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**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

Youth detention population in Australia 2013

JUVENILE JUSTICE SERIES NO. 13



Australian Government

**Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare**

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

JUVENILE JUSTICE SERIES

Number 13

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2013

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
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Contents

- Acknowledgments..... v**
- Abbreviations..... vi**
- Summaryvii**
- 1 Introduction.....1**
 - 1.1 Key principles in youth detention1
 - 1.2 Youth detention age limits.....1
 - 1.3 Legal status (sentenced or unsentenced)2
 - 1.4 States and territories2
 - 1.5 Detention data2
- 2 Recent trends in detention.....4**
 - 2.1 Key points4
 - 2.2 Number in detention5
 - 2.3 Rate of detention8
 - 2.4 Legal status10
- 3 Recent trends in unsentenced detention14**
 - 3.1 Key points14
 - 3.2 Number in unsentenced detention.....15
 - 3.3 Rate of unsentenced detention.....18
- 4 Recent trends in sentenced detention21**
 - 4.1 Key points21
 - 4.2 Number in sentenced detention.....22
 - 4.3 Rate of sentenced detention.....26
- 5 State and territory trends28**
 - 5.1 Key points28
 - 5.2 New South Wales.....29
 - 5.3 Victoria32
 - 5.4 Queensland35
 - 5.5 Western Australia38
 - 5.6 South Australia.....41
 - 5.7 Tasmania44
 - 5.8 Australian Capital Territory47
 - 5.9 Northern Territory50

Appendix A	Data and methods.....	53
Appendix B	Summary table	57
Appendix C	JJ NMDS 2011-12 Data Quality Statement.....	58
Glossary.....		65
References		66
List of figures		67
List of tables		70
Related publications.....		71

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- 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
AJJA	Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators
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

Summary

This report examines 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 2009 to the June quarter 2013.

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

There were 970 young people in youth detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013. The vast majority (90%) were male. About half (51%) 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 (76%) 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 young people. The other detainees were aged 18 or over.

Numbers are stable, but rates have decreased

Over the 4-year period, the national youth detention population remained relatively stable, with 948 to 1,081 young people in detention on an average night each quarter.

However, when only those aged 10–17 are considered, there was a small but steady downward trend in the number in detention and in the rate of detention, from 3.6 to 3.3 young people per 10,000 on an average night. The rate was highest during 2010 (3.9 per 10,000 in the March quarter 2010) and lower from late 2011 onwards.

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 (2.0 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2013), there was a decrease in the rate of sentenced detention over the period (from 1.6 to 1.2 per 10,000). Most of the decrease occurred from late 2011 onwards.

One in two in detention are Indigenous

About half (51%) of those in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 were Indigenous. Over the 4-year period, there was an increase in the rate ratio (the rate of detention for Indigenous young people aged 10–17 compared to the rate of non-Indigenous young people) from 26 to 31, mainly due to a decrease in the rate of non-Indigenous young people in detention.

Different trends among the states and territories

There were different trends in the youth detention population among the states and territories. Over the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night decreased in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, increased in Queensland and the Northern Territory, and fluctuated or remained stable in the remaining states and territories.

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 examines the numbers and rates of young people in detention in Australia, focusing on recent trends. The report and accompanying supplementary tables (those with a prefix 'S') are available for download from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice/>.

More information about the youth justice system is available from <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 and that they should be detained 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 key to applying these principles and may take a number of forms, including police warnings, referral to services such as drug and alcohol treatment, and youth justice conferencing. A range of alternatives to detention is 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 14% of those under supervision on an average day in 2011–12 were in detention (including estimates for Western Australia and the Northern Territory, as standard data were not provided; AIHW 2013). However, a higher proportion (41%) 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 2011–12, about 19% of young people under supervision on an average day were aged 18 or older (AIHW 2013). 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 centre 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. Rates are calculated only for young people aged 10–17 in this report 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 (sentenced or unsentenced)

Young people may be detained 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 2011–12, 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 2013). 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 examined 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, such as 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 a range of 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 <http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/states-territories/>.

1.5 Detention data

This report uses the data for the period from April 2009 to June 2012 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 2012 to June 2013.

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 entire period covered by this report (July 2009 onwards).

The report examines data on the number of young people in detention on an average night in each quarter over the 4-year period from June 2009 to June 2013. 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.

For more information about the data and methods used in this report, including a summary of the data available in the supplementary tables, see Appendix A.

Trends in the detention population

This report focuses on trends over the 4-year period from the June quarter 2009 to the June quarter 2013. 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 may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends, which should therefore be interpreted with caution, particularly where they relate to small populations. Percentage changes are not calculated for populations of fewer than 100 young people.

In this report, comparisons are made between the June quarter in 2013 and the June quarter 1 year earlier (2012) and 4 years earlier (2009). 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 may be fluctuations between those quarters. More detailed information about the population in each quarter is available in the supplementary tables (which can be downloaded from <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 2013 (see Appendix B for a summary table for the June quarters 2009, 2012 and 2013).

2.1 Key points

On an average night in the June quarter 2013:

- there were 970 young people in youth detention
- about three-quarters (76%) were aged 10–17, and the remainder were aged 18 or over
- there were 3.3 young people aged 10–17 in detention per 10,000 in the population
- about half (51%) of those in detention were Indigenous
- 90% were male
- about half (51%) were unsentenced, and the rest were serving a sentence.

Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013):

- the youth detention population remained relatively stable (ranging between 948 and 1,081 young people in each quarter)
- there was a small decrease in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night (from 3.6 to 3.3 per 10,000)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation among young people in detention increased from 26 to 31 times the non-Indigenous rate, mainly due to a decrease in the non-Indigenous rate
- rates of detention increased in Queensland and the Northern Territory, decreased in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, and fluctuated or remained relatively stable in the other states and territories.

Over the 1-year period (June quarter 2012 to June quarter 2013):

- numbers of young people in detention were relatively stable (ranging between 952 and 1,005 on an average night each quarter)
- there were between 3.2 and 3.5 people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in detention each quarter
- there was little overall change in the level of Indigenous over-representation; the Indigenous rate was between 28 and 32 times the non-Indigenous rate each quarter
- rates of those aged 10–17 in detention increased in Queensland and the Northern Territory and decreased or fluctuated in the other states and territories.

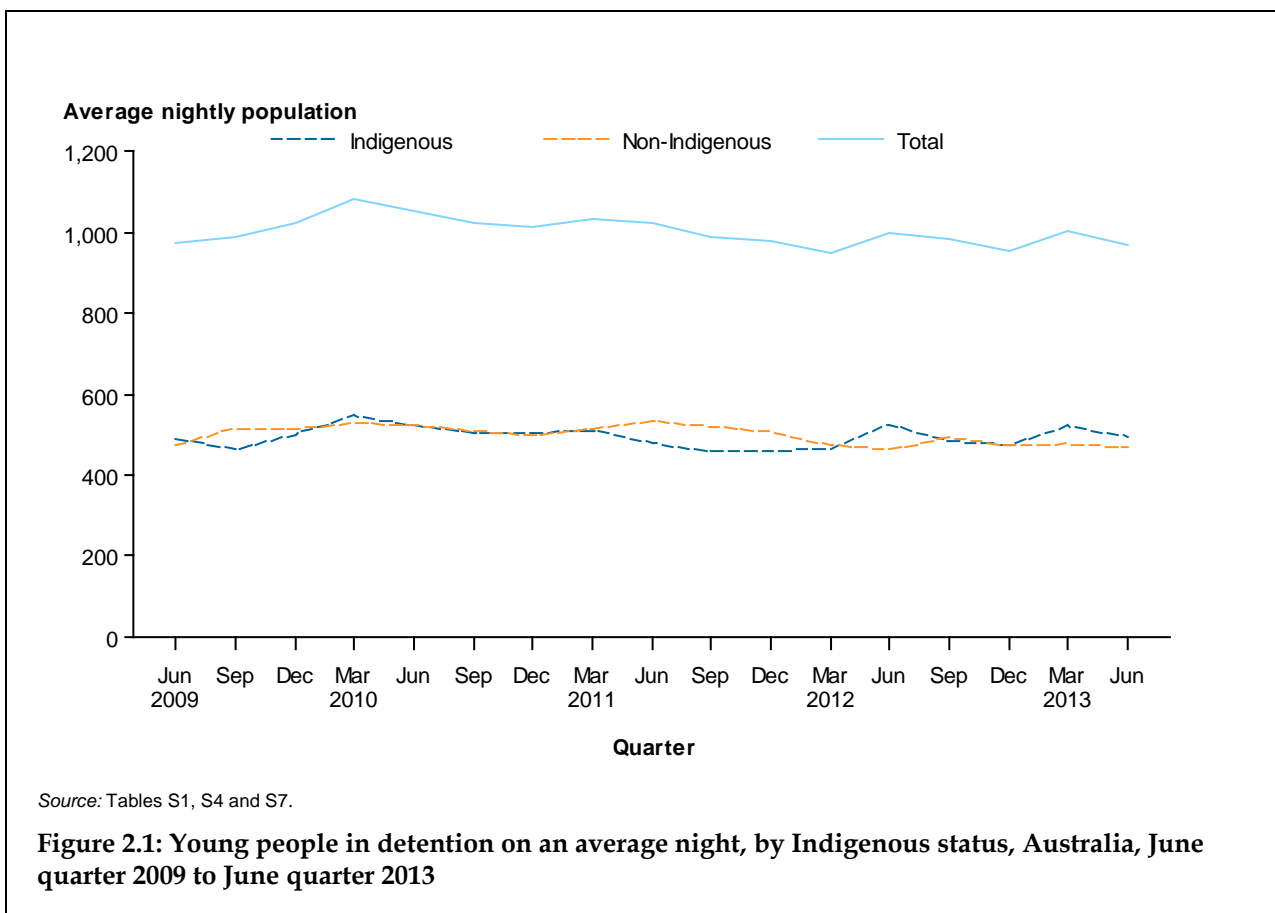
2.2 Number in detention

Nationally, there were 970 young people in youth detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 2.1).

The youth detention population remained relatively stable over the 4-year period from the June quarter 2009 to the June quarter 2013, ranging between 948 young people (March quarter 2012) and 1,081 (March quarter 2010).

Indigenous status, age and sex

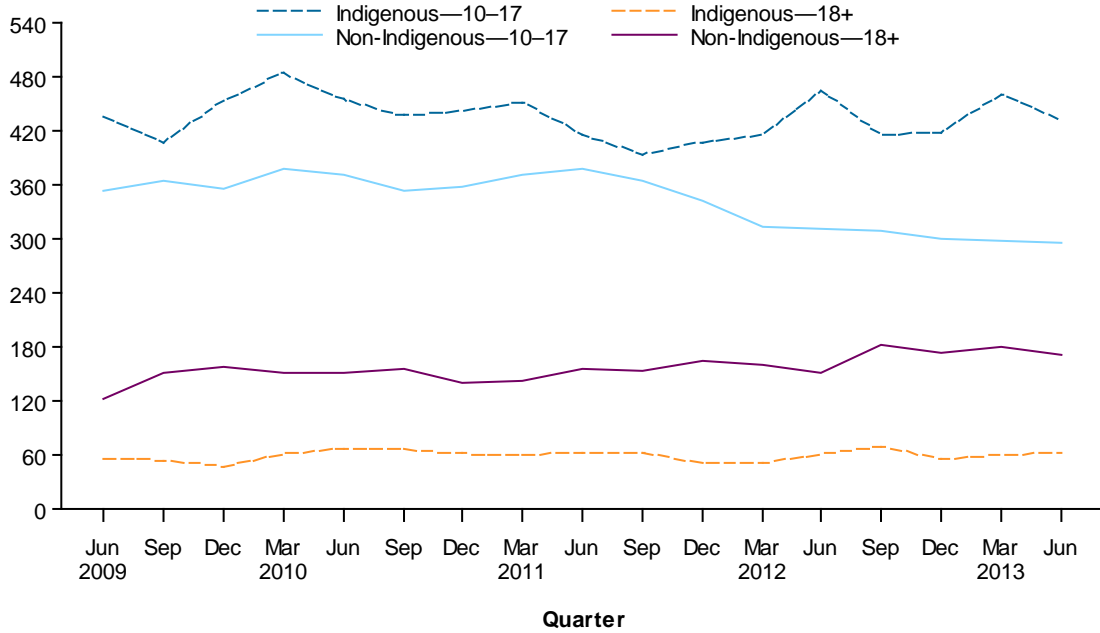
On an average night, there were similar numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people in detention each quarter throughout the 4-year period (Figure 2.1). In the June quarter 2013, 51% of those in detention on an average night were Indigenous.



Most young people in detention on an average night were aged 10–17, and the remainder were aged 18 or over (tables S7, S8 and S9; see Chapter 1 for more information about age limits in the youth justice system). In the June quarter 2013, 76% were aged 10–17.

A higher proportion of Indigenous young people in detention were aged 10–17 than non-Indigenous young people (87% compared with 63%, respectively, in the most recent quarter) (Figure 2.2 and tables S1, S2, S4 and S5). Each quarter, around 9 in 10 (86 to 91%) Indigenous young people in detention were aged 10–17, compared with 62 to 74% of non-Indigenous young people.

Average nightly population

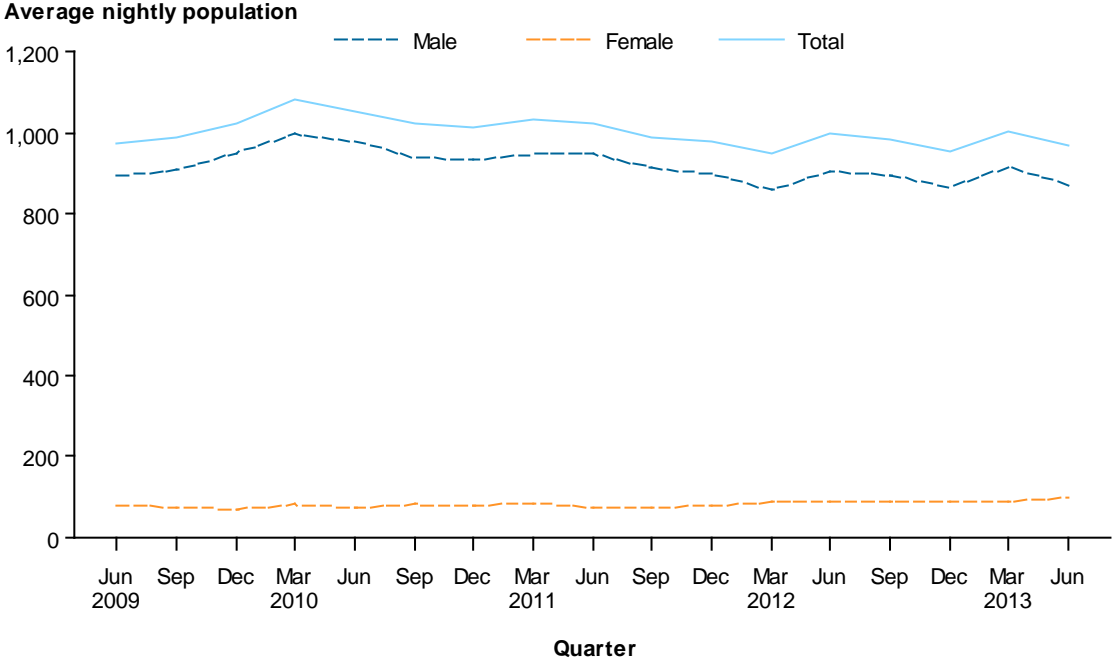


Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S2, S3, S5 and S6.

Figure 2.2: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Nine in ten (90%) young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 were male (871 males and 98 females) (Figure 2.3). The vast majority (90 to 93%) of those in detention in all quarters throughout the 4-year period were male.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S7.

Figure 2.3: Young people in detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

States and territories

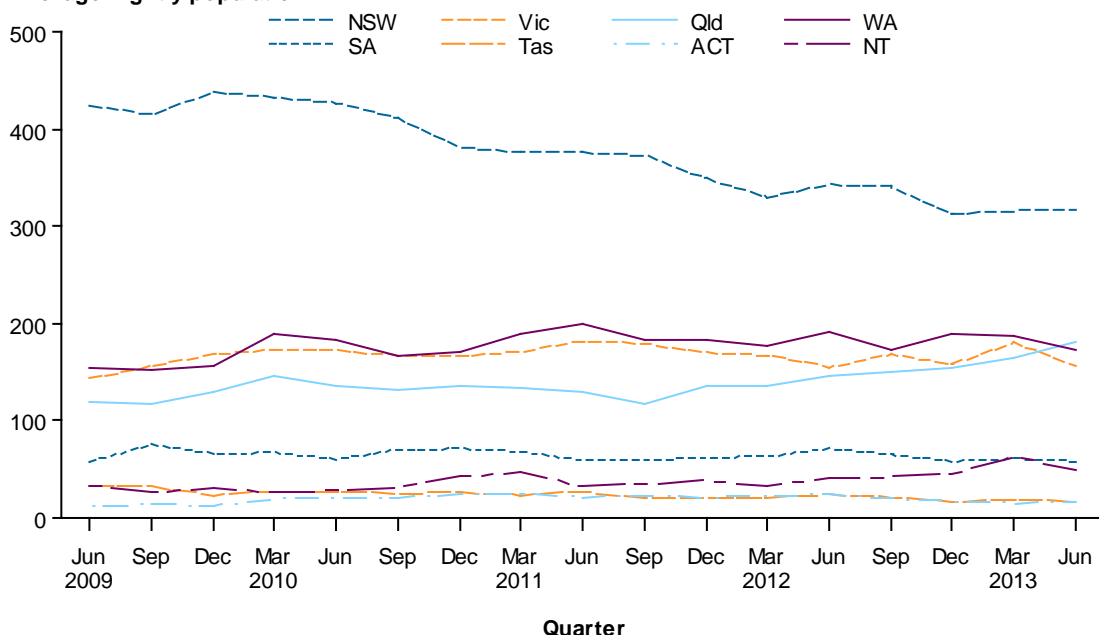
New South Wales had the largest youth detention population throughout the 4-year period, followed by Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland (Figure 2.4).

Despite the fact that the detention population was relatively stable at the national level, there were notably different trends among the states and territories. Between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, the average nightly detention population decreased in New South Wales (from 424 to 317) and Tasmania (from 32 to 17). The population increased in Queensland (from 119 to 180) and the Northern Territory (from 33 to 49), including a steady rise from the second half of 2011 onwards. There were slight increases or little overall change in the other states and territories.

Over the most recent year, 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 147 to 180) and the Northern Territory (from 41 to 49), 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 in Chapter 5.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S7.

Figure 2.4: Young people in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

2.3 Rate of detention

There were 3.3 young people aged 10–17 in detention per 10,000 in the population on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 2.5), a decrease from the rate in the June quarter 4 years earlier (3.6 per 10,000). Lower rates occurred from late 2011 onwards. Over the period, the rate was highest in the March quarter 2010 (3.9 per 10,000) and lowest in the second half of 2012 (3.2 per 10,000).

Over the most recent year, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention ranged between 3.2 and 3.5 per 10,000.

States and territories

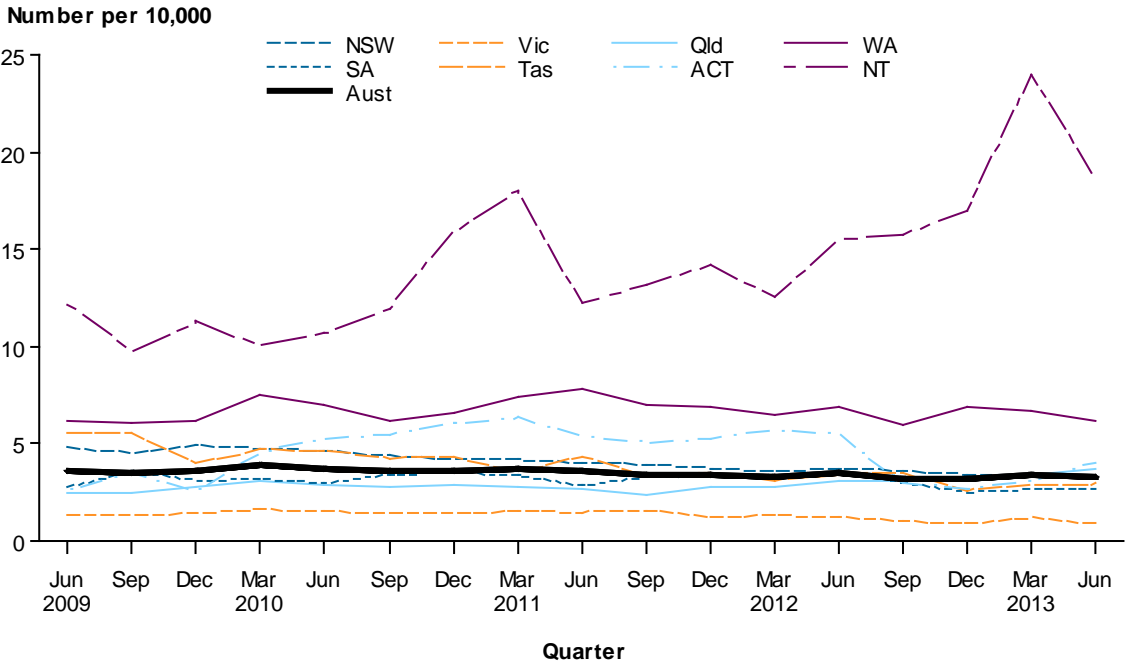
On an average night in the June quarter 2013, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention was lowest in Victoria (0.9 per 10,000) and highest in the Northern Territory (18.7 per 10,000) (Figure 2.5).

Rates of detention tended to fluctuate from quarter to quarter throughout the 4-year period, particularly among the smaller jurisdictions (the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania) due to the small numbers in detention. However, 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 (from 2.5 to 3.7 per 10,000) and the Northern Territory (from 12.2 to 18.7 per 10,000). Rates decreased in New South

Wales (from 4.8 to 3.3 per 10,000), Victoria (from 1.4 to 0.9 per 10,000) and Tasmania (from 5.5 to 2.9 per 10,000) and fluctuated or remained relatively stable in the other states and territories. 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 the most recent year, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention increased overall in Queensland and the Northern Territory, and decreased or fluctuated in the other states and territories.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S10.

Figure 2.5: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

Indigenous representation in the juvenile justice system can be expressed as the rate ratio, which is the rate of Indigenous young people divided by the rate of non-Indigenous young people.

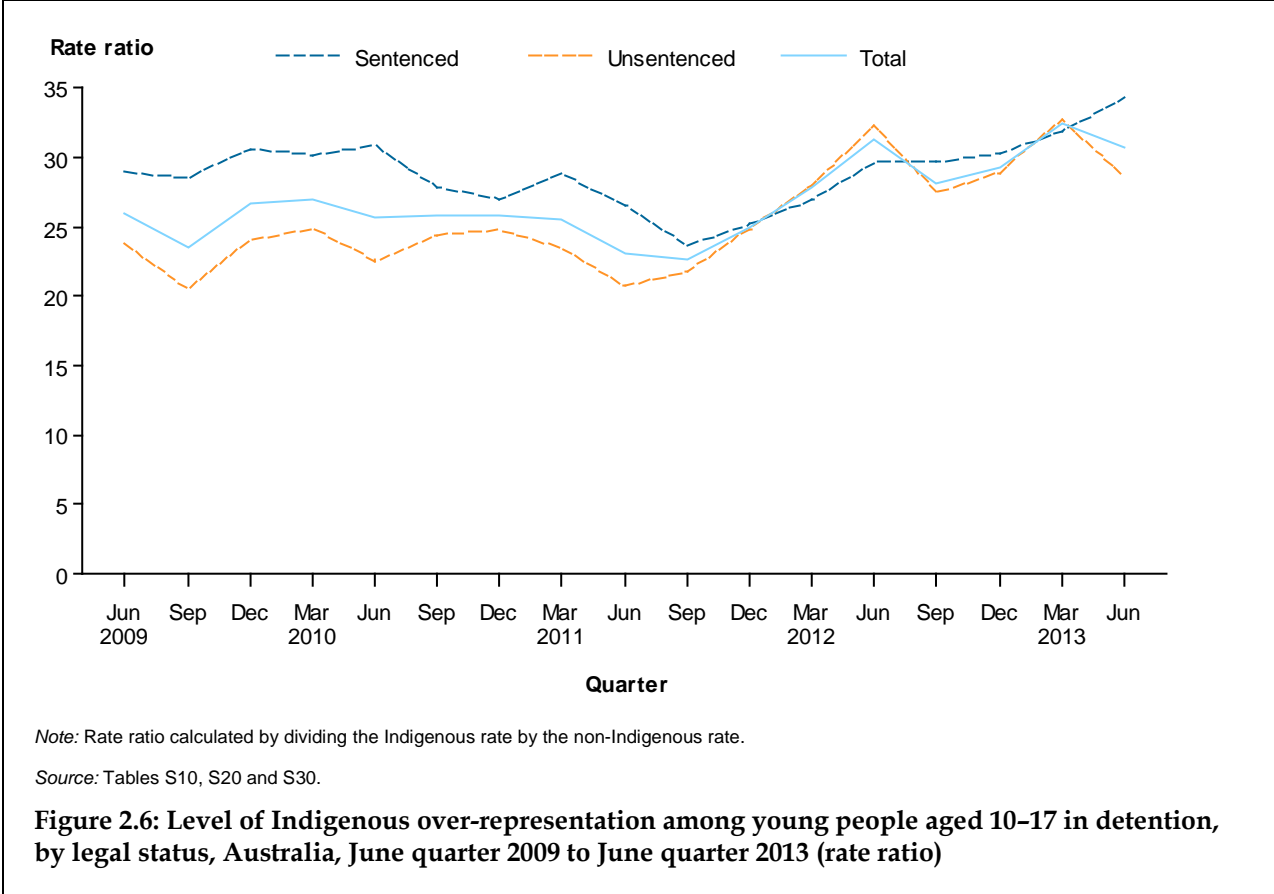
Nationally, Indigenous young people aged 10–17 were 31 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (rates of 41.7 and 1.4 per 10,000, respectively) (Figure 2.6 and Table S10). This was an increase from 26 times as likely in the June quarter 2009.

This increase was seen primarily from the beginning of 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 decreased from 1.6 to 1.7 per 10,000 between the June quarter

2009 and the December quarter 2011 to about 1.4 per 10,000 from the March quarter 2012 onwards.

Similar patterns of increase 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 2013, among the states and territories for which the rate ratio was available, it was lowest in Victoria (15 times) and highest in Western Australia (60 times) (rate ratios were not calculated where there were fewer than five young people in detention in the state or territory) (Table S10).

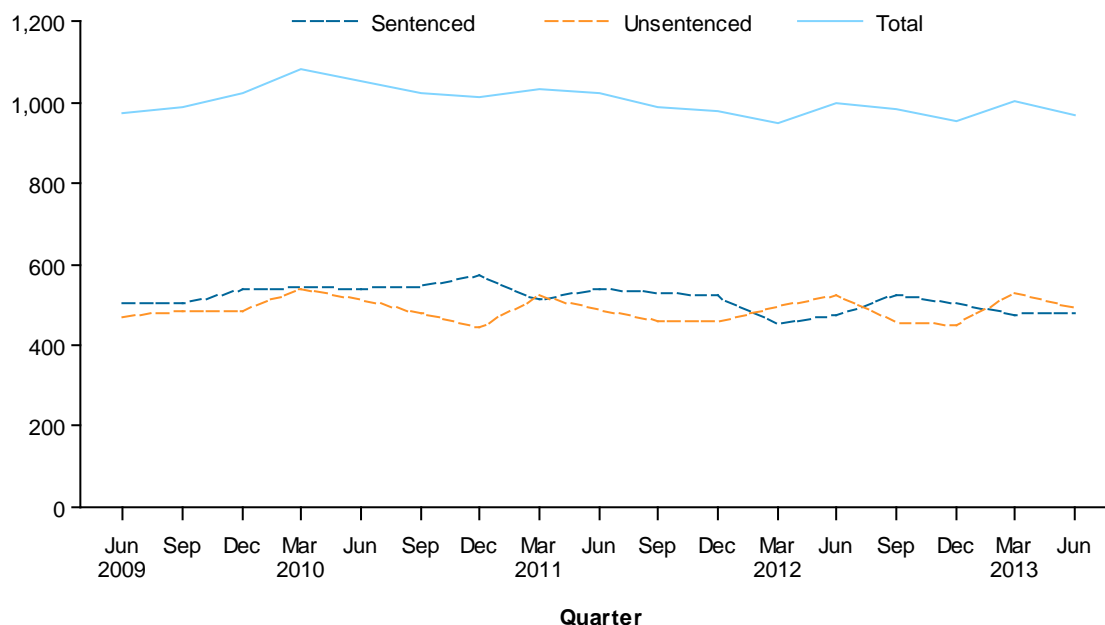


2.4 Legal status

About half (51%) of those in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 were unsentenced (490 young people), and the remainder (49%; or 480 young people) were serving a sentence (Figure 2.7). Similar numbers of young people were in unsentenced (444 to 539 young people) and sentenced detention (455 to 571) on an average night each quarter throughout the 4-year period.

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

Average nightly population



Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

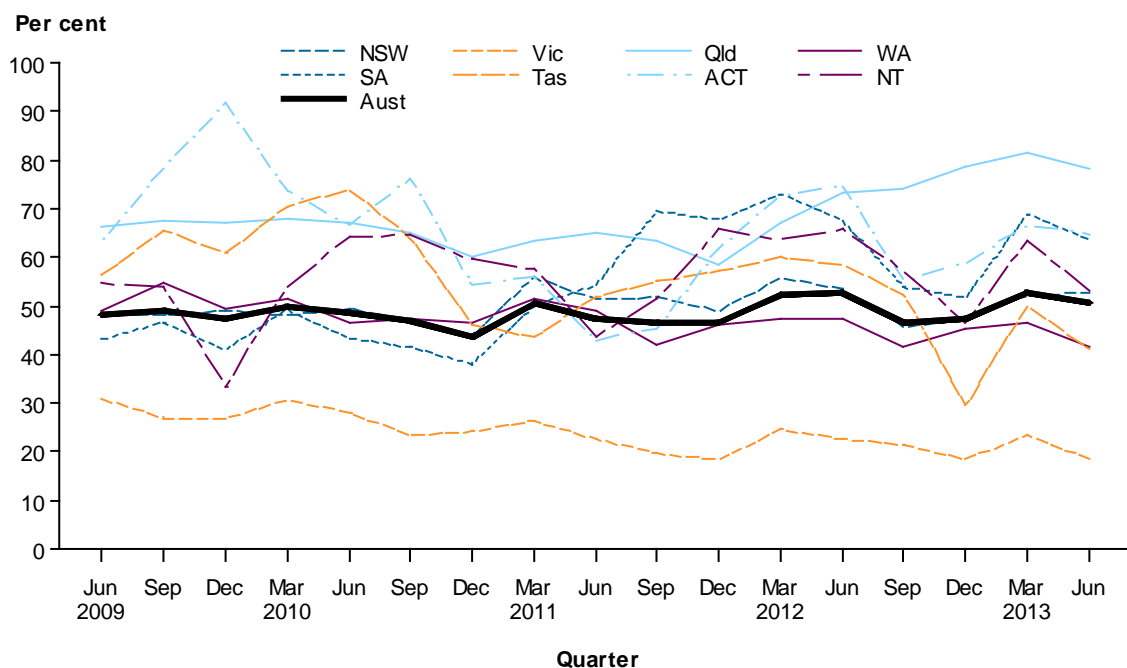
Figure 2.7: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

States and territories

There was wide variation among the states and territories in the proportion of young people in detention on an average night who were unsented (Figure 2.8). In the June quarter 2013, this ranged from 18% in Victoria to 78% in Queensland (41 to 65% in the other states and territories).

Throughout the 4-year period, Victoria consistently had the lowest proportion of young people in detention on an average night who were unsented. In part, this was due to the 'dual track' sentencing system operating in that state, whereby young people aged 18–20 may be sntenced 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, 62% of young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 were unsented (tables S8 and S18). This proportion ranged from 45% in Western Australia to 79% in Queensland and South Australia (55% in Victoria).



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S7 and S17.

Figure 2.8: Young people in unsentenced detention as a proportion of young people in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (per cent)

Indigenous status

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

In unsentenced detention, there were more Indigenous than non-Indigenous young people in most quarters throughout the period (56% Indigenous in the June quarter 2013) (tables S11, S14 and S17).

From early 2012 onwards, there was a slight upward trend in the unsentenced Indigenous population and a downward trend in the non-Indigenous population, with most of the change occurring among the 10–17 age group. This produced an increase in the Indigenous rate ratio among those aged 10–17 over the 4-year period (from 24 to 29 times the non-Indigenous rate) (Table S20).

In sentenced detention, just under half (46%) of those detained on an average night in the June quarter 2013 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 relatively stable over time.

Among those aged 10–17, there was a decline in the size of both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups; however, there was a proportionally larger drop in the non-Indigenous than the Indigenous sentenced rate. This led to an increase in the Indigenous rate ratio (from 29 to 34 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 examines trends in the numbers and rates of young people in unsentenced detention over the 4 years to the June quarter 2013.

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 2013:

- 490 young people were in unsentenced detention
- most (458 or 93%) were aged 10–17
- there were 2.0 young people per 10,000 aged 10–17 in the population in unsentenced detention
- just over half (56%) of those in unsentenced detention were Indigenous
- the majority (86%) were male.

Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013):

- numbers and rates of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter remained relatively stable, with little overall change (rates of 1.9 to 2.3 per 10,000 aged 10–17 each quarter)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation increased from 24 to 29 times the non-Indigenous rate, with most of the change occurring from the December quarter 2011 onwards
- there were increases in the rates of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention in Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory, and overall decreases in New South Wales, Victoria 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 2012 to June quarter 2013):

- there was little change in the numbers (450 to 529) and rates (1.9 to 2.2 per 10,000) of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter
- the rate of Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention was 27 to 33 times the non-Indigenous rate each quarter.

3.2 Number in unsentenced detention

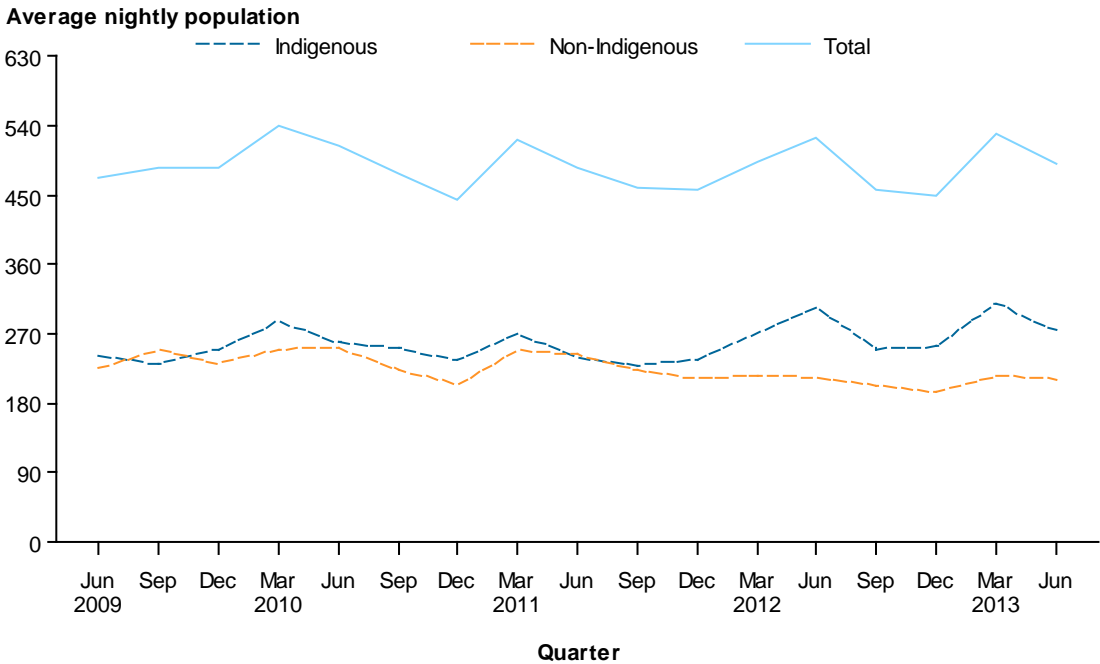
Nationally, there were 490 young people in unsentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013, which equates to just over half (51%) of all young people in detention (Figure 3.1 and tables S10 and S17).

Over the 4-year period, the unsentenced detention population fluctuated between 444 (December quarter 2010) and 539 (March quarter 2010) young people on an average night, with no clear trend (450 to 529 over the most recent year). Nationally, numbers tended to be lower in the September and December quarters and higher in the March and June quarters each year, 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 Indigenous; the proportion ranged from 48% in the September quarter 2009 to 58% in the June quarter 2012 and March quarter 2013 (56% in the June quarter 2013) (Figure 3.1).

Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention outnumbered non-Indigenous young people in most quarters throughout the 4-year period (about 230 to 300 Indigenous and 200 to 250 non-Indigenous young people on an average night each quarter).



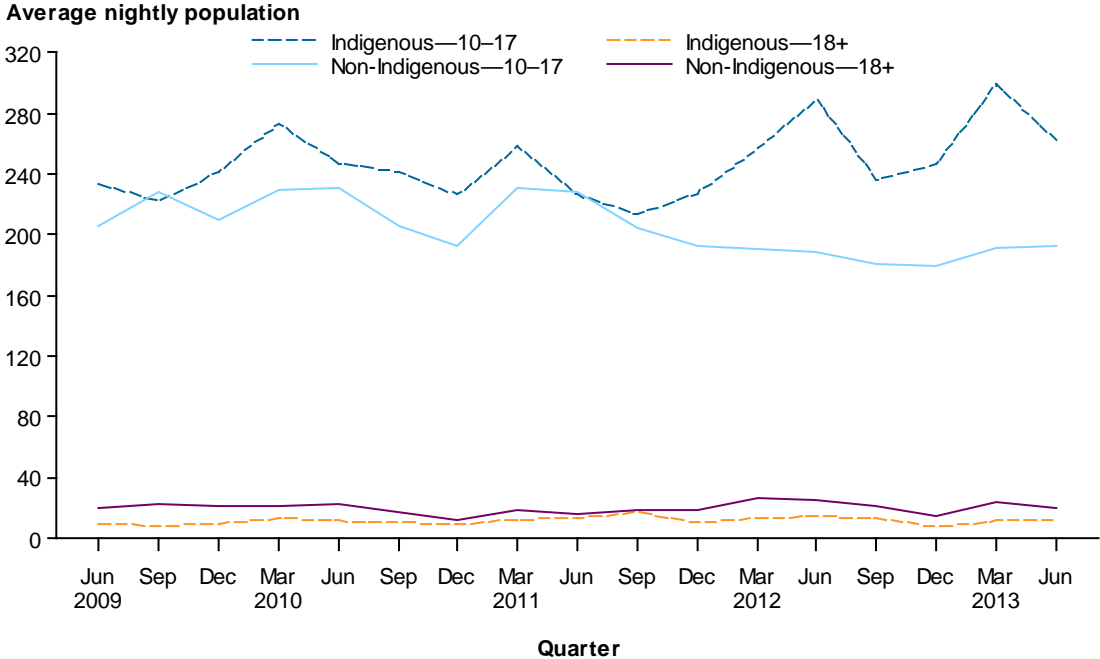
Source: Tables S11, S14 and S17.

Figure 3.1: Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Throughout the 4-year period, most (92 to 95%) young people in unsentenced detention each quarter were aged 10–17 (93% in the June quarter 2013) (tables S17 and S18). About 96% of Indigenous young people and 91% of non-Indigenous young people were aged 10–17 in the June quarter 2013 (tables S11, S12, S14 and S15).

Trends in the numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people aged 10-17 therefore closely followed the trends in the numbers of young people of all ages (Figure 3.2). There were between 213 and 299 unsentenced Indigenous young people aged 10-17 in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter, and between 179 and 230 non-Indigenous young people. Overall, there was a slight pattern of increase over the period among the Indigenous population, and a decrease in the non-Indigenous population, from early 2012 onwards.

Among those aged 18 and over, there were 7 to 17 Indigenous and 12 to 26 non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter.



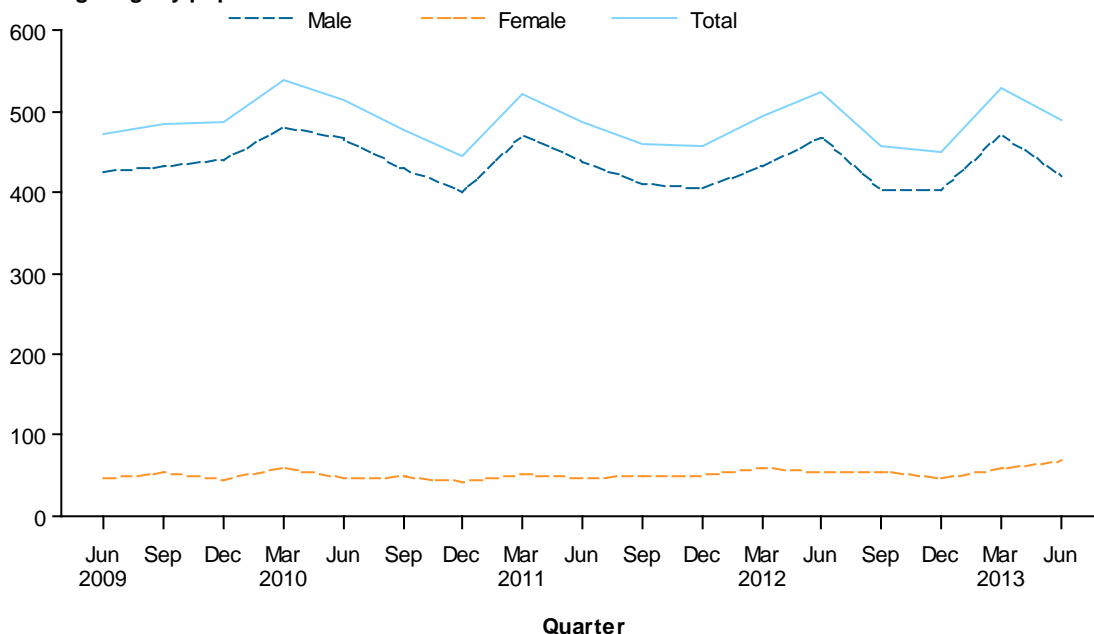
Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S12, S13, S15 and S16.

Figure 3.2: Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Most (86 to 91%) of those in unsentenced detention on an average night throughout the period were male (86% in the June quarter 2013) (Figure 3.3). There were around 45 to 60 females in unsentenced detention on an average night in each quarter (slightly higher at 68 in the June quarter 2013).

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

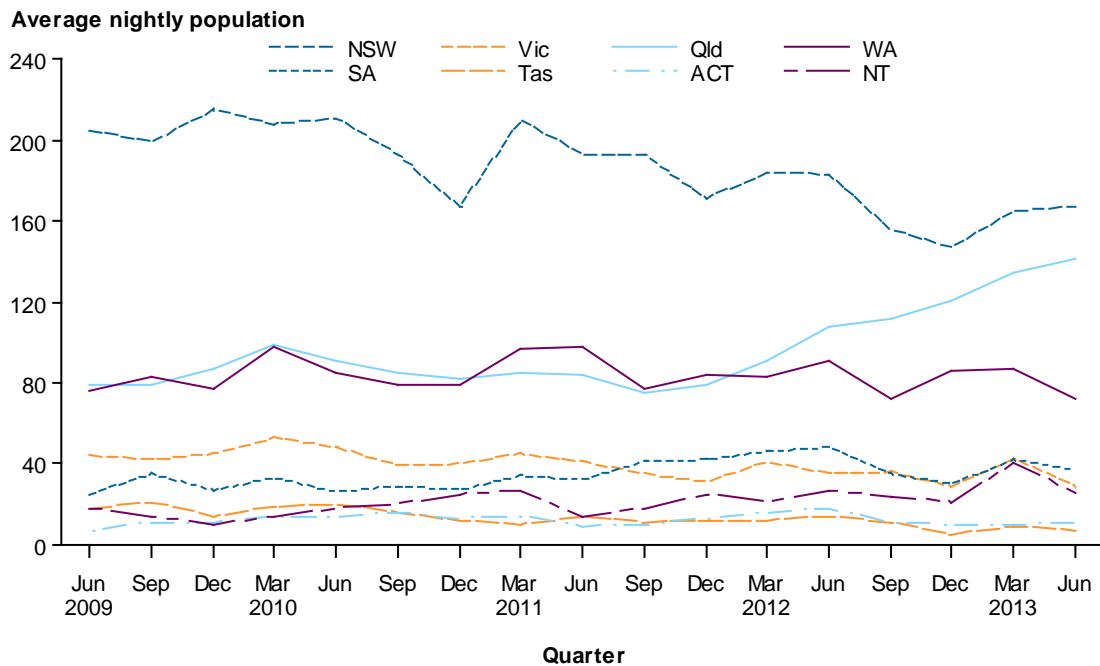
Source: Table S17.

Figure 3.3: Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

States and territories

There were different trends in the number of young people in unsentenced detention among the states and territories over the 4-year period, although it should be noted that numbers tended to fluctuate from quarter to quarter, particularly in the smaller jurisdictions (Figure 3.4). Overall, there were decreases in the number of young people in unsentenced detention on an average night in New South Wales (from 205 to 167) and Tasmania (18 to 7) and an increase in Queensland (from 79 to 141). There were minor fluctuations or no clear trends in the other states and territories.

Over the most recent year, there were fluctuations or slight decreases in the unsentenced detention population in each state and territory except Queensland, where there was a large increase (from 108 to 141).



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S17.

Figure 3.4: Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

3.3 Rate of unsentenced detention

Nationally, over the 4-year period to the June quarter 2013, the rate of young people in unsentenced detention remained relatively stable (Figure 3.5).

There were 1.9 to 2.3 young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention per 10,000 in the population in each quarter throughout the period (1.9 to 2.2 per 10,000 over the most recent year; 2.0 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2013).

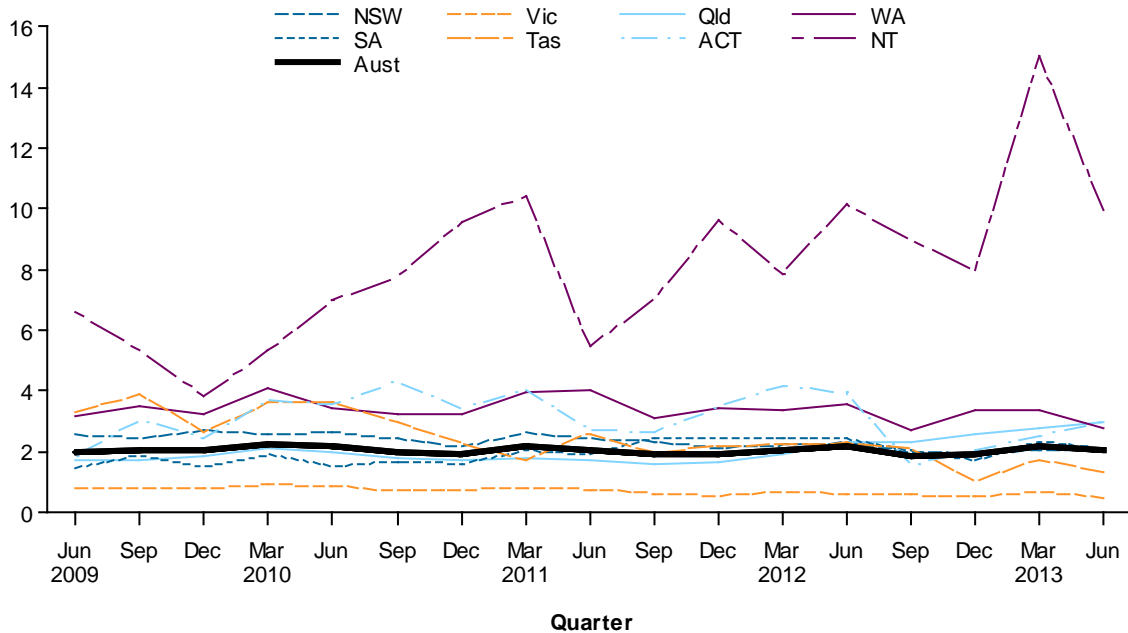
States and territories

Throughout the 4-year period, the rate of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention was highest in the Northern Territory (ranging from 3.8 to 15.0 per 10,000 each quarter), and lowest in Victoria (0.5 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, due to small numbers in those jurisdictions.

There were increases over the 4-year period in Queensland and the Northern Territory and overall decreases in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

Over the most recent year, there were slight decreases or little change in the rates among all states and territories except Queensland, where there was an increase.

Number per 10,000



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S20.

Figure 3.5: Young people aged 10-17 in unsentenced detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

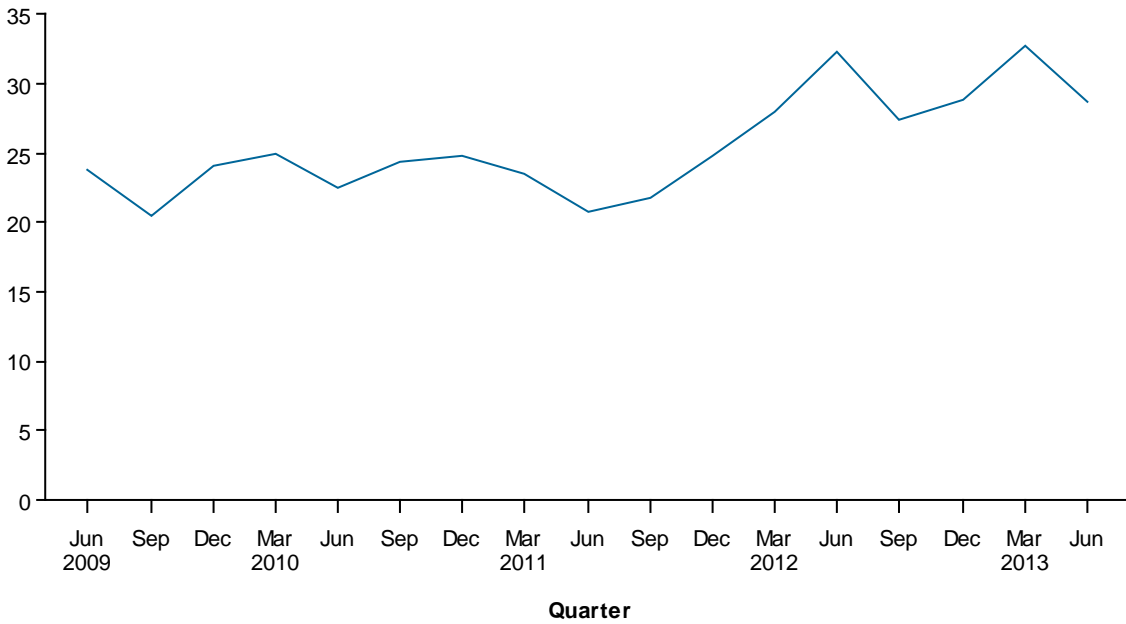
Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2013, Indigenous young people aged 10-17 were 29 times as likely as non-Indigenous young people to be in unsentenced detention on an average night, up from 24 times as likely in the June quarter 2009 (Figure 3.6).

The level of Indigenous over-representation remained relatively steady from the June quarter 2009 to the September quarter 2011 (20 to 25 times the non-Indigenous rate), followed by an increase to the June quarter 2012 (to 32 times). The rate ratio remained at the higher level over the most recent year (27 to 33 times). This increase was due to both an increase in the Indigenous rate and a slight decrease in the non-Indigenous rate.

Over the 4-year period, there were increases in the levels of Indigenous over-representation in unsentenced detention in Queensland and Western Australia and fluctuations in the other states and territories for which data were available. Rate ratios were not calculated in all quarters for the other states and territories due to small numbers (rates and rate ratios are not calculated where there are fewer than five young people in the numerator).

Rate ratio



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

Source: Table S20.

Figure 3.6: Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10-17 in unsentenced detention, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate ratio)

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 2009 and the June quarter 2013.

4.1 Key points

On an average night in the June quarter 2013:

- there were 480 young people in sentenced detention
- 58% were aged 10–17, and the remainder were 18 or over
- there were 1.2 young people per 10,000 aged 10–17 in sentenced detention
- just under half (46%) were Indigenous, and a much higher proportion (62%) if only those aged 10–17 are considered
- 94% were male.

Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013):

- numbers and rates of young people in sentenced detention on an average night were highest during 2010 and decreased thereafter (there was an overall decrease in the rate over the 4-year period from 1.6 to 1.2 per 10,000 aged 10–17)
- the level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention increased (from 29 to 34 times the non-Indigenous rate) due to a larger decrease in the non-Indigenous than the Indigenous rate from late 2011 onwards
- the rate of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention decreased in New South Wales, displayed an upward trend in the Northern Territory and showed no clear pattern in the other states and territories
- rates of detention among those aged 10–17 were lowest in Victoria in most quarters and highest in the Northern Territory.

Over the 1-year period (June quarter 2012 to June quarter 2013):

- there were 473 to 525 young people in sentenced detention on an average night each quarter
- rates of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention fluctuated at around 1.2 to 1.4 per 10,000
- the level of Indigenous over-representation increased from 30 to 34 times the non-Indigenous rate.

4.2 Number in sentenced detention

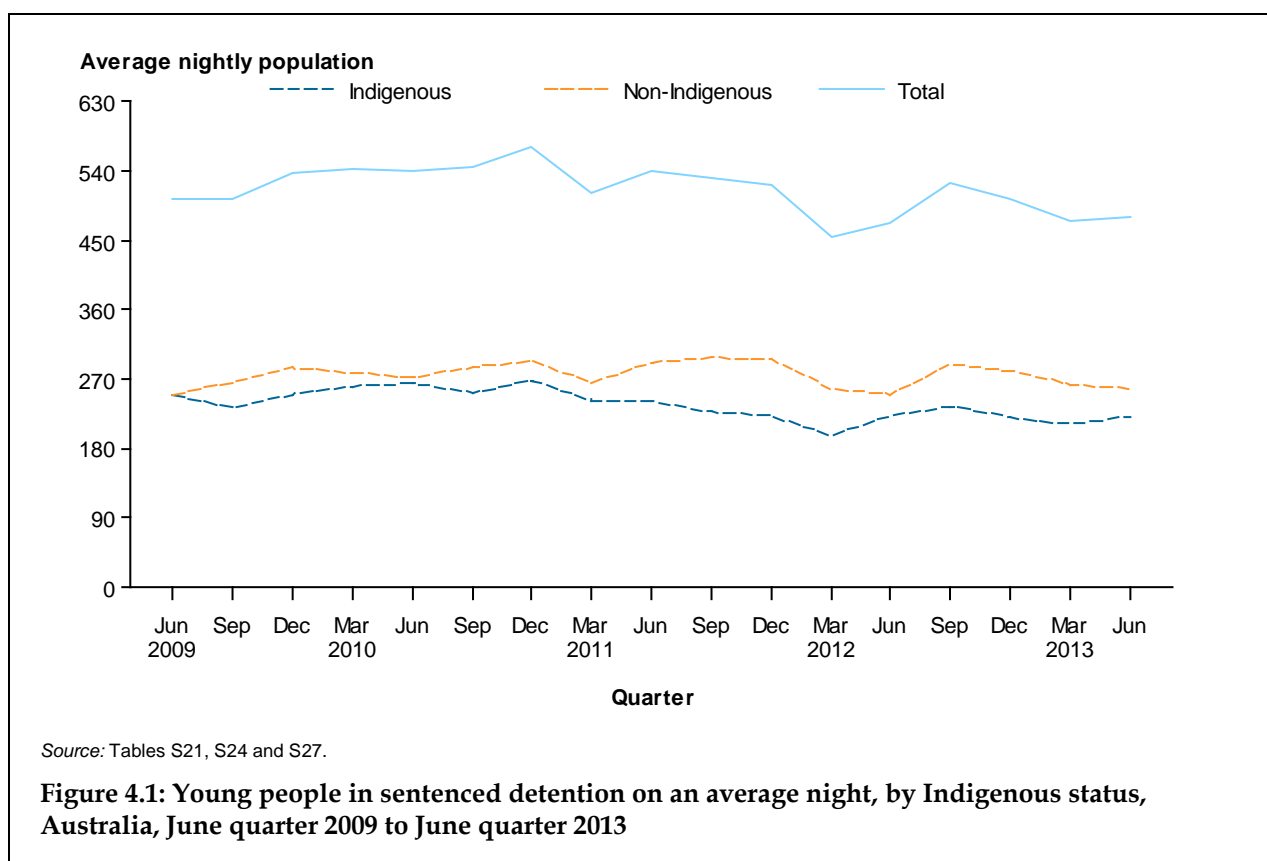
There were 480 young people in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 4.1).

Over the 4-year period, the sentenced detention population was largest during 2010 (540 to 571 young people each quarter), before declining slightly from early 2011 onwards. In the most recent year, there were 473 to 525 young people in sentenced detention on an average night each quarter.

Indigenous status, age and sex

There were slightly different trends among the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in sentenced detention. Over the 4-year period, the Indigenous sentenced population was largest during 2010 (252 to 268 young people on an average night each quarter), and slightly lower from 2011 onwards (221 in the June quarter 2013, or 46% of all young people in sentenced detention).

The non-Indigenous sentenced population was larger than the Indigenous population throughout the period, with no clear change over time (249 to 297 young people each quarter; 257 in the June quarter 2013).

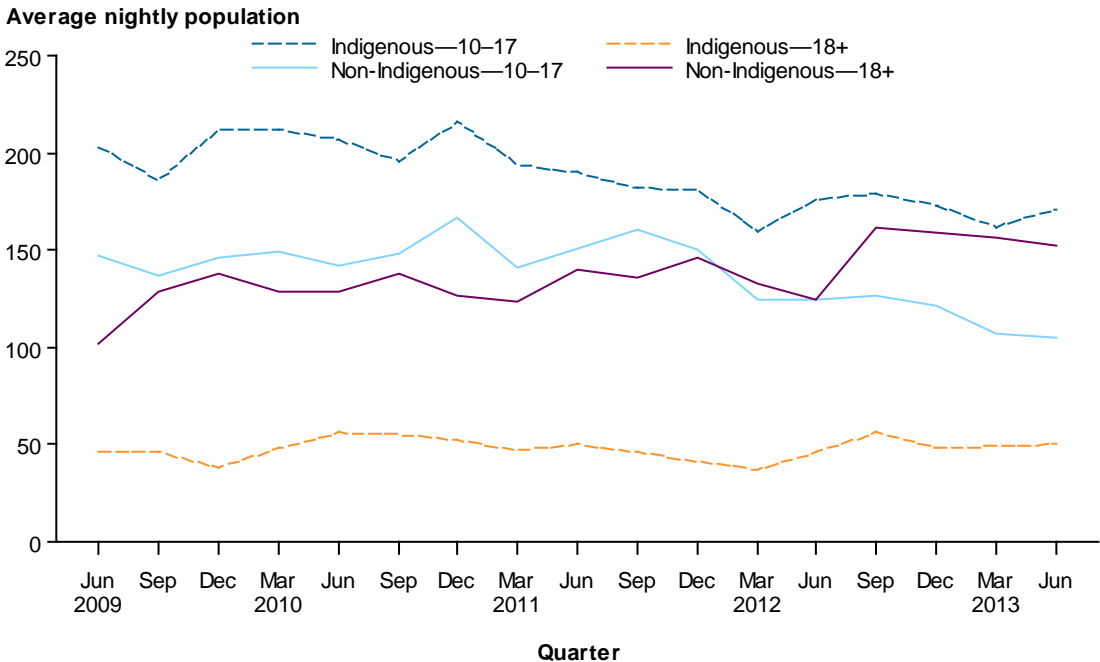


Throughout the 4-year period, most of those in sentenced detention were aged 10–17 (58% in the June quarter 2013, down from 70% in the June quarter 2009) (tables S27 and S28). However, proportions varied substantially among jurisdictions, from just 16% in Victoria in the most recent quarter to 100% in Queensland and the Northern Territory. The low

proportion in Victoria is likely to be a result of the state’s ‘dual track’ sentencing system (see Chapter 1 for more details).

Among those aged 10–17, most were Indigenous: there were 171 Indigenous (62%) and 105 non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 4.2). Indigenous young people outnumbered non-Indigenous young people throughout the 4-year period. While the size of both groups decreased, there were slight differences in the trends: 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 2012.

Among those aged 18 or over, there were 50 Indigenous and 152 non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013. The non-Indigenous group increased from a low of 102 young people in the June quarter 2009; most of the increase occurred in late 2009 and the most recent year. There was no change in the size of the Indigenous group.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S22, S23, S25 and S26.

Figure 4.2: Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

On an average night in the June quarter 2013, there were 450 males (94%) and 30 females in sentenced detention (Figure 4.3). The vast majority (92 to 96%) were males in each quarter throughout the period.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

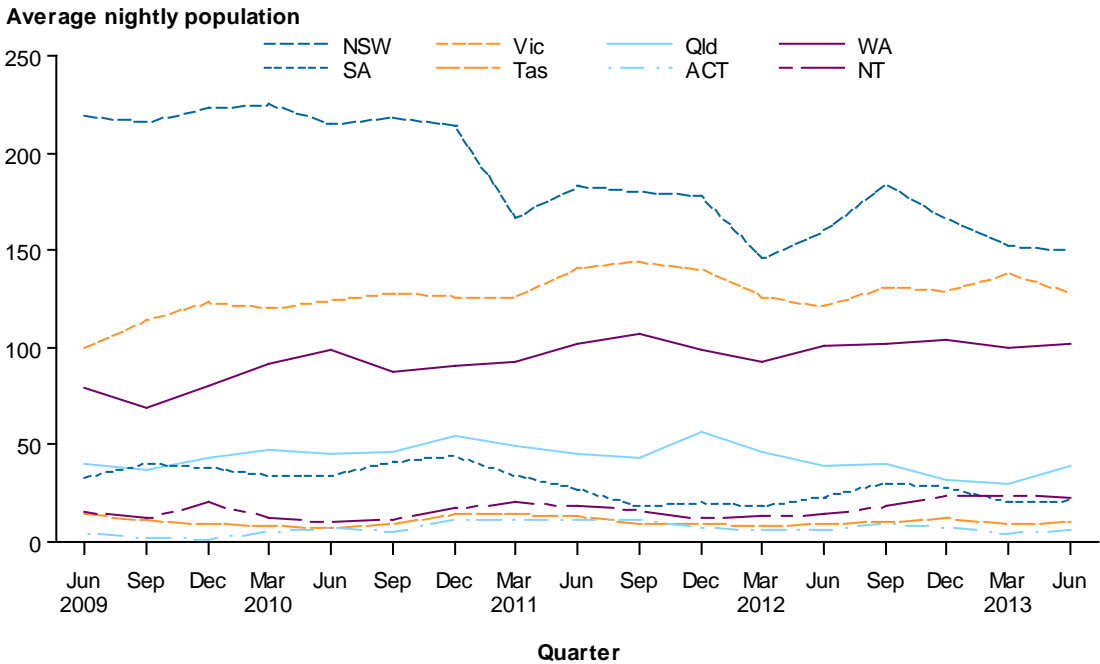
Source: Table S27.

Figure 4.3: Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

States and territories

New South Wales had the largest sentenced detention population throughout the 4-year period, followed by Victoria and Western Australia (Figure 4.4).

There were different trends in the sentenced population among the states and territories. Between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, the number of young people in sentenced detention on an average night decreased in New South Wales (from 219 to 150) and South Australia (33 to 21). There were increases in Victoria (from 100 to 128) and Western Australia (79 to 102), and no clear patterns of change in the other states and territories.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Table S27.

Figure 4.4: Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

4.3 Rate of sentenced detention

There were 1.2 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in sentenced detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013, which was a decrease from the rate in the June quarter 2009 (1.6 per 10,000) (Figure 4.5).

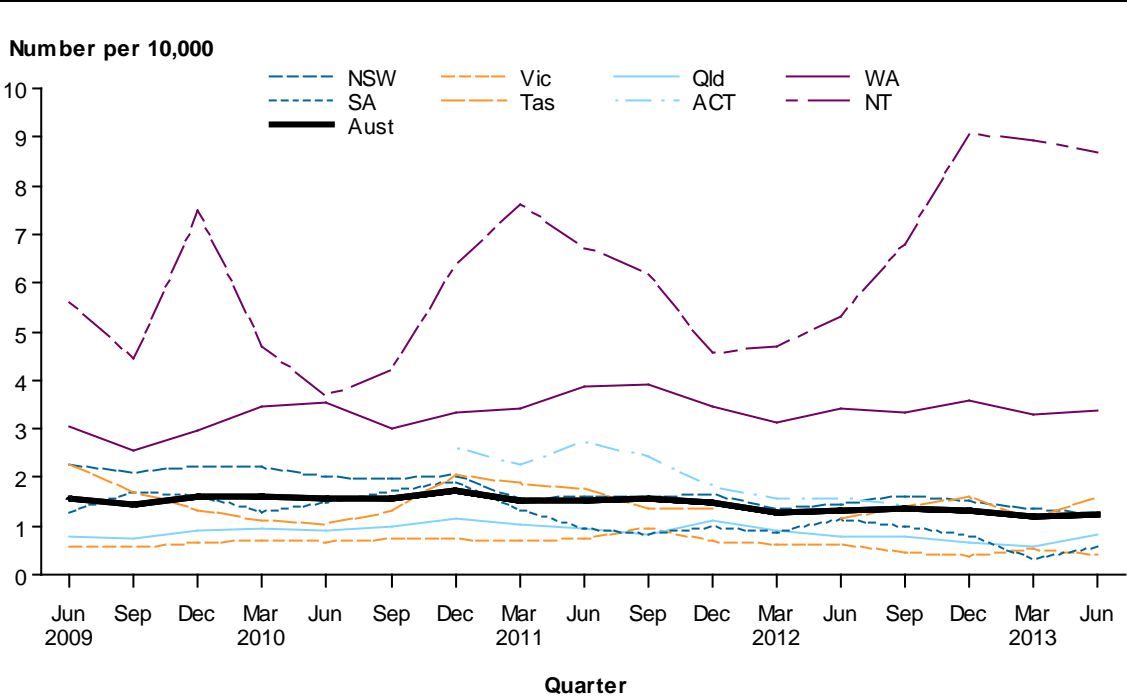
The rate of young people in sentenced detention was consistently lower during 2012 and early 2013 (1.2 to 1.4 per 10,000) than earlier in the 4-year period (1.5 to 1.7 per 10,000).

States and territories

In the June quarter 2013, rates of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention ranged from 0.4 per 10,000 in Victoria to 3.4 per 10,000 in Western Australia and 8.7 per 10,000 in the Northern Territory.

Over the 4-year period, the rate decreased in New South Wales, displayed an upward trend in the Northern Territory, and showed no clear pattern among the other states and territories.

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 in part to the small numbers of young people involved. Rates of sentenced detention were lowest in Victoria and Queensland in most quarters during the period.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

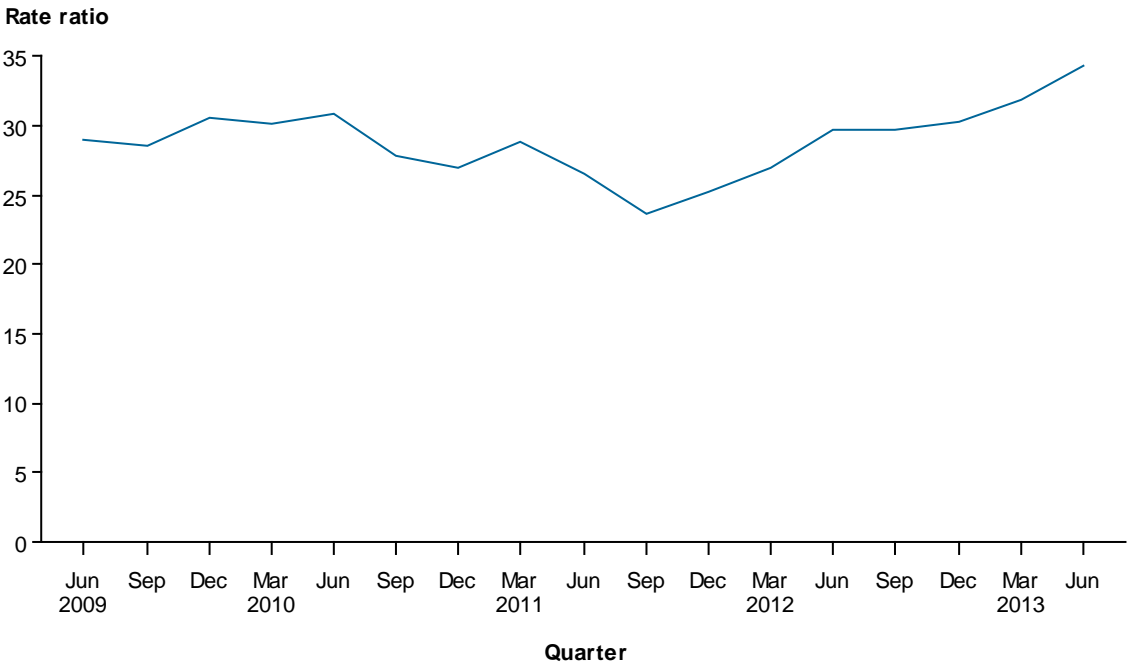
Source: Table S30.

Figure 4.5: Young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2013, Indigenous young people were 34 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 29 times as likely in the June quarter 4 years earlier. There was a steady increase in the rate ratio from the September quarter 2011 onwards.

The increase was due to a proportionally larger drop in the non-Indigenous sentenced detention rate (from 0.7 to 0.5 per 10,000) than the Indigenous rate (from 19.7 to 16.4 per 10,000) over the 4-year period (Table S30). Much of this change occurred from early 2012 onwards.



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

Source: Table S30.

Figure 4.6: Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10-17 in sentenced detention, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate ratio)

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 2009 and the June quarter 2013.

5.1 Key points

Over the 4-year period (June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013):

New South Wales

- The number of young people in detention on an average night decreased (from 424 to 317), as did the rate of those aged 10–17 (4.8 to 3.3 per 10,000).
- Decreases in numbers and rates occurred in sentenced and unsentenced detention.

Victoria

- While the number of young people of all ages in detention remained relatively stable, there was a slight decrease in the rate of those aged 10–17 (1.4 to 0.9 per 10,000).
- Rates of unsentenced and sentenced detention were similar.

Queensland

- The number and rate of young people in detention increased (from 119 to 180 young people and from 2.5 to 3.7 per 10,000); most of the increase occurred in the most recent year.
- This was driven by a rise in the number of young people in unsentenced detention.

Western Australia

- The number and rate of young people in detention fluctuated from 152 to 200 on an average night each quarter, or 6.0 to 7.8 per 10,000 aged 10–17.
- The number and rate in unsentenced and sentenced detention were stable over time.

South Australia

- The number and rate of young people in detention on an average night fluctuated each quarter (58 to 75 young people and 2.5 to 3.6 per 10,000 aged 10–17).
- The unsentenced population outnumbered the sentenced from June 2011 onwards.

Tasmania

- There was a steady decline in the number (from 32 to 17) and rate (from 5.5 to 2.9 per 10,000) of young people in detention on an average night.
- This was mainly due to a decrease in unsentenced detention.

Australian Capital Territory

- The number and rate in detention were highest between 2010 and mid-2012.
- The unsentenced population was larger than the sentenced in most quarters.

Northern Territory

- Despite small and fluctuating numbers, there were overall increases in the number (from 33 to 49) and rate (from 12.2 to 18.7 per 10,000) of young people in detention.
- Most of those in detention in each quarter were Indigenous.

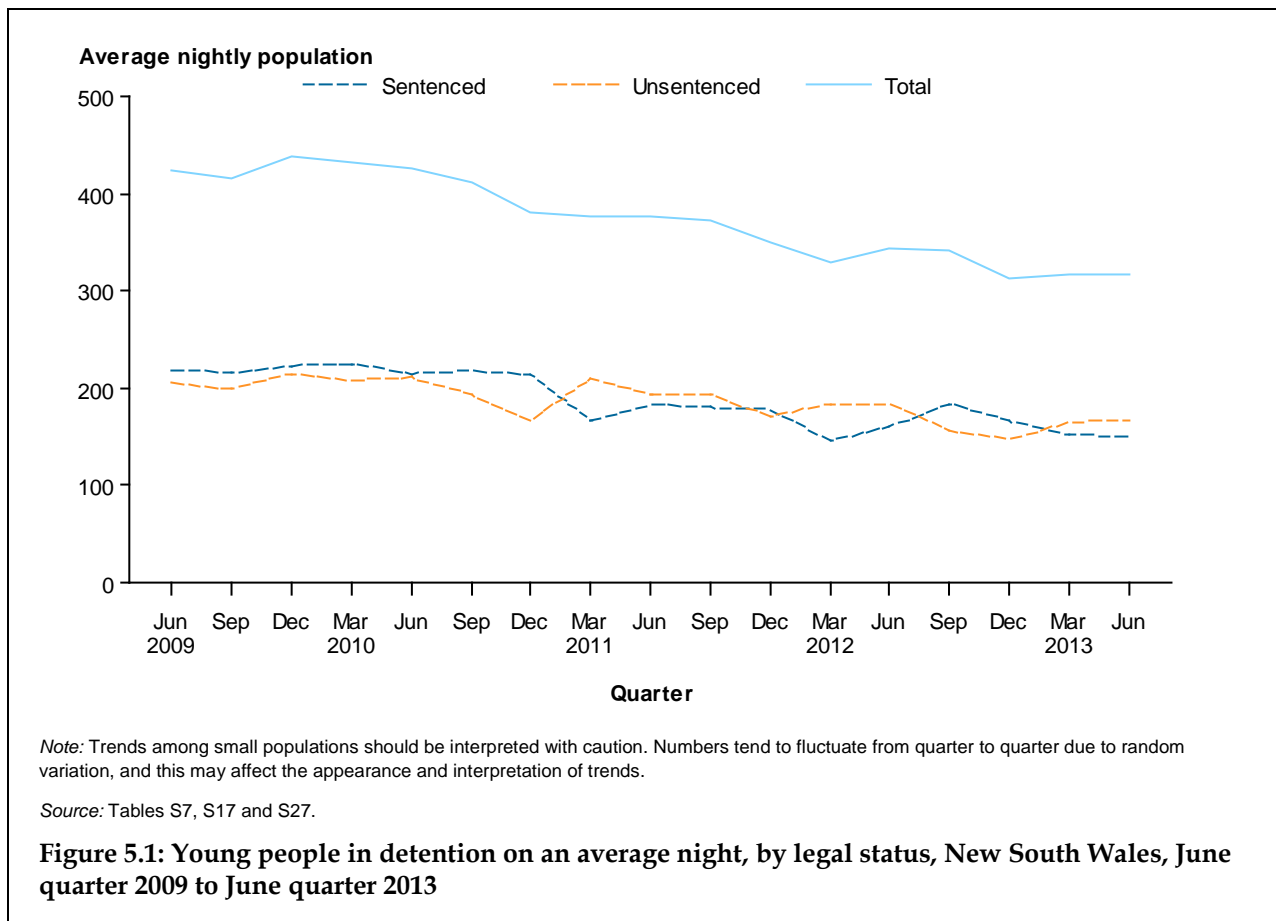
5.2 New South Wales

Numbers

There were 317 young people in detention in New South Wales on an average night in the June quarter 2013, down from 424 in the June quarter 2009 (Figure 5.1). There was a steady decline in the number on an average night each quarter from early 2010 onwards.

Similar numbers of sentenced and unsentenced young people were in detention in New South Wales on an average night each quarter throughout the 4-year period. Between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, there were decreases in the numbers of young people in both sentenced (down 32% to 150 young people) and unsentenced detention (down 19% to 167).

Over the most recent year, numbers fluctuated slightly, with small overall decreases in both sentenced and unsentenced detention.

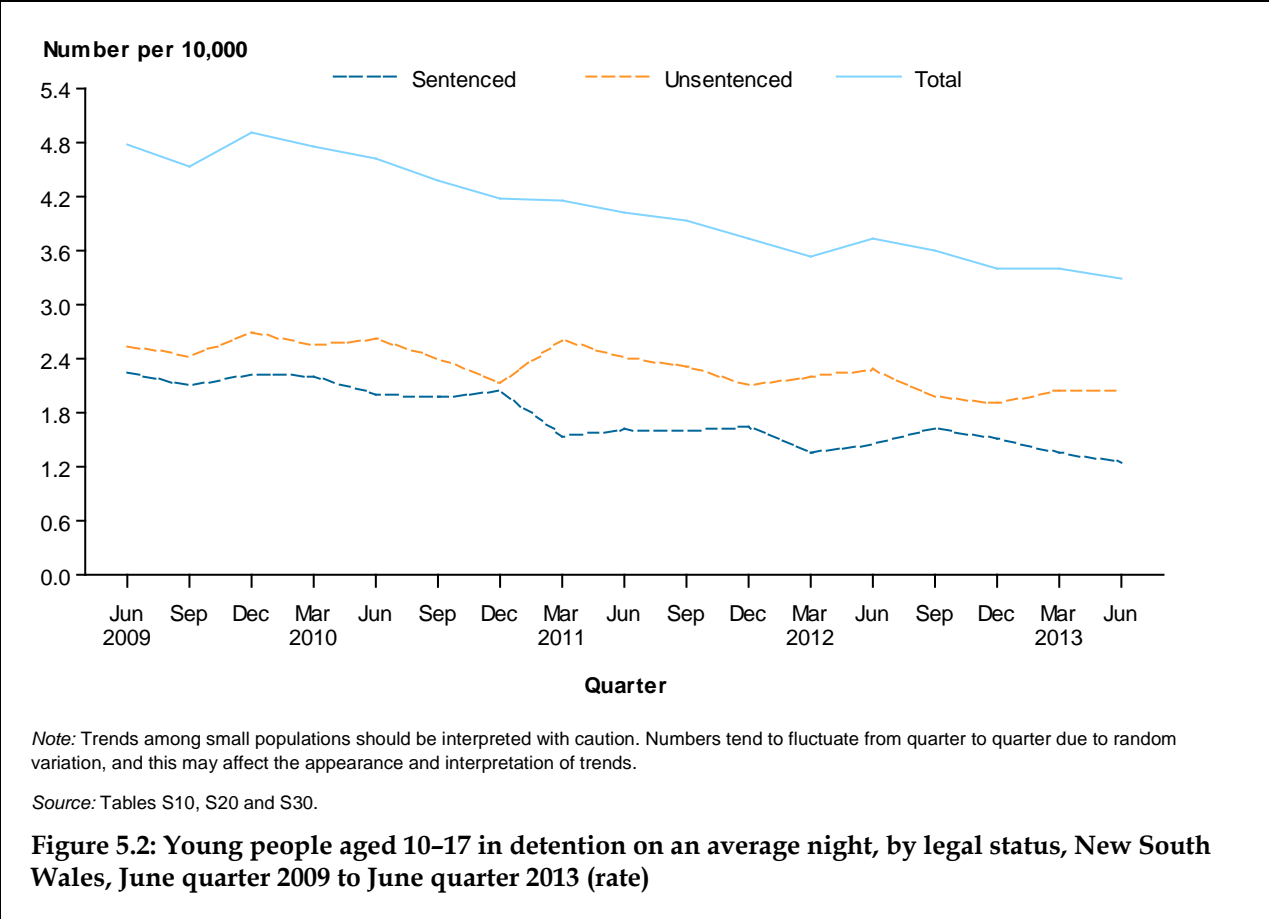


Rates

There were 3.3 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in detention on an average night in the most recent quarter: 2.0 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention and 1.3 per 10,000 in sentenced detention (Figure 5.2).

Over the 4-year period, there was a relatively steady decline in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night each quarter (from 4.8 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2009 to 3.3 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2013).

Similar to the pattern in the numbers of young people in detention, there was a slightly more pronounced decrease in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in sentenced (from 2.2 to 1.3 per 10,000) than in unsentenced detention (from 2.5 to 2.0 per 10,000).

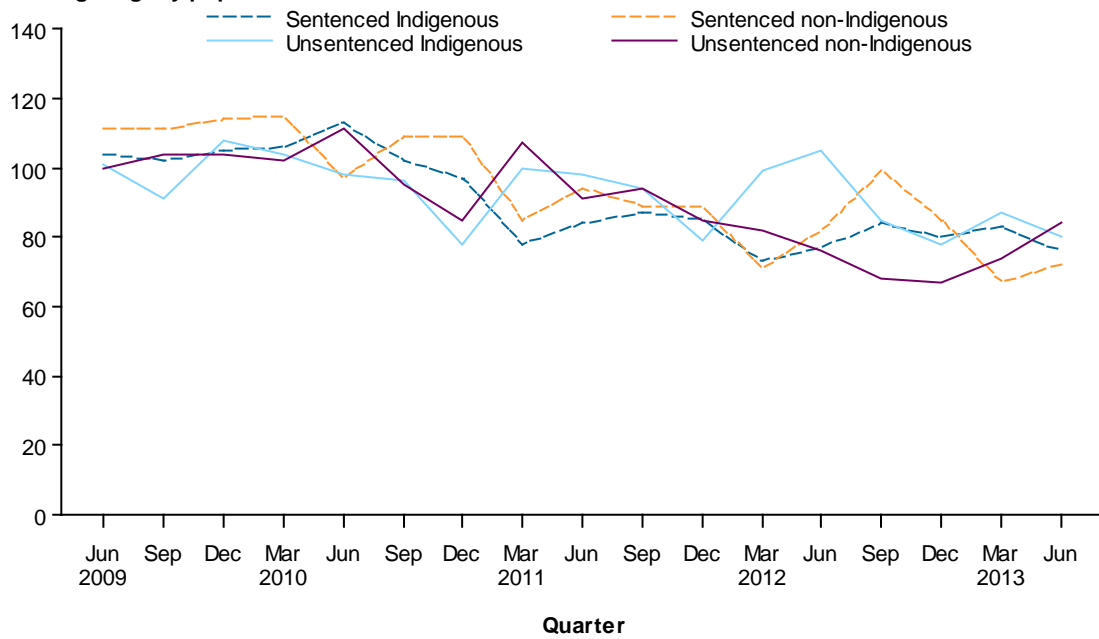


Indigenous status

On an average night in the June quarter 2013, there were 76 Indigenous and 72 non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention, along with 80 Indigenous and 84 non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention (Figure 5.3).

These four groups remained similar in size to one another throughout the 4-year period. Despite fluctuations from quarter to quarter, each of the groups showed a similar decline from early 2010 onwards.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

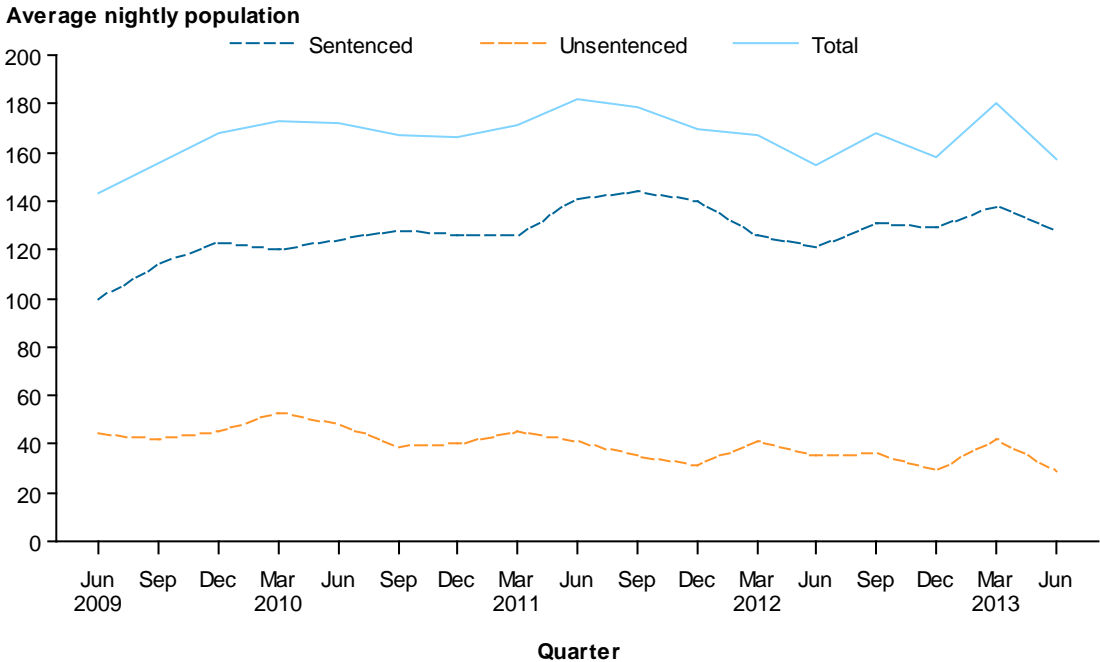
Figure 5.3: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, New South Wales, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.3 Victoria

Numbers

In the most recent quarter, there were 157 young people in detention in Victoria on an average night (Figure 5.4). The detention population was relatively stable throughout most of the 4-year period, ranging between 143 (June quarter 2009) and 182 (June quarter 2011).

Most young people in detention in Victoria were serving a sentence, and this proportion increased slightly over the 4 years (from 70% to 82%). The average nightly sentenced population increased between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013 (from 100 to 128), while the unsentenced population was relatively stable, with a slight decrease overall (from 44 to 29).



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

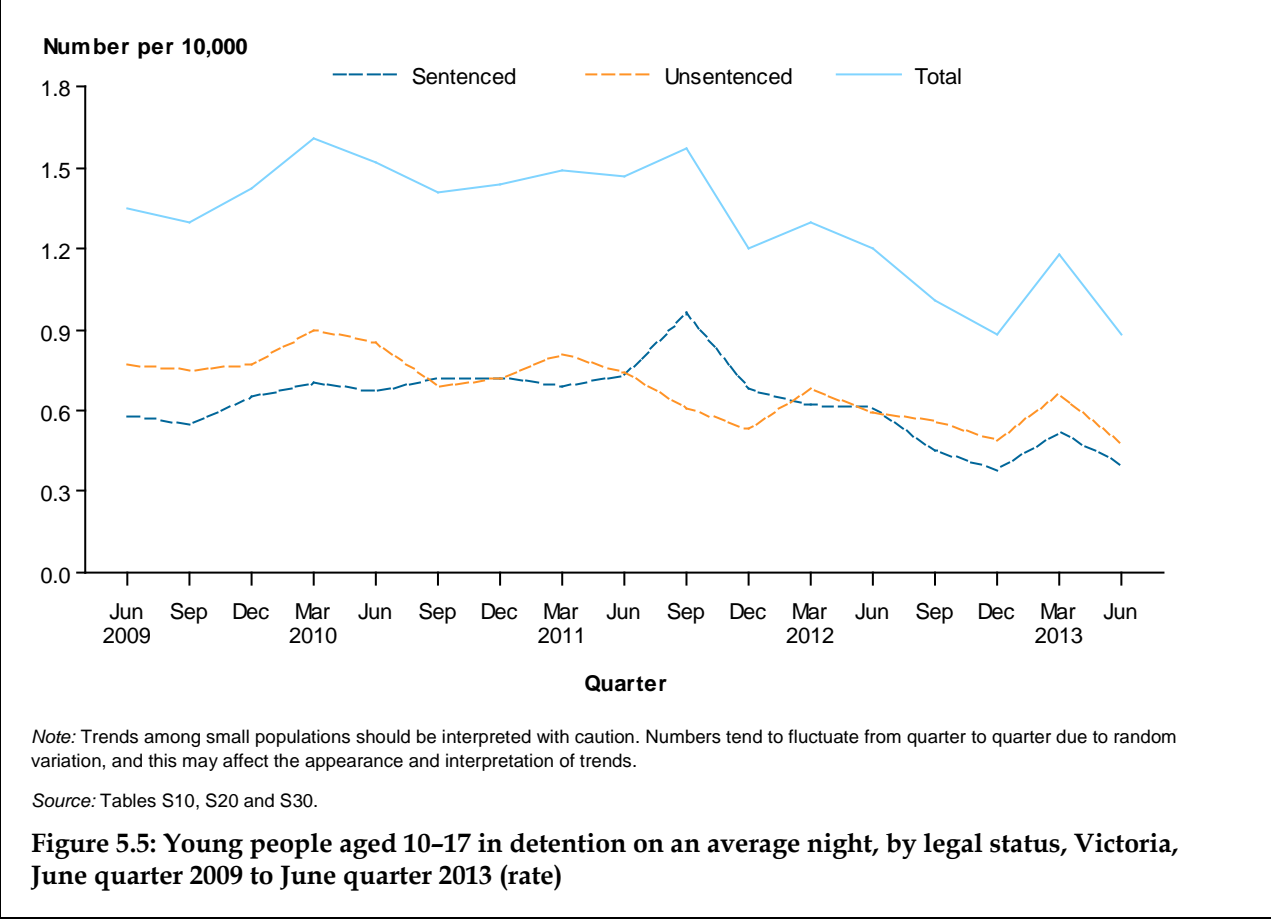
Figure 5.4: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Victoria, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Rates

Over the 4-year period, there was a decrease in the rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night in Victoria, from 1.4 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2009 to 0.9 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 5.5). The decrease occurred from the December quarter 2011 onwards.

Rates of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced and sentenced detention remained similar to one another over the 4-year period. 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

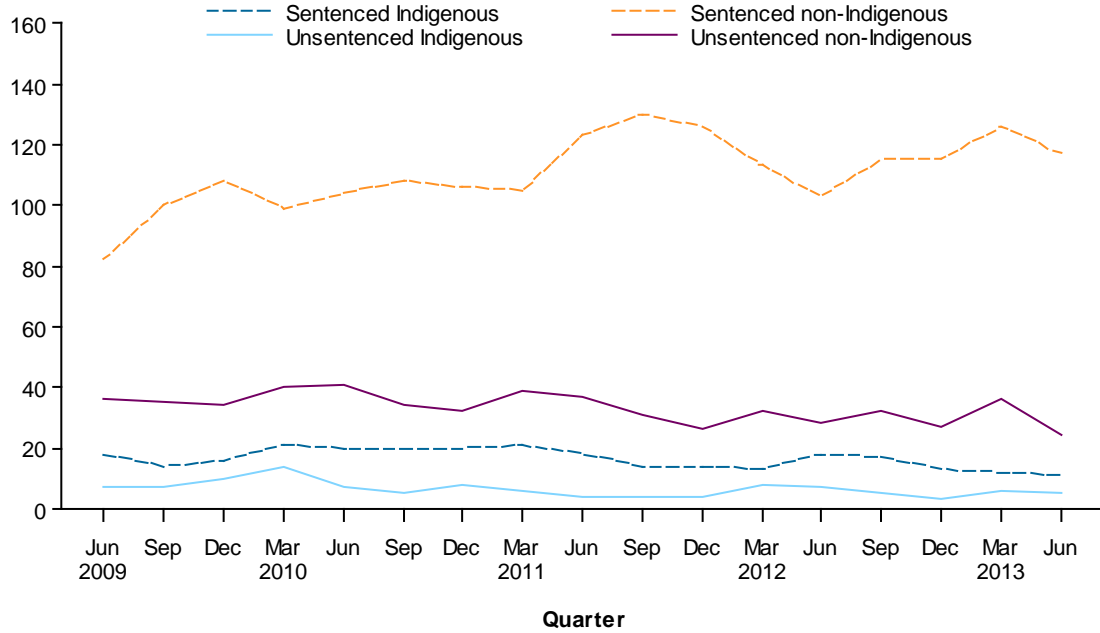
that a high proportion of those in detention were aged 18 or over (49% in the June quarter 2009, increasing to 70% in the most recent quarter) (tables S7 and S9). The high proportion of young people aged 18 or over is likely to be due to the 'dual track' sentencing system operating in Victoria, whereby 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

Sentenced non-Indigenous young people were consistently the largest group in detention in Victoria, and made up three-quarters (75%) of those in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 5.6). This group ranged from 82 young people in the June quarter 2009 to 126 in the December quarter 2011 and March quarter 2013, with an overall slight upward trend over the 4 years. There were no marked trends among the other three groups.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

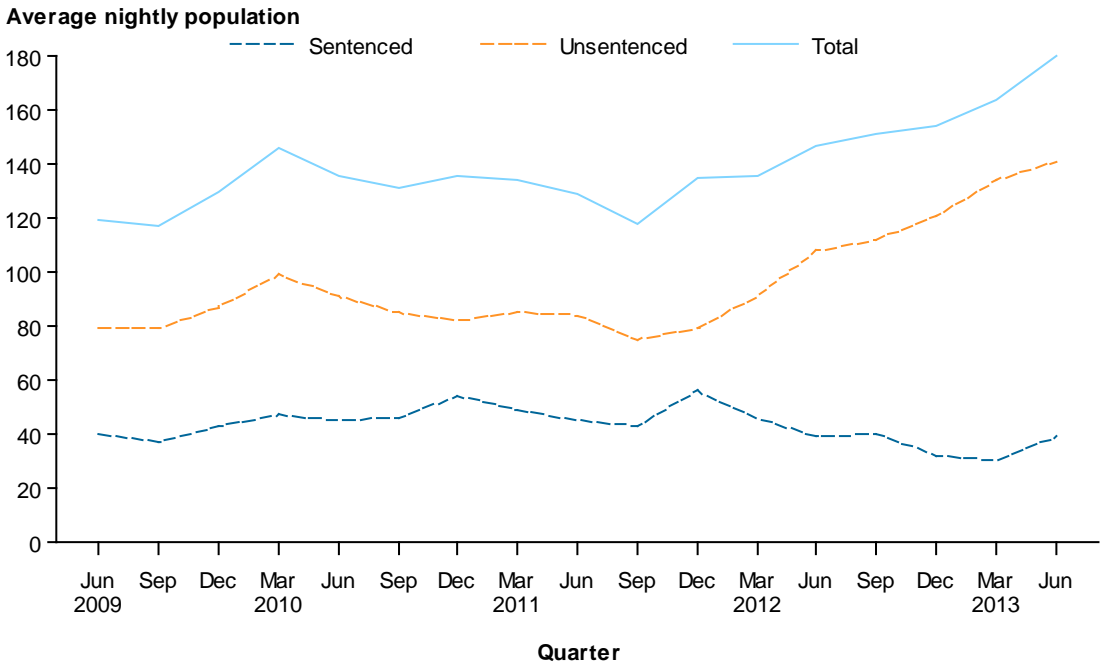
Figure 5.6: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Victoria, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.4 Queensland

Numbers

The number of young people in detention on an average night in Queensland increased over the 4-year period, from 119 in the June quarter 2009 to a high of 180 in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 5.7). Most of the increase occurred in the most recent year (from the June quarter 2012 onwards).

The rise was driven by an increase in the number of young people in unsentenced detention. There were 75 to 99 young people in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter until the March quarter 2012, after which there was a steady increase to 141 in the most recent quarter. Those in unsentenced detention outnumbered those in sentenced detention in each quarter (30 to 56) throughout the 4-year period.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

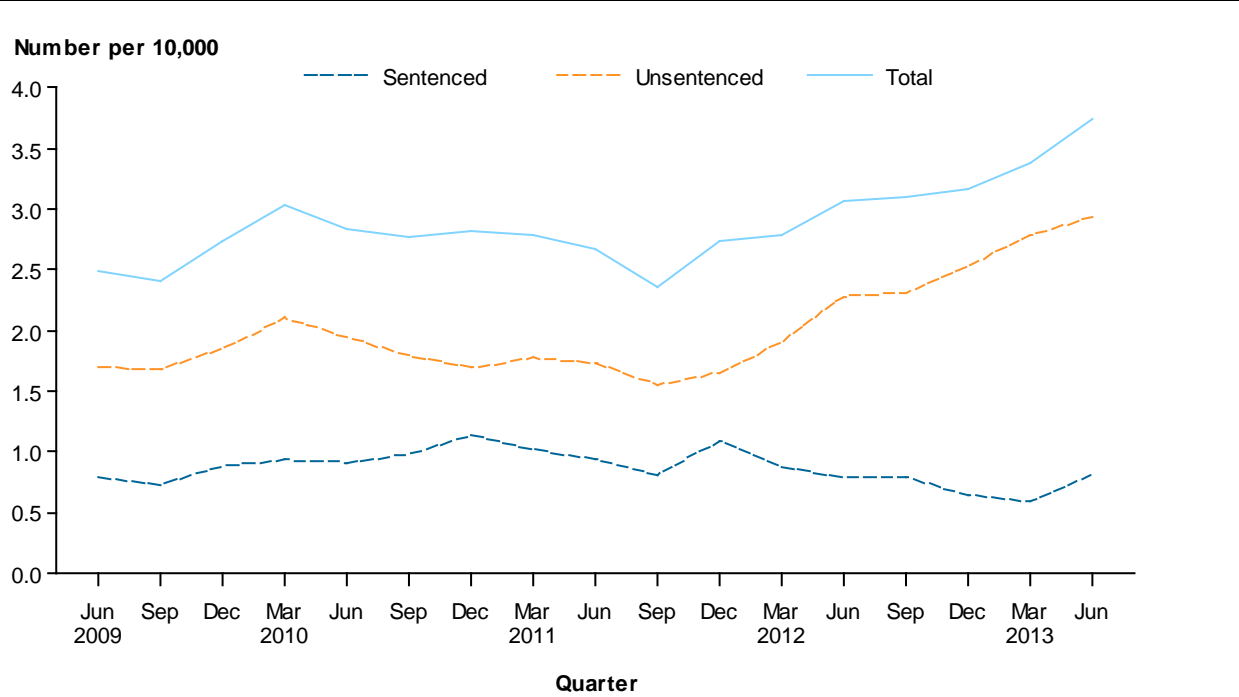
Figure 5.7: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Rates

Very few young people in detention in Queensland are aged 18 or over, as the upper age limit in the youth justice system is 16 years at the time the offence was committed or allegedly committed (it is 17 years in other states and territories; see Chapter 1). Therefore, 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, there was an overall increase in the rate of young people in detention on an average night, from 2.5 per 10,000 in the June quarter 2009 to a high of 3.7 per 10,000 in the most recent quarter (Figure 5.8).

Again, this was driven by an increase in the rate of unsentenced detention (from 1.7 to 2.9 per 10,000 over the 4-year period), with most of the change occurring over the most recent year. The rate of young people in sentenced detention on an average night ranged from 0.6 to 1.1 per 10,000 each quarter over the 4-year period.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

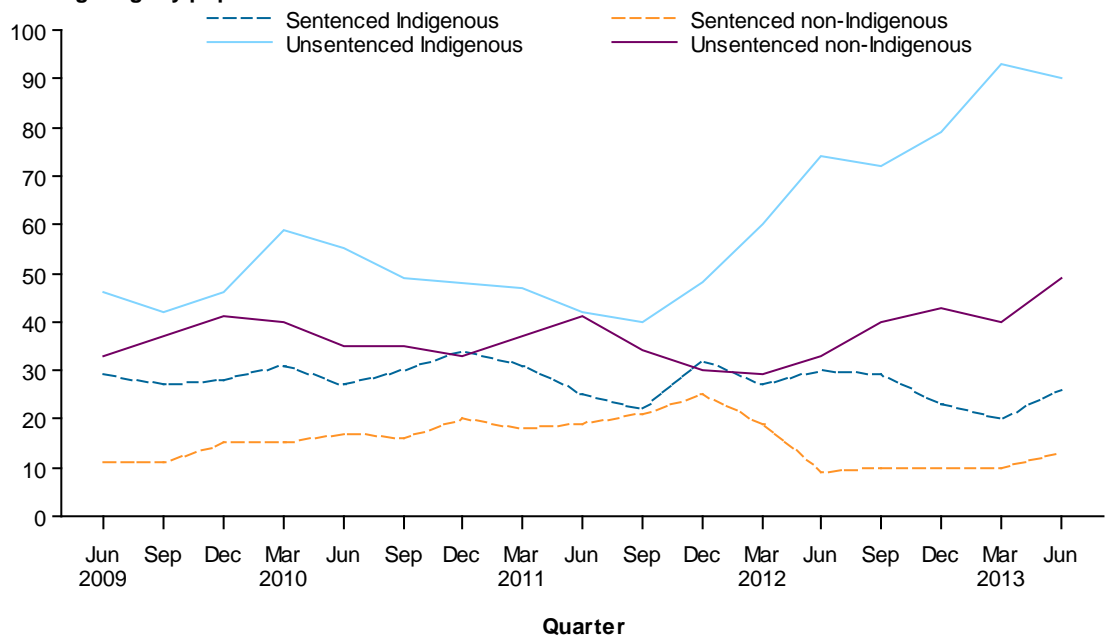
Figure 5.8: Young people aged 10-17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

The increase in the unsentenced population in the most recent year mainly occurred among Indigenous young people (Figure 5.9). There were 40 to 60 Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention each quarter between the June quarter 2009 and the March quarter 2012, rising to 72 to 93 in the most recent year. Unsented Indigenous young people were the largest group in detention each quarter throughout the period.

There were no consistent trends among the other groups. On an average night each quarter, there were 29 to 49 non-Indigenous young people in unsentenced detention, along with about 20 to 34 Indigenous and 9 to 25 non-Indigenous young people in sentenced detention.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

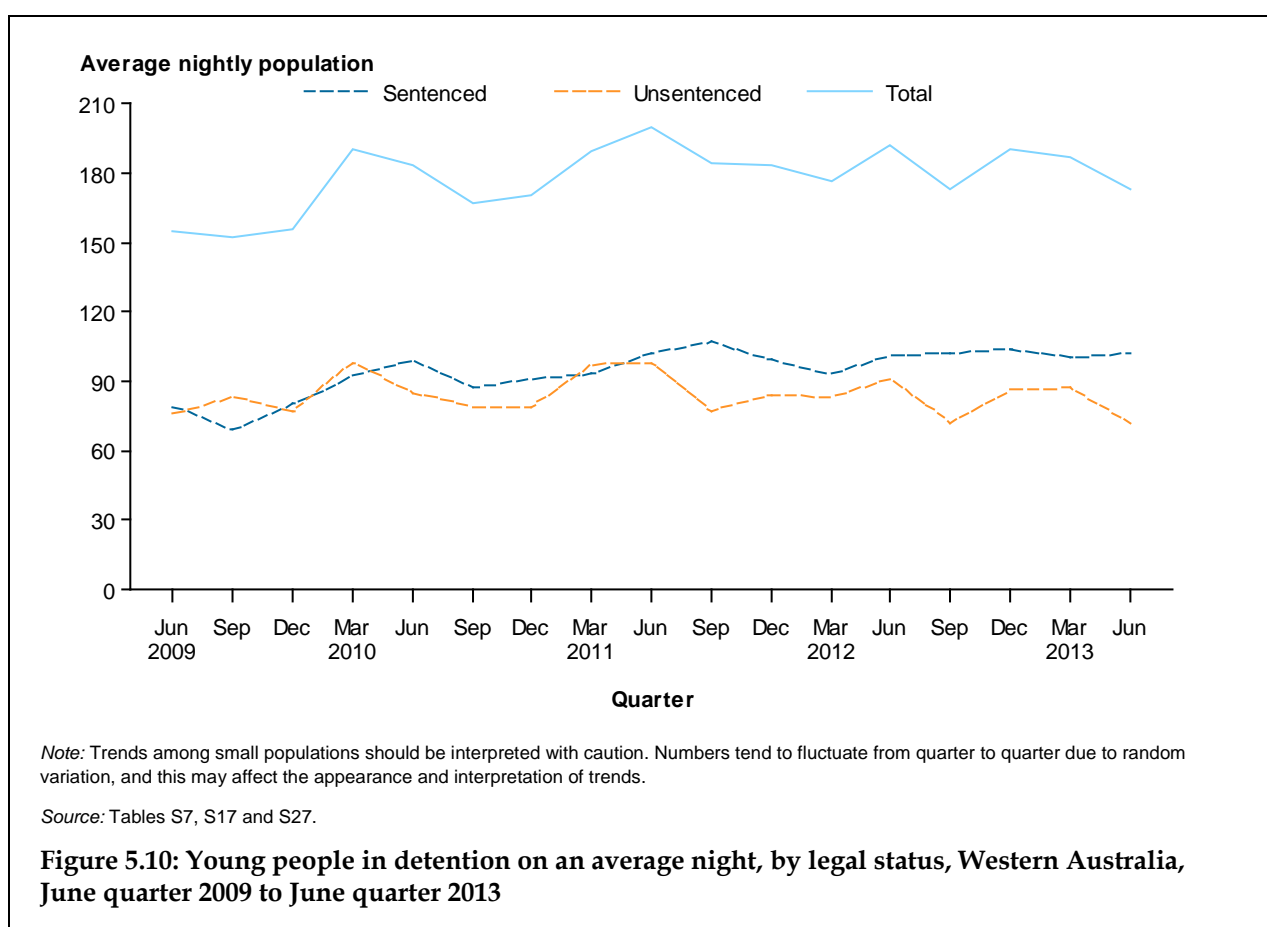
Figure 5.9: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.5 Western Australia

Numbers

Over the 4 years to the June quarter 2013, there were 152 to 200 young people in detention on an average night in Western Australia each quarter (173 in the June quarter 2013) (Figure 5.10). Numbers fluctuated each quarter, but were consistently lowest during 2009.

The numbers of sentenced and unsentenced young people remained similar to one another over the period, although the number of sentenced young people increased and slightly exceeded the number of unsentenced young people from the June quarter 2011 onwards.

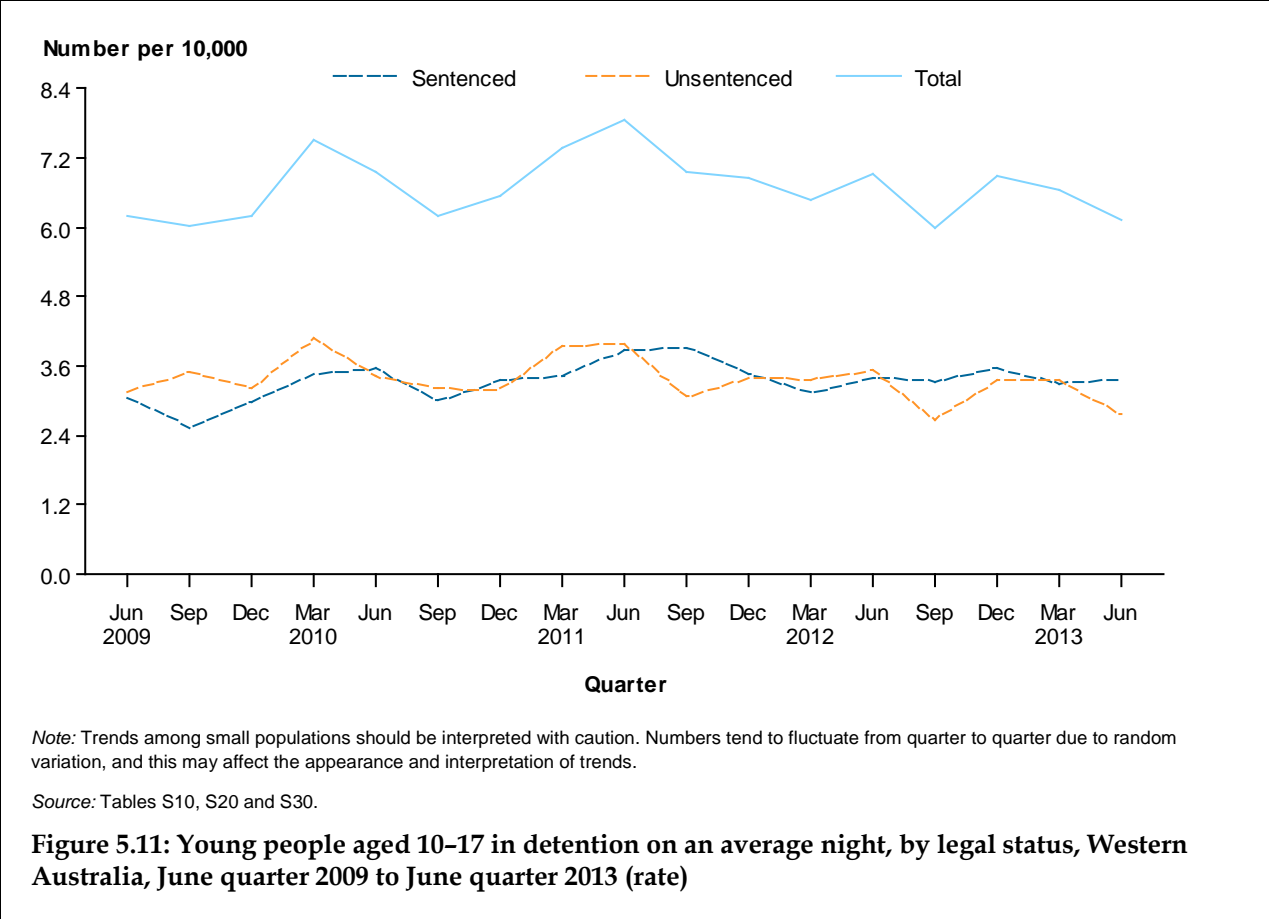


Rates

On an average night in the June quarter 2013, there were 6.1 young people aged 10–17 in detention per 10,000 in Western Australia: 2.8 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention and 3.4 per 10,000 in sentenced detention (numbers do not sum due to rounding) (Figure 5.11).

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 was lowest in the September quarter 2009 and September quarter 2012 (6.0 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. There were 2.7 to 4.1 young people aged 10–17 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention on an average night each quarter, and 2.5 to 3.9 per 10,000 in sentenced detention.

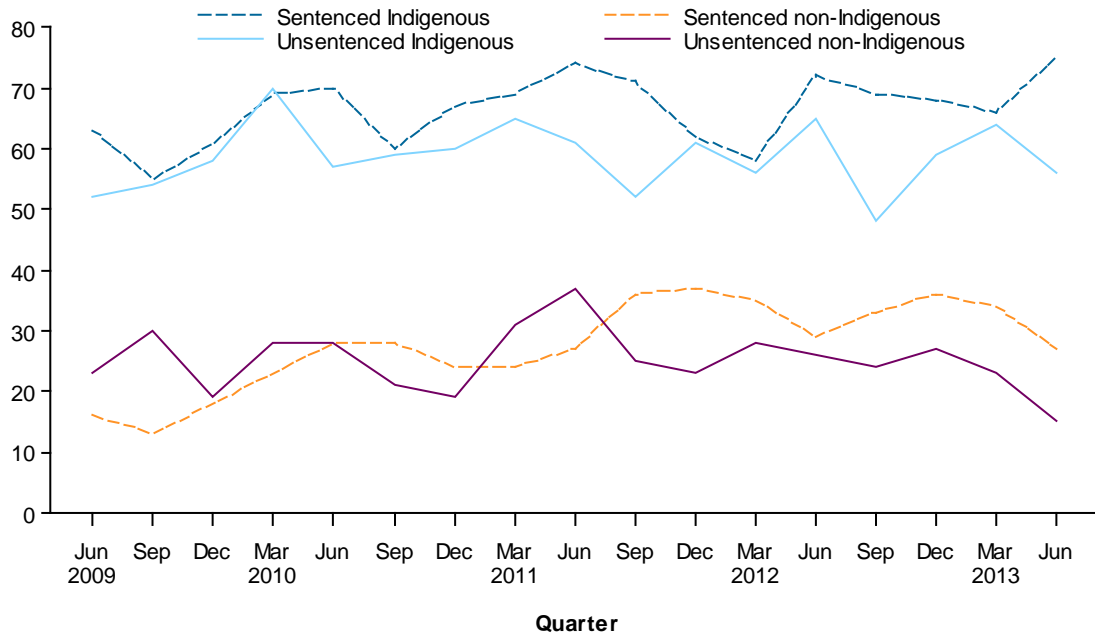


Indigenous status

Throughout the 4-year period, the majority (about 60 to 80%) of young people in both unsentenced and sentenced detention in Western Australia were Indigenous (Figure 5.12). The Indigenous unsentenced and sentenced groups remained similar in size over the period, with the sentenced group (55 to 75 young people) slightly outnumbering the unsentenced group (48 to 70) in most quarters.

Among non-Indigenous young people, the unsentenced and sentenced groups were also similar in size throughout the 4 years. The sentenced group increased in size over the period, and was slightly larger than the unsentenced group from the September quarter 2011 onwards.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

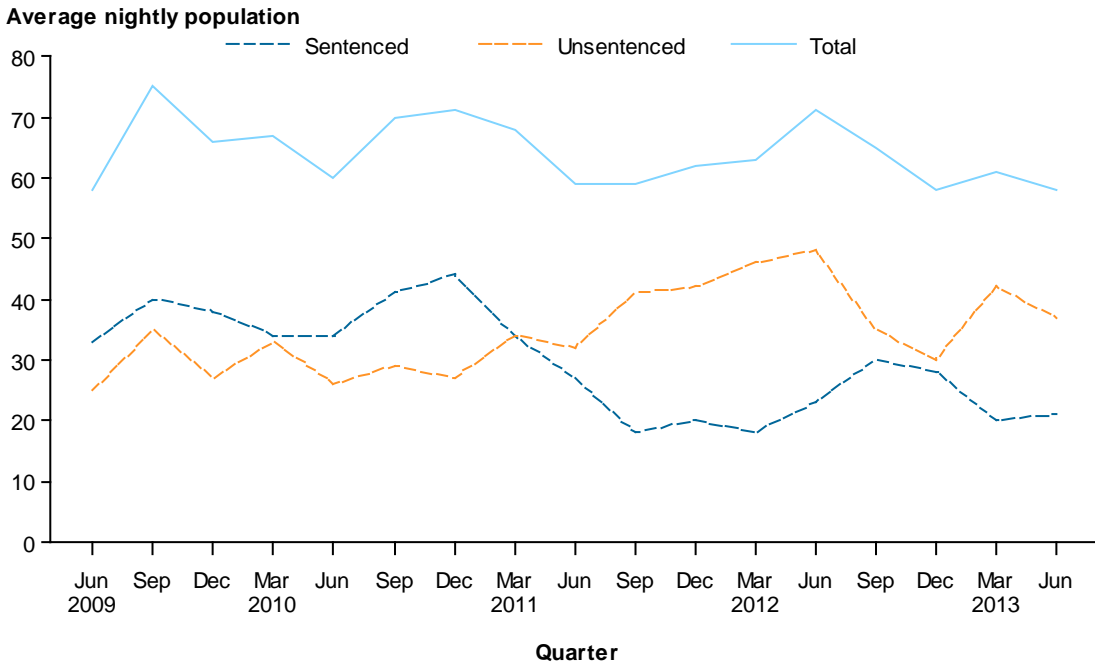
Figure 5.12: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Western Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.6 South Australia

Numbers

There were 58 to 75 young people in detention in South Australia on an average night in each quarter over the 4-year period (58 in the June quarter 2013) (Figure 5.13). Numbers fluctuated slightly from quarter to quarter, with no clear pattern of change.

However, there were substantially different trends in the unsentenced and sentenced populations. The sentenced population was larger than the unsentenced population in each quarter until June 2011, when the number in sentenced detention dropped and the number in unsentenced detention rose. The unsentenced population then outnumbered the sentenced population for the remainder of the period. There were 37 unsentenced and 21 sentenced young people in detention on an average night in the most recent quarter.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

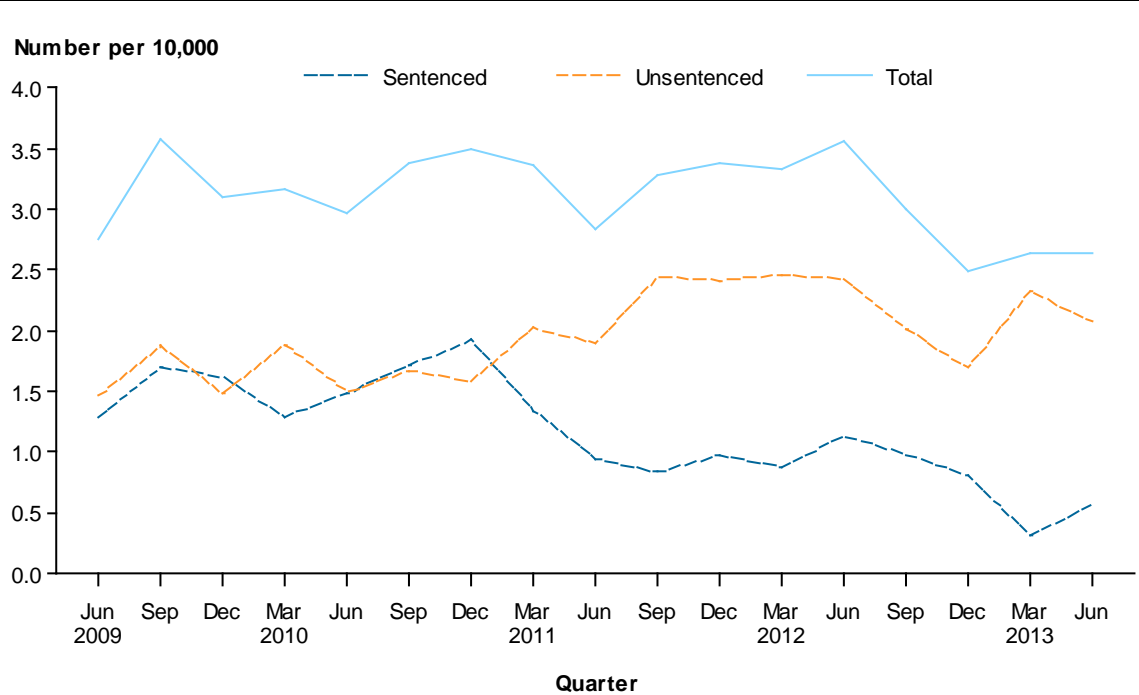
Figure 5.13: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Rates

Trends in the rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention in South Australia were consistent with the trends in numbers. The rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night fluctuated from about 2.5 to 3.6 per 10,000 each quarter (2.6 in the June quarter 2013).

Rates of young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced and sentenced detention were similar (around 1.5 per 10,000) until early 2011, when the sentenced detention rate decreased (to

about 0.5 to 1.0 per 10,000) and the unsentenced detention rate increased (to about 2.0 to 2.5 per 10,000). In the June quarter 2013, there were 0.6 young people per 10,000 in sentenced detention on an average night and 2.1 per 10,000 in unsentenced detention.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

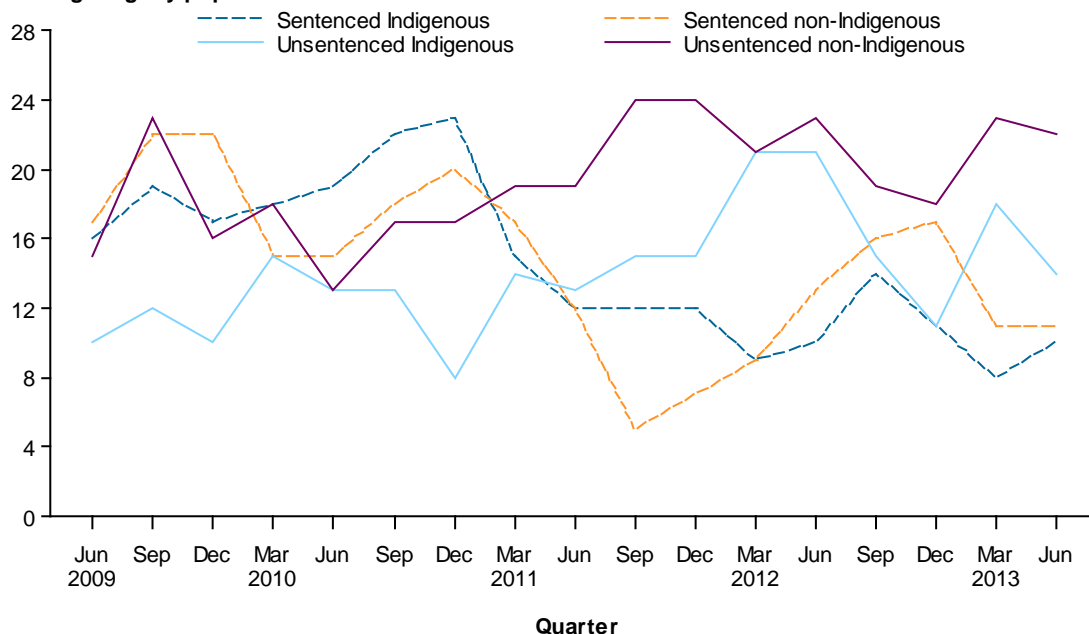
Figure 5.14: Young people aged 10-17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

In the June quarter 2013, unsentenced non-Indigenous young people were the largest group of young people in detention in South Australia (22 young people on an average night, or 38% of all those in detention) (Figure 5.15).

The size of each of the four groups fluctuated each quarter over the 4-year period, in part because of the very small numbers involved. Overall, there were slight downward trends in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous sentenced populations.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

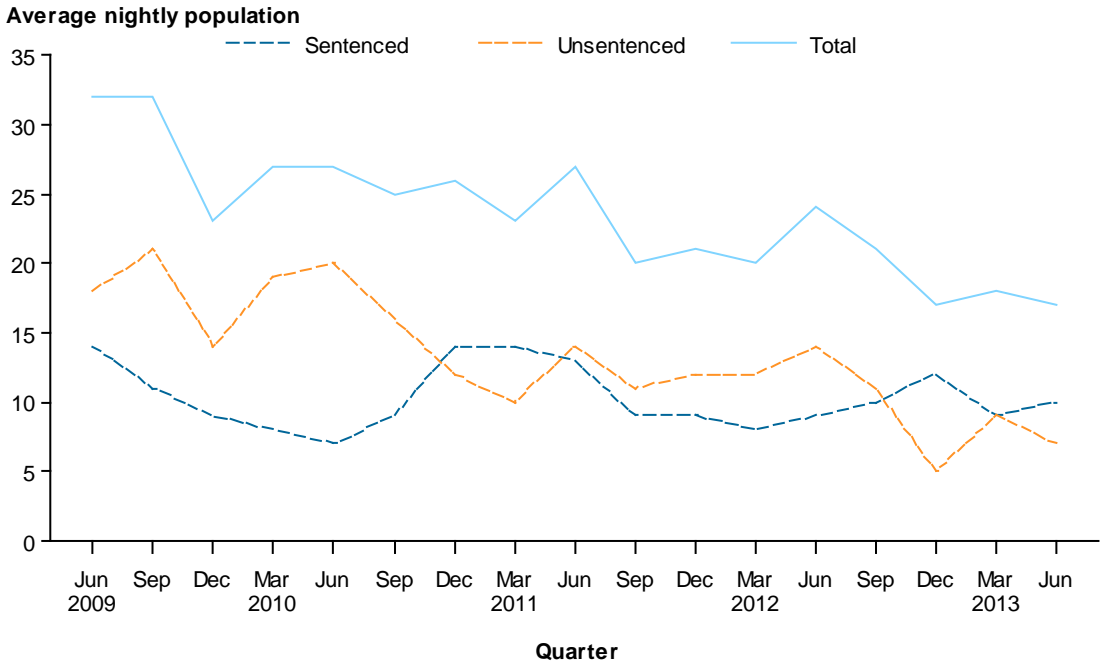
Figure 5.15: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.7 Tasmania

Numbers

Despite quarterly fluctuations, there was a relatively steady decrease in the number of young people in detention on an average night in Tasmania, from a high of 32 young people at the start of the 4-year period to a low of 17 in the most recent quarter (Figure 5.16).

This was driven mainly by a decrease in the number of young people in unsentenced detention, from 18 on an average night in the June quarter 2009 to 7 in the June quarter 2013.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

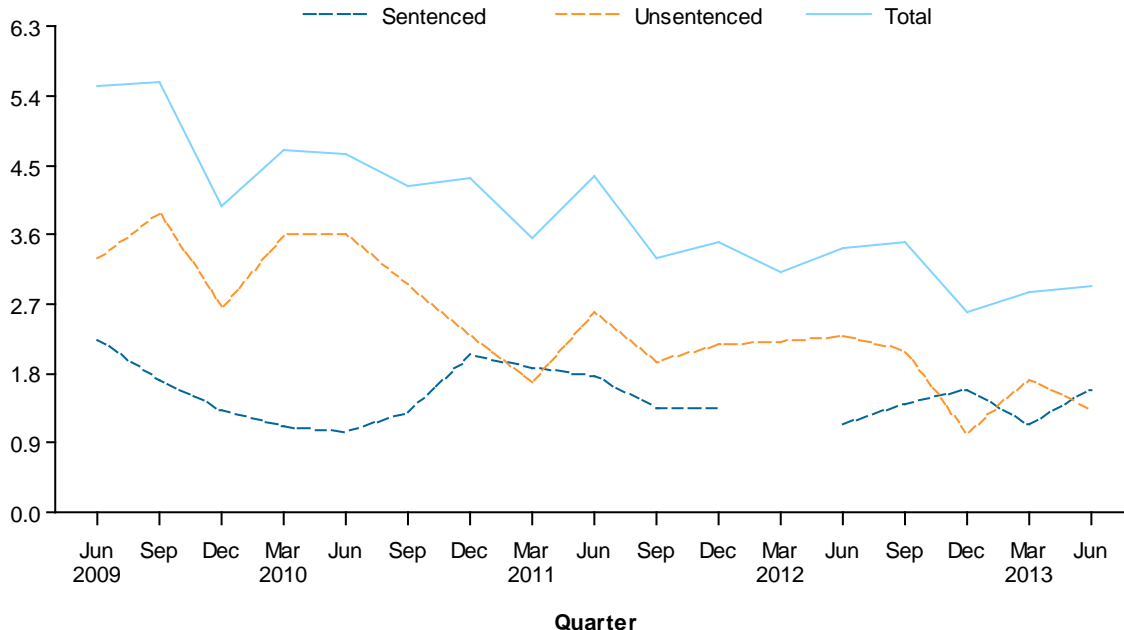
Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

Figure 5.16: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Rates

Similar to the decline in the number of young people in detention, the rate of those aged 10–17 decreased between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, from 5.5 to 2.9 per 10,000 (Figure 5.17). While the rate of young people in sentenced detention fluctuated, the rate of those in unsentenced detention decreased overall. Rates were not calculated where there were fewer than five young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night.

Number per 10,000



Notes

1. Rates are not published where there were fewer than five young people in the numerator.
2. Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

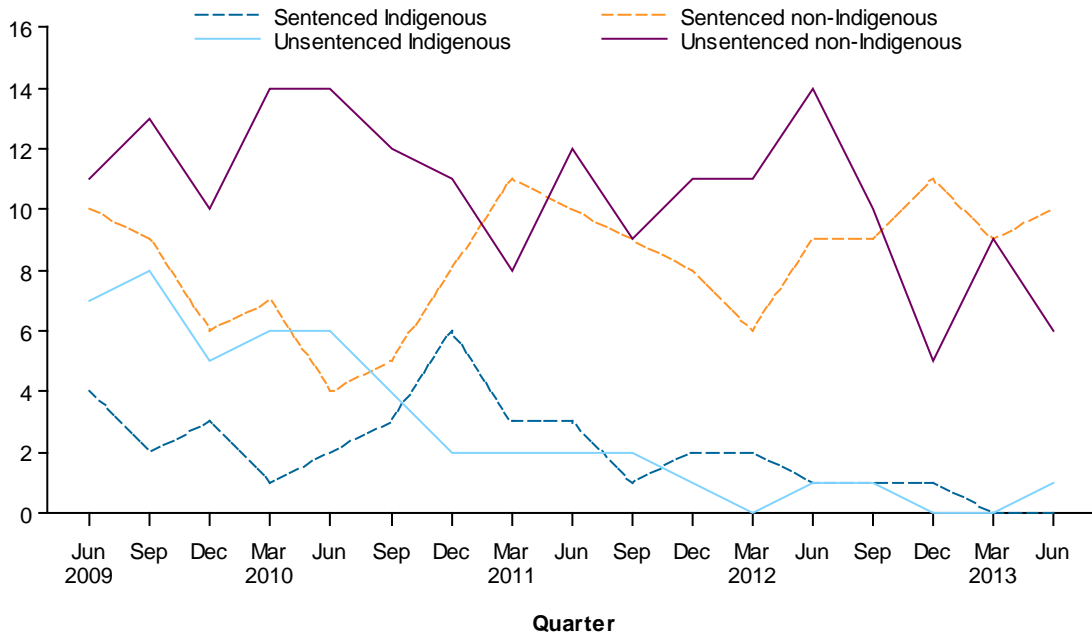
Source: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

Figure 5.17: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

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

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

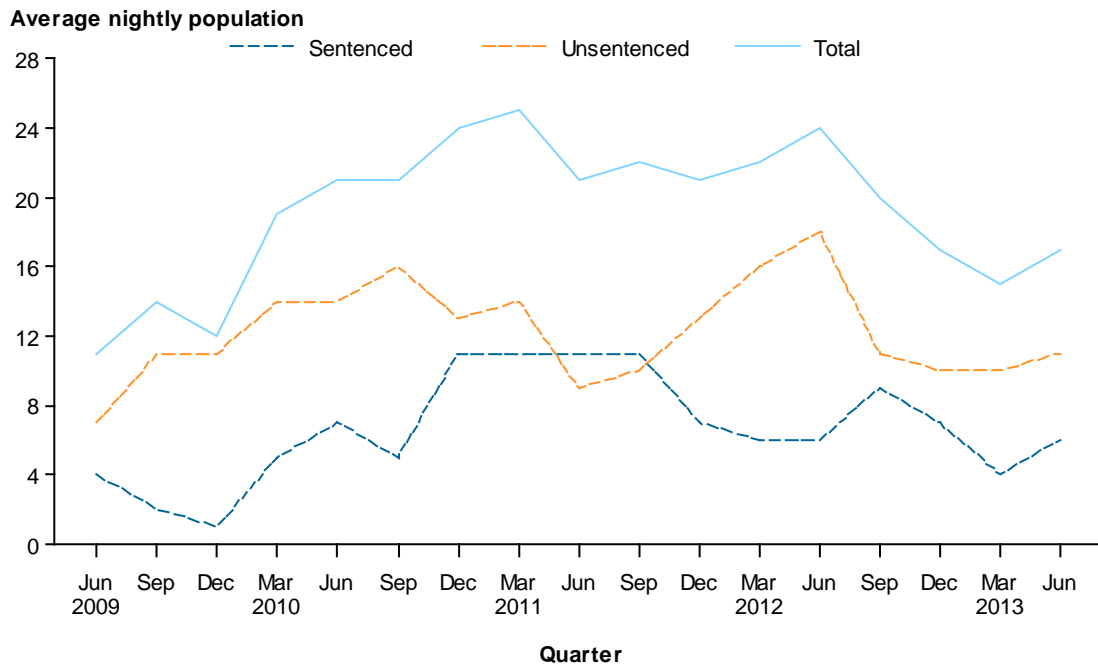
Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

Figure 5.18: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.8 Australian Capital Territory

Numbers

There were 17 young people in detention in the Australian Capital Territory on an average night in the June quarter 2013 (Figure 5.19). Over the 4-year period, the average nightly population in detention increased slightly during 2009 and 2010 before decreasing in the most recent year. The average number of young people in unsentenced detention was greater than the number in sentenced detention in almost every quarter.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

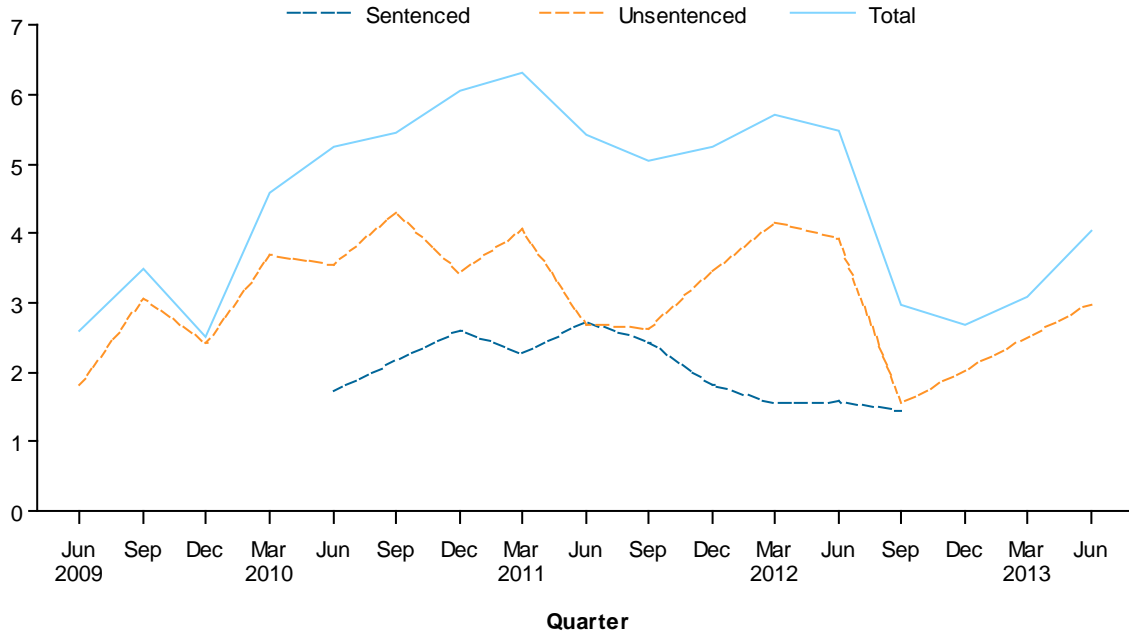
Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

Figure 5.19: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australian Capital Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Rates

Rates of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night fluctuated between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, in part due to the very small numbers of young people in detention (Figure 5.20). Rates were not calculated where there were fewer than five young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night.

Number per 10,000



Notes

1. Rates are not published where there were fewer than five young people in the numerator.
2. Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

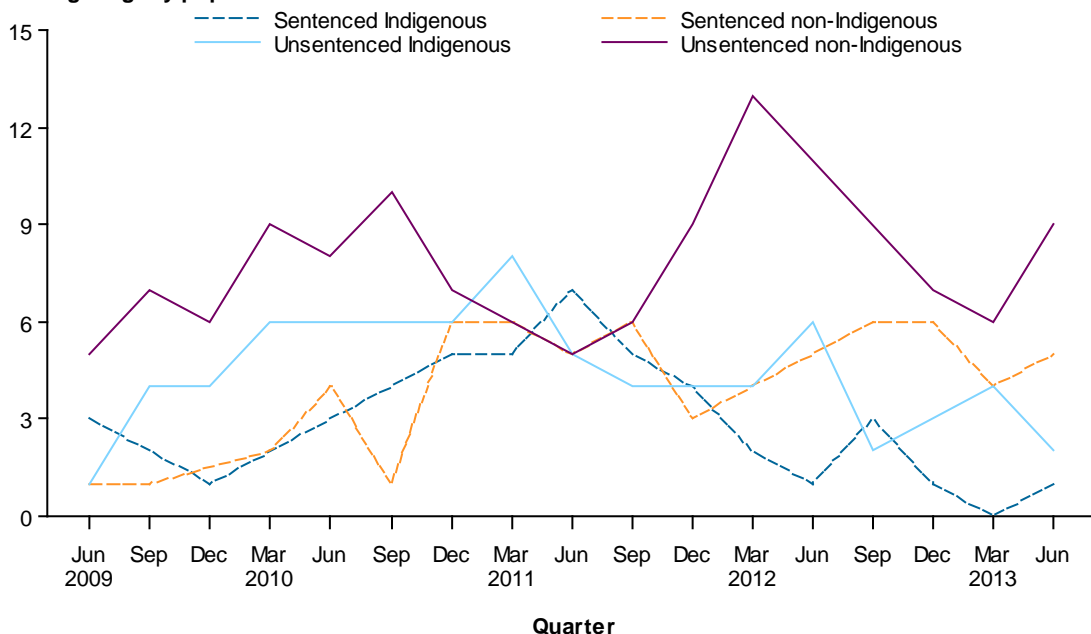
Source: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

Figure 5.20: Young people aged 10-17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australian Capital Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

Unsentenced non-Indigenous young people were the largest group of young people in detention in most quarters over the period (9 on an average night in the June quarter 2013) (Figure 5.21). There were no clear trends among any group, probably reflecting the relatively small numbers of young people involved.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

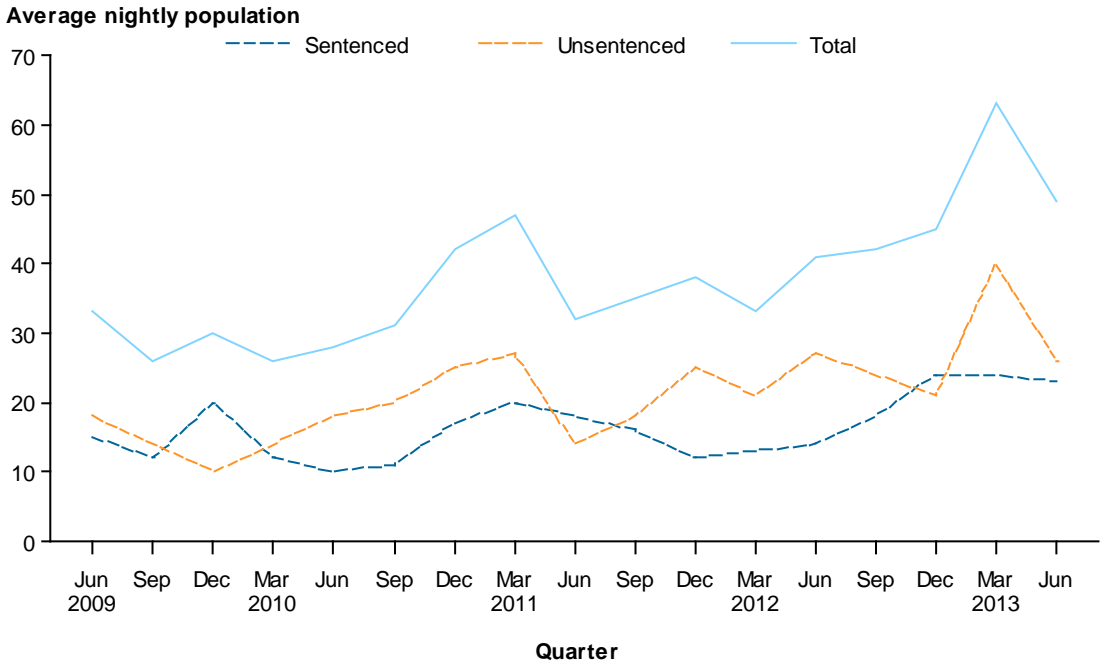
Figure 5.21: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Australian Capital Territory June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

5.9 Northern Territory

Numbers

Despite small numbers and quarterly fluctuations, there was an overall upward trend in the average nightly detention population in the Northern Territory over the 4 years to the June quarter 2013 (Figure 5.22). There were 33 young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2009, rising to 49 in the June quarter 2013 (after a peak of 63 in the March quarter 2013).

Young people in unsentenced detention slightly outnumbered those in sentenced detention in most quarters during the period. There were 26 unsentenced and 23 sentenced young people in detention on an average night in the June quarter 2013.



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S7, S17 and S27.

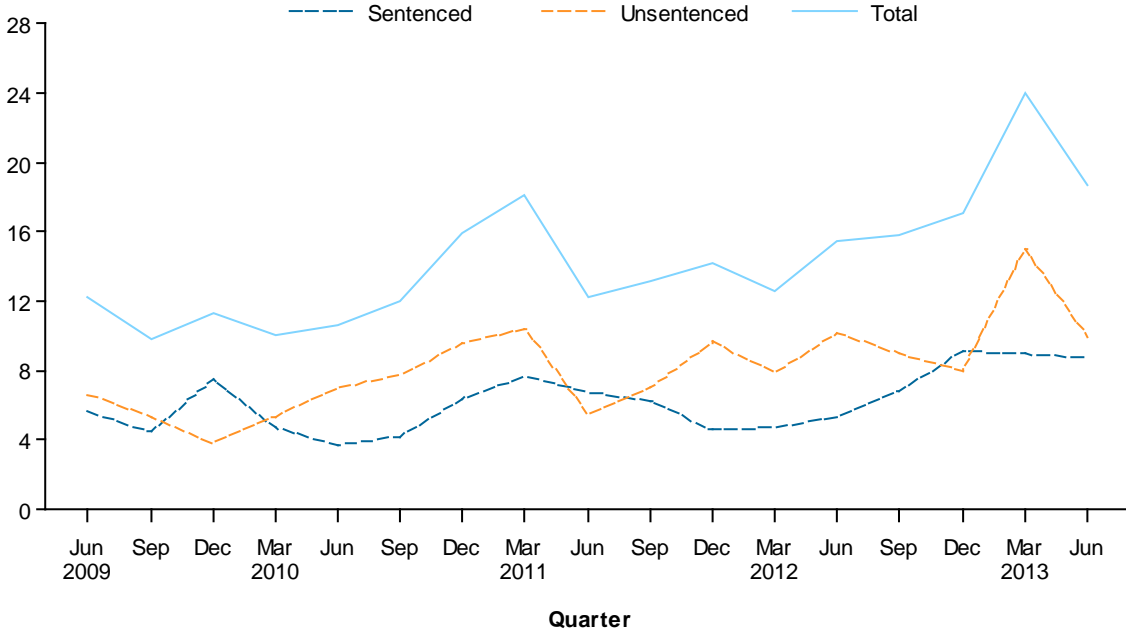
Figure 5.22: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

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, due to the fact that very few young people aged 18 or over were in detention in the Northern Territory.

The rate of young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night increased between the June quarter 2009 and the June quarter 2013, from 12.2 to 18.7 per 10,000 (Figure 5.23). As with the numbers, the unsentenced detention rate was slightly higher than the sentenced detention rate in most quarters.

Number per 10,000



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

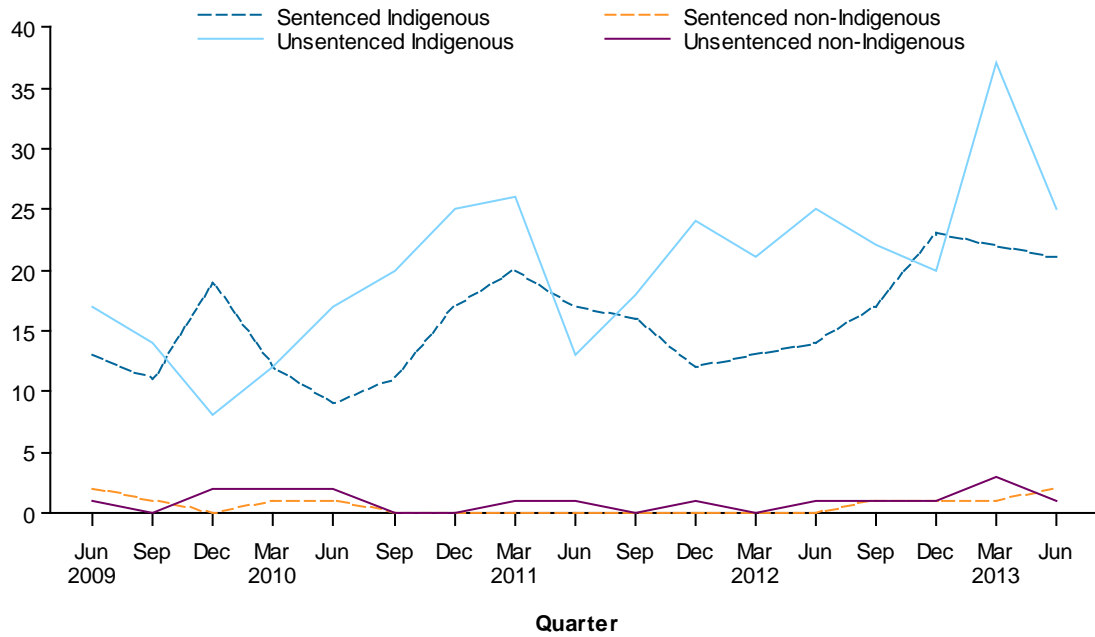
Source: Tables S10, S20 and S30.

Figure 5.23: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)

Indigenous status

Most of those in detention in the Northern Territory were Indigenous (89 to 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 unsentenced than sentenced Indigenous young people in detention on an average night in most quarters.

Average nightly population



Note: Trends among small populations should be interpreted with caution. Numbers tend to fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to random variation, and this may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.

Source: Tables S11, S14, S21 and S24.

Figure 5.24: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013

Appendix A Data and methods

Detention data

This report was compiled using the 2011–12 Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS), which contains data up to and including 30 June 2012 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 2012 and June 2013.

Western Australia and the Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2012. In this report, end-of-month data were used for Western Australia and the Northern Territory for this period.

A data quality statement for the JJ NMDS 2011–12 is provided in Appendix C.

In addition to this report, the AIHW 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 <<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 which are not available in *Youth justice in Australia* on young people in detention in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

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		
			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 <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.

A young person’s age can therefore vary across tables because age is calculated in light of the type of detention being analysed. 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 that are extracted from the JJ NMDS, the average nightly population is calculated by summing 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 2009 and the June quarter 2012. 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, a number of 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. It should be noted that 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 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 2011–12 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 and 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 five young people in the numerator due to a lack of statistical reliability. The calculation of rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people excludes young people with unknown Indigenous status.

In some previous AIHW 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 five young people in the numerator, due to a lack of statistical reliability.

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.

Rates calculated by using the average nightly population rounded to whole numbers may therefore differ slightly from the rates presented in this report.

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.

Appendix B Summary table

Table B1: Young people in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009, 2012 and 2013

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Number									
Unsentenced detention									
June quarter 2009	205	44	79	76	25	18	7	18	471
June quarter 2012	183	35	108	91	48	14	18	27	524
June quarter 2013	167	29	141	72	37	7	11	26	490
Sentenced detention									
June quarter 2009	219	100	40	79	33	14	4	15	503
June quarter 2012	160	121	39	101	23	9	6	14	473
June quarter 2013	150	128	39	102	21	10	6	23	480
Total detention									
June quarter 2009	424	143	119	155	58	32	11	33	974
June quarter 2012	343	155	147	192	71	24	24	41	997
June quarter 2013	317	157	180	173	58	17	17	49	970
Rate (number per 10,000)									
Unsentenced detention									
June quarter 2009	2.54	0.77	1.69	3.15	1.46	3.29	1.81	6.59	1.97
June quarter 2012	2.28	0.59	2.28	3.52	2.42	2.28	3.92	10.14	2.14
June quarter 2013	2.04	0.48	2.93	2.75	2.07	1.33	2.98	9.96	2.03
Sentenced detention									
June quarter 2009	2.24	0.58	0.79	3.05	1.29	2.24	—	5.58	1.57
June quarter 2012	1.45	0.61	0.78	3.40	1.13	1.14	1.57	5.32	1.33
June quarter 2013	1.25	0.40	0.81	3.37	0.56	1.59	—	8.70	1.23
Total detention									
June quarter 2009	4.78	1.35	2.48	6.20	2.75	5.53	2.59	12.17	3.55
June quarter 2012	3.73	1.20	3.06	6.93	3.55	3.43	5.49	15.46	3.47
June quarter 2013	3.29	0.88	3.74	6.12	2.64	2.92	4.04	18.66	3.25

Notes

1. Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.
2. Rates are for young people aged 10–17. Numbers include young people aged 18 and older. 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 may affect the appearance and interpretation of trends.
4. Rates are not published where there are fewer than five young people in the numerator.

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

Appendix C JJ NMDS 2011–12 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 juvenile justice agencies because they were alleged or proven to have committed an offence. The JJ NMDS is Australia's only national collection of juvenile 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 juvenile 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 the years from 2008–09 to 2011–12. Where possible, estimates for Western Australia and the Northern Territory are used to calculate estimated national totals.
 - Data for South Australia for 2011–12 should be interpreted with caution due to the implementation of a new client and case management system in that state.
 - In Tasmania, data are available only from 2006–07 onwards.
 - In the Australian Capital Territory, data prior to 2003–04 are not available, 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 Kariiong Juvenile Correctional Centre after 10 November 2004 are not included.
- Overall, the coverage of data in the JJ NMDS is very good. Only three variables have rates of missing or unknown data greater than 1%.

Description

The juvenile 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, juvenile justice is the responsibility of state and territory governments, and each state and territory has its own juvenile justice legislation, policies and practices.

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

Each year, the state and territory government departments responsible for juvenile justice supply data to the AIHW under a memorandum of understanding between the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA) and the AIHW. Those data are compiled into the JJ NMDS, which is the only national collection of juvenile justice data in Australia.

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* 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 and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

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

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

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act, in conjunction with the compliance provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cwth), 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>.

Timeliness

The reference period for the 2011–12 JJ NMDS is from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2012. This means that in 2011–12 data were resupplied for the period from 2000–01 to 2010–11 and data for 2011–12 were supplied for the first time. The data set includes young people who were under juvenile justice supervision at any time during that period.

The state and territory departments responsible for juvenile justice provide data to the AIHW annually, following the end of each financial year. For the 2011–12 collection, the first iteration of data was due to the AIHW within 3 months of the end of the financial year (by 30 September 2012). Three of six jurisdictions supplied data within that time, and all participating jurisdictions supplied within 4 months. Data were finalised on schedule for all participating jurisdictions by January 2013.

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 may occur in other AIHW bulletins and reports, and other publications external to the AIHW.

For the first time, data from the 2011–12 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).

Accessibility

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

Further information about youth justice in Australia is available from <<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. A cost recovery charge may apply to requests that take longer than half an hour to compile. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may require approval from the AJJA and/or the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General inquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Communications, Media and Marketing Unit on (02) 6244 1032 or via email to <info@aihw.gov.au>.

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/>. AIHW youth justice reports are available for purchase in hard copy or for download free of charge from <<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. Supporting information includes footnotes to tables and details of the data items, coverage and quality and 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 <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/378088>>.

Relevance

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

- committed or allegedly committed an offence between the ages of 10 and 17, or
- 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, juvenile 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, juvenile justice legislation applies to young people aged 10–17. Although most young people under juvenile justice supervision are aged 10–17, some are aged 18 or over.

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 juvenile justice agencies administer (both community-based and detention orders) and all periods of detention in juvenile justice detention centres.

Supervised legal arrangements and orders include police-referred detention before the first court appearance; court-referred remand; supervised bail; and 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 first court appearance), remand (court-referred detention following a court appearance) and sentenced detention.

For each period of supervision, data are collected on:

- the order or detention type
- the start date of the order or detention period
- the end date of the order or detention period
- the 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
- the 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 juvenile 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.

Accuracy

Data for the JJ NMDS are extracted each year from the administrative systems of the state and territory departments responsible for juvenile 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 (6%) and detention (7%) 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. Trend data may therefore 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 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 the years 2008–09 to 2011–12, and some states and territories did not provide data in the current format for all years of the JJ NMDS (2000–01 to 2011–12). 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 (rounded to the nearest five young people) 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 should consider 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 Kariong Juvenile Justice Centre was transferred from the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice to the NSW Department of Corrective Services on 10 November 2004 and renamed the Kariong 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 Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre after 10 November 2004 is not included. There are typically 18–28 young people in the centre on an average day, so they are only a small proportion (around 5%) of young people in detention in New South Wales.

Western Australia

Western Australia did not provide JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2011–12. For those years, it provided only limited data in a non-standard format, including the number under community-based supervision and in detention at the end of each month, and further data on community-based orders and detention placements. Those 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. Some trend analyses therefore exclude Western Australia. Those data were extracted from separate detention and community-based supervision databases and linked using a statistical linkage key. While this linkage is sufficiently accurate for statistical purposes, it is not accurate for administrative purposes such as case management.

South Australia

Data from South Australia for 2011–12 should be interpreted with caution. Implementation of the Connected Client and Case Management System (C3MS) to training centres was undertaken during 2011–12, which may impact on the quality of data provided for the JJ NMDS. South Australia is undertaking processes to validate data.

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 may therefore 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. Some trend analyses therefore exclude the territory.

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

The end reasons for orders are not available for the territory.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory did not provide JJ NMDS data for 2008–09 to 2011–12. Data for 2000–01 to 2007–08 are available only in JJ NMDS 2007 format. Some trend analyses therefore exclude the territory.

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

Coherence

The JJ NMDS was first developed between 2002 and 2004, and the first report containing data from the data set 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 juvenile justice supervision (see *Juvenile justice in Australia 2007–08* for more information).

In 2009, the JJ NMDS was redeveloped to capture all supervised legal arrangements and orders for young people under juvenile justice supervision, rather than only the most serious one. 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 juvenile justice agencies administer. *Juvenile justice in Australia 2008–09* was the first report to contain data from the redeveloped JJ NMDS.

For the 2011–12 JJ NMDS collection, the reference period was 2000–01 to 2011–12. Data were resupplied for the 2000–01 to 2010–11 period. Due to data revisions, trend data may therefore differ from those previously published.

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 further 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 *Juvenile detention population in Australia 2012* report contains JJ NMDS data up to and including 30 June 2011, supplemented with other data for the period from July 2011 to June 2012.

These data differ from those published in the annual *Juvenile justice in Australia* reports in several ways. First, *Juvenile detention population in Australia* presents the average nightly population for each quarter, while *Juvenile 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 *Juvenile detention population in Australia*, but are counted as both sentenced and unsentenced (or once in the total population) in *Juvenile 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 in detention 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 from 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.

Glossary

dual track system: A system in Victoria whereby young people aged 18–20 can be sentenced to a period in a youth detention centre.

youth justice centre: A place, administered and operated by a youth justice agency, where young people are detained while under the supervision of the agency.

youth justice agency: A state or territory government agency or department responsible for youth justice supervision.

police-referred detention: Unsentenced detention in a youth justice facility that occurs before the young person's first court appearance.

remand: The act of placing in custody a young person who is accused of an offence to await trial or the continuation of their trial.

young person: In this report, a person who is under supervision by a youth justice agency as a result of having committed or allegedly committed an offence.

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List of figures

Figure 2.1:	Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	5
Figure 2.2:	Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	6
Figure 2.3:	Young people in detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	7
Figure 2.4:	Young people in detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	8
Figure 2.5:	Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	9
Figure 2.6:	Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in detention, by legal status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate ratio).....	10
Figure 2.7:	Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	11
Figure 2.8:	Young people in unsentenced detention as a proportion of young people in detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (per cent).....	12
Figure 3.1:	Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	15
Figure 3.2:	Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	16
Figure 3.3:	Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	17
Figure 3.4:	Young people in unsentenced detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	18
Figure 3.5:	Young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	19
Figure 3.6:	Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in unsentenced detention, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate ratio).....	20
Figure 4.1:	Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	22
Figure 4.2:	Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and age group, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	23
Figure 4.3:	Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by sex, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	24
Figure 4.4:	Young people in sentenced detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	25
Figure 4.5:	Young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention on an average night, by state and territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	26
Figure 4.6:	Level of Indigenous over-representation among young people aged 10–17 in sentenced detention, Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate ratio).....	27

Figure 5.1: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, New South Wales, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	29
Figure 5.2: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, New South Wales, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)	30
Figure 5.3: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, New South Wales, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	31
Figure 5.4: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Victoria, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	32
Figure 5.5: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Victoria, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	33
Figure 5.6: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Victoria, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013.....	34
Figure 5.7: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	35
Figure 5.8: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)	36
Figure 5.9: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Queensland, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	37
Figure 5.10: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Western Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	38
Figure 5.11: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Western Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	39
Figure 5.12: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Western Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	40
Figure 5.13: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	41
Figure 5.14: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)	42
Figure 5.15: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, South Australia, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	43
Figure 5.16: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	44
Figure 5.17: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate).....	45
Figure 5.18: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Tasmania, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	46
Figure 5.19: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australian Capital Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	47
Figure 5.20: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Australian Capital Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)	48
Figure 5.21: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Australian Capital Territory June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	49
Figure 5.22: Young people in detention on an average night, by legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	50

Figure 5.23: Young people aged 10–17 in detention on an average night, by legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013 (rate)	51
Figure 5.24: Young people in detention on an average night, by Indigenous status and legal status, Northern Territory, June quarter 2009 to June quarter 2013	52

List of tables

Table A1: Index of supplementary tables54

Table B1: Young people in detention on an average night, by states and territories, June quarter 2009, 2012 and 201357

Related publications

This report is part of an annual series examining 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: <<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 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. Juvenile detention population in Australia 2012. Juvenile justice series no. 11. Cat. no. JUV 11. 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 2009 to June 2013. On an average night, there were about 1,000 young people in detention, about half of whom were unsentenced. Numbers and rates of young people in detention remained relatively stable over the 4 years nationally; however, this trend varied between different states and territories. Around half of all young people in detention on an average night were Indigenous.