



# Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study

*The artist is a young person who grew up in care.*

*"The banner shows many pathways through the care system with a carer or caseworker acting as a guide, ultimately leading to independence for every young person. Whether we live with family or strangers, study, work, or just try our best, the paths we choose and are guided through in our youth are what we use to prepare ourselves for the happiest adulthood we can achieve" Billy Black*

## Are we making the grade? Education and children in OOHC

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I would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians.  
I recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.  
I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

I would like to strongly support equality for all people. I embrace diversity and welcome all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.



# Overview of Presentation



POCLS data:

- Survey and Interview data with carers and young people (waves 1-3)
- Australian Early Development Census (AEDC; Kindergarten) n = 695 participated in one of the testing cycles (2009, 2012, 2015)\*
- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) n = 1,691 (2008-14)\*
- Caseworker survey n = 2,828 (wave 2)

\*Some children may or may not have been in care at the time of these assessments

## 3 key messages

# Brief Overview of the Literature



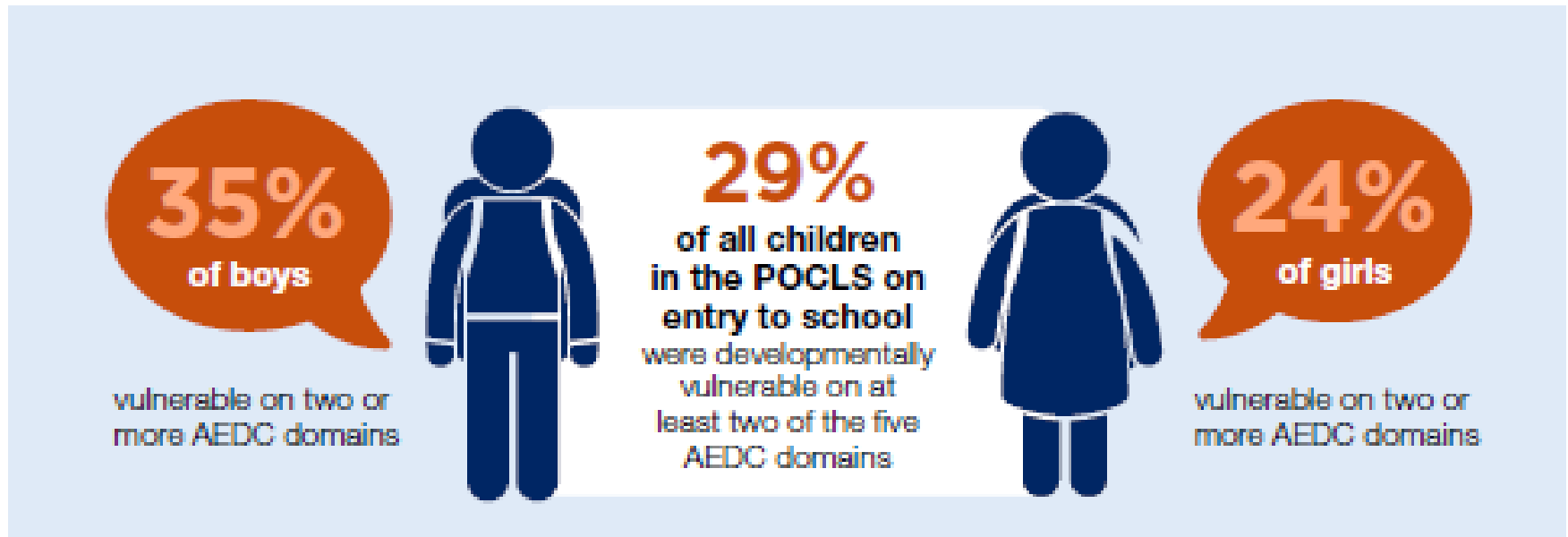
- Australian research has been consistent that many children who enter OOHC are at risk educationally
- Views divided as to whether the OOHC system is responsible or whether children in care would experience poor educational outcomes even if they had not been placed in care
- The 15 years of educational outcome research in Australia consistently has showed us most children in OOHC perform more poorly than their peers and leave school with fewer qualifications

# AEDC



- AEDC provides a standardised tool to assess children's development on entry to school
- Commenced in 2009, teacher complete for children 100 questions across five domains:
  - physical health and wellbeing
  - social competence
  - emotional maturity
  - language and cognitive skills
  - communication skills and general knowledge
- A child's development at the commencement of school has been consistently shown predict performance across primary school

# AEDC



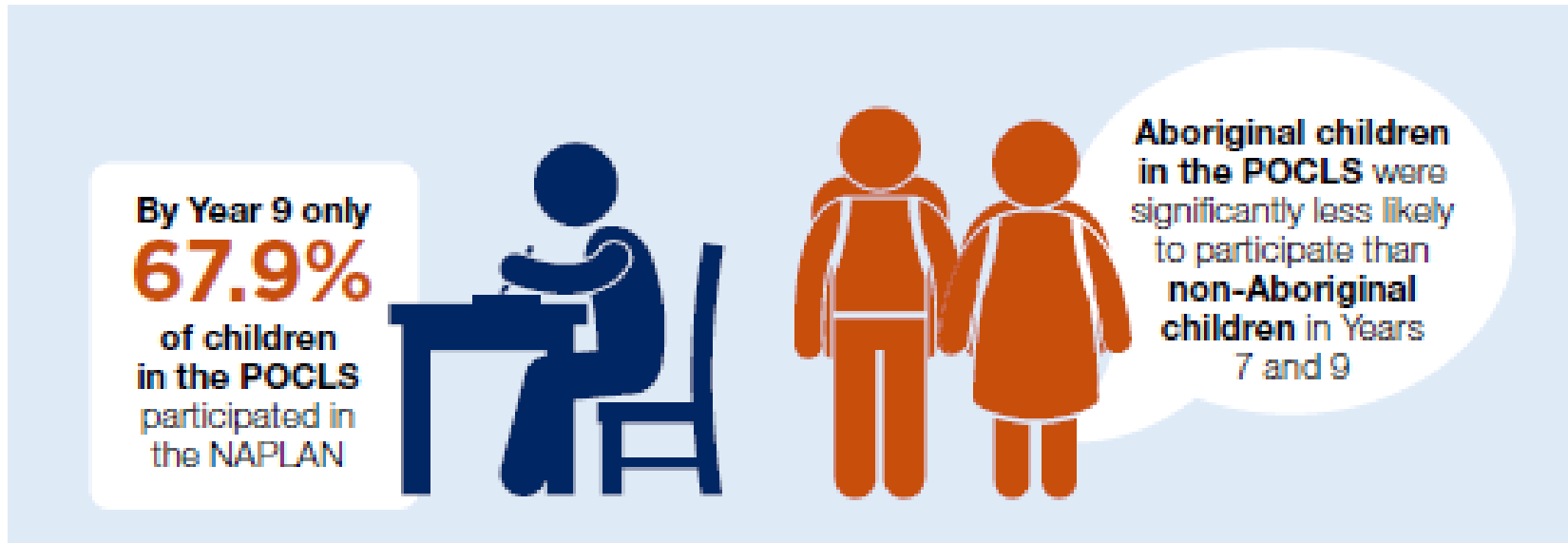
- Developmental vulnerability is almost 3 x higher compared with all Australian children
- There were no significant differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in POCLS
- Children developmentally vulnerable on at least 2 domains were significantly more likely to spend time away from school

# NAPLAN



- The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing regime commences with children being tested in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9
- These tests are designed to assess the sorts of literacy and numeracy skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life. They also assess whether children have achieved the minimum benchmark standards appropriate for their year level

# NAPLAN



- NAPLAN reading and numeracy results for children in the study was substantially lower than all NSW children across all years
- The greatest difference is in Year 9
- As the number of AEDC vulnerabilities increased NAPLAN scores decreased

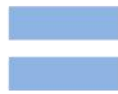


# Importance of Student Well-being



- Better student outcomes

Higher levels  
of wellbeing



Better  
mental  
health



More pro-  
social and  
responsible  
lifestyle

More Yr 12  
completions



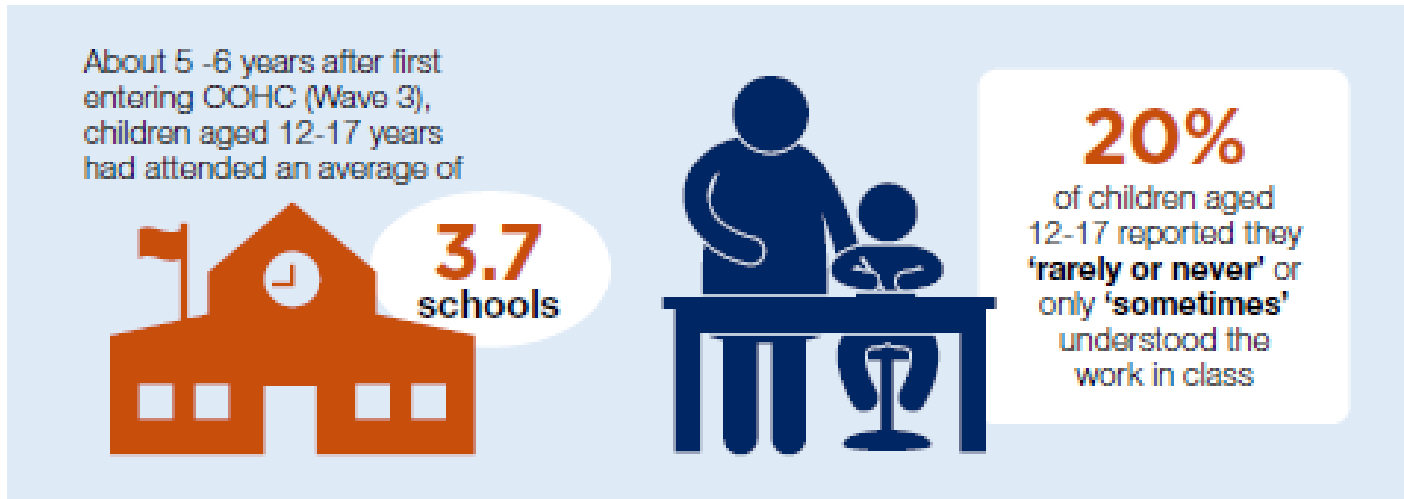
Paying attention to student wellbeing also acknowledges the pivotal role of education in preparing students for a rewarding life beyond school

# Education (interview cohort Wave 3)



- Increased number of ROSH reports was significantly associated with lower NAPLAN scores, increased negative reactivity, internalising, externalising and overall problem behaviours

# Education (interview cohort Wave 3)



- A quarter of all 12-17 year olds said they rarely, never or sometimes completed homework and assignments on time
- Carers reported 25% of primary school aged children had academic or other problems at school. This increased to a 35% of high school aged students

# Child Behaviour Checklist (interview cohort)



The CBCL measures a range of child and adolescent behaviour problems and interpersonal competencies

CBCL	Wave 1			Wave 2			Wave 3		
6–11 years	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinical	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinical	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinic al
Internalising	51.4 (50.1, 52.7)	4.9	18.2	48.6 (47.5, 49.8)	7.6	12.2	47.58 (45.9, 49.2)	5.6	11.2
Externalising	56.8 (55.3, 58.3)	10.5	33.8	54.9 (53.6, 56.3)	9.4	27.2	55.52 (46.6, 56.9)	8.4	30.5
Total problems	55.8 (54.4, 57.3)	10.8	30.8	52.9 (51.6, 54.4)	7.5	24.4	53.3 (51.9, 54.7)	10.2	25.4

CBCL	Wave 1			Wave 2			Wave 3		
12–17 years	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinical	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinical	Mean (95% CI)	% Border- line	% Clinic al
Internalising	55.8 (53.4, 57.9)	14.5	27.4	52.6 (50.7, 54.5)	12.4	37.9	51.0 (49.1, 52.8)	8.0	17.7
Externalising	59.7 (57.4, 61.9)	10.5	45.2	57.6 (55.5, 59.8)	13.7	37.3	54.7 (52.8, 56.8)	9.1	30.3
Total problems	59.1 (56.8, 61.5)	9.7	46.8	56.8 (54.7, 59.0)	22.4	37.9	53.9 (51.8, 56.0)	9.1	29.1

# Summary:



1. Monitor and intervene early
2. Take actions to enhance children and young people in OOHC's wellbeing and education
3. Hold the big picture in mind: we are facilitating long-term outcomes

# Thank you and acknowledgements



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