

# What DoCS data tell us about Aboriginal clients



### **Authors**

Venessa Smoothy and Merran Butler

### **Acknowledgements**

Many thanks to Marilyn Chilvers for her invaluable input and guidance throughout the project.

### **Produced by**

Economics, Statistics and Research  
Service System Development  
NSW Department of Community Services  
4-6 Cavill Avenue  
Ashfield NSW 2131  
Phone (02) 9716 2222

[www.community.nsw.gov.au](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au)

*“The cold statistics of Aboriginal over-representation in the child protection and out-of-home care ... systems ... indicate a substantial level of disadvantage for Aboriginal people ... Considerable resources are now applied across the Department to strengthen and improve service planning and delivery for Aboriginal children and young people, families and communities, as well as provide better support structures and relevant developmental opportunities for Aboriginal staff. However further collective effort within the Department is vital if real changes are to occur. The challenge faced by DoCS is to consciously change the way we work and recognise that a core responsibility of our agency is to improve our responsiveness to the needs of Aboriginal clients.”<sup>1</sup>*

## ABOUT THIS PAPER

Throughout this paper, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW.

DoCS data on Aboriginality has been sourced from the Indigenous status field in DoCS Key Information and Directory System (KiDS). This field allows caseworkers to select a child or young person’s Indigenous status from five coded fields being: 1) Aboriginal 2) Torres Strait Islander 3) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4) Not Indigenous and 5) Not Stated. Therefore, throughout this paper where Aboriginal children and young people are referred to, this is a summation of the first three coded fields. Where non-Aboriginal or other children are referred to, this is a summation of the “not Indigenous” and “not stated” fields. Table B1 in Appendix B shows reports received by DoCS in 2006/07 by Indigenous status recorded in KiDS.

The recording of a child’s Aboriginality in KiDS has improved over time. While this field was made a mandatory data item in October 2003, the KiDS system did not enforce this rule until mid 2004. Because of the volatility in recording of Aboriginality over time, this paper largely focuses on current data.

Unless otherwise stated, data sources used throughout this paper are:

### ***Child Protection:***

2000/01 – September 2003: Client Information System (CIS) – Annual Statistical Extracts

October 2003 - 2006/07: Key Information and Directory System (KiDS) – Annual Statistical Extract

### ***Out-of-home care:***

2002/03 – 2004/05 and 2006/07 cohort analysis: Integrated Substitute Care Database statistical extracts

2005/06 and 2006/07: Corporate Information Warehouse Annual Statistical Extracts

---

<sup>1</sup> Message from the Director-General, *DoCS Aboriginal strategic commitment 2006-2011*, NSW Department of Community Services, 2006.

## SECTION 1. CHILD PROTECTION REPORTS

### KEY FINDINGS

- In 2006/07 there were 49,443 child protection reports involving Aboriginal children, more than two and a half times that received in 2001/02. Over the same period the number of reports received about non-Aboriginal children and young people increased by 67%.
- From 2001/02 to 2006/07 the number of Aboriginal children and young people reported to DoCS more than doubled, compared to an increase of 39% for other children.
- The rate of reporting about Aboriginal children, compared with the population, is higher than that for other children across all age groups but particularly for children aged less than one.
- Aboriginal children were more likely than other children to be reported by the Police and Relatives/friends/neighbours.
- Most (89%) Aboriginal children reported in 2006/07 were referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment. 82% of other children reported were referred.
- In 2006/07, a greater proportion of reports about Aboriginal children received a required response time of less than 24 hours compared to non-Aboriginal children. They also received a higher risk of harm rating.
- Western, Northern and Southern regions had the highest proportions of referred reports involving Aboriginal children.
- The number of Aboriginal children reported with a child protection history has been consistently higher than the number of new Aboriginal children reported over the period 2001/02 to 2006/07. For non-Aboriginal children the number of new children has been fairly stable, while the number with a child protection history has increased significantly.
- In 2006/07, three quarters of Aboriginal children reported were already known to DoCS, compared to 54% of other children reported.
- An average of 3.1 reports per Aboriginal child was received in 2006/07, compared to an average of 2.2 reports for other children.
- A higher proportion of Aboriginal children received multiple reports in 2006/07 than other children. The percentage of Aboriginal children with 5 or more reports was almost twice that of other children.
- In 2006/07, Aboriginal children were more likely than other children to be reported for neglect and carer issues.

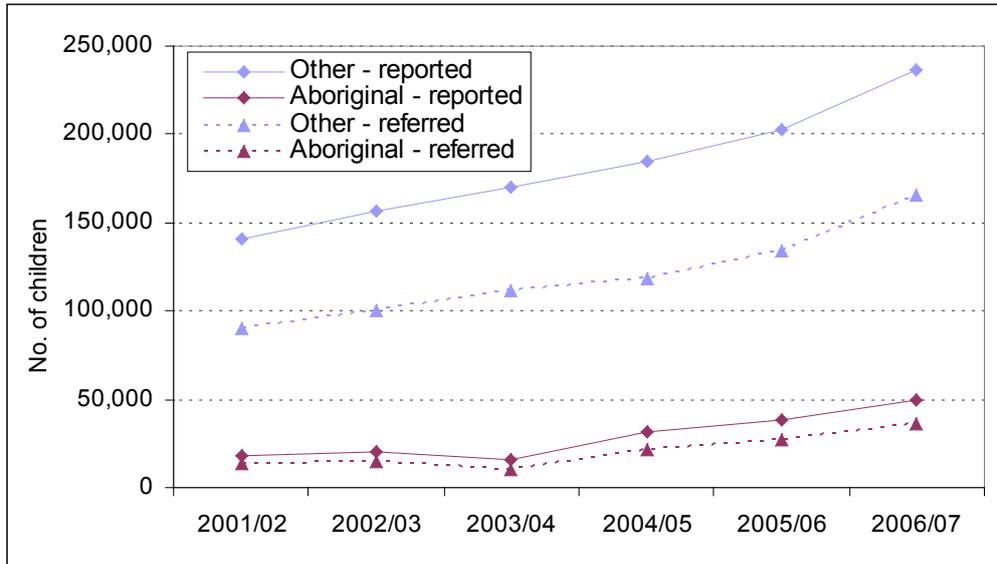
### 1a. Number of reports and children reported

#### Number of reports

Over the six-year period from 2001/02 to 2006/07, the number of child protection reports received by DoCS about both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people increased, as shown in Figure 1. However, the increase in the number of child protection reports about Aboriginal children has been greater than that for other children. Over the period, the number of reports about Aboriginal children increased more than two and half times from 18,348 in 2001/02 to 49,443 in 2006/07. This compares with an increase of 67%, from 141,295 in 2001/02 to 236,590 in 2006/07, for reports about other children. In 2001/02, reports about Aboriginal children accounted for 11% of all reports to DoCS. This had increased to 17% in 2006/07, although Aboriginal children and young represented only about 4% of the total number of children and young people aged 0-17 years in NSW.

In 2006/07, 73% of reports about Aboriginal children and young people were referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment compared to 70% of reports about other children. These percentages have remained relatively stable over the period 2001/02 to 2006/07.

**Figure 1: Reports made to DoCS and those referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07**



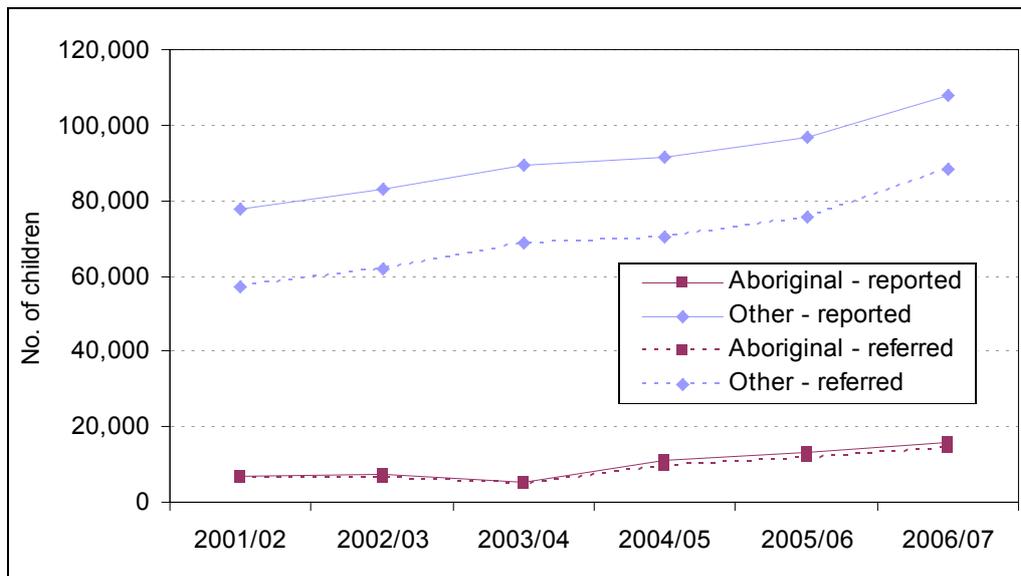
**Number of children and young people reported**

Figure 2 shows that over the six-year period, the number of Aboriginal children and young people reported to DoCS more than doubled from 7,093 children in 2001/02 to 15,820 children in 2006/07, while the number of other children reported increased by 39% from 77,872 to 107,870. In 2001/02 Aboriginal children made up 8% of all children reported to DoCS while in 2006/07 this had risen to 13%.

Figure 2 also shows that the proportion of Aboriginal children and young people referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment was higher than for other children. The percentage of Aboriginal children referred to a CSC/JIRT remained fairly stable over the period at around 88% while the percentage of other children referred to a CSC/JIRT increased from 73% in 2001/02 to 82% in 2006/07.

The average number of reports received about Aboriginal children per year was greater than the average for other children. In 2006/07, 3.1 reports per child were received about Aboriginal children compared with an average of 2.2 reports for other children.

**Figure 2: Children and young people reported to DoCS and children referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07**



## Number of reports and children reported – Adjusted data

Aboriginal identification and recording in KiDS has improved over time. The Indigenous status field in KiDS was made a mandatory data item in October 2003. However, the KiDS system did not enforce this rule until mid 2004.

It is difficult to separate increases caused by these changes from the overall increases observed in the numbers of reports involving Aboriginal children and the number of Aboriginal children reported to DoCS.

However, the data has been adjusted in an attempt to do this. If any report over the period 1999/00 to 2006/07 about a child or young person was recorded as being of Aboriginal status, then all reports received about that child over the period are identified as being of Aboriginal status. It should be noted that this method has not been tested for accuracy; a case file audit would be required to get a better estimate of the level of accuracy in the recording of data in the Indigenous status field in KiDS.

The data adjustment results in a substantial increase in the number of reports about Aboriginal children and in the number of Aboriginal children reported per year as shown in Table 1 below. This table also shows that the overall increase and average annual increase in reports and children across the period decreases substantially when adjusted data are used.

Appendix A examines the original data (as recorded in KiDS) with this adjusted data in more detail.

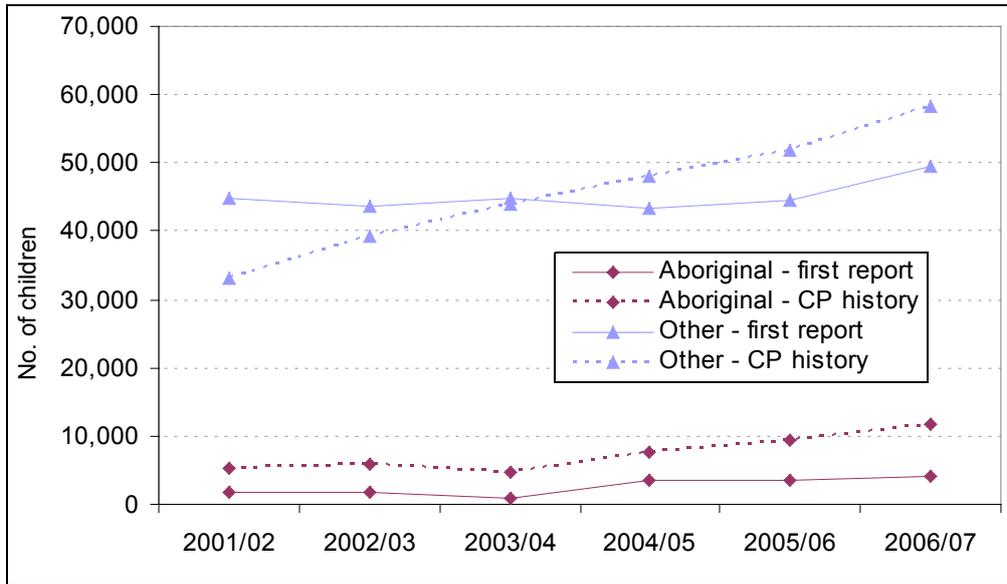
**Table 1: Reports made about Aboriginal children and Aboriginal children reported to DoCS, 2001/02 to 2006/07, original and adjusted data**

	Reports about Aboriginal children				Aboriginal children reported			
	Original data	Adjusted data	Difference	% Change	Original data	Adjusted data	Difference	% Change
2001/02	18,348	23,882	5,534	30.2	7,093	9,600	2,507	35.3
2002/03	20,017	27,044	7,027	35.1	7,597	10,424	2,827	37.2
2003/04	15,495	28,569	13,074	84.4	5,630	10,673	5,043	89.6
2004/05	31,526	38,326	6,800	21.6	10,910	13,717	2,807	25.7
2005/06	38,297	43,566	5,269	13.8	13,092	15,002	1,910	14.6
2006/07	49,443	52,294	2,851	5.8	15,820	16,775	955	6.0
Overall increase 2001/02 to 2006/07	169%	119%			123%	75%		
Avg annual increase 2001/02 to 2006/07	28%	17%			23%	12%		

### 1b. Children with a Child Protection history

Figure 3 shows the number of Aboriginal and other children reported to DoCS by whether the child or young person had been reported previously (history from 1987/88). The pattern for Aboriginal children was quite different to that for other children. In 2006/07, 75% of Aboriginal children reported to DoCS had a child protection history compared with 54% of other children. For each year from 2001/02 to 2006/07, there were more Aboriginal children reported to DoCS who already had a child protection history than there were Aboriginal children who were not previously known. For non-Aboriginal children the number of new children reported to DoCS between 2001/02 to 2005/06 remained stable at around 44,000 per year and increased to 49,497 in 2006/07. Comparatively, the number of non-Aboriginal children with a child protection history increased by 76% from 2001/02 to 2006/07.

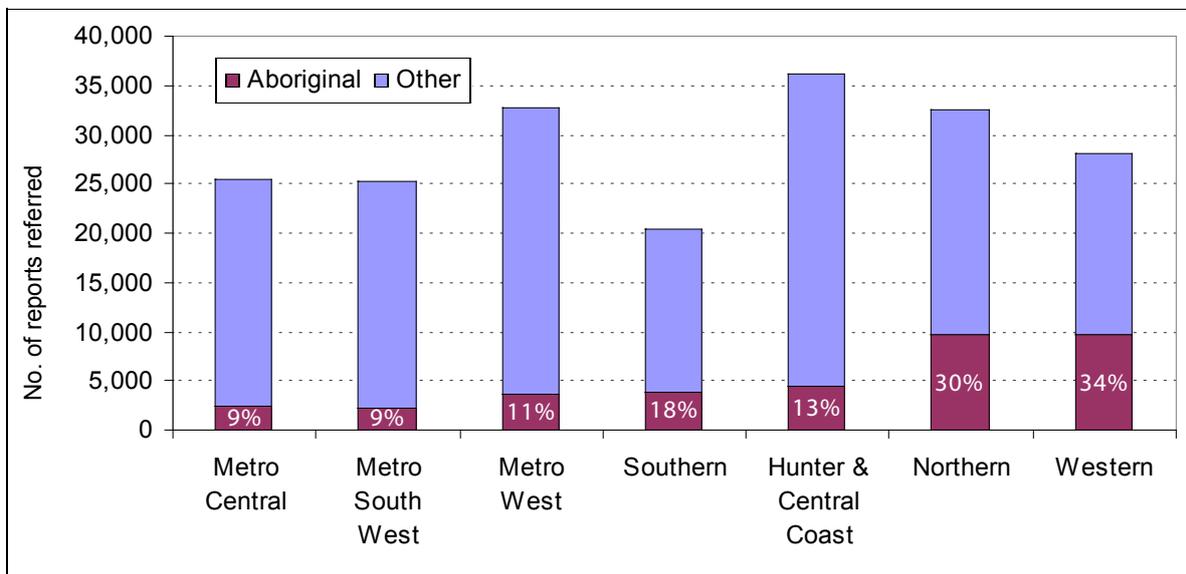
**Figure 3: Children and young people reported to DoCS by Aboriginality and child protection history status, 2001/02 to 2006/07**



### 1c. Region

Figure 4 shows that Western, Northern and Southern regions had the highest proportions of reports referred to a CSC/JIRT for further assessment involving Aboriginal children and young people (34%, 30% and 18% respectively). This compares to around 10% for the other regions.

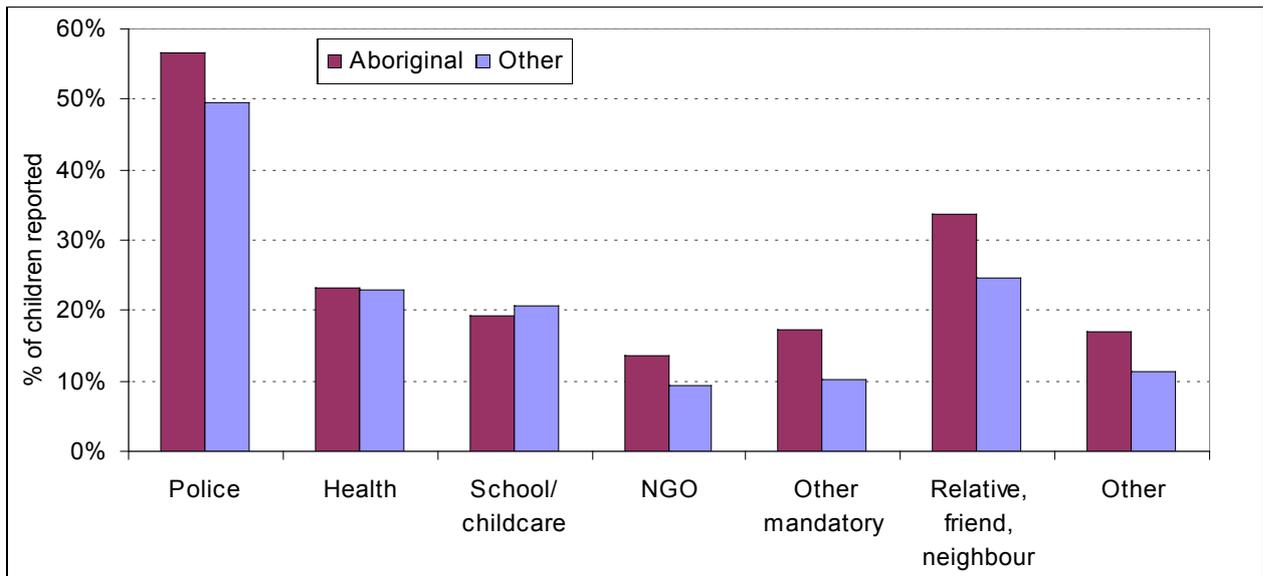
**Figure 4: Number of reports referred to a CSC/JIRT for further assessment by DoCS region and Aboriginality, 2006/07**



### 1d. Reporter types

Figure 5 examines the percentage of children and young people who were reported to DoCS at least once in 2006/07 by various reporter types and Aboriginality. A higher proportion of Aboriginal children reported to DoCS in 2006/07 were reported, at some stage during that year, by Police (57% of Aboriginal children compared with 49% of other children) and Relatives/friends/neighbours (34% compared with 25%). The proportions of Aboriginal children and other children reported by Health and School/Childcare were similar.

**Figure 5: Percentage of children and young people reported to DoCS with reports from each reporter type by Aboriginality, 2006/07**



Notes: Groups are not mutually exclusive; children may be reported by one or more reporter types throughout the year.

### 1e. Required response time

Table 2 examines the required response time and risk of harm determined during the initial assessment of reports referred to CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment.

A greater proportion of reports involving Aboriginal children that were referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment had a required response time of less than 24 hours (13%) than for referred reports involving other children (9%). This is reversed for reports with a required response time of less than 10 days where 42% of referred reports involving Aboriginal children had a required response time of less than 10 days compared with 49% of referred reports involving other children.

Looking at the risk of harm field in KiDS shows that 41% of referred reports involving Aboriginal children and young people were considered to be 'high risk' following initial assessment. This compares with 36% of referred reports involving other children that were considered to be 'high risk'.

**Table 2: Required response time and risk of harm for reports referred to CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2006/07**

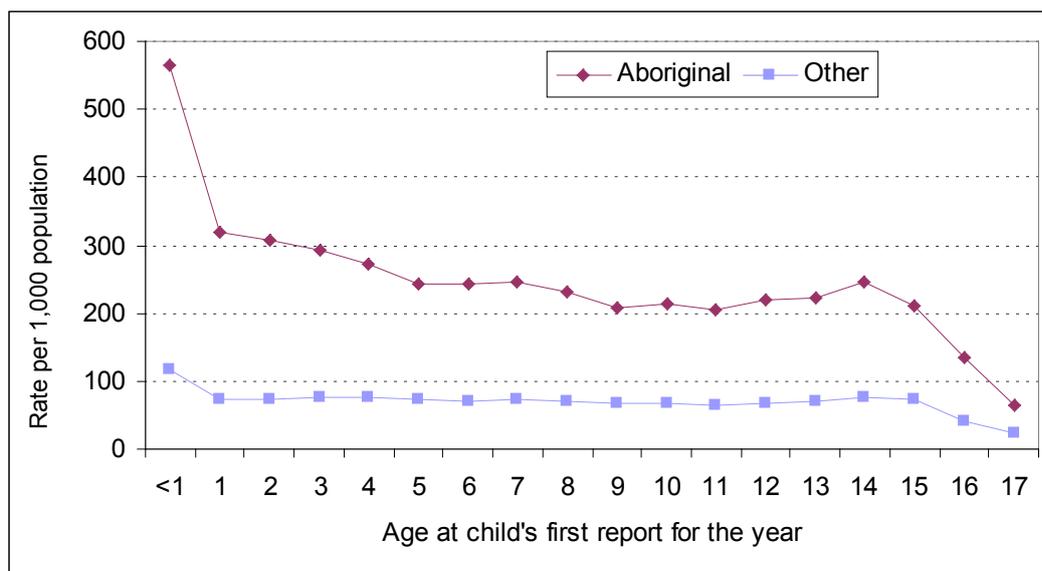
	Aboriginal		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Required response time</i>						
Less than 24 hours	4,584	12.7	14,609	8.8	19,193	9.5
Less than 72 hours	13,763	38.3	59,924	36.3	73,687	36.6
Less than 10 days	14,955	41.6	81,702	49.4	96,657	48.0
10 days or more	111	0.3	448	0.3	559	0.3
None required/not stated	2,559	7.1	8,553	5.2	11,112	5.5
<b>Total reports referred</b>	<b>35,972</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>165,236</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>201,208</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<i>Risk of harm</i>						
High	14,903	41.4	59,076	35.8	73,979	36.8
Medium	15,072	41.9	77,995	47.2	93,067	46.3
Low	3,337	9.3	19,299	11.7	22,636	11.3
None/not entered	2,660	7.4	8,866	5.4	11,526	5.7
<b>Total reports referred</b>	<b>35,972</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>165,236</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>201,208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 1f. Age at time of report

In 2006/07 for every 1,000 Aboriginal children and young people in NSW, around 251 were reported to DoCS. This compares to a rate of 72 per 1,000 for other children. Rates of children reported to DoCS vary considerably by age group and Aboriginality.

Figure 6 shows that the rate of reporting about Aboriginal children was higher than the rate of reporting about other children for all ages. While it varies across age, it is most noticeable for children aged less than one year. For every 1,000 Aboriginal children aged less than one year in NSW, 565 (or 1 in 2) were reported to DoCS while for every 1,000 non-Aboriginal children aged less than one year in NSW, 116 (or 1 in 9) were reported.

**Figure 6: Rate of children reported to DoCS per 1,000 population by age group and Aboriginality, 2006/07**



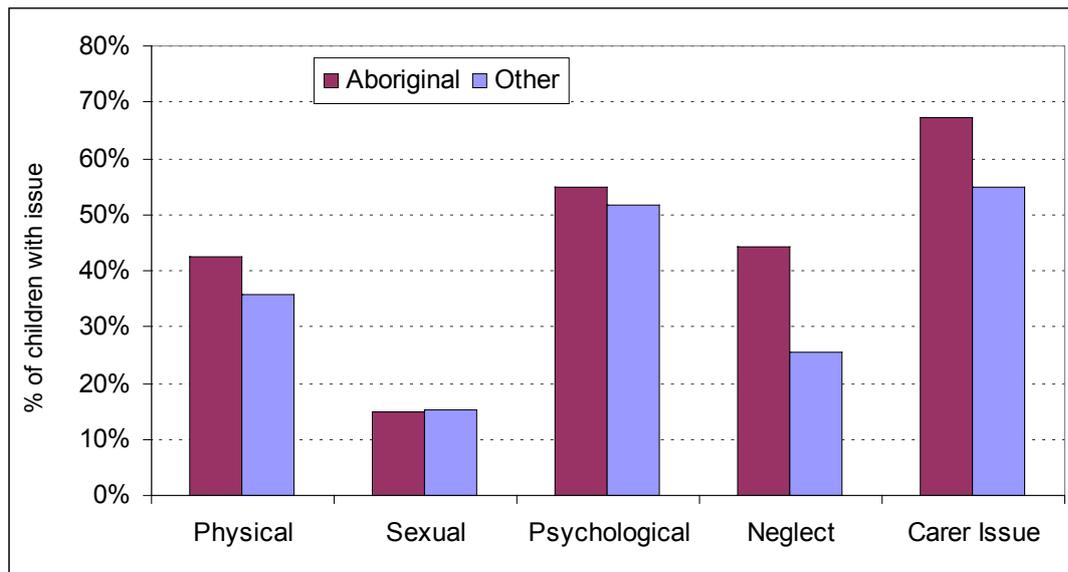
Notes: Age is child's age at time of first report for a given year. Base population is sourced from ABS Census 2006. The less than 1 year category includes children who were first reported pre-natally in 2006/07. The population figures do not include unborn children.

## 1g. Reported issues

Each initial assessment record in KiDS allows for the entering of up to three reported issues (from a list of 47 issues) in coded fields. Figures 7 and 8 depict the percentage of Aboriginal children and other children where selected reported issues were recorded in any reports received about them in 2006/07. Appendix D shows the full list of issues which falls under each of the categories presented in Figures 7 and 8.

A reported issue categorised as neglect was recorded in the reports of 44% of Aboriginal children and young people reported to DoCS, compared with 26% of other children. Carer issues were recorded in the reports of 67% of Aboriginal children compared with 55% of other children.

**Figure 7: Percentage of children and young people by reported issue type and Aboriginality, 2006/07**

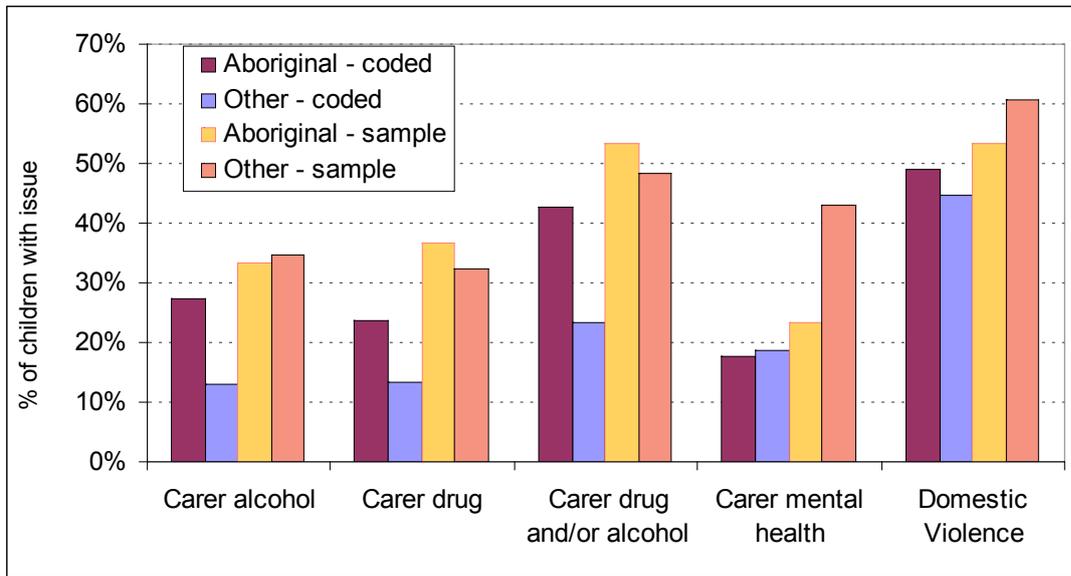


It is known that those issues recorded in the coded reported issue fields in KiDS are subject to under-enumeration. A study conducted by the Economics and Statistics Branch in 2006 examined the child protection history of a sample of 200 children that were reported to DoCS in 2004/05. The results of this study are also shown, for comparative purposes, in Figure 8 and labelled as 'sample'.

During 2006/07, domestic violence was the most frequently reported issue with 49% of Aboriginal children reported and 45% of other children reported having had this issue feature in the coded field of their reports. The percentage of Aboriginal children with the following issues in their reports was around twice that of non-Aboriginal children: carer alcohol (27% compared to 13%), carer drug (24% compared to 13%) and carer drug and/or alcohol (43% compared to 23%).

Interestingly, when data from the sample are compared, the percentages of Aboriginal children with carer alcohol or carer drug use as issues are far closer to those for other children. This suggests that the problem of under-recording is more prevalent for non-Aboriginal families. That is, where present, the selected carer issues are less likely to be recorded for non-Aboriginal children than for Aboriginal children.

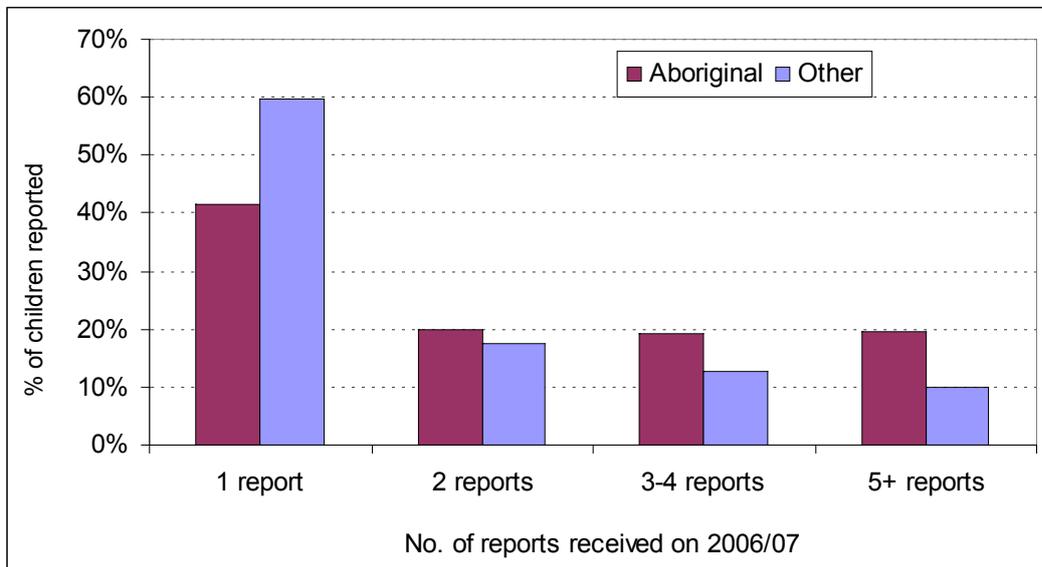
**Figure 8: Percentage of children and young people with selected reported issues in their reports by Aboriginality, 2006/07**



### 1h. Concentration of reports

In 2006/07, a higher proportion of Aboriginal children and young people received multiple reports than other children (see Figure 9). Just over two-fifths (41%) of Aboriginal children reported had one report in 2006/07 compared with three-fifths (60%) of other children. The percentage of Aboriginal children with five or more reports (19%) was almost twice that for other children (10%).

**Figure 9: Percentage of children and young people by number of reports received and Aboriginality, 2006/07**



## SECTION 2. RE-REPORTING: ANALYSIS OF A COHORT OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

### KEY FINDINGS

Based on a cohort of children and young people reported during July-September 2004:

- The more reports received about a child or young person, whether Aboriginal or not, the more likely it is that the child or young person will be re-reported within 12 months.
- However, the overall likelihood for Aboriginal children to be re-reported is greater than that for other children.
- Aboriginal children with a child protection history and who had been in a placement were the most likely to be re-reported.
- When controlling for all other factors, the most significant factors in determining whether a child will be re-reported were child protection history, age, Aboriginality and out-of-home care history, with all increasing the likelihood of re-reporting.
- For Aboriginal children reported, other less significant factors were reports involving neglect issues and reports with carer mental health issues. These factors also increased the likelihood of re-reporting.

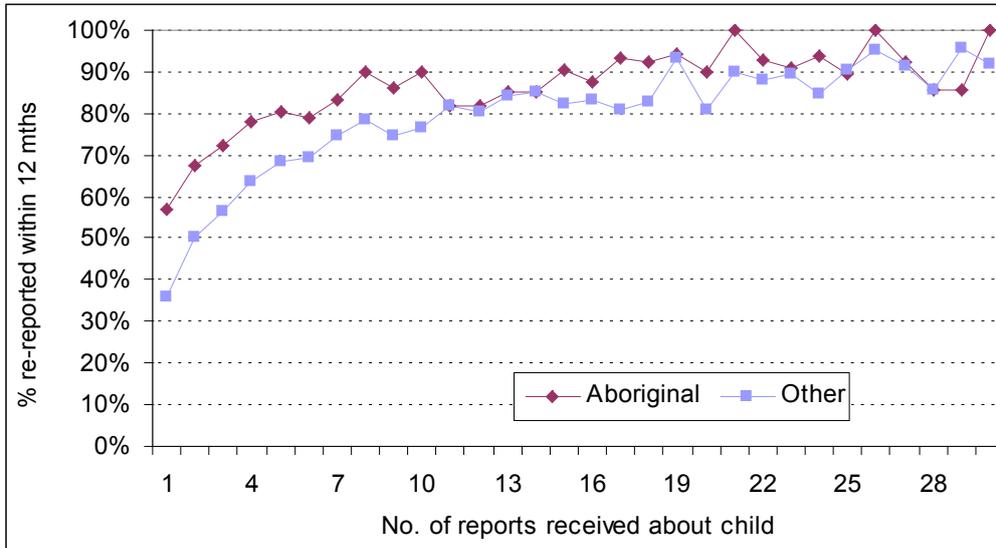
### Introduction and Method

The following analysis is based on a cohort of children and young people aged 0-16 years reported in July-September 2004 (reference report) and follows their child protection outcomes in KiDS for 12 months. If the child was reported more than once during this period, the first report was used in the cohort for the analysis and became the reference report. The children's full electronic child protection histories were examined (5 years' history) to determine the number of prior reports for the child. The cohort was restricted to a maximum age of 16 years so that all children could be followed for a full 12 months and that there was no bias due to the young person turning 18 years.

#### 2a. Re-reporting within 12 months

Figure 10 shows the likelihood of being re-reported by the number of reports for Aboriginal and other children and young people. The more reports that have been received about a child, the more likely it was that the child was reported again within 12 months – however, the overall likelihood for Aboriginal children to be re-reported was greater than that for other children. Once an Aboriginal child received their first report, they were more likely to be reported again within 12 months than not, with the likelihood of re-report being 57%. This compares to 36% for other children. For Aboriginal children the likelihood of re-report increases to over two-thirds (68%) from the second report onwards and to over 80% from the fifth report onwards. Comparatively, for other children, the likelihood of re-report rises above two-thirds (68%) from the fifth report onwards and above 80% for 10 or more reports.

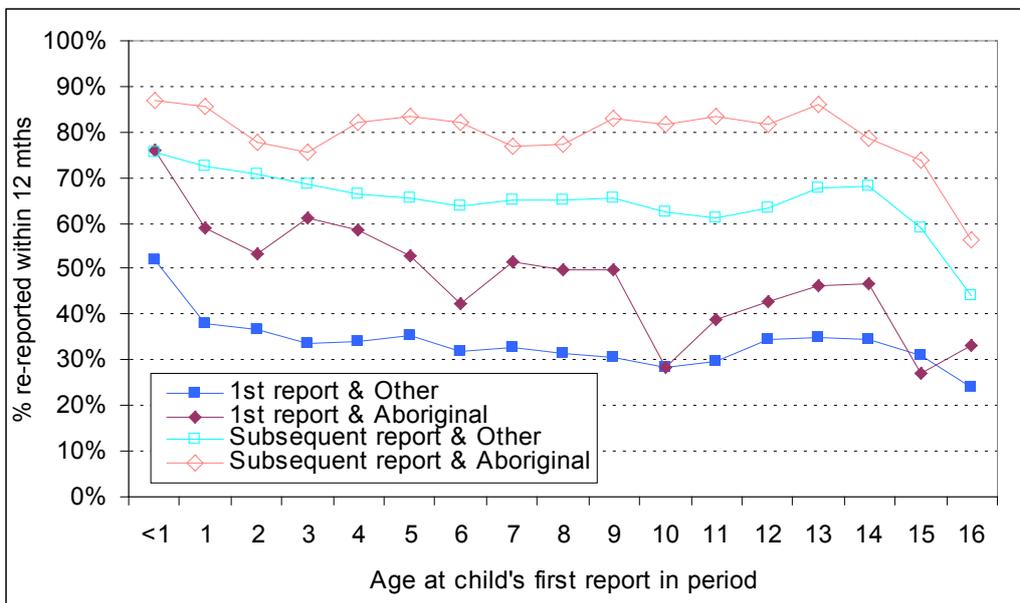
**Figure 10: Percentage of children and young people aged 0-16 years reported July-September 2004 who were re-reported within 12 months, by Aboriginality and number of reports received about the child in 2005/06**



Taking into account Aboriginality, child protection history and age, children with prior reports who were Aboriginal were the most likely to be re-reported at any age, as shown in Figure 11. Children with a child protection history and who were non-Aboriginal were the next most likely group to be re-reported.

For children reported for the first time, those aged less than one year were substantially more likely to be re-reported than other age groups. This was the case for both Aboriginal and other children.

**Figure 11: Percentage of children aged 0-16 years reported July-September 2004 who were re-reported within 12 months by Age, Aboriginality and Child Protection History**



## 2b. Re-reporting rate based on the child's child protection history, Aboriginality and placement history

Table 3 examines a child's propensity to be re-reported when their out-of-home care placement history and child protection report history are accounted for. Aboriginal children with a child protection history who had previously been in a placement were found to be the most likely to be re-reported (88% of children re-reported). The next most frequently re-reported group were Aboriginal children with a child protection history, but no history of being in a placement (79%). The group least likely to be re-reported were other children for whom this was their first report, and who had no out-of-home care placement history (36%).

**Table 3: Number and percentage of children reported July-September 2004 who were re-reported within 12 months by Aboriginality, child protection history and placement history**

Child and report factors	Child Protection Status after 12 months					
	Not re-reported		Re-reported		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
First ever report, Non-Indigenous, no placement history	6,538	64.1	3,654	35.9	10,192	100.0
First ever report, Indigenous, no placement history	357	42.8	477	57.2	834	100.0
Subsequent report, Non-Indigenous, no placement history	5,938	36.2	10,452	63.8	16,390	100.0
Subsequent report, Non-Indigenous, placement history	415	21.6	1,502	78.4	1,917	100.0
Subsequent report, Indigenous, no placement history	581	21.0	2,191	79.0	2,772	100.0
Subsequent report, Indigenous, placement history	83	12.4	588	87.6	671	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,924</b>	<b>42.5</b>	<b>18,873</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>32,797</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Very few children had no child protection history but had previously been in a placement and they were therefore not shown in Table 2.

## 2c. Factors predicting re-reporting

Multivariate analysis (logistic regression) has been undertaken to determine which factors were still significant in predicting re-reporting after controlling for all of the other factors. Three logistic regressions were undertaken to examine the effect of the Aboriginal variable:

1. population of children and young people reported in July-September 2004;
2. population of Aboriginal children and young people reported in July-September 2004 and factors that were significant in the first regression; and,
3. population of other children and young people reported in July-September 2004 and factors that were significant in the first regression.

For all three regressions child protection history, age and out-of-home care history were the most significant factors in determining re-reporting with all increasing the likelihood of being re-reported.

In the first regression (population of children reported in July-September 2004) Aboriginal status was also determined to significantly increase the likelihood of re-reporting. In addition, all other factors were found to be significant although to a less extent. Similarly, in the third regression (population of other children reported in July-September 2004) most other factors were found to be significant but to a lesser extent.

In the second regression (population of Aboriginal children reported in July-September 2004) the only other factors found to be significant (but less so) were reports involving neglect issues and reports with carer mental health issues as a reported issue. Both of these factors also increased the likelihood of being re-reported.

Appendix C outlines the factors used and the detailed results from the regression analyses (see Tables C1, C2 and C3).

## SECTION 3. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE

### KEY FINDINGS

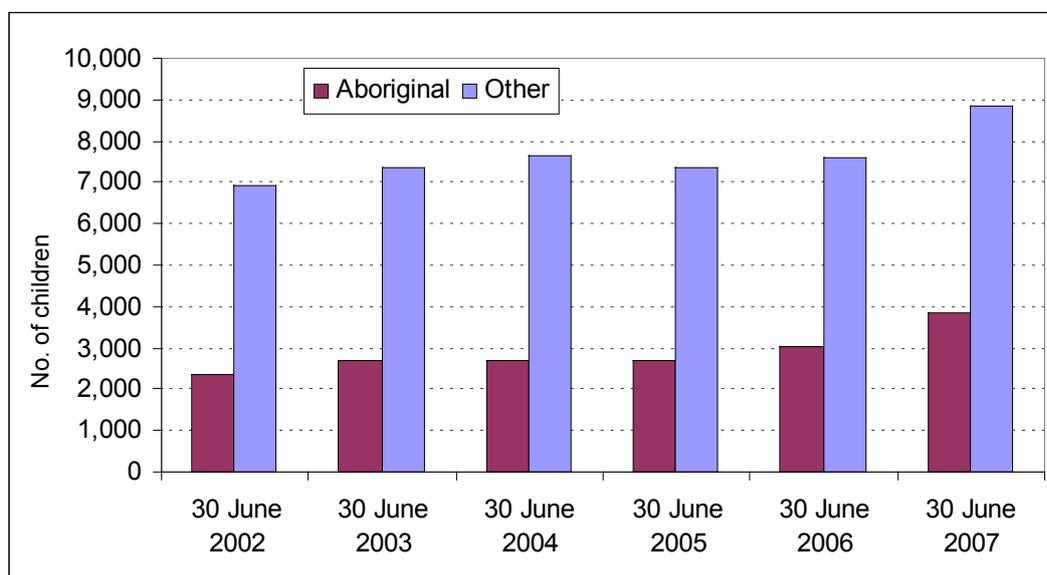
- In 2006/07, 30% of children and young people in out-of-home care were identified as Aboriginal.
- Between 2002 and 2007, there has been a 65% increase in the number of Aboriginal children in care. This compares to an increase of 28% for non-Aboriginal children.
- The overall rate of Aboriginal children in care is significantly higher than for other children (61 per 1,000 compared to 6 per 1,000) and across all age groups.
- The rates of both Aboriginal and other children and young people in out-of-home care are greatest for those aged four to 15 years. Conversely, the highest rates of children reported are found in the youngest age groups.
- The pattern of children and young people entering care during 2006/07 is similar for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children. For both groups the numbers (and rates per 1,000 population) are greatest for children aged less than one.
- Western and Northern regions had the highest proportions of Aboriginal children and young people in care.
- 64% of Aboriginal children and young people in care were in Relative and Kinship Care at 30 June 2007, compared with 46% of other children.
- The length of time in current care period was similar for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children.
- Aboriginal children were less likely than other children to have multiple placements.
- Of those children that entered care for the first time in 2006/07 and who had a child protection report before entering care, 28% were identified as Aboriginal.

### 3a. Children and young people in care

There were 12,712 children and young people in out-of-home care at 30 June 2007. Of these, 3,865, or 30% were identified as Aboriginal. This compares to around 4% of the NSW population of children and young people aged 0-17 years being Aboriginal. Figure 12 shows that there was a 65% increase in Aboriginal children in care from 2002 to 2007, compared with an increase of 28% for other children.

While Aboriginal clients make up over one-quarter of all children in care, the difference in the rate of Aboriginal compared to other children in care is significant. At 30 June 2007, for every 1,000 Aboriginal children and young people in NSW, 61 were in care. This figure compares with just 6 per 1,000 for other children.

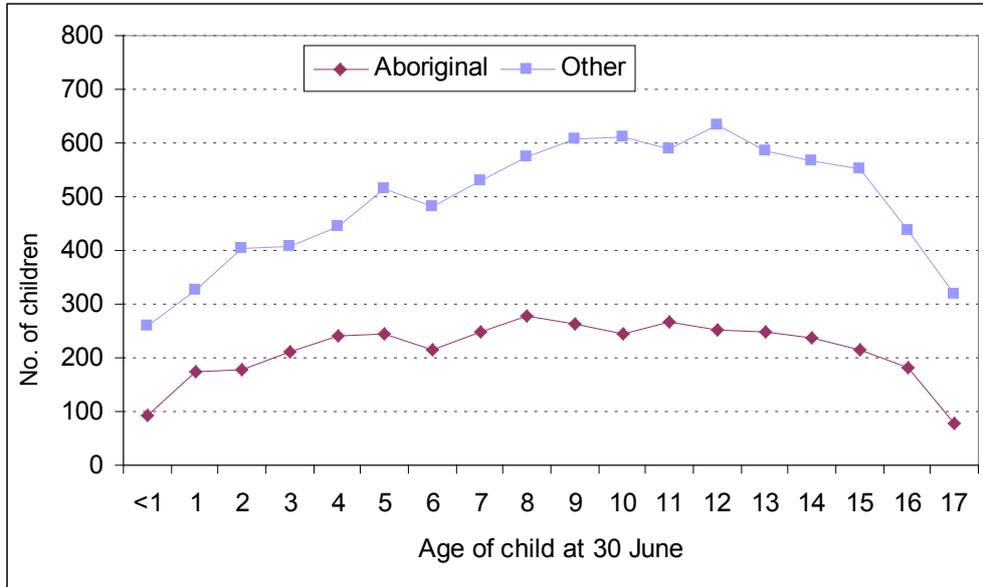
**Figure 12: Children and young people in out-of-home care by Aboriginality as at 30 June 2002 to 30 June 2007**



### 3b. Age

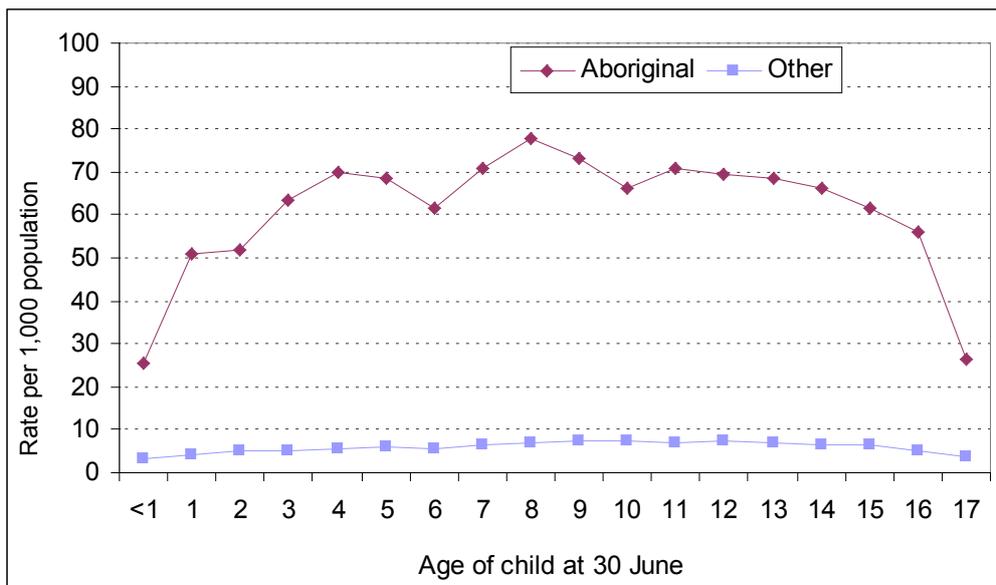
The pattern of children in care by age appears not to differ greatly by Aboriginality as shown in Figure 13. For both groups of children, their numbers in care tend to increase with age until around seven years and then flatten out until around 15 years, whereafter a sharp decrease occurs.

**Figure 13: Number of children and young people in out-of-home care by age and Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**



As depicted in Figure 14, the rates of Aboriginal children and young people in care are greater than those for other children across all age groups. The difference in rates of children in care by Aboriginality is generally far greater for those aged from four to 15 years.

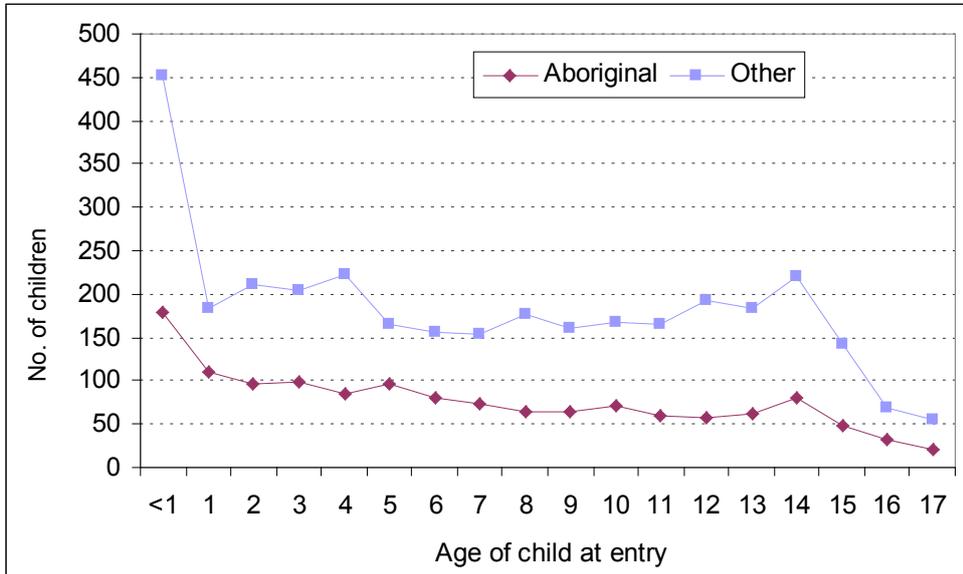
**Figure 14: Rate of children and young people in out-of-home care by age per 1,000 population by Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**



Notes: Base population sourced from ABS Census 2006.

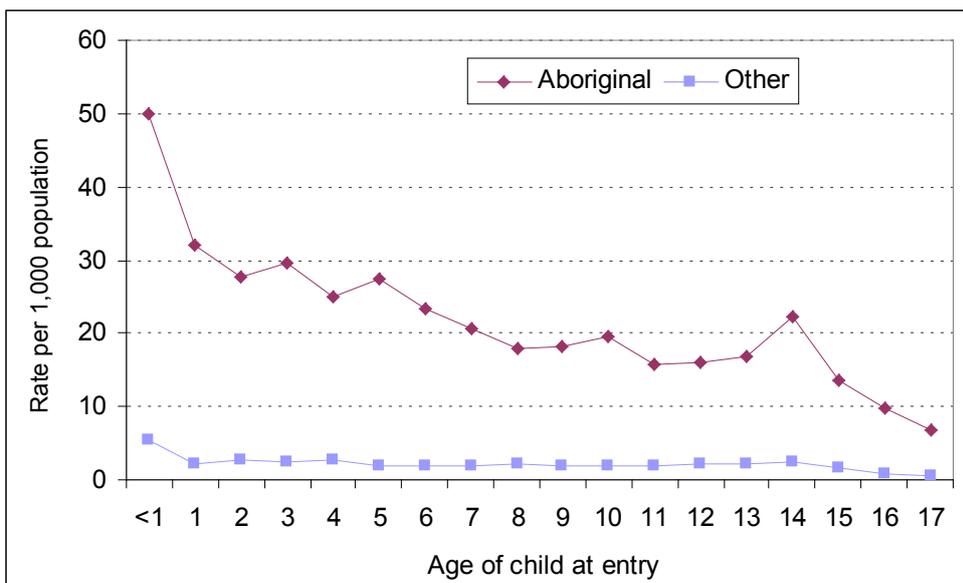
Figure 15 shows that the pattern of children and young people entering care during 2006/07 is similar for Aboriginal children and non-Aboriginal children. For both groups, the numbers entering care are greatest for children aged less than one. The pattern is similar to that noted in Figure 6 for rates of children reported.

**Figure 15: Number of children and young people entering into out-of-home care by age and Aboriginality during 2006/07**



During 2006/07, for every 1,000 Aboriginal children in NSW, around 22 entered care. This compares to a rate of around two per 1,000 for other children. Figure 16 shows that the rate of Aboriginal children and young people entering care per 1,000 population is higher than that of non-Aboriginal children and young people for all ages, particularly those aged less than one year. For every 1,000 Aboriginal children aged less than one year in NSW, around 50 entered care during 2006/07, while for other children aged less than one year in NSW, around five entered care during 2006/07.

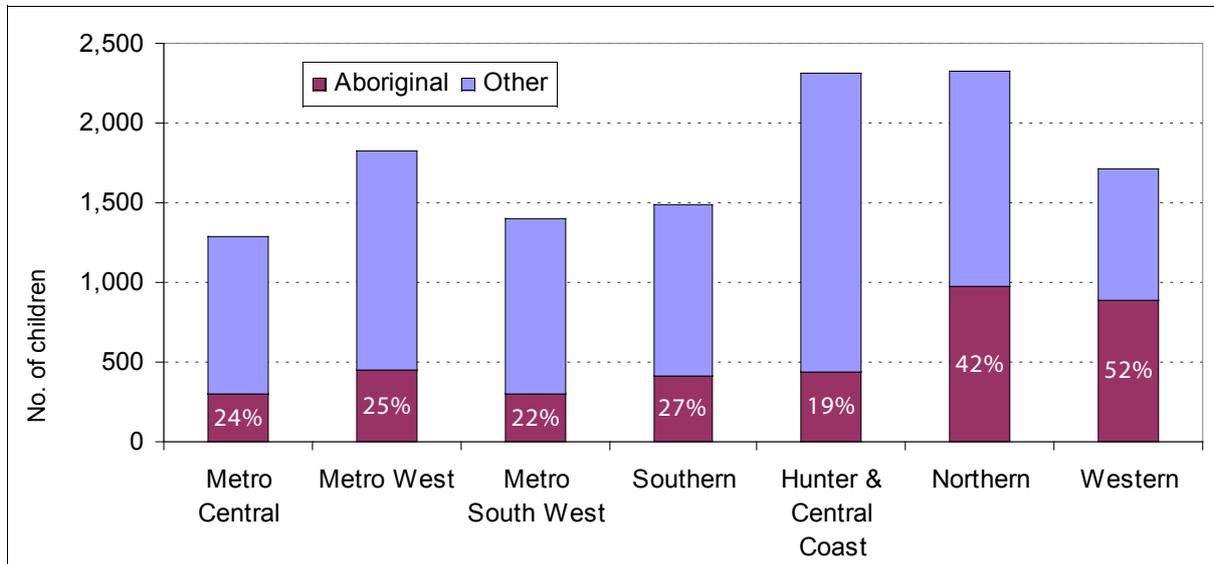
**Figure 16: Rate of children and young people entering into out-of-home care by age per 1,000 population and Aboriginality during 2006/07**



### 3c. Regional differences

Western and Northern regions had the highest proportions, and highest numbers, of Aboriginal children in care – with a respective 52% and 42% of children in care in these regions being identified as Aboriginal (Figure 17).

**Figure 17: Children and young people in out-of-home care by DoCS region and Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**



### 3d. Types of care

As seen in Table 4, for Aboriginal children and young people, Relative and Kinship Care was the most common care type, with 64% of Aboriginal children in this type of care at 30 June 2007. Foster Care placements were held by 29% of the Aboriginal children in care. For other children in care, 46% were in Relative and Kinship Care and 41% were in Foster Care.

**Table 4: Children and young people in out-of-home care by placement types and Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**

Placement type	Aboriginal		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Relative & Aboriginal Kinship Care	2,469	63.9	4,028	45.5	6,497	51.1
Foster Care	1,102	28.5	3,639	41.1	4,741	37.3
Non Related Person	68	1.8	282	3.2	350	2.8
Parents	133	3.4	478	5.4	611	4.8
Residential Care	53	1.4	256	2.9	309	2.4
Independent Living	29	0.8	96	1.1	125	1.0
Supported Accommodation	11	0.3	68	0.8	79	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,865</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,847</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>12,712</b>	<b>100.0</b>

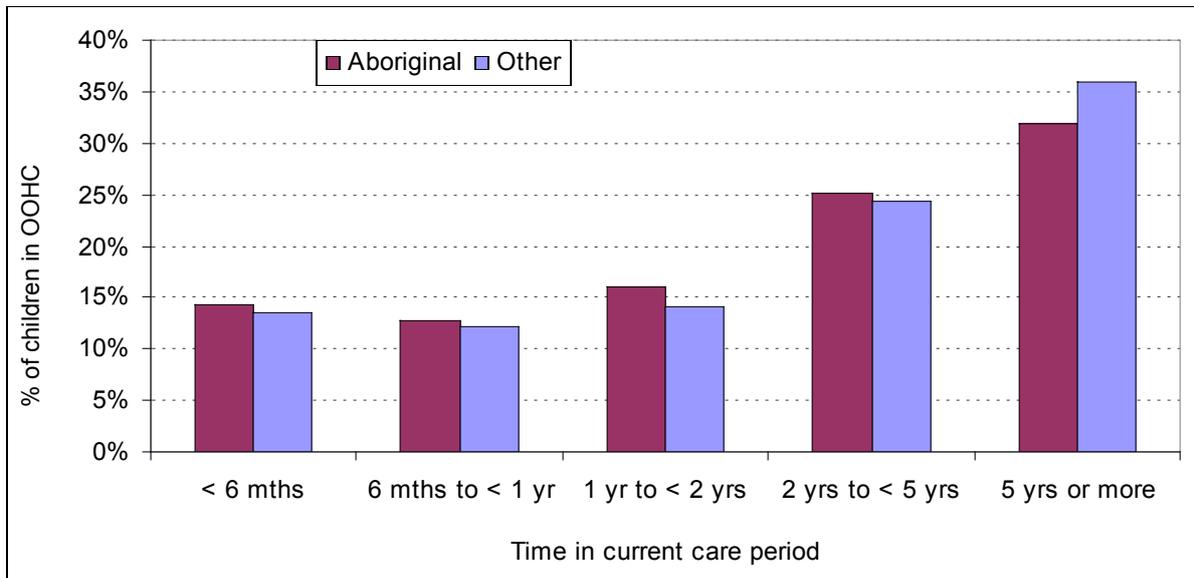
### 3e. Aboriginal placement principle

Of those Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care at 30 June 2007, 85% had been placed in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle.

### 3f. Stability of placements

There was no significant association between a child or young person's length of time in their current care period and their Aboriginality. As shown in Figure 18, for 32% of Aboriginal children and 36% of other children in care as at 30 June 2007, their current care period was five years or greater in duration. For both groups of children, 14% had been in their current care period for less than six months.

**Figure 18: Length of time in current care period for children and young people in out-of-home care by Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**



Aboriginal children and young people were less likely to have multiple placements than other children, as depicted in Figure 19. Over half (53%) of Aboriginal children in care at 30 June 2007 had just one placement in their current care period compared with 46% of other children in care. Three or more placements in the current care period were experienced by 25% of Aboriginal children compared with 29% of other children.

**Figure 19: Number of placements in current care period for children and young people in out-of-home care by Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**

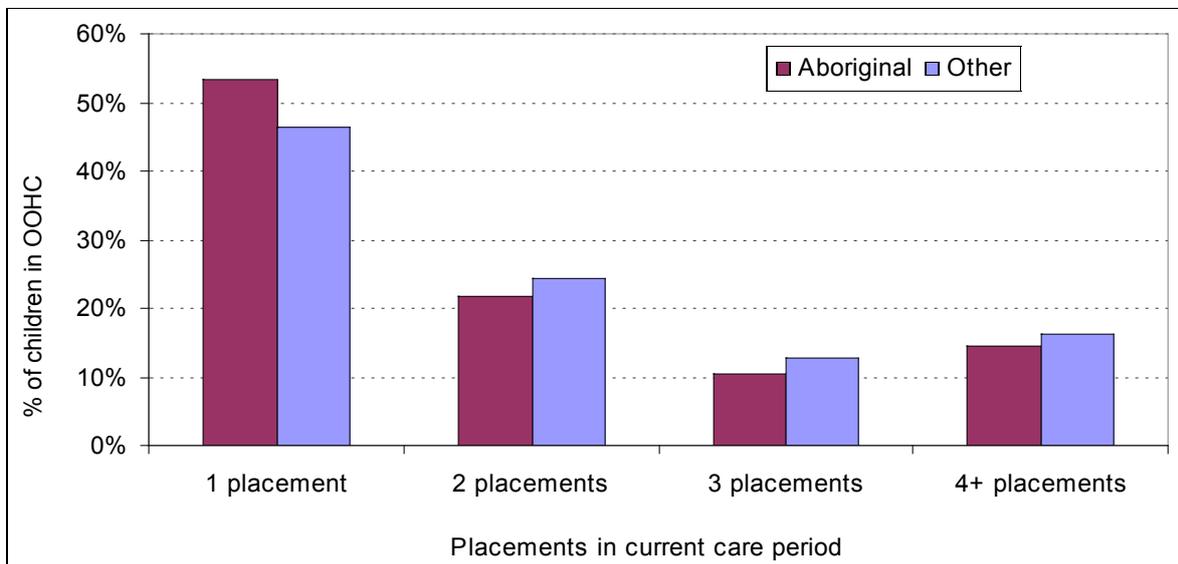
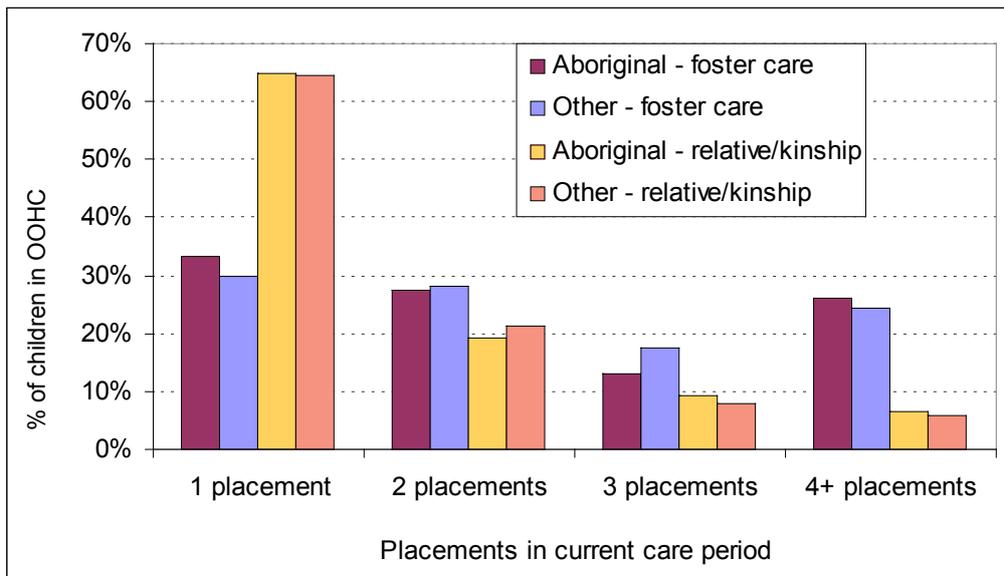


Figure 20 shows that the stability of placements is quite different for those children in Foster Care compared to those in Relative and Kinship Care at 30 June 2007, but not that different for Aboriginal children compared to other children. Of those children in Relative and Kinship Care, 65% of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children had just one placement in their current care period, while less than 10% of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children had four or more placements. For those children in Foster Care, the proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children with just one placement were similar (33% and 30% respectively) as were the proportions with four or more placements (26% and 25% respectively).

**Figure 20: Number of placements in current care period for children and young people in out-of-home care by type of care and Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**



When length of time in current care period is examined by number of placements in current care period, differences can be seen between Aboriginal and other children, as shown in Table 5. These data show that a greater percentage of Aboriginal children had just one placement (across all lengths of current care period) compared to non-Aboriginal children.

**Table 5: Length of time in current care period by number of placements in current period for children and young people in out-of-home care by Aboriginality as at 30 June 2007**

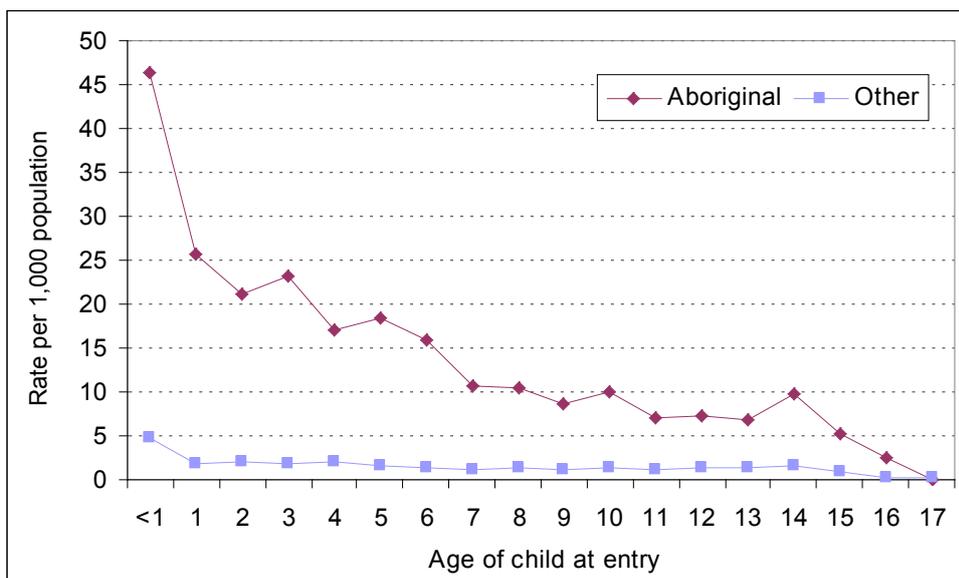
Length of current care period	Aboriginal status	No. of placements in care period			Total
		1	2-3	4+	
Less than 1 year	Aboriginal	78.3%	19.0%	2.7%	100.0%
	Other	68.0%	28.5%	3.5%	100.0%
1 -4 years	Aboriginal	49.8%	36.9%	13.3%	100.0%
	Other	45.8%	39.5%	14.7%	100.0%
5 or more years	Aboriginal	36.9%	37.5%	25.6%	100.0%
	Other	31.7%	40.9%	27.4%	100.0%
All children	Aboriginal	53.4%	32.3%	14.4%	100.0%
	Other	46.5%	37.2%	16.4%	100.0%

### 3g. Child protection history before entering care (cohort analysis)

During the 2006/07 year, 4,658 individual children and young people entered out-of-home care, with 3,283 entering care for the first time ever. Of these 3,283 children, the majority (3,075 or 94%) had at least one child protection report before entering care. This section examines this cohort of 3,075 children who entered care for the first time ever in 2006/07 and who had a child protection report before entering care to determine if Aboriginality influences entry to care.

Figure 21 shows the rate per 1,000 population of entry into care by age for this cohort by Aboriginality. Similar to Figure 16, this shows that the rate of Aboriginal children and young people in the cohort entering care per 1,000 population is higher than that of non-Aboriginal children and young people for all ages, particularly for those in the less than one and one year age groups.

**Figure 21: Rate of children and young people who entered into care for the first time ever in 2006/07 and had a child protection report before this entry per 1,000 population, by age group and Aboriginality**



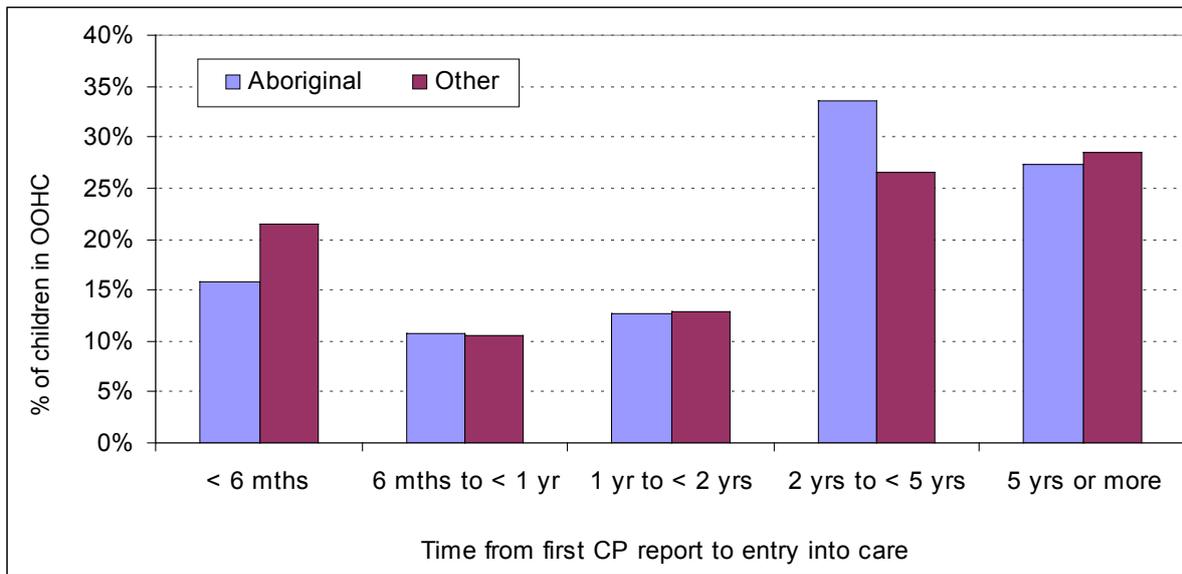
Of the cohort of 3,075 children and young people, 863 or 28% were identified as being Aboriginal. These Aboriginal children had a total of 9,536 reports before entering care compared with 24,240 reports for the 2,212 children not identified as Aboriginal. This means that an average of 11.0 reports was received about both Aboriginal and other children before entry to care (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Children and young people who entered into care for the first time ever in 2006/07 and had a child protection report before this entry, by number of child protection reports before entry to care and Aboriginality**

	Aboriginal	Other	Total
Number of children and young people	863	2,212	3,075
Total number of reports before entry	9,536	24,240	33,776
Average number of reports before entry	11.0	11.0	11.0
Maximum number of reports before entry	79	85	85

Figure 22 looks at the time between a child or young person’s first ever entry to care and their first ever child protection report. Time from first report to entry to care appears to not be related to Aboriginality. For 16% of the Aboriginal children and young people, their first care period started within six months of their first child protection report. This compares to 21% of the other children. For 27% of Aboriginal children and 29% of other children, it took five or more years from their first child protection report to enter care.

**Figure 22: Children and young people who entered into care for the first time ever in 2006/07 and had a child protection report before this entry, by length of time from first report to care and Aboriginality**



One-quarter of Aboriginal children and young people in the cohort entered care within 47 weeks of their first child protection report compared with almost 34 weeks for other children, as shown in Table 7. Half of Aboriginal children in the cohort entered care within 150 weeks (or almost three years) of their first report compared with 127 weeks for other children.

**Table 7: Quartiles, in weeks, for length of time from first report to care for children and young persons who entered care for the first time ever in 2006/07, by Aboriginality**

	1st quartile (25%)	2nd quartile (50%)	3rd quartile (75%)
Aboriginal	47	150	279
Other	34	127	286
Total	37	134	281

## Appendix A – Number of reports and children reported – original and adjusted data

Aboriginal identification and recording in KiDS has improved over time. The Indigenous status field in KiDS was made a mandatory data item in October 2003. However, the KiDS system did not enforce this rule until mid 2004.

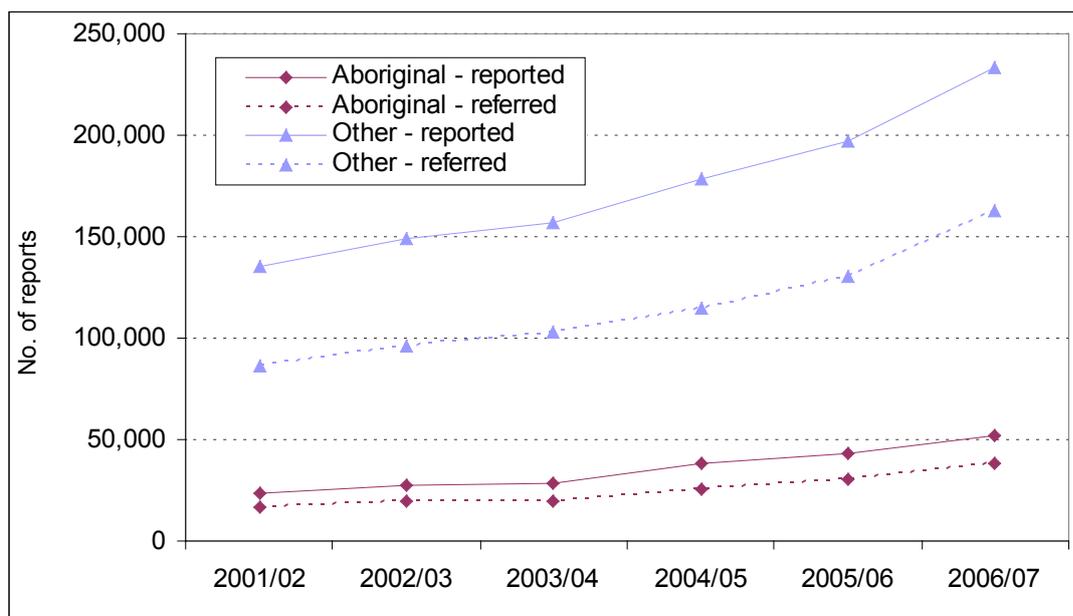
It is difficult to separate increases caused by these changes from the overall increases observed in the numbers of reports involving Aboriginal children and the number of Aboriginal children reported to DoCS.

However, the data has been adjusted in an attempt to do this. If any report over the period 1999/00 to 2006/07 about a child or young person was recorded as being of Aboriginal status then all reports received about that child over the period are identified as being of Aboriginal status. It should be noted that the reliability of this adjustment has not been tested.

### Number of reports – adjusted data

Figure A1 shows the number of reports made to DoCS and those referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality over the period 2001/02 to 2006/07 using the adjusted data. Using the adjusted data the number of reports involving Aboriginal children has increased by 119% over the period 2001/02 and 2006/07. This is less than the 169% increase observed using the original data.

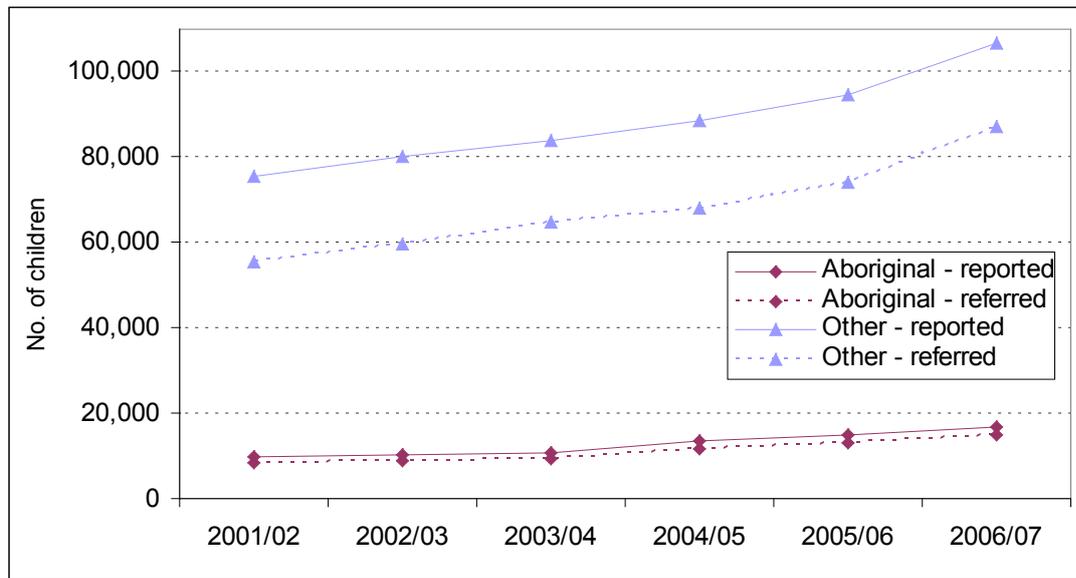
**Figure A1: Reports made to DoCS and those referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, using adjusted data**



### Number of children and young people reported – adjusted data

Using the adjusted data the number of Aboriginal children and young people reported to DoCS has increased by 75% over the period 2001/02 and 2006/07 (see Figure A2). This is less than the 123% increase observed using the original data.

**Figure A2: Children and young people reported to DoCS and children referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, using adjusted data**



**Table A1: Reports made to DoCS by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, original and adjusted data**

	Original data (as recorded in KiDS)			Adjusted data		
	Aboriginal	Other	Total	Aboriginal	Other	Total
1999/00	8,671	64,315	72,986	11,293	61,693	72,986
2000/01	12,856	94,538	107,394	16,367	91,027	107,394
2001/02	18,348	141,295	159,643	23,882	135,761	159,643
2002/03	20,017	156,254	176,271	27,044	149,227	176,271
2003/04	15,495	169,703	185,198	28,569	156,629	185,198
2004/05	31,526	184,860	216,386	38,326	178,060	216,386
2005/06	38,297	202,706	241,003	43,566	197,437	241,003
2006/07	49,443	236,590	286,033	52,294	233,739	286,033

**Table A2: Reports referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, original and adjusted data**

	Original data (as recorded in KiDS)			Adjusted data		
	Aboriginal	Other	Total	Aboriginal	Other	Total
1999/00	6,726	42,347	49,073	8,391	40,682	49,073
2000/01	9,653	62,394	72,047	12,047	60,000	72,047
2001/02	12,952	90,122	103,074	16,438	86,636	103,074
2002/03	14,365	100,635	115,000	19,198	95,802	115,000
2003/04	10,615	111,356	121,971	19,475	102,496	121,971
2004/05	21,525	118,659	140,184	25,963	114,221	140,184
2005/06	26,713	134,129	160,842	30,240	130,602	160,842
2006/07	35,972	165,236	201,208	37,985	163,223	201,208

**Table A3: Children and young people reported to DoCS by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, original and adjusted data**

	Original data (as recorded in KiDS)			Adjusted data		
	Aboriginal	Other	Total	Aboriginal	Other	Total
1999/00	4,837	45,458	50,295	6,427	43,868	50,295
2000/01	6,259	59,852	66,111	8,134	57,977	66,111
2001/02	7,093	77,872	84,965	9,600	75,365	84,965
2002/03	7,597	82,961	90,558	10,424	80,134	90,558
2003/04	5,630	88,922	94,552	10,673	83,879	94,552
2004/05	10,910	91,439	102,349	13,717	88,632	102,349
2005/06	13,092	96,476	109,568	15,002	94,566	109,568
2006/07	15,820	107,870	123,690	16,775	106,915	123,690

**Table A4: Children and young people referred to a CSC/JIRT for secondary assessment by Aboriginality, 2001/02 to 2006/07, original and adjusted data**

	Original data (as recorded in KiDS)			Adjusted data		
	Aboriginal	Other	Total	Aboriginal	Other	Total
1999/00	4,204	31,020	35,224	5,250	29,974	35,224
2000/01	5,388	42,487	47,875	6,730	41,145	47,875
2001/02	6,338	57,150	63,488	8,218	55,270	63,488
2002/03	6,574	61,755	68,329	8,889	59,440	68,329
2003/04	5,021	68,889	73,910	9,269	64,641	73,910
2004/05	9,600	70,418	80,018	11,818	68,200	80,018
2005/06	11,449	75,747	87,196	13,008	74,188	87,196
2006/07	14,029	88,069	102,098	14,835	87,263	102,098

## Appendix B – Additional tables

**Table B1: Indigenous status recorded in KiDS for child protection reports made to DoCS, 2006/07**

<b>Indigenous status recorded in KiDS</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Aboriginal	48,350	16.9
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	284	<1.0
Torres Strait Islander	809	<1.0
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>49,443</i>	<i>17.3</i>
Not Indigenous	200,534	70.1
Not Stated	36,056	12.6
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>236,590</i>	<i>82.7</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>286,033</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Appendix C – Details of multivariate analysis (section 2c)

The factors considered in the logistic regressions were:

- age of child (< 1 year, 1-2 years, 3-14 years, 15-16 years);
- source of report (Police, Health, School/child care/preschool, Relative, Friend/neighbour and Other);
- sex;
- whether the report involved physical abuse;
- whether the report involved sexual abuse;
- whether the report involved psychological abuse;
- whether the report involved neglect;
- whether domestic violence was a reported issue;
- whether carer drug and alcohol was a reported issue;
- whether carer mental health was a reported issue;
- child protection history;
- OOHC history;
- whether the child was in OOHC at the time of the report; and
- Aboriginality (for the first regression only).

**Table C1: Logistic regression: significant independent factors determining re-reporting, population of children reported in July-September 2004**

Variable	95.0% C.I. for Odds ratio			Significance
	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper	
Age				0.000
<1 year	<b>3.287</b>	2.910	3.713	0.000
1-2 years	1.917	1.722	2.134	0.000
3-14 years	1.514	1.392	1.646	0.000
15-16 years*	1.000	-	-	-
Source of report				0.000
Health	1.161	1.073	1.258	0.000
School/Child care/ preschool	1.054	0.974	1.139	0.190
Relative	1.474	1.351	1.607	0.000
Friend/neighbour	1.096	0.942	1.274	0.236
Other	1.212	1.119	1.312	0.000
Police*	1.000	-	-	-
Sex (female vs male)	0.951	0.907	0.997	0.039
Report involved physical abuse	1.083	1.018	1.152	0.012
Report involved sexual abuse	1.113	1.019	1.215	0.017
Report involved psychological abuse	1.146	1.081	1.215	0.000
Report involved neglect	1.235	1.153	1.323	0.000
DV was a reported issue	1.137	1.065	1.215	0.000
Carer D/A was a reported issue	1.311	1.223	1.407	0.000
Carer MH was a reported issue	1.320	1.220	1.429	0.000
Had a child protection history	<b>3.258</b>	3.092	3.433	0.000
Aboriginal vs other	<b>1.984</b>	1.833	2.147	0.000
In OOHC at the time of the report	1.353	1.187	1.542	0.000
Had an OOHC history	<b>2.163</b>	1.950	2.400	0.000

\* reference category

**Table C2: Logistic regression: significant independent factors determining re-reporting, population of Aboriginal children reported in July-September 2004**

Variable	95.0% C.I. for Odds ratio			Significance
	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper	
Age				0.000
<1 year	<b>5.930</b>	4.024	8.738	0.000
1-2 years	<b>2.657</b>	1.881	3.753	0.000
3-14 years	<b>2.181</b>	1.622	2.932	0.000
15-16 years*	1.000	-	-	-
Report involved neglect	1.391	1.170	1.654	0.000
Report involved Carer MH	1.368	1.035	1.808	0.028
Had a child protection history	<b>3.533</b>	2.951	4.229	0.000
Had an OOHC history	<b>2.095</b>	1.629	2.693	0.000

\* reference category

**Table C3: Logistic regression: significant independent factors determining re-reporting, population of other children reported in July-September 2004**

Variable	95.0% C.I. for Odds ratio			Significance
	Odds Ratio	Lower	Upper	
Age				0.000
<1 year	<b>3.107</b>	2.733	3.532	0.000
1-2 years	1.887	1.686	2.112	0.000
3-14 years	1.478	1.354	1.612	0.000
15-16 years*	1.000	-	-	-
Source of report				0.000
Health	1.180	1.086	1.282	0.000
School/Child care/ preschool	1.085	1.000	1.177	0.049
Relative	1.555	1.419	1.703	0.000
Friend/neighbour	1.053	0.900	1.233	0.517
Other	1.232	1.132	1.340	0.000
Police*	1.000	-	-	-
Sex (female vs male)	0.934	0.889	0.982	0.007
Report involved psychological abuse	1.131	1.064	1.202	0.000
Report involved neglect	1.165	1.086	1.249	0.000
Report involved DV	1.097	1.028	1.171	0.005
Report involved Carer D/A	1.333	1.236	1.437	0.000
Report involved Carer MH	1.287	1.187	1.395	0.000
Had a child protection history	<b>3.225</b>	3.053	3.406	0.000
In OOHC at the time of the report	1.568	1.344	1.829	0.000
Had an OOHC history	<b>2.192</b>	1.956	2.457	0.000

\* reference category

## Appendix D – Categorisation of data used in this report (sections 1d and 1g)

**Table D1: Classification used for reporter type**

Category	Contactor type coded field	
Police	14	Police
Health	6	Hospital/health centre
	7	Medical practitioner
	11	Other health professional
School/childcare	2	Child care personnel
	15	School personnel
NGO	8	Non Gov Organisation
Other mandatory	3	DoCS officer
	4	Family Court
	10	Other Government
	17	Social Worker
	19	DADHC
Relative/friend/neighbour	5	Friend/neighbour
	12	Other relative
	13	Parent/Guardian
	16	Sibling
Other	1	Anonymous
	9	Other
	18	Subject Child/Young Person

**Table D2: Classification used for reported issue type**

Category	Reported issue coded field
Physical	2 Alcohol use by child or YP
	8 Death of child, non accident
	9 Death of sibling, non accident
	12 Drug use by child or YP
	15 DV, Child/n harmed intervening
	30 Physical: Hit, kick, strike
	31 Physical: other
	32 Physical: Poisoning
	33 Physical: Shaking baby/child
	34 Physical: Strangle/suffocate
	35 Physical: Throwing baby/child
	38 Risk of physical harm/injury
	41 Runaway child/young person
Sexual	5 Child inappropriate sexual behaviour
	40 Risk of sexual harm/injury
	42 Sexual: Penetration
	43 Sexual: Exposure pornography
	44 Sexual: Indecent acts/molestation
	45 Sexual: Non-physical exploitation
Psychological	14 DV Child/n exposed to violence
	28 Persistent caregiver hostility
	37 Psychological mistreatment
	39 Risk of psychological harm
	46 Suicide risk for child
Neglect	6 Child/n left unattended in car
	7 Child/n or YP/s abandoned
	17 Failure to thrive, non-organic
	21 Inadequate clothing
	22 Inadequate nutrition
	23 Inadequate shelter or homeless
	24 Inadequate supervision for age
	26 Medical treatment not provided
Carer	1 Alcohol abuse by carer
	3 Unauthorised OOHC arrangement
	4 Carer in prison
	10 Developmental disability, carer
	11 Drug abuse by carer
	13 DV - Domestic violence
	16 Emotional state of carer
	18 Financial problems of carer
	19 Gambling problem of carer
	20 Hague Convention kidnapping
	25 Legal guardianship issues
	29 Physical disability of carer
	36 Psychiatric disability, carer
	47 Suicide risk/attempt of carer

**Table D3: Classification used for reported issues**

Category	Reported issue coded field	
Carer alcohol	1	Alcohol abuse by carer
Carer drug	11	Drug abuse by carer
Carer mental health	16	Emotional state of carer
	36	Psychiatric disability, carer
	47	Suicide risk/attempt of carer
Domestic violence	13	DV - Domestic violence
	14	DV Child/n exposed to violence
	15	DV, Child/n harmed intervening