

Social Indicators June 2021

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This annual report provides statistics on state and territory child protection and family support services, and selected characteristics of children receiving these services.

Author: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare ([AIHW](#))

Date of release: 18 May 2021

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This monthly publication provides statistics on criminal offences in the Northern Territory, extracted from the police records system.

Author: Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services ([NTPFES](#))

Date of release: 21 May 2021

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This annual publication looks at statistics on young people who were under youth justice supervision in Australia during 2019-20 because of their involvement or alleged involvement in crime.

Author: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare ([AIHW](#))

Date of release: 28 May 2021

Disclaimer

Caution is advised when using monthly data for the Territory, which is often derived from small samples and highly volatile. Although all due care has been exercised in the preparation of this material, no responsibility is accepted for any errors or omission.

More information:

Intergovernmental Relations | Department of Treasury and Finance

P: 08 8999 6718 | W: <https://treasury.nt.gov.au>

Social Indicators June 2021

Child Protection, Australia, 2019-20

The following is a summary of information on child protection and support services in the Northern Territory in 2019-20, unless otherwise stated.

- There were 5778 children receiving child protection services, compared with 5521 in 2018-19 (Figure 1). This represents an increase of 4.7%. Nationally, there was an increase of 2.7% over the same period.
- There were 94 children receiving child protection services per 1000 children, compared to 31 nationally.
- There were 25 499 child protection notifications, compared with 23 482 in 2018-19 (Figure 2). This represents an increase of 8.6%, compared to a national increase of 7.8%, over the same period.
- Of the total number of notifications, 5220 or 20.5% were investigated, compared with 37.7% nationally. Police represented the greatest source of notifications for investigations at 39.9%, followed by medical/health personnel at 22.4% and school personnel at 14.7%. Some children are involved in multiple notifications and investigations.
- The remaining 20 279 notifications were responded to by means other than an investigation, such as referral to police or family services, or the provision of advice.
- There were 4712 children who were the subject of child protection investigations. Of these investigations, 24.4% (1150) were substantiated, 57.1% (2692) were not substantiated and the remaining 18.5% (870) were either still in progress or closed with no outcome possible.
- Of the 1150 child protection substantiations, 85.7% were Aboriginal children, compared with 29.3% nationally (Table 1). Further of the total substantiations, 53.0% were female and 47.0% were male. Nationally, 50.0% were female, 4.3% were male and 1.7% did not state gender.
- The most common type of substantiated abuse was emotional abuse at 46.3%, followed by neglect at 26.9% and physical abuse at 21.7%. This is consistent with national data where the most common type of substantiated abuse was emotional abuse at 53.9%, followed by neglect at 22.5% and physical abuse at 14.1%. (Table 2)

Figure 1: Number of children receiving child protection services, Northern Territory, 2015-16 to 2019-20

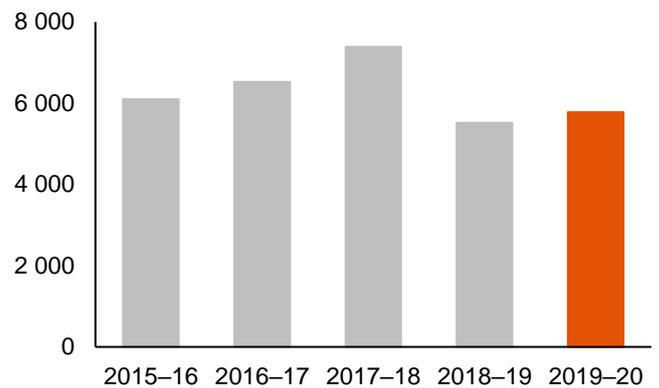


Figure 2: Number of child protection notifications, Northern Territory, 2015-16 to 2019-20

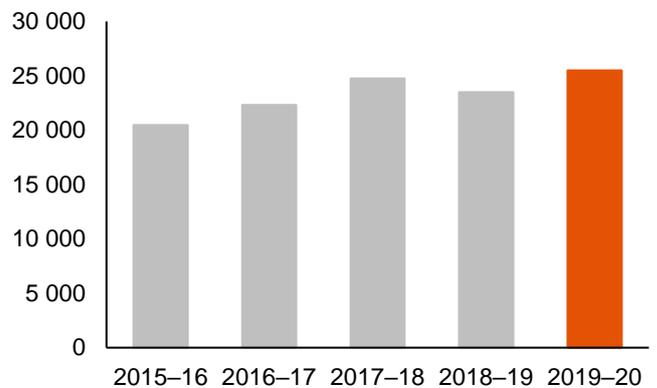


Table 1: Child protection substantiations by Aboriginal status, 2019-20^{1,2}

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	No.	%	No.	%
NSW	5 622	33.4	10 426	61.9
Vic	2 341	14.0	14 373	86.0
Qld	2 415	36.9	3 863	59.1
WA	2 067	43.7	2 658	56.2
SA	778	35.1	1 419	64.0
Tas	73	18.0	122	30.0
ACT	42	15.0	213	76.1
NT	985	85.7	165	14.3
Australia	14 323	29.3	33 239	68.0

1 Figures may not add as 1324 substantiations with unknown Aboriginal status are not included. None of these substantiations are in the NT or Vic.

2 Data is not comparable across jurisdictions due to differences in the way jurisdictions collect and report data on notifications, investigations and substantiations.

Table 2: Most common type of substantiated abuse per child, notified during 2019-20³

	NT		Australia	
	No.	%	No.	%
Emotional	532	46.3	26 350	53.9
Neglect	309	26.9	10 983	22.5
Physical	249	21.7	6 894	14.1
Sexual	60	5.2	4 511	9.2
Not stated	0	0.0	148	0.3
Total	1 150	100.0	48 886	100.0

3 Sexual abuse is under-reported in the Northern Territory due to recording issues.

Source data in Child Protection, Australia, 2019-20: Department of Treasury, AIHW

The following is a summary of information on offence counts in the Northern Territory in the March quarter 2021 compared to the March quarter 2020, unless otherwise stated:

- Recorded offences against property decreased by 766, or 11.5%, to 5917. This decrease was driven by decreases in all offences against property, with the largest decrease in the number of offences against property damage (Table 3).
- Commercial break-ins decreased by 13.4% to 613 with the decline driven by decreases in Katherine (34.5% or 19 break-ins), Other (32.8% or 117 break-ins) and Palmerston (18.0% or 9 break-ins). This was partially offset by increases in Tennant Creek (90.7% or 49 break-ins), Alice Springs (43.3% or 13 break-ins), and Nhulunbuy (225.0% or 9 break-ins).
- House break-ins decreased by 17.8% to 750, primarily driven by decreases in Darwin (-161), Palmerston (-53) and Other (-23) (Table 4).
- The number of acts intended to cause injury increased by 8.8% to 2036 offences. This was primarily due to increases in Palmerston (102), Darwin (98) and Other (41).
- Of the total number of acts intended to cause injury, 2028 were assaults. Of these assaults, 65.6% involved domestic violence, 49.7% involved alcohol and 36.1% involved both domestic violence and alcohol.
- In the year ending March 2021, the highest rate of sexual assault and related offences was recorded in Tennant Creek with an offence rate of 725.7 per 100 000 population which is the highest rate in the region since 2009. This is followed by Alice Springs (354.9) and Katherine (251.7) (Figure 3).
- The largest percentage increase in the rate of sexual assault and related offences per 100 000 population between the year ending March 2020 and March 2021 was recorded in Tennant Creek with an increase of 293.8%. This was followed by Nhulunbuy (98.6%) and Palmerston (21.1%). The only decrease was recorded in Darwin.
- The Northern Territory crime statistics are prepared by the Department of Attorney-General and Justice using data recorded by the Northern Territory Police.

Table 3: Selected recorded offences against property and persons, March quarter, 2020 and 2021^{4,5,6}

	Mar qtr 2020 No.	Mar qtr 2021 No.	Annual change %
Offences against property			
House break-ins	912	750	-17.8
Commercial break-ins	708	613	-13.4
Motor vehicle theft and related offences	505	408	-19.2
Theft	2 237	2 069	-7.5
Property damage	2 321	2 077	-10.5
Total	6 683	5 917	-11.5
Offences against persons			
Homicide and related offences	2	2	0.0
Acts intended to cause injury	1 872	2 036	8.8
Sexual assault and related offences	103	121	17.5
Other	191	161	-15.7
Total	2 168	2 320	7.0

⁴ Break-ins include actual and attempted break-ins.

⁵ Other includes other dangerous or negligent acts endangering persons, abduction, harassment and other offences, robbery, extortion and related offences.

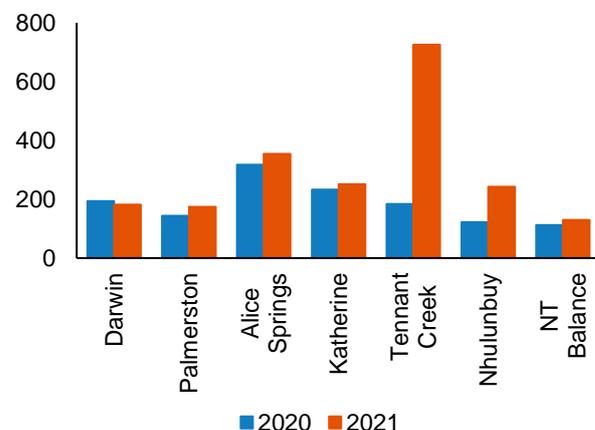
⁶ Acts intended to cause injury includes assault and related offences.

Table 4: Recorded house break-ins by region, March quarter, 2020 and 2021⁷

	Mar qtr 2020 No.	Mar qtr 2021 No.	Annual change %
Darwin	276	115	-58.3
Palmerston	138	85	-38.4
Alice Springs	211	236	11.8
Katherine	50	42	-16.0
Tennant Creek	54	103	90.7
Nhulunbuy	4	13	225.0
Other	179	156	-12.8
Total	912	750	-17.8

⁷ Other includes areas of the Northern Territory that lies outside of the six urban centres of Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy.

Figure 3: Rate of sexual assault and related offences per 100 000 population for the year ending March 2020 and 2021



Source data in Northern Territory Crime Statistics, March 2021: Department of Treasury and Finance, NTPFES

Youth justice in Australia, 2019-20

The following is a summary of information on young people who were under youth justice supervision in the Northern Territory during 2019-20 because of their involvement or alleged involvement in crime. The summary includes some data from the COVID-19 period, specifically between March and June 2020.

Young people represents all individuals aged 10 and over in the youth justice system, including some individuals aged 18 and over, unless otherwise stated.

The 'average day' is a summary measure that reflects both the number of young people supervised and the amount of time they spent under supervision. It is derived by averaging the number of days each young person spends under supervision in each financial year with the total number of days in the year.

- On an average day, 198 young people were under youth justice supervision, of which 88.4% were male and 11.6% were female (Table 5).
- Of these young people, 94.3% were Aboriginal, the highest proportion of all jurisdictions and above the national average of 46.8% (Table 5).
- The rate of young people aged 10-17 under youth justice supervision on an average day was 50 per 10 000 population, down from 61 per 10 000 population in 2018-19. This was the highest of all jurisdictions and above the national average of 16.5 per 10 000 (Figure 4).
- Over the five years to 2019-20, the number of young people under supervision increased by 8.2%, however the rate per 10 000 population decreased by 13.6%.
- Of the young people under youth justice supervision, 19.6% were under detention, and 81.2% were under community supervision. This compares to the national average of 17.2% and 83.6%, respectively.
- On an average day, 83.2% of young people under detention and 24.0% of young people under community supervision were unsentenced. These figures are higher than the national average of 67.9% and 17.9%, respectively.
- The average length of time spent under supervision by young people in the Territory was 210 days, or 30.1 weeks. This was the third highest period of all jurisdictions, behind Tasmania and Western Australia and is greater than the national average of 190 days, or 27.2 weeks (Figure 5).
- The average length of time spent under supervision by Aboriginal young people in the Territory was 8.1% longer, at 214 days, compared to non-Aboriginal young people, at 197 days.

Table 5: Young people under supervision on an average day, Australia, 2019-20⁸

	Total No.	Aboriginal %	Male %	Female %
NSW	1 296	44.3	80.0	20.0
Vic	925	13.6	83.8	16.2
Qld	1 780	58.2	76.3	23.7
WA	685	58.6	81.1	18.8
SA	224	48.4	84.0	16.0
Tas	146	32.0	75.3	24.7
ACT	70	21.8	75.7	24.3
NT	198	94.3	88.4	11.6
Australia	5 323	46.8	79.9	20.1

⁸ Figures may not add due to rounding.

Figure 4: Rate of young people aged 10-17 by type of supervision on an average day per 10 000 population, Australia, 2019-20

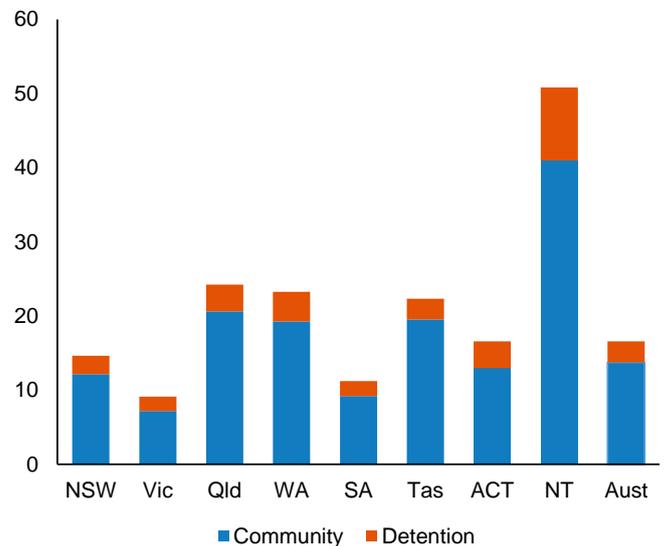
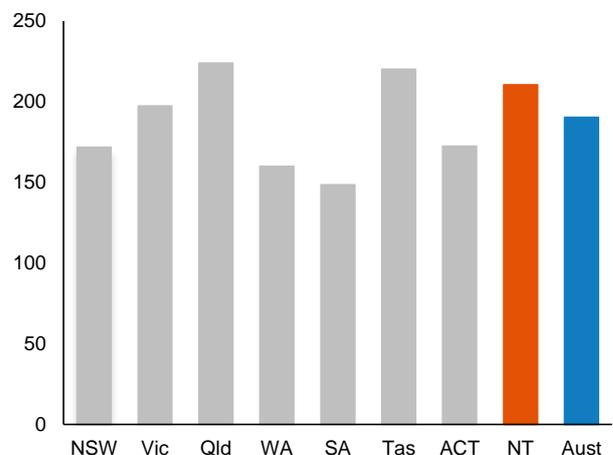


Figure 5: Average length of time spent during the year under supervision, Australia, 2019-20, days



Source data in Youth Justice in Australia, Australia, 2019-20: Department of Treasury and Finance, AIHW