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**Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare**



# Pathways through youth justice supervision

## Further analyses





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Cover art by an Indigenous artist at the Alice Springs Correctional Centre, Alice Springs, Northern Territory. In the painting titled *Women digging for food #1*, the 'U' shape represents women digging for food.

Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report.  
Please check the online version at <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)> for any amendments.

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# Summary

This report looks at the youth justice supervision history of 24,102 young people who were aged 10–17 and under supervision between 1 July 2000 and 30 June 2014. It focuses on the sequences of periods of community-based supervision and detention that young people experienced (their ‘pathways’ through supervision), including the number of periods completed and the total amount of time spent under supervision. It includes information on young people with extensive supervision histories, differences among the states and territories, and trends over time.

Data on six birth cohorts are available—for young people born between 1990–91 and 1995–96. This report builds on analyses first published in *Pathways through youth justice supervision* (AIHW 2014).

## Young people spent a median of 10 months under supervision

- Young people under youth justice supervision spent a median of 303 days (about 10 months) under supervision when they were aged 10–17, and completed a median of 2 periods of supervision.
- Young people spent more time under supervision if they were male (median 314 days compared with 274 for females), Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (433 days compared with 275 for non-Indigenous young people), or first supervised at a younger age (1,413 days if first supervised aged 11 compared with 117 days for those aged 17).

## Some pathways through supervision were long and complex

- About 11% of young people had a pathway that was considered ‘extensive’—that is, it included 2 or more years of supervision and 7 or more periods. These young people accounted for about one-third (32%) of the total days of supervision, and nearly half (45%) of all supervision periods.
- Young people with extensive pathways were more likely than those with non-extensive pathways to be male (87% compared with 79%), Indigenous (51% compared with 25%), have first entered supervision aged 10–14 (82% compared with 20%) and have been in unsentenced detention the first time they were supervised (58% compared with 37%).

## Young people’s pathways varied among the states and territories

- The most common pathway was *sentenced community only* (37% of young people), ranging from 8% in the Australian Capital Territory to 58% in Tasmania.
- The total time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17 ranged from a median of 215 days in South Australia to 374 days in Queensland.

## The most common pathways were relatively similar over time

- The top 10 pathways were similar for young people born between 1990–91 and 1995–96.
- The median total time spent under supervision increased from 277 days for the 1990–91 cohort to 326 days for the 1995–96 cohort, while the median number of periods completed remained stable (2 periods).



# 1 Introduction

## The youth justice system

The youth justice system manages children and young people who have committed, or allegedly committed, an offence. In Australia, youth justice is the responsibility of the states and territories, and each has its own legislation, policies and practices. However, the general processes by which young people are charged and sentenced, and the types of legal orders available to the courts, are similar.

In Australia, young people can be charged with a criminal offence if they are aged 10 or older. The upper age limit for treatment as a young person under the law is 17 in all states and territories except Queensland, where the limit is 16. However, some young people aged 18 or older are also involved in the youth justice system (see 'Technical notes').

A young person first enters the youth justice system when they are investigated by police for allegedly committing a crime. Legal action taken by police might include court actions (the laying of charges to be answered in court) and non-court actions (such as cautions, conferencing, or infringement notices). If the matter proceeds to court and the charge is proven, the court may hand down any of a number of orders, either supervised or unsupervised.

## Youth justice supervision

A major aspect of the youth justice system is the supervision of young people on legal orders by the state and territory agencies responsible for youth justice. Young people may be supervised either in their communities ('community-based supervision') or in secure detention facilities.

Young people may be supervised in the community or in detention when they are unsentenced—that is, when they have been charged with an offence and are awaiting the outcome of their court matter, or when they have been found or pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing. However, most of those under supervision have been proven guilty in court and sentenced.

On an average day in 2013–14, about 6,100 young people were under youth justice supervision in Australia (AIHW 2015). Most (85%) were supervised in the community, and the vast majority (92%) of those under community-based supervision were serving a sentence. Of the 951 young people in detention, just over half (52%) were unsentenced.

Individual periods of community-based supervision that were completed during 2013–14 were substantially longer, on average, than periods of detention (median 122 days compared with 7 days). Completed periods of sentenced detention were longer than periods of unsentenced detention (73 days compared with 7 days).

## Data on youth justice supervision pathways

This report looks at the supervision history of particular cohorts of young people in Australia, based on data from the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS). It builds on analyses first published in *Pathways through youth justice supervision* (AIHW 2014). That report identified the most common supervision pathways and explored the characteristics of young people within these pathways—including Indigenous status, sex and age at first supervision—and whether pathways have changed over time. This report considers additional elements of supervision pathways, including time spent under supervision, young people with long or extensive pathways, state/territory analyses, and trends.

In 2013–14, the JJ NMDS contained the complete supervision history of 24,102 young people (Table S1) who were born between 1 July 1990 and 30 June 1996, and under youth justice supervision between 1 July 2000 and 30 June 2014 when they were aged 10–17.

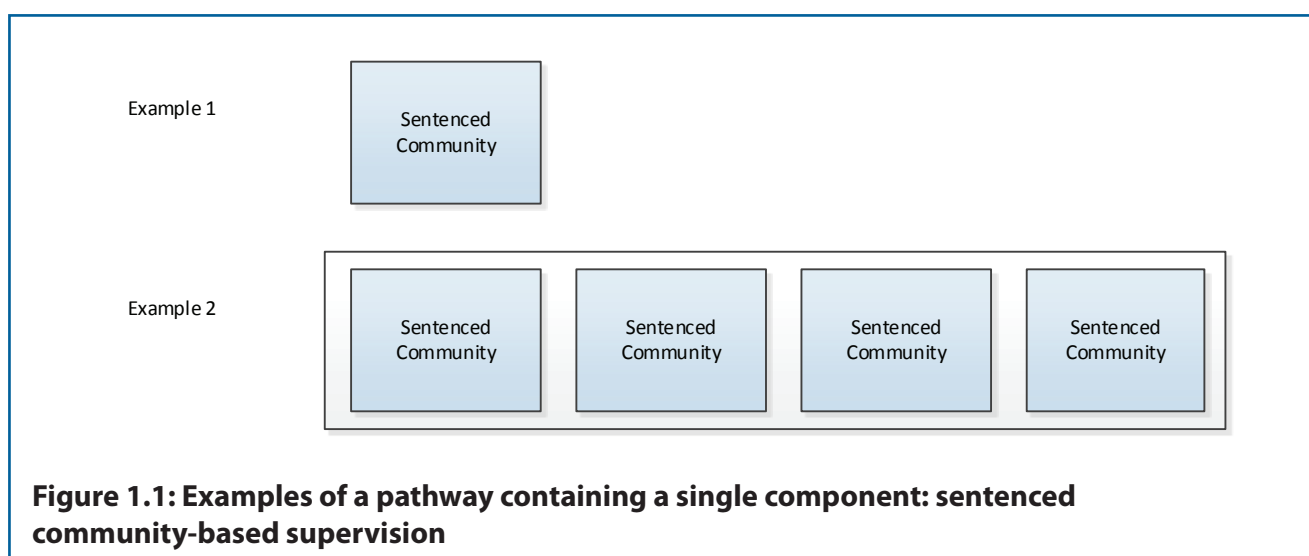
Young people for whom a complete supervision history was not available were excluded. This includes all young people in Western Australia and the Northern Territory and some young people in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. In addition, 'Chapter 5 Trends in pathways' only includes young people from states with complete data for all 6 cohorts (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia). More information is given in the 'Technical notes'.

For each young person under supervision, a pathway—or summary of their supervision history when aged 10–17—was developed based on their experience of 4 categories of supervision:

- **Unsentenced community-based supervision:** including supervised or conditional bail and home detention bail.
- **Sentenced community-based supervision:** including probation, suspended detention, and parole or supervised release.
- **Unsentenced detention:** including remand and police-referred detention.
- **Sentenced detention.**

In this report, a 'period' of supervision is defined as a continuous amount of time under supervision within each of these categories. For example, if a young person was under sentenced community-based supervision for an unbroken period of 6 months, this is counted as 1 period (shown in example 1 in Figure 1.1). This period might have included different types of sentenced community-based orders.

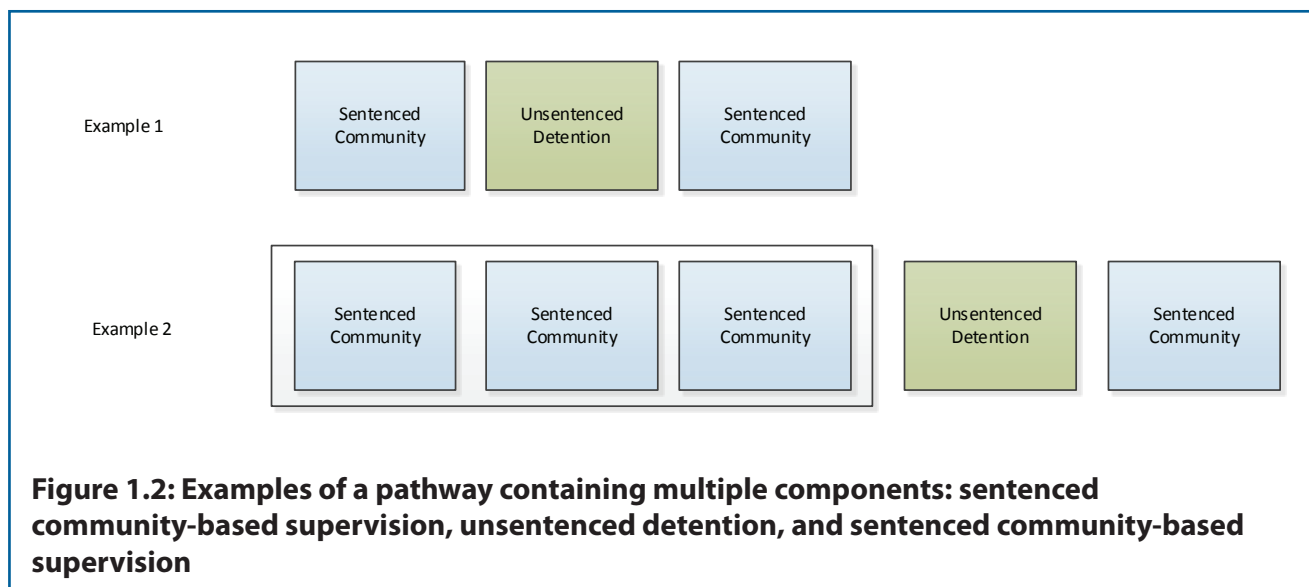
A 'component' of a pathway might be made up of 1 or more periods. Where periods of the *same* category of supervision occurred consecutively—for example, if the young person mentioned above had several consecutive periods of sentenced community-based supervision—these periods form a single component (example 2 in Figure 1.1). These periods are separated by 1 or more days *not* under supervision.



**Figure 1.1: Examples of a pathway containing a single component: sentenced community-based supervision**

If periods of *different* categories of supervision occurred consecutively, these form different components of supervision (example 1 in Figure 1.2).

For example, if a young person had several consecutive periods of sentenced community-based supervision followed by a period of unsentenced detention and then another period of sentenced community-based supervision, their pathway would consist of 3 components—sentenced community-based supervision, sentenced detention, then sentenced community-based supervision (example 2 in Figure 1.2).



More information about the construction of pathways is given in the 'Technical notes'.

## Report structure

**Chapter 1** (this chapter) provides background information about youth justice supervision and the types of pathways of young people through supervision.

**Chapter 2** looks at the most common pathways, the total time young people spent in youth justice supervision pathways—including the time in each component of supervision—and the number of periods of supervision that were completed within pathways.

**Chapter 3** considers young people with extensive supervision histories—those who spent the most time in total under supervision, and who also had the greatest number of periods.

**Chapter 4** looks at differences in pathway characteristics across the states and territories.

**Chapter 5** looks at trends in pathways, including changes in the number of periods and time spent under supervision.

This report includes supplementary tables (those with a prefix of S) which can be downloaded free of charge from: <[www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/youth-justice)>.

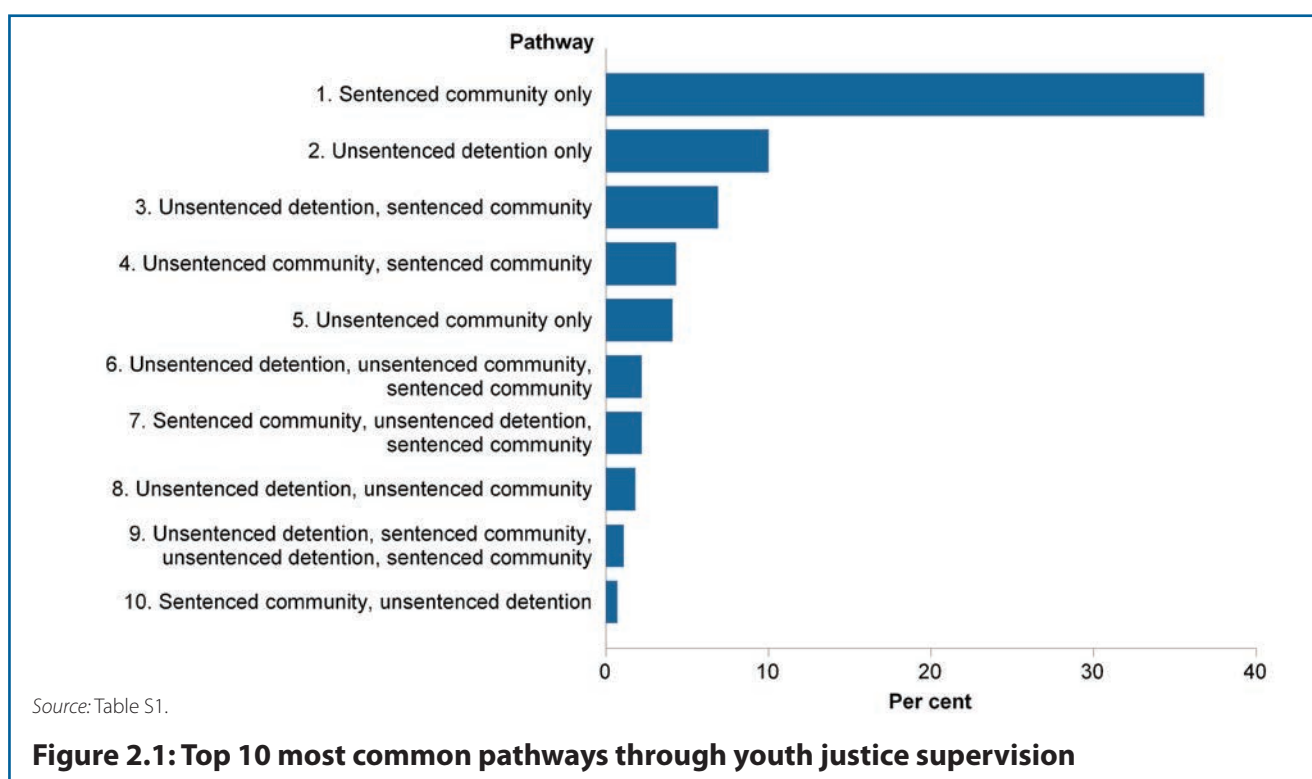
## 2 Time spent in youth justice supervision pathways

This chapter looks at the time young people spent under supervision in the most common pathways, including the total time spent under supervision, the time spent within each pathway component, the number of periods of supervision experienced and how these characteristics vary for different groups of young people.

### Youth justice supervision pathways

The 24,102 young people for whom data were available experienced 3,274 different pathways through supervision (excluding Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and some young people in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory; see 'Technical notes' for more details).

But the majority of young people (70%) had 1 of the 10 most common pathways (Figure 2.1), and more than one-third (37%) of young people experienced the most common pathway, *sentenced community-based supervision only* (in this report, pathways are numbered according to their frequency).



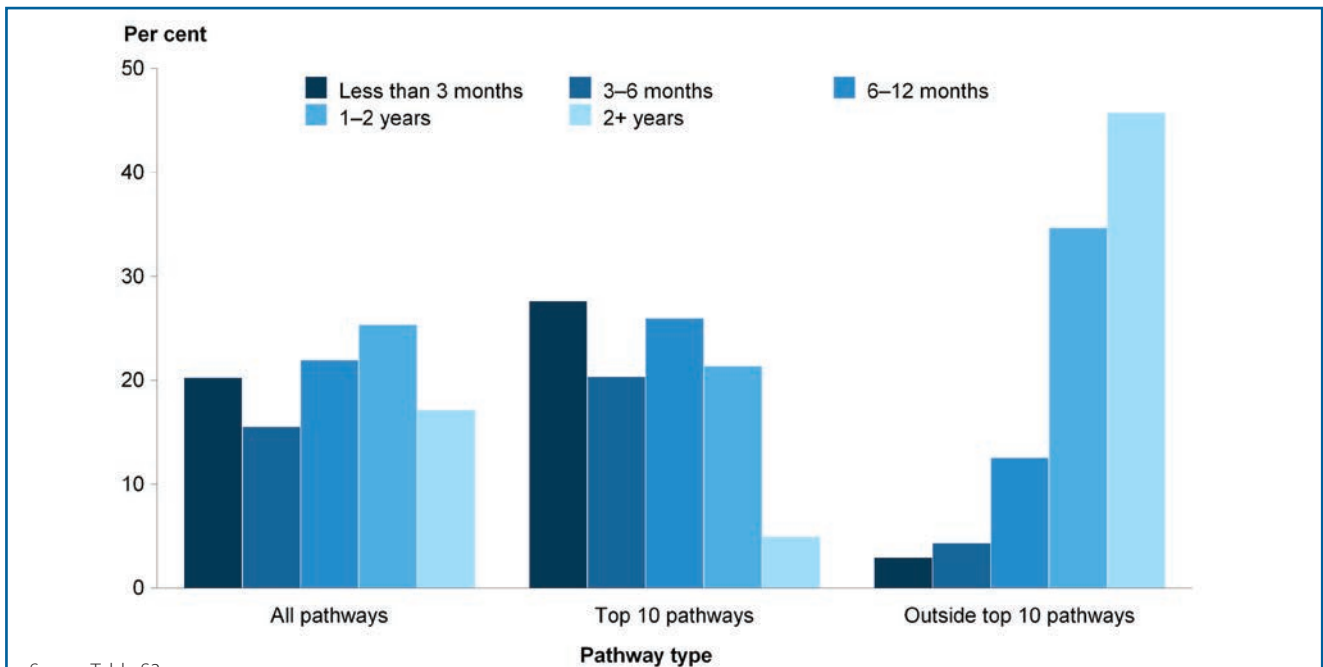
The 10 most common pathways were relatively simple, containing between 1 and 4 components of supervision (Table S1). Pathways outside the top 10 were generally more complex, containing up to 87 components. More than 1 in 10 (11% or 2,739) young people had a pathway that was individual to them.

About 1 in 8 (13% or 3,055) young people experienced a pathway containing sentenced detention (tables S1 and S2), but no pathway in the top 10 contained sentenced detention.

### Time under supervision

Young people who experienced youth justice supervision spent a median of 303 days (about 10 months), in total, under supervision when they were aged 10–17 (Table S3). Young people with a pathway in the top 10 spent a substantially lower median number of days under supervision than those with a pathway outside the top 10 (201 days compared with 682 days). This is to be expected, as the top 10 most common pathways were relatively simple.

Young people with a pathway in the top 10 were more likely than those outside the top 10 to have spent less than 3 months under supervision (28% compared with 3%) (Figure 2.2). They were less likely to have spent 1–2 years (21% compared with 35%) or 2 years or more (5% compared with 46%) under supervision.

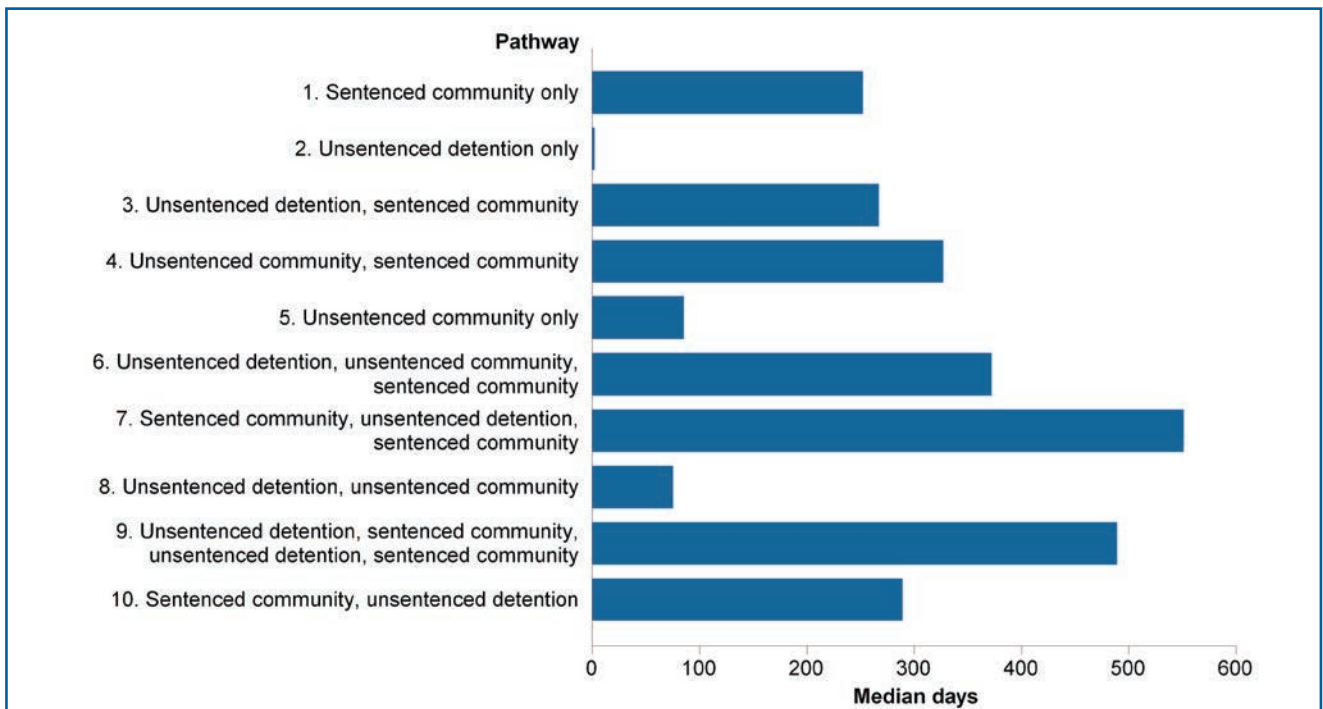


Source: Table S3.

**Figure 2.2: Time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17, by pathway type**

The median total time spent under supervision varied substantially among the top 10 pathways, from 2 days (*unsentenced detention only*) to 551 days (*sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community*) (Figure 2.3).

Pathways in the top 10 that contained sentenced community-based supervision generally had a higher median number of days under supervision than those that did not (Figure 2.3), due to the relatively long average duration of sentenced community-based supervision. These pathways included a larger proportion of young people who spent more than 1 year under supervision (28% to 76% compared with 1% to 3% for pathways without sentenced community-based supervision) (Table S5).



Source: Table S4.

**Figure 2.3: Median time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17, top 10 most common pathways**

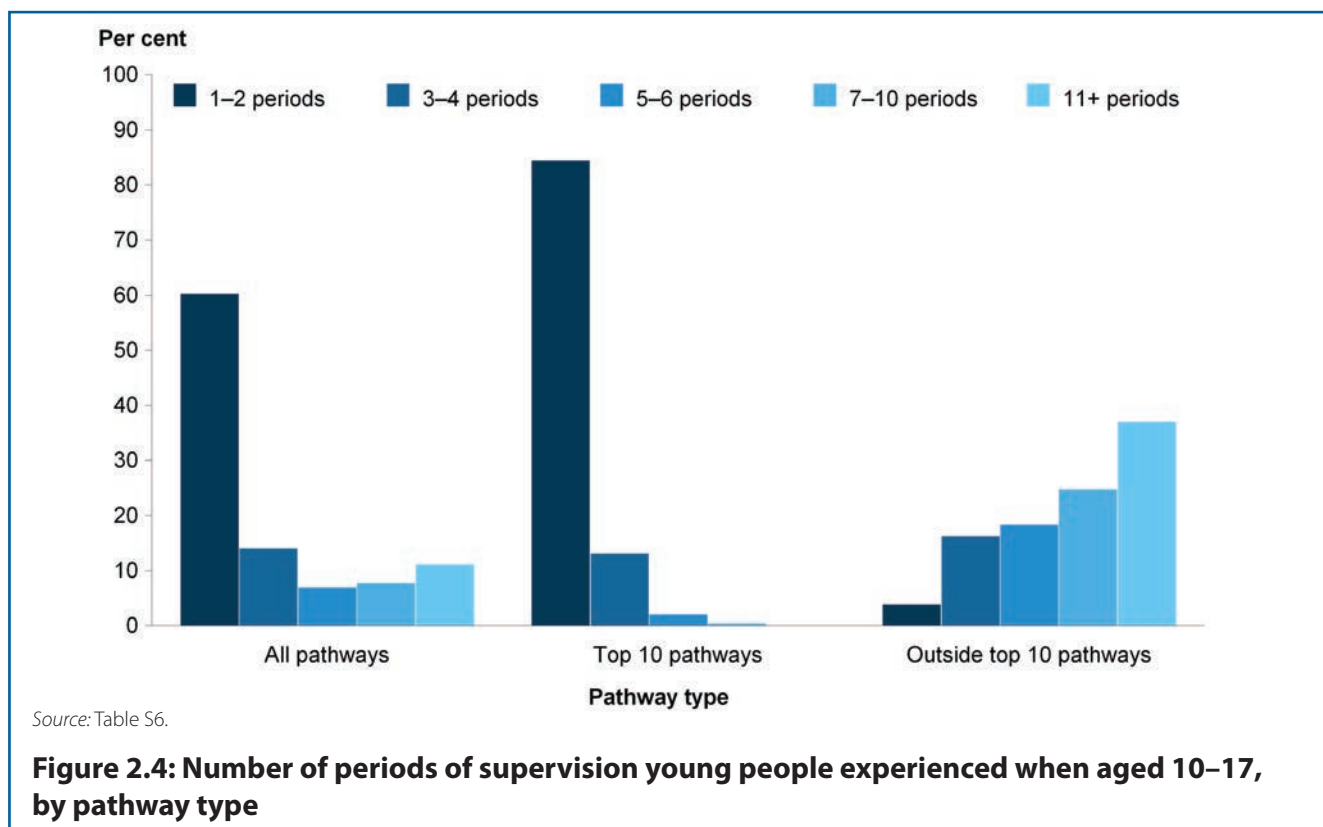
## Number of periods of supervision

Overall, the majority of young people (60%) completed only 1–2 periods of supervision when they were aged 10–17 (Figure 2.4). An additional 14% experienced 3–4 periods and 7% experienced 5–6 periods, almost 8% experienced 7–10 periods and 11% experienced 11 periods or more.

The median number of periods of supervision was 2 (ranging from 1 to 106) (Table S6).

The number of periods under supervision was lower among young people with pathways in the top 10 (median 1 period) than among those with pathways outside the top 10 (median 8 periods). Within the top 10 pathways, nearly all young people experienced 1–2 periods of supervision (84%) or 3–4 periods (13%) (Table S6). But in pathways outside the top 10, only 4% of young people experienced 1–2 periods of supervision, and more than half (62%) experienced 7 periods or more. This result is as expected, as the top 10 pathways were relatively simple and included 3 pathways that consisted of single components of supervision.

Most top 10 pathways consisted of a median of 1, 2 or 3 periods of supervision, reflecting the comparatively low number of components in each of these pathways (Table S7). For example, pathways made up of 1 component had a median of 1 period of supervision, and those made up of 2 components had a median of 2 periods. The exception was pathway 9, which was made up of 4 components (*unsentenced detention, sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community*) and had a median of 5 periods.



## Components of pathways

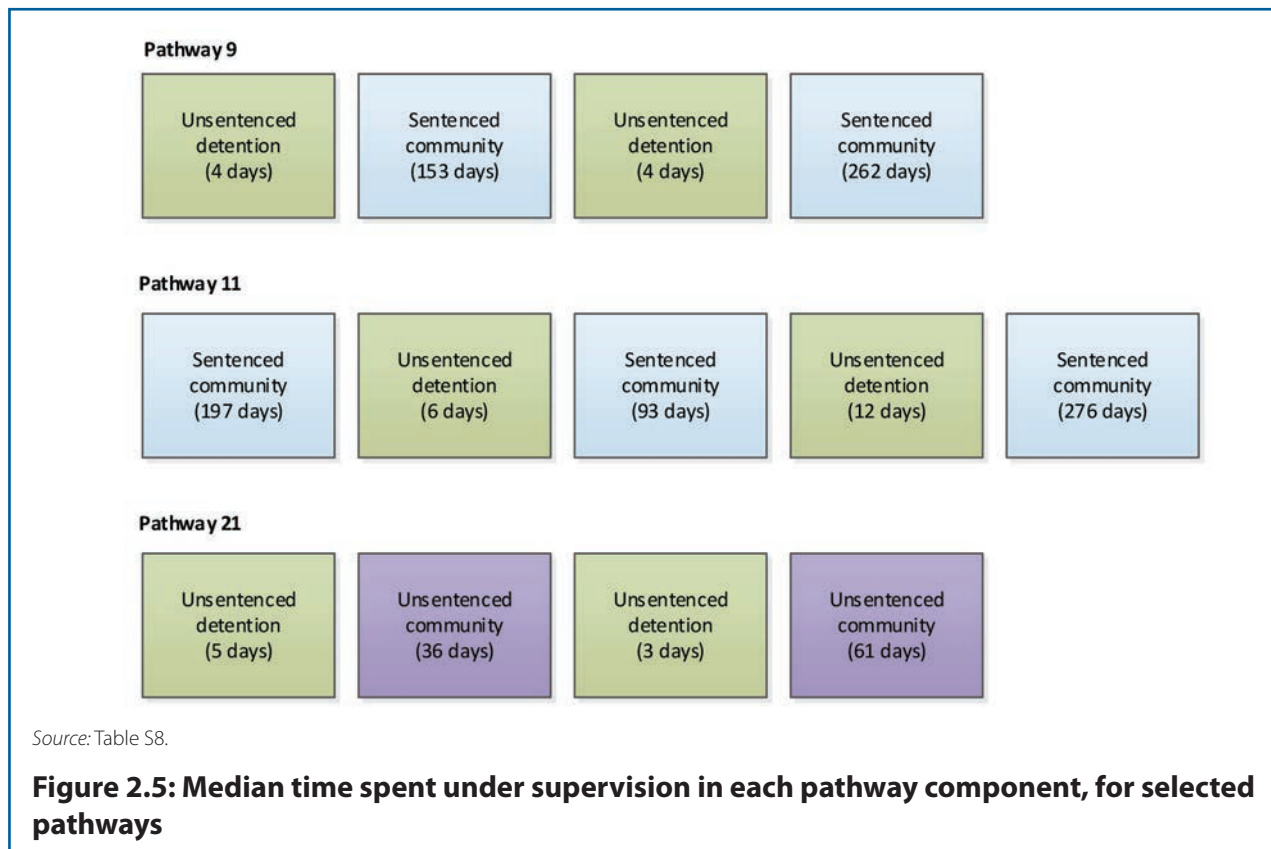
Each pathway through youth justice supervision consists of components that might vary in duration and might be made up of 1 or more periods of supervision (see ‘Data on youth justice supervision pathways’ and ‘Technical notes’ for more information). This section focuses on pathways with multiple components of the same type among the 30 most common pathways—for example, the sentenced community-based supervision components of the pathway *sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community*.

Young people whose pathways included multiple sentenced community-based supervision components spent, in general, more days under supervision in later components of sentenced community-based supervision (Figure 2.5). For two-thirds (67%) of those, the median duration increased from the first to the last component of

sentenced community-based supervision. But there was substantial variability, and some pathways showed a decrease from the first to the second component.

Among pathways with multiple components of unsentenced detention, time spent under supervision showed no clear pattern (Table S8). Equal numbers of pathways had an overall rise and fall in the number of days in unsentenced detention from the first to the last component of unsentenced detention.

Only 5 pathways within the 30 most common contained multiple unsentenced community-based supervision components (Table S8). Among these, 3 pathways showed an overall increase in the time spent under supervision across unsentenced community-based supervision components (see pathway 21 in Figure 2.5).



The median number of periods across components of the same supervision type did not change, regardless of the type of component. For each component, young people completed a median of 1 period of supervision (Table S9). Of the 81 components within these pathways, just 16% (or 13 components) included young people who experienced more than 4 periods of supervision within that component (Table S10).

These patterns might vary substantially for individuals, and be influenced by factors such as offence type and severity, offending history, and sentencing options available to the courts.

## Characteristics of young people

Previous analyses of the JJ NMDS (AIHW 2014) showed that typical pathways through youth justice supervision might vary for different groups of young people. This section looks at differences in pathways, the time spent under supervision, and the number of periods by sex, Indigenous status, age at first supervision, and the first type of supervision.

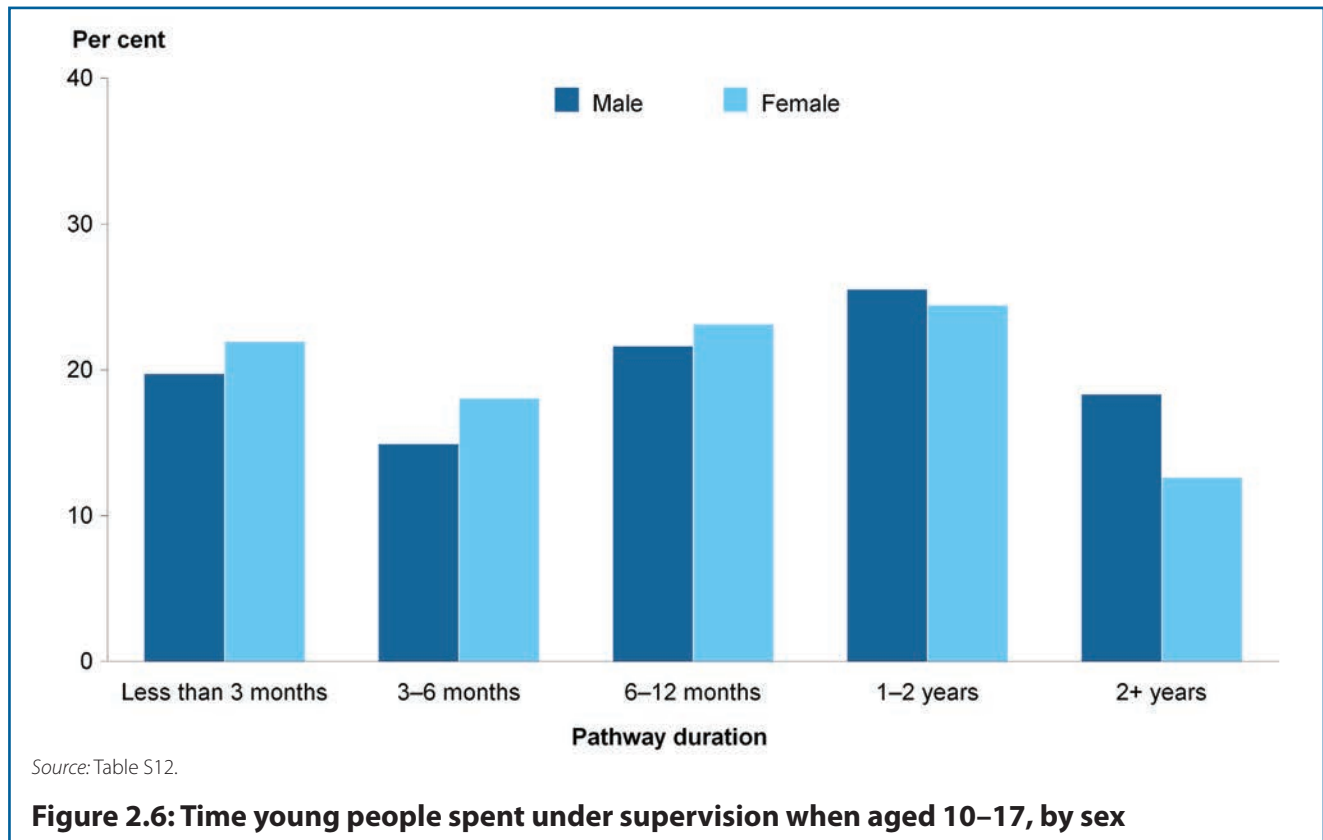
### Sex

Most (80%) of the 24,102 young people with complete supervision histories in the JJ NMDS were male (tables S1 and S11). The 10 most common pathways were similar for males and females, but 5 pathways were ranked differently and the 10th pathway was not the same. The pathways of females were more likely to be within the top 10 than males (76% compared with 68%).

Overall, males spent more time under supervision when they were aged 10–17 than females (median 314 days compared with 274) (Table S12). A slightly greater proportion of males spent 2 years or more under supervision (18% compared with 13%) (Figure 2.6).

Differences were greatest among young people with pathways outside the top 10: males spent a median of 697 days under supervision, compared with 613 days for females (Table S12). Within the top 10 pathways, females spent more time, on average, under supervision in 8 of the 10 pathways (Table S13).

Males and females both experienced a median of 2 periods of supervision when aged 10–17—1 period for those with pathways in the top 10, and 8 periods for those outside of the top 10 pathways (Table S14). But females were more likely than males to have experienced only 1–2 periods (66% compared with 59%), and less likely to have experienced 7 periods or more (15% compared with 20%) (tables S11 and S14).



## Indigenous status

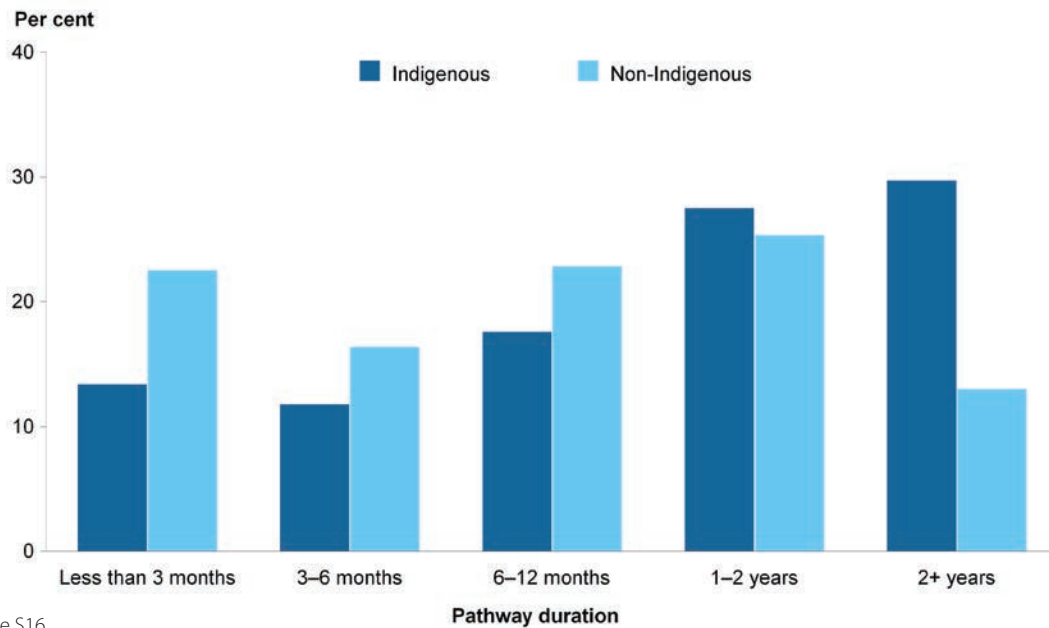
About 3 in 10 (28%) young people with complete supervision histories in the JJ NMDS were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (tables S1 and S15).

The most common pathways of Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people were similar, although 5 of the top 10 pathways were in a different order for Indigenous young people and the 10th pathway was not the same (Table S15). The pathways of Indigenous young people were more likely to be outside the top 10 when compared with non-Indigenous young people (42% compared with 26%).

Indigenous young people spent substantially longer under supervision when aged 10–17 than non-Indigenous young people (median 433 days compared with 275) (Table S16). The proportion of Indigenous young people under supervision for 2 years or more when aged 10–17 was more than twice that of non-Indigenous young people (30% compared with 13%) (Figure 2.7).

Indigenous young people spent longer under supervision, on average, both within the top 10 pathways (median 269 days compared with 188) and outside the top 10 (818 days compared with 611) (Table S16).





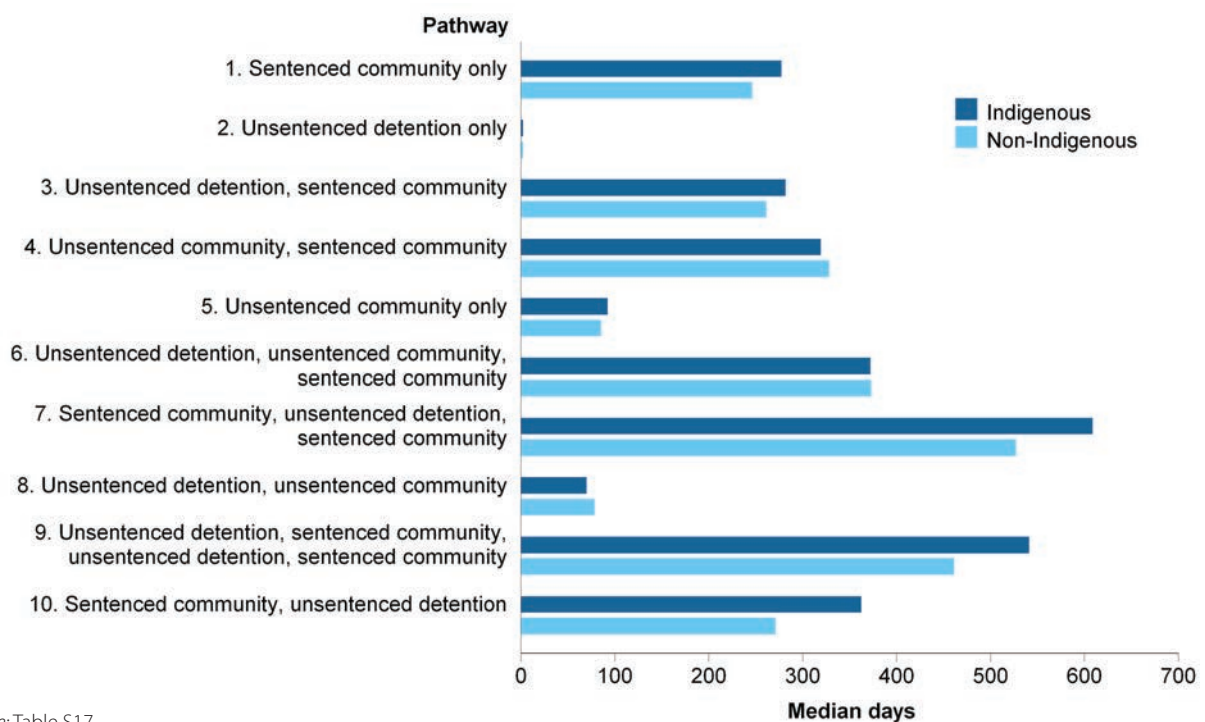
Source: Table S16.

**Figure 2.7: Time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17, by Indigenous status**

Indigenous young people completed more periods of supervision when they were aged 10–17 than non-Indigenous young people (median 3 periods compared with 2) (Table S18). They were twice as likely to complete 7 or more periods of supervision (30% compared with 15%) (tables S15 and S18).

The difference in the median number of periods completed was greatest among young people with pathways outside the top 10 (10 periods for Indigenous young people compared with 7 for non-Indigenous young people).

Indigenous young people spent more time under supervision than non-Indigenous young people in 6 of the top 10 (overall) pathways (Figure 2.8). The greatest difference was in pathway 10, with Indigenous young people spending about 3 months longer under supervision than non-Indigenous young people (362 days compared with 271).



Source: Table S17.

**Figure 2.8: Median time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17, by Indigenous status, top 10 most common pathways**

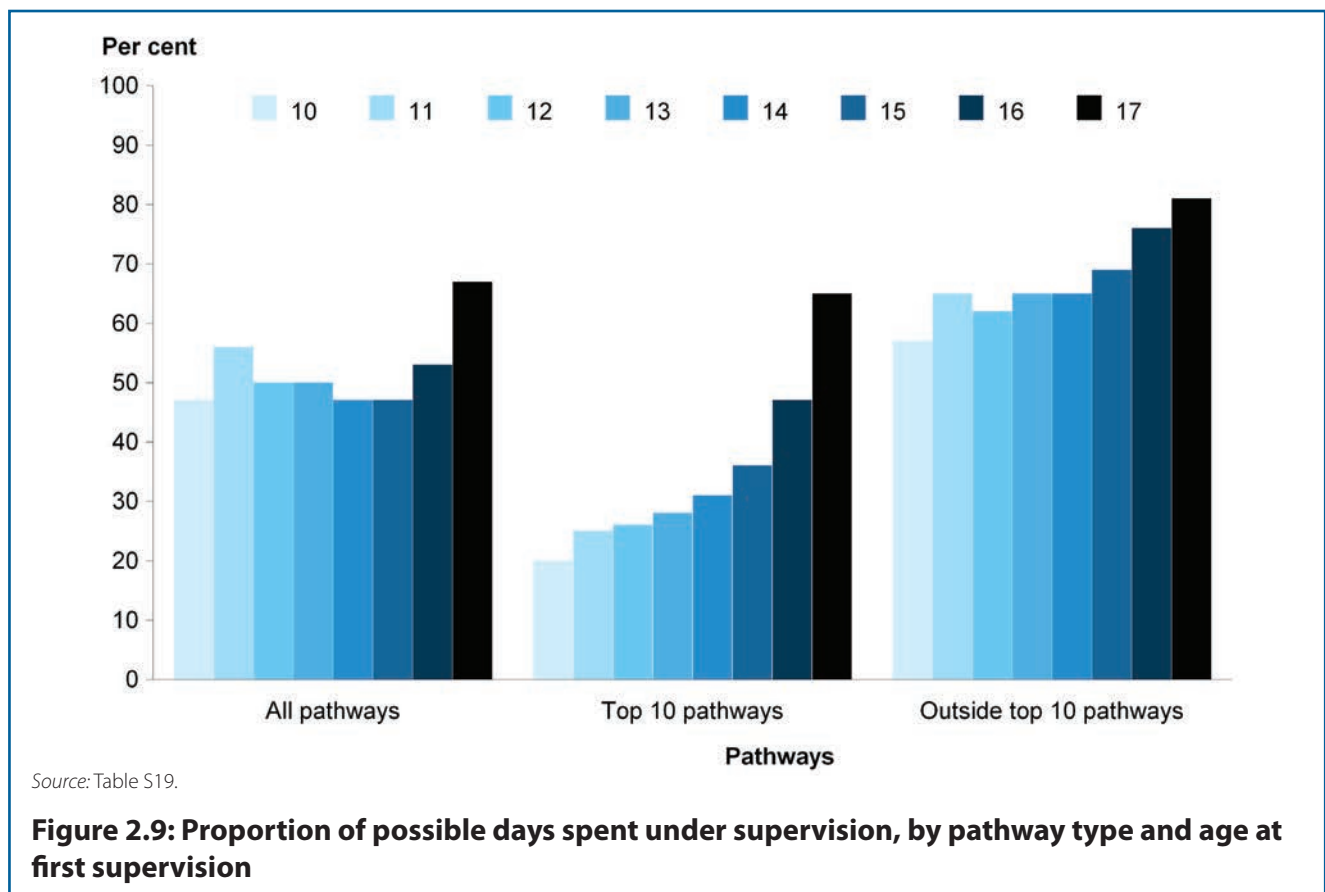
## Age at first supervision

Analysis of the age at which young people were first under supervision supports previous findings (AIHW 2013; AIHW 2014) that those first supervised at a younger age are likely to have longer and more complex youth justice supervision pathways than those first supervised at an older age.

Young people who were aged 11 at first supervision spent the most time, in total, under supervision when they were 10–17 (median 1,413 days), while those aged 17 spent the least time (117 days) (Table S19). This pattern occurred within the top 10 pathways (393 days compared with 107), and for pathways outside the top 10 (1,562 days compared with 186). This result is not surprising, given that the younger a person is when first supervised, the more possible days to be supervised before ‘ageing out’ of the youth justice system.

Young people aged 10–16 at their first supervision spent about half (47% to 56%) of all possible days (defined as all days between the start of the first supervision and the date the young person turned 18) under supervision (Figure 2.9). The proportion of possible days spent under supervision was lower among those with pathways in the top 10 (20% to 47%) than among those with more complex pathways outside the top 10 (57% to 76%). The proportion was highest among those aged 17, due to the limited number of possible days to be supervised before turning 18.

Indigenous young people spent a higher proportion of possible days under supervision than non-Indigenous young people across each year of age at first supervision (Table S19). This pattern occurred in both the top 10 pathways and outside the top 10 pathways.



Similarly, young people who were first supervised at a younger age typically completed more periods of supervision than those first supervised at an older age (Table S20). Young people first supervised at age 11 experienced a median of 16 periods of supervision in total compared with 1 period for those first supervised at age 17.

Most of this variation occurred outside of the top 10 pathways, where young people first supervised at age 11 experienced a median of 21 periods compared with 4 periods for those first supervised when aged 17 (Table S20).

## First supervision type

For almost half (48%) of all young people for whom a complete pathway was available, the first type of supervision was sentenced community-based supervision (Table S21). Unsentenced detention was the next most common (39%), followed by unsentenced community-based supervision (12%), and sentenced detention (less than 1%).

Young people whose first type of supervision was sentenced community-based supervision spent the most time, in total, under supervision when they were aged 10–17 (316 days) (Table S22). This group was the least likely to spend less than 3 months under supervision (10%). More than half (53%) spent between 6 months and 2 years under supervision (Table 2.1).

Young people whose first type of supervision was unsentenced detention spent the second most time under supervision, on average (median 297 days), followed by those who first entered unsentenced community-based supervision (271 days) (Table S22).

Young people in unsentenced detention were most likely to spend either less than 3 months in total (31%) or 1 year or more (45%) under supervision (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Time young people spent under supervision when aged 10–17, by first supervision type**

	Sentenced community		Unsentenced detention		Unsentenced community		Sentenced detention	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Less than 3 months	1,222	10	2,919	31	698	24	19	28
3–6 months	2,450	21	799	9	473	16	9	13
6–12 months	3,141	27	1,490	16	605	21	21	31
1–2 years	3,017	26	2,321	25	738	25	15	22
2+ years	1,842	16	1,861	20	417	14	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,672</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9,390</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,931</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100</b>

### Notes

1. Numbers might not sum due to rounding.
2. Sentenced detention numbers should be interpreted with caution due to low numbers.

Source: Table S22.

Young people with pathways outside the top 10 were much more likely than those in the top 10 to have spent 2 or more years under supervision, regardless of first supervision type—this pattern occurred for sentenced community-based supervision (58% for outside top 10 compared with 6% for within top 10), unsentenced detention (42% compared with 3%), and unsentenced community-based supervision (40% compared with 3%) (Table S22).

Compared with non-Indigenous young people, the first type of supervision for Indigenous young people was less likely to be unsentenced community-based supervision (7% compared with 15%), and slightly more likely to be sentenced community-based supervision (50% compared with 46%) and unsentenced detention (42% compared with 39%) (Table S21).

On average, Indigenous young people spent more time under supervision than non-Indigenous young people in all first supervision types (Table S22). The largest difference was among young people who were first under unsentenced community-based supervision (median 380 days for Indigenous young people compared with 261 days for non-Indigenous young people).

Overall, young people whose first type of supervision was unsentenced detention completed the greatest number of periods of supervision (median 3 periods) (Table S23). This was followed by unsentenced community-based supervision and sentenced detention (median 2 periods each).

## 3 Young people with extensive pathways

This chapter looks at young people whose pathways through youth justice supervision can be considered extensive. It looks at the characteristics of those young people, the types of pathways they experienced, the time they spent under supervision, and the number of periods of supervision they experienced. Comparisons are made with young people whose pathways were not extensive.

A young person was determined to have had an extensive pathway if they:

- were under supervision when aged 10–17 for 2 years or more in total
- experienced 7 periods of supervision or more.

These criteria aimed to capture young people who experienced a large number of periods of supervision and spent substantial time under supervision when they were 10–17.

In total, 2,756 young people (11%) had an extensive pathway (tables S1 and S24).

Young people with extensive pathways accounted for about one-third (32%) of the total days spent under supervision by all young people between 1 July 2000 and 30 June 2014, and nearly half (45%) of all periods of supervision.

### Extensive supervision pathways

Young people's extensive pathways through youth justice supervision were typically long and complex, involving many different components. The 2,756 young people with an extensive history went through a total of 2,288 pathways, with three-quarters (76%) going through a pathway unique to them (that is, their sequence of supervision types was not experienced by anyone else).

Extensive pathways were made up of between 2 and 87 components. Each pathway contained a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 106 periods of supervision (see 'Technical notes' for more information about periods and components).

In contrast, the 21,346 young people who did not have an extensive pathway had a total of 1,248 pathways (Table S25), with about 4% going through a pathway unique to them.

The 10 most common extensive pathways accounted for just 5% of all young people in this group. Only 40 young people (or just over 1%) went through the most common extensive pathway (*sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community*) (Table S24).

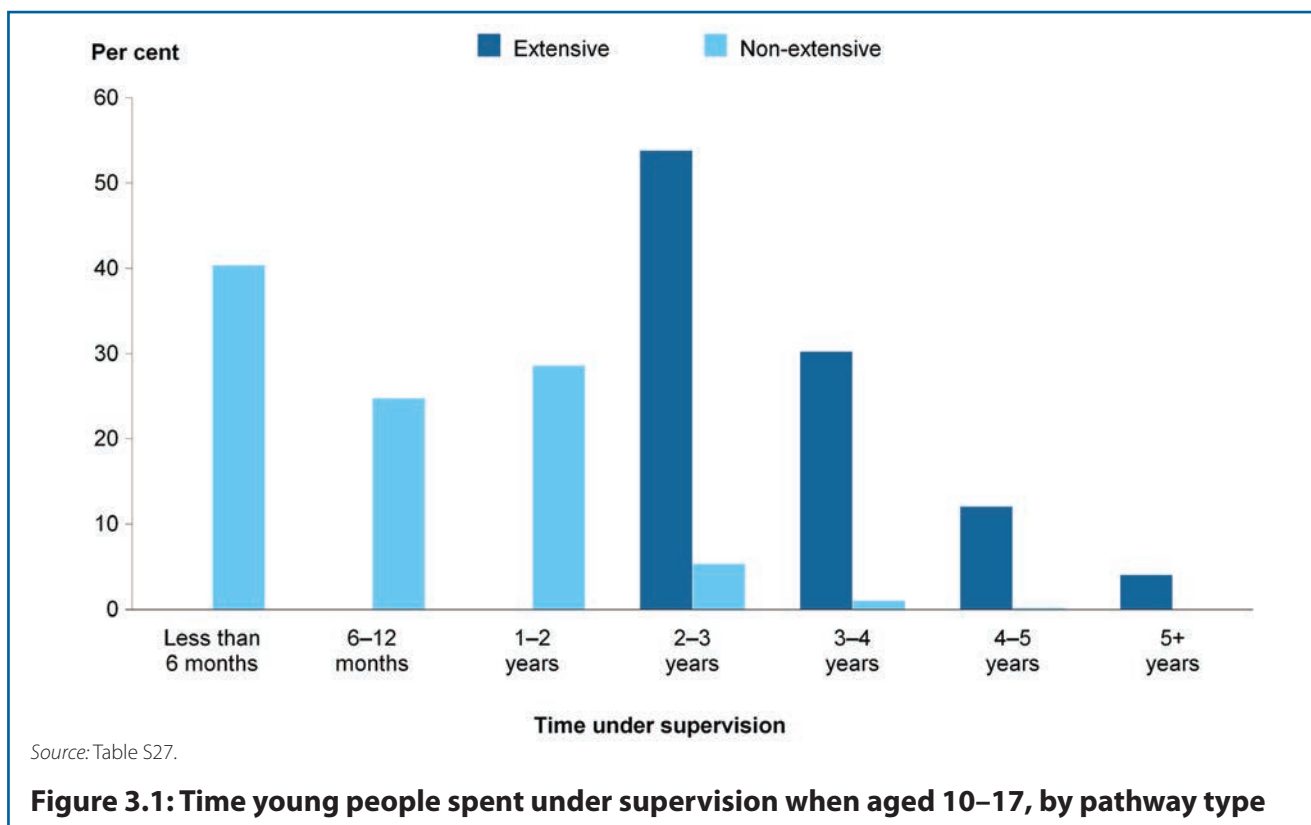
Almost all young people with extensive pathways (more than 99%) experienced some form of detention—more than 99% spent time in unsentenced detention, and close to two-thirds (63%) in sentenced detention (Table S26).

### Time under supervision in extensive pathways

Unsurprisingly, young people with extensive pathways spent lots of time under supervision when they were aged 10–17—a median of 1,066 days (or almost 3 years) in total (Table S27). This was about 4 times as long as young people with non-extensive pathways (264 days).

More than half (54%) of all young people with extensive pathways spent 2–3 years under supervision in total when they were aged 10–17 (Figure 3.1). A further 30% spent 3–4 years under supervision, 12% spent 4–5 years, and 4% spent 5 years or more.

In contrast, most (94%) young people with a non-extensive pathway spent less than 2 years under supervision, in total, with the majority (65%) spending less than 12 months (Table S27).



## Number of periods of supervision in extensive pathways

Young people with extensive pathways completed many more periods of supervision than those with non-extensive pathways—a median of 15 periods compared with 2 periods (Table S28).

Almost three-quarters (72%) of young people with extensive pathways completed 11 periods of supervision or more, compared with only 3% of those with non-extensive pathways.

About one-quarter (26%) of young people with extensive pathways completed 11–15 periods, 16% completed 16–20 periods, 18% completed 21–30 periods, and 11% completed 31 or more periods.

## Components

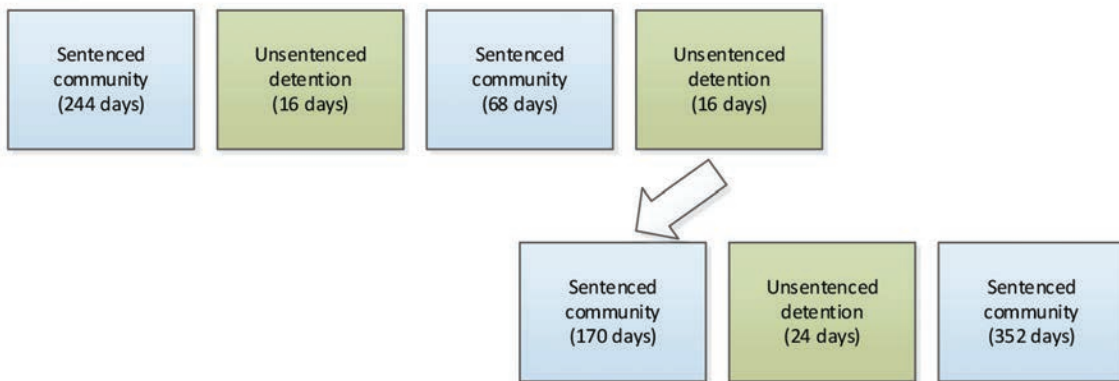
Analysis of the components of extensive pathways is limited due to the small number of young people in each pathway. Any generalisations should be made with caution due to the unique nature of most extensive pathways.

The most common extensive pathway consisted of several sentenced community-based supervision and unsentenced detention components (*sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community, unsentenced detention, sentenced community*). This pathway illustrates the variability in the duration of components, particularly the sentenced community-based components in this case (Figure 3.2). In this pathway, the median time spent in the first component (sentenced community-based supervision) was relatively long (244 days), and was followed by both shorter (median 68 days and 170 days) and longer (352 days) components of sentenced community-based supervision. The median time young people spent in unsentenced detention components rose from 16 to 24 days.

This variability might be influenced by factors such as the small number of young people with this pathway, the number of periods of supervision that made up each component, the number and types of offences that young people were charged with, young people's offending history and personal circumstances, and the sentencing options available to the courts.

Most components in the top 10 extensive pathways consisted of a maximum of only a few periods of supervision (Table S30)—of the 71 components that made up the top 10 pathways, 94% included a maximum of only 1–3 periods of supervision.

**Pathway 1**



Source: Table S29.

Note: This pathway should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers.

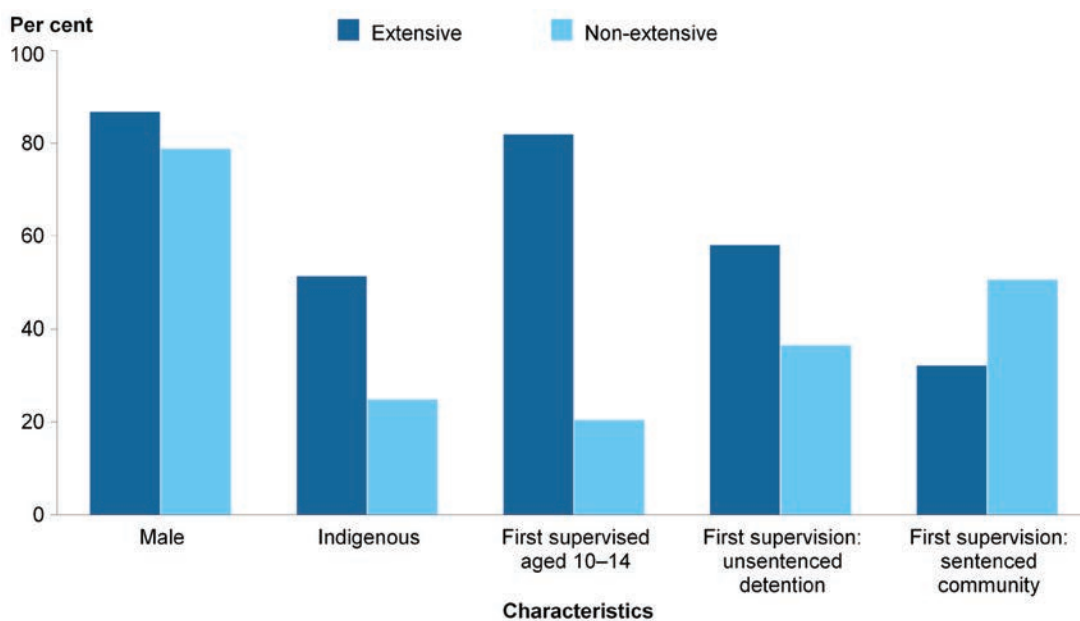
**Figure 3.2: Median time young people spent under supervision in the components of the most common extensive pathway**

In comparison, among the top 10 non-extensive pathways, most (57%) components had a maximum of 4 or more periods of supervision (Table S31). This difference highlights the greater complexity and more frequent changes in supervision type that are typically evident in extensive pathways.

### Characteristics of young people with extensive pathways

The characteristics of young people with extensive and non-extensive pathways differed. Young people with extensive pathways were more likely than those with non-extensive pathways (Figure 3.3) to:

- be male (87% compared with 79%)
- be Indigenous (51% compared with 25%)
- have first entered supervision when they were aged 10–14 (82% compared with 20%)
- have been in unsentenced detention the first time they were under supervision (58% compared with 37%) rather than sentenced community-based supervision (32% compared with 51%).



Source: Table S32.

**Figure 3.3: Selected characteristics of young people who spent time under supervision, by pathway type**

## Sex

Among young people with extensive pathways, males spent slightly longer under supervision than females (median 1,074 days compared with 1,028 days) (Table S33), a similar pattern as for those with non-extensive pathways (270 days for males compared with 244 days for females).

There also were minor differences between males and females in the number of periods of supervision, among both those with extensive pathways (median 15 periods for males compared with 14 periods for females), and those with non-extensive pathways (2 periods compared with 1 period) (Table S34).

## Indigenous status

Indigenous young people with extensive pathways spent more time under supervision than non-Indigenous young people (median 1,122 days compared with 1,021 days) (Table S35). This difference was proportionally smaller than among those with non-extensive pathways (534 days compared with 466).

Among those with extensive pathways, the number of periods completed differed slightly between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people (median 15 periods compared with 14 periods). But there was no difference for those in non-extensive pathways (6 periods each) (Table S36).

## Age at first supervision

Young people first supervised at a younger age typically spent longer under supervision, and completed more periods of supervision in total than those first supervised at an older age (Table S37). Young people with extensive pathways who first entered supervision aged 11 spent nearly twice as long under supervision as those who first entered aged 15 (median 1,610 days compared with 846 days). They also had nearly twice as many periods of supervision (23 periods compared with 12) (Table S38).

The older young people were when they first entered youth justice supervision, the more likely they were to spend more of their possible days under supervision (before they turned 18 and 'aged out' of the system). For example, young people with extensive pathways who first entered supervision aged 15 spent 90% of their possible days under supervision compared with 69% of young people who first entered supervision aged 11 (Table S37).

## First supervision type

Young people with extensive pathways were most likely to have been in unsentenced detention as their first type of supervision (58%) (Table S32). But those who were first under sentenced community-based supervision spent the most time, in total, under supervision when they were aged 10–17 (median 1,124 days) (Table S39). This was followed by those who were first under unsentenced community-based supervision (1,047 days) and unsentenced detention (1,039 days).

A similar pattern occurred among those with non-extensive pathways, with young people who were first under sentenced community-based supervision spending the most time under supervision (median 277 days), followed by unsentenced community-based supervision (234 days) and unsentenced detention (206 days) (Table S39).

## 4 State and territory comparisons

Variations among the states and territories in the numbers and rates of young people under supervision, and the characteristics of pathways, reflect differences in youth justice legislation, policy and practice. This includes differences in police practices, the range of legal orders available to the courts and the options for diversion. More information about the youth justice systems, policies and practices in the states and territories is available from <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/states-territories](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/states-territories)>.

More broadly, levels of youth crime are also affected by policy and practice in other areas including child protection, housing and homelessness, education, employment, family and community services, and health services.

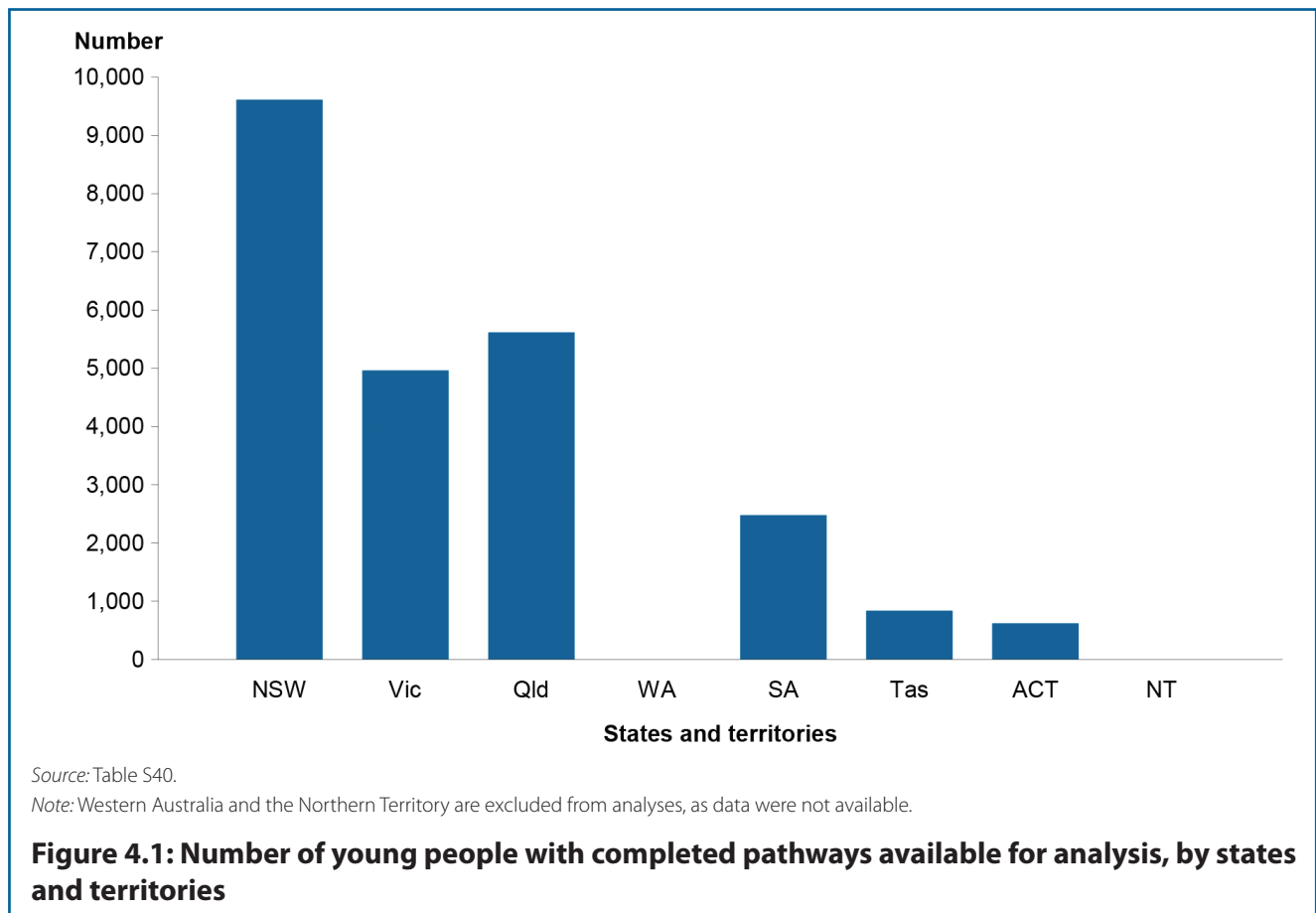
This chapter looks at the similarities and differences in pathways through youth justice supervision among the states and territories. It compares the top 10 national pathways through supervision in each state and territory, along with time spent under supervision, number of periods of supervision completed, and young people's characteristics.

All states and territories are included in these analyses (unless otherwise stated) except for Western Australia and the Northern Territory, as JJ NMDS data were not available. Young people for whom a complete supervision history was not available were excluded. This excludes some young people in Tasmania (360 young people or 43% of the total) and the Australian Capital Territory (14 young people or 2%).

This means that in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, some young people with long supervision histories are not captured in this analysis. Young people who were supervised before data became available, and who did not return during the period for which data are available, are also missing from the analysis.

### Supervision pathways in the states and territories

New South Wales had the largest number of young people with completed pathways available for analysis (40% or 9,605), while the Australia Capital Territory had the smallest (3% or 615) (Figure 4.1).



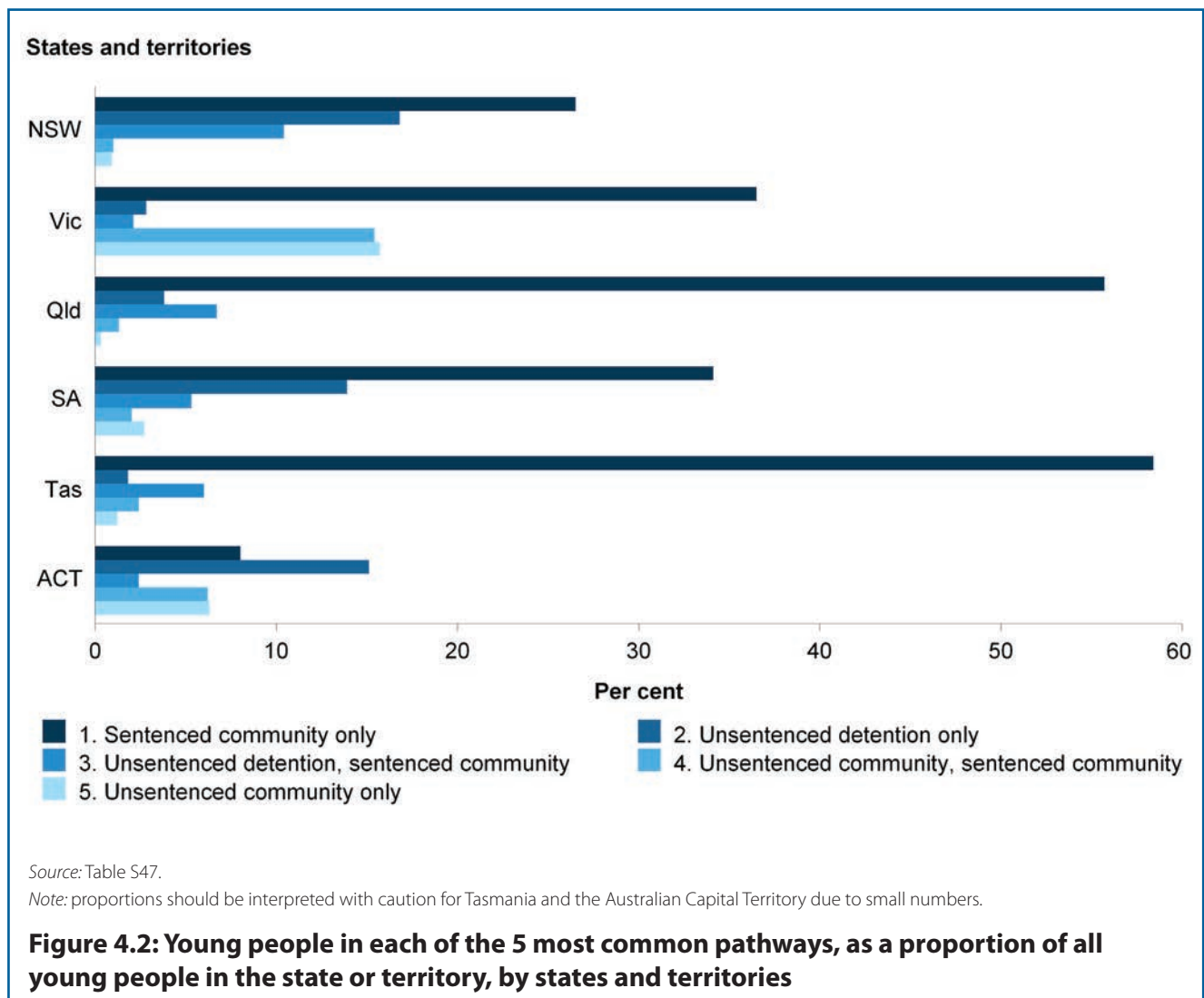


The proportion of young people in each state and territory whose pathway was in the national top 10 ranged from 60% of those in the Australian Capital Territory to 80% in Victoria (tables S41–S46). This largely reflected the proportion of young people with a pathway unique to them, which was highest in the Australian Capital Territory (26%) and lowest in Victoria (9%).

The most common pathways through supervision varied between the states and territories (Figure 4.2). *Sentenced community only* was the most common pathway at the national level and in all jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory. But the proportion of young people with this pathway varied substantially—from just 8% of those in the Australian Capital Territory to 58% in Tasmania. In the Australian Capital Territory, it was the third most common pathway, behind *unsentenced detention only* and *unsentenced detention, sentenced community* (not shown in Figure 4.2) (Table S46).

Nationally, the second most common pathway was *unsentenced detention only* (Table S1). There were higher proportions of young people with this pathway in New South Wales (17%), the Australian Capital Territory (15%), and South Australia (14%) than in the remaining states (2% to 4%) (Table S47).

Victoria had a relatively high proportion of young people with pathways containing unsentenced community-based supervision (Figure 4.2). For example, in Victoria 16% of young people experienced the pathway *unsentenced community only* compared with less than 1% to 3% for most other jurisdictions (6% in the Australian Capital Territory).



Source: Table S47.

Note: proportions should be interpreted with caution for Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory due to small numbers.

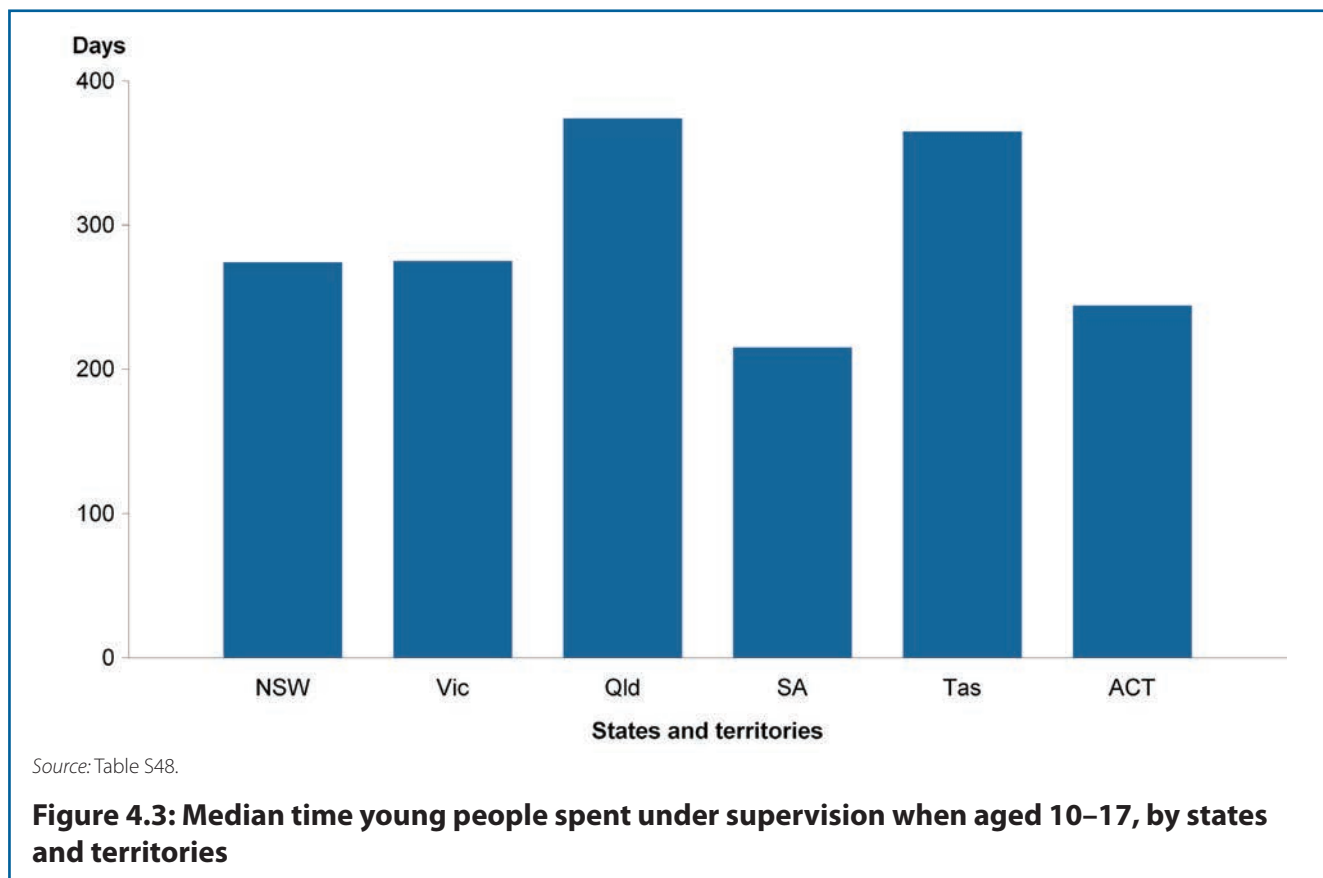
**Figure 4.2: Young people in each of the 5 most common pathways, as a proportion of all young people in the state or territory, by states and territories**

## Time under supervision in the states and territories

The total time young people aged 10–17 spent under supervision in the states and territories was lowest in South Australia (215 days) and highest in Tasmania and Queensland (365 and 374 days, respectively) (Figure 4.3).

Queensland (57%) and Tasmania (48%) had the highest proportions of young people who spent 1 year or more under supervision when they were aged 10–17 (Table S48). Just over one-third (35% to 38%) of young people in the remaining jurisdictions spent 1 year or more under supervision. Conversely, in the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia, almost one-third of young people spent less than 3 months under supervision (32% and 31%, respectively).

Young people in the top 10 pathways spent less time under supervision—from a median of 97 days in the Australian Capital Territory to 347 days in Tasmania (Table S48). For pathways outside the top 10, the median ranged from 581 days in South Australia to 896 days in Queensland.



## Number of periods of supervision in the states and territories

In most jurisdictions, young people completed a median of 2 periods of youth justice supervision when they were aged 10–17 (Table S49). Tasmania had the lowest median number of periods completed (1 period), while the Australian Capital Territory had the highest (3 periods).

In the top 10 pathways, young people in nearly all jurisdictions completed a median of 1 period of supervision (Table S49). Outside the top 10 pathways, the median number of periods was lowest in Victoria (6 periods), and highest in the Australian Capital Territory (10 periods).

In all jurisdictions, about half (or more) of young people experienced only 1 or 2 periods of supervision—from 46% in the Australian Capital Territory to 72% in Victoria (Table S49). The proportion of young people who experienced 7 periods of supervision or more was highest in the Australian Capital Territory (28%), and lowest in Victoria (10%).

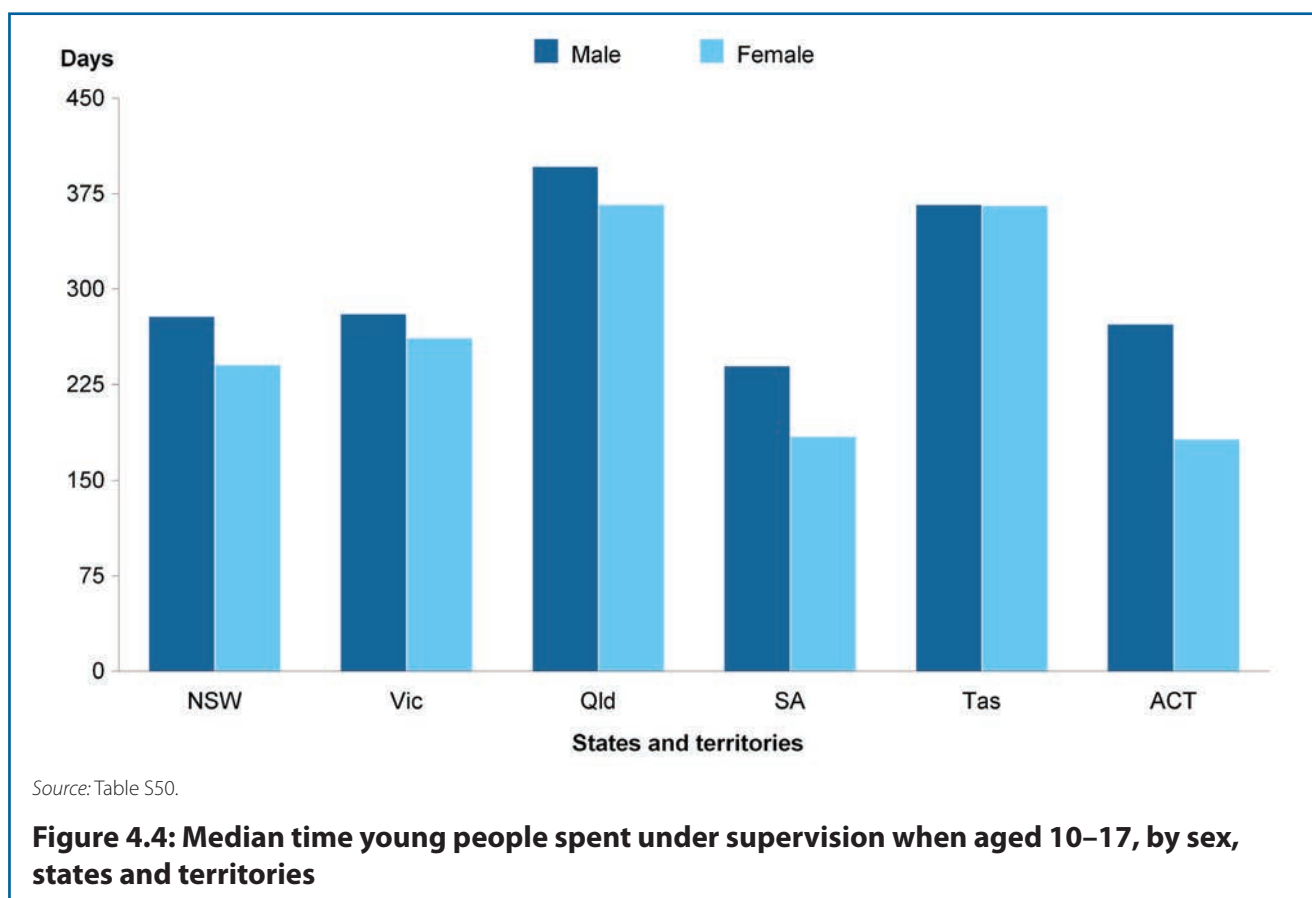
## Characteristics of young people in the states and territories

### Sex

On average, males spent more time under supervision than females in all states and territories. The difference was greatest in the Australian Capital Territory (90 days more for males) and smallest in Tasmania (1 day) (Figure 4.4).

But in the 10 most common pathways, females spent more time, on average, under supervision than males in Tasmania (22 days more), New South Wales (8 days), and the Australian Capital Territory (7 days) (Table S50).

Males completed a median of 2 periods of supervision when they were aged 10–17 compared with 1 period for females in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania (Table S51). In the other states and territories, the median number of periods completed was equal.

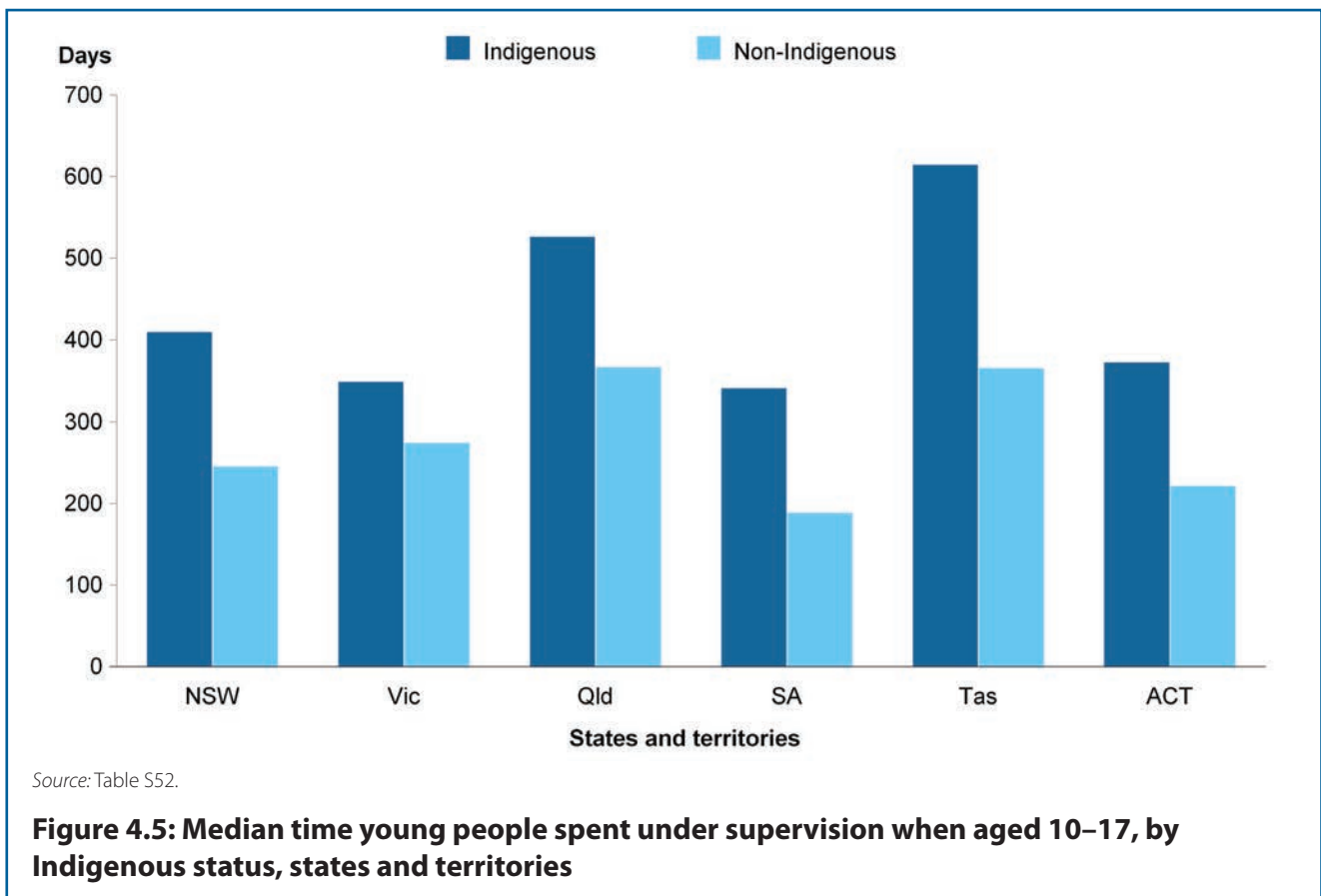


### Indigenous status

Indigenous young people spent more time under supervision than non-Indigenous young people in all states and territories, with the largest difference in Tasmania (249 days more) and the smallest in Victoria (74 days) (Figure 4.5). This pattern occurred in most states and territories both in the top 10 pathways and outside the top 10 pathways (Table S52).

Indigenous young people also completed a slightly higher median number of periods of supervision than non-Indigenous young people in all jurisdictions except Victoria (where the number of periods was equal) (Table S53).

In the top 10 pathways, Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people completed an equal number of periods in all jurisdictions except New South Wales and Tasmania (where Indigenous young people completed a median of 2 periods compared with 1 for non-Indigenous young people). Outside the top 10 pathways, Indigenous young people experienced 1–5 additional periods of supervision, on average (Table S53).



## Age at first supervision

In each state and territory, those who were first supervised at a younger age spent substantially more time in total under supervision than those first supervised at an older age (Table S54). Those first supervised at age 11 spent 1,235–1,440 days under supervision in each jurisdiction, compared with 83–182 days for those first supervised at age 17. This pattern reflects the fact that the younger a person was when first supervised, the more possible days to be supervised before ‘ageing out’ of the youth justice system.

Among the states and territories, the median number of periods completed by young people who were first supervised at age 11 ranged from 7 in South Australia to 25 in the Australian Capital Territory (Table S55). Across jurisdictions those first supervised at age 17 completed a median 1 period of supervision, except for the Australian Capital Territory (2 periods).

## First supervision type

The total time spent under supervision by first supervision type varied among the states and territories. In New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, young people who first entered unsentenced community-based supervision spent the most time in total under supervision when they were aged 10–17 (median 362, 571 and 309 days, respectively) (Table S56). In Victoria and Tasmania, those who first entered unsentenced detention spent the most time in total under supervision (364 and 506 days, respectively). In the Australian Capital Territory, those who first entered sentenced community-based supervision spent the most time in total under supervision (321 days).

But there were relatively few differences in the median number of periods of supervision completed by first supervision type across the states and territories. Young people who first entered sentenced community-based supervision completed a median of 1 period in each state and territory, those who first entered unsentenced community-based supervision completed a median of 2–3 periods, while those who first entered unsentenced detention completed a median of 3–4 periods (Table S57).

## Extensive pathways in the states and territories

New South Wales and Queensland had the highest proportion of young people under youth justice supervision with extensive pathways (13% each) (Table S58). Victoria had the lowest proportion (7%). Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory are not included in this section due to small numbers.

Differences in the proportion of young people with extensive pathways among the states and territories might reflect differences in youth justice legislation, policy and practice, along with policy and practice in areas such as child protection, housing and homelessness, and family and community services.

The time young people with extensive pathways spent under supervision ranged from a median of 1,020 days in New South Wales to 1,138 days in Queensland (Table S59). South Australia had the highest proportion of young people with extensive pathways who spent 4 years or more under supervision (23%).

The number of periods of supervision young people with extensive pathways completed ranged from a median of 12 in Victoria to 21 in South Australia (Table S60). South Australia had the highest proportion (29%) of young people with extensive pathways who completed 31 or more periods of supervision, although this represented a small number of individuals.

## 5 Trends in pathways

This chapter looks at trends in young people's pathways over time, including changes in the time spent under supervision and the number of periods young people experienced. It looks at the supervision history of young people in six birth cohorts—those born in 1 of the 6 financial years between 1990–91 and 1995–96. These young people were aged 10–17 and under youth justice supervision between 2000–01 and 2013–14.

This chapter only considers young people from states with complete data for all 6 cohorts (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia).

### Trends in the top 10 pathways

Analysis of the top 10 pathways for each cohort showed that the most common pathways remained similar over time, though there were minor changes (Table S61). The proportion of young people whose pathway was in the top 10 decreased from 74% in those born in 1990–91 to 68% in those born in 1995–96. This was largely driven by a decline in the most common pathway, *sentenced community only* (from 39% to 34%).

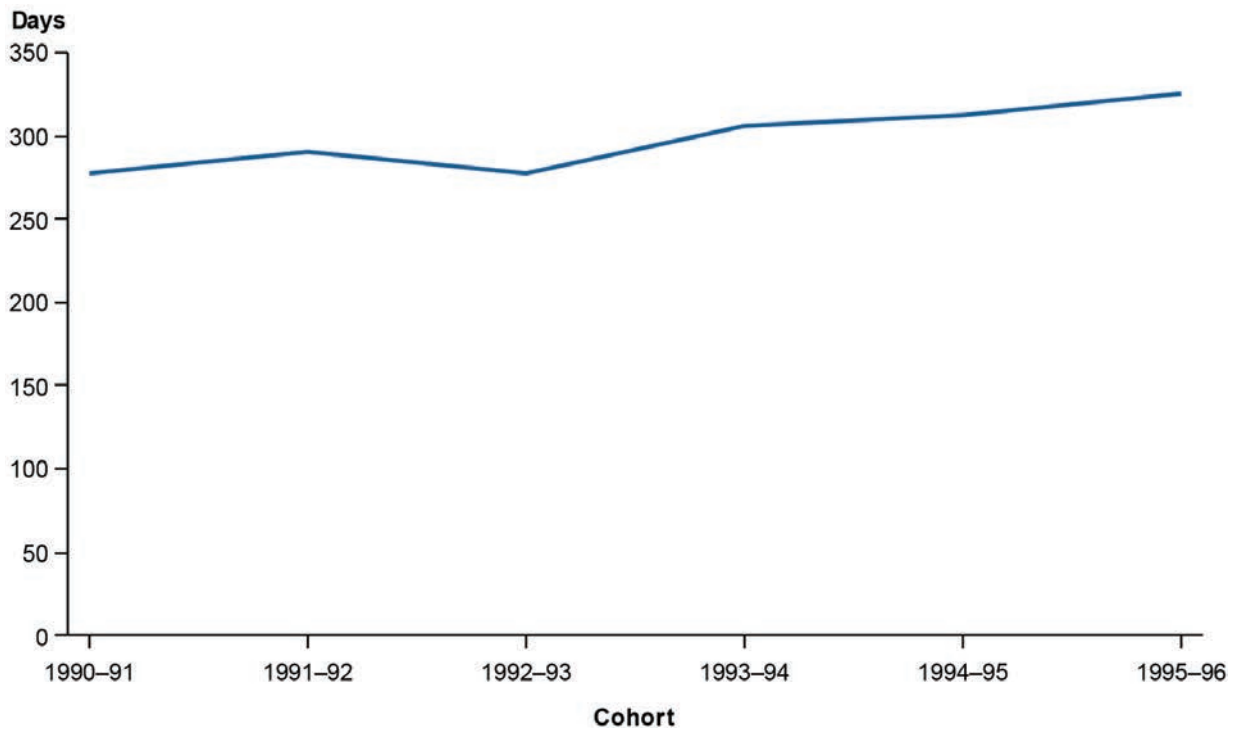
The first 9 pathways through youth justice supervision remained common to each cohort, although the order of these pathways changed slightly over time (Table S61). The top 3 pathways—*sentenced community only*, *unsentenced detention only* and *unsentenced detention, sentenced community*—were the same in all cohorts.

### Trends in time under supervision

The time spent under supervision across all pathways increased from a median of 277 days for the 1990–91 cohort to 326 days for the 1995–96 cohort. This increase occurred primarily from the 1992–93 cohort onwards (Figure 5.1).

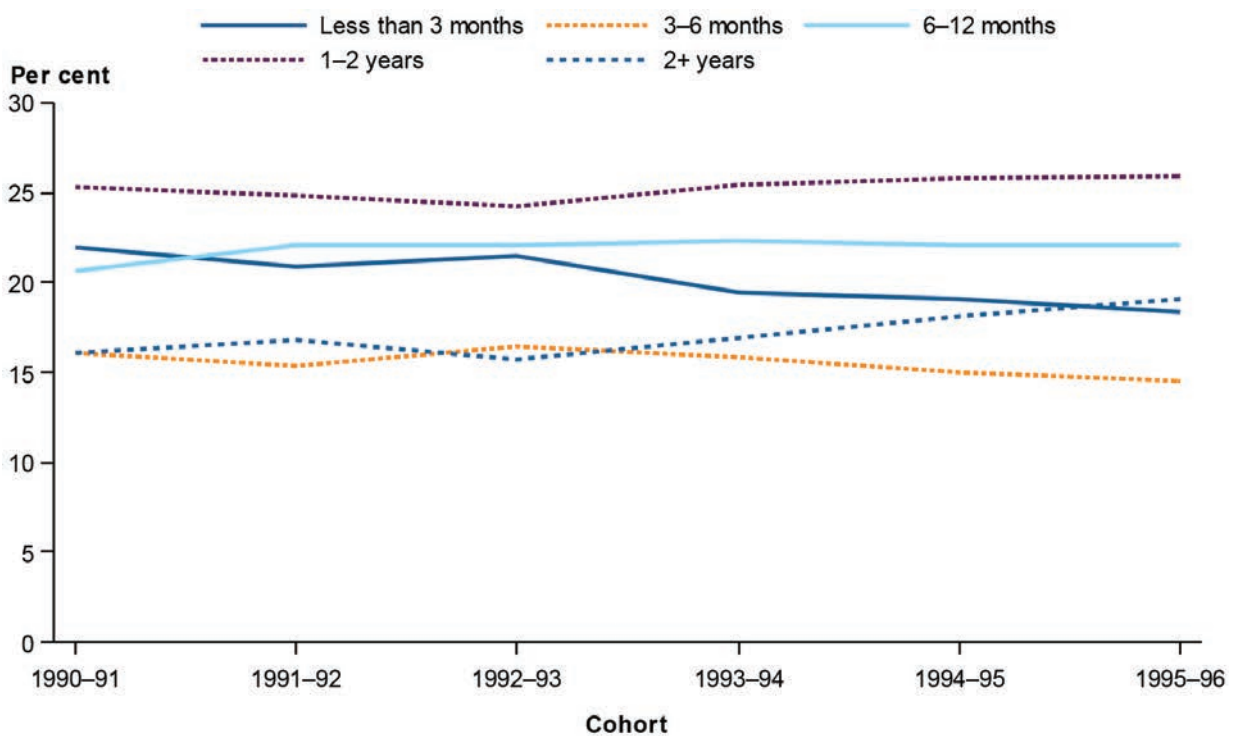
The median total time under supervision was lower among young people with pathways in the top 10, ranging between 190 days for the 1992–93 cohort and 215 days for the 1995–96 cohort (Table S62). Outside the top 10 pathways, the trend in time spent under supervision was also similar to the overall pattern—increasing from 645 days in 1992–93 to 722 days in 1995–96.

Between young people born in 1990–91 and 1995–96, the proportion who spent less than 3 months under supervision decreased slightly from 22% to 18% (Figure 5.2). The proportion who spent more than 2 years under supervision increased from 16% to 19%.



Source: Table S62.

**Figure 5.1: Median time young people spent under supervision when aged 10-17, by birth cohort**



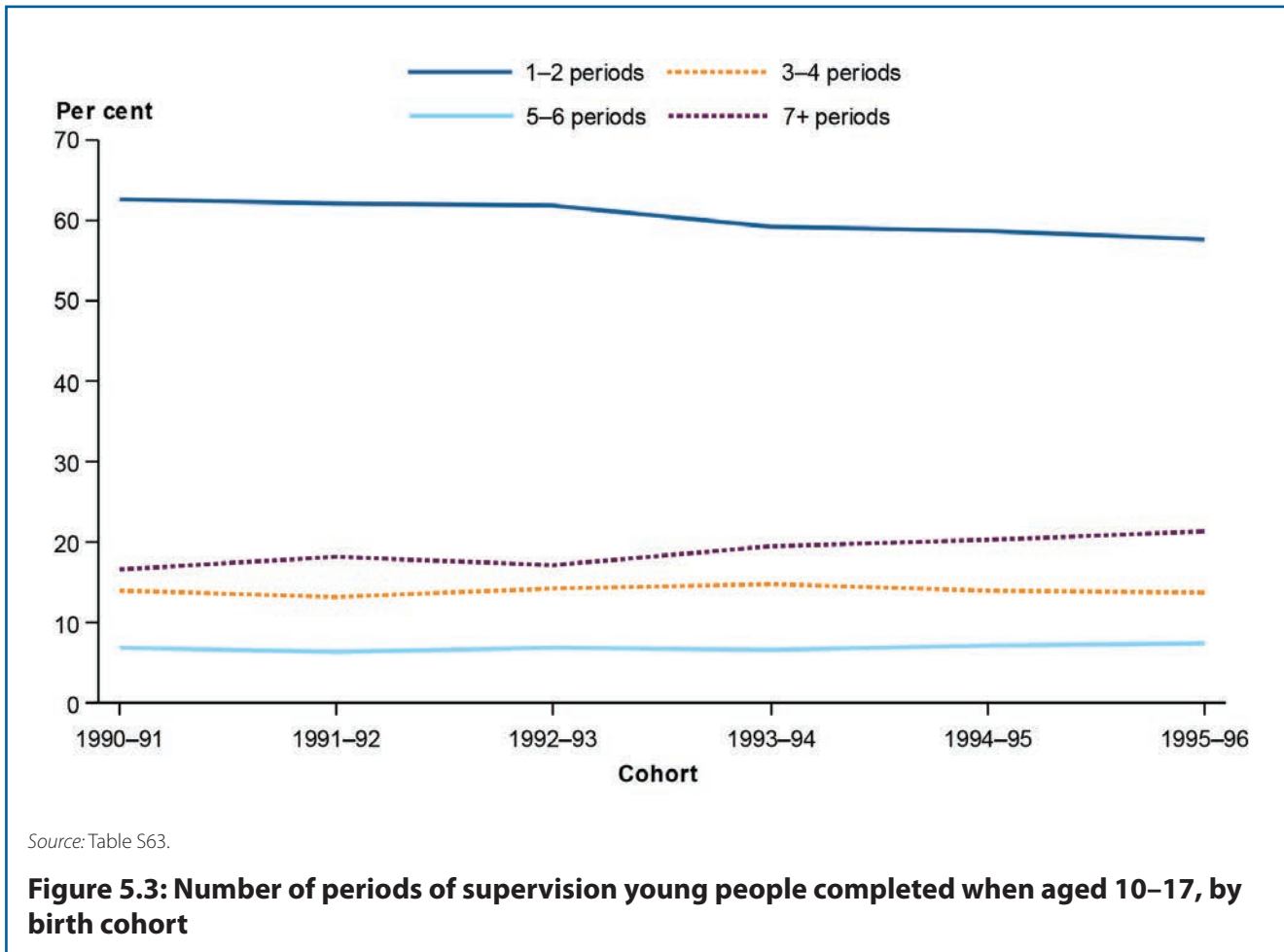
Source: Table S62.

**Figure 5.2: Time young people spent under supervision when aged 10-17, by birth cohort**

## Trends in the number of periods of supervision

Overall, the number of periods of supervision young people completed was consistent over time (median 2 periods in each cohort) (Table S63). In the top 10 pathways, each cohort spent a median of 1 period under supervision. Outside the top 10 pathways, most cohorts spent a median of 8 periods under supervision, with the only exception being those born in 1995–96 (9 periods).

Most young people only completed 1 or 2 periods of supervision. Over time, the proportion of young people in each cohort experiencing 1–2 periods of supervision decreased slightly, from 63% in the 1990–91 cohort to 58% in the 1995–96 cohort (Figure 5.3). The proportion of young people who experienced 7 or more periods of supervision rose slightly from 17% in the 1990–91 cohort to 21% in 1995–96).



Among young people with pathways in the top 10, most experienced only 1 or 2 periods of supervision, with the proportion fluctuating between 83% and 86% in each cohort (Table S63). Similarly, the proportion who completed 3–4 periods (12% to 14%) or 5 or more periods (2% to 4%) changed little. Less than 1% completed 7 or more periods of supervision.

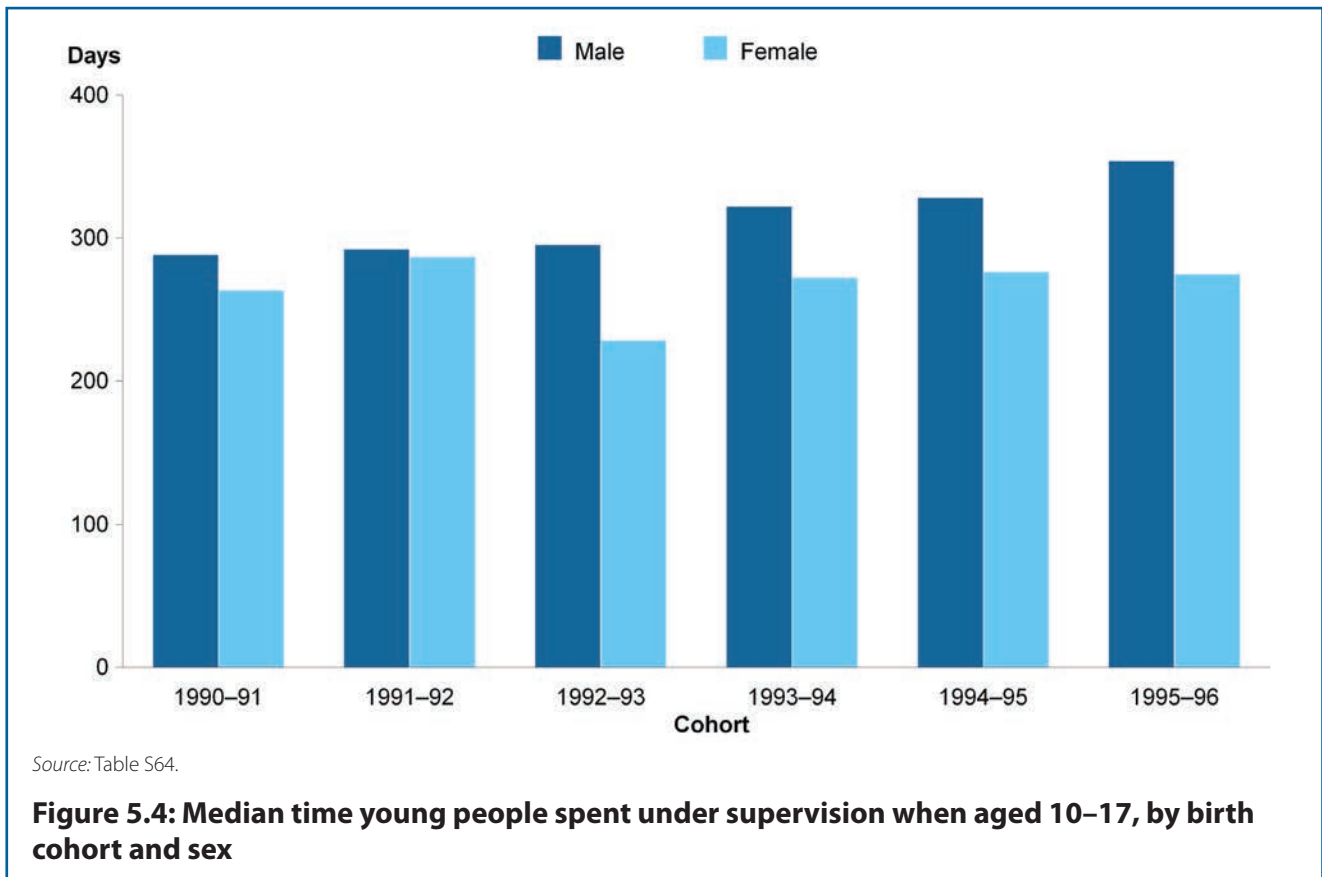
Outside the top 10 pathways, almost two-thirds (59% to 65%) of young people in each cohort experienced 7 or more periods of supervision.

## Trends in characteristics of young people

### Sex

Males spent more time under supervision than females in all cohorts (Figure 5.4). Differences varied over time, ranging from 6 days more for males born in 1991–92 to 79 days more for males born in 1995–96. In each cohort, more males than females spent 2 years or more under supervision (Table S64).

Males and females completed the same median number of periods of supervision in 5 of the 6 cohorts (2 periods each) (Table S65). In each cohort, slightly more males than females completed 7 periods of supervision or more.

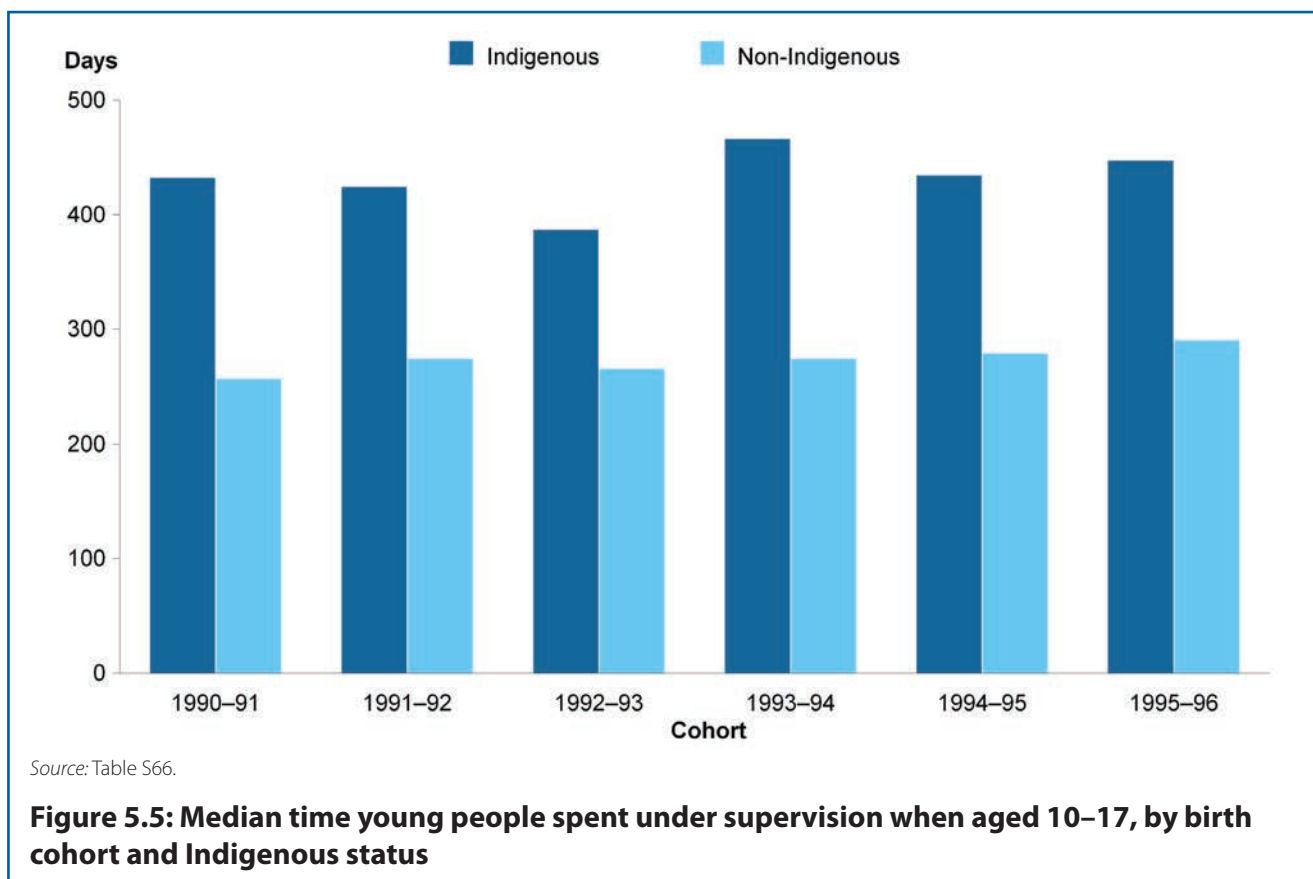


### Indigenous status

In each cohort, Indigenous young people spent more time under supervision, on average, than non-Indigenous young people, with the difference ranging from 122 days more to 192 days more (Figure 5.5). The differences fluctuated across cohorts, with no clear trend. Indigenous young people were about 2–3 times as likely to have spent 2 years or more under supervision as non-Indigenous young people in each cohort (Table S66).

Indigenous young people were also more likely to complete more periods of supervision than non-Indigenous young people—a median of 3 periods compared with 2 in each cohort (Table S67). They were about twice as likely as non-Indigenous young people to have experienced 11 periods or more in each cohort, and were substantially less likely to have only spent 1 or 2 periods under supervision than non-Indigenous young people (44% to 49% compared with 61% to 67%).





### Age at first supervision

In each cohort, young people who were first supervised at a younger age spent more time in total under supervision than those first supervised at an older age (Table S68). Young people first supervised at age 11 spent a median of 1,267–1,529 days under supervision compared with 103–120 days for those first supervised at age 17. There were no consistent changes across the cohorts in the proportion of possible days spent under supervision for each single-year age group.

Similarly, young people first supervised at age 11 completed a median of 13–19 periods of supervision compared with a median of 1 period for those first supervised at age 17 (Table S69).

### First supervision type

Young people who were first under sentenced community-based supervision spent the most time under supervision for all cohorts except 1991–92 (Table S70). Among those born in 1991–92, young people who first entered unsentenced detention spent the most time under supervision (310 days).

The time spent under supervision for young people who first entered sentenced community-based supervision increased from a median of 312 to 358 days. There were similar trends for unsentenced community-based supervision (223 to 281 days) and unsentenced detention (258 to 319 days), with fluctuations across cohorts.

However, the median number of periods of supervision completed by first supervision type varied little across the cohorts. Young people who first entered sentenced community-based supervision completed a median of 1 period across all 6 cohorts (Table S71). Those who first entered unsentenced community-based supervision completed a median of 2 periods, while those who first entered unsentenced detention completed a median of 3–4 periods, with an increase in the later cohorts.

## Trends in extensive pathways

The proportion of young people with extensive pathways increased slightly across the cohorts, from 10% of those born in 1990–91 to 14% of those born in 1995–96 (tables S62 and S72).

The time young people with extensive pathways spent under supervision ranged from a median of 1,044 days in the 1992–93 cohort to 1,085 days in 1993–94, with no consistent trend over time (Table S72). In each cohort, more than half (52% to 58%) of young people with extensive pathways spent 2–3 years under supervision, and another 28% to 34% spent 3–4 years under supervision.

Those with extensive pathways experienced a median of 14–15 periods of supervision in all cohorts (Table S73). About three-quarters (70% to 75%) of young people in each cohort experienced 11 or more periods of supervision.

Males with extensive pathways spent more time under supervision than females in all cohorts except 1992–93 (Table S74). The differences between males and females ranged from 1 day more for males born in 1991–92 to 116 days more for males born in 1990–91. A higher proportion of males than females spent 4 years or more under supervision in every cohort.

Across cohorts the median number of periods males and females completed ranged from 14 to 16 periods for males and 13 to 20 for females (Table S75).

Indigenous young people with extensive pathways spent more time under supervision than non-Indigenous young people in all cohorts (Table S76). Over time, the difference fluctuated, ranging from 65 days more for Indigenous young people born in 1993–94 to 142 days more for those born in 1994–95.

Indigenous young people with extensive pathways completed 14–16 periods of supervision when they were 10–17, compared with 13–14 periods for non-Indigenous young people (Table S77).

# Appendix A: Data and technical notes

## Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set

Information about young people under youth justice supervision in this report is based on data from the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS). This is a longitudinal data set that contains information on all young people who were supervised by state and territory youth justice agencies in Australia, both in the community and detention.

Information collected for the JJ NMDS includes the characteristics of the young person (such as age, sex and Indigenous status), as well as the characteristics of their supervision (such as dates and type of supervision). The inclusion of a person identifier means that young people can be tracked over time to identify their pathway through supervision.

Data are currently available from 2000–01 to 2013–14, but not for all states and territories in all years. More information about data availability is given in the ‘Technical notes’ below.

The JJ NMDS also contains limited information about charges and offences (which are not included in this analysis due to data quality issues), and does not contain information on unsupervised orders such as fines and good behaviour bonds.

More information about the JJ NMDS, including details of the data and methods used in reporting, is available from <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice/data-quality)>. A data quality statement for the JJ NMDS 2013–14 is available at <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/601986>>.

## Technical notes

### Age

Across Australia, young people may be charged with a criminal offence once they are aged 10 or older. The upper age limit for treatment as a young person is 17 (at the time an offence was allegedly committed) in all states and territories except Queensland, where the age limit is 16. Young people who are aged 18 or older (17 or older in Queensland) at the time an offence was allegedly committed are dealt with under adult criminal legislation.

It is possible for young people aged 18 or older to be under youth justice supervision for reasons such as the offence being committed when the young person was aged 17 or younger, the continuation of supervision once they turn 18, or their vulnerability or immaturity. In addition, in Victoria, some young people aged 18–20 may be sentenced to detention in a youth facility (known as the ‘dual track’ system).

For this study, only young people under supervision up until age 17 are included, after which they ‘age out’ (that is turn 18) of the youth justice system. The pathways of all young people are followed up until the same point.

### Average and median

This report uses the median to describe the typical or central value for the data. Medians are used due to the skewed distribution of the data—for example, in the total time spent under supervision.

### Cohorts

The JJ NMDS currently contains 6 full birth cohorts of data—that is, youth justice supervision information is available for young people who were born in 1 of the 6 financial years from 1990–91 to 1995–96. These young people were aged 10–17 during the period of the JJ NMDS (2000–01 to 2013–14).

Additionally, the JJ NMDS contains supervision cohorts—that is, data on young people who went through the same type of supervision. These 2 types of cohorts allow for full pathway analyses as well as end-point pathway analyses (for example, the pathways that lead young people to sentenced detention). This bulletin focuses on birth cohort analysis.

## Data availability

Complete cohort data are not available for all states and territories, as complete data in the latest version of the JJ NMDS (known as JJ NMDS 2009 format) are not available for all states and territories in all years from 2000–01 to 2013–14 (see Table A1).

Cohort analyses exclude the following:

- All young people in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, as the data are only available in JJ NMDS 2007 format from 2000–01 to 2007–08, and are not provided from 2008–09 onwards.
- Some young people in Tasmania, as data were not available before 2006–07. There were 360 young people (43% of the total) with an incomplete supervision history in Tasmania who were excluded.
- Some young people in the Australian Capital Territory, as data are not available before 2003–04, and are only available in JJ NMDS 2007 format from 2003–04 to 2007–08. There were 14 young people (2% of the total) with an incomplete supervision history in the Australian Capital Territory who were excluded.

This means that in Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, some young people with long supervision histories are not captured in this analysis. Young people in these jurisdictions who were supervised before data became available and who did not return during the period for which data are available are also excluded from the analysis.

Full cohort data are available for all 6 cohorts in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The Australian Capital Territory contains 3 full birth cohorts, while the remaining states and territories contain partial cohorts.

**Table A1: JJ NMDS data availability, by year and state and territory, 2000–01 to 2013–14**

Year	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
2000–01	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	n.a.	✓
2001–02	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	n.a.	✓
2002–03	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	n.a.	✓
2003–04	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓
2004–05	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓
2005–06	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓
2006–07	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2007–08	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2008–09	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
2009–10	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
2010–11	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
2011–12	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
2012–13	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.
2013–14	✓	✓	✓	n.a.	✓	✓	✓	n.a.

Note: ✓—available; n.a.—not available.

## Indigenous status

Less than 7% of all young people in the JJ NMDS since 2000–01 have an unknown Indigenous status. In 2013–14, fewer than 5% of all young people under supervision during the year had an unknown Indigenous status. Among the states and territories, this ranged from less than 1% in Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia to 13% in New South Wales.

Young people whose Indigenous status was not stated are excluded from analyses of Indigenous status data.

In 2011, an AIHW review of Indigenous data quality in the JJ NMDS found the use of the Australian Bureau of Statistics standard for collecting and recording Indigenous status data varied among the states and territories. See *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification in community services data collections: an updated data quality report* (AIHW 2012) for more information.

## Pathways

For this report, pathways were determined through analyses of the patterns of young people's movement through and across the available types of supervision before age 18. Each unique pattern was considered a pathway through youth justice supervision.

This analysis included 4 supervision types: unsentenced community-based supervision, sentenced community-based supervision, unsentenced detention and sentenced detention.

In this report, a 'period' of supervision is defined as a continuous amount of time under supervision within each of these categories. For example, if a young person was under sentenced community-based supervision for an unbroken period of 6 months, this is counted as 1 period. This period might have included multiple orders or different types of sentenced community-based orders.

A 'component' of a pathway may be made up of 1 or more periods. Where periods of *the same* category of supervision occurred consecutively, then these periods form a single component. These periods are separated by 1 or more days *not* under supervision. There was no maximum break between periods.

If periods of *different* categories of supervision occurred consecutively, then these form different components of supervision. For example, if the young person had several consecutive periods of sentenced community-based supervision followed by a period of unsentenced detention and then another period of sentenced community-based supervision, their pathway would consist of 3 components—sentenced community-based supervision, sentenced detention, then sentenced community-based supervision.

Where a young person was under different supervision types concurrently (for example, in sentenced and unsentenced detention at the same time), these types were both included as components in their pathway. The order of the components was determined by the start and end dates of the supervision types. For example, if the young person was on sentenced detention and received an unsentenced detention order to serve concurrently, their pathway would include a sentenced detention component followed by an unsentenced detention component. Where different supervision types both started and ended on the same day, the order of components was determined at random.

Additionally, these broad pathways were mapped within each state. Where a young person was supervised across 2 states, 2 pathways were generated—1 pathway per person per state.

# Glossary

**‘ageing out’ of the youth justice system:** When a young person becomes too old to be managed within the youth justice system (when a young person turns 18 in most cases).

**categories of supervision:** This report considers 4 categories of supervision: unsentenced community-based supervision, sentenced community-based supervision, unsentenced detention, and sentenced detention.

**community-based supervision:** Youth justice supervision that takes place while the young person is living in the community.

**component of a pathway:** One or more periods of the same category of supervision.

**detention:** Youth justice supervision that takes place while the young person resides in a secure detention facility.

**extensive pathway:** In this report, a young person was determined to have had an extensive pathway if they were under supervision when aged 10–17 for 2 years or more in total and experienced 7 periods of supervision or more.

**pathway:** A summary of a young person’s supervision history when aged 10–17.

**period of supervision:** A continuous amount of time under supervision within one of the 4 categories of supervision.

**possible days for supervision:** All days between the start of the first supervision and the date the young person turned 18.

**sentenced:** When a young person has been found guilty in a court and given a sentence.

**unsentenced:** When a young person has been charged with an offence and is awaiting the outcome of their court matter, or when they have been found or pleaded guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

# References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2012. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification in community services data collections: an updated data quality report. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2013. Young people aged 10–14 in the youth justice system 2011–12. Juvenile justice series 12. Cat. no. JUV 19. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2014. Pathways through youth justice supervision. Juvenile justice series 15. Cat. no. JUV 40. Canberra: AIHW.

AIHW 2015. Youth justice in Australia 2013–14. AIHW bulletin no. 127. Cat. no. AUS 188. Canberra: AIHW.

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## Related publications

More information about young people under youth justice supervision in Australia is available at <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice)>.

The report can be downloaded free of charge from <[www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice-publications](http://www.aihw.gov.au/youth-justice-publications)>.

The following AIHW publications might also be of interest:

- AIHW 2015. Youth justice in Australia 2013–14. AIHW bulletin no. 127. Cat. no. AUS 188. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2015. Using the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set to measure returns to sentenced youth justice supervision: stage 2. Juvenile justice series no. 17. Cat. no. JUV 54. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2014. Youth detention population in Australia 2014. Juvenile justice series 16. Cat. no. JUV 53. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2014. Pathways through youth justice supervision. Juvenile justice series 15. Cat. no. JUV 40. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Using the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set to measure juvenile recidivism. Juvenile justice series no.14. Cat. no. JUV 32. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Young people aged 10–14 in the youth justice system 2011–12. Juvenile justice series 12. Cat. no. JUV 19. Canberra: AIHW.





This report looks at the complete youth justice supervision history of 24,102 young people in Australia aged 10–17, who experienced supervision, both in the community and in detention, between 1 July 2000 and 30 June 2014. More than one-third (37%) of young people experienced the most common pathway of sentenced community-based supervision only. Young people spent a median of 303 days (about 10 months) under supervision in total, and completed a median of 2 periods of supervision. About 11% of young people had a pathway that was considered 'extensive', and these young people accounted for about one-third (32%) of the total days of supervision and nearly half (45%) of all supervision periods.

