

“Help Break Down the Wall” Community Attitudes Survey

Summary of Results

**Report to the Department of Families,
Housing, Community Services and Indigenous
Affairs**

by

NAPCAN

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This Survey and report was funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). The report was authored by Professor Rob Donovan, Dr Lisa Wood, Mr Geoffrey Jalleh and Ms Penny Ivery, on behalf of NAPCAN.

Contents		Page
1	Introduction	1
	1.1 Methods	2
	1.1.1 Literature review and Survey development	2
	1.1.2 Focus group pre-testing	2
	1.1.3 On-line pilot testing	3
2	Results	4
	2.1 Respondent characteristics	5
	2.1.1 Demographics	6
	2.1.2 Contact with children	6
	2.1.3 Children at home and foster parent status	7
	2.1.4 Surprise at the level of child abuse and neglect in Australia	7
	2.2 Perceptions of child wellbeing	8
	2.2.1 Responsibility for child wellbeing and safety	8
	2.2.2 Respondents' concerns for children and young people	9
	2.2.3 Children and young people's concerns for themselves	10
	2.3 Community beliefs about child abuse	11
	2.3.1 Severity of the problem	11
	2.3.2 Prevalence	12
	2.4 What respondents would do in relation to three hypothetical scenarios	14
	2.4.1 Inhibitors to action	15
	2.5 Perception of what contributes to child abuse and neglect in Australia	16
	2.6 Perceived effectiveness of interventions to prevent child abuse and neglect	19
3	Concluding Comments	21
Appendix 1	The Research Group involved in the development of the Survey and its methodology	24
Appendix 2	NAPCAN Community Survey – possible themes to explore	25
Appendix 3	NAPCAN Survey development	26
Appendix 4	Questionnaire presented to focus group 1 : Children and Young People Survey	27
Appendix 5	Web based questionnaire	40
Appendix 6	Community Attitude Survey on the Safety and Wellbeing of Children	44

Contents

Page

Tables

1	Respondent demographics and comparison with ABS 2006 population data	5
2	Amount of contact respondents reported having with children	6
3	Perception of who is responsible for children's wellbeing and safety	8
4	Respondents' concerns for children up to 12 years and 13-17 years	9
5	Mission Australia Survey 2009: Issues of concern to young people by age	10
6	Respondents' beliefs about the community's seriousness of the problem of child abuse & neglect and their own beliefs about the seriousness of the problem	11
7	What respondents would 'definitely' do in three hypothetical scenarios	14

Figures

1	Perceived prevalence of abuse	12
2	Factors perceived to stop people from taking action when they suspect child abuse or neglect	16
3	Perceived contributors to child abuse and neglect	17
4	Perceived effectiveness of interventions to prevent child abuse and neglect	19

1 Introduction

NAPCAN (National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect) is a leading advocate for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. NAPCAN's mission is to advocate on behalf of children and young people and to promote positive change in attitudes, behaviour, policies, practices and the law to prevent abuse and neglect and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Australian children.

Child abuse in Australia is a serious problem and its prevalence is worsening. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's *Child Protection Australia 2008-09* reported that in 2008/09, the number of children subject to a child protection notification increased by 6.2 per cent to 207,462, and the number of children subject to a substantiation of a notification increased by 1.7 per cent to 32,641. Also, in one year, the number of children in out-of-home care increased by 9.3 per cent to 34,069, with a 44 per cent increase over five years (from 23,695 in 2005).¹

Child abuse occurs right across Australian society and the long-term, personal, social and economic costs of child abuse and neglect are immense. NAPCAN believes that it is time to draw the line in the sand and break this cycle of abuse. NAPCAN works with researchers, professionals, government, business, the media and committed individuals to bring about this change.

National Child Protection Week commences on Fathers' Day in the first week in September each year and runs for one week. It has been co-ordinated by NAPCAN since 1990. In recent years, NAPCAN has received Federal Government funding for National Child Protection Week.

In its current form, National Child Protection Week serves as a national focal point for a broad range of annual activity across the child protection and family support sectors in Australia. It rallies organisations to action, builds relationships and raises the issue of prevention on the national agenda.

For National Child Protection Week 2009, NAPCAN wished to undertake an activity that would gauge community attitudes to child abuse and neglect. In previous annual National Child Protection Weeks, NAPCAN initiated various local community activities supported by a community service announcement on the major commercial television networks and mass media publicity.

For 2009, it was proposed to use a community service announcement, other media publicity and email lists to motivate people to go to a particular website and complete a questionnaire on their beliefs and attitudes about various issues pertaining to children and child protection. The rationale was that this would not only provide an opportunity for those who felt strongly enough about the issue to voice their opinions, but also that the Survey results – particularly if a large number responded – could be useful to inform a social change strategy. It was also envisaged that this process could generate an email list of people who could be kept informed of future developments if not further engaged in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children.

¹ Available at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10859>

Funding was subsequently obtained from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to conduct a web-based community attitudes survey.

The Survey was launched in the lead-up to National Child Protection Week (Sunday, 6 September to Saturday, 12 September 2009) and a dedicated website, created by NAPCAN, made it available online through to the end of October.

In this report, the term “children” refers to all people below the age of 18 years.

1.1 Methods

NAPCAN brought together a group of social scientists with relevant expertise and an interest in child advocacy issues to act as an Advisory Committee for the development of the questionnaire (Appendix 1). Professor Rob Donovan and Dr Lisa Wood were commissioned to identify potential items from the literature and oversee an iterative process for the construction of the questionnaire.

1.1.1 Literature review and Survey development

The authors developed an initial set of themes and topics which was circulated to the Advisory Committee. The first draft of possible themes and issues is presented in Appendix 2. A review of published and grey literature was undertaken to identify relevant existing instruments and survey items to include in a pool of potential items (Appendix 3).

While there were existing questions in the literature reviewed relating to perceptions of child abuse and parenting, there was a relative paucity of existing questions relating to some of the other themes that the Advisory Committee was keen for the Survey to cover. Hence a number of items were drafted in close collaboration with the Advisory Committee. Through several telephone conferences with, and written feedback from, the Advisory Committee, the authors developed an initial questionnaire for preliminary testing with members of the general public (Appendix 4).

1.1.2 Focus group pre-testing

Two focus group discussions were held in July 2009 with 17 female adults recruited from a Curtin University database of persons who had previously indicated they were willing to take part in social and health issues research. At least half of the women were parents. Their ages ranged from 20 – 55 years.

The focus groups were also used to provide creative feedback to NAPCAN’s advertising agency on the development of a community service announcement. Reactions to this advertising concept served as a ‘warm-up’ to a discussion on children’s issues and consideration of the aims of the draft NAPCAN Survey. Group participants were then asked to complete the questionnaire without any interaction with other group members.

After all had completed the questionnaire, the moderator (Professor Donovan) led the group through each question probing for ease of understanding, identifying any ambiguities, checking the appropriateness of terminology, and eliciting whether any issues were not included that

should have been, and so on. After feedback from the first group, several modifications were made to the questionnaire for the second group.

Feedback from both groups was incorporated into a modified questionnaire which was then circulated amongst the Advisory Committee.

1.1.3 On-line pilot testing

After further extensive feedback from the Advisory Committee, a web-based questionnaire was developed by the authors for on-line testing using Survey Monkey (Appendix 5).

Using Curtin University's database of persons who had previously indicated they were willing to take part in social and health issues research, 100 men and women, half of whom were parents, were recruited by telephone to complete the web-based questionnaire. Participants were sent an email with a link to the questionnaire and encouraged to complete the questionnaire as soon as possible. To meet timing deadlines, the results were tabulated after 56 interviews were completed (19 men; 37 women).

Patterns of responding were examined to identify any problems with the questionnaire items or issues with on-line responding that were not evident in the paper and pencil version. No significant issues were identified. The online questionnaire also asked respondents for feedback on the questionnaire design (i.e., the words used, or the length, or the meaning of some questions). Of those who commented, the most frequent comment was – as anticipated – that the questionnaire was 'too long'.

A shorter questionnaire was then constructed and minor modifications made to various items. This questionnaire was circulated amongst the Advisory Committee who, in conjunction with NAPCAN staff, made the final decision on wording alternatives, what items should or should not be included, and what other information would be added at the end of the questionnaire. The final questionnaire also contained two questions from the Australian Childhood Foundation's survey which was going into the field around the same time. These questions related to (i) the extent to which respondents personally think the issue of child abuse in Australia is a problem and (ii) the extent to which respondents think the Australian community believes that child abuse is a serious problem.

The final questionnaire (see Appendix 6) was then submitted for, and received, Curtin University ethics approval. It should be noted that for ease of self-completion and to increase the likelihood of complete responses, all questions were closed-ended. That is, respondents were provided with response alternatives rather than being asked open-ended questions. It may well be that in some cases (e.g. Question: what respondents believe are the three things children and young people worry most about), quite different response patterns could have emerged for open-ended questions.

To ensure respondents had a common understanding, the following definitions were provided at the start of the questionnaire:

- **Physical abuse:** *non-accidental aggressive act towards a child including slapping, shaking, punching, kicking etc.*

- **Psychological abuse:** includes rejecting, ignoring, terrorising and/or not providing emotional support and care.
- **Sexual abuse:** any sexual activity between a child and an adult or older person (5 or more years older). Includes fondling, oral or anal and vaginal penetration, exposing or involving a child in pornography, voyeurism etc.
- **Neglect:** failure to provide for a child's basic needs, including not enough food, shelter, clothing, supervision, medical attention etc.
- **Witnessing family violence:** a child being present, either hearing or seeing, while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical, sexual or psychological abuse or is exposed to damage caused by the abuser.

These definitions were provided by the Australian Institute of Family Studies' National Child Protection Clearinghouse.

2 Results

Analysable questionnaires were obtained from 21,050 respondents. With respect to geographic distribution, proportions were somewhat reflective of census population data except for Victoria: NSW 28%; Queensland 24%; Victoria 12%; WA 10%; SA 8%; ACT 8%; Tasmania 4%; and NT 3% (not stated 3%). The reasons for Victoria being under-represented are unclear but may be due to there being minimal NAPCAN presence in Victoria, resulting in NAPCAN being unable to use its networks to promote the Survey to the extent that it could in the other jurisdictions. To promote the Survey within Victoria (in addition to its initiatives within national reach), NAPCAN enlisted the help of Parliamentarians Against Child Abuse and Neglect Co-Convenor and Federal Senator for Victoria, Helen Kroger. Senator Kroger published an opinion piece in Victoria's *Sunday Herald Sun* appealing to Victorians to complete the NAPCAN Survey.²

For this summary report, only descriptive analyses were undertaken using SPSS 17. The results for the various questions are presented in table or figure form for the total sample only – generally with non-responses excluded. Non-responses were generally less than 1% for all rating questions. Note that some tables and figures may add up to less or more than 100% due to rounding.

All questions were analysed by gender, age, amount of contact with children at work, whether respondents had children living with them, and whether or not respondents were surprised by the number of children and young people who were found by government authorities to have

² Helen Kroger, 'We must talk about abuse', *Sunday Herald Sun*, 1 November 2009, available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/opinion/we-must-talk-about-abuse/story-e6frfiffo-1225793171951>

been abused or neglected in the previous year. Differences on these characteristics are noted only where relevant and substantial. Pdfs of these cross-tabulations are available on request.

This report first presents the respondent characteristics followed by the Survey findings under the following themes:

- Perceptions of child wellbeing;
- Action that would be taken in relation to hypothetical scenarios of child abuse and neglect;
- Perceptions of what contributes to child abuse and neglect in Australia;
- Perceptions of the effectiveness of interventions aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect.

2.1 Respondent characteristics

In addition to demographic data collected from participants (including age, gender, level of education, marital status), the Survey asked respondents about how much contact they had with children in various settings, whether they had children living with them, and whether they had ever been a foster parent. The demographic profile of respondents appears in Table 1 compared with ABS 2006 Census data and is discussed below, followed by summarised data relating to contact with children.

Table 1: Respondent demographics and comparison with ABS 2006 population data

	NAPCAN		ABS 2006 Census	
	%	n	%	N
Gender				
Male	20	4236	49	9,799,252
Female	80	16814	51	10,056,036
Age	%	n	%	N
<35years	33	6967	47	9,317,877
35-44 years	29	6092	15	2,937,832
45+ years	38	7991	38	7,599,578
Highest level of education	%	n	%	n
Some high school or less	6	964	41	8,179,573
Completed high school	11	2236	33	6,657,144
TAFE certificate/diploma	23	4804	15	2,891,330
University/tertiary institute degree	60	12872	11	2,253,761
Marital status	%	n	%	N
Single	17	3689	33	5,278,600
Married*	69	14636	50	7,900,648
Separated/divorced/widowed	12	2571	17	2,738,792
ATSI**	%	n	%	N

Yes	3	603	2	455,016
No	96	20261	92	18,266,834
Main language spoken at home	%	n	%	N
English	98	20524	79	15,581,333
Other	2	418	21	4,273,955

* Includes de facto in NAPCAN sample. ** Substantial no response in Census

2.1.1 Demographics

Given the methods used to attract respondents to the online Survey and that respondents self-selected to participate in it, the demographic profile of the sample was not expected to reflect that of the general population. The most noticeable differences were in relation to gender, with a far higher proportion of female respondents than in the general population (80% vs 51%), respondents having a university/tertiary institute degree relative to the Australian population (60% vs 11%), and being less likely to be single (17% vs 33%). On the other hand, the proportion of Indigenous Australian respondents was similar to that in the general population (3% vs 2%) providing a substantial subsample of this group (n=603) for independent analysis.

The Survey was conceived as a way of allowing concerned people a means of expressing that concern during National Child Protection Week. It was never intended to be a survey of the general population's feelings about child protection. It is, however, a valid indicator of the views of concerned people.

2.1.2 Contact with children

Respondents were asked how much contact they had with children in four different settings: in their home; in the home of their friends or family members; through work; and through sport and recreational activities. In addition they were asked about how much contact they had with children generally.

Table 2: Amount of contact respondents reported having with children

	None %	Very little %	A little %	Some %	A lot %
In your home	18	13	7	9	52
In the home of your friends or family members	2	12	16	30	39
Through work	29	16	9	12	32
Through sports or recreation activities	27	20	15	17	19

In general	2	12	16	30	39
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Table 2 shows that over half of all respondents indicated that they had a lot of contact with children in their own home (52%), followed by in the home of friends and family (39%) and through work (32%). Respondents had the least amount of contact with children through sport or recreation, with 47% indicating that they had no or very little contact with children in this setting. Around two thirds of respondents reported some or a lot of contact with children in general (69%).

Possibly reflecting gender roles, female respondents reported more contact in general with children when compared with male respondents. In particular, women were more likely than men to indicate that they had a lot of contact with children in the home of friends or family members (42% vs 29%) and through work (35% and 19%).

Perhaps not unexpectedly, respondents in the 35 to 44 year age group reported more contact with children than respondents in other age groups. For example, 77% of 35 to 44 year olds indicated that they had a lot of contact with children in their home, compared with 40% for respondents less than 35 years of age and 44% for respondents aged 44 years or older. This pattern also emerged in relation to having contact with children in the home of friends or family members, through sport and recreation activities and general contact with children.

2.1.3 Children at home and foster parent status

Respondents were asked if they had children living at home and if they had ever been a foster parent. Just under half of the respondents (46%) had children living at home and 5% indicated that they had been a foster parent - which was substantially higher than the 0.2% recorded in the 2006 Census. This reflects the self-selection nature of the sample.

2.1.4 Surprise at the level of child abuse and neglect in Australia

Respondents' reaction to the actual level of child abuse and neglect in Australia was assessed by stating "*last year the number of individual children and young people in Australia who were found by government authorities to have been abused or neglected was above 30,000*", and then asking: "*Does that surprise you?*" The vast majority (79%) claimed that they were not surprised by this figure; i.e., 21% reported being surprised. The more contact the respondent had with children at work, the more likely they were to be not surprised by this figure: a lot of contact (85%); some contact (79%); and no contact (71%).

Conversely, those with little or no contact with children at work were more likely to be surprised by this figure: 26%. Indigenous respondents and those who had ever been a foster parent were far less likely to be surprised than other respondents: 12% and 10% respectively.

2.2 Perceptions of child wellbeing

The questionnaire included a number of items relating to child wellbeing, including perceptions of responsibility for the wellbeing of children and what respondents were concerned about with respect to children.

2.2.1 Responsibility for child wellbeing and safety

Respondents were provided with the list shown in Table 3 and asked: “Who do you see being responsible for children’s wellbeing and safety?” They were asked to indicate for each whether they considered that entity to be ‘mainly’, ‘partly’ or ‘not at all’ responsible for the wellbeing and safety of children.

Table 3: Perception of who is responsible for children’s wellbeing and safety

	Mainly %	Partly %	Not at all %	No response %
Parents	98	2	0	0
Other relatives	54	45	1	0
Schools	51	49	0	0
Child Protection Authorities	48	50	1	1
Police	43	54	2	1
Government	35	61	3	1
Health professionals and agencies	33	65	1	1
The media	22	60	17	1
Charities and welfare groups	20	70	9	1
Neighbours	10	78	11	1
Businesses/companies	8	60	31	1

With respect to being *mainly* responsible, almost all respondents nominated parents (98%), with almost half the sample nominating other relatives (54%), schools (51%) and child protection authorities (48%). Far lesser proportions nominated the media, charities and welfare groups, neighbours and businesses as *mainly* responsible, but all entities achieved majorities indicating *mainly* or *partly* responsible. Nevertheless, substantial minorities stated that businesses (31%) and the media (17%) were *not at all* responsible.

Female respondents were generally more likely than males to nominate all of these entities as *mainly* responsible, but they particularly nominated health professionals (36% vs 24%), child protection authorities (51% vs 38%) and police (45% vs 34%). Age comparisons generally showed few differences. However respondents under the age of 35 years were more likely to believe schools were *mainly* responsible (60%) when compared with the other age groups: 35 to 44 years (50%) and 45 years and older (43%).

Respondents who had *a lot* of contact with children *at work* were more likely than those that had *some* contact or *no contact* to nominate public sector organisations as *mainly* responsible: health professionals and agencies (43% vs 30% and 26% respectively); government (45% vs 32% and 28%); police (50% vs 20% and 16%); and child protection authorities (56% vs 45% and 44%). It may well be that those with work contact would have been exposed to the various services that are often engaged with children and their families.

Indigenous and foster parent respondents were slightly more likely than others to nominate all of the above organisations as ‘mainly’ responsible.

2.2.2 Respondents’ concerns for children and young people

Respondents were asked: “What are the three major things that **you** worry about in relation to children and young people in today’s society?” They were presented with the list of concerns shown in Table 4 and asked to give a separate answer for children up to 12 years and those aged 13-17 years. These results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents’ concerns for children up to 12 years and 13-17 years

	up to 12 years %	13-17 years %
Being bullied	74	36
Fitting in at school	31	17
Relationships with friends	30	23
Parents fighting	29	14
Parents separating	23	14
Doing OK at school	32	24
Arguments with parents	12	16
Being neglected or abused	65	36
Being robbed or attacked	13	18
Getting depressed	19	45
Sexuality	8	25
Drugs	15	68
Alcohol	11	58
Chances of getting a job they like	4	20

Two main respondent concerns feature for children up to 12 years: children being bullied (74%) and neglected or abused (65%) (the latter reflecting their interest in this Survey). For 13-17 year olds, these both decline to 36%, with the two most frequently nominated respondent concerns for this age group relating to substance use - drugs (68%) and alcohol (58%) – followed by getting depressed (45%).

Respondents who had children living with them were more likely to worry about children being neglected or abused than those who did not have children living with them: 73% vs 58% respectively. More Indigenous respondents generally nominated each of these as a concern (except for being bullied and being neglected or abused), with the differences generally being less for youth than for children. There was only a very slight tendency for foster parents to nominate these concerns more than other respondents. There was little difference in the nominations of those with a lot or some contact with children in general versus those with a little or none.

2.2.3 Children and young people's concerns for themselves

Mission Australia's *National Survey of Young Australians* in 2009³ attracted nearly 47,000 respondents, most of whom were 11-14 years (approx 24,000) or 15-19 years of age (approx 22,000). It should be noted that the sample was self-selecting rather than a random sample.

Table 5: Mission Australia Survey 2009: Issues of concern to young people by age

Issues of concern	11-14 yrs	15-19 yrs	20-24 yrs
	%	%	%
Drugs	31	23	17
Suicide	26	27	22
Body image	24	27	29
Family conflict	25	23	21
Bullying/emotional abuse	25	21	19
Alcohol	24	22	18
Physical/sexual abuse	23	23	24
Personal safety	23	21	22
Coping with stress	16	21	30
Depression	15	22	30
School or study problems	17	18	12
The environment	19	14	19
Self-harm	12	14	10
Discrimination	10	13	13
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	11	12	14

Respondents were provided with the list of 'concerns' shown in Table 5 and asked to rank order their top three concerns. Clearly the lists given to respondents in the NAPCAN and Mission Australia Surveys were different, but with some overlap. Table 5 indicates that no single or even

³ Mission Australia 2009: National Survey of Young Australians 2009 Key and emerging issues.

group of concerns stands out from all the others, with ten of these concerns being nominated by approximately one in five young people as amongst their top three concerns. Furthermore, other than for coping with stress and depression, there is little difference between the age groups on their most nominated concerns.

Overall though, comparisons with the NAPCAN data should be interpreted with caution given the different methodologies and ways in which data were collected. Nevertheless, given that the provided lists were different, there is considerable overlap between NAPCAN respondents' concerns for children and young people and Mission Australia's respondents' concerns.

2.3 Community beliefs about child abuse

2.3.1 Severity of the problem

Respondents were asked: "From what you know or have heard, to what extent do you think that the Australian Community believes that child abuse or neglect is a serious problem?" They were then asked to what extent they personally think child abuse and neglect is a serious problem? The response alternatives and the results for both questions are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Respondents' beliefs about the community's seriousness of the problem of child abuse and neglect and their own beliefs about the seriousness of the problem

	Perception of Australian Community Belief %		Respondent Belief %
Very well recognised	13	It is a serious problem	92
Fairly well recognised	38	It is of concern though there are more serious problems	6
Not recognised enough	47	Don't think it is a serious problem	1
Don't know	2	Don't know	1

Just under half (47%) felt that child abuse and neglect was not recognised nearly enough as a serious problem, with only 13% stating that it was very well recognised as a serious problem.

Women were more likely than men to indicate that child maltreatment was not recognised enough as a serious problem (50% vs 37%), as were respondents who were not surprised by the number of children found by government authorities to have been abused or neglected in the previous year compared with those who were surprised (50% vs 39%). Indigenous respondents (57%) and foster parents (57%) were more likely to state that it was not recognised enough as a serious problem. There was no difference by amount of contact with children in general.

No doubt reflecting the self-selection of the sample, almost all (92%) indicated that they personally considered that child abuse and neglect is a serious problem, with women slightly more likely than men to do so: 94% vs 82%.

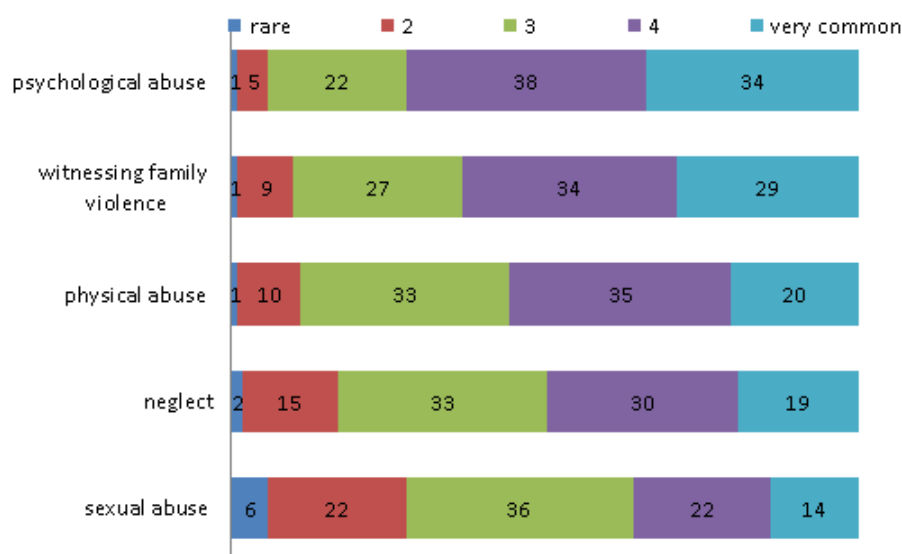
While the NAPCAN Survey found that 92% of respondents felt that child abuse and neglect was a serious problem, data from another survey, conducted by the Australian Childhood Foundation in 2009⁴, found that 77% of their respondents indicated that the issue of child abuse and neglect was a serious problem, whilst 20% indicated it was a not so serious problem and 3% no problem at all.

Respondents were also asked about the extent to which they perceived that the Australian community believes child abuse is a serious problem. For the NAPCAN Survey, 13% of respondents indicated that it was very well recognised, while in the Australian Childhood Foundation Survey, a slightly higher percentage of respondents (20%) thought so. A slightly higher proportion in the NAPCAN Survey (47%) indicated that they felt child abuse and neglect was not recognised enough, compared with the Australian Childhood Foundation results (40%).

2.3.2 Prevalence

Given a scale from 1 (rare) to 5 (very common), respondents were asked: *“How common (or rare) do you think it is for children in Australia to experience ... sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, neglect, and witnessing family violence?”* The results are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Perceived prevalence of abuse



Combining ratings of 4 and 5, the most commonly perceived form of abuse was psychological abuse (72%), followed by witnessing family violence (63%) and physical abuse (55%). In contrast, sexual abuse was perceived as occurring more rarely, with 28% of respondents selecting the 1 or 2 ratings. Overall though, it appears that this sample perceive all forms of abuse as ‘relatively’ common or at least ‘not uncommon’.

⁴ Australian Childhood Foundation, *Community attitudes about child abuse in Australia* (2009).

Women were more likely than men to perceive the different forms of abuse to be very common: psychological abuse 38% vs 21%; witnessing family violence 32% vs 16%; physical abuse 23% vs 11%; neglect 21% vs 11%; and sexual abuse 16% vs 6%. Those who had a lot of contact with children at work, were more likely to perceive all types of abuse as very common compared with those who had some or no contact. Similarly, respondents who were not surprised by the number of children neglected and abused were more likely to perceive the following as very common, compared with respondents who were surprised: sexual abuse; physical abuse; neglect; and witnessing family violence.

Indigenous respondents were substantially more likely to nominate each of these types of abuse as 'very' common: sexual abuse 34%; physical abuse 43%; psychological abuse 54%; neglect 43%; and witness family violence 57%. Similarly, respondents who were not surprised by the number of children neglected and abused were more likely to perceive sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and witnessing family violence as very common, compared with respondents who were surprised.

The above perceptions of relative prevalence roughly correspond with data from the AIHW⁵ which identified the following breakdown of primary maltreatment types in Australia in the 2008 to 2009 period (average state percentage): emotional abuse 38%; physical abuse 22%; neglect 31%; and sexual abuse 9%. It is pertinent to note that while sexual abuse is less common than some other forms of abuse, and is perceived as such by respondents to the NAPCAN Survey, it represents a relatively significant proportion of child abuse calls from children to the Kids Helpline (2008⁶): physical abuse 46%; sexual abuse 37%; emotional abuse 13%; and neglect 4%. [child abuse accounted for 5% of all counselling sessions].

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010: Child protection Australia 2008-09

⁶ Kids Helpline Overview 2008.

2.4 What respondents would do in relation to three hypothetical scenarios

Respondents were presented with the actions listed in Table 7 and asked what they would do in each of three hypothetical situations. For each scenario they were asked to nominate whether they definitely would do, probably would do, might or might not do, probably wouldn't do and definitely wouldn't do each action. The three scenarios represented physical abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and were presented in that order.

Physical abuse scenario: "Your neighbour's 7 year old child often has bruises. You hear a lot of yelling and screaming coming from the house. You see the child with a new black eye".

Neglect scenario: "When walking past a house in your neighbourhood you often notice 3 children in their front yard. They are skinny and always look dirty. One of the children, who is about 10 years old regularly asks you for money for food."

Sexual abuse scenario: "A twelve year old child, who is a member of your extended family, tells you that an adult relative has been touching him/her on the genitals."

Table 7 shows the percentage of respondents who would definitely take each action in each scenario.

Table 7: What respondents would 'definitely' do in three hypothetical scenarios

Percentage who definitely would do	Physical abuse	Neglect	Sexual abuse
	%	%	%
Discuss it with a friend or partner	80	76	76
Call the families/child protection department	45	44	49
Phone a helpline for advice	31	27	36
Call the police	28	13	34
Talk to the child	20	28	14
Call a child health nurse/teacher	11	13	15
Talk to the parents	7	6	42

For each scenario the three most frequently mentioned 'definite' actions were common to all three scenarios: 'discuss with a friend or partner' (76-80%); call the families/child protection department (44-49%); and phone a helpline for advice (27-36%). Notable differences occurred between the other possible actions, with calling police being nominated 'definitely' more for

sexual abuse (34%) and physical abuse (28%) than neglect (13%); talking to the child being nominated more for neglect (28%) than the other scenarios (20%, 14%); and talking to the parents being nominated 'definitely' far more frequently for sexual abuse (42%) than for the other scenarios (7%, 6%). This high percentage that nominated talking to the parents about sexual abuse suggests respondents were making an assumption that the offender was not the parent, which is not always the case.⁷

In general, for all three scenarios, women were more likely than men to nominate 'definitely' would do for all or most of these actions. Probably reflecting the nature of their work, the more contact the respondent had with children at work, the more likely they were to indicate that they definitely would contact the families and/or child protection department for each scenario, and the less likely they would discuss it with their partner or a friend. A similar finding with respect to contacting the families and/or child protection department was obtained for those not surprised by the annual number of substantiated child abuse cases.

With respect to the sexual abuse scenario, the younger the respondent, the more likely they would *definitely* call the police: 45 years and above 28%; 35 to 44 years 35%; and under 35 years 39%. Similarly, the more contact a respondent had with children at work, the more likely they would *definitely* call the police: no contact 31%; some contact 32%; and a lot of contact 39%.

For all three scenarios, Indigenous respondents were slightly less likely to discuss it with their partner, but generally substantially more likely to report to police, call the families and/or child protection department and contact a child health nurse. A similar pattern of responses was found for foster parents.

The questionnaire did not include follow-up questions as to why respondents would or would not take these listed actions – although this was asked in general in the next section. Further research into facilitators and inhibitors for these specific actions would be helpful.

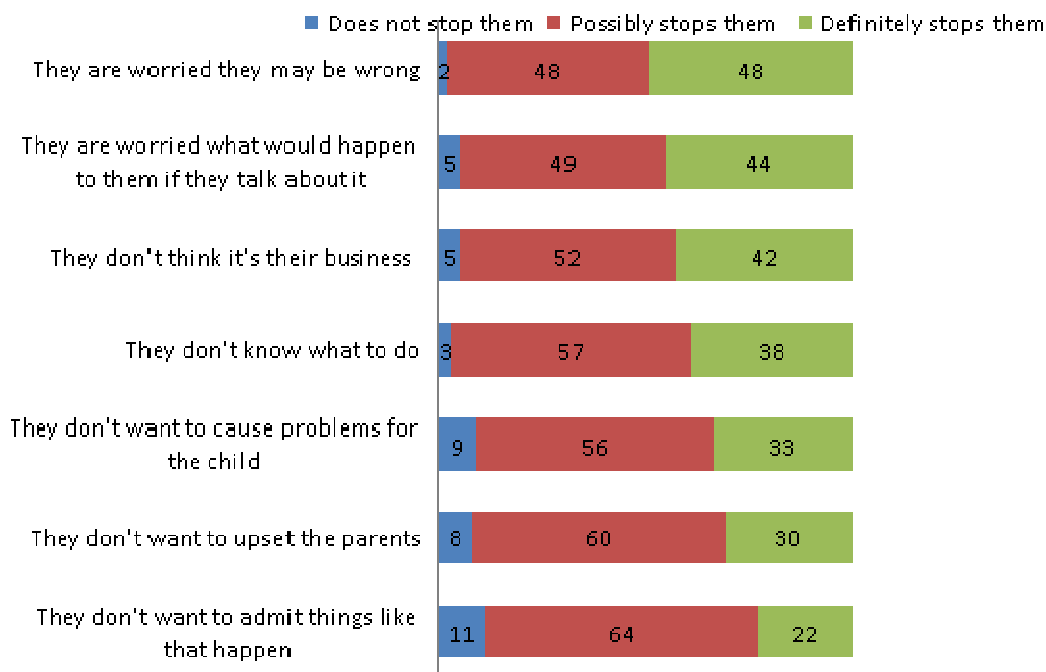
2.4.1 Inhibitors to action in general

Respondents were then presented with the statement that "*sometimes people suspect a child is being abused or neglected but they don't do anything*", and asked: "*What do you think stops them from taking any action?*" Respondents were provided with the reasons listed in Figure 2 and were asked to indicate for each if they felt it would definitely, possibly, or would not stop them.

Figure 2 shows that the major perceived inhibitors are a lack of certainty about the suspected abuse or neglect, the impact on the observer of maltreatment if they took action, and a belief that it is not their business. This last item is a significant finding, given that Council of Australian Governments' *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020* is entitled, "Protecting Children is Everybody's Business". A lack of knowledge about what to do is also a major perceived inhibitor, supporting the need for public education campaigns on what people can – and should - do when they suspect child abuse or neglect.

⁷ Please see <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs7/rs7.html>

Figure 2: Factors perceived to stop people from taking action when they suspect child abuse or neglect



Younger respondents were more likely to worry that they may be wrong: less than 35 years, 57%; 35 to 44 years, 49%; and 45 years and above, 40%.

Indigenous respondents were more likely to nominate 'definitely' stops them for not wanting to admit things like this happen (30%), being worried about what would happen to them (57%) and not wanting to upset the parents (39%). There were no substantial differences by contact with children in general or foster parents.

2.5 Perception of what contributes to child abuse and neglect in Australia

Given a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot), respondents were presented with the factors listed in Figure 3 and asked: "From what you know or have heard, how much do you think each of the following things contribute to child abuse and neglect?"

Figure 3: Perceived contributors to child abuse and neglect

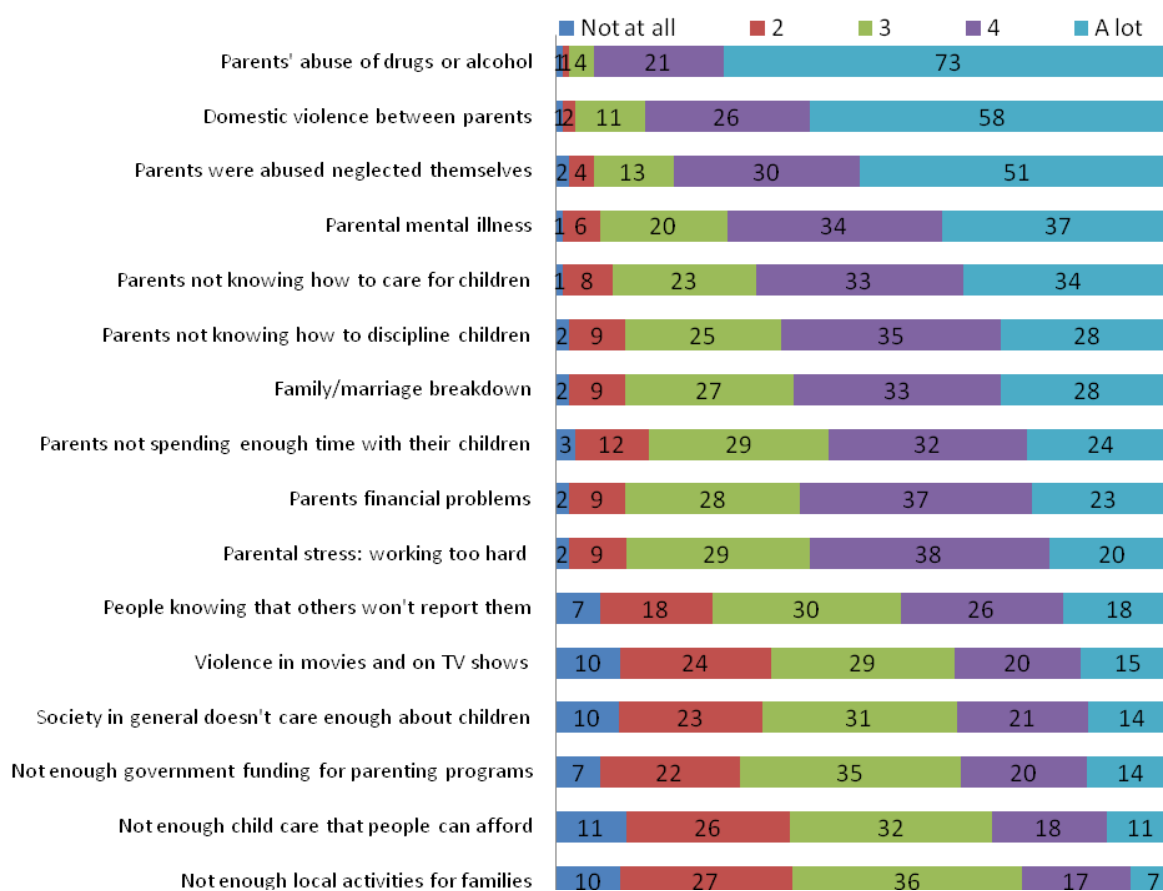


Figure 3 shows that the most common factors believed to contribute most to child abuse and neglect relate to dysfunctional behaviours (drug and alcohol abuse; domestic violence), a cycle of abuse or neglect (parents were abused themselves), and mental illness. Next most common relate to a lack of parenting skills and family breakdown. Not enough local activities for families, not enough childcare that people can afford and not enough funding for parenting programs were perceived as contributing the least to child abuse and neglect. Overall, negative factors are seen as far more influential than a lack of positive factors.

Women were generally more likely to indicate that all or most of these factors contributed a lot to child abuse and neglect. Older respondents were more likely to indicate that they felt that violence in movies and on TV shows contributed a lot to child abuse and neglect: 45 years and above, 21%; 35 to 44 years, 14%; and less than 35 years, 8%.

It is likely that these data are influenced by the expertise and experiences of many Survey respondents. For example, respondents who had a lot to do with children at work, compared

with those who had some or no contact, perceived that the following contributed a lot to child abuse and neglect: domestic violence between parents: 65%; 55%; 53% respectively; parents not knowing how to care for children: 40%; 31%; 31%; and not enough funding for parenting programs; 20%; 13%; 10%.

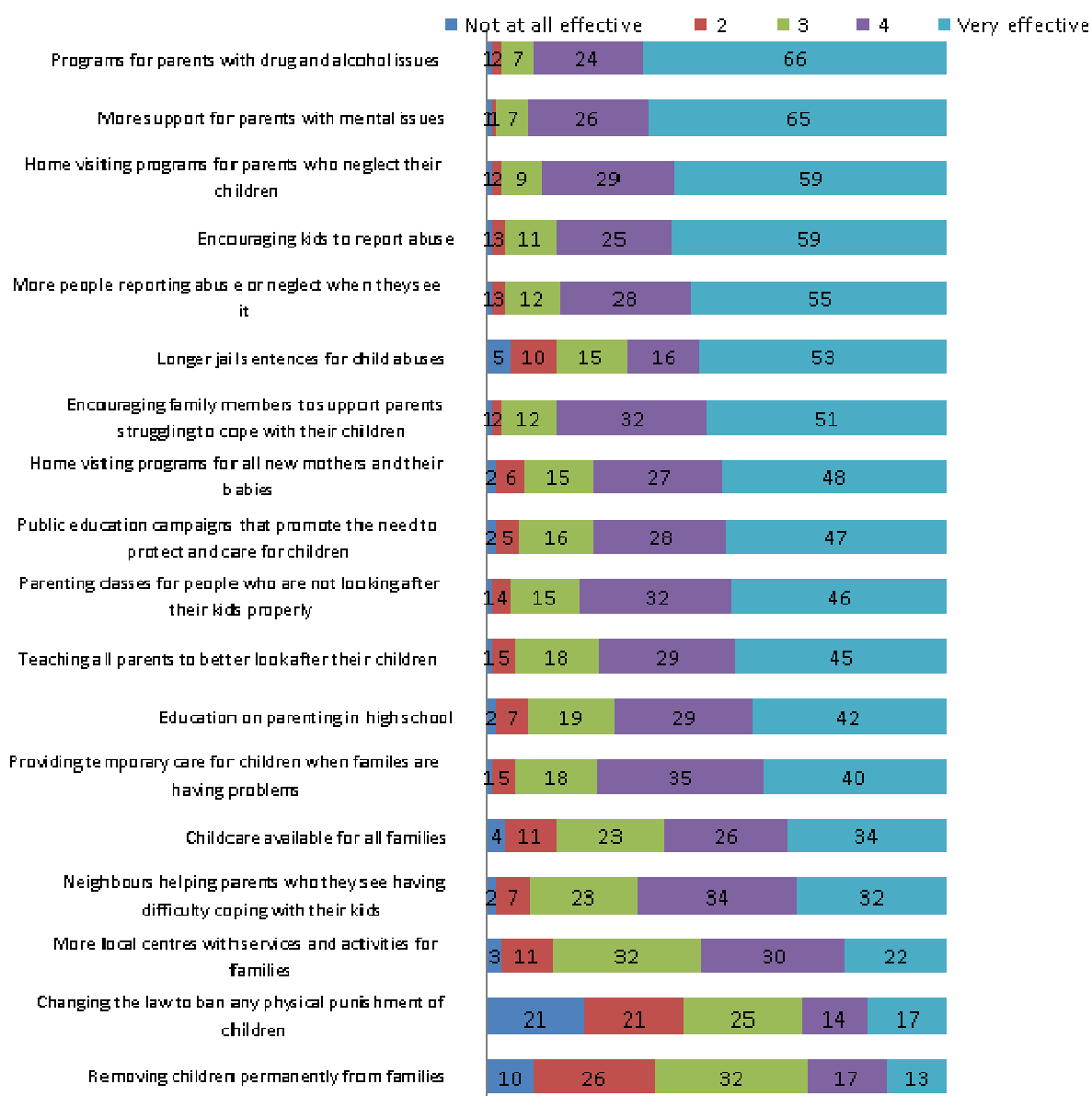
More Indigenous respondents nominated most of these items 'a lot' relative to the rest of the sample, and particularly (10% or more greater): parents not knowing how to care for children; not enough government funding for parenting programs; society in general not caring enough for children; not enough affordable child care; parents not spending enough time with children; parents not knowing how to discipline children; parents' financial problems; not enough local activities for families; and people knowing others won't report them.

Foster parents were also more likely to nominate most of these items 'a lot' relative to the rest of the sample, but the differences were small. There were no substantial differences by contact in general with children.

2.6 Perceived effectiveness of interventions to prevent child abuse and neglect

Given a scale from 1 (not at all effective) to 5 (very effective), respondents were presented with the list of interventions shown in Figure 4 and asked to *indicate how effective you think each might be*”.

Figure 4: Perceived effectiveness of interventions



Reflecting the factors perceived to contribute most to child abuse and neglect, the two interventions perceived most effective were programs for parents with drug and alcohol issues (66%) and more support for parents with mental health issues (65%). However, the vast majority of the interventions were seen to be potentially effective (4 or 5 responses) by a majority of respondents.

Generally the interventions perceived as most effective involved education of the parents or encouraging the children and the public to report abuse, along with general public awareness. Removing children permanently from families (13%) and changing the law to ban any physical punishment of children (17%) were seen to be the least effective way of reducing child abuse and neglect.

The interventions most commonly perceived as effective were all more likely to be nominated by women than men as being very effective: programs for parents with drug and alcohol issues (women 69% vs men 52%); more support for parents with mental health issues (68% vs 49%); home visiting programs for parents who neglect their children (52% vs 33%); and encouraging children to report abuse (62% vs 47%).

Generally it was found across all interventions that those respondents who had a lot of contact with children at work were more likely to perceive the intervention as very effective compared with those who had some or no contact with children at work. For example, those who had a lot to do with children at work were more likely to perceive high school education on parenting as a very effective intervention (48%), compared with respondents who had some (40%) or no contact (37%). Older respondents were also more likely to perceive high school education on parenting as a very effective intervention in reducing child abuse and neglect: 45 years and above, 47%; 35 to 44 years, 42%; and less than 35 years, 36%.

Other than removing children from their families, Indigenous respondents were more likely to nominate these interventions as 'very' effective, and particularly (almost 20% or greater): more local centres with services/activities for families; more people reporting; parenting classes for parents not looking after children; longer jail sentences for child abusers; and public education campaigns. Foster parents and those with a lot or some contact with children in general were also more likely to nominate most items as 'very' effective, but the difference was far less than for Indigenous respondents.

Overall, respondents were more likely to nominate interventions targeting parents and children already at risk of abuse ('secondary prevention') and already abusive parents/perpetrators (aimed at preventing further abuse, 'tertiary prevention') as more effective than broad population-wide interventions designed to prevent abuse occurring in the first place ('primary prevention').

3 Concluding Comments

With respect to the major findings presented in this report, the following points can be noted:

- Women were generally more likely to hold stronger views on most issues and topics compared with men. This is consistent with greater female interest in completing the Survey.
- People who had a lot of contact with children through work appeared to have a greater understanding of the issues, contributors to child abuse and neglect, and effectiveness of various interventions, and were more likely to think that authorities such as family and child protection or police should be called in situations of abuse and neglect. It may well be these findings reflect that many of these respondents work in children and youth related policy or welfare areas.
- Indigenous respondents and foster parents tended to be more willing to take formal action for the abuse and neglect scenarios, were more likely to rate contributors to child abuse and neglect as contributing 'a lot' and interventions to be 'very' effective than other respondents, and were more likely to think that the public did not see child abuse and neglect as a serious problem. Indigenous respondents were more likely to consider child abuse to be more prevalent than other respondents.

There are a number of implications for public education campaigns, regardless of the self-selection bias in the sample. In fact, given the bias in this self-selected sample, it is likely that many of the implications below are even more relevant to the general population.

- Parents are perceived to have the primary responsibility for children's wellbeing and safety. Campaigns must therefore acknowledge that belief to attract and maintain attention to further messages.
- Despite previous national and local campaigns and many of the Survey respondents living and working with children, the idea that parents require the support of the community as a whole to assist in the raising of healthy and happy children, is still not widely recognised.
- While there is substantial acceptance of schools, child protection authorities and police to have a primary role in children's wellbeing and safety, there is a need to increase awareness of the responsibility of other societal groups, and particularly the media, neighbours and businesses. Campaigns will need to 'spell out' how and why these groups have a responsibility. On the positive side, with the exception of the media and businesses, very few considered that any of these entities had 'no responsibility' at all. The total responsibility figures can also be used when encouraging the media (82%) and businesses (68%) to adopt more child friendly-family friendly practices.
- With respect to government involvement, 96% considered that government did have a responsibility for children's wellbeing and safety, with 35% indicating 'mainly'. Hence government supported campaigns would be seen to be consistent with the role of government.

- Respondents' specific concerns for children delineated in Table 4 indicate the levels of support for programs and interventions that deal with these issues.
- While almost all of the respondents personally considered that child abuse and neglect is a serious problem, nearly half perceived that the community in general did not share this concern. Hence there would be considerable support amongst respondents for a broad-based community education campaign.
- While public campaigns traditionally focus on physical child abuse and neglect, and sexual abuse receives substantial media attention when it is identified, the respondents considered that psychological abuse (especially) and witnessing family violence were more common types of maltreatment. Acknowledging and educating on these forms of harm would also reinforce support for initiatives in the other areas also.
- In spite of the self-selection nature of the sample and the near-universal perception of child abuse and neglect as a serious problem, many of these respondents showed a reluctance to take definitive formal or informal action with respect to the three scenarios presented to them. Notably, only half said they would definitely call the families and/or child protection department for each scenario; only a third or less would definitely call a helpline; and, even for the suspected child sexual abuse scenario, only a third said they would definitely call the police. There is a clear need for research to identify how these involved persons could be prompted to take more definitive actions. The relatively low proportion definitely nominating a helpline for advice suggests a clear need for research to assess why this is so and how this could be increased.
- Fear of being wrong was the most frequently nominated reason for people not acting on child abuse and neglect, along with worries about what would happen to themselves, a perception of 'not their business' and not knowing what to do. If these perceptions are accurate (or are a projection of their own views), public education campaigns are needed to deal with all of these issues. It is likely that information about what to do is a necessary but not a sufficient prerequisite for action; that is, even well-informed persons are unlikely to respond if these emotional issues are not minimised or eliminated.
- Individual negative factors such as drug and alcohol abuse, violence between parents, the intergenerational transmission of maltreatment (i.e. parents' own experiences of abuse or neglect) and parental mental illness, dominated perceived contributors to child abuse and neglect (relative to insufficient positive factors and societal attitudes).
- There was a high degree of consistency between the main perceived contributors to child abuse and perceived effectiveness of interventions to prevent child abuse. In addition, parenting interventions, interventions encouraging children to report abuse, along with more people in general reporting abuse and neglect, and public education campaigns promoting the need to protect and care for children were considered very effective by around half or more of these respondents. These data provide considerable support for the introduction of specific interventions.

There is considerable potential for further analyses looking at differences between sub-samples and the relationships between variables within sub-samples. Furthermore, given the differences already noted between the Indigenous and foster parent sub-samples versus other respondents, further qualitative research would be essential in determining why such differences exist and hence better informing future activities in these areas. Further reports can elaborate on these findings.

APPENDIX 1

The Research Group involved in the development of the Survey and its methodology included:

- Dr Fiona Arney - Menzies School of Health Research
- Dr Leah Bromfield - Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Dr Judy Cashmore – University of Sydney
- Professor Rob Donovan – Curtin University
- Dr Adam Tomison – Australian Institute of Criminology
- Dr Joe Tucci – Australian Childhood Foundation
- Dr Lisa Wood – University of Western Australia

APPENDIX 2

NAPCAN Community Survey – possible themes to explore

Possible themes to explore in community survey	<i>Examples of potential sub-issues to explore within themes</i>
Key issues affecting children/young people in today's society*	eg ascertain adult perceptions of what the issues and worries facing children/young people are (adapt from questions in surveys of children); relative priority of issues affecting children (eg relative to other societal issues), biggest issues relating to children's safety
Community attitudes towards children/young people*	eg How are children (pre teen and teens separate) of today perceived (eg some surveys ask for key words to describe or 'compared with previous generations'), stereotypes?, problems that can arise in community in relation to young people? Valuing of children as a community norm?
Children's rights	eg perceived relevance to Australia of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, perceptions as to what children have the right to (eg to feel safe at home and in neighbourhood, education), whose responsibility is protection and promotion of children's rights
Children's needs*	eg beliefs re what children and young people need for good health and wellbeing, whose role is it to meet the needs of children, are there subgroups of children with higher needs
Parenting (including parents responsibilities)	eg beliefs re key responsibilities, challenges/stresses; what constitutes positive parenting; where to obtain help/info re parenting if need it or know a parent who seems to need support
Community role in relation to children/young people	eg. do people see the wellbeing of children as a shared responsibility? Who in community in particular might have role to play; do people know how they can play a role
Nature, extent and costs (personal and social) of child abuse and neglect	eg estimates of number of children affected, who is most at risk, perceptions of whether has changed over time; what do people understand to be neglect versus abuse, consequences of not preventing (individual and at community level)
The potential for taking action to prevent child abuse and neglect	Awareness of what could do personally if aware of; what could suggest someone else could do; where would you go for more info; awareness of agencies/key groups who play a role in prevention

* Themes that are also pertinent (with adaptation of questions) if NAPCAN develops a concurrent Survey that young people themselves complete

APPENDIX 3

NAPCAN SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to review of instruments and issues referred to in published literature, the following Surveys undertaken elsewhere have been sourced to date. These provide examples of possible item wording (how to and how not to word!), issues to cover etc.

SOURCES OF POSSIBLE QUESTIONS/ITEMS TO INCLUDE TO DATE	
Surveys of adults	
Australia	<p>NSW DoCS, 2006 <i>Spotlight on Safety</i>. Community attitude to child protection, foster care and parenting (telephone survey plus focus groups)</p> <p>Australian Childhood Foundation, <i>Out of Sight Out of Mind</i>. Telephone Survey</p> <p>Australian Childhood Foundation (Tucci et al) 2003 <i>Tolerating Violence Against Children</i>. Telephone Survey</p> <p>Bolzan, N., 2003, 'Kids are like that!' <i>Community attitudes to young people</i>, Canberra: National Youth Affairs Research Scheme. Survey and focus groups</p>
International	<p>Children's Trust Fund of Texas Council 1997. <i>Survey of public attitudes, beliefs and practices relating to child rearing and child protection</i></p> <p>Washington State Dept of Health, 2002. <i>General population norms about child abuse and neglect and associations with childhood experiences</i></p> <p>NSPCC (National society Prevention cruelty to Children), UK. 2005. <i>Child abuse survey</i></p> <p>Zeldin, S, & Topitzes, D (2002). Neighborhood Experiences, Community Connection, and Positive Beliefs About Adolescents among Urban Adults and Youth. <i>Journal of Community Psychology</i>, 30(6), 647-669.</p> <p>Lofquist, 1989 "The Spectrum of Adult Attitudes toward Young People," The Technology of Prevention Workbook, Associates for Youth Development</p>
Surveys of children/young people	
Australia	<p>Kids Helpline, 2005 <i>Overview — what is concerning children and young people in Australia?</i></p> <p>Mission Australia, 2008, <i>National Survey of young Australians 2006. Key and emerging issues</i></p>

APPENDIX 4

Questionnaire presented to focus group 1

Children and Young People Survey

Thank you for beginning our Survey of people's opinions on and beliefs about issues to do with children and young people.

Please note that you can skip any question that you don't want to answer.

First, a few definitions.

Children and young people

When we use the term "children" we generally mean those aged 12 years and under. When we use the term "young people" we generally mean teenagers 13 – 17 years.

Abuse and neglect

When we refer to "child abuse" and "neglect" in this Survey we refer to any or all of the following:

Physical child abuse: physically harming a child such as hitting, slapping, beating with objects, burning, pushing hard, etc.

Emotional child abuse: yelling, putting a child down, screaming at them, telling them they are hopeless or stupid or no good, etc.

Sexual child abuse: any sexual contact between an adult and a child or young person under 15.

Physical neglect: failure to provide adequate food, clothing, cleanliness and hygiene, not washing or cleaning them or their clothes, dirty living conditions.

Emotional neglect: failure to provide love, care, affection.

Other neglect: not making sure they are at school, not caring where they go or what they do, leaving alone or long periods.

Now let's begin.

Q1. First, what words, pictures or feelings come to mind when you think of "young people"?
(Write in whatever comes to mind).

Q2a. Which of the following do you think are the major things that children and young people worry about today? **(Please answer separately for primary school children and high school young people. Circle only their major worries). Circle all that apply**

	Primary school age children	High school age young people
Alcohol.....	1.....	2.....
Drugs.....	1.....	2.....
Bullying.....	1.....	2.....
Quarrels with parents.....	1.....	2.....
Relationships with friends.....	1.....	2.....
Doing OK at school.....	1.....	2.....
Likelihood of getting a job they like.....	1.....	2.....
Depression.....	1.....	2.....
Sexuality.....	1.....	2.....
Being robbed or assaulted.....	1.....	2.....
Being abused or neglected.....	1.....	2.....
Anything else not listed here? (type in):		

Q2b. What are the major things that you worry about in relation to children and young people in today's society? **(Do separately for primary school children and high school young people. Circle only your major worries). Circle all that apply**

	Primary school age children	High school age young people
Alcohol.....	1.....	2.....
Drugs.....	1.....	2.....
Bullying.....	1.....	2.....
Quarrels with parents.....	1.....	2.....
Relationships with friends.....	1.....	2.....
Doing OK at school.....	1.....	2.....
Likelihood of getting a job they like.....	1.....	2.....
Depression.....	1.....	2.....
Sexuality.....	1.....	2.....
Being robbed or assaulted.....	1.....	2.....
Being abused or neglected.....	1.....	2.....
Anything else not listed here? (type in):		

Q3. How many proven cases of child abuse or neglect do you think there were in Australia last year? **(If you don't know, just guess what you think is the number).**

Number: _____

Q4. To what extent do you think the Australian community believes that child abuse is a serious problem? **(Circle one only).**

Not nearly enough recognised as a serious problem..... 1

Only fairly well recognised as a serious problem..... 2

Very well recognised as a serious problem..... 3

Q5a. If the government announced \$100 million for spending across the following areas, how would you allocate the money? **(Make sure your amounts add up to 100).**

Allocate money up to \$100 million

Better public transport: \$ _____

More services for children and families: \$ _____

More police and crime prevention: \$ _____

More recreation and sporting facilities: \$ _____

Better health hospital facilities: \$ _____

Total: \$ 100 million

Q5b. If the government announced \$100 million for services related to children and families, how would you allocate the money? **(Make sure your amounts add up to 100).**

Allocate money up to \$100 million

More pre-school programs for all children: \$ _____

More help for parents with problems such as mental illness, drugs and alcohol: \$ _____

More parenting programs for young parents: \$ _____

More help for children with learning difficulties: \$ _____

More home visits to families in trouble: \$ _____

Total: \$ 100 million

Q6. Do you think government education authorities do enough, not enough or too much in the following areas?

Not enough Enough Too much Don't know

- (a) Programs for children with learning difficulties.....1.....2.....3.....4
 (b) Help for parents of children with behavioural problems.....1.....2.....3.....4
 (c) Providing extracurricular opportunities for children in disadvantaged areas.....1.....2.....3.....4
 (d) Giving children exposure to a variety of sporting, recreational and art activities.....1.....2.....3.....4
 (e) Disciplining children who disrupt class.....1.....2.....3.....4
-

Q7. How common do you think are the following relating to children in Australia?
(For each one, please circle a number from 1 to 7 using the scale where 1 = not at all common and 7 = very common).

Not at all common

Very common

- (a) Sexual abuse..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (b) Physical abuse 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (c) Emotional abuse 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (d) Emotional neglect 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (e) Physical neglect..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (f) Domestic violence in front of children.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (g) Not making sure kids are at school..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (h) Not giving kids opportunities to discover and use their talents.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
-

Q8. The number of proven cases of child abuse or neglect in Australia is around 60,000. Does that surprise you?

Yes.....1

No.....2

If "Yes": Why? _____

-
- Q9. Following is a list of things that various people think could be effective in reducing child abuse and neglect in Australia. For each one, please indicate how effective you think that might be in reducing child abuse and neglect in Australia?

Not at all effective

Very effective

- (a) Increased availability of family friendly community centres..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (b) More friends and neighbours reporting abuse or neglect..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (c) More affordable childcare , including occasional care..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (d) Stronger jail sentences for people who abuse or neglect children..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (e) Home visit programs for parents who abuse or neglect their children..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (f) Encouraging grandparents and other family members to support parents struggling with parenting..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (g) Education on parenting in the last year of high school.....1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (h) Increased job training and job seeking programs for out-of-work parents..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (i) Neighbours helping parents who they see having difficulty coping with their kids.....1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (j) Increased availability of community nurses.... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (k) Compulsory rehabilitation classes for parents who abuse or neglect their children.....1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (l) Public education campaigns that promote the need to protect and care for children..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (m) More programs and support for parents with mental health or drug and alcohol issues..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (n) Encouraging kids to report their abusive parents or carers..... 1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (o) Identifying parents who might abuse or neglect their children and offering them parenting classes.....1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
- (p) Compulsory parenting programs for all parents.....1.....2.....3..... 4.....5.....6..... 7
-

Q10. Here is that list again. This time please indicate how willing you would be for the government to spend more on each of these – bearing in mind that would mean less money for other government programs.

(For each one, please circle under not willing, somewhat willing or very willing).

Very willing Somewhat willing Not willing

- (a) Increased availability of family friendly community centres.....1.....2.....3
- (b) More friends and neighbours reporting abuse and neglect.....1.....2.....3
- (c) Compulsory rehabilitation classes for parents who abuse or neglect their children..1.....2.....3
- (d) Stronger jail sentences for people who abuse or neglect children..... 1.....2.....3
- (e) Home visit programs for parents who abuse or neglect children..... 1.....2.....3
- (f) Encouraging kids to report their abusive parents or carers.....1.....2.....3
- (g) Compulsory parenting programs for all parents..... 1.....2.....3
- (h) Increased job training and job seeking programs for out-of-work parents..... 1.....2.....3
- (i) Encouraging neighbours to help parents who they see having difficulty coping with their kids..... 1.....2.....3
- (j) Increased availability of community nurses.....1.....2.....3
- (k) More affordable childcare, including occasional care..... 1.....2.....3
- (l) Public education campaigns that promote the need to protect and care for children.....1.....2.....3
- (m) More programs and support for parents with mental health or drug and alcohol issues..... 1.....2.....3
- (n) Encouraging grandparents and other family members to support parents struggling with parenting.....1.....2.....3
- (o) Education on parenting in the last year of high school..... 1.....2.....3
- (p) Identifying parents who might abuse or neglect their children and offering them parenting classes..... 1.....2.....3
-

Q11. Sometimes people hear about or suspect a child is being abused or neglected but they don't do anything. Which of the following do you think stop people from doing something about it? **Circle any of these that you think apply**

They ...

Don't know what to do about it.....1

Don't want to admit things like that happen..... 1

Are worried what would happen to themselves if they did talk about it..... 1

Are worried that they might have got things wrong and cause trouble for no reason..... 1

Don't think it is any of their business.....1

Don't want to upset the parents or adults concerned..... 1

Don't want to cause problems for a family..... 1

Other (write in): _____

Q12a. How likely would you be to do each of the following if you were told by someone you trust that a neighbour's child was being physically abused by their parents?

	Definitely would do	Probably would do	Might or might not do	Probably wouldn't do	Definitely would not do
--	------------------------	----------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------

(a) Discuss with friend/partner.. 1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(b) Encourage the person who told me to do something.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(c) Call the police.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(d) Talk to the parents.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(e) Call the families department.1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(f) Call a community nurse.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(g) Talk to the child.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(h) Phone a helpline for advice..1.....2.....3.....4.....5

(i) Nothing at all.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5

Other (write in): _____

Q12b. How likely would you be to do the following if you were told by someone you trust that a child you didn't know but was at your child's school was being physically abused by their parents?

Definitely Probably Might or Probably Definitely
would do would do might not do wouldn't do would not do

- (a) Discuss with friend/partner.. 1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (b) Encourage the person who told me to do something.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (c) Call the police.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (d) Talk to the parents.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (e) Call the families department.1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (f) Call a community nurse.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (g) Talk to the child.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (h) Phone a helpline for advice...1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 (i) Nothing at all.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5
 Other (write in): _____
-

Q13. How much do you think the following contribute to child abuse and neglect?
(Please give each a score from 1 to 7 where 1 = not at all and 7 = A Lot).

Not at all

A lot

- (a) Domestic violence between parents..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (b) Parents not knowing how to care for children..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (c) Not enough government funding for parenting programs..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (d) Parents' abuse of drugs or alcohol..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (e) Family/marriage breakdown..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (f) Society in general doesn't care enough about children..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (g) Not enough affordable pre-school programs..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (h) Parents not spending enough time with their children..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (i) Parents not knowing how to discipline children..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (j) Parents' financial problems..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (k) Violence in movies and on TV shows..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (l) Too much pressure to get ahead..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (m) Parental stress: working too hard..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (n) Not enough low cost recreational centres and activities for parents and children..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (o) Parents were abused or neglected themselves..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 (p) People knowing that others won't report them..... 1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Other (write in): _____
-

Q14. Here are some situations involving a child. For each one, please say whether you would take any action if you saw or heard the following:

Definitely Probably Probably not Definitely not
take action take action take action take action

- (a) A person leaves a young child alone
in a car for more than five minutes..... 1.....2.....3.....4
- (b) A parent constantly yells abuse at their child.1.....2.....3.....4
- (c) A child tells you they are being abused.....1.....2.....3.....4
- (d) Children in a neighbouring house appear to
be neglected and not well cared for..... 1.....2.....3.....4
- (e) A group of young teens truanting from
school.....1.....2.....3.....4
- (f) An eight year old boy regularly goes to
school without lunch..... 1.....2.....3.....4
- (g) A 14 year old girl is having sex with an adult.. 1.....2.....3.....4
-

Q15a. What sorts of things do you think could make it easier for parents having problems to seek help before they hurt their children?

Q15b. What sorts of things do you think could make it easier for parents to admit they have hurt their children and seek help?

Q16. Would you know where to go if you or someone you knew wanted to get help with parenting problems?

Yes.....1

No.....2

If "Yes": Where? _____

Q17. Do you know where a child or young person could go for help if they were being abused or neglected?

Yes.....1

No.....2

If "Yes": Where? _____

Q18. Who do you see being responsible for children's safety and welfare? Please indicate whether each is **mainly** responsible, **partly** responsible, or **not** responsible at all.

	<u>Mainly</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
(a) State government.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(b) Relatives.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(c) Federal government.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(d) Their own friends.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(e) Schools	1.....	2.....	3.....
(f) Welfare agencies.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(g) Local government.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(h) Child protection authorities.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(i) Parents.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(j) Neighbours.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
(k) Charities and welfare groups.....	1.....	2.....	3.....
Other (write in): _____			

Q19. Here are a number of statements that may or may not describe you. If it describes you, circle under the word "true". If not, circle under the word "false."

	<u>True</u>	<u>False</u>
(a) I sometimes litter.....	1.....	2.....
(b) I always admit my mistakes openly and face the potential negative consequences.....	1.....	2.....
(c) In traffic I am always polite and considerate of others.....	1.....	2.....
(d) I have tried illegal drugs (for example, marijuana, cocaine, etc.).....	1.....	2.....
(e) I always accept others' opinions, even when they don't agree with my own....	1.....	2.....
(f) I take out my bad moods on others now and then.....	1.....	2.....
(g) There has been an occasion when I took advantage of someone else.....	1.....	2.....
(h) In conversations I always listen attentively and let others finish their sentences.....	1.....	2.....
(i) I never hesitate to help someone in case of emergency.....	1.....	2.....
(j) When I have made a promise, I keep it – no ifs, ands or buts.....	1.....	2.....
(k) I occasionally speak badly of others behind their back.....	1.....	2.....
(l) I would never live off other people.....	1.....	2.....
(m) I always stay friendly and courteous with other people, even when I am stressed out.....	1.....	2.....
(n) During arguments I always stay objective and matter- of-fact.....	1.....	2.....
(o) There has been at least one occasion when I failed to return an item that I borrowed.....	1.....	2.....
(p) I always eat a healthy diet.....	1.....	2.....
(q) Sometimes I only help because I expect something in return.....	1.....	2.....

Q20. How much contact do you have with children or young people in the following places?

	<u>None</u>	<u>Very little</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A lot</u>
(a) In your home.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....
(b) Friends' homes.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....
(c) When shopping.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....
(d) At your workplace.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....
(e) At entertainment places.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....
(f) In general.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	4.....	5.....

Finally, some demographic questions to help us categorise your responses.

Q21. What is your gender?

- Male.....1
 Female..... 2
-

Q22. How old are you?

- 18-24 years..... 1
 25-29 years..... 2
 30-34 years..... 3
 35-39 years..... 4
 40-45 years..... 5
 46-49 years..... 6
 50-54 years..... 7
 55-65 years..... 8
 65+ years.....9
-

Q23. What is the main language spoken in your home?

- English.....1
 Other (write in): _____
-

Q24. Are you from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background?

- Yes.....1
 No.....2
-

Q25. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Never attended school/some primary school..... 1
Completed primary school..... 2
Some high school..... 3
School certificate/intermediate/year 10/4th form..... 4
TEE/Leaving/Year 12/6th form..... 5
TAFE certificate/diploma..... 6
University, or other tertiary institution degree..... 7
Other (write in): _____
-

Q26. Which of the follow best describes you. Are you...

- Single..... 1
Married or living with a partner..... 2
Separated/divorced..... 3
Widowed..... 4
Other (write in): _____
-

Q27. Which of the following best describes your current employment?

- Full-time paid work..... 1
Part-time or casual paid work..... 2
Home duties..... 3
Studying..... 4
Currently looking for work or receiving
government assistance..... 5
Unable to work due to injury or illness..... 6
Other (write in): _____
-

Q28. Which of the following best describes your parenting status?

- No children..... 1
Children under 18..... 2
Children over 18 at home..... 3
Children have left home..... 4
Fostering children..... 5

If you have "Children under 18": What are their ages? _____

Q29. Into which range does your annual combined household income fall?

- Less than \$25,000..... 1
- \$25,000 to less than \$35,000..... 2
- \$35,000 to less than \$50,000.....3
- \$50,000 to less than \$65,000..... 4
- \$65,000 to less than \$80,000..... 5
- \$80,000 to less than \$100,000..... 6
- \$100,000 to less than \$120,000..... 7
- \$120,000 to less than \$140,000..... 8
- \$140,000 to less than \$160,000..... 9
- More than \$160,000..... 10

Q30. And finally, what is your postcode? _____

APPENDIX 5

Q1. Are you?

- Male
- Female

Q2. Do you live in?

- ACT
- NSW
- NT
- QLD
- SA
- TAS
- VIC
- WA

And what is your postcode?

Q3. Are you?

- Under 18
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65 years or over

Q4. Do you work with children or young people?

- Yes
- No

Q5. Do you have children or young people living with you?

- Yes
- No

Q6. How much contact do you have with children or young people in the following places?

None Very little A little Some A lot
 1.....2.....3.....4.....5

- (a) In your home
- (b) In friends' homes
- (c) When shopping
- (d) At your workplace
- (e) At entertainment places
- (f) In general

Q7. Who do you see being responsible for children’s safety and welfare? Please indicate whether each is mainly responsible, partly responsible, or not responsible at all.

Mainly responsible Partly responsible Not responsible at all
 1.....2.....3

- (a) State government
- (b) Relatives
- (c) Federal government
- (d) Their own friends
- (e) Schools
- (f) Local government
- (g) Child protection authorities
- (h) Parents
- (i) Neighbours
- (j) Charities and welfare agencies
- (k) The police
- Other (type in):

Q8a. Which of the following do you think are the major things that children and young people worry about today? (Please give a separate answer for children up to 12 years and young people 13 - 17 years. Tick only their major worries.)

Children up to 12 years Young people 13- 17 years
 1.....2

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Being bullied
- Quarrels with parents
- Relationships with friends
- Doing Ok at school
- Likelihood of getting a job they like
- Getting depressed
- Sexuality
- Being robbed or attacked
- Being abused or neglected
- Fitting in at school
- Parents quarrelling or separating
- Anything else not listed here? (type in):

Q8b. What are the major things that you worry about in relation to children and young people in today’s society? (Please give a separate answer for children up to 12 years and young people 13 - 17 years. Tick only their major worries).

Children up to 12 years	Young people 13- 17 years
1.....	2.....

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Being bullied
- Quarrels with parents
- Relationships with friends
- Doing Ok at school
- Likelihood of getting a job they like
- Getting depressed
- Sexuality
- Being robbed or attacked
- Being abused or neglected
- Fitting in at school
- Parents quarrelling or separating
- Anything else not listed here? (type in):

Q9. Authorities receive many reports of child abuse and neglect. They then investigate to find out whether those reports are correct or not. How many cases of child abuse or neglect do you think were proven correct in Australia last year? (If you don’t know, just guess what you think is the number?)

Number:

Q10. To what extent do you think the Australian community believes that child abuse is a serious problem?

- Not nearly enough recognised as a serious problem
- Only fairly well recognised as a serious problem
- Very well recognised as a serious problem

Q11a. If the government announced an extra \$100 million for spending across the following areas, where would you like them to spend the money? (Allocate the \$100 million across these five areas. Make sure your amounts add up to 100.)

- Better public transport..... \$
- More services for children and families.. \$
- More police and crime prevention..... \$
- More recreation and sporting facilities.. \$

Q15. Following is a list of things that various people think could be effective in reducing child abuse and neglect in Australia. For each one, please indicate how effective you think it might be in reducing child abuse and neglect in Australia?

Not at all effective Very effective
1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 67

- (a) More local centres with services and activities for families
- (b) More people reporting abuse or neglect when they see it
- (c) Parenting classes for people who are not looking after their kids properly
- (d) Longer jail sentences for child abusers
- (e) Home visit programs for parents who neglect their children
- (f) Encouraging kids to report abuse
- (g) Increased job training and job seeking programs for out-of-work parents
- (h) Neighbours helping parents who they see struggling to cope with their kids
- (i) Home visit programs for all new mothers and their babies
- (j) Childcare available for all families
- (k) Public education campaigns that promote the need to protect and care for children
- (l) More support for parents with mental health issues
- (m) More support for parents with drug and alcohol issues
- (n) Encouraging other family members to support parents struggling to cope with their kids
- (o) Education on parenting in the last year of high school

Q16. Here is that list again. How willing would you be for the government to spend more on each of these – bearing in mind that would mean less money for other government programs.

YES Maybe NO
1.....2.....3

- (a) More local centres with services and activities for families
- (b) More people reporting abuse or neglect when they see it
- (c) Parenting classes for people who are not looking after their kids properly
- (d) Longer jail sentences for child abusers
- (e) Home visit programs for parents who neglect their children
- (f) Encouraging kids to report abuse
- (g) Increased job training and job seeking programs for out-of work parents
- (h) Neighbours helping parents who they see struggling to cope with their kids
- (i) Home visit programs for all new mothers and their babies
- (j) Childcare available for all families
- (k) Public education campaigns that promote the need to protect and care for children
- (l) More support for parents with mental health issues
- (m) More support for parents with drug and alcohol issues
- (n) Encouraging other family members to support parents struggling to cope with their kids
- (o) Education on parenting in the last year of high school

Q17. Sometimes people hear about or suspect a child is being abused or neglected but they don't do anything. Which of the following do you think stop people from doing anything about it? (Tick any of these that you think apply.)

Definitely does Probably does Probably does not

1.....2.....3

- (a) They don't know what to do about it
 - (b) They don't want to admit things like that happen
 - (c) They are worried what would happen to themselves if they did talk about it
 - (d) They are worried that they might have got things wrong and cause trouble for no reason
 - (e) They don't think it is any of their business
 - (f) They don't want to upset the parents or adults concerned
 - (g) They don't want to cause problems for a family
- Other (type in):

Q18. How likely would you be to do each of the following if you were told by someone you trust that a neighbour's child was being physically abused by their parents?

Definitely Probably Might or Probably Definitely
would do would do might not do would not do would not do

1.....2.....3.....4.....5

- (a) Discuss with friend/partner
 - (b) Encourage the person who told me to do something
 - (c) Call the police
 - (d) Talk to the parents
 - (e) Call the families/child protection department
 - (f) Call a child health nurse
 - (g) Talk to the child
 - (h) Phone a helpline for advice
 - (i) Nothing at all
- Other (type in):

Q19. How likely would you be to do the following if you were told by someone you trust that a child you didn't know but was at your child's school was being physically abused by their parents?

Definitely Probably Might or Probably Definitely
would do would do might not do would not do would not do

1.....2.....3.....4.....5

- (a) Discuss with friend/partner
 - (b) Encourage the person who told me to do something
 - (c) Call the police
 - (d) Talk to the parents
 - (e) Call the families/child protection department
 - (f) Call a child health nurse
 - (g) Talk to the child
 - (h) Phone a helpline for advice
 - (i) Nothing at all
- Other (type in):

Q20. How much do you think the following contribute to child abuse and neglect?

Not at all A lot
 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 67

- (a) Domestic violence between parents
- (b) Parents not knowing how to care for children
- (c) Not enough government funding for parenting programs
- (d) Parents' abuse of drugs or alcohol
- (e) Family/marriage breakdown
- (f) Society in general doesn't care enough about children
- (g) Not enough affordable pre-school programs
- (h) Parents not spending enough time with their children
- (i) Parents not knowing how to discipline children
- (j) Parents' financial problems
- (k) Violence in movies and on TV shows
- (l) Too much pressure to get ahead
- (m) Parents working too hard
- (n) Not enough low cost recreational centres and activities for parents and children
- (o) Parents were abused or neglected themselves
- (p) People knowing that others won't report them

Q21. Here are some situations involving a child. For each one, please say whether you would take any action if you saw or heard the following:

Definitely Probably Probably Definitely
 take action take action not take action not take action
 1.....2.....3.....4

- (a) A person leaves a young child alone in a car for more than five minutes
 - (b) A parent constantly yells abuse at their child
 - (c) A child tells you they are being abused
 - (d) Children in a neighbouring house appear to be neglected and not well cared for
 - (e) A group of young teens truanting from school
 - (f) An eight year old boy regularly goes to school without lunch
 - (g) A 14 year old girl is having sex with an adult
- Other (type in):

Q22. Would you know where to go if you or someone you knew wanted to get help with parenting problems?

- Yes
- No

If "Yes", where?

Q23. Do you know where a child or young person could go for help if they were being abused or neglected?

Yes

No

If "Yes", where?

Finally, some demographic questions to help us categorise your responses.

Q24. What is the main language spoken in your home?

English

Other (type in):

Q25. Are you from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background?

Yes

No

Q26. Which of these best describes your education?

Never attended school/some primary school

Completed primary school

Some high school

TAFE certificate/diploma

University, or other tertiary institution degree

Other (type in):

Q27. Are you?

Single

Married or living with a partner

Separated/divorced

Widowed

Other (type in):

Q28. Are you?

In full-time paid work

In part-time or casual paid work

Doing home duties

Studying

Currently looking for work or receiving government assistance

Unable to work due to injury or illness

Other (type in):

Q29. Do you have?

No children

Children under 12 years

Children 13 – 17 years at home

Children 18 years or over at home

Children who have left home

Foster children

If you do have children at home, how many and what are their ages?

Q30. Do you have any comments on the questionnaire itself? For example, the words used, or the length or the meaning of some questions?**Q31. Do you have any comments to add on the issues of children and youth, and child abuse and neglect?**

APPENDIX 6: Community Attitude Survey on the Safety and Wellbeing of Children

Thank you for taking part in this Survey. It shows that you care about children and young people and your answers will help all of us to find better ways to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

This Survey is confidential and completely anonymous. It asks about your views and includes some questions about you. Your answers will be treated as private and you will not be identified by the answers you give.

Please note that you can skip any question that you don't want to answer but it would be really helpful if you could continue to the end. It will take approximately 15 minutes.

Q1. Are you ...?

Male

Female

Q2. What is your postcode ...?

Q3. Are you ...?

Under 18

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65 or over

Q4. How much contact do you have with children or young people in the following places?

	<u>None</u>	<u>Very little</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>A lot</u>
(a) In your home	1	2	3	4	5
(b) In the homes of your friends or family members	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Through your work	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Through sport or recreation activities	1	2	3	4	5
(e) In general	1	2	3	4	5

Q5. Who do you see being responsible for children's wellbeing and safety? Please indicate whether each is **mainly** responsible, **partly** responsible, or **not** responsible at all.

	<u>Mainly</u>	<u>Partly</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
(a) Neighbours	1	2	3
(b) Health professionals and agencies	1	2	3
(c) Schools	1	2	3
(d) Government	1	2	3
(e) Child protection authorities	1	2	3
(f) Parents	1	2	3
(g) Other relatives	1	2	3
(h) Businesses / companies	1	2	3
(i) Charities and welfare groups	1	2	3
(j) The media	1	2	3
(k) Police	1	2	3
(l) Other (write in): _____			
(m) I don't know			

Q6. From what you know or have heard, what do you think are the 3 major things that **children and young people** worry about today? (Please give a separate answer for children up to 12 and young people 13-17.

	<u>children up to 12</u>	<u>young people 13-17 years</u>
Alcohol	1	2
Drugs	1	2
Being bullied	1	2
Arguments with parents	1	2
Relationships with friends	1	2
Doing OK at school	1	2
Chances of getting a job they like	1	2
Getting depressed	1	2
Sexuality	1	2
Being robbed or attacked	1	2
Being neglected or abused	1	2
Fitting in at school	1	2
Parents fighting	1	2
Parents separating	1	2
Anything else not listed here? (type in): _____		
I don't know		

Q7. What are the 3 major things that **you** worry about in relation to children and young people in today’s society? (Please give a separate answer for children up to 12 and young people 13 -17.)

	<u>children up to 12</u>	<u>young people 13-17 years</u>
Alcohol	1	2
Drugs	1	2
Being bullied	1	2
Arguments with parents	1	2
Relationships with friends	1	2
Doing OK at school	1	2
Chances of getting a job they like	1	2
Getting depressed	1	2
Sexuality	1	2
Being robbed or attacked	1	2
Being neglected or abused	1	2
Fitting in at school	1	2
Parents fighting	1	2
Parents separating	1	2
Anything else not listed here? (type in): _____		
I don't know		

Q8. From what you know or have heard, to what extent do you think the **Australian community** believes that child abuse and neglect is a serious problem? **(Circle one only).**

Not recognised nearly enough as a serious problem	1
Only fairly well recognised as a serious problem	2
Very well recognised as a serious problem	3
I don't know	

Q9. To what extent do **you** think that child abuse and neglect is a serious problem? **(Circle one only).**

I think it's a really serious problem	1
It is of concern but there are more serious problems	2
I don't think it's a serious problem	3
I don't know	4

Q10. How common (or rare) do you think it is for children in Australia to experience each of the following? **(For each one, please circle a number from 1 to 5 using the scale where 1 = rare and 5 = very common).**

	<u>Rare</u>			<u>Very common</u>	
(a) Sexual abuse*	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Physical abuse *	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Psychological abuse *	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Neglect *	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Witnessing family violence	1	2	3	4	5
(g) I don't know					

* What does this mean?

DROP DOWN BOX

- **Physical abuse:** non-accidental aggressive act towards a child including slapping, shaking, punching, kicking etc. *
- **Psychological abuse:** includes rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing and/or not providing emotional support and care*
- **Sexual abuse:** any sexual activity between a child and an adult or older person (5 or more years older). Includes fondling, oral or anal and vaginal penetration, exposing or involving a child in pornography, voyeurism etc.*
- **Neglect:** failure to provide for a child’s basic needs, including not enough food, shelter, clothing, supervision, medical attention etc.*
- **Witnessing Family Violence:** a child being present, either hearing or seeing, while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical, sexual or psychological abuse or is exposed to damage caused by the abuser*

* AIFS National Child Protection Clearing House

Q11. Last year the number of individual children and young people in Australia who were found by government authorities to have been abused or neglected was above 30,000.

Does that surprise you?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....

Q12. What would you do if.....

Your neighbours’ 7 year old child often has bruises. You hear a lot of yelling and screaming coming from the house. You see the child with a new black eye.

Would you:

	Definitely would do	Probably would do	Might or might not do	Probably wouldn’t do	Definitely would not do
(a) Discuss it with your friend/partner	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Talk to the parents	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Call the police	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Phone a helpline for advice	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Call the families/child protection department	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Call a child health nurse/teacher	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Talk to the child	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Do nothing at all	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Other (write in): _____					
(j) I don’t know					

Q13. What would you do if.....

When walking past a house in your neighbourhood you often notice 3 children in their front yard. They are skinny and always look dirty. One of the children, who is about 10 years old regularly asks you for money for food.

Would you:

	Definitely would do	Probably would do	Might or might not do	Probably wouldn't do	Definitely would not do
(a) Discuss it with your friend/partner	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Talk to the parents	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Call the police	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Phone a helpline for advice	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Call the families/child protection department	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Call a child health nurse/teacher	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Talk to the child	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Do nothing at all	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Other (write in): _____					
(j) I don't know					

Q14. What would you do if.....

A twelve year old child, who is a member of your extended family, tells you that an adult relative has been touching him / her on the genitals.

Would you:

	Definitely would do	Probably would do	Might or might not do	Probably wouldn't do	Definitely would not do
(a) Discuss it with your friend/partner	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Talk to the parents	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Call the police	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Phone a helpline for advice	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Call the families/child protection department	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Call a child health nurse/teacher	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Talk to the child	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Do nothing at all	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Other (write in): _____					
(j) I don't know					

Q15. Sometimes people suspect a child is being abused or neglected but they don't do anything. What do you think stops them from taking any action?

	Definitely stops them	Possibly stops them	Does not stop them
(a) They don't know what to do	1	2	3
(b) They don't want to admit things like that happen	1	2	3
(c) They are worried what would happen to them if they talk about it	1	2	3
(d) They are worried they may be wrong	1	2	3
(e) They don't think it's their business	1	2	3
(f) They don't want to upset the parents	1	2	3
(g) They don't want to cause problems for the child	1	2	3
(h) Other reasons _____			

Q16. From what you know or have heard, how much do you think each of the following things contribute to child abuse and neglect? **(Please give each a score from 1 to 5 where 1 = not at all and 5 = a lot).**

	<u>Not at all</u>			<u>A lot</u>	
(a) Domestic violence between parents	1	2	3	4	5
(b) Parents not knowing how to care for children	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Not enough government funding for parenting programs	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Parents' abuse of drugs or alcohol	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Family/marriage breakdown	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Society in general doesn't care enough about children	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Not enough child care that people can afford	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Parents not spending enough time with their children	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Parents not knowing how to discipline children	1	2	3	4	5
(j) Parents' financial problems	1	2	3	4	5
(k) Violence in movies and on TV shows	1	2	3	4	5
(l) Parental mental illness	1	2	3	4	5
(m) Parental stress: working too hard	1	2	3	4	5
(n) Not enough local activities for families	1	2	3	4	5
(o) Parents were abused or neglected themselves	1	2	3	4	5
(p) People knowing that others won't report them	1	2	3	4	5
(q) Other (write in): _____					
(r) I don't know					

Q17. Following is a list of things that could possibly be effective in reducing child abuse and neglect. It would be really helpful if you would indicate how effective you think each might be:

	<u>Not at all effective</u>			<u>Very effective</u>	
(a) More local centres with services and activities for families	1	2	3	4	5
(b) More people reporting abuse or neglect when they see it	1	2	3	4	5
(c) Parenting classes for people who are not looking after their kids properly	1	2	3	4	5
(d) Longer jail sentences for child abusers	1	2	3	4	5
(e) Home visiting programs for parents who neglect their children	1	2	3	4	5
(f) Encouraging kids to report abuse	1	2	3	4	5
(g) Neighbours helping parents who they see having difficulty coping with their kids	1	2	3	4	5
(h) Removing children permanently from families	1	2	3	4	5
(i) Home visiting programs for all new mothers and their babies	1	2	3	4	5
(j) Childcare available for all families	1	2	3	4	5
(k) Public education campaigns that promote the need to protect and care for children	1	2	3	4	5
(l) More support for parents with mental health issues	1	2	3	4	5
(m) Teaching all parents to better look after their children	1	2	3	4	5
(n) Programs for parents with drug and alcohol issues	1	2	3	4	5
(o) Encouraging family members to support parents struggling to cope with their kids	1	2	3	4	5
(p) Education on parenting in high school	1	2	3	4	5
(q) Providing temporary care for children when families are having problems	1	2	3	4	5
(r) I don't know					

Q18. Is there anything else you would like to say about how Australia can ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children? For example, what sorts of things do you think could make it easier for parents having problems to seek help before they have hurt their children?

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Thank you. That completes the main part of the Survey however it is very helpful for our researchers to know more about the people who have answered the Survey.

Please take another minute to tell us more about your background. We would like to assure you again that this Survey is completely confidential. This means your answers will be treated as private and you will not be identified by the information answers you give to us.

Q19. What is the main language spoken in your home?
English 1
Other (write in): _____

Q20. Are you from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background?
Yes 1
No 2

Q21. Which of these best describes your education?
Never attended school/some primary school 1
Completed primary school 2
Some high school 3
Completed high school 4
TAFE certificate/diploma 5
University, or other tertiary institution degree 6
Other (write in): _____

Q22. Are you...?
Single 1
Married or living with a partner 2
Separated/divorced 3
Widowed 4
Other (write in): _____

Q24. Do you have children living with you?
Yes
No

If you do have children living with you at least some of the time, please list their ages? _____

Q25. Have you ever been a foster parent?
Yes
No

If you have now completed your answers click here..... SUBMIT

(Survey shuts and immediately a screen with the following appears)

Thank you again. Your answers will truly help.

If you would like to hear about progress from this Survey and other ways in which you can be involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children please enter your email address here.....

Thinking about child abuse and neglect raises important issues for many people. The following services may be of assistance to you.
"Help & Support" (a button which clicks through directly to the next page)

