Results from FACS survey of guardians, adoptive parents and other carers
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Why the survey?
Why the survey?

Data capture
• Understand the experience of guardians, adoptive parents and other carers.

Inform program design
• Take a new approach to the recruitment, development and support of guardians, adoptive parents and other carers.

Share results with important stakeholders
• Use digital and social media, including www.caring.childstory.nsw.gov.au
• Brief FACS Districts and out-of-home care practitioners.
• Tell the sector (FACS-funded peaks and NGOs).
• Acknowledge people in caring roles via networks and correspondence.
Survey participants
Survey participants

1,481 people took part.

The average participant is a 36-55 year-old female homeowner, who is currently a foster carer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of carer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>current foster carer</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current relative/kin carer</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past foster carer</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current guardian</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identifies as Aboriginal</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALD background</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorising agency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACS</td>
<td>41%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most common locations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunter New England</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least common locations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South East Sydney</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far West</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>homeowner</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>renter</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Motivations for becoming a carer
Motivations for becoming a carer

- wanting to **make a difference** to a child or young person's life 72%
- wanting to **break the cycle** of disadvantage for future generations 41%
- wanting to act as a **positive role model** in the community 27%
- a **family member** needed someone else to care for their child/ren 25%
The process of becoming a carer
The process of becoming a carer

Overall level of satisfaction with the process

![Graph showing satisfaction levels]

Suggested improvements

- more detailed **information** on the challenges when caring for a child 51%
- **training** on the impact of trauma and challenging behaviour 51%
- ongoing **communication** from agency on progress of assessment 49%
- **connecting** to another carer, guardian or adoptive parent 41%

How initial training prepares carers

![Graph showing training preparation levels]
The carer experience
## Training

| Frequency | | Most selected training topics |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------|
| • 1-3 training topics in 12 months 51% | • challenging behaviors 66% |
| • no training in 12 months 26% | • healing from trauma 63% |

### Preferred delivery

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• face-to-face training 75%</td>
<td>• advocating for children 54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• online training 54%</td>
<td>• building resilience 51%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Preferred length of training

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<tr>
<td>• half-day 45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 2 hours 40%</td>
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**Training is fairly helpful or very helpful**

62%
Information

Child placement information
- unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory 49%
- satisfactory or very satisfactory 28%

How carers receive information
- email 68%
- mail 38%

Utility of information

Top online searches of carers
- Connecting Carer NSW
- FACS website
- Fostering NSW website
Connecting with other carers

How carers meet
- in person 47%
- online 36%
- a combination 36%

Frequency of connections
- weekly 37%
- monthly 33%
- bi-monthly 17%

Preferred events for connecting
- local gatherings with kids 64%
- training 60%
- local gatherings without kids 44%
- camps with kids 40%

Barriers
- uncertainty about how to connect or lack of information about events 62%
Advocacy

Where carers seek advocacy support
- Connecting Carers NSW 43%
- Agency caseworker or manager 39%
- another carer 29%

Top issues
- problems with FACS or agency 55%
- problems with caseworker 27%

Overall satisfaction with available support

Carers who have accessed advocacy support

Overall satisfaction with available support

Very satisfied
Satisfied
Neither
Unsatisfied
Very unsatisfied
Relative and kinship carers
Relative and kinship carers

### Satisfaction with ongoing support for relative and kinship carers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>22.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>19.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>20.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfied</td>
<td>25.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unsatisfied</td>
<td>11.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Satisfaction with ease of finding contacts to discuss care options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>9.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>18.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>15.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfied</td>
<td>30.65%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Satisfaction with respect shown to them as a relative/kin carer

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>19.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>16.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>27.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfied</td>
<td>23.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unsatisfied</td>
<td>12.59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respite and carer wellbeing
Respite and carer wellbeing

Self-assessment of wellbeing
• satisfactory or very satisfactory 68%
• unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory 15%

Respite care
• not accessed 50%
• accessed in the past 37%
• never been offered it 22%
• accessed in the last 6 months 13%
Overall satisfaction
Overall satisfaction

Ways to improve overall satisfaction

• greater **respect** for the role of caring 73%
• caseworker **stability** 63%
• improved **advocacy and support** 60%
• more support with medical and educational **costs** 55%
• **consistent policies and procedures** across the sector 52%
• flexible **training** options 50%
• more opportunities to **connect** with carers 50%
Looking to the future
Looking to the future

Respondents considering guardianship or adoption
- guardianship 55%
- open adoption 44%
- neither 19%

Rationale
- improved permanency outcomes for child 68%
- increased confidence for the child or young person as part of my family 61%
- greater stability for all family members 61%
- to remove the stigma of foster or relative/kin care 47%
- reduced FACS/agency involvement in my family 47%
41% don’t see themselves ending their carer role.

Top reasons respondents would end their role in the future
• becoming a guardian or adoptive parent 27%
• age of child or children in care 21%
• level of support 19%
• OOHC system too difficult 16%

45% would likely or very likely recommend becoming a carer, guardian or adoptive parent to friends, family or the broader community.