

Regulatory Institutions Network

**A National Survey on Perceptions of
How Child Protection Authorities Work
2010: The Perspective of Third Parties**

Preliminary Findings

Mary Ivec, Valerie Braithwaite and Monika
Reinhart

Occasional Paper 16

February 2011



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RegNet Occasional Paper No. 16

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Australian National University 2011

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Author: Ivec, Mary.

Title: A national survey on perceptions of how child protection authorities work 2010: the
perspective of third parties.

[electronic resource]: preliminary

findings / Mary Ivec, Valerie

Braithwaite, Monika Reinhart.

ISBN: 9780980330281(epub)

Subjects: Child welfare--Australia--Public opinion.

Child welfare--Political aspects--Australia.

Other Authors/Contributors:

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Australian National University. Regulatory Institutions Network

Dewey Number: 362.760994

Disclaimer

This article has been written as part of a series of publications issued from the Regulatory Institutions Network. The views contained in this article are representative of the authors only and not of the Australian National University or any funding partner.

Table of Contents

1	Background and Overview	2
2	Survey	2
2.1	Methodology	2
2.2	Participants	3
2.3	Description of sample in terms of social-demographic variables including tables and graphs by state, age, education and occupation	3
3	Headline Results	7
3.1	Regulatory Approach	7
3.1.1	Regulatory Approach: Survey participants' views on how child protection authorities should engage with the community if they are to achieve their goals	7
3.2	Regulatory Practice	10
3.2.1	Regulatory Practice: Survey participants' views on what statutory child protection authorities do well and not so well	10
3.2.2	Regulatory Practice of Third Parties: Survey participants' views on usefulness of 'third parties' (e.g. defined as someone related or unrelated to the family but who is trusted by the family)	12
3.3	Relationship Management	13
3.3.1	Relationship Management: Survey participants' views about trust in and engagement with child protection authorities	13
3.3.2	Relationship Management: What survey participants think about the actions of child protection authorities in intervening, helping and linking families to resources	14
3.3.3	Relationship Management: How third parties perceive their own treatment by child protection authorities	15
3.3.4	Relationship Management: Survey participants' perceptions of the integrity and procedural justice shown by child protection authorities when engaging with parents, families and the community	16
3.4	Standards Performance	18
3.4.1	Standards Performance: Survey participants' report card on the child protection system — How well is the system acting on the principles for best practice as outlined in the National Child Protection Framework?	18
3.4.2	Standards Performance: Report card on the child protection system — What are perceived as being the major obstacles to making progress on the principles of the National Child Protection Framework?	20
3.5	Motivational Postures	22
3.5.1	Motivational Postures: Survey participants' beliefs about and attitudes towards the child protection system — How survey participants approach authorities in their current job	22
4	Tables: Summary description of responses to survey questions	25
5	Graphs for responses to the survey questions	35
6	Email Invitation and Information Sheet to Participants, Questionnaire	83
7	References	115

1 Background and Overview

This report is based on a survey of 427 people from all Australian states and territories who logged on to an ANU web survey and answered 217 questions about the way in which child protection systems across Australia are operating. Those invited to participate had worked alongside child protection authorities and were contacted through numerous email networks that the researchers were able to access either directly or indirectly through colleagues. Snowballing was encouraged, with participants invited to widen the web of people included in the survey.

The focus of the survey was on government child protection agencies – how well is government doing in overseeing the child protection system and how well does government work with third parties (including other government agencies such as police) to ensure that children are being cared for. The results reflect systematic criticism with the way in which child protection agencies are connecting to others who occupy professional roles, to families and to carers. Yet there is no evidence that those responding to the survey did not share the same belief that child protection agencies had very important work to do. They simply believed that child protection agencies needed a different way of doing things and needed to work more with other agencies and groups who could offer assistance.

Those doing the judging in this survey are third parties – doctors, lawyers, teachers, police, and welfare and health workers with 72% of respondents covered by mandatory reporting legislation. The average number of years respondents worked alongside child protection agencies was 11 years. Their average age was 44 years, 79% were woman and across all respondents 70% had a university degree. The sample comprised 30 respondents who identified as Aboriginal. No claims can be made about the representativeness of this sample because of how it was recruited. The consistency of responses, however, both quantitative and qualitative suggest that the views of this sample of third parties should be taken seriously and used to foster a range of local debates on how child protection authorities may work with communities better. Confidence in the findings can be taken from the similarity of the results with the conclusions of many of the recent reports on the provision of care for children who are abused or neglected in this country (Bamblett, Bath and Roseby 2010; Mullighan 2008; Wood 2008; Ford 2007; Wild and Anderson 2007; Crime and Misconduct Commission 2004; Vardon 2004). What this report adds is an understanding of how people in the field are thinking about child protection – where are the points of controversy and how might they be addressed so that the system can continue to evolve in more positive directions.

2 Survey

2.1 Methodology

A self report web survey methodology was utilised for this study. The survey ran from February to August 2010. A total of 209 statements/questions plus 8 questions requesting free text responses made up the survey. Quantitative data were used for the statistical analyses presented in this report. Qualitative analyses of the free text responses will be the subject of a second report scheduled for completion by the end of June 2011.

2.2 Participants

The survey was designed as a companion survey to the Australian Catholic University's survey of government employees working in child protection departments or offices across the country. Our survey was targeted to those working alongside child protection from non-profit organizations and other government departments covering the fields of education, health, and law and justice. Survey participants were from various occupations and ranged from frontline workers to managers. Participants responded from each state and territory across Australia. A final sample of 427 was accessed utilising a snow ball sampling technique. The point of entry into various networks was usually through an individual who was particularly interested in supporting the project. As the project gained momentum, invitations were extended to organizations who circulated details of how to participate through their networks.

2.3 Description of sample in terms of social-demographic variables

Those who completed the survey were predominantly female (79%). Survey participants' mean age was 44 years (median 45 years), with ages ranging from 22 to 72 years. A highly educated and experienced group, 70% had a Bachelor or higher degree and had worked alongside child protection authorities for an average of 11.4 years (median 10 years). Almost three quarters (72%) were mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect to child protection authorities. Generally in full-time work (74%), the majority of participants (86%) identified their level of involvement with child protection authorities over the past two years as being of 'modest' or 'intensive' contact' rather than 'more distant' or 'very little' contact. The majority were Australian born (80%) with a total of 94% being born in English speaking countries. Seven percent of participants identified as Aboriginal. A minority (13%) spoke another language at home. Up to three quarters of survey participants had contact with either some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients or some diverse cultural and linguistic background clients. Almost half of survey participants were from South Australia and New South Wales. Family support and general welfare were most commonly reported occupational types. By the same token a diverse group of third parties participated in the survey including police, crisis accommodation workers, drug and alcohol workers, education and child care workers, medical and legal workers.

Table 1: Summary description of responses to survey questions

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	87	21%
Female	334	79%
Involvement with child protection over the past 2 years		
Intensive or moderate contact with authorities over past 2 years	358	86%
Works		
Full time	308	74%
Part time	87	21%
Casual	11	2%
Contract	7	2%
Place of birth of survey participants		
Australia	333	80%
United Kingdom	45	11%
New Zealand	12	3%
Other	28	6%
Speak another language at home		
Yes	53	13%
No	365	87%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander		
Yes, Aboriginal	30	7%
No	391	93%
Mandatory reporter		
Yes	297	72%
No	102	25%
Not sure	13	3%
Respondents who answered 'yes' to 'In your work, which of the following client groups do you deal with.' (multiple responses allowed)		
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients only	36	8%
Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients	322	75%
No Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients	18	4%
Diverse cultural & linguistic background clients only	31	7%
Some diverse cultural & linguistic background clients	301	70%
No diverse cultural & linguistic background clients	24	6%

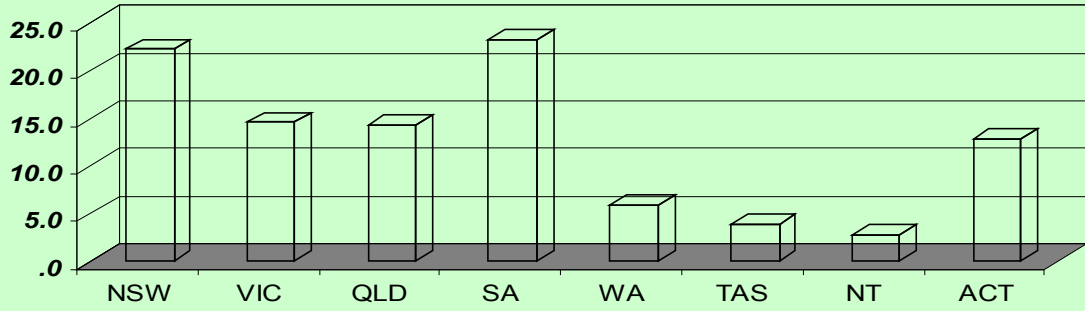
Post High School Education	Frequency	Percent
None	9	2%
Trade/apprenticeship	6	2%
Other certificate	18	4%
Current undergraduate	9	2%
Diploma	67	17%
Bachelors degree	157	39%
Higher degree	127	31%
Other	13	3%

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Family Support	74	21%
General Welfare	64	18%
Police	48	14%
Crisis Accommodation	41	12%
Drug & Alcohol Service	38	11%
Education	26	8%
Medical	25	7%
Child Care	18	5%
Legal	13	4%

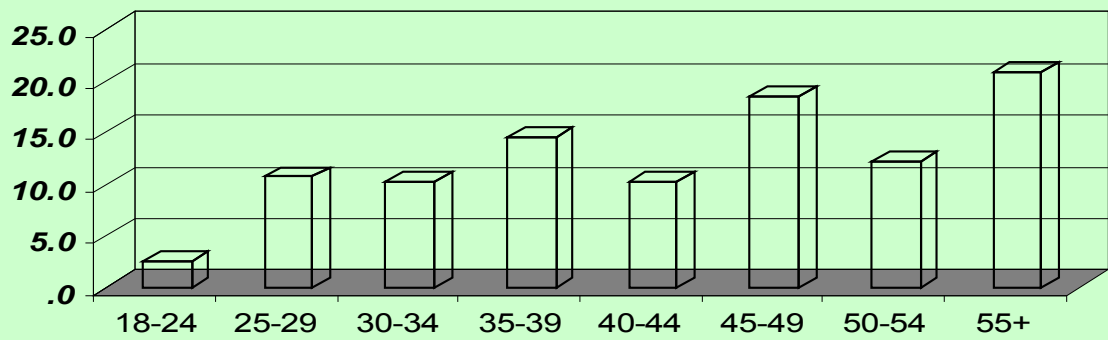
Age	Frequency	Percent
18-24 years	11	3%
25-29 years	45	11%
30-34 years	43	10%
35-39 years	61	15%
40-44 years	43	10%
45-49 years	78	19%
50-54 years	51	12%
55 + years	88	21%
Location		
South Australia	91	23%
New South Wales	87	22%
Victoria	57	15%
Queensland	56	14%
Australian Capital Territory	50	13%
Western Australia	23	6%
Tasmania	15	4%
Northern Territory	11	3%

Representation across states, age groups, highest post high school educational qualification and occupational fields are shown graphically below to illustrate the diversity in the personal backgrounds of individuals who responded to the questionnaire. The highly educated nature of the sample may reflect reluctance on the part of those with less education to spend time reading and completing the questionnaire. This issue will be investigated through further research.

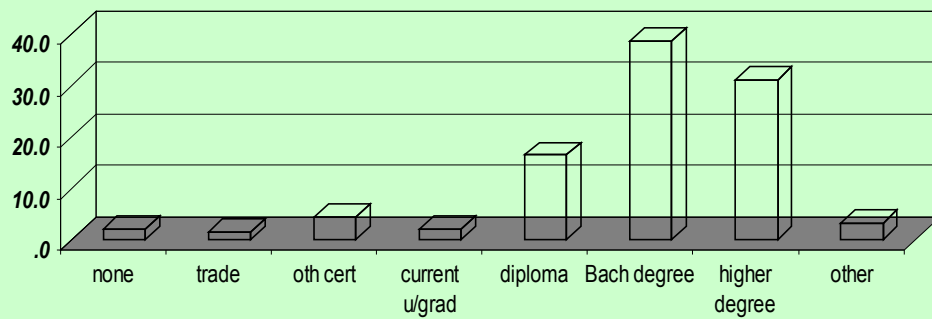
Location of survey participants



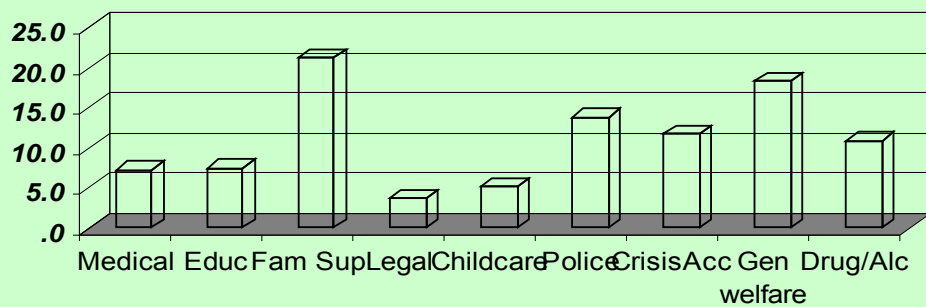
Age range of participants



Highest post-secondary education level of participants



Occupation of participants



3 Headline results

3.1 Regulatory Approach

3.1.1 Regulatory approach: Survey participants' views on how child protection authorities should engage with the community if they are to achieve their goals

Participants were presented with 32 statements that represented ways in which child protection authorities might think about the regulatory task (Section 1: Q1 to Q32). Participants were asked to indicate whether they agreed that this was a productive way to think about child protection regulation by choosing one of the following response categories: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. In the summary of findings below, the percent using the strongly agree and agree categories are combined to indicate the percent in favour.

In summary, participants favoured a regulatory process that was inclusive of the care network of the child including parents and family. They valued consultation, negotiation and compromise, but recognized that the power of the law and the legal authority of child protection agencies was essential back-up for protecting children. Their philosophy was one of persuasion first backed up by legal coercion.

Overall, participants expressed sympathy for parents, even those failing to care for their children. They were more oriented to being 'helpers' than 'enforcers'. Around half saw child protection as having responsibility for children with behaviour problems as well as children with parents who were not providing adequate care. Possibly these participants were, through their practical experience, aware of how these problems were interconnected. In their view it made little sense to try to differentiate between the two kinds of problems – one where parenting was the main concern, the other where a child's behaviour was the main concern.

On the subject of enforcement, this sample urged child protection authorities to use rules judiciously. They saw little good – for children or their parents, coming out of slavish adherence to rules. At the same time, to conclude that the sample did not respect rules would be incorrect. When mention was made of stretching rules or bending rules, the sample overall was rejecting of the idea. A minority, however, did concur that sometimes the rules had to be bent or stretched in the best interest of the child.

Below is a summary of participants' responses to the 32 questions. In the complete version of the report graphs showing the distribution of responses are provided. In the abridged version the graphs are omitted.

The importance of dialogue

90% perceived that effective outcomes in child protection can be achieved between authorities and clients when negotiation, accommodation and communication are part of the relationship. (Q13)

Parents wanting to be good parents

90% believed parents should be given a chance to make changes that show they are good parents. (Q15)

55% believed that most of the time, child protection authorities are dealing with families who want to do the right thing. (Q12)

41% believed that families usually try to do what child protection authorities ask of them. (Q23)

Engaging children, parents and families in decision making

85% believed children should have a say in decisions that affect them in the child protection context. (Q16)

But this was not to the exclusion of family nor did it involve being dismissive of parents.

88% considered the support of the family as critically important in child protection. (Q18)

86% believed parents should be involved in decision making about their children in the child protection context. (Q8)

80% believed parents should always be listened to by authorities. (Q22)

70% believed parents should always participate in case plans for their children. (Q30)

60% believed workers can only be effective by understanding a parent's perspective. (Q20)

Authorities' 'helping' leads to co-operation

74% believed that a helping role on the part of authorities is an important factor in getting families to do the right thing in the future. (Q1)

Only 5% believed it was not a good idea for authorities to offer assistance to families who had done the wrong thing and harmed their children. (Q17)

A range of strategies needed to regulate families

The majority of respondents (86%) perceived child protection authorities needing both their legal authority and their skills of persuasion and education to be effective in regulating families. (Q2)

A preference for persuasion was evident in the sample:

77% believed that negotiation and compromise are effective when working with families in child protection (Q5)

71% believed that it is better to try to persuade families to do the right thing voluntarily even at the risk of being considered 'soft'. (Q9)

72% said it was best for authorities to obtain compliance through advice and encouragement rather than by taking legal action. (Q26)

42% believed that child protection authorities who rely on their legal authority are less effective than those who rely on persuasion. (Q19)

But a substantial minority believed law enforcement was essential:

45% believed that in order to change behaviour of people who break the law, a child protection authority has to legally intervene. (Q10)

40% agreed that without the power to take legal action, families would ignore a child protection practitioner's requests for them to meet parenting expectations. (Q31)

A smaller minority were dismissive of parents and saw the need for a somewhat punitive approach:

26% believed it was better for child protection authorities to be tough enforcers of child safety legislation even at the risk being considered punitive. (Q11)

24% believed that people who harm their children are not going to co-operate with a child protection authority unless they are forced to. (Q6)

11% agreed that people who harm their children don't deserve 'kindness' from a regulatory agency. (Q27)

At the same time, only 4% believed that child protection authorities can't afford to show compassion or sympathy towards those they regulate. (Q29)

Regulating young people

56% believed that parents should be able to rely on child protection services to help them and take action with an 'uncontrollable' child/young person. (Q7)

Only 17% of respondents believed parents who are unable to control their children should not be a priority for child protection services. (Q24)

Sticking to the rules?

The role of law was appreciated by the sample as a means of backing up methods of persuasion and education. Perhaps then it was not so surprising to find the sample asking that child protection authorities show flexibility and discretion in decision making about children's safety.

87% agreed that child protection authorities should use common sense by applying the legislation in a way that is not dogmatic or legalistic. (Q3)

83% agreed that while rules may be useful in statutory child protection work, the situation not the rule should determine the outcome. (Q4)

82% agreed that the use of discretion by authorities in the administration of the legislation where permitted is desirable. (Q28).

77% agreed that rules are there only as a guide and each child protection case should be considered on its merits. (Q21)

A smaller percent advocated bending or stretching the rules:

48% believed that child protection authorities should bend the rules sometimes to suit special situations. (Q25)

44% believed child protection authorities should make decisions on what they believe is right at the time, even if it stretches the rules. (Q32)

The sample was more unanimous on the view that rigidity in following rules was not a fruitful approach for child protection authorities to take:

Only 16% believed that by sticking strictly to the rules will child protection authorities avoid errors in judgement. (Q14)

3.2 Regulatory Practice

3.2.1 Regulatory practice: Survey respondents' perceptions of what child protection authorities do well and not so well

Responses to Section 2, questions 33 to 61 were given on a five-point scale from 'almost always' to 'never'. Five dimensions were measured. The extent to which child protection authorities: (a) respected family relationships; (b) were open with and inclusive of parents; (c) regulated responsively; (d) were goal directed; and (e) were ritualistic in following rules. Items are grouped under these dimensions. Percentages below represent those in the sample who responded to each item with 'almost always' or 'often'.

Overall, the findings below show that respondents did not think that the child protection authorities were strong on building relationships with parents and families nor did they regulate in either a responsive way or a goal oriented way. At the same time, they were not criticized particularly strongly for being rule bound. Overall they were seen to be bogged down in paper work and as needing clearer rules.

Respect for family relationships

38% perceived child protection authorities as understanding the importance of a child's bond with his/her parents, siblings and wider family. (Q49)

29% perceived child protection authorities as recognising the importance of contact between children, their parents, siblings and extended families when children have been removed. (Q55)

Open and inclusive of parents

10% perceived child protection authorities as being good at following through with parents and families. (Q51)

8% perceived child protection authorities as being good at making sure parents and families understood what was going on. (Q41)

6% perceived child protection authorities as being good at sharing information with parents and families. (Q35)

Regulating responsively

35% perceived child protection authorities using coercive powers to intervene without enough thought as to the next steps. (Q43)

30% perceived child protection workers using only as much intervention as is required to keep children safe. (Q44)

23% perceived child protection workers as explaining clearly to families the steps involved when they investigate suspected child abuse or neglect. (Q45)

17% perceived child protection authorities as tailoring their responses to different client needs (Q34)

11% perceived child protection authorities as helping families improve their capacity to care for their children. (Q33)

Goal directed

49% perceived child protection workers as easily losing touch with what they were trying to achieve for children and families. (Q39) (reverse score)

33% perceived child protection authorities as working hard to ensure that children who have been removed from their families still are able to have contact and build relationship with their natural families. (Q46)

15% perceived child protection authorities as being good at implementing care plans for children once they have been placed into care. (Q53)

12% perceived child protection authorities as good at monitoring and ensuring that children in out-of-home care have stability of care. (Q47)

9% perceived child protection authorities as being good at monitoring and ensuring safety of children once they have been placed into care. (Q38)

Reliance on rules and ritualism

42% perceived child protection authorities relying too much on rules for making decisions. (Q52)

36% perceived child protection workers as mechanically following processes and ignoring outcomes. (Q50)

33% perceived child protection workers doing their jobs by 'ticking boxes' without thinking beyond that. (Q48)

33% perceived child protection authorities losing sight of the goal of keeping children safe as they work through their procedures and rules. (Q54)

Additional questions of interest

74% perceived child protection authorities as needing clear rules to cover the situations they find themselves in. (Q36)

78% perceived child protection authorities as getting bogged down in paper work and paper trails. (Q37)

48% thought confidentiality made it difficult for child protection authorities to share information. (Q40)

25% thought legislation was so complex that child protection workers do not know what they can and cannot do. (Q42)

3.2.2 Regulatory Practice of Third Parties: Survey participants' views on usefulness of 'third parties' (e.g. defined as someone related or unrelated to the family but who is trusted by the family)

Survey participants were asked to rate six statements (Q56 to Q61) in relation to third parties. The rating scale of 'almost always' to 'never' was used with these questions, as was used above in other questions in Section 2. Below percentages represent those in the sample responding with 'often' or 'almost always.'

Overall, the majority believed that third parties were playing a positive role in child protection. There was also acknowledgment of the positive role of child protection workers.

72% regarded it as important for families when dealing with child protection authorities to have the support of a third party. (Q58)

60% thought that third parties could help both child protection workers and families bridge their differences. (Q59)

58% thought that the involvement of third parties helped families better cope with the process when child protection matters are being negotiated. (Q56)

54% thought that third party advocacy for families in child protection matters leads to better outcomes overall. (Q57)

49% perceived third parties as having a better understanding of a family's situation than child protection workers. (Q60)

40% indicated that third parties have a greater capacity to effectively intervene than child protection workers. (Q61)

3.3 Relationship Management

3.3.1 Relationship Management: Survey participants' views about trust in and engagement with child protection authorities

General quality of relationship measures

Participants responded to two questions (Q64 to Q65) on a seven-point scale with response categories 'extremely well', 'very well', 'well', 'neither well nor poorly', 'poorly', 'very poorly', 'extremely poorly'.

21% of respondents viewed child protection authorities as being able to engage with families 'well', 'very well' or 'extremely well'.

20% of respondents viewed child protection authorities as being able to engage with non government organisations and other services 'well', 'very well' or 'extremely well'.

Trust in child protection systems

Q66 to Q72 measure the degree to which respondents trusted child protection authorities. Responses were made on a five-point rating scale with the categories 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'neither agree or disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Percentages referred to below are calculated through combining the categories, agree and strongly agree.

30% agreed that child protection authorities can be trusted to administer child protection laws and rules fairly. (Q66)

28% agreed that child protection authorities took advantage of people who are vulnerable. (Q72)

50% agreed that child protection authorities failed to deliver on their responsibilities to the community. (Q71)

21% agreed that child protection authorities do not mislead people. (Q68)

23% agreed that child protection authorities are open and honest in their dealings with people. (Q67)

14% agreed that child protection authorities will keep their word. (Q70)

14% agreed that child protection authorities can be relied on to do what they say they will do. (Q69).

3.3.2 Relationship Management: What survey participants think about the actions of child protection authorities in intervening, helping and linking families to resources

The analysis of the next twelve questions (Q73 to Q84) are divided into the three themes of a) use of coercive powers to intervene, b) providing help through programs and assistance to families and c) improving networks of families by child protection authorities. Each theme is examined against four criteria: i) is it enough; ii) is there enough consultation with families; iii) is there enough consultation with other support agencies; and iv) is there sufficient understanding of the situation?

Respondents answered a series of questions summarized below using bipolar seven-point scales. At the lower end the rating scale was anchored by a descriptor (not enough or without ...), while the upper end was anchored by the opposite descriptor (too often or with ...). The percentages below represent responses made below the midpoint, that is using the categories 1, 2 or 3.

Respondents thought that statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene ...

Q73 Not enough 45%
Q76 Without enough consultation with families 67%
Q79 Without enough consultation with support agencies 82%
Q82 Without sufficient understanding of the situation 65%

Respondents thought that statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families ...

Q74 Not enough 82%
Q77 Without enough consultation with families 72%
Q80 Without enough consultation with support agencies 81%
Q83 Without sufficient understanding of the situation 70%

Respondents thought that statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families ...

Q75 Not enough 83%
Q78 Without enough consultation with families 74%
Q81 Without enough consultation with support agencies 81%
Q84 Without sufficient understanding of the situation 72%

3.3.3 Relationship Management: How third parties perceive their own treatment by child protection authorities

The next 24 questions (Q85 to Q108) examined how respondents thought of their relationship with child protection authorities (CPAs). Responses were provided on a five-point rating scale from 'never' to 'always'. Percentages reported below combine responses to the categories, 'most times' and 'always'. The items have been grouped according to how they describe child protection as an organization to work along side of.

A partnering organization

- 36% say that CPAs value you as someone working with them. (Q85)
- 40% say that CPAs trust you to act on your professional judgment. (Q86)
- 28% say that CPAs back you when making a difficult decision. (Q87)
- 20% say that CPAs support you when things get tough. (Q88)
- 22% say that CPAs provide information that helps you manage cases better. (Q89)
- 21% say that CPAs tell the truth in their discussions with you. (Q90)
- 35% say that CPAs meet their negotiated obligations willingly. (Q91)
- 40% say that CPAs negotiate joint expectations fairly. (Q92)
- 26% say that CPAs try to get the upper hand in negotiations and discussions with you. (Q93)
- 19% say that CPAs discuss issues openly so that staff from my organization are kept well informed. (Q94)
- 22% say that CPAs listen to the views of workers in my sector. (Q95)
- 15% say that CPAs learn from the views of workers in my sector. (Q96)
- 58% say that CPAs have an open door policy for hearing the views of workers like myself. (Q97)
- 14% say that CPAs work problems through with their organizations to reach a compromise that everyone can work with. (Q98)
- 45% say that CPAs withhold information for no apparent reason from those who need to know. (Q99)

A responsible organization

- 27% say that CPAs accept responsibility for their practice. (Q105)
- 31% say that CPAs engage in practice guided by principles of respect and human dignity. (Q106)
- 31% say that CPAs accept responsibility for their decisions. (Q107)
- 16% say that CPAs make amends when things go wrong. (Q108)

A professionally networked organization

- 15% say that CPAs consult with other professions to improve practice. (Q103)
- 61% say that CPAs consult with others outside the authority with relevant experience to improve practice. (Q104) (reverse scored for scaling purposes)

An innovative problem solving organization

- 12% say that CPA's encourage other organisations to put forward innovative ideas for practice. (Q100)

4% say that CPAs provide useful sessions for learning better problem solving skills. (Q101)
54% say that CPAs consult with their own colleagues when unsure of what to do. (Q102)

3.3.4 Relationship Management: Survey participants' perceptions of the integrity and procedural justice shown by child protection authorities when engaging with parents, families and the community

The next eight questions (Q109 to Q116) relate to how survey respondents perceive authorities engaging with parents and families, whether they displayed procedural fairness treating them with respect and as trustworthy and whether they displayed integrity (listening, consulting and reconsidering their position when warranted).

Responses were provided on a five-point scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Percentages below represent responses to the combined categories, 'agree' and 'strongly agree'.

Procedural justice is often thought of as the formal procedures organisations follow, but procedural justice extends beyond this to how individuals perceive their treatment by authorities. Relational qualities of child protection authorities such as openness, honesty and communicating trustworthiness are important when dealing with the public and other service systems that play an important role in child protection activity. The extent to which survey respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the following statements indicated that respondents evaluated treatment by authorities in respect of procedural justice as poor overall.

Treat with respect

25% said that child protection authorities respect the individual's rights as a citizen. (Q113)

23% said that child protection authorities are concerned about protecting the average citizen's rights (Q114)

Consultation with others

10% said that child protection authorities consult widely about how they might change things to make it easier for parents to meet their obligations. (Q111)

7% said that child protection authorities go to great lengths to consult with the community over changes to their systems. (Q112)

Treat as trustworthy

56% said that child protection authorities treat people as if they will only do the right thing when forced to. (Q110). (reverse scored for scaling purposes)

17% said that child protection authorities treat people as if they can be trusted to do the right thing. (Q109)

Openness to review

14% said that child protection authorities are open to reviewing their decisions when challenged (Q116)

12% said that child protection authorities accept responsibility when they make a mistake. (Q115)

3.4 Standards Performance

3.4.1 Standards Performance: Report card on the child protection system — How well is the system acting on the principles for best practice as outlined in the National Child Protection Framework?

The Australian Government announced a set of principles for developing and evaluating the child protection system in Australia in 2009. The National Framework for Protecting Australia's children represents "an unprecedented level of collaboration between Australian State and Territory governments and non-government organisations to protect children" (p.5). The need to build capacity and strength in families, communities and across the nation is seen as the best way to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring in the first place (p.6).

The next eleven questions (Q117 to Q127) relate to how well the child protection system acts on the principles set out in the National Child Protection framework according to the perceptions of survey participants. Q117 to Q127 asked participants to consider each standard and to assess the state of the child protection system with which they were familiar on a seven-point response scale with the categories labelled as 'extremely well', 'very well', 'well', 'neither well nor poorly', 'poorly', 'very poorly', 'extremely poorly'. The percentages below were obtained through combining 'well', 'very well' and 'extremely well', i.e. those responses above the midpoint, 'neither well nor poorly'.

We defined what we meant by 'system' for participants. System does not refer only to government. It refers to government and non-government organizations, groups and individuals who work to protect children from abuse and neglect. We saw these data as providing a baseline measure of the various child protection systems across the country against which future measures could be taken to assess progress. Those working alongside child protection government departments and offices are ideal people to judge the progress of the system since they see first hand what is happening and are in a position to observe change both for better and worse. It is our opinion that they are also more likely to feel able to express their views about the system than those working within government departments.

Standards associated with the rights of children

About one third of respondents considered that the system was working well with regard to the following principles:

Children's right to grow up in an environment free of neglect and abuse (32%) and improving the safety and well-being of children (30%). (Q117 & Q120)

29% considered the system worked well in terms of upholding children's rights through our systems and institutions. (Q123)

Less than one fifth of respondents considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of children's rights to participate in decisions affecting them (18%). (Q118)

Standards associated with social inclusiveness of families

25% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of a family's right to participate in decisions affecting them. (Q119)

20% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of working in partnership with families in their caring responsibilities. (Q122)

17% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of communicating to families that they are valued and supported in their care giving responsibilities. (Q121)

Standards associated with best practice

35% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of a preference for children to be reunited with their natural parents. (Q127)

32% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of using out-of-home care as a last resort. (Q126)

28% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of basing interventions and policies on evidence. (Q124)

24% considered the system worked well in terms of the principle of basing interventions and policies on experience of best practice. (Q125)

3.4.2 Standards Performance: Report card on the child protection system — What are perceived as being the major obstacles to making progress on the principles of the National Child Protection Framework?

The questions on performance on the principles of the National Child Protection Framework were followed by a list of 29 possible obstacles to progress (Q128 to Q156). Participants rated each of the potential obstacles on a five-point scale using the categories ‘no obstacle’, ‘small obstacle’, ‘medium obstacle’, ‘big obstacle’ and ‘huge obstacle’.

The percentages reported below reflect responses that indicated a ‘big’ or ‘huge obstacle’ for child protection authorities. They are presented in descending order of the magnitude of the obstacle. Importantly, all but 4 obstacles were acknowledged as being a problem by more than half of respondents. The biggest obstacles dealt mainly with limited resources and too much distraction from the main task through paperwork. The upper middle ranking obstacles dealt with lack of capacity to be nimble, flexible, imaginative and responsive in dealing with child protection challenges. The lower middle rankings dealt with problems of motivation, loss of confidence and detachment from the world of parents and their children. The smallest obstacles had to do with loss of purpose and an inability to work to more abstract goals.

Biggest Obstacles

Too high a turnover of workers	90%
Case loads too high	86%
Too many inexperienced workers	77%
Too captured by paperwork	75%

Upper Middle Ranking Obstacles

Too slow to respond	68%
Too little time to think about what we are doing and why	66%
Too little creativity in thinking of new ways to solve old problems	64%
Too many people signing off on decisions before anything is done	63%
Too inflexible	62%
Too narrow thinking, not making connections between issues	62%
Too much focus on 'can't do' - not enough on 'can do'	61%
Too much resistance to working with others who might be able to help	60%

Lower Middle Ranking Obstacles

Too unable to motivate and draw out the best in people	59%
Too little understanding of the service delivery capabilities of different parts of the system	58%
Too few can see the big picture	57%
Too often at the mercy of decisions/policies of other government services	56%
Too much centralised control	55%
Too much distancing, discouraging contact and engagement	55%

Too driven by targets	55%
Too tied up in rules and protocols	54%
Too risk averse to trying new things	53%
Too afraid to give those who want to try out new ideas the opportunity to have a go	53%
Too unrealistic in setting goals for child protection	51%
Too little understanding of the capacities of parents and families	51%
Too hesitant to deal with the problem	50%

Smallest Obstacles

Too much confusion over the goals of child protection	49%
Too much pushing of work onto others	46%
Too difficult to turn the principles of the National Child Protection Framework into workable goals	43%
Too broad a set of goals to aim for	39%

3.5 Motivational Postures

3.5.1 Motivational posturing: Survey participant's beliefs and attitudes towards the child protection system — How survey participants approach authorities in their current job

Motivational postures is the term used to describe the ways in which people deal with the demands of authorities. Motivational postures are signals that people give to communicate to authorities how favourably they regard them and how deferential they feel toward them. 35 statements (Q158 to Q192) that are based on work on posturing in other domains (nursing homes, tax, occupational health and safety) were used to assess posturing of those who work in organizations alongside child protection authorities. Five types of postures were measured: (a) commitment particularly to the goals of child protection; (b) capitulation or going along with child protection to make things easier; (c) resistance or concern about justice and wanting change in the system; (d) disengagement or just ignoring the system as much as possible; and (e) game playing or challenging the system through finding clever ways around the rules.

Participants were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed that they felt this way about child protection authority by choosing one of the following response categories: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. In the summary of findings below, the percent using the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' categories are combined to indicate the percent in favour.

Commitment

Commitment involves an internalisation of the regulatory goals as 'the right thing to do'. High levels of commitment to child safety were evident in this sample as shown below:

85% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt a moral obligation to work with government to ensure children live in safe and supportive families and communities. (Q169)

94% agreed or strongly agreed that preventing the abuse of children is the right thing for government to do. (Q162)

96% agreed or strongly agreed that ensuring children are safe and cared for ultimately advantages everyone. (Q174)

97% agreed or strongly agreed that ensuring children are not left in situations of abuse and neglect is a responsibility that should be willingly accepted by everyone. (Q183)

97% agreed or strongly agreed that they are committed to ensuring that the children they come in contact with in their work are safe and have every chance of developing into healthy, happy adults. (Q186)

96% agreed or strongly agreed that they were committed to ensuring that children and families access the support they need to prevent harm and promote safety. (Q179)

Capitulation

While respondents showed high levels of commitment to the goals of keeping children safe, they showed more ambivalence in their capitulation to child protection authorities.

Capitulation represents a willingness to keep the authorities happy, to go along with and meet authorities' demands possibly without giving too much thought to objectives or outcomes.

24% agreed or strongly agreed that child protection authorities are encouraging to people who have difficulty meeting their obligations through no fault of their own. (Q167)

32% agreed or strongly agreed that child protection agencies are supportive as long as we try to do the right thing and learn from our mistakes. (Q164)

45% agreed or strongly agreed that if you cooperate with child protection authorities, they are likely to be cooperative with you. (Q160)

15% agreed or strongly agreed that the child protection system may not be perfect, but it works well enough for most of us. (Q168)

63% agreed or strongly agreed that they thought of child protection authorities as looking out for the safety of Australian children. (Q177)

Resistance

A substantial proportion of the sample expressed a posture of resistance to child protection authorities.

45% agreed or strongly agreed that it is impossible to satisfy child protection authorities completely. (Q180)

14% agreed or strongly agreed that as a society, we need to stop government organisations like child protection authorities dictating terms for children's safety. (Q165)

29% agreed or strongly agreed that as a society, we need more people willing to take a stand against child protection authorities. (Q187)

59% agreed or strongly agreed that it was important not to let child protection authorities push you around. (Q181)

38% agreed or strongly agreed that if you don't co-operate with child protection authorities, they will get tough with you. (Q182)

39% agreed or strongly agreed that once child protection authorities have you branded as someone who won't comply, they will never change their mind. (Q185)

32% agreed or strongly agreed that child protection authorities are more concerned about making their own job easier than making things easier for others. (Q190)

27% agreed or strongly agreed that child protection authorities are more interested in catching you for doing the wrong thing, than helping you do the right thing. (Q161)

Game playing

A small proportion agreed that they game played child protection authorities.

2% agreed or strongly agreed that they will tick the boxes to please a child protection authority and make the paperwork look good but will not do anything else to help them. (Q175)

6% agreed or strongly agreed that they play the game of finding the grey in the law so that they don't have to do what child protection authorities tell them to do. (Q170)

3% agreed or strongly agreed that their attitude to child protection workers is to tell them what they want to hear. (Q176)

23% agreed or strongly agreed that their attitude to child protection workers is to work around them as much as possible. (Q166)

12% agreed or strongly agreed that no matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to give them only as much cooperation as the law requires. (Q173)

5% agreed or strongly agreed that they do what they are legally required to do to get child protection authorities off their back, but nothing more for them. (Q192)

2% agreed or strongly agreed that they do the minimum when it comes to the legal requirements imposed by child protection authorities (Q189).

Disengagement

A small proportion described themselves as adopting the posture of disengagement.

7% agreed or strongly agreed that they didn't care if they were not doing the right thing by child protection authorities (Q172)

4% agreed or strongly agreed that if child protection authorities got tough with them, they will become uncooperative with them. (Q188)

12% agreed or strongly agreed that they personally didn't think that there was much child protection authorities could do to them to make them comply with their requirements if they didn't want to. (Q191)

24% agreed or strongly agreed that if they found out that they were not doing what child protection authorities wanted, they were not going to lose any sleep over it. (Q163)

4 Tables: Summary description of responses to survey questions

	Agree/Strongly Agree
Q1. If a child protection authority shows an interest in helping families solve their problems, families will be more likely to try to do the right thing in the future.	74%
Q2. Child protection authorities need both their legal authority and skills of persuasion and education to be effective.	86%
Q3. Child protection authorities should use common sense by applying the legislation in a way that is not dogmatic or legalistic.	87%
Q4. In statutory child protection work, rules are useful, but the situation not the rule should determine the outcome.	83%
Q5. Negotiation and compromise are effective when working with families in child protection.	77%
Q6. People who harm their children are not going to cooperate with a child protection authority unless they are forced to.	24%
Q7. Parents should be able to rely on child protection services to help them and take action with an 'uncontrollable' child/young person.	56%
Q8. Parents should be involved in making decisions about their children in the child protection context.	86%
Q9. It is better to try to persuade families to do the right thing voluntarily even at the risk of being considered 'soft'.	71%
Q10. In order to change the behaviour of people who break the law, a child protection authority has to legally intervene.	45%
Q11. It is better for a child protection authority to be a tough enforcer of the legislation, even at the risk of being considered punitive.	26%
Q12. Most of the time child protection authorities are dealing with families who want to do the right thing.	55%
Q13. Relationships between child protection authorities and clients can produce effective outcomes when there is negotiation, accommodation and communication.	90%
Q14. To avoid errors in judgement, child protection workers should stick strictly to the rules.	16%
Q15. Parents should be given a chance to make changes that show they are good parents.	90%
Q16. Children should have a say in decisions that affect them.	85%
Q17. It is not a good idea for a child protection authority to offer assistance to people who have done the wrong thing and harmed their children.	5%

Q18. The support of the family is critically important in child protection.	88%
Q19. Child protection authorities who rely on their legal authority are less effective than those who rely on persuasion.	42%
Q20. Only by understanding a parent's perspective can workers be effective.	60%
Q21. Rules are there only as a guide; each child protection case should be considered on its merits.	77%
Q22. Parents should always be listened to.	80%
Q23. Families usually try to do what child protection authorities ask of them.	41%
Q24. Parents who are unable to control their children should not be a priority for child protection services.	17%
Q25. Sometimes child protection authorities should bend the rules to suit special situations.	48%
Q26. It is best for child protection authorities to obtain compliance through advice and encouragement rather than taking legal action.	72%
Q27. People who harm their children don't deserve 'kindness' from a regulatory agency.	11%
Q28. It is desirable for child protection authorities to use discretion in their administration of the legislation where permitted.	82%
Q29. A child protection authority can't afford to show compassion or sympathy towards those they regulate.	4%
Q30. Parents should always participate in case plans for their children.	70%
Q31. Without the power to take legal action families would ignore a child protection practitioner's requests for them to meet parenting expectations.	40%
Q32. Child protection authorities should make decisions on what they believe is right at the time, even if it stretches the rules.	44%

	Often/ almost always
Q33. Child protection authorities help families improve their capacity to care for their children.	11%
Q34. Child protection authorities tailor their responses to different client needs.	17%
Q35. Child protection authorities are good at sharing information with parents and families.	6%
Q36. Child protection workers need clear rules to cover the situations they find themselves in.	74%
Q37. Child protection workers get bogged down in paper work and paper trails.	78%

Q38. Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring safety of children once they have been placed into care.	9%
Q39. Child protection workers easily lose touch with what they are trying to achieve for children and families.	49%
Q40. Confidentiality makes it difficult for child protection authorities to share information.	48%
Q41. Child protection authorities are good at making sure parents and families understand what is going on.	8%
Q42. Legislation is so complex that child protection workers do not know what they can and cannot do.	25%
Q43. Child protection authorities use coercive powers to intervene without enough thought as to the next steps.	35%
Q44. Child protection workers use only as much intervention as is required to keep children safe.	30%
Q45. Child protection workers explain clearly to families the steps involved when they investigate suspected child abuse or neglect.	23%
Q46. Child protection authorities work hard to ensure that children who have been removed from their families still are able to have contact and build a relationship with their natural families.	33%
Q47. Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring that children in out-of-home care have stability of care.	12%
Q48. Child protection workers do their jobs by 'ticking boxes' without thinking beyond that.	33%
Q49. Child protection authorities understand the importance of a child's bond with his/her parents, siblings and wider family.	38%
Q50. Child protection workers mechanically follow processes and ignore outcomes.	36%
Q51. Child protection authorities are good at following through with parents and families.	10%
Q52. Child protection authorities rely too much on rules for making decisions.	42%
Q53. Child protection authorities are good at implementing care plans for children once they have been placed into care.	15%
Q54. Child protection authorities lose sight of the goal of keeping children safe as they work through their procedures and rules.	33%
Q55. Child protection authorities recognise the importance of contact between children, their parents, siblings and extended families when children have been removed.	29%
	Often/almost always
Q56 The involvement of third parties helps families' better cope with	58%

.	the process when child protection matters are being negotiated.	
Q57	Third party advocacy for families in child protection matters leads to better outcomes overall.	54%
Q58	It is important for families when dealing with child protection authorities to have the support of a third party.	72%
Q59	Third parties can help both child protection workers and families bridge their differences.	60%
Q60	Third parties have a better understanding of a family's situation than child protection workers.	49%
Q61	Third parties have a greater capacity to effectively intervene than child protection workers.	40%

	Well/very well/extremely well	Neither well nor poorly	Poorly/very poorly/extremely poorly
Q64. How well do child protection authorities engage with families?	21%	28%	52%
Q65. How well do child protection authorities engage with non government organisations and other services they deal with?	20%	19%	61%

	Agree/Strongly Agree	Disagree/Strongly disagree
Q66. can be trusted to administer child protection laws and rules fairly	30%	41%
Q67. are open and honest in their dealings with people	23%	55%
Q68. do not mislead people	21%	52%
Q69. can be relied on to do what they say they will do	14%	65%
Q70. will keep their word	14%	59%
Q71. fail to deliver on their responsibilities to the community	50%	25%
Q72. take advantage of people who are vulnerable	28%	42%
		Not enough/2/3
Q73. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)....		45%
Q74. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families....		82%
Q75. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families....		83%

	Without enough consultation with families/2/3
Q76. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)...	67%
Q77. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	72%
Q78. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families...	74%

	Without enough consultation with other support agencies/2/3
Q79. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)...	82%
Q80. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	81%
Q81. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families....	81%

	Without a great deal of understanding of the situation/2/3
Q82. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (to monitor or remove children)...	65%
Q83. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	70%
Q84. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families...	72%

	most times/always
Q85. Value you as someone working with child protection authorities	36%
Q86. Trust you to act on your professional judgment	40%
Q87. Back you when you make a difficult decision	28%
Q88. Support you when things get tough	20%
Q89. Provide information that helps you manage cases better	22%

Q90.	tell the truth in their discussions with you	21%
Q91.	meet their negotiated obligations willingly	35%
Q92.	negotiate joint expectations fairly	40%
Q93.	try to get the upper hand in negotiations and discussions with you	26%

		most times/always
Q94.	It is the practice of child protection authorities to discuss issues openly so that staff from my organisation are kept well informed.	19%
Q95.	Child protection authorities are good at listening to the views of workers in my sector.	22%
Q96.	Child protection authorities are good at learning from the views of workers in my sector.	15%
Q97.	Statutory child protection authorities have an open door policy for hearing the views of workers like myself.	58%
Q98.	Child protection authorities work problems through with other organisations to reach a compromise that everyone can work with.	14%
Q99.	In my work with child protection authorities, it seems that information is withheld for no apparent reason from those who need to know.	45%
Q100.	Statutory child protection agencies encourage other organisations to put forward innovative ideas for practice.	12%
Q101.	Child protection authorities provide useful sessions for learning better problem solving skills.	4%
Q102.	Consult with their own colleagues when unsure of what to do	54%
Q103.	Consult with other professions to improve practice	15%
Q104.	Consult with others outside the authority with relevant experience to improve practice	61%
Q105.	Accept responsibility for their practice	27%
Q106.	Engage in practice guided by principles of respect and human dignity	31%
Q107.	Accept responsibility for their decisions	31%
Q108.	Make amends when things go wrong	16%

		Agree/Strongly agree
Q109.	Treat people as if they can be trusted to do the right thing	17%
Q110.	Treat people as if they will only do the right thing when forced to	56%
Q111.	Consult widely about how they might change things to make it easier for parents to meet their obligations	10%
Q112.	Go to great lengths to consult with the community over changes to	7%

their systems	
Q113. Respect the individual's rights as a citizen	25%
Q114. Are concerned about protecting the average citizen's rights	23%
Q115. Accept responsibility when they make a mistake	12%
Q116. Are open to reviewing their decisions when challenged	14%

	well/very well/extremely well
Q117. Children's right to grow up in an environment free of neglect and abuse	32%
Q118. Children's rights to participate in decisions affecting them	18%
Q119. Family's right to participate in decisions affecting them	25%
Q120. Improving the safety and well-being of children	30%
Q121. Communicating to families that they are valued and supported in their caregiving responsibilities	17%
Q122. Working in partnership with families in their caring responsibilities	20%
Q123. Upholding children's rights through our systems and institutions	29%
Q124. Basing interventions and policies on evidence	28%
Q125. Basing interventions and policies on experience of best practice	24%
Q126. Using out-of-home care as the last resort	32%
Q127. Preferring for children to be reunited with their natural parents	35%

	big obstacle /huge obstacle
Q128. Case loads too high	86%
Q129. Too high a turnover of workers	90%
Q130. Too much centralised control	55%
Q131. Too much resistance to working with others who might be able to help	60%
Q132. Too much pushing of work onto others	46%
Q133. Too narrow thinking, not making connections between issues	62%
Q134. Too risk averse to trying new things	53%
Q135. Too many people signing off on decisions before anything is done	63%
Q136. Too little understanding of the capacities of parents and families	51%
Q137. Too tied up in rules and protocols	54%
Q138. Too hesitant to deal with the problem	50%

Q139.	Too unable to motivate and draw out the best in people	59%
Q140.	Too much distancing, discouraging contact and engagement	55%
Q141.	Too much focus on 'can't do' - not enough on 'can do'	61%
Q142.	Too slow to respond	68%
Q143.	Too inflexible	62%
Q144.	Too little creativity in thinking of new ways to solve old problems	64%
Q145.	Too little time to think about what we are doing and why	66%
Q146.	Too few can see the big picture	57%
Q147.	Too afraid to give those who want to try out new ideas the opportunity to have a go	53%
Q148.	Too captured by paperwork	75%
Q149.	Too driven by targets	55%
Q150.	Too many inexperienced workers	77%
Q151.	Too unrealistic in setting goals for child protection	51%
Q152.	Too often at the mercy of decisions/policies of other government services	56%
Q153.	Too little understanding of the service delivery capabilities of different parts of the system	58%
Q154.	Too much confusion over the goals of child protection	49%
Q155.	Too broad a set of goals to aim for	39%
Q156.	Too difficult to turn the principles of the National Child Protection Framework into workable goals	43%

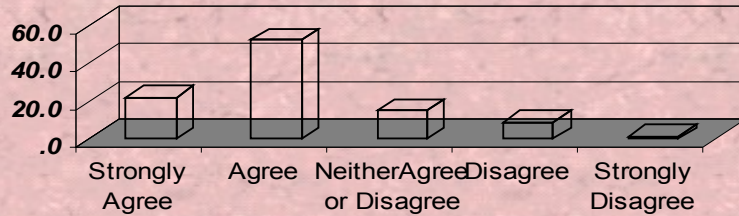
	Agree/Strongly agree
Q158. I don't really know what child protection authorities expect of me and I'm not about to ask.	9%
Q159. I always follow child protection's rules even if I disagree with them.	39%
Q160. If you cooperate with child protection authorities, they are likely to be cooperative with you.	45%
Q161. Child protection authorities are more interested in catching you for doing the wrong thing, than helping you do the right thing.	27%
Q162. Preventing the abuse and exploitation of children is the right thing for government to do.	94%
Q163. If I find out that I am not doing what child protection authorities want, I'm not going to lose any sleep over it.	24%
Q164. Child protection agencies are supportive as long as we try to do the right thing and learn from our mistakes.	32%

Q165. As a society, we need to stop government organisations like child protection authorities dictating terms for children’s safety.	14%
Q166. My attitude to child protection workers is to work around them as much as possible.	23%
Q167. Child protection authorities are encouraging to people who have difficulty meeting their obligations through no fault of their own.	24%
Q168. The child protection system may not be perfect, but it works well enough for most of us.	15%
Q169. I feel a moral obligation to work with government to ensure children live in safe and supportive families and communities.	85%
Q170. I play the game of finding the grey in the law so that I don’t have to do what child protection authorities tell me to do.	6%
Q171. For me there is nothing more important than doing child protection work that respects families and communities but at the same time protects the rights of children.	88%
Q172. I don’t care if I am not doing the right thing by child protection authorities.	7%
Q173. No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to give them only as much cooperation as the law requires.	12%
Q174. Ensuring that our children are safe and cared for ultimately advantages everyone.	96%
Q175. I will tick the boxes to please a child protection authority and make the paperwork look good but I will not do anything else to help them.	2%
Q176. My attitude to child protection workers is to tell them what they want to hear.	3%
Q177. I think of child protection authorities as looking out for the safety of Australian children.	63%
Q178. Doing the best job involves creatively navigating the rules imposed by child protection authorities.	35%
Q179. I am committed to ensuring that children and families access the support they need to prevent harm and promote safety.	96%
Q180. It’s impossible to satisfy child protection authorities completely.	45%
Q181. It’s important not to let child protection authorities push you around.	59%
Q182. If you don’t cooperate with child protection authorities, they will get tough with you.	38%
Q183. Ensuring that children are not left in situations of abuse and neglect is a responsibility that should be willingly accepted by everyone.	97%
Q184. No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to always be cooperative with them.	49%

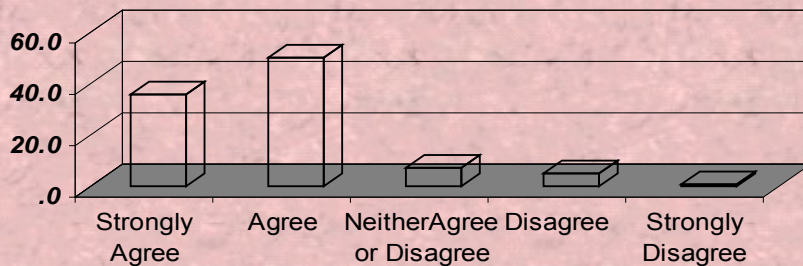
Q185. Once child protection authorities have you branded as someone who won't comply, they will never change their mind.	39%
Q186. I am committed to ensuring that the children I come in contact with in my work are safe and have every chance of developing into healthy and happy adults.	97%
Q187. As a society, we need more people willing to take a stand against child protection authorities.	29%
Q188. If child protection authorities get tough with me, I will become uncooperative with them.	4%
Q189. I do the minimum when it comes to the legal requirements imposed by child protection authorities.	2%
Q190. Child protection authorities are more concerned about making their own job easier than making things easier for others.	32%
Q191. I personally don't think that there is much child protection authorities can do to me to make me comply with their requirements if I don't want to.	12%
Q192. I do what I am legally required to do to get child protection authorities off my back, but nothing more for them.	5%

5 Graphs for responses to the survey questions

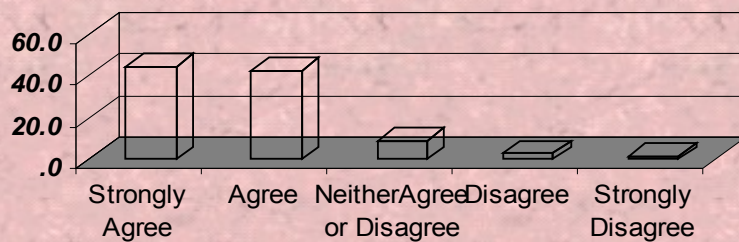
Q1 If a child protection authority shows an interest in helping families solve their problems, families will be more likely to try to do the right thing in the future



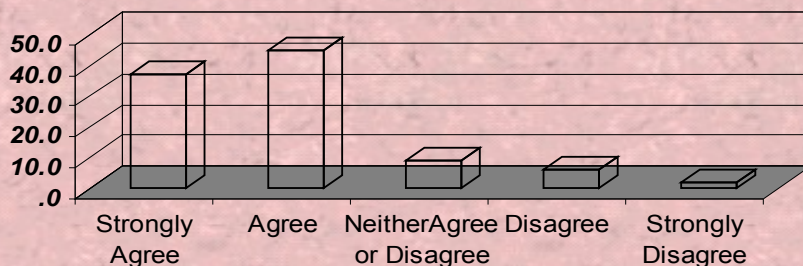
Q2 Child protection authorities need both their legal authority and skills of persuasion and education to be effective



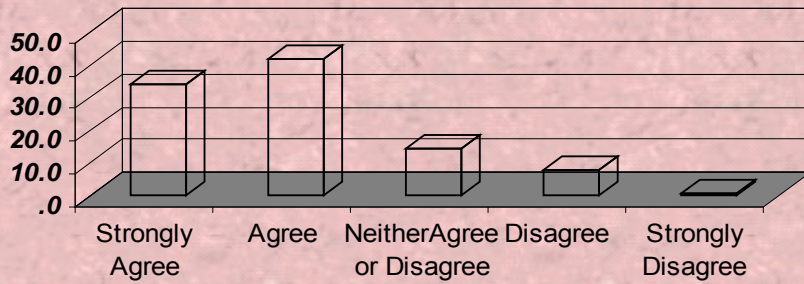
Q3 Child protection authorities should use common sense by applying the legislation in a way that is not dogmatic or legalistic



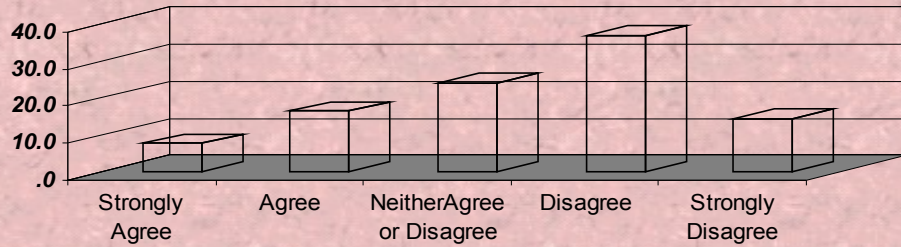
Q4 In statutory child protection work, rules are useful, but the situation not the rule should determine the outcome



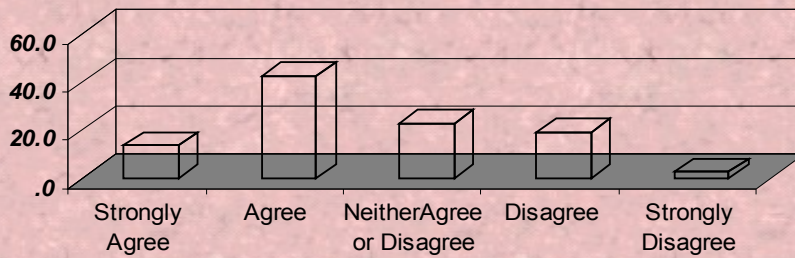
Q5 Negotiation and compromise are effective when working with families in child protection



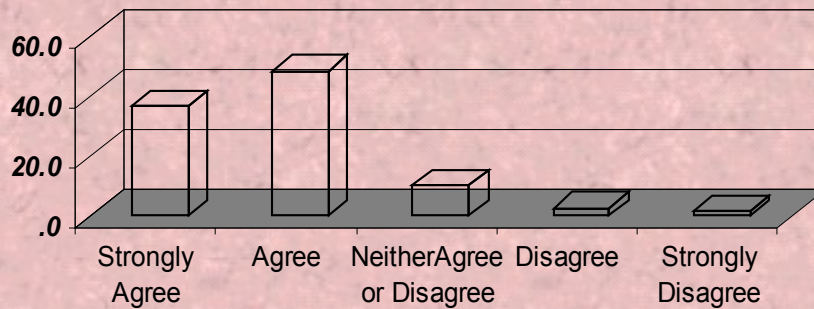
Q6 People who harm their children are not going to cooperate with a child protection authority unless they are forced to



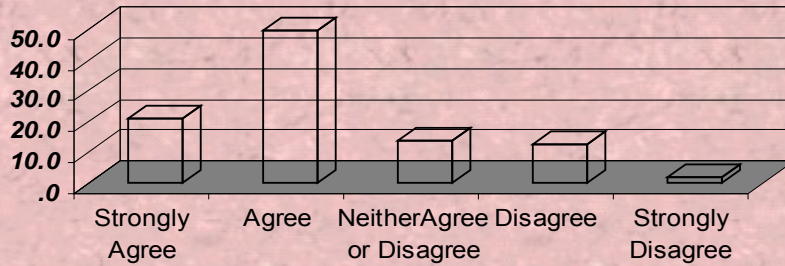
Q7 Parents should be able to rely on child protection services to help them and take action with an 'uncontrollable' child/young person



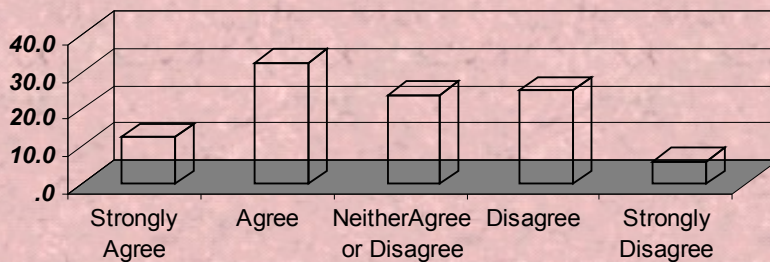
Q8 Parents should be involved in making decisions about their children in the child protection context



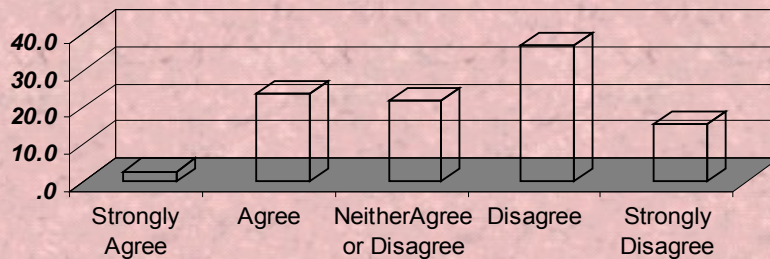
Q9 It is better to try to persuade families to do the right thing voluntarily even at the risk of being considered 'soft'



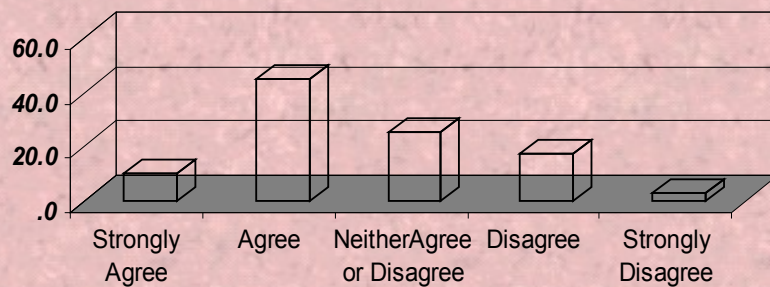
Q10 In order to change the behaviour of people who break the law, a child protection authority has to legally intervene



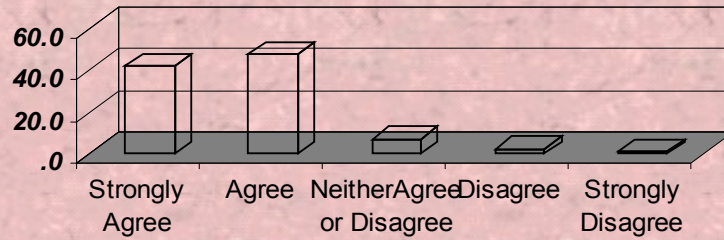
Q11 It is better for a child protection authority to be a tough enforcer of the legislation, even at the risk of being considered punitive



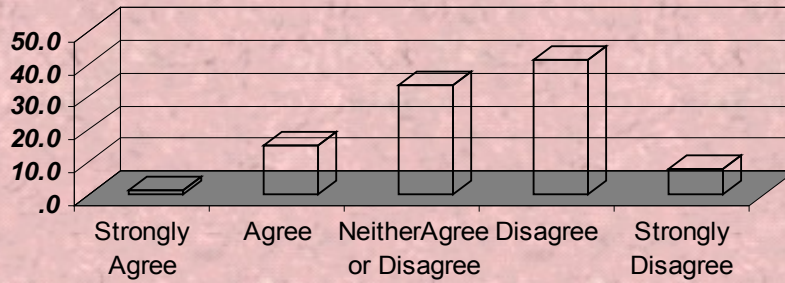
Q12 Most of the time child protection authorities are dealing with families who want to do the right thing



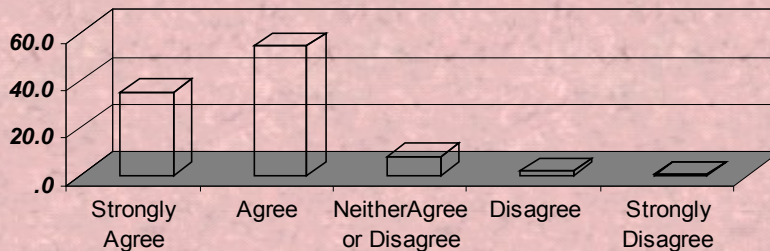
Q13 Relationships between child protection authorities and clients can produce effective outcomes when there is negotiation, accommodation and communication



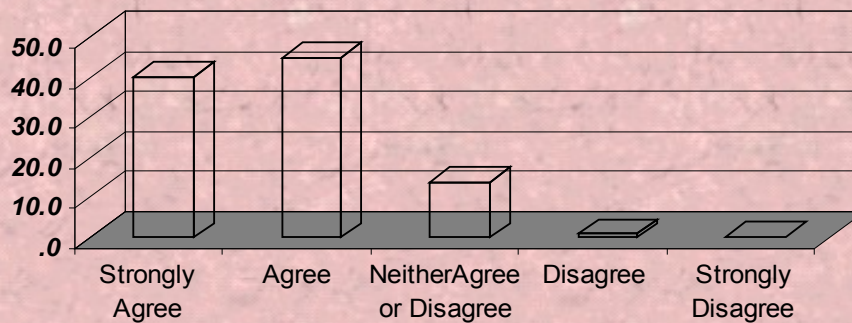
Q14 To avoid errors in judgement, child protection workers should stick strictly to the rules



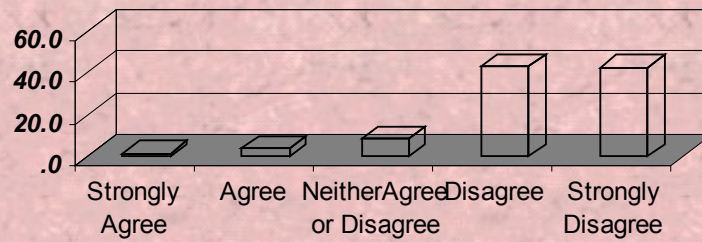
Q15 Parents should be given a chance to make changes that show they are good parents



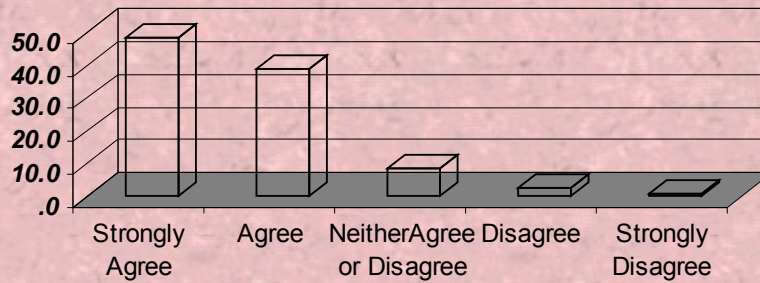
Q16 Children should have a say in decisions that affect them



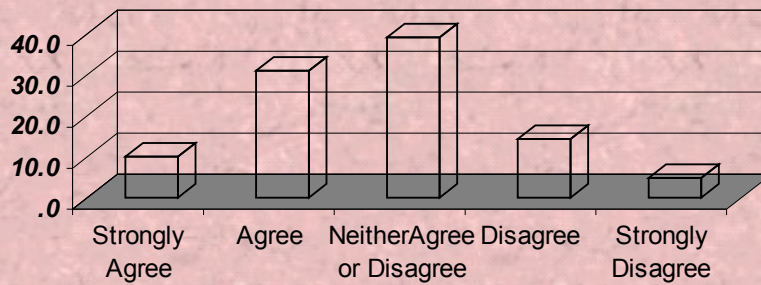
Q17 It is not a good idea for a child protection authority to offer assistance to people who have done the wrong thing and harmed their children



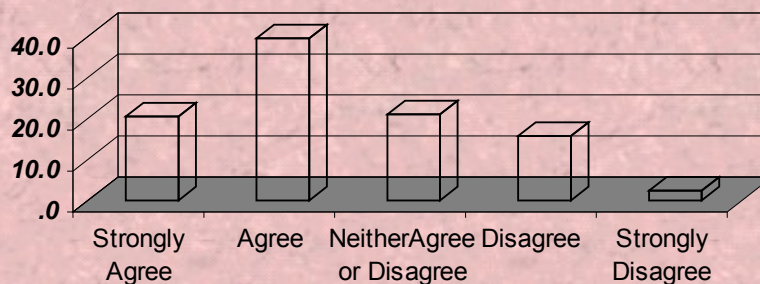
Q18 The support of the family is critically important in child protection



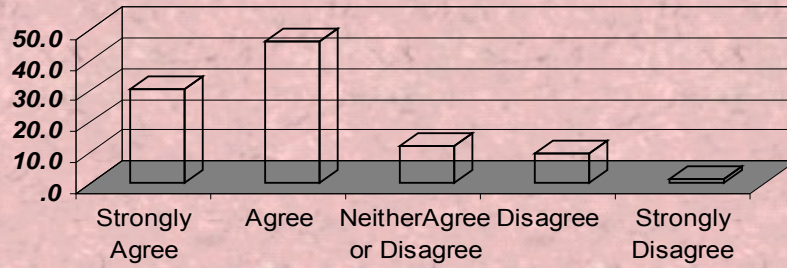
Q19 Child protection authorities who rely on their legal authority are less effective than those who rely on persuasion



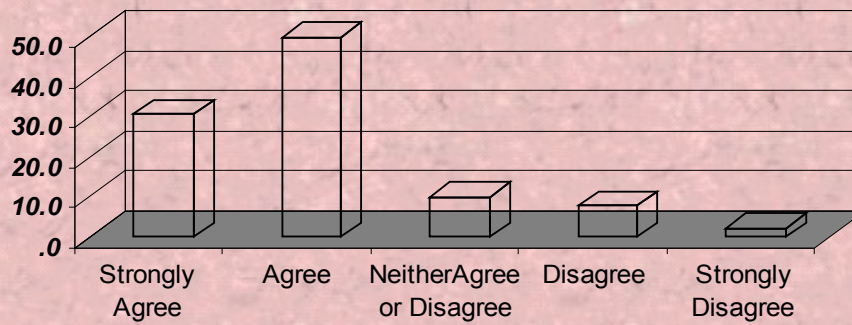
Q20 Only by understanding a parent's perspective can workers be effective



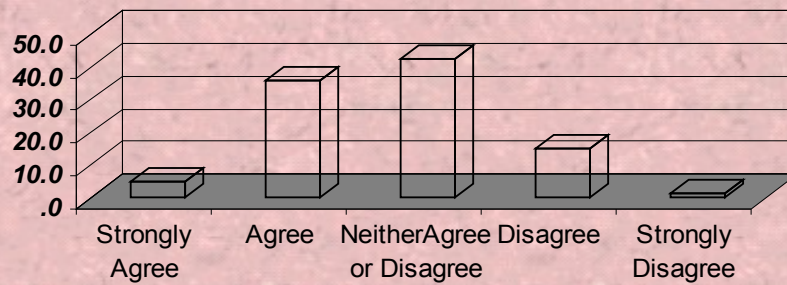
Q21 Rules are there only as a guide; each child protection case should be considered on its merits



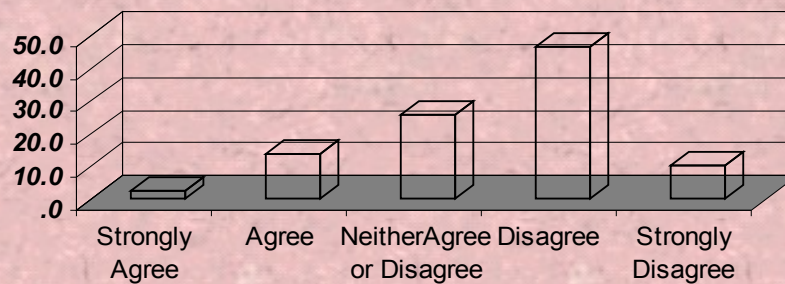
Q22 Parents should always be listened to



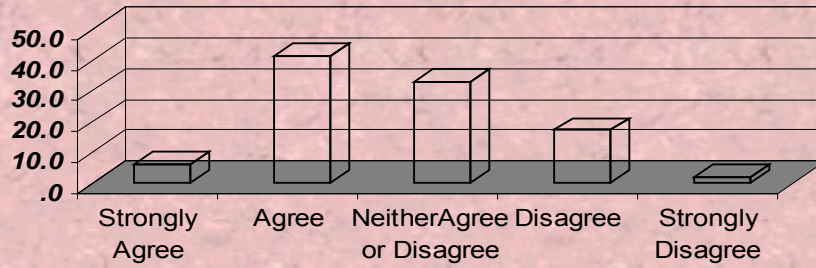
Q23 Families usually try to do what child protection authorities ask of them



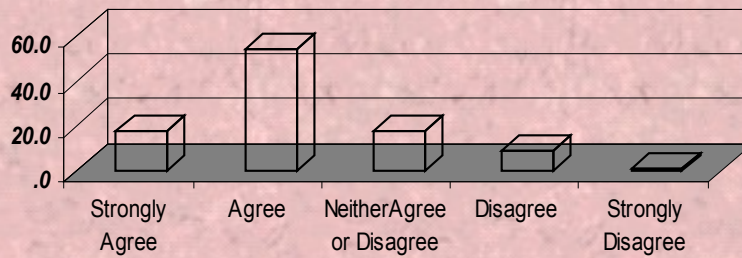
Q24 Parents who are unable to control their children should not be a priority for child protection services



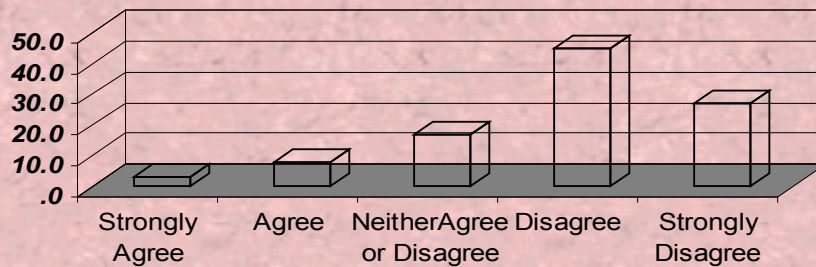
Q25 Sometimes child protection authorities should bend the rules to suit special situations



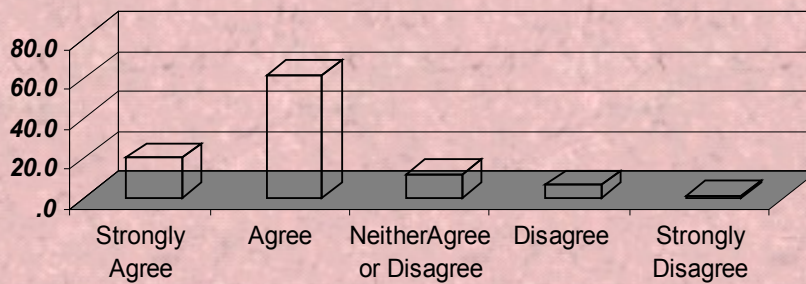
Q26 It is best for child protection authorities to obtain compliance through advice and encouragement rather than taking legal action



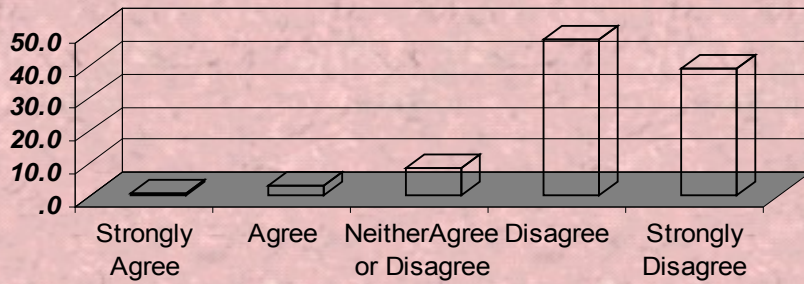
Q27 People who harm their children don't deserve 'kindness' from a regulatory agency



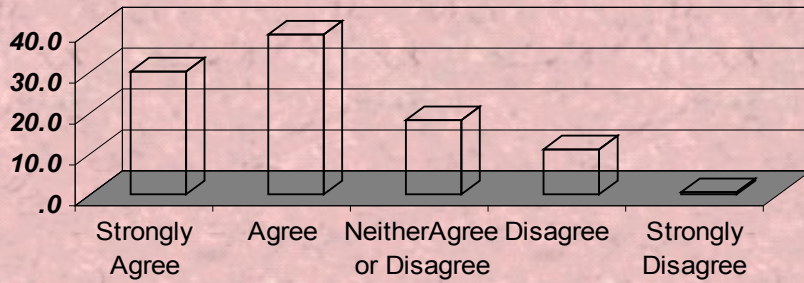
Q28 It is desirable for child protection authorities to use discretion in their administration of the legislation where permitted



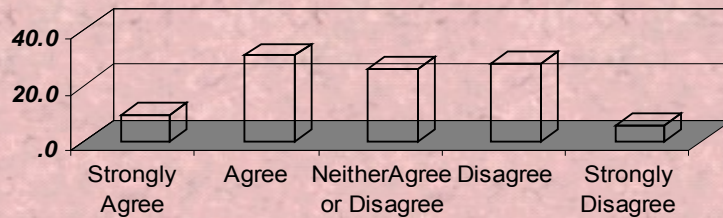
Q29 A child protection authority can't afford to show compassion or sympathy towards those they regulate



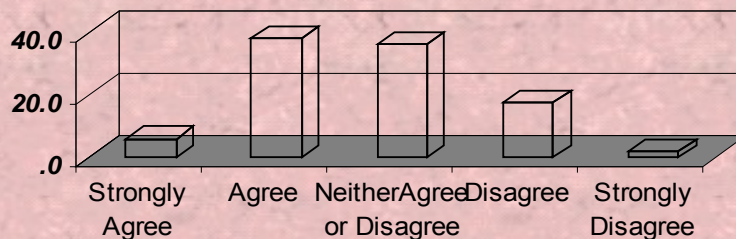
Q30 Parents should always participate in case plans for their children



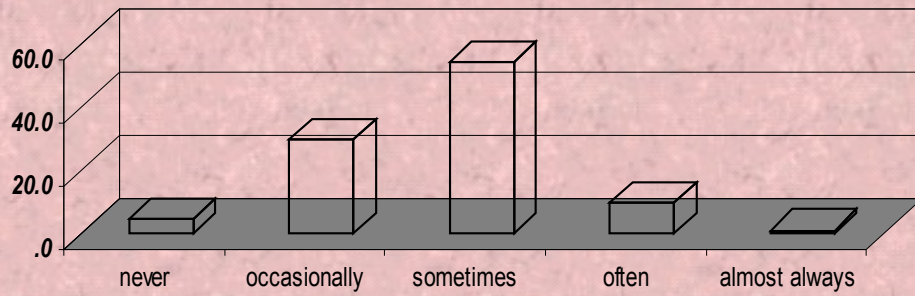
Q31 Without the power to take legal action families would ignore a child protection practitioner's requests for them to meet parenting expectations



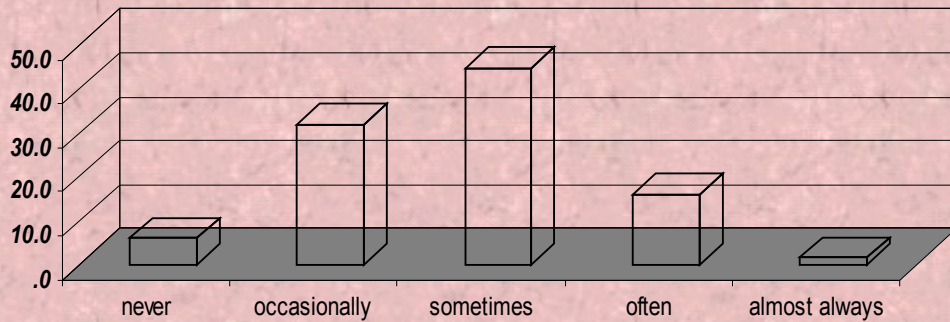
Q32 Child protection authorities should make decisions on what they believe is right at the time, even if it stretches the rules



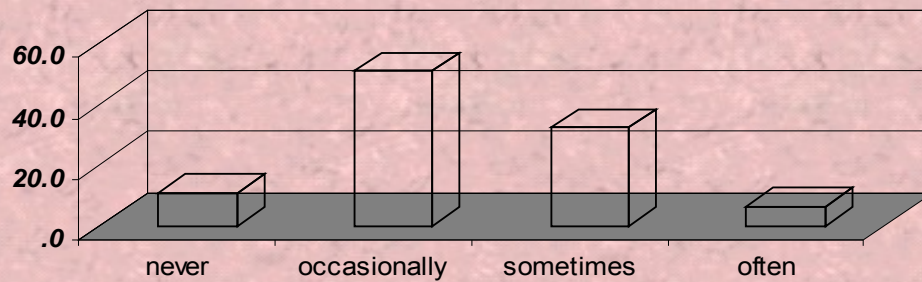
Q33 Child protection authorities help families improve their capacity to care for their children



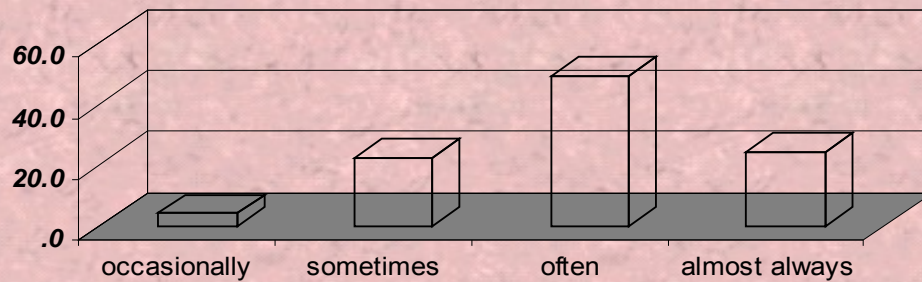
Q34 Child protection authorities tailor their responses to different client needs



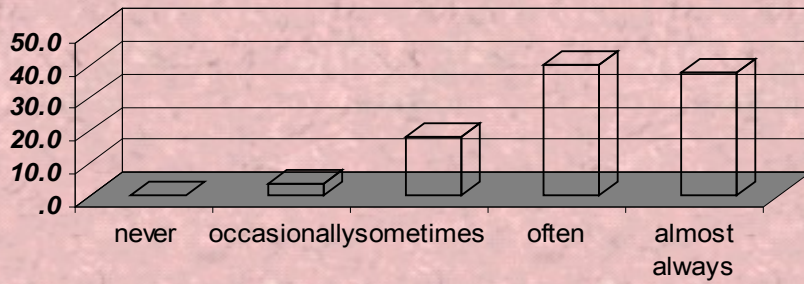
Q35 Child protection authorities are good at sharing information with parents and families



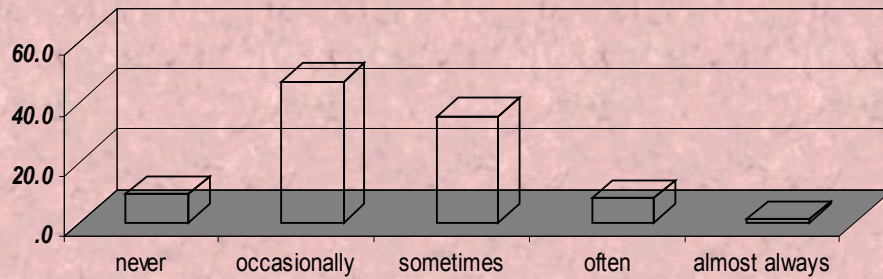
Q36 Child protection workers need clear rules to cover the situations they find themselves in



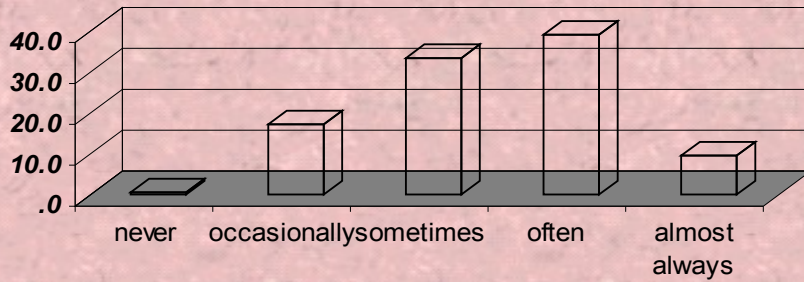
Q37 Child protection workers get bogged down in paper work and paper trails



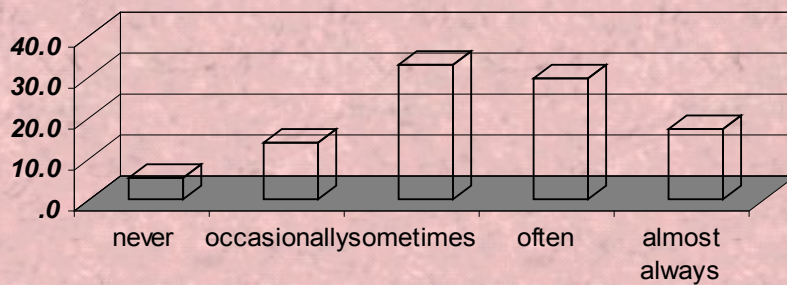
Q38 Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring safety of children once they have been placed into care



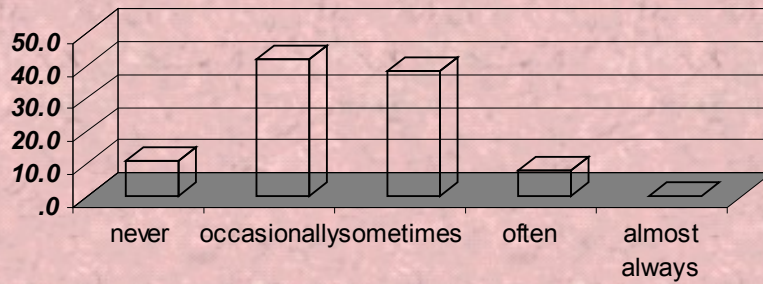
Q39 Child protection workers easily lose touch with what they are trying to achieve for children and families



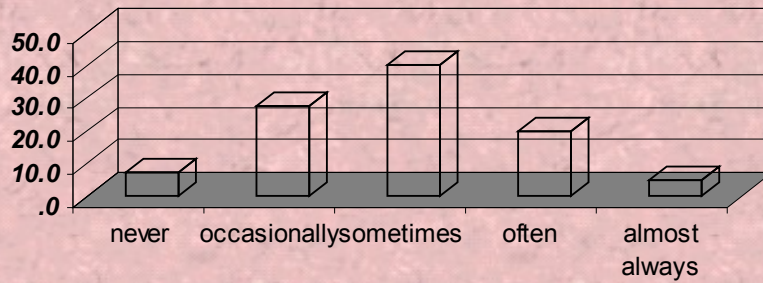
Q40 Confidentiality makes it difficult for child protection authorities to share information



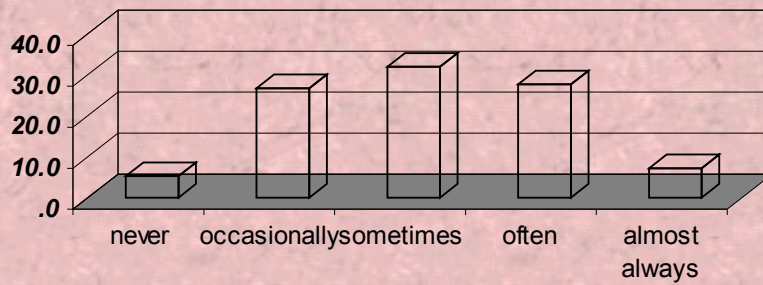
Q41 Child protection authorities are good at making sure parents and families understand what is going on



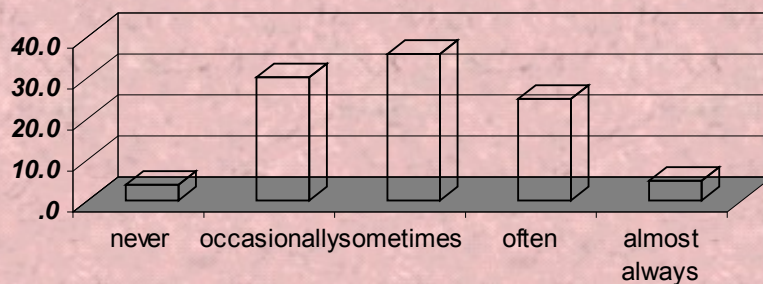
Q42 Legislation is so complex that child protection workers do not know what they can and cannot do



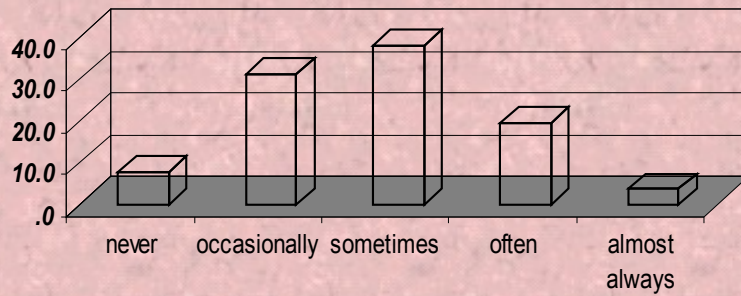
Q43 Child protection authorities use coercive powers to intervene without enough thought as to the next steps



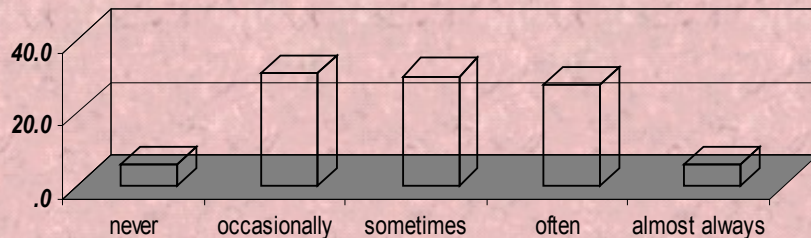
Q44 Child protection workers use only as much intervention as is required to keep children safe



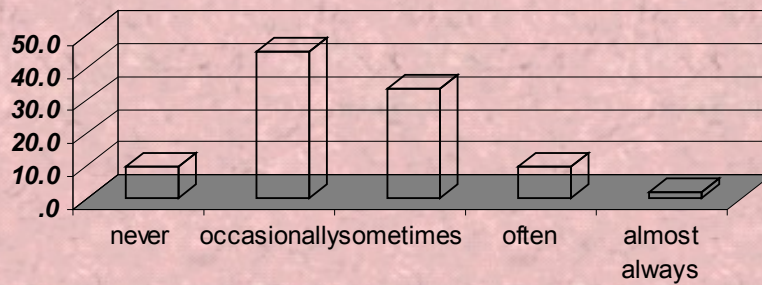
Q45 Child protection workers explain clearly to families the steps involved when they investigate suspected child abuse or neglect



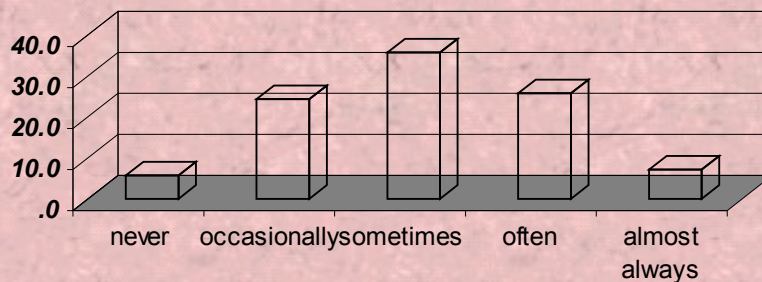
Q46 Child protection authorities work hard to ensure that children who have been removed from their families still are able to have contact and build a relationship with their natural families



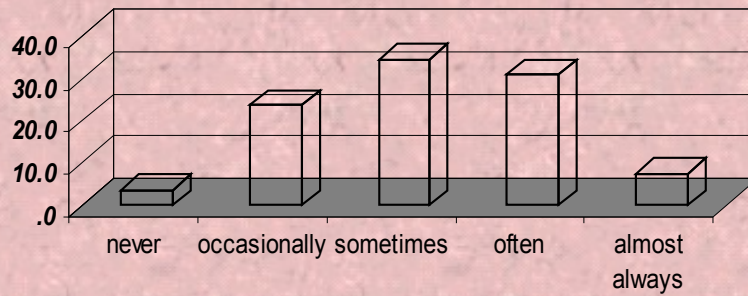
Q47 Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring that children in out-of-home care have stability of care



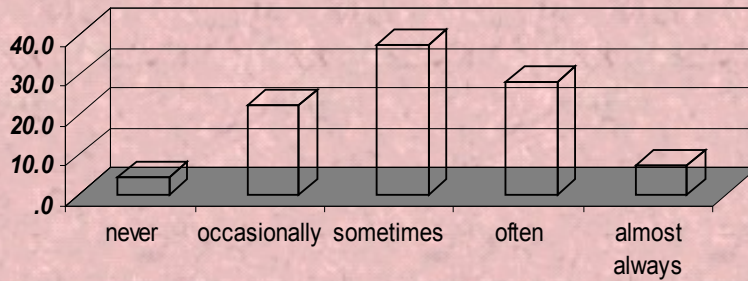
Q48 Child protection workers do their jobs by 'ticking boxes' without thinking beyond that



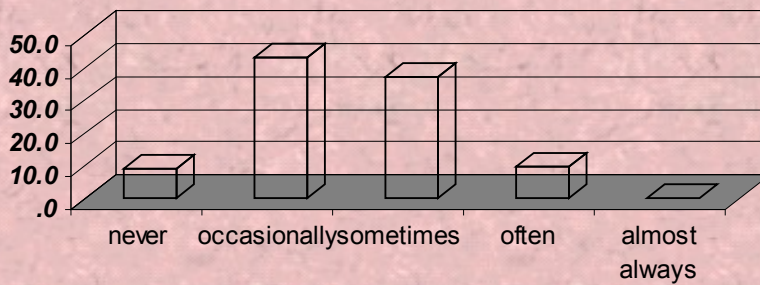
Q49 Child protection authorities understand the importance of a child's bond with his/her parents, siblings and wider family



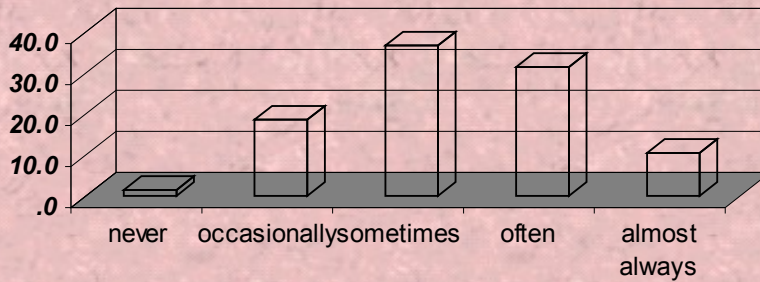
Q50 Child protection workers mechanically follow processes and ignore outcomes



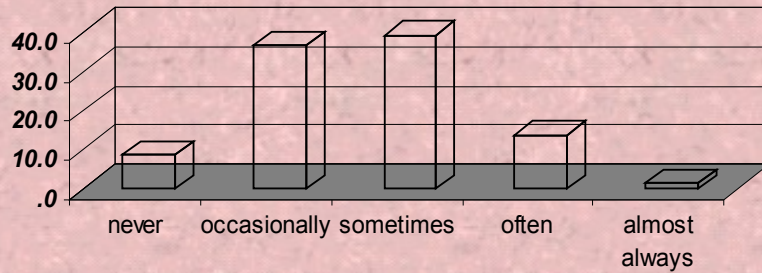
Q51 Child protection authorities are good at following through with parents and families



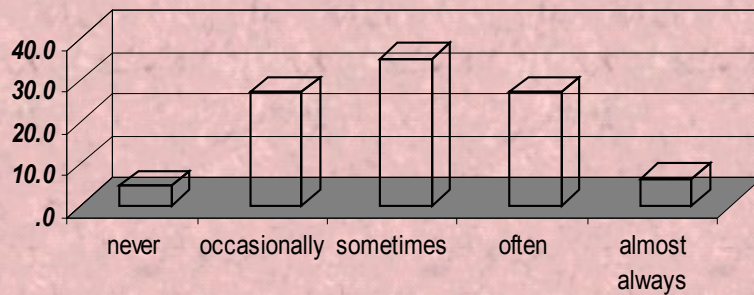
Q52 Child protection authorities rely too much on rules for making decisions



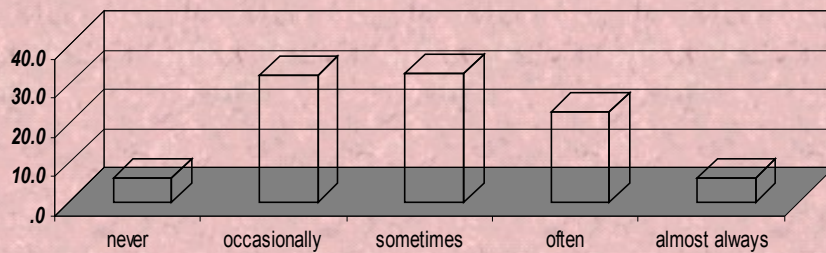
Q53 Child protection authorities are good at implementing care plans for children once they have been placed into care



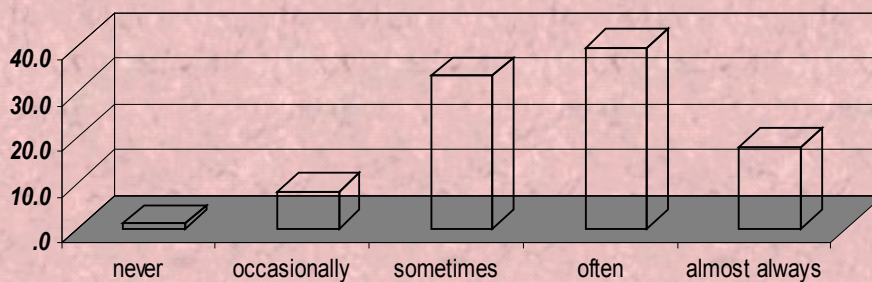
Q54 Child protection authorities lose sight of the goal of keeping children safe as they work through their procedures and rules



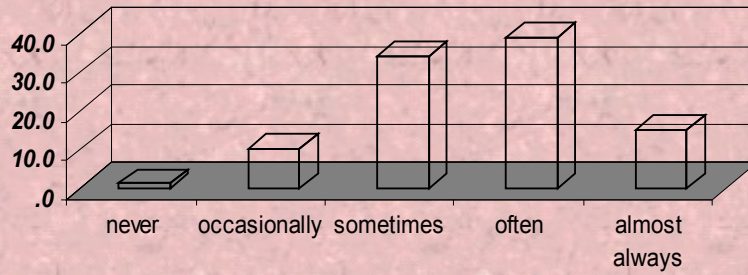
Q55 Child protection authorities recognise the importance of contact between children, their parents, siblings and extended families when children have been removed



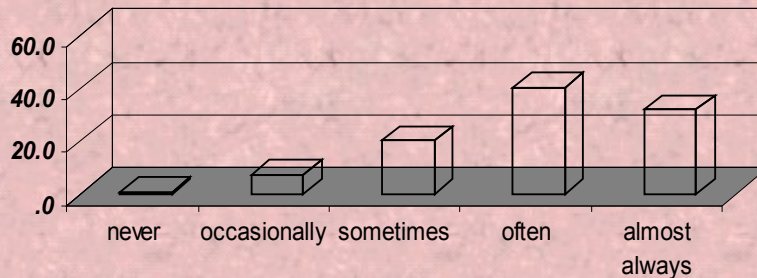
Q56 The involvement of third parties helps families better cope with the process when child protection matters are being negotiated



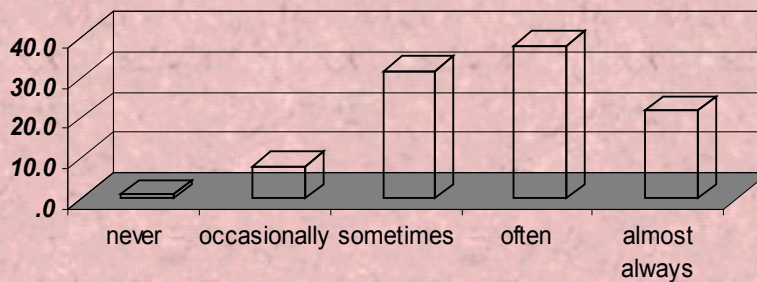
Q57 Third party advocacy for families in child protection matters leads to better outcomes overall



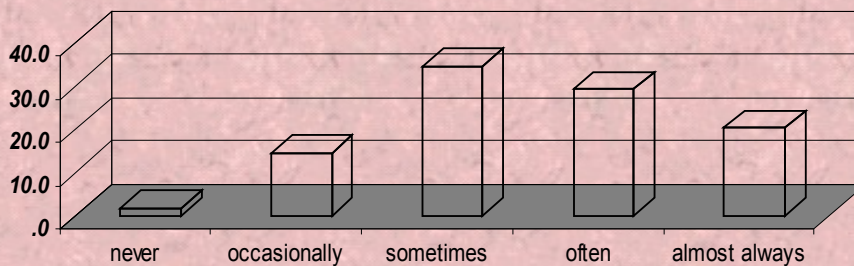
Q58 It is important for families when dealing with child protection authorities to have the support of a third party



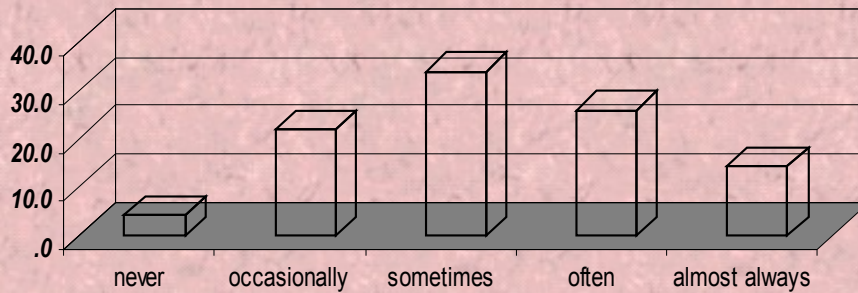
Q59 Third parties can help both child protection workers and families bridge their differences



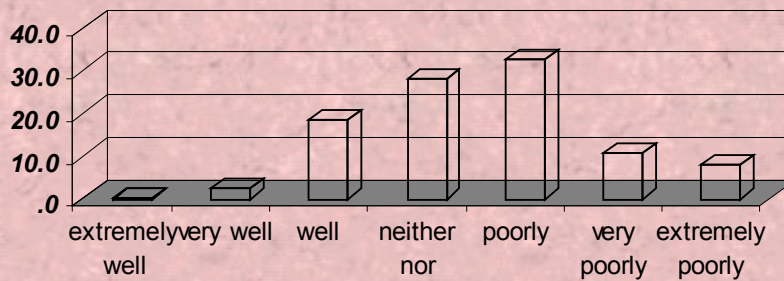
Q60 Third parties have a better understanding of a family's situation than child protection workers



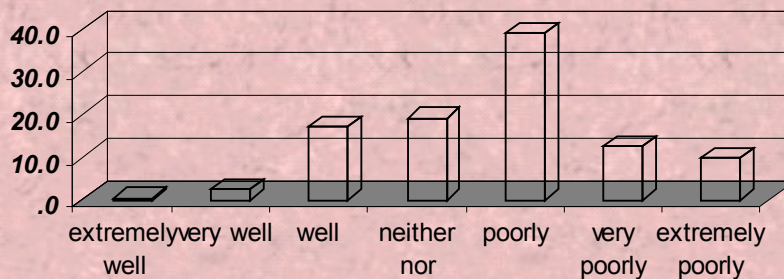
Q61 Third parties have a greater capacity to effectively intervene than child protection workers



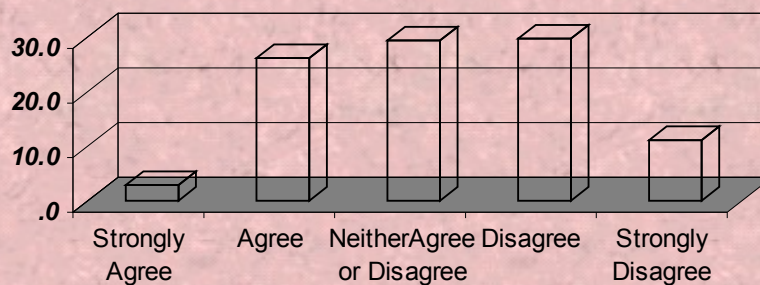
Q64 How well do child protection authorities engage with families?



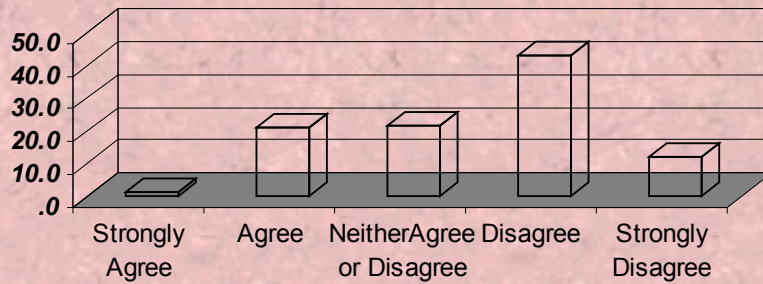
Q65 How well do child protection authorities engage with non government organisations and other services they deal with?



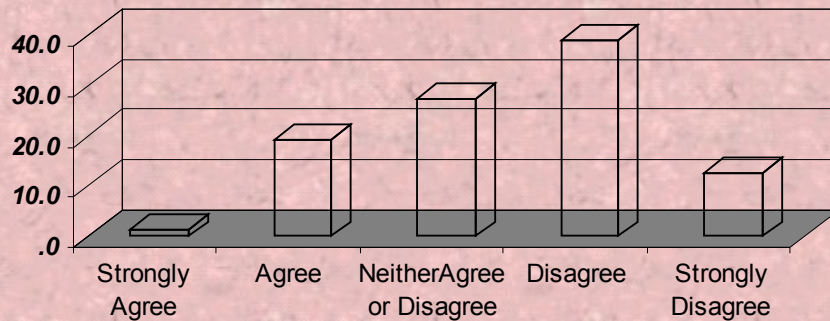
Q66 Child protection authorities can be trusted to administer child protection laws and rules fairly



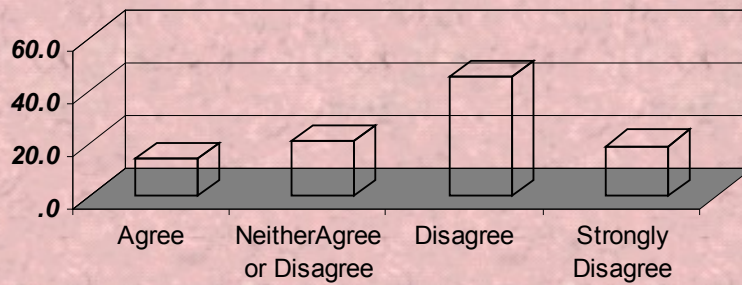
Q67 Child protection authorities are open and honest in their dealings with people



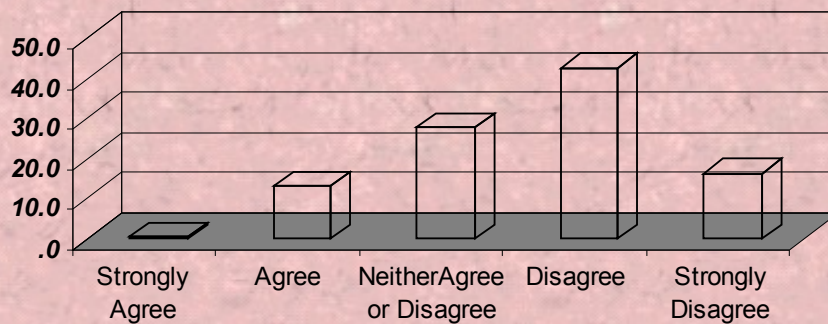
Q68 Child protection authorities do not mislead people



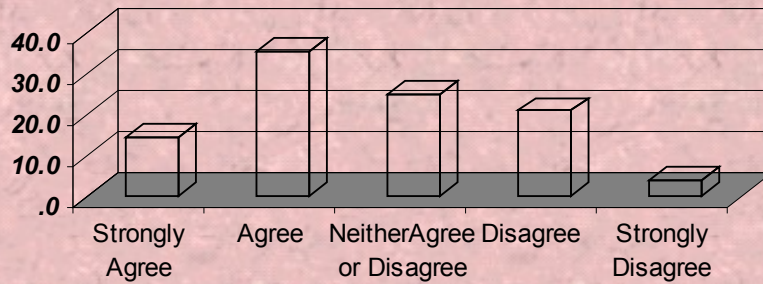
Q69 Child protection authorities can be relied on to do what they say they will do



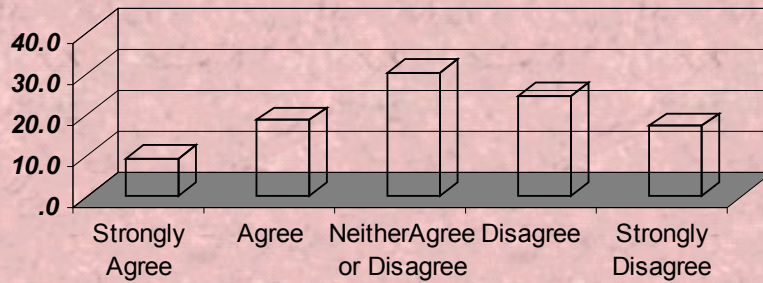
Q70 Child protection authorities will keep their word



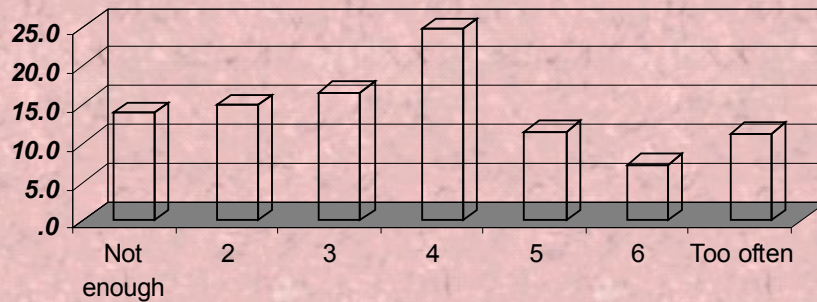
Q71 Child protection authorities fail to deliver on their responsibilities to the community



Q72 Child protection authorities take advantage of people who are vulnerable



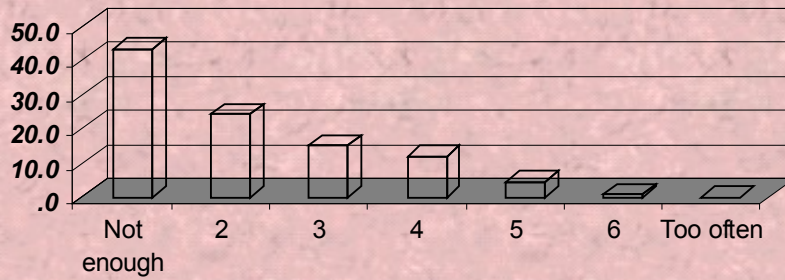
Q73 Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (eg to monitor or remove children)



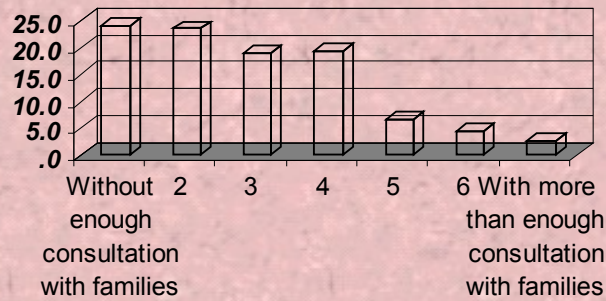
Q74 Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance for families...



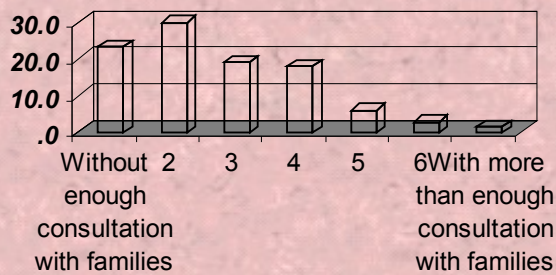
Q75 Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families...



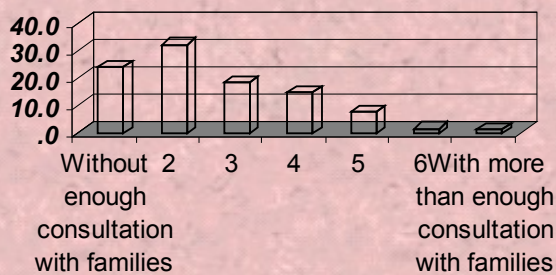
Q76 Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)...



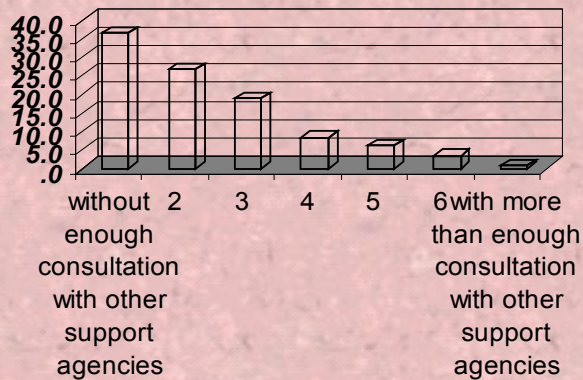
Q77 Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs of assistance for families....



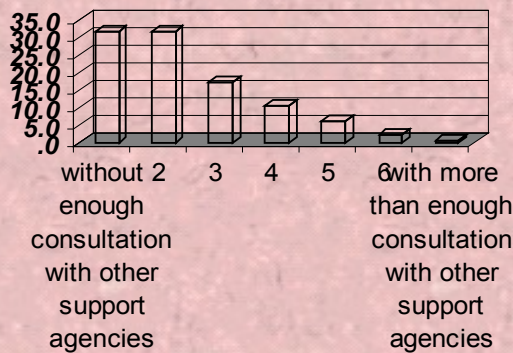
Q78 Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of supports for families



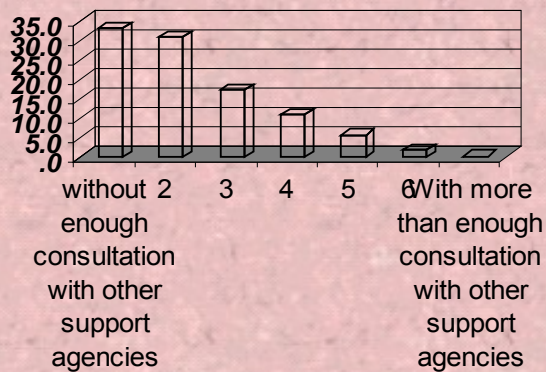
Q79 Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)...



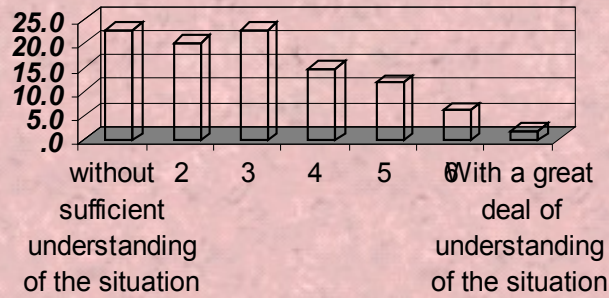
Q80 Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...



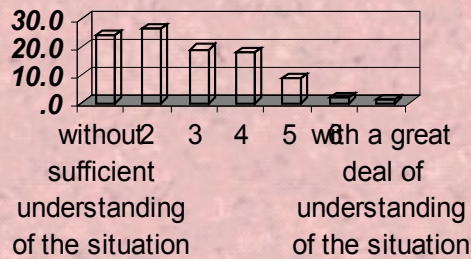
Q81 Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families....



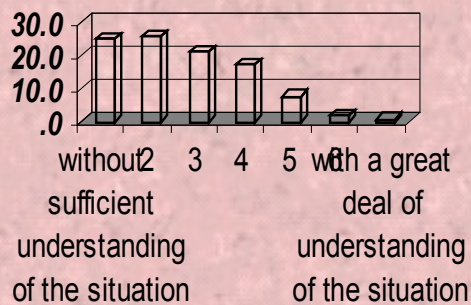
Q82 Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (to monitor or remove children)...



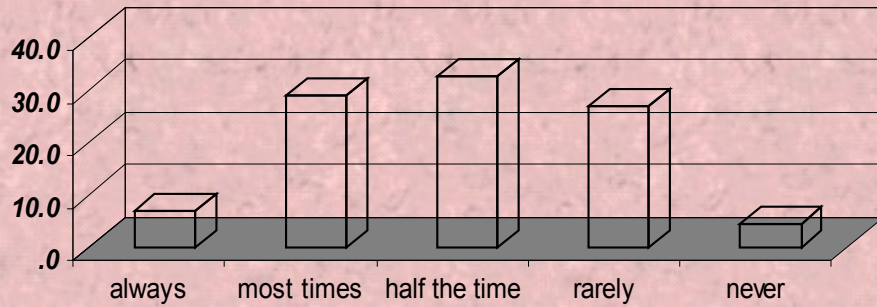
Q83 Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...



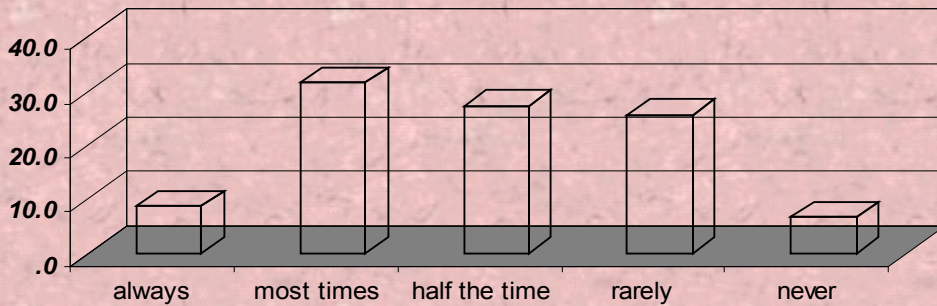
Q84 Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families...



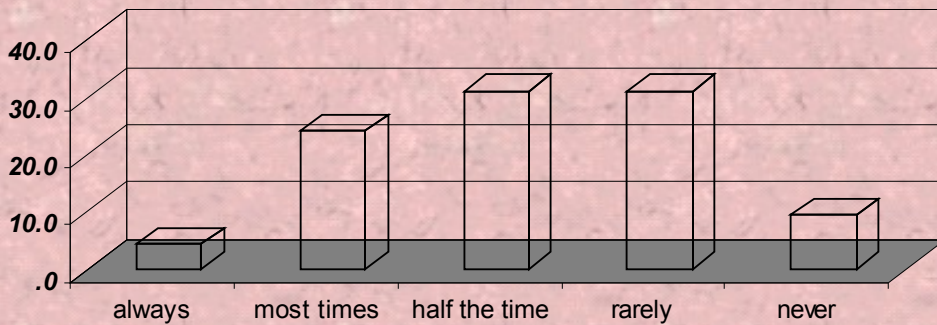
Q85 Value you as someone working with child protection authorities



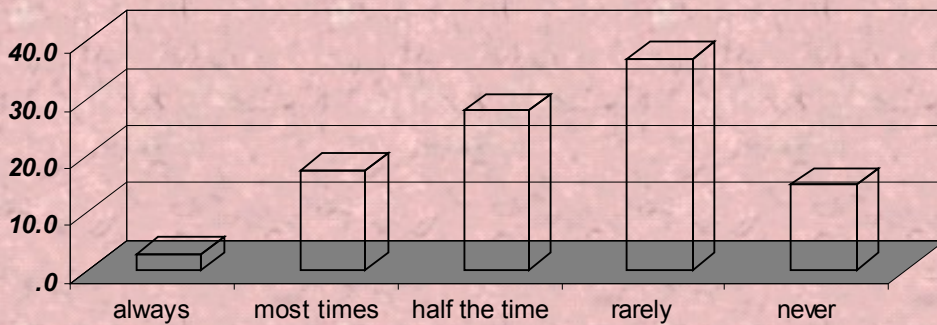
Q86 Trust you to act on your professional judgement



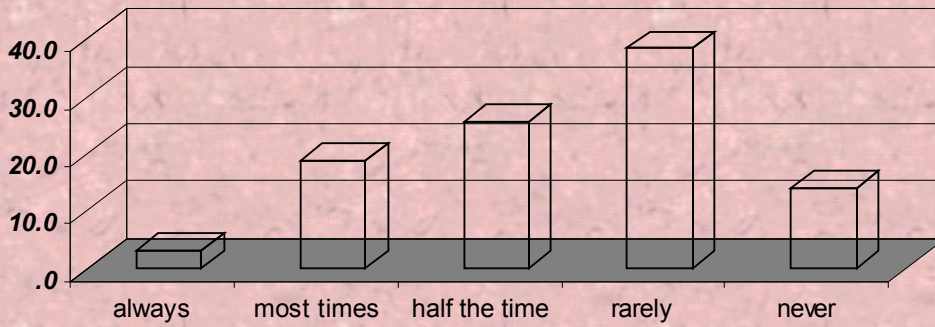
Q87 Back you when you make a difficult decision



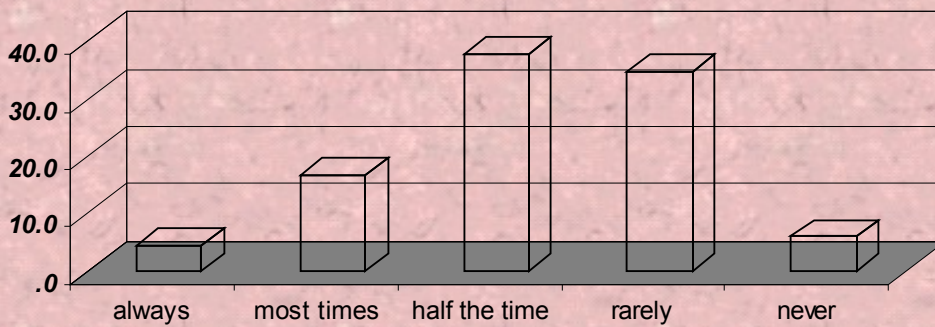
Q88 Support you when things get tough



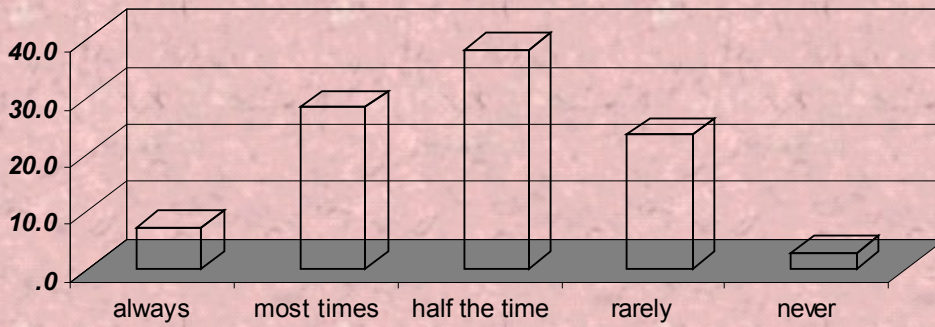
Q89 Provide information that helps you manage cases better



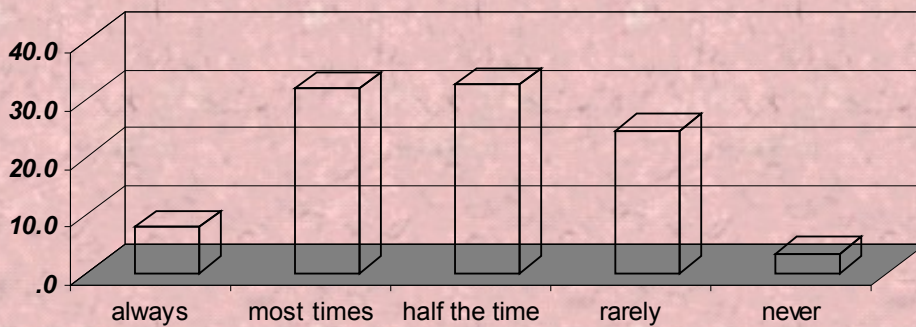
Q90 Tell the truth in their discussions with you



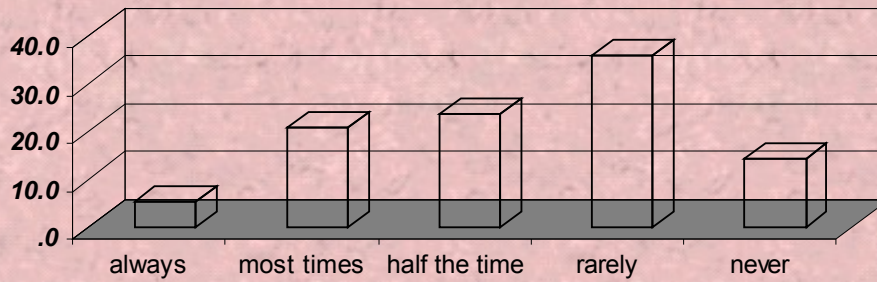
Q91 Meet their negotiated obligations willingly



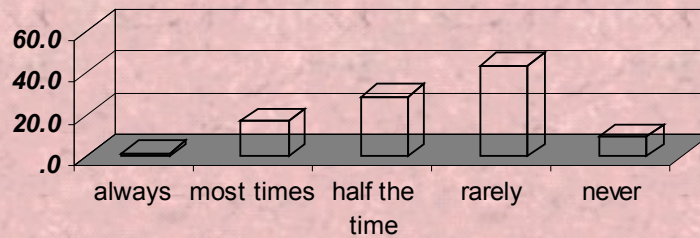
Q92 Negotiate joint expectations fairly



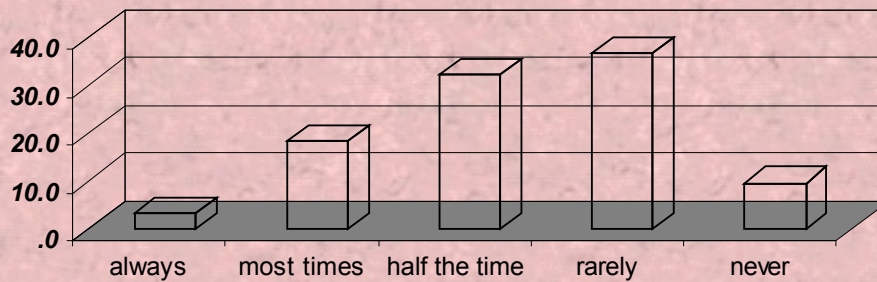
Q93 Try to get the upper hand in negotiations and discussions with you



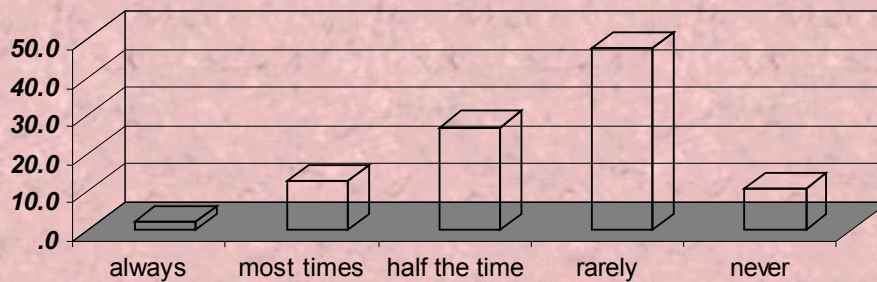
Q94 It is the practice of child protection authorities to discuss issues openly so that staff from my organisation are kept well informed



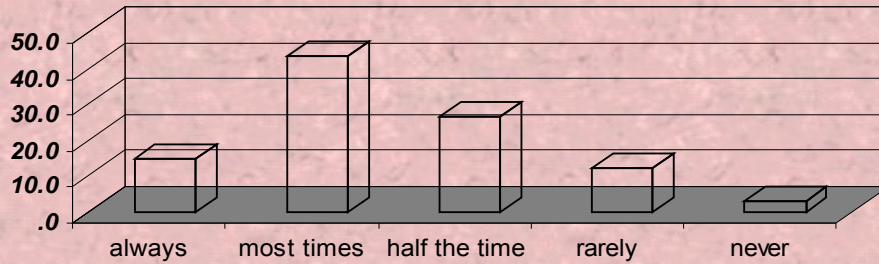
Q95 Child protection authorities are good at listening to the views of workers in my sector



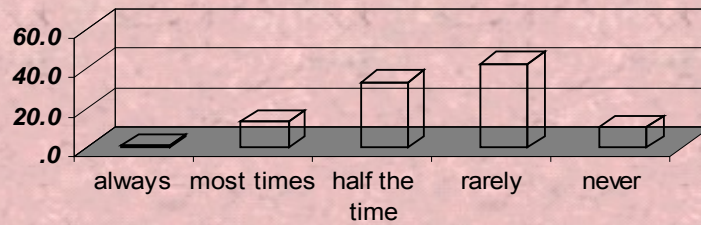
Q96 Child protection authorities are good at learning from the views of workers in my sector



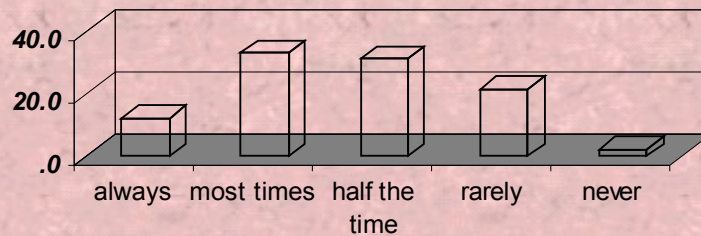
Q97 Statutory child protection authorities have an open door policy for hearing the views of workers like myself



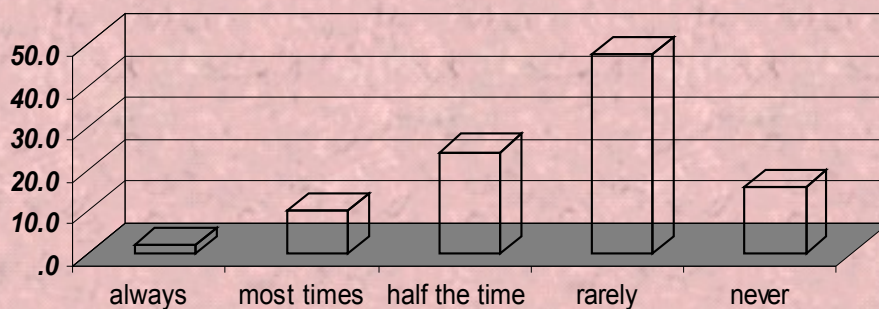
Q98 Child protection authorities work problems through with other organisations to reach a compromise that everyone can work with



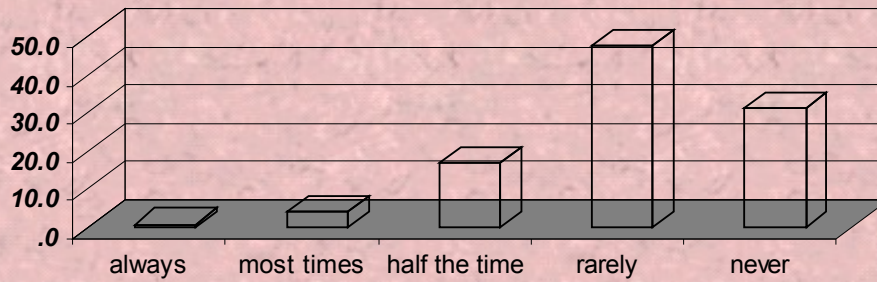
Q99 In my work with child protection authorities, it seems that information is withheld for no apparent reason from those who need to know



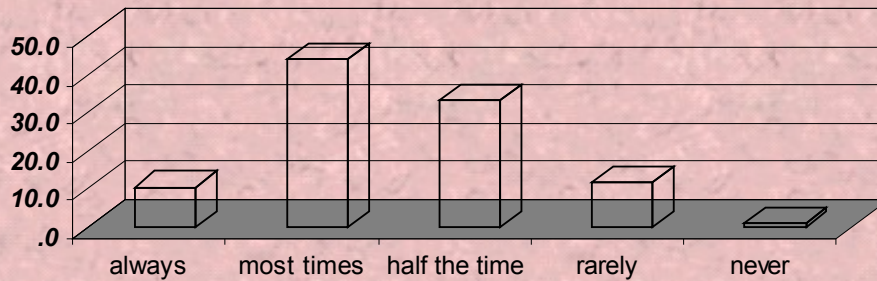
Q100 Statutory child protection agencies encourage other organisations to put forward innovative ideas for practice



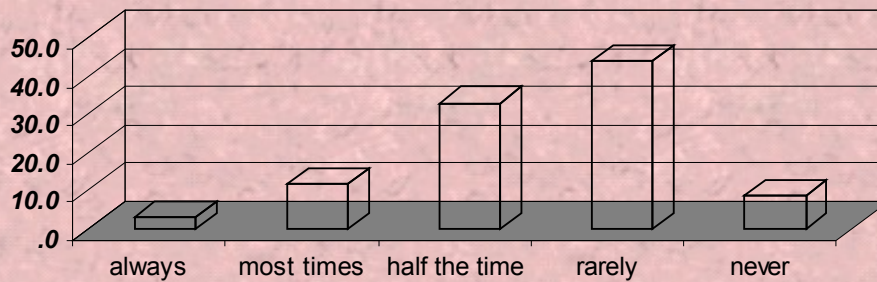
Q101 Child protection authorities provide useful sessions for learning better problem solving skills



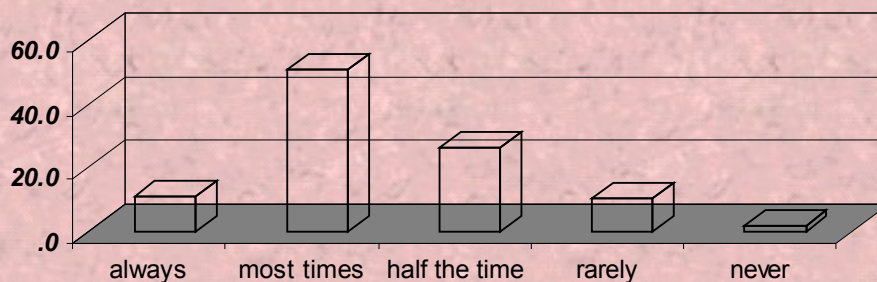
Q102 Child protection authorities consult with their own colleagues when unsure of what to do



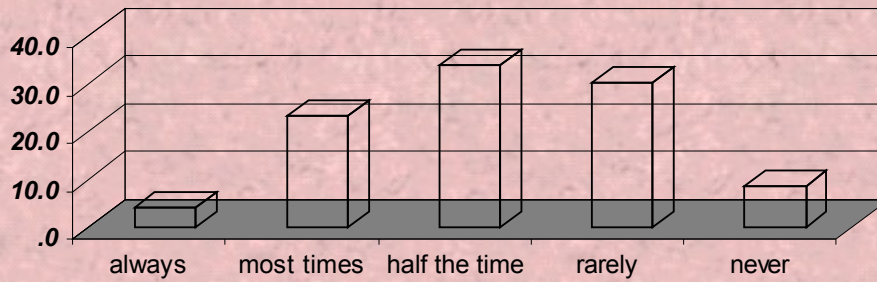
Q103 Child protection authorities consult with other professions to improve practice



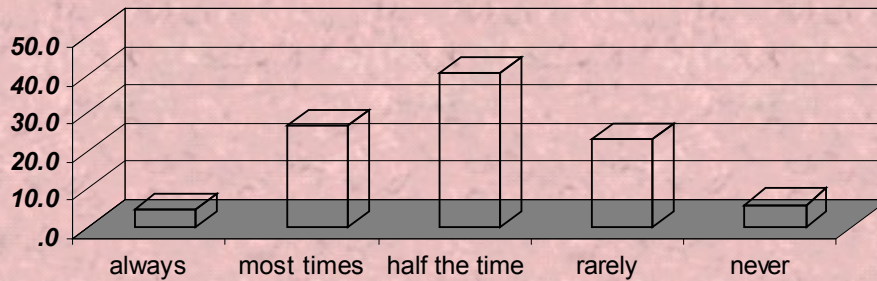
Q104 Child protection authorities consult with others outside the authority with relevant experience to improve practice



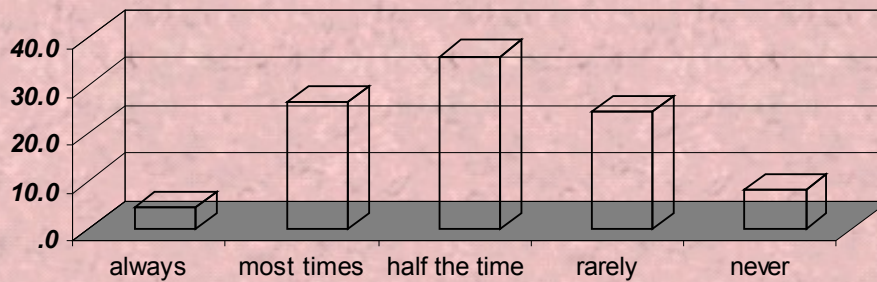
Q105 Child protection authorities accept responsibility for their practice



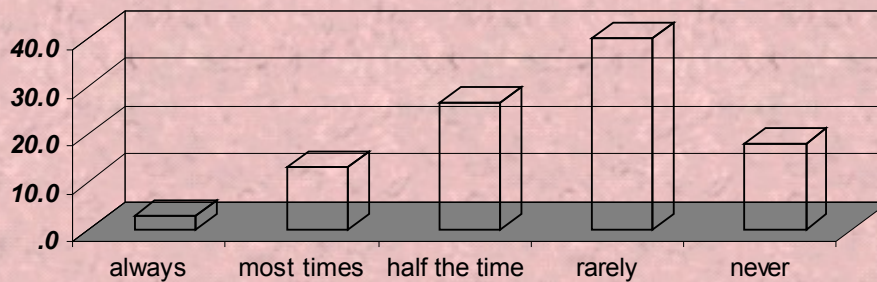
Q106 Child protection authorities engage in practice guided by principles of respect and human dignity



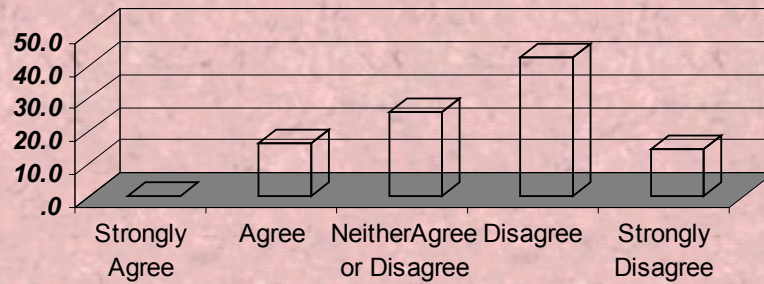
Q107 Child protection authorities accept responsibility for their decisions



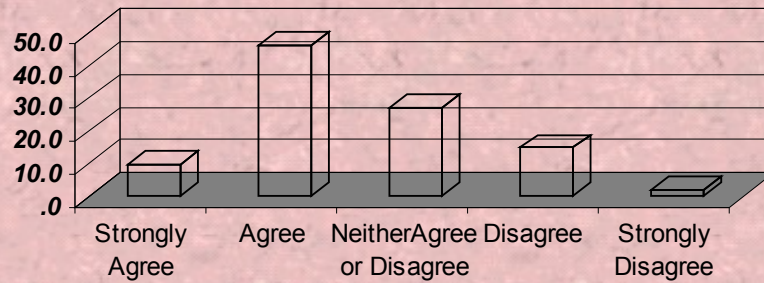
Q108 Child protection authorities make amends when things go wrong



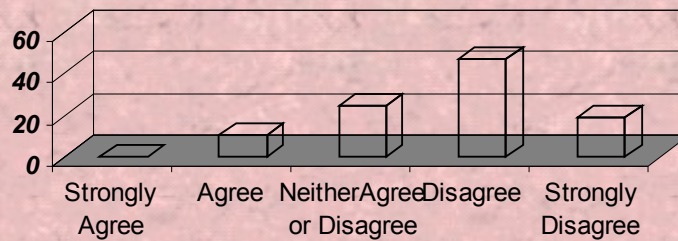
Q109 Child protection authorities treat people as if they can be trusted to do the right thing



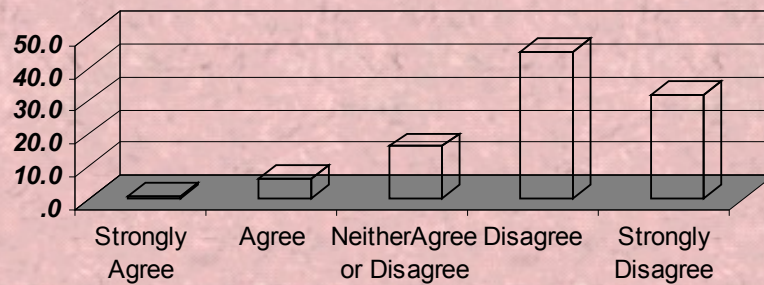
Q110 Child protection authorities treat people as if they will only do the right thing when forced to



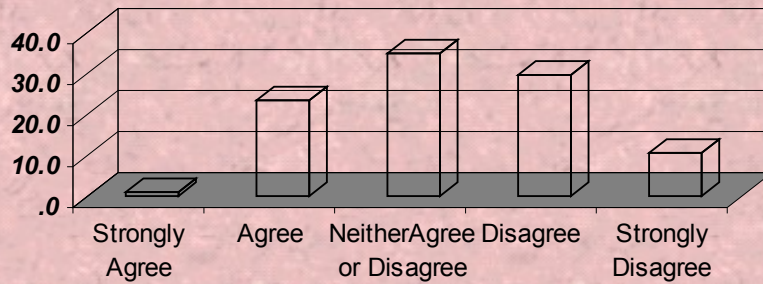
Q111 Child protection authorities consult widely about how they might change things to make it easier for parents to meet their obligations



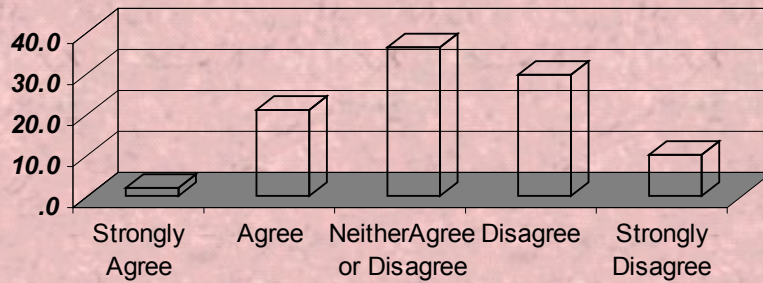
Q112 Child protection authorities go to great lengths to consult with the community over changes to their systems



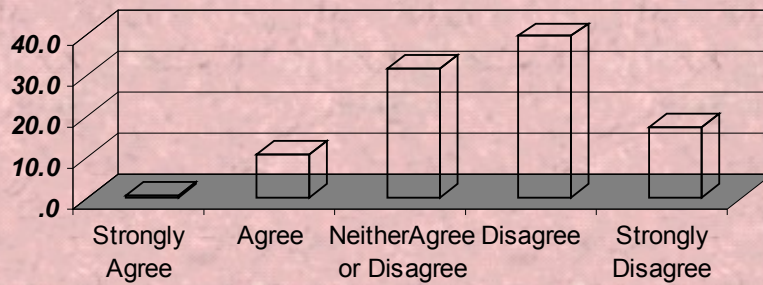
Q113 Child protection authorities respect the individual's rights as a citizen



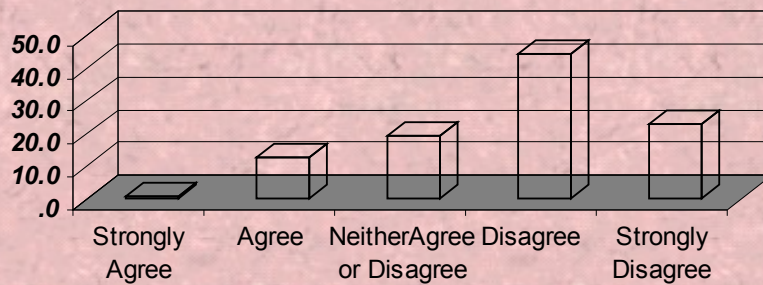
Q114 Child protection authorities are concerned about protecting the average citizen's rights



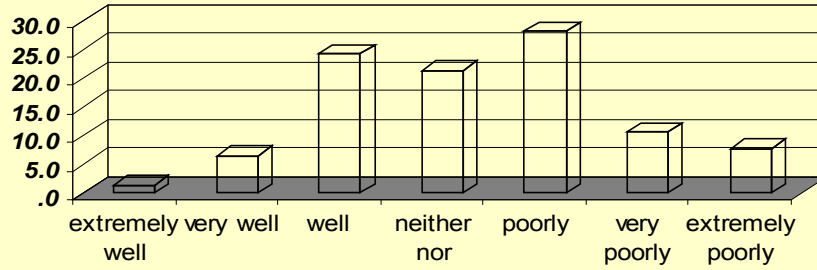
Q115 Child protection authorities accept responsibility when they make a mistake



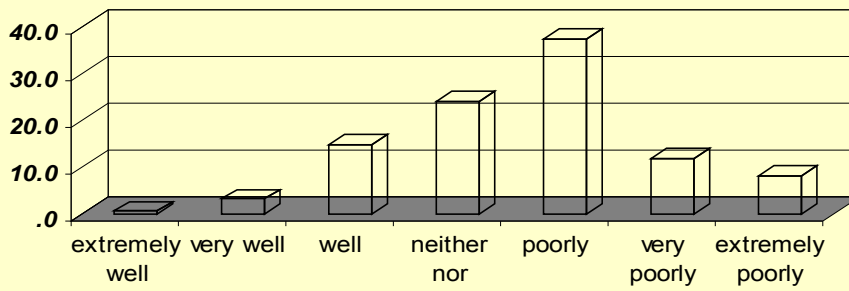
Q116 Child protection authorities are open to reviewing their decisions when challenged



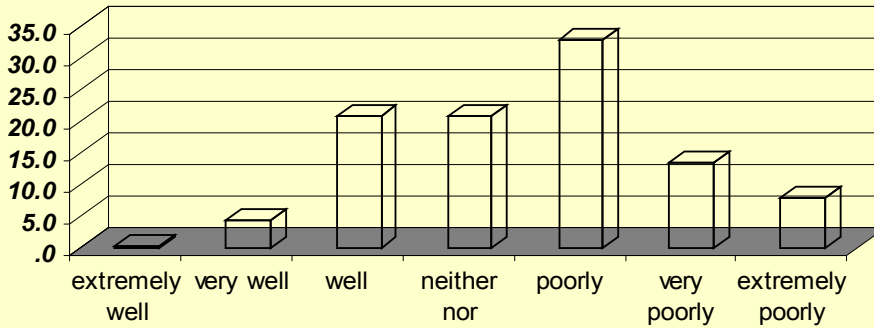
Q117 Children's right to grow up in an environment free of neglect and abuse



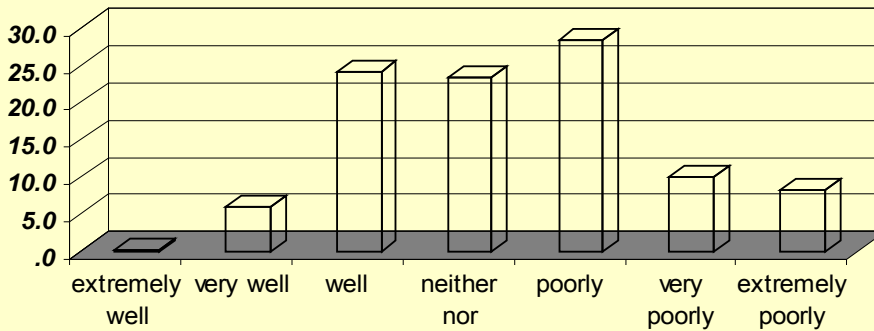
Q118 Children's rights to participate in decisions affecting them



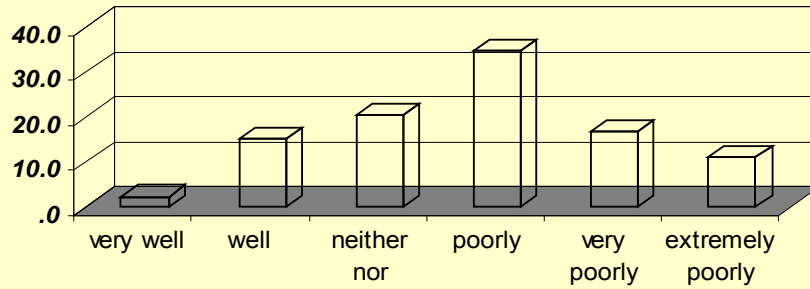
Q119 Family's right to participate in decisions affecting them



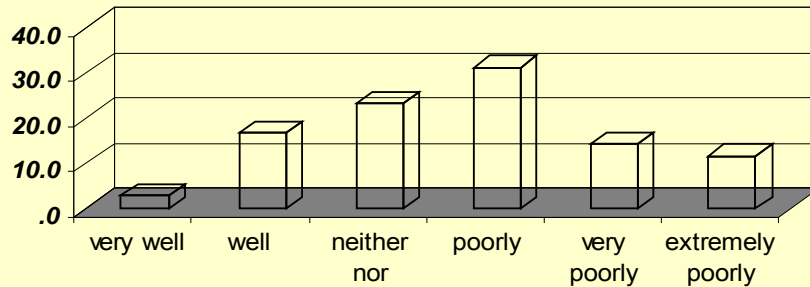
Q120 Improving the safety and well-being of children



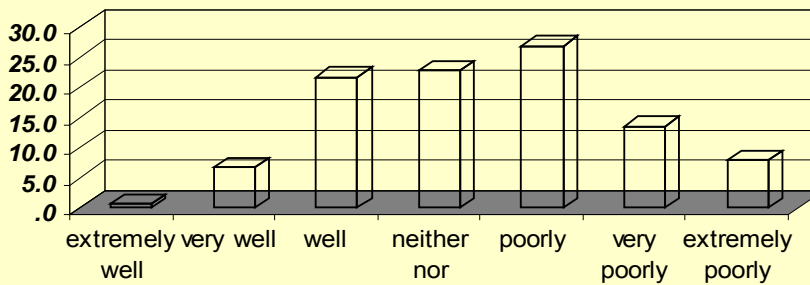
Q121 Communicating to families that they are valued and supported in their caregiving responsibilities



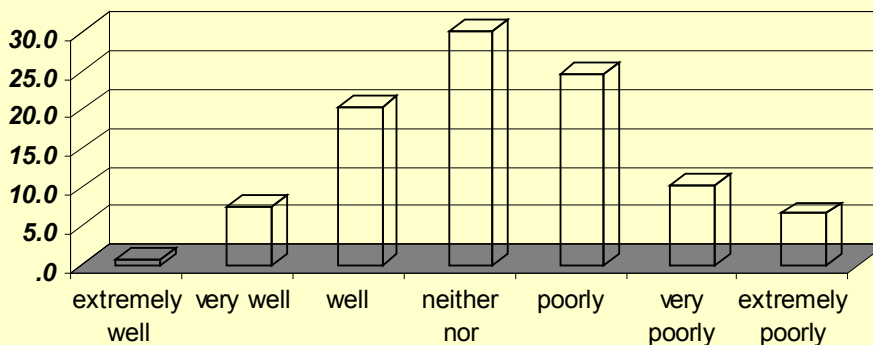
Q122 Working in partnership with families in their caring responsibilities



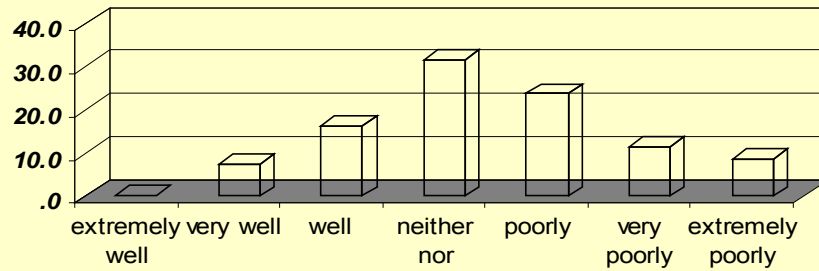
Q123 Upholding children's rights through our systems and institutions



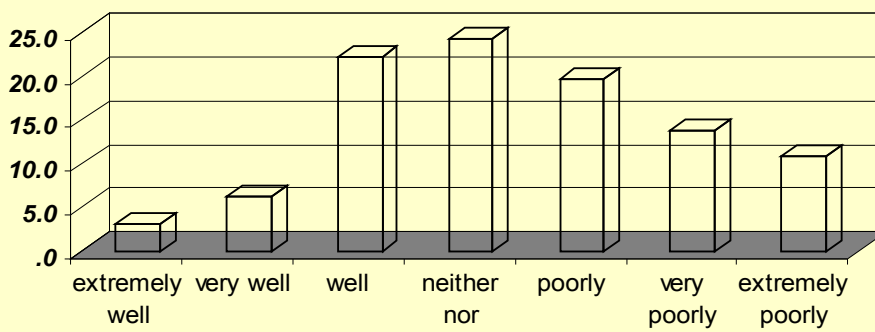
Q124 Basing interventions and policies on evidence



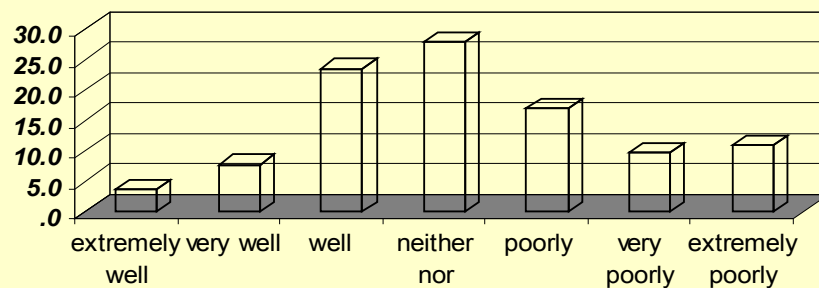
Q125 Basing interventions and policies on experience of best practice



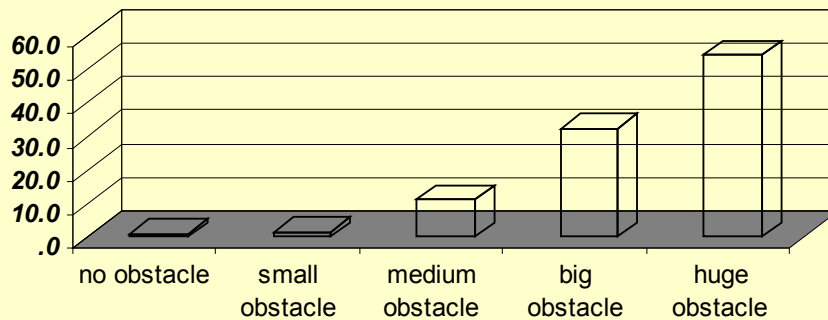
Q126 Using out-of-home care as the last resort



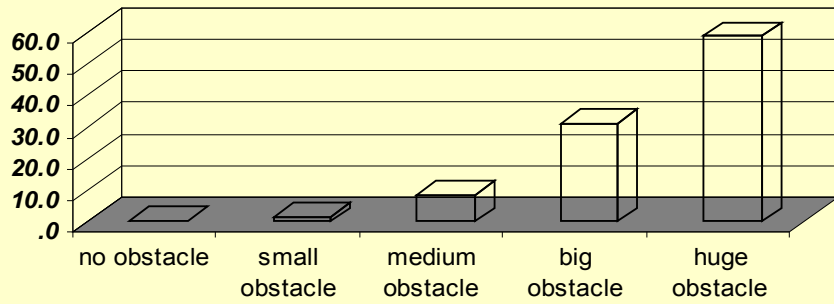
Q127 Preferring for children to be reunited with their natural parents



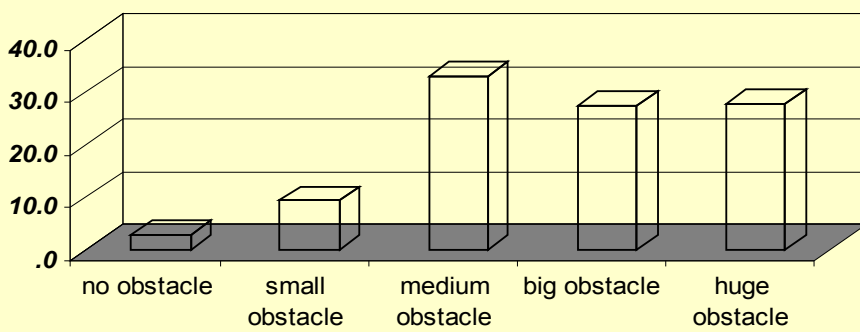
Q128 Case loads too high



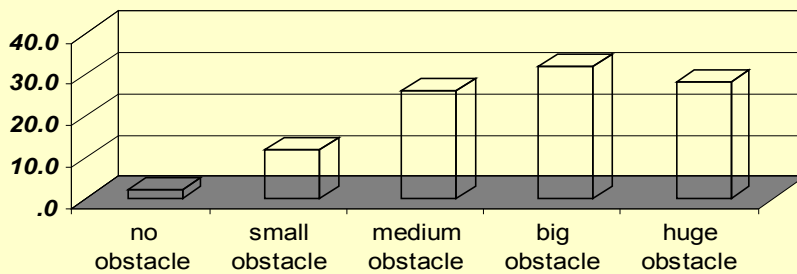
Q129 Too high a turnover of workers



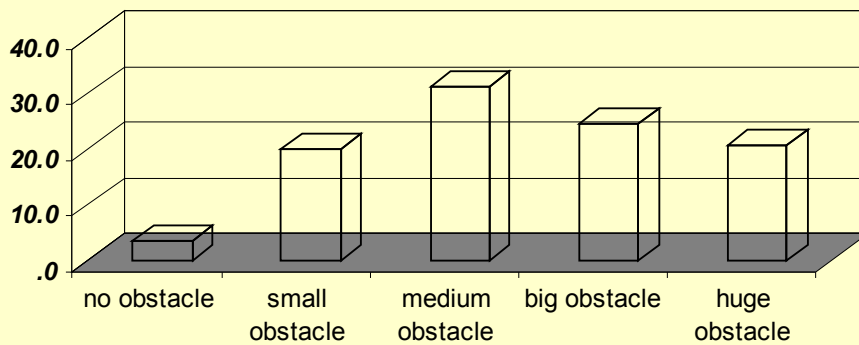
Q130 Too much centralised control



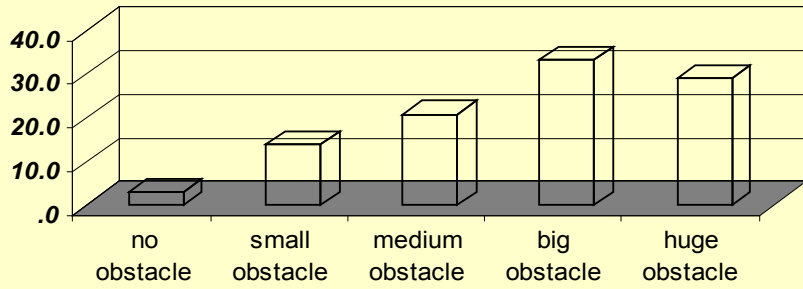
Q131 Too much resistance to working with others who might be able to help



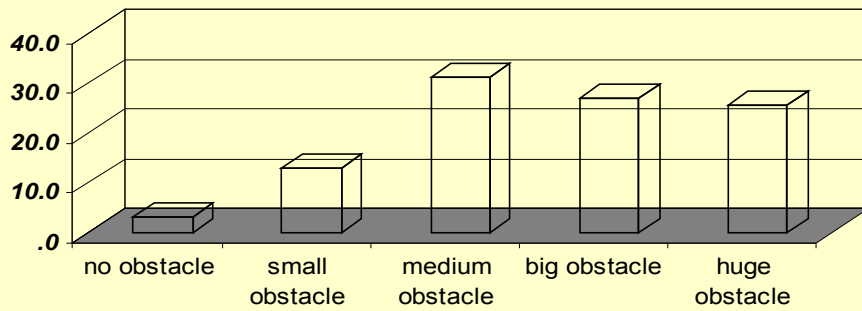
Q132 Too much pushing of work onto others



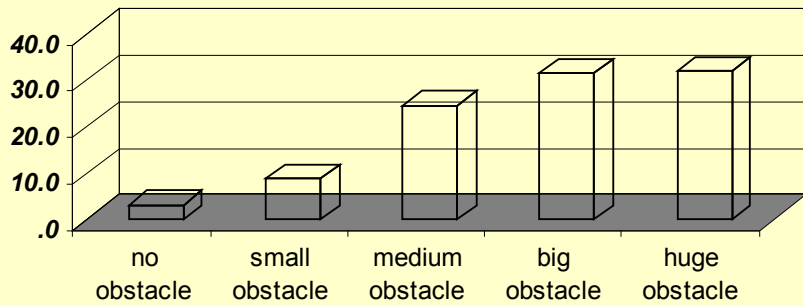
Q133 Too narrow thinking, not making connections between issues



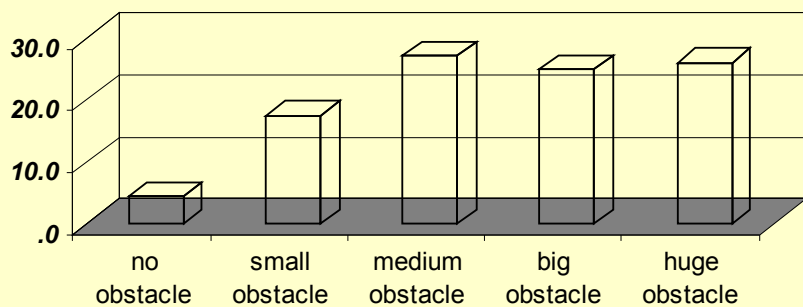
Q134 Too risk averse to trying new things



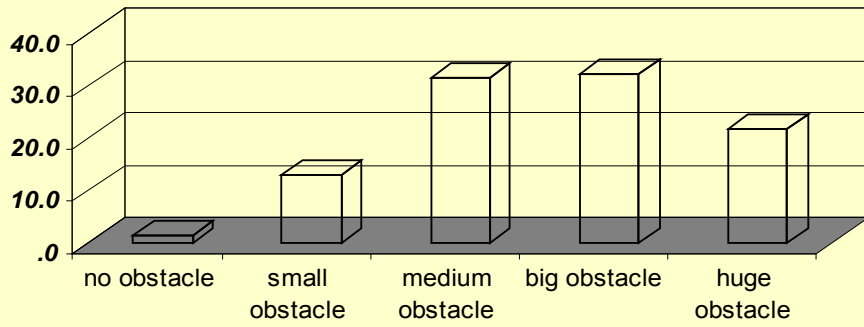
Q135 Too many people signing off on decisions before anything is done



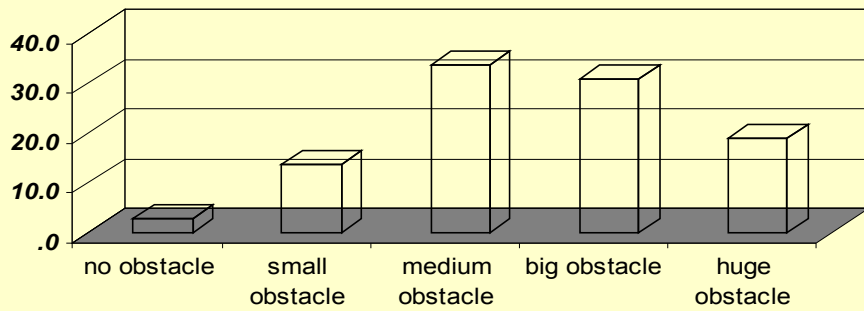
Q136 Too little understanding of the capacities of parents and families



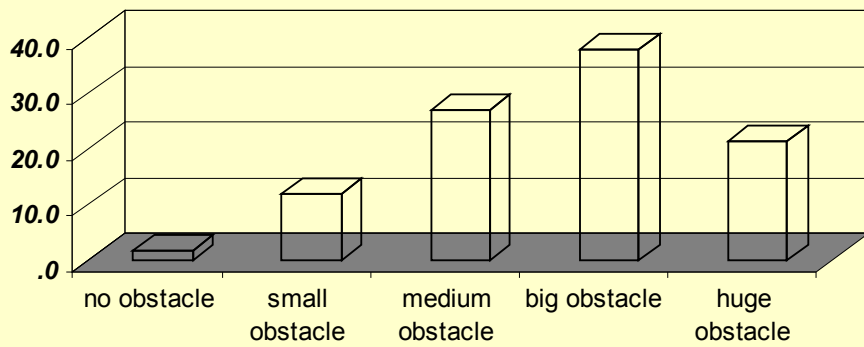
Q137 Too tied up in rules and protocols



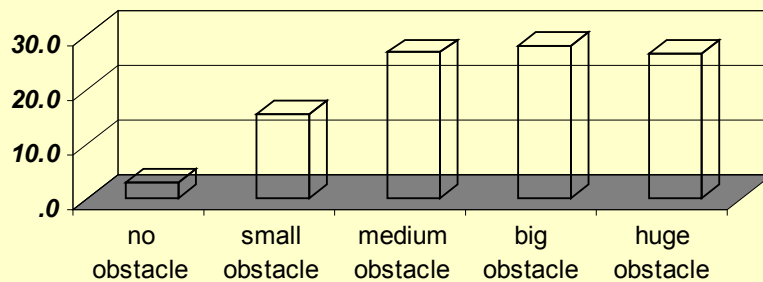
Q138 Too hesitant to deal with the problem



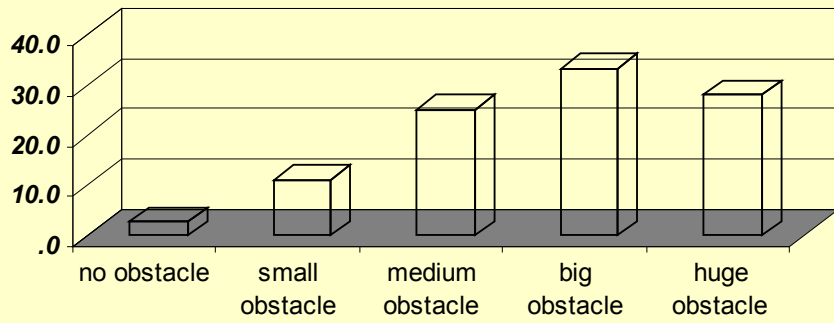
Q139 Too unable to motivate and draw out the best in people



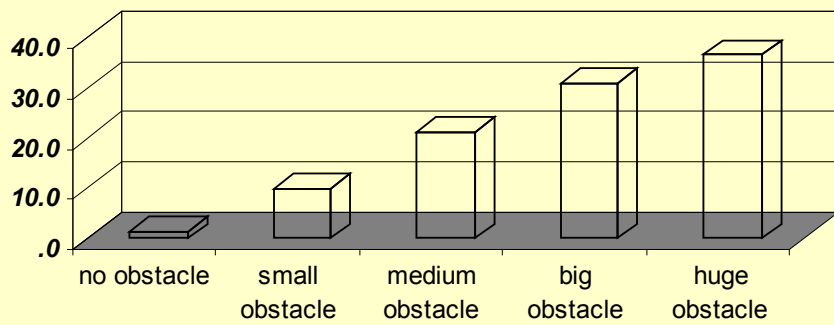
Q140 Too much distancing, discouraging contact and engagement



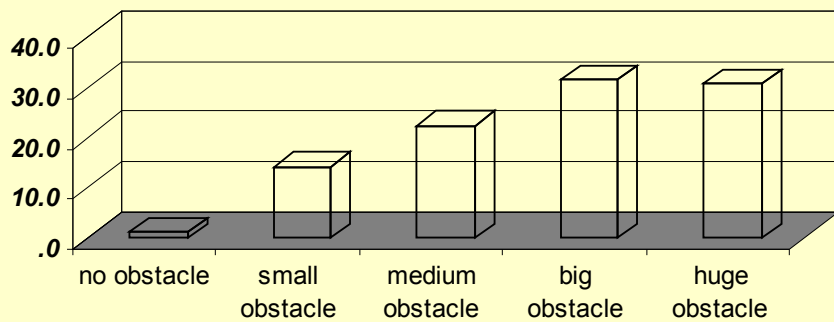
Q141 Too much focus on 'can't do' - not enough on 'can do'



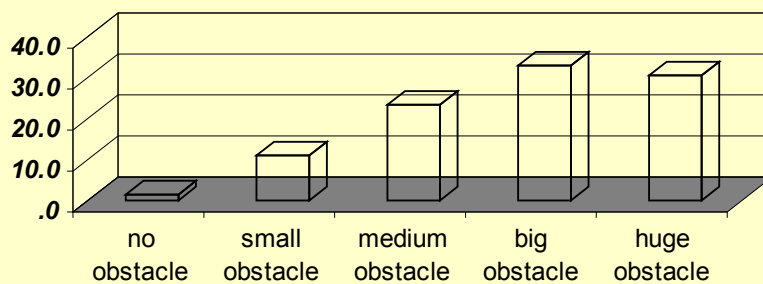
Q142 Too slow to respond



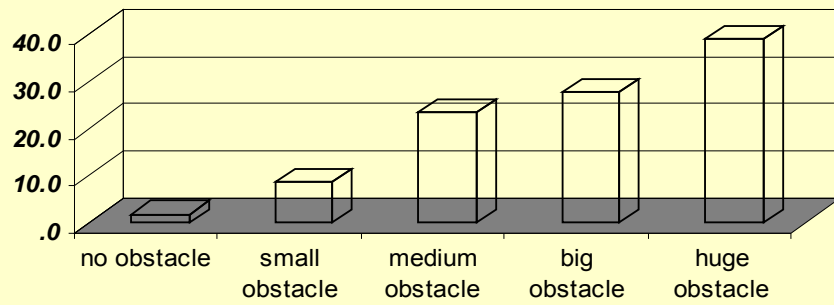
Q143 Too inflexible



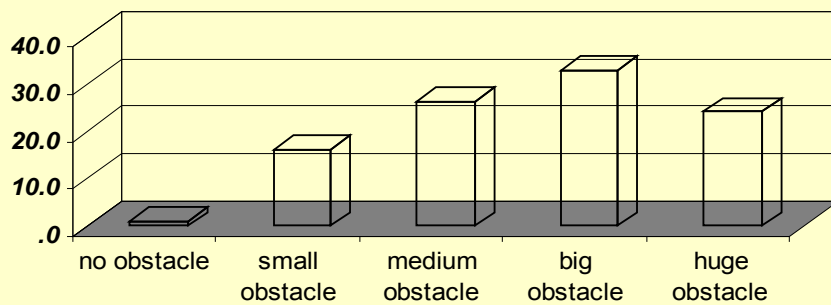
Q144 Too little creativity in thinking of new ways to solve old problems



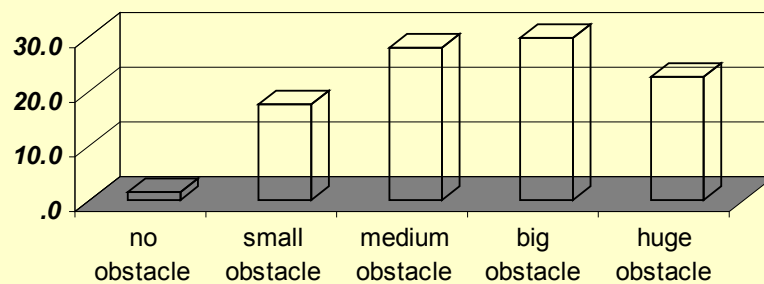
Q145 Too little time to think about what we are doing and why



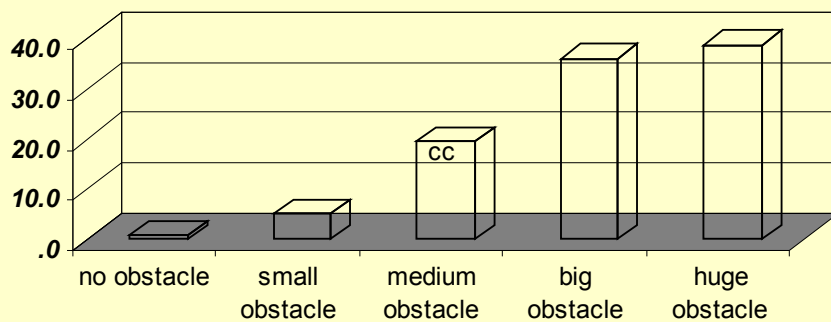
Q146 Too few can see the big picture



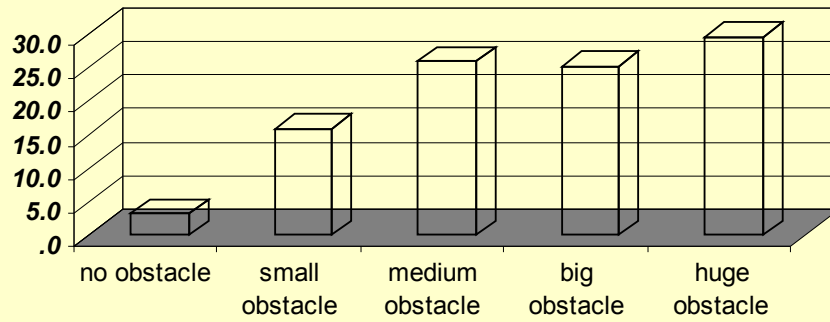
Q147 Too afraid to give those who want to try out new ideas the opportunity to have a go



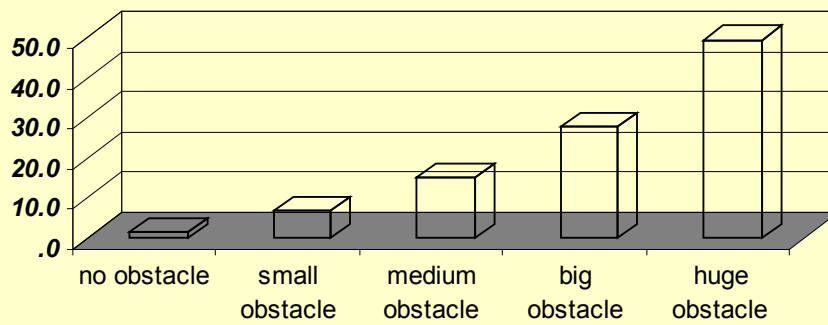
Q148 Too captured by paperwork



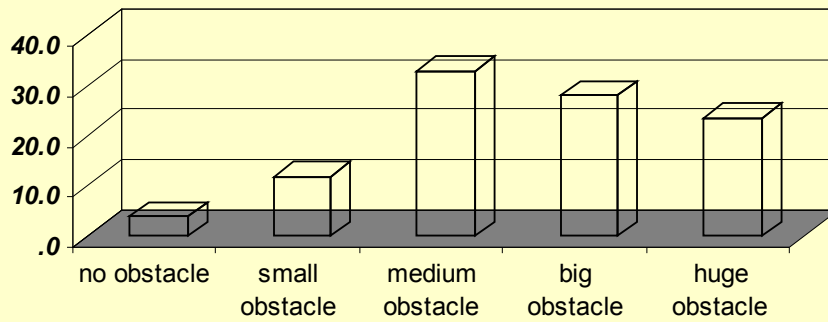
Q149 Too driven by targets



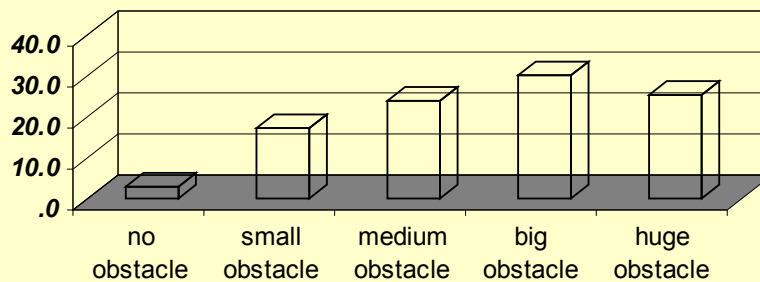
Q150 Too many inexperienced workers



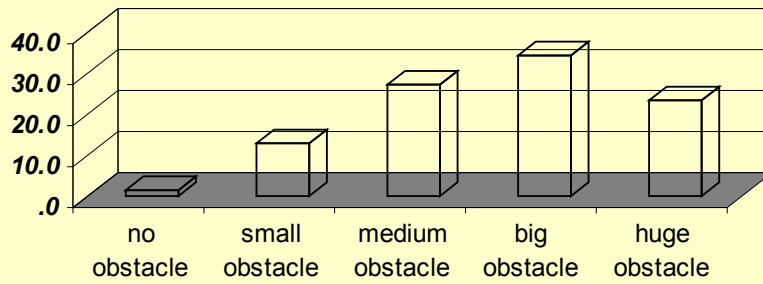
Q151 Too unrealistic in setting goals for child protection



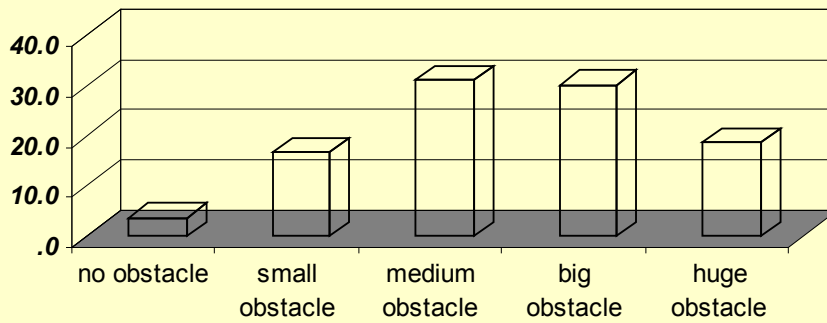
Q152 Too often at the mercy of decisions/policies of other government services



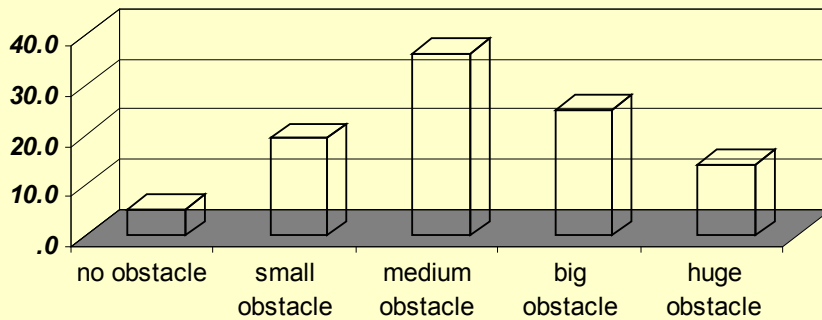
Q153 Too little understanding of the service delivery capabilities of different parts of the system



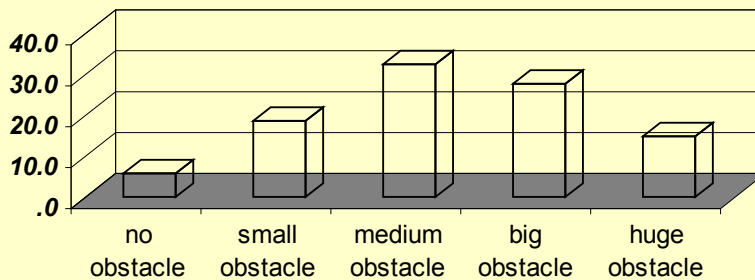
Q154 Too much confusion over the goals of child protection



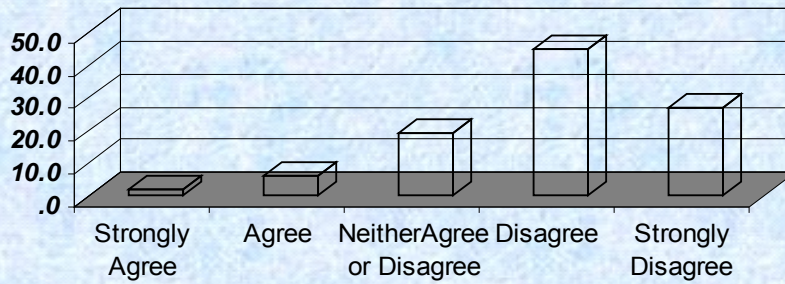
Q155 Too broad a set of goals to aim for



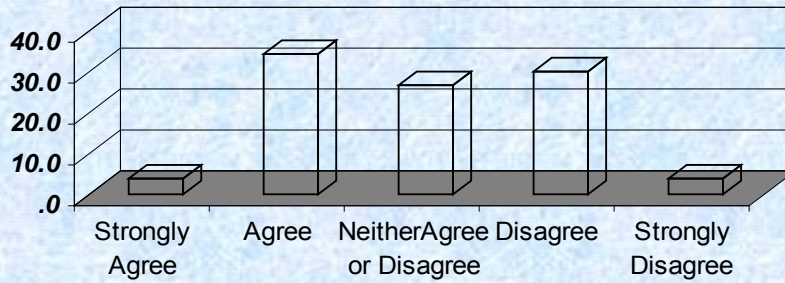
Q156 Too difficult to turn the principles of the National Child Protection Framework into workable goals



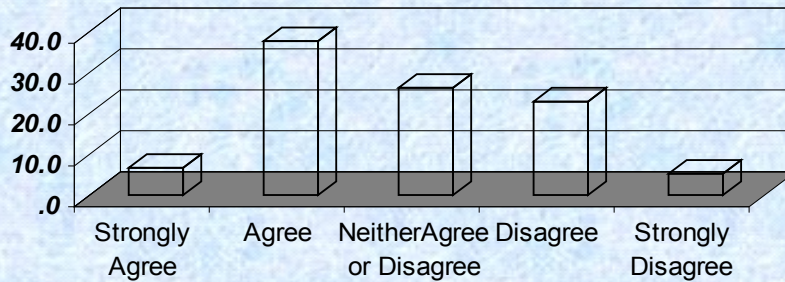
Q158 I don't really know what child protection authorities expect of me and I'm not about to ask



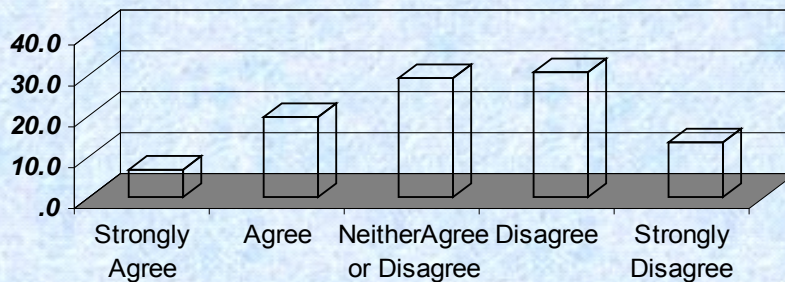
Q159 I always follow child protection's rules even if I disagree with them



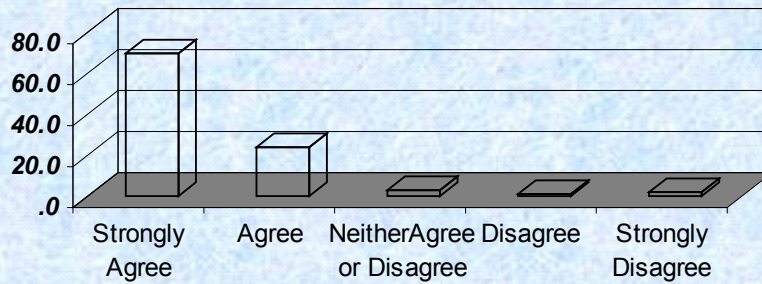
Q160 If you co-operate with child protection authorities, they are likely to be co-operative with you



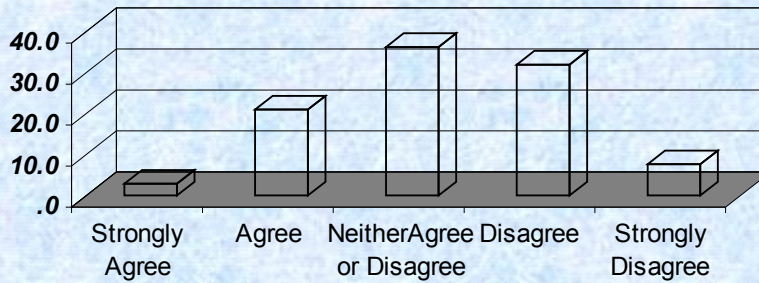
Q161 CPA are more interested in catching you for doing the wrong thing, than helping you do the right thing



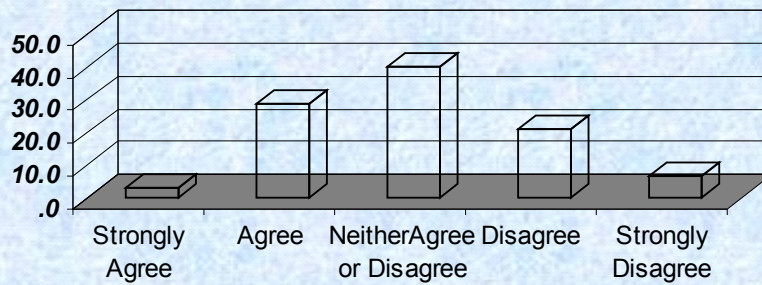
Q162 Preventing the abuse and exploitation of children is the right thing for government to do



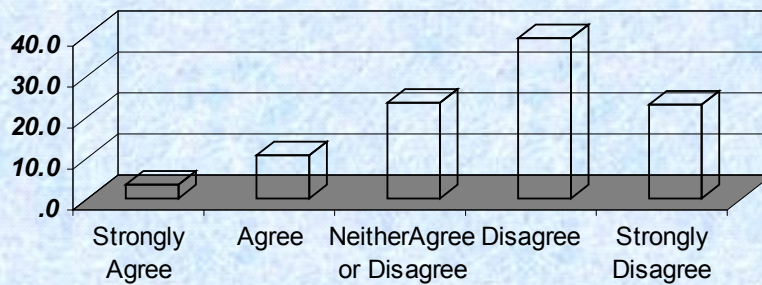
Q163 If I find out that I am not doing what CPA want, I'm not going to lose any sleep over it



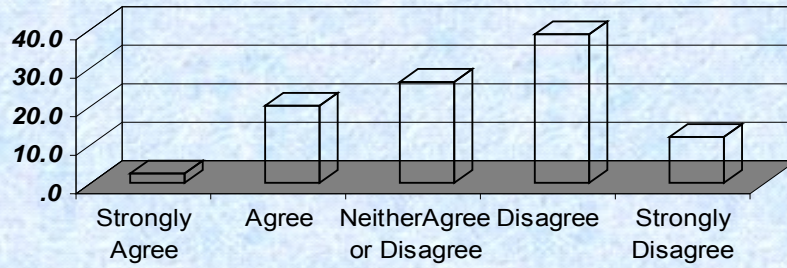
Q164 CPA are supportive as long as we try to do the right thing and learn form our mistakes



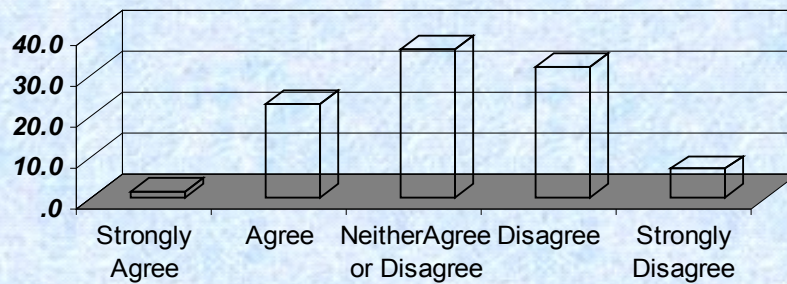
Q165 As a society, we need to stop government organisations like CPA dictating terms for children's safety



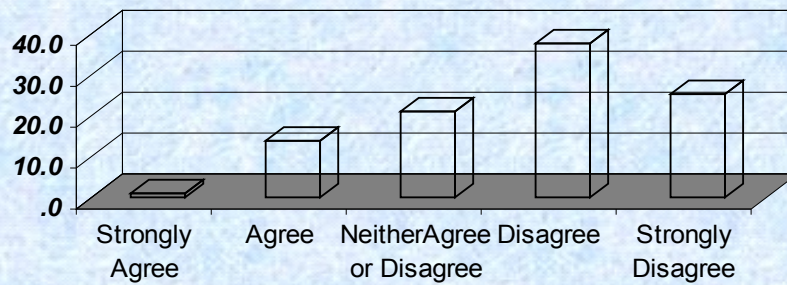
Q166 My attitude towards child protection workers is to work around them as much as possible



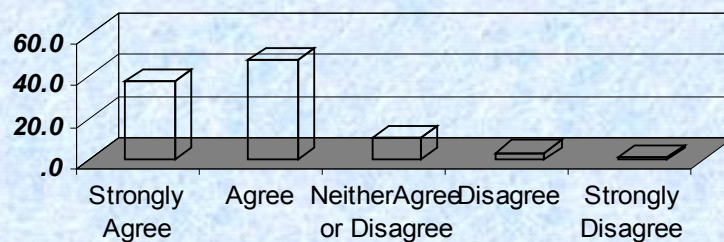
Q167 CPA are encouraging to people who have difficulty meeting their obligations through no fault of their own



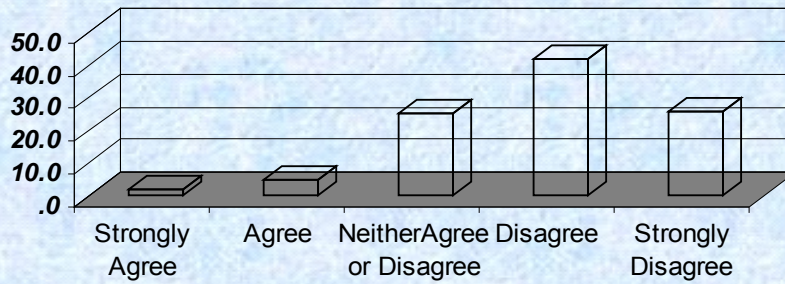
Q168 The child protection system may not be perfect, but it works well enough for most of us



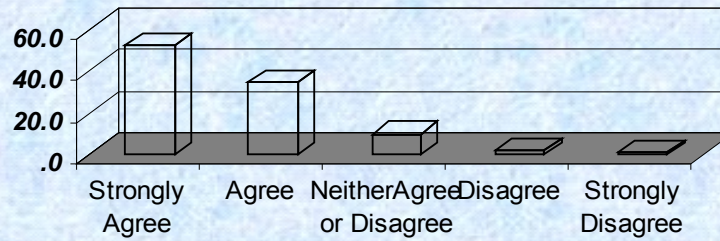
Q169 I feel a moral obligation to work with government to ensure children live in safe and supportive families and communities



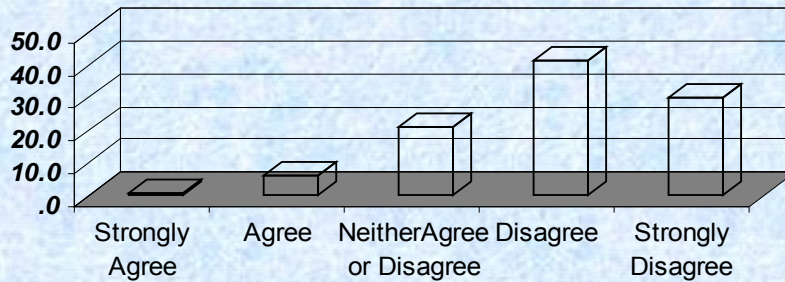
Q170 I play the game of finding the grey in the law so that I don't have to do what child protection authorities tell me to do



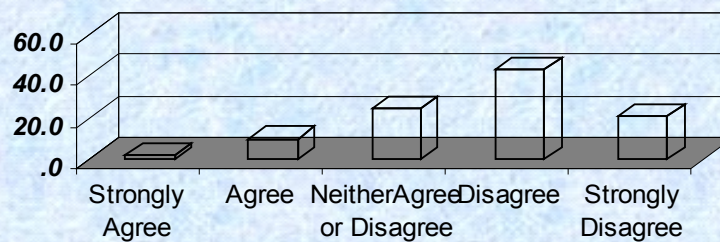
Q171 For me there is nothing more important than doing child protection work that respects families and communities but at the same time protects the rights of children



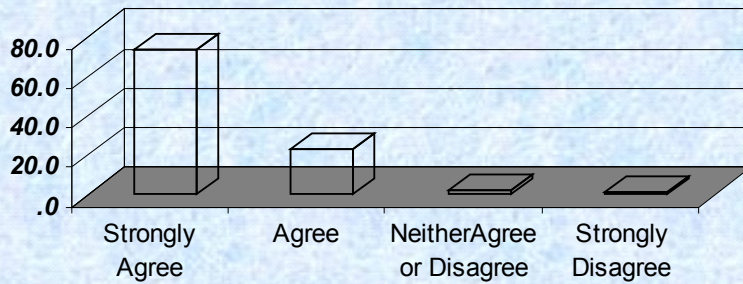
Q172 I don't care if I am not doing the right thing by child protection authorities



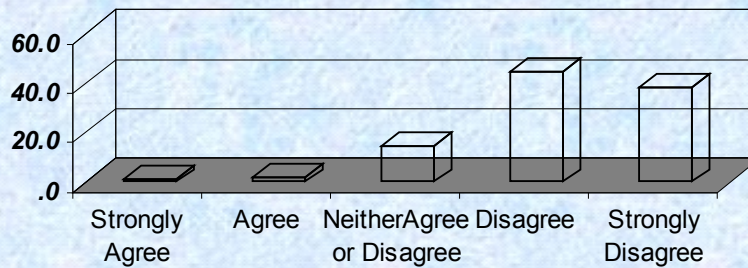
Q173 No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to give them only as much cooperation as the law requires



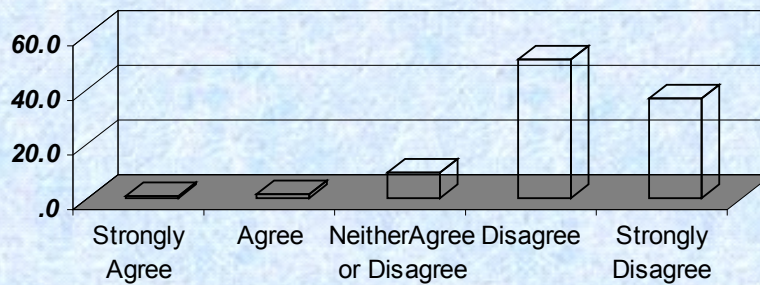
Q174 Ensuring that our children are safe and cared for ultimately advantages everyone



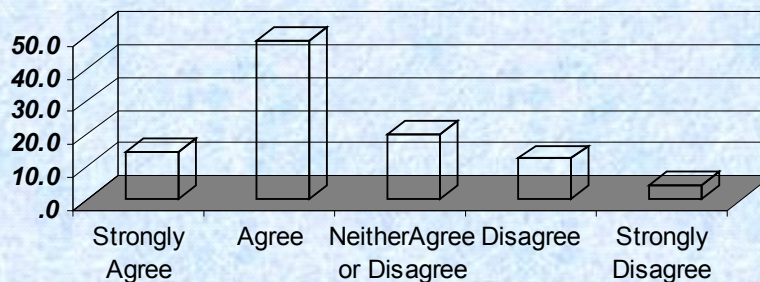
Q175 I will tick the boxes to please a child protection authority and make the paperwork look good but I will not do anything else to help them



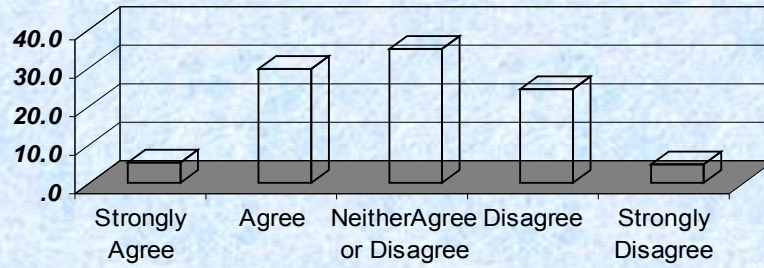
Q176 My attitude to child protection workers is to tell them what they want to hear



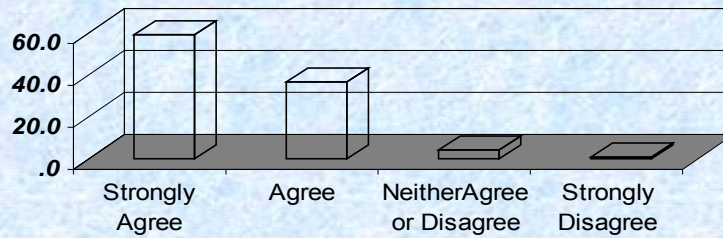
Q177 I think of child protection authorities as looking out for the safety of Australian children



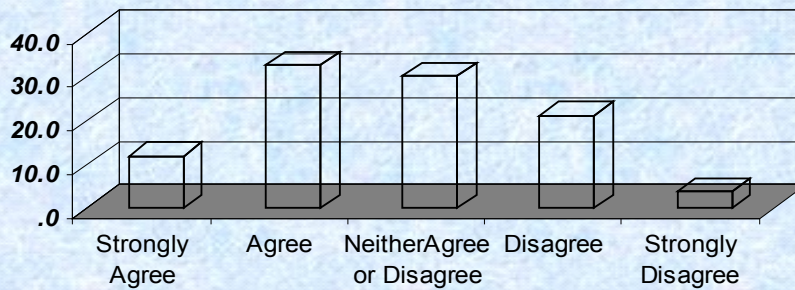
Q178 Doing the best job involves creatively navigating the rules imposed by child protection authorities



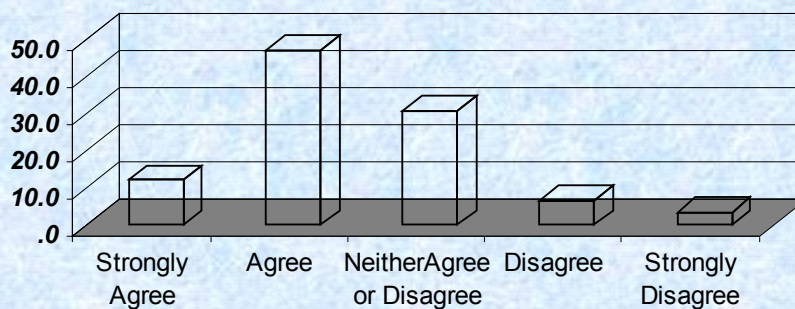
Q179 I am committed to ensuring that children and families access the support they need to prevent harm and promote safety



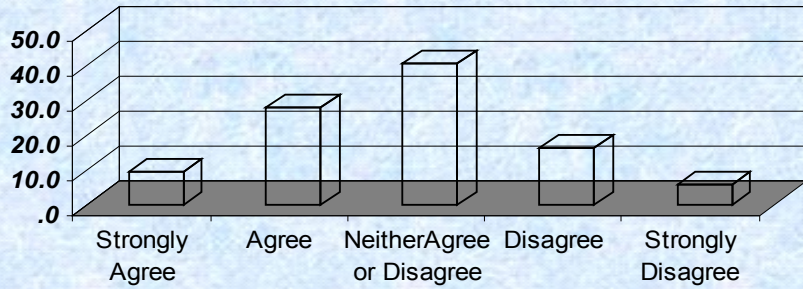
Q180 It is impossible to satisfy child protections authorities completely



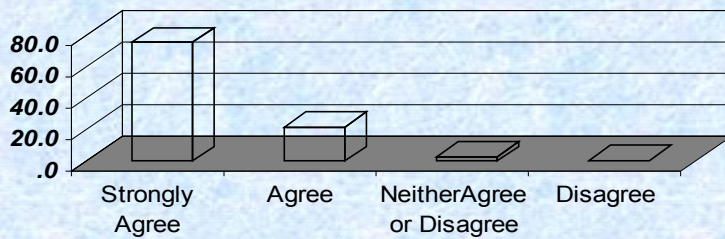
Q181 It's important not to let child protection authorities push you around



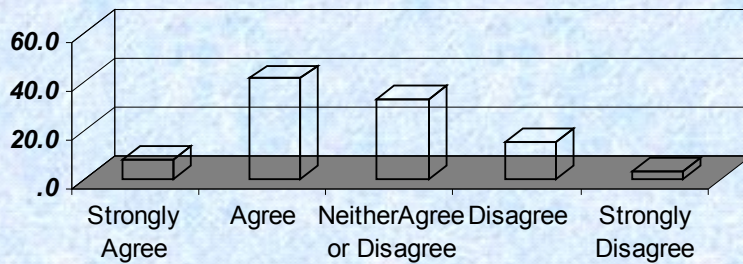
Q182 If you don't co-operate with child protection authorities, they will get tough with you



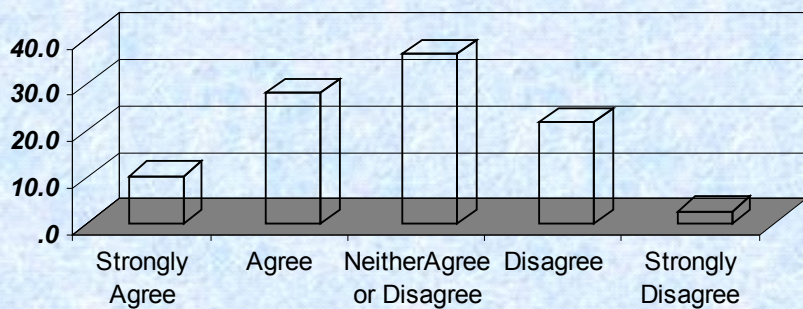
Q183 Ensuring that children are not left in situations of abuse and neglect is a responsibility that should be willingly accepted by everyone



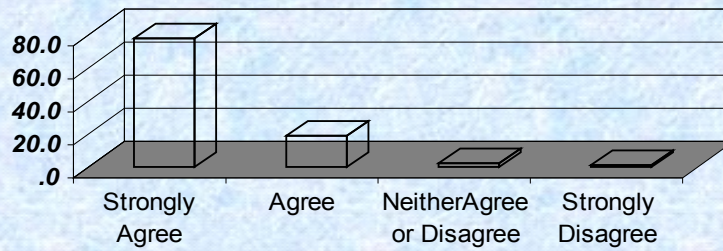
Q184 No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to always be cooperative with them



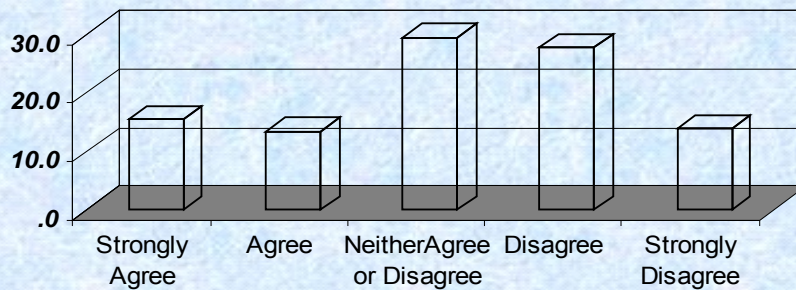
Q185 Once child protection authorities have you branded as someone who won't comply, they will never change their mind



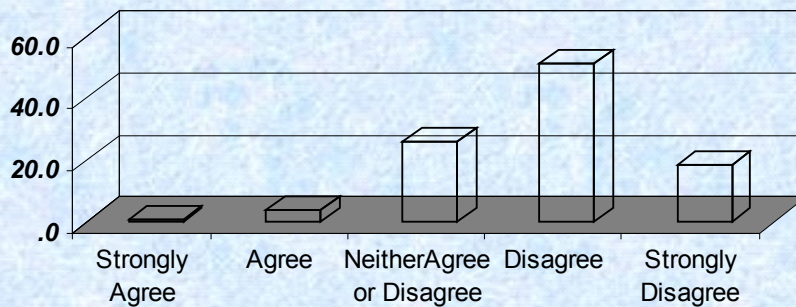
Q186 I am committed to ensuring that the children I come in contact with in my work are safe and have every chance of developing into healthy and happy adults



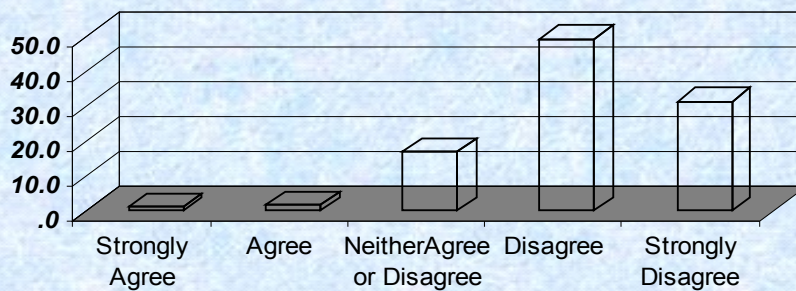
Q187 As a society, we need more people willing to take a stand against child protection authorities



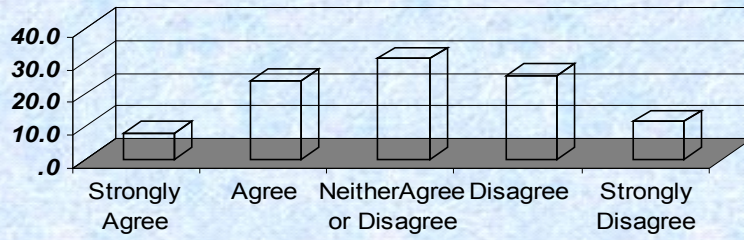
Q188 If child protection authorities get tough with me, I will become uncooperative with them



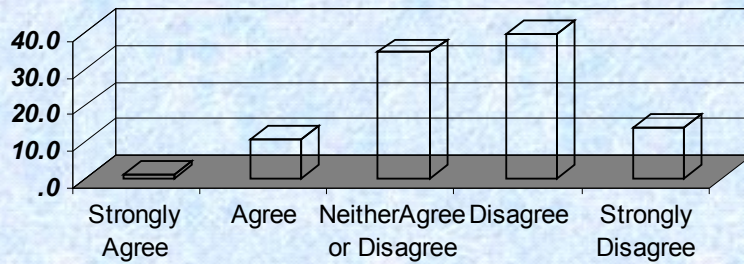
Q189 I do the minimum when it comes to the legal requirements imposed by child protection authorities



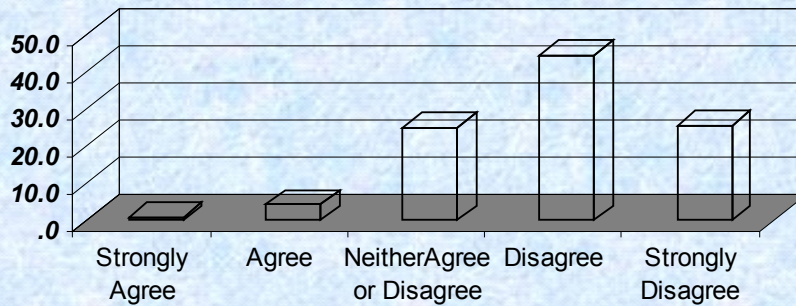
Q190 Child protection authorities are more concerned about making their own job easier than making things easier for others



Q191 I personally don't think that there is much child protection authorities can do to me to make me comply with their requirements if I don't want to



Q192 I do what I am legally required to do to get child protection authorities off my back, but nothing more for them



6 Email Invitation, Information Sheet to Participants and Questionnaire

Email Invitation to participants

If you have had **dealings with child protection services** through your work, but are **not employed directly** by them, we would greatly appreciate you giving us forty five minutes to an hour of your time to share your experiences and views on the child protection systems we have across Australia. The survey is **anonymous** and **totally confidential**.

We don't have the resources to interview in person as we would ideally like to do, but we have been able to set up an **on-line survey**. We will be analysing the results with the purpose of describing how child protection authorities engage with other groups in order to provide care and protection for children. Understanding how working relationships are established and maintained is important knowledge to have if we are to build a fair and effective child protection system.

The survey lists a series of statements which require a **tick box response**. Several questions ask you to write **your own opinions and ideas**. To **log on** to the survey go to <https://apollo.anu.edu.au/default.asp?pid=3836> and use User ID **mfdg** and password **cp001** to enter. **The survey must be completed in one sitting otherwise results will be lost.** The survey will be open for 2 weeks initially.

This research is being conducted by the Australian National University as part of the "Regulation and Social Capital Project" which is part of a larger "Trust and Hope in the Democracy Project" and has been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. An information letter is attached. We thank you in advance for making this significant investment in contributing to research. Please forward this to your networks and colleagues.

Before commencing we want to assure you that we acknowledge and respect the talent and effort of people across the child protection system who work tirelessly to make the lives of children better. This survey is about asking this question: Can we make changes to ensure that the whole is far more than the sum of the parts? If in answering this survey you feel "negative" and that we are being "negative", please ring us. We are at a fork in the road in child protection policy. Through collecting evidence and talking to people like yourselves we can find a better way.

If you would like to debrief or provide us with any direct feedback once you have completed the survey, do ring us. We would welcome your contact. For further information, please contact Mary Ivec on (02) 6125-4438 or mary.ivec@anu.edu.au

Perceptions of how child protection authorities work: values, processes and challenges

Information Letter to Participants

Purpose of the study and what is involved

Statutory child protection agencies are dedicated to making sure children in Australia are safe and well cared for. Numerous government enquiries into their operation have suggested that their task is not an easy one. The purpose of this study is to describe how child protection authorities engage with other groups in order to provide care and protection for children. Understanding how working relationships are established and maintained is important knowledge to have if we are to build a fair and effective child protection system.

We would like to invite you to take part in an on-line survey. The survey is designed for those who work alongside child protection authorities on a **paid or unpaid** basis. Companion surveys are being conducted with those who work within child protection agencies and with parents whose children have been reported as being at risk of abuse or neglect. This survey is about **your** experiences and views as someone who has dealings with child protection authorities and families.

This research is being conducted by the Australian National University as part of the "Regulation and Social Capital Project" which is part of a larger "Trust and Hope in the Democracy Project" and has been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee.

Benefits of the research

The research will provide insights into how to improve relationships between child protection authorities and communities. Through building better relationships, the capacity of both child protection agencies and communities to care for children will be improved.

Participation, anonymity and choice

The research will involve participants completing an anonymous, online survey that takes approximately 45 minutes to one hour. The link to the survey is in the email you receive with this invitation. Participation is completely voluntary. You can withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason. If you agree to participate in the anonymous, online survey, completing and submitting the survey will indicate your consent.

What happens to your responses?

Your responses will be aggregated and we will look for patterns in the data as a whole. No individual's responses will be reported. No individuals will be identified. The results of this study will be published in journal articles, books and reports. At the end of the project, a summary of our findings will be made available on the web site <http://demgov.anu.edu.au/> of the Australian National University.

If you are concerned about this research If you have any concerns or complaints about the study please feel free to contact Mary Ivec (Project Manager), telephone 02-61254438 or email mary.ivec@anu.edu.au, or Professor Valerie Braithwaite (Chief Investigator), telephone 02-61254601 or email valerie.braithwaite@anu.edu.au. You may also contact the Human Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Australian National University, telephone 02-6125 7945 or email Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au

Questionnaire

Section 1. Questions in this section are about your views on how child protection authorities should engage with the community if they are to achieve their goals. Please choose the answer closest to what you think.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q1. If a child protection authority shows an interest in helping families solve their problems, families will be more likely to try to do the right thing in the future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q2. Child protection authorities need both their legal authority and skills of persuasion and education to be effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q3. Child protection authorities should use common sense by applying the legislation in a way that is not dogmatic or legalistic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q4. In statutory child protection work, rules are useful, but the situation not the rule should determine the outcome.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q5. Negotiation and compromise are effective when working with families in child protection.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q6. People who harm their children are not going to cooperate with a child protection authority unless they are forced to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q7. Parents should be able to rely on child protection services to help them and take action with an 'uncontrollable' child/young person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q8. Parents should be involved in making decisions about their children in the child protection context.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q9. It is better to try to persuade families to do the right thing voluntarily even at the risk of being considered 'soft'.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q10. In order to change the behaviour of people who break the law, a child protection authority has to legally intervene.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q11. It is better for a child protection authority to be a tough enforcer of the legislation, even at the risk of being considered punitive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q12. Most of the time child protection authorities are dealing with families who want to do the right thing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q13. Relationships between child protection authorities and clients can produce effective outcomes when there is negotiation, accommodation and communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q14. To avoid errors in judgement, child protection workers should stick strictly to the rules.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q15. Parents should be given a chance to make changes that show they are good parents.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q16. Children should have a say in decisions that affect them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q17. It is not a good idea for a child protection authority to offer assistance to people who have done the wrong thing and harmed their children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q18. The support of the family is critically important in child protection.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q19. Child protection authorities who rely on their legal authority are less effective than those who rely on persuasion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q20. Only by understanding a parent's perspective can workers be effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q21. Rules are there only as a guide; each child protection case should be considered on its merits.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q22. Parents should always be listened to.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q23. Families usually try to do what child protection authorities ask of them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q24. Parents who are unable to control their children should not be a priority for child protection services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q25. Sometimes child protection authorities should bend the rules to suit special situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q26. It is best for child protection authorities to obtain compliance through advice and encouragement rather than taking legal action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q27. People who harm their children don't deserve 'kindness' from a regulatory agency.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q28. It is desirable for child protection authorities to use discretion in their administration of the legislation where permitted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q29. A child protection authority can't afford to show compassion or sympathy towards those they regulate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q30. Parents should always participate in case plans for their children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q31. Without the power to take legal action families would ignore a child protection practitioner's requests for them to meet parenting expectations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q32. Child protection authorities should make decisions on what they believe is right at the time, even if it stretches the rules.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Section 2. In this set of questions we ask your views on what statutory child protection authorities do well and not so well. How often have you seen the following occur? Please choose the answer closest to what you think.

	never	occasionally	sometimes	often	almost always
Q33. Child protection authorities help families improve their capacity to care for their children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q34. Child protection authorities tailor their responses to different client needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q35. Child protection authorities are good at sharing information with parents and families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q36. Child protection workers need clear rules to cover the situations they find themselves in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q37. Child protection workers get bogged down in paper work and paper trails.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q38. Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring safety of children once they have been placed into care.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q39. Child protection workers easily lose touch with what they are trying to achieve for children and families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q40. Confidentiality makes it difficult for child protection authorities to share information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	never	occasionally	sometimes	often	almost always
Q41. Child protection authorities are good at making sure parents and families understand what is going on.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q42. Legislation is so complex that child protection workers do not know what they can and cannot do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q43. Child protection authorities use coercive powers to intervene without enough thought as to the next steps.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q44. Child protection workers use only as much intervention as is required to keep children safe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q45. Child protection workers explain clearly to families the steps involved when they investigate suspected child abuse or neglect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q46. Child protection authorities work hard to ensure that children who have been removed from their families still are able to have contact and build a relationship with their natural families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q47. Child protection authorities are good at monitoring and ensuring that children in out-of-home care have stability of care.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q48. Child protection workers do their jobs by 'ticking boxes' without thinking beyond that.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	never	occasionally	sometimes	often	almost always
Q49. Child protection authorities understand the importance of a child's bond with his/her parents, siblings and wider family.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q50. Child protection workers mechanically follow processes and ignore outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

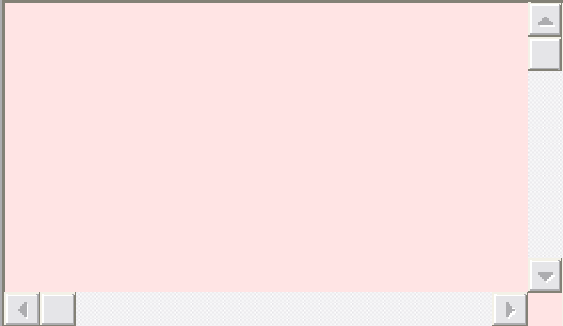
Q51. Child protection authorities are good at following through with parents and families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q52. Child protection authorities rely too much on rules for making decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q53. Child protection authorities are good at implementing care plans for children once they have been placed into care.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q54. Child protection authorities lose sight of the goal of keeping children safe as they work through their procedures and rules.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q55. Child protection authorities recognise the importance of contact between children, their parents, siblings and extended families when children have been removed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	never	occasionally	sometimes	often	almost always
Q56. The involvement of third parties helps families better cope with the process when child protection matters are being negotiated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q57. Third party advocacy for families in child protection matters leads to better outcomes overall.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q58. It is important for families when dealing with child protection authorities to have the support of a third party.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q59. Third parties can help both child protection workers and families bridge their differences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q60. Third parties have a better understanding of a family's situation than child protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

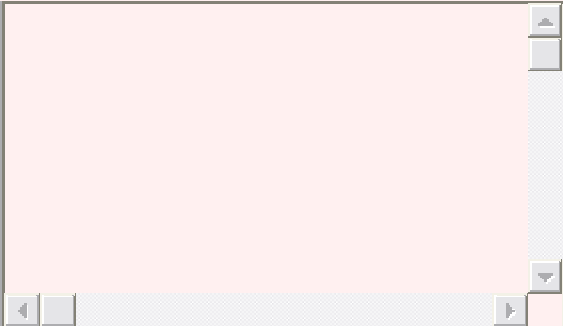
workers.

Q61. Third parties have a greater capacity to effectively intervene than child protection workers.

Q62. Please tell us how authorities could better use third parties?



Q63. A story to illustrate excellent use of third parties would be most appreciated.



Questionnaire

Section 3. The questions in this section are about trust in and engagement with child protection authorities. Please choose the answer closest to what you think.

	extremely well	very well	well	neither well nor poorly	poorly	very poorly	extremely poorly
Q64. How well do child protection authorities engage with families?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q65. How well do child protection authorities engage with non government organisations and other services they deal with?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Think of your experience with child protection authorities. How strongly do you agree or disagree that child protection authorities...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q66. can be trusted to administer child protection laws and rules fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q67. are open and honest in their dealings with people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q68. do not mislead people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q69. can be relied on to do what they say they will do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q70. will keep their word	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q71. fail to deliver on their responsibilities to the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q72. take advantage of people who are vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Below please use the rating scales to tell us what you think about the actions of child protection authorities in intervening, helping and linking families to resources.							
	Not enough	2	3	4	5	6	Too often
Q73. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q74. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q75. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Without enough consultation with families	2	3	4	5	6	With more than enough consultation with families
Q76. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q77. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q78. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

	Without enough consultation with other support agencies	2	3	4	5	6	With more than enough consultation with other support agencies
Q79. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (e.g. monitoring or removing children)...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q80. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q81. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of support for families....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Without sufficient understanding of the situation	2	3	4	5	6	With a great deal of understanding of the situation
Q82. Statutory child protection authorities use their coercive powers to intervene (to monitor or remove children)...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q83. Statutory child protection authorities use their resources to provide programs and assistance to families...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q84. Statutory child protection authorities use their position to improve the networks of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

support for families...

Do the statutory child protection authorities that you have most contact with, treat you in the following ways?

	always	most times	half the time	rarely	never
Q85. Value you as someone working with child protection authorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q86. Trust you to act on your professional judgment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q87. Back you when you make a difficult decision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q88. Support you when things get tough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q89. Provide information that helps you manage cases better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q90. tell the truth in their discussions with you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q91. meet their negotiated obligations willingly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q92. negotiate joint expectations fairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q93. try to get the upper hand in negotiations and discussions with you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

And what about these. How often would you say statutory child protection service workers do the following?					
	always	most times	half the time	rarely	never
Q94. It is the practice of child protection authorities to discuss issues openly so that staff from my organisation are kept well informed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q95. Child protection authorities are good at listening to the views of workers in my sector.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q96. Child protection authorities are good at learning from the views of workers in my sector.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q97. Statutory child protection authorities have an open door policy for hearing the views of workers like myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q98. Child protection authorities work problems through with other organisations to reach a compromise that everyone can work with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q99. In my work with child protection authorities, it seems that information is withheld for no apparent reason from those who need to know.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q100. Statutory child protection agencies encourage other organisations to put forward innovative ideas for practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q101. Child protection authorities provide useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

. sessions for learning better problem solving skills.						
And what about these. How often would you say the following occur?						
		always	most times	half the time	rarely	never
Q102	Consult with their own colleagues when unsure of what to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q103	Consult with other professions to improve practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q104	Consult with others outside the authority with relevant experience to improve practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q105	Accept responsibility for their practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q106	Engage in practice guided by principles of respect and human dignity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q107	Accept responsibility for their decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q108	Make amends when things go wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thinking more generally now of how child protection engages with parents and families, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? Child protection authorities...						
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q109	Treat people as if they can be trusted to do the right thing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q110	Treat people as if they will only do the right thing when forced to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q111	Consult widely about how they might change things to make it easier for parents to meet their obligations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q112	Go to great lengths to consult with the community over changes to their systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q113	Respect the individual's rights as a citizen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q114	Are concerned about protecting the average citizen's rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q115	Accept responsibility when they make a mistake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q116	Are open to reviewing their decisions when challenged	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 4. Public's report card on the child protection system.

'System' means government and non-government organisations, groups and individuals who work to protect children from abuse and neglect. The National Child Protection Framework outlines a number of principles for best practice. In your experience how well is the system acting on these principles?

	extremely well	very well	well	neither well nor poorly	poorly	very poorly	extremely poorly
Q117	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q118	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q119	Family's right to participate in decisions affecting them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q120	Improving the safety and well-being of children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q121	Communicating to families that they are valued and supported in their caregiving responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q122	Working in partnership with families in their caring responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q123	Upholding children's rights through our systems and institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q124	Basing interventions and policies on evidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q125	Basing interventions and policies on experience of best practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q126	Using out-of-home care as the last resort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q127	Preferring for children to be reunited with their natural parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How big an obstacle is each of the following to implementing the principles of the National Child Protection Framework?

	no obstacle	small obstacle	medium obstacle	big obstacle	huge obstacle
Q128 Case loads too high	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q129	Too high a turnover of workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q130	Too much centralised control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q131	Too much resistance to working with others who might be able to help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q132	Too much pushing of work onto others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q133	Too narrow thinking, not making connections between issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q134	Too risk averse to trying new things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q135	Too many people signing off on decisions before anything is done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q136	Too little understanding of the capacities of parents and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		no obstacle	small obstacle	medium obstacle	big obstacle	huge obstacle
Q137	Too tied up in rules and protocols	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q138	Too hesitant to deal with the problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q139	Too unable to motivate and draw out the best in people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q140	Too much distancing, discouraging contact and engagement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q141	Too much focus on 'can't do' - not enough on 'can do'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q142	Too slow to respond	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q143	Too inflexible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q144	Too little creativity in thinking of new ways to solve old problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q145	Too little time to think about what we are doing and why	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		no obstacle	small obstacle	medium obstacle	big obstacle	huge obstacle
Q146	Too few can see the big picture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q147	Too afraid to give those who want to try out new ideas the opportunity to have a go	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q148	Too captured by paperwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q149	Too driven by targets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q150	Too many inexperienced workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q151	Too unrealistic in setting goals for child protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q152	Too often at the mercy of decisions/policies of other government services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q153	Too little understanding of the service delivery capabilities of different parts of the system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q154	Too much confusion over the goals of child protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q155	Too broad a set of goals to aim for	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q156	Too difficult to turn the principles of the National Child Protection Framework into workable goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q157 Do you have ideas for change that you are able to share with us?

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Section 5. In this section we are asking you to answer a series of questions that sum up how you personally approach child protection authorities. We are asking you to stand back and think across situations in answering these questions. We understand that different contexts bring forth different responses in you, but overall how well do these responses describe how you approach authorities in your current job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q158 I don't really know what child protection authorities expect of me and I'm not about to ask.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q159 I always follow child protection's rules even if I disagree with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

.	them.					
.	Q160 If you cooperate with child protection authorities, they are likely to be cooperative with you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q161 Child protection authorities are more interested in catching you for doing the wrong thing, than helping you do the right thing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q162 Preventing the abuse and exploitation of children is the right thing for government to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q163 If I find out that I am not doing what child protection authorities want, I'm not going to lose any sleep over it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q164 Child protection agencies are supportive as long as we try to do the right thing and learn from our mistakes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q165 As a society, we need to stop government organisations like child protection authorities dictating terms for children's safety.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
.	Q166 My attitude to child protection workers is to work around them as much as possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q167 Child protection authorities are encouraging to people who have difficulty meeting their obligations through no fault of their own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q168 The child protection system may not be perfect, but it works well enough for most of us.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
.	Q169 I feel a moral obligation to work with government to ensure children live in safe and supportive families and communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q170	I play the game of finding the grey in the law so that I don't have to do what child protection authorities tell me to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q171	For me there is nothing more important than doing child protection work that respects families and communities but at the same time protects the rights of children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q172	I don't care if I am not doing the right thing by child protection authorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q173	No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to give them only as much cooperation as the law requires.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q174	Ensuring that our children are safe and cared for ultimately advantages everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q175	I will tick the boxes to please a child protection authority and make the paperwork look good but I will not do anything else to help them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q176	My attitude to child protection workers is to tell them what they want to hear.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q177	I think of child protection authorities as looking out for the safety of Australian children.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q178	Doing the best job involves creatively navigating the rules imposed by child protection authorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q179	I am committed to ensuring that children and families access the support they need to prevent harm and promote safety.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q180	It's impossible to satisfy child protection authorities completely.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

Q181	It's important not to let child protection authorities push you around.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q182	If you don't cooperate with child protection authorities, they will get tough with you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q183	Ensuring that children are not left in situations of abuse and neglect is a responsibility that should be willingly accepted by everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q184	No matter how cooperative or uncooperative a child protection authority is, the best policy is to always be cooperative with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q185	Once child protection authorities have you branded as someone who won't comply, they will never change their mind.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q186	I am committed to ensuring that the children I come in contact with in my work are safe and have every chance of developing into healthy and happy adults.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q187	As a society, we need more people willing to take a stand against child protection authorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q188	If child protection authorities get tough with me, I will become uncooperative with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q189	I do the minimum when it comes to the legal requirements imposed by child protection authorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q190	Child protection authorities are more concerned about making their own job easier than making things easier for others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Q191	I personally don't think that there is much child protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire

authorities can do to me to make me comply with their requirements if I don't want to.					
Q192 I do what I am legally required to do to get child protection authorities off my back, but nothing more for them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 6. Demographics & Final Questions

In this last section we are asking you to provide some background information so that we can describe the sample of people who took part in the survey. We do not want to identify individuals or the organisations they work for.

Q193 Please indicate your age in years

Only numbers may be entered in this field

Q194 What is your gender?

Female

Male

Q195 In which country were you born?

if Other

Q196 Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Yes

No

Questionnaire

Q197 Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

- Aboriginal
- Torres Strait Islander
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- No, neither

Q198 Which of the below best describes your field of work? (you can tick more than one box). If other, please describe in comments box below.

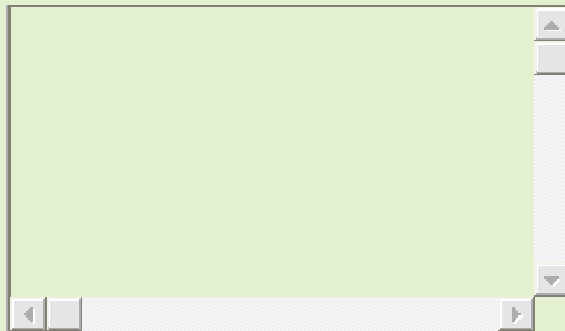
- Medical
- Education
- Family Support
- Legal
- Child Care
- Police
- Crisis Accommodation/Homelessness
- General welfare
- Drug and Alcohol Service
- Other, please specify

Questionnaire

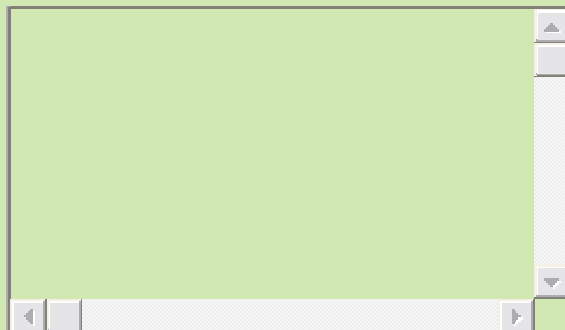
Comments



Q199 What is the work you do currently that is associated with child protection? Please describe this role in as much detail as you can. What do you do with families? What do you do with child protection authorities?



Q200 Do you currently have any other role associated with child protection e.g. foster carer. Please describe this role in as much detail as you can.



Questionnaire

Q201 In your work, which of the following client groups do you deal with? (you can tick more than one box).

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients only
- Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- No Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Background clients only
- Some Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Background clients
- No Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Background clients

Q202 Please indicate your workplace post code.

Q203 What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed?

Q204 What is the highest level of post-secondary/tertiary education that you have completed?

Q205 What are your work arrangements?

- Full time
- Part time

Questionnaire

Casual

Contract

Q206 For how many years have you worked alongside child protection authorities (in an NGO, partner agency or other government department)

Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to each of the following questions so that we have an accurate picture of your involvement with child protection authorities over the past two years.

Q207 Intensive contact over a number of cases/issues

Yes

No

Q208 Intensive contact over one case/issue

Yes

No

Q209 Modest contact over a number of cases/issues

Yes

No

Questionnaire

Q210 Modest contact over one case/issue

Yes

No

Q211 More distant contact over a number of cases/issues

Yes

No

Q212 More distant contact over one case/issue

Yes

No

Q213 Very little contact over last two years

Yes

No

Q214 Are you required to do mandatory reporting of children at risk of abuse or neglect?

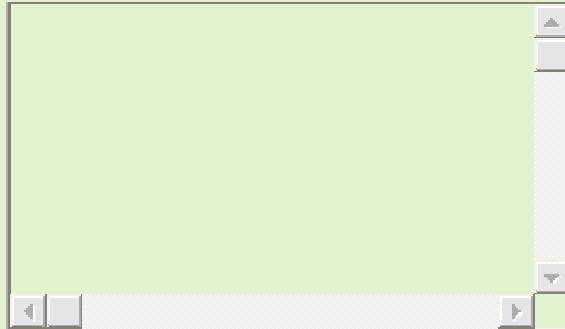
Yes

Not sure

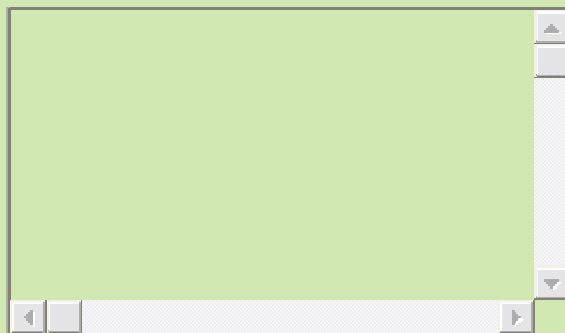
No

Questionnaire

Q215 Child protection authorities have policies about being responsive to families with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (including Indigenous families). In your experience, how responsive have you found them with these groups? In the space below, please tell us a story that illustrates your experience without identifying any individual or providing any identifiable information.

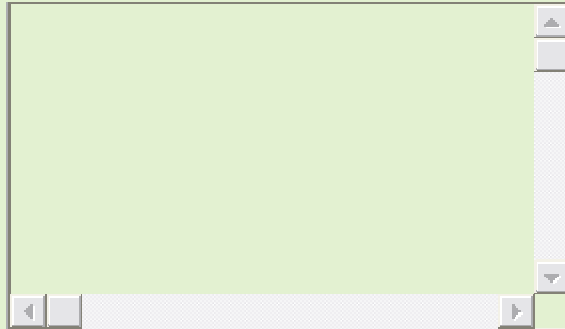


Q216 Are there any other comments you would like to make? We are particularly interested in any innovative care networks that you know of that work well.



Questionnaire

Q217 If you would like to be contacted in future to participate in focus groups, please supply an email/phone number here.



Thank you very much for the time and effort you have invested in completing this questionnaire. Results will be posted on <http://demgov.anu.edu.au/> after April 30, 2010.

Questionnaire

7 References

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