry into children and young people who are absent or missing from residential care                                 | Out of sight: Systemic inquiry into children and young people who are absent or missing from residential care was established due to concern over the very high number of young people who continue to be absent or missing from residential care, as seen through our incident monitoring function and through our past inquiries.                | 18 |
| 2020 | <i>Keep caring, Systemic inquiry into services for young people transitioning from out-of-home care</i>                                       | <i>Keep Caring, Systemic inquiry into services for young people transitioning from out-of-home care</i> examined mounting evidence in Victoria that young people who have grown up in out-of-home care face an unacceptably high risk of homelessness, poor physical and mental health, unemployment and involvement in the youth justice system.  | 15 |
| 2023 | <i>The Let us learn: Systemic inquiry into the educational experiences of children and young people in out-of-home care</i>                   | <i>The Let us learn: Systemic inquiry into the educational experiences of children and young people in out-of-home care</i> examined the educational experiences of children and young people in out-of-home care, including the factors that affect their educational outcomes and ability to stay engaged in education.                          | 47 |

If there are any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards, Meena

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The Commission respectfully acknowledges and celebrates the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Victoria and pays its respects to their Elders, children and young people of past, current and future generations.