

# PLAY IT SAFE BY THE WATER

## Campaign Tracking Report

### 2011/2012

Conducted by:  **Newspoll**<sup>™</sup>  
market & social research

Summary prepared by: Dr Bernadette Matthews, Life Saving Victoria

# Contents

1. Research objectives
2. Methodology
3. Overall findings
4. Swimming ability and lessons
5. Respondent profile
6. Conclusions

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

# Objectives

Quantitative research was undertaken to:

- measure the awareness and recall of the Play it Safe by the Water Campaign amongst adults;
- measure the impact of the campaign on adults; and
- measure self-reported swimming ability of adults and parent-reported swimming ability of children.

# Methodology

## Sample

- Conducted in Victoria among 401 respondents aged 18 years and over.
- Respondents selected via a random sample process which included:
  - a quota being set for each capital city and non-capital city area, and within each of these areas, a quota being set for groups of statistical divisions or subdivisions;
  - random selection of household telephone numbers within each area;
  - random selection of an individual in each household by a “last birthday” screening question.

# Methodology

## Interviewing

- Conducted by telephone over the period of 30 March to 1 April 2012
- To ensure the sample included those people who tend to spend a lot of time away from home, a system of call backs and appointments was incorporated.

# Methodology

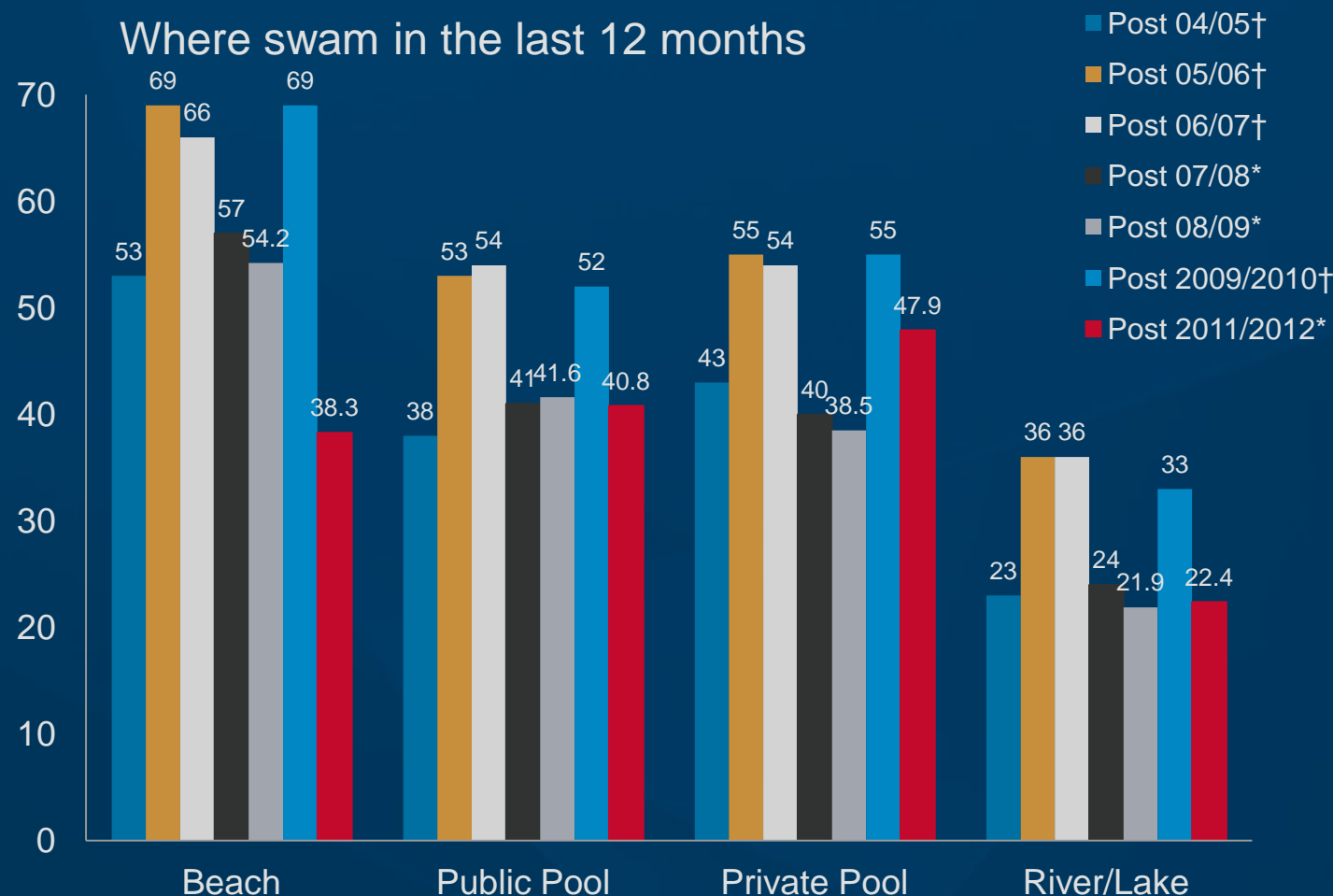
- This study was carried out in compliance with ISO 20252 – Market, Social and Opinion Research
- This report summarises the findings of the latest study – conducted in 2012 and compares these results, where appropriate, with those from similar studies conducted from 2004-2011.
- Legend notations throughout the report indicate the research company that conducted the surveys –  
\*Newspoll; †Sweeney

# OVERALL FINDINGS

# Patterns of aquatic recreation

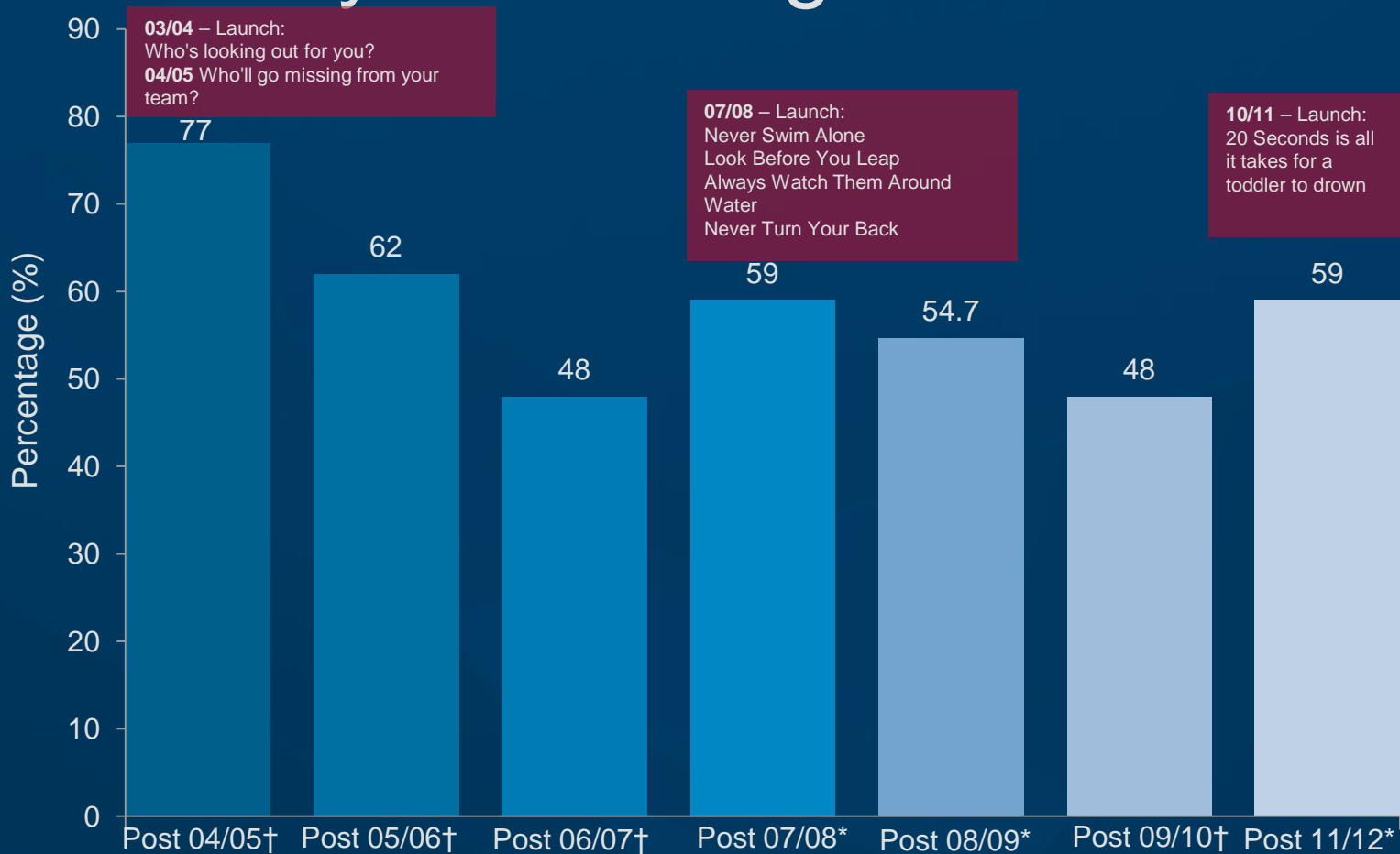
- Aquatic recreation remains popular with 74% of Victorians participating in any aquatic recreation in the last 12 months.
- Participation at the beach was reduced compared to previous years however this may reflect a change in the way the question was asked. Respondents were asked about their recreation at patrolled and unpatrolled surf or bay beaches rather than just beaches as asked in previous years.

Where swam in the last 12 months



# Recall of water safety advertising

- There was an increase in recall of any water safety advertising, with levels comparable to four years ago.

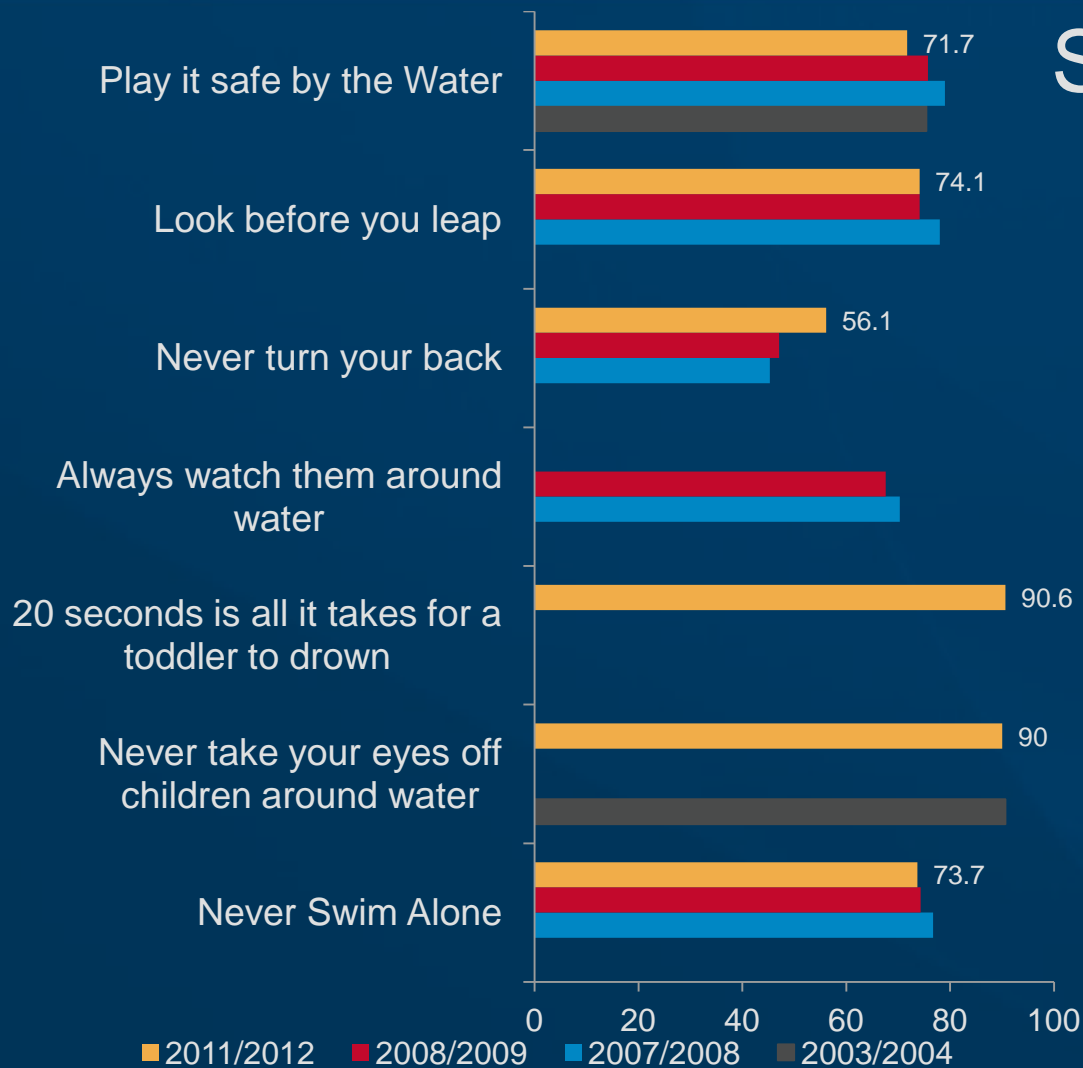




# Main messages recalled

- Child safety around water 65.4%
  - 29.3% Don't take eyes off children around water
  - 19.3% Don't leave children/toddlers unsupervised around water
  - 17.0% It only takes 20 seconds for children to drown/ children can drown quickly/ silently
- Pool safety 21.8%
- Don't swim alone/Keep eye out for others 11.7%
- Water safety/Be careful around water 20.5%

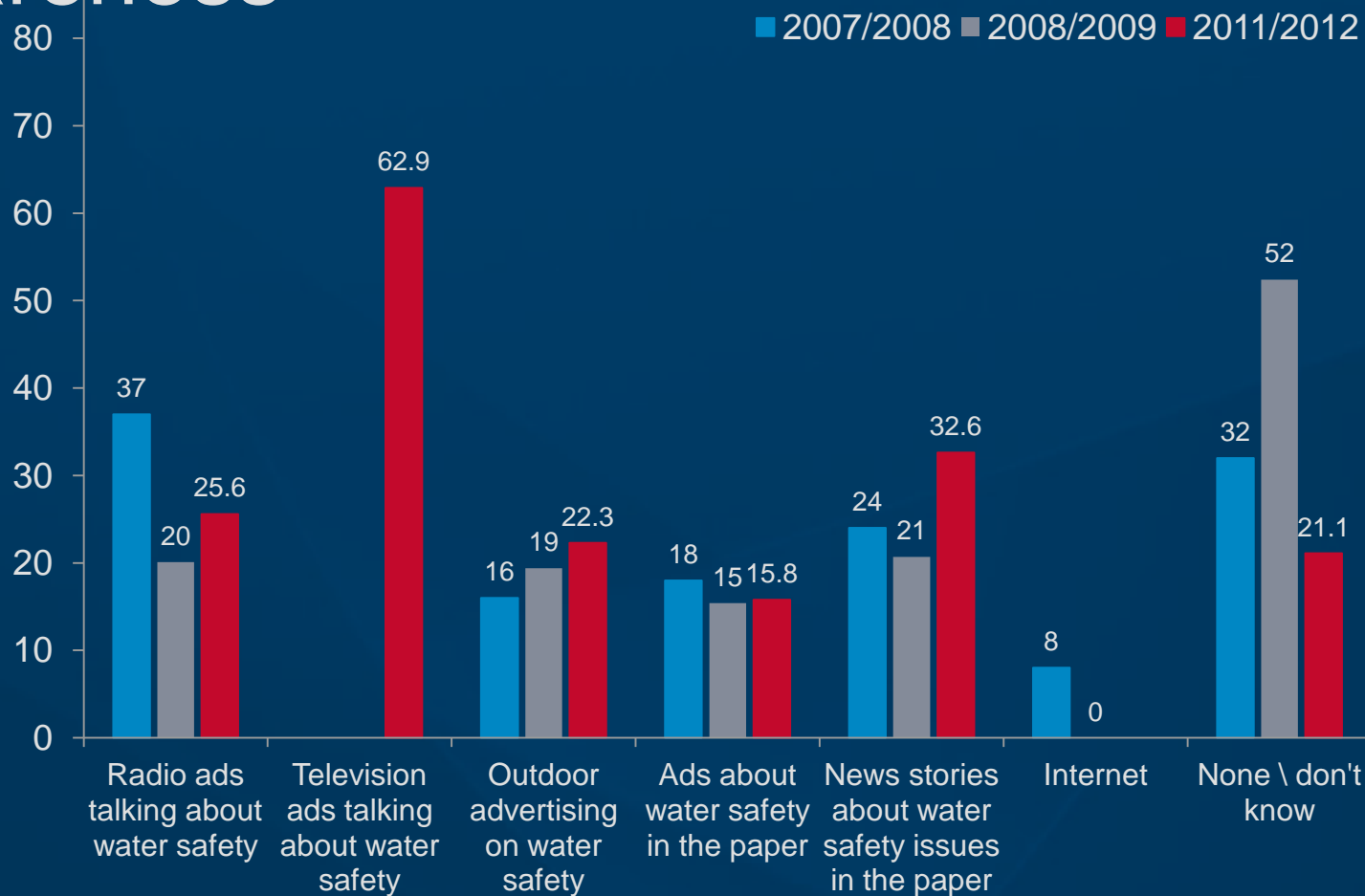
## Slogan recall – Prompted



- The '20 seconds is all it takes for a toddler to drown' message was the highest prompted recalled message in 2011/2012.
- Similarly the 'Never take your eyes off children around water' message also had a very high recall as also found in 2003/2004. This message had stronger recall than the previously used 'Always watch them around water'.

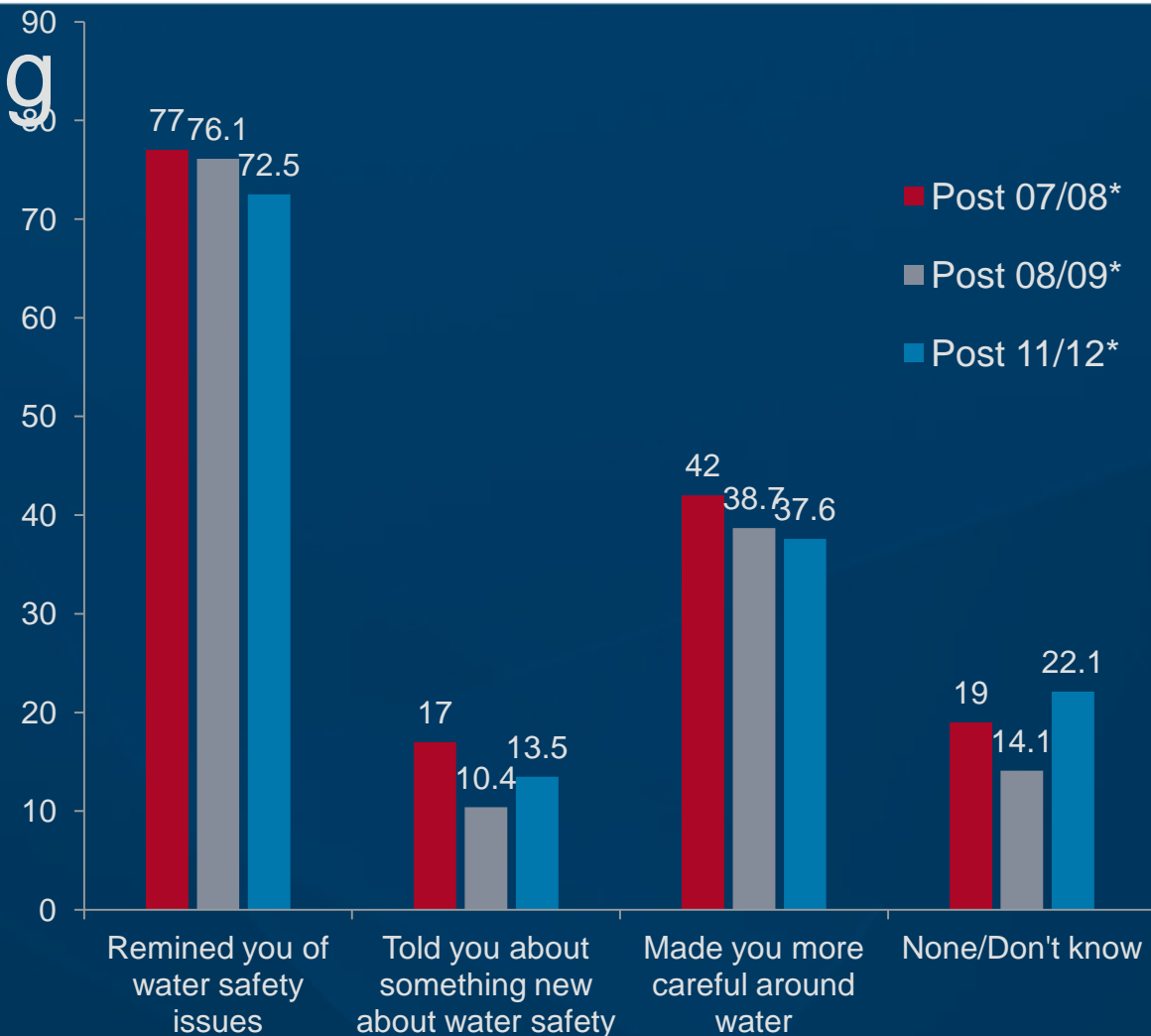
# Source of awareness

- The majority of those that recalled any water safety advertising, saw ads on TV.
- The proportion of those hearing radio advertising was lower compared to previous years however those seeing news stories about water safety issues in the paper increased compared to previous years. This may reflect increased reporting by the media of water safety issues.



# Impact of advertising

- The majority of respondents who recalled any water safety advertising were reminded of water safety issues.
- Almost half (48.9%) of those who learnt something new about water safety learnt how quickly it can take for a child to drown/ it only takes 20 seconds for a toddler to drown.



# Behaviour change

- Of those who reported the advertising made them more careful around water:
  - 34.1% keep watch on children in the water/ don't leave children unsupervised
  - 17.4% remember to be extra cautious/look around when I swim/be aware/alert of surroundings
  - 9.8% make sure surrounding is safe for children
  - 8.4% ensure/have added fencing around the pool/ the height of the fencing
  - 5.9% be careful with children in the bath
- Those who reported they could not swim or were a poor swimmer were more likely to report behaviour change.\*

\*Results are based on small sample size (n=62) and should be read with some caution.

# Behaviour change – Parents/carers of toddlers

- 54 respondents had one or more children aged 0 to 4 years

The following results summarise this subset. As the results are based on a small sample size they should be read with some caution.

- While parents' and carers' reported behaviours around toddlers and water were similar to the previous tracking study in 2010/2011 (n=500), the results indicate an improvement in some reported behaviours.

## Improved behaviours

- A greater proportion of respondents reported *always* being vigilant about securing gates, doors and fences (63% post 2010/11 vs 85% post 2011/12).
- More respondents would *always* empty the bath water straight away (74% post 2010/11 vs 91% post 2011/12).
- Fewer respondents would ask older siblings to watch toddlers around water for them (33% post 2010/11 vs 10% post 2011/12).
- Slightly more respondents said they would *never* duck out for a moment during bath time (61% post 2010/11 vs 71% post 2011/12).

# Behaviour change – Parents/carers of toddlers

## No change

- Remain within arm's reach of toddlers around water (65% post 2010/11 vs 65% post 2011/12).
- One in ten respondents would still *always* rely on their hearing to supervise toddlers around water (13% post 2010/11 and 13% post 2011/12). However there was an increase in those that reported never relying on their hearing 58% post 2010/11 vs 74 % post 2011/12).
- Leave toddlers to play outside by themselves (57 % post 2010/11 vs 56% post 2011/12).
- Keep buckets of water sitting around the house (20 % post 2010/11 vs 15% post 2011/12).

# SWIMMING ABILITY AND LESSONS

# Swimming ability- Self reported

## *Rate current, unassisted swimming ability*

- 22% surveyed said couldn't swim or were a poor swimmer
- 36% said they were an average swimmer

*Rate swimming ability on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 equals cannot float or swim and 10 is "I can confidently swim for over one hour and float as long as I wish"*

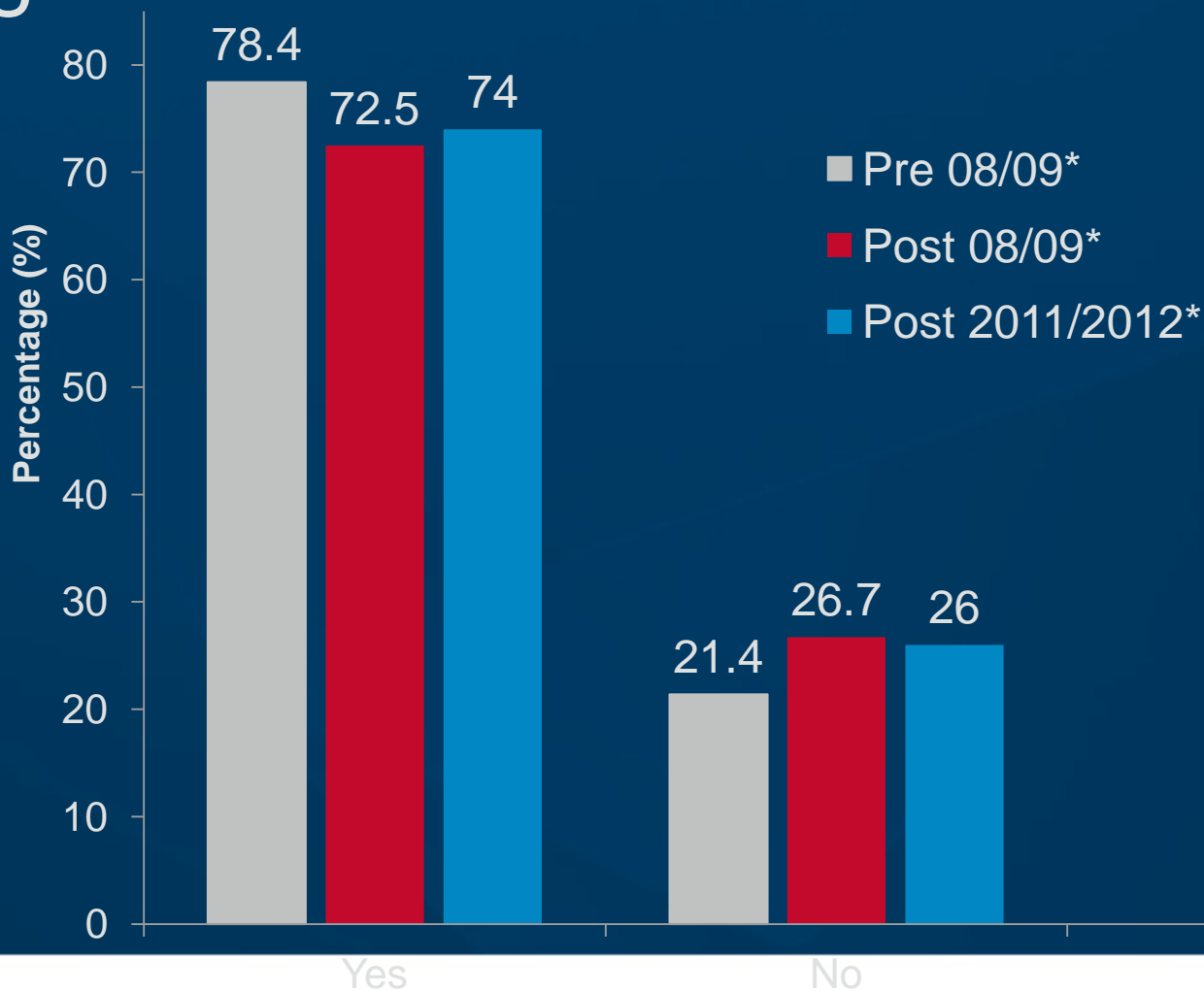
- The mean (SD) ratings were:
  - 6.0 (2.8) overall
  - 6.8 (2.9) in a swimming pool, and
  - 4.5 (2.9) in and through the surf .

# Swimming ability- Self reported

- Those who rated their unassisted swimming ability higher (e.g good/ very good) were more likely to swim at surf beaches while those with poor through to very good swimming ability swam at bayside beaches
- Those who said they could not swim or rated their unassisted swimming ability as poor were unlikely to swim in a river, lake or creek (~2%).
- Those who were younger (18-24yrs) rated their swimming ability higher while older adults (65+ years) rated their swimming ability lower [mean (SD) 7.4 (1.6) vs 3.7 (3.1) respectively].

# Formal swimming lessons - Adults

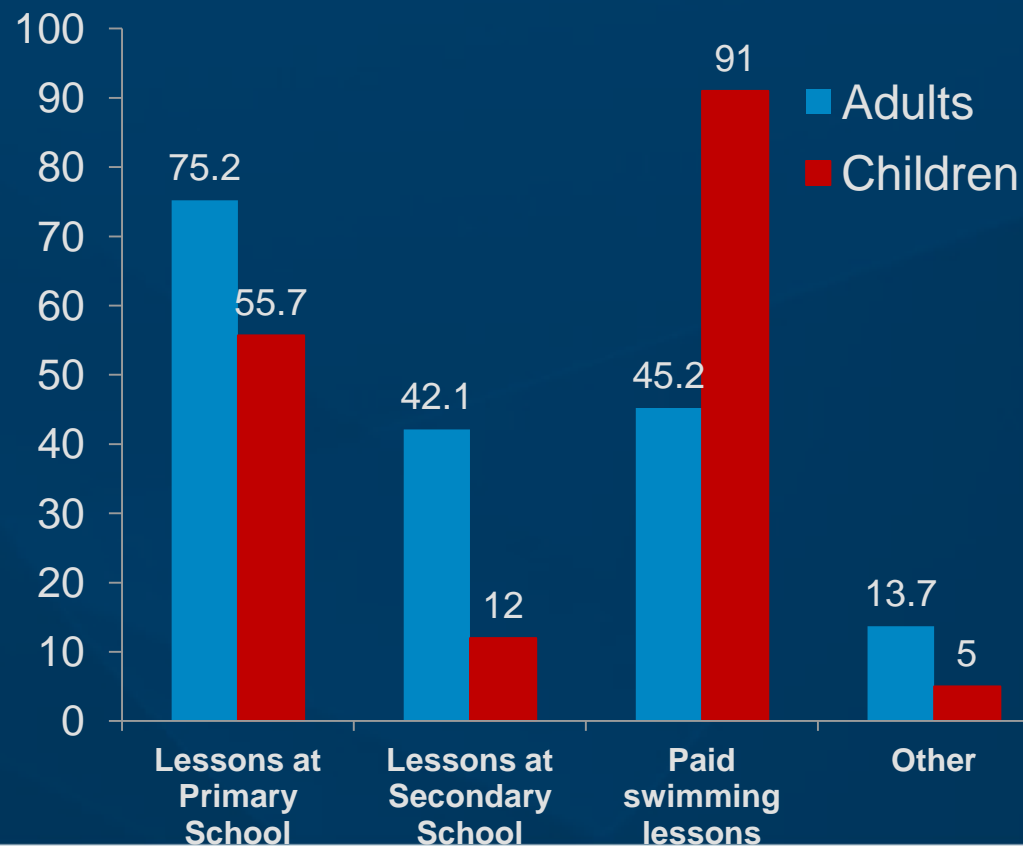
- 26% had not had any formal swimming lessons
- Of those that had formal swimming lessons
  - 50.1% only had lessons for less than 6 months
  - 75.2% had lessons at Primary School
- The main reason for not having lessons was because of lack of opportunity i.e. formal lessons not available where they grew up (29.7%).



# Formal swimming lessons - Children (0-14 yrs)

- 128 respondents had one or more children aged 0 to 14 years
- Of these 80.1% said any of their children had formal swimming lessons
  - 56% at Primary School
  - 91% paid lessons
- Those respondents who had had formal swimming lessons themselves were more likely to have children that had paid swimming lessons (94.4% vs 76.6%)

Type of formal swimming lessons



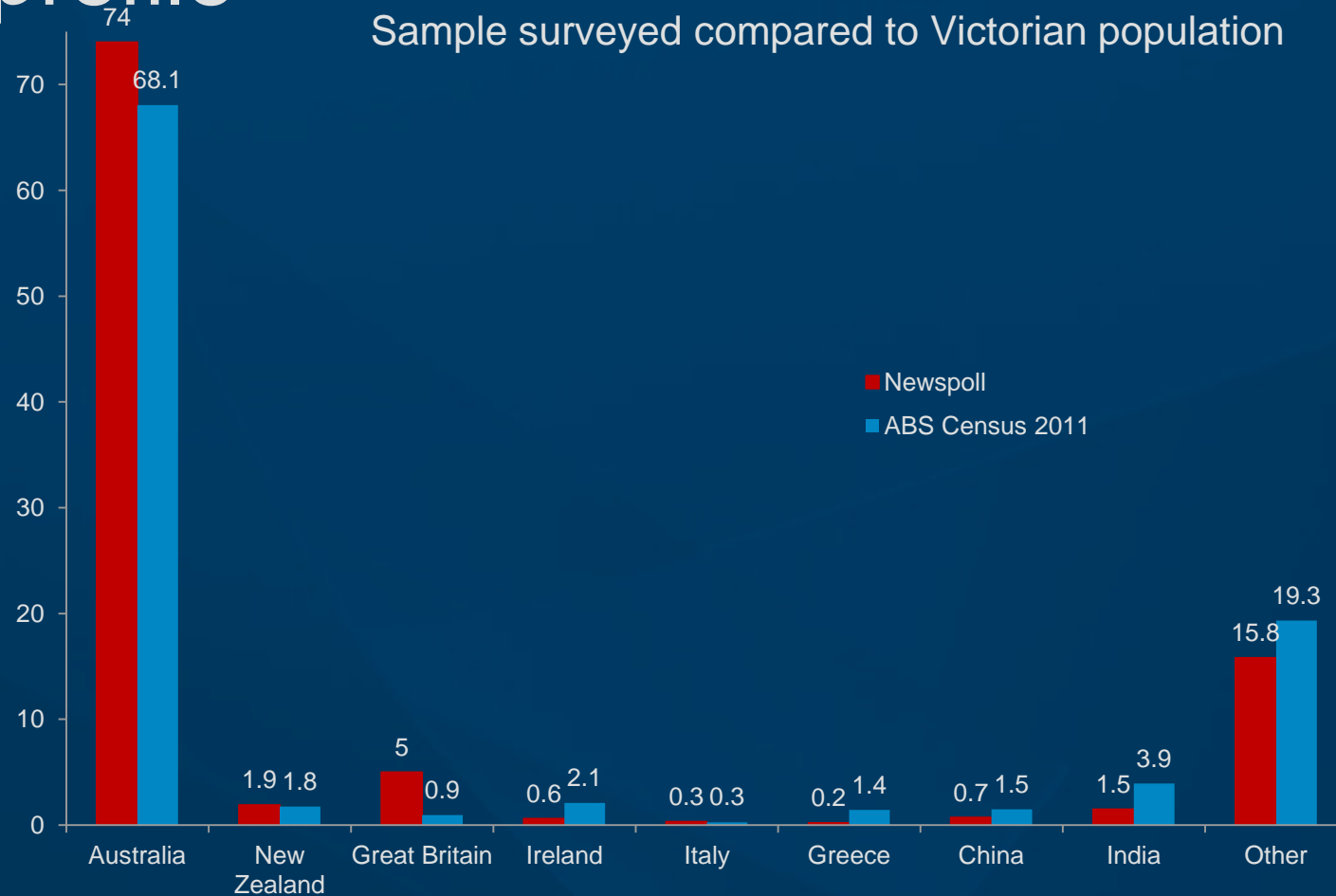
## Swimming ability- Children (10-14 yrs)

- 61 respondents had one or more children aged 10 to 14 years and thus just about to leave or just left Primary School, the age at which certain standards of swimming are expected to be acquired (refer Victorian Water Safety Certificate).
- The following results summarise this subset. As the results are based on a small sample size they should be read with some caution.
  - 44% said their child/children could not swim more than 50 metres
  - 43% said their child/children could not float for more than 5 minutes

# Respondent profile

- 74% of respondents were born in Australia and had lived in Australia for more than 9 years.
- 56% of respondents both parents born in Australia.

Sample surveyed compared to Victorian population



# Conclusions

- The Play it Safe By the Water campaign and messaging remains strong.
- The '20 seconds campaign' was highly successful as demonstrated by the high recall levels and the behaviour change in a number of areas as well as the high proportion of respondents learning something new from this campaign.
- The success of the 20 seconds campaign is likely due to a number of factors:
  - Use of television
  - Strength of the message
  - Use of a new message where people learnt something they were previously unaware.

# LIFE SAVING VICTORIA

## RISK AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Dr Bernadette Matthews

[bernadette.matthews@lifesavingvictoria.com.au](mailto:bernadette.matthews@lifesavingvictoria.com.au)