



PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP AND CHILDREN IN SUBSTITUTE CARE, AUSTRALIA, JUNE 1982

- PHONE INQUIRIES** *for more information about these statistics—contact Philip Clarke on Canberra (062) 52 6322 or any of our State offices.*
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EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The statistics in this publication are the product of the National Working Party on Welfare Statistics (WELSTAT).

2. WELSTAT is a joint State and Commonwealth project concerned with the standardisation and improvement of social welfare statistics. The project is managed by committees consisting of representatives from each State and Territory welfare department, the Commonwealth Department of Social Security and the ABS. The project is serviced by the WELSTAT Secretariat which operates full time and is located in the central office of the Department of Social Security. The ABS provides assistance to the Secretariat through the outposting of an officer.

3. This is the fourth national publication of statistics based on standardised definitions and classifications of data relating to persons under guardianship of State and Territory welfare departments and to children who are living apart from their natural or adoptive parents in foster care or in residential child care establishments.

4. Participants in this collection were:

- New South Wales—Department of Youth and Community Services
- Victoria—Department of Community Welfare Services
- Queensland—Department of Children's Services
- South Australia—Department for Community Welfare
- Western Australia—Department for Community Welfare
- Tasmania—Department for Community Welfare
- Northern Territory—Department of Community Development
- Australian Capital Territory—Department of Territories and Local Government
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Department of Social Security

5. Work on standardisation of welfare statistics is continuing. Statistical standards have been developed by WELSTAT in the areas of 'Child Maltreatment' and 'Emergency and Supplementary Assistance' for future compilation and publication of comparable data for each State and Territory. The WELSTAT project has also developed statistical standards for 'Children Under Detention (Persons in Juvenile Corrective Institutions and Children in Prison)' and 'Adoptions', statistics for which are published by the Australian Institute of Criminology and the ABS (Catalogue No. 4406.0) respectively.

Scope and coverage

6. The statistics relate to all persons under the guardianship of the State and Territory welfare departments and to children who are living apart from their natural or adoptive parents in foster care or in residential child care establishments. Persons not under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department who are living in establishments operated by other government authorities and non-government organisations are currently not collected. The statistics, therefore, do not provide a full count of the number of children in substitute care.

7. Although the State and Territory welfare departments were able to provide a full count of the persons under their guardianship and in their own residential child care establishments, some States experienced difficulty in obtaining the full range of information required for the tables. The main gap in 1982 data is age and sex not recorded for 1,477 persons under guardianship in Victoria.

8. An adult (person aged 18 years and over) does not usually remain under guardianship except in special circumstances.

9. The different State and Territory legislative and administrative practices are summarised in Technical note 2.

Collection method

10. Data were collected and compiled by each State or Territory welfare department from its own records relating to persons under guardianship and from a census of its own establishments.

11. Editing of the data was undertaken by the WELSTAT Secretariat consisting of officers from the Department of Social Security and the ABS.

12. The standards require that the reference date be 30 June for each year.

Definitions

13. A *child* is a person who is under 18 years of age.

14. An *adult* is a person who is aged 18 years and over.

15. *Person under guardianship of State/Territory welfare department (excluding adoption and immigration cases)* is a person whose legal guardian is the Minister, Director or other official of a State or Territory welfare department, where the guardianship is conferred under legislation other than legislation controlling the adoption of children or the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946*.

16. *Foster care*. A child is in foster care if he/she is living apart from his/her natural or adoptive parents in a private household, where he/she is cared for by one or more adults who act as substitute parents to the child and are paid a regular allowance for the child's support by a government authority or non-government organisation.

17. A *residential child care establishment* is an establishment mainly engaged in providing accommodation and meals, together with at least some personal care, protection, control, corrective treatment or detention, to children who, temporarily or permanently, are unable, not permitted, or unwilling to live with their natural or adoptive parents. The establishment must be provided by a government authority, or non-government organisation for the purpose of providing substitute care to children.

18. Technical note 1 contains more detailed definitions of the various classifications used for statistics of persons under guardianship and children in substitute care.

Related publications

19. For further information on the operations of the welfare departments refer to the annual reports published by the various departments. The statistics contained in these reports may differ from those contained in this publication because definitions, aggregations, reference dates, etc. used may differ from the standards developed for the statistics contained in this publication.

20. The Australian Institute of Criminology produces a quarterly publication on 'Persons in Juvenile Corrective Institutions' which gives further information on persons in juvenile corrective institutions in States and Territories. This series provides additional information on children in the 'Juvenile Corrective Institutions' category used in tables 4, 5 and 8 in this publication.

21. The ABS publishes *Adoptions, Australia* (4406.0), based on standards developed by WELSTAT.

22. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- nil or rounded to zero
- n.a. not available

23. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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Australian Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Persons under guardianship (see Tables 1 and 2)

At 30 June 1982, there were 16,776 persons under the guardianship of the State and Territory welfare departments. The downward trend in the number of persons under guardianship in Australia has continued, as can be seen in the table below.

State and Territory	Persons under guardianship at end June				Percentage decline since 1979
	1979	1980	1981	1982	
S S W	4,911	4,764	4,349	4,341	12.0
Vic	5,251	4,606	4,158	3,834	27.0
Qld	6,377	4,538	4,270	4,305	32.5
S A	1,561	1,243	1,186	1,208	22.6
W A	3,389	2,807	2,556	2,338	31.0
Tas	689	643	563	549	20.3
N T	214	162	154	118	44.9
A C T	112	89	97	83	25.9
Australia	22,524	18,952	17,353	16,776	25.5

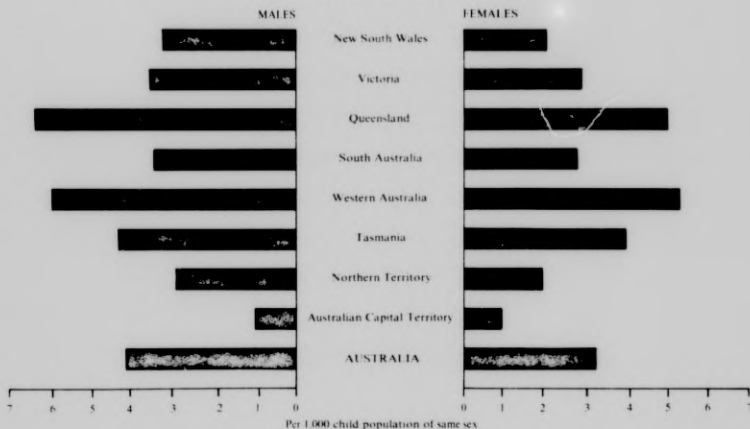
New South Wales had the greatest number of persons under guardianship, but as Table 2 shows, it had the lowest rate of children under guardianship (per thousand child population) of all the States and Territories except the Northern Territory and the A.C.T.; Queensland and Western Australia had the highest rate of children under guardianship (5.7 per thousand each), with Queensland the highest rate for males (6.4 per 1,000) and Western Australia the highest rate for females (5.3 per 1,000).

Age and sex (see Table 3)

(Note: The age and sex distribution of 1,477 persons under guardianship in Victoria is not available.)

The majority of persons under guardianship are males, (57.5 per cent) and, because legislation makes most people over the age of 18 years ineligible to be placed in or remain under guardianship, most persons under guardianship are children (97.7 per cent). In the States and Territories for which data are available, males outnumber females in all age groups except 5-9 year olds in Tasmania and 10-14 year olds in the A.C.T. Persons under guardianship are concentrated in the 10-14 and 15-17 year age groups (37.9 and 32.8 per cent respectively).

DIAGRAM 1: CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: PROPORTION OF POPULATION BY SEX, STATES AND TERRITORIES, JUNE 1982



Age	Children under guardianship(a) (per cent)		
	Males	Females	Total
0-4	9.4	11.0	10.1
5-9	17.9	20.9	19.2
10-14	37.9	38.0	37.9
15-17	34.8	30.6	32.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Based on the age distribution of persons under guardianship in all States and Territories except Victoria.

Types of placement (see Tables 4 and 5)

In June 1982, 4,756 persons under guardianship were in residential care establishments. This number represents 28.4 per cent of all persons under guardianship, a small decline from 30.1 per cent of all persons under guardianship in June 1981. The decline in numbers occurred in all States and Territories except South Australia and the Northern Territory. South Australia (17.2 per cent) and Western Australia (17.5 per cent) had the lowest proportion of its persons under guardianship in residential care establishments, while Victoria had the highest rate (45.0 per cent).

The total number of persons under guardianship in non-institutional types of placement declined from 12,316 in June 1981 to 12,020 in June 1982. This represents a decrease of 3.4 per cent over the twelve month period (compared with a 10.4 per cent decrease in the number of persons in residential care establishments).

DIAGRAM 2: PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: TYPE OF PLACEMENT, JUNE 1982
(per cent)

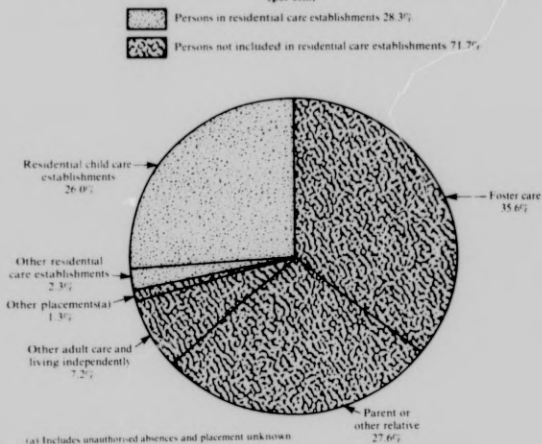
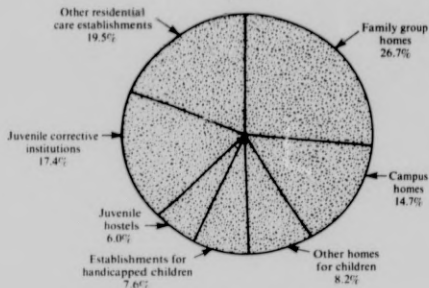


DIAGRAM 3: PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT(a), JUNE 1982
(per cent)



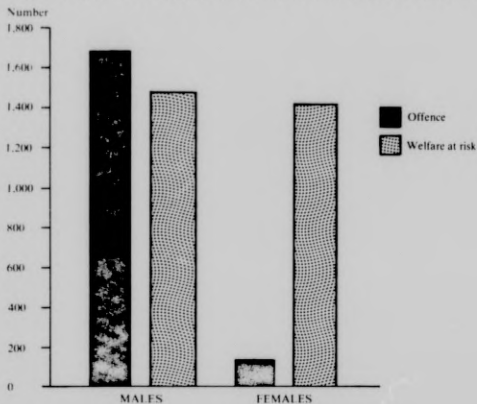
(a) Excludes unauthorised absences and placement unknown

Admissions to and discharges from guardianship (Tables 6 and 7)

During the year ended 30 June 1982, the number of persons placed under guardianship was 4,717, of whom 3,158 were males and 1,559 females, representing a decrease of 425 males but an increase of 87 females when compared with the 12 months ended 30 June 1981. The changes were not consistent between the States and Territories; however the greatest decrease in the number of males occurred in the A.C.T. (88.3 per cent) and Queensland (36.4 per cent), whilst the greatest increase in the number of females were in the Northern Territory (66.7 per cent) and Western Australia (37.4 per cent). All States and Territories except South Australia had more discharges than admissions during the year.

The diagram below shows the differences which exist in the reasons males and females were placed under guardianship. The majority of males (53.3 per cent) were placed under guardianship for having committed an offence, while the majority of females (91.0 per cent) were placed under guardianship because of 'welfare at risk'.

DIAGRAM 4: PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP DURING 1981-82: REASON FOR ADMISSION



The most common reason for being discharged from guardianship was the 'expiry of specified time'. With the exception of Queensland, where 16.4 per cent of discharged persons were released as they were to be adopted, adoption was not a common reason for discharge.

Residential child care establishments (see Tables 8, 9 and 10)

At the end of June 1982, a total of 3,080 children were accommodated in residential child care establishments operated by State and Territory welfare departments, a decrease of 101 from the corresponding date one year earlier. Of all children in these establishments, 1,200 (39.0 per cent) were in juvenile corrective institutions. Juvenile corrective institutions are almost exclusively run by welfare departments, thus Table 8 gives the total population of children in corrective institutions, except for those in one institution in Victoria.

Over one half (54.5 per cent) of the residential child care establishments operated by State or Territory welfare departments had five or less persons at 30 June 1982. These small establishments were the most common in Victoria (61 out of 81 establishments) and Tasmania (12 out of 18 establishments). Residential child care establishments operated by non-government organisations also tended to be small in size with 52.6 per cent having five or less persons at 30 June 1982.

Children in foster care (see Table 11)

The number of children in foster care at 30 June 1982 was 10,930, an increase of 694 children from the same date one year earlier. This increase was confined to children placed in foster care who were not under the guardianship of the welfare departments, even though the welfare departments were, in the majority of cases, the organisations responsible for the placement of the children.

TABLE 1. PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: CHILDREN AND ADULTS BY SEX, STATE AND TERRITORY, JUNE 1982

State and Territory of guardianship	Children			Adult(a)			Persons			No. per cent
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	
New South Wales	2,496	1,580	4,076	164	101	265	2,660	1,681	4,341	25.9
Victoria	(b)2,129	(b)1,659	(b)3,788	(b)25	(b)21	(b)46	2,154	1,680	3,834	22.8
Queensland	2,444	1,824	4,268	29	8	37	2,473	1,832	4,305	25.7
South Australia	667	521	1,188	19	1	20	686	522	1,208	7.2
Western Australia	1,262	1,069	2,331	5	2	7	1,267	1,071	2,338	13.9
Tasmania	291	252	543	3	3	6	294	255	549	3.3
Northern Territory	71	47	118	—	—	—	71	47	118	0.7
Australian Capital Territory	43	40	83	—	—	—	43	40	83	0.5
Australia	(b)9,403	(b)6,992	(b)16,395	(b)245	(b)136	(b)381	9,648	7,128	16,776	100.0
1981 r	9,987	7,272	17,259	216	147	363	10,203	7,419	17,622	
1980	10,778	7,788	18,566	239	147	386	11,017	7,935	18,952	

(a) Persons aged 18 years and over, who do not usually remain under guardianship except in special circumstances. (b) In Victoria, the age and sex of 1,477 persons under guardianship is not known. These figures are estimated based on the child/adult ratio and the sex ratio of the 2,357 persons whose age and sex was recorded.

TABLE 2. CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: PROPORTION OF POPULATION BY SEX, STATE AND TERRITORY, JUNE 1982

State and Territory of guardianship	Children under guardianship per 1,000 child population(a) June 1981			Children under guardianship per 1,000 child population(b) June 1982		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
New South Wales	3.2	2.1	2.7	3.2	2.1	2.7
Victoria	(b)3.9	(b)3.1	(b)3.5	(c)3.5	(c)2.9	(c)3.2
Queensland	7.0	5.2	6.1	6.4	5.0	5.7
South Australia	3.5	2.7	3.1	3.4	2.8	3.1
Western Australia	6.7	5.8	6.3	6.0	5.3	5.7
Tasmania	4.6	4.1	4.4	4.3	3.9	4.1
Northern Territory	4.1	2.7	3.4	2.9	2.0	2.5
Australian Capital Territory	1.6	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.1
Australia	(b)4.3	(b)3.3	(b)3.8	(c)4.1	(c)3.2	(c)3.6

(a) Source: Projections of the Population of the States and Territories of Australia, 1981-2021 (3214.0). 1981 figures revised to this base. (b) In Victoria, the age and sex of 1,789 persons under guardianship is not known. These figures are estimated based on the child/adult ratio and the sex ratio of the 2,369 persons whose age and sex was recorded. (c) In Victoria, the age and sex of 1,477 persons under guardianship is not known. These figures are estimated based on the child/adult ratio and the sex ratio of 2,357 persons whose age and sex was recorded.

TABLE 3. PERSONS UNDER GUARDIANSHIP: AGE BY SEX, STATE AND TERRITORY, JUNE 1982

Age (years)	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
MALES									
Children									
0-4	217	} n.a.	283	63	86	22	6	6	} n.a.
5-9	395		488	125	212	50	15	17	
10-14	953		881	263	516	101	31	10	
15-17	931		792	216	448	118	19	10	
Total	2,496	(a)2,129	2,444	667	1,262	291	71	43	9,403
Adults	164	(a)25	29	19	5	3	—	—	245
Total males	2,660	(a)2,154	2,473	686	1,267	294	71	43	9,648
FEMALES									
Children									
0-4	170	} n.a.	267	53	69	16	5	6	} n.a.
5-9	307		440	87	196	61	11	15	
10-14	615		642	211	436	96	17	11	
15-17	488		475	170	368	79	14	8	
Total	1,580	(a)1,659	1,824	521	1,069	252	47	40	6,992
Adults	101	(a)21	8	1	2	3	—	—	136
Total females	1,681	(a)1,680	1,832	522	1,071	255	47	40	7,128
PERSONS									
Children									
0-4	387	} n.a.	550	116	155	38	11	12	} n.a.
5-9	702		928	212	408	111	26	32	
10-14	1,568		1,523	474	952	197	48	21	
15-17	1,419		1,267	386	816	197	33	18	
Total	4,076	(a)3,788	4,268	1,188	2,331	543	118	83	16,395
Adults	265	(a)46	37	20	7	6	—	—	381
Total persons	4,341	(a)3,834	4,305	1,208	2,338	549	118	83	16,776

(a) In Victoria, the age and sex of 1,477 persons under guardianship is not known. These figures are estimated based on the child/adult ratio and the sex ratio of the 2,357 persons whose age and sex was recorded.

TABLE 6. PERSONS PLACED UNDER GUARDIANSHIP(a): SEX BY REASON FOR GUARDIANSHIP, STATE AND TERRITORY, DURING YEAR ENDED JUNE 1982

Reason for guardianship	State and Territory of guardianship								
	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld(b)	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
MALES									
Offence(c)	1,061	99	203	263	25	19	10	2	1,682
Welfare at risk(d)	319	347	465	158	134	20	30	3	1,476
Total	1,380	446	668	421	159	39	40	5	3,158
FEMALES									
Offence(c)	68	12	23	14	16	6	1	—	140
Welfare at risk(d)	300	331	427	155	153	24	24	5	1,419
Total	368	343	450	169	169	30	25	5	1,559
PERSONS									
Offence(c)	1,129	111	226	277	41	25	11	2	1,822
Welfare at risk(d)	619	678	892	313	287	44	54	8	2,895
Total	1,748	789	1,118	590	328	69	65	10	4,717

(a) Does not include persons placed under guardianship in a particular State or Territory who have been transferred from guardianship in another State or Territory. (b) Queensland figures are not comparable to previous years due to change in methodology. (c) Includes breach of probation or similar order and non-payment of fine. (d) Includes physical, mental, emotional and moral welfare. For details see Technical note 1.

TABLE 7. PERSONS DISCHARGED FROM GUARDIANSHIP(a): REASON FOR DISCHARGE, STATE AND TERRITORY, DURING YEAR ENDED JUNE 1982

Reason for discharge from guardianship	State and Territory of discharge								
	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
MALES									
Expiry of specified time	561	196	451	299	261	18	42	1	1,829
Death	4	2	5	—	2	—	—	—	13
Adoption	29	31	117	6	7	3	2	—	195
Other(c)	807	406	268	112	19	42	20	3	1,677
Total	1,401	635	841	417	289	63	64	4	3,714
FEMALES									
Expiry of specified time	280	127	202	70	233	17	27	3	959
Death	1	4	2	—	3	—	—	—	10
Adoption	35	25	103	2	1	2	1	1	170
Other(c)	99	322	192	79	20	20	9	4	745
Total	415	478	499	151	257	39	37	8	1,884
PERSONS									
Expiry of specified time	841	323	653	369	494	35	69	4	2,788
Death	5	6	7	—	5	—	—	—	23
Adoption	64	56	220	8	8	5	3	1	365
Other(c)	906	728	460	191	39	62	29	7	2,422
Total	(d)1,876	1,113	1,340	568	546	102	101	12	(d)5,658

(a) Does not include persons whose discharge from guardianship is the result of a transfer to the guardianship of another State or Territory. (b) Queensland figures are not comparable to previous years due to change in methodology. (c) Includes discharges from guardianship by departmental decision, successful court appeal, parents applications, order of Minister and Governor-in-Council. (d) Includes 60 persons (26 males and 34 females) for whom reason for discharge was not recorded.

TABLE 8. CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE ESTABLISHMENTS OPERATED BY STATE AND TERRITORY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS: STATUS OF CHILD BY TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT, STATE AND TERRITORY OF LOCATION, JUNE 1982

Type of establishment	State and Territory of location								
	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia
CHILDREN UNDER GUARDIANSHIP OF STATE AND TERRITORY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS									
Establishments for handicapped children	175	—	—	23	—	8	—	—	206
Establishments for other children—									
Family group homes—									
Scattered	76	202	—	25	16	26	5	—	350
Clustered	—	55	—	—	24	—	—	—	79
Campus homes	138	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	138
Juvenile hostels	56	13	5	3	17	—	—	—	94
Juvenile corrective institutions	449	149	88	48	44	18	—	—	796
Other homes for children	223	195	77	—	41	—	16	—	552
Total	1,117	614	170	99	142	52	21	—	2,215
OTHER CHILDREN									
Establishments for handicapped children	8	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	11
Establishments for other children—									
Family group homes—									
Scattered	—	3	—	22	21	31	—	—	77
Clustered	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	22
Campus homes	20	—	—	—	24	—	—	—	32
Juvenile hostels	1	2	—	5	24	—	—	—	32
Juvenile corrective institutions	192	63	19	23	102	2	1	2	404
Other homes for children	12	116	2	—	185	—	4	—	319
Total	233	184	21	53	334	33	5	2	865
TOTAL									
Establishments for handicapped children	183	—	—	26	—	8	—	—	217
Establishments for other children—									
Family group homes—									
Scattered	76	205	—	47	37	57	5	—	427
Clustered	—	55	—	—	24	—	—	—	79
Campus homes	158	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	160
Juvenile hostels	57	15	5	8	41	—	—	—	126
Juvenile corrective institutions	641	212	107	71	146	20	1	2	1,200
Other homes for children	235	311	79	—	226	—	20	—	871
Total	1,350	798	191	152	476	85	26	2	3,080

TABLE 9. RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE ESTABLISHMENTS OPERATED BY STATE AND TERRITORY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS: SIZE OF ESTABLISHMENT, STATE AND TERRITORY OF LOCATION, JUNE 1982 (Number of establishments)

State and Territory of location	Size of establishment: Number of children in residence							100 and over	Total establishments operating
	0-5	6-10	11-19	20-29	30-49	50-69	70-99		
New South Wales	30	6	17	3	4	4	2	2	68
Victoria	61	10	3	1	1	1	2	2	81
Queensland	3	2	—	—	3	1	—	—	9
South Australia	5	5	2	1	—	1	—	—	14
Western Australia	14	4	5	4	7	—	—	—	34
Tasmania	12	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	18
Northern Territory	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
Australian Capital Territory	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Australia	126	35	30	9	15	7	4	4	230

TABLE 10. RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE ESTABLISHMENTS OPERATED BY NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS(a): SIZE OF ESTABLISHMENT, STATE AND TERRITORY OF LOCATION, JUNE 1982
(Number of establishments)

State and Territory of location	Size of establishment : Number of children in residence								Total establishments operating
	0-5	6-10	11-19	20-29	30-49	50-69	70-99	100 and over	
New South Wales	48	42	21	7	7	2	—	—	127
Victoria(b)(c)	144	67	5	1	3	2	1	—	223
Queensland(c)	44	29	6	3	—	1	—	—	83
South Australia	22	5	4	—	—	—	—	—	31
Western Australia	10	3	10	2	5	5	—	—	35
Tasmania	9	4	1	3	—	—	—	—	17
Northern Territory	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
Australian Capital Territory	2	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	6
Australia	279	160	47	16	17	10	1	—	530

(a) Establishments which have come to the notice of the welfare departments through either their placement of persons under guardianship in the establishments or through the licensing requirements of the legislation with respect to children's homes. Coverage may not be complete. (b) Size range is based on capacity rather than children in residence. (c) Licensed establishments only.

TABLE 11. CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE(a): STATUS OF CHILD BY PLACEMENT ORGANISATION, STATE AND TERRITORY PAYING FOSTER ALLOWANCE, JUNE 1982

State and Territory paying foster allowance	Placement organisation									Per cent
	Welfare department			Non-government organisation			Total			
	Children under guardianship of State and Territory welfare department	Other children	Total	Children under guardianship of State and Territory welfare department	Other children	Total	Children under guardianship of State and Territory welfare department	Other children	Total	
N.S.W.	2,069	684	2,753	—	—	—	2,069	684	2,753	25.2
Vic	418	61	479	149	1,971	2,120	567	2,032	2,599	23.8
Qld	(b)1,537	56	1,593	—	412	412	1,537	468	2,005	18.3
S.A.	618	77	695	—	1,131	1,131	618	1,208	1,826	16.7
W.A.	824	53	877	—	505	505	824	558	1,382	12.6
Tas.	240	12	252	—	—	—	240	12	252	2.3
N.T.	59	3	62	—	—	—	59	3	62	0.6
A.C.T.	37	6	43	—	8	8	37	14	51	0.5
Australia—										
Total	5,802	952	6,754	149	4,027	4,176	5,951	4,979	10,930	100.0
Per cent	53.1	8.7	61.8	1.4	36.8	38.2	54.4	45.6	100.0	

(a) Includes those children for whom foster allowance is paid by State or Territory welfare department which in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory is the only organisation paying a foster allowance. In other States, information on whether other government authorities and non-government organisations are paying foster allowance is not available. (b) Includes 51 children for whom placement details are not known.

TABLE 12. FOSTER HOMES IN USE: NUMBER OF CHILDREN FOSTERED(a) BY STATE AND TERRITORY JUNE 1982

State and Territory	Size of foster home: Number of fostered children in residence						Total foster homes in use
	1	2	3	4	5	6 and over	
New South Wales	1,251	337	72	31	10	7	1,708
Victoria	1,571	329	83	21	3	3	2,010
Queensland	815	282	100	47	12	11	1,267
South Australia	992	244	55	27	11	3	1,332
Western Australia	834	211	53	23	9	4	1,134
Tasmania	155	36	5	1	—	1	198
Northern Territory	33	5	2	1	—	1	42
Australian Capital Territory	32	6	1	1	—	—	40
Australia	5,683	1,450	371	152	45	30	7,731

(a) Includes those children for whom foster allowance is paid by State or Territory welfare department which in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory is the only organisation paying a foster allowance. In other States, information on whether other government authorities and non-government organisations are paying foster allowance is not available.

TECHNICAL NOTE 1.

Standards for statistics of persons under guardianship and children in substitute care

The definitions below indicate the principal criteria for the main classifications used in the tables. The definitions have been extracted from the *WELSTAT Standards for Statistics of Persons Under Guardianship of State/Territory Welfare Departments and Children in Substitute Care*. Copies of the full set of standards may be obtained from the WELSTAT Secretariat, Department of Social Security, P.O. Box 1, Woden, A.C.T. 2606.

Person under guardianship of State/Territory welfare department (excluding adoption and immigration cases): A person whose legal guardian is the Minister, Director or other official of a State or Territory welfare department, where the guardianship is conferred under legislation other than legislation controlling the adoption of children or the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946*. Generally, such persons are placed under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department under legislation dealing with child welfare or juvenile offenders. Although most of these persons are children (i.e. persons under 18), some may be aged 18 or over e.g. some intellectually retarded persons remain under guardianship in adulthood.

Other child: A child other than a child under guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department (excluding adoption and immigration cases) as defined above.

Note that children surrendered for adoption and unaccompanied child immigrants are included in this category even though they are under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department, unless they have also been placed under such guardianship under legislation other than adoption legislation or the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946*.

A residential child care establishment is an establishment mainly engaged in providing accommodation and meals, together with at least some personal care, protection, control, corrective treatment or detention, to children who, temporarily or permanently, are unable, not permitted, or unwilling to live with their natural or adoptive parents. The establishment must be provided by a government authority, or non-government organisation for the purpose of providing substitute care to children. Excludes residential establishments mainly engaged in providing education or health services to children.

Establishment for handicapped children: A residential child care establishment mainly for children who are physically handicapped or intellectually retarded. Excludes establishments mainly for socially maladjusted, uncontrollable or recalcitrant children or children with behaviour disorders. Excludes hospitals and nursing homes.

Establishment for other children: A residential child care establishment mainly for children who are not physically handicapped or intellectually retarded. Includes residential child care establishments mainly for *socially maladjusted*, uncontrollable or recalcitrant children or children with behaviour disorders.

Family group home: A residential child care establishment consisting of a single dwelling in which usually not more than 10 children are cared for round-the-clock by the same adult or adults (often a married couple), who live in the home and act as substitute parent(s) to the children. The home must be run like a normal family home; in particular, meals must be prepared in the home and the house parent(s) and children must eat together as a family group.

The dwelling must be provided by a State or Territory welfare department, other government authority or non-government organisation, for the purpose of providing substitute care to children. If the dwelling is provided by the substitute parent(s) (who may own it, be paying it off, renting it, or occupying it rent-free for reasons other than that it is used for substitute care), it should not be regarded as a family group home or any other type of residential child care establishment.

Usually at least one house parent is employed to care for the children by the organisation operating the family group home. Alternatively the house parent(s) may receive the equivalent of a salary in the form of rent-free accommodation or an honorarium. The house parent(s) may be assisted by other staff, and may have regular days off, and the usual types of leave.

Scattered family group home: A family group home whose grounds do not adjoin those of another family group home, or other residential child care establishment, operated by the same enterprise.

Clustered family group home: A family group home whose grounds adjoin those of another family group home, or other residential child care establishment, operated by the same enterprise. Note that, in accordance with the definition of an establishment, a group of adjoining clustered family group homes must not have any form of on-site centralised administration or control. If there is one form of centralised administration or control on the site, the group of dwellings is treated as a single establishment, which may be classified as a campus home.

Campus home: A residential child care establishment consisting of two or more dwellings that do not share cooking or eating facilities. Note that, in accordance with the definition of an establishment, there must be some form of on-site centralised administration or control. The following establishments are excluded:

- (a) establishments mainly providing secure detention to child offenders or children on remand for alleged offences (these are classified as juvenile corrective institutions); and
- (b) establishments mainly for children aged 15 and over who have left school (these are classified as juvenile hostels).

Juvenile hostel: A residential child care establishment mainly for children aged 15 and over who have left school; the establishment must provide some personal care, protection, control, corrective treatment or detention, as well as full board. The following establishments are *excluded* even though they may be called *hostels* by the enterprise operating them:

- establishments mainly providing secure detention for child offenders or children on remand for alleged offences (these are classified as juvenile corrective institutions);
- establishments mainly for children who are aged under 15 and/or are still at school (these may be classified as family group homes, campus homes, or other homes for children);
- establishments mainly for persons aged 18 and over (these may be classified as residential adult care establishments).

Note that it is possible for a hostel to be an establishment used as a *half-way house* for children released from a corrective institution.

Juvenile corrective institution: A residential child care establishment that is mainly for child offenders or children on remand for alleged offences and that has, as one of its major aims, the secure detention of the majority of its residents through active measures designed to prevent them from leaving the grounds of the establishment at all, or for reasons other than school attendance, work, participation in activities supervised by the establishment or authorised home leave. Excludes establishments mainly for detention of persons aged 18 or over (these are classified as prisons), even though such establishments may be called *youth training centres* or similar names more usually applied to establishments for the detention of children.

Other home for children: A residential child care establishment that is mainly for children aged under 15 and/or still at school, and that consists of either:

- a single dwelling that is not a family group home, or
- two or more dwellings that share cooking or eating facilities.

The following establishments are *excluded*:

- establishments mainly providing secure detention for child offenders, children on remand for alleged offences, uncontrolled or recalcitrant children (these are classified as juvenile corrective institutions); and
- establishments mainly for children aged 15 and over who have left school (these are classified as juvenile hostels).

Foster care: A child is in foster care if he is living apart from his natural or adoptive parents in a private household, where he is cared for by one or more adults who act as substitute parents to the child and are paid a regular allowance for the child's support by a government authority or non-government organisation. The regular allowance, which is called *foster allowance* in these standards, must be paid only for children living apart from their natural or adoptive parents. Thus Commonwealth family allowance and handicapped child's allowance, and allowances for children included in Commonwealth and State pensions and benefits paid to adults, do not satisfy the definition; however Commonwealth (double) orphan's pension does. Note that the allowance need not be called *foster allowance* by the organisation that pays it.

The dwelling in which the household lives must be provided by the persons caring for the child (they may own it, or be paying it off, renting it, or occupying it rent-free for reasons other than that they are providing substitute care to children). If the dwelling is provided by a government authority, or non-government organisation, for the purpose of providing substitute care to children, the home should be classified as a residential child care establishment. This is so even if the house parents in such an establishment are paid a regular allowance for each child living in the establishment.

Residential adult care establishment: An establishment mainly engaged in providing a home and some care or support (other than medical or nursing care) to adults (persons aged 18 or over) with special needs, such as aged or handicapped adults, adults released from prison, or women in distress.

Living with parent or other relative: A person under guardianship is living with a parent or other relative if he is living with one or both of his natural or adoptive parents, or with any adult relative who does not receive foster allowance for him. A relative is a grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle, of the whole or half blood or by marriage or adoption. Foster allowance is defined above.

Other adult care: A person under guardianship is in other adult care if:

- he is not in foster care or living in a residential child care, health, education, adult penal or adult care establishment; and
- he is not living with a parent or other relative; but
- he is living with an adult who has accepted responsibility for caring for, or supervising, him.

This category *includes* persons under guardianship who are:

- living with adult(s) who used to receive foster allowance for them;
- placed in the custody of their employer or landlord;
- placed with prospective adoptive parents who do not receive foster allowance for them (foster allowance is defined previously in these standards);

(d) placed with the authorities of an Aboriginal reserve or mission; or

(e) living in a welfare establishment that mainly provides non-residential services.

Living independently: A person under guardianship is living independently if he is not living with either of his natural or adoptive parents or with any other adult relative, or with any non-relative adult who has accepted responsibility for caring for, or supervising, the person. Persons under guardianship who are living independently may be staying in a boarding house, private hotel, or hostel for adults; boarding in private households (other than their former foster home); renting a house or flat by themselves or with friends; camping out; etc. The State/Territory welfare department may be subsidising their board payments by means of regular payments to the adults with whom they are living.

Hospital or nursing home: An establishment mainly engaged in providing:

(a) hospital (including psychiatric or mental hospital) facilities such as diagnostic medical or surgical services as well as continuous in-patient nursing care; or

(b) nursing or convalescent home facilities (including the provision of nursing or medical care as a basic part of the service).

This category corresponds to Group 814 of the revised Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC). Establishments that mainly accommodate babies and young children who are not sick or handicapped are excluded, even though trained nurses may be employed.

Boarding school: An establishment mainly engaged in providing pre-school, primary, or secondary education, or special education and training for handicapped children, where the children attending the establishments live in. Boarding schools would be classified to Group 823 of the revised ASIC.

Prison: A penal establishment mainly providing detention for adults (i.e. persons aged 18 and over). Includes prison farms, adult remand centres, and youth training centres mainly for persons aged 18 to 21. Excludes establishments mainly for child offenders or children on remand (these are classified as residential child care establishments). Prisons would be classified to Class 8493 of the revised ASIC (which, however, also includes penal establishments for children).

Unauthorised absence: A person under guardianship is on an unauthorised absence if he has been absent from another placement for one night or more without the permission of the appropriate authorities. Excludes absences for which no specific permission is required. Once a person under guardianship returns to an authorised placement, he is no longer considered to be on an unauthorised absence. For example, an absconder from foster care who has been picked up by the police and placed in a juvenile corrective institution should not be classified as on an unauthorised absence but as resident in the juvenile corrective institution.

Other placement: Any placement other than those defined above. Includes persons under guardianship whose placement is unknown. If any persons under guardianship are classified to this category, their placements should be specified in a footnote.

Reason for guardianship

Offence: This category covers persons who are placed under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department because they have been found by a court, juvenile panel or other similar authority, to have committed an offence against the law. Excludes cases where the offence was not dealt with as such by the court, panel or similar authority, but was used as evidence that the person should be placed under guardianship for another legal reason, such as *likely to lapse into a life of vice or crime*. Also excludes persons placed under guardianship because they have not paid a fine; have breached a probation, bond, supervision or similar order; or have been found to be neglected, uncontrollable or uncontrolled, likely to lapse into a life of vice or crime, exposed to moral danger, etc. Although the offence will usually be one that would be an offence if committed by an adult, some offences can only be committed by children (e.g. truancy).

Non-payment of fine: This category covers persons who are placed under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department because they have not paid a fine imposed on them.

Breach of probation or similar order: This category covers persons who are placed under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department because they have breached a probation, bond, supervision or similar order. Excludes cases where the breach was caused by a further offence and guardianship was imposed for this further offence; these should be classified to *offence*.

Welfare at risk: This category covers persons who are placed under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department because their physical, mental, emotional or moral welfare is at risk. It includes all children admitted or committed to guardianship for the following reasons:

- (a) because of the death, sickness or desertion of one or both of their parents;
- (b) because they have been found wandering, abandoned, with no fixed abode or with no means of support;
- (c) because of unfit, improper or incompetent guardianship, neglect or abuse;
- (d) because they have been found to be uncontrolled or uncontrollable, likely to lapse into a life of vice or crime, exposed to moral danger, etc.;
- (e) because of truancy (unless the child was charged with this as an offence);
- (f) because of physical or intellectual handicap;
- (g) at the request of a parent or other person who has been looking after them, including a person in charge of a residential child care establishment;
- (h) at their own request; or
- (i) because they have not been adopted.

Note that the category does not cover persons under the guardianship of a State or Territory welfare department under legislation controlling the adoption of children or under the *Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1946*.

TECHNICAL NOTE 2

Summary of State/Territory legislative and administrative practices

Guardianship in all States and Territories is based on legislation which differs from State to State. In administering their statutory provisions, State welfare departments adopt different policies which directly and indirectly are reflected in statistics relating to persons under guardianship and children in substitute care. Some knowledge of the legislation and administrative practices in each State will assist the reader in understanding the statistics. Each State and Territory welfare department has provided a brief description of legislation and practice in its State. Further information can be obtained from the departments listed in the preface.

New South Wales—Department of Youth and Community Services

The N.S.W. Department of Youth and Community Services is the authority charged with the administration of the Child Welfare Act, 1939 (as amended). Included in the scope of this Act are the areas of guardianship and substitute care.

Guardianship of a child in N.S.W. may be transferred from his parent or guardian to the Minister for Youth and Community Services for several reasons. The Minister may admit a child to his guardianship as a result of an application from a parent or guardian. A child may be committed to the care of the Minister by a Children's Court on welfare grounds. A person, who may be a child or a person aged 18 years and over may be committed to a Training School by a children's Court for an offence. Under such a committal order, the person comes automatically under guardianship of the Minister. Under the provisions of the Act relating to care of intellectually handicapped people, a person may also be admitted to the guardianship of the Minister by a parent or guardian or by a court. Under the same provision, the guardianship of a child can be extended beyond the 18th birthday.

Most of the children under guardianship are in foster homes or in the Department's residential child care establishments with a few in non-government welfare organisation homes. Others live independently, with parents, or other relatives.

The Department arranges for the placement of all children under guardianship and pays a subsidy for those in foster care. On occasions, the Department will arrange foster care for children not under guardianship and may pay subsidies on their behalf. Non-government organisations also arrange fostering.

There are no residential child care establishments operated by other Government authorities but there are a large number of non-government residential child care establishments. Most of these are licensed by the Department and some receive maintenance from the Department for most children under their care. However, a large majority of children in these establishments are not under guardianship.

Victoria—Department of Community Welfare Services

The Department of Community Welfare Services is responsible for persons under guardianship and children in substitute care in Victoria and its role with respect to these programs is determined by the Community Welfare

Services Act 1978. A child may be placed under the guardianship of the Director-General by the Children's Court as a result of an application for care and protection, because the child is uncontrolled or because the child has been found guilty of an offence. The Director-General may also admit a child to guardianship on application directly to him by a parent or guardian and he may also accept transfer of guardianship from other State Welfare Departments. Children under guardianship are referred to as wards.

A significant feature of wardship and substitute care in Victoria is the integration of child care establishments administered by the Department with an unusually large non-government sector which receives funding from the Department. Other government departments (e.g. Mental Health Division of the Health Commission) administer units which are generally specialist in nature, such as training centres for handicapped persons.

The Department of Community Welfare Services administers a large number of small occupancy scattered and clustered family group homes (with about four children in each home) and five large occupancy homes (congregate facilities).

The Department is the only paying organisation for foster care in Victoria, although approved non-government agencies handle the majority (over 75 per cent) of placements. Wardship does not generally extend beyond 18 years, although it can be extended to 21 years, particularly for educational purposes. If under 15, a child admitted to care for an offence will generally be admitted to wardship, with a number of placement options. If over 15, an offender may be sentenced to a term in a youth training centre, although persons placed in youth training centres are not necessarily made wards. As an alternative to the youth training centre, a young offender may be placed in a youth welfare service or a juvenile hostel.

Queensland—Department of Children's Services

The Department of Children's Services is a sub-department of the Department of Welfare Services. The Children's Services Act 1965-80 bestows authority and responsibility for services to children and families on the Department's Director. Included in these is alternative care for children, services for the protection of children and family support services. Guardianship of children by the Director of the Department of Children's Services occurs when a child is admitted to Care and Protection by a court order or by declaration of the Director following an application to him by a parent, guardian, relative or a person of good repute, or when a child is committed to Care and Control by a court, either as a result of an application to the Children's Court or after being charged with an offence.

Children are admitted to Care and Protection when their parents are unable or unwilling to provide for them. They are committed to Care and Control when they have been found guilty of an offence or have misbehaved.

In general, a child placed under guardianship as the result of an application remains in care until he attains the age of 18 years whereas a child charged with an offence may be committed to care for a period not exceeding two years. However, there is provision for the Director or Minister to release him from guardianship before 18 years of age or on the expiry of the order. There is, in general, no provision in Queensland legislation to place a person 18 years of age or older under the guardianship of the Director. When a child is first admitted to Care and Protection he may be placed in one of the Department's receiving centres and after a thorough assessment, plans are made for his future placement.

The Department's policy is to keep children in the community. Some older children in care, and particularly those under Care and Control orders usually require an initial period of residential care where stabilisation and substitute nurturing care can be provided. A minority of young offenders are placed in more secure facilities. Non-government welfare organisations provide almost all the residential child care establishments in Queensland. The Department of Children's Services does not administer any institutions other than receiving centres, correctional institutions, and a hostel.

South Australia—Department for Community Welfare

The legislative basis for children being placed under guardianship and in substitute care is the Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act, 1979-80 (since 1979) and the Community Welfare Act, 1972-80. Children are placed under the guardianship of the Minister for Community Welfare with services provided principally by the Department for Community Welfare.

Children can be placed under guardianship by the Children's Court or by decision of the Minister pursuant to the Community Welfare Act. During the period covered by these statistics, children could be committed to guardianship because of neglect or for offences. Under the Community Welfare Act, the Minister is also able to receive applications from parents or guardians for children to be accepted into guardianship as children in care. These provisions are used sparingly. The usual procedure is for the matter to be taken before the Children's Court.

Residential child care establishments are administered both by the Department and by voluntary organisations. A few children under guardianship are cared for in voluntary organisations' homes, but most children in these homes are not under the Department's guardianship. The Department administers a few small homes and hostels. For the care of children under guardianship, South Australia relies heavily on foster care and care by parents and relatives. The Department's staff are responsible for the placement and supervision of children under guardianship in foster homes and in their own homes. Payments are made for children who are under the Ministers' guardianship in foster homes.

A principal concern of the Department's staff is to work with the children's own families with a view to the children being returned home as soon as that is possible.

The Department may make foster payments to friends or relatives and others who are caring for a child, not their own, without the child being under official guardianship.

Up to 1 July 1979, children could not be committed to the guardianship of the Minister beyond 17 years of age but in practice some persons were cared for by the Department until they reached 21 years of age.

Since 1 July 1979 however, children cannot be committed to the guardianship of the Minister beyond the time when they reach 18 years of age.

Western Australia—Department for Community Welfare

The legislative basis for the Department's responsibilities to children under guardianship and in substitute care is the *Child Welfare Act*, 1947 (as amended). Under this Act, guardianship of children may be transferred from parents or guardians to the Director of the Department for Community Welfare. Services are provided mainly by the Department.

Legislation in Western Australia differs from other States as it contains, in addition to guardianship, a status called *Children Placed Under Control*. In Table 8 some of these children are classified as *other children*. These children are not placed under the guardianship of the Director of the Department for Community Welfare but in other respects they are treated similarly to those under guardianship. Guardianship is primarily used by the Children's Court for children in need of care and protection, while children who commit criminal offences are generally placed *under control* of the Department.

The Department for Community Welfare is the only governmental organisation providing residential child care aimed specifically at children placed under guardianship. There are, however, children under guardianship who happen to be residing in facilities run by other Departments. For example, a child with Downes Syndrome, who is under guardianship, may be in a hostel run by the Division for the Intellectually Handicapped of the Department of Mental Health Services; or a child may be in a residential child care establishment for purposes of attending school, e.g. in an educational hostel.

Non-government residential child care in Western Australia is primarily run by church-based organisations. In country areas, these are often missions whose residents would be Aboriginal children who may be placed there not only for care and protection but also to enable them to attend school. As a result, the proportion of children in residential care may be higher than in other States. Children who receive subsidy payments from the Department but are not under its care, and children who are in residential establishments but are not subsidised by the Department (e.g. to enable them to attend school) may also be found in the *other children* category.

The Department arranges foster care for children under guardianship or under control and pays subsidies to foster parents. On occasions the Department, or a non-government welfare organisation, may place a child, not under guardianship, in a foster home. The Department may pay a foster subsidy in these cases.

Children may be placed under guardianship until they reach 18 years of age or for a shorter period. Guardianship may be extended beyond the 18th birthday by the Minister in special circumstances.

Tasmania—Department for Community Welfare

The legislative basis for placing children under guardianship and in substitute care is provided in the Child Welfare Act 1960 and the Residential Domestic Assistance Act 1947. Children placed under the guardianship of the Director for Community Welfare are referred to as Wards of the State.

Children may be placed under guardianship by the Director on application of a parent or guardian, or by the Children's Court on welfare grounds or for an offence.

If a child is declared a State Ward because of an offence he may also be committed to a Departmental institution. The choice of the institution lies with the Director.

Residential child care establishments are administered by the Department for Community Welfare and non-government organisations. Other government departments are not involved. Foster care arrangements for Wards and non-Wards are made by the Department and it pays a subsidy to foster parents.

A child may be placed in substitute care by the Department if he is a Ward or in a temporary admission situation, e.g. because his parents cannot be located. In addition, the Department may arrange for care of a child on warrant pending a Children's Court hearing, or a child charged with an offence may be placed on 'remand for observation' by the Court. A child may also be placed in substitute care if a Children's Court places a child brought before it on a welfare matter on an interim order i.e. in the care of the Director for 3 months. Under the provisions of the Domestic Assistance Act 1947, the Director of the Department may also provide accommodation for children from a home where there is sickness.

State guardianship can be extended after the Ward reaches the age of 18 years by application to the Minister.

Northern Territory—Department of Community Development

The Community Welfare Division of the Department of Community Development is responsible for the provision of services to children placed under guardianship of the Director of Child Welfare and to other children in need of care. For the period covered by the statistics in this publication, the Child Welfare Ordinance 1973 was in force, however, the Northern Territory of Australia, Child Welfare Act, 1980, provides the legislative basis for recent practice.

Guardianship of a child can be transferred from his parent or guardian to the Director only by the Children's Court, i.e. the child is committed to the care of the Director and is a State Child.

The child can be committed both upon welfare grounds, i.e. the child is declared to be destitute, neglected, incorrigible or uncontrollable, and as a result of being found guilty of committing an offence.

The child can be committed to care up to the age of 17 years or during such period as the court decides.

The Department administers residential child care establishments, and also uses voluntary organisation homes for short to medium term care for children under guardianship and other children needing substitute care. However, the Departmental policy is to minimise the length of stay in residential care and to actively promote alternatives of either return to parents with a support service or foster care. The Department arranges all foster placements of children under guardianship and pays foster subsidies.

The Department also arranges placement and fostering and pays subsidies for children not under guardianship, for example, children subject to a temporary care deed from the parent.

Australian Capital Territory—Department of Territories and Local Government

The Welfare Branch of the Department of Territories and Local Government is the body charged with the administration of the Child Welfare Ordinance 1957 (as amended). Under this Ordinance, guardianship of a child may be transferred from a parent or guardian to the Minister for Territories and Local Government.

A child is admitted to guardianship if a Court has committed the child, or released the child, to the custody of the Minister, for an offence or on welfare grounds. The Minister may also admit a child to guardianship on the application of a parent or guardian. In the Act, if a person is committed to a training school by a Children's Court for an offence, then the person is admitted to an institution in N.S.W. and consequently comes under the guardianship of the Minister for Youth and Community Services.

Most persons under guardianship in the A.C.T. are in foster care or residential child care establishments conducted by voluntary organisations, while some live independently or with parents or other adults.

Apart from the Children's Shelter, the Department of Territories and Local Government does not administer residential or corrective establishments for children. The Department uses the resources of voluntary organisations and N.S.W. Government institutions.

Children are committed to the Minister's guardianship up to the age of 18 years or for a shorter period. There is no provision to extend the period beyond reaching 18 years of age or to admit people over 18 years of age to guardianship.