

Targeted Earlier Intervention Program

2020-2021 Illawarra Shoalhaven and
Southern NSW Annual Report





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Table of Contents

List of boxes, figures and tables.....	5
Boxes.....	5
Figures.....	5
Tables.....	6
Executive Summary	7
Key findings	7
Service delivery.....	7
Client demographics for individual clients	8
Referral pathways for individual clients	8
Individual client and community outcomes.....	9
TEI services and findings for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities	9
Data quality	9
Next steps – supporting TEI providers to capture and record high-quality quantitative data	10
1 Purpose.....	10
2 Data Collection Method	10
2.1 Important considerations and limitations.....	11
3 Future state: What complete data will be able to tell us about TEI services .	11
4 Current State: What the reported data tells us about TEI services in ISSNSW in 2020-21.....	13
4.1 Program reach and client cohorts	13
4.1.1 Service provision.....	13
How many TEI service providers are there in ISSNSW?	13
How many people do ISSNSW TEI service providers work with?	13
What services did TEI individual clients receive?	14
4.1.2 Client demographics	15
Who is accessing TEI services?	15
4.1.3 Referral pathways	22
4.2 Individual client and community outcomes	26
4.2.1 Individual client outcomes	27
How many individual clients had outcomes recorded?	27
What outcomes did TEI individual clients achieve?	29
4.2.2 Client satisfaction	32
How many individual clients reported Satisfaction SCOREs?	32

4.2.3 Community level outcomes	32
What community level outcomes did the TEI program achieve in ISSNSW?	32
4.3 TEI services and findings for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities	34
4.3.1 How many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients do TEI providers work with?	34
4.3.2 Aboriginal service provision in ISSNSW	35
4.3.3 How many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients had outcomes recorded?	36
4.3.4 Aboriginal focused service types and number of clients with outcomes recorded	38
4.4 Data Quality	40
4.4.1 Low-quality SLKs	41
4.4.2 Missing information: not stated or unknown demographic information	42
4.4.3 Requirements for recording Circumstances and/or Goals SCOREs not met	43
4.4.4 Unknown reasons for seeking assistance and referral sources	44
5 Next steps – supporting TEI providers to capture and record high-quality quantitative data	44
Appendix 1	46
Appendix 2	47

List of boxes, figures and tables

Boxes

Box 1 Future opportunities for analysis dependent upon more complete data	12
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Figures

Figure 1 Number of TEI clients in ISSNSW in 2020-21	13
Figure 2 Number of TEI clients who received a service in ISSNSW per month for 2020-21	14
Figure 3 Number of TEI individual clients across different service streams and program activities in ISSNSW	15
Figure 4 Age of TEI Individual clients in ISSNSW	16
Figure 5 Children and young people in the TEI program in ISSNSW	17
Figure 6 Gender of TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	17
Figure 7 TEI individual clients who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in ISSNSW	18
Figure 8 TEI individual clients who self-identify as living with disability in ISSNSW ..	19
Figure 9 Culturally and linguistically diverse TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	20
Figure 10 Homelessness status of TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	21
Figure 11 Household composition for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	22
Figure 12 Referral source for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	23
Figure 13 Reason for seeking assistance for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	24
Figure 14 Referrals recorded for individual clients in TEI program in ISSNSW	25
Figure 15 Internal and external referrals out of the TEI program in ISSNSW	26
Figure 16 Number and proportion of TEI individual clients assessed with outcomes (Goals and/or Circumstances SCOREs) in ISSNSW	27
Figure 17 Number and proportion of TEI individual clients with SCORE recorded in ISSNSW	28
Figure 18 Number and proportion of clients with outcomes recorded (Goals and/or Circumstances SCOREs) by program activity in ISSNSW	29
Figure 19 Supported Playgroups service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains	30
Figure 20 Family Capacity Building service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains	31
Figure 21 Social Participation service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains	31
Figure 22 Average Community SCOREs in the Community Strengthening stream in ISSNSW	33
Figure 23 Number and proportion of Aboriginal individual clients across different service streams and program activities in ISSNSW	35

Figure 24 Number and proportion of Aboriginal individual ISSNSW who received TEI services provided by Aboriginal service providers in ISSNSW	36
Figure 25 Number and proportion of Aboriginal clients who were fully assessed with outcomes recorded in ISSNSW	36
Figure 26 Number and proportion of Aboriginal clients with outcomes recorded (Goals and Circumstances SCOREs) by program activity in ISSNSW	37
Figure 27 Aboriginal individual clients across the Aboriginal focused service types in ISSNSW	39
Figure 28 Low-quality SLKs and contributing factors for individual clients in ISSNSW	42
Figure 29 Missing information: Not stated or unknown client demographics for individual clients in ISSNSW	43
Figure 30 TEI Program streams of support and program activities (service types) ..	46

Tables

Table 1 Top 10 countries of birth and languages spoken at home for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW	20
Table 2 Number of Aboriginal clients who received services from universal service types and specialised types and were fully assessed in ISSNSW	40
Table 3 Not stated or unknown client demographics for individual clients in ISSNSW against the TEI Program's goals	47



Executive Summary

This is the first Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 Illawarra Shoalhaven and Southern NSW Districts Annual Report. It accompanies the recently released, first state-wide Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 NSW Annual Report.

The Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Program commenced 1 July 2020 and is funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). The Program's objective is to deliver flexible support to ensure children, young people, families and communities thrive. Importantly, it seeks to prevent any child abuse and neglect risks or vulnerabilities from escalating.

This report presents quantitative data reported by the TEI Program's service providers from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Due primarily to the impacts of COVID, data collection was only mandatory for the six months from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021 and any conclusions drawn from this report and the data should be very mindful of this limitation.

The report provides insights into the potential for TEI data collection in Illawarra Shoalhaven and Southern NSW districts (ISSNSW). It includes key information about service delivery and client cohorts and preliminary information about client and community outcomes.

The report also identifies key data quality issues in ISSNSW TEI reporting. Service providers in the district and across NSW will be supported to address these to ensure TEI Program data is high-quality, consistent, comparable and complete. As the TEI Program matures, and the data correctly reflects what is occurring in and as a result of the program, it will be a powerful tool for planning, decision making, advocacy and evaluation for TEI services in ISSNSW and the TEI Program as a whole.

Key findings

Service delivery

- In 2020-21, TEI services in ISSNSW were delivered by 61 service providers in 134 locations.
- Services were delivered to a total of 8,942 individual clients¹ and 51,687 unidentified group clients.

¹ Individual clients are those for whom identifying information was recorded by a service provider. This information can only be collected with the consent of the client. All other clients ('unidentified group clients') are unidentified when entered into the Data Exchange. These clients may have attended a community event, or attended a drop in centre where identifying information is not collected. For these

- Slightly more individual clients (5,155) received services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream than the Community Strengthening stream (4,162).
- The most common program activity overall was Targeted Support within the Wellbeing and Safety stream (4,758 clients).
- Within the Community Strengthening stream, the most common program activity was Community Support (1,983 clients).

Client demographics for individual clients

- The majority (57%; 5,056 clients) of individual clients recorded in ISSNSW were under 25 years old. The largest group of children and young people recorded was 12-16 year olds (1,641). 29% of individual clients (2,591) were aged 25-49 years old, and 14% (1,273) were aged 50 and over.
- 17% of clients (1,520 clients) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- 14% of clients (1,245) identified as living with a disability, impairment or condition.
- 11% of clients (960) were culturally and linguistically diverse. Other than Australia, the three most common countries of birth of individual clients in ISSNSW were North Macedonia (154 clients; 1.7%), Syria (85 clients; 1.0%) and Thailand (75 clients; 0.8%). Other than English, the three most common languages recorded as being spoken at home were Arabic (252 clients; 2.8%), Macedonian (208 clients; 2.3%) and Swahili (53 clients; 0.6%).
- 184 clients reported they were homeless (2.1%) and a further 381 clients (4.3%) reported they were at risk of homelessness.
- Clients most commonly accessed TEI services for issues relating to community participation and networks, and family functioning.

Referral pathways for individual clients

- The main referral source for clients to TEI services in ISSNSW was self-referrals (768 referrals). This was followed by internal referrals (687) – where the clients were already engaged with a particular service provider who then recommended they participate in another activity delivered within the same organisation.
- ISSNSW TEI service providers made 931 referrals on behalf of clients to other services or programs. 60% of these were external referrals (referrals to different organisations) and 40% were internal referrals (referrals to another activity within the same organisation). The most common reasons for external referrals were mental health, wellbeing and self-care reasons (242) and material wellbeing and basic necessities (117). The most common reasons for internal referrals were for Community participation and networks (219) and material wellbeing and basic necessities (168).

events or services, the total number of clients attending the event or dropping in over the course of a day/set period is collected.



Individual client and community outcomes

- Client outcomes² were only recorded for 13% (1,145) of individual clients in ISSNSW. The data that was recorded reflects some positive impacts for clients.
- Community level outcome³ findings also seem to indicate TEI services in ISSNSW are producing positive changes.

TEI services and findings for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities

- 929 individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients engaged with services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream and 705 in the Community Strengthening stream. Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients engaged with services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream, most clients received Targeted Support services (859 clients) and 79 clients received Intensive or Specialist Support services.
- Of the 36 Aboriginal TEI service providers across NSW who recorded data in 2020-21, four were in ISSNSW. 8.5% (129) of individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients received a service from an Aboriginal service provider.
- The three most common identified Indigenous service types received by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients were Indigenous social participation in the Wellbeing and Safety stream (92 clients); Indigenous supported playgroups (72); and Indigenous healing workshops (63).
- Outcomes were recorded for 13% (194) of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander individual clients.

Data quality

Data quality issues were identified in TEI Program reporting across the state, including in ISSNSW, which limits the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

Identified data quality issues in ISSNSW include:

- Targets for recording Circumstances and/or Goals SCOREs not met⁴.
- Missing information:
 - There is a high proportion of clients for whom the demographic information of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, disability, homelessness and household composition is not known, when compared to TEI Program reporting goals⁵.
 - TEI program referral source is not known for 64% of ISSNSW individual clients.
 - The reason 66% of individual clients sought assistance is not known.
- 18% of individual clients in ISSNSW have a low-quality SLK.

² Client outcomes refers to individual clients with a Goal and/or Circumstances SCORE. Satisfaction SCORE is not counted towards the 13%.

³ Community outcomes are collective outcomes for groups of clients.

⁴ See the [TEI Data Collection and Reporting Guide](#) for requirements.

⁵ See the [Using data in the TEI program](#) guide for TEI program goals for recording demographic information.



Next steps – supporting TEI providers to capture and record high-quality quantitative data

DCJ is committed to continuing to support TEI service providers address data quality issues and reporting requirements so that high-quality data is available for service providers and DCJ to utilise. This includes working with services to understand key issues impacting the recording of accurate, timely data, and supporting services to access resources available to address specific issues.

1 Purpose

The ISSNSW TEI report (the report) is one of seven district level reports developed to accompany the recently released, state-wide Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 NSW Annual Report.

The DCJ TEI Program commenced on 1 July 2020. Its objective is to deliver flexible support to ensure children, young people, families and communities thrive. Importantly, it seeks to prevent any child abuse and neglect risks or vulnerabilities children, young people, families and communities are experiencing from escalating.

The TEI Program is comprised of two streams of support and five program activities. These are illustrated in Figure 30 of Appendix 1. Within each program activity are service types delivered to children, young people, families and communities. See the [TEI Program Specifications](#) for further details about the TEI Program including descriptions of service types.


The report presents select quantitative data reported by the TEI Program's service providers in ISSNSW from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Due primarily to the impacts of COVID, data collection was only mandatory for the six months from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021, so any conclusions drawn from this report and the data should be in the context of this, and other limitations noted in this report.

2 Data Collection Method

In the TEI program, service providers report their data in the [Data Exchange](#). The Data Exchange is a web-based platform hosted by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

All TEI service providers are required to report their data in accordance with the [Data Exchange Protocols](#) and the [TEI Data Collection and Reporting Guide](#).

On 25 August 2021, de-identified, unit record (i.e. anonymous information for individual persons) level data for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 was sent from DSS to DCJ.



FACS Insights, Analysis and Research (FACSIAR), a Directorate within DCJ, analysed the ISSNSW unit record level data presented in this report.

2.1 Important considerations and limitations

The data featured in this report does not present a complete picture of the service delivery that occurred in ISSNSW in 2020/2021 and the client outcomes that were achieved during that period.

There are significant gaps in the data. Not all organisations were reporting their data in the Data Exchange after reporting became mandatory, and there are issues with the quality of the data which was reported overall.

To develop this report DCJ used 'aged', or snapshot, data extracted from the Data Exchange on 25 August 2021. Caution should be exercised when comparing figures in this report to the online Data Exchange reports which are a live environment where the data is updated continuously. In the live Data Exchange reports, even after a reporting period has closed, numbers change as client records and cases are updated or as service providers obtain approval to correct and/or upload data for closed reporting periods.

3 Future state: What complete data will be able to tell us about TEI services

The goal for the TEI Program is to have high-quality data that is consistent, comparable and complete.

The first state-wide TEI Program annual report and its accompanying district reports identified a number of data quality issues (data quality issues for ISSNSW are outlined in section 4.4 of this report). Data quality issues are to be expected in the first year of reporting for the TEI Program.

When data correctly represents what is occurring in the TEI Program streams, program activities and service types, it will be a powerful tool for planning, decision making, advocacy and evaluation - both within districts, and for the program overall.

Reporting high-quality data will enable DCJ and service providers to gain valuable insights into service delivery models and to better understand what works and what needs to be improved to achieve better outcomes for clients.

Box 1 below highlights opportunities for analysis when high quality data is available.

Box 1 Future opportunities for analysis dependent upon more complete data

Future opportunities for analysis dependent upon more complete data

Data category	Key information	Opportunities for analysis
Age	What support do different age groups receive	These data will illustrate the differential benefits of supports provided to children, parents and grandparents/carers by a service. It also allows the program to identify the targeted age groups and their journey through the TEI program.
Location and remoteness	All individual clients recorded	These data will help determine whether locational differences are based on differences in population size, or are indicative of clients' accessibility of the service. They also help understand demand for particular services by location.
Referrals	Benefits of referring clients to appropriate services	<p>These data will help inform the business on clients' requirements of the program. These can be used to ensure that the appropriate services better suited to needs and requirements are available to TEI clients. The data also help determine clients' referral pathways and whether they are supported to navigate through the most suitable services according to their needs.</p> <p>Importantly, these data inform our understanding of the critical relationships between services, throughout the services system, in order to better ensure these are easier to navigate and don't involve barriers to access.</p> <p>Complete data and high-quality SLKs are critical if this is to happen effectively.</p>
SCORES	Results recorded in unexpected domains	These data will help determine the benefits of a program in terms of the outcomes for clients, and accurate recording of results and pairing of SCORES is vital. Although unexpected results are valid, this can be explored further with service providers if data are complete and accurate.

4 Current State: What the reported data tells us about TEI services in ISSNSW in 2020-21

4.1 Program reach and client cohorts

4.1.1 Service provision

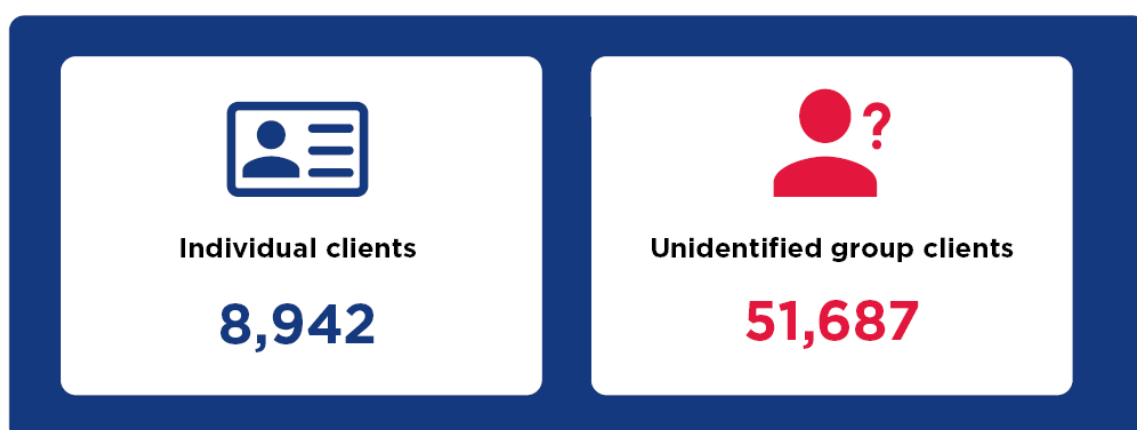
How many TEI service providers are there in ISSNSW?

In 2020-21 there were 61 service providers operating in ISSNSW. They delivered services out of 134 outlets. Outlets are the locations in which TEI services are delivered, or where staff travel from to deliver a service (for example, when conducting home visiting).

How many people do ISSNSW TEI service providers work with?

60,629 clients were recorded as receiving a TEI service in ISSNSW (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Number of TEI clients in ISSNSW in 2020-21



In the TEI Program, there are targets for each program activity for the proportion of clients who should be recorded as individual clients and the proportion recorded as unidentified group clients (see the [Data collection and reporting guide for the Targeted Early Intervention program](#) for details). Unfortunately in the 2020-21 financial year these targets were not met for the program as a whole. Addressing these findings as soon as possible is a major goal for the TEI program.

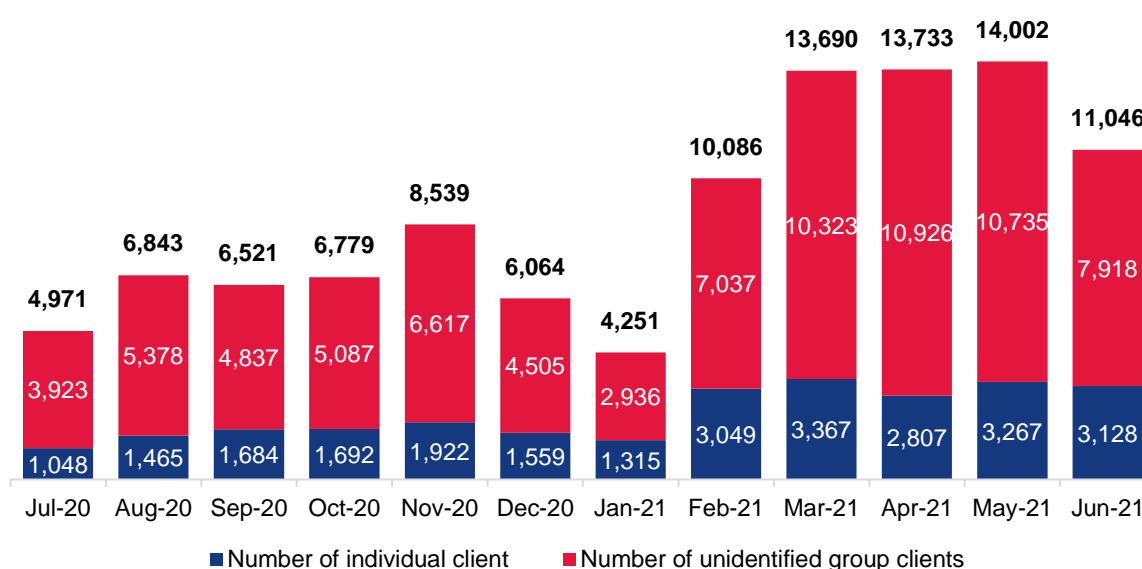
Unidentified group clients should only be reported when it is not practical, possible or appropriate to collect individual client details. Where clients do not consent to having their personal identifying information recorded, it is important that services do not record them as unidentified clients, but rather, untick the consent box recording the person as a de-identified client in the Data Exchange system.

See section 5.4 of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 NSW Annual Report for further information about the issue of recording clients as individual clients or unidentified group clients.

Figure 2 illustrates the monthly number of clients who engaged with a TEI service.

The lower number of clients in December 2020 and January 2021 is consistent with anecdotal information provided by service providers that service delivery tends to reduce over the Christmas to New Year period and during the summer school holidays. It is likely COVID-19 impacted on client numbers, particularly fluctuations in unidentified clients as restrictions and client confidence changed.

Figure 2 Number of TEI clients who received a service in ISSNSW per month for 2020-21



Note: The number of individual clients for each month does not add up to the total number of individual clients in the TEI program. This is because an individual client can access TEI services multiple times throughout the year.

What services did TEI individual clients receive?

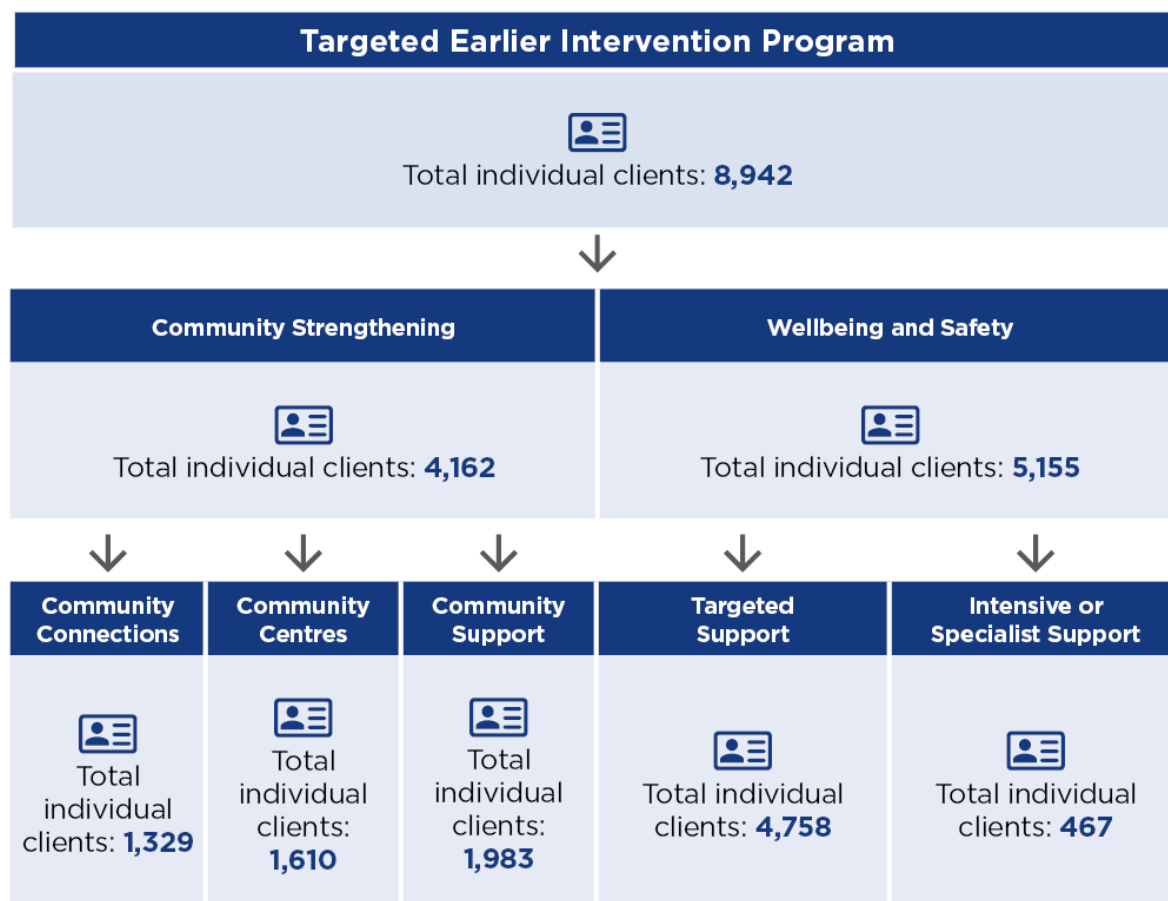
Figure 3 breaks down the services individual clients received in ISSNSW by TEI Program stream and activity.

Slightly more individual clients (5,155) received services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream than the Community Strengthening stream (4,162).

The most common program activity overall was Targeted Support within the Wellbeing and Safety stream (4,758 clients).

Within the Community Strengthening stream, the most common program activity was Community Support (1,983 clients).

Figure 3 Number of TEI individual clients across different service streams and program activities in ISSNSW



Note: The number of individual clients in different program activities, or different service streams should not be added up to get the total number of individual clients (8,942) as individual clients can receive more than one service in the TEI program.

4.1.2 Client demographics

Who is accessing TEI services?

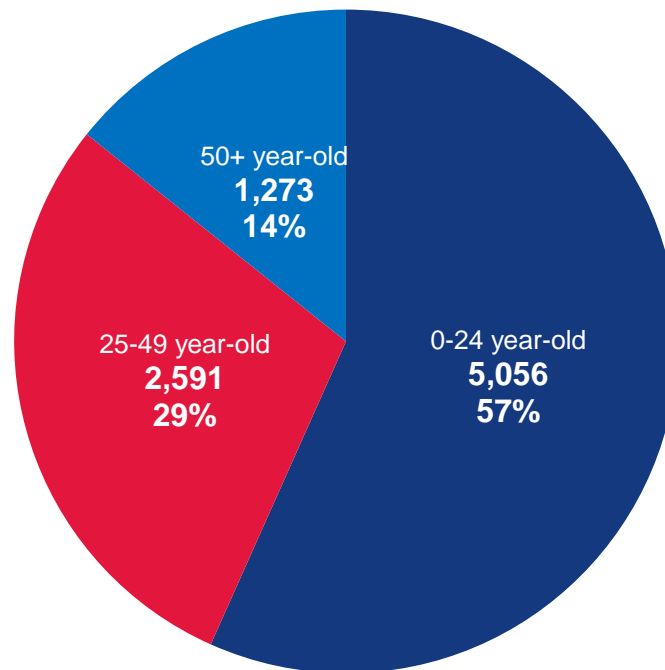
This section provides information about the demographic characteristics of individual clients with whom TEI service providers in ISSNSW worked in 2020-21, where this information is recorded.

There is a high proportion of clients for whom the demographic information of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, disability, homelessness and household composition is not known. Any conclusions drawn from this data should be in the context of this limitation. In the TEI Program, there are goals for recording demographic information. For details of these and how ISSNSW's reported data compared for all demographic characteristics, see Appendix 2.

Age

The majority (57%; 5,056 clients) of individual clients recorded in ISSNSW were under 25 years old. 29% (2,591) were aged 25-49 years old, and 14% (1,273) were aged 50 and over.

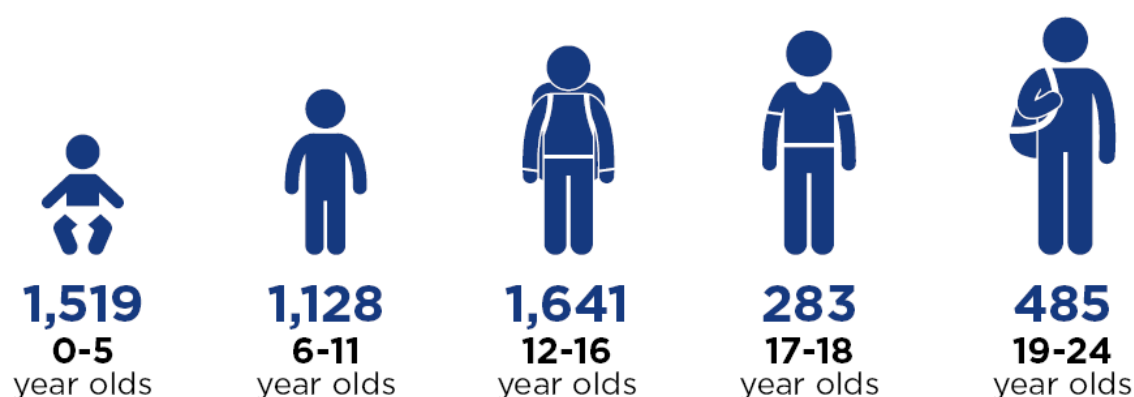
Figure 4 Age of TEI Individual clients in ISSNSW



Note: The total number of TEI individual clients who received TEI services from ISSNSW cannot be calculated by adding up the number of clients in each of the above age groups. Client age is unique across all NSW as the highest age will only be counted once whether or not they have received services from more than one district cluster.

Figure 5 shows a breakdown of individual clients under 25 by age group. The largest group of children and young people recorded was 12-16 year olds (1,641). This was followed by 0-5 year olds (1,519) – a key TEI Program target group.

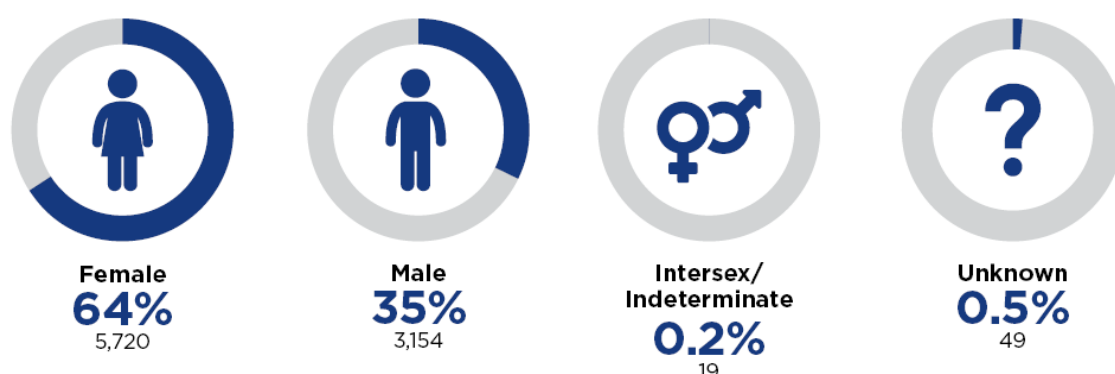
Figure 5 Children and young people in the TEI program in ISSNSW



Gender

The majority of individual clients were female (64%; 5,720 clients). This is consistent with the TEI program across the state as a whole. See Figure 6 for a full breakdown by gender.

Figure 6 Gender of TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients

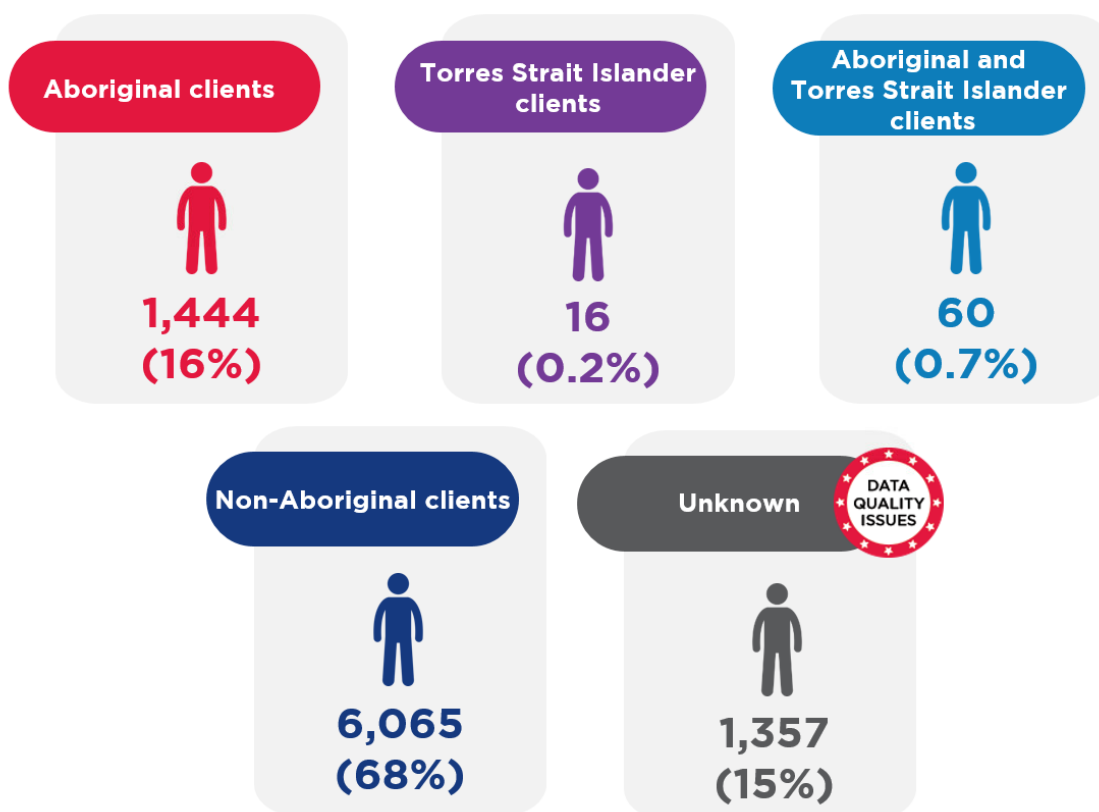
Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities are a key target group of the TEI program.

1,520 individual clients who were recorded as receiving a TEI service in ISSNSW identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, representing approximately 17% of all individual clients for whom this information was recorded (see Figure 7).

Note that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status is not known for 15% of clients (1,357 clients). Ideally, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status would

be not known for less than 5% of individual clients, however it is understood and respected that some Aboriginal people will not want to share this information.

Figure 7 TEI individual clients who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in ISSNSW



See section 4.3.2 for information about Aboriginal service provision in ISSNSW.

People living with a disability

1,245 (14%) individual clients who were recorded as receiving a TEI service in ISSNSW self-identified as living with a disability, impairment or condition (Figure 8).

For the majority of these clients (65%; 808 clients), the reported disabilities were psychiatric⁶. 24% (301) of clients identified as living with a learning disability⁷ and 21% (261) as living with a physical disability⁸.

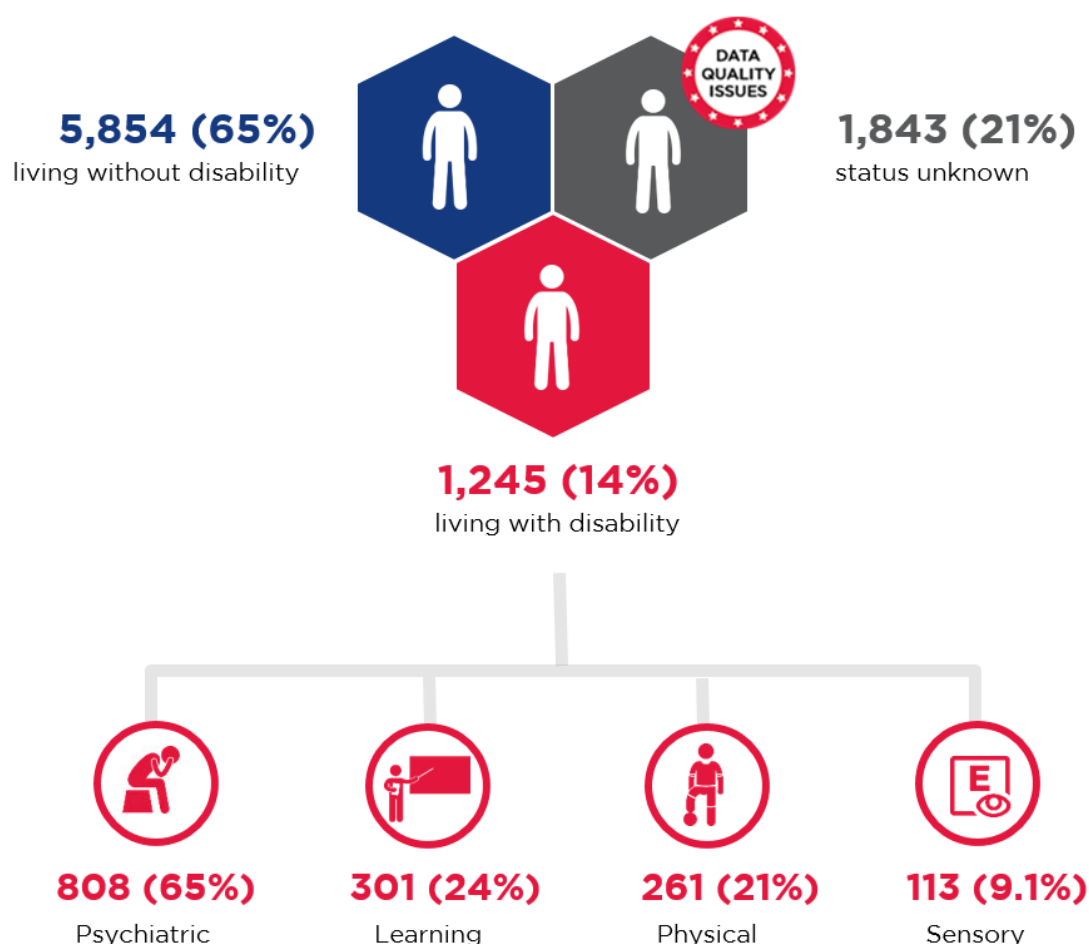
⁶ Psychiatric conditions are associated with clinically recognisable symptoms and behaviour frequently associated with distress that may impair personal functioning in social activity. These include, for example, autism, Asperger syndrome, depression and eating disorders.

⁷ Learning disabilities are associated with impairment of intellectual functions which limit daily activities and restrict participation in a range of life areas (e.g. dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyslexia).

⁸ Physical disabilities are associated with the presence of an impairment which may have diverse effects, including mobility (e.g. paraplegia, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy).

Note disability status is not known for 21% of individual clients (1,843 clients). Ideally, TEI service providers are encouraged to ensure disability status is not known for less than 5% of clients.

Figure 8 TEI individual clients who self-identify as living with disability in ISSNSW

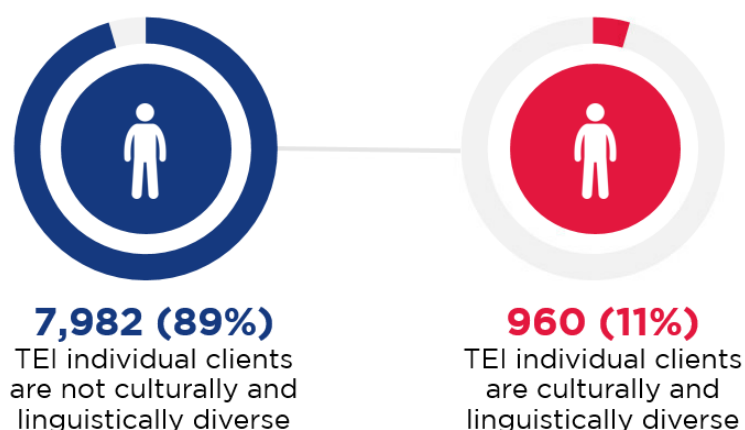


Note: Individual clients can self-identify as living with multiple disabilities, impairments or conditions.

Culturally and linguistically diverse clients

11% (960) of individual clients who were recorded as receiving a TEI service in ISSNSW were culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) (Figure 9). That is, they were recorded as being born overseas and as speaking a language other than English at home.

Figure 9 Culturally and linguistically diverse TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



Note: TEI individual clients can only be classified into two categories in the Data Exchange: culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and not CALD. It should be noted where individual clients have 'unknown' country of birth and/or 'unknown' language spoken at home, they are categorised as non-CALD. This needs to be addressed to ensure data in relation to culturally and linguistically diverse people accessing TEI services is accurate.

Other than Australia, the three most common countries of birth recorded for individual clients in ISSNSW were North Macedonia (154 clients; 1.7%), Syria (85 clients; 1.0%) and Thailand (75 clients; 0.8%).

Other than English, the three most common languages recorded as being spoken at home were Arabic (252 clients; 2.8%), Macedonian (208 clients; 2.3%) and Swahili (53 clients; 0.6%) (Table 1).

Table 1 Top 10 countries of birth and languages spoken at home for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW

Top 10 Countries of Birth		Top 10 Languages spoken at home	
Country	Number of individual clients	Language	Number of individual clients
Australia	6,541 (73%)	English	6,701 (75%)
North Macedonia	154 (1.7%)	Arabic	252 (2.8%)
Syria	85 (1.0%)	Macedonian	208 (2.3%)
Thailand	75 (0.8%)	Swahili	53 (0.6%)
England	75 (0.8%)	Vietnamese	49 (0.5%)

Top 10 Countries of Birth		Top 10 Languages spoken at home	
Country	Number of individual clients	Language	Number of individual clients
New Zealand	58 (0.6%)	Turkish	43 (0.5%)
Philippines	56 (0.6%)	Italian	42 (0.5%)
India	55 (0.6%)	Karen	39 (0.4%)
Vietnam	53 (0.6%)	Thai	38 (0.4%)
Democratic Republic of Congo	52 (0.6%)	Aboriginal English	33 (0.4%)

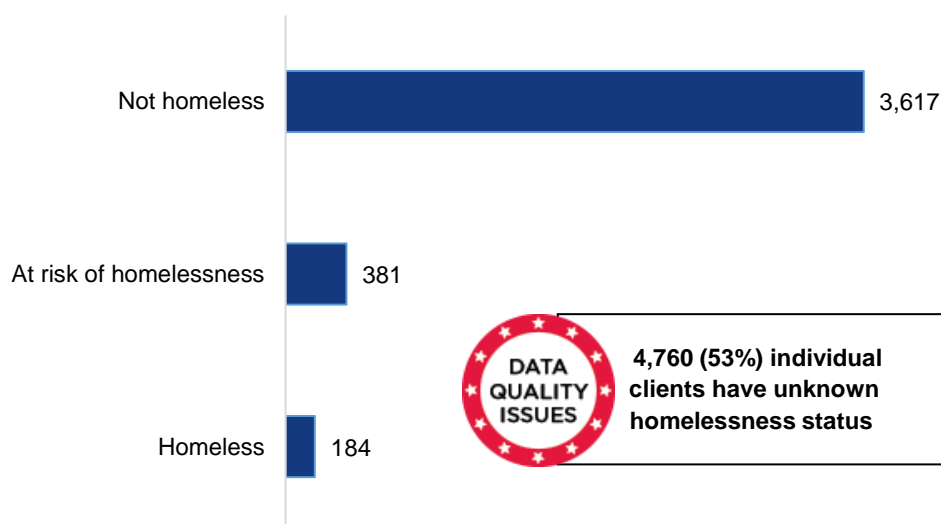
Note: Country of birth is unknown for 1,007 individual clients (11%). Main language spoken at home is unknown for 923 individual clients (10%).

Homelessness status

184 individual clients (2.1%) with whom ISSNSW TEI service providers were working reported they were homeless (Figure 10). 381 clients (4.3%) reported they were at risk of being homeless. Combined, 6.3% of clients were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

It should be noted that the homelessness status of more than half (53%; 4760) of individual clients is unknown. Ideally, TEI service providers are encouraged to ensure homelessness status is not known for less than 5% of individual clients.

Figure 10 Homelessness status of TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



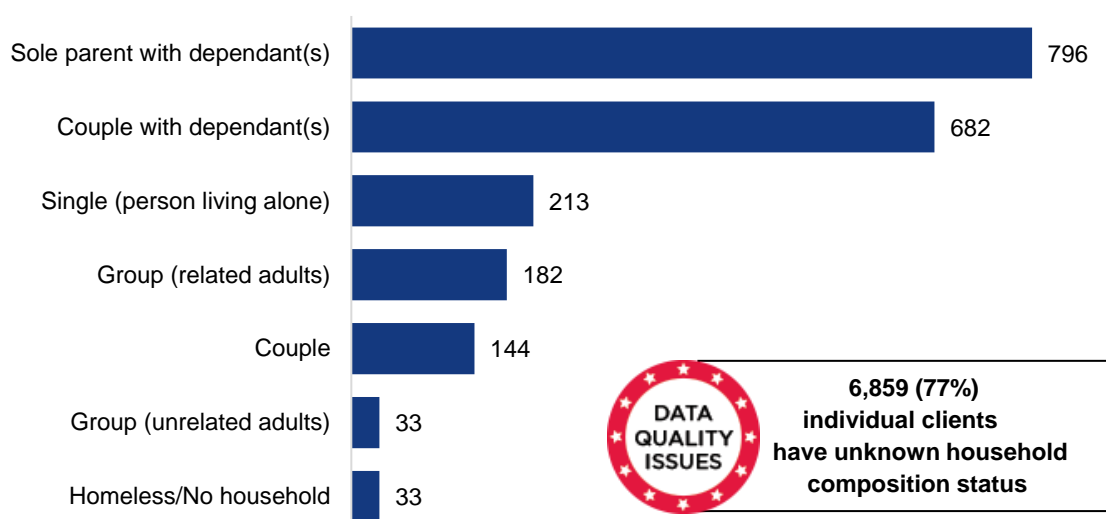
Household composition

Household composition can provide useful information about clients' living arrangements and how this may impact the challenges they face.

The most common household composition for individual clients was 'sole parent with dependant(s)' (796; 8.9% of all individual clients) (Figure 11). This was followed by 'couple with dependant(s)' (682; 7.6%).

It should be noted that household composition was not recorded for more than three quarters of clients (77%; 6,859 clients). Ideally, TEI service providers are encouraged to ensure household composition is not known for less than 5% of individual clients.

Figure 11 Household composition for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



4.1.3 Referral pathways

How and why do clients access the TEI program?

Figure 12 shows the referral sources⁹ recorded for TEI clients in ISSNSW. Note that no referral source was recorded for the majority (64%) of clients. This prevents us from understanding the pathways these clients have travelled into the TEI service system.

Self-referrals were the most common referral source (768 referrals). A high number of self-referrals could reflect the extent to which TEI services in ISSNSW are:

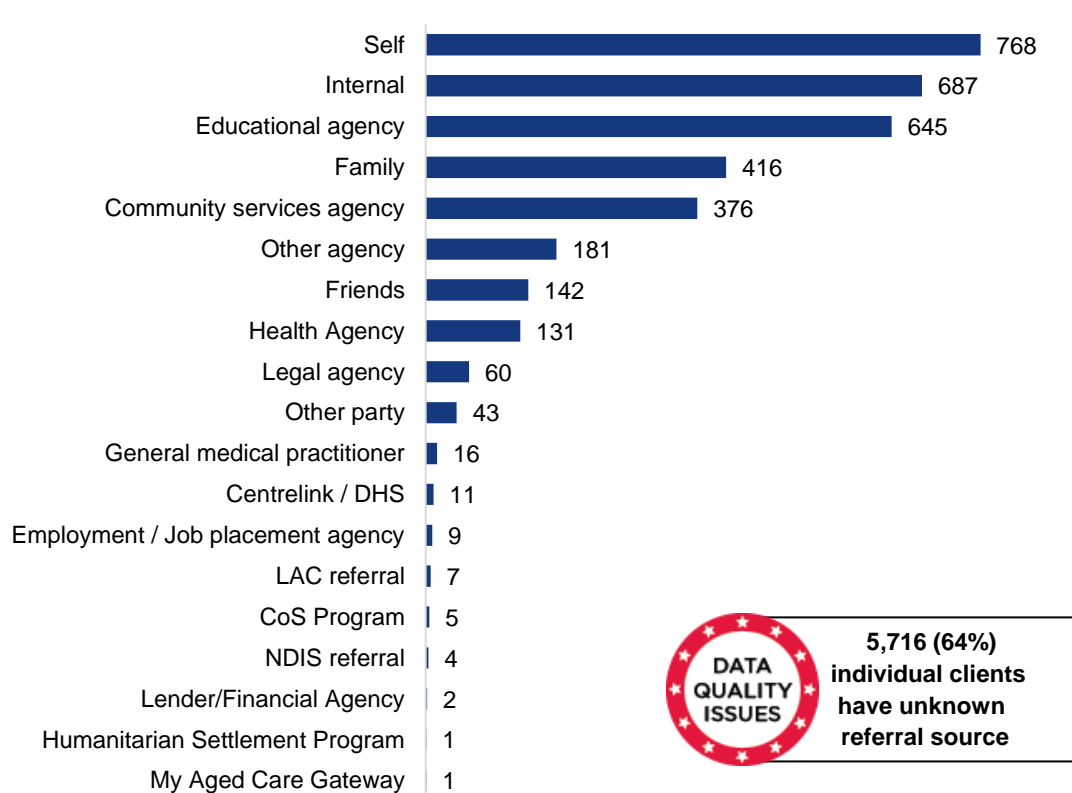
⁹ The referral source is the person or agency responsible for referring a client to the TEI service or activity.

- easy to find, and/or
- easy to access and/or
- known in their local communities.

The next most common referral sources were internal referrals (687) and educational agencies (645 referrals). Internal referrals mean the clients were already engaged with a particular service provider who then recommended they participate in another activity delivered within the same organisation.

416 clients were referred by family, indicating the importance of informal networks to help people navigate the service system and know where to go for assistance.

Figure 12 Referral source for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



Note: A referral source can be recorded for a single client multiple times.

Individual clients accessed TEI services in ISSNSW for various reasons. Figure 13 breaks these down by primary reason (the main reason for seeking assistance) and secondary reason(s) (which can also be recorded for clients if relevant).

The two most common reasons overall are community participation and networks (1,325) and family functioning (1,256).

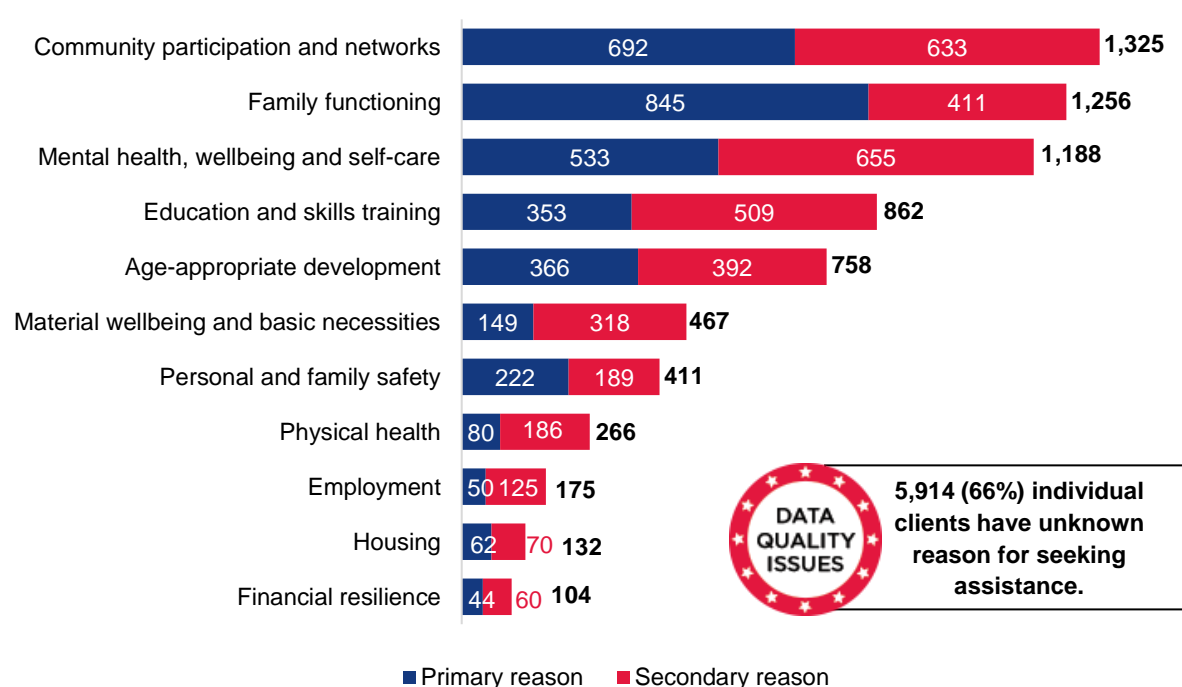
Community participation and networks refers to support needed to better engage with local community and to build a network of informal supports through family and friends.

Family functioning refers to the support children, young people and parents may need to improve their relationships at home, address conflict, improve communication and foster a loving and supportive home environment.

Another common reason for seeking assistance was mental health, wellbeing and self-care (1,188). A goal of TEI services is to help support people experiencing mental health issues and having trouble accessing the services they need, however this cannot be fully explored until data are more complete.

Note the reasons individual clients sought assistance are not known for 66% of clients (5,914 clients).

Figure 13 Reason for seeking assistance for TEI individual clients in ISSNSW



Note: Reason for seeking assistance can be recorded for a single client multiple times. Individual clients who receive TEI services from more than one cluster and have their reasons for referral recorded only in some clusters will not be counted in the cluster with unknown reasons.

To what other services or programs were TEI clients referred?

ISSNSW TEI services recorded a total of 931 referrals to other services/programs for individual clients. Referrals are conducted when:

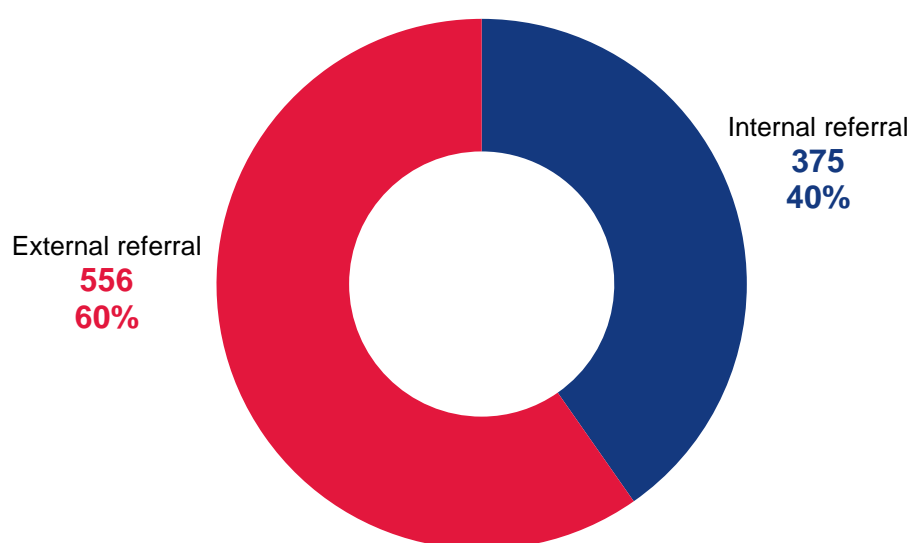
- a service provider doesn't have the necessary skills or capacity to meet a client's need
- a client might be better off receiving a different type of service
- a client wants additional services to meet their needs.

60% of referrals were external and 40% internal. External referrals are to activities provided by a different organisation. For example, a young person participating in an

after-school program may be referred to counselling run by a mental health practitioner. Internal referrals are to another activity offered within the same organisation. For example, a parent participating in a playgroup may be referred to a parenting group run by the same service provider.

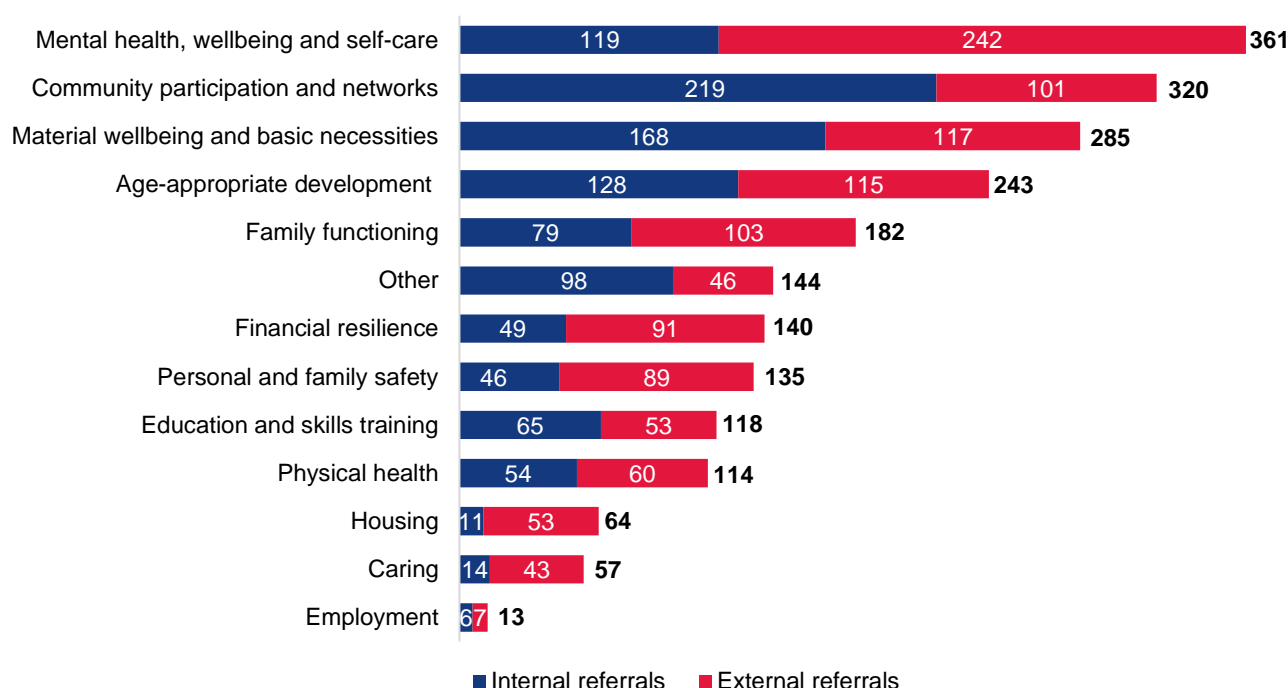
The limited data reported suggests that TEI service providers are supporting clients to navigate the service system and find the services they need.

Figure 14 Referrals recorded for individual clients in TEI program in ISSNSW



External referrals were most likely to be conducted for mental health, wellbeing and self-care reasons (242 referrals) and material wellbeing and basic necessities (117) (Figure 15). Internal referrals were most likely to be conducted for Community participation and networks (219) and material wellbeing and basic necessities (168).

Figure 15 Internal and external referrals out of the TEI program in ISSNSW



Note: This is not a unique count of referrals out of the TEI program as there can be one or more reasons for referral for a single referral conducted.

4.2 Individual client and community outcomes

In the TEI program, client outcomes are the changes that occur for clients and communities as a result of service delivery. These can be changes in skills, knowledge, attitude, values, behaviours or circumstances.

To understand how each TEI service provider contributes to the TEI program client outcomes, DCJ requires TEI service providers to report client and community outcome data in the Data Exchange, using “SCORE”. SCORE stands for ‘Standard Client/Community Outcomes Reporting’. It is an outcome reporting tool that helps report the impact of service delivery. In the Data Exchange, there are four different types of SCORE:

- Circumstances SCORE: measures changes in client circumstances.
- Goals SCORE: measures progress in achieving specific goals.
- Satisfaction SCORE: measures client satisfaction.
- Community SCORE: measures changes for groups or communities.

Each type of SCORE has different domains that can be used to report client outcomes. SCORE uses a 5-point rating scale to report outcomes. The scale varies for each type of SCORE. See the [Data Exchange Protocols](#) for details.

4.2.1 Individual client outcomes

How many individual clients had outcomes recorded?

To ensure analysis is meaningful, Circumstances and Goals SCORE data need to be collected **at least twice** during a client's engagement with a service – early in their engagement and then, at a minimum towards or at the end of their engagement. Paired SCOREs are then compared to measure the degree of change over time. By doing this, the impact the program is having or had on an individual's life can start to be understood.

TEI service providers should record Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE for at least 50% of their individual clients (see the [TEI Data Collection and Reporting Guide](#)).

In ISSNSW in 2020-21, only a small proportion of individual clients (13%; 1,145) were assessed for Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE. That is, at least two SCOREs were recorded and paired for the client for a particular domain (see Figure 16, below).

15% of clients (1,319) were partially assessed (Figure 16). Partial assessment means the client had an initial SCORE recorded for a particular Circumstance and/or Goal SCORE domain, but no subsequent SCORE against the same domain to measure any change. Partial assessment data is of little value.

Figure 16 Number and proportion of TEI individual clients assessed with outcomes (Goals and/or Circumstances SCOREs) in ISSNSW

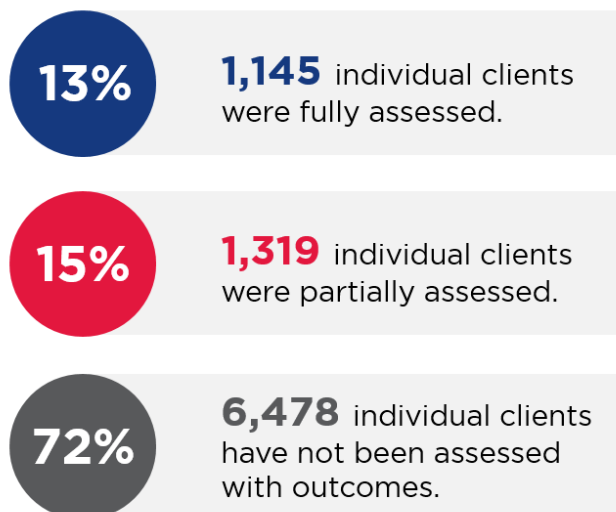
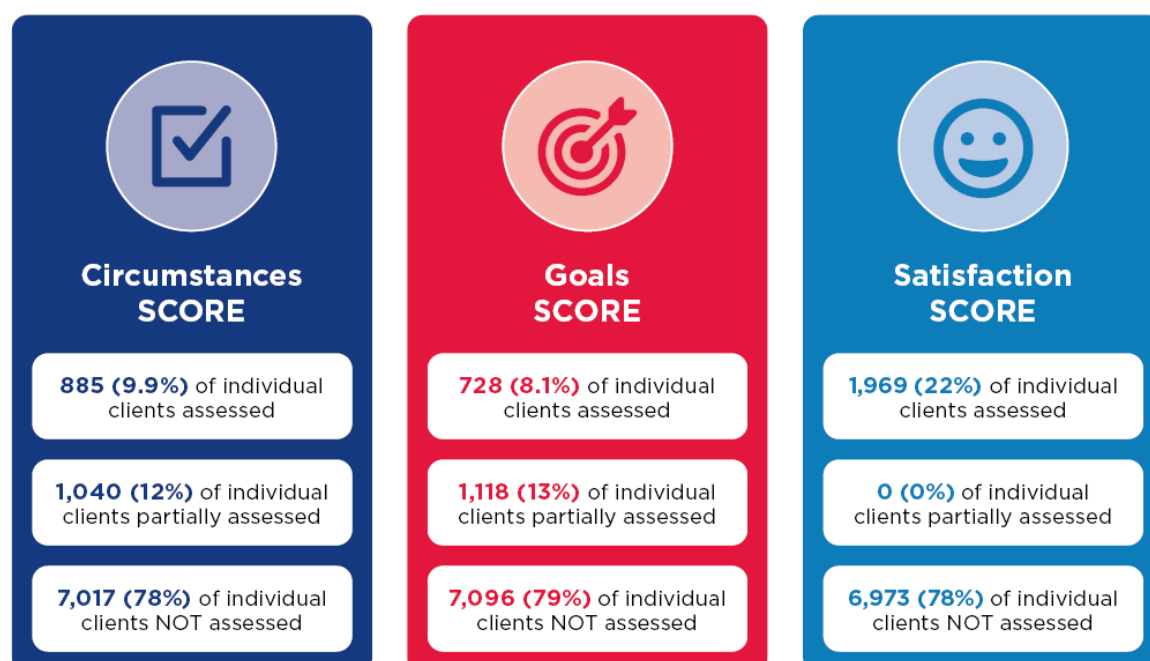


Figure 17 shows a breakdown of the number and proportion of individual clients assessed, partially assessed, and not assessed by Circumstances, Goals and Satisfaction SCOREs.

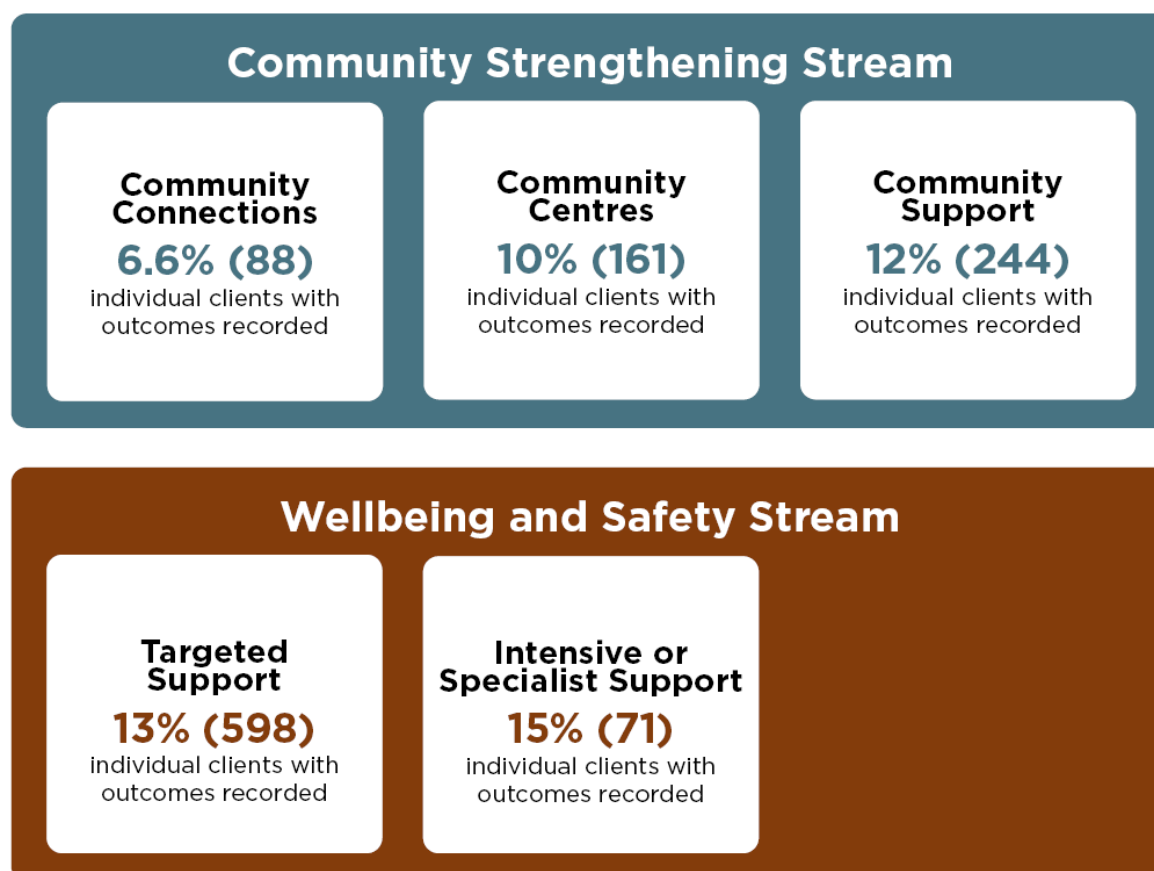
Figure 17 Number and proportion of TEI individual clients with SCORE recorded in ISSNSW



The low number of complete Circumstances and Goals SCOREs is generally consistent with providers across the state - only 18% of TEI clients across the state had Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE outcomes recorded. This significantly limits the conclusions that can be drawn about the ability of the TEI program generally and in ISSNSW specifically to help clients improve their circumstances or achieve their goals. The low numbers also reduce our ability to evaluate the TEI program and demonstrate the impact of service providers.

Figure 18 breaks down the number and proportion of clients who were assessed for Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE by program activity in ISSNSW. Note these are not unique counts and the same client could be counted more than once if they received a service and were assessed in more than one program activity. For example, a client who received a service in both the Community Centres and Targeted Support program activities, and who was assessed in both, will be counted twice – once in each program activity.

Figure 18 Number and proportion of clients with outcomes recorded (Goals and/or Circumstances SCOREs) by program activity in ISSNSW



Note: Individual clients can receive services and have their outcomes recorded from more than one program activity.

Footnote: Individual clients with outcomes recorded means that they are fully assessed with paired SCOREs (earliest and latest SCOREs).

What outcomes did TEI individual clients achieve?

Despite the low percentage of clients who had Circumstance and/or Goals SCOREs recorded, the data available suggests TEI services in ISSNSW had a positive impact on client outcomes.

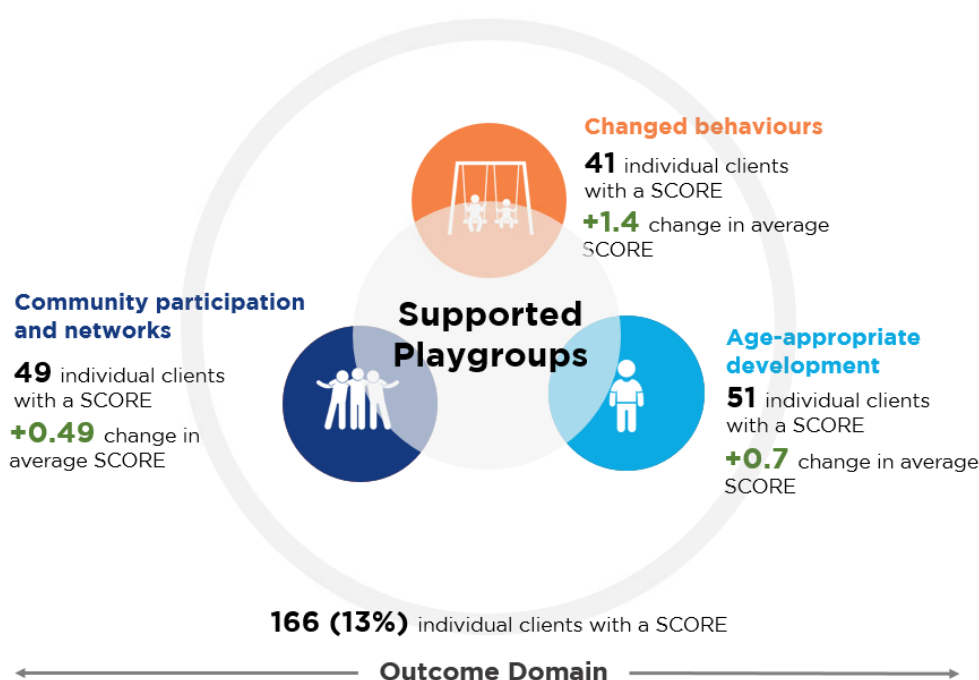
To determine this, the three TEI service types across all program activities with the highest number of individual clients assessed were selected. For each of these three service types, the three domains used to measure outcomes that had the highest

number of individual clients assessed were also selected¹⁰. Please see figures 19, 20 and 21 below for details.

Positive impacts are shown for all nine domains. This is demonstrated by the green figures in Figures 19-21 which show the average difference between the earliest and latest paired SCOREs. In all cases, there was a positive net shift.

Figure 19 Supported Playgroups service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains

Program Activity 4: Targeted Support



¹⁰ Some domains under particular service types may have shown additional and bigger outcomes achieved, but have not been included here as there may have been a smaller number of clients accessing the service, or the number of recorded SCOREs were low.

Figure 20 Family Capacity Building service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains

Program Activity 4: Targeted Support

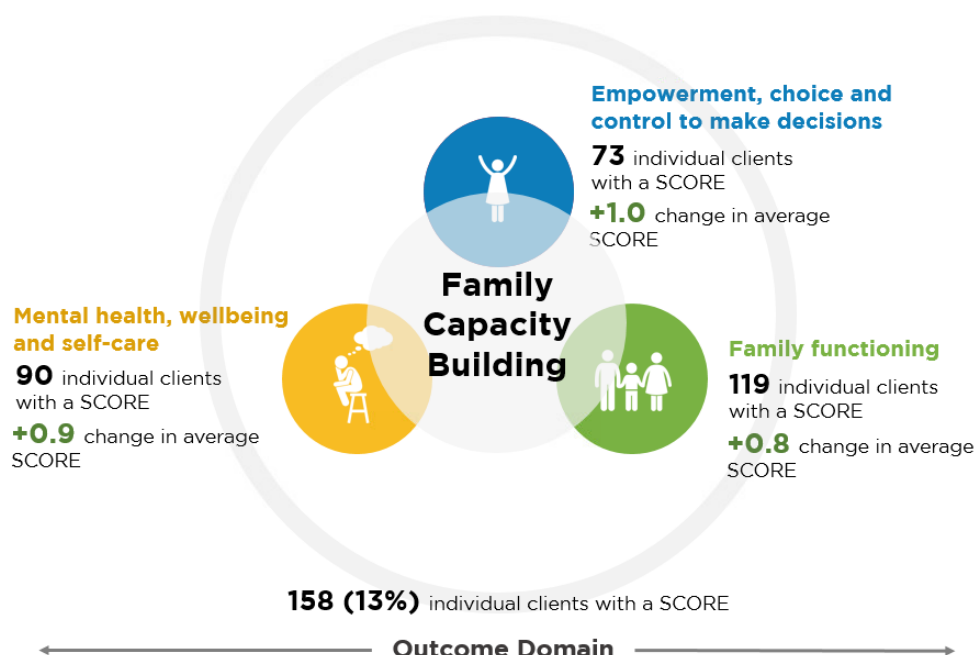
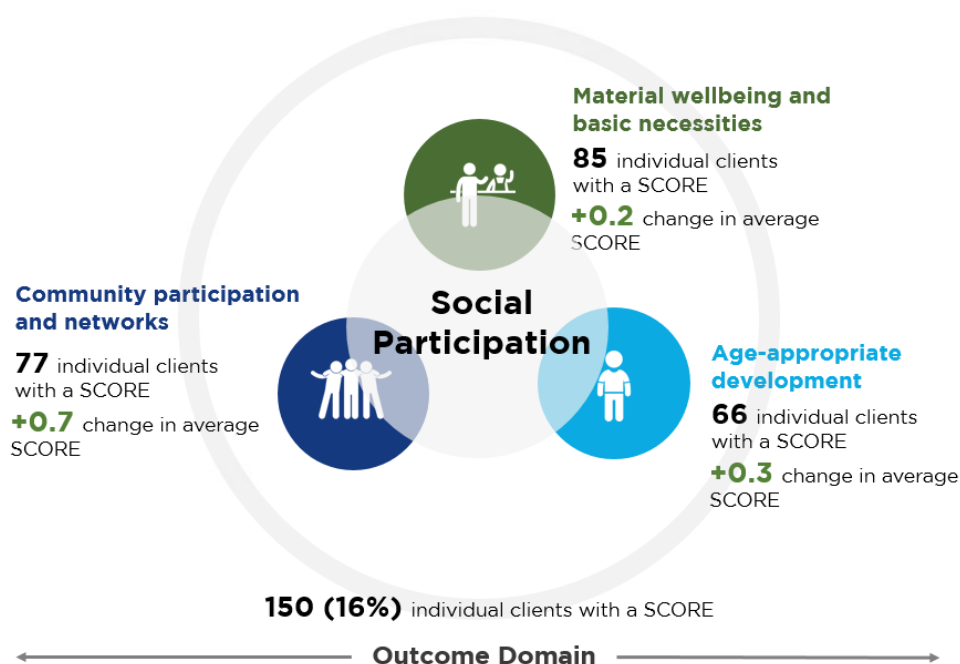


Figure 21 Social Participation service type: individual clients with recorded SCOREs in the top three domains

Program Activity 2: Community Centres



4.2.2 Client satisfaction

How many individual clients reported Satisfaction SCOREs?

TEI service providers should record Satisfaction SCORE for at least 10% of clients (see the [TEI Data Collection and Reporting Guide](#)).

In 2020-21 in ISSNSW, 22% of individual clients (1,969 clients) had a Satisfaction SCORE recorded (Figure 17).

4.2.3 Community level outcomes

In the TEI program, service providers use Community SCORE to report collective outcomes for groups of clients. Community SCORE should only be used when it is:

- not possible or practical to record SCOREs for individual clients (e.g. at a one-off event, in a drop-in centre)
- not relevant to record SCOREs for individual clients (e.g. at an interagency meeting).

Due to the nature of TEI services, Community SCOREs are mostly reported for services in the Community Strengthening stream.

Community SCORE uses a 5-point rating scale to report changes in these outcomes.

Service providers administer surveys to groups of clients, or they conduct a practitioner assessment to determine where the group of clients sits on this scale.

1 – No change	2 – Limited change with emerging engagement	3 – Limited change with moderate engagement	4 – Moderate change	5 – Significant change
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The community session SCORE is treated as a stand-alone assessment and no pairing occurs. Only latest SCORE is included.

What community level outcomes did the TEI program achieve in ISSNSW?

Community level outcome findings seem to indicate TEI service providers in ISSNSW are producing positive changes for groups of TEI Clients.

To determine this, the three service types that had the largest number of sessions within each program activity in the Community Strengthening stream were selected.

See Figure 22 for details.

Average Community SCOREs for two of the nine service types are above 4.0 (4.1). These indicate moderate positive change for those service types.

Average Community SCORES for six service types ranged from between 3.1 – 3.9, indicating positive change, though limited, with moderate engagement. Average Community SCORE for the remaining service type was 2.8, indicating limited change with emerging engagement. Further interrogation is needed to understand client needs with respect to these service types and the extent to which practice can reflect that.

Figure 22 Average Community SCOREs in the Community Strengthening stream in ISSNSW





4.3 TEI services and findings for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities

4.3.1 How many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients do TEI providers work with?

Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities are a key target group of the TEI program.

Completeness of the data relating to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people using TEI services is very low. DCJ will be working with service providers and communities to understand why this is the case.

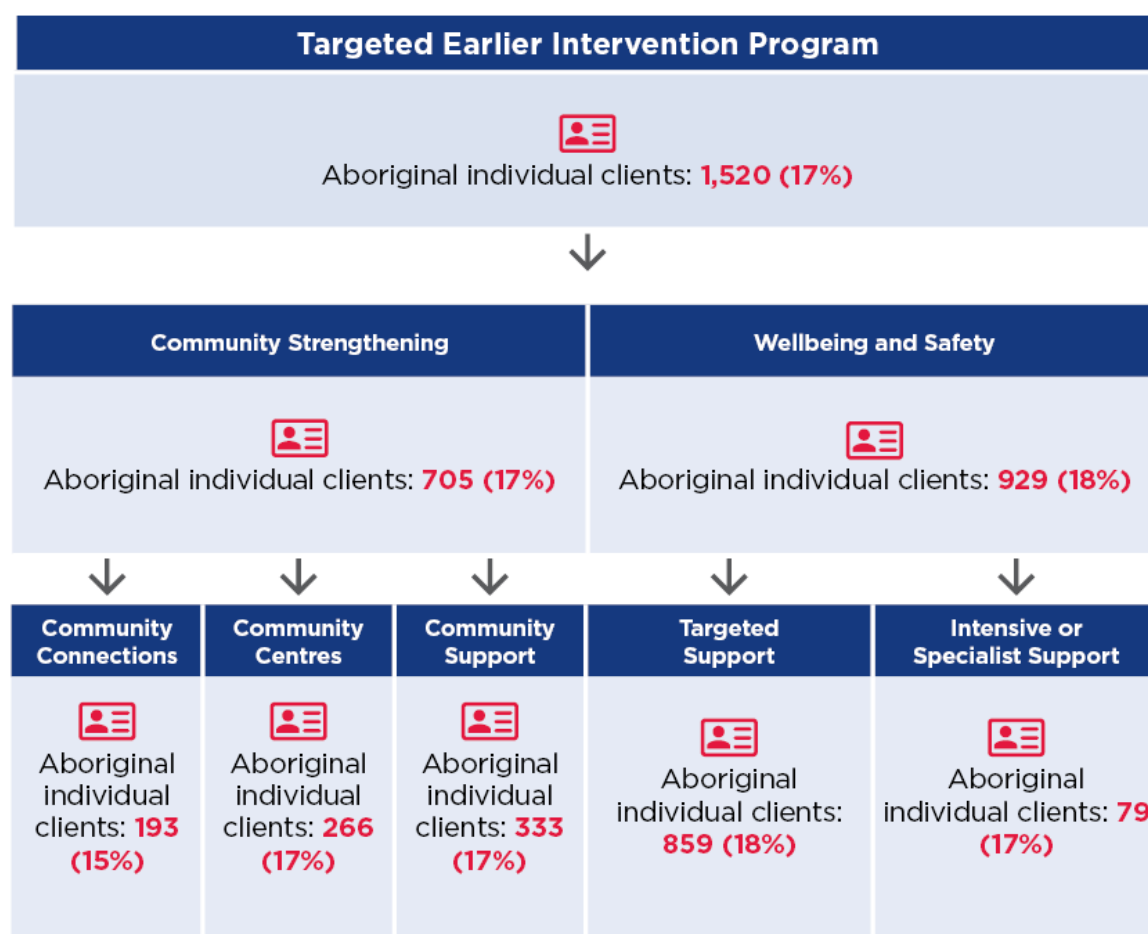
It is also noted that quantitative data collected in the Data Exchange about TEI services generally, but in particular services owned by, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is limited in the person and community centred outcomes it measures. Again, DCJ will be working in partnership with services and communities to develop tools which support the collection, analysis and use of data relevant to Aboriginal people and communities.

As mentioned in section 4.1.2, 1,520 clients with whom ISSNSW worked self-identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. 929 individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients engaged with services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream and 705 in the Community Strengthening stream (Figure 23).

It is noted that for many clients engaging in Community Strengthening stream programs/services, demographic data (including data in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification) will not have been collected, and these clients will be recorded as unidentified.

Of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients engaged with services in the Wellbeing and Safety stream, most clients received Targeted Support services (859 clients) and 79 clients received Intensive or Specialist Support services.

Figure 23 Number and proportion of Aboriginal individual clients across different service streams and program activities in ISSNSW



Note: The number of Aboriginal individual clients in different program activities, or different service streams should not be added up to get the total number of Aboriginal individual clients (1,520) as individual clients can receive more than one service in the TEI program.

4.3.2 Aboriginal service provision in ISSNSW

Of the 36 Aboriginal TEI service providers across NSW who recorded data in 2020-21, four were in ISSNSW.

129 (8.5%) of the 1,520 individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients who received a TEI service in ISSNSW received the service from an Aboriginal service provider (Figure 24).

Figure 24 Number and proportion of Aboriginal individual ISSNSW who received TEI services provided by Aboriginal service providers in ISSNSW



4.3.3 How many Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients had outcomes recorded?

Of the 1,520 individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients who received a TEI service in ISSNSW in 2020-21, 194 (13%) were assessed for Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE (Figure 25).

Figure 25 Number and proportion of Aboriginal clients who were fully assessed with outcomes recorded in ISSNSW

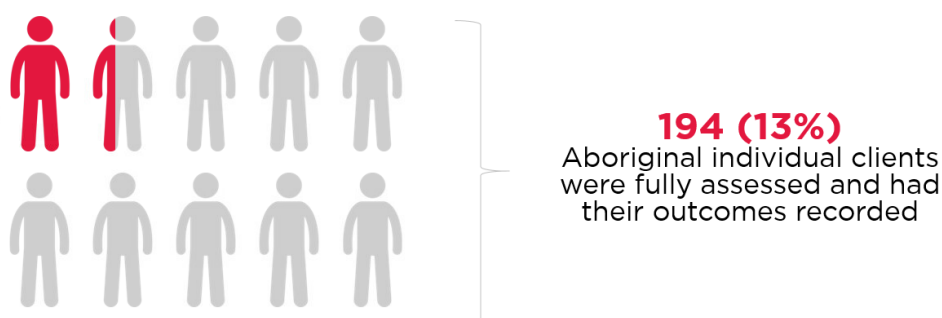


Figure 26 breaks this down by program activity. Of all the individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients who received a service, the following were assessed:

- Community Connections program activity, 11% (22 clients)
- Community Centres program activity, 18% (47 clients)
- Community Support program activity, 6.3% (21 clients)
- Targeted Support program activity, 12% (104 clients)
- Intensive or Specialist Support activity, 3.8% (3 clients).

Figure 26 Number and proportion of Aboriginal clients with outcomes recorded (Goals and Circumstances SCOREs) by program activity in ISSNSW



Note: Individual clients can receive services and have their outcomes recorded from more than one program activity.

Footnote: Individual clients with outcomes recorded means that they are fully assessed with paired SCOREs (earliest and latest SCOREs).

4.3.4 Aboriginal focused service types and number of clients with outcomes recorded

In the TEI program there are five identified Indigenous service types:

1. Indigenous community engagement activities
2. Indigenous social participation activities
3. Indigenous advocacy/support
4. Indigenous healing workshops
5. Indigenous supported playgroups.

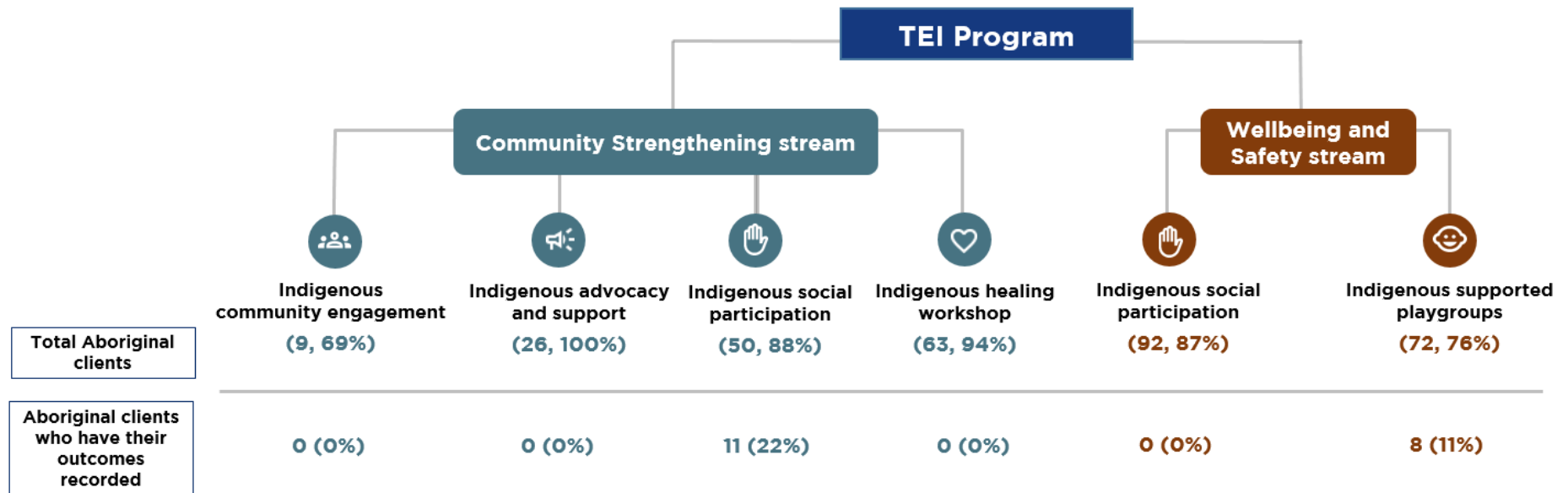
See the [TEI Program Specifications](#) for descriptions of these services.

Figure 27 shows a breakdown of the number and proportion of individual Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients who received an identified Indigenous service and of those who did, the number and proportion who were assessed within those services (for Circumstances and/or Goals SCORE).

The three most common service types received were Indigenous social participation in the Wellbeing and Safety stream (92 clients); Indigenous supported playgroups (72); and Indigenous healing workshops (63).

Within the Wellbeing and Safety stream, outcomes were recorded for 8 clients who received Indigenous supported playgroup services.

Figure 27 Aboriginal individual clients across the Aboriginal focused service types in ISSNSW



All of the Indigenous service types have a universal equivalent, except for Indigenous healing workshops. For example, there is an Indigenous supported playgroup and a Supported playgroup; Indigenous advocacy/support and Advocacy and support. Table 2 compares the number of Aboriginal clients who received an Identified Indigenous service type with those who received the equivalent universal service within the same program activity.


Table 2 Number of Aboriginal clients who received services from universal service types and specialised types and were fully assessed in ISSNSW

Program Activity	Service type	Number of Aboriginal clients	Aboriginal clients fully assessed with outcomes
Community Connections	Community Engagement	98	0 (0%)
	Indigenous community engagement	9	0 (0%)
	Social participation	59	9 (15%)
	Indigenous social participation	50	11 (22%)
Community Support	Advocacy/Support	96	9 (9.4%)
	Indigenous advocacy/support	26	0 (0%)
Targeted Support	Supported playgroups	159	29 (18%)
	Indigenous supported playgroups	72	8 (11%)

Note: An individual TEI client identified as Aboriginal may attend both an Aboriginal targeted service type and also a universal service type. Indigenous social participation and Social participation service types in this table only include the number of clients in the Community Connections program activity, as the Social participation service type was not available in the Targeted Support program activity.

4.4 Data Quality

A number of data quality issues were identified in ISSNSW TEI reporting. As outlined in section 3 of this report, this is to be expected in the first year of TEI Program reporting.



Data quality issues occur when data are missing, incorrect, inconsistent, or when they are not recorded in a timely manner. These issues severely limit the usefulness of data. Addressing these issues as soon as possible will allow DCJ and service providers to use high-quality data for planning, decision making, advocacy and evaluation.

4.4.1 Low-quality SLKs

Low-quality SLKs were identified as a data quality issue in ISSNSW.

An SLK is a 14-character algorithm generated from selected letters from a client's first and last name, gender, and date of birth, which allows de-identified data to be linked with other data sets for which SLKs can also be created. For example an SLK of 'MIHOH140219711' provides no independent means of identifying an individual client when used in place of the actual identifying information.

Being able to link data using SLKs allows us to understand this client's referral pathways throughout the service system.

Of the 8,942 individual clients in ISSNSW, 18% (1,563 clients) had a low-quality SLK (Figure 28)¹¹. This means those clients' details are missing or inaccurate.

By far the main cause of low-quality SLKs was the use of an estimated date of birth instead of an actual date of birth (16%).

It is recognised that in the TEI program it is not always possible, or appropriate, to obtain certain information. Some clients may not want to provide their personal details, and it is critical that clients are not reluctant to access nor denied services for this reason.

However, wherever possible, TEI service providers should try to ensure as many client records as possible are accurate. Over time, as service providers build a relationship with clients, clients might feel more comfortable disclosing personal information. Client records can be updated as more accurate information is provided.

¹¹ For the purpose of the ISSNSW TEI Report, SLK compliance is attached to the session conducted date. This allows SLK analysis to be conducted on the TEI cohort who are reported in this report. This differs from SLK compliance rate from the Data Exchange live environment, where SLK is attached to when the client's record is first created, which would include clients that have engaged in services outside 2020-21.

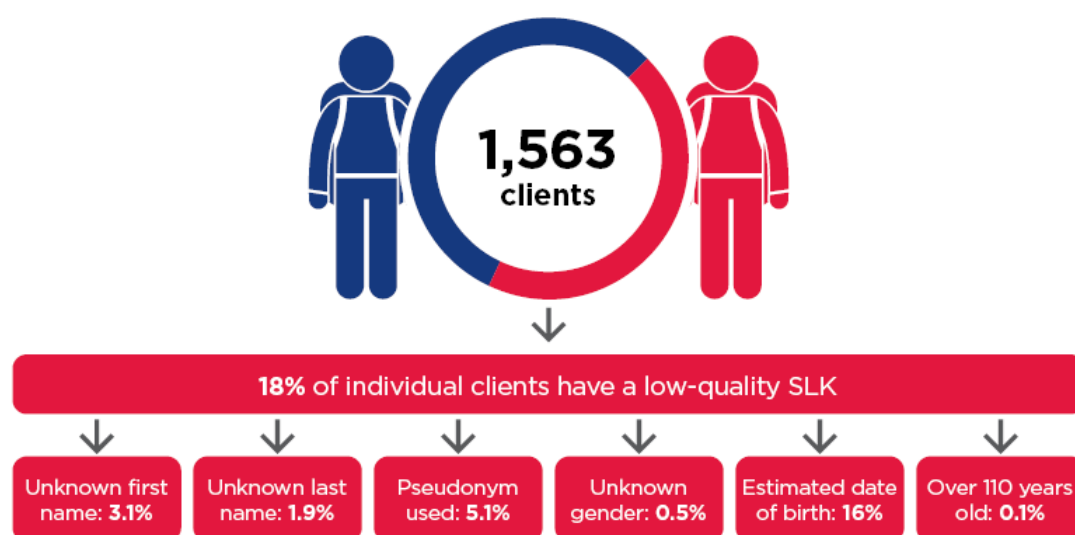
TEI service providers are encouraged to set the following goals for their organisation:

- missing first name: <2%
- missing last name: <2%
- pseudonym: <10%
- gender not stated: <2%
- estimated date of birth: <10%
- over 110 years old: <1%

For more information about how to check the quality of SLKs see: [Using Data in the TEI program.](#)

To see a comparison between the state-wide data and ISSNSW data regarding low quality SLKs, see section 5.1 of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 NSW Annual Report.

Figure 28 Low-quality SLKs and contributing factors for individual clients in ISSNSW



4.4.2 Missing information: not stated or unknown demographic information

Missing demographic information was identified as a data quality issue in ISSNSW.

Demographic data is collected to help the program understand who is accessing TEI services and what services they need, which is important information for service delivery planning.

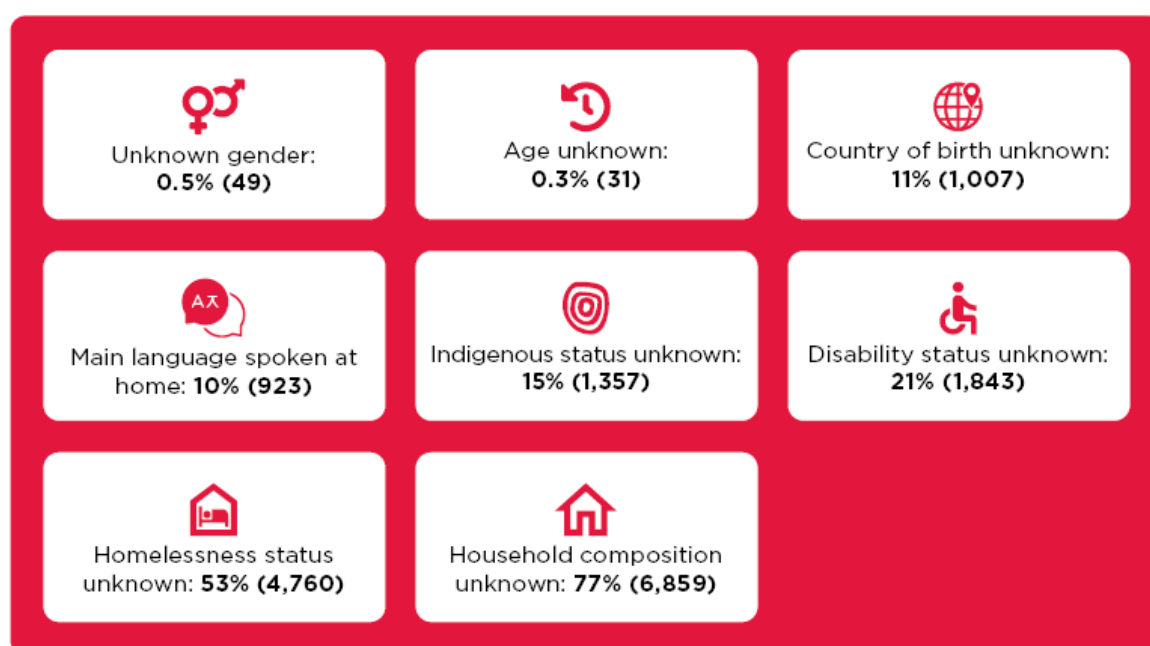
Figure 29 provides detail about unknown demographics in ISSNSW. All of these demographic data items are mandatory fields. This means TEI service providers are

required to ask clients for this information, recognising that it is always the client's choice as to what information they disclose.

As mentioned in section 4.1.2, of particular concern in ISSNSW is missing information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, disability, homelessness and household composition.

Table 3 in Appendix 2 shows ISSNSW's reported data against the TEI Program's goals for reporting demographic information.

Figure 29 Missing information: Not stated or unknown client demographics for individual clients in ISSNSW



Note: Household composition and homelessness status data items will only be available if organisations have selected the “partnership approach”. This is mandatory in TEI, however it must be selected by an organisation manually in setting up their system. This may explain why ‘unknown’ numbers are high. DCJ will be seeking further information about this and work with organisations to address as required.

4.4.3 Requirements for recording Circumstances and/or Goals SCOREs not met

As outlined in section 4.2.1, requirements for recording Circumstances and/or Goals SCOREs were not met in ISSNSW. This limits the ability to draw conclusions about the ability of the TEI program in ISSNSW to help clients improve their circumstances and achieve their goals or to evaluate the TEI program to demonstrate the impact of TEI service providers.



4.4.4 Unknown reasons for seeking assistance and referral sources

As outlined in section 4.1.3 of this report:

- the referral source into the TEI program is not known for 64% of ISSNSW individual clients
- the reason 66% of individual clients sought assistance is not known.

This limits the usefulness of referral pathways data, which is important for understanding client needs and their journey through the system.

5 Next steps – supporting TEI providers to capture and record high-quality quantitative data

The state-wide and district TEI Program annual reports highlight key data quality issues in TEI reporting. In addition to the specific issues highlighted for ISSNSW in section 4 of this report, issues identified at a state level include:


- sessions with one unidentified client
- too many unidentified group clients recorded
- unpaired SCOREs
- incorrectly recorded outcomes in every SCORE domain
- program activity targets for recording of individual (rather than unidentified) clients were not met.

See the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program 2020-2021 NSW Annual Report for further details about these issues.

The significance and importance of high quality quantitative data which, with qualitative and other data, can demonstrate the value and impact of early support services for families and communities cannot be overstated. It will be critical for the evaluation of the TEI program as a whole, and for individual services to understand the impact they have on client outcomes locally.

This report reflects the first year of the journey in ISSNSW, and hopefully provides insights into not only the areas where work is required, but also the incredible potential of a complete, consistent, accurate TEI data set for future sector and local planning, and the opportunity for services to demonstrate their impact on client outcomes, including through their relationships with other service providers in their local service system.

Beyond the service delivery challenges of the last 12 months where the TEI sector's response was extraordinary, data issues no doubt very much reflect the significance of the shift to a new approach to the recording of data, particularly the collection of client outcomes data.



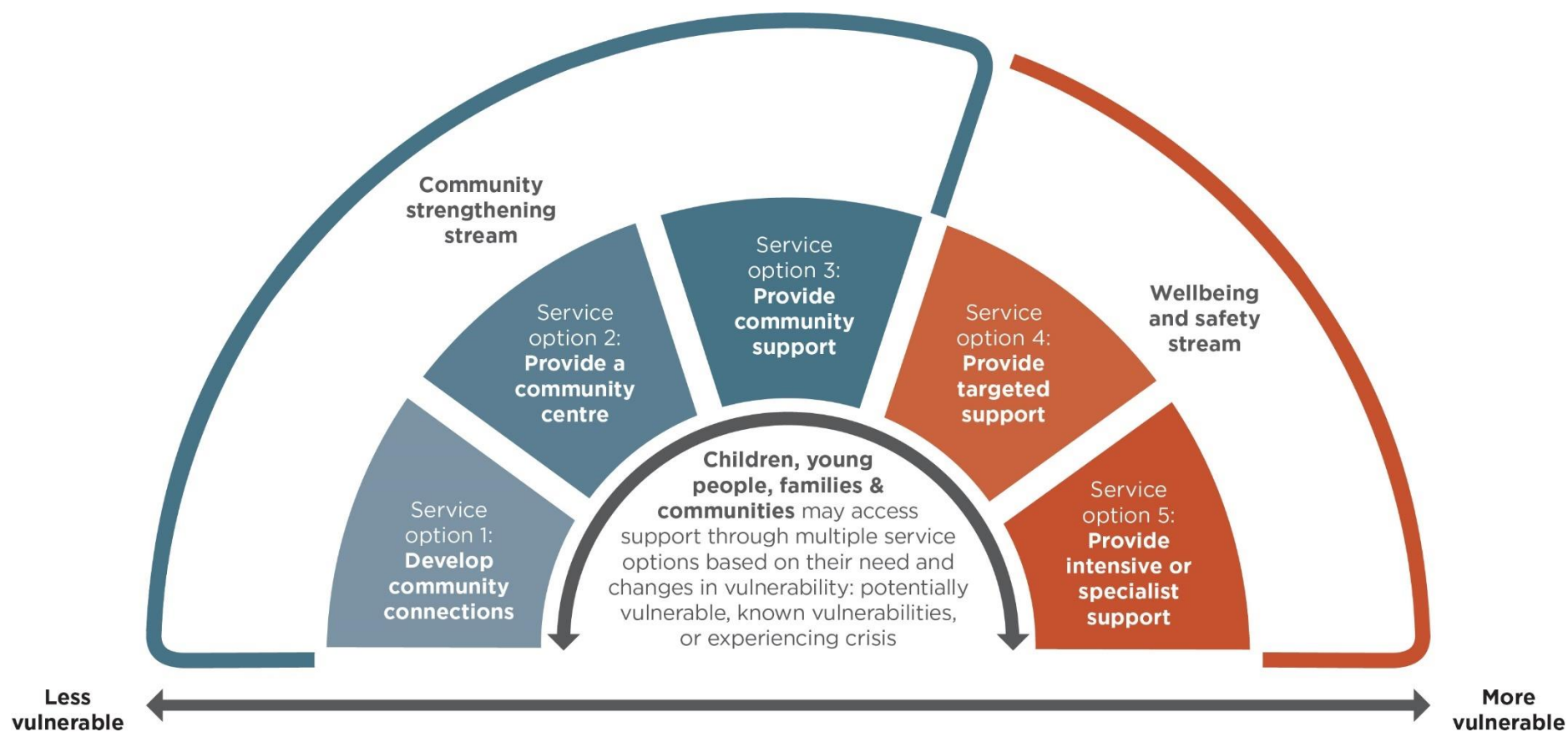
DCJ is committed to continuing to support service providers address data quality issues as soon as possible so that high-quality TEI Program data is available for service providers and DCJ to better understand what works and what needs to be improved to achieve better client outcomes.

There are [existing resources](#) on the TEI Program site to support the recording of accurate data. The [Data Exchange Protocols](#), [TEI Data Collection and Reporting Guide](#) and [Using data in the TEI program](#) guide set out data requirements and targets for TEI reporting. They include guidance on TEI Program goals for recording demographic information, program activity targets for recording individual clients, and minimum dataset requirements (including in relation to referrals and reason for seeking assistance).

DCJ Central Office and Districts will be working with service providers to better understand the barriers/challenges to the collection of complete and accurate data and the extent to which these resources support that outcome, and provide support where required.

Appendix 1

Figure 30 TEI Program streams of support and program activities (service types)



Source: Targeted Earlier Intervention Program Outcomes Framework

Appendix 2

Table 3 Not stated or unknown client demographics for individual clients in ISSNSW against the TEI Program's goals

Not stated or unknown client demographics	ISSNSW's reported data	TEI program's goals
Gender	0.5%	<2%
Age	0.3%	<2%
Country of birth	11%	<5%
Indigenous status	15%	<5%
Main language	10%	<5%
Disability status	21%	<5%
Homelessness status	53%	<5%
Household composition	77%	<5%