

Out-of-home care survey national dataset 2018 Data Quality Statement

Identifying and definitional attributes

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Data quality

Quality statement summary: The 2018 national data set includes data on the views of children in out-of-home care, collected by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection, as part of local case management processes.

The data set includes children aged 8–17 residing in out-of-home care (including foster care, relative/kinship care, family group homes, residential care and independent living), whose care arrangements had been ordered by the relevant Children’s Court and where the parental responsibility for the child had been transferred to the relevant minister or chief executive, and who had been on a relevant court order for 3 months or more.

The data set includes data about children’s views on various topics, including feelings of safety, participation in decision making, community connection and activity, family connection and contact, presence of a significant adult in their life, and leaving care.

Institutional environment: Unit record (child-level) data were provided to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection.

The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987 to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity established in 1987, governed by a management board and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury and mental health to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The Institute also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The Institute works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to those standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national data sets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse the data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act, in conjunction with the compliance provisions of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth), ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions to preserve privacy and confidentiality.

For further information, see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au.

Timeliness: The reference period for the 2018 dataset is from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2018; states and territories collected data as part of their local case management processes during this period.

The data set was collected for the second time for the 2018 reference period. As such, there is 1 prior collection, from 2015. No subsequent collections are currently confirmed, however it was originally conceived as a biennial collection.

Accessibility: Publications containing data from this data set will be available on the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au/child-protection/. These reports are available free of charge.

Requests for unpublished data can be made by contacting the AIHW. See <https://www.aihw.gov.au/about-our-data/accessing-australian-government-data>. A cost-recovery charge may apply to requests that take substantial resources to compile. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may require approval from the state and territory data custodians and/or the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General inquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Digital and Media Communications Unit on (02) 6244 1000 or via email to info@aihw.gov.au.

Interpretability:

Relevance: The data set includes children aged 8–17 years residing in out-of-home care (including foster care, relative/kinship care, family group homes, residential care and independent living), whose care arrangements had been ordered by the relevant Children’s Court and where the parental responsibility for the child had been transferred to the relevant minister or chief executive, and who had been on a relevant court order for 3 months or more.

Data were collected by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. As the data were collected as part of local case management processes, there was some variation in the sampling and administration methodologies used across states and territories. A brief description of the process used by each state and territory is provided in the [report](#).

The data set includes data about children’s views on various topics, including feelings of safety, participation in decision making, community connection and activity, family connection and contact, presence of a significant adult in their life, and leaving care.

Data sourced from the data set are used for reporting of selected indicators under the National Standards for out-of-home care.

Accuracy: Data were collected by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. As the data were collected as part of local case management processes, there was some variation in the sampling and administration methodologies used across states and territories. A brief description of the process used by each state and territory is provided in the [report](#). Data were extracted from the state and territory data systems, according to definitions and technical specifications agreed by states and territories and the AIHW.

The data set only includes in-scope children who participated in the data collection that occurred as part of local case management processes. Response rates (that is, the number of children approached, divided by the number of children who completed the questions) for each state and territory are not known, but a national response rate of 53% was reported in 2018. In-scope children who did not participate in the data collection (for example, because the timing of their case review did not align with the data collection reference period) are excluded from the data set. It is difficult to determine the number of excluded children due to the movement of children in and out of scope over the 6-month reference period. There may be differences between the children included in the data set and those not included, but the nature, extent and impact of potential biases in the final data set used for analysis is uncertain.

Data for Western Australia were not available for indicators 8.1 (Community activity), 9.3 (Family contact) and for 10.2 (Sense of community for the question ‘Are you helped to follow your religion, beliefs and customs where you live?’)

Coherence: The data set was collected for the second time in the 2018 reference period. As such, there is 1 prior collection, from 2015. No subsequent collections are currently confirmed; however, it was originally conceived as a biennial collection.

Data were collected by the state and territory departments responsible for child protection. As the data were collected as part of local case management processes, there was some variation in the sampling and administration methodologies used across states and territories. A brief description of the process used by each state and territory is provided in the [report](#). Data were extracted from the state and territory data systems, according to definitions and technical specifications agreed by states and territories and the AIHW.

In terms of coherence between the 2015 national pilot survey and the 2018 national survey, state and territory sampling and administration methodologies were similar across the two surveys. Some jurisdictions were not able to collect all of the relevant national questions in both surveys. Further detail is provided in the report. Data for Western Australia were not available for indicators 8.1 (Community activity), 9.3 (Family contact) and for 10.2 (Sense of community for the question ‘Are you helped to follow your religion, beliefs and customs where you live?’)

Data products

Implementation start date: 01/02/2015

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)