



Characteristics of the children and young people in the POCLS

Overview of Dashboard 1

This document provides a high-level view of the characteristics of the children and young people (hereafter children) in the Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study (POCLS). It accompanies the [interactive dashboard](#), published on the DCJ website.

Data reported in Dashboard 1 are grouped into the following categories:

- Age, culture and gender of children who received final orders and participated in wave interviews
- Placements and exits from out-of-home care (OOHC) by age and gender.

The demographics of those who completed an interview at each Wave, and for those who completed interviews at Wave 1, 2 and 3 and at Wave 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be found in Dashboard 1.

The number of all children who entered OOHC for the first time on interim orders during an 18-month period between May 2010 and October 2011 was 4,126 – this group is known as the POCLS **population cohort**. The demographics of the children who went on to receive final orders by 30 April 2013 (n=2,828) - the **final orders cohort** - can be found in Dashboard 1. A total of 1,789 carers of children in the final orders cohort agreed to be part of the **interview cohort** and were invited to participate in an interview at each wave of the Study. For the 4,126 children in the population cohort, the POCLS has record linkage to child protection, health, education and offending data.

It should be noted that the dashboards do not show whether differences are statistically significant, and so confirmation of trends observed in the dashboards through either published papers available on the POCLS website or by contacting the POCLS team is highly recommended before making decisions based on this data.

What types of questions can be explored with Dashboard 1?

The following questions are examples of the types of questions that can be answered in Dashboard 1.

Question	How to Guide	Answer
What are the characteristics of the children who received final orders when they enter OOHC for the first time (N=2,828) – are there more males than females in the final orders cohort?	Choose cohort ' <i>Received final orders</i> ', district ' <i>All</i> ', Drill down level 1 ' <i>All Children</i> ', Drill down level 2 ' <i>All Children</i> ', select demographic to display ' <i>Gender</i> '.	Of the 2,828 who received final orders, 51% were males and 49% were females.
What are the characteristics of the children who received final orders when they enter OOHC for the first time (N=2,828) – what are their cultural backgrounds?	Choose cohort ' <i>Received final orders</i> ', district ' <i>All</i> ', Drill down level 1 ' <i>All Children</i> ', Drill down level 2 ' <i>All Children</i> ', select demographic to display ' <i>Culture</i> '.	Of the 2,828 who received final orders, 33% were Aboriginal, 11% identified as CALD and 56% were Other Australian.
How many children have been interviewed at all four waves of the study?	Choose cohort ' <i>Completed waves 1, 2, 3 and 4</i> ', district ' <i>All</i> ', Drill down level 1 ' <i>All Children</i> ', Drill down level 2 ' <i>All Children</i> ', select demographic to display ' <i>Gender</i> ' for example. Hover the cursor to see how many children were in each category.	371 were males and 363 were females giving a total of 734 children who were interviewed at all four waves. You can also find a summary of the number of children in each cohort on the landing page.
What are the cultural backgrounds of the children who were interviewed at Wave 4?	Choose cohort ' <i>Wave 4 all responses</i> ', district ' <i>All</i> ', Drill down level 1 ' <i>All Children</i> ', Drill down level 2 ' <i>All Children</i> ', select demographic to display ' <i>Culture</i> '.	Of the 962 who were interviewed at Wave 4, 40% were Aboriginal, 10% identified as CALD and 50% were Other Australian.
What percentage of children at Wave 3 had exited to guardianship and restoration?	Choose cohort ' <i>Wave 3 all responses</i> ', district ' <i>All</i> ', Drill down level 1 ' <i>All Children</i> ', Drill down level 2 ' <i>All Children</i> ' Refer to graphic entitled <i>Placements and Exits</i>	Of the 1033 children interviewed at Wave 3, 16% had exited to guardianship and 7% were restored to their birth parents.

Overview of the key characteristics of the children and young people in the POCLS study

What were the demographics of those who completed an interview?

- Gender was not a determining factor in whether an interview was completed. There were roughly even numbers of males and female children involved in each of the Study Waves.
- The majority of those completing a Wave 1 interview were under six years old. At Wave 1, 44% of those completing an interview were aged 9-35 months, while only 10% were in the 12-17 year age group.
- 33% of those children who received final orders (n=2,828) were Aboriginal. 39% of those who completed an interview at Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4 were Aboriginal. This suggests that there has been a strong engagement of carers of Aboriginal children during the study.

Where were the children living during the Study?

For example, for the cohort who participated in Waves 1, 2, 3 and 4:

- About half were in foster care at each of the Study Waves (52% at Wave 1, 46% at Wave 4)
- Approximately half (48%) were in relative/kinship care at Waves 1 and 2 with the percentage decreasing to 31% at Waves 3 and 4
- By Waves 3 and 4, 18% had exited to guardianship
- By Wave 4, 3% had exited to adoption.

Exits from OOHC

Information is provided on where the child was living (e.g. restoration, guardianship, adoption or long-term OOHC) at the end of Wave 4 regardless of where they have been placed in the intervening period since entering care.

Looking at all responses for children who participated at Wave 4:

- 3% had been adopted, 7% had been restored and 16% were in guardianship.
- 43% were in foster care, 29% were in relative/kinship care and 2% were in residential care.
- 13% of 12-17 year olds had been restored compared to 5% of 3-6 year olds and 6% of 7-11 year olds.
- 53% of 3-6 year olds were in foster care compared to 45% of 7-11 year olds and 37% of 12-17 year olds.

Where can I find further information?

The documents accompanying the dashboards present some key statistics about the carers and the children in the Study. If you are unable to use the interactive dashboards and need more granular information or other statistics, please contact the POCLS team on Pathways@facs.nsw.gov.au

For an overview of the POCLS please see the [Study objectives and strategic research agenda \(Technical Report No.1, 2020\)](#).

For more information on POCLS including our publications please visit our [web page](#).

