

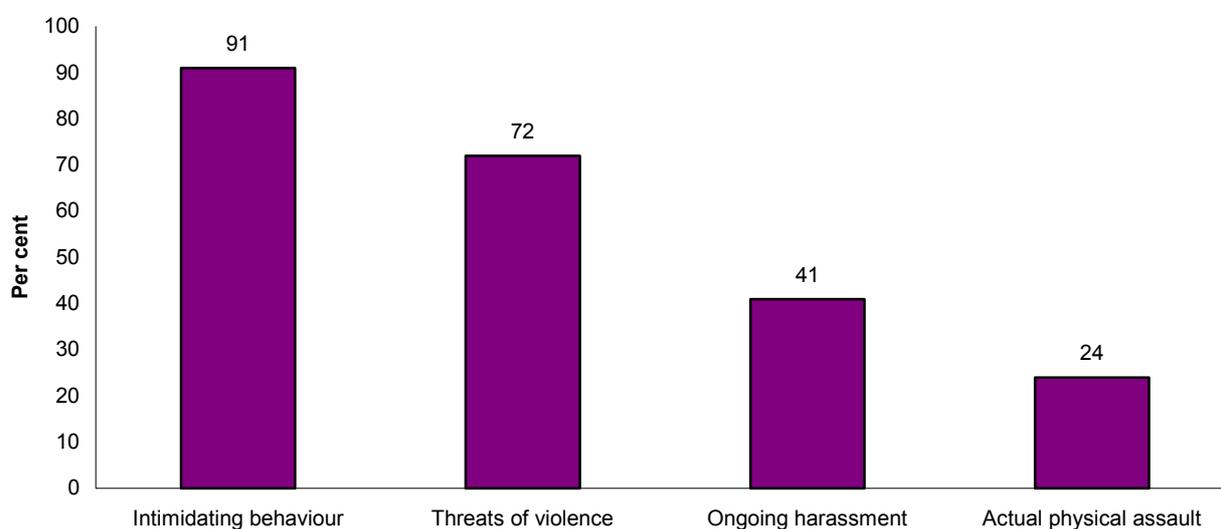


• From the Australian Institute of Criminology •

## *Threats of violence against professionals whose work involves children*

The capacity of professionals working in child protection to do their job effectively is affected by their morale, competence and staff turnover. There is growing concern that these professionals are subjected to increasing levels of violence, threats and intimidation. The Australian Institute of Criminology has recently released a report on the key findings from an Australian study into the experiences of violence, threats and intimidation by professional groups working in child protection. The research reports on the experiences of 589 child protection professionals such as social workers, teachers, police, nurses and psychologists. In the course of their child protection duties, 91 per cent had experienced intimidating behaviour, 72 per cent had experienced threats of violence, 41 per cent had experienced ongoing harassment and 24 per cent had experienced actual physical assault. In the majority of cases, the aggressor was a parent or caregiver of the child being protected. The majority (74 per cent) of respondents reported emotional and/or health effects (such as fear, anxiety or inability to sleep) as a result of experiencing abusive behaviours.

### Percentage of professionals working in child protection experiencing violence, threats and intimidation



SOURCE: Briggs F, Broadhurst D & Hawkins R 2004. Violence, threats and intimidation in the lives of professionals whose work involves children. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no. 273 Australian Institute of Criminology Canberra

Full report available on AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi273.html>

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