

Indigenous Issues



Australia's Indigenous peoples experience a significant over-representation in national figures of disadvantage, health and poverty. Indigenous Australians:

- experience homelessness at a rate four times higher than non-Indigenous Australians
- are 3.2 times more likely to be unemployed and 11 times more likely to be imprisoned
- are 10 times more likely to live in an overcrowded home and 12 times more likely to be hospitalised after an assault
- are more likely to commit suicide and six times more likely to be murdered
- die earlier than non-Indigenous Australians (67.2 years for males, as compared to 78.7 years for non-Indigenous males; 72.9 years for females, as compared to 82.6 years for non-Indigenous females)
- will need aged care services between 11 and 17 years earlier than will non-Indigenous citizens
- are between 1.8 and 2.4 more times likely to suffer a disability.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are less likely to attend preschool and school, meet minimum standards for literacy and numeracy and are 50% less likely to continue their schooling to Year 12. The average performance of Australia's Indigenous students placed them two-and-a-half years behind Australia's non-Indigenous students. They are over-represented in the child protection system (over six times more likely to be in care, compared with other Australian children), are 20 times more likely to be detained by police and 14 times more likely to be under juvenile justice supervision.

Indigenous children:

- are much more likely to live without an employed parent and experience child abuse
- are twice more likely than other children to grow up to be unemployed
- are much more likely to be arrested and imprisoned.

The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory* supports Indigenous Australians throughout its corps (churches) in Adelaide, Alice Springs, Kununurra, Katherine, Melbourne, Murray Bridge, Northam, Perth, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln and Swan Hill. The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory is a large provider of social services to Indigenous Australians, who use the Army's services to a greater extent than their representation in the general population (7% of those assisted are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background).

The Salvation Army meets Indigenous Australians' needs through:

- court and prison chaplaincy
- emergency relief programmes
- alcohol and other drug detoxification and rehabilitation services
- key crisis housing programmes.

Nationally, The Salvation Army provides employment and training services to Indigenous Australians.

Australian statistics are taken from the *Australia's Welfare 2009* Biennial Report and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Salvation Army statistics are from The Salvation Army's service and mission information system (SAMIS).

For more information visit salvationarmy.org.au

