

**STRATCOM**

# 2023 Workplace Violence Survey

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

July 17, 2024

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# Methodology & Reporting

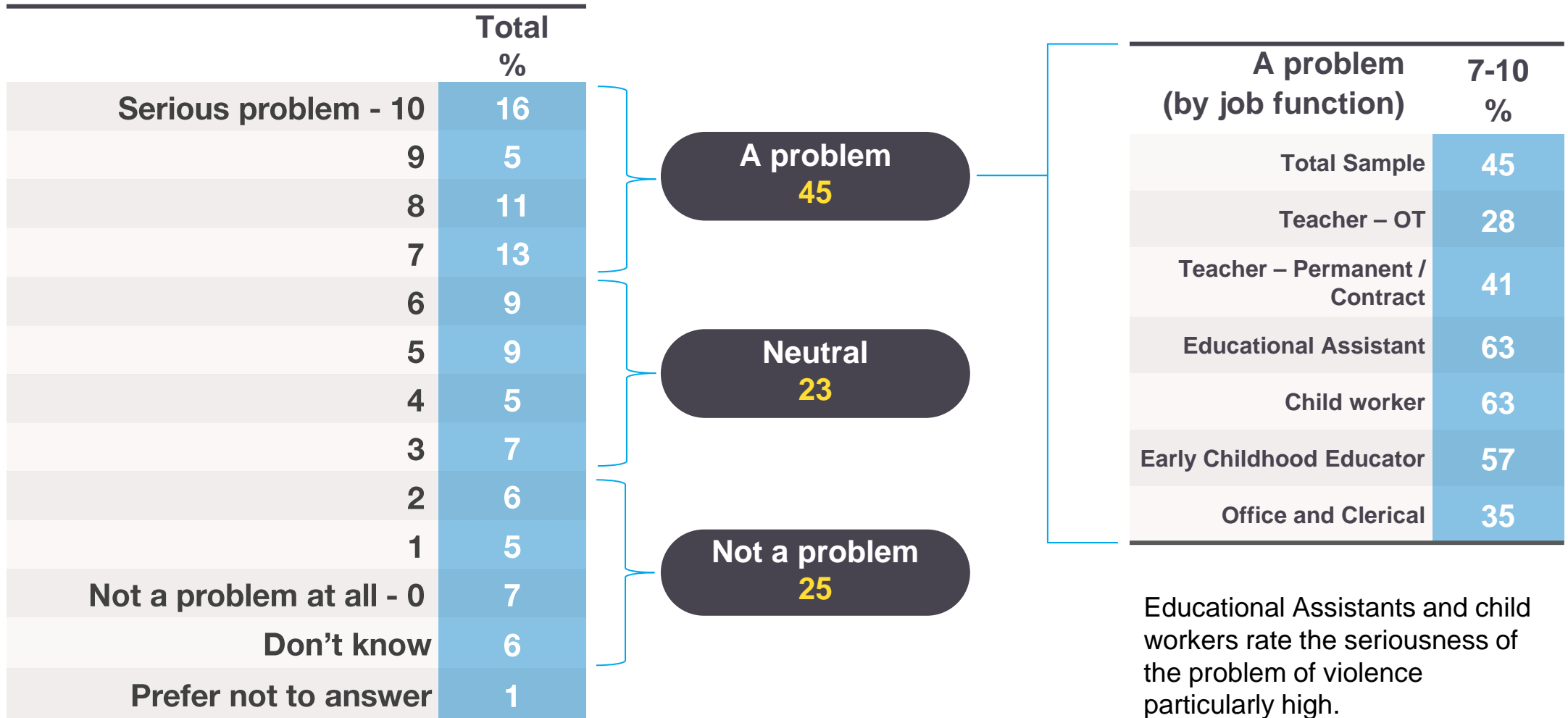
- ▶ These are results from an online survey of 6,585 Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation members from May 25<sup>th</sup> – June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, conducted by Strategic Communications.
- ▶ Invites and weekly reminders were sent to 41,251 OSSTF members, resulting in a completion rate of 16%. Some charts and tables might not total 100% due to rounding.
- ▶ The final survey data has been statistically weighted to ensure the relative proportions of member type match their distribution in the membership database. Margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 1.0 %, 19 times out of 20
- ▶ All figures are percent (%) unless indicated otherwise.
- ▶ All research conducted by Stratcom.



# Violence In Schools

# Violence against teachers and education workers in the Ontario public school system is a serious problem

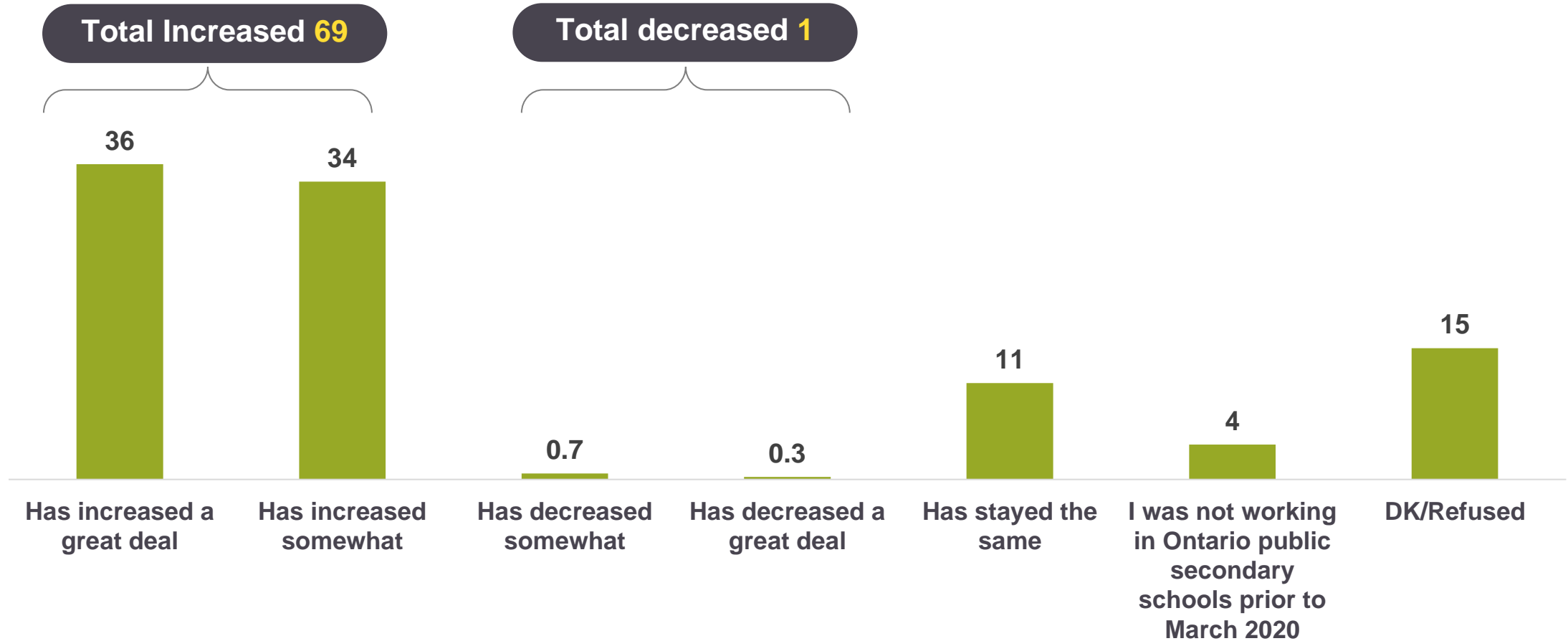
About half of members (48%) perceive violence against educators as a problem at their school.



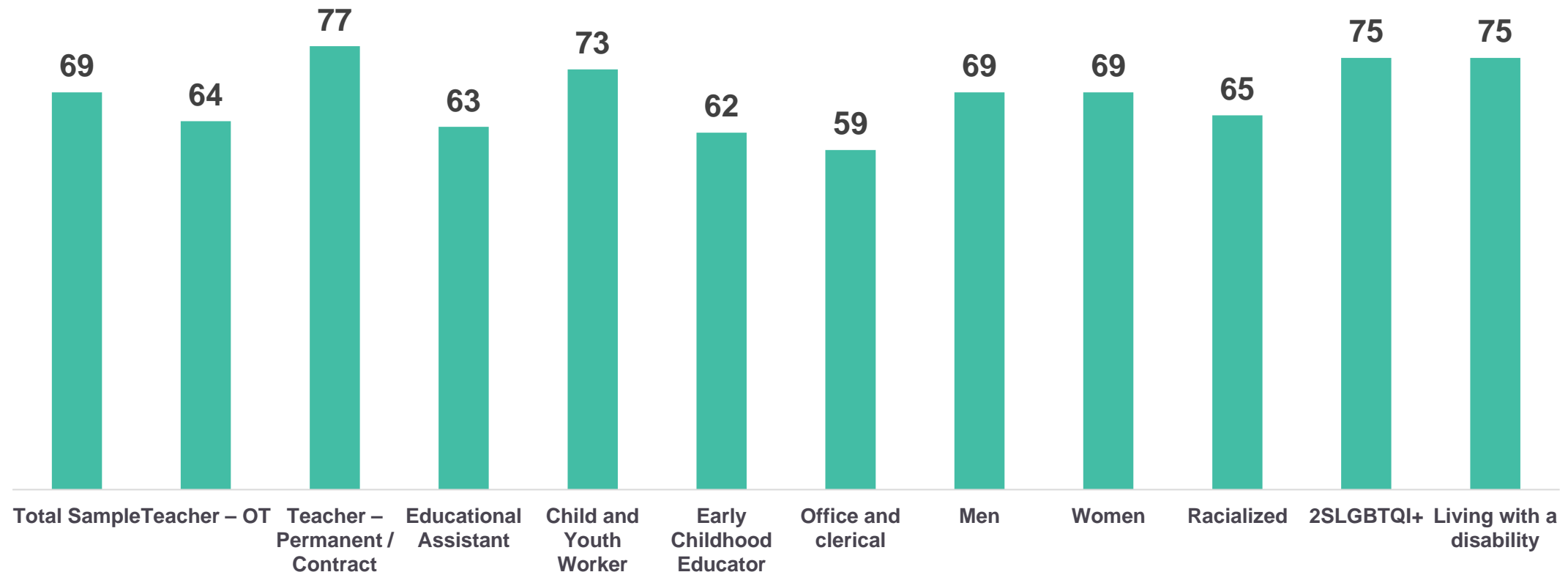
Educational Assistants and child workers rate the seriousness of the problem of violence particularly high.

## Members have experienced a (significant) uptick in the incidence of violence since before March 2020...

Seven in ten members say the number of incidents of violence against teachers and education workers in the Ontario public school system has as increased, including 36% who believe the number of incidents 'has increased a great deal'.



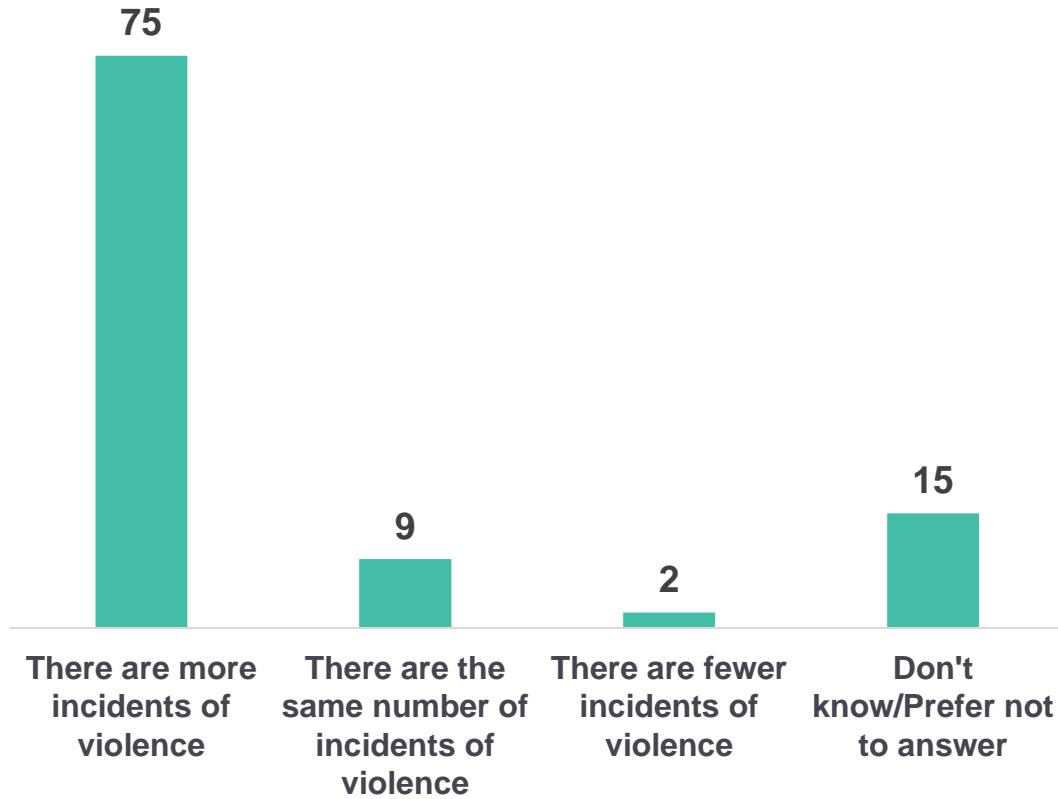
Higher than average numbers of permanent teachers and child/youth workers as well as members living with a disability and members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community perceive the number of incidents of violence in the Ontario public school system to have increased since before March 2020



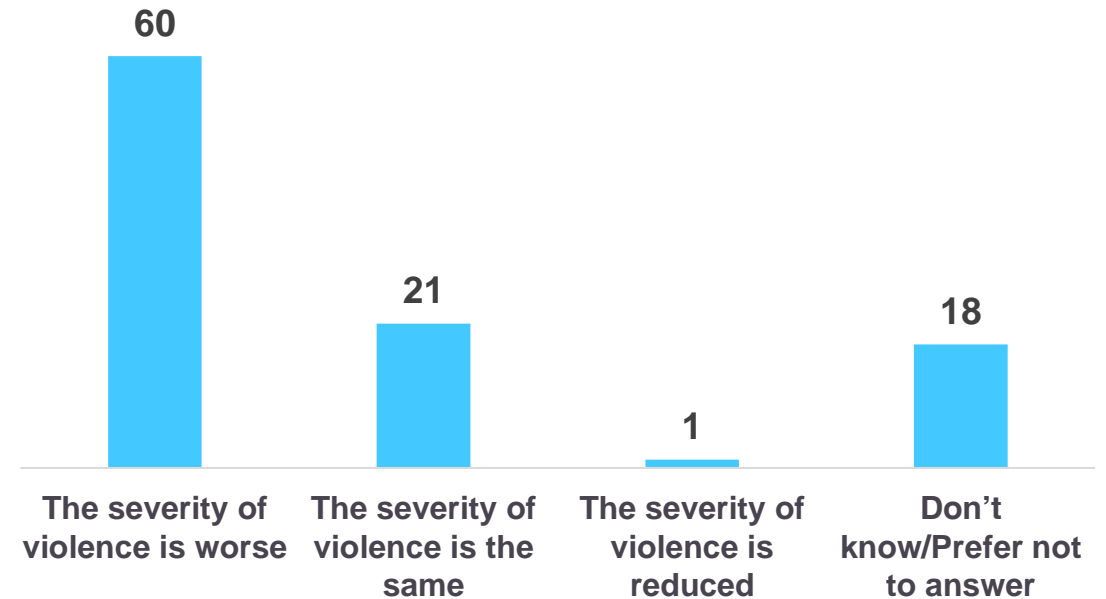
**...but members believe the occurrence of violence in schools has been on a negatively upward trend for a longer period of time**

Three quarters (75%) say 'there are more incidents of violence' and three in five members (60%) say the 'severity of violence' has gotten worse since they have been working in the Ontario public school system.

**INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE:**

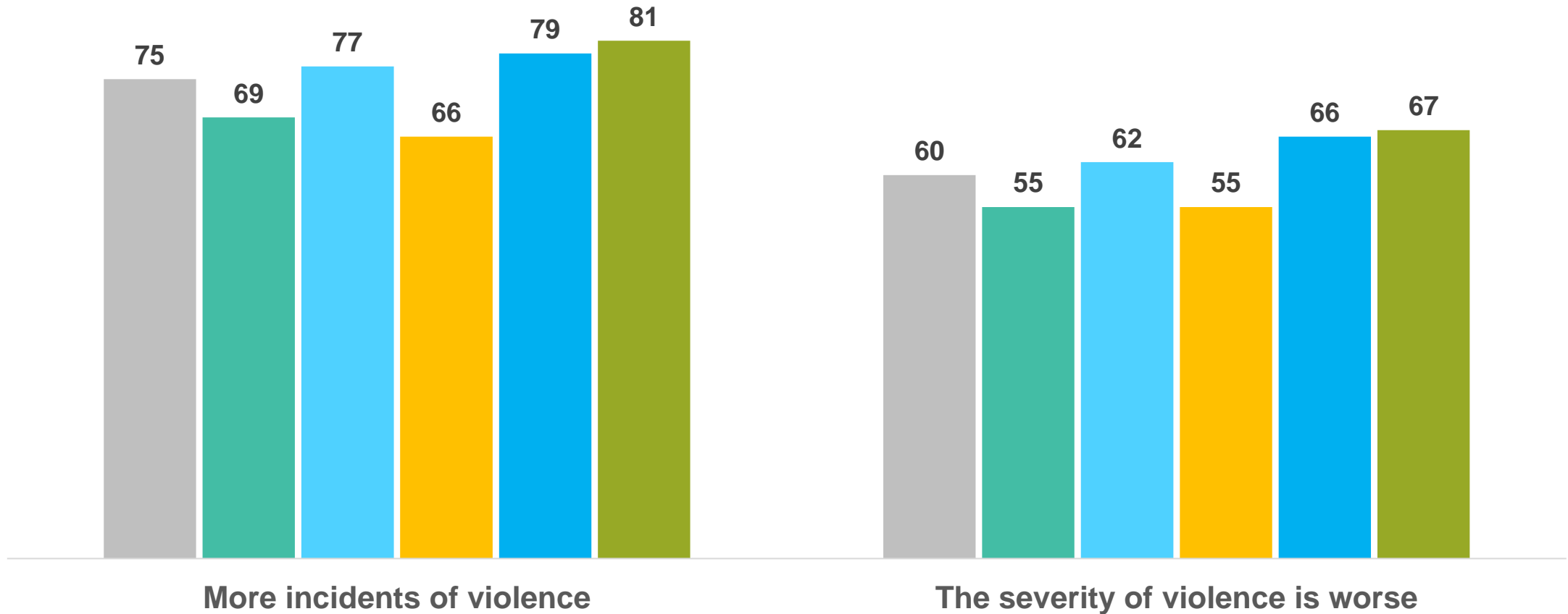


**SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE:**



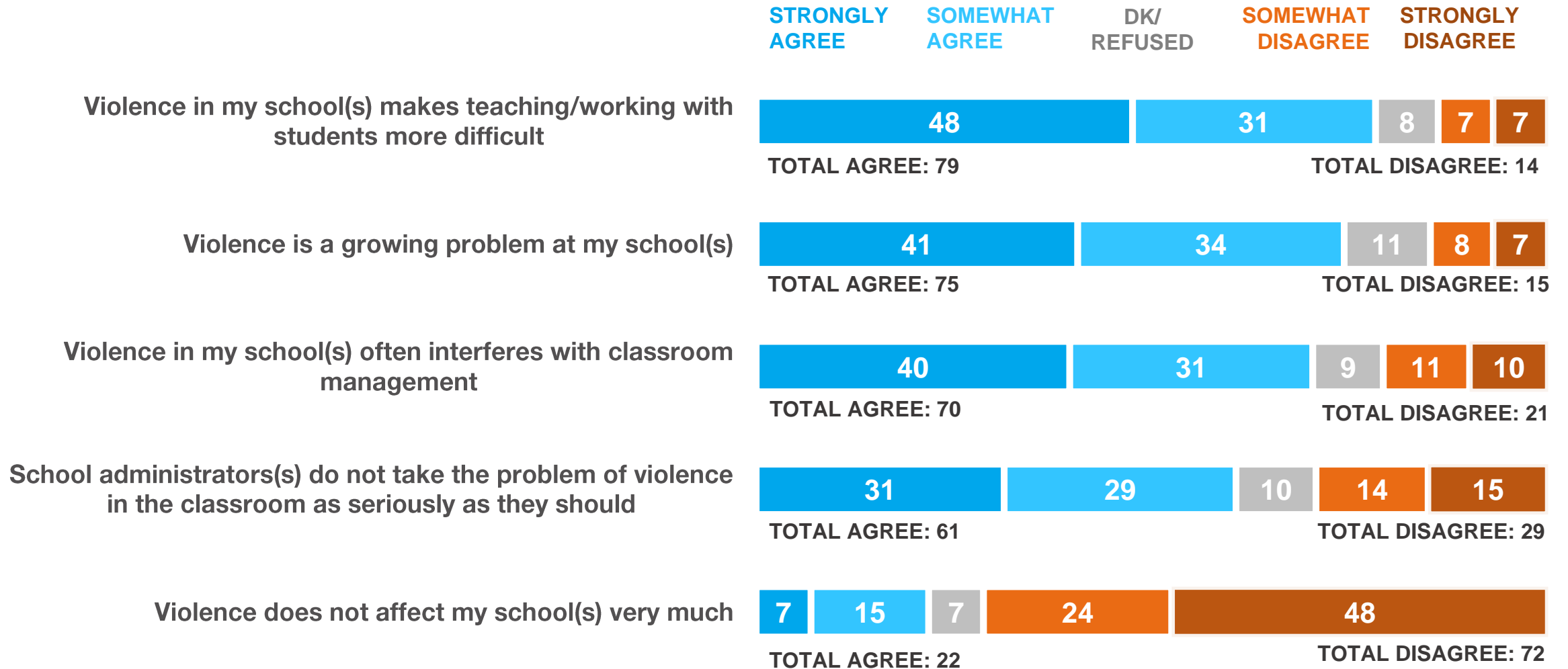
# People living with a disability, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community and women perceive the negative upward trend in incidence and severity of violence against educators in greater than average numbers

■ Total Sample ■ Men ■ Women ■ Racialized ■ 2SLGBTQI+ ■ Living with a disability



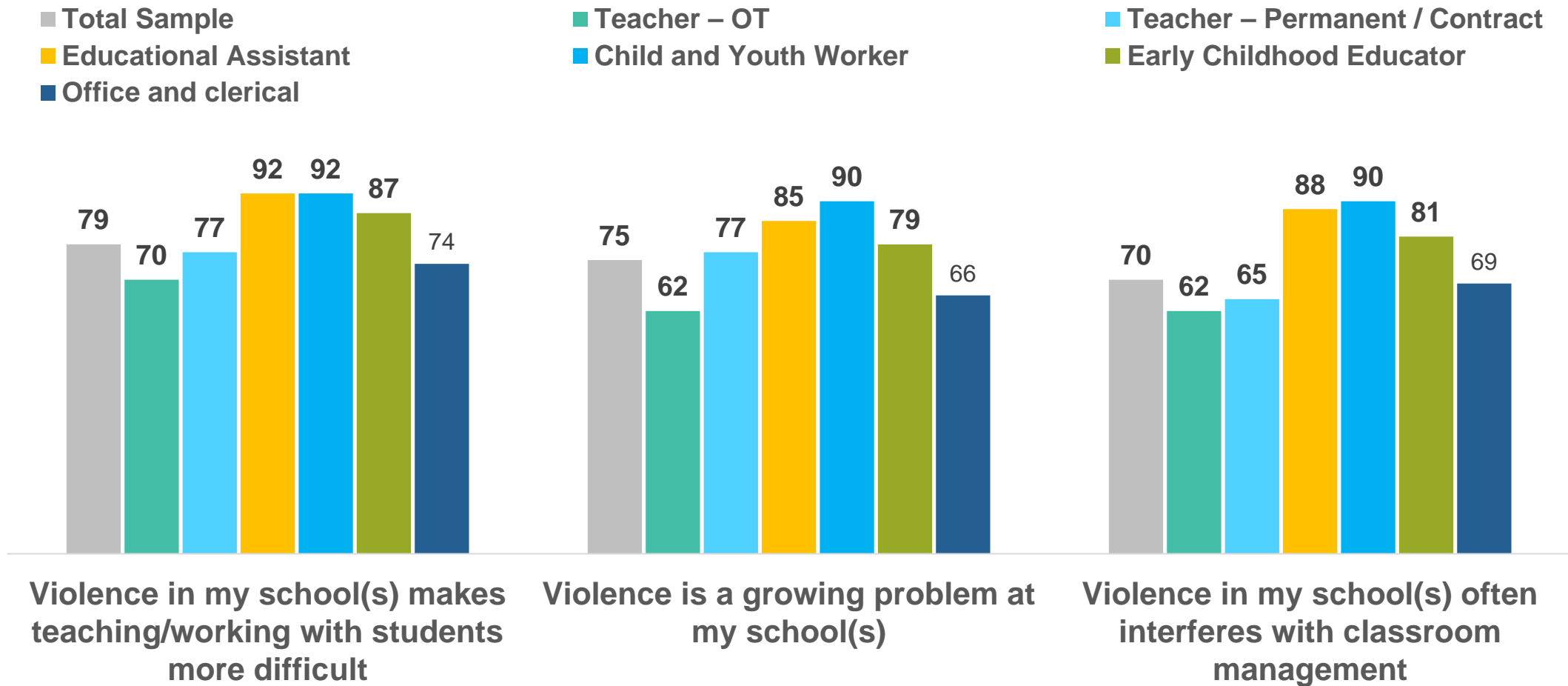


**Violence in schools is perceived as a growing issue that makes teaching more difficult and often interferes with classroom management. School administrators are largely perceived as not taking the problem as seriously as they should**

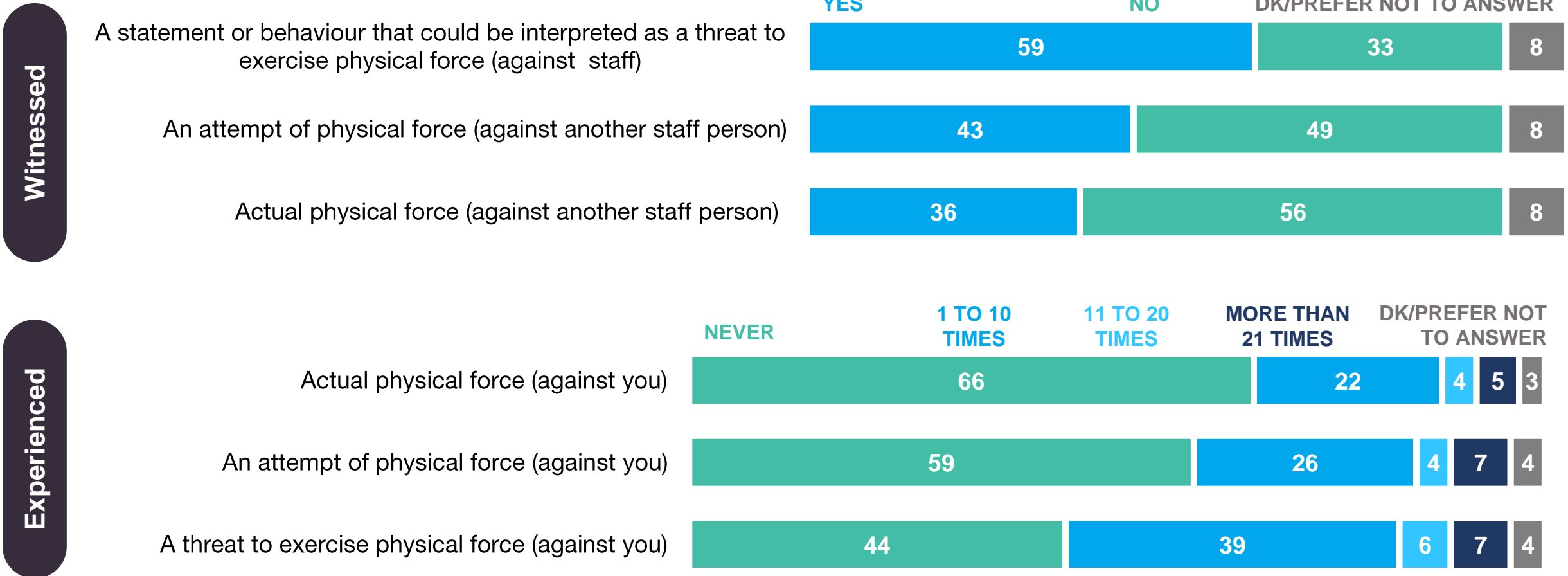


**Educational Assistant, Child and Youth Workers and Early Childhood Educators in particular report that the increase in violence adversely impacts the learning environment at their school**

Over four in five Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Workers and Early Childhood Educators say that violence is a growing problem that makes teaching more difficult and often interferes with classroom management



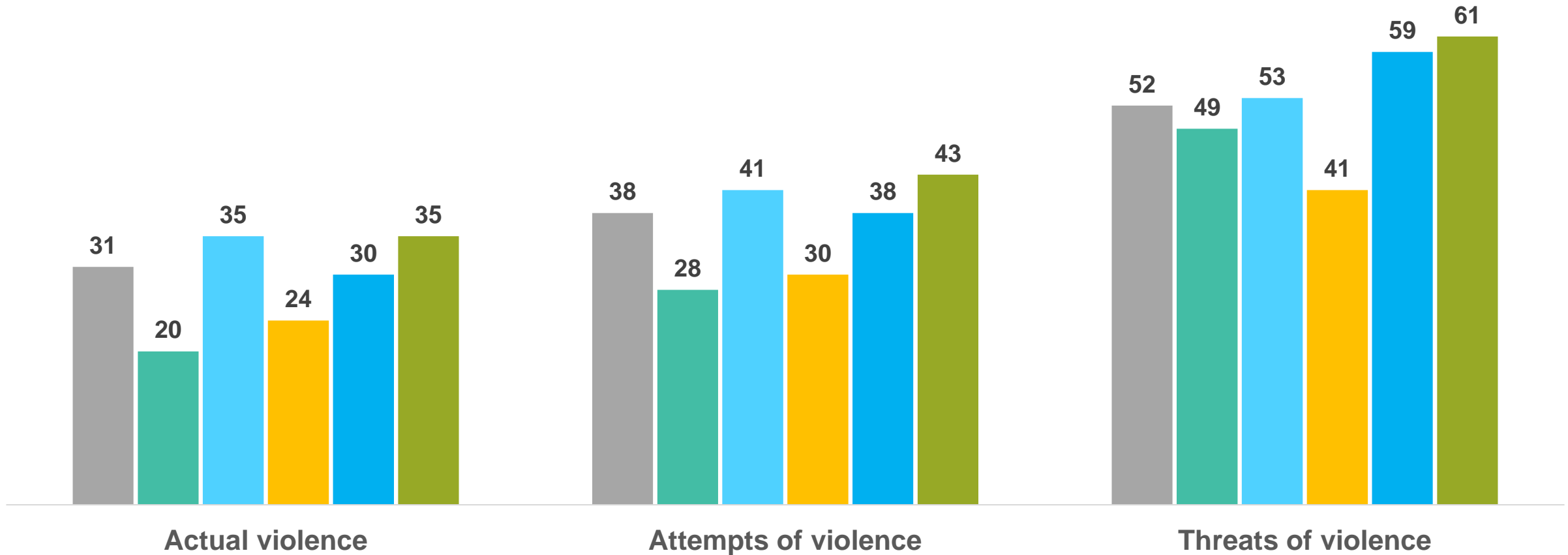
## A significant number of members witnessed or personally experienced violence – physical, as well as psychological – in the 2022-2023 school year



## Women and members with a disability are at greater than average risk

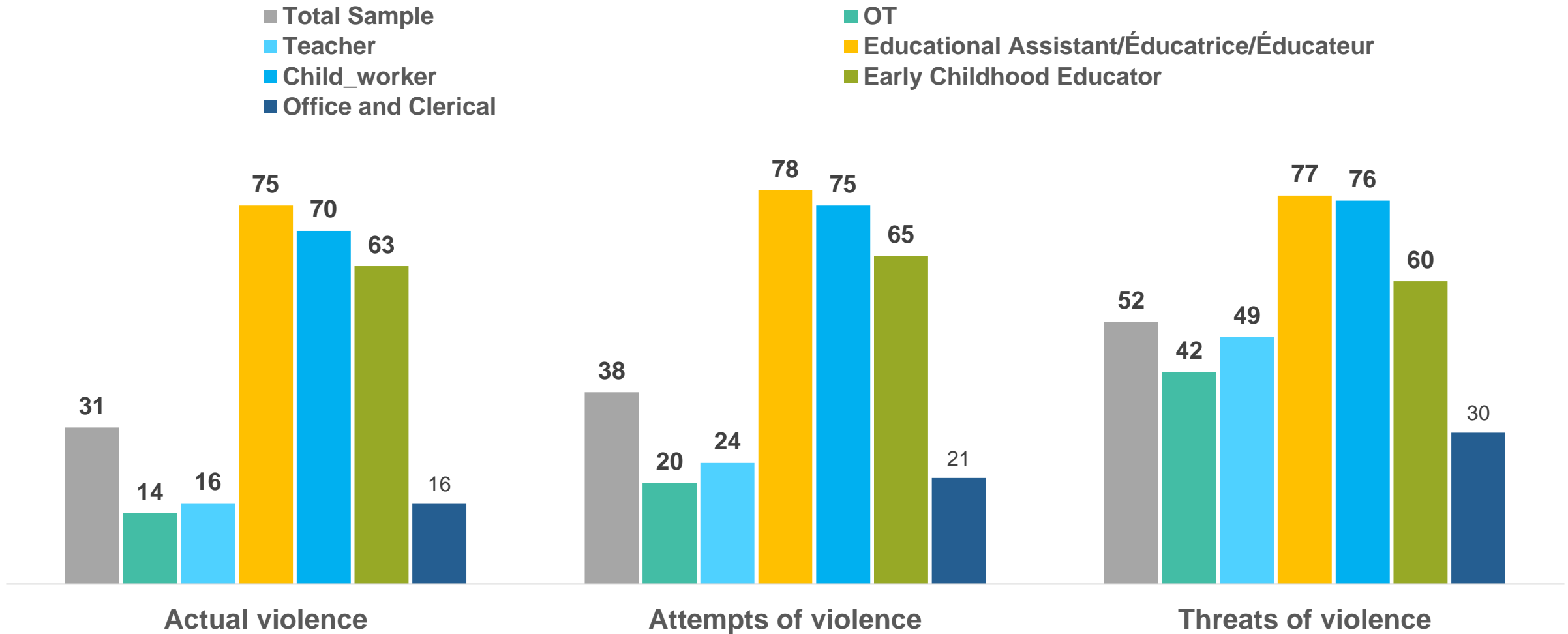
35% of female members and members living with a disability were personally subjected to physical force.

■ Total Sample ■ Male ■ Female ■ Racialized ■ 2SLGBTQI+ ■ Person living with a disability



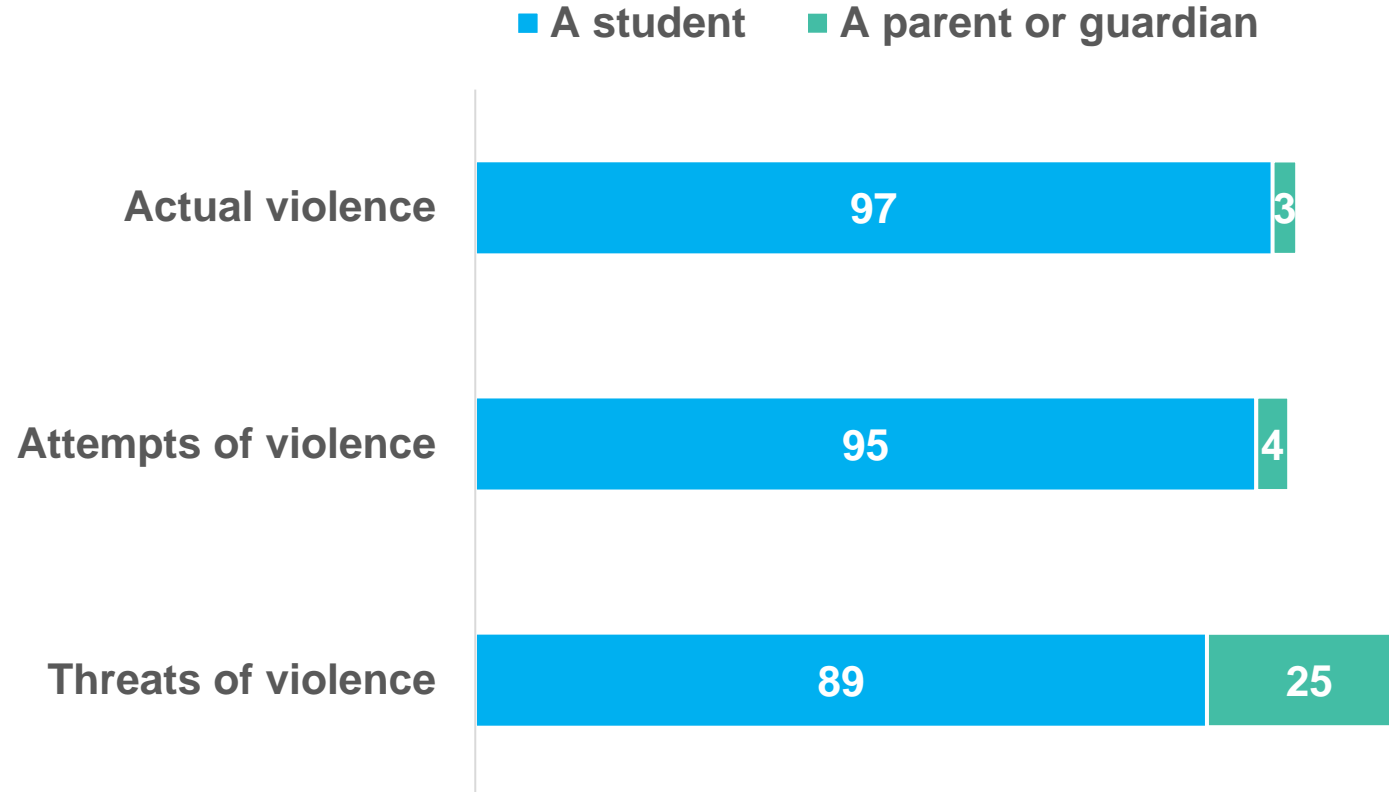
## (Largely female) education workers experience violence in greater numbers

Three quarters of educational assistants (75%) report having had physical force used against them in the 2022-2023 school year; 89% of Educational Assistants identify as female.



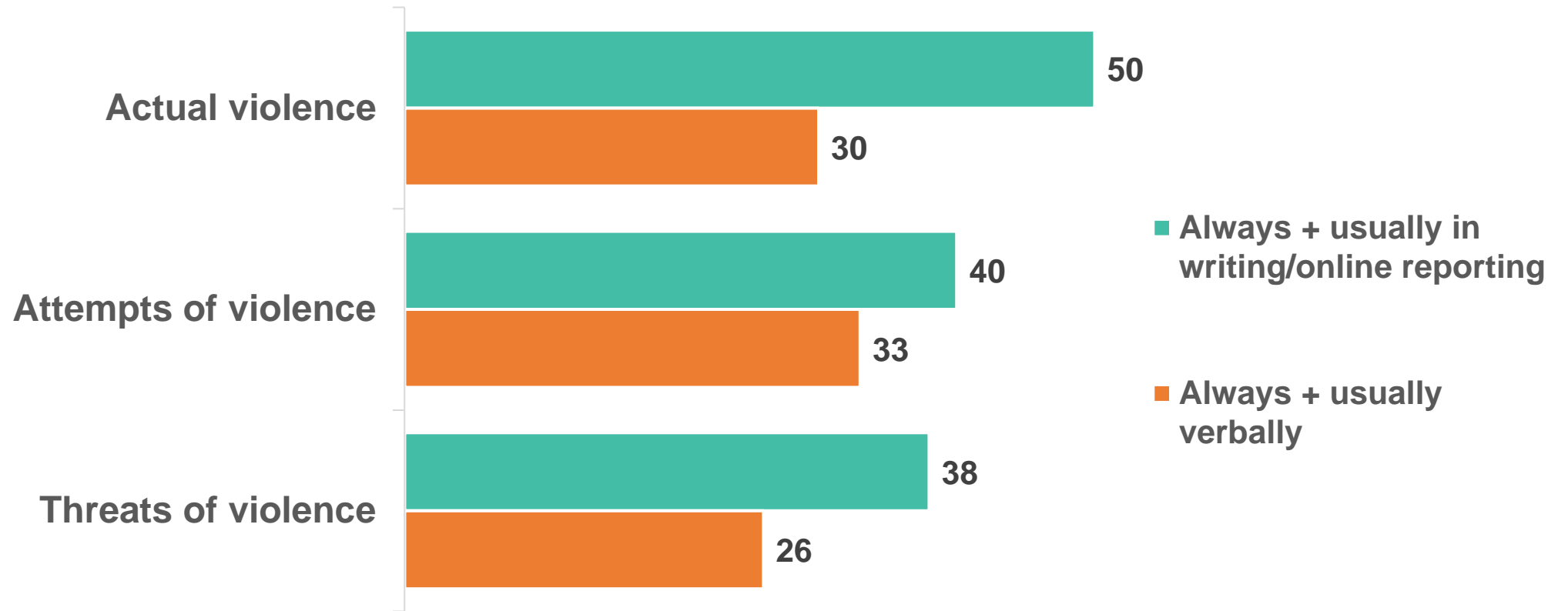
## Members predominantly experience violence at the hands of students, but threats of violence come from parents too

Among members who personally experienced violence in the 2022-2023 school year, 97% were subjected to physical force from a student. One quarter (25%) report having had threats of violence used against them by parents.



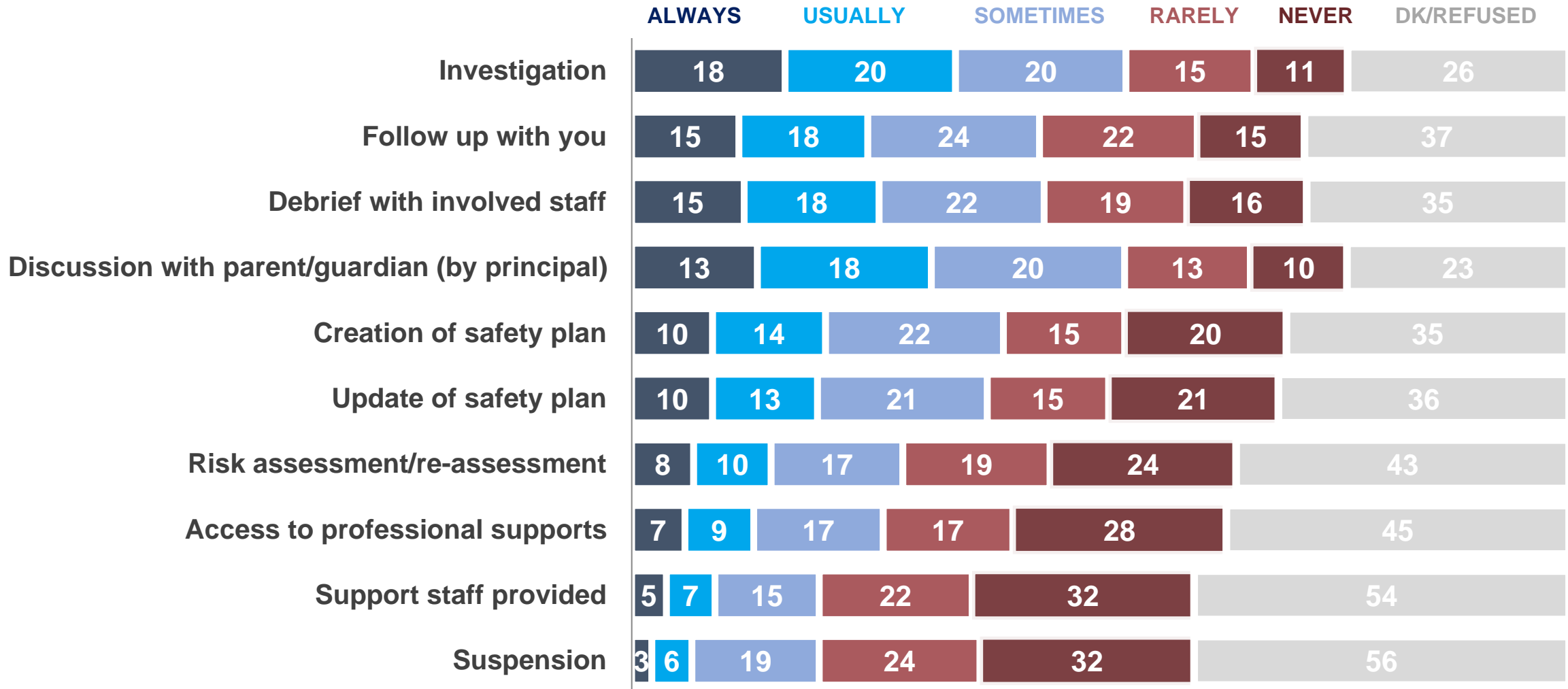
## Violent incidents remain under-reported

Only half (50%) of members who personally experienced violence inform their administrator 'always or usually in writing/online reporting' of violent incidents and another 30% 'always or usually' report incidents verbally.



## Actions taken by administrators in response to an incident of violence are limited

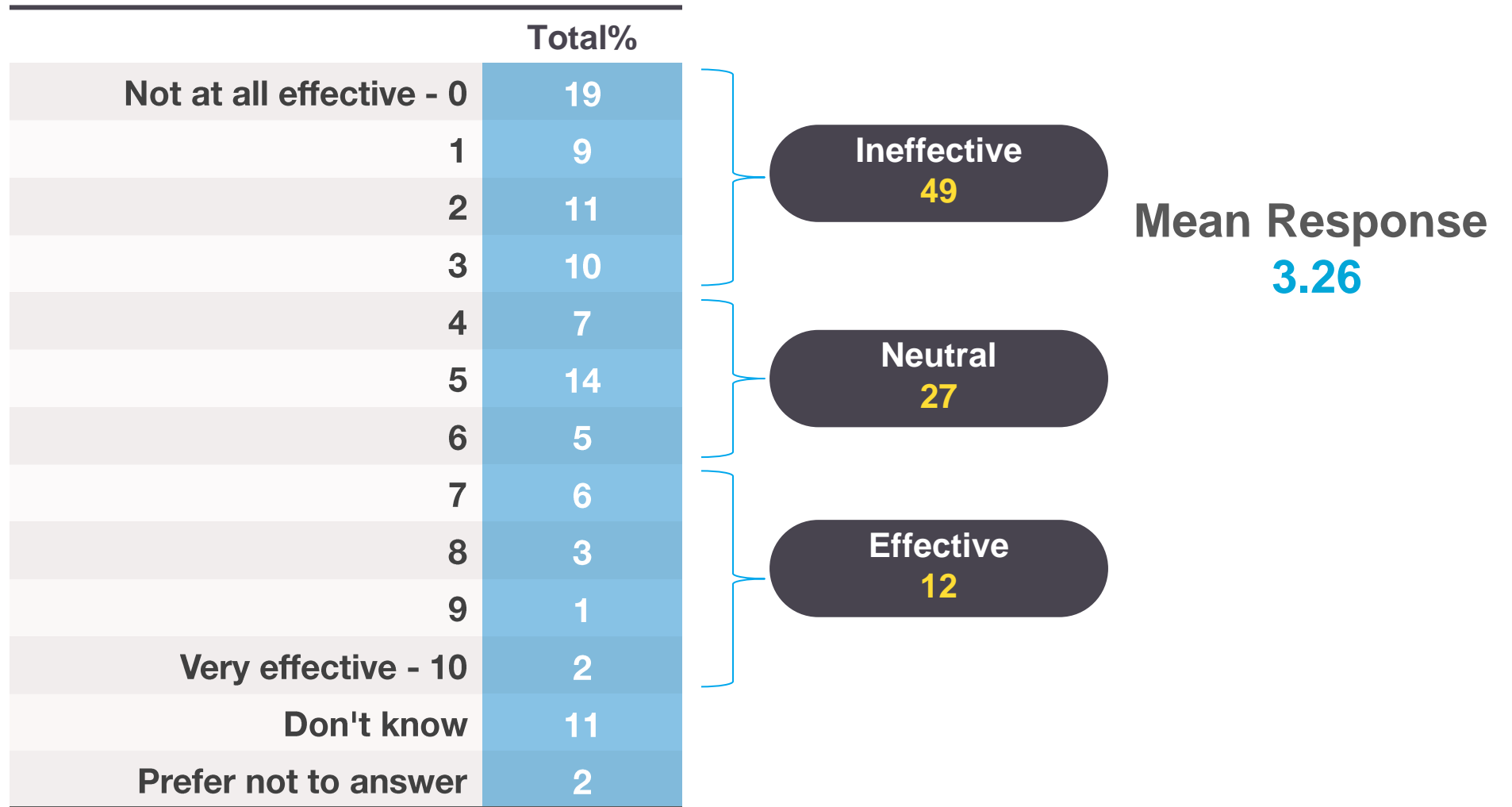
The most common actions taken include an investigation, a follow-up with the member, and debrief with involved staff; however, less than two in five state that these steps were taken after they've reported an incident.



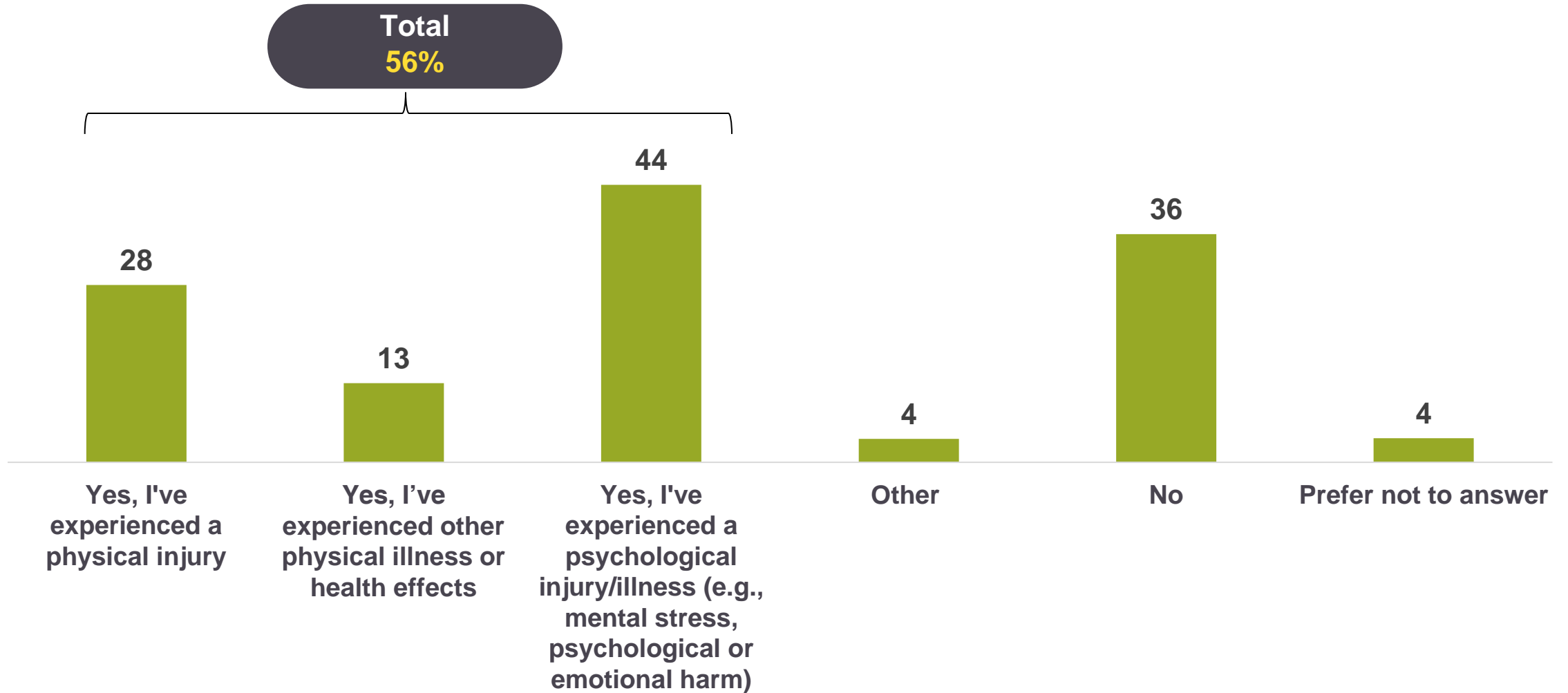


## Confidence in the effectiveness of actions to prevent a recurrence of violent incidents is low

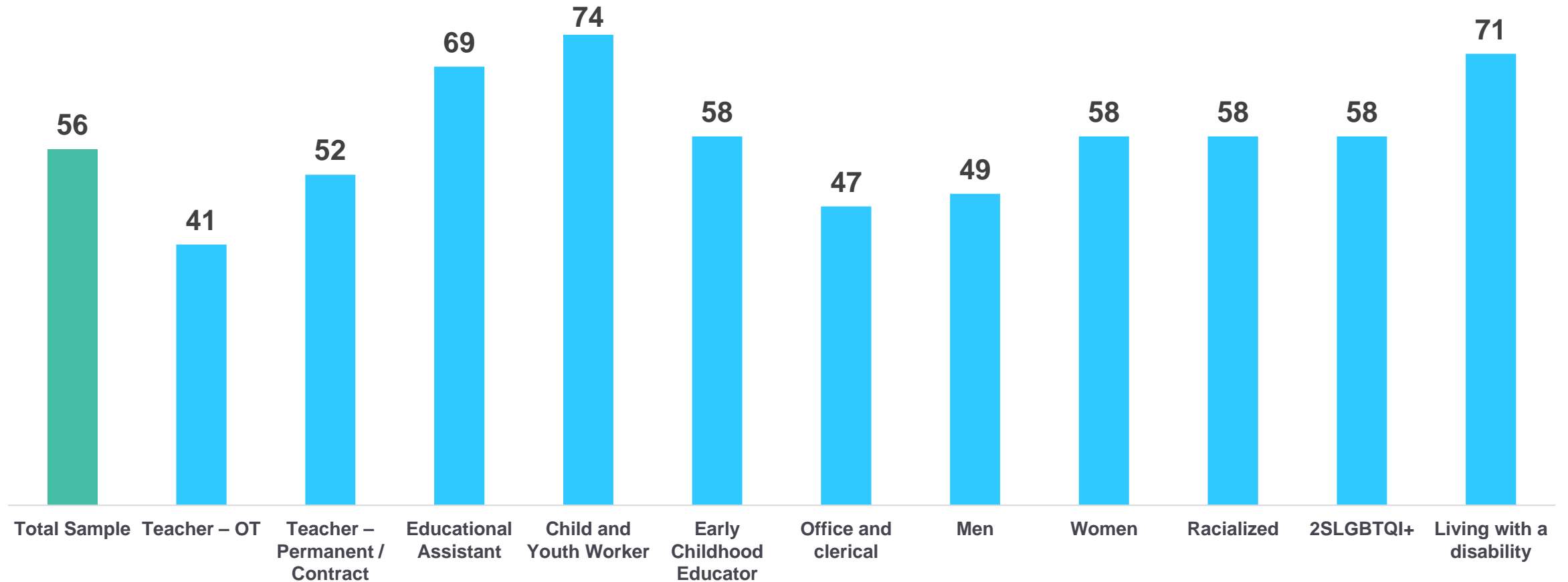
Almost half (49%) of those who have reported an incident think the actions or steps taken in response were ineffective in preventing a recurrence of violence.



Among those personally involved in violent incidents a significant number have experienced harm – physical, as well as psychological – as a result of violence against them in the 2022-2023 school year

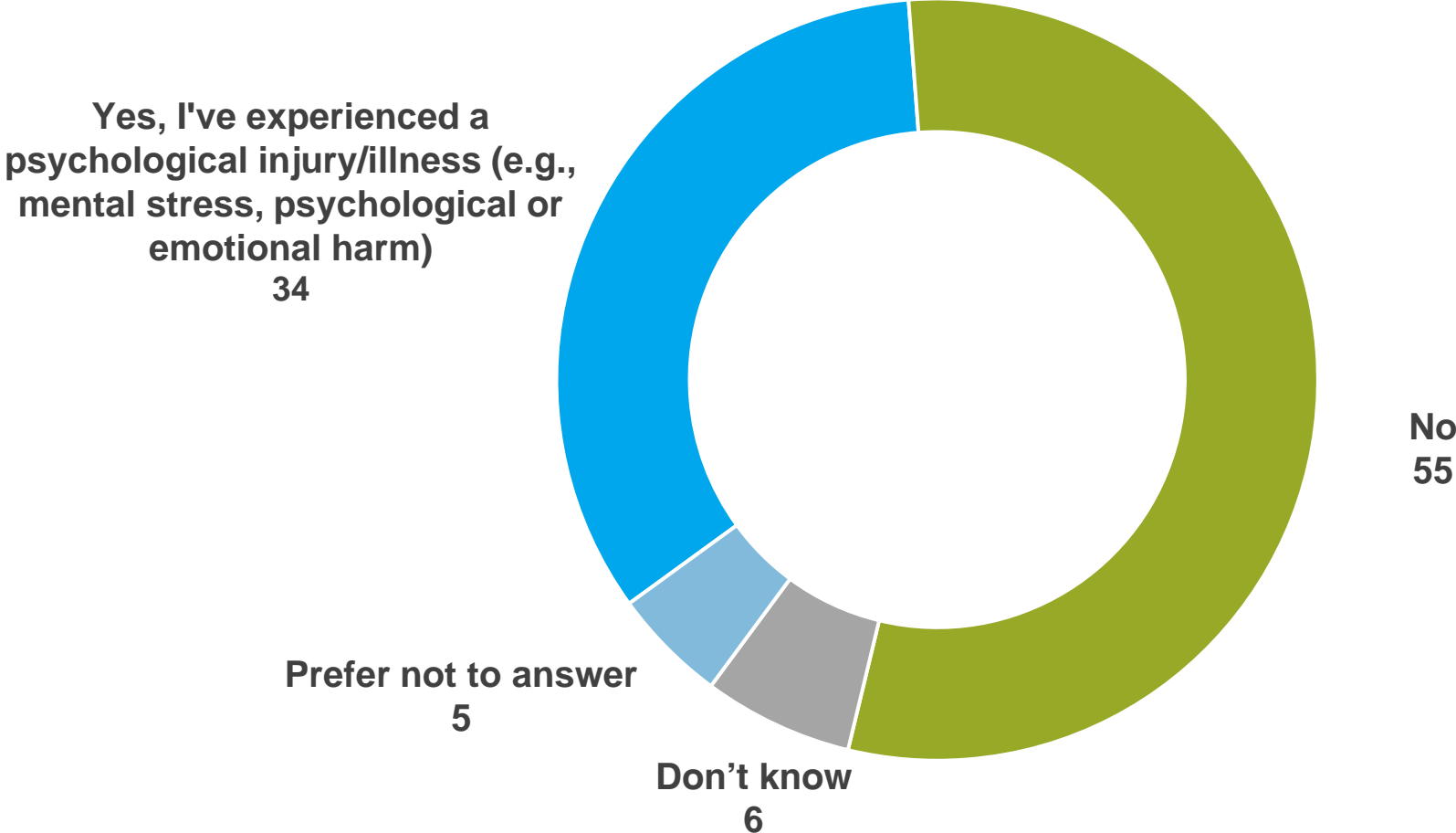


# Educational Assistants and Child and Youth Workers as well as vulnerable groups experience harm in higher than average numbers

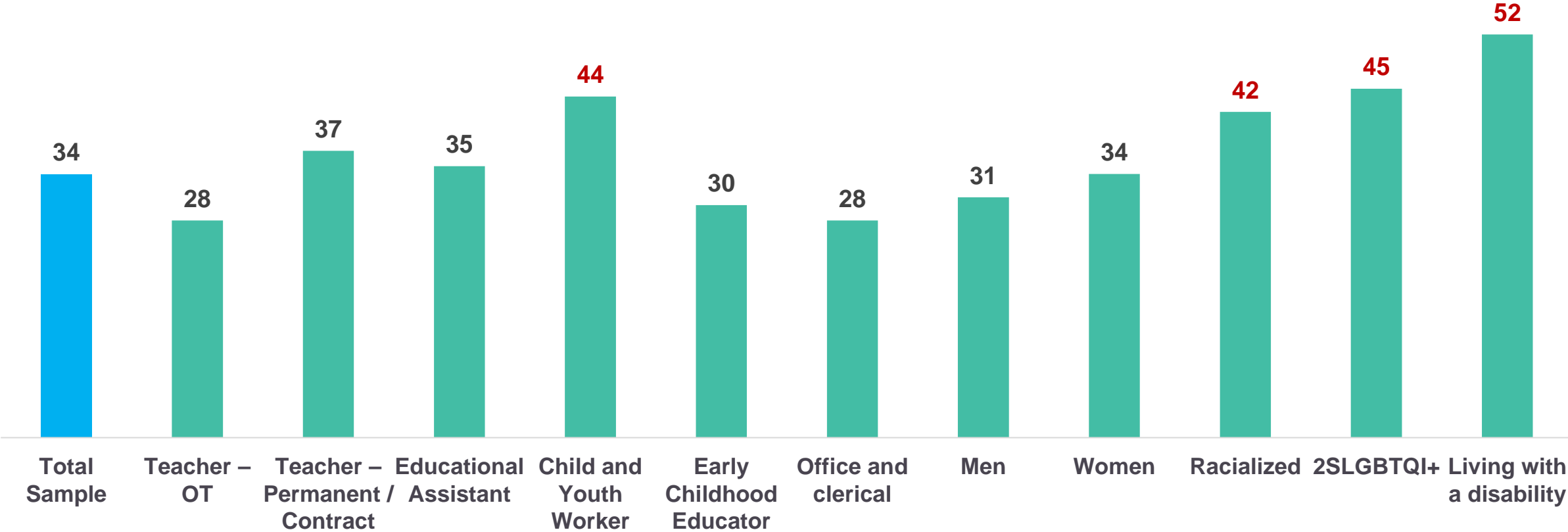


[IF PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED ANY VIOLENCE IN B5]

One-third experienced harm as a result of witnessing workplace violence...

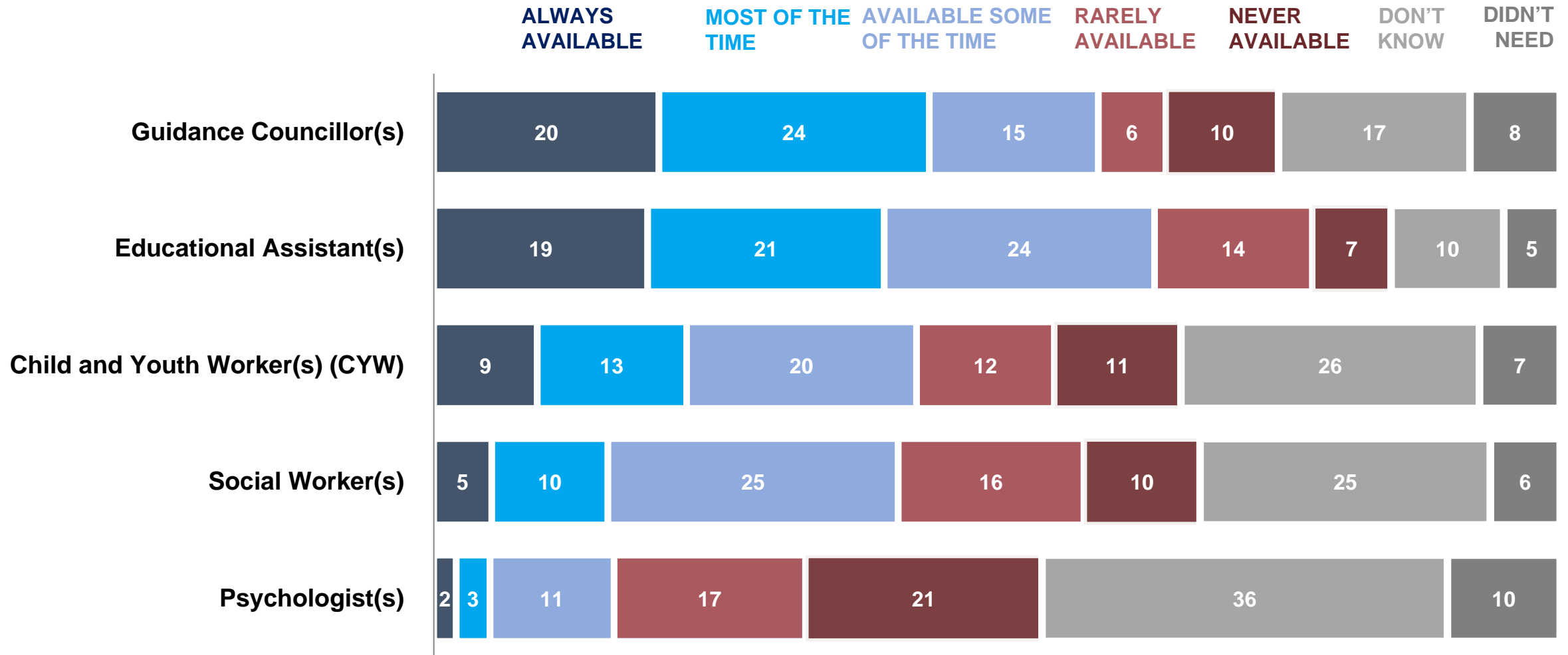


Racialized members, members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community and members living with a disability, as well as Child and Youth Workers, experience harm as a result of witnessing workplace violence at a higher than average rate.

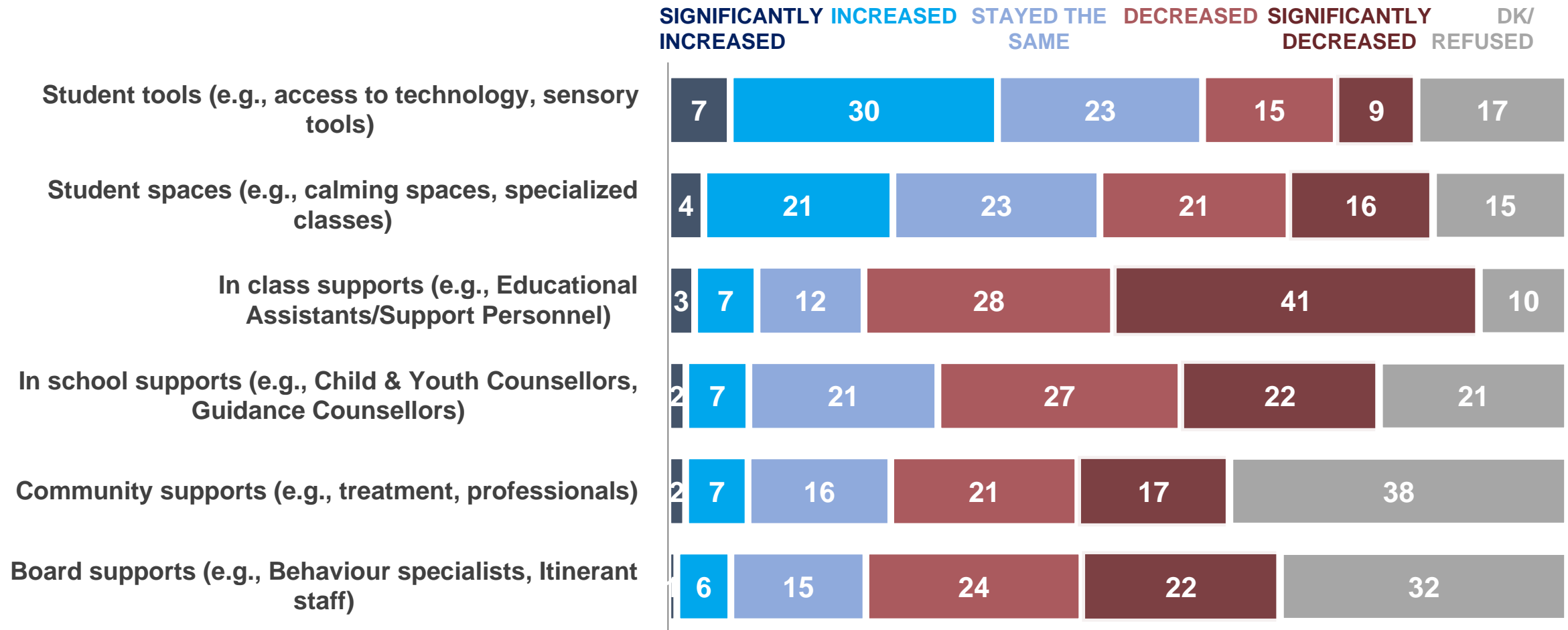


## Access to support staff has been limited when required

Less than half report that Guidance Counsellors and Educational Assistants are available 'always' or 'most of the time'.

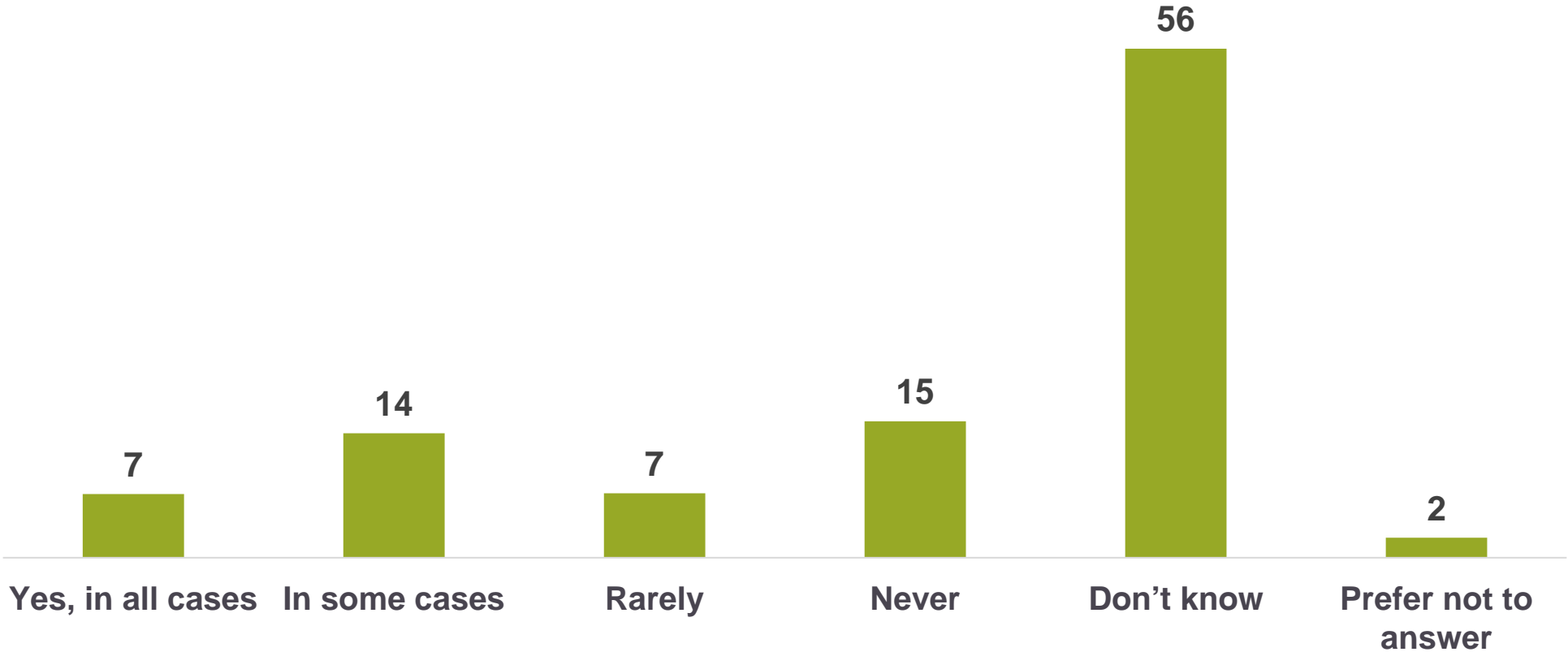


## A majority perceive the availability of in-class supports like Educational Assistants and Support Personnel to have decreased



# There is a lack of awareness about risk assessments/reassessments performed in response to violent incidents

Over half (56%) don't know if their administrator conducted risk assessment/reassessments in response to violent incidents.





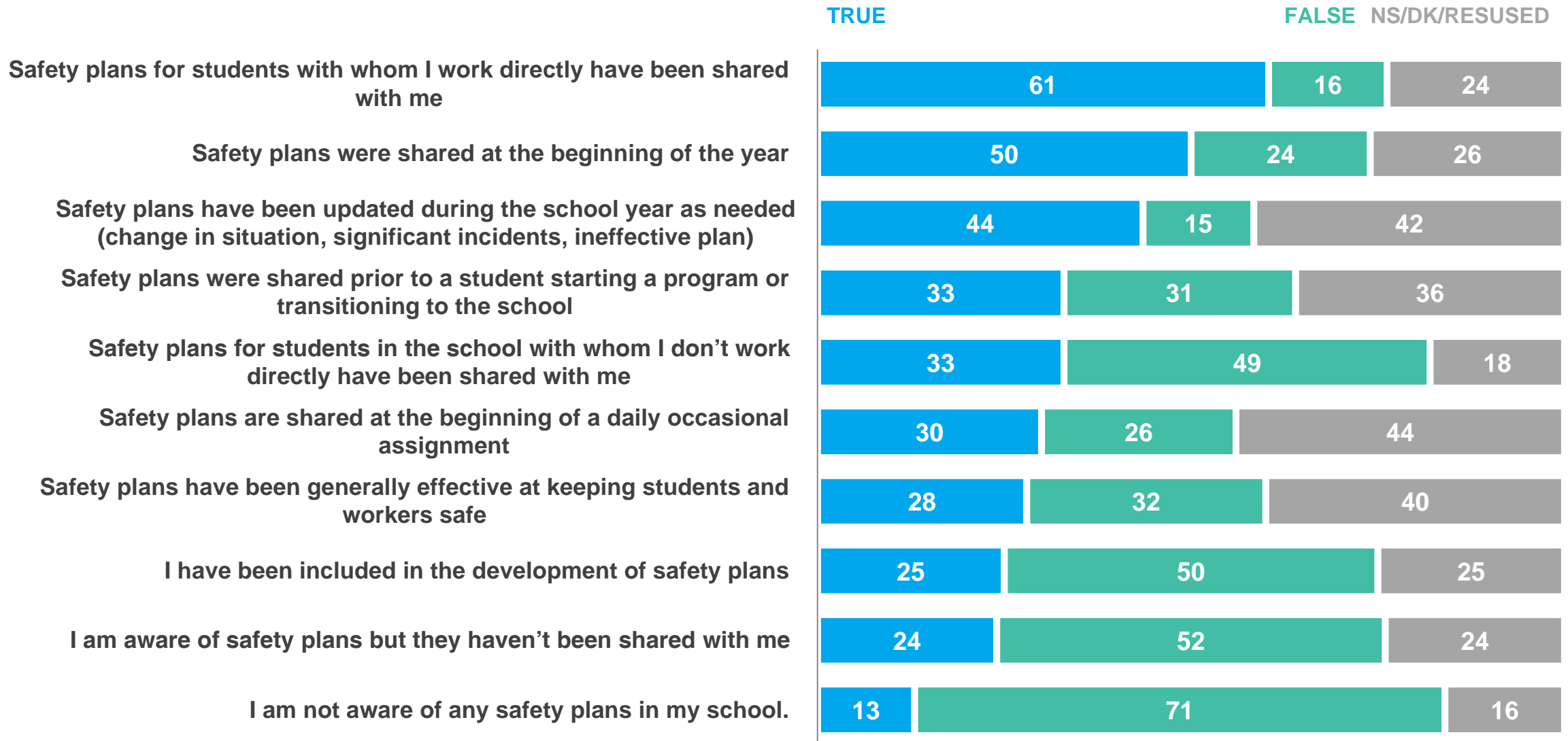
# Experience of risk assessments/reassessments

[\*including coded “other” open-end responses]



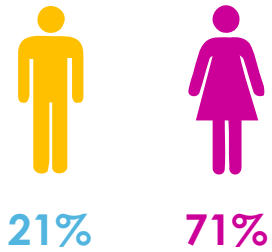
## A majority - but not all - are aware of safety plans in their school.

Only 61% say that safety plans for students with whom they work directly have been shared with them.

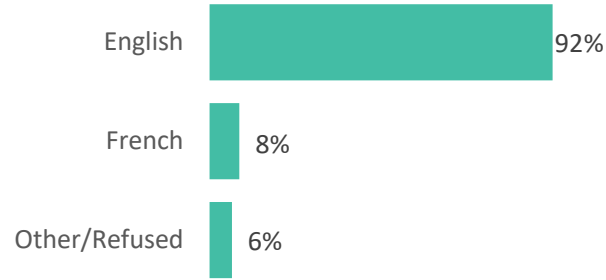


# Sample Profile

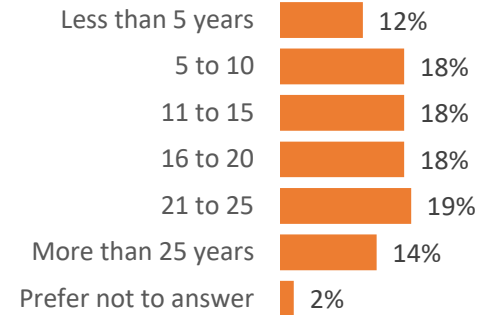
## Gender



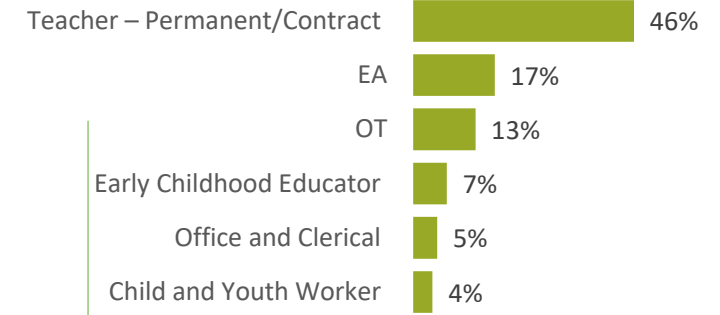
## Main language



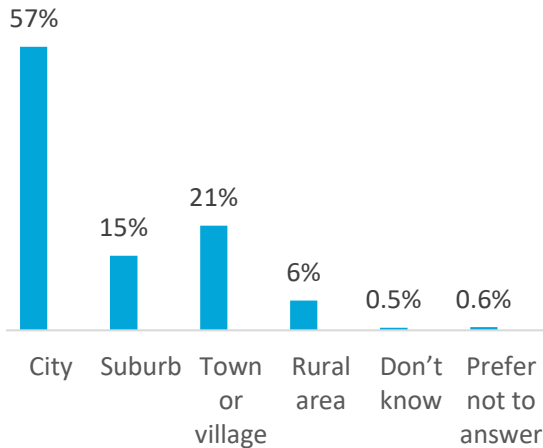
## Membership Length



## Primary role



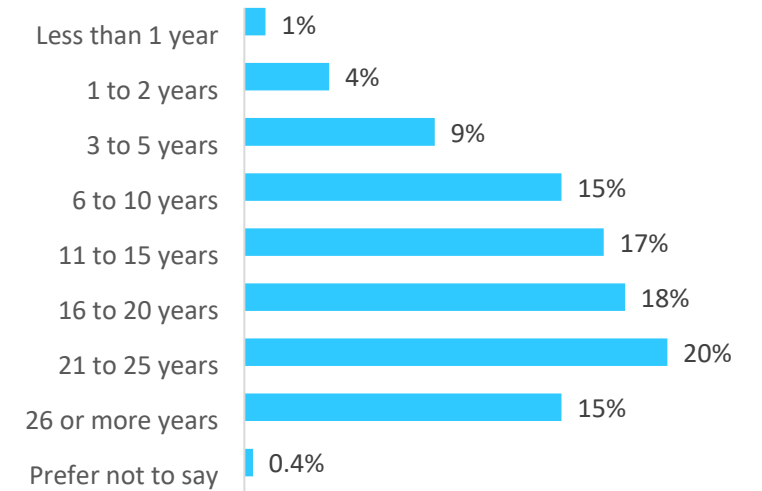
## Work Location

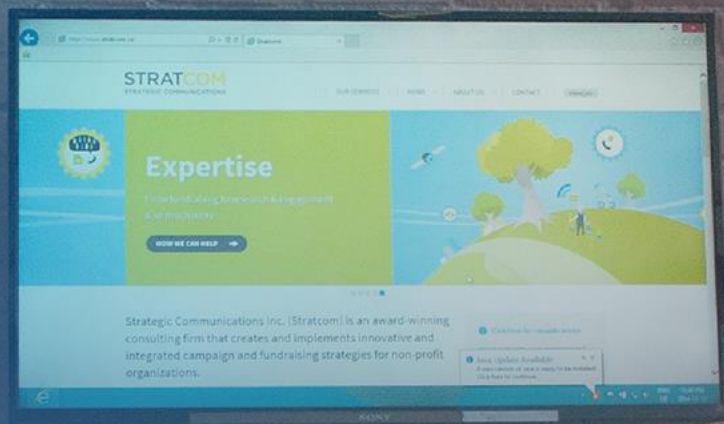


## Racialized identities

Black (e.g., African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent)	3%
East Asian (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Taiwanese descent)	3%
Indigenous (e.g., First Nations, Inuit, Métis descent)	2%
Latinx (e.g., Argentinean, Chilean, Costa Rican descent)	1%
Middle Eastern (e.g., Afghan, Iranian, Syrian descent)	2%
South Asian (e.g., Indian, Indo-Caribbean, Tamil descent)	4%
Southeast Asian (e.g., Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese descent)	1%
White (European descent)	76%

## Length of time working in the Ontario public school system





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