



FAMILY MATTERS

Strong communities. Strong culture.
Stronger children.



THE FAMILY MATTERS REPORT CARD 2023

Very poor

Poor

Promising/improving

Stronger practice/outcomes

ABBREVIATIONS

OOHC: out-of-home care
ACCO: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation
ATSICPP: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle
AEDC: Australian Early Development Census
CTG: National Agreement on Closing the Gap
IFS: Intensive Family Support
TPPRO: third-party parental responsibility order

References to Aboriginal people refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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Headline indicator Over-representation in OOHC + TPPRO (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	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over-representation in OOHC above national averageThird highest proportion of investment in ACCOs for family support and IFS (17.5%)Proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS below national average (12%)Second lowest rate of Aboriginal children on track in all 5 AEDC domains (27.3%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress made on investment to ACCOs, but continuing distrust between sector and governmentLack of resources for ACCOs to support families to participate in child protection processes, including AFLDMCo-design network provides Aboriginal community advice based on lived and living experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Highest placement with Aboriginal kin (42.6%)Second highest reunification rate for Aboriginal children (12.3%)Did not provide data on relationship status of carer for children on TPPROs in accordance with requestCommunity identifies practice improvement, including promising Aboriginal restoration taskforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Interim Aboriginal Children's Advocate appointed and Aboriginal Children's Commissioner legislatedIndependent Aboriginal oversight body monitors implementation of Our Booris, Our Way reviewCommunity voices highlight improvements in partnerships with ACCOs and community for reform
NSW	10.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduced rate of Aboriginal children in OOHC over past 3-years, but over-representation continues to riseProportion of expenditure on family support and IFS below national average and dropping (12.1%)Relatively low proportion of investment in ACCOs for family support and IFS (7.7%)Highest rate of Aboriginal children on track in all 5 AEDC domains (38.8%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Highest proportion of investment in ACCOs for care services (7.4%)Minimal progress to transfer case management to ACCOs – lack of plan, resources and accountabilityPeak and sector representatives highlight poor transparency and lack of partnership in reformCase consultation and family participation largely internalised rather than with independent ACCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Third highest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (63.4/1,000)Only state to adopt out Aboriginal children in 21-22 (5 of 6 children adopted by non-Indigenous carers)Lowest reunification of Aboriginal children (2.3%)Poor transparency in review of decision-making tools and low implementation of Aboriginal Case Management Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of plan and demonstrated progress to implement recommendations from Family is Culture review 4-years after it was completedDeputy Aboriginal Children's Guardian role vacant since 2022 and new Aboriginal Advocate for Children appointed but without community consultationOfficer Level Working Group to progress Closing the Gap Target 12 ineffective and has stalled – a Ministerial Aboriginal Partnership Group is still being established
NT	14.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduced rate of Aboriginal children in OOHC over past 3-years, but over-representation continues to riseSecond lowest rate of Aboriginal entry to OOHC (6.2/1,000)Highest proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS (29.4%) but second lowest expenditure per child on IFS (\$34,860)Lowest rate of Aboriginal children on track in all 5 AEDC domains (16.4%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increases in ACCO family support, but investment in ACCOs remains low overall in a system that predominantly engages Aboriginal childrenNo AFLDM model implemented despite commitment 5 years agoLimited access to legal services for families and low referrals to Aboriginal legal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Third lowest placement with Aboriginal kin (25.5%)Lowest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (23/1,000)Investment increasing in purchased home based care despite commitment to phase it out in favour of kinship and foster careThird highest reunification of Aboriginal children (9.3%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delays and lack of resources to implement <i>10-year Generational Strategy for children and families</i>No dedicated Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young PeopleTripartite Forum with APO NT membership guides government reform for children and familiesNo peak body for Aboriginal children and families
QLD	9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second lowest rate but increasing over-representation in OOHC, with third highest Aboriginal entry (13.3/1,000)Proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS below national average and dropping (12.3%)High proportion of family support and IFS provided by ACCOs (20%), but droppingBudget allocation to expand ACCO Family Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commitment to transfer services for Aboriginal children and families to ACCOs within 10 -yearsEqual funded teams in peak body (QATSICPP) and Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services to support expansion of ACCO delegated authorityBudget allocation to expand ACCO Family Participation ProgramEnhanced role of peak body in strategy, policy, co-design and sector development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second lowest placement with Aboriginal kin (22.8%)Increasing number of Aboriginal children in residential care, including younger childrenPlanned implementation of Family Caring for Family and Delegated Authority by ACCOs will increase family and community care for childrenChild Placement Principle included in legislation to standard of Active Efforts, but work needed on quality implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Queensland First Children and Families Board oversees Our Way StrategyAboriginal leadership and peak body partnership to develop the Breaking Cycles Action PlanAction plan includes driving better reporting and monitoring – data improvements neededNo dedicated Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People
SA	11.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second highest Aboriginal entry to OOHC (15.2/1,000)Second lowest proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS (9.8%)Third highest expenditure per child on IFS (\$111,580)Relatively low proportion of investment in ACCOs for family support and IFS (6.9%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Investment in family group conferencing is promising, but not delivered through ACCOsCommissioner identifies limited engagement of Aboriginal stakeholders in legislative reviewAdvancing new peak body through Aboriginal-led process to input to service and system designLimited scope of Gazetted Organisation role	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second highest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (81.3/1,000) and low placement of children on TPPROs with Aboriginal carers (38.3%)Second lowest reunification rate for Aboriginal children (3.8%)Service model design led by government resulting in services unsuitable to meet Aboriginal family needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New Aboriginal children and families peak body establishment in process with ongoing funding committedFully legislated independent Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young PeopleLack of a dedicated plan to address over-representation overseen by Aboriginal people
TAS	5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lowest over-representation in OOHC, but community concern about identification practiceLowest Aboriginal entry to OOHC (6.2/1,000)Early Intervention Unit being established in partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service and Tasmanian Legal Aid to deliver pre-litigation advocacy for familiesSecond highest rate of Aboriginal children on track in all 5 AEDC domains (38.3%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No Aboriginal Family Group Conference facilitators employed despite government commitmentsNo policy or program for ACCO involvement in child protection decisions or AFLDMCommission of Inquiry identified ad hoc approach to engaging ACCOs in child protection decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lowest placement with Aboriginal kin (12%)Second lowest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (26.3/1,000)Third lowest reunification rate for Aboriginal children (4.3%)Peak body reports that the Child Placement Principle is being ignored in child protection decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding to the TAC to develop an evidence-based strategy and action plan to address over-representation in OOHC in TasmaniaNo dedicated commissioner for Aboriginal childrenCommission of Inquiry identified ad hoc engagement with ACCOs and recommended reform and investment to increase ACCO authority
VIC	17.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second highest over-representation in OOHCHighest Aboriginal entry to OOHC by far (31.9/1,000)Second highest proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS (28.1%)Highest expenditure per child on IFS (\$149,730)Lowest over-representation of Aboriginal children commencing IFS (7.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second highest proportion of investment in ACCOs for care services (5.3%)Progress remains stalled on case management transfer to ACCOs for Aboriginal children (48%)Trial extension of ACCO delegation to investigationsAFLDM program statewide, but only implemented in 24% of cases and only after harm is substantiated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Second highest placement with Aboriginal kin (39.6%)Highest rate of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (83.1/1,000)Highest reunification rate for Aboriginal children (22.6%)Legislative change to include the 5 elements of the Child Placement Principle and extend ACCO delegation to investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Partnership with ACCOs through the Aboriginal Children's Forum and the <i>Wungurilwil Gaggapdair Agreement</i>, but Aboriginal community voices identify a lack of genuine partnershipDedicated Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, but the role is not in legislationYoorrook Commission found lack of accountability of Victorian Government for improving outcomes
WA	19.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Highest over-representation in OOHCReduced rate of Aboriginal children in OOHC over past 3-years, but over-representation continues to riseLowest proportion of expenditure on family support and IFS (5%) and lowest expenditure per child on IFS (\$24,080) – high proportion invested in ACCOs (21.1%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prescriptive program requirements and short-term pilots limit potential for ACCO-led service deliveryAFLDM continues to only be implemented in 2 locations with no commitment to broader roll-outAboriginal Representative Organisation pilot has not met community expectations with limited authority and resources for ACCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Third highest placement with Aboriginal kin (38.8%)Highest over-representation of Aboriginal children on long-term orders (19.4)Recommissioning of some OOHC services to ACCOs in progressCommunity voices highlight major gaps in culturally safe and trauma-informed services and harmful child protection practice across the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none">WA 10-year Roadmap to address over-representation completed with extensive state-wide community consultation and leadership but not yet committed to by governmentNo dedicated Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young PeopleNo Aboriginal child and family peak body resourced for state-wide leadership

Note on data: The reference date and source for data is often excluded in this abbreviated table, but is available in the relevant sections of the report. The headline indicator is based on children in 'out-of-home care' and on third-party parental responsibility orders.