



**Australian Government**

**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**

# **Youth detention population in Australia 2014**

JUVENILE JUSTICE SERIES NO. 16





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

JUVENILE JUSTICE SERIES

Number 16

# **Youth detention population in Australia**

**2014**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
Canberra

Cat. no. JUV 53

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- Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, South Australia
- Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania
- Community Services Directorate, Australian Capital Territory
- Department of Correctional Services, Northern Territory.

# Abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Aust	Australia
Dec	December quarter (October to December)
JJ NMDS	Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set
Jun	June quarter (April to June)
Mar	March quarter (January to March)
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
Sep	September quarter (July to September)
Tas	Tasmania
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

# Symbols

– nil or rounded to zero

# Notes

All numbers in text are calculated from unrounded numbers (see Supplementary tables).

# Summary

This report looks at the numbers and rates of young people who were in youth detention in Australia due to their involvement or alleged involvement in crime. It focuses on trends over the 4-year period from the June quarter 2010 to the June quarter 2014.

## **Fewer than 1,000 young people in detention on an average night**

In the June quarter 2014, 929 young people were in youth detention on an average night. The vast majority (91%) were male. About half (52%) were unsentenced – that is, they were awaiting the outcome of their court matter or sentencing – and the remainder were serving a sentence.

About three-quarters (79%) of those in detention were aged 10–17. This equates to 3.3 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in the Australian population, or about 1 in every 3,000 in that age group. The other detainees were aged 18 or older.

## **Numbers and rates have decreased**

Over the 4-year period, there was an overall decrease in the national youth detention population, from 1,053 to 929 young people in detention on an average night. When only those aged 10–17 are considered, there was a small but steady downward trend in the overall number and rate – from 833 to 738 young people, and from 3.7 to 3.3 young people per 10,000 on an average night.

Between the June quarter 2013 and the June quarter 2014, numbers and rates of young people in detention were relatively stable – ranging between 929 and 948 young people, and between 3.1 and 3.3 people aged 10–17 per 10,000 on an average night each quarter.

## **Decrease in sentenced detention rate**

The decrease in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention was mainly due to a decrease in the sentenced detention rate. While the rate of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention remained relatively stable (ranging between 1.8 and 2.2 per 10,000 each quarter), the rate of sentenced detention decreased over the period (from 1.6 to 1.3 per 10,000). The sentenced detention rate was consistently lower during 2013 and early 2014 (1.2 to 1.3 per 10,000) than earlier in the 4-year period (1.3 to 1.7 per 10,000).

## **Half of those in detention are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**

About half (52%) of young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Over the 4-year period, the over-representation of Indigenous young people in detention increased from 22 to 25 times the rate of non-Indigenous young people, mainly due to a decrease in the rate of non-Indigenous young people in detention.

## **Trends among the states and territories vary**

Trends in the youth detention population varied among the states and territories. Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night increased in Queensland, and decreased in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.



# 1 Introduction

In Australia, young people who are charged with or proven guilty of criminal offences may be supervised by state and territory youth justice agencies, either in the community or in detention. This report is part of an annual series that looks at the numbers and rates of young people in secure detention facilities in Australia, focusing on recent trends. The report and accompanying supplementary tables (those with a prefix 'S') are available from [www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/).

More information about the youth justice system is available from [www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/).

## 1.1 Key principles in youth detention

Two main principles upon which the Australian youth justice system is based, and which are incorporated in state and territory legislation, are that young people should be detained:

- only as a last resort (with the exception of Queensland which revised its legislation in March 2014 to remove this principle)
- for the shortest appropriate period (Chrzanowski & Wallis 2011).

This is consistent with international guidelines, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Standard minimum rules for the administration of juvenile justice (United Nations 1985, 1989).

Diverting young people from further involvement in the system is fundamental to applying these principles and may take various forms, including police warnings, referral to services such as drug and alcohol treatment, and youth justice conferencing. Various alternatives to detention are also available, including transfer to specialist courts or programs, and supervised or unsupervised community orders.

Most young people under supervision in Australia are supervised in the community. Only 15% of those under supervision on an average day in 2012–13 were in detention (including estimates for Western Australia and the Northern Territory, as standard data were not provided; AIHW 2014). But a higher proportion (42%) were in detention at some time during the year.

## 1.2 Youth detention age limits

In Australia, children under the age of 10 cannot be charged with a criminal offence. Separate justice systems operate for young people and adults, each under specific legislation. The upper age limit in the youth justice system is 17 in all states and territories except Queensland, where the age limit is 16. This refers to the age at which the offence was committed or allegedly committed. Those aged 18 or older (17 or older in Queensland) are dealt with under the criminal legislation relating to adults.

Despite this, in 2012–13, about 16% of young people under supervision on an average day were aged 18 or older (AIHW 2014). Reasons for this include the following:

- They were apprehended for an offence that was committed or allegedly committed when they were aged 17 or younger.

- Young people may continue to be supervised by the youth justice system once they turn 18 (or they may be transferred to the adult correctional system).
- In some states and territories, youth justice agencies may supervise young people aged 18 or older due to their vulnerability or immaturity.
- Young people in Victoria aged 18–20 may be sentenced to detention in a youth facility rather than an adult prison if the court deems this appropriate (this is known as the ‘dual track’ sentencing system).

In this report, the term ‘young people’ is used to refer to people of any age who are under supervision by a youth justice agency as a result of having committed or allegedly committed offences. Numbers refer to young people of all ages unless otherwise specified.

Population rates allow for the comparison of different groups while taking into account different population sizes. In this report, rates are calculated only for young people aged 10–17 because of the differences in age limits among the states and territories. More information about the calculation of age is in Appendix A.

### 1.3 Legal status

Young people may be detained in secure detention facilities, administered and operated by state and territory youth justice agencies, while they are unsentenced – that is, while awaiting the outcome of their court matter, or while awaiting sentencing after being found or pleading guilty. They may also be in sentenced detention when they have been proven guilty in court and have received a legal order to serve a period of detention.

Most young people in unsentenced detention have been remanded in custody by a court until their next court appearance. In 2012–13, 97% of young people in unsentenced detention on an average day were on remand (excluding young people in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, as estimates were not available; AIHW 2014). The remainder were in police-referred detention – that is, they were detained before their first court appearance (this is possible in most states and territories).

Trends in the numbers and rates of young people in unsentenced and sentenced detention are looked at throughout this report. Young people who are both sentenced and unsentenced at the same time are counted as sentenced.

### 1.4 States and territories

In Australia, youth justice is the responsibility of state and territory governments. Variations among the states and territories in the numbers and rates of young people in detention can reflect differences in youth justice legislation, policy and practice. This includes differences in police practices, the range of legal orders available and the options for diversion. More broadly, levels of youth involvement in crime are also affected by policy and practice in various areas, including child protection, housing and homelessness, education, employment, family and community services, and health services.

More information about the youth justice systems, policies and programs in the states and territories is available from <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/states-territories/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/states-territories/)>.

## 1.5 Detention data

This report uses the data for the period from April 2010 to June 2013 from the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) for all states and territories, except Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Additional data (supplied by each jurisdiction) on the number of young people in detention at midnight at the end of each month were used for the period from July 2013 to June 2014. Details about the data and methods used in this report, including a summary of the data available in the supplementary tables, are provided in Appendix A. A data quality statement for the JJ NMDS 2012–13 is provided in Appendix B, and metadata specifications are available at <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/470084>.

Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data after June 2008, so end-of-month data were used for these jurisdictions for the period covered by this report.

The report looks at data on the number of young people in detention on an average night in each quarter over the 4-year period from June 2010 to June 2014. Each quarter covers 3 months of the year and is identified by reference to the last month in the quarter. For example, the March quarter includes January, February and March.

In JJ NMDS data, the average nightly population is calculated based on the number of young people in detention each night during the quarter. In end-of-month data, it is calculated by averaging the number in detention on the last night of each month in the quarter.

### Trends in the detention population

This report focuses on trends over the 4-year period from the June quarter 2010 to the June quarter 2014. The number of young people in detention on an average night is relatively small, and the amount of random variation from quarter to quarter is more noticeable when numbers are small. This might affect the appearance and interpretation of trends, which should therefore be interpreted with caution, particularly where they relate to small populations. In recognition of this, percentage changes are not calculated for populations of fewer than 100 young people.

In this report, comparisons are made between the June quarter in 2014 and the June quarter 1 year earlier (2013) and 4 years earlier (2010). The same quarters are compared across years to minimise the effect of seasonal variations. The report aims to highlight the overall or net change over the 1-year and 4-year periods, although there might be fluctuations between those quarters. More detailed information about the population in each quarter is available in the supplementary tables at [www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/).

## 2 Recent trends in detention

This chapter summarises trends in youth detention over the 4 years to the June quarter 2014 (see Chapter 5 for a summary table for the June quarters 2010, 2013 and 2014).

### 2.1 Key points

#### **On an average night in the June quarter 2014:**

- 929 young people were in detention
- more than three-quarters (79%) of young people in detention were aged 10–17, and the remainder were aged 18 or older
- there were 3.3 young people aged 10–17 in detention per 10,000 in the population (about 1 in every 3,000 young people of that age group)
- about half (52%) of young people in detention were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- most young people in detention (91%) were male
- about half (52%) of young people in detention were unsentenced, and the rest were serving a sentence.

#### **Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014):**

- the number of young people in detention decreased from 1,053 to 929
- the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night decreased slightly (from 3.7 to 3.3 per 10,000)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation among young people in detention increased from 22 to 25 times the non-Indigenous rate, mainly due to a decrease in the non-Indigenous rate
- rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention increased in Queensland, and decreased in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

#### **Over the 1-year period (June quarter 2013 to June quarter 2014):**

- numbers of young people in detention were relatively stable (ranging between 929 and 948 on an average night each quarter)
- between 3.1 and 3.3 people aged 10–17 per 10,000 were in detention each quarter
- the level of Indigenous over-representation changed little overall, remaining between 25 and 26 times the non-Indigenous rate each quarter
- rates of those aged 10–17 in detention increased overall in Queensland and South Australia, and decreased in Tasmania and Western Australia.

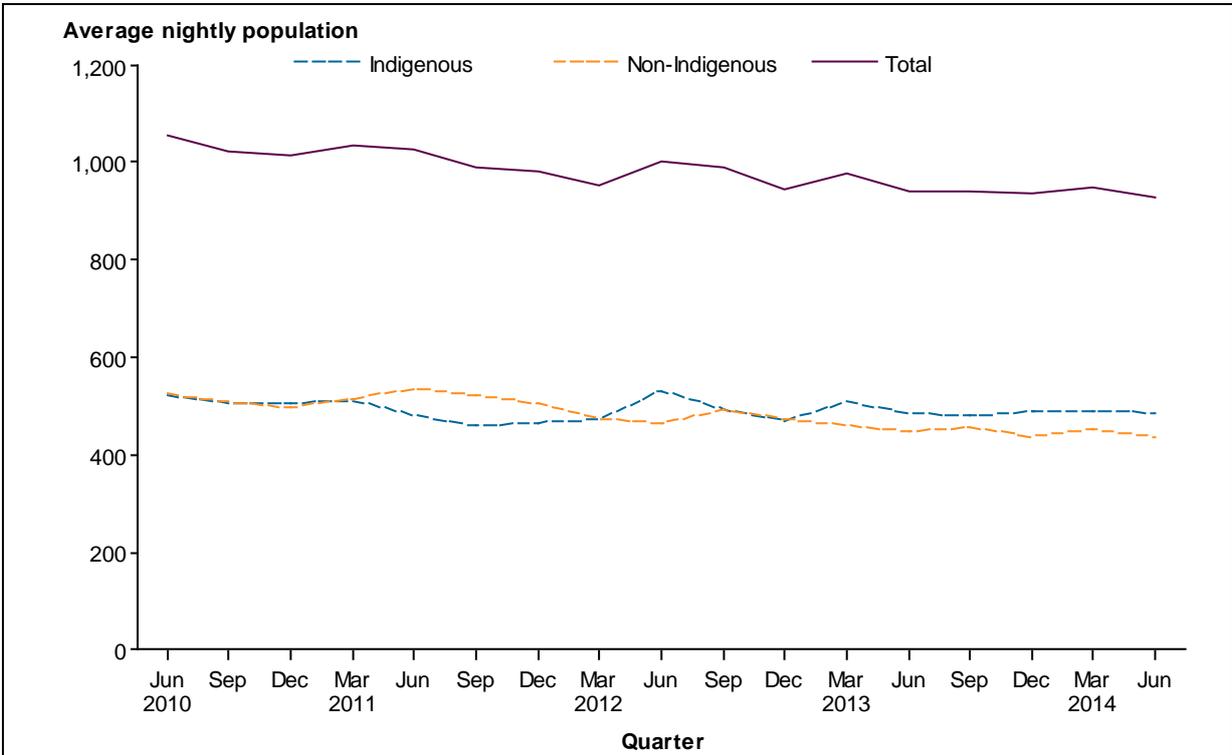
## 2.2 Number in detention

Nationally, 929 young people were in youth detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 2.1; Table 5.2).

The number of young people in detention decreased over the 4-year period, from 1,053 young people in the June quarter 2010 to 929 in the June quarter 2014.

### Indigenous status, age and sex

On an average night, the numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people in detention each quarter remained similar throughout the 4-year period (Figure 2.1). In the June quarter 2014, about half (52%) of those in detention on an average night were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

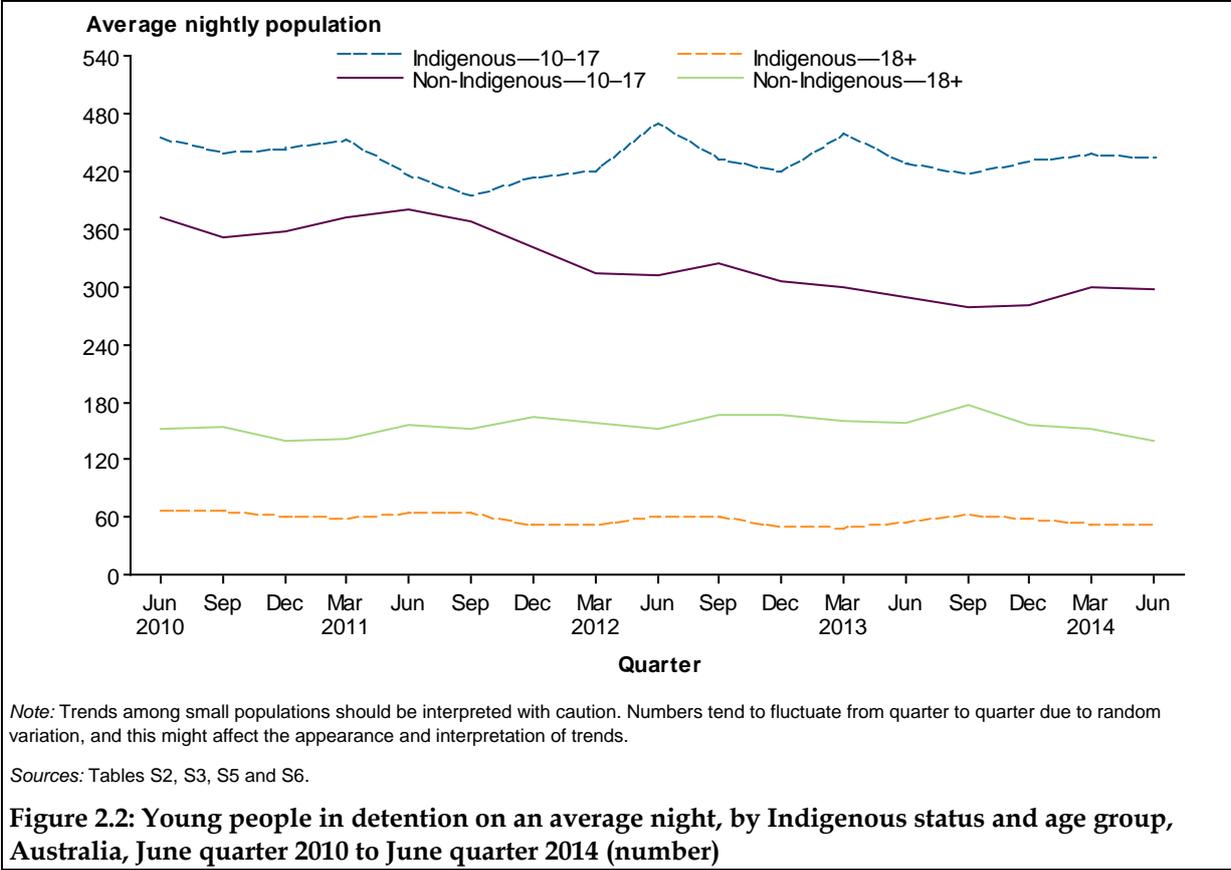


Sources: Tables S1, S4 and S7.

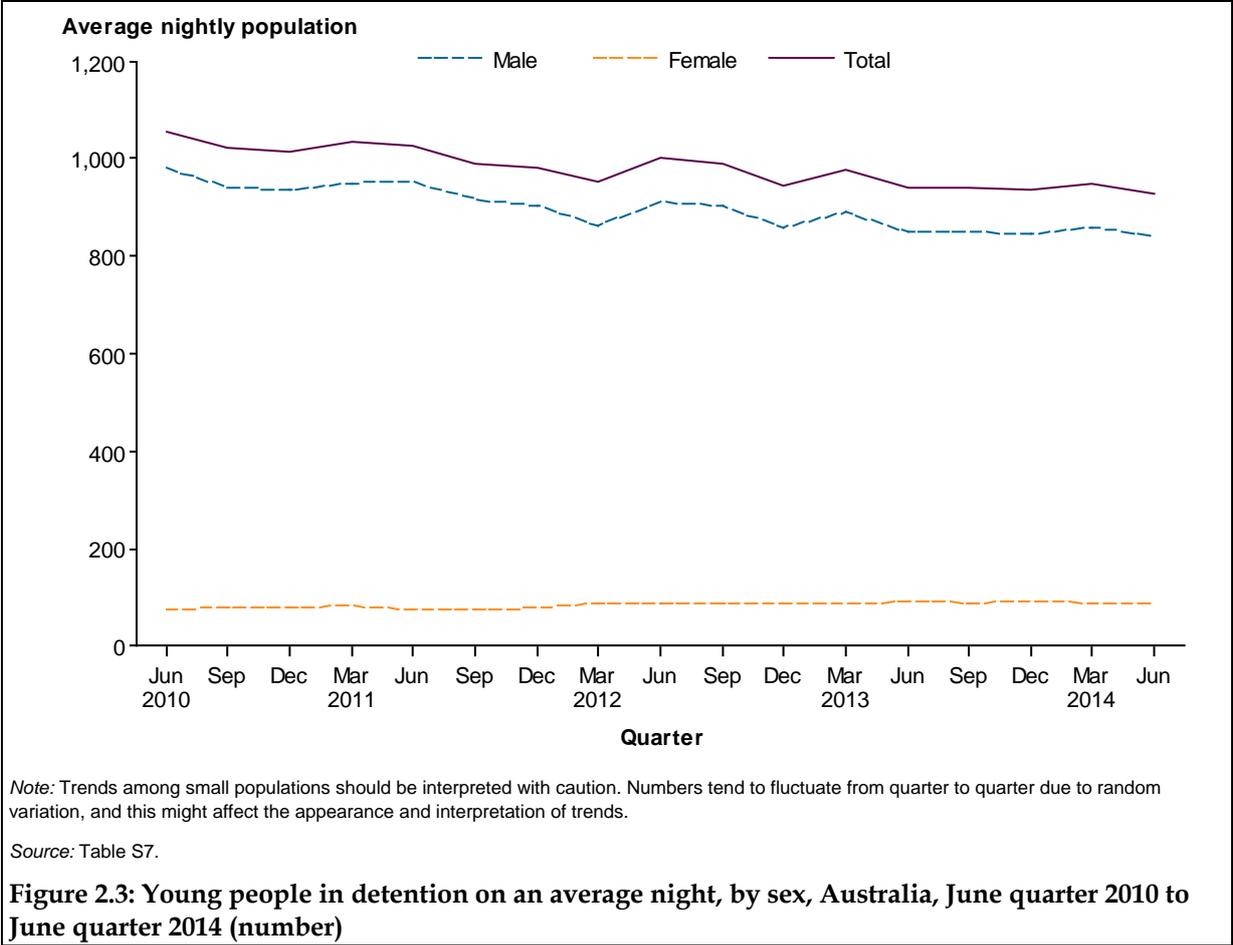
**Figure 2.1: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status, Australia, June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014 (number)**

Most young people (between 74% and 80%) in detention on an average night were aged 10–17, and the remainder were aged 18 or older (tables S7, S8 and S9; see Chapter 1 for more information about age limits in the youth justice system). In the June quarter 2014, 79% were aged 10–17.

A higher proportion of Indigenous young people in detention were aged 10–17 than non-Indigenous young people (89% compared with 68%, respectively, in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 2.2 and tables S1, S2, S4 and S5). Each quarter, about 9 in 10 (86% to 90%) Indigenous young people in detention were aged 10–17, compared with 61% to 72% of non-Indigenous young people.



About 9 in 10 (91%) young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 were male (841 males and 89 females) (Figure 2.3). The vast majority (between 90% and 93%) of those in detention in all quarters throughout the 4-year period were male.



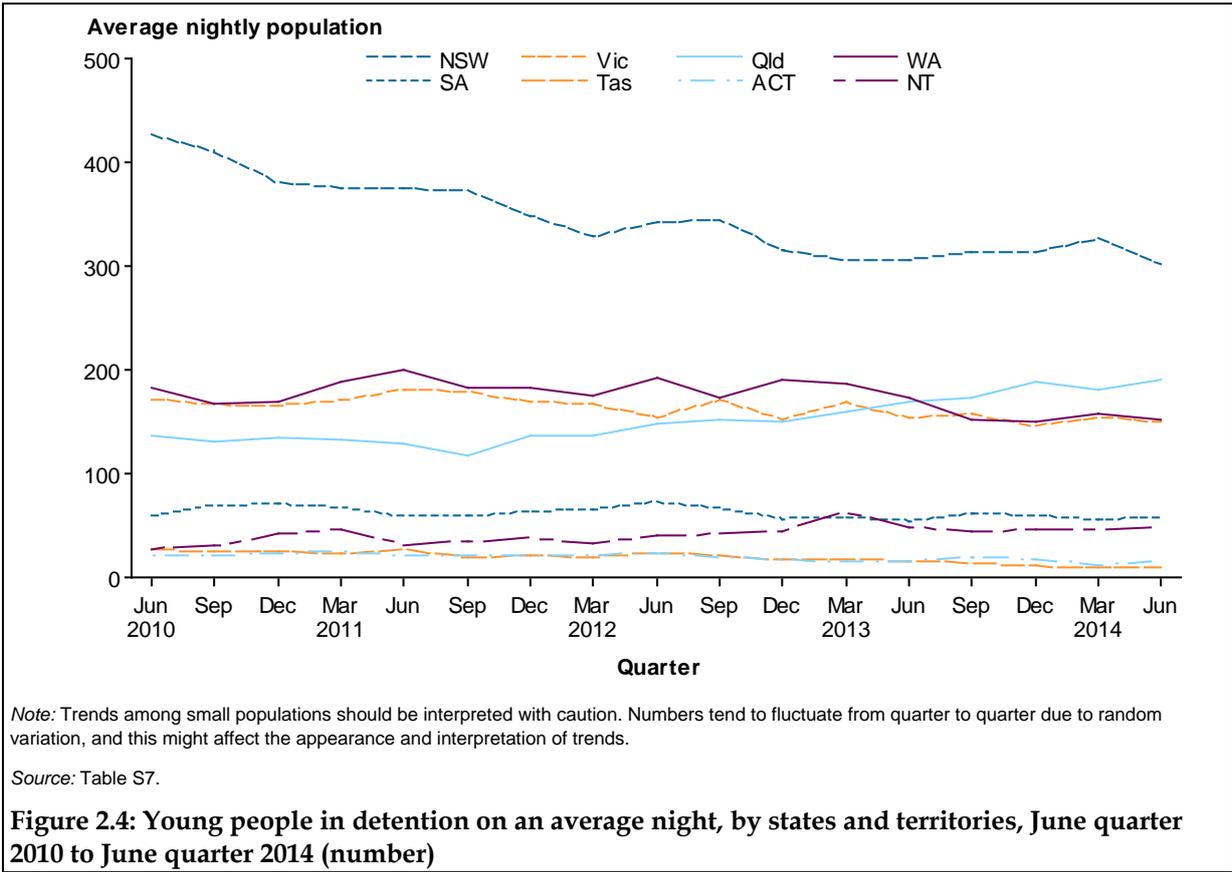
### States and territories

New South Wales had the largest number of young people in detention throughout the 4-year period, followed by Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland (Figure 2.4; Table 5.2). This generally reflects the larger population in these states when compared with the remaining states and territories.

There were notably different trends among the states and territories. Between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, the number of young people in detention on an average night decreased in New South Wales (from 427 to 302), Victoria (from 172 to 150) and Tasmania (from 27 to 9). The population increased in Queensland (from 136 to 191) and the Northern Territory (from 28 to 49), including a steady rise from the second half of 2012 onwards in both jurisdictions. There were slight decreases or little overall change in the other states and territories.

Over 2013–14, the number of young people in detention on an average night also remained relatively stable at the national level. The population increased in Queensland (from 169 to 191), and fluctuated or decreased in the other states and territories.

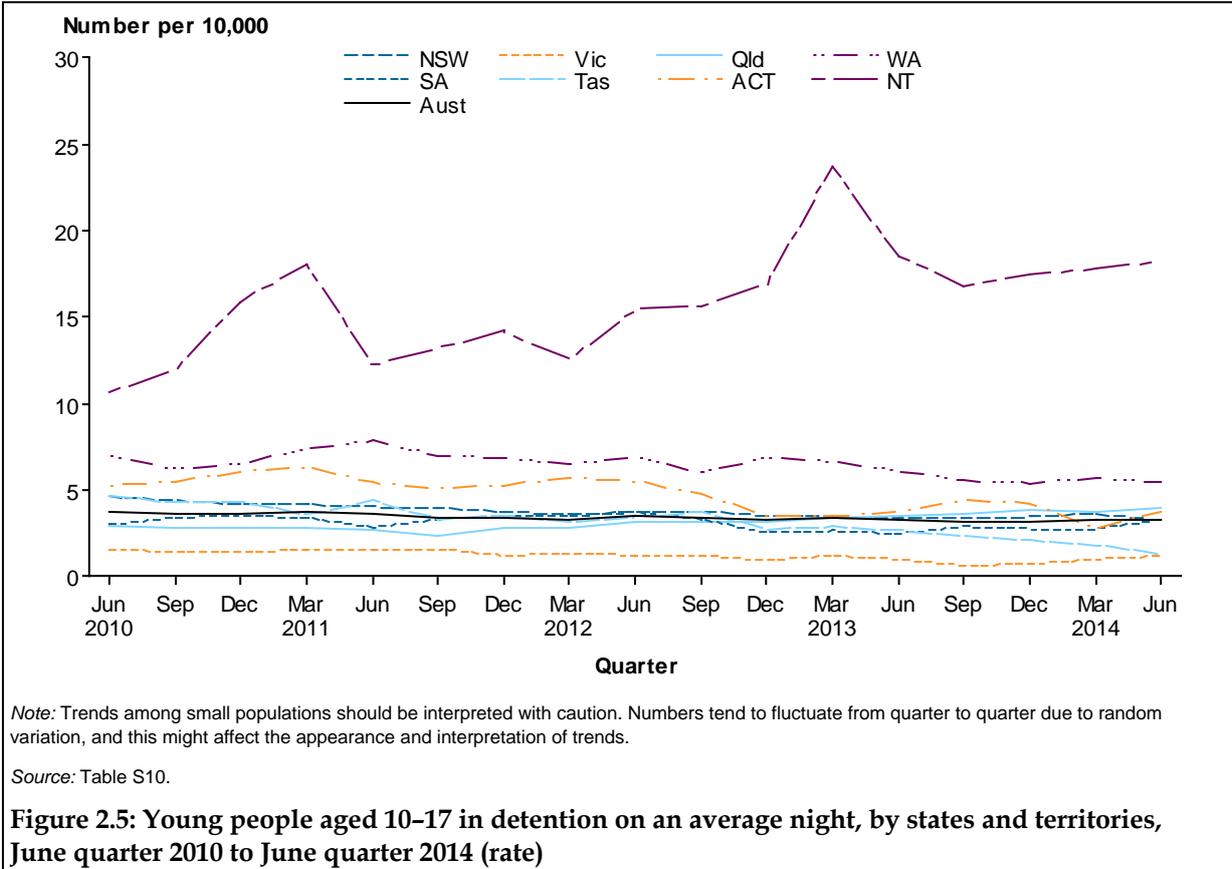
More detailed information about trends in the detention population in each state and territory is provided in Chapter 5.



### 2.3 Rate of detention

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, there were 3.3 young people aged 10–17 in detention per 10,000 in the population (about 1 in every 3,000 young people of that age group) (Figure 2.5; Table 5.2). This was a slight decrease from the rate in the June quarter 4 years earlier (3.7 per 10,000, or about 1 in every 2,700 young people). Lower rates occurred from early 2013 onwards. Over the 4 years, the rate was highest in the June quarter 2010 and March quarter 2011 (3.7 per 10,000), and lowest in the September quarter 2013 (3.1 per 10,000).

Over 2013–14, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention ranged between 3.1 and 3.3 per 10,000.



### States and territories

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention was lowest in Victoria (1.2 per 10,000, or about 1 in 8,500 young people) and highest in the Northern Territory (18.2 per 10,000, or about 1 in 550 young people) (Figure 2.5; Table 5.2).

Rates of detention fluctuated from quarter to quarter throughout the 4-year period, particularly among the smaller jurisdictions (Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory) due to the small numbers in detention. Despite these fluctuations some clear patterns were evident – Victoria consistently had the lowest rate on an average night, while Western Australia and the Northern Territory had the highest.

Over the 4 years, the rate of detention increased in Queensland, and decreased in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. The decrease in the rate in New South Wales largely drove the decrease in the national rate over the 4 years because of that state’s relatively large share of the detention population.

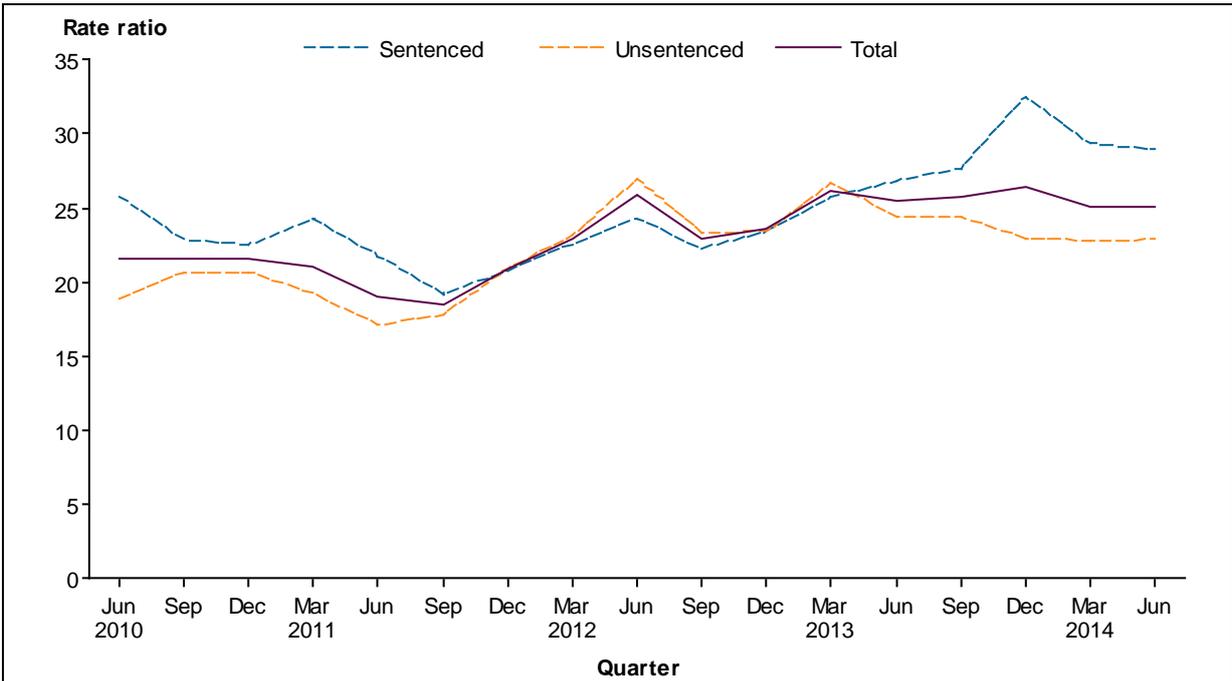
Over 2013–14, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention increased overall in Queensland and South Australia, and decreased in Tasmania and Western Australia.

**Indigenous status**

Indigenous representation in the youth justice system can be expressed as the rate ratio, which is the rate of Indigenous young people relative to the rate of non-Indigenous young people (see Appendix A for further details).

Nationally, Indigenous young people aged 10–17 were 25 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 (rates of 34.8 and 1.4 per 10,000, respectively) (Figure 2.6; Table S10). This was an increase from 22 times as likely in the June quarter 2010.

This increase was seen primarily from the March quarter 2012 onwards, and was mainly due to a decrease in the rate of non-Indigenous young people in detention (Table S10). The rate for non-Indigenous young people remained steady at 1.7 to 1.8 per 10,000 between the June quarter 2010 and the September quarter 2011, and then decreased to between 1.3 and 1.5 per 10,000 from the March quarter 2012 onwards.



Note: Rate ratio is calculated by dividing the Indigenous rate by the non-Indigenous rate.

Sources: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

**Figure 2.6: Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in detention, by legal status, Australia, June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014 (rate ratio)**

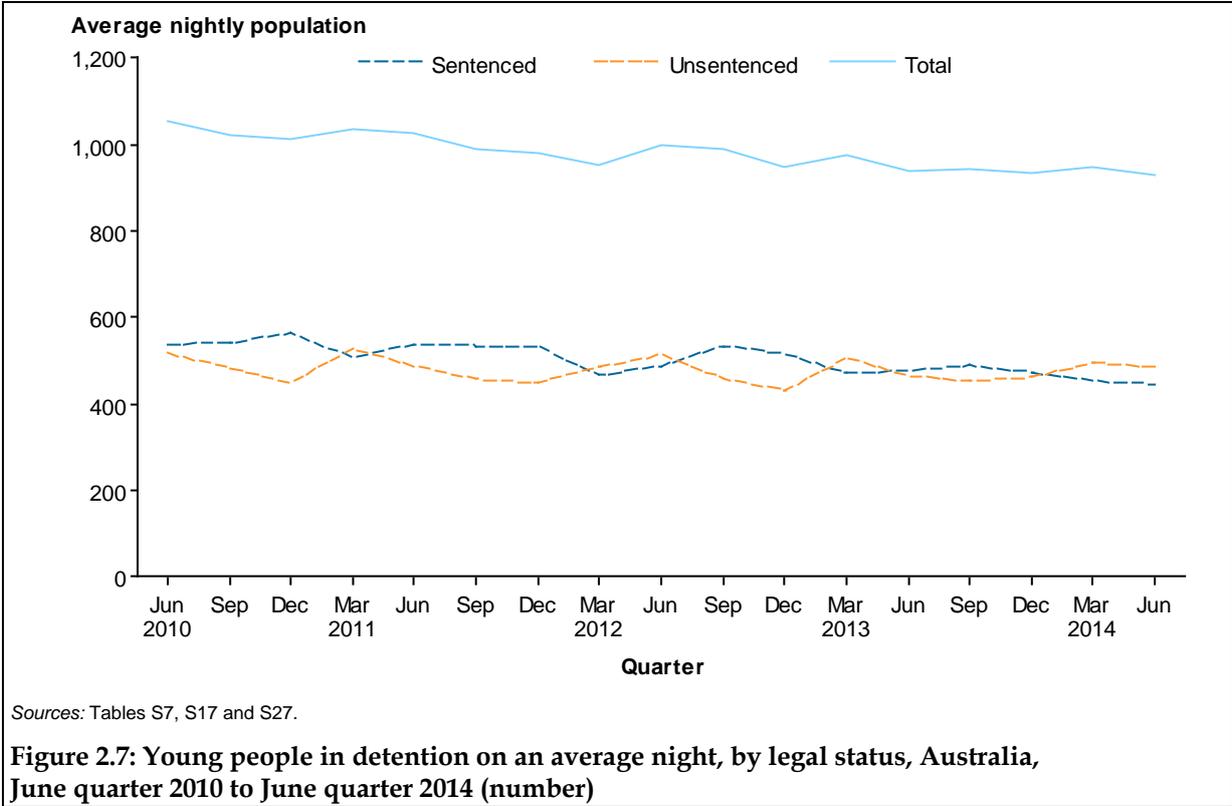
Similar patterns of increase in the rate ratio, from early 2012 onwards, occurred in both unsentenced and sentenced detention (Figure 2.6; see chapters 3 and 4 for more details).

In the June quarter 2014, among the states and territories for which the rate ratio was available (see Appendix A for more information), it was lowest in Victoria (13 times) and highest in Western Australia (58 times) (Table S10).

## 2.4 Legal status

About half (52%) of those in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 were unsentenced (485 young people), and the remainder (48% or 445 young people) were serving a sentence (Figure 2.7). Throughout the 4-year period, similar numbers of young people were in unsentenced (between 431 and 527 young people) and sentenced detention (between 445 and 564) on an average night each quarter.

Trends in the unsentenced and sentenced populations are looked at in more detail in chapters 3 and 4.

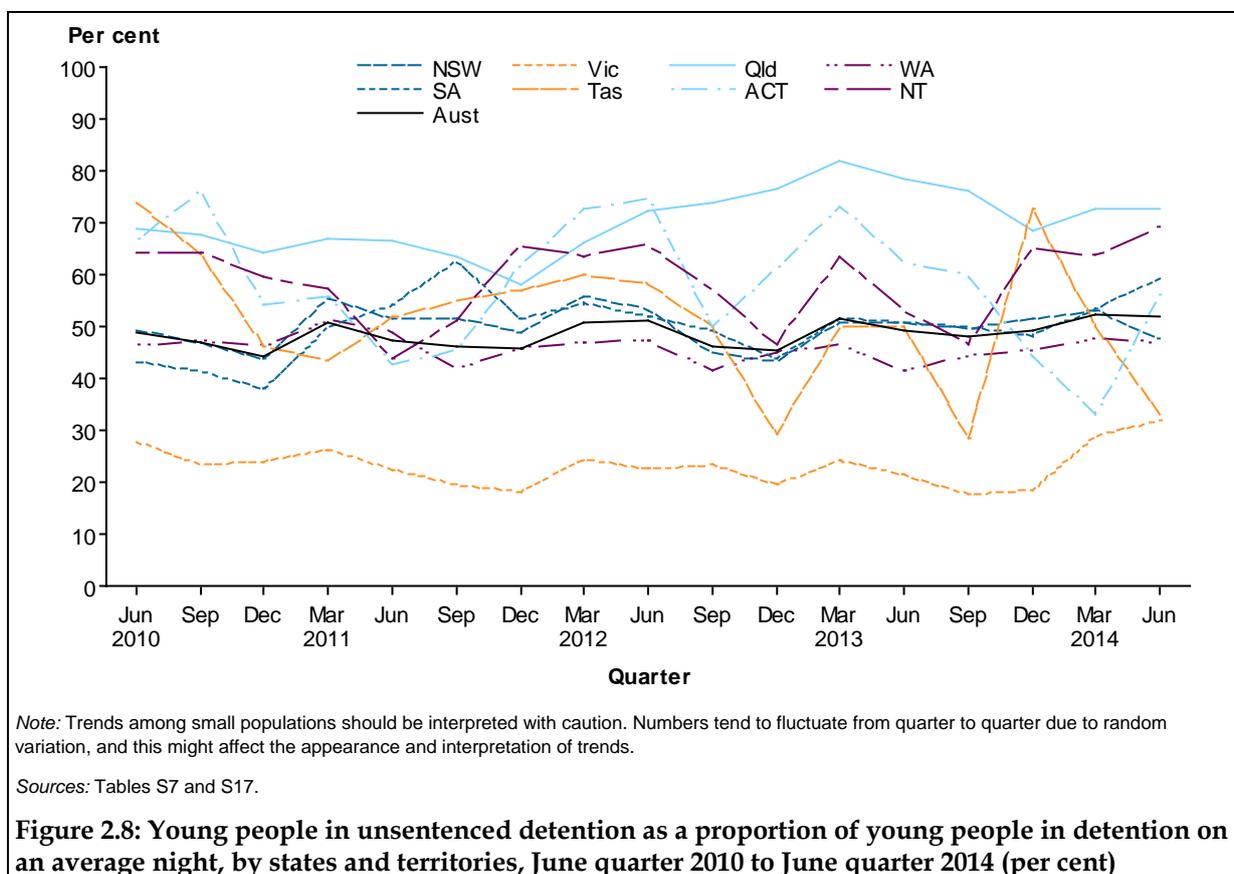


## States and territories

The proportion of young people in detention on an average night who were unsentenced varied widely between the states and territories (Figure 2.8), ranging from 32% in Victoria to 73% in Queensland in the June quarter 2014.

Throughout the 4-year period, Victoria consistently had the lowest proportion of young people in detention on an average night who were unsentenced. This was at least in part due to the 'dual track' sentencing system operating in that state, whereby young people aged 18–20 may be sentenced to detention in a youth facility rather than an adult prison if the court deems this appropriate.

When only young people aged 10–17 are considered, 61% of young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 were unsentenced (tables S8 and S18). This proportion ranged from 29% in Tasmania to 74% in Queensland, although numbers fluctuated, particularly in the smaller jurisdictions.



## Indigenous status

Over the 4-year period, the trends among Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced and sentenced detention varied.

In unsentenced detention, there were more Indigenous than non-Indigenous young people in most quarters throughout the period (55% Indigenous in the June quarter 2014) (tables S11, S14 and S17).

From early 2011 onwards, the proportion of Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention rose slightly, while the proportion of non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention fell, mostly among those aged 10–17. These contrasting trends resulted in an increase in the Indigenous rate ratio among unsentenced young people aged 10–17 over the 4-year period (from 19 to 23 times the non-Indigenous rate) (Table S20).

In sentenced detention, just under half (49%) of those detained on an average night in the June quarter 2014 were Indigenous (tables S21, S24 and S27). Over the 4-year period, the Indigenous sentenced population was largest during 2010 and slightly lower from 2011 onwards, while the non-Indigenous population was at its lowest point in the December 2013, March 2014 and June 2014 quarters.

Among those aged 10–17, the size of both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups declined; but the drop in the non-Indigenous sentenced rate was proportionally larger than the Indigenous sentenced rate. This led to an increase in the rate ratio (from 26 to 29 times the non-Indigenous rate) (Table S30).

For more information about the trends in sentenced and unsentenced detention among Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people, see chapters 3 and 4. Information about the trends in each state and territory is in Chapter 5.

## 3 Recent trends in unsentenced detention

This chapter looks at trends in the numbers and rates of young people in unsentenced detention over the 4 years to the June quarter 2014.

Young people in unsentenced detention are those who are detained while awaiting the outcome of a court matter or sentencing. This includes both those referred to detention by police before their first court appearance and those remanded in custody by a court.

### 3.1 Key points

#### **On an average night in the June quarter 2014:**

- 485 young people were in unsentenced detention
- most (93%) were aged 10–17, and the remainder were aged 18 or older
- there were 2.0 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in the population in unsentenced detention (about 1 in 5,000 young people aged 10–17)
- just over half (55%) of those in unsentenced detention were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- most young people in unsentenced detention (87%) were male.

#### **Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014):**

- numbers and rates of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter remained relatively stable, with little overall change (1.8 to 2.2 per 10,000 people aged 10–17 across the period)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation increased overall, from 19 to 23 times the non-Indigenous rate, although it fluctuated, peaking in the June quarter 2012 and in the March quarter 2013 at 27 times
- the rate of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention increased in Queensland and decreased in New South Wales and Tasmania
- rates of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention were consistently lowest in Victoria and highest in the Northern Territory.

#### **Over the 1-year period (June quarter 2013 to June quarter 2014):**

- the number of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter slightly increased (from 464 to 485), while the rate remained relatively stable (from 1.8 to 2.0 per 10,000 each quarter)
- the rate of Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention was 23 to 24 times the non-Indigenous rate each quarter.

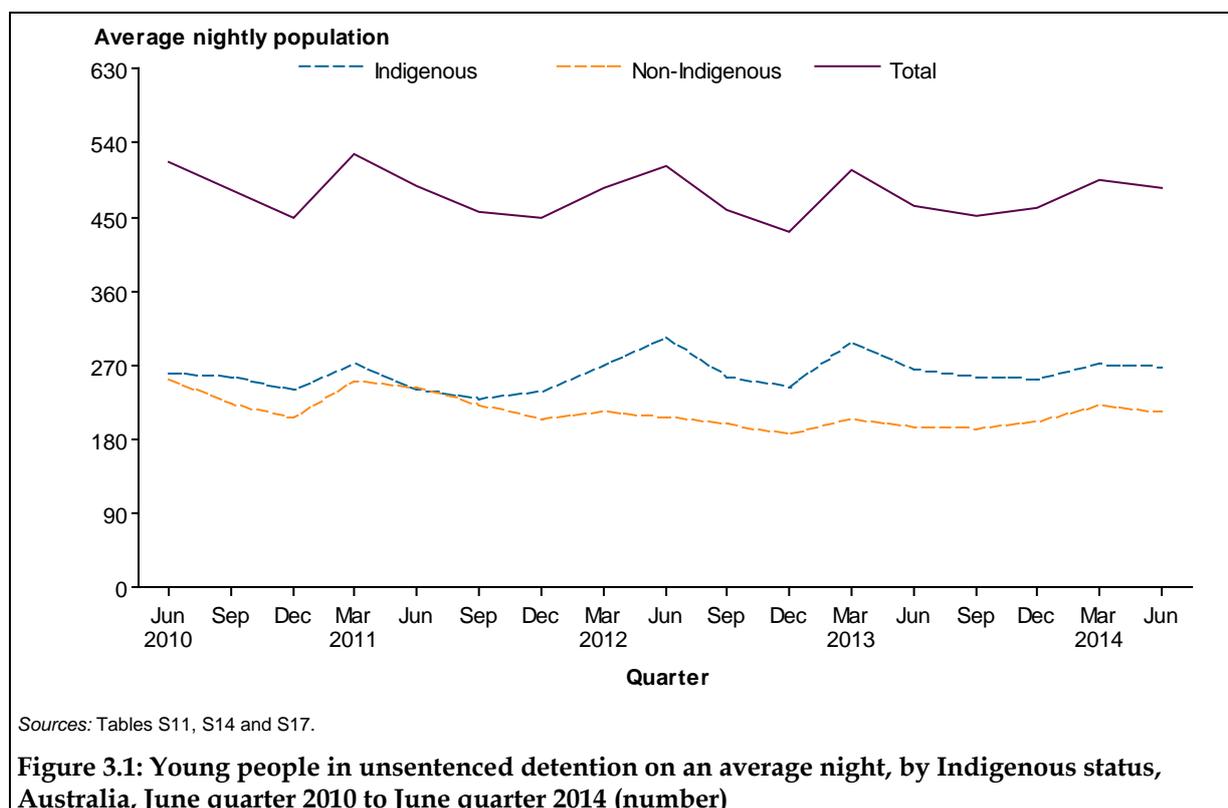
## 3.2 Number in unsentenced detention

Nationally, 485 young people were in unsentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014, which equates to just over half (52%) of all young people in detention (Figure 3.1 and tables 5.2, S7 and S17).

Over the 4-year period, the number of young people in unsentenced detention fluctuated between 431 (December quarter 2012) and 527 (March quarter 2011) on an average night, with no clear trend. Numbers increased slightly from 464 to 485 over 2013–14. Each year, nationally, numbers tended to be lower in the September and December quarters and higher in the March and June quarters, although this varied among the states and territories (Table S17). The reasons for this pattern are not yet well understood.

### Indigenous status, age and sex

About half of young people in unsentenced detention each quarter during the 4-year period were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, ranging from 49% in the June quarter 2011 to 59% in the June quarter 2012 and March quarter 2013 (55% in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 3.1).

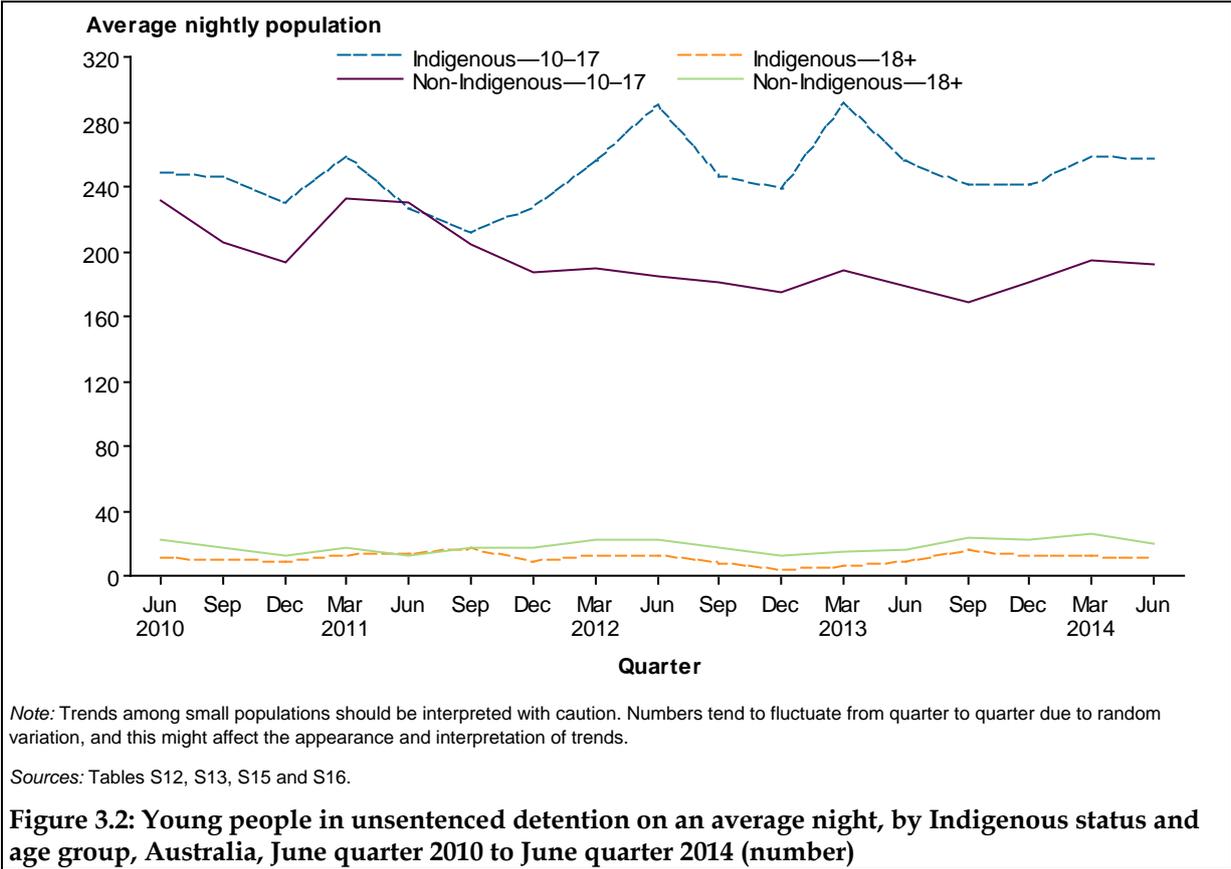


Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention outnumbered non-Indigenous young people in most quarters throughout the 4-year period (from 229 to 304 Indigenous and from 186 to 253 non-Indigenous young people on an average night each quarter).

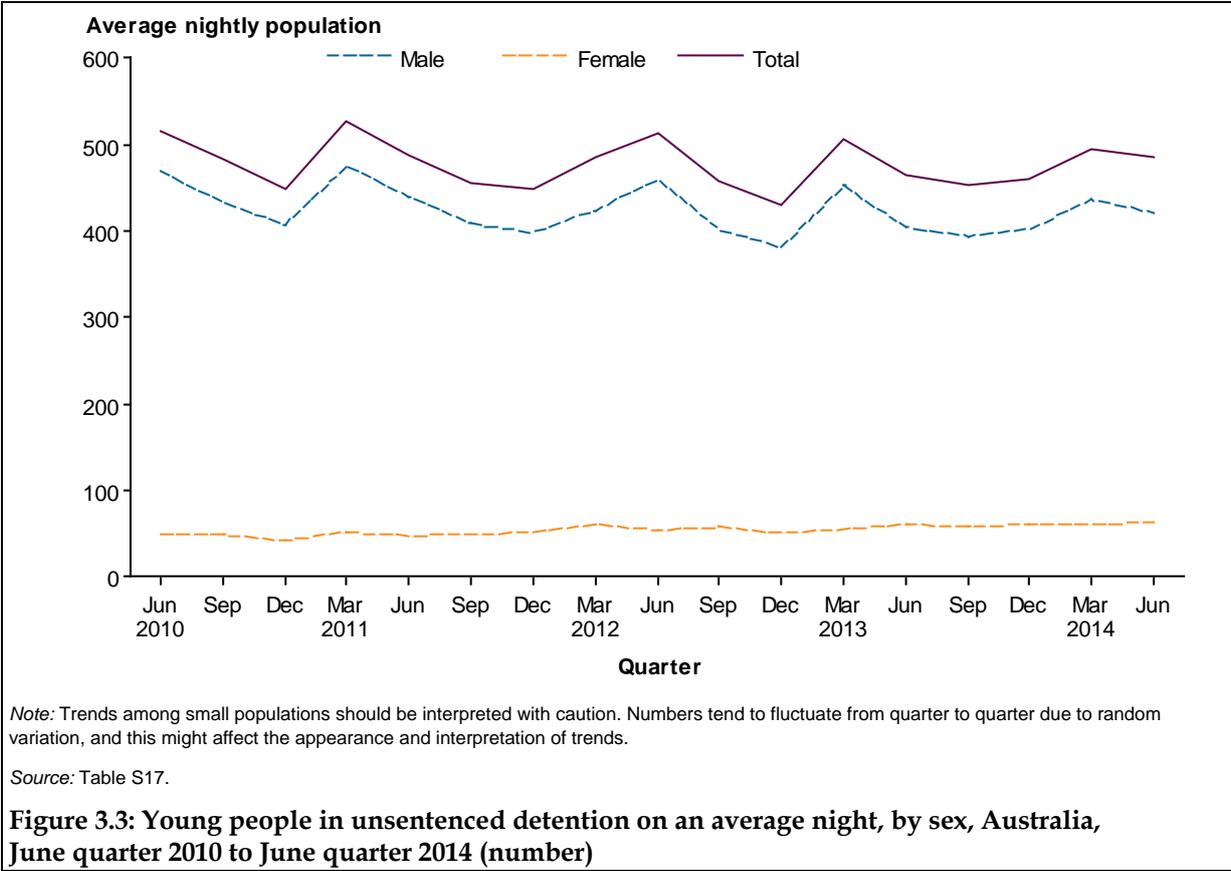
Throughout the 4-year period, most young people in unsentenced detention each quarter were aged 10–17 (between 91% and 96%; 93% in the June quarter 2014) (tables S17 and S18). About 96% of Indigenous young people and 90% of non-Indigenous young people were aged 10–17 in the June quarter 2014 (tables S11, S12, S14 and S15).

Trends in the numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people aged 10–17 closely followed the trends in the numbers of young people of all ages. Between 212 and 292 Indigenous and between 169 and 233 non-Indigenous young people aged 10–17 were in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter. Overall, from early 2012 onwards, the Indigenous population increased slightly, and the non-Indigenous population decreased slightly (Figure 3.2).

Among those aged 18 or older, between 4 and 17 Indigenous and 12 and 26 non-Indigenous young people were in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter.



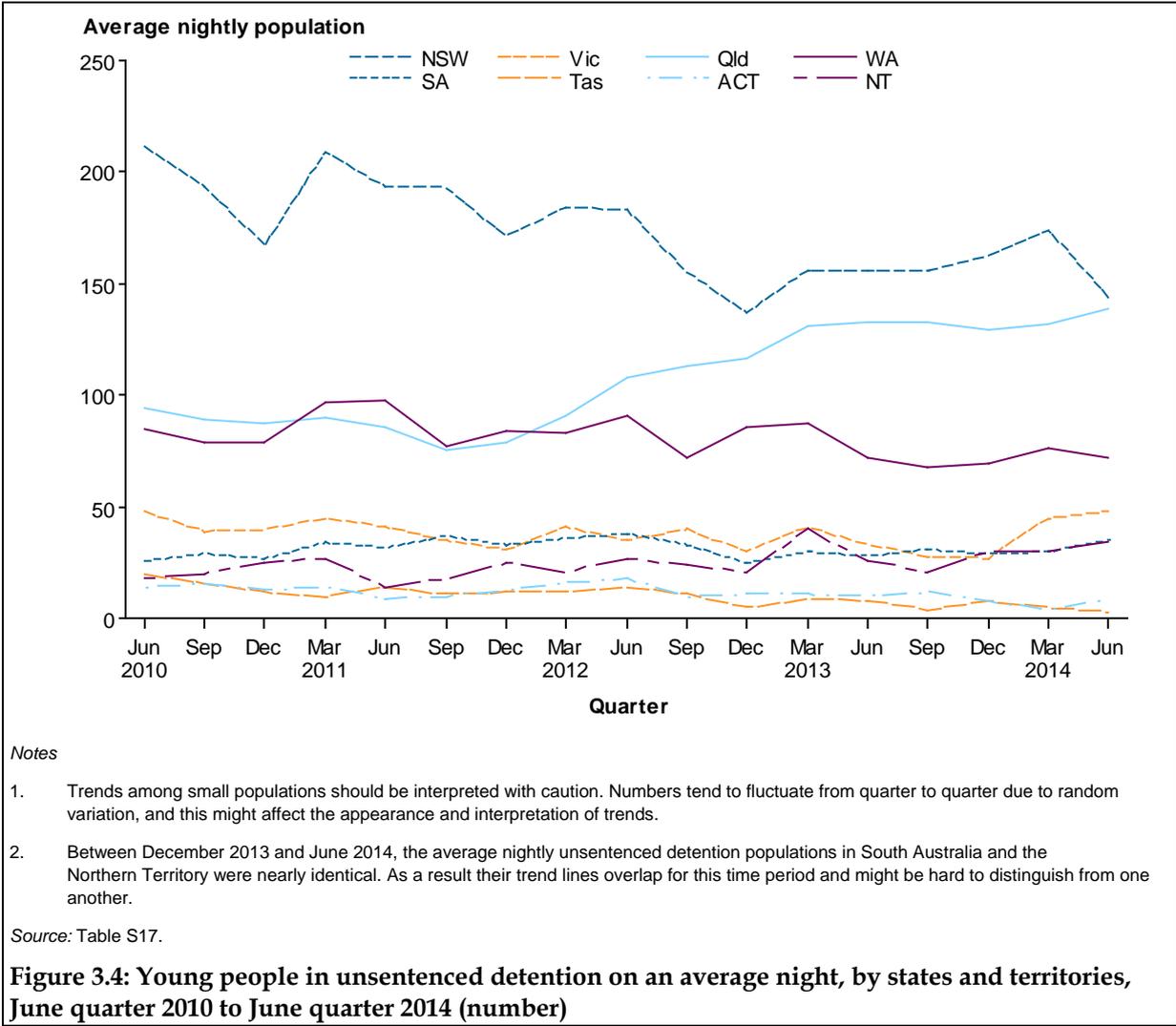
Most (from 87% to 91%) of those in unsentenced detention on an average night throughout the 4-year period were male (87% in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 3.3). Between 42 and 63 females were in unsentenced detention on an average night in each quarter.



### States and territories

The trends in the number of young people in unsentenced detention varied among the states and territories over the 4-year period, although numbers fluctuated from quarter to quarter, particularly in the smaller jurisdictions (Figure 3.4; Table 5.2). Overall, the number of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night decreased in New South Wales (from 211 to 144) and Tasmania (from 20 to 3) and increased in Queensland (from 94 to 139).

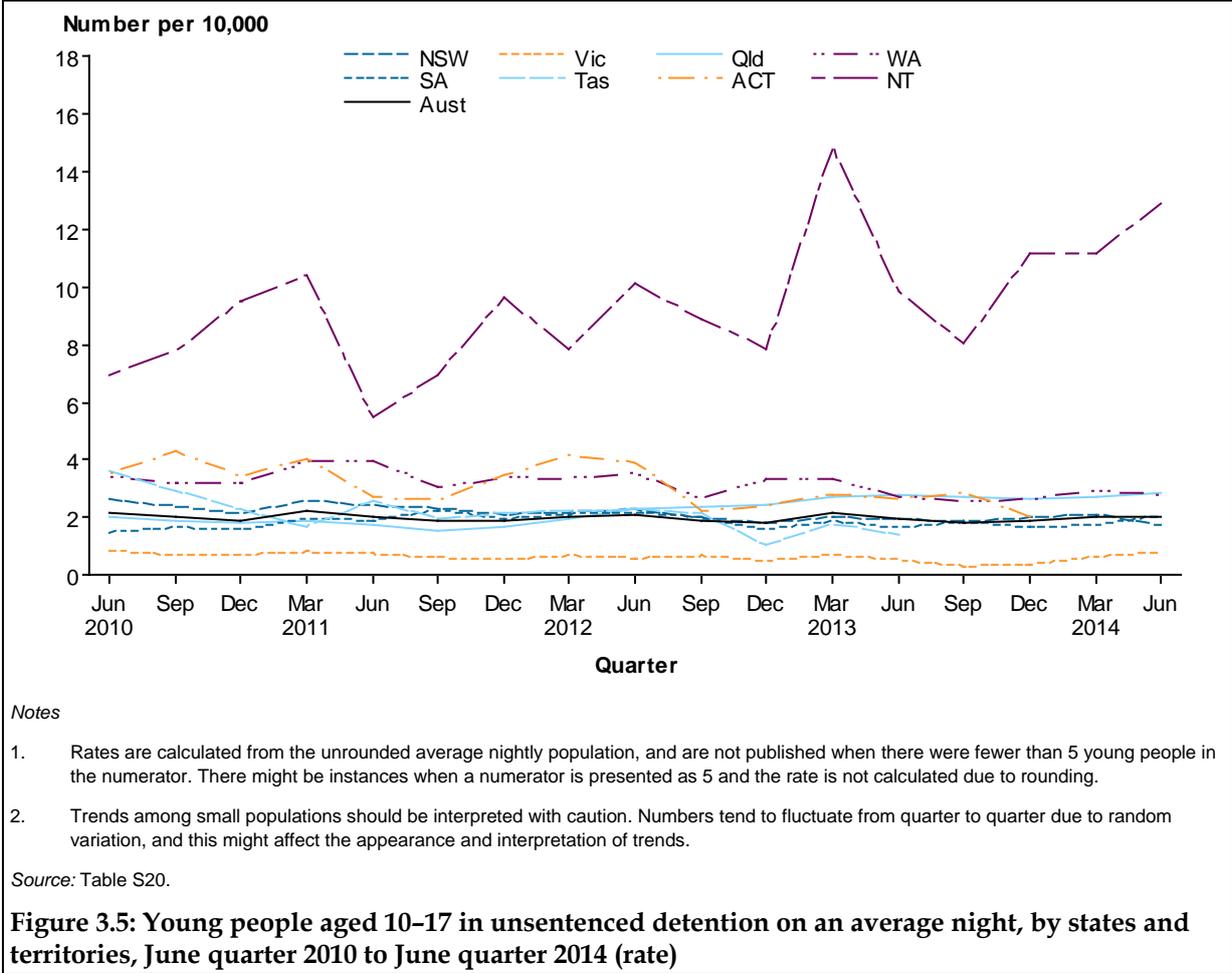
Over 2013–14, there were fluctuations or slight decreases in the unsentenced detention population in each state and territory.



### 3.3 Rate of unsentenced detention

Nationally, over the 4-year period to the June quarter 2014, the rate of young people in unsentenced detention remained relatively stable (Figure 3.5; Table 5.2).

There were between 1.8 and 2.2 young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention per 10,000 in the population in each quarter throughout the period (between 1.8 and 2.0 per 10,000 in each quarter from the June quarter 2013 to the June quarter 2014; and 2.0 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2014, or about 1 in 5,000 young people).



#### States and territories

Throughout the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention was highest in the Northern Territory (from 5.5 to 14.9 per 10,000 each quarter), and lowest in Victoria (from 0.3 to 0.9 per 10,000) (Figure 3.5). Rates fluctuated the most in the smallest jurisdictions, particularly the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, which was likely largely due to small numbers in those jurisdictions.

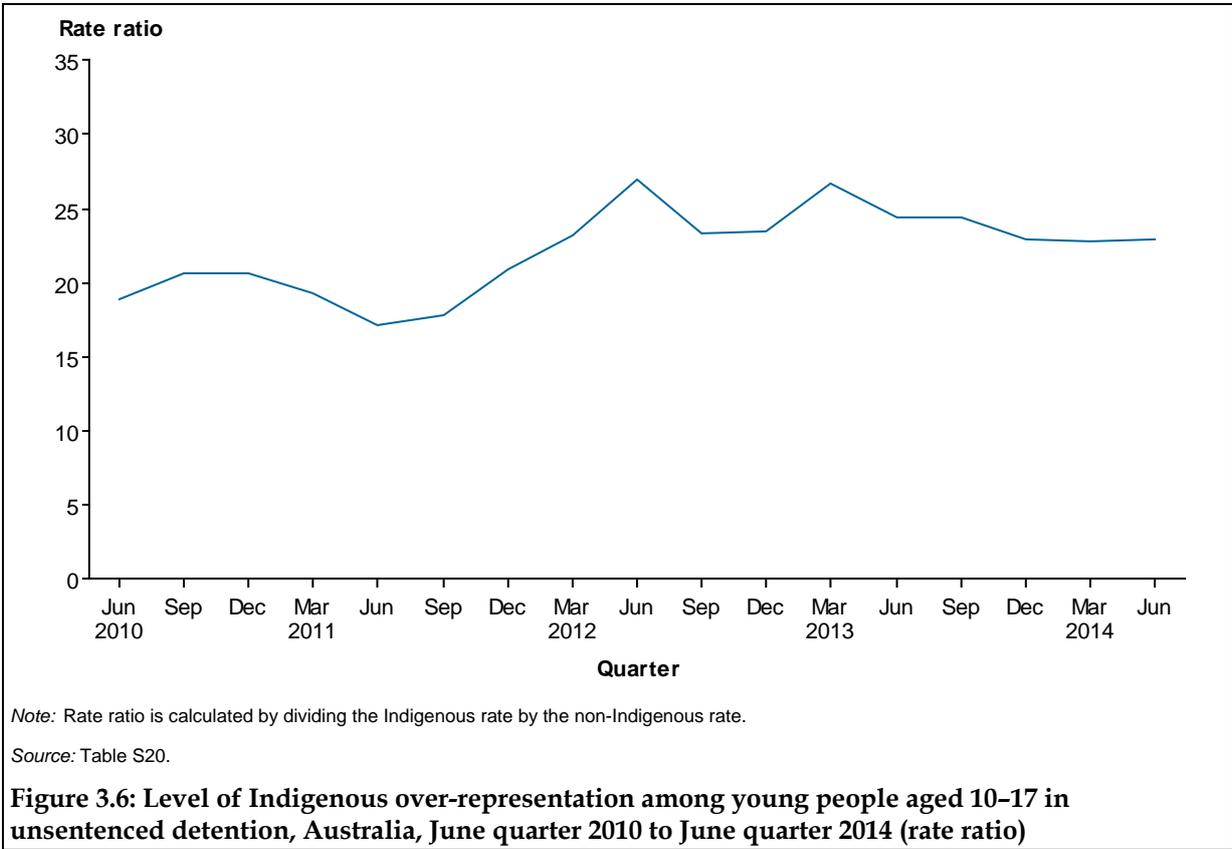
Rates over the 4-year period increased in Queensland and decreased in New South Wales and Tasmania. Over 2013–14, the Northern Territory was the only state or territory where rates changed, with an increase from 9.9 to 12.9 per 10,000 in the population.

## Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2014, Indigenous young people aged 10-17 were 23 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in unsentenced detention on an average night, up from 19 times as likely in the June quarter 2010 (Figure 3.6).

The level of Indigenous over-representation remained relatively steady from the June quarter 2010 to the December quarter 2011 (ranging between 17 and 21 times the non-Indigenous rate). The rate ratio then peaked in the June quarter 2012, and again in the March quarter 2013 (at 27 times), then dropped to 23 times the non-Indigenous rate by the June quarter 2014.

Over the 4-year period, the levels of Indigenous over-representation increased in unsentenced detention in Western Australia, and fluctuated in the other states and territories for which rate ratios were able to be calculated (see Appendix A for more information).



## 4 Recent trends in sentenced detention

This chapter summarises trends in the numbers and rates of young people in sentenced detention between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014.

### 4.1 Key points

#### **On an average night in the June quarter 2014:**

- 445 young people were in sentenced detention
- 64% of young people in sentenced detention were aged 10–17, and the remainder were 18 or older
- there were 1.3 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in the population in sentenced detention (about 1 in 7,900 young people aged 10–17 across Australia)
- about half (49%) of young people in sentenced detention were Indigenous, and a higher proportion (62%) if only those aged 10–17 are considered
- 94% of young people in sentenced detention were male.

#### **Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014):**

- numbers and rates of young people in sentenced detention on an average night were highest during 2010–11, then decreased (overall the rate over the 4-year period slightly decreased from 1.6 to 1.3 per 10,000 aged 10–17)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention increased (from 26 to 29 times the non-Indigenous rate), because the non-Indigenous rate decreased more than the Indigenous rate from early 2012
- the rate of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention decreased in New South Wales and Victoria
- rates of detention among those aged 10–17 were lowest in Victoria in most quarters, and highest in the Northern Territory in all quarters.

#### **Over the 1-year period (June quarter 2013 to June quarter 2014):**

- 445 to 488 young people were in sentenced detention on an average night each quarter
- the rate of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention remained stable at 1.3 per 10,000
- the level of Indigenous over-representation ranged between 27 and 33 times the non-Indigenous rate.

## 4.2 Number in sentenced detention

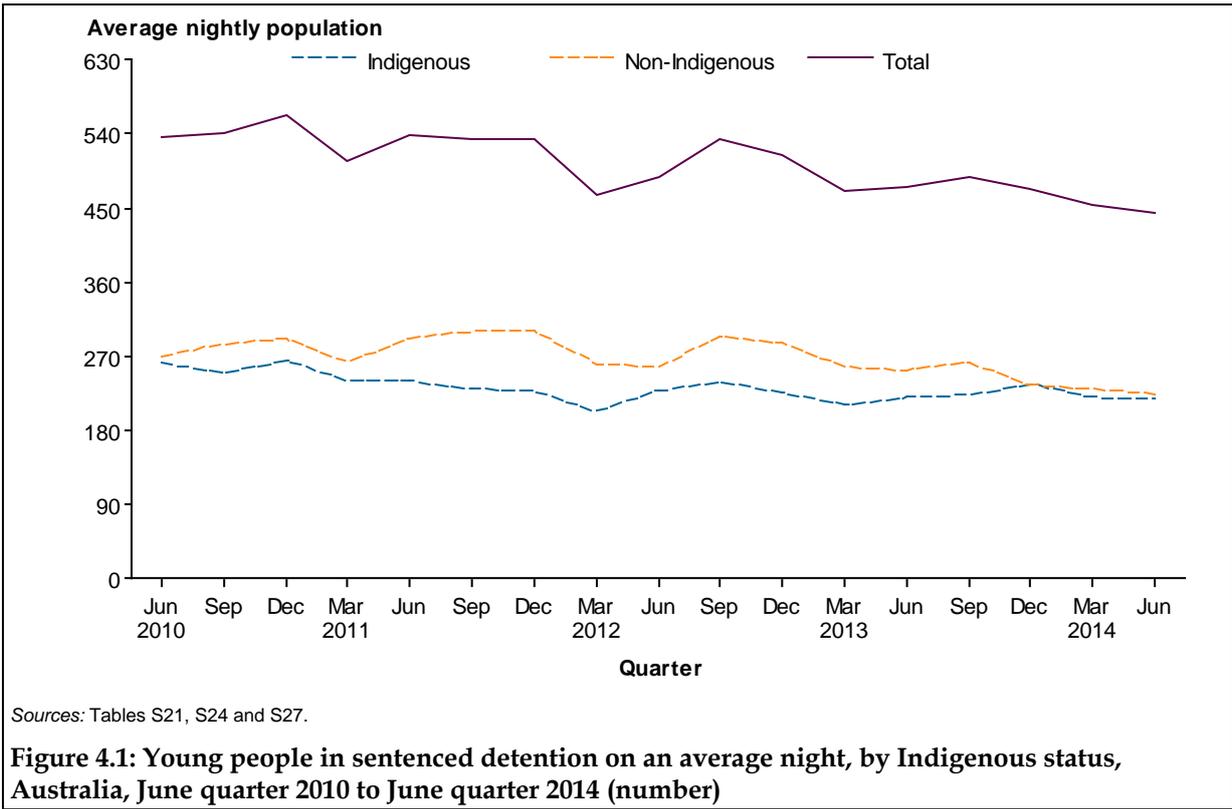
On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 445 young people were in sentenced detention (Figure 4.1; Table 5.2).

Over the 4-year period, the number of young people in sentenced detention was highest during 2010–11 (between 533 and 564 each quarter), before a decline from early 2012 onwards. During 2013–14, between 445 and 488 young people were in sentenced detention on an average night each quarter.

### Indigenous status, age and sex

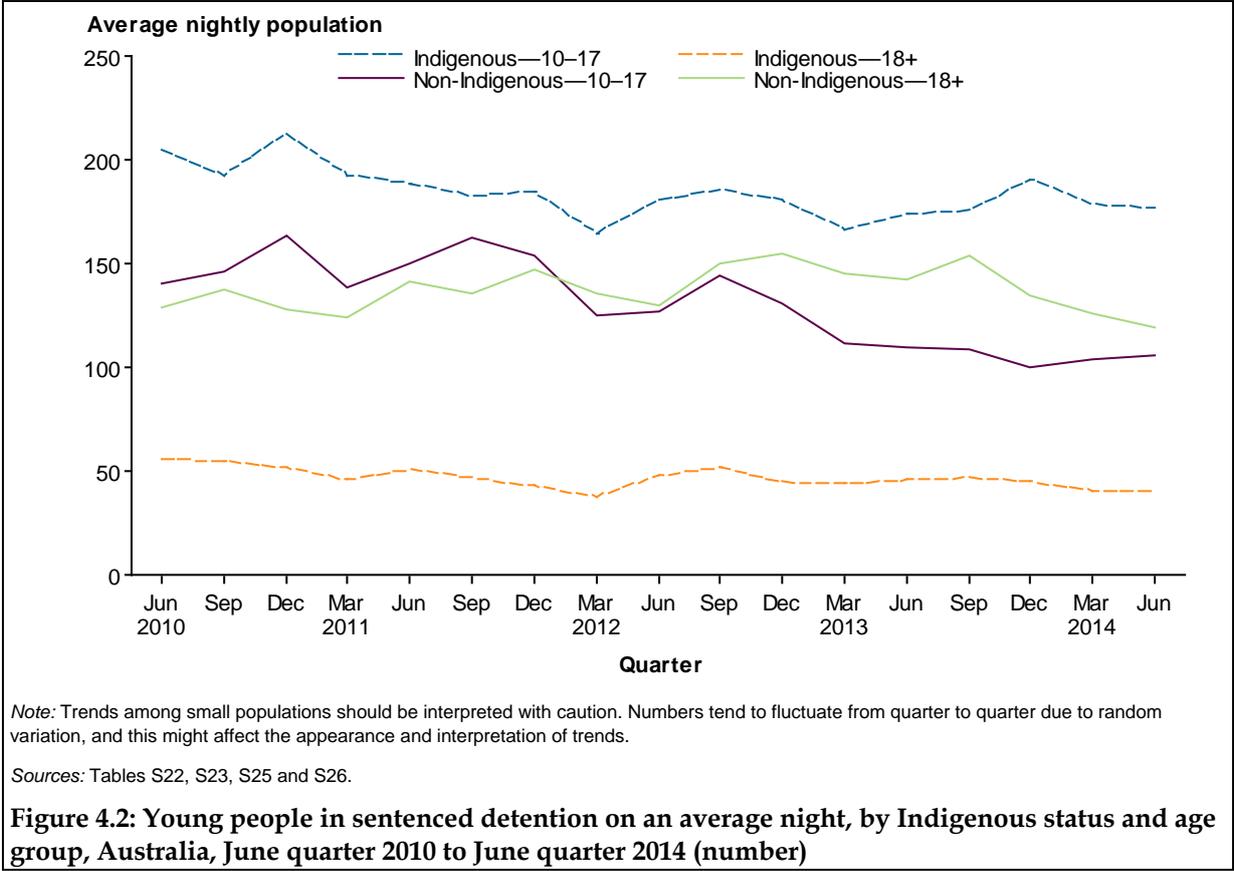
Trends in the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention varied. Over the 4-year period, the number of young Indigenous people in sentenced detention was highest during 2010 (between 249 and 265 on an average night each quarter), and slightly lower from 2012 onwards (218 in the June quarter 2014, or 49% of all young people in sentenced detention).

The non-Indigenous sentenced population was larger than the Indigenous population throughout the period (between 224 and 300 young people), with it reaching its lowest point in the June quarter 2014 (224).



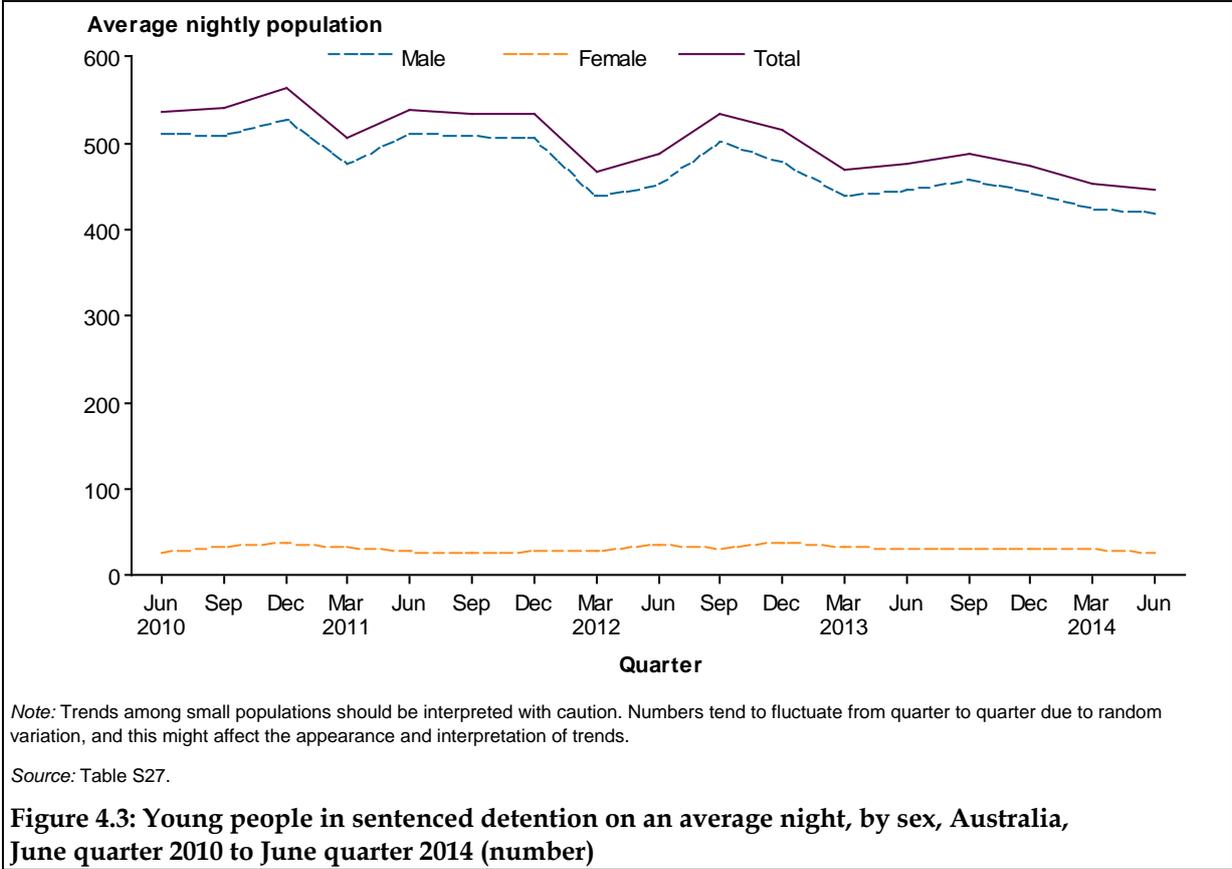
Throughout the 4-year period, the majority of those in sentenced detention were aged 10–17 (ranging between 59% in the September quarter 2013 and 67% in the December quarter 2010; 64% in the June quarter 2014) (tables S27 and S28). But proportions varied substantially among jurisdictions in the June quarter 2014, from just 20% in Victoria to 94% in Queensland and 100% in the Northern Territory. The low proportion in Victoria is likely to be largely driven by the state’s ‘dual track’ sentencing system (see Chapter 1 for more details).

Among those aged 10–17, the majority were Indigenous – 177 Indigenous (62%) and 106 non-Indigenous young people were in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 4.2). Indigenous young people outnumbered non-Indigenous young people throughout the 4-year period. While the size of both groups decreased, the trends varied slightly – the decline among Indigenous young people occurred from the beginning of 2011, while the proportionally larger decline among non-Indigenous young people began in early 2013.



Among those aged 18 or older in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014, 41 were Indigenous and 119 were non-Indigenous. The non-Indigenous group peaked at 155 in the December quarter 2012, dropping again in the 2013–14 year. The size of the Indigenous group remained relatively stable over the 4-year period.

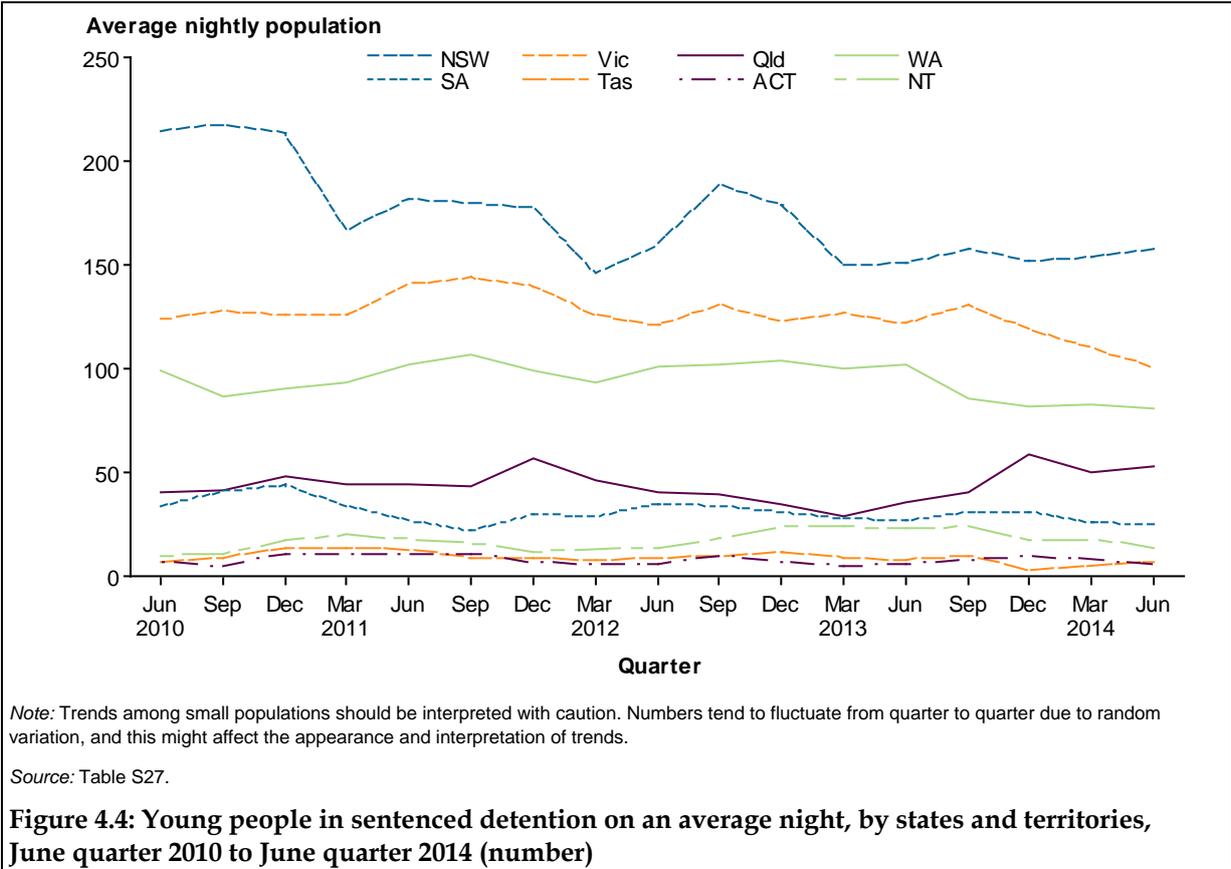
On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 419 males (94%) and 25 females were in sentenced detention (Figure 4.3). The vast majority (between 93% and 95%) were males in each quarter throughout the 4-year period.



### States and territories

New South Wales had the highest number of young people in sentenced detention throughout the 4-year period, followed by Victoria and Western Australia (Figure 4.4; Table 5.2).

The trends in the sentenced population varied among the states and territories. Over the 4-year period, the number of young people in sentenced detention on an average night decreased in New South Wales (from 215 to 158). Over the 2013-14 year, the number of young people in sentenced detention decreased in Victoria (from 122 to 101), Western Australia (from 102 to 81) and the Northern Territory (from 23 to 14), but increased in Queensland (from 36 to 53).



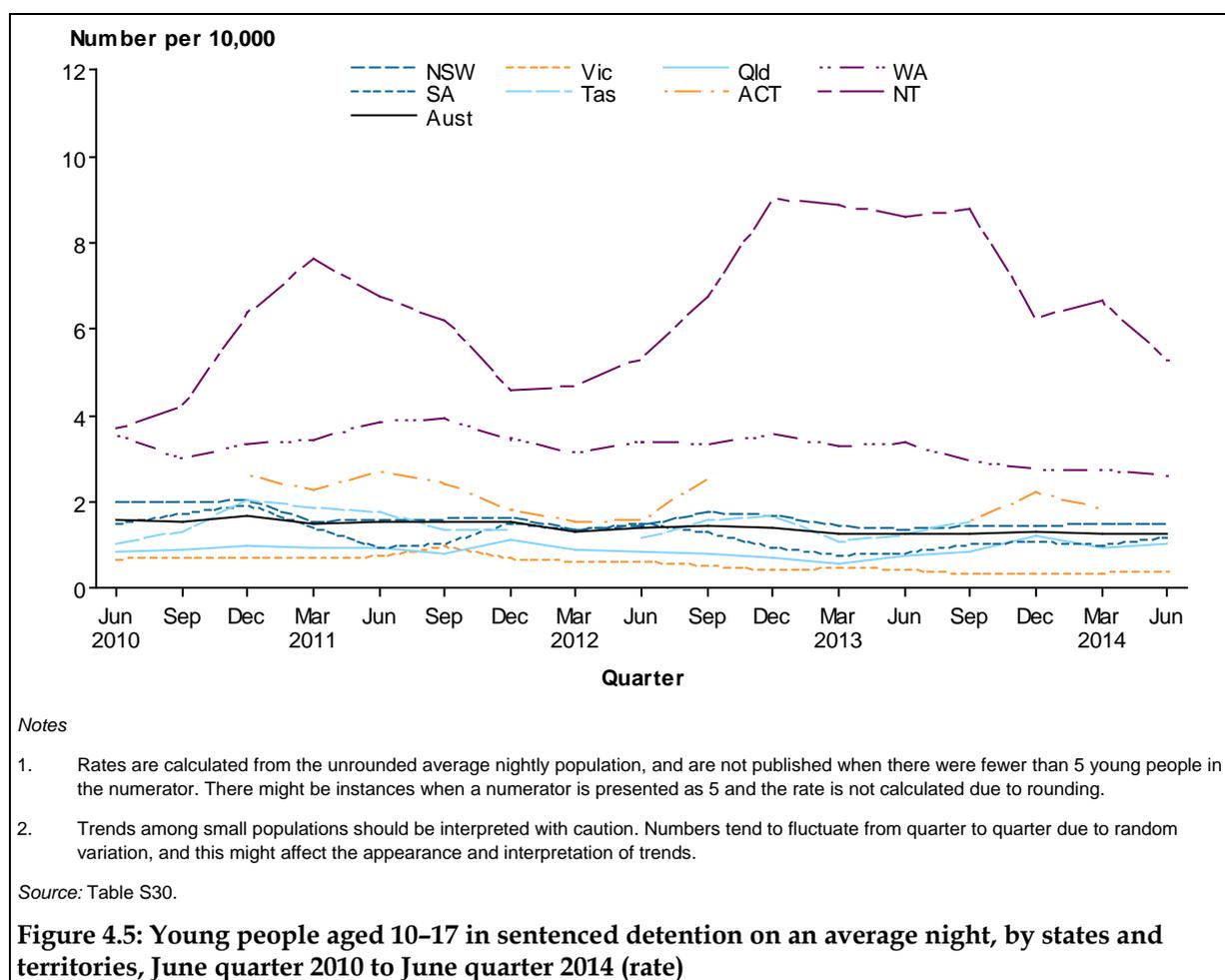
### 4.3 Rate of sentenced detention

There were 1.3 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 (about 1 in 7,900 young people) in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014, a slight decrease from the rate in the June quarter 2010 (1.6 per 10,000) (Figure 4.5; Table 5.2).

The rate of young people in sentenced detention was consistently lower during 2013 and early 2014 (between 1.2 and 1.3 per 10,000) than earlier in the 4-year period (between 1.3 and 1.7 per 10,000).

#### States and territories

In the June quarter 2014, rates of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention ranged from 0.4 per 10,000 in Victoria (or about 1 in 25,000) to 2.6 per 10,000 in Western Australia (or about 1 in 3,800) and 5.3 per 10,000 in the Northern Territory (or about 1 in 1,900).



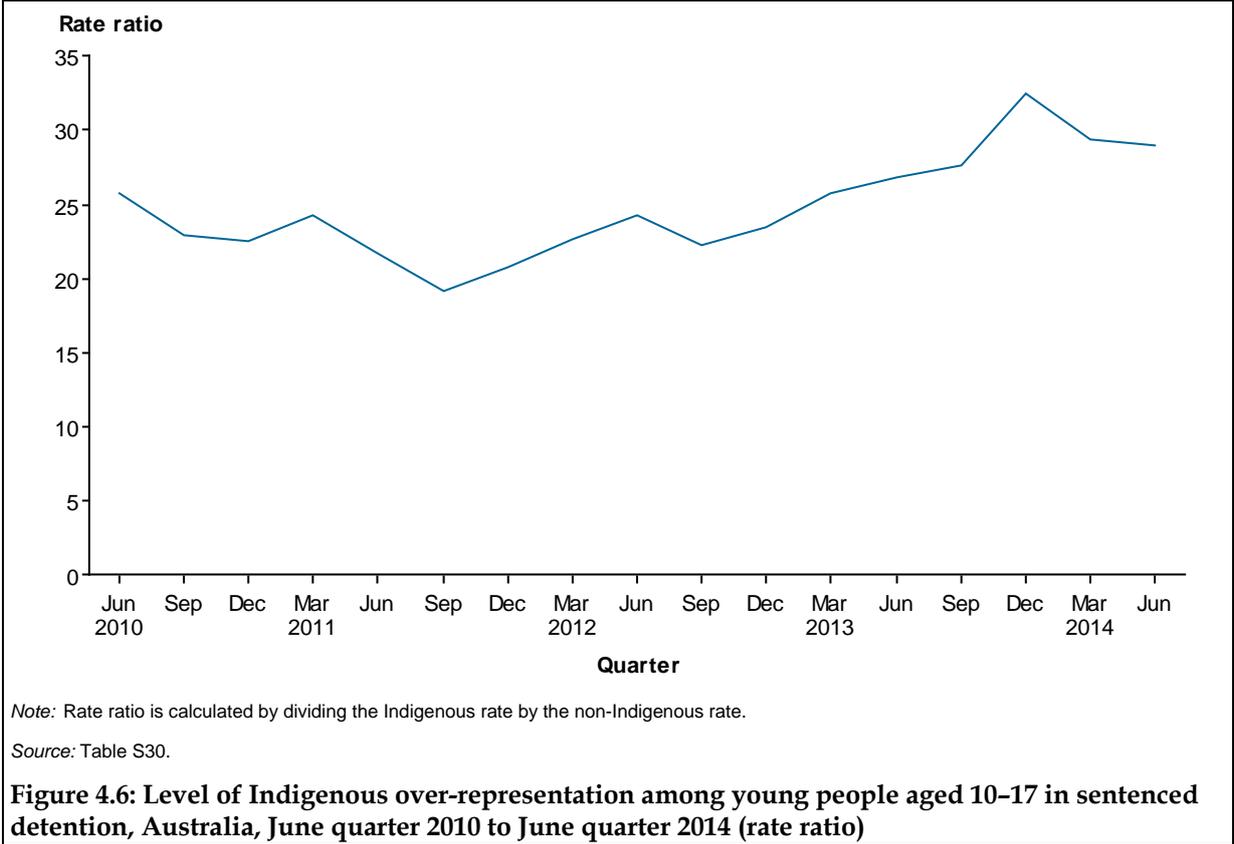
Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention decreased in New South Wales and Victoria.

As with unsentenced detention, the Northern Territory had the highest, but also the most volatile, rate of sentenced detention throughout the 4-year period. The large fluctuations were due at least in part to the small numbers of young people involved. Rates of sentenced detention were lowest in Victoria in most quarters during the period.

## Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2014, Indigenous young people were 29 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in sentenced detention on an average night (Figure 4.6). This was an increase from 26 times as likely in the June quarter 4 years earlier.

The rate ratio increased steadily from the September quarter 2012 onwards. This was due to a relatively larger drop in the non-Indigenous sentenced detention rate (from 0.7 to 0.5 per 10,000) than the Indigenous rate (from 17.0 to 14.2 per 10,000) over the 4-year period (Table S30). Much of this change occurred from early 2012 onwards.



## 5 State and territory trends

This chapter gives an overview of the key trends in youth detention in each state and territory between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014.

### 5.1 Key points

**On an average night over the 4-year period (June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014), the number and rate of young people in detention:**

- decreased in New South Wales (from 427 to 302, and from 4.6 to 3.2 per 10,000 aged 10–17) for both sentenced and unsentenced detention, and for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people
- decreased slightly in Victoria (from 172 to 150 young people, and from 1.5 to 1.2 per 10,000 aged 10–17), with similar rates of unsentenced and sentenced detention
- increased in Queensland (from 136 to 191 young people, and from 2.9 to 3.9 per 10,000 aged 10–17), driven mainly by a rise in the number of Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention
- fluctuated in Western Australia, with rates decreasing overall (from 7.0 to 5.4 per 10,000 aged 10–17)
- fluctuated each quarter in South Australia (between 55 and 73 young people, and between 2.5 and 3.7 per 10,000 aged 10–17), with more young people in unsentenced detention than in sentenced detention from late 2011 onwards
- declined steadily in Tasmania (from 27 to 9 young people, and from 4.6 to 1.3 per 10,000 aged 10–17), mainly due to a decrease in unsentenced detention
- were highest in the Australian Capital Territory between 2010 and mid-2012, with more young people in unsentenced detention than in sentenced detention in most quarters
- fluctuated in the Northern Territory, with numbers increasing overall (from 28 to 49 young people), and with most (89% to 100%) young people being Indigenous.

Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014), the rate of young people in detention on an average night varied among states and territories – decreasing in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, increasing in Queensland (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night by legal status, summary of trends, June quarter 2010 to June quarter 2014 (rate)**

	Unsentenced	Sentenced	Total in detention
New South Wales	↓	↓	↓
Victoria	↔	↓	↓
Queensland	↑	↔	↑
Western Australia	↔	↔	↓
South Australia	↔	↔	↔
Tasmania	↓	↔	↓
Australian Capital Territory	↔	↔	↓
Northern Territory	↔	↔	↔
<b>Australia</b>	↔	↓	↓

*Notes*

1. ↑ increase; ↓ decrease; ↔ no clear trend or stable.
2. Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this might affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Sources: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

Table 5.2 provides a summary of the numbers and rates of young people in detention on an average night during the June quarters 2010, 2013 and 2014. Between the June quarter 2013 and June quarter 2014:

- numbers of young people in detention were relatively stable (between 929 and 948 on an average night each quarter)
- rates of those aged 10–17 in detention increased in Queensland and South Australia, decreased in Tasmania and Western Australia
- numbers (from 464 to 495) and rates (from 1.8 to 2.0 per 10,000) of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter remained relatively stable
- rates of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention remained stable at 1.3 per 10,000.

**Table 5.2: Young people in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2010, 2013 and 2014 (number and rate)**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
<b>Number</b>									
<b>Unsentenced detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	211	48	94	85	26	20	14	18	516
June quarter 2013	156	33	133	72	28	8	10	26	464
June quarter 2014	144	48	139	72	35	3	9	34	485
<b>Sentenced detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	215	124	41	99	34	7	7	10	537
June quarter 2013	151	122	36	102	27	8	6	23	476
June quarter 2014	158	101	53	81	25	7	6	14	445
<b>Total detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	427	172	136	183	60	27	21	28	1053
June quarter 2013	307	154	169	173	55	16	16	49	940
June quarter 2014	302	150	191	153	59	9	16	49	929
<b>Rate (number per 10,000)</b>									
<b>Unsentenced detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	2.62	0.85	2.00	3.41	1.49	3.60	3.54	6.97	2.16
June quarter 2013	1.95	0.53	2.76	2.74	1.64	1.42	2.64	9.87	1.94
June quarter 2014	1.72	0.80	2.87	2.79	2.08	—	2.40	12.9	2.00
<b>Sentenced detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	2.00	0.67	0.84	3.55	1.48	1.04	1.72	3.68	1.56
June quarter 2013	1.36	0.43	0.75	3.36	0.81	1.24	—	8.62	1.27
June quarter 2014	1.50	0.38	1.03	2.60	1.18	0.97	—	5.26	1.26
<b>Total detention</b>									
June quarter 2010	4.62	1.52	2.85	6.96	2.97	4.64	5.26	10.65	3.71
June quarter 2013	3.32	0.96	3.51	6.10	2.45	2.66	3.73	18.49	3.21
June quarter 2014	3.22	1.17	3.90	5.39	3.26	1.29	3.75	18.16	3.26

*Notes*

1. Numbers might not add up to total due to rounding.
2. Rates are for young people aged 10–17. Numbers include young people aged 18 or older, under youth justice supervision for reasons considered appropriate by youth justice agencies. For numbers of young people aged 10–17 only, refer to the supplementary tables.
3. Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this might affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.
4. Rates are calculated from the unrounded average nightly population, and are not published when there were fewer than 5 young people in the numerator. There might be instances when a numerator is presented as 5 and the rate is not calculated due to rounding.

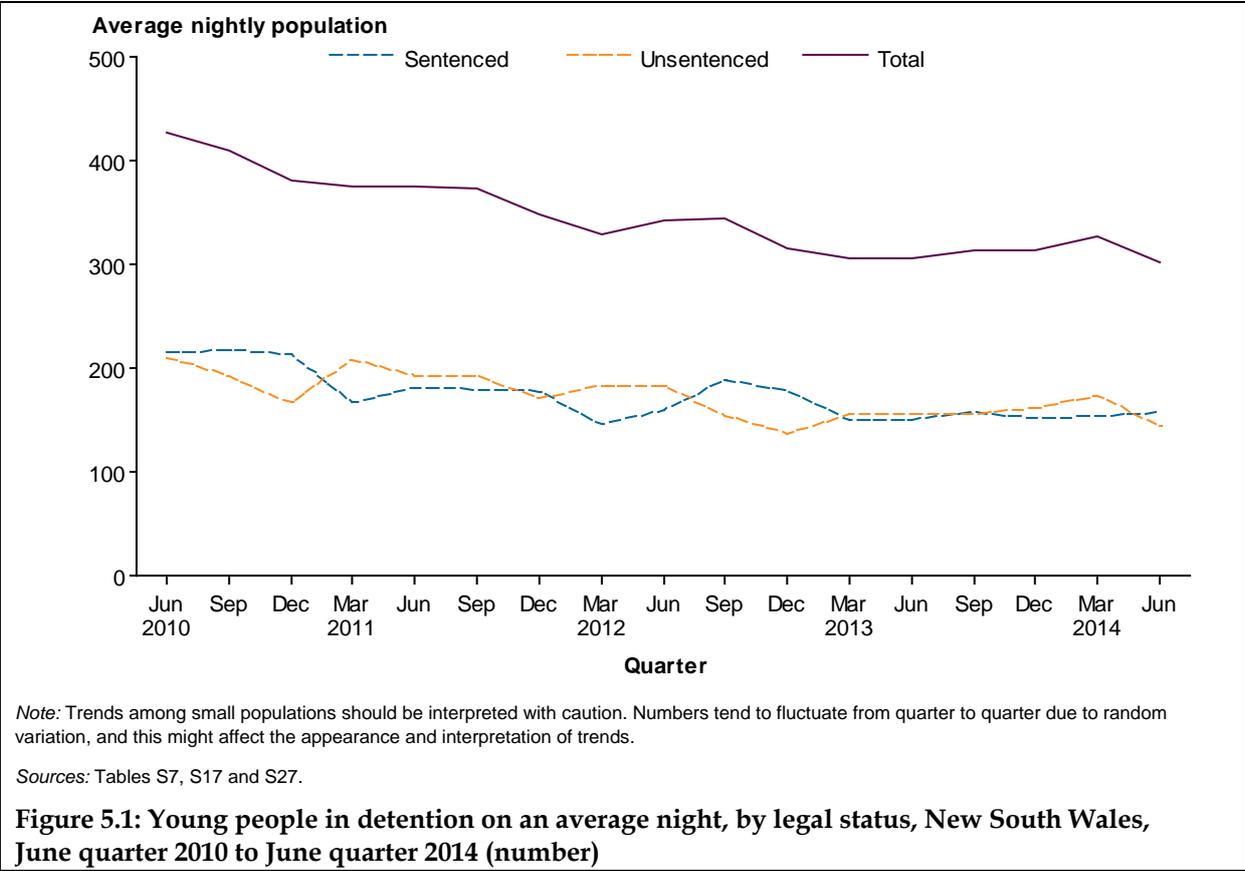
Sources: Tables S7, S10, S17, S20, S27 and S30.

# 5.2 New South Wales

## Numbers

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 302 young people were in detention in New South Wales, down from 427 in the June quarter 2010 (Figure 5.1; Table 5.2). The number of young people in detention on an average night each quarter declined steadily from June 2010 onwards.

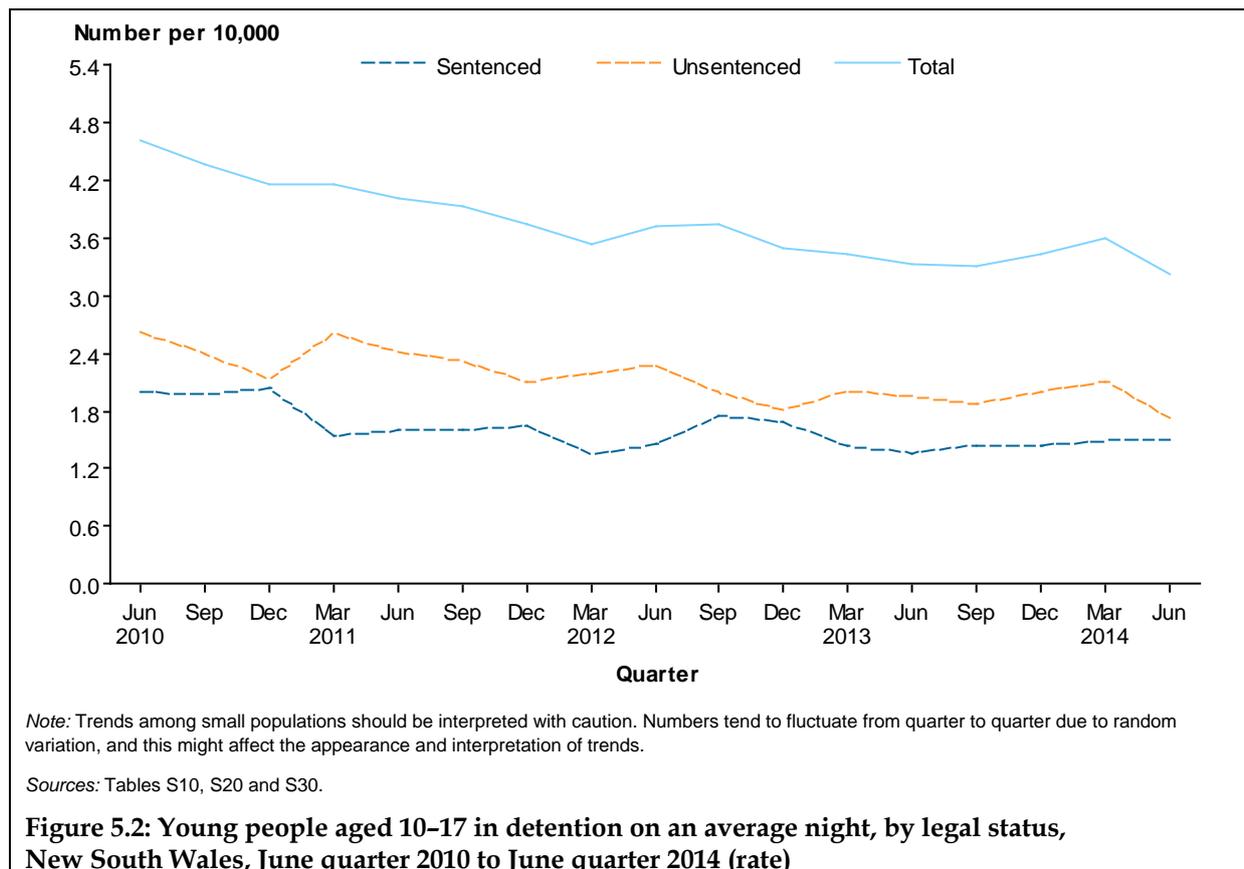
Similar numbers of young people were in sentenced and unsentenced detention in New South Wales on an average night each quarter throughout the 4-year period. Between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, there were decreases in the numbers of young people in both sentenced (down 27% to 158 young people) and unsentenced detention (down 32% to 144).



## Rates

On an average night in the June 2014 quarter, 3.2 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 (or about 1 in 3,100) were in detention – 1.7 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention and 1.5 per 10,000 in sentenced detention (Figure 5.2; Table 5.2).

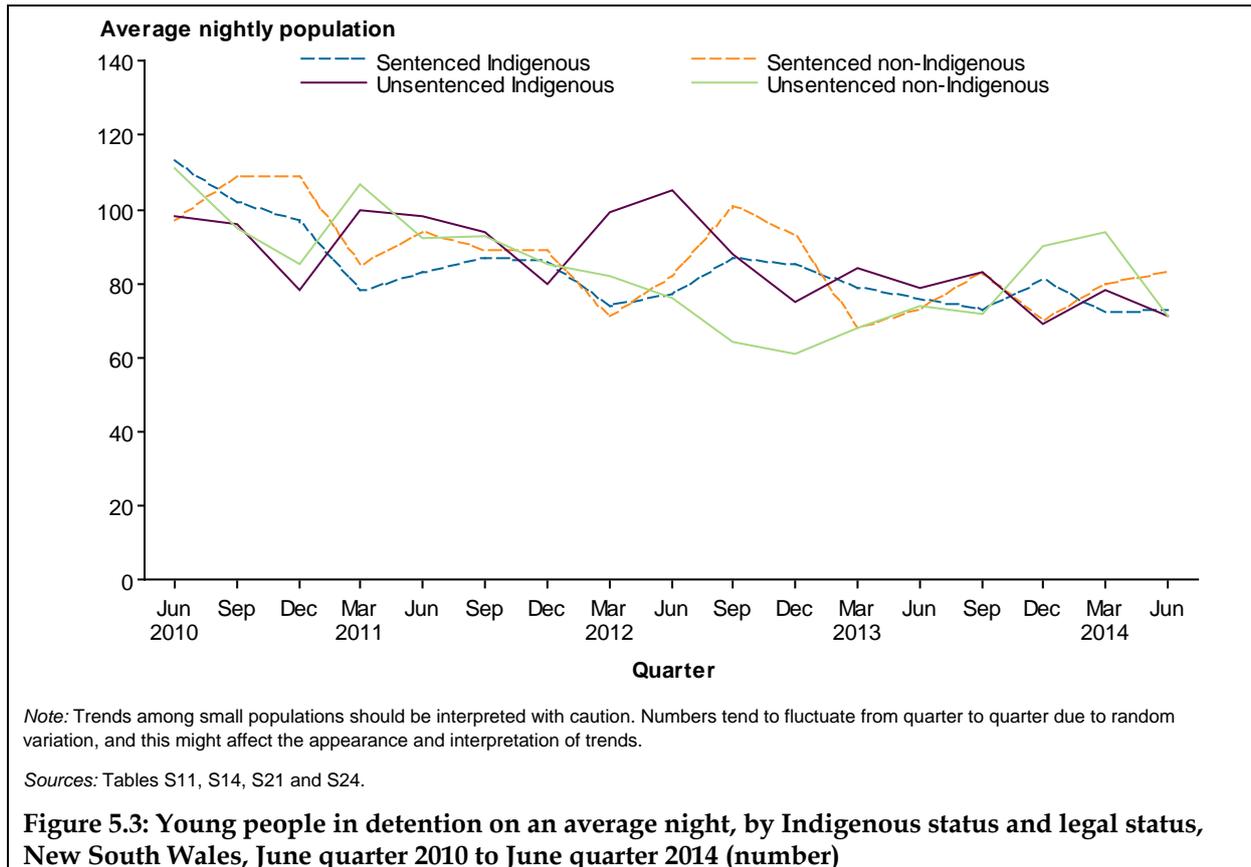
Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night each quarter declined relatively steadily (from 4.6 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2010 to 3.2 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2014). There was a slightly more pronounced decrease in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention (from 2.6 to 1.7 per 10,000) than in sentenced detention (from 2.0 to 1.5 per 10,000).



## Indigenous status

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 73 Indigenous and 83 non-Indigenous young people were in sentenced detention, and 71 Indigenous and 71 non-Indigenous young people were in unsentenced detention (Figure 5.3).

Between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, the number of young people in each of these 4 groups fell – the highest falls were seen in the number of Indigenous young people in sentenced detention (down 35%, from 113 to 73), and the number of non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention (down 36%, from 98 to 71).

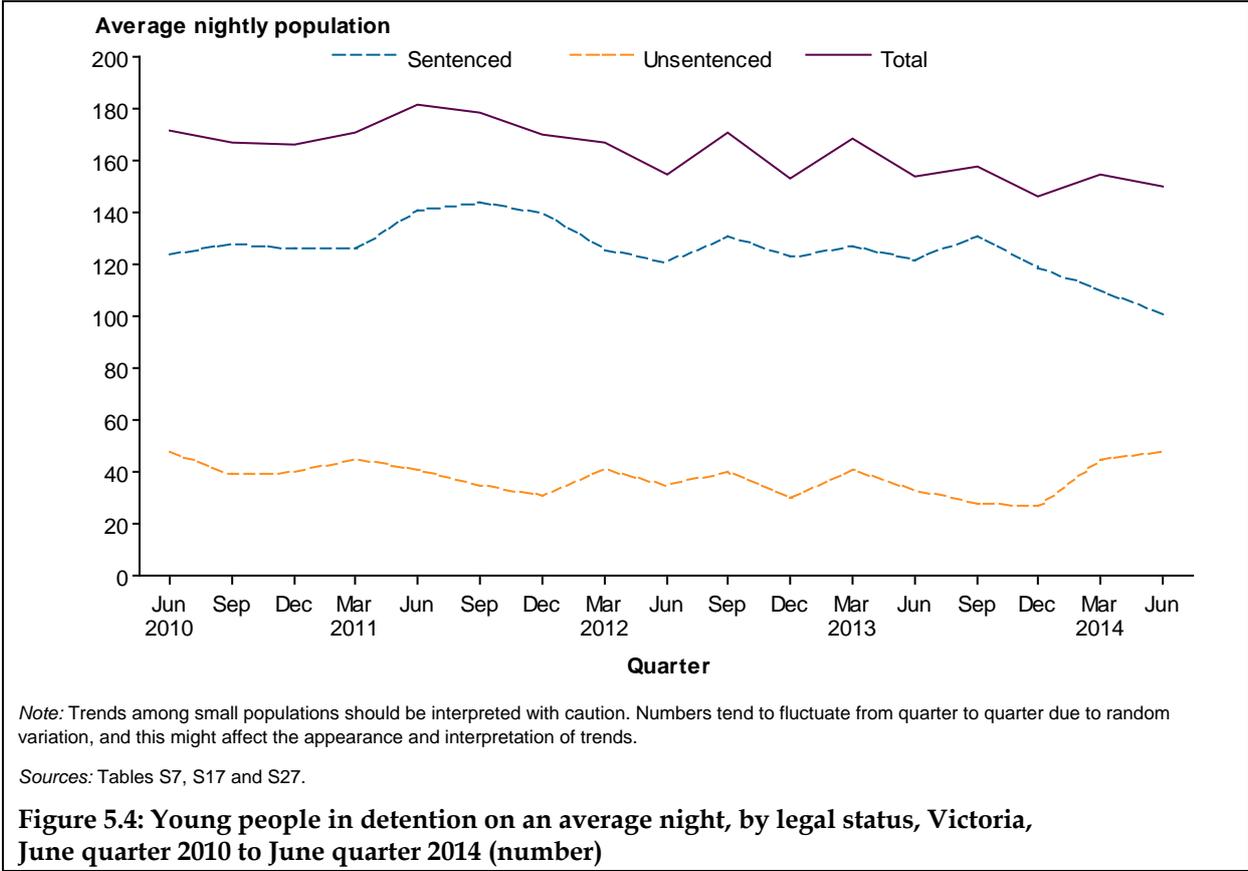


# 5.3 Victoria

## Numbers

On an average night, in the June quarter 2014, 150 young people were in detention in Victoria (Figure 5.4; Table 5.2), down from 172 in the June quarter 2010.

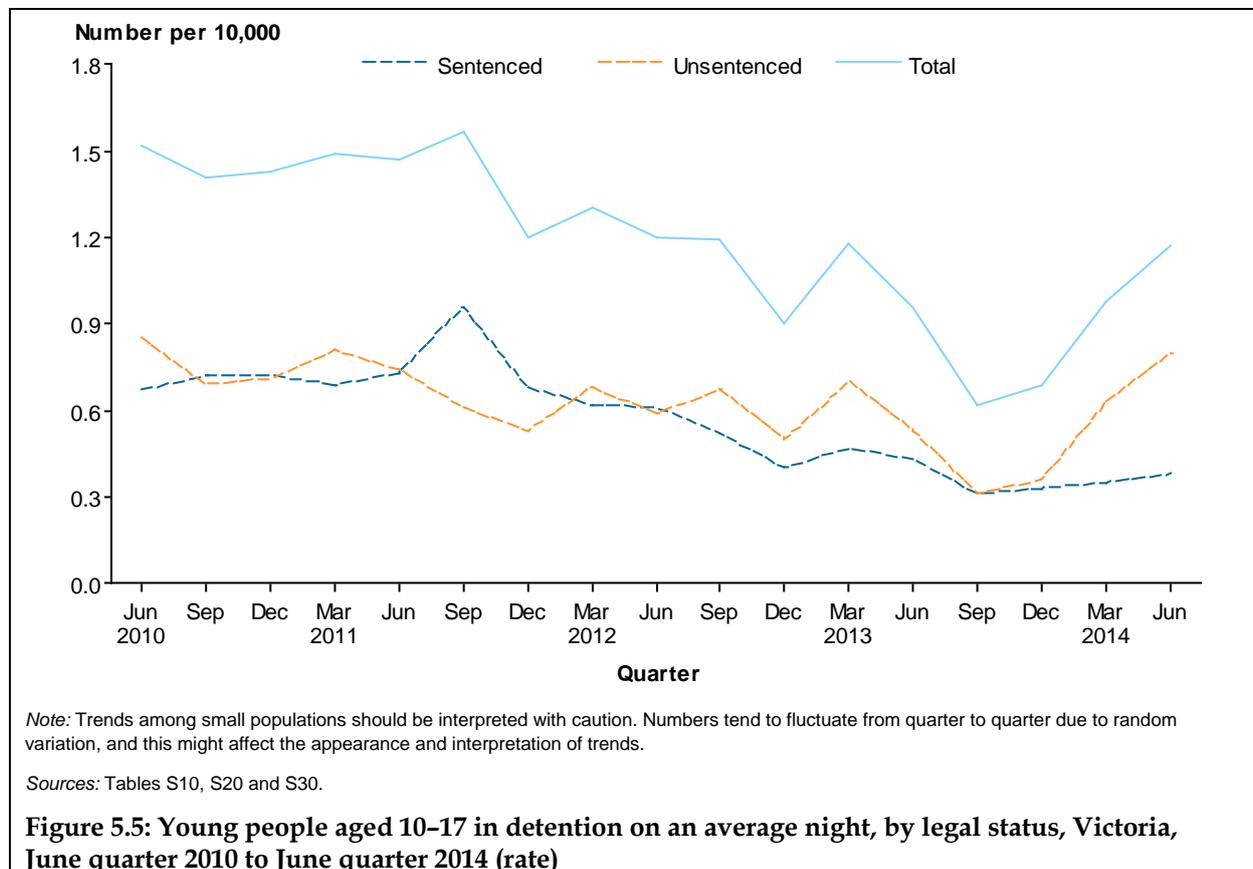
The majority of young people in detention in Victoria were serving a sentence, and this proportion decreased slightly over the 4 years (from 72% to 67%). Most change occurred between the June quarter 2013 and the June quarter 2014, with the number of young people in sentenced detention on an average night falling from 122 to 101. The unsentenced population fluctuated between 27 and 48 each quarter on an average night.



## Rates

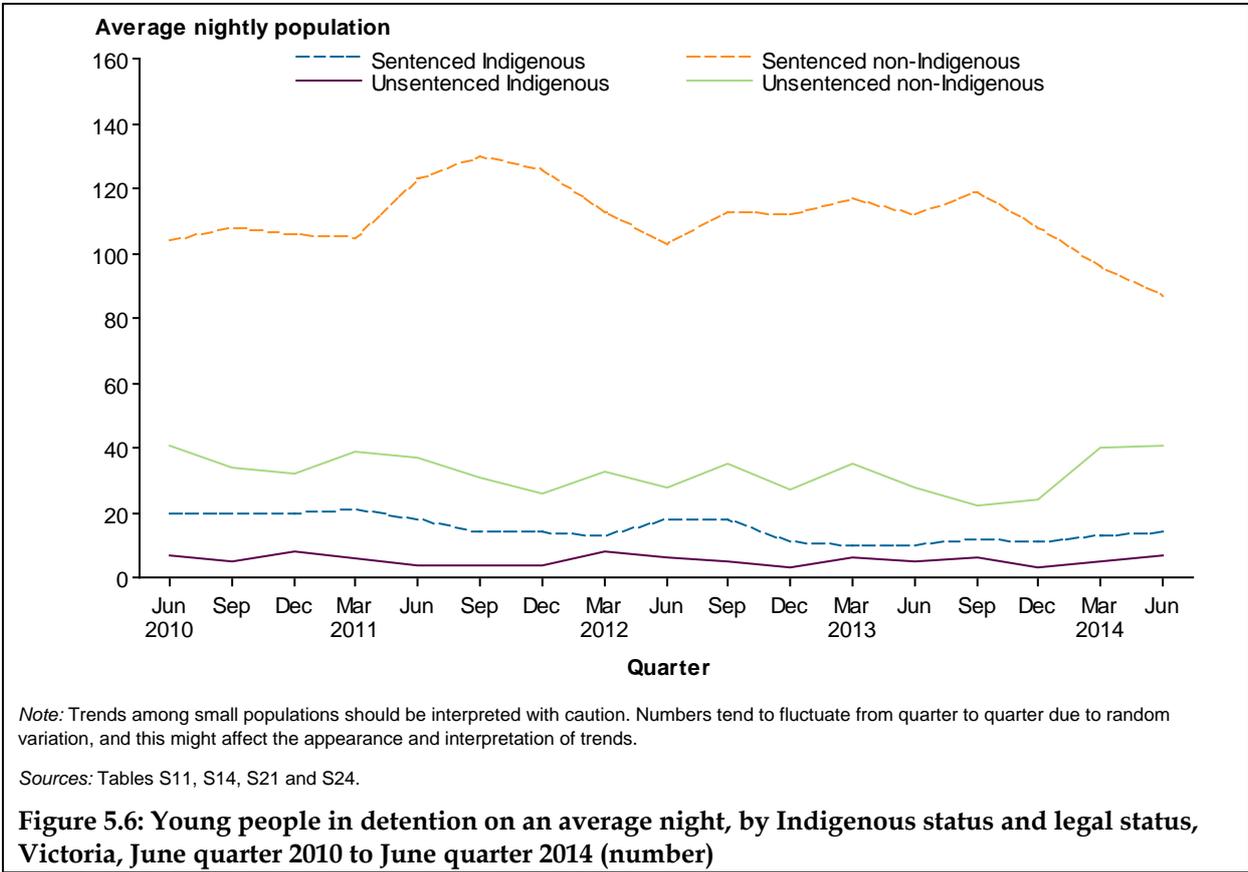
Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night fell in Victoria, from 1.5 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2010 to 1.2 per 10,000 (or about 1 in 8,500) in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 5.5; Table 5.2). The decrease occurred from the December quarter 2011 onwards.

Rates of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention declined over the 4-year period, while there was no clear trend in unsentenced detention. Differences between the numbers of young people (of all ages) and rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention in Victoria were due to the fact that a high proportion of those in detention were aged 18 or older (52% in the June quarter 2010, increasing to 57% in the June quarter 2014) (tables S7 and S9). The high proportion of young people aged 18 or older is likely to be largely driven by the ‘dual track’ sentencing system operating in Victoria, whereby some young people aged 18–20 may be sentenced to detention in a youth facility rather than an adult prison (see Chapter 1).



# Indigenous status

Non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention were consistently the largest group in Victoria, making up 3 in every 5 (58%) of those in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 5.6). This group ranged from 87 young people in the June quarter 2014 to 130 in the September quarter 2011, with an overall slight downward trend over the 4 years. There were no marked trends among the other three groups.

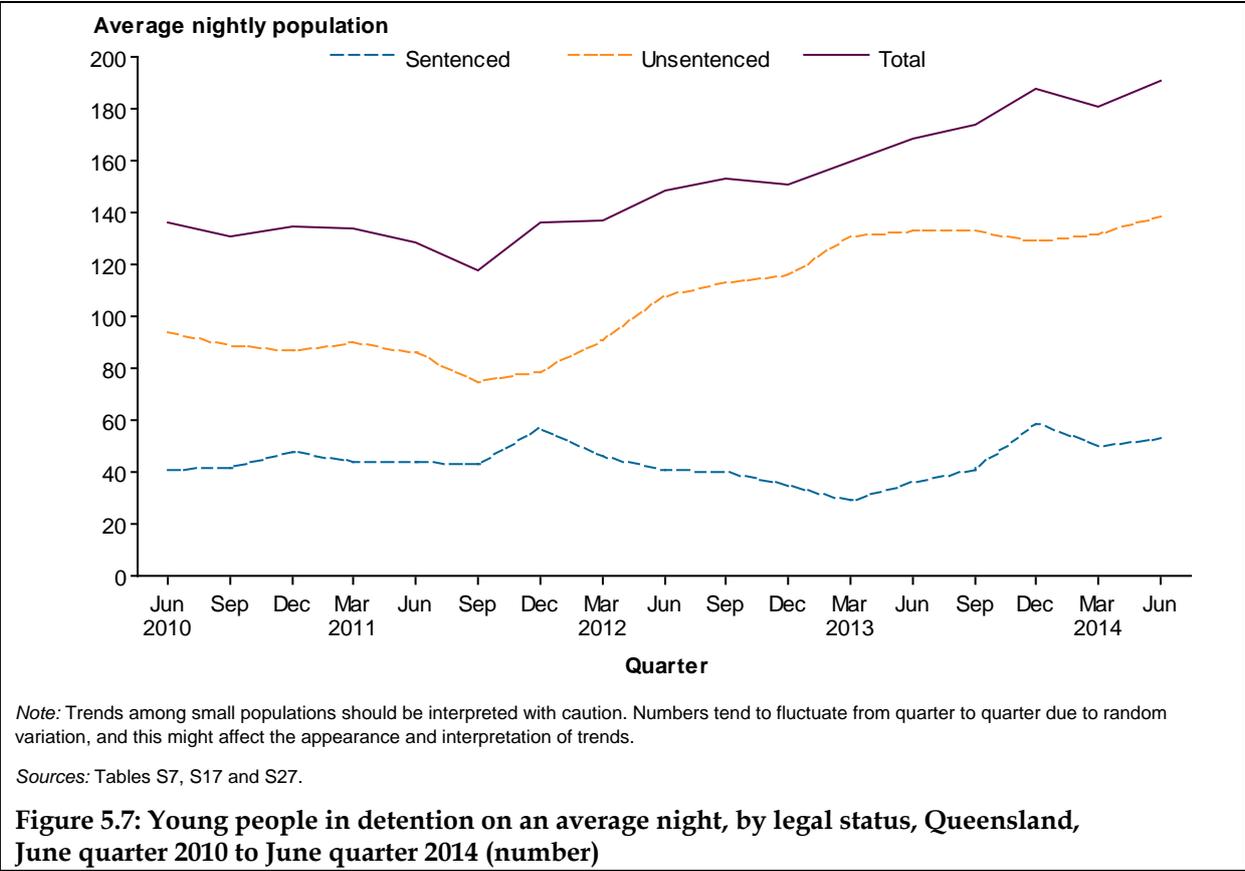


# 5.4 Queensland

## Numbers

The number of young people in detention on an average night in Queensland increased over the 4-year period, from 136 in the June quarter 2010 to 191 in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 5.7; Table 5.2). Most of the increase occurred from the June quarter 2012 onward.

The rise was almost entirely driven by an increase in the number of young people in unsentenced detention. Between 75 and 94 young people were in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter until the June quarter 2012, after which numbers increased steadily to 139 in the June quarter 2014. Those in unsentenced detention outnumbered those in sentenced detention in each quarter (by 22 to 102 young people) throughout the 4-year period.

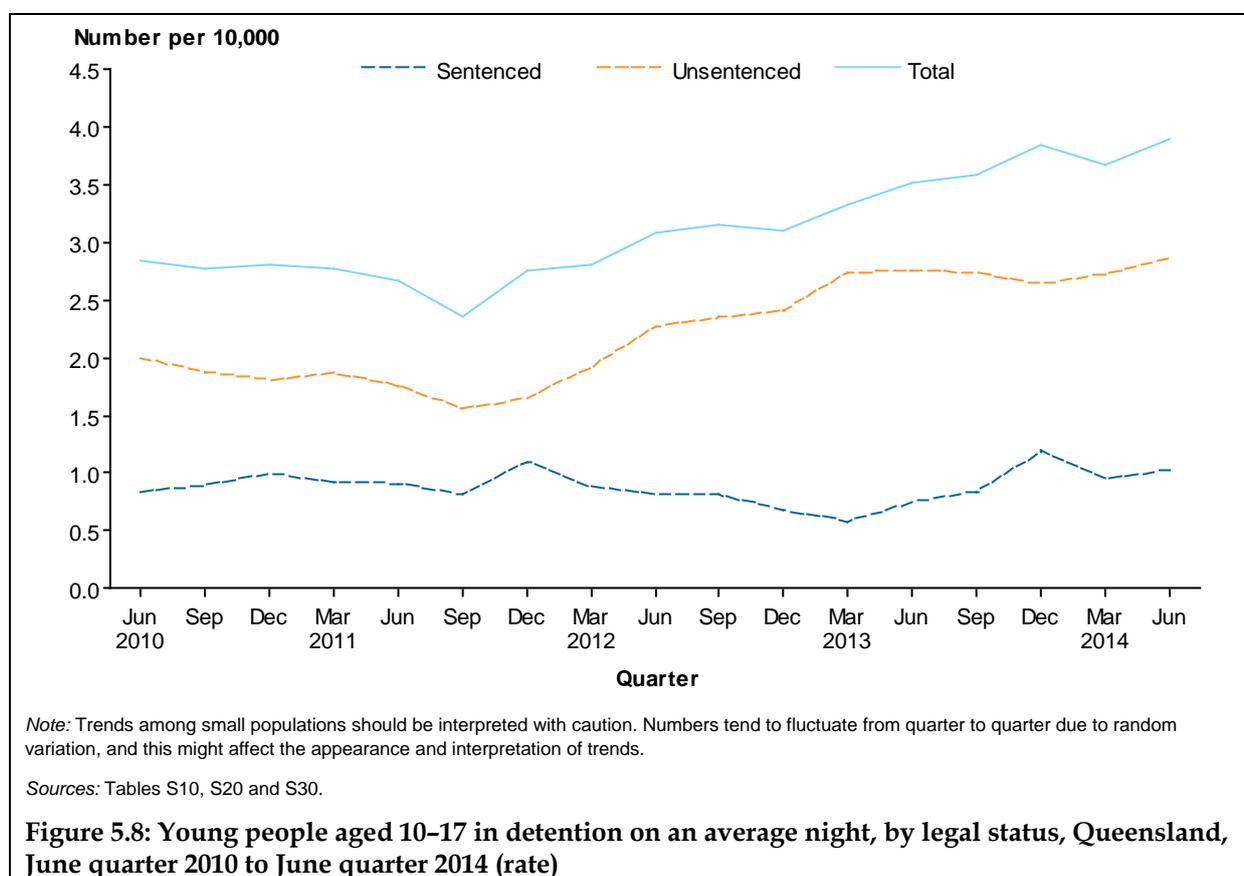


## Rates

Very few young people in detention in Queensland are aged 18 or older, as the upper age limit in the youth justice system is 16 at the time the offence was committed or allegedly committed (it is 17 in other states and territories; see Chapter 1). As a result, trends in the rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention were very similar to the trends in the numbers of young people of all ages.

Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people in detention on an average night rose overall, from 2.9 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2010 to 3.9 per 10,000 (or about 1 in 2,500) in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 5.8; Table 5.2).

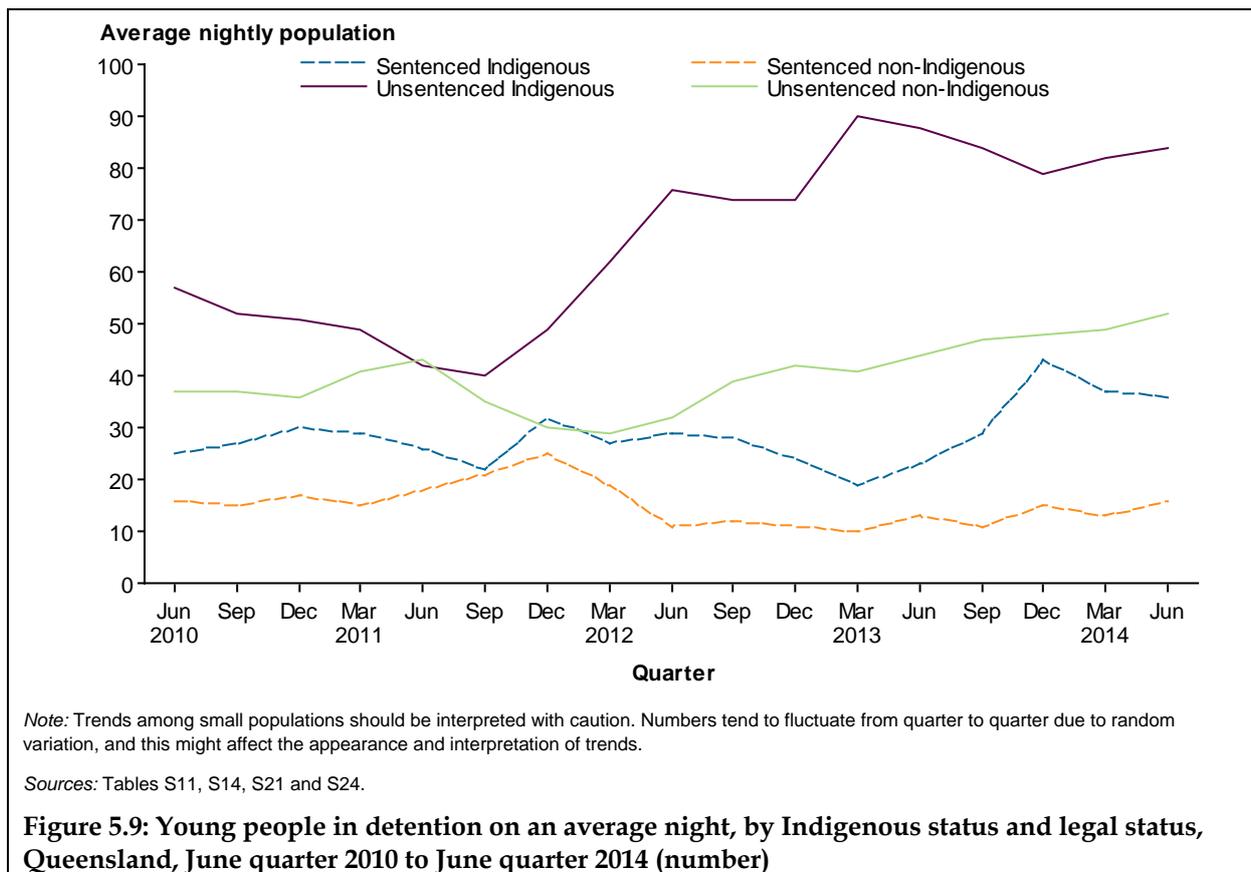
Again, this was driven by an increase in the rate of unsentenced detention (from 2.0 to 2.9 per 10,000 over the 4-year period), with most of this increase occurring since the September quarter 2011. The rate of young people in sentenced detention on an average night fluctuated, ranging between 0.6 and 1.2 per 10,000 each quarter over the 4-year period.



## Indigenous status

The increase in the unsentenced population since the September quarter 2011 mainly occurred among Indigenous young people (Figure 5.9). Between the June quarter 2010 and September quarter 2011, between 40 and 57 Indigenous young people were in unsentenced detention, rising to between 70 and 88 Indigenous young people in 2013–14. Unsentenced Indigenous young people were the largest group in detention in most quarters throughout the period.

There were no consistent trends among the other groups. On an average night each quarter, between 29 and 52 non-Indigenous young people were in unsentenced detention, and about 19 to 43 Indigenous and 10 to 25 non-Indigenous young people were in sentenced detention.



# 5.5 Western Australia

## Numbers

Over the 4 years to the June quarter 2014, between 151 and 200 young people were in detention on an average night in Western Australia each quarter (153 in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 5.10; Table 5.2). Numbers fluctuated slightly each quarter, but were consistently lowest during 2013–14.

The numbers of sentenced and unsentenced young people remained similar to one another over the period, although sentenced young people outnumbered unsentenced young people in all but the March quarter 2011.

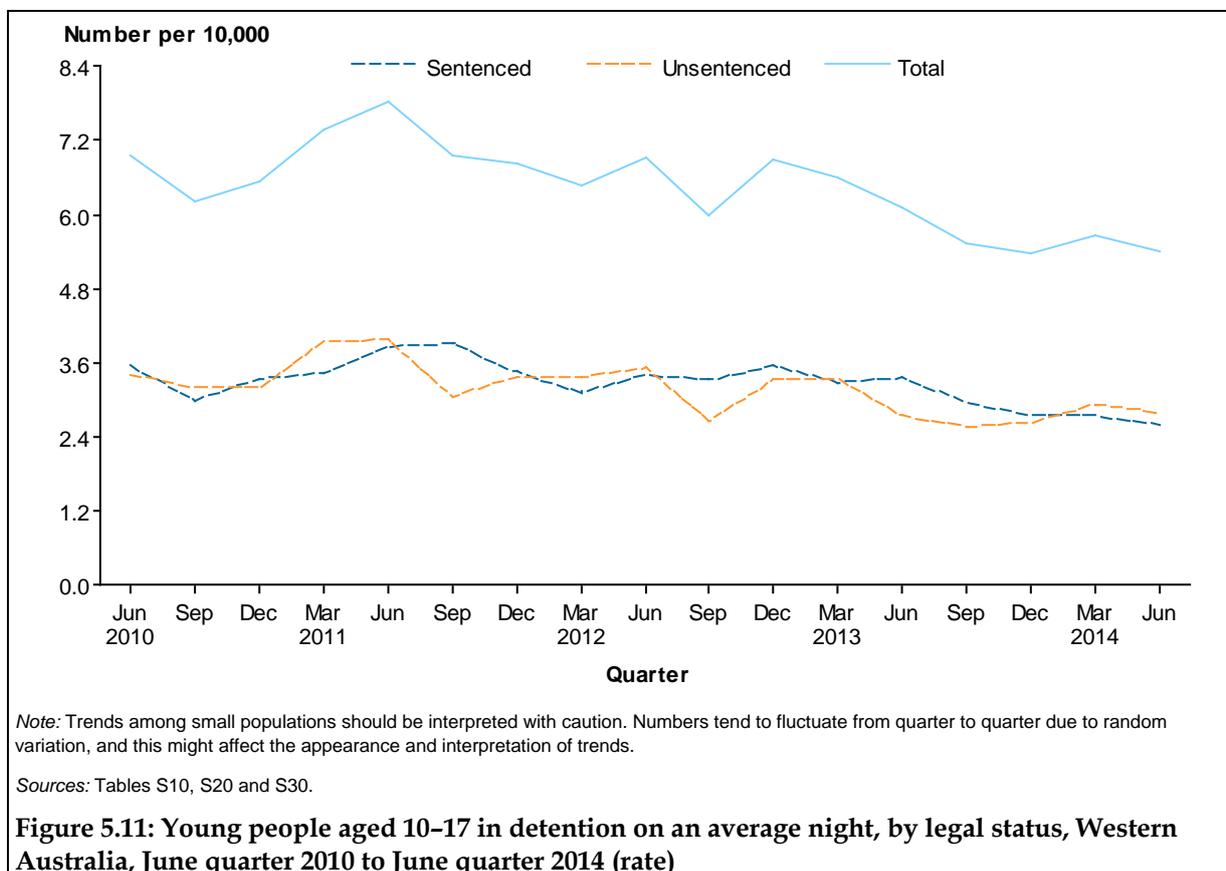


## Rates

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 5.4 young people aged 10–17 were in detention per 10,000 (or about 1 in 1,800) in Western Australia – 2.8 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention and 2.6 per 10,000 in sentenced detention (Figure 5.11; Table 5.2).

Patterns in the rates of detention among those aged 10–17 were similar to those in the numbers of young people of all ages due to the relatively small proportion of those aged 18 or older. Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night decreased overall (from 7.0 to 5.4 per 10,000), and was lowest in the December quarter 2013 and June quarter 2014 (5.4 per 10,000) and highest in the June quarter 2011 (7.8 per 10,000).

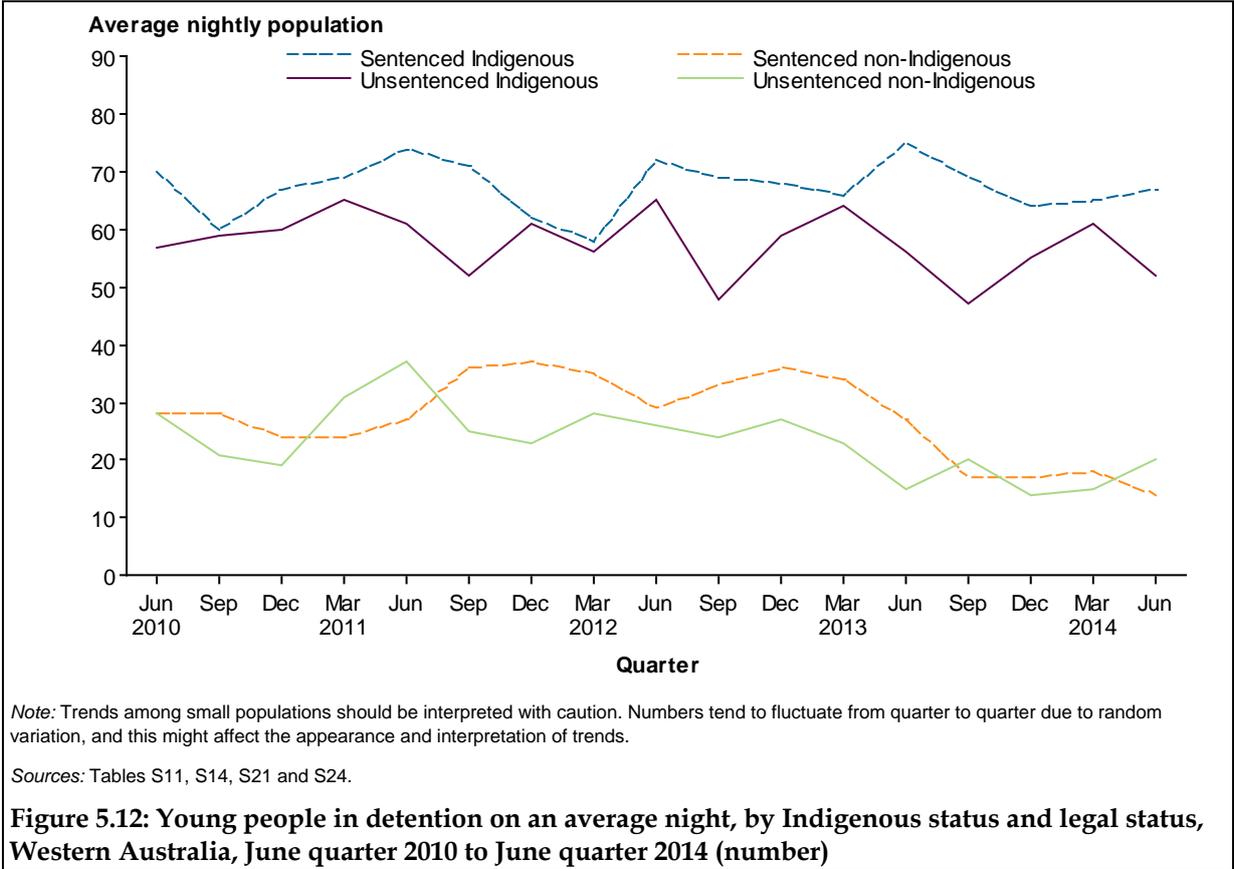
The unsentenced and sentenced detention rates closely followed each other over the period and changed little over time. Between 2.6 and 4.0 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 were in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter, and 2.6 to 3.9 per 10,000 in sentenced detention.



## Indigenous status

Throughout the 4-year period, the majority (about 65% to 79%) of young people in detention in Western Australia were Indigenous. The numbers of Indigenous young people in unsentenced and sentenced detention remained similar over the period, with the sentenced group (58 to 75) slightly outnumbering the unsentenced group (47 to 65) in most quarters (Figure 5.12).

The numbers of non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced and sentenced detention were also similar throughout the 4 years. The sentenced group reached its highest levels between the September quarter 2011 and the March quarter 2013 to be slightly larger than the unsentenced group.

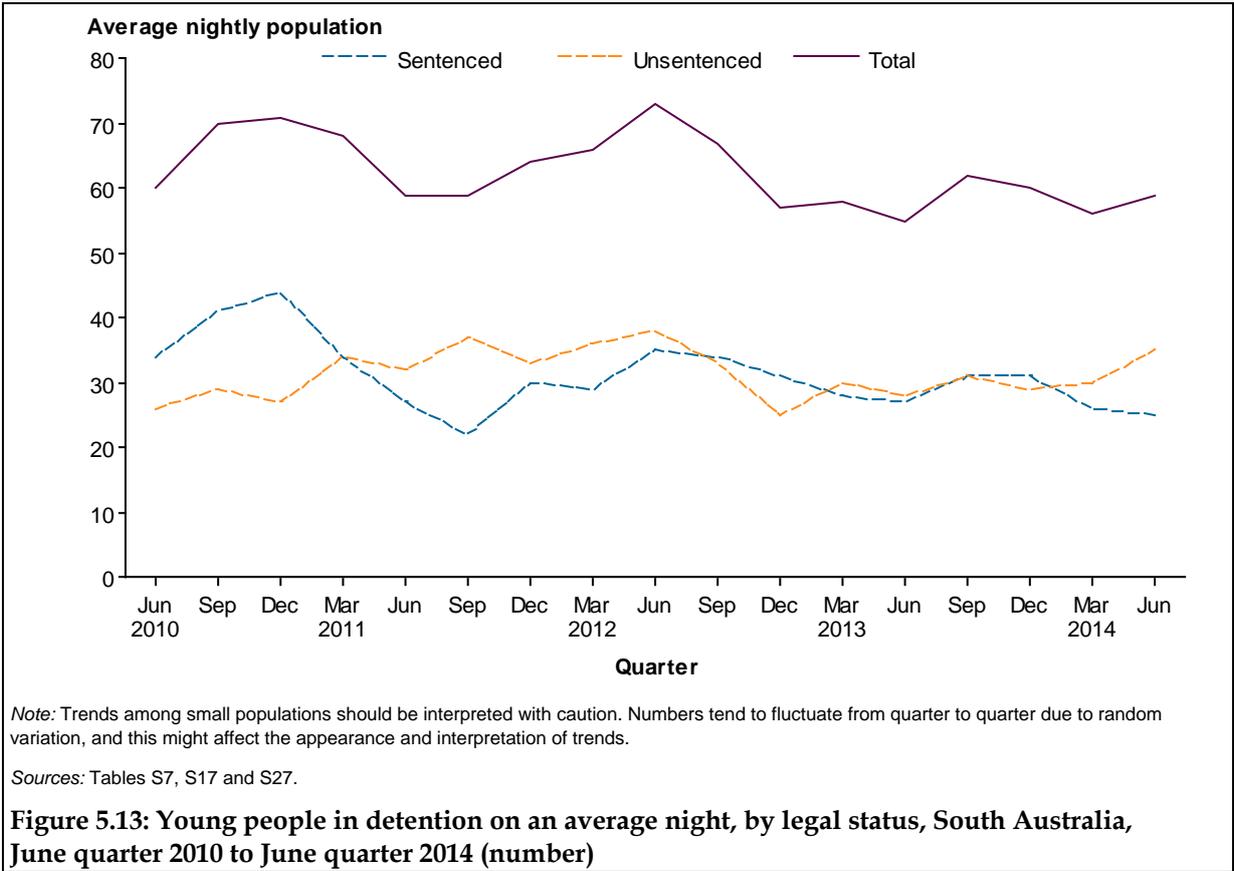


# 5.6 South Australia

## Numbers

Over the 4-year period, between 55 and 73 young people were in detention in South Australia on an average night in each quarter (59 in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 5.13; Table 5.2). Numbers fluctuated slightly from quarter to quarter, with no clear pattern of change.

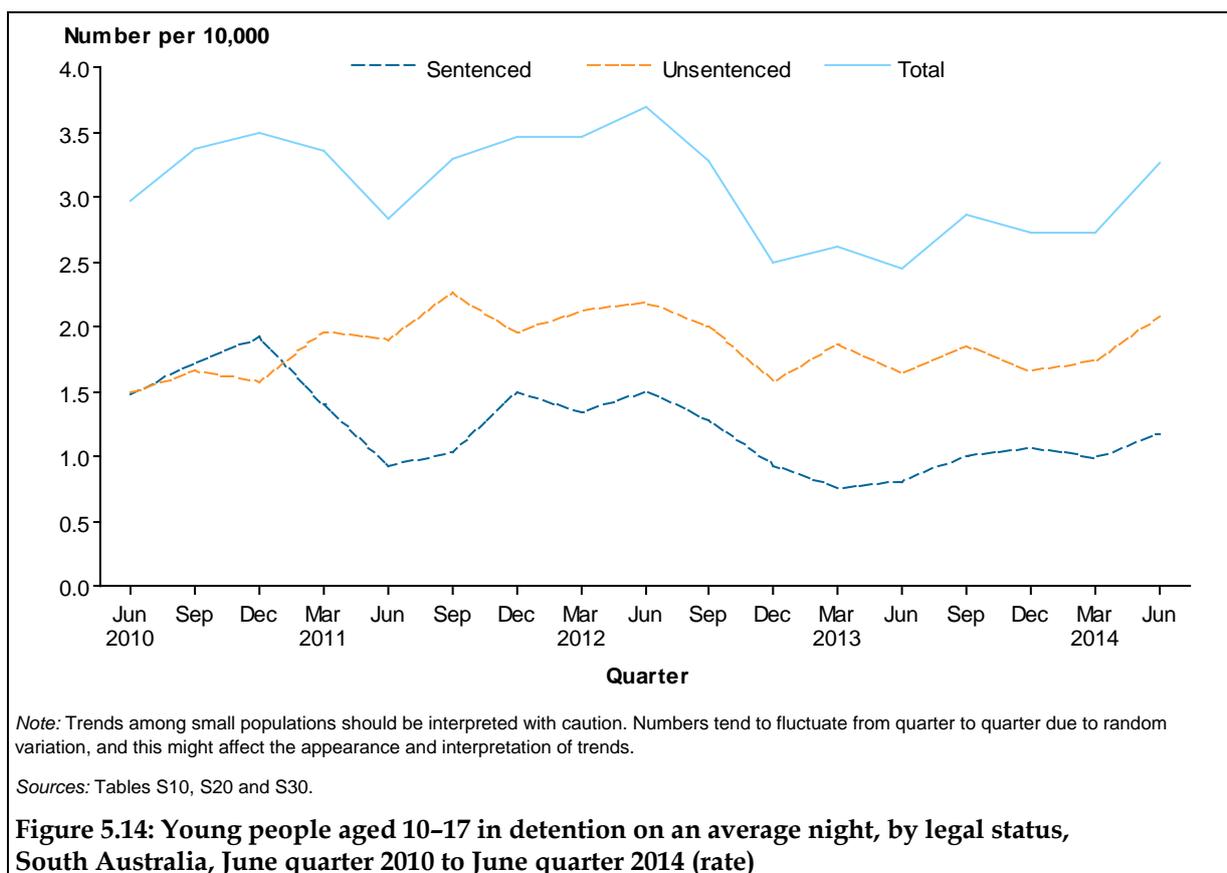
The numbers of young people in sentenced and unsentenced detention remained similar to one another over the period. On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 35 unsentenced and 25 sentenced young people were in detention.



## Rates

Trends in the rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention in South Australia were consistent with the trends in numbers over the 4-year period (Figure 5.14), fluctuating from about 2.5 to 3.7 per 10,000 each quarter (3.3 per 10,000, or about 1 in 3,000, in the June quarter 2014).

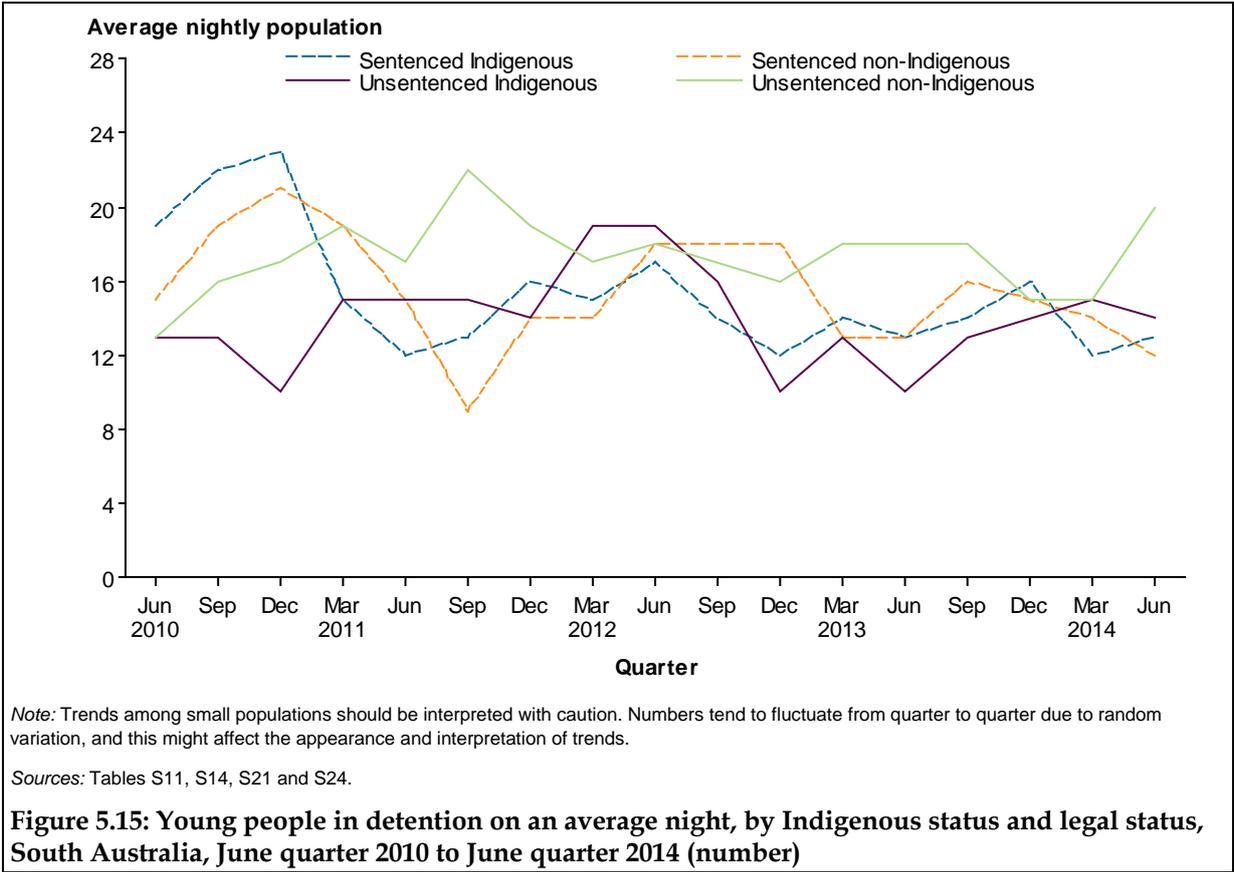
Rates of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced and sentenced detention were similar (about 1.5 per 10,000) until late 2010, when the sentenced detention rate decreased (to about 0.8 to 1.3 per 10,000) and the unsentenced detention rate increased (to about 1.6 to 2.2 per 10,000). In the June quarter 2014, 1.2 young people per 10,000 were in sentenced detention on an average night, and 2.1 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention.



### Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2014, non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention were the largest group of young people in detention in South Australia (20 young people on an average night, or 34% of all those in detention) (Figure 5.15).

The size of each of the 4 groups fluctuated each quarter over the 4-year period, in part because of the very small numbers involved. Overall, both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in sentenced detention decreased slightly.

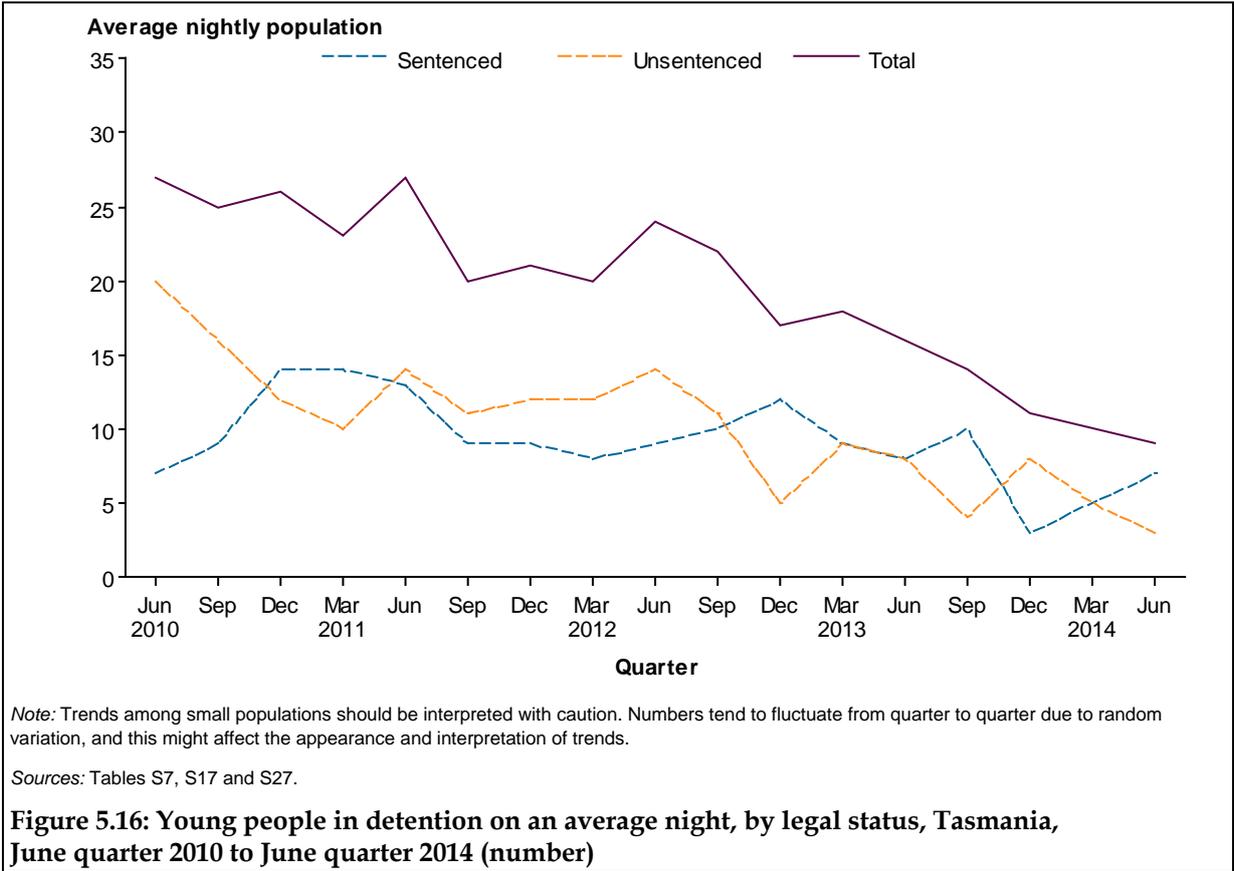


# 5.7 Tasmania

## Numbers

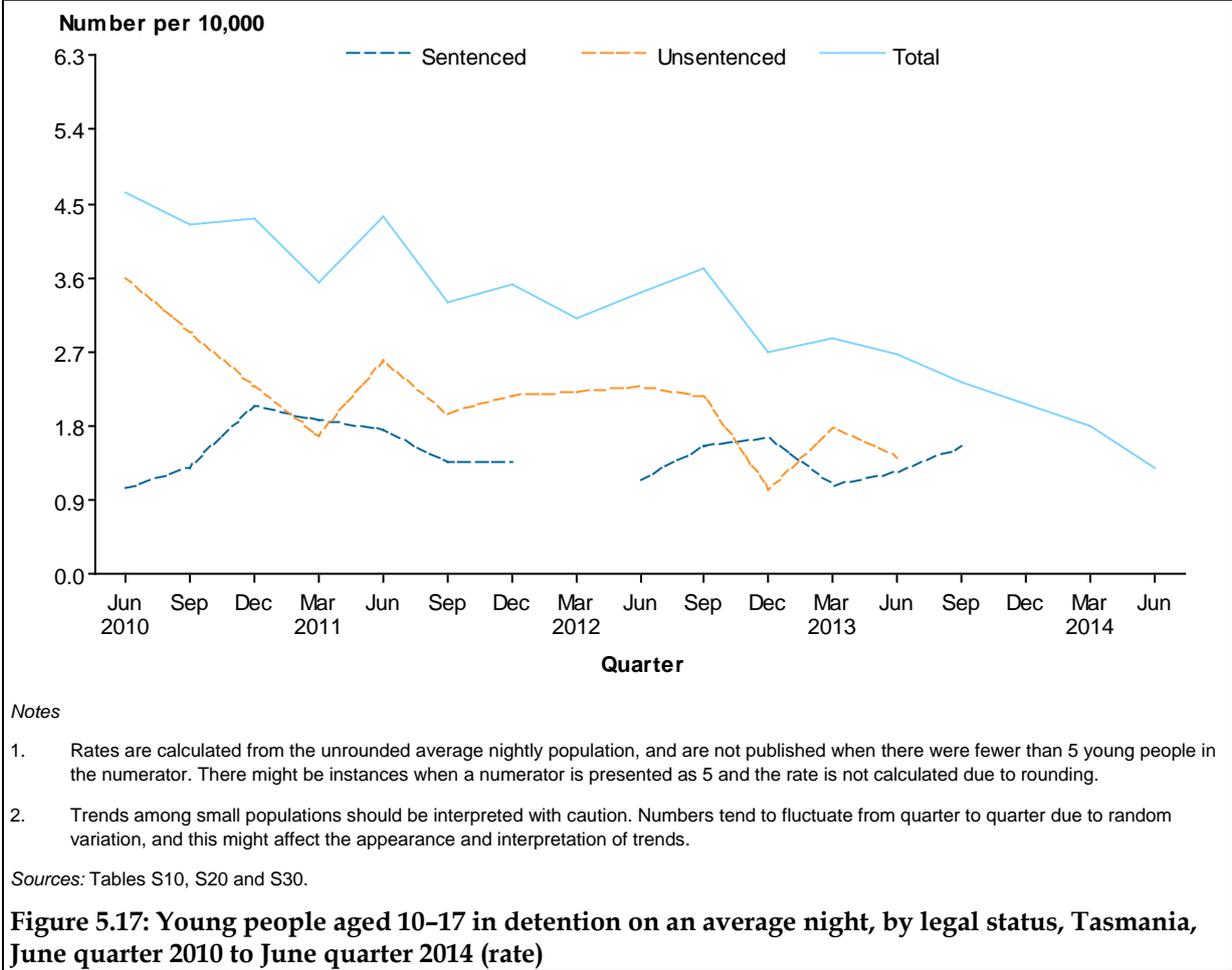
Despite quarterly fluctuations, the number of young people in detention on an average night in Tasmania declined steadily, from 27 young people at the start of the 4-year period to 9 in the June quarter 2014 (Figure 5.16; Table 5.2).

This was driven mainly by a decrease in the number of young people in unsentenced detention, from 20 on an average night in the June quarter 2010 to 3 in the June quarter 2014.



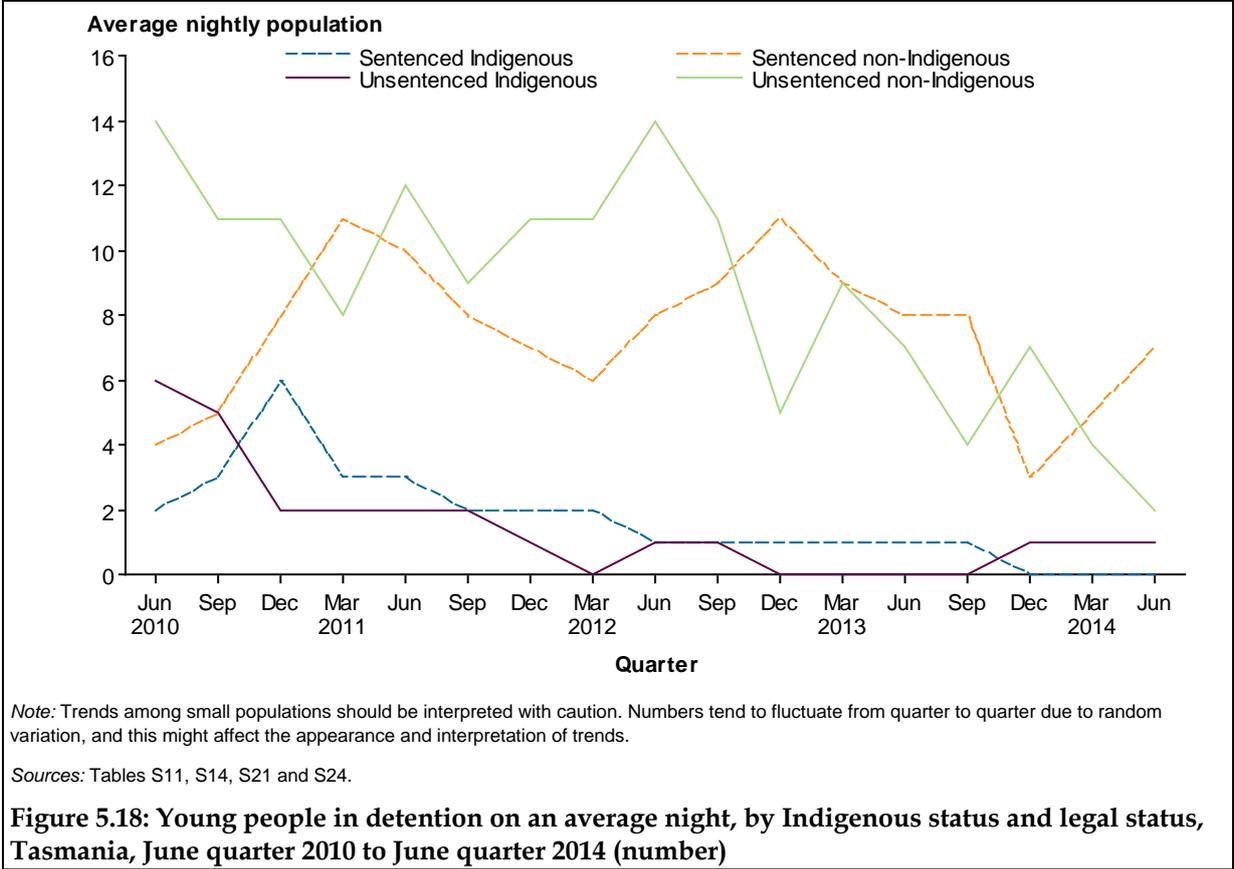
# Rates

Driven by the decline in the number of young people in detention, the rate of those aged 10–17 in detention decreased between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, from 4.6 to 1.3 per 10,000, or about 1 in 7,700 (Figure 5.17; Table 5.2). Rates of young people in unsentenced detention declined over the 4-year period. Rates were not calculated where there were fewer than 5 young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night.



# Indigenous status

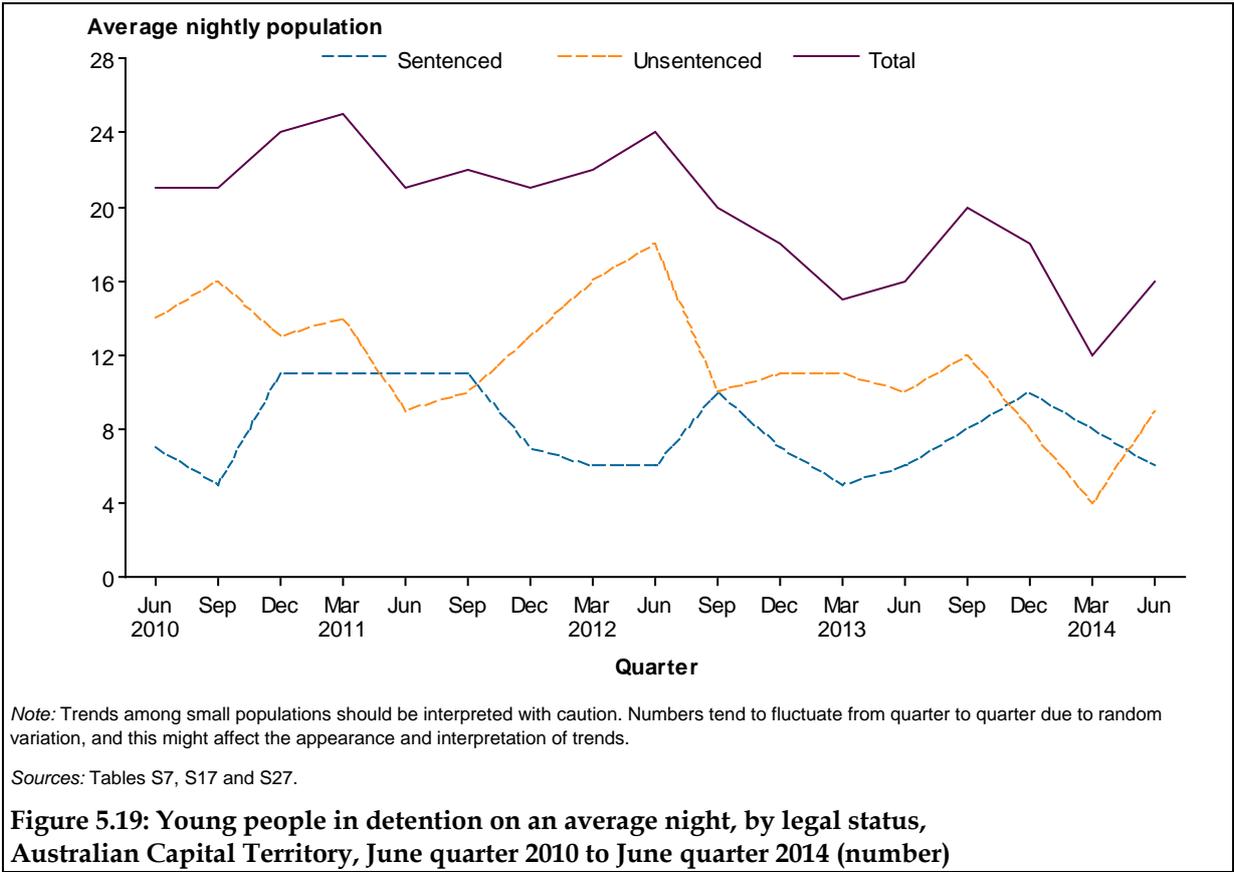
The very small numbers of young people in detention in Tasmania meant that there were few clear patterns in the Indigenous and non-Indigenous unsentenced and sentenced populations over the 4-year period (Figure 5.18). Overall, non-Indigenous young people outnumbered Indigenous young people in both unsentenced and sentenced detention each quarter.



# 5.8 Australian Capital Territory

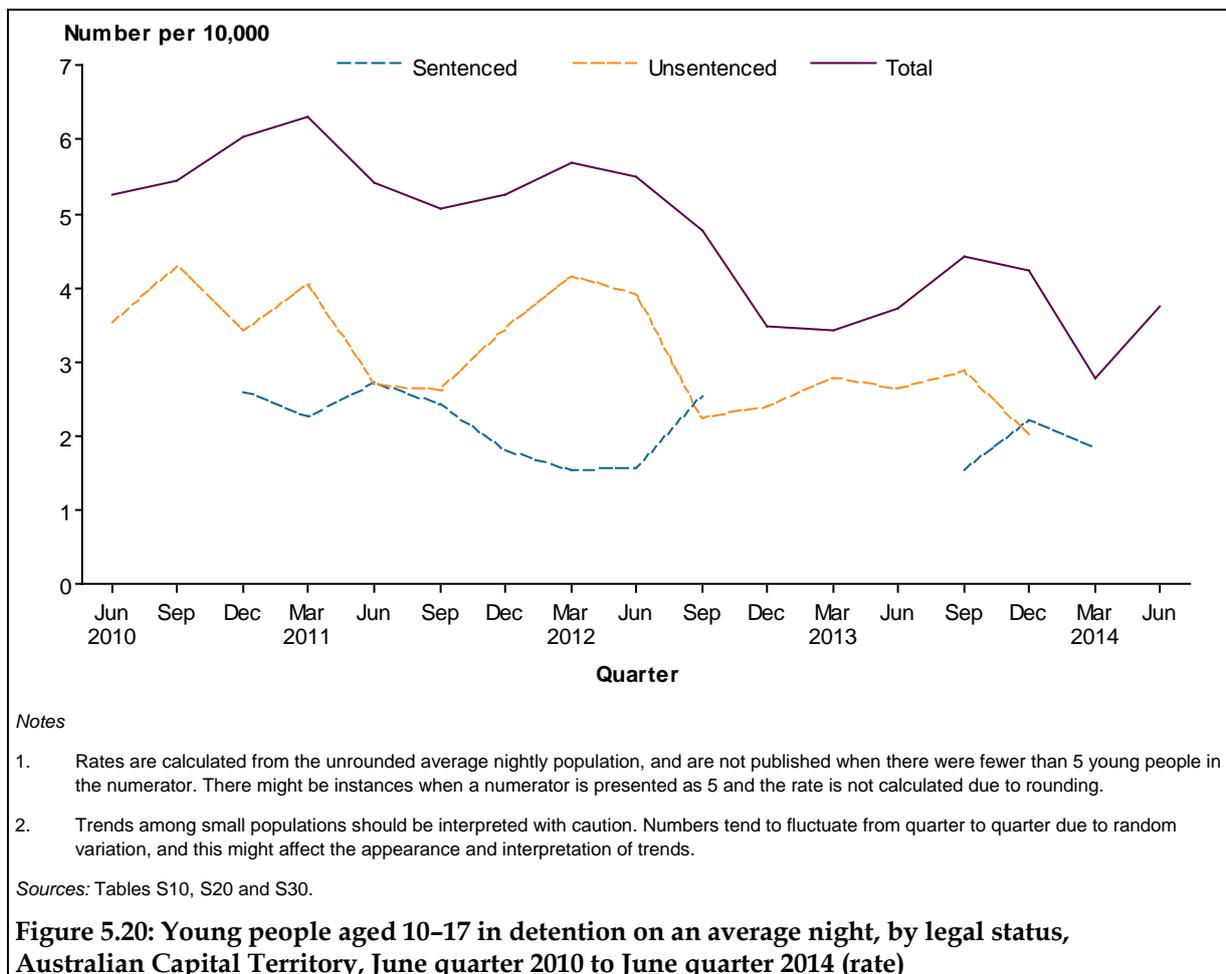
## Numbers

On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 16 young people were in detention in the Australian Capital Territory (Figure 5.19; Table 5.2). Over the 4-year period, the number of young people in detention on an average night increased slightly during 2010 to 2012 (peaking at 25 in the March quarter 2011), before decreasing during 2013 and 2014 (reaching a low of 12 in the March quarter 2014). The number of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night was greater than the number in sentenced detention in most quarters.



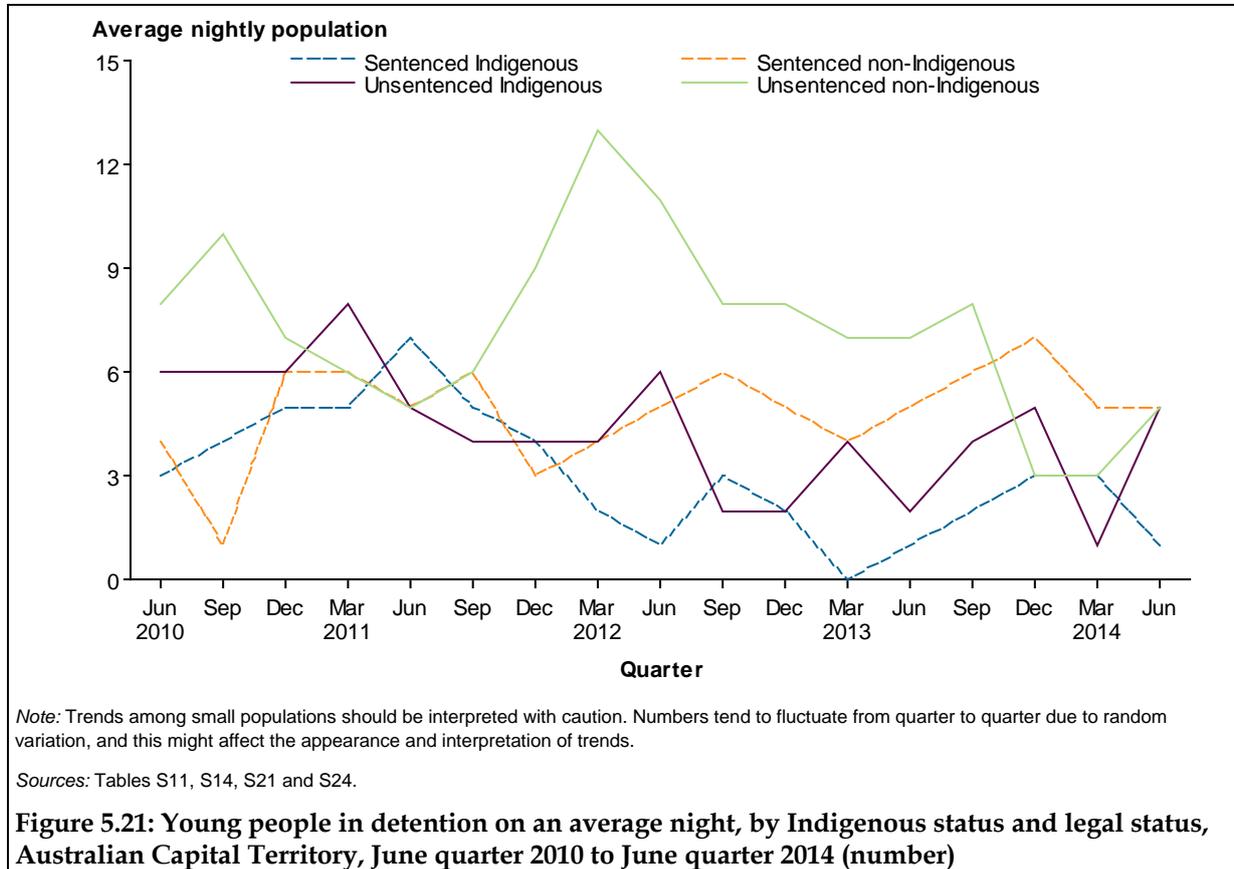
## Rates

Rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night fluctuated between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, in part due to the very small numbers of young people in detention (Figure 5.20). There was however an overall decline in the rate of young people from 5.3 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2010 to 3.8 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2014. Rates were not calculated where there were fewer than 5 young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night.



## Indigenous status

Unsentenced non-Indigenous young people were the largest group of young people in detention in most quarters over the period (5 on an average night in the June quarter 2014) (Figure 5.21). There were no clear trends among any group, probably reflecting the relatively small numbers of young people involved.

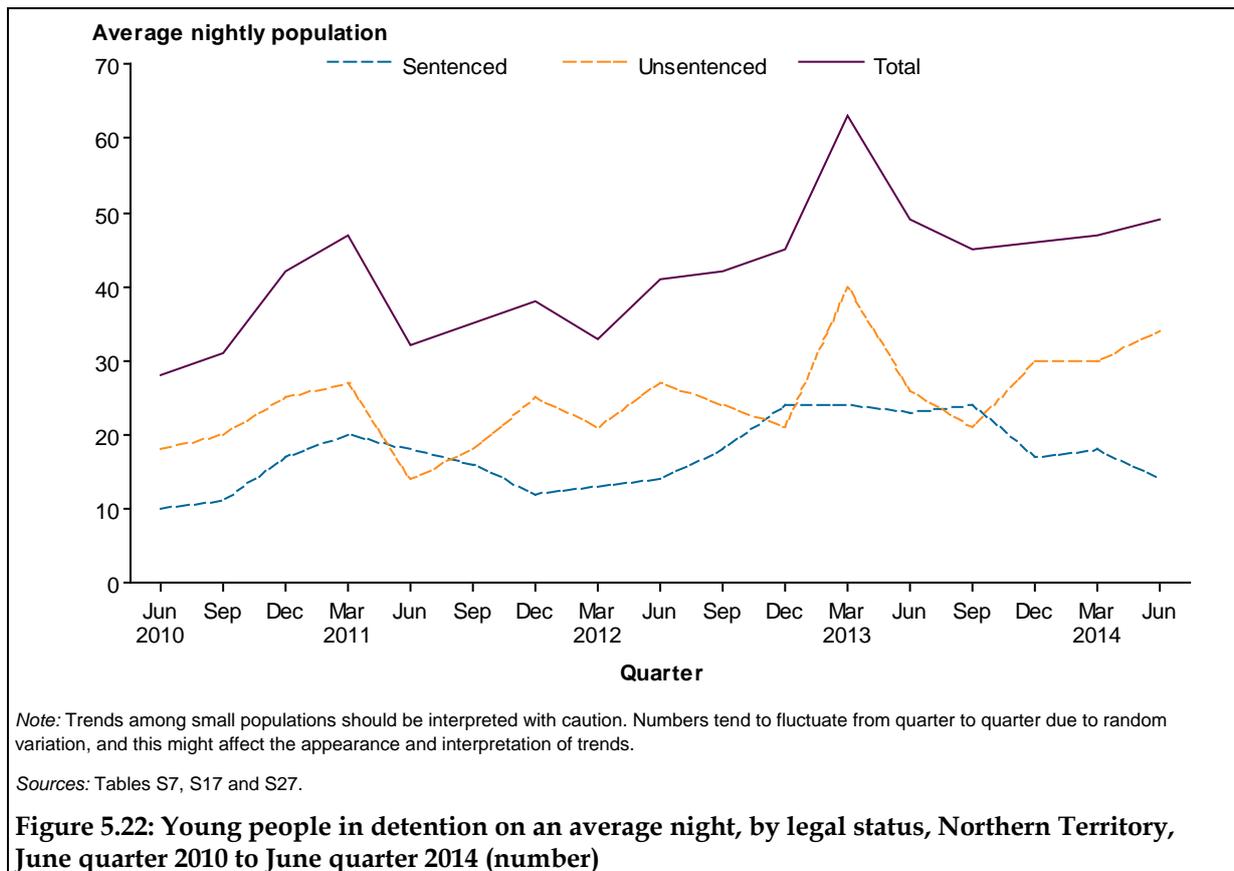


## 5.9 Northern Territory

### Numbers

Despite small numbers and quarterly fluctuations, the number of young people in detention on an average night in the Northern Territory increased over the 4-year period – from 28 young people in the June quarter 2010 to 49 in the June quarter 2014 (after a peak of 63 in the March quarter 2013) (Figure 5.22; Table 5.2).

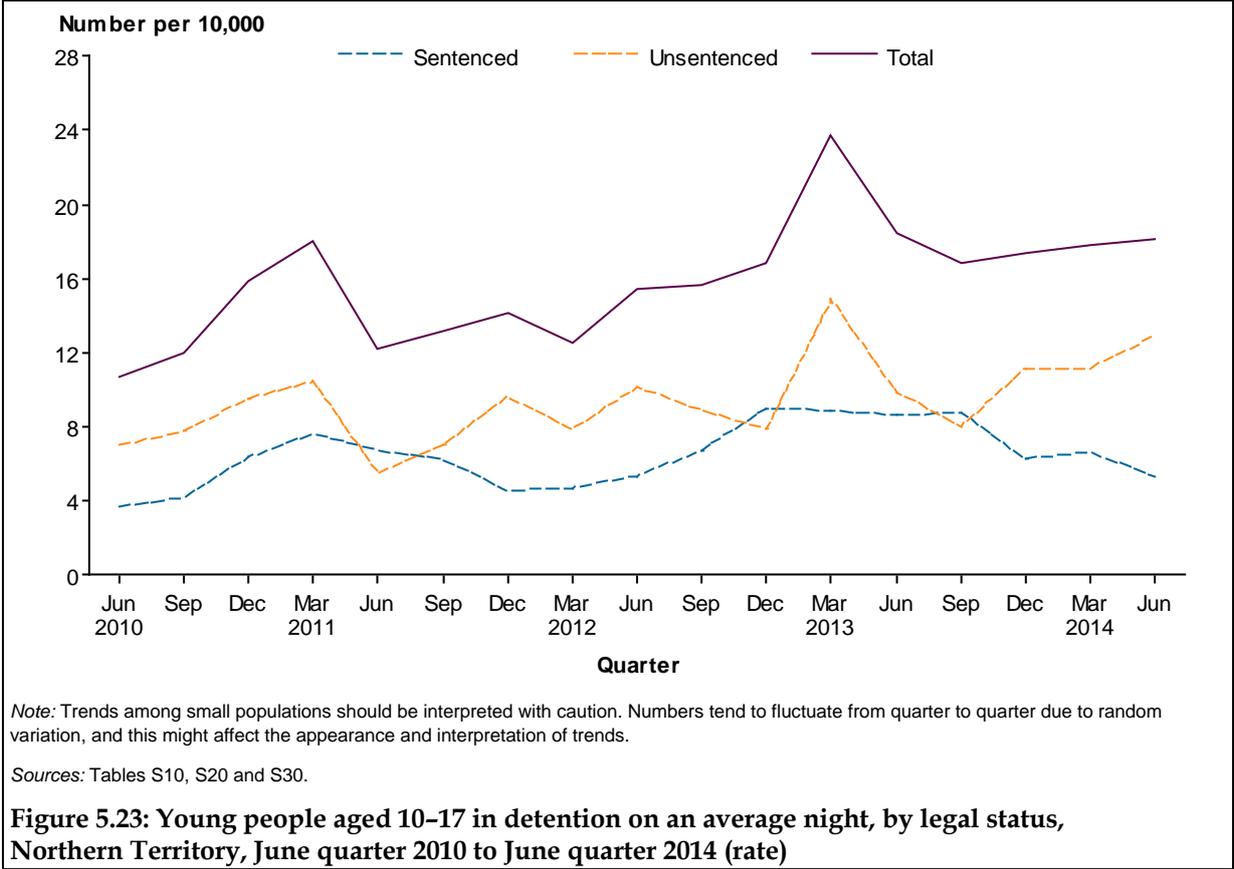
Young people in unsentenced detention slightly outnumbered those in sentenced detention in most quarters during the period. On an average night in the June quarter 2014, 34 unsentenced and 14 sentenced young people were in detention.



### Rates

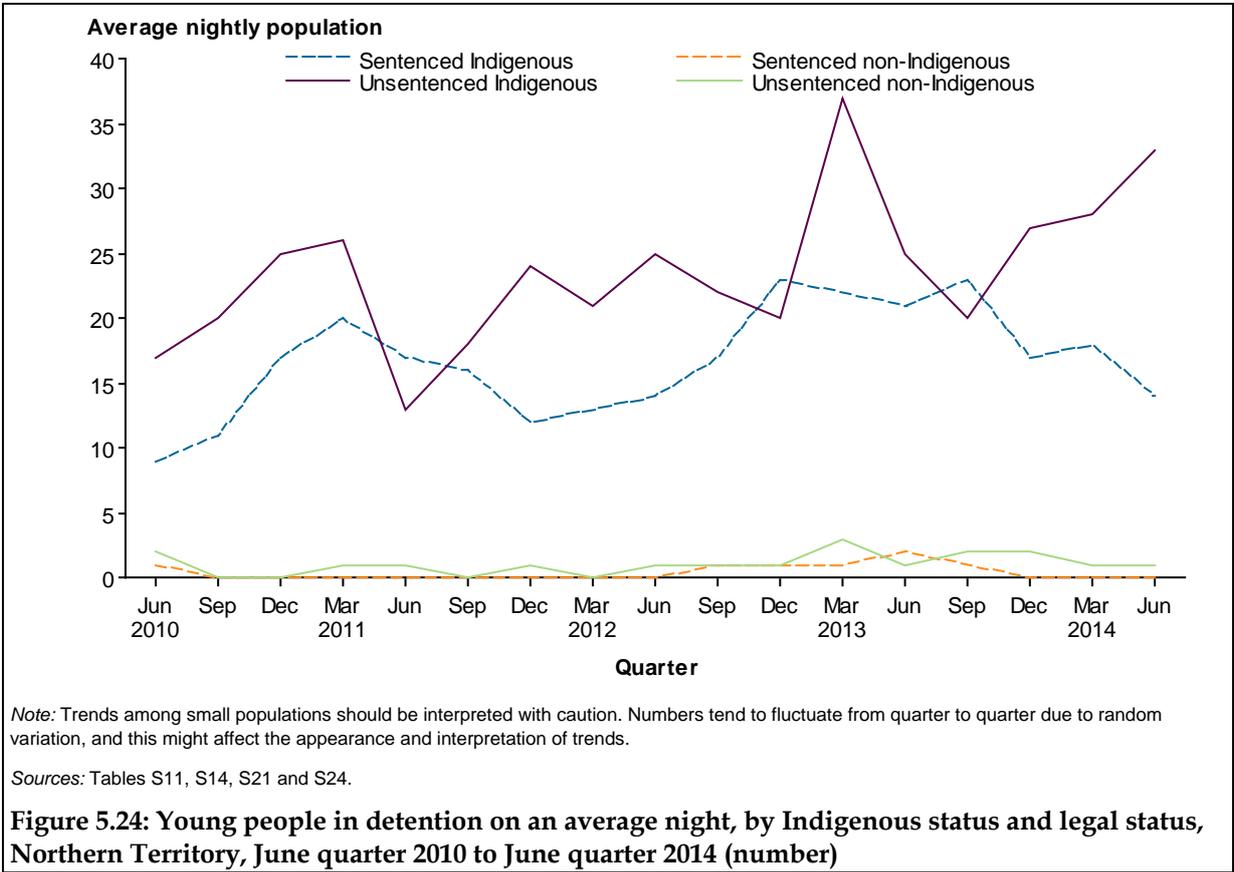
Over the 4-year period, trends in the rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention closely matched the trends in the numbers, as very few young people aged 18 or older were in detention in the Northern Territory.

The rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night fluctuated between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2014, ranging from 10.7 to 18.2 per 10,000, or about 1 in 550 young people (Figure 5.23). As with the numbers, the rate of young people in unsentenced detention was slightly higher than that in sentenced detention in most quarters.



# Indigenous status

Most of those in detention in the Northern Territory were Indigenous (between 89% and 100% in all quarters; tables S1 and S7). There were very few non-Indigenous young people in either unsentenced or sentenced detention during the 4-year period (Figure 5.24). There were slightly more young Indigenous people in unsentenced detention than in sentenced detention on an average night in most quarters.



# Appendix A: Data and methods

## Detention data

This report was compiled primarily using the 2012–13 Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS), which contains data up to and including 30 June 2013 for all states except Western Australia and the Northern Territory. This was supplemented with further data on the number of young people in detention at midnight at the end of each month between July 2013 and June 2014.

Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2013. As a result, in this report, end-of-month data were used for Western Australia and the Northern Territory for this period instead.

A data quality statement for the JJ NMDS 2012–13 is provided in Appendix B.

In addition to this report, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare also publishes the annual *Youth justice in Australia* series, which provides comprehensive information on young people under youth justice supervision each year (for the most recent bulletin and accompanying fact sheets, see <[www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/)>). This report presents more recent data on trends in the detention population than the *Youth justice in Australia* series. It also contains data on young people in detention in Western Australia and the Northern Territory that are not available in *Youth justice in Australia*.

The presentation of data in this report is slightly different from the presentation in *Youth justice in Australia*. First, this report presents the average nightly population for each quarter, while *Youth justice in Australia* presents the average daily population for each year. This is due to the availability of end-of-month data (available only on a nightly basis), as well as the focus on changes at a more detailed quarterly level in this report. Second, young people who are concurrently unsentenced and sentenced are classified as sentenced in this report, but are counted separately as both unsentenced and sentenced in *Youth justice in Australia* (although they are only counted once in the total detention population in both reports).

Table A1 summarises the data provided in the supplementary tables.

**Table A1: Index of supplementary tables**

Population	Indigenous status	Data type	Age group (years)		
			All ages	10–17	18+
All detention	Indigenous	Number	S1	S2	S3
	Non-Indigenous	Number	S4	S5	S6
	All	Number	S7	S8	S9
	All by Indigenous status	Rate	—	S10	—
Unsentenced detention	Indigenous	Number	S11	S12	S13
	Non-Indigenous	Number	S14	S15	S16
	All	Number	S17	S18	S19
	All by Indigenous status	Rate	—	S20	—
Sentenced detention	Indigenous	Number	S21	S22	S23
	Non-Indigenous	Number	S24	S25	S26
	All	Number	S27	S28	S29
	All by Indigenous status	Rate	—	S30	—
Australian population	All by Indigenous status	Number	—	S31	—

## Methods

This section provides information about key methods used in this report.

For more information about the JJ NMDS, including details about the data and methods used in reporting, see Appendix B and <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality/)>.

### Age

In this report, numbers of young people in detention include all age groups unless otherwise specified. Population rates include young people aged 10–17 only (see ‘Rates’ below).

For data extracted from the JJ NMDS, age is calculated at the start of the relevant quarter unless the period of detention began within the quarter, in which case age is calculated as at the start of the detention period.

As a result, a young person’s age can vary across tables because age is calculated in light of the type of detention being looked at. This means that for a particular age group, the total number of young people in detention might not be the sum of the number of young people in sentenced and unsentenced detention.

For the end-of-month data, age is calculated as at the end of the relevant month.

### Average nightly population

For data extracted from the JJ NMDS, the average nightly population is calculated by adding the duration (in nights) of each period of detention that falls within the quarter, and dividing the summed duration by 91, which is the number of nights in a standard year divided by the number of quarters in a year.

Where no JJ NMDS data were available for the relevant quarter, the nightly averages were calculated by averaging end-of-month data provided by the states and territories.

## Indigenous status

Information on Indigenous status has been collected since the implementation of the JJ NMDS. Nationally, the proportion of young people with 'not stated' Indigenous status ranged from 0.5% to 1.5% each quarter between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2013. This proportion was low (7% or less each quarter) in all states and territories. However, information on the proportion of Indigenous young people who are correctly reported as Indigenous is not available.

There are some differences in the ways states and territories collect information about Indigenous status. Not all jurisdictions use the national standard question and standard codes for recording Indigenous status, as recommended by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. However, some jurisdictions have taken steps to improve their data collection forms and information systems in recent years to be more in line with the national standard. Changes in the collection and recording of Indigenous status can affect rates of Indigenous identification over time.

## Legal status

Young people who are both sentenced and unsentenced on a particular night (that is, serving multiple or concurrent supervision orders) are classified as sentenced. The JJ NMDS includes periods of detention with 'other' legal status; those periods are not included in this report. In the 2012–13 JJ NMDS, less than 0.1% of young people in detention during the year had a legal status of 'other'.

## Rates

Population rates allow for the comparison of different groups while taking into account different population sizes. Because there are differences between the states and territories in the extent to which young people aged 18 or older can be detained in youth justice facilities, rates are restricted to those aged 10–17. Crude rates are presented in this report.

The number of young people in detention on an average night during a quarter is rounded to the nearest person. The rate is calculated using the number on an average day before rounding. Rates are not calculated where there are fewer than 5 young people in the numerator due to a lack of statistical reliability. In some instances, the number of young people might be presented as 5, but the rate might not be calculated due to rounding. However, these young people contribute to overall state and national rates. The calculation of rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people excludes young people with unknown Indigenous status.

In some previous Australian Institute of Health and Welfare youth justice reports, rates of young people under supervision were expressed as the number per 1,000 young people. Rates that are expressed as a number per 1,000 can be converted to a number per 10,000 by multiplying the rate by 10.

Population data used in the calculation of rates are provided in supplementary Table S31.

## Rate ratios

Rates for different groups can be compared using a rate ratio, which is the ratio of two rates. In this report, rate ratios are used to compare Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates, and to provide a measure of the level of Indigenous over-representation. Rate ratios are calculated by dividing the Indigenous rate by the non-Indigenous rate.

Rate ratios should be interpreted with caution where there are small denominators, rare events and rates that converge while declining.

In this report, rate ratios are not calculated where one or both of the rates have fewer than 5 young people in the numerator, due to a lack of statistical reliability. However, these young people contribute to overall state and national rate ratios.

## Rounding

The average nightly population is rounded to whole numbers. Components might not sum to the given totals due to this rounding.

Rates were calculated using the unrounded average nightly population, and are presented in this report to one decimal place, and to two decimal places in the supplementary tables. As a result, rates calculated by using the average nightly population rounded to whole numbers might differ slightly from the rates presented in this report. Further, there might be some instances where the number of young people might be presented as 5, but the rate might not be calculated due to rounding.

Rate ratios were calculated using rates rounded to two decimal places. Proportions were calculated using average nightly numbers rounded to whole numbers. Numbers and rates displayed in figures are rounded, as presented in the supplementary tables.

## Trends

The general direction of the trend in the number and rate of young people in detention has been determined using linear regression. While some trends might appear to be increasing or decreasing, this approach has demonstrated that any observed patterns could be due to random fluctuations in the data.

# Appendix B: Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set 2012–13 data quality statement

## Summary of key issues

- The Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) contains information on young people in Australia who were supervised by youth justice agencies because they were alleged or proven to have committed an offence. The JJ NMDS is the only national collection of youth justice data.
- The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) compiles the JJ NMDS each year using data extracted from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for youth justice.
- There are a number of data quality and coverage limitations specific to each state and territory. In particular:
  - Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2012–13. Where possible, estimates for Western Australia and the Northern Territory are used to calculate estimated national totals. Additional information on how these totals are calculated is available at [www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality/).
  - South Australian data might vary from that reported in previous years due to improvements in data quality and assurance.
  - In Tasmania, data are available from 2006–07 onwards only.
  - In the Australian Capital Territory, data are available from 2003–04 onwards only, and data for 2003–04 to 2007–08 are only available in JJ NMDS 2007 format.
  - In New South Wales, data on young people in the Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre after 10 November 2004 are not included.
- Overall, the coverage of data in the JJ NMDS is very good. Only 3 variables have rates of missing or unknown data greater than 1%.

## Description

The youth justice system is the set of processes and practices for dealing with children and young people who have committed or allegedly committed offences. In Australia, youth justice is the responsibility of state and territory governments, and each state and territory has its own youth justice legislation, policies and practices.

The JJ NMDS contains information on all children and young people in Australia who are supervised by youth justice agencies, both in the community and in detention.

Each year, the state and territory government departments responsible for youth justice supply data to the AIHW under a memorandum of understanding between the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators and the AIHW. Those data are compiled into the JJ NMDS.

## 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 <[www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2004A03450](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2004A03450)> to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent statutory authority established in 1987, governed by a management board <[www.aihw.gov.au/aihw-board/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/aihw-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 variety 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 AIHW 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 AIHW works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to those 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 the data sets, and to disseminate information and statistics.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act, in conjunction with the compliance provisions of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cwth) <[www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2011C00503](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2011C00503)>, ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions to preserve privacy and confidentiality.

For further information, see the AIHW website <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)>.

## Relevance

The JJ NMDS contains information on all children and young people who were supervised by a youth justice agency in Australia during the reference period because they:

- committed or allegedly committed an offence between the ages of 10 and 17
- committed or allegedly committed an offence when aged over 17 and were treated as a young person due to their vulnerability or immaturity.

In Queensland, youth justice legislation applies to children and young people aged 10–16 when the offence was committed or allegedly committed. In all other states and territories, youth justice legislation applies to young people aged 10–17. Although most young people under youth justice supervision are aged 10–17, some are aged 18 or older.

For each young person recorded in the JJ NMDS, data are collected on sex, date of birth, Indigenous status and date of first supervision.

The JJ NMDS contains information on all supervised legal arrangements and orders that youth justice agencies administer (both community-based and detention orders), and all periods of detention in youth justice detention centres.

Supervised legal arrangements and orders include:

- police-referred detention before the first court appearance
- court-referred remand
- supervised bail
- sentenced orders, such as community service orders, probation, suspended detention, sentenced detention and parole or supervised release.

Periods of detention include:

- police-referred detention (before the young person's initial court appearance)
- remand (court-referred detention following a court appearance)
- sentenced detention.

For each period of supervision, data are collected on:

- order or detention type
- start date of the order or detention period
- end date of the order or detention period
- reason the order or detention period ended, including whether the order was successfully completed or breached and whether the young person was released from detention on bail or parole
- suburb and postcode of the young person's last known home address.

The JJ NMDS does not contain information on children and young people in the youth justice system who were not supervised (for example, young people on unsupervised bail), or who were supervised by other agencies, such as police.

Data published in the *Youth justice in Australia* bulletins include numbers and rates of young people under supervision, both on an average day and during the year, the characteristics of those young people and information on the types of supervision they experienced.

## Timeliness

The reference period for the 2012–13 JJ NMDS is from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2013. This means that in 2012–13, data were resupplied for the period 2000–01 to 2011–12, and data for 2012–13 were supplied for the first time. The data set includes young people who were under youth justice supervision at any time during that period.

The state and territory departments responsible for youth justice provide data to the AIHW annually, following the end of each financial year. For the 2012–13 collection, the first iteration of data was due to the AIHW within 3 months of the end of the financial year (by 30 September 2013). Two of 6 jurisdictions supplied data within 3 months of the end of the financial year, and all participating jurisdictions supplied data within 4 months. Data were finalised on schedule for all participating jurisdictions by January 2014.

The first release of JJ NMDS data for each collection period occurs in the *Youth justice in Australia* bulletin (previously *Juvenile justice in Australia*). Subsequent publication of these data might occur in other AIHW bulletins and reports, and other publications external to the AIHW.

For the second time, data from the 2012–13 JJ NMDS are expected to be published in April of the year following the reference period (10 months after the end of the reference period). In previous years, data were expected to be published in August (14 months after the end of the reference period).

## Accuracy

Data for the JJ NMDS are extracted each year from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for youth justice in Australia, according to definitions and technical specifications agreed to by the departments and the AIHW.

Overall, the coverage of data in the JJ NMDS is very good. About 7% of all young people in the JJ NMDS since 2000–01 have an unknown Indigenous status, and similar proportions of records in each of the order (7%) and detention (6%) files have unknown or missing information for the postcode and suburb of the young person's usual residence. For all other variables in the JJ NMDS, the proportion of missing data is 1% or less.

Each year, most jurisdictions supply data from 2000–01 to the most recent financial year, incorporating updates to data as required. As a result, trend data might differ from those published in previous *Youth justice in Australia* reports due to data revisions. The most recent data are the most accurate.

There are data quality and coverage limitations specific to each state and territory. In particular, Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for the years 2008–09 to 2012–13, and some states and territories did not provide data in the current format for all years of the JJ NMDS (2000–01 to 2012–13). As a result, two types of national totals are calculated for publications where possible – totals based on JJ NMDS data only (excluding Western Australia and the Northern Territory), and estimated national totals that include all states and territories.

In addition, some analyses of trends exclude those states and territories with incomplete data in the new format due to comparability issues. Readers are advised to read the supporting information in publications (such as footnotes to tables and details of the methods used to compile the data) to ensure appropriate interpretation.

Data quality issues specific to each state and territory include the following.

### New South Wales

In New South Wales, the Kariiong Juvenile Justice Centre was transferred from the New South Wales Department of Juvenile Justice to the New South Wales Department of Corrective Services on 10 November 2004 and renamed the Kariiong Juvenile Correctional Centre. As the JJ NMDS includes only young people who are supervised by youth justice agencies in Australia, information about young people in custody in the Kariiong Juvenile Correctional Centre after 10 November 2004 is not included. There are typically 18–28 young people on an average day in the Kariiong Juvenile Correctional Centre, forming only a small proportion (about 5%) of young people in detention in New South Wales.

### Western Australia

Western Australia did not provide JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2012–13. For these years, only limited data in a non-standard format were provided. These data include the

number under community-based supervision and in detention at the end of each month, and additional data on community-based orders and detention placements. These data contribute to the national totals where possible, but are not reliable enough for separate reporting.

Data for Western Australia for 2000–01 to 2007–08 are available only in the JJ NMDS 2007 format. As a result, some trend analyses exclude Western Australia. These data were extracted from separate detention and community-based supervision databases, and linked using a statistical linkage key. While this linkage is accurate enough for statistical purposes, it is not accurate for administrative purposes such as case management.

## **South Australia**

Data from South Australia for 2012–13 might vary from that reported in previous years due to improvements in data quality and assurance.

## **Tasmania**

For Tasmania, complete data on detention periods and orders are available only for 2006–07 onwards. Because data on length of detention is used to derive the time spent under community-based supervision, information on periods of community-based supervision before 2006–07 might be incomplete and are not reported.

## **Australian Capital Territory**

For the Australian Capital Territory, data for 2000–01 to 2002–03 are not available, and data for 2003–04 to 2007–08 are available only in JJ NMDS 2007 format. As a result, some trend analyses exclude the Australian Capital Territory.

In the Australian Capital Territory, both police-referred pre-court detention and remand (court-referred detention) are recorded as remand.

The reason orders ended are not available for the Australian Capital Territory.

## **Northern Territory**

The Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2012–13, and data for 2000–01 to 2007–08 are available only in JJ NMDS 2007 format. As a result, some trend analyses exclude the Northern Territory.

Data for 2007–08, which are the most recently available JJ NMDS data for the Northern Territory, are used in the national totals where possible, but are not reliable enough for separate reporting.

## Coherence

The JJ NMDS was initially developed between 2002 and 2004, and the first report containing data from the JJ NMDS was published in 2006. This first version of the JJ NMDS (referred to as JJ NMDS 2007 on METeOR) contained information on only the most serious supervised legal arrangement or order for each young person under youth justice supervision (see *Juvenile justice in Australia 2007–08* <[www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=6442468301](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=6442468301)> for more information).

In 2009, the JJ NMDS was redeveloped to capture all supervised legal arrangements and orders for young people under youth justice supervision, rather than only the most serious ones. This version of the JJ NMDS (known as JJ NMDS 2009) allows for more complete analyses of the numbers and types of supervised orders that youth justice agencies administer. *Juvenile justice in Australia 2008–09* <[www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737418606](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737418606)> was the first report to contain data from the redeveloped JJ NMDS.

For the 2012–13 JJ NMDS collection, the reference period was 2000–01 to 2012–13. Data were resupplied for the period 2000–01 to 2011–12. As a result, trend data might differ from those previously published due to data revisions.

The JJ NMDS is also used to compile the AIHW's *Youth detention population in Australia* report (previously *Juvenile detention population in Australia*), which is supplemented with additional data on the number of young people in detention at midnight at the end of each month in the most recently completed financial year. The report, *Juvenile detention population in Australia 2013* <[www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129542553](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129542553)>, contains JJ NMDS data up to and including 30 June 2012, supplemented with additional data for the period from July 2012 to June 2013.

These data differ from those published in the annual *Youth justice in Australia* reports in several ways. First, *Youth detention population in Australia* presents the average nightly population for each quarter, while *Youth justice in Australia* presents the average daily population and total population for each year. Second, young people who are concurrently unsentenced and sentenced are classified as sentenced in *Youth detention population in Australia*, but are counted as both sentenced and unsentenced (or once in the total population) in *Youth justice in Australia*. These differences ensure comparability between the JJ NMDS data and the end-of-month data, which are counts of the numbers of young people at midnight, and do not distinguish those who are serving a sentence from those who are concurrently sentenced and unsentenced.

For the years before July 2008, JJ NMDS 2009 data were used for all states and territories other than Western Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, for which JJ NMDS 2007 data were used. In addition, only end-of-month data were used for Western Australia and the Northern Territory for July 2008 onwards.

Data from the JJ NMDS are also reported in the annual *Report on government services* published by the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, and were used in the *Juveniles in detention in Australia* reports published by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC). The two most recent AIC reports contain data from the JJ NMDS; these data are the number in detention on the last night of each quarter. Earlier reports published by the AIC contain end-of-quarter data supplied directly by the states and territories.

## Interpretability

Detailed supporting information on the quality and use of JJ NMDS data is available from the AIHW website at <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/)>. AIHW youth justice reports are available for purchase in hard copy or for download free of charge from <[www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/)>. Readers are advised to consider supporting information to ensure appropriate interpretation of analyses presented by the AIHW. This includes footnotes to tables, and details of the data items, coverage, quality as well as the methods used in reporting, such as the calculation of counts, rates and supervision periods.

Metadata for the JJ NMDS is available in METeOR, the AIHW's online metadata repository. METeOR specifications for the collection can be accessed at <[meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/470084](http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/470084)>.

## Accessibility

Publications containing JJ NMDS data, including the annual Youth justice in Australia bulletin and online appendix tables, are available free of charge on the AIHW website <[www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/)>.

Additional information about youth justice in Australia is available from <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/)>.

Requests for unpublished JJ NMDS data can be made by contacting the AIHW on (02) 6244 1000 or via email to [info@aihw.gov.au](mailto:info@aihw.gov.au). A cost recovery charge might apply to requests that take longer than 30 minutes to compile. Depending on their nature, requests for access to unpublished data might need approval from the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators and/or the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General enquiries 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](mailto:info@aihw.gov.au).

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## Related publications

This report is part of an annual series looking at trends among young people in youth detention. This and related youth justice reports and fact sheets can be downloaded for free from the AIHW website: <[www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/)>. The website also includes information about ordering printed copies.

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 2014. Youth justice in Australia 2012–13. Bulletin no. 120. Cat. no. AUS 179. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Youth detention population in Australia 2013. Juvenile justice series no. 13. Cat. no. JUV 31. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Young people aged 10–14 in the youth justice system 2011–12. Juvenile justice series no. 12. Cat. no. JUV 19. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Youth justice in Australia 2011–12: overview bulletin. Bulletin no. 115. Cat. no. AUS 170. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2012. Indigenous young people in the juvenile justice system: 2011–12. Bulletin no. 109. Cat. no. AUS 164. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 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 2012. Girls and young women in the juvenile justice system: 2011–12. Bulletin no. 107. Cat. no. AUS 162. Canberra: AIHW.

This report presents information on the youth detention population in Australia, focusing on quarterly trends from June 2010 to June 2014. On an average night, close to 1,000 young people were in detention, about half of whom were unsentenced. Nationally, numbers and rates of young people in detention remained relatively stable over the 4 years; but trends varied among states and territories. About half of all young people in detention on an average night were Indigenous.