



Australian Government

**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision

2015–16

The logo for the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), consisting of the letters 'AIHW' in a bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is filled with a different color: 'A' is teal, 'I' is green, 'H' is blue, and 'W' is purple. The letters are slightly shadowed and appear to be floating above a white background.

AIHW



Australian Government
**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

DATA LINKAGE SERIES

Number 23

Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision 2015–16

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

Cat. no. CSI 25

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is a major national agency whose purpose is to create authoritative and accessible information and statistics that inform decisions and improve the health and welfare of all Australians.

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017



This product, excluding the AIHW logo, Commonwealth Coat of Arms and any material owned by a third party or protected by a trademark, has been released under a Creative Commons BY 3.0 (CC-BY 3.0) licence. Excluded material owned by third parties may include, for example, design and layout, images obtained under licence from third parties and signatures. We have made all reasonable efforts to identify and label material owned by third parties.

You may distribute, remix and build upon this work. However, you must attribute the AIHW as the copyright holder of the work in compliance with our attribution policy available at <www.aihw.gov.au/copyright/>. The full terms and conditions of this licence are available at <<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/>>.

This publication is part of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Data linkage series. A complete list of the Institute's publications is available from the Institute's website <www.aihw.gov.au>.

ISSN 2205-5045 (PDF)

ISSN 1833-1238 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-76054-208-5 (PDF)

ISBN 978-1-76054-209-2 (Print)

Suggested citation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017. Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision 2015–16. Data linkage series no. 23. Cat. no. CSI 25. Canberra: AIHW.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair
Mrs Louise Markus

Director
Mr Barry Sandison

Any enquiries about copyright or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 6244 1000

Email: info@aihw.gov.au

Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

This publication is printed in accordance with ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) and ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems). The paper is sourced from sustainably managed certified forests.



**Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report.
Please check the online version at <www.aihw.gov.au> for any amendments.**

Contents

- Acknowledgments.....iv**
- Summary.....v**
- 1 Introduction.....1**
 - 1.1 What is child protection?.....2
 - 1.2 What is youth justice supervision?2
 - 1.3 Data.....3
 - Child protection data.....3
 - Youth justice supervision data3
 - Data available only for limited jurisdictions.....4
 - Age is restricted to young people aged 10–164
 - 1.4 Linkage method.....4
 - 1.5 Report structure.....6
 - 1.6 Notes.....6
- 2 Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision7**
 - 2.1 Overlap by state and territory.....9
- 3 Young people in the child protection system11**
 - 3.1 Overlap with youth justice11
 - 3.2 Investigated notifications12
 - 3.3 Care and protection orders13
 - 3.4 Out-of-home care14
- 4 Young people under youth justice supervision.....15**
 - 4.1 Overlap with child protection.....15
 - 4.2 Community-based supervision.....16
 - 4.3 Detention18
 - 4.4 Age at first youth justice supervision20
- 5 Future reporting21**
 - 5.1 Data availability for states and territories21
 - 5.2 Longitudinal analyses of pathways and links21
 - 5.3 Other data collections22
- References.....23**
- List of figures24**
- List of supplementary tables25**
- Related publications26**

Acknowledgments

Arianne Schlumpp wrote this report. David Braddock, Louise York, Fadwa Al-Yaman, and Matthew James reviewed the report and provided valuable input and feedback.

The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions, comments, and advice from:

- the Juvenile Justice Research and Information Group—which consists of representatives from the state and territory departments responsible for youth justice supervision
- the Children and Families Data Network—which consists of representatives from the state and territory departments responsible for child and family services.

Summary

Research shows that children and young people who have been abused or neglected are at greater risk of engaging in criminal activity, and entering the youth justice system. A better understanding of the characteristics and pathways of children and young people who are both in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision can help support staff, case workers, and policy makers to get the best outcomes for these children and young people.

Using data from the linked child protection and youth justice supervision data collection, this report presents information on young people who were involved in the child protection system, and also subject to youth justice supervision at some time between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016.

The cohort includes young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014 to ensure all possible youth justice supervision is included across the 2-year period. Results are limited to the 6 jurisdictions with data in both child protection and youth justice national minimum data sets—a total of 47,697 young people (43,326 from child protection, and 7,185 from youth justice).

Young people in the child protection system were 12 times as likely as the general population to also be under youth justice supervision

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 6.5% (2,814) of young people who were in the child protection system were also under youth justice supervision at some point during the same 2-year period, compared with 0.5% of the general population.

The level of youth justice supervision was 10.4% for those under care and protection orders, 10.2% for those in out-of-home care, and 5.7% for those who were the subject of an investigated notification.

Young people under youth justice supervision were 12 times as likely as the general population to also be in the child protection system

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 39.2% (2,814) of young people under youth justice supervision were also in the child protection system.

Those in detention were more likely to also be in the child protection system (43.4%) than those under community-based supervision (39.2%).

The younger people were at first supervision, the more likely they were to also be in the child protection system during the period (62.3% of those aged 10 at first supervision, and 16.7% of those aged 17).

Young Indigenous Australians were more likely than non-Indigenous Australians to be in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, young Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were 16 times as likely as non-Indigenous Australians of the same age to be both in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision.

1 Introduction

In 2015–16, about 115,000 children and young people aged 0–17 had a notification of abuse or neglect investigated by a department responsible for child protection (AIHW 2017a), and almost 10,000 young people aged 10–17 were supervised in the community or in youth detention centres by a department responsible for youth justice (AIHW 2017b). Some young people are involved in both the child protection system and youth justice supervision (AIHW 2016b).

Research shows that children and young people who have been abused or neglected are at greater risk of engaging in criminal activity, and entering the youth justice system. For example, 1 study found that being maltreated as a child roughly doubles the probability of committing a crime (Currie & Tekin 2006).

The majority of children who are abused and neglected do not go on to offend, but a large proportion of children who offend have had a history of abuse or neglect (Cashmore 2011). This is particularly the case for young people in detention. A survey of young people in youth detention in New South Wales found that 81% of young women and 57% of young men had been abused or neglected, while 49% of young women and 19% of young men had suffered severe abuse or neglect (Indig et al. 2011).

Procedures used within the child protection and youth justice systems can also facilitate involvement of one system with the other. For example, contact with youth justice agencies may lead to a child protection notification being made if abuse or neglect is suspected by, or reported to, agency staff (AIFS 2016).

This highlights the importance of better understanding the characteristics and pathways of children and young people who are both in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision. This information can assist support staff, case workers, and policy makers to get the best outcomes for children and young people.

Previous work by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) found that linking child protection and youth justice supervision data was both feasible and beneficial (AIHW 2012).

With a national unit record data collection on children and young people in the child protection system introduced in 2012–13—the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set (NMDS)—it is possible to link child protection system data with the existing data on youth justice supervision.

This linkage, in turn, enables reporting on the relationships between child protection and youth justice supervision annually (AIHW 2015). The first of these annual reports was released in 2016, based on 2013–14 data (AIHW 2016a). This report, the third in the series, is based on 2015–16 NMDS data.

This report presents information on 47,697 young people who were involved in the child protection system or under youth justice supervision at some time between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016 in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory, and who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

Of this group, 5.9% (or 2,814) were in both child protection and under youth justice supervision during the measurement period. This is a subset of the total number of children and young people who were involved in both the child protection system and under youth justice supervision at some point during childhood and adolescence. This is because some children were in the child protection system in the years before or after youth justice

supervision, but not during the same 2-year period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016. Within this subset, this report does not differentiate between young people who were first involved with the child protection system and those who were first involved with the youth justice system.

As more data become available in future years, it will be possible to better analyse the links and pathways between child protection and youth justice supervision over several years. Detailed information on the method used for this report can be found in *Developing a linked data collection to report on the relationships between child protection and youth justice supervision* (AIHW 2015).

1.1 What is child protection?

In Australia, state and territory departments responsible for child protection assist vulnerable children and young people who have been, or are at risk of being, abused, neglected, or otherwise harmed, or whose parents are unable to provide adequate care or protection (AIHW 2017a).

The 3 main components of the child protection system are:

- **notifications** of possible abuse, neglect, or other harm—these notifications are screened by child protection departments, and, if necessary, the report is investigated; if the investigation finds that the child is being or is likely to be abused, neglected, or otherwise harmed, the notification is recorded as substantiated
- **care and protection orders**—these are legal orders or arrangements that give child protection departments some responsibility for a child's welfare
- **out-of-home care**—where children are placed in overnight care for which the department has made or offered a financial payment to the carer, in cases when parents cannot give adequate care, children need a more protective environment, or other accommodation is needed during family conflict. Consistent with the principle of keeping children with their families, out-of-home care is considered an intervention of last resort.

It is possible for children and young people to be involved in each of these 3 components at the same time. For more information on child protection policies and practices in the states and territories, see *Child protection Australia 2015–16* (AIHW 2017a).

1.2 What is youth justice supervision?

In Australia, the states and territories are responsible for dealing with young people who have committed, or who are alleged to have committed, criminal offences.

The youth justice system applies to children and young people aged 10–17 at the time of the offence in all states and territories, except Queensland, where it applies to those aged 10–16. Also, in Victoria, some young people aged 18–20 may be sentenced to detention in a youth facility under the state's 'dual track' sentencing system, which aims to prevent young people from entering the adult prison system at an early age. Children aged under 10 cannot be charged with a criminal offence in any state or territory.

Young people enter the system when they are investigated by police for allegedly committing an offence, and, depending on the outcome of the investigation, charges may be laid. If the young person is proven guilty, they will then be sentenced by a court (AIHW 2017b).

Youth justice supervision is a component of the youth justice system. Young people may be supervised by a youth justice department at any stage of the youth justice system.

The 2 main types of supervision are:

- **community-based supervision**—for young people who live in the community and are supervised by the youth justice department; young people may be unsentenced (before a court hearing or while awaiting the outcome of a trial or sentencing), may have been sentenced to a period of community-based supervision by a court, or have been released from sentenced detention on parole or supervised release
- **detention**—for young people who are detained in a youth justice centre or detention facility; young people may be unsentenced, or may have been sentenced to a period of detention by a court.

Young people may be under multiple types of youth justice supervision in the same year, and may be under multiple types at the same time where these supervision orders relate to different court matters.

Young people who are in the youth justice system may also be unsupervised in the community (for example, on unsupervised bail). Information on these unsupervised community-based orders is not available from the data collection on youth justice supervision, so is not included in this report.

For more information on youth justice supervision in Australia, see *Youth justice in Australia 2015–16* (AIHW 2017b).

1.3 Data

Child protection data

Child protection data in this report are from the Child Protection NMDS. This longitudinal person-based data set contains information on the:

- demographics of children and young people who receive child protection services
- notifications received by child protection departments
- care and protection orders and out-of-home care placements relating to these children and young people in a financial year.

It contains data for all states and territories, except New South Wales. For information on data quality, see the Child Protection NMDS 2015–16 data quality statement at <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/665947>.

The scope of child protection data in this report is restricted to investigated notifications, care and protection orders, and out-of-home care. It excludes notifications that were not investigated, care and protection orders that were 'other' or 'not stated', and living arrangements that do not constitute out-of-home care.

As the legislative and policy frameworks for assessing child protection notifications vary widely between states and territories, the number of notifications, and the proportion of these that are investigated are not comparable between states and territories.

Youth justice supervision data

Youth justice supervision data in this report are from the Juvenile Justice NMDS. This longitudinal person-based data set contains information on the demographics of young people who are supervised by youth justice departments in the financial year, and the details of their unsentenced and sentenced supervision, both in the community and in youth justice detention centres. It contains data for all states and territories, except the Northern Territory.

For information on data quality, see the Juvenile Justice NMDS data quality statement at <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/666484>>.

In this report, 'youth justice supervision' refers only to supervised community-based and detention orders (both unsentenced and sentenced). It does not include unsupervised orders, such as unsupervised bail, or diversionary activities that are not supervised orders.

Data available only for limited jurisdictions

The data in this report relate only to selected jurisdictions. As the Child Protection NMDS at the time of linkage did not contain data for New South Wales, and the Juvenile Justice NMDS did not contain data for the Northern Territory, the data in this report relate only to Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory. For comparative purposes, the rates of child protection and youth justice supervision for the general population in this report are restricted to these 6 jurisdictions.

Together, these 6 jurisdictions account for 55.0% of young people aged 10–17 receiving child protection services, and 67.7% of those under youth justice supervision in Australia in 2015–16 (AIHW 2017a, 2017b).

It is expected that data for additional states and territories will be available in future years (see Chapter 5 'Future reporting' for more details).

Age is restricted to young people aged 10–16

Data in this report relate only to young people who were aged 10–16 at the start of the measurement period (1 July 2014). This is to ensure that individuals in the study cohort are eligible for both child protection services and youth justice supervision throughout the measurement period.

Children aged under 10 are excluded, even if they were in the child protection system, as they cannot be under youth justice supervision.

As years of data accumulate, it will be possible to look at the involvement of children and young people in both sectors over several years (see Chapter 5 'Future reporting' for more information).

1.4 Linkage method

The available data were linked using a multistep key-based linkage method, which allows data collections without common person identifiers or full names to be linked. The aim of key-based linkage is to minimise the likelihood both of:

- false positives (where records that belong to different people are incorrectly identified as belonging to the same person)
- false negatives (where records that belong to the same person are incorrectly identified as belonging to different people).

Using linkage keys protects the privacy of individuals, and lowers the burden on data providers, as existing data collections can be used.

This method uses a series of keys that vary in distinctiveness, to reduce the possibility that records belonging to different people are incorrectly recorded as belonging to the same person. At the same time, it increases the possibility that records belonging to the same person will be identified, even where components, such as family name, have changed.

This method can be used where values are missing (such as unknown date of birth), and, where available, it can also use alternative information such as alias names.

To link the child protection and youth justice supervision data collections, linkage keys were formed using data items available in both collections. These were:

- selected letters of name
- date of birth
- sex
- Indigenous status
- information about the suburb or town of usual residence.

Complete address information was not available.

Once all the possible linkage keys were identified, the utility of each key was measured, using the available child protection and youth justice supervision data. These measures were used to order the keys, and the keys were then tested to find the point at which further linkage keys added no value to the linkage. A total of 339 keys were used to link the data collections.

The resulting ordered list of linkage keys was used to link the individual state and territory data sets. The most precise key (as decided by the measures of utility) was used first, followed by the next most precise key, and so on. The final linked data set was then created by combining the records that linked using the ordered list of keys with the records that remained unlinked. A project-specific identifier was created so that distinct people could be counted.

Once the linked data set was built, analysis data sets were created for any youth justice supervision, including a breakdown of detention and community-based supervision, and any child protection involvement, including a breakdown of investigated notifications, care and protection orders, and out-of-home care:

- The youth justice supervision data set was created by extracting record identifiers from both the detention file and the community-based supervision file in the Juvenile Justice NMDS.
 - The **detention data set** was created by extracting data from the detention file in the source youth justice supervision data set. As it is not possible to be in detention in more than 1 state or territory at the same time, conflicting records (where a detention record for a person starts or ends in 1 state or territory while another detention record for the same person is active in another state or territory) were identified and removed. Less than 0.3% of individuals had conflicting detention records, and no individuals were removed as a result of this data cleaning, which indicates that the quality of the linkage was high.
 - The **community-based supervision data set** was created by extracting information from the orders file in the Juvenile Justice NMDS. Episodes of community-based supervision were created by removing any portions of community-based orders that were covered by a period of detention (as a young person cannot be in detention and supervised in the community at the same time).
- The child protection data set was created by extracting record identifiers from the investigated notifications, care and protection orders, and out-of-home care data sets.
 - The **investigated notifications data set** was created by extracting information from the notifications file in the source child protection data set. All notifications that were

investigated from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016 (including those where the investigation was in progress) were included.

- The **care and protection orders data set** was created by extracting information from the care and protection orders file in the source child protection data set.
- The **out-of-home care data set** was created by extracting information from the living arrangements file in the source child protection data set. As it is not possible to be in detention and in out-of-home care at the same time, a check was run to find and remove conflicting records (where a person has an out-of-home record that starts or ends while a detention record is active). Detention records that ended the same day as an out-of-home care record started, and out-of-home care records that started the same day as a detention record ended were not considered to conflict. This check revealed that between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 0.5% of out-of-home care records had a conflicting detention record, and these were removed from the analysis.

For more detail on the linkage method, see *Developing a linked data collection to report on the relationships between child protection and youth justice supervision* (AIHW 2015).

1.5 Report structure

There are 5 chapters in this report:

- Chapter 1 introduces the report, provides an overview of child protection and youth justice supervision, and describes the data and the method used to create the linked data set and resulting analysis data sets.
- Chapter 2 explores the demographic characteristics of young people involved in both child protection and youth justice supervision.
- Chapter 3 explores the demographic characteristics of young people involved in both child protection and youth justice supervision from the perspective of the child protection system, by reporting on young people in the child protection system who are also under youth justice supervision.
- Chapter 4 explores the demographic characteristics of young people involved in both child protection and youth justice supervision from the perspective of youth justice supervision, by reporting on young people under youth justice supervision who are also in the child protection system.
- Chapter 5 summarises the limitations of the current report, and outlines ways in which future reporting can be expanded and improved.

Supplementary tables referred to in this report (tables with a prefix of S) are available from www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/young-people-in-youth-justice-supervision-2015-16.

1.6 Notes

Percentages are rounded to 1 decimal place in text.

Rate ratios are calculated from unrounded percentages, as presented in the supplementary tables.

Figures (charts) present unrounded percentages.

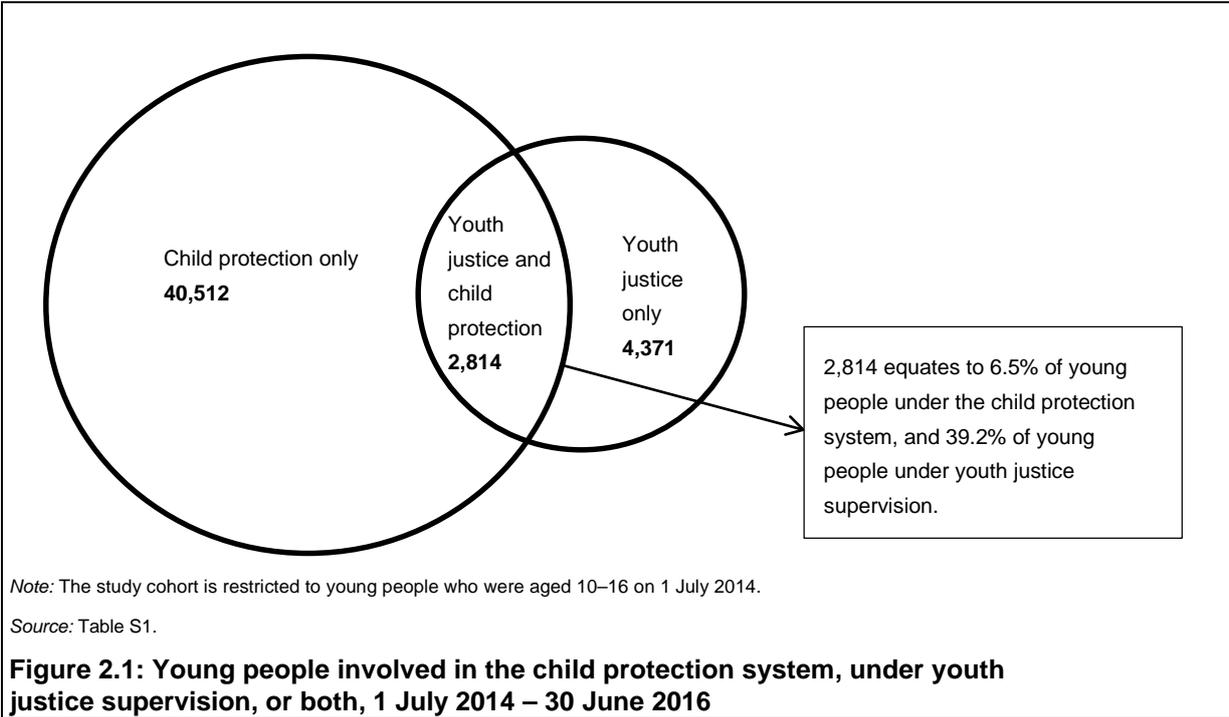
2 Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision

This chapter provides information on the number of young people involved in any part of the child protection system and under any type of youth justice supervision from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016. The data in this chapter relate to Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory, and the study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 47,697 young people aged 10–16 were involved in the child protection system, under youth justice supervision, or both. Of these, 5.9% (2,814 young people) were both involved in the child protection system, and under youth justice supervision.

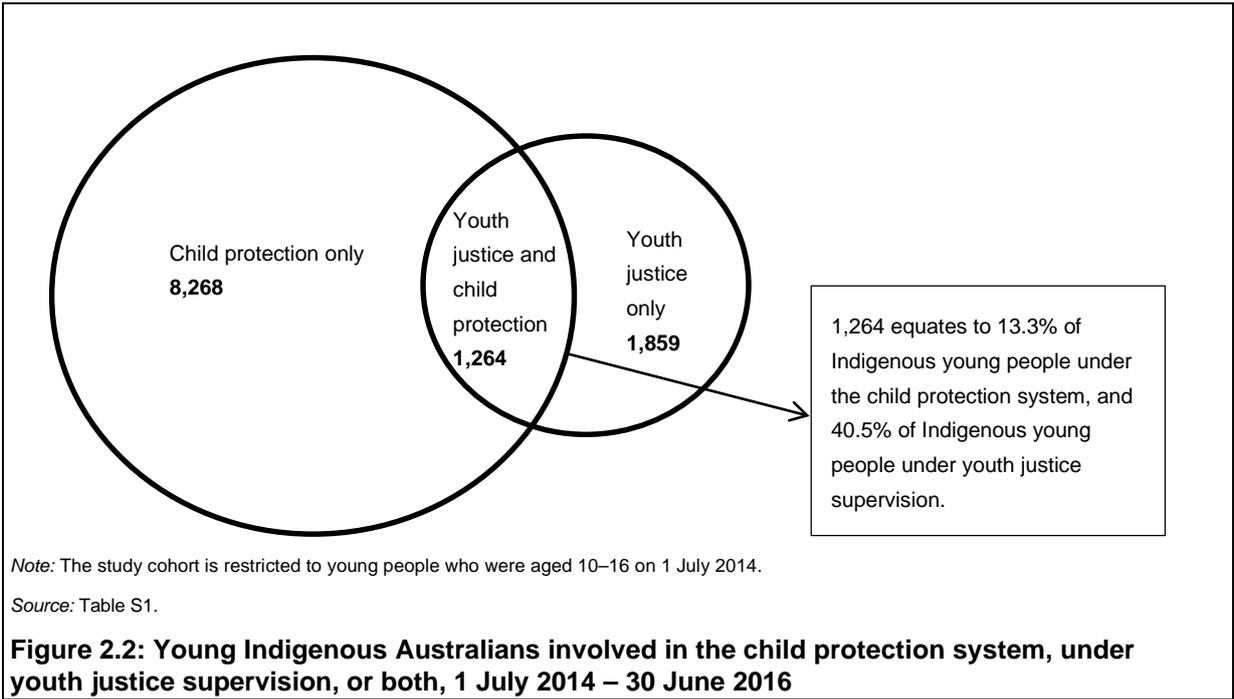
Of the 43,326 young people involved in the child protection system during the measurement period, only 6.5% also had some type of youth justice supervision. But of the 7,185 young people under youth justice supervision, 39.2% had been involved in the child protection system during the same period (Figure 2.1).

This suggests that being under youth justice supervision was relatively uncommon among those receiving child protection services, but it was fairly common for those who were under youth justice supervision to have had contact with the child protection system.



Young Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be involved in the child protection system, or to be under youth justice supervision during the measurement period. Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) young Indigenous Australians had contact with either child protection or youth justice supervision, compared with 1 in 30 young non-Indigenous Australians (3%) (Table S1).

Of the 11,391 young Indigenous Australians who were involved in the child protection system, or were under youth justice supervision between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 11% (1,264) had contact with both child protection and youth justice, compared with 4% of the 34,519 young non-Indigenous Australians (Figure 2.2; Table S1).



As these data relate to the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016, and include those who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014, the actual involvement in both sectors over time may be higher. A full analysis of the complete overlap between these sectors could be done once all child protection system and youth justice supervision data over a number of years are considered. This could be achieved once suitable longitudinal child protection data are available (see Chapter 5 ‘Future reporting’).

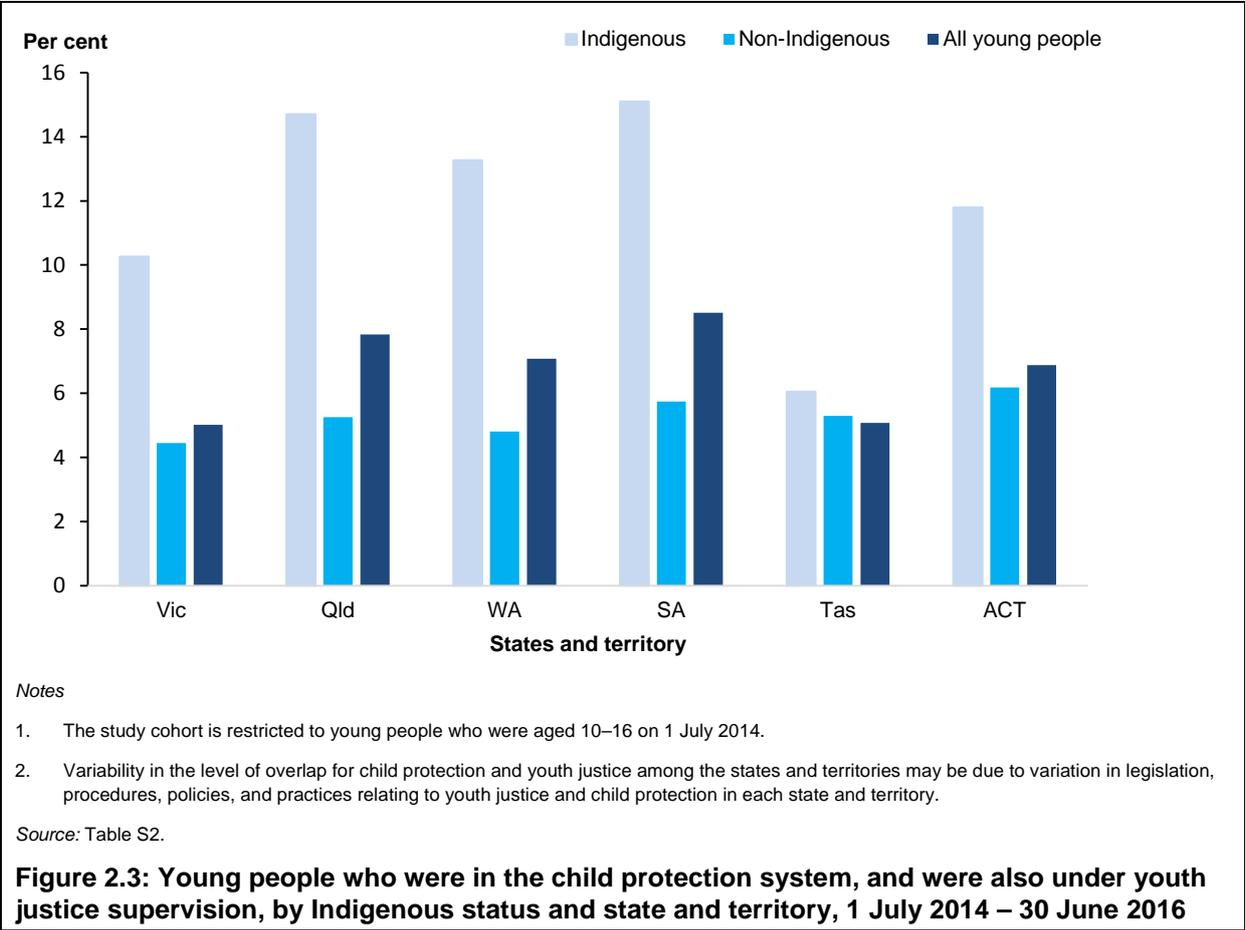
2.1 Overlap by state and territory

The level of overlap between youth justice supervision and child protection between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016 varied among the states and territories (figures 2.3 and 2.4). This may be due to variation in procedures, policies, and practices in each state and territory, relating to both youth justice, and child protection.

Young people who received a child protection service in South Australia were the most likely to have also been supervised by a youth justice agency (8.5%) (Table S2). Being under youth justice supervision was least likely for young people who received a child protection service in Victoria (5.0%).

Of those in the child protection system in each state and territory:

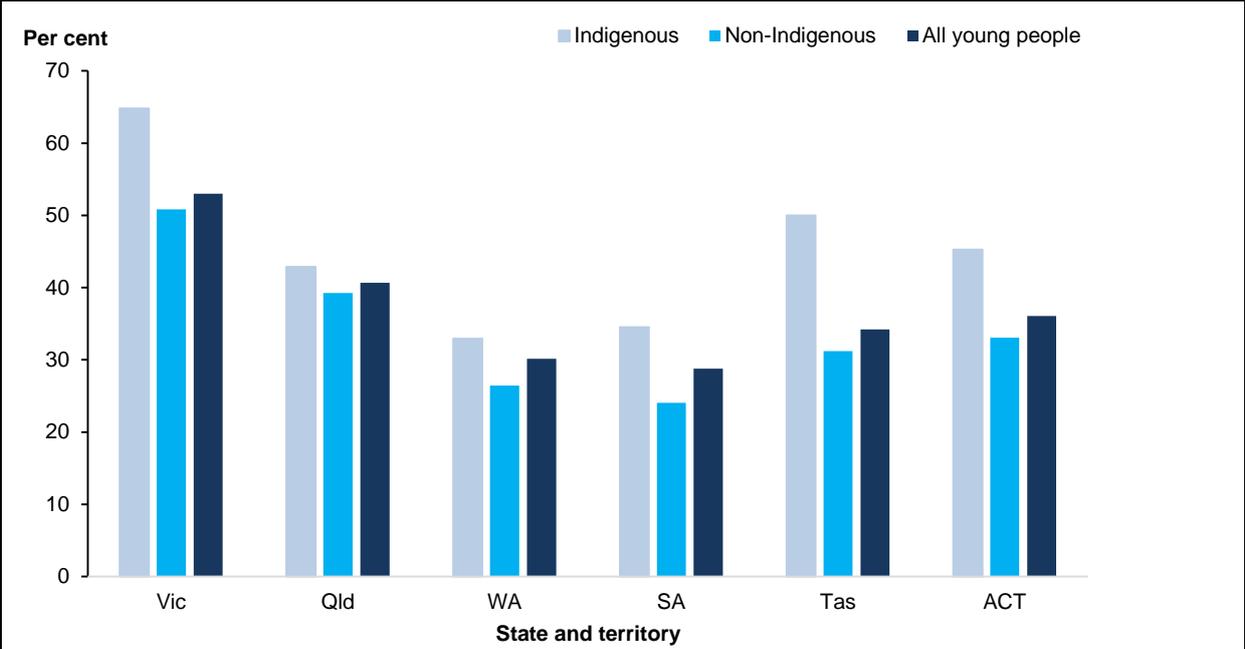
- young Indigenous Australians were more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be under youth justice supervision
- males were more likely than females to be under youth justice supervision (Table S2).



Young people under youth justice supervision in Victoria were the most likely to have also received a child protection service during the same 2-year period (53%) while those in South Australia were the least likely (29%) (Table S3).

Of those under youth justice supervision in each state and territory:

- young Indigenous Australians were more likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to have received child protection services
- females were more likely than males to have received a child protection service (Table S3).



Notes

1. The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.
2. Variability in the level of overlap for child protection and youth justice among the states and territories may be due to variation in legislation, procedures, policies, and practices relating to youth justice and child protection in each state and territory.
3. Indigenous proportions in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory have been calculated from denominators less than 50 and therefore should be interpreted with caution.

Source: Table S3.

Figure 2.4: Young people who were under youth justice supervision, and were also in the child protection system, by Indigenous status and state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016

3 Young people in the child protection system

This chapter looks at the demographic characteristics of young people involved in both child protection and youth justice supervision from the perspective of those in the child protection system. The data in this chapter relate only to Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016. The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

Key findings

Young people receiving child protection services at some time between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016 were 12 times as likely as the general population to be under youth justice supervision at some time during the same period.

Compared with 0.5% of the general population aged 10–16 under youth justice supervision:

- 5.7% of those who were the subject of an investigated notification were also under youth justice supervision
- 10.4% of those who were the subject of a care and protection order were also under youth justice supervision
- 10.2% of those who were in out-of-home care were also under youth justice supervision.

3.1 Overlap with youth justice

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 43,326 young people were involved in the child protection system, and 6.5% of those also had some type of youth justice supervision during the same period—12 times the rate of youth justice supervision for the general population (tables S4 and S14).

In the same period, young Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were almost 6 times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to be involved in the child protection system (Table S14).

Young Indigenous Australians who were involved with the protection system were almost 3 times as likely as their non-Indigenous Australians counterparts to also be under youth justice supervision (Table S4).

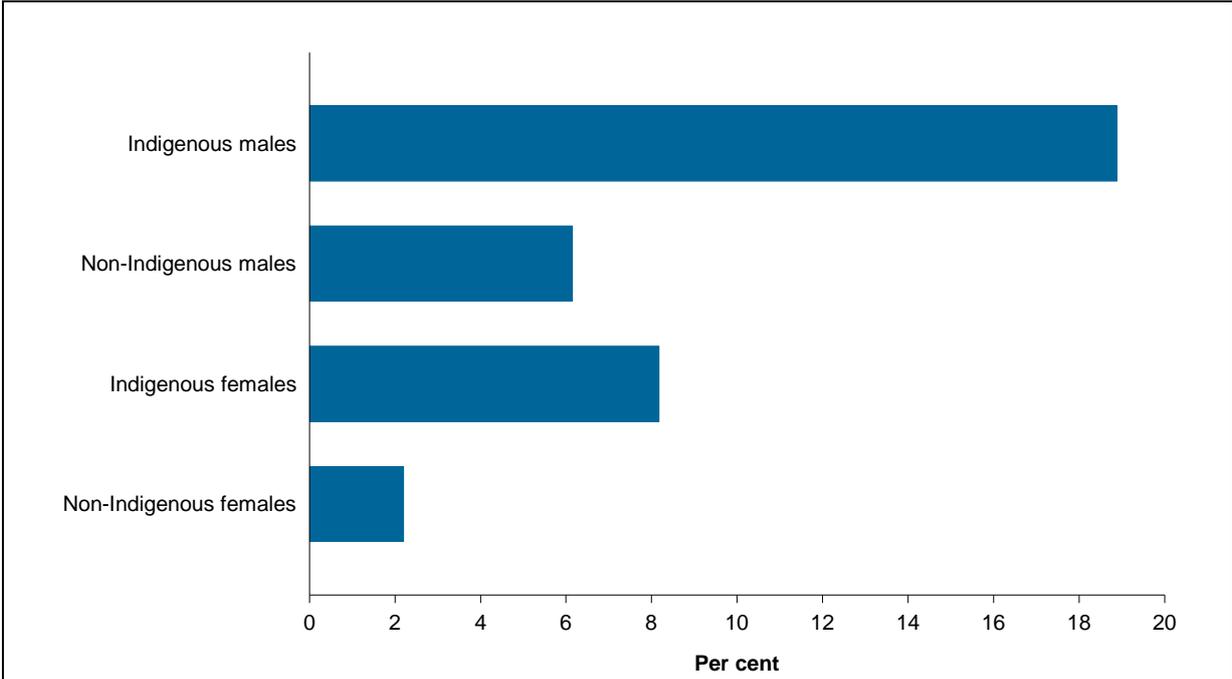
Overall, Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were 16 times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to have had contact with both the child protection system and youth justice supervision during the 2-year period (Table S1).

Males in the child protection system were more than twice as likely as females to have had youth justice supervision during the 2-year period (9.4% compared with 3.8%).

3.2 Investigated notifications

Of the 33,383 young people in the study cohort who were the subject of an investigated notification between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, 5.7% were also under youth justice supervision in the same 2-year period—11 times the rate of youth justice supervision for the general population (tables S5 and S14).

Youth justice supervision was most likely for young Indigenous Australians—18.9% of Indigenous males, and 8.2% of Indigenous females who were the subject of an investigated notification were also under youth justice supervision during the 2-year period, compared with 6.2% of non-Indigenous males, and 2.2% of non-Indigenous females (Figure 3.1).



Note: The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

Source: Table S5.

Figure 3.1: Young people who were the subject of investigated notifications, and were also under youth justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016

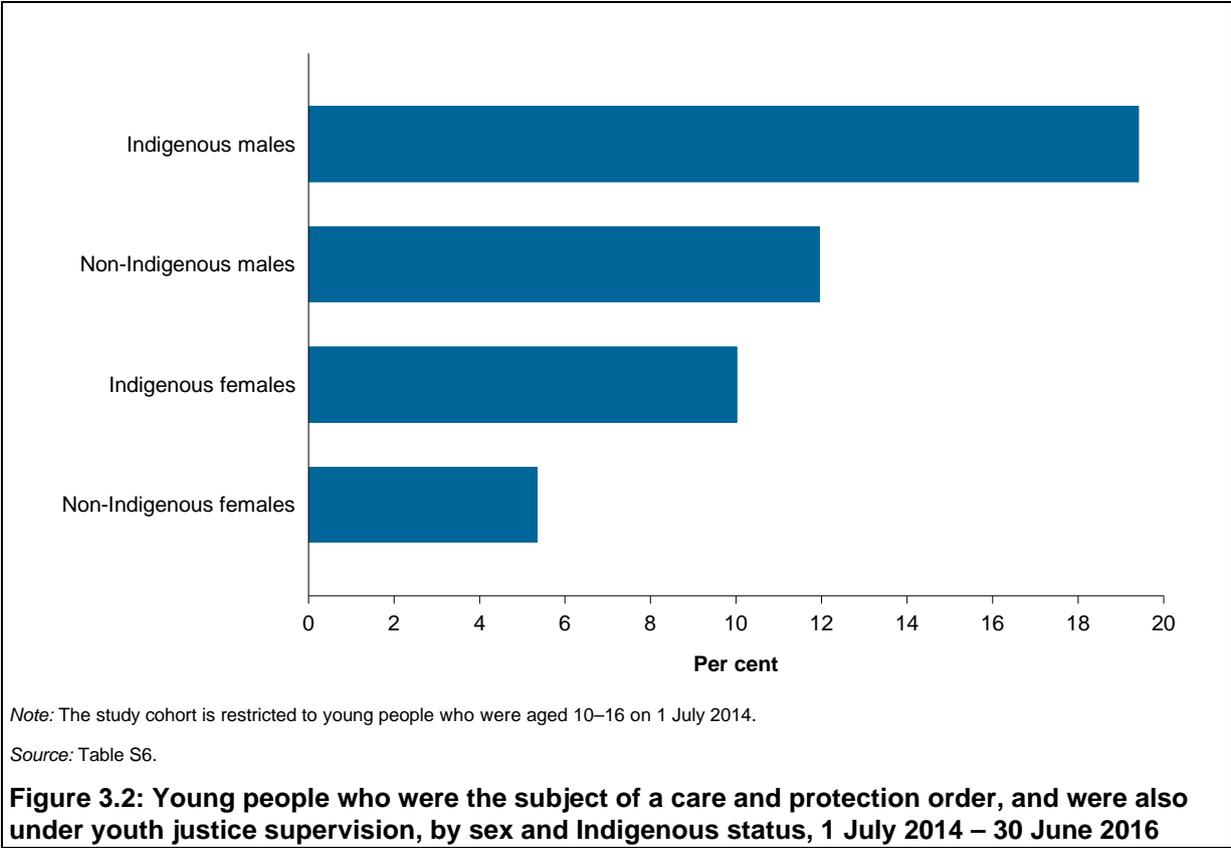
Further analysis showed differences between young people who had at least 1 notification substantiated through the period, and those whose investigated notifications were not substantiated. Of those with a substantiated notification, 8.7% were also under youth justice supervision in the same 2-year period, compared with 4.9% of those whose investigated notifications were not substantiated.

3.3 Care and protection orders

Youth justice supervision in the same 2-year period was nearly twice as likely for young people who were the subject of a care and protection order as for those who were the subject of an investigated notification.

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, of the 13,982 young people in the study cohort who were the subject of a care and protection order, 10.4% were also under youth justice supervision—19 times the rate of the general population of the same age (tables S6 and S14).

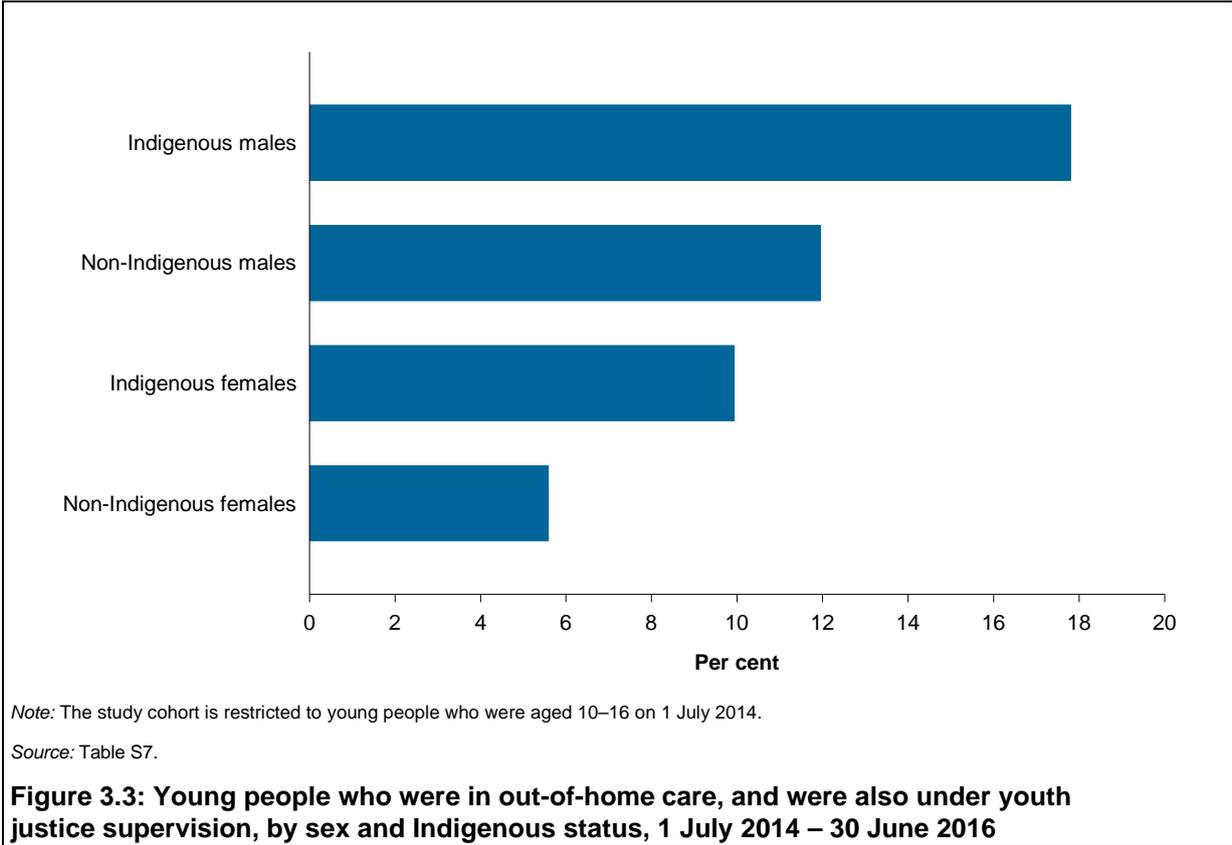
Youth justice supervision was most likely for Indigenous males, with 19.4% of those who were the subject of a care and protection order also being under youth justice supervision, compared with 12.0% of non-Indigenous males, 10.0% of Indigenous females, and 5.3% of non-Indigenous females (Figure 3.2).



3.4 Out-of-home care

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, of the 11,999 young people who were in out-of-home care, 10.2% were also under youth justice supervision—19 times the rate of the general population of the same age (tables S7 and S14).

Youth justice supervision was most likely for Indigenous males, with 17.8% of those in out-of-home care also under youth justice supervision, compared with 12.0% of non-Indigenous males, 9.9% of Indigenous females, and 5.6% of non-Indigenous females (Figure 3.3).



4 Young people under youth justice supervision

This chapter looks at the demographic characteristics of young people involved in both child protection and youth justice supervision from the perspective of those under youth justice supervision. The data in this chapter relate only to Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016. The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

Key findings

Young people aged 10–16 who were under youth justice supervision at some time between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016 were 12 times as likely as the general population to be receiving child protection services at some time during the same period.

Compared with 3.3% of the general population aged 10–16 in the child protection system:

- 39.2% of those under community-based supervision were also in the child protection system
- 43.4% of those in detention were also in the child protection system.

The younger people were at their first youth justice supervision, the more likely they were to also be in the child protection system.

4.1 Overlap with child protection

Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, of the 7,185 young people under youth justice supervision, 39.2% also had contact with the child protection system during the same 2-year period—12 times the rate for the general population (tables S8 and S14).

In the same period, young Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were 15 times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to be under youth justice supervision (Table S14).

Of those under youth justice supervision, Indigenous Australians were slightly more likely to be involved with the child protection system as their non-Indigenous counterparts (40.5% compared with 38.5%, respectively) (Table S8).

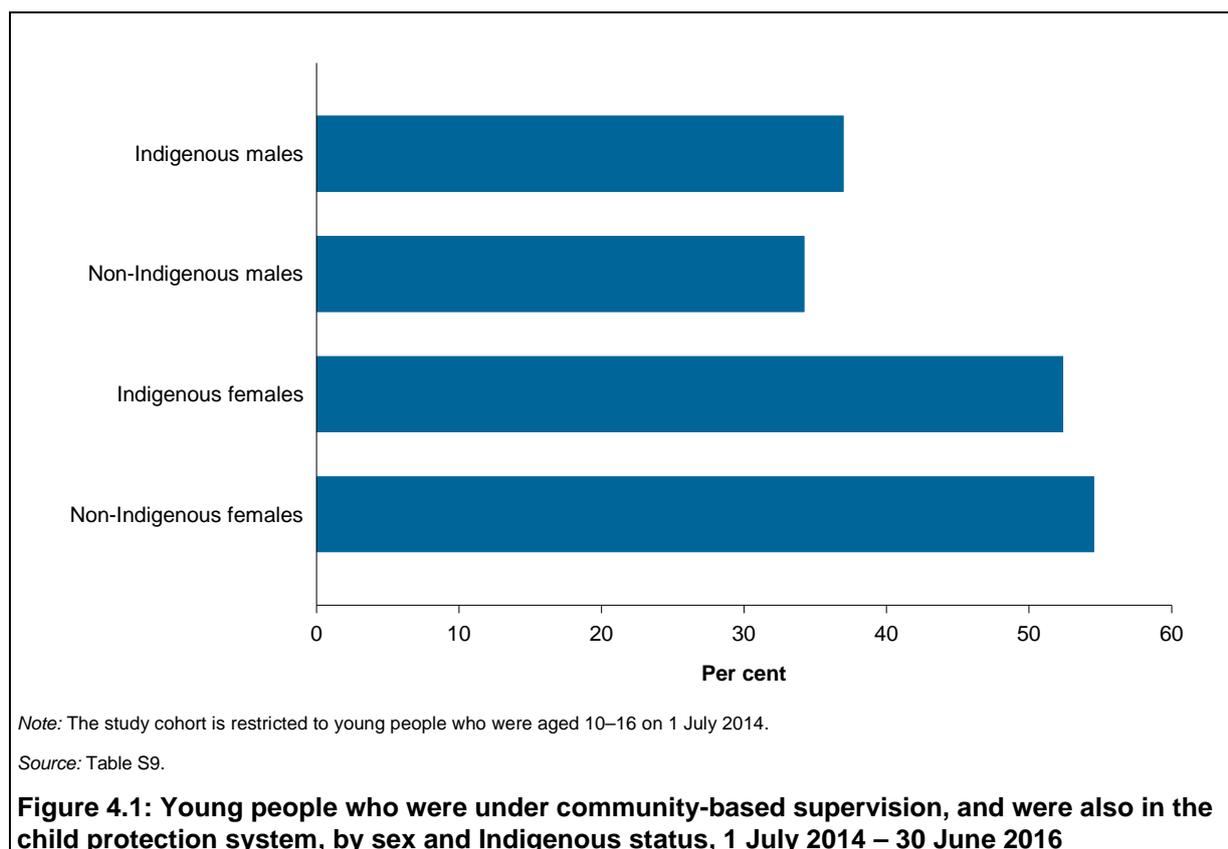
Overall, young Indigenous Australians aged 10–16 were 16 times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to have contact with both the child protection system and youth justice supervision during the 2-year period (Table S1).

Females under youth justice supervision were 1.5 times as likely as males to have been involved with the child protection system during the 2-year period (53.0% compared with 35.1%).

4.2 Community-based supervision

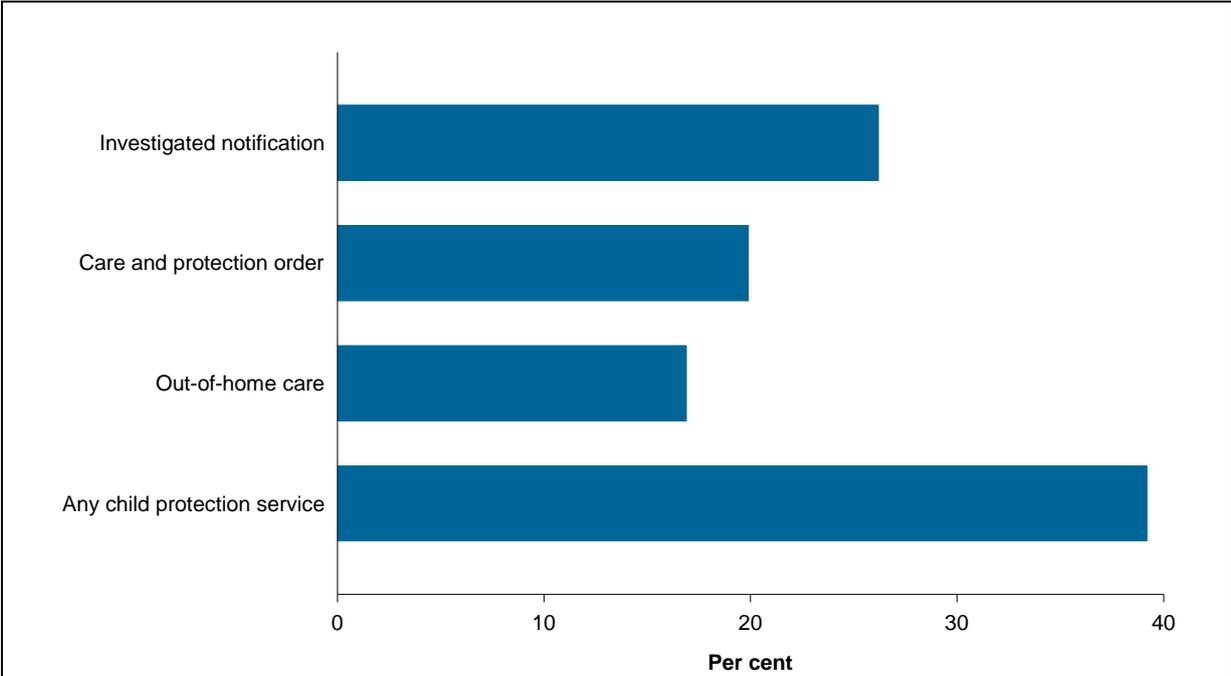
Of the 6,543 young people under youth justice community-based supervision, 2 in 5 (39.2%) were also in the child protection system between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016—12 times the rate for the general population (tables S9 and S14).

Of those under community-based supervision, young females were most likely to also be in the child protection system—52.4% of Indigenous females, and 54.5% of non-Indigenous females, compared with 37.0% of Indigenous males, and 34.2% of non-Indigenous males (Figure 4.1).



For those under community-based supervision from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016 who were also in the child protection system in the same period, the most common types of child protection service were investigated notifications (26.2% of those under youth justice community-based supervision), followed by care and protection orders (19.9%), and out-of-home care (16.9%) (Figure 4.2).

Non-Indigenous females were the most likely to also be the subject of a care and protection order (32%) or to be in out-of-home care (29%), but young Indigenous females were the most likely to be the subject of investigated notifications (37%) (Table S10).



Note: The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

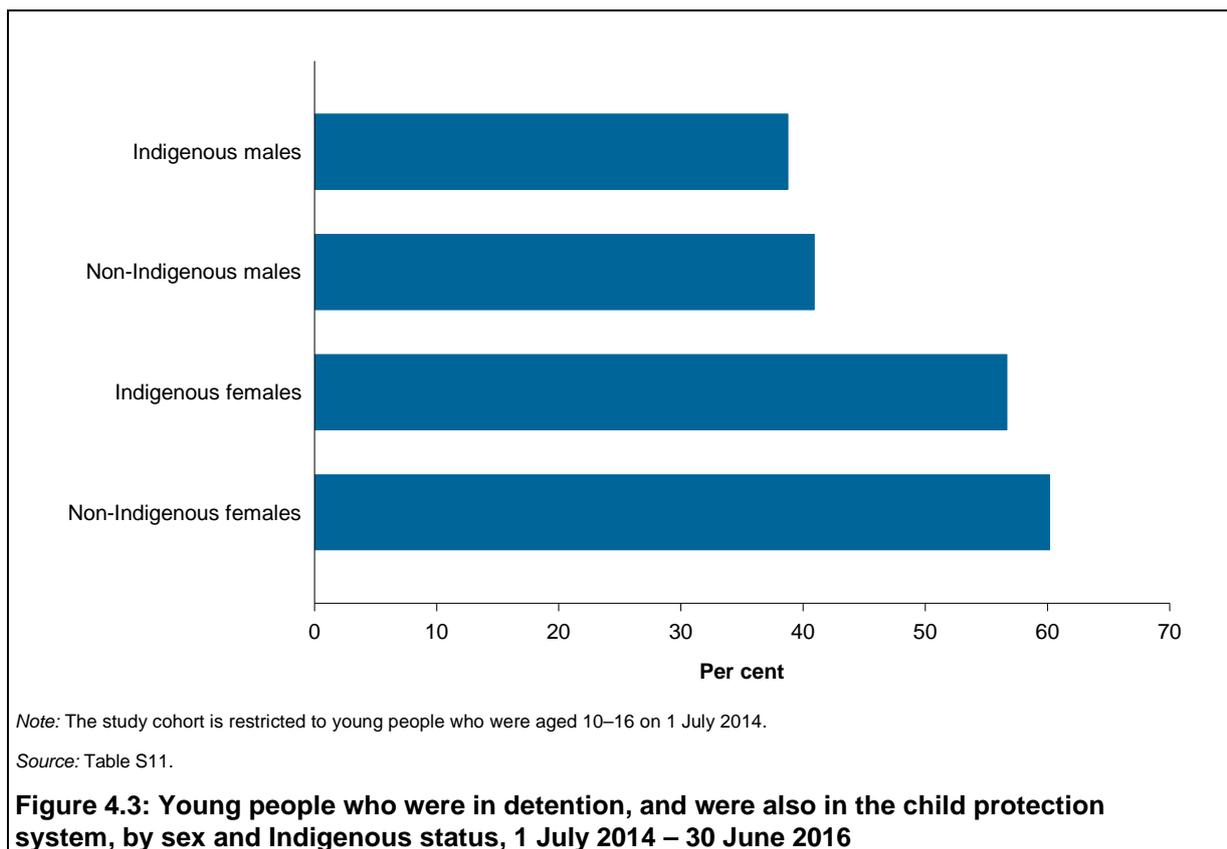
Source: Table S10.

Figure 4.2: Young people who were under community-based supervision, and were also in the child protection system, by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016

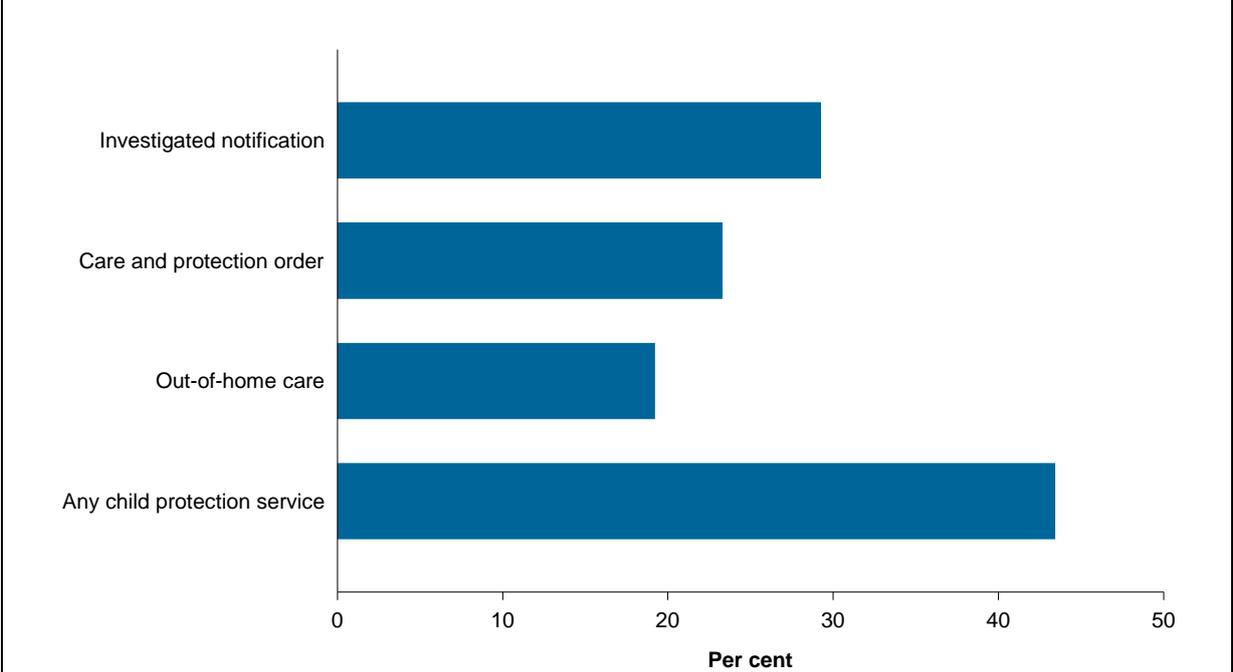
4.3 Detention

Of the 3,769 young people in detention between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, just over 2 in 5 (43.4%) were also in the child protection system at some time in the same period—13 times the rate for the general population (tables S11 and S14).

Of those in detention during the measurement period, young females were most likely to also be in the child protection system—56.7% of Indigenous females, and 60.2% of non-Indigenous females, compared with 38.7% of Indigenous males, and 40.9% of non-Indigenous males (Figure 4.3).



Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016, the most common types of child protection services for those in detention who were also in the child protection system were investigated notifications (29.2%), followed by care and protection orders (23.3%), and out-of-home care (19.2%) (Figure 4.4).



Note: The study cohort is restricted to young people who were aged 10–16 on 1 July 2014.

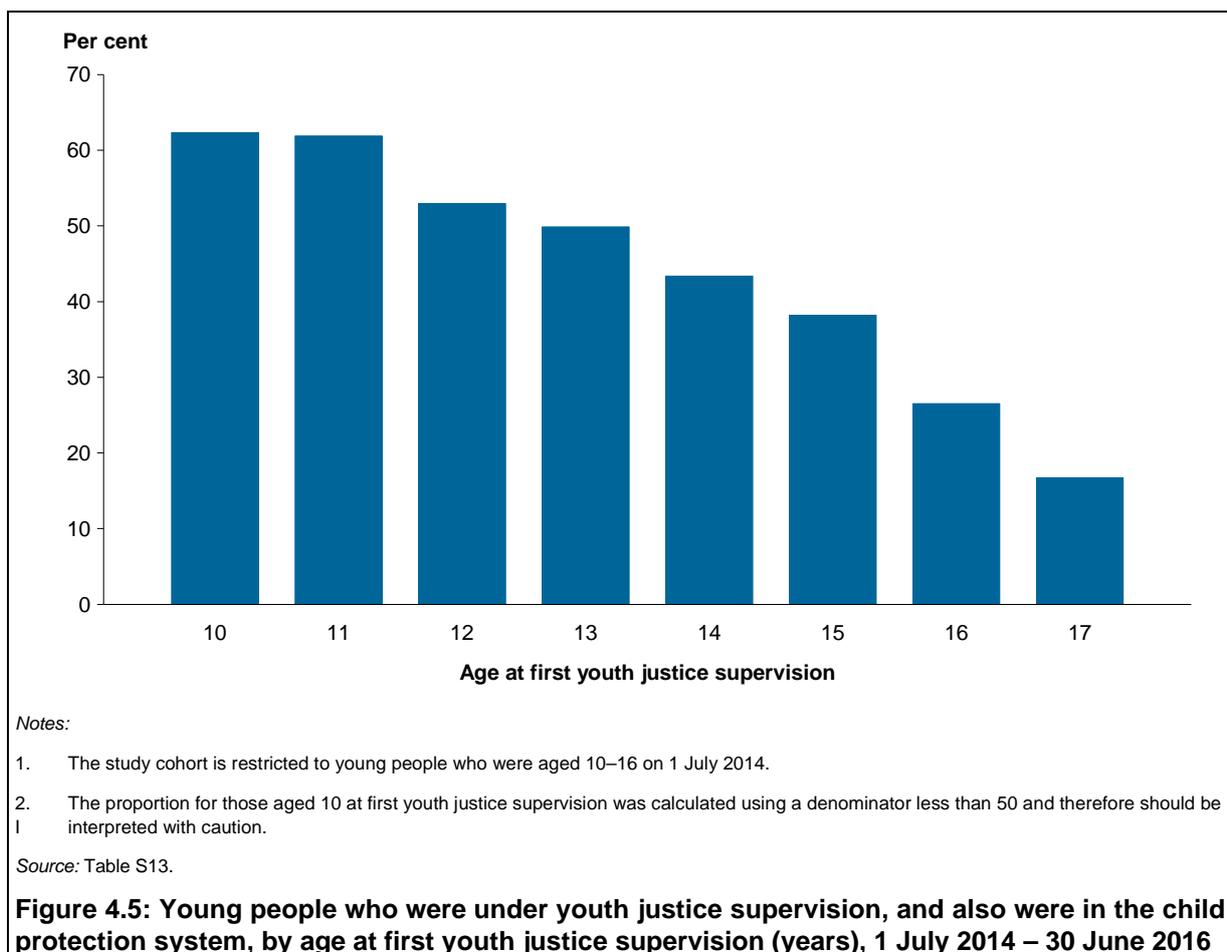
Source: Table S12.

Figure 4.4: Young people who were in detention, and were also in the child protection system, by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016

4.4 Age at first youth justice supervision

Those who were younger at their first youth justice supervision were more likely to also be in the child protection system between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016 than those who were older at their first youth justice supervision (which may have been before the 2-year period) (Figure 4.5).

Of those aged 10 at their first youth justice supervision 3 in 5 (62.3%) were also in the child protection system, compared with 16.7% of those aged 17.



5 Future reporting

This report expands on earlier AIHW reports that linked selected child protection data with the Juvenile Justice NMDS (AIHW 2012, 2015, 2016b). This showed that linking child protection and youth justice supervision data annually is both feasible and informative. This report updates these findings with results based on the 2015–16 data collections, and expands the analysis period to cover 2 years (from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016).

Results from the linked data collection will be improved in future years, as data become available for more states and territories, and as years of data accumulate. Including data from other health and welfare data collections will also be considered to supply more information on multiple service use among vulnerable children and young people.

5.1 Data availability for states and territories

Data limitations meant that analyses in this report were restricted to data for those who were in child protection or under youth justice supervision in only 6 Australian jurisdictions—Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory.

As data for more jurisdictions become available, there will be enough data to look at the links between child protection and youth justice supervision by demographic characteristics other than sex and Indigenous status (including age, remoteness, and socioeconomic status of usual residence), as well as the similarities and differences between the states and territories.

5.2 Longitudinal analyses of pathways and links

This report used available data to look at the characteristics of young people who were in both the child protection system and under youth justice supervision between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2016.

Although the period was expanded to cover a 2-year period, the findings of this report were largely consistent with the patterns presented in the previous reports using 2013–14 and 2014–15 data (AIHW 2016a, 2016b).

For example, single-year and 2-year period analyses showed that only a small proportion of young people in the child protection system had contact with youth justice supervision, but a substantial proportion of young people under youth justice supervision had contact with the child protection system. Similarly, single-year and 2-year period analyses showed that young people in detention were more likely than those supervised in the community to have had contact with the child protection system.

These data are a subset of the total number of children and young people who were involved in both systems at some point during childhood and adolescence, which prevents the analysis of pathways taken through the respective systems.

As years of data accumulate for both data collections, it will be possible to create a longitudinal data set that can be used to look at the links between different types of events, such as whether there is an association between the number and length of out-of-home care placements and being placed in unsentenced detention instead of unsentenced community-based supervision.

Over time, it will be also be possible to look at the pathways from early childhood, and the impact of childhood abuse or neglect on later involvement in the youth justice supervision system.

5.3 Other data collections

It is also possible to expand the linked child protection and youth justice supervision data collection to include information from other health and welfare data collections.

This would improve the value of the linked data collection, and yield valuable information on various issues, such as mental health conditions, acquired brain injury, alcohol and other drug problems, and homelessness.

Data collections with information on health and welfare issues that are suitable for linkage include the:

- Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services NMDS
- Disability Services NMDS
- National Prisoner Health Data Collection.

In 2016, the AIHW linked child protection, youth justice and specialist homelessness services data. The results from this linkage are published in *Vulnerable young people: interactions across homelessness, youth justice and child protection—1 July 2011 to 30 June 2015*.

References

AIFS (Australian Institute of Family Studies) 2016. Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect. Child Family Community Australia resource sheet, September 2017.

Melbourne: AIFS. Viewed 15 September 2017, <<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>>.

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2012. Children and young people at risk of social exclusion: links between homelessness, child protection and juvenile justice. Data linkage series no. 13. Cat. no. CSI 13. 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 2016a. Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision 2013–14. Data linkage series no. 21. Cat. no. CSI 22. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2016b. Young people in child protection and under youth justice supervision 2014–15. Data linkage series no. 22. Cat. no. CSI 24. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2017a. Child protection Australia 2015–16. Child welfare series no. 66. Cat. no. CWS 60. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2017b. Youth justice in Australia 2015–16. AIHW bulletin no. 139. Cat. no. AUS 211. Canberra: AIHW.

Cashmore J 2011. The link between child maltreatment and adolescent offending. Family Matters 2011, Edition 89. Melbourne: AIFS.

Currie J & Tekin E 2006. Does child abuse cause crime? National Bureau of Economic Research working paper no. 12171. Cambridge, MA: NBER.

Indig D, Vecchiato C, Haysom L, Beilby R, Carter J, Champion U et al. 2011. 2009 NSW Young People in Custody Health Survey: full report. Sydney: Justice Health and Juvenile Justice.

List of figures

Figure 2.1: Young people involved in the child protection system, under youth justice supervision, or both, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016.....	7
Figure 2.2: Young Indigenous Australians involved in the child protection system, under youth justice supervision, or both, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	8
Figure 2.3: Young people who were in the child protection system, and were also under youth justice supervision, by Indigenous status and state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	9
Figure 2.4: Young people who were under youth justice supervision, and were also in the child protection system, by Indigenous status and state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	10
Figure 3.1: Young people who were the subject of investigated notifications, and were also under youth justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	12
Figure 3.2: Young people who were the subject of a care and protection order, and were also under youth justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	13
Figure 3.3: Young people who were in out-of-home care, and were also under youth justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016.....	14
Figure 4.1: Young people who were under community-based supervision, and were also in the child protection system, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	16
Figure 4.2: Young people who were under community-based supervision, and were also in the child protection system, by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	17
Figure 4.3: Young people who were in detention, and were also in the child protection system, by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016.....	18
Figure 4.4: Young people who were in detention, and were also in the child protection system, by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	19
Figure 4.5: Young people who were under youth justice supervision, and also were in the child protection system, by age at first youth justice supervision (years), 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016	20

List of supplementary tables

- Table S1: Number of people aged 10–16 in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S2: Young people aged 10–16 in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision by sex, Indigenous status, and state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S3: Young people aged 10–16 under youth justice supervision who were also in the child protection system by sex, Indigenous status and state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S4: Young people 10–16 in the child protection system and who were under youth justice supervision by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S5: Young people aged 10–16 who were the subject of investigated notifications and were also under youth justice supervision by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S6: Young people aged 10–16 who were the subject of a care and protection order and also under youth justice supervision by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S7: Young people aged 10–16 who were in out-of-home care and also under youth justice supervision by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S8: Young people aged 10–16 who were under youth justice supervision and also in the child protection system by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S9: Young people aged 10–16 who were under community-based supervision and also in the child protection system by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S10: Young people aged 10–16 who were under community-based supervision and also in the child protection system by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S11: Young people aged 10–16 who were in detention and also in the child protection system by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S12: Young people aged 10–16 who were in detention and also in the child protection system by type of child protection service, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S13: Young people aged 10–16 who were youth justice supervision and also in the child protection system by age at first youth justice supervision, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016
- Table S14: Young people aged 10–16 who were under the child protection system, youth justice supervision by state and territory, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2016

Related publications

This report can be downloaded free of charge from
<www.aihw.gov.au/reports-statistics/health-welfare-services/youth-justice/overview>.

More information about children and young people in the child protection system in Australia is available from
<www.aihw.gov.au/reports-statistics/health-welfare-services/child-protection/overview>.

As well as the publications listed in the references, the following AIHW publications might also be of interest:

- AIHW 2014. Pathways through youth justice supervision. Juvenile justice series no. 15. Cat. no. JUV 40. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2015. Youth detention population in Australia 2015. AIHW bulletin no. 131. Cat. no. AUS 196. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2016. Pathways through youth justice supervision: further analyses. Juvenile justice series no. 19. Cat. no. JUV 75. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2016. Young people returning to sentenced youth justice supervision 2015–16. Juvenile justice series no. 20. Cat. no. JUV 84. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2016. Vulnerable young people: interactions across homelessness, youth justice and child protection: 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2015. Cat. no. HOU 279. Canberra: AIHW.



This report presents information on people aged 10–16 who were in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016. Young people under youth justice supervision were 12 times as likely as the general population to be in the child protection system. Indigenous Australians were 16 times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterpart to be both in the child protection system and under youth justice supervision.

aihw.gov.au



Stronger evidence,
better decisions,
improved health and welfare

