



Child Abuse & Neglect

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# Cumulative incidence of child protection system contacts among a cohort of Western Australian Aboriginal children born 2000 to 2013

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S014521342300282X>



## Aims

- Examine more recent CPS data for Aboriginal children born in WA
- Examine how contacts are clustered within family units

## Cohort

- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander born in WA between 2000 and 2013

## Related family

- Biological mothers
- Full and maternal half-siblings born 1980-99 and 2014-15

## Data

- Child protection contacts (2000 – 2015)
- Birth records, midwives' notification system, death records
- Family relationships

The authors wish to thank the staff at the Western Australian Data Linkage Branch and the custodians of the following datasets:

- ▶ Western Australian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages
- ▶ Midwives Notification System
- ▶ WA Department of Communities Child Protection Dataset
- ▶ Intellectual Disability Exploring Answers
- ▶ Mental Health Information System
- ▶ WA Notifiable Infections Diseases Dataset
- ▶ Western Australian Register of Developmental Abnormalities - Birth Defects
- ▶ Western Australian Register of Developmental Abnormalities - Cerebral Palsy
- ▶ Hospital Morbidity Data System
- ▶ Emergency Department Data Collection

The information presented does not reflect the views of the Data Linkage Branch or any of the data custodians.

Table 1: Number and percent of Aboriginal children born in Western Australia between 2000 and 2013 (N = 33,709) with zero to eight or more contacts with the child protection system between 2000 and 2015.

Number of contacts	Notification		Investigation		Substantiation		Placement	
No contact	21352	63.3%	23493	69.7%	28004	83.1%	30442	90.3%
1	4006	11.9%	4223	12.5%	3589	10.6%	506	1.5%
2	2752	8.2%	2460	7.3%	1292	3.8%	657	1.9%
3	1819	5.4%	1510	4.5%	556	1.6%	553	1.6%
4	1331	3.9%	932	2.8%	185	0.5%	337	1.0%
5	854	2.5%	522	1.5%	51	0.2%	282	0.8%
6	618	1.8%	286	0.8%	19	0.1%	195	0.6%
7	374	1.1%	137	0.4%	7	<0.1%	154	0.5%
8+	603	1.8%	146	0.4%	6	<0.1%	583	1.7%

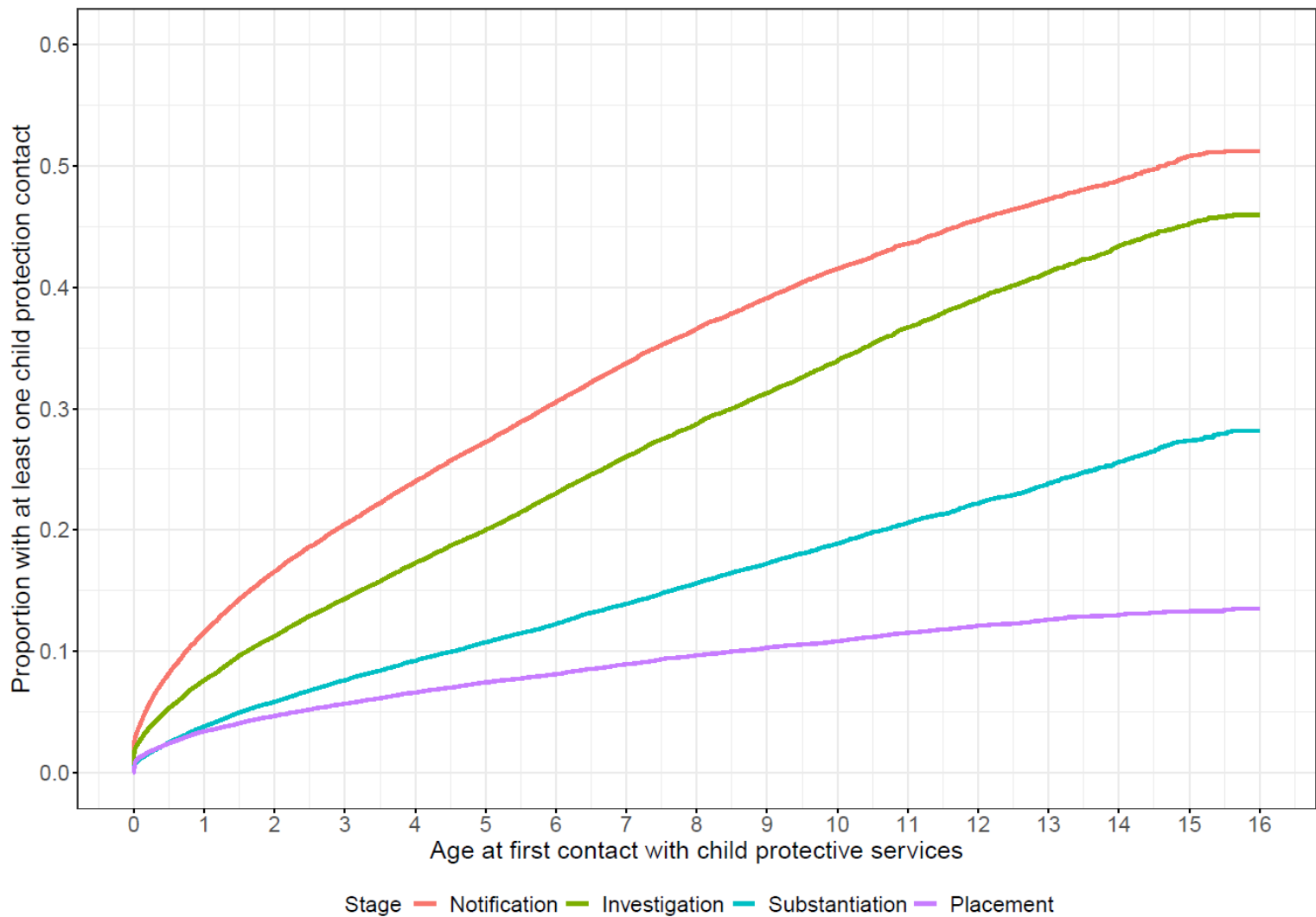


Figure 2: Cumulative incidence estimates for first time child protection system contacts, between 2000 and 2015, among Aboriginal children born in Western Australia, 2000-2013.

Table 2: Number of children born between 1980 and 2015, to mothers of the cohort, including the cohort (Aboriginal children born 2000 to 2013) and children not in the cohort (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children born 1980 to 1999 and 2014 to 2015).

Maternal sibling group size	N	%
1	3651	21.3%
2	4772	27.8%
3	3544	20.7%
4	2255	13.2%
5	1382	8.1%
6	749	4.4%
7+	787	4.6%
Total	17140	100%

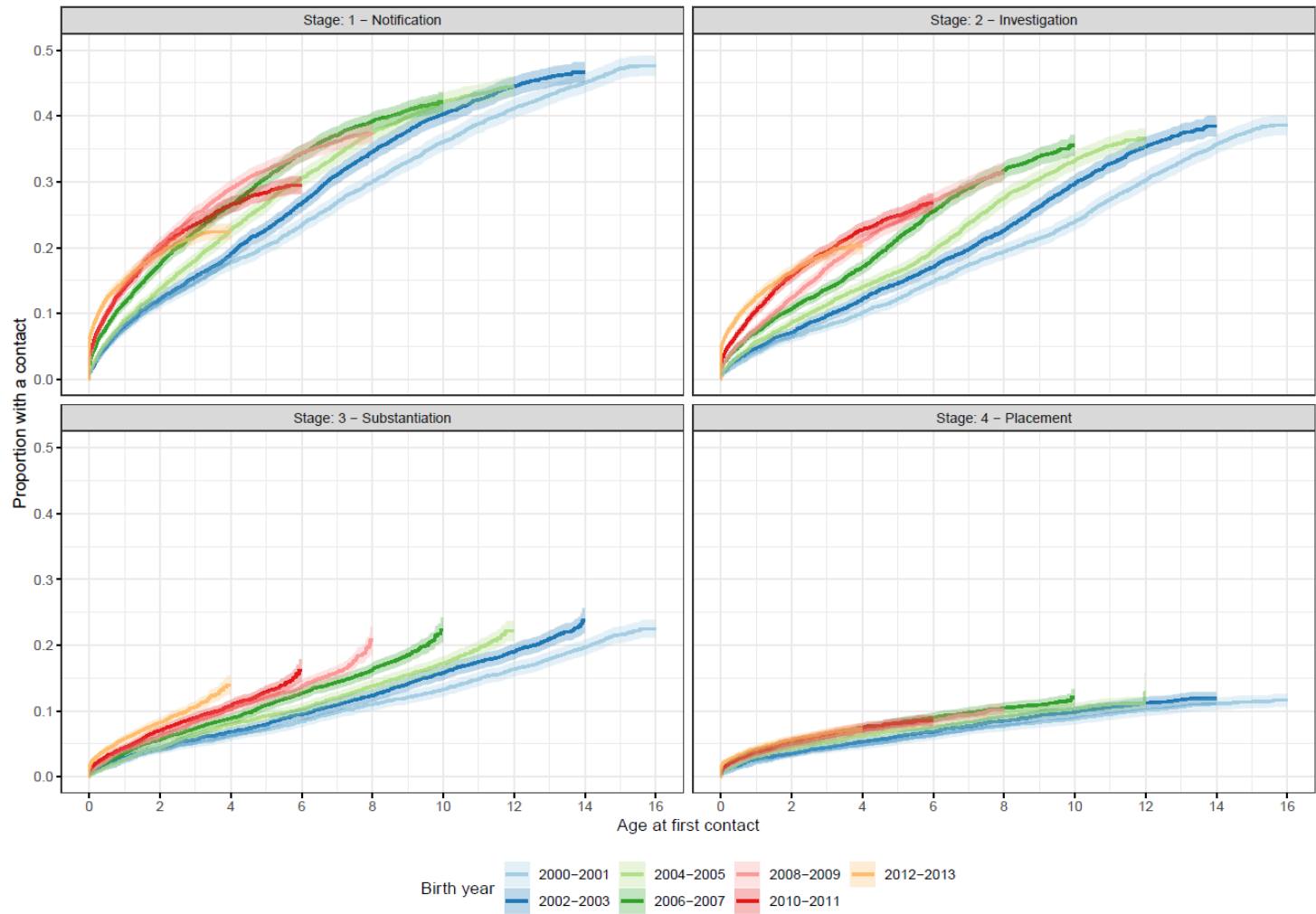


Figure 3: Cumulative incidence estimates with 95% confidence intervals for first child protection system contacts, between 2000 and 2015, by birth-year cohorts, among Aboriginal children born in Western Australia, 2000-2013.

Table 3: Timing of first contact with each stage of child protective services relative to the earliest recorded contact within a sibling group for contacts occurring between 2000 and 2015, for Aboriginal children born in WA between 2000 and 2013.

Stage	Same as sibling group's first contact		After sibling group's first contact		No recorded contact for child	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Notification	6195	64.1%	1085	11.2%	2390	24.7%
Investigation	5708	60.0%	1177	12.4%	2628	27.6%
Substantiation	3442	57.7%	616	10.3%	1911	32.0%
Placement	2023	64.7%	260	8.3%	846	27.0%



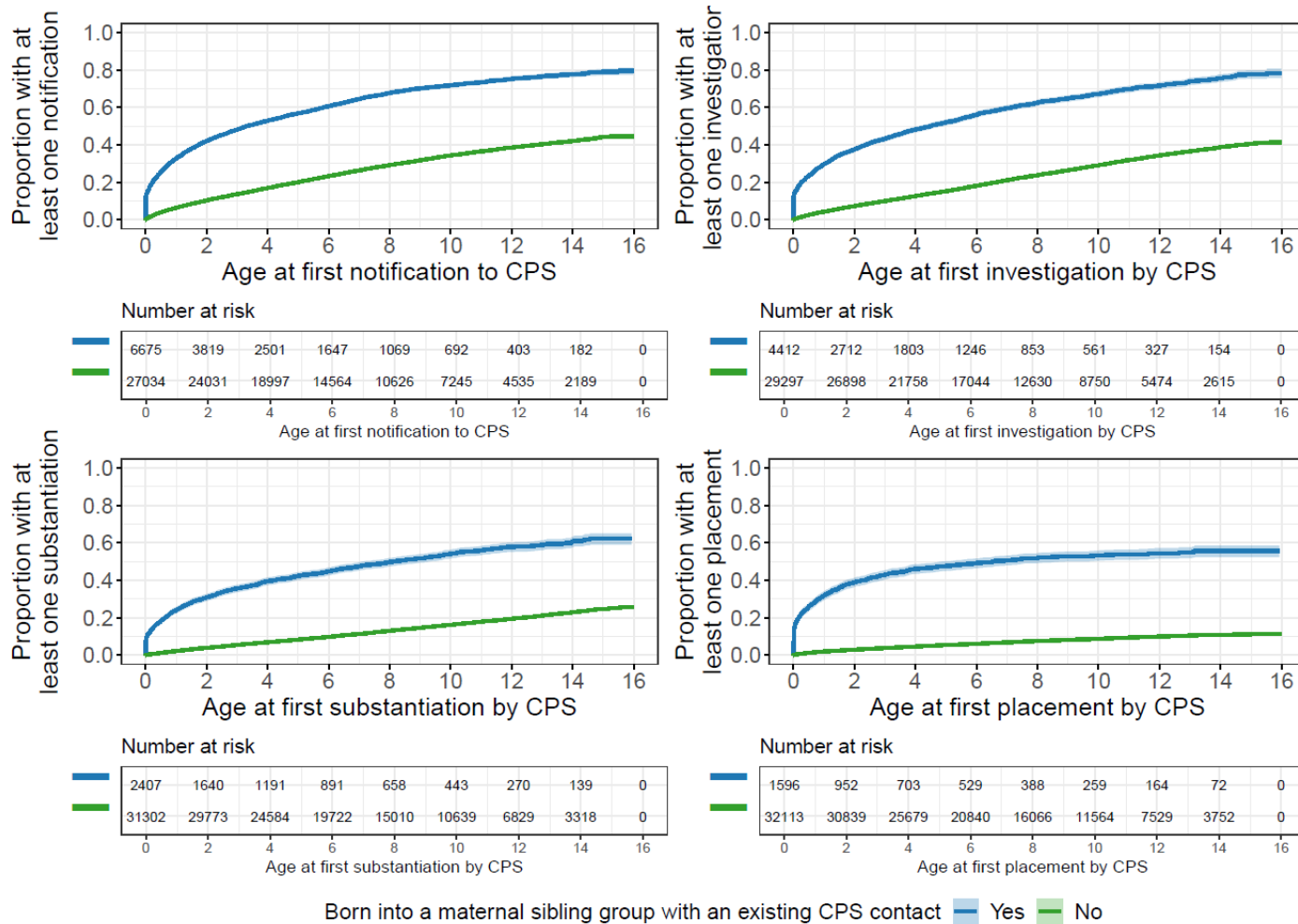


Figure 4: Cumulative incidence estimates with 95% confidence intervals for first contact with the child protection system by whether a child was born to a maternal group with a pre-existing contact, contacts occurring between 2000 and 2015 among Aboriginal children born in Western Australia, 2000-2013.

# Next steps

- Use health data to compare health profiles of children with a placement in care to those never in care
- Use hospitalisation data to assess incidence of potentially preventable hospitalisations for children before and after they have their first placement in care
- Assess how the distance between a child's residential address and the region's child protection office is associated with probability of contact with CPS