

Report on Government Services (ROGS) Summary

Community Services: Child Protection

This summary of the most recent ROGS covers child protection services.

Expenditure

- In 2022-23, total recurrent expenditure on family support services, intensive family support services, protective intervention services, and care services (out-of-home-care and other supported placements) was \$9.4 billion nationally. This represents a real increase of 9.5% from 2021-22.
- Of this \$9.4 billion, care services accounted for 63.1 per cent or \$5.9 billion. Care services include activities associated with providing out-of-home care and supported placements for children 0-17.
- In 2022-23, real recurrent expenditure on all child protection services per child aged 0– 17 years in the population was \$1,638 nationally (compared with \$1,450 nationally in 2021-22).

Unit costs

- Nationally in 2022-23, the unit cost of care was \$335, compared with \$288 in 2021-22, continuing the trend in increased real costs since 2013-14.
- The annual cost per child in care at 30 June 2023 varied across jurisdictions ranging between \$79,992 and \$161,914.
- Annual costs per child for *residential care* ranged between \$561,246 and around \$1.1 million (in jurisdictions where data was available).
- Annual costs per child for *non-residential care* ranged between \$50,616 and \$67,275.

Profile

- Nationally in 2022-23:
 - 292,173 children (aged 0-17 years) were the subject of *notifications*.
 - 105,209 children were the subject of a *finalised investigation*.
 - 45,746 children were the subject of a *substantiation*.
 - 60,592 children were on *care and protection orders*.
 - 45,284 children were in *out-of-home care* and a further 10,533 children were in other supported placements.

- Of these figures, most represent an increase on the ROGS 2021-22 data with the exception of children on care and protection orders, children in out of home care where there was a slight decrease.
- Nationally in 2022-23, around four in ten notifications (38.1 per cent) resulted in an investigation, similar to 2021-22 data.
- While response times between notification and investigations varied across jurisdictions, nationally in 2022-23 (excluding Tasmania), 16.4 per cent of investigations were completed within 28 days or fewer of the notification date, which represents the lowest proportion over the ten years of reported data.
- Nationally in 2022-23, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were between two and eight times more likely to be subjects of substantiations compared to their relative proportion in the population aged 0–17 years (nationally 6 per cent of children aged 0–17 years are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people).
- Nationally, 88 per cent of children who left out-of-home care to a permanency arrangement in 2021-22 did not return to out-of-home care in the following 12 months. Permanency includes reunification, finalised third-party parental responsibility order, and adoption.
- Nationally in 2022-23, nearly half (44.1 per cent) of all finalised investigations were substantiated for abuse or neglect, or risk of abuse or neglect, which is similar to 2021-22 (45.8 per cent).
- Nationally at 30 June 2023, the proportion of children in out-of-home care who were placed with relatives or kin was 54.7 per cent, slightly higher than at 30 June 2022 (54 per cent).
- Nationally at 30 June 2023, 89.3 per cent of children required to have a current documented and approved case plan, had such a plan, representing a small increase from 87.6 per cent of children at 30 June 2022.

Workforce stability and sustainability

Data measuring ‘continuity of case worker’ – defined as the proportion of children in out-of-home care who have one case worker assigned during the reporting period – is not yet available for reporting.

The indicator for ‘workforce sustainability’ – defined as the capacity of the child protection workforce to meet current and projected future services demand – is currently under development and will be a useful source of information for child protection services workforce planning.



Data set: [16 Child protection services - Report on Government Services 2024 - Productivity Commission \(pc.gov.au\)](#)