

# Office of the Guardian's Audits of Annual Reviews 2012-13



1999 children's circumstances were due for review in 2012-13

1567 were reviewed

174 annual reviews were audited by GCYP

The law requires a review of the circumstances of each child or young person on long term orders be carried out at least once a year by a panel appointed by the Minister for that purpose.

The Office of the Guardian intends to audit 10% of these reviews each year. The Office does this to:

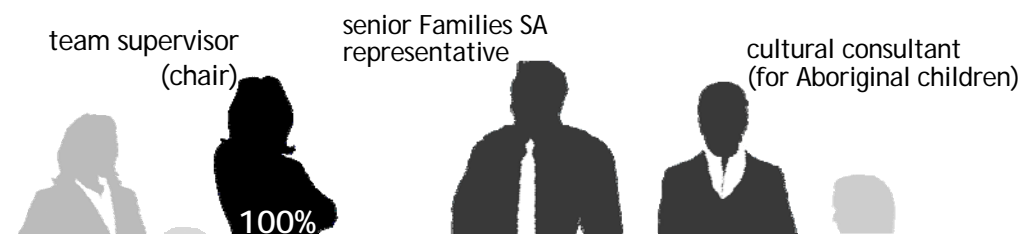
- provide further **external accountability** on review panels
- provide some **external scrutiny** of case management practice and interagency collaboration
- **advocate** for quality outcomes for children and young people.

We provide feedback to individual offices and a detailed report of our findings to Families SA. Page references below refer to that report.

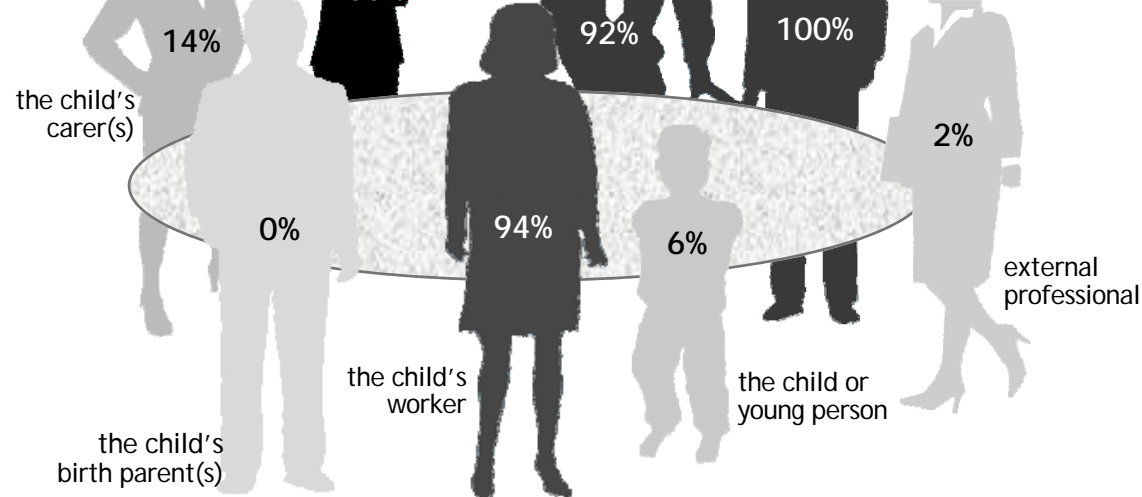
\* Families SA guidelines require that each meeting be chaired by the supervisor of the relevant care team and attended by at least one other senior Families SA staff member. Other attendees capable of making a contribution include:

- the child

## The review panels\*



- the child's worker
- carers—foster, relative or residential care
- external professionals from, for example, education, CAMHS or disability
- birth parents
- a cultural consultant (for Aboriginal children)



Similar to previous years the way in which reviews are conducted is inconsistent across Families SA offices.

...a child's circumstances are discussed and considered in greater detail where there is some level of participation from external service providers and/or independent panel members, and when more than thirty minutes is allocated to the review.

Similar to last year's findings there was evidence in a few cases that previous reviews' recommendations had not been implemented.

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### Participation

10 young people attended in person

42 completed a survey form

73 had their views represented in detail by their workers

33 had their views represented by a carer

## Case management practice and interagency co-operation

children had the recommended monthly face-to-face contact with workers (as reported by social workers)

74%

children had current Individual Education Plans on their files (of those in state schools)

83%

children participated in their annual reviews (6% directly, 27% by survey)

33%

15 to 17 year-olds who had transition plans

75%

children who had been provided with, and had explained to

70%



There were examples of excellent casework practice, including regular independent face-to-face contact between the child and the social worker according to the child's wishes, extensive research into a child's cultural heritage to strengthen identity and connections, and active advocacy on behalf of the child...

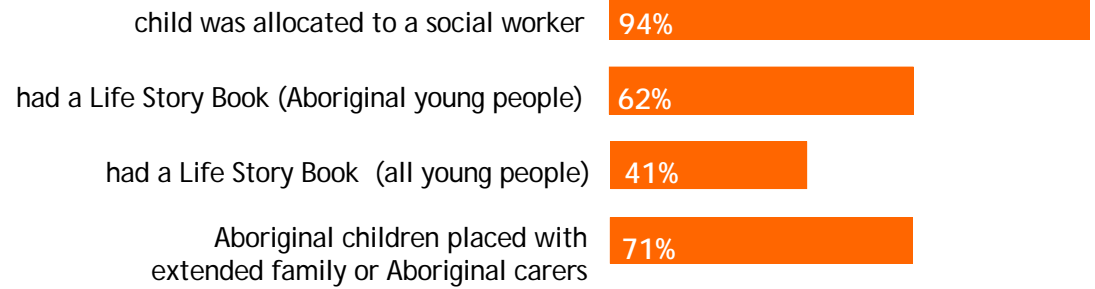
there were also 13 instances where the social worker had limited knowledge of the child or young person, or was not proactive in working with the child...

In 16 of the cases (9 per cent) reviewed there was no current case plan on the child's file.

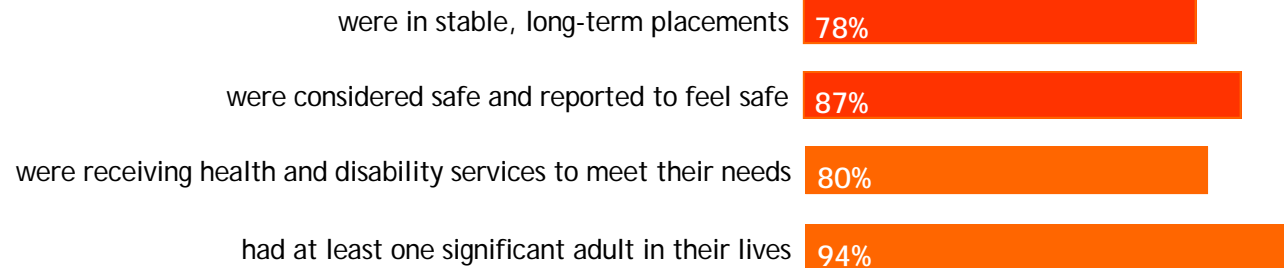
*p.21*



them, the *Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care* (of those competent to understand)



## Outcomes for children and young people



### Aboriginal children and young people

42 cases were reviewed (24% of the total)

30 (of 42) were placed with their extended family or with Aboriginal carers

a Principal Aboriginal Consultant or Aboriginal Senior Project Officer was present at all reviews of Aboriginal children

38 cases showed evidence that cultural consultation

had occurred to inform case planning  
37 cases showed evidence of provision of information about cultural heritage  
36 had opportunity to engage in activities to promote their cultural identity  
18 were confirmed to have a cultural identity plan at the time of the Annual Review  
of the 8 in non-Aboriginal placements, 5 had an Aboriginal Life Story Book and 4 of these had a life story book specific to their clan group



**Government  
of South Australia**

Office of the Guardian  
for Children and  
Young People

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**THANK  
YOU...**

...to the many Families SA offices and staff who assisted us with the audits.

Children and Young People in Care—What we know from the annual reviews of their circumstances  
Report of the 2012-13 Audit of Annual Reviews  
August 2013 [link to full report]