CHAPTER 4: Children's Views and Parenting Assessments and Reports

Introduction

Phase 2 of the Family Law Act Modernization Project includes a review of child-centred decision making. This includes the best interests of the child provisions in Part 4 - Care of and Time with Children of the FLA, and the various mechanisms by which the views of a child can be provided for consideration in family law disputes that relate to them.

One way a child's views on a family law dispute may be obtained and presented is through interview or assessment processes and reports prepared under sections 202 and 211 of the FLA. These include "Full" Section 211 reports, Views of the Child reports, and Hear the Child reports.

Although the authority for some types of reports is under section 202, that provision is intended to give the court flexibility in ensuring that a child's evidence is heard, which can include other mechanisms for obtaining a child's views such as:

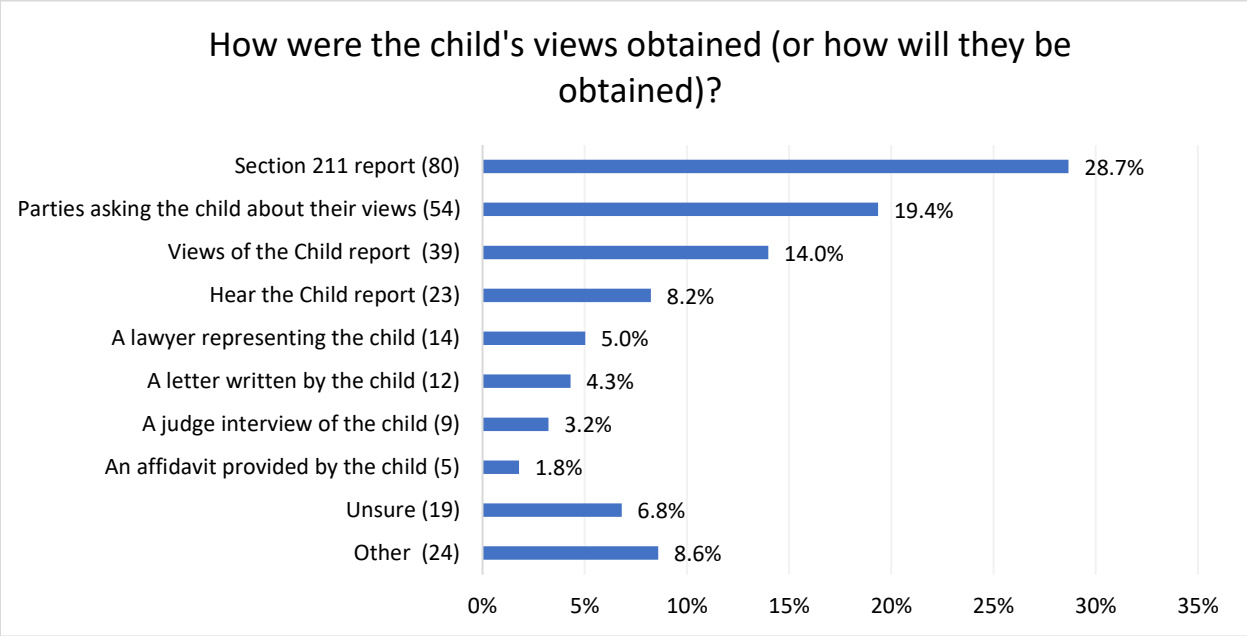
- letters written by the child
- affidavits of the child
- judicial interviews of the child
- the appointment of a lawyer to represent the child (i.e., a children's lawyer)

Please see Chapter 3: Child-Centred Decision Making for feedback related to these other ways to obtain the views of a child.

Assessments and Reports

Based on survey results, reports were the most common way that a child's views are being obtained in a family law dispute. Section 211 reports were the most frequent way to obtain the views of a child, with Views of the Child reports and Hear the Child reports being less common.

Figure 4-1: How a Child's Views Were Obtained



However, when asked to describe positive or negative experiences with reports, survey respondents overwhelmingly described negative experiences. Common reasons for the negative experiences included the following:

- The report writer was biased, or the process used by the report writer was biased or flawed
- The report was useless and did not address important topics
- The report was costly and delayed the family law matter
- The process was distressing for the respondent and/or the child
- The report writer did not understand family violence

What Was Said:

> *"It was incredibly intrusive and very expensive and didn't really help resolve anything."*
>
> *"The whole process was opaque and frightening. We never felt heard or taken seriously by the assessor."*

Other engagement feedback, however, highlighted that reports were an opportunity for a child's voice to be heard in the family law dispute. Feedback from youth suggested that reports could be a valuable way to obtain the views of a child if done properly. From the youth's perspectives, the following were important elements of interviews and preparing reports on their views:

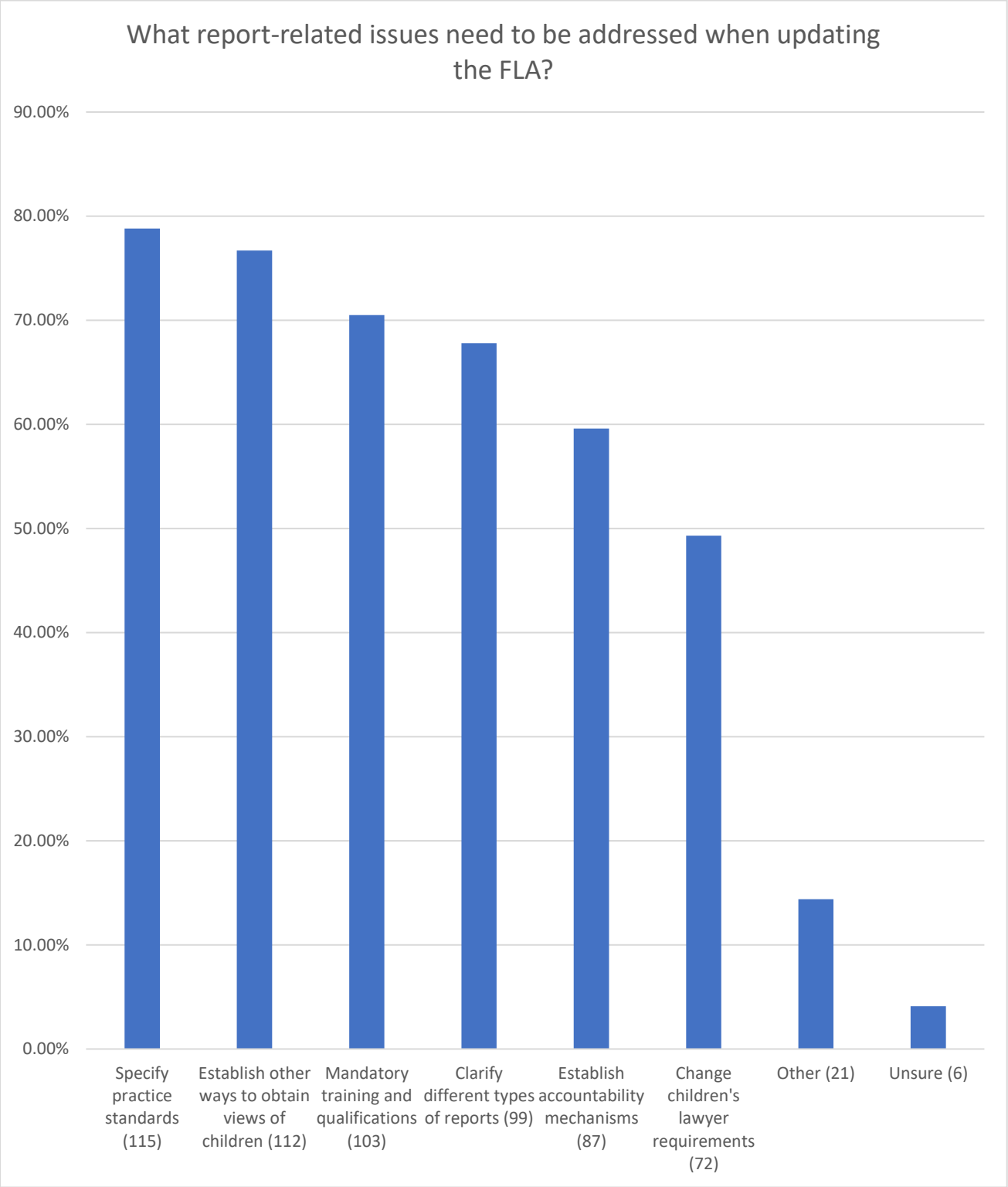
- The report writer should establish a relationship with the child first, and not conduct a one-off interview where the child will never see the person again
- The report writer needs to explain to the child why they are being interviewed and what the child's answers will be used for
- The youth should be allowed to express their views in different ways, such as through the use of art, or in another manner in which the youth is comfortable
- Youth are often more comfortable in one-on-one interviews or discussing issues in small circles, rather than in large groups.

All engagement feedback pointed to the need for FLA amendments to address issues related to reports. For example, as depicted in Figure 4-1, when asked what issues need to be addressed related to reports, 67.8% of survey respondents indicated that the different types of reports need to be clarified. Over 70% of survey respondents also suggested that the FLA should be updated to establish mandatory training and qualification requirements for report writers, practice standards for report writers to follow, and provide guidance on other ways that a child's views may be obtained (see Chapter 3 for more discussion).

Did you know?

Although the views of a child must be considered in determining the best interests of a child (unless it would be inappropriate to consider them), the FLA does not specify how the views of a child must be obtained. Hear the Child reports, Views of the Child reports, and "Full" Section 211 reports are some examples, but there is currently no restriction on the ways the views of the child may be obtained.

Figure 4-2 – Report-related FLA Issues



Types of Reports

Sections 202 and 211 of the FLA do not specify different types of reports that may be prepared, but research and early engagement indicated the following are some common reports being requested by parties or ordered by the court:

- "Full" Section 211 reports
- Views of the Child reports
- Hear the Child reports

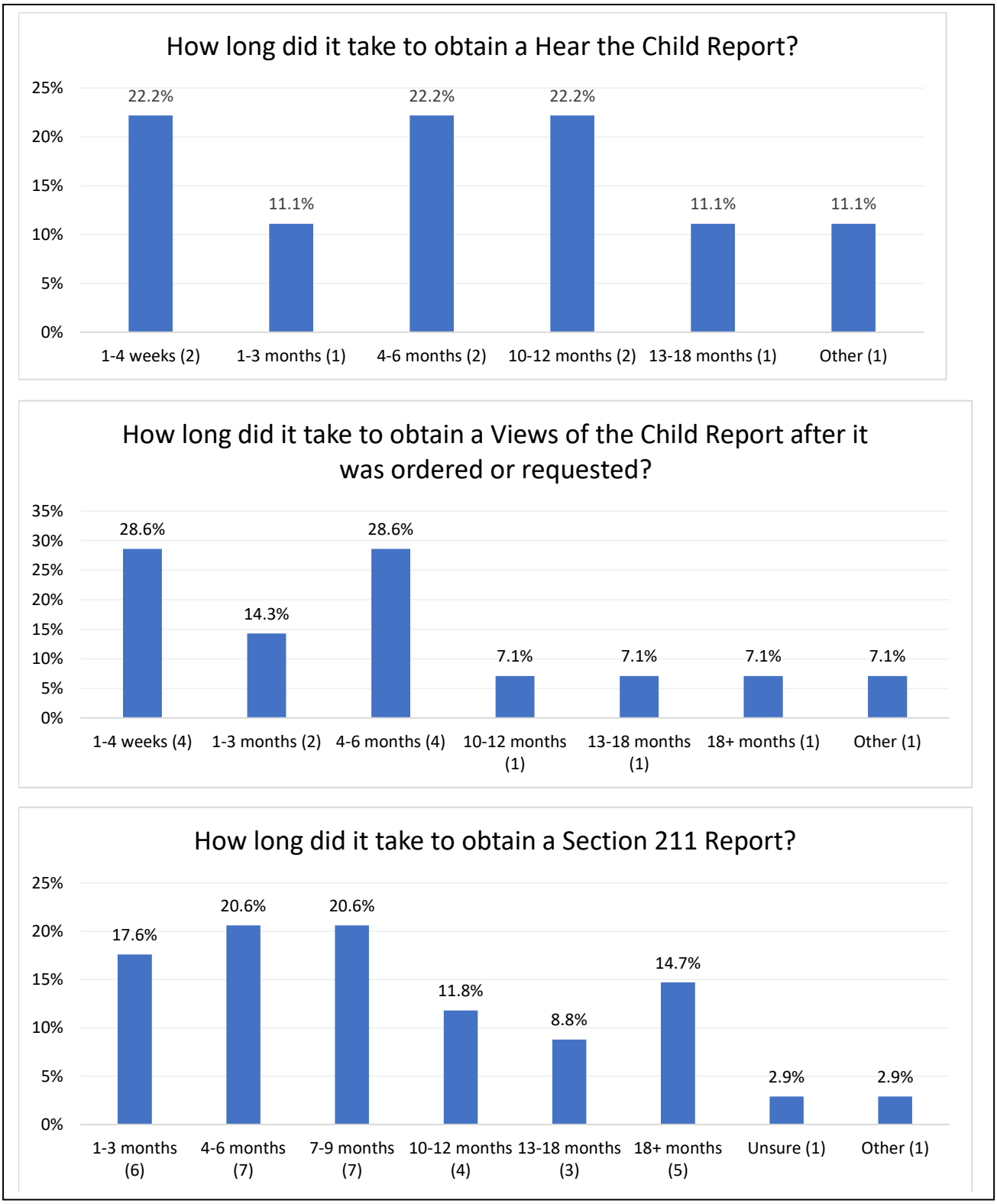
The FLA currently does not list, define, or describe in detail the types of reports that may be ordered or prepared under the Act. There is also no legislative criteria for when each type of report should be ordered.

The written feedback unanimously supported clarifying the different types of reports that a court may order under the FLA, particularly the differences between the purpose of each type of report, who can prepare each type of report, and the process to be followed for each report. There were some discrepancies between the terms used with respect to different types of reports (for example, evaluative vs. non-evaluative views of the child reports), which also supported the need for clarification in the FLA.

There was a suggestion that the FLA should expressly allow and support a child's right to be heard in a non-evaluative format (i.e., without an expert using their views to inform an opinion, assessment or recommendation) and that it should be included in Part 4 of the Act (Care of and Time with Children). However, others cautioned that some reports that were intended to give a child a voice in family law proceedings, have instead resulted in the child being put in the middle of the parents' conflict, creating an unhealthy situation for the child, especially in situations where there is family violence.

The survey results showed that a Full Section 211 report was the most frequently ordered report, followed by a Views of the Child report, then a Hear the Child report. Results also highlighted differences between the reports based on cost and time it took to complete the reports. The costs of the reports varied with Hear the Child reports and Views of the Child reports generally costing less than Section 211 reports (see more discussion about costs of reports below).

Figure 4-3: Length of Time to Complete Reports



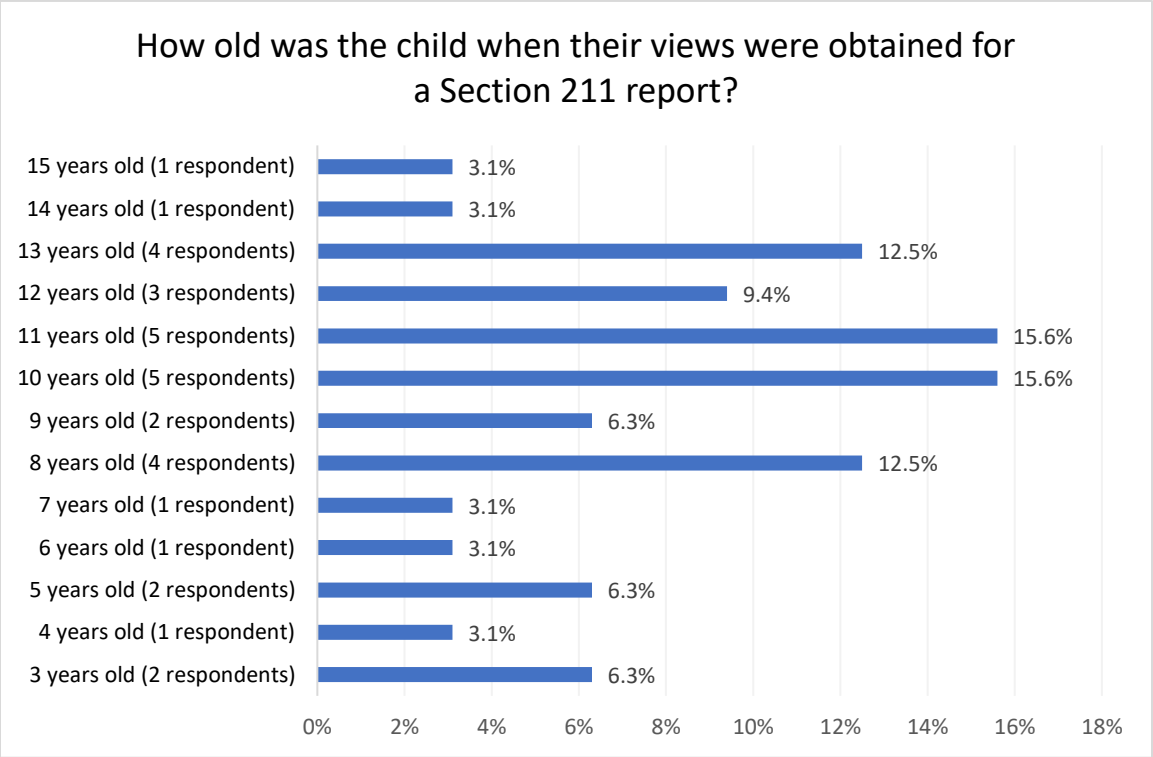
According to survey results, the length of time it took to complete a report varied for all reports. Some reports were completed within 1 to 3 months, whereas others took over 18 months to complete.

What Was Said:

> *"I think the different types of reports should be more clearly explained. For example, the report I referred to in this survey was titled a section 211 report; however, it was more a voice of the child report with a summary based on what mom and dad said. It did not provide any recommendations. It is difficult to distinguish between the reports as the report writers tend to do what they want with the report."*
>
> *"Absolute clarity as to types of reports. This was a cash grab by lawyers, then the child turns 12 and everybody puts all the responsibility on the child."*
>
> *"Name Views of the Child and Full Reports and do not list both as Section 211 reports."*
>
> *"It would be helpful to have a clear framework for who can write which type of reports, what they must contain, and when they should be obtained. It seems to me the legal test at the moment is along the lines of 'if the report would be helpful to the court in making a decision about the best interests of the child it should be ordered. I think added clarity might help the expense issue but giving mid-range options."*

The age of the children being interviewed varied for all three types of reports, especially the Section 211 reports. Based on survey responses, the views of children between the ages of 3 and 15 were obtained through Section 211 reports, with most children being between the ages of 8 and 15 years old (see Figure 4-4).

Figure 4-4: Age of Children in Section 211 Reports



Criteria for Ordering Reports

The written feedback supported that criteria should be established for a decision-maker to consider in determining when to order different types of reports. However, there were different views on what the criteria should be.

Some submissions suggested establishing similar criteria as New Zealand's *Care of Children Act* (s.133(6)), such as whether the report is essential, whether it is the best source of information, and delay implications. Submissions also suggested that the cost and the ability of the parties to pay for a report are considered, similar to Alberta's PN8 and Ohio's Rule 91.05 (F)(a). It was also suggested that the court should not order a report for the sole or primary purpose of obtaining a child's wishes. It was further suggested that the

court should confirm that the recommended assessor or report writer has completed any necessary training and experience requirements, particularly if the report is expected to address specific issues (e.g., disabilities, addictions, substance misuse) when ordering a report.

What Was Said:

> *"The cost- bankrupt me."*
>
> *"Prohibitively expensive for most of my clients."*
>
> *"Courts need to be able to assign the clear best choice for the child regardless if their cost or timeline on paper is longer/higher than another. Problematic writers are being assigned because they skirt the system this way, writing a lower quote and faster turnaround but taking longer and ultimately costing more in reality."*

Alternatively, another submission suggested that despite cost, intrusiveness and delay implications, a Full Section 211 report should be ordered in certain circumstances, such as when there is a history of family violence, possible child coercion or alienation, addictions or mental health concerns, or involvement of the Ministry of Children and Family Development or the police.

There were differing views on the use of psychometric testing. One submission said that once a Section 211 report is ordered, there should be no limit on the tools the assessor can use in conducting the assessment.

We heard that a non-evaluative report should be ordered when the court wants to obtain the views of the child and they have not been obtained in another way. However, another submission cautioned that a non-evaluative report should not be a default starting point when risk factors could result in retribution toward the child.

When a Report is Ordered

Early engagement suggested that obtaining the views of children involved in family law disputes earlier in the dispute resolution processes may help resolve disputes in a timelier and more cost-effective way and help reduce escalation of the conflict.

It often occurs that a report is ordered by a judge after parties have been unsuccessful in resolving their family law dispute using out-of-court processes. However, most of the written feedback supported reports being ordered earlier in family law disputes. The feedback suggested that Section 211 reports ordered as early as possible in the dispute

resolution process could support earlier resolution in parenting-related issues. It was also suggested that in cases where the parties are represented, the lawyers should be required to prepare a joint summary document, memorandum or instructions to the report writer outlining agreed upon facts, issues in dispute, clear instructions or guidance on the types of issues the report should focus on, and any materials permitted to be reviewed as evidence.

There were mixed views on whether the views of a child should be obtained earlier in the process. Some feedback supported this, while other feedback suggested that it may be unhelpful as the child would still be adjusting to their parents' separation and their views might change over time.

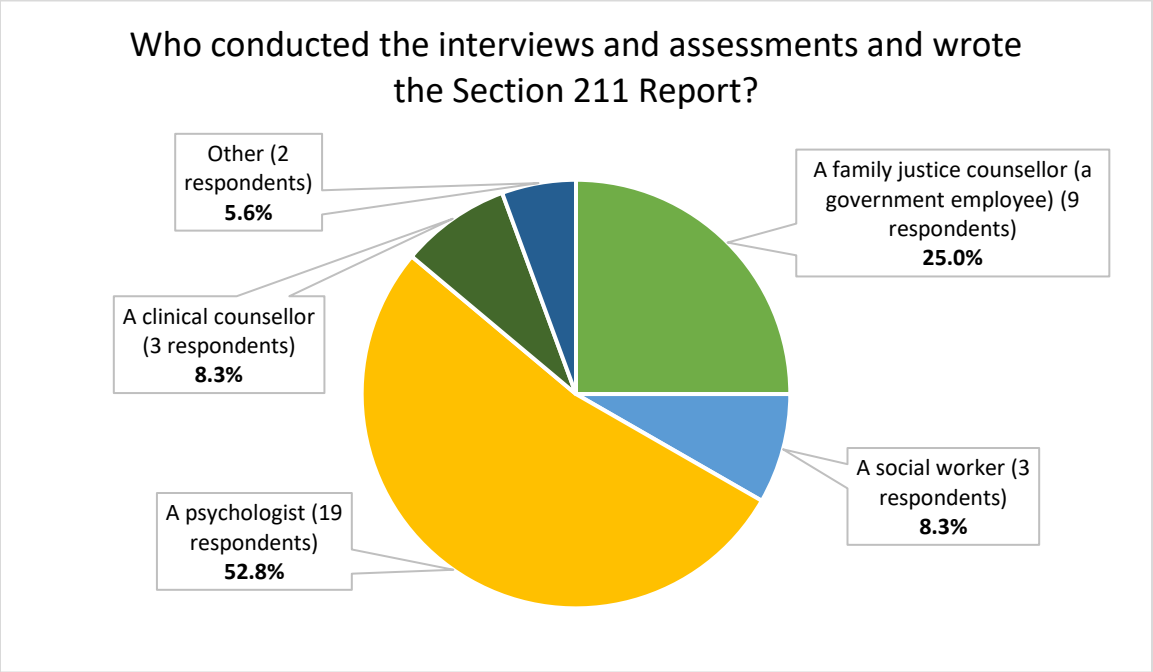
Report Writers

Who Can Write Reports

Section 211(2) of the FLA specifies that a person appointed by the court to assess the needs and views of a child, and the ability and willingness of a party to satisfy those needs, must be a "family justice counsellor, a social worker or another person approved by the court." The person must also not have any previous connections with the parties unless they agree. The FLA is silent on qualification or membership criteria for report writers.

Family justice counsellors are employees of the Ministry of Attorney General, Family Justice Services Division and prepare publicly funded Section 211 reports. Other Section 211 report writers, such as social workers, psychologists, and clinical counsellors are generally professionals who are not employed by the government and who charge for their services. As seen in Figure 4-5, many survey respondents indicated that Section 211 report writers involved in their family law dispute were psychologists (52.8%), followed by family justice counsellors (25%).

Figure 4-5 Section 211 Report Writers



Section 202 of the FLA does not refer to the preparation or admission of reports. However, it is used as authority for accepting reports other than Section 211 reports into evidence. Section 202 also does not specify any profession or other qualification a person must have to write a report or submit evidence on the views of a child in a family law dispute. The BC Hear the Child Society has established a Child Interviewer Roster of professionals who conduct non-evaluative child interviews and prepare reports referred to as Hear the Child Reports, but membership on this roster is not required under the FLA.

Some report writers may be members of professional governing bodies or rosters or employed by the Ministry of Attorney General as family justice counsellors with specialized training to prepare reports. Some professional governing bodies and employers may establish their own qualification requirements for the professional generally, or for report writers specifically. However, the qualification requirements differ based on which body established them, and membership or employment with certain bodies is not always mandatory.

The FLA regulations also do not provide any qualification requirements for report writers. As a comparison, Part 3 of the Family Law Act Regulation establishes qualification requirements for three types family dispute resolution professionals – family law mediators, family law arbitrators, and parenting coordinators.

The majority of feedback supported the need for report writers to meet qualification requirements, including training and experience. Feedback suggested that the qualifications could differ depending on the type of report being prepared – Full Section 211 report writers need to meet the most stringent qualifications, whereas non-evaluative report writers should have to meet less stringent qualifications.

There were mixed views on whether there should be professional requirements for report writers. For example, one suggestion was that Full Section 211 report writing should specifically be limited to professionals trained in mental health, with a recognized level of expertise (i.e., Registered Counsellor, Registered Social Worker, Registered Psychologist) and registered with a professional association or a regulatory body. It was highlighted that registration with a professional association can help provide oversight and accountability. Another suggestion, however, recommended not limiting professional requirements for report writers, because this will restrict report writing to an "elite" group of professionals who may not have the right skill set and expertise in dealing with complex family issues.

It was suggested that before appointing an evaluator in a case that involves a specific issue (e.g., substance abuse, neuro-diversity, etc.), the court should meaningfully inquire into the qualification of the proposed evaluator, especially if the parties disagree, and not assume that general qualifications, or a single course or limited work experience are sufficient.

Indigenous Perspectives – Report Writers for Indigenous Families

Figure 4-6 highlights the survey results regarding who Indigenous people feel would be appropriate interviewers and report writers for their families.

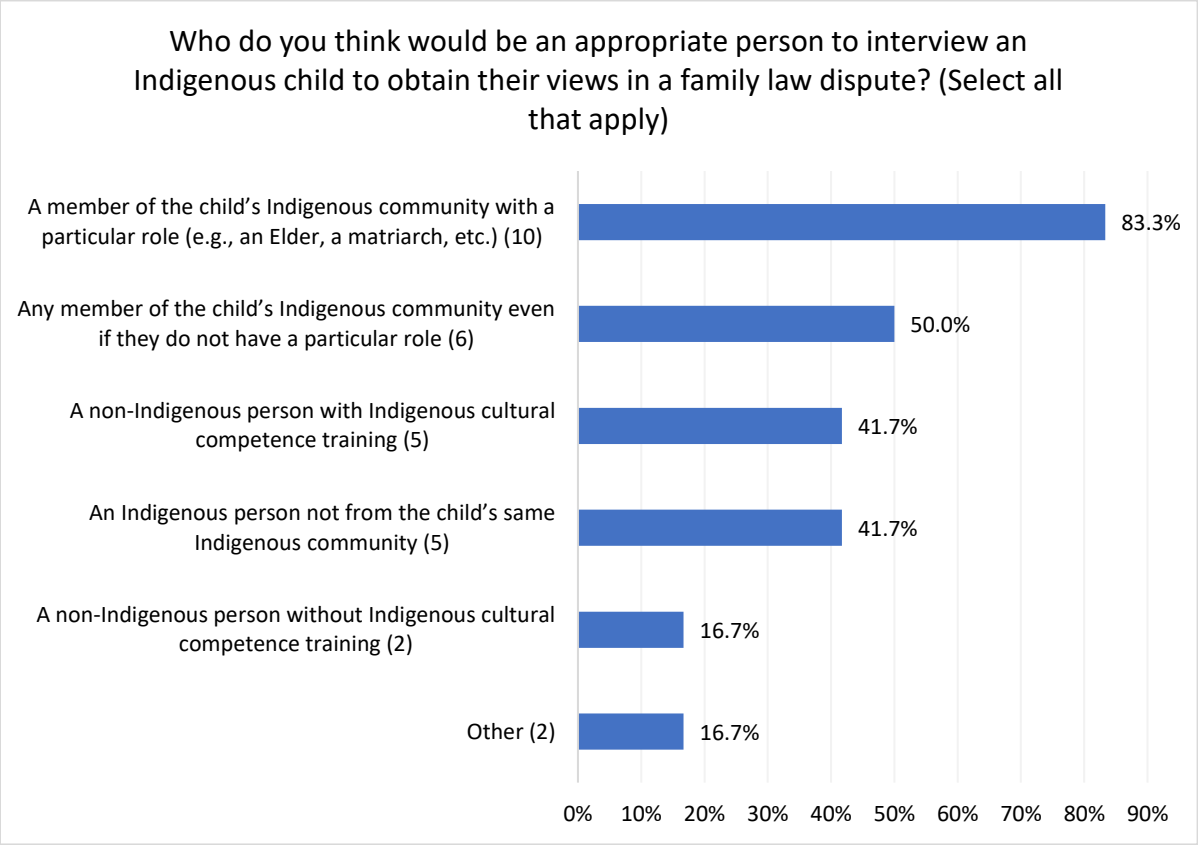
In speaking with Indigenous people with lived experience, it was suggested that the FLA should recognize that there are members of an Indigenous community who may be better qualified to assess their community members' parenting abilities and to obtain their children's views. For example, Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) communities may have Elders, Matriarchs, knowledge keepers, or other community members such as

Indigenous family support workers who should be qualified to make assessments or write reports to submit to the court related to their own member families.

Feedback from Indigenous Perspectives Survey and the Indigenous dialogue sessions suggested that the FLA should allow individuals who an Indigenous community considers as being qualified to conduct interviews, assessments and write reports to the court about Indigenous families and children from their community.

Some concern was raised about potential conflicts and difficulty in finding an Indigenous community member to write a report who has no previous connection with the parties. There could also be challenges if the parties are members of different Indigenous communities with different community members who may write reports. It was suggested that in those cases, it could be open to the parties to consent to a particular report writer, or the report could be jointly written by multiple report writers, for example, by one report writer from each community.

Figure 4-6: Indigenous Perspectives: Who Can Write Reports



Types of Qualifications

If it is desirable to establish consistent qualification requirements for report writers, there are various types of qualifications that can be established. As a comparison, Part 3 of the FLA Regulation establishes mandatory qualification requirements for Family Dispute Resolution Professionals, including the following:

- Membership with a Professional Governing Body
- Experience Requirements
- Training Requirements

Did you know?

All of the following are considered "Family Dispute Resolution Professionals:"

- Family law mediators
- Family law arbitrators
- Parenting coordinators

In order to act in any of these family law roles, a person must meet the qualification requirements set out in Part 3 of the FLA Regulation.

Written feedback provided a variety of suggested mandatory qualifications for report writers. Some groups suggested that initial and ongoing evaluation-specific training and experience should be required for all report writers, especially in relation to screening for and assessing family violence. Mandatory training in child development and capacity, and fundamentals of family law.

A common theme in survey responses was that mandatory training specifically in family violence should be established for report writers, as well as other justice professionals such as police, lawyers, and judges. Feedback indicated that the interviews and report writing process were distressing for many respondents and/or their child and the report writer did not understand family violence.

What Was Said:

> *"All lawyers, judges, family justice counsellor, support workers should have relevant training on family violence. There are stories of terrible conducts of legal and service professionals who have re-traumatized the survivors through the process without proper understanding and. training."*

> *"Psychologist need to be required to have family violence training..."*

"Report writers should have substantial training in child psychology and trauma-informed interview practices, along with cultural competency training."

"ALL section 211 report writers should have some training in procedural fairness. This was totally absent in our section 211 report."

"Special needs training."

"... a writer assessing a neurodivergent child and/or family/ parent be explicitly trauma informed and neurodivergent affirmative and follow the tenants set out by Therapist Neurodiversity Collective..."

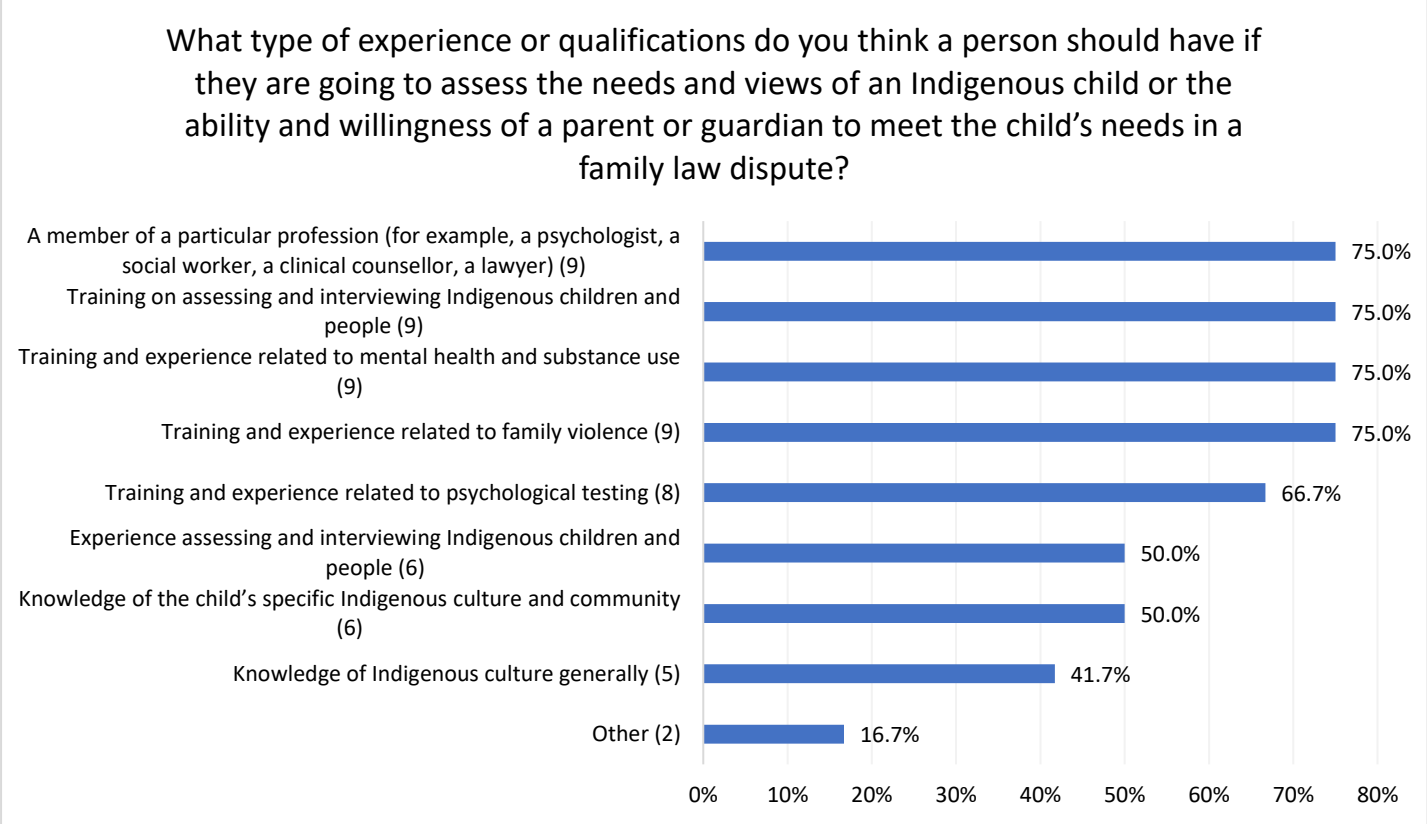
"Cultural competency training must include cultural humility -- they are integral to each other, however the latter is more important than the former. Report writers must be required to take family violence training."

Indigenous Perspectives: Report Writer Qualifications

Engagement feedback supported establishing requirements for report writers to cultural training and experience when interviewing and writing reports about Indigenous families. Some survey respondents indicated that training and experience specifically in interviewing Indigenous children, knowledge of the child's specific Indigenous culture and community, and knowledge of Indigenous culture generally should be mandatory requirements for report writers working with Indigenous families (Figure 4-7).

Feedback suggested that the participation of Indigenous people as educators of Indigenous culture would help ensure report writers receive appropriate and training for assessing and writing reports about Indigenous children and families.

Figure 4-7: Indigenous Perspectives: Report Writer Qualifications



It was suggested that qualification requirements for non-evaluative report writers should be guided by the Hear the Child Society's roster requirements, which includes being a member in good standing of a professional association, as well as specifical experience and training requirements, a criminal record check, and references.

Allowing new report writers to shadow more experienced ones, might help the writers obtain any necessary experience required.

It was also suggested that there should be an overarching body, such as a roster or committee, that approves and oversees training and the accreditation process. Some said that a roster would be helpful and should be administered by a public body, such as administration by the courts or by the BC Ministry of Attorney General. One written response, however, stated that implementing a roster would be overly bureaucratic solution to something that is not a problem.

Practice Standards

Like the qualifications of report writers, there are currently no consistent mandatory practice standards evaluative and non-evaluative report writers must follow. Report writers who are members of professional governing bodies, rosters, associations, or are employees of the Ministry of Attorney General, may be required to follow certain practice standards or guidelines when conducting assessments and writing reports. However, the practice standards that apply to report writers may differ based on which body established them, and there is no requirement for all report writers to be members of the same body. Also, some practice standards may be mandatory for some report writers to follow, while others may be non-mandatory guidelines.

Most of the feedback supported that mandatory practice standards are needed for report writers conducting assessments or writing reports under the FLA. Establishing practice standards was the report-related issue most identified by survey respondents as needing to be updated in the FLA. However, one written submission said that qualification requirements should be established for report writers, and not practice standards.

Survey respondents particularly highlighted concerns with the interview and report writing process in their family law disputes. Some concerns raised included report writer bias and errors with no opportunity to correct them.

What Was Said:

> *"Creepy interviewer, biased from the start."*
>
> *"Took a long time, and the assessor did not do some of the psychological testing that other assessors do, which was not ideal. there should be standard tests they have to do."*
>
> *"Aside from the logistical bias, the interviews were poor. Before we began, the assessor told me he had no interest in being educated about abuse or alienation, and then he laughed. The assessor repeatedly got angry when I didn't give him the answers he wanted to hear, rolling his eyes, slapping his papers down, getting upset when I didn't answer fast enough."*

"There were multiple errors, mixed up names, and did not give any insight into what might be the best course of action should be taken. Even the judge said there was nothing beneficial from the report."

"Did not abide by her retainer agreement, was completely bias in her interviews and report, made recommendations outside of her scope, did not give any weight to my kids views, did not provide recommendations on issues that were required, provided recommendations that are untenable and not viable, destroyed my credibility to the court as a person, and mother, minimized family violence as harsh discipline, was not transparent, forced me to do things I didn't want to do."

Submissions suggested that mandatory practice standards could enhance the quality of reports, help parties understand the process, and will reduce conflict after the reports are released. Many submissions pointed to practice standards that already exist in other jurisdictions, such as those set out in the California Rules of Court, the Australian Standards of Practice for Family Assessments and Reporting, and in the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts' Guidelines for Parenting Coordination.

Suggestions for what the mandatory practice standards should be included:

- Screening for family violence, which should be done in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive way
- Where allegations of family violence are proven, there should be a legislative avenue to seek an assessment of the parent found to have perpetrated family violence (rather than always an assessment of both parties' parenting capacity)
- Mechanisms to determine when the disclosure of sensitive information is necessary
- Criteria for when psychometric testing is applied, including requirements to explain why the testing was done, which tests or diagnostic models were used, what it was intended to measure
- When other healthcare professionals (such as a family doctor) should be included in the analysis, ensure that the tester considers equity, diversity and inclusion principles, and information similar to the cautions and disclaimers mandated by the Ontario Family Law Rules
- Report writers should clearly and accurately describe what was said by everyone interviewed
- Peer review of reports

What Was Said:

> *"This was extremely traumatic. Despite there being screening for family violence as part of the intake process, all suggestions and claims of family violence were turned around by the evaluator and made out to be my fault."*
>
> *"Clearer standards for obtaining views. Inequity in the information gathering process and who may or may not influence report writing."*
>
> *"Standardized guidelines for report writers. Making the s. 211 process more accessible to more people. There is a dearth of qualified, competent report writers. Those who are qualified and competent have long waiting lists and the cost of their reports is prohibitive."*

Indigenous Perspectives: Practice Standards

With respect to reports written for Indigenous families, feedback suggested that report writers should be required to follow laws, customs and practices of the relevant Indigenous Nations, including possibly speaking with or working with a member or members (for example, an Elder, a Matriarch or another person chosen by the community) of the Nations who can ensure the process is culturally appropriate. For example, the Australian Standards of Practice for Family Assessments and Reporting require assessors to consider cultural issues in the process and the report itself, including whether engagement with an Indigenous consultant or advisor is needed.

To avoid delays, it was suggested that case management could be helpful when a report is ordered. However, one submission cautioned against computerized reports designed to generate hundreds of reports per year, as issues like parenting responsibilities and what is in the best interests of a child can be complex and nuanced.

Accountability Mechanisms

A party with concerns about the preparation of a report under section 202 or 211 of the FLA has limited options to address those concerns. Currently, a party's options are to raise their concerns during the court proceeding or through administrative processes outside the court proceeding; however, both options have limitations.

Based on survey results, over 80% of respondents indicated that they had a complaint about the interviewer or the report in the Section 211 report process (see Figure 4-8).

However, when asked how they dealt with their complaint, most respondents said that they did not take any action (55.2%)(see Figure 4-9). The next most common action respondents took to deal with their complaint was to complain to a professional governing body (27.6%) or to cross-examine the report writer (20.7%).

Figure 4-8: Section 211 Report Complaints

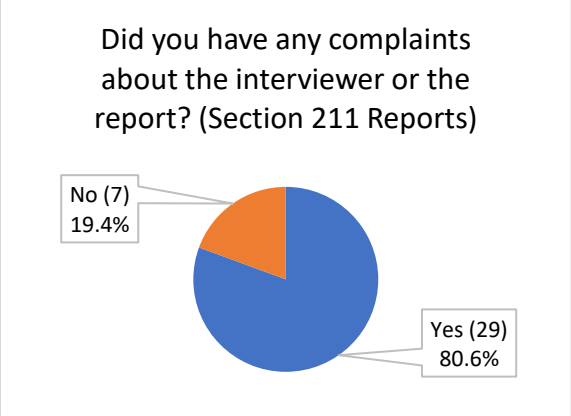
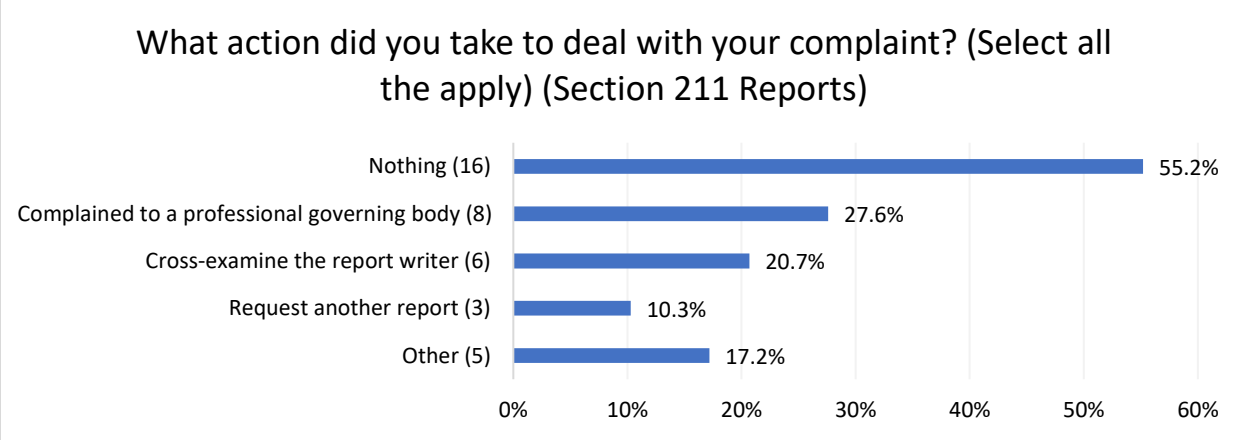


Figure 4-9: How People Dealt with Section 211 Complaints



A variety of reasons were provided by survey respondents for not taking any action to deal with their complaint, including difficulties with the process and being advised by professionals not to complain.

What Was Said:

> *"Brought concerns to my lawyer and my trauma therapist, both said nothing could be done."*
>
> *"Discussed with lawyer but felt it would be unaffordable to pursue a complaint further."*
>
> *"I was told by my lawyer that fighting a 211 reporter either for another report to change the report was a waste of money and would not be successful."*
>
> *"Contacted the report writer's supervisor who made a note on the file. However, the error could not be corrected as the report was already submitted to the court."*
>
> *"Requested to cross-examine report writer was denied by the court."*
>
> *"I tried to make a complaint but would need to give my name and since this person was court ordered and may be ordered to do another report, I am terrified of the consequences of reporting him."*
>
> *"Attempted to make a complaint but was never processed because the writer is a system 'favorite' despite having a horrible reputation for misogyny and other problematic views."*

The written feedback supported the need for ways to challenge Section 211 reports, however there was no single accountability mechanism that stood out as the best way to do so.

Court Processes

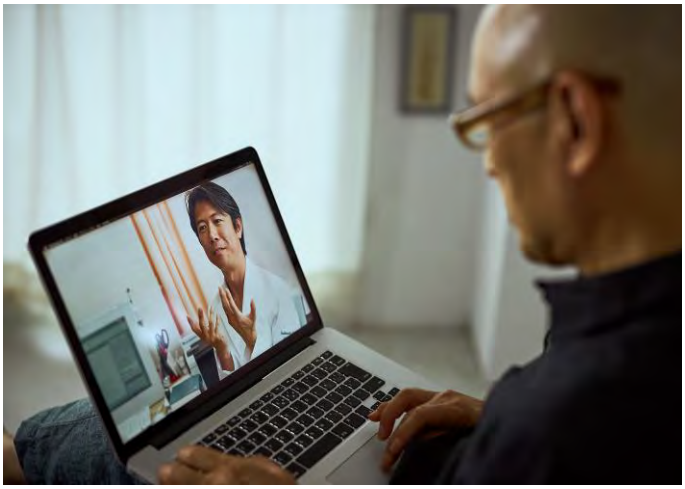
Current court processes that may be used to challenge expert reports include:

- Cross-examination of the report writer
- A "critique" or "review" report to refute the conclusions of the original report
- An admissibility hearing where criteria such as the relevance and necessity of the report and qualifications of the writer are considered in order to determine whether an expert report is admissible (section 211 reports are currently exempt from admissibility hearings)

The written feedback supported the need for accessible accountability mechanisms, although it also suggested that establishing report writer qualifications and practice standards and ensuring compliance with them could help reduce the number of complaints or challenges to reports.

What Was Said:

> *"These reports can be obtained out of normal expert report rules which is a problem. This does not give those opposing the report or having issues with the report a legal mechanism to challenge the report. Second, not allowing a second report is problematic as many report writers do not understand family violence, default to equal parenting time, and will diagnose parents with personality disorders after a 30 minute appointment. Section 211 reports should be ordered as any other expert report and treated the same way in regards to the rules of evidence."*



It was suggested that it would be helpful for the FLA to include an accountability mechanism or even multiple ones that operate as a coherent framework. There were suggestions that review reports should be more readily allowed, particularly where expert opinion is needed (for example, to refute psychological testing) and that there could be alternatives to cross-examination, such as something like Ontario's disclosure meetings or Alberta's "work file critique" process or case management conferences after the report is complete.

Administrative Processes

Currently, there are some administrative processes in place that people use to make complaints about a report or report writer outside of court. For example, if the report writer is a member of a professional governing body like the former College of Psychologists of BC (now the College of Health and Care Professionals of BC) or the BC College of Social Workers, then it may be possible to make a complaint through that body's dispute resolution process. A complaint about a family justice counsellor report writer may also be made through the Ministry of Attorney General's internal dispute resolution processes.

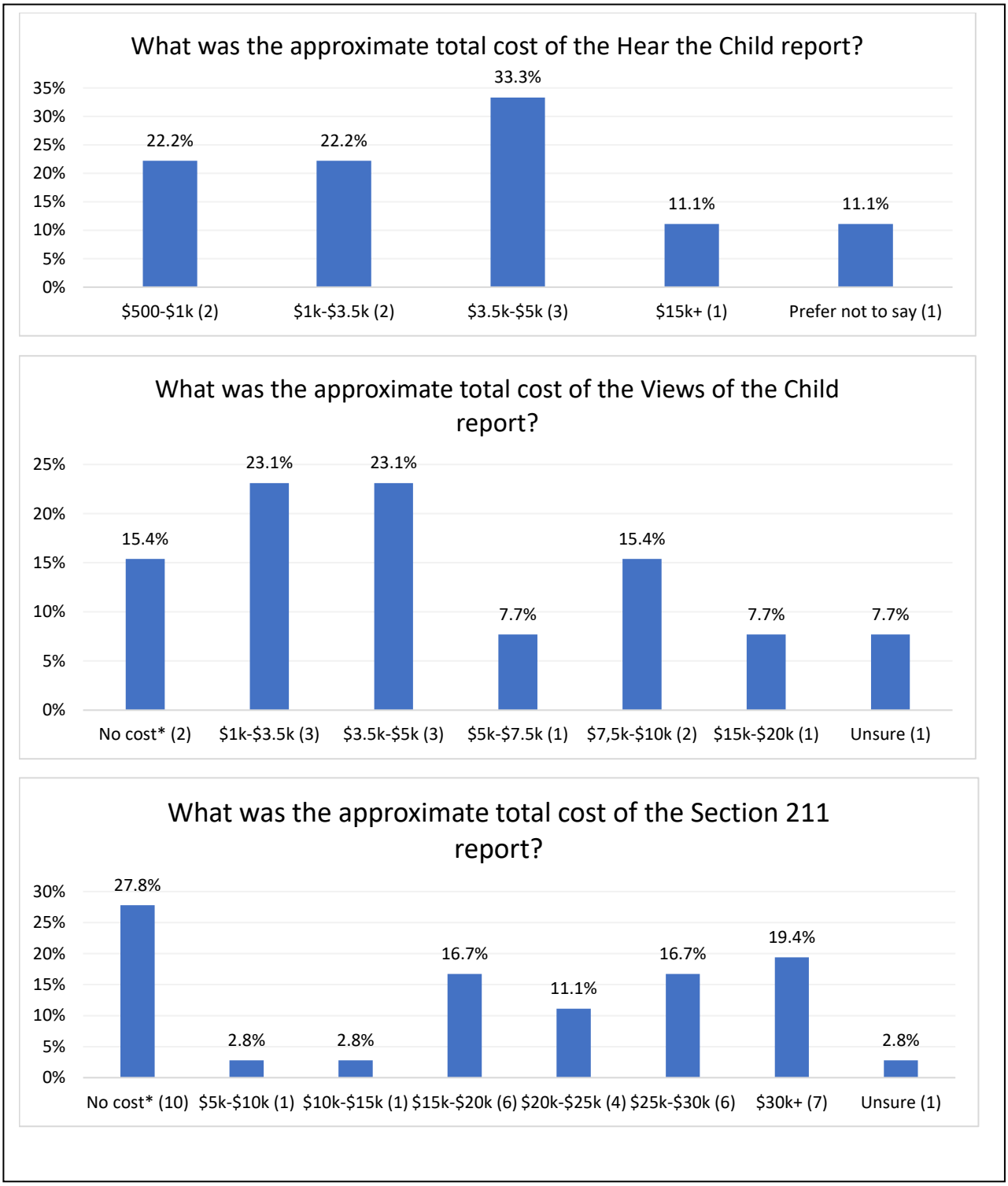
While feedback supported the need for accessible ways for the public to challenge report writers and reports, it was also noted that report writers need protection from complaints as they regularly face undue complaints, harassment, reputational damage, and safety concerns. Private assessors face particular difficulties in this regard. When a complaint was made to the College of Psychologists of BC, for example, the report writer had to appeal the case which requires time and resources, including hiring counsel. The assessor is not reimbursed or compensated for the loss of income.

Cost

The financial costs of assessments and reports was highlighted in many submissions. Some feedback noted that the current costs of reports make them inaccessible to many families, and that the availability of publicly funded or partially funded reports needs to be enhanced. Providing tax deductions or credits in relation to reports were also suggested. It was suggested that the cost and ability of the parties to pay for a report should be factors the court must consider when deciding whether to order a report. One psychologist, however, felt that placing a financial cap on these reports does not align with the costs of services by other professions such as lawyers or doctors.

Figure 4-10 shows the differences in costs between Hear the Child reports, Views of the Child reports, and Full Section 211 reports based on survey results. The costs of Hear the Child reports and Views of the Child reports tended to be below $5,000, whereas the cost of Full Section 211 reports tended to be above $15,000. Almost 20% of survey respondents indicated that their Section 211 report cost $30,000 or more.

Figure 4-10: Costs of Reports



Accessibility of reports was a prominent theme in the survey responses, as many respondents wrote about the need to reduce the financial burden and hardship associated with reports, and to reduce the delay in obtaining a report. The no cost reports indicated in Figure 4-10 represent Views of the Child reports and Full Section 211 reports prepared by family justice counsellors. However, engagement feedback also indicated that there can be long delays to access these publicly funded reports.

What Was Said:

> *"The cost of having a real report done is prohibitive. The free version is too slow, and is often used as a tactical measure to add a lot of delay to a case. The mid-range reports have generally been helpful. The high-end reports have either been very insightful, or seemingly boilerplate."*