

## MEDIA HANDOUT: 30 SEPTEMBER 2019 CHILD AND FAMILY PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

- The data released today is for the 12 months to 30 September 2019. The data can be found here: <https://www.csyw.qld.gov.au/child-family/our-performance>

### KEY IMPROVEMENTS

- The number of investigations commenced by Child Safety in the last year is up by almost 7 per cent (23,759 in total). This is 1,511 more investigations commenced by Child Safety when compared to the same period last year. This included 3,933 notifications with a 24 hour priority, 3 per cent more than this time last year.
- We continue to prioritise our most urgent cases. For investigations with a 24 hour priority – 93 per cent commenced within that timeframe. This is 112 more investigations commenced within that timeframe compared to this time last year.
- As part of the child and family reforms, Child Safety Officers are working more intensively during investigations to work with families and de-escalate risk to children. Although this means investigations can take longer, intensive work with families is resulting in positive outcomes. Despite more children being investigated, fewer children (4,041) were assessed as being in need of protection at the end of investigations compared to 2012-13 (4,460).
- For the seventh consecutive quarter, the proportion of children in care who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander has remained relatively stable (around 42 per cent), a reversal of the pre-reform (2012-13) trend of growing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system.
- When a family is unable to care for their children safely at home, Queenslanders are continuing to step up to become foster and kinship carers. Over the last year 1459 families stepped up to be carers for the first time, a 15 per cent increase compared to last year. In total there were 5,415 carer families as at 30 September 2019, up from 5,258 a year ago.
- We are always looking for more foster carers. Anyone interested in becoming a foster carer should call the Foster Care Recruitment Line on 1300 550 877, visit [www.fcq.com.au](http://www.fcq.com.au) or [www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/](http://www.qld.gov.au/community/caring-child/foster-kinship-care/) or contact one of Queensland's many foster care support agencies direct.
- Caseloads for child safety officers continue to be under 18 cases per full-time equivalent child safety officer for the eighth quarter in a row.

### COMPLEXITY

- The child protection system is working with families who are presenting with multiple risks and needs, which in turn is increasing the demand for child protection services.
- ICE continues to impact the child protection system. More than 1 in 3 children (39 per cent or 967 children) who came into the care of the department during the 12 months to September 2019 had a parent with current or previous methamphetamine use recorded, up from 34 per cent a year ago.
- In the majority of cases (65 per cent or 630 children), the type of methamphetamine was ICE.

- There has been an increase in the prevalence of risk factors within households where a child experienced significant harm and/or was at risk of significant harm:
  - **66 per cent** of parents had a current or past drug/alcohol problem  
(60 per cent in 2013-14)
  - **54 per cent** had a current or previously diagnosed mental illness  
(42 per cent in 2013-14)
  - **53 per cent** of parents had a criminal history  
(45 per cent in 2013-14)
  - **49 per cent** had experienced domestic and family violence within the last year  
(43 per cent in 2013-14)
  - **42 per cent** of parents had been abused as a child  
(42 per cent in 2013-14)
- Three out of every four households (75 per cent) had more than one of these risk factors, compared to 69 per cent in 2013-14.

### SIGNIFICANT INITIATIVES

- The Government continues to review, learn and improve, with significant initiatives underway:
  - reviewing the current intake processes for reporting concerns;
  - working with the Queensland Family and Child Commission to strengthen investigation, assessment and family intervention processes;
  - continuing to improve court litigation processes;
  - developing a new integrated information management and sharing platform.

### BUDGET OUTCOMES

- In total, the Queensland Government will invest \$1.3 billion in 2019-20 to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect and reform the family support and child protection system, with a focus on early intervention.
- With that funding comes an additional 116 frontline child safety staff who will hit the ground in the next three years. This is on top of more than 450 new staff funded since 2015, including 93 this year.
- Other budget highlights include:
  - \$196.5 million over three years for Intensive Family Support services to continue early intervention for families and parents;
  - \$45.5 million over three years for Family and Child Connect services that help connect families to the right help at the right time;
  - \$24.7 million over three years to support foster and kinship carer through non-government organisations;
  - \$14.6 million over four years to implement new and enhanced initiatives under *Our Way* which aims to eliminate the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by 2037;
  - \$2.5 million over three years to continue and enhance the Next Step After Care program, supporting young people during and after transition to adulthood;
  - \$9.6 million in 2019-20 to continue services provided by the Office of the Child and Family Official Solicitor to provide early, independent legal advice to child safety workers about child protection matters.

INFOGRAPHICS



