

PARENT PERSPECTIVES: CHILD CARE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

AUGUST 2023



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime



METHODOLOGY

This poll was conducted between August 18-August 21, 2023 among a sample of 804 parents of children ages 0-3. The interviews were conducted online and the data was weighted to approximate a target sample of parents of children 0-3 based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and gender by age. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Sample	N-size	MOE
Parents	804	+/-3%
Democrats	312	+/-6%
Republicans	211	+/-7%
Formal Child Care	282	+/-6%

Comparisons are made to a survey previously fielded in April 2023 among the same audience.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. Parents hold the federal government accountable for child care challenges.** In fact, a plurality (47%) of parents say *the government* is most responsible for child care challenges, such as long wait lists, high costs, and limited options. More specifically, the majority of parents say *Congress* (74%) and *the Biden administration* (72%) are responsible for failing to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families—a sentiment shared by Democrats and Republicans alike.
- 2. Congress' failure to secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year will result in additional challenges for parents.** One-third of parents say they anticipate having to *rely on family for child care* (34%), *reduce the amount of money they spend* (32%), and having *difficulty finding quality child care they can afford* (32%) if funding is not secured. Furthermore, nearly nine-in-ten parents with children in formal child care say they are concerned about their provider *raising prices* (88%) and *being unable to retain teachers* (86%) if Congress does not secure child care funding.
- 3. Parents want the federal government to put child care at the top of their legislative agenda.** Nearly nine-in-ten (86%) parents say it should be a priority for Congress to secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year. Notably, an overwhelming majority of both Democrats (94%) and Republicans (84%) say it is important that candidates running in the upcoming 2024 presidential election present a plan to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families.

CONTENTS

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION

PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

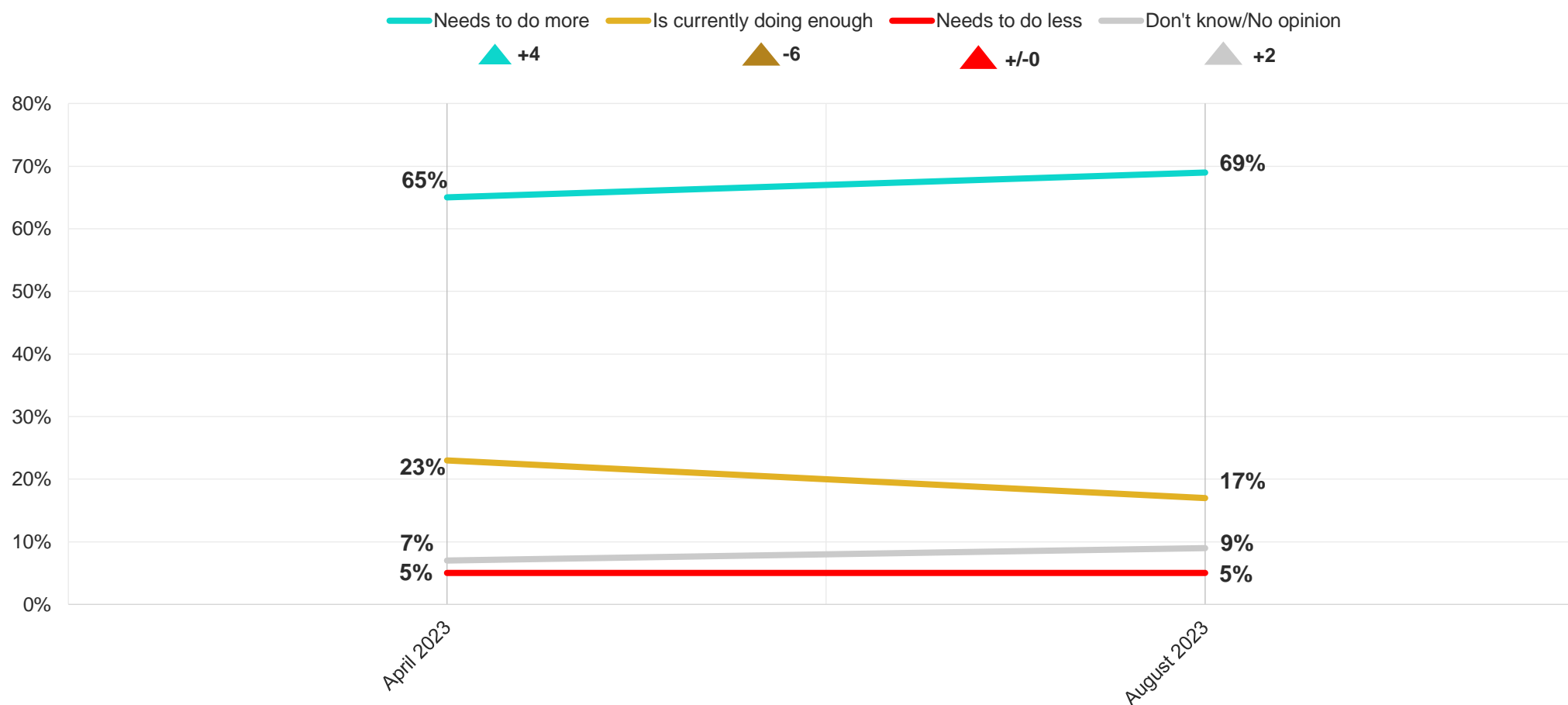
APPENDIX



WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

Seven-in-ten (69%) parents say the federal government *needs to do more* to address the needs and challenges of raising a child—an increase of 4 percentage points since April 2023.

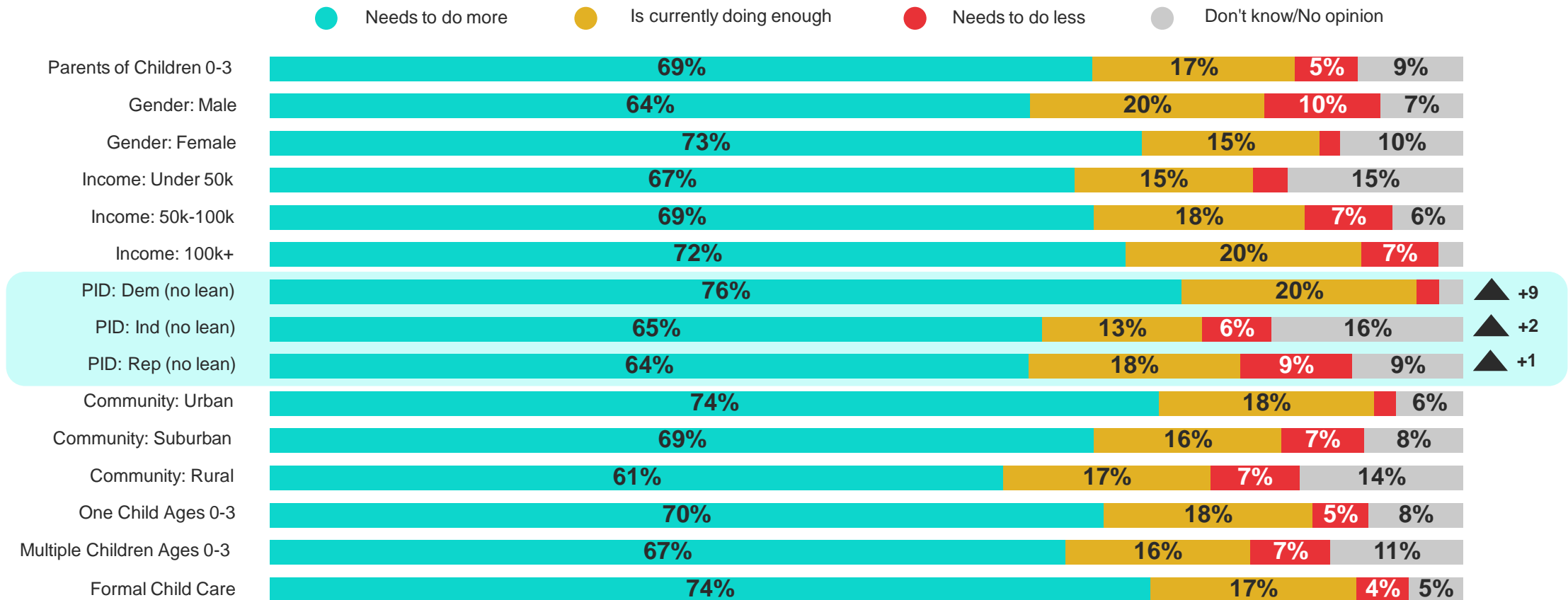
Based on your own experiences as a parent, do you believe the federal government is doing enough to address the needs and challenges of raising an infant or toddler (e.g., child care, healthcare)?



WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

Although both Democrats (76%) and Republicans (64%) say the federal government *needs to do more* to address the challenges of raising an infant or toddler, this sentiment has increased (+9) among Democrats since April 2023.

Based on your own experiences as a parent, do you believe the federal government is doing enough to address the needs and challenges of raising an infant or toddler (e.g., child care, healthcare)?



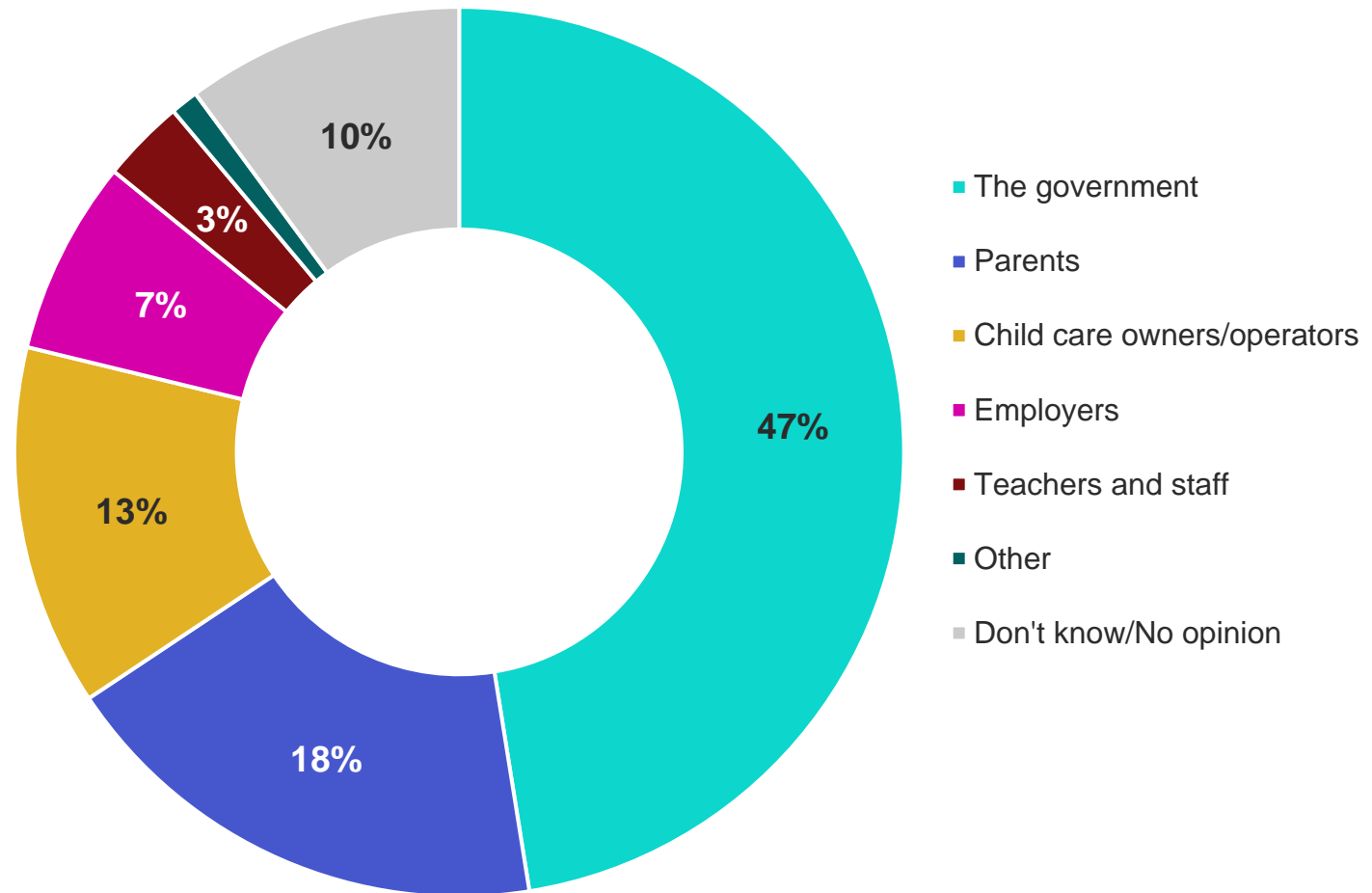
▲ = change in "needs to do more" since April 2023

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

A plurality (47%) of parents say *the government* is **most** responsible for child care challenges, such as long wait lists, high costs, and limited choices.

In thinking about the challenges parents experience related to child care, such as long wait lists, high costs, and limited choices, who do you consider **most** responsible for these issues?

Democrats (47%) and Republicans (47%) alike say *the government* is most responsible for these child care issues.

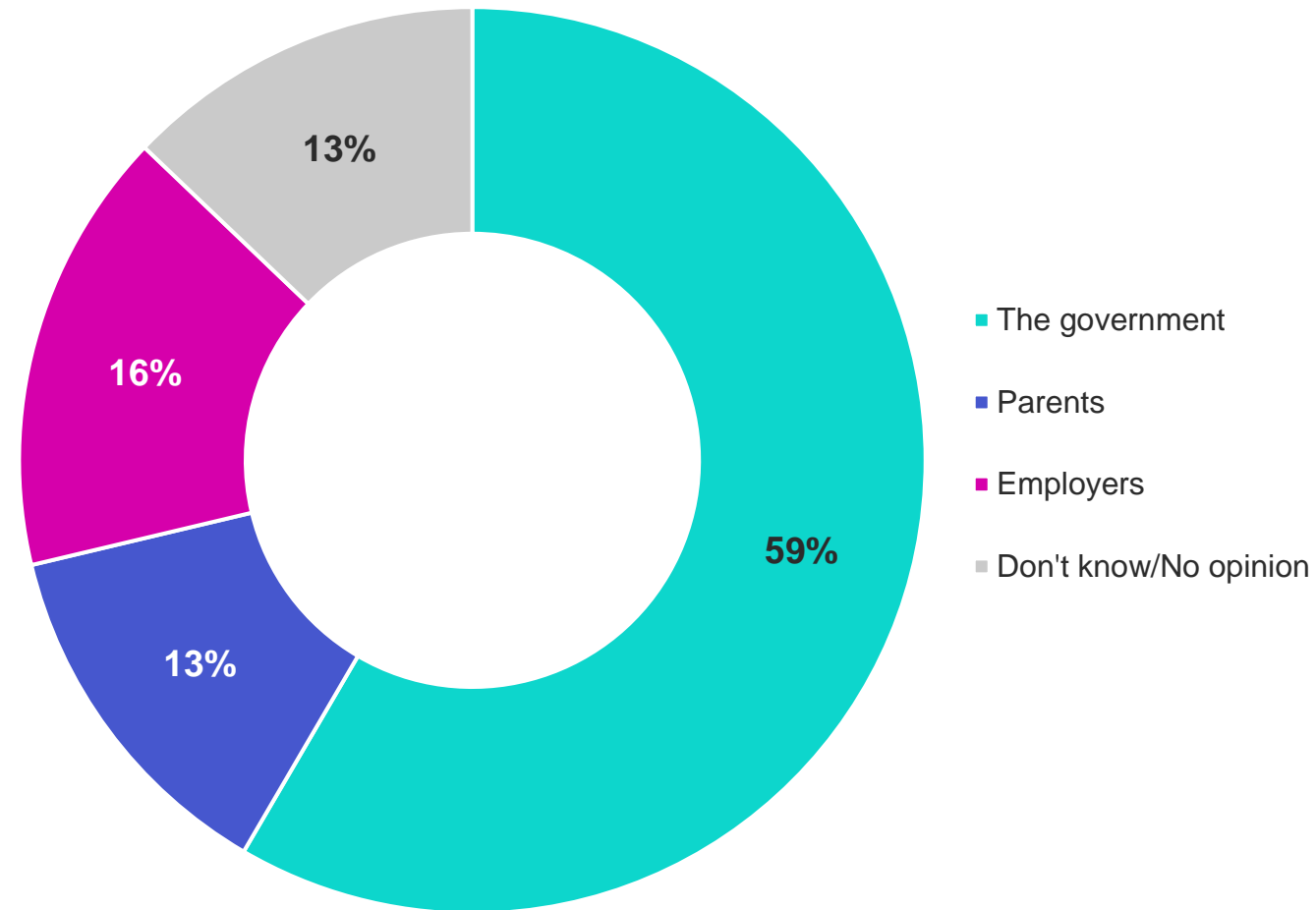


WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

Similarly, a majority (59%) of parents say *the government* should cover the gap between how much parents can afford for child care and how much providers need to provide quality care at appropriate wages.

As you may know, the funding child care providers receive from parents is often insufficient to provide appropriate wages to child care staff. In your opinion, who should provide the funding needed to cover the gap between how much parents can afford for child care and how much providers need to provide quality care at appropriate wages?

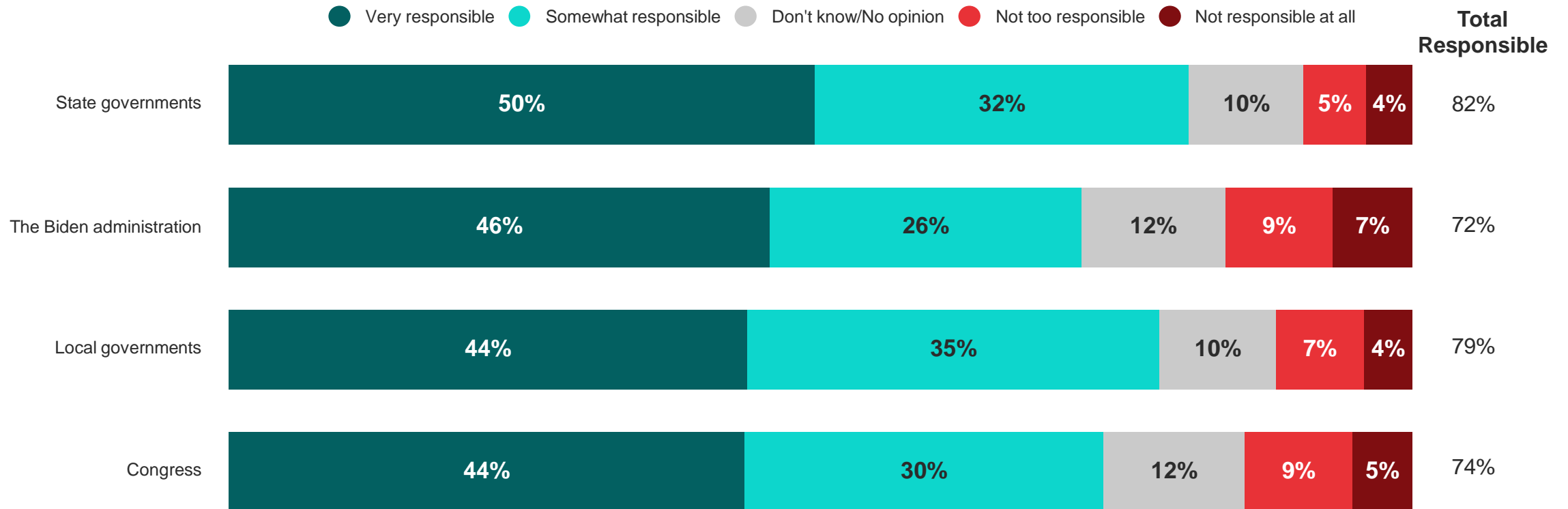
Democrats (61%) and Republicans (58%) alike say *the government* should be responsible for covering this gap.



WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

Parents say the government is responsible for failing to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families. Specifically, four-in-five parents say *state governments* (82%) and *local governments* (79%) are responsible, while three-fourths say *Congress* (74%) and *the Biden administration* (72%) are responsible.

In your view, how responsible are each of the following for failing to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families?



Both **Democrats** (88%) and **Republicans** (77%) agree *state governments* are responsible for failing to make high quality child care accessible and affordable. Similarly, there is **bipartisan agreement** that *local governments* (Democrats: 84%; Republicans: 77%), **Congress** (Democrats: 80%; Republicans: 69%), and *the Biden administration* (Democrats: 76%; Republicans: 71%) are responsible.

Total responsible = Very responsible + Somewhat responsible

CONTENTS

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION

PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

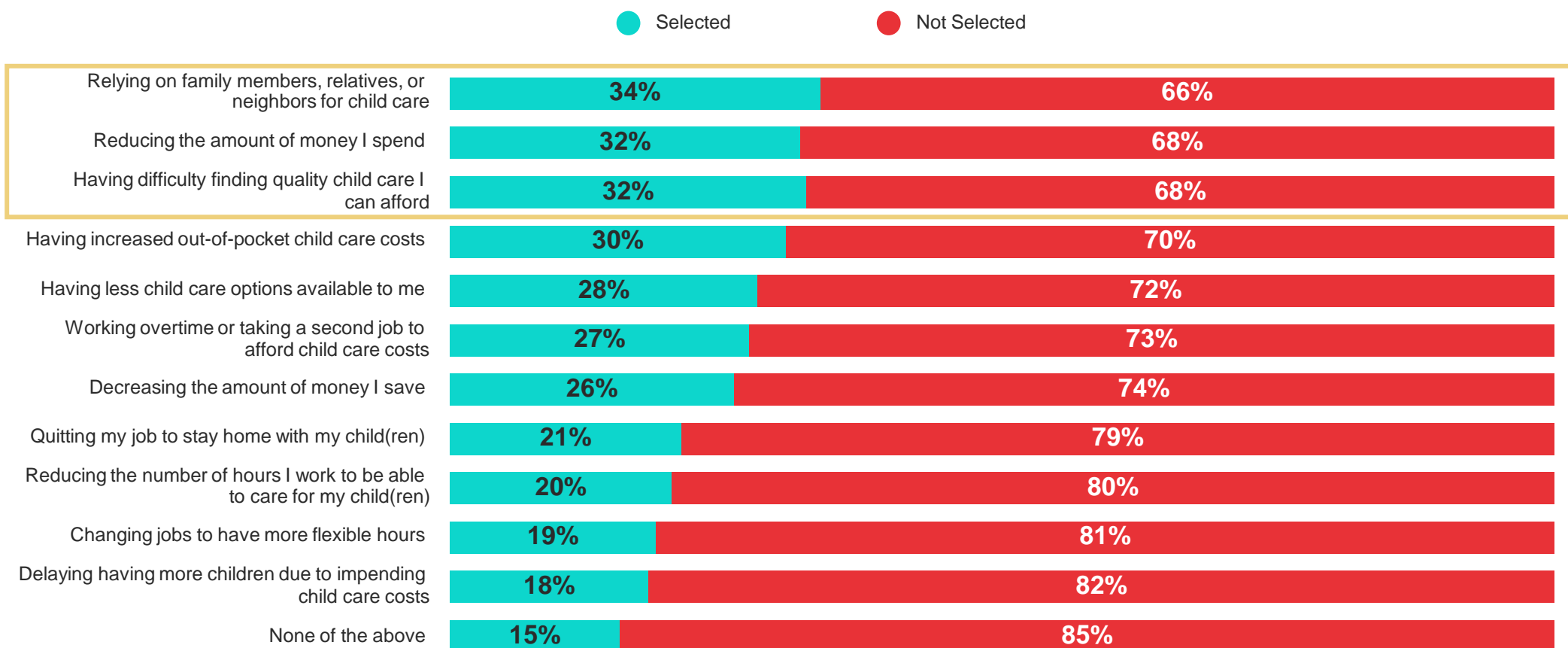
APPENDIX



IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION

If Congress does not secure child care funding in the upcoming year, one-third of parents say they anticipate having to *rely on family for child care* (34%), *reduce the amount of money they spend* (32%), and having *difficulty finding quality child care they can afford* (32%).

If Congress does **not** secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year, do you anticipate experiencing any of the following? Select all that apply.



Parents with children in **formal child care*** are especially likely to anticipate experiencing these challenges compared to those with other child care arrangements.

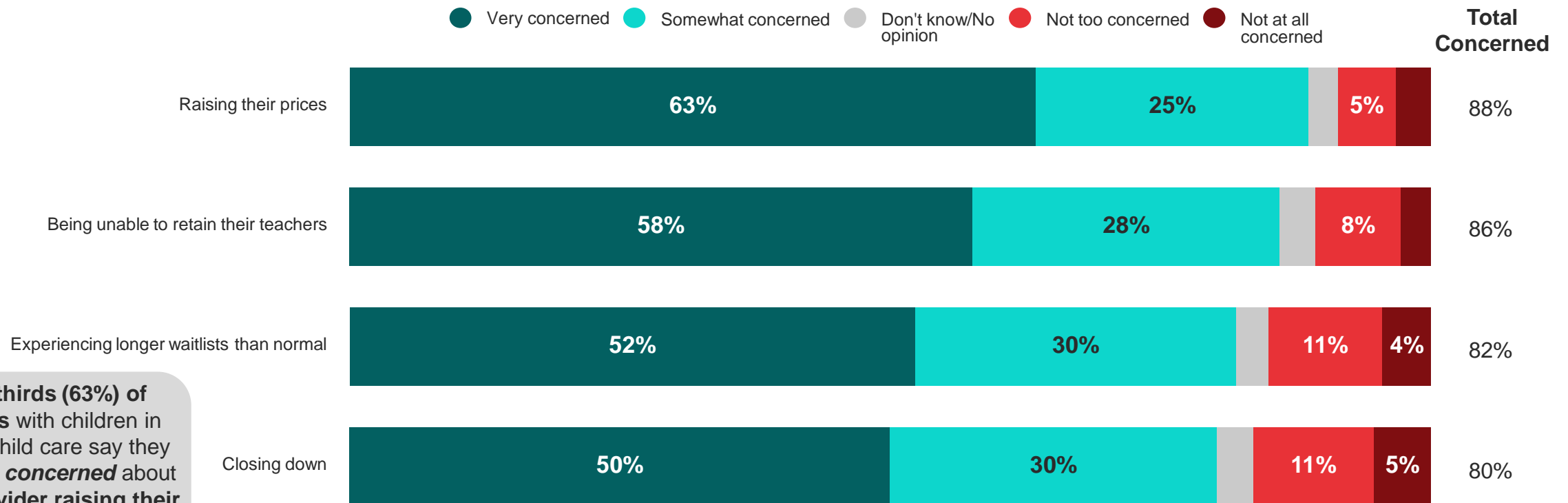
*Formal child care includes care provided by child care centers, family child care homes, and Early Head Start programs.

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION

Nearly nine-in-ten parents with children in formal child care say they are concerned about their provider *raising prices* (88%) and *being unable to retain teachers* (86%) if Congress does not secure child care funding in the upcoming year.

If Congress does **not** secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year, how concerned will you be about your child care provider doing each of the following?

AMONG PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN FORMAL CHILD CARE* (n=282)



Two-thirds (63%) of parents with children in formal child care say they are **very concerned** about their provider **raising their prices** if Congress doesn't secure child care funding.

Total concerned = Very concerned + Somewhat concerned; MOE: +/-6%
 *Formal child care includes care provided by child care centers, family child care homes, and Early Head Start programs.

CONTENTS

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION

PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

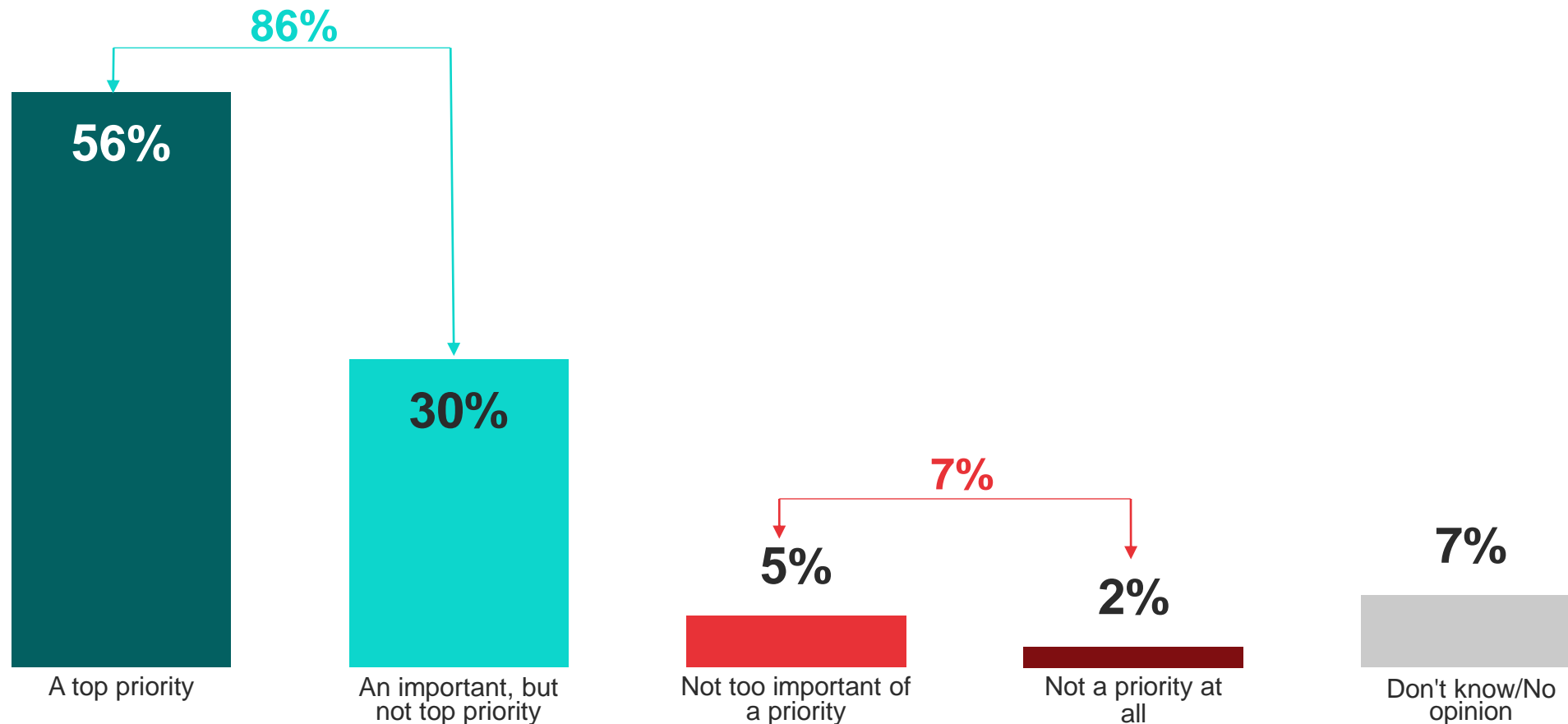
APPENDIX



PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Nearly nine-in-ten (86%) parents say it should be a priority for Congress to secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year, including more than half (56%) who say it should be a *top priority*.

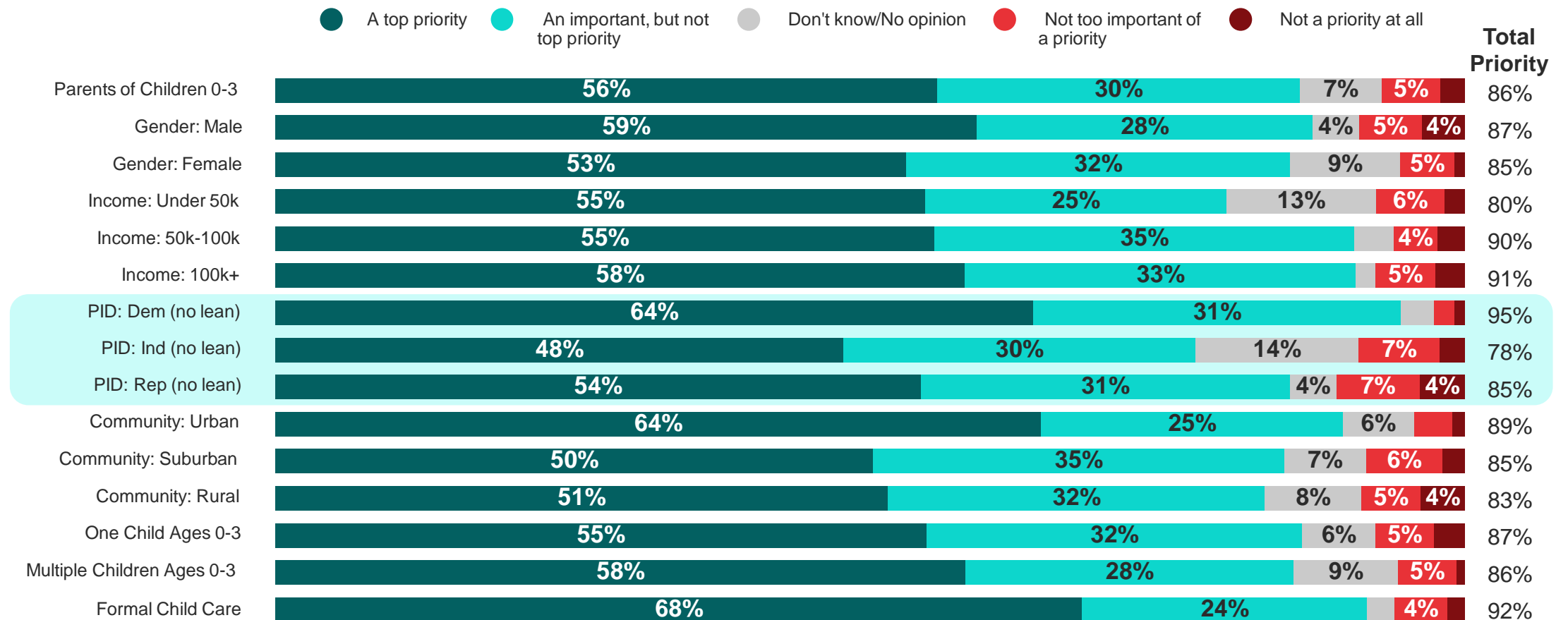
As a reminder, Congress has an opportunity to secure funding to save the U.S. child care system in the upcoming year. How much of a priority, if at all, should it be for Congress to secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year?



PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Importantly, there is bipartisan agreement among both Democrats (95%) and Republicans (85%) that Congress should make securing child care funding a priority.

As a reminder, Congress has an opportunity to secure funding to save the U.S. child care system in the upcoming year. How much of a priority, if at all, should it be for Congress to secure funding for the child care system in the upcoming year?

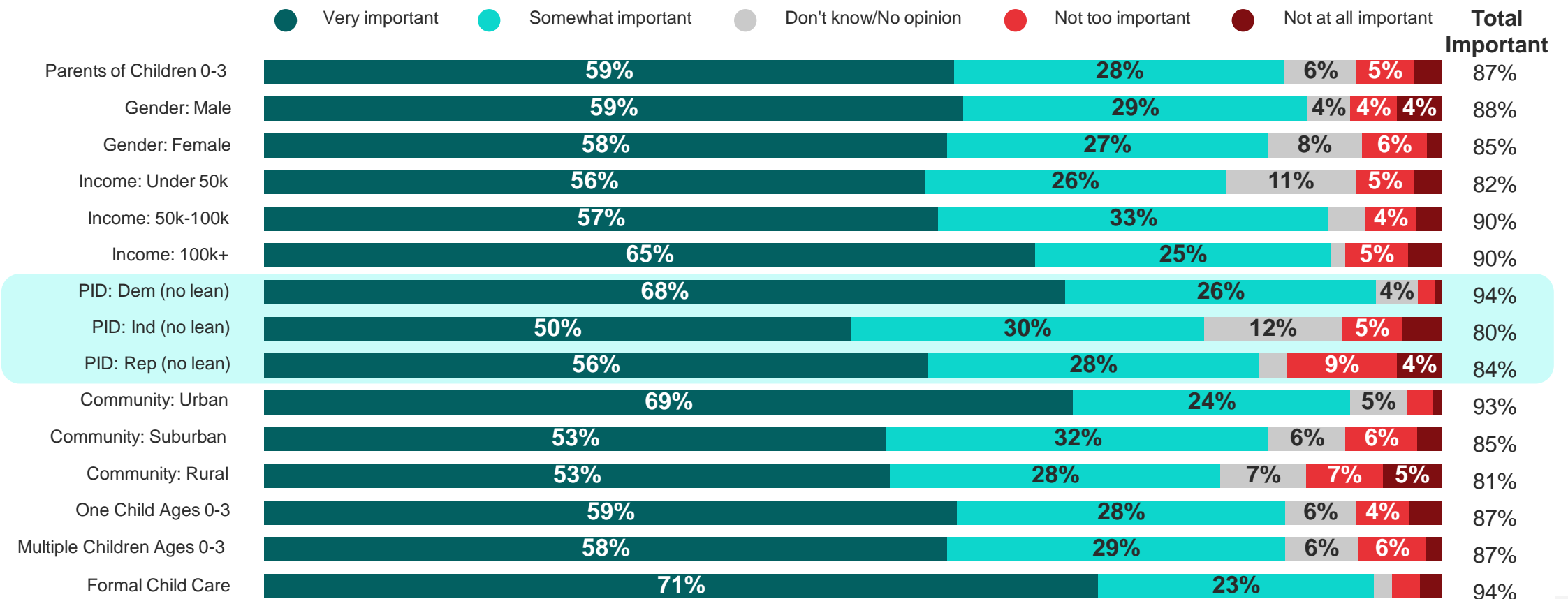


Total priority = A top priority + An important, but not a top priority

PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Similarly, an overwhelming majority of Democrats (94%) and Republicans (84%) say it is important that candidates running in the upcoming 2024 presidential election present a plan to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families.

How important is it to you, if at all, that candidates running in the upcoming 2024 presidential election present a plan to make high quality child care accessible and affordable for families?



Total important = Very important + Somewhat important

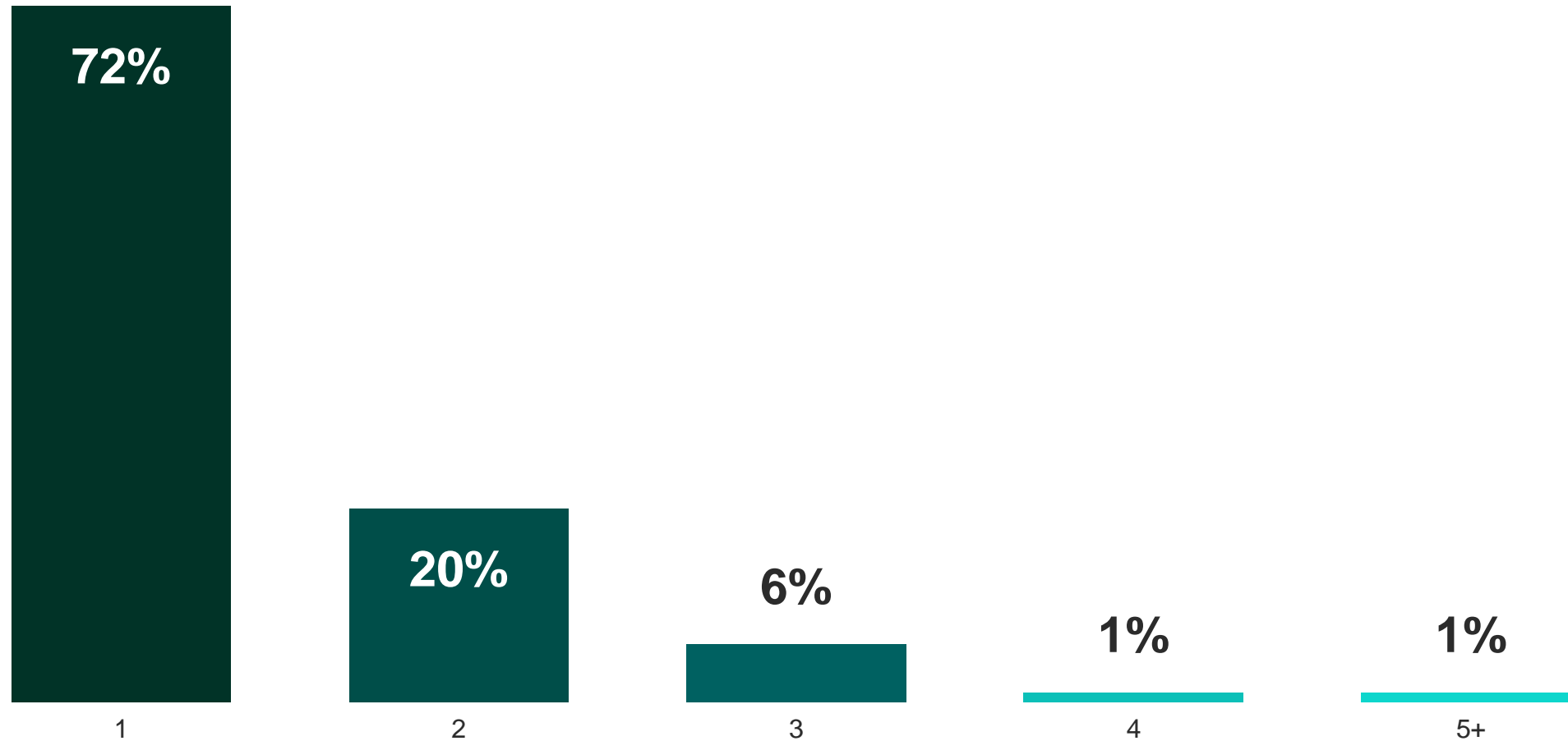
CONTENTS

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?
IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION
PARENTS' LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

APPENDIX

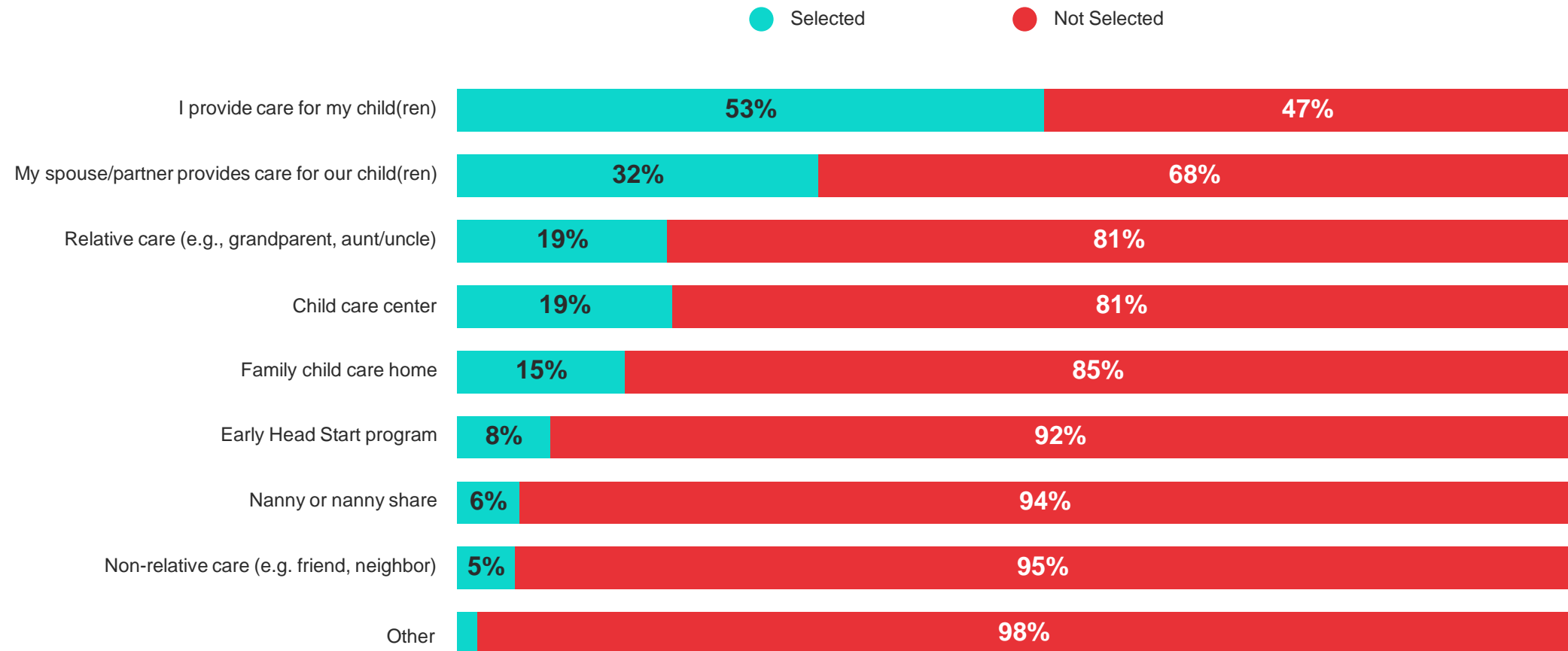


How many children ages 0-3 do you have?



APPENDIX

Which of the following best describes the **current** child care arrangement(s) for your child(ren) ages 0-3? Select all that apply.



Demographic Breakdown

Parents of children 0-3	Gender: Male	Gender: Female	Age: 18-34	Age: 35-44	Age: 45-64	Age: 65+	GenZers: 1997-2012	Millennials: 1981-1996	GenXers: 1965-1980	Baby Boomers: 1946-1964
804	44%	56%	52%	36%	10%	2%	14%	70%	12%	4%

PID: Dem (no lean)	PID: Ind (no lean)	PID: Rep (no lean)	Educ: < College	Educ: Bachelors degree	Educ: Post-grad	Income: Under 50k	Income: 50k-100k	Income: 100k+	Community: Urban	Community: Suburban	Community: Rural
39%	35%	26%	59%	25%	15%	43%	35%	23%	36%	37%	27%

4-Region: Northeast	4-Region: Midwest	4-Region: South	4-Region: West	Ethnicity: White	Ethnicity: Hispanic	Ethnicity: Black	Ethnicity: Other	Has Formal Child Care*	Has Informal Child Care**	One Child Ages 0-3	Multiple Children Ages 0-3
20%	21%	38%	21%	76%	23%	13%	11%	35%	81%	72%	28%

*Includes care provided by child care centers, family child care homes, and Early Head Start programs.

**Includes care provided by parents, relatives, non-relatives, and nannies.



MORNING CONSULT[®]