

Child Guardian

Views of Children and Young People in Care

Queensland 2006



commission for
children and young people
and child guardian

Dear Premier

In accordance with section s163 of the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*, I provide the Commission's report, *Views of Children and Young People in Care – Queensland 2006*.

I have a responsibility as Commissioner and Child Guardian to listen to and seriously consider the concerns, views and wishes of children and young people. For this reason, and to better understand the effectiveness of recent reforms to the child safety system, I conducted a survey of children and young people in out-of-home care. This report reveals the results of that survey.

The publication of this report recognises that children and young people in out-of-home care have valid views which can (and should) be used by decision-makers, practitioners, and researchers to improve service delivery by the child safety system.

Yours sincerely



Elizabeth Fraser
Commissioner for Children and Young People
and Child Guardian

Acknowledgements

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Particular appreciation is expressed to:

- the children and young people living in out-of-home care who participated in the survey, and whose views are represented in this report
- foster carers, relative carers, grandparent carers and all other carers who supported the children and young people involved in the survey
- officers of the Department of Child Safety, the Department of Communities and non-government service providers who supported the development and conduct of the survey
- the Commission's Zonal Coordinators and Community Visitors for helping administer the survey
- officers of the Commission who variously designed the study, analysed the data and/or prepared the report.

Glossary

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
Blueprint	Blueprint for implementing the recommendations of the January 2004 CMC inquiry into abuse in foster care
CSO	Child Safety Officer
CAPD	Central Auditory Processing Disorder
CMC	Crime and Misconduct Commission
CV	Community Visitor
CYMHS	Child and Youth Mental Health Service
DChS	Department of Child Safety
FAS	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
FSO	Family Services Officer
NGO	Non-government Organisation
SEDU	Special Education Developmental Unit
YP	Young people/person

Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Glossary	ii
List of figures	iv
List of tables	iv
Foreword	1
Summary of findings	2
Introduction	3
Survey design	5
Guiding principles	5
Design process	5
Administration implications	6
Report implications	7
Limitations	7
Findings	8
Satisfaction with care (Questionnaires 1-3)	8
Demographic information	8
Background information	8
Frequency and nature of disabilities	9
Prevalence of ADHD medication	10
Placement information	10
Length of current placement.....	10
Age at commencement of care.....	11
Total placements.....	12
Total length of time in care.....	13
Reunification.....	14
School attendance.....	15
Perceptions of current placement.....	16
Feelings of safety.....	16
Perceptions of carer.....	16
Other aspects of placement	18
Happiness with placement	19
Child Safety Officers	20
Do you know the name of your CSO?	20
Contact with your CSO.....	20
Is your CSO nice to you?.....	21
Does your CSO listen to you?.....	22
Your CSO cares about what is best for you .	22
Helpfulness of your CSO	22
Perceptions about the system in general.....	23
Reason for, and expectations of, care.....	23
Practical impacts of being in out-of-home care	23
People listen to you what you want.....	23
Able to get permission in time	24
Have to do things you don't want to do (such as see people or go to meetings).....	24
Able to do things that others not in care can do.....	25
Miss out on things because of care.....	25
Made to feel different because of care.....	25
Know who to ask for help	26
Involvement in decisions	26
People explain decisions made about you....	26
Confidence in Department's assurances	27
Unresolved health issues	27
Unresolved problem at school.....	27
Education Support Plans	27
Case Plans.....	28
Improvements in the last 12 months	28
Better or worse off.....	28
Contact with family	29
Anything that you would like to have happen to you	30
Improvements to the system.....	31
Perceptions of Plans for Leaving Care (over 16 year-olds only).....	32
Influences according to Indigenous status and disability.....	32
Indigenous status.....	32
Disability.....	32
Satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program.....	33
Demographic information	33
The Community Visitor Program.....	34
Do you know the name of your CV.....	34
Contact with CV	35
Perceptions of CV	36
Is your CV nice to you?.....	36
Does your CV listen to you?.....	36
Does your CV care about what is best for you?.....	37
Has your CV been able to help you with anything in particular?.....	37
Helpfulness of CV.....	37
Influences according to Indigenous status ...	38
Future Directions	39
Appendix	41

List of Figures

Figure 1	Carer listens to you	17
Figure 2	Treated the same as other children living with you.....	17
Figure 3	Happiness with current placement ...	19
Figure 4	Frequency of contact with your CSO	20
Figure 5	Desired contact with CSO.....	21
Figure 6	Able to contact your CSO when needed	21
Figure 7	Does your CSO listen to you?.....	22
Figure 8	Your CSO cares about what is best for you.....	22
Figure 9	Helpfulness of your CSO	22
Figure 10	People listen to what you want.....	23
Figure 11	Able to get permission in time.....	24
Figure 12	Have to do things you don't want to do - such as see people or go to meetings	24
Figure 13	Able to do things that others not in care can do.....	25
Figure 14	Miss out on things because of care ..	25
Figure 15	Made to feel different because of care.....	25
Figure 16	Know who to ask for help.....	26
Figure 17	Have a say in what happens to you	26
Figure 18	People explain decisions made about you	26
Figure 19	How often you see your Community Visitor.....	35
Figure 20	How often do you want to see your CV	35
Figure 21	Able to contact your CV when needed.....	36
Figure 22	Does your CV listen to you?.....	36
Figure 23	Does your CV care what is best for you?	37
Figure 24	Helpfulness of CV	38

List of Tables

Table 1	Background information.....	9
Table 2	Rates of disability	9
Table 3	Prevalence of ADHD medication	10
Table 4	Length of current placement	10
Table 5	Length of current placement (frequency distribution).....	11

Table 6	Age in years at commencement of care.....	11
Table 7	Age in years at commencement of care (frequency distribution).....	12
Table 8	Total number of placements as reported by the participants	12
Table 9	Total number of placements as reported by the participants (frequency distribution)	13
Table 10	Total length (in years and months) of care.....	13
Table 11	Total length of care in years (frequency distribution).....	14
Table 12	Number of reunifications.....	14
Table 13	Number of reunifications (frequency distribution).....	15
Table 14	School attendance.....	15
Table 15	Feelings of safety	16
Table 16	Perceptions of carer	16
Table 17	Number of other young people and children who live here.....	18
Table 18	Other aspects of placement.....	18
Table 19	Do you know the name of your CSO?	20
Table 20	Is your CSO nice to you?	21
Table 21	Reasons for and expectations of care.....	23
Table 22	Confidence in Department's assurances	27
Table 23	Unresolved health issues.....	27
Table 24	Unresolved problem at school.....	27
Table 25	Have an Education Support Plan.....	28
Table 26	Have a Case Plan.....	28
Table 27	Have things got better for you in the last 12 months?	28
Table 28	Better or worse off since coming into care	28
Table 29	Contact with family	29
Table 30	Leaving Care Plans	32
Table 31	Background information.....	34
Table 32	Do you know the name of your CV?	34
Table 33	How often do you want to see your CV?	35
Table 34	Is your CV nice to you?	36
Table 35	Has your CV been able to help you with anything?	37
Table 36	Helpfulness of CV	37

Foreword

As Queensland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian I have a responsibility to listen to and seriously consider the concerns, views and wishes of children and young people in this state. To do this, and to better understand the effectiveness of recent reforms to the child safety system, I initiated a survey of children and young people in out-of-home care.

In January and February 2006, 1703 Queensland children and young people living in out-of-home care responded to the survey.¹ These children and young people have provided their views about their experiences in out-of-home care, particularly their day-to-day interactions with carers, Child Safety Officers and Community Visitors and other more general aspects of the child safety system. In doing so these children and young people have broadened the Commission's understanding of Queensland's child protection system. This will contribute to the establishment of a longitudinal evidence-base for identifying placement characteristics that have a significant and lasting impact on the wellbeing and life chances of children and young people in care.

I believe the information and knowledge provided by children and young people in out-of-home care needs to be shared with the public. Publishing children and young people's views recognises and affirms that they have valid views which need to be understood and used in decisions including both policy and practice.

For this reason – as far as possible and within the parameters of ethical research practice^{2,3} – the information provided by children and young people has been reported without alteration or interpretation, so the community 'hears' their words rather than the Commission's interpretation.

There is a great deal of information in this report that will hearten members of the community who have worked tirelessly to reform Queensland's child protection system. The fact that almost 98 per cent of children and young people who took part the survey told us they feel safe in their current placement is encouraging. However, the two per cent of participants who told us they don't feel safe in their current placement represents a significant number of children and young people whose protective care needs may require assessment. As the survey data is progressively integrated with the information compiled by the Commission through its Child Guardian, policy, advocacy, research and employment screening work, this and other findings will be the subject of further analysis and reporting (particularly in the Commission's Child Guardian Report 2006).

I wish to thank the children and young people for their trust and courage in sharing their experiences and perceptions of life in care with us. I also appreciate the role carers played in making the survey possible by accommodating longer than usual visits and helping children and young people to complete surveys or completing them on their behalf if necessary. I thank them most sincerely for their assistance and support.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the Commission's Zonal Coordinators and Community Visitors. Their efforts indicate their high degree of professionalism and dedication to supporting and representing children and young people in out-of-home care.



Elizabeth Fraser
Commissioner for Children and Young People
and Child Guardian

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- 1 Carers completed the survey form for those children who were too young or unable to complete it themselves.
 - 2 The anonymity of survey respondents has been assured and carefully protected throughout the conduct of the survey and subsequent data compilation and report preparation. Completed surveys were returned to the Commission devoid of respondents' names and other identifying details, and any identifying information in the survey responses themselves (eg. names of the respondent's carer, family members, Community Visitor, Child Safety Service Centre, Child Safety Officer) were systematically removed in the presentation and discussion of survey responses within the report.
 - 3 Throughout the conduct of the survey, the safety and best interests of the children remained the paramount concern for the Commission. In the process of obtaining informed consent to participate in the study, children and young people were advised of the Community Visitors' overriding responsibility to identify and respond to safety concerns or issues that may become evident in the course of the survey. Emergent safety concerns and issues were attended to by the Commission in consultation with the Department of Child Safety.

Summary of Findings

This report is the first of many strategies to capture and profile the views of Queensland children and young people in out-of-home-care. It provides a rich and authentic source of data for practitioners, policy makers and researchers with an interest in the wellbeing of children and young people.

Key findings from the survey reveal most children and young people are happy with many aspects of their out-of-home care situation. Reports from children and young people suggest this is influenced by factors such as:

- feeling safe in their current placement
- being treated well by their carer
- being understood by their carer
- being treated the same as others not in care
- knowing who to ask for help
- Child Safety Officers who are nice and care about their best interests
- helpful and responsive Community Visitors
- feeling their situation has improved over the last year.

However, quantitative analyses, supported by comments from children and young people, identified a range of issues of concern. These include the:

- high proportion of children and young people who think their views are not seriously considered
- large number of children and young people experiencing many different care placements
- number of attempts at family reunification
- length of time in care without permanency planning
- lack of confidence that when the department approves something it will actually happen
- high proportion of young people who do not know if they have a case plan
- high proportion of children and young people wanting more contact with their family and their CSO
- difficulties associated with obtaining permission to do things that those not in care can do.

Preliminary analyses also identified issues related to Indigenous status and disability. These and other survey findings will be the focus of further activities by the Commission.

Introduction

Purpose of the survey and report

The Queensland Government has made a significant commitment to reforming the child safety system through its implementation of the Blueprint for reform, arising from the Crime and Misconduct Commission's (CMC's) inquiry into the abuse of children in foster care.

The Commission's survey has yielded important information that will enhance our understanding of the views of children and young people living in out-of-home care, and how current child safety reforms are impacting on them. This information is vitally important in enabling the continuous improvement of services delivered in the child safety system. Equally the survey also represents a powerful way of showing individual children and young people that they have an important voice in shaping the future directions and priorities of the system.

Information gathered from the survey will also inform the Child Guardian's ongoing monitoring of the child safety system and the operations of the Community Visitor Program.

This report details the conduct and findings of the survey.

Background

In January 2004, the CMC released its report *Protecting children: an inquiry into abuse of children in foster care*. The report's recommendations were endorsed by the Queensland Government in its Blueprint for child safety reform. The Blueprint outlined how the CMC's recommendations were to be implemented. It also provided the Commission with increased powers and responsibilities to monitor the child safety system and respond to children and young people on an individual basis.

These powers and responsibilities were to be carried out by a new Child Guardian function. On 1 August 2004 the Commission's name changed to reflect this new function. In line with the Blueprint for child safety reform, the Child Guardian is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of services to all children in the child safety system.

On 6 January 2006, the Child Guardian reported to the CMC on its implementation of the Blueprint's recommendations (the *Child Guardian Report 2005*). In this report, the Child Guardian outlined the Commission's plan to survey children and young people in out-of-home care. To comply with the Blueprint, the survey was administered by the Commission's Community Visitors, providing an opportunity to independently assess the progress of Queensland's child safety reforms.

The Community Visitor Program provides the Commission the opportunity to determine the issues of importance to children and young people in care. It does this as part of its mandated responsibility to visit children in out-of-home care regularly. Community Visitors capture data on, and resolve at a local level, a range of issues identified by children and young people and their carers.

The Community Visitor Program also provides an opportunity to ask children and young people questions about other things besides direct care issues, particularly through surveys or single question formats.

The survey was administered by Community Visitors during January and February 2006. It was designed to provide the Child Guardian with information about children and young people's experiences of out-of-home care and their satisfaction with the Commission's Community Visitor Program.

Children and young people currently in out-of-home care have a range of insights and opinions that can inform improvements to practices and programs, including the Community Visitor Program. The strengths and weaknesses of the child safety system are not remote policy documents or conceptual ideas to these children and young people, but rather their lived experience. They can tell us what is working for them, and what is not.

Report structure

The report's *Survey Design* section describes the principles behind the survey development, including the consultation process that informed the design. This section outlines the different types of questionnaires administered, that is, questionnaires addressing children and young people's experiences of care and those addressing children and young people's satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program. The different questionnaires administered to children and young people of varying ages are also described, as are the various ways in which the questionnaires were administered.

The report's *Findings* section details what the Commission has learnt from the survey. For the most part, these findings are presented in the form of averages or frequencies. Comments from children and young people are also included to further highlight or exemplify responses to particular items. A detailed list of the children and young people's comments are included in the Appendix.

Finally, the *Future Directions* section discusses some of the planned further uses of the survey data. This includes the intention to conduct more detailed analyses to identify any contextual variables of significance across the issues identified. These may include demographic, cultural, age-specific, gender-specific and harm-related factors that may warrant consideration in care planning and case management practices.

Survey design

Guiding principles

In developing the survey to capture the *Views of Children and Young People in Care* in collaboration with key stakeholders⁴, the following considerations were identified by the research team as core design principles.

- The survey should form an integral part of the Commission's systemic monitoring framework and augment the Child Guardian's existing information-gathering activities.
- The impost of the survey on children, young people and their carers should be minimal and should not incite unpleasant memories or emotions for survey participants.
- The nature and focus of the survey questions should address the key issues targeted in the reform of Queensland's child protection system and be informed by children and young people currently in out-of-home care.
- The language and style of administration should be appropriate to the age, developmental profile, literacy level and ability of the children and young people being surveyed.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people should be particularly encouraged and enabled to participate in the survey and their responses should be capable of differentiation in data analyses.
- The variety of out-of-home care placement options⁵ should be taken into account in developing the survey questionnaire items and administration protocol/s.
- The survey questionnaire items and administration protocol/s must not compromise the quality of the relationships children and young people participating in the survey have with their carer or Community Visitor.
- If opportunities exist to collect information of value to key child protection stakeholders, they should be explored in the context of the preceding principles.

Design process

Consistent with the agreed principles, the survey was developed in consultation with children and young people in out-of-home care across Queensland. With appropriate permissions from the Department of Child Safety, out-of-home carers and children and young people themselves, the Commission convened six focus groups involving children, young people and their carers in Brisbane, Gold Coast, Logan, Beaudesert, Ipswich and Townsville.

The focus groups were convened with the support and assistance of Community Visitors and led by Commission research staff. They were held in local venues such as classrooms and parks that were readily accessible to all participants. One focus group was held in a residential facility. The Commission provided light refreshments to encourage a relaxed, convivial atmosphere and maximise the comfort and engagement of focus group participants.

Focus group participants were advised that the Commission was planning to survey all children and young people in out-of-home care and were told about the purpose of the survey and their role in shaping it. Developmentally appropriate language and concepts were used in advice and information to different groups to maximise understanding of and engagement in the focus group process. For example, children or young people who were unlikely to understand the concept of a survey, were advised it was a set of questions that would *"give children and young people in care a chance to tell the Commission about the things they think the Commission should know about being in care. This includes the things that work for kids, and the things that don't."*

4 Stakeholders involved in the design of the survey questionnaire included children and young people, carers and the Department of Child Safety.

5 Out-of-home care placement options include relative care, short and long term foster care, residential care, and supported accommodation.

Focus group participants were advised they could help ensure the right questions were asked by identifying aspects of out-of-home care that the Commission should know about. Prompts were used to galvanise thinking and discussion around aspects of care particularly relevant to child protection reforms. For example, if focus group discussion failed to mention the Community Visitor Program, a prompt of, “*What about having a Community Visitor, how is that for you?*” was used. Additional open-ended comments and encouragements along the lines of, “*Can you tell me more about that*”, or “*So how was that?*” were used to elicit further and focused discussion.

While the age and gender of children and young people participating in the focus group were recorded, identifying information (eg. their name) was not. The youngest child who took part and expressed views in the focus group process was six years old and the oldest was 18. In the tradition of minimally intrusive participant observation, hand written notes of focus group discussion and expressed views were compiled as the children and young people spoke. These notes were available and open to scrutiny by forum participants if they were interested.

Focus group notes were transcribed, collated and analysed to distil key themes and parameters for the survey questionnaire items that emerged across all focus groups, as well as those specific to certain age groups or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Administration implications

Examination of the focus group data, and consideration of age-related comprehension and articulation skills across the focus groups indicated that different and tailored administration strategies would be required for specific age groups being surveyed.

It was evident that the survey should be personally delivered to children and young people with a clear explanation of the survey purpose and process. It was also apparent that carers or Community Visitors might need to complete, or assist with the completion of the questionnaire for children and young people who were too young or otherwise incapable of completing it independently.

Five different survey questionnaires were designed. Two questionnaires were developed to measure satisfaction with the out-of-home care system, two focused on satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program and one asked about satisfaction with the out-of-home care system and the Community Visitor Program. Each questionnaire was customised to reflect the age-related comprehension and literacy skills of a specific sub-group of children and young people, as outlined below.

- *Questionnaire 1* focused on measuring satisfaction with the out-of-home care system among young people aged 9 to 18 years. Young people could choose to complete the questionnaire in the company of and with assistance from their Community Visitor or by themselves.
- *Questionnaire 2* sought to measure satisfaction with the out-of-home care system among children aged from 5 to 8 years. Community Visitors either administered the questionnaire or completed it with or on behalf of the child, depending on the child’s comprehension and literacy skills.
- *Questionnaire 3* sought to measure satisfaction with the out-of-home care system and the Community Visitor Program among children less than five years of age or for children with a disability that precluded self-administration. Carers either administered the questionnaire or completed it with or on behalf of the child, depending on the child’s comprehension and literacy skills.
- *Questionnaire 4* focused on measuring satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program among young people aged 9 to 18 years. Young people could choose to complete the questionnaire in the company of and with assistance from their carer or by themselves.
- *Questionnaire 5* focused on measuring satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program among children aged 5 to 8 years. Carers either administered the questionnaire or completed it with or on behalf of the child, depending on the child’s comprehension and literacy skills.

Report implications

The presentation and discussion of survey data in this report is designed to convey the perceptions and experiences of life in care of the children and young people who took part in the survey as directly and comprehensively as possible. Information volunteered by these children and young people has therefore been documented without alteration or interpretation, so the community ‘hears’ their words, rather than the Commission’s filtering, interpretation or translation of those words. In doing so, the data may sometimes appear erroneous, when they are actually an artefact of the flexibility and adaptability built into the survey design. For example, the age group targeted by each survey questionnaire was clearly identified on the front section of the document, but Community Visitors and carers exercised discretion based on their personal knowledge of the capabilities of individual children and young people who agreed to participate in the survey. As a result, the ages of children who completed each survey questionnaire don’t necessarily accord with the age range one would expect in the frequencies tables and graphs for each questionnaire.

Similarly, although satisfaction ratings for the same aspect of out-of-home-care were sought across all age groups, the wording of the relevant questionnaire items varied to accommodate age-appropriate language. The response options for similar items across the three age groups also varied in scope and sophistication, with the youngest age group choosing between ‘yes’ (satisfied) and ‘no’ (not satisfied) response options, older age groups responding with satisfaction ratings (eg. very satisfied, satisfied, not satisfied, not sure) and young people allocating ratings on a scale of 1 to 10 for some survey responses. Any comparison of relevant item responses across age-groups therefore requires aggregation and recoding of responses, which necessarily loses statistical power in data analyses.

For this report and for ease of communication, data captured from closed (limited choice) survey items are presented in frequency tables or figures where appropriate. Mean response values are also provided as a broad indicator of the responses overall. Samples of the comments provided by children and young people in response to specific open-ended survey questions are provided to illustrate the variety of perceptions and perspectives conveyed by the comments. A complete list of children’s and young people’s comments in relation to those questions is also included in the Appendix.

Limitations

The survey design parameters described above create some limitations in data interpretation and analysis. While the Commission has not embarked on data interpretation and analysis for this report, the following matters should be considered in any ensuing data analyses.

First, the survey respondents represent around 31% of the population of children and young people in out-of-home care in Queensland (at January 2006). The children and young people invited to take part in the survey were limited to those known to the Commission through its Community Visitor Program. The sub-set of survey invitees who agreed to participate was essentially self-selected.

Second, the validity and reliability of responses to the questionnaires completed by carers and Community Visitors on behalf of children and young people in care are uncertain, due to potential administrator bias in interpreting and recording the responses. This potential bias would need to be factored in to any statistical analyses of survey responses.

Finally, potential selection bias in the recruitment process is problematic, as privacy and confidentiality provisions don’t allow for a comparison of respondent and non-respondent characteristics beyond the broad attributes of age, gender, Indigenous status and geographic location. For example, children and young people who experienced the severest forms of abuse before being placed in out-of-home care may have been less inclined to participate in an activity involving thinking or talking about their parents. It is also possible that children and young people who have been in very long term out-of-home care placements were less inclined to take part due to survey questions that may no longer be relevant for them.

These limitations will be carefully considered in future analyses of and reports making use of the data gathered through the Commission’s inaugural survey on the *Views of Children and Young People in Care* in Queensland.

Findings

Satisfaction with care (Questionnaires 1-3)

A total of 1703 surveys relating to the out-of-home-care system were returned. Findings reported in this chapter focus largely on those generated by Questionnaire 1 developed for older children and young people. Findings from Questionnaires 2 and 3 are presented as a point of comparison when the similarity of questionnaire items permits. For the purposes of this report:

- *Questionnaire 1* participants (those aged from around nine to 18 years of age) are referred to as young people
- *Questionnaire 2* participants (those aged from around five to eight years of age) are referred to as children
- *Questionnaire 3* participants (those aged from around 0 to four years of age) are referred to as young children.

Demographic information

Background information

The first section of each questionnaire included questions on background information relating to each young child, child and young person in out-of-home care. Table 1 provides a summary of background information from all those who participated in the survey (Questionnaires 1, 2 and 3).

As the table shows, the age range of young people was 4 years and 2 months to 18 years, with an average age of 13 years and 3 months.⁶ The ages of children ranged from 2 years and 6 months to 17 years and 11 months, with an average age of 8 years and 6 months. Young children's ages ranged from 1 month to 16 years and 2 months. The average age of these young children was 3 years and 10 months. Across each of the three groups boys and girls were fairly evenly represented.

As expected, the highest representation of surveys came from the most populated Department of Child Safety zones in the state - Logan and Brisbane West, Brisbane South and the Gold Coast, Brisbane North and the Sunshine Coast, and Ipswich and Western zone. Across all three participant groups, the lowest survey representation came from the Far Northern zone.

The majority of participants were Caucasian Australians. Children and young people of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander descent made up between 19.1% and 27.7% of all participants, the highest representation being among young children. Nearly all participants were born in Australia and the primary language spoken at home was English.

In terms of the type of out-of-home care placement currently experienced by children and young people, foster care was by far the most common. The second most common type of placement was relative care. Reports of being in residential care were highest (8.2%) among young people.

⁶ Although each of the five questionnaires was nominally identified as being suitable for a particular age group, this was a guide only and the questionnaire most suitable to each child's ability level was used. This accounts for why the range of ages provided in the tally of responses for each questionnaire includes children with ages outside the suggested age group level for that questionnaire. This information applies across all results but it is particularly relevant to keep in mind when looking at tables discussing ages, lengths of time and means.

Table 1 Background information

Item	Young people Age 9-18 years N = 728	Children Age 5-8 years N = 424	Young children/ Age 0-4 years N = 551
Age in years + months – range⁷ mean	4yrs 2mths-18yrs 13yrs 3mths	2yrs 6mths-17yrs 11mths 8yrs 6mths	1mth-16yrs 2mths 3yrs 10mths
Sex (%):			
Male	50.8	48.5	52.9
Female	49.2	51.5	47.1
Zones (%):			
Far Northern	5.4	7.6	5.6
Northern	8.2	8.1	8.5
Central	16.2	11.5	11.7
Ipswich and Western	19.4	20.8	22.6
Brisbane Nth and Sunshine Coast	16.0	17.4	22.3
Brisbane Sth and Gold Coast	14.2	14.2	14.1
Logan and Brisbane West	20.5	20.5	15.2
Indigenous status (%):			
Caucasian Australian	74.3	67.3	65.5
Aboriginal (A)	19.1	26.0	27.7
Torres Strait Islander (TSI)	1.8	1.5	1.7
Both A and TSI	1.8	1.8	.9
Other	3.1	3.5	4.2
Country of birth (%):			
Australia	98.0	98.3	99.8
Other	2.0	1.7	.2
Language at home (%):			
English	99.4	100	100
Other	.6	0	0
Type of care (%):			
Foster care	69.2	74.6	76.5
Relative care	19.5	23.2	21.7
Specialist foster care	1.7	.2	1.5
Residential care	8.2	2.0	.4
Supported independent living	1.4	0	NOT ASKED

Frequency and nature of disabilities

Information from participants established the frequency and nature of disabilities⁸ among children and young people in care. As can be seen in Table 2, the frequency of disabilities among all three groups was high. This was particularly apparent among the young children, 27.2% of whom reported some kind of disability.

Table 2 Rates of disability

	Young people	Children	Young children
Have a disability	20.8%	22.5%	27.2%

⁷ See the *Design of Survey* section and footnote 6 for an explanation of variances outside nominal age range.

⁸ The reporting of having a disability represents the child or young person's perception of a disability. This does not necessarily reflect the disabilities classified by Disability Services Queensland.

In relation to disabilities, the most commonly reported across all three groups were learning, behavioural or developmental disorders such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome and Dyslexia. A wide range of other disabilities were also reported, including Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Cerebral Palsy and Epilepsy.

Prevalence of ADHD medication

The three groups of participants were asked if they were currently taking medication for ADHD to try to gauge its prevalence. As can be seen in Table 3, a substantial proportion of young people and children reported that they were taking medication.

Table 3 Prevalence of ADHD medication

	Young people	Children	Young children
Taking medication for ADHD	15.6%	14.1%	6.0%

Of those taking medication, most said they were prescribed Methylphenidates such as Ritalin and Concerta. Dexamphetamine was also commonly noted. Antipsychotic medications such as Risperdal and Zyprexa were also cited, while some mentioned taking a combination of up to three medications for their ADHD.

Placement information

Several questions focused on the placements of each child and young person in care.

No definition of placement was provided in the survey, and it is possible children and young people could be counting respite care in their responses. Information on these questions, including length of current placement, age at commencement of care, total number of placements, and years of care are presented in the tables below. Comparative information is also presented.

Length of current placement

As Table 4 indicates, the average length of the current placement was highest among young people. Placement lengths for this group averaged four years and one month and ranged from birth to 18 years. Average placement lengths were considerably less for the younger groups. The high maximum of 13 years for the third group is likely to be explained by the small number of children and young people who, due to developmental delay or disability, had carers complete surveys on their behalf. These children and young people have typically been in out-of-home care for some time.

Table 4 Length of current placement (range and mean scores)

	Young people	Children	Young children
Range	0-18 yrs	1mth-11yrs	0-13yrs
Mean	4yrs 1mth	2yrs 11mths	1yr 9mths

The distribution of placement lengths for the three groups is presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Length of current placement (frequency distribution)

Length of current placement in years	Young People (9-18)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Children (5-8)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Young children (0-4)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<1	202	29.3	29.3	109	27.9	27.9	183	34.0	34.0
1	112	16.3	45.6	74	18.9	46.8	158	29.3	63.3
2	77	11.2	56.7	46	11.8	58.6	93	17.3	80.5
3	44	6.4	63.1	45	11.5	70.1	42	7.8	88.3
4	31	4.5	67.6	33	8.4	78.5	28	5.2	93.5
5	30	4.4	72.0	21	5.4	83.9	7	1.3	94.8
6	21	3.0	75.0	20	5.1	89.0	7	1.3	96.1
7	24	3.5	78.5	15	3.8	92.8	5	0.9	97.0
8	22	3.2	81.7	14	3.6	96.4	3	0.6	97.6
9	22	3.2	84.9	6	1.5	98.0	5	0.9	98.5
10	17	2.5	87.4	6	1.5	99.5	3	0.6	99.1
11	21	3.0	90.4	2	0.5	100.0	2	0.4	99.4
12	19	2.8	93.2				2	0.4	99.8
13	17	2.5	95.6				1	0.2	100.0
14	9	1.3	97.0						
15	8	1.2	98.1						
16	9	1.3	99.4						
17	3	0.4	99.9						
18	1	0.1	100.0						
Total	689	100.0		391	100.0		539	100.0	

Age at commencement of care

Table 6 shows although there was substantial variation in the three groups regarding the age at which care commenced, across all groups, care began as early as birth. However, mean scores indicate that for most participants, care started much later than this. Young people, for instance, went into care at an average age of six years and nine months, while children averaged four years and 10 months. On the other hand, reports from carers indicated that younger children commenced care at an average age of less than two years-of-age.

Table 6 Age in years at commencement of care (range and mean scores)

	Young people	Children	Young children
Range	0-16yrs 11mths	0-16yrs 1mth	0-15yrs
Mean	6yrs 9mths	4yrs 10mths	1yr 9mths

The distribution of ages at commencement of care for the three groups can be seen below in Table 7.

Table 7 Age in years at commencement of care (frequency distribution)

Age in years	Young people (9-18)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Children (5-8)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Young children (0-4)	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	74	11.3	11.3	40	11.6	11.6	266	50.7	50.7
1	49	7.5	18.8	29	8.4	20.0	91	17.3	68.0
2	41	6.3	25.0	27	7.8	27.8	55	10.5	78.5
3	51	7.8	32.8	40	11.6	39.4	43	8.2	86.7
4	40	6.1	38.9	39	11.3	50.7	30	5.7	92.4
5	34	5.2	44.1	38	11.0	61.7	14	2.7	95.0
6	46	7.0	51.1	39	11.3	73.0	4	0.8	95.8
7	33	5.0	56.2	40	11.6	84.6	7	1.3	97.1
8	45	6.9	63.1	20	5.8	90.4	1	0.2	97.3
9	41	6.3	69.3	11	3.2	93.6	2	0.4	97.7
10	43	6.6	75.9	4	1.2	94.8	0	0	97.7
11	34	5.2	81.1	10	2.9	97.7	5	1.0	98.7
12	38	5.8	86.9	3	0.9	98.6	3	0.6	99.2
13	33	5.0	91.9	2	0.6	99.1	3	0.6	99.8
14	34	5.2	97.1	0	0	99.1	0	0	99.8
15	12	1.8	98.9	2	0.6	99.7	1	0.2	100.0
16	6	0.9	99.8	1	0.3	100.0			
18	1	0.2	100.0						
Total	655	100.0		345	100.0		525	100.0	

Total placements

Responses from the three groups show the number of placements increases with age. For instance, Table 8 shows young people had averaged almost four placements at the time they were surveyed, while children averaged two and a half. Table 8 also shows the large range in the number of placements, with some children and young people in each age group experiencing a large number of placements. For example, three young people said they had had 50 placements. The proportion of each age group from oldest to youngest who had experienced more than two⁹ placements was 46.9%, 32.1%, and 16.3%.

As no definition was provided of what a placement was, it is possible children and young people could be including respite care in their count.

Table 8 Total number of placements as reported by the participants (range and mean scores)

	Young people	Children	Young children
Range	0-50	0-36	0-48
Mean	3.7	2.5	1.7

⁹ The Productivity Commission in its *Report on Government Services 2006* identified that 'Stability of placement is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources. This indicator is defined as the number of placements that a child has during a period of continuous out-of-home care. A low number of child placements (one or two) per period of care is desirable, but must be balanced against other placement quality indicators, such as placements in compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, local placements and placements with siblings. Children may have multiple placements for good reasons, (for example, an initial placement followed by a longer term placement) or it may be desirable to change placements to achieve better child-family compatibility. It is not desirable for a child to stay in an unsatisfactory or unsupportive placement. Also, older children are more likely to have multiple placements as they move towards independence and voluntarily seek alternate placements... p. 15.9.

The distribution of placement numbers for the three groups is presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Total number of placements as reported by the participants (frequency distribution)

Total number of placements	Young people	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Young children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	9	1.4	1.4	6	1.6	1.6	8	1.6	1.6
1	187	28.6	30.0	144	39.1	40.8	275	54.0	55.6
2	151	23.1	53.1	100	27.2	67.9	143	28.1	83.7
3	91	13.9	67.1	59	16.0	84.0	53	10.4	94.1
4	58	8.9	76.0	17	4.6	88.6	17	3.3	97.4
5	56	8.6	84.5	18	4.9	93.5	8	1.6	99.0
6	30	4.6	89.1	8	2.2	95.7	1	0.2	99.2
7	9	1.4	90.5	4	1.1	96.7	2	0.4	99.6
8	13	2.0	92.5	1	0.3	97.0	0	0	99.6
9	2	0.3	92.8	3	0.8	97.8	1	0.2	99.8
10	13	2.0	94.8	1	0.3	98.1			
11	1	0.2	94.9	1	0.3	98.4			
12	7	1.1	96.0	0	0	98.4			
13	3	0.5	96.5	2	0.5	98.9			
14	3	0.5	96.9	0	0	98.9			
15	5	0.8	97.7	1	0.3	99.2			
17	1	0.2	97.9	0	0	99.2			
18	0	0	97.9	1	0.3	99.5			
20	3	0.5	98.3	1	0.3	99.7			
21	1	0.2	98.5						
22	2	0.3	98.8						
25	3	0.5	99.2						
30	1	0.2	99.4						
32	1	0.2	99.5						
36				1	0.3	100.0			
48							1	0.2	100.0
50	3	0.5	100.0						
Total	653	100.0		368	100.0		509	100.0	

Total length of time in care

In relation to total time in care, score ranges shown in Table 10 indicate wide variation in each of the groups. For instance, some young people had been in care for less than one month, while others had been in care for up to 18 years. The average length of time that young people had been in care was six years 10 months. Children, had averaged four years in care, although as the range suggests, some had been in care for as long as 14 years 7 months.

Table 10 Total length (in years and months) of care (range and mean scores)

	Young people	Children	Young children
Range	0-18yrs	1mth-14yrs 7mths	1mth-14yrs 11mths
Mean	6yrs 10mths	4yrs	2yrs 4mths

The distribution of length of care for the three groups is presented in Table 11.

Table 11 Total length of care in years (frequency distribution)

Length of time in care in years	Young people	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Young children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	45	7.0	7.0	35	10.8	10.8	126	25.1	25.1
1	63	9.8	16.8	51	15.8	26.6	151	30.1	55.3
2	62	9.7	26.5	43	13.3	39.9	95	19.0	74.3
3	52	8.1	34.6	44	13.6	53.6	48	9.6	83.8
4	33	5.1	39.8	33	10.2	63.8	31	6.2	90.0
5	40	6.2	46.0	28	8.7	72.4	13	2.6	92.6
6	33	5.1	51.2	21	6.5	78.9	10	2.0	94.6
7	45	7.0	58.2	29	9.0	87.9	6	1.2	95.8
8	32	5.0	63.2	24	7.4	95.4	4	0.8	96.6
9	31	4.8	68.0	5	1.5	96.9	7	1.4	98.0
10	51	8.0	76.0	7	2.2	99.1	1	0.2	98.2
11	32	5.0	81.0	1	0.3	99.4	4	0.8	99.0
12	30	4.7	85.6	0	0	99.4	0	0	99.0
13	36	5.6	91.3	1	0.3	99.7	3	0.6	99.6
14	17	2.7	93.9	1	0.3	100.0	2	0.4	100.0
15	17	2.7	96.6						
16	13	2.0	98.6						
17	8	1.2	99.8						
18	1	0.2	100.0						
Total	641	100.0		323	100.0		501	100.0	

Reunification

Children and young people were asked how many times they had been placed back home. Although mean scores shown in Table 12 indicate that most had not been returned home, the score ranges suggest that some had experienced many reunifications, with 13.4% of young people, 6.4% of children, and 1.2% of young children having experienced more than one reunification breakdown. Some children reported being placed back home as many as 20 times, while one young person reported being placed back home as many as 15 times. Reports from carers on behalf of young children or those with a disability indicated reunifications for this group occurred less frequently.

Table 12 Number of reunifications (range and mean scores)

	Young people	Children	Young children
Range	0-15	0-20	0-2
Mean	.69	.46	.12

The distribution of reunifications for the three groups is presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Number of reunifications (frequency distribution)

Times placed back home	Young people	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Young children	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	455	72.0	72.0	275	79.9	79.9	431	88.9	88.9
1	92	14.6	86.6	47	13.7	93.6	48	9.9	98.8
2	32	5.1	91.6	11	3.2	96.8	6	1.2	100.0
3	23	3.6	95.3	4	1.2	98.0			
4	11	1.7	97.0	1	0.3	98.3			
5	4	0.6	97.6	2	0.6	98.8			
6	1	0.2	97.8						
7	2	0.3	98.1						
8	2	0.3	98.4						
9	3	0.5	98.9						
10	2	0.3	99.2	1	0.3	99.1			
11	1	0.2	99.4						
12	2	0.3	99.7	1	0.3	99.4			
14	1	0.2	99.8						
15	1	0.2	100.0						
20				2	0.6	100.0			
Total	632	100.0		344	100.0		485	100.0	

School attendance

Children and young people were also asked a range of questions about school, including whether they attend school and, if so, which year level they were enrolled in, how many schools they have attended, if they have ever been kept back a year at school, and if they have, how many times.

Table 14 shows that over 90% of respondents attend school. Further analyses revealed that 59.1% of the young people are enrolled in Years 7-11. Table 14 also shows that, on average, young people have attended more than four schools. While most have attended up to five schools, many young people reported having attended up to 10 schools and some up to 23 schools. One young person reported attending 50 schools.

Table 14 School attendance

	Young people	Children
Attend school	91.2%	92.5%
Mean number of schools attended	4.1	2.3
Repeated a year at school	31.9%	24.9%
Mean number of times held back	1.1	1.0

We also asked young people if they had ever repeated a year at school. As seen in Table 14, almost one third (31.9%) indicated that they had and, of these, most (87.9%) reported repeating a year only once. The remaining young people had repeated a year up to four times.

Table 14 also shows that 92.5% of children in out-of-home care attend school. At the time of the survey, over two-thirds (68.5%) of these children were enrolled in Years 1 to 6. Like the young people, many of the children had attended more than one school, with many having attended three to five

schools. Two children reported having already attended 20 schools. When asked if they had ever been kept back a year at school, one quarter (24.9%) reported that they had. Most (89.6%) of these children had been kept back a year once.

Perceptions of current placement

The second section of the questionnaire asked children and young people a range of questions about their current placement. Responses from young people are discussed first. Where the similarity of survey items enables comparison across the groups, findings from children and young children are also reported.

Feelings of safety

Young people were asked if they feel safe in their current placement. As Table 15 shows, 97.7% of young people do feel safe, while a small, but not insignificant, percentage indicated that they feel unsafe.¹⁰ Similar responses were found for children. Some of these responses included not feeling safe because of more generic fears such as not liking the dark or the town they live in.

Table 15 Feelings of safety

Young people		Children	
Yes	No	Yes	No
97.7%	2.3%	97.6%	2.4%

Children and young people were also invited to comment on why they feel safe or unsafe in their current placement. These comments appear in the Appendix to this report.

Examples of comments from those who explained why they do feel safe include:

No one harasses me here. No one annoys me here. I don't get bullied, don't get pushed and shoved.

I love my current placement and feel safer than I did when I was with my Mum.

I feel safe here and know every one at school and around town.

Examples of comments from those who explained why they do not feel safe include:

Because when the carers go home, we don't know who's coming.

I worry that Mum and Dad might come to get me.

Perceptions of carer

A number of questions focused on young people's perceptions of their carer. They were asked, for instance, whether or not their carer understands them, cares what is best for them and treats them well. Table 16 shows that the vast majority of young people feel their carer cares about what is best for them and treats them well. However, the table shows there was slightly less consensus among young people that their carer understands them.

Table 16 Perceptions of carer

	Young people	
	Agree	Disagree
Carer understands you	95.0%	5.0%
Carer cares about what is best for you	98.2%	1.8%
Carer treats you well	98.9%	1.1%

¹⁰ The Commission has a legislated responsibility to notify the appropriate authority should it receive information about a child who may be in need of protection under the *Child Protection Act 1999* or who may be the victim of a criminal offence. In cases where a survey respondent indicated they did not feel safe, their response was attended to in consultation with the Department of Child Safety. Children and young people were told when giving consent to the survey that anonymity would be guaranteed except where they identified that they or someone else was at risk. In those circumstances they were told the Commission "may have to tell someone to keep you safe".

Many young people chose to comment on why their carer understands or does not understand them. A full list of these comments is provided in Appendix 1. Examples of comments from two young people who thought their carer understood them were:

They give me time to talk to them about stuff.
She understands how I feel and she knows my needs and wants.

On the other hand, two of the young people who did not feel that their carer understood them had the following to say:

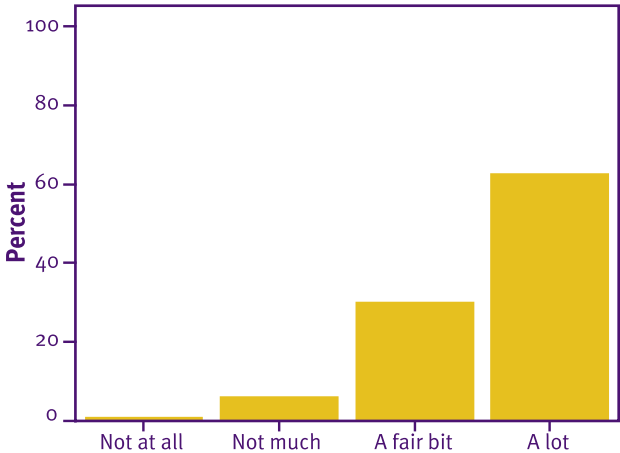
I think they can't understand because they haven't experienced it and just refer me to a textbook.
Not listened to. They don't understand why I do the things I do.

Another question in this section asked young people to indicate the extent to which they believe that their carer listens to them.

As can be seen in Figure 1, almost two-thirds (62.9%) of young people felt their carer listens to them a lot.

A further 30.1% reported that their carer listens to them a fair bit. Seven per cent of young people indicated that their carer didn't listen much or at all.

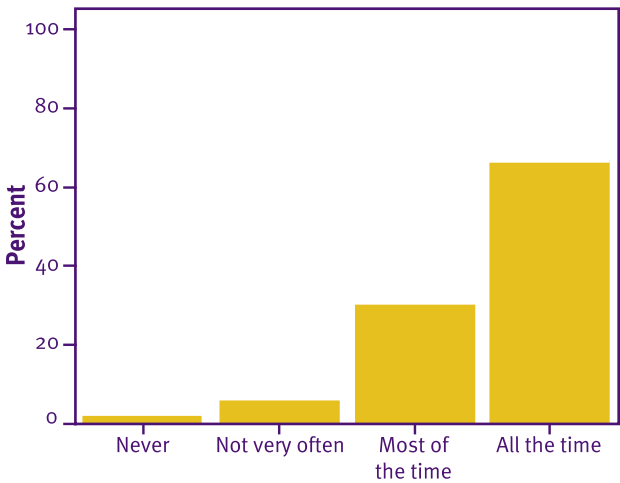
Figure 1
Carer listens to you (young people)



Young people were also asked about the extent to which their carer treats them the same as other children or young people who live with them. Figure 2 shows that almost two thirds (64.8%) of the young people felt they are treated the same as others all the time. A further 28.1% believed this to be the case most of the time. Around 7% reported that they were never, or not very often, treated the same as others not in care.

Children were also asked if their carer listens to them, is nice to them and treats them the same as other children who lived with them. Analyses of responses revealed that the majority of children in this group believed their carer does listen to them (97.0%), is nice to them (99.3%) and treats them the same as other children living with them (89.9%).

Figure 2
Treated the same as other children living with you (young people)



To gauge the size of the households or residential care facilities in which the children and young people live, they were asked how many other children and young people live with them. Table 17 shows the combined responses from children and young people. As can be seen, there is wide variation in the size of households and facilities in which children and young people live. More than half live with five or more other children and young people, while one in ten live in households or facilities of between 10 and 18 children and young people.

Table 17 Number of other young people and children who live here

Number of children and young people who live here	Summed frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
0	21	0.5	0.5
1	135	3.0	3.5
2	195	8.7	12.3
3	201	13.5	25.8
4	161	14.4	40.2
5	121	13.5	53.7
6	98	13.2	66.9
7	81	12.7	79.6
8	58	10.4	90
9	24	4.8	94.8
10	9	2	96.8
11	9	2.2	99
13	1	0.3	99.3
14	1	0.3	99.6
18	1	0.3	100
Total	1116		

Other aspects of placement

Table 18 shows a number of other issues that children and young people were asked about in relation to their current placement. Both groups were asked to respond 'yes' or 'no' to these questions. In relation to household rules and discipline, the table shows most children and young people consider the rules and discipline to be reasonable and agree that their possessions are treated with respect.

Two further questions focused on satisfaction with some of the physical aspects of where they lived – the cleanliness and the amount of space. The table suggests that young people were more satisfied with the cleanliness of their place of residence than the amount of space they had. Children appeared slightly less satisfied than the young people with some aspect of their placement.

Table 18 Other aspects of placement

	Young people		Children	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Rules & discipline reasonable	94.7%	5.3%	92.4%	7.6%
Possessions treated with respect	94.0%	6.0%	93.2%	6.8%
Have enough space	92.5%	7.5%	92.9%	7.1%
Place is clean enough	94.9%	1.9%	96.8%	3.2%

Happiness with placement

Another question asked young people to rate their level of happiness with their current placement from one (really unhappy) to 10 (really happy). As can be seen in Figure 3, ratings ranged from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of (an enthusiastic) 11. The high mean score of 8.63 indicates that most young people are very happy with their placement.

Responses from children about their happiness revealed similar findings. When asked if they were happy or not, 97.1% commented that they were happy, while 2.9% commented that they were not happy.

Open-ended questions gave young people the opportunity to comment further on two aspects of their current care arrangement – the best thing about their current placement and what would make their placement better.

In terms of the best thing about the current placement, many again made reference to feeling safe. For instance, one young person commented:

It is safe, I have food and a loving Mum and Dad,” while one of the children stated, “I am always safe and there is enough food and I don’t have to worry about being kicked out.

While another young person’s comments about their placement were:

Rewarded for being me,” and, “I get to sleep on the top bunk.

Many commented further on what they would like to see improved or changed to make their placement better. Analysis of young people’s comments revealed eight primary themes or categories of responses. These themes and examples of comments typifying each of the themes are listed below in order of popularity. A full list of all themes and comments can be found in the Appendix.

Changes/additions to house

A bigger house would be good, because we are all bigger now, and there isn’t much space for everyone.

Yard could do with a bit of grass.

Possessions/pets

Would like to get more pocket money.

Would like a dog.

Better relationships within family

Have one of my brothers start to help and being part of this family and not always trying to be hard to get along with.

That we get help with anger management and depression and healthy relationships.

Own bedroom/privacy

A tidier bedroom partner. More privacy.

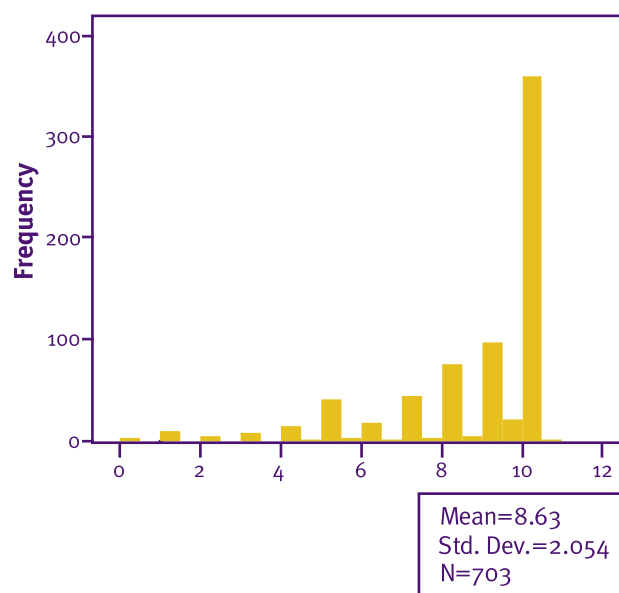
More room. Separate space for other people to be.

Another child in placement

A kid my own age.

Have a girl in care around my age living at our house.

Figure 3
Happiness with current placement
(young people)



Better peer relationships

Stop getting yelled at by other children.

Other kids stop bossing me.

Parental contact

Spend more time with Mum and Dad.

Go home each weekend at least one day.

Reunification

I would like to live with my Dad not in a motel.

I just want to get out of here – [service provider]. I want to live back with my mother.

When asked if there was anything that they would like to be different or done differently, 28% of children and 35% of carers said yes.

Child Safety Officers

The third section of the questionnaire for children and young people included several questions relating to Child Safety Officers (CSOs). To ensure children and young people knew the role being referred to here, they were provided with the range of names commonly used for this role, such as case worker or Family Services Officer (FSO). The questions sought information on a range of issues such as awareness of the CSO’s name, frequency of contact with and receptiveness and helpfulness of the CSO.

Do you know the name of your CSO?

The first question in this section asked children and young people if they know the name of their CSO. Table 19 shows that 75.1% of young people know the name of their CSO. Children were less likely than young people to know the name of their CSO. Carers were the most likely of the three groups to know the CSO’s name.

Table 19 Do you know the name of your CSO?

	Young people	Children	Carers
Know CSO’s name	75.1%	55.6%	90.0%

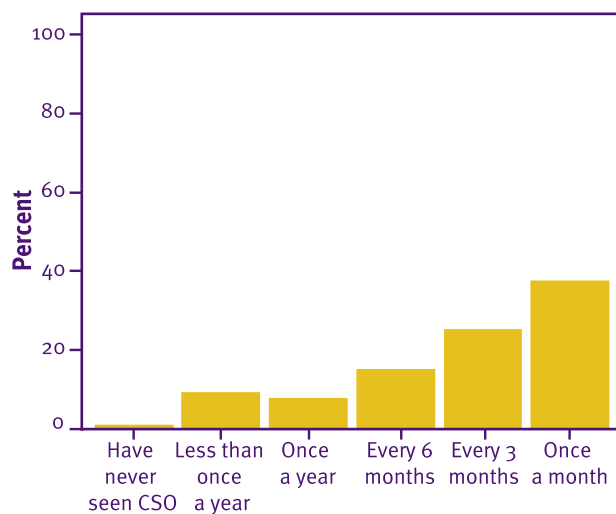
Contact with your CSO

Young people were asked about the frequency of contact they have with their CSO and their satisfaction with that level of contact.

Figure 4 shows that almost two thirds (64.1%) of the young people reported seeing their CSO once a month to once every three months.

A further 10.2% reported that they see their CSO less than once a year, while 1.0% of young people had yet to see their CSO.

**Figure 4
Frequency of contact with your CSO
(young people)**

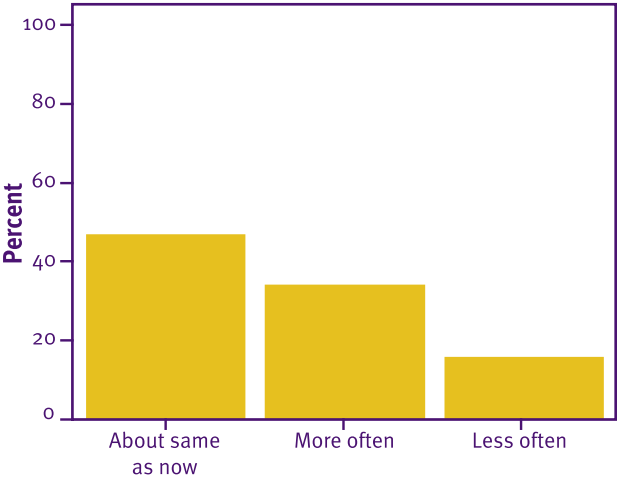


In relation to how often they would like to see their CSO, Figure 5 shows 47.1% of young people were happy with their current level of contact.

However, more than one third (35%) of young people reported that they would like to see their CSO more often.

Around half that number indicated they would prefer to see their CSO less.

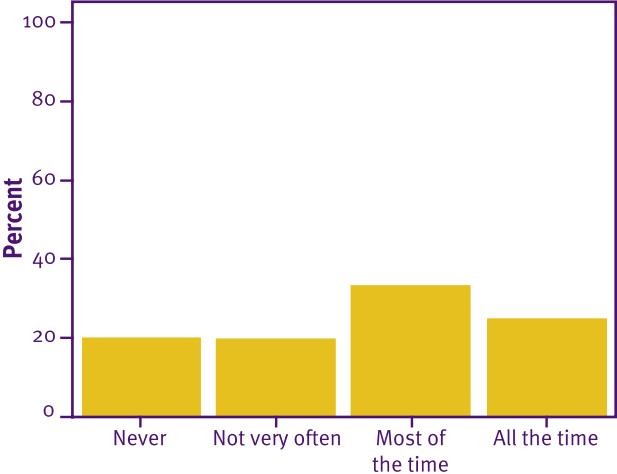
Figure 5
Desired contact with CSO (young people)



Another question asked young people to indicate the extent to which they are able to get in touch with their CSO if needed. Figure 6 shows 59.5% of the young people reported that they are able to contact their CSO most or all of the time. However, many (40.5%) indicated they were never, or not very often, able to contact their CSO.

Children were also asked about the frequency of contact with their CSO. When asked if they saw their CSO much, almost one third (32.4%) said they do, but more than half (53.7%) of these children indicated they would like to see their CSO more often. In contrast, 14.2% said they preferred to see their CSO less, while 32.1% were happy with their current frequency of contact.

Figure 6
Able to contact your CSO when needed (young people)



Responses from carers indicated that the frequency of CSO contact with young children varied markedly.

Around one third said CSO visits to the child in their care occurred monthly, around one quarter indicated these visits occurred once every three months and 16.0% once every six months. More than one in ten (11%) carers indicated that these visits took place less than once per year, while 4.5% noted that the CSO had never visited.

Responses from 64.3% of the carers suggested that they were satisfied with the amount of contact young children had with their CSO. Nevertheless, a substantial number (32.9%) indicated that visits should occur more often. Related to this, 74.7% of carers indicated that they were able to contact the CSO at least most of the time. However, 25.3% reported that they were never or not very often able to contact the CSO.

Is your CSO nice to you?

Children and young people were asked whether their CSO is nice to them. As shown in Table 20, around 91% of children and young people agreed. However, more than 8% of young people and more than 9% of children indicated that their CSO was not nice to them.

Table 20 Is your CSO nice to you?

	Young people		Children	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is CSO nice to you?	91.8%	8.2%	90.8%	9.2%

Does your CSO listen to you?

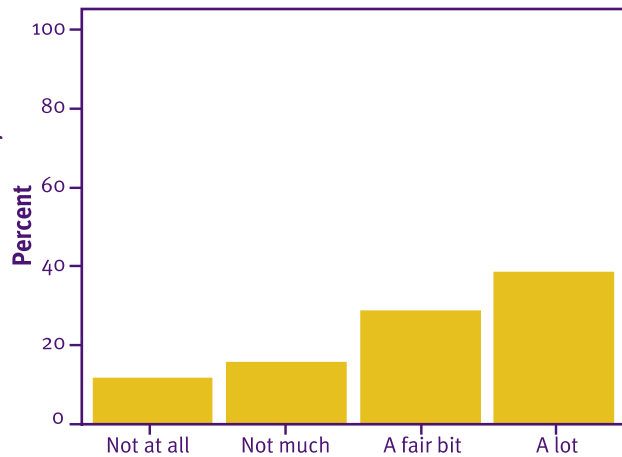
Children and young people were also asked about the extent to which their CSO listens to them.

Figure 7 shows 69.4% of young people believed their CSO listens to them a fair bit or a lot.

However, Figure 7 also shows that more than 30% of young people felt their CSO did not listen much or at all.

Similar responses were provided by children when asked if their CSO listens to them. The majority (82.9%) said their CSO listens to them, although 17.1% said they did not.

Figure 7
Does your CSO listen to you? (young people)



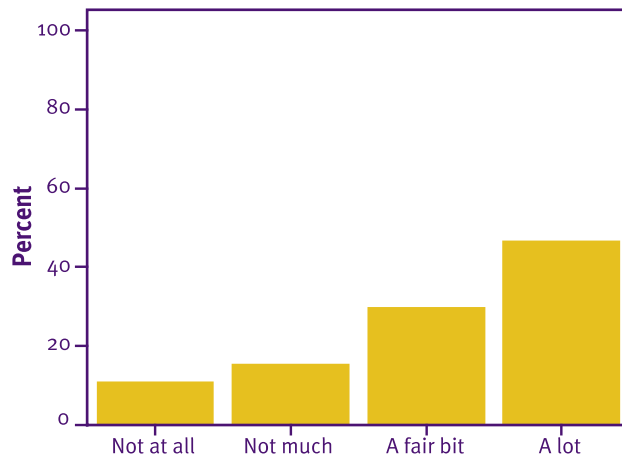
Your CSO cares about what is best for you

Young people were asked about the extent to which their CSO cares about what is best for them.

Figure 8 shows that 75.1% of young people believe their CSO does care a fair bit, although one quarter (24.9%) reported that their CSO didn't care much or didn't care at all.

When children were asked if their CSO cares about what is best for them, 87.3% said they do, while 12.7% reported that their CSO does not care what is best for them. Three quarters of carers (75.6%) reported that CSOs care a fair bit or a lot. However, almost one quarter (24.4%) reported that CSOs do not care much or not at all.

Figure 8
Your CSO cares about what is best for you (young people)



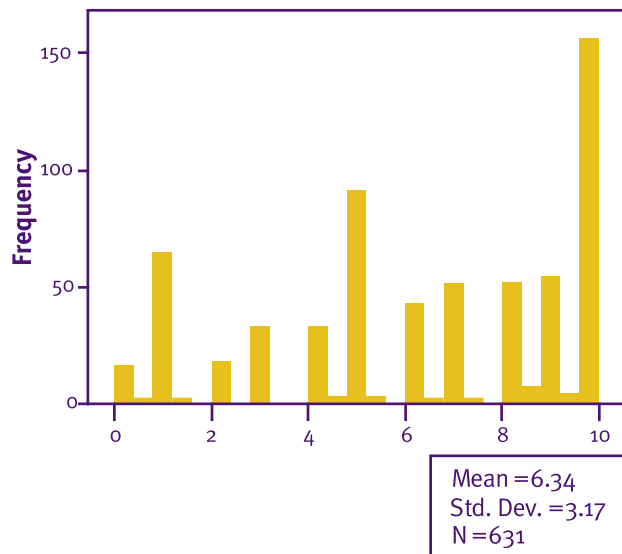
Helpfulness of your CSO

A final question in this section asked young people to rate their CSO's helpfulness from one (really unhelpful) to 10 (really helpful). As can be seen in Figure 9, ratings ranged from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 10. The mean score was 6.3 (out of 10).

Children were also asked about the helpfulness of their CSO. They were asked to consider whether or not their CSO had been able to help them with anything. Around 60% said the CSO had been able to help, although over one third (38.8%) said their CSO had not been able to help them with anything.

Responses from carers on behalf of young children or those with a severe disability revealed very similar views to those of young people. Again, ratings of CSO helpfulness ranged from 0 to 10, while the overall mean score of 6.5 was slightly higher.

Figure 9
Helpfulness of your CSO (young people)



Perceptions about the system in general

The fourth section of the questionnaire focused on general issues around children and young people’s experiences of care.

Reason for, and expectations of, care

Young people were asked if they were aware why they first came into care and if they were told what to expect about being in care. Table 21 shows that although more than three quarters of young people reported being aware of why they came into care, only around one quarter said they were told what to expect.

Table 21 Reasons for and expectations of care (young people)

Questionnaire item	Young people	
	Yes	No
Aware of reason for coming into care	76.6%	23.4%
Told what to expect about being in care	23.1%	76.9%

Children were also asked if they knew the reason for coming into care. Compared with the young people, substantially fewer children (60.5%) were aware of why they came into care.

Practical impacts of being in out-of-home care

Several questions in this section of the questionnaire focused on the impact being in out-of-home care can have on the daily lives of children and young people. These questions asked them to consider the extent to which:

1. People listen to what they want.
2. They are able to get permission in time to do things they want to do.
3. They have to do things that they don’t want to do (such as seeing people or going to meetings).
4. They are able to do the same sorts of things that children not in care can do.
5. They miss out on doing things (such as seeing friends or playing sport) because they are in care.
6. They are made to feel different because they are in care.
7. They know who to ask for help if needed.

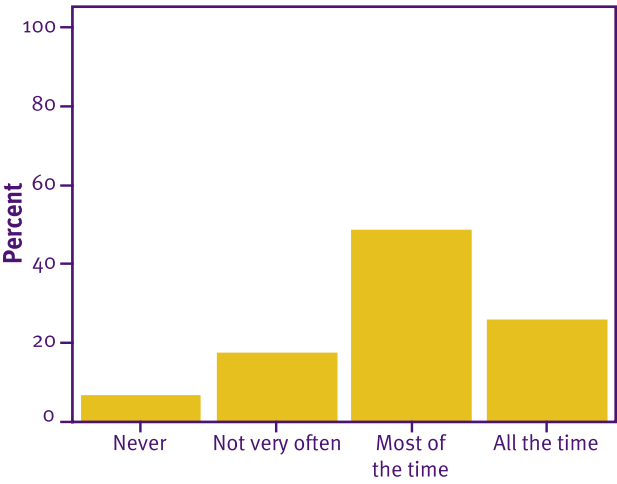
Responses to these questions are presented in Figures 10–16.

People listen to you what you want

As Figure 10 shows, three quarters of young people feel they are listened to most (50%), or all of, (25.3%) the time. That said, almost one quarter (24.7%) of young people reported that they were not listened to very often or they were not listened to at all.

Children were also asked if people listen to what they want. The majority (83.5%) reported that they are listened to, while 16.5% reported that they are not. A similar question asked carers if the views and wishes of those in their care are taken into account. Although 31.7% indicated they are taken into account, around 10% indicated they are not. More than half (57.9%) of the carers noted that the issue did not apply to those in their care as they are too young.

**Figure 10
People listen to what you want
(young people)**



Able to get permission in time

When asked if they were able to get permission from the Department in time to do things (such as see people or go to a meeting), almost two thirds (63.5%) of young people reported that they could get permission in time most, or all, of the time.

However, more than one third (36.5%) reported that permission was never or not very often given in time to do things.

Have to do things you don't want to do (such as see people or go to meetings)

Reports from young people indicate that most of them rarely have to do things – such as see people or go to meetings – they do not want to do. As Figure 12 shows, around 40% of young people report never having to do things they don't want to do, and 38.6% report having to do such things only occasionally. However, one in five young people said they had to do things they did not want to do most of, or all of, the time.

Children and young children were also asked a similar question. Almost a third (32.2%) of the children reported that they do have to do things they don't want to do, while 67.8% indicated they do not. Half (50%) of the carers responding on behalf of young children indicated that those in their care do not have to do things that they do not want to do, although 15.4% indicated they do. More than one third of carers (34.6%) felt those in their care were too young for the question to be applicable.

Children and young people were invited to comment further about things they had to do, but did not want to do. Comments illustrating the diversity of responses to this question include:

Counselling, had to go but didn't want to.

I felt forced to attend family counselling against my wishes. I was coerced to go to a course but refused.

I had to visit my mother in order to go visit my aunty at [regional location]. I had to attend an anger management course.

If I say I don't want to see someone they say tough you have to.

Two of the comments from children who felt that they had to do things or see people they did not want to were:

I don't like going to the Department meeting.

I had to go to Mum's on school days, I missed out on special things at school, making Xmas presents.

Figure 11
Able to get permission in time (young people)

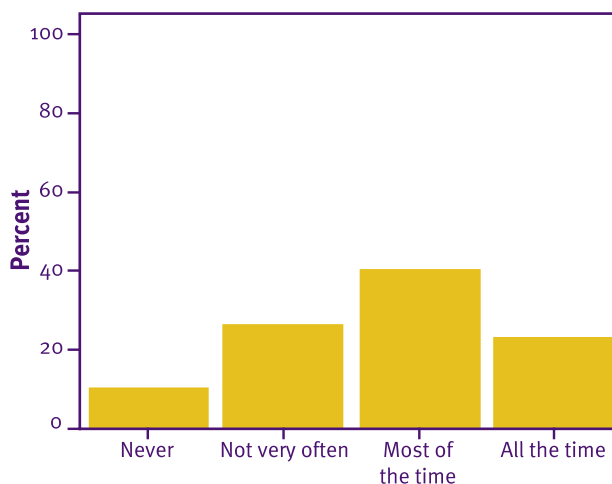
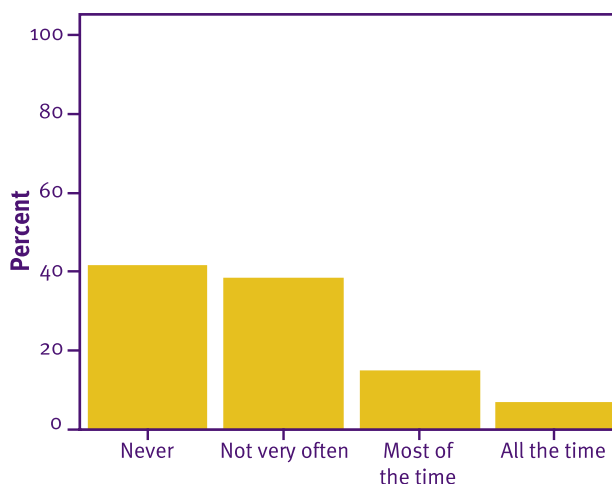


Figure 12
Have to do things you don't want to do - such as see people or go to meetings (young people)



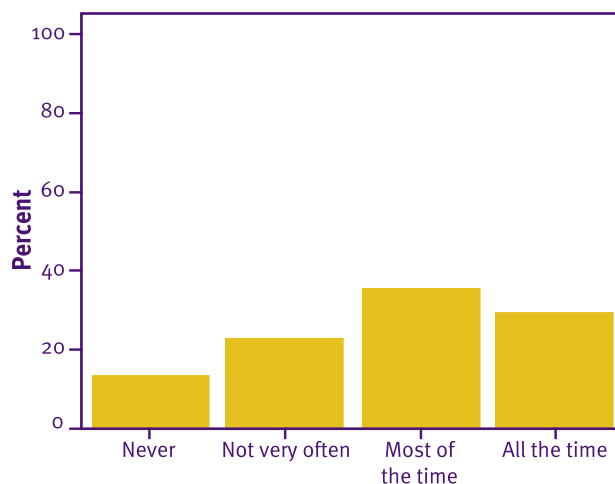
Able to do things others not in care can do

Around two thirds of young people (64.1%) reported that most or all of the time they can do things others can do.

However, many young people said being in care impacts on their ability to do things.

As Figure 13 shows, more than one in 10 felt they are never able to do things, and a further one in five felt they are not able to do things very often.

Figure 13
Able to do things others not in care can do (young people)



Miss out on things because of care

Similarly, young people were asked if they felt they miss out on things due to being in care.

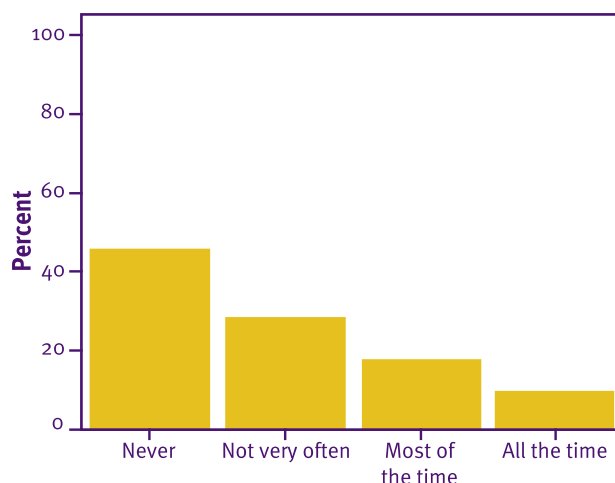
Figure 14 shows 45.7% responded that this never happened, followed by not very often (27.2%).

However, the figure also shows that more than a quarter (27.1%) of young people reported they miss out on things most, or all, of the time.

Children were also asked if they feel they miss out on things due to being in care.

Although the majority (64.5%) said they did not miss out on things very often, a considerable proportion (36.5%) reported that they did at least most of the time.

Figure 14
Miss out on things because of care (young people)



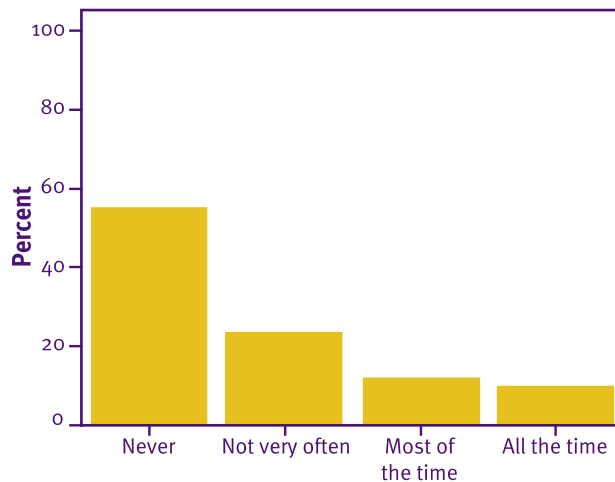
Made to feel different because of care

Responses from most young people suggest that being in care does not make them feel any different to those who are not in care.

Figure 15 shows around half (54.7%) of the young people reported that they are never made to feel different, while a further 22.8% indicated that they are not made to feel different very often.

However, more than one in five (22.5%) young people reported feeling different to others most, or all, of the time.

Figure 15
Made to feel different because of care (young people)



Know who to ask for help

Young people were asked if they knew who to ask for help if they needed it. Reports from young people indicated that most appear to know who to ask for help. Figure 16 shows that more than half (59.8%) reported knowing who to ask all the time, while more than one quarter (29.5%) knew who to ask most of the time.

Around 11% of young people though, reported that they either don't know very often, or never, who to ask for help.

Children were also asked if they know who to ask if they need help. Most (91.6%) of the children reported that they do know who to ask for help, although 8.4% indicated they did not.

Involvement in decisions

Young people were asked to consider the extent to which they have a say in what happens to them and people explain decisions made about them. Responses are shown in Figures 17 and 18.

As shown in Figure 17, there was a lack of consensus among young people about the extent to which they believe they have a say in what happens to them.

More than 30% claimed they have no say at all, and more than 22% reported that they do not have much say in decisions involving them.

However, the remainder stated they have at least some say in what happens to them.

People explain decisions made about you

In relation to having decisions explained to them, responses from young people were again varied. As can be seen in Figure 18, 30.3% maintained that decisions were explained a fair bit, while a further 23.2% reported that they were explained a lot. In contrast though, responses from 46.5% of young people indicated that decisions were explained to them not much or not at all.

Children were also asked if they feel they have a say in what happens to them and if decisions are explained to them. More than half (57.8%) agreed they have a say in what happens to them while 42.2% disagreed. In relation to explaining decisions, 71.5% of children agreed that decisions about them were explained to them, while 28.5% did not agree this was the case.

Figure 16
Know who to ask for help (young people)

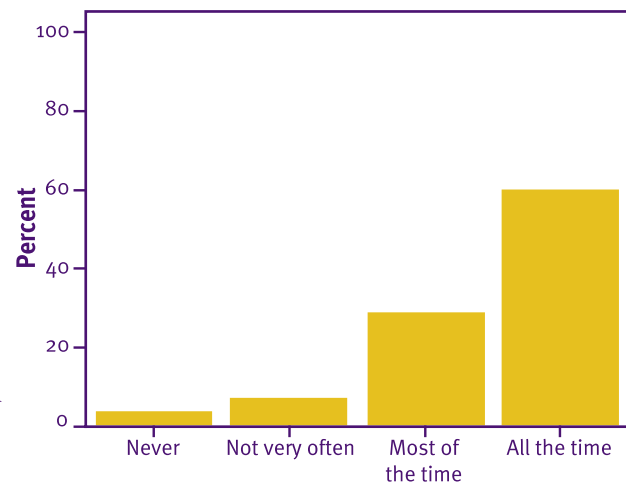


Figure 17
Have a say in what happens to you (young people)

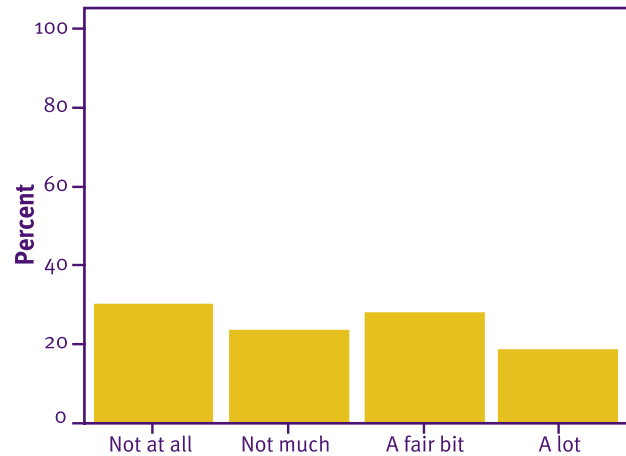
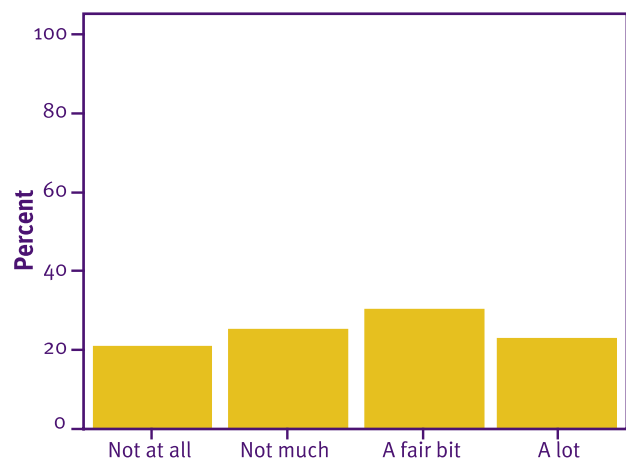


Figure 18
People explain decisions made about you (young people)



Confidence in Department's assurances

One question asked young people if they felt confident that when the Department of Child Safety assured them they could do or have something, it would happen. Table 22 shows that although 58.9% agreed that they were confident, 41.1% of the young people indicated they were not.

Table 22 Confidence in Department's assurances

	Young people	
	Yes	No
Confident in Department's assurances	58.9%	41.1%

Unresolved health issues

Reports from young people indicate that more than six per cent have a health issue that remains unresolved. Table 23 shows more than 90% indicated they do not have an unresolved health issue. Carers were also asked if young children (in their care) had any unresolved health issues. Reports from carers, also shown in Table 23, indicate that 13.8% of the young children have a health issue that is unresolved.¹¹

Table 23 Unresolved health issues

	Young people		Young children	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Have an unresolved health issue	6.7%	93.3%	13.8%	86.2%

Unresolved problem at school

Another question asked young people if they had any problems at school that they had been unable to get help with. As can be seen in Table 24, the majority reported not having any unresolved problems at school, although more than 14% reported that they did.

Table 24 Unresolved problem at school

	Young people	
	Yes	No
Have an unresolved problem at school	14.7%	85.3%

Education Support Plans¹²

Young people were asked if they have an Education Support Plan, and if they did, whether or not it was helpful. An Education Support Plan is a formal written document that identifies the educational goals of the child or young person in care. It includes the strategies needed to achieve these goals, the required and available resources, who is responsible for implementing the strategies and processes for monitoring and reviewing the plan.

In relation to the first question, almost half of the young people did not know if they had such a plan. As can be seen in Table 25, more than a quarter of young people were aware they did have a support plan, while almost a fifth knew they did not.

11 Between November 2004 and October 2005, the Commission's Community Visitor Program identified 637 dental needs, 513 medical needs and 1146 therapeutic service needs. Each child or young person visited by a Community Visitor is entitled to raise any health issues with them. Community Visitors will then advocate for resolution with the Department of Child Safety.

12 A range of plans are developed within the school setting to cater for the individual educational needs of students. These include Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with disabilities, Individual Behaviour Plans for students requiring individualised behaviour support and Senior Education and Training (SET) plans for students in years 10, 11 and 12. An Education Support Plan for a child or young person in the care of the state may not necessarily be written as a discrete plan but is more likely to be incorporated into one of the student's other educational plans.

Table 25 Have an Education Support Plan

Item	Young people		
	Yes	No	Don't know
Have Education support plan	28.9%	19.5%	47.5%

Of those who said they did have an Education Support Plan, more than half (55%) reported that it was not helpful. Forty-five percent regarded their support plan as helpful.

Case Plans

Young people were asked if they had a Case Plan, and if so, whether they knew what was in it. In late 2004, case planning became a legislated requirement under the *Child Protection Act 1999*. This Act requires a high level of child involvement in the process, including having the process explained to them and the Department providing them with a copy of their Case Plan. Table 26 shows that the majority (62.1%) of young people were unaware of whether or not they had a Case Plan. Around one quarter reported knowing that they had such a plan.

Table 26 Have a Case Plan

Item	Young people		
	Yes	No	Don't know
Have Case Plan	23.6%	11.6%	62.1%

Of those who said they do have a Case Plan, the vast majority (81.8%) reported being unaware of what is in the plan. Responses indicated that 18.2% knew what was in the plan.

Improvements in the last 12 months

Young people were asked if things had got better for them over the last year. As Table 27 shows, most of the group believed that they had. However, one in six young people reported that things had not improved over the last year.

Table 27 Have things got better for you in the last 12 months

	Young people	
	Yes	No
Things have got better for you in the last 12 months	84.5%	15.5%

Better or worse off

Both children and young people were asked if they considered themselves to be better or worse off as a result of their care experiences. Table 28 shows responses across the two groups were consistent. As the table indicates, most children and young people considered themselves to be better off since coming into care. However, around 10% of both groups felt they were worse off.

Table 28 Better or worse off since coming into care

	Young people	Children
Better since coming into care	89.3%	90.5%
Worse since coming into care	10.7%	9.5%

Children and young people were invited to comment on why they felt they were better or worse off since coming into care. Comments from respondents who felt better off included:

“Much better environment. I am happy, I feel safe, less stress, less responsibility.”

“Otherwise I would be a street kid.”

Because I used to be a screaming child but now look at me.

We get to do good things. I am doing great things at school.

On the other hand, comments from those who believed that they were worse off since coming into care included:

Because I am with someone I don't really know. It's hard to forget your mother and father.

Would rather be home with my Mum and Dad.

Contact with family

Children and young people were asked about their contact with their families. Two questions asked about their satisfaction with:

1. How often they saw their families.
2. How often they spoke to their families.

A third question asked children and young people if they were permitted to phone or email their family. Responses to the questions are shown in Table 29.

The survey shows that 65.6% of young people appear satisfied with how often they can speak to their family, and 51.3% are satisfied with how often they see them. A substantial number of young people also reported that they did not see (41.6%) or speak to (29.4%) their family as often as they would like. This view was even more apparent among children. Almost two thirds (64.5%) of the children expressed a desire to see their family more often, while more than half (56.6%) wanted to speak more often to their family.

In contrast to reports from children and young people, carers generally believed that young children saw their families as often as needed. Around 15% believed they should see their families more often.

In relation to phone or email contact, responses from the majority of children and young people, as shown in Table 29, indicated that phone and email contact with their family is permitted. However, one fifth (20.9%) of young people and 29.8% of children reported that they were not allowed to phone or email their family.

Table 29 Contact with family

	Young people	Children	Young Children
See family			
See family often enough	51.3%	24.7%	75.4%
Want to see family more	41.6%	64.5%	15.3%
Want to see family less	7.0%	10.8%	9.3%
Speak to family			
Speak to family often enough	65.6%	30.2%	
Want to speak to family more	29.4%	56.6%	
Want to speak to family less	5.0%	13.2%	
Phone/email family			
Permitted	79.1%	70.2%	
Not permitted	20.9%	29.8%	

Many children and young people commented further on issues around contact with their families. Two of those who did not see their families as much as they would like stated:

I never get to see my family because they live so far away.

Only see Mum on Saturdays. My dream is to live with my Mum again.

It was previously noted that some young people wished to see their families less. As one young person stated:

I never want to see them (except my little sister).

Anything you would like to have happen to you

When asked if there was anything they would like to have happen to them that, so far, had not been listened to, 28.8% of young people agreed. Analysis of young people's comments revealed eight primary themes or categories of responses. These themes and examples of comments that typify each theme are listed below in order of popularity. A full list of themes and comments can be found in the Appendix.

More family contact

I would like my family to be transferred down to Brisbane.

I would like to have visits with my Mum and by myself. I asked ages ago but it hasn't happened yet.

Reunification

I really want to go home and live with Mum.

I would like to go home – for a visit and then stay forever.

Lifestyle issues

I feel bad asking to be in after school activities because they cost money.

I might want to play soccer and touch football. I can do it if my behaviour is good.

Obtaining permission

I want to go and stay with my friends without a police check. I have known his family for years.

They are listening but it ain't happening. I want my belly button pierced.

Things requested from Department

I would like regular phone credit because I spend all of the credit I earn on having to use for ringing department people or my Mum or foster carers. I can't ring my friends because I run out of credit.

I want a passport. I want to change my last name.

Living standards and circumstances

Having more freedom.

Living independently.

Department of Child Safety's service delivery

More opportunity to talk to people from the Department – CSO.

Some things are left in the dark.

Transfer of guardianship/permanency/stability

I want Nan and Pop to have legal guardianship.

I would like to have the Guardianship that is all I want and I will be happier than I am now.

Similarly, children and carers (on behalf of young children) were asked if there was anything they would like to be different or done differently. More than one third of the children (38.1%) and carers (35%) said there was.

Improvements to the system

An open ended question asked young people to comment on how the system could be improved for others in out-of-home care. Analysis of young people's comments revealed ten primary themes or categories of responses. These themes and examples of comments that typify each theme are listed below in order of popularity. A full list of all themes and comments can be found in the Appendix.

Input into decision making

Be listened to more. Let them do stuff they want to do. Let them see their family more.

They should be able to choose which family they want to go to. And they shouldn't be treated differently.

Wanting the Department to listen and advocate for them

Kids to have their say.

CSOs that listen and CSOs that will get out there and do stuff and take in what the children are saying.

Wanting people to listen

Carers listen more to children and treat children with love and respect.

Listen to kids more and not focus on one person who needs a lot of help and ignore the others. Like bringing a birthday card or cake (CV included).

Wanting to be like other kids

To let kids do normal things other kids would do.

I want kids not to be made to feel like it's there [sic] fault 'cause they're in foster care.

Wanting a permanent CSO

Get sick of changing workers at the Department. Want same worker all the time.

A CSO that cares and not changing CSOs every few months.

More contact with CSO

Kids see their CSO every month.

Having more regular visits from CSOs. CSOs doing what they say in a reasonable time.

Improved communication with Department/CSO

To be able to speak to the Department when you want to.

Foster carer and myself to be involved in all case meetings and better communication with the DChS.

Money/resources

More money for the carers so we can do more.

Umm, mostly a bit more money going to the parents/carers so that they don't have to stretch heaps.

Not needing to get Department permission all of the time

Let them do things without always getting the Department permission all the time. It takes too long and you don't get to go.

I feel the carers should make more decisions about me instead of Child Safety.

General changes to the Department

You could make it harder for people to become carers and for the people who are carers to be checked properly all the time.

More workers, more receptionists – able to get through more easily. Team leaders need more training.

Perceptions of plans for leaving care (over 16 year-olds only)

The final section of the questionnaire for young people applied only to those aged 16-18 years. It was made up of two questions about Leaving Care Plans. Transitioning from care is an important stage requiring careful planning to identify the future needs and aspirations of young people and support to make the process successful.

Young people were asked if plan for leaving care had been developed for them and, if so, were they involved developing it.

Responses, as shown in Table 30, showed many young people either didn't have a plan (36.8%) or were unaware of whether they had a plan (45.3%). Of those who did have a Leaving Care Plan, almost half were involved in its development.

Table 30 Leaving Care Plans

	Yes	No	Don't know
Have a Leaving Care Plan	17.9%	36.8%	45.3%
Involved in Leaving Care Plan	49.3%	22.4%	

Influences according to Indigenous status and disability

Preliminary analyses were done to determine if two background factors – Indigenous status and disability – accounted for any differences among the groups on a range of key variables.

Indigenous status

Analyses revealed significant differences on a number of aspects of care for young people in relation to Indigenous status. For instance, Aboriginal young people were less likely to report that they could contact their CSO when needed, while both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people were more likely to report an unresolved issue at school.

Torres Strait Islander young people were also more likely than the other groups to report that they were not able to speak to their family as often as they would like, and that they were significantly less happy than the others in their current placement.

Indigenous status did not appear to account for any differences among the subsets of children and young children.

Disability

Preliminary analyses revealed two significant differences for young people with a disability – feeling safe and having an unresolved issue at school. Young people with a disability were less likely than those without a disability to report feeling safe and more likely to report having an unresolved issue at school.

There were no apparent significant differences according to disability for children, but it accounted for several differences among young children. For instance, young children with a disability were more likely than those without a disability to have an unresolved health issue and their carers were more likely to feel that things should be done differently for them.

Satisfaction with the Community Visitor Program

For the Commission to gain an understanding of children and young people's views about the Community Visitor Program this part of the survey had to be administered in a different way.

To ensure responses to questions about Community Visitors were provided freely and reported independently, Community Visitors could not be involved.

Consequently, these questionnaires were left behind by CVs following their visits, with an information sheet and a request for carers to help by transcribing the child or young person's responses. The carer was also asked to mail the survey back in the reply paid envelope provided.

Because of the different mode of delivery, the response rate to this part of the survey differed to the part administered by Community Visitors.

The following analysis is based on the responses received by 28 February 2006 from 1396 children, aged 0-18 years who, at the time of the survey, were visited by the Community Visitor Program in Queensland. For very young children, or those with a disability preventing them from expressing an opinion, the carer responded on their behalf. Their responses are included in this total.

Findings are primarily reported on the responses to the young people's version of the questionnaire, with the responses from children and those from carers on behalf of young or disabled children used as a point of comparison.

To be equitable and transparent in this process, the questions about Community Visitors were the same as those asked about Child Safety Officers (CSO).

Demographic information

The first section of the questionnaire was made up of questions on background information relating to each young child, child or young person involved in the Community Visitor Program. Table 31 provides a summary of background information from all those who participated in Questionnaires 1, 2 and 3.

As the table shows, the average age of young people was 12 years and seven months; children, eight years and three months; and young children, three years and 10 months. There were slightly more girls than boys among the young people and children but more boys than girls among the young children.

The highest representation of questionnaires again came from the most populated (Department of Child Safety) zones of the state, namely, Logan and Brisbane West, Brisbane South and the Gold Coast, Brisbane North and the Sunshine Coast, and Ipswich and Western. The lowest questionnaire representation came from the Far Northern zone.

As the table shows, the majority of participants were Caucasian Australians. Participants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent comprised between 16.8% to 27.7% of all participants, with the highest representation among young children.

The most common type of out-of-home placement currently experienced by the three groups was foster care. The second most common type of placement was relative care. Reports of being in residential care were highest (6.7%) among young people.

Table 31 Background information

Item	Young People N= 554	Children N=291	Young Children N = 551
Age			
Range ¹³	1yr 10mths-18yrs	8mths-17yrs 11mths	1mth-16yrs 2mths
Mean	7mths 12yrs 7mths	8yrs 3mths	3yrs 10mths
Sex (%):			
Male	48.4	44.6	52.9
Female	51.6	55.4	47.1
Zones (%):			
Far Northern	6.0	5.9	5.6
Northern	10.8	6.3	8.5
Central	14.5	7.7	11.7
Ipswich & Western	19.8	28.6	22.6
Brisbane Nth & Sunshine Coast	18.5	20.2	22.3
Brisbane Sth & Gold Coast	12.5	13.9	14.1
Logan & Brisbane West	17.9	17.4	15.2
Indigenous status (%):			
Caucasian Australian	76.6	71.9	65.5
Aboriginal (A)	16.8	20.8	27.7
Torres Strait Islander (TSI)	1.2	1.8	1.7
Both A and TSI	1.4	1.8	.9
Other	4.1	3.6	4.2
Type of care (%):			
Foster care	70.9	79.0	76.5
Relative care	19.6	19.2	21.7
Residential care	6.7	1.0	.4
Specialist foster	1.3	.7	1.5
Supported independent living	1.5		

The Community Visitor Program

Do you know the name of your Community Visitor?

The first question in this section asked children, young people and carers if they knew the name of their Community Visitor (CV). As can be seen in Table 32, reports from the vast majority of children, young people and carers indicate that they know the name of their CV.

Table 32 Do you know the name of your CV?

	Young people	Children	Carers
Know name of your CV	95.1%	94.4%	99.3%

¹³ Although each of the five questionnaires was nominally identified as being suitable for a particular age group, this was a guide only and the questionnaire most suitable to each child's ability level was used. This accounts for why the range of ages provided in the tally of responses for each questionnaire includes children with ages outside the suggested age group level for that questionnaire. This information applies across all results but it is particularly relevant to keep in mind when looking at tables discussing ages, lengths of time and means.

Contact with Community Visitor

In relation to contact with Community Visitors, Figure 19 reveals that most (95.2%) young people saw their Community Visitor once a month. Few young people reported seeing their Community Visitor less than this.

Children were also asked if they see their CV much, with 87.3% stating that they do, while 12.7% disagreed.

Carers were also asked about the frequency of CV visits. Responses from 98.7% of carers indicated that CVs visit every month.¹⁴

Less than 2% of carers reported that CVs visit less than once a month.

In terms of satisfaction with frequency of visits, Figure 20 shows that the majority (72%) of young people are satisfied with the amount of contact they have with their CV.

That said, equal numbers (14.0%) of young people reported wanting to see their CV more often or less often.

Figure 19
How often you see your Community Visitor (young people)

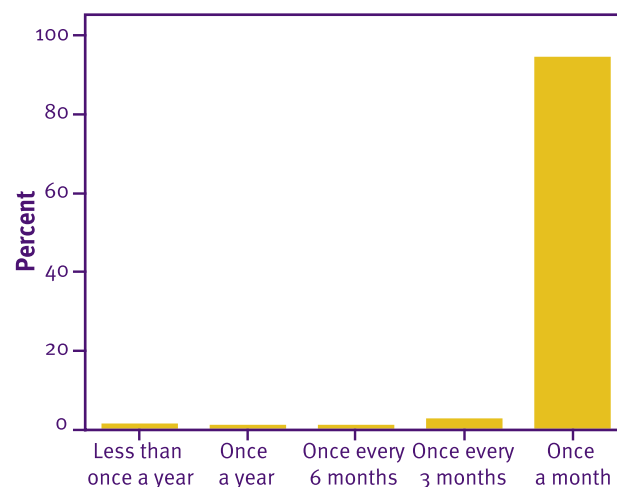
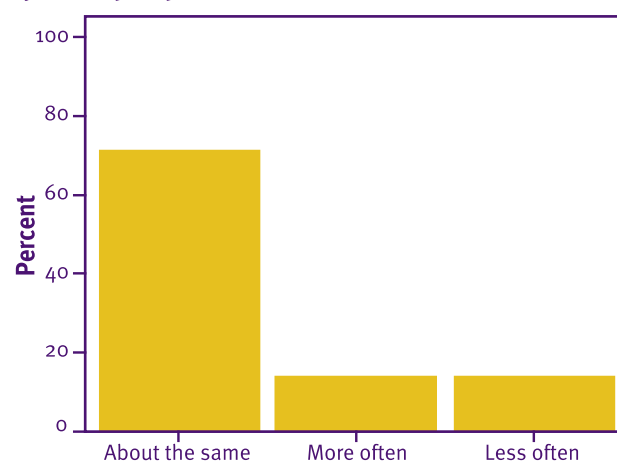


Figure 20
How often do you want to see your CV (young people)



Children and carers were also asked if the frequency of contact with their CV was satisfactory. Findings presented in Table 33 show the majority of children and carers were satisfied with this amount of contact. More than one fifth of the children, however, expressed a desire to see their CV more often. This contrasts markedly with the views of carers, only 2.4% of whom felt that visits to young children should be more frequent. Some children and carers felt that these visits needed to occur less frequently.

Table 33 How often do you want to see your CV?

	Children	Carers
See CV the same amount	63.7%	87.3%
See CV more	21.0%	2.4%
See CV less	15.3%	10.3%

¹⁴ The visitation rate reported by children and young people here differs from that recorded in the Commission's *Child Guardian Report 2005*. This discrepancy may be attributable to the different approaches to sampling taken, the different time periods reported on, and/or differences between children's perceptions of how much time has passed since a visit and actual visitation rate.

Also in relation to CV contact, Figure 21 shows that most young people appeared largely satisfied that they were able to contact their CV when the need arose. More than two thirds (68.4%) of young people reported that they were able to contact their CV a lot, while a further 23.5% reported being able to contact their CV a fair bit. Around 8% indicated that they were able to contact their CV not much or not at all.

Carers were also asked the extent to which they are able to contact the CV when needed. Compared with young people, more carers (81.4%) indicated that they were able to contact the CV a lot. Only 2% indicated that they were able to contact the CV not much or not at all.

Perceptions of CV

Is your CV nice to you?

Children and young people were asked if their CV is nice to them. There was unanimous agreement among children and young people, with all of them stating that CVs are nice to them, as shown in Table 34.

Table 34 Is your CV nice to you?

	Young people		Children	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Is your CV nice to you?	100%	0%	100%	0%

Does your CV listen to you?

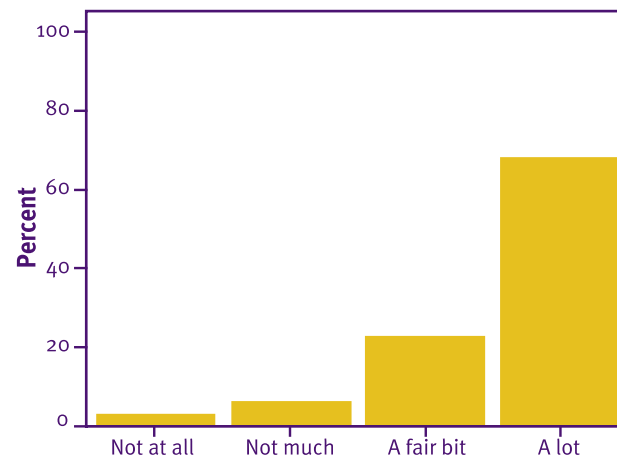
When asked the extent to which their CV listened to them, the majority (81.0%) of young people reported that they are listened to a lot.

A further 17.6% indicated that they were listened to a fair bit, while few felt they were listened to not much or not at all.

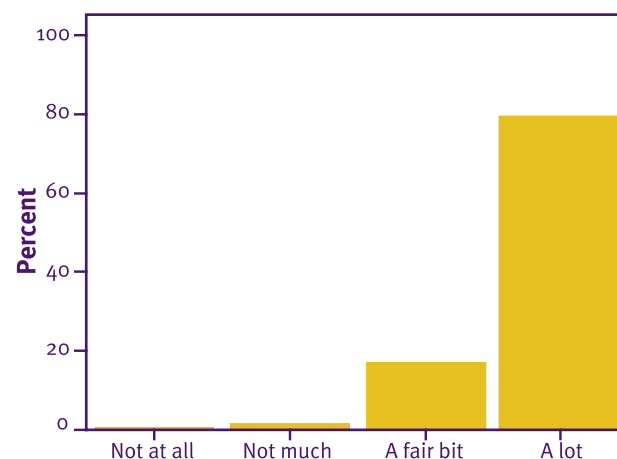
The breakdown of responses to the question is shown in Figure 22.

In relation to children, 100% agreed that their CV listens to them.

**Figure 21
Able to contact your CV when needed
(young people)**



**Figure 22
Does your CV listen to you? (young people)**

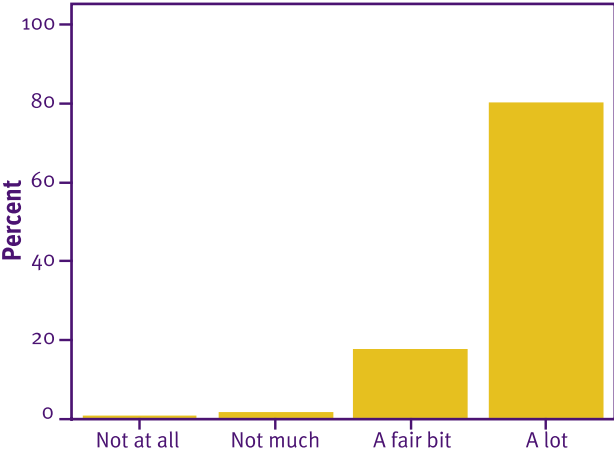


Does your CV care about what is best for you?

Young people were also asked about the extent to which they believed their CV cared about what is best for them. Figure 23 shows that most (80.1%) young people believe that their CV cares a lot about what is best for them. A further 18.2% reported that their CV cared a fair bit. Less than 2% felt that their CV cared not much or not at all.

Responses provided by children and carers indicated widespread agreement that CVs care about the interests of children and young children. The vast majority (99.3%) of children agreed that their CV cares about their best interests. Similarly, when asked about the extent to which CVs cared about the best interests of the child, 88.2% of carers responded that they cared a lot. In contrast, only one carer responded that the CV did not care.

Figure 23
Does your CV care what is best for you? (young people)



Has your CV been able to help you with anything in particular?

Children, young people and carers were asked if there was anything in particular their CV had been able to help with. Table 35 shows that compared with carers, young people and children were more likely to acknowledge that the CV had been able to help with something. While the majority of children and young people felt CVs had been able to help, almost half of the carers believed they had not. Across each of the groups, many chose not to respond to the question.

Table 35 Has your CV been able to help you with anything?

	Young people		Children		Carers	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
CV able to help	61.8%	38.2%	71.3%	28.7%	44.2%	55.8%

Helpfulness of CV

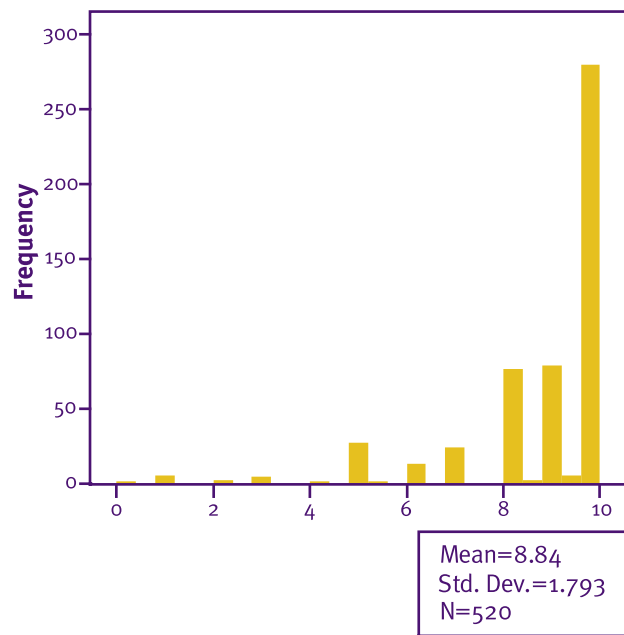
Related to the previous question, young people and carers were asked to rate the helpfulness of the CV on a scale of 1 (really unhelpful) to 10 (really helpful). Mean scores presented in Table 36 suggest that by and large, CVs are viewed by young people and carers as being very helpful.

Table 36 Helpfulness of CV

	Young people	Carers
Range	0-10	1-10
Mean	8.84	8.77

The distribution of young people’s ratings for the helpfulness of the CV is presented in Figure 24.

Figure 24
Helpfulness of CV (young people)



Influences according to Indigenous status

Preliminary analyses were done to determine if Indigenous status accounted for any differences between the groups on a range of key variables. Only one difference for young people was found – that Aboriginal young people were less likely to indicate that they could contact their CV when needed.

Indigenous status did not account for any differences among children or young children. However, relationships between these and a range of other key variables will be explored further as part of the future directions for the Views of Children and Young People in Care Project.

Future directions

This report is the first of a number of strategies to present the experiences, perceptions and ideas of children and young people communicated to the Child Guardian through its survey of children and young people in care. The Commission has an obligation to ensure that what these children and young people have told us through this survey has a positive impact on their lives and the lives of others entering out-of-home care.

The Commission is actively fulfilling a responsibility to protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of all children and young people in Queensland by giving voice to the views and perspectives of those most vulnerable, and working in partnership with government and non-government service providers to understand and respond to children and young people's views and perspectives.

The information underpinning this report is a source of rich primary data for further research and analysis, and provides the Child Guardian with new insights into aspects of the child safety system that can be enhanced to better support children and young people who need its services.

Further analysis of the data will appear in the *Child Guardian Report 2006*. This report will detail how the survey data has been used to recommend improvements to child protection services in the 2006 calendar year.

Importantly, the Commission will report the findings to the children and young people in out-of-home care who participated in the survey, to ensure they see that their voices have indeed been heard, and their views and perspectives have been genuinely represented. This will show them they have a capacity to inform enhancements to the care and services they require by participating in these surveys.

Notably, the views, perspectives and experiences conveyed by participants in the survey indicate that a significant proportion of children and young people in out-of-home care feel their situation has improved over the last year. They enjoy the kinds of positive life circumstances sought in the reform of Queensland's child safety system, including:

- feeling safe in their current placement
- being treated well by their carer
- being understood by their carer
- being treated the same as children and young people who are not in care
- knowing who to ask for help
- having access to Child Safety Officers who they feel care about their best interests, and
- having helpful and responsive Community Visitors.

Many children and young people also communicated views, perspectives and experiences of their life in out-of-home care which underpin issues of concern identified in this report. These should not be regarded as a comprehensive reflection of the challenges to the reform of Queensland's child safety system. However, they provide a timely, client-focused platform for examining and reviewing policies and practices designed to assure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care. These issues include:

- the high proportion of children who feel that their views are not seriously considered
- the large number of children experiencing numerous placements in out-of-home care
- the number of failed attempts at reunification
- the length of time children are staying in out-of-home care without apparent permanency planning
- children's lack of confidence in the Department's approval processes
- the difficulty children and young people in out-of-home care have in obtaining permission to engage in activities that may be outside the scope of their agreed care provisions but would ordinarily be considered beneficial to social, physical and emotional development.

The Commission hopes to stimulate stakeholder engagement with these issues through diverse, accessible communications and publications. This will enable the views and perspectives of children and young people in out-of-home care to be widely heard, considered and appropriately responded to.

The first of these publications is expected to be a series of Issues Papers designed to focus discussion and debate on specific areas of service delivery. Issues will be addressed in order of perceived priority, particularly in the context of public sector policy analysis and development forums.

The issues of concern identified will also inform the Commission's input to the *Queensland Child Protection Strategy 2006-2009*, and shape the agenda of zonal level forums, where service level consideration of the issues can be promoted. These forums will also encourage and enable Commission and departmental officers working directly with children and young people in out-of-home care to reflect on relevant issues and identify implications for their own practice. Learnings and outcomes from the forums will also provide a valuable focus for discussion at the Commission's Early Years Forum planned for October 2006.

The Commission will further analyse the survey data to identify any contextual variables of significance across the issues identified. These could include demographic, cultural, age-specific, gender-specific and harm-related factors that may warrant specific consideration in care planning and case management practices.

Wherever possible, the Commission will pursue collaborative research around the identified issues, to harness the expertise and resources of human services agencies interested in improving the life circumstances of vulnerable children and young people.

An early and desirable outcome of the inaugural survey of children and young people in out-of-home care and this report will be the establishment of an active and focused Children and Young People's Research Network that maintains the direction and momentum of the reform of Queensland's child safety system.

As foreshadowed in the inaugural *Child Guardian Report 2005*, the data collected through the Commission's survey of children and young people in care will also help guide the future work and direction of the Child Guardian.

Critical analysis of the data will focus on identifying issues that may warrant further refinement of Community Visitor processes and training, targeted monitoring and/or investigative work and the development of future Monitoring Plans¹⁵ by the Child Guardian with service providers.

¹⁵ Monitoring plans are detailed plans developed between the Child Guardian and relevant service providers under s31B of the CCYPCG Act about the potential service delivery issues that could be monitored by the Child Guardian within a certain period of time.

Please note:

To preserve the anonymity of survey respondents, information that could identify individual children or young people has been removed from this Appendix. Personal names have been replaced with asterisks (****). Other identifying information, such as the names of places or services, has been replaced with generic terms.

Where more than three respondents made the same response, the number of those who made that response is noted in brackets. For example, if 200 children responded “Not really,” then that comment is recorded as: Not really (200 responses).

Appendix Contents

Do you feel safe here?	42
Young people.....	42
Children	44
Does your carer understand you?	46
Young people.....	46
What is the best thing about living here?	48
Young people.....	48
Children	58
What would you most like to see improved or changed to make your placement better?.....	63
Young people.....	63
Do you have to do things, such as see people or go to meetings, or other things, that you don't want to do?	68
Young people.....	68
Children	70
Young children.....	71
Are you able to see your family as much as you would like?	73
Young people.....	73
Children	77
Young children.....	79
Are you better or worse off since coming into care?	82
Young people.....	82
Children	84
Is there anything that you would really like to have happen that no one is listening to you about?	86
Young people.....	86
What would you most like to see improved or changed to make the system better for kids?	89
Young people.....	89

Do you feel safe here?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 21)

“Yes” responses with comments

- No (8 responses).
- Cool.
- My carer is doing a great job looking after me.
- I feel that my foster parents are very wary of my health.
- They're great.
- Because the carer looks after me.
- I have been here all my life, my parents care about me.
- Because my carers treat me like their daughter. They treat me better than my mum.
- No one harrasses me here. No one annoys me here. I don't get bullied, don't get pushed and shoved.
- Depends who is here - when there are aggressive or angry residents - don't always feel safe - we tell the nurses but they often laugh it off.
- They always look after me and I can talk to them.
- Sometimes the external doors left unlocked.
- It's a safe place.
- Because my Mum and Dad are so caring.
- Yes, really safe.
- I feel safe with the carer, but don't feel safe living in this street because it is too close to old foster carer.
- Very.
- It's alright. Better than staying with my Mum.
- Besides having fights with other kids, it's been OK.
- Staff are 'really nice and easy to talk to.'
- I feel safe because it's home.
- Good strong environment.
- Good place.
- I like it here.
- It's fun.
- I love my current placement and feel safer than I did when I was with my Mum.
- My carers are lovely.
- I like it here, most carer's don't care as much as ***** and *****.
- They take care of me.
- I like being here because I don't like having my leg broken anymore.
- I feel very safe here because I know nothing is going to happen to me.
- Live with grandparents. (2 responses)
- I love my foster carers 'cause they treat me like I'm a part of their family.
- I love living here.
- I want to go home.
- They don't drink, don't hit me.
- This household is good and friendly, everyone gets along if everyone respects each other.
- I feel very safe at home.
- It's my Nan and Pop - they are cool.
- This family is a very caring home.
- My foster family is one of the very best I have ever lived with.
- I love it here.
- I love it - I'm a lot happier and ***** is the best.
- Because my carers make sure that I am happy.
- I don't know.
- Lots of them fed every day. Doors locked at night. Because ***** has gone.
- Auntie ***** (his carer) is just the best, I love her cooking. I don't know who I'd be with if Auntie ***** didn't step in.
- ***** is a great carer, I have food provided and a home to live in. She is very lenient.
- Plenty of other people who look out for me.
- No drugs or alcohol. Calm environment.
- Cause they don't drink, have parties or get angry.
- Well every foster home has their ups and downs cause you don't know them all that well but I feel safe here they feel like my real parents.
- It alright but it's a bit boring really, but I really like going with the youth worker. THEY ROCK.
- I feel safe here because of my dad. He does not know where I am.
- It's good here.
- And it is also fun here.
- Definitely
- I love my carers with all my heart and never wanna leave here ever.
- I love it at my placement. She is a mum to me and I love her and I respect her home.
- It's fun here.

- We feel more safe than when we lived with Mum.
- I never want to leave this family.
- Cause I'm with my family.
- This is my home and I feel safe.
- Around parents.
- Normal family.
- Yes, I got guardianship last [month cited] and I couldn't be happier.
- I feel really, really, really safe here. I don't even feel uncomfortable. !!!!
- No strangers here.
- I know no one will be bashing anyone, screaming, or battles and stuff going on in the group.
- I really like here but I would like to go back home.
- If I do the wrong thing I go to my room.
- It's great.
- I'm with my grandparents.
- I like living here it has helped me greatly thank you.
- It is better than the other places - it has things that others don't
- She really looks after us.
- Sometimes, not all the time.
- I like it here - I am safe here I get to do many different activities and I get pocket money.
- I feel safe but I've got a lot of people coming in and out and I don't call it home, I'm still meeting them all.
- I feel safe here and I know everyone at school and around town.
- Always.
- They look after me so well as if I were one of their own children and that's how I feel.
- Treated well, plenty food, loved, given a bed and clothes.
- They're really nice.
- I love this place because they love me just like I was their own.
- Living here in this environment with these people makes me feel safe.
- Apart from spiders and bugs.
- Of course.
- Great.
- I'm safe and everything is real good.
- Relatively.
- Dad has good things that keep us safe.
- I like it here. I feel protected here.
- I like it here because it's fun, I feel free and I can walk around the yard and be safe, they are the best parents I've ever had.
- They're an awesome, loving and safe family.
- Because she is my grandma and my mum and aunty trusted her, so I can too.
- I am helped with my work and she takes care of me.
- Because I have lived here practically all my life.
- They love us like we are their own kids.
- Mum and Dad (carers) will protect me. I feel loved, cared about and wanted.
- I have a warm bed and I get every meal everyday. They love me, and care about me.
- Very safe. She is like a mother and grandmother to me.
- I love my family.
- It's crap.
- This is the best house in the world, and I love my mum and dad.
- They keep the house locked at night.
- Two lovely people (carers).
- I don't feel safe when I get yelled at.
- My carer is a custodial supervisor so I feel safe.
- All the time.
- Yes I love this house.
- I feel safe here because it is a caring family.
- I feel safe because I have Nanny (carer).
- Sometimes I feel safe sometimes I feel like I don't belong here.
- Hell yes.
- It's a safe place.
- I'm almost 16 so I can do a lot of things myself.
- I love it here.
- ***** and ***** are very caring carers.
- Grandad only lets some people in the house.
- Grandparents look after her.
- It's good.
- All people are loving and caring.
- Got hit.
- Most of the time except when my brother comes to stay.
- I feel safe and comfortable but I would like to go home.
- I feel safe here because you can talk to someone about your problems and they keep you safe every night.

“No” responses with comments

- Problems with other tenant.
- Don't feel safe in [Brisbane location].
- Not really.
- Would rather be living with dad.
- I always get hit when I am bad sometimes.
- Carer can be mean - yelling.
- Sometimes. There has been some D.V.
- It's f**king bullshit the adults are f**kwits and the rules are stupid.
- Well I am a 15 year old, and I expected to be treated my own age. I want my own space, and my own normal life.
- Because when the carers go home we don't know who's coming and we wish to know.
- I'm sometimes scared if people laugh at me. Sometimes I start crying I walk away because I am not happy.
- Other residents issues (not directed at me).

Provided comments only

- Sometimes (3 responses).
- Sometimes potential fear of things happening like break-ins.
- Depends on the carer.
- Kind of - because I am scared at night because of noises.
- Maybe.
- Kind of - more yes than no.
- Not too sure.
- Sometimes I feel safe, this doesn't feel like home.
- Sort of. No one hurts me but I want to go back and be with my brother and sister.

Children

(Questionnaire 2, Question 21)

“Yes” responses with comments

- Always.
- Feel very safe here because ***** and ***** love me.
- Like living here 'cause carer lives here too and keeps her safe.
- She knows her carers are here to look after her and to keep her safe.
- Sometimes any when I come back.
- My aunty and uncle buy me things let me do things and love me they play games with me.
- More than any other place totally love this place.
- Like living here. (2 responses)
- Not always.
- I don't like it at ***** and *****'s when they pull my pants down and smack my bottom *****.
- Because I love ***** and ***** carers.
- My carers keep us safe. They keep us safe at the shops by holding our hands.
- Because we don't live in the city. No one is dangerous in this house.
- Treated equal.
- My carers are very nice.
- I love it here.
- Worry that Mum and Dad might come to get me.
- Because my grandma looks after me and takes care of me.
- Sort of sometimes when I feel sick I don't go to the doctors.
- This is a safe house.
- Feel good here.
- Staying with carer makes him safe.
- Aunty ***** house.
- No one is going to jump in and kill me for no reason because that would be so weird.
- It is the best placement.
- Because I know this is a safety house.
- Because she looks after me well.
- Because people look after me well.
- It's fun.
- I just want you to know I am safe here.
- Yeah I really like it here.
- Because carer will never stop loving me.
- I observed that the child is very comfortable with her carer, physically and verbally.
- Things are pretty good.

- It's fun.
- I want to stay here until next year, then I want to go to my family in [rural/remote location].
- Keep dry from the rain (raining while on today's visit).
- ***** looks after me.
- I know they can look after me.
- Because carer looks after me.
- I'm not scared.
- We have a fire alarm.
- They look after us.
- Because I do something that I'm told sometimes.
- Most of time they protect me.
- Pop looks after us. He makes sure we don't get hurt.
- Because I don't get bossed around ***** isn't allowed to hurt me.
- I just feel safe.
- And I get lots of hugs.
- Because ***** is a really good carer.
- Sort of, ***** mum exboyfriend threatened to shoot at the house.
- Sort of sometimes.
- Because carer (Mum) looks after me.
- Safe in the yard and house.
- Watch TV and play with *****.
- It's fun.
- I get growled at when I am not doing anything wrong. Everybody growls at me.
- Get lots of food and clothes.
- I used to get hit in my room at my house so I came here.
- Don't know and just feel safe.
- Some kids tease me.
- Trampoline.
- "Sort of" scared of *****.
- Pretty good, they're helping us with stuff.
- Because there is locks on the doors for when strangers come.
- Definitely.
- Except when a robber came in to the house.
- I feel loved here, but I fight with my sisters.
- She's always nice to me, but sometimes she yells at me.
- Triple yes!! "It's the best house in the world."
- When ***** is gone, I'll be really safe, ***** is really strong.
- Want to live with his mum.
- I don't get hurt and I am loved.

- If we stay out the back no-one can take us and that's really safe.
- Not at my Mum's but ***** and ***** (carers) are good.
- Love to leave with grandmother.
- Sometimes.
- Because ***** and ***** are here to look after me. I don't go near the cane.
- ***** is a responsible carer, as she has cared for us for 8 bright happy years.
- But don't want my parents to know my address.
- If strangers come I lock the doors.
- I do.

"No" responses with comments

- I don't know.
- At night I get scared of ghosts.
- Very happy.
- An older child in care (ie. intellectually disabled has been asking my brother to touch).
- Because a child (boy) in care aged 16 with an intellectual disability, has been asking my brother to touch his penis.
- I think the other boys might hurt me.
- Because I want to live with Mum and Dad. They can take me to many places.

Provided comments only

- Sort of sometimes when I feel sick I don't go to the doctors.
- Sort of, *****'s mum exboyfriend threatened to shoot at the house.
- Sort of sometimes.
- "Sort of" scared of *****.

Does your carer understand you?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 22)

“Yes” responses with comments

- Sometimes (12 responses).
- Most of the time (8 responses).
- No (8 responses).
- She does sometimes.
- I can talk to her.
- She listens to me.
- They listen to me.
- My mum tells me she loves me and give me big smoochy kisses.
- They understand me lots, they listen to me.
- My Nan had three teenage daughters, so she understands.
- Well, she gives eye contact. No eye contact is rude.
- Some do some don't.
- I can talk to them about anything.
- Tries her best to.
- Only when I speak clearly.
- Pretty much.
- She's great.
- YP stated all team at facility were helpful and he received help with school work and his special interests.
- My carer understands me when I'm upset or depressed.
- Sometimes - they are elderly and unwell.
- A lot.
- But I feel that one of the three carers doesn't understand me. He's too old to understand young fellas.
- Kind of.
- Very much.
- She listens.
- Half the time.
- Yes Mum understands me all the time.
- Well I can always tell someone in my care whether it's my foster parents or one of the older ones I always have someone to tell.
- She is cool.
- Easy to talk to.
- They understand things I go through and they understand why I take medication.
- Sometimes.
- They don't really listen to what I have to say.
- YP indicated she 'loves Mum and Dad' referring to foster parents - they are easy to talk to.
- I think they understand.
- Most of the time but they are a bit old.
- Sort of.
- My carer makes a great effort to understand me and one that not many others have made.
- But she doesn't always let me go to places I want to go to.
- Sometime Nan doesn't let me go places I want.
- She listens to my problems and stuff - she helps me sort out things.
- Well he knows be better than I know myself - I've known him since I was 5 years old. I always wanted to live here.
- She listens to us.
- Maybe sometimes I don't feel like it though.
- Because they make see things more clearly.
- They listen to everything I say unless they're on toilet or phone.
- A few. Have 4 carers at the moment.
- Most times.
- They are very calm I see they get cranky if you push the wrong button like anyone else.
- Nil.
- She understands me when I get in trouble - she listens to what I like understand I'm scared of the dark because of my Dad.
- Everyone of the workers treat me with respect & make sure I'm safe.
- Not always though.
- Whenever I need them even if I don't they still listen to me.
- She always listens to me and provides for me.
- My carer is the best.
- I don't know.
- Sometimes - but Dad and brother mumble and I can't understand them.
- They act like they do but I don't know if they do.
- Carer crossed out and Parents written instead. I have lived here for 14 years, obviously they would!
- She understands me a lot and I love her very much she is like my real mother. I love her so much!!!
- Aunty can talk to me. She will help me even if she knows I'm not telling the truth. She understands my Mum because her Mum did the same stuff.
- Sometimes doesn't because I talk fast.

- They know how to help me and that's great.
- Not sure.
- A lot.
- Sometimes, sometimes not.
- Sometimes, sometimes not. I find it hard to explain things.
- She is a good carer and I love Nanna and I trust her more than I trust anyone else.
- "Sometimes they get confused."
- She understand me well. And I know I can go to her for help.
- Always.
- Some of them.
- Not always.
- Yes because she listens to you.
- Because I have been here so long.
- She helps me a lot.
- They know my entire life and I feel they do understand me.
- Yes I can speak freely.
- ***** my foster mother is very easy to talk to and I tell her everything. The others are great as well I am just closer to *****.
- Pretty much.
- I don't really tell them because I know.
- Heaps.
- She understands everything.
- She is lucky to have me.
- 3 carers. 2 out of 3 do.
- Except 1 worker.
- Yeah - gets me what I want.
- Sometimes they don't.
- They understand me very strongly.
- Always discuss issues/problems - understand me, give me advice.
- She is nice and loveable and funny.
- We get along like a house on fire.
- We talk to each other.
- I don't know.
- In some ways.
- She always understands me. She loves me.
- They are always here for me.
- Sometimes.
- She understands when I talk about problems.
- Yes they give me time to talk to them about stuff.
- She understands how I feel and she know my wants and needs.
- Very supportive.

- We get listened to a lot.
- Better than anyone else.
- Definitely she helps me with my school work and she's the best!
- Sometimes but sometimes they don't.
- When I say something to them about something otherwise they don't know.

"No" responses with comments

- Some do some don't.
- Doesn't understand feelings.
- One only carer knows about ASD.
- I don't talk to them much.
- Since other kids came, carer takes their side.
- Sometimes but not really.
- Sometimes.
- Nan doesn't let me do things with my mates.
- Not really - she doesn't know how to deal with someone like me.
- I think that they can't understand because they haven't experienced it and just refer me to a textbook.
- Not sure. (2 responses)
- I've got about 7-8 so I don't talk to them because I'd have to say it all over again to the others!
- They don't listen.
- They won't listen.
- Well some times I don't like to talk to my carer because they never support me on my well being, like what I need.
- Don't know. (2 responses)
- Not listened to. They don't understand why I do the things I do.
- Different generations - doesn't understand the teenage needs.
- Doesn't understand the concept of 'teenage years'!
- Sometimes but not all the time.

Provided comments only

- Sometimes (14 responses).
- Don't know (3 responses).
- Sometimes they say they do - but I don't think they do.
- Sometimes. When they agree - will talk over me and act as if my opinion doesn't matter if they don't agree with me.
- Half and half.
- I don't know.
- Not sure of this.

- Sometimes we have disagreements but every family has disagreements so yeah.
- NA - young person living alone in independent living.
- I don't know.
- Most of the time.
- With some things not all.
- I don't know.
- Not really, sometimes.
- Most of the time carer understands, but at times, feels like she doesn't.
- Sometimes. Because sometimes I'm naughty and she (they) doesn't understand why I'm the way I am.
- Sometimes because she is from another generation, and that was different.
- Sometimes. They forget we are growing older, and should get more privileges. We still get the "safety lecture" when going out.
- As much as she can, she tries hard.
- Not sure.

What is the best thing about living here?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 33)

Support from carers

- Everything (20 responses).
- All the support and love from everyone and how we are all classed as a family.
- Treat fairly. Clean place.
- Well we get to see our mum and ***** is a very nice person.
- My foster parents.
- No red paste (Chilli). No soap in your mouth. The rules are fair, very fair.
- Everyone is nice to me.
- I get treated with respect. My carer is so nice. I am safe.
- You don't get hit!
- Good mum and dad. Good presents.
- I get treated like the carers daughter, I have a brother and a great backyard. They give us a trampoline.
- Playing with the others and sharing stuff. Good food my favourite is spaghetti bolognaise. I have plenty of clothes to wear.
- Everything - nothing bad.
- Like being here - have not been away for 4 and a half years. Feels like a steady home - longest house I've lived in without moving - Nana is a good cook.
- I'm with my real family and they love me very much no matter how much crap I give them. They spoil me rotten.
- Getting treatment and help.
- I can talk to them, they understand and treat me well.
- I get cared about.
- The carers.
- Living with his carers he classes as Mum and Dad.
- Rewarded for being for me. Like strictness.
- Someone to love you.
- Everything. Because I'm allowed to do anything around here.
- Everything is alright.
- Parents house is yucky and here is clean. Carer listens to me. It's better here.
- Having fun, playing pool, building stuff - model toys.
- ***** ***** - female carers nickname.

- Everything.
- They love me and they are nice.
- I get to have a break from looking after my sister.
- It is safe, I have food and a loving Mum and Dad.
- Feeling safe. Knowing carer cares about me.
- Mowing the lawn. The food is good. Like the carers.
- Pets and family.
- The trust that is in the house, also the independence that we have.
- *****.
- You get looked after properly and fed and you get a lot done for you.
- Fed well, treated well, cared well.
- I have got someone to listen to me. Someone that cares for me. And someone to look up to.
- Having my sisters here to play with, living with my Mum and Dad (foster parents), how they care for me and support me.
- Do what I want. Get what I want. Like what I get. Love my Nonny and Poppy.
- Get own room. Like carers.
- Talk to other people about problems.
- Everything good.
- I get to go good places with friends and family.
- Being with my sister. Going on group outings like shopping to spend pocket money. Pocket money. Food. Staff are good.
- Staff are 'good and give us nice food and special treats, bus trips, drama on Friday nights.'
- That there's enough room for everyone and that there is a caring and loving family living with me.
- Having a family who cares for me.
- Part of a big family.
- The best thing is living with family and going to a great school with lots of friends.
- I have a home, food, clothes and grandparents that love me.
- YP states that there are lots of activities to do with the family.
- For birthdays and Xmas we got a lot of stuff and good clothes.
- They care about us a lot.
- Feel safe.
- I am living with family and I feel more secure and happy.
- That they know what we like and she understands us pretty well.
- The cooking is great and I get to spend *****'s money when she gives it to me.
- They look after you very well. They feed you - everything.
- Get a lot of nice things but you have to behave for it.
- That we have a good Mum and Dad and we get real food.
- ***** is very nice.
- Clean and when carer's family visits, their kids receive same discipline.
- They look after me.
- Feels safe, feels like home.
- Food is great and lot of clothes.
- Nice clothes and good food.
- Good carers; good is great; good allowance; pretty fair discipline; carers let you have space away from the other kids; Xbox.
- Getting cared about. Being listened to. Being fed.
- It's a nice house and air conditioned. Getting looked after, being fed.
- That I'm always safe.
- Everything is good here.
- Everything the love that you get by living in the house.
- That I'm loved.
- My family loves me.
- I am friends with everyone and I am equal as everyone else is.
- Don't get sworn at.
- Good carer.
- I get treated the same way everyone else does. We all get pocket money. We go to some places.
- We have lots of things to do and play with.
- We have lots of movies. They don't hit us. We have a Playstation.
- Lots of food, lots of things to play with.
- Having a big family that loves you and cares for you.
- Sometimes can stay up late. Part of family.
- My pet, can ring Dad when I want to, got nice room and clothes.
- Really nice home, carers 'Mum and Dad' are great, other kids are nice. Got my own room. Can have pets here.
- Mum and Dad.' Having my own room. Mum is my best friend. Can have friends over.
- Carers, pool, friends who live close, learning to rollerblade and bedroom is really pretty.
- Loving parents.

- That Auntie treats right and give treats.
- Sometimes I get heaps of things - staying for Xmas.
- It is great I have the support of a great family and my life is happy.
- Well we have a great foster mum also we have communication, eye contact and trust and love. Nothing.
- Safe.
- Best for me to be here. Regular meals.
- Good. Play. Go out to fun places.
- The food. Everything. The animals. Lots of room.
- Friendly people.
- Everything is good.
- You get a lot of fresh air, I am with my sister, ***** my carer really cares for us and gets us things.
- It is a nice and friendly place to live.
- Just like being here.
- Being safe and being happy. Everything is really good here.
- We get to do a lot of things.
- We have a roof over our head. We like the nice food.
- We've got a roof over our heads. We've got beds, food in our bodies, we got clothes, we got presents and we went to [overseas location].
- They understand me and care very much about what I need and want and always treat me with great respect.
- Get food, roof over my head.
- That I have a lot of things I don't get at Mum's.
- ***** gets us cool presents - bike - my Mum never sent us a present - I got a new bike - I get heaps of stuff.
- Do anything I want within reason. He trusts me.
- Get treated fairly - I get what other kids get.
- People caring about me. ***** cares about what I did today. More responsibilities for ourselves.
- You get to places you've never been before.
- They are nice all the time.
- Having someone to care for her and listen.
- She doesn't feed me junk food she only give me healthy food. I get nice clothes and animals.
- Lots of things.
- She's a good cook, cleaner and she (the carer) teaches me stuff and helps me learn.
- Always being treated fairly and equally, always being loved and cared for, feeling like a part of the family, having everything and more than I need.
- I get treated nicely. It's fun (most of the time).
- Stability. Carers.
- Not sure - love in the family.
- Really nice place to live in and if I'm good I get what I want.
- My foster parents love me.
- Like being with carer, getting on well with carer.
- Nan and Grandpa are always nice. They treat me with respect. They don't yell. My little sister is fun to play with.
- A big loving family and a Mum I can give lots of hugs.
- I am respected here.
- I feel safe & I can do things without feeling uncomfortable.
- I like it here.
- A good family that cares about me.
- Feels more at home than anywhere else.
- I got friends around the block and I have lived here all my life. "Actually".
- I get treated with respect & I get listened to. I've made a friend in here who has similar issues as me.
- I'm alive.
- Get a lot of stuff. Go place with friends (I'm lucky).
- Well it cool here you can do anything here I love my parents. I love my family.
- I'm with family.
- I get treated better than when I was at my other
- Carers & other kids. Special Room & things music.
- Carers, other young people, my room & DVD's.
- Living with my family.
- That I'm respected and loved like their own daughter and will always care for me.
- I'm not afraid to come home and she respects me with love and it feels like home and I am so happy here.
- Generally everything.
- I feel cared for here. I feel safe. I fee like I belong here. I like being together with my sisters.
- I feel safe. I happy I'm with my grandparents & not a foster family. I like the swimming pool.
- My mum, dad care for me and love me very much. I am special to this family and they treat me like their own child and include me in everything.
- We get a lot of fun and everyone is treated fairly.

- I'm with my family
- Being with my family and able to do thing with them.
- I like all the things here.
- Being cared for instead of being on the streets or with parents that fight.
- They are really nice people
- That we get treated well.
- My freedom.
- I get an X Box in my room, and a TV. I am part of the family and I'm happy.
- That ***** looks after us.
- This is home.
- That I'm treated like their own daughter and like a sister. They love me like their own.
- My mum taking me to sport and playing PS2 and going swimming in the pool.
- Being able to have a bit of freedom.
- My carers.
- I'm with family.
- Because it's family.
- I get whatever I want when I ask for it and I get taken care of the way that I should.
- I'm loved, I have a good education, I have been brought up so well words can't explain, I get fed really well as I love to eat (haha).
- Well I am very very happy here and I love my whole family I love everything here and I think everything I have is very nice and I am very grateful.
- The carers are very helpful it's a nice place.
- She doesn't treat me like my mum.
- ***** loves us!
- Good things.
- Mum and Dad because they treat me so good. They treat me with respect
- I have freedom - not too much and not too little.
- It's family.
- We get a variety of food - good food, pretty healthy, correct weight and my carers loving me.
- That I'm with my carers and my sister.
- It's family.
- Clothes like everyone else. Treated well. Like cleaning up house.
- It's all good I guess.
- They are my family.
- Mum and Dad.
- Probably the carers they are really nice.
- The carers.
- I'm close to my brothers. My carer is more understanding than previous carers.
- The safety.
- The freedom to do things my way and be treated well.
- I still get to visit any relatives everyone is treated fair.
- They are my family.
- I am a part of this family, feels like my own family.
- It feels like my family.
- Looked after well
- Going on holidays.
- Going camping on holidays.
- Playstation, my own room downstairs, having Foxtel, animals, living with nice people who love me.
- The house is clean and I get treated well and get lots of things. We go to places and get pocket money. ***** and Grandad are nice.
- You get to have things that other carers don't give you like Xbox and things and going to Dreamworld.
- We get to go out places and we get to stay up on weekends.
- My parents understand me. If I have a problem at school I can come home and we talk about it. They talk through my problem of being on medication. They were kid to bring me into the family.
- I get fed well.
- Nanie buys us stuff.
- It's like family.
- I'm close to my Mum. Everyone here is really nice at this house.
- Learn ballet and violin. Other kids. Carers buy us good stuff. Nice clothes.
- Mum and Dad i.e. foster carers. Nice room, good food, Phantom comics, drum set, going to scouts and squash.
- I feel happy and very safe and I love here as there is lots things to do.
- It's fun and I'm happy here.
- A lot of friends and carer takes good care of me.
- "Mum and Dad care for me and love me" (about carers).
- Everything, having my dog.
- My foster mum.
- That I am safe and great school.!
- Got a pool, Optus, someone who cares.
- Family.

- Freedom. Care that's given.
- Being able to go out with friends. Certain amount of freedom. Able to give her own view and opinion about things - listened to.
- Going to school. Having kids to play with. Not too many jobs. Not having to put up with my Mum and sister, Carer teaches me to look after myself.
- Treated with respect. Go to a good school.
- I feel loved and as if I belong and have been here since birth. I am treated so well I wouldn't want to have any other carer.
- It's safe.
- Good food, cared for.
- Holidays, school good, what they give me, the food, clothes, shoes.
- Foster carers ("Mum and Dad").
- Everything. My room, the food, she makes the best dinner, gives me good lunch for school.
- They're nice. They help me.
- Nana spoils me heaps and understands me.
- Sometimes I get what I want.
- That I am away from family.
- That we all get treated the same.
- We go on trips and go fishing; good friends living here and good family.
- Signing up for football, good Christmas presents, and everything else!
- Growing up with kids and also being old enough to make my own decisions. I'm respected like an adult.
- ***** cooks nice food and ***** buys me toys.
- Comfort. Knowing everybody's safe.
- Feed me. Clothe me. Helped me.
- We go out a lot and we have fun like go to the beach and do a lot of family activities.
- Carer's look after me and keep me safe.
- Carer's are great and treat us fairly.
- Carer's and family are nice to me.
- Feeling as though I am a valued part of this family and being equal.
- No smacking. Nice people. Lots of space. Desserts.
- I don't have to be like a Mum already (Nan does the cleaning and looks after little sister). I watch more TV and have Foxtel and Nickelodeon. I hardly have to do anything.
- Lots of space - hens are my favourite animals. Rumpus room, Mum and Dad, my brother and my twin sisters.
- Family. Everything. Life.
- I get loved and spoiled a lot.
- Better environment for me.
- Carer supports me.
- Love within the family.
- Going out with one of the carers.
- When a current carer is on shift.
- Everything.
- Mum and Dad. Lots of brothers and sisters and niece that are very caring!
- Everything. Mum and Dad and lots of brothers and sisters and niece that are very caring.
- Because they love me.
- I am loved and able to do things that I like. Also it is good, because my Carer and I talk a lot.
- A good shelter, and good things to do.
- Everything.
- Carers are really understanding. Comfort me when feeling down, especially with family issues.
- I have lived here forever, and I like it here.
- Being safe, living with ***** (carer).
- The fact that I feel safe, and that I look to my carer as my mum.
- You get pizza.
- I've got nice parents.
- Everything.
- I get lots of presents.
- Get treated nicely most of the time.
- Allowed to do what I want. Sometimes gives me time to think.
- It's somewhere to stay.
- It's good.
- Feeling secure.
- Everything.
- I don't get junk food, I get treated healthy.
- We get loved equally. We get respected and looked after.
- That I get what I want and I've got a good life here.
- You get what you want. You get looked after and we get respect and I am always clean.
- Everything.
- I have foster brothers to play with. I can talk to my carers. I get free bus rides.
- Staying with my Mum and Dad (carers) and getting treated the way other people get treated.
- It feels like home. Greatest parents in the world couldn't be happier.
- That it is my family and I feel safe all the time. I don't have to be scared anymore.

- Good food. Family.
- We get treated well.
- I get help. People care for me, and we have each other.
- I am with my family (brother and sisters), plus my carers and their family.
- Being with my family (carer & siblings).
- They help you get back on your feet, and never put you down like other people do, and they help you get a job and places to stay.
- You can go out, but you have to be back at your carer 5:30pm on weekdays, and on the weekends 10:30pm, which is so good here. I wish I could live here for life.
- I get to go to the beach with my carer.
- Getting treated good.
- Everything. They are basically my parents. I love them more than anything.
- It is the coolest.
- Treated better here.
- It's better than being with my real family.
- They do lots and lots of stuff for us, and with us as well.
- The carers are very good people, they are understanding, and give you everything you basically need to grow up with.
- It's cool.
- She loves us, lets us watch the Simpsons.
- Going out doing fun things (doing fun things together).
- I have all I want.
- I feel family.
- Don't know but I like it here.
- When Nanny takes me out for a reward or something special.
- They are my parents to me.
- I love my home town and for once in my life I'm happy.
- I am loved, I get to have the pets I want, I love my parents...
- I have my own dog. They care about me.
- We get to go places all the time and we get to do a lot of things we want to.
- That ***** and ***** (carers) would never lie, never not treat us the same and they would never take us anywhere we don't want to go.
- Animals and foster carer.
- Carer is nice, she cares, can do whatever you like but have to ask.
- I had always lived with my Mum or the carer. To me she is my Mum.
- I live somewhere.
- Freedom to make own decisions while knowing the results if I make a bad decision.
- That I have a mother and a home.
- They're nice (carers).
- Spoilt and getting treated well.
- My Mum and school, beach.
- I get more things here than other houses.
- Swimming, going out, being spoilt.
- Living with my parents.
- I'm being heard and Auntie ***** helps me, I have a lot of support.
- We go on a lot of holidays.
- It was a great place but most of the time I was getting into fights over clothes but other than that I had great fun!
- It is clean.
- I actually have a house to live in.

Lifestyle

- Riding. Going to the skate park.
- The farm life
- All the horses and being able to have a go at everything.
- Minutes from the beaches.
- I'm allowed to watch whatever I want when my carer is not watching TV.
- The food. Going swimming.
- Having a dog. Going to the beach. Going to the pub. Going to other people's houses. Going to the shops and playing games.
- Close to the water.
- 5 acres of land.
- The acreage. Neighbours not too close.
- Big open space and big house and no one annoys you.
- Big house.
- Playing football.
- Close to school.
- Space to play in yard.
- It's quiet.
- Getting to go in the pool nearly every day.
- Animals. Swimming pool.
- Lots of space, like living in the bush.
- Other kids. Lots of space and things to do, nice staff. Going to beach with other kids.
- Trampolines, activities with other kids, don't live with my Mum anymore but YP indicated he enjoys seeing her on site.
- Close to school, close to shops.

- Lots of things to do on the property.
- Swimming in the pool, watching TV.
- Pool and games.
- Bike riding.
- Treated well, enjoy the lifestyle.
- The pool, lots of room.
- I get what I need. I go out a lot.
- Horse riding and lifestyle.
- Out in the bush, quiet, food.
- Playing cricket.
- Get to cook. Get to have own bedroom. Get my own stuff.
- The bush.
- The fresh air and good water.
- Have a pool and we're allowed to go for a swim.
- Lots of friends. Get to have BBQ's. Go to the park.
- No stress having responsibility, better lifestyle.
- Like playing here and with the chooks.
- I get freedom enough to do what I want (within reasonable restrictions).
- The yard and air conditioning.
- Freedom.
- Love swimming.
- Bush we are out in the bush with my own box track and a big yard.
- Going swimming, computer, music and youth worker rock. ***** is the best ever.
- Pool, spa, sauna. Close to shops and friends.
- The pool is great cause it's really hot.
- I get my own freedom as long as I tell my carer where I am.
- My room, new clothes & toys. House is nice. Go to dancing & swimming.
- It's really fun & you get to do lots of stuff.
- I like the cattle, goats, horses, pigs & other animals. I really like the river.
- I get to have fun.
- We get pancakes & we see our Uncles. Lots of animals.
- That we have a really nice TV. and a puppy.
- You can do a lot of stuff. Swimming/playing music of my own/playing board games etc.
- Freedom, own room, having own money & job.
- Take part in sport, go to church. Enjoy yourself.
- Lots of room to run around and go fishing. Sometimes it floods & I don't have to go to school.
- I can go fishing.
- There are heaps of things I can do.
- Heaps of things to do.
- Country area, small area.
- Got lots of space and animals.
- Cricket; calves; ***** the dog; all of the people; food; cordial; toys; Christmas; kind things as well; ***** the cat and ***** the cat.
- All the space & the horses.
- Living at beach.
- Kids are kind to me, I play games and the computer a lot. I play with the dogs.
- The beach.
- Beach nearby and more space to get around,
- The laziness.
- The TV and the back garden.
- Can do almost everything I like except if it's dangerous.
- I get to go for swims and get to meet new friends in the complex.
- We are right near the beach. The big space in the backyard.
- Acreage lots to do.
- The pool and garden.
- There's a lot of things to do 'cause we got an Xbox and Playstation and computer and 2 acres.
- Got heaps of friends here and it's close to the beach.
- Nothing really, the only thing is it's close to the beach!
- Plenty of room, can do whatever I want because I live on acreage.
- My room. Country.
- Lots of space in the yard. Lots of people to place cricket with.
- We've got 3 acres. We've got a spa and a ping-pong table and a deck and we can play cricket. We can skate-board.
- Basketball hoop. Cricket, football, tiggy. Lots of room to play. Playstation game.
- Going camping, swimming, movies.
- Play games - cricket. Swim in river.
- Get to play sport.
- Country living.
- Ride ponies. Own room. Good food.
- I can have fun.
- The fun stuff - when it's raining we play board games and things.
- We get to play on the Playstation and the trampoline.
- I live near the river and friends.

- There is so much to do.
- Lots to do. See friends.
- Riding the bikes and play with friends and sleeping at friend's places and going out places.
- Less pressure from home.
- The beach.

Having possessions or luxuries

- The Playstation and get movies.
- They give me money, free space.
- Foxtel.
- We get to play our games on the computer.
- Pool, canal.
- I get to get pocket money - \$5 a week.
- Air conditioning.
- It's a big house, lots of fans. Get good food. 2 TV's.
- Air con.
- Get \$20 voucher for being good.
- The money.
- Buggies.
- Getting pocket money.
- I have my own room, TV, DVD, computer, double bed.
- Having Austar.
- Pocket money for chores.
- Get what I want.
- The pool.
- Computers.
- I get to talk on MSN to my friends.
- I get toys and clothes.
- Got a computer.
- My army.
- TV.
- Air conditioning.
- Because I get a little bit more spent on me because I am the only girl out of 2 boys.
- Pool.
- Pool - swimming.
- Work for \$25 a week put in my bank.
- Keeping me entertained it's better because I have an Xbox and computer to use. There is air conditioning.
- Watching videos.
- Getting stuff.
- I get most things.
- I get stuff - like CD's and clothes.
- Pool.
- Playstation.

- Play with good toys.
- Pool. Pets.
- The house.
- Good toys including bikes. Got to go on trips.
- A swimming pool.
- Got a big trampoline.
- Xbox, food, clothes (a lot), basketball.
- My TV and computer and the pool.
- I like the pool.
- All pretty good. Getting paid for the work I do.
- I have a pool and a motorbike and buggy.
- The guitars.
- The boat.
- I get what I want.
- Free internet.
- Pool, own room, food and toys.

Having contact with friends

- I've got a lot of friends.
- Lots of friends that I've made here.
- Roof over my head. See my friends in this area.
- Because there is other kids here.
- Get to meet other kids in respite and know that she is not the only one in foster care.
- The best thing is living with family and going to a great school with lots of friends.
- Having other teenagers and being able to visit my Mum.
- Friends.
- Lots of children in nearby units.
- It's fun - kids to play with.
- Friend close by.
- Friends come over a lot.
- There are so many good things. When I feel bored I have friends next door to play with.
- Freedom - able to socialise with friends.
- Young people
- Friends.
- There is a girl in an adjoining house that I get on really well with.
- PS2, good good and good friends.
- All my friends live around me.
- Being able to visit my friends.
- ***** my friend is the best thing.
- Have other people here that are my age.
- Close to friends.
- Little kids.
- I get to go to school and meet my friends.
- Making new friends. Pets. Pool.

- “Cool and deadly” - get along with kids.
- There’s lots of people to play with.
- There are lots of kids to play with.
- People to have fun with.
- With the friend of mine.
- People to play with and never feel lonely.
- School and friends.
- Dogs to plays with and other kids to play with.
- Got people I can play with. Have no little kids annoying me.
- Being with friends.
- I have a friend next-door who I’ve known for 10 years.
- Peers living in the area.
- When I’m bored, I can play with people down the street.

Appreciates being placed in relative care

- Staying with my family.
- Living with Pop and Nan.
- With my brothers.
- With Grandma and Pop.
- I’m with my family.
- Live with grandparents and father. Own room. In care of grandparents. (2 responses)
- I get to live with relatives who understand me better than a foster carer. A good, clean and safe environment to grow up in with every facility needed available.
- My aunt.
- My Aunt & Uncle.
- That my mum is right next door and that I am with my own family.
- Living with my grandma. I don’t want to go back to my Mum.
- I’m living with family members.
- I’m with my sister.
- Living with my Nanna, being close to school and friends.
- I am with all my family (carers & siblings). Would like my littlest sister to be placed with us too.
- It’s with my family.
- I’m living with my grandparents.
- I get to be with my little sister and she is treated well.
- I get to be with Grandma.
- I am living with my aunty and uncle.

Family life

- Being with family.
- The people.
- We get to play with ***** (dog). We have Nan to look after us. We have an uncle to play hide from.
- The people - they respect each other
- All girls.
- No arguments, easy people to live with.
- Pool, living with other people.
- I have sister’s and we do stuff and yeah.
- I have people to do things with.
- Family and mates.
- Working with Dad around the yard and helping Mum in house.
- Have fun with the other kids - big family.
- More kids to play with. Good carer.
- It is a proper family environment.
- I can see my family, friends, and relatives.
- Having a family and having a life.
- With family.
- Family life.

Opportunities

- All the horses and being able to have a go at everything.
- Getting them out and seeing new things.
- I get to do my favourite sport.
- It helps you learn the living skills for when you move out into your own place and it’s fun.
- Getting out more and having more fun.
- In a good private school.
- Stable home. Goes to church and meets new people. Goes to a good private school.
- More fun and do more things.
- You get to go on trips and do activities - experience things you have never done in your life.
- Meeting people.
- Being allowed to have piano lessons and friends over etc.
- I am given opportunities.
- Getting responsibilities, getting treated like an adult.
- That I’m going to a good school. And that I’m doing tennis for once.
- I like going to school to learn.
- I like going to school.

Personal space

- Having my own personal space.
- I get more freedom than I used to - I get my own room.
- You get your own freedom. You're not in a family type thing - you're sort of independent.
- Is that I have a TV and my own room.
- Own room, privacy.
- Having the space to work more and have own things.
- Own room.
- Space.
- I don't know - good to have my own room.
- Because I have my own room.
- We get heaps of space.
- That I have my own space.

Food

- Good food (3 responses).
- The food. Going swimming.
- Nan's cooking.
- Get to eat whatever.
- Nice food.
- Food.
- Food.
- Get good food.

Pets

- Having a cute dog.
- I get to keep fish.
- Having my own cat.
- Pets and family.
- Likes the cats.
- My animals.
- The pets.
- My puppy.

Home life

- That I have a roof over my head.
- Having my own room. Having responsibilities. Feed the birds. Cook occasionally. Clean my room.
- Roof over my head.
- I'm comfortable.
- Room, hobbies, another YP i.e. an infant, pets.
- Staff are nice. Food. Other kids. Lots of activities.

Maintaining contact with biological family

- My visits. More with Mother and Father.
- I see my Mum, brothers and sister.

Nothing

- Nothing (9 responses).
- There isn't.
- Nothing - having the internet.
- Nothing much.
- Nothing good.
- Isn't one.
- "Too dead up here." Would like to go back to [regional location].
- Nothing. I get sick of living in this place.

Don't know

- Don't know (11 responses).
- I don't know (3 responses).
- I have no idea.
- Not sure. (2 responses)
- I can't think of anything at the moment.
- There really isn't one.
- Would not have a clue?
- I don't know - everything.

Other

- Independent living.
- Happy because I found Christ.
- Having a break from school.
- Because before I came into care I was playing the role of my Mum to my 2 younger sisters (6 months old and 2 years) and living here has let me be a teenager.
- I don't have to do a lot of work.
- Going to other people in the family, going out to places.
- Not much places to go - find your way around here - don't get lost.
- I like Mum being here too.
- Don't have to share with my family.
- I have known my carer before I started to live with her.
- I get to sleep on the top bunk.
- Have my own unit. There is not unreasonable rules. Sick of moving placements really enjoying living here.
- There are a lot of good things but can't think of any right now.
- That I get different carers everyday and that I have friends down the road.
- My little bro *****.
- Sometimes it's a really happy environment.
- Communication skills that I have learnt here - I get to go to basketball and other activities.

- I can do whatever I want.
- Outings in the bus to McDonalds. Staff are good.
- I can sleep in.
- ***** - a decent worker. She always smiles.
- I have a roof over my head, and I have a boyfriend who lives down the road, and I see him often.
- The workers.
- You don't have to pay the rent.
- Going out late night. Not a slave.
- No father.
- McDonalds's sometimes. Play.
- ***** cooking.
- I can look after myself.

Children

(Questionnaire 2, Question 31)

Support from carers

- Everything (6 responses).
- Getting treated fairly.
- I get heaps of cuddles.
- Living with *****.
- Getting stuff. New clothes.
- ***** is nice, fun, fair and cool.
- Family safe and care.
- Carer gives treats.
- ***** and ***** love me and care for us.
- I can play with plenty of toys, I got a remote control car for Christmas.
- Foster carer cooks some of my favourite foods like hot dogs, curried chicken and rice and fries and she will let me do stuff I listen to her.
- I am well looked after.
- Nanna loves and kisses me.
- Feels safe, can trust people.
- Mum is with me (carer).
- Animals and Nan and Pop and ***** and the Playstation and the river. (2 responses)
- I'm happy.
- I love this house and my family.
- We have been taught about eating vegetables and fruit.
- Really like all the people at the placement.
- When mum gives me icecream and yoghurt.
- We've got a good life here instead of the children's shelter.
- Go for a swim, eat chocolate and ice cream Flake.
- People love and care for us.
- Me loving my carer.
- How much I am loved.
- Having a loving and caring family.
- We have a home.
- They're nicer to me than last carers.
- Happy at placement lots of things to do.
- The carers look after all their children and family and they let us do things but not naughty stuff.
- Cause he's just likes everyone.
- Spending time with ***** (Carer).
- Carers talk to me a lot. Going out with carers.
- Love being with family.
- Being loved, my Grandma, getting spoilt, and big cat.

- We've got ducks and chickens and a Game Boy.
- Carer's cooking.
- Watch TV, treated properly.
- Protection.
- ***** (carer) loves us and takes care of us and feeds us.
- They look after me.
- Carers give me nice food and nice clothes.
- Because I love *****and *****.
- ***** gives us heaps of stuff, she's kind and she doesn't yell.
- Heaps of stuff.
- My carers.
- Mum love, videos.
- I've got my family to be with.
- Its good.
- Mum and Dad give us good food.
- Food, room, family.
- Living here, I like living here.
- Because I get treated well.
- There's a roof over my head.
- That we get recognised.
- Everybody is nice to me sometimes.
- My nanny.
- I love my Mum.
- Having a large backyard and lots of love, carer.
- Having clean house with a large background and love.
- My Mum is the best at playing pool. My Dad is the best at playing pool. I like the kitchen and food.
- To hug Mum and Dad when its bed time.
- Nice people.
- That we went to Sea World.
- I get a lot of help and support.
- I have other people to talk to. I feel safe here.
- My carer lets me play outdoors most of the day and I like it.
- I have a family who loves me.
- I feel safe and happy.
- Grandma or Grandad care about us. There's a pool.
- I have lots of toys and a special desk. I have Astar.
- Nan puts me in bed and I like going to the pool.
- That I have someone to take care of me.
- I get to do fun things here.
- Carer taking us places and loving us and being nice she doesn't smack.
- I have my own bed. I don't get hurt. Carer helps me.
- I usually get what I want like a soft drink when I'm out on a hot day or milkshake.
- A nice carer.
- A good place to be she looks after me.
- Everything is best, carer cooks good teas.
- Taking care of each other. ***** wakes me up in the morning.
- I'm allowed to do what we want. Not bad things. Aunty is very kind.
- Going to the shop and buying stuff.
- Because I'm into my family.
- She has friends she gets spoilt. Carers love her.
- My foster carers.
- Toys, mum, uncle, nan where we live.
- I love this home get looked after well.
- We are all together always treated nicely.
- Hugging Nanny and Poppy.
- I am looked after.
- Mum, Dad, ***** , ***** , ***** , they are my family.
- Everything. The dog, my TV, bunk beds.
- Going shopping and going to *****'s work.
- Because I love aunty ***** .
- My carer 'cause shes really nice and she took us to Dreamworld yesterday.
- Holidays with carers our dog, my room, cubby.
- Male carers name, big dogs, pool, toys.
- Getting presents I like and helping uncle ***** on the farm.
- Feeling safe and secure.
- Getting looked after by Nan and Pop and playing with friends down the road and my little sister.
- She takes me places.
- I can play, and carers are nice.
- I like everybody.
- *****'s just nice and Dad.
- That we are with people that love us.
- Look after me.
- ***** .
- Too many good things.
- Can eat our favourite foods.
- Christmas is good here.
- Get treated well and fair get some things we want.
- Don't always have to have dessert if we're good we may get an ice block.
- That my carer looks after me.

- My pool and my family and my puppy too.
 - Get spoilt.
 - Going for holidays.
 - I have the toys, bikes and stuff. The holidays.
 - Being safe. Carer is nice.
 - The people and the wildlife.
 - Good food, go to school, have toys.
 - The people.
 - Toys, food, looking after Mum and Dad.
 - Comfortable, safe, and good.
 - They're good fun.
 - Getting treated well.
 - There's too much stuff to list.
 - Nice family.
 - Doing things with my Nan.
 - "Mum and Dad, and all my family."
 - It is good being happy.
 - Mum gives us nice clothes, bags - with heaps of zips.
 - ***** is nice.
 - Playing with the kids and *****.
 - The carer is nice and cares for everyone.
 - Getting food and icecream.
 - ***** gives me nice clothes.
 - Get to go to the beach.
 - I'm always safe and there is enough food, and I don't have to worry about being kicked out.
 - No fights. Nice and quiet. Feel safe.
 - Being listened to and loved.
 - Safety.
 - Coming to live with my carer, she is nice.
 - I have everything I need.
 - Talking to ***** and *****.
 - They treat everyone the same at home.
 - Big bed, 2 other children, my teddies, and ***** and ***** (Carers).
 - Good food, can visit other family.
 - Get treated well. Have friends over.
 - You get to play a lot, you get to play with your dolls.
 - Get the best icecream here. This is the best house I've lived in. I've learnt things.
 - Everything. Watching TV.
- Lifestyle**
- Going in the pool. Riding on my bike.
 - TV (Foxtel) and the dog, the pool, the games, the Sony Playstation.
 - Its fun and I play with the dog.
 - Playing with football in the back yard.
 - Play computer, puppy dogs, ride bike, play at friends house, ride skateboard.
 - I get lots of play time.
 - Pool.
 - Playing. Lots of places to play.
 - Playing around the property. Things to do.
 - Love own bike and toys, scooter, trampoline, radio, go to school.
 - Get to go in pool, Playstation, toys, water gun, Game Boy, stereo and headphones and walkee talkee. I get to go to comp.
 - Play games, Playstation, kids to play with, play with dogs.
 - Great front yard with flowers.
 - My chickens and animals.
 - Patting horses and feeding them.
 - Ride bikes, play with my friends, footy and bike riding.
 - Playing football.
 - Playing, eating, sleeping.
 - Get to swim.
 - Playing games like Dragon Ball Z and riding my bike.
 - Having animals, seven chickens, two dogs, cats, cows.
 - Live close to the river, hunting for turtle, fish, goanna and bushturkey.
 - The swimming pool and the lizards.
 - Playing. (2 responses)
 - Playing with toys and playing dress up and getting dressed myself.
 - Having a big yard.
 - Because there's heaps of room can climb the tree, run around yard.
 - Playing with the bike and ball and bird.
 - Going for a swim.
 - We ride our bikes and go bike riding. And I like playing with my toys.
 - Playing with the dogs and riding the motor bike.
 - Feed the kangaroos next door and play games.
 - The creek.
 - That we got to go swimming.
 - Lots of outside things and a pool.
 - There is a pool. We can ride around the block.
 - Going to the park, going swimming.
 - Cool swimming hole, going to school.
 - Good food, Nanna, good kids to play with.
 - Riding scooters and pool.
 - Big yard.

- Making things in the shed.
- I get to ride my bike and climb trees.
- Swimming in the pool.
- Going swimming.
- Going and playing in the pool.
- Bike track.
- Pool, swimming and the babies (carer's grandchildren).
- Animals. (2 responses)
- Big yard.
- Skiing.
- Close to the beach.
- Football in backyard.
- Footy in backyard.

Having possessions or luxuries

- Water pistol and pool.
- Bikes and toy cars and motor bikes.
- All the toys in the toy box.
- The house.
- My bike.
- Bike (new one).
- Swimming pool.
- I like new DVD Shark Boy and Lava Girl.
- Have dress up clothes and toys.
- Get TV and DVD, room to myself, cool with air conditioner.
- Having a pool.
- There's a pool.
- Trampoline.
- I love swimming in our pool.
- Play on Nintendo.
- Get toys and go to Kmart.
- Treats and toys are given.
- Likes the swimming pool.
- Air con.
- Swimming in my pool.
- Having a Game Boy and Sky TV.
- Pool.
- Pool, pool table.
- My bike.
- My posters.
- We have a pool and air con.
- Going in pool.
- Having a Playstation and going on holidays and I get things that I need.
- TV in my room.
- Dog, computer, TV in room, DVD player in room, Nintendo/Playstation, chooks are mine.

- Getting toys especially Blockzones game.
- Toys.
- The pool. (2 responses)
- Playing Playstation, playing pool table.
- All my toys.
- Pool, spa, TV, computer and animals.
- Playstation 2.
- Computer, TV, food.
- My toys.
- Big TV, we get to watch cartoons and play Xbox.
- I get to play my Xbox.
- The swimming pool.
- Lots of toys.
- Playing tapes and CD's.
- Swimming pool.

Having contact with friends

- Playing, having his brothers with him.
- It is fun. Have friends around to play.
- A lot of kids here to play with.
- Lots of kids live here.
- Lots of other children live in this house and we all play together.
- Lots of other kids to play with at this house.
- Playing with my sister.
- Have friends to come and play.
- Having lots of friends.
- Having lots of kids in my family.
- Get take away, get to play with the other kids.
- Friends come to visit.
- Other kids to play with.
- ***** plays games with me.
- Well you meet new people and go to movies more often.
- I get to play with my friends, I can walk around the block.
- Nothing but I play with my friends.
- When my friends come over. We have more hiding spots than their house.
- Lots of children to play with.
- I have three other baby brothers and sisters.
- Living with the two boys.
- Living with two other boys.
- I have my friends close by and see my Grandma.
- Sleepovers with my friends.
- There are kids here.
- The best thing when I live here is that my bestest friend always will be there.
- Playing with my friends.

Home life

- Making things, playing, talking to ***** and *****.
- Watching cartoons, sleeping, clean up the house.
- Play room is good.
- Play room has computers and Sony Playstation.
- Doing jobs and earning pocket money. (2 responses)
- Because it is safe and there is peace and quiet here I can play blocks with my sister.
- Playing here.
- I can help play with the baby. They're fun to play with.
- Cooking, shopping, little brothers and sisters.
- Living in this house (new house).
- Playing and helping *****.
- Playing. (2 responses)
- Play games and play.
- Pets and people.
- Playing games on the TV.

Food

- Food (3 responses).
- We get fed good food.
- Food especially dessert.
- Chocolate.
- The food is yummy.
- Macaroni.
- I like the food.
- Chocolate.
- Eating.
- Nice food.
- The food.
- Having ice-cream.
- I get yummy food.

Pets

- Animals.
- The fishes and the puppies and the kittens.
- The dogs.
- Lizard.
- Guinea pigs.
- I like having pets, and I have lots to play with.
- I like the kittens.
- There are cats here.
- I get to play with the dogs.
- I might get a bird.

Personal space

- Have my own bedroom.
- Have my own room and it's safe here.

- My room.
- Having my own space.
- I have my own room.

Appreciates being placed in relative care

- I'm with my sisters.
- Being and playing with my sisters.
- Being with my little brothers.
- I am with my aunty and uncle.

Maintaining contact with biological family

- Seeing Dad all the time.
- Seeing Nan and Pop.
- Seeing my sister.
- I visit my mum.

Opportunities

- Going on holidays.
- Get to help fix the car, get to help *****.
- Holidays, going away.
- Everything especially my trip to [Overseas location].

Family life

- Got a pet and mum and dad and family.
- ***** and Nanna.

Nothing

- Nothing. (2 responses)
- Nothing is good here.

Don't know

- I don't know (7 responses).
- Don't know (4 responses).
- Not sure.
- Can't think.
- I can't think of anything. (2 responses)

Other

- Wearing *****'s shoes. I like having a cuddle at bedtime.
- I like it.
- Going to movies.
- *****.
- Sometimes we go outside and sit at the table.
- I like face paints.
- Seeing my friend from across the world.
- I can sleep on the couch.
- Verandah.
- The cat and eating cake.
- Watching TV.
- *****'s and Sugarworld.
- Eating ice cream and school.

- I know my way around the place, I know the people that live next door, I don't get lost.
- Get to sleep under fans.
- No kicking the walls.
- Playing on my trampoline.
- Playing on the trampoline.
- Watching Disney. Little Einstein is my favourite show.
- Lots of rules - the police think it's a good idea.
- Don't have to look after ***** (brother) all of the time only some of the time.

What would you most like to see improved or changed to make your placement better?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 34)

Home improvements

- Pool (7 responses).
- New rooms. (2 responses)
- A bigger house.
- Change my bedroom into living room.
- I want a big bedroom.
- Happy as it is but would like my room a bit bigger but I'm happy with it.
- A bigger yard, a big pool, cleaner gardens, a slippery slide for the pool.
- Make the walls more decorated. Have a wider screen TV - even bigger than the one we have.
- House with air con.
- Air con.
- The size of the house. Wish it was bigger. More of my own space.
- A bigger house, my own room.
- We're in a small house - 3 boys stuck in one room, us girls share a bedroom. We're getting the carport turned into a bedroom for us 2 girls.
- Way the house looks, no spiders outside.
- A bigger house with my own room. More privacy.
- Bigger bathroom or more bathrooms.
- I would like to see my room a bit bigger and more space as well.
- Get extensions done.
- The whole house - we are renovating.
- Have the renovations finished.
- Change the cracks in the wall.
- Have a better room. I get bored. I need an air conditioner. I get hot in there.
- More rooms.
- The jet skis gone. They are in my way when I play tiggly.
- A bigger house would be good, because we are all bigger now, and there isn't much space for everyone.
- Bigger backyard so I could really kick the ball around.
- More bedroom space.
- Yard could do with a bit of grass.

Possessions or luxuries

- A new dog collar.
- More money.
- A quad bike to use for recreational and farm use.
- YP indicated he would like his own Playstation and games.
- Bigger TV.
- I'd like a trampoline in the backyard.
- Air conditioning.
- Allowance.
- Get a pool.
- Pool. Air-conditioning.
- Not enough TV's. (2 responses)
- Motorbike.
- Would like to get more pocket money.
- Nothing, just air conditioning.
- To get more toys.
- Bigger bed.
- I would like a swimming pool.
- Swimming pool.
- We are saving up for an inground pool.
- Having a phone.
- I would like a swimming pool. I would like a skateboard and ramps and a cricket pitch.
- I would like a car but Child Safety will not help.
- Swimming pool. Toys.
- A swimming pool or Playstation.

Improved relationships within family

- Have one of my brothers start help and being a part of this family and not always trying to be hard to get along with.
- Fight with sister.
- Discipline of youngest child in care.
- For my Mum to get on with everyone.
- Don't want ***** here and ***** stop laughing so much.
- ***** not be such a sped and not be such an asshole.
- Everyone get treated the same.
- Communication between everyone improve. Less tension between everyone.
- I would like one boy here to be a lot nicer.
- "***** not being nasty to me - he blames for things. I hate his music - well some of it, and he has it loud although he doesn't do it all the time" "It makes me embarrassed."
- Kids telling kids to shut up. Not being grounded for so long.
- Not so much yelling between the kids.

- ***** to be nicer to me and his brother.
- That we get help for anger management and depression and healthy relationships.
- To have no problems with my family!!!
- Little sister to behave.
- Little children don't get so spoiled.
- At times, I get frustrated with my younger brother.
- More cooperation between young family members tidying up after us.
- Older foster brother to not annoy her.
- To be treated fairly like the other two girls.
- Sister's behaviour.

Personal space

- Own room (14 responses).
- A new room. A PeeWee50.
- Sometimes wants a different bedroom.
- A cupboard.
- A tidier bedroom partner, more privacy.
- I would like to change my bedroom. And have another foster child same age as me. I'm turning 12.
- More room. Separate space for other people to be.
- A different room.

Another child in placement

- Having another family member.
- At least one other guy around I am placed with three girls.
- A kid my own age.
- A child younger than me living with me.
- Someone my own age living here too.
- Have kids my age. To bring all my other stuff from home and not have the other kids touch it.
- Maybe another boy here.
- And have another foster child same age as me. I'm turning 12.
- More boys in care.
- Nothing. I like it how it is. I would like a playmate my age.
- Everything. I'm lonely here. I'd like someone my age to be here.
- Have a girl in care around my age living at out house.
- I would like some kids to stay here with me.

Better peer relationships

- I don't get bashed up and I get treated well.
- Other kids kinder towards her.
- Stop getting yelled at by the other children.

- People not bashing me (another child). Carer stops them.
- Other kids fight with me sometimes.
- Sometimes other kids annoy me.
- Nothing - one or other children to quit whinging.
- No bullies.
- Other kids stop bossing me around.
- Other kids being nicer.

More parental contact

- Spend more time with Mum and Dad.
- Seeing Mum more.
- Visit Mum more often.
- Seeing Mum and Dad a bit more.
- Stable visits with Mother that happen in a routine, same time all the time.
- I would like Mum to stay here. I would like my own bed and my own bedroom.
- I like to have mum at home. She works too much.
- Go home each weekend at least one day.
- I want to see my Mum more.
- That I can stay with my Mum more often.

Reunification

- Happy with everything but would like to be with mum and dad.
- My mum living with me.
- Nothing other than live with my Mum. I want my brother always with me.
- I would rather move home.
- I would like to live with Dad not in a motel.
- I just want to get out of here - *****. I want to live back with my mother.
- Want to go home to Mum.
- To go home.
- Live with my Mum.
- Nothing - want to live at Mum's.
- Sometimes I want to go back to live with Dad.

More contact with friends

- Being able to go out and see my mates more.
- Going out more with my friends.
- Have more kids come and stay.
- I want to go out with my friends more.
- To let me have friends and let me out and see them.
- Allowed to visit other young persons on the site. House rules.
- I would like to go to my friends' houses more often especially after school.

- I wish I could have more friends over.

Self-improvement

- No - just my behaviour.
- Clean up a bit more - me - I should.
- Bit more discipline 'cause I'm getting a bit cheeky and arguing with girls.
- Me being good.
- That I not have a bad attitude.
- My rules, but I deserve them! (Long story).
- More therapy and making my life go better, becoming a psychologist.
- I would just get along with everybody a lot better and keep smiling.

To be treated differently

- They should treat you like a person - some do - some don't - don't like being treated like textbook description of your illness.
- Less parental-care. Too much - worry too much.
- More trust.
- The treatment between me and my foster brother.
- Carer to stop picking on me about little things.
- The rules.
- Me getting treated like I'm supposed to be.
- That I could have my own phone and less rules and make them stop treating me like a kid.

Pets

- Like a dog.
- Another pet.
- If I could keep one of the kittens and call it *****.
- A pet which is a kangaroo.
- New dog.
- A dog or Dodge Viper.
- Would like a dog (have had pets in the past).
- A pony.

Carer to have guardianship

- The guardianship to be hurried up by DChS.
- I would like to grow up here and not have my family involved in my life.
- Having a good life I would like to stay here because they are like my parents.
- That I stay here 'till I'm 18 - the Dept. leave me alone - and the carers get guardianship.
- If this place was long term & I could stay for a couple of years.
- I want my carers to be able to have guardianship of me.
- Being adopted by my carer.

More family contact

- More family contact.
- More visits with my family.
- See my family more often.
- My sister back.
- More family visits.
- To have my younger brother be able to speak to us or better live with us.
- To always go and sleep at my Mum's and see my little brother and sister.

To live in a different location

- More ways of getting into town.
- I want to live in the country and not in the town.
- Don't like the area.
- Live closer to town. (2 responses)
- Move into town.
- Home is a bit far from town - have to drive for half an hour to get anywhere - have to get up early to get to school on time.

More leisure activities

- More outings and entertainment.
- Like to go bike riding down street with adult.
- Not enough to do here.
- My TV hours. My Pop do more activities with me.
- Nothing to do, very small country town. Only other YP his age.
- More sporting activities.

Change of carers

- Not to be here.
- Some of the carers to be less violent towards me; like to be able to go home; be able to get my shopping without complaints from workers; air conditioning - room is very hot.
- For me to get a real family. I don't wanna live like this.
- Get rid of a carer.
- New carers. More carers. The carers to be more organised.
- Different carers.

Independence

- Prefer to live alone.
- Freedom. (2 responses)
- I would like to be out of the Dept's care. I want to just be a regular kid, and not have to ask them for anything.
- Doing my own things. Don't need carers all the time. Want my own house.

Money or resources from Department

- The Department paying the carer more money.
- More money to finish my own granny flat from the DCHS.
- The pay payment for foster carers is poor, very poor. They do so much and get so little in return.
- Need some more furniture - CSO is in the process of organizing this.
- I want the Department to pay for the rent so we have more money for other stuff - but we still can afford the rent.

Less children in placement

- Less boys at facility. Young person indicated sometimes 'the boys are annoying.'
- Less other children to be placed here.
- Less kids - sometimes can't cope with noise.
- Less kids.

Support for carer

- I would like my carer to be happy and not so stressed.
- Carer under less stress.
- Happier environment. Payment to my carers.
- Payment to my carers.

Support from carer

- Support from Uncle ***** (carer). More support.
- Bit more respect from the carers.
- We get to spend more time with the carers.
- Carer being at home a bit more often.

Action from Department.

- Some co-operation from the Dept. They still owe money for my school camp from last April.
- Have things done faster by the department.
- Care to stop taking young children.

Order in household

- House not run properly - youth workers don't do washing.
- We get to spend more time with the carers. And things should be handled properly. And when people get in trouble the carer should stick to it 'cause then they think they can get away with it.
- Would like to be alone in a house with carer. Some house rules enforced.

Nothing

- Nothing (243 responses).
- No (9 responses).
- Happy (6 responses)
- None (3 responses).
- I'm leaving here soon.

- I'm fine.
- It's fine.
- Everything is really good.
- I wouldn't want to change anything.
- All fine.
- Good how it is.
- Just the way it is.
- No I don't need to see any change.
- Don't think there's anything to be changed.
- No improvement necessary
- All perfect the way it is.
- No response - placement meets needs.
- Nothing needs to be changed (Mum says, fix the air con!!)
- Can't think of anything I'd want to change.
- I can't think of anything.
- Everything is very well.
- Everything here is just fine.
- I like the place the way it is - I love it.
- I like it the way it is.
- Everything good.
- It is all perfect.
- Nothing - except me having a motor bike.
- Don't need improvement.
- No it's fine. Everything's perfect.

Don't know

- Don't know (26 responses).
- Not sure (6 responses).
- No response. (2 responses)
- Can't think of anything. (2 responses)
- Nothing.
- I don't know. I'd like a monster truck.

Other

- My grades.
- For ***** to be nice to me all the time.
- Bike fixed. Been broken for a while (carer told CV previously that he was getting a new bike for birthday).
- Someone that has a horse.
- Maybe having a choice of carers.
- More activities - only child in care with older carer.
- Would like to go to respite home more.
- That the foster kids get to be a part of all talks.
- Not being forced to play clarinet.
- Dirt.
- Don't clean so much and have more fun.

- More youth hours and days with youth workers because they rock.
- More take-away food.
- Everything.
- ***** getting better and changing his act.
- More time to myself.
- Not have a carer with you when you visit your family or when you see friends.
- The fact that my carer respects that I like stay in my room.
- Nothing. Stop community visitors.
- Let the people grow a brain, get organised and stop speaking shit.
- Adults not to smoke.
- Only a wrestling ring.
- I wish I could read better, and know more maths.
- More time to sleep.
- Equal turns on the computer so that we all don't fight a lot.
- Now that I'm going back home I feel this isn't my permanent home.
- Everything.
- Sack ***** (worker).
- Not get hit by ***** and *****.
- Different work instead of fruit picking. Working towards Apprenticeship in mechanics.
- Not having to answer stupid surveys.
- Lollies all day.
- By being happy all the time.
- To be rich.
- For her to go back to the way she used to be.
- Have school food.

Do you have to do things, such as see people or go to meetings, or other things, that you don't want to do?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 49)

"A lot" responses with comments

- I had to go to the counsellor or play therapist I did not want to do that.
- I don't want to see Mum but the Dept are making me.
- Doctors, counsellors.
- No. (2 responses)
- "Meetings - at the Department. I wish that could change."
- Don't want to go to Child Youth Mental Health.
- They say we have to.
- I never want to see my other mum and dad.
- Have to go to counselling.
- Counselling, appointments etc.

"A fair bit" responses with comments

- I had to visit my mother in order to go visit aunty at [regional location]. I had to attend anger management course.
- Not this admission - but in the past admissions CYMHS made me see a worker I didn't want to see over a few months.
- Previous CSO.
- Have to get permission to do everything.
- I did like going to them until I was sick of being disappointed.
- Talking to people.
- Music lesson.
- Counselling - had to go but didn't want to.
- I see anger management, counselling and CSO.
- At school I go to meetings.
- I felt forced to attend family counselling against my wishes. I was coerced to go to a course but refused.
- I have to see Nanna every time the Dept says I have to. I don't like seeing Nanna.
- Meetings. I hate meetings, I feel so awkward.
- If I say I don't want to see someone they say tough you have to.
- Like respite, and not seeing my family.
- Like respite too.
- Go to school.

- But it is the best for me.
- As you know, I'm happy. I don't want to see the CSO - I'm happy.
- Don't want to go to the Dept office and wait to go to other places, wait ages.
- Most of it's fun but not all.

"Not much" responses with comments

- I hate the Bible camps.
- If I have to go I do.
- I don't need or want to go to meetings.
- Don't really want CSO coming here.
- Make my own decisions.
- Department family meeting.
- I have never been to any meetings yet.
- I don't get made to do things that I don't want to do.
- I don't like phoning the Dept.
- Sometimes they don't want to go on family visits but the Dept makes me.
- I saw a Child Therapist for about 6 weeks.
- Meetings.
- Because I now stand up for myself and only do the things I want to do.
- Only thing don't want to do is see Mum.
- Doesn't want to see real Mum.
- I don't need it at all.
- Sometimes.
- It's annoying.
- No. (3 responses)
- CSO usually comes to me.
- Except for going to a solicitor & I missed school.
- When we have to go to court or the police station.
- If I don't want to see them I don't have to go.
- I used to I don't go now.
- I used to - not so much now.
- At aunt's I did but not here. They're not as religious here so we don't go to church as much.
- At school - when teachers ask you out of class because I'm targeted as a foster child.
- At school - when teachers and guidance officer ask you out of class I'm targeted as a foster child.
- Sometimes it depends on what things they are.
- Fun to see my Mum again.
- Seeing Mum during school sports wasn't very good. I had to go to the police station too - it was terrible.
- It doesn't bother me.

“Not at all” responses with comments

- I don't go.
- I don't have to do any of that stuff.
- YP states that they have never attended meeting.
- But I want to.
- Carers don't make me do what I don't want to - meetings are OK.
- Except for going to school.
- No. (2 responses)
- My carer does it for me.
- Depends what they do. I can go to movies, skating or sleepovers. We treat aunty as mum.
- Never.
- Nanna always comes with me as I don't trust adult people.
- Given choice.
- I told them I don't want to and they listened.
- I do things eg. Meeting I like to be involved.
- The Department doesn't make us see our biological parents.
- The Department doesn't make me see my biological parents.
- If I don't want to, I don't have to.
- Nobody can make me do anything I don't want to.
- If I have a meeting and I don't want to I just say I don't want to go .
- I don't really do those things.
- I just don't do it.

Provided comments only

- Sometimes (8 responses).
- Don't get that question.
- I've never been to a meeting before.
- Want to see my old carer.
- Only school.
- I don't do things I don't want to do.
- Yes - when we go to counselling, we have to go.
- Yes.
- I hate having to go to counselling - it's dumb - I hate the office.
- Sometimes I have to go and I don't want to.
- I've never been to a placement meeting - I like to have a say.
- I don't like attending the family meeting because I think that is up to the family to work out.
- I don't know.
- I don't mind.
- Don't know. (2 responses)

- No. Happy to have the meetings.
- No.
- Not sure.
- I had to have contact with my father and his family because the Department said so.

Children

(Questionnaire 2, Question 42)

“Yes” responses with comments

- Sometimes (3 responses).
- Sometimes I get bored.
- Shops scare the birds off.
- Sometimes Mum.
- Used to go to this place at [NGO service provider] sort of like counselling.
- I have to go everywhere.
- Mothers boyfriend *****. (2 responses)
- Counselling.
- Psychologists.
- Shopping he doesn't like it much.
- Sometimes I became bored during contact especially when we had to go to the department.
- Go to the dentist.
- To the Department.
- Don't want to visit Nana but have to because I have to look after my little sister.
- Doesn't like going to visits sometimes.
- Made to visit Mum when I didn't want to go.
- The dentist. Don't want to be with CSO on visits with Mum and Dad.
- Sometimes his Dad on phone.
- Don't want to go to grade four and five.
- Sometimes I want a break from seeing my grandmother.
- I don't like going to the doctors.
- My cousin.
- Just when we had to go and write a card to Dad at the Dept.
- Was taken by Dept and made write out a card for father.
- I had to go to mums on school days, I missed out on special things at school, making Xmas presents.
- To daycare.
- Like to go to access.
- Sometimes I don't want to go to access with parents.
- Like counselling.
- I had to go to Nanny and Poppy. See Mummy too much.
- I had to go and stay at *****'s (other carer) because I wanted to stay with my Nan.
- I have to clean up my room.
- My Dad is a bit mean to me.

- People I don't know.
- Especially respite.
- I don't like going to the Department meeting.
- Sometimes when I go to respite.
- Because it's boring.
- The Department.
- *****.
- Church every week, kid's club (with church).
- Shopping - it's boring.
- Sometimes I want to stay at home and play.
- I don't feel like going back to seeing my Dad.
- ***** and *****'s.
- Sometimes I have to go to peoples' places I don't want to.
- Visits with Mum at Park.
- Sometimes (CS).
- Just family stuff. Counselling.

“No” responses with comments

- I go to things.
- The carer listens to me if I don't want to see my family.
- Everything's OK except I hate ***** to death.
- Very happy in current placement.
- Get more help with things.
- I don't like to clean my room but granny makes me.
- Have to go to the park on Sunday when I don't want to.
- When I went to see dad it upset me and my carer made sure I didn't have to go again.
- Visits with Mum.
- I don't know.
- We mostly stay home.
- This is my home, I've lived here most of my life.
- Not all the time.

Provided comments only

- Don't know (16 responses).
- I don't understand the question.
- Not super don't want to do counselling.
- Pass on this question.
- If I don't want to see people I don't think I should have to, but sometimes I have to.
- Sometimes.
- I want to go everywhere
- Mmm nowhere.
- Maybe.

Young children

(Questionnaire 3, Question 24)

"Yes" responses with comments

- Child was made to attend visits that were not in the child's best interest. Dept pushed too fast and this affected the child's physical and emotional state.
- Has been forced into family contact, crying and screaming.
- Because of his age he would rather play than go - this would be age appropriate.
- Sometimes.
- Sometimes to visitations, but we make him go.
- Every time they have contact with mother they seem to go very distant for a time after. (2 responses)
- Starting to show signs of distress following contact with mum, including diarrhoea.
- I feel seeing parent is upsetting for him. Has started to self harm himself ie. Hits head on walls.
- He would prefer not to go on family visits.
- Contact with maternal grandmother & mother.
- Cries when entering or seeing Dept of Families building.
- Sometimes gets very upset when he has a 2 hour visit.
- Hated day care. DChS wanted the social interaction.
- Family visits.
- Parents. (2 responses)
- Doesn't want to see mother, comments made to CV.
- Hospital appointments. Sometimes visits with mum.
- Sometimes respite or events but has to go for own good.
- Go with the people for reunification who ever turns up on the day.
- Occasionally the child is unhappy about contact visits.
- Made to see family that she doesn't want to.
- A visit with dad - first ever meeting in a high security jail. Dad now out of jail, no contact whatever. Just that one unnecessary visit.
- A jail with her father 12 months ago - in high security - first time she had seen her dad. Dad now out & no contact at all.
- Sent to ***** in school holidays, did not want to go (play up) last year. No more.
- Speech therapy.
- Not people, but was absolutely traumatised by being picked up by people he didn't know - CSO seemed not to care - is fine now.
- The natural mother's "boyfriend" is present at contact visits, and this upsets the child "I don't like...". Child does not enjoy the 4 hours driving for contact visits - gets car sick and very tired.
- Where serious child abuse has been involved, and the child still has to see the perpetrator.
- Lengthy travel for visits makes tired child - not happy to go to day care as ordered.
- Did not want to continue family visits when we knew she was being sexually molested and abused, but the Dept said they had to continue visits.
- Had to visit family when didn't want to go, as she came home abused again and sexually molested as well - the department threatened us to continue visits.
- Dislikes visiting parent when grandparent interferes.
- She has voiced her concern that she fears the foster carer who has her siblings, because of seeing their ideas of discipline. However, the Dept. still wants her to go out to their house, even when they have heard of her fears.
- Every family visit - currently 7 per month - is too many. They scream hysterically when collected, and are clingy when returned.
- This (child?) has at the moment been stalked by the psychologist at ***** - CSO (will) not believe me.
- A counsellor.
- At 8 months, child at times is unsettled during/ after access visits.
- Hates doctors - has seen many, and been in hospital very ill.
- Mother's boyfriend, who all the children dislike, and state they don't want to see their mum if he is there.
- Hospital visits, but they are necessary.
- As above mentioned I guess.
- Has fortnightly visits with natural mother, and doesn't want to go but has to.
- He does not want to see the Community Visitor.
- Access visits frequently - child very stressed, separation anxiety.
- Doesn't like contact - does not sleep, agitated, clingy, and sometimes 'sickly'.
- Parental contact - he gets visibly upset about going in Dept car.

- Parents contact. I get bitten and kicked when placing this child in the Department car to go to visit his parents.
- In the end, they did not like access visits, but DChS required them to go.
- Child is forced to see mother and father.
- Does not want to see other siblings sometimes.
- Family access is very hard for her.
- Doesn't like visits with mother. Comes home stressed and agitated.
- This child has been taken to contact visits with a relative unknown to him for 2 years. The child was clearly uncomfortable and upset. I would have thought including the carer for initial visits would have helped.
- The child has been taken to family contact screaming and crying the whole way, and verbalising that she did not want to go.
- She still cries and clings to me [date] when she is to go on a visit with their grandmother and aunt. I had been taking them to visit, but gran and aunt wanted to see her without me. Her crying and clinging was not taken into account when they decided to send her on visits without me. At 2, I believe she should be taken to visit not sent if she is still crying. It's supposed to be for her benefit.
- He has settled now, but for a time was upset about seeing his father.
- She is too small to say but regresses in behaviour frequently.

"No" responses with comments

- I do not force him to do anything he doesn't want to, I encourage others not to force him as well.
- She doesn't mind seeing her sisters
- Child visit sibling and preschool and dancing school.
- Took a long time to get the Medicare card & current CSO was most active in getting the card.
- Although preferred to stay with us, rather than go to respite, but once there is okay.
- Visits she is not keen on.
- She can say if she does not want to, and this is respected.
- I like to see my Aunty.
- If by first experience child displays inappropriate behaviour after visit, then review will be made.
- ***** can not speak and I make decisions for her with help from registered nurse.

"Not applicable as child is too young" responses with comments

- We had different opinions in regards to safety with parent.
- Not old enough.
- Too many disabilities.
- Child very attached to carers.
- Still manage to have nightmare after visit with parent.
- Some contact sessions difficult for her.
- Ums and ahs a lot about visits.
- However, this child has a negative reaction to supervised contact with family.
- Not applicable as child is too young/disability
- Child care 2 days per week from 12 months of age inappropriate.

Provided comments only

- Yes. Sit at the department for hours waiting for contact, when no one would show up.
- We usually work something out.
- Intellectually impaired.
- Yes, when child has been sick - CSO did not care.
- Child has had no contact
- Seem to have enjoyed everything. (2 responses)
- Gets very upset and/or angry after visits where natural mother is, even though presently non-existent.
- Too young.
- ***** can not speak I make decisions for her, and with help from registered nurse.

Are you able to see your family as much as you would like?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 57)

“Yes” responses with comments

- I never get to see my brothers and I always see my ma and sister.
- Lives with grandmother, brothers.
- I am going back home soon.
- Every week for two days. (2 responses)
- I see mum every weekend and I see Dad every school holidays.
- The same or more - mum moving closer - never met my real dad.
- They live in [regional location] but are moving closer so I might see more - don't really care.
- Can see whenever.
- This is my family.
- But I don't want to see my Mum as much.
- Choose not to.
- But choose not to!
- No I don't see them.
- Don't want to see family.
- Don't want to see them.
- But I want to see my parents and have not seen them since I came into care.
- I live with them.
- I live with Nan and Pop.
- I don't know them (extended family).
- I see them when it is time to see them.
- I live with my Nanna and two brothers.
- I live with my grandparents.
- Don't see my father. Living with my grandparents.
- See my Mum but not my father. I live with my grandparents.
- Now I get to see my Dad.
- I really want to see them more.
- No don't get to see them.
- On my mum's side but I don't want to on my dad's side. I don't like them.
- Don't want to see them at all.
- Maybe would like to see them more but Dad works.
- When they come to visit.
- I really miss my family.
- No. (2 responses)
- I go when the rest of the family goes.
- Sort of.
- I see them as much as I like at the moment.
- I have never met my Dad and I would like to, one day, kind of.
- I can see them whenever I want.
- We get to see Mum when we want to.
- I don't really want to see her more than once per month.
- Weekly visits.
- Stay at my stepdad's sometimes.
- I want to see them every day but I know I can't.
- Dad's in jail, don't want to see Mum, don't see brother but want to.
- Doesn't want to see Dad. Sees Mum enough.
- No contact.
- I don't want much contact.
- Cause I don't want to see them.
- Because I don't want to see them.
- My foster family would allow me if I would like I believe.
- Yes ***** is organising it.
- I'm happy with seeing them every 3 or 4 months. I still love my other Mum and my brother and sister.
- Some family in NSW - need permission to see them.
- Saw mother and grandmother.
- However don't want to see my Mum.
- I don't want to talk to some of my family members, or see them.
- I don't want to see my biological parents, but I sort of want to see my little sister who lives with another carer.
- I don't see them (biological parents). I am going to start seeing my infant sister.
- I choose not to see them.
- I don't want to see them, but sometimes I run into them at the shops and I don't want to.
- N/A
- I would like to see my brother more.
- Dad lives near by, mum passed away 2004.
- I can ask for it to be arranged and it usually will be.
- I don't want to see Mum and I don't have to see my sisters.
- I don't want to see my Mum but my Dad, brother and sister yes, I'd like to see them.

- I live with them!! [Child's "carer" is his Grandma but one parent lives in the home also].
- I like to see them every week which is good.
- Not concerned about seeing family.

"No, I have to see them more than I want" responses with comments

- Every day - only see them 1-2 times a week.
- I love seeing my sisters, I just don't like seeing my Mum as much as I do.
- I see my mother and sisters, want to see my sisters and brother.
- I never want to see them, (except my little sister).
- No I don't want to - my sister's a cow at the moment.
- I love seeing my Grandfather but I'm not so keen seeing my Mum. I would really like to see my Dad.
- Don't want to see them. (2 responses)
- I want to see them more often cause I miss them.
- Used to travel every month to see my brother (for 2 years).
- Child safety don't allow it.
- Depends on Dept.
- I don't like them.
- I would like to see my Dad more.
- I had to go there once and I didn't want to but they made me.
- I am happy not to see them.
- Because they're in [interstate location].
- I would rather see them once a quarter and not monthly.
- I don't want to see them.
- My Mum too much. My Nana and brother and sister not enough.

"No, I don't get to see them enough" responses with comments

- No contact (4 responses).
- I would like to see my brother and sister more.
- I haven't seen mum in last 2 weeks.
- I would like to see them more.
- My brother only - do not want to see any other family member.
- I would like to see my brothers and sisters.
- I never see them even though I would like to. My mum doesn't get along with my extended family.
- I want to see sisters, ***** but do not want to see Mum - would like a plan in place to visit *****.

- They never come around or anything.
- I can't visit them all the time. I can't go to my Mum's home at all.
- Visiting hours are too short and restrictive over school holidays.
- Mother only visited here once in a year.
- Only get to see my brothers and Mum. Want to see my grandparents and sisters.
- I only have 1 day per week per parent. Would like 2 days with each parent.
- I would like to see them every day - only see them twice a week.
- I don't want to see them.
- As I would like to.
- Want to see my brother more.
- Which and what family?
- I don't get to see them at all.
- Rather be with them all the time.
- Like to see brothers and sisters.
- Would like to see sister more to help her get used to being around.
- Is getting more but would like to have more.
- I would like to see them more.
- Because my Mum is not always contactable.
- No contact.
- Would like to see grandparents but the Dept won't let me.
- Dad don't want to see everyone else more.
- Sometimes wants to see siblings more. Doesn't want to see Mum at all.
- I would love to be with them all the time.
- Haven't seen siblings for 2 years.
- I see Dad but not Mum.
- YP's mother and siblings have moved interstate.
- I never see my family. I would like to see them heaps.
- Sometimes Mum doesn't come to the access meeting.
- Like to see Mum and younger siblings more.
- Because of money - can't get down there.
- I want to see them more - all my brothers and sisters are in care (8 of them).
- Would like to see them a bit more.
- Live in [interstate location] - Dept won't pay for me to visit them.
- Don't get to see Mum as much as I like.
- It's all f**ked up.
- Because my little brother and sister live far away from me.

- I don't get to see them at all. Dept can't find them all.
 - I want to see them more often.
 - They live in [rural/remote location].
 - See Mum but not brother.
 - Some family members live far away.
 - I don't get to see them enough. I would like to see my natural parents, I don't get to see them ever.
 - I would like to see "mum", former foster carer - more.
 - The Department doesn't pay for them to visit.
 - Cause my mum won't let me see them without her there too.
 - It's because I'm so busy with other things like work and dancing.
 - I don't see my grandpa much now because he is caring for my mum.
 - I want to see Mum and cousins.
 - I can only see my dad, not my mum or brothers/sisters.
 - It's not their fault - more organisation would help - i.e. from carers.
 - I think once a fortnight is so slack and I would love to see Mum and the rest once a week at least.
 - I want to see my Nan. (2 responses)
 - Would like to travel to see them more than once a year.
 - I can't see my sister any more because she left.
 - Not without Dept's permission.
 - They never let me see them as much as I want and they change what they first say.
 - I see my brothers enough but not the rest of my family.
 - Want to see Mum more as she's very upset at the moment.
 - Never get to see them.
 - My little sister (also in care).
 - Mum and Dad.
 - They're in [interstate location] (parents). Haven't seen brothers since year 4. It's unfair 'cause they're not in care and I am.
 - Never see them.
 - I never get to see them (the family I want to, my bro), my Dad won't let me.
 - Want to see them more.
 - Only 2 visits per year.
 - I want to see them more.
 - Because I am busy and have a job. I see them on special occasions.
 - Sometimes.
 - I would to see my family more.
 - Want to see Mum and Dad more.
 - Mum, big brother, big sister, little brother.
 - Little brother, cousins.
 - Only see mum 3 times a year, because she lives up north.
 - I would like to see mum and dad more.
 - I want to find my cousins and Aunties, and Uncles, and Nanna and Pop when I grow up.
 - I never get to see my family because they live so far away.
 - Distance too far.
 - I want to see them.
 - Arrangements not always followed through by other parties involved.
 - No.
 - I don't get to see my brothers enough, and my mum.
 - I don't get to see my mum enough. I haven't seen her for 11 weeks. Dept was screwing up transportation.
 - I want to see my family 3 hours or more, a few times a week.
 - The Dept don't ring my carer and tell her if they cancel home visits.
 - I see mum enough - don't get to see my sister.
 - I don't see or talk to my little brother at all.
 - Far distance.
 - I don't get to see Mum at all but I get to see my brother and sister.
 - Mum doesn't turn up enough.
 - They don't want anything to do with me so that tells a lot.
 - I want my sisters to come over more often.
 - I wish I could more than once a week.
 - I mainly organise them myself.
 - Only my brother I wanna see.
 - I am not allowed to stay at my uncle's house.
 - Want to live with Mum.
 - Haven't seen Mum and Dad since last Sept/Oct.
-
- Provided comments only*
-
- No contact (3 responses).
 - Don't want to see them (4 responses).
 - I don't see family (N/A)
 - I don't see any family.
 - Not sure.
 - I don't have contact with my original family. That's what I want.

- I don't know.
- No comment.
- I don't see them - I don't want to see them.
- Not when they are drunk.
- Never see them but that is OK.
- Don't want to see family.
- No contact - I prefer this.
- I don't want any contact with my Mum.
- I don't see them at all.
- I do want to see my family but don't.
- The child does not want to see his natural family.
- Declined to comment.
- We visit Dad at [rural/remote location] - once a month.
- They come and visit me.
- Other family in [regional location] I would like to see sometimes.
- They live in [interstate location] and Mum rang for my birthday but never sent me a present even for Christmas.
- I don't really care about seeing my family.
- No I don't see them at all. I want to see my little brother but Mum won't give in.
- I don't want to. She would probably try to take me.
- No I don't see them. They are in [regional location].
- I do not want to see my Mum and her boyfriend.
- No don't get to see them.
- Child does not want to talk about her family.
- Wishes not to have contact with mum. But is desperate to have contact with sister.
- No I don't want to.
- I have no contact. I never wanted to see them. Except my sister who still lives with me.
- Yes - my mum & uncles & aunties.
- I hate them.
- I don't want to see them never ever.
- No - I don't want to see them.
- Not at all.
- I don't want to see my family.
- Have not seen my Mum or Dad since I came into care.
- I would like to see my brother more.
- I don't want to see them. (2 responses)
- Has made a decision that she doesn't want to see biological family.
- I don't know.
- I don't have any.
- Don't really want to.
- Is this biological parents? I don't know if I want to see them. YP identifies foster family as 'family'. Haven't seen them since 7 - not at all.
- Never.
- Don't want to see.
- I like to see Father more, hard with Mum.
- Normally I just go when I want to. (Regular contact visits.) - Child has choice about attendance.
- They ring me all the time it's annoying.
- I don't WANT to see them ever.
- I'm not sure.
- The amount of time I see them now is alright for me.
- No comment.
- I see my brother and sisters.
- No I have to see them more than I want - Mum/Stepdad/Grandad. No I don't get to see them enough - Siblings
- I don't know my father's side of the family and I don't want to. I don't feel comfortable.
- Doesn't see family as family don't want to see him, that is his biological Mum and Dad.

Children

(Questionnaire 2, Question 44)

“About the same as you see them now” responses with comments

- Once a week.
- I’ve seen my natural mother about 3 times now.
- I don’t see mummy ‘cause she’s in jail.
- Parents deceased, stupid question.
- Parents deceased.
- Want to see mostly sisters and brother, but doesn’t want to see grandparents.
- I want to see mum but she said she doesn’t love me. I see my auntie, nan and two uncles.
- I live in the same community as them.
- I live in and close to some of my family in this community.
- I’d like to see my old friends.
- Like being with ***** (grandmother) and grandfather.
- I always do.
- I see them lots.
- I see her (Mum) in school holidays.
- I see my mum every weekend.
- Do not want to see the family.
- Live with family.
- Live with Grandma and mother.
- Dad in [Regional location].

“More often” responses with comments

- Mummy was sick on Saturday and I think she just makes that up. She rang up and said “I don’t feel well”.
- Super super more.
- My little brother ***** is living with Mum.
- Younger brother.
- 2 days.
- Two or three days a week.
- More more 7 days.
- She wants to see her siblings more.
- She hardly gets to see her siblings.
- But Department said I can’t see my Mum.
- Brothers and sisters in [Interstate location].
- See Dad and siblings more.
- Heaps. (2 responses)
- I want to see grandmother and cousins I don’t see my cousins any more.
- No contact. (2 responses)

- Like to see my Dad and my brother and sister and my very best friend who lives with my Mum but is a child.
- Want to see more of Dad and a bit more of Mum. Dad buys me presents. Want to see more of ***** my younger brother.
- My brothers and sisters.
- I want to see Mum more.
- I want to see my Mum more.
- I want to see Dad more.
- Stay with Dad.
- Don’t see enough.
- Want to go and live with Mummy, Daddy and baby *****.
- More but Mum’s not well enough yet.
- My Daddy is in prison.
- I only get to see them on Friday.
- Don’t see them at all they live in [Interstate location].
- The child has not actually spent enough time with her mother to get to know her or develop a relationship.
- I love them, I’d like to see my baby sister [Rural/remote location] and big brother [Interstate location].
- Nan went to see Mum.
- Want to see my sisters and brothers more often also grandma and grandpa.
- Want to see my family more often brothers and sisters and grandma and grandpa.
- I want to see them in the holidays.
- My Dad only.
- Want to see brother in [Regional location]. Don’t like sister in [Interstate location] only see brother in [Interstate location] once. Like to see him again.
- A little bit more.
- Mum. I wish she would come here quicker.
- Only see Mum on Saturdays. My dream is to live with my Mum again.
- A bit more.
- About 3 times a week.
- See them enough but more would be good.
- Dad. (2 responses)
- See my sisters.
- My brother.
- Dad and Mum more often.
- I want to see Dad more, see Mum heaps.
- Not my sister.

- Of both.
- More of Mum 'cause Dad smacks us.
- Nanny and Poppy, ***** (my sister) and Mum because I haven't see them much.
- I don't want to see my Mum but I want to see ***** (sister) more often.
- Mum and Dad and siblings.
- Because I don't see them every year.
- Mum have not been here since a baby.
- I mean Mum and Dad and brothers and sister.
- ***** , ***** , Mum, aunties, grandma.
- Wants to see more of Mum and Dad.
- My little four year old sister.
- Mum, little brother.
- Little brother, big brother.
- My father.
- Yes, my father.
- "Cause I love them."
- Like to see real Mum and Dad.
- See Mum once/fortnight.
- I would like to see my Dad more - only see once a fortnight - would like to see him each week. Would like to see Mum on Christmas Day.
- Would like to see Grandparents more, a bit more of my fathers.
- I can't see my Mum until the Department says so. I am not happy.
- I want them to take me to Macca's, and buy me stuff and I don't get to see them anymore.
- We see them every Sunday.
- My Mum, Dad, ***** , ***** , my Nanny, Poppy.
- Last time I saw them was before Christmas.
- Mum and Gran, and Pop, and Dad.
- Mum, just Mum.
- And my whole family.
- My Mum and Dad.
- I want to see my other brothers more. I don't know their names.
- I would want to see Mum more if she had a pool.
- I want to see my Mum.
- Family doesn't contact.
- Brothers and Sisters in [Regional location].
- Would like to see both parents two more afternoons per week. Tuesday and Thursday.
- Mum and Dad - I don't want to see them. My other family - more often.
- I don't want to see Mum and Dad. Sisters and brothers more often.
- Mummy *****.

"Less often" responses with comments

- My Mum and ***** (younger brother).
- Dad.
- Doesn't want to see family.
- I don't like Mummy anymore she's naughty she's in jail.
- Less on school days, only on the weekends.
- No comment, the young person didn't want to answer anymore questions.
- I have asked not to see my mother, and my CSO insists that I do. We have fights about it.
- I don't want to see ***** at all. She's scary.
- Only want to see siblings.

Provided comments only

- Never.
- Not relevant at this stage at this time.
- Recently stopped visits to Mum at the child's request.
- Sees Daddy enough doesn't see Mum much.
- Don't know. (2 responses)
- No contact. (2 responses)
- Visits at present postponed.
- Do not see family.
- Don't see family.
- Don't see anyone.
- I see my family all the time. (2 responses)
- Mum doesn't turn up at visits.
- I don't see them, I see my Mum, grandma and sometimes I don't want to see my dad.
- My Mum I'd like to see more of, don't want to see my father.
- Don't want to see them at all.
- More often.
- Would like to see Dad more often. Mum about the same. Brother more often. Sister less often.
- Not at all!
- I don't see my mother and sisters.
- I would like to see my Daddy and my Mummy.
- I want to see my family at [Interstate location]. I wish my brother was here in care.
- I want to see my cousins, real Dad, fake Dad and Poppy more. I don't want to see Mummy anymore, never.

Young children (Questionnaire 3, Question 25)

"Yes" responses with comments

- Doesn't really like phone contact.
- Doesn't want to talk on phone - 2 separated parents & 2 siblings elsewhere - should see oldest sibling more often.
- I supervise and arrange contact.
- Sees sibling sisters and grandmother. Mum not interested, not present. (2 responses)
- Supervision is still needed due to behaviour after visit.
- More supervision would enable more visits with parent.
- Contact is regular, open to negotiation, & contact between carer & birth family is great.
- Parents don't turn up to visits
- Very little contact and very happy with that.
- Mother lives with child & grandmother.
- Although mothers whereabouts currently unknown, hasn't seen her since [2004]
- Once every two week from 3pm to 5pm. Parents normally don't turn up.
- Currently no contact with father.
- Not seeing sibling (sister) enough.
- Parents are not interested as they see child as too damaged. Also have substance (A) abuse.
- Parent unable to understand the damage is permanent.
- Parents not interested due to substance (A) abuse.
- At this point in time, until parents can care for the child adequately.
- Gets very upset he wants his sisters to live with us (*****) age 5, and (*****) age 4. After a while they don't want him.
- Likes to see father, not the mother. She doesn't turn up per access. Child comments where is mum.
- Depending on father's work and mother lives at home in a granny flat.
- This child's best interest comes far behind the wants of the respective parent.
- Happy to see, and happy to be back.
- Except older siblings. Has not been granted any visits to older siblings during 1yr in care - even after requests by child and foster carers.
- Mother only. Past problems resolved. Father in jail now, more travel involved. (Maybe Dad needs to sort own problems out and not create more for child).
- I think it's for the parents to decide if other grandparents have to be involved.
- No consultation with carers about changing length of visits or days.
- As far as we (Foster parents) feel, but it's the parents that didn't want to see the children.
- But mum and dad won't see the children - nor phone them up.
- I feel Dept supervised contact often enough. Parents have option to visit more often if they want to.
- When relatives arrive for holidays. Child is taken for extra visits by carer with Dept. approval.
- Mum not always at contact.
- No visits from family have happened, however are allocated.
- Sees dad weekly - no problems. Sees mum weekly, lots of problems behaviour-wise, she tells him lots of things that are not true.
- But upset this child.
- Family drops in and out of the child's life at their leisure. This had an adverse effect on little ones.
- She sees her family, both sides every week - parental and maternal.
- Carer believes mother rewarded, as she doesn't comply with contract re: drug rehab.
- Mum very unstable - often cancels visit (one day a week). We don't mind at all.
- With family all the time, a lot of interaction.
- Mum and Dad haven't really bothered.
- We take child to Brisbane monthly for extended family contact. Mother lives interstate.
- Birth family, yes, she takes her out for a day and brings her in the afternoon at 5 o'clock back home. Twice a day after school.
- Once a week.
- Once a week is fine.
- Visits are irregular because parents don't contact office very often.
- We keep grandmother informed of milestones etc, initiate contact, and provide travel arrangements.
- It would not be any advantage to this child, in fact, it would be concerning if there were more contacts.
- As stated with the grandmother and aunt visit, I believe that at 2 if she is upset about going, then they should have regarded her first, and said to the grandmother and aunt that until she was older and more settled and used to them, then they should be
- Mother has phone contact and mail contact.

- Contact left to family and they choose when to come. Visits don't exist on regular basis.
- Yes, he has 3 other sisters out with foster carer as well and they come every holiday, so he gets to meet with them as well.
- Once a month. She visits her mother at community centre, supervised visit, 1 hour.

“No, this child has to see them too much” responses with comments

- Very stressful visits, he was made to go by himself without the support of anyone familiar.
- This child in the wk prior to Xmas saw his mother 3 times as the CSO said we owe the mother the extra 2 visits due to Xmas. WHAT ABOUT THE CHILD'S NEEDS WANTS ETC. I FEEL THEY CARE MORE ABOUT MOTHERS.
- Regular phone contact with grandparents (roster of calls organised by the department)
- Parents have not earned the right to see these children after abandoning them.
- Parents have not earned the right to see these children after abandoning them and having them removed from them.
- 3 supervised visits per week which seems quite disruptive to baby
- 3 supervised visits per week for 16 months despite no current plans for reunification.
- Sees parent under supervision. 2 hr visit, twice weekly.
- When the chance of reconciliation is slim, it upsets the child for no reason.
- Weekly contact after four years in care does not allow the child to develop healthy in mind.
- Child gets re-traumatised each time. Behaviours before and after visits are so hard to keep handling.
- Child reacts to every visit. It was suggested counselling might help, but issue never addressed.
- Family has not contacted DFS to have visits.
- Both parents have child abuse charges against them - reunification should never happen - why do this to them every week?
- Every 3 weeks this child (18 months) visits an Aunty for 2 nights. Not sure this is in best interest of child at this age.
- 3 visits one week and 4 the next - 4 different people on each visit too much.
- Family contact was not regular. Mum has passed on and the child feels hatred about not seeing mum before she died.
- Says she doesn't want to go but has fun when there.

“No, this child doesn't see them often enough” responses with comments.

- Their father is in jail - has been for 2 years in [interstate location] and has only had one video link. The girls miss him and would love to see him.
- Mother disappeared. (2 responses)
- Due to instability of the mother, not inaction by the department.
- The family have made no effort & shown no interest in being part of this child's everyday life for the past 12 months. They have my full contact details.
- Not able to see Dad as often as needed - due to dept not providing funding for transport.
- Parents moved further away. Dept have made attempts to visit, but no interest shown.
- No visits since 5 months ago.
- Has no contact with birth parents, but phones brother and sister (mum has gone missing).
- His family (mum) makes no effort to see him and doesn't allow others to. But I talk about his family (mum and siblings) to him with little information I have.
- Sees mother twice as much as her father, which is not in the child's best interest as has as close connection with father.
- Due to unforeseen circumstances contact has not been as often as desired. (2 responses)
- Last contact with mum 17 months ago.
- In the process of correcting now. Had a big family meeting with CSO/Team leader yesterday.
- Every time he sees his father, he exhibits disturbing behaviours on his return.
- No contact - Mother's choice.
- Has only seen mother once, and other relatives once.
- Parents have chosen to cease all contact with this child.
- Mother needs to take more involvement in the child.
- Yes, if mother would take more involvement with care.
- But has just increased to two hours a week so is much better. Father has whole day access and now grand parents towards moving to them.
- Only got 2 hrs once a week. Child would have liked more.
- Only got 2 hrs once a week - wanted more.
- Mother has moved far away & currently is not able to be contacted (phone has been disconnected). Children would like to see her more, but this has not been possible.

- His parents are not interested in seeing him, but his half sister comes down from [regional location] and sees him once a year, when her foster mum comes down.
- We have trouble with sibling visits (in foster care). We go there, but they usually don't put in an effort to come here, then complain they don't see these kids often enough.
- Child has no contact.
- Because of safety issues.
- One of seven children in 3 different placements, only all been together on 2 occasions, 3 weeks apart.
- Parents have chosen to be uncontactable, and have chosen not to see the child.
- My understanding is the boys have had very little to no family contact in the last 2 years. However, they don't have a relationship with their parents to miss them. They do, however, frequently talk positively about their previous carer, and ask about her. (2 responses)
- Parents not interested. (2 responses)
- He would like to see his sister more.
- Only sees his father once a fortnight for 2 hours. No time to build a relationship.
- Sisters at [regional location].
- Father seems to make contact only when he is in rehab. Mother could make more effort.
- The children don't see their mother often enough. They see their mother in law too much. Children play up after seeing her.
- Distance is a problem, and DChS transport is not always available.
- Have not seen the parents for at least six months, and CSO said visits have been cancelled indefinitely.
- Parents mostly unavailable.
- Department didn't arrange contact for months, child missed out on contact due to CSO not doing their work.
- Parents mostly unavailable.
- Department didn't arrange contact for months, child missed out on contact due to CSO not doing their work.
- Parents mostly unavailable.
- In past experience, during his placement here Mum only initiates contact usually six months before each court order expires but loses interest with each new order.
- 6 children. 4 in one place 2 in another place. 6 children spend time together would be nice.
- Not enough visit supervisors. If one is away or sick, the visit is cancelled.

- The problem is getting the family interested in seeing this child.
- The mother doesn't show up for the arranged visits.
- Mother does not keep in touch. (2 responses)

Provided comments only

- ***** has been here 4 since she was 11 weeks old. We have tried contact with parent, it is too upsetting when she doesn't understand who this person is.
- Child is available for adoption.
- Both parents are heroin addicts.
- The parents wish not to have contact.
- No contact.
- She has no contact with mum.
- No contact at present. Mother says she will phone, but very rarely does.
- We put in an effort to take her on visits. However, they don't put in an effort from their end, then complain they don't see the kids enough.
- No contact at the moment, due to health.
- No contact at the moment, due to health reasons.
- Not sure how to answer, as the baby is supposed to see his mother for 3 days and 2 nights, but often she doesn't turn up. So he goes from maximum time, to no time at all.
- No interest from parent, so no contact.
- Due to her injury being caused by a member of her family, no contact at this stage.
- The child doesn't understand this yet.
- Mother lives away, and does not instigate contact.
- Sees family never. They're too busy.
- See 1 brother at school. Working on 6 monthly visits with other sibling in [Brisbane location].
- Parent has chosen not to have any contact for 6 years - no relationship exists.
- Child is in pre-adopt, so has no contact with family.
- Child's family lives interstate.
- The child's family does not appear interested in the child - just the process.
- Father has seen child once, failed to show up to arranged visit at his request, has since failed to request any contact. Mother sees child whenever she wishes, but frequency of visits decreasing.
- Family made no contact with child for 2 years.
- Parents don't want contact at moment.

- Child visits one parent more so than other parent - siblings involved with both parents.
- Spasmodic - very on and off as the wind blows!
- The family has chosen not to see the child, and do not return calls etc. very transient.
- The child has visited the father twice in jail and has not seen her mother since avg. 2005. The grandparents visit about every 4-6 weeks.

Are you better or worse off since coming into care?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 66)

"Yes" responses with comments

- I feel safer. I do not want to go back to mum.
- Absolutely.
- Better because I belong to a real family.
- Because I have people to play with here.
- Probably better.
- Especially coming to Mum's (*****).
- Better physically but mentally it doesn't help you.
- Better off being with Nan.
- Learnt more stuff.
- Otherwise I would be a street kid.
- Way better!!
- Happier.
- Because now living with grandparents.
- Got lots of food to eat and have nice clothes.
- Because I use to be a screaming child but now look at me.
- But I miss where I lived and my old friends.
- Wouldn't know - I was 5.
- The carers are nicer than my parents.
- Dept is not listening about my frustrations at school. Want to do life skills education.
- Not the same.
- I am safe and feel loved and cared about.
- Learned a lot more since being in care.
- Because of the carers not the Department.
- Get good stuff in care.
- We got food and clean clothes. Nan washes my school uniform.
- It sucked before.
- Better off not being at home - never going home.
- Little bit better.
- They have done very well.
- I'm much better.
- Better with where I am living & the people that hang around but I don't know because in Brisbane we used to live where all the druggo's are.
- Loved and safe.
- I can't really think why.
- Better than the last place.

- It better because I'm with my brother (carer)
- I actually have a life.
- It's helped me to meet a lot of people - who have helped over the years.
- Way better being here because I get care and respect and people that love me.
- I reckon if I was still with Mum I might be on drugs, stealing, smoking, missing school.
- 100% better.
- I was only 1.
- Lots better.
- I get looked after better.
- It's safer here 'cause I don't get hurt.
- Mum couldn't look after me and she's really poor.
- I have plenty of food - a room, lots of love. I feel real safe here.
- I don't have to put up with my family.
- Much better. I have a much better life that I could or would have if I wasn't in care.
- Safer, better care.
- A bit better.
- Good now.
- More safe.
- I feel at home.
- Much better. I just think I should have been in care much sooner. I wish the Department has asked me what I wanted way before.
- Don't really remember what it was like before.
- There is lots of things.
- Would rather be with my family.
- Way better. (2 responses)
- Slightly.
- Who knows - would have been in shack in middle of nowhere with no education.
- Because I feel better, and I get an education.
- Because I get looked after.
- I'm with family, not with strangers.
- No.
- If I was with my biological parents, I would be roaming the streets, smoking and doing drugs.
- It is a safe environment.
- We have the proper support we need.
- We didn't get fed much, or cared for much before.
- No screaming or people beating the crap out of each other.
- It's been pretty good in care.

- I'm not being abused or raped since being here. I'm in a good environment with friends around me.
- I had asthma before I was taken into care.
- Because of when I was with my real Mum of the things she did.
- Much better environment, I'm happy, I feel safe, less stress, less responsibility.
- I guess.
- Maybe.
- It's great here always.
- I know how to look after myself.

"No" responses with comments

- Ever since I went in I have not been able to do as much as I could when I wasn't in care.
- Would rather be home with Mum.
- Because he doesn't get to live with his Mum.
- Been bashed by carers, not believed - no physical proof - nothing happens. Can not go home.
- At this house. Better when I was working - could go and see your friends.
- With Dept.
- Because I am with someone I don't really know. It's hard to forget your mother and father.
- The people you have to put up with and the way they treat you.
- It's better now but it wasn't good when I first left Mum and Dad. I wasn't living here then.
- Because I can't really explain sorry.
- Cause she get very angry.
- I want to be back with my family.
- Better off with Mum.
- I want my birth certificate and to find out who my dad is & find him.
- Not with my Mum.
- Because wants to live with Mum.
- Because I'm always thinking of mum.
- Because I don't see mum as much.
- I would like to be with my mum.
- Don't like the placement.
- Getting worse now.

Provided comments only

- Don't know (46 responses).
- Unsure (14 responses).
- Don't know - too young when entered care (12 responses)
- Both better and worse (6 responses)

- Same (6 responses)
- No comment (3 responses).
- I really want to go to my real mother in [interstate location]
- Don't know. Better food. Can't go out.
- None, because I feel devastated. But I have not been worse.
- No idea. (2 responses)
- Don't know - I'd like to live with Mum and my stepdad.
- Haven't decided.

Children

(Questionnaire 2, Question 50)

"Better" responses with comments

- Mummy doesn't hurt me.
- I can hide behind the Christmas tree.
- I was an angel when I came into care and my carers read me stories.
- Feel safe, Nan has high fences.
- Bit happier.
- Safe.
- Feel safe.
- Mum's place has puzzles, liked TV show at *****'s.
- Safe.
- I like it in care.
- First it was better but now it is worse because older sisters pick on you.
- Play area to look different.
- I miss my Mum.
- Mostly better.
- I feel better inside.
- Because I'm safe.
- I get to play with my friends.
- Beause there is no fighting here.
- Good things here.
- Nobody could say no.
- Great here.
- So damn better.
- But I miss Mum.
- Cause I used to be naughty but now I am turning out a little bit good. Carer has helped me with my behaviour.
- I nearly died before I came into care.
- I have more freedom.
- I am doing great things at school.
- I like it at this house better.
- Get looked after better at the carer's house.
- Because I am sometimes naughty and sometimes not but I don't get in big trouble or hurt.
- I wouldn't be in so many arguments when they argue.
- Mum and Dad couldn't control me. Carer did control, I was happier.
- Because there is food. I like getting presents.
- Because she looks after us.
- Little bit better living with Nana and *****.
- Better when Nan was here.
- We get to do good things.

- I don't remember that far back.
- She feels safer.
- Mum didn't teach me any manners.
- My old home is a bit dirty.
- Better and safer here.
- Better with n/m and auntie *****.
- I get to go to school and it helps me but I want to live at home with Mum and Dad.
- I have more toys and go to more good places since I've been here.
- Well loved and cared for here.
- I was only two when I came here so I don't know.
- Safe and better food.
- I get looked after properly.
- I'm fed and get clean clothes .
- I don't know but I think better.
- More healthy, more food.
- More freedom eg piercings and staying over friends houses.
- I had an itchy head before I came here.
- It's happier.
- I like helping.
- Probably here where I am now.
- They do a better job looking after me here.
- Sometimes better off.
- Because maybe mum and dad will fight again and hurt me.
- Playing, swimming.
- It would be way better if I lived with my mum and dad.
- It is good.
- Help with learning.
- They (***** and *****) think I'm nice and pretty.
- It's fun.
- I don't like foster care - being with other kids I don't know. I like it with Nan.

“Worse” responses with comments

- Because I'm not with my family.
- I don't like foster care.
- Don't see my sister.
- Can't live with now.
- Because I miss my family but I've learnt more things like cooking.
- Because I don't like it. They make strict rules.
- I do not feel safe here with *****.
- Sad because I don't see parents enough.
- Sometimes scared.

- Because I want my own space.
- Because other foster child (gone now) upset me. It's better now she left in December.
- Want to see mum and rest of extended family.
- I want to live with my parents.
- Now have healthy food.

Provided comments only

- Don't know (15 responses).
- Misses Mum and Dad.
- Not sure. (2 responses)
- I don't understand the question really.
- I cant answer this one, maybe both.
- I would have liked to stay with my Mum. They took me away when I was enjoying it there.
- Can't do the same things here. Like to get my own food without asking.
- About the same.
- Didn't understand.
- Child would not remember - too young.
- Medium.
- Too young to know difference.
- I don't like foster care. I like it better with Nan.
- About the same.

Is there anything that you would really like to have happen that no one is listening to you about?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 67)

“Yes” responses with comments

Wanting more family contact

- Want to move from here. Want to live with sister.
- Seeing my family.
- I want to have more Communication and contact with my family.
- Want to go home and see my family.
- I want to visit my relatives in [interstate location] at Easter.
- Want to see aunty however can't.
- Want to have a home. Would like to meet my family.
- I would like my family to be transferred down to Brisbane.
- See my family & my twin brother, have not seen him for six years.
- Want to see my dad.
- Air con. More visits with Mum and siblings.
- See my family more often.
- I would like to have visits with my Mum and by myself I asked ages ago but it hasn't happened yet.
- I would like to see my Mum.
- Seeing Mum more.
- Want to see my Mum, brother *****
- I want contact with my father.
- Telephone contact with mum & move to another residence.
- That I cannot see my mum in hospital.
- Seeing my Mum more.
- Like more visits with Mum and Dad.
- Like to see my family - mother and brothers.
- More contact with my brothers and sisters.
- Air con. More visits with Mum and siblings.
- Yes, to see my brothers.
- See my brothers.
- I want to see my little sister.
- Yes, go visit my brother and sister - [interstate location].

- As noted I have exhausted asking the department to help me have contact with my sister.
- I want to see my baby brother. He's in care in [Brisbane location].
- I want to be with my sister. If she won't come back, I would rather go live with her.
- See my brother - not sure where he lives.
- Being with my brother.
- See my brother.

Reunification

- My Department is trying to make me move to Brisbane to live with my family. If you can help please call [telephone number].
- I would love to go home to my Mum and Dad.
- We moving out of care & back home.
- Go home this year.
- I really want to go home and live with Mum.
- That I go home to Mum.
- To live with my Mum and be around my family again.
- I would like to go home - for a visit and then stay there forever.
- I want to go back to my family.
- Getting home with Mum.
- I would like to live with my family with *****
- Going home.
- I want to go home.
- Live with my Dad.
- I want to live with my Mum and Dad. I would like to go on sleepovers.

Issues concerning lifestyle

- Doing activity out of school.
- I might want to play soccer and touch football. I can do it if my behaviour is good.
- I feel bad asking to be in after school activities because they cost money.
- Would like to play rugby with Junior Bronco's in [Brisbane location].
- Need a bigger backyard as ours is very small. A pool - put one in for us - take down the fence to put it in.
- My granny flat being finished.
- New couches in home as they are all torn up.
- Get out more.
- Sports.
- Go to McDonalds and swimming.
- A dog.
- Air con. More visits with Mum and siblings.

- I want an air conditioner.
- I would like to have a Discman, but the carer does not want me to have one.

Issues around obtaining permission

- We have kept things quiet in past because of waiting for Dept permission. Instead have just done it.
- Gym, permission for carpenters course. Still waiting from CSO.
- License package. Money out of trust for car.
- I want to ride on the back of my carer's motorbike and the Department is saying no.
- They are listening but it ain't happening. I want my belly button pierced.
- Go to my friends houses for sleepovers more often and have a bot in the room as well as my friends.
- Sleeping over a friend's house.
- I want to go to stay with my friends without a police check - I have known this family for years.
- I want to live with my Mum and Dad. I would like to go on sleepovers.
- Braces. More visits out of area.
- I want to visit my relatives in [interstate location] at Easter.
- Want to go back to [regional location] and visit.
- To get the permission & buy my sporting equipment.

Wanting money or resources from the Department

- I would like regular phone credit because I spend all of the credit I earn having to use for ringing department people or my mum or foster carers I can't ring my friends because I run out of credit.
- Computer - it's take 8 months to resolve this issue.
- Laptop for school.
- To get the permission & buy my sporting equipment.
- It would be good if they paid for my TAFE.
- I want a passport. I want to get my last name changed.
- I'd like a mobile phone to keep in contact with my family.
- I feel bad asking to be in after school activities because they cost money.
- I would like more phone calls.
- I really need to get some money from the Department for some clothes, I have hardly any and the Department doesn't care.

- The community visitors. And my passport.
- License package. Money out of trust for car.
- I want the furniture that the Dept promised. CSO was to come and see my flat, they have not visited at all.
- I really need to get some money from the Department for some clothes, I have hardly any and the Department doesn't care.

Issues to do with living situations

- If I want to but something it should be my decision not the workers.
- Having more freedom.
- Telephone contact with mum & move to another residence.
- Want to go back to [regional location].
- Want to back to [regional location].
- I want to move into [Brisbane location].
- To go to a different placement.
- Leave me here and DChS butt out.
- For the Department to leave me alone.
- Living independently.

Wanting more action from the Department

- No action RE former placement return.
- Computer - it's take 8 months to resolve this issue.
- Everyone in [DChS service centre] fired and sent to Cuba.
- More opportunity to talk to people from the Department - CSO.
- Some things are left in the dark.
- And my passport.
- Moving but it is going to happen now after 5 months.

Wanting guardianship

- I want Nan and Pop to have legal guardianship.
- Probably the guardianship.
- I would like to have the Guardianship that is all I want & I will be happier than I am now.
- Adoption - Guardianship; access with sister.

Concerns with education

- Would like to attend a normal school.
- I want to change school - we have left messages with the Dept - no one has contacted me or come to see me about this.
- I want to go to TAFE and visit my friends more often.
- School work and school.
- Lots of things, change schools.
- Get some help with my homework.

Wanting people to listen

- Dept keep asking same stuff and don't listen.
- Clarinet. I don't want to play it or go to lessons but no one is listening.
- How I feel.

Wanting medical attention

- Dental.
- Braces. More visits out of area.
- I want my teeth fixed.

Wanting CSO to provide support

- My gear is still at old carers and CSO has not arranged to collect it.
- I want the furniture that the Dept promised. CSO was to come and see my flat, they have not visited at all.

Wanting more contact with other children

- My friends going to camp with me so I don't have to go alone.
- Spend more time at mates'.

Wanting contact with previous carers

- Contact with my former carer. (2 responses)

Everything is fine as it is

- Stay in this home.
- Everyone listens to us.

Other

- I would like to pay back my carers for all the nice things they have done for me. I would like to send them to Disneyland for a holiday.
- I forgot.
- I have talked to my Mum who said I can't have it until I get older.
- Stop trying to get me together with my family (siblings)
- I think they are listening but there is nothing they can do without mum's permission.
- At school, people think I lie.
- When I had a youth worker.
- My brother has a motorbike for Christmas and I'm afraid he'll hit something and hurt himself - he's only 11 and it's not necessary for him to ride one on the road.
- School foods.
- Want to join workforce.
- I asked for a new bed ages ago, and gave three quotes but nothing done yet.
- I would love to spend more time with Mum and Dad (carers).
- Want to have a home. Would like to meet my family.

- I want them to find a family for me.
- The community visitors.

"No" responses with comments

Wanting more family contact

- But I'd like to see my mum more.
- I want contact with my father.

Everything is fine as it is

- Not really (6 responses).
- People listen to me.
- My carers always listen to me.
- I am listened to.
- Something that I want - I usually get.
- I am happy and people listen to me.
- Don't need nothing.
- Because people are listening.
- Everything gets listened to.
- Not at the moment.
- They are listening to me.
- I'm fine!

Don't know

- Not sure.
- Don't know.
- I don't know.

Other

- Although I asked for a computer.
- I want a placement meeting to happen that includes my mum and boyfriend, brother, carers and CV.
- Would like to be back with family, everything else OK.
- YP indicated she would talk to facility staff, CV and departmental worker.
- But want to go out of care at end of order.
- Apart from getting rid of all those gangs.
- Lots of things, change schools.
- But want Mum and Dad to have guardianship (the carers).
- Care package still a concern.

Provided comments only

Wanting more family contact

- I would like to get in contact with Dad. Foster Mum and Dad said people have tried but they can not find him.
- I want to see Mum more.
- Would like to see grandparents. Would like to go to private school.

Everything is fine as it is

- Not really. (2 responses)
- Sometimes.

Don't know

- I don't know (9 responses).
- Does not understand.
- Not sure. (2 responses)
- No response - YP shrugged.

Other

- Yes and no because my foster family listens but I would love to do modelling but I am not allowed by the Dept.
- Sometimes but unable to comment.
- Sometimes.
- To go out with friends, to have my own room.
- For someone to tell me the truth and where am I going to end up.
- Guardianship.
- More money for things.

What would you most like to see improved or changed to make the system better for kids?

Young people

(Questionnaire 1, Question 68)

To have input into decision making

- Involve them more in decision making and case meetings.
- That I am noticed and listened to and have some say in what matters.
- More choices for kids.
- More discussion with kids.
- The Department don't have to be so overprotective.
- That kids have a say.
- Be listened to more. Let them do stuff they want to do. Let them see their family more.
- Kids get more say in things.
- The Dept listen to you when you complain. Carers giving you more respect and responsibility - more freedom.
- Talk to me and carers about decisions.
- The Department listen to you more - they probably need to ask more questions about what you want.
- That they get to have a say in most things. The things they are not allowed to do are not very good.
- Kids should have more say in what goes on in their life.
- No preparation to go to foster home. Profiles of carers for young people to choose placements.
- Getting a "say" in what happens.
- They should be able to choose which family they want to go to. And they shouldn't be treated differently.
- Have more choices.
- That they get to pick if it's fine at home or they go into foster care. I would like to have had more say.
- I would like young people to make their own choices and not the Department.
- Kids to have more say as to what happens to them.
- Let them have a say more RE. who the carer is they stay with.
- More help, a better place.
- Not having to go to Dept.

- Leave alone.
- For the government to f**k off. That would make everything better.
- Have them leave us alone.
- My own place and go to the army but my court case against my Mum and ***** is making my future disappear. I can't have my own place because I'm not rich enough.
- Should have more fun in care.
- All the boxes and things moved out of my room so that I have space - a bigger house - my own room.
- More outings. (2 responses)
- Playground.
- Make it a bit more funner.

The Department to listen and advocate for them

- For kids to be believed if they say they have been hit by carers, have some choice RE carers, for kids to have a list of things so they can go home. Kids be allowed to go home for a visit after 6 months in care - max.
- For the Department to listen to them.
- For the Department to listen to little children more.
- To listen to kids more. To allow kids more freedom.
- Kids to have their say.
- I would like a lot of shit changed but everytime I say something it feels like they don't give two f**ks.
- Listen to what kids want more. Don't listen to foster carers. Some CSOs don't have kids - don't understand.
- Being happy more and most of the time.
- The Dept listen to you when you complain. Carers giving you more respect and responsibility - more freedom.
- When a child tells you something about their carer don't just say OK and then do nothing, actually investigate.
- To be heard more by the Dept.
- They need more people to listen to them and ask what they want (personal) and help.
- Listen to us. We need someone there to be our voice.
- That people listen to kids and they get their stuff back straight away and not always be waiting for answers and action.
- Listen to needs to YP. Follow through with actions (CSOs)
- CSOs that listen! & CSOs that will get out there & do stuff & take in what the children are saying.
- If you want something say it and for the FSO or CSO to do it for you.
- For them (kids) to be honestly heard.
- Asking kids more questions and listening to what they say.
- Talk to the kids about how the kids feel all the time, no matter what.
- More input from kids and from CSO.
- Get more say about things.
- Family services actually do their jobs and take kids who are over 14 more seriously.
- The system needs more contact with kids. Approve stuff quicker.
- Family services need to listen to the kids more.
- Listen and get what they need.
- Listening to our opinion more.
- Department to listen more. Not break promises.
- They actually listen to what they want and keep a record of it so the new people know what they want.

People to listen

- That someone cares about me and listens and lets me say what I want.
- Kids should be listened to more often.
- Listen to the kids.
- Listen to what the kids want.
- That someone will listen & care not just the CV
- Listen to kids and not focus on one person who needs a lot of help and ignore the others. Like bringing a birthday card or cake. (CV included)
- More people listen to what we have to say.
- Listen to kids better & do what's right by them cause I know how it feels.
- Ask what the kids want and what they need and not to act like a f**king c**ks**ker.
- Carers listen more to children and treat children with love and respect.
- People to listen to what I want to do.
- That DChS listens more.
- They (Dept) should listen to what I want.
- Kids get more attention from Dept and listen to what the kids want.
- Be listened to more. Let them do stuff they want to do. Let them see their family more.
- Listen to kids more.
- Listen to us more often. Keep the same CSO instead of changing all the time.

- Listen to kids. (2 responses)
- Just listen and do please.

To be like “normal” kids

- Make sure foster homes are places where kids can play and do sport etc.
- I want kids to not be made to feel like it's their fault 'cause they're in foster.
- To be happy and be well cared for and loved.
- Actually do and pay for kids activities and studies. So we can be able to act like a normal kid would.
- I'm happy the way it is. But treat them like their not different.
- Start treating them their own age, and treat them more normal.
- That they can lead normal and happy lives.
- Sponsor or donate money to them/or be nice and happy, make them feel safe.
- Want kids to enjoy being in care, and have lots of fun.
- More having fun than the department saying no or not letting us to do that.
- I don't know - make it easier to go to sporting activities.
- More fun and more care of children than worrying about anything else.
- Do stuff like other kids i.e. not made to feel 'different.'
- Do normal things that other kids get to do.
- To let kids do normal things other kids would do.
- Kids get to do more things.
- To do things that other kids can do and that I can't do. Like ride motorbikes.

A permanent CSO

- Having a caseworker would help.
- To get a worker.
- Better communication with the Dept. Consistency of case workers - too many changes of CSOs.
- Keep the same worker for a long time.
- It would be better if you could have one CSO for a long time so they could get to know you and you could get to know them.
- Get sick of changing workers at Department. Want same worker all the time.
- More CSOs and CSOs that don't keep leaving i.e. just get to trust people and they leave.
- A stable case worker who the children in care have approved on. If you don't like your case worker you can't express your needs or wants!

- CSOs don't change all the time. CSOs follow up with issues in a short timeframe or advise you the reasons they can't.
- Not have as many different CSOs.
- A CSO that cares & not changing CSOs every few months.
- My CSO changes too often.
- The CSO changes too often.
- Not so many CSOs.
- Make sure the foster parents aren't doing it for the money. Would like to have the same CSO for a long time. Last year we had 5 CSOs, and didn't even meet some of them.
- Listen to us more often. Keep the same CSO instead of changing all the time.
- Brothers and sisters should be kept together. Would like to have the same CSO for a long time.
- The department needs to be more organised, and I would like to have the same CSO for a while.
- To be able to have one CSO for the time in care.
- For them to have a CSO all the time and to keep children away from parents who have sexually assaulted their kid.

More contact with CSO

- Kids see their CSOs every month.
- See more of CSO.
- Make sure that the CSO is available when you want to see them in the office.
- To see your CSO more often.
- To see their CSO more often.
- To see the CSO more often.
- Kids who don't see their case worker much should be able to see in.
- CSOs to listen more and need to be able to contact them.
- More CSO contact.
- There CSO comes and see us once a week.
- More case workers. More questions asked of kids. Longer visits from CSO.
- Their CSOs have more contact with them and for kids to have more contact with their family. If kids have problems they should be able to phone their CSO.
- Having more regular visits from CSOs. CSOs doing what they say in a reasonable timeframe.
- Yes - see us more often!
- Have more trips to theme parks to get them involved and comfortable with their case workers.
- CSO stay with me.

- CSO will stay with us all the time.
- More case workers - less children. Case workers on time.
- Talk to me and carers about decisions.
- The Dept should let kids have contact with their family and slowly decrease contact - not just take them away.
- See FSO more.

Improved communication with Department/CSO

- Explain things better.
- Better communication with the Dept. Consistency of case workers - too many changes of CSOs.
- Listen to the kids and talk to them before you write that, say, my Mum bashed me up.
- More communication with CSO.
- Foster carer and myself involved in all case plan meetings and better communication with the DChS.
- More communication between the Department and children so that I am more informed of what's happening.
- CSO to be more contactable and to hear what I want.
- CSOs don't change all the time. CSOs follow up with issues in a short timeframe or advise you the reasons they can't.
- Better communication from the Dept.
- Everyone to keep in touch more.
- To be able to speak to the Dept when you want to.
- When we ask for my CSO she is either out or away - we send an email and it takes a while for her to get back to us.
- Quicker response from CSOs.
- To tell kids more about what is going to happen to them.
- More communication with CSOs.
- More communication with me.
- Better communication between CSO and myself.
- More up to date communication between parties. If the carer was not so proactive little would be done.
- Would like to have more communication with Dept.

Issues around obtaining permission

- Don't have to get permission of so many things.
- Let them do things without always getting the department permission all the time. It takes too long and you don't get to go.

- I feel the carers should make more decisions about me instead of Child Safety.
- We don't need permissions from the Dept when we have to go far away. Carers should be able to give permission.
- Let me do more stuff and stop being so strict - with my carers.
- Let them do what kids want.
- Give the kids the OK to have motor-bikes and ride go-carts etc.
- Should be able to do more without asking.
- Allowed to do more things.
- Letting us go out with friends.
- Let people do more things.
- Cut down on rules and regulations.
- Not so many rules so they can do things without everyone knowing and if she wants to go on a church mission they have to give so much information.
- Permission request delays. System needs to be quicker when permission requested.
- They can get body piercing because it is their body.
- Sleepover at friends' house more often.
- Children in foster care should be allowed to go on sleepovers.
- Not having to ask permission to do stuff. Don't put them in crap placements with carers who don't care! Find better carers.
- The permission to buy more things for the kids.

Money or resources from the Department

- Holiday plans for families.
- If we can have our own stuff, like computers or laptops.
- Actually do and pay for kids activities and studies. So we can be able to act like a normal kid would.
- Give kids more presents.
- The kids in care get a bigger budget so they can get and do what they need to.
- Approvals & payment process.
- More money for the carers so we can do more.
- Give kids allowances for clothing - give kids money.
- More clothing allowance.
- Money for more support things.
- The Department should pay for camps and sports, school.
- Every foster home to have a pool.
- Department look at paying private school fees or a percentage.

- They could give the carers more money to buy clothes for the children.
- Umm... mostly a bit more money going to the parents/carers, so they don't have to stretch heaps.
- Pay \$3500+ for [overseas location] trip at the end of 2006.
- Pay for schooling.
- More toys to be shared among us kids.

More parental contact

- See mum more.
- For kids to be believed if they say they have been hit by carers, have some choice RE carers, for kids to have a list of things so they can go home. Kids be allowed to go home for a visit after 6 months in care - max.
- Better contact with our proper parents.
- See my mother - visit brothers and sisters in Brisbane and have family BBQ's.
- Let children see their parents every weekend if they want.
- See their family more often, hurry up with things they say they're going to get,
- Let them visit their mother.
- More access to parents.
- Be listened to more. Let them do stuff they want to do. Let them see their family more.
- Kids could see more of their parents.
- I want to see my Mum.
- To see their families more.
- Parents should have another chance, but parents kept away if they hurt their kids.

General charges to the Department

- You could make it harder for people to become carers and for the people who are carers be checked properly every time.
- Get better workers!
- The Dept - it is lazy.
- Stop screwing kids lives up. CSOs should visit without notifying carers. Carer's (OLD) get kids to clean up house.
- I want them to be reliable.
- Get their act together and be more hand on activities.
- The Department needs to be more organised, and I would like to have the same CSO for a while.
- More workers, more receptionists - be able to get through more easily. Team leaders need more training.
- Family services actually do their jobs and take kids who are over 14 more seriously.

- The Department to wake up, the CSOs are fine.
- Better efficient. More reliable.
- Kids to get what they need.

CSO to provide support

- CSO to care more about each kid.
- DChS - should ask about my life, get info about me, because they never do.
- If CSOs knew kids better if problems occur they can be discussed. My CSO doesn't know me.
- Seeing kids more (CSOs) and trying harder to do things for them.
- Faster responding to issues (CSOs).
- CSO actually taking interest in kids in care rather than other family members. CSO getting to know me as an individual.
- CSO could do more for kids.
- CSOs that listen and know how to talk to kids. CSOs that are like my CV - she's cool.
- Having more regular visits from CSOs. CSOs doing what they say in a reasonable timeframe.
- More CSOs that are dedicated to your specific situation.
- CSOs don't listen. I have had too many CSOs. Not doing their job properly.

Stability in a home

- Long-term placement. Carers should have more say.
- Stay with same carers & not have to move.
- If there were more foster homes like the one I'm in now.
- Not move around as much.
- Don't change foster homes all the time. Make sure carers are nice.
- I want the Department to actually look for home's for kids. I've had them look at two places and then give up. It's not very fair.
- Nothing - I want to stay here, who can I tell. I don't like to talk to the CSO about things like that.
- More long term placements.
- Stop harassing kids, stop changing kids placements.
- Brothers and sisters should be kept together. Would like to have the same CSO for a long time.
- If they are not happy about seeing parents they should be asked if they want to see them.

More suitable carers

- Just to not make kids go to crap carers who don't care and treat you like crap like my last carers.

- Not having to ask permission to do stuff. Don't put them in crap placements with carers who don't care! Find better carers.
- Find good families because there are some not good ones.
- Get better f**kin' foster carers please.
- Better carers like mine, nicer ones.
- Match the child to the carer.
- Better carers.
- Don't change foster homes all the time. Make sure carers are nice.
- Foster carers to be more truthful to the kids. Eg. Ex foster carers abusive to me and would not listen about my concerns.
- Make sure the foster parents aren't doing it for the money. Would like to have the same CSO for a long time. Last year we had 5 CSOs, and didn't even meet some of them.

The Department to make decisions more quickly

- Make the system faster.
- Be a lot quicker. When you ask DChS something, instead of taking 2 months, it should happen within a week or so.
- CSOs doing things faster than usual.
- See their family more often, hurry up with things they say they're going to get,
- Answer us faster
- That people listen to kids and they get their stuff back straight away and not always be waiting for answers and action.
- They need to be faster with their responses. Everything is so slow. The CSOs are rarely available quickly.
- The system needs more contact with kids. Approve stuff quicker.
- Response time. Response to what we want.

More support and understanding from the Department

- More encouragement.
- No more categorising people into their illness and treating them as if they are the illness.
- The Department get in and help more with the families that the kids are in.
- The Department pay more attention to the kids and what they want. And to contact them more often.
- The kids side is really good, though there could be more support for the carers.
- Department's too bossy. When I went to a meeting, she asked me a question, then said "hurry up" 'cause I couldn't think.

- More help.
- Make it easier on them - Aboriginal kids get teased because of colour, and white kids because they're in care - it makes them sad. Look after them better - make their parents care more.

The Department to exchange information

- Being told where their family are (every sibling)
- That you get to be told what is happening with court and stuff.
- Tell truth, not bit of story. They tell the adults all the details, but the kids only a bit.
- When ask questions, don't get back. Don't tell truth - not stress kids, but not knowing stresses more. Be truthful - tell kids to tell truth but don't themselves.
- More honesty. They should tell us about our lives.
- Explain better to kids.
- They should give more information instead of keeping it away from the child.
- Actually tell the kids what's gonna happen if they go to foster care, and what to expect.

Reunification

- Still live with parents but still having a caseworker.
- Don't want to be in care.
- Kids go home.
- Go home to mum and still with the department.
- Kids stay with their parents.
- Put kids with their Mum & Dad.

More contact with other children

- For us kids not to fight.
- More contact with friends.
- Talk and interact with kids.
- More get-togethers with other kids in care.
- Social interaction with other kids in care - kids who understand what it is like to be in foster care. Holidays - day outings for kids in care.
- Change to see old foster kids.

Issues around the practices of the Department

- The system is all talk and no action.
- I dislike the Department (child safety) all my life: they say they will do something but it takes ages and ages. Their choices are not in the best interests of the children.
- The way the system is going to be better is if you get people together like you're supposed to rather than letting them down and denying them and disrespecting them.

- Have no idea - I suppose that the Department doesn't ask us our opinion and then doesn't do what we ask anyway. Why ask at all 'cause they do what they like.
- Could have moved me into care faster and listened to me more about what it was like living with Mum. (She changed her mind about this part and asked CV to cross it out).

More contact with other family members

- See my mother - visit brothers and sisters in Brisbane and have family BBQs.
- That we can have contact with our siblings who aren't in care.
- Well I would like to see my sisters and brothers.
- See your relatives more.
- Improve family contact arrangements.

The Department keep to commitments

- Department to listen more. Not break promises.
- To do what the kids want. They (DChS) said that I could have a computers & I did what they asked - then they did not supply a PC.
- That Dept keep their promises to the kids.
- Keep their word, stop changing their mind.
- The Department to keep promises.

A better CSO

- Better CSO. (2 responses)
- Better case worker.
- Better driver.

Concerns at school

- Bullying
- Give them better education.

Guardianship

- Guardianship to the carer after a child's been in care for 5 years.
- Guardianship. Less Dept involvement.

Medical attention

- We should have free private emergency dental and free check-ups and optometrist visits.
- Free dentist visits - all the time. At least every 6 months (check-up).

Everything is fine as it is

- Nothing (42 responses).
- Not really (3 responses).
- Quite happy - no changes.
- I have a perfect life so I don't really know what to change for other kids.
- Fine.
- Not much.

- I'm happy here.
- I don't know. I have got what I need in foster care.
- I'm happy so I don't really know.
- OK.
- It will change their life - they will calm down, get along with everyone.
- I don't know. Everything's good for me.

Don't know

- Don't know (92 responses).
- Not sure (6 responses).
- No idea (3 responses).
- I'm not sure about that.
- Don't care - nothing.
- Wouldn't have a clue.
- Don't understand. (2 responses)
- No idea. Maybe more CSOs, less cases.
- YP couldn't think of anything.
- Can't think of anything.
- Not too sure.
- Can not think of anything.
- Child did not understand.
- We should have a Dreamworld day with real parents or relatives.
- Never thought about it.
- It's all a bit messed up - I don't know how you'd change it - it's a bit complicated.
- Don't care.
- But my friends should be allowed to go in the car with me.
- Haven't a clue.

Other

- More visits
- More foster carers.
- They (DChS) should get older people as CSOs as there is too much of a clash between CSO and young people. They are currently too young at 21-22.
- Nurses being less judgemental.
- Parties on hols - don't dress up like hooligans. Bad Santa costume. Treated like a kid.
- Not taking kids away from their family.
- Sex changes with DChS staff.
- Things for us to do with family during the holidays.
- Something to make kids grow up stronger.
- More carers.
- Get most of them off drugs and off the streets into a family and give them an education.

- When kids ask for something they should get it or they should get paid to go to school.
- Make sure all kids are safe.
- I don't know everything they need to get active in our lives.
- If kids don't get paid for job around the house they shouldn't have to do the jobs.
- More opportunities.
- When I first went into care the carer put me in nappies and then I wet the bed after that. I wouldn't want that to happen to other kids.
- Different boss with great mates.
- Not so many rules. Especially teenagers.
- More CSOs like *****.
- More youth hours.
- Have a foster child come and explain to you what to expect when you start.
- The rules for being in foster care.
- Not be so strict.
- Someone monitoring carers more closely.
- Stop being so uptight.
- Adults should always tell us kids the truth.
- I'd like there to be care for the kids that need it but not for me. So read this and make sure it goes into action.
- I'd like there to be care for the kids that need it but not for me.
- Same things as I have living here.
- [DChS service centre] completely restaffed, from top to bottom. [DChS service centre] office is so bad.
- Everything.
- Understand what we are feeling, we go through a tough time.
- Talking to other children in care would really help - sometimes I feel alone and like I'm the only one.
- More freedom and better explanations of consequences and rules that are put in place.
- Parents use contraception if you can't look after your kids.
- Not really I just think that when you're in the city grownup's treat you like shit and I think whatever, but I don't care that much.
- Have younger house people.
- Make it easier on them - Aboriginal kids get teased because of colour and white kids because they're in care - it makes them sad. Look after them better - make their parents care more.
- They have the choice to get their toys.
- If they ask to get a pet or something, they would be allowed.
- My attitude and behaviour.
- Less community visitors.
- Don't put them back where they get abused. eg. They put my brother back with my Dad.
- For them to have a CSO all the time and to keep children away from parents who have sexually assaulted their kid.
- Make their parents protect them.
- Teach parents how to look after their children and then the children can go back to their parents.



commission for
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