

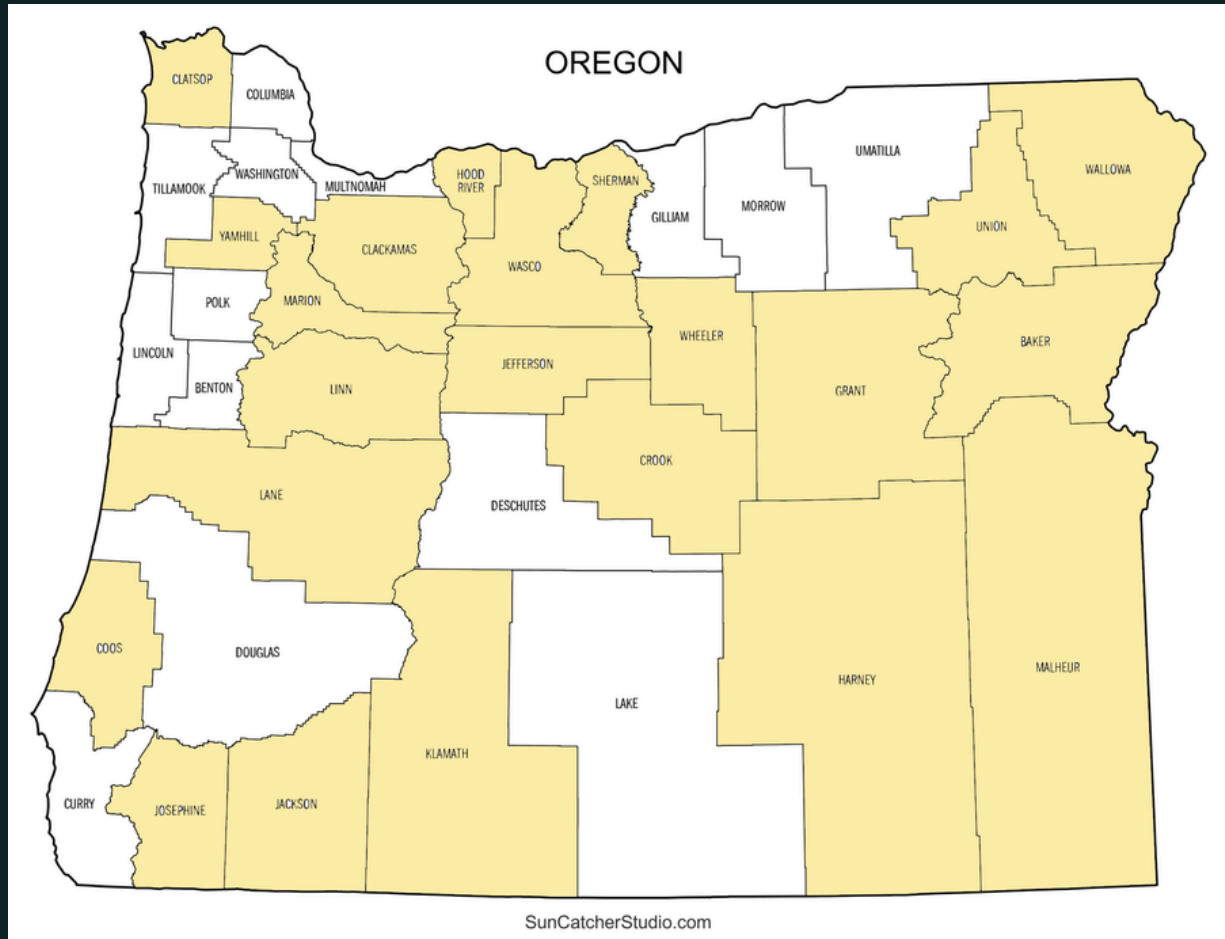
Bench Survey

2024



Prepared For
OCN NETWORK

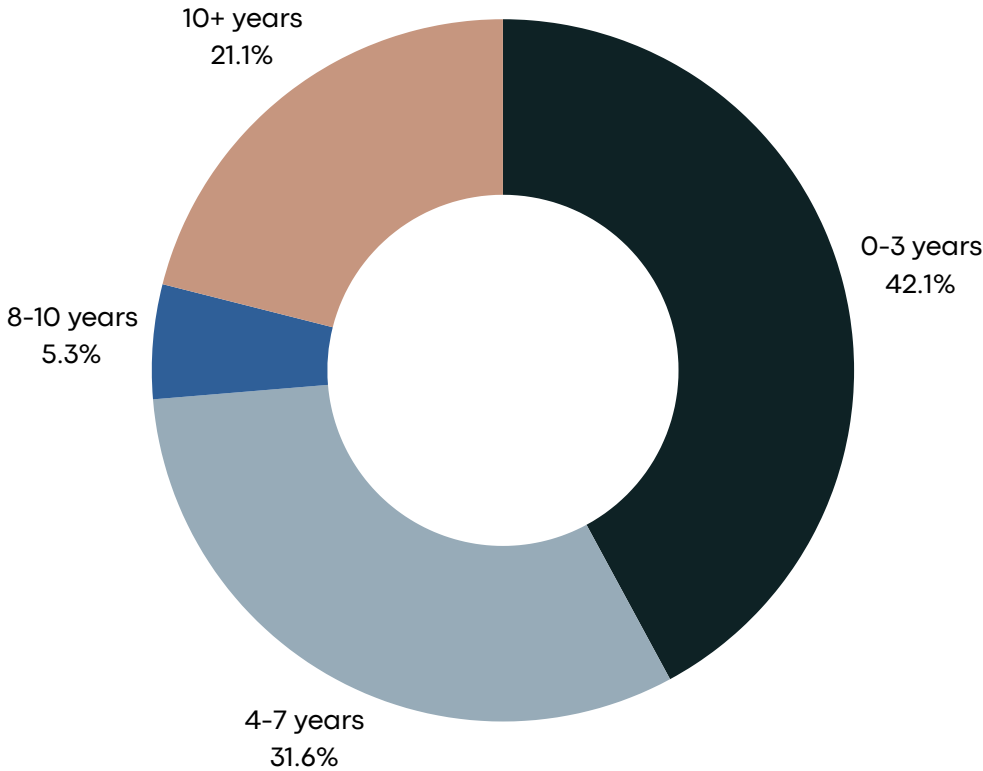
Representation



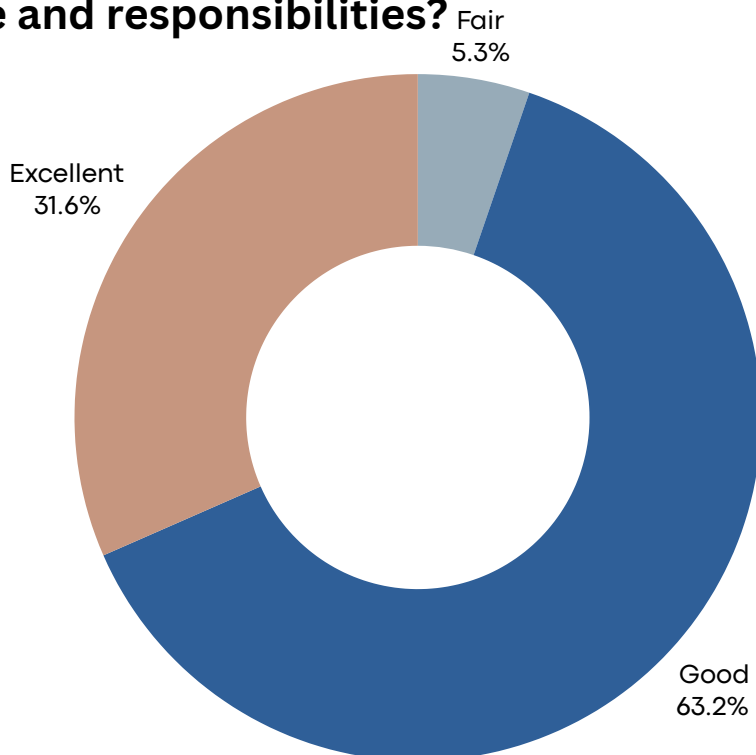
Approximately 54% of children experiencing wardship are served by programs represented in this survey.

Generic Information

How long have you been a dependency judge?

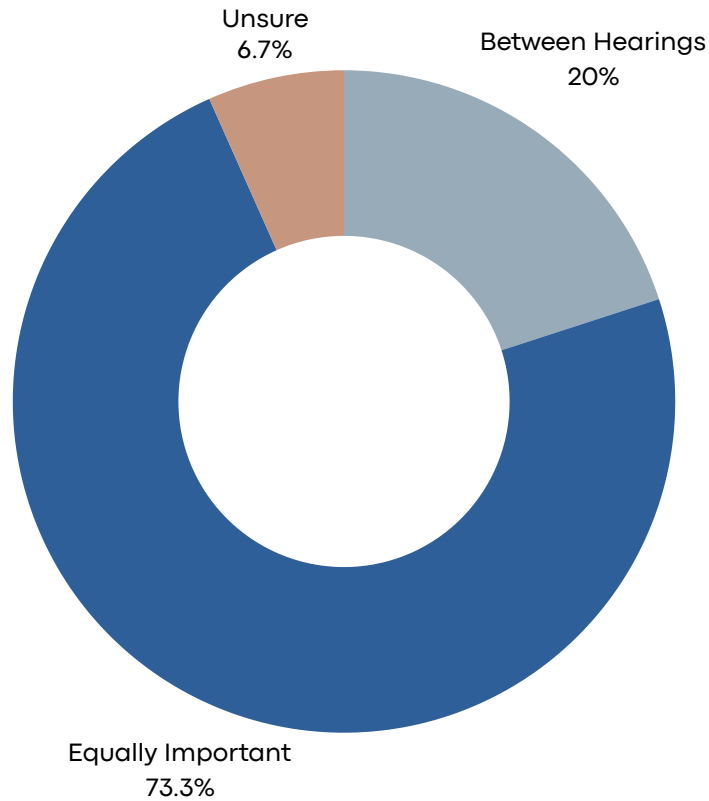


How would you rate your understanding of a CASA Volunteer's role and responsibilities?



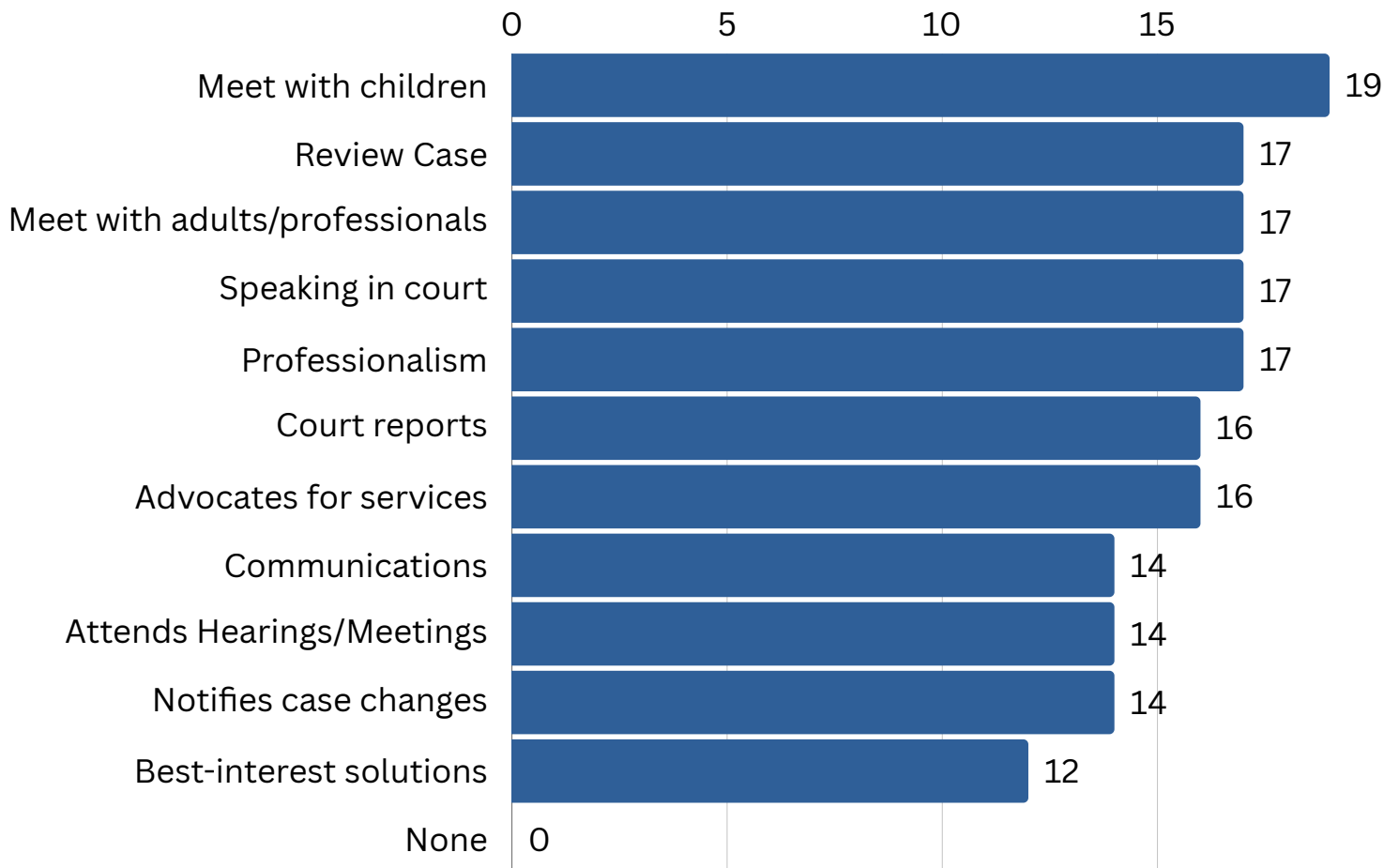
Generic Information

In your experience, CASA's play the most crucial role:



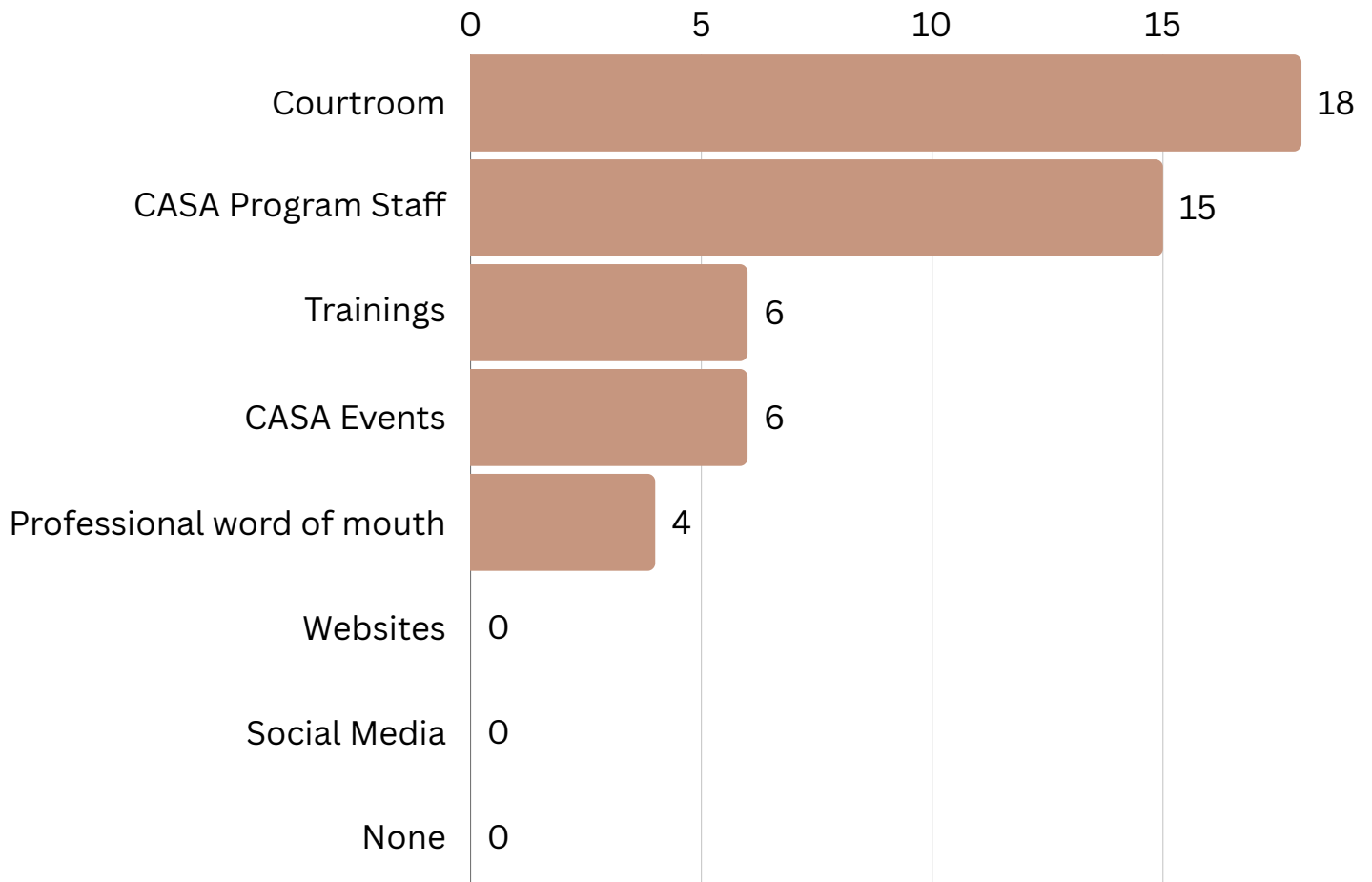
Generic Information

How would you describe the role of a CASA Volunteer (select all that apply):



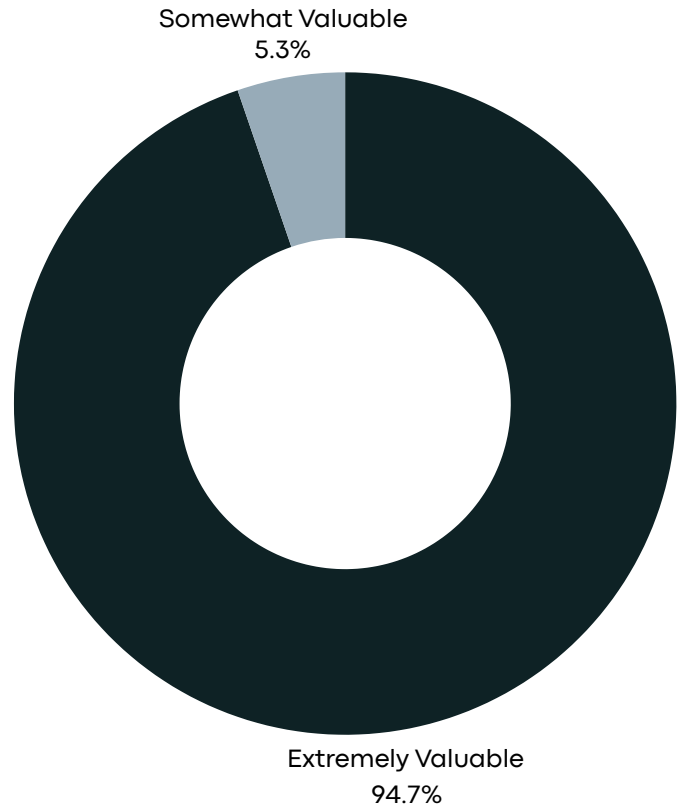
Generic Information

Which sources have been most impactful to your understanding of the CASA role (select all that apply)?

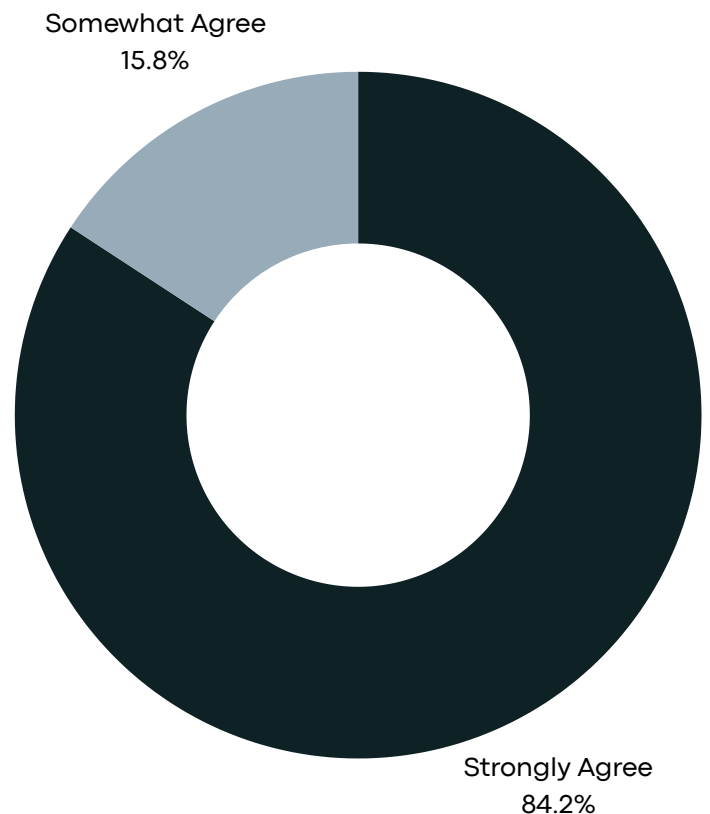


CASA Advocacy

I find information provided by CASAs to be:

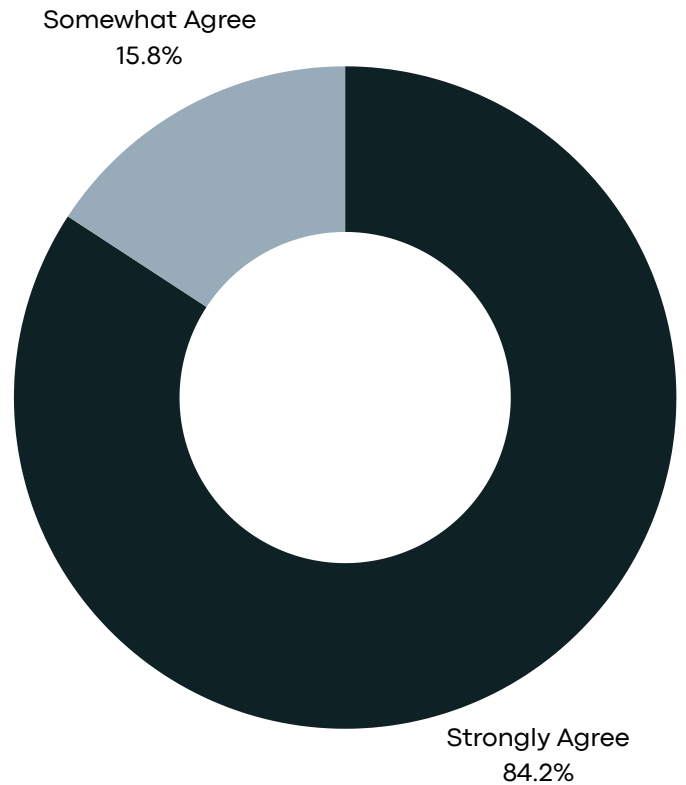


I look to CASA volunteers for recommendations regarding the best interest of the child.

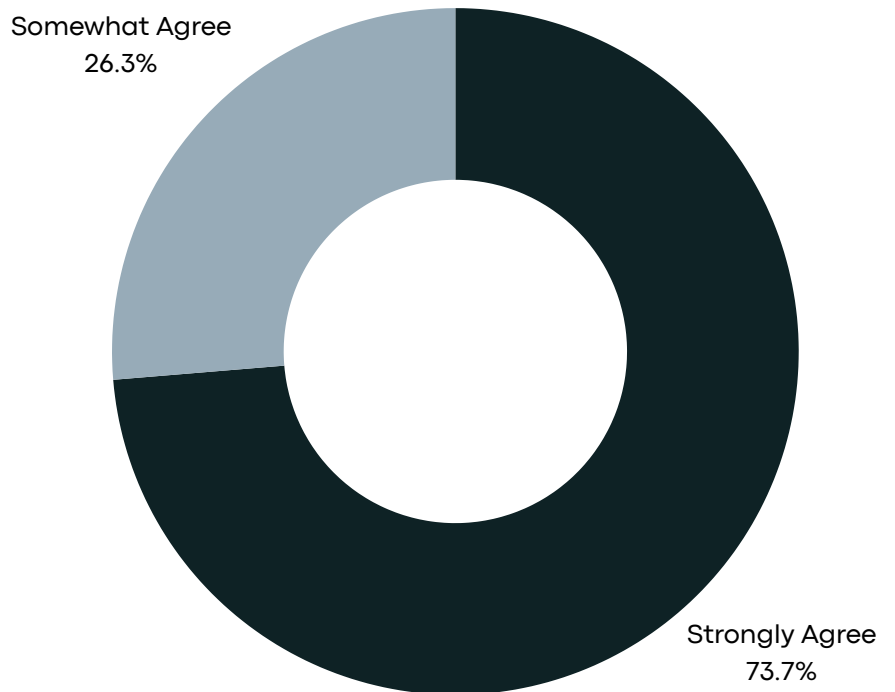


CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers for current information regarding children experiencing wardship.

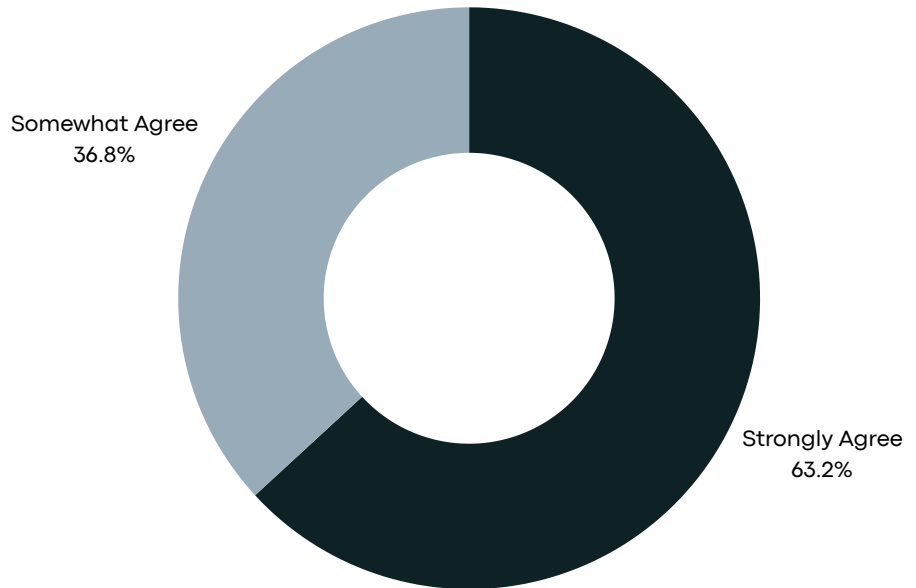


I look to CASA volunteers for services needed or received by children experiencing wardship.

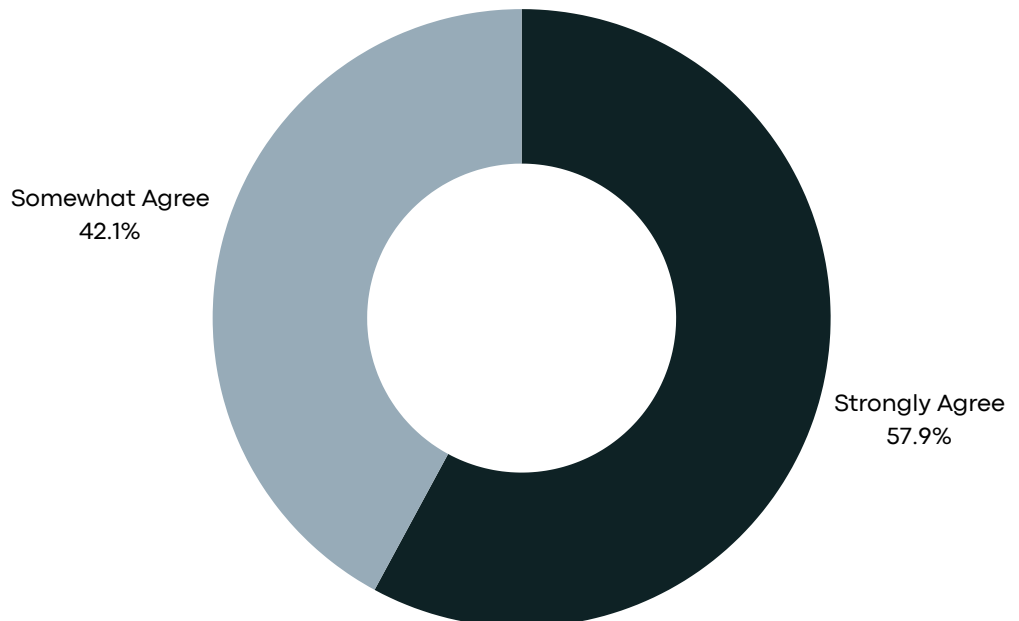


CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers for the status of sibling and kin relationships of children experiencing wardship.

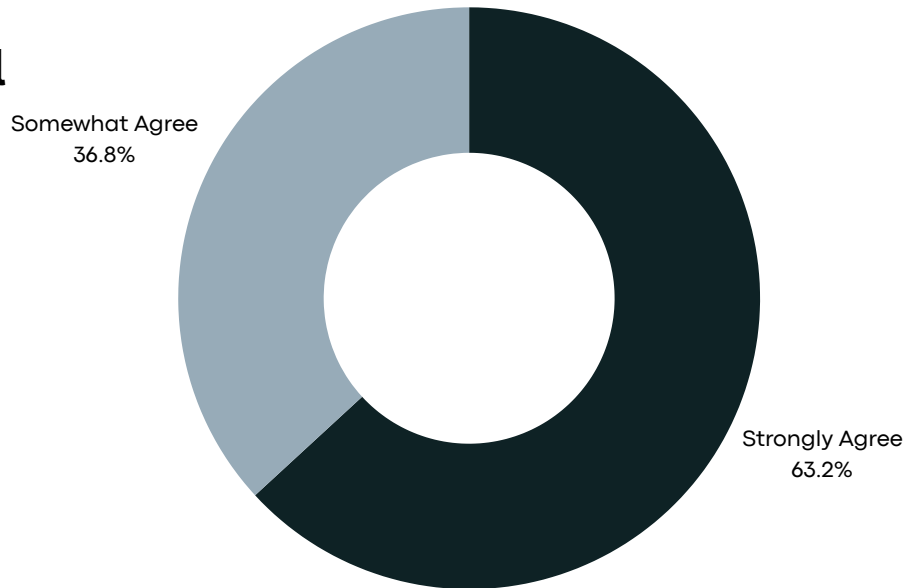


I look to CASA volunteers to understand academic progress and needs of children experiencing wardship.

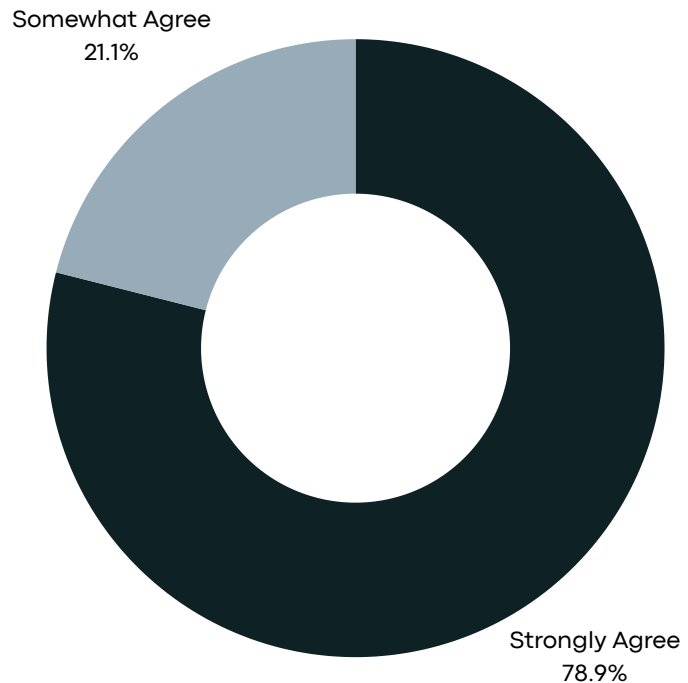


CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers for medical services needed and received by children experiencing wardship.

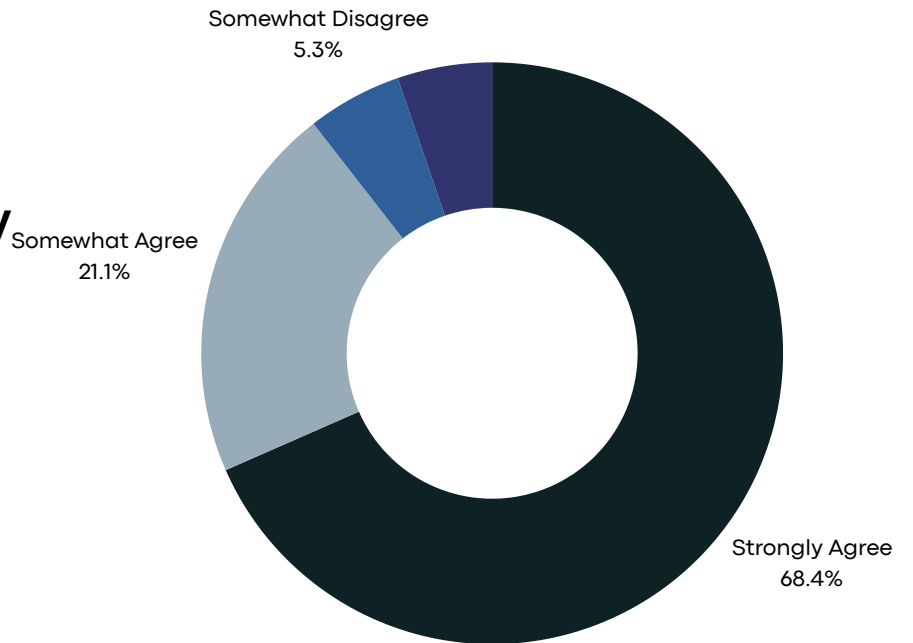


I look to CASA volunteers to understand the child's wishes.

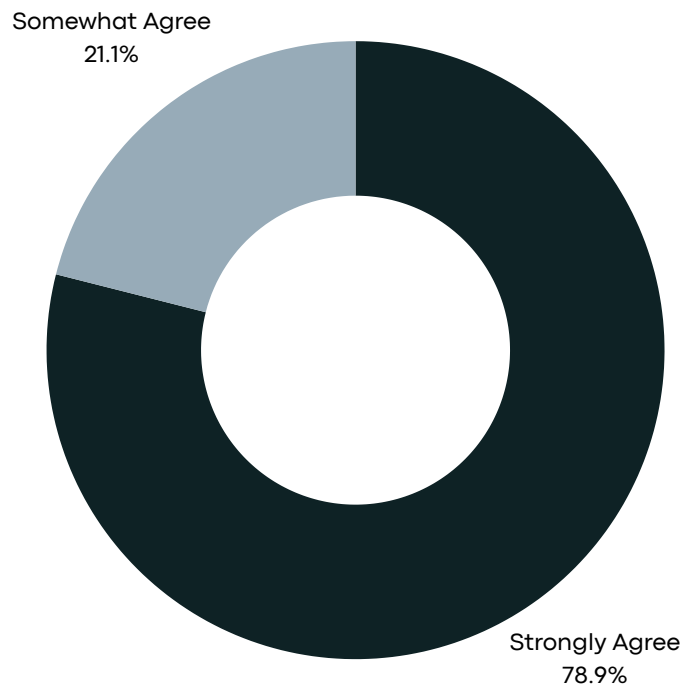


CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers to understand cultural practices and identity needs of children experiencing wardship.

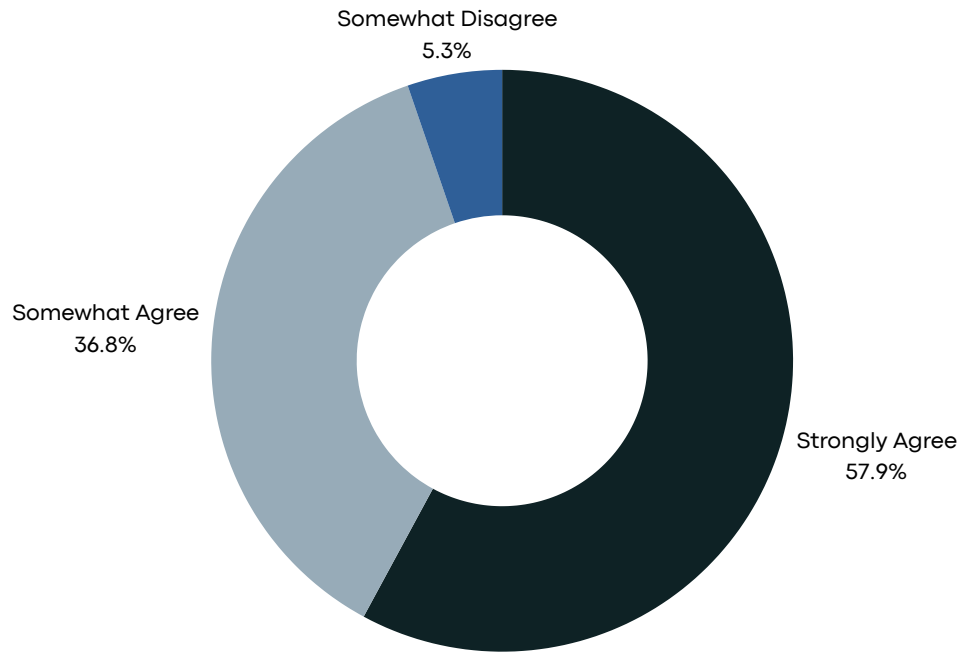


I look to CASA volunteers for placement updates and recommendations of children experiencing wardship.

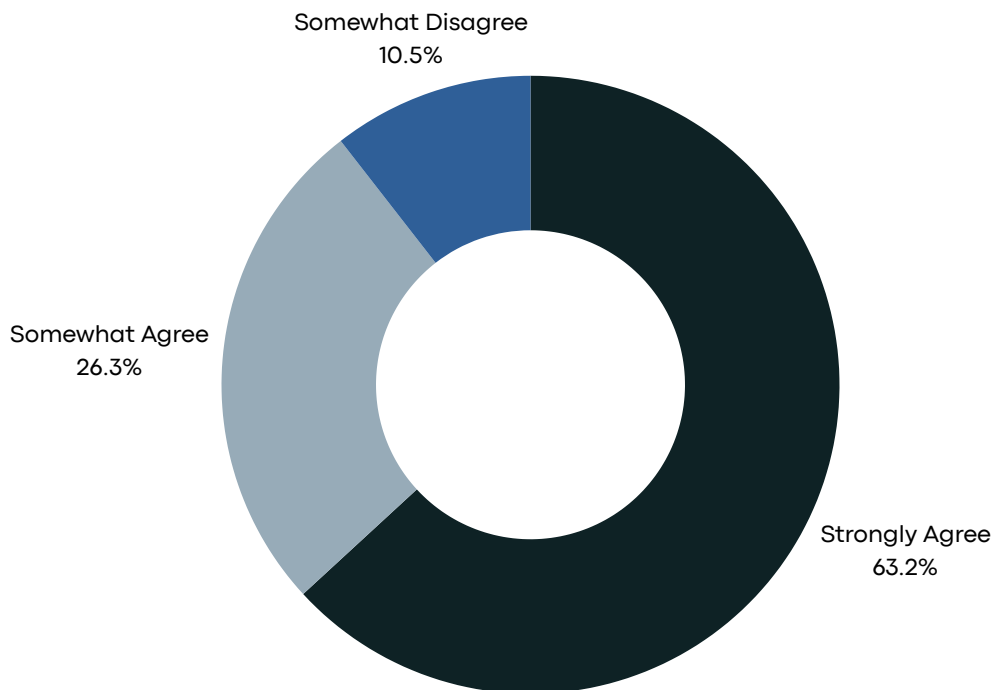


CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers for recommendations about permanency goals.

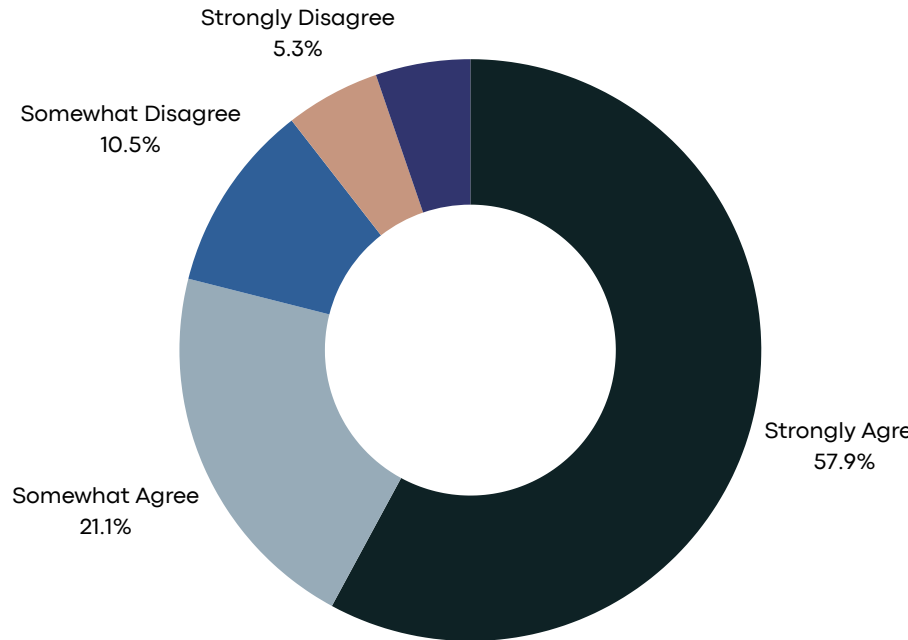


I look to CASA volunteers for information about parent visitations and contact of children experiencing wardship.



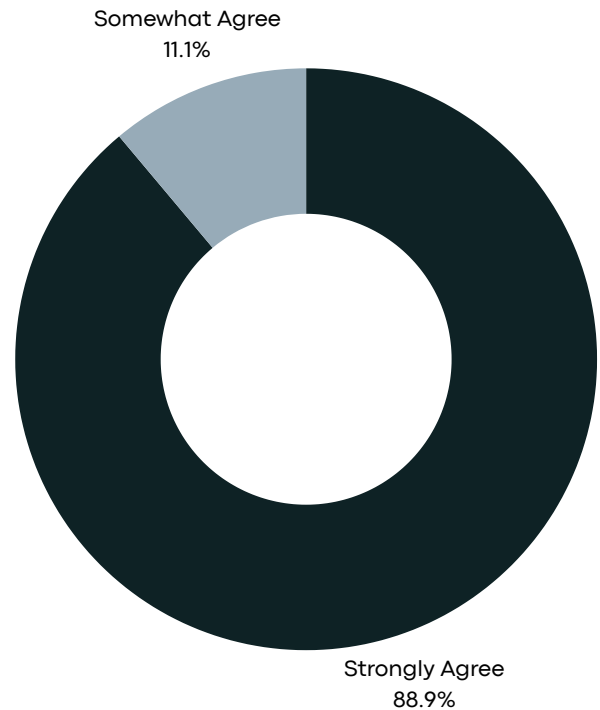
CASA Advocacy

I look to CASA volunteers for updates regarding active/reasonable efforts.

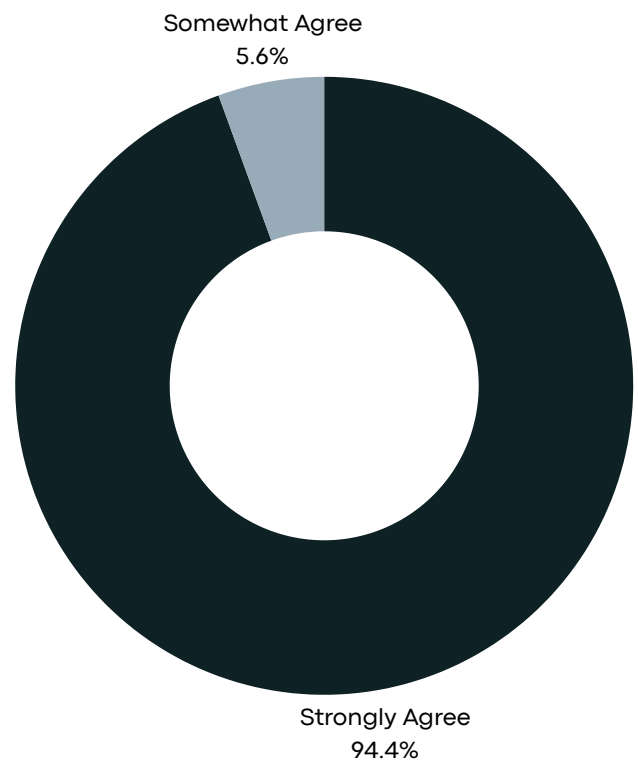


Communications

CASA volunteers bring important information to my attention.

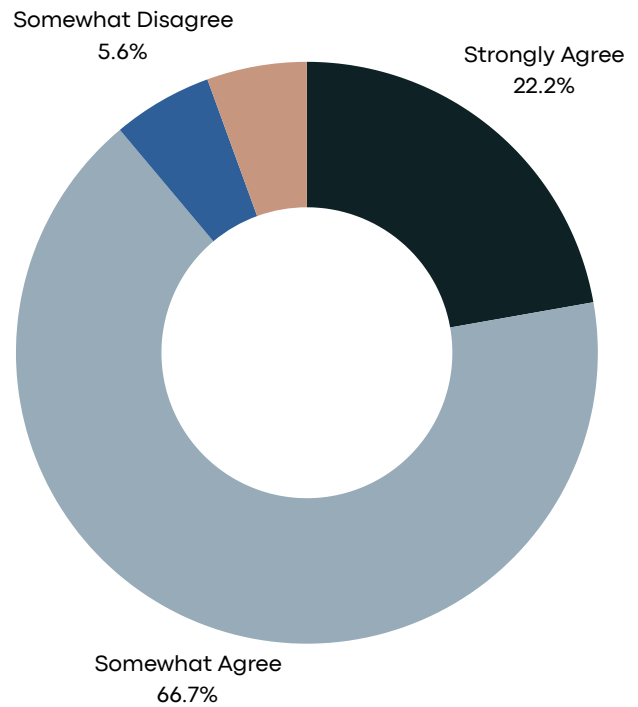


CASA volunteers work with integrity, respect, and collaboration amongst all parties on a case.

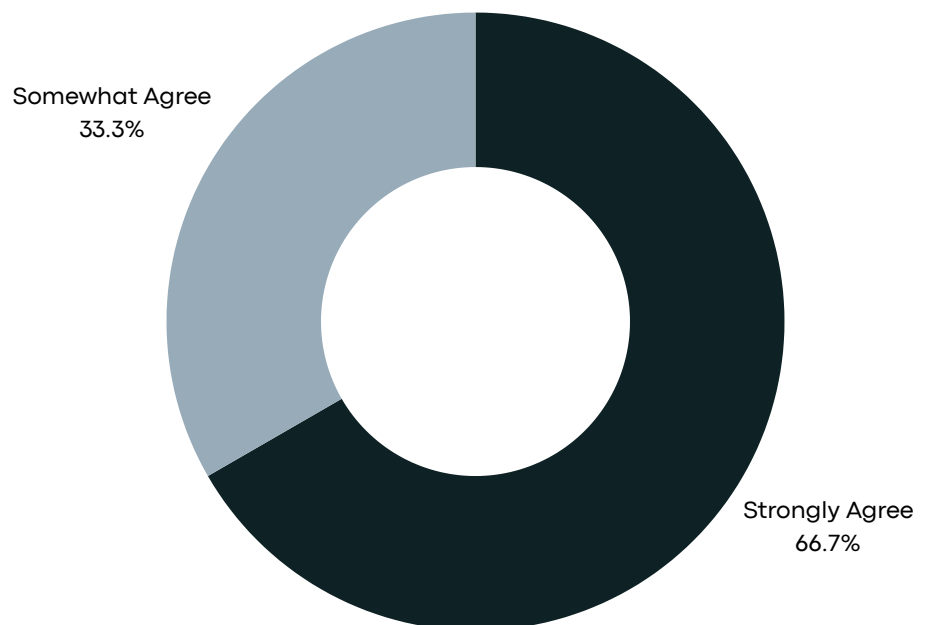


Communications

CASA volunteers have strong and confident voices in the courtroom.

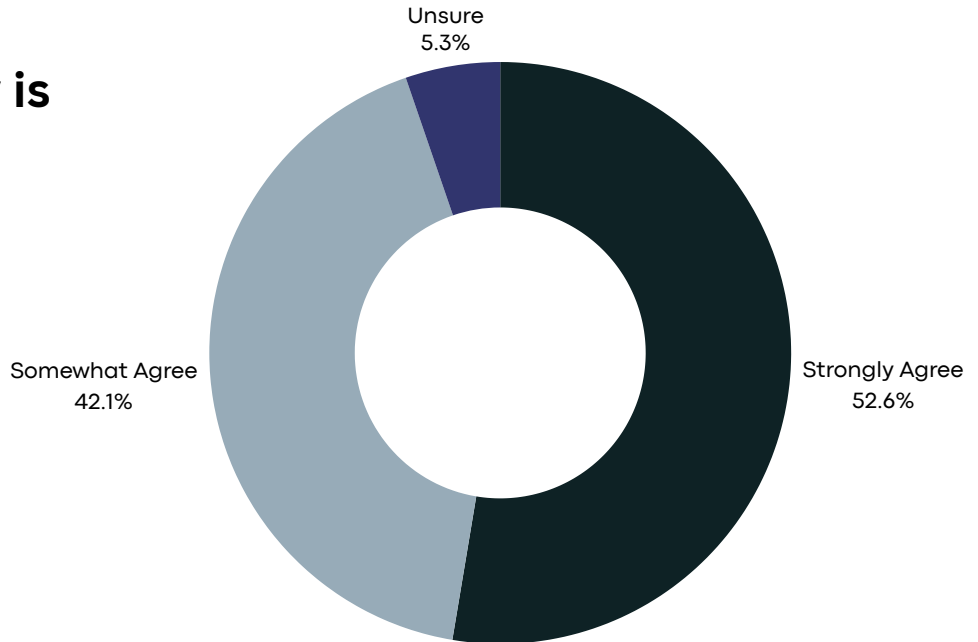


Court reports from CASAs are thorough, detail-oriented, and fact-based.

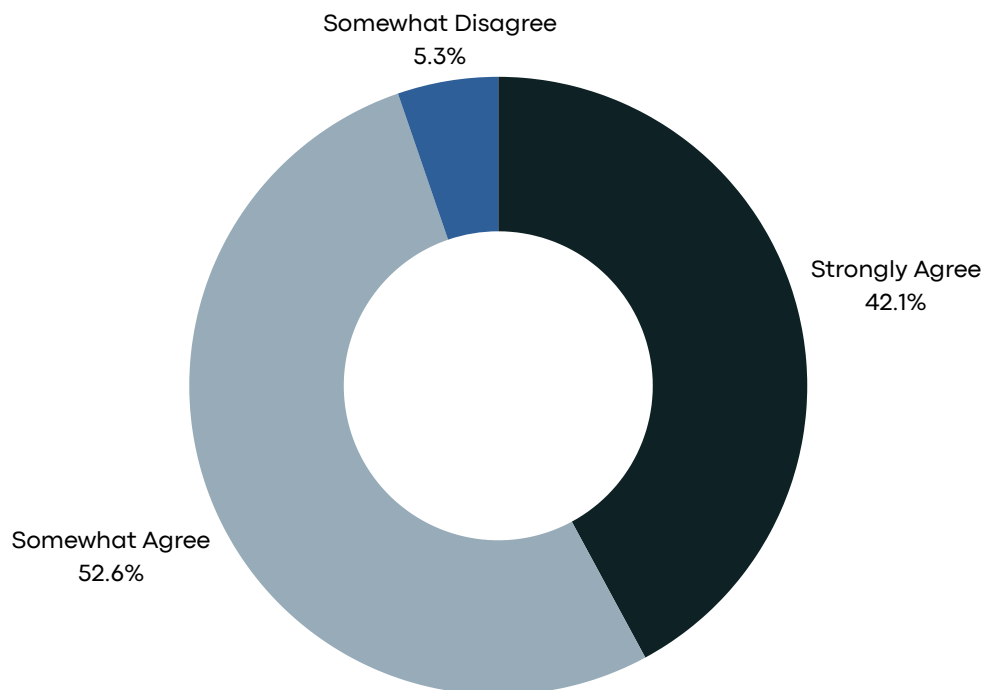


Cultural Humility/Competency

Volunteer advocacy is culturally-sensitive and unbiased.

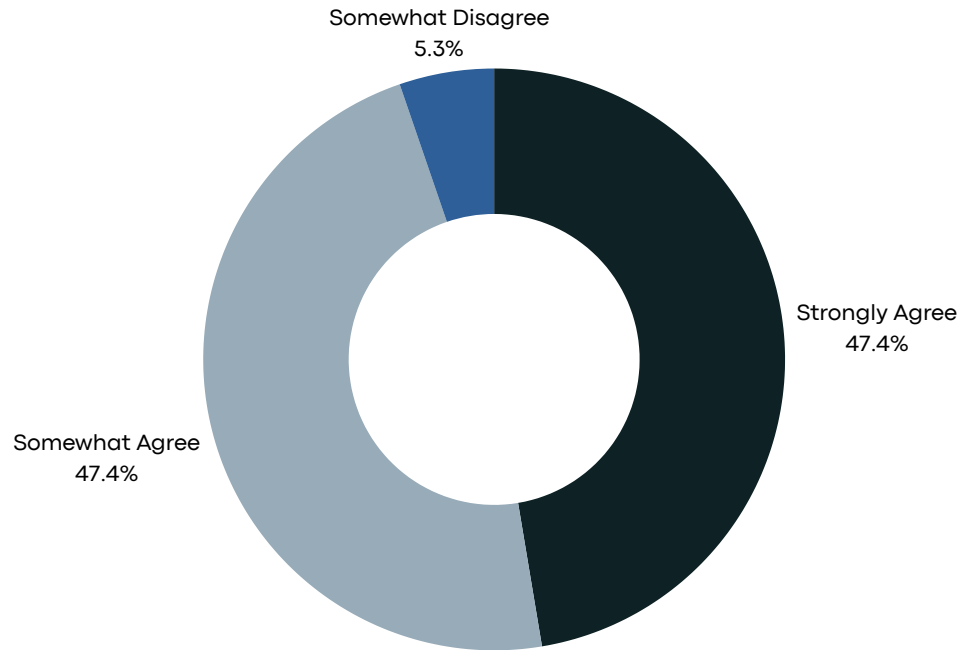


Volunteer advocacy highlights cultural values and needs in recommendations, reports, hearings, and reviews.



Cultural Humility/Competency

CASAs demonstrate understanding of minimally-sufficient level of care (minimally-adequate parenting)

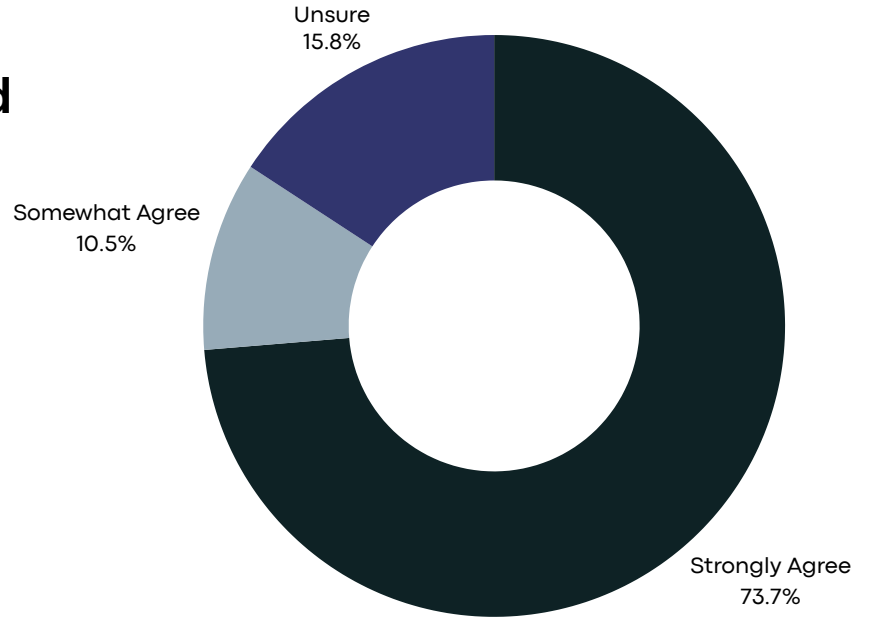


CASAs consider lived experiences of children and parents in recommendations (e.g. mental health, addictions, domestic violence, disabilities, neurodivergence, poverty, medical needs, etc.)

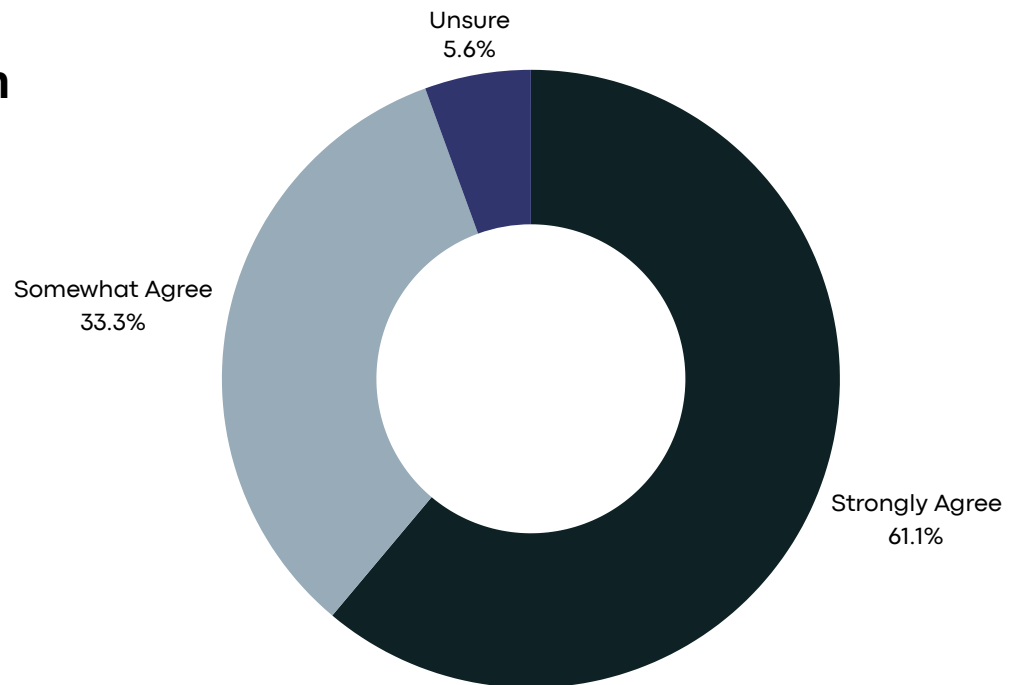


Sound Judgement

CASAs adhere to ethical guidelines and procedures.

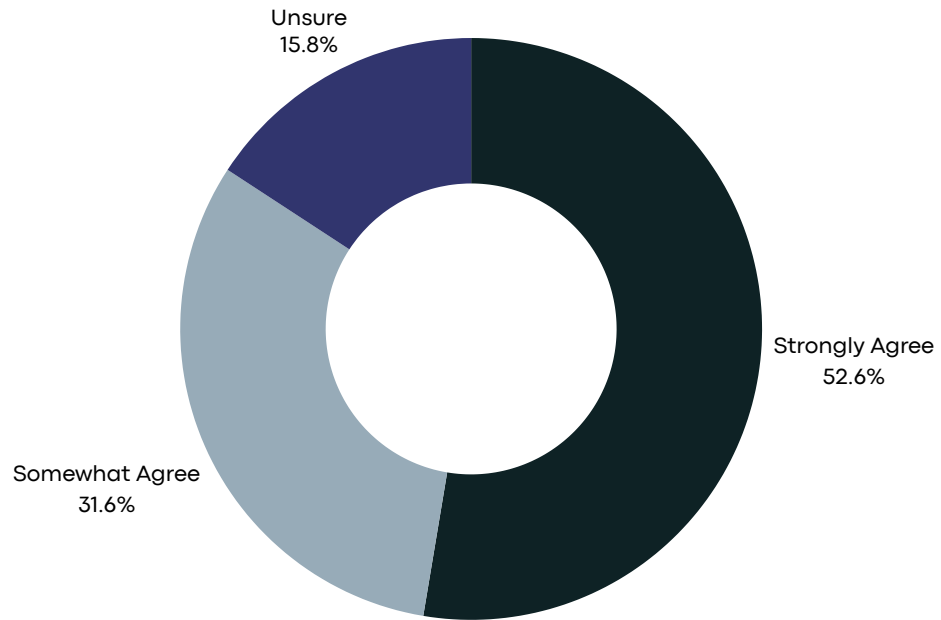


CASAs are collaborative when case changes and challenges arise.



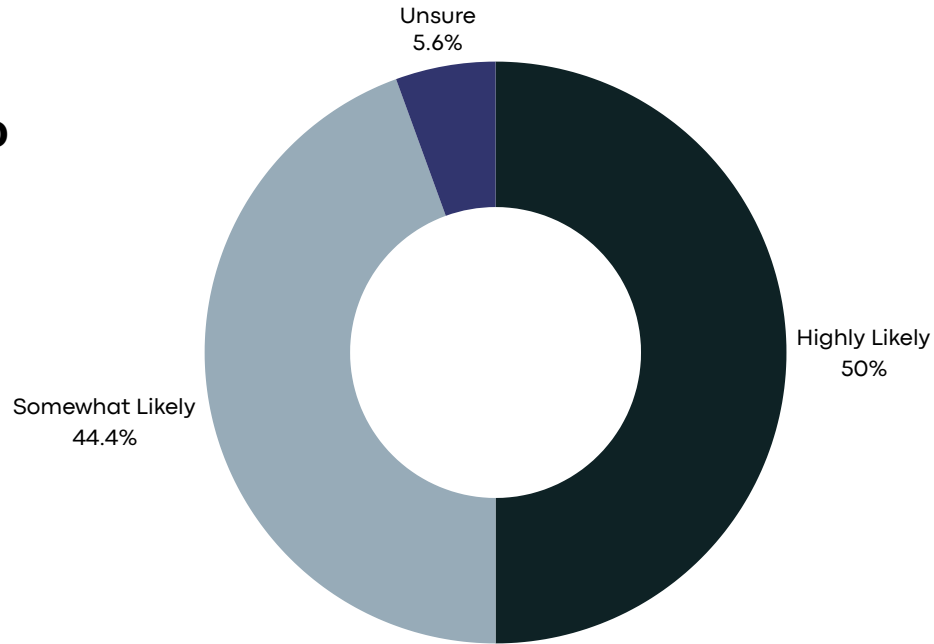
Sound Judgement

CASAs are thorough with referencing available information from multiple sources in their recommendations.

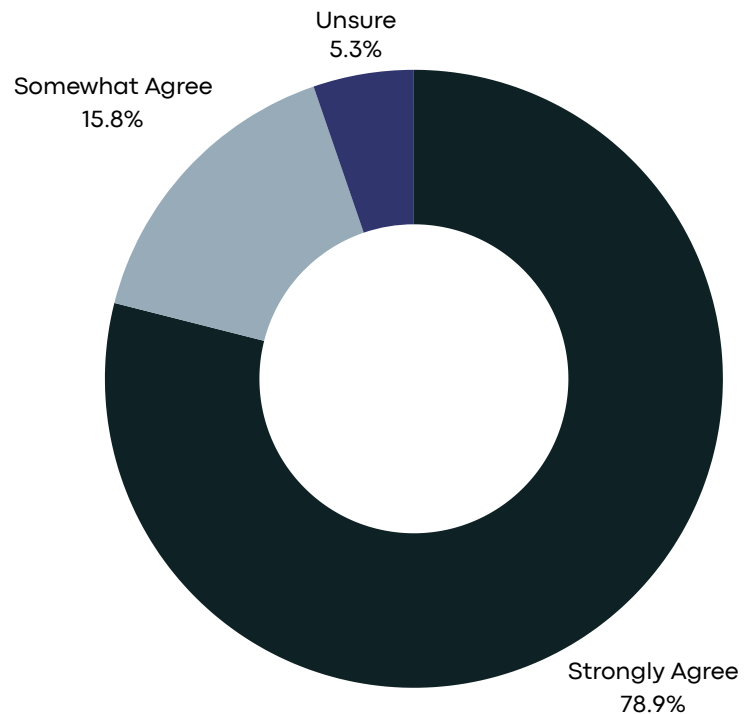


Initiative and Impact

How likely are you to include CASA recommendations into the permanency plan?

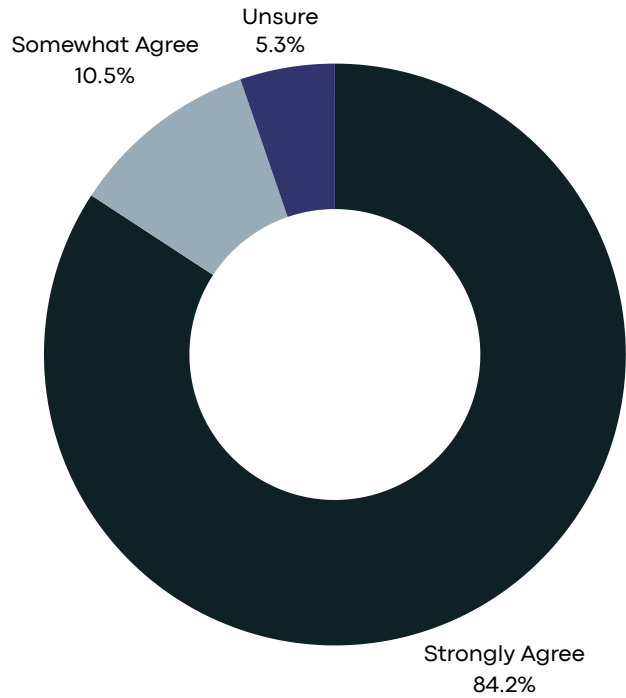


CASAs provide regular and consistent face-to-face time with children.

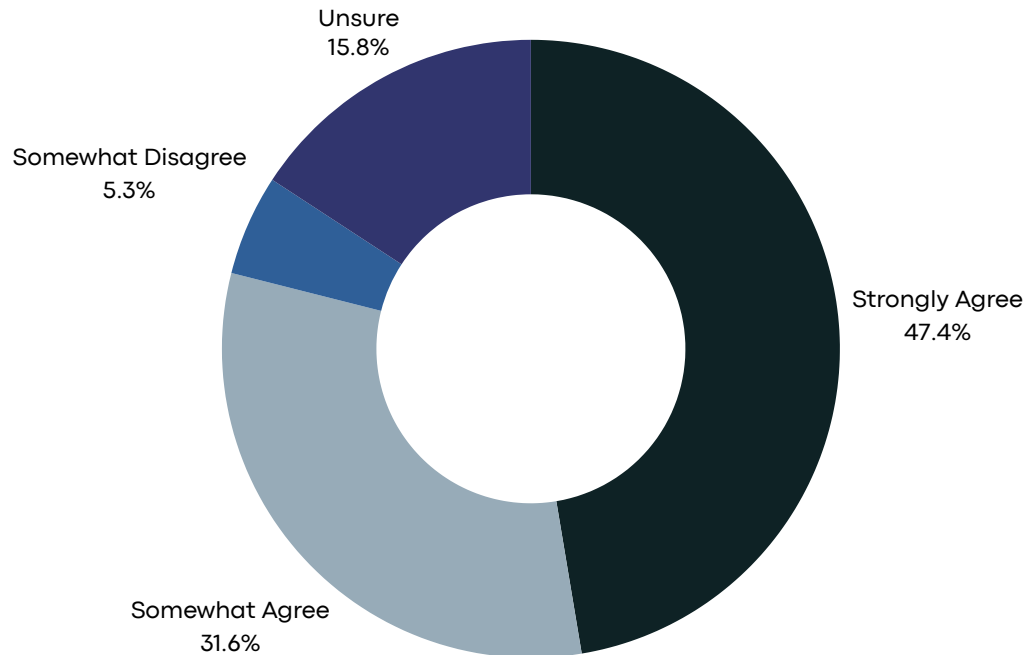


Initiative and Impact

CASAs influence decisions that support the child's best interest.

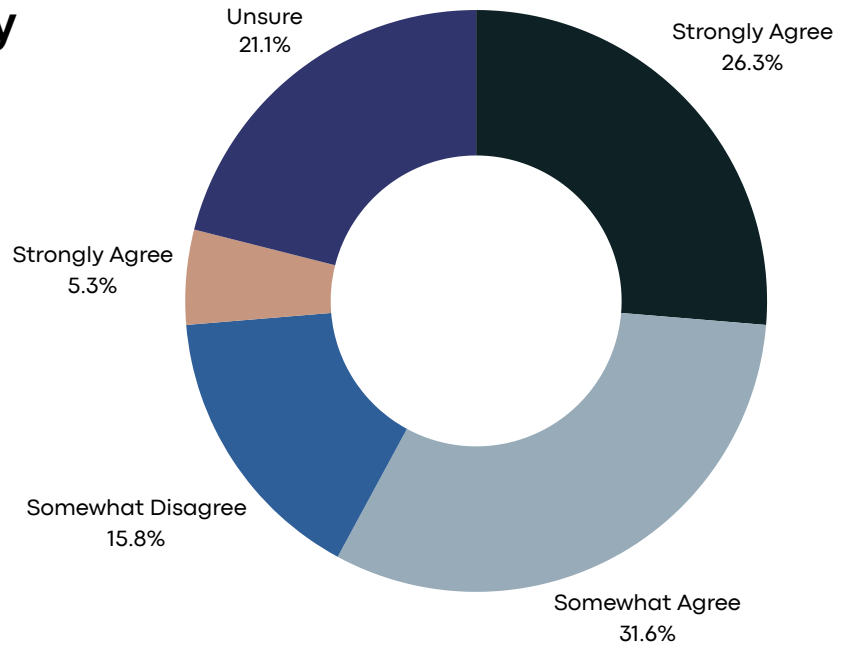


CASAs influence more placement stability.

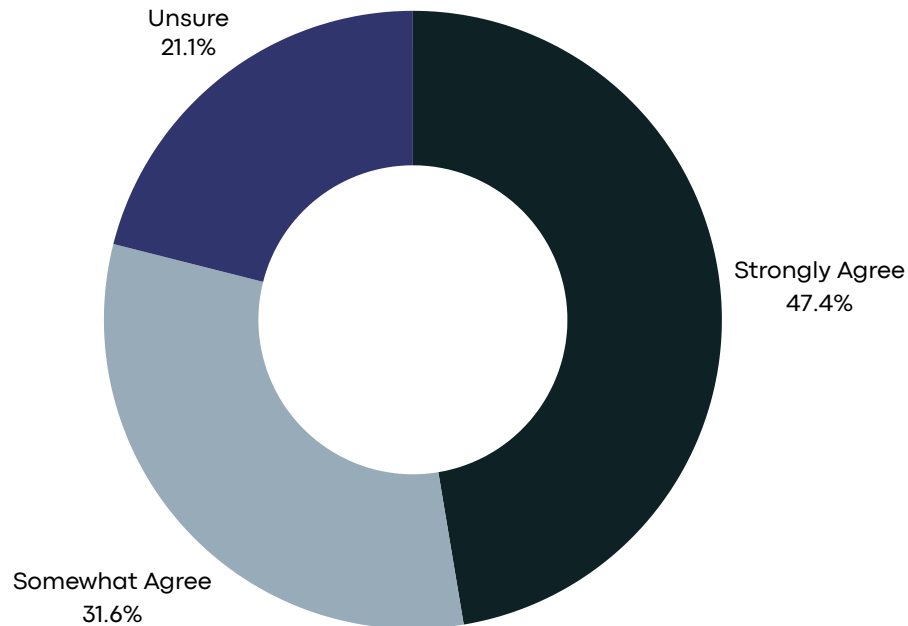


Initiative and Impact

CASAs work to identify kin for relational support and possible placements for children experiencing care.

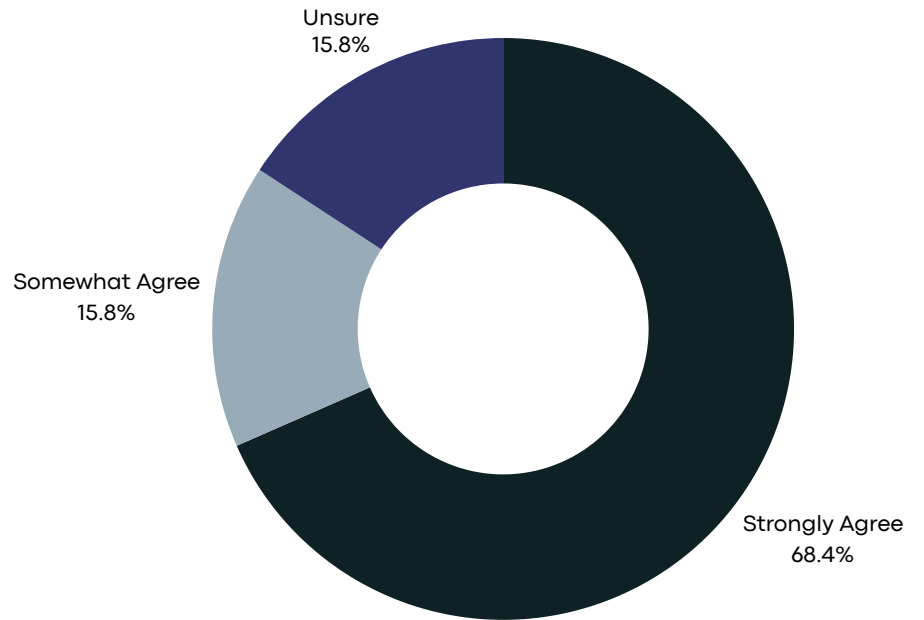


CASAs influence positive family connections for children experiencing care.



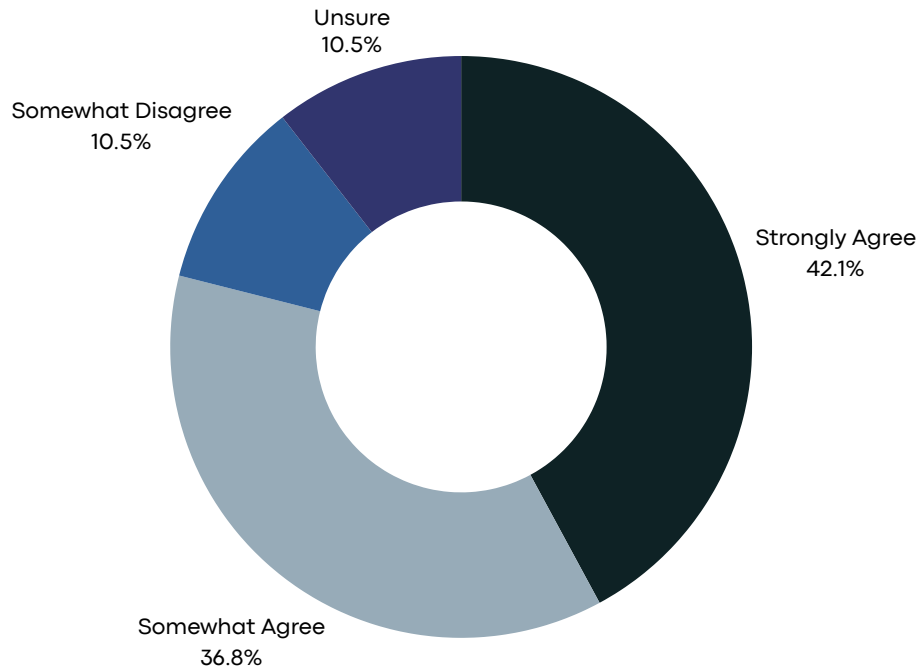
Initiative and Impact

CASAs influence improving services received for children experiencing care.

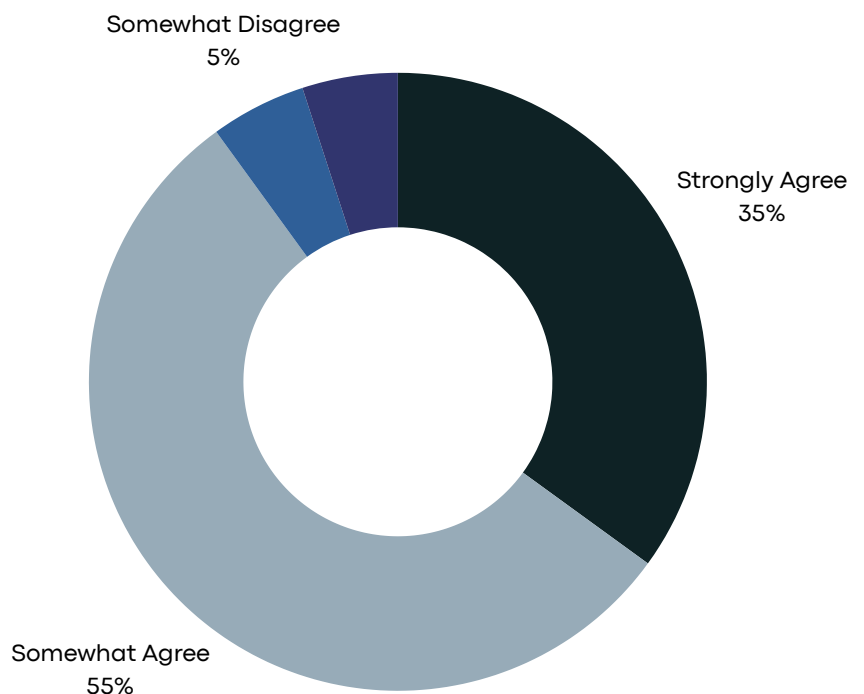


Foundations of Knowledge

CASAs advocacy is based on child/family strengths, not weaknesses.

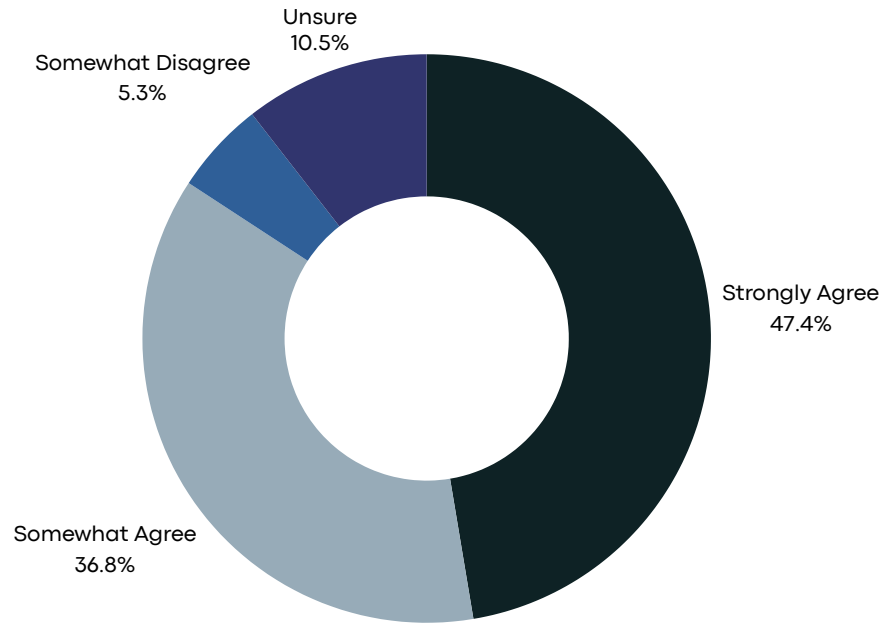


CASAs demonstrate understanding of all permanency options.



Foundations of Knowledge

CASAs demonstrate understanding of concurrent planning.



Quality Improvement

From you experience, what are your local CASA programs top FOUR strengths?



Quality Improvement

In what areas would you recommend additional training for CASAs?



Quality Improvement

What do you appreciate most about your local CASA Program?

- I appreciate the time and energy they put into writing informative reports and attending court hearings. Although they do not have enough CASA volunteers for every child, I know they make efforts to assist the children who have the greatest need for a CASA. Their commitment and dedication to doing what is right for these kids is apparent.
- Consistency in children's lives.
- Professionalism
- Great CASA Reports that provide a broader written context of the case, plus they often include pictures of the children.
- Our local CASA program has outstanding management and this is reflected in the overall quality of our CASAs.
- they do a good job of giving the court a unique child perspective. They also provide valuable information about the child's needs.
- The amount of time and energy volunteered
- Children, especially the younger children, rarely attend court. The CASA court reports typically give me the best information regarding how the child is doing in the home. Because in many cases I never actually see the child, the photographs included in most CASA reports are invaluable to me.
- Easy-to-follow yet still detailed reports. Offers a third-party perspective.
- The narratives in the court reports and the time they spend in contact with the kids, and their nonjudgmental attitudes.
- Casas court reports are up to date as to actually what is happening with the child at that time period. The Family Reports from ODHS can have information that is old and not currently pertinent to the child and I like having the current summary from the CASA before reviewing other documents and going into court.

- Our CASA's work their rears off, but we don't have enough of them. Recruitment and retention are major issues that I see.
- CASAs give me a valuable extra set of eyes, one that is often more common sense and unbiased than others.
- Consistent participation in court hearings; timely and informative reports
- The CASAs provide the court with information about the child of which I otherwise would not be aware. The CASAs I work with provide detailed reports which often have more insight on the child and the case that I can glean from the other reports.
- Their ongoing efforts to advocate for the best interests of children in care.

How can your local CASA program better meet your needs as a dependency judge?

- I hope they feel comfortable speaking up in court to address any new concerns. I appreciate it when they have questions for witnesses; their perspective is often exactly the information the judge is interested in hearing.
- Having a CASA in all cases would be great.
- They are already great
- More training on how to use their voice in the courtroom, and according to court procedure (i.e. calling witnesses, or asking witnesses questions, when to offer evidence).
- We have some CASAs that are outstanding in both report writing, advocacy, and knowledge of their foster children. We have others that are not quite as prepared and involved. The CASAs need to recognize their importance and potential impact on cases and information that could be useful to the court.
- We don't have enough CASAs and there are a lot of hearings where there is no CASA on the case providing a report.
- Provide enough volunteers so every child is appointed a CASA
- I'm very satisfied and cannot think of anything.
- Having more would be beneficial.

- Written reports would be helpful
- advocate early on in the case for a placement familiar to the child
- The CASAs I work with are tremendous. The only thing I can think of is that they should not shy away from speaking in court. I want to hear their thoughts. I think because of their unique role in the case they have more influence than they may realize.

Is there anything else you would like to learn more about from you local CASA program?

- The CASAs we have are doing a good job. Just need more assigned to all cases.
- When can CASA supervisors or other CASA fill in for a CASA that is not available for a certain court date. We have times lines to meet and I don't understand why a supervisor cannot substitute in at some of the hearings if they can get the information from the assigned CASA that they would like the court to have.
- Thanks for the work that our local CASA's do.
- It would be helpful to have a list of all the local CASA volunteers and the cases they are working on. I will soon be retiring as judge and would like to use this space to thank the CASAs I have worked with over the years. I can see that they have truly improved the lives of several children.
- More advocates, better training on courtroom procedures and report writing. The court feels that lack of CASAs at shelter, admit/deny and jurisdiction is a significant problem and does not best serve the children of our community. Early intervention in these cases shape the course of these cases. Not offering CASAs at shelter is a serious failing.