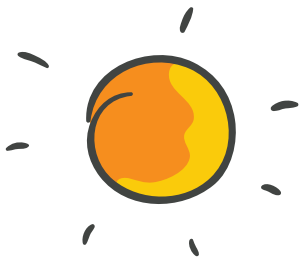


National Survey of Children and Families 2016

ScRA Information and Research Team 2016



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Executive Summary

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration's (SCRA) is committed to improving its service. Providing a good level of service is important – primarily to ensure the children and young people involved in the Children's Hearings System have the best experience they can realistically have, at what is likely to be a very difficult time for them¹.

This is SCRA's fourth national survey of children, young people, parents and carers attending Children's Hearings. Like previous surveys, it aimed to assess the performance of our service, and identify areas for improvement. The survey was carried out between 4th and 29th April 2016 in Hearings Centres in 30 towns and cities across Scotland².

The format of the survey was very similar to previous ones. All participants were interviewed face to face by a trained SCRA interviewer using a structured questionnaire. Three different questionnaires were used for different age groups - a colouring-in sheet was used for children aged three to six years old, a shortened questionnaire for children aged seven to 11 years, and a full questionnaire for young people aged 12 to 17 years and for their parents and carers.

A total of 636 people took part in the 2016 survey – 388 adults, 122 young people and 126 children (including 26 three to six year olds).

Findings

Information for Hearings

- 71% of children had received a letter from SCRA to invite them to their Hearings, and 74% of them said it was either quite easy or very easy to understand.
- 91% of young people 93% of adults had received a letter; and 84% of young people and 87% of adults had received their Hearings papers. 88% of young people and 82% of adults said they had received enough information for the Hearing.
- 33% of both children and young people said that they did not receive the All About Me form to help them give their views to their Hearing. Of those who received the form, 28% of young people and 67% of children had completed it.

Preparation for Hearings

- 63% of children, 92% of young people and 98% of adults said that they understood why they were at a Hearing.
- 56% of children, 61% of young people and 58% of adults said they had spoken to someone before coming to the Hearing. The majority of children, young people and adults who had done this said that it helped them prepare (at least a bit). Social workers were the professionals who were most often spoken to by all age groups. Children and young people also spoke to their parents, family members and carers; and adults to legal professionals. Very few participants had spoken to the Children's Reporter before the Hearing or indicated that they wanted to.

¹ SCRA's Customer Commitment - <http://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/vision-values-commitment-outcomes/>

² Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Banff, Barrhead, Bellshill, Dalkeith, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fraserburgh, Glasgow, Glenrothes, Greenock, Hamilton, Inverness, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Lanark, Lerwick, Livingston, Lochgilphead, Paisley, Perth, Selkirk, Stirling, Stranraer, and Thurso.

Participation in Hearings

- Children were asked whether they had things to say at the Hearing, and 33% said that they did. When asked about their last Hearing, 45% of children said that they had spoken at it.
- 77% of young people felt like they were the most important person at their last Hearing, and 76% said that they had given their views. Of those who gave their views, 74% said they had felt listened to.

Equalities

- 94% of young people and 98% adults felt that they were treated with dignity and respect by SCRA staff at the Hearings Centre.
- 93% of adults and young people said that they didn't need any help with accessing the Hearings Centre.
- 88% of adults and young people would prefer to come to Hearings on a weekday, and for the Hearing to be held in the morning (43% of adults and 36% of young people) or in the afternoon (30% of adults and 44% of young people).
- 92% of young people had access to the internet and 8% did not; 85% of adults had access to the internet and 15% did not.

Children's feelings about being at Hearings

81% of young children (three to six years) indicated that they were 'happy' to be at their Hearing, 12% said they were 'OK' and 7% said they were 'sad'. Of children aged seven to 11 years, 63% said they felt 'OK' to be at the Hearing, 33% felt 'happy', and 4% felt 'sad'.

Conclusions

The findings from the 2016 children and families survey are very similar to previous ones.

SCRA continues to perform well in the information it provides, how its staff treat young people and adults at Hearings, and in its facilities. There were also areas for improvement identified for SCRA and three recommendations are made on these:

SCRA Recommendation 1: There would be merit in exploring if SCRA staff are including the All About Me forms when sending letters and Hearings papers to children and young people.

SCRA Recommendation 2: SCRA should work with partner agencies (and particularly social work) to develop more effective methods for young people to give their views to their Hearings.

SCRA Recommendation 3: SCRA should consider how to increase service users' understanding of its role in the Hearings System and be more proactive in offering and providing assistance to those coming to Hearings.

The 2016 survey's findings also raise questions for all agencies involved in the Hearings System:

Question 1. Is there a balance to be made between the disruption to a child's day and possibly causing them anxiety with coming to a hearing which they don't understand and are unable to contribute to?

Question 2. What more can be done to make every child and young person feel listened to and important at their hearing?



Chapter 1. Introduction

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) is committed to improving its service. Providing a good level of service is important – primarily to ensure the children and young people involved in the Children's Hearings System have the best experience they can realistically have, at what is likely to be a very difficult time for them³.

In 2008, 2012-13 and 2015 SCRA carried out surveys of children, young people, parents and carers attending Children's Hearings across Scotland⁴. The 2016 national survey is therefore the fourth by SCRA to assess its performance from the viewpoint of its service users, and to identify areas of good practice and improvement. It was also carried out to supplement the results of the 2015 survey which had low response rates in some areas.

Each of the nine SCRA Localities were asked if there were any specific issues they would like covered and these were included in surveys for: Ayrshire; Central; Grampian; Highlands & Islands; North Strathclyde; South East; and Tayside & Fife Localities. The results for the Locality specific questions are presented in Appendix 1.

Aims

The aims of the 2016 survey were to investigate the perceptions, expectations and experiences of those involved in Hearings:

- suitability of information provided
- feelings of preparedness
- ability to participate
- understanding of why they are at a Hearing
- perceptions of contact with SCRA staff, our facilities and our service
- preferred days and times for Hearings

And to measure any changes in performance from previous surveys.

For the purposes of this report, and for ease of comparison with previous surveys, children and young people are referred to as:

Young people - 12 years and over
Children - seven to 11 years
Young children - three to six years.

³ SCRA's Customer Commitment - <http://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/vision-values-commitment-outcomes/>

⁴ SCRA (2009). The views and experiences of children and families involved in the Children's Hearings System in Scotland. (available on request)

SCRA (2013). National survey of children and families in the Children's Hearings System 2012/13. <http://www.scra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SCRA-Research-Report-Education-and-SRs-March-2013.pdf>

SCRA (2015). National Survey of Children and Families 2015. <http://www.scra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Children-and-Families-Survey-2015-Final-Report-A.pdf>

Chapter 2. Methods

The survey was carried out between 4th and 29th April 2016 in 30 Hearings Centres: Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Banff, Barrhead, Bellshill, Dalkeith, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fraserburgh, Glasgow, Glenrothes, Greenock, Hamilton, Inverness, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Lanark, Lerwick, Livingston, Lochgilphead, Paisley, Perth, Selkirk, Stirling, Stranraer and Thurso.

Interviews

All interviews were carried out face to face using a structured questionnaire. There were three questionnaires: 1. for young children colouring-in sheets were used⁵; 2. a short questionnaire for children; and 3. a more detailed questionnaire for young people, parents and carers (kinship and foster carers) (Appendices 2 and 3).

Interviews took place before Hearings in waiting rooms, other private rooms or reception areas. As far as practicable, all in attendance were invited to participate⁶. There was a very limited timescale to complete the questionnaires - typically five to ten minutes. Children and young people were prioritised over adults.

Ethical considerations

Before the interview, it was explained to potential participants what they were being asked to do and their consent was gained verbally. Where the participant was a child or young person under 16 years old the consent of their parents or carers was also sought. Following completion of the questionnaire, all children and young people were given a small token of thanks by way of a fun key ring of their choice. They were not informed of this before so as not to coerce them into taking part. Young children were able to keep their colouring pencils and a colouring-in book as a thank you, and again, were not told of this before.

All interviewers were SCRA staff members and, as such, are listed in Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme for regulated work with children or hold Enhanced Disclosure clearance⁷. All interviewers had also completed training on data protection.

Analysis

All questionnaires were completed anonymously, recording the age and gender of the child or young person, the SCRA Locality, Hearings Centre and date of the interview. Completed questionnaires were returned to SCRA's Information & Research Team and were stored securely with restricted access. Completed questionnaires were inputted into Survey Monkey to collate responses and for analysis. Questionnaires were destroyed once the information had been inputted.

⁵ Completed colouring-in sheets from the children who took part in the survey are used to illustrate this report.

⁶ Children, young people and parents and carers who were considered by SCRA staff to be or may become distressed were not approached to take part. Similarly, those who were attending Hearings in relation to Child Protection Orders or other types of emergency Hearings were not approached.

⁷ Section 52 of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

Chapter 3. Findings

Participants

In 2016:

A total of 636 people took part: 388 adults (61%), 122 young people (19%), 100 children (16%) and 26 young children (4%)⁸ (Table 1).

248 **children and young people** took part - 45% female and 55% male. Their average ages were: young people - 14 years; children - nine years; and young children - five years.

388 **adults** took part – 272 parents (70%), 101 carers (26%), and 15 adults (other) (4%).

Table 1. Numbers of participants in SCRA Localities (2016)

SCRA Locality	Adults	Young people	Children	Young children	Total
Ayrshire	14	16	21	6	57 (9%)
Central	34	5	5	1	45 (7%)
Glasgow	33	19	24	2	78 (12%)
Grampian	28	5	4	3	40 (6%)
Highlands & Islands	15	2	1	1	19 (3%)
Lanarkshire/Dumfries&Galloway	93	20	15	2	130 (20%)
North Strathclyde	67	10	8	3	88 (14%)
South East	23	13	9	2	47 (7%)
Tayside & Fife	81	32	13	6	132 (21%)
Total	388 (61%)	122 (19%)	100 (16%)	26 (4%)	636

The numbers of participants in this and previous surveys are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Numbers of participants in national surveys (2008 – 2016)

Year	Adults	Young people	Children	Young children	Total
2008	398	161	71*	n/a	630
2012-13	456	158	85	46	745
2015	313	108	75	24	520
2016	388	122	100	26	636

*Five to 11 years

Information for Hearings

All children and young people and their relevant persons (usually parents, some carers) are notified by letter that they must come to a Hearing after this has been arranged by the Reporter. SCRA issues these letters, along with Hearings papers, and leaflets for certain types of Hearings. Usually only young people and relevant persons are sent Hearings papers.

⁸This included two children who were seven years old.

Letters

In 2016:

- 71% of **children** had received a letter to come to their Hearing, with a further 20% being unsure of this (100). Of those who received a letter (61), 74% said it was either quite easy or very easy to understand.
- 91% of **young people** (111) had received a letter to come to their Hearing, and 78% of them said they understood it (87).
- 93% of **adults** said they had received a letter (361), and 82% of them said they understood it (297).

Table 3. Comparison of participants who received a letter (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13	2008
Adults	93%	90%	94%	91%
Young people	91%	94%	84%	91%
Children	71%	78%	74%	66%

Hearings papers

In 2016:

- 84% of **young people** (103) received their Hearing papers, and 75% of them (78) said they understood them.
- 87% of **adults** (338) said they had received the Hearing papers, and 81% of them (273) said they understood them.

Table 4. Comparison of participants who received Hearings papers (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13	2008
Adults	87%	86%	90%	85%
Young people	84%	82%	73%	86%

Leaflets

Information leaflets are sent in certain circumstances to children, young people and their relevant persons.

In 2016:

- 31% of **young people** had received a leaflet (38) (it was 27% in 2015, 23% in 2012-13, and 16% in 2008), and 79% of them (20) said they understood it.
- 21% of **adults** (81) said they received a leaflet (it was 15% in 2015, 14% in 2012-13, and 13% in 2008), and 74% of them (60) said they understood it.

Information provision

Young people and adults were asked about the amount of information they were sent for the Hearing.

In 2016:

- 88% of **young people** (100) said they got enough information for their Hearings, 11% (13) said they got too much, and 1% (1) did not get enough (there were an additional eight young people who did not answer this question).
- 82% of **adults** (312) said they got enough information for their Hearings, 8% (31) said they got too much, and 10% (36) did not get enough (there were an additional nine adults who did not answer this question).

Table 5. Comparison of participants' views on information provision (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016			2015			2012-13			2008		
	Enough	Too much	Not enough	Enough	Too much	Not enough	Enough	Too much	Not enough	Enough	Too much	Not enough
Adults	82%	8%	10%	84%	7%	10%	78%	11%	11%	82%	7%	11%
Young people	88%	11%	1%	77%	14%	8%	86%	5%	9%	83%	12%	5%

'All About Me' forms

SCRA should send all children and young people an age appropriate 'All About Me' form when they are invited to a Hearing. This is a way for children and young people to give their views to the Panel Members. They can either send the completed form to the Reporter or bring it to their Hearing.

In 2016:

28% of **young people** (33) completed the All About Me Form, and 32% of them said that someone helped them to do this. Nine young people said who helped them: parent(s) (5); carers (2); and advocate/Children's Rights Officer (2).

27 young people explained how much completing the form helped them prepare for their Hearings: 37% of them said it helped a little; 30% said not much; 22% said it helped a lot; and 11% said not at all.

64 young people explained why they did not complete the form: 55% of them didn't want to; 33% didn't receive it; 11% didn't have time; and 2% didn't understand it.

67% of **children** (67) received the All About Me form, and of them 72% (48) had filled it in with ten getting help from someone else to do this. Fifty children explained how they felt about completing the form: 44% liked it a little; 40% said they liked it a lot; 8% didn't like it much; and another 8% didn't like it at all.

Most children received the All About Me form and there was an increase in those who had completed it (Table 6) - this suggests that the form is suitable for this age group. However, the proportion of young people completing the form remains low - this implies that it is not an effective way for them to give their views.

Table 6. Completion of the All About Me form (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13	2008
Children	72%	56%	61%	52%
Young people	28%	28%	28%	30%

‘Helping Me Make Choices’ leaflet

In late 2015, the Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership published a leaflet ‘Helping Me Make Choices’ to assist those involved with young people (e.g. social workers, foster carers, Children’s Rights Officers, etc.) in preparing them for their Hearings⁹.

- Nine **young people** said they had seen the leaflet, with four saying it helped them a little or a lot.
- 21 **adults** had seen the leaflet, and 15 (71%) said it helped them a little or a lot.

Format of information

Young people and adults were asked if they would have liked to have received the information for their Hearings in a different format (Table 7).

Table 7. Format of information for Hearings (2016)

Format	Adults	Young people	Total
No change needed	324	101	425 (86%)
Bigger lettering	8	3	11 (2%)
Easy read	8	6	14 (3%)
Sent by email	25	1	26 (5%)
Another Language	0	0	0
Braille	0	0	0
Other*	18	3	21 (4%)
Total**	380	114	494

*Too much information/ too many copies (5); written in plain English/wording and jargon difficult to understand (5); prefer no SCRA label on envelope (3); papers were late (2); carer would like paperwork (2); difficulties with reading or writing (2); correct spelling to be used (1); babies should not be sent All About Me form (1).

**The total doesn’t equal the sum as some respondents chose more than one option.

In 2016, the majority (86%) of adults and young people said that no change was needed to the format of the information they were sent for Hearings (it was 85% in the 2015 survey).

Preparation for Hearings

Understanding of why they are at a Children’s Hearing

Children, young people and adults were asked if they understood why they were attending a Hearing.

In 2016:

- 63% of **children** (62) knew why they were at their Hearing; 16% (16) didn’t know; and 20% replied ‘no’ (20) (in addition, there were two children who didn’t answer this question). Of the 36 children who answered ‘don’t know’ or ‘no’, 61% had been to a Hearing before.
- 92% of **young people** (108) knew why they were at their Hearing; 5% (6) weren’t sure; and 35 (4) said ‘no’ (in addition, there were four children who didn’t answer this question).
- 98% of **adults** (377) knew why they were at their Hearing; 1% (5) weren’t sure; and 0.5% (2) said ‘no’ (in addition, there were four adults who didn’t answer this question).

⁹ <http://www.chip-partnership.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Helping-Me-With-Choices-2015.pdf>

Table 8. Understanding of why they were at the Hearing (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13	2008
Adults	98%	97%	97%	97%
Young people	92%	90%	94%	94%
Children	63%	48%	56%	53%

Speaking to others

Children, young people and adults were asked if they had spoken to someone before the Hearing about what would happen, who they spoke to and how much it had helped them prepare. The detailed responses are given in Appendix 4.

In 2016:

- 56% of **children** (56) had spoken to someone before their Hearing – this was most commonly a social worker (20); their parent(s) (18); grandparent(s) (11); or other relatives (10).
- 61% of **young people** (73) had spoken to someone before their Hearing (two didn't answer this question): social worker (39); carer or unit staff (15); parent(s) (12); advocate or legal representative (7); grandparent(s) (6); and other relatives (5).
- 58% of **adults** (222) had spoken to someone before the Hearing (seven didn't answer this question): social worker (137); solicitor/legal representative (65); partner (21); parent (17); other family or grandparent (15); child (11); friend (7); support worker (7).
- There were three adults who had spoken to a Reporter before the Hearing. No children or young people said they had spoken to a Reporter.

The majority of children, young people and adults who had spoken to someone before their Hearing said that it helped them prepare (at least a bit).

Table 9. How many had spoken to someone before the Hearing (2008 - 2016) (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13	2008
Adults	58%	64%	57%	66%
Young people	61%	62%	59%	67%
Children	56%	51%	51%	46%

In 2016

- One **young person** would have liked to have spoken to someone else but did not get the opportunity, and this was their grandparent/carer.
- 46 **adults** said there was someone else they would have liked to have spoken to (some chose more than one): social worker (21); solicitor/legal representative (15); Reporter (8); family members (6); advocacy worker (3); ombudsman (1); and Barnardo's (1).

This shows that social workers are the main professionals who prepare children and families for Hearings, and the importance of parents, carers and family members in helping children and young people. Few children and young people had the opportunity to speak to an advocate or representative. No children or young people and very few adults said they had spoken to a Reporter or would have liked to.

Additional information

Young people and adults were asked if they had accessed any other information before the Hearing.

In 2016, two young people (2%) and 34 adults (9%) said they had looked for further information. Of the 34 **adults**, 13 had accessed SCRA's website (with 12 finding it helpful). Other sources of additional information were websites for: Scottish Child Law Centre, Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People, Children's Hearings Scotland; Family Rights Group, kinship care.

43 **adults** said there was other information they would like to have had but didn't. The information they would have liked to have was: reports for the Hearing (18); information about what would happen at the Hearing/who would be there (8); more up to date information on child's case (4); conditions of CSOs (2); leaflets/information to help prepare children (2); information from social work (2); information on parents' rights (2).

Participation in the Children's Hearing

In 2016:

Children were asked if they had things they wanted to say to the Panel Members today - 33% said that they did (33) (it was 25% in 2015 and 27% in 2012-13), 43% said they didn't (43) and 23% didn't know (23).

73% of children (73) had been to a Hearing before - 45% (37%) of them said that they had spoken at their last Hearing, 23% (19) hadn't, and 32% (26) couldn't remember. This is similar to the 2015 survey in which 43% of children said that they had spoken at their previous Hearing.

84% of **young people** (95) had been to a Hearing before. 87 young people had attended their previous Hearing and 67 of them (77%) felt like they were the most important person at it.

76% of young people (90) said that they had given their views at their last Hearing and 74% (67) said they felt that they had been listened to, 17% (15) couldn't remember, and 9% (8) said that they weren't (Table 10).

Table 10. Young people's experience of their previous Hearing (2012-13 – 2016) (%)

	2016	2015	2012-13
Felt like the most important person at last Hearing	77%	68%	71%
Gave views at last Hearing*	76%	73%	n/a
Felt listened to*	74%	88%	n/a

*These questions weren't included in the 2012-13 survey

Equalities

SCRA staff at the Hearings Centre

Part of SCRA's values is that '*we are approachable and open*', and the organisation believes in treating people equally. To help measure whether SCRA is achieving this, young people and adults were asked if they felt that staff at the Hearings Centre treated them with dignity and respect (Table 11).

In 2016:

- 94% of **young people** (107) felt they were treated with dignity and respect by SCRA staff. Of the seven (6%) who answered no - their reasons were it was their first time at a Hearing (2), sometimes/'wee bit' (3), and don't know (2).
- 98% of **adults** (360) said they were treated with dignity and respect - of those who answered 'no' and explained, their comments were about Panel Members (7).

Table 11. Were you treated with dignity and respect by SCRA staff (2012-13 – 2016)? (%)

Age group	2016	2015	2012-13
Young people	94%	98%	99%
Adults	98%	99.7%	99%

Accessibility of the Hearings Centre

Adults and young people were asked if they would have liked any help at the Hearings Centre. In 2016, 93% of adults and young people said that they didn't need any help with accessing the Hearings Centre (Table 12).

Table 12. Help required with accessing the Hearings Centre (2016)

Type of help required	Adults	Young people	Total
No help needed	343	112	455 (93%)
Accessing the building	3	1	4 (1%)
Moving around the building	0	0	0
Support with hearing	3	0	3 (0.6%)
Other*	28	1	29 (6%)
Total	377	114	491

*Where 'other' was selected and explained, in most cases this was related to lack of or limited availability of car parking (18). Other issues raised were: Finding building/lack of directions (3); difficulties in getting pram/buggy into building (2); need for better disabled access (2); transport difficulties (2).

Days and times of Hearings

Adults and young people were asked: 'when is it most suitable for you to come to Hearings?', and their responses are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. When is it most suitable for you to come to Hearings (2016)?

Most suitable time of Hearing:	Adults	Young people	Total
Weekday - morning	141 (43%)	38 (36%)	179 (41%)
Weekday - afternoon	98 (30%)	47 (44%)	145 (36%)
Weekday - evening	12 (4%)	3 (3%)	15 (4%)
Weekday – blank/no preference	31 (10%)	8 (7%)	39 (9%)
Weekday - total	282 (87%)	96 (90%)	378 (88%)
Weekend - morning	19 (6%)	2 (2%)	21 (5%)
Weekend - afternoon	6 (2%)	6 (6%)	12 (3%)
Weekend - evening	9 (3%)	1 (1%)	10 (2%)
Weekend – blank/no preference	9 (3%)	2 (2%)	11 (2%)
Weekend - total	43 (13%)	11 (10%)	54 (12%)
Total	325 (100%)	107 (100%)	432 (100%)

In 2016, 87% of adults and 90% of young people would prefer to come to Hearings on a weekday, and for the Hearing to be held in the morning (43% of adults; 36% of young

people) or in the afternoon (30% of adults; 44% of young people). This is similar to the 2015 survey, in which 90% of young people and 91% of adults said they would prefer weekday Hearings.

Internet access

Adults and young people were asked if they had access to the internet. This is to help inform the development of SCRA's and Children's Hearings Scotland's joint digital strategy.

In 2016:

- 92% of **young people** had access to the internet and 8% did not. Two young people had accessed SCRA's website.
- 85% of **adults** had access to the internet and 15% did not. 61 adults had accessed SCRA's website.

There were differences in where young people and adults accessed the internet. In 2016, the majority of adults (77%) access the internet at home, whereas young people were almost as likely to use their mobile phones as at home (Table 14). Adults in this survey are similar to the Scottish population as a whole in which 20% of adults have no internet access and those that do either access it at home (78%) or using mobile phones (30%)¹⁰.

Table 14. Where do you access the internet (2016)?

Location	Adults	Young People
Home	252 (77%)	64 (58%)
Mobile phone	125 (38%)	56 (51%)
Friend or relative's home	5 (2%)	2 (2%)
Library	7 (2%)	2 (2%)
School	0	12 (11%)
College/university/work	11 (3%)	0
Residential Unit	0	1 (1%)
Friend or relative's phone	0	2 (2%)
x-box/playstation	2 (1%)	4 (4%)
Shopping centre	0	1 (1%)
Anywhere	0	2 (2%)
Job Centre	1 (1%)	0
Total*	327	110

*Sums do not equal totals as some respondents gave more than one response.

Children's feelings about being at Hearings

Young children and children were asked about how they felt being at their Hearing. Young children answered by choosing a picture to colour in from a set for boys or a set for girls. Each set included pictures of either 'Billy' (for boys) or 'Chloe' (for girls), with each character being shown as either happy, OK or sad. Children aged seven to 11 years were asked whether they felt happy, OK or sad.

¹⁰ Scotland's People Annual Report. Results from the 2013 Scottish Household Survey. Scottish Government (updated October 2015). <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/08/7973/8>

In 2016:

- 63% of **children** (62) said they felt OK about coming to the Hearing, 33% (33) felt happy, and 4% (4) felt sad (one child didn't answer this question).
- 81% of **young children** (21) felt happy about coming to the Hearing, 12% (3) felt OK, and 7% (2) felt sad.

Table 15. How young children and children felt about being at their Hearings (2012-13 – 2016)

Year	Sad		OK		Happy	
	Young children	Children	Young children	Children	Young children	Children
2016	7%	4%	12%	63%	81%	33%
2015	4%	11%	25%	61%	71%	27%
2012-13	11%	5%	11%	62%	78%	33%



Chapter 4.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

SCRA's performance

SCRA's customer commitment is that¹¹:

- We will be approachable, knowledgeable and helpful.
- We will ensure we answer you promptly if you contact us.
- We will keep you informed of the reason for any delay and keep delays to a minimum.
- We will provide information about the Children's Hearings System which is easily accessible, accurate and easy to understand.
- We will ensure we send any correspondence to you on time, and we will keep your information safe and secure.
- We will ensure that our Hearing Centers are clean, safe and comfortable.
- We will listen to and respond promptly to your comments and complaints

The results of the 2016 children and families show how well SCRA is meeting some of these commitments.

Areas of good performance by SCRA

- SCRA is performing well in sending letters and papers to those coming to Hearings and in providing information in a form that children, young people and adults understand.
- Almost all young people and adults said that they were treated with dignity and respect by SCRA staff, implying that our staff are approachable and friendly.
- The majority of young children and children felt happy or OK about being at their Hearings.
- Almost all young people and adults said that they didn't need any help in accessing or whilst in the Hearings Centre.

These findings above are very similar to previous surveys and show that SCRA maintains a consistently high level of performance in these areas of its service.

Areas for improvement by SCRA

A third of children and young people did not receive the All About Me form.

SCRA Recommendation 1: There would be merit in exploring if SCRA staff are including the All About Me forms when sending letters and Hearings papers to children and young people.

¹¹ <http://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/vision-values-commitment-outcomes/>

Just over a quarter of young people had completed the All About Me form. This is similar to previous surveys. This raises questions on how useful young people find the form, and if instead SCRA should explore other methods of helping young people give their views to their Hearings. Social workers are the professionals who young people most often spoke to before their Hearings, and as such would be best placed to support young people in providing their views.

SCRA Recommendation 2: SCRA should work with partner agencies (and particularly social work) to develop more effective methods for young people to give their views to their Hearings.

No young people and few adults had spoken to a Reporter before their Hearing, and few said they would have liked to. This could be considered surprising as the Reporter is the person who decides if a child should be referred to a Hearing, arranges the Hearing and sends letters and papers to those who will attend. In addition, few (2% of young people; 18% of adults) had accessed SCRA's web site which contains a variety of guidance and materials about the Hearings System. Is there more that SCRA should be doing to promote its role as a source of information and advice to those coming to Hearings?

SCRA Recommendation 3: SCRA should consider how to increase service users' understanding of its role in the Hearings System and be more proactive in offering and providing assistance to those coming to Hearings.

Questions for SCRA and other agencies

Only a third of children had things they wanted to say at their Hearing. Just over a third didn't know why they were at the Hearing, and of these most had been to a Hearing before.

Question 1. Is there a balance to be made between the disruption to a child's day and possibly causing them anxiety with coming to a hearing which they don't understand and are unable to contribute to?

About three quarters of young people said they had been listened to and felt like they were the most important person at their last Hearing. This is similar to previous surveys.

Question 2. What more can be done to make every child and young person feels listened to and important at their Hearing?

Responses to Locality specific questions

1. Ayrshire Locality

30 respondents – 16 young people and 14 adults.

How far have you travelled for today's Hearing?

<5 miles: 11 (37%)
 5 to 10 miles: 7 (23%)
 >10 miles: 12 (40%)

How did you get here?

By bus: 10 (33%)
 Own car: 7 (23%)
 Someone else's car: 9 (30%)
 By train: 3 (10%)
 Taxi: 1 (3%)

What is more important for you?

A Hearings Centre close to where you live: 8 (28%)
 A Hearings Centre with good facilities: 21 (72%)

Would you be prepared to travel further than today to go to a Hearings Centre with better facilities?

No: 11 (35%)
 Not sure: 11 (35%)
 Yes: 9 (29%)

2. Grampian Locality

32 respondents – 4 young people and 28 adults.

Is the waiting room comfortable?

No: 1 (3%)
 Yes: 31 (97%)

Are there any ways it could be improved?

No: 20 (62%)
 Yes: 11 (34%)
 Not sure: 1 (3%)

Suggestions for improvement to waiting rooms: adult reading matter (1), TV (1), computer (1), warmer/colder (3), music (1), vending machine/tea/coffee (2), more homely (1).

Do you have any suggestions for improvement to this Hearings Centre?

No: 26 (84%)
Yes: 4 (13%)
Not sure: 1 (3%)

Suggestions for improvement to Hearings Centre: TV (1), adult reading matter (1), automated doors (1), more comfortable chairs (1), warmer (1).

Have you tried to phone the Reporter's office recently?

Yes: 7 (21%)
No: 29 (79%)

If yes, how easy was it to speak to the person you wanted to?

1 = very easy: 3 (50%)
2 1 (17%)
3 2 (33%)
4 0
5 = very difficult 0

3. Highlands & Islands Locality

16 respondents – one young person and 15 adults.

Was this Hearings Centre easy to find and get to?

Yes: 16 (100%)

Is it private enough for you here at this Hearings Centre?

No: 3 (19%)
Yes: 13 (81%)

If not, why? – Waiting room doors are open (2).

Are the reception area and waiting room here welcoming and comfortable?

Yes: 16 (100%)

4. Tayside & Fife Locality

117 respondents – 32 young people and 81 adults.

Did you feel welcomed when you came here today?

No: 3 (3%) Yes: 112 (97%)

Didn't really speak to anyone (1); didn't pay attention (1); reception staff not smiling/friendly (2).

Is there anything you think we should do to improve this waiting room?

No: 82 (71%)
Not sure: 6 (5%)
Yes: 28 (24%)

The following suggestions for improvement were made:

- Coffee & tea/ vending machine – 3
- TV – 2
- Brighter/more colourful – 2
- More for young people to do – 6
- Games console – 2
- DVD – 3
- Private or separate rooms - 2
- Baby changing facilities, music, pencils, more variety of things in waiting room, bigger waiting room, much improved since I was last here – all 1 respondent each

Have you ever tried to phone the Reporters' office?

No: 88 (75%) Yes: 29 (25%)

If yes, how easy was it to get to speak to the person you wanted to?

1 (very easy): 15 (50%)
2 4 (13%)
3 6 (20%)
4 3 (10%)
5 (very difficult) 2 (7%)

Have you been to a Hearing here before?

Yes: 100 (85%) No: 17 (15%)

If yes, can you tell me what you thought about the set-up of the Hearings Room?

80 responses – the most common were:

- OK/fine/like it the way it is/no change needed: 55 (68%)
- Too formal/ intimidating: 9 (11%)
- Crowded/too many people: 4 (5%)
- Don't know/don't remember/no comment: 4 (5%)

5. Central Locality

39 respondents – 5 young people and 34 adults.

Did you find this Hearings Centre easy to travel to?

Yes: 33 (85%) No: 6 (15%)

Is this Hearings Centre suitable and comfortable for you?

Yes: 38 (97%) No: 1 (3%)

Would you rather travel a longer distance to a purpose built Hearings Centre or come to perhaps less suitable local premises?

Local: 32 (82%)

Purpose built: 2 (5%)

Don't know: 5 (12%)

6. North Strathclyde Locality

77 respondents – 10 young people and 67 adults.

Did you find this Hearings Centre easy to travel to?

Yes: 70 (91%) No: 7 (9%)

Is this Hearings Centre suitable and comfortable for you?

Yes: 70 (91%)

No: 5 (6%)

Don't know: 2 (3%)

Would you rather travel a longer distance to a purpose built Hearings Centre or come to perhaps less suitable local premises?

Local: 55 (73%)

Purpose built: 14 (19%)

Don't know: 6 (8%)

7. South East Locality

36 respondents – 13 young people and 22 adults.

Do you think this Hearings Centre is suitable and comfortable?

Yes: 34 (94%) No: 2 (6%)

If no, what would make it better?

'More activities for kids especially older kids' (1)

Would you like to be reminded of your Hearing by text?

Yes: 13 (37%)

No: 18 (51%)

Don't know: 4 (11%)

**Child's questionnaire
(ages 7 – 11 years)**

Section A: Administrative information

Complete as much of Part 1 as possible **prior to approaching** the child (aged 7 to 11 years) to participate in an interview. Please complete Parts 2 and 3 after approaching the participant, but before conducting the interview.

Part 1: Administrative information			
Name of interviewer: _____			
Locality: _____			
Hearing Centre: _____			
Date: / April /2016			
Did the interview take place in a waiting room or private room?			
Waiting room	Private room	Reception area	Other
Was there anyone else present when the interview took place? Yes			No

Part 2: Consent <i>(please circle)</i>	
If the participant is a child, did the parent/carer provide consent to participate? Yes	No
Did the child provide consent to participate? Yes	No
If either the parent/carer or the young person says no, please do not interview the young person.	

Part 3: Participant information <i>(please write in/circle answer)</i>	
How old is the child? _____ years	
What gender is the child? Male	Female
Is this the child's first Hearing? Yes	No

Section B: Information about today

1. Did you get a letter asking you to come here today? (tick one option only)

Yes No Don't know
 (go to question 2) (go to question 3) (go to question 3)

2. How easy was it to understand the letter? (circle one option only)

very quite not very not at all
 easy easy easy easy

3. Did you get an 'All About Me' form before today?

Show the 'All About Me' form to the child

Yes No Don't know
 (go to question 4) (go to question 6) (go to question 6)

4. Did you fill in this form before coming here today (or maybe somebody helped you)?

Yes, I did (go to question 5)

Yes, someone else did it with me (go to question 5)

No, I didn't fill it in (go to question 6)

5. How did you feel about filling it in? (circle one option only)

liked it liked it didn't like didn't like
 a lot a little it much it at all

Section C: Your participation

Please tick one box and follow the directions under the corresponding box. When the answer requires writing, please write the answer in the space provided.

6. Before today, did you talk to anyone about what would happen today? (tick one option only)

Yes No
 (go to question 7) (go to question 8)

7. Who did you talk to and has it helped you? (e.g. mum, dad, Reporter, Social Worker, carer, friend)

Who?	Has it helped you prepare for today?			
	Yes, a lot	Yes, a bit	Not really	Not at all

8. Do you have things you want to say to the Panel Members today? (tick one option only)

Yes No Don't know

Section D: Your understanding of the Children's Hearings System

9. Do you know why you are here today? (tick one option only)

Yes No Don't know

10. How do you feel about coming to the Hearing today? (circle one option only)

happy okay sad

11. Have you been to a Hearing like this before? (tick one option only)

Yes No Can't remember

12. Did you say anything the last time you came? (tick one option only)

Yes No Can't remember

Thank you very much for answering these questions.

**Adults and Young People's Questionnaire
(young people aged 12 or over & parents/carers)**

Section A: Administrative information

Complete as much of Part 1 as possible **prior to approaching** the young person or adult to participate in an interview. Please complete Parts 2 and 3 after approaching the participant, but before conducting the interview.

Interviews are to be carried out before the Hearing.

Part 1: Administrative information

Name of interviewer: _____

Locality: _____

Hearing Centre: _____

Date: / April 2016

Did the interview take place in a waiting room or private room?

Waiting room Private room Reception area Other

Was there anyone else present when the interview took place? Yes No

Part 2: Consent (please circle)

If the participant is a young person, did the parent/carer provide consent to participate?

Yes No

Did the adult/young person provide consent to participate? Yes

No

If either the parent/carer or the young person says no, please do not interview the young person.

Part 3: Participant information (please write in/circle)

Is the participant a young person or an adult?

Young person _____ Adult (parent) _____ Adult (carer)
Adult (other)

How old is the **young person**? _____ years

Young person's gender: Male Female

Section B: Information for today

These questions are for ALL participants

1. What information did you receive for today's Hearing? (please tick responses where a 'yes' answer is provided and cross responses where a 'no' answer is provided)

Information	Received?	Understood?
Letter		
Papers/reports		
Leaflet(s)		

2. Would you have liked your information in a different format such as:

Bigger lettering Another language Brail Easy read

Sent by email Other _____ No change needed

3. Do you feel you got enough information for today? (tick one option only)

Enough Too much Not enough

4. Do you know why you are here today? (tick one option only)

Yes No Not sure

5. Would you have liked any further help at this Hearing centre with:

Accessing the building Moving around in the building

Support with hearing Anything else _____ No help needed

These questions are for young people only

6. Did you fill in the 'All About Me' form? (tick one option only)

Yes No
(go to question 8) (go to question 7)

7. Can you tell me why you didn't? (tick one option only)

Didn't get it Didn't have time

Didn't understand it Didn't want to

Other (please specify) _____

(please go to question 11)

8. Did anyone help you fill it in? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

(go to question 9)

(go to question 10)

9. Who helped you fill it in? (e.g. social worker, parent)

10. How much did filling in this form help you to prepare for the Hearing today? (circle one option only)

a lot
not at all

a little

not much

Section C: Your participation

Please tick one box and follow the directions under the corresponding box. When the answer requires writing, please write the answer in the space provided.

These questions are for ALL participants

11. Before you came here today, did you talk to anyone about what might happen? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

(go to question 12)

(go to question 13)

12. Who have you spoken to and has it helped you prepare for today? (e.g. social worker, parent, solicitor/legal representative, safeguarder, Children's Rights Officer, Who Cares? Scotland, etc.)

Who?	Has it helped you prepare for today?			
	Yes, definitely	Yes, a bit	Not really	Not at all

13. Is there anyone (else) you would have liked to talk to about today? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

(go to question 14)

(go to question 15)

14. Who would you have liked to have spoken to? (e.g. social worker, parent, Reporter, legal representative, friend)

15. Have you seen this leaflet before? – Helping Me Make Choices (show leaflet)

Yes
(go to question 16)

No
(go to question 17)

16. Did you find it helpful? (circle one)

a lot a little not much not at all don't know

17. Have you accessed any information to help you prepare for today? (e.g. SCRA website, Scottish Child Law Centre, Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People, etc) (*tick one option only*)

Yes
(go to question 18)

No
(go to question 19)

18. If Yes....

What?	Has it helped you prepare for today?			
	Yes, definitely	Yes, a bit	Not really	Not at all

19. Is there any information you would have liked to have (but didn't) to help you prepare for today? (*tick one option only*)

Yes

No

If yes, please explain:

20. Do you access the internet? (*tick one option only*)

Yes
(go to question 21)

No
(go to question 23)

21. Where do you usually access the internet?

22. Have you ever looked at the SCRA website? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

23. Do you feel that the staff at this Hearings Centre treat you with dignity and respect? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

If no, "can you tell me more about that?"

24. When is it most suitable for you to come to Hearings? (circle one)

Weekdays weekends

And (circle one)

morning afternoon evening

Section D: Previous Hearings

These questions are for young people only

25. Is this your first time at a Hearing? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

(no further questions) (go to question 26)

26. Did you come to the last Hearing? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

Not sure

(go to question 27) (no further questions) (no further questions)

27. Did you feel like you were the most important person at your last Hearing? (tick one option only)

Yes

No

28. Did you give your views at your last Hearing? (tick one option only)

Yes No Can't remember

If No - why not:

29. Did you feel listened to? (tick one option only)

Yes No Can't remember

Thank you very much for answering these questions.

Appendix 4

Who children, young people and adults spoke to and how much it helped them prepare for the Hearing

Table 1. Who children spoke to and how much it helped them.

Who was spoken to	Yes, a lot	Yes, a bit	Not really	Not at all	Total (N)
Child(ren)	0	0	0	0	0
Parent(s)	9 (53%)	7 (41%)	1 (6%)	0	17
Other family	9 (60%)	6 (40%)	0	0	15
Carer(s)	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	0	0	6
Social Work	8 (40%)	11 (50%)	0	0	20
Education	3 (100%)	0	0	0	3
Health/Mental Health	0	0	0	0	0
Reporter/SCRA	0	0	0	0	0
Advocacy/Solicitor/Legal Rep	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0	0	2
Police/Justice	0	0	0	0	0
Voluntary Sector	0	0	0	0	0
Other Worker	0	0	1 (100%)	0	1
Friend	0	0	0	0	0
Partner (or ex-partner)	0	0	0	0	0
Other	4 (50%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)	0	8
Total	38	29	5	0	72

Table 2. Who young people spoke to and how much it helped them.

Who was spoken to	Yes, definitely %	Yes, a bit %	Not really %	Not at all %	Total (N)
Child(ren)	0	0	0	0	0
Parent(s)	7 (58%)	5 (42%)	0	0	12
Other family	2 (67%)	1 (33%)	0	0	3
Carer(s)	9 (100%)	0	0	0	9
Social Work	26 (68%)	11 (29%)	0	1 (3%)	38
Education	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	0	1 (20%)	5
Health/Mental Health	0	0	0	0	0
Reporter/SCRA	0	0	0	0	0
Advocacy/Solicitor/Legal Rep	3 (75%)	0	0	1 (25%)	4
Police/Justice	0	0	0	0	0
Voluntary Sector	0	0	0	0	0
Other Worker	1 (100%)	0	0	0	1
Friend	1 (100%)	0	0	0	1
Partner (or ex-partner)	0	0	0	0	0
Other	9 (56%)	7 (44%)	0	0	16
Total	59	27	0	3	73

Table 3. Who adults spoke to and how much it helped them.

Who was spoken to	Yes, definitely (%)	Yes, a bit (%)	Not really (%)	Not at all (%)	Total (N)
Child(ren)	7 (64%)	3 (27%)	1 (9%)	0	11
Parent(s)	14 (82%)	3 (18%)	0	0	17
Other family	11 (73%)	4 (27%)	0	0	15
Carer(s)	0	0	0	0	0
Social Work	95 (69%)	30 (22%)	7 (5%)	5 (4%)	137
Education	1 (100%)	0	0	0	1
Health/Mental Health	0	0	0	0	0
Reporter/SCRA	0	0	0	0	0
Advocacy/Solicitor/Legal Rep	53 (77%)	11 (16%)	4 (6%)	1 (1%)	69
Police/Justice	0	0	0	0	0
Voluntary Sector	0	0	0	0	0
Other Worker	1 (100%)	0	0	0	1
Friend	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	0	0	7
Partner (or ex-partner)	14 (67%)	3 (14%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	21
Safeguarder	0	0	0	0	0
Other*	23 (82%)	4 (14%)	1 (4%)	0	28
Total	225	59	15	8	307

* other worker (7); safeguarder (3); nursery staff (3); Reporter (3); LAC meeting (2); residential school (2); LLS (2); relatives (2); paediatrician (2). All one each – solicitor, Phoenix Futures, counsellor, health visitor, Barnardo’s, family centre, school nurse, hospital records manager, DFP, Circle.



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