

**Children in the Supported Accommodation Assistance
Program (SAAP)**

Final Report

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Children in the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) Final Report

Social Policy Research Centre

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SAAP IV NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

During 2002-03, the National SAAP Coordination and Development Committee (CAD) agreed to fund a series of research projects to address a number of gaps in homelessness and SAAP policy and practice.

The projects were developed under four broad themes:

- needs of homeless sub-populations
- service system responses and linkages
- program management and administration
- pathways and costs of homelessness.

This report is the product of one of the research projects undertaken.

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Abbreviations

ACOSS	Australian Council of Social Service
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTCOSS	Australian Capital Territory Council of Social Service
AFHO	Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CACH	Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness
CAD	SAAP National Coordination and Development Committee
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
CHP	Council to Homeless Persons
CSHA	Commonwealth State Housing Agreement
DCD	Department for Community Development (WA)
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DHCS	Department of Health and Community Services (NT)
DHS	Department of Human Services (Victoria)
DoCS	Department of Community Services (NSW)
FaCS	Department of Family and Community Services
FHPP	Family Homelessness Prevention Pilot
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
nd	no date
NDC	SAAP National Data Collection
NDCA	National Data Collection Agency
nes	not elsewhere specified
NHS	National Homelessness Strategy
NYARS	National Youth Affairs Research Scheme
PADV	Partnerships Against Domestic Violence
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre
TILA	Transition to Independent Living Allowance
YHTF	Young Homelessness Taskforce
YSAP	Youth Supported Accommodation Program
YSS	Youth Services Scheme

Executive Summary

This report details the research project undertaken by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) about children in the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). The report was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) on behalf of the SAAP National Coordination and Development Committee (CAD). It has three parts: a review of the current literature, an analysis of the current data on children in SAAP, both those who accompany their families and those who are unaccompanied, and a discussion of policy development and possible further research.

Substantial numbers of children present to SAAP, but the program was not designed with the needs of children in mind and until recently there was little information available on the characteristics of children. That has started to change with the change in data analysis by the National Data Collection Agency and the production of a number of reports commissioned by SAAP, although there is still a perception by some stakeholders that children are not treated sufficiently as clients in their own right.

The literature review

Concern with homelessness among children in Australia dates from the 1980s, with the Burdekin Report in 1989 a crucial milestone. Understanding the problem requires understanding the scope of the key terms, 'homelessness' and 'children', both of which are less obvious than might appear at first sight – 'homelessness' because it means more than just being without shelter, and 'children' because of the age variations throughout the literature. Moreover, for the purposes of SAAP data collection, an important distinction is made between those child clients of SAAP services who are accompanying their families ('accompanying' children) and those who are unaccompanied.

The full extent of homelessness among children in Australia is unknown. In 2002/03, there were around 11,100 unaccompanied children in SAAP services, and 53,800 children accompanying their families, but these figures do not tell us how many homeless children there are across the nation, because not all of them present at SAAP services.

The causes of homelessness are perceived to be complex, with poverty and violence recognised as the main immediate precipitating factors. The literature mainly rejects explanations that attribute homelessness to the characteristics or behaviours of individuals, preferring instead to see the causes as structural – poverty, unemployment, family stress, the housing market – and hence largely beyond the control of individuals and families. Whether presenting in their own right or as members of families, children and young people are homeless largely for the same reasons as adults, although their needs can be different.

Children are not a homogenous group and much of the research acknowledges this. This report discusses in particular issues of relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children in care.

On the whole SAAP has been well received by the housing sector although there are still issues identified in the literature as needing to be addressed. These include: unmet demand, problems with data collection, lack of resourcing for extra workloads, unrealistic expectations about what SAAP services could achieve, funding models that relied on client ability to pay, and a perception that early intervention with young people has been over-emphasised at the expense of structural questions of housing provision. In particular the literature points to a shortage of affordable housing that would allow SAAP clients to move on into independence, a tendency towards under-funding by the governments and a consequent diversion of funds earmarked for capital works into ongoing running expenses.

The more recent National Homelessness Strategy (NHS) was not seen to have solved these problems. It, too, was widely regarded as under-resourced and as consisting largely of a series of pilot projects which, while good in themselves, tended to leave communities without further assistance when funding ran out. The NHS focus on prevention and early intervention, while helpful in some cases, was criticised on the grounds that it failed to deal with the structural causes of homelessness and diverted resources away from crisis intervention.

There was strong support in the literature for keeping SAAP as a joint Commonwealth/States/Territories responsibility because the structural causes of poverty and homelessness could only be dealt with on a national level. The NHS contains a commitment to continuing Commonwealth involvement in SAAP, but there has been some devolution of responsibilities to the States. There has been some perceived uncertainty about whether the responsibility for certain groups of older children belongs with the State/Territories through their provision of child services or with the Commonwealth through its homelessness initiatives. In response to these problems, all States and Territories have negotiated protocols with the Commonwealth to try to address the respective boundaries of responsibility and the mechanisms for providing appropriate services.

Overall there was found to be an increasing awareness within SAAP of the needs of children, but some concern about whether that awareness could be translated into improving services in the light of decreasing resources. The particular service needs of homeless children and young people recommended in various earlier studies include: child care, specialist workers, domestic violence counselling and protection from abuse, education, health care, toys and pets. Good practices identified include the development of child-centred approaches that involve better integration of child support services into the mainstream of SAAP services. However, it is difficult to assess from the literature how far these recommendations have already been implemented.

The review of SAAP data

The purpose of the data analysis component of this study was to provide a critical analysis of information from SAAP and the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) on the circumstances and outcomes of children, both accompanying and unaccompanied, using SAAP services.

The circumstances of accompanying and unaccompanied children presenting to SAAP are both similar and different. They are similar in that both groups of children are

most likely to present in a capital city in one of the eastern states of Australia. However, accompanying children are typically under 12 years of age, just as likely to be a male as a female, and have most recently been living in a two-parent family in private or public rental accommodation. These young children typically present to SAAP with their mothers who have referred themselves. Although most of these women are not involved in legal processes, if they are they are likely to have taken out some form of restraining order. On the other hand, unaccompanied children are more likely to be female than male, are most commonly almost adults, at 16 or 17 years of age, but are not likely to have been paying for accommodation: they were mainly living with their parents before coming to SAAP alone. The legal process they are most commonly involved with is a protection/guardianship order.

Patterns of service-use vary considerably by State and location, by child group and age. The types of services used in different States and locations appear to be closely related to supply, and while children and young people are most frequently found at services for young people and for women escaping domestic violence, a significant number also use other kinds of agency.

The pattern of services requested by unaccompanied children was similar to that of SAAP clients generally. The most commonly requested services were SAAP/CAP accommodation; emotional support or other counselling; advice or information; and basic services such as meals, laundry and shower facilities. However, there were important differences distinguishing unaccompanied children from adult clients with accompanying children. Unaccompanied children were less likely to request drug or alcohol support/intervention, or domestic violence counselling, or culturally appropriate support. They were more likely than clients generally to seek assistance with: employment training and assistance; family/relationship counselling; living skills and personal development; recreation; and transport.

There is only limited information available from SAAP records with which to measure outcomes for children. Much of this relates specifically to SAAP service delivery and may more accurately be seen as system outputs rather than outcomes. However, given that SAAP is only one element in broader policy approaches to homelessness, there is a limit to what the program itself can be expected to achieve.

Accompanying children had an average rate of unmet need of less than three per cent, compared with just over seven per cent for unaccompanied children and just under seven per cent for all clients. Counselling for sexual or physical abuse is one area where more could be done to meet the needs of accompanying children, as 11 per cent of requests apparently go unmet.

Unmet need for unaccompanied children was highest in the service groups of specialist services and financial/employment services. Among specialist services, the categories of physical disability support and intellectual disability support services appear to have extremely high levels of unmet need. However, these particular categories had low numbers of support periods where requests were made, so this finding should not necessarily be cause for alarm. What is perhaps a cause of greater concern is a high rate of unmet need for drug and alcohol support - a service request that is much more common.

Children attending agencies targeting women escaping domestic violence were likely to have low unmet need. For accompanying children this is encouraging, given the large proportion of cases this represents. Unaccompanied children who attended agencies targeting either single women or men also had low unmet need. Day support and outreach service delivery models were successful at achieving low rates of unmet need for both child groups. Children attending agencies which targeted multiple client groups appeared more likely to have unmet needs, even though one might expect these agencies to be able to address a wider range of service requests. Agencies targeting young people also saw somewhat higher levels of unmet need. This might suggest that these agencies are not as attuned to children's needs as others, but it may also be that the service requests presented to such agencies (such as drug and alcohol problems or psychological difficulties) are harder to address.

In contrast to clients as a whole, who were predominantly recorded as moving into the more independent settings of social housing or private rental, unaccompanied children showed significant movement away from living in their own home, private rental and social housing. Unaccompanied children tended to move into rent-free accommodation, other SAAP services or emergency housing. Rent-free accommodation may sometimes involve reconciliation with families, but perhaps more often it means staying temporarily with friends and acquaintances – a form of tenure which is likely to be insecure. Overall, these observations suggest that while there are some positive outcomes for unaccompanied children it is not clear that their independence has been markedly increased through engagement with SAAP services. However, with close to two-fifths of responses for this outcome measure missing, it is not possible to be certain about this finding.

Policy issues and further research

The underlying difficulty in relation to SAAP is that it is not intended as a provider of long-term housing. SAAP's effectiveness is tied to its clients' ability to move on and that ability in turn is dependent on the limited supply of affordable accommodation. Moving on into secure housing is difficult for many of SAAP's clients, quite apart from those whose need may be as great but who do not approach a SAAP agency.

A related issue concerns the individualistic emphasis of much public policy towards homelessness. If the main causes of homelessness are structural, focusing on individuals (or families) will not solve them. And yet this is increasingly the emphasis of government policy, including SAAP itself.

The key recommendations arising from the literature concern the structural causes of homelessness. Although these are outside the scope of SAAP, they have an impact on the ways in which SAAP agencies operate, and even on whether they can operate at all. If there are too few 'exit points', clients stay longer in SAAP accommodation and tie up resources that should be available for people in crisis.

In terms of findings specifically concerning children, one of the key points that emerges is the importance of recognising them as people with service needs of their own, distinct from those of their parents/guardians. This has been happening increasingly in SAAP over recent years, but there are areas where further development is needed. Solutions are not straightforward. SAAP stands in a different legal position in relation to children who present with their parents than it does in

relation to unaccompanied children, even when they are the same age. The situation is further complicated by widely varying age-based definitions of what constitutes a 'child' in SAAP. However, while the circumstances of accompanying and unaccompanied children are clearly different, they should not be viewed as separate, as unaccompanied children are often subject to the same pressures and problems that have led to families with accompanying children becoming homeless. The fact that the proximate cause of homelessness is family breakdown should not obscure the fact that the underlying causes may be related to other more structural issues.

Partly because the specific attention to children in SAAP data recording is relatively new, information on service needs and requests for accompanying children is incomplete. However, it appears while overall most recorded service needs are met, unaccompanied children are considerably less likely to have all their service needs met, particularly when it comes to employment-related needs or other specialist services such as mental health or drug and alcohol problems.

One key finding from the data analysis which has clear policy implications is that a large proportion of both accompanying and unaccompanied children are recorded as approaching SAAP at the point of 'imminent risk' of homelessness, rather than when they had already been homeless for some time. This suggests an important role for SAAP in intervention to prevent actual homelessness. The early intervention and prevention programs relating to homelessness have been controversial, but much of this policy does not in any case deal with prevention at the point of imminent homelessness. This needs liaison and negotiation with public housing authorities, community housing agencies, legal centres, Centrelink, private landlords and families.

The literature identifies a range of service improvements needed for children and some studies also note that substantial progress has been made. The data analysis suggests that while the majority of children in SAAP present to services that target them and thus are likely to be attuned to their circumstances, a significant minority of children attend other kinds of service which may have more difficulty identifying and meeting their needs.

Indigenous children are substantially over-represented in SAAP services compared to their presence in the population as a whole. The administrative data suggest that in terms of recorded service needs or requests being met, Indigenous children tend to do fairly well compared with non-Indigenous children. However, both the concept and the practical experience of homelessness can be somewhat different within Indigenous communities, because of different familial relationships and dwelling patterns. This needs to be taken into account without assuming that homelessness is not a problem because there is always somewhere for a young Indigenous person to stay.

Children from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds appear to be under-represented amongst the SAAP population. It is not clear whether this is because they are less likely to be homeless or because they are less likely to access SAAP services if they do experience housing problems.

The other group of children for whom homelessness remains a particular problem is those leaving State care. Too often they remain at the borders of legislative and financial responsibility between States and the Commonwealth. While research has found that SAAP provides important services for this group and can be effectively

integrated into support through federal programs like Reconnect, it is difficult to determine from the limited outcome data available how effective SAAP is in providing longer-term housing options for those former wards of state who use its services.

The aims of the data analysis element of this study included reviewing the opportunities and options for further research. Four areas deserve further attention: extending the analysis of children in SAAP to include multi-variate modelling; investigating whether children who request services are different from those who do not; developing better outcome measures (for SAAP and for children); and determining whether the population of children in SAAP is stable over time. The ability to carry out such studies is likely to be enhanced in the future through the implementation from July 2005 of a new Core Data Set.

1 Introduction

1.1 The research project

The Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS), on behalf of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Coordination and Development Committee (CAD), contracted the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) to provide consultancy services for research into children in SAAP. This report details the research project undertaken by the SPRC under the terms of this contract. The main aim of the research was to identify opportunities to improve SAAP's capacity to understand and better meet the needs of children within its program ambit – that is, those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. A further aim was to identify future directions for performance and data reporting on children in SAAP, with a view to informing program development.

The project had three elements: a review of current research into legal, policy and program activities concerning children who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and/or in SAAP programs; a critical analysis of existing data on accompanying and unaccompanied children in SAAP; and a discussion of options for policy and program development aimed at improving SAAP service delivery for children.

1.2 The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP is Australia's main service delivery response to homelessness. The Program is cost-shared between the Commonwealth and the States/Territories. The current legal foundation of SAAP is the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Act 1994, which defines the main aim of the program as the provision of transitional support and services to help homeless people achieve the maximum possible self-reliance. The aspirations and objectives for the current (and fourth) round of SAAP are spelled out in the SAAP Memorandum of Understanding 2000-2005, and the Act provides for a set of Bilateral Agreements between the Commonwealth and the State and Territory governments. A National Research Program was established under the 1994 Act, overseen by the SAAP National Coordination and Development Committee (CAD), to inform policy development, improve management of SAAP services and measure program outcomes (FaCS, 2003a).

1.3 The policy focus on children

The present focus on children in SAAP arises from a recognition that substantial numbers of children present to SAAP services for assistance, both accompanying their families and alone. Historically, however, SAAP was not designed with the needs of children in mind (Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994: 21), and until recently data analysis by the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) did not focus in any detail on the characteristics of children. Subsequently, however, there has been a special collection of information on accompanying children (AIHW, 2000), followed by a study of young people in SAAP (AIHW, 2003a). In 1993, the Evaluation Steering Committee of the second National SAAP Evaluation commissioned a study to identify the needs of children accompanying their families in SAAP services (Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994). SAAP later also commissioned a study of best practice for case management with children (Strategic Partners, 1997), while a number of other studies funded by SAAP have looked at specific issues affecting particular groups of homeless children and young people, such as those from diverse

cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Jurak, 2003), those with diverse sexuality and gender expression (Perth Inner City Youth Services, 2003) and those accompanying mothers who have been subjected to domestic violence (Edwards, 2003).

It has been argued that in spite of the substantial resources that were generated for homelessness services by the Burdekin Report on homeless children 15 years ago (HREOC, 1989), many of Burdekin's recommendations were not fully implemented (Salvation Army, 2003). A number of submissions to the evaluation of SAAP IV have also expressed the view that there has been an insufficient focus on children as a client group in their own right, both in terms of data collection, programs of support and early intervention, and of resources to fund child caseworkers in services such as women's refuges (see, for example, AFHO, 2003a; CHP Victoria, 2003; Hanover Welfare Services, 2003). Similar points were made to the NSW State Government by the NSW SAAP Peaks Forum before the State election (NCOSS, 2003). The needs of children who are homeless are often complex and SAAP's policy responses are constrained by limits to its jurisdictional powers, but there is an argument that children's needs are not always fully recognised when they are not treated as clients in their own right (Purdey, 2003).

Thus, in the context of increasing cross-jurisdictional and cross-portfolio policy emphasis on prevention and early intervention to support families and to address children's needs at the important developmental stage, there is a strong argument for a better information base for SAAP on children coming into contact with its services.

1.4 Report structure

The next Section of the report presents the review of literature on children and homelessness and summarises the policy issues and recommendations that arise. Section 3 presents the re-analysis of SAAP client data, focusing on child characteristics, service needs and outcomes. Section 4 discusses further research and policy options. An Appendix to the report also highlights some issues and limitations of the client data in relation to children.

2 Review of Literature on Children and Homelessness

2.1 Background

The starting point for any review of policies, programs and activities in support of homeless children in Australia remains the 1989 Report of the National Inquiry into Homeless Children (widely known as ‘the Burdekin Report’ after the Federal Human Rights Commissioner who chaired the Inquiry), conducted by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC, 1989). It has been extensively quoted and remains the reference point for much of the subsequent research. The Burdekin Report was the major influence in the Victorian government’s decision to establish a Youth Homelessness Taskforce in 1989 (Enconsult, 1992: 1). It has been referred to as a ‘watershed’ (House of Representatives, 1995: 54; Crane and Brannock, 1996: 2), a challenge to the complacency of Australian society, and an exposé of the inadequacy of government and community responses (Sykes, 1993: 1). Its release, according to one commentator, ‘created an enormous stir, a media frenzy’ (Fopp, 2003), while another said that it ‘provoked the most widespread discussion of youth homelessness in Australia’ (Smith, 1995a: 108). However, despite the Report’s widespread influence, it has been argued that many of its major recommendations have still not been implemented (Salvation Army, 2003).

The Burdekin Report was not the first public expression of concern for the needs of young homeless Australians. In the late 1980s Maas and Hartley listed a number of government reports and initiatives undertaken during the 1980s, while the 1970s saw the development of numerous special housing programs for various categories of people, including young people (Maas and Hartley, 1988). The Burdekin Report itself listed a number of programs and inquiries during the late 1970s and the 1980s, including the first five-year SAAP Agreement, 1985-89 (HREOC, 1989: 10-15), although it also pointed out that assistance to the homeless prior to the 1970s was largely provided by charitable institutions without government funding (p.9). Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1998) noted that youth homelessness was not perceived as a social problem in the 1960s and 1970s and dated Commonwealth Government concern with the issue from the 1982 Senate *Report on Homeless Youth* (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 7). Nonetheless, it was only with the appearance of the Burdekin Report that homelessness amongst young people became widely recognised as a major social problem (Evans and Shaver, 2001: 62) and generated ‘a new urgency about the needs of homeless children’ (Sykes, 1993:2).

2.2 Definitions

Before embarking on a discussion of what the literature tells about homelessness and children it is necessary to consider the definition of these terms. The question of definition is a crucial one for the sector and the literature contains numerous discussions about the best ways of defining not just ‘homelessness’ but also ‘children’ themselves.

Defining homelessness

The literature emphasises the importance of being clear about what constitutes ‘homelessness’, while at the same time acknowledging that there are difficulties defining it with sufficient clarity and precision for policy purposes (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 16-36; National Evaluation Team, 1999). Brann (1996) insisted

that 'all definitions of homelessness are open to criticism'. Not only were they likely to be inconsistent between people and over time, they were also very much dependent on 'prevailing standards and values' (Brann, 1996: 1-2).

One of the reasons suggested for the difficulty of defining homelessness is 'the heterogeneity of the homeless population' (Smith, 1995a). Another is that homelessness has a temporal dimension. Beer et al point out that the typical homeless situation is not a single occasion, but rather 'an ongoing process involving moves from one arrangement to another'. As a consequence, any measures of genuine homelessness would need to include 'longer-term life histories or trajectories' as well as 'point in time measures of housing status' (Beer et al, 2003: 3).

There is general agreement in the literature that 'homelessness' cannot be defined only in terms of lack of shelter (Fopp, 1988: 349; Maas and Hartley, 1988: 3; HREOC, 1989: 7; Victorian Government, 1992: 7; Neil and Fopp, 1994; Smith, 1995a: 16-18; Casey, 2001: 76; Strategic Partners, 2001: 10; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002). Sykes argued that 'providing shelter alone is not an adequate solution to homelessness' because a secure and stable home environment is more than just having a roof over one's head, important though that is. As part of the definition of 'home', she included sufficient income for food (and, it might be added, other necessities like clothing, furniture, appliances, etc., as well as basic utilities like gas, electricity and water), 'love, caring and emotional support', and education. Although fulfilling these requirements might seem beyond resolution through government policy, Sykes argued that the problem was not as daunting as it might seem at first sight and that there were existing programs which had already addressed all these issues (Sykes, 1993: 3-7).

According to Chamberlain and MacKenzie, a consensus was starting to emerge towards the end of the 1990s around definitions of homelessness in Australia. That consensus converged on the 'cultural' definition first proposed by these authors in 1992 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1992; McIntosh and Phillips, 2000; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: 3). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has used this definition for Census purposes, starting with the 1996 Census. It is also the definition used in the SAAP data collection (Strategic Partners, 2001: 11-12). It is 'an operational definition of homelessness which can be easily measured', and consists of three parts intended to capture three types of homelessness: 'primary', 'secondary' and 'tertiary'.

'Primary' homelessness involves:

People without conventional accommodation, such as people living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings, or using cars or railway carriages for temporary shelter.

'Secondary' homelessness involves:

People who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another. It covers: people using emergency accommodation (such as hostels for the homeless or night shelters); teenagers staying in youth refuges; women and children escaping domestic violence (staying in women's refuges); people residing temporarily with other families (because they have no accommodation of their own);

and those using boarding houses on an occasional or intermittent basis.

‘Tertiary’ homelessness involves:

People who live in boarding houses on a medium to long-term basis. Residents of private boarding houses do not have a separate bedroom and living room; they do not have kitchen and bathroom facilities of their own; their accommodation is not self-contained; and they do not have security of tenure provided by a lease (Chamberlain, 1999: 1).

The definition of homelessness contained in the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act (1994)* states that:

A person is homeless if, and only if, he or she has inadequate access to safe and secure housing. A person is taken to have inadequate access to safe and secure housing if the only housing to which the person has access:

- a) damages, or is likely to damage, the person’s health; or
- b) threatens the person’s safety; or
- c) marginalises the person through failing to provide access to:
 - (i) adequate personal amenities; or
 - (ii) the economic and social support that a home normally affords; or
- d) places the person in circumstances which threaten or adversely affect the adequacy, safety, security and affordability of that housing (Chamberlain, 1999: 1).

All these definitions have relevance for children and young people, especially the insistence that homelessness is not just the absence of physical shelter but includes other considerations such as safety, nurturance and material resources. Because of the necessary dependency of childhood, children ought to be able to expect to be cared for and kept safe, but, as the Burdekin Inquiry found, there were growing numbers of children who were homeless because their families were, and hence their families were unable to protect them (HREOC, 1989: 7). For these children the family was not a haven from homelessness and hence there was no way of escaping from homelessness by staying with their families.

Defining children

As well as definitions of homelessness, research on the impact of homelessness or potential homelessness on children’s experiences in the broad social policy context requires some discussion of the definition of children. Who is to count as a ‘child’ for the purposes of framing policy?

The principal defining boundary is, of course, age, and this review accepts the legal definition of ‘children’ as ‘persons under the age of 18’. However, even this seemingly unexceptionable cut off point presents difficulties for generalisations from the literature. Not all research observes the same age boundary, and even that cut off point tends to remain focused on older youth and to exclude younger children. The Burdekin Report, for example, said it was focusing on children under the age of 18, but it confined its attention mainly to those who were unaccompanied by their

families, as well as considering evidence relevant to young people over the age of 18 (HREOC, 1989: 7). Beer et al defined the young people in their research in rural areas as those aged 12 to 25 (Beer et al, 2003: 1); the Victorian government's Young Homeless Taskforce (YHTF) Program was targeted at young people 12 to 24 years (Enconsult, 1992); and the definition of 'young people' is extended to 24 years for the purposes of the SAAP National Data Collection (AIHW, 2003a, 2003b). The FaCS interim report on the Family Homelessness Prevention Pilot had a different cut off point for the end of childhood, defining 'adult' as 'a person over the age of 16 years' (RPR Consulting, 2003: 3), while the target group for the National Youth Housing Strategy was 15 to 24 (Maas, 1995: 1). Chamberlain and MacKenzie's second national census of homeless school students confined the population to homeless young people aged 12 to 18 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: I), as did the House of Representatives Standing Committee Report (the Morris Report) (House of Representatives Standing Committee, 1995).

As should be clear from this brief summary, it is often not possible to generalise from existing research about 'persons under the age of 18'. Either the target population is extended beyond the age of 18 to 24, or the focus is only on 'young people' (aged 12 to 18 or 12 to 24) and not 'children' (under the age of 12). However, a start has been made at rectifying the dearth of knowledge about younger children.

'Accompanying' and 'unaccompanied' children

A crucial distinction for SAAP purposes is that between 'accompanying' and 'unaccompanied' children (Fopp and Parker, 2003: 7). Unaccompanied children are those who present in their own right, while an 'accompanying' child is defined by the SAAP Coordination and Development Committee as 'a person who is under 18 years of age; receives support, accommodation or assistance from a SAAP agency; and has a parent or guardian who is a client of a SAAP agency' (AIHW 1999: ix). Accompanying children tend to be younger than unaccompanied children and less able (or, in the case of the youngest, not at all able) to articulate their needs.

Focusing attention on a category of 'accompanying children' was deemed necessary because of a general perception that SAAP services focused on the interests of adults, whereas it was important to understand children's perspectives and experiences in and of themselves. Children's own needs and concerns were more likely to be addressed if they were singled out for special attention, it was felt, rather than being subsumed within the needs, experiences and definitions of their family unit, as is often the case in social policy. This focus on accompanying children is not a recent development, but dates at least from the time of the second SAAP Evaluation (1993) (see Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994).

2.3 How many children are homeless?

It is generally agreed that determining how many homeless people there are is a daunting task (Sykes, 1993: 77; House of Representatives, 1995: 27; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 38; Kids Help Line, 2000; McIntosh and Phillips, 2000; Strategic Partners, 2001: 3; Healey, 2002: 26). In 1982 the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare was reluctant to refer to the available statistics on youth homelessness, so unreliable were they, and in 1985 the Burdekin Report said, 'There are no reliable measures, in fact there are very few measures at all, of the incidence of child and youth homelessness' (HREOC, 1989: 65). Reasons given for the difficulty of

precisely estimating numbers of homeless people include: varying definitions of homelessness (Kids Help Line, 2000); different methods of counting – for example, point-in-time censuses versus cumulative annual totals (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 38); and the transitory nature of the homeless population – many do not approach official helping services but stay with friends or family, or camp out or in squats (Mission Australia, 2001). Citing a 1988 report into homelessness from the United States Institute of Medicine, the Burdekin Report attributed the difficulty primarily to the fact that official statistics counted only people living in fixed residences. As the homeless do not have residences, it is difficult to find out how many there are overall (HREOC, 1989: 65). A further difficulty in the case of homeless children (as noted above) is the variation in the age definition of who constitutes a ‘child’ and the overlap between ‘children’ and ‘young people’.

Nonetheless, in recent years there have been concerted attempts to devise ways of counting the homeless (by the ABS in the 1996 and 2001 censuses – Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1995; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998; Chamberlain, 1999; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002; MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003; and through the SAAP data collection – AIHW, 2000; Strategic Partners, 2001; AIHW, 2003a; AIHW, 2003b).

In 2002/03, unaccompanied children in SAAP services numbered 11,100, while there were 53,800 children accompanying their families (See Figure 3.1, Section 3 below; AIHW, 2003c). Most of the figures cited in the literature relating to children and homelessness drew upon the SAAP National Data Collection (NDC) for earlier years. For children accompanying their families, Horn and Cooke found that they numbered at least 52,700 in 1999-2000 (Horn and Cooke, 2001: 1), while the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness (CACH), citing the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2000/01 Annual Report, estimated that ‘45,000-50,000 [accompanying] children received assistance from SAAP homelessness services in 1999-2000’ (CACH, 2003: 102). For 2001-2002, the Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (AFHO) reported the figure of 50,800 accompanying homeless children accommodated by SAAP services around Australia (AFHO, 2003a: 35). In the case of unaccompanied children, Fopp and Parker found from their analysis of the 2001-02 NDC that 11,300 had presented at a SAAP service. This was a slight increase from the previous year (Fopp and Parker, 2003: 7-8).

These figures are in line with the 2002/03 figures (not surprisingly since they are from the same data source). However, they relate only to those children who presented to SAAP services. As Chamberlain and MacKenzie point out, data on the use of SAAP services captures only a part of the homeless population. They note that many homeless people do not use SAAP services and many others are turned away because services are full. Their analysis of the 2001 Census found that 105,300 persons were recorded as homeless on census night, but only 13,000 were being accommodated by SAAP (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: 1). Horn and Cooke also pointed out that the figure they cited for children accompanying their families did not include those who were turned away from services; nor did it include those whose families did not approach SAAP services at all (Horn and Cooke, 2001: 1). Hence, the SAAP figures do not give the full picture of the extent of homelessness among Australia’s children.

Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2002) arrived at different estimate of the number of homeless young people. Using the ‘cultural’ definition of homelessness, and

combining SAAP data with information from a national census of students held in August 2001 in conjunction with the 2001 national census, these authors estimated there were 26,060 homeless young people aged 12 to 18 across the nation in the second week of August 2001 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: 23, chapter 4. See also: Beer et al, 2003: 3-4). This figure is not comparable with the SAAP figures since there is no indication whether these children should be counted as accompanying or unaccompanied, and it does not include younger children. Still, it does indicate a high level of homelessness amongst older children in Australia.

Just over half of the children accompanying families assisted by SAAP homelessness services in 1999-2000 (54 per cent) were under six years of age. Nineteen per cent had been homeless for a month before arriving at the SAAP service, while two per cent (900 to 1,000 children, given CACH's estimate of 45,000-50,000) had been homeless for a year (CACH, 2003: 102). Citing the 2000-2001 SAAP National Data Collection Report, the AFHO submission to the SAAP IV Evaluation said that, in the first half of 2001, around 52 per cent of the SAAP women's refuge population were children, that there were 5,186 children in SAAP accommodation on Census night 2001, and that there were 10,300 children in SAAP services in NSW in 2000-2001, nearly half of whom were under five years of age (AFHO, 2003a: 57).

Much of the literature tends to suggest that the numbers of homeless people in general, and of children in particular, have been increasing, although given that the counting techniques are so newly developed it is difficult to determine this with any certainty. In their analysis of the 2001-02 National Data Collection, Fopp and Parker found that there were 11,300 unaccompanied homeless children and young people who presented at a SAAP service, a slight increase from the previous year. But they also found that the SAAP NDC figures indicated a gradual decline in the numbers of unaccompanied children since 1996-97, although whether that was due to decreasing demand, increasing numbers turned away, or other factors, the authors could not say (Fopp and Parker, 2003: 7-8).

Horn and Cooke have argued that, on the best available indications, homelessness has continued to increase across Australia over the past decade. They gave as an example the fact that the overall demand on homeless services in Victoria had increased by between eight and 14 per cent annually during the latter part of the 1990s. In the case of children accompanying their families, they said that the situation had worsened over the last decade, and that households with children were 'a substantial and growing proportion of households experiencing homelessness' (Horn and Cooke, 2001: 1). The AFHO said in its submission to the SAAP IV Evaluation that more homeless people were requesting SAAP services each year and that more were being turned away (p.13). They also stated that SAAP services were at present seeing increasing numbers of young people, unaccompanied children and families requiring support; increasing numbers of women and dependent children escaping domestic violence; and increasing numbers of young people without adult or any other kind of support (AFHO, 2003a: 13, 27, 35). According to the AFHO Consultant for the SAAP IV Evaluation, increasing numbers of school-age children were seeking support from SAAP services (Foster, 2004: 6).

The Morris Report found that the numbers of homeless youth (aged 12 to 18) had doubled between 1991 and 1994 (House of Representatives, 1995: 34. See also: Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1995: 17; Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 170),

and according to Chamberlain and MacKenzie, the numbers of homeless teenagers increased by 8.4 per cent between 1994 and 2001, from 11.9 per 1,000 in 1994 to 12.9 per 1,000 in 2000 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: 32).

Bartholomew noted that families were the fastest growing subgroup of the homeless in the US and Europe. Although it might seem that statistical information from other countries has little relevance for Australia, the author points out that, in many ways, overseas trends are simply ahead of trends already visible in Australia (Bartholomew, 2002. See also: Shaver and Paxman, 1995: 1; National Evaluation Team, 1999: xxxiii; CACH, 2003: 49, 50).

2.4 Pathways into homelessness

The terminology of 'pathways' ('paths', 'routes') is common in the literature (Brann, 1996; National Evaluation Team, 1999; FaCS, 2000; Casey, 2001; Horn, and Cooke, 2001: 1; Kolar, 2003b; MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003), but this usage has been disputed by Fopp, who asks whether it is an appropriate term to use to describe why people become homeless. Like the term 'career', he suggests, it does not 'convey the loss and trauma of homelessness' (Fopp, 2003).

In contrast, MacKenzie and Chamberlain have been arguing since 1995 for the notion of 'career' as a way of drawing attention to the fact that homelessness differs for young people and adults, and hence the strategies of early intervention need to differ too. For young people, it 'may involve facilitating family reconciliation or working with parents as well as teenagers' and working in schools (whereas for adults it means helping them keep the accommodation they already have). It 'identifies points of intervention along a time continuum' (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003: 13, 61-2).

What the term 'pathways' is attempting to convey is a notion of homelessness as a process rather than a single once and for all event. It is also an attempt to account for the antecedents to homelessness, for its 'causes' (Sykes, 1993: 83-99; Neil and Fopp, 1994; Kids Help Line, 2000; Casey, 2001; CHP Victoria, 2002: 3-5; CHP Victoria, nd) or for the 'reasons' or 'factors' why people become homeless (Maas and Hartley, 1988; House of Representatives, 1995; Beer et al, 2003).

It is generally agreed that the reasons for homelessness are complex, and many commentators list multiple factors (Beed, ed., 1991: 121; Neil and Fopp, 1994; Smith, 1995a: 19-28; Brann, 1996; Crane and Brannock, 1996: 12-13; National Evaluation Team, 1999: viii; Kids Help Line, 2000; Mission Australia, 2001; CHP Victoria, 2002; Healey, 2002: 26-7, 28-9; Beer et al, 2003). The National Homelessness Strategy (NHS) Discussion Paper lists: increased levels of family breakdown, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol abuse; deinstitutionalisation; decreased availability of low cost accommodation; and 'changes to the structure and nature of the labour market that have led to fewer jobs for low-skilled people' (FaCS, 2000: 5).

There is a consensus that poverty and violence are often the immediate causes of homelessness (Thomson, 1993; CHP Victoria, 1998; Kids Help Line, 2000; Horn, and Cooke, 2001: 29; Beer et al, 2003: 6-7; Jurak, 2003: 20; Rogers, 2003: 5). Between 1986 and 2001, the number of urban Australian households experiencing housing stress (that is, paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent) rose from 90,000 to 250,000 (Affordable Housing National Research Consortium, 2001: 2). Bell points

out that the violence and substance abuse implicated in homelessness were often the result of poverty and unemployment. Doing something about family homelessness, she said, needs to address both 'the growing gap between rich and poor' and the violence against women and children in the home (Bell, nd).

However, while poverty and violence may be the most immediate factors precipitating homelessness (and the reasons most often given by homeless people themselves) (Beed, ed., 1991: 126-7; Newman et al, 1995; Smith, 1995a: 19-28; Brann, 1996: 11-15), they by no means exhaust all the causes of homelessness. To leave the explanation there is to beg important questions about the causes of levels of poverty so severe that people cannot even access such a basic human right as adequate shelter, even to escape from physical violence. As Casey has argued, although the primary causes of homelessness are economic disadvantage and insufficient affordable housing, these factors are themselves the consequences of a long chain of events. Among these events she mentions 'major changes to economic policy [and] the impact of globalisation', 'deregulation of the labour market', 'injustice and oppression', 'powerlessness, violence, cultural imperialism, marginalisation and exploitation', a 'relatively unregulated private rental market' and 'the diminishing availability of public housing' (Casey, 2001: 79-80). Clearly, there are other factors than poverty and violence to be considered if homelessness is to be adequately accounted for.

Neil and Fopp have argued that there are two broad schools of thought about what causes homelessness. One school emphasises economic, social and political conditions, while the other emphasises factors intrinsic to individuals, such as mental health problems, inadequate socialisation and/or poor social adjustment on the part of homeless people themselves (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 35). Sykes made much the same point when she asked: 'Does the main cause of homelessness reside in the alleged ... inadequacies of individuals or in the broader structures of our society, in under- and unemployment, and the lack of affordable, safe and secure housing?' (Sykes, 1993: 88).

The Burdekin Inquiry found that most of the witnesses and submissions to the Inquiry tended to refer to both individual and structural reasons for homelessness, and the Commissioners themselves agreed with this view (HREOC, 1989: 85). The Morris Report was chiefly concerned with the question of whether or not the availability of income support was a significant factor in encouraging young people to leave home (they concluded it was not), and with the extent of child abuse in the community (House of Representatives, 1995: 37-42). Maas and Hartley largely focused on individual reasons for young people leaving home, including family conflict, the need to escape from abusive situations, and a desire for independence. At the same time they also acknowledged causes beyond the reach of individuals, such as insufficient affordable housing, high levels of unemployment and the lack of recognition of the rights of young people (Maas and Hartley, 1988: 4-12, 3-4).

On the whole, however, the literature overwhelmingly rejects explanations that attribute homelessness to the characteristics or behaviours of the individual. Terms like 'pathways' and 'career' go against the grain of most of the arguments in the literature because they imply some degree of choice in becoming homeless, as if people were simply deciding between different pathways at certain points in their lives, or taking up different career options from a range of possibilities and one of

them happened to be homelessness. Crane and Brannock argued that the terminology of being 'at risk' was another of the ways in which causality was located with the individual. It is, they said, 'almost always explored at the level of the individual, family or population sub-group'. The implication is that 'the antecedents of the particular negative event are located in people themselves or in their interaction with their immediate environment', and that people themselves are at fault rather than finding the fault in the economic, social and institutional contexts of their lives (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 15). A comment by one of the witnesses to the Burdekin Inquiry rejected the view that young people choose to leave home: 'Some people often say these kids leave home. But in most cases, home leaves them' (HREOC, 1989: 85).

Neil and Fopp pointed out that notions of individual choice as a cause of homelessness rested on mistaken beliefs about what housing options were available. They gave the example of a 30-year-old schizophrenic man who left the 'special accommodation house' he was allocated when he was discharged from hospital because he was housed in a room he had to share with elderly demented residents. At first sight it seemed he was driven by his mental illness to leave the accommodation provided for him in order to live on the streets, but in fact he had quite reasonably left an insupportable situation and homelessness was the only other option available to him (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 36).

Bartholomew cites US research that suggested that those individual characteristics often seen as the causes of homelessness, e.g. 'disability, dysfunction, mental illness, and/or dependency', in many cases did not appear until after people had been homeless for some time. The author went on to say that, in the early 1990s in the industrialised nations of the world, there was a dawning awareness that 'individual dysfunction' or 'inadequacy' were not the causes of homelessness. Research was starting to show that homeless people were no different from the rest of the population except for their 'lack of a stable home', and that their problems mounted the longer they had been looking for adequate accommodation: 'The duration of their search for safe and secure accommodation appeared to be the most significant predictor of their other problems', he said (Bartholomew, 2002: 1 of 5). Sykes also found that homeless young people were not very different from young people who did not become homeless when they left their childhood home. The difference lay simply in lack of sufficient income to meet living expenses (Sykes, 1993: 84).

Neil and Fopp cited research which suggested that, for many homeless people, mental disorders were caused, or at least exacerbated, by their homelessness and not the other way round. 'For a significant proportion of homeless', the authors said, 'the trauma of homelessness itself may have worsened or precipitated behavioural disorders or a worsening of severe disorders'. They were cautious in attributing cause and effect, saying that there was too little information that might 'help unravel the temporal sequence with respect to mental disorders and homelessness'. They cited research in Melbourne which showed that eight out of 10 homeless people with mental disorders had symptoms before they became homeless. Nonetheless, given that there was some doubt about which was cause and which was effect, providing housing could be argued as 'a significant primary strategy in averting mental illness' (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 73). They also suggested that, to the extent that homeless people were more dysfunctional than people with secure accommodation, this could be 'as much a product of the social structure as is homelessness itself' (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 36-7).

The literature sometimes refers to ‘situational’ factors rather than individual ones. The 1983 Report of the National Committee for the Evaluation of the Youth Services Scheme, for example, talked about ‘situational’ and ‘external’¹ reasons for homelessness (Sykes, 1993: 84), and Crane and Brannock said that ‘the causal factors of homelessness [are] to some extent situational, though predominantly external and/or structural’ (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 14). Beer et al described situational factors as ‘those relating primarily to young people’s interactions with others, most notably their family and peers’, and said that one of the most commonly identified of these situational factors is abuse (Beer et al, 2003: 6). It is not clear, however, that pointing to ‘situational’ factors is any more helpful in explaining the causes of homelessness than the ‘at risk’ terminology. Even though many people are in unbearable situations just before they become literally homeless (in the ‘primary’ sense), those situations themselves – the poverty and the violence – also require explanation.

Despite all the arguments against it, the notion that people cause their own homelessness, either by choosing it voluntarily or because they are suffering from some remediable deficiency, continues to influence the public debate (Sykes, 1993). MacKenzie and Chamberlain believe that notions of homeless people as ‘mad, bad or addicted’ have informed public debate as ‘unstated assumptions parked in the background’, but their own research found no evidence that young people became homeless for these reasons. Such assumptions, they said, ignored two crucial facts about homeless youth: first, that they often left home to escape the problems caused by mental illness, drug addiction or alcoholism; and, second, that homeless people’s addictions tended to start after they became homeless, not before (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003: 53-6).

There are indications that government policy, too, is influenced by explanations for homelessness in terms of individual traits or behaviours. McIntosh and Phillips felt it had some influence in the policy environment. They referred to ‘a perception of “choice” associated with those sleeping rough’ as a possible reason for policy decisions not to target people living on the streets (McIntosh and Phillips, 2000: 3 of 7). Bartholomew mentioned transitional housing programs which offered accommodation for a number of months while residents were trained in ‘living skills’, as an example of a policy focus on the ‘individual deficit model’ of homelessness. The author pointed to a number of problems with such programs. They relied on ‘dated ideas about etiology’ and assumed that homelessness was caused by personal inadequacies. In doing so they flew in the face of common sense. ‘Can one realistically assume’, asks the author, ‘that dramatic increases in homelessness rates can be attributed to a corresponding increase in the number of people who are not good at managing their money or presenting themselves as good rental potential?’ Moreover, even if successful, they would simply result in one low-income household replacing another unless there was an increase in the affordable housing stock.

¹ ‘External’ factors are those that happen elsewhere than the young person’s immediate environment but which have a major impact on their life chances. These include structural factors such as high levels of youth unemployment, low levels of unemployment benefit (or none at all) (see also: Thomson, 1993), and high rental costs, as well as discrimination by landlords (Sykes, 1993: 84-5).

Finally, by implicitly holding people responsible for their own homelessness, they 'may reinforce damaging social attitudes' (Bartholomew, 2002).

AFHO has also argued in its SAAP IV submission that government policy has focused on individual factors. As examples of the issues government programs focused on they listed the 'limited social and living skills' of homeless people, their low educational levels, their drug and alcohol misuse, problem gambling and poor mental health, their histories of state care, and being the victims of child abuse. While not denying the importance of these factors which, even though not the fundamental causes of homelessness, made the situations of homeless people worse and increased the risk, the authors said that this focus 'has limited the policy response and has done little to actually reduce or prevent homelessness' (AFHO, 2003a: 10).

Bartholomew cited an in-depth analysis of SAAP by Fopp which found that by 1996 SAAP had 'refocused its objective away from that of long-term exit points to individualistic interventions that focus on the person as the origin of the problem'. Fopp commented that the program had evolved to a point where it now tended 'to concentrate on personal symptoms rather than causes' because there was no longer 'a full and unreserved commitment to the "moving on" objective' (Bartholomew, 2002: 3 of 5).

As an alternative to explanations based on the individual pathology of homeless people, the literature highlights what is referred to as the 'structural' causes of homelessness. Some examples of these structural causes include: unemployment (Maas and Hartley, 1988: ix); labour market and economic processes (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 37); recent demographic, economic and social changes (Maas, 1995: 3); the way young people are understood and stereotyped, and the collapsing full-time youth labour market during the early to mid 1970s (Crane and Brannock, 1996: ix, 1); a shift in the low income housing ratio (Bartholomew, 2002: 4 of 5); lack of access to affordable housing, lack of secure employment, inadequate income support and poverty (CHP Victoria, 2002: 3-4 of 6); globalisation, patriarchy, the family, education, political governance; unemployment, the availability of a stable income, education levels, insufficient public housing, mismatch between policy concepts and the delivery of services, policies based on market processes, and the changing social and economic environment (Beer et al, 2003: 5, 7-9); the lack of low cost public and private rental housing, the lack of jobs, and the manner in which assistance is constructed and delivered (Hanover Welfare Services, 2003: 2 of 15); social and economic exclusion (Kolar, 2003a: vi); poverty, increasing income inequality, decreasing housing affordability (Bell, nd: 1 of 4).

The first SAAP Evaluation referred to the 'difficulties experienced particularly by youth and women' as 'systematic' and likely to be 'exacerbated by the continued decline in the overall economic situation' (quoted in AFHO, 2003a: 11). Shaver and Paxman saw economic conditions as the reason why some young people became homeless on leaving the parental home, especially 'the labour market for young workers and access to low-cost, low-barrier accommodation' (Shaver and Paxman, 1992: 2). Oberin saw 'structural issues' as 'the root of social problems', but said it was easier for policy makers 'to focus on individuals and families "needing some work"'. The structural issues she listed were: 'poverty, massive income and wealth inequalities, domestic and family violence, rape, incest and sexual abuse, racism, ill-

health and unequal access to health care, meaningful work, appropriate affordable housing, and societies other resources' (Oberin, 2002).

CACH denied categorically that 'personal flaws or bad choices' on the part of homeless people were the cause of homelessness – they were 'myths' to be 'dispelled'. Rather, [p.14] the Committee pointed to 'the structural and idiosyncratic factors that cause homelessness', giving as examples of structural causes 'unemployment, low income and lack of access to affordable, safe, secure housing'. 'The only way to reduce homelessness', the Committee said, 'is by tackling the structural factors that produce it', noting that it was 'a serious challenge for all Australian governments and communities' (CACH, 2001: 8; CACH, 2003; 7, 12).

In its submission to the SAAP IV Evaluation, AFHO also stressed the structural causes of homelessness, saying that the community sector has 'argued for twenty years that the causes of homelessness are based on structural issues of poverty, unemployment, housing availability and affordability, discrimination, and the trends and prevalence of family and domestic violence and family breakdown'. The authors argued that homelessness was intimately connected with levels of poverty in the community, both of individual resources and of public provision, and that it indicated the failure of both the housing market and the public sector that a basic necessity like housing was not available to everybody at a time when the economy in general was known to be healthy (AFHO, 2003a: 10, 25).

The Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) Victoria also gives priority to structural inequalities as the main cause of homelessness. While not denying that homelessness is 'a complex and multi-dimensional problem', the Council's Fact Sheet No. 1 asserts: 'Homelessness occurs because of structural inadequacies in Australian society'. It mentions in particular the lack of access to affordable housing, lack of or insecure employment, inadequate income support and poverty. The Fact Sheet goes on to discuss other factors, such as family instability and breakdown, and individual factors such as health difficulties, mental illness and substance abuse, which could lead to exclusion or discrimination. CHP's main focus, however, is on structural factors (CHP Victoria, 2002: 3-5; See also: CHP Victoria, nd).

Not surprisingly, the literature strongly emphasises poverty and an inadequate supply of affordable housing as the central causes of homelessness. In their submission to the SAAP IV Inquiry, CHP Victoria stressed 'the lack of affordable, sustainable and long-term housing' as the 'key pressure' behind levels of homelessness in Australia (CHP Victoria, 2003: 16). Bartholomew concurred. 'The change that has caused the consistent growth in the homeless population', he said, 'concerns a shift in the low income housing ratio ... the balance between the number of households living in poverty and the amount of affordable low income housing available' (Bartholomew, 2002: 4 of 5). Neil and Fopp had earlier identified changes in the labour market in combination with increasing housing costs as the key factors behind the crisis in affordable and appropriate accommodation for people on low incomes (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 59).

It would appear, however, that government policy has not incorporated this information. CHP Victoria pointed out that funding from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) had declined since 1991-92, that public housing had increased by only 6.5 per cent while waiting lists had increased by 13.5 per cent, and

that the numbers of low-income people being allocated public housing were declining. The submission also pointed out that increasing numbers of people renting privately were experiencing housing stress. The submission concluded by saying that homelessness in Australia could only be adequately addressed through 'the increased provision of long-term affordable housing for people ... who cannot afford to rent privately' (CHP Victoria, 2003: 16-19). ACOSS, too, said that the funding provided through CSHA had continued to shrink. They also argued that this situation was made worse by the straitened financial circumstances of State housing authorities who were using CSHA funds to meet a backlog of liabilities rather than provide new housing stock (ACOSS, 2003: 11).

Bartholomew said that the structural causes of homelessness 'were repeatedly identified and highlighted in the early 1990s', and asked, 'Why then, have our policies and practices not been responsive?' He quoted McChesney who was critical of governmental priorities in the allocation of funds to combat homelessness. 'Policy makers must understand', she said, 'that no matter how much money they spend on emergency accommodation, stand alone service delivery, or transitional living programs, the number of homeless families will not change' unless 'the number of units of housing affordable to the poor' is increased. As long as no new low cost dwellings were added to the public housing stock, no families would be able to exit homelessness (Bartholomew, 2002: 4 of 5).

One question is whether that the causes of homelessness are significantly different for children and adults. Green quoted Fopp arguing that they *are* different, that the causes of young people's homelessness are best explained in terms of family dysfunction, while explanations in structuralist terms of inadequate housing and income insecurity make more sense in the case of adults (Green, 1993: 4). This may be true in an immediate sense for unaccompanied young people (although not for adult young women for whom domestic violence is an immediate precipitating factor in homelessness), but it is not true for children accompanying their parents, with whom they share the causes of homelessness as well as the experience. Nor is it entirely true for many unaccompanied young people. While they may have been forced out of home by unbearable circumstances, they would not be homeless if there were somewhere else to go. It is the absence of alternatives that makes them homeless, either of sufficient income to rent privately or of access to subsidised public housing. Neither of these factors is a consequence of dysfunctional families, but both are implicated in adult homelessness. The intervention strategies may differ, especially for accompanying children (as suggested above by MacKenzie and Chamberlain, and by Strategic Partners), but the issues of poverty and lack of affordable housing are the same. Whether presenting in their own right or as members of families, children and young people are homeless largely for the same reasons as adults.

2.5 Factors and impacts associated with homelessness for children

The consultants, Strategic Partners, writing in 1997, estimated that one-third of those who were used SAAP services were children. They also noted that, in refuges in particular, there were more children housed than adults. Although some refuges did provide child care, child support programs and specialist workers, many were not organised to cater for children's needs (Strategic Partners, 1997: 6). Earlier, Thomson Goodall Associates had found that accompanying children comprised two-thirds of the residents in refuges. They reported that most refuges and family services were

funded to provide in-house child care and respite care, but that ‘this may still not be an adequate response to the specific needs of children’ (Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994: 21).

According to Jurak, writing in 2003, SAAP data indicated that most refuge services provided child care and other facilities for children under six years. But older children (8-15) were less well catered for and there was a need for them to have their own space, as well as age-appropriate activities (Jurak, 2003: 5). This pilot research project also found there were some agencies, both government and non-government, which claimed to have little or no contact with accompanying children. It subsequently became apparent, however, that all the key service providers in the study did have some contact, although sometimes indirectly (e.g. through immigration policy, housing practices, Centrelink regulations). This suggests there is a gap in service provision because some agencies are unaware of the relevance of their policies for young children (Jurak, 2003: 6).

The study had a disappointing response rate, however. Only three of 37 potential refuge services sent a representative to a focus group, and another sent only a written response. This low response rate was attributed to refuge services being unable to respond to requests for information because of the stresses they face – most said they were unable to attend the focus group because they were short staffed that day. This meant that there was a low rate of identification of children’s issues (Jurak, 2003: 6).

Strategic Partners pointed out that most children arriving in refuges had been the victims of, or at least witnesses to, domestic violence, and needed support and appropriate counselling as well as protection from abuse. The consultants quoted a 1992 article which suggested that children needed therapeutic intervention to help them recognise that their experiences were not unique, that other children had had similar experiences and that they could support each other. Most importantly, children needed to be helped to realise that they were not responsible for the family violence and that it was not their job to protect their parents (Strategic Partners, 1997: 5-9) or their siblings (CACH, 2003: 99). They also needed education, health care, child care, toys and pets. (The researchers found that, after the loss of family and friends, the loss of pets was the one most keenly felt by children of all ages) (Strategic Partners, 1997: 6, 21).

CACH reported that children who had been involved with violence, even just as witnesses, and whether at home or on the streets, tended to feel ‘fear, anger, powerlessness, guilt, confusion, despair, sadness or shame’. These feelings manifested in various ways, including bodily symptoms and inappropriate behaviours. The Committee also noted that experiences of violence while young can result in detrimental changes to the brain (CACH, 2003: 102-3).

Strategic Partners cited research which found that around half of the children who had experienced homelessness showed major developmental delays and high levels of either aggressiveness or withdrawal (Strategic Partners, 1997: 6). Other researchers also discussed the adverse developmental effects of homelessness. Neil and Fopp mentioned research that found that almost half of a sample of homeless preschoolers ‘were slower in language development, motor skills, fine-motor coordination, and personal and social abilities’ than a sample of housed children of a similar age and socio-economic status (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 15. See also: Thomson Goodall

Associates, 1994: 22-4; CACH, 2003: 99; Rogers, 2003). The consultants also cited research showing the deleterious effects on children of domestic violence. The children exhibited, they said, 'a range of short- and long-term behavioural and emotional problems including low self-esteem, adjustment problems, stress-related problems, poor school performance, aggressive behaviour and an inability to form stable adult relationships'. The children also engaged in extreme and destructive behaviours, ways of relating and attempts to resolve problems. These patterns were caused 'by such factors as: a reaction to the move and/or the precipitating factors; grief in relation to the losses associated with the move; a reaction to the communal living situation; the release of tension created by the absence of the violent parent; the over-disciplinary approach of a parent trying to get the child to "behave" because of the presence of other adults' (Strategic Partners, 1997: 6).

The consultants identified a number of issues that need to be considered when working with accompanying children in SAAP services. These included play areas and quiet study areas, workers' responsiveness to children, child-specific assessment procedures, recognising the importance of the children's relationships with each other, specific activities for boys, recreational activities for all children, integrating families with the local community, encouraging children to express themselves, allowing them to maintain contact with services after they had left the agency, and financial help to enable children to continue with their accustomed activities such as school excursions (Strategic Partners, 1997: 21-3). The research also identified a number of obstacles to working effectively with children, within five domains: the societal culture, the broad service network, the SAAP service system, service providers and worker practice. The consultants pointed out that many of these obstacles were outside the SAAP system and hence would require broader social change, but that some could be addressed within SAAP and other agencies (Strategic Partners, 1997: 25-30).

They also noted that when children's workers were employed in refuges they tended to be accorded low status and, as a consequence, to be poorly resourced (Strategic Partners, 1997: 5, 11. See also: Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994: 37). They noted, too, an increasing concern on the part of SAAP service providers about reduction in the support network of services that had traditionally worked with SAAP clients. They reported that services external to the SAAP sector had not kept pace with demand and that accessing the broader service network was becoming increasingly difficult, largely but not only because of the mandatory reporting requirements. The paucity of long-term housing was also hampering the capacity of SAAP services to refer and locate families. The consultants also reported that there was a strong sense expressed by the respondents to their research that SAAP should become involved in community education around homelessness and domestic violence (Strategic Partners, 1997: 17-18).

Through a series of site visits with agencies considered to be examples of good practice, the research uncovered a number of key features of effective working with children and families. These were: a child-centred approach where the child support teams were integrated with the more generalist teams (instead of being isolated, as often happened); child-oriented recruitment and training; clear rules and protocols ensuring the safety of all residents; effective and appropriate assessment; a separate, well-equipped space for children; and a commitment to a developmental approach and a recognition that trust and learning take time (Strategic Partners, 1997: 35-8).

Despite the continuing problems, the consultants felt that the situation was in the process of changing. Whereas it used to be the case that children were not considered to be SAAP clients in their own right, recently an increasing number of service providers have been introducing procedures specifically for children, along with an increase in research relating directly to children (Strategic Partners, 1997: ii).

The New South Wales Department of Community Services (DoCS), in its SAAP Service Framework (dated October 2001), has taken account of the emerging awareness of the needs of accompanying children in SAAP services. The Framework lists 'specific programs for children' in the context of 'coordinating with the client a range of support services'. The Framework also notes that 'accompanying children are clients in their own right and must receive a service as such'; while 'Children accompanying adults in SAAP services are entitled to have their individual needs identified and met and their rights respected' is listed among the overarching principles in the SAAP standards (DoCS, 2001: 6, 7-8, 13-14).

CACH noted that SAAP services had become increasingly aware of the need to provide services to children and young people in their own right. In particular, they had begun to question the appropriateness of refuges as a form of communal living for children and young people, and to trial new models for the women and children escaping domestic violence. The chief difficulty, however, was that the resources needed fell far short of demand (CACH, 2003: 99).

However, according to the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) Victoria Submission to the SAAP IV National Evaluation, it is still being assumed that supporting the needs and issues of the parent is also supporting the child. The Council argued that while this can sometimes be true it can also mean that important needs specific to the child are ignored. They recommended the establishment of specialist child-related positions within those SAAP services supporting families with accompanying children (CHP Victoria, 2003: 35).

Particular categories of children

Children are not a homogenous group. They are stratified on a variety of bases, and much of the research acknowledges this. Among the groups found to be particularly disadvantaged amongst those who become homeless are young women (Maas and Hartley, 1988: 61-3; Casey, 2001; Beer et al, 2003: 15-19; CHP Victoria, nd: 5), gays and lesbians (AFHO, 2003a: 59; Crane and Brannock, 2003: 12; Perth Inner City Youth Services, 2003), and young people in rural and regional areas (House of Representatives, 1995: 175-7; Evans and Shaver, 2001: 49; Beer et al, 2003). What follows looks at what the literature also has had to say about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and children in care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

There has been a consistent concern with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues throughout the history of SAAP. Every research report and policy document contains a section devoted to Indigenous issues, although whether that concern has translated into practical improvements is not clear.

The first SAAP Review commissioned a research report specifically devoted to Indigenous access to SAAP services. This study, which investigated 11 SAAP-funded programs in Queensland, found that the greatest difficulty with access to SAAP services by Indigenous people was the remoteness of the areas they lived in, combined with cultural factors that meant they did not know about the services or did not understand them. The research also found a number of indications of serious under-funding, including staff working long hours without pay, no follow-up programs, no external support systems, second-hand vehicles, insufficient accommodation and workers using their own homes to shelter clients (Watson, 1988; Chesterman, 1988: 71-5).

The second SAAP review noted that Indigenous people were over-represented in SAAP services, an unsurprising finding given levels of disadvantage and difficulties in obtaining mainstream accommodation. The review mentioned that a number of Indigenous specific services had been developed and there were also some Indigenous positions in the mainstream services, although Indigenous people still sometimes found SAAP services alien and/or inappropriate. The review recommended training programs designed to enhance cultural awareness in services working with significant numbers of Indigenous people (Lindsay, 1993: 34, 39-40, 67, 84).

The Burdekin Report found that Aboriginal households were more likely than other Australian households to be homeless, to live in poverty, not to be receiving benefits to which they were entitled, to be more distrustful of the social security system because of past policies of child removal, to have spent time in correctional institutions, and to live in single parent families. There were also high levels of alcohol abuse caused by poverty, deprivation and desperation, which in turn exacerbated the disadvantages. The Report supported the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle whereby Aboriginal children who cannot remain with their family of origin are placed within the Aboriginal community, and recommended that it be established in legislation in all Australian jurisdictions (HREOC, 1989: 129-37. See also: House of Representatives, 1995: 175-7).

The consultants, Strategic Partners, perceived Indigenous peoples as a target group requiring special attention, and included interviews with Aboriginal adults and children in their research methodology. They noted the existence of racism and discrimination, along with difficulty of access to mainstream services and poor educational opportunities, as added obstacles to housing security for Indigenous people. They said that case management tended to be regarded with suspicion by both Indigenous clients and workers because of the history of child removal and institutional abuse. There may also be family or clan reasons why some Indigenous people cannot access particular Indigenous services, and these need to be taken into account (Strategic Partners, 1997: xi, 3, 10, 13, 53).

In 1998, the social research consultants Keys Young published a report on homelessness in an Indigenous context. The report was commissioned by the then Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services in September 1997, as the first in a series of research projects under the aegis of the 1994 SAAP national research program. The report canvassed a wide range of issues relevant to Indigenous homelessness and the ways in which it was different from, as well as similar to, homelessness among non-Indigenous Australians. In relation to Indigenous youth, it expressed particular concern under the heading 'Unsafe home: escaping violence,

abuse or neglect'. It pointed out that these were the most vulnerable members of the community who were being forced to leave their homes often because they were in physical danger. The report noted that this danger, however, was spasmodic, and frequently depended on who else was home at the time. Often, too, young people left their homes not so much because they were at risk of physical violence, but for other reasons, especially noise, overcrowding, late night partying and drinking. According to some of the service providers interviewed, these children were getting younger and younger – ages of 10, 13 and 14 were mentioned – and hence were unsuitable as SAAP clients in their own right. Some of them had to literally sleep on the streets; others technically had a bed with extended family members but no one to supervise them or to look out for their welfare. As a consequence they were constantly at risk of a 'substance abuse lifestyle' (Keys Young, 1998: 36-8). Overcrowding was also mentioned as a particular problem for young people because they were more likely to be expected to give up their beds than older people and less likely to be able to compete for food. It also meant young people found it more difficult to get caring attention from adults, and made them more vulnerable to physical and sexual assault. It also had a negative impact on their educational and employment prospects (Keys Young, 1998: 30). A loss of parenting skills as one of the effects of colonisation was also noted as a factor in Indigenous youth homelessness (Keys Young, 1998: 129).

The Commonwealth Government's Discussion Paper for the National Homelessness Strategy (NHS) identified Indigenous Australians as a group at high risk of homelessness (FaCS, 2000: 16). The Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (AFHO) states that although Indigenous people comprised only two per cent of the Australian population they made up 16 per cent of SAAP clients. AFHO noted that Indigenous people experienced the highest levels of disadvantage of any other population group in Australia and listed a number of historical reasons why this was so. However, they believed that the SAAP service system had improved in its approach to Indigenous people, although there were no Indigenous owned and managed services (AFHO, 2003a: 62, 60-2, 27, 25). CACH had initially singled out Indigenous people for special mention (CACH, 2001: 14-15, 46-8), but by the time their final report was released they had decided not to confine discussion of Indigenous peoples to a single chapter since they were affected by much the same issues as other Australians, as well as by issues specifically related to race. Principles such as self-determination, self-management, community capacity building and equity for Indigenous people needed to be incorporated into every aspect of service provision (CACH, 2003: 9-10, 13).

RPR Consulting, authors of the interim report on the Family Homelessness Prevention Pilot (FHPP) project, said that FHPP was specifically designed to include at least one service for Indigenous families, in recognition of the higher levels of homelessness among Indigenous people. They found clear differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous families, all of which indicated greater disadvantage for Indigenous families. For example, they were more likely to have been living in temporary accommodation or to have experienced periods of homelessness before coming to SAAP, and less likely to have been renting from private landlords. The consultants said, however, that a useful start had been made in identifying services to assist Indigenous families. There had also been some improvement in outcomes following FHPP support – some stabilisation in housing and improvement in employment – although less improvement than there had been for non-Indigenous families. The

consultants listed a number of characteristics programs should have if they are to be culturally appropriate for Indigenous people, including links with Indigenous development, utilisation of Indigenous resources, cultural affirmation, endorsement by community leaders, high quality service provision, sensitivity to cultural norms, and a focus on family/community, not just on individuals (RPR Consulting, 2003: 41, 24-6, 41-4. See also: CHP Victoria, 2003: 37).

A number of commentators have suggested that Indigenous communities tend not to see homelessness in quite the same way as the non-Indigenous population. Evans and Shaver found, for example, that some of the people interviewed for their evaluation of the Reconnect program had doubts about the appropriateness of a service for Indigenous homeless youth when their communities did not use such a concept. When young people left home early to live with friends or relatives, they were not regarded as homeless (Evans and Shaver, 2001: 50). Nonetheless, Indigenous people do use SAAP services, and, as noted above, in higher proportions than other Australians.

Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds

As in the case of Indigenous people, research and commentaries on homelessness generally include a section devoted to people of CALD backgrounds (Chesterman, 1988: 75-9; Lindsay, 1993: 34-5, 40, 67, 84; CACH, 2001: 68-9; AFHO, 2003a: 27, 62-3; CACH, 2003: 9-10; Crane and Brannock, 2003: 12; RPR Consulting, 2003: 45-6). (The Burdekin Report devoted a chapter to the situation of young refugees – HREOC, 1989: 139-42).

A pilot research project in Western Australia, *Caught in the Crossfire*, funded by the SAAP Co-ordination and Development (CAD) Committee National Research Program, assessed the needs of accompanying children from CALD backgrounds. It found that there had been little or no research in this area. The sixth annual report on homeless people in SAAP contained no data on how well services catered for children from CALD backgrounds, nor on the percentages of children from CALD backgrounds who were Australian-born (although it did identify those children from CALD backgrounds who were not born in Australia) (Jurak, 2003: 7, 20). The Western Australian study also found that the needs of such children did not differ greatly from those of other children – ‘to feel heard; listened to; cared for; have fun; meet friends; express feelings; have companionship; and to feel safe’ – although there were differences in specific situations. The study pointed to the need for further research of relevance to people of CALD backgrounds, such as the impact of immigration laws and processes, more accurate profiles of particular CALD backgrounds, and more investigation into the reasons why services are underused by people of CALD backgrounds. While people of CALD backgrounds have many of the same problems as the general community and Indigenous Australians (e.g., poverty), they can also have extra burdens, such as adapting to life in a new country, trying to maintain their culture for future generations, and the isolation that comes from being far from extended family and friends. The study also found wide disparities across the language and cultural groups in perceptions of the prevalence of domestic violence, ranging from 10 per cent of women affected to over 70 per cent. In fact, research has shown there is considerable variation in attitudes to domestic violence among language and cultural groups (p.13). The most general finding of the research was that service provision needs to be relevant if it is to service the needs of children of CALD

backgrounds. Cultural and linguistic diversity must always be considered, along with the unique needs of each child (Jurak, 2003: 7).

AFHO considered that SAAP had improved its service delivery to people from CALD backgrounds although more was needed. They particularly noted the plight of refugees, whose lack of access to income support has meant cost-shifting onto SAAP services and hence extra stress on those services (AFHO, 2003a: 27).

Children in care

There is general agreement in the literature that children in out-of-home or substitute care arrangements have a very high risk of homelessness (VCOSS, 1990: 73-9; Shaver and Paxman, 1992: 1-5; Green, 1993: xi, 98; Magree and Elkington, 1993; Newman et al, 1995; Shaver and Paxman, 1995: 7-8; Cashmore and Paxman, 1996: 5-8; Casey, 2001: 82). The situation appears not to have improved significantly in the last 15 years, at least since the publication of the Burdekin Report (and probably earlier). The Burdekin Report itself admitted to being particularly concerned about the numbers of homeless children who were state wards, quoting one commentator saying: “Indeed, coming into care, or attempting to have a child committed to care, provides a clear path to homelessness” (HREOC, 1989: 109). Although de-institutionalisation has meant a large decrease in the numbers of State wards, out-of-home care arrangements are still implicated in high levels of homelessness. Raman noted that young people leaving care were often confronted with severe problems of homelessness because they were ill-equipped to lead life without support (Raman, 2003: 14). While young people leaving care fall outside the scope of this review since they are 18 years and older, there are young people under that age who are homeless. Green pointed out, citing the Salvation Army *Forced Exit* study, that the problem was not that State intervention caused homelessness, but that it was failing to prevent it (Green, 1993: 40).

The literature attributes the precarious situation of State wards, at least in part, to recently developed uncertainties about the respective responsibilities of the States and the Commonwealth in relation to children and young people (see also below, ‘State/federal responsibilities’). The Morris Report said that the entry of the Commonwealth into the child and family area was a response to the decreasing ability of State and Territory welfare departments to care for adolescents (House of Representatives, 1995: 205). The Report gave a number of reasons for this, including a focus on younger children as a response to the mandatory reporting requirements of child protection legislation, and a change in child welfare philosophy towards de-institutionalisation, itself motivated by the poor outcomes for state wards. There was also no planning for the aftermath of either de-institutionalisation or mandatory reporting, and no extra resources were provided. The Report also mentioned the tax sharing arrangements between the Commonwealth and the States/Territories (see also: Shaver and Paxman, 1992: 4); the financial pressures on State/Territory governments and on service providers in the community sector; and the limited supply of appropriate alternative care options for adolescents, other than refuges and the now abolished residential care. The Committee tried to find out whether there was a connection between the rising numbers of homeless young people and the reduction in guardianship and control orders by State/Territory governments, but they found the task impossible, largely because of problems in data collection (House of Representatives, 1995: chapter 9).

In 1989 the Burdekin Report had said that the situation of children and young people in care or leaving care was ‘a serious indictment’ of the relevant authorities (HREOC, 1989: 117). It noted that the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare had made a similar finding four years earlier in 1985 (p.115). In 1995 the Morris Report also used the word ‘indictment’ and said that since the release of the Burdekin Report, neither the Commonwealth nor the State and Territory governments had managed to improve the situation of young homeless people. According to AFHO there has been little improvement since then: recently they argued that ‘Family breakdown and the shortage of foster care places and substitute care is contributing to the increasing numbers of young people seeking support from SAAP services’ (AFHO, 2003a: 58).

However, a number of States/Territories are currently in the process of reviewing their child protection legislation (or have already done so) with the aim of including ‘young people leaving care’ as a category of those at risk of homelessness.

For example, in NSW, the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, s.165, refers specifically to the Minister’s responsibility ‘to provide or arrange such assistance for children of or above the age of 15 years and young persons who leave out-of-home care until they reach the age of 25 years’ (or even older), including information about what is available, ‘financial assistance and assistance for obtaining accommodation, setting up house, education and training, finding employment, legal advice and accessing health services, and counselling and support’. The NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) website contains information for young people leaving care.

(http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/html/young_people/care_leaving_after.htm)

The Government of Western Australia has gone further than the other States and Territories in response to the recognition that young people leaving care are among those at particular risk of homelessness, having already allocated a sum of money (\$2.4 million over four years) through the State Homelessness Strategy to help young people leaving long-term care (<http://www.homeless.dhw.wa.gov.au/>). The WA Government’s 2002 report contained a section devoted to the issues of ‘leaving institutional and long-term care’, concluding with a recommendation that the Department for Community Development (DCD) include in its case plans strategies to enable children in care to develop skills for managing independent living (Western Australian Government, 2002: 17-18). The *Children and Community Services Act 2004*, s.96, states that any person who has been in the care of the Chief Executive Officer of the DCD from the age of 15 and who is under 25 years of age, qualifies for assistance from the Department, while s.99 and s.100 list the type of assistance that can be provided. In addition to the forms of assistance contained in the NSW Act, the WA Act provides for grants in connection with education or training (s.100(1)(c)).

The relevant child protection legislation in each of the other jurisdictions makes no special provision for young people leaving care, but most State/Territory governments are reviewing their legislation, taking into account the difficulties faced by young people leaving care. In the case of Victoria, the task of ‘meeting the needs of young people, including leaving care’ is the tenth and final ‘Key Component’ of the Government’s reform priorities for the safety and wellbeing of children (Victorian DHS, 2004c: 3). In 2005, the Government will be introducing new legislation replacing the *Children and Young Persons Act 1989* and the *Community Services Act 1970* (Victorian DHS, 2004a), with the aim (among others) of clarifying the role of

the Department of Human Services (DHS) in relation to children and young people leaving out-of-home care placements (Victorian DHS, 2004b). South Australia (Schedule to the *Child Protection Review (Powers and Immunities) Act 2002*), the Northern Territory (Northern Territory DHCS, 2003: 36; Northern Territory DHCS, 2004: 121) and the ACT (ACTCOSS Inc, 2002) are also in the process of reviewing their legislation.

In recognition of the importance of the transition from care to independent living, the Commonwealth Government has instituted a Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA). Commenced in March 2003, this allowance is a payment of up to \$1,000 for goods and/or services to assist a young person in their move to independent living from state-supported care arrangements. It is not intended to be a direct cash payment to young people themselves, but rather to be made on their behalf by one of a select number of youth-focused non-governmental organisations. It is not a loan (it does not have to be re-paid), and it is not counted as income for income-support purposes (FaCS, 2003c; FaCS, nd).

It is still too early to tell how effective the initiatives described above will be in practice. Indeed, much of the legislation is still in the planning stage. However, there is a growing recognition across all jurisdictions in Australia that young people who have had unsettled childhoods have an increased risk of homelessness.

2.6 Policies and programs

History

As the Burdekin Report pointed out, until the 1970s homelessness in Australia was largely a problem of older single men, and service providers in the sector were private charitable, usually religious, organisations that operated largely without government funding. However, with the passing of the Homeless Persons' Assistance Act in 1974, the Commonwealth Government took on some of the financial responsibility for the construction and operation of temporary accommodation centres for the homeless (HREOC, 1989: 9).

Throughout the 1970s welfare agencies had noticed that the numbers of homeless children and young people were increasing. The Brotherhood of St Laurence, for example, has been working in the area of homelessness since the 1940s (its first report was produced in 1944). But it was not until the late 1980s, when Brotherhood staff recognised that they were increasingly working with homeless young people, that it directed its research and assistance programs specifically towards homeless youth (Magree and Elkington, 1993: 2, 5).

In 1978 at the Conference of Welfare Ministers, State Ministers asked the Commonwealth Government to provide funding specifically for young people. In 1979 the Commonwealth Government established the Youth Services Scheme (YSS), a three-year pilot project to be jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the States/Territories. YSS provided for young homeless persons short-term, temporary accommodation, support and counselling, and assistance into more long-term accommodation through loans, subsidies or guarantees. In 1982, the YSS was evaluated by a National Committee. Its report, *One Step Forward*, was released in 1983. The Committee concluded that, while providing temporary accommodation was necessary, the end result of providing homeless youth with stable housing had not

been achieved. The 1989 Burdekin Report commented that they had come to the same conclusion 'more than five years later', that in the meantime the situation had become 'urgent', and that the plight of many homeless children and young people had become 'desperate' (HREOC, 1989: 9-12).

In 1982, the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare also produced a Report on Homeless Youth. It, too, was critical of the fact that the YSS focused almost exclusively on refuges, commenting that 'the most effective response to this problem is to provide medium and long term accommodation'. The Committee was also critical of the low levels of income support for homeless youth, which represented about 12 per cent of the average wage in 1982. In 1983 a Ministerial Review extended the YSS for a further 12 months, the only change being to shift all the administration to the States (HREOC, 1989: 11-12).

Crane and Brannock reported that, as a response to the Burdekin Report, the Commonwealth Government announced a Youth Social Justice Strategy, which included an explicit focus on the prevention of homelessness, together with additional funding for medium to long-term accommodation for young people and the establishment of Youth Access Centres (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 29). There was a major review of housing policies in 1992-93 resulting in a National Housing Strategy that identified young people as one of the groups facing particular disadvantage in the housing market (Maas, 1995). In the 1993-94 Budget the Commonwealth Government announced a National Youth Housing Strategy (NYHS), the first national review of the housing needs of independent young people on low incomes. The NYHS did not focus on youth homelessness since that was the responsibility of SAAP, but rather on improving other services for those with housing difficulties (Maas, 1995: 1, 6).

The Working Nation policy framework announced in 1994 was also relevant for federal government policy initiatives around youth homelessness, according to Crane and Brannock. They said that it 'consolidated the place of education retention and vocational training as the central strategies' for that policy. The authors felt that its most significant aspect was its emphasis on case management, an emphasis that was continued in the government's response to the Morris Report. In 1995 the government's policy statement, *An Agenda for Families*, shifted the focus again towards giving priority to reunifying homeless youth with their families, with prevention conceptualised as intervening in families to improve relationships and provide family members with better coping skills (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 29, 30). From a review of the policy literature since 1986, the authors concluded that there was 'an emerging policy agenda of "home retention"' in the area of youth homelessness, somewhat along the lines of the 1980s policy of school retention. They saw a new type of service emerging, directed towards adolescent-family mediation, largely because this was the way Commonwealth funding was allocated.

SAAP

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was introduced in all States on 1 January 1985 (HREOC, 1989: 12). Until 1985, programs and policies for the homeless were uncoordinated and differed from one State/Territory to another. Under SAAP, policy is coordinated nationally, and services to the homeless are jointly funded by the Commonwealth and each State/Territory. The ratio of funding

varies across jurisdictions, with the Commonwealth providing between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of the funding (National Evaluation Team, 1999: xxv).

SAAP has been through four phases, each phase being evaluated to assess progress and to inform the development of the next phase (National Evaluation Team, 1999). The current program, SAAP IV, is the fourth five-year Agreement for the program. It dates from 16 December 1999 and is governed by the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994* (AIHW, 2003a: 1).² It funds agencies across Australia (1,290 at the end of 2003 – FaCS, 2003a) to deliver supported accommodation and related services to homeless people (CHP Victoria, 2002), the service delivery being mainly provided by non-government organisations, with some local government involvement (Strategic Partners, 2001: 3). According to the NHS Discussion Paper, it is ‘Australia’s major response to the crisis of homelessness’, and the Commonwealth funding was increased by 18 per cent in real terms under the December 1999 agreement (FaCS, 2000: 17; FaCS, 2003a).

On the whole, SAAP has been well received by the sector. The consultants, Strategic Partners, identified ‘some extremely effective models’ and some very positive work being done with children and families (Strategic Partners, 1997: 25). A review of the Reconnect program found that SAAP placements were ‘an integral part of any network of services for young people in a community’ (Evans and Shaver, 2001). CHP Victoria sees it as innovative in both its research and its development of best practice models (CHP Victoria, 2002. See also: National Evaluation Team, 1999: i). AFHO referred to it as ‘a welcome initiative’ because it brought consistency and co-ordination to a system that up to then had had varying levels of adequacy and appropriateness. In their view it was effective in meeting the aims of the program and the periodic reviews had shown ‘significant development and improvement in service delivery, program management, program administration, data collection and client outcomes’ (AFHO, 2003a: 12).

According to the NHS Discussion Paper, however, there were still serious issues needing to be addressed, including the relationship between homelessness and housing policy and programs, and ‘a lack of coordination and sharing of information’ (FaCS, 2000: 17, 7). Beer et al. pointed to the fact that there may not be sufficient housing for all those young people who needed it, especially in rural and regional areas of Australia. They also noted that SAAP was not intended to be a substitute for longer-term public housing (Beer et al, 2003: 8). Fopp emphasised the lack of ‘exit points’ from SAAP. He noted that the lack of affordable and appropriate housing for clients to move into meant that they stayed longer than necessary in SAAP accommodation and thus tied up resources that should be available for people in crisis. This was a point, he said, that had been made by all three SAAP evaluations (Fopp, 2002). The 1998 report into Indigenous homelessness noted that it was not SAAP’s responsibility to address the broader systemic causes of homelessness, among which these authors included housing supply. Nonetheless, they pointed out, these

² For SAAP I, see: Chesterman, 1988; for SAAP II, see: Lindsay, 1993; for SAAP III, see: National Evaluation Team, 1999. At the time of writing, the report on SAAP IV has not been released. It is to be presented to Community Service Ministers in June 2004, followed by a Community Service Ministers meeting on 28 July 2004 (FaCS, 2003; AFHO, 2003b).

systemic factors had an impact on SAAP, in terms of both the level of demand and the capacity of clients to move on from SAAP (Keys Young, 1998: 136).

CACH acknowledged that SAAP was as 'vigorous' a response to homelessness as anything any comparable country had devised. But, they said, while the needs of the homeless had become increasingly complex, the resources to meet those needs had remained unaltered. Moreover, there was a need for services to be 'more integrated, flexible and responsive', and there were still gaps in the service system (CACH, 2003: 7-8). In 1989, the Burdekin Report had voiced concern that SAAP, and the Youth Supported Accommodation Program (YSAP) in particular, had continued to focus on crisis or refuge accommodation, while earlier calls for increased medium to long-term accommodation services had 'gone largely unheeded'. The Report also noted that the Review of SAAP I had said that its recommendations were made in the context of a worsening situation for the homeless (HREOC, 1989: 14-15).

In its submission to the SAAP IV evaluation, AFHO said that there had been no substantial increase in SAAP funding for many years and that Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) funds were being diverted from capital works to other uses such as temporary accommodation for clients, salaries and other areas that State budgets or CSHA should address (AFHO, 2003a: 17) (See also: Clay, 2003). AFHO also said that some of SAAP's performance indicators were related to factors external to SAAP such as income security and the employment market, and hence could not be directly influenced by SAAP. They were also concerned about a lack of consultation with the community sector, especially in relation to the performance indicator area, and the development of the National Plan and the strategic themes for SAAP IV for the period 2000-2005. As a consequence, there were a number of issues of concern to the sector which were not addressed in the themes, such as unmet demand, problems with data collection, lack of resourcing for extra workloads, unrealistic expectations about what SAAP services can achieve, funding models that rely on client ability to pay, the pressure to turn SAAP into an early intervention program only, and no provision for increases in staff wages (AFHO, 2003a: 17, 18-21). In relation to unmet demand, Bartholomew reported that Hanover Welfare Services had found in the mid-1990s that the majority of families could not be helped by SAAP services because there were no vacancies for them (Bartholomew, 2002. See also: Bell, nd). The evaluation of SAAP III noted that, according to NDC estimates, between 31 per cent and 51 per cent of demand for SAAP services was unmet in 1996/97 (National Evaluation Team, 1999: vii).

AFHO also pointed out that some of the most significant of the proposals from earlier SAAP evaluation reports had not been implemented. Many of these proposals related to the need for increased funding, especially overall funding because, although SAAP was working well for those people it did help, it was not able to provide help to all those who needed it. AFHO also mentioned prior recommendations to increase funding for CAP, for public housing, to expand early intervention and prevention, for children escaping domestic violence, and to improve resources for SAAP services (AFHO, 2003a: 7-8). AFHO were convinced that 'a substantial injection of funds into SAAP and into other areas such as housing, employment, income security, health and education' would not only improve the situation of homeless people but would also save money in the long-term. It would in fact be a redirection of funds, away from the necessity for dealing with the social consequences of poverty and homelessness, such

as ‘juvenile justice, corrections, social security payments’, and towards the root causes (AFHO, 2003a: 11). The primary message of the AFHO submission to SAAP IV was summed up by the AFHO Consultant, who said that SAAP was working, but that it needed more resources to respond to its ever-increasing client base (Foster, 2004: 5).

Bartholomew argued that the chief problem facing SAAP services is the shortage of long-term, stable exit points for clients, only a small percentage of whom ever move on to medium- or long-term accommodation. The problem is often masked by current data collection practices that count the provision of emergency housing as ‘outcomes’.³ This tends to obscure the fact that many SAAP clients are repeat clients who either return to the street, enter another similar arrangement or move to another service after each ‘outcome’. ‘Accommodating a family for as little as one night’, he said, ‘cannot realistically be regarded as an “outcome”’ (Bartholomew, 2002). Green listed a number of costly consequences of continuing to measure performance in terms of ‘bed day targets’, and said that it militated against service continuity and a continuum of care. As long as it continued to be seen as an end in itself, instead of one aspect of a long-term planning process for young people and their families, ‘coming into care will continue to provide a clear path to homelessness’ (Green, 1993: 94-5, 98)

Bartholomew also pointed out that focusing almost exclusively on crisis accommodation at the expense of long-term, stable housing is based on the erroneous assumption that homelessness is temporary. Providing crisis accommodation is important, but unless there is also provision for more long-term options, there is a danger that it will not be available for those who really need it in an emergency (e.g. women escaping domestic violence), because it is already being occupied by families who are ready to move on but have nowhere to go (Bartholomew, 2002. See also: Shaver and Paxman, 1995: 110).

Strategic Partners identified a number of obstacles to working with children accompanying their families in SAAP (Strategic Partners, 1997: 25-30). They listed these within five broad areas: societal culture, the broad service network within which SAAP operates, the SAAP service system, service providers and worker practice. At the same time as they listed the obstacles, however, they also noted the existence of many agencies that demonstrated what could be achieved despite the problems.

Under the first heading, ‘Societal Culture’, the authors listed: the condoning of violence; unrealistic views about families; the devaluing of the work done with children; a society-wide toleration of existing levels of unemployment, homelessness and poverty; discrimination against Indigenous people, those from CALD backgrounds, migrants and refugees; and few opportunities for parenting education.

In the area of the broader service network, the authors noted that because of a diminishing allocation of government resources to support services, not only does SAAP have diminishing access to these services, especially in rural and remote areas, but it is also being used to fill the gaps in specialist services. The consultants also

³ These issues are discussed further below in the section on data analysis.

found that access to some services was dependent on involvement with child protection, and that this was compounded by the difficulties in accessing the child protection system. They also mentioned: problems of service co-ordination; reductions in community housing availability; the low status given SAAP services in some parts of Australia; minimal services for migrants and refugees; the lack of work being done with perpetrators; and confusion around understandings of 'case management' and from which agency the case manager should be drawn.

In the case of SAAP itself, the consultants identified a lack of a systematic focus on children, both child-related services and data collection. (This is in the process of changing – see: Lindsay, 1993: chapter 4; Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994; Efron et al, 1996; AIHW, 2000; AIHW, 2003a; Jurak, 2003; Perth Inner City Youth Services, 2003; Edwards, 2003; as well as the consultants' own work – Strategic Partners, 1997 – and this present review). They also identified a certain inflexibility in the system (they gave the example of fixed daytime working hours); a lack of protocols linking SAAP with other services; the draft national standards' minimal focus on children; too little training for managers and little recognition of staff training; the lower status and conditions of employment of those who work with children; the slowness to implement the Case Management Adviser system; limited resources for outreach work; and difficulties with staff turnover and recruitment, especially in rural and remote areas.

In relation to service providers, Strategic Partners mentioned a lack of consistent commitment to working with families holistically; difficulties with physical access to some premises; the unavailability of staff after normal working hours; staff reluctance or inability to work with children; the failure of some Management Committees to appreciate what is involved in working with children; and a client focus on adults rather than on children.

Finally, in relation to worker practice, Strategic Partners identified as obstacles: too little focus on child development; a lack of specialist skills (for example, trauma counselling); a lack of child-oriented resources and equipment; confusion around what is involved in case management and which agency is responsible in the case of multiple-agency involvement; and lack of role modeling for teenage boys.

Earlier, Thomson Goodall Associates had identified services gaps in six areas. The first mentioned was 'Housing', to which the first required response was 'increased appropriate public housing'. Other areas discussed were: inadequate legal and community responses; insufficient linkages between SAAP and community resources; a limited range of options for service delivery; inadequate provision of support to children; and uneven and inequitable allocation of resources (Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994: 3-10).

National Homelessness Strategy

The Commonwealth Government announced its National Homelessness Strategy (NHS) in 2000 with the release of a Discussion Paper detailing a framework for both current and planned initiatives. This consisted of four main themes: 'Working Together in a Social Coalition', 'Prevention', 'Early Intervention' and 'Crisis, Transition and Support'. SAAP was to remain in place and provide the centrepiece for policy, but the Strategy was intended to be a more comprehensive, holistic and

coordinated approach. The first theme, 'Working Together', would 'bring together governments, businesses and communities in a social coalition', while the fourth theme, 'Crisis, Transition and Support', would continue the work of SAAP. (For the other two themes, see below) (FaCS, 2000). The NHS would involve increased spending on crisis accommodation, as well as working with the States/Territories 'to strengthen community housing as an option ... for people with higher support needs'. It was expected that the NHS would result in a higher proportion of people leaving SAAP for public housing (FaCS, 2000: 18).

In the 2001 Budget, the Commonwealth Government allocated \$5 million over three years to a Family Homelessness Prevention Pilot (FHPP). The FHPP involves Centrelink and community agencies working together in local Service Partnerships, with community agencies funded to deliver and coordinate services to families identified as being at risk of homelessness. It is expected that the FHPP will provide evidence about the effectiveness of early intervention and prevention services (Vanstone, 2002; FaCS, 2003b).⁴

As commentators have pointed out, it is difficult to obtain a clear overview of Commonwealth Government initiatives for alleviating homelessness because programs not specifically directed towards homelessness, such as those dealing with drug abuse or crime prevention, can also have an effect on it (McIntosh and Phillips, 2000; Healey, 2002: 34-5). However, there are a number of specific initiatives. McIntosh and Phillips list as the main programs in the area: SAAP, CSHA and CAP, Rent Assistance, Emergency Relief Program, the NHS; and for youth, the Prime Ministerial Youth Taskforce, the Youth Homelessness Pilot Program and Reconnect (McIntosh and Phillips, 2000. See also: Mission Australia, 2001; CHP Victoria, 2002). Crane and Brannock refer to 'a wide range of government and non-government delivered programs and services', including family relations services, services targeting particular young people, general protective services, service delivery infrastructure, and social policy positions and development processes (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 30-7).

In an overview of models of service delivery, Beer et al. found that there had been considerable policy innovation in dealing with homeless young people over the last decade or so. They found that a greater emphasis was now being placed on prevention and early intervention, and on helping families solve their own problems. In particular they noted moves towards targeting services for those most at risk, towards case management and family preservation as preferred strategies, and towards families, schools and other places with a potentially strategic role to play in prevention and/or early intervention (Beer et al., 2003: 25).

In a commentary on the NHS, Bell said that the work that had already been done was important and had the potential to make homelessness more visible in the federal policy arena than ever before. But, she noted, it needs to be 'comprehensive and fully

⁴ In 2003 the Interim Evaluation of the Pilots was completed, showing strong positive outcomes for participating families. The Australian Government has committed further funding of \$10.4 million over four years in the 2004-05 Budget to continue this work. From 1 July 2004 the Pilots were renamed and continue as the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program.

resourced'. She commented that there was 'a high degree of cynicism' around towards policies that failed 'to result in real action on the ground'. She said that the Strategy was an 'opportunity to prevent the problem of homelessness worsening', but that it must be supported with adequate resources. 'It is not enough just to develop a good strategy', she said, 'it needs to be implemented' (Bell, no date: 3).

The AFHO said that, to date, the NHS had involved 'little more than a series of pilot projects with no resources for their ongoing implementation and continuance'. They recommended instead the kinds of homelessness policies developed in Victoria and Western Australia, which they felt had been far more effective in reducing levels of homelessness (AFHO, 2003a: 11). Bell, too, expressed concern about what she saw as a trend towards providing funding only for short-term pilot programs. No matter how innovative and successful these programs were, they left communities high and dry when the funding ran out, and hence would not lead to any long-term change (Bell, no date: 2).

There was general agreement throughout the literature that the level of provision of public housing was inadequate and declining (Lindsay, 1993: 6, 154; Neil and Fopp, 1994: 112, 116-17; Casey, 2001: 80; Bartholomew, 2002; ACOSS, 2003: 2, 11; Beer et al, 2003: 8; CHP Victoria, 2003: 17; Clay, 2003; Hanover Welfare Services, 2003: 2). CHP Victoria said that public housing stock comprised 6.5 per cent of Australian dwellings, but that many people waited a long time for public housing, sometimes indefinitely (CHP Victoria, 2002). AFHO said that SAAP's aim to make its clients independent was not being achieved because of the lack of affordable and appropriate housing as exit points from SAAP, as well as by 'the impact of high rates of unemployment and poverty, and the diversity of the problems faced by SAAP clients' (AFHO, 2003a: 7). ACOSS said there were over 200,000 people on waiting lists for public housing, and that CSHA funds continued to shrink, a situation made worse by the fact that state housing authorities were being forced to use current funding to meet already existing liabilities, instead of providing new housing (ACOSS, 2003: 2, 11).

Kolar argued that access to good quality housing was essential, and called for preventative strategies that would guard against people losing their housing, whether in the private or in the public sector. In particular, she argued, it should not be possible for families in public housing to lose their homes (Kolar, 2003a: vi).

The literature suggests that despite the resources that have been poured into the sector, the situation has not been improving significantly. A research report produced by the Salvation Army in 1995 said that, although youth homelessness was clearly seen as an important social issue, given the dramatic increase in resources and the hundreds of reports that have been produced, 'young people continue to become homeless and to remain homeless, often for years' (Smith, 1995b: 1). Also in 1995, the Morris Report said that the governments had failed to improve the situation of young homeless people in the years since the Burdekin Report (House of Representatives, 1995: 207). Pinkney and Ewing also said that many of the preventative programs offered by community and youth service agencies were not demonstrably successful in reducing levels of youth homelessness (Pinkney and Ewing, 1997: ix).

In 1994, Neil and Fopp argued that there were a number of government policies that were instrumental in unintentionally worsening the impact on levels of homelessness of current economic circumstances. These included youth income support policies,

subsidising home ownership at the expense of rental accommodation, and de-institutionalisation. In the case of the latter, the problem was not de-institutionalisation in itself, but the way in which it was carried out, that is, 'the extremely limited resources allocated to it, its varied interpretations, and the way in which the principle has been translated into practice' (Neil and Fopp, 1994: 67-76).

Kolar was convinced that both family and youth homelessness have been increasing, despite government efforts. The reason was that the structural factors causing homelessness had not been addressed. Instead, government initiatives had been mainly reactive responses to crisis situations, such as SAAP and rental subsidies to the private market, and these did not address the underlying causes. What was needed was the political and community will to tackle the root problems. Without that, she said, government responses will be ineffective in the long term (Kolar, 2003a: 80).

Prevention and early intervention

As mentioned above, prevention and early intervention are two of the four themes of the Commonwealth Government's National Homelessness Strategy. In relation to prevention, the Government believes that its own economic management and the taxation and workplace relations reforms already in place provide a basis for tackling the social disadvantage that is the cause of homelessness. The Government also believes that building family and community capacity is an important element of prevention. The specific initiatives detailed in the Discussion Paper are: tackling domestic violence, largely through Partnerships Against Domestic Violence (PADV); helping people in financial difficulty (Rent Assistance, Emergency Relief, Centrepay); addressing family breakdown (the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, family relationship services, Reconnect and the Youth Homelessness Taskforce are mentioned in this context); providing access to housing via the CSHA and the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program; various strategies for dealing with drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse and mental illness; and building community capacity through the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy.

In the context of early intervention, the Discussion Paper mentions the Youth Homelessness Taskforce and Reconnect, together with a number of the other programs discussed under the 'Prevention' heading. Also mentioned are seven categories of people at high risk of homelessness, including Indigenous Australians and young people who have been in care. The Discussion Paper also says that early intervention is a fairly recent innovation for SAAP, having been introduced in the SAAP III Act (FaCS, 2000: 11-16). The evaluation of SAAP III commented that 'additional funding will need to be provided to develop early intervention and outreach activities as a part of any future response to the needs of the homeless' (National Evaluation Team, 1999: xix).

Discussions in the literature under the heading of 'prevention and early intervention' tend to focus only on early intervention, although the terms 'are often used interchangeably, inconsistently and with little specificity' (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 14). The distinction Crane and Brannock make concerns entirely different levels of intervention. Prevention, they argue, largely involves the 'structural or external factors contributing to youth homelessness'. The example they give of an external factor is 'the pool of suitable public housing stock for young people', while their example of a structural factor is 'age-based systems of youth wages and income support'. They say

that prevention can also operate at the 'situational' level, for example, 'a parenting skills program incorporated in the school curriculum', but measures targeted to the situations of specific individuals or families are not seen as preventative in their terms. Early intervention, on the other hand, does involve 'situational factors affecting specific young people'. It can happen at two points, either before a particular instance of homelessness has occurred and in response 'to a perceived difficulty or crisis', or after the young person has become homeless but before the homelessness has become chronic (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 14-16). Within this framework, early intervention does not lead to the prevention of homelessness, however helpful it might be to particular individuals.

However, this distinction is not used elsewhere in the literature. Chamberlain and MacKenzie, for example, acknowledge that distinctions between prevention and early intervention do tend to become blurred and that the terms are used loosely, but they use a different distinction to that used by Crane and Brannock. Chamberlain and MacKenzie distinguish between strategies focused on young people before they have left home (which the authors refer to as preventative) and measures taken early in the young person's homeless 'career' (which the authors refer to as early intervention) (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 115-16). In the terms proposed by Crane and Brannock, this distinction would refer to two different types of early intervention, neither of which would be preventative. On the whole, however, the literature continues to discuss prevention and early intervention either as though they were interchangeable, or by focusing only on early intervention.

Chamberlain and MacKenzie are of the view that there has been 'an explicit turn in youth policy towards building an early intervention capacity in schools and local communities' since 1995. This is a consequence of the policy emphasis of the Coalition Government elected in 1996. Its Youth Homelessness Taskforce made this emphasis explicit in a report which was released in 1998 and which led to the establishment of the Reconnect program (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2002: 34. See also: Pinkney and Ewing, 1997: 2-3).

Schools are currently seen as one of the primary locations for early intervention (Parkinson, 2003). The Burdekin Report said it was essential that schools assist in trying to avert homelessness, even though they were often ill-equipped for it and tended to reject students in difficult circumstances. But, said the report, apart from families, schools were the 'first line of defence' in protecting children, and they were often 'the last point of contact which these children have with mainstream society' (HREOC, 1989: 273-8).

Crane and Brannock also argued that schools were 'an important site for both prevention and early intervention', but they too could see that there were limits to what schools could do. They mentioned especially the difficulties of the extra support and attention needed by homeless students. 'The challenge for schooling systems and individual schools', they said, 'is to address academic and vocational goals and yet be responsive to the social and emotional well-being of young people from the widest range of circumstances'. They suggested three strategies for schools to adopt. The first involved inviting youth and community services to play a number of roles within the school itself, from curriculum development to friendly advice in the playground. The second involved the school using those services for referral, external case management, etc. The final suggestion involved ensuring that all the school's

practices and procedures were consistent with the purposes of prevention and early intervention (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 103).

Pinkney and Ewing pointed out that school-based interventions could 'provide an environment and resources to enable young people in the early stages of home leaving to complete their secondary education and to avoid the ongoing instability of homelessness'. They suggested a strategy of funding 2,000 full-time equivalent welfare coordinator positions in schools nationwide, noting that, if even a quarter of the estimated number of homeless students could be helped, 'the economic benefit to the community would outweigh the cost' (Pinkney and Ewing, 1997: 3, 6). Kolar also pointed out that the costs of social and economic exclusion were substantial, both for the individual and for the community through the need to fund welfare, health and justice programs (Kolar, 2003a: vi).

MacKenzie and Chamberlain pointed out that schools are important for early intervention because 'most young people have their first experience of homelessness while still at school'. They said there is now a higher level of awareness of student homelessness than there was before 1995, and evidence that some schools were developing welfare supports for their students and links with local services. There had been an increase in welfare support capacity in schools since 1995, with several States making a significant investment in school welfare counsellors (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003: 61, 24-5. See also: House of Representatives, 1995: 271-4).

Evans and Shaver found that some of their respondents working in the areas of mental health, behavioural problems and criminal activity believed that prevention and early intervention could work with children younger than the 12- to 18-year-olds who are the target age group for Reconnect. Children in primary schools could show signs of the problems that have been known to lead to homelessness later. The authors also noted that programs like Families First in New South Wales and Strengthening Families in Victoria were targeted at even younger children, as well as at the antenatal stages (Evans and Shaver, 2001: 39-41). Chamberlain and MacKenzie, however, argued against focusing on primary schools, first because there was no evidence of significant numbers of homeless students in primary schools, and secondly because it was dangerous to label young children 'at risk of homelessness'. They pointed out that what people were concerned about in primary schools were broader welfare issues, not homelessness as such (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 123-4).

A number of commentators said that early intervention strategies were working. RPR Consulting found that FHPP services were already demonstrating the usefulness of early intervention strategies for reducing family homelessness. There was an increase in the proportion of families whose housing and financial circumstances improved after intervention. The proportion in secure accommodation rose from 34 per cent to 67 per cent, while 90 per cent stayed in their accommodation or were rehoused (RPR Consulting, 2003: 6. See also: FaCS, 2003b). CACH said that education had already shown its worth in early intervention strategies both for homeless young people and for imparting basic skills to older homeless people (CACH, 2003: 8). MacKenzie and Chamberlain also said there is some evidence of the effectiveness of early intervention. Their 2001 census of school students found that schools had managed 'to retain a significant minority of homeless students', while a number of other students had been successful in achieving independent living (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003: iv-v).

There are others, however, who have been critical of early intervention strategies as they have developed so far. The chief criticism is that they cannot deal with the basic causes of homelessness. As Crane and Brannock put it: 'Early intervention strategies cannot deal with or ameliorate the social and structural dynamics which produce and sustain homelessness' (Crane and Brannock, 1996: 109).

Oberin (2002) was also concerned that notions of early intervention 'failed to tackle the structural issues which are at the root of social problems'. She acknowledged that there was some good work being done and that early intervention had the potential to help some people and some families, but she found the concept 'problematic, elusive and without a clear framework'. She identified a number of concerns. First, the exclusive focus on individuals and families made it seem as though there was something wrong with them, 'rather than fully recognising the factors which have caused the disadvantage'. Her second concern was that it made it seem as though something was being done, although it was too often just 'busy work' that did not 'address issues around structural disadvantage and marginalisation'. Third, it was taking on an unwarranted importance, with resources being directed towards early intervention and away from crisis intervention. She pointed out that, for many people, especially women escaping from domestic violence, the crisis when they walked out of home was the earliest occasion on which they sought help, and hence the crisis intervention was the early intervention. She said the logic of shifting resources from crisis to early intervention appeared to be sound – if the crisis could be prevented by the early intervention then the demand for crisis intervention would be reduced. There were two problems with this, however. The first was that the funding was shifted before the demand was reduced, and the second was that demand would inevitably increase if the services were doing their job properly by reaching out to the community (Oberin, 2002).

That the use of services does in fact increase after people's housing has stabilised was one of the more unexpected findings of the Hanover Family Outcomes Study, a longitudinal study of 42 families who had experienced housing crisis. The study found that, after about six months in their new stable accommodation, people began to access other services like employment services, health, food vouchers, counselling and, in particular, financial relief. It was as though getting housed had been such an overwhelming priority that people had ignored their other problems; once that overwhelming need had been satisfied, they were able to focus on other important needs when they became more pressing (Kolar, 2003a: 79-80; Kolar, 2003b: 12).

Like Oberin, AFHO also expressed disquiet at the funding priority being given to early intervention at the expense of crisis intervention. 'The pressure to shift the focus of SAAP to early intervention', they said, 'is problematic'. They were critical of the fact that funds were being diverted from other areas into early intervention. They supported any initiative to provide additional funds to SAAP for early intervention work, but they did not support any erosion of 'SAAP's primary role as a safety net, crisis accommodation and support program' (AFHO, 2003a: 20, 14).

Evans and Shaver identified a number of problems with the prevention and early intervention program, Reconnect, including: a paucity of resources, especially mental health services for adolescents in particular; too few counsellors in schools; the slowness of the assessment process for income support; legislative requirements to disclose confidential information; unsuitable referrals from State welfare departments;

and the inappropriateness of Reconnect for some SAAP clients. It was important to develop the ability of communities to address the issues behind family conflict and early home leaving, they said, but community should not be seen as a substitute for the professional support that was also needed to assist young people and their families (Evans and Shaver, 2001: 41-50).

Oberin gave a number of examples of what she considered to be ‘good early intervention strategies’:

Let’s start talking about real “early intervention” and have our Commonwealth Government say sorry to our Indigenous people, redistribute some of the wealth, income and power, start to create full employment, an equitable health system based on health promotion, provide safe, affordable housing for everyone, stop treating refugees as criminals and less than human, and free all women and children from domestic and family violence. These seem to be good early intervention strategies (Oberin, 2002).

State/federal responsibilities

In its SAAP IV submission, AFHO said that it strongly supported SAAP remaining a joint Commonwealth/States/Territories responsibility because homelessness was a national issue requiring a national response, because it required co-ordination of all policy levels, and because Commonwealth oversight protected the program from unilateral decisions on the part of the States/Territories. AFHO noted that the situation prior to SAAP was ‘uncoordinated, poorly resourced and varied in adequacy and appropriateness’, and that it was this situation that SAAP was intended to redress. They said that the sector was worried that SAAP may not continue once the full impact of the GST was achieved in the States/Territories. But even when the GST was fully implemented, they pointed out, there would still be a need, not only for national co-ordination, but also for Commonwealth funds. The devolution of SAAP back to the States/Territories would be detrimental to the development of national strategies for dealing with the structural causes of poverty and homelessness (AFHO, 2003a: 15-16, 47).

Chamberlain and MacKenzie referred to the need for a ‘national response for a national problem’, asserting that the Commonwealth Government had a responsibility to provide national leadership in relation to prevention and early intervention strategies in schools. This would include national standards for the provision of basic welfare services in all Australian schools, co-ordination of services at every level of government, and support for co-ordination in local communities. The authors suggested that this leadership could be administered either through a Department of Youth Affairs, possibly combined with Education, or an Office of the Status of Young People and Children in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (p.183) (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 1998: 173-88).

The Morris Report had also argued for continued Commonwealth input into homelessness policies. It quoted from evidence supplied by Brian Burdekin, author of the 1989 HREOC Inquiry, giving another reason why the Commonwealth should remain involved in the sector, that is, because the Commonwealth is the appropriate

entity under international law for the discharge of Australia's obligations in relation to the rights of the child (House of Representatives, 1995: 239).

The NHS Discussion Paper said that SAAP would continue as a joint Commonwealth and State/Territory responsibility. The signatories to the SAAP Memorandum of Understanding were committed to building the necessary links between the relevant departments at State and federal levels of government (FaCS, 2000: 8-9).

However, according to the SAAP III evaluation, there has been a devolution of program administration from the Commonwealth to States/Territories, a process furthered by the implementation of 'funder-purchaser-provider models of funding'. The evaluation noted the importance of positive leadership by the Commonwealth, especially for co-ordination, and for ensuring accountability, fostering standards and monitoring and evaluation (National Evaluation Team, 1999: v, xii, xxvii).

The Morris Report documented what amounted to a withdrawal from the provision of services to young people on the part of the States/Territories. This was happening for a number of reasons, including a trend away from state intervention and wardship, reduced resources for State/Territory welfare departments, mandatory reporting of child abuse, and the targeting of staff resources towards children under 12 (House of Representatives, 1995: chapter 9. See also: Shaver and Paxman, 1995: 17-20).

As Shaver and Paxman found, 'homeless young people find themselves at the boundaries of responsibility dividing Commonwealth and State governments'. State governments are responsible for child welfare, but recent Commonwealth funding programs, including SAAP and the provision of income support for young people under the age of 18, have brought it into closer proximity to the child welfare responsibilities of the States. The purpose of these extensions of Commonwealth funding is to provide assistance to those young people who lack parents able or willing to take responsibility for them. A State ward, however, does have a responsible parent in a strict legal sense, and the eligibility rules for income support have been drawn up to avoid this responsibility being passed from the States to the Commonwealth. One consequence of this is that State wards are treated differently from non-wards. This can work to their advantage (for example, when parental means tests are not applied to foster parents' income). However, it is also the case that young people can be defined as ineligible for help from the Commonwealth, even though they are unsupported by the State/Territory welfare authorities who are retreating from 'parental' responsibilities (Shaver and Paxman, 1992: 3-5, 43-4, 112).

In response to such concerns, the Morris Committee noted, the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments have adopted a Youth Protocol for referral, assessment, case management and support for young homeless people. Parties to the Protocol are Centrelink, the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS), the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and the Department of Employment and Work Place Relations (DEWR). The Youth Protocols apply to young people under 15, to those between 15 and 17 and at risk of abuse and to State wards and specify the actions and responsibilities required once a young person is identified as falling into one of these groups. All the States and Territories are signatories to the Protocols, but the ACT and NSW governments are currently in the process of renegotiation of the terms. While the Youth Protocol has a national

framework, State-specific factors dictate variations in the operational guidelines from State to State.⁵

The Morris Committee found that the Protocol received support from some organisations working with young people, although there were also a number of concerns about it (House of Representatives, 1994: 29-33). Overall, the Committee concluded that the Protocol was an inadequate response to a massive problem, for reasons including the lack of consultation with non-government organisations and the inability of welfare departments to comply due to serious limitations of resources (House of Representatives, 1995: 233). Similarly, Evans and Shaver (2001: 46-7) found varying views on the Protocols among the relevant agencies, some finding them useful in clarifying responsibilities between agencies, while others had little or no knowledge of them. The most important change they noted was that welfare agencies must now financially support young people falling under the Protocol, whereas that was not the case some years ago). However, both these reviews took place some years ago and it may be expected that the Protocols have now become more firmly embedded in practice.

The AFHO Consultant for the SAAP IV Evaluation found that there was still some uncertainty about where the responsibility lay for the increasing numbers of school-age children at risk of homelessness. Strictly speaking, these children are the legal responsibility of the States/Territories' human services departments and yet they are often being placed in SAAP services (Foster, 2004: 6).

Shaver and Paxman also earlier pointed out that the tax sharing arrangements between the Commonwealth and the States/Territories set the terms under which the States/Territories carried out their Constitutional functions. These arrangements are set at the national level and determine the resources available to the States to carry out their responsibilities for child and adolescent welfare. Although the needs had been increasing with growing levels of homelessness, resources had not kept pace (Shaver and Paxman, 1992: 4).

The SAAP III Evaluation found that the relationship between the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) and SAAP was unclear at the time of writing. The Team stressed the importance of a number of issues concerning CAP, including that it remain a tied fund grant from the Commonwealth, that it not be only a provider of capital, that it be flexible, and that it be oriented towards exit from SAAP into independent living (National Evaluation Team, 1999: p.xx).

2.7 Relationship with legislation

This review found little information in the literature on the implications of policy and program development that arise out of legislation and constrain service capacity, although there was some discussion of the mandatory reporting requirements of the various Child Protection Acts in the State/Territory jurisdictions. Evans and Shaver

⁵ The Youth Protocol included on the FaCS website is specific to New South Wales: http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/state_offices-nswyouthprotocols.htm (accessed 22.6.04). This is under renegotiation and likely to be amended soon. The signed Protocols for the States/Territories are due to appear on the FaCS website in the near future.

said that a number of NSW participants in their research, especially DoCS staff, had discussed the inclusion of homelessness in a section of the NSW *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, noting that it would mean an increased role for services offering mediation and dispute resolution, such as Reconnect (Evans and Shaver, 2001: 46-7). The Morris Report had found that the mandatory reporting requirements had resulted in a decreased focus on older children in favour of directing scarce resources to younger children. Adolescents, they said, were not being seen to be at high risk of abuse and were being largely forgotten by the child welfare system (House of Representatives, 1995: 207-8).

Green discussed some problems with the Victorian *Children and Young Persons Act 1989*. The Act changed the grounds on which the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (H&HS) could make protective applications to the Children's Court, by deleting clauses relating to problems in relationships between parents and young people, to young people's difficult behaviour and to homelessness. As a result, Green pointed out, three categories of young people were excluded from the ambit of Protective Services. While approving of the Act's intention to abolish some of the more punitive aspects of the prior legislation, Green argued that significant numbers of young people who would have been in the care of the welfare system under the previous legislation were now being deprived of resources or placed in the homeless system where it was extremely difficult to access child welfare services. The problem was not the legislation itself, but a lack of training, inadequate planning to implement voluntary access and family involvement in service delivery and, even more importantly, a lack of resources to enable the community sector to implement the new requirements. She summed up the results of the study by saying that they 'indicate that the impact on services to young people has been that young people placed on a voluntary basis are receiving a second class service when compared to their statutory counterparts and that a number of young people are being displaced altogether and forced into services intended for the homeless' (Green, 1993: 31-59).

2.8 Summary of key issues

Recent developments in the housing market Australia-wide, but especially in the capital cities, have significantly reduced the capacity for home ownership amongst lower earners in the Australian population. Colmar Brunton Social Research have reported that, by June 2000, no household with an income in the lowest 40 per cent could afford to buy a three-bedroom house in Sydney, Melbourne or Adelaide, or a one-bedroom unit in Sydney. Fewer than five per cent could afford to rent a one-bedroom unit in the inner city in Sydney or Melbourne, while nearly three-quarters of households at this income level nationwide were forced to spend more than 30 per cent of their income in rent. Moreover, low income households were increasingly having to compete with higher income households for low-cost rental accommodation, resulting in a nationwide shortage of 150,000 dwellings in the mid-1990s (Colmar Brunton Social Research, 2004: 14, 15, 11). The result is a high level of unmet need for housing.

Meanwhile, funding to the States/Territories through CSHA for the provision of public housing for low-income households has been reduced. As a consequence, State housing authorities are having to use CSHA funds to meet a backlog of liabilities rather than provide new housing stock, and the numbers of low-income people being

allocated public housing continue to decline. This has made it harder to reduce homelessness amongst the Australian population.

SAAP was not intended as a provider of long-term housing. Its overall aim under the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994* is 'to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services' to people who are homeless (s5(2)(a)). However, SAAP agencies also have a statutory responsibility 'to help people who are homeless to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence' (s5(2)(a)) and 'to obtain long-term, secure and affordable housing and accommodation' for them (ss5.3(b) and 7(c)). Indeed, 'a place to live for some time' is exactly the kind of support that the vast majority of SAAP clients say they need (82 per cent nationally, ranging from 97 per cent in the ACT to 75 per cent in NSW) (Colmar Brunton Social Research, 2004: 15-16). SAAP's efficacy is tied to its clients' ability to move on and that ability in turn is dependent on the supply of affordable accommodation. Given the 'grave, complex and pressing' housing situation in Australia (Affordable Housing National Research Consortium, 2001: 3), that cannot happen for most of SAAP's clients, not to mention the numbers of people whose need is as great but who do not approach a SAAP agency.

A related point concerns the individualistic emphasis of much public policy towards homelessness. If, as most commentators argue, the problems causing homelessness are structural – poverty, unemployment, the housing market – focusing on individuals (or families) will not solve them. And yet this is increasingly the emphasis of government policy (Bartholomew, 2002), including in the SAAP Act itself with its primary emphasis on case management. It is true that it is individuals (and families) who are in crisis and hence in need of help and support. But the crisis situations people find themselves in are not the result of (for example) their low levels of education, bad financial management or lack of living skills, but of a broader social and economic crisis that places access to basic shelter beyond many people's reach.

The literature includes literally hundreds of recommendations to address these problems, many of them concerned with procedural details, and it is not possible to give an overview in a review of this size. Moreover, it is difficult to determine how far past recommendations have already been implemented by SAAP agencies, and to find out would require a large research project which is beyond the scope of this present report. There were comments throughout the literature indicating that previous recommendations had not been incorporated into the homelessness policy agenda. However, these comments were often either out of date (e.g. the Burdekin report) or vague with no details given (e.g. Salvation Army, 2003). A further problem concerns the fact that the most important causes of homelessness lie outside SAAP's terms of reference, including unemployment, poverty, domestic violence and the lack of affordable housing.

Nonetheless, there are a number of overarching recommendations arising out of the literature. The first of these concerns what the literature consistently refers to as the 'structural' causes of homelessness. Although these are outside the scope of SAAP, they have an impact on the ways in which SAAP agencies operate, and even on whether they can operate at all. This is especially the case in relation to housing supply. As the 1998 report into Indigenous homelessness noted, both the level of demand on SAAP services and the ability of clients to move on are affected by the supply of affordable housing (Keys Young, 1998: 136). If there are too few 'exit

points' from SAAP, clients stay longer in SAAP accommodation and tie up resources which should be available for people in crisis (Fopp, 2002).

In the case of services specifically for children, detailed recommendations can be found in the publications authored by Thomson Goodall Associates (1994) and Strategic Partners (1997), among them provision of such support services as child care, specialist workers, domestic violence counselling and protection from abuse, and education, health care, toys and pets. Most refuges and family services provide in-house child care (Thomson Goodall Associates, 1994: 21), but although children under six were well catered for, Jurak's (2003) study suggested that older children were sometimes less well supported. However, it should be noted that this particular study had a poor response rate from refuges and the findings may not be representative. Other areas needing attention concern the low status of children's workers; the fact that services external to SAAP were becoming increasingly difficult to access, largely but not only because of the mandatory reporting requirements; and the fact that it was becoming increasingly clear that refuges were an inappropriate form of communal living for children and young people.

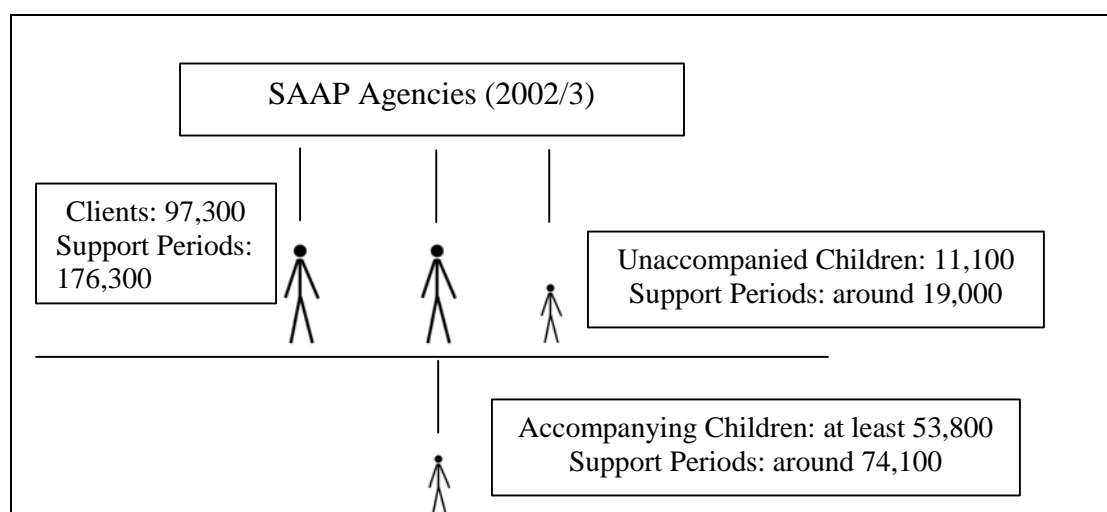
3 Analysis of SAAP Client Data on Children

3.1 Data background

The purpose of the data analysis component of this study is to provide a critical analysis of information from SAAP and the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) on the circumstances and outcomes of children, both accompanying and unaccompanied, using SAAP services.

The SAAP National Data Collection was established in July 1996 at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). It currently includes information on children in varying degrees of detail, depending on how they present to SAAP. A person under 18 years of age may present independently to SAAP, as an unaccompanied child, or may present with another person who is the SAAP client. In the latter case they are regarded as an accompanying child (see Figure 3.1 below). Data on accompanying children have only been collected since 2000-2001, but a special collection of data on this group of children was carried out in 1998 (AIHW, 2000). Children are an important group within SAAP services, representing some 43 per cent of all persons involved in SAAP and 37 per cent of 'support periods'.⁶ This research project is taking an important step in analysing together the data on the two sets of presenting children, rather than continuing to treat accompanying children as grouped with adult clients. This allows the development of a more complete picture of the circumstances and outcomes for children in SAAP.

Figure 3.1 Person groups in SAAP and associated support periods, 2002-03



Note: A child is a person aged 17 years or younger.

Source: AIHW, 2003c, Tables 4.2, 9.1 and 9.2, plus additional information from SAAO Data Analyst.

Information in the SAAP National Data Collection is gathered via completion of a standardised administrative document called the 'Client Form'. A range of demographic and situation-specific information on children is available. This allows a

⁶ This would suggest that children have fewer repeat episodes than adults in SAAP, but the difference may be an artefact of the difficulty in tracking repeat support periods of accompanying children.

broad description of the characteristics and circumstances of SAAP child clients, and includes items such as age, gender, geographical area, and whether the child is accompanied or unaccompanied. There is also information relating to the children's periods of support from SAAP services, including the SAAP agency profile, the services needed, the services received and the duration of the support period.

Some data items are only collected for the adult that the child accompanies. This means that direct information about accompanying children is not available. In this report, in order to provide some detail about the experience of children in SAAP, details of the accompanied adult are used in lieu of details of accompanying children. However, at some points in the report analysis of accompanying children is restricted because use of the proxy information would lead to too many strong assumptions in its interpretation.

While the quality of the administrative data is reasonably high, there are missing values throughout and these are noted where applicable. The data are collected from consenting clients at participating agencies and there is a high response rate. Ninety-four per cent of agencies participated in the 2002-03 collection and within these agencies 86 per cent of support periods had informed consent obtained (consent must be obtained from clients before anything beyond rudimentary information can be collected) (AIHW, 2003c). Data here are weighted to adjust for non-participation by agencies. An additional non-consent weight is calculated for clients and for accompanying children. This are explained further below in Appendix A.

The data analysis that follows has been carried out using de-identified data tables provided by the SAAP Data Analyst, with input from the NDCA staff at the AIHW. An SPRC analyst consulted with the data collection organisations, specifying the form and content of the data provided. The full collection of tables relating to child circumstances, service needs and outcomes can be found in Appendix B. Wherever possible, the child is the principal unit of our analysis, in line with the need to shift the focus of understanding to children in their own right.

3.2 Circumstances of children in SAAP

This section describes the circumstances of children presenting to SAAP. It identifies the prevalence within SAAP of both groups of children, accompanying and unaccompanied, and breaks down these groups by important demographic variables such as gender, age, location, and cultural and linguistic diversity. The characteristics of the children in SAAP are compared to children in the general Australian population using the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Census Basic Community Profile. This analysis shows that children are over-represented in SAAP compared with their presence in the Australian population as a whole. Certain sub-groups are also over-represented, such as Indigenous children and unaccompanied female children, but others are under-represented, such as unaccompanied children born overseas.

Circumstances specific to the child's period of homelessness, such as type of accommodation before SAAP, or the legal processes involved, cannot be compared with data external to SAAP. Nonetheless, such data items provide important information about the child's situation. These items are compared with general SAAP client (predominantly adult) circumstances to explore the uniqueness of the child's experience, as well providing grounding for the other research questions.

Demographic profile of children in SAAP

There were around 64,500 children who presented to SAAP nationally in the year 2002-03 (Table 3.1). Most of these (83 per cent) were accompanying an adult SAAP client, but around 11,000 children presented to SAAP unaccompanied. Children therefore represent a significant proportion overall (43 per cent) of all individuals presenting.⁷ Given that Australian Census data show that children constitute only 25 per cent of the Australian population, it is clear that children are over-represented in the client population of SAAP.

SAAP agencies with high client turnover currently complete a shorter Client Form for High Volume Agencies, which covers a subset of the items found on the full Client Form. These numbers for children in SAAP (below) do not include those children listed on the high volume SAAP forms, because the children are not individually identified. Based on available data, we estimate that the number of individual children on high volume records for the same period was around 3,400.⁸ Including this rough estimate of children on high volume forms would raise the proportion of children in the SAAP population to 44 per cent (a further explanation of high volume forms appears in Appendix A).

Table 3.1: Number of children in SAAP, by sex, 2002-03

	Males	Females	Total ^a
Accompanying children (aged 0-17) ^b	26,952	26,773	53,819
Unaccompanied children (aged 12-17) ^c	4,298	6,444	10,743
Total children (younger than 18 years)	31,250	33,217	64,562
Total number of other clients (18 years and older)	36,400	49,400	86,411
Total people in SAAP 2002-03	67,650	82,617	150,973

Notes:

- a. Totals for accompanying and unaccompanied children include cases where gender was not known (94 and 1 respectively). Totals for adult clients include 611 cases where gender was not known.
- b. Excludes accompanying children listed on high volume forms.
- c. Excludes unaccompanied children under the age of 12.
- d. Client weight was used to calculate figures in this table, to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: Appendix B, Table B.1, and AIHW 2003c, Table 4.2.

Figure 3.2 compares the proportion of children who are SAAP clients with the proportion of children in the general Australian population. The solid line representing the proportion of children in SAAP lies consistently above the broken line; representing the share of children in the Australian population. Although the proportion of 13-15 year olds in both populations is similar, other age groups are

⁷ This is different from the share of support periods.

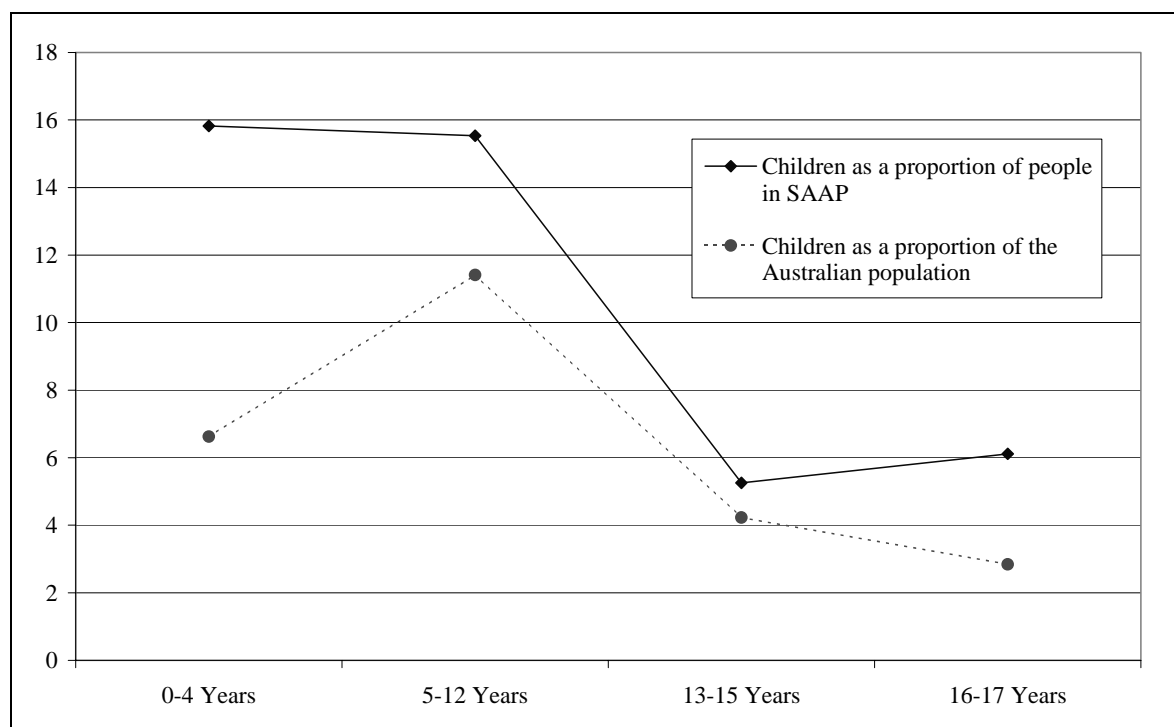
⁸ The number of individual accompanying children on high volume forms in 2002/03 is estimated by: the total number of high volume support periods for children (4,500), divided by the average number of support periods per child (1.32) on general forms. Data are from AIHW (2004: Table 1.1) and AIHW (2003c: Table 9.4). This assumes that the accompanying children appearing on high volume forms visit SAAP the same number of times as children on general forms. Further compounding the 'roughness' of this estimate is the fact that some children may appear both on high volume forms and elsewhere, and this cannot always be detected because the high volume forms do not require a valid alpha code for each child.

markedly over-represented in the SAAP population. This is most evident for the youngest group of children, aged 0-4 years. What this shows overall is that families with young children are particularly vulnerable to homelessness and likely to use SAAP services if they do become homeless.

It is important to bear in mind from the start that the accompanying and unaccompanied child groups are largely demarcated along age lines. Some 88 per cent of the accompanying children are aged from birth to 12 years. This age divide between the two groups is reinforced by the way that the data are constructed, because unaccompanied children aged under 12 years have been excluded from the analysis (see Appendix A). Since age and whether the child presents to SAAP as accompanying or unaccompanied are so closely related, it is of particular interest to unpack these two characteristics where possible.

The gender composition of the accompanying child group (shown in Table 3.1) is evenly balanced, with close to 27,000 males and females each presenting to SAAP in 2002-03. But there were more females (n = 6,444) than males (n = 4,298) in the unaccompanied child group. The proportion of young women presenting as unaccompanied children (60 per cent) is very close to that of adult women (58 per cent).

Figure 3.2: Children as a proportion of SAAP service users, by age, 2002-03

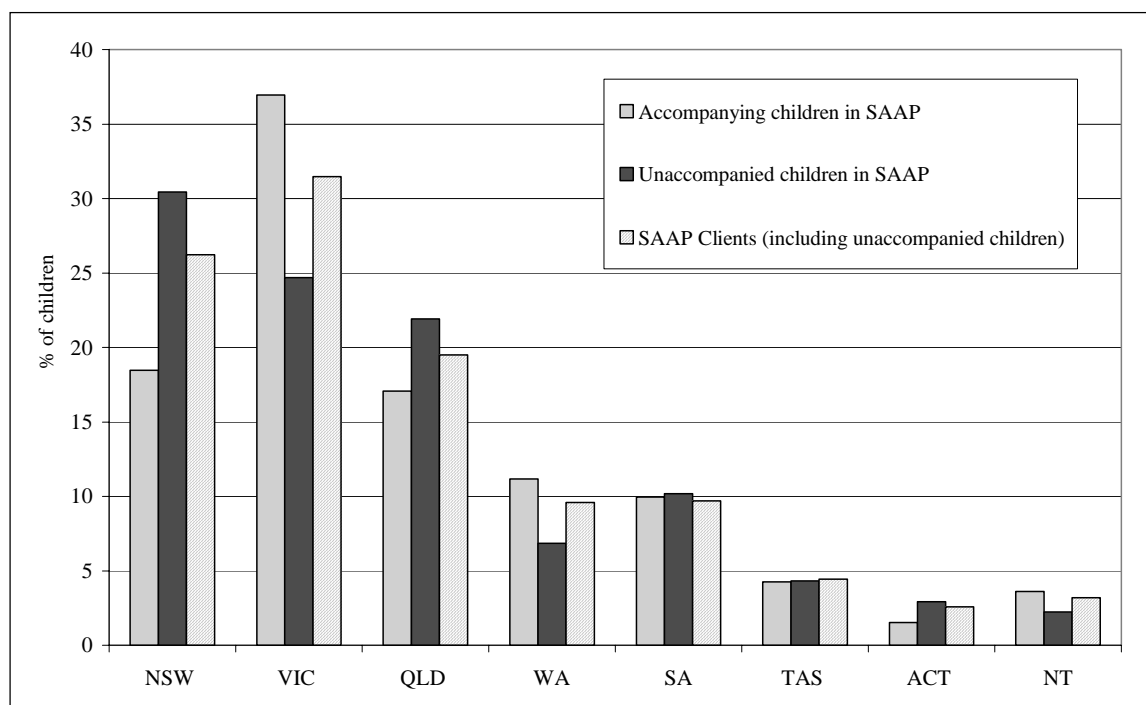


Sources: B.1; ABS (2002: Table B03, excludes overseas visitors).

The distribution of children in SAAP by State and Territory is broadly the same as the distribution of clients in general. As Figure 3.3 shows, most children present to SAAP in the more populous States of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, where

there is also greater funding for SAAP services.⁹ However, the relative share of accompanying and unaccompanied children presenting to SAAP differs significantly across the different jurisdictions. New South Wales, for example, had a much higher share of the unaccompanied child population than the other major States, whereas Victoria had an inordinately high share of the accompanying child population - almost twice that of New South Wales. This is not a consequence of a larger population of children in Victoria, because Victoria has nearly 450,000 fewer children than New South Wales. This suggests either that Victoria has a disproportionate problem of family homelessness, or that there is a stronger presence of SAAP services aimed at family homelessness, including women’s refugees (the latter is more likely). Similarly, the disproportionate presence of unaccompanied children in New South Wales SAAP services may indicate greater provision of youth homelessness services.

Figure 3.3: Distribution of children in SAAP, by State/Territory (percentage of total number of children using SAAP services across Australia), 2002-03



Note: The figure shows individuals in SAAP by State/Territory as a proportion of total individuals in SAAP in Australia. Because an individual could have presented to SAAP in more than one State/Territory, these proportions sum to more than 100.

Sources: Appendix B: Table B.2; AIHW (2003c: Table 3.1).

⁹ As the 2002/03 SAAP annual report says ‘Current funding is based on a combination of funding levels that were agreed on and implemented at SAAP’s inception in 1985 and growth funds for SAAP IV which are based on State and Territory populations’ (page 3). Each state’s share of total SAAP funding is as follows: NSW 35 per cent, Vic 23 per cent, Qld 15 per cent, WA 9 per cent, SA 8 per cent, Tas 4 per cent, ACT 3 per cent and NT 3 per cent (AIHW 2003c: Table 2.1).

About half of all children in SAAP presented to services in the capital cities (49 per cent of accompanying children and 52 per cent of unaccompanied children). In the other geographic locations the shares of both accompanying and unaccompanied children were similar: six and 10 per cent respectively in other metropolitan areas; 14 and 18 per cent in large rural centres; 29 and 24 per cent in other rural areas and eight and four per cent respectively in remote areas (Appendix B: Table B.3).

Indigenous Australians make up only about two per cent of the Australian population as a whole (ABS 2002). However, among SAAP clients generally (AIHW 2003c: Table 4.5) 13 per cent of men and 21 per cent of women were Indigenous. This over-representation is also seen at the child level, where 25 per cent of accompanying children (based on the parent or guardian's details) and 17 per cent of unaccompanied children are Indigenous (Appendix B: Table B.4).

SAAP sees fewer overseas-born people than would be expected, given that one in four people living in Australia was born overseas (ABS 2002). Only 14 per cent of the total client group were born overseas and only six per cent of unaccompanied children (Appendix B: Table B.4). Calculating this statistic for accompanying children is unreliable, because only parent or guardian data are available and these are not necessarily the same as for the accompanying child. In the absence of other information it is difficult to interpret this finding of under-representation. It is possible that children coming from overseas-born communities are less likely to become homeless or to make use of SAAP services if they do; it could also be that language barriers prevent some children born overseas from knowing about and locating SAAP agencies. The review of the literature found relatively little information about the specific circumstances of children born overseas or from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, except that their needs were not always fully met in SAAP services.

Characteristics related to the period of homelessness

This section presents information relating more specifically to the child's period of homelessness. For accompanying children we have to rely on proxy information provided about the client they were accompanying. For this reason care must be taken in comparing some of the information about the two groups of children because the same category can mean different things.

The information on 'type of accommodation' provides an example (see Table 3.2). For accompanying children, private rental accommodation is the most commonly recorded type of accommodation they were occupying immediately before presenting to SAAP, yet it is among the least recorded types of accommodation for unaccompanied children. This comparison is clearly flawed. Accompanying children do not pay private rent themselves, their parents or guardians do. Thus in reality nearly all accompanying children would be living rent-free. However, allocating accompanying children to the rent-free category would be misleading because the category of 'private rental' is helpful in describing the stability of accompanying children's prior accommodation. Few of the unaccompanied children were classified as having lived in private rental accommodation, because they did not pay for it themselves. However, we know that many of them were living in families before they come to SAAP and therefore in some form of rental or owner-occupied dwelling – like most of the accompanied children. Hence, what would appear to be a difference

between the two groups of children in an artefact of the data collection that conceals what is in fact a similarity.

As this example illustrates, the individual categories can be misleading, and it is important to keep in mind all the information we have on the children in order to make sense of the data.¹⁰

Most accompanying children had been living in private accommodation of some sort before SAAP. This was either rental accommodation (22 per cent), boarding in a private home (14 per cent), or living in their own home (seven per cent). This still left a large number of accompanying children who had been living in public or community housing before SAAP (17 per cent). Some five per cent of accompanying children had been living in rooming houses/hotels/hostels or caravans. There was also a substantial group of accompanying children who had been living in some other emergency accommodation prior to SAAP (16 per cent) and a small number (two per cent) living rough in a car, tent, park, street or squat.

For unaccompanied children, the most common type of accommodation directly before SAAP was living rent-free in a house or flat (34 per cent). Many were boarding in a private home (19 per cent). As suggested above, both of these sets of unaccompanied children were most likely living with their families. As with accompanying children, there was a substantial group of unaccompanied children (19 per cent) who had previously been in SAAP or some other emergency accommodation.

¹⁰ There is a difficulty with the SAAP client questionnaire here: any one person could fit into several categories. The accommodation question also blends two aspects of accommodation: whether clients pay for their accommodation themselves and the type of accommodation it is. Strictly speaking we cannot add categories together because an individual can be in more than one category if they change characteristics between separate support periods with SAAP. The duplication is only slight, however.

Table 3.2: Type of accommodation before SAAP, 2002-03

	Accompanying children (type of accommodation of client)		Unaccompanied Children	
	n	%	n	%
Don't know/no info/missing	4,670	7.7	1,666	12.4
SAAP or other emergency housing	9,635	16.0	2,595	19.3
Living rent-free in house/flat	4,649	7.7	4,583	34.2
Private rental	13,118	21.7	464	3.5
Public or community housing	10,057	16.6	244	1.8
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	3,062	5.1	434	3.2
Boarding in private home	8,436	14.0	2,050	15.3
Own home	4,121	6.8	94	0.7
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	1,388	2.3	515	3.8
Institutional	535	0.9	538	4.0
Other non-SAAP housing	743	1.2	228	1.7
Total	60,414	100	13,411	100

Notes:

- The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying (53,819) and unaccompanied children (10,743) because some appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.5.

Many accompanying children (at least one-third) appeared to have been living with only one parent or guardian immediately before SAAP, because 31 per cent of the adult clients they accompanied reported that they were 'living alone' or 'alone with children' (Table 3.3). But their modal living situation before SAAP was a two 'parent' family: 20,541 accompanying children, around 35 per cent, lived like this and a few were with their parent or guardian's foster family (17 individuals). Some accompanying children had been living with their extended family immediately before SAAP, indicated by the fact that 2,616 adults associated with the accompanying children who said they were living with their own parents. Finally, substantial numbers of accompanying children were living with relatives or friends in the short term (16 per cent) or long term (two per cent).

For unaccompanied children, as with accompanying children, the modal living situation before coming to SAAP was with parents or a foster family (3,870 and 350 respectively or around 31 per cent in total), but we cannot distinguish between children living with one parent and those living with two. A large number of unaccompanied children had been living with relatives or friends in the short term (2,874 or 21 per cent) or with other unrelated persons (2,059 or 15 per cent). Some 797 had been living alone before SAAP. The category 'living alone with children' probably indicates 63 young parents in the unaccompanied child group, while others had been living with a spouse or partner and possibly their own children (501) before SAAP.

Table 3.3: Living situation before SAAP, 2002-03

Living situation	Accompanying Children (living situation of client)		Unaccompanied Children	
	n	%	n	%
Don't know/no info/missing	4,485	7.5	2,112	15.7
With parent(s)	2,616	4.4	3,870	28.8
With foster family	17	0.0	350	2.6
With relatives/friends short-term	9,504	16.0	2,874	21.4
With relatives/friends long-term	1,123	1.9	649	4.8
With spouse/partner with/without children	20,541	34.5	501	3.7
Alone with children	17,817	29.9	63	0.5
Alone	804	1.4	797	5.9
With other unrelated persons	1,894	3.2	2,059	15.3
Other	784	1.3	171	1.3
Total	59,585	100	13,446	100

Notes:

- a. The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying (53,819) and unaccompanied children (10,743) because people appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- b. Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.7.

Table 3.4 shows the different client groups for the two sets of children. 'Client group' refers to the household/age form in which the person presented to SAAP. A sizable group of children accompanied a couple, probably both parents, to SAAP (10 per cent). Some children accompanied a man only (four per cent), but the vast majority came with a woman, probably in most cases their mother (85 per cent). Comparison with the previous living situations shown in Table 3.3 indicates that coming to SAAP is often associated for children with transition from living with both parents to living with only one. This emphasises how much SAAP is particularly a service focused on sole parents, often following relationship breakdown or domestic violence

Coming to SAAP alone was the overwhelmingly the norm for unaccompanied children (86 per cent), as would be expected. However, some 280 unaccompanied children arrived as a couple without children, and a further 561 came with children of their own, mainly as young sole mothers.

Table 3.4: Client groups, 2002-03

	(Client with) Accompanying children		Unaccompanied Children	
	n	%	n	%
No info/missing	658	1.2	441	4.0
Male alone aged under 25	-		4,001	35.8
Female alone aged under 25	c		5,576	49.9
Couple without children	-		280	2.5
Couple with children	5,388	9.8	113	1.0
Female with children	46,585	84.9	417	3.7
Male with children	2,058	3.8	31	0.3
Other	168	0.3	310	2.8
Total	54,857	100	11,169	100

Notes:

- The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying (53,819) and unaccompanied children (10,743) because people appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.
- This figure was confidentialised by the NDCA on the ground of small numbers. Total excludes this category

Source: Appendix B: Table B.6.

The majority of children (or rather the adult they were accompanying) were either not involved in any legal processes or were not aware of any concerning them (see Table 3.5). Where they were involved in legal processes, these were often not identified but categorised as 'other' (13 per cent accompanying and 15 per cent unaccompanied).

When legal processes were identified, by far the most common for the client of an accompanying child (14 per cent) was 'intervention/ protection/ restraining order/ apprehended violence order (as a result of violence perpetrated *against* the client)'. For the most part these clients are women, so this finding is foreshadowing domestic violence as a major issue for accompanying children. Some clients with accompanying children had these orders *against them* as the perpetrator (three per cent). Finally, there were two per cent clients with accompanying children who had protection/ guardianship orders. It is likely that these concerned the accompanying child.

In the case of unaccompanied children, when legal processes were identified they were most likely to be protection/guardianship orders (six per cent). There were a small number of children with 'intervention/ protection/ restraining order/ or apprehended violence orders', and these were evenly split between being a result of violence *against* the child (279) and violence *by* the child (268).

Table 3.5: Involvement in legal processes, 2002-03

	(Client with) Accompanying children		Unaccompanied children	
	n	%	n	%
None	31,777	57.3	6,690	62.3
Don't know/no information	6,390	11.5	1,203	11.2
Protection/guardianship order	1,065	1.9	644	6.0
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order (as victim)	7,535	13.6	279	2.6
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order (as perpetrator)	1,432	2.6	268	2.5
Other legal processes	7,216	13.0	1,655	15.4
Total	55,415	100	10,739	100

Notes:

- The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying and children because people appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.8.

Table 3.6 shows that being 'at imminent risk' was the most common classification of duration of homelessness for both groups of children (30 per cent and 32 per cent). The duration profiles were very similar for the two groups of children. Unaccompanied children were more likely to appear in multiple categories - an artefact of unaccompanied children being more likely to have repeat support periods. There was also a high level of missing information in this category for both types of children.

Table 3.6: Duration of homelessness, 2002-03

	Client with Accompanying children		Unaccompanied Children	
	n	%	n	%
At imminent risk	18,138	29.8	4,387	31.7
Less than 1 week	4,766	7.8	1,494	10.8
1 week to 1 month	7,552	12.4	1,748	12.6
1-3 months	5,194	8.5	1,052	7.6
3-6 months	3,474	5.7	667	4.8
6-12 months	3,410	5.6	601	4.3
1-2 years	2,801	4.6	493	3.6
2-5 years	2,891	4.7	410	3.0
More than 5 years	2,894	4.8	252	1.8
Don't know/no information/missing info	9,824	16.1	2,745	19.8
Total	60,944	100	13,849	100

Notes:

- The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying and unaccompanied children because people appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.8.

The most common source of referral to SAAP was ‘Self’ (Table 3.7). Family and friends were a less common source of referral or information about SAAP for accompanying children than for unaccompanied children. More important for adults associated with accompanying children were telephone crisis referral agencies, non-government organisations, SAAP or other agency workers, police or legal units, and other government departments. For unaccompanied children, the main sources of referral or information (after self-referral) were the community services department and SAAP or other agency workers.

Table 3.7: Sources of referral or information about SAAP, 2002-03

	(Client with) Accompanying children		Unaccompanied Children	
	n	%	n	%
Don't know/missing	3,913	6.5	1,720	12.5
School/other educational institution	240	0.4	754	5.5
Community Services Dept	2,686	4.4	1,340	9.8
Police/legal unit	3,872	6.4	561	4.1
Prison/correction unit	109	0.2	171	1.2
Hospital/health services	1,765	2.9	281	2.0
Psychiatric unit	139	0.2	56	0.4
Phone/crisis referral agency	7,190	11.9	415	3.0
SAAP agency/worker	6,557	10.8	1,429	10.4
Other govt dept	3,729	6.1	1,004	7.3
Other non-govt org	5,869	9.7	985	7.2
Self	17,886	29.5	2,811	20.5
Family	2,497	4.1	1,143	8.3
Friends	2,628	4.3	765	5.6
Other	1,591	2.6	281	2.1
Total	60,671	100	13,716	100

Notes:

- The sum exceeds the total number of accompanying and unaccompanied children because people appear in multiple categories if their circumstance (or those of the client they were accompanying) differed each time they were supported by SAAP.
- Excludes accompanying children on high volume forms.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.10.

In summary, the circumstances of accompanying and unaccompanied children presenting to SAAP are both similar and different. They are similar in that both groups of children are most likely to present in a capital city in one of the eastern states of Australia. However, accompanying children are typically under 12 years of age, just as likely to be a male as a female, have most recently been living in a two-parent family in private or public rental accommodation. These young children mainly present to SAAP with their mothers who have referred themselves. Although most of these women are not involved in legal processes, they are quite likely to have taken out some form of restraining order. On the other hand, unaccompanied children are more likely to be female than male, are almost adults at 16 or 17 years of age, but are not likely to have been paying for accommodation: they were living with their parents before coming to SAAP alone. The legal process they are most involved with is a protection/ guardianship order.

3.3 Service needs of children in SAAP

This section looks at the pattern of service needs of children in SAAP. Information is presented on the number of times children came to SAAP, as well as their (or their

guardian's) reasons for seeking assistance. We look at whether children present to SAAP agencies of particular types or service delivery models, and what types of services they request, if any. Particular interest lies in determining which different 'groups' of children, as defined by their demographic and situational characteristics, need which services. We also try to unpack whether there is any difference between children who had services requested and those who did not, in order to help us understand whether some children's needs are neglected, or whether those who do not request services do not need them.

Support periods and reasons for seeking assistance

Accompanying children were involved in a total of 75,769 support periods for the year 2002-03 (high volume accompanying children are included in this figure). Unaccompanied children were involved in a total of 17,674 support periods for the year.

The share of support periods devoted to male and female children mirrored their prevalence in their client group. Accompanying children, who we saw from Table 3.1 were about half girls and half boys, were again evenly split when it came to the number of support periods each sex used in the year 2002-03. Boys and girls in this group used approximately 35,000 support periods each.¹¹

Unaccompanied child support periods were devoted more often to females: about 10,500 support periods compared to 7,000 for males. Again this simply reflects the gender composition of the unaccompanied child group, where 60 per cent were female. The pattern of support periods by gender is therefore unremarkable (the above data are from Appendix B: Table B.1).

The form completed on behalf of SAAP clients asks for all reasons for a person presenting to SAAP, and then asks what the main reason was. Table 3.8 lists the share of support periods in which these main reasons were nominated, for both accompanying and unaccompanied children. For comparative purposes, the table is sorted according to the most common reasons cited by the client population.

The least common main reasons were roughly the same for accompanying children, unaccompanied children and clients: with few citing sexual abuse, gambling, psychiatric illness or recently leaving an institution as the main reason for coming to SAAP. The most frequently cited main reason, however, was different for accompanying and unaccompanied children. Domestic violence stands out for accompanying children, while it is relationship or family breakdown for unaccompanied children.

Domestic violence is the most common main reason for presenting to SAAP given by the parent/guardian of accompanying children, applying to some 45 per cent of accompanying child support periods. Most accompanying children (46,585 out of 53,819) come to SAAP with their mother (or at least with a woman) and domestic violence is by far the most common main reason for women to come to SAAP services (AIHW 2003c: Table 5.3). If a woman comes to SAAP with two children, her

¹¹ Gender was not recorded for about 5,500 accompanying children.

main reason for assistance is recorded twice in Table 3.8. This is deliberate double counting. If two children were affected by that domestic violence or any other reason, it is important that each of those children is recognised. It is not giving undue weight to their effective reason for being at SAAP. SAAP agencies deal with many children who have witnessed, experienced or are having to deal with the aftermath of domestic violence. As AIHW (2004: 17) notes,

Children who witness or experience domestic violence may suffer severe psychological trauma and have very specific needs. They display high levels of distress, low self-esteem and, in many cases, behavioural problems such as depression (Rogers 2003; Stone 2003).

Domestic violence is not a common main reason given by unaccompanied children, cited in only three per cent of support periods. The main reason was less well defined for the older group of children. For them it is relationship or family breakdown that is the most common main reason for seeking assistance (in 24 per cent of support periods). Seeking time out from family (main reason in 12 per cent of support periods) was important for older unaccompanied children, but it did not factor significantly for the younger children.

Perhaps as a culmination of financial stress and relationship breakdown, eviction is another frequently cited reason for presenting at SAAP for unaccompanied children. Summing the categories of 'eviction/previous accommodation ended' and 'usual accommodation unavailable' would rival 'relationship/family breakdown' as the most common main reason for presenting to SAAP.

It is important to look at *all* reasons why people approach SAAP services because it shows more of the complexity of their situations. For instance, when forced to choose a main reason, a person may decide it is domestic violence. Underlying this, though, are likely to be the more specific aspects of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or relationship breakdown. Indeed, this is shown in Table 3.9 where all of the reasons for seeking assistance are listed for accompanying and unaccompanied children. Multiple reasons were cited in many support periods.

Four reasons stood out for clients of accompanying children. Domestic violence was cited in 56 per cent of support periods as one of the reasons for being at SAAP, physical and emotional abuse in 38 per cent of support periods, family/relationship breakdown in 36 per cent, and financial stress in 30 per cent.

Unaccompanied children on the other hand, cited relationship and family breakdown in almost a half of support periods (48 per cent), interpersonal conflict in 28 per cent, and time out from family or other situations in 31 per cent of support periods.

Thus in almost one third of accompanying child support periods, the parent/guardian said they came to SAAP at least partly because they were in financial difficulty, although it was the main reason in only five per cent of cases. This indicates that people in SAAP face multiple disadvantages. About one in six unaccompanied children cited financial difficulty (17 per cent), but again, unaccompanied children did not commonly note this as a main reason for seeking assistance at SAAP.

Table 3.8: Main reason for seeking assistance (as a percentage of support periods), 2002-03

	Accompanying Children (client's main reason)	Unaccompanied Children	Clients ^a
Domestic violence	44.5	3.3	22.1
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	11.0	12.2	11.2
Usual accommodation unavailable	6.5	11.9	10.9
Relationship/family breakdown	6.9	24.4	10.5
Financial difficulty ^b	5.0	3.0	8.9
Other reason	4.9	4.4	5.8
Time out from family/other situation	3.2	11.6	5.6
Recent arrival in area	3.6	2.3	5.5
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	0.8	1.6	5.0
Physical/emotional abuse	3.8	3.0	3.0
Itinerant	1.3	2.3	3.0
Interpersonal conflict	1.6	5.5	2.8
Recently left institution	0.3	1.2	1.6
Psychiatric illness	0.2	0.4	1.6
Emergency accommodation ended	1.1	1.8	1.4
Sexual abuse	0.4	1.4	0.8
Gambling	0.1	-	0.3
Don't know/missing/no information	4.7	9.6	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes:

- Clients include adults and unaccompanied children. Unfortunately the unaccompanied children cannot be removed from the published client data.
- For unaccompanied children, due to small numbers in the gambling category, financial difficulty includes gambling.
- The total number of support periods were: accompanying children (75,769), unaccompanied children (17,674) and clients (130,400).

Source: Appendix B: Table B.3, AIHW 2003c: Table 5.3.

Table 3.9: All reasons for seeking assistance (as a percentage of support periods), 2002-03

	Accompanying Children (client's reasons)	Unaccompanied Children
Usual accommodation unavailable	18.1	25.0
Time out from family/other situation	19.0	30.5
Relationship/family breakdown	35.6	47.7
Interpersonal conflict	19.6	27.7
Physical/emotional abuse	37.9	16.1
Domestic violence	55.7	9.7
Sexual abuse	3.9	3.8
Financial difficulty	30.3	17.0
Gambling	0.8	0.2
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	19.8	25.1
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	9.4	8.8
Emergency accommodation ended	3.3	4.8
Recently left institution	0.7	2.2
Psychiatric illness	1.9	2.1
Recent arrival in area	8.8	5.1
Itinerant	3.9	6.8
Other reason	11.2	8.2

Note:

a. Percentages sum to more than 100 because more than one reason was allowed.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.2.

Types of agency to which children present

In this section we describe what type of service the children attended, and whether certain children were more likely to attend particular types of agency. There are two descriptive characteristics of SAAP agencies available: 'agency primary target group' and 'agency service delivery model'. Table 3.10 shows the number of agencies in each target group and service delivery category. More than one-third of SAAP agencies primarily target young people. A little over one-fifth primarily target women escaping domestic violence and almost as many have multiple target groups. The remaining agencies target families, single men or single women. The service delivery models are dominated by crisis/short-term style agencies and medium to longer-term ones. The majority of agencies targeting young people deliver services over the medium to longer-term, whereas those targeting women escaping domestic violence are more likely to be delivering crisis/short-term services. On the other hand, agencies targeting multiple client groups have a diverse range of service delivery models. Outreach agencies are most likely to direct their efforts at young people, as are telephone information and referral services.

Table 3.10: SAAP agency primary target group as a percentage of SAAP agencies, 2002-03

Number	Crisis/ S-term	Medium/ L-term	Day support	Outreach support	Tel/ info/ref	Agency support	Multi	Other	Total
Young people	123	215	2	36	9	1	56	30	472
Single men	39	28	2	2	.	1	19	4	95
Single women	14	25	.	2	.	.	5	1	47
Families	38	58	1	3	.	7	11	1	119
Women escaping DV	171	48	1	17	2	1	36	10	286
Multiple	69	87	20	8	4	15	44	16	263
Total	454	461	26	68	15	25	171	62	1,282

Source: Special table requested from the SAAP data analyst.

The agencies children present to can help us infer what their service needs are, although the information is limited by two factors: for accompanying children parental needs may be primary, and presentation to particular agencies is constrained to some extent by the nature of service supply in different areas. The present supply of SAAP services is a function of a range of factors including historical service development, local politics, available funding, and issues that the local area has faced.

Table 3.11 summarises the data relating to the target group of agencies used by children, according to the children's characteristics. Most child support periods are at SAAP agencies that target women escaping domestic violence, and agencies that focus on young people. Some 52 per cent of accompanying child support periods occurred at women's refuges, while agencies for young people dealt with 87 per cent of the unaccompanied child support periods. The agencies most prevalent in Australia are also more likely to see children.

What is perhaps of more interest is the fact that a significant share of child support periods happened outside these two main agency target groups. Forty-eight per cent of accompanying, and 13 per cent of unaccompanied, child support periods did not take place at what might be termed their stereotypical agency type. This means that other agency types need to have some capability for dealing with children even when children are not the main focus of their work. These agencies need to be able to refer children appropriately or address their needs adequately even if they are exceptional cases. Thus, even when agencies define themselves as targeting particular groups of people, they need to be prepared to handle cases that do not fit that mould.

Table 3.11 shows the characteristics of the children more likely to present at non-typical agencies. Child support periods were more likely to take place at agencies targeting other groups if the accompanying child was: 0-4 years of age, non-Indigenous, from Victoria or Tasmania, living in a metropolitan area or homeless for a shorter time.

One point of interest is that 10 per cent of accompanying children aged 0-4 years are recorded as presenting at youth-focused agencies. This younger age group was much more likely than older accompanying children to attend this agency type, indicating that they are accompanying young parents. Again, this means that youth services need

on occasions to be able to offer appropriate assistance to young children as well as their youth target group.

Ethnic background and location also seemed to be associated with the agency type attended. Children of Indigenous clients were more likely to attend an agency dealing with domestic violence than accompanying children in general (67 per cent compared with 52 per cent). People living in Western Australia and the Northern Territory were more likely to attend an agency dealing with domestic violence, and people in 'other rural centres' and remote locations were more likely than people in metropolitan areas or large rural centres to attend a domestic violence targeted agency. Large rural centres had similar profiles to capital cities and other metropolitan areas, except that 30 per cent of the accompanying child support periods were at multiple target agencies, about one and a half times the rate of capital city agencies and three times the rate of other metropolitan agencies. These results for location run contrary to the expectation that multiple target agencies might be more heavily used in smaller population areas simply because they are more prevalent. This is in fact what happened in Tasmania, where virtually all accompanying child support periods (95 per cent) were provided by multiple target agencies.

Clients of accompanying children who had been living in their own home or public/community housing were more likely to go to agencies specifically dealing with domestic violence. This is not surprising since they were more likely to be living with others.

In the case of unaccompanied children, the 13 per cent who presented to services targeted outside the 'young people' category were associated with one or more of the following characteristics: being aged 17, female, Indigenous, living in a less populous State/location, or previously living in a conventional home setting.

Seventeen-year-olds were more likely than younger unaccompanied children to attend a non-youth agency (17 per cent compared with 10 per cent of their younger counterparts). Female unaccompanied children were more likely than boys to go elsewhere than a youth service – mainly to agencies targeting domestic violence – as were Indigenous children. Without access to unit record data, however, it was not possible to carry out multivariate analysis that would identify any interactions between these separate factors.

In 'Other Rural' and 'Remote' settings, where agencies are likely to be more generalist because they deal with smaller numbers of clients, a disproportionate number of unaccompanied children used centres not solely targeted at them (24 per cent and 32 per cent respectively).

The patterns of agency use varied by State. In Tasmania, for example, 52 per cent of unaccompanied child support periods were provided by agencies other than those targeted at youth, in line with the notion that in less populated locations agencies are necessarily more generalist. However in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory – with similar sized populations, but very different geographical dispersion - unaccompanied children mostly attended agencies focused on the youth client group (only six per cent and 16 per cent, respectively, went elsewhere), whereas in Victoria, a much more heavily populated State, more than one-fifth of unaccompanied children's service periods took place at a non-youth specialist agency.

Overall, probably all that can be concluded from this locational analysis is that service use follows supply.

The duration of homelessness did not appear to be associated with whether or not unaccompanied children presented at youth agencies. Children with shorter terms of homelessness (less than a few months) were just as likely to use the agencies aimed at young people as those with longer terms (five years or more).

Unaccompanied children who had previously been institutionalised, on the other hand, almost exclusively attended agencies targeted at young people and only four per cent went elsewhere. In contrast, those coming from conventional home settings, be it private rental, social housing or owner-occupied, were more likely to use other services.

Table 3.11: Share of support periods going to a particular agency type, by child characteristics (percentage), 2002-03

	Accompanying children	Unaccompanied Children		
		<i>Percentage of support periods that were at an agency targeting...</i>		
	Women escaping domestic violence	Other	Young people	From elsewhere
All	52.5	47.5	87.2	12.8
Sex				
Male	n.a.	n.a.	93.0	7.0
Female	n.a.	n.a.	83.1	16.9
Age				
0-4 years	51.9	48.1	-	-
5-12 years	55.5	44.5	-	-
13-15 years	48.8	51.2	-	-
16-17 years	41.1	58.9	-	-
12 years	-	-	90.2	9.8
13 years	-	-	87.3	12.7
14 years	-	-	91.3	8.7
15 years	-	-	92.5	7.5
16 years	-	-	89.2	10.8
17 years	-	-	82.9	17.1
Indigenous Australian*	66.9	33.1	79.4	20.6
State/Territory*				
NSW	59.5	40.5	91.3	8.7
VIC	39.3	60.7	78.8	21.2
QLD	48.4	51.6	93.3	6.7
WA	78.9	21.1	87.6	12.4
SA	71.6	28.4	93.4	6.6
TAS	5.3	94.7	48.2	51.8
ACT	52.1	47.9	94.0	6.0
NT	71.7	28.3	84.2	15.8
Region*				
Capital City	48.3	51.7	89.9	10.1
Other Metropolitan	42.5	57.5	92.8	7.2
Large Rural Centre	41.8	58.2	92.1	7.9
Other Rural Centre	58.5	41.5	76.5	23.5
Remote Centre	84.4	15.6	68.0	32.0
Duration of current homelessness				
<1 week	n.a.	n.a.	87.7	12.3
1 week to 1 month	n.a.	n.a.	85.4	14.6
1-3 months	n.a.	n.a.	86.9	13.1
3-6 months	n.a.	n.a.	87.3	12.7
6-12 months	n.a.	n.a.	87.7	12.3
1-2 years	n.a.	n.a.	88.7	11.3
2-5 years	n.a.	n.a.	90.3	9.7
5 years +	n.a.	n.a.	85.6	14.4
At imminent risk	n.a.	n.a.	88.6	11.4
Previous living situation				
SAAP or other emergency housing	54.6	45.4	89.9	10.1
Living rent-free in house/flat	45.2	54.8	91.0	9.0
Private rental	49.9	50.1	72.2	27.8
Public or community housing	69.6	30.4	63.8	36.2

Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	32.8	67.2	81.9	18.1
Boarding in private home	33.0	67.0	80.7	19.3
Own home	78.8	21.2	68.3	31.7
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	22.0	78.0	81.7	18.3
Institutional	31.1	68.9	88.0	12.0
Other non-SAAP housing	37.2	62.8	96.1	3.9

Notes:

* For accompanying children, this field is based on the client that they were accompanying. It will not always be the same as the true accompanying child characteristic

n.a. indicates item not available for accompanying children, due to the inclusion of high volume forms

Source: Appendix B: Tables 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16 and 2.17.

Table 3.12 shows the distribution of support periods across the different service models. Both clients with accompanying children and unaccompanied children themselves were most likely to use crisis or short-term agencies, followed by medium-term support and then multiple services. Unaccompanied children were somewhat more likely than accompanying children to use these latter types, but the difference was not large. However, unaccompanied children were significantly more likely than the (younger) accompanied children to have support periods that fell under the telephone/information/referral service delivery model.

Table 3.12: Share of child support periods delivered by agency service delivery model (percentage), 2002-03

	Accompanying Children	Unaccompanied Children
Crisis / Short Term	42.5	40.0
Medium / Long term	28.4	26.4
Day Support	2.2	1.0
Outreach support	7.7	4.1
Telephone / information / referral	3.3	6.6
Agency support	0.2	-
Multiple	13.9	18.6
Other	1.7	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Appendix B: Table B.18.

We now discuss the relationship between service delivery models and child characteristics or circumstances. The percentages in the text should be compared to the totals shown in Table 3.12 for each group of children.

The older the accompanying children were, the more they tended towards using an agency with a medium to long-term service delivery model. The share of support periods at agencies of this sort was just over one-quarter for 0-4 year olds, but to two-fifths for 16-17 year olds (Appendix B: Table B.18). Accompanying children of Indigenous clients were more likely than the average to have support periods at a crisis or short-term agency (61 per cent) and at an outreach agency (10 per cent) (Appendix B: Table B.20).

Analysis by jurisdiction suggests considerable variation between States and Territories in the emphasis each placed on the different service delivery models, probably because of the different ways services developed historically. South Australia was on its own in delivering as much as 38 per cent of its accompanying

child support periods through agencies with outreach service delivery models. In New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory large shares of accompanying child support periods were delivered by crisis/short-term model agencies (57 per cent, 57 per cent, 87 per cent, and 64 per cent, respectively). Victoria delivered high proportions of support periods to clients with accompanying children through medium to long-term service delivery models (61 per cent); Tasmania delivered 58 per cent of accompanying child support periods via agencies with multiple service delivery models; and the ACT had a very similar profile to the Australian average (State and Territory information derived from Appendix B: Table B.21).

Capital cities had a greater share of accompanying child support periods delivered through medium to long-term facilities (33 per cent), while other metropolitan areas and large rural centres relied more heavily on the short-term or crisis agency model (69 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively). 'Other rural centres' were more likely than other areas to supply accompanying child support periods via agencies with multiple models of service delivery (21 per cent), whereas remote centres almost exclusively delivered these support periods through crisis or short-term agencies (83 per cent) (Location information derived from Appendix B: Table B.22).

Type of accommodation before approaching a SAAP service appeared largely unrelated to the agency service delivery model. However, social housing residents stood out as more likely than others to attend crisis or short-term centres (69 per cent of support periods). Clients with accompanying children who had previously been in SAAP or emergency housing were the most likely accommodation group to use an outreach centre (13 per cent) (Accommodation information derived from Appendix B: Table B.24).

The age of unaccompanied children was not associated with the agency service delivery model. All ages of unaccompanied children had similar levels of service use on this agency characteristic – with the possible exception of 12-year-olds who were significantly more likely to use telephone/information/referral services than other age groups: more than one-quarter (26 per cent) of their support periods were delivered through this agency model. However, 12-year-olds contributed only a small proportion of the total support periods of unaccompanied children (Appendix B: Table B.18).

It is interesting to note that unaccompanied female children were twice as likely to use the telephone/information/referral services as unaccompanied males (eight per cent of female support periods compared to four per cent of those of males). Since female unaccompanied children accounted for more total support periods than males, females made up almost three-quarters of the support periods where telephone services were used (73 per cent). Although the overall share of support periods delivered through this agency model was small, this perhaps suggests that young women are more comfortable with telephone service use than young men (Appendix B: Table B.19).

Indigenous unaccompanied children were more likely than unaccompanied children generally to seek assistance from agencies delivering services via a crisis/short-term (50 per cent) or an outreach model (six per cent) (Appendix B: Table B.20).

In New South Wales nearly half of the unaccompanied child support periods took place at crisis/short-term agencies (47 per cent), with only 11 per cent at medium to long-term centres. Victoria was the opposite, with the majority of support periods taking place at medium to long-term agencies (67 per cent). Victoria did not have any unaccompanied children attending multiple service delivery agencies at all. In Western Australia, three-quarters of the unaccompanied child support periods occurred in crisis/short-term agencies, while in the ACT more than two-thirds did (68 per cent). South Australia again was on its own in delivering a large share of support periods through agencies with multiple service delivery models (67 per cent). The similarities here to the accompanying child results indicate that service needs are difficult to disentangle using the available data, because service use is a function of availability and of the emphasis placed on particular models in different jurisdictions (Appendix B: Table B.21).

The main pattern of support periods is determined by capital cities (because this is where the majority take place), but there is some divergence from this pattern in other types of location. Just over half of the unaccompanied child support periods in 'other metropolitan areas' were supplied by agencies using crisis/short-term service delivery models. Telephone information and referral services were used more heavily in large rural centres, where they accounted for 15 per cent of unaccompanied child support periods. 'Other' rural centres were characterised by a high use of medium to long-term delivery models (35 per cent), while outreach services were more often used by unaccompanied children in remote centres, than elsewhere (11 per cent) (Appendix B: Table B.22).

Those unaccompanied children who had become homeless only very recently, in the previous week, were much more likely to attend a crisis or short-term agency (58 per cent) than those who had been homeless for longer periods (36 per cent). Beyond this, there were no strong observable trends in associating agency model with the duration of homelessness (Appendix B: Table B.23).

Finally, accommodation before SAAP showed little relationship to service delivery model for unaccompanied children. It is not possible to make the same generalisations of unaccompanied children as for accompanying children. However, unaccompanied children who had been living in their own homes before approaching a SAAP agency were less likely to attend agencies concerned with crisis/short-term service delivery: only 15 per cent of their support periods were at such agencies. Instead, greater shares of their support periods were at medium to long-term facilities (53 per cent). Those who had been in SAAP or other emergency accommodation before the current period tended not to use agencies with telephone/information/referral service models (these were the location of only two per cent of their support periods) (Appendix B: Table B.24).

Services requested

What services were actually requested from SAAP agencies for or by children? This is the most fundamental question in determining the service needs of children. The general client form lists a different set of services for accompanying and unaccompanied children, with the accompanying child list being more child-focused. This section presents the data on how often different service types were requested and analyses whether certain children are more often in need of particular services.

Table 3.13: Distinct service requests as a proportion of support periods (percentage), 2002-03

Type of Service	Accompanying Children	Unaccompanied Children	Clients
Housing/accommodation			
SAAP/CAP accommodation (incl. THM and other SAAP managed properties)	41.3	63.2	67.7
Assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation	-	21.9	26.1
Assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing	-	26.1	29.6
Financial/employment			
Assistance to obtain/maintain benefit/pension/other government allowance	-	18.7	16.1
Employment and training assistance	-	15.0	10.8
Financial assistance/material aid	-	23.6	29.1
Financial counselling and support	-	9.6	9.7
Counselling			
Incest/sexual assault counselling and support	2.5	4.0	2.5
Domestic violence counselling and support	-	5.9	16.1
Family/relationship counselling and support	-	27.5	14.8
Emotional support/other counselling	11.2	46.6	46.4
Assistance with problem gambling	-	0.1	0.7
General support/advocacy			
Living skills/personal development	-	38.6	19.8
Assistance with legal issues/court support	-	8.8	10.5
Advice/information	11.0	56.1	61.3
Retrieval/storage/removal of personal belongings	-	17.1	26.3
Advocacy/liaison on behalf of client	9.6	33.5	31.0
Brokerage services	2.2	6.0	5.5
Specialist services			
Psychological services	-	3.6	2.8
Psychiatric services	-	2.1	3.2
Pregnancy support	-	3.1	1.7
Family planning support	-	2.5	0.9
Drug/alcohol support or intervention	-	9.7	17.9
Physical disability services	-	0.1	0.4
Intellectual disability services	-	0.5	0.4
Culturally appropriate support	5.2	4.8	11.8
Interpreter services	-	0.2	1.1
Assistance with immigration issues	-	0.2	0.7
Health/medical services	6.6	16.3	19.7
Basic support and services (not elsewhere specified)			
Meals	25.8	49.0	50.8
Laundry/shower facilities	22.0	44.5	50.4
Recreation	18.6	35.7	27.2
Transport	25.2	44.8	26.6
Other	8.4	13.3	12.6
Accompanying Child Specific Services			
Help with behavioural problems	7.6	-	-
Child care	12.9	-	-
Liaison with kindergarten/school	8.3	-	-
Access arrangements	2.4	-	-
Skills education	2.0	-	-

Table 3.13 Continued

	Accompanying Children	Unaccompanied Children	Clients
Total number of support periods	75,769	17,673	147,900
Total number of distinct services requested	168,764	115,361	964,400
Mean services per support period	2.2	6.5	6.5

Notes:

'Clients' here includes both adults and unaccompanied children.

Percentages sum to more than one hundred in each column because a person could have more than one service type per support period.

Source: Appendix B: Table B.5; and AIHW 2003c: Table 7.2.

Table 3.13 above summarises the distinct service requests made by accompanying and unaccompanied children. There is a separately coded section on the client form for requests and provision of services to accompanying children. We have matched the service types where possible. A distinct service request is registered every time a child requests a new type of service. If they make two requests for counselling in the one support period, this is recorded as only one distinct service; but if they make one request for counselling and another for a meal, it is counted as two distinct requests.

The pattern of services requested by unaccompanied children was quite similar to that of SAAP clients generally. Both of these groups requested a mean number of 6.5 distinct services. The most commonly requested services were the same for unaccompanied children and clients more generally: SAAP/CAP accommodation; emotional support or other counselling; advice or information; and basic services such as meals, laundry and shower facilities.

However, there were important differences distinguishing unaccompanied children from adult clients with accompanying children. Unaccompanied children were less likely to request drug or alcohol support/intervention, or domestic violence counselling, or culturally appropriate support. They were more likely than clients generally to seek assistance with: employment training and assistance; family/relationship counselling; living skills and personal development; recreation; and transport.

We know that relatively few unaccompanied children attended agencies targeting domestic violence, so the lower service provision in that counselling area is not surprising. However, it is interesting that culturally appropriate services are not requested more often (assuming that refers at least partly to Indigenous culture) given that Indigenous people make up about the same proportion of the unaccompanied child population as of the adult client population. The services that were requested most often by unaccompanied children related to skills and opportunities for independence.

Accompanying children had relatively low levels of recorded request for both counselling and general support and advocacy services. For example, only 11 per cent were listed as requesting advice/information, compared to over half of unaccompanied children. They were also less likely to request health or medical services. Rates of service request for the accompanying child specific services also seemed quite low. Overall, accompanying children made an average of 2.2 distinct service type requests

in a support period. This was one-third the level of unaccompanied children and clients.

In the remainder of this section of the report, the service types are grouped into major categories in order to avoid problems of small sample sizes. The numbers of distinct services are still counted at the more detailed level and summed to the main category. Table 3.14 presents a considerable amount of information because there are several categories to compare, differences are hard to show clearly. Therefore, following the discussion of Table 3.14 the remaining data are presented graphically so that the patterns can be observed more directly.

The gender of an accompanying child appeared to make no difference to the level or type of service requests they made. Table 3.14 shows that the profile of male and female accompanying children is nearly identical and that the accompanying male child was just as likely overall as his female counterpart to request services (57 per cent and 58 per cent respectively). Children accompanying an Indigenous client, on the other hand, were less likely to request child care or school liaison services, counselling, and much less likely to request general support or advocacy services.

Not shown in the table is the fact that, as a group, children accompanying Indigenous clients were more likely to have service requests recorded than other children. Some 68 per cent of their support periods had service requests recorded, compared to only 54 per cent of all accompanying child support periods. By contrast, all clients, whether unaccompanied children or adults, are recorded as requesting at least one service. This highlights an important issue: that 46 per cent of accompanying child support periods do not have any service requests associated with them. It is unclear whether this is due to an absence of need, administrative practices, or SAAP services not being attuned to the needs of accompanying children. Partly it is likely to stem from the adult client being the main focus for the SAAP agency. Accompanying children may have needed services and these were not requested, or they may have been sought but not recorded on the form. This is a known problem with the current data recording system and may happen because the accompanying child section is still relatively new.

For unaccompanied children there were differences in the service requests of males and females, with females more likely to request counselling and specialist services, although the level of requests for specialist services was still low. Males on the other hand were more likely to request basic support and services (including meals, showers, recreation and transport). The service request profile of Indigenous unaccompanied children was largely similar to all unaccompanied children. This group was slightly more likely to request specialist services.

Finally, comparing unaccompanied children with 'all clients' shows a very similar profile of service requests, while comparison of accompanying and unaccompanied children indicates that the former were more likely to request basic support, rather than the more complex services such as specialist support and advocacy.

Table 3.14: Distinct service requests, by service type: by sex and Indigenous background (numbers and percentages), 2002-03

	Accompanying children			Unaccompanied Children			Clients
	Female	Male	Indigenous (client)	Female	Male	Indigenous	All
Housing/accommodation (Service type as a percentage of distinct service requests by group)	15,636 <i>18.6</i>	15,376 <i>18.6</i>	11,237 <i>19.6</i>	11,366 <i>16.6</i>	8,306 <i>17.7</i>	2,991 <i>15.8</i>	182,500 <i>18.9</i>
Child Care/ School Liaison	7,929 <i>9.4</i>	7,821 <i>9.5</i>	3,525 <i>6.2</i>	- <i>-</i>	- <i>-</i>	- <i>-</i>	- <i>-</i>
Financial/employment	- <i>-</i>	- <i>-</i>	- <i>-</i>	7,145 <i>10.4</i>	4,680 <i>10.0</i>	1,698 <i>8.9</i>	97,100 <i>10.1</i>
Counselling	8,515 <i>10.1</i>	8,889 <i>10.8</i>	4,199 <i>7.3</i>	9,930 <i>14.5</i>	4,926 <i>10.5</i>	2,055 <i>10.8</i>	119,100 <i>12.3</i>
General support/advocacy	9,569 <i>11.4</i>	9,307 <i>11.3</i>	3,073 <i>5.4</i>	16,745 <i>24.4</i>	11,538 <i>24.6</i>	4,238 <i>22.3</i>	228,400 <i>23.7</i>
Specialist services	4,417 <i>5.2</i>	4,362 <i>5.3</i>	3,492 <i>6.1</i>	4,965 <i>7.2</i>	2,658 <i>5.7</i>	1,654 <i>8.7</i>	89,600 <i>9.3</i>
Basic support and services (not elsewhere specified)	38,122 <i>45.3</i>	36,760 <i>44.5</i>	31,718 <i>55.4</i>	18,358 <i>26.8</i>	14,744 <i>31.5</i>	6,349 <i>33.4</i>	247,800 <i>25.7</i>
Total Number of Distinct Service Requests	84,188	82,515	57,244	68,509	46,852	18,985	964,500

Source: Appendix B: Tables 2.5 and 2.6; and AIHW 2003c: Table 7.2.

Looking at the profile of recorded service needs according to other child characteristics, it appears that the relative importance of each group of services remains the same irrespective of the circumstances of the child. Figure 3.4 to Figure 3.8 show that in almost all cases the ordering of services from most to least often requested remains the same, as listed below:

1. Basic services, then;
2. General support/advocacy;
3. Housing/accommodation;
4. Counselling;
5. Financial/employment; and
6. Specialist services.

The main exception is that for accompanying children, general support and advocacy are recorded as requested less often than housing/accommodation.

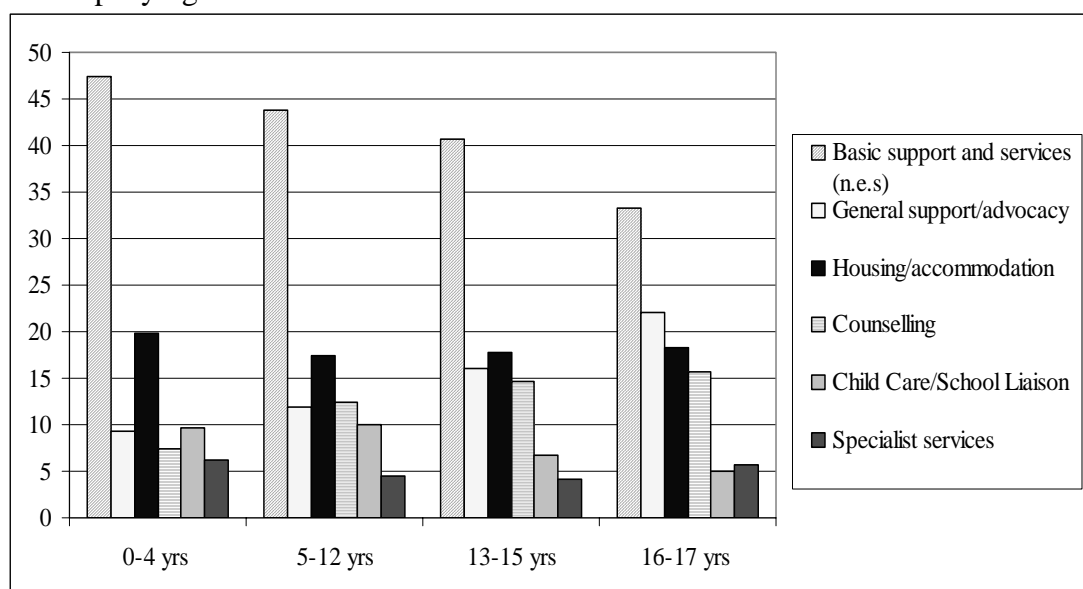
Are the needs of children in SAAP really this similar? This uniformity of service request profiles might indicate, to some extent, a 'one-size fits all' approach by SAAP

agencies, meaning that regardless of actual individual need a person seeking assistance from SAAP will be recorded as requesting broadly the same services.

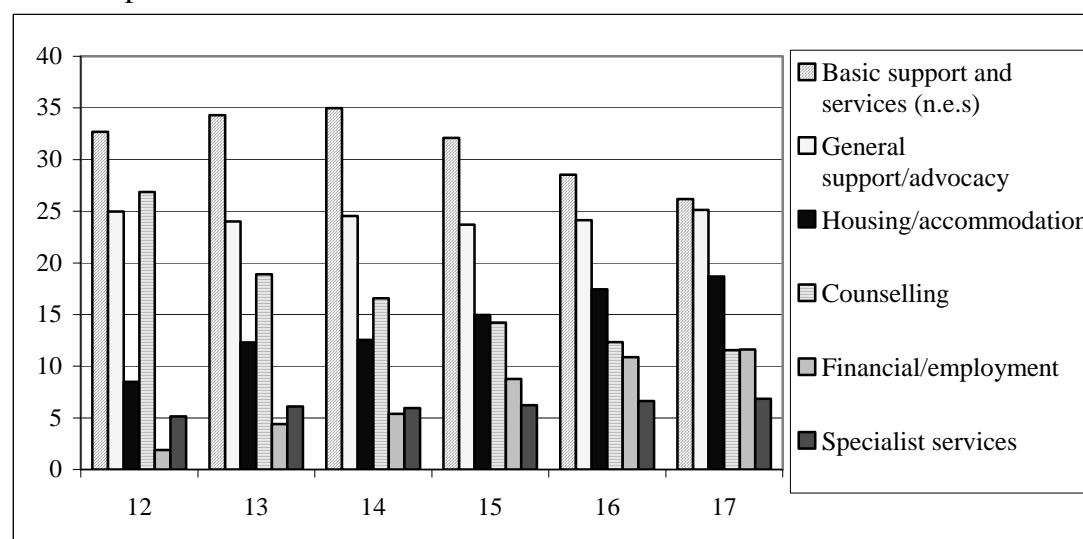
Figure 3.4 indicates that accompanying children are more likely to have requests recorded for general support and advocacy services if they are older. Among unaccompanied children, this service type does not vary with age. Housing services are also more likely to be requested by older unaccompanied children. The level of requests for specialist services does not vary substantially by age. All children had high levels of request for basic support, which decreased relatively with age because the more focused services became more important.

Figure 3.4: Distinct service requests, service type by age, 2002-03

Accompanying Children



Unaccompanied Children



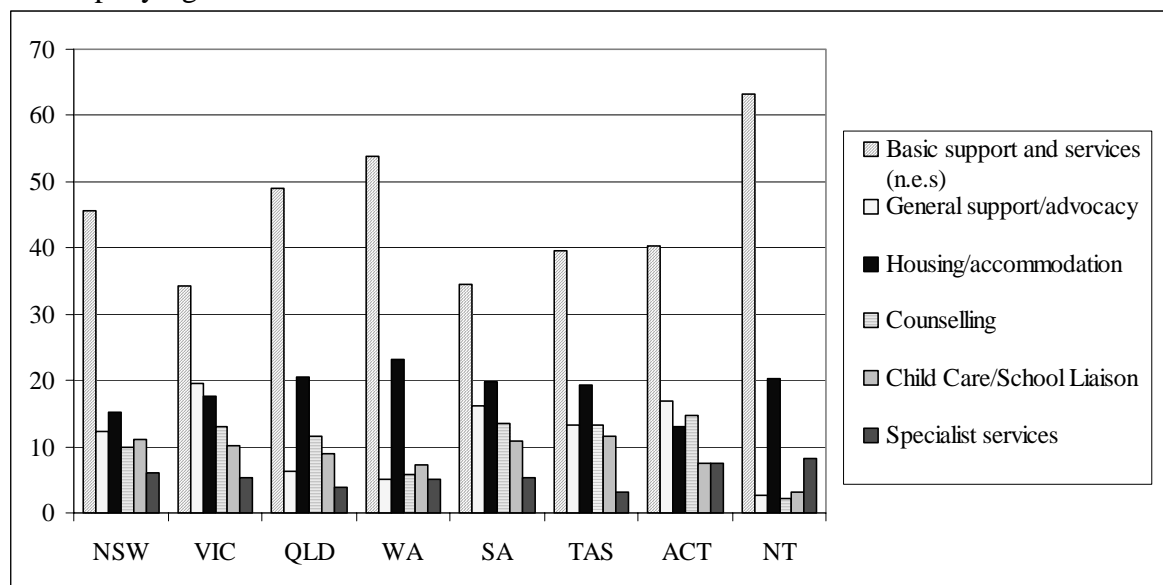
Source: Appendix B: Table B.4.

Figure 3.5 shows that advocacy and counselling services for accompanying children have a lower level of prominence in the service request profile of Queensland,

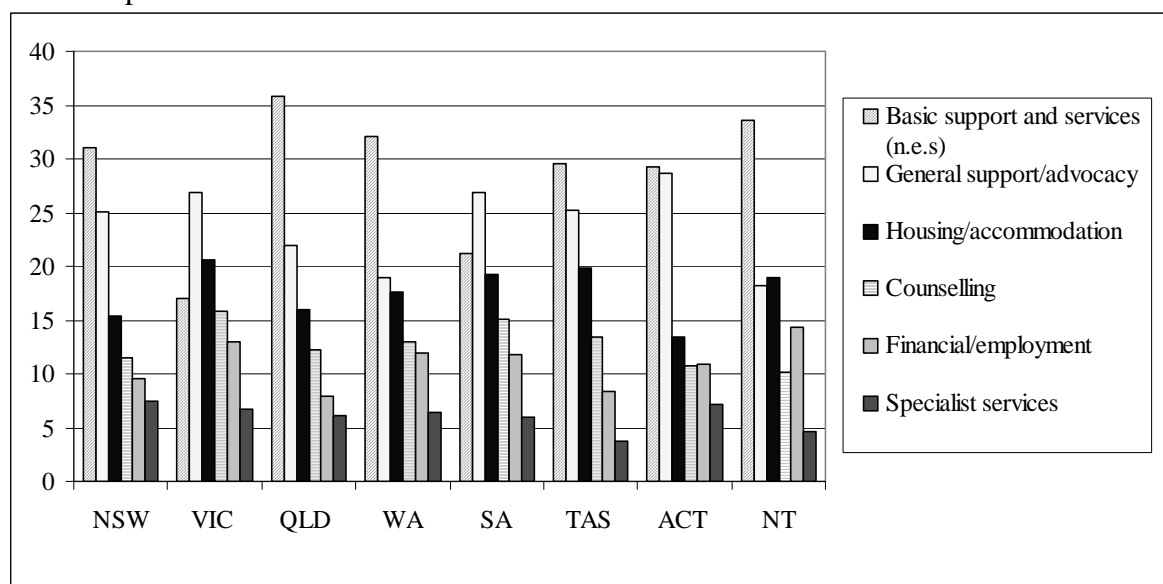
Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory also sees relatively fewer requests for child care and school liaison services. Although the prevalence of the service requests is quite consistent across the States and Territories for unaccompanied children, several cases stand out. In Victoria and South Australia general support and advocacy services are more often requested than basic support and services. As we saw for the accompanying children, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have a greater overall share of requests falling into the category of basic support and services.

Figure 3.5: Distinct service requests, service type by State/Territory, 2002-03

Accompanying Children



Unaccompanied Children



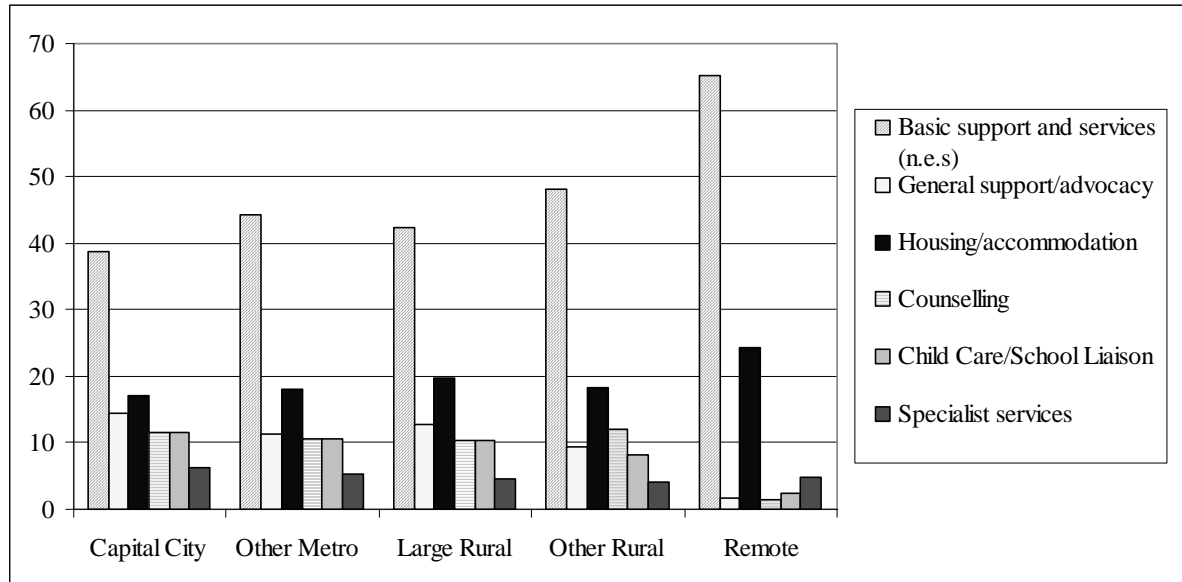
Source: Appendix B: Table B.7

Figure 3.6 supports the earlier finding that the States with more remote areas (eg. QLD, WA and the NT) field a greater share of requests for basic support. This is

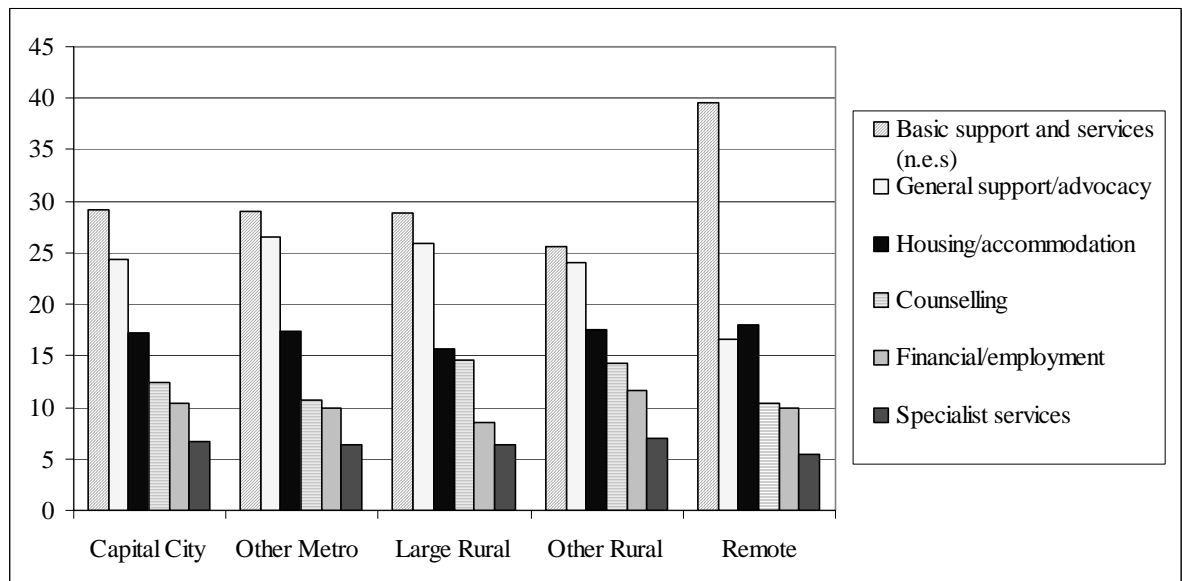
further evidence that service requests recorded may reflect the resources available to a SAAP agency rather than necessarily being a full assessment of need.

Figure 3.6: Distinct service requests, service type by location, 2002-03

Accompanying Children



Unaccompanied Children

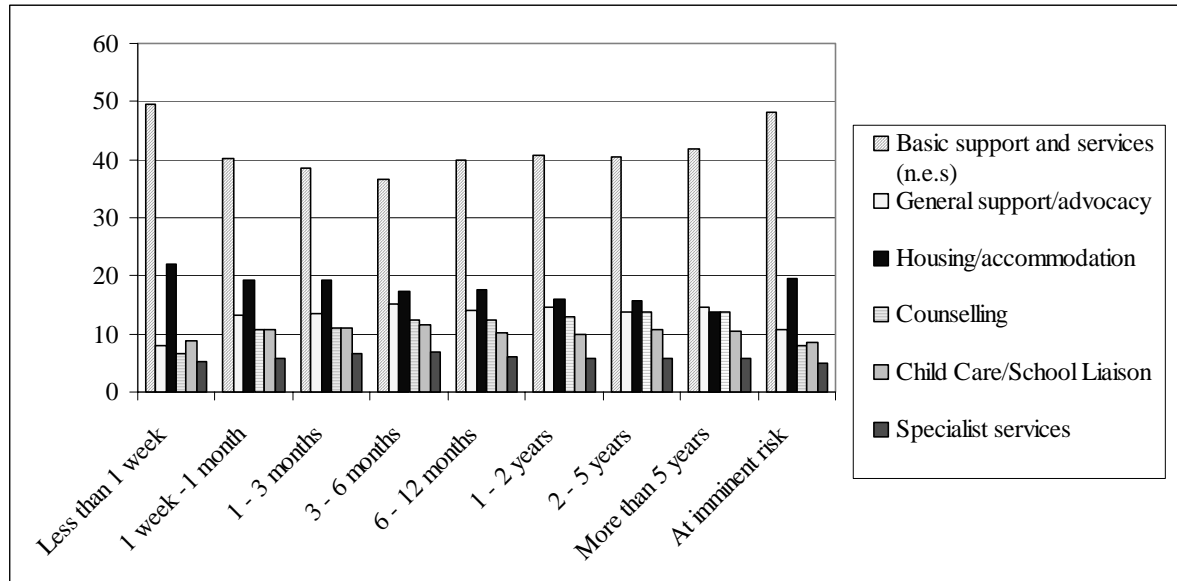


Source: Appendix B: Table B.8

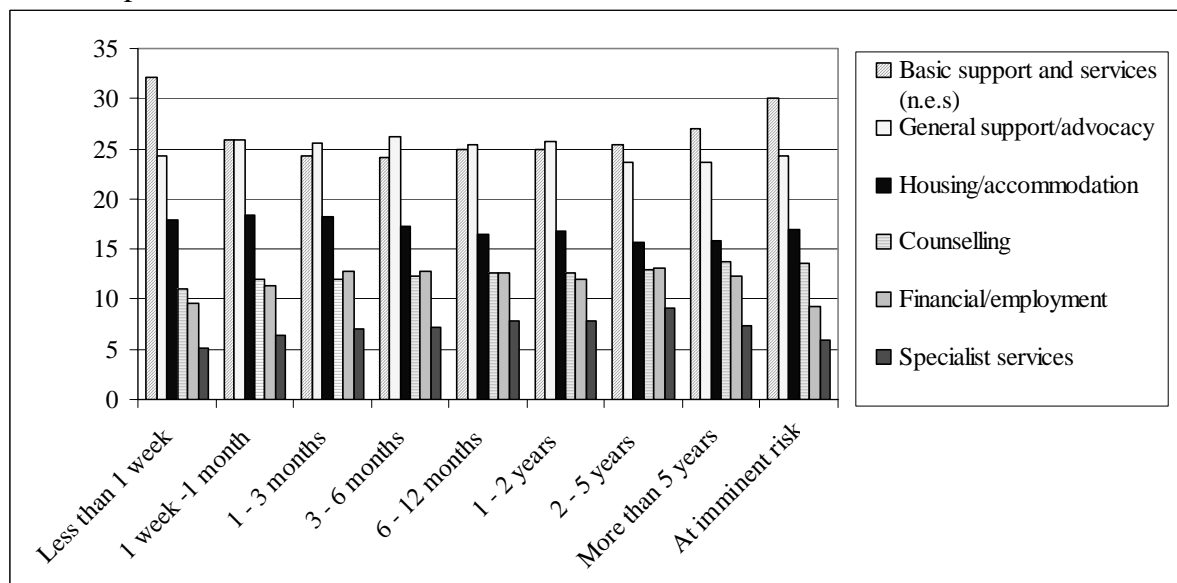
One feature of Figure 3.7 worth remarking is that duration of homelessness appears to make virtually no difference to the types of services requested. It is difficult to believe that the needs of a child whose homelessness has been entrenched are no different to those of someone who has just become homeless, yet children at risk and those homeless for less than a week were only marginally more likely to request basic support and services rather than other service types.

Figure 3.7: Distinct service requests, service type by duration of homelessness, 2002-03

Accompanying Children (duration of homelessness of client)



Unaccompanied Children

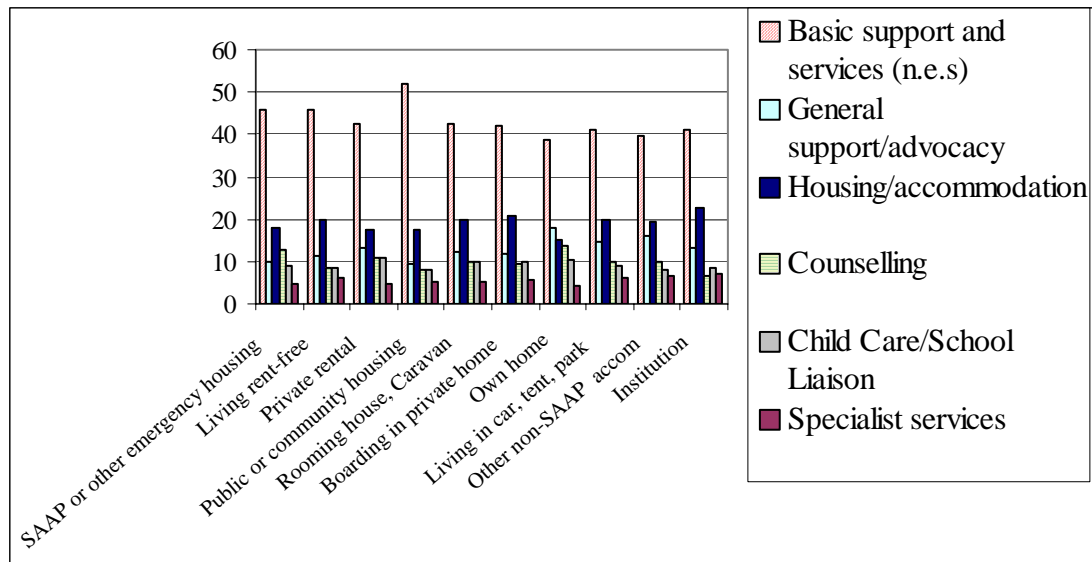


Source: Appendix B: Table B.9

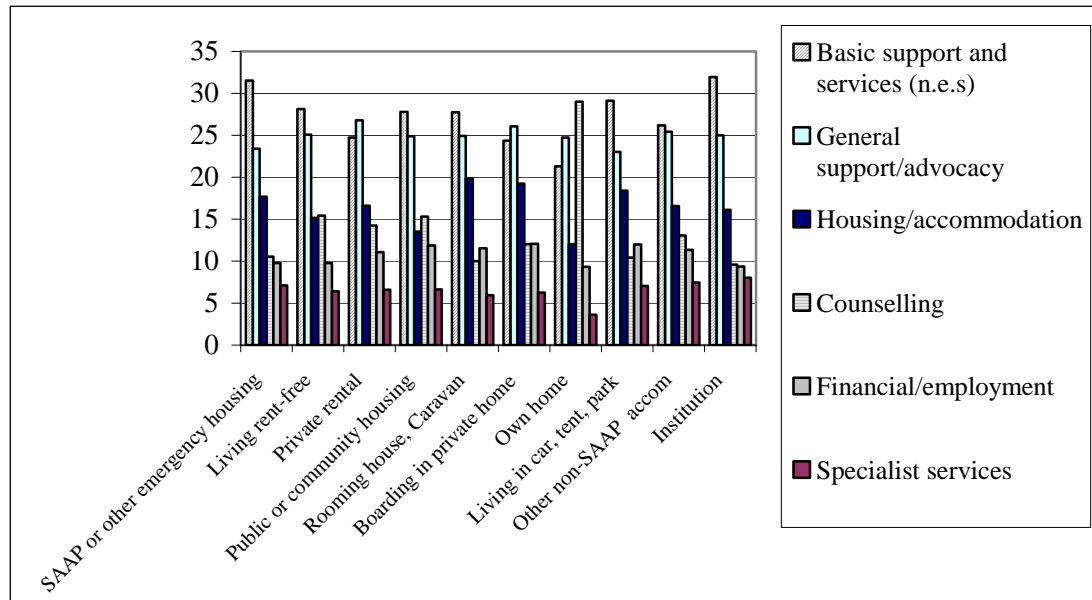
Again, it is the similarity rather than the difference that is striking about Figure 3.8. It seems that rather than requesting accommodation support, unaccompanied children coming from their own home are more likely to request counselling (Figure 3.8). This group of children is the least likely to request specialist services.

Figure 3.8: Distinct service requests, service type by accommodation before SAAP, 2002-03

Accompanying children (accommodation of client)



Unaccompanied children



Source: Appendix B: Table B.10

3.4 Outcomes for children in SAAP

What outcomes are measurable?

The information available from SAAP service data about outcomes specifically related to children is limited. Given that SAAP is only one element in broader policy approaches to dealing with both homelessness and child disadvantage, there is a limit to what SAAP can be expected to achieve in these areas. Moreover, most of the information available relates specifically to SAAP service delivery, and hence might be more accurately seen as ‘outputs’ of a system rather than outcomes for clients.

The SAAP data analyst has reviewed the outcome measures for SAAP clients in general (Lai, 2003). She includes such indicators as employment gained, income support receipt and income level. While these are important and clearly have an impact on children, they are more directly related to adults and are less relevant to an examination of service outcomes for children.

Here we have restricted our analysis to two measures, chosen as relevant to SAAP’s charter in meeting the needs of children. These are: the level of unmet need and a positive change in accommodation post-SAAP. These measures are neither ideal nor exhaustive, but they can go some way towards establishing whether SAAP is addressing the service requests made by and on behalf of children, whether those requests are addressed at a different rate to requests from adult clients, and whether the requests of particular groups of children go unmet. Although it is not possible to know whether assistance through SAAP is the sole cause of any change in accommodation, knowing which children experience better accommodation after SAAP may provide some indication of which groups of children SAAP is most successful in helping.

‘Unmet need’ is defined here as having a service need recorded that is met neither directly through SAAP nor through a referral to another service. This is the same definition as used in AIHW (2003c). It diverges from the definition used by AIHW (2003d), which distinguishes between valid and invalid requests. AIHW (2003d: 31) makes the point that,

Invalid requests for accommodation include people requesting assistance from an agency with the wrong target group (for example, a married couple approaching a single men’s agency); a request made at a non-accommodation agency; or where the offer of accommodation was refused by the requesting person or group.

This study does not make this distinction: while it is true that SAAP is a generalist program from which specialist results cannot be expected, and that agencies devoted to particular target groups cannot be expected to deal with all groups to the same standard, it is nevertheless of legitimate concern if issues are being raised at SAAP agencies and not being dealt with by appropriate referral.

There are clearly limitations to the measures chosen here. Accommodation after SAAP assistance, for example, is subject to a high proportion of missing data. Moreover, what is included in the category of ‘Services requested’ does not represent a formal exhaustive assessment of the child’s needs; even if all these requests were

met there could be other areas where needs were not identified in the original assessment.

One other possible measure considered (but eventually rejected) was the number of visits a client group made to SAAP agencies. One of the key goals of SAAP is to foster the capacity of clients to live independently, but it is not obvious whether a high number of visits represents a bad outcome or a good one on this criterion. Remaining in the system could be viewed as a poor outcome, but repeated use of SAAP cannot automatically be counted as failure. Lai (2003: 18), quoting a community sector study by Owens and Ransom (2003) states,

Repeated use of SAAP facilities should not be viewed as a failure of the service provider or of the program because the process of moving clients from entrenched homelessness to secure housing and participation in the life of the community often takes time and requires ongoing availability of support and accommodation.

In addition, Lai (2003: 6) notes, ‘the results of the repeat usage analysis are very much influenced by the characteristics of SAAP agencies and how they define their relationship with their clients’. If this is the case, the same must be true of the length of a support period. Lengths of support periods are also highly dependent on how the agency collects its data (that is, whether or not every time a client presents to the agency is regarded as a new period, whether or not this results in new information being added to the existing support period form). Discontinuing the high volume client form and encouraging the use of question 21 to record further support period details will enable repeat usage to be measured more consistently across agencies.¹²

Extent of unmet need

The rate of unmet need has been calculated by dividing the number of service requests that were neither provided directly nor met through referral, by the number of distinct service requests of that type, and multiplying by one hundred. A higher rate of unmet need is interpreted as undesirable, as it indicates that SAAP did not deliver on the service needs identified. For accompanying children, unmet data relates only to children who had the services they requested noted on the accompanying child section of the client form. It should be remembered that there was a large number of support periods for accompanying children where no services were requested. Table 3.15 reports the rate of unmet need in each service type.

Accompanying children had an average rate of unmet need of less than three per cent. This compared favourably with rates of just over seven per cent for unaccompanied children and just less than seven per cent for all clients. (These averages are shown below in the summary figures, Figure 3.9, Figure 3.10 and Figure 3.11).

However, for accompanying children the service group ‘accompanying child services’ had the highest rate of unmet need, which would tend to suggest that more attention still needs to be paid to service requests from accompanying children. Counselling for

¹² Question 21 allows for the type of accommodation support and the dates of separate support periods to be included on the one Client Form.

sexual or physical abuse is another area where more could be done to meet the needs of accompanying children, as 11 per cent of requests go unmet.

Unmet need for unaccompanied children was highest in the service groups of specialist services and financial/employment services. Among specialist services, the categories of physical disability support and intellectual disability support services appear to have extremely high levels of unmet need. However, these particular categories had low numbers of support periods where requests were made, so this finding should not necessarily be cause for alarm. What is perhaps a cause of greater concern is that the high rate of unmet need for drug and alcohol support intervention - a service request that is much more common. Almost one-fifth of this group were recorded as having outstanding unmet need. Similarly, there are sufficient numbers of requests for psychiatric and psychological services to be confident that unaccompanied children also have high rates of unmet need in these service groups. In the absence of detailed examination of SAAP service provision it is difficult to interpret what these findings mean. It is possible that access to these forms of support is limited and that SAAP agencies tend not to be able to address them fully within their own services. There could also be stigmas attached to these health problems which create barriers to effective treatment. Either way this appears to be an area of potential unmet need that requires further examination.

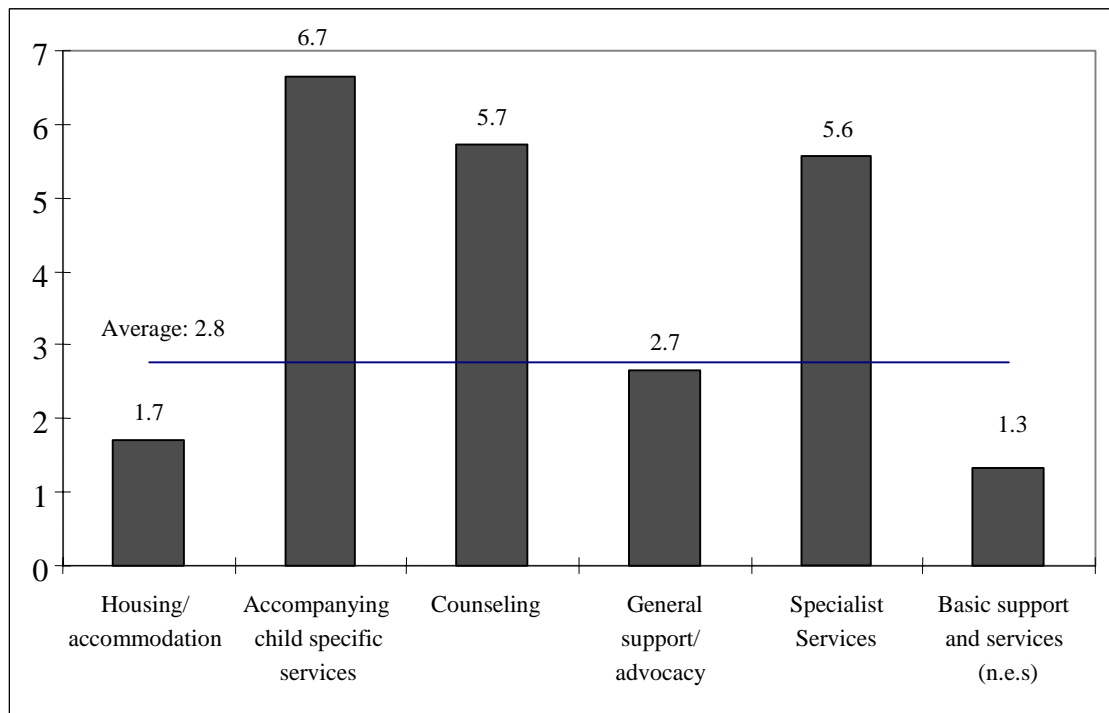
On the other hand, SAAP agencies did well at meeting the needs of children in the area of basic support and services and general support/advocacy. These categories of services had the lowest rates of unmet need.

Table 3.15: Unmet need: accompanying children, unaccompanied children and clients (percentage of requested services neither provided nor referred), 2002-03

Service Type	Accomp. children	Unaccomp. children	Clients (all)
Housing/ accommodation	1.7	8.4	11.0
SAAP/CAP accommodation (incl. THM and other SAAP managed)	1.7	3.2	3.4
Assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation		13.5	9.1
Assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing		18.0	29.9
Financial/ employment		12.8	14.7
Assistance to obtain/maintain benefit/pension/other govt. allowance		11.8	5.0
Employment and training assistance		20.8	59.9
Financial assistance/material aid		6.8	4.9
Financial counselling and support		17.9	10.4
Counselling	5.7	10.5	5.1
Sexual/physical abuse counselling and support	10.6	19.4	13.8
Domestic violence counselling and support		20.9	5.8
Family/relationship counselling and support		15.1	9.8
Emotional support/other counselling	4.7	5.7	2.6
Assistance with problem gambling		34.8	18.6
General support/ advocacy	2.7	4.5	6.2
Living skills/personal development		7.5	32.8
Assistance with legal issues/court support		13.0	9.0
Advice/information	2.9	1.8	1.0
Retrieval/storage/removal of personal belongings		4.6	2.6
Brokerage services	2.1	7.2	2.0
Advocacy/liaison on behalf of client	2.6	3.1	4.7
Specialist services	5.6	15.1	9.3
Psychological services		24.1	23.9
Psychiatric services		23.1	21.2
Pregnancy support		11.2	11.0
Family planning support		13.8	15.1
Drug/alcohol support or intervention		19.9	11.9
Physical disability services		54.5	18.1
Intellectual disability services		43.3	23.8
Culturally appropriate support	3.4	4.4	2.3
Interpreter services		13.5	8.2
Assistance with immigration issues		12.9	7.3
Health/medical services	7.4	12.0	6.6
Basic support and services (n.e.s)	1.3	3.2	1.6
Meals	1.0	2.5	1.3
Laundry/shower facilities	1.1	2.4	1.0
Recreation	1.8	4.2	2.1
Transport	1.4	4.3	2.8
Other	2.1	2.0	1.8
Accompanying child specific services	6.7		
Help with behavioural problems	7.2		
Child care	6.0		
Liaison with kindergarten/school	6.7		
Access arrangements	8.1		
Skills education	7.8		

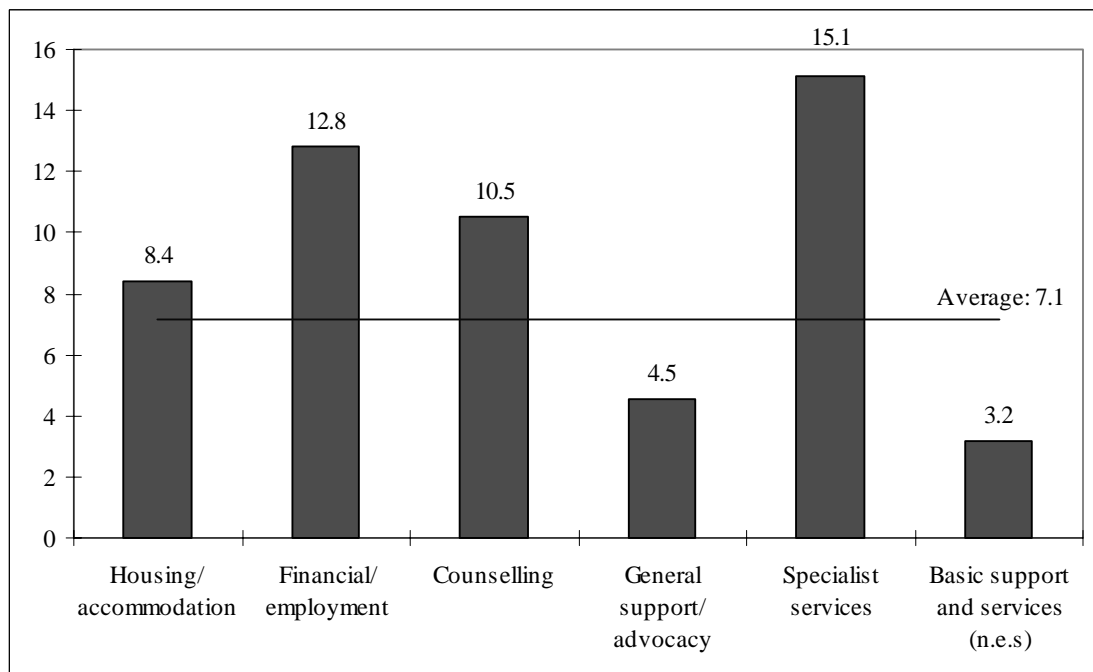
Source: Appendix B: Table B.25; AIHW 2003c: Table 7.2.

Figure 3.9: Unmet need by service type, accompanying children, 2002-03

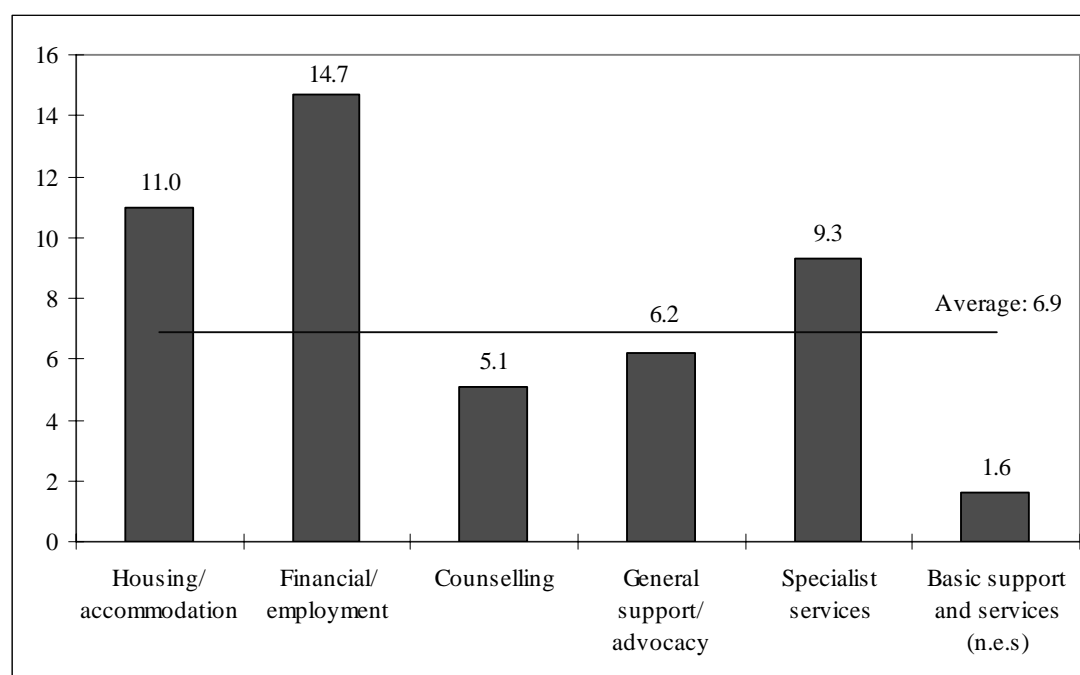


Source: Table 3.15

Figure 3.10: Unmet need by service type, unaccompanied children, 2002-03



Source: Table 3.15

Figure 3.11: Unmet need by service type, clients, 2002-03

Source: Table 3.15

The following tables present unmet need broken down by the characteristics of children and of their homelessness. For each characteristic, the rates of unmet need are sorted so that the category for which most needs were met appears first and the category that had the most unmet need appears last. Table 3.16 presents rates of unmet need for accompanying children according to their personal characteristics and Table 3.17 shows accompanying children's unmet need by the characteristics of their homelessness. Table 3.18 and Table 3.19 then present the corresponding data for unaccompanied children.

To summarise the results, the characteristics of children who were more likely to have needs met (represented by lower percentages in the tables) included: being younger; being Indigenous or a child accompanying an Indigenous client; being an unaccompanied child in the ACT, NT or Western Australia or an accompanying child in Tasmania, the NT, Queensland or the ACT; and being a child in a remote location. Conversely, children were less likely to have their needs met if they were: older (16 or 17 years); an unaccompanied child in South Australia or Victoria, or an accompanying child in Victoria; and living in a capital city.

The relationship between unmet need and circumstances of homelessness differed somewhat between the two groups of children. There was no clear pattern in terms of the duration of homelessness for either accompanying or unaccompanied children. Unaccompanied children whose housing was more conventional and private before SAAP were more likely to have their needs met, whereas rates of unmet need were higher for those who previously had more tenuous accommodation. However, for accompanying children the story was less clear. Public or community housing residents were more likely to have their needs met, but children who had been in their own home were found in the middle of the range and private rental tenants also had quite high levels of unmet need.

If the child (or the client they were accompanying) had come to SAAP mainly because of interpersonal conflict, there was a better chance that their needs would be met. For unaccompanied children, those who had just ended other emergency accommodation or had recently left an institution also had relatively low rates of unmet need. For accompanying children, if the accompanied adult gave physical abuse as the main reason for seeking assistance, this group was also likely to have low unmet need.

Also likely to have low unmet need were children attending agencies targeting women escaping domestic violence. For accompanying children this is encouraging, given the large proportion of cases this represents. Unaccompanied children who attended agencies targeting either single women or men also had low unmet need. Day support and outreach service delivery models were successful at achieving low rates of unmet need for both child groups. This is a somewhat contradictory finding for the unaccompanied children: their unmet need was at the lower end for those attending an agency targeting domestic violence, whereas it was high for those for whom this was the main reason for attending SAAP.

Children more likely to have unmet needs were: unaccompanied children who sought assistance mainly because of psychiatric illness, or drug/alcohol or substance abuse; and (particularly) accompanying children whose accompanied adult had sought assistance mainly because they had recently left an institution, had gambling problems or financial difficulties (but see note below Table 3.17 concerning small sample sizes).

Children attending agencies which targeted multiple client groups also appeared more likely to have unmet needs. This is interesting because one might expect these agencies to be able to address a wider range of service requests. Agencies targeting young people also saw somewhat higher levels of unmet need. This might suggest that these agencies are not as attuned to children's needs as others, but it may also be that the service requests presented to such agencies (such as drug and alcohol problems or psychological difficulties) are harder to address, as discussed earlier.

Service delivery models associated with higher levels of unmet need were medium- to long-term agencies (for unaccompanied children); and agency support and telephone/information and referral services (for accompanying children).

There was some evidence that agencies offering shorter-term assistance, such as outreach and same day support, had lower rates of unmet need for the children who attended. Taking this analysis further, Figure 3.12 plots the rate of unmet need by duration of the support period for both accompanying and unaccompanied children. A trend line is inserted to show the strength of the relationship. For accompanying children, no relationship is evident: there is little variation in levels of unmet need across different periods of support. However, the downward sloping trend line for unaccompanied children suggests that the longer they spend in a SAAP service, the more likely they are to have their needs met.

Table 3.16: Unmet service requests, by personal characteristics: accompanying children, 2002-03

		% of requested services unmet	
Age	0-4 years	2.5	
	5-12 years	2.9	
	13-15 years	2.9	
	16-17 years	4.1	
	No info/missing	4.8	
Gender	Female	2.7	
	No info/missing	2.8	
	Male	2.8	
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity	Indigenous	2.2	
State/Territory	Tasmania	1.0	
	Northern Territory	1.4	
	Queensland	1.7	
	Australian Capital Territory	1.8	
	South Australia	2.7	
	Western Australia	2.7	
	New South Wales	2.9	
	Victoria	4.8	
	Locality	Remote centres	1.4
		Large rural centres	2.1
Other rural centre		2.4	
Other metro centres		2.9	
Capital cities		3.6	
All accompanying children		2.8	

Note: Categories are sorted in ascending order by extend of unmet need.

As discussed in the data issues section below, the country of birth and language variables for accompanying children are not appropriate for analysis because they relate to the client rather than to the child and may often not be indicative of the child's characteristics.

Source: Appendix B: Tables B.26, B.27, B.28, B.29 and B.30.

Table 3.17: Unmet service requests, by homeless characteristics: accompanying children, 2002-03

		% of requested services unmet
Duration of homelessness	No info/missing	2.1
	At imminent risk	2.6
	Less than 1 week	2.7
	5 years +	2.9
	1-3 months	3.0
	1 wk – 1 month	3.3
	2-5 years	3.3
	1-2 years	3.5
	3-6 months	3.7
	6-12 months	4.5
Accommodation before SAAP	Public or community housing	1.8
	Institutional	2.0
	Living rent-free in house/flat	2.7
	SAAP or other emergency housing	2.7
	Own home	2.9
	Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	3.0
	Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	3.1
	Private rental	3.2
	No info/missing	3.5
	Other non-SAAP housing	3.9
Main reason for homelessness (of client)	Boarding in private home	4.1
	No info/missing	1.4
	Physical/emotional abuse	1.8
	Interpersonal conflict	2.3
	Time out from family/other situation	2.5
	Domestic violence	2.7
	Recent arrival in area	3.2
	Sexual abuse	3.2
	Eviction/previous accommodation ended	3.3
	Itinerant	3.5
	Other	3.6
	Usual accommodation unavailable	3.8
	Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	4.0
	Relationship/family breakdown	4.1
	Psychiatric illness	4.2
	Emergency accommodation ended	5.3
	Financial difficulty	5.8
Gambling	6.7	
Recently left institution	12.7	
Agency primary target group	Single men	1.2
	Women escaping DV	2.2
	Single women	4.1
	Families	4.3
	Multiple	4.3
Agency service delivery model	Young people	5.6
	Outreach support	1.1
	Other	1.6
	Day support	2.1
	Crisis/short term	2.3

Table 3:17 Continued

Multiple	2.5
Med/long term	6.5
Tel/info/ref	8.9
Agency support	9.9

Notes: Categories are sorted in ascending order by extend of unmet need.

Some rates of unmet need are less reliable than others in this table because they are based on smaller numbers. For example, while (clients with) children whose main reason for being at SAAP was because they had recently left an institution seem to have a relatively high rate of unmet need (12.7 per cent), this is based on just 30 cases of unmet need out of only 233 distinct service requests. For many of the other categories the percentages are based on thousands of service requests.

Source: Appendix B: Tables 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11.

Table 3.18: Unmet service requests by personal characteristics: unaccompanied children, 2002-03

		% of requested services unmet
Age	12 years	3.3
	13 years	4.9
	14 years	6.0
	15 years	6.7
	17 years	7.2
	16 years	7.9
Gender	Female	7.1
	Male	7.1
CALD	Indigenous	6.0
State/Territory	Australian Capital Territory	4.2
	Northern Territory	5.5
	Western Australia	5.8
	Tasmania	6.2
	Queensland	6.4
	New South Wales	7.0
	Victoria	8.8
	South Australia	9.6
	Locality	Remote centres
	Other rural centre	5.7
	Other metro centres	6.5
	Large rural centres	6.5
	Capital cities	8.2
All unaccompanied children		7.1

Note: Categories are sorted in ascending order by extend of unmet need.

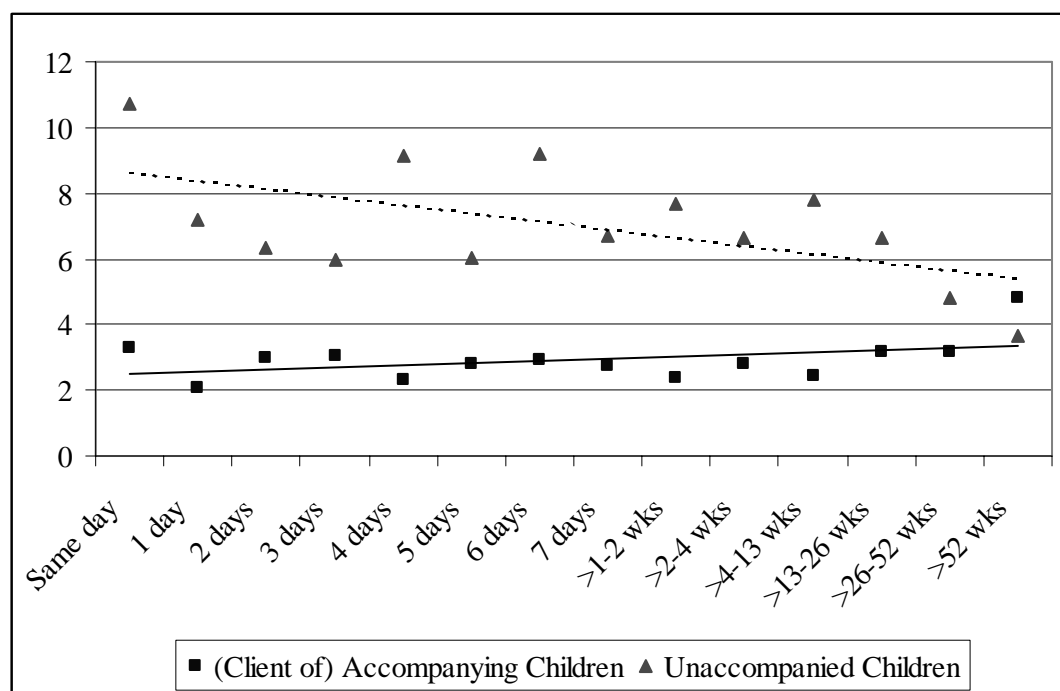
Source: Appendix B: Tables 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6.

Table 3.19: Unmet service requests by homeless characteristics: unaccompanied children, 2002-03

		% of requested services unmet
Duration of homelessness	Less than 1 week	5.7
	5 years +	5.9
	At imminent risk	6.1
	1 wk – 1 month	7.3
	1-3 months	7.4
	3-6 months	9.3
	1-2 years	10.1
	2-5 years	10.2
	6-12 months	11.5
	Accommodation before SAAP	Own home
Private rental		4.9
Other non-SAAP housing		6.0
Public or community housing		6.0
Living rent-free in house/flat		6.6
Boarding in private home		6.7
Institutional		7.2
SAAP or other emergency housing		8.1
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat		8.9
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan		9.3
Main reason for homelessness	Interpersonal conflict	5.2
	Emergency accommodation ended	5.3
	Recently left institution	5.8
	Other	6.1
	Recent arrival in area	6.3
	Physical/emotional abuse	6.5
	Eviction/previous accommodation ended	6.6
	Usual accommodation unavailable	6.8
	Financial difficulty (includes gambling)	6.9
	Time out from family/other situation	7.4
	Sexual abuse	8.1
	Relationship/family breakdown	8.1
	Itinerant	8.4
	Domestic violence	8.9
	Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	9.6
	Psychiatric illness	13.6
	Agency primary target group	Women escaping DV
Single women		5.5
Single men		5.6
Families		6.4
Young people		7.2
Multiple		10.5
Agency service delivery model	Day support	3.8
	Outreach support	5.8
	Crisis/short term	6.1
	Multiple (includes 'agency support')	6.2
	Tel/info/ref	6.7
	Med/long term	10.6
	Other	12.8

Note: Categories are sorted in ascending order by extend of unmet need.

Source: Appendix B: Tables 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11.

Figure 3.12: Unmet need, by duration of support period, 2002-03

Source: Appendix B: Table B.35

Post-SAAP accommodation

SAAP aims to maximise the independence of people who are homeless. Comparing the accommodation of children before and after support can therefore provide a useful indicator of whether this goal has been achieved, although given the wide range of other influences on housing outcomes SAAP cannot necessarily be given either all the credit or all the blame for these.

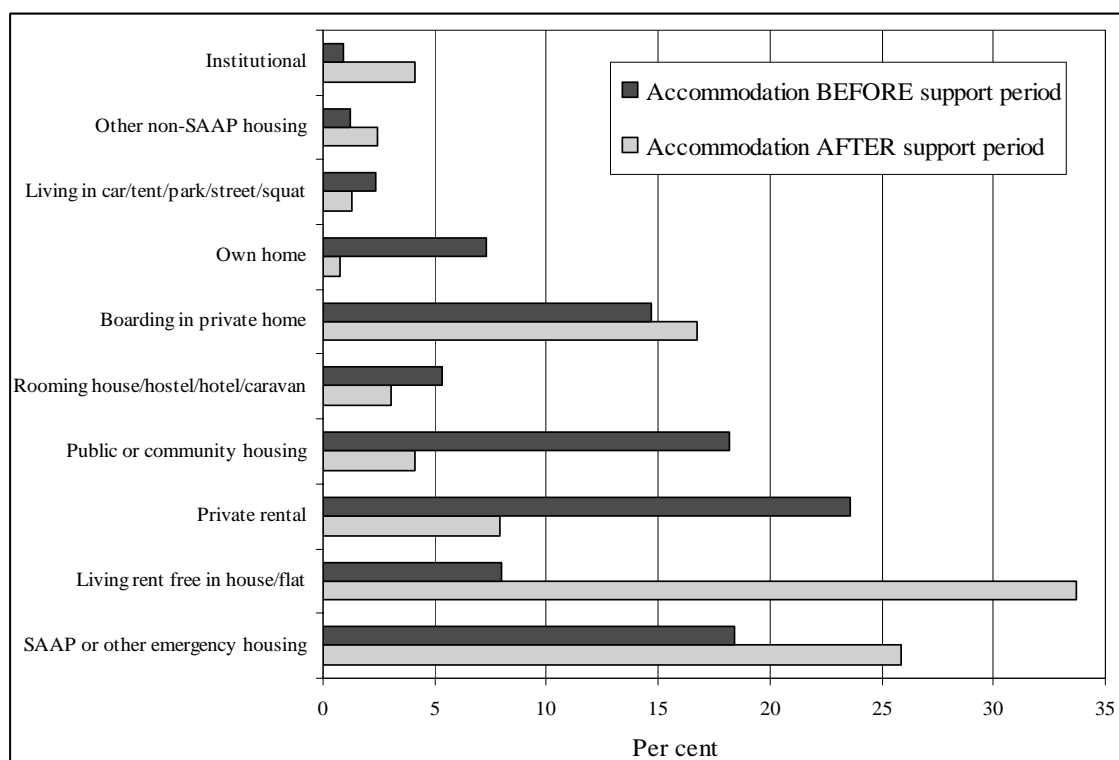
As discussed above, comparing accommodation before and after SAAP for accompanying children is problematic. The accommodation variable, before and after the support period, relates to the adult they were accompanying to SAAP. Combining this already imperfect outcome measure with some child characteristics that are only measured through the accompanied adult and the picture blurs further. Finally, children on high volume forms do not have the data recorded at all. For these reasons, in this section we present only unaccompanied child accommodation outcomes that are directly observable and therefore more straightforward to interpret.

The picture for them is less positive than that shown by the client data reported by the AIHW (2003c: Figure 8.1). In direct contrast to clients as a whole, who were seen as predominantly moving into the more independent settings of public or community housing, or private rental, unaccompanied children exhibit sizeable movement away from living in their own home, private rental and public or community housing. Unaccompanied children are more often seen moving into rent-free accommodation (particularly), SAAP or emergency housing. There is also a small degree of movement to institutions, boarding privately and living in other non-SAAP housing. There is a movement away from the accommodation offered by rooming houses and hostels, but also a trend away from being on the streets. It is not clear what the major movement into rent-free accommodation represents: in some cases it could involve

reconciliation with families, but perhaps more often means staying temporarily with friends and acquaintances – a form of tenure which is likely to be insecure. Overall, these observations suggest that while there are some positive outcomes for unaccompanied children it is not clear that their independence has been markedly increased through engagement with SAAP services.

However, a large proportion of the data is missing for this item: there were 5,666 closed support periods out of a total of only 15,324. With 37 per cent of the information on this outcome measure missing, it is not possible to be certain about this finding. While it is possible that the unaccompanied children who achieve greater independence after SAAP are harder to count; it could also be the case that the many of the missing individuals are the ones for whom SAAP did not provide positive outcomes. The level of missing information means that there is little value in further analysis of these data in their present form.

Figure 3.13: Accommodation before and after support period: unaccompanied children, 2002-03



Source: Appendix B: Table B.10 and Table 3.13.

Summary

There is only limited information available from SAAP records with which to measure outcomes for children. Much of this relates specifically to SAAP service delivery and may more accurately be seen as system outputs rather than outcomes. However, given that SAAP is only one element in broader policy approaches to homelessness, there is a limit to what the program itself can be expected to achieve. The analysis here is restricted to two measures: the extent of recorded unmet need and positive change in accommodation after being assisted by SAAP.

Accompanying children had an average rate of unmet need of less than three per cent, compared with just over seven per cent for unaccompanied children and just under seven per cent for all clients. Counselling for sexual or physical abuse is one area where more could be done to meet the needs of accompanying children, as 11 per cent of requests apparently go unmet.

Unmet need for unaccompanied children was highest in the service groups of specialist services and financial/employment services. Among specialist services, the categories of physical disability support and intellectual disability support services appear to have extremely high levels of unmet need. However, these particular categories had low numbers of support periods where requests were made, so this finding should not necessarily be cause for alarm. What is perhaps a cause of greater concern is a high rate of unmet need for drug and alcohol support – a service request that is much more common.

Also likely to have low unmet need were children attending agencies targeting women escaping domestic violence. For accompanying children this is encouraging, given the large proportion of cases this represents. Unaccompanied children who attended agencies targeting either single women or men also had low unmet need. Day support and outreach service delivery models were successful at achieving low rates of unmet need for both child groups. Children attending agencies which targeted multiple client groups appeared more likely to have unmet needs, even though one might expect these agencies to be able to address a wider range of service requests. Agencies targeting young people also saw somewhat higher levels of unmet need. This might suggest that these agencies are not as attuned to children's needs as others, but it may also be that the service requests presented to such agencies (such as drug and alcohol problems or psychological difficulties) are harder to address.

In contrast to clients as a whole, who were predominantly recorded as moving into the more independent settings of social housing or private rental, unaccompanied children showed significant movement away from living in their own home, private rental and social housing. Unaccompanied children tended to move into rent-free accommodation, other SAAP services or emergency housing. Rent-free accommodation may sometimes involve reconciliation with families, but perhaps more often it means staying temporarily with friends and acquaintances – a form of tenure which is likely to be insecure. Overall, these observations suggest that while there are some positive outcomes for unaccompanied children it is not clear that their independence has been markedly increased through engagement with SAAP services. However, with close to two-fifths of responses for this outcome measure missing, it is not possible to be certain about this finding.

4 Conclusions: Options for Policy and Further Research

4.1 Policy issues

This review of literature and data on children in SAAP has found a considerable history of concern and research about children and homelessness over the last three decades in Australia. While there has clearly been progress made both in defining the problems and putting in place programs and resources that more effectively meet the needs of homeless children and young people, it is difficult to determine how far the many recommendations from earlier studies and reports have been implemented.

The underlying difficulty in relation to SAAP is that it is not intended as a provider of long-term housing. SAAP's effectiveness is tied to its clients' ability to move on and that ability in turn is dependent on the supply of affordable accommodation. Funding to the States/Territories through CSHA for the provision of public housing for low-income households has been reduced and access to low-cost private renting is also severely restricted in many areas. Thus moving on into secure housing is difficult for many of SAAP's clients, quite apart from those whose need may be as great but who do not approach a SAAP agency.

A related point concerns the individualistic emphasis of much public policy towards homelessness. If, as most commentators argue, the problems causing homelessness are structural – poverty, unemployment, the housing market – focusing on individuals (or families) will not solve them. And yet this is increasingly the emphasis of government policy, including SAAP itself with its primary emphasis on case management.

The key recommendations arising from the literature concern the structural causes of homelessness. Although these are outside the scope of SAAP, they have an impact on the ways in which SAAP agencies operate, and even on whether they can operate at all. If there are too few 'exit points', clients stay longer in SAAP accommodation and tie up resources which should be available for people in crisis.

In terms of findings specifically concerning children, one of the key points that emerges is the importance of entering them as people with service needs of their own, distinct from those of their parents/guardian when they are with adults. This has been happening increasingly in SAAP over recent years, but there are areas where further development is needed. It is not straightforward, because SAAP stands in a different legal position towards children who present with their parents from that towards unaccompanied children even when they are the same age. Thus accompanying children cannot simply be treated as clients in their own right, like unaccompanied children. The situation is further complicated by widely varying age-based definitions of what constitutes a 'child' in SAAP. However, while the circumstances of accompanying and unaccompanied children are clearly different, it is a mistake to view them altogether as separate, as both the literature on the causes of and routes to homelessness, and the administrative data on reasons for seeking assistance, indicate that often unaccompanied children are simply victims of the same pressures and problems that have led to families with accompanying children becoming homeless. The fact that the proximate cause of homelessness is family breakdown should not obscure the fact that the underlying causes may be related to other more structural issues, including unemployment, poverty and housing shortage.

Partly because the attention to children specifically in SAAP data recording is relatively new, information on service needs and requests for accompanying children is incomplete and thus it is difficult to determine accurately how far these needs are not being met. There is also some sense that service needs are noted partly according to what particular kinds of service agencies have to offer. Nevertheless, it appears while overall most recorded service needs are met, unaccompanied children are considerably less likely to have all their service needs met, particularly when it comes to employment-related needs or other specialist services such as mental health, and drug and alcohol problems.

One key finding from the data analysis which has clear policy implications is that easily the largest groups of both accompanying and unaccompanied children are recorded as approaching SAAP at the point of 'imminent risk' of homelessness, rather than when they had already been homeless for some time. This implies an important role for SAAP in intervention to prevent actual homelessness. The early intervention and prevention programs relating to homelessness have been controversial. The literature review found mixed views on whether this policy emphasis was effective or diverting much-needed resources from immediate crisis accommodation without tackling the underlying structural problems. However, much of this policy does not in any case deal with prevention at the point of imminent homelessness. This needs liaison and negotiation with public housing authorities, community housing agencies, legal centres, Centrelink, private landlords and families.

The literature identifies a range of service improvements needed for children (and some studies also note that substantial progress has been made, though again it is difficult to know how far some recommendations have been implemented). These include the provision of such support services as child care, specialist workers, domestic violence counselling and protection from abuse, education, health care, toys and pets. Most refuges and family services provide in-house child care, but although children under six years seem well catered for, older children may be less so. Good practices identified include the development of child-centred approaches that involve better integration of child support services into the mainstream of SAAP services. The data analysis suggests that while the majority of children in SAAP present to services that target them and thus are likely to be attuned to their needs, a significant minority of children attend other kinds of service which may have more difficulty identifying and meeting their needs.

Indigenous children are substantially over-represented in SAAP services compared to their presence in the population as a whole. The literature suggests that they have all the needs of the general homeless population and some further specific ones, including the need for culturally appropriate services. The administrative data suggest that in terms of recorded service needs or requests being met, Indigenous children tend to do fairly well compared with non-Indigenous children. Both the concept and the practical experience of homelessness can be somewhat different within Indigenous communities, however, because of different familial relationships and dwelling patterns. This needs to be taken into account without assuming that homelessness is not a problem because there is always somewhere for a young Indigenous person to stay.

Children from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds appear to be under-represented amongst the SAAP population. It is not clear whether this is

because they are less likely to be homeless or because they are less likely to access SAAP services if they do experience housing problems. The literature suggests that children from CALD backgrounds can face additional burdens if they do become homeless.

The other group of children for whom homelessness remains a particular problem is those leaving State care. Too often they remain at the borders of legislative and financial responsibility between States and the Commonwealth. While research has found that SAAP provides important services for this group and can be effectively integrated into support through federal programs like Reconnect, it is difficult to determine from the limited outcome data available how effective SAAP is in providing longer-term housing options for those former wards of state who use SAAP services. Recently a number of States and Territories have been negotiating protocols with the Commonwealth for determining appropriate service provision for children who for various reasons fall on the boundaries of jurisdictional responsibilities.

In general, outcome information from SAAP is limited and difficult to interpret. Apart from unmet recorded service needs, the main indicator available relevant to children is that of post-SAAP accommodation, but many of the data on this are missing. While clients as a whole are predominantly recorded as moving into the more independent settings of social housing or private rental, unaccompanied children show significant movement away from living in their own home, private rental and social housing. They tend to move into rent-free accommodation, other SAAP services or emergency housing. Rent-free accommodation can include reconciliation with families, but it may more often mean staying temporarily with friends and acquaintances – a form of tenure which is likely to be insecure. Thus, while there are some positive short-term outcomes for unaccompanied children, it is not clear that their independence has been markedly increased through engagement with SAAP services. This relates again to the difficulties mentioned above, that SAAP itself can only be expected to have a limited impact on homelessness in the absence of wider systemic changes in housing affordability and availability.

4.2 Further research

The aims of the data analysis element of this study included reviewing the opportunities and options for further research. Four areas deserve further attention: extending the analysis of children in SAAP to include multi-variate modelling; investigating whether children who request services are different from those who do not; developing better outcome measures (for SAAP and for children); and determining whether the population of children in SAAP is stable over time.

Multi-variate modelling

This study was limited to the use of customised tables from the SAAP National Data Collection. These were specified after establishing that the existing data on accompanying and unaccompanied children were either not sufficiently comparable, or did not cover topics that were part of the project scope. There were limitations in the level of analysis possible on the basis of data tables supplied. Without access to unit records we were not able to undertake multivariate analysis such as various forms of regression, in order to assess the independent associations at play in the data. Access to the original data would also promote better comprehension, speed of analysis and accuracy of sampling. One possibility for a future venture is that the

SAAP National Data Collection, or a suitable portion of it, be made available to external researchers for more in-depth analysis. This would not have to be limited to research about the children in SAAP, but could be expanded to include all clients.

Services requested

Our study revealed that a large proportion of accompanying children were recorded as not having any 'services requested'. How are these children different from others? An absence of service requests may indicate that a child did not need services. But does the other evidence corroborate this? Comparison might show that the children who request services belong to groups that we would consider to be more needy. If this was the case, it is an indication that SAAP is allocating services appropriately. However, if children who otherwise look the same do not make service requests, there may be other reasons. The service requests of children could be based, to some extent at least, on 'luck'; SAAP services might not be attuned to children's needs; or there could be unobserved differences in the groups of children, which in turn points to the inherent inadequacy of administrative data for these research questions. A short analysis could be prepared using the existing customised tables.

Developing better outcome measures

Unmet need, defined as non-referral and non-provision of requested services, was the main outcome measure focused on for this study. Developing more sophisticated and appropriate outcome measures using the SAAP National Data Collection could be the focus of a future research project.

One possibility is to explore how quickly needs are met. With access to unit record data, a hazard analysis could be carried out of the time taken to meet need. The analysis could control for the tendency of different States/Territories or agency types to administer support periods differently, and the number of service requests made. It would then be possible to determine what types of clients were likely to have their needs met sooner than others.

Longitudinal data analysis, following individuals over time, is not considered possible at present because the unique identifiers assigned are not entirely robust across calendar years (see Appendix A). If this issue can be resolved, projects looking at longer-term outcomes and at clients with repeat service episodes should be considered.

A further area of outcomes analysis would be that of accommodation following involvement with SAAP services. As discussed above, the data at present do not allow reliable conclusions to be drawn because of large amounts of missing information. The major difficulty is for SAAP services knowing where clients go after leaving the services (and how long they remain in this accommodation). It may be that special research or inquiries are needed to address this question rather than attempts to improve the ongoing data collection by service agencies.

Analysing data on children in SAAP over time

Over time, children in SAAP may exhibit different profiles, reflecting shifts in the groups accessing SAAP programs. Rather than following individual children, further research could look at changes in the child groups over time. Although time series cross-section analysis has elsewhere been regarded as inappropriate (Lai, 2003), that

view is debateable. Concern about varying agency participation in the data collection from year to year is largely negated by the weighting scheme. Although agency involvement in the SAAP program itself changes from one year to the next, the Client Collection is essentially a census: looking at how a population changes over time is highly relevant. Also, it would be possible to control for changes in the types of agencies involved in the SAAP program.

Some of these research possibilities are likely to be enhanced in the future by a new SAAP Core Data Set (CDS) which has been piloted and begins full operation from July 2005. The CDS involves a strengthened alpha-numeric coding for client identification which aims to reduce duplication of records and should allow better analysis of client progress through the SAAP system over time. It is also intended to improve both analysis of routes into SAAP services and the measurement of client outcomes because client identification codes will be aligned with some other service programs, including health and juvenile justice. The confidentiality issues resulting from this will require a change in the wording on client forms and it remains to be seen whether this will affect the level of consent for data collection.

Appendix A: Data Issues

This section documents data issues relating to this project. For more general SAAP National Data Collection issues, the reader is referred to Appendix 1 in *Homeless People in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection Annual Report 2002/03*. Information for this section has been gleaned from the various SAAP data documents and from conversations with the SAAP and NDC data analysts.

Some data issues are unavoidable (the extent and quality of current data) and must simply be borne in mind when assessing and interpreting the information collected about children in SAAP. Other matters feed into addressing further research and policy options.

It should be noted that SAAP and the NDCA have been aware of these difficulties and many of them will be addressed in the new Core Data Set, which begins operation from 1 July 2005 (see Section 4.2 above for discussion of the CDS).

Identifying Individual Children

Unique Identifier

The unique identifier on the NDCA is an encrypted version of the valid alpha code associated with that individual. A valid alpha code is a combination of letters from a person's name together with their gender and the client's reported year of birth. There are several issues concerning the unique identifier that arise in this project.

Ostensibly the data collection is a panel data set: cross sectional and time series. The NDCA has confidence in the unique identifier for individual years. However, it is thought that the alpha codes are not stable enough to use the data as a time series. Discussion with AIHW staff found that approximately three per cent of the unique identifiers would be duplicated across years. That is, different people could legitimately end up with the same, supposedly unique, identifier. The size of the problem was considered large enough to preclude following individuals across years.

Another problem affecting some records is that missing data prevents the creation of a valid alpha code. An alpha code is not valid, for example, if the person's year of birth is not reported. So accompanying children on the high volume client forms (see sub-heading below) do not have a unique identifier. Without a unique identifier for accompanying children at high volume agencies, this report cannot look at repeat support periods for this group of children. Also, a child may present to a high volume agency and subsequently to a general agency and the data cannot detect this. Incomplete coverage by the unique identifier will therefore have the effect of over-estimating the number of individual high volume accompanying children.

Another related issue is that a child may, in a small number of cases, accompany their parent to SAAP and later in the year present as an unaccompanied child. Although this is picked up by the alpha coding (provided they were not a high volume accompanying child) such duplication is not prevented in this report because the two sets of child data were extracted separately and only reached the SPRC in tabular form.

High Volume Forms

SAAP agencies with high client turnover currently complete a shorter ‘high volume agency’ client form, covering only a subset of data items. Of particular concern for a study about children in SAAP is that accompanying children are not individually identified on the high volume form, only the number of children accompanying in each age grouping is known. Age, gender, services requested, etc. are not collected specific to each child on the high volume form – only specific to the adult client they accompany.

In this report, the exclusion of high volume clients is noted where applicable. We have aimed to be consistent in whether high volume records were included or excluded from the tables, but this has not always been possible. High volume accompanying children are *excluded* from the tables relating to child circumstances, giving the widest number of characteristics possible but on a subset of accompanying children. On the other hand, the high volume accompanying children are *included* in the service needs and outcomes tables, restricting the characteristics we can look at, but increasing the number of children.

Problems stemming from the high volume or general form split will largely disappear when the NDCA moves to the planned new client form, which both general and high volume agencies will complete.

Age grouping

The client form currently collects age differently for the three sets of children: unaccompanied, accompanying and high volume accompanying. Unaccompanied children have their age derived from their year of birth. For accompanying children, age is collected in two forms, banded into the groups: 0-4 years, 5-12 years, 13-15 years and 16-17 years, and year of birth. However, a significant proportion of records do not have the year of birth field completed on the form. Finally, on the high volume form, the least is known about children: only a count of children in each age band is collected and children are not identified on the form individually. Consistency in how age is collected between all the forms would be preferable. As it stands, these differing collection styles make comparison across the child sets somewhat restricted. For this report, the age of accompanying children is presented grouped, as it was collected.

Under 12 year olds

Unaccompanied child data for those aged less than 12 years appears generally unreliable, with problems affecting up to three-quarters of all individual child records. For example, there are people apparently recorded as aged less than 12 years who report receipt of Newstart Allowance, and one-year olds presenting unaccompanied. These problems are explained in some detail in Lai (2004).

Despite some 103 of the 410 unaccompanied children under 12 years of age having plausible circumstances, a decision was taken to exclude them from this project due to the prohibitive time required to check each particular record and to include or exclude them accordingly.

Client Level Data

Wherever possible, the data analysis uses information directly relating to the accompanying child. However, data collected on accompanying children themselves is limited and high volume client forms exacerbate this limitation. Much of the information is gathered only from the adult client that these children accompany. For instance, the client reports the duration of their period of homelessness, but the child accompanying them may not have been with that client for the corresponding period. Obviously this is not ideal and the assumption should not be made that these are always the child's characteristics.

In some instances, the proxy information will be reasonably accurate. For instance, if the parent (client) identifies themselves as Indigenous, in most cases their accompanying child will be Indigenous as well. However, the same association cannot be drawn for the rest of the cultural and linguistic diversity variable. That is, just because the client was born overseas, does not mean their accompanying child was also born overseas. Despite the customised tabular data including place of birth, it is not used in the report, as it provides substantially less reliable information regarding the accompanying child.

The view taken here is that the information for the client on some fields is better than no information at all and it serves to describe some aspect of the background of the accompanying child. Client information on accompanying children reported in this project is noted where appropriate.

Outcome Data

Unmet need

In the absence of any other information this study interprets service requests as equivalent to client needs. Unmet needs are therefore service requests neither met by SAAP directly nor through referral to another service. The vast majority of needs recorded are met. However, this is likely to be largely because agencies will often enter only those needs relevant to the agency, i.e. those which they can meet. The needs of people presenting to SAAP are not rigorously assessed using the client collection form (nor are they intended to be). As an outcome measure, therefore, unmet need as it is currently measured is flawed, but remains the only measure of this kind available. For this reason we use it, but with acknowledgment of its limitations. An analysis of which types of client and children have unmet needs remains a viable topic for further research.

In addition to the limitations of the current measurement of need, it needs to be remembered that some homelessness remains hidden. Discussions with AIHW staff indicate that homeless people often do not present to SAAP if they know the system well and are aware that on a particular night or season a facility is not likely to be able to accommodate them. This has the effect of hiding unmet need, because these people do not reach the stage of expressing their needs on the client form.

Number and duration of support periods

Agencies apply different rules to determine when a support period is 'closed' (or ended). Even within agencies, there will be inconsistencies about dealing with people re-presenting: whether to start a new support period, or to continue a previous support

period. This means that the number of times a person attends SAAP, and the length of each support period, are dependent on each other. At one agency a person may be listed as having many short support periods, while if the same attendance pattern at another agency might be listed as a smaller number of longer support periods. This makes it difficult to compare repeat usage and duration of support across different groups of children.

Using what data are available, we rely on the number of support periods in many tables. This is done on the assumption that the circumstances of homeless people and the nature of their homelessness do not affect how their support period is defined by the agency. This assumption will be quite robust for many cases – for example, there is no reason to believe that a women’s support period will be closed and re-opened using different rules to those applied to men. However, the assumption will be less robust to differences such as the types of agency type to which they present.

One way to deal with the data in their current form is a method known as ‘chaining’, involving the merging of consecutive support periods. If support periods occur on consecutive days, they could be regarded as one support period rather than two.

However, the client collection form is undergoing modifications that will go some way towards rectifying the measurement of the number and duration of support periods in SAAP. On the new form, more space will be available to enter subsequent support period details, so that continuous periods or spans of support with very short breaks can be easily entered as one support period. This will have the additional benefit of being faster, as details will not need to be sought again from the client for a new form.

Accommodation after support

On high volume client forms, information on accommodation after leaving SAAP support is not sought. On the general form this field is also often left as missing because it is hard to determine: for example the support period may have ended before the accommodation was established, or it may have been inappropriate to seek this information. Some 5,666 out of 15,324 unaccompanied child closed support periods (around 37 per cent) had missing data for their accommodation after SAAP support. For accompanying children, this is another field that is recorded at the client level, rather than specific to the children.

Weighting

Weighting adjustment is used to correct for agency non-participation in the NDC, client non-response, or both. Detailed information about the construction of these weights can be obtained from Karmel (1999).

The existing 94 per cent response rate (Annual Report 2002-03, Page 81) from SAAP agencies is commendable. The valid client consent rate (the proportion of support periods for which information was recorded and a valid alpha code provided) of 86 per cent is also exceptional, especially considering the private nature of the data and the fact that they are being collected at a time of personal crisis.

It would, of course, be desirable for the client response rate to improve even further, which it has since the inception of the data set in 1996-97, when the consent rate stood

at only 64 per cent (Karmel, 1999). However, complete data should not take precedence over service provision and client privacy. Recording of SAAP information should therefore always be based on informed consent and not as a condition of receiving services.

Different patterns of consent for accompanying children across States/Territories and agency primary target group (raised in the data issues section of AIHW, 2004) are not a concern, given the weighting scheme. Karmel (1999: 5) notes that such variables were among the strata chosen in the weight construction, which allowed for factors that influence consent.

The SPRC liaised with the SAAP and NDCA Analysts to ensure that the most appropriate existing weights were used. Each customised table clearly states which weight was used in its construction.

Appendix B: Technical Appendix: Customised Tabular Data for 2002-03 prepared by the SAAP Data Analyst

Circumstances of Children

In all of the tables below, Panel A refers to accompanying children in SAAP, and Panel B refers to unaccompanied children. Tables relating to child circumstances have all been weighted by the standard client weights developed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The symbol ‘-’ is used when the value of a cell is zero or was rounded to zero by the AIHW. Full variable labels can be found on the SAAP NDCA Client Collection forms. Some variables are not available for accompanying children. In some instances, as a proxy measure customised tables were sought for the characteristics of the adult client that the child was accompanying. This is clearly indicated where applicable. All data refers to 2002-03.

Table B.1: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Age by Gender

Panel A				
(Accompanying) ^a				
Age	No information	Female	Male	Total
No information	2	56	50	108
0-4	57	11,725	12,089	23,870
5-12	33	11,524	11,711	23,269
13-15	-	2,543	2,271	4,814
16-17	2	925	831	1,759
Total	94	26,773	26,952	53,819
Panel B				
(Unaccompanied)				
Age	No information	Female	Male	Total
12	-	90	77	167
13	-	234	169	404
14	-	524	337	862
15	-	1,086	763	1,848
16	1	1,971	1,237	3,210
17	-	2,539	1,714	4,253
Total	1	6,444	4,298	10,743
Note:				
a. Excludes high volume records.				

Table B.2: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Age by State/Territory

Panel A^a								
Age	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
No info.	16	52	20	7	7	5	-	1
0-4	4,627	8,257	4,128	2,755	2,485	994	446	1,026
5-12	4,195	8,687	4,064	2,653	2,236	1,027	300	795
13-15	833	1,992	765	446	493	216	59	91
16-17	262	902	207	146	142	56	24	36
Total	9,934	19,891	9,183	6,008	5,363	2,297	828	1,949
Panel B								
Age	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
12-13 ^b	203	101	144	30	52	21	20	4
14	286	124	297	28	64	34	36	8
15	588	363	474	110	173	93	41	43
16	999	801	675	218	336	131	91	79
17	1,196	1,265	764	348	471	186	127	106
Total	3,271	2,653	2,354	735	1,095	465	315	240

Notes:

- a. Excludes high volume records.
- b. Combined due to small cells.
- c. The State/Territory numbers presented in both panels are based on a 'State ever visited' basis, not the 'First State visited' basis. The total State/Territory accompanying child numbers exceed the total accompanying child number of 53,819 and the total State/Territory client numbers exceed the total client number of 10,743 because some children visited more than one State/Territory in the year.

Table B.3: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Age by Locality

Panel A^a						
Age	Capital city	Other metro	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	
No info	58	6	7	33	3	
0-4	11,726	1,411	3,202	6,663	2,200	
5-12	11,287	1,375	3,146	6,776	1,907	
13-15	2,348	305	682	1,418	220	
16-17	964	98	244	449	55	
Total	26,383	3,196	7,280	15,339	4,386	

Panel B						
Age	Capital city	Other metro	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	
12-13 ^b	299	39	123	105	22	
14	448	82	168	161	33	
15	931	171	369	396	84	
16	1,632	331	579	786	146	
17	2,244	443	677	1,093	181	
Total	5,554	1,067	1,915	2,540	466	

Notes:

- a. Excludes high volume records
- b. Combined due to small cells.

Table B.4: Number of Accompanying Children and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Age by Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD)

Panel A ^a						
Age	No info	CALD (of accompanied adult) ^b				Total
		Australian born		Overseas-born		
		Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	English prof. group 1	English prof. group 2-4	
No info	1	28	52	10	17	108
0-4	551	6,028	14,140	839	2,313	23,870
5-12	578	5,747	13,214	1,017	2,713	23,269
13-15	147	906	2,804	280	677	4,814
16-17	60	293	984	114	307	1,759
Total	1,337	13,002	31,194	2,259	6,027	53,819

Panel B						
Age	No info	CALD (of accompanied adult) ^b				Total
		Australian born		Overseas-Born		
		Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	English prof. group 1	English prof. group 2-4	
12	10	51	97	8	-	167
13	25	90	272	7	9	404
14	52	179	598	16	16	862
15	97	317	1,340	44	50	1,848
16	122	467	2,443	77	102	3,210
17	199	622	3,164	106	162	4,253
Total	507	1,726	7,913	258	339	10,743

Notes:

- a. Excludes high volume records.
- b. The CALD of accompanying children is derived from that of the adult they first accompanied. Some of these children might have accompanied different adults when they visited SAAP more than once. In the report we only use the data on clients who identified as Indigenous Australians. English proficiency of the accompanied adult will not be a good proxy measure of the child's English skills. This variable assumes that the English proficiency of Australian-born children is excellent. These data should be treated with caution.

Table B.5: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Type of Accommodation before SAAP

Panel A^{ab}	
Type of accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)	Number
Don't know/no info/missing	4,670
SAAP or other emergency housing	9,635
Living rent-free in house/flat	4,649
Private rental	13,118
Public or community housing	10,057
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	3,062
Boarding in private home	8,436
Own home	4,121
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	1,388
Institutional	535
Other non-SAAP housing	743
Panel B^c	
Type of accommodation before SAAP	Number
Don't know/no info/missing	1,666
SAAP or other emergency housing	2,595
Living rent-free in house/flat	4,583
Private rental	464
Public or community housing	244
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	434
Boarding in private home	2,050
Own home	94
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	515
Institutional	538
Other non-SAAP housing	228

Note:

- a. Excludes high volume records
- b. The number of accompanying children in the row categories exceeds the total accompanying child number of 53,819 because some clients were in more than one category.
- c. The number of clients in the row categories exceeds the total client number of 10,743 because some clients were in more than one category. The same children may appear in more than one category if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they were supported by SAAP.

Table B.6: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Client Group

Panel A ^a	
Client group (of accompanied adult)	Number
No info/missing	658
Female alone aged 25 or over	b
Couple with children	5,388
Female with children	46,585
Male with children	2,058
Other	168
Total ^c	53,819
Panel B	
Client group	Number
No info/missing	441
Male alone aged under 25	4,001
Female alone aged under 25	5,576
Couple without children	280
Couple with children	113
Female with children	417
Male with children	31
Other	310
Total ^c	10,743

Notes:

Excludes high volume records.

- a. Excludes high volume records. The client groups 'Male alone aged under 25', and 'Couple without children' had no entries for accompanying children.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers. The same children may appear in more than one category if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they presented to SAAP.

The number of accompanying children in the row categories exceeds the total accompanying child number of 53,819 because some clients were in more than one category. The number of clients in the row categories exceed the total client number of 10,743 because some clients were in more than one category

Table B.7: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Living Situation before SAAP

Panel A^{ab}	
Living situation (of accompanied adult)	Number
Don't know/no info/missing	4,485
With parent (s)	2,616
With foster family	17
With relatives/friends short-term	9,504
With relatives/friends long-term	1,123
With spouse/partner with/without children	20,541
Alone with children	17,817
Alone	804
With other unrelated persons	1,894
Other	784
Panel B	
Living situation before SAAP	Number
No info/missing	2,112
With parent (s)	3,870
With foster family	350
With relatives/friends short-term	2,874
With relatives/friends long-term	649
With spouse/partner with/without children	501
Alone with children	63
Alone	797
With other unrelated persons	2,059
Other	171
Notes:	
a. Excludes high volume records	
b. The same children may appear in more than one category if their circumstances were different each time they were support by SAAP (or in the case of accompanying children, if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they were supported by SAAP.) For this reason the sum of the rows exceed the total number of accompanying children.	

Table B.8: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Legal Processes involved

Panel A^{ab}	
Legal processes involved (of accompanied adult)	Number
None	31,777
Protection/guardianship order	1,065
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order as a result of violence perpetrated against client	7,535
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order as a result of violence perpetrated by client	1,432
Other legal processes	7,216
Don't know/no information	6,390
Total	53,819
Panel B	
Legal processes involved	Number
None	6,690
Protection/guardianship order	644
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order perpetrated against client	279
Intervention/protection/restraining order/apprehended violence order perpetrated by client	268
Other legal processes	1,655
Don't know/no information	1,203
Total	10,743
Notes:	
a. Excludes high volume records	
b. The number of accompanying children in the row categories exceed the total number of accompanying children because some were in more than one category. The same children may appear in more than one category if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they were supported by SAAP.	

Table B.9: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Duration of Homelessness

Panel A^{ab}	
Duration of Homelessness (of accompanied adult)	Number
At imminent risk	18,138
Less than 1 week	4,766
1 week to 1 month	7,552
1-3 months	5,194
3-6 months	3,474
6-12 months	3,410
1-2 years	2,801
2-5 years	2,891
More than 5 years	2,894
Don't know/no information/missing info	9,824
Panel B	
Duration of Homelessness	Number
At imminent risk	4,387
Less than 1 week	1,494
1 week to 1 month	1,748
1-3 months	1,052
3-6 months	667
6-12 months	601
1-2 years	493
2-5 years	410
More than 5 years	252
Don't know/no information/missing info	2,745
Notes:	
a. Excludes high volume records.	
b. The same children may appear in more than one category if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they were supported by SAAP.	

Table B.10: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children in SAAP, Source of Referral by Gender

Panel A ^{ab}				
Referral source (of accompanied adult)	No info	Female	Male	Total
Don't know/missing	17	1,918	1,977	3,913
School/other education institution	3	102	136	240
Community Services Department	4	1,350	1,332	2,686
Police/legal unit	8	2,004	1,860	3,872
Prison/correction institution	-	50	59	109
Hospital/health services	1	895	869	1,765
Psychiatric unit	0	69	69	139
Phone/crisis referral agency	5	3,589	3,596	7,190
SAAP agency/worker	15	3,252	3,290	6,557
Other government department	5	1,835	1,889	3,729
Other non-government organisation	4	2,865	3,000	5,869
Self	21	8,923	8,942	17,886
Family	0	1,266	1,231	2,497
Friends	6	1,289	1,332	2,628
Other	5	781	805	1,591
Panel B				
Referral source	No info	Female	Male	Total
Don't know/missing	-	1,027	693	1,720
School/other education institution	-	486	268	754
Community Services Department	1	706	633	1,340
Police/legal unit	-	295	266	561
Prison/correction institution	-	39	133	171
Hospital/health services	-	187	94	281
Psychiatric unit	-	39	17	56
Phone/crisis referral agency	-	264	151	415
SAAP agency/worker	-	871	558	1,429
Other government department	-	577	427	1,004
Other non- government organisation	-	613	372	985
Self	-	1,787	1,024	2,811
Family	-	621	522	1,143
Friends	-	482	283	765
Other	-	168	113	281

Notes:

- a. Excludes high volume records
- b. The same children may appear in more than one category if their circumstances were different each time they were supported by SAAP (or in the case of accompanying children, if the circumstances of the adult(s) they accompanied differed each time they were supported by SAAP.) For this reason the sum of the rows exceed the total number of accompanying children.

Service Needs

For the service needs tables, different weights were used for the accompanying and unaccompanied child groups, as recommended by the SAAP data analyst. All data refer to 2002-03.

Table B.11: Number of Support Periods of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children, Age by Gender

Panel A^a

Age	No info	Female	Male	Total
No info	406	673	620	1,698
0-4 yrs	2,369	15,013	15,595	32,977
5-12 yrs	2,128	14,824	15,281	32,234
13-15 yrs	526	3,246	2,726	6,498
16-17 yrs	225	1,125	1,013	2,362
Total	5,654	34,880	35,235	75,769

Panel B^b

Age	No info/missing	Female	Male	Total
12	-	135	100	235
13	-	314	220	534
14	-	742	462	1,203
15	-	1,682	1,184	2,866
16	1	3,176	2,183	5,360
17	-	4,380	3,096	7,476
Total	1	10,429	7,244	17,674

Notes:

- a. This panel uses the agency non-participation weight.
 - b. This panel uses the full non-consent weight.
-

Table B.12: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, All Reasons for Seeking Assistance

Panel A	
Reasons for seeking assistance (of accompanied adult)	Total number of support periods
Usual accommodation unavailable	13,699
Time out from family/other situation	14,386
Relationship/family breakdown	27,003
Interpersonal conflict	14,815
Physical/emotional abuse	28,724
Domestic violence	42,215
Sexual abuse	2,959
Financial difficulty	22,971
Gambling	627
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	14,987
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	7,120
Emergency accommodation ended	2,536
Recently left institution	502
Psychiatric illness	1,439
Recent arrival in area	6,703
Itinerant	2,938
Other	8,471
Panel B	
Reasons for seeking assistance	Total number of support periods
Usual accommodation unavailable	4,427
Time out from family/other situation	5,397
Relationship/family breakdown	8,422
Interpersonal conflict	4,900
Physical/emotional abuse	2,841
Domestic violence	1,716
Sexual abuse	679
Financial difficulty	2,996
Gambling	42
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	4,436
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	1,553
Emergency accommodation ended	853
Recently left institution	384
Psychiatric illness	375
Recent arrival in area	905
Itinerant	1,204
Other	1,456
Note:	
Both panels of this table use the full non-consent weight.	

Table B.13: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Main Reason for Seeking Assistance

Panel A^a	
Main reason for seeking assistance (of accompanied adult)	Total number of support periods
Usual accommodation unavailable	4,893
Time out from family/other situation	2,448
Relationship/family breakdown	5,211
Interpersonal conflict	1,206
Physical/emotional abuse	2,912
Domestic violence	33,745
Sexual abuse	338
Financial difficulty	3,818
Gambling	53
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	8,365
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	611
Emergency accommodation ended	812
Recently left institution	205
Psychiatric illness	167
Recent arrival in area	2,742
Itinerant	948
Other	3,698
Don't know/missing/no information	3,596
Total	75,769
Panel B^a	
Main reason for seeking assistance	Total number of support periods
Usual accommodation unavailable	2,104
Time out from family/other situation	2,057
Relationship/family breakdown	4,320
Interpersonal conflict	970
Physical/emotional abuse	529
Domestic violence	589
Sexual abuse	244
Financial difficulty ^b	530
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	2,150
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	279
Emergency accommodation ended	322
Recently left institution	220
Psychiatric illness	69
Recent arrival in area	412
Itinerant	408
Other	771
Don't know/missing/no information	1701
Total	17,674
Notes:	
a. Both panels of this table use the full non-consent weight.	
b. Includes 'Gambling' due to small numbers in that category.	

For Tables B.14 to B.23, use the service code key below to determine the service type. Service codes correspond to the ones on the client form.

Service Code Key			
Panel A: Accompanying Children		Panel B: Unaccompanied Children	
Code	Service Type	Code	Service Type
21	SAAP/CAP accommodation	5	Employment and training assistance
1	Help with behavioural problems	6	Financial assistance/material aid
2	Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	7	Financial counselling and support
3	Child care	8	Incest/sexual assault counselling and support
4	Liaison with kindergarten/school	9	Domestic violence counselling and support
5	Access arrangements	10	Family/relationship counselling and support
10	Culturally sensitive services	11	Emotional support/other counselling
11	Meals	12	Psychological services
12	Showers/hygiene support	13	Psychiatric services
13	Recreation	14	Living skills/personal development
14	Transport	16	Drug/alcohol support or intervention
15	Advice/information	17	Physical disability services
16	Brokerage services	18	Intellectual disability services
17	Skills education	19	Culturally appropriate support
18	Advocacy	20	Interpreter services
19	Health/medical services	21	Meals
20	General counselling/support	22	Laundry/shower facilities
998	Other	23	Recreation
999	Other	24	Transport
		25	Assistance with legal issues/court support
		26	Health/medical services
		27	Advice/information
		28	Brokerage services
		29	Retrieval/storage/removal of personal belongings
		30	Advocacy/liaison on behalf of client
		33	Pregnancy support
		34	Family planning support
		36	Assistance with problem gambling
		37	Assistance to obtain/maintain benefit/pension/other government allowance
		38	Assistance with immigration issues
		39	Assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation
		42	Assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing
		43	SAAP/CAP accommodation (including THM and other SAAP managed prop)
		999	Other

Table B.14: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Services Requested by Age

Panel A^a						
Service requested	No info	0-4 yrs	5-12 yrs	13-15 yrs	16-17 yrs	Total
21	366	14,469	13,491	2,322	664	31,312
1	46	2,029	3,038	559	115	5,787
2	13	382	1,175	236	60	1,866
3	86	5,678	3,643	287	50	9,745
4	59	1,371	4,095	600	134	6,258
5	18	868	816	91	16	1,810
10	40	1,732	1,744	284	108	3,908
11	195	9,022	8,745	1,319	289	19,569
12	149	7,857	7,283	1,145	222	16,655
13	108	5,828	6,886	1,093	207	14,121
14	157	8,841	8,383	1,360	350	19,092
15	67	2,553	4,195	1,109	428	8,352
16	23	657	762	179	58	1,678
17	10	456	788	165	89	1,508
18	74	2,747	3,456	727	296	7,300
19	60	2,779	1,794	258	101	4,991
20	66	2,473	4,667	969	303	8,477
998	19	589	458	74	15	1,154
999	65	2,409	2,223	360	123	5,181
No Services Requested	1,165	14,566	14,537	3,342	1,391	35,002

Table B.14: Continued

Panel B^a						
Service type	12 yrs	13 yrs	14 yrs	15 yrs	16 yrs	17 yrs
5	6	21	71	352	850	1,344
6	9	81	210	579	1,252	2,049
7	4	9	51	196	570	871
8	5	27	67	141	196	263
9	18	44	86	179	280	429
10	103	210	452	917	1,477	1,709
11	146	296	623	1,399	2,429	3,335
12	15	32	53	96	186	253
13	-	13	21	54	102	179
14	90	201	508	1,144	2,094	2,779
16	8	23	89	253	561	779
17	-	b	b	b	13	7
18	b	b	6	13	19	43
19	20	35	64	142	220	362
20	-	b	b	b	10	25
21	70	268	710	1,590	2,670	3,350
22	50	225	606	1,465	2,467	3,050
23	100	228	560	1,165	1,914	2,345
24	66	233	545	1,329	2,467	3,277
25	12	42	119	248	492	642
26	9	77	170	478	887	1,253
27	106	250	624	1,541	2,961	4,430
28	6	22	41	130	295	571
29	6	60	161	434	965	1,392
30	33	158	366	899	1,776	2,689
33	b	b	9	54	205	285
34	-	6	29	59	146	201
36	-	-	b	b	5	17
37	-	23	68	498	1,197	1,515
38	-	b	b	7	12	21
39	11	67	169	565	1,231	1,832
42	13	27	64	386	1,460	2,672
43	62	281	696	1,821	3,516	4,801
999	45	93	170	403	633	1,012

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- c. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.15: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Services Requested by Gender

Panel A^a				
Service type	No info	Female	Male	Total
21	299	15,636	15,376	31,312
1	58	2,504	3,224	5,787
2	36	1,009	821	1,866
3	170	4,862	4,712	9,745
4	82	3,067	3,109	6,258
5	17	920	872	1,810
10	47	1,992	1,868	3,908
11	245	9,841	9,483	19,569
12	198	8,401	8,056	16,655
13	197	7,040	6,884	14,121
14	219	9,587	9,285	19,092
15	105	4,215	4,033	8,352
16	49	824	805	1,678
17	38	713	756	1,508
18	93	3,610	3,597	7,300
19	73	2,425	2,494	4,991
20	101	4,289	4,088	8,477
998	2	565	587	1,154
999	28	2,688	2,465	5,181
No Services Requested	5,222	14,632	15,148	35,002

Table B.15: continued

Panel B^a			
	Female	Male	Total
5	1,473	1,172	2,645
6	2,618	1,559	4,177
7	1,029	671	1,700
8	580	119	699
9	809	227	1,036
10	3,192	1,675	4,867
11	5,344	2,884	8,228
12	389	246	635
13	217	151	368
14	3,875	2,942	6,817
16	862	850	1,712
17	14	12	26
18	30	55	85
19	532	311	843
20	28	14	42
21	4,690	3,968	8,658
22	4,135	3,727	7,862
23	3,499	2,812	6,311
24	4,729	3,186	7,915
25	830	724	1,554
26	1,924	951	2,875
27	5,987	3,923	9,910
28	690	374	1,064
29	1,781	1,237	3,018
30	3,582	2,338	5,920
33	542	12	554
34	408	34	442
36	5	21	26
37	2,025	1,278	3,303
38	19	22	41
39	2,186	1,690	3,876
42	2,984	1,637	4,621
43	6,196	4,979	11,175
999	1,305	1,051	2,356

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.16: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Services Requested by CALD

Service type	No info	CALD (of accompanied adult)			
		Indigenous	Aust-born Non-Indig.	Eng prof group 1	Overseas-born Eng prof group 2-4
21	574	11,237	14,944	1,348	2,877
1	125	2,062	3,078	223	344
2	52	316	1,094	123	207
3	191	2,285	5,555	596	1,063
4	152	1,240	3,313	350	1,091
5	60	196	1,172	98	335
10	84	2,280	405	107	911
11	320	8,717	8,095	782	1,595
12	268	7,910	6,586	655	1,364
13	235	5,499	6,222	658	1,425
14	324	7,621	8,597	784	1,955
15	191	1,376	5,263	491	1,168
16	22	296	1,030	69	158
17	35	222	798	91	220
18	167	1,204	4,539	436	1,100
19	114	1,212	2,664	283	671
20	180	1,599	5,245	486	985
998	49	186	763	47	160
999	108	1,785	2,526	264	553
No Services requested	1,017	6,239	22,359	1,297	4,090

Table B.16: Continued**Panel B^a**

Service type	Indigenous	Aust-born		Overseas-born	
		Non-Ind	Eng prof. group 1	Eng prof. group 2-4	
5	370	2,043	89	92	
6	660	3,165	110	148	
7	219	1,347	38	62	
8	89	565	13	17	
9	198	734	36	35	
10	583	3,877	118	154	
11	1,177	6,424	176	227	
12	55	528	18	18	
13	37	307	6	10	
14	1,008	5,299	184	170	
16	276	1,326	42	30	
17	4	20	-	b	
18	17	59	4	b	
19	598	113	18	93	
20	b	13	-	24	
21	1,742	6,250	251	206	
22	1,565	5,683	232	191	
23	1,140	4,653	199	165	
24	1,532	5,774	222	211	
25	283	1,139	46	49	
26	483	2,137	86	107	
27	1,419	7,630	243	305	
28	211	773	29	28	
29	454	2,330	88	88	
30	863	4,567	139	222	
33	106	420	9	10	
34	78	338	15	9	
36	8	16	-	b	
37	449	2,552	98	127	
38	b	6	7	24	
39	510	3,024	105	116	
42	554	3,690	113	158	
43	1,927	8,320	308	321	
999	370	1,819	59	48	

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- c. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.17: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support periods, Services Requested by State/Territory

Panel A^a									
Service requested	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
21	6,835	5,506	7,562	5,471	2,899	870	590	1,578	31,312
1	1,125	1,289	2,017	317	644	150	193	52	5,787
2	488	529	287	186	174	126	59	18	1,866
3	3,316	1,360	2,095	1,183	1,070	370	219	131	9,745
4	1,726	1,839	1,246	504	541	156	124	121	6,258
5	472	627	250	110	226	26	81	19	1,810
10	1,125	489	478	776	348	62	124	506	3,908
11	5,230	2,465	4,556	3,732	1,292	509	437	1,347	19,569
12	5,048	1,513	3,634	3,730	867	357	401	1,105	16,655
13	4,306	1,924	3,745	1,699	873	237	390	946	14,121
14	4,853	3,345	4,979	2,777	1,268	493	412	965	19,092
15	2,209	2,653	1,199	547	1,185	203	274	83	8,352
16	770	367	49	44	111	216	117	4	1,678
17	563	263	138	122	180	67	125	49	1,508
18	2,085	2,483	848	479	854	152	290	108	7,300
19	1,589	1,172	924	444	427	83	215	136	4,991
20	2,299	1,995	1,819	764	998	255	288	60	8,477
998	306	226	161	53	298	62	35	13	1,154
999	888	1,222	1,023	731	478	129	139	571	5,181
No Services Requested	3,944	16,197	4,783	2,028	5,620	1,710	253	466	35,002

Table B.17: Continued

Panel B^a									
Service type	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
5	935	563	512	186	249	59	89	51	2,645
6	1,318	908	667	268	491	129	286	110	4,179
7	420	358	395	111	273	45	55	43	1,700
8	222	124	99	40	121	58	23	11	699
9	330	210	188	58	146	26	53	26	1,036
10	1,482	1,180	1,021	231	600	128	169	57	4,867
11	2,351	1,595	2,002	544	921	381	328	109	8,229
12	241	90	141	30	73	9	43	7	635
13	122	101	69	18	33	7	14	5	368
14	2,311	981	1,942	381	529	226	363	83	6,816
16	695	245	356	130	141	40	95	9	1,712
17	10	6	5	-	5	-	-	-	26
18	42	13	18	b	9	-	1	-	84
19	256	130	249	77	72	5	21	33	843
20	11	16	4	5	5	b	-	-	42
21	3,235	677	2,608	557	632	412	359	179	8,658
22	2,859	569	2,361	561	604	392	350	168	7,863
23	2,345	588	2,111	297	408	144	298	120	6,312
24	2,818	1,099	2,013	480	674	288	365	178	7,916
25	534	285	298	83	209	51	79	15	1,554
26	1,144	501	601	144	238	63	162	22	2,875
27	3,013	2,115	2,124	467	1,233	428	409	122	9,911
28	580	75	76	9	129	95	98	b	1,064
29	1,050	415	668	125	372	87	232	69	3,018
30	2,037	1,433	864	207	738	223	341	77	5,921
33	157	132	105	13	95	18	22	11	555
34	148	75	117	19	42	20	15	7	442
36	11	5	b	-	7	-	B	-	26
37	974	739	584	237	403	134	147	85	3,303
38	9	13	9	b	b	b	4	-	41
39	1,285	955	653	142	540	118	134	48	3,876
42	1,133	1,322	745	255	591	275	197	103	4,622
43	3,405	1,771	2,955	789	1,166	481	381	229	11,176
999	555	412	632	267	211	67	183	30	2,357

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- c. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.18: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support periods, Services Requested by Locality

Panel A ^a						
Service type	Capital City	Other Metro Centre	Large Rural Centre	Other Rural Centre	Remote Centre	Total
21	12,822	2,182	3,621	8,394	4,293	31,312
1	2,636	362	541	2,168	80	5,787
2	1,027	99	211	501	28	1,866
3	4,780	881	1,158	2,672	253	9,745
4	3,831	391	731	1,116	190	6,258
5	1,041	110	266	358	35	1,810
10	1,819	218	290	935	646	3,908
11	6,832	1,162	2,082	6,085	3,407	19,569
12	5,514	1,263	1,472	5,057	3,349	16,655
13	5,773	1,160	1,398	4,102	1,689	14,121
14	7,590	1,438	2,185	5,628	2,251	19,092
15	4,723	668	1,024	1,822	115	8,352
16	811	73	242	548	4	1,678
17	906	152	90	339	21	1,508
18	4,256	494	797	1,626	126	7,300
19	2,884	406	567	923	211	4,991
20	4,101	657	1,039	2,535	145	8,477
998	722	40	82	267	43	1,154
999	2,547	262	544	1,048	779	5,181
No Services Requested	20,007	2,535	3,611	7,563	1,286	35,002

Table B.18: Continued**Panel B^a**

Service type	Capital City	Other Metro Centre	Large Rural Centre	Other Rural Centre	Remote Centre	Total
5	1,367	287	354	576	60	2,645
6	2,271	411	482	877	138	4,179
7	890	132	217	413	48	1,700
8	423	60	61	135	20	699
9	520	59	132	277	48	1,036
10	2,422	358	908	1,082	98	4,867
11	3,958	802	1,601	1,674	194	8,229
12	299	68	130	131	6	635
13	193	51	52	65	8	368
14	3,460	797	1,215	1,216	129	6,816
16	1,008	154	235	300	15	1,712
17	16	b	b	7	-	26
18	40	5	9	31	-	84
19	374	31	143	216	79	843
20	33	b	b	b	b	42
21	4,545	835	1,356	1,543	379	8,658
22	4,296	818	1,080	1,319	350	7,863
23	3,307	665	1,193	882	265	6,312
24	3,958	771	1,347	1,557	283	7,916
25	807	136	213	347	51	1,554
26	1,541	330	372	573	59	2,875
27	5,012	1,021	1,796	1,884	197	9,911
28	568	169	149	164	14	1,064
29	1,604	359	449	550	56	3,018
30	2,971	661	963	1,195	131	5,921
33	239	63	137	105	11	555
34	190	51	91	103	8	442
36	11	-	b	12	-	26
37	1,623	356	520	705	99	3,303
38	29	b	6	4	b	41
39	2,126	407	452	823	68	3,876
42	2,186	510	797	1,023	106	4,622
43	5,889	1,142	1,658	2,036	452	11,176
999	1,157	358	363	380	99	2,357

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- c. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.19: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support periods, Services Requested by Duration of Homelessness

Panel A^a

Service type	Duration of homelessness (of accompanied adult)										Total
	Don't know/ missing/ no info	Less than 1 week	1 wk – 1mth	1 - 3 mths	3 - 6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2 -5 years	More than 5 years	At imminent risk	
21	4,769	2,768	3,286	2,487	1,567	1,500	1,248	1,429	1,386	10,541	30,980
1	1,897	234	528	439	396	312	278	366	316	1,067	5,833
2	259	71	200	133	108	122	132	159	149	462	1,793
3	1,372	733	1,119	739	609	480	460	624	664	2,887	9,689
4	775	363	704	660	430	383	323	359	408	1,739	6,145
5	229	72	165	153	152	125	167	166	193	440	1,861
10	356	336	367	309	233	219	194	243	321	1,207	3,788
11	3,509	1,772	1,658	1,176	744	775	720	893	1,060	7,204	19,512
12	3,165	1,546	1,351	924	603	618	600	791	886	6,296	16,781
13	2,855	1,039	1,240	988	684	739	675	737	914	4,168	14,039
14	3,440	1,493	1,881	1,367	946	884	847	977	1,123	6,322	19,280
15	855	474	950	803	630	554	495	601	653	2,474	8,488
16	133	139	249	130	96	53	45	57	79	593	1,574
17	146	61	175	140	113	97	112	130	121	273	1,368
18	883	336	862	649	490	452	435	436	549	2,356	7,445
19	598	314	602	546	376	297	262	284	257	1,408	4,945
20	974	457	921	701	508	526	493	596	801	2,518	8,495
998	212	57	113	105	70	81	97	82	48	341	1,204
999	928	360	571	400	243	295	269	232	208	1,729	5,235
No services requested	7,099	2,250	4,834	2,940	1,938	1,933	1,509	1,443	1,495	9,562	35,002

Table B.19: continued**Panel B^a**

Service type	Less than 1 week	1 wk -1 month	1 - 3 months	3 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	1 - 2 years	2 - 5 years	More than 5 years	At imminent risk
5	254	367	296	152	199	147	128	67	775
6	473	587	399	261	253	192	181	89	1,320
7	155	224	192	105	113	81	89	49	484
8	55	73	70	29	45	39	32	25	231
9	95	106	58	51	71	48	55	37	397
10	449	598	360	223	224	202	166	99	1,771
11	839	1,022	647	372	409	314	254	162	2,905
12	43	72	72	34	34	26	31	18	173
13	34	42	40	17	19	27	20	5	108
14	759	874	566	331	392	288	232	142	2,264
16	124	193	139	81	108	98	82	34	544
17	b	b	b	b	b	-	b	b	13
18	6	11	12	8	5	b	b	b	25
19	68	88	61	27	43	23	32	12	306
20	7	5	4	b	b	b	-	-	16
21	1,147	966	547	322	375	288	239	152	3,175
22	1,111	898	508	298	322	269	232	151	2,924
23	762	700	409	248	269	232	190	119	2,120
24	976	1,005	611	356	396	320	249	153	2,747
25	150	214	150	86	87	67	63	30	530
26	324	409	249	171	180	133	131	72	862
27	1,085	1,356	789	487	476	376	293	178	3,306
28	114	161	103	66	73	68	50	30	305
29	398	402	280	146	163	165	105	57	1,022
30	687	849	534	325	324	265	182	116	2,107
33	38	76	41	34	44	31	26	18	155
34	31	53	39	17	38	32	32	12	115
36	5	b	b	b	b	-	b	-	7
37	375	528	320	186	190	152	112	84	1,042
38	b	6	6	4	-	b	4	b	14
39	465	573	362	176	185	160	118	76	1,295
42	464	739	487	282	310	225	164	95	1,365
43	1,434	1,432	873	492	485	414	330	199	4,002
999	225	301	227	95	122	82	84	58	825

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- c. The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.20: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Services Requested by Type of Accommodation Before SAAP

Service requested	Type of accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)										Inst.	Total
	No info/ Error/ Missing	SAAP or other emergency housing	Living rent-free	Private rental	Public or com housing	Rooming house, Caravan	Boarding in private home	Own home	Living in car, tent, park	Other non- SAAP accom.		
21	1,592	6,981	2,316	5,841	5,752	1,591	4,068	1,681	596	309	253	30,980
1	221	2,422	320	907	721	239	522	313	85	59	24	5,833
2	97	439	97	400	273	82	177	178	28	18	4	1,793
3	452	2,021	611	2,246	1,660	489	1,172	740	144	91	62	9,689
4	237	1,533	398	1,335	982	311	741	419	117	39	35	6,145
5	75	348	125	397	313	92	195	245	34	20	15	1,861
10	163	680	375	608	983	132	473	242	64	50	19	3,788
11	891	4,278	1,413	3,593	4,652	875	2,088	1,132	338	145	105	19,512
12	761	3,877	1,224	2,905	4,104	735	1,808	913	234	112	109	16,781
13	502	3,859	985	2,621	2,878	588	1,329	871	216	126	63	14,039
14	823	4,724	1,253	3,637	4,127	846	2,270	1,013	276	190	118	19,280
15	276	1,624	526	1,924	1,359	437	1,078	920	181	100	62	8,488
16	65	357	112	360	230	90	191	99	44	21	7	1,574
17	61	352	82	266	259	75	130	109	24	5	6	1,368
18	272	1,492	547	1,687	1,210	336	850	701	173	112	65	7,445
19	202	1,198	353	1,005	786	295	654	222	112	55	61	4,945
20	357	1,690	521	2,037	1,360	392	967	896	153	79	43	8,495
998	73	283	83	280	205	39	113	91	18	7	10	1,204
999	319	845	426	1,046	1,190	288	581	293	142	49	55	5,235
No Services Requested	3,832	4,441	2,692	8,317	4,939	1,729	5,111	2,435	778	429	298	35,002

Table B.20: Continued

Panel B^a

Service requested	No info/ Error/ Missing	SAAP or other emergency housing	Living rent-free	Private rental	Public or com housing	Rooming house, Caravan	Boarding in private home	Own home	Living in car, tent, park	Other non- SAAP accom.	Institution
5	123	758	841	69	49	91	430	6	123	52	103
6	229	1,028	1,311	164	96	148	708	13	239	73	171
7	66	474	477	74	31	64	315	8	87	32	71
8	49	204	245	13	10	9	78	17	17	17	42
9	44	230	409	53	50	28	130	8	31	22	31
10	-	911	2,249	143	75	103	641	63	147	90	147
11	534	1,871	3,295	280	149	210	1,115	40	324	111	301
12	27	151	274	10	5	12	71	b	32	12	39
13	21	94	132	9	5	10	35	-	18	6	37
14	332	1,896	2,568	186	80	177	900	14	240	106	317
16	85	555	488	28	22	46	197	7	112	31	141
17	-	11	b	-	-	b	10	-	-	-	B
18	4	30	33	-	B	b	10	-	b	-	b
19	52	238	289	18	22	14	108	-	28	19	53
20	1	12	15	-	-	b	5	-	b	b	4
21	567	2,560	2,914	217	129	249	1,007	21	417	123	453
22	522	2,476	2,526	168	107	225	912	22	371	107	428
23	348	1,824	2,327	157	90	162	678	20	252	105	350
24	436	2,268	2,615	242	150	248	1,088	31	330	122	386
25	81	396	493	47	36	44	202	14	75	25	142
26	93	857	979	87	47	88	396	9	129	53	136
27	37	324	304	47	22	40	167	7	47	22	48
28	108	878	948	95	37	97	469	8	145	49	184
29	285	1,390	2,124	195	107	194	959	26	264	107	270
30	22	98	175	53	18	26	122	-	18	10	11
33	13	107	186	22	4	12	60	-	19	6	14
34	-	6	10	-	-	-	b	-	6	-	b
36	147	725	1,314	74	44	100	515	14	156	52	163
37	-	12	15	b	-	b	6	-	b	b	b
38	259	1,055	1,219	93	37	150	583	11	240	74	156
42	208	1,093	1,382	216	77	193	1,004	13	209	73	153
43	891	3,249	3,498	262	137	351	1,554	29	480	158	567
999	160	509	956	66	40	87	291	b	100	25	120
Total	2,224	4,016	5,965	565	287	508	2,435	104	630	250	691

Notes:

- Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- Confidentialised due to small numbers.
- The sum of the rows exceeds the total number of support periods because more than one service type could be requested in a single support period.

Table B.21: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary Target Group by Age

Panel A^a							
Primary target group	No info	0-4 yrs	5-12 yrs	13-15 yrs	16-17 yrs	Total	
Young people	125	3,268	677	136	90	4,296	
Single men	17	147	147	40	18	370	
Single women	41	688	556	188	111	1,584	
Families	487	4,927	5,519	1,268	523	12,724	
Women escaping DV	647	17,108	17,875	3,174	970	39,774	
Multiple	381	6,839	7,460	1,692	650	17,022	
Total	1,698	32,977	32,234	6,498	2,362	75,769	
Panel B^a							
Primary target group	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Young people	212	466	1,098	2,651	4,781	6,196	15,403
Single men	-	4	3	3	7	31	47
Single women	b	b	4	7	33	82	132
Families	b	b	4	9	49	80	148
Women escaping DV	12	20	37	83	152	304	608
Multiple	6	37	57	114	337	784	1,336
Total	235	534	1,203	2,866	5,360	7,476	17,674

Notes:

- Both panels use the full non-consent weight
- Confidentialised due to small numbers

Table B.22: Number of Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary Target Group by Gender

Panel B^a				
Primary target group	No info	Female	Male	Total
Young people	-	8,666	6,737	15,403
Single men	-	8	39	47
Single women	b	130	4	132
Families	1	109	38	148
Women escaping DV	b	568	40	608
Multiple	1	948	388	1,336
Total	1	10,429	7,244	17,674

Notes:

Panel A could not be generated because gender of the accompanying children was not available on the high volume form.

- Full con-consent weight used
- Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.23: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary target group by CALD

Primary target group	CALD (of accompanied adult)						Total
	No info	Aust born		Born overseas			
		Indigenous	Non-Ind	Eng Prof group 1	Eng Prof group 2-4		
Young people	94	938	2,850	84	204	4,170	
Single men	13	103	178	-	19	313	
Single women	61	158	1,235	67	158	1,679	
Families	371	2,554	8,809	576	1,272	13,582	
Women escaping DV	830	13,307	18,058	1,774	4,684	38,653	
Multiple	489	2,829	11,813	598	1,641	17,372	
Total	1,858	19,889	42,945	3,099	7,978	75,769	

Primary target group	CALD (of accompanied adult)						Total
	No info	Aust born		Born overseas			
		Indigenous	Non-Ind	Eng Prof group 1	Eng Prof group 2-4		
Young people	741	2,186	11,633	395	447	15,403	
Single men	1	8	34	b	b	47	
Single women	4	14	109	b	b	132	
Families	b	39	97	b	6	148	
Women escaping DV	19	338	222	11	19	608	
Multiple	66	169	1,067	6	28	1,336	
Total	834	2,753	13,162	420	505	17,674	

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.24: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary Target Group by State/Territory

Panel A^a									
Primary target group	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
Young people	1,072	1,232	907	252	675	-	75	84	4,296
Single men	239	48	74	b	7	-	b	-	370
Single women	524	1,013	36	b	11	-	b	-	1,584
Families	1,588	4,618	3,507	946	1,508	-	404	152	12,724
Women escaping DV	7,706	10,071	6,392	6,340	6,998	155	523	1,588	39,774
Multiple	1,819	8,676	2,291	496	575	2,774	-	392	17,022
Total	12,946	25,657	13,207	8,036	9,773	2,929	1,003	2,216	75,769
Panel B^a									
Primary target group	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
Young people	4,796	3,021	3,927	858	1,691	368	467	277	15,403
Single men	11	5	7	b	4	10	b	5	47
Single women	79	35	5	b	-	-	10	b	132
Families	34	25	49	8	15	b	16	b	148
Women escaping DV	159	107	147	104	53	b	b	34	608
Multiple	173	643	74	7	46	384	-	10	1,336
Total	5,253	3,836	4,208	979	1,810	763	497	329	17,674

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.25: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary Target Group by Locality

Panel A^a						
	Capital City	Other Metro Centre	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	Total
Young people	2,484	441	784	414	172	4,296
Single men	71	58	4	233	4	370
Single women	845	178	409	152	-	1,584
Families	8,048	1,873	1,110	1,473	220	12,724
Women escaping DV	18,447	2,250	3,395	10,681	5,001	39,774
Multiple	8,278	496	2,416	5,305	527	17,022
Total	38,174	5,296	8,116	18,258	5,924	75,769
Panel B^a						
	Capital City	Other Metro Centre	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	Total
Young people	8,154	1,472	2,756	2,592	429	15,403
Single men	19	b	13	10	b	47
Single women	85	21	17	9	-	132
Families	86	19	5	25	12	148
Women escaping DV	110	63	24	252	158	608
Multiple	619	b	178	501	28	1,336
Total	9,073	1,587	2,993	3,389	631	17,674

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.26: Number of Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Primary Target Group by Duration of Homelessness

Primary target grp	Less							More		At	Total
	No info/ missing	than one week	1 wk- 1 mth	1-3 mths	3-6 mths	6- 12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-5 yrs	than 5 yrs	imminent risk	
Young people	3,216	1,600	1,793	1,082	681	619	510	427	243	5,230	15,403
Single men	17	5	5	-	-	b	-	b	b	20	47
Single women	16	15	6	12	4	b	10	b	b	57	132
Families	38	12	21	13	6	8	6	7	7	30	148
Women escaping											
DV	228	61	36	16	15	16	9	18	17	192	608
Multiple	270	130	239	122	73	54	40	18	14	374	1,336
Total	3,784	1,824	2,100	1,245	780	706	575	473	284	5,904	17,674

Notes:

Panel A could not be generated because duration of homelessness is not available on the high volume form

- a. Full non-consent weight used
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.27: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support periods, Primary Target Group by Type of Accommodation Before SAAP

Primary target group	Type of Accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)											Total
	SAAP		Living rent-free	Priv. rental	Public or com housing	Rooming house, Caravan	Boarding in private home	Own home	Living in car, tent, SAAP park accom	Other non-Inst.		
No info/Error	or other emerg housing											
Young people	501	634	475	692	452	228	883	48	92	126	38	4,170
Single men	179	37	10	28	33	9	11	-	5	-	-	313
Single women	94	278	149	323	248	99	280	93	34	45	33	1,679
Families	1,430	2,521	910	2,666	1,326	995	2,552	323	510	209	141	13,582
Women escaping DV	2,456	7,200	2,510	8,117	8,991	1,209	3,339	3,978	358	269	228	38,653
Multiple	1,213	2,525	1,496	4,437	1,859	1,152	3,066	605	630	215	173	17,372
Total	5,875	13,197	5,551	16,261	12,909	3,690	10,130	5,050	1,629	865	613	75,769

Primary target group	Type of Accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)											Total
	SAAP		Living rent-free	Priv. rental	Public or com housing	Rooming house, Caravan	Boarding in private home	Own home	Living in car, tent, SAAP park accom	Other non-Inst.		
No info/Error	or other emerg housing											
Young people	1,921	3,610	5,430	407	183	416	1,966	71	515	220	664	15,403
Single men	8	10	7	b	b	b	8	-	4	-	4	47
Single women	18	44	28	b	b	b	22	b	b	b	b	132
Families	16	36	30	12	9	8	29	b	b	b	4	148
Women escaping DV	104	121	135	34	66	22	100	b	8	8	b	608
Multiple	157	194	335	101	24	61	310	25	94	20	15	1,336
Total	2,224	4,016	5,965	564	287	508	2,435	104	630	250	691	17,674

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.28: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Age

Panel A^a							
Service delivery model	No info	0-4 yrs	5-12 yrs	13-15 yrs	16-17 yrs	Total	
Crisis/short-term	765	14,224	13,978	2,436	796	32,199	
Medium/long-term	511	8,816	9,167	2,101	928	21,523	
Day support	30	712	718	191	43	1,694	
Outreach support	26	2,502	2,523	625	159	5,835	
Tel/info/referral	48	1,413	920	111	46	2,537	
Agency support	6	83	67	5	-	162	
Multiple	262	4,654	4,353	925	340	10,535	
Other	50	574	508	104	49	1,285	
Total	1,698	32,977	32,234	6,498	2,362	75,769	
Panel B^a							
Service delivery model	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Med/long term	36	136	269	659	1,371	2,196	4,668
Day support	4	4	21	21	46	90	185
Outreach support	9	13	31	112	242	325	733
Tel/info/ref	62	16	83	142	344	523	1,171
Multiple	58	105	194	572	973	1,386	3,286
Other	14	28	50	72	147	253	564
Total	235	534	1,203	2,866	5,360	7,476	17,674

Notes:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.29: Number of Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Gender

Panel B^a				
Service delivery model	No info	Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
Crisis/short term	1	3,958	3,105	7,065
Med/long term	-	2,857	1,811	4,668
Day support	-	68	117	185
Outreach support	-	495	238	733
Tel/info/ref	-	852	319	1,171
Multiple	-	1,811	1,475	3,286
Other	-	387	177	564
Total	1	10,429	7,244	17,674

Note:

Panel A could not be generated because gender of the accompanying children is not available on the high volume form.

a. Full non-consent weight used.

Table B.30: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Client CALD

Panel A^a

Service delivery model	No info	CALD (of accompanied adult)				Total
		Aust born		Born Overseas		
		Indigenous	Non-Indig	Eng Prof grp 1	Eng Prof grp 2-4	
Crisis/short term	765	14,224	13,978	2,436	796	32,199
Medium/long term	511	8,816	9,167	2,101	928	21,523
Day support	30	712	718	191	43	1,694
Outreach support	26	2,502	2,523	625	159	5,835
Tel/info/referral	48	1,413	920	111	46	2,537
Agency support	6	83	67	5	-	162
Multiple	262	4,654	4,353	925	340	10,535
Other	50	574	508	104	49	1,285
Total	1,698	32,977	32,234	6,498	2,362	75,769

Panel B^a

Service delivery model	No info	CALD (of accompanied adult)				Total
		Aust born		Born Overseas		
		Indigenous	Non-Indig	Eng Prof grp 1	Eng Prof grp 2-4	
Crisis/short term	282	1,368	5,037	213	164	7,065
Medium/long term	281	409	3,717	88	173	4,668
Day support	15	39	131	-	-	185
Outreach support	48	175	448	23	39	733
Tel/info/ref	32	99	961	15	65	1,171
Multiple	140	529	2,504	64	50	3,286
Other	35	134	365	16	15	564
Total	834	2,753	13,162	420	505	17,674

Note:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.31: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by State/Territory

Panel A^a									
Service delivery model	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
Crisis/short term	7,341	6,621	7,526	6,956	882	995	465	1,413	32,199
Medium/long term	1,492	15,704	1,718	749	936	5	336	581	21,523
Day support	-	1,185	476	b	31	-	b	-	1,694
Outreach support	68	17	1,457	330	3,715	-	58	190	5,835
Tel/info/referral	89	2,130	254	b	63	-	b	-	2,537
Agency support	-	-	-	-	162	-	-	-	162
Multiple	2,989	-	1,711	-	3,967	1,692	143	32	10,535
Other	966	-	65	-	17	237	-	-	1,285
Total	12,946	25,657	13,207	8,036	9,773	2,929	1,003	2,216	75,769
Panel B^a									
Service delivery model	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
Crisis/short term	2,477	911	1,968	729	173	290	337	180	7,065
Medium/long term	587	2,552	1,029	164	24	175	92	47	4,668
Day support	-	68	100	-	b	-	10	b	185
Outreach support	296	4	162	87	84	-	57	43	733
Tel/info/ref	98	301	453	-	319	-	-	-	1,171
Multiple	1,289	-	490	-	1,202	247	-	59	3,286
Other	506	-	6	-	b	51	-	b	564
Total	5,253	3,836	4,208	979	1,810	763	497	329	17,674

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Table B.32: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Location

Panel A^a						
Service delivery model	Capital city	Other metro centre	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	Total
Crisis/short term	12,656	3,628	4,288	6,686	4,942	32,199
Medium/long term	12,631	866	2,051	5,681	295	21,523
Day support	1,694	-	-	-	-	1,694
Outreach support	3,912	42	101	1,402	379	5,835
Tel/info/referral	2,193	54	254	35	-	2,537
Agency support	162	-	-	-	-	162
Multiple	4,534	662	1,276	3,755	308	10,535
Other	392	46	147	699	-	1,285
Total	38,174	5,296	8,116	18,258	5,924	75,769

Panel B^a						
Service delivery model	Capital city	Other metro centre	Large rural centre	Other rural centre	Remote centre	Total
Crisis/short term	3,537	805	1,235	1,158	330	7,065
Medium/long term	2,313	423	599	1,182	151	4,668
Day support	185	-	-	-	-	185
Outreach support	392	67	29	178	68	733
Tel/info/ref	620	54	453	44	-	1,171
Multiple	1,724	181	616	683	82	3,286
Other	302	57	62	144	-	564
Total	9,073	1,587	2,993	3,389	631	17,674

Note:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.33. Number of Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Duration of Homelessness

Service delivery model	Panel B ^a										Total
	No info/missing	Less than one wk	1 wk- 1 mth	1-3 mths	3-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-5 yrs	More than 5 yrs	At imminent risk	
Crisis/short-term	1,025	1,060	831	426	242	262	203	190	144	2,681	7,065
Med/long-term	754	341	653	446	301	244	177	116	63	1,572	4,668
Day support	57	8	4	5	8	4	-	-	6	92	185
Outreach support	312	25	58	37	36	28	34	47	19	138	733
Tel/info/ref	749	80	114	42	25	5	8	4	-	145	1,171
Multiple	728	282	386	243	145	133	132	106	47	1,083	3,286
Other	158	27	54	44	23	31	21	9	4	193	564
Total	3,784	1,824	2,100	1,245	780	706	575	473	284	5,904	17,674

Notes:

Panel A could not be generated because duration of homelessness is not available on the high volume form.

a. Full non-consent weight used.

Table B.34: Number of Accompanying and Unaccompanied Child Support Periods, Service Delivery Model by Type of Accommodation Before SAAP

Service delivery model	Type of accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)										Inst.	Total
	No info/Error	SAAP or other emerg housing,	Living rent-free,	Priv rental,	Public or com. housing,	Rooming house Caravan,	Boarding in Priv. home	Own home	Living in car tent,	Other non SAAP accom		
Crisis/s-t	2,857	5,292	2,330	7,122	7,662	1,762	4,261	2,191	669	269	254	34,667
Medium/l-t	1,115	3,796	2,185	5,337	2,914	1,269	4,090	1,678	617	426	233	23,662
Day support	399	173	70	440	94	32	156	18	34	4	7	1,425
Outreach support	109	1,651	126	243	269	44	107	96	14	22	17	2,698
Tel/info/referral	188	175	76	374	209	23	41	182	5	b	b	1,276
Agency support	15	106	-	19	44	-	-	-	-	b	b	188
Multiple	898	1,810	690	2,410	1,578	494	1,379	855	269	136	97	10,616
Other	295	195	76	316	140	66	97	26	21	b	b	1,237
Total	5,875	13,197	5,551	16,261	12,909	3,690	10,130	5,050	1,629	865	613	75,769

Panel B^a

Service delivery model	Type of accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)										Inst.	Total
	No info/Error	SAAP or other emerg housing,	Living rent-free,	Priv rental,	Public or com. housing,	Rooming house Caravan,	Boarding in Priv. home	Own home	Living in car tent,	Other non SAAP accom		
Crisis/s-t	815	1,830	2,229	193	130	196	899	16	321	94	342	7,065
Med/l-t	439	993	1,672	157	50	114	866	55	125	78	119	4,668
Day support	32	46	33	15	b	9	20	b	19	b	10	185
Outreach support	99	140	300	24	25	21	74	4	10	9	26	733
Tel/info/referral	346	95	519	48	b	20	79	b	20	b	35	1,171
Multiple	417	817	1,034	100	53	131	417	8	103	51	154	3,286
Other	76	95	177	26	22	16	80	19	32	16	4	564
Total	2,224	4,016	5,965	564	287	508	2,435	104	630	250	691	17,674

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Confidentialised due to small numbers.

Outcomes

Table B.35: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Service Type by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a

	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Number of closed support periods
SAAP/CAP accommodation	454	686	24,629	879	26,648
Help with behavioural problems	347	492	3,367	630	4,837
Sexual/physical abuse counselling/support	163	337	724	309	1,533
Child care	498	551	6,743	570	8,363
Liaison with kindergarten/school	338	286	3,856	598	5,078
Access arrangements	114	287	779	226	1,406
Culturally sensitive services	112	122	2,907	202	3,342
Meals	182	105	17,370	229	17,887
Showers/hygiene support	166	24	15,163	52	15,406
Recreation	223	79	11,945	223	12,468
Transport	226	52	16,136	259	16,673
Advice/information	195	62	6,023	529	6,809
Brokerage services	31	50	1,207	170	1,458
Skills education	94	52	908	146	1,200
Advocacy	152	74	5,052	671	5,950
Health/medical services	296	1,010	1,718	954	3,979
General counselling/support	330	356	5,837	536	7,059
Other - 998	23	84	579	221	907
Other - 999	89	154	3846	304	4393

Table B.35: Continued**Panel B^b**

Service type	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Number of closed support periods
Employment and training assistance	445	530	818	351	2,144
Financial assistance/material aid	238	200	2,783	280	3,501
Financial counselling and support	246	89	979	62	1,376
Incest/sexual assault counselling and support	113	141	240	87	581
Domestic violence counselling and support	186	118	478	107	889
Family/relationship counselling and support	624	454	2,632	431	4,141
Emotional support/other counselling	404	163	6,104	403	7,074
Psychological services	132	161	170	84	547
Psychiatric services	73	135	68	40	316
Living skills/personal development	444	63	5,345	91	5,943
Drug/alcohol support or intervention	297	250	736	210	1,493
Physical disability services	12	c	6	c	22
Intellectual disability services	29	11	16	11	67
Culturally appropriate support	30	41	559	56	686
Interpreter services	5	c	28	c	37
Meals	199	47	7,712	49	8,007
Laundry/shower facilities	176	10	7,143	23	7,352
Recreation	244	33	5,439	54	5,770
Transport	301	42	6,557	86	6,986
Assistance with legal issues/court support	172	139	784	232	1,327
Health/medical services	296	629	1136	409	2,470
Advice/information	152	8	8,235	254	8,649
Brokerage services	61	76	622	87	846
Retrieval/storage/removal of personal belongings	122	31	2,407	64	2,624
Advocacy/liaison on behalf of client	158	20	4,681	205	5,064
Pregnancy support	49	56	236	97	438
Family planning support	49	78	148	80	355
Assistance with problem gambling	8	9	6	-	23
Assistance to obtain/maintain benefit/pension/other govt allowance	327	405	1,558	472	2,762
Assistance with immigration issues	4	4	19	4	31
Assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accom.	459	451	2099	399	3,408
Assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing SAAP/CAP accom. (incl. THM and other SAAP managed prop)	688	573	2,127	428	3,816
Other	316	401	444	8667	368
	41	37	1,839	93	2,010

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.
- c. Confidentialised due to small numbers

Table B.36: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Age by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Age	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	59	32	1,066	72	1,229
0-4 yrs	1,581	2,135	56,438	3,089	63,243
5-12 yrs	1,952	2,190	59,264	3,603	67,009
13-15 yrs	319	384	9,558	688	10,950
16-17 yrs	121	124	2,465	255	2,965
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
Age	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
12	30	7	814	47	898
13	136	103	2,384	129	2,752
14	412	222	5,942	242	6,818
15	1,122	720	14,077	836	16,756
16	2,410	1,660	24,811	1,652	30,532
17	3,073	2,741	34,348	2,712	42,873
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.

Table B.37: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Gender by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Gender	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	54	32	1,634	212	1,932
Female	1,963	2,309	64,517	3,726	72,516
Male	2,015	2,524	62,639	3,770	70,948
Panel B^b					
Gender	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Female	4,228	3,552	47,708	3,701	59,191
Male	2,955	1,900	34,657	1,917	41,428
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight

Table B.38: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: CALD by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a

CALD (of accompanied adult)	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	122	121	2,401	199	2,843
Indigenous	1,144	787	49,423	1,358	52,714
Aust-born non-Ind	1,949	3,222	58,428	4,499	68,098
Born overseas Eng prof grp 1	182	238	5,926	327	6,673
Born overseas Eng prof grp 2-4	738	728	12,369	1,235	15,070

Panel B^a

CALD	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Indigenous	961	670	13,600	909	16,140
Aust-born non-Ind	5,575	4,270	62,294	4,203	76,342
Born overseas Eng prof grp 1	191	166	2,238	145	2,740
Born overseas Eng prof grp 2-4	262	233	2,204	203	2,901
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Note:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.39: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: State/Territory by Service Provided/ Referred/ Neither

Panel A^a					
State/Territory	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
NSW	1,142	803	34,511	2,793	39,249
VIC	1,224	2,440	19,312	2,366	25,343
QLD	575	534	31,275	773	33,156
WA	584	229	20,540	445	21,799
SA	307	455	10,225	592	11,579
TAS	39	98	3,586	99	3,822
ACT	60	140	2,568	511	3,279
NT	101	166	6,773	128	7,168
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
State/Territory	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
NSW	2,330	1,823	26,712	2,357	33,222
VIC	1,426	1,558	12,253	1,056	16,292
QLD	1,615	789	22,058	876	25,338
WA	347	146	5,274	196	5,964
SA	930	682	7,448	583	9,643
TAS	247	198	3,329	188	3,962
ACT	186	153	3,724	318	4,382
NT	101	105	1,578	44	1,828
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight

Table B.40: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Locality by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Locality	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Capital cities	2,151	2,825	51,566	3,653	60,195
Other metro centres	289	336	8,916	554	10,095
Large rural centres	339	653	13,858	1,047	15,897
Other rural centre	1,013	945	38,177	2,192	42,327
Remote centres	240	106	16,273	263	16,881
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
Locality	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Capital cities	4234	2,830	42,107	2,583	51,754
Other metro centres	670	775	8,446	413	10,304
Large rural centres	1058	621	13,906	615	16,200
Other rural centre	1091	1,097	15,083	1,925	19,196
Remote centres	129	131	2,834	83	3,176
Total	7183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.

Table B.41: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Service Provided/Referred/Neither by Duration of Homelessness

Panel A^a					
Duration of homelessness (of accompanied adult)	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	514	444	22,908	790	24,657
At imminent risk	1,247	1,427	43,522	2,372	48,568
Less than 1 wk	304	304	10,205	353	11,164
1 wk - 1 mth	472	623	12,288	790	14,173
1-3 mths	313	503	8,894	688	10,397
3-6 mths	260	481	5,720	535	6,997
6-12 mths	301	380	5,477	583	6,742
1-2 yrs	220	304	5,394	473	6,390
2-5 yrs	258	327	6,559	587	7,731
5 yrs +	246	305	7,580	445	8,576
Total	4,135	5,097	128,547	7,617	145,396
Panel B^a					
Duration of homelessness	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
At imminent risk	2,114	1,676	28,914	1,965	34,669
Less than 1 wk	696	570	10,325	532	12,123
1 wk - 1 mth	955	961	10,344	767	13,027
1-3 mths	587	571	6,210	537	7,906
3-6 mths	424	299	3,556	278	4,557
6-12 mths	574	332	3,753	330	4,989
1-2 yrs	397	228	2,943	381	3,949
2-5 yrs	320	268	2,330	216	3,133
5 yrs +	116	130	1,578	150	1,975
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Note:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.42: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Type of Accommodation Before SAAP by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Accommodation before SAAP (of accompanied adult)	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	219	192	5,572	242	6,225
SAAP or other emergency housing	937	1,142	30,504	1,704	34,288
Living rent-free in house/flat	267	439	8,780	513	9,998
Private rental	895	1,008	24,781	1,524	28,209
Public or community housing	531	688	27,066	1,416	29,700
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	201	293	5,823	381	6,698
Boarding in private home	650	708	13,676	804	15,839
Own home	288	362	8,448	727	9,825
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	77	144	2,071	180	2,473
Institutional	15	43	652	70	780
Other non-SAAP housing	53	78	1,174	55	1,361
Total	4,135	5,097	128,547	7,617	145,396

Panel B^a					
Accommodation before SAAP	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
SAAP or other emergency housing	2,183	1,219	22,252	1,362	27,016
Living rent-free in house/flat	2,291	2,055	28,734	1,880	34,960
Private rental	152	172	2,577	194	3,095
Public or community housing	97	63	1,352	95	1,608
Rooming house/hotel/hostel/caravan	284	182	2,394	204	3,064
Boarding in private home	926	920	11,129	923	13,898
Own home	11	34	324	23	392
Living in car/tent/park/street/squat	411	306	3,624	301	4,642
Institutional	346	259	3,941	274	4,820
Other non-SAAP housing	94	97	1,240	146	1,577
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Note:

a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.

Table B.43: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Main Reason for Seeking Assistance by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Main reason (of accompanied adult)	Neither	Referred only	Provided only	Provided	Distinct services requested
	provided nor referred			and referred	
No info/missing	145	65	9,845	65	10,120
Usual accommodation unavailable	195	226	4,528	226	5,176
Time out from family/other situation	108	96	3,973	99	4,276
Relationship/family breakdown	283	366	5,948	395	6,993
Interpersonal conflict	45	93	1,722	110	1,970
Physical/emotional abuse	113	192	5,734	234	6,271
Domestic violence	2,299	2,520	76,381	4,627	85,828
Sexual abuse	24	46	616	59	745
Financial difficulty	148	156	2,090	178	2,571
Gambling	6	7	62	10	85
Eviction/previous accom ended	285	577	7,370	545	8,777
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	51	87	1,014	102	1,254
Emergency accom ended	73	97	1,077	125	1,371
Recently left institution	30	7	186	10	233
Psychiatric illness	15	24	267	53	361
Recent arrival in area	130	213	3,569	205	4,117
Itinerant	52	78	1,143	241	1,514
Other	134	249	3,021	331	3,734
Total	4,135	5,097	128,547	7,617	145,396

Main reason	Neither	Referred only	Provided only	Provided	Distinct services requested
	provided nor referred			and referred	
Usual accommodation unavailable	780	442	9,711	526	11,459
Time out from family/other situation	939	514	10,628	560	12,641
Relationship/family breakdown	1,997	1,673	19,517	1,546	24,733
Interpersonal conflict	244	319	3,852	295	4,710
Physical/emotional abuse	246	248	3,007	260	3,761
Domestic violence	370	198	3,259	337	4,165
Sexual abuse	101	74	972	106	1,253
Financial difficulty ^b	141	137	1,669	98	2,046
Eviction/previous accom ended	1,012	881	12,506	861	15,259
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	137	83	1,023	177	1,420
Emergency accom ended	123	139	1,910	140	2,311
Recently left institution	87	67	1,250	90	1,492
Psychiatric illness	59	31	310	35	435
Recent arrival in area	158	156	2,079	109	2,501
Itinerant	209	169	1,966	139	2,484
Other	172	172	2,244	212	2,799
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Both panels use the full non-consent weight.
- b. Includes 'Gambling' due to small numbers in that category.

Table B.44: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Agency Primary Target Group by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Agency primary target group	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Young people	221	387	3,085	239	3,932
Single men	3	11	234	10	257
Single women	46	117	887	76	1,126
Families	615	1,012	11,315	1,276	14,218
Women escaping DV	2,377	2,269	98,385	5,058	108,089
Multiple	770	1,070	14,885	1,049	17,774
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
Agency primary target group	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Young people	6,422	4,689	74,064	4,610	89,785
Single men	14	19	210	6	249
Single women	48	58	658	111	876
Families	47	47	467	170	730
Women escaping DV	56	123	2,861	272	3,313
Multiple	596	518	4,115	449	5,678
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.

Table B.45: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Service Delivery Model by Service Provided/ Referred/ Neither

Panel A^a					
Agency service delivery model	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Crisis/short term	2,161	1,822	87,936	3,921	95,840
Med/long term	1,181	2,029	12,919	2,112	18,241
Day support	10	51	294	119	473
Outreach support	95	136	8,374	83	8,688
Tel/info/ref	27	65	178	33	303
Agency support	26	16	216	5	263
Multiple	522	736	18,220	1,408	20,886
Other	11	10	654	27	701
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
Agency service delivery model	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Crisis/short term	3,176	2,033	45,015	2,224	52,447
Med/long term	2,205	1,654	15,115	1,773	20,748
Day support	26	21	600	33	680
Outreach support	146	309	1,752	291	2,498
Tel/info/ref	241	387	2,909	57	3,595
Multiple ^c	1,161	932	15,827	957	18,877
Other	228	116	1,157	284	1,786
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses agency non-participation weights.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.
- c. Includes 'Agency Support' due to small numbers in that category.

Table B.46: Number of Closed Support Periods for Accompanying and Unaccompanied Children: Duration of Support Period by Service Provided/Referred/Neither

Panel A^a					
Duration of Support Period (of accompanied adult)	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
No info/missing	19	3	267	25	314
Same day	125	231	3,124	344	3,823
1 day	401	139	18,377	202	19,119
2 days	267	69	8,304	252	8,892
3 days	182	39	5,626	153	6,000
4 days	120	69	4,943	122	5,253
5 days	107	40	3,505	135	3,787
6 days	100	53	3,133	121	3,408
7 days	89	59	2,935	130	3,213
>1-2 wks	371	311	14,267	630	15,578
>2-4 wks	421	415	13,506	776	15,117
>4-13 wks	714	1,315	25,239	2,025	29,293
>13-26 wks	442	915	11,537	1,124	14,019
>26-52 wks	327	751	8,379	928	10,386
>52 wks	346	456	5,648	741	7,191
Total	4,032	4,865	128,790	7,708	145,396
Panel B^b					
Duration of Support Period	Neither provided nor referred	Referred only	Provided only	Provided and referred	Distinct services requested
Missing	14	19	137	49	220
Same day	501	448	3,532	192	4,673
1 day	706	181	8,844	128	9,859
2 days	335	117	4,708	138	5,298
3 days	277	101	4,156	118	4,652
4 days	278	96	2,595	82	3,050
5 days	154	67	2,248	94	2,562
6 days	233	100	2,125	72	2,530
7 days	162	99	2,047	110	2,417
>1-2 wks	835	488	9,056	539	10,918
>2-4 wks	825	656	10,247	711	12,440
>4-13 wks	1,827	1,745	18,240	1,613	23,424
>13-26 wks	648	686	7,589	874	9,797
>26-52 wks	285	479	4,604	577	5,944
>52 wks	104	173	2,249	322	2,847
Total	7,183	5,454	82,376	5,618	100,631

Notes:

- a. Panel A uses the agency non-participation weight.
- b. Panel B uses the full non-consent weight.

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