



**ORANGA
TAMARIKI**
Ministry for Children

New Zealand Government

Training opportunities for Family Start kaimahi: Family Violence and Sexual Violence

Findings from the Family Start Kaimahi Survey
2022

The Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre works to build the evidence base that helps us better understand wellbeing and what works to improve outcomes for New Zealand's children, young people and their whānau.

This survey and report were developed in collaboration with Janet Dean (Pa Harakeke Family and Community), Steve Peter (Evidence Centre) and the Evidence Centre.

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If you need this material in a different version, please email us at surveys@ot.govt.nz and we will provide it for you.

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Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to understand what support and professional development is needed for Family Start kaimahi working with whānau experiencing Family Violence and Sexual Violence. It is to identify:

- the percentage of kaimahi that are confident and knowledgeable about working with whānau affected by Family Violence and Sexual Violence
- differences in knowledge and confidence by role
- differences in training needs
- where support and training should be directed.

A survey was undertaken with 47 Family Start providers, with 365 responses in total. References to Family Start kaimahi are inclusive of Early Start kaimahi. Through improving understanding of existing capability within the Family Start kaimahi workforce, this survey assists Oranga Tamariki to target training and learning opportunities that will be most helpful for where kaimahi are at in their knowledge and confidence.

Key findings

- **Almost no Family Start kaimahi (1%) reported that their knowledge of Family Violence or Sexual Violence was very poor.** However, 33% of kaimahi felt their knowledge of Family Violence was OK or poor, and 54% felt their knowledge of Sexual Violence was OK or poor, indicating knowledge gaps in both areas. Kaimahi knowledge of Family Violence was higher than their knowledge of Sexual Violence.
- Out of the whānau worker group, **29% had no training in Sexual Violence** at all, compared to **8%** of kaimahi who had no training at all in **Family Violence**.
- Kaimahi wanted to participate in training that helped them respond to whānau disclosures about Family and/or Sexual Violence, trained them on processes within the care and protection system, helped them to support victims and equipped them to work with culturally diverse whānau. An emphasis was on practical tools that could be applied to their work.
- ‘Understanding Abuse’ was the most mentioned topic by kaimahi, with 52 mentions in total – an indicator that any training related to understanding Family and Sexual Violence would be valued.
- **Regional differences were inconclusive** or very small due to response rate differences by regions. Increasing survey participation within each provider will help the strength of findings in future. However, **topics mentioned by kaimahi differed slightly per region** and more research into regional needs could help to direct specific training to regions.

- Training providers, such as Child Matters, SHINE (Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday), Eclipse, Women's Refuge, and Rob Veale's courses were often referenced by Family Start kaimahi as places for training and these options could be beneficial to explore.

Background

This report collates feedback from Family Start and Early Start kaimahi in relation to Family Violence and Sexual Violence. Family Start is an early home visiting programme focused on children and tamariki. The program is voluntary and works with whānau and families to realise better outcomes for their children. Family Start is acknowledged as being well placed to work with whānau at the early stages of 'things going wrong within the whānau'. Family Start service includes:

- undertaking Strength and Needs Assessments
- early identification of family/sexual violence
- development of Child Family Plans and Child Safety tools
- home visiting
- referrals to specialist services.

This report is part of a response to the Te Aorerekura National Strategy. [Te Aorerekura – the National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence](#) includes Action 32 to 'improve the Family Start service' by providing additional training and support for Family Start kaimahi to be more knowledgeable and confident in working with whānau who experience Family Violence or Sexual Violence. Oranga Tamariki is the lead agency for Action 32.

Methodology

The questionnaire for this survey was developed in consultation with the Evidence Centre and was launched on Qualtrics, a third-party software, in November 2022. The survey was distributed by email to key Family Start contacts, with approximately 47 Family Start providers invited to take part in the survey. 365 Family Start kaimahi (inclusive of Early Start kaimahi) responded to the survey, with at least one kaimahi from 44 Family Start providers responding out of the 47 Family Start providers across the motu (a provider response rate of over 93%).

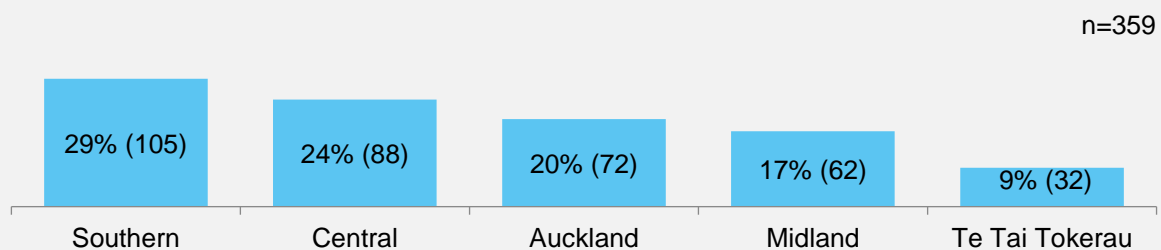
All information from kaimahi was linked to their Family Start site but data did not identify individual kaimahi. A mixed methods approach was undertaken for the survey and analysis, with a thematic 'ground up' analysis undertaken on the qualitative (open text) data to find patterns in kaimahi responses.

Important notes on data limitations

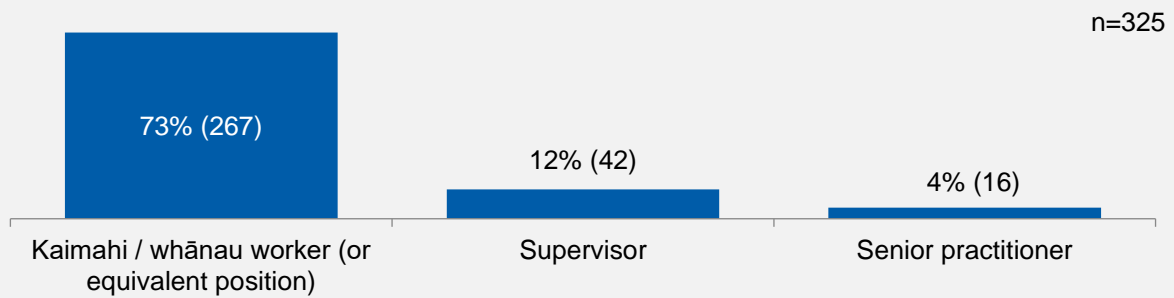
The survey dataset has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results in this report. Limitations include the relatively small number of responses, regional differences in response rates, and that some Family Start providers responded on behalf of their entire organisation/site (one response for multiple kaimahi). Twenty-nine percent of all responses came from the Southern region, compared to 9% from Te Tai Tokerau. Six responses were discarded in regional breakdowns as they were from providers not specified in the survey dropdown.

Increasing responses within providers could improve our understanding of regional differences and provide a clearer picture of the knowledge, training, and confidence of Family Start kaimahi. Despite this limitation, almost all providers had one response (44 out of 47).

Figure 1. Responses by region



While the dataset had a good coverage of whānau workers (73%), fewer responses for other roles mean interpreting differences in responses between role types should be taken with a grain of salt'. Responders who selected role type "Other" were discarded from the role breakdowns (40 responses).

Figure 2. Roles within Family Start

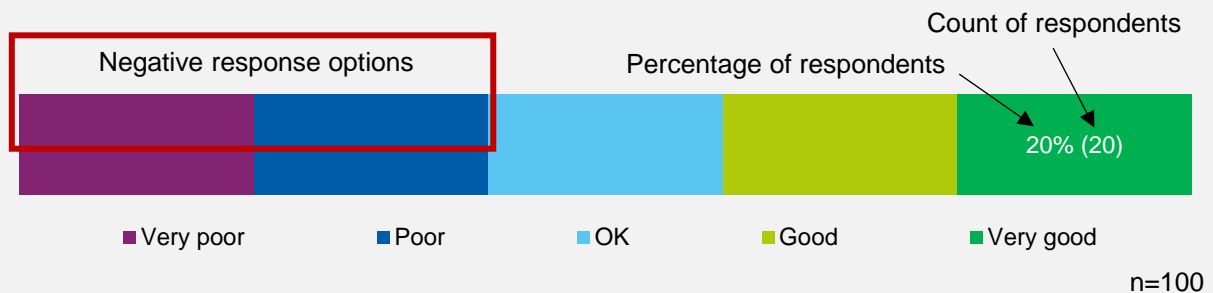
Additionally, comparing actual training data to the self-rated training responses could improve accuracy.

It is important to note that the results in this report have not focused on groups of importance, such as Māori, Pacific peoples, people with disabilities and gender diversity. This does not diminish the importance of considering the perspectives and needs of these communities in both decision-making processes and research design for future iterations of this report.

Findings

Some questions had no negative answers

For some questions, no participants selected the negative response options – **Purple** and **Blue** box below. These include for example ‘Very poor’, ‘Poor’, ‘Not confident at all’, and ‘No training at all’. This is an important finding which can be overlooked, and suggests that, overall, the responses leaned towards positive options. Note also that due to the small number of participants, we have displayed both the percentage of respondents and the count of respondents.



Key takeaways

Knowledge of Family and Sexual Violence, and to a lesser extent training, had an impact on kaimahi confidence working with whānau experiencing these types of violence.

Knowledge is important in **driving kaimahi confidence** in working with whānau experiencing Family and Sexual Violence situations, and some of this knowledge comes from training.

More training equalled **more confidence**: 9 out of 10 kaimahi with ‘extensive’ training were completely confident with working with whānau experiencing Family Violence (n=18), and 10 out of 10 kaimahi with ‘extensive’ Sexual Violence training (n=11)

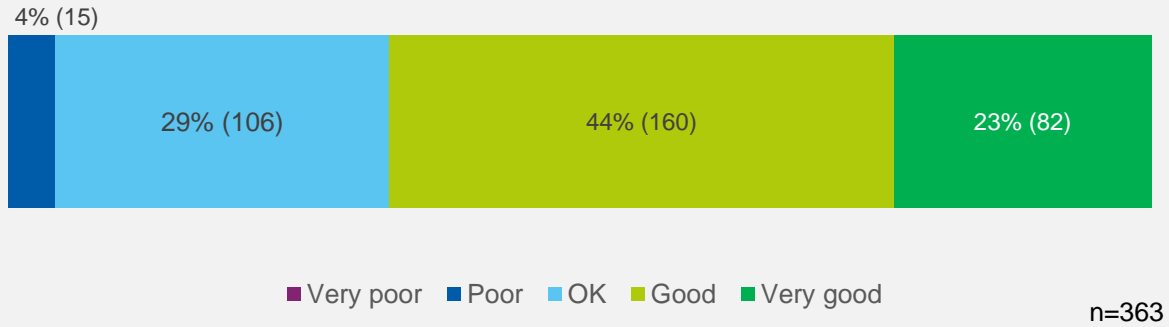
48% of kaimahi with **no training at all** stated they were ‘**somewhat confident**’ working with whānau experiencing Family Violence. More data is needed to determine if, and how, training Family Start Kaimahi receive, contributes to their knowledge and confidence working with whānau experiencing Family Violence.

Regional differences in training topics wanted, knowledge, training and confidence were too small or inconclusive to make region-specific recommendations. Regional breakdowns can be found in the Appendix.

Family Start Kaimahi knowledge of Family Violence

67% of all kaimahi felt their knowledge of Family Violence was good or very good, and almost all kaimahi felt they had an OK or better knowledge of Family Violence. No kaimahi reported their knowledge was 'Very poor'.

Figure 3. Kaimahi knowledge of Family Violence

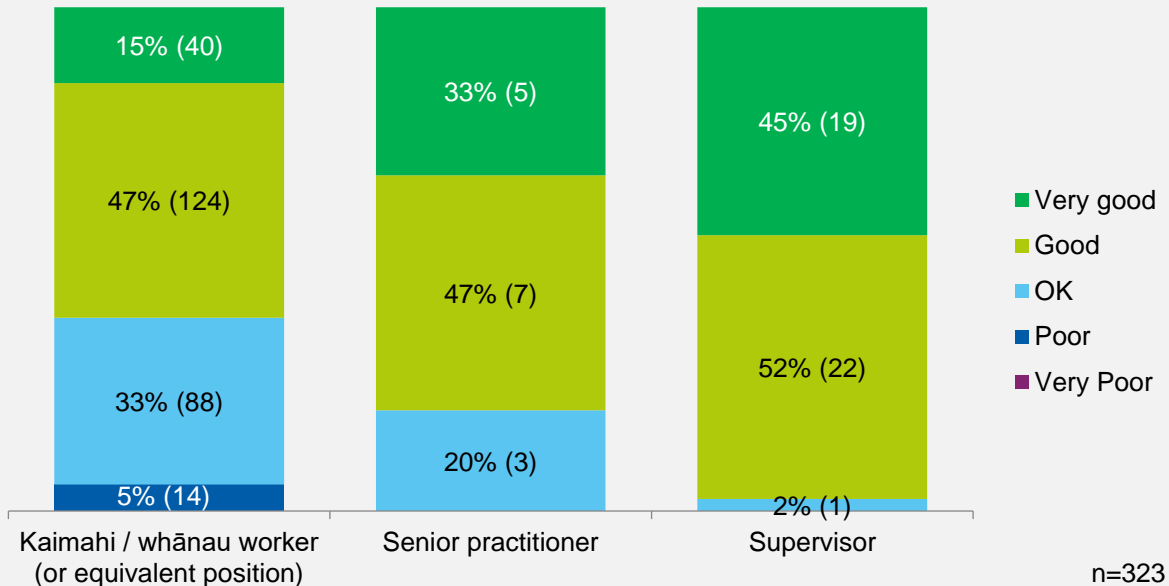


Role differences in knowledge of Family Violence

As kaimahi gained seniority, they gained more knowledge of Family Violence.

- 62% of whānau workers thought their FV knowledge was good or very good.
- 80% of senior practitioners thought their FV knowledge was good or very good.
- 97% of supervisors thought their FV knowledge was good or very good.

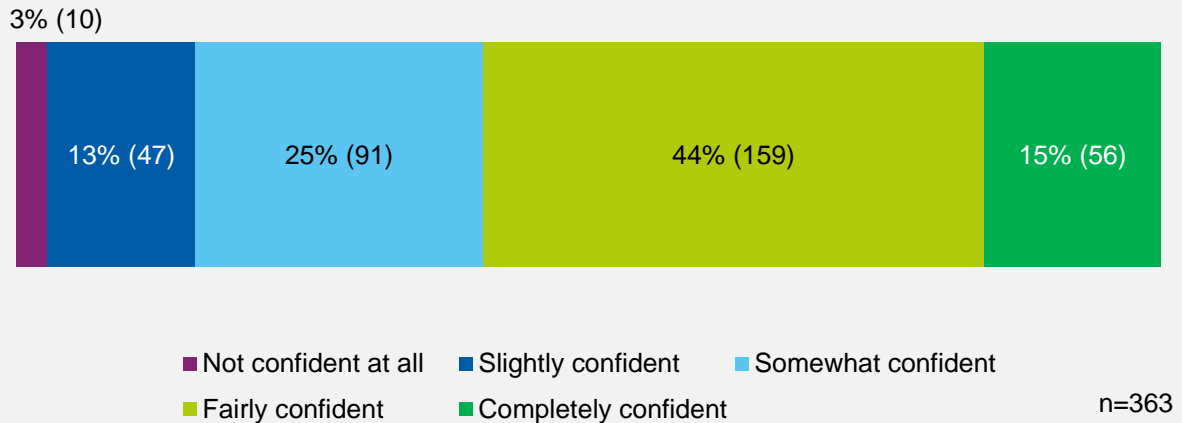
Figure 4. Knowledge of Family Violence by role



Confidence in working with whānau experiencing Family Violence

Fifty-nine percent of Family Start kaimahi are fairly or completely confident working with whānau experiencing Family Violence, with 16% feeling not confident or slightly confident.

Figure 5. Confidence working with whānau experiencing Family Violence

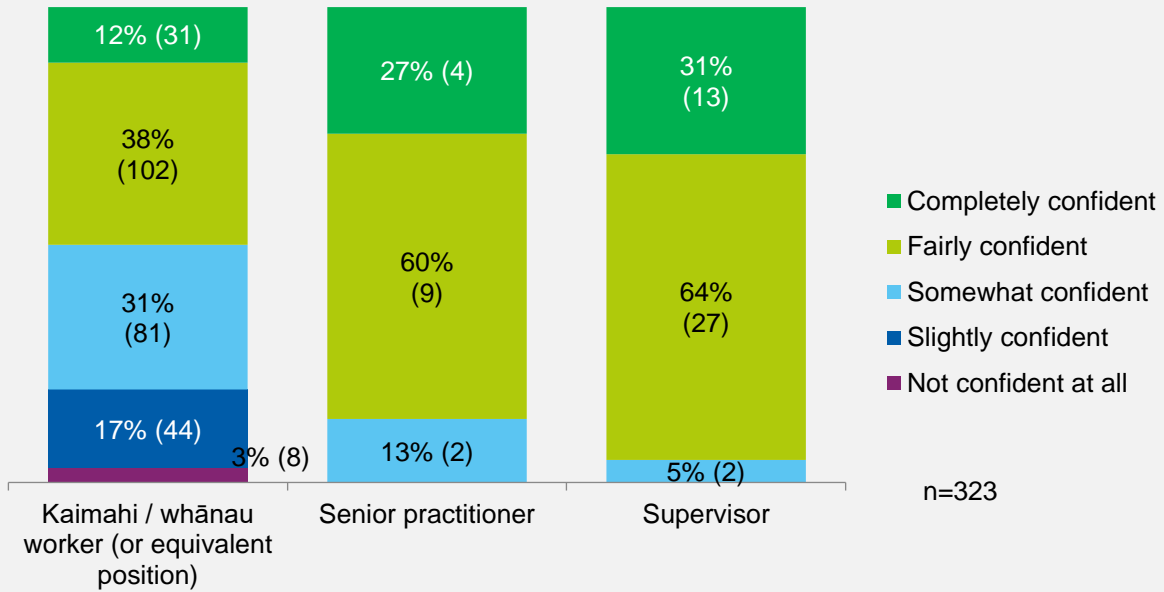


Role differences in confidence working with whānau experiencing Family Violence

Most supervisors (95%) and senior practitioners (87%) were fairly or completely confident in working with whānau experiencing Family Violence. This is a positive indicator that kaimahi in more senior roles feel confident working with whānau experiencing Family Violence.

Half of whānau workers felt they were fairly or completely confident, and 20% said they were slightly confident (17%), or not confident at all (3%). As whānau workers are the kaimahi most often face-to-face with whānau in their homes, these results suggest that increasing whānau worker confidence in relation to Family Violence would be positive.

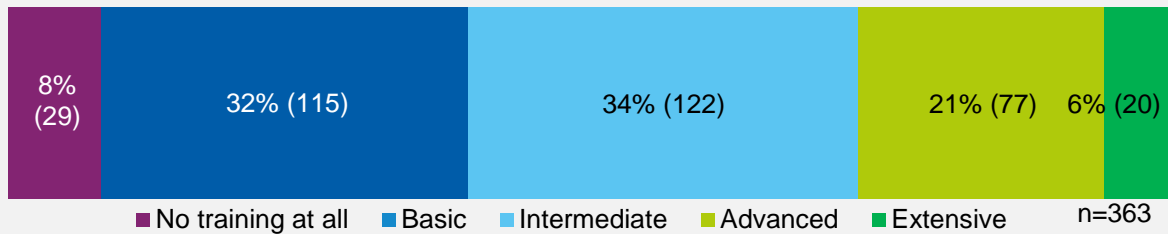
Figure 6. Confidence in working with whānau experiencing Family Violence by role



Kaimahi training in Family Violence

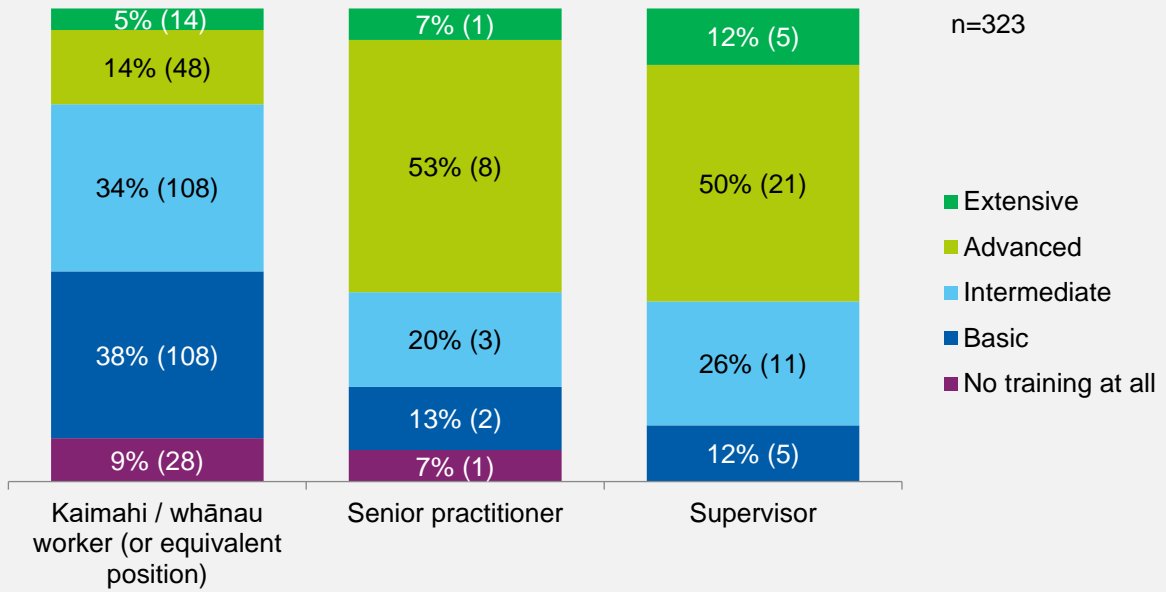
Sixty-one percent of all kaimahi reported they had Intermediate or higher training. As expected, senior practitioners and supervisors had higher levels of training than whānau workers. **40% of kaimahi had basic or no training at all in Family Violence.**

Figure 7. Level of Family Violence training



Role differences in training in Family Violence

Figure 8. Training in Family Violence by role

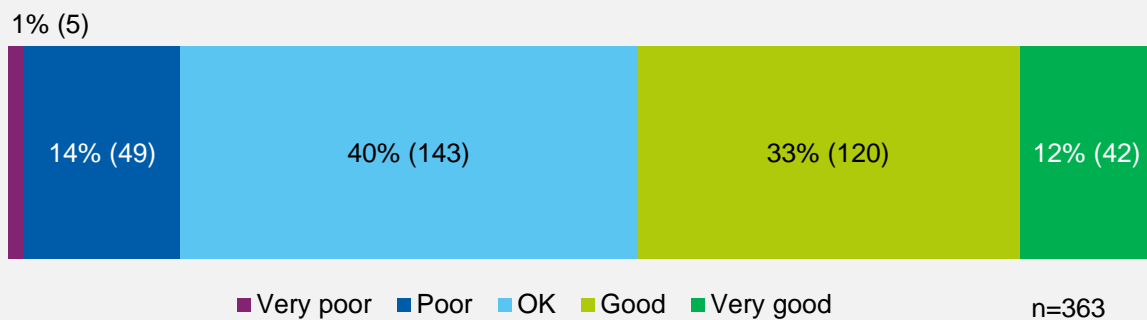


Sexual Violence

Kaimahi knowledge of Sexual Violence

Just under half (45%) of all kaimahi felt they had a good or very good knowledge of Sexual Violence. Same as the Family Violence topic, when kaimahi knowledge of Sexual Violence increased, so did their confidence with working with whānau experiencing Sexual Violence, with similar findings for Sexual Violence training and tenure.

Figure 9. All kaimahi knowledge of Sexual Violence

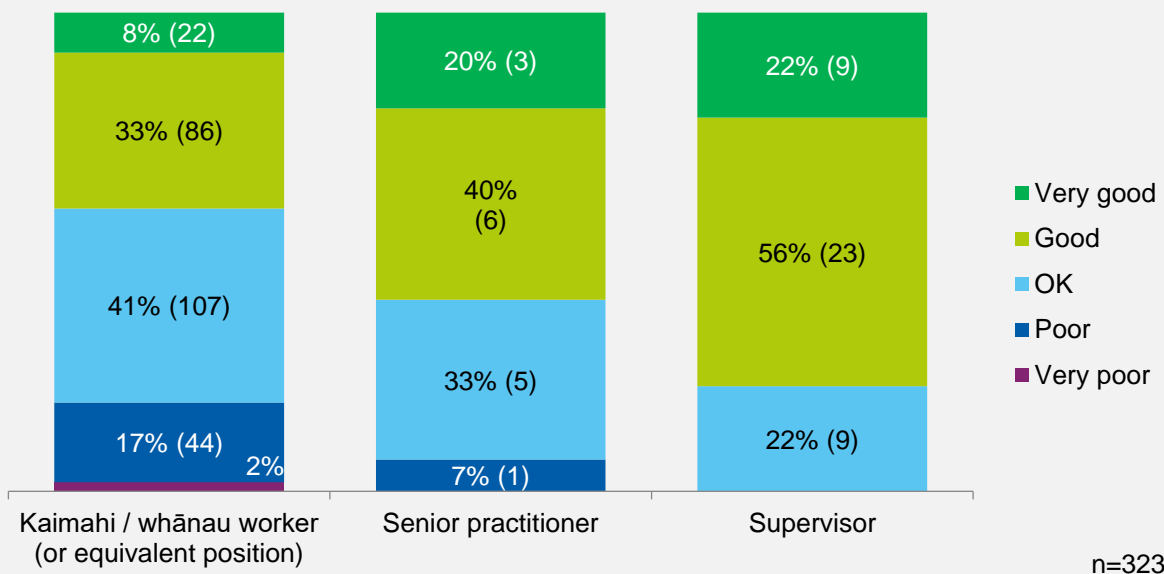


Role differences

When looking how roles affect knowledge, 41% of whānau workers felt they had a good or very good knowledge of SV. As roles became more senior, the proportion of good or very good knowledge of SV rose higher:

- 60% of Senior Practitioners felt their SV knowledge was good/very good.
- 78% of supervisors felt their SV knowledge was good/very good.

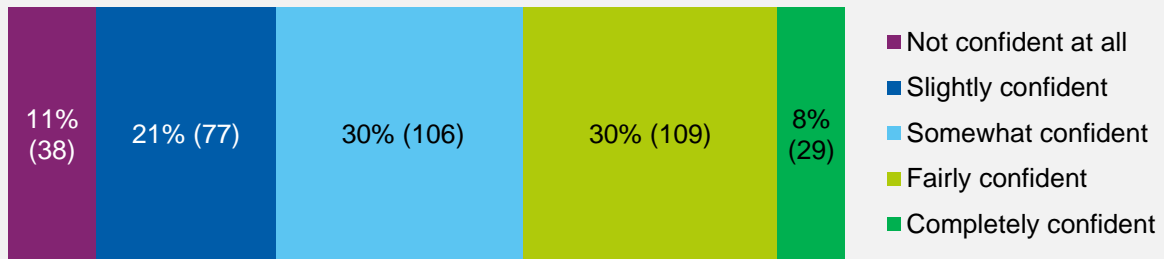
Figure 10. Knowledge of Sexual Violence by role



Family Start kaimahi confidence working with whānau experiencing Sexual Violence

Overall, 38% of kaimahi felt they were fairly or completely confident working with whānau experiencing Sexual Violence. At the other end of the scale, just under a third (32%) of kaimahi felt they were not confident at all or slightly confident.

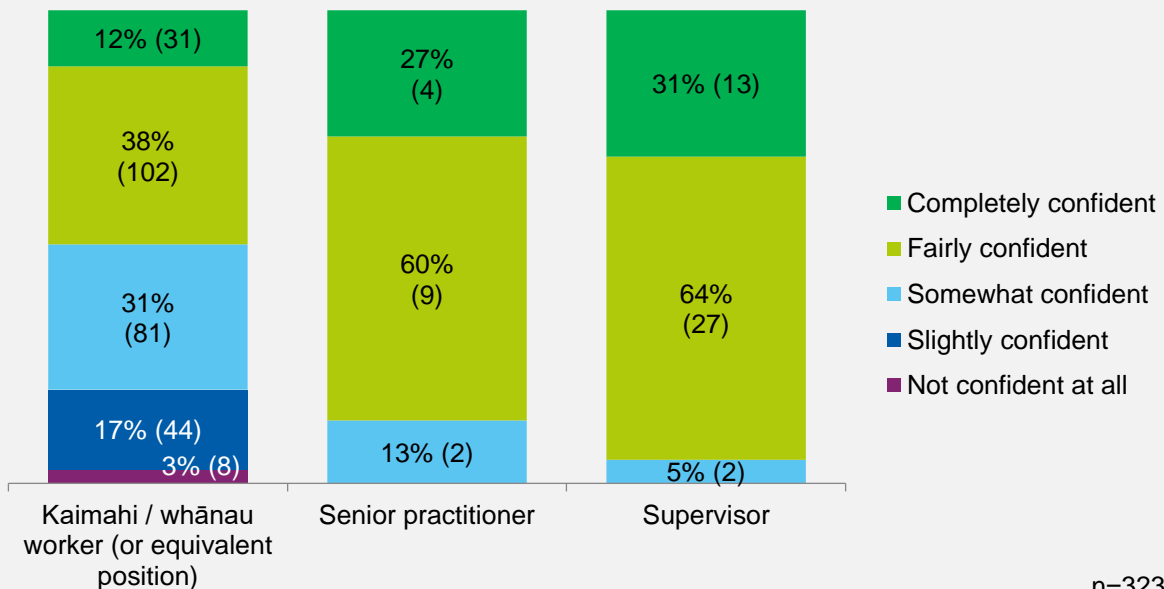
Figure 11. How confident are you in working with whanau experiencing Sexual Violence?



n=363

Role differences in confidence working with whānau experiencing Sexual Violence

Figure 12. Confidence working with whanau experiencing Sexual Violence by role

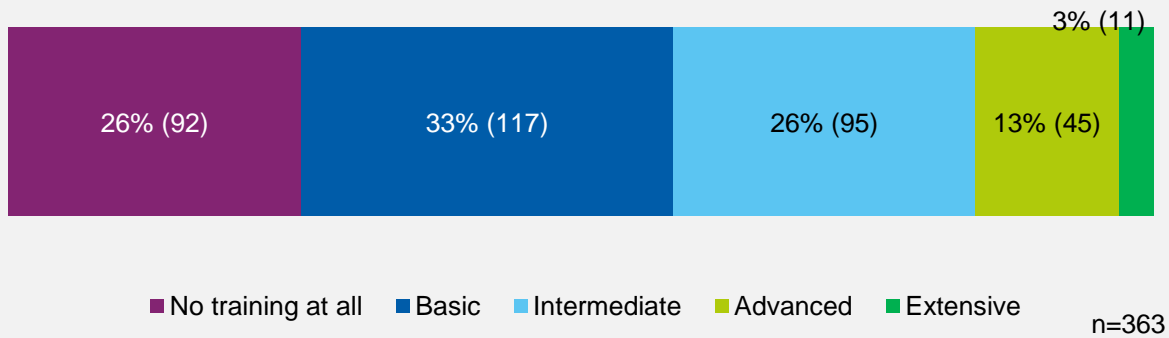


n=323

Family Start kaimahi training in Sexual Violence

Twenty-six percent of all Family Start kaimahi had no training at all in Sexual Violence. However, 59% of all kaimahi had taken part in basic or intermediate training in Sexual Violence, and 16% of kaimahi had taken part in advanced or extensive training in Sexual Violence.

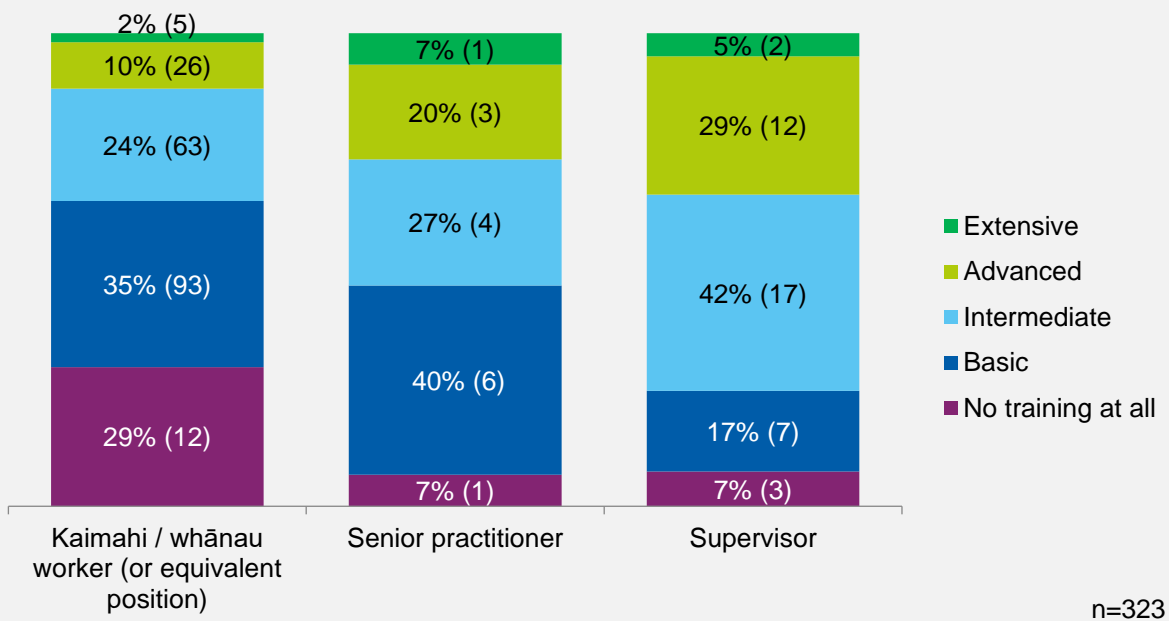
Figure 13. Kaimahi participation in Sexual Violence training



Role differences in Sexual Violence Training

As expected, senior practitioners and supervisors had higher levels of training compared to whānau workers. Out of the whānau worker group, 29% had no training in Sexual Violence at all.

Figure 14. Kaimahi participation in Sexual Violence training by role

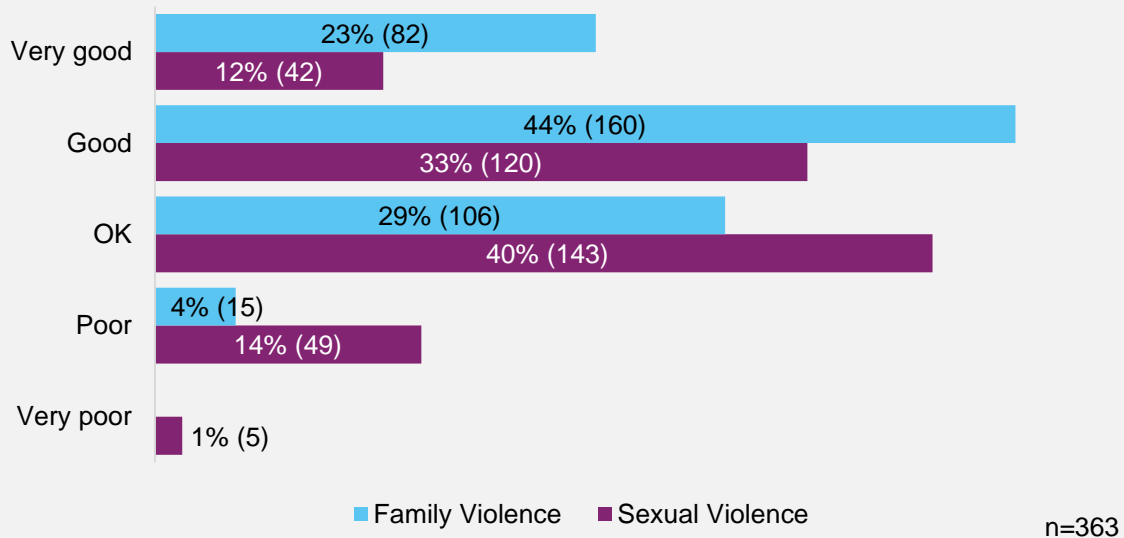


Comparisons between topics

Kaimahi showed higher confidence working with whānau, training levels, and knowledge towards Family Violence than Sexual Violence. While both areas had room for improvement, Sexual Violence stood out, with 26% of kaimahi having no training in the area (compared to 8% for Family Violence).

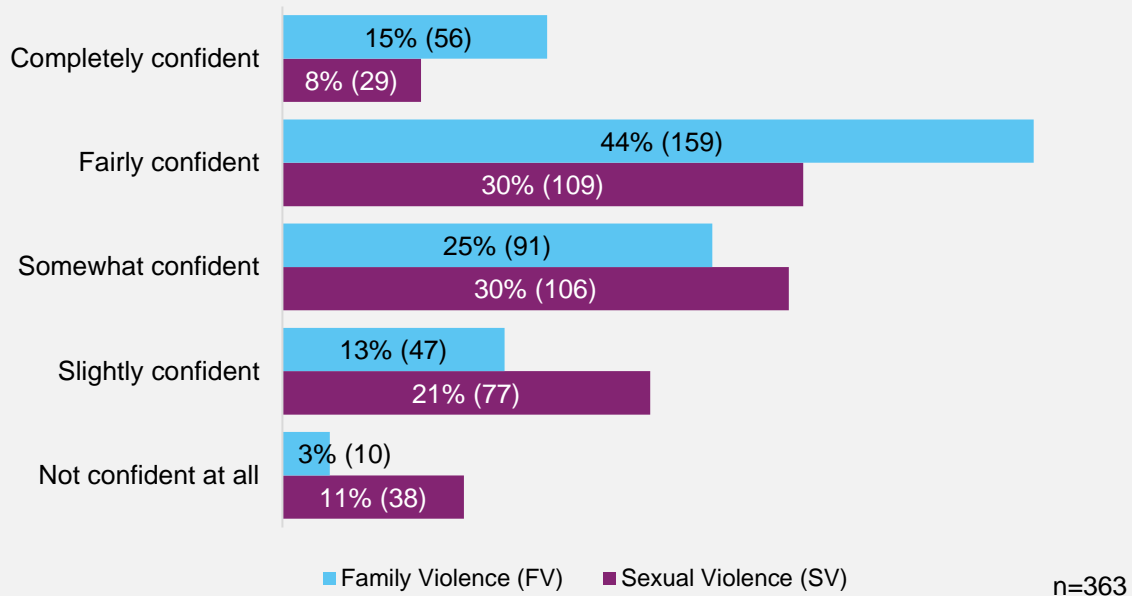
Knowledge comparison

Figure 15. Knowledge in topics



Confidence comparison

Figure 16. Confidence working with whānau experiencing Family or Sexual Violence



What's driving confidence?

Knowledge kaimahi had about Family Violence was the primary factor driving their confidence¹ in working with whānau experiencing Family Violence. When kaimahi had more training in Family Violence, they were more confident working with whānau as well, but this positive relationship wasn't as strong as knowledge was.

It was a similar story for Sexual Violence, with both knowledge and training playing a role in confidence working with affected whānau. However, for Sexual Violence, confidence appeared to be more reliant on training². As the other results show, kaimahi feel differently towards Sexual Violence, and their confidence in working with whānau experiencing this is less than Family Violence.

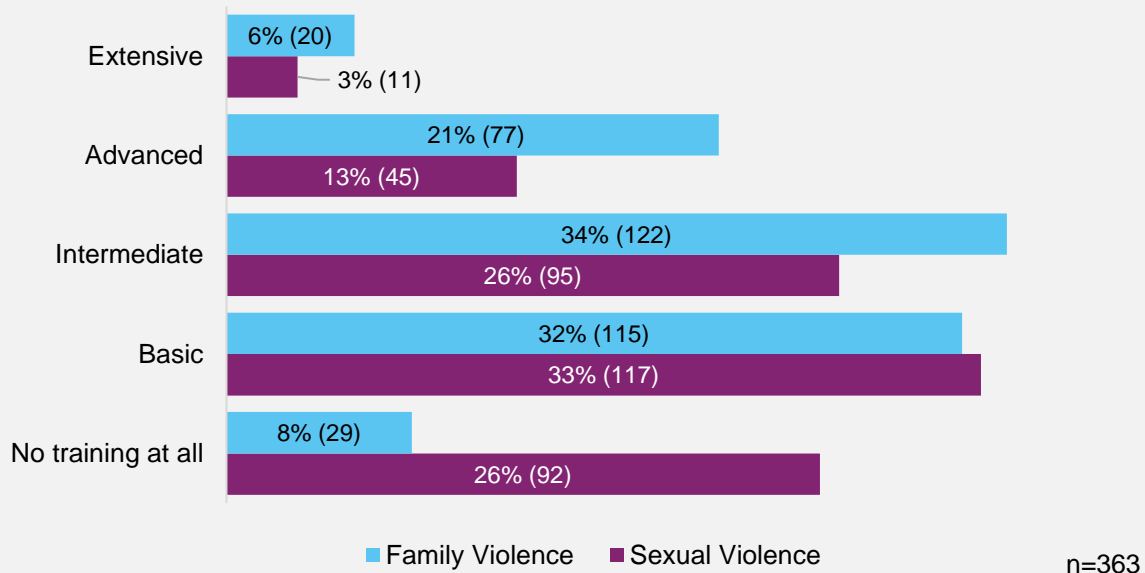
These findings indicate that knowledge, followed by training, are good measures of how confident kaimahi will be in the field, working with whānau experiencing Family Violence. Tenure also had a strong positive relationship with confidence: the longer kaimahi worked in a role, the more confident they became working with whānau experiencing Family Violence.

¹ Using a regression analysis of all variables, 87% of confidence was explained by the knowledge of Family Violence variable, while 9% was explained by training.

² For Sexual Violence, the same regression (with Sexual Violence variables rather than Family Violence variables) showed 64% of confidence explained by knowledge of Sexual Violence and 36% of confidence explained by training.

Training comparison

Figure 17. Levels of training



What topics would kaimahi like to learn more about?

Family Start Kaimahi asked for more training on both the topics of Family Violence and Sexual Violence. Kaimahi wanted to learn practical ways to support whānau, including how to connect with whānau experiencing family and sexual violence, provide them with support (or avenues of support), respond to whānau disclosures appropriately, and how to connect with culturally diverse whānau. The following are key topics and quotes from the Family Start kaimahi survey respondents.

There is a clear need and desire for training in both Family Violence and Sexual Violence (21)

A strong theme was an eagerness for training in both areas of Family Violence and Sexual Violence, with slightly more comments for Sexual Violence training. Training was welcomed by kaimahi to help develop their professional understanding of types of abuse. Twenty-one kaimahi explicitly mentioned they would value any type of training to do with the topics of Family Violence and Sexual Violence.

“Both topics are very relevant and regular training should occur regardless of level of expertise to ensure quality of practice.”

More training on how to support victims of Family Violence and Sexual Violence (33)

Kaimahi wanted to know what support pathways were available for victims, and how to support victims in a mana enhancing way. Kaimahi wanted to understand how to protect child victims, and how trauma and/or violence affected the wellbeing of whānau and tamariki. The impact of family and sexual violence on child development was also mentioned as a topic kaimahi wanted to know about. A lack of resources on how to support male victims was also mentioned. Finally, there was an acknowledgement that whānau kaimahi are working in a space where specialist services may not be available, and how kaimahi can effectively support whānau while they wait for specialist referrals.

“Working locally ‘specialist services’ only seem to be available for people who are not continuing with their relationship. I am working with some family who still wish to move forward safely in their relationship with Protection Order in the background as a safeguard. Available Family Violence programmes only seem to be for women ready to separate from their partners. Accessing supports for males can be problematic with a lack of services locally or that cover rural areas. Specific strategies for restoring a sense of calm for young babies and toddlers would be beneficial. So, help or direction with this would be fantastic.”

“Sexual violence: how to appropriately talk to clients who have experienced sexual violence. I need to know how to support clients without risk of causing further trauma, without risking a police investigation that could take place. How to support clients who may need to give an evidential interview. How to support clients who are on a waiting list for sexual abuse counselling, these waiting lists are sitting at a year long, in our area.”

“The pathway of options for whanau who are experiencing family/sexual violence. This could be a flow chart with pathways dependent on willingness/reluctance to make changes; when to make a Report of Concern to Oranga Tamariki, when to refer to police. The ACC process for Sensitive Claims. What supports are there for men who have been victims of Family/Sexual Violence?”

More training on how to respond to disclosures of violence (17)

Kaimahi working with whānau who were experiencing family or sexual violence said they dealt with whānau disclosures on a regular basis. They wanted more training on how to not only respond to disclosures of family and sexual violence, but how to talk to whānau about these topics comfortably and what resources were available after disclosures. Additionally, kaimahi were unsure of correct processes after whānau disclosures of abuse. For example, supporting whānau moving from disclosure to court proceedings or evidential interviews, or how to process a protection order.

“I would just love to have more family and sexual violence training in relation to the actual practical side of things – how to actually engage with these

families, have these discussions, approach the topics, community support options to offer etc...”

“Through working with families who have experienced sexual violence I have learned there needs to be specific process for things, such as counselling can only begin after the evidence interview. There are also different avenues for counselling depending on the experience (physical experience vs exposure to porn etc) I would like more training on the process after disclosure is made for sexual violence. I would also like more training on how to bring up the topic of intimate partner sexual violence and what we can and can’t say/ask.”

More training on how to identify harm and use screening tools (12)

As well as discussing harm with whānau, kaimahi wanted to know how to identify harm in the households they were visiting. As kaimahi closely worked with whānau, tools to identify harm could enable kaimahi to open conversations and provide avenues for support before disclosures happen.

“More training in sexual violence, this is a gap. How to identify and how to respond other than ‘recognise, respond, refer’. Some of our team have many years of experience and some have come from other fields than social work.”

More training on how to work with culturally diverse whānau (8)

Kaimahi wanted to learn culturally diverse ways of applying their work. They desired Mātauranga Māori frameworks that could be applied to not only practice areas of family and sexual violence, but prevention, education, and healing. Training to work and relate more confidently with Muslim and Pacific whānau was also wanted.

“Te Ao Māori aspects to support sustainable and positive changes for Māori who are living with family harm and in sexually violent relationships. Also, Te Ao Māori aspects to support tamariki currently living in whānau where they or a whānau member are victims of family / sexual violence, including where tamariki are the perpetrators. Finding adequate, long-term Te Ao Māori supports.”

“Working with Muslim mums or mums from patriarchal cultures.”

More training on system processes (18)

Kaimahi wanted training on how to work with the Care and Protection System. This included Family Court and Protection Order filings, how to ensure safety when working with whānau and create safety plans for whānau experiencing family or sexual violence, or what to do after a Report of Concern (RoC) had been made.

“What OT involvement / process when dealing with SV (once RoC made). What Family Start / social worker expectations of their involvement concerning victims/family if it is a confirmed SV situation within the family.”

“How do I go about seeking a protection order for clients?”

What training did kaimahi want to participate in?

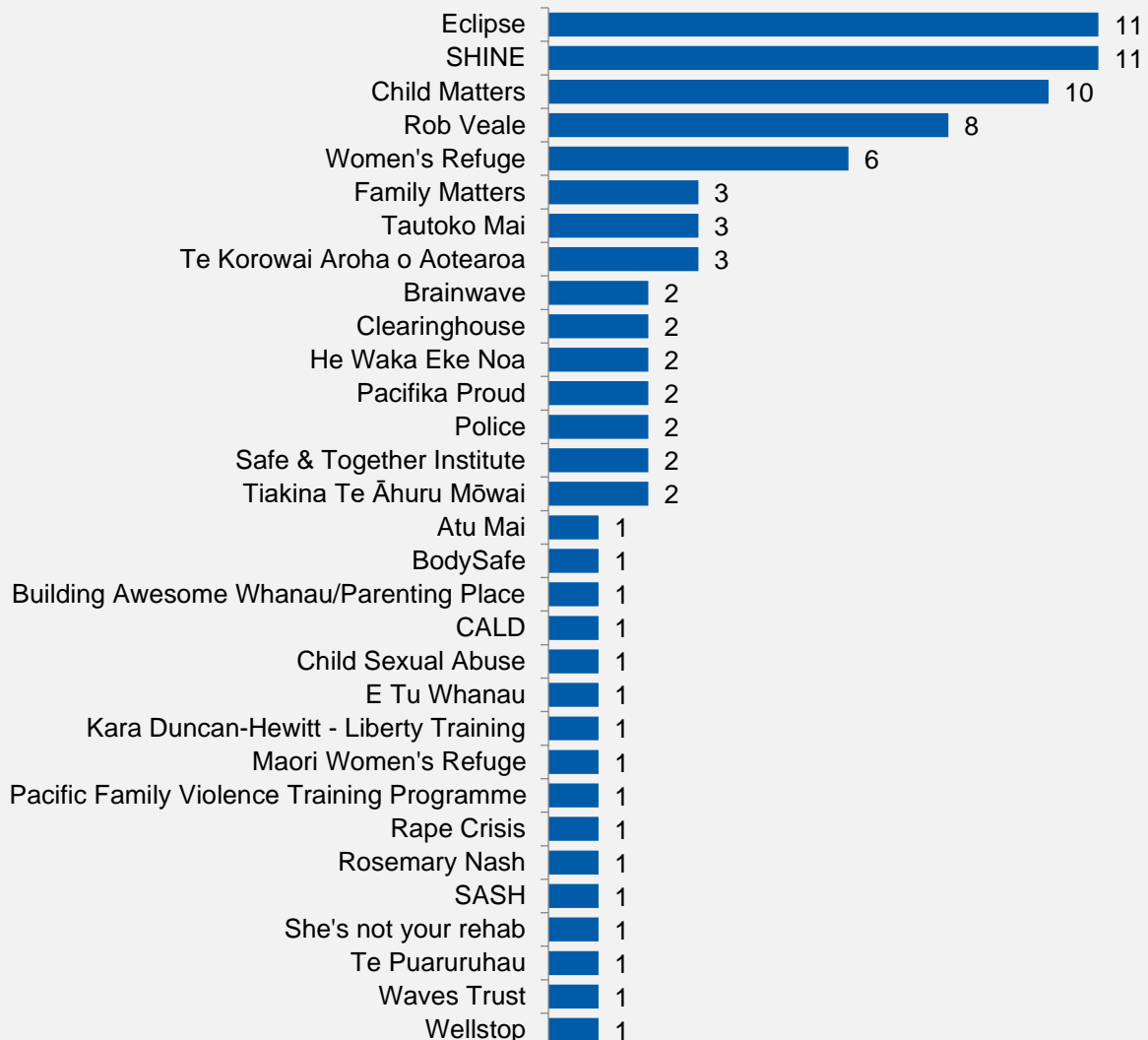
Many training providers were mentioned by kaimahi. However, Eclipse, SHINE and Child Matters were the training providers referred to the most. Rob Veale, an individual Family Harm educator, was also mentioned often. There was no strong preference for providers by region.

Some kaimahi had provider recommendations:

“Open to any and all suggestions. Have taken part in training through Eclipse which was very informative. I have regularly referred to information, knowledge, and strategies I learned through that training when working with whānau experiencing Family Violence.”

“SHINE has a number of training options in family violence. I have attended an online webinar which was great. I would be interested in their levels one and two training.”

Figure 18. Training providers mentioned by kaimahi



Topics kaimahi would like to learn more about by region

The topics mentioned by kaimahi in each region are based on a small sample of responses and may not accurately stand for the views of the entire Family Start kaimahi in each region due to low response rates in some regions.

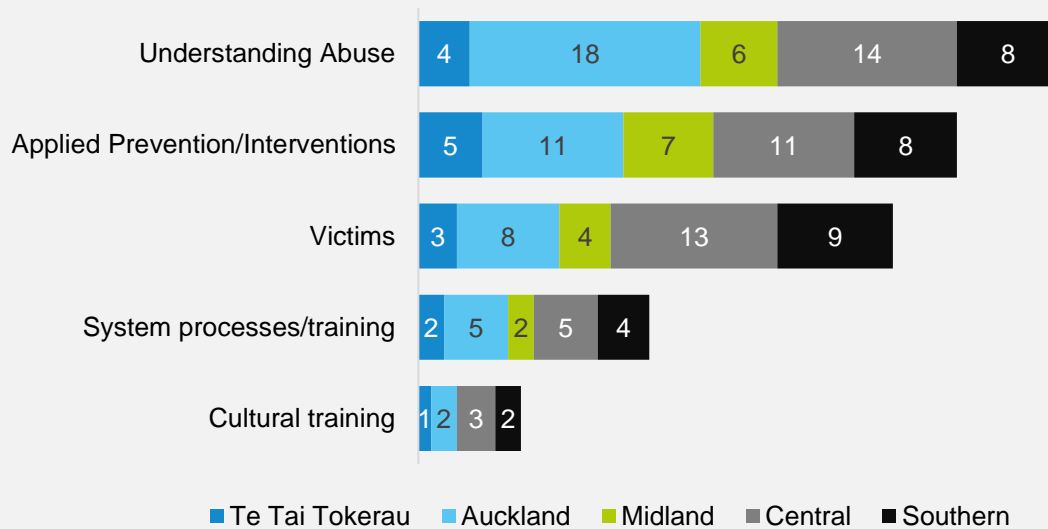
For example, five out of the 32 responses from Te Tai Tokerau wanted to learn about applied prevention/interventions (16% of the Te Tai Tokerau group) while seven out of the 62 responses from Midland wanted to learn the same topic (11% of the Midland group).

While Midland has two more responses than Te Tai Tokerau requesting this topic, proportionally, a higher percentage of respondents from Te Tai Tokerau wanted to learn about Applied Prevention/Interventions than Midland.

Please note the number of respondents when interpreting these findings below. The following talks about the most mentioned topics per region:

- 5 out of the 32 responses from **Te Tai Tokerau** wanted to learn about Applied Prevention/Interventions (15.6%), 4 wanted to learn about Understanding Abuse (12.5%).
- 14 out of the 88 responses from **Central** wanted to learn more about Understanding Abuse (15.9%), followed by 13 out of 88 who wanted to learn about Victims.
- 18 out of the 72 responses from **Auckland** wanted to learn about Understanding Abuse (25%), while 11 out of 72 wanted to learn about Applied Prevention/Interventions.
- 7 out of the 62 responses from **Midland** wanted to learn about Applied Prevention/Interventions (11%), while 6 out of 72 wanted to learn about Understanding Abuse.
- 9 out of the 105 responses from **Southern** wanted to learn about Victims (7%) followed by Understanding Abuse and Applied Prevention/Interventions was followed by 8 responses each out of the 105 for Southern.

Figure 19. Topics kaimahi want to learn about by region



Topic map

The topics kaimahi wanted to learn about were grouped into five core themes. Please note that some themes may be out of scope for Family Start kaimahi training. As with any qualitative analysis, note that respondents may “not know what they don’t know” and thus those with less experience may have not commented in detail on topics they would like to learn compared to others. The core themes are organised into most mentions to least mentions by kaimahi below:

- Understanding Abuse** (52 mentions total) was defined as any topics that helped kaimahi understand Family Violence and Sexual Violence. Family Violence (29) and Sexual Violence (39) were mentioned, as well as the more specific topics of coercion, control, and manipulation (3), Intimate Partner Violence (2), financial abuse (1) and serial abuse (1).
- Applied Prevention and Interventions** (44 mentions total) were practical skills kaimahi wanted to learn. This included mentions about Asking about/responding to disclosures (17 mentions), identifying harm/screening tools (12), trauma informed practices (7), perpetrator support/rehabilitation (7), prevention/interventions (4), educating and supporting whānau about the topic (2), consent and relationship skills (2) and de-escalation training (1)
- Victims** (39 mentions total) related to any topics around victims. Victim support was dominant within this (33) followed by the impact of violence on families and child development (7), protecting and supporting children (6), male victims (3) and what support can be provided for women who do not want to leave a relationship where they are experiencing violence (2).

- **System processes/training** (18) involved mentions on how to work with legal and protection order filings (6), safety planning (6), process training for Oranga Tamariki services or Reports of Concern (5), with ACC sensitive claims (2), police processes (1)
- **Cultural training** (8 mentions) involved training about Mātauranga Māori frameworks and kaupapa (6), working with culturally diverse whānau (CALD) (1) and Pacific whānau (1).

Appendices



Appendix 1. Survey Questionnaire

Question 1. What is your current role within Family Start?

- Kaimahi / whānau worker (or equivalent position)
- senior practitioner
- supervisor
- other (please specify)

Question 2. How long have been working in your current role?

- 0 – 1 year
- 1 – 2 years
- 2 – 3 years
- 3 – 4 years
- 4 – 5 years
- 5 years and over

Question 3. Please select which Family Start provider you work for.

Question 4. How strongly do you rate your knowledge of family violence?

- (Very poor, Poor, OK, Good, Very good)

Question 5. How confident are you to work with whānau experiencing family violence?

- (Not confident at all, Slightly confident, Somewhat confident, Fairly confident, Completely confident)

Question 6. What level of training about family violence have you participated in?

- (No training at all, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Extensive)

Question 7. How strongly do you rate your knowledge of sexual violence?

- (Very poor, Poor, OK, Good, Very good)

Question 8. How confident are you to work with whānau experiencing sexual violence?

- (Not confident at all, Slightly confident, Somewhat confident, Fairly confident, Completely confident)

Question 10. What level of training about sexual violence have you participated in?

- (No training at all, Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Extensive)

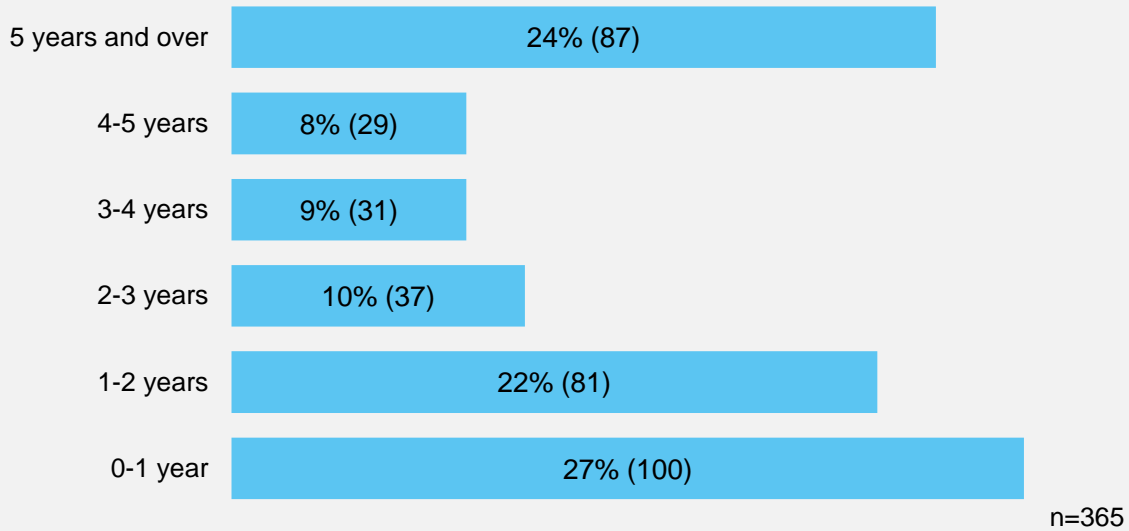
Question 11. If you know of any training in Family and/or Sexual Violence that you would like to participate in, please list them below.

Question 12. If you have any specific topics or aspects of Family and / or Sexual Violence that you want to know more about, please provide details below.

Appendix 2. Additional analysis

Kaimahi length of time in current role

Figure 20. Responses by tenure



Regional breakdowns

Please note the relative differences in response rates between regions when interpreting these results.

Family Violence

Figure 21. Knowledge of Family Violence by region

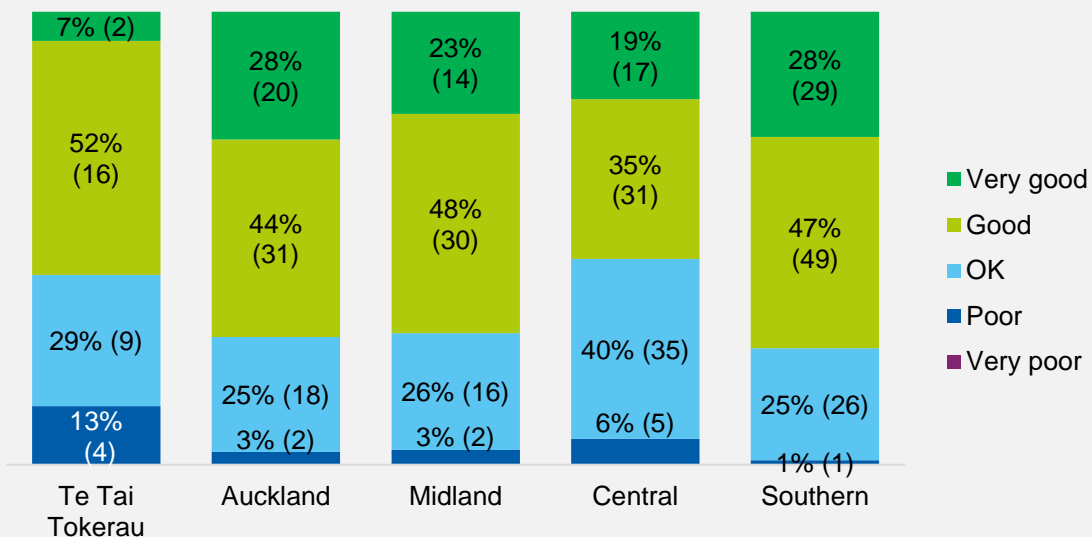


Figure 22. Confidence working with whanau experiencing Family Violence by region

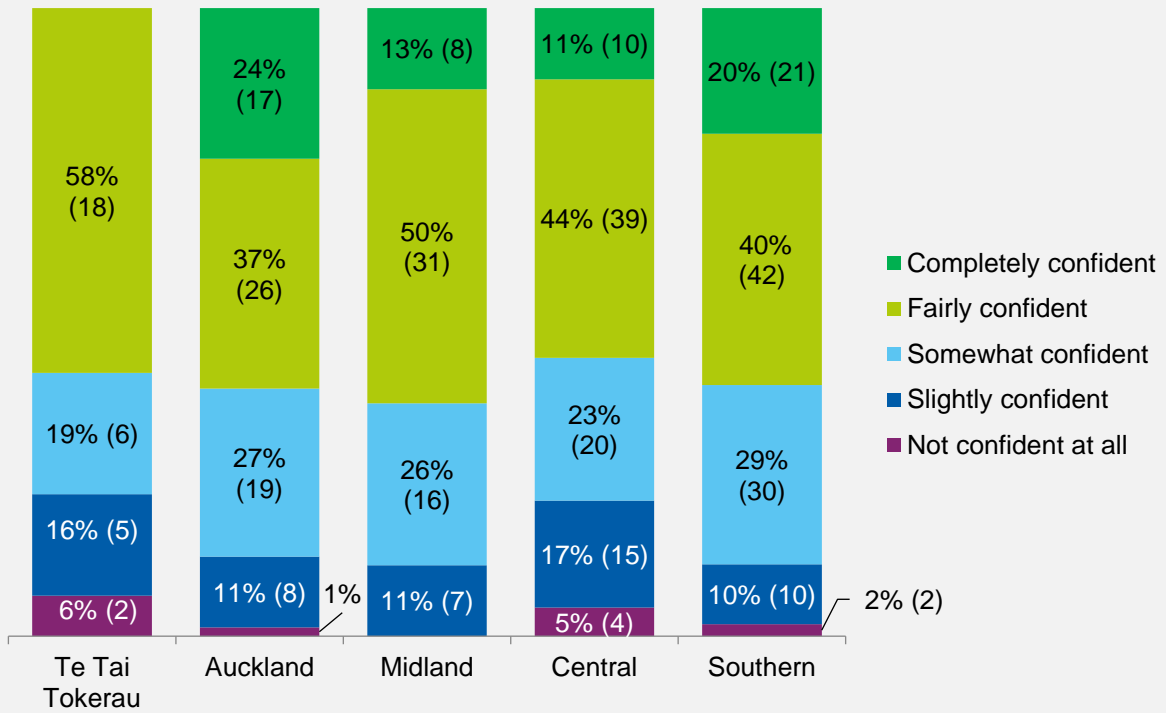
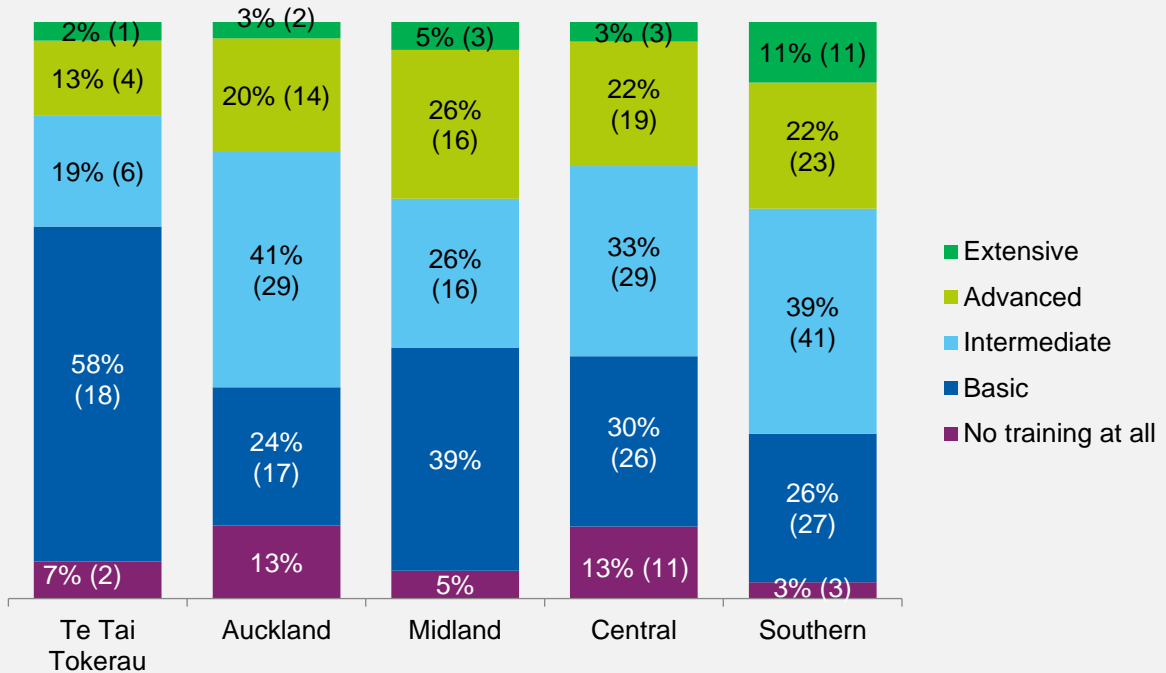


Figure 23. Training in Family Violence by region



Sexual Violence

Figure 24. Knowledge of Sexual Violence by region

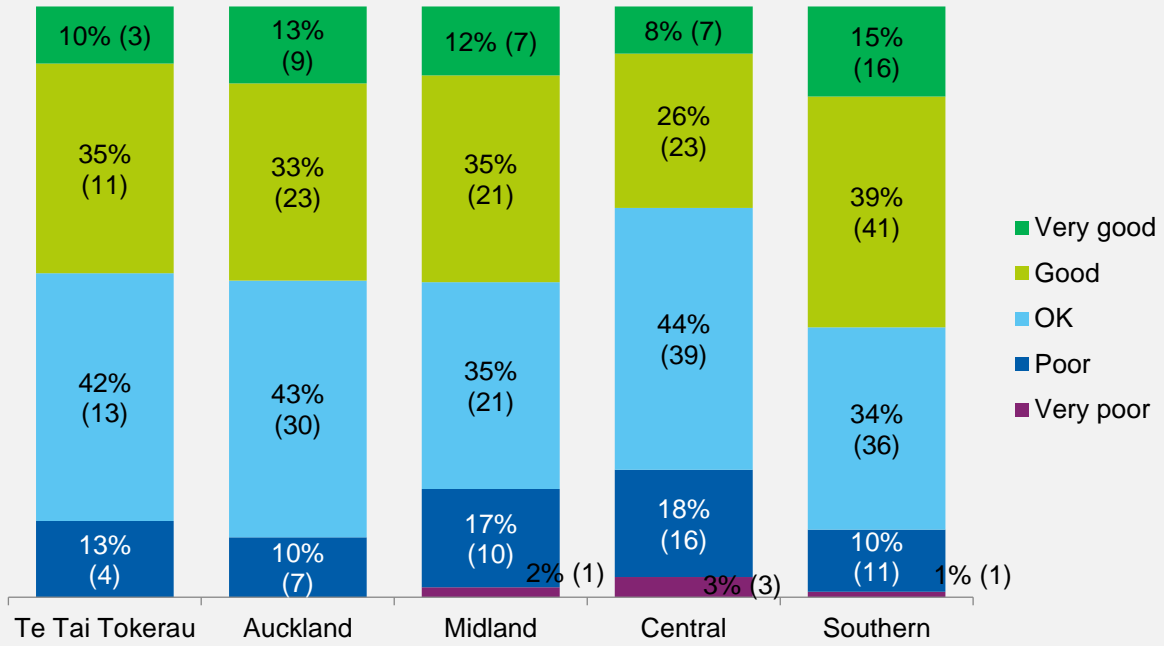


Figure 25. Confidence working with whanau experiencing Sexual Violence by region

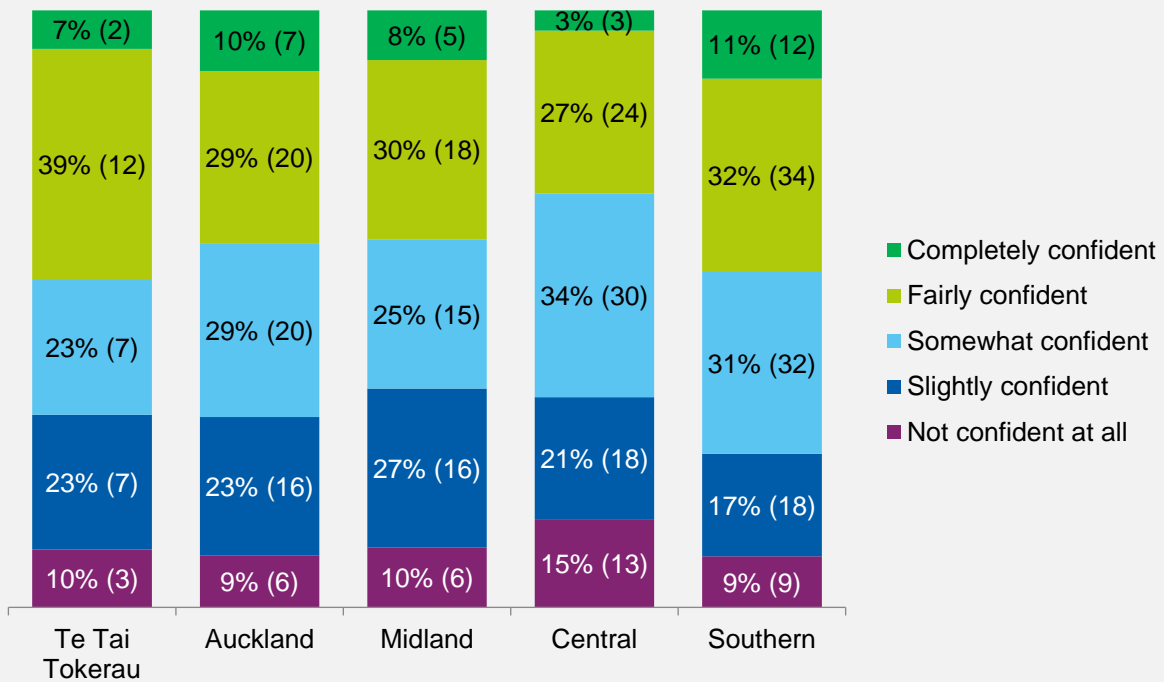


Figure 26. Training in Sexual Violence by region

