

THE ISSUES



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE
20,421

37.3% of the total number of children in out-of-home care, but only **5.5%** of the total number of children in Australia.

In 2018, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were:

10.2x MORE LIKELY TO BE living in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children.

2017 **49.4%** LESS LIKELY TO be living with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family members or carers.
↓
2018 **45.0%**

7x MORE LIKELY TO BE ON A **permanent care order until aged 18** and at risk of permanent separation from their families, cultures and communities.

In NSW, Aboriginal children are **nearly twice (1.8x)** AS LIKELY to be on a **permanent care order** compared to the national average.



THE CAUSES

POVERTY

NEARLY 1 IN 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are **living below the poverty line**, and people accessing homelessness services are **9.4 times more likely to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**.

25% of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** experiencing homelessness are children.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are:

2.6x more likely to be **developmentally delayed** at the **age of 5**.

attending child care services at **half the rate** of non-Indigenous children and **being excluded from these services with the introduction of the New Child Care Package and associated Activity Test**.

far more likely to be **reported to a child protection service** before they are born. (In WA, as much as 60.9% of unborn reports).

EARLY CHILDHOOD VULNERABILITY

INTER-GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

The trauma associated with **child removal is inter-generational**. Children living with members of the Stolen Generations, when compared with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are:

1.8x AS LIKELY TO HAVE POOR SELF-ASSESSED HEALTH

1.6x AS LIKELY TO LIVE IN HOUSEHOLD WITH CASH-FLOW PROBLEMS

THE SOLUTIONS



We call on the Council of Australian Governments to work in partnership with SNAICC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to:

Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national children's strategy with generational targets to eliminate over-representation and address the causes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child removal.

Building Block 1

Access to universal and targeted services

Invest in early intervention and prevention focused child and family services.

Building Block 2

Participation and control in decision-making

Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander decision-making through investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations (ACCOs).

Building Block 3

Culturally safe and responsive policies and practice

Adopt national standards for implementing all five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle instead of focusing on legal permanent care orders.

Building Block 4

Governments and services are accountable

Establish national and state-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people's commissioners and improved data across the country.



In 2017-18 only

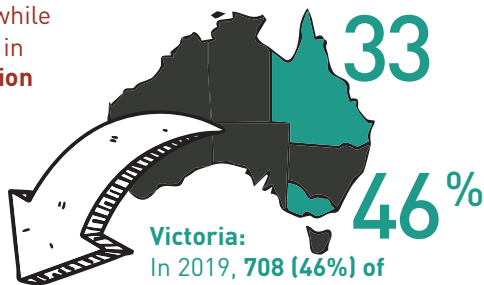
17%

of overall child protection funding was invested in support services for children and their families, while

83% was invested in child protection services.

Only **Victoria** and **Queensland** fund ACCOs to facilitate family participation across the state.

Queensland: 33 Family Wellbeing Services and 13 Family Participation Program Services delivered by ACCOs.



Victoria: In 2019, **708 (46%)** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people on a contractible order in care were managed by an ACCO.

POLICY

All states and territories have committed to the five elements through the **National Framework for Protecting Children** but there are no agreed standards to guide policy and practice.



South Australia and **Victoria** are the only states to have a **dedicated commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.**

2019 REPORT CARD SNAPSHOT

	HEADLINE INDICATOR Over-representation in OOHHC (rate)	BUILDING BLOCK 1 Universal and targeted services	BUILDING BLOCK 2 Participation, control and self-determination	BUILDING BLOCK 3 Culturally safe and responsive systems	BUILDING BLOCK 4 Accountability
ACT	16.3	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
NSW	10.5	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
NT	11.5	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
QLD	8.5	Promising/improving	Stronger practice/outcomes	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
SA	10.4	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
TAS	-	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving
VIC	16.4	Poor	Stronger practice/outcomes	Promising/improving	Stronger practice/outcomes
WA	17.8	Very poor	Poor	Promising/improving	Promising/improving

*Tasmania excluded due to poor identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

KEY Very poor (Red) Poor (Orange) Promising/improving (Yellow) Stronger practice/outcomes (Green)