

# **Seminar 9: Child Protection & Kids in Care**



**AJ Williams-Tchen  
& GMAR**

**WE PROUDLY TO  
ACKNOWLEDGE THE**

**WURUNDJERI / BOON WURRUNG**

**AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF  
OF THE LAND ON WHICH AGECS IS LOCATED**



# **SEMINAR 9:**

## **Speakers:**

**AJ Williams-Tchen**

**Cultural Mentor:**

**Girraway Ganyi Consultancy**

## **Guest speakers:**

**Aunty Reio Ellis**

**(Waka Waka/Bundjilung Elder)**

**Grand Mothers Against Removal**

**(GMAR)**





**TRIGGER  
WARNING**



**AJ WILLIAMS-TCHEN**

AGECS



# Overview

- **Department of Fairness, Families and Housing** is the Victorian state government department responsible for statutory child protection in Victoria
- **Previously known as:**
  - **'CSV'**
  - **'DHS'**
  - **'DHHS'**



# Australia's spending

- The national recurrent spending on child protection and out-of-home care was **\$6.2 billion in 2020–21**
- increased spending over the past 5-year periods, averaging an annual increase of **about \$385 million**

**(Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2022).**





# Australia data

**in 2020–21**

- more than **178,800 children** were supported by state and territory child protection
- **531,900 notifications**      **(293,600 children)**
- **68,000 substantiations**      **(49,700 children)**
- more than **46,200 children** were in **out-of-home care on June 30 2021**





# Indigenous data

in 2020–21

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children** were **10X** more likely to be removed from their families compared to non-Aboriginal children
- **14,600 Indigenous children** were the subject of a **‘substantiation’**, with **emotional abuse (48%)** followed by **neglect (31%)** as being the reasons. This equals to **1:23 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**



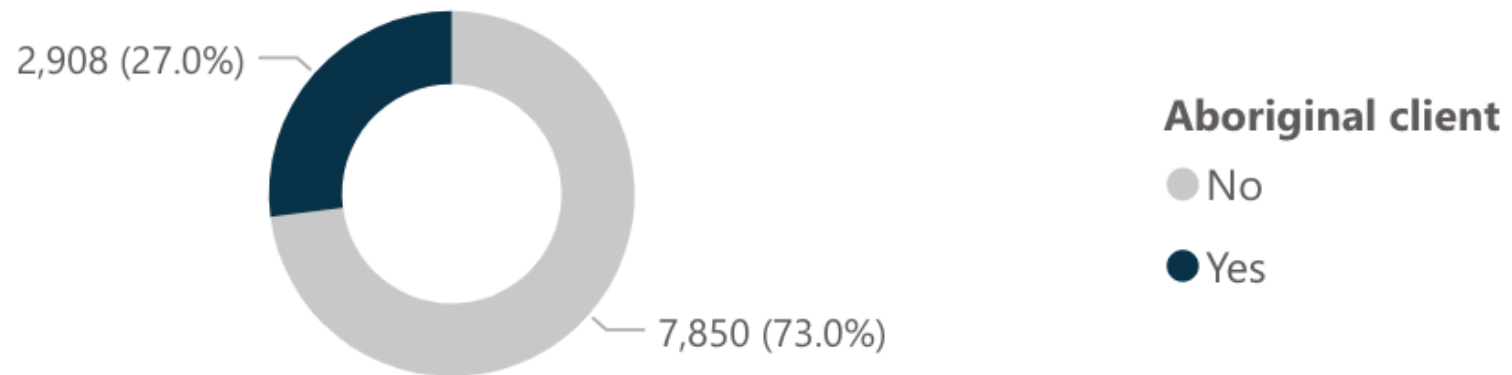
# Indigenous data

**At 30 June 2021**

- **24,200 Indigenous children** were on **care and protection orders**. Of these children, **69% (around 16,700)** were on ‘**guardianship orders**’ or ‘**custody orders**’
- **1 in 17 Indigenous children** (around 19,500) were **in out-of-home**, almost **two-thirds (63%)** of whom were living with relatives, kin or other Indigenous caregivers.
- **5,400 children** who reunified in 2020–21, **nearly 1:3 (31%)** were Indigenous

# Victorian Indigenous data: Children on protection orders

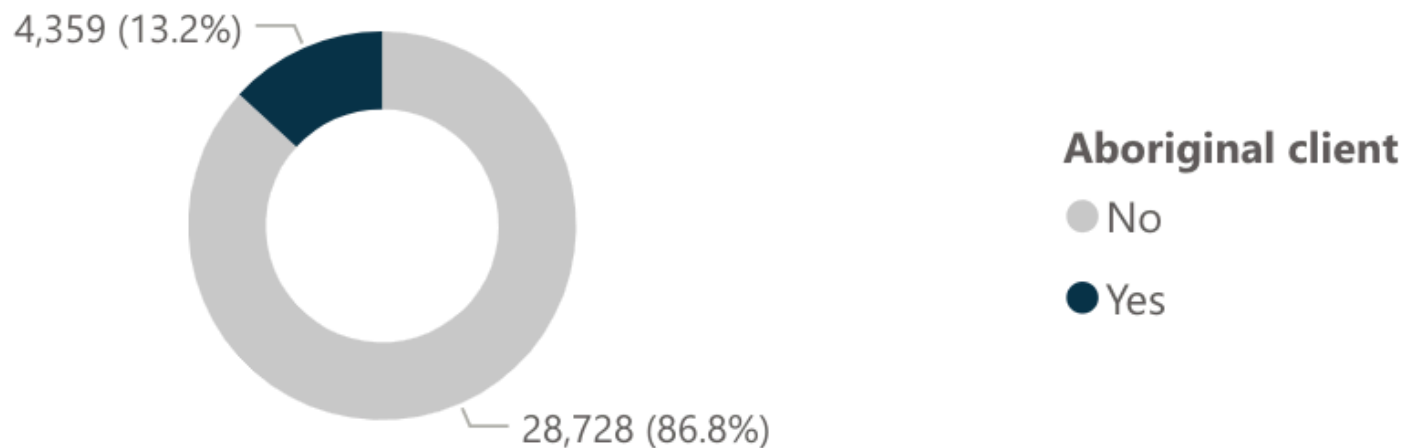
Number and proportion of children by Aboriginal status of child, as at 30 June in 2020-21



[www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection](http://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection)

# Victorian Indigenous data: Investigations

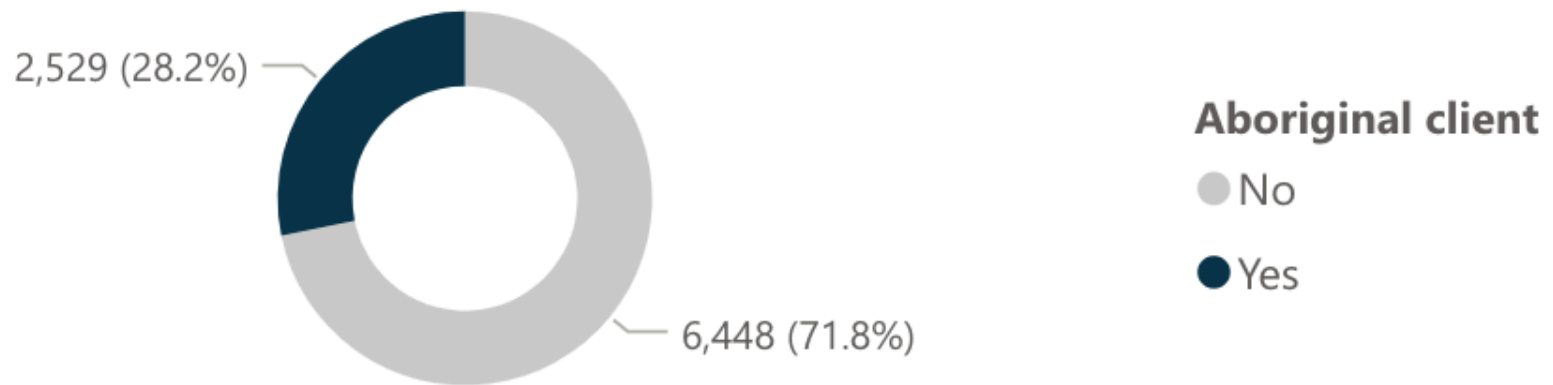
Number and proportion of investigations by Aboriginal status of child, as at  
30 June in 2020-21



[www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection](http://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection)

# Victorian Indigenous data: children in care

Number and proportion of children by Aboriginal status of child, as at 30 June in 2020-21



[www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection](http://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/family-violence-data-dashboard/victorian-child-protection)



# Victorian Indigenous data

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are 16X more likely to be removed from their families by child protection services than non-Indigenous children**

**[www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-24/aboriginal-organisations-should-oversee-kids-needing-care/101356742](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-24/aboriginal-organisations-should-oversee-kids-needing-care/101356742)**



# **Comment**

**"I think as a nation we should be really  
sort of shocked and horrified"**

**Muriel Bamblett  
CEO VACCA**



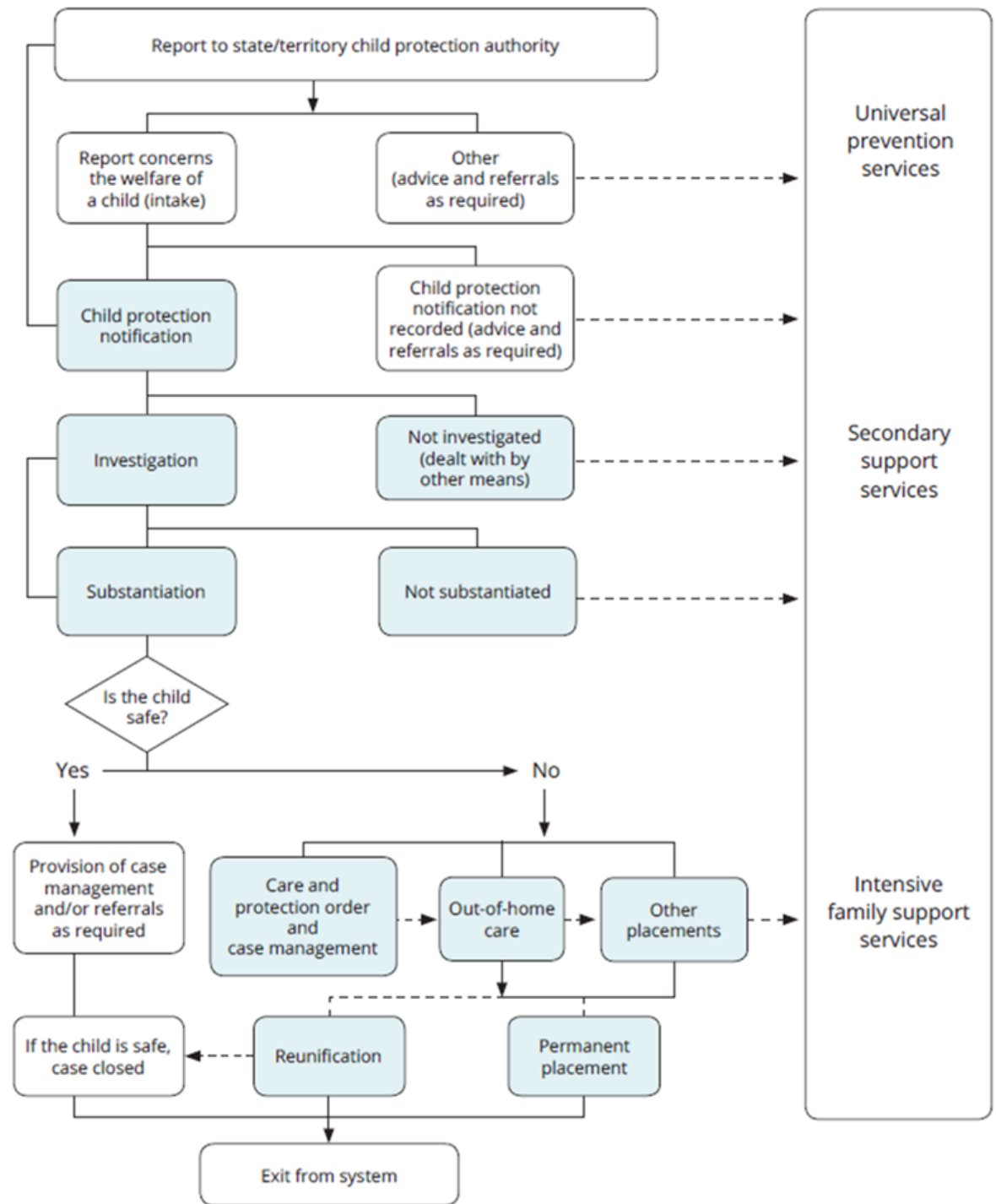




# Contact

- **Anyone concerned about a child's welfare can report their concerns:**
  - **community members**
  - **professionals**
  - **children**
  - **parents**
  - **other relatives**

# Child protection Process





# **Youth justice**

**in 2020-21**

- **14% of all children and young people involved with Youth Justice identified as Aboriginal.**
- **80% are male / 20% are female**
- **30% are 18 years or older**
- **66% are aged 14 to 17 years**
- **4% are aged 10 to 13 years**
- **37% in metro areas / 63% are in regional areas**

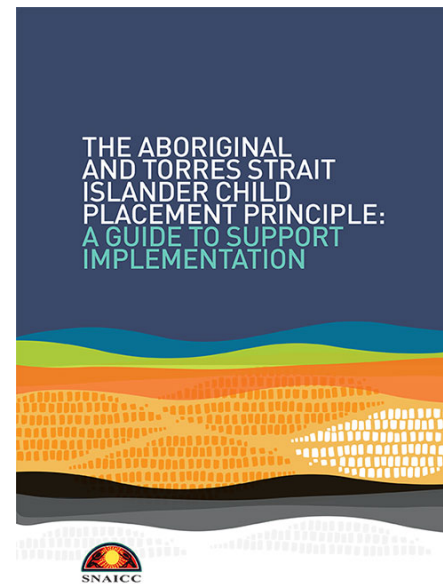
**Youth Justice CRIS Data (2021)**

# **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle**

- **five core elements:**

- a) Prevention**
- b) Partnership**
- c) Placement**
- d) participation, and**
- e) connection**

**– that work across the continuum of the child protection system to protect and realise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, and communities**





# **Reasons for Investigations and Out-of-home care**

<b>Less likely to access early childhood education</b>	<b>High rates of socio and economic disadvantage</b>	<b>Poverty</b>
<b>Overcrowded housing</b>	<b>Family violence situations</b>	<b>Institutional racism</b>
<b>Lack of involvement in decision-making</b>	<b>Lack of appropriate family members seen as ‘carers’</b>	<b>Insufficient home visits</b>
<b>Over reporting</b>	<b>Substantiations at greater levels</b>	<b>Material disadvantage</b>
<b>Less likely to be re-unified</b>	<b>Deficiencies in the provision of cultural care</b>	<b>Inconsistent monitoring of the principle</b>



# **Impact on kids**

**By and large, Indigenous children and young people in the general population perform worse on certain educational, psychological and social measures in comparison to non-Indigenous children and young people and this also appears to be the case for those involved with the foster care system**



# **Impact on Indigenous kids in care**

- **loss of identity**
- **loss of family contact (parents, siblings, grand-parents)**
- **loss of contact with country**
- **loss of cultural knowledge & experiences**
- **self esteem / self image issues**
- **increase in self-harming behaviours**





# **Impact on Indigenous kids in care if in group home settings**

- **mixing with individuals with criminal records**
- **participating in criminal activities for acceptance**
- **trying to balance in 2 worlds**
- **questioning of identity and self**
- **less likely to complete Year 10 / Year 12**
- **more likely to be a younger parent**



**Aunty Rieo Ellis**



**Girraway Ganyi**

CONSULTANCY

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