Putting Children First Reader Survey
Analysis - 2006

About the Survey

The *Putting Children First Reader Survey* was conducted to gain feedback from stakeholders on *Putting Children First*, NCAC resources and publications and the NCAC website, to assist with future improvement and development of these resources. The survey also sought feedback on resources in addition to *Putting Children First* and the website. Information was also sought on the Child Care Quality Assurance (CCQA) *Support Documents*, *Factsheets*, brochures and the Online Store that was added to the website in 2005.

Distribution

The *Survey* was distributed to:

- Family day care schemes
- Long day care centres
- Outside school hours care services
- Family day care carers
- Validators
- Moderators
- Peak bodies
- *Putting Children First* subscribers

Approximately 11,800 copies of the *Survey* were included with *Putting Children First* Issue 17 and made available on the NCAC website in March 2006.

The previous *Putting Children First Reader Survey* was conducted in April 2003. This survey gained feedback from 1,336 respondents from long day care and family day care services about *Putting Children First* and the NCAC website.

Respondents

The 2006 *Survey* received 1,965 responses. The majority of respondents were from services located outside of capital cities in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, with 42.5% from regional areas, 17.7% from rural areas and 3% from remote locations.
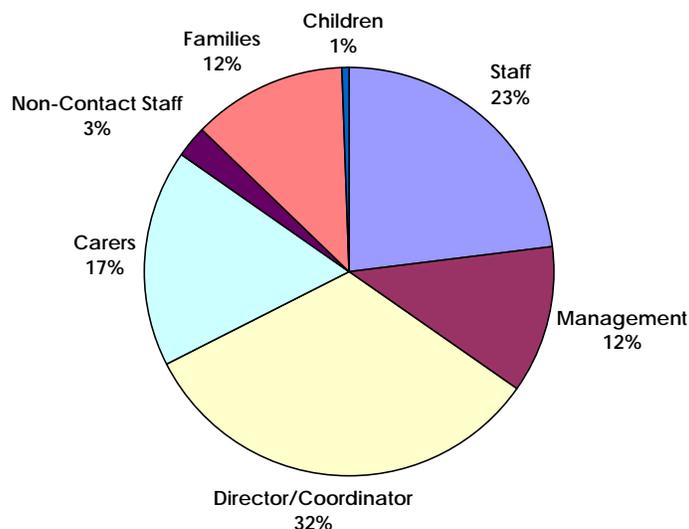
Of these respondents 56.5% were involved in long day care, 31.7% from outside school hours care and 11.4% from family day care.

Putting Children First

Putting Children First is NCAC's quarterly newsletter. It aims to provide information and support to children's services participating in the CCQA systems.

Readership

Directors, coordinators, service staff, carers, management and families made up the majority of the *Putting Children First* readership as shown in the graph below.

Pie chart showing readership breakdown:
- Children 1%
- Families 12%
- Non-Contact Staff 3%
- Carers 17%
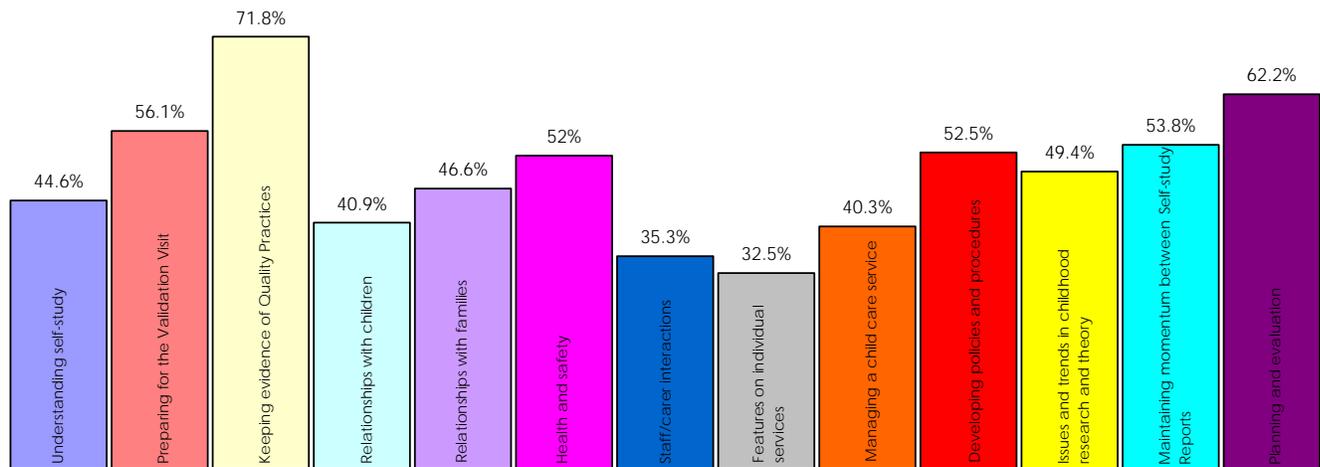- Director/Coordinator 32%
- Staff 23%
- Management 12%

Respondents were asked how *Putting Children First* is shared throughout their service.

- 82.8% stated that copies of *Putting Children First* were made available to read at the service
- 37.9% stated that they photocopied relevant articles of *Putting Children First* to distribute throughout the service
- 6.9% of respondents distributed photocopies of the entire publication
- 6.9% stated that staff/carers were referred to electronic copies on the NCAC website
- 87.9% kept copies to refer to as needed
- 11.2% kept copies for a limited time

Future Topics

Readers were asked about topics they would like to see in future issues of *Putting Children First.* The majority of respondents stated they would like to see information on keeping evidence of quality practices, planning and evaluation and developing policies and procedures, as shown in the graph below. Please note, respondents could choose multiple options.

Topic	Percentage
Understanding self-study	44.6%
Preparing for the Validation Visit	56.1%
Keeping evidence of Quality Practices	71.8%
Relationships with children	40.9%
Relationships with families	46.6%
Health and safety	52%
Staff/carer interactions	35.3%
Features on individual services	32.5%
Managing a child care service	40.3%
Developing policies and procedures	52.5%
Issues and trends in childhood research and theory	49.4%
Maintaining momentum between Self-study Reports	53.8%
Planning and evaluation	62.2%

Comments from Readers

Readers were asked to provide additional comments about *Putting Children First.* A sample of responses is provided below.

- *"Valuable resource. Gives parents and staff insight into accreditation, purpose and procedures."*

- *"Any information about accreditation is useful as it can be difficult to put it into practice."*

- *"Keep information straight to the point. Have information on exactly what policies and procedures you require."*

- *"Needs to be available in languages other than English for both parents and carers especially parent information sheet."*

- *"Give clear specific examples of practice. Not vague generalisations."*

- *"Short articles with easily visible sections are great for quick reference and reading during a busy day. Staff tend not to read large chunks at a time, with so much to do it looks overwhelming."*

- *"Staff are in information overload - better co-ordinated information between NCAC and all other bodies providing advice."*

Support Documents

Support Documents provide information that will assist services in their progression through the five steps of CCQA. These documents are posted to services as they begin each step of the CCQA process.

Readership

Service director and coordinators were the main readers of the *Support Documents.* Management, staff and carers also made up a large percentage of readers as the graph (right) shows.

Families 7%
Management 15%
Non-contact 2%
Carers 13%
Director/Coordinator 39%
Staff 24%
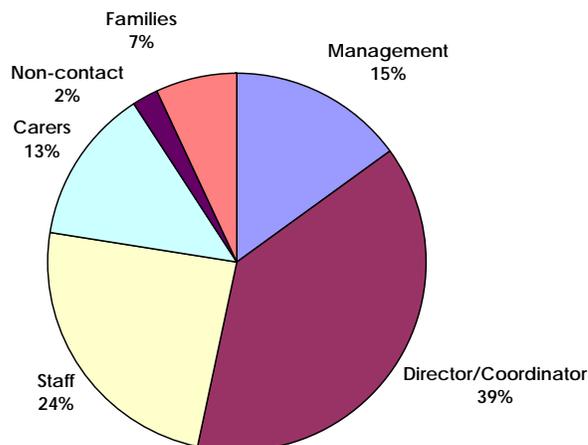
About the *Support Documents*

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with a number of statements about the *Support Documents.*

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The *Support Documents* are clear and easy to understand	91.2%	8%	0.8%
The information in the *Support Documents* is relevant to me	87.8%	11.7%	0.5%
I receive *Support Documents* when I need them	70.2%	7%	2.8%
The information provided in the *Support Documents* helps me with Quality Assurance	87%	11.9%	1.1%
I read the entire *Support Document* when I receive it	71.8%	22.6%	5.6%
I find the online copies of the *Support Documents* useful as a resource	57.3%	35.9%	6.8%

Suggested Improvements

Respondents were asked for suggestions for future improvements of the *Support Documents.* A sample of the feedback included:

- *"I feel as if they are not 'black and white'. There is too much room for interpretation and therefore possible error."*

- *"Clearer, less jargon, useful for all stakeholders, not just coordinator, updated more timely."*

- *"Need to be easier to read for staff."*

- *"They seem very 'wordy', maybe diagrams or flow-charts might break it up or examples of steps and what centres have done."*

- *"I understand there is so much information but it would be nice if they were more concise, staff tend to avoid reading them because they are so long.*

- *"Needs to be practical for remote and rural services."*

- *"As we have many carers with English as a second language, it should be mandatory for the* Support Documents *to be available in a wide variety of languages."*

- *"More user friendly, less mass content, more point form and ideas lists."*

- *"Flow charts for processes rather than (paragraph) written explanations would make more sense."*

Other NCAC Resources

Respondents were asked for feedback on other resources produced by NCAC.

Factsheets

NCAC has produced *Factsheets* to assist services progressing through CCQA. Each *Factsheet* provides practical examples, explanations, issues to consider, questions to ask and further information that will help services to continue to provide quality child care.

72.5% of respondents found the FDCQA and OSHCQA *Factsheets* to be a useful resource. Please note, *Factsheets* for QIAS had not been produced at the time of the survey.

Respondents stated that they would like to see future *Factsheets* on topics including:

- Nutrition
- Health and safety
- Involving and communicating with families

- Programming and evaluation
- Policies
- Behaviour management

Helping Services with Quality Assurance

Suggestions for other resources that could assist services with their quality improvement processes included:

- Help with self-study
- Checklists
- Videos/DVDs
- More translations

- Policy examples
- Posters
- Information packs for families
- Resource kits

Communicating with Children

Ideas on what NCAC could do to help services communicate with children about Quality Assurance included:

- Children's books
- Simple *Factsheets* and brochures
- Posters
- Videos/DVDs

Communicating with Families

Ideas on what NCAC could do to help services communicate with families about quality assurance included:

- Handouts and information sheets
- Posters about NCAC
- Information packs

- *Factsheets*
- A newsletter for families

NCAC Website

The NCAC website (www.ncac.gov.au) contains information about NCAC and the CCQA systems, including a search facility of all services registered with NCAC, an Online Store, NCAC resources, online training modules, statistical information, reports and papers presented by NCAC and links to child care related organisations.

Website Usage

82.2% of respondents stated that they had visited the NCAC website at some point in time. During 2006:

- 15.8% of respondents had not visited the website

- 9.9% of respondents had visited the website once

- 45.1% of respondents had visited the website between 2 and 5 times

- 13.4% of respondents had visited the website between 6 and 10 times

- 10.8% of respondents had visited the website more than 10 times
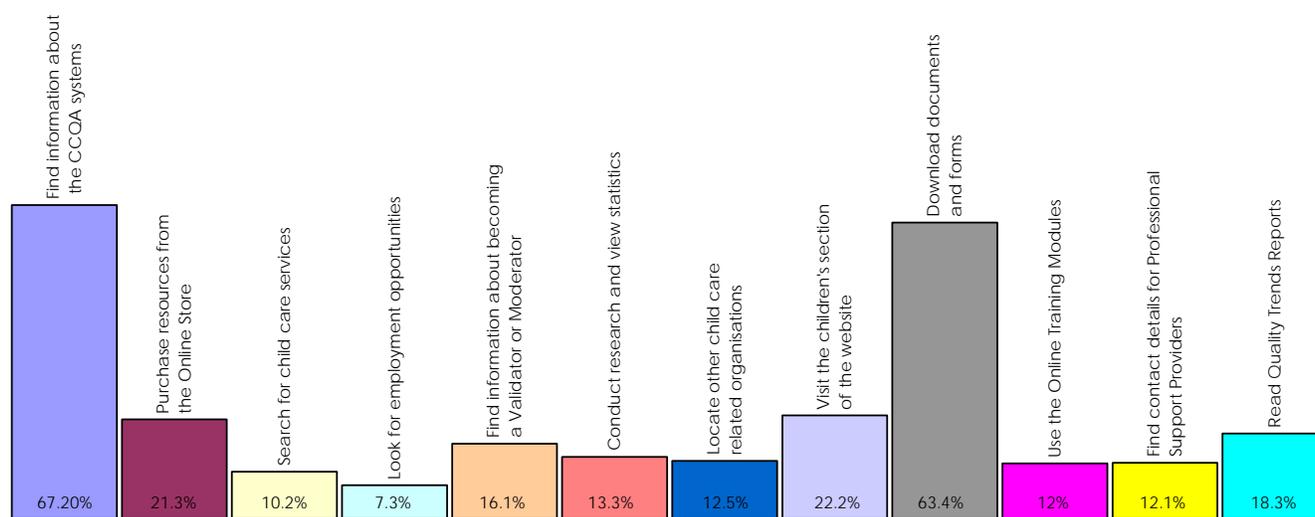
Access to the NCAC Website

Respondents were asked where they accessed the NCAC website. 64.2% stated they accessed the website from their child care service, 40.6% accessed the website from their home, 1.6% from their office and 1.2% from their TAFE institution (respondents could choose as many options as appropriate).

66.3% of respondents who accessed the website from their child care service stated their service used a broadband connection. 33.7% stated that their service used a dial-up connection to the Internet.

Reasons for Visiting the NCAC website

Respondents indicate the main reasons for visiting the NCAC website were to find information about the CCQA systems and to download documents and forms, as shown in the graph below.

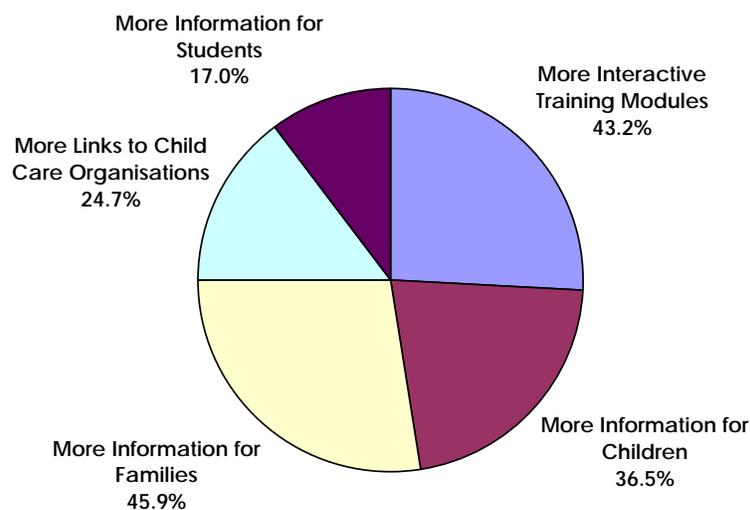| Find information about the CCQA systems	Purchase resources from the Online Store	Search for child care services	Look for employment opportunities	Find information about becoming a Validator or Moderator	Conduct research and view statistics	Locate other child care related organisations	Visit the children's section of the website	Download documents and forms	Use the Online Training Modules	Find contact details for Professional Support Providers	Read Quality Trends Reports
67.20%	21.3%	10.2%	7.3%	16.1%	13.3%	12.5%	22.2%	63.4%	12%	12.1%	18.3%

New NCAC Website

In February 2006 NCAC launched its new website. 47.9% of respondents had visited the new website. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with a number of statements about the new NCAC website.

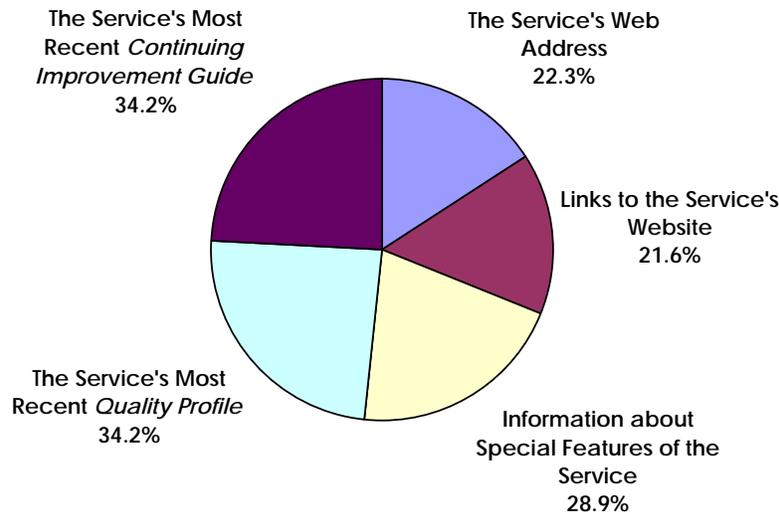|	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I like the look of the new NCAC website	88.3%	11%	0.7%
The information I need is easy to find	82.3%	13.7%	4%
The information is easy to understand	89.8%	9.4%	0.7%
The pages download quickly	76.7%	20.1%	3.2%
The information on the website saves me having to telephone NCAC	77.1%	18.2%	0.9%
I find the printer-friendly pages useful	88%	11.1%	0.9%
The redesigned website is easier to use than the previous website	65.6%	33%	1.4%
I have not experienced difficulties opening and downloading documents from the website	79.4%	14.5%	6.1%

Further Information

Respondents were asked what other information they would like to see on the NCAC website. The majority of respondents would like more information for families and more interactive training modules, as shown in the graph below.

More Information for Students 17.0%

More Links to Child Care Organisations 24.7%

More Interactive Training Modules 43.2%

More Information for Families 45.9%

More Information for Children 36.5%

Further Information about Child Care Services

Respondents were asked what other information about child care services they would find useful on the NCAC website. The results are shown in the graph below.

The Service's Most Recent *Continuing Improvement Guide* 34.2%

The Service's Web Address 22.3%

Links to the Service's Website 21.6%

The Service's Most Recent *Quality Profile* 34.2%

Information about Special Features of the Service 28.9%

NCAC Online Store

The NCAC Online Store was launched in July 2005. The Online Store enables users to purchase NCAC publications and resources online with payment by credit card.

15.5% of respondents had used NCAC's Online Store. These respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with a number of statements about the new NCAC Online Store.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I found the Online Store easy to use	78.6%	19.1%	2.3%
The Online Store was a convenient way of purchasing NCAC resources	80.6%	16.6%	2.8%
There is sufficient information about using the Online Store on the website	77.4%	18.4%	4.2%
I was happy with the time it took to receive my purchase	75.1%	20.3%	4.6%
I would like to use this facility to pay for other fees and charges, such as Registration Fees	59.8%	20.8%	8.4%
I would recommend using the Online Store to others	75.1%	23.2%	1.7%

The majority of respondents who had not used the Online Store stated that they had not needed to purchase NCAC resources, they did not use a credit card or were unsure about the security of online shopping.