



Fact sheet



The facts on child abuse and neglect

Act for Kids is an Australian charity working tirelessly to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect.

Act for Kids is one of the most prominent providers of free professional therapy for children who have suffered abuse and support for families at risk.

With 22 centres from Adelaide to the Cape York Peninsula, Act for Kids has supported thousands of children and their families throughout Queensland for almost 29 years.

In 2014-15 we helped 15,868 Australians, 9 per cent increase from 2013-2014.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Child protection Australia 2014–15. Child welfare series no. 63. Cat. No. CWS 57. Canberra: AIHW.
<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129554728>

For more statistics about child abuse in Australia visit www.aihw.gov.au

*Reference for statistics (NAPCAN's 2010 National Survey)

It's bigger than stranger danger.

Child abuse and neglect is a very real social problem in Australia.

- In 2014–15 alone there were **320,200 reports** made to child protection authorities in Australia; **one child every two minutes**.
- In that same 12 months, **42,457 children suffered abuse or neglect; that's one child every 13 minutes**.
 - In New South Wales, there were 15,022 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In Victoria, there were 13,300 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In Queensland, there were 5,869 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In Western Australia, there were 3,382 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In South Australia, there were 1,908 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In Tasmania, there were 833 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In Australia Capital Territory, there were 386 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
 - In the Northern Territory, there were 1,757 children confirmed as abused or neglected.
- 1 in 5 children were the subjects of multiple substantiations.
- Of the 11,581 children admitted to out-of-home care during 2014-15, **5,307 (46%) were under the age of 5**.
- At 30 June 2015, there were **43,400 children and young people in out-of-home care**.
- Almost half (47%) of all **children admitted to orders were aged between 0 and 4**.
- **Children under 12 months old were the most likely to suffer abuse or neglect**.
- Nationally, emotional abuse was the most prevalent type, confirmed in 43% of cases (23,678), closely followed by neglect in 26% of cases (16,060).
- Emotional abuse and neglect are the most likely types to co-occur, with an average co-occurrence of 32% and 28% respectively.



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The facts on child abuse and neglect

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With 19 centres from Adelaide to the Cape York Peninsula, Act for Kids has supported thousands of children and their families throughout Queensland for almost 27 years.

In 2013-14 we helped 14,500 Australians, 24 per cent increase from 2012-2013.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Child protection Australia 2013–14*. Child welfare series no. 61. Cat. No. CWS 52. Canberra: AIHW.
<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129550762>

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*Reference for statistics (NAPCAN's 2010 National Survey)

- In Australia, police were the most common source of reports at 22%, followed by school personnel at 17%.
- Sadly, less than 35%* of adults say they would report suspected child abuse to police, even if a child disclosed sexual abuse.
- 11,675 (39.8 per 1,000) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were the subject of a child protection substantiation: 7 times the rate of non-Indigenous children (5.9 per 1,000).
- Overall, the most common type of substantiated abuse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children was neglect and emotional abuse, each representing 38% of substantiations (compared with 21% and 46% for non-Indigenous children).
- At 30 June 2015, there were 15,455 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care, a rate of 52.5 per 1,000 children. Nationally, the rate of Indigenous children in out-of-home care was 9.5 times the rate for non-Indigenous children.
- The reasons for the over-representation of Indigenous children in child protection substantiations are complex. The legacy of past policies of forced removal; intergenerational effects of previous separations from family and culture; lower socioeconomic status; and perceptions arising from cultural differences in child-rearing practices are all underlying causes for their over-representation in the system.
- No official statistics or reports show the true extent of the problem, with many cases of abuse or neglect going unreported.
- Child abuse and neglect can have long term physical, psychological, cognitive, behavioural and social consequences, which are often interrelated.
- If a child experiences abuse or neglect at a young age, often their brain may not develop properly. Without intervention, impairments can be permanent.
- For some adult survivors, the effects of child abuse and neglect are chronic and debilitating, while others have more positive outcomes – early intervention and professional support can make a real difference.
- In 2009 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020*, committing to achieving a substantial, sustained reduction in child abuse and neglect in Australia. Act for Kids is part of a coalition working to ensure these national reforms produce better protection for children.