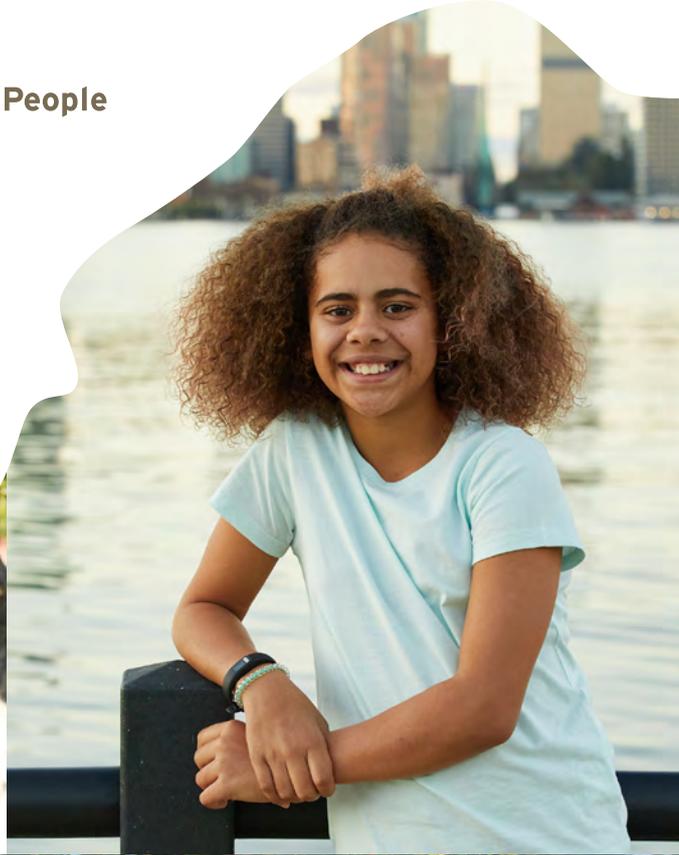




Commissioner for Children and Young People  
Western Australia



# Profile of Children and Young People in WA 2022

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## Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal peoples' culture and heritage to Western Australian society. For the purposes of this report, the term 'Aboriginal' encompasses Western Australia's diverse language groups and also recognises Torres Strait Islanders who live in Western Australia. The use of the term 'Aboriginal' in this way is not intended to imply equivalence between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, though similarities do exist.

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## Alternative formats

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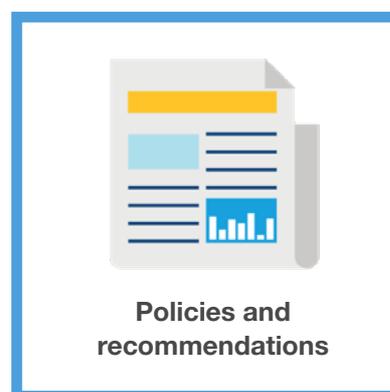
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# This report

The Commissioner for Children and Young People has a statutory responsibility to monitor the wellbeing of all children and young people living in Western Australia (WA) and to advocate on their behalf.

The Commissioner developed a Wellbeing Monitoring Framework to monitor and report on the wellbeing of WA children and young people. It encompasses the following three components:

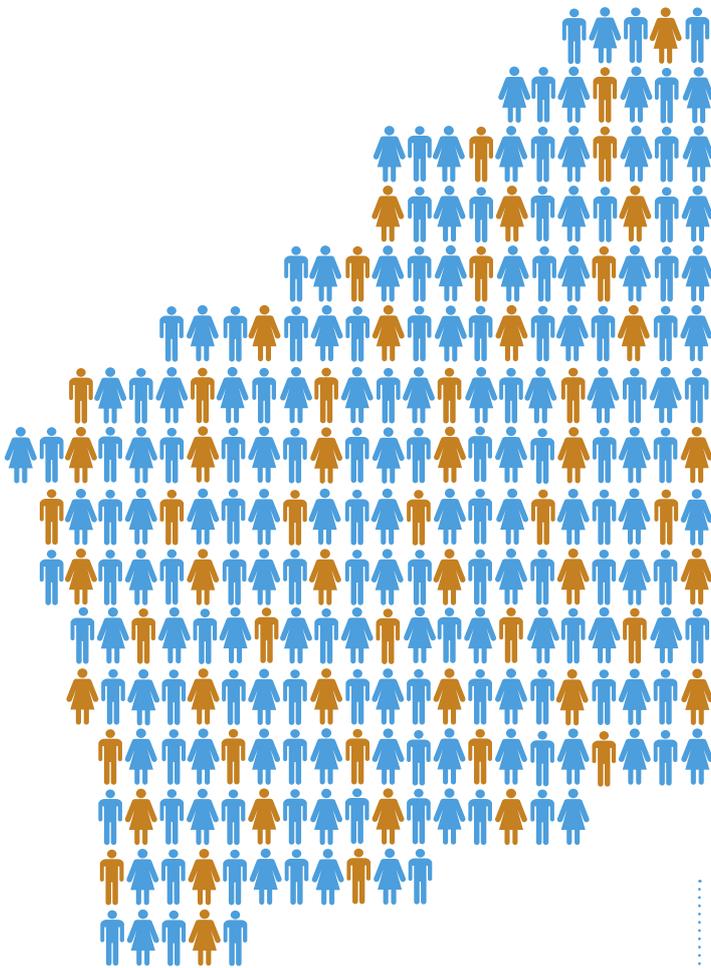


This report is produced annually and provides a demographic profile of the children and young people (aged 0 to 17 years) in WA. The profile includes a focus on children and young people who experience vulnerability and hardship, such as those in the juvenile justice system, in out-of-home care, with disability and living in poverty.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused sudden and unforeseen changes to the lives of many children and young people in WA. These changes have had some immediate impacts on the wellbeing of children and young people across the state, which will need to be addressed in the short-term. How these will impact children and young people in WA over the longer term is, as yet, unknown.

More data is available in the [Indicators of Wellbeing](#) online resource which provides a single place for information from a variety of sources on WA children and young people's wellbeing. In addition, the [Speaking Out Survey](#), which was first conducted in 2019 and again in 2021, provides the most comprehensive survey of children and young people on their health and wellbeing ever undertaken in WA.

# Western Australia's children and young people



Approximately

# 616,000

children and young people live in WA and make up **23 per cent** of the state's population



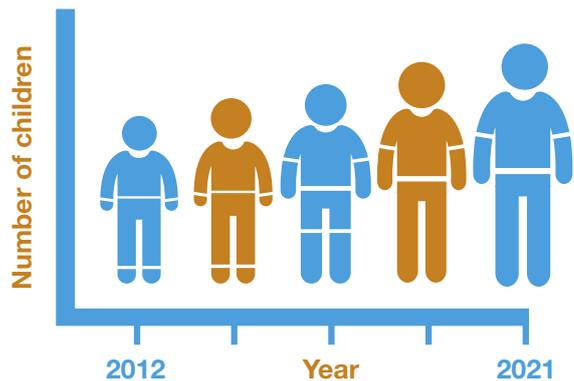
Poverty line



Up to

# 17%

of children and young people are living below the poverty line in WA

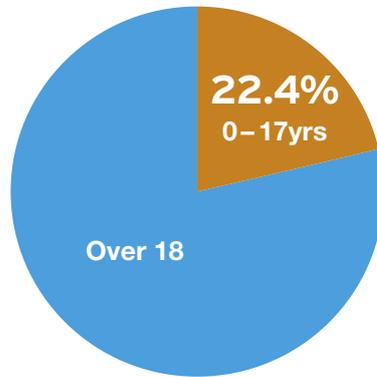


In the last 10 years there has been a **17 per cent** increase in the number of children aged 6 to 11 years living in WA

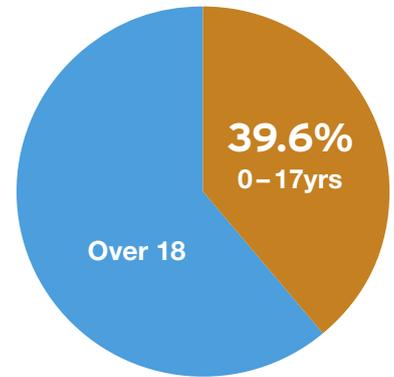
# Western Australia's children and young people

## Aboriginal children and young people

There are about **40,000** Aboriginal children and young people aged under 18 years living in WA. Children and young people make up **39.6 per cent** of the total WA Aboriginal population



WA non-Aboriginal population



WA Aboriginal population



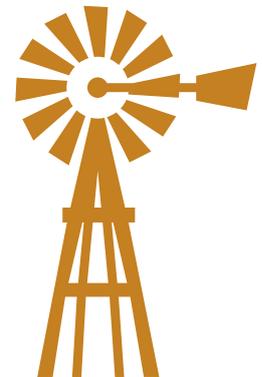
**32,677**

births were registered in WA during 2020

Around

**152,000**

or **25 per cent**, of children and young people in WA live in regional and remote areas



**57%**

of all WA children and young people in out-of-home care are Aboriginal





# Population

WA is home to approximately 616,000 children and young people, who represent 23 per cent of WA's total population.

Between June 2020 and June 2021 the number of children and young people in WA increased marginally.

**Table 1: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years, number and per cent, WA and Australia, 2019 to 2021**

	WA			Australia*
	2021	2020	2019	2021
<b>Children and young people</b>	<b>615,859</b>	<b>610,146</b>	<b>603,131</b>	<b>5,670,359</b>
Total population (all ages)	2,681,633	2,664,212	2,623,259	25,739,256
Proportion of total population (%)	23.0	22.9	23.0	22.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *National, state and territory population, June 2021*

\* Figure includes other territories comprising Jervis Bay Territory, Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

# Population

The gender distribution of children and young people in WA is 51.3 per cent male and 48.7 per cent female, which is consistent with most Australian states and territories and the national distribution.<sup>1</sup>

From 2012 to 2021, the number of 0 to 17 year-olds in WA increased by over 57,000 or 10.3 per cent (Table 2). The largest increase (16.8%) occurred in the primary school years for children aged six to 11 years.

**Table 2: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years by age group, number and per cent, WA, 2012 and 2021**

	June 2021		June 2012		Change from 2012 to 2021	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
0 to 5 years	206,528	33.5	194,561	34.8	11,967	6.2
6 to 11 years	210,841	34.2	180,517	32.3	30,324	16.8
12 to 17 years	198,490	32.2	183,373	32.8	15,117	8.2
<b>0 to 17 years</b>	<b>615,859</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>558,451</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>57,408</b>	<b>10.3</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *National, state and territory population, June 2021*

The number of WA children aged six to 11 years has increased more than the number of young people aged 12 to 17 years mainly due to a higher fertility rate in the mid-2010s. The WA fertility rate grew during the 2000s but has declined in recent years (refer to the Births section). An increase in the number of 12 to 17 year-olds (secondary school years) will follow in the next decade.

## Births

After declining since the 1960s, WA's fertility rate increased in the early 2000s to reach 2.095 babies per woman in 2008 (a rate last reached in the late 1970s). From 2008, the total fertility rate in WA has steadily declined to 1.7 babies per woman in 2020.<sup>2</sup>

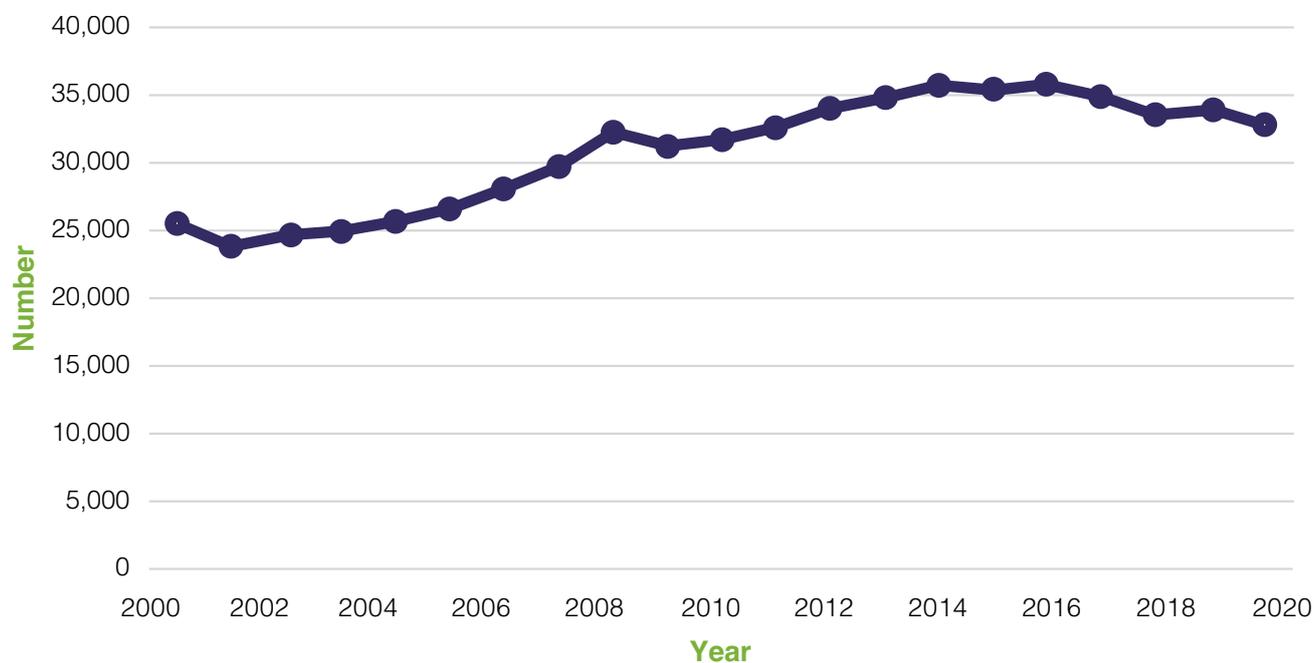
The number of births in WA increased during the 2000s until 2014 when the number of births peaked at around 35,000 per year. Since 2016 the number of births per year has decreased from 35,652 to 32,677 in 2020.

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, *National, state and territory population, June 2021*, ABS.

2 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, *ABS Explorer, Fertility by age, by state*, ABS.

# Population

Figure 1: Total births, number, WA, 2000 to 2020



Source: WA Department of Justice 2021, [WA Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages](#)

The median age of all mothers for births registered in WA in 2020 was 31.5 years (an increase in the median age of 30.2 recorded in 2010). The median age of all fathers was 33.6 years (also a slight increase from 32.8 recorded in 2010).<sup>3</sup>

There were 2,823 births (8.7% of all births) registered in WA during 2020 where at least one parent recorded themselves as Aboriginal on their child's birth registration form.<sup>4</sup>

In general, Aboriginal mothers give birth at a younger age than non-Aboriginal mothers. The median age of Aboriginal women who registered a birth in WA in 2020 was 25.7 years, approximately six years less than the median age of all mothers (31.5 years) but an increase on the median age of 24.2 years recorded for Aboriginal mothers in 2011.<sup>5</sup>

Correspondingly, the highest proportion of Aboriginal women giving birth is in the age group 20 to 24 years (30.8%) compared with 30 to 34 years for non-Aboriginal women (37.9%).

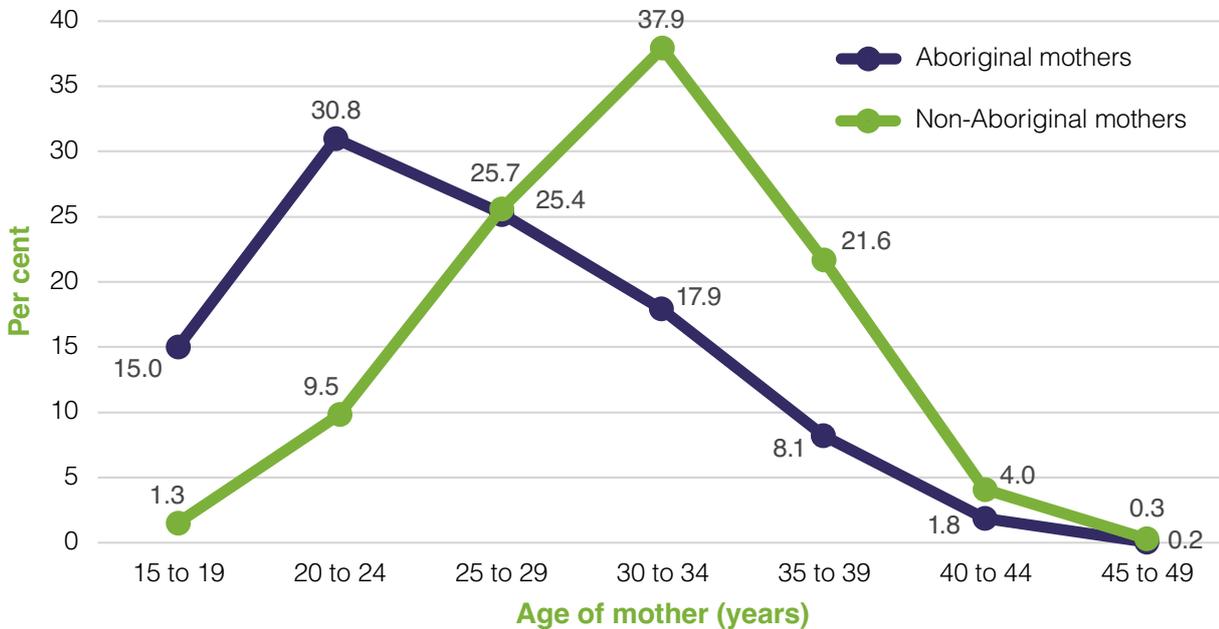
3 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, [ABS.Explorer, Confinements by nuptiality, by state](#), Confinements, by nuptiality, by state, ABS.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, [ABS.Explorer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander births and confinements, summary, by state](#), ABS.

5 Ibid.

# Population

**Figure 2: Proportion of overall births by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mothers by age group, per cent, WA, 2020**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, [ABS Explorer – Births by age by state, 2020](#), and [ABS Explorer – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fertility, by age, by state](#)

Over the past decade, the total number of births in the 15 to 19 year-old cohort has declined by 49.8 per cent, from 1,460 in 2011 to 733 in 2020.<sup>6</sup> The number of births to Aboriginal mothers in this age group has decreased from 425 in 2011 to 333 in 2020 (-21.6%).<sup>7</sup>

## Geographical distribution

In 2020, three-quarters (75.1%) of the population of 0 to 17 year-olds resided in the metropolitan area,<sup>8</sup> 16 per cent resided in regional areas and around nine per cent in remote areas of WA (Table 3).

All metropolitan areas recorded an increase in the population of children and young people from 2019 to 2020, with Perth – North East recording a 2.2 per cent increase. Regional and remote WA recorded minimal change in their overall populations of children and young people, with some areas recording modest increases (Pilbara: 2.8%) and some recording modest decreases (Esperance: -2.2%).

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, [ABS Explorer, Fertility by age, by state](#), ABS.

<sup>7</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, [ABS Explorer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander births and confinements, summary, by state](#), ABS.

<sup>8</sup> The metropolitan area corresponds to the five Perth Statistical Area Level 4s as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It does not include Mandurah.

# Population

**Table 3: Geographical distribution of children and young people aged 0 to 17 years by age group, number and per cent, WA, June 2020**

	0 to 5 years	6 to 11 years	12 to 17 years	Total 0 to 17 years	Change from 2019 to 2020	Proportion of WA children and young people
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Per cent	Per cent
<b>Metropolitan</b>	<b>157,353</b>	<b>156,344</b>	<b>144,521</b>	<b>458,218</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>75.1</b>
Perth – South East	43,148	41,270	36,952	121,370	1.7	19.9
Perth – South West	35,426	35,895	33,093	104,414	1.7	17.1
Perth – North East	22,484	21,342	19,749	63,575	2.2	10.4
Perth – North West	45,698	45,894	42,790	134,382	0.8	22.0
Perth – Inner	10,597	11,943	11,937	34,477	2.4	5.7
<b>WA regional</b>	<b>29,893</b>	<b>33,899</b>	<b>33,832</b>	<b>97,624</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>16.0</b>
Mandurah	7,241	7,963	7,785	22,989	1.2	3.8
Bunbury *	13,530	15,344	15,594	44,468	-0.2	7.3
Wheatbelt **	9,122	10,592	10,453	30,167	-0.5	4.9
<b>WA remote</b>	<b>19,588</b>	<b>18,637</b>	<b>15,742</b>	<b>53,967</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>8.8</b>
Esperance	1,209	1,195	1,303	3,707	-2.2	0.6
Goldfields	3,607	3,291	2,831	9,729	-1.9	1.6
Mid West	4,093	4,258	4,230	12,581	-1.0	2.1
Gascoyne	731	739	642	2,112	-0.2	0.3
Pilbara	6,166	5,655	3,632	15,453	2.8	2.5
Kimberley	3,782	3,499	3,104	10,385	-0.1	1.7
<b>Total WA</b>	<b>206,834</b>	<b>208,880</b>	<b>194,095</b>	<b>609,809</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *Estimated resident population (ERP)*, Custom report June 2020 and June 2019 [unpublished]

\* Includes Busselton, Margaret River, Augusta and Manjimup.

\*\* Includes Albany, Wheatbelt North and Wheatbelt South.

Notes:

1. The geographical distribution of WA's estimated resident population (ERP) is only available one year in arrears. Hence, presented here is the table for 2020. The totals in this table do not agree exactly to 2020 totals in Tables 1 and 2 as ERP for sub-state regions are only prepared annually (as opposed to quarterly revisions). This data is prepared based on a modelling process incorporating Census and administrative data sources. The accuracy of sub-state ERPs is described in the Quality Declaration – summary in the [Regional population methodology](#).
2. Per cent totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
3. To provide a detailed picture of the geographical distribution of children and young people across WA, Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) was chosen to represent areas within the metropolitan area and regional WA and Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3) for remote areas. For simplicity, some areas are classified as remote even though the main population centre local government area may be classified as regional (e.g. Geraldton and the Mid West). For more information on these areas see Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\)](#).

# Population

## Aboriginal children and young people

Aboriginal children and young people represent 6.8 per cent of the total population of children and young people in WA (Table 4).<sup>9</sup>

**Table 4: Estimated residential population including children and young people aged 0 to 17 years by Aboriginal status, number and per cent, WA, 2016**

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number
0 to 17 years	39,779	6.8	549,089	93.2	588,868
<b>Total population</b>	<b>100,512</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2,455,466</b>	<b>96.1</b>	<b>2,555,978</b>
Children and young people as a proportion of population (per cent)	39.6		22.4		23.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016*

Note: The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) uses the results of the Census as the main data source to produce population estimates for Aboriginal Australians. Estimates of the population of Aboriginal peoples in the Census are undercounted for a variety of reasons. The Estimated Resident population (ERP) presented in Table 4 is adjusted for the net undercount. For more information, refer to the ABS *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2016*.

The proportion of children and young people in the Aboriginal population is almost double that of the proportion of children and young people in the non-Aboriginal population (39.6% compared to 22.4%). The primary reasons for this are lower life expectancy and higher fertility rates of Aboriginal people compared to non-Aboriginal people.<sup>10</sup>

With respect to geographic distribution, around 58 per cent of Aboriginal children and young people aged 0 to 17 years live in regional and remote areas compared to 20 per cent of non-Aboriginal children and young people (Table 5). Most notably, nearly one-quarter (23.5%) of Aboriginal children and young people live in very remote parts of WA.

<sup>9</sup> This is the latest data available at publication date.

<sup>10</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2012, *4725.0 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing: A focus on children and youth*, Apr 2011, ABS.

# Population

**Table 5: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years by remoteness area and Aboriginal status, number and per cent, WA, 2016**

	Non-Aboriginal		Aboriginal		Total*	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Major cities**	402,764	79.5	12,558	41.7	435,609	76.8
Inner regional	45,820	9.0	2,300	7.6	51,690	9.1
Outer regional	36,005	7.1	4,268	14.2	43,512	7.7
Remote	15,483	3.1	3,862	12.8	21,547	3.8
Very remote	6,114	1.2	7,083	23.5	14,363	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>506,479</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>30,141</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>567,163</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *Census Tablebuilder: Dataset – Cultural Diversity and remoteness area*

\* Totals include Aboriginal status not stated and no usual address and therefore do not sum.

\*\* The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) defines remoteness areas into five classes of relative remoteness across Australia using a combination of population sizes (to define urban centres) and distances from urban centres.

In this classification, Mandurah is included in the Major Cities category. Refer to the ABS, [1270.0.55.005 – Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 5 – Remoteness Structure, July 2016](#) for more information.

Note: This data is from the 2016 Census which has not been adjusted for undercounting. The estimated resident population (ERP) in Table 4 has been adjusted for the net undercount and Australian residents temporarily overseas, however does not provide single age data by remoteness area for WA. Totals in the table are per the ABS and may not sum exactly.



# Population

## Cultural background

In 2016, 14.5 per cent of all children and young people in WA were born overseas, compared to 85.5 per cent born in Australia.<sup>11</sup>

For WA's children and young people, the most common country of birth after Australia is England (2.6%), followed by New Zealand (1.7%), the Philippines (1.2%) and South Africa (1.1%) (Table 6).

**Table 6: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years by country of birth, number and per cent, WA, 30 June 2016**

	Number	Per cent
<b>Australia</b>	<b>503,624</b>	<b>85.5</b>
England	15,599	2.6
New Zealand	10,267	1.7
Philippines	6,914	1.2
South Africa	6,525	1.1
India	5,390	0.9
China (excludes SARs* and Taiwan)	2,776	0.5
Malaysia	2,732	0.5
Scotland	2,248	0.4
United States of America	1,966	0.3
Other	30,826	5.2
<b>All overseas born</b>	<b>85,244</b>	<b>14.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>588,868</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, *Migration, Australia 2017–18*, Dataset: Estimated resident population, Country of birth, State/territory, Age and sex – as at 30 June 1996 to 2016, Census years

\* Special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau.

Note: The ABS reports the estimated resident population (ERP) by country of birth and state and territory for age groups 0 to 4 years, 5 to 9 years, 10 to 14 years and 15 to 19 years. Population estimates by country of birth by state and territory are only available for Census years. The estimated number and percentage of young people aged 0 to 17 years has been calculated by the Commissioner for Children and Young People using this data.

According to Census 2016 data, the majority of WA children and young people speak English at home (78.5%). The most common other languages spoken at home are Chinese languages (2.0%), Indian languages (1.8%) and South East Asian languages (1.7%).<sup>12</sup>

11 This is the latest data available at publication date.

12 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018, *Table-builder: 2016 Census – Cultural Diversity*, ABS.

# Population

## Disability

The ABS estimates that in 2018, 43,600 WA children and young people aged 0 to 17 years had a reported disability (Table 7).<sup>13</sup> This represented 7.5 per cent of the total population of 0 to 17 year-olds in WA in 2018.

More than one-in-10 (11.5%) children aged between six and 11 years had a reported disability.

**Table 7: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years with disability by age group and disability status, number and per cent, WA, 2018**

	All with reported disability		Profound or severe core activity limitation	
	Number	Per cent of children and young people in age group	Number	Per cent of children and young people in age group
0 to 5 years	9,000	4.4	4,600*	2.2
6 to 11 years	22,400	11.5	14,200	7.3
12 to 17 years	14,500	7.9	5,500	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,600</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>25,100</b>	<b>4.3</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *Persons with reported disability by specific age groups*, Custom report from the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2018 [unpublished]

\* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

Note: 'Profound or severe core activity limitation' indicates the person is unable to do, or always needs help with, a core activity task such as communication, mobility or self-care.

Across Australia, 70 per cent of 0 to five year-olds with disability have a sensory and speech disability (including loss of sight or hearing). In the six to 11 year-old age group, the most common disability types are intellectual (67.8%) and psychosocial (39.3%).<sup>14</sup>

13 The ABS notes that for the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers a person has a disability if they report they have a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities.

14 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2021, *Persons with reported disability by specific age groups*, Custom report from the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2018, ABS [unpublished].

# Population

## Family composition

The most recent Census data reports that there were 385,482 households with one or more children in WA in 2016.<sup>15</sup>

Of these households, 244,566 or 63.4 per cent were couple families with dependent children and about 62,230 or 16.1 per cent were single-parent families with dependent children (Table 8).

The majority of single parents in WA are female (81.7 per cent).<sup>16</sup>

**Table 8: Families with children by family composition, number and per cent, WA, 2016**

	Couple families		Single-parent families		Total
	Number	Per cent of total	Number	Per cent of total	Number
With dependent children under 15 years*	205,891	53.4	48,488	12.6	254,379
With dependent children over 15 years and no children under 15 years	38,675	10.0	13,742	3.6	52,417
<b>Total with dependent children**</b>	<b>244,566</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>62,230</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>306,796</b>
With non-dependent children***	47,574	12.3	31,112	8.1	78,686
<b>Total families with children</b>	<b>292,140</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>93,342</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>385,482</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 2016*, compiled using Table Builder – Dataset 2016 Census: Selected Family Characteristics

\* Includes families with children under 15 years and dependent children over 15 years.

\*\* Dependent children include children under 15 (dependent by definition) and dependent students aged 15 to 24 years.

\*\*\* This can include adult children (over 25 years) living with a parent.

15 This is the latest data available at publication date.

16 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018, ABS Census 2016, *Quick Data, WA*, ABS.

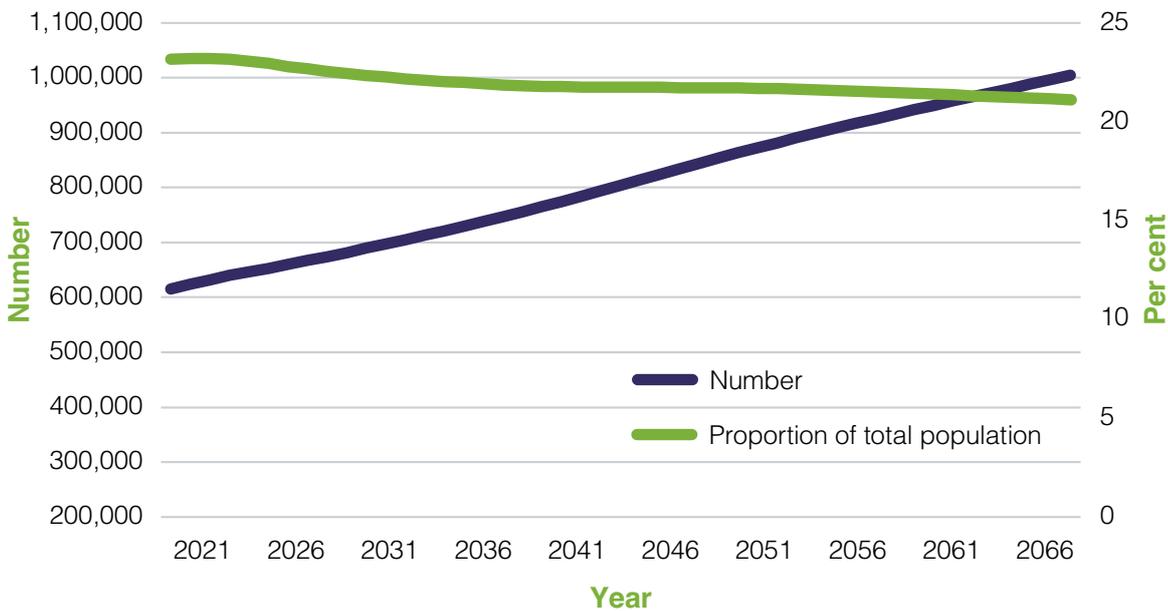
# Population

## Projected population growth

The ABS projects that WA’s population will reach almost 4.8 million people in 2066 if fertility, life expectancy and migration remain largely in line with current trends.<sup>17,18</sup>

Based on these assumptions, the number of children and young people in WA is projected to reach over 1 million by 2066, representing a 63.3 per cent increase.<sup>19</sup>

**Figure 3: Projected population of children and young people aged 0 to 17 years, number and per cent of total population, WA, 2020 to 2066**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2018, *Population Projections, Australia 2017 (base) – 2066*, Table B5. Population projections, By age and sex, Western Australia – Series B (medium series)

The proportion of children and young people in the overall population is projected to decrease from 23.2 per cent to 21.1 per cent due to Australia’s ageing population.

17 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018, *Population Projections, Australia 2017 (base) – 2066*, Table B5. Population projections, By age and sex, Western Australia – Series B (medium series), ABS. This is the latest data available at publication date.

18 It should be noted that this projection was calculated prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and has not been adjusted for expected changes in migration due to the pandemic.

19 Ibid.



# Child care and education

More than two-thirds of WA students are educated in government schools and almost one-third are educated in Catholic and independent schools.

## Child care

Almost 50 per cent (47.6%) of WA children aged less than two years and more than 60 per cent (61.9%) of children aged two to three years attend either formal or informal child care.<sup>20</sup> This includes all types of formal day care and informal care, which could be provided by a grandparent or other relative who is not a parent or guardian.

Child care arrangements become less common once children start formal schooling (Table 9).

**Table 9: Type of care attended by children aged 0 to 12 years by age group and type of care arrangement, number and per cent, WA, 2017**

	Under 2 years		2 to 3 years		4 to 5 years		6 to 12 years	
	Number	Per cent						
<b>Usually attended care</b>	<b>31,300</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>61.9</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>97,000</b>	<b>41.3</b>
Formal care only**	9,400*	14.3*	18,100	24.6	9,000	13.1	14,700	6.3
Informal care only***	14,300	21.7	11,400	15.5	21,800	31.8	77,600	33.0

<sup>20</sup> This is the latest data available at publication date.

## Child care and education

	Under 2 years		2 to 3 years		4 to 5 years		6 to 12 years	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Both formal and informal care	7,500*	11.4*	15,400	20.9	5,500*	8.0*	3,700*	1.6*
<b>No usual care arrangement</b>	<b>36,200</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>24,300</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>34,300</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>139,500</b>	<b>59.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,800</b>		<b>73,700</b>		<b>68,500</b>		<b>234,800</b>	

Source: ABS 2018, *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2017*, cat. no. 4402.0, Table 1 Children aged 0–12 years: Care usually attended by age of child – Western Australia

\* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25 per cent to 50 per cent and should be used with caution.

\*\* Includes formal care such as long day care, family day care, before and/or after school care and other.

\*\*\* Includes informal care provided by a relative such as grandparent, non-resident parent, brother/sister or other relative.

Note: Cells in this table have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

More data is available in the [Participation in formal and informal child care](#) indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

### Education

More than two-thirds of WA students are educated in government schools and almost one-third are educated in Catholic and independent schools.

Between Semester 2 2020 and Semester 2 2021, the number of school students enrolled in WA rose from 466,469 to 473,012, an increase of 1.4 per cent (Table 11).

**Table 10: Students in government and non-government schools by year level, number and per cent, WA, Semester 2 2021**

	Government		Non-government		Total
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number
Kindergarten	24,703	68.1	11,568	31.9	36,271
Pre-primary	26,648	74.4	9,157	25.6	35,805
Years 1 to 6	152,354	72.3	58,417	27.7	210,771
Years 7 to 12	113,333	59.6	76,832	40.4	190,165
<b>Total</b>	<b>317,038</b>	<b>67.6</b>	<b>155,974</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>473,012</b>

Source: WA Department of Education 2021, *Summary Statistics of Schools and Full-Time Students*

## Child care and education

In 2021, there were 822 government schools (818 in 2020) and 314 non-government schools (313 in 2020) operating in WA.<sup>21</sup>

At March 2020, prior to any response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 4,116 WA students were registered to receive home education which represented an almost 11 per cent increase from 2019 (3,720).<sup>22,23</sup> At March 2021, 4,562 students were registered to receive home education, which is a further 10 per cent increase over the 2020 numbers.<sup>24</sup>

Eighty per cent (378,459) of all students were enrolled in the metropolitan area and the remaining 20 per cent (94,553) were enrolled in regional and remote education regions, with a high proportion (9.3%) attending schools in the South West education region (Table 11).

**Table 11: Number of schools and primary and secondary students by education region, number and per cent, WA, Semester 2 2021**

Education region	Schools	Primary*	Secondary	Total students	Proportion of all students	Change 2020 to 2021
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Per cent	Per cent
North metropolitan	357	108,488	78,230	186,718	39.5	1.5
South metropolitan	377	116,000	75,741	191,741	40.5	1.9
<b>Total metropolitan</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>224,488</b>	<b>153,971</b>	<b>378,459</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Goldfields	48	6,488	3,753	10,241	2.2	1.2
Kimberley	44	4,897	2,469	7,366	1.6	1.3
Mid West	60	7,313	4,514	11,827	2.5	-0.5
Pilbara	35	7,401	3,410	10,811	2.3	1.1
South West	139	25,702	18,440	44,142	9.3	0.1
Wheatbelt	76	6,558	3,608	10,166	2.1	0.0
<b>Total regional/ remote</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>58,359</b>	<b>36,194</b>	<b>94,553</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>282,847</b>	<b>190,165</b>	<b>473,012</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.4</b>

Source: WA Department of Education 2021, *Students by Education Region and Education Level*

\* Primary includes pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, pre-primary students and primary students.

21 WA Department of Education 2020, *Students by Education Region and Education Level*, Summary Statistics of Schools and Full-Time Students, WA Government.

22 WA Department of Education 2020, *Annual Report 2019–20*, WA Government, p. 165.

23 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during 2020 most students in WA were learning from home for two to three weeks in April. Whether this has resulted in a sustained increase in the number of students registered to be educated at home is yet to be established.

24 WA Department of Education 2021, *Annual Report 2020–21*, WA Government, p. 178.

## Child care and education

From 2020 to 2021, student numbers increased by a combined total of 1.7 per cent in the two metropolitan education regions, while regional and remote education regions recorded a combined total increase of 0.3 per cent. The Kimberley region recorded an increase of 1.3 per cent, while the Mid West region saw a decrease of 0.5 per cent.

There were 32,725 Aboriginal students enrolled in Semester 2 2021, representing 6.9 per cent of all WA students.<sup>25</sup> There are significant differences across the regions, with Aboriginal students representing 63.9 per cent of students in the Kimberley region and 3.5 per cent of students in the North metropolitan education region (Table 12).

**Table 12: Students by education region and Aboriginal status, number and per cent, WA, Semester 2 2021**

Education region	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number
North metropolitan	6,563	3.5	180,155	96.5	186,718
South metropolitan	9,303	4.9	182,438	95.1	191,741
<b>Total metropolitan</b>	<b>15,866</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>362,593</b>	<b>95.8</b>	<b>378,459</b>
Goldfields	2,170	21.2	8,071	78.8	10,241
Kimberley	4,705	63.9	2,661	36.1	7,366
Mid West	2,808	23.7	9,019	76.3	11,827
Pilbara	2,964	27.4	7,847	72.6	10,811
South West	2,611	5.9	41,531	94.1	44,142
Wheatbelt	1,601	15.7	8,565	84.3	10,166
<b>Total regional/remote</b>	<b>16,859</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>77,694</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>94,553</b>
<b>All regions</b>	<b>32,725</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>440,287</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>473,012</b>

Source: WA Department of Education 2021, *Students by Education Region and Education Level*

Since 2011, there has been a 28 per cent increase in Aboriginal students across WA (2011: 25,487), compared to an 18 per cent increase in non-Aboriginal students (2011: 371,669).

More data is available in the **School attendance** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

<sup>25</sup> WA Department of Education 2021, *Students by Education Region and Education Level*, Aboriginal student numbers by Education Sector and Education Region, WA Government.



# Vulnerability

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Up to 17 per cent of children and young people in WA are estimated to be living below the poverty line.

## Child poverty

In 2020, the Australian Council of Social Services released their *Poverty in Australia 2020* report, in which they estimated that 17.5 per cent of children across Australia are living in poverty in 2017–18.<sup>26,27</sup> They do not provide child poverty data by jurisdiction.

Based on analysis by the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM), the child poverty rate in WA in 2015–16 was 17.0 per cent, compared to 17.2 per cent Australia-wide.<sup>28</sup>

This equates to approximately 88,000 children and young people in WA aged 0 to 14 years who are living in poverty.

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26 Davidson P et al 2020, *Poverty in Australia 2020: Part 1, Overview*, ACOSS/UNSW Poverty and Inequality Partnership Report No. 4, ACOSS, p. 27. The 17.5% is based on the post-2007 income definition (refer report Chapter 3 for discussion). This is the latest data available at publication date.

27 It is important to note that measures of poverty are varied and contested. Previous releases of the *Profile of Children and Young People in WA* relied on poverty rates calculated from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics survey (HILDA).

28 Miranti R et al. 2018, *Child Social Exclusion, Poverty And Disadvantage In Australia*, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA), University of Canberra. The poverty line is set at half the median equivalised household disposable income, adjusted for housing costs. This definition was applied to the ABS Survey of Income and Housing 2015/2016 to reveal the patterns of child poverty at the national, state and capital cities/outside capital cities.

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# Vulnerability

**Table 13: Poverty rates for children and young people under 15 years of age by jurisdiction, per cent, Australia, 2015–16**

	Percentage
NSW	17.9
VIC	18.6
QLD	15.7
SA	17.3
<b>WA</b>	<b>17.0</b>
TAS	14.7
NT*	10.8
ACT	11.2
<b>Australia</b>	<b>17.2</b>

Source: NATSEM, *Child Social Exclusion, Poverty and Disadvantage In Australia*

\* Northern Territory estimates are mainly representative of urban areas only. Remote and sparsely settled areas are excluded.

Note: Calculated based on 50 per cent of the Australian median disposable income (after housing costs) using the ABS Survey of Income and Housing 2015/2016.

There is significant variation in poverty rates across WA with 69.7 per cent of children and young people in the East Pilbara estimated to be living in poverty compared to 3.3 per cent of children and young people in the Perth suburb of City Beach.<sup>29</sup>

Children in single parent families have a significantly higher risk of poverty than children living in couple families (35.2% compared to 11.1%).<sup>30</sup>

In 2017–18, 16.8 per cent of WA households spent more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on housing costs. This is seen as an indicator of housing stress for low-income households. This proportion increased by 3.5 percentage points from 2007–08 (13.3%).<sup>31</sup>

More data is available in the **Material basics** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

29 Miranti R et al. 2018, *Child Social Exclusion, Poverty And Disadvantage In Australia*, Table Appendix 2 – Child Social Exclusion and Child Poverty, Table A6. Child Social Exclusion and Child Poverty, National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA), University of Canberra.

30 Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) 2020, *Poverty by family type*, ACOSS [online].

31 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2019, *Housing Occupancy and Costs: 2017-18*, Table 17.3 Household Estimates, Selected household characteristics, Western Australia, 1994–95 to 2017–18, ABS.

## Housing and homelessness

At 30 June 2021, 9,934 children and young people were on the public housing wait list.

From 30 June 2016 to 30 June 2019, there was a significant decrease in the number of children and young people on the public housing wait list (30 June 2016: 11,963; 30 June 2019: 6,824). However, at 30 June 2021, the number of children and young people on the wait list has increased from 7,469 at 20 June 2020 to 9,934 (33.4% of all applicants).

**Table 14: Children and young people aged 0 to 17 years on public housing wait list by number of applications and applicants, number and per cent, WA, 2016 to 2021**

	Total applicants (all ages)	Applicants (0 to 17 years)	Proportion of all applicants	Applications (0 to 17 years)
	Number	Number	Per cent	Number
30 June 2016	36,167	11,963	33.1	6,058
30 June 2017	29,544	9,070	30.7	4,532
30 June 2018	23,637	6,892	29.2	3,311
30 June 2019	23,254	6,824	29.3	3,325
30 June 2020	24,364	7,469	30.7	3,669
30 June 2021	29,720	9,934	33.4	4,975

Source: Department of Communities (Housing), *Public Housing Wait List as at 30 June 2021 custom report* [unpublished]

Note: Children and young people under 18 are considered applicants when their parent(s) or guardians are applying for housing to accommodate them.<sup>32</sup> In a small number of cases the young person (aged 16 to 17 years) can be applying in their own right.

On average, households waited 102 weeks to be housed (94 weeks in 2019–20).<sup>33</sup>

This represents a substantial increase in the average time on the wait list. The Housing Authority notes that increased waiting times in 2020–21 were due to very low private rental supply combined with public housing stock being largely unchanged from the prior year.<sup>34</sup>

More than one-quarter (27.8%) of WA households live in a rented dwelling.<sup>35</sup>

32 It is generally recommended that children less than five years of age of different sexes may reasonably share a bedroom and children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom. There should be no more than two persons per bedroom. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2019, *6553.0 – Survey of Income and Housing, User Guide, Australia, 2017–18 Housing Statistics*, ABS.

33 Department of Communities 2021, *Housing Authority 2020–21 Annual Report*, WA Government, p. 201.

34 Ibid.

35 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2019, *Housing Occupancy and Costs: 2017–18*, Table 17.3 Household Estimates, Selected household characteristics, Western Australia, 1994–95 to 2017–18, ABS.

## Vulnerability

According to the Australian Census, in 2016 at least 1,949 WA children and young people were homeless (Table 15).<sup>36</sup> This figure is known to be underestimated due to the often-hidden nature of youth homelessness.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 15: Children and young people aged 0 to 18 years reported as homeless by age group and gender, number, WA, 2016**

	0 to 11 years	12 to 18 years	Total
Male	636	350	986
Female	576	398	974
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,208</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>1,949</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness*, Table 4.6 Homeless Operational Groups and Other Marginal Housing, Western Australia–Sex by age of person–2016

Note: Cells in this table have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. As a result, cells may not add to the totals.

In 2020–21, 7,102 children and young people aged 0 to 17 years presented at WA specialist homelessness services alone or with their families (7,271 in 2019–20). The majority of whom (4,170) were under 10 years of age.<sup>38</sup>

The single most common reason for children and young people to need housing and homelessness assistance is family and domestic violence.<sup>39</sup>

More data is available in the **Material basics** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

36 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2020, *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016*, Homelessness Operational Groups and other Marginal Housing, Western Australia–Sex by age of person–2016, ABS. This is the latest data available at publication date.

37 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2020, *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016*, Youth homelessness, ABS.

38 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, *Specialist Homelessness Services annual report 2020–21*, Table Clients.1: Clients and support periods, by age and sex, 2020–21, AIHW.

39 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, *Specialist Homelessness Services Collection data cubes 2011–12 to 2020–21*, SHSC Demographics data cube, AIHW.

# Vulnerability

## Developmental vulnerability

According to the 2018 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC),<sup>40</sup> 6,369 WA children were assessed as vulnerable on one or more developmental domains upon entering primary school.<sup>41</sup> This represents 19.4 per cent of children assessed in 2018, which is a decrease from 23.0 per cent of children assessed in 2012.

**Table 16: Children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains, number and per cent, WA and Australia, 2012, 2015 and 2018**

	WA		Australia	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
<b>2012</b>	7,048	23.0	59,933	22.0
<b>2015</b>	6,895	21.3	62,960	22.0
<b>2018</b>	6,369	19.4	63,448	21.7

Source: Australian Early Development Census, [Data Explorer](#)

The proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains is lower in WA (19.4%) than in Australia overall (21.7%) (Table 16).

Almost one-half of Aboriginal children (45.2%) were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains. This figure has decreased since 2015 (47.5%) but is almost three times the incidence for non-Aboriginal children (17.6%).<sup>42</sup>

In WA, 38.5 per cent of children living in very remote areas are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains compared to 18.4 per cent of children who live in the metropolitan area.<sup>43</sup>

Over the last decade, the percentage of children who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains has decreased in the Perth metropolitan area by 5.1 percentage points from 23.5 per cent to 18.4 per cent but has increased in very remote areas by 3.2 percentage points from 35.3 per cent to 38.5 per cent.<sup>44</sup>

In 2018, almost one-tenth (9.4%) of WA children and young people were developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains. This is a reduction of 1.1 percentage points from 2015 (10.5%). A number of areas across WA have recorded reductions in the proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains since 2015.

40 The Australian Early Development Census measures the development of children in Australia in their first year of full-time school. Data is collected using an adapted version of the Early Development Instrument, which consists of approximately 100 questions closely linked to child health, education and social outcomes across five key domains. Children receive a score between zero and ten for each domain and children falling below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile are categorised as 'developmentally vulnerable'. AEDC scores are calculated for each domain for each individual child where enough valid responses have been recorded.

41 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) 2019, [Australian Early Development Census National Report 2018](#), AEDC. This is latest data available at publication date.

42 WA Department of Education 2019, *WA AEDC data – source Australian Early Development Census 2009–2018*, Custom report provided to the Commissioner for Children and Young people (unpublished).

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

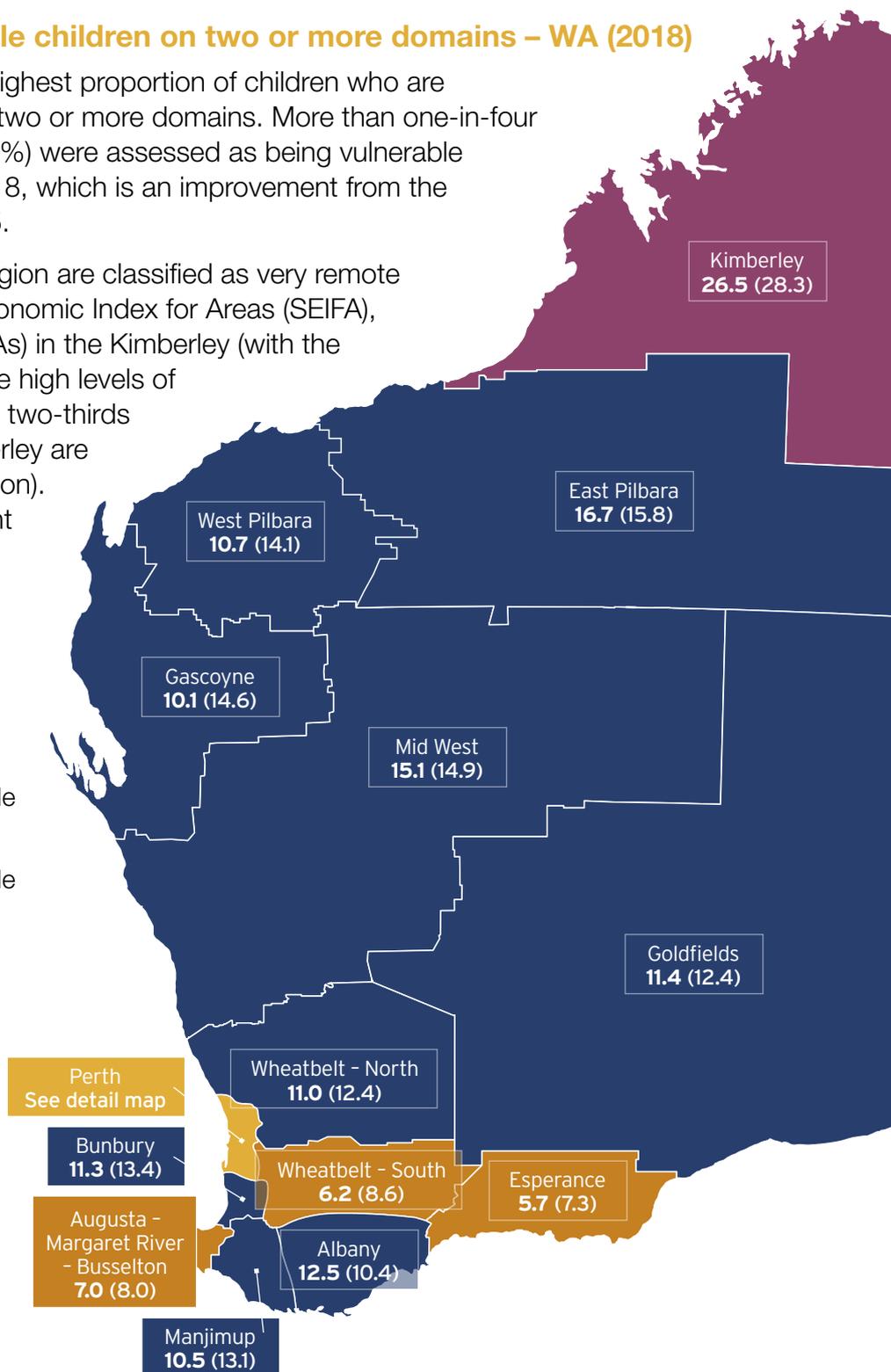
# Vulnerability

## Developmentally vulnerable children on two or more domains – WA (2018)

The Kimberley region has the highest proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains. More than one-in-four students in the Kimberley (26.5%) were assessed as being vulnerable on two or more domains in 2018, which is an improvement from the 28.5 per cent recorded in 2015.

Large parts of the Kimberley region are classified as very remote and according to the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA), all local government areas (LGAs) in the Kimberley (with the exception of Broome LGA) have high levels of disadvantage.<sup>45</sup> Further, almost two-thirds of school entrants in the Kimberley are Aboriginal (see chapter Education). Aboriginal people also represent 41.6 per cent of the Kimberley population, in comparison to 3.1 per cent of the WA population overall.<sup>46</sup>

- Below 10 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable
  - 10 to 20 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable
  - Greater than 20 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable
- ( ) Data in brackets is 2015 result



Source: Australian Early Development Census 2019, *Public table by Statistical Area Level (SA3) 2009–2018*

Note: Data for Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands is not included due to the relatively small number of children with valid scores.

45 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018, *2033.0.55.001 Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA), 2016*, Table 1 Local Government Area (LGA) SEIFA Summary, 2016, ABS.

46 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018, *2016 Census QuickStats: Kimberley*, ABS.

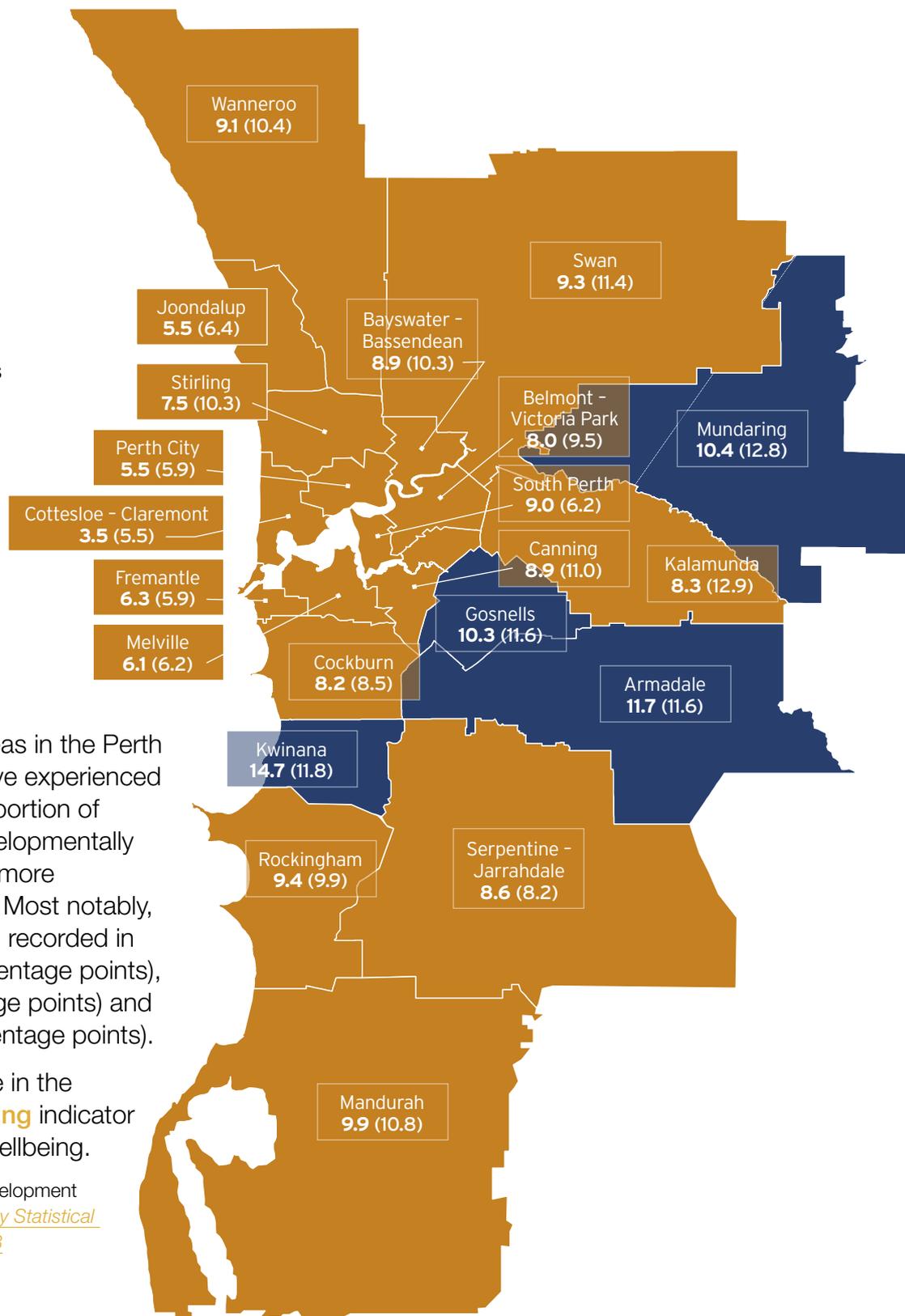
# Vulnerability

## Developmentally vulnerable children on two or more domains – metropolitan area (2018)

Below 10 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable

10 to 20 per cent of children are developmentally vulnerable

( ) Data in brackets is 2015 result



A number of local areas in the Perth metropolitan area have experienced reductions in the proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains since 2015. Most notably, decreases have been recorded in Kalamunda (4.6 percentage points), Stirling (2.8 percentage points) and Mundaring (2.4 percentage points).

More data is available in the **Readiness for learning** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

Source: Australian Early Development Census 2019, *Public table by Statistical Area Level (SA3) 2009–2018*

# Vulnerability

## Children and young people in the child protection system

Aboriginal children and young people continue to be over-represented in the child protection system.

At 30 June 2021, there were 5,344 children and young people in out-of-home care in WA, more than half of whom (57.2%) were Aboriginal.

From 30 June 2020 to 30 June 2021, the total number of children and young people in care decreased by 154, or 2.8 per cent (Table 17). The number of Aboriginal children and young people in care decreased by 0.8 per cent and the number of non-Aboriginal children and young people in care decreased by 5.3 per cent.

**Table 17: Children and young people in out-of-home care by age group and Aboriginal status, number, WA, 30 June 2020 and 30 June 2021**

	30 June 2021			30 June 2020		
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total
Less than 1 year	90	55	145	105	66	171
1 to 4 years	665	421	1,086	685	485	1,170
5 to 9 years	918	665	1,583	925	733	1,658
10 to 14 years	929	735	1,664	922	747	1,669
15 years and older	454	412	866	445	385	830
<b>Total children and young people in care</b>	<b>3,056</b>	<b>2,288</b>	<b>5,344</b>	<b>3,082</b>	<b>2,416</b>	<b>5,498</b>

Source: Department of Communities 2021, *Child Protection Activity Performance Report 2020–21*

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) publishes the *Child Protection Australia* report on an annual basis. This report provides detailed data from state and territory child protection agencies, including rates of children and young people being placed in out-of-home care.

At June 2020, Aboriginal children and young people in WA were 18 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Aboriginal children and young people (66.9 per 1,000 compared to 3.7 per 1,000).<sup>47</sup>

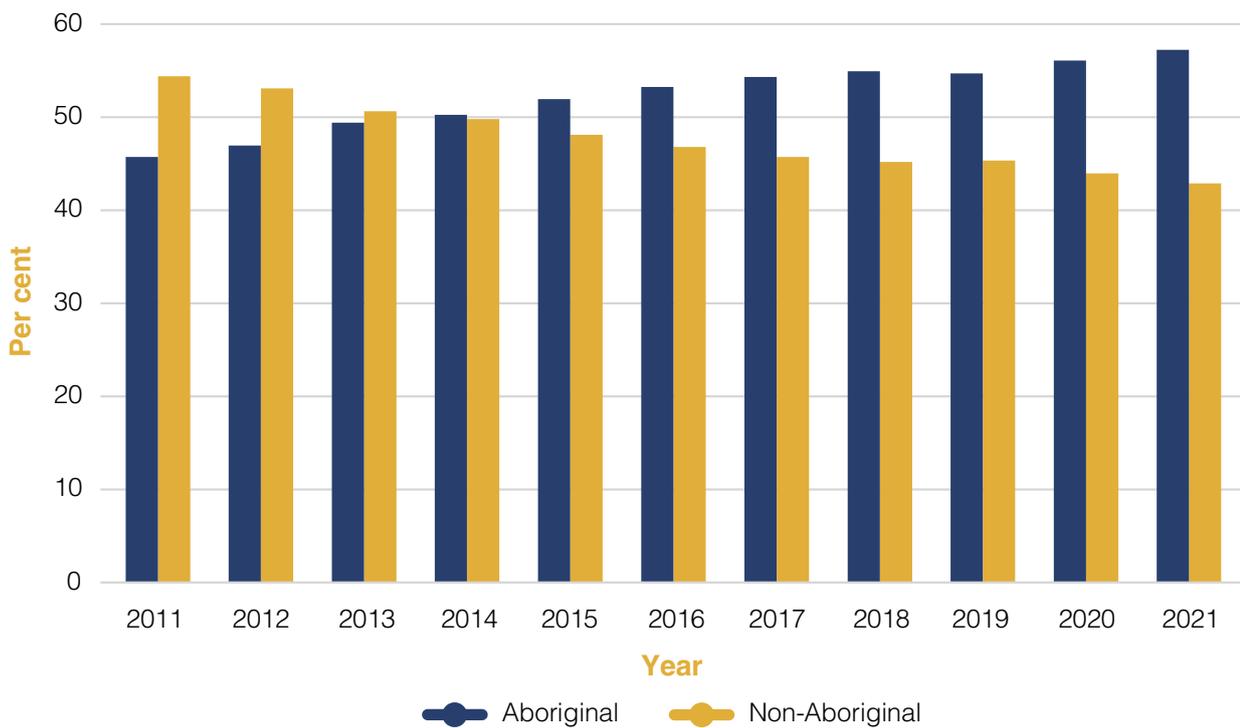
47 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, *Child Protection Australia, 2019–20*, Table S5.10: Children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status and state or territory, 30 June 2020, AIHW.

# Vulnerability

In the last 10 years, the number of Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care has increased by 90 per cent (2011: 1,607; 2021: 3,056), compared to a 20 per cent increase for non-Aboriginal children and young people (2011: 1,912; 2021: 2,288).<sup>48</sup>

The proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care in WA who are Aboriginal has increased from 45.7 per cent in 2011 to 57.2 per cent in 2021.

**Table 18: Proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care by Aboriginal status, per cent, WA, 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2021**



Department of Communities (and previously Department for Child Protection and Family Support), *Annual Reports from 2016–17 to 2020–21*

More data is available in the **Safe in the home** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

<sup>48</sup> Department of Communities (and previously Department of Child Protection), *Annual Reports from 2016–17 to 2020–21*.

## Children and young people in the youth justice system

On an average day<sup>49</sup> in 2019–20, there were 600 children and young people aged 10 to 17 years under youth justice supervision in WA, with the majority (501 or 83.5%) being supervised in the community (Table 19).

**Table 19: Children and young people aged 10 to 17 years under youth justice supervision in the community or detention on an average day, number and per cent, WA, 2017–18 to 2019–20**

	2019–20		2018–19		2017–18	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Community	501	83.5	590	81.4	594	80.2
Detention*	104	17.3	133	18.3	147	19.8
<b>Total**</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), *Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20*, Table S74a: Young people in detention in an average day by age, states and territories and Table S36a: Young people under community-based supervision on an average day, by age, states and territories

\* Children and young people in detention are held in Banksia Hill Detention Centre in Canning Vale, which is WA's only youth detention facility.

\*\* The number of young people on an average day may not sum due to rounding, and because some young people may have been moved between community-based supervision and detention on the same day. Caution is to be applied when interpreting trends among small populations such as these.

The number of children and young people under youth justice supervision on an average day decreased from 2018–19 to 2019–20. The Department of Justice reported that in 2019–20 there was a 42 per cent decrease in the number of young people from the Kimberley being transferred to Banksia Hill compared to 2018–19.<sup>50</sup>

During 2020–21, the Department of Justice reports an average population of 102 children and young people were held in Banksia Hill Detention Centre.<sup>51</sup>

Data from the AIHW, shows that a total of 1,463 children and young people were under youth justice supervision in WA during 2019–20. This included 12 children under 12 years of age and 143 children under 14 years of age who were held in detention at some time during the year.<sup>52</sup>

49 The 'average day' measure is calculated by summing the number of days each young person spends under supervision during the financial year, and dividing this by the total number of days in the year. It reflects the number under supervision on any given day during the year, and indicates the average number of young people supported by the supervision system at any time. This summary measure reflects both the number of young people supervised, and the amount of time they spent under supervision. Source: AIHW 2019, *Youth Justice in Australia 2017–18*, p. 44, AIHW.

50 Department of Justice 2020, *Annual Report 2019–20*, WA Government, p. 34.

51 Department of Justice 2021, *Annual Report 2020–21*, WA Government, p. 25.

52 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, *Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20*, Table S1b: Young people under supervision during the year by age, AIHW and Table S74b: Young people in detention during the year by age, AIHW.

## Vulnerability

In 2019–20, Aboriginal children and young people in WA were 36 times more likely than non-Aboriginal children and young people to be in held in youth detention. More than two-thirds (72.4%) of children and young people in detention on an average day are Aboriginal (Table 20).

**Table 20: Children and young people aged 10 to 17 years under community-based supervision or detention on an average day by Aboriginal status, number and rate, WA, 2019–20**

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total		Rate ratio Aboriginal/ Non-Aboriginal
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	
Community	282	160.1	218	9.0	501	19.3	17.8
Detention	75	42.6	29	1.2	104	4.0	36.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>201.1</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>19.9</b>

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), [Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20](#)

Female children and young people are significantly less likely to be under youth justice supervision than male children and young people. On an average day in 2019–20, 21.6 per cent of children and young people under community supervision and 10.6 per cent of children and young people in detention were female.<sup>53</sup>

The number of female children and young people in detention on an average day decreased from 14 in 2018–19 to 11 in 2019–20 in line with the overall decrease in children and young people in detention.<sup>54</sup>

In 2020, the AIHW released an analysis of children and young people under youth justice supervision and in child protection.<sup>55</sup> The report found that more than one-half (54%) of children and young people in the youth justice system in 2018–19 had received child protection services in the five years from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2019.<sup>56</sup>

More data is available in the **Contact with the youth justice system** indicator in the Indicators of Wellbeing.

53 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, [Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20](#), Table S134b and c: Young people under community-based supervision and detention on an average day by age, sex and Indigenous status, Western Australia, 2015–16 to 2019–20, AIHW.

54 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2021, [Youth Justice in Australia 2019–20](#), Table S134c: Young people in detention on an average day by age, sex and Indigenous status, Western Australia, 2014–15 to 2018–19, AIHW.

55 Receiving child protection services includes investigated notifications, children under care and protection orders and children in out-of-home care.

56 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2020, [Young people under youth justice supervision and in child protection 2018–19](#), AIHW.



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All photographs featured in this publication are of Western Australian children and young people and have been taken by or for the Commissioner for Children and Young People.