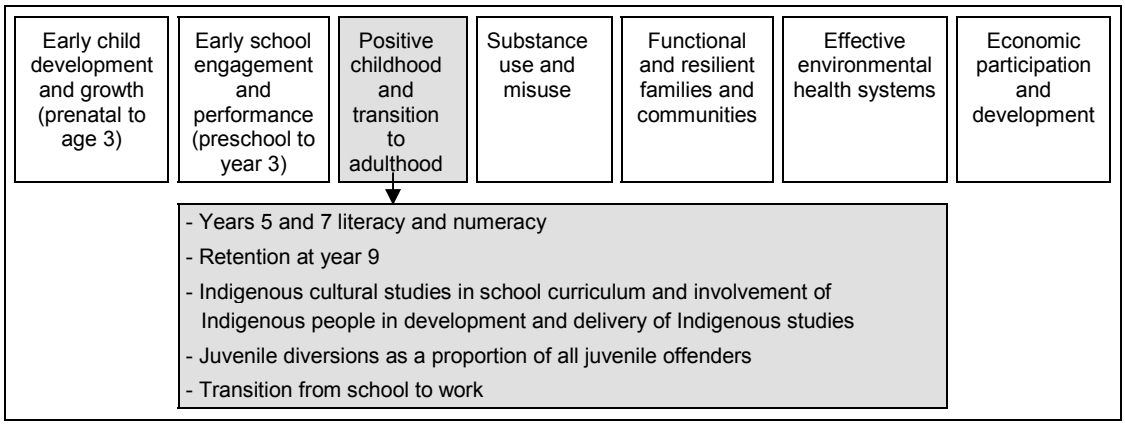
7 Positive childhood and transition to adulthood

Strategic areas for action



This strategic area for action reflects the importance of the transition from childhood to adulthood. At this stage of the life cycle, a good foundation in early childhood can be built upon, or interventions can assist those who had a difficult early childhood to make the transition to a more positive adulthood.

Several important transitions occur between early childhood and adulthood:

- from primary school to secondary school
- from compulsory schooling to post-compulsory schooling
- from school to post-secondary study
- from school or post-secondary study to work.

The indicators for this strategic area for action reflect (i) the continuing importance of educational outcomes through childhood to early adulthood, and (ii) alternatives to detention for juvenile offenders that can reduce reoffending and the likelihood of progressing to the adult corrections system.

There are links between outcomes in positive childhood and transition to adulthood and several of the headline indicators:

- disability and chronic disease

- parental education
- labour force participation and unemployment
- income
- suicide and self-harm
- substantiated child abuse and neglect
- family and community violence
- imprisonment and juvenile detention rates.

Outcomes in this area are also related to outcomes in other strategic areas for action:

- early child development and growth (hearing impediments) — chapter 6
- early school engagement and performance (preschool and early learning, school attendance and year 3 literacy and numeracy) — chapter 5
- substance use and misuse — chapter 8
- functional and resilient families and communities (children on care and protection orders, access to primary health care, mental health, participation in organised sport, arts or community group activities, engagement with service delivery) — chapter 9
- effective environmental health systems (diseases associated with poor environmental health, access to clean water and functional sewerage, overcrowding in housing) — chapter 10
- economic participation and development (employment, governance capacity and governance arrangements) — chapter 11

Literacy and numeracy at years 5 and 7 is an important indicator of progression in learning and provides a foundation for successful secondary education. Good outcomes at these levels are critical to achieving headline outcomes, such as year 10 and 12 retention and attainment, post-secondary education and employment. Educational attainment is also linked to health outcomes (ABS and AIHW 2005). Achievements against years 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy benchmarks are contained in sections 7.1.

The period during which children move from primary to secondary school can be difficult for many young people. It can be particularly traumatic for young Indigenous people in regional or remote areas who have to leave their communities to undertake secondary studies. ‘Poor preparation, not knowing what to expect, homesickness, distance from family and community support, lack of local support, poor literacy levels and shame at not succeeding lead many young Indigenous people to drop out’ (MCEETYA 2001).

In most states and territories, compulsory education ends in year 9 or 10 for most students. Many of the Indigenous students who choose to leave at this point have poor literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, they have limited options for the future, which often leads to boredom, despair, substance abuse and criminal activity. The retention of Indigenous students at this stage in their education is one of the key outcomes for breaking the cycle of disadvantage. Data on the retention of Indigenous students at year 9 are reported in section 7.2.

The National Statement of Principles and Standards for More Culturally Inclusive Schooling in the 21st Century (MCEETYA 2000) states that schooling should acknowledge the capacity of all young Indigenous people to learn, by providing a curriculum that avoids discrimination; allows Indigenous students the same opportunities as other students while allowing them to be strong in their own cultures; and helps all students to understand and value Indigenous culture and knowledge.

There is a significant body of research that supports the importance of cultural studies in the school curriculum to motivate Indigenous students, increase their attendance and improve their self-identity. Curriculum is one of several factors influencing Indigenous school performance, none of which is sufficient on its own (see Bourke, Rigby and Burden 2000; Harslett et al. 1998; and Purdie et al. 2000).

During consultations on the Report, Indigenous people suggested three outcomes from including Indigenous content in school curriculum:

- The incorporation of Indigenous studies and Indigenous content in the curriculum makes schooling more relevant to Indigenous students and leads to better attendance and better educational outcomes for them.
- An improved understanding of Indigenous culture improves the spiritual health of Indigenous students, which leads to better outcomes in areas such as health, family and community cohesion, education and employment.
- Teaching Indigenous culture, history and other Indigenous knowledge to non-Indigenous students will help address the racism of some non-Indigenous people that Indigenous people believe is founded on fear and ignorance. It has the additional benefit of generally creating a broader knowledge and understanding of Australian history among non-Indigenous Australians.

Case studies about Indigenous cultural studies and information about Indigenous employment in schools are included in section 7.3.

Indigenous young people have a high rate of contact with the juvenile justice system (see section 3.12). Once an Indigenous youth has entered the criminal justice system, the chances of him or her being channelled into more constructive activities

is markedly reduced. Juvenile diversion programs can contribute to a reduction in antisocial behaviour and offending.

Diverting juveniles from detention is an important factor in reducing re-offending. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991) found that:

> It is in everyone's interest to ensure that juvenile offenders remain outside of the justice system; not simply by being diverted from it after offences have been committed, but by avoiding the circumstances which lead to the commission of the offences in the first place (chapter 30).

Data on diversions have been provided by some jurisdictions (see section 7.4).

The transition from school to work is a critical period in which young Indigenous people are most at risk of limiting their future options in life. Those who are not actively engaged in education and training, or employed, are at risk of long term disadvantage. Section 7.5 examines the transition of unemployed 15 to 24 years olds 'at risk' (those neither employed nor studying), and employment outcomes for those with different levels of education.

Box 7.1 **'Things that work' — positive childhood and transition to adulthood**

Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation – Youth Justice Program (Tasmania)

The Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation Youth Justice Program is based in Smithton in north west Tasmania and focuses on supporting children aged 10 to 18 years, who are at risk of adverse contact with the criminal justice system. A range of activities including bush survival camps, mentoring at school, drug diversion and mediation between youth and their parents, support a positive transition from childhood to adulthood.

The program receives funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and has partnerships with local police, alcohol and drug services, the Smithton High School, the local council, a suicide prevention program, Anglicare, the Circular Head Rural Health Service and Centrelink.

At the time of writing, there were 17 individual participants and 8 family mediations.

Source: Attorney-General's Department (unpublished).

Attachment tables

Attachment tables for this chapter are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 7A.2.3). A list of attachment tables is in section 7.7. These tables can be found on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users can also contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables.

7.1 Years 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy

Box 7.1.1 **Key messages**

- Between 1999 and 2005, year 5 Indigenous students' performance against the national reading, writing and numeracy benchmarks fluctuated, with no statistically significant trend (figures 7.1.1, 7.1.3 and 7.1.5).
- Between 2001 and 2005, year 7 Indigenous students' performance against the national reading, writing and numeracy benchmarks also fluctuated, with no statistically significant trend (figures 7.1.7, 7.1.9 and 7.1.11).
- In 2005, the proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who did not achieve the national benchmark was substantially higher than the proportion of all students for:
  - reading (37.2 per cent compared to 12.5 per cent) (figure 7.1.2)
  - writing (25.7 per cent compared to 6.7 per cent) (figure 7.1.4)
  - numeracy (33.5 per cent compared to 9.2 per cent) (figure 7.1.6).
- In 2005, the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who did not achieve the national benchmark was substantially higher than the proportion of all students for:
  - reading (36.2 per cent compared to 10.2 per cent) (figure 7.1.8)
  - writing (27.7 per cent compared to 7.8 per cent) (figure 7.1.10)
  - numeracy (51.2 per cent compared to 18.2 per cent) (figure 7.1.12).
- As Indigenous students progress through school the proportion who achieve the national minimum benchmarks decreases (figures 7.1.13 and 7.1.15).

Achieving literacy and numeracy benchmarks for years 5 and 7 has a significant effect on participation in year 12 and entry into higher education (ACER 2004). Evidence suggests that school leavers who lack fundamental skills in literacy and numeracy face poor employment prospects (ACER 2004; OECD 2004).

Recent studies have highlighted the link between health and education (Schwab and Sutherland 2004; Zubrick et al. 2006). Low literacy was identified as one of the biggest hurdles when it comes to improving the health of Indigenous people (Schwab and Sutherland 2004).

Emotional distress was one of the factors associated with the academic performance of Aboriginal students in WA. Aboriginal students at high risk of clinically significant emotional or behavioural difficulties were almost three times more likely to have low academic performance compared with Aboriginal students at low risk (Zubrick et al. 2006). Section 9.4 has more information on mental health and social and emotional wellbeing issues for children.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a survey of the reading, mathematical, scientific literacy and problem solving skills of 15 year olds. PISA is an initiative of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The results of the Australia PISA sample for 2000 and 2003 can be found in tables 6A.3.55–59. Less than half the proportion of 15 year old Indigenous students surveyed reached the OECD average when compared to all students across all four educational domains in both years. (tables 6A.3.55–59).

Information on learning outcomes is also available from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). For background information on the TIMSS initiative, see section 6.3. Some of the findings from the TIMSS 2002-03 for year 8 students include:

- Indigenous students achieved 79 score points lower than non-Indigenous students in mathematics (the average score was 508 for non-Indigenous students and 429 for Indigenous students).
- Indigenous students were 38 score points lower than the TIMSS international mathematics average and non-Indigenous students were 41 score points above the international average.
- There was no change in Indigenous student achievement for both mathematics and science from TIMSS 1994-95 to TIMSS 2002-03.
- Indigenous students who speak English infrequently in the home achieved at a level below Indigenous students who often speak English at home (Thomson, McKelvie and Murnane 2006).

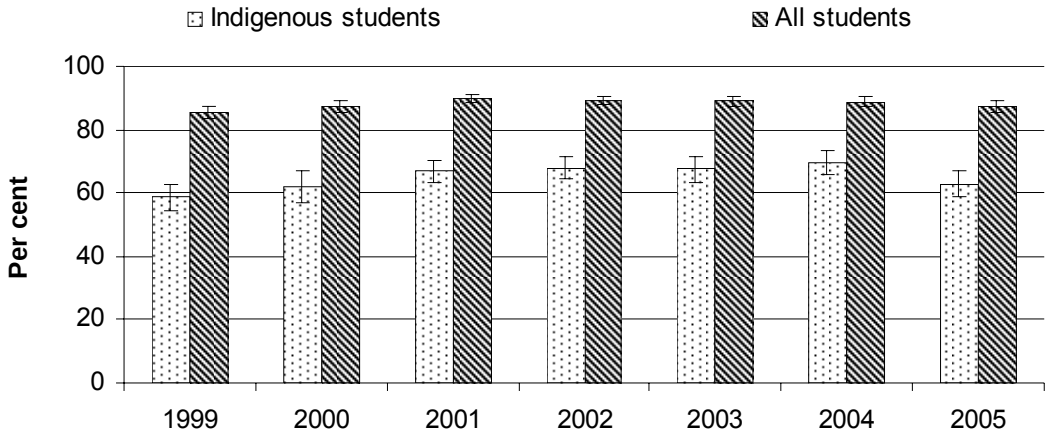
Programs that have been successful in improving literacy outcomes for Indigenous children can be found in chapter 6, box 6.3.2.

This chapter presents nationally comparable learning outcomes data for 2005 for years 5 and 7 reading, writing and numeracy. These data are the proportion of students who achieved the minimum benchmark for reading, writing and numeracy (in contrast to PISA data — the proportion of students who reached the OECD average — which is possibly a higher standard).

Nationally comparable learning outcomes data for years 5 and 7 for 2005 and previous years are reported in the attachment tables. Background information and issues in relation to national benchmarks used in reporting on literacy and numeracy are addressed in section 6.3 of chapter 6.

Year 5 reading

Figure 7.1.1 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the reading benchmark, 1999–2005[a, b]**

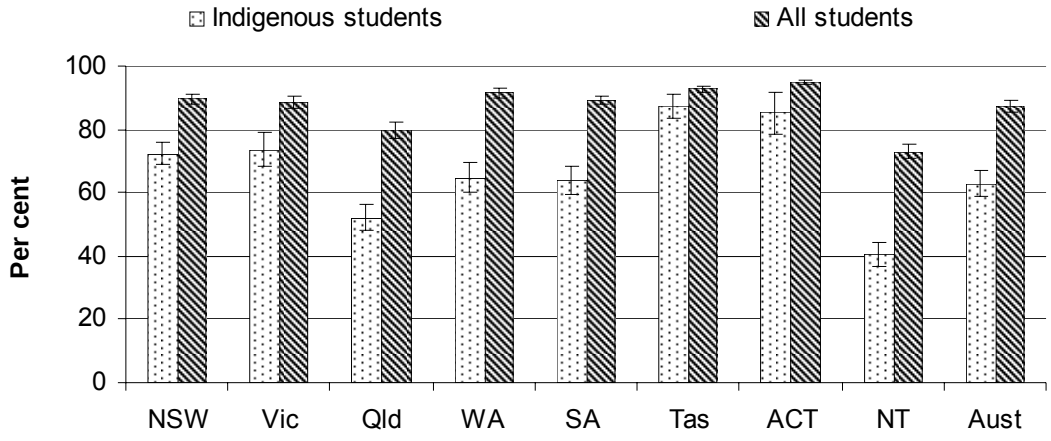


a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.4.

- Figure 7.1.1 shows no statistically significant change over time (from 1999 to 2005) in the proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the reading benchmark. Performance levels for all students have been consistently higher than for Indigenous students over time.
- For all years except 2001 and 2003, the proportion of year 3 Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 reading benchmark was significantly higher than the proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the year 5 reading benchmark (figures 6.3.1 and 7.1.1). For all students, the proportion of year 3 and 5 students who achieved the respective benchmarks were similar over these years (figures 6.3.1 and 7.1.1).

Figure 7.1.2 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the reading benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005**[a, b, c, d]



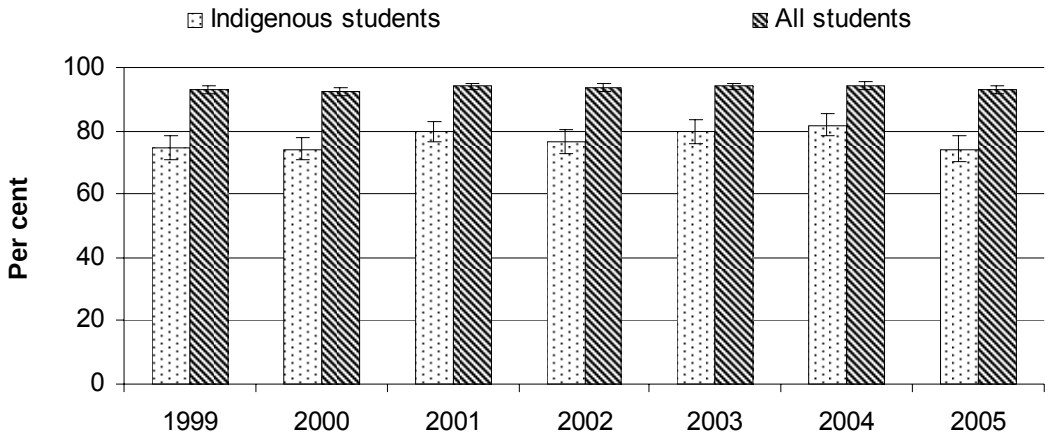
[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.44. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. [c] Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. [d] The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.41.

- The proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the reading benchmark varied significantly across states and territories in 2005 (figure 7.1.2).
- Nationally in 2005, over a third (37.2 per cent) of year 5 Indigenous students did not achieve the reading benchmark, compared with 12.5 per cent of all students (table 6A.3.41). Students who do not achieve the minimum reading benchmark will have difficulty progressing through school.

Year 5 writing

Figure 7.1.3 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the writing benchmark, 1999–2005[a, b]**

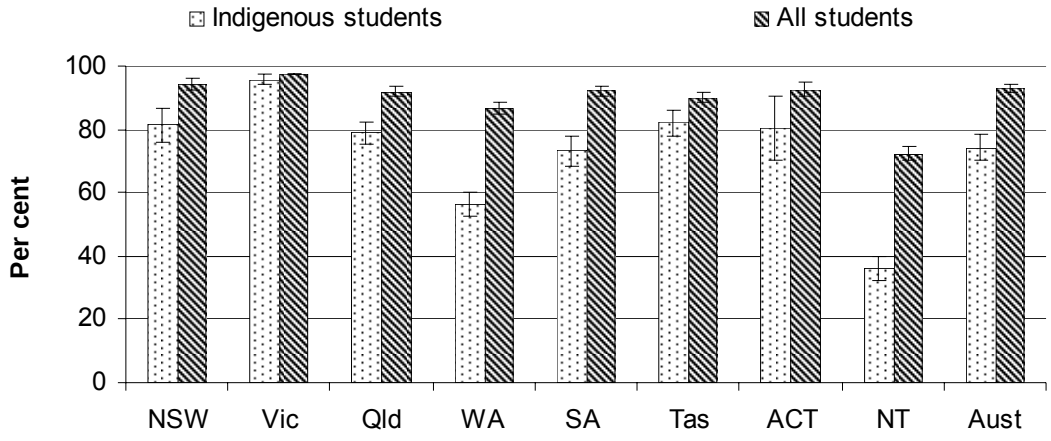


a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.5.

- Figure 7.1.3 shows that from 1999 to 2005, there was no clear trend (and no statistically significant difference) in the proportion year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark. Performance levels for all students have been consistently higher than for Indigenous students over time.

Figure 7.1.4 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the writing benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005[a, b, c, d]**



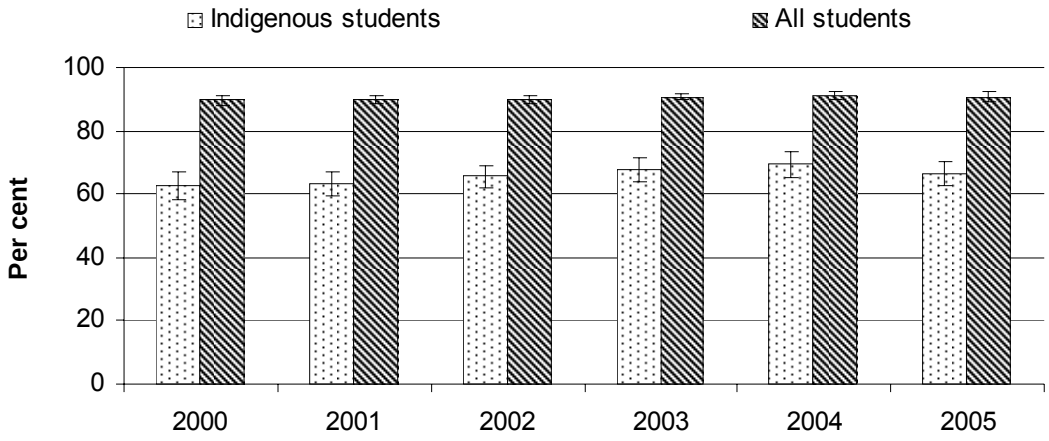
a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.49. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. **d** The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.46.

- In 2005, the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark varied across states and territories (figure 7.1.4).
- Nationally in 2005, 25.7 per cent of Indigenous students did not achieve the writing benchmark compared to 6.7 per cent of all students (table 6A.3.46). Students who do not achieve the writing benchmark standard will have difficulty progressing through school.

Year 5 numeracy

Figure 7.1.5 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, 2000–2005[a, b]**

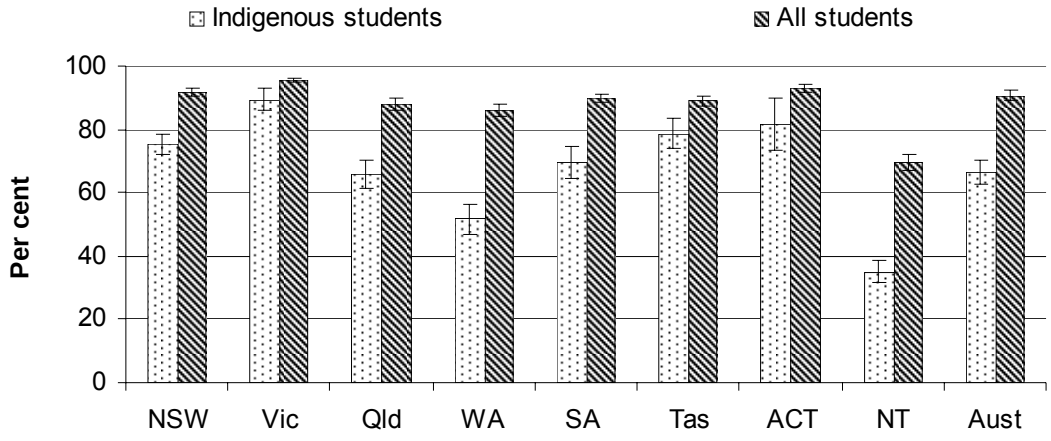


[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.6.

- There was no statistically significant change over time (from 2000 to 2005) in the proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the numeracy benchmark (figure 7.1.5). Performance levels for all students have been consistently higher than for Indigenous students over time.
- For the years 2001 to 2005, the proportion of year 3 Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 numeracy benchmark was significantly higher than the proportion of year 5 Indigenous students who achieved the year 5 numeracy benchmark (figures 6.3.5 and 7.1.5). For all students, the proportion of year 3 and 5 students who achieved the respective benchmarks were similar over these years (figures 6.3.5 and 7.1.5).

Figure 7.1.6 **Proportion of year 5 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005[a, b, c, d]**



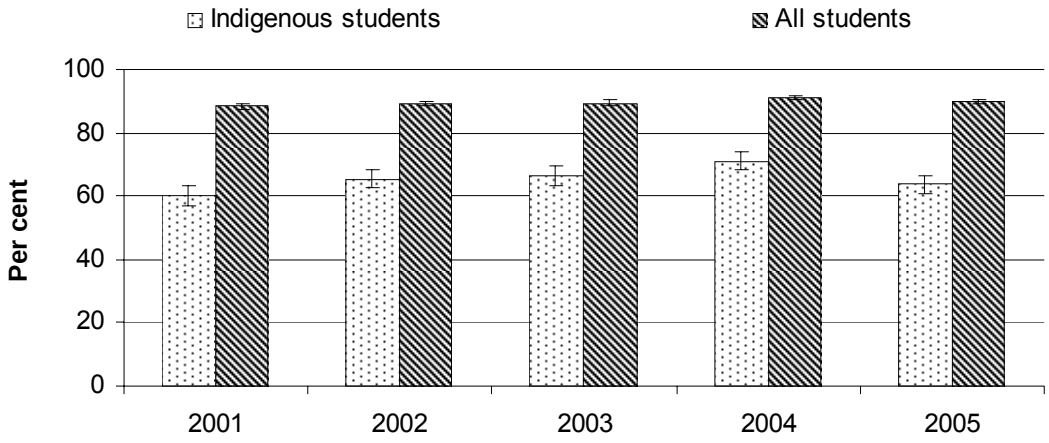
a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.54. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. **c** Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. **d** The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.51.

- In 2005, the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the numeracy benchmark varied significantly across states and territories (figure 7.1.6).
- Nationally in 2005, a third (33.5 per cent) of year 5 Indigenous students did not achieve the numeracy benchmark compared to 9.2 per cent of all students (table 6A.3.51). Students who do not achieve the numeracy benchmark will have difficulty progressing through school.

Year 7 reading

Figure 7.1.7 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the reading benchmark, 2001–2005[a, b]**

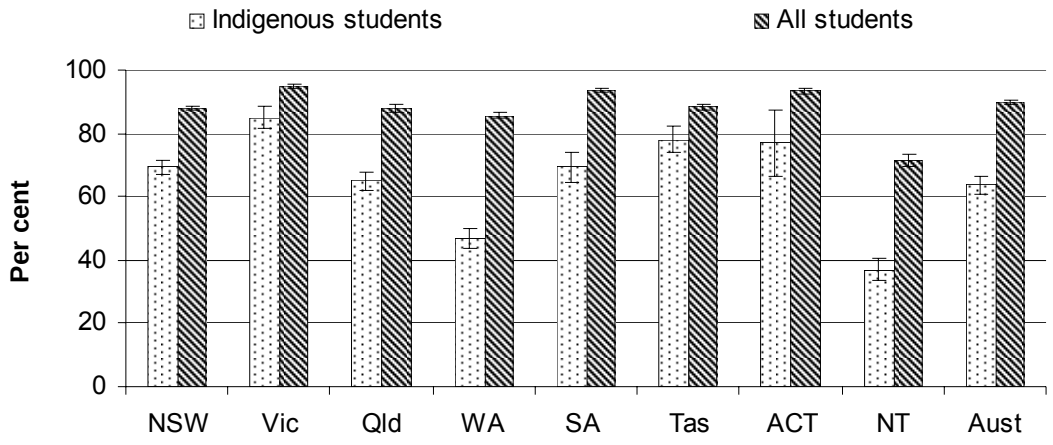


[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.7.

- Figure 7.1.7 shows that from 2001 to 2005, there was no clear trend (and no statistically significant difference) in the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who achieved the reading benchmark. Performance levels for all students have been consistently higher than for Indigenous students over time.
- For all years (2001 to 2005), the proportion of year 3 Indigenous students who achieved the year 3 reading benchmark was significantly higher than the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who achieved the year 7 reading benchmark (figures 6.3.1 and 7.1.7). For all students, the proportion of year 3 and 7 students who achieved the respective benchmarks were similar over these years (figures 6.3.1 and 7.1.7).

Figure 7.1.8 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the reading benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005**[a, b, c, d]



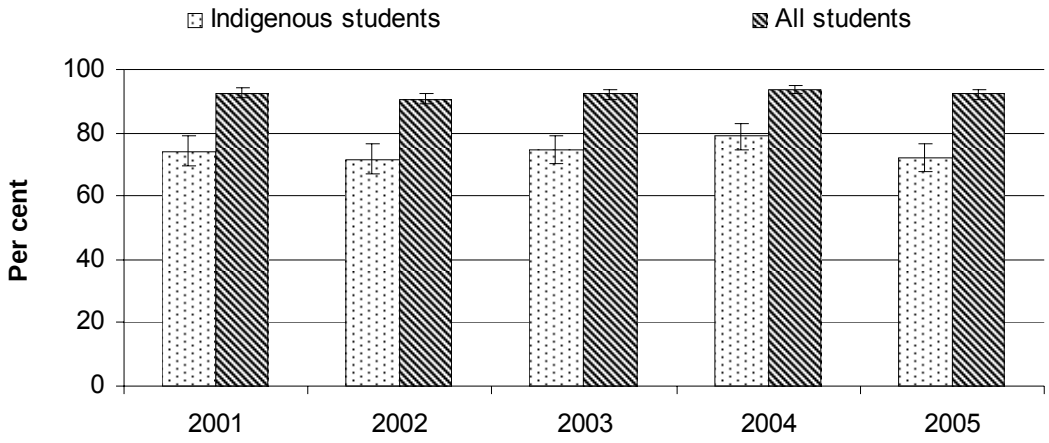
[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.44. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. [c] Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. [d] The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.42.

- In 2005, there was significant variation across states and territories in the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who achieved the reading benchmark (figure 7.1.8).
- In 2005, the national proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who did not achieve the reading benchmark was 36.2 per cent compared to 10.2 per cent of all students (table 6A.3.42). Students who do not achieve the reading benchmark will have difficulty progressing through school.

Year 7 writing

Figure 7.1.9 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the writing benchmark, 2001–2005[a, b]**

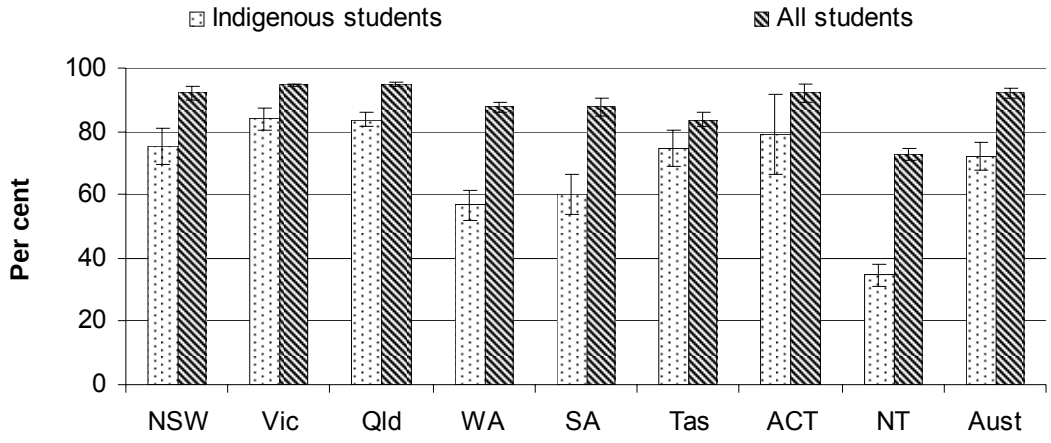


a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.8.

- Figure 7.1.9 shows that there was no statistically significant change over time (from 2001 to 2005) in the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark. Performance levels for all students have been consistently higher than for Indigenous students over time.
- There was no significant difference between the proportion of year 3, 5 and 7 Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark in all years (figures 6.3.3, 7.1.3 and 7.1.9).

Figure 7.1.10 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the writing benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005**[a, b, c, d]



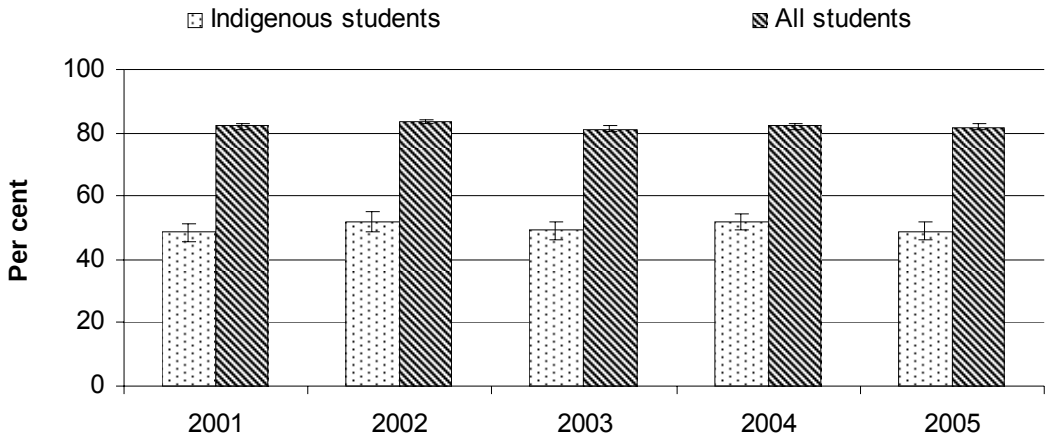
[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.49. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. [c] Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. [d] The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.47.

- The proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the writing benchmark varied significantly across states and territories in 2005 (figure 7.1.10).
- Nationally in 2005, 27.7 per cent of Indigenous students did not achieve the writing benchmark compared to 7.8 per cent of all students. A student that does not achieve the minimum writing benchmark will have difficulty progressing through school.

Year 7 numeracy

Figure 7.1.11 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, 2001–2005[a, b]**

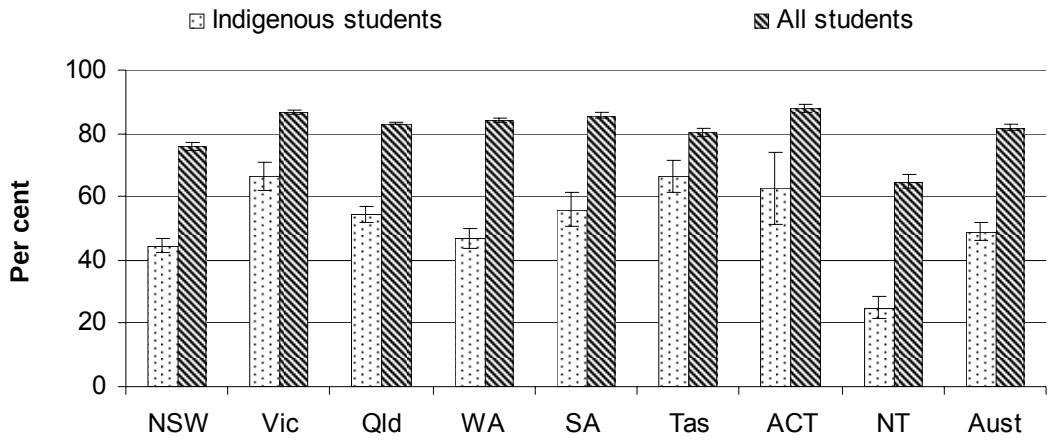


[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.9.

- There was no statistically significant change over time (from 2001 to 2005) in the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students who achieved the numeracy benchmark (figure 7.1.11).
- The proportion of year 3 and 5 Indigenous students who achieved the numeracy benchmark was significantly higher than the proportion of year 7 Indigenous students in all years (2001 to 2005) (figures 6.3.5, 7.1.5 and 7.1.11).

Figure 7.1.12 **Proportion of year 7 students who achieved the numeracy benchmark, by State and Territory, 2005**[a, b, c, d]



[a] The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. [b] Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations. The proportion of absent and withdrawn students varies across jurisdictions, as shown in table 6A.3.54. Readers are urged to be cautious when comparing results. [c] Some movements in the results over time might have occurred because of State/Territory equating processes, and may not reflect actual improvements in student performance. [d] The methods used to identify Indigenous students varied across jurisdictions.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); table 6A.3.52.

- Nationally in 2005, over half (51.2 per cent) of year 7 Indigenous students did not achieve the numeracy benchmark compared to 18.2 per cent of all students (figure 7.1.12). Students who do not achieve the numeracy benchmark will have difficulty progressing through school.

Comparisons of year 3, 5 and 7 learning outcomes

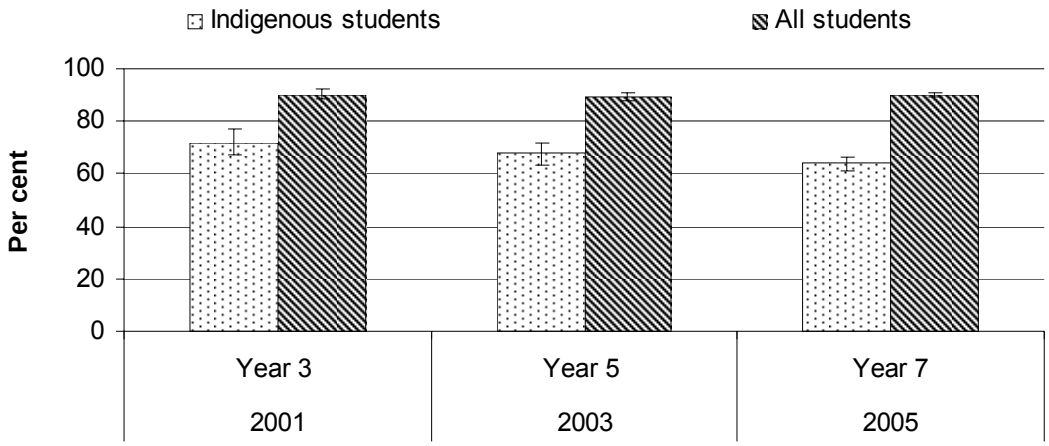
Research suggests that the disparity in academic performance between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students increases as students progress through the education system and that underperforming students are unable to catch up (Ou and Reynolds 2004; Reynolds et al. 2001; Schweinhart 2005; Zubrick et al. 2006).

National benchmarks for use in reporting years 3, 5 and 7 students' reading, writing and numeracy performance were developed in 1997 (reporting of these benchmarks began in 1999). These data are not longitudinal in design or measurement and therefore there is no certainty that the same cohort of year 3 students in 2001 are tested again in year 5 in 2003 or in year 7 in 2005.

However, the normal progression through school would mean that a large proportion of year 3 students in 2001 would progress through to year 5 in 2003 and

then year 7 in 2005, and be tested at those year levels. The data presented in the next section provide some indication of how students are faring as they progress through the early school years.

Figure 7.1.13 **Proportion of year 3 students in 2001, year 5 students in 2003 and year 7 students in 2005 who achieved the reading benchmark[a, b]**

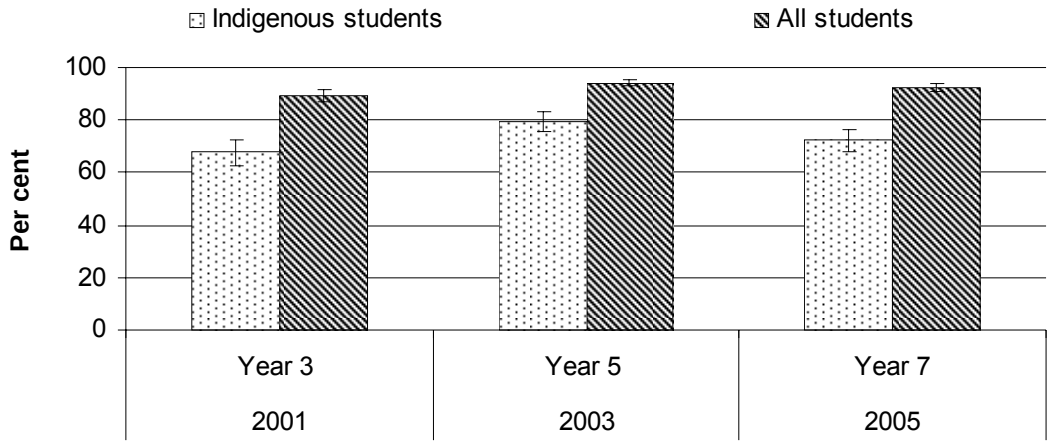


a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); tables 6A.3.1; 6A.3.4; 6A.3.7.

- Figure 7.1.13 shows that as Indigenous students progressed through school from year 3 to year 7, the proportion who achieved the national minimum reading benchmark decreased.
- There was no difference in the proportion of all students who achieved the reading benchmark in year 3 in 2001 and year 7 in 2005 (figure 7.1.13).

Figure 7.1.14 **Proportion of year 3 students in 2001, year 5 students in 2003 and year 7 students in 2005 who achieved the writing benchmark[a, b]**

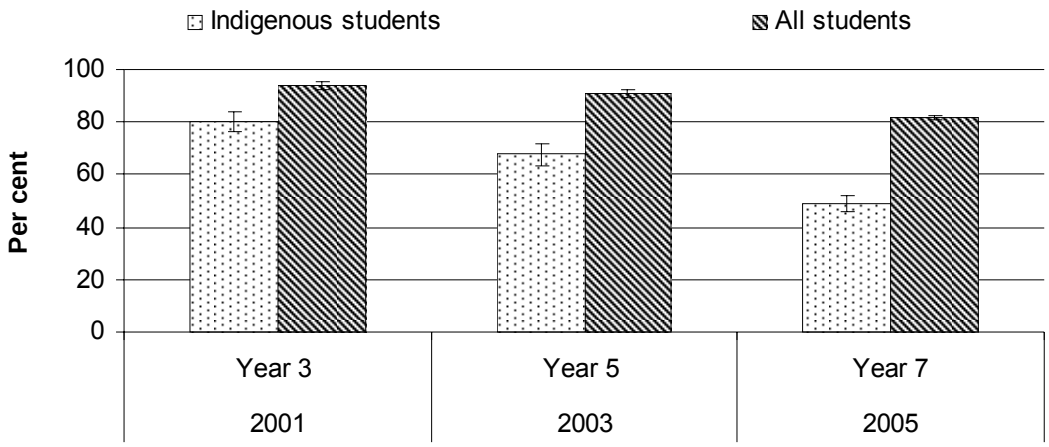


a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); tables 6A.3.2; 6A.3.5; 6A.3.8.

- There was no statistically significant difference in the proportion of Indigenous students who achieved the national minimum writing benchmark at the particular year levels (figure 7.1.14).

Figure 7.1.15 **Proportion of year 3 students in 2001, year 5 students in 2003 and year 7 students in 2005 who achieved the numeracy benchmark[a, b]**



a The achievement percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals, for example, 80 per cent ± 2.7 per cent. **b** Students who were absent or withdrawn from testing are not classified as assessed students and are not included in the benchmark calculations.

Source: MCEETYA (2007); tables 6A.3.3; 6A.3.6; 6A.3.9.

- Figure 7.1.15 shows that as Indigenous students progressed through school from year 3 to year 7, the proportion who achieved the national minimum numeracy benchmark decreased.
- There was also significant decrease in the proportion of all students who achieved the numeracy benchmark between year 5 in 2003 and year 7 in 2005 (figure 7.1.15).

7.2 Retention at year 9

Box 7.2.1 **Key messages**

- In 2006, 7.7 per cent of Indigenous people aged 14 years were not participating in school education compared with 1.4 per cent of non-Indigenous 14 year olds (table 3A.3.2).
- Over the period 2002 to 2006, the Indigenous retention rate to year 9 was relatively stable (figure 3.3.2).
- In 2005, the retention rate for Indigenous students to year 9 was 99.2 per cent. In 2006, the retention rate for the same group of students (now in year 10) had declined to 91.4 per cent (figure 3.3.2 and table 3A.3.1).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many Indigenous children are leaving school in years 9 and 10 with poor literacy and numeracy skills and with limited post-school options. In 2004-05, Indigenous people who had a year 9 or below level of education were less likely to be employed than those who had vocational or higher education qualifications (15.8 per cent and 43.9 per cent, respectively) (table 3A.3.19).

The available retention data do not reflect this situation, because apparent retention rates are based on enrolment numbers, and high rates are to be expected because normal year level progression means students in year 9 are generally of an age at which school education is compulsory. Apparent retention rates do not reflect school attendance or whether the student completed the school year (because data are collected in August). Some information on methods for calculating retention rates and definitional issues are addressed in section 3.3. Supplementary age-specific participation measures have been included to provide a comprehensive picture of Indigenous education.

There is evidence to suggest that the causes of early school leaving include:

- poor literacy and numeracy skills
- a student's lack of interest
- poverty
- the quality of teaching staff (ACER 2002; Purdie and Corrigan 2004).

The Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey conducted in 2001 and 2002 (Zubrick et al. 2006) found that:

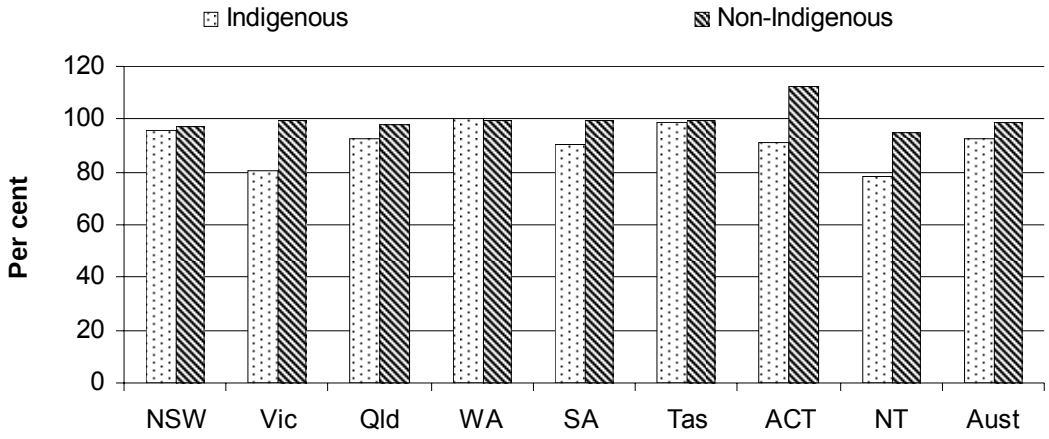
- When the period of compulsory education ends, the proportion of Indigenous children who no longer attend school is substantially higher than that for

non-Indigenous children, reducing their chances of academic and vocational success beyond the school years.

- Of those Indigenous children who left school after the period of compulsory education, one third were neither working nor in any form of education.

Some programs that have been successful in encouraging Indigenous students to stay at school can be found in section 3.3, box 3.3.2.

Figure 7.2.1 **School participation rates of full time students aged 14 years, all schools, 2006[a, b, c]**



a The participation rate is the number of full time school students of a particular age, expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age at June in 2006. **b** The ACT rate exceeds 100 per cent, largely as a result of NSW residents from surrounding areas enrolling in ACT schools. **c** Calculations of rates for the Indigenous population are based on ABS Experimental Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (low series, 2001 base). There are no comparable population data for the non-Indigenous population. Calculations of rates for the non-Indigenous population are based on data derived by subtracting Indigenous population projections from total population estimates and should be used with care.

Source: ABS 2007 (unpublished); table 3A.3.2.

In general, the age of students in year 9 is 14 years old (ABS 2007). Figure 7.2.1 shows school participation rates for 14 year olds in 2006.

- Nationally in 2006, 7.7 per cent of Indigenous people aged 14 years were not participating in school education. For non-Indigenous people, 1.4 per cent of 14 year olds were not participating in school education (table 3A.3.2).
- High participation rates are to be expected because school education was compulsory in all states and territories for people between 6 and 15 years of age in 2006 (extending to 16 years of age in SA and Tasmania). Rates for Indigenous students, however, were lower than those for non-Indigenous students in all states and territories except WA (figure 7.2.1).

Table 7.2.1 **Apparent retention rates of full time secondary students to year 9, all schools, 2006 (per cent)[a, b, c, d, e]**

	NSW	*Vic*	*Qld*	*WA*	*SA*	*Tas*	*ACT*	*NT*	*Aust*
Indigenous									
Male	96.0	100.0	100.4	100.1	90.5	101.8	109.5	89.6	97.6
Female	99.3	105.6	99.9	100.0	90.6	107.1	97.5	94.2	99.2
Total	97.6	102.8	100.2	100.1	90.5	104.3	103.7	91.9	98.4
Non-Indigenous									
Male	99.0	99.6	100.7	101.5	100.1	100.9	98.3	96.5	99.9
Female	99.6	100.6	100.5	101.5	100.4	99.4	99.6	96.2	100.3
Total	99.3	100.1	100.6	101.5	100.2	100.2	98.9	96.4	100.0

a The apparent retention rate is the percentage of full time students who continued to year 9 from respective cohort groups at the commencement of their secondary schooling (year 7/8). **b** Retention rates are affected by factors that vary across jurisdictions, so variations in apparent retention rates over time within jurisdictions may be more useful than comparisons across jurisdictions. Retention rates can exceed 100 per cent for a variety of reasons, including student transfers between jurisdictions after the base year. **c** The exclusion of part time students from standard apparent retention rate calculations has implications for the interpretation of results for all jurisdictions, but particularly for SA, Tasmania and the NT where there is a high proportion of part time students. **d** The small number of Indigenous students in some jurisdictions (the ACT and Tasmania) can result in large fluctuations in the apparent retention rates when disaggregated by gender. **e** Ungraded students are not included in the calculation of apparent retention rates. This exclusion has particular implications for the NT and as a result, Indigenous apparent retention rates may misrepresent the retention of students in secondary schooling in the NT.

Source: ABS 2007 (unpublished); table 3A.3.3.

- From 2002 to 2006, Indigenous apparent retention rates from the start of secondary school to year 9 have remained relatively constant (fluctuating between 97.8 and 98.4 per cent) (figure 3.3.2).
- High rates are to be expected because normal year level progression means students in year 9 are generally of an age at which school education is compulsory. Rates for Indigenous students, however, were lower than those for non-Indigenous students in all states and territories except Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT (table 7.2.1).
- The national retention rate for Indigenous students was 98.4 per cent compared with 100.0 per cent for non-Indigenous students (table 7.2.1).

7.3 Indigenous cultural studies in school curriculum and involvement of Indigenous people in development and delivery of Indigenous studies

Box 7.3.1 **Key messages**

- Between 2001 and 2005, the number of Indigenous teachers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers in schools increased from 3238 to 3596 (table 7.3.1).
- Some primary and secondary schools are incorporating Indigenous studies in their curricula, and Indigenous culture and perspectives are being incorporated into VET programs offered at school. This can improve the number of Indigenous students completing year 12 and improve all students' knowledge and appreciation of Indigenous culture (boxes 7.3.2 to 7.3.6).

In consultations on the 2005 Report (SCRGSP 2007), differing views on this indicator were expressed by various Indigenous organisations and communities. Responses from governments and agencies also differed.

Some Indigenous organisations and communities were concerned that the attention was on culturally appropriate education for Indigenous people rather than good academic outcomes that are comparable to all students. Other Indigenous organisations and communities believed cultural studies consolidated community teaching and could assist to preserve Indigenous language. Indigenous cultural studies also provides an opportunity for Indigenous people to share their knowledge with the wider community.

Approaches to incorporating Indigenous content into the school curriculum vary widely between education systems and between schools. Schools exist in varied contexts and have varying numbers of Indigenous students. A quarter of schools had no Indigenous students in 2005 (25.1 per cent); the remainder had some Indigenous students enrolled (48.1 per cent of schools had 0.1 to 5.0 per cent Indigenous students). In 1.8 per cent of schools, more than 95 per cent of students were Indigenous and in 1.0 per cent of schools all students were Indigenous (DEST unpublished).

Data for reporting against this indicator are very limited. The *National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training, 2004* (DEST 2006) provides some qualitative and quantitative information for this indicator.

The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) collects limited information related to this indicator from Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) reports completed by individual education systems and schools.

A suite of performance indicators has been developed for the Indigenous Education Program (2005–2008) — Supplementary Recurrent Assistance — and DEST plans to include a measure in this reporting process to encourage more extensive Indigenous involvement in developing and delivering Indigenous studies.

Although there is no systematic collection of data on Indigenous studies in the school curriculum, some examples have been identified and are included in this section.

Culturally inclusive curricula

Most states and territories have developed strategies to incorporate Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum. Many have units devoted to developing Indigenous curriculum materials for use within various subjects and at various stages in schooling.

DEST (2006) reported that a range of projects have been developed by states and territories, such as *The Croc Festivals*, *Deadly Vibe Magazine* (see section 3.3, box 3.3.2) and *Indigenous Mentoring Pilot Project*, to motivate and inspire Indigenous students. These projects are designed to complement programs on cultural studies in school curriculum.

The following case studies boxes (7.3.2 to 7.3.7) are presented as examples of what some schools and education providers are doing to introduce Indigenous culture and perspectives into their curricula. Some case studies demonstrate programs created primarily for Indigenous students to increase their knowledge of their culture and to improve their motivation to attend and succeed at school. Other case studies aim to improve the knowledge and understanding of all students (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous).

Box 7.3.2 **Bendigo Senior Secondary College, Victoria — Dare to Lead program**

The 2005 Report included a case study on the 'Dare to Lead' Program at the Bendigo Senior Secondary College. The program continued successfully in 2006, building on initiatives undertaken in 2004 and 2005 to promote awareness of Indigenous culture. In 2005, the College was one of six national winners of the Excellence in Leadership in Indigenous Education awards established under the 'Dare to Lead' Program. In 2006, the Bendigo Senior Secondary College had 21 Koorie students enrolled out of a total 1781 students.

In 2006, the Program Coordinator at Bendigo Senior Secondary College implemented activities aimed at improving transition, engagement and cultural awareness. These activities included a Formalised Indigenous Transition Program where the College worked with five secondary schools in Bendigo to ensure that the move for students into senior education was culturally sensitive. The transition program has significantly improved retention into the College's senior campus. Koorie students also participated in a number of community events including careers expos, as well as the Crocfest in Swan Hill.

As part of improving cultural awareness, Year 11 students studied the short film works of filmmaker and activist Richard Frankland. In addition:

- health and human development students studied contemporary Indigenous health
- physical education students studied traditional Indigenous games
- Australian history students studied the impact of settlement in the Port Phillip District
- outdoor education classes looked at Indigenous land use and perspectives.

As a result of the targeted program focused on Indigenous culture, the College is beginning to see success in its Indigenous students over a range of areas, including scholarships, retention, and completion. The number of school completions among the Indigenous cohort has increased over the last three years.

Source: Department of Education and Training, Victoria (unpublished).

Box 7.3.3 **Swan View Senior High School, WA**

To encourage Indigenous students to continue to year 12, the Swan View Senior High School has created a comfortable and culturally-affirming environment for learning. To create a supportive and culturally-appropriate model of schooling, the school and the Indigenous community developed the Access Program.

The Access Program offers school-based traineeships. The key to the program's success was the school's engagement with the community and negotiating all aspects of learning. The ongoing involvement of parents, family members and former students in the program has resulted in more Indigenous students completing year 12.

Source: DEST 2006; O'Callaghan 2005.

Box 7.3.4 **Broulee Public School, NSW — language program**

The 2005 Report included a case study on the Broulee Public School in Eurobodalla, NSW. The school has a large population of Aboriginal students and decided to include the Dhurga Djamanji language program into the school curriculum, to teach both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children about Indigenous language and culture.

The Dhurga Djamanji language program offered at Broulee Public School continues to perform strongly. The program has been endorsed by the NSW Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group as an exemplary program and model. The Aboriginal language program has been successfully integrated into everyday classroom activities and has received overwhelming support within the school community and the local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Source: NSW Government (unpublished).

Box 7.3.5 **Tauondi College, SA**

Vocational education and training (VET) in schools can reaffirm Indigenous students' cultural identity, as well as provide skills for employment, community development and self-development.

Tauondi College, in Port Adelaide, is an independent, Indigenous community-run training organisation that has operated since 1974. Tauondi College is a registered training organisation that has established a culturally-appropriate approach to VET in Schools. Tauondi College deliver nationally accredited VET training packages to secondary school students. The Tauondi VET in Schools program provides dual award courses that combine traditional school studies with VET, which allow students to attain a qualification from both Tauondi College and their secondary school.

Tauondi currently runs VET in Schools courses in hospitality, art, information technology, horticulture, community services and automotive skills. The college operates using cultural protocols and practices and each course incorporates Aboriginal culture. For example, the hospitality students work with native foods as well as western foods.

Source: O'Callaghan 2005.

Box 7.3.6 **Western Arrernte Picture Dictionary, NT — language and cultural program**

Since 2004, the Indigenous staff at the Ntaria School have developed a comprehensive language and cultural program with funding from IESIP. In 2006, a Western Arrernte Picture Dictionary was produced. The dictionary is a simple but comprehensive introduction to the Western Arrernte language, which is spoken in the country to the west of Alice Springs at Hermannsburg, Papunya, Ikuntji (Haasts Bluff), Wallace Rockhole, and in Alice Springs. The dictionary comprises an extensive word list in Western Arrernte and a reverse English-Western Arrernte word finder and is an invaluable resource in the school's ongoing language and culture program.

Source: NT Government (unpublished).

Box 7.3.7 **Remote Independent Community School**

A remote community school (which cannot be identified) was founded in 1978 and is situated on a pastoral lease, which was transferred to the local Aboriginal community in 1976. The local community comprises approximately 250 people, and is remote and isolated, particularly during the wet season.

The primary and secondary school population is approximately 70 students with itinerant students adding to the population seasonally.

Indigenous studies programs are included in the curriculum through a thematic approach to teaching. The themes work on a two year cycle, ensuring that all students get exposed to Indigenous studies during their schooling. In addition, students undertake language and cultural days at the end of each term.

All classes have two Aboriginal Education Workers who work with a qualified teacher. The Aboriginal Education Workers are responsible for ensuring the delivery and development of the Indigenous studies program. When the school travels for cultural days, Indigenous people in the community facilitate the outcomes and the delivery of the program.

The school focuses on the maintenance of two local Aboriginal languages. There are a number of different language based activities carried out at the school, for example:

- paintings were placed around the school and the stories were translated into local languages
- the students undertook three cultural and language days where language was spoken on traditional country
- the school and students produced three language books that were published.

Source: DEST (Supplementary Recurrent Assistance Performance Reports) 2005 (unpublished).

Indigenous employment in schools

While no specific data were available on Indigenous teachers teaching Indigenous studies, some data on Indigenous employment in schools have been included to provide information on Indigenous involvement in school education. Indigenous cultural perspectives are important across the curriculum and the presence of Indigenous staff provide positive role models and contribute to bringing Indigenous perspectives to students.

Table 7.3.1 **Indigenous employment in schools**

	Government schools					*Catholic schools*[a]				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Number of Indigenous teachers [b, c]	1 338	1 350	1 473	1 493	1 459	52	66	72	73	106
Indigenous teachers as a proportion of all teachers (%) [b, c]	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Indigenous students as a proportion of all students (%) [d]	4.5	4.7	4.9	5.1	5.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6
Number of AIEWs in schools [b, c, e, f]	1 406	1 441	1 435	1 459	1 570	442	477	495	523	461
Ratio of Indigenous students to Indigenous teachers and AIEWs [b, c, d]	27.1	26.2	26.4	25.9	25.8	28.8	28.0	27.8	27.6	32.1
Number of Indigenous staff in schools including teachers, specialist support staff (including teacher aides and AIEWs), administrative and clerical staff [b, c, g, h]	2 824	3 239	3 211	3 273	3 761	473	535	552	562	548
Total number of staff in schools including teachers, specialist support staff (including teacher aides and AIEWs), administrative and clerical staff	214 363	212 594	232 249	236 524	238 874	56 268	58 451	62 634	64 324	63 647
Indigenous staff as a proportion of all staff in schools (%) [b, c, h]	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Indigenous administrative and clerical staff as a proportion of all administrative and clerical staff (%)	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.6	3.2	3.3	2.7	2.7	3.3

AIEWs = Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers. [a] The number of Indigenous students in Catholic schools is based on the number in all Catholic schools, not just IESIP funded Catholic systems. Staff numbers are those in IESIP funded Catholic systems. [b] For some states and territories, these figures are based on actual numbers and for some others, it is based on full time equivalent (FTE). [c] Figures are not to be considered as nationally reflective because not all states and territories reported on employment in any one year. [d] Catholic Schools' enrolment data include some other non government schools, including many Indigenous run schools that have greatly influenced the results. [e] Figures for 2001 includes 140 teacher aides in Queensland who are not classified as AIEWs because they are not placed in identified positions. [f] Includes school and non school based AIEWs. [g] Changes in the way staffing in the category 'specialist support staff' was reported by two state departments in 2003, means that it is not possible to provide a consistent picture of change over the period 2002-03. [h] Total for government schools in 2001 is less than the sum of numbers for Indigenous teachers and AIEWs because the total Indigenous staff numbers in government schools does not include 140 teacher aides in Queensland not classified as AIEWs.

Source: DEST IESIP performance reports 2001–2005 (unpublished).

In 2000, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) decided to include an Indigenous identifier for staff in the National Schools Statistics Collection. (NSSC). In 2006, the decision to use the ABS standard definition for the collection and reporting on Indigenous staffing was implemented and become part of the NSSC reporting requirements. No data are yet available from the NSSC.

Nevertheless, a general indication of the number of Indigenous teachers and Aboriginal and Islander education workers is available from DEST IESIP reports. Table 7.3.1 includes Indigenous Teacher Aides (classified as Indigenous specialist support staff) from Queensland government schools for the first time. Information previously published has been adjusted to reflect this.

- Indigenous teachers and staff in schools are a much smaller proportion of all teachers and staff than Indigenous students are of all students.
- Between 2001 and 2005, there have been increases in the number of Indigenous teachers and other staff in schools.
- There was a 9.0 per cent increase in the number of Indigenous teachers in government schools over the period.
- The ratio of Indigenous students to Indigenous teachers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) decreased from 27.1 per cent in 2001 to 25.8 per cent in 2005.
- The number of AIEWs employed in the government system and the Catholic system fluctuated between 2001–2005.
- In 2004, 2.2 per cent of executive staff in the government system and 1.2 per cent of executive staff in the Catholic system were Indigenous (DEST 2006).

Table 7A.3.2 shows that 39.3 per cent of AIEWs in government schools and 57.5 per cent of AIEWs in Catholic schools had completed or were studying towards formal qualifications in 2005. The proportion who had completed or were studying towards formal qualifications has increased in government schools and Catholic schools since 2001 (31.3 per cent and 47.1 per cent, respectively)[1].

Box 7.3.8 shows a program that provides community based teaching training for Indigenous people.

[1] Smaller numbers of AIEWs in Catholic systems can mean that small changes in numbers studying or total AIEWs can cause proportions to vary from year to year without necessarily indicating a trend.

Box 7.3.8 **RATEP — a community based Indigenous teacher education program in Queensland**

The Remote Area Teacher Education Program (RATEP) is a training and employment program to assist Indigenous community teachers to become registered teachers in communities where they live and work. RATEP is a partnership between the Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts, James Cook University, and the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE.

In 2007, 167 students were enrolled in the program, including 63 in Certificate III and IV in Education, 43 in Diploma of Education and 61 in Bachelor of Education courses.

Since its inception in 1990, 113 RATEP graduates have achieved a university qualification, making them eligible for teacher registration and over 500 graduates have achieved a Certificate III or diploma level vocational qualification.

In 2006, the Government expanded RATEP to four additional sites (Ravenshoe, Badu Island, Yorke Island and Darnley Island) and continues to work with training and education providers to replicate the model across other Government human services agencies.

Source: Queensland Government (unpublished).

7.4 Juvenile diversions as a proportion of all juvenile offenders

Box 7.4.1 **Key message**

Although data on juvenile diversions are not comparable between states and territories, a smaller proportion of Indigenous juveniles were diverted from court by formal cautioning or referrals than non-Indigenous juveniles in each State and Territory for which data were available.

Diversion programs allow a juvenile offender to be disciplined without the necessity of interaction with traditional court processes. The most common diversionary mechanisms used by State and Territory juvenile justice systems include:

- cautions or warnings
- infringement notices
- referrals to youth, community or family conferences
- referrals to juvenile justice teams.

Diversionary mechanisms may not reduce the interaction between Indigenous juveniles and the criminal justice system, but in combination with sports and leisure programs have been shown to contribute to reducing antisocial behaviour and offending (Morris, Sallybanks and Willis 2003). Research has also shown that programs that increase young peoples' involvement in sport, arts, or community group activities may reduce the likelihood of Indigenous juveniles having repeated contact with police (Cameron and MacDougall 2000; Mason and Wilson 1988; Morris, Sallybanks and Willis 2003; Randell 2002). This in turn may lead to an improvement in imprisonment and juvenile detention rates (reported in section 3.12) and less directly lead to improvements in year 10 and 12 retention (section 3.3), tertiary qualifications and participation (section 3.4), unemployment (section 3.5), and suicide and self-harm (section 3.8). Some successful initiatives implemented in Victoria to divert Indigenous youth from the criminal justice system are described in box 7.4.2.

In some states and territories, the decision to divert an alleged offender will be left to the discretion of individual police officers. Alternatively, as in NSW, an Act of Parliament governs the process to be followed. In such cases, when the police apprehend a young person, they must consider whether he or she is entitled to be diverted under the appropriate Act.

Box 7.4.2 **'Things that work' – Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement Community Grant Programs**

Community Grant Programs, an initiative of the Victorian Aboriginal Justice Agreement, enable Koori communities throughout Victoria to design and deliver localised early intervention/prevention strategies targeting Koori youth. Strategies implemented to date have included programs to assist Koori youth who receive police cautions, improve relations between Koori youth and police, and engage Koori youth in sporting and other club activities that offer social alternatives to offending.

Some examples of programs include:

- *Night Patrol*, which has been established in Shepparton, Mildura, Robinvale, Bairnsdale and the north-western suburbs of Melbourne as a means of:
  - safely transporting young Koories from situations in which they are at risk of negative contact with the criminal justice system
  - developing positive and productive relationships with local police. Qualitative evaluation suggests that people in those communities generally rated the night patrols as effective in reducing alcohol related violence and crimes. Rowland and Toumbourou (2004) reported that the crime rate in a local shopping mall dropped by 39 per cent after the night patrol service commenced in a rural Indigenous community of Victoria.

(Continued next page)

Box 7.4.2 (continued)

- *Police and Youth Groups*, which have been established in Ballarat, Horsham and Halls Gap as a means of:
  - providing a safe place for interaction between local Koori youth and police
  - fostering bonds between local Koori leaders and local Koori youth
  - providing more opportunities for Koori youth to feel like valued members of their community. These youth groups run a range of activities, such as bowling, swimming, movies and football, which have been well attended by local Koori youth.
- *The Youth Contact Minimisation Project,* which was established in Mildura as a means of:
  - encouraging and supporting Koori youth, both personally and financially, to participate in formal organised sport throughout the year
  - encouraging and supporting local Elders and parents to be involved in sports as mentors, coaches, umpires, committee members and support workers
  - assisting Koori youth to develop physical skills, increase self esteem and improve team-building and leadership skills, while also providing a mechanism whereby Koori youth can become accountable and responsible for improving their long-term employment or sporting potential. To date, the project has attracted up to 250 Koori youth, who have competed successfully in the local district soccer competition. The group are currently working in partnership with other recreation and community groups to establish non-soccer activities over the summer (non-playing) season, including a youth group/drop in centre.

There is no national data set on the extent of Indigenous juvenile diversions. The data in this section are from NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA, SA and the NT, and the focus is on diversions at the police level. The data are not comparable, but have been provided to give some indication of the level of Indigenous juvenile diversions. Diversions can also be exercised at the court level. In this Report, only WA provides some data on referrals to juvenile justice teams by the court. Diversionary mechanisms exercised by courts may be explored further in future Reports.

The availability of data on juvenile diversions by Indigenous status is increasing. In the 2003 report, data were only available for NSW, WA and the NT. In the 2005 Report, data were also available for Victoria and SA. For the 2007 Report, data are available for Queensland, which now allows reporting for six jurisdictions.

The NSW data are from police records and represent persons of interest (POIs) or alleged offenders who have come to the attention of NSW Police for a recorded criminal incident (driving offences are excluded). Not all crimes have an associated

POI. The NSW Department of Juvenile Justice also plays a significant role by administering Youth Justice Conferences, which are the mechanism for juvenile diversions in that State. The NSW Police data does not reflect the activity of Youth Justice Conferences.

In Victoria, data on apprehensions describe offences charged by police as either an 'arrest' or 'summons', and a diversion as a 'caution'. Queensland Police data present diversionary methods of processing as 'caution' and 'community conference', in contrast to an 'arrest', 'notice to appear', 'summons' or 'warrant'. In WA, a juvenile diversion includes both 'cautioning' and 'referrals to juvenile justice teams' by the police. A 'formal caution' and 'transfer to family conference' issued by police in SA are classified as juvenile diversions. For the NT, the data refer to apprehension cases rather than individual persons; therefore, a number of cases can relate to one person.

Indigenous status in Victoria, WA and SA is completed on the basis of the attending officer's subjective assessment of the person's appearance and is recorded for operational purposes only. In NSW, Queensland and the NT, police officers ask juveniles whether they are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Data from Tasmania and the ACT have not been published in this Report. In some instances, this is because there is no Indigenous identifier currently in place or data are not of sufficient size or quality to publish. It is anticipated that in future years a more extensive and comparable set of data will be available from jurisdictions.

Data in the following section have not been adjusted to control for factors which might affect the likelihood of a juvenile being diverted from court by police. These factors include the nature of the offence and the offending history of the young person.

New South Wales

Table 7.4.1 **NSW, number and proportion of juveniles diverted, 2005**[a, b, c, d]

	Unit	*Indigenous*	*Non-Indigenous*	*Total*[e]
Proceeded against other than to court				
Youth conference	no.	334	916	1 287
Caution – Young Offenders Act	no.	1 503	8 332	10 233
Warning	no.	2 048	14 079	17 304
Infringement Notice		446	6 195	7 317
Total	no.	4 331	29 522	36 141
Proceeded against to court	no.	4 821	9 019	14 315
Proportion of juveniles diverted	**%**	**47.3**	**76.6**	**71.6**

[a] This table represents persons of interest (POIs) or alleged offenders who have come to the attention of NSW Police for a recorded criminal incident (driving offences are excluded). Not all crimes have an associated POI. The table only shows POIs whom the police have taken action against. 'Proceeded against to court' includes the issue of court attendance notices, charges and summonses. 'Youth Justice Conference' shows police conference referrals but excludes court referrals. [b] Under the *Young Offenders Act 1997* (NSW), when police apprehend a young person they must first consider whether the young person is entitled to be diverted under the Act by way of warning, caution or youth justice conference. [c] Excluded from this table were 1335 juvenile POIs whose status was recorded by police as 'legal process not further classified'. [d] Indigenous status is based on self-identification by the juvenile. [e] 'Total' includes those juveniles whose status is unknown.

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (unpublished); table 7A.4.4.

Table 7.4.1 shows the various legal processes NSW Police can employ against alleged offenders. The proportion of juveniles diverted includes those referred to a 'youth conference' and those given a 'caution', 'warning' or 'infringement notice'; none of which require the juvenile to attend court.

- Indigenous juveniles were diverted at a lesser rate than non-Indigenous juveniles in 2005 (47.3 per cent compared to 76.6 per cent) (table 7.4.1).
- The highest number of cautions and referrals to youth justice conferences issued to Indigenous and non-Indigenous juveniles in NSW was for 'theft' in 2004 (table 7A.4.1) and 2005 (table 7A.4.2).
- The proportion of Indigenous juveniles diverted by police increased from 2004 to 2005 (43.8 per cent in 2004 compared with 47.3 per cent in 2005) (tables 7A.4.3 and 7A.4.4). In 2004, 77.9 per cent of non-Indigenous juveniles were diverted (table 7A.4.3), similar to the 76.6 per cent diverted in 2005 (table 7.4.4).

Victoria

Table 7.4.2 **Victoria, Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders and cautions[a]**

	Unit	*Indigenous*	*Non-Indigenous*
2005-06			
Total juvenile alleged offenders	no.	1 607	24 230
Juvenile cautions	no.	157	6 398
Proportion of juveniles cautioned	**%**	**9.8**	**26.4**
2004-05			
Total juvenile alleged offenders	no.	1 551	23 548
Juvenile cautions	no.	181	5 501
Proportion of juveniles cautioned	**%**	**11.7**	**23.4**
2003-04			
Total juvenile alleged offenders	no.	1 476	19 938
Juvenile cautions	no.	162	5 873
Proportion of juveniles cautioned	**%**	**11.0**	**29.5**
2002-03			
Total juvenile alleged offenders	no.	1 424	22 194
Juvenile cautions	no.	198	6 524
Proportion of juveniles cautioned	**%**	**13.9**	**29.4**

a Indigenous status is derived from the racial appearance of the offender which is a subjective assessment of the police officer.

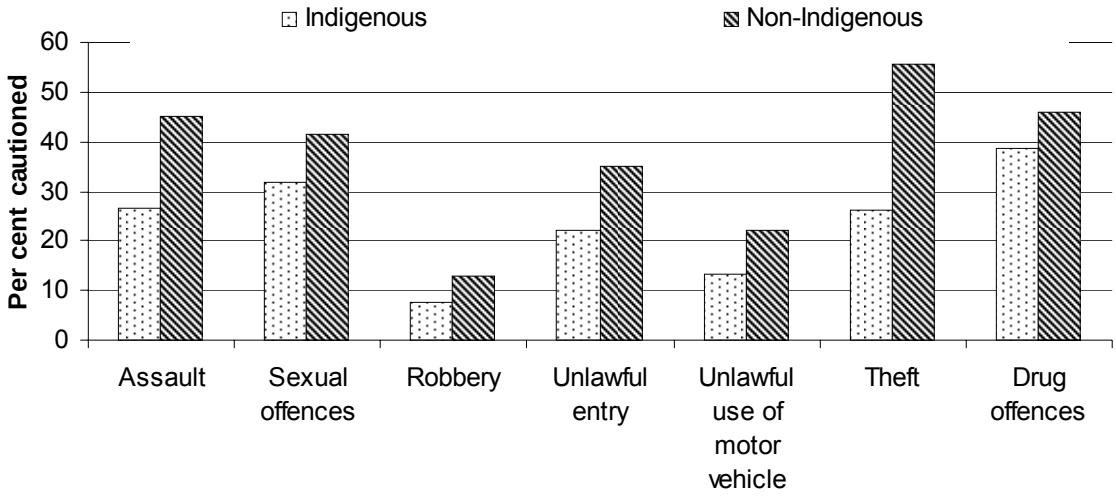
Source: Victoria Police (unpublished); tables 7A.4.5–8.

- In 2005-06, the proportion of non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in Victoria who received a caution was 2.7 times as high as the proportion of Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders cautioned (26.4 per cent compared to 9.8 per cent) (table 7.4.2).
- Table 7.4.2 shows that the proportion of Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders cautioned by police in Victoria decreased from 2002-03 to 2005-06 (13.9 per cent in 2002-03 compared to 9.8 per cent in 2005-06). The proportion of non-Indigenous juveniles cautioned by police also decreased over this period.
- The highest number of cautions issued to Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in Victoria in 2004-05 and 2005-06 were for 'theft' (stealing from a shop) (tables 7A.4.9 and 7A.4.10).
- In 2004-05 and 2005-06, the proportion of Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in Victoria who received a caution was highest in outer regional areas (13.3 per cent in 2005-06) compared with 9.3 per cent in major cities and 8.5 per cent in inner regional areas (tables 7A.4.11 and 7A.4.12). A similar

pattern was observed for non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in outer regional areas.

Queensland

Figure 7.4.1 **Queensland, proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders receiving a caution, by type of offence, 2004-05[a, b, c, d]**



a Proportions are calculated using data in table 7A.4.13. The number of cautions are divided by the sum of the number of arrests, cautions, referrals to community conference, notices to appear, summons, warrants and 'other' methods of processing juvenile alleged offenders used by Queensland Police, multiplied by 100. **b** Indigenous status is based on self-identification by the juvenile. **c** Only those offenders whose age and sex were identified are included. **d** 'Theft' excludes unlawful entry.

Source: Queensland Police Services 2004-05; table 7A.4.13.

- Figure 7.4.1 shows that in Queensland, a greater proportion of non-Indigenous juveniles received cautions for assault, sexual offences, robbery, unlawful entry, unlawful use of a motor vehicle, theft, and drug offences than Indigenous juveniles in 2004-05.
- In Queensland, the most common caution for Indigenous juveniles was for drug offences, at 38.7 per cent of apprehensions. The most common caution for non-Indigenous juveniles, on the other hand, was for theft, at 55.4 per cent of apprehensions (figure 7.4.1).
- The smallest number of cautions in Queensland were issued for robbery, at 7.6 per cent and 12.8 per cent of Indigenous and non-Indigenous apprehensions, respectively (figure 7.4.1).

To accompany figure 7.4.1, table 7A.4.13 presents a detailed breakdown of the number of arrests, cautions, referrals to community conferences, notices to appear, summonses and warrants issued by Queensland Police, by offence type in 2004-05.

Western Australia

Table 7.4.3 **WA, number and proportion of contacts with the juvenile justice system, by type of contact, 1995–2002[a, b, c]**

	Unit	*Indigenous*	*Non-Indigenous*
Cautioned	no.	17 167	62 555
Referred to juvenile justice teams by police	no.	4 489	11 000
Total number of juveniles diverted	**no.**	**21 656**	**73 555**
Dealt with by court			
Dismissed/no penalty	no.	4 153	4 629
Fine	no.	1 910	5 477
Community-based order	no.	6 399	8 580
Detention	no.	2 565	1 851
Referred to juvenile justice teams	no.	3 068	7 608
Total	**no.**	**39 751**	**101 700**
Proportion of juveniles diverted	**%**	**54.5**	**72.3**

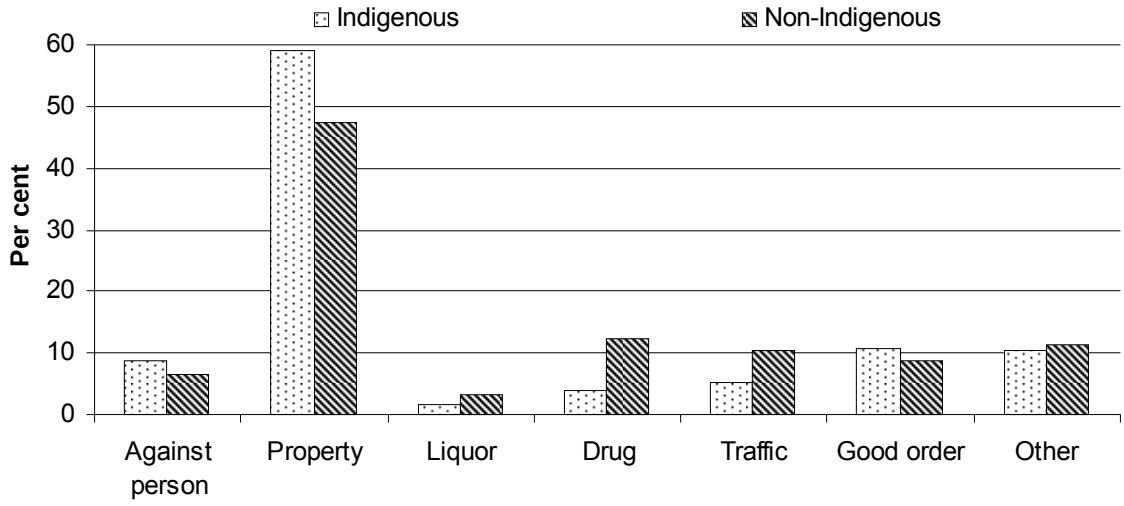
a A 'contact' was counted for every event in which a juvenile was cautioned or referred to a juvenile justice team, irrespective of the number of offences for which the caution or referral was made. **b** A diversion includes both cautioning and referral to juvenile justice teams by the police. Juvenile justice teams handle juveniles who have committed minor offences, or who are in the early stages of offending. **c** Indigenous status is based on the attending officer's subjective assessment of the offender's appearance and is recorded for operational purposes only.

Source: University of Western Australia Crime Research Centre 2004a; table 7A.4.14.

- For Indigenous juveniles, about half (54.5 per cent) of those formally dealt with by the WA Police were diverted between 1995 and 2002, while the proportion of non-Indigenous juveniles diverted was greater at 72.3 per cent (table 7.4.3).
- The number of cautions and referrals to juvenile justice teams in WA (by police) issued to non-Indigenous juveniles were 3.6 times and 2.5 times greater, respectively, than the number issued to Indigenous juveniles between 1995 and 2002 (table 7.4.3).

To support table 7.4.3, tables 7A.4.15 and 7A.4.16 present the number and proportion of juvenile diversions (i.e. cautioning and police referrals) between 1995 and 2002 by sex and type of offence.

Figure 7.4.2 **WA, Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile cautions, by type of offence, 2004[a]**



[a] Indigenous status is based on the attending officer's subjective assessment of the offender's appearance and is recorded for operational purposes only.

Source: University of Western Australia Crime Research Centre 2004b; table 7A.4.17.

- In 2004, Indigenous juveniles received a greater proportion of cautions for three of the seven types of offences presented in figure 7.4.2 ('against person', 'property' and 'good order').
- The greatest disparity between the proportion of cautions by offence type issued to Indigenous and non-Indigenous juveniles was for drug related offences (12.2 per cent for non-Indigenous juveniles compared to 4.0 per cent for Indigenous juveniles).
- Offences against property received the greatest number of cautions for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous juveniles at 59.0 per cent and 47.2 per cent of the total cautions issued, respectively.

An annual breakdown of the number and proportion of juvenile cautions issued in WA from 1994 to 2004 is presented in table 7A.4.18. For Indigenous juveniles, there has been an upward trend in the number of cautions issued from 1994 to 2004. For non-Indigenous juveniles, however, there was an upward trend in the number of cautions issued from 1994 to 2000, but a gradual decline in cautions issued in the four years following the peak of 2000.

Table 7A.4.19 shows the number and proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous juveniles cautioned in WA in 2004 by sex and single-year age groups (from 10 to 17 years).

South Australia

Table 7.4.4 **SA, Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile apprehensions and diversions[a, b]**

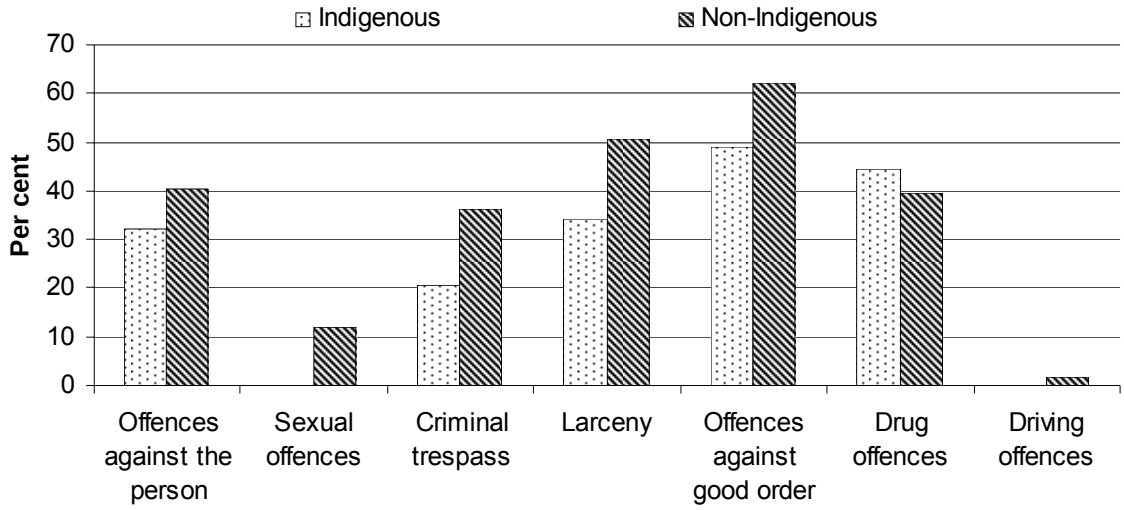
	Unit	*Indigenous*	*Non-Indigenous*
1 January to 31 December 2005			
Juvenile apprehensions[c]	no.	1 248	4 439
Formal caution	no.	258	1 257
Transfer to family conference	no.	186	751
Proportion diverted	**%**	**35.6**	**45.2**
1 January to 31 December 2004			
Juvenile apprehensions[c]	no.	1 054	4 018
Formal caution	no.	200	1 247
Transfer to family conference	no.	181	837
Proportion diverted	**%**	**36.1**	**51.9**

[a] Aboriginal appearance, derived from police apprehension reports, reflects the opinion of the apprehending officer. [b] Juvenile diversions include both formal cautions and transfers to a family conference. [c] Numbers of juvenile apprehensions exclude those offences with an unknown method of processing.

Source: Office of Crime Statistics and Research (2005 and 2006); table 7A.4.20.

- Table 7.4.4 shows that a smaller proportion of Indigenous juveniles were diverted via formal caution and transfer to family conference in 2004 and 2005 than non-Indigenous juveniles.
- In 2005, the proportion of Indigenous juveniles in SA diverted from court decreased slightly to 35.6 per cent of Indigenous juvenile apprehensions compared to 2004 (table 7.4.4).

Figure 7.4.3 **SA, proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders diverted, by type of offence, 2005[a, b]**



a Proportions are calculated using data in table 7A.4.22. The number of juvenile diversions (that is, cautions and transfers to family conference) are divided by the total number of apprehensions and multiplied by 100. **b** Aboriginal appearance, derived from police apprehension reports, reflects the opinion of the apprehending officer.

Source: Office of Crime Statistics and Research (2006); table 7A.4.22.

- Figure 7.4.3 shows that for each offence category except drug offences, the proportion of Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in SA diverted from court (via formal cautions or transfers to a family conference) was lower than the proportion of non-Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders diverted by the same methods of processing.
- For sexual offences and driving offences, no Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders received a formal caution or transfer to a family conference in SA in 2005.
- In 2004 and 2005, the highest numbers of formal cautions issued to Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders in SA were for 'larceny from shops' and 'disorderly/offensive behaviour' (tables 7A.4.21 and 7A.4.22). The highest numbers of transfers to family conference issued to Indigenous juvenile alleged offenders were for 'criminal trespass' in 2004 and 'larceny from shops' in 2005 (tables 7A.4.21 and 7A.4.22, respectively).

Northern Territory

Table 7.4.5 **NT, Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile apprehensions and diversions, 1 January to 31 December 2005[a, b]**

	Indigenous	*Non-Indigenous*	*Total*
Juvenile apprehensions (number)			
Male	780	302	1 082
Female	124	78	202
Total	**904**	**380**	**1 284**
Declined or denied participation in diversion (number)[c]			
Male	582	141	723
Female	40	18	58
Total	**622**	**159**	**781**
Participated in diversion (number)			
Male	198	161	359
Female	84	60	144
Total	**282**	**221**	**503**
Proportion diverted (%)			
Male	25.4	53.3	33.2
Female	67.8	76.9	71.3
Total	**31.2**	**58.2**	**39.2**

a Data refers to apprehension cases rather than individual persons, therefore, there may be a number of cases that relate to one person. **b** Indigenous data are based on self-identification by the juvenile. **c** Where cases did not result in a diversion, these cases either proceeded to court or were resolved in some other manner (it is not an indicator of the number of matters referred to the courts).

Source: NT Police (unpublished); table 7A.4.24.

- In 2005, the proportion diverted was lower for Indigenous than non-Indigenous juvenile cases (31.2 per cent compared with 58.2 per cent). For both Indigenous and non-Indigenous juvenile cases, a greater proportion of females than males were diverted (table 7.4.5).
- Of the total apprehensions for the period (1284), 39.2 per cent participated in diversion (table 7.4.5).
- The proportion of Indigenous juveniles diverted from 1 January to 31 December 2002 was 42.9 per cent of apprehensions (table 7A.2.23). From 2002 to 2005, there was a decrease in the proportion of Indigenous juveniles diverted (tables 7A.4.23 and 7A.4.24).
- The proportion of non-Indigenous juvenile diversions fluctuated between 2002 and 2005, but were still consistently greater than the proportion of Indigenous diversions during this period (tables 7A.4.23 and 7A.4.24).

7.5 Transition from school to work

Box 7.5.1 **Key messages**

- In 2004-05, for young people aged 18 to 24 years:
  - a higher proportion of Indigenous young people than non-Indigenous young people were not employed and not studying, for both males and females in all remoteness areas (figures 7.5.1 and 7.5.2)
  - a higher proportion of Indigenous young people living in very remote areas were not employed and not studying, (51.5 per cent), compared with those in major cities (33.6 per cent) (figure 7.5.1)
  - both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young females were more likely than their male counterparts to be neither employed nor studying (figure 7.5.2).
- In 2004-05, for people aged 18 years and over:
  - both labour force participation and employment rates for Indigenous people were lower than for non-Indigenous people whether or not they had achieved a certificate level 3 or higher qualification (table 7.5.1)
  - for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, those with a certificate level 3 or higher qualification were more likely to participate in the labour force than those with lower levels of qualifications or without qualifications (table 7.5.1).

This indicator reports on the status of young Indigenous people's participation in either the work force or the education/training system. As one of the components of the 'Positive Childhood and Transition to Adulthood' strategic area for action, it identifies those young Indigenous people who are potentially at risk of long term disadvantage.

Two approaches are used to examine the transition from education to work — the 'at risk' and the 'outcome from education' approaches. The 'at risk' approach examines the number of Indigenous people aged 15 to 24 years who are not participating in education and training, and who are not employed. These people are considered as being at risk of long term disadvantage. The 'outcome from education' approach looks into labour force outcomes for those Indigenous people aged 18 years and over who have achieved a certain level of education.

Although there is no research specifically focusing on Indigenous young people during their transition from education to work, several recent studies have been using data collected in the *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* which examine patterns of transition from education to work for Australian youth in general.

A study by McMillan and Marks (2003) found that young people who are not achieving well at secondary school and leave without a school qualification may

have few opportunities for work. As time passes, their chances of gaining employment or re-entering full time education appear to decline even further.

Studies examining labour market outcomes of graduates and non-graduates from university or TAFE concluded that the transition from study to work was generally smoother for graduates, and that tertiary qualifications worked to protect young people from many of the difficulties involved with making this transition (Lamb 2001; Lamb and McKenzie 2001). The authors also found that university and TAFE graduates earned significantly more than those who entered the workforce directly from school. Most students who moved into employment immediately after completing Year 12 were in low level positions, primarily in the areas of retail trades, accommodation, cafes and restaurant, and manufacturing (Thomson 2005).

Sections 3.3 and 7.2 contain more information on secondary school retention for Indigenous students. Unemployment and labour force participation for Indigenous people aged 18 to 64 years are discussed in section 3.5. More information related to employment undertaken by Indigenous people, including employment by full time and part time status, by sector, industry and skill level are examined in section 11.1. Self employment and Indigenous business are reported in section 11.2.

The main sources of data for this indicator are ABS surveys, including the 2004-05 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) and National Health Survey (NHS), and the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and General Social Survey (GSS). Data for people aged 18 to 24 years who were not participating in education and training and not employed are reported to enable comparisons of outcomes in 2004-05 with those in 2002.

This Report includes, for the first time, data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), a research program jointly managed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). LSAY studies the progress of several groups of young Australians as they move from school into post-secondary education and work. This Report includes data from the 1995 and 1998 LSAY cohorts, two groups of students who were at Year 9 in 1995 and at Year 9 in 1998, respectively. LSAY has followed each group of participants by annual telephone interview. There were originally 13 613 participants in the 1995 cohort including 389 Indigenous people, and 14 117 participants in the 1998 cohort including 458 Indigenous people. It should be noted that Indigenous people accounted for 3 per cent of the LSAY samples in both cohorts, which is slightly higher than the proportion of Indigenous students among the total Year 9 population. It is possible that young Indigenous people are more likely than non-Indigenous people to leave school before year 9

(see section 7.2 Retention at year 9). Therefore, the findings from the survey may not apply to all of the Indigenous population.

Box 7.5.2 **'Things that work' — Queensland Education to Employment scheme**

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education to Employment Scheme began in 1998. It is coordinated by the Queensland Department of Main Roads and is a joint venture between 15 Queensland government departments. The aim is to increase training and employment opportunities for Indigenous youth in Queensland by encouraging them to complete year 12 and then progress to tertiary education and/or employment in their chosen vocation.

The Scheme provides Indigenous students who commit to participate fully in the program with the opportunity of financial assistance and practical support in their schooling.

- In the first year of the program, 3 scholarships were awarded, and since then almost 100 scholarships have been awarded.
- A total of 918 students have applied for scholarships since inception of the Scheme, with 242 successfully graduating.

A recent decision by the Queensland Government's Interdepartmental Taskforce on Indigenous Education has recommended that the scheme be expanded by a further 50 placements across the Queensland public sector and another 50 places secured on the scheme via private sector sponsorship.

Source: Queensland government (http://www.reconciliation.qld.gov.au/stories/employment.html); Queensland Government (unpublished).

The 'at risk' approach

This approach looks at the participation in the work force and education system of people aged 18 to 24 years. It examines the proportion of people in this age group who are neither in full or part time employment, nor in full or part time study.

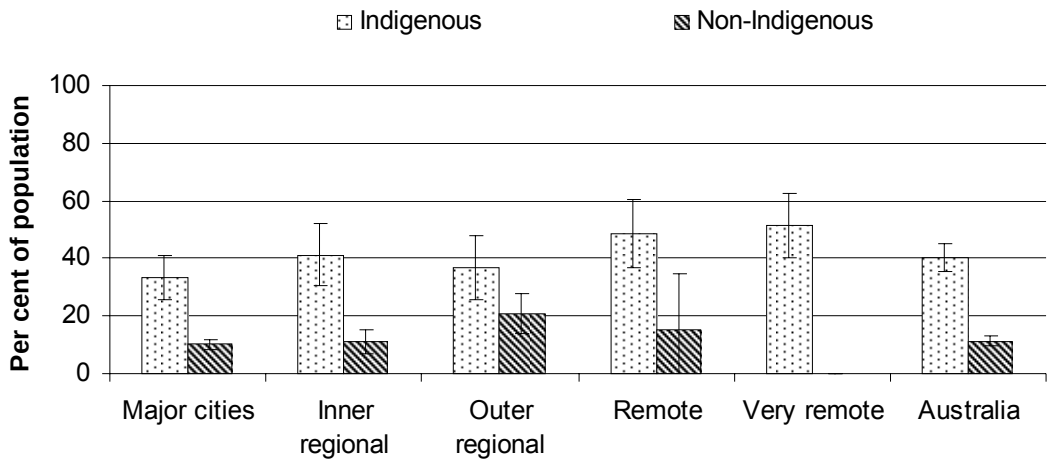
Young people who spend extended periods of time outside the work force and full time education may be missing out on employment experience, the development of work skills and familiarity with new technologies, all of which decrease their chances of finding employment in the future.

A research report based on the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) found that over 64 per cent of the young people who participated in the LSAY spent some time outside the labour force and full time education over the years they were surveyed (from 1997 up to the end of 2003). For the majority of young people, the

period of time outside the labour force and full time education was quite short, around one month. Young people who had not achieved highly at secondary school, did not have a Year 12 certificate, were female, or who had a health problem or disability were more likely to report extended periods of time (longer than 12 months) outside the labour force and full time education (Hillman 2005).

Young Indigenous females are more likely to be outside the labour force and full time education due to home duties. In 2005, the teenage fertility rate of Indigenous women aged 15 to 19 years (69 babies per 1000 women) was more than four times the fertility rate of all teenage women (16 babies per 1000 women) (ABS 2006).

Figure 7.5.1 **Proportion of people aged 18 to 24 years who were not employed and not studying, 2004-05[a, b, c]**



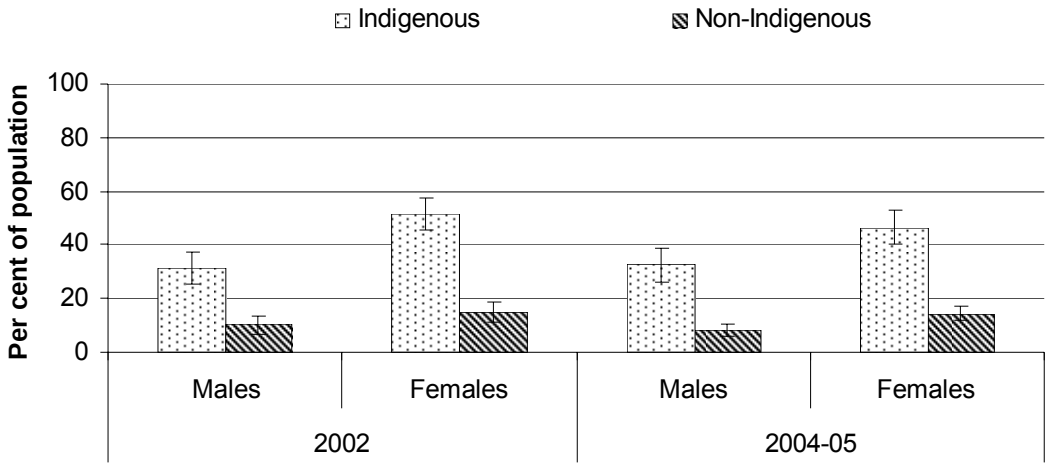
a Not employed comprises people unemployed or not in the labour force. **b** Non-Indigenous data for very remote areas are not provided by the ABS as they are considered too small to produce reliable estimates, but these data have been attributed appropriately to national estimates. **c** Error bars represent 95 per cent confidence intervals around each estimate (see chapter 2 for more information).

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS and NHS (unpublished); table 7A.5.1.

- Nationally, in 2004-05, 40.1 per cent of Indigenous people aged 18 to 24 years were not employed (unemployed or not in the labour force) and not studying, compared with 11.2 per cent of non-Indigenous people of the same age group (figure 7.5.1).
- For Indigenous people, in 2004-05, a higher proportion of young people aged 18 to 24 years in very remote areas (51.5 per cent) were not employed and not studying, compared with those in major cities (33.6 per cent).
- Between 2002 and 2004-05, there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of people aged 18 to 24 years who were not employed and not

studying, for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, across remoteness areas. It is important, however, to keep in mind that a proportion of Indigenous people are CDEP participants (who are classified as employed) (for 2004-05, 28.8 per cent of those aged 15 to 24 years in remote areas) (tables 7A.5.2 and 3A.5.4).

Figure 7.5.2 **Proportion of people aged 18 to 24 years who were not employed and not studying[a, b, c]**



a Not employed comprises people unemployed or not in the labour force. **b** Non-Indigenous data for remote and very remote areas are not provided by the ABS as they are considered too small to produce reliable estimates, but these data have been attributed appropriately to national estimates. **c** Error bars represent 95 per cent confidence intervals around each estimate (see chapter 2 for more information).

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS and NHS, 2002 NATSISS and GSS (unpublished); table 7A.5.2.

In 2004-05:

- The proportions of both Indigenous males and females aged 18 to 24 years who were not employed (unemployed or not in the labour force) and not studying were around three times higher than for their non-Indigenous counterparts (figure 7.5.2).
- For both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 18 to 24 years, females were more likely than males to be not employed and not studying.
- From 2002 to 2004-05, there was no statistically significant change in the proportions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous males and females aged 18 to 24 years who were not employed and not studying. However, this does not take into account the proportion of Indigenous people who were engaged in CDEP and therefore classified as employed (in 2004-05, 8.8 per cent of those aged 15 to 24 years) (figure 7.5.2; table 3A.5.5).

State and Territory data on people aged 18 to 24 year who were not employed and not studying are included in table 7A.5.3.

Figure 7.5.3 **Main activities of 1995 cohort participants in the fifth to eighth years of LSAY**

Source: ACER *Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth* (unpublished); table 7A.5.4.

Figure 7.5.3 shows the main activities of 1995 cohort participants in the fifth to eighth years of LSAY. During these four years, when the participants were aged approximately from 18 to 21 years:

- Indigenous young people were less likely than their non-Indigenous counterparts to be engaging in studies (including secondary and post secondary studies) (figure 7.5.3).
- A higher proportion of Indigenous young people in the cohort than their non-Indigenous counterparts were not studying and not employed (figure 7.5.3).

- Similar patterns to those in the 1995 cohort are also observed from the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants in the 1998 cohort (table 7A.5.5).
- In both the 1995 and 1998 cohorts, Indigenous young people were more likely than non-Indigenous people to be undertaking vocational education and training, including study at a TAFE institution or in an apprenticeship or traineeship, but less likely to be studying in universities (tables 7A.5.4 and 7A.5.5). This is consistent with the results reported in section 3.4, Post-secondary education — participation and attainment.

The 'outcome from education' approach

This approach examines the labour force status of people who have and have not achieved a qualification of certificate level 3 or higher. It shows the relationship between employment outcomes and attainment of a certain level of educational qualification.

Table 7.5.1 **Labour force status, people aged 18 years and over, age standardised, 2004-05[a]**

	Indigenous			*Non-Indigenous*		
	Males	*Females*	*Persons*	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*
Labour force participation as a proportion of the population aged 18 years and over (%)						
Certificate level 3 or higher	79.3	69.6	74.3	80.9	72.3	77.1
Balance of population[b]	57.6	37.5	46.8	71.9	54.4	61.9
All people[c]	62.6	44.5	52.9	76.5	60.8	68.5
Employed people as a proportion of the labour force (%)						
Certificate level 3 or higher	91.5	91.9	91.8	97.2	97.6	97.3
Balance of population[b]	90.7	89.2	90.0	95.6	95.7	95.6
All people[c]	90.7	89.9	90.3	96.4	96.6	96.5

a Excludes people still at school. **b** Includes Certificate 1 and 2 and non-school qualifications. **c** Includes inadequately described and not stated.

Source: ABS 2004-05 NATSIHS and NHS (unpublished); table 7A5.6.

In 2004-05:

- For both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 18 years and over, the labour force participation rate for those with a certificate level 3 or higher was much higher than for those with lower levels of qualifications (than certificate 3) or without qualifications; however, the employment rates for those with higher and lower qualifications were similar (table 7.5.1).

- Both labour force participation and employment rates for Indigenous people were lower than for non-Indigenous people, whether or not they had achieved a certificate level 3 or higher qualification (table 7.5.1).
- The category 'certificate level 3 or higher' includes a range of intermediate to advanced qualifications and the gap in employment rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people may partly reflect a lower proportion of Indigenous compared to non-Indigenous people with more advanced qualifications (including certificate 4, diploma, advanced diploma as well as university degrees) in this category (see section 3.4 for more information on post-secondary education, participation and attainment).

From 2002 to 2004-05, there was a significant increase in the employment rates for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (table 7A.5.6). The increase of employment opportunities over this period was greater for those with a low level of qualification (certificates 1 and 2) or without a qualification than those with a certificate level 3 or higher qualification.

- The employment rate for Indigenous people with qualifications lower than certificate 3 or without qualifications increased from 79.4 per cent in 2002 to 90.0 per cent in 2004-05.
- The rate for non-Indigenous people in the same group increased from 92.3 per cent in 2002 to 95.6 per cent in 2004-05.
- There were no significant changes in the employment rates for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with a certificate level 3 or higher qualification between 2002 and 2004-05 (table 7A.5.6).

Tables 7A.5.7 and 7A.5.8 provide data on labour force status by level of qualifications for each State and Territory. Table 7A.5.9 contains information on employment of people in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) and non-CDEP employment by level of qualification.

Examples of successful programs in increasing Indigenous higher education attainment are described in box 3.4.2 in chapter 3. Box 11.1.2 in chapter 11 provides some examples of successful programs in improving Indigenous employment outcomes.

7.6 Future directions in data

Years 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy

(As for year 3) Indigenous learning outcomes data in future reports will need to be improved through the inclusion of more timely data and data by remoteness areas.

Indigenous cultural studies in school curriculum and involvement of Indigenous people in development and delivery of Indigenous studies

Currently, there are very limited data on Indigenous curriculum and staff, with no change in available data since the 2003 Report. The ABS standard definition for the collection and reporting on Indigenous staffing has become part of the NSSC reporting requirements. For some jurisdictions, these data may be collected and released in 2008.

Juvenile diversions as a proportion of all juvenile offenders

Further work in the area of juvenile diversions is needed to improve the comparability of data across jurisdictions. For two jurisdictions (Tasmania and the ACT) there are currently no data available because there is either no Indigenous identifier currently in place or data are not of sufficient size or quality to publish.

Transition from school to work

Since the 2005 Report, data on young people aged 18 to 24 years at risk of long-term disadvantage have become available at national and state level through the 2002 NATSISS and GSS, and the 2004-05 NATSIHS and NHS.

This Report includes data from the 1995 and 1998 cohorts of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), a research program jointly managed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). LSAY studies the progress of several groups of young Australians from the compulsory years of schooling into their mid-twenties, which provides additional insights into pathways of young people in transition from school to work. However, the Indigenous sample is relatively small compared to the non-Indigenous sample in the survey, which limits the usefulness of the data for Indigenous and non-Indigenous comparisons. The 2003 and 2006 cohorts of LSAY have larger relative samples of Indigenous young people, which will allow greater analysis of the transition in future years.

7.7 Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 7A.3.2 is table 2 in the attachment tables for section 7.3). The files containing the attachment tables can also be found on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users without access to the Internet can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

7.1 Years 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy

See section 6.3 for attachment tables

7.2 Retention at year 9

See section 3.3 for attachment tables

7.3 Indigenous cultural studies in school curriculum and involvement of Indigenous people in development and delivery of Indigenous studies

Table 7A.3.1	Indigenous employment in schools
Table 7A.3.2	Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers in government and Catholic schools who have completed or are undertaking professional development leading to formal qualifications

7.4 Juvenile diversions as a proportion of all juvenile offenders

Table 7A.4.1	NSW, alleged juvenile offenders (aged 10−17 years) proceeded against by police, by offence type, 2004
Table 7A.4.2	NSW, alleged juvenile offenders (aged 10−17 years) proceeded against by police, by offence type, 2005
Table 7A.4.3	NSW, juvenile diversions, 2004
Table 7A.4.4	NSW, juvenile diversions, 2005
Table 7A.4.5	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, 2002-03
Table 7A.4.6	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, 2003-04
Table 7A.4.7	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, 2004-05
Table 7A.4.8	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, 2005-06
Table 7A.4.9	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, by type of offence, 2004-05
Table 7A.4.10	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, by type of offence, 2005-06
Table 7A.4.11	Victoria, method of processing juvenile alleged offenders, by remoteness area, 2004-05

7.5 Transition from school to work

7.8 References

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