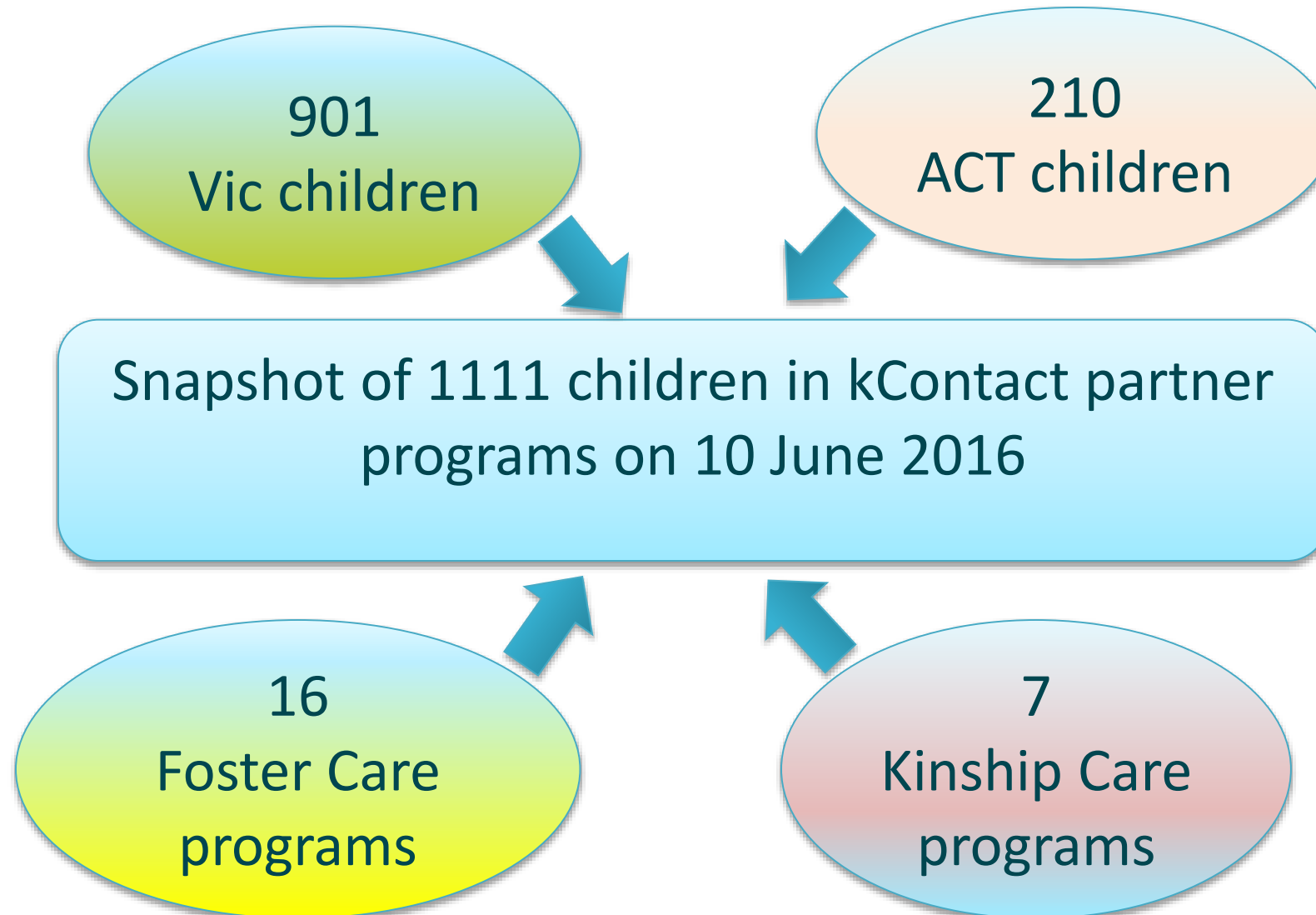




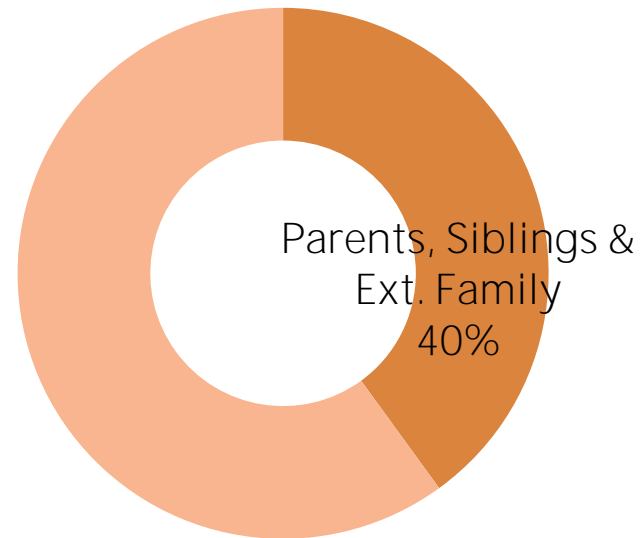
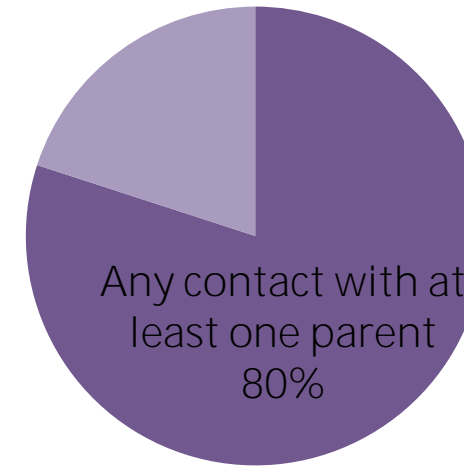
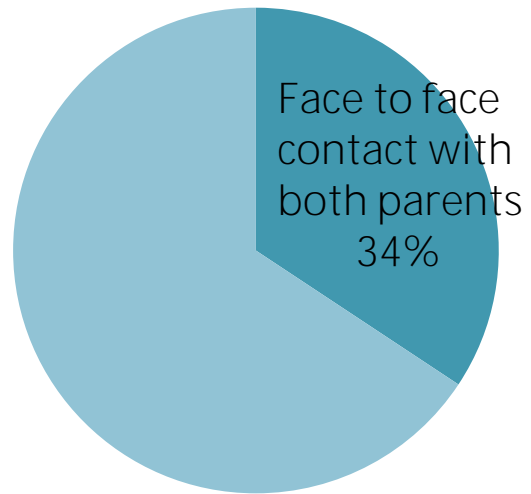
# Maintaining connections between children in out-of-home care and their families

**Dr Margaret Kertesz**  
University of Melbourne

# Patterns of Contact Mapping



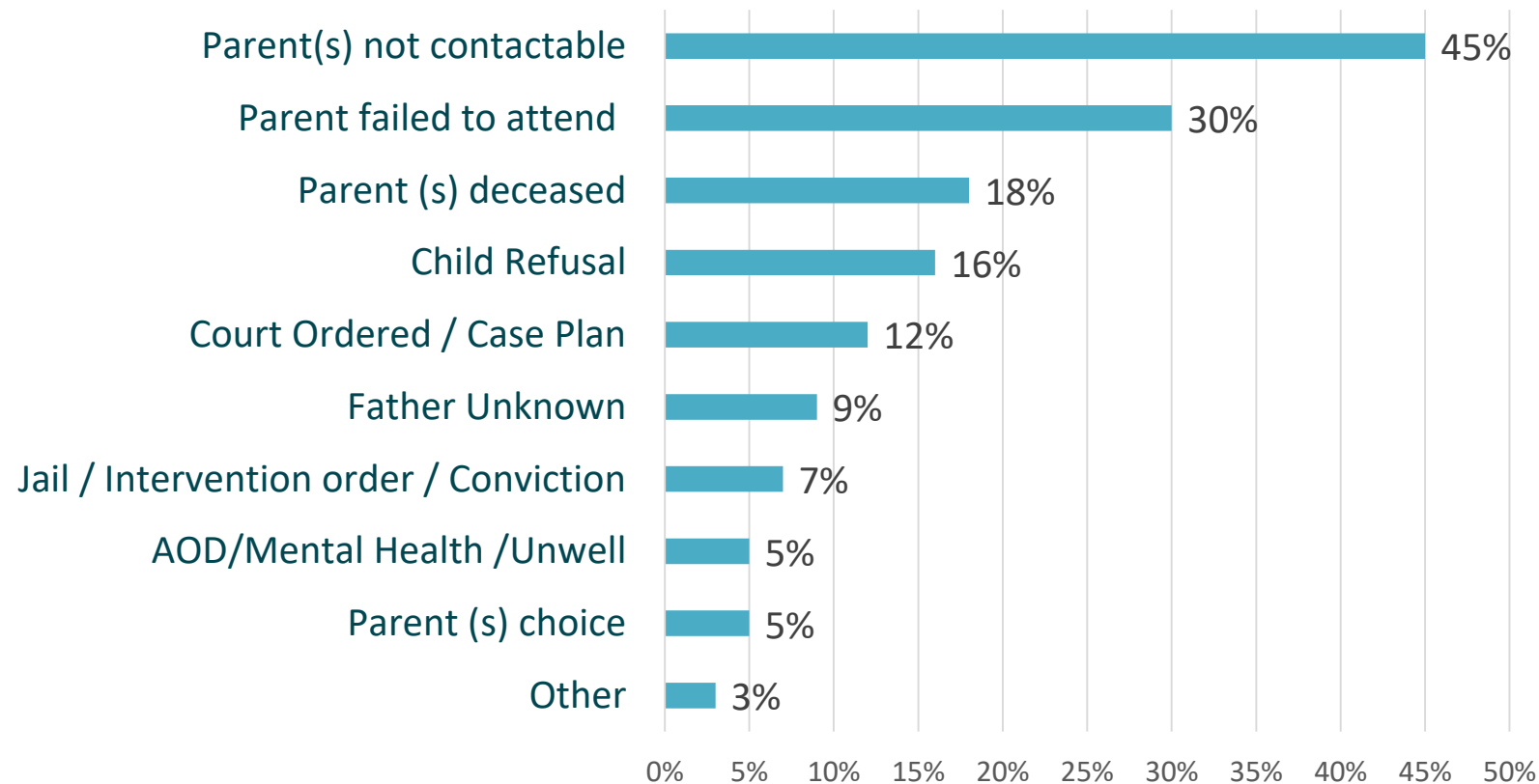
# The good news about contact



## How many children have had no contact with family in 12 months?

- 1 in 5 – no contact with either parent
- 1 in 6 – no contact with any siblings
- 1 in 11 – no contact with parents or siblings
- 1 in 30 – no contact with parents, siblings or extended family

# Why workers say children had no contact with their parents?

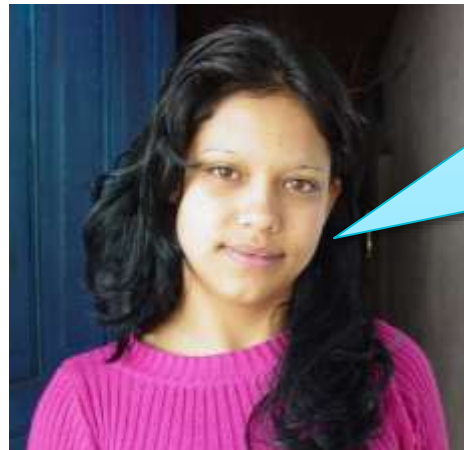


# Connection Strategies

- Engaging parents from early in placement
- Assisting parents with transition from role of primary carer to non-residential parent
- Get carers involved
- Kinship care – difficult family dynamics
- Things change – create or look out for opportunities to re-connect family members (safely)

## Alternatives to Contact

- “Spending time and doing things together” is not always realistic.



*“I would like to know more about my real family, and I want to know who my dad is . . .*

*They could look up more things, well like on the computer, like history, about my family or something like that. All my family.”*

(‘Olivia’, age 11)

# A focus on family connections

Letters, Cards  
etc.

Photos

Memory  
Boxes

Diaries kept for  
parents during  
periods of no  
contact

Contact

Connections with  
both sides of the  
extended family

Social Media

Let children know how  
their parents are getting  
on during periods of no  
contact

Life Story  
Work

Family  
History





## **kContact website:**

<http://www.acu.edu.au/icps-kcontact>

## **Contacts**

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