



Liberal National Party's proposals for overhauling Queensland's
child protection system

Survey Findings

*On the proposal to introduce new performance
reporting to increase transparency and accountability*

2 November 2020



ChildProtectionPeak



PeakCare
Queensland Inc.

Thank you to all who took time from their busy schedules to respond to our survey about the Liberal National Party's proposals for overhauling the child protection system. We trust that you have made a valuable and constructive contribution to the further development and refinement of the policy platforms of Queensland's political parties. We look forward to the informed discussion and debate the survey findings will generate. Following on from our report providing an overview of the survey findings, this is the eleventh in the series of detailed reports that addresses the proposal to introduce new performance reporting to increase transparency and accountability.



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Introduction

Following the announcement on 17 June 2020 of the Liberal National Party's (LNP's) [plans for overhauling Queensland's child protection system](#), PeakCare Queensland Inc. (PeakCare) and the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) conducted a survey to gauge stakeholders' views about the plans. The survey was released on 19 June and closed on 10 July 2020.

About this report and the reports to follow

An [overview of the survey findings](#) was released on 24 August 2020. More detailed reports about the survey findings released since include:

- [On the question of re-naming the Child Safety Department, the Child Protection Force](#)
- [On the proposal to extend payments to Foster Carers until children in their care turn 21](#)
- [On the proposal to increase use of adoption through a new triage model with permanency order targets](#)
- [On the proposal for random compulsory drug tests for people on Intervention with Parental Agreements](#)
- [On the proposal that positive drug tests will require parents to participate in a drug rehabilitation service](#)
- [On the proposal that a second positive drug test will lead to children being placed on foster care under a no-second chances model](#)
- [On the proposal for the Child Protection Force to adopt a hierarchy and rank structure similar to the Police](#)
- [On the proposal for Child Protection Force officers to be on-hand 24-hours a day under new shift arrangements](#)
- [On the proposal for a rapid response team to be placed on stand-by for after-hours support](#)
- [On the proposal that a new team of police investigators be formed to clear backlogs and overhaul investigation procedures for high-risk cases](#)
- [On the proposal to recruit more foster carers](#)

This report addresses the question included in our survey – *Do you agree with the proposal to introduce “new performance reporting for all regional child safety service centres to increase transparency and accountability for senior executives to ensure vulnerable kids don't fall through the cracks”?*

This report is best read in conjunction with the following reports that address related topics:

- [On the proposal to introduce a requirement for regional offices to undertake two-year accreditation programs](#)

- [On the proposal that that officers in the LNP's Child Protection Force undergo new training and development](#)

About the survey respondents

In total, 1,998 people responded to the survey from across 13 identified stakeholder groups including:

Survey respondent stakeholder groups	No (%)
Employees of non-government organisations including:	811 (40.82%)
• PeakCare Member organisation employees	289 (14.54%)
• QATSCIPP Member organisation employees	63 (3.17%)
• Non-Member NGO employees	459 (23.10%)
Employees of Government agencies	633 (31.86%)
Employees of peak bodies or other industry or representative groups	56 (2.82%)
Academics	38 (1.91%)
Private consultants or employees of private consultancy or training organisations	42 (2.11%)
Parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system	65 (3.27%)
Young people (under 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system	15 (0.75%)
Older people (over 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system	42 (2.11%)
Foster Carers	121 (6.09%)
Kinship Carers	35 (1.76%)
Others	129 (6.49%)

Eleven survey respondents skipped the question requesting them to identify the group to which they belonged.

The 129 survey respondents who identified as belonging to the 'others' category described themselves as follows:

Interested community member (e.g. parent, concerned citizen, “just an ordinary person”)	39
Retired, semi-retired or former employee of either a government or non-government agency or both	33
Member of a particular professional or occupational group (eg. a barrister, allied health professional)	18
Member of two or more of the listed groups	14
Relative or friend of a Carer or employee of a government or non-government organisation	13
Non-specified connection with child protection system	6
Former Foster Carer	4
Friend of a person who was formerly in care	2

About the strength of the survey

As noted in the overview report, the respondents to the survey are not a representative sample and therefore the results cannot be generalised to specific stakeholder groups or stakeholders as a whole.

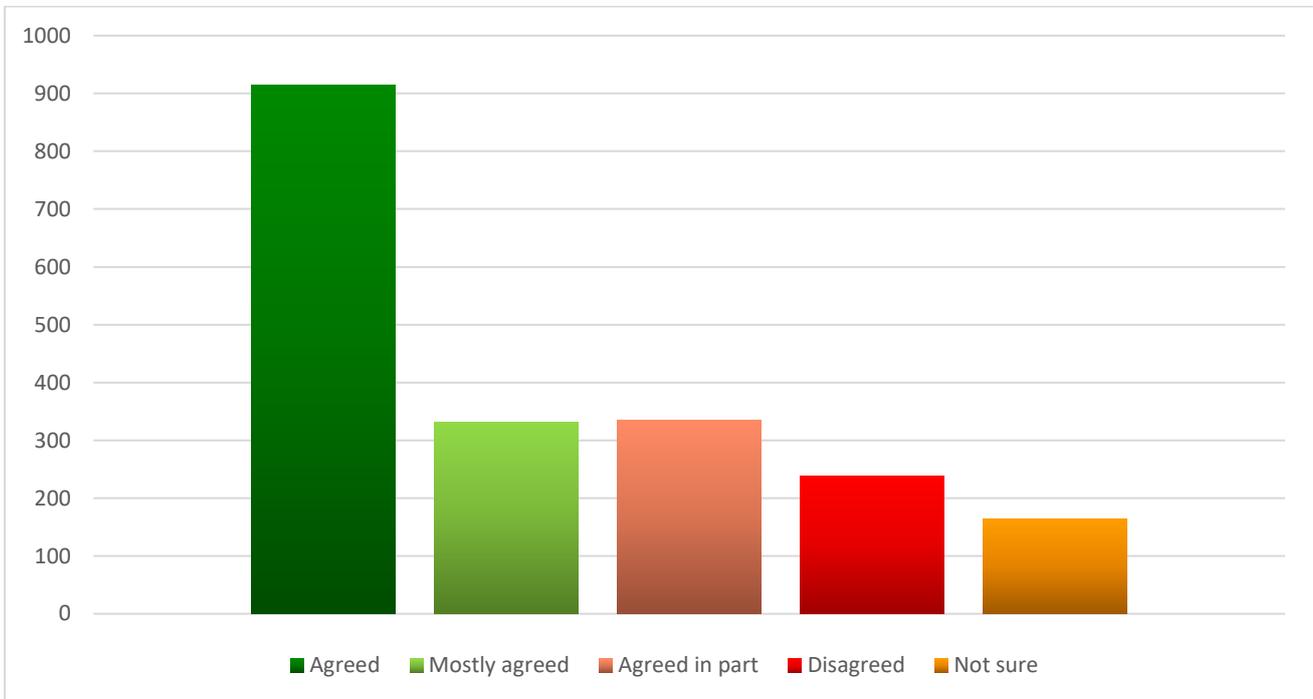
The strength of the survey and its findings lies in the diversity of views that have been collected from within and across stakeholder groups. This provides a rich source of data to generate debate about how to best protect children, promote their development and well-being, and support their families.

Overall response

Of the 1,998 survey respondents, 1,984 answered, and 14 'skipped', this question. A majority of respondents who answered the question agreed or mostly agreed with the proposal.

Specifically, of the 1,984 respondents who answered this question:

- 914 (46.07%) agreed with the proposal
- 332 (16.73%) mostly agreed
- 335 (16.89%) agreed only in part
- 239 (12.05%) disagreed, and
- 164 (8.27%) indicated that they were not sure



A majority of respondents (i.e. 50% or more) within 12 of the 13 stakeholder groups agreed or mostly agreed with the proposal:

- Employees of PeakCare member organisations (67.70%)
- Employees of QATSICPP member organisations (66.13%)
- Employees of non-government organisations that are not a member organisation of either PeakCare or QATSICPP (71.58%)
- Employees of a peak body or other industry or representative group (65.46%)
- Academics (50%)
- Consultants and employees of private consultancy or training services (63.42%)
- Parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system (86.16%)
- Young people (under 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system (80%)
- Older people (over 25) with a lived experience of the child protection system (83.33%)

- Foster Carers (89.26%)
- Kinship Carers (82.85%)
- Others (72.09%)

More employees of government agencies (44.59%) disagreed or agreed only in part with the proposal, but their number was insufficient to constitute a majority (i.e. 50% or more) of this stakeholder group.

The responses indicated that some respondents were not clear about the reference made by the LNP to regional child safety service centres and whether this meant:

- Child Safety Service Centres located in various regional and remote areas of the State
- Child Safety Services Centres situated within each of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women regions as specifically defined by the Department
- Regional Offices of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, or
- all Child Safety Service Centres

The responses also indicated that some respondents were not clear about whether the reference made to increasing “transparency and accountability for senior executives” was intended to convey:

- increasing transparency and accountability of all staff so that this information could be used by senior executives, or
- increasing transparency and the accountability of senior executives

Noting that not all respondents entered additional comments into the survey, a review of those that were entered identified the following key themes.

Increased transparency and accountability

Many respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and processes that are currently in place. A number of these respondents identified the need for similar external requirements to those currently applied to the non-government sector.

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including:

- what is to be measured and how it is to be measured
- identifying and managing unintended consequences of focusing on particular aspects of performance
- how it is to be collected and streamlining reporting with other systems
- involving stakeholders in evaluating performance
- ensuring independence of the process
- how the data is to be used

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included:

- the purpose of collecting and using data
- ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs
- cross sector responsibilities for performance
- additional training and support of staff

- Information technology to support data collection
- additional funding
- stakeholder input into review processes
- collaboration with community partners
- building a positive culture
- providing additional services to meet the needs of children and families
- addressing systemic issues

Further information

Some respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and why this isn't sufficient, how this would be different to the current processes, and how it may impact on staff and the work.

Address the underlying issues

Many respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern about the purpose of performance reporting - in particular, that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work with children and families.

Other issues highlighted by respondents included:

- the lack of cultural competence and need to fund a statutory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander body
- need for a whole of government and community approach
- lack of evidence that performance reporting improves outcomes

Other respondents indicated there were already processes for ensuring accountability and transparency including performance reporting

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability for performance including:

- a relational approach to child protection based on care and compassion

- a whole of systems approach to child protection and shared accountability
- a review process that ensures appropriate systems and processes are in place for all children to have their needs identified and met
- cross sector collaboration
- building staff capacity through practice reflection, training and supervision
- addressing the blame culture of the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- funding family support services to address needs and reduce demand

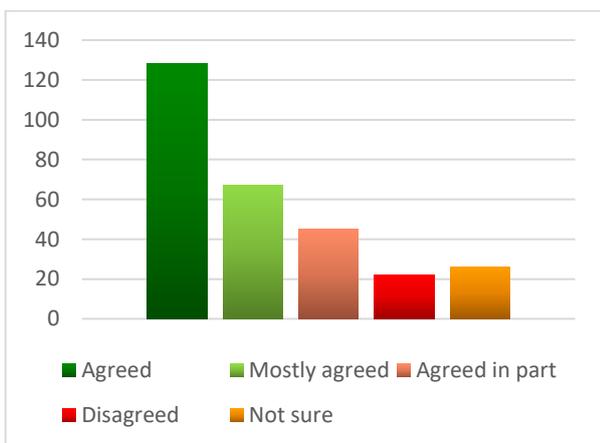
Responses by stakeholder groups

Employees of PeakCare Member organisations

Of the 288 employees of PeakCare Member organisations who answered this question:

- 128 (44.44%) agreed with this proposal
- 67 (23.26%) mostly agreed
- 45 (15.63%) agreed only in part
- 22 (7.64%) disagreed, and
- 26 (9.03%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



106 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and the current processes that are in place. A number of these respondents identified the need for similar external requirements to those currently applied to the non-government sector:

- *They need to be accountable, the whole hierarchy and way of working needs to be overhauled*
- *I agree that there should be some level of assessing Service Centre performance - similar to the HSQF and licensing process that NGOs must undertake*
- *An external audit system could be implemented similar to the ones used in*

non-government organisations, as they do in the UK

- *Too many fall through the cracks at present. Too many are referred to community agencies when tertiary intervention is required*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, unintended consequences of focusing on particular aspects of performance, how it is to be collected, independence of the process and how the data is to be used:

- *It would depend on what the reporting requirements relate to. I would like to see a systemic change that focuses on outcomes of I&As, rather than just outputs. The pressure on CSOs to close a certain number of investigations every month contributes to poor assessments and dangerous practices*
- *Increased transparency and accountability are needed, but I am mindful of what performance reporting looks like, i.e. performance around reunifying children has seen many children being reunified that shouldn't have been just to meet a performance requirement*
- *There needs to be much more accountability in child protection at all levels to ensure vulnerable young people do not fall through the cracks. Early intervention is the key to supporting kids and families to get the best outcomes, and this is critical*
- *Reporting to ensure transparency and accountability is commendable. However, many services are so overwhelmed with reporting and compliance obligations nowadays that staff start to lose the heart and passion for making a difference and instead become automatons of the system. Reporting systems need to be streamlined for ease of use, investment made into setting them up and testing them with a strong focus on usability, and automation used where possible to help staff use it easily with a minimum of fuss. Reporting needs to*

lead to better outcomes, not just covering themselves politically

- *Better data is never a bad idea, it's what you do with it that counts*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, cross sector responsibilities, additional training of staff, and additional funding and building a positive culture:

- *I agree if this is part of a larger project to improve the culture of the department, away from a punitive blame culture, to a performance development and learning culture*
- *Only if the work is actually being done and not time wasted in trying to prepare reports. More staff are needed to work with parents on IA's, IPA's and ST orders, not more layers of bureaucracy*
- *Any additional performance should not fall onto the shoulders who are carrying a HUGE amount of pressure already. The responsibility should sit across departments. There should be a high risk panel of Department heads across every Child Safety region reviewing and taking responsibility and actioning cross-sector interventions for high risk cases e.g. Police, Education, Health, Child Safety, Communities and Disability Services, Youth Justice, Justice and Attorney-General, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Office for Veterans*
- *Absolutely and all staff need better training to understand trauma and the effects on brain development. There needs to be services within the system that screens every child entering the system for Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. There needs to be more staff so they have the time to do better work. Less team leaders and more on the ground frontline workers*
- *As a former Child Safety Officer of 9 years, I agree to an extent. Yes, more transparency is needed, but only if it comes with additional funding to provide sufficient staff to meet these requirements. This has never*

occurred in my 10 plus years working in this industry whenever significant change has been introduced, the staffing needed to make this change well is never available/maintainable due to a lack of funding, and lack of positive culture from the top down around positive work/life balance and supporting Child Safety staff

Further information

Some respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and why this isn't sufficient, how this would be different to the current processes, and how it may impact on staff and the work:

- *Would need to know exactly what this would look like. Blanket statements with no content are not helpful with forming a valid opinion*
- *I do not know what this means. What current reporting takes place? Is the proposed new reporting system realistic to implement and how would it help ensure vulnerable kids don't fall through the cracks?*
- *What does this entail and does it mean that workers will be further over worked trying to meet audit type deadlines and therefore stuck doing paperwork as opposed to entering homes and checking on the welfare of children*

Address the underlying issues

Many respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *There is performance reporting now, right now accountability sits with the front line staff who are overworked and under supported*
- *I believe that current inadequacies in the system are largely caused by caseloads that are too large for Child Safety Officers to have a chance at providing the level of care*

needed for each individual child allocated to them. More reporting tends to mean more time spent out of the workday recording data rather than using the time for client-focused work. I believe that reporting may be able to be updated without creating more processes for front-line workers to complete, but ultimately change will be better implemented by creating more positions and smaller caseloads

- It's a good idea for senior executives to be held accountable - however, when they don't have adequate and/or confident and effective staffing numbers, it's just setting them up for failure or 'buck passing'
- The pressure already in place to report and meet KPI's already surpasses the importance of doing the day to day work. More accountability for senior executives will ultimately mean extra work for staff doing the job and it is already impossible with the red tape and reporting requirements
- Come on, it is a whole country issue, don't put the onus on one group. Fund and resource this huge issue properly to ensure a better service can be given to the kids in care already

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Other respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability:

- The Senior Executives that I know take their responsibility and accountability for children's safety extremely seriously. This proposal does not take into account the multiple agencies involved in children's and families' lives in Queensland - Child Safety Service Centres cannot hold central responsibility to 'ensure that vulnerable children don't fall through the cracks'
- I think Service Centres' practice and processes are slowed down enough by red tape meaning families and children are already missing out on service delivery because CSOs are stuck behind a desk doing paperwork. There needs to be accountability and transparency but there are other ways this can be implemented including through regular supervision for all staff, ongoing use

of critical friends on practice panels, using the current practice advice and support teams, etc

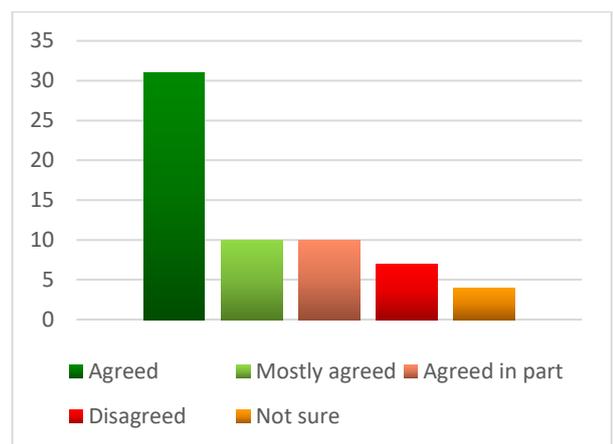
- Transparency and accountability are important, but reporting systems do not increase performance and practice. Weekly/fortnightly case reviews in a group setting such as group supervision promotes transparency, as well as learning from peers. These can be facilitated by practice leaders. A clear practice framework with a line of sight from the services' values to the forms and processes, and service delivery practices will be a more helpful process, especially if it focuses on high level outcomes. From a Logic Model, performance reporting only reports on outputs, not about significant change!

Employees of QATSI CPP Member organisations

Of the 62 employees of QATSI CPP Member organisations who answered this question:

- 31 (50%) agreed with the proposal
- 10 (16.13%) mostly agreed
- 10 (16.13%) agreed only in part
- 7 (11.29%) disagreed, and
- 4 (6.45%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



19 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Two respondents agreed with the need to increase transparency and accountability due to their concerns that it is not already happening and concerns with the current system:

- *How this is not already happening is just disgraceful and so very sad*
- *Totally agree as I know all the current services don't do jack shit now and getting paid big bucks to do the job*

Scoping KPIs

A number of respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including streamlining reporting with other systems, involving stakeholders in evaluating performance, and ensuring the independence of performance evaluation:

- *This needs to be streamlined and perhaps other systems removed instead of just adding to the caseload of extra red tape and paperwork*
- *Increased transparency would be beneficial to continue to be agile to the needs of families and children, however for this information to be available on a wider format, to allow community and stakeholders (professional) to be invited to evaluate what is working well and where gaps need to be plugged*
- *However, who would they be reporting to? How often would they be reporting and what would they be reporting on? These are critical questions. I think they should be reporting to an independent commission*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, and supporting staff and improving retention:

- *It will totally depend on how this is structured and needs to be done so with a focus of improving services. Transparency and accountability should already be a part of the current fabric of this process*

- *This needs to be focused on management and not the CSO's and CSSO's that are doing the best with what they have. There needs to be more staff*
- *Accountability needs to be applied to management at all levels and not just Child Safety Officers and Team Leaders. The leadership and management is something that is essential in supporting all front line workers and leaders and also ensure their emotional wellbeing and practice as well as the safety of children and young people. External professional supervision should be provided to all staff members rather than all supervision remaining internal to the service centres which support a toxic workplace*
- *Longer contracts should be provided to CSO's and staff to reduce turn over. Children, parents and carers all suffer when a CSO changes. A child should not be expected to advocate for themselves when there is a constant stream of strangers coming into their lives. Children fall through the gaps as a result of no long- lasting relationship where they feel comfortable to share their thoughts and opinions*

Further information

One respondent identified the need for further information to consider and respond to the proposal:

- *I feel that the survey does not give all the information needed to complete the survey with the correct response to questions or to comment*

Address the underlying issues

A number of respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department emphasising focusing on children, providing sufficient staffing and reduce caseloads, cultural competence and funding a statutory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander body:

- *These are children not KPI's*
- *Need more on the ground case workers. People who are actually doing the work, not people monitoring the work*

- *How about senior executives take a walk in the shoes of CSSC staff...they wouldn't cope. Adequately resource the department with money to support families and enough workers to do the job. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families need a statutory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander body that assesses their family situation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social workers - if there aren't enough social workers then the government needs to upskill the people to address the need of the sector and community. Stop making decisions about our kids without understanding the people's story. Stop making decisions about our sector without understanding the worker story. Performance reporting - reduce caseloads to 1/2 to 1/3 of what they are currently - then see how outcomes improve*

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Other respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability:

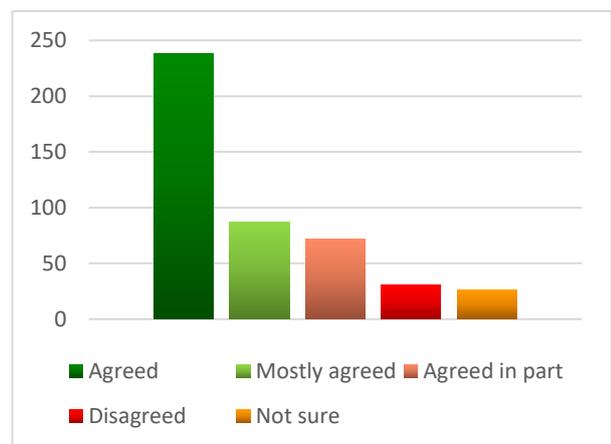
- *What needs to happen is at the front end. When a report is made and services are going out to work with the families and they say that they don't want help and then the family gets reported back 3-4 more times in quick succession, then there needs to be away of elevating this family higher to ensure the safety of the child and the family. Warning signs are sometimes right there in front of us, but the inability for services to refer or flag this family to a higher level with Child Safety is not always available*
- *So much time is spent on reporting now! Reporting does not increase safety, cross sector collaboration and shared accountability does*
- *Define performance reporting...this is a double-edged sword and can lead to tick and flick assessments to complete KPI's. Further funding to intensive family support services would be better to reduce the numbers at child safety and keep eyes on children*

Employees of non-Member non-government organisations

Of the 454 employees of non-government organisations that are not Members of either PeakCare or QATSICPP who answered this question:

- 238 (52.42%) agreed with the proposal
- 87 (19.16%) mostly agreed
- 72 (15.86%) agreed only in part
- 31 (6.83%) disagreed, and
- 26 (5.73%) indicated that they were not sure

Five respondents skipped this question.



118 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance at all levels and the ongoing monitoring of results. Respondents also identified that non-government services are subject to external performance requirements while Child Safety Service Centres are not:

- *Staff need to be accountable, ethical and transparent at all levels*
- *Service Centres need to be accountable for practice and work that is completed by their staff within their Service Centre. Managers are often seen in an admin role rather than contributing to practice frequently. Continued development and collaborative practices need to be inclusive of managers*
- *Absolutely - constant audits and sustainable and real checks*

- *At present there is high accountability on the NGO sector with licensing and monitoring. No one keeps Child Safety accountable. They often have the final say and no one ensuring they have best practice and care for children. Often poor practice results in poor decision making from the department and a money focus impacting on our children and families*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, streamlining reporting with other systems, and the need for external oversight and cultural input:

- *What outcome measures and tools will be used? Are they evidence based and undertaken clinical trials to measure proven efficacy?*
- *I agree that Service Centres must have performance reporting and visibility on key metrics that focus on ensuring the most vulnerable and disadvantaged don't fall through service system gaps, however, this must be a considered and balanced approach to avoid service centres focusing on KPI's over what is best for families and children*
- *So long as this is a streamlining and strengthening of existing systems, and not an additional layer of 'red tape' that often gets in the way of robust case work and service delivery on the frontline*
- *If this does occur, it is so important for external agency/bodies to play a part in this process. Cultural reviews from external agencies are so important due to the lack of cultural positions and funding allocated for this industry*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by many respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, additional funding, collaboration with community partners and additional services to meet needs:

- *It would depend how this would be implemented with staff. Child Safety staff are already stressed with increasing work loads and not having the time to complete their existing tasks. A lot of Child Safety staff feel 'under the pump' and are already constantly monitored. This would add an extra layer of stress, to an already stressed system*
- *Child Safety must be accountable. More transparency and less power over is required. Child Safety are the delegates for Child Protection and yet we continue to have under trained and unskilled staff doing assessments at the front end (the end that carries the most risk) without thorough and robust assessments of need. It is a broken system. If resources go into employing more people to push paper around then I totally disagree. Non-government services must be utilised to provide joined up responses to our most vulnerable group i.e. disabilities, children. We need to engage our community partners to provide case work / case management / robust assessments, early intervention with families*
- *This would need to be accompanied by increased funding for more front-line positions. We have new-graduate case managers with case loads exceeding 40 children. How can we expect them to meet KPI's in such a chaotic environment?*
- *If this isn't connected to the real increase in services to vulnerable populations, this is not going to do anything but place the blame for societal problems on individual public servants*

Further information

Some respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and why this isn't sufficient, how this would be different to the current processes, and how it may impact on staff and the work:

- *Isn't this in place already?*
- *What does this look like?*
- *Hard to make a decision without further information. What is meant by 'performance reporting'?*

Address the underlying issues

Many respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to the nature of the approach, high caseloads, insufficient staffing, and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *This appears to be a punitive approach not a supportive one*
- *All organisations should be accountable. However most/all CSSCs are drastically under-staffed. This is a core problem*
- *Government must also be responsive and increase funding to permit CSO's to conduct their work in a better way. Yes, transparency and accountability are incredibly important, but that includes the government too. It is their funding which permits or restricts comprehensive case management and positive outcomes for families and children*
- *I think generating reports and having audits and policies is important, but based on all the previous questions I am concerned that this will just be even more paperwork that CSOs don't have time to do, and yet apparently this entire program is to help at-risk children, of which so far I have heard nothing that will actually help children and families*
- *Focus should be on frontline service delivery not stats and data collection*
- *CSO's currently struggle under the weight of reporting measures which have only increased with successive whole of system inquiries - ongoing in Queensland since 1999. Child protection is the single most examined arm (in terms of lengthy and comprehensive public and private enquiry resulting in ongoing legislative and policy reform) of government operation*

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Other respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability:

- *More reporting won't improve outcomes. More training in comprehensive*

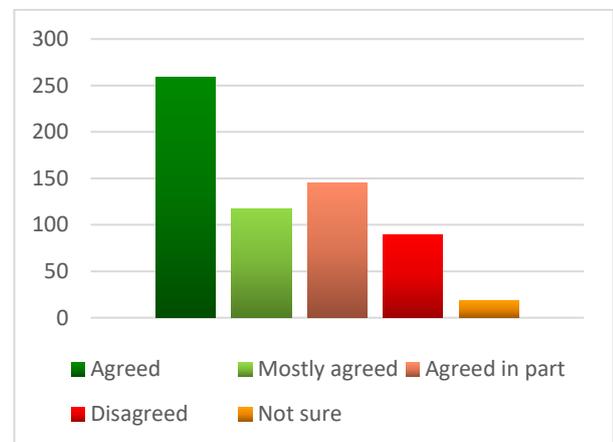
investigation skills would be more likely to achieve improved outcomes

Employees of Government agencies

Of the 628 employees of Government agencies who answered this question:

- 166 (26.43%) agreed with the proposal
- 97 (15.45%) mostly agreed
- 148 (23.57%) agreed only in part
- 132 (21.02%) disagreed, and
- 85 (13.54%) indicated that they were not sure

Five respondents skipped this question.



260 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and the current processes in place:

- *Accountability and transparency uphold integrity and performance*
- *I agree that more accountability needs to lay with the senior executives in the department. At the end of the day, front line CSSC staff do the best they can with the resources they have and it is never enough. This information is constantly fed back to senior management and directors, yet no changes ever occur. Makes me wonder if*

people in the higher levels of the department are really aware of the challenges and what is happening within the regions, or whether they are told what they want to hear

- Regions currently have too much autonomy and do not consistently adhere to policy and procedures. New practices need to be better implemented and increasing compliance would assist
- I'm all for transparency and accountability - however it would be nice sometimes if our hard work was recognised instead of constantly being highly criticized by the media all the time

Scoping KPIs

Many respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, unintended consequences of focusing on particular aspects of performance, how it is to be collected, independence of the process and how the data is to be used:

- It depends on what the reporting is on and how the performance measures will be used. Meeting performance targets does not necessarily equate to quality work
- This needs to focus on quality of assessments and casework not just stats. With a focus on stats (case plans, commencement, throughput, etc) it is more likely that the quality of the work completed is lower to achieve kpi's. If the focus was on quality frontline staff would receive more support to upskill
- The idea of reviewing performance in some way seems sensible, however increasing pressure on a system to reach performance targets does not equate to better service delivery for families. Need to be very thoughtful around what performance is being measured and how this equates to better outcomes for families
- Child Safety already has transparency and accountability. If the new reporting is simpler and reduces the workload of paperwork for child safety officers so they

can do the work of looking after children then I would support it

- Building of data and reporting requirements provided the ITC infrastructure is supported in this and it is not a labour intensive, double handling, then it would be good

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, cross sector responsibilities, additional training of staff, and additional funding:

- The spirit of reporting must be collaborative and open rather than punitive
- Dependent on the type of 'new performance reporting' - may just be shifting the blame onto another area rather than managing the systemic worries
- How would further reporting enhance safety? If they were able to show how additional resources and supports could be mobilised as a result of increasing demands, this may be a good thing. If it is used to show just how poorly the department is doing it would not be of benefit
- I agree as long as it is not frontline staff who are punished for more senior staff decisions. Absolutely I agree with all services being accountable but it also needs to be done fairly and with opportunities to learn and grow. If staff are subjected to penalties that are not fair and equitable there will be greater difficulties recruiting and maintaining experienced and qualified staff
- Yes - but case loads need to be re-evaluated - 20 or 25 cases are way too many, this is why things are missed - there are simply not enough hours in the day to do the job effectively. Particularly where you are managing multiple complex families at once, or children and young people with complex needs and disabilities
- As long as this is balanced with workload demands and is not an added piece of red tape which takes staff away from ensuring the safety of the children and places them behind a desk for even longer periods

- *If performance reporting is linked to initiatives and investments from the government this will be fine. There are 100's of children who are falling through the cracks within the department as there is not suitable funding and resources for staff to best support children and families*
- *This has to be balanced with providing sufficient improvements in training and resources that can bolster staff morale, expertise and retention. If simply applying more pressure from above on middle management without sufficient resources for their teams/centres - then that could be detrimental*
- *All of these mechanisms currently exist! This responsibility cannot be left up to one agency - it must include QPS, Health, NDIS, funded agencies and Education. If Education ensured they educated all 'at risk' children instead of expelling them, how many kids would not 'fall through the gaps'?*
- *There's plenty of reporting already and processes like CQI. The fundamental issue is that caseloads are too high and staff are overworked. No amount of reporting is going to save any child if we don't have the resources to do the work well*
- *But first, adequately resource the CSSC's. The problem isn't the workers, it is a government and system that doesn't resource it properly. Provide more CSSC staff, CSSO's, CSO's STL's and admin staff. That is what will fill the cracks, not putting more reporting requirements on people. Instead of making people report more, resource them so they can do the job they want to do. Senior executives don't keep children safe, front line workers do. If they were better supported and resourced children wouldn't fall through the cracks*
- *Accountability is useless without additional support for staff - it's like flogging a dead horse - staff need more support and resources not more whip cracking. The only good I can see of performance reporting is in highlighting how under resourced and broken the system is*

Further information

Some respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and why this isn't sufficient, how this would be different to the current processes, and how it may impact on staff and the work:

- *Would need to have more details about what this would entail and what result this is seeking*
- *Will it be more effective than the current model? Who decides the new model? What is the model measuring?*
- *I am not sure what this actually means - there is performance reporting for all Child Safety Service Centres now*

Address the underlying issues

Most respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *Part of the challenge for this system is the onerous level of administrative oversight that virtually paralyzes child safety staff. This work is best done relationally - and there is no time for CSO staff to form relationships with the level of operational, administrative and procedural burden they already have to bear. Instead - we should be looking at workload management strategies to enable staff to have reasonable caseloads that mean they really 'see and know' the children and families and carers they work with every day*
- *I am concerned that the CSO's will be scapegoated under this proposal, they already work in an extremely difficult and complex system and the majority of CSO's are dedicated, hard working and child focused. If the CSO's become scapegoated this will result in less wanting to come into this line of work which is already difficult to recruit for...this will get worse and positions will not be filled leaving vulnerable children more at risk as there will not be enough staff to ensure 'eyes on the children' and will*

mean higher caseloads due to not enough staff/resources

programs, education programs and hold parents accountable

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Other respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability:

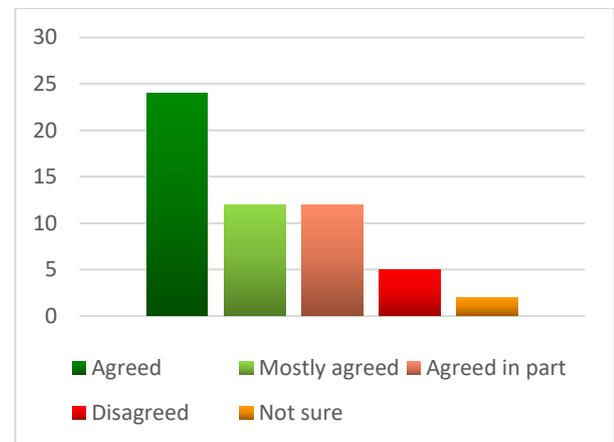
- *I don't think performance reporting is the answer, this reduces children to commodities/numbers. The focus should be on ensuring appropriate systems and processes are in place for all children to have their needs identified and met, including a review process to assess progress for the child - I would imagine these policies already exist. Getting management to focus on performance reporting diverts their attention from looking after their staff and ensuring all children under their watch are being dealt with appropriately*
- *All the reporting in the world won't improve staff retention, staff acumen across multiple domains they are expected to be competent in now (legal, therapeutic, forensic, influential communicators, change agents, disability/NDIS, drug and alcohol, mental health, child development, administrators, nurturers, education, authors)...Vulnerable children fall through the cracks when systems are siloed creating those cracks, and when there is too little time and attention available to be given to their specific situational and long term needs*
- *Performance reporting/compliance measures are a small part of what is needed; it is not unimportant, but it is not enough; the ability for all levels of child protection staff to critical reflect on their work and adapt their practice accordingly is best practice. Staff need much better support in the form of highly skilled professional/ clinical supervision to think through their work*
- *I would prefer that senior executives actually spend more time on the ground with families and staff assisting them to meet the needs of vulnerable children than them engaging in time wasting exercise of reporting up to politicians. If you want vulnerable kids to not fall through the gaps, then invest in early intervention, parenting*

Employees of peak bodies, industry and representative groups

Of the 55 employees of peak bodies, industry and representative groups who answered this question:

- 24 (43.64%) agreed with this proposal
- 12 (21.82%) mostly agreed
- 12 (21.82%) agreed only in part
- 5 (9.09%) disagreed, and
- 2 (3.64%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



18 of the respondents within this stakeholder commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

A small number of respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns with current processes and practices:

- *More accountability has got to be better than what is happening now. There's no accountability*
- *Absolutely... The reporting needs to be made immediately by the staff member once the call has ended... Not left in a data base and an email sent whatever time that day. This is a very, very crucial area that needs to be adhered to IMMEDIATELY within the department*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, and accessing the voices of stakeholders:

- *It needs to include implementation of all five elements of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle*
- *In accordance with professional standards*
- *We need to increase children and young people's participation in decision making about their lives. There should be greater transparency and assessment in these processes. We need to acknowledge the large caseloads and stress of the system. There is an extreme turnover of staff. We need to find effective and sustainable means of evaluating effectiveness of keeping our children safe and supported*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, and additional funding:

- *As long as this does not amount to systems compliance. This has to be practice compliance driven with appropriate oversight and reporting*
- *As long as the department listens*
- *What does this reporting even entail? There is regular reporting provided up from teams in relation to how many open investigations are in place, how many in backlog, how many of these families are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, how many children in out of home care. The qualitative information that the government may be seeking here would be more of an auditing process (which also exists in different forms), so we really need to ask who in the government is going to fund this additional work because if you continue to increase the work of CSOs, TIs and Managers, there won't be anyone left to work for the department*

Further information

Two respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal:

- *Can't agree with a statement that does not provide any detail about the nature of the reports*

Address the underlying issues

Some respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing, and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

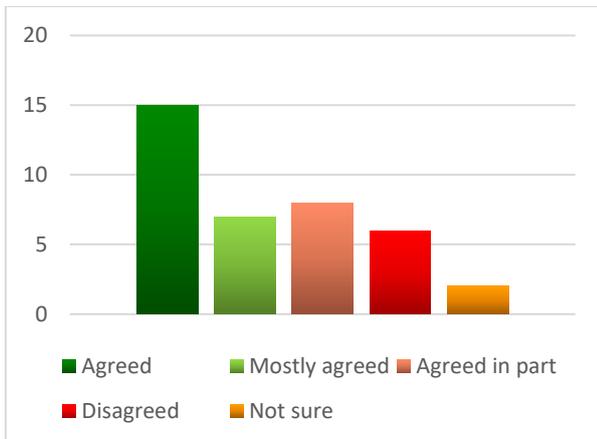
- *Will this detract child protection staff and authorities from focusing on the kids and be more focused on stats? Where the child safety service centres are adequately staffed and resourced, they have better outcomes for kids and families, under the previous LNP government, child safety service centres and other public services were decimated with budget and staffing cuts*
- *I think the workload of these offices makes this difficult. They could look at outsourcing some tasks to agencies i.e. checks*
- *This proposal could backfire. There is no clear evidence that this type of proposal will increase accountability and transparency*
- *Performance reporting, transparency and accountability already exist. Reviewing what is there could be useful to ensure processes are keeping pace with needs. Many reviews have already been done and there is evidence that service centres are under resourced and that this can lead to situations being missed. It would be disastrous if more reporting processes were put in place, thus adding to the burden and further diminishing resources to work with families*

Academics

Of the 38 academics who answered this question:

- 17 (44.74%) agreed with this proposal

- 2 (5.26%) mostly agreed
- 7 (18.42%) agreed only in part
- 9 (23.68%) disagreed, and
- 3 (7.89%) indicated that they were not sure



11 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

One respondent agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns with senior staff.

Scoping KPIs

Three respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, ensuring the integrity of the data, and independent oversight:

- *Current performance targets measure the wrong thing. It's all about policy and procedure, not meaningful and effective intervention and support for families. Kids fall through the cracks because CSOs don't have time to check on them because they are doing paperwork. Take out some layers of bureaucracy that don't increase safety for the child and find some way to measure how safe a child is before, during and after intervention and then this could be effective reporting*
- *In some years, you couldn't even compare data in the same state because of goal-post moving (e.g. AIHW reports), let alone states. Open data is a joke because the data provided is designed to highlight*

departmental achievement rather than outcome effectiveness

- *Again, agree with the sentiment. Obviously oversight is critical*

Further information

Two respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and how this would be different to the current processes:

- *I agree there should be more transparent performance reporting but more details are needed on this proposal*
- *Don't they do reporting already? How would this be different?*

Address the underlying issues

Two respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to insufficient staffing and under resourcing, and the need for a whole of government and community approach:

- *People should be accountable for their workloads providing sufficient staff are available. However, people cannot be held accountable for the behaviour of families as these issues are frequently unpredictable. Many children are at risk and those at higher risk are more likely to come to harm. Intent of harm or intent to allow the child to come to harm more than risk would need to be assessed and unfortunately this can most often be assessed after the fact*
- *Currently they have significant KPIs, what else are they expecting to measure? There is transparency as it is, this is again trying to set a narrative that the DCSYW is totally useless and it is a false narrative. It must be dispelled. Of course there are issues and the DCSYW has addressed many of the issues that were raised by the Coroner's Inquiry - it must be said that they did so before the report because this is a system that wants to prevent children being harmed. Without a whole of government (bi-partisan) and community approach we will keep having these conversations*

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

Other respondents identified different ways of achieving transparency and accountability:

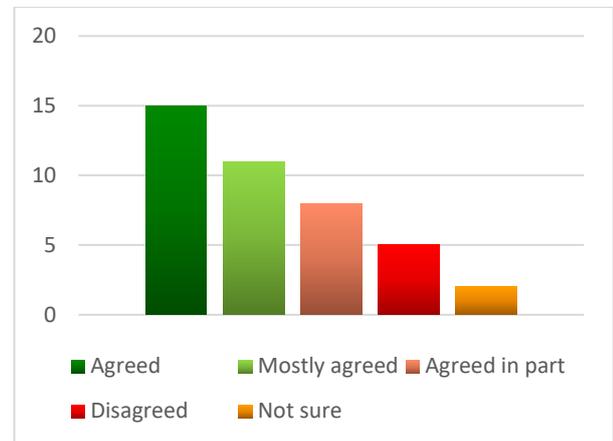
- *While this might seem good, in practice this leads to completing forms for stats rather than the provision of quality services. If govt targeted the bullying and racist culture in every office things might be different*
- *Child Safety already has mechanisms of accountability - indeed it is one of only a few departments that does have an internal and external review process. Furthermore, this logic assumes that Child Safety is entirely responsible for children falling through the cracks. Children at risk attend schools, health care services, come into contact with police, communities - the risk needs to be shared across sectors with greater integration between sectors rather than a political system that makes them compete for funding thereby building silos of service delivery - this is why they fall through the cracks*

Private consultants and employees of consultancy or training organisations

Of the 41 private consultants and employees of consultancy or training organisations, who answered this question:

- 15 (36.59%) agreed with the proposal
- 11 (26.83%) mostly agreed
- 8 (19.51%) agreed only in part
- 5 (12.20%) disagreed, and
- 2 (4.88%) indicated that they were not sure

One respondent skipped this question.



17 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Two respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns with children falling through the cracks and current processes:

- *Hopefully reduce the deaths of these kids*
- *Totally agree, there are CSSCs that need a complete overhaul!*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, how it is to be collected, streamlining reporting processes, and how the data is to be used:

- *I agree in principle. As long as these are not 'another tick and flick' performance criteria which loses relevance quickly. Rather, genuine 'weekly' Case Reviews and Reporting Meetings (Case aware/ informed at all times) which 'do' occur weekly. With staff and Team Leaders frequently discussing, sharing and recording case information and held to account as information is reported up (Executives) 'weekly.' Safeguarding children and young people don't fall through the cracks and ensuring 'all' staff who are working a particular case are aware, at any given time, of 'the full facts' of the case and working to achieve a set outcome/s across Teams. Currently, Department staff CSO's and Team*

Leaders fluctuate (move/leave cases frequently) across cases and information is depersonalised, normalised, undetected, missed, and/or lost and/or not followed up on due to this

- *But it needs to be achievable or it will become an additional burden, which is not what is needed*
- *Workers are consumed with paperwork and stats at present - it needs to be streamlined*
- *As long as this ACTUALLY happens! Data and reporting is easily written without evidence necessarily so how do we make sure this is actually proof, we also need to listen to the concerns of parents and how they find systematic processes of their local offices*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, and accessing expert advice:

- *Resourcing must be provided to underpin any department changes required*
- *Please ensure that expert advice from mental health practitioners is provided to Child Safety to help them understand that before removed children need counselling, they need safety. A safe placement and safety where they DO NOT have ongoing contact with known perpetrators of abuse. Processing trauma and recovery cannot happen when children keep seeing perpetrators who have not admitted to the abuse or done any work to repair the damage they have done to their child*

Further information

A number of respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal:

- *Too vague in detail.....what would constitute performance?*
- *There is not enough detail in this statement to comment. I know that Child Safety Officers feel that they do a huge amount of reporting already. Reporting takes time and this is time away from case work*

Address the underlying issues

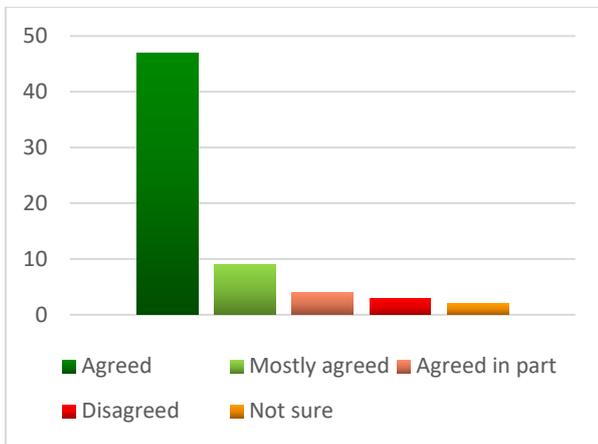
Some respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *Child Safety already has a strong reporting regime*
- *The focus at service centres should be on case work, not on reporting data. Part of the current problem is that management tend to expect protection workers to reach paperwork key performance indicators; as every worker has too many cases, this is achieved by not being able to spend enough time out of the office working with children and families*
- *The ever-growing paperwork and bureaucracy often take up time in which practitioners and managers are able to connect to the required work of providing support to vulnerable families and communities*

Parents (and other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 65 parents (or other family members) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 47 (72.31%) agreed with the proposal
- 9 (13.85%) mostly agreed
- 4 (6.15%) agreed only in part
- 3 (4.62%) disagreed, and
- 2 (3.08%) indicated that they were not sure



14 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

A number of respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns with children falling through the cracks and current processes:

- *ABSOLUTELY! It is outrageous that this has not been in place. So many vulnerable children have fallen through the cracks, unnecessarily losing connection with family and parents*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, how it is to be collected, independence of the process and how the data is to be used:

- *I guess it depends on what the performance reporting covers and focuses on relevant and important measures that supports the services in carrying out their responsibilities*
- *This has to be centred around children's welfare first and not stupid target systems that make it all about just getting numbers and hitting targets purely on a numbers basis*
- *Agree with independent oversight and defined consequences for negligence*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, checks on decision making, consistency across regions and CSSCs, and an IT system that supports data collection:

- *As long as staffing is maintained or upgraded so that this does not impact in a negative way by reducing effectiveness of time spent by officers with face to face investigation*
- *There should not be reporting by one individual. It has been a regular occurrence when one person's opinion has changed people's lives forever just because that person happens to be biased against someone. There should be a group of 3 or 4 witnesses accountable to senior executives, not just one person*
- *One of my children's cases is with a regional service centre. There is hardly any staff and they don't act within the normal standards of a city based service centre. There is much to be done around how these centres work*
- *And an IT system that can support this*

Address the underlying issues

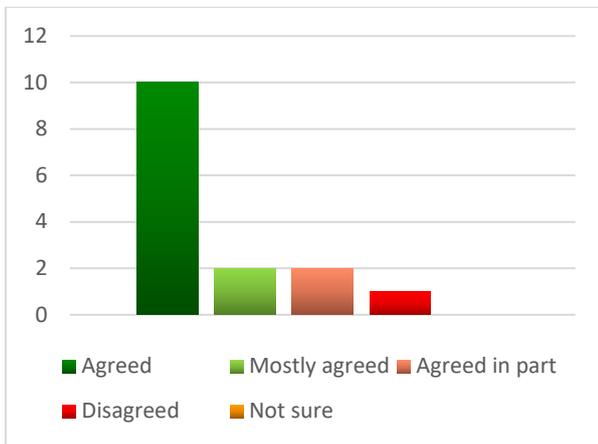
One respondent identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department:

- *KPI for this kind of issue is a very bad idea*

Young people (under 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 15 young people (under 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 10 (66.67%) agreed with this proposal
- 2 (13.33%) mostly agreed
- 2 (13.33%) agreed only in part, and
- 1 (6.67%) disagreed



2 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Address the underlying issues

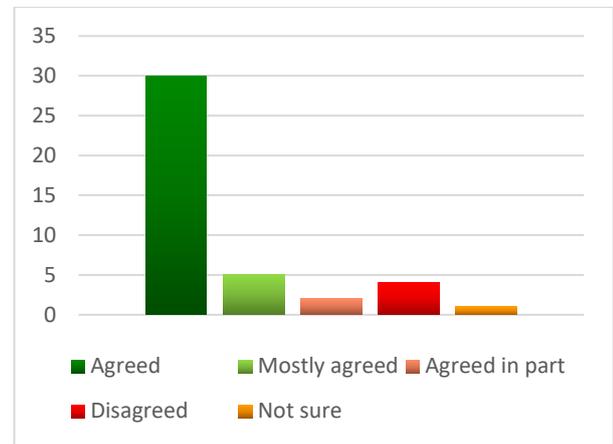
Two respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to insufficient staffing and under resourcing, and the need to treat the whole family:

- *Money can be better spent elsewhere. On the ground level. CSOs can't do their jobs without the right support and resources*
- *Drugs are self-medicating trauma, we need to treat whole family systems and family scapegoat system is the real problem*

Older people (over 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system

Of the 42 older people (over 25 years) with a lived experience of the child protection system who answered this question:

- 30 (71.43%) agreed with this proposal
- 5 (11.90%) mostly agreed
- 2 (4.76%) agreed only in part
- 4 (9.52%) disagreed, and
- 1 (2.38%) indicated that they were not sure



11 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

A number of respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and current processes:

- *There is enough evidence to suggest that 'falling through the cracks' has caused some catastrophic outcomes for children*
- *I understand that child services are damned if they do and damned if they don't but authorities should be held accountable, the same for parents and/or guardians*
- *Absolutely. Regional Executive Directors get paid a huge wage to take ownership and ensure their region is performing. They need to take the data (that head office provides them regularly) more seriously and actually put initiatives in place (at a local level)! to deal with certain pressures the region is experiencing*

Scoping KPIs

One respondent highlighted the need for consistent application of the KPIs:

- *Need to have senior management and executives be subject to the same performance reporting and standards. This will ensure that regional and metro centres aren't under resourced and forced into poor reviews*

Other considerations

One respondent expressed concern that the proposal not increase paperwork:

- *As long as this does not mean more paperwork*

Address the underlying issues

Many respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *The above statement is general in nature and therefore the answer is general and not specific enough. It reminds me of politicians. There are already significant monitoring and reviewing systems in place but if you don't have the staff or the right staff, problems will continue. Also if you provide staff with the time and opportunity to do the work then at the very least you'll receive a very basic level of service*
- *Not the answer as reporting and KPIs only add pressure to a busy service, already so much red tape*

Other ways of achieving transparency and accountability

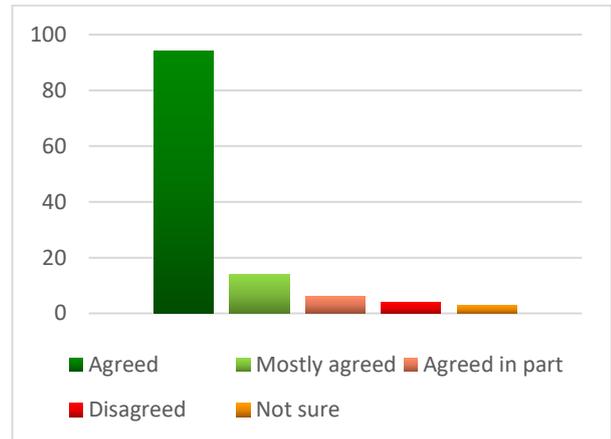
One respondent identified a different way of achieving transparency and accountability:

- *What does this mean? Performance reporting? Child Safety Department System works as 'blame culture'. It is the problem. The lack of understanding, compassion, wisdom in the system exists because of the performance reporting. Start to care for the families and build human relationships between clients and staff. This 'performance reporting' is more of the same blame culture leaving everyone stressed and undermined, the children suffering the most*

Foster Carers

Of the 121 Foster Carers who answered this question:

- 94 (77.69%) agreed with this proposal
- 14 (11.57%) mostly agreed
- 6 (4.96%) agreed only in part
- 4 (3.31%) disagreed, and
- 3 (2.48%) indicated that they were not sure



10 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and current processes:

- *Absolutely - it is time they are held accountable for their inactions where children die or are harmed*
- *At present the department seem to be writing their own cheques. No accountability unless it becomes a high profile case or in the media*
- *And if they do not perform they need to be in someway accountable and liable. They should not be just moved offices or role. They are part of reason if a child slips through the cracks*
- *This would also support foster carers, who, with certain CSSCs, are unable to access needed support for children due to not being heard*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured, how it is to be measured, how it is to be collected, independence of the process and how the data is to be used:

- *As long as this means protection for the kids, and not a hidden quota for reunification! And what are the consequences for sending kids back into dangerous environments?*
- *Reporting to who?? Who is going to hold them accountable? Now if you complain to the Minister it goes straight back to the service centre it originated from ..who then add it to the piles under their carpet*
- *If this actually would prevent a child falling in between the cracks. As long as children not at real risk aren't removed to just meet a number criteria, or removed from parents unnecessarily*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring smaller caseloads and sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, considering stakeholder input, cultural change:

- *This will only work if each CSO has a smaller caseload. More staff are needed*
- *Depends on how this would be done, as staff already have a huge workload, which is why children are not getting checked on by child safety in a timely manner*
- *Also consider the foster and kinship carers' opinions in stakeholders meetings when decisions are made*

Address the underlying issues

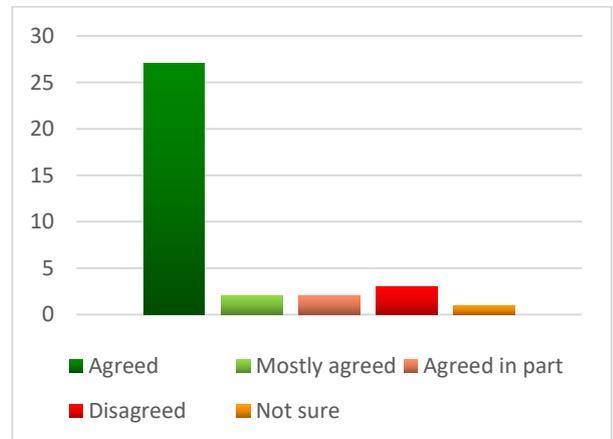
A number of respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing. They expressed concern that this would place unrealistic pressures on staff that could not be met which, in turn, would further limit their capacity to do the work:

- *There are reporting systems in place. These can be adjusted and increased where needed*
- *More reporting isn't going to help anyone! What is needed is more time for robust casework and less reporting*
- *Putting more work on already overworked Child Safety concerns me. I see many places where they are 'wasting their time'. I think that process needs to be looked at across the board and see where they are wasting time and looking at why things are falling through the cracks*

Kinship Carers

Of the 35 Kinship Carers who answered this question:

- 27 (77.14%) agreed with the proposal
- 2 (5.71%) mostly agreed
- 2 (5.71%) agreed only in part, and
- 3 (8.57%) disagreed, and
- 1 (2.86%) indicated that they were not sure



9 of the respondents within this stakeholder group commented on their responses.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and current processes:

- *I think greater accountability up the line will make a difference, especially where CSSC*

front line staff have endlessly identified areas of need and regional decisions are made to ignore funding shortfalls to spend money on other priorities (for example leaving positions vacant so they can save money)

- *All staff need to be aware of vulnerable children in placement with red flag*
- *The department is highly skilled at reporting to their advantage*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included ensuring there are sufficient staff and supports to do the work and greater sharing of information:

- *Child Safety Officers need to be accountable for their work and behaviour, however the support also needs to be put in place for the workers*
- *And sharing more information with the carers especially Kinship Carers*

Address the underlying issues

Many respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing and under resourcing:

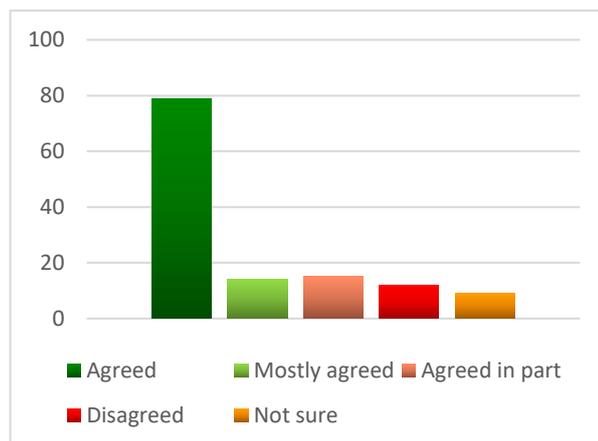
- *However are there significant monitors of staff supporting these children?*
- *Don't they already spend far too much time doing paperwork instead of actually working in the community? Pay more social workers, get more people, not more reports!*

Others

Of the 129 survey respondents who indicated that they did not belong to one of the aforementioned groups or who identified with multiple groups, and who answered this question:

- 79 (61.24%) agreed with the proposal
- 14 (10.85%) mostly agreed
- 15 (11.63%) agreed only in part
- 12 (9.30%) disagreed, and

- 9 (6.98%) indicated that they were not sure



45 of respondent within this stakeholder group provided comments.

Increased transparency and accountability

Some respondents agreed with the need for increased transparency and accountability for performance due to concerns about children falling through the cracks and current processes. A number of these respondents identified the need for similar external requirements to those currently applied to the non-government sector:

- *The system needs to be held to the same account as all other systems. Currently little or no transparency*
- *Yes there are way too many children being killed at the hand of a parent, the cycle of bad parenting needs to be broken as well for a number of families where parents don't know how to be a parent, the cycle of abuse has been the normal and they don't know any different. We need to teach adults how to parent*
- *It's very easy for senior execs to pass the blame when something goes wrong, and there needs to be strong uniformity across the regions, with regional directors having the same stance on all issues and guided by the same protocols, not just the legislation*

Scoping KPIs

Some respondents highlighted the need to carefully scope the key performance indicators to be used including what is to be measured,

how it is to be measured and unintended consequences of performance indicators:

- *Reporting on what? Need to know the KPIs to be reported on. Not just numbers, needs to be focussed on outcomes*
- *Such systems have ended up being highly 'gamed' and MUST be directly aligned with safety of the highest risk kids. Each CSSC is very different - not really one size fits all, so some consideration must be given. The better KPIs are those that ensure the basic practices are being maintained. However, better STL leadership KPIs should also exist, such as proper supervision KPIs*
- *Performance indicators that are unrealistic have often contributed to children falling through the cracks. Child Safety Officers are basically working the same as insurance officers- they are expected to 'get the files off their desks' and 'close files quickly' - this leads to children being seen as statistics to be managed, rather than children that need care and support*
- *This should not be a numbers game. Any analysis should be based on individual evaluations*

Other considerations

Other considerations identified by respondents included the purpose of collecting and using data, ensuring there are sufficient staff to do the work and achieve the KPIs, additional funding, and addressing systemic issues:

- *Depending on 'performance' definition*
- *Anything that increases accountability is a good thing, as long as it doesn't set up failure for already exhausted child protection force staff*
- *Senior Executives in the Department should be held more accountable but only if the resources exist to effect change with highly trained, well remunerated and resourced workforce to support families and the community and protect children*
- *If you continually are just 'reporting up' who will actually be held accountable? Senior executives' job description would need an overhaul and even at that, if senior executives are then managing all of this, when will they have time to implement and*

assess critical changes? It sounds like new roles would be required for this

- *Accountability is good, but I would like to think that Child Protection Officers work very hard, and that failings are more likely the result of systemic issues or underfunding, than incompetence*

Further information

A number of respondents identified the need for further information to consider the proposal including what reporting is currently happening and why this isn't sufficient, how this would be different to the current processes, and how it may impact on staff and the work:

- *Would like to see the performance reporting criteria to be able to have an informed opinion on this question*

Address the underlying issues

Some respondents identified that new performance reporting would not address the issues facing the Child Safety Department which relate to high caseloads, insufficient staffing, under resourcing and inadequate funding of community services:

- *Do not agree to a system that seeks to find fault which may lead to the case officer always being made a scapegoat*
- *Is there evidence that current reporting structures are failing because they are professionally inadequate, or that staff are inadequately trained or that the system is overworked with too high caseloads?*
- *Many of these systems of performance reporting are far too rigid and have no room for flexibility*
- *Instead of pouring money into performance reporting, use those funds to provide more resources to service centres. It doesn't take a genius or an expert to work out that children are dying because the child protection system is completely overrun*
- *Start by adequately funding community services that provide support for vulnerable people before a top down system that ensures the paperwork is done without concern about the best outcome for children and the community*

