

# Results

## 1. Social determinants

### 1.1 Demographics

The physical, social and family environments in which young people live influence their health-related behaviours. Demographic factors including age, gender, indigenous status, country of birth and living in remote and rural areas impact on the health of young people (Robards, 2009). Aboriginal young people are particularly disadvantaged, with high levels of trans-generational trauma and associated exposure to mental illness, drug and alcohol issues, family violence and socio-economic disadvantage (DOH, 2010a). Together these contribute to higher rates of some chronic diseases, death and injury compared with non-Aboriginal young people (AIHW, 2007).

In Australia in 2006, there were 5.3 million young people aged 19 years or younger, of whom 4.1% were of Indigenous origin (AIHW, 2008e). In NSW in 2006, the estimated residential population of people aged 19 years or younger was 1.8 million (26%), with approximately 148,178 Aboriginal people, reflecting just over 2% of the total population (DOH, 2010a).

The average age of participants in the 2009 YPICHS was 17.0 years, which was similar to the average age of the 2003 YPICHS sample of 17.1 years. The average age of the 2009 YPICHS sample is higher than the average age of 16.4 years of young people in custody in NSW for the 2008/2009 period. The age range of the 2009 YPICHS sample was 13 to 21 years, which was similar to the 2003 YPICHS age range of 14 to 22 years.

Young women comprised 12% of the 2009 YPICHS sample, which is substantially higher than the daily average of 7.3% of young women in custody in 2008/09 (Juvenile Justice, 2009). The higher proportion of young women is due to deliberate over-sampling, as detailed in the Methods section. Consistent with the 2003 sample, young men were older on average than young women (17.1 years vs 16.3 years;  $p < 0.001$ ). Non-Aboriginal young people were significantly older than Aboriginal young people (17.3 years vs 16.7 years,  $p < 0.001$ ). The median age of the sample was 17.0 years, which was the same for both young men and young women. However the median age for Aboriginal young people was lower than for non-Aboriginal young people (16.8 years vs 17.4 years)

**Table 1.1.1 Participant age characteristics**

	Young Men	Young Women	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total
N	319	42	174	187	361
Mean (± sd)	17.1 (± 1.5)	16.3 (± 1.5)	16.7 (± 1.5)	17.3 (± 1.5)	17.0 (± 1.5)
Median	17.0	17.0	16.8	17.4	17.0
Range	13-21	13-19	13-21	13-21	13-21

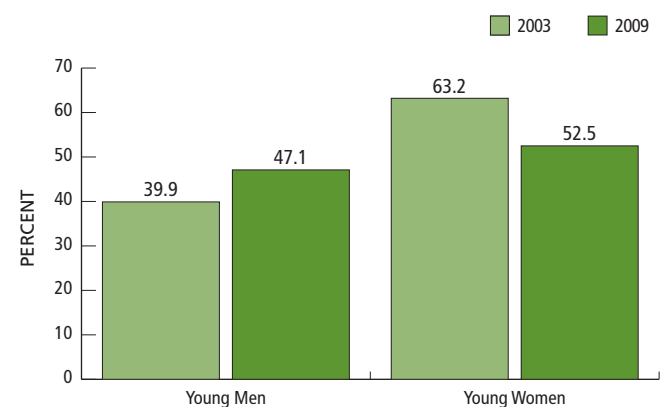
Nearly half (48%) of non-Aboriginal young people were aged 18 years or older compared to one third (32%) of Aboriginal young people, with nearly a quarter (24%) under 16 years of age, compared with 11% of non-Aboriginal young people. Overall, 40% of participants were aged 18 years or older. Twice as many young men (42%) as young women (22%) were aged 18 years or older.

**Table 1.1.2 Participant age by age groups**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
14 years and under	9	2.8	5	11.9	10	5.7	4	2.1	14	3.9
15 years	39	12.2	8	19.1	31	17.8	16	8.6	47	13.0
16 years	61	19.1	7	16.7	33	19.0	35	18.7	68	18.8
17 years	75	23.5	13	31.0	45	25.9	43	23.0	88	24.4
18 years	86	27.0	7	16.7	39	22.4	54	28.9	93	25.8
19 years and over	49	15.4	2	4.8	16	9.2	35	18.7	51	14.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Nearly half (48%) of the 2009 YPICHS participants reported being of Aboriginal origin, compared with 42% in the 2003 YPICHS sample. This reflects the increase in the proportion of Aboriginal young people in custody over this period (Juvenile Justice, 2009).

**Table/Fig 1.1.3 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	89	223	39.9	128	272	47.1
Young Women	12	19	63.2	21	40	52.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>47.8</b>

Young people born outside of Australia are under-represented in detention. In 2006, 16% of young people aged 15-24 years were born outside of Australia. One third of these were from English-speaking countries and the remainder from non-English speaking countries (AIHW, 2007). In NSW in 2006, 74% of residents were born in Australia, with the largest number of overseas born residents coming from the United Kingdom, China, New Zealand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Lebanon and Italy (DOH, 2010a).

Nearly all (89%) young people in the 2009 YPICHs were born in Australia, slightly more than the 2003 YPICHs sample (85%). This rise partly reflects the increased proportion of Aboriginal young people in custody over this period, since a significantly greater proportion (99%) of Aboriginal young people in the 2009 sample reported being born in Australia compared with non-Aboriginal young people (79%) ( $p < 0.001$ ). There was also an increase in non-Aboriginal young people reporting being born in Australia (79% vs 74%). In 2009, young men and young women were equally likely to be born in Australia. The proportion of young women born in Australia is the same across both samples at 95%, while the 2009 sample had slightly more young men than the 2003 YPICHs (88% vs 84%) born in Australia.

Table/Fig 1.1.4 Born in Australia



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	188	223	84.3	238	272	87.5
Young Women	18	19	94.7	38	40	95.0
Aboriginal	102	102	100.0	148	149	99.3
Non-Aboriginal	104	140	74.3	128	163	78.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>85.1</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>88.5</b>

A small proportion of the sample was not born in Australia (12%). Of this group, the majority were from New Zealand (44%) with a smaller proportion from Asian (22%) or Middle Eastern (17%) countries. No young women in the 2009

sample were born outside of Australia or New Zealand. By comparison, 24% of young people in custody from July 2008 to June 2009 were born outside of Australia, with the majority born in New Zealand (5%), other Oceania (8%) and the Middle East (5%) (Juvenile Justice, 2009). This suggests that the 2009 YPICHs may have an under-representation of young people born outside of Australia than is usually found in custody at Juvenile Justice.

Table 1.1.5 Region of birth

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Australia	238	87.5	38	95.0	148	99.3	128	78.5	276	88.5
New Zealand	14	5.1	2	5.0	1	0.7	15	9.2	16	5.1
Other Oceania	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.2	2	0.6
Asia	8	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	4.9	8	2.6
Europe	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.2	2	0.6
Middle East	6	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	3.7	6	1.9
Americas	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Africa	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.2	2	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

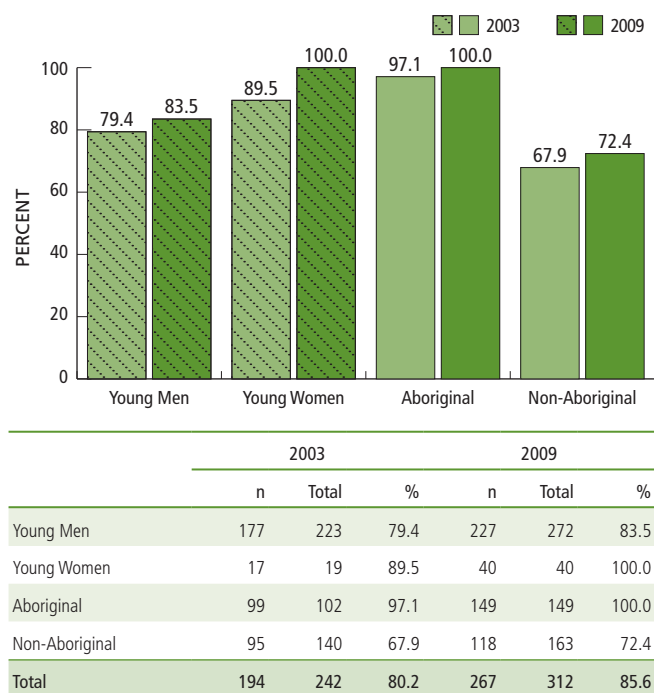
Just over two-thirds of the participants (71%) had a mother who was born in Australia. Less than half (47%) of non-Aboriginal young people reported their mother was born in Australia. A higher proportion of young women (83%) than young men (69%) reported their mother was born in Australia. Of the 84 young men with mothers born overseas, 21% reported that their mothers were born in Lebanon and 14% were born in either New Zealand or in Tonga.

Two-thirds of the participants reported their father had been born in Australia (67%). Less than half of non-Aboriginal young people (42%) reported that their father was born in Australia. More young women (75%) reported their father had been born in Australia than young men (66%). Of the 92 young men with fathers born overseas, 17% were born in Lebanon, 15% were born in New Zealand, 13% in Tonga and 11% in Samoa. More than 95% of Aboriginal young people reported that their parents were born in Australia.

The majority (86%) of the 2009 YPICHs participants reported speaking English when growing up. There was an increase in the proportion of young people who spoke English when growing up from the 2003 to 2009 YPICHs surveys across all groups, which may be due in part to the increased proportion of Aboriginal young people in custody over this period.

All young women in the 2009 sample spoke English at home when growing up, and were significantly more likely to have spoken English growing up than young men (100% vs 84%,  $p<0.01$ ). Aboriginal young people were also significantly more likely than non-Aboriginal young people to have spoken English when growing up (100% vs 72%,  $p<0.001$ ).

**Table/Fig 1.1.6 English spoken when growing up**



Forty five (14%) young people reported that English was not the main language spoken when they were growing up. For these young people, the main languages spoken were Arabic (24%) or Tongan (20%).

**Table 1.1.7 Main language when growing up**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
English	227	83.5	40	100.0	149	100.0	118	72.4	267	85.6
Arabic	11	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	6.7	11	3.5
Tongan	9	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	5.5	9	2.9
Lebanese	3	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.8	3	1.0
Samoan	3	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.8	3	1.0
Other	19	7.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	11.7	19	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

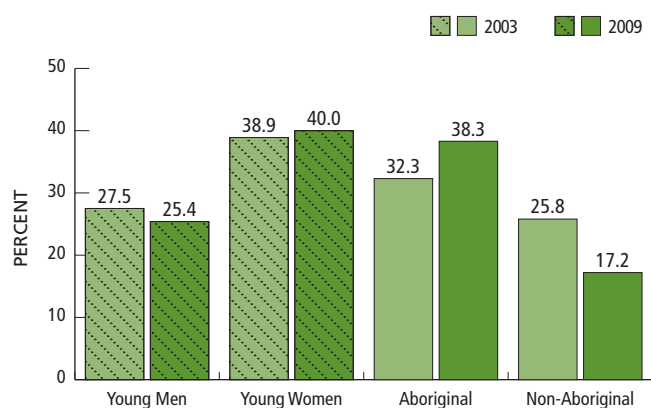
## 1.2 Childhood care experiences

Parents and other caregivers play an important role for young people, enabling them, through interactions with these adults, to develop positive resilient self identities (Ungar, 2004). A history of being raised outside of the family unit is more prevalent among inmate populations than among the general population (Borzycki, 2005). Children who are placed in out-of-home care (OOHC) experience significantly poorer long-term physical and psycho-social outcomes than those not placed in care, particularly where the child does not experience stable care placements (COAG, 2009; Cashmore & Paxman, 2006). Children who have been placed in OOHC are over-represented in the juvenile justice system and have been found to experience poorer mental and physical health, particular difficulties in accessing education, employment and housing and have higher rates of early parenthood (Mendes, 2009). These young people suffer multiple disadvantages and are less likely to have the level of emotional, financial and social support available to most young people in their transition to adulthood (Osborn & Bromfield, 2007; Richardson, 2005). Consequently, the long term social and economic costs to the young person and the wider community are high (Bromfield et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2008).

In NSW OOHC placements may include living in foster care or residential care with carers who are unrelated to the child, with extended family or kin (kinship care), or living at home with their own families under the supervision of Community Services (Richardson et al., 2009). These placements are for children and young people up to the age of 18 years and can be voluntary or ordered by the NSW Children's Court under The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998; however both have the premise that a young person is unable to reside with their birth family. In 2009, the rate of children in OOHC across NSW was 9.4 per 1,000 children, the highest rate in Australia and an increase since 2005 when the rate was 5.8 per 1,000 (AIHW, 2010a). In NSW, there were 15,211 children in OOHC as at 30 June 2009, with 33% of these children being of Aboriginal origin (71.3 per 1,000), a rate 11 times higher than for non-Aboriginal children (AIHW, 2010a).

In the 2009 YPICHS, young people were asked if they had ever experienced OOHC placements whilst they were growing up. Over one quarter (27%) of young people reported that they had been placed in OOHC before 16 years of age, which is consistent with the 28% of the 2003 YPICHS sample who reported OOHC experiences. In the 2009 YPICHS, Aboriginal young people were twice as likely as non-Aboriginal young people to report ever being placed in care as a child (38% vs 17%,  $p<0.001$ ). Young women were also more likely than young men (40% vs 25%,  $p<0.05$ ) to report having ever being placed in care.

**Table/Fig 1.2.1 Ever placed in care before the age of 16 years**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	57	207	27.5	69	272	25.4
Young Women	7	18	38.9	16	40	40.0
Aboriginal	30	93	32.3	57	149	38.3
Non-Aboriginal	34	132	25.8	28	163	17.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>27.2</b>

Of those young people that had been in OOHC, approximately 43% said that they were placed in care before the age of 10 years. Aboriginal young people were significantly more likely to be placed into care before the age of 10 years than non-Aboriginal young people (51% vs 29%;  $p < 0.05$ ). A higher proportion of young women reported having been placed into care before the age of 10 years than young men (53% vs 42%); however, this difference was not significant.

**Table 1.2.2 Age first placed in care (if ever placed in care)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
0-2 years	7	10.3	3	20.0	8	14.5	2	7.1	10	12.0
3-4 years	5	7.4	1	6.7	4	7.3	2	7.1	6	7.2
5-9 years	16	23.5	4	26.7	16	29.1	4	14.3	20	24.1
10+ years	40	58.8	7	46.7	27	49.1	20	71.4	47	56.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Three-quarters (77%) of the 85 young people who reported ever being placed into care before the age of 16 years reported being placed into care by the Department of Community Services (DOCS). The remainder reported being placed into care by a Court Order (12%) or by other various means (12%). There were no significant differences found in the likelihood that young men or young women would be placed into care by different routes, despite more young women reporting DOCS placement than young men (94% vs 73%).

**Table 1.2.3 By whom placed in care (if ever placed in care)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Department of Community Services	50	72.5	15	93.8	41	71.9	24	85.7	65	76.5
Court order	9	13.0	1	6.3	7	12.3	3	10.7	10	11.8
Other	10	14.5	0	0.0	9	15.8	1	3.6	10	11.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority of the young people who had ever experienced OOHC were placed into either foster care placements (46%) or with other family members (28%). No significant differences were found by gender or Aboriginality for those experiencing a care placement. By comparison, among all young people placed into OOHC in NSW in 2009, the majority (56%) were placed with other family members, or in kinship care, with the remainder (41%) placed in foster care (AIHW, 2010a). Similarly, the proportion of Aboriginal young people in custody being placed in kinship care in NSW was found to be 56%, which was the highest proportion in (AIHW, 2010a).

**Table 1.2.4 Type of care placement (if ever placed in care)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Foster care	31	46.3	6	42.9	23	42.6	14	51.9	37	45.7
With other family members	21	31.3	2	14.3	19	35.2	4	14.8	23	28.4
In a home	6	9.0	2	14.3	4	7.4	4	14.8	8	9.9
Other	9	13.4	4	28.6	8	14.8	5	18.5	13	16.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Just under two-thirds (64%) of the sample was placed into care once, while over one-quarter (27%) were placed into care three or more times. Again, there was no significant difference by gender or Aboriginality in the number of times young people were placed in care.

**Table 1.2.5 Number of times placed in care (if ever placed in care)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Once	43	63.2	10	66.7	35	63.6	18	64.3	53	63.9
Twice	7	10.3	1	6.7	5	9.1	3	10.7	8	9.6
Three or more times	18	26.5	4	26.7	15	27.3	7	25.0	22	26.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 1.3 Education

Participation in education is a fundamental social determinant of health and is considered to be one of the most important contributors to the development of individual capability and establishment of a socially inclusive society (ABS, 2010a). Involvement in education has been noted as a protective factor reducing the risk of reoffending (Roberts, 2005; Thompson & Pope, 2005; Farrington, 2003; Gottfredson et al., 2002; Cottle et al., 2001) and demonstrates substantial and ongoing savings to the community (Aos et al., 2006; Homel et al., 2006). Research by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) identified not attending school at the time of their first offence as a significant predictor of recidivism for juvenile offenders (Weatherburn et al., 2007).

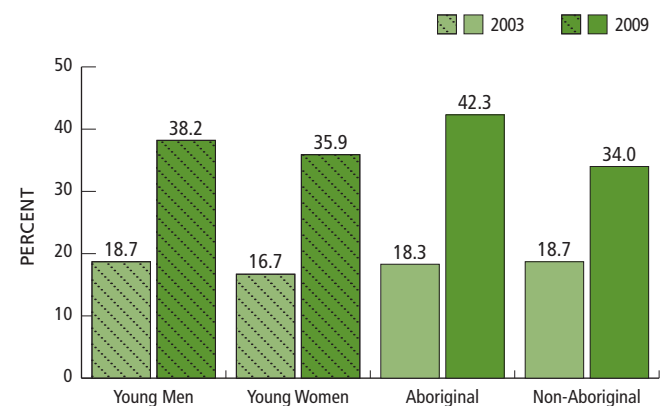
Across Australia, in May 2009, 70% of young people aged 15 to 19 years were in full-time education, either in secondary school or in tertiary study (Robinson & Lamb, 2010). Young women (72%) were more likely than young men (67%) to be enrolled in full-time study in 2009, whereas young men (18%) were more often engaged in full-time work than young women (10%) (Robinson & Lamb, 2010). The NSW year 12 retention rate in 2007 was reported to be 70%, with a higher rate found in non-government schools than in government schools (79% vs 65%) (DOH, 2010a). Across Australia, 74% of young people completed year 12, which was significantly lower for Indigenous students (43%) (AIHW, 2008e). Aboriginal people in NSW aged 15 years or older were less likely to have a post-school qualification (27%) compared to non-Aboriginal people (49%) (DOH, 2010a).

In NSW as a whole, the proportion of 15-19 year olds participating in full-time education or training, full-time work or a combination of part-time education or training and part-time work (or what is known as a full participation rate) was 86% in 2008. The retention rate between Year 10 to 12 for all NSW government school students was 69% in 2009 (DET, 2010). The number of 15 to 19 year olds enrolled in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses increased by 3% from 2005 (134,463) to 2009 (138,665) (DET, 2010).

Aboriginal students in NSW, particularly younger students, are attending school more often and staying in school longer. Between 2005 and 2009 retention rates for Years 7-10 increased from 78% to 84%. For Years 10-12 retention rates increased from 36% to 41%. The number of Aboriginal students gaining their HSC more than doubled between 2003 (485) and 2008 (1,049). The attendance rate for Aboriginal students in NSW as a whole was 85% in 2009 (DET, 2010).

Consistent with the risk factors described, young people in custody were found to have a very different education profile from that of the general community. Only 38% of young people in the 2009 YPICHs sample reported going to school in the six months prior to custody. However, the proportion of young people attending school prior to custody doubled between 2003 to 2009 (from 19% to 38%) and more than doubled for Aboriginal young people (from 18% to 43%). More Aboriginal young people (42%) reported attending school prior to custody than non-Aboriginal young people (34%), although this difference was not statistically significant. Furthermore, Aboriginal young people in custody are significantly younger than non-Aboriginal young people. Levels of educational participation remain far below those in the community (Robinson & Lamb, 2010).

**Table/Fig 1.3.1 Attending school prior to custody**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	39	209	18.7	104	272	38.2
Young Women	3	18	16.7	14	39	35.9
Aboriginal	17	93	18.3	63	149	42.3
Non-Aboriginal	25	134	18.7	55	162	34.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>37.9</b>

For the 2009 YPICHs, the average age of leaving school was 14.4 years, with the median age being 15 years. This average age is lower than the current minimum age for leaving school in NSW, which was 15 years at the time of the survey. The youngest age that was reported for leaving school was age six years, and the highest was 18 years. Aboriginal young people in custody were significantly more likely to report leaving school at a younger age than non-Aboriginal young people (14.0 vs 14.7 years,  $p < 0.01$ ). There was no difference in the mean age of leaving school for young men and young women.

**Table 1.3.2 Age left school**

	Young Men	Young Women	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total
N	177	27	96	108	204
Mean ( $\pm$ sd)	14.5 ( $\pm$ 1.5)	14.1 ( $\pm$ 1.1)	14.0 ( $\pm$ 1.6)	14.7 ( $\pm$ 1.2)	14.4 ( $\pm$ 1.4)
Median	15.0	14.0	14.0	15.0	15.0
Range	6-18	12-16	6-17	12-18	6-18

Overall, almost two-thirds (65%) of participants reported leaving school by Year 9. This was more common for young women than young men (79% vs 63%) and for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal young people (73% vs 58%). Close to 10% of the sample progressed beyond Year 10, which is substantially lower than the 69% of the NSW general population (DET, 2010).

Of concern is that no young women in the 2009 sample progressed past Year 10 and higher proportions of young women left school in both Year 7 (21%) and Year 8 (32%) than the young men of the sample (16% and 12% respectively). A significantly higher proportion of Aboriginal young people left in Year 7 than non-Aboriginal young people (26% vs 8%,  $p < 0.001$ ), however across other years the sample proportions were similar between the two groups.

**Table 1.3.3 Year of leaving school**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Year 7 or less	29	15.6	6	21.4	26	25.5	9	8.0	35	16.4
Year 8	22	11.8	9	32.1	15	14.7	16	14.3	31	14.5
Year 9	66	35.5	7	25.9	33	32.4	40	35.7	73	34.1
Year 10	48	25.8	6	21.4	22	21.6	32	28.6	54	25.2
Year 11	16	8.6	0	0.0	5	4.9	11	9.8	16	7.5
Year 12	5	2.7	0	0.0	1	1.0	4	3.6	5	2.3
Total	186	100.0	28	100.0	102	100.0	112	100.0	214	100.0

Any attendance at a special class within a mainstream school, or attendance at a special school was recorded. A special school was defined as a school for specific purposes, including intellectual disability and behavioural disorders. Tutorial centres or alternative community based programs were included in this group. More than two-fifths (41%) of participants reported ever attending either a special class or special school. There were no differences by gender or Aboriginality with regard to the likelihood of attending a special class or school. The high proportion of young people who had ever attended a special class or special school reflects interrupted attendance at school, prevalence of behavioural and other mental health problems (as described elsewhere in this report), and other related factors such as intellectual disability, family violence, neglect, and alcohol and other drug issues.

**Table 1.3.4 Attendance at special school or class**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	161	60.3	21	53.9	87	60.0	95	59.0	182	59.1
Yes, special school	67	25.1	15	38.5	36	24.8	46	28.6	82	26.6
Yes, special class	39	14.6	3	7.7	22	15.2	20	12.4	42	13.6
Total	267	100.0	39	100.0	145	100.0	161	100.0	306	100.0

The 263 young people who reported attending school prior to custody were asked to estimate the number of times they had missed class without permission. Nearly three in five young people (58%) reported that they had missed or skipped class five or more times in the six months prior to custody. Just over one-quarter (27%) of young people attending school said they had never skipped or missed class in the six months prior to custody.

**Table 1.3.5 Missed class without permission in the six months prior to custody**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never	65	28.4	6	17.7	34	26.6	37	27.4	71	27.0
1-2 times	17	7.4	4	11.8	11	8.6	10	7.4	21	8.0
3-4 times	16	7.0	3	8.8	10	7.8	9	6.7	19	7.2
5+ times	131	57.2	21	61.8	73	57.0	79	58.5	152	57.8
Total	229	100.0	34	100.0	128	100.0	135	100.0	263	100.0

The majority of young people in the 2009 YPICHS sample had been suspended from school at least once (88%). Two-thirds (66%) reported being suspended three or more times. Young women reported being suspended three or more times less often (53%), and never being suspended (18%) more often than young men. However, these results were not found to be significantly different by gender or Aboriginality among young people in custody.

**Table 1.3.6 Suspension from school**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never	31	11.6	7	17.5	16	11.0	22	13.6	38	12.3
Once	22	8.2	6	15.0	13	8.9	15	9.3	28	9.1
Twice	34	12.7	6	15.0	19	13.0	21	13.0	40	13.0
Three or more times	181	67.5	21	52.5	98	67.1	104	64.2	202	65.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Close to half of the 2009 sample (47%) had been excluded (previously termed expelled) from school at least once. Just under two-thirds (60%) of the 144 young people who had ever been excluded reported that this happened only once. Young men were significantly more likely to have ever been excluded from school than young women (49% to 31%;  $p < 0.04$ ). No significant differences were found with Aboriginality in relation to likelihood of ever being excluded from school.

**Table 1.3.7 Exclusion from a school**

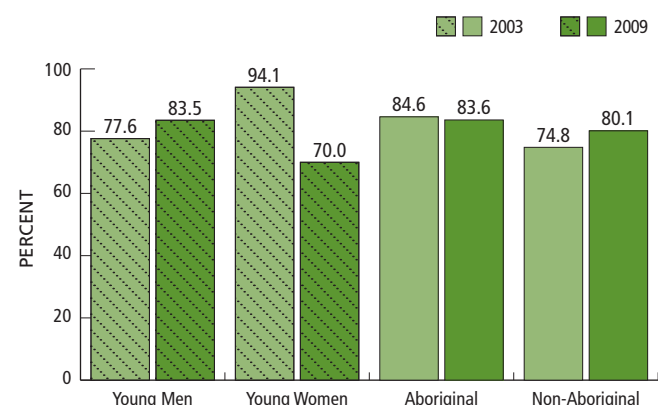
	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never	139	51.3	27	69.2	86	58.5	80	49.1	166	53.5
Once	79	29.2	8	20.5	38	25.9	49	30.1	87	28.1
Twice	34	12.5	2	5.1	13	8.8	23	14.1	36	11.6
Three or more times	19	7.9	2	5.1	10	6.8	11	6.7	21	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Young people of school age are required to attend school in custody and are able to continue the education they were receiving in the community, or recommence education if they wish. Together, Juvenile Justice and the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) deliver risk-assessed programs to improve levels of education and training, build pathways, and increase the confidence of young offenders to re-enter education and training post custody.

The Juvenile Justice 2008/09 Annual Report shows that during the financial year, 1,311 young people were enrolled in Education and Training Units based within Juvenile Justice Centres. This included 140 young people enrolled in School Certificate Courses, 56 in Higher School Certificate (HSC) courses and 633 enrolled in Technical and Further Education (TAFE). Of these, 94 young people completed the School Certificate and one young person completed the HSC (Juvenile Justice, 2009).

The majority of the 2009 participants (82%) were attending school whilst they were in custody, compared to the 2003 figure of 79%. Young men were significantly more likely to attend school in custody than young women (84% vs 70%,  $p < 0.04$ ), and there was no difference in the likelihood of Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal young people attending school in custody.

**Table/Fig 1.3.8 Attending school in custody**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	159	205	77.6	223	267	83.5
Young Women	16	17	94.1	28	40	70.0
Aboriginal	77	91	84.6	122	146	83.6
Non-Aboriginal	98	131	74.8	129	161	80.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>81.8</b>

Young people were also asked if they were attending TAFE institutes prior to admission to custody. Nearly one-quarter (24%) reported attending TAFE in the six months prior to custody; less than the 30% reported in 2003. No significant

differences were found by gender or Aboriginality in the likelihood of attending TAFE in the six months prior to custody.

**Table/Fig 1.3.9 Attending TAFE in the six months prior to custody**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	60	206	29.1	62	271	22.9
Young Women	6	18	33.3	12	40	30.0
Aboriginal	29	91	31.9	32	148	21.6
Non-Aboriginal	37	133	27.8	42	163	25.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>23.8</b>

## 1.4 Employment and Income

Participation in employment by young people is associated with higher levels of physical and psychological well-being, and contributes to individual development and capacity building within society (ABS, 2010a). Research suggests that young people who are not fully engaged in either work, education or both are at greatest risk of long term difficulties with secure employment (ABS, 2010a; Pech et al., 2009; Fergusson et al., 1997). A number of factors found in the juvenile offender population have been shown to be associated with poorer employment outcomes in the first five to seven post-school years. These include: early school leaving, young motherhood, disability, being Indigenous and having a language background other than English (Pech et al., 2009).

International research with adults has established employment status as a moderately strong predictor of recidivism (Jones, 2006), reflecting not only financial need, but also job satisfaction, social reinforcement and reward, and stability (Boyle, 2007). Unemployed young people are more likely to exhibit lifestyle risk factors, particularly cannabis use and, less consistently, tobacco use and risky alcohol consumption compared with employed young people (Morrell et al., 1998). Obtaining and maintaining stable employment is known to be a protective factor reducing the risk of re-offending (Thompson & Pope, 2005; Farrington,

2003; Cottle et al., 2001) and the socioeconomic benefits of persons being gainfully employed and contributing to the wider community are also well documented (Aos et al., 2006). Across Australia, 13% of young people aged 15-19 years in the labour force were unemployed and a further 10% were under-employed (AIHW, 2008e). Unemployment in young people rose from 12.2% in May 2008 to 18.5% in May 2009, which is recorded as one of the largest annual increases for teenagers over the past two decades (Robinson & Lamb, 2010). Young women were more likely than young men to be either in part-time employment, (7.9% compared to 6.8%) or not employed at all (2.5% higher for young women than young men), while young men were more likely to be unemployed (5.4% vs 4.2%) (ABS, 2010a). In NSW, Aboriginal people had an unemployment rate three times higher (19% vs 6%) than non-Aboriginal people (DOH, 2010a).

One-quarter (26%) of the 2009 YPICHS sample reported working in the six months prior to their admission to custody, which is a large decrease from the 39% who reported they were working in the 2003 YPICHS sample. This decrease was found across both gender and Aboriginality. This finding may in part be explained by the increase in young people participating in education prior to custody (see section 1.3). In the 2009 YPICHS sample, young men were more likely to be working in the six months prior to custody than young women (28% vs 13%;  $p < 0.05$ ). Non-Aboriginal young people were more likely to be working than Aboriginal young people (34% vs 17%;  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table/Fig 1.4.1 Working in the six months prior to custody**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	84	207	40.6	74	268	27.6
Young Women	3	18	16.7	5	39	12.8
Aboriginal	27	91	29.7	25	147	17.0
Non-Aboriginal	60	134	44.8	54	160	33.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>25.7</b>

Of the 79 young people who reported that they had been working in the six months prior to custody, the majority were either in full or part-time paid employment (71%). The minority were working in unpaid roles or roles attached to remuneration by the government such as work for the dole, volunteer work or participation in a Community Development Employment Project (CDEP, an Australian government funded initiative for Indigenous people designed to provide meaningful employment opportunities, enable communities to manage their own affairs and gain economic and social equity).

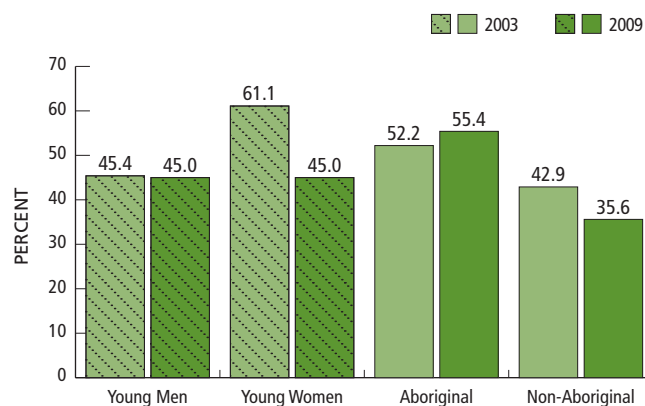
**Table 1.4.2 Employment status in the six months prior to custody**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not working	194	72.4	34	87.2	122	84.1	106	66.3	228	74.3
Full-time	31	11.6	2	5.1	5	3.4	28	17.5	33	10.7
Part-time	23	8.6	0	0.0	6	4.1	17	10.6	23	7.5
Casual	16	6.0	2	5.1	7	4.8	10	6.3	18	5.9
CDEP	3	1.1	0	0.0	3	2.0	0	0.0	3	1.0
Volunteer work	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.3
Work for the dole	0	0.0	1	2.6	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In NSW in 2008, 3.9% of the eligible population received unemployment benefits, including Youth Allowance, Newstart Allowance and Mature Age Allowance (DOH, 2010a). Family assistance benefits (paid to assist with the cost of raising children) were provided to 14% of all families and disability or sickness benefits were paid to 8.2% of people aged 15 to 64 years (DOH, 2010a). Aboriginal households in NSW in 2006 were more likely (25% vs 20%) to have a weekly household income of less than \$500 than non-Aboriginal households (DOH, 2010a).

Nearly half (45%) of the survey population were in receipt of allowances or benefit payments in the six months prior to custody. Whilst the overall proportion receiving allowances or benefits appears consistent between 2003 (47%) and 2009 (45%), there was a decrease in young women receiving allowances or benefits from 61% in 2003 to 45% in 2009. In the 2009 YPICHs, Aboriginal young people were more likely to be in receipt of benefits than non-Aboriginal young people (55% vs 36%;  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table/Fig 1.4.3 Allowances or benefits received in the six months prior to custody**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	94	207	45.4	122	271	45.0
Young Women	11	18	61.1	18	40	45.0
Aboriginal	48	92	52.2	82	148	55.4
Non-Aboriginal	57	133	42.9	58	163	35.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>46.7</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>45.0</b>

Not surprisingly, given the age of the sample, the majority of the 140 young people receiving a Centrelink allowance or benefit reported that they were in receipt of the Youth Allowance (59%). Youth Allowance is paid to those 15 to 20 years old (up to 25 years in some circumstances) who are studying, undertaking training or an Australian Apprenticeship, looking for work, or sick (Centrelink, 2009). Abstudy is an allowance paid to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people who are secondary or tertiary students, or full-time Apprentices. Abstudy was being paid to 14% of the Aboriginal YPICHs participants, who were mostly young men. The Newstart allowance is only paid to those over the age of 21 years looking for work, thus only a small proportion of the 2009 sample reported that they were receiving this benefit.

**Table 1.4.4 Type of allowance or benefit received**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	149	55.0	22	55.0	66	44.6	105	64.4	171	55.0
Newstart	8	3.0	0	0.0	7	4.7	1	0.6	8	2.6
Youth allowance	71	26.2	12	30.0	41	27.7	42	25.8	83	39.3
Austudy	2	0.7	1	2.5	1	0.7	2	1.2	3	1.0
Abstudy	18	6.6	2	5.0	20	13.5	0	0.0	20	6.4
Other	23	8.5	3	7.5	13	8.8	13	8.0	26	8.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 1.5 Accommodation

The need for shelter is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and the broader community. Young people experiencing homelessness are one of the most marginalised, least visible and most at risk groups in society (Bantchevska et al., 2008). Homeless young people also experience difficulties with educational achievement, tend to have mental and behavioural problems, and often have a history of abuse, trauma and neglect (Toro et al., 2007; Simon, 2009). Same sex attracted, and transgender young people are also at greater risk of homelessness due to conflict with their family or community regarding their sexual or gender orientation (Milburn et al., 2009). People who become homeless before the age of 18 years are at greater risk of being homeless for long periods and find it more difficult to transition out of homelessness (Johnson et al., 2008; Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 2008).

Compounding the severe social and economic disadvantage, young people who are homeless have high rates of alcohol and other drug use (Johnson et al., 2008) and are at higher risk of pregnancy and sexually transmissible infection, and being repeated victims of crime (Milburn et al., 2009; Toro et al., 2007). Research also suggests a correlation between adolescent homelessness and criminal behaviour, and outlines the bi-directional nature of this relationship. Ensuring young people have stable accommodation as they exit custody is critical to reducing homelessness. A high rate of homelessness shortly after release from custody perpetuates a cycle of disadvantage and offending among young people to help meet daily needs (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003). Homelessness is further exacerbated amongst those who enter custody for short periods, during which time they may be unable to access assistance for accommodation or training in independent living skills, areas in which intervention has shown to be effective (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998; Loeber & Farrington, 1998). Furthermore, the strengthening of criminal networks and negative social contacts whilst homeless has been shown to increase the risk for continuing homelessness (Johnson et al., 2008; Milburn et al., 2009).

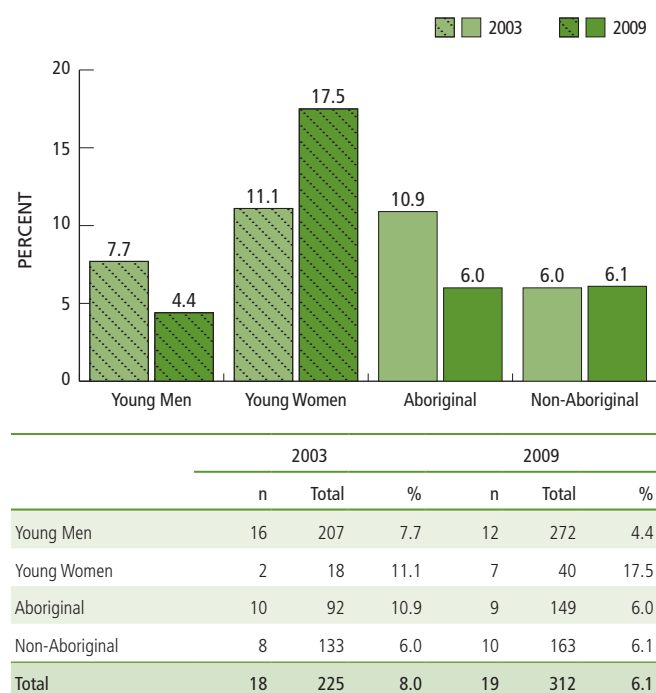
The 2006 Australian Census indicated that there were approximately 105,000 homeless people across the country with 12% aged under 12 years and 21% aged between 12 to 18 years (Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 2008). NSW had the largest increase in homelessness since the previous census with a 48% increase since the 2002 census compared to a 19% increase nationally. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of all homeless people under 18 years live in NSW (Simon, 2009). Indigenous young people are more at risk of homelessness, and those with a history of OOHC are over-represented in the youth homeless population (Chamberlain & Mackenzie, 2008). In 2001, 10% of young people aged 15-24 years lived in overcrowded housing (AIHW, 2007). Aboriginal households are more likely

to be overcrowded and house multiple families (3.7% vs 1.5%) and seven or more people (3.1% vs 0.8%) than non-Aboriginal households (DOH, 2010a).

In 2006/07, there were 69,100 accompanying children using the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) and a further 24,900 clients aged 20 years or younger. On an average day SAAP services were unable to meet the demand for 415 young people under 19 years, two-thirds of whom were accompanying a parent/guardian and half required accommodation within 24 hours (AIHW, 2008e). Domestic violence and relationship or family breakdown were the primary reasons for children and families seeking supported accommodation. Indigenous young people are more than five times as likely to be seeking SAAP assistance than non-Indigenous young people (77 per 1,000 compared to 14 per 1,000).

In the 2009 YPICHS, the proportion of young women residing in unsettled or "no fixed place of abode" accommodation nearly doubled, increasing from 11% in 2003 to 18% in 2009, and was significantly higher than for young men (18% vs 4%,  $p < 0.001$ ). The proportion of both young men and Aboriginal young people in unsettled accommodation decreased, and the proportion of non-Aboriginal young people has remained constant. Overall, there was a decrease in unsettled or "no fixed place of abode" accommodation between 2003 (8%) and 2009 (6%).

Table/Fig 1.5.1 Unsettled or "no fixed abode" accommodation prior to custody



In NSW in 2006, 67% of the population lived in a household where the home was either fully owned or being purchased, while 30% were in rental accommodation (DOH, 2010a). Aboriginal households in NSW in 2006 were twice as likely (59% vs 27%) to live in a rented home than non-Aboriginal households (DOH, 2010a). Aboriginal households were also more likely to involve multiple families (3.7% vs 1.5%) and seven or more people (3.1% vs 0.8%) than non-Aboriginal households (DOH, 2010a).

Four in five young people (80%) said that they were living in the family home prior to custody, which is higher than the proportion in 2003 (67%). Fewer young women (55%) and Aboriginal (77%) young people reported living in the family home than young men (83%) and non-Aboriginal young people (82%). Of the 64 young people not living in the family home, the highest proportion reported staying with friends (42%) which may include 'couch surfing' or short periods with different people.

**Table 1.5.2 Type of accommodation prior to custody**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Family home	226	83.1	22	55.0	114	76.5	134	82.2	248	79.5
Renting	11	4.0	1	2.5	4	2.7	8	4.9	12	3.8
Unsettled lodging	11	4.0	7	17.5	9	6.0	9	5.5	18	5.8
Sleeping on the streets	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	1	0.3
Sharing with friends	19	7.0	8	20.0	18	12.1	9	5.5	27	8.7
Other	4	1.5	2	5.0	4	2.7	2	1.2	6	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Accommodation for the majority of young people was relatively stable, with over two-thirds (70%) having either not moved or moved only once in the six months prior to their admission to custody. A small percentage (3.5%) reported that they had no fixed place of abode. Just over one-quarter (27%) had moved two or more times in the six months prior to custody. Significantly more young women reported moving two or more times in the six months prior to custody than young men (40% vs 25%,  $p < 0.01$ ), a trend also found in Aboriginal young people compared with non-Aboriginal young people (32% vs 22%,  $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1.5.3 Number of times moved in the six months prior to custody**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None, lived in same place	129	47.4	13	32.5	54	36.2	88	54.0	142	45.5
Moved once	69	25.4	7	17.5	41	27.5	35	21.5	76	24.4
Moved 2-3 times	45	16.5	7	17.5	27	18.1	25	15.3	52	16.7
Moved 4-5 times	11	4.0	3	7.5	9	6.0	5	3.1	14	4.5
Moved 6+ times	11	4.0	6	15.0	11	7.4	6	3.7	17	5.4
No fixed accommodation	7	2.6	4	10.0	7	4.7	4	2.5	11	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

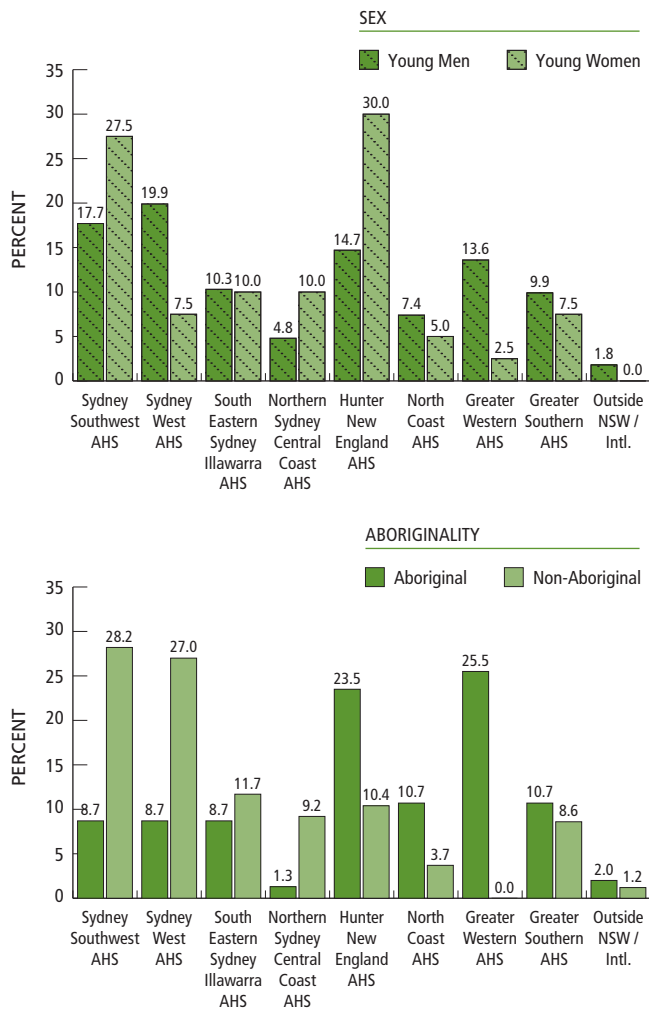
Few young people (N=25) who had previously been in custody reported that they had accommodation problems in the six months after their most recent release. Young women were significantly more likely to have experienced accommodation problems in the six months after their most recent release than young men (24% vs 8%;  $p < 0.01$ ). Young women were also more likely to have moved multiple times compared with young men in the previous six months. These figures do not account for family stresses which make it difficult for the young person to live at home, such as overcrowding, parental alcohol or drug misuse, family violence or neglect.

**Table 1.5.4 Accommodation problems within six months of most recent release (if ever previously in custody)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	17	7.9	8	23.5	15	11.8	10	8.1	25	10.0
No	199	92.1	26	76.5	112	88.2	113	91.9	225	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Young people were asked their main suburb or town of residence in the year before they were admitted to custody. This location was mapped to the relevant NSW Area Health Service (AHS). Rural AHSs included Hunter New England, North Coast, Greater Western and Greater Southern Areas. Urban AHSs included Sydney South West, Sydney West, South Eastern Sydney Illawarra and Northern Sydney Central Coast Areas. Five young men (1.6%) living interstate or abroad were included in the urban group.

**Table/Fig 1.5.5 NSW Area Health Service of residence in the year prior to custody**



	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sydney Southwest AHS	48	17.7	11	27.5	13	8.7	46	28.2	59	18.9
Sydney West AHS	54	19.9	3	7.5	13	8.7	44	27.0	57	18.3
South Eastern Sydney Illawarra AHS	28	10.3	4	10.0	13	8.7	19	11.7	32	10.3
Northern Sydney Central Coast AHS	13	4.8	4	10.0	2	1.3	15	9.2	17	5.4
Hunter New England AHS	40	14.7	12	30.0	35	23.5	17	10.4	52	16.7
North Coast AHS	20	7.4	2	5.0	16	10.7	6	3.7	22	7.1
Greater Western AHS	37	13.6	1	2.5	38	25.5	0	0.0	38	12.2
Greater Southern AHS	27	9.9	3	7.5	16	10.7	14	8.6	30	9.6
Outside NSW/International	5	1.8	0	0.0	3	2.0	2	1.2	5	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In NSW as a whole in 2006, the estimated residential population for urban AHSs was 4.7 million people (69%), 26% of whom were aged 19 years or younger. The remaining 31% of the population (2.1 million people) lived in rural AHSs and 27% of these were aged 19 years or younger (DOH, 2010a). In the 2009 YPICHs, Aboriginal young people were significantly more likely to reside in a rural AHS than non-Aboriginal young people (71% vs 23%; p<0.001). In the overall sample, a slightly smaller proportion were residing in areas within rural AHSs (45%) than urban (55%), however this difference was not significant. There were no gender differences in the likelihood of living in either a rural or urban Area Health Service.

**Table 1.5.6 Rural or urban Area Health Service of residence in the year prior to coming into custody**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Rural AHS	124	45.6	18	45.0	105	70.5	37	22.7	142	45.5
Urban AHS	148	54.4	22	55.0	44	29.5	126	77.3	170	54.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Note: Urban AHS includes interstate.

## 1.6 Children of participants

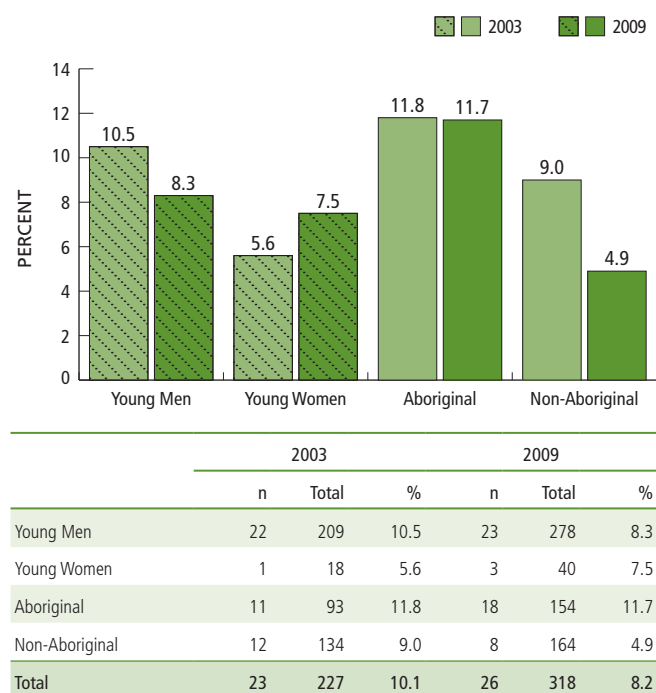
The disadvantaged backgrounds of young people in custody and histories of abuse and neglect put them at risk of early parenthood. Risk factors associated with teenage pregnancy include: living in family situations with regular conflict between members; violence and sexual abuse in childhood; unstable accommodation; poor educational achievement and attendance; low socioeconomic background; family history of teenage pregnancies; low maternal education; absence of the father; low self-esteem; being of Aboriginal origin; and living in rural and remote areas (Grayson et al., 2005). Research has consistently linked teenage pregnancy with experiences of sexual abuse (Widom & Kuhns, 1996). These also translate into continuing disadvantage for the mother and child. A number of these risk factors are commonly found in the juvenile offender population.

In 2007 in Australia, the fertility rate of young mothers (less than 20 years) was 16 babies per 1,000 teenage women, a decrease from 20.6 babies in 1987 (ABS, 2010a). Over the past decade the number of young mothers decreased by 7.8% from 12,920 in 1998 to 11,912 in 2007 (ABS, 2008a). The proportion of teenage women who gave birth in 2007 was 4.1%. In 2007, the fertility rate for Aboriginal mothers aged 15 to 19 years was 70 babies per 1,000, which was more than four times the rate of 16 per 1,000 for those aged 15 to 19 years in the general population (ABS, 2008a).

Information about rates of teenage fatherhood in the general Australian population may be incomplete, since Midwives Data Collections do not include information about the father. Information about the father's age is collected by the NSW Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, based on data provided on an information form completed by the parent(s) of the child. However, information may be missing, incomplete, or untimely, particularly for vulnerable populations. This limits our ability to compare teenage fatherhood in the 2009 YPICHs participants with the general community.

Among 2009 YPICHs participants, 23 young men (8.3%) and 3 young women (7.5%) reported having at least one child. This represented 8% of the total sample, a fall from 10% in 2003. The proportion of mothers in the general NSW population who gave birth in 2008 and were aged less than 20 was 3.5% (Laws et al., 2010). Aboriginal young people in the 2009 YPICHs were more than twice as likely (12% vs 5%,  $p < 0.03$ ) to report having children than non-Aboriginal participants.

**Table/Fig 1.6.1 Participants with children**



Of the 26 young people in 2009 YPICHs who had children, the majority (81%) had one child.

For young women in the 2009 YPICHs, the rate of young motherhood was nearly double that of young women under the age of 20 years in the general Australian population (7.5% vs 4.1%) (ABS, 2008a).

**Table 1.6.2 Number of children of participants**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	255	91.7	37	92.5	136	88.3	156	95.1	292	91.8
1	18	6.5	3	7.5	14	9.1	7	4.3	21	6.6
2 or more	5	1.8	0	0.0	4	2.6	1	0.6	5	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority of the children were born before the participant had reached the age of 18 (92%). A higher proportion of Aboriginal young people with children had them aged 16 years and younger (61%) compared to non-Aboriginal young people (25%) but the difference was not significant.

**Table 1.6.3 Age when first child was born (if any children)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
14 years and under	2	8.7	0	0.0	2	11.1	0	0.0	2	7.7
15 years	6	26.1	1	33.3	6	33.3	1	12.5	7	26.9
16 years	3	13.0	1	33.3	3	16.7	1	12.5	4	15.4
17 years	10	43.5	1	33.0	6	33.3	5	62.5	11	42.3
18 years	2	8.7	0	0.0	1	5.6	1	12.5	2	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100.0</b>

For the 26 participants who had children, the majority (58%) lived with their partner and child prior to custody. The majority (78%) of children lived with their partner after the participant entered custody. This is higher than reports in the literature which suggest that 60% of young mothers do not have a male partner when their baby is born (Condon & Corkindale, 2002). Two-thirds (68%) of the participants who had children reported that they had not received parenting education at any stage.

**Table 1.6.4 Parenting education received (if any children)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	5	29.4	1	50.0	4	30.8	2	33.3	6	31.6
No	12	70.6	1	50.0	9	69.2	4	66.7	13	68.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 1.7 Family history

Families can provide young people with physical, emotional and economic support, enhance coping skills and influence health and health-related behaviours. Where parental involvement is limited through family separation, chronic illness, disability, or incarceration, young people may be more likely to be affected by physical and mental health problems themselves (AIHW, 2009c). Parental incarceration places children and young people at increased risk of involvement with the Juvenile Justice system (Borzycki & Baldry, 2003; Miller, 2006).

Parental physical and mental health is an important determinant of the health of children and young people. In 2006 across Australia, 13% of parents identified their health as 'fair' or 'poor' and one in five (21%) parents were identified as having a mental health problem. In 2003, one in five (19%) parents was found to have a disability (AIHW, 2009c). In 2006, 15% of children aged 0-14 years lived in jobless families (AIHW, 2008e). Half (51%) of children in one-parent families did not live with an employed parent compared with 6% in two-parent families. Among Indigenous children, 42% lived in jobless families, a rate three times higher than found for non-Indigenous children. In 2003, 14% of young people aged 12-24 were living in families where no parent was employed (AIHW, 2007). In the 2007/08 NSW Health Child Survey, it was reported that 92% of children aged 0 to 15 years lived in homes with healthy family functioning (DOH, 2010c). One-quarter (25%) of parents or carers of children aged 1 to 15 years had ever felt the need for parental support services and among these, 75% had used those services (DOH, 2010c).

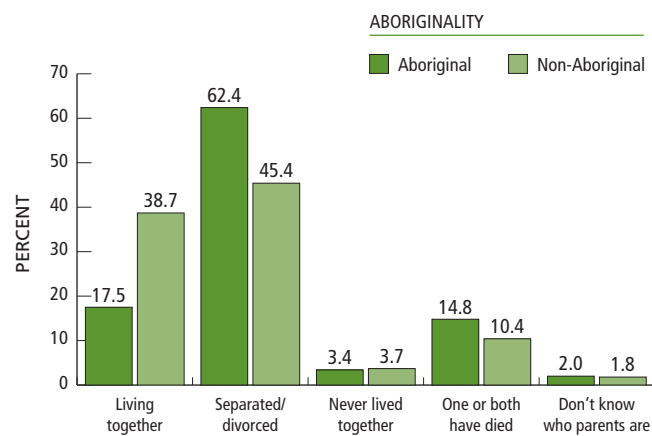
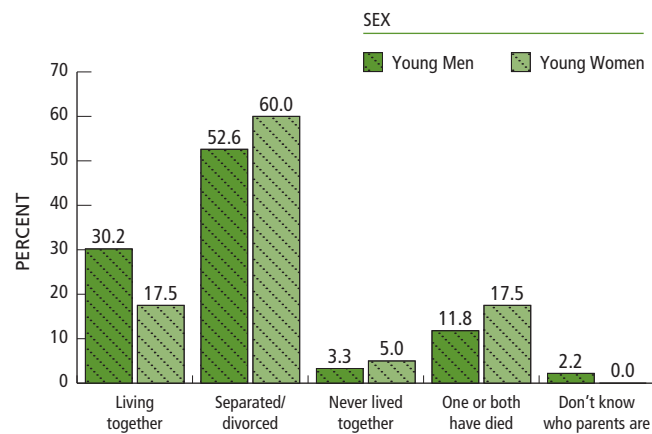
2009 YPICHs participants were asked to indicate who was responsible for raising them when they were growing up, allowing for multiple responses. The majority (75%) of participants indicated that their mother was mainly responsible for raising them while they were growing up, with significantly more non-Aboriginal young people reporting this than Aboriginal young people (86% vs 67%,  $p < 0.001$ ). Non-Aboriginal young people were also significantly more likely to report that their father was mainly responsible for them than Aboriginal young people (57% vs 32%,  $p < 0.001$ ). By contrast, Aboriginal young people were significantly more likely than non-Aboriginal young people to report that other family members were responsible for raising them, including grandparents, (28% vs 15%,  $p < 0.01$ ) aunts and uncles (20% vs 9%,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 1.7.1 Person(s) mainly responsible while growing up**

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mother	214	77.0	30	75.0	103	66.9	141	86.0	244	76.7
Father	126	45.3	17	42.5	49	31.8	94	57.3	143	45.0
Stepmother/stepfather	14	5.0	2	5.0	7	4.5	9	5.5	16	5.0
Grandmother/grandfather	60	21.6	8	20.0	43	27.9	25	15.2	68	21.4
Aunt/uncle	37	13.3	8	20.0	30	19.5	15	9.1	45	14.2
Brother/sister/step-brother or sister	35	12.6	4	10.0	17	11.0	22	13.4	39	12.3
Foster family	12	4.3	3	7.5	12	7.8	3	1.8	15	4.7
Other	12	4.3	5	12.5	10	6.5	7	4.3	17	5.3

The majority (54%) of 2009 YPICHS participants indicated their biological parents were either separated or divorced. Only 29% of participants reported their parents were still together, which was significantly higher in non-Aboriginal young people than Aboriginal young people (39% vs 18%,  $p < 0.001$ ). There was no significant difference between young men and young women with regard to the status of their biological parents.

**Table/Fig 1.7.2 Status of natural (biological) parents**



	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Living together	82	30.2	7	17.5	26	17.5	63	38.7	89	28.5
Separated/divorced	143	52.6	24	60.0	93	62.4	74	45.4	167	53.5
Never lived together	9	3.3	2	5.0	5	3.4	6	3.7	11	3.5
One or both have died	32	11.8	7	17.5	22	14.8	17	10.4	39	12.5
Don't know who parents are	6	2.2	0	0.0	3	2.0	3	1.8	6	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

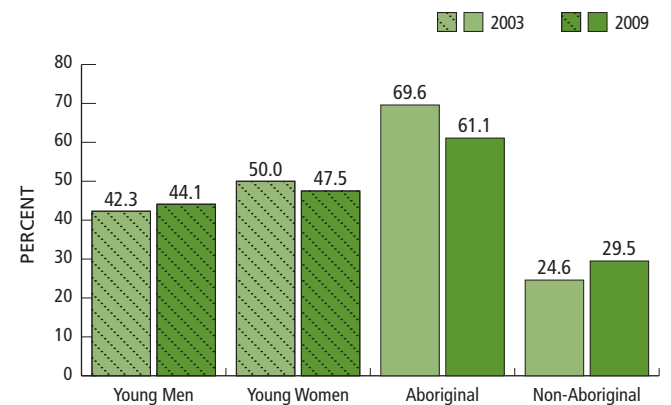
More than one in ten (12%) young people reported that either one or both of their parents had died. Parental death before the age of 16 years is associated with depression and other mental health issues (Crook & Eliot, 1980). The majority of deaths were of fathers, reported by 10% of participants compared with 2% of young people whose mother had died. There were no significant differences by gender or Aboriginality, but both young women and Aboriginal young people had a higher proportion with parents who had died than young men or non-Aboriginal young people.

**Table 1.7.3 Parent deceased**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	240	88.2	33	82.5	127	85.2	146	89.6	273	87.5
Mother	7	2.6	0	0.0	5	3.4	2	1.2	7	2.2
Father	25	9.2	7	17.5	17	11.4	15	9.2	32	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Parental incarceration is a predictor of children becoming incarcerated (Miller, 2006). Almost half (45%) of 2009 YPICHS participants reported one or both of their parents having ever been in prison, slightly more than in the 2003 YPICHS (43%). Aboriginal young people in the 2009 YPICHS were significantly more likely than non-Aboriginal participants to have a parent who had been in prison (61% vs 30%,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table/Fig 1.7.4 Parent ever in prison**



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	88	208	42.3	120	272	44.1
Young Women	9	18	50.0	19	40	47.5
Aboriginal	64	92	69.6	91	149	61.1
Non-Aboriginal	33	134	24.6	48	163	29.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>42.9</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>44.6</b>

Among the 139 participants who reported having a parent in prison, the majority (80%) reported it was their father or step-father that had been in prison.

**Table 1.7.5 Which parent ever in prison**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	143	52.6	17	42.5	51	34.2	109	66.9	160	51.3
Mother	15	5.5	2	5.0	13	8.7	4	2.5	17	5.4
Father/step-father	95	34.9	16	40.0	69	46.3	42	25.8	111	35.6
Both	10	3.7	1	5.0	9	6.0	2	1.2	11	3.5
Don't know	9	3.3	4	10.0	7	4.7	6	3.7	13	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

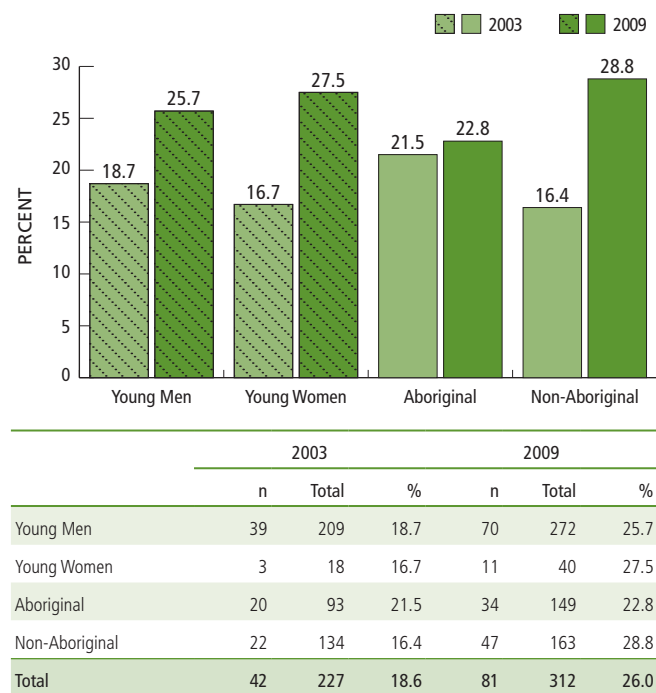
Approximately one in ten (10%) young people reported that their parent was currently in prison, the majority of whom were fathers or step-fathers. Aboriginal young people were significantly (four times) more likely to have a parent currently in prison than non-Aboriginal young people (16% vs 4%,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 1.7.6 Which parent currently in prison**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	236	86.8	32	80.0	118	79.2	150	92.0	268	85.9
Mother	4	1.5	0	0.0	2	1.3	2	1.2	4	1.3
Father/step-father	23	8.5	3	7.5	21	14.1	5	3.1	26	8.3
Both	0	0.0	1	2.5	1	0.7	0	0.0	1	0.3
Don't know	9	3.3	4	10.0	7	4.7	6	3.7	13	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100.0</b>

An important aspect of understanding the family situation of young people in custody is to determine if they live with anyone who has a physical, mental or emotional problem that affects their daily life. Over one-quarter (26%) of young people in 2009 reported that they lived with someone with a physical, mental or emotional problem that impacted on their daily life, which was higher than found in 2003 (19%). The most common person to have the problem was the mother (35%) or the father (17%), and the most common problem was a mental health-related condition (36%).

**Table/Fig 1.7.7 Live with someone who has a physical, mental or emotional problem that affects daily life**



Over one-third (35%) of the 81 participants who indicated they lived with someone with a physical, mental or emotional problem that affects their daily life, indicated that they were responsible for helping to look after them. More young men (36%) reported this than young women (27%). There was no difference in reporting between Aboriginal (36%) and non-Aboriginal (34%) young people. Furthermore, of the 81 participants who lived with a person with a disability or health problem, 30% of young men and 20% of young women indicated that they were personally affected by this.

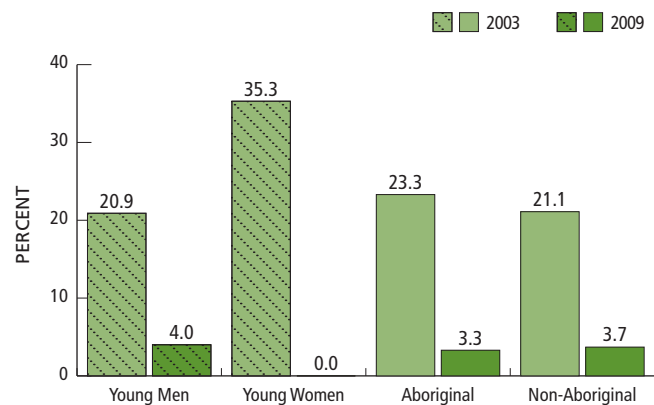
## 1.8 Social support

Social support from families and peers can have a positive effect on young people's health by improving their self-esteem, self-efficacy and sense of control over their lives (Turner, 1999). These factors play a role in influencing young people's health-related behaviours and their ability to access appropriate health services. Greater levels of social support have been shown to be linked to lower levels of depression, smoking and inactivity in young people (AIHW, 2007). In a national survey, 91% of young people aged 15-24 years scored well on the social support scale (AIHW, 2007).

In the 2003 YPICHs, over one in five (22%) young people reported that they had no close friends. By contrast, the number of young people in the 2009 YPICHs reporting no close friends had reduced to less than one in twenty (4%).

Young men were more likely to report having no close friends although there were no significant differences by gender or Aboriginality. The majority of participants reported having at least one close friend who is related to them (60% of young men, 57% of young women).

Table/Fig 1.8.1 Have no close friends



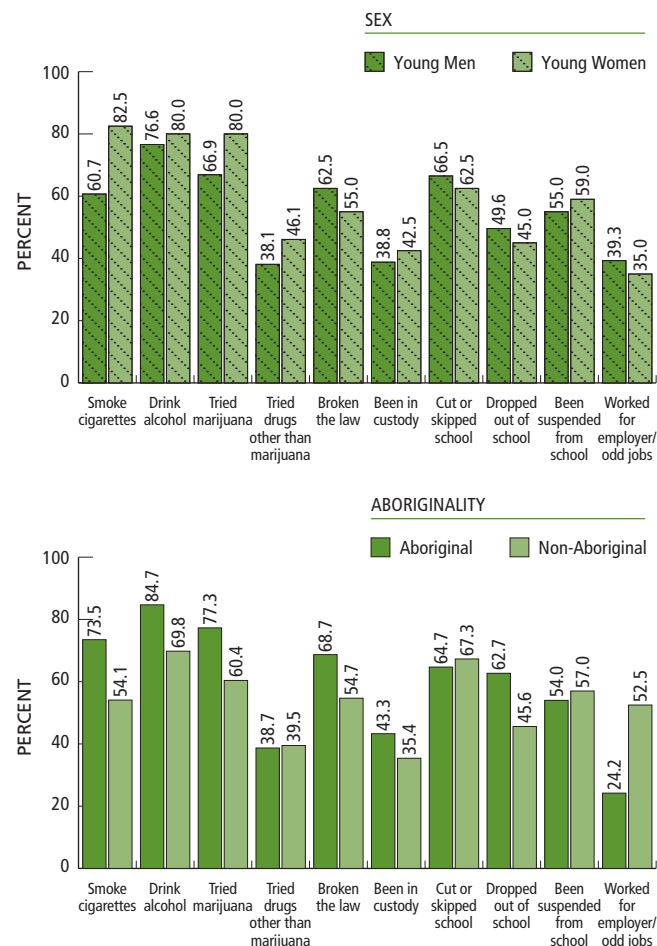
	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	42	201	20.9	11	273	4.0
Young Women	6	17	35.3	0	0.0	0.0
Aboriginal	21	90	23.3	5	150	3.3
Non-Aboriginal	27	128	21.1	6	162	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>3.5</b>

2009 YPICHS participants were asked whether their close friends had engaged in a number of risk behaviours including using alcohol and drugs, committing crime and skipping school. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of young people reported that most or all of their close friends smoked cigarettes, with significantly more young women reporting this than young men (83% vs 61%,  $p < 0.02$ ) and significantly more Aboriginal young people than non-Aboriginal young people (74% vs 54%,  $p < 0.001$ ).

A high proportion (77%) of young people reported that most or all of their close friends drank alcohol, with significantly more Aboriginal young people reporting this than non-Aboriginal young people (85% vs 70%,  $p < 0.01$ ). The close friends of Aboriginal young people were also significantly more likely than the close friends of non-Aboriginal people to have tried cannabis (77% vs 60%,  $p < 0.01$ ) or to have broken the law (69% vs 55%,  $p < 0.03$ ).

Similarly, having problems at school was a common problem for the close friends of young people in custody. Problems with school for the friends of young people in custody included skipping school (66%), school suspension (56%) and dropping out of school (49%).

Table/Fig 1.8.2 Activities most or all close friends have ever done



(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Smoke cigarettes	164	60.7	33	82.5	111	73.5	86	54.1	197	63.5
Drink alcohol	206	76.6	32	80.0	127	84.7	111	69.8	238	77.0
Tried cannabis	180	66.9	32	80.0	116	77.3	96	60.4	212	68.6
Tried drugs other than cannabis	102	38.1	18	46.1	58	38.7	62	39.5	120	39.1
Broken the law	168	62.5	22	55.0	103	68.7	87	54.7	190	61.5
Been in custody	104	38.8	17	42.5	65	43.3	56	35.4	121	39.3
Cut or skipped school	179	66.5	25	62.5	97	64.7	107	67.3	204	66.0
Dropped out of school	133	49.6	18	45.0	79	62.7	72	45.6	151	49.0
Been suspended from school	148	55.0	23	59.0	81	54.0	90	57.0	171	55.5
Worked for employer/odd jobs	105	39.3	14	35.0	36	24.2	83	52.5	119	38.8

It was clear from the responses of 2009 YPICHS participants that their close friends are very important to them. Three-quarters (75%) of young people indicated they took their close friends' opinion into account when they made a decision; a finding significantly higher among non-Aboriginal young people than Aboriginal young people (82% vs 67%,  $p<0.03$ ). Young women were more likely to indicate their friends pushed them to succeed and do interesting things that they would not do by themselves than were young men (78% vs 61%,  $p<0.05$ ). Non-Aboriginal young people were also significantly more likely than Aboriginal young people to say their friends push them to succeed (69% vs 57%,  $p<0.05$ ). By contrast, over two-fifths (41%) participants reported that their close friends sometimes push them to do foolish or stupid things. There were no significant differences by gender or Aboriginality about the negative influence of close friends to encourage young people to do foolish things.

**Table 1.8.3 Influence of close friends**

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
My close friends push me to succeed and to do interesting things that I would not do by myself	163	60.8	31	77.5	85	57.0	109	68.6	194	63.0
When I make a decision, I take my close friends' opinions into account	197	73.5	33	82.5	100	67.1	130	81.8	230	74.7
My close friends sometimes push me to do foolish or stupid things	109	40.7	16	40.0	68	45.6	57	35.8	125	40.6

Young women in custody were more likely than young men to talk to their close friends on at least a weekly basis about themselves or their problems (65% vs 48%); however, this difference was not significant. Aboriginal young people were also more likely to talk to their close friends about themselves or their problems on at least a weekly basis than non-Aboriginal people (56% vs 45%,  $p<0.001$ ).

**Table 1.8.4 How often talk to close friends about self or problems**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never	64	23.7	3	7.5	37	24.5	30	18.9	67	21.6
Once in a while (1-2 times a month)	76	28.2	11	27.5	29	19.2	58	36.5	87	28.1
Often (1-2 times a week)	51	18.9	8	20.0	23	15.2	36	22.6	59	19.0
Nearly every day	79	29.3	18	45.0	62	41.1	35	22.0	97	31.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Over one-quarter (27%) of young people reported they had no one they could talk to besides their close friends. Nearly half (47%) of young people reported that they could talk to their brother or sister, followed by their mother (34%) then a grandparent or other relative (27%).

**Table 1.8.5 Others can talk to besides close friends**

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No one	79	28.5	8	20.0	45	29.2	42	25.8	87	27.4
Mother	95	34.3	14	35.0	56	36.4	53	32.5	109	34.4
Father	52	18.8	5	12.5	22	14.3	35	21.5	57	18.0
Stepmother/stepfather	9	3.2	5	12.5	8	5.2	6	3.7	14	4.4
Brother/sister	128	46.2	20	50.0	67	43.5	81	49.7	148	46.7
Grandparent/other relative	73	26.4	12	30.0	52	33.8	33	20.2	85	26.8
Other person (non-related)	67	24.2	18	45.0	44	28.6	41	25.2	85	26.8

Violence is strongly associated with incarceration for both young people and adults (Spaccarelli et al., 1995). Nearly two in three (64%) 2009 YPICHS participants indicated they had been in a physical fight in the past six months. The proportion of young people (25%) who had been in a fight four or more times in the past six months was similar by gender or Aboriginality.

**Table 1.8.6 Number of physical fights in past six months**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never	102	37.2	11	27.5	48	31.6	65	40.1	113	36.0
Once	42	15.3	8	20.0	24	15.8	26	16.1	50	15.9
2-3 times	61	22.3	10	25.0	39	25.7	32	19.8	71	22.6
4-5 times	33	12.0	4	10.0	16	10.5	21	13.0	37	11.8
6+ times	36	13.1	7	17.5	25	16.5	18	11.1	43	13.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Violence is strongly associated with incarceration for both young people and adults (Spaccarelli et al., 1995). Nearly two-thirds (64%) of 2009 YPICHS participants indicated they had been in a physical fight in the past six months. The proportion of young people who had been in a fight four or more times in the past six months (25%) was similar by gender and Aboriginality.

**Table 1.8.7 With whom had most recent fight (if any fights in the past six months)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Stranger	71	40.6	9	30.0	36	34.6	44	43.6	80	39.0
Friend/someone I knew	82	46.9	13	43.3	52	50.0	43	42.6	95	46.3
Boyfriend/girlfriend	0	0.0	3	10.0	0	0.0	3	3.0	3	1.5
Parent, brother, sister, family member	5	2.9	1	3.3	6	5.8	0	0.0	6	3.9
Someone else	17	9.7	4	13.3	10	9.6	11	10.9	21	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 1.9 Bullying

Bullying is widely regarded as a particularly destructive form of aggression with harmful physical, social and emotional outcomes for the perpetrators, victims and also the bystanders (Olweus, 1993; Slee, 2003). Bullying may be carried out by a single person or by a group against a single person; involves an imbalance of power or strength between the aggressor and the victim; and commonly occurs repeatedly over time (Nansel et al., 2001). Australian and international research indicates that victims of bullying are likely to suffer lowered self esteem (Rigby & Slee, 1993), higher rates of depression (Olweus, 1993; Slee, 1995; Ttofi & Farrington, 2008), anxiety (Olweus, 1993; Rigby & Slee, 1993; Ttofi & Farrington, 2008), feelings of loneliness and difficulty making friends (Nansel et al., 2001), suicidal ideation and higher rates of school absenteeism (Smith & Brain, 2000; Ttofi & Farrington, 2008).

The prevalence rates for both perpetrators and victims of bullying are difficult to establish, due in part to definitional reasons and the lack of comparability of research findings (Porter, 2007). However, bullying is thought to be so widespread as to be nearly universal (Smith & Brain, 2000; Noble, 2006). Close to one in five students appears to experience bullying at least once a week in school and over half of students experience it during their school lives, with a third of students saying that it makes them feel unsafe at school (Rigby & Slee, 1993; Sharp & Smith, 1994; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). One in twenty students is estimated to participate in persistent bullying (Rigby & Slee, 1991; 1993). Through self-report, boys are more likely than girls to bully others, but are most often bullied only by

other boys, whereas girls frequently report being bullied by both genders (Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993).

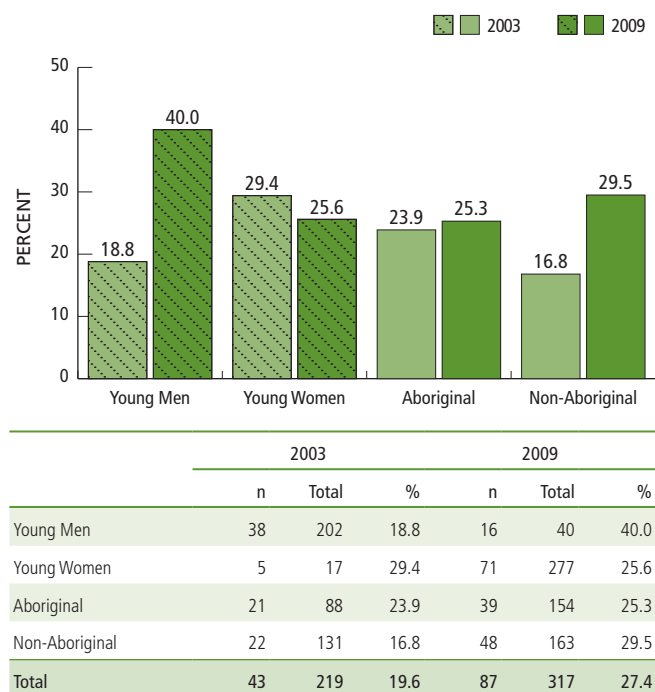
The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey found that 11% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 to 14 years reported being bullied at school as a result of being of Indigenous origin, with little difference by gender (ABS/AIHW, 2008). Of these children who had been bullied, over a third (34%) reported that the bullying had impacted on their school attendance and 17% reported that it had impacted on their progress at school.

Bullying other students is also associated with experiencing legal or criminal troubles as adults. Olweus (1997) found that 70% of those characterized as bullies in grades six to nine had at least one criminal conviction by age 24. The perpetration of bullying is related to other problem behaviours, including fighting, alcohol consumption, smoking, carrying weapons (Nansel et al., 2003) and other antisocial behaviours including later offending (Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). It has also been identified as a precursor to poor mental health and diminished school performance (Smith & Brain, 2000). Persons who are considered to be chronic bullies often perpetrate these behaviours into their adult years, negatively influencing their ability to develop and maintain positive relationships (Oliver et al., 1994).

Young people were asked about their experience of bullying in the 2009 YPICHS, using a modified set of questions from the 2003 YPICHS. In 2003, young people were asked about their experience of bullying within the school context only. In 2009, these questions were broadened to allow a greater range of bullying scenarios to be included.

There was an increase in the number of young people reporting that they had ever been bullied, which may in part be attributable to the broadening of the question beyond school-based bullying. In 2003, 20% of young people reported that they had ever been bullied whilst at school; whereas 27% reported they had ever been bullied (in any context) in the 2009 YPICHS. The increase can be seen mainly in the proportion of young men (40% in 2009 from 19% in 2003) and non-Aboriginal young people (30% in 2009 from 17% in 2003) who reported the experience of bullying.

Table/Fig 1.9.1 Ever been bullied



The context in which bullying mostly occurred was at school (71%) followed by when they were in custody (36%), on the streets (24%) and at their home (16%). No gender differences were found in the likelihood of experiencing bullying in one place over another, as was the case between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal young people. However, higher proportions of young women and non-Aboriginal young people reported being bullied at school, and higher proportions of young men and Aboriginal young people reported being bullied in custody.

Table 1.9.2 Where bullied (if ever bullied)

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
School	49	69.0	13	81.3	26	66.7	36	75.0	62	71.3
At home	12	16.9	2	12.5	9	23.1	5	10.4	14	16.1
On the streets	17	23.9	4	25.0	11	28.2	10	20.8	21	24.1
In custody	26	36.6	5	31.3	16	41.0	15	31.3	31	35.6
Other	3	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	6.3	3	3.4

Of those who admitted ever being bullied, three in five (62%) reported that the bullying had occurred more than one year ago. A third (33%) reported that the bullying was either currently happening, or in the very recent past (up to six months prior). No differences were found within gender or Aboriginality.

Table 1.9.3 When was the last time bullied (if ever bullied)

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
In the last month	12	17.1	3	18.8	7	18.0	8	17.0	15	17.4
1-<3 months ago	6	8.6	0	0.0	5	12.8	1	2.1	6	7.0
3-<6 months ago	5	7.1	2	12.5	5	12.8	2	4.3	7	8.1
6-<12 months ago	3	4.3	2	12.5	1	2.6	4	8.5	5	5.8
1-<2 years ago	7	10.0	1	6.3	3	7.7	5	10.6	8	9.3
2-<5 years ago	13	18.6	3	18.8	7	18.0	9	19.2	16	18.6
5+ years ago	24	34.3	5	31.1	11	28.2	18	38.3	29	33.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority (62%) of young people who indicated they had been bullied indicated it only happened one or two times in a month, with little variation by gender or Aboriginality. However, one in five (22%) indicated the bullying happened nearly every day.

Table 1.9.4 How often bullied (if ever bullied)

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Once in a while (1-2 times a month)	45	64.3	9	56.3	24	61.5	30	63.8	54	62.8
Often (1-2 times a week)	10	14.3	2	12.5	5	12.8	7	14.9	12	14.0
Nearly every day	15	21.4	4	25.0	9	23.1	10	21.3	19	22.1
Other	0	0.0	1	6.3	1	2.6	0	0.0	1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Those who were bullied were asked who the perpetrator was, with multiple responses permitted for this question. Older peers and friends were most frequently reported as being the perpetrators of bullying (64%). Young women were the only ones to report a parent or guardian as being a bully (n=2; 13%) and were also more likely to have been bullied by younger peers than young men (50% vs 11%; p<0.001). No differences were found by Aboriginality for those who perpetrated the bullying.

**Table 1.9.5 Who bullied you (if ever bullied)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
(Multiple response)										
Parents/guardians	0	0.0	2	12.5	2	5.1	0	0.0	2	2.3
Siblings	7	9.9	3	18.8	6	15.4	4	8.3	10	11.5
Other family members	4	5.6	1	6.3	3	7.7	2	4.2	5	5.7
Older peers/friends	48	67.6	8	50.0	28	71.8	28	58.3	56	64.4
Younger peers/friends	8	11.3	8	50.0	6	15.4	10	20.8	16	18.4
Other	17	23.9	1	6.3	5	12.8	13	27.1	18	20.7

Three-quarters (75%) of those who reported having been bullied were perpetrated against by a person older than them, with significantly more Aboriginal young people reporting this than non-Aboriginal young people (87% vs 65%, p<0.02). Young women were more likely to have been bullied by someone younger than them compared to young men (38% vs 9%; p<0.01).

**Table 1.9.6 Age of people who bullied you (if ever bullied)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
(Multiple response)										
Older than me	55	77.5	10	62.5	34	87.2	31	64.6	65	74.7
About the same age	21	29.6	7	43.8	12	30.8	16	33.3	28	32.2
Younger than me	6	8.5	6	37.5	7	18.0	5	10.4	12	13.8

Of those who reported having ever been bullied, three quarters (76%) reported that the bully was a young man. No significant differences were found within gender or Aboriginality, but young women were much more likely to be bullied by other young women (56%) or both young men and young women (38%) than young men.

**Table 1.9.7 Gender of people who bullied you (if ever bullied)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Males	64	91.4	1	6.3	31	79.5	34	72.3	65	75.6
Females	1	1.4	9	56.3	4	10.3	6	12.8	10	11.6
Both males and females	5	7.1	6	37.5	4	10.3	7	14.9	11	12.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The majority of respondents reported that being bullied made them feel angry, sad or stressed out (73%). One in five (21%) reported that the bullying did not bother them. No significant differences were detected in how people felt about being bullied by gender or Aboriginality.

**Table 1.9.8 Feelings about being bullied (if ever bullied)**

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Made you sad	6	8.7	1	6.3	5	12.8	2	4.4	7	8.3
Made you angry	38	55.1	4	25.0	23	59.0	19	41.3	42	49.4
Doesn't bother you	12	17.4	6	37.5	4	10.3	14	30.4	18	21.2
Stressed you out	9	13.0	4	25.0	6	15.4	7	15.2	13	15.3
Other	4	5.8	1	6.3	1	2.6	4	8.7	5	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Young people were also asked about their experiences of being the perpetrator of bullying. Approximately half (52%) of the 2009 YPICHS participants reported that they had ever bullied someone else, which is consistent with the 2003 sample (51%). The proportion of young men and young women reporting to have ever bullied someone else has also remained fairly consistent over the two samples. However, Aboriginal young people in the 2009 YPICHS were significantly more likely than non-Aboriginal young people to say they have ever been a perpetrator of bullying (55% vs 50%; p<0.02). It is unclear if there were any differences in honesty levels among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants with regard to answering this highly sensitive question, but such differences have been observed in other studies. Outcome data is not available to confirm the actual situation.

Table/Fig 1.9.9 Ever bullied others



	2003			2009		
	n	Total	%	n	Total	%
Young Men	102	203	50.3	142	277	51.3
Young Women	10	17	58.8	24	40	60.0
Aboriginal	51	89	57.3	85	154	55.2
Non-Aboriginal	61	131	46.6	81	163	49.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>50.9</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>52.4</b>

A total of 166 young people reported that they had ever bullied someone. The majority of these young people reported that they did not do this on a regular basis, with just under three quarters (71%) saying that they bullied only once in a while. Just over one quarter (29%) reported that they were the perpetrator of bullying at least once or twice a week, if not daily.

Table 1.9.10 How often bullied others (if ever bullied others)

	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Once in a while (1-2 times a month)	99	69.7	19	79.2	59	69.4	59	72.8	118	71.1
Often (1-2 times a week)	33	23.2	4	16.7	16	18.8	21	25.9	37	22.3
Nearly every day	10	7.0	1	4.2	10	11.8	1	1.2	11	6.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The perpetration of bullying happened mostly in the school context (68%). Interestingly, more than two in five (44%) young people reported bullying others on the streets, which is nearly twice the proportion of young people reporting to have been bullied on the streets. A smaller proportion reported having perpetrated bullying in the home, when compared to the proportion who reported being the victim of bullying in the home.

Non-Aboriginal young people were significantly more likely to perpetrate bullying within the school context than Aboriginal young people (75% vs 61%,  $p < 0.05$ ). Young women were significantly more likely to bully others on the streets than young men (63% vs 41%,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 1.9.11 Where bullied others (if ever bullied others)

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
School	100	70.4	13	54.2	52	61.2	61	75.3	113	68.1
At home	18	12.7	3	12.5	10	11.8	11	13.6	21	12.7
On the streets	58	40.9	15	62.5	40	47.1	33	40.7	73	44.0
In custody	58	40.9	7	29.2	34	40.0	31	38.3	65	39.2
Other	4	2.8	0	0.0	2	2.4	2	2.5	4	2.4

The young people who reported bullying others chose men as their victims more often than women. The most bullied group were similarly aged young men, reported by over three quarters (77%) of the sample. Half (49%) said that they bullied older men, and just over one quarter (27%) said they bullied younger men. Men were more likely than women to bully same age men (82% vs 46%;  $p < 0.001$ ). Young women were significantly more likely than young men to bully all other young women including younger women (29% vs 3%;  $p < 0.001$ ), same age young women (92% vs 7%;  $p < 0.001$ ) and older young women (50% vs 4%;  $p < 0.001$ ). Aboriginal young people who bullied others were no more likely to target their victims by gender or age than non-Aboriginal young people.

Table 1.9.12 Who did you bully (if ever bullied others)

(Multiple response)	Young Men		Young Women		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Younger males	38	26.8	6	25.0	22	25.9	22	27.2	44	26.5
Same age males	117	82.4	11	45.8	61	71.8	67	82.7	128	77.1
Older males	69	48.6	12	50.0	44	51.8	37	45.7	81	48.8
Younger females	4	2.8	7	29.2	4	4.7	7	8.6	11	6.6
Same age females	10	7.0	22	91.7	16	18.8	16	19.8	32	19.3
Older females	5	3.5	12	50.0	7	8.2	10	12.4	17	10.2

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## Chapter Summary

Young people in custody come from very disadvantaged backgrounds compared with young people in the community. This is demonstrated by disproportionately high numbers of Aboriginal young people in custody, low participation in education and employment and high rates of out of home care and homelessness. Aboriginal young people and young women were significantly more likely to have a history of out of home care than young men and non-Aboriginal people. Most young people reported that their parents were either separated or divorced, with less young Aboriginal people reporting that their parents were still together than non-Aboriginal young people. Significantly more Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal young people reported that one or both of their parents had either ever been in prison or was currently in prison. Over one quarter of participants reported living with someone with a physical, mental or emotional problem that affected their daily life.

While the number of young people participating in education increased between the 2003 YPICHs and the 2009 YPICHs, levels of educational participation and attainment remain well below those reported for the population overall. The average age of leaving school among survey participants (approximately 14 years) was lower than the minimum age for leaving school in NSW. A high proportion of participants reported being bullied but an even higher proportion reported bullying other people. Aboriginal young people were significantly more likely to report bullying other people than non-Aboriginal young people. Fewer young people in custody were working in the six months prior to custody than in 2003, with significantly more young men employed than young women and significantly more non-Aboriginal young people employed than Aboriginal young people. Providing opportunities for young people in custody to engage in education is an important strategy to develop the confidence needed to re-enter education and training programs post custody. This also has the potential to increase employment opportunities once released from custody.