

# 2010 Annual survey

---

Results only



**ACYS** | AUSTRALIAN  
CLEARINGHOUSE  
FOR YOUTH STUDIES



## Contents

Introduction	5
ACYS products and services	7
<i>Youth Studies Australia</i>	13
<i>Youth Field Xpress</i>	19
The sector	21
Respondent demographics	25



## Introduction

The ACYS annual survey was conducted during a four-week period between 16 December, 2010 and 27 January, 2011.

During this period 372 responses were recorded. This is the largest ever response for an ACYS survey. The next highest response for a survey was 277 responses in the 2008 annual survey.

This year, respondent demographics were recorded in order to gauge who ACYS is servicing.

Open-ended questions were included and elicited a large number of responses. When asked 'What do you think ACYS does well or can improve on?' 173 people took the time to respond – providing ACYS with valuable data.

The survey was promoted through various networks including the Australia Youth Information Network, Youthgas, CommunityNet and Dove-tail. A link to the survey was emailed directly to *Youth Field Xpress* and *Youth Studies Australia* subscribers and the survey was also promoted on Facebook and Twitter. State peak organisations sent information through their networks about the survey and some included an article in their newsletters.

On completion of the survey, respondents had the option of entering into a draw to win one of two prizes: a copy of *Youth work and social diversity* and *Sounds of then, sounds of now: Popular music in Australia*.

It should be noted that questions relating to the new ACYS website were not included in this survey, as the site had only been live for a few weeks at the time of the survey. An additional survey about the ACYS website will be conducted mid-2011.



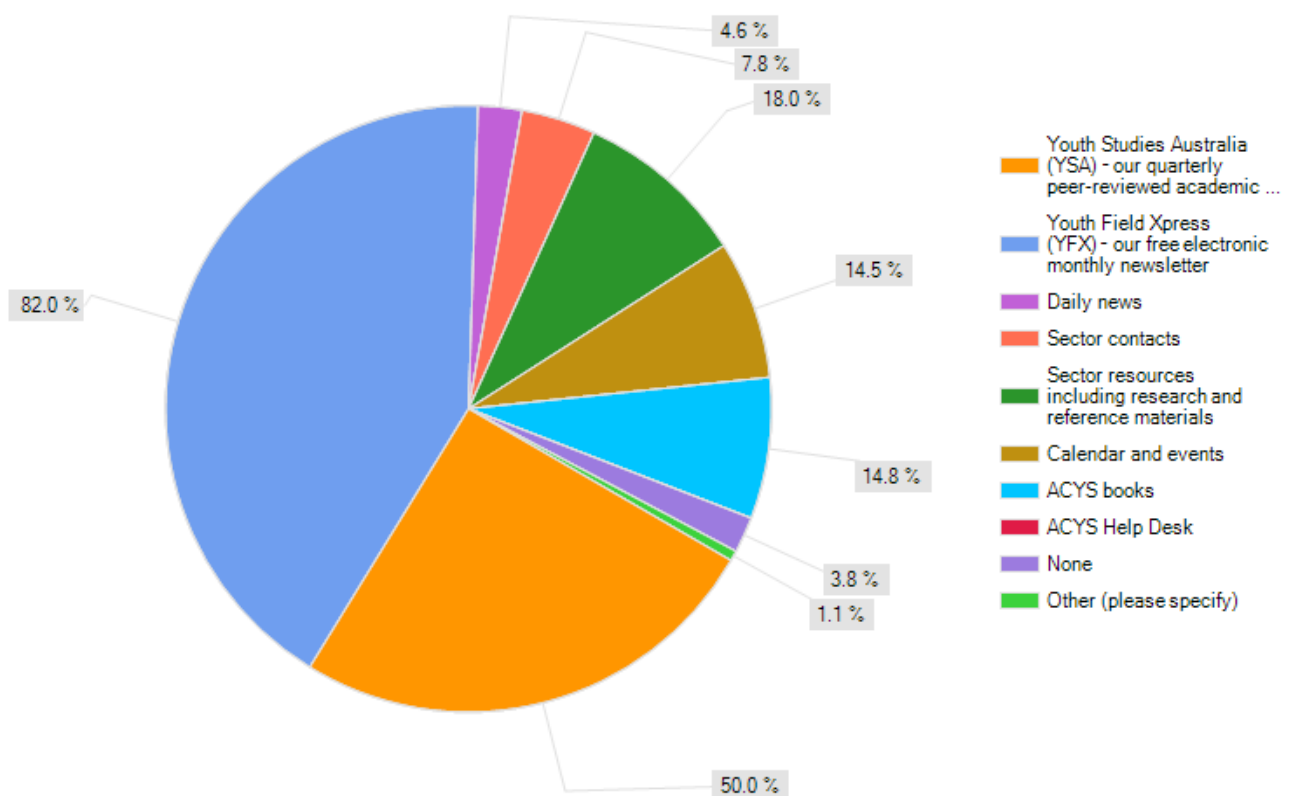
## ACYS products and services

The survey collected general information relating to ACYS products and services, how these are used and for what purposes. It also looked at how respondents first heard about ACYS and how frequently they use ACYS as a resource.

### *Which products and services are most popular?*

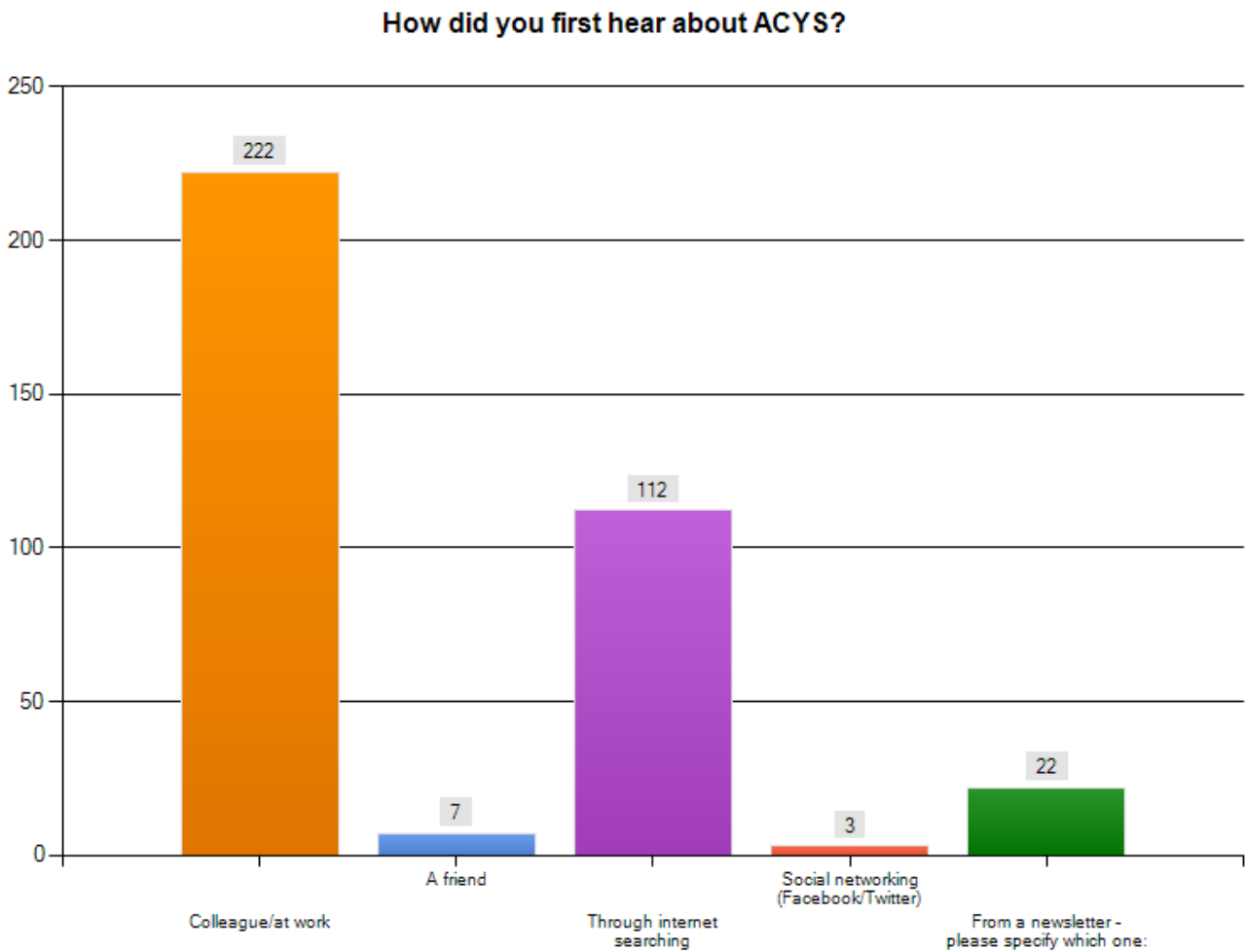
**Chart 1** details which ACYS resources and information are most commonly used. Respondents were able to select one or more answers. The most commonly used service is *Youth Field Xpress*, ACYS's free monthly newsletter, followed by *Youth Studies Australia*, ACYS's peer-reviewed journal.

**What ACYS resources and information do you use?**



## How did respondents first hear about ACYS?

**Chart 2** shows that over 60% of survey respondents heard about ACYS from a colleague or at work. This finding illustrates the importance of word-of-mouth communication and networking.



### Other notable responses

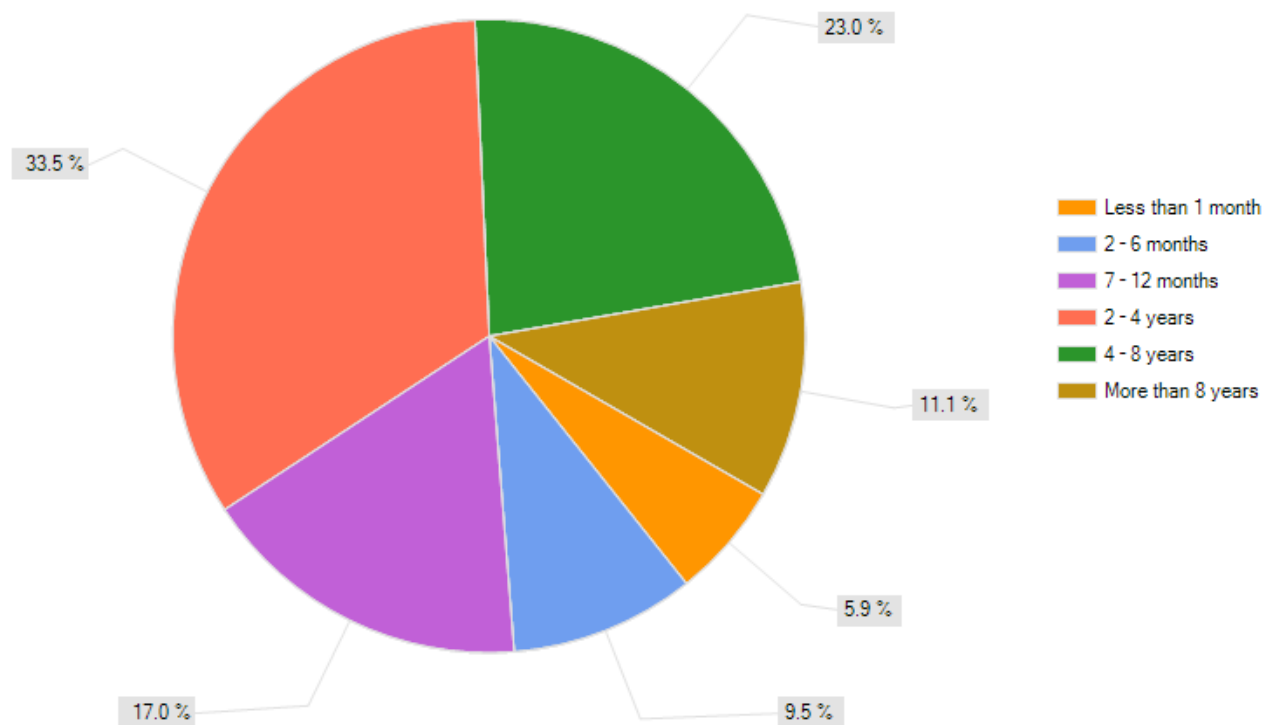
Youthgas email alerts	4
Youth Studies Australia	3
Academic research/study	2



### ***For how long have respondents used ACYS services?***

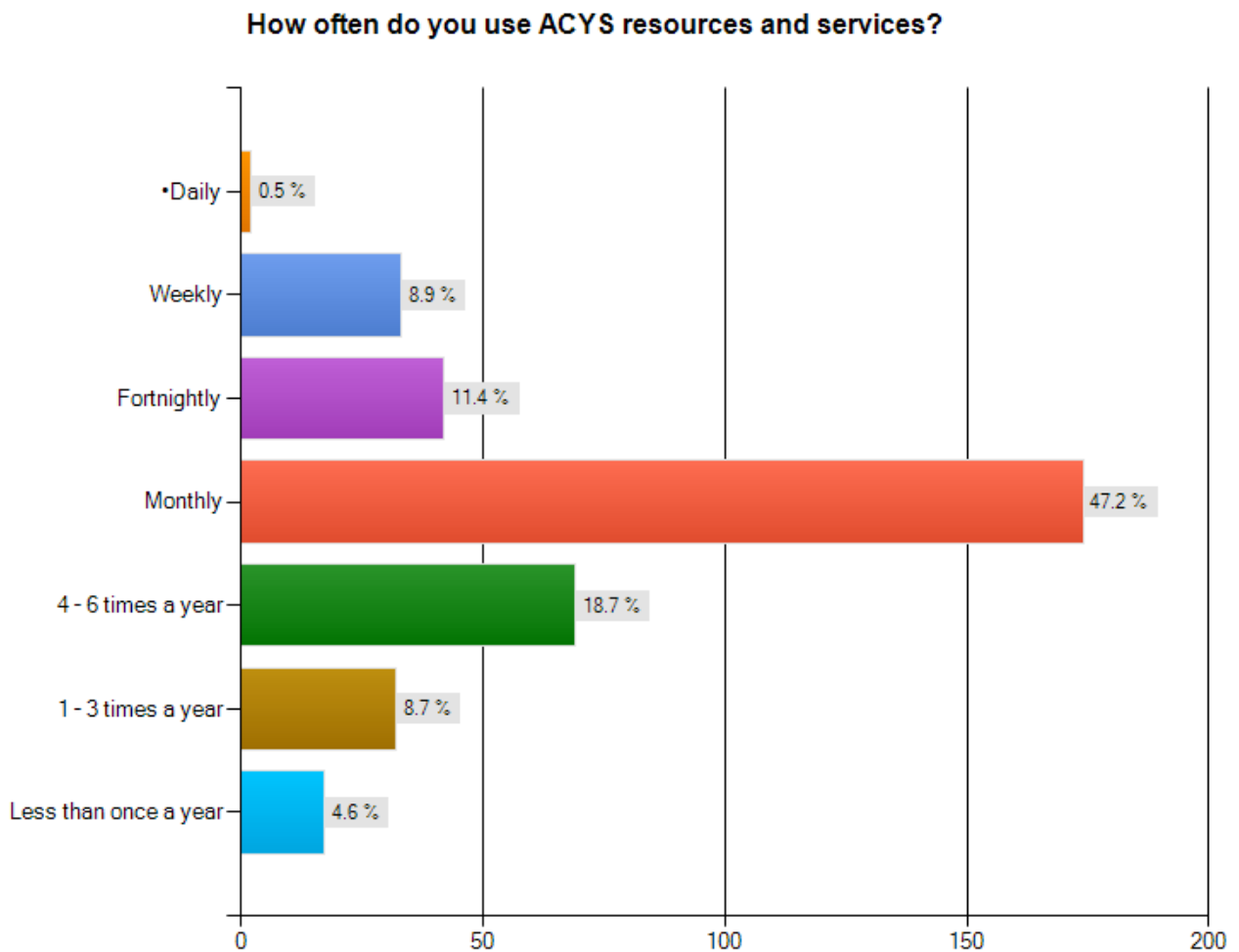
**Chart 3** reveals that the majority of respondents, over 65%, have used ACYS services for more than two years and over 30% of respondents have used ACYS services for more than four years. This demonstrates that ACYS is used as a long-term service in respondents' careers and working lives.

**For how long have you used ACYS services?**



### How often do respondents use ACYS resources and services?

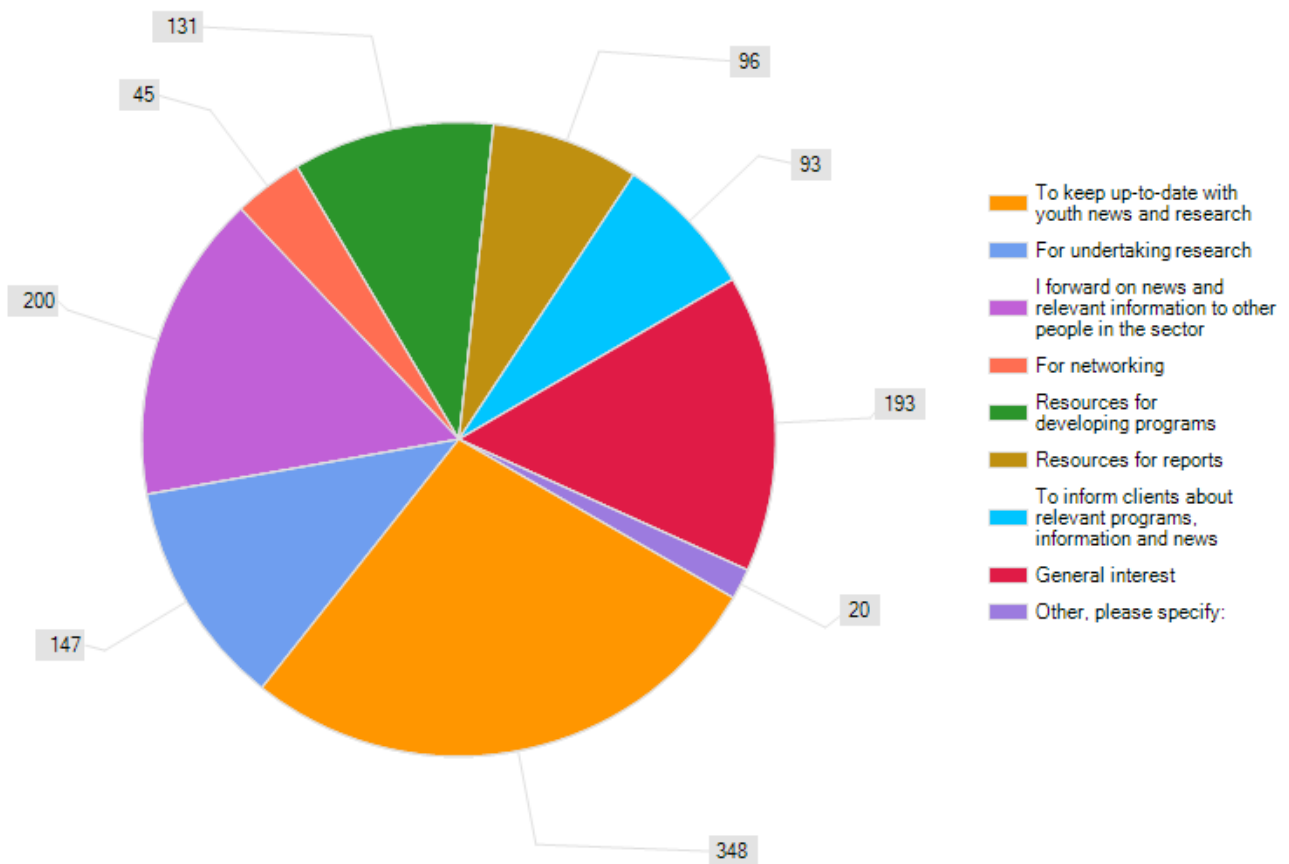
**Chart 4** demonstrates that the majority of respondents use ACYS resources and services on a monthly basis. This pattern correlates with the frequency of *Youth Field Xpress* which, according to Chart 1, is the most used service.



### How are ACYS services and resources used?

Chart 5 shows that most respondents use ACYS to keep up-to-date with youth news, research and general interest in the youth sector. Undertaking research and using ACYS as a resource for developing programs and reports are also popular uses.

How do you use this information? Please select one or more:

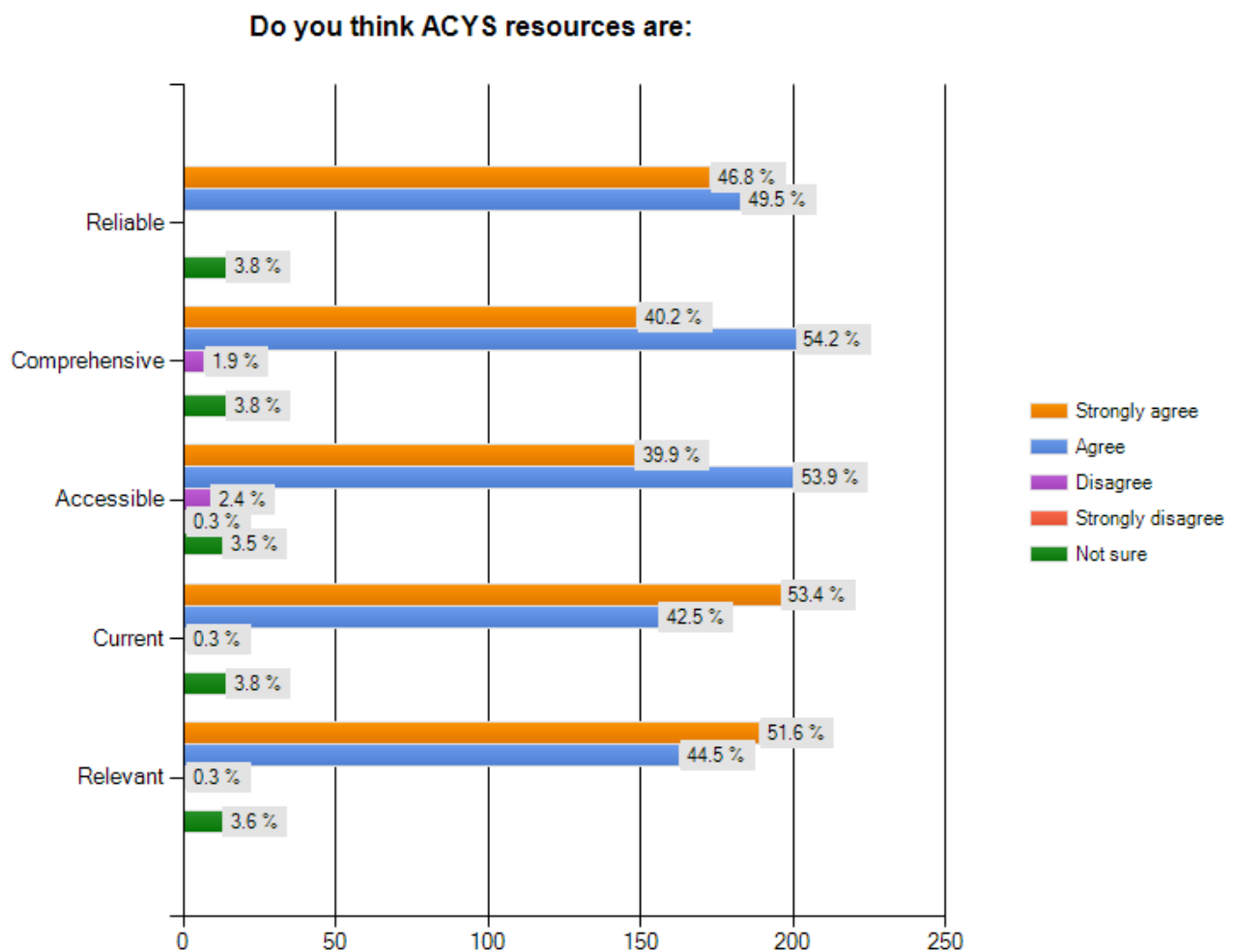


### Other notable responses

Training/resources/teaching	7
Research/study	3

## Value of ACYS resources

**Chart 6** demonstrates how respondents value ACYS resources and information. There was an overwhelming positive response with over 90% either agreeing or strongly agreeing that ACYS resources are reliable, comprehensive, accessible, current and relevant.

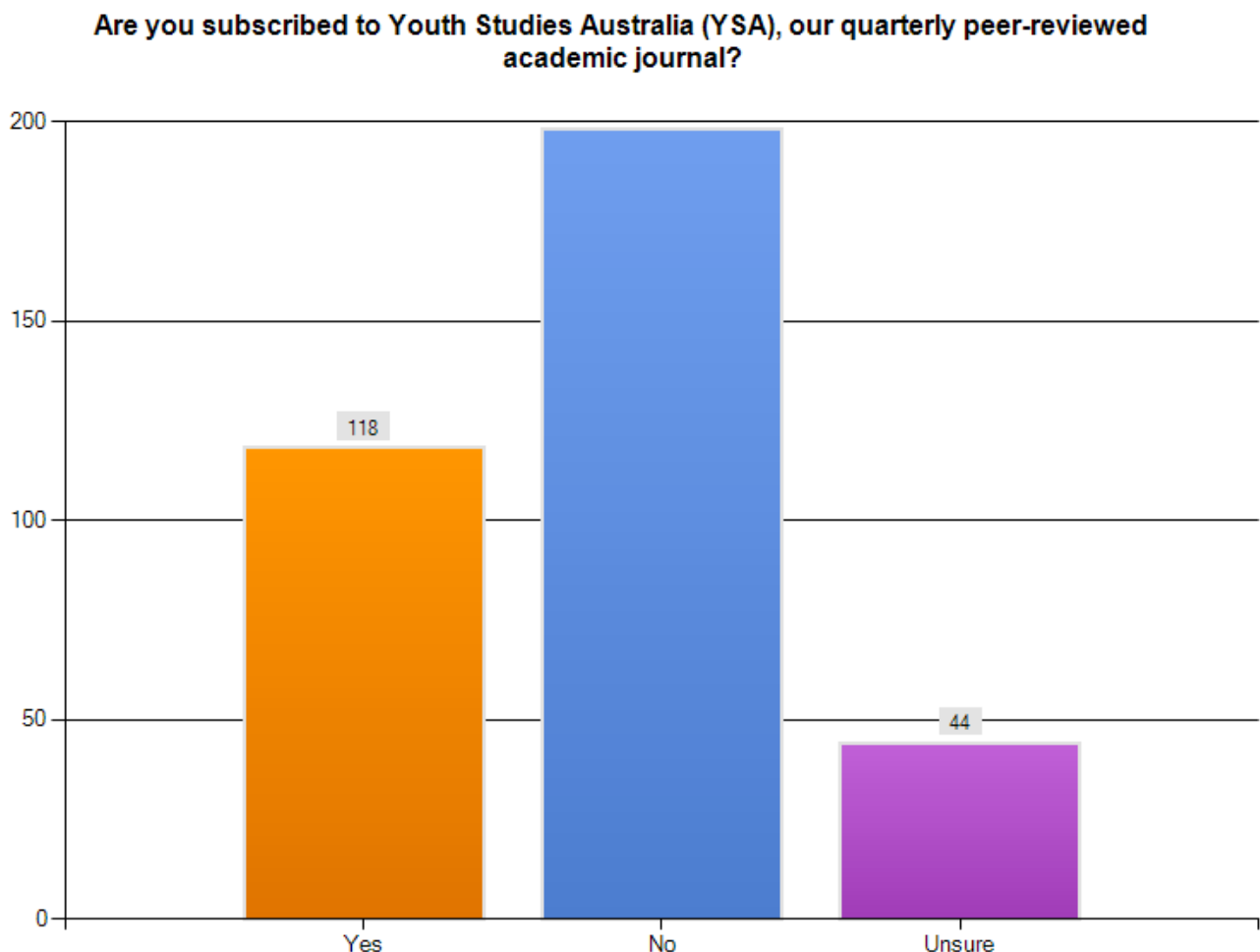


# Youth Studies Australia

This section of the survey focused on *Youth Studies Australia*. It asked if respondents were subscribed to YSA, if not what would encourage them to do so, if they had previously submitted a paper to YSA and how YSA articles are used at educational institutions and training organisations.

## ***How many respondents are subscribed to YSA?***

**Chart 1** shows 118 of the 372 respondents (more than 30%) are currently subscribed to *Youth Studies Australia*.

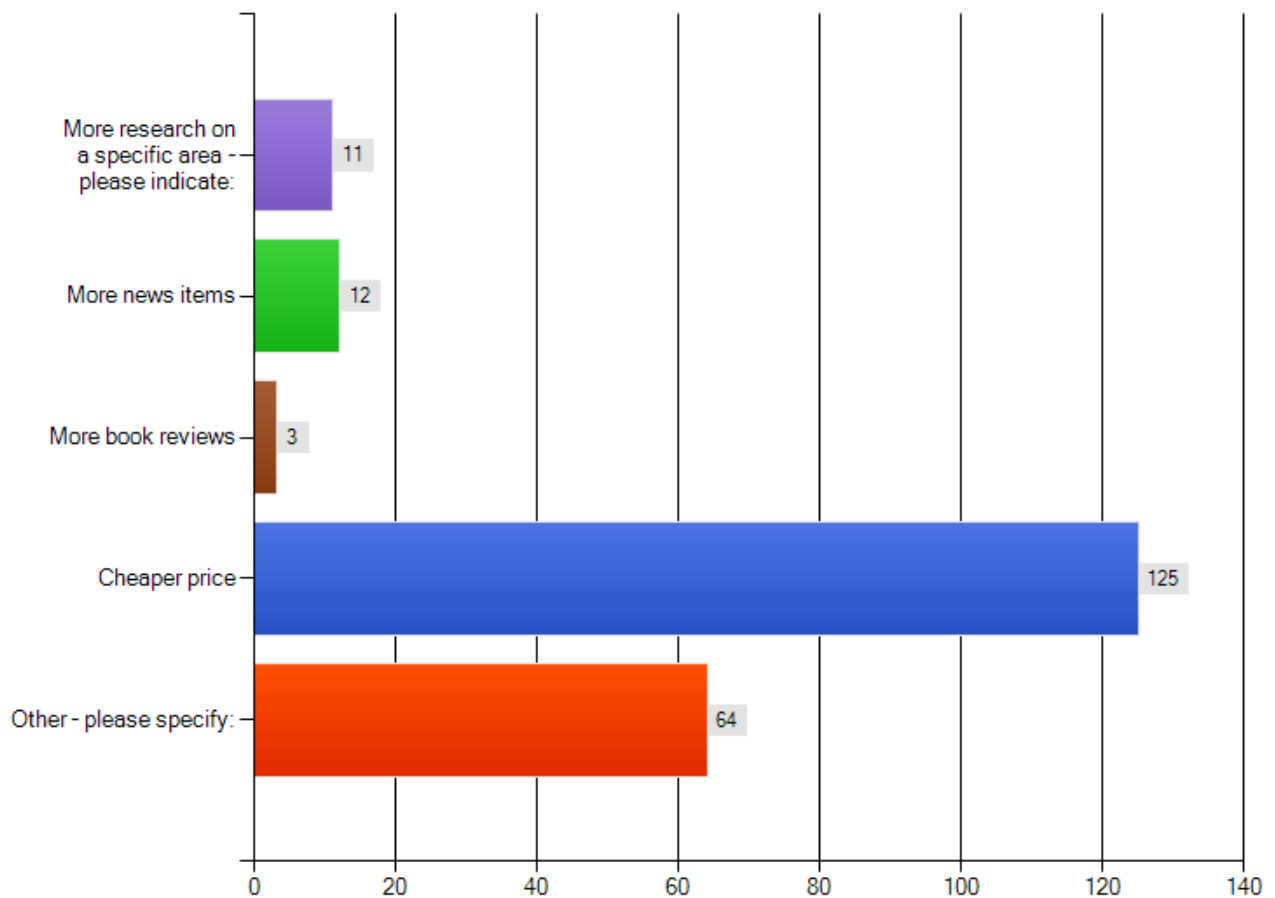


## What would encourage respondents to subscribe to YSA?

Respondents who are not subscribed to YSA were asked what would encourage them to subscribe.

**Chart 2** shows that the majority of respondents would subscribe if the journal was free. Other notable answers demonstrated that 12 respondents already have access either through their university or workplace and therefore do not need to subscribe.

**If you are NOT subscribed to YSA, what would encourage you to subscribe?**



### Other notable responses

Already have access through employer/educational institution	12
Unaware of YSA/need more information	12
Require organisational approval/budgets	2
More time	2
Work purposes eg. research/good news stories	1
Contributors wider than 'academics'	1
Digital format for iPad	1

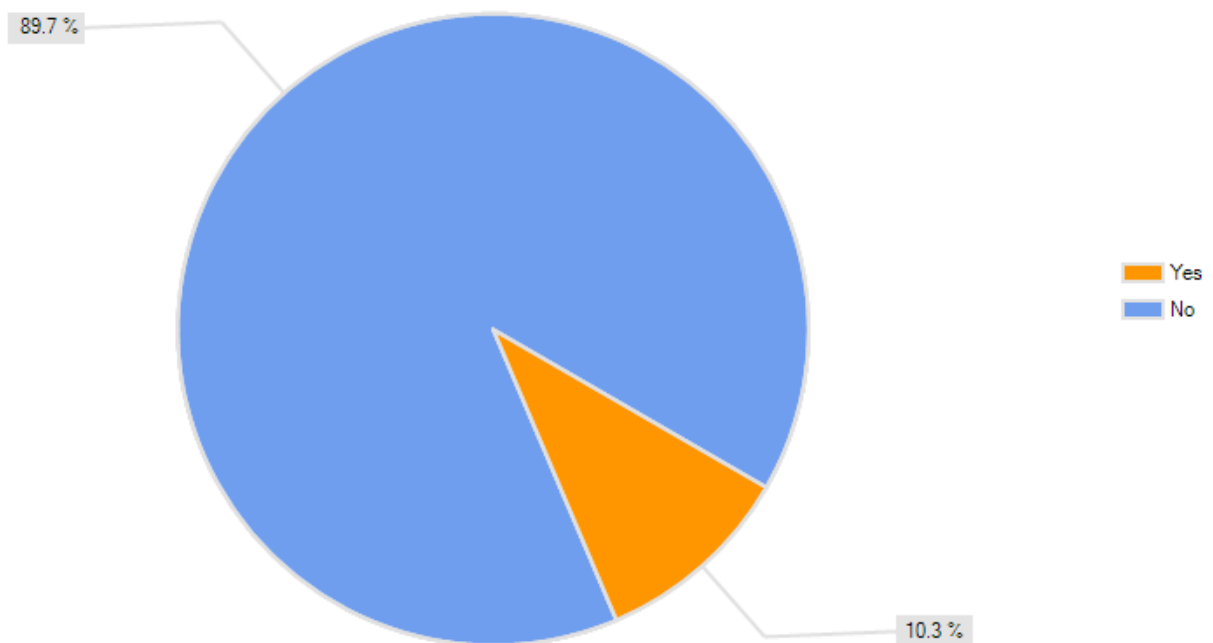
### Specific content

Indigenous Australian content	1
Wellbeing	1
Research around Tafe's role in providing	
Greater options for young people	1
Management issues of youth programs	1
Hepatitis C, injecting drug use	1
Youth Volunteerism	1

**What percentage of respondents had submitted a paper to YSA?**

**Chart 3** demonstrates that 10.3% of respondents have submitted a paper to YSA in the past. If respondents had not submitted a paper, they were asked to give a reason why. Notable responses are listed below.

**Have you submitted a paper to YSA for publishing?**

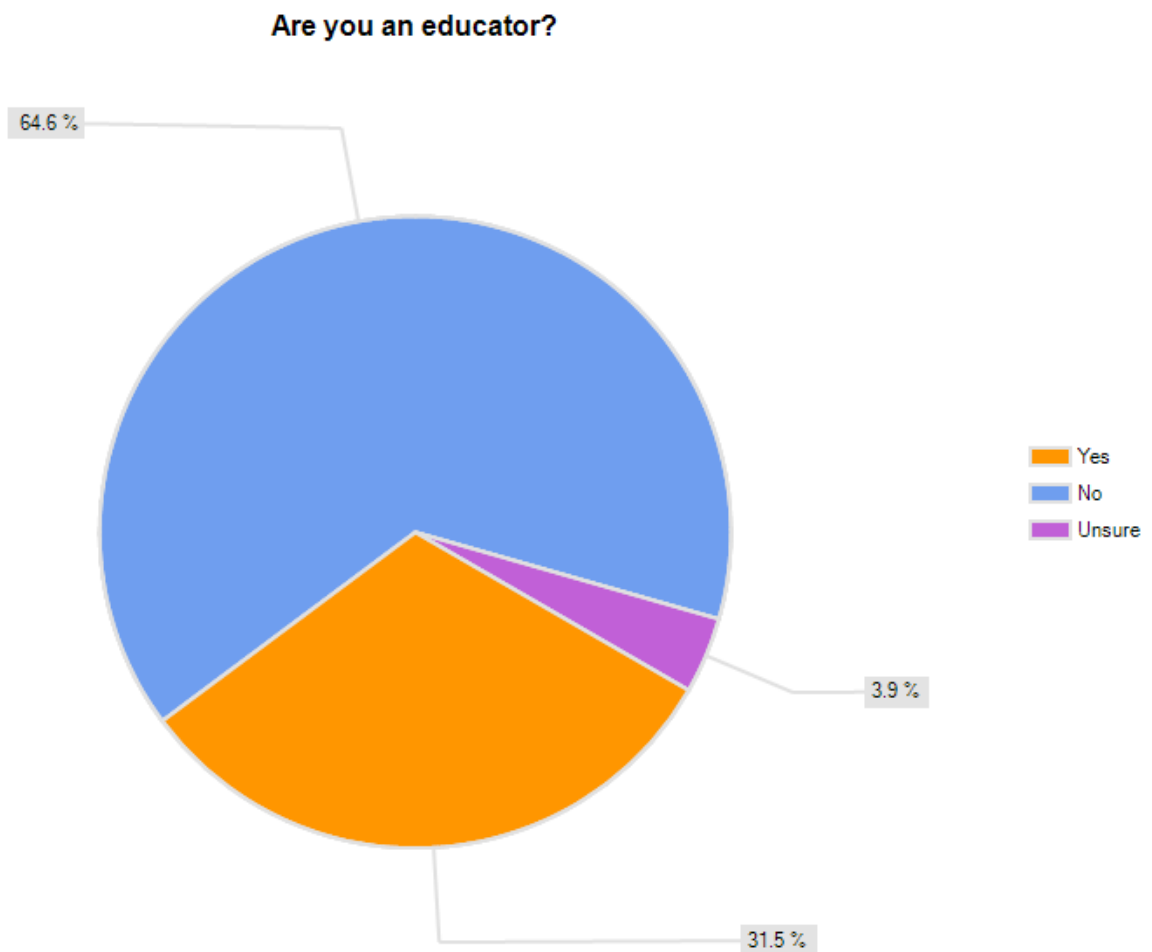


**If respondents answered No to the above question, they were asked to give a reason why. Over 240 responses were given.**

Time constraints	54
Yet to produce a suitable/relevant paper	34
Was not aware/have not considered to do so	29
Not enough experience	27
Not within context of current role/not applicable	26
Unaware of submittal process/eligibility	24
Not interested	12

**What percentage of educators use YSA articles and for what purposes?**

**Chart 4** shows the percentage of survey respondents who considered themselves educators (31.4%). Educators were asked if they used YSA articles and if so for what purposes. Of the 31.4% of respondents who were educators, nearly 80% (79.3%) use YSA papers for various educational and research purposes. Listed below are the uses of YSA articles and also reasons why educators do not use YSA articles.



**Educators use YSA articles for...**

Research/information & resources	26
General teaching purposes	22
Course reading/materials	15
Training	12
Keeping up-to-date/informed	10
Raising awareness of issues/creating debate	6
Personal development	2

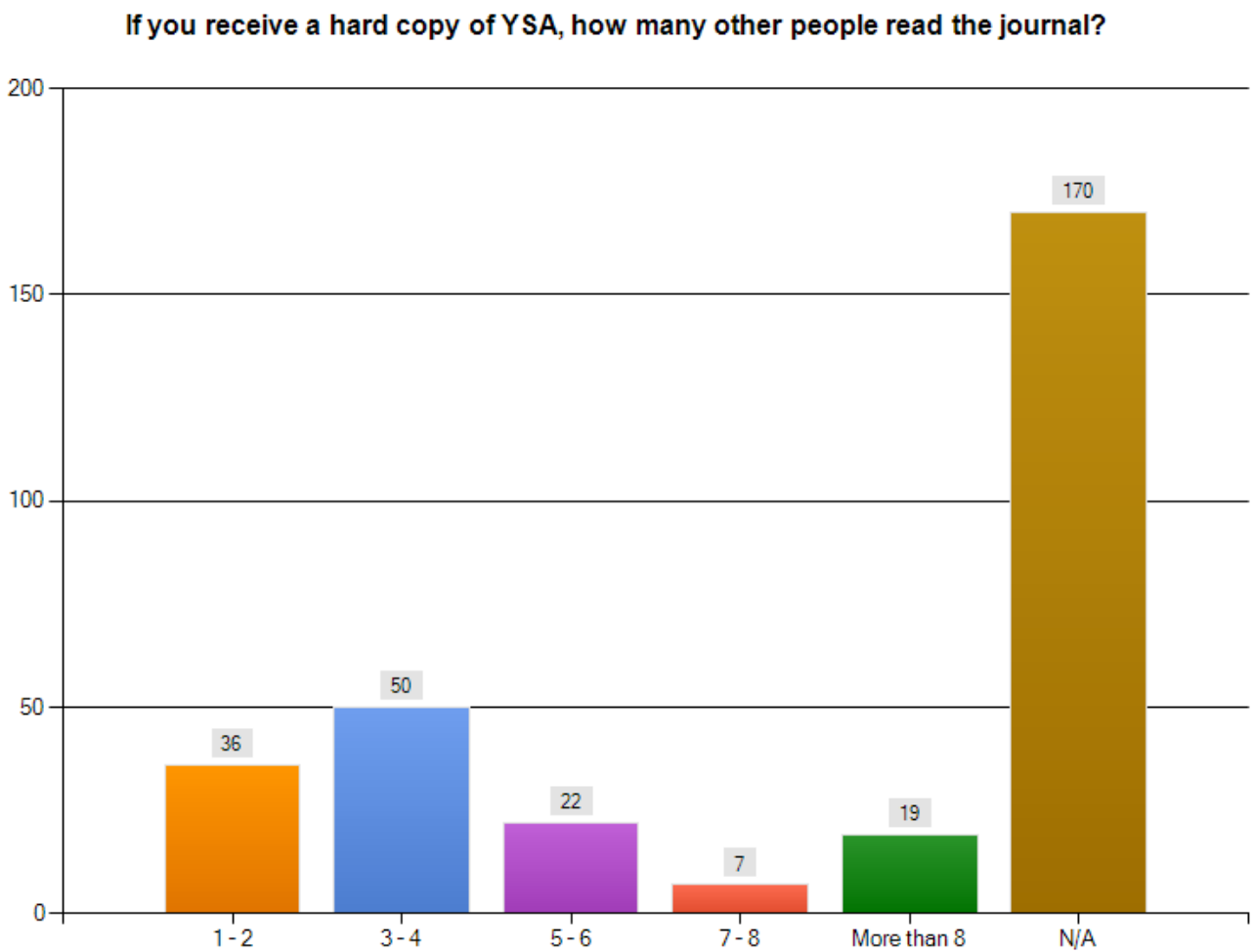
**Why educators do not use YSA articles...**

Not subscribed to YSA	8
Info not directly relevant/different sector	8



***How widely are hard copies of YSA circulated?***

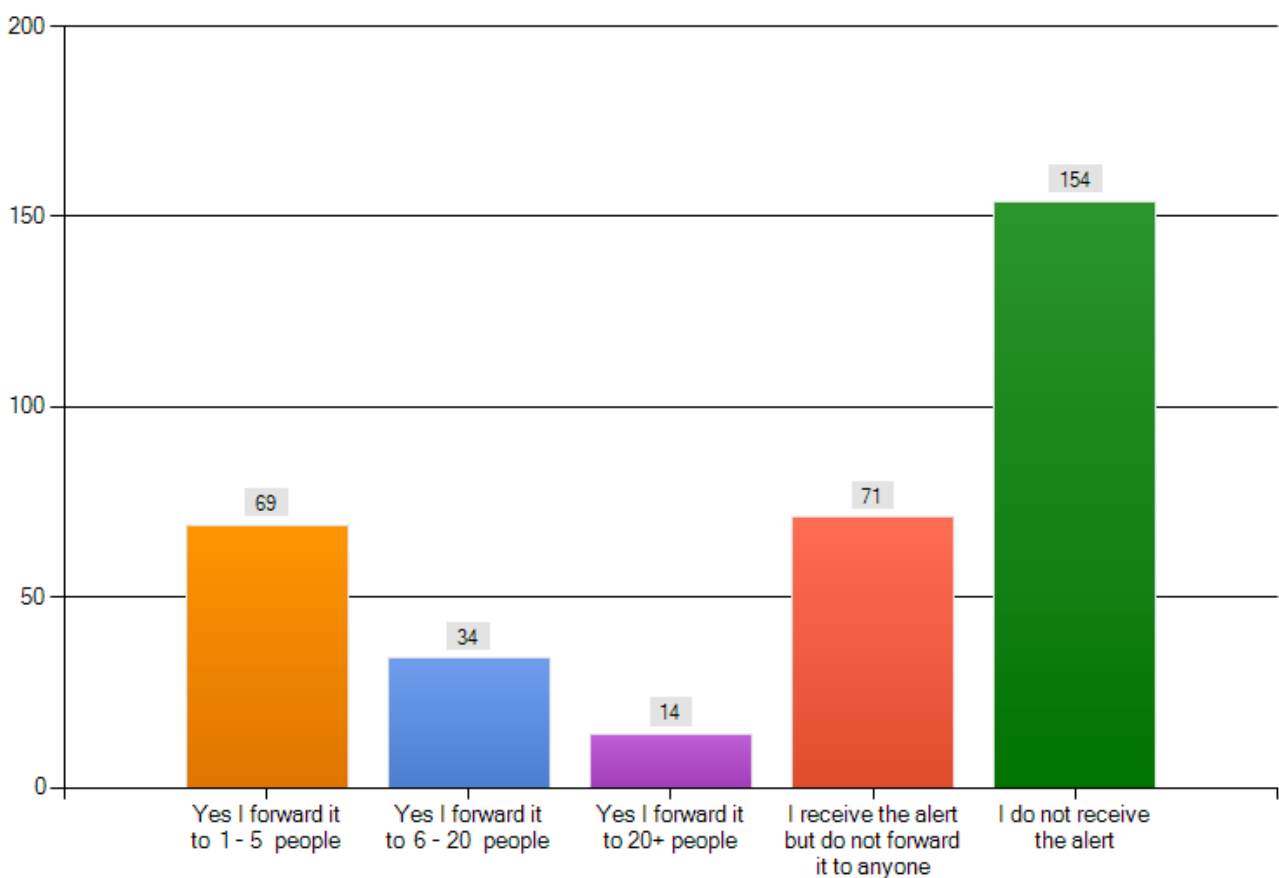
**Chart 5** demonstrates how many subsequent people read a single hard copy of YSA.



### ***How widely is the table of contents (TOC) alert circulated?***

The YSA TOC alert is sent to a distribution list prior to the publication of YSA. It includes abstracts of the articles included in the upcoming issue of YSA. **Chart 6** demonstrates how widely the TOC alert is circulated by subscribers forwarding on the alert.

**If you receive the Youth Studies Australia TOC (table of contents) alert, which provides news of research about to appear in each issue of the journal, do you forward this to anyone else?**



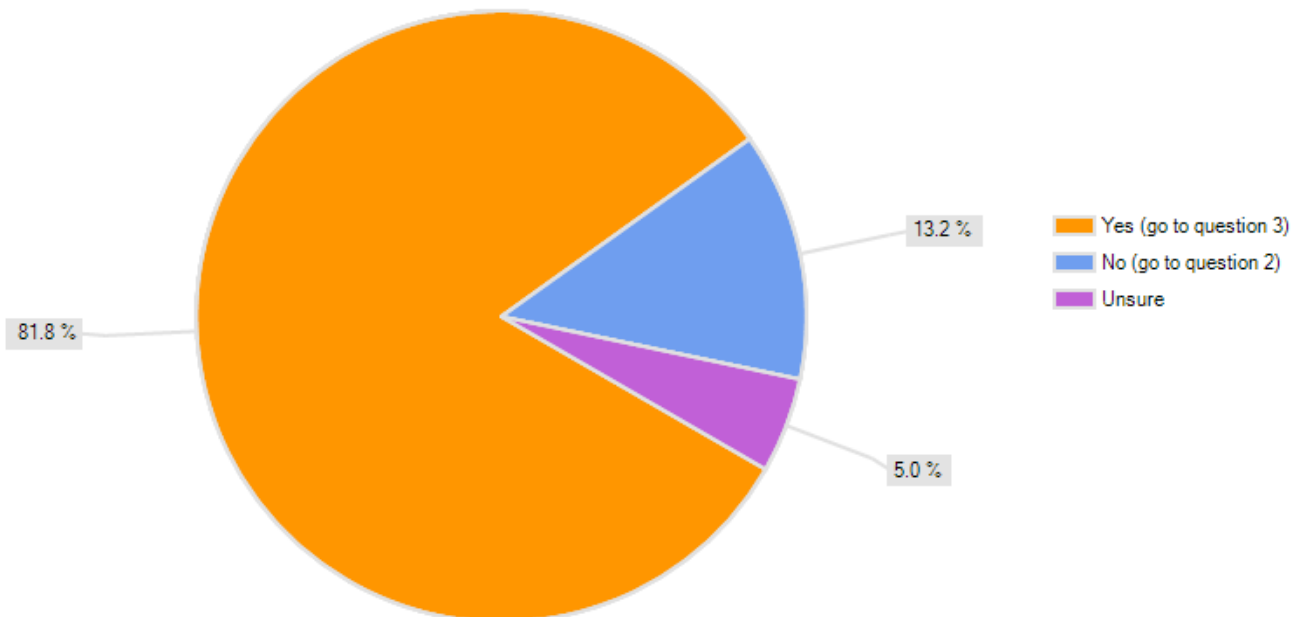
## Youth Field Xpress

As ACYS's most popular service, *Youth Field Xpress* currently has over 4000 subscribers in Australia and overseas. This section of the survey asked respondents if they were not subscribed, what would encourage them to do so and if they are subscribed, how many people they circulate the newsletter to.

### ***What percentage of respondents are subscribed to YFX?***

**Chart 1** shows that over 80% of respondents are subscribed to YFX.

**Are you subscribed to Youth Field Xpress (YFX), our free electronic monthly newsletter?**



## What would encourage respondents to subscribe?

A total of 39 answers were recorded. The most notable responses are listed below.

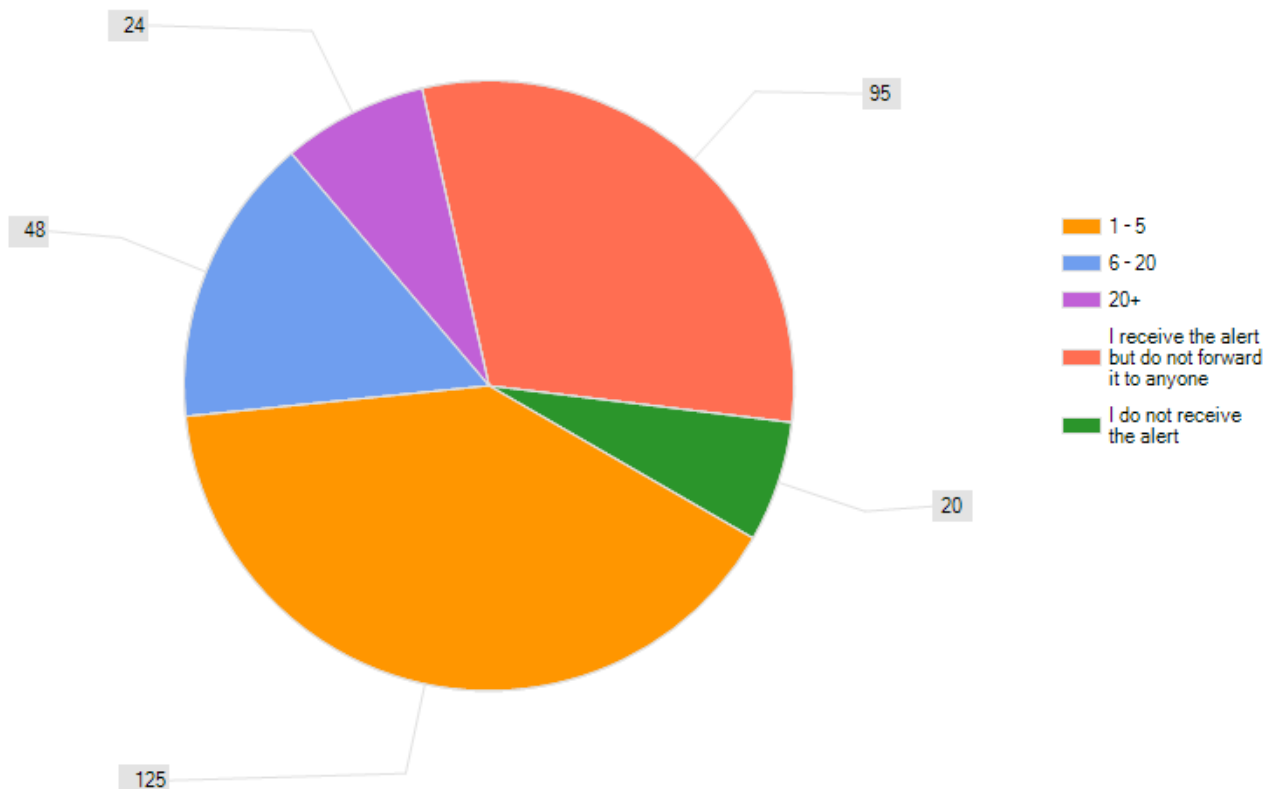
### Notable responses

Was unaware of YFX/more information	14
Already receive YFX via a colleague	3
Already receive too many newsletters	2
Better presentation	1
Personal development opportunities	1
Relevance of material	1

## How widely is YFX circulated?

Chart 3 demonstrates how widely YFX is circulated beyond subscribers.

If you answered YES to question 1, how many people do you forward the YFX newsletter to?



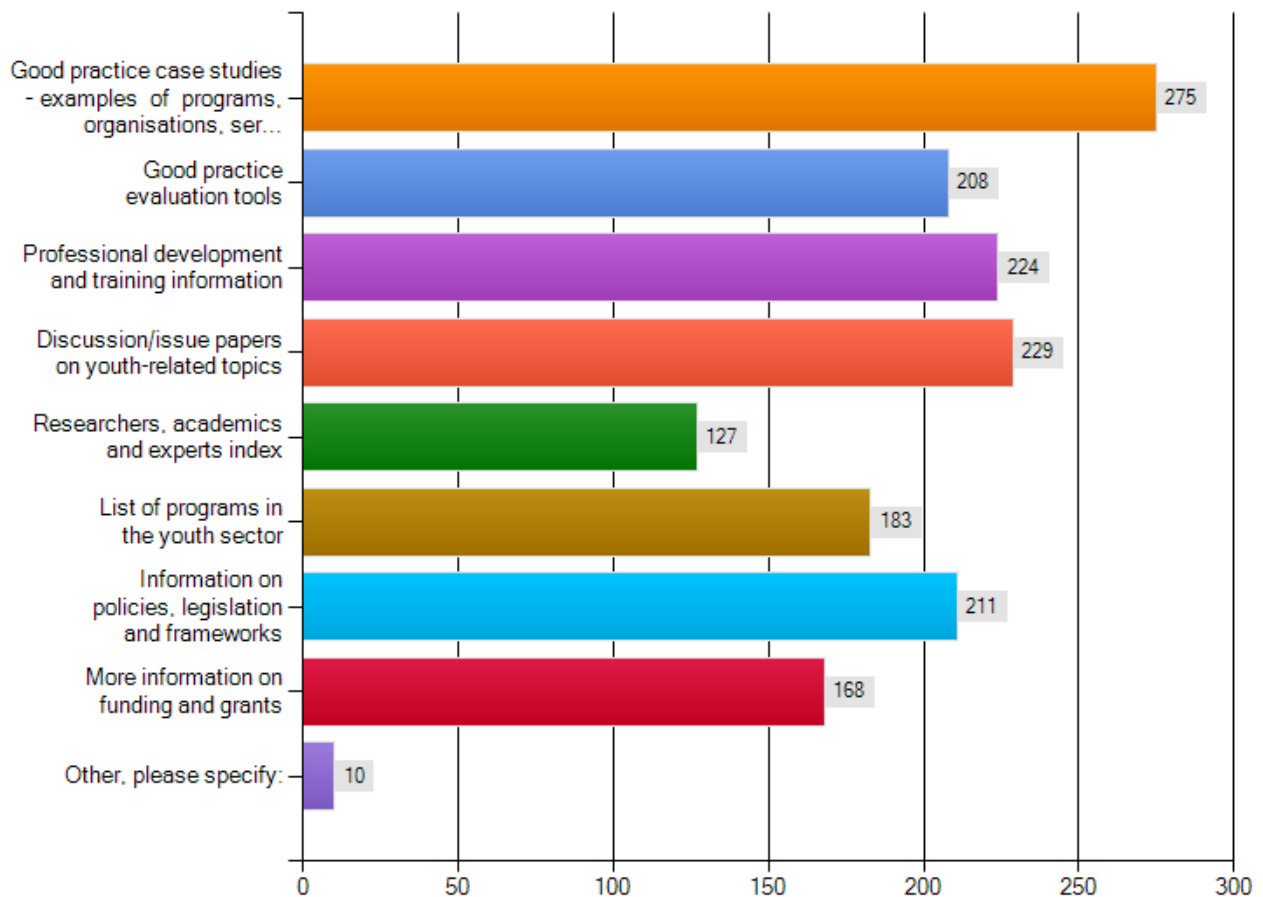
## The sector

The aim of this section of the survey was to identify what additional youth clearinghouse services respondents would like ACYS to provide, ACYS's role in the sector, what ACYS does well and possible improvements.

### *What other information would be useful?*

**Chart 1** demonstrates that respondents believe access to good practice case studies including examples of programs, organisations and services would be extremely useful. Respondents also rated information on good practice evaluation tools as a high need. Discussion papers and professional development and training information was also popular.

**What other information would be useful to you? Please select up to four:**



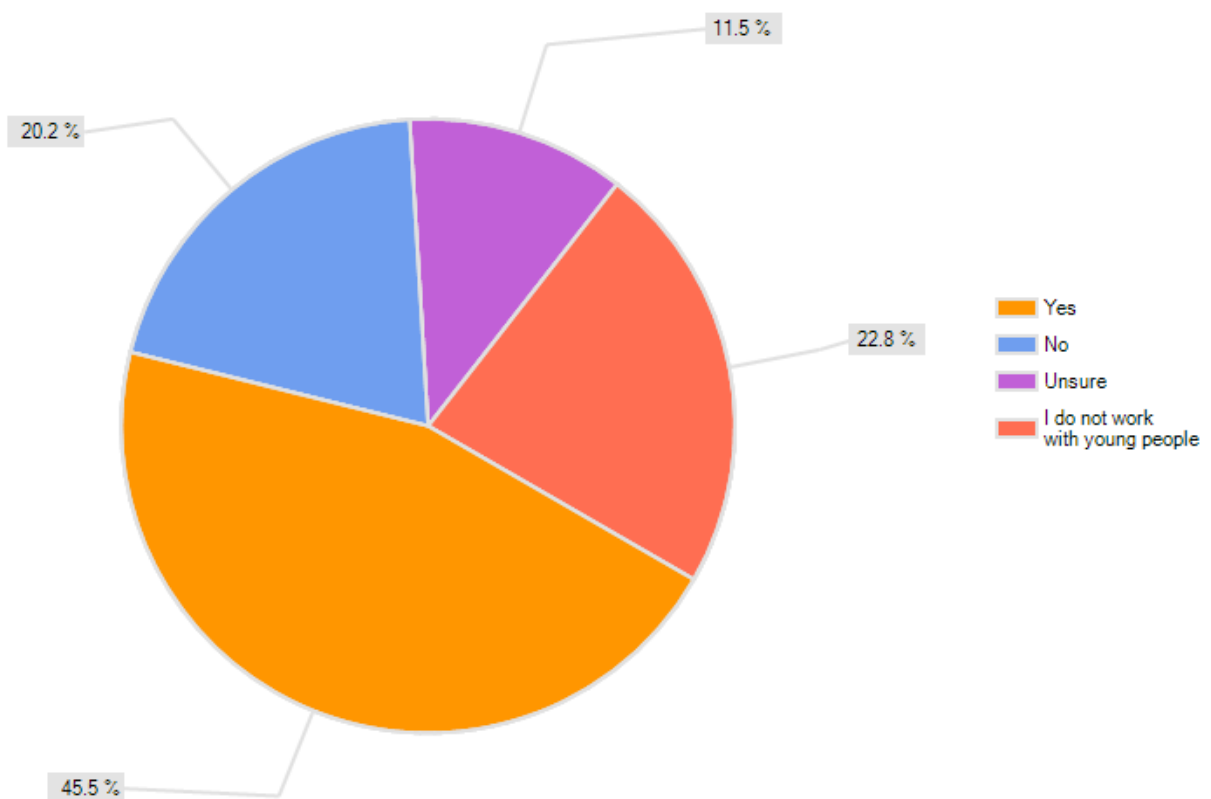
### *Other notable responses*

Indigenous content	2
Public health/health promotion	1
Ethical practice	1
Refugee content	1
Youth development	1

## ***Do respondents use information accessed through ACYS with their client group?***

**Chart 4** shows that 45.5% of respondents use information or resources accessed through ACYS directly with their client group. This demonstrates that ACYS resources and reaching various client groups and services are being utilised in a meaningful way in the youth sector and also other sectors dealing with youth.

**If you work with young people, do you provide your clients with information as a result of accessing information through ACYS?**



## What does ACYS do well?

Respondents were asked what they thought ACYS did well. Listed below is a collection of notable responses.

- “Provide excellent quality leadership. Great to have a national body that sets standards and support for the youth work sector.”
- “I believe that the information is current, informative and relevant. I have just moved from a front line service into youth policy and I find that the ACYS offers a service that assists and informs my practice.”
- “Brilliant accessible first stop resource.”
- “I love youth field express and find it really useful to keep informed on new emerging trends and issues within the sector.”
- “I think the *Youth Studies Australia* journal is excellent with good articles and I appreciate the section on latest research.”
- “I think the compilation books like *Concepts and methods of youth work* are great.”
- “I find ACYS is a great way to get an overall feel for what is happening in the field without investing a lot of time myself. Keep up the good work!”
- “I think ACYS is the best resource in the youth sector. I love the *Youth Studies Australia* Journal, but particularly find the monthly online YFX newsletter extremely useful. I read it religiously for any relevant information related to both my research (I am a masters student) or my work in Health Promotion in Community Health.”
- “YSA is fabulous resource and now well complemented with the books.”  
“Provides a reliable and accessible source of information.” “Bringing youth-related information together in one accessible place.”
- “Provides a credible medium to promote professional practice in youth work.”
- “ACYS assist with my studies, but also gives me ideas on how to deal with students commencing undergraduate studies at University. Generational understandings become a major issue.”
- “Provides current information which living in Tasmania makes me feel I am part of the loop still.”
- “Providing a centralised location to access news and information about issues in the youth sector.”
- “Excellent at capturing succinctly what is going on in the youth sector. I really like the information in the electronic newsletter being listed by various topics. I look forward to reading the electronic newsletter every month.”
- “Fantastic resources, new website is fantastic, much more user friendly and accessible.”
- “I believe the dissemination of information to a large number of people in many different areas is critical to ensuring up-to-date practice for young people. ACYS seem to provide this in an accessible way.”
- “Good communication line - even to me in NZ.”

## ***How can ACYS improve?***

Respondents were asked how they thought ACYS could improve. Listed below is a collection of notable responses.

- “I think the only other thing would be to facilitate some online discussion forums based on papers published in YSA. And, perhaps, encourage young people to contribute a column in YSA...whether they be involved in peer based projects or positive outcomes from engaging in services...”
- “Not well enough known in the industry, I’m part of a highly active interagency, but ACYS has never been mentioned. Maybe getting information through inter-agencies, and at meetings may increase awareness.”
- “I find *Youth Field Xpress* really inaccessible and difficult to read--the PDF does not come through, so I get an email with dozens of brief articles and web links. This is my only exposure to your organisation.”
- “Map current youth services across state.”
- “More information about ACYS through electronic newsletter, internet would be an improvement (I’m only familiar with the journal).”
- “I think there is a need for more reporting of successful evidence based programs in a format that generalist youth workers can use.”
- “I think more professional development opportunities would be helpful.”
- “I love the *Youth Field Xpress* newsletter but perhaps it would be easier to read if it was developed in a different format so it is not just one big long email... like if you could select an topic on a table of contents and it would take you to another link...?”
- “More on the ground ‘reports’ - not all academic papers, etc.. at the coalface articles, discussions.”

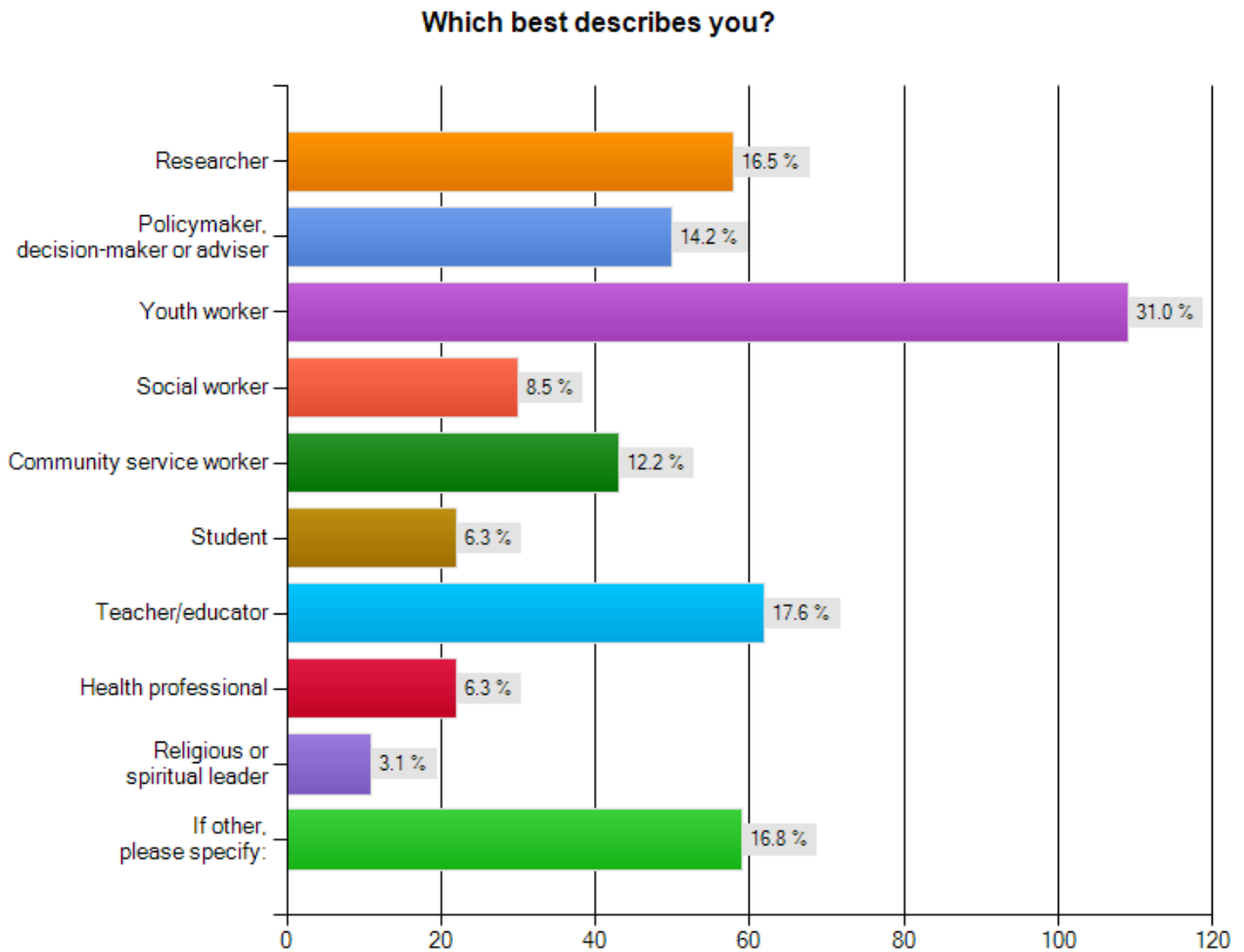


# Respondent demographics

This year ACYS endeavoured to collect information on who ACYS reaches in the sector. In this section respondents were asked what their professional role is, what type of organisation they work for, which state or territory they live in and what their client group or service type is.

## *What type of professionals were the respondents?*

**Chart 1** demonstrates that ACYS resources and information are utilised by a wide audience. The most prominent profession of respondents is clearly youth workers, followed by teachers/educators and then researchers.



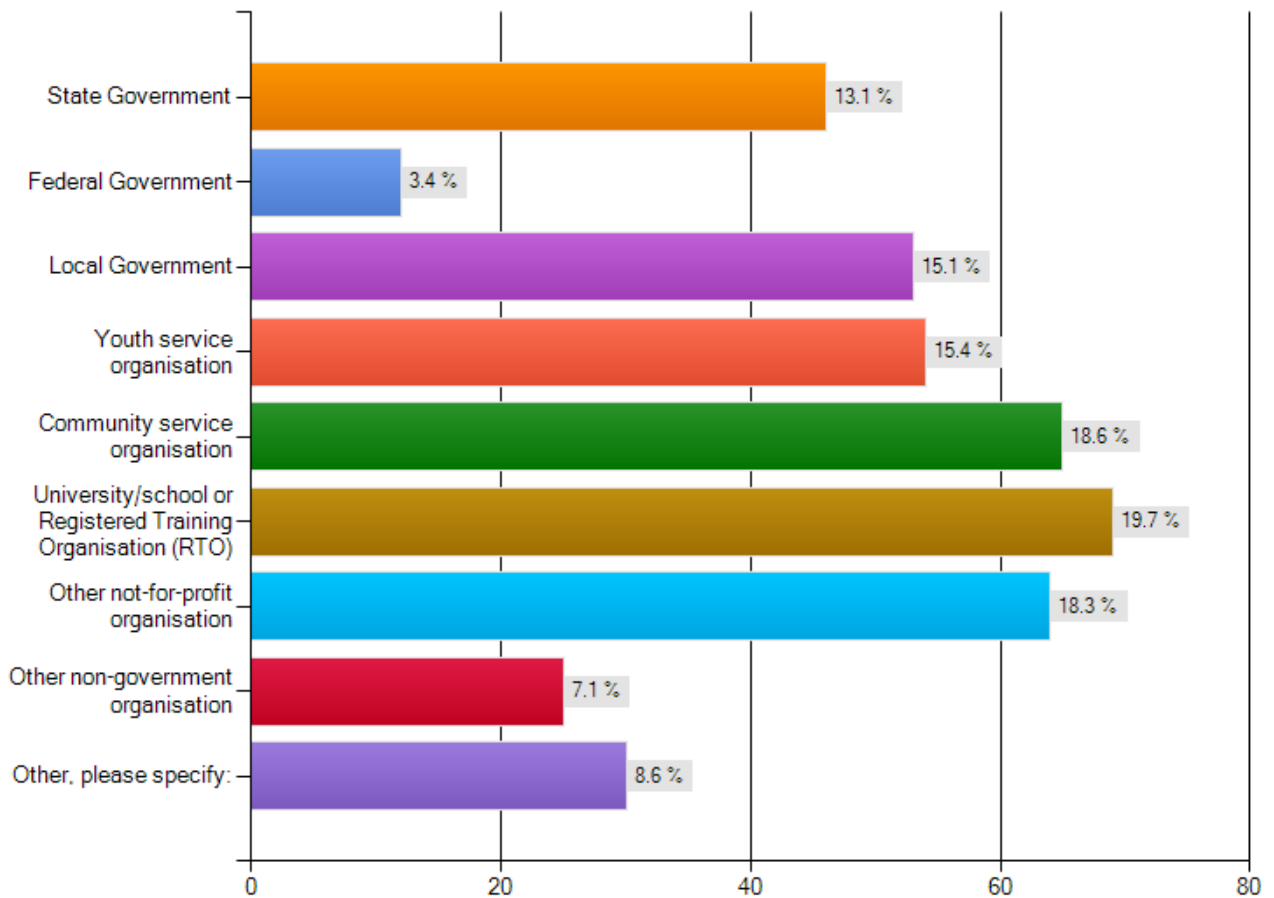
## *Other notable responses*

Youth services manager	9
Librarian	7
Professional development and practical support workers	6
Work in the arts	4
Trainer/counsellor	3
Coordinator of programs	3

### What type of organisation do respondents work for?

Chart 2 shows that the largest percentage of respondents work for an educational institution or registered training organisation (RTO). This is closely followed by community service organisations and other not-for-profit organisations.

Which best describes your organisation: Please select up to two:



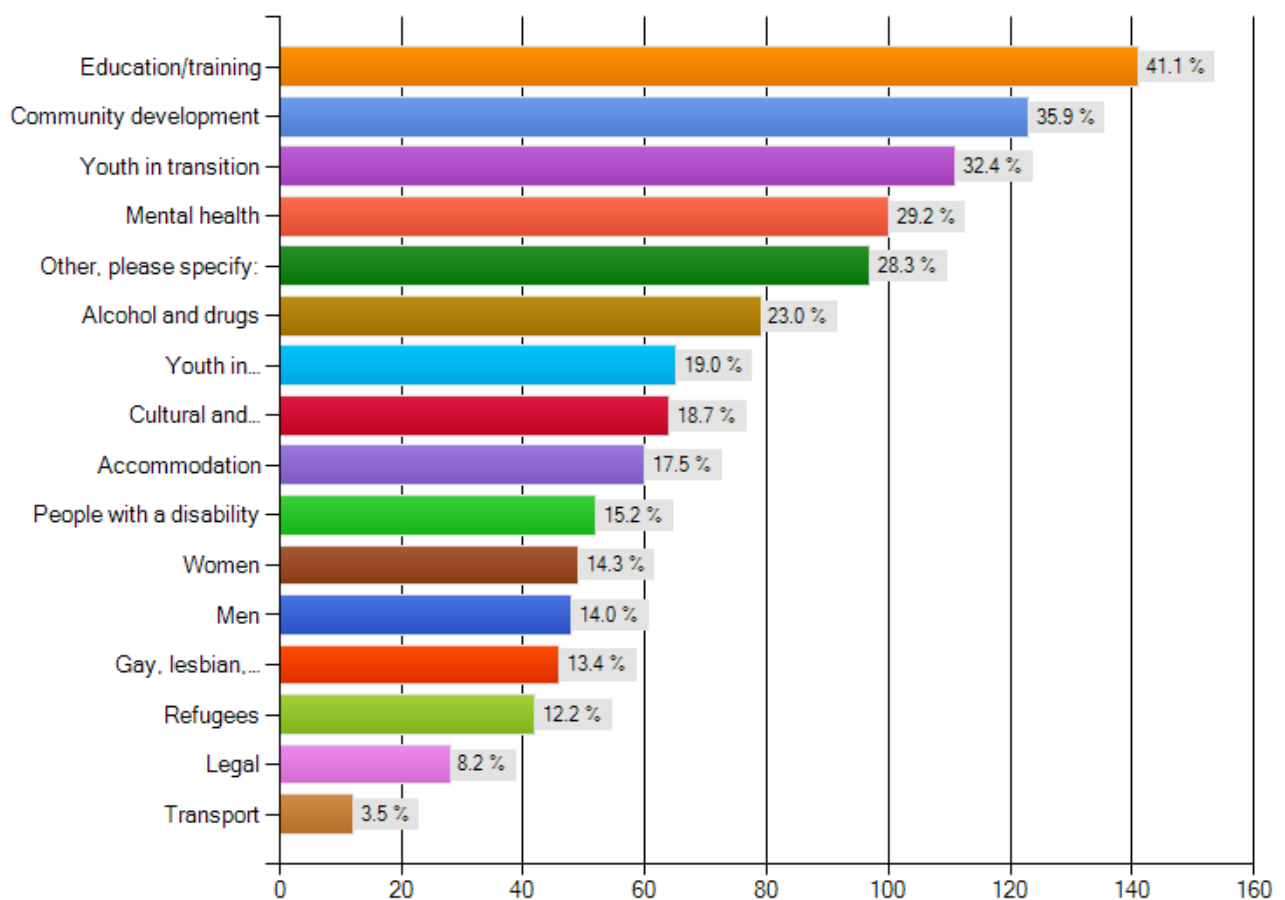
### Other notable responses

Peak body	9
Self employed	3
Private research company	2

### What is their client group/service type?

**Chart 3** demonstrates that ACYS supports a variety of sectors through its services and distribution of information and resources. The largest percentage of respondents work with clients in education and training, followed by community development and youth in transition.

**What is your client group/service type? Please select one or more:**

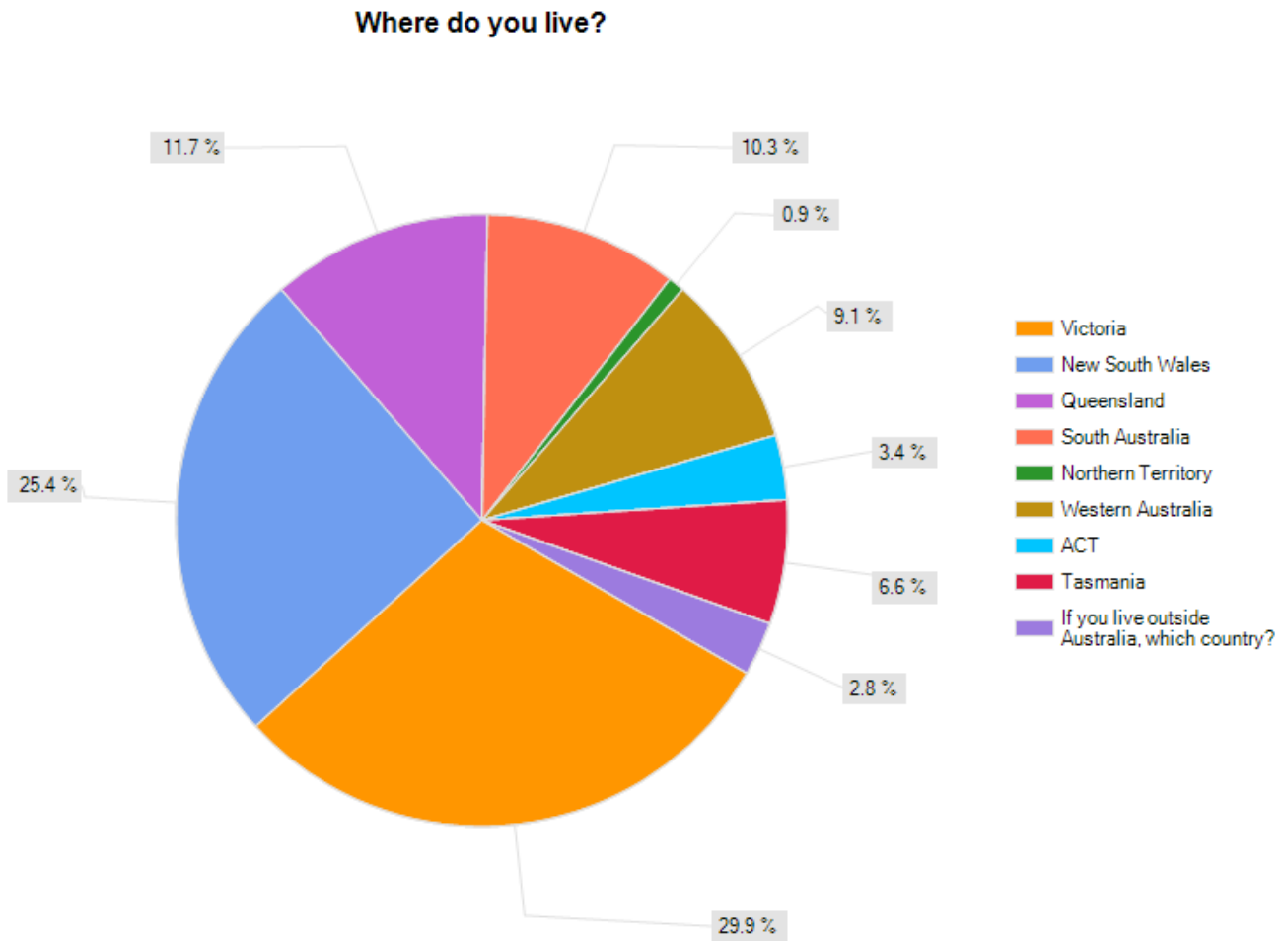


### Other notable responses

Generalist youth work	25
Health	7
Parents, families & children	7
Indigenous services	5
Youth at risk	5
Young offenders	4
Young carers	3

### Where do respondents live?

Chart 4 details the states and territories of respondents who completed the survey. Victoria and New South Wales were the two main locations.



### If you live outside of Australia, which country?

New Zealand	5
Ireland	1
Northern Ireland	1
Germany	1
Malaysia	1
United Kingdom	1

## Further comments

At the end of the survey an open field was provided for any further comments. This section received 83 comments, all comments relating to ACYS were extremely positive. There were also two comments which focused on current issues in the youth sector.

### Comments relating to ACYS

- “Keep up the brilliant work. I not only use your journals and online content for work but in the past have found it invaluable for university studies in social welfare.”
- “I think ACYS provides a very valuable service to the youth work and youth policy sector, and I am delighted to be associated with its work. I hope to act as a book reviewer for the journal in the year ahead.”
- “Thank you for being such a valuable resource and such an expressive outlet.”
- “I started using ACYS in the form of the *Youth Field Xpress* newsletter while working in NSW. Having moved to QLD 6 years ago, ACYS was one of the first mailing lists etc that I accessed in any of the roles I have held in QLD and have encourage many others over the years to at least sign up for *Youth Field Xpress*.”
- “The ACYS are providing a great service to the youth workers across Australia and it’s great for us to have a link like this to other youth workers as some of us in rural and regional area can be quite isolated and not have the same networks accessible in metro areas.”
- “It’s great to have such a comprehensive service delivered to our emails and to have a helpdesk also available via email is something invaluable.”
- “This survey has also been a great awareness raiser.”
- “I find your resource just fantastic. I work in a family relationship centre and I work with a lot of young people who are in the midst of family breakdown or starting families very young and its great to have a high quality information resource to backup my work. I live in a regional centre in a small state so there’s not a lot out there in the way of collegiate support.”
- “Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback! ACYS plays a critical communication role within the youth sector. Your ongoing work in disseminating youth-related research is much appreciated!”
- “ACYS is a critical institution for the youth and human services sectors that should be supported and maintained across government, non-government and private groups.”

### Comments relating to the youth sector

- “The sector is suffering from lack of opportunities for improving professionalism, UWS cutting the youth work program. The youth sector is changing dramatically at the moment and there is concern that the focus on this vulnerable age group will be lost.”
- “‘Alcohol and drugs’ terminology above is a good example of an issue needing serious treatment. If we are ‘multi-disciplinary’ isn’t it time we included philosophy of language. If we said ‘Aboriginals and decent humans’ the Aboriginal community would get upset because the ‘and’ says you are not part of the group ‘decent...’ This has a consequence in the public psyche about ‘drugs’.”