

FACS Annual Statistical Report 2017-18: Objective 2: Improving the lives of children and young people

This accessible text document provides a high-level view of the contribution of Family and Community Services (FACS) to improving the lives of vulnerable children and young people and their families in NSW. It accompanies the [interactive dashboard](#), published on the FACS website.

Improving the lives of children and young people

Overview

Data reported in Objective 2 are grouped into ten main themes each supported by a dashboard:

1. **Addressing problems early** - data on children and young people receiving and commencing and receiving an intensive family support service (IFSS).
2. **Building families** - data on children and young people and their families entering, participating or engaged in and exiting Brighter Futures Program.
3. **Children and young people involved in ROSH reports** - data on children and young people involved in risk of significant harm (ROSH) reports by Aboriginality, by mandatory reporter type, and by reported issue.
4. **Safe and stable homes** - data on children and young people in out-of-home care (OOHC), their length of time in care, number of placements, and data on the number of adoptions.
5. **Meeting increased demand** - data on child and young person concern reports received by the FACS Child Protection Helpline, ROSH reports by district, by response priority, by primary Helpline assessed issue and by reporter type.

6. **Keeping children and young people safe** - data on children and young people re-reported at ROSH within 12 months of plan closure with closure reason of 'case plan goal achieved'. Data on children and young people involved in ROSH reports who were seen by a FACS caseworker.
7. **Out of Home Care exits** - data on children and young people exiting from OOHC by Aboriginality, by age at exit and by district. Data on children and young people on Guardianship Orders by Aboriginality, by age, by district.
8. **NGO Partners – Breaking disadvantage** - data on children and young people in statutory OOHC by Aboriginality, by district, and by disability.
9. **Safe children and young people in care** – data on children and young people in OOHC by care arrangement and parental responsibility.
10. **Connection to culture and community** – data on Aboriginal children and young people in OOHC by Aboriginality of caregiver and placement type. Data on children and young people entering OOHC and those entering OOHC for the first time, by Aboriginality and age at entry. Data on children and young people in OOHC by Aboriginality and district and children and young people in statutory OOHC by Aboriginality and district.

1. Addressing problems early

- In 2017-18, 17,700 children and young people received an intensive family support service (IFSS). This is an increase of 1.4 per cent (244 children and young people) in the use of these services from 2016-17 and 9.6 per cent (1,551 children and young people) from 2011-12.
- There was an increase of 3.1 per cent in the number of children and young people commencing IFSS between 2016-17 (10,181 children and young people) and 2017-18 (10,500 children and young people). Compared to 2011-12, this was an 18.3% increase in the number of children and young people commencing IFSS.
- Of all children and young people commencing IFSS in 2017-18, the majority (81.4 per cent) were aged 0-9 years.
- Of the 10,500 children and young people commencing IFSS in 2017-18, 32.2 per cent were Aboriginal children and young people. This proportion remains the same when compared with 2016-17.

2. Building families

- The number of children and young people who were in the Brighter Futures Program decreased by 5.6 per cent (or 383 children and young people) from 6,788 as at 30 June 2016 to 6,405 as at 30 June 2017. As at 30 June 2017, 2,654 families were in Brighter Futures Program, a reduction of 200 families from the previous year.
- There were 120 fewer children and young people entering Brighter Futures Program in 2016-17 from the previous year. Similarly, there were 129 fewer families who entered Brighter Futures Program in 2016-17 from 2015-16.
- There were 10,219 children and young people exiting Brighter Futures Program, a decline of 103 children and young people from 2015-16. Of the 4,346 families which exited Brighter Futures Program in 2016-17, 29.8 per cent (1,297 families) were Aboriginal families.
- In 2015-16, 2,106 children and young people exiting the Brighter Futures Program with case plan goal achieved did not receive a subsequent ROSH report in the following 12 months. This is an improvement of 240 children and young people compared to 2014-15.
- 2017-18 data is not available for the Brighter Futures Program in this dashboard.

3. Children and young people involved in ROSH reports

- There was an increase of 6.5 per cent in the number of children and young people involved in ROSH reports from 2016-17 (86,426 children and young people) to 2017-18 (92,007 children and young people).
- The proportion of children and young people who received one and two ROSH reports in 2017-18 remains the same as 2016-17 at 63.2 per cent and 18.5 per cent, respectively.
- Of all children and young people involved in ROSH reports in 2017-18, 20.1 per cent or 18,454 were Aboriginal children and young people.
- In 2017-18, 52.9 children and young people per 1,000 population aged 0-17 years in NSW were involved in a ROSH report. This rate has generally been trending upwards from 37.3 per 1,000 in 2011-12 to the current rate.

- In 2017-18, the rate of Aboriginal children and young people involved in ROSH reports per 1,000 population aged 0-17 years in NSW was 196.8. This is more than four times the rate for non-Aboriginal children and young people per 1,000 population aged 0-17 years (44.7) for the same period.
- In 2017-18, NSW Education reported the highest number of children and young people involved in ROSH reports (25,144 children and young people). This accounted for 27.3 per cent of children and young people involved in ROSH reports during the reporting period.
- In 2017-18, the number of children and young people involved in ROSH reports where Domestic Violence, Neglect or Physical Abuse were one of the reported issues, has increased by 5.6 percent, 14.5 per cent and 3.6 per cent, respectively, from the previous year.

4. Safe and stable homes

- As at 30 June 2018, there were 17,387 children and young people in OOHC. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for the number of children and young people in OOHC is not directly comparable to historic data previously published. When adjusted to make them comparable, there was a decrease of 2.3 per cent in the number of children and young people in OOHC as at 30 June 2018, compared to 30 June 2017.
- Of the children and young people in OOHC as at 30 June 2018, 6,671 (38.4 per cent) had been in one placement; 4,632 children and young people (26.6 per cent) had been in two placements and 6,081 children and young people (35.0 per cent) had experienced three or more placements within their current care period. As may be expected due to the overall decrease of numbers in OOHC, the number of children and young people in each group decreased from the same period the previous year. However, the proportion of children and young people who experienced three or more placements during the care period decreased from 37.6 to 35.0 per cent of all children and young people in OOHC.
- As at 30 June 2018, 1,759 children and young people had been in OOHC for less than one year; 1,828 children and young people had been in OOHC between 1-2 years and 5,560 children and young people had been in care between 2-5 years. Additionally, 8,237 children and young

people in OOHC had been in care for a period longer than five years. The proportion of all OOHC children and young people who have been in care for a period longer than five years has remained steady around 46 to 47 per cent for the last five years.

- Adoptions in 2017-18 were a record high for a second year, with 140 OOHC adoptions, which increased 8.5 per cent from 129 OOHC adoptions in 2016-17.

5. Meeting increased demand

- There was an increase of 0.7 per cent in the number of child and young person concern reports received by the FACS Child Protection Helpline in 2017-18. Concern reports increased from 291,583 in 2016-17 to 293,678 in 2017-18.
- Of the 293,678 concern reports in 2017-18, 57 per cent (167,436 concern reports) met the ROSH threshold.
- The three districts with the highest number of ROSH reports in 2017-18 were Hunter New England District with 26,505 ROSH reports (15.8 per cent), South Western Sydney District with 17,141 ROSH reports (10.2 per cent) and Western NSW District with 12,841 ROSH reports (7.7 per cent).
- Across NSW in 2017-18, 37,426 or 22.4 per cent of ROSH reports were allocated a response priority of less than 24 hours. This was similar to the previous year at 37,959 (23.9 per cent).
- NSW Education continued to be the top reporter, accounting for 20.2 per cent of all ROSH reports in 2017-18, followed by non-mandatory reporters (18.7 per cent) and non-government organisations (NGOs) (14.8 per cent).

6. Keeping children and young people safe

- The percentage of children and young people re-reported at ROSH within 12 months of their case plan goals achieved and the closure of their case plan in 2017-18 was 36.2 per cent, a decrease of 5.3 percentage points from the previous year.
- In 2017-18, 26,196 children and young people reported at ROSH were seen by FACS caseworkers, of which 26.7 percent were Aboriginal

children and young people and 73.3 per cent were non-Aboriginal children and young people.

7. Out of Home Care exits

- The number of children and young people exiting OOHC was 2,572 in 2017-18. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for the number of children and young people exiting OOHC is not directly comparable to historic data previously published.
- As at 30 June 2018, there were 2,849 children and young people on Guardianship Orders. This was an increase of 186 children and young people from 2,663 in 2017.
- There were 1,609 children and young people aged between 5-12 years on Guardianship Orders as at 30 June 2018, accounting for 56.5 per cent of the total number of children on Orders in NSW. The total number of children aged between 13-17 years on Guardianship Orders was 956, or 33.6 per cent of all children on the Orders as at the end of the reporting period. The remaining 284 children on Guardianship Orders were aged between 0-4 years.
- South Western Sydney District had the highest number of children and young people on Guardianship Orders as at 30 June 2018 at 15.4 per cent (439 children and young people). Hunter New England District and Illawarra Shoalhaven District were the next highest with 13.2 per cent (377 children and young people) and 10.0 per cent (286 children and young people) respectively.

8. NGO partners – Breaking disadvantage

- As at 30 June 2018, 56 per cent of children and young people in statutory OOHC were placed with NGOs.
- The number of children and young people in statutory OOHC was 13,935 as at 30 June 2018. Of these children and young people, 5,493 or 39.4 per cent were Aboriginal children and young people. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for the number of children and young people in statutory OOHC is not directly comparable to historic data previously published.

- As at 30 June 2018, 18.4 per cent of all children and young people in statutory OOHC (2,567 children and young people) were reported to have a disability.
- The rate for Aboriginal children and young people in statutory OOHC was 58.6 children and young people per 1,000 population. This is more than 11 times the rate for non-Aboriginal children and young people (5.1 per 1,000 population).

9. Safe children and young people in care

- There were 17,387 children and young people in OOHC as at 30 June 2018. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for children and young people in OOHC is not directly comparable to historic data previously published.
- As at 30 June 2018, 80.1 per cent of children and young people in OOHC were in statutory care, 11.5 per cent were in supported care and 8.4 per cent were in voluntary care.

10. Connection to culture and community

- As at 30 June 2018, 74.0 per cent of Aboriginal children and young people in OOHC had been placed with a relative or an Aboriginal carer.
- There were 2,157 children and young people entering OOHC in 2017-18. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to the OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for the number of children and young people entering OOHC is not directly comparable to historic data previously published. When adjusted to make them comparable, there was a decrease of 27.3 per cent in the number of children and young people entering OOHC in 2017-18, compared to 2016-17.
- The number of children and young people entering OOHC for the first time was 1,644 in 2017-18. Note: In 2017-18 changes were made to OOHC counting rules to better align those with national reporting and to also better reflect the legal status of clients in OOHC. The 2017-18 result for the number of children and young people entering OOHC for the first time is not directly comparable to historic data previously published.

- Almost 40 per cent of children and young people in statutory OOHC were Aboriginal children and young people as at 30 June 2018.
- As at 30 June 2018, 38.9 per cent of children and young people in OOHC were Aboriginal children and young people.

Endnotes

This document presents some key statistics about the NSW overall performance result for this objective in 2017-18. If you are unable to use the interactive dashboards and need more granular information or other statistics, please contact us on FACSIAR@facs.nsw.gov.au.

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