NOTE: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) staff are assisting other Government agencies, including the Department of Health, to monitor the COVID–19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

This is our top priority and some of the work we had planned for 2020 will have to be delayed. We are still releasing some reports and other data products, especially those which were close to completion prior to the pandemic or contain information which is time-sensitive for policy-makers and service-providers.

The rate of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under youth justice supervision has fallen over the past five years, a report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has shown.

The report, Youth justice in Australia 2018–19, presents information on young people aged between 10 and 17 years under youth justice supervision both in the community and in detention.

On an average day in 2018–19, there were 5,694 (1 in 490) young people under youth justice supervision due to their involvement, or alleged involvement, in crime. Throughout the year, a total of 10,820 young people were under supervision.

‘Between 2014–15 and 2018–19, the level of Indigenous over-representation in youth justice supervision stabilised,’ said AIHW spokesperson Ms. Anna Ritson.

‘The rate of Indigenous young people aged 10–17 under supervision on an average day fell from 176 to 172 per 10,000. The rate of non-Indigenous young people fell from 12 to 11 per 10,000.

‘Although only about 6% of young people aged 10–17 in Australia are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, half (2,448) of the young people under supervision on an average day in 2018–19 were Indigenous.’

Indigenous young people aged 10–17 were 16 times as likely to be under supervision as non-Indigenous young people in 2018–19.
The report also shows that, on an average day in 2018–19, young males were about 4 times as likely to be under youth justice supervision as young females. Young females under supervision were more likely to be younger than males, with the most common age being 16 for young females and 17 for young males.

‘Being under youth justice supervision doesn’t always mean a young person is in detention. Around four in five young people (4,767) received community-based supervision such as home detention, bail, parole and probation,’ Ms. Ritson said.

‘The remaining 1 in 5 (956) were in detention, most of whom were remanded in custody awaiting the outcome of their charges.’