

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents information about the use of community services by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in the areas of child care, child protection, adoptions, juvenile justice, disability services and aged care. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are over-represented in both the child protection and juvenile justice systems. Only 3% of disability service users were Indigenous, even though their rates of disability are almost twice the rate of non-Indigenous Australians (see Chapter 5). Indigenous people were more likely to utilise both disability and aged care services at younger ages, reflecting their poorer health status and lower life expectancy.

Community services are provided by Australian, state, territory and local government agencies, as well as by non-government not-for-profit and for-profit organisations. Most of the data in this chapter come from national data collections compiled by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) from the administrative databases of community service providers. While these data provide useful information, there are some limitations on data quality. The Indigenous status of clients is not always disclosed by the clients or recorded by the service provider. In addition, in some cases where Indigenous status is recorded, inconsistencies in recording methods result in data that are not comparable between jurisdictions (see box 11.21).

CHILD CARE

Child care services provide care and development activities for children generally aged 12 years and younger. These services enable parents to participate in employment, education and training, community activities and personal activities. They may also be used for family support reasons. As a condition of government funding and regulation, child care services must promote and enhance children's emotional, intellectual, social and physical development. Dedicated preschool services offer educational and developmental programs for children in the year or two before full-time school.

In early 2008 the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) gained responsibility for child care (prior to this, child care was the responsibility of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)). DEEWR funds most child care services through the Australian Government Child Care Support Program. DEEWR also provides supplementary funding for Indigenous children enrolled in government and non-government preschools under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Act 2000* in order to accelerate improvements to the educational outcomes of Indigenous Australians. During 2005–2008, over \$500 million in Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) will be allocated to schools, including preschools (DEST 2004).

All state and territory governments fund dedicated preschool services. They also provide some funding for other child care services, either solely or in conjunction with the Australian Government.

CHILD CARE *continued*

The Australian Government supports mainstream child care services such as long day care centres, family day care services and outside hours care services, as well as culturally specific services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. These include:

- Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services (MACS), which provide flexible services to meet Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's social and developmental needs. MACS offer care for children under school age and for school age children, including long day care, playgroups, before and after school care and school holiday care, and cultural programs.
- Aboriginal Playgroups and Enrichment Programs. Aboriginal playgroups provide opportunities for children under school age and their parents to socialise and interact with one another. Enrichment programs provide supervised care, organised activities, homework centres and nutrition services for school age children.

Although not specifically for Indigenous children, the Australian Government also funds mobile children's services which visit remote areas and provide occasional care, school holiday care, playgroups, story telling, games and toy library services for children and information and support for parents.

Nationally, comprehensive and comparable data on children using child care and preschool services are not available. The development phase of a Children's Services National Minimum Data Set (CSNMDS) has been completed. The final report on the development of the CSNMDS was released in February 2007 and work is currently underway to develop options for its implementation. Since most child care services are supported by the Australian Government, the Census of Child Care Services (previously administered by FaHCSIA) is currently the most comprehensive source of data on Indigenous children attending child care services in Australia. Results from the 2006 Child Care Census are not yet available for reporting. Data from the 2004 Child Care Census are therefore provided.

In 2004, there were 651,044 children using Australian Government supported child care services, of whom 11,971 (1.8%) were Indigenous. Not surprisingly, Indigenous-specific services such as Aboriginal Playgroups and Enrichment Services and Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services had the highest proportions of Indigenous children (88% and 79% respectively). Among mainstream services in 2004, around 10% of children using Mobile and Toy Library Services were Indigenous and 6% of children using Multifunctional Children's Services were Indigenous. Indigenous children represented less than 2% of all children using the remaining service types.

CHILD CARE *continued***11.1** CHILDREN IN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED CHILD CARE, by Indigenous status and service type—May 2004

		Indigenous children	Other children(a)
Long day care centres	%	50.7	59.0
Family day care	%	8.9	13.8
Occasional care	%	1.1	1.2
Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services	%	11.7	—
Multifunctional Children's Services	%	0.5	0.2
Before/after school care (Outside of School Hours Care) services	%	15.5	24.9
Vacation care	%	—	—
Mobile and Toy Library Services	%	2.5	0.4
Aboriginal Playgroups and Enrichment Services	%	8.9	—
In-home Care Services	%	0.2	0.5
<b>Total</b>	%	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	no.	<b>11 971</b>	<b>639 073</b>

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Includes children for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

Source: 2004 FaCS Australian Government Census of Child Care Services

Of all Indigenous children in Australian Government supported child care services, 51% were in long day care centres, 16% were in before/after school care and 9% were in family day care (table 11.1). The corresponding proportions for other Australian children were 59%, 25% and 14% respectively.

Some data are also available on the number of Indigenous children enrolled in state and territory funded and non-government funded preschool services from the annual census conducted by DEEWR. In 2006, there were 4,931 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in state/territory funded preschools in all jurisdictions, excluding Queensland and Victoria (children attending state and territory funded preschools in Queensland and Victoria were excluded from the data collection in 2006), and there were a further 4,344 Indigenous children enrolled in non-government funded preschools in all states and territories.

## CHILD PROTECTION

Each state and territory has a department which is responsible for child protection services. Children who come into contact with these departments for protective reasons include those:

- who have been abused, neglected or otherwise harmed
- whose parents cannot provide adequate care or protection.

Children who are seen to be in need of protection can come to the attention of child protection authorities through a report by an individual or organisation, or by the children themselves. Reports of suspected abuse or neglect can lead to the matter being dealt with as a family support issue (whereupon services will be provided) or as a child protection notification. Departments then determine if a notification requires an investigation or is better dealt with by other means, such as referral to other organisations or family support services. If an investigation is carried out, the outcome can be a substantiation, meaning that the investigating authority concludes that the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. A range of services may then be provided to the child and the child's family.

## CHILD PROTECTION

*continued*

The departments provide assistance to these children through the provision of, or referral to, a wide range of services. Non-government agencies are often contracted by the departments to provide these services which range from family support to the placement of children in out-of-home care.

In more serious cases, the department may also apply to the relevant court to place a child under a care and protection order. Care and protection orders vary between jurisdictions but can provide for a supervisory role for the department or transfer of legal guardianship to the department. The issuing of a care and protection order is often a legal requirement if a child is to be placed in out-of-home care. This option can be used to protect the child from further harm, where there is family conflict and 'time out' is needed, or where parents are ill or unable to care for the child.

The three areas of child protection services for which national data are collected are:

- child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations
- children on care and protection orders
- children in out-of-home care.

Each state and territory has its own legislation, policies and practices in relation to child protection, so the data provided by jurisdictions are not strictly comparable, and national data are limited. This is particularly the case with the data on notifications, investigations and substantiations, where jurisdictions use different definitions and processes (AIHW 2007d). It is also worth noting that the quality of Indigenous data varies across jurisdictions due to differences in the practices used to identify and record the Indigenous status of children and young people in the child protection system.

*Substantiations*

In 2005–06, the rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were the subject of a child protection substantiation were substantially higher than the rates for other children in all jurisdictions except Tasmania (table 11.2). Data for Tasmania, however, should be interpreted with caution due to the low incidence of child protection workers recording Indigenous status at the time of the substantiation.

Substantiations  
continued

**11.2** CHILDREN WHO WERE THE SUBJECT OF A CHILD PROTECTION SUBSTANTIATION(a), by Indigenous status—2005–06

State/territory	NUMBER OF CHILDREN			RATE PER 1,000 CHILDREN(b)			Rate ratio(c)
	Indigenous	Other(d)	Total	Indigenous	Other(d)	Total	
	no.	no.	no.	rate	rate	rate	ratio
New South Wales	2 696	9 931	12 627	44.2	6.9	8.4	6.4
Victoria	834	6 453	7 287	67.7	6.0	6.7	11.3
Queensland	1 340	8 737	10 077	23.0	10.1	10.9	2.3
Western Australia	316	603	919	10.9	1.4	2.0	7.8
South Australia	360	1 101	1 461	32.3	3.5	4.5	9.2
Tasmania(e)	34	635	669	4.4	6.2	6.1	0.7
Australian Capital Territory	99	754	853	56.8	10.9	12.0	5.2
Northern Territory	354	108	462	15.2	3.2	8.1	4.8

(a) Aged 0–16 years.

(b) Based on ABS 'low series' population projections.

(c) The rate for Indigenous children divided by the rate for other children.

(d) Includes children for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

(e) Data should be interpreted with caution due to the high proportion of investigations not finalised by 31 August 2006 (the cut-off date for the processing of investigations for inclusion in the data for that year).

Source: AIHW 2007d

Substantiations are classified into one of the following four categories depending on the main type of abuse or neglect that has occurred: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect. While more than one type of abuse or neglect may be recorded, only the most serious type of abuse or neglect for the first substantiation of the year for each child is reported. Thus, it is difficult to measure the real patterns of abuse or neglect that each child may experience. The precise definition of type of abuse or neglect, as well as the types of incidences that may be substantiated, vary according to the policies and practices of the different jurisdictions.

The pattern of substantiated abuse and neglect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children differs somewhat from the pattern for other children. Indigenous children were more likely to be the subject of a substantiation of neglect than other children. For example, in Western Australia 40% of Indigenous children in substantiations were the subject of a substantiation of neglect, compared with 30% of other children (table 11.3). However, other Australian children were more likely than Indigenous children to have substantiations where the main type of abuse was sexual. For example, in New South Wales, 17% of other Australian children had substantiations where the main type of abuse was sexual abuse, compared with 9% of Indigenous children. Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory had a relatively high proportion of substantiations that were classified as 'emotional abuse' for both Indigenous and other children.

*Substantiations  
continued*

**11.3** CHILDREN WHO WERE THE SUBJECT OF A CHILD PROTECTION SUBSTANTIATION(a), by type of abuse or neglect and Indigenous status—2005–06

Type of abuse or neglect	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.(b)	ACT(b)	NT
INDIGENOUS CHILDREN								
Physical abuse	17.5	20.7	20.7	27.4	14.7	26.5	7.1	33.1
Sexual abuse	9.2	5.6	4.2	16.4	5.8	2.9	—	4.2
Emotional abuse	37.0	49.3	36.2	16.1	36.1	23.5	69.7	28.4
Neglect	36.3	24.3	38.9	40.1	43.3	47.1	23.2	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
OTHER CHILDREN								
Physical abuse	21.5	25.1	22.1	28.6	25.9	22.2	9.0	31.5
Sexual abuse	16.7	9.4	6.6	23.6	9.7	12.5	3.3	9.3
Emotional abuse	38.1	43.1	42.4	17.9	32.1	26.9	71.8	37.0
Neglect	23.6	22.5	28.8	29.9	32.3	38.5	15.9	22.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Children aged 0–17 years.

(b) The proportion of Indigenous children who were the subject of a substantiation in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers in these jurisdictions.

Source: AIHW 2007d

*Care and protection orders and out-of-home care*

The rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being placed on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care was around seven times the rate for other Australian children (table 11.4). The rate ratios varied considerably by jurisdiction and were highest in Victoria (12.3 for children on care and protection orders and 11.4 for children in out-of-home care) and lowest in Tasmania (2.3 for children on care and protection orders and 2.2 for children in out-of-home care). Again, however, it should be noted that data from Tasmania should be interpreted with caution due to the low incidence of child protection workers recording Indigenous status at the time of the substantiation.

Care and protection  
orders and out-of-home  
care continued

#### 11.4 CHILDREN ON CARE AND PROTECTION ORDERS AND IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE(a), by Indigenous status—30 June 2006

State/Territory	CARE AND PROTECTION ORDERS			OUT-OF-HOME CARE		
	Indigenous	Other(b)	Rate ratio(c)	Indigenous	Other(b)	Rate ratio(c)
New South Wales	37.2	4.5	8.3	44.7	4.6	9.7
Victoria	56.4	4.6	12.3	42.1	3.7	11.4
Queensland	26.7	5.2	5.1	24.0	4.7	5.1
Western Australia	31.8	3.9	8.2	30.2	3.4	8.9
South Australia	25.8	2.7	9.6	24.8	2.6	9.5
Tasmania(d)	15.2	6.5	2.3	11.9	5.4	2.2
Australian Capital Territory	12.2	3.8	3.2	10.0	3.0	3.3
Northern Territory	53.3	6.2	8.6	43.7	4.1	10.7
<b>Australia</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>7.3</b>

- (a) Rates per 1,000 children aged 0–17 years, based on 'low series' ABS population projections from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.
- (b) Includes children for whom Indigenous status was not stated.
- (c) Rate ratio is equal to the rate for Indigenous children divided by the rate for other children.
- (d) Data for Tasmania should be interpreted with caution due to the low incidence of child protection workers recording Indigenous status.

Source: AIHW 2007d

One of the most significant changes in child welfare policy in relation to Indigenous children was the introduction of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (box 11.5). The Principle outlines a preference for placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with relatives/kin or other Indigenous carers. All jurisdictions have adopted the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle in legislation and policy.

#### 11.5 THE ABORIGINAL CHILD PLACEMENT PRINCIPLE

The Aboriginal Child Placement Principle expresses a preference for the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when they are placed outside their family (Lock 1997). The Principle has the following order of preference for the placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children:

- with the child's extended family
- within the child's Indigenous community
- with other Indigenous people.

The Principle covers the placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care as well as the adoption of Indigenous children.

The impact of the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is reflected in the relatively high proportion of Indigenous children who are placed with Indigenous caregivers or with relatives, though this proportion varies by state and territory. At 30 June 2006, the proportion of Indigenous children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin, other Indigenous caregivers or in Indigenous residential care was at least 62% in all jurisdictions, except Tasmania (table 11.6). These data do not necessarily reflect the effort made to place a child in accordance with the Principle, however, as the availability

*Care and protection orders and out-of-home care continued* of Indigenous caregivers and other considerations in relation to the suitability of the placement can impact on the placement outcomes.

**11.6** INDIGENOUS CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE(a), by relationship to, and Indigenous status of carer—30 June 2006

<i>Relationship/Indigenous status of carer</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
NUMBER								
Indigenous relative/kin	1 669	152	379	394	109	10	28	90
Other Indigenous caregiver	512	102	400	143	138	13	17	67
Other relative/kin	282	80	142	64	28	8	11	(b)na
Indigenous residential care	9	21	9	18	—	—	1	—
<b>Total with relative/kin, other Indigenous caregivers, Indigenous residential care</b>	<b>2 472</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>157</b>
Other caregiver	374	166	538	92	62	55	18	87
Other residential care	43	27	28	45	22	7	6	—
<b>Total other caregivers, other residential care</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 889</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>1 496</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>244</b>
PERCENT								
Indigenous relative/kin	57.8	27.7	25.3	52.1	30.4	10.8	34.6	36.9
Other Indigenous caregiver	17.7	18.6	26.7	18.9	38.4	14.0	21.0	27.5
Other relative/kin	9.8	14.6	9.5	8.5	7.8	8.6	13.6	na
Indigenous residential care	0.3	3.8	0.6	2.4	—	—	1.2	—
<b>Total with relative/kin, other Indigenous caregivers, Indigenous residential care</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>76.6</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>64.3</b>
Other caregiver	12.9	30.3	36.0	12.2	17.3	59.1	22.2	35.7
Other residential care	1.5	4.9	1.9	6.0	6.1	7.5	7.4	—
<b>Total other caregivers, other residential care</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>66.7</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>35.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

na not available

(a) This table does not include Indigenous children who were living independently or whose living arrangements were unknown.

(b) In the Northern Territory, children placed with family members have all been included in the 'Indigenous relative/kin' category.

Source: AIHW 2007d

## ADOPTION

The formal adoption of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children has not been a common practice in recent years. In many cases where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children cannot live with their birth parents, informal arrangements are made for them to live with a relative or other member of the community (HREOC 1997). Arrangements of this type are generally preferred and adoption orders are only made when informal alternatives are judged not to be in the best interests of the child.

Between 2001–02 and 2005–06, there were only 18 adoptions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia. Eight of these were 'known' child adoptions where the adoptive parents had a pre-existing relationship with the child (e.g. relatives/kin or carers), and 10 were 'local' adoptions where there was no pre-existing relationship between the adoptive parents and the child.

Although the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (box 11.5) also covers the adoption of Indigenous children, of the 10 'local' adoptions of Indigenous children between 2001–02 and 2005–06, three were adoptions by Indigenous parents and seven were adoptions by non-Indigenous parents.

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

The juvenile justice system is responsible for dealing with young people who have committed or allegedly committed an offence while a 'juvenile'. In Queensland, juvenile justice legislation applies to those people who were aged 10–16 years of age at the time of the offence. In most other jurisdictions, however, those who were aged 10–17 years of age are included as juveniles. Victoria also has a sentencing option for adult courts which allows for some 18–20 year-olds to be sentenced to detention in juvenile justice facilities.

Juvenile justice is a state and territory responsibility and each jurisdiction has its own legislation that dictates policies and practices in this area. While there are differences in detail, the intent of the legislation is very similar across Australia. For example, key elements of juvenile justice in all jurisdictions include:

- diversion of young people from court where appropriate;
- incarceration as a last resort;
- victim's rights;
- the acceptance of responsibility by the offender for his or her behaviour; and
- community safety.

The juvenile justice system in each state and territory comprises several organisations, each having a different primary role and responsibility in dealing with young offenders:

- the Police, who are usually the young person's first point of contact with the justice system. Where considered appropriate, the Police may administer warnings, cautions and in some jurisdictions use conferencing to divert the juvenile from proceeding to court;
- the courts (usually a special children's or youth court), where matters regarding the charges against the young person are heard. The courts are largely responsible for decisions regarding bail (and remand) and sentencing options if the young person admits guilt or is found guilty by the court;
- the juvenile justice departments, which are responsible for the supervision of juveniles on a range of community-based orders and supervised bail and which are also responsible for the administration of juvenile detention centres.

The AIHW and the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA) have developed a national data collection with information about young people who are on supervised community-based orders or in detention centres. The latest report from this new Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set was released in August 2007 and presents data from 2005–06, with trends from 2000–01—the first year of data collected (AIHW 2007i). The quality of information collected on the Indigenous status of juvenile justice clients varies according to differing collection and recording practices in the states and territories. Since the first report of the NMDS was released in February 2006, the quality has improved and it is expected that further improvements will be made over the next couple of years as standardised methods are implemented.

Few young people have contact with the juvenile justice system and many who do are diverted from the court when the offences committed are relatively minor and/or are a first offence. Of those young people who do go to court, most receive either non-supervised orders or community-based orders, with only a small proportion of young people placed in juvenile detention centres. Community-based supervision includes supervised bail, probation, community service orders and parole. Detention supervision includes both custodial remand prior to the case being finalised in court and

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

*continued*

sentenced detention. Juvenile justice supervision includes those under community-based supervision and those in detention.

The rates of juvenile justice supervision for all young people aged 10–17 years show high levels of over-representation of Indigenous youth during the period 2003–04 to 2005–06, relative to the proportion of Indigenous youth in state and territory populations (table 11.7). In 2005–06, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were under juvenile justice supervision at a rate of 44 per 1,000, compared with a rate of 3 per 1,000 for non-Indigenous young people.

Rates of juvenile justice supervision for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people decreased in most states and territories during the period 2003–04 to 2005–06.

**11.7** RATES OF YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 10–17 YEARS UNDER JUVENILE JUSTICE SUPERVISION (a)(b), by Indigenous status—2003–04 to 2005–06

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas. (c)	ACT	NT	Australia
2003–04									
Indigenous	35.8	26.5	41.6	99.6	63.0	11.9	56.7	21.6	45.1
Non-Indigenous	2.5	2.6	3.6	3.8	4.5	3.8	6.7	3.9	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>5.1</b>
2004–05									
Indigenous	33.8	23.9	39.7	103.4	58.0	14.4	59.3	23.0	44.3
Non-Indigenous	2.5	2.2	3.1	3.8	4.0	4.1	5.8	3.3	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>
2005–06									
Indigenous	34.7	23.8	39.8	106.6	51.4	17.7	44.2	21.2	44.4
Non-Indigenous	2.6	2.0	3.0	4.2	3.9	4.9	5.1	3.5	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>

(a) Age is calculated as at date of first juvenile justice supervision during the relevant year.

(b) Rates per 1,000 young people. Calculation of rates excludes records for young people whose Indigenous status was not stated. The rates are based on ABS high series 2001 Estimated Resident Indigenous population projections.

(c) Indigenous data for Tasmania may not be reliable due to limitations in the reporting capabilities of the information system.

Source: AIHW 2007i

*Community-based supervision*

In the period 2000–01 to 2005–06, the average daily number of Indigenous young people in community-based supervision increased by 24% (from 1,579 to 1,961). In comparison, there was a 4% decrease (from 2,980 to 2,853) for non-Indigenous young people over the same period. Part of the increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander numbers is likely to be due to a decrease in the number of young people whose Indigenous status was unknown, from 613 to 266 over this period (table 11.8).

*Community-based supervision continued*

**11.8** YOUNG PEOPLE, average daily number in community supervision by Indigenous status(a)(b)—2000–01 to 2005–06

Year	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	Total(c)
2000–01	1 579	2 980	613	5 172
2001–02	1 543	3 026	448	5 017
2002–03	1 674	3 026	407	5 107
2003–04	1 757	2 969	344	5 070
2004–05	1 814	2 833	258	4 905
2005–06	1 961	2 853	266	5 081

- (a) Averages are calculated by summing the community supervision days throughout the year and then dividing by 365.25 to get an average daily number. A community supervision day is one day of community-based supervision for one person.
- (b) Australian Capital Territory is excluded as data for 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 were unavailable.
- (c) Components may not add to total due to rounding.

Source: AIHW 2007h, 2007i

*Detention supervision*

In the period 2000–01 to 2005–06, the average daily number of Indigenous young people in detention supervision increased by 11%, from 321 in 2000–01 to 357 in 2005–06 (excluding the Australian Capital Territory for which data from 2000–01 to 2002–03 were unavailable). In comparison, there was a 15% decrease (from 501 to 425) for non-Indigenous young people over this period. The higher number of Indigenous young people in detention supervision may be due, or partly due, to improvements in Indigenous identification, with the average daily number of young people in detention whose Indigenous status was unknown decreasing from 59 to 15 over this period (table 11.9).

**11.9** YOUNG PEOPLE, average daily number in detention by Indigenous status(a)(b)—2000–01 to 2005–06

Year	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown	Total(c)
2000–01	321	501	59	881
2001–02	340	501	44	886
2002–03	333	465	35	833
2003–04	346	438	29	814
2004–05	341	406	19	766
2005–06	357	425	15	798

- (a) Averages are calculated by summing the detention supervision days throughout the year and then dividing by 365.25 to get an average daily number. A detention supervision day is one day of detention supervision for one person.
- (b) Australian Capital Territory is excluded as data for 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 were unavailable.
- (c) Components may not add to total due to rounding.

Source: AIHW 2007h, 2007i

*Juvenile justice supervision*

Most young people under juvenile justice supervision are in community-based supervision rather than detention (tables 11.8 and 11.9). However, on an average day in 2005–06, Indigenous young people comprised a larger share of those in detention (45%) than those under community-based supervision (38%).

*Juvenile justice  
supervision continued*

Young Indigenous males under juvenile justice supervision outnumbered Indigenous females by a ratio of four to one. However, Indigenous females comprised a larger share of all females under supervision (45%) than did Indigenous males as a proportion of all males under supervision (37%) (table 11.10).

**11.10** YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER JUVENILE JUSTICE SUPERVISION, by Indigenous status and sex—2005–06

<i>Indigenous status</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
NUMBER			
Indigenous	4 044	1 009	5 054
Non-Indigenous	6 385	1 084	7 470
Unknown/not recorded	602	127	730
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 031</b>	<b>2 220</b>	<b>13 254</b>
PERCENT			
Indigenous	36.7	45.5	38.1
Non-Indigenous	57.9	48.8	56.4
Unknown/not recorded	5.5	5.7	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AIHW 2007i

Most young people under juvenile justice supervision during 2005–06 were aged 16 years or over (64%). However, 14% of Indigenous young people under supervision were aged 13 years or less, compared with only 6% of non-Indigenous young people (table 11.11).

**11.11** YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER JUVENILE JUSTICE SUPERVISION, by Indigenous status and age—2005–06

<i>Indigenous status</i>	AGE (YEARS)									<i>Total</i>
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18 and over	
NUMBER										
Indigenous	20	65	170	430	736	948	1 129	1 094	462	5 054
Non-Indigenous	8	31	64	280	675	1 207	1 835	2 026	1 344	7 470
Unknown/not recorded	—	5	2	19	45	113	175	188	183	730
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>1 456</b>	<b>2 268</b>	<b>3 139</b>	<b>3 308</b>	<b>1 989</b>	<b>13 254</b>
PERCENT										
Indigenous	0.4	1.3	3.4	8.5	14.6	18.8	22.4	21.5	9.2	100.0
Non-Indigenous	0.1	0.4	0.9	3.7	9.0	16.2	24.6	27.1	18.0	100.0
Unknown/not recorded	—	0.7	0.3	2.6	6.2	15.5	24.0	25.8	25.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

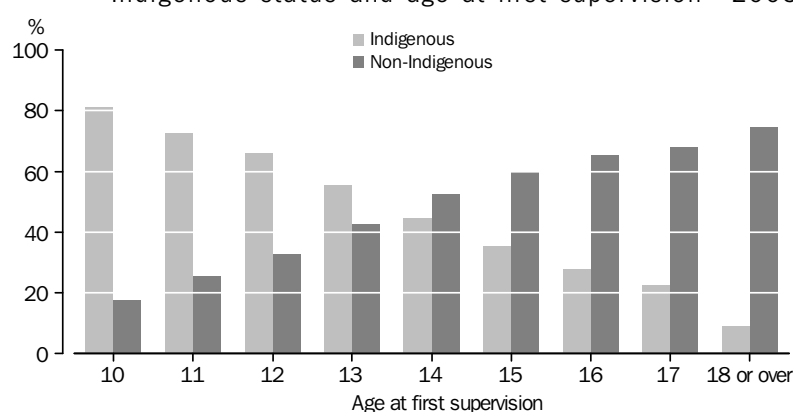
— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Source: AIHW 2007i

*Juvenile justice  
supervision continued*

There are also differences in the age at which young people were first placed under juvenile justice supervision. Of those under juvenile justice supervision in 2005–06, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were younger, on average, at the time of first ever supervision than non-Indigenous young people (graph 11.12). Just over half (56%) of Indigenous young people were aged 14 years or less during their initial supervision, compared with 30% of non-Indigenous young people.

**11.12** YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER JUVENILE JUSTICE SUPERVISION, by Indigenous status and age at first supervision—2005–06



Source: AIHW 2007i

The over-representation of Indigenous people in the justice system is not confined to young people. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise around 2% of the adult population, they constituted 24% of the average daily number of prisoners in full-time custody and 18% of adults on community corrections orders in the March 2007 quarter (ABS 2007b).

## DISABILITY SERVICES

Services funded under the Commonwealth State-Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) are designed for people who need ongoing support with everyday life activities. Under this agreement the Australian Government has responsibility for planning, policy setting and management of employment services, while the states and territories have responsibilities for all other disability services. These include:

- accommodation support—services that provide accommodation to people with disability and services that provide the support needed to enable a person with disability to remain in his or her existing accommodation or move to more suitable or appropriate accommodation
- community support—services that provide the support needed for a person to live in a non-institutional setting, including therapy, early childhood intervention, counselling and case management
- community access—services that provide opportunities for people with disability to gain and use their abilities to enjoy their full potential for social independence, including day programs (alternatives to employment) and recreation/holiday programs
- respite—services that provide a short-term break for families and other voluntary caregivers of people with disability, while providing a positive experience for the person with disability.

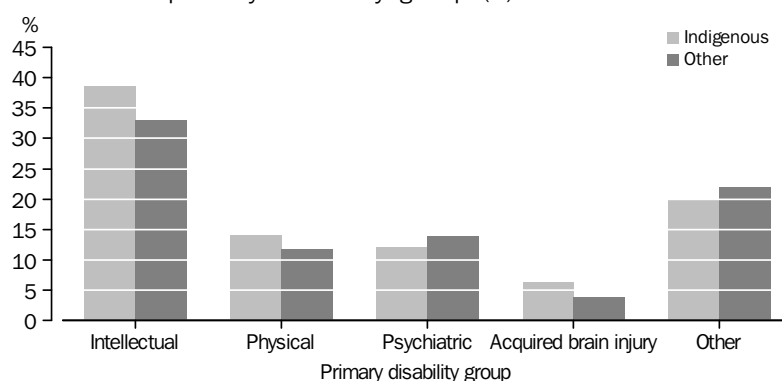
DISABILITY SERVICES  
*continued*

Advocacy, print disability and information services are considered shared responsibilities of the Australian state and territory governments.

National data on services are collected through the CSTDA National Minimum Data Set (NMDS), which includes information relating to CSTDA services and the people who use these services throughout the financial year. Data are collected by each state and territory and the Australian Government and forwarded to the AIHW for collation and analysis.

Data presented here are from the 2005–06 data collection, the third full year of the CSTDA NMDS. In 2005–06 there were 7,182 Indigenous CSTDA-funded service users, representing 3% of all users. The Indigenous status of 23,156 service users (11%) was unknown. The proportion of service users who were Indigenous has changed little over the three collection years (AIHW 2007f).

**11.13** USERS OF CSTDA-FUNDED SERVICES, by Indigenous status and primary disability group (a)—2005–06



(a) Excludes 33,350 service users with primary disability group not stated.

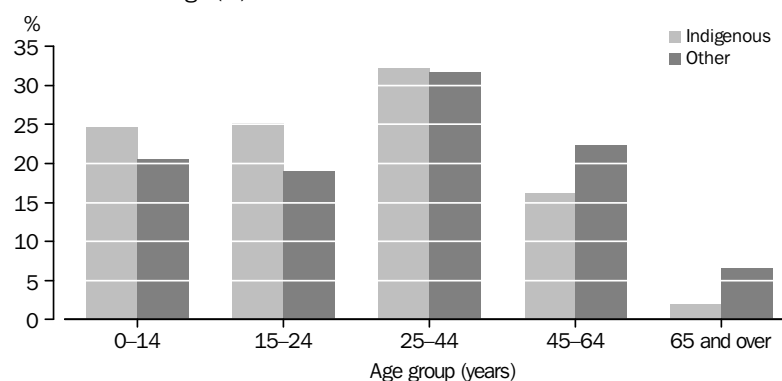
Source: AIHW 2007f

The most commonly reported primary disabilities for Indigenous service users were intellectual (39%), followed by physical (14%) and psychiatric (12%) (graph 11.13). Among non-Indigenous service users the most commonly reported primary disabilities were also intellectual (36%), but these were followed by people with psychiatric (15%) and then physical (11%) disabilities (AIHW 2007f).

Service users who were Indigenous more often reported multiple disabilities. Nearly half of all Indigenous service users (46%) reported a primary disability and at least one other significant disability, compared with 34% of non-Indigenous users (AIHW 2007f).

Indigenous service users of CSTDA services were younger, on average, than other service users (graph 11.14). The median age for Indigenous service users was 25 years, compared with a median age of 32 years for other service users (AIHW 2007f). This is consistent with the earlier onset of many chronic health conditions and shorter life expectancy in the Indigenous population (see Chapter 7).

## DISABILITY SERVICES

*continued***11.14** USERS OF CSTDA-FUNDED SERVICES, by Indigenous status and age(a)—2005–06

(a) Excludes 167 service users whose age was not stated.

Source: AIHW 2007f

Patterns of service use were similar for Indigenous and non-Indigenous service users (table 11.15). Similar to non-Indigenous users, Indigenous service users most commonly accessed community support services, followed by employment, accommodation, community access, and respite services. Indigenous service users were more likely than non-Indigenous users to access community support services (53% compared with 42%) respite services (20% compared with 13%), and accommodation services (20% compared with 18%). A lower proportion of Indigenous users accessed employment services (24% compared with 38%) and community access services (20% compared with 23%).

Differences in the types of services accessed may reflect different availability of services in regional/remote areas rather than differing needs of Indigenous and non-Indigenous service users. Some 12% of Indigenous users lived in remote and very remote areas, compared with 1% of other users, while 37% of Indigenous users were located in major cities compared with 64% of other users (AIHW 2007f).

**11.15** USERS OF CSTDA-FUNDED SERVICES(a), by Indigenous status and service group —2005–06

Service group	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Unknown		Total(b)	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Accommodation support	1 443	20.1	32 909	17.6	1 214	5.2	35 566	16.4
Community support	3 819	53.2	77 831	41.7	15 014	64.8	96 664	44.5
Community access	1 402	19.5	42 063	22.5	4 273	18.5	47 738	22.0
Respite	1 404	19.5	23 971	12.8	1 944	8.4	27 319	12.6
Employment	1 748	24.3	70 121	37.5	1 288	5.6	73 157	33.7
<b>All service groups</b>	<b>7 182</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>186 805</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23 156</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>217 143</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Service user data are estimates after use of a statistical linkage key to account for individuals who received services from more than one service type outlet during the twelve months from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

(b) Column totals may not be the sum of the components since individuals may have accessed services in more than one service group during the twelve month period.

Source: AIHW 2007f

## AGED CARE

This section provides information on government services that give care and support to frail older people who are living in the community or who are in a residential aged care facility. Entry to many of the programs requires assessment and approval by an Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), but ACATs also refer clients to other services which do not require formal approval. The Home and Community Care Program (HACC) is one such program and is the largest community care program, both in terms of expenditure and numbers of clients receiving care in any given year.

HACC is jointly funded by the Australian and state and territory governments. It provides community-based support services, such as home nursing, personal care, respite, domestic help, meals, and transport to people who can be appropriately cared for in the community and can therefore live at home.

ACAT approval is required to access Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs), Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH) packages, EACH Dementia packages and residential aged care (including residential respite care), all of which are subsidised by the Australian Government. In addition, ACAT assessment is required for entry to the Transition Care Program, and may be required by some states and territories for entry to the Multi-purpose Service program, both of which are funded jointly with the states and territories.

CACPs provide support and care to people who prefer to remain at home rather than enter low level residential aged care for which they are also eligible. EACH is a relatively new program which provides home care for people who are otherwise eligible for high level residential aged care. A recent innovation in provision of high care packages has seen the introduction of the EACH Dementia program with packages that are specifically targeted at people with dementia and associated behaviour and psychological symptoms (EACH Dementia). Use of the EACH and EACH Dementia programs by Indigenous people has been relatively low.

Residential aged care is subsidised by the Australian Government and provides accommodation and other support services such as personal care, help with performing daily tasks, and nursing care.

Although these services are mainly used by older people, a proportion of younger people utilise such services. This occurs relatively more often among Indigenous Australians because of the higher prevalence of chronic diseases among young people. For example, Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and kidney disease typically occur at younger ages among Indigenous people and can result in a need for care at younger ages.

When planning service places and packages for older people, the Australian Government uses population estimates for the general population aged 70 years and over. However, in the allocation of places and packages across the country the Government also takes into account the number of Indigenous Australians who are 50 years and over (as a proxy for old age) (DHAC 2001). A research project, funded under the National Health and Medical Research Council/Australian Research Council *Ageing Well, Ageing Productively* program is underway in the School for Social and Policy Research at Charles Darwin University to examine the robustness of this planning assumption.

In developing programs to meet the care needs of older people, particular consideration is given to issues of access and equity for groups with special needs—such as Indigenous

AGED CARE *continued*

Australians. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy was developed in 1994 after consultation with Indigenous communities and organisations involved in the provision of aged care services. This Strategy tackles issues of access to services, including those related to the rural and remote location of many Indigenous communities. The Strategy established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Services, which provide aged care services with a mix of residential and community care places that can change as community needs vary. Many of these services have been established in remote areas where no aged care services were previously available. The flexible services developed as part of the Strategy are now funded under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program.

In rural and remote locations that are too small to support the standard systems of aged care provision, Multi-purpose Services provide a more workable care and treatment model by bringing together a range of local health and aged care services, often including residential aged care, under one management structure. Multi-purpose Services provide flexible care places.

*Home and Community  
Care Program*

Data about client characteristics and services provided through the HACC program are collected on a quarterly basis and records are linked across quarters to form the annual HACC Minimum Data Set (MDS). Although a set of demographic, circumstance and assistance totals is held in the data repository for each agency reporting a client's data, only one set of demographic data is included in the combined linked data set. These demographic data are not a compilation from multiple data records but rather a selection of the demographic data record with the most recent assessment date. Consequently, not all valid demographic values may be captured and some invalid or missing values may be included. This may have an impact on the consistency of reporting of Indigenous status over time within the linked data. In 2005–06, Indigenous status was not recorded or not known for nearly 16% of HACC clients, compared with 11% of clients in 2004–05.

During 2005–06 approximately 3,200 organisations (around 82% of HACC-funded organisations) submitted data on the services they provided to clients across Australia. Among participating agencies, HACC services were provided to about 777,500 clients of all ages. Of these, just over 2.5% (about 19,100 after pro-rating of clients with missing Indigenous status) were reported to be Indigenous clients, ranging from 45% in the Northern Territory to 1% in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (DoHA 2007a).

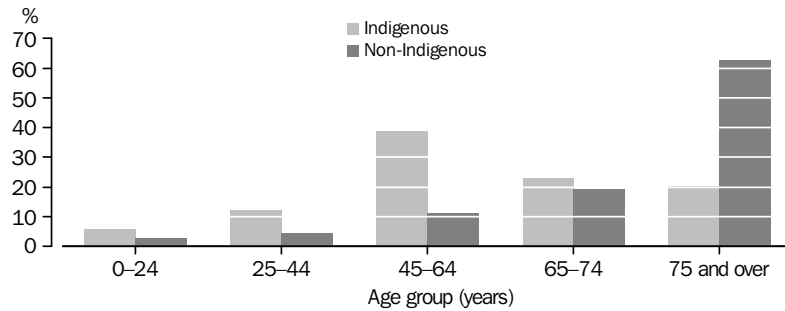
## AGE PROFILE

Analysis of HACC MDS data shows that Indigenous HACC clients had a younger age profile than other clients (graph 11.16). About 57% of Indigenous clients were aged less than 65 years, compared with 18% of non-Indigenous clients. About 20% of Indigenous clients were aged 75 years or over, compared with 63% of non-Indigenous clients. The proportion of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients who were aged 75 years or over has increased slightly for both groups since 2003–04 (18% and 57% respectively), reflecting the ageing of the Australian population overall (DOHA 2007a).

Home and Community  
Care Program *continued*

AGE PROFILE *continued*

**11.16** HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE CLIENTS, by Indigenous status and age(a)—2005–06



(a) Excludes 152,349 clients whose Indigenous status was not stated. Within age groups, these clients have been distributed between 'Indigenous' and 'Non-Indigenous' categories in accordance with the proportions that occurred for clients with known Indigenous status.

Source: AIHW analysis of the DoHA Aged and Community Care Management Information System Database

USAGE RATES

An examination of age-specific usage rates for Indigenous HACC clients in 2005–06 suggests the existence of some data quality problems. For some groups (e.g. Indigenous women aged 75 years and over) and for some states, the number of HACC clients identified as Indigenous were close to or greater than the ABS estimates of the corresponding Indigenous population. There may be a number of factors contributing to this. Repeat HACC clients may provide different name or birth date information to different HACC agencies, resulting in them being counted more than once. Over-estimation of the clients' ages could also result in higher age-specific usage rates for older clients. The usage rate might also be inflated if people were more inclined to identify themselves as Indigenous in the HACC collection than in the 2001 Census.

Because of these concerns about Indigenous identification in the HACC MDS, further information by Indigenous status is not presented for the Home and Community Care Program.

The Aged Care Assessment  
Program

The Aged Care Assessment Program (ACAP) is jointly funded by the Australian Government and the states

and territories to support the network of multidisciplinary Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) which operate in each state and territory within Australia. The primary purpose of ACATs is to comprehensively assess the care needs of frail older people and assist them to gain access to the types of available services most appropriate to meet their care needs. The assessment of care needs takes into account a person's physical, medical, psychological and social needs and assists them in gaining access to appropriate care services.

Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) may be hospital or community-based. The main professional groups represented in teams are doctors, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. The target populations for assessment by

*The Aged Care Assessment  
Program continued*

an ACAT are non-Indigenous people aged 70 years or over and Indigenous people aged 50 years or over. Data about ACAT clients and services are recorded at a national level in the ACAP MDS. Indigenous status was not known or not recorded for 3.4% of completed assessments in 2004–05 (ACAP NDR 2006).

In 2004–05, there were 2,075 referrals to ACAP for Indigenous clients. Nationwide, 5% of the Indigenous population aged 50 years and over were referred to the ACAP and 1,862 received a complete assessment (ACAP NDR 2006). Nationally, the proportion of referrals to the ACAP for Indigenous clients was only 46% of the expected number, given the proportion of people in the target population (ACAP NDR 2006).

Both waiting times for assessment and the duration of the assessment process were generally shorter for Indigenous than non-Indigenous clients. The report from the ACAP National Data Repository notes that 'ACATs seem to have made an effort to complete assessments for Indigenous clients quickly, even though Indigenous clients often live in isolated communities and their assessments may require assistance from an interpreter or culturally appropriate assessor'.

*National Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander  
Flexible Aged Care  
Program*

At 30 June 2006, there were around 30 services delivering 580 flexible places for Indigenous clients under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program. These services are funded to deliver culturally appropriate aged care, close to home and country, mainly in rural and remote areas.

As part of the 1994 National Strategy, services were established to provide aged care using a flexible model. Communities are encouraged to participate in every aspect of service provision, from the very early planning stages right through to the operation of the services. These services are now funded under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program.

The funding is 'cashed-out' and can be used flexibly so that a mix of residential and community aged care services can be provided. The mix of services may change as aged care needs vary. Funding is based on an agreed allocation of places, and not on the occupancy of those places. This provides a constant income stream so that service providers have both stability of income from the funding and flexibility to manage the delivery of aged care services. No demographic data are available for clients of these services.

*Community Aged Care  
Packages*

Out of a total of 31,803 people receiving Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) at 30 June 2006, 1,204 (4%) identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Indigenous status was not known for 0.4% of care recipients.

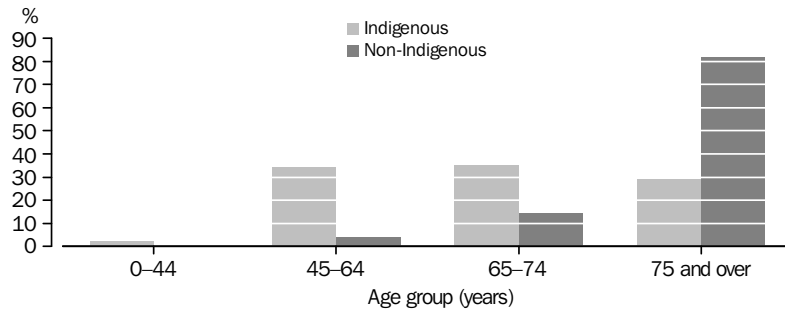
#### AGE PROFILE

Of people receiving assistance, proportionately more Indigenous recipients were in younger age groups (graph 11.17). About 36% of Indigenous CACP recipients were aged less than 65 years of age, compared with fewer than 4% of other CACP recipients. About 29% of Indigenous care recipients were aged 75 years and over, compared with 82% of other care recipients.

Community Aged Care  
Packages continued

AGE PROFILE *continued*

**11.17** COMMUNITY AGED CARE PACKAGE RECIPIENTS, by Indigenous status and age(a)—30 June 2006



(a) Includes 134 clients whose Indigenous status was not stated. Within age groups, these clients have been distributed between the 'Indigenous' and 'Non-Indigenous' categories in accordance with the proportions that occurred for clients with a known Indigenous status.

Source: AIHW analysis of the DoHA Aged and Community Care Management Information System Database.

USAGE RATES

Use of Community Aged Care Packages is higher for Indigenous Australians compared with other Australians in all age groups examined. At 30 June 2006, there were 16 per 1,000 Indigenous clients aged 50–74 years, compared with 1 per 1,000 other Australian clients in the same age group (table 11.18). There were 85 per 1,000 Indigenous Australians aged 75 years and over using Community Aged Care Packages, compared with 20 per 1,000 other Australians in this age group.

**11.18** COMMUNITY AGED CARE PACKAGE RECIPIENTS (a), by Indigenous status and age(b)—30 June 2006

Age group (years)	RECIPIENTS			USAGE RATE PER 1,000 (c)		
	Indigenous	Other	Total	Indigenous	Other	Total
Less than 50	58	128	186	0.1	—	—
50–74	806	5 431	6 237	15.7	1.1	1.2
75 and over	345	25 035	25 380	84.8	19.6	19.8
Total	1 209	30 594	31 803	0.2	1.5	1.5

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

- (a) Recipients of packages provided by multi-purpose services and services receiving flexible funding under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program are not included, as age-specific figures are not available for these programs.
- (b) There were 134 recipients whose Indigenous status was not stated. Within age groups, these recipients have been distributed between the 'Indigenous' and 'Other' categories in accordance with the proportion that occurred for recipients with a known Indigenous status.
- (c) Rates per 1,000 are based on the 'low series' ABS population projections based on the 2001 Census.

Source: AIHW analysis of the DoHA Aged and Community Care Management Information System Database

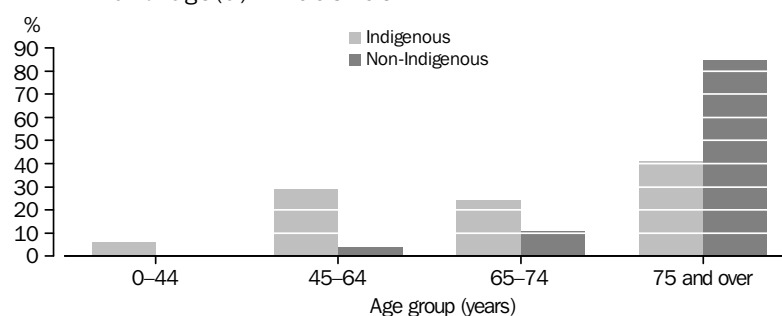
### Residential aged care services

There were 154,872 people using residential aged care services at 30 June 2006. Of these, 872 permanent residents (0.6% of all permanent residents) and 35 people in respite care (1.1% of all people in respite care) identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Indigenous status was not recorded or not known for 10,967 residents (5%) (AIHW 2007m).

#### AGE PROFILE

Of those who were admitted to permanent or respite care during 2005–06, proportionately more Indigenous people were in younger age groups (graph 11.19). Almost 35% of Indigenous Australians were less than 65 years of age on admission to residential aged care, compared with 4% of other Australians. In contrast, about 41% of Indigenous Australians were aged 75 years or over on admission, compared with 85% of other Australians.

**11.19** RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE ADMISSIONS, by Indigenous status and age(a)—2005–06



(a) Includes 612 clients whose Indigenous status was not stated. Within age groups, these clients have been distributed between the 'Indigenous' and 'Non-Indigenous' categories in accordance with the proportions that occurred for clients with a known Indigenous status.

Source: AIHW analysis of the DoHA Aged and Community Care Management Information System Database.

#### USAGE RATES

Age-specific usage rates show that Indigenous Australians make higher use of residential aged care services than other Australians at all ages (table 11.20). At 30 June 2006, 8 per 1,000 Indigenous people aged 50–74 years were residents in residential aged care, compared with 4 per 1,000 other Australians. At ages 75 years and over, 109 per 1,000 Indigenous people were in residential care, and 105 per 1,000 other Australians were in residential care. However, total usage rates for Indigenous Australians are lower than for non-Indigenous Australians due to the small proportion of the Indigenous population aged 75 years and over, the age group in which usage rates are highest.

Residential aged care services continued

USAGE RATES continued

**11.20** RESIDENTS OF RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE SERVICES AND SERVICE USAGE RATES (a), by resident's Indigenous status and age—30 June 2006

Age range (years) (b)	RESIDENTS			USAGE RATE PER 1,000(c)		
	Indigenous	Other	Total	Indigenous	Other	Total
Under 50	85	963	1 048	0.2	0.1	0.1
50–74	428	18 677	19 105	8.3	3.8	3.8
75 and over	444	134 275	134 719	109.0	105.3	105.3
Total	957	153 915	154 872	1.9	7.6	7.5

- (a) Places provided by multi-purpose services and services receiving flexible funding under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy are not included, as age-specific figures are not available for these programs.
- (b) There were 6,799 residents whose Indigenous status was not stated. Within age groups, these residents have been distributed between the 'Indigenous' and 'Other' categories in accordance with the proportion that occurred for residents with a known Indigenous status.
- (c) Rates per 1,000 are based on the 'low series' ABS population projections based on the 2001 Census.

Source: AIHW analysis of the DoHA Aged and Community Care Management Information System Database

DEPENDENCY LEVELS

The care needs of residents (dependency levels) are indicated by scores on the Resident Classification Scale (RCS). The RCS has eight categories which represent eight levels of care need in descending order from 1 to 8, with categories 1–4 representing high-care status and categories 5–8 representing low-care status.

Overall, 72% of Indigenous residents were classified as high-care at 30 June 2006, compared with 68% of other residents.

Residential respite care

Respite care supports community living for people who receive assistance from informal providers (family carers), by giving carers a break from providing assistance to see to their own affairs, to visit family and friends, to take a holiday or in instances where carers themselves encounter health, personal or family problems.

Residential respite care is recognised as an important component of the carer support system and provides short-term accommodation and care in residential aged care homes on a planned or emergency basis. Apart from emergencies, ACAT approval is required to access residential respite care and an approval remains valid for 12 months. A person with a valid ACAT approval for residential respite care may use up to 63 days of respite care in a financial year, which can be taken in 'blocks', for example, one or two weeks at a time. An extra 21 days may be available if deemed necessary by an ACAT.

There were 49,727 admissions for residential respite care between 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2006, 490 of which (1%) were for people who identified as Indigenous. Admission rates for Indigenous people in younger age groups were higher than non-Indigenous people, however, over two-thirds (68%) of admissions of Indigenous

*Residential respite care  
continued*

people were for those aged 65 years and over. At 30 June 2006, there were 3,135 respite residents, 35 (or 1%) of whom were Indigenous.

## **11.21** INDIGENOUS IDENTIFICATION IN COMMUNITY SERVICES COLLECTIONS

### *Indigenous identification in community services collections*

Since the 2005 edition of this report, the quality of identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in eight community services data collections has been examined, by analysing the extent to which Indigenous status is missing or not stated in each of the data collections (AIHW 2007l). The rates of missing/not stated were compared with those reported earlier, and a survey of activities at the national and the jurisdictional level to improve the quality of Indigenous identification in these data collections was also carried out.

The eight data collections examined were:

- Commonwealth-State Disability Agreement Minimum Data Set
- Residential Aged Care Services Data Collection
- Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set
- Community Aged Care Packages Data Collection
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection
- Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set
- Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set
- National Child Protection data collection, incorporating three data collections:
  - Children who are the subject of notifications, investigations and substantiations;
  - Children on care and protection orders; and
  - Children in out of home care.

Five out of the eight data collections reported decreases in the national missing/not stated Indigenous status rates, while the other three collections recorded an increase. It should be noted that these increases are not necessarily indicative of a decline in the quality of the data collected—the implementation of methods to promote longer term improvements may also contribute to a short-term increase in the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status.

The extent to which the Indigenous identifier was missing or not stated varied greatly between the datasets. However, any analysis of Indigenous identification data in the community services sector must take into consideration that the preparedness of clients to identify may be influenced by a number of factors related to the nature of the service provided, including the purpose of the service and the voluntary nature of the clients' access to the service.

Activities aimed at improving the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients that have been implemented at the national level include the development of improved data collection forms and software; implementation of the standard Indigenous status question; consultation with jurisdictions and agencies on the use of their data, including the return of data; and edit checks of national and jurisdictional data. Activities implemented in various data collections at the jurisdictional level have

*Residential respite care  
continued*

included supplying feedback to participating agencies by following up on data quality issues as they arise and providing support to participating agencies through training and data guides, help-desks and data collection software packages.

## SUMMARY

In 2004, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children using Australian Government supported child care services was 1.8%. Of all Indigenous children in Australian Government supported child care services, 51% were in long day care centres, 16% were in before/after school care and 9% were in family day care. The corresponding proportions for other Australian children were 59%, 25% and 14% respectively.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were over-represented in the child protection systems across most of Australia, with rates of Indigenous children in substantiations 11 times the rate for other children in Victoria and 9 times the rate in Western Australia. Across Australia, the rate of Indigenous children being placed under care and protection orders and in out-of-home care was seven times the rate for other children. Around two-thirds of children in out-of-home care were placed with Indigenous relatives/kin (37%) or with other Indigenous caregivers (27%). These are the preferred placements under the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle that has been adopted by all jurisdictions.

The rates of juvenile justice supervision for young people aged 10–17 years show high levels of over-representation of Indigenous youth. In 2005–06 there were 44 Indigenous youth per 1,000 under juvenile justice supervision compared with 3 per 1,000 for non-Indigenous youth. Most young people under juvenile justice supervision were in community-based supervision rather than detention. Indigenous youth comprised a larger share of those in detention (45%) than those under community supervision (38%). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were younger, on average, than non-Indigenous young people when first placed under juvenile justice supervision.

In 2005–06, 7,182 people, or 3% of those receiving Commonwealth/State/Territory Disability Agreement funded services were Indigenous. The proportion of Indigenous people who use disability services is relatively low given that the rate of disability in the Indigenous population is almost twice the rate of disability in the non-Indigenous population. Indigenous service users were more likely than non-Indigenous users to report a physical disability as their primary disability, acquired brain injury or developmental delay. Disability service users who were Indigenous were younger than other service users, with a median age of 25 years compared with a median age of 32 years for non-Indigenous users.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were also more likely than other Australians to utilise aged care services at younger ages, consistent with the poorer health status and lower life expectancy for this population. Of those admitted to permanent or respite residential care during 2005–06, almost 35% were less than 65 years of age, compared with fewer than 4% of other Australians. Of all Indigenous Australians receiving Community Aged Care Packages at 30 June 2006, 36% were less than 65 years of age and 20% were aged 75 years or over. The corresponding rates for other HACC clients were 4% and 63% respectively.