



Queensland
Foster and
Kinship Care

CARER EXIT SURVEY

South East Region

2018-2019

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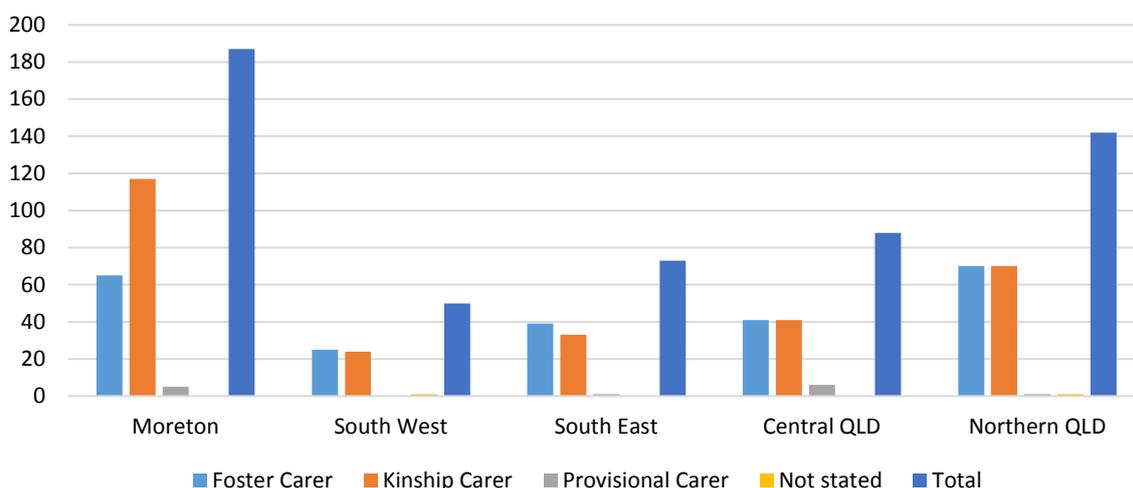
Executive Summary

Information relating to End of Carer Approval Notices

This report brings Queensland Foster and Kinship Care, formally Foster Care QLD (hereafter referred to as QFKC) to the end of our eleventh year managing the Exit Interview Program. For this report QFKC has maintained the breakdown of regions.

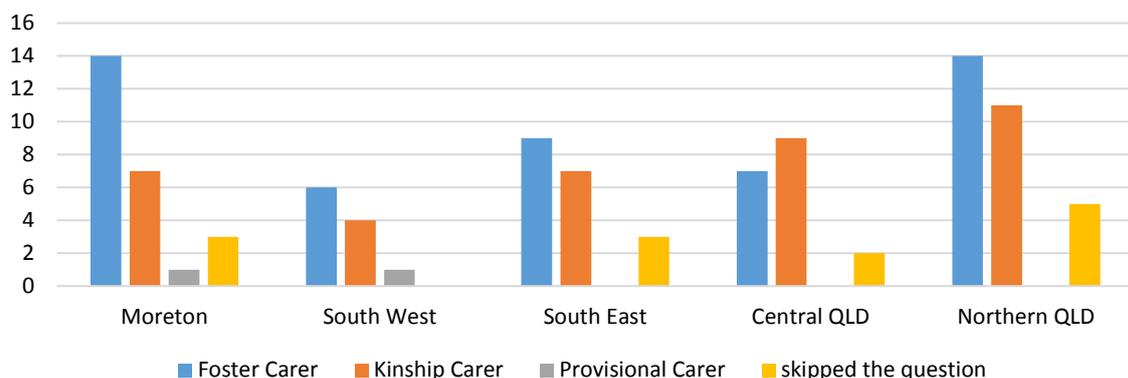
QFKC received a total of 540 Exit Interview referrals for the period **1st July 2018 to 30th June 2019**. 240 of the total were Foster Carers, 285 of the total were Kinship Carers, 13 were Provisional Carers and 2 did not state what the carer status was.

End of Carer Approval Notices received by QFKC during the period of 1st July 2018-30th June 2018



103 Exit Surveys were completed on Survey Monkey, either by the carers directly, QFKC inputting the data on the carer's behalf from a paper based survey that the carer was sent and returned to QFKC or the carer requested a telephone interview and QFKC inputted the data on to Survey Monkey during the telephone interview. The return rate this year in relation to completed surveys, is 19%.

People who completed the Exit Survey



The procedures for responding to notifications of End of Carer Approval Notices is as follows;

- QFKC send a letter when they receive the End of Carer Approval Notice from the Department, informing the person/persons that QFKC has received the End of Carer Approval Notice and would they like to provide information about their experiences as carers. The letter also provides a number of ways they can complete the survey, either online, over the phone, or have a paper survey sent out with a return stamp addressed envelope, which would then be input into Survey Monkey by QFKC.
- After a two week period QFKC would follow up via phone call where possible with the former carers to confirm receipt of the letter and discuss the opportunity to provide their experiences. When no phone contact details have been provided, QFKC would email the former carer/s if email details were included on the End of Carer Approval Notices.

It has been noted over the years that QFKC do not receive all the End of Carer Approval Notices that should be provided to QFKC to give the opportunity to people who would like to undertake a survey and this needs to improve to ensure equal opportunity for everybody to provide feedback.

As stated in previous reports QFKC continue to receive a number of End of Carer Approval Notices however based on the figures provided by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women we continue to receive significantly less notifications than we should be receiving. QFKC has endeavoured to address this significant issue in previous years and it would appear that less than half of the End of Carer Approval Notices have been received again by QFKC in the year 2018-2019 when comparing the figures that are provided on the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women website. The lack of understanding by regions as to the importance of QFKC receiving all End of Carer Approval Notices has a direct impact on the integrity of the program and places a question as to whether this undertaking is viable in the future. QFKC absolutely believe the data has validity and strength however the full potential of the data cannot be reached if we do not have (all) the notices.

Overall Data and Findings

This report outlines the feedback from all 103 carers and it is sectioned into regions so that the information is specific to the feedback from each region.

Overall, across the state people identified positive aspects of their time as carers and these related to;

- The range of allowances provided by Child Safety to help meet the cost of caring for a child
- Number of children placed with the carer
- Contact with the agency
- The allowance payment rates
- How quickly allowances were paid (this was separate to how quickly out of pocket expenses were reimbursed and a high number of people identified that they were not satisfied)
- Opportunities carers were given to participate in training and professional development
- Pre-service training delivery
- Standard training modules 5,6 and 7
- Ability to access additional training
- Information provided about your role and responsibilities
- Information provided about Foster and Kinship Care Services role and responsibilities
- The manner in which the carer approval renewal process was undertaken

These comments are similar to previous years and reflects the overall responses to the question, whilst some responses may differ to being satisfied we have taken a range of responses whereby the percentage rate is high for satisfaction.

Overall across the State, there were similarities in terms of negative feedback provided, listed below are common themes from information provided in the 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and the 2018-2019 reports;

The majority of responses relating to interactions with Child Safety identified that the carer felt;

- Unsupported
- Did not feel valued
- Lack of communication

The majority of responses identifying that the carer left due to issues with the children placed with them, stated it was for the following reasons;

- Behavioural
- Complexity of issues (trauma, medical, psychological)

The majority of responses relating to leaving due to family reasons identified the following;

- Time commitments
- Partner and biological children did not want to continue
- Change in circumstances
- Cost of providing care

The findings relating to what were the most challenging aspects of being a carer have remained consistent over the years that QFKC has been undertaking the Exit Survey Report. The lack of communication and feeling part of a care team is dominant throughout the reports for each region and this would be suggestive that this is a State-wide issue in regards to the feedback provided.

Some areas of care were identified as equally satisfied and dissatisfied in their responses;

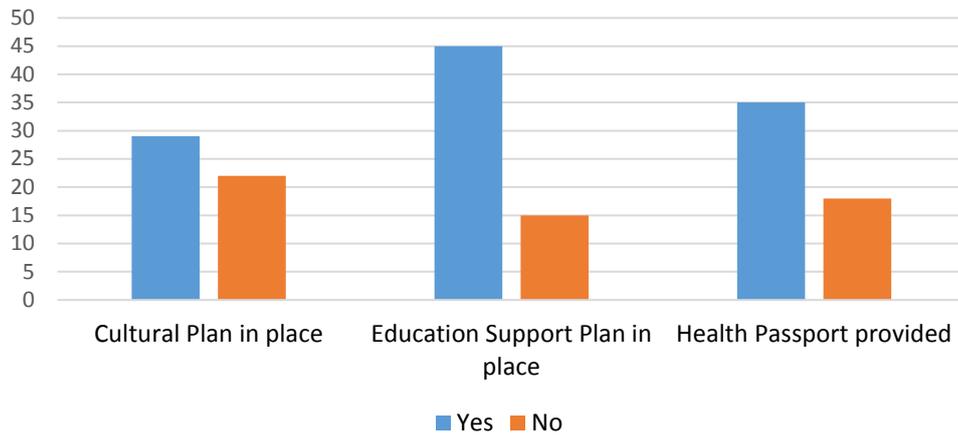
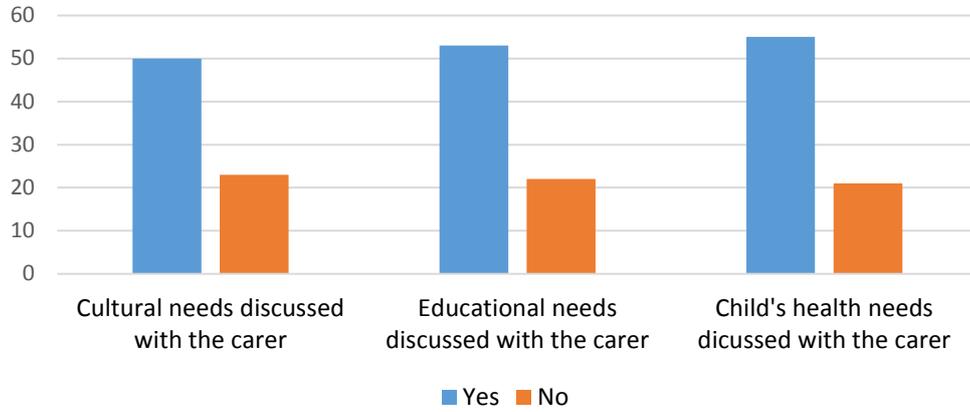
- Child Safety's policies and procedures dealing with Harm Report/SOC process
- Handling of a Harm Report/SOC process
- Outcome of discussions with Child Safety
- Discussions with FAST Reps

People were asked if they had attended training in the last 12 months, 76 people responded to this question and 20 people stated they had attended but 56 people stated they had not attended training.

People were also asked if they had a Foster Care Agreement in place and 56 people stated they did and 4 people stated they didn't.

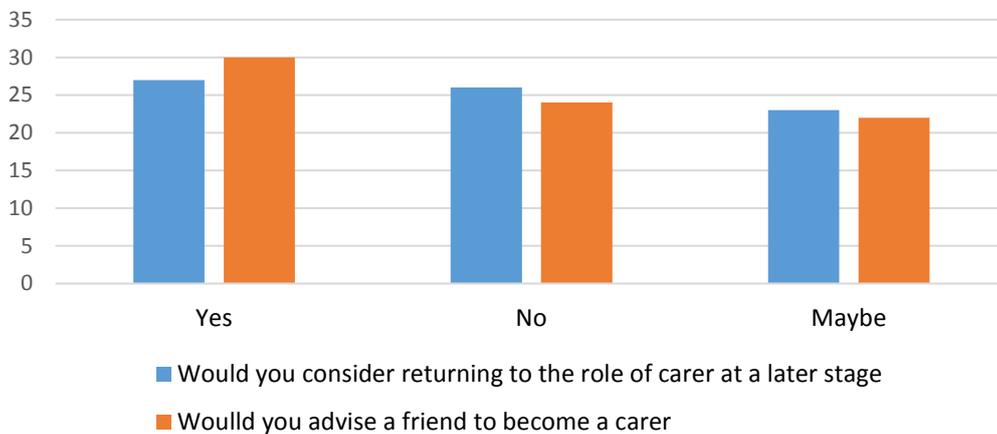
In relation to the needs of the child the following information was identified;

Child's needs



People completing the survey were asked if they would advise a friend to become a carer and would they consider returning to the role of carer at a later stage, the responses overall for QLD are listed below;

Overall



In summary, an equal number of people identified that they would/wouldn't consider returning to foster care at a later stage. A slightly lower number of people identified that they may consider returning to the role of caring at a later stage. The responses are also similar for "would you advise a friend to become a carer".

The majority of carers who completed the survey identified that they started fostering due to a desire to help children. This information has also been consistent throughout the years, but this was diminished by the lack of feeling valued or being part of a care team.

While reading the responses there was one response that summarised all the information relating to lack of feeling valued and being part of a care team, I have taken the extract from the responses word for word and QFKC feel that the response is very relevant to how people are feeling.

"A simple thank you at the end of placement would do wonders"

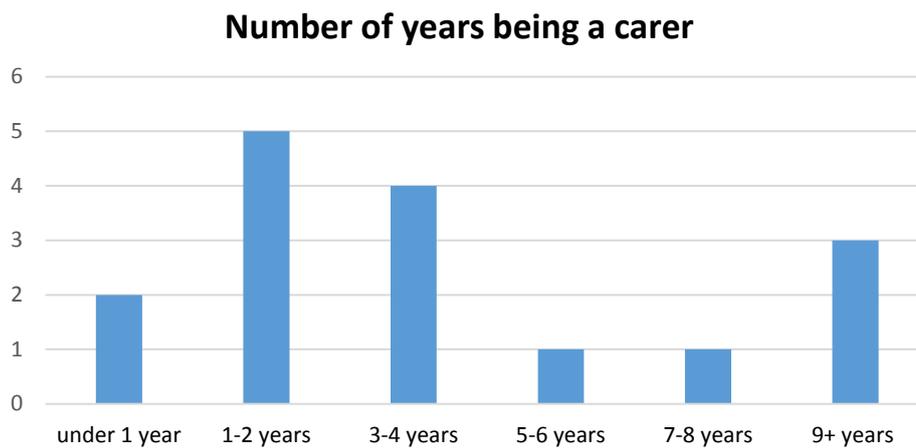
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8 August 2019

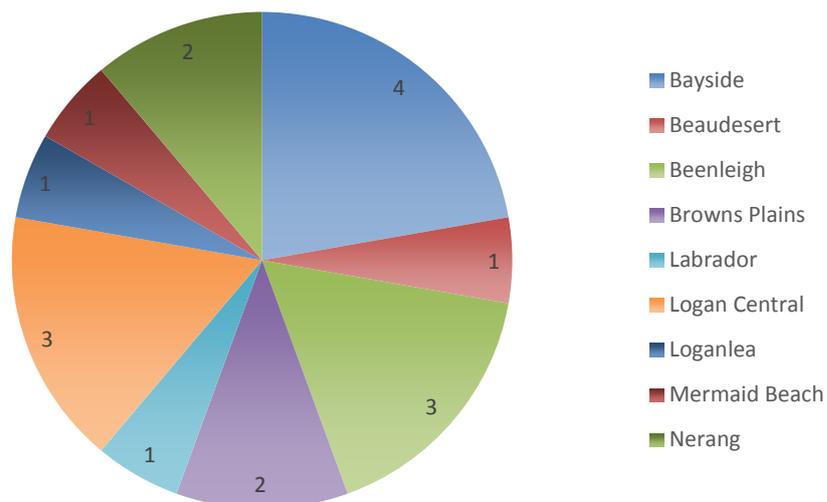
Summary – South East Region

Queensland Foster and Kinship Care (here after referred to as QFKC) received 540 End of Carer Approval Notices during the period of 1st July 2018 to 30 June 2019. 73 (13.5%) of the End of Carer Approval Notices were received from the South East region and affiliated with the following service centres. Please note that sometimes all the required information is not provided to QFKC.

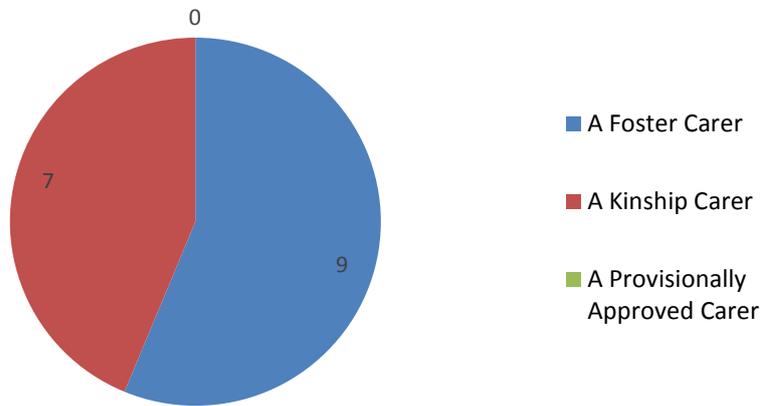
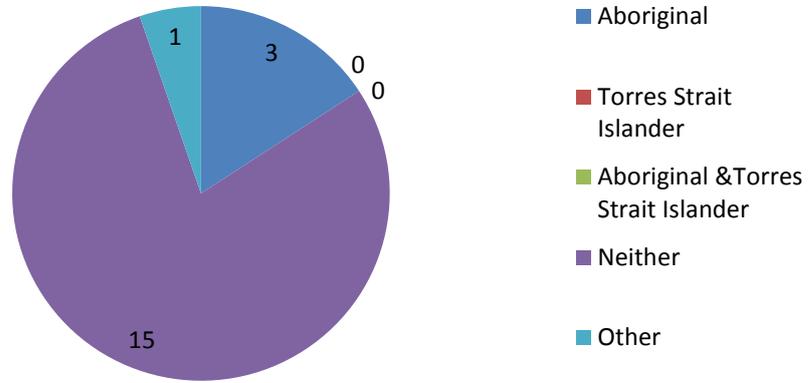


All 73 end of carer approvals were sent an acknowledgment letter from QFKC asking them if they wanted to complete an exit survey.

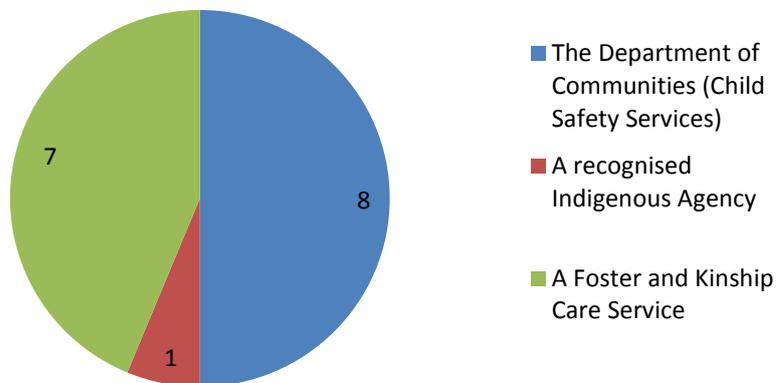
There were 19 people completed the survey, affiliated with the service centres below.



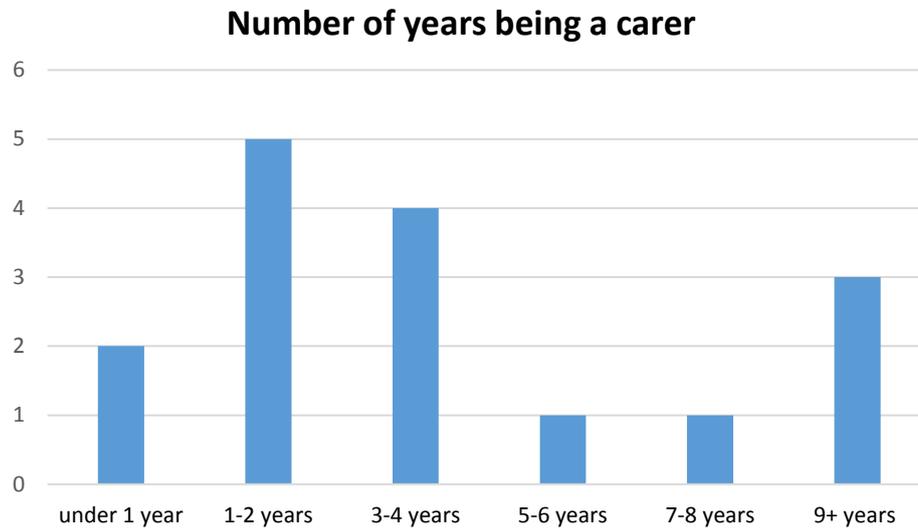
From the 19 people who completed the survey for the South East region the following information was shared.



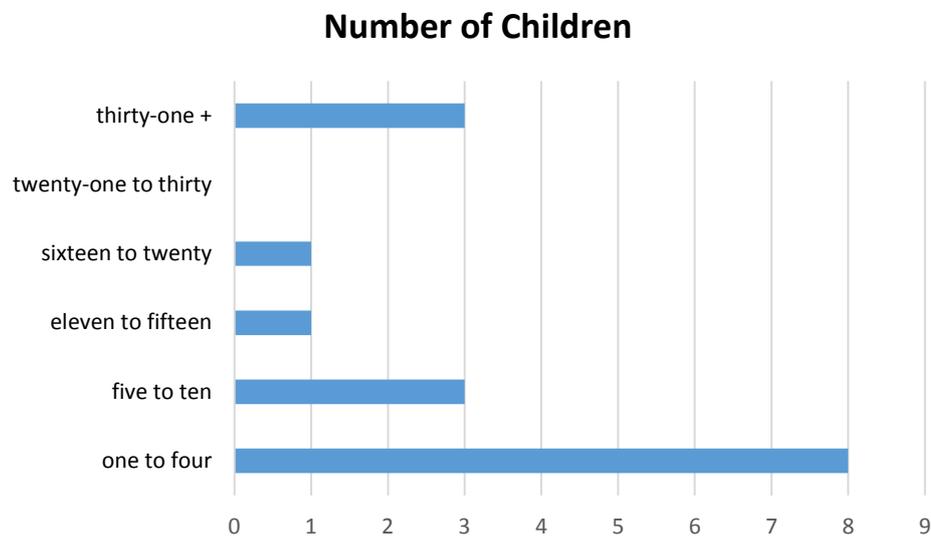
People were asked to identify who they are supported by, they answered as follows;



Information is requested regarding the person's time spent as a carer; to identify when they started as a Carer and when they stopped. Below is a graph that identifies the length of time stated in the responses.

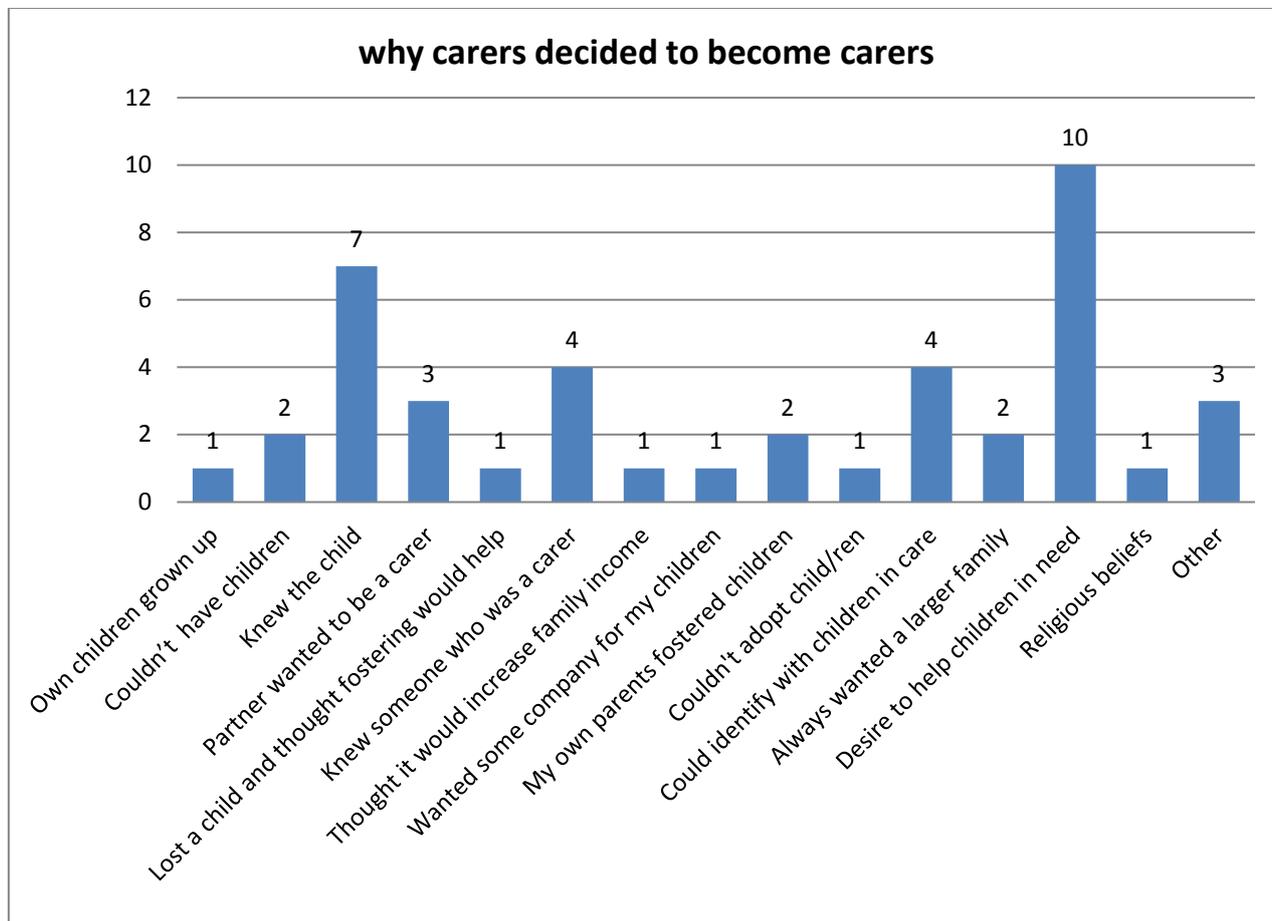


The information provided also evidences the amount of children the person/persons have provided care to.



About You as a Carer

People were asked to identify what made them decide to become a Foster Carer.



Below is a selection of some of the comments provided by the people undertaking the survey in relation to why they decided to become a carer. This information would be consistent with the section under *other* on the graph:

- To give those who haven't had a chance, a chance
- The child was in danger in a residential so her mother and I removed her with police assistance and informed Child Safety where she was going to stay which was with me
- To assist my daughter who was a carer and casual teacher, and for respite
- Child is my niece - although we are related we did not have much of a relationship due to her mother and Child Safety intervention *Ceased caring in January 2019, however this is not an option in your list
- Child was a friend of one of my son's. We decided to apply to become carer's when we discovered the child had recently been taken into Foster Care
- I wanted to give these children a better life
- I wanted to do something not because I had to, but because I could. I believed I could make a difference. There are enough people in this world who frankly do not give a stuff about other people, I wanted to show I was someone who did care
- The desire to help children in need and to make a positive difference in young lives

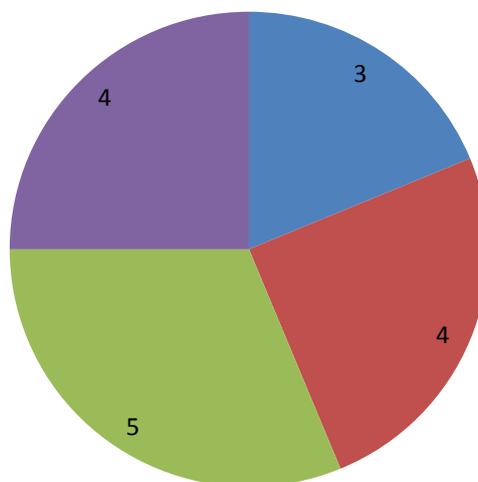
- I have skills to help children as I work with special needs. My training helped me assist children with special needs, trauma and separation
- Had Child Safety done their jobs I wouldn't of had to of stepped in
- Loved having the children - as my own children are from 50-36 and as I was retired TAFE teacher felt I had the time and expertise to assist
- Grew up with family friends who had foster kids
- Wanted to give back to the community. Friends who are full time carers doing a fantastic but hard job

Reason for Discontinuing as a Foster/Kinship Carer

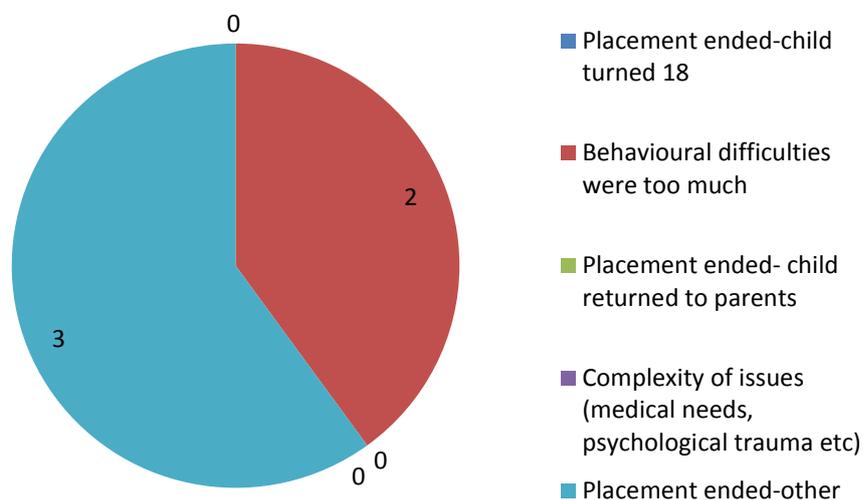
People undertaking the survey were asked to provide the reason why they deciding to stop being carers. They are provided with four options then asked to elaborate in relation to the option that they have selected.

Main reason for deciding to stop being a carer

■ Child related ■ Carer & Family related ■ Child Safety related ■ Other



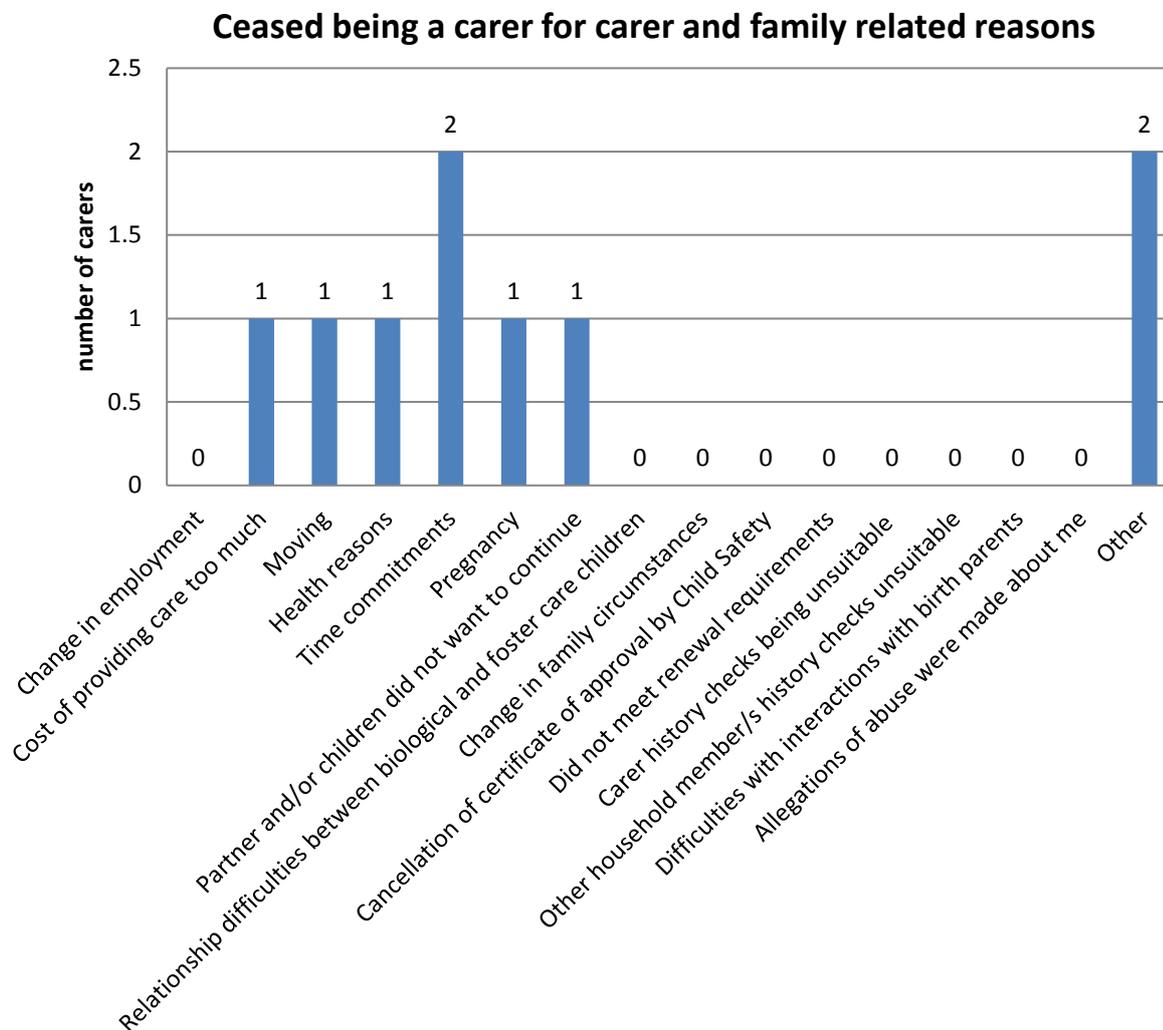
The following information will be specific to the reason that has been provided in this question. If the respondents answered that they ceased being carers due to child related reasons, they are asked to expand on the reasons, as follows.



Below are extracts of comments that were made by people completing the survey in relation to this question:

- Child was abusing one of my children
- We felt we were NOT valued
- Child was out partying and she would not listen to me and return home and Child Safety couldn't get her to return
- The department knew the about lies and chose to ignore it

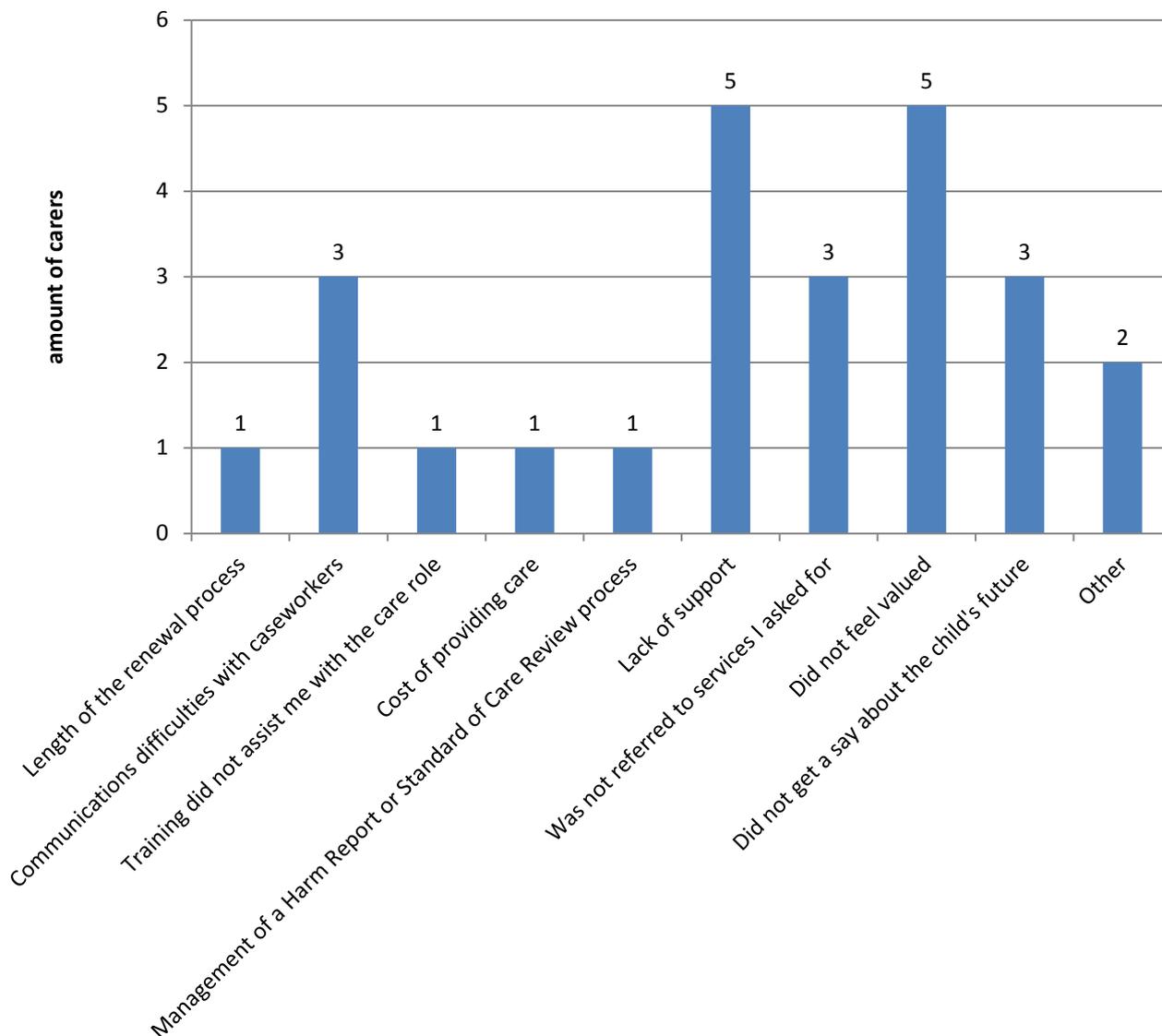
For people who stated that they ceased caring due to carer and family reasons, they were asked to expand on their response.



Comments provided:

- The child in care was abusing one of my children
- Ageing parent needing care
- Reimbursement was not sufficient for the care I was providing
- We wanted to take foster daughter with us for a 6 month relocation to Alice Springs however, this was not approved
- Primarily lack of response from Department in all aspects
- Although my partner was the one who wanted to be a foster carer, he complained every time the kids came into our care and provided no support
- My choice as I didn't want to deal with incompetency!
- Initial stress on relationship and interactions between foster child and biological son were at times concerning

Response from carer when ceasing care due to issues relating to Child Safety Services



Below are extracts of comments made by carers in relation to the questions referring to why they ceased as Carers if this was related to Child Safety Services.

- Their lies and lack of care about the child. I am disgusted.
- Dept. personnel changed about three times, no consistency with workers
- Lack of response to requests, constant changes of case workers therefore having to repeat requests all over again. Delays and lies causing untold stresses.
- The lies and rubbish we were fed by the department is disgusting. They showed no support as our child approached 18. Phone calls were ignored, emails ignored. Our child went 4 months without a visit!!!! We moved interstate and took our child with us. As he was high needs we did need some extra support to assist him when he turned 18. We were told that it had nothing to do with NSW Child Safety. Qld Child Safety said it was out of their hands as he lived interstate now. So our child went without, our family broke down as we couldn't cope. We had wonderful rapport with both Anglicare and Child Safety. When we needed them NO ONE could care less. One by one every person from either Child Safety or

Anglicare just wiped us and we were eventually told that because we no longer lived in QLD Anglicare was only doing us a favour out of courtesy, and it was none of their concern what happened to our child. Our child was not eligible for any service in NSW including Anglicare as he was under a QLD court order and he was 'too old' to transfer. In the end our child's behaviour got more and more out of control. Fast approaching 18 with no career prospects, a high needs disability and ineligible for NDIS funding to support himself due to yet more errors made by the Dept.! We eventually made the heartbreaking decision to send our child back to QLD. We hoped that this would ensure he would get the support he needed to set himself up with a plan for when he turned 18. Instead he is still ignored, still brushed off. There has been no case planning what so ever for our boy and this was the biggest frustration we had. He turns 18 in two weeks and there is no plan for his future, the Dept. is just going to kick him to the curb which they pretty much already did 12 months ago. The entire process has left us broken and defeated. We received great training about how hard and difficult the kids are and how horrible their parents are to deal with. What we did not expect and received no training on is how crap the Dept. is and how terrible the support for these kids is when they need it. We didn't know that there's no accountability within the Dept. We thought we were joining a club or an army of people who wanted to help these kids and one day end the ongoing cycle of poverty and abuse even for just one child. It was an eye opening experience to say the least. I would never do it again, not because of the kids, but because of the Dept. Kids I could handle it's the Dept. that carry on worse than the children they're supposedly trying to help. One particular thing that really irritated me was the lack of contact. QLD's response: "Yes well because he's in NSW it's not a part of our role anymore really... yea..." NSW's response: "Because he is a QLD child NSW really only does things as a courtesy, he's not our responsibility. He needs to take responsibility for himself and not rely on the Dept. anymore. One word comes to my mind as I type this... Vile! Thank you so much for the opportunity to vent!

- The system was the main problem. We lived in Parkinson but our children go to school in Springfield. We wanted to be able to care for children who were linked to the Springfield area to make traveling easier but because you are stuck with the agency in your area and they can only manage children in their area. Also, the majority of foster carers we met were only a single step up from the parents that the children were being taken away from which just contributes to the cycle of kids in care. There is also too much focus on reunification with parents who should never have been parents.
- When baby was collected for contact, I had to ask 3 times, to see id and the workers changed constantly, I also dropped the young baby to the community Centre a few times myself, and the child's Mother came to collect her from me at my car, but no Child Safety worker appeared on two occasions and I had to tell the child's Mother I would like to come in and look around, (not wanting to go with no supervision there) after twice waiting for some 20 mins with other Parents with children there, I left feeling uncomfortable that there was no one from the Dept. there. The person at the Community Centre, (reception) didn't even look up or acknowledge me being there. I did make a complaint to Child Safety, about the above, I also mentioned there was no sign in book for visitors to which I was told yes there was, to the right when you go in? I questioned why I was not told this earlier as a "workplace safety" issue, it was "fobbed off"
- Burnt out
- Moving interstate
- He turned 18
- Work and travel commitments
- I was having the child/ren nearly every weekend
- I refused to put my children at risk of any further harm. I received no support from Child Safety - we were constantly lied to by Child Safety workers, about financial information and the child's sexual

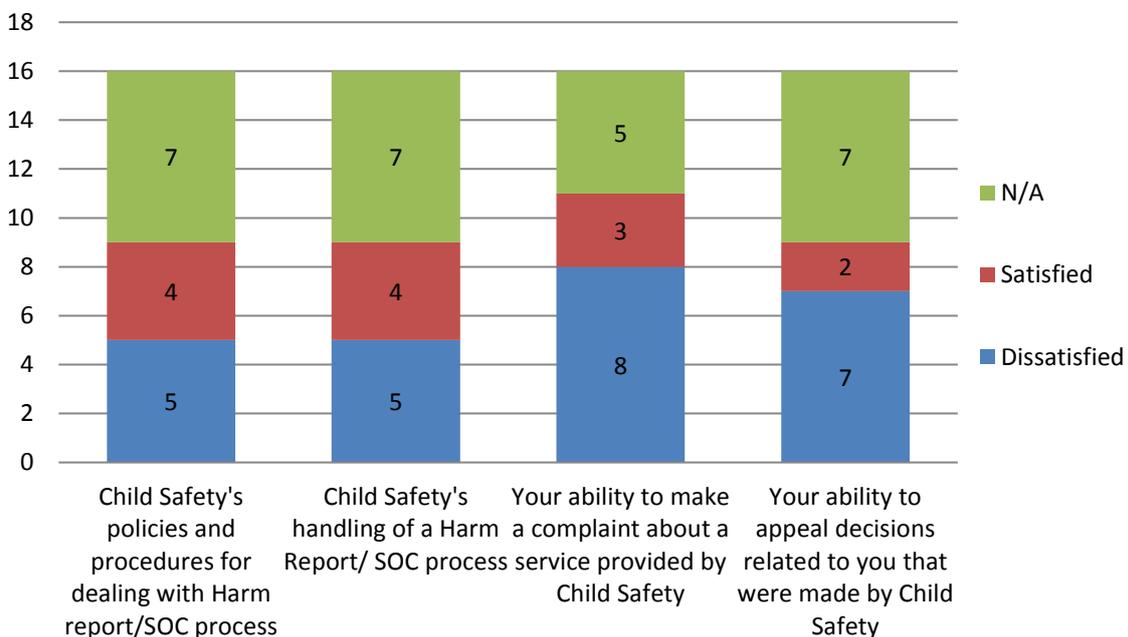
behaviours and the possible risk to our family. I was subjected to abuse from the child's former step-father, with no support from Child Safety on this issue either

- Lack of support from Child Safety over three years. Even when we had a serious discussion with caseworker when we were close to breaking point, no further contact was made until we followed up, and still they didn't do anything and blamed staff moving to another department
- We had 2 siblings reunify after 2.5 years. (who we keep in touch with) When they left we went off line for a year. After 5 years we felt it was time for us to take some time out. As we are moving interstate and would need to redo our training in NSW we decided to resign
- The Dept. was the main reason and why we won't foster again. It's too heart breaking watching these kids be let down by the one entity that is supposed to protect them. In many circumstances I have seen the poor kids would be best left in their original home environments than to deal with the uncertainty of the Dept.
- The system, the system, the system - no flexibility, promises that are never delivered, aimless management
- The Child Safety department refused to listen to our concerns relating to the increased negative behaviours from both the children in our last placement. These behaviours were stimulated from increased home visits within their family. The department were notified many times by us in relation to this, and as a result the condition continued to exist. We were basically the "scapegoat" and the department defended the actions of both the children and the family
- My concerns about my last clients were not addressed or acted upon. The placement ceased, I did not get the opportunity to say goodbye. I provided respite for 2 years for 2 boys and other children
- Child Safety have shocking communication skills and in the beginning should not support the placement and did everything in their power to make it unbearable including not financially supporting the child in my care. It wasn't until I submitted a complaint that they started to pull their finger out. Once the child in my care got a new CSO as a safety officer things ran much smoother so 10 points to her doing her job unlike the colleagues that went before her
- Yes! I didn't receive any payments for approximately 6 or 8 weeks, I was told I hadn't officially received my certificate of appointment, I spoke to the Director who said she hadn't signed off on that yet, to which I replied "I have the certificate in my hand" with your signature, "no she hadn't seen it" I suggested she must have a copy or the original in her possession - upon investigate (with no apologies) I finally received a payment in Mid-January! Some 6-8 weeks later I was so angry I rang and told her the "system was fucked" (I don't normally swear) and I would no longer be dealing with them, as she didn't know what was happening In her own office! I kept a diary when I had the children from the word go, as I have worked for an organisation with young teenagers in care and protection when I was at Uni and wanted to keep track of dates, times, and dates of the children in my care, and any behavioural issues and how I dealt with that in a positive manner. The only person who saw this or read it to was the support worker from Life Without Barriers, and she was a past student of mine. Since my disassociation from Child Safety, the times I had the children, my daughter paid me herself. There was also an incident at our local park, where my grandson happened to be, and two workers had one of the children I minded, and their siblings, and the boys were in the water splashing kids, (which is not a kids pool, but has ducks, fish etc. in the water, which is quite deep. A member of the public chastised the boys, and my grandson said the workers were on their mobile phones (one guy and a girl) he took a photo! I believe this was also reported. I wonder what happened there?? So with the above, it appears that workers are inattentive, too immature, lack experience and training! Attracted by the position and wage more than the responsibility of the care and protection!

- We would have thought keeping us as foster carers would have been a logical idea despite a 6 month relocation however, there was no encouragement or suggestion if this. We too could of advocated for this however, felt worn down by Child Safety system
- Work and travel commitments. New season of life now own children are grown.
- No support with a very autistic child also suffering from BPD
- From the children and the Dept.
- My concerns were not investigated
- Have indicated elsewhere
- Regular respite ended when children were placed in a residential home
- The Department made it very difficult for our family
- Husband needed extra attention for health reasons
- As noted elsewhere
- You do not become foster carers to be thanked however, I am gobsmacked that at the end of our time as foster carers not what service has acknowledged our commitment. Not one thank you

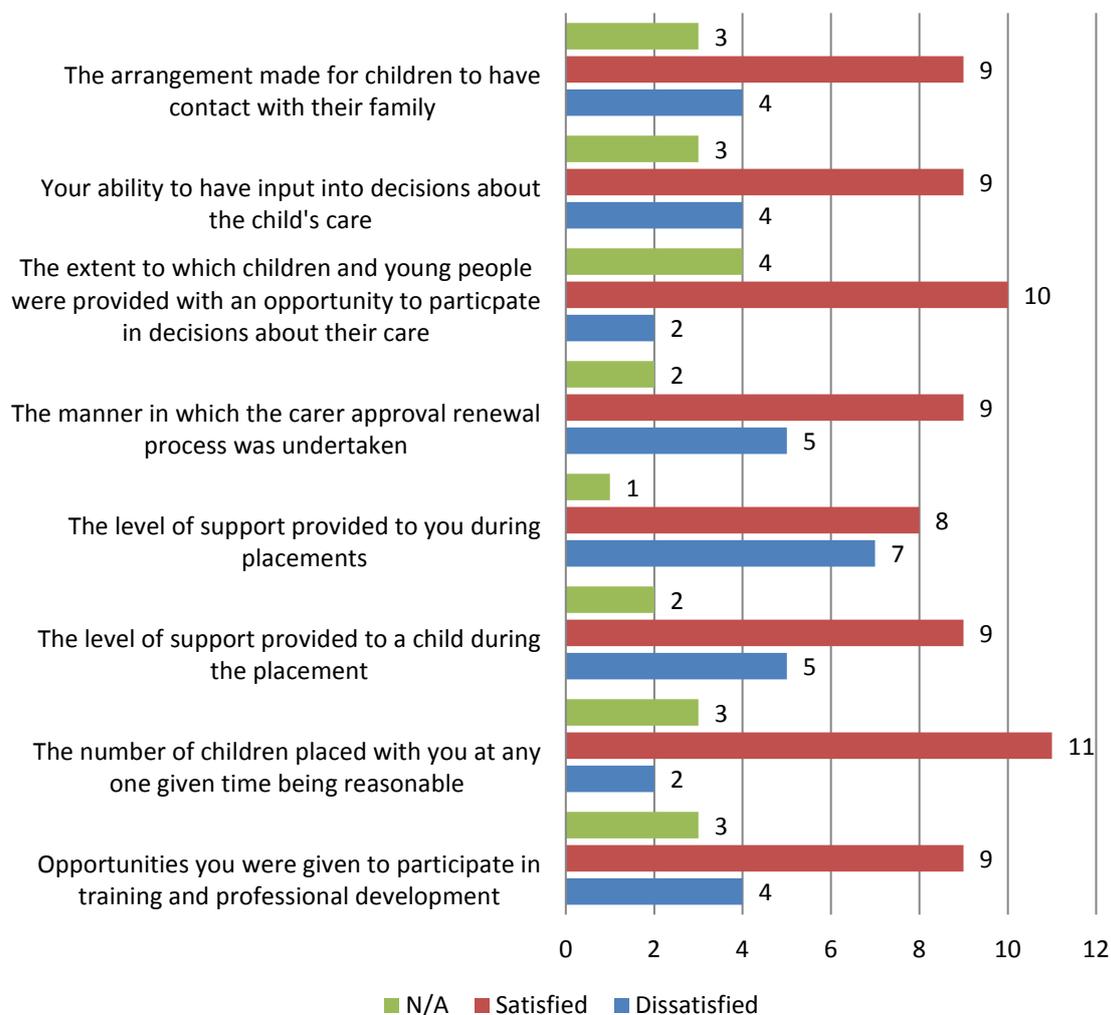
People undertaking the surveys were asked how satisfied they were with different elements of their involvement with the Department of Child Safety.

**In regards to Child Safety,
 how satisfied were you with**



The Experience of Caring

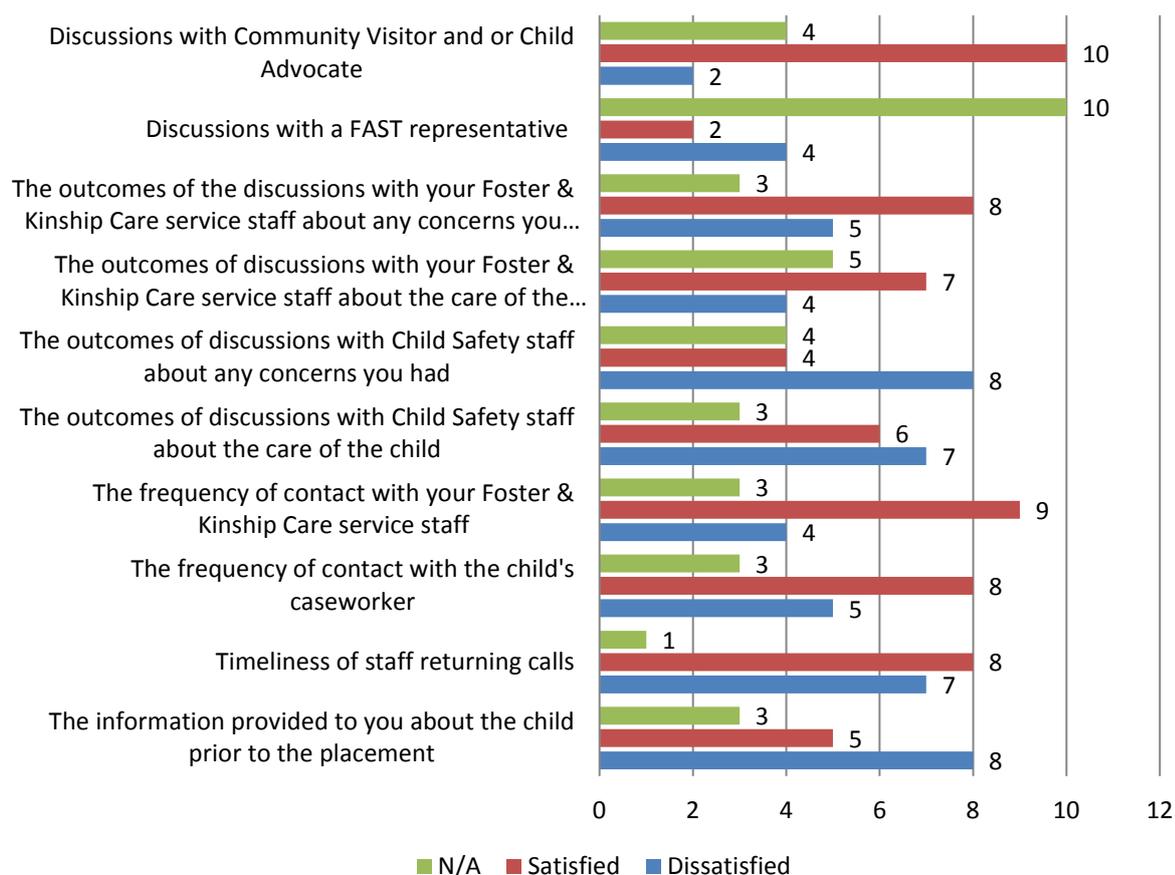
How satisfied were you with



The Experience of Caring: Communication

Carers were asked how satisfied they were with their experiences of communication with relevant stakeholders. Below is a table that outlines the responses and extracts of further comments that they wanted to make in relation to the question.

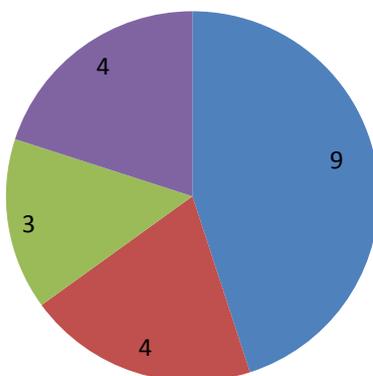
How satisfied were you with



The carers were asked to identify whether Child Safety discussed the following matters with them:

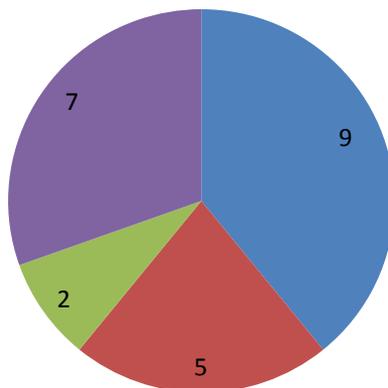
The child's cultural support needs

■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure ■ If yes, was there a cultural support plan in place



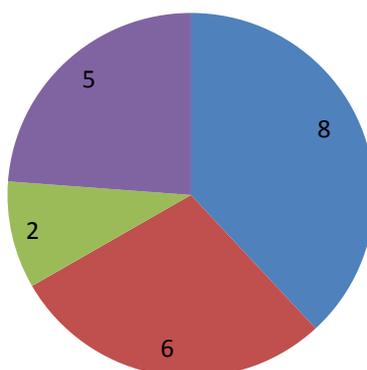
The child's educational needs

■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure ■ If yes, was there an education support plan in place



The child's health needs

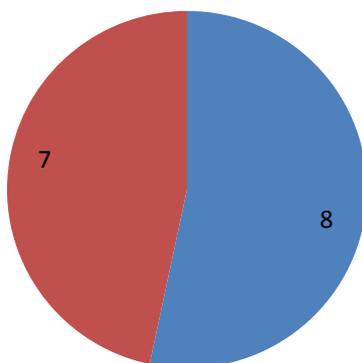
■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure ■ If yes, did the child have a current child health passport



Carers were asked if they had received information regarding FAST Representatives and QLD Foster and Kinship Care, the table below identifies their responses:

Did you receive information about FAST and/or QLD Foster and Kinship Care (formerly Foster Care QLD)

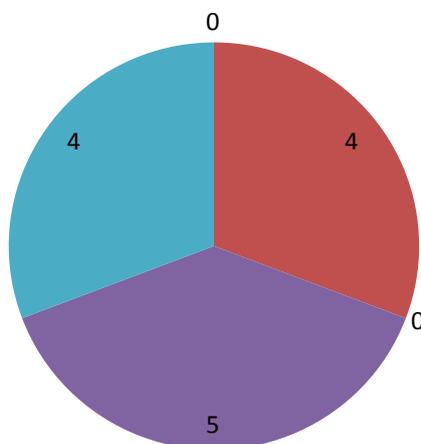
■ Yes ■ No



Experience of Caring: Contact

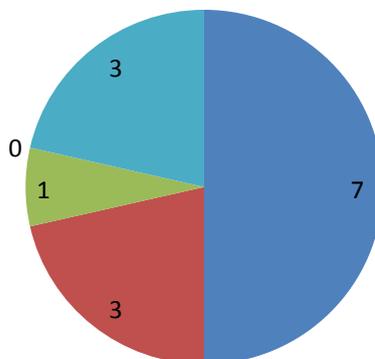
How often did you have contact with Child Safety staff

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Fortnightly ■ Monthly ■ Only occasionally



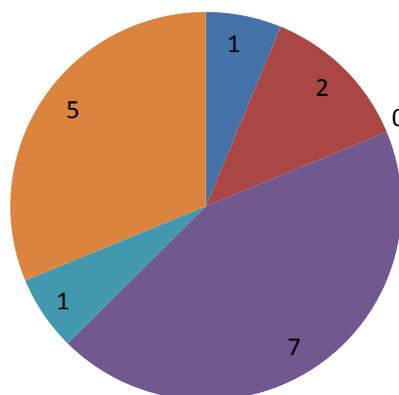
How did contact occur?

■ Phone call ■ Home Visit ■ Email ■ Meeting at the office ■ Other



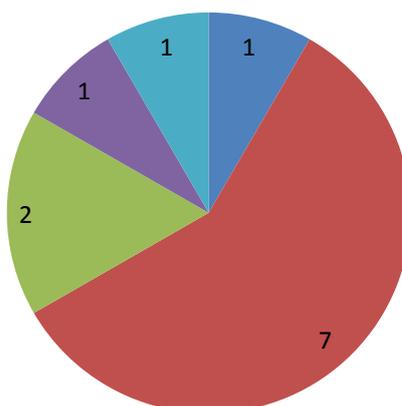
How often did you have contact with your Foster and Kinship Care Service?

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Fortnightly ■ Monthly ■ Only occasionally ■ Not applicable

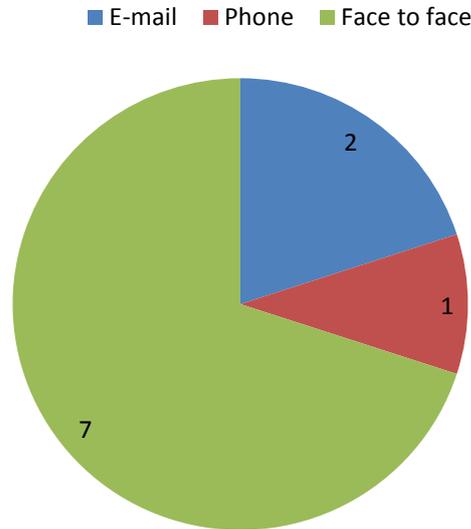


How did this contact occur?

■ Phone call ■ Home visit ■ E-mail ■ Meeting at the office ■ Other



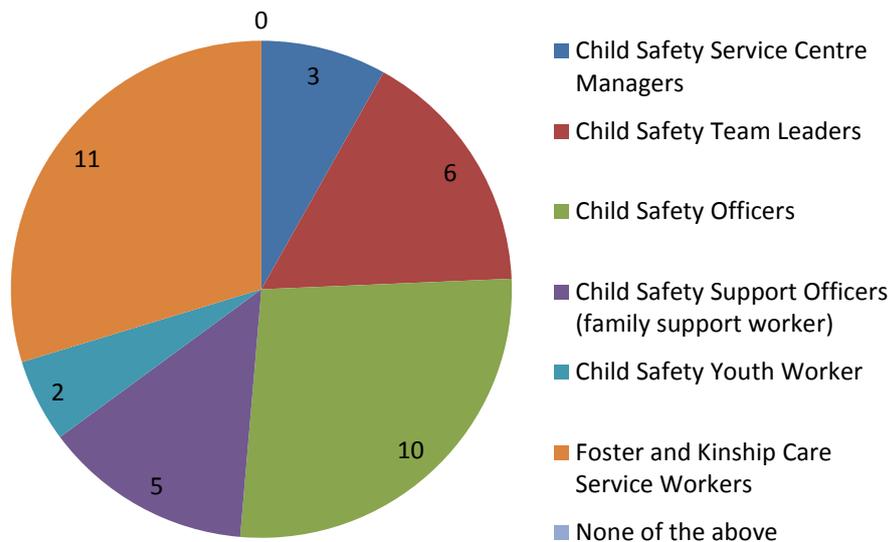
What was your preference regarding contact?



Comments provided:

- Most of the contact was via phone, shockingly little information was put into writing because staff were giving false information, and phone calls leave no written trail of evidence.
- I haven't had a conversation with Child Safety for over 3 years
- Phone or visit

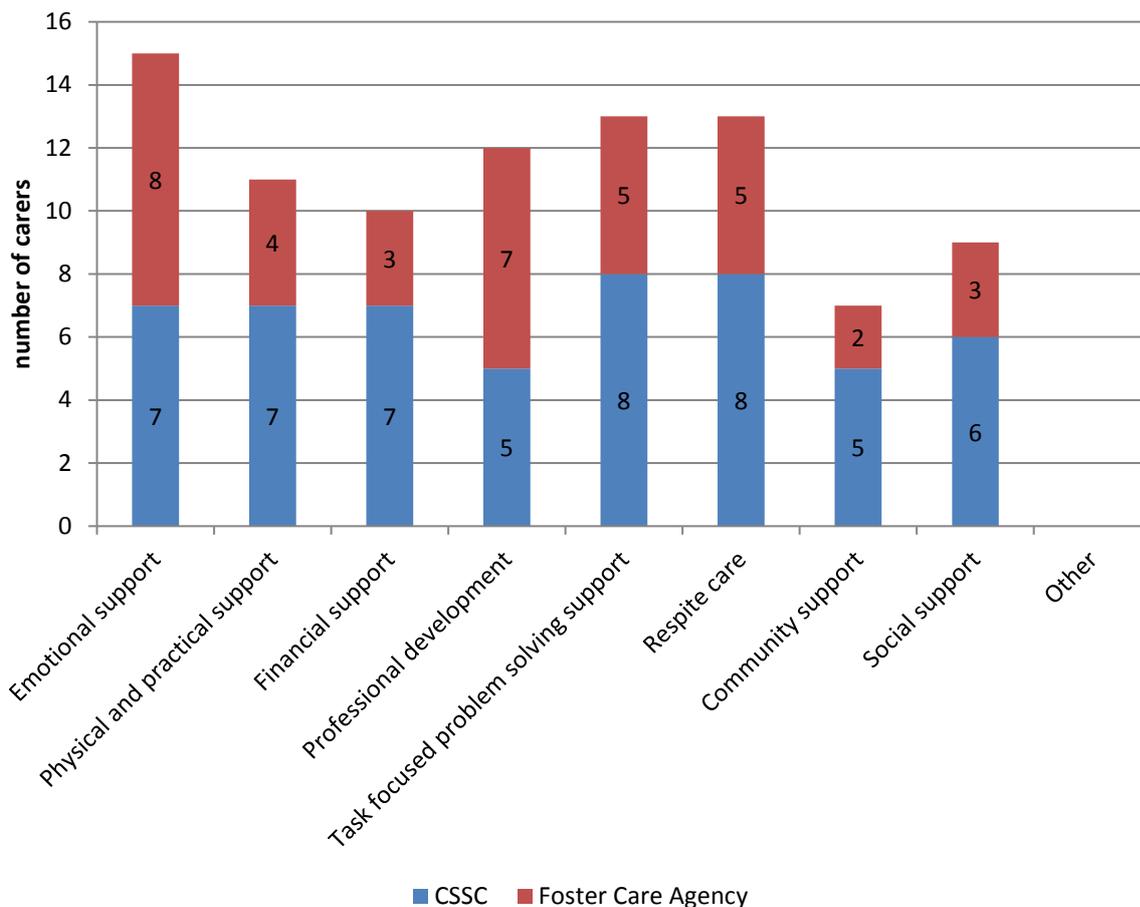
Which of the following persons did you usually have contact with?



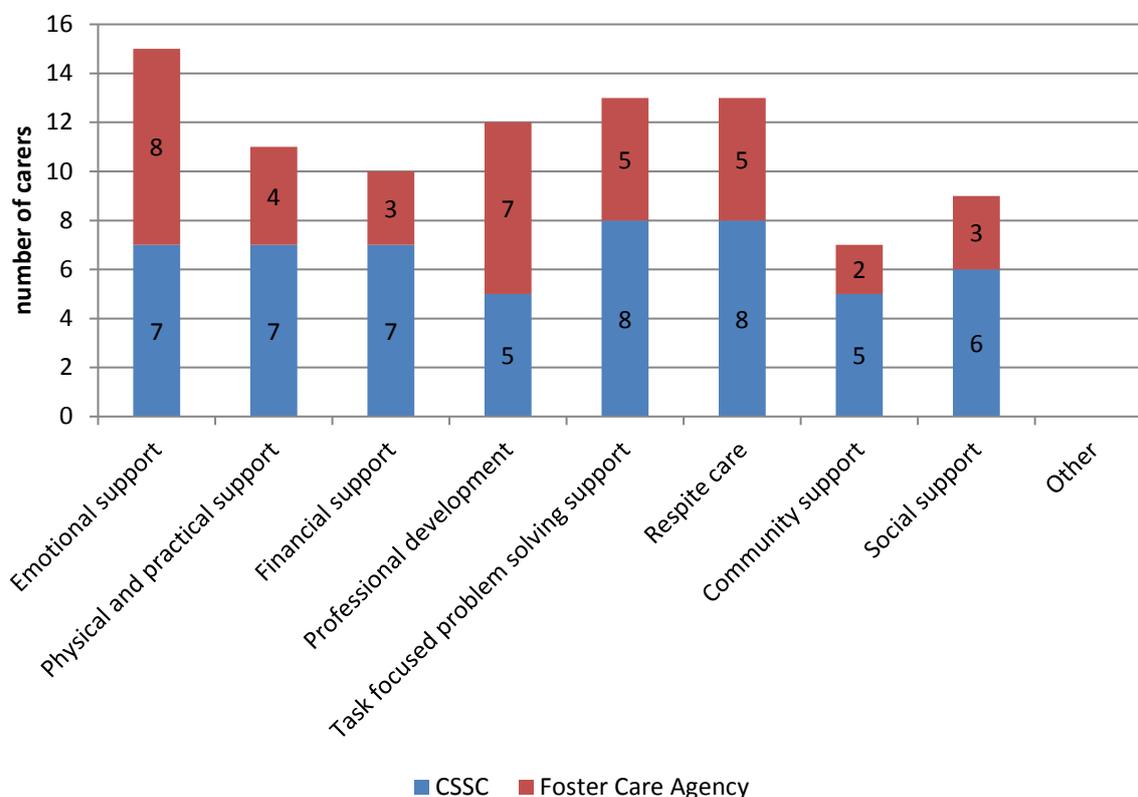
The Experience of Caring: Support

This section addresses the experience of caring and support received.

Please indicate whether during your time as a foster carer you requested any of the following supports from Child Safety and or your Foster & Kinship Care Service



Please indicate whether during your time as a foster carer you received any of the following supports from Child Safety and or your Foster & Kinship Care Service



Carers were asked to provide responses to two questions:

- Did they seek or receive any other form of support, and where was this from?
- Were there other supports you would have liked access to?

Below are the responses supplied:

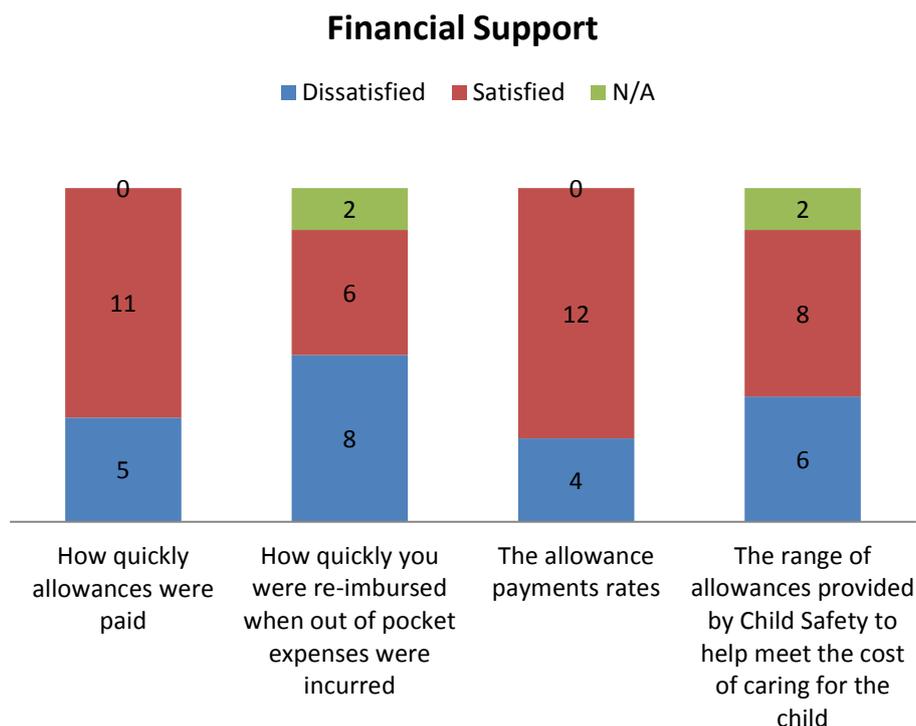
- Foster and Kinship Care service had to follow up any requests I had made to Child Safety because they just ignored, deflected etc.
- Denied all! As our child was 'doing well' he was a very low priority
- None
- Nil
- No
- Nil
- We tried to seek support from Anglicare
- No
- No

Responses to, were there other supports you would have like to access:

- Counselling - Silky Oaks
- Yes - any support whatsoever - I got nothing
- Support for teaching the child how to become an adult, filling in forms, cooking, resume writing etc.
- Nil

- We asked for youth worker access we found the names number etc. etc. Were told they were too costly and as our child was nearly 18 not something they were interested in
- No

The Experience of Caring: Financial Support

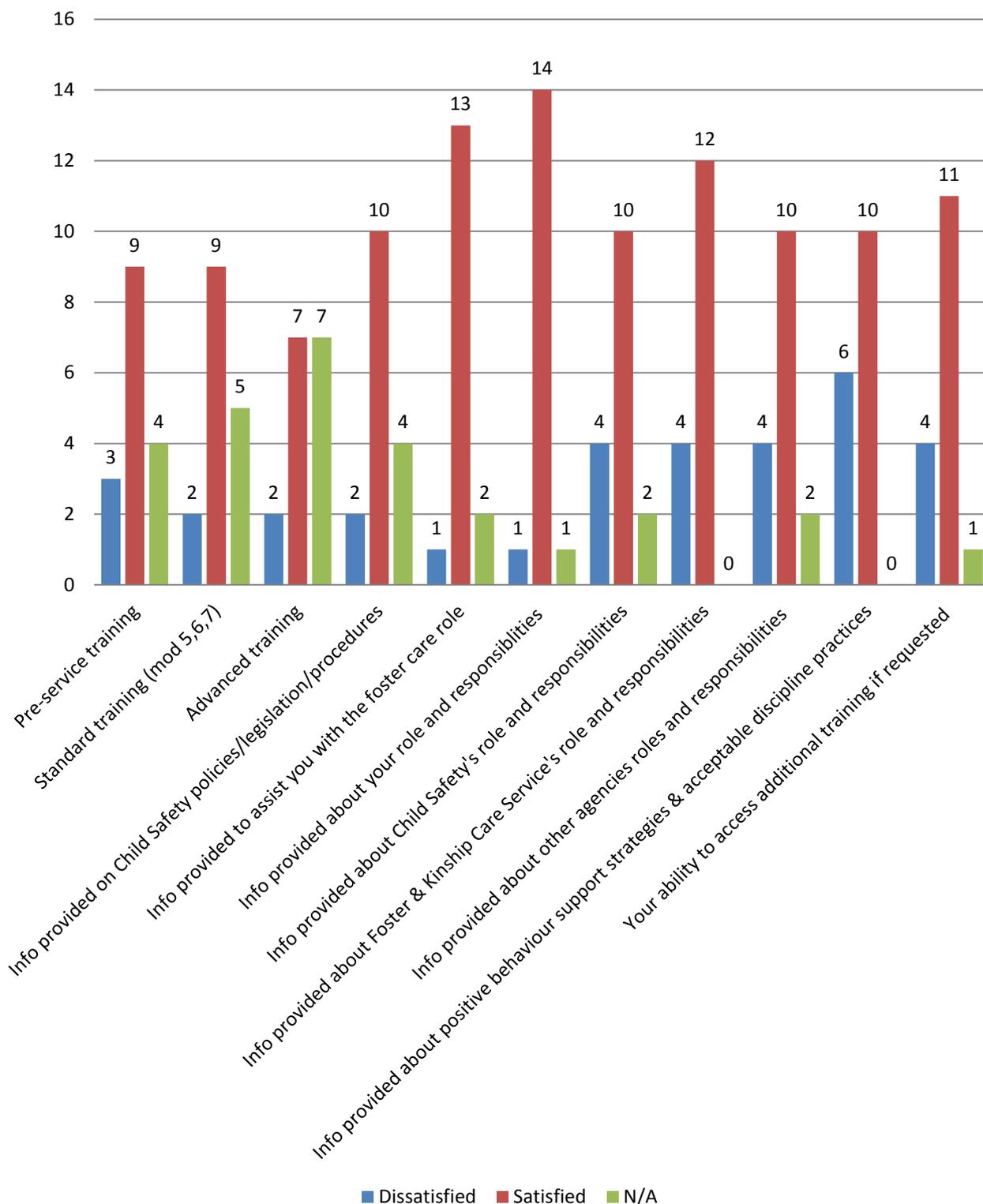


Responses from carers in relation to financial support:

- We live in NSW & provided care in NSW however we were "paid" QLD carer rates. I use the term paid loosely as we were not actually paid for the care we provided
- We paid for the child to attend a private school that included the costs of laptops and camps etc. in the fees. We asked for assistance for the cost of the camps and laptop but were told no
- Mostly fine but there was a period of time (3 months) I was chasing the same thing up nearly every week. Thankfully it was sorted. Overall satisfied
- Financial aid was never the problem. We needed more support than a pay check and 'off you go' We never did Mod 5,6,7 Anglicare simply said "you guys have got this, off you go"
- There were occasions over the years where we waited months for reimbursement. We were also denied a respite payment once, because they said it was not in the best interest of the children (for the record we only used about 40 - 50% of respite entitlements.) why!!! I WOULD LIKE SOMEONE TO EXPLAIN THIS TO US
- Not consistent; not enough to cover expenses
- E.g. swimming lessons

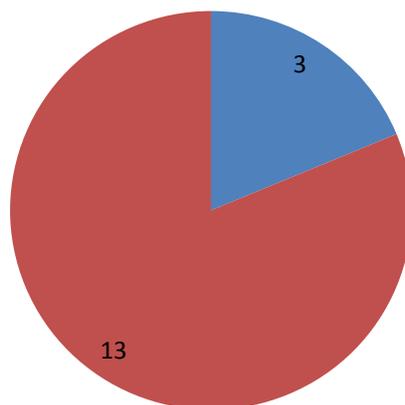
The Experience of Caring: Training and Professional Development

In regard to training and development, how satisfied were you with the following?



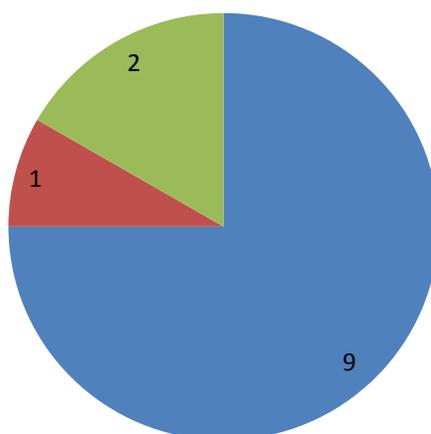
Have you attended any training in the last 12 months

■ Yes ■ No

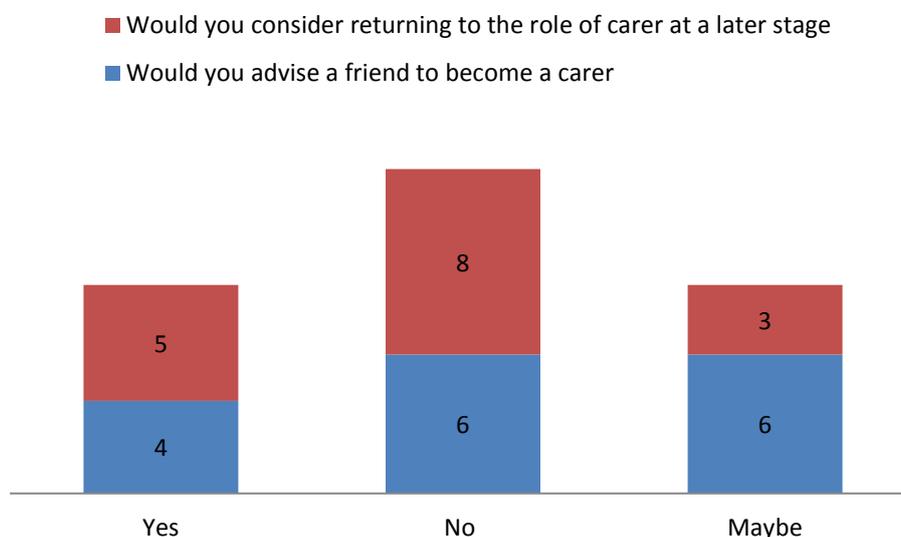


If you were approved as a Foster Carer, was there a Foster Care Agreement in place?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know



Overall Experience



Responses in relation to returning to the role as a carer at a later stage and advising a friend to become a carer:

- I wouldn't recommend it to my worst enemy
- Nope. It's not the kids. It's the Dept.
- My only wish is that the Dept. treated the carers better
- Only with children younger than own
- Depends on the person
- Breaks my heart it really does but I couldn't do it again

Carers were asked to provide comments in relation to their overall experience as a carer, the responses were as follows:

1. Did your experiences of providing care meet the expectation you had when you decided to become a carer?

- No responses

2. What were the most challenging aspects of being a Carer?

- All of it - everything is challenging when you are being given false information from the agency that is supposed to be supporting you
- Dealing with the Department
- Pressure given to accept more respite duties than what I could cope with
- Caring for children of similar ages to our own children, sometimes the behaviours they were exposed to was challenging
- I felt I had to micromanage the Dept. It was so one-sided. Surely by now whomever is reading my answers is getting a broad picture of the circumstances that occurred... :)
- The system is set up for the kids in care to become the parents of kids in care
- The department
- Teenage boy issues
- Not being valued or listened to

- Dealing with Child Safety, dealing with a drug dependent 16 year old that didn't like discipline or being told she had to stay home
- The Dept.
- Child Safety Emotional wellbeing on foster daughter Impact on biological son Impact on relationship
- Dealing with challenging behaviours

3. What was the most positive aspect of being a Carer?

- Nothing - one of my children has been abused - there is absolutely no positive in this situation
- Seeing the Child achieve
- There was back up plans Seeing the children
- Our whole family loved being able to provide a safe loving home for the children. My 11 year still refers to the 2 little ones who have been back with their mum for a year and a half her brother and sister
- Making a difference to the child's life. Not many people get that chance
- Nothing
- Seeing the joy and happiness from the children in general
- Later years - Child behaviours
- Knowing he left in a better position than he came
- Happy children
- Knowing that a child would not be harmed by Child Safety inability to do their job.
- Loved the children
- The beautiful spirited resilient little girl we will never forget
- Providing a safe place and being a positive role model

4. What helped you feel supported in your role as a Carer?

- Case Worker from Churches of Christ Carer Support
- 24 hour contact
- We were mostly fortunate with both our agency and the department and the support and shoulder they both offered. Also the childcare centre worked amazingly with us
- Our family through and through. Until many many of our friends including my parents said enough is enough "you need to stop before it destroys you"
- Nothing
- Our Agency (Churches of Christ Care) and our friend network
- Loved every minute. If younger would continue
- Family support
- Contact with team leader
- CSO when she was finally assigned to the child in my care
- My family
- Mercy / Silky Oaks counselling
- Regular home visits, even as only a respite carer

5. What could be improved to assist Carers in their role?

- Anything - anything at all
- Department needs to really look at the way they treat their carers
- LWB were wonderful to me and the children

- Everyone's different but I think it's important to let carers know that respite is ok. It took us a long time to realise that
- Child Safety stop having so many meetings and do their job! Did you know that Child Safety bayside doesn't take phone calls on Thursday afternoons because its "mindfulness time". How nice... LEAVE THE DESK AND GO AND SEE THESE KIDS!
- Change the system completely
- Respect from the Child Safety Dept. being treated as equals. The Dept... actually addressing issues fairly. NOT Always siding with the children and their family
- CCO's
- I think the staff were great
- Higher rate of payment; better communication
- Supportive Child Safety officers to start with and the list goes on
- Child Safety culture change. Please note we experienced a number of incredible CSOs however, the negative experiences unfortunately are fresh in our minds
- Mandatory training to understand the impact of trauma upon a child's development. This is only touched upon during the standard training but a fuller understanding leads to greater empathy and ability to deal with challenging behaviours

6. Do you have any additional comments, suggestions or concerns?

- This has been such an awful experience, we lodged many complaints & they were met with tepid responses if they were responded to at all
- I can't express strongly enough, how stressful the Department makes it for a family to operate with a child in care. The Department needs a big shakeup, I feel for the children that have no option but to be in this system. For me, I had the opportunity to walk away after the lack of response caused untold stresses. I will never put myself back in that position to be treated in that way by the Department
- That's all, had my vent
- Perhaps the Child Safety staff should do respite regularly to gain a valuable insight into the real issues regarding the situations that carers experience
- No
- Too many departments; too many agencies; Communication
- A simple thank you at the end of placement would do wonders