

SAFEGUARDING CAPABILITIES SURVEY

2021 RESULTS

Who participated in the survey?

631 Staff/volunteers

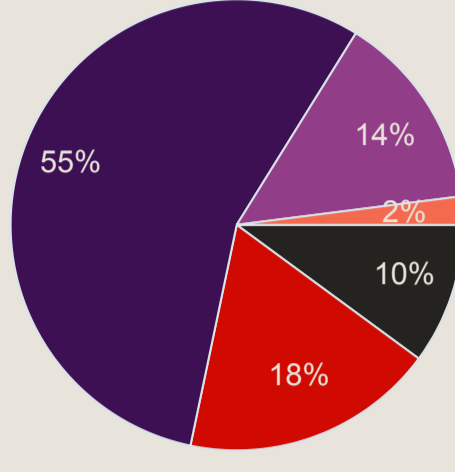


82% Female
16% Male
2% Gender diverse

Who were the participants?



55% Practitioners (teacher, social worker or therapist)



14% Administrators (not a frontline staff member)



2% Volunteers



18% Middle managers (team leader, coordinator)



10% Leaders (CEO, director, principal)

What sector were the participants from?



40% Education



24% Families and children's services



17% Youth employment services



14% Youth work, counselling



5% Religious ministry



What were the findings of the study?

Organisational culture

Participants were asked about their level of awareness of policies and procedures and their perception of the culture of child safety within the organisation.

79% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were aware of policies and procedures and that the organisation had a culture of child safety.

Participants had **greater awareness** of:

- their workplace having a culture that prioritises protection of children and young people from sexual abuse.
- leaders in their organisation who understand the importance of safeguarding.

Participants had **less awareness** of:

- how they could be building the sexual safety skills of young people by staff and volunteers.
- whether their organisation examines the physical layout of their buildings and grounds to improve oversight of adult/child interactions while respecting privacy.

Confidence to act

Participants were asked about their level of confidence to take action to prevent abuse or respond to young people's concerns.

73% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident to take action to prevent abuse or respond to young people's concerns.

Participants were **most confident** in:

- being able to fulfil their mandatory reporting obligations.
- their ability to support children and young people's respectful relationships with each other.

Participants were **least confident** in:

- developing safety plans for children and young people.
- including the perspectives of young people when addressing sexual abuse risks.

Attitudes to prevention

Participants were asked about their attitudes that relate to the prevention of abuse and the agency of children and young people.

96% of participants agreed or strongly agreed to having attitudes that support the prevention and appropriate response to child sexual abuse.

Most supportive attitudes in preventing abuse:

- not believing young people who get sexually abused have usually acted promiscuously or somehow 'asked' for it.
- believing a young person's wellbeing is more important than protecting the organisation's reputation if abuse were to occur.

Less supportive attitudes that may get in the way of good sexual abuse prevention:

- believing that screening staff and volunteers with working with children checks is the only real way to prevent abuse.
- believing that it is more important to understand a colleague's intentions instead of considering whether behaviour is consistent with organisational policy.

Prevention knowledge

Participants were asked about their knowledge related to situational prevention and the role of educating staff and children about abuse.

90% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they possess knowledge of situational prevention and the role of educating staff and children and young people.

Strong knowledge in following area:

- sexual abuse prevention education can effectively equip children and young person to know what behaviours are safe and unsafe when interacting with peers and adults.

Poor knowledge in following areas:

- the negative impact that high staff turnover can have in making children and young people less comfortable to speak up about their sexual safety concerns
- child sexual abuse is more likely to occur when there are opportunities for adults to spend time interacting with children out of sight of other adults.