

QFCC Community Perceptions Survey 2024

Summary of key findings

About the survey

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) has conducted a community perceptions survey in 2017 and annually since 2019.

In 2024, the survey focused on the community's knowledge and perceptions about:

- Overall confidence and trust in the child protection system
- Awareness of where to report concerns or seek help in relation to a child's safety or wellbeing
- Contact with the child protection and family support system
- Consideration of becoming a foster or kinship carer
- Proportion agreeing they would take in a friend's child in a time of emergency
- Agreement with statements about protections and supports for children and young people
- Agreement with statements about whether the views of children and young people are listened to and valued
- Proportion accessing youth mental health services and barriers to accessing the services
- Agreement with statements about mental health services
- Agreement with statements about the prioritisation, safety and inclusion of children and young people
- Perceptions of incarceration of children
- Parent (or those acting in a parenting role) agreement with statements about supporting their child and accessing services
- Perceptions of what the biggest issues are for parents and children in Queensland.

The full survey report can be found [here](#)



Method

We surveyed **3,641** people between 27 March and 23 April 2024. The survey was available through online and offline methods (including over the phone).



97%
Online

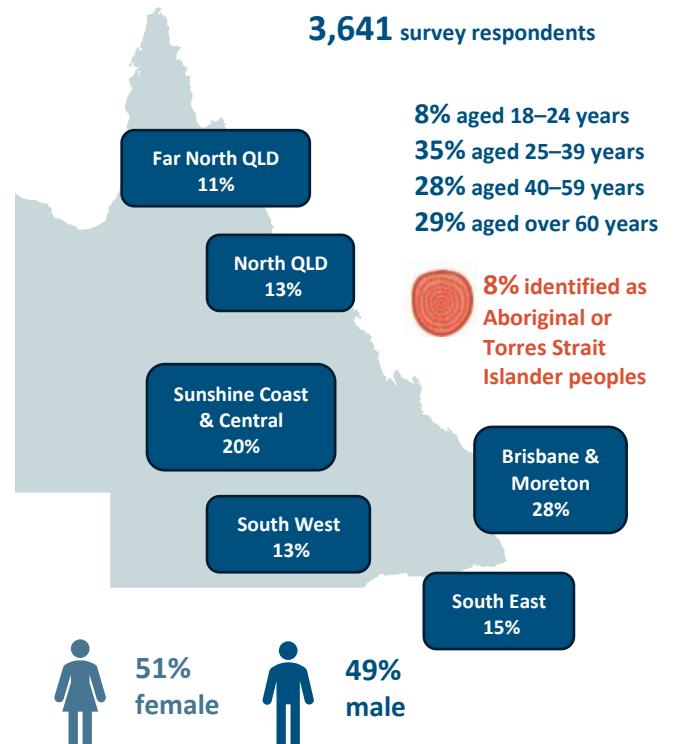


3%
Offline
methods



Respondents

3,641 survey respondents



Queensland
Family & Child
Commission



Queensland
Government

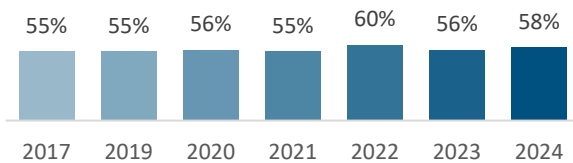


Key findings

Confidence and trust in the child protection system

In the 2024 survey, **58%** of respondents agreed with the statement 'Overall, I have confidence and trust in the Queensland child protection system' (**50%** agreed, **8%** strongly agreed). A total of **42%** disagreed (**32%** disagreed, **10%** strongly disagreed).

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who agreed that 'Overall, I have confidence and trust in the Queensland child protection system', 2017-2024



Respondents who were responsible for the care of a child aged 0-17 years were more likely to agree they had confidence in the Queensland child protection system (**62%** versus **58%** overall).

Factors that would increase confidence in the child protection system

Respondents who expressed lack of confidence and trust in the Queensland child protection system were asked what would increase their confidence in the system. This was a new question in the 2024 survey and respondents were able to answer in their own words.

Factors that would increase confidence included:

- fewer negative outcomes for children (not leaving children in unsafe situations, more child-focussed outcomes) (**19%**).
- improvements to resourcing and system processes, including **14%** who suggested improvements to resources and capability aspects (more staff/case workers, improved retention, skills and capability) and **11%** who noted improvements to the speed and way initial concerns are dealt with (improved response times, early interventions, proactiveness).
- **16%** needed more information and awareness of the child protection system to make a more favourable judgement.

Less than half (49%) of respondents agreed children and young people in their community are protected from abuse and neglect with **42% agreeing** and **7% strongly agreeing**.

Prioritisation, safety and inclusion

We asked respondents about the prioritisation, safety and inclusion of children and young people.

49% agreed the Queensland Government prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

47% agreed that young people are portrayed fairly in the media

45% agreed that young people have the opportunity to contribute to discussions about issues that affect them

Nearly **7 in 10 (69%)** respondents agreed that the involvement of young people in public life positively contributes to social cohesion.



First Nations respondents were more likely to disagree that children are safe in their community (**39%** versus **27%** overall) and that the community prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people (**32%** versus **25%** overall).

Minimum age of incarceration

As was the case in both 2022 and 2023, the 2024 survey shows that most respondents consider the minimum age a child should be incarcerated is 12 years or older (**76%** in 2023, **72%** in 2024). Compared with the 2023 survey, there has been a decrease in the proportion of respondents nominating 14 years as the minimum age for incarceration (**49%** in 2023, **36%** in 2024).



Youth mental health

We asked all respondents about the accessibility, affordability, and timeliness of youth mental health services in their area and whether services were culturally appropriate.



Only **50%** of respondents said they had access to mental health services in their area.

Out of the respondents who could access youth mental health services, **46%** agreed they were culturally appropriate; **32%** felt they were affordable; and just **26%** said the service was timely (that is, the services had enough capacity to meet demand without waitlists).

Close to **1 in 4** respondents who were under 26 or had parenting responsibilities had tried to access youth mental health services in the past 3 years.

Of these, **68%** had experienced barriers, including:

- **72%** - long waitlists
- **58%** - cost of services
- **23%** - unsure how to obtain referral
- **20%** - lack of services in area
- **20%** - unaware of services in area



First Nations respondents were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the accessibility (**30%** versus **23%** overall) and cultural appropriateness (**30%** versus **14%** overall) of youth mental health services in their area.

Difficulty maintaining housing

A new question was added to the 2024 survey asking whether respondents had experienced difficulty maintaining housing in the past six months.

Overall, **20%** of respondents indicated they had difficulty maintaining housing, including:

- **9%** who were unable to pay rent
- **4%** unable to pay their mortgage
- **4%** unable to access stable housing, and
- **3%** experiencing discrimination in their housing search or application process.

Parenting, safety and inclusion of children and young people

The survey asked respondents whether they agreed with a range of statements about families, parenting, young people and communities. Agreement was highest for the statements:

- 'the cost of living is having a negative impact on families' (**91%** strongly agreed or agreed)
- 'being a parent is hard work' (**87%**)
- 'parents struggle to discipline their children' (**81%**).

Between **60%** and **70%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements in 2024:

'I feel safe in my community' **70%**

'The involvement of young people in public life positively contributes to social cohesion' **69%**

'Schools maintain (or provide) safe and supportive learning environments for children' **66%**

'The community prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people' **63%**

'Children are safe in my community' **63%**



Parents/carers were more likely to agree the cost of living is having a negative impact on families (**93%** versus **90%** for those not responsible for children).

Reporting child safety concerns

As in 2023 (**57%**), police were the most commonly nominated organisation that respondents in 2024 would report a concern to about a child's safety or wellbeing (**58%**), followed by a relevant government agency (e.g. Department of Community Services/Department of Child Safety) (**56%** in 2023, **54%** in 2024).



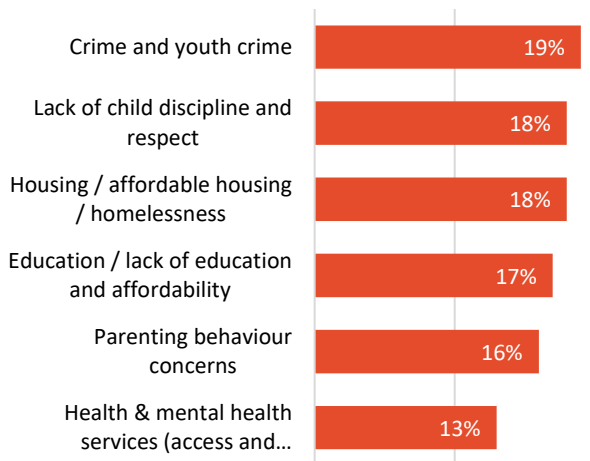
First Nations respondents were significantly less likely to report concerns to police (**43%** versus **58%** overall).

The big issues facing parents and children in Queensland

In their own words, respondents told us they were most concerned about cost-of-living pressures, crime/youth crime and affordable housing/homelessness.



49% of respondents identified cost of living/finances/money as one of the biggest issues for parents and children in 2024.



First Nations respondents were more likely to highlight housing affordability and homelessness as one of the biggest issues for parents and children in Queensland (**13%** versus **9%** among those who do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander).

Protections and supports for children and young people

We asked about the supports, services and wellbeing mechanisms that children and young people have in their community.

Compared with 2023, there were statistically significant increases in agreement (agreed/strongly agreed) that in their communities:

- children and young people are supported to live safely at home with their families (**55%** in 2023, **58%** in 2024)
- children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect (**45%** in 2023, **49%** in 2024).

Regarding safety:

- **58%** of respondents agreed (agreed/ strongly agreed) that children are supported to live safely at home with their families
- **57%** agreed that in their community, children and young people live in safe communities.

| In my community, children and young people... | 2024 results |
|---|--------------|
| Can access sporting, recreational or community activities | 77% |
| Can access early childhood education and care, such as kindergarten | 77% |
| Can access the services they need to stay healthy, such as GPs and hospitals | 71% |
| Have support to stay engaged in learning at school or TAFE | 65% |
| Can access disability services if needed | 65% |
| Can access the services they need for healthy teeth, such as dentists | 64% ↓ |
| Can access NDIS supports if needed | 62% |
| Are supported to live safely at home with their families | 58% ↑ |
| Are supported to connect with their culture (for First Nations children and young people) | 57% |
| Live in safe communities | 57% |
| Are protected from abuse and neglect | 49% ↑ |

↑ ↓ indicates the result is a significant increase or decrease from the prior year result



First Nations respondents were more likely to agree that children and young people within their community are supported to connect with their culture (**65%** versus **57%** overall) and can access NDIS supports if needed (**65%** versus **62%** overall).

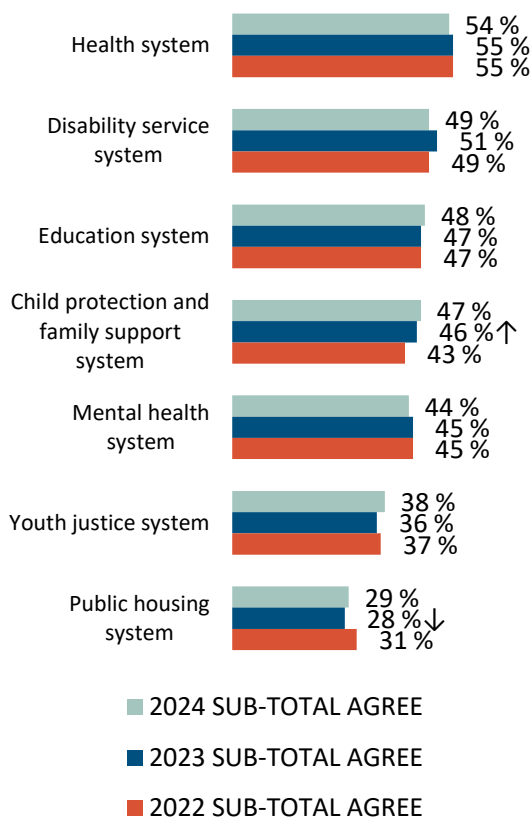
The role of children and young people in society

The systems perceived most likely to be listening to and valuing the views of children and young people were:

- the health system (54% agreed/strongly agreed)
- the disability services system (49%)
- the education system (48%)
- the child protection and family support system (47%)
- the mental health system (44%).

Agreement was lower among respondents regarding the public housing (29%) and youth justice systems (38%).

Figure 2. Agreement with whether the views of children and young people are listened to and valued, 2022-2024



Parents/carers were more likely to agree that the views of children and young people are listened to and valued by the health system (60% versus 54% overall).

First Nations respondents

Compared to the overall sample, respondents who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander were:

- Significantly more likely to consider becoming a foster or kinship carer (51% versus 38% among those who do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander)
- More likely to have tried to access youth mental health services in the last 3 years (31% versus 26% overall)
- More likely to agree with the statement 'I am satisfied with the amount of time I have available to spend with my children' (78% versus 72% of non-Indigenous respondents)
- More likely to highlight housing affordability and homelessness as one of the biggest issues for parents and children in Queensland (13% versus 9% of non-Indigenous respondents).



Parent/carer respondents

Compared to the overall sample, respondents who were responsible for the care of a child aged 0–17 years were:

- More likely to agree that youth mental health services are:
 - Accessible (services are available in the area) (55% versus 50% overall)
 - Culturally appropriate (54% versus 46% overall)
 - Affordable (39% versus 32% overall)
 - Timely (32% versus 26% overall)
- More likely to agree there is sufficient oversight of the Queensland child protection system (49% versus 42% overall) and Queensland youth justice system (46% versus 38% overall)
- More likely to consider becoming a foster or kinship carer (51% versus 39% overall) and would take in a friend's child in a time of emergency (94% versus 86% overall)
- More likely to agree that the Queensland Government prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people (52% versus 48% for those without responsibility for children) and that young people have the opportunity to contribute to discussions about issues that affect them (47% versus 44% for those without responsibility for children).