

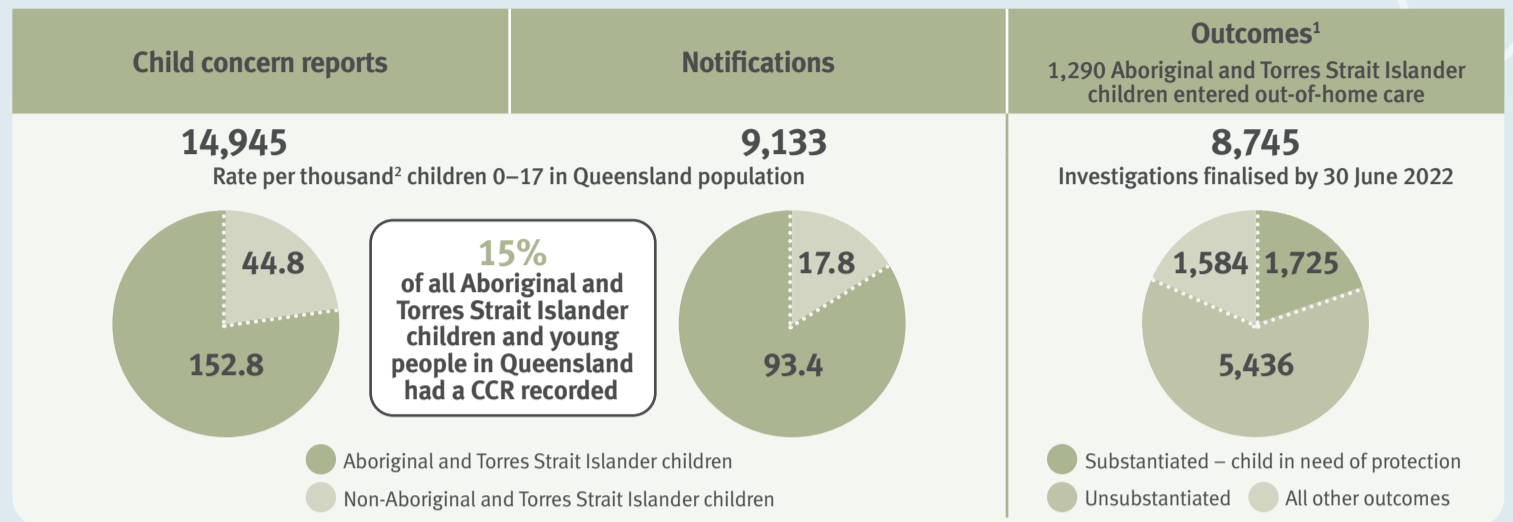
2021–22 Over-representation for Queensland

Over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the Queensland statutory child protection system.

All data in this snapshot refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, unless otherwise stated for comparison purposes.

Entry

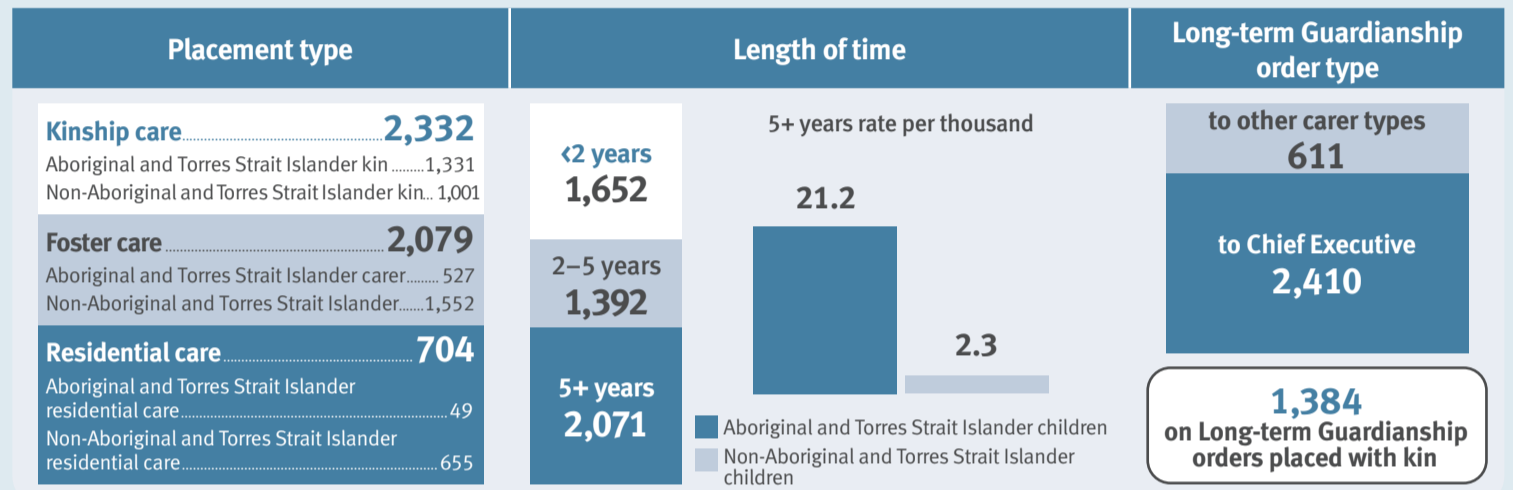
The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) will report annually on whether the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people entering the child protection system is significantly less than the number exiting.



Duration

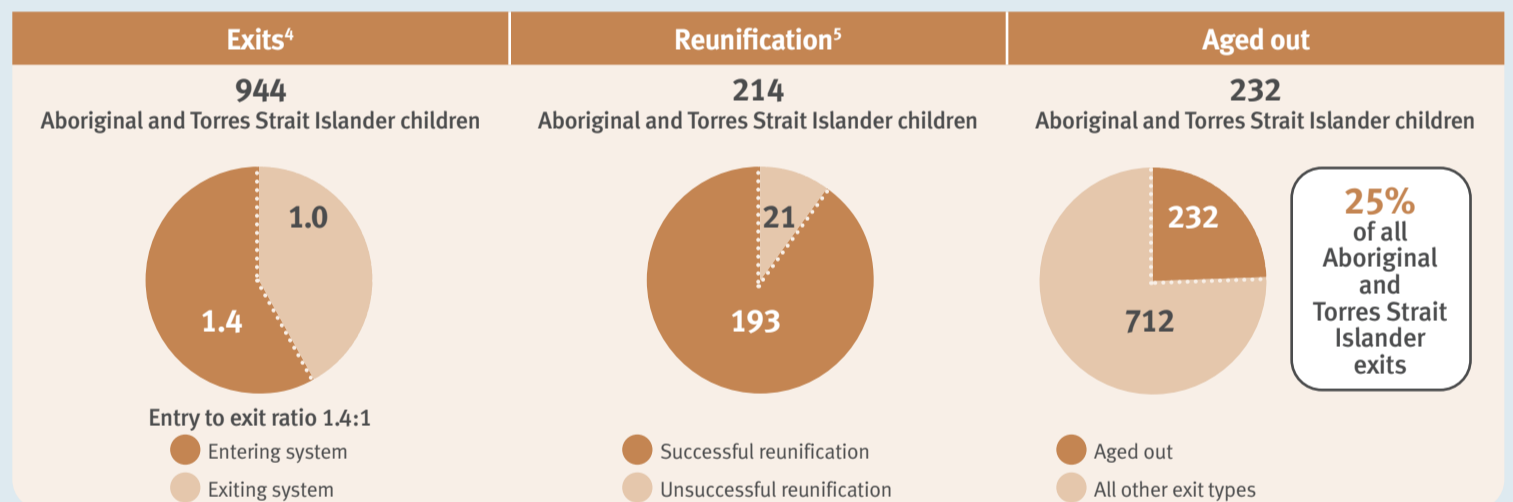
The QFCC expects to see:

- an increase in placement of children and young people with kin and family
- a reduction of the length of time in care
- a reduction in the number of Long-term Guardianship orders granted to the Chief Executive.



Exit

The QFCC expects to see a focus on the reunification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people with family, and eventually exits to exceed entries into the statutory child protection system.³



The story behind the data

This reporting period the QFCC met with five of the six regions to identify the dynamics and drivers of over-representation specific to their location. Common themes include:

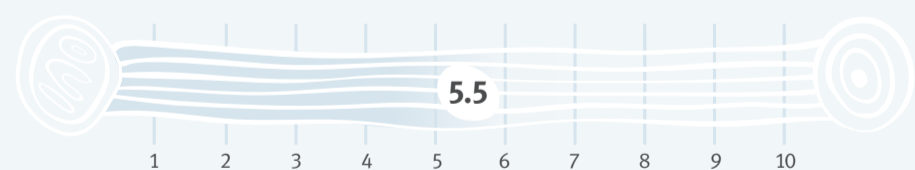
- Difficulty engaging kinship carers due to a fear of Child Safety and complicated processes such as Bluecard applications.
- The establishment of dedicated Kinship Care Teams to identify kin carers.
- Processes and practice unable to meet complex needs of children and families.

There has been a slight decrease in the ratio of entries to exists (from 1.5:1 to 1.4:1) for this reporting period.

The number of kinship placements has increased this reporting period, and this may be attributed to the establishment of dedicated Kinship Care teams in most regions. Residential care placements continue to increase across the state with most regions identifying the lack of kinship and foster carers. The number of children reunified continues to remain small in comparison to the number of children in out-of-home care.

The QFCC needs to further investigate the 519 children that exited care but did not age out or were not reunified with family.

Disproportionality ratio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people aged 0–17 in out-of-home care at 30 June 2022



The disproportionality ratio⁶ for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people is currently 5.5 against the target population of children aged 0–17 in Queensland.

Reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people will require:

- exits to exceed entries
- a reduction in the duration of time children spend in care
- a short-term focus on reunification to increase exits from out-of-home care
- a long-term focus on reunification to reduce duration of time in out-of-home care.

The QFCC, as part of its Principle Focus program of work, will continuously monitor Queensland's progress in achieving these goals.

1. Data is represented for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 2. Regional population estimates for year ending 30 June 2020 are used in all calculations.
 3. The point of entry used in this data for comparison with exit data is children entering out-of-home care.
 4. Exited care is defined as children who left out-of-home care in the reference period and did not return within 60 days. Children who exited out-of-home care more than once during the reference year are counted only once, irrespective of the number of times they exited.

5. Reunification data is for the period 2020–21 due to the counting rule of children in the reference period who did not return to a primary placement within 6 and 12 months. Data for 2021–22 will be available 12 months after the reference period ends.
 6. Disproportionality refers to when representation of a particular group is higher than it should be by statistical standards. If the cohort's representation is proportionate to their representation in the target population, the disproportionality ratio will equal 1:1. Calculating disproportionality reveals inequality and disadvantage of societal groups and can show where uneven distribution of services or biases may lay.