

Question on Notice

No. 1040

Asked on 12 September 2023

MS A CAMM asked the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services (HON C CRAWFORD)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide (reported separately by region and year) for the last three years (a) the average number of placements for a child in out-of-home care, (b) the highest number of placements for a child in out-of-home care and (c) the average number of placements for a child in residential care?

ANSWER

When a child enters out-of-home care to ensure their safety, the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (DCSSDS) aims to provide a stable care arrangement to meet their need for safety, belonging and wellbeing. Providing ongoing stability means having as few changes as possible to the child's care arrangement. Sometimes, meeting the needs and best interests of the child may require a number of different care arrangements.

To select the right care arrangement for a child to ensure physical permanency and stability, DCSSDS assesses the child's strengths and needs, the supports required to meet those needs and the particular skills and abilities the care provider is required to have. There are a number of different care arrangement options that are considered to determine which placement would be in the child's best interests.

Data on the average number of placements for all children in out-of-home care at any time during the year is not a departmental corporate measure. Data held by DCSSDS to measure placement stability relates to the number of children exiting out-of-home care in a 12 month period, by the length of time in continuous care and the number of placements. The latest available data is as at 30 June 2023.

For the 12 months ending 30 June 2023, 2,217 children exited out-of-home care (including foster carer, kinship carer and residential care services). The majority of children (72.2 per cent) exiting out-of-home care had three or fewer placements, while a small proportion (4.1 per cent) had 10 or more placements.

In response to part (a) of the question, I can advise the number of placements for children exiting out-of-home care:

- Brisbane and Moreton Bay – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (319), 4 to 6 placements (68), 7 to 9 placements (13) 10 or more placements (9); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (291), 4 to 6 placements (61), 7 to 9 placements (14) 10 or more placements (13); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (267), 4 to 6 placements (58), 7 to 9 placements (27) 10 or more placements (13).
- Far North Queensland – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (185), 4 to 6 placements (75), 7 to 9 placements (13) 10 or more placements (17); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (196), 4 to 6 placements (41), 7 to 9 placements (11) 10 or more placements (15); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (184), 4 to 6 placements (29), 7 to 9 placements (15) 10 or more placements (13).

- North Queensland – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (193), 4 to 6 placements (47), 7 to 9 placements (18) 10 or more placements (18); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (178), 4 to 6 placements (56), 7 to 9 placements (10) 10 or more placements (23); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (164), 4 to 6 placements (62), 7 to 9 placements (21) 10 or more placements (13).
- South East – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (297), 4 to 6 placements (65), 7 to 9 placements (26) 10 or more placements (12); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (312), 4 to 6 placements (57), 7 to 9 placements (16) 10 or more placements (12); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (312), 4 to 6 placements (65), 7 to 9 placements (21) 10 or more placements (18).
- South West – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (340), 4 to 6 placements (73), 7 to 9 placements (29) 10 or more placements (21); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (304), 4 to 6 placements (65), 7 to 9 placements (18) 10 or more placements (12); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (285), 4 to 6 placements (66), 7 to 9 placements (22) 10 or more placements (34).
- Sunshine Coast and Central – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (253), 4 to 6 placements (74), 7 to 9 placements (25) 10 or more placements (13); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (279), 4 to 6 placements (62), 7 to 9 placements (21) 10 or more placements (12); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (227), 4 to 6 placements (61), 7 to 9 placements (19) 10 or more placements (16).
- *Other – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (13), 4 to 6 placements (0), 7 to 9 placements (1), 10 or more placements (0); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (14), 4 to 6 placements (2), 7 to 9 placements (0), 10 or more placements (1); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (8), 4 to 6 placements (2), 7 to 9 placements (0), 10 or more placements (0).
- Statewide – (30 June 2023): 1 to 3 placements (1600), 4 to 6 placements (402), 7 to 9 placements (125) 10 or more placements (90); (30 June 2022): 1 to 3 placements (1574), 4 to 6 placements (344), 7 to 9 placements (90) 10 or more placements (88); (30 June 2021): 1 to 3 placements (1447), 4 to 6 placements (343), 7 to 9 placements (125) 10 or more placements (107).

* Other can include records assigned to units, such as the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre.

In response to part (b) of the question, I can advise the highest number of out-of-home care placements for children exiting care:

- Brisbane and Moreton Bay – (30 June 2023): (21); (30 June 2022): (16); (30 June 2021): (18).
- Far North Queensland – (30 June 2023): (24); (30 June 2022): (21); (30 June 2021): (23).
- North Queensland – (30 June 2023): (30); (30 June 2022): (19); (30 June 2021): (27).
South East – (30 June 2023): (21); (30 June 2022): (23); (30 June 2021): (23).
- South West – (30 June 2023): (19); (30 June 2022): (22); (30 June 2021): (26).
- Sunshine Coast and Central – (30 June 2023): (25); (30 June 2022): (18); (30 June 2021): (20).
- Other – (30 June 2023): (8); (30 June 2022): (14); (30 June 2021): (5).

* Other can include records assigned to units, such as the Child Safety After Hours Service Centre.

In response to part (c) of the question, data on the average number of placements for a child in residential care at any time during the year is not available. This would require a complex measure to be developed to distinguish multiple residential care placements across all out-of-home care placements at any time during the year and calculate exclusively the average length of time across the residential care placements within the overall time in continuous care. Information is however available to Child Safety Officers in case notes.