A foster carer's perspective

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The ‘signposting’ slide – I am going to talk about…

1. Personal experience of being a foster carer

2. What do foster carers need?

3. Work of NSPCC for looked after children

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My personal experience of being a foster carer

- Why I became a foster carer
- My experience of being a foster carer
- Why I value being a foster carer

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Local foster carers surveys

- First in 2008
- Second in 2011

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2008 survey

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Allowances comments

£

£

- ‘petty deductions’ eg when child is on holiday
- Costs of living are going up in real terms and this really impacts on foster carers
- ‘holding payments’ when no placement
- ‘holiday pay for Foster Carers’
- holiday payments – don’t reflect real costs eg having to get extra rooms
- Insurance – accidental damage cover/excess means ‘you never get paid and always lose’

£

£

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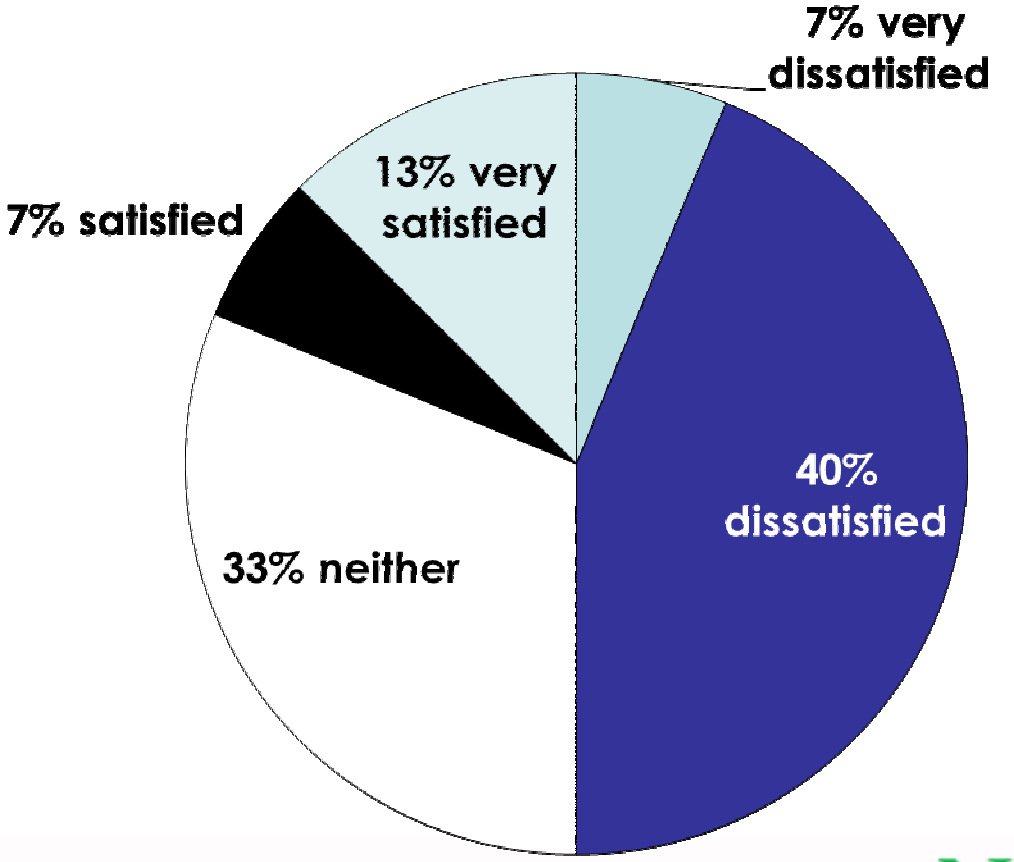
Respite



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Respite

- generally dissatisfied
- 47% dissatisfied
- only 20% satisfied

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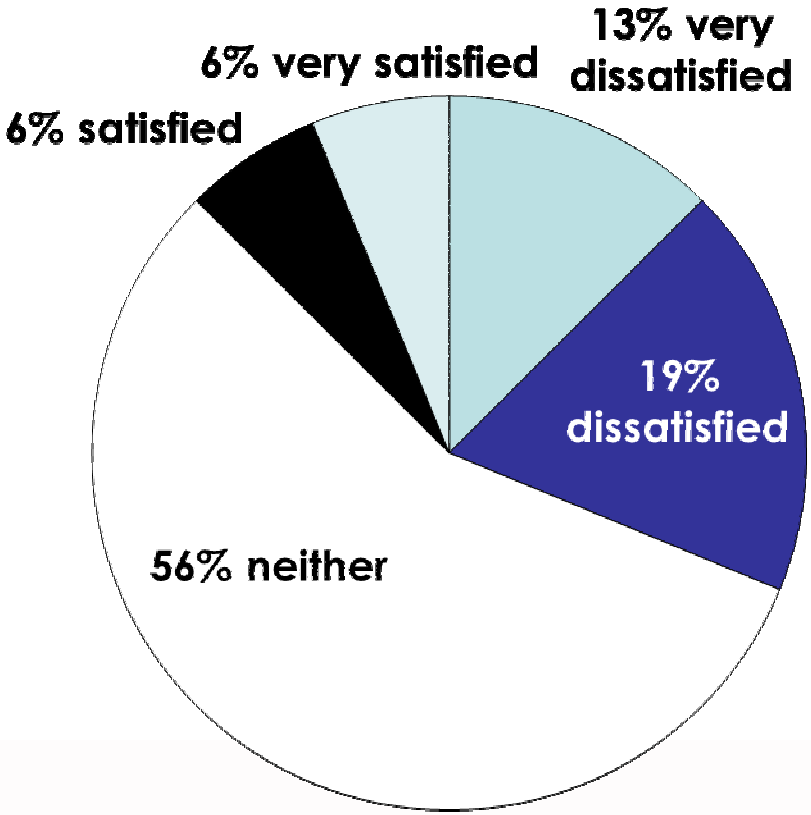
Babysitting



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Babysitting

- negatively indifferent
- 32% dissatisfied
- only 12% satisfied

2011 survey

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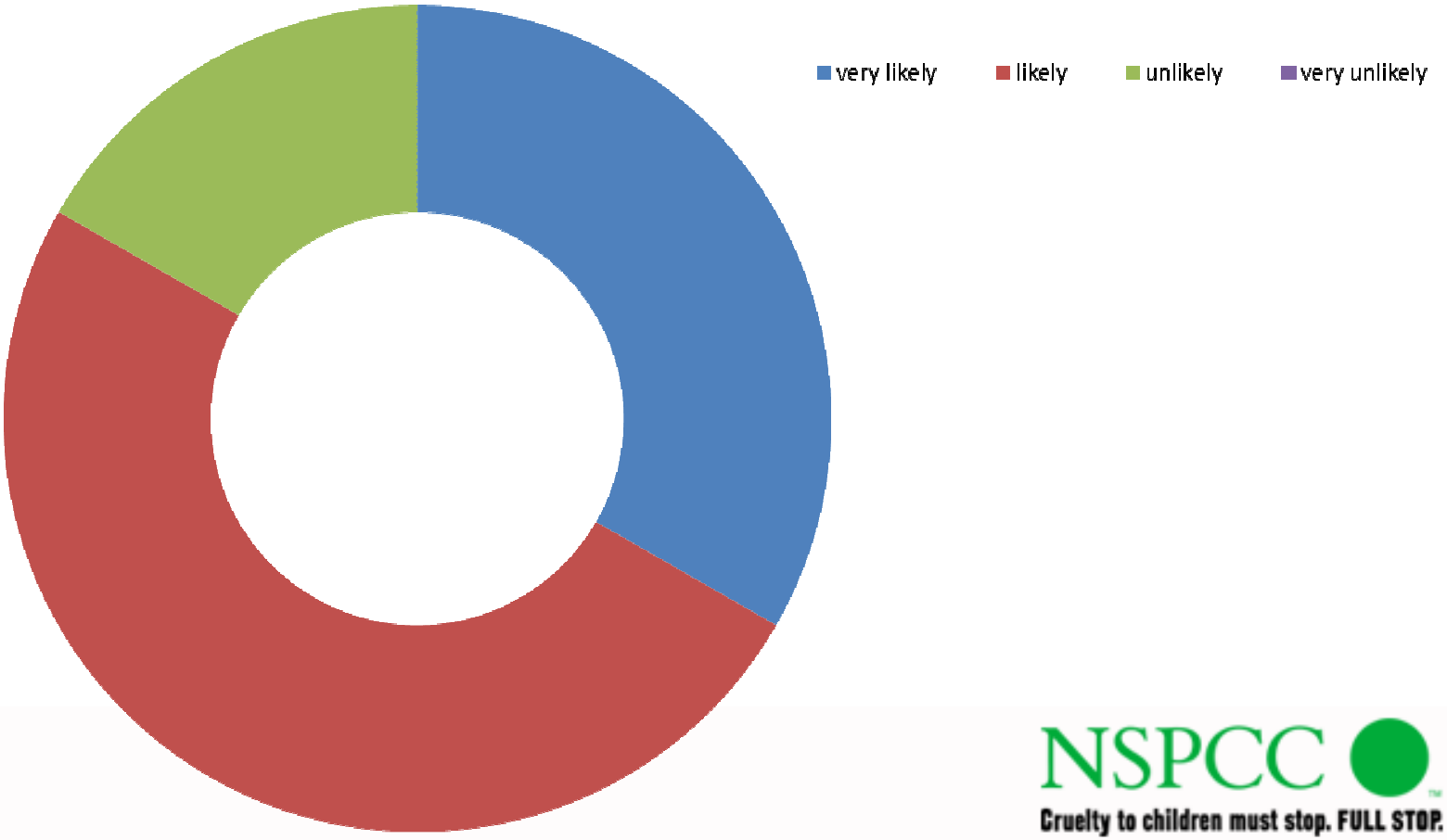
How likely are you to be a Foster Carer in 5 years?



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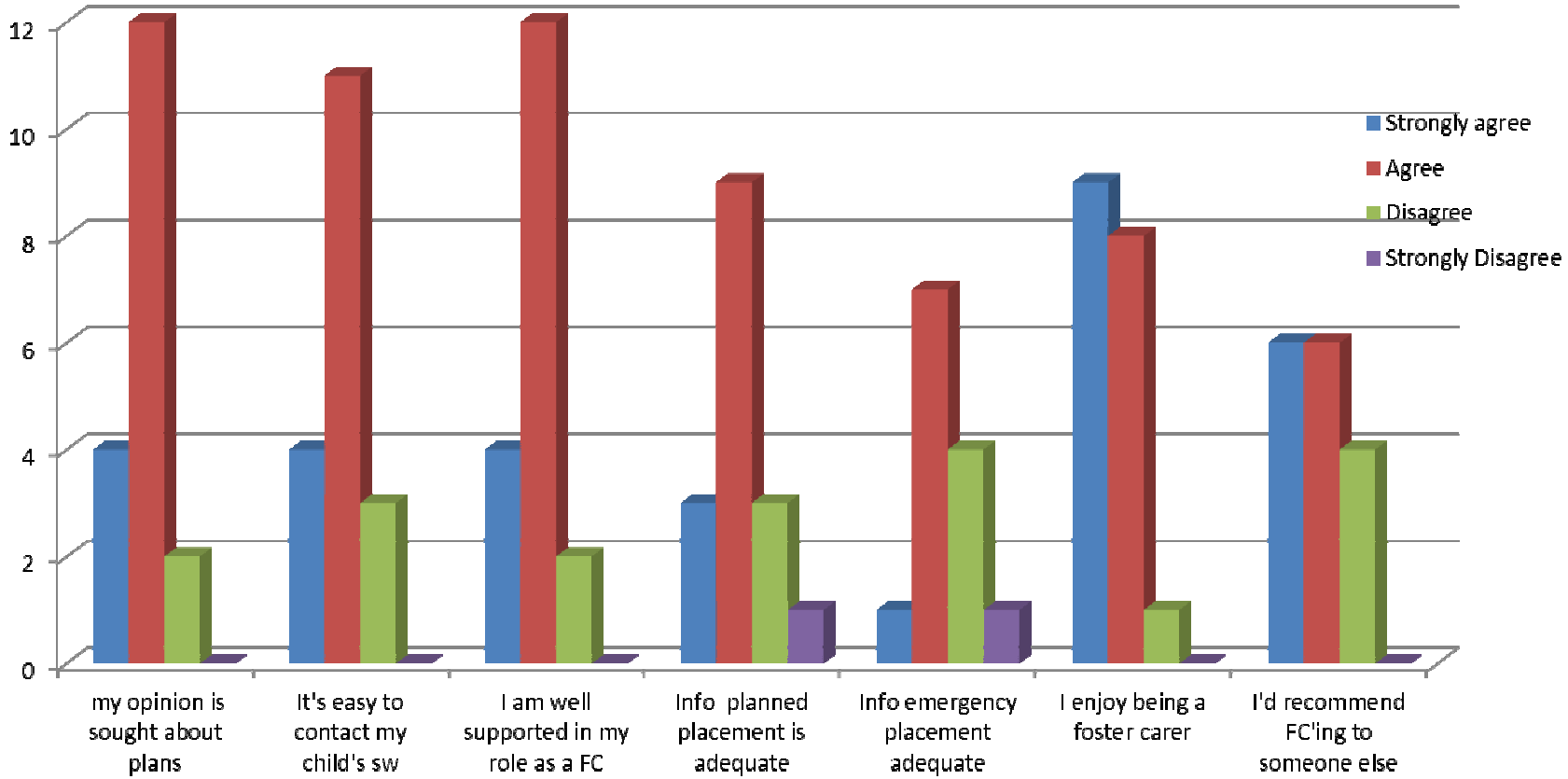
Agree or disagree?



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Comments

- *A fulfilling challenging exciting career*
- *Info given with emergency placements are a bit hit and miss.*
- *Being part of the planning and a valued member of the professional team varies from social worker to Social worker and needs direction from senior Management leading by example and not just ticking boxes.*
- *I tend to take the lead when making future plans for my child so I tend to seek SS for their opinions.*
- *Contacting a social worker is easy, getting a reply is harder!*

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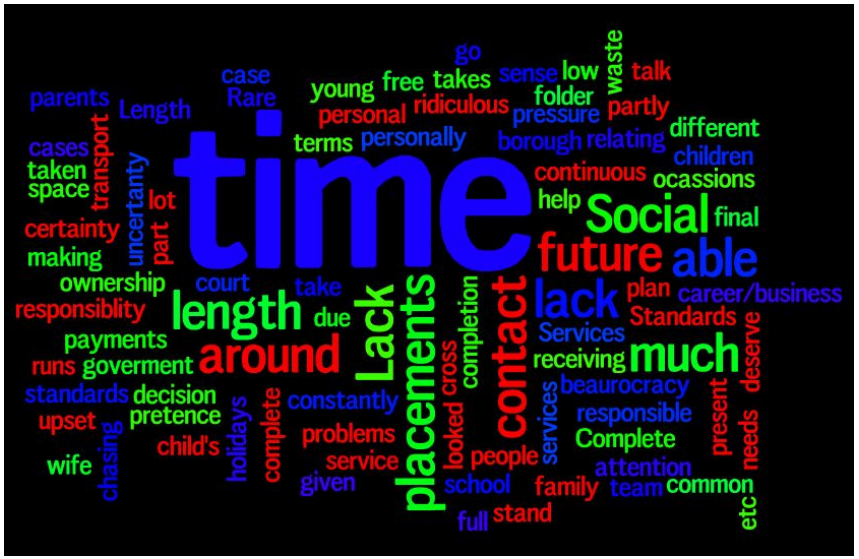
What do you enjoy…

Least



Most

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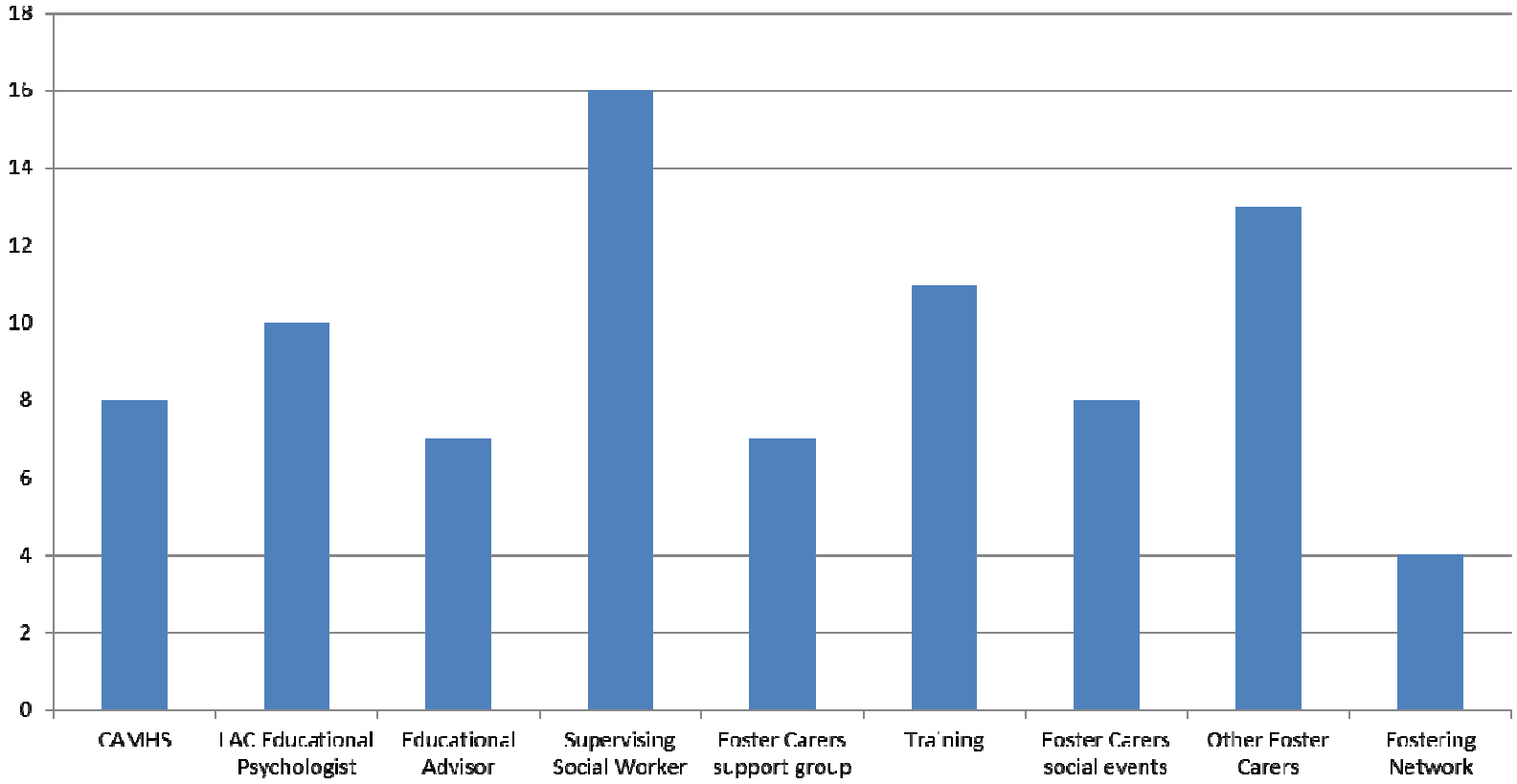
What services do you value?



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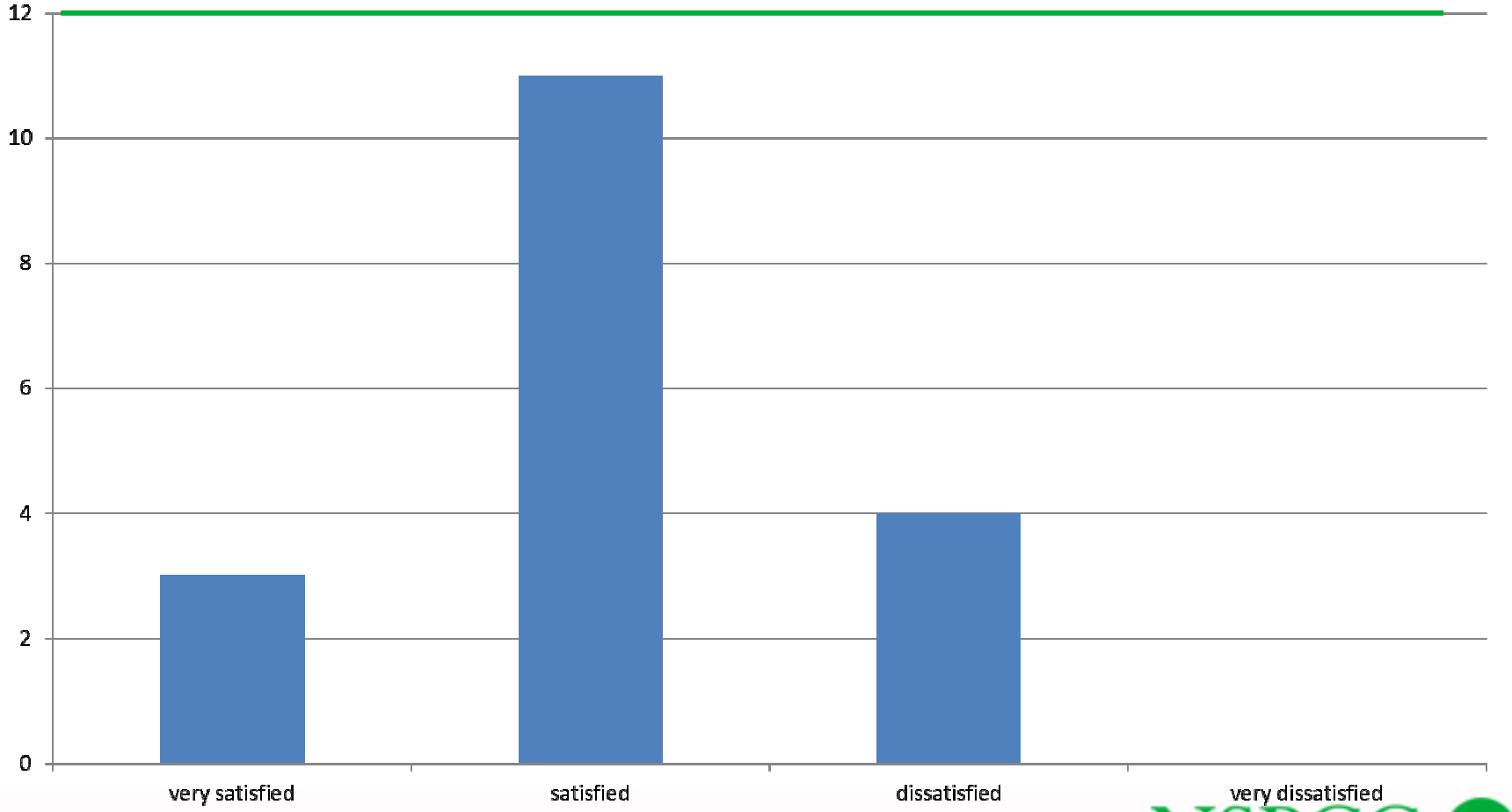
Pay and allowances



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What do foster carers need?

- Support

  - particularly that of other foster carers

- Training

- Recognition

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The relationship between being a foster carer and my job at the NSPCC

- What being a foster carer has taught me that helps with my job at NSPCC
- What working for the NSPCC has taught me that helps with being a foster carer

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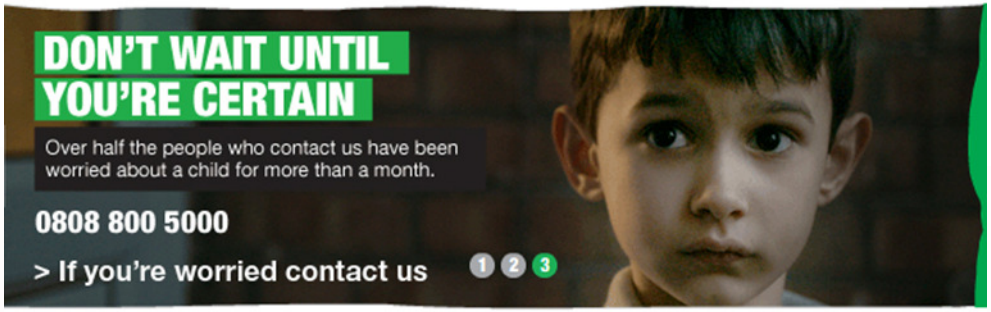
NSPCC work with looked after children

- Connecting with children in care
- Safeguarding looked after children through advocacy
- Reunification of looked after children
- The New Orleans Intervention Model
- ChildLine/Helpline



ChildLine
0800 1111

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Conclusion

- To give every fostered child the opportunities they deserve we need continued combination of the personal commitment of fosters carers and institutional commitment by supporting agencies
- Recognition is really important
- Seemingly small things matter
- It is hard work – and great fun!

@PeterWatt123
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