

COVID-19 Parent Survey:

How the pandemic has impacted California parents' child care plans and preferences

SEPTEMBER 2020



California Child Care Resource & Referral
NETW  **ORK**



COVID-19 Parent Survey

October 6, 2020

How the pandemic has impacted California parents' child care plans and preferences

Presenters



Gemma DiMatteo
Research Director



Keisha Nzewi
Public Policy Director

Agenda



- Main findings from survey
- Policy recommendations
- Open Q&A

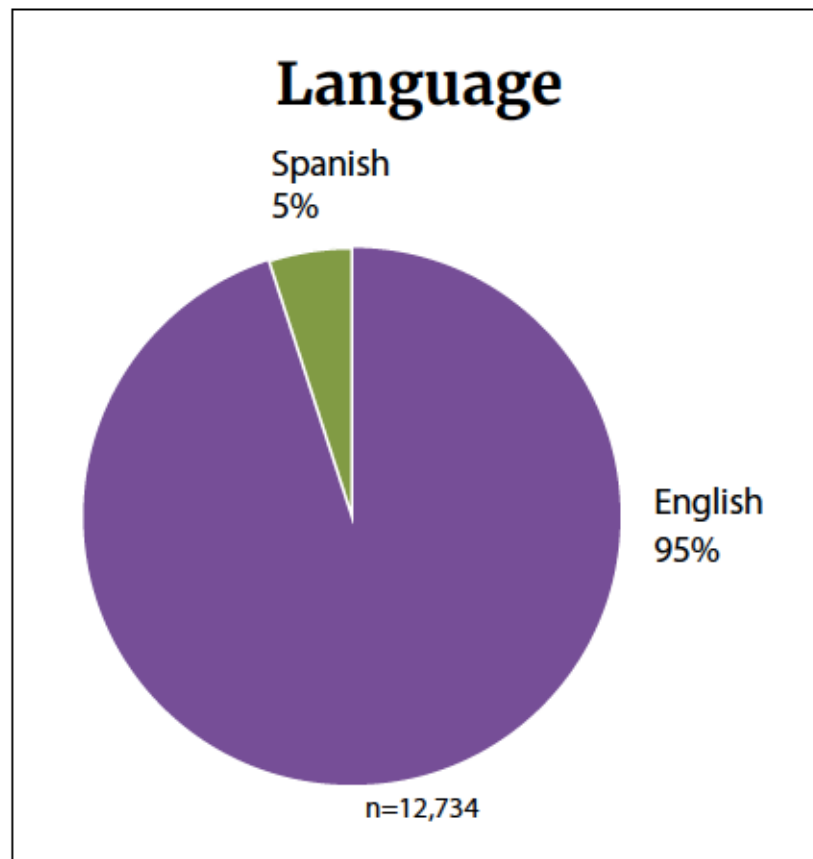
Housekeeping



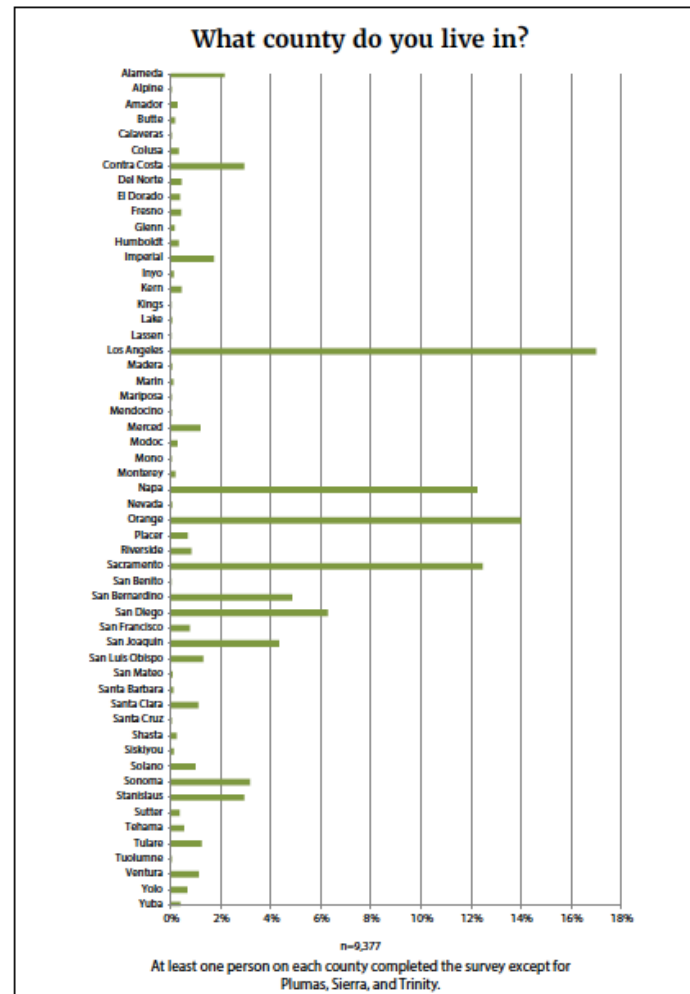
- All participants are muted
- Please type questions into Q&A box
- Follow link in chat box to download the report and slides

Respondents

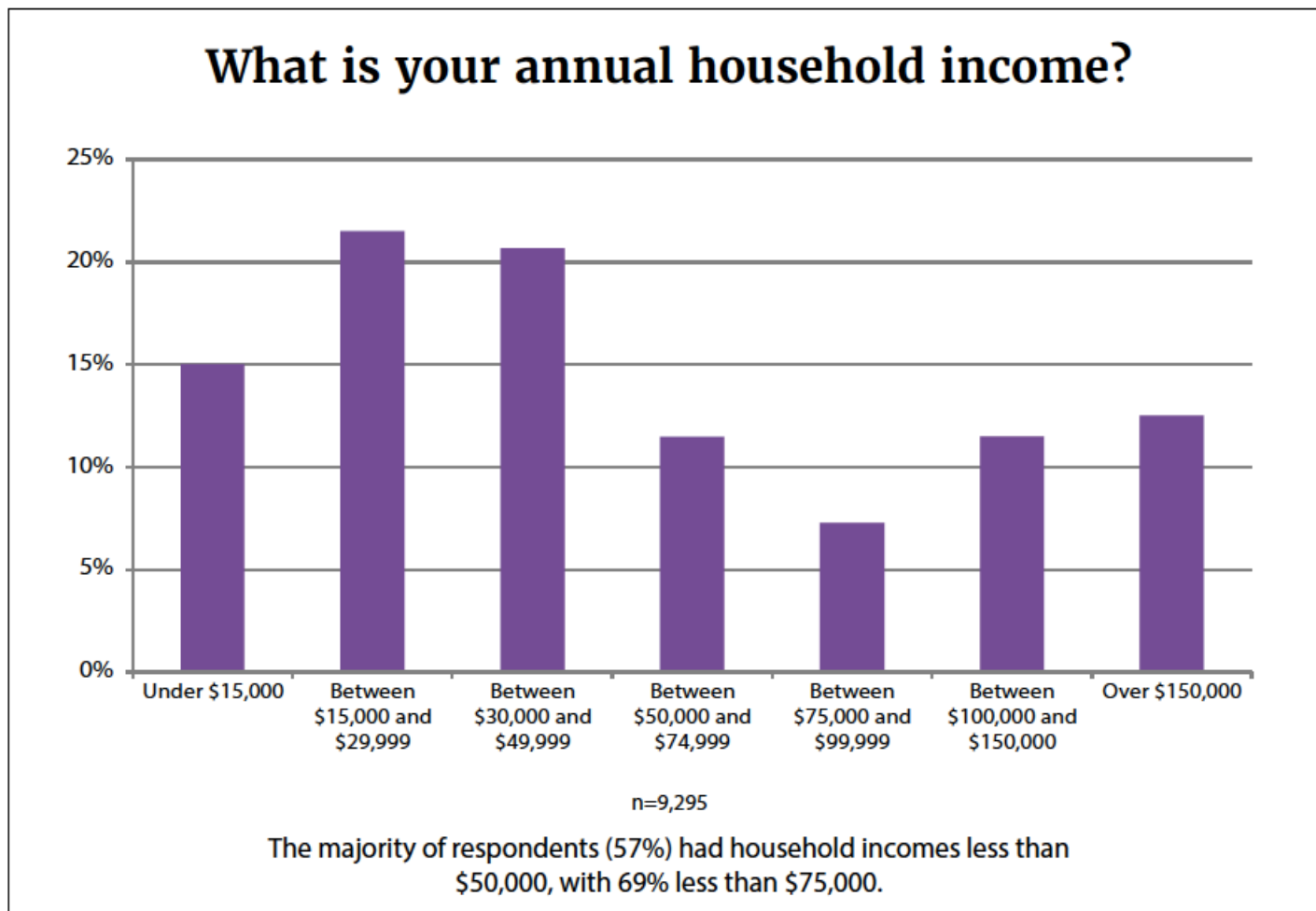
- 12,734 started survey (422 disqualified)
- 9,377 completed survey



Geography



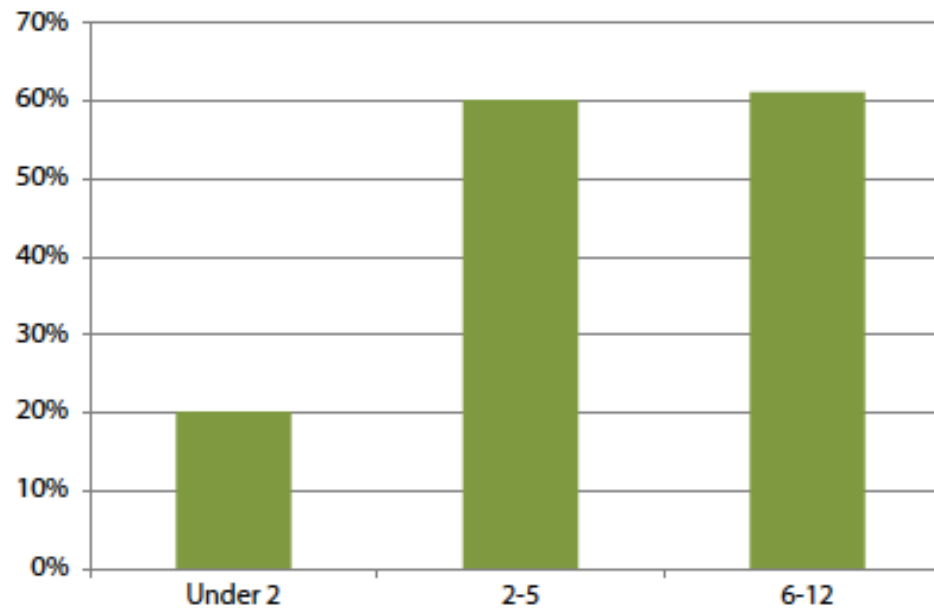
Income



Children's ages



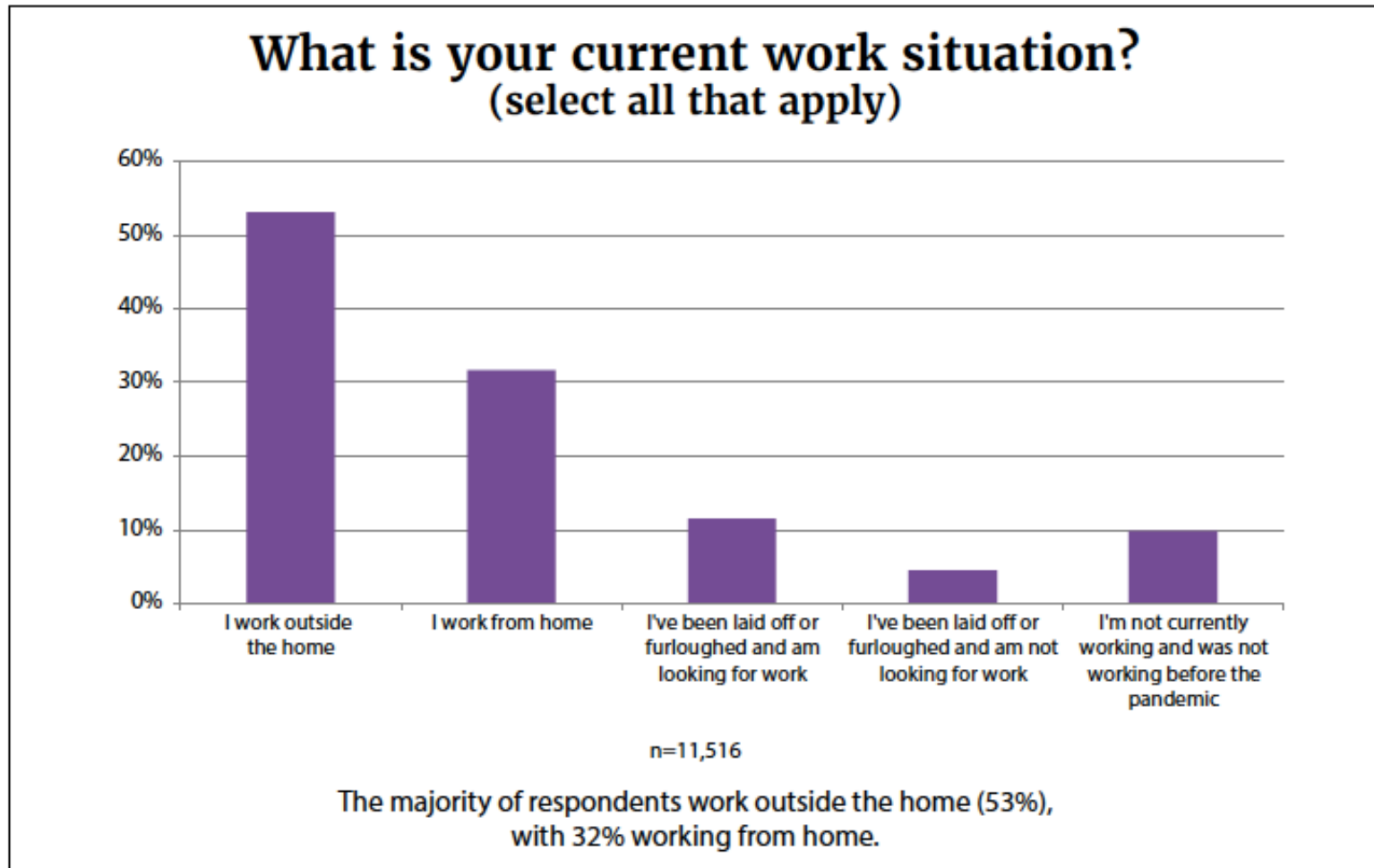
How old are your children? (select all that apply)



n=12,210

61% of respondents have a school-aged child,
60% have a child 2-5, and 20% have a child under 2.

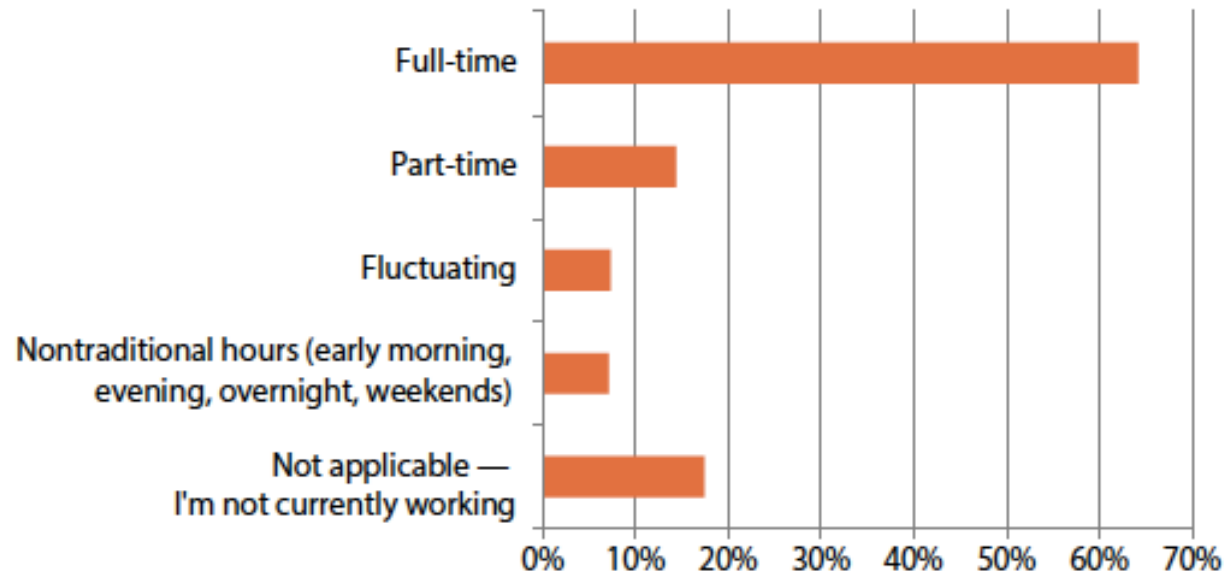
Work status



Work schedule



**Please select your work schedule
(select all that apply)**



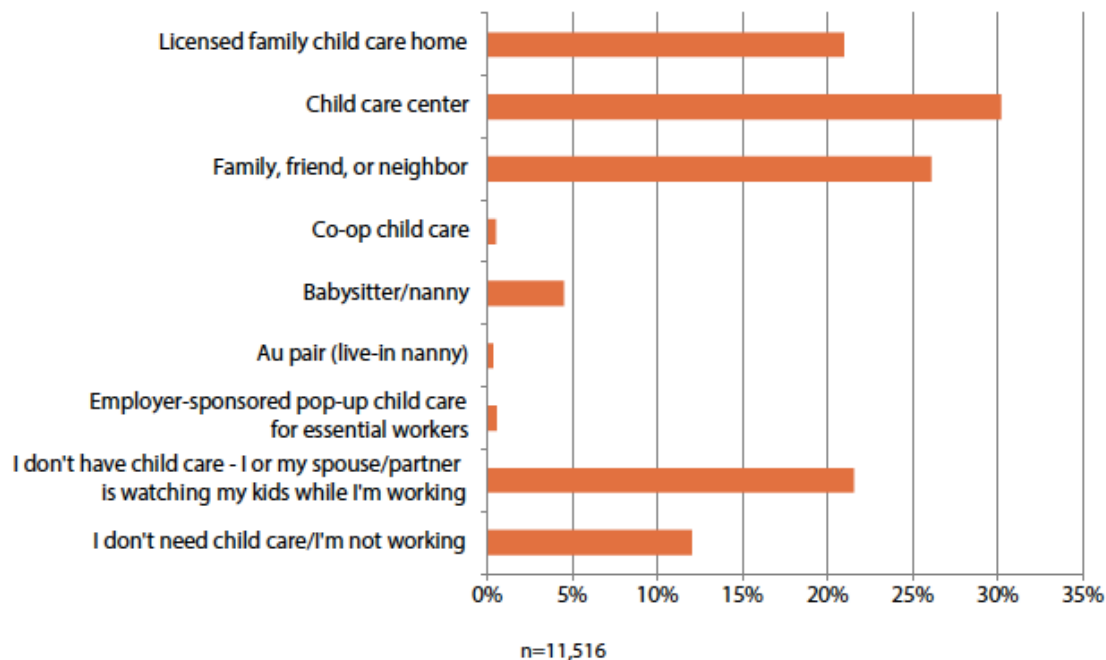
n=11,516

The majority of respondents work full-time (64%).

Child care arrangement

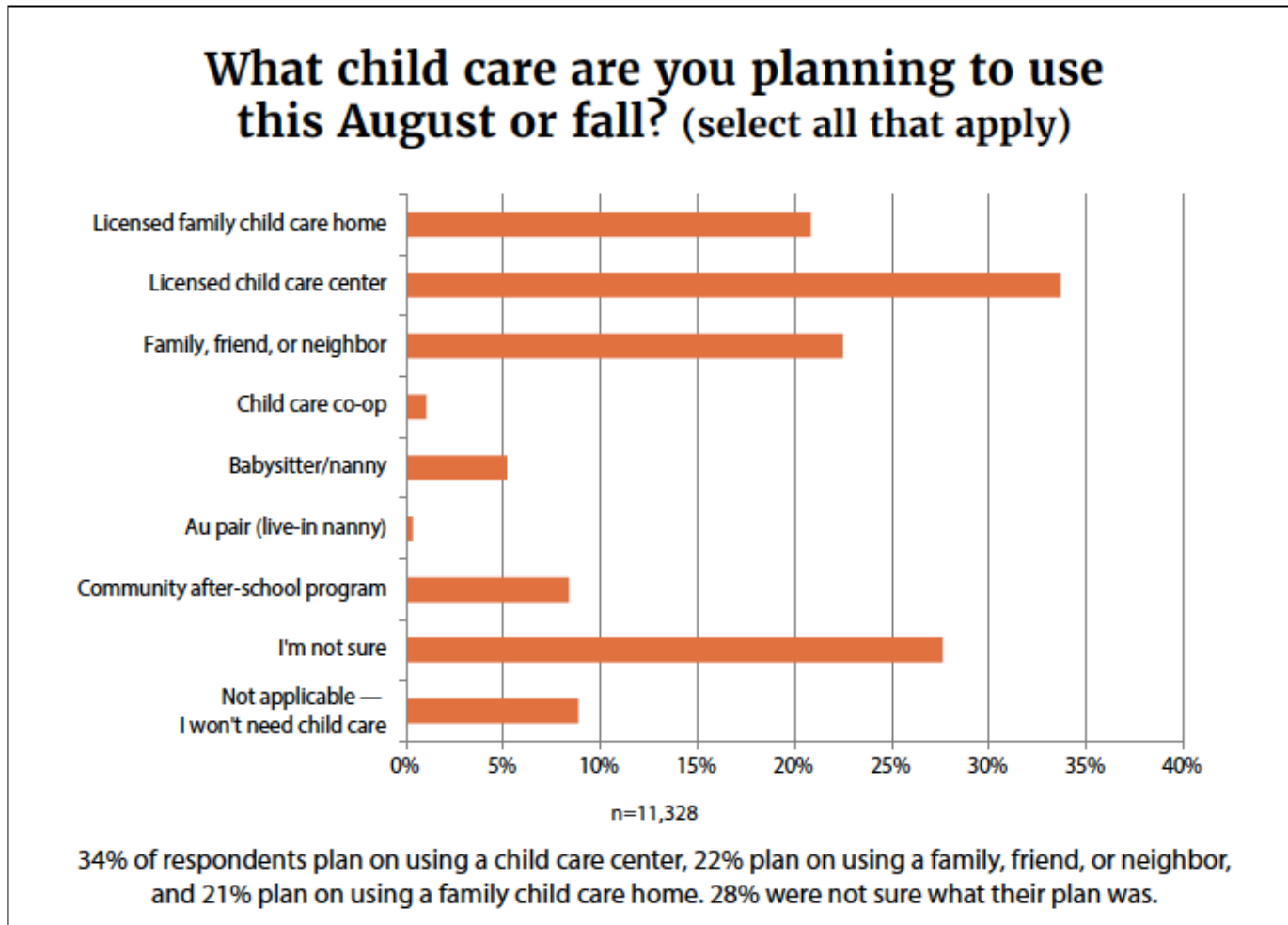


What's your current child care arrangement? (select all that apply)



30% of respondents were currently using a child care center, 26% were using a family, friend or neighbor, and 21% were using a family child care home as their child care arrangement. 22% didn't have any child care and were watching their children at home while they work.

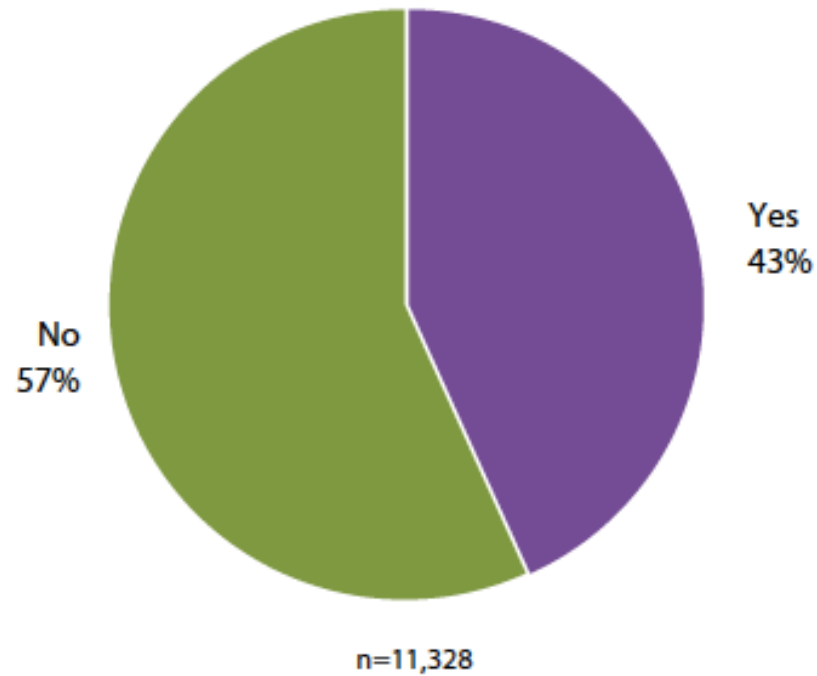
Plans for August/fall



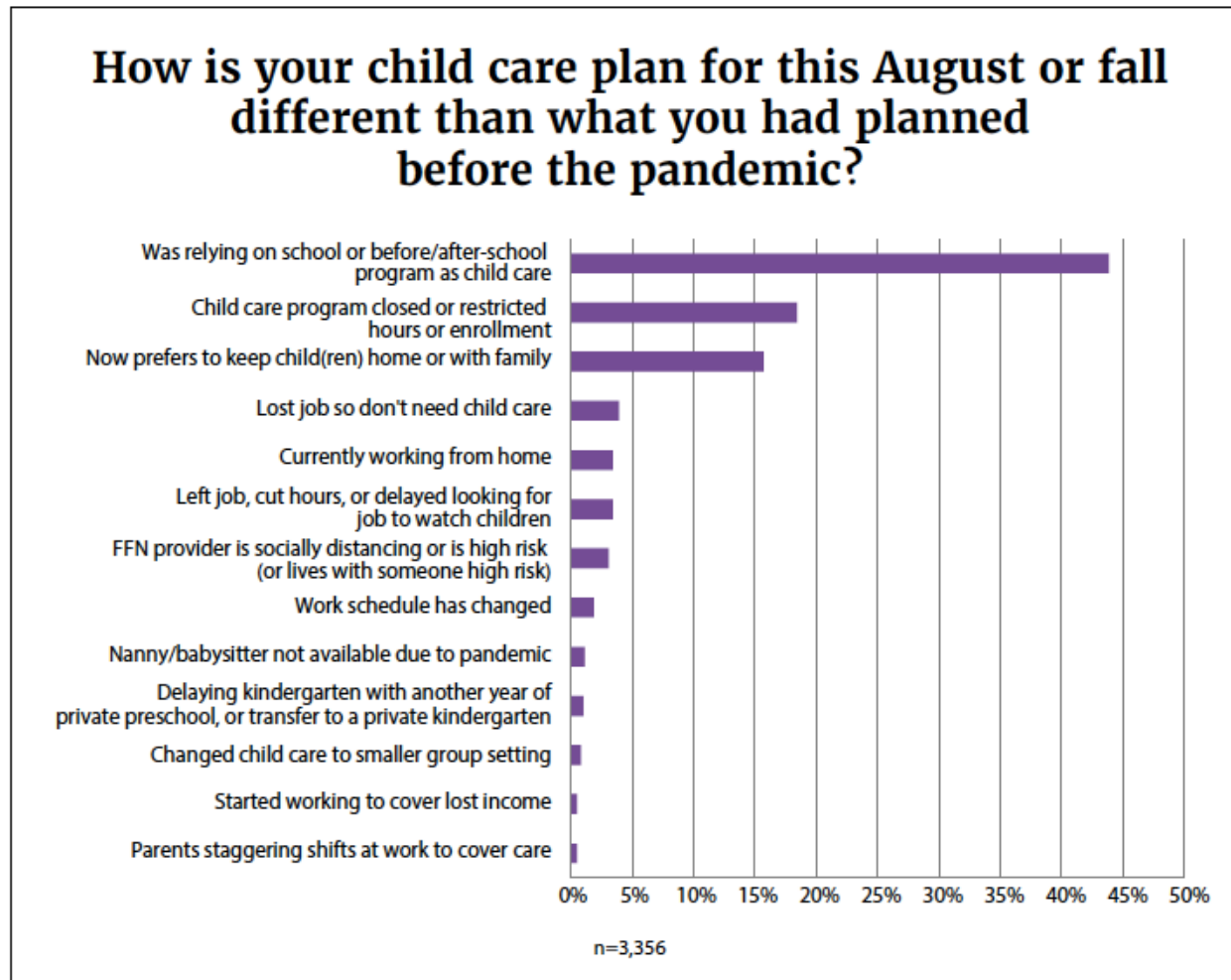
Change in plans



Is this different than what you were planning to use before the pandemic?



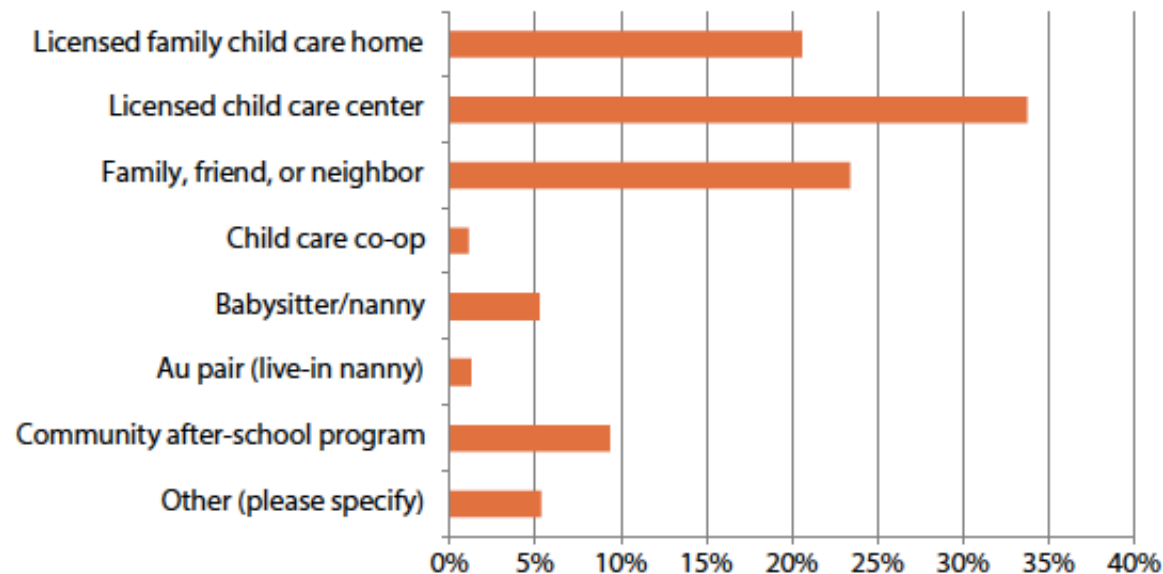
How plans have changed



Preferred setting



If you could choose any type of child care for August or this fall, which would you be most comfortable with?



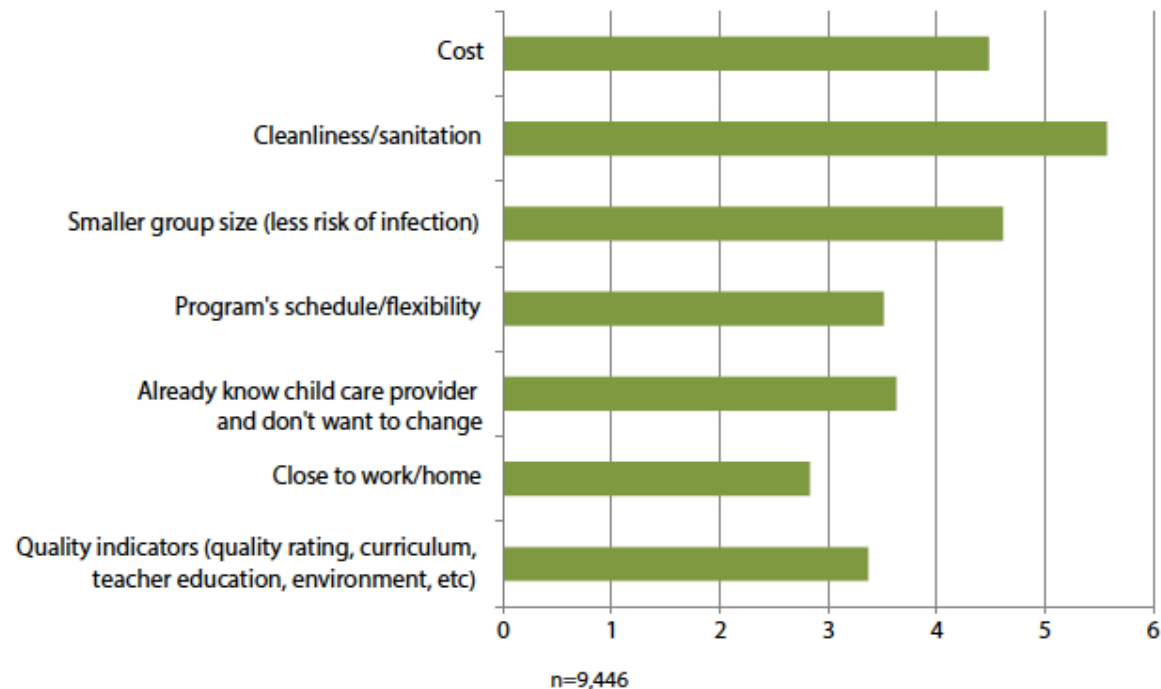
n=9,446

34% of respondents were most comfortable with a child care center, 24% with a family, friend, or neighbor, and 21% with a family child care home.

Factors in preferred setting



What factors are most important to you in choosing a child care setting right now?

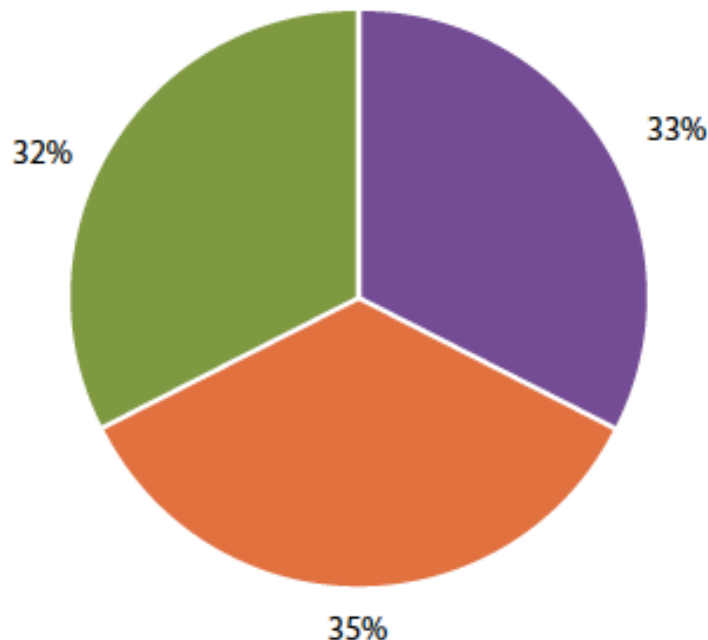


When asked to rank the above factors, the top factor was cleanliness/sanitation, followed by smaller group size and cost.

Forced choice FCC vs center



Which child care setting would you feel more comfortable sending your child to right now?



n=9,446

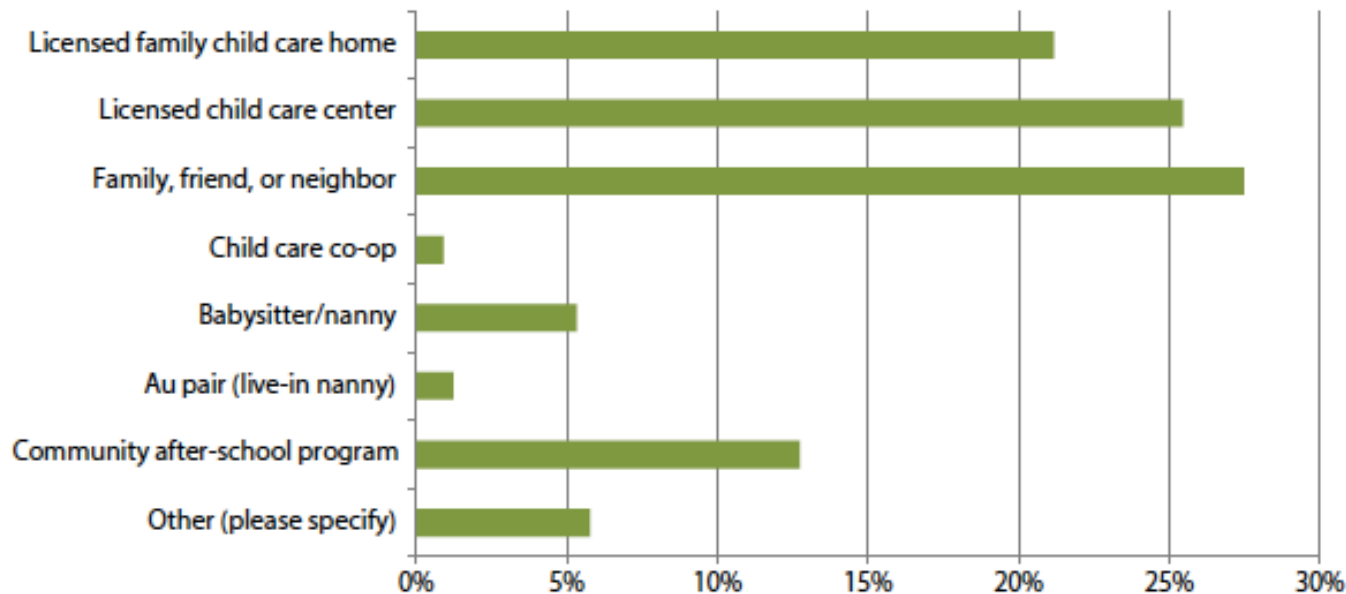
- Licensed family child care home (child care business operated out of an individual's home, with a capacity of 8 or 14 children)
- Licensed center (child care business operated out of a facility, usually with larger capacities)
- I wouldn't feel comfortable with either

When forced to choose between a family child care home and center, 35% chose center, 33% chose family child care home, and 32% were not comfortable with either.

Preferences by age group

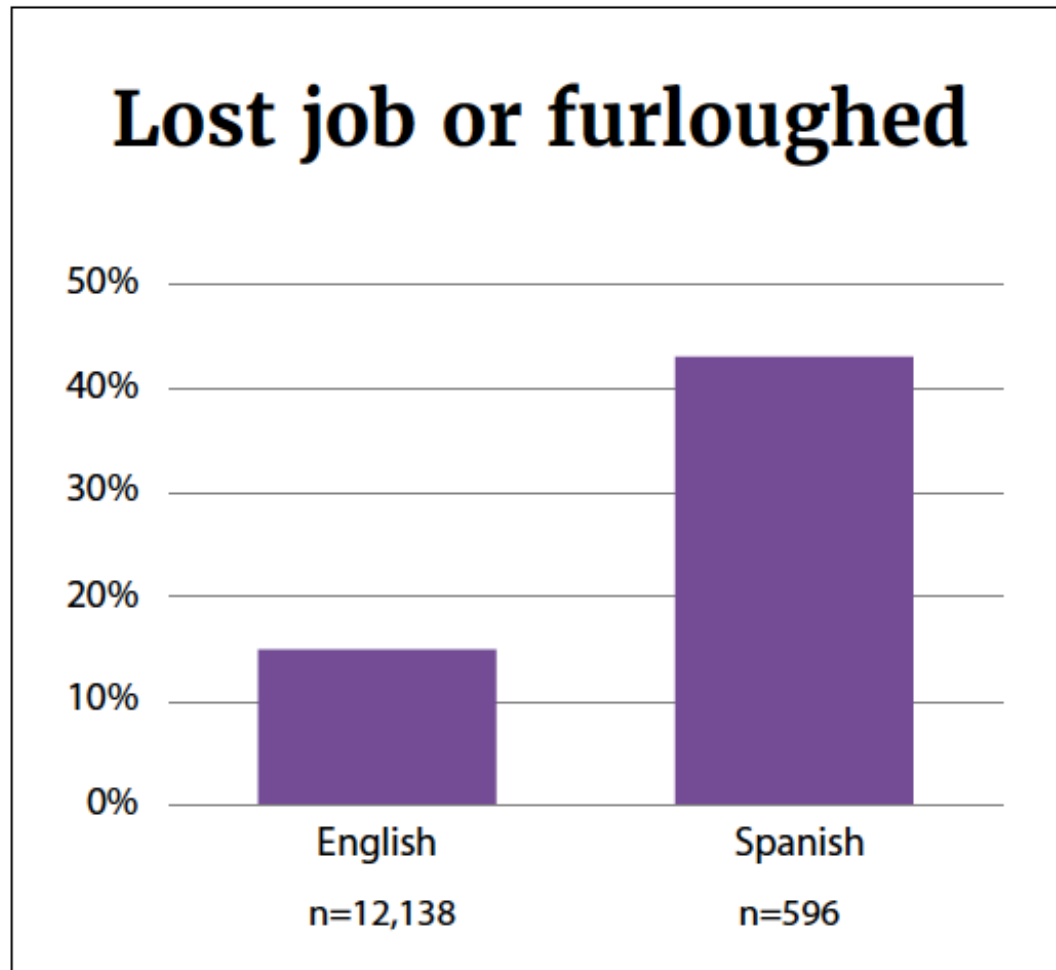
At least one **school-aged** child

If you could choose any type of child care for August or this fall, which would you be most comfortable with?



n=5,709

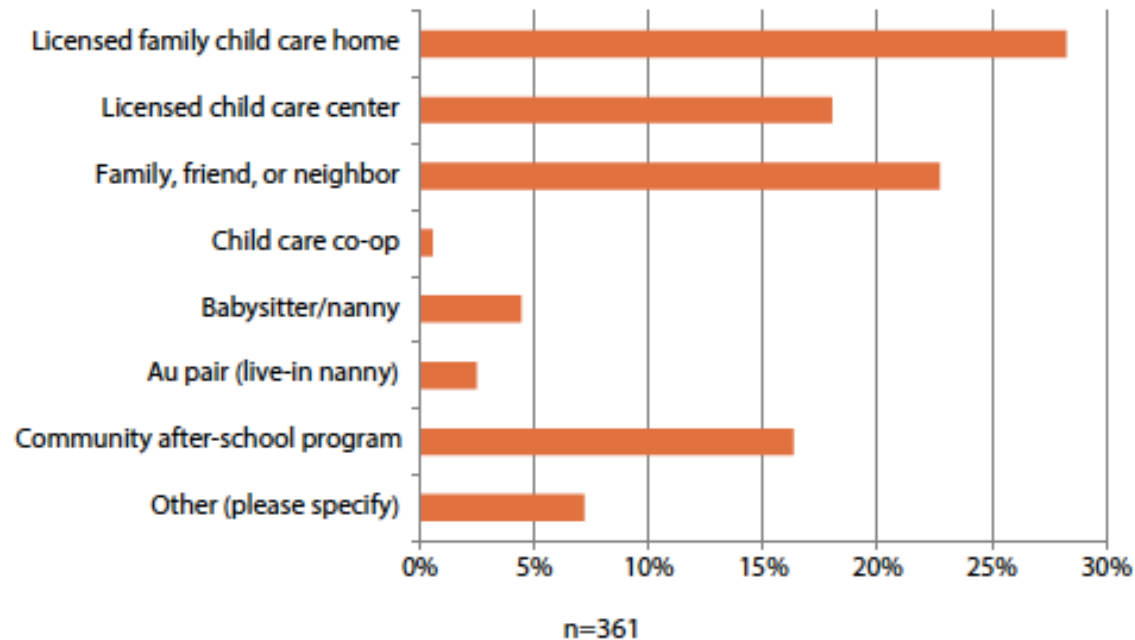
Job loss by language



Preference by language

Spanish responses

If you could choose any type of child care for August or this fall, which would you be most comfortable with?

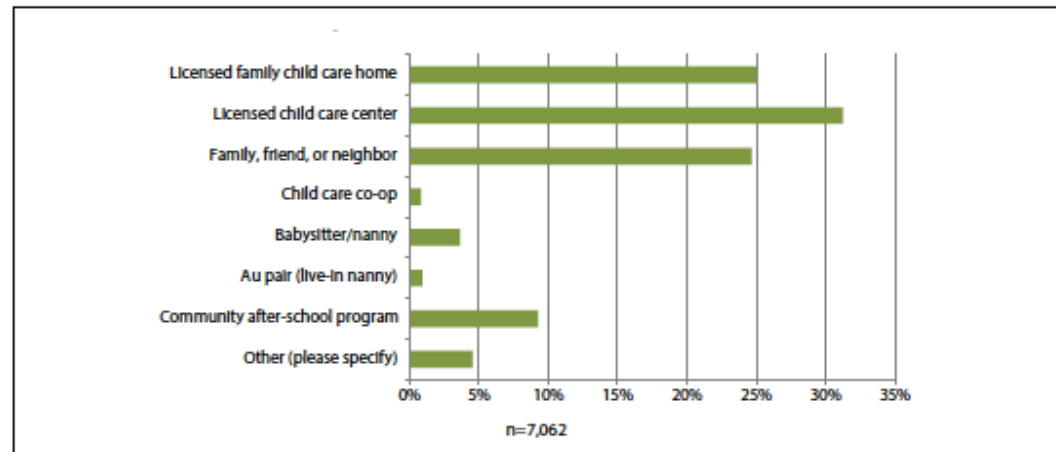


Plans and preferences by income

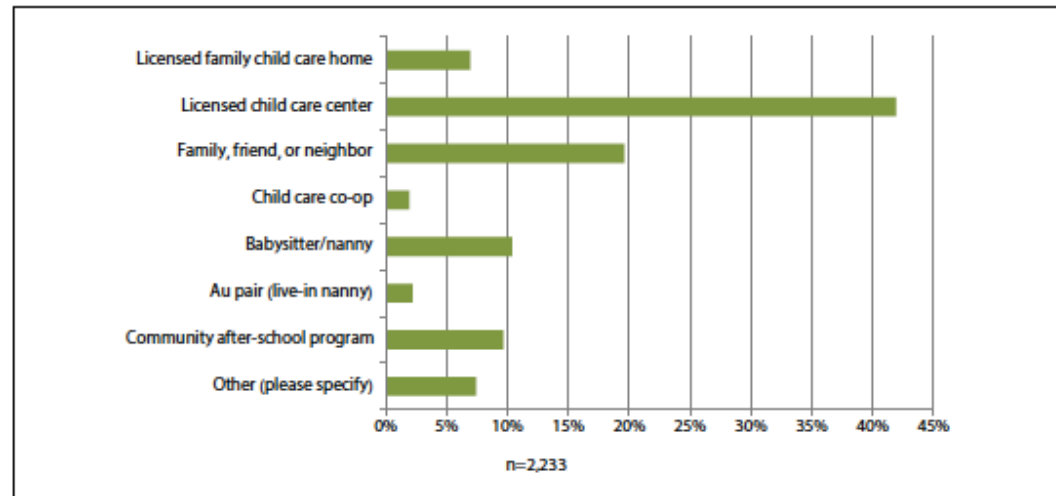
Preference

(similar pattern to plan)

UNDER \$100,000



OVER \$100,000

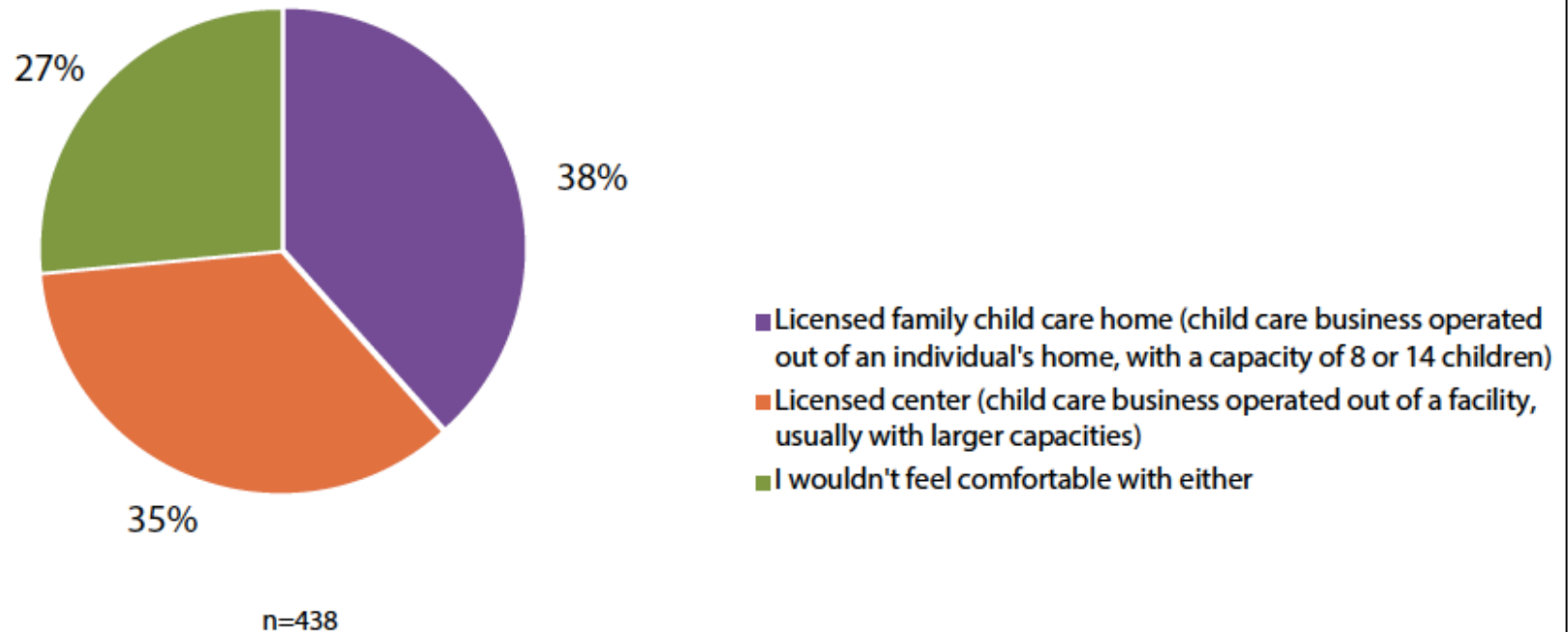


Regional differences



North

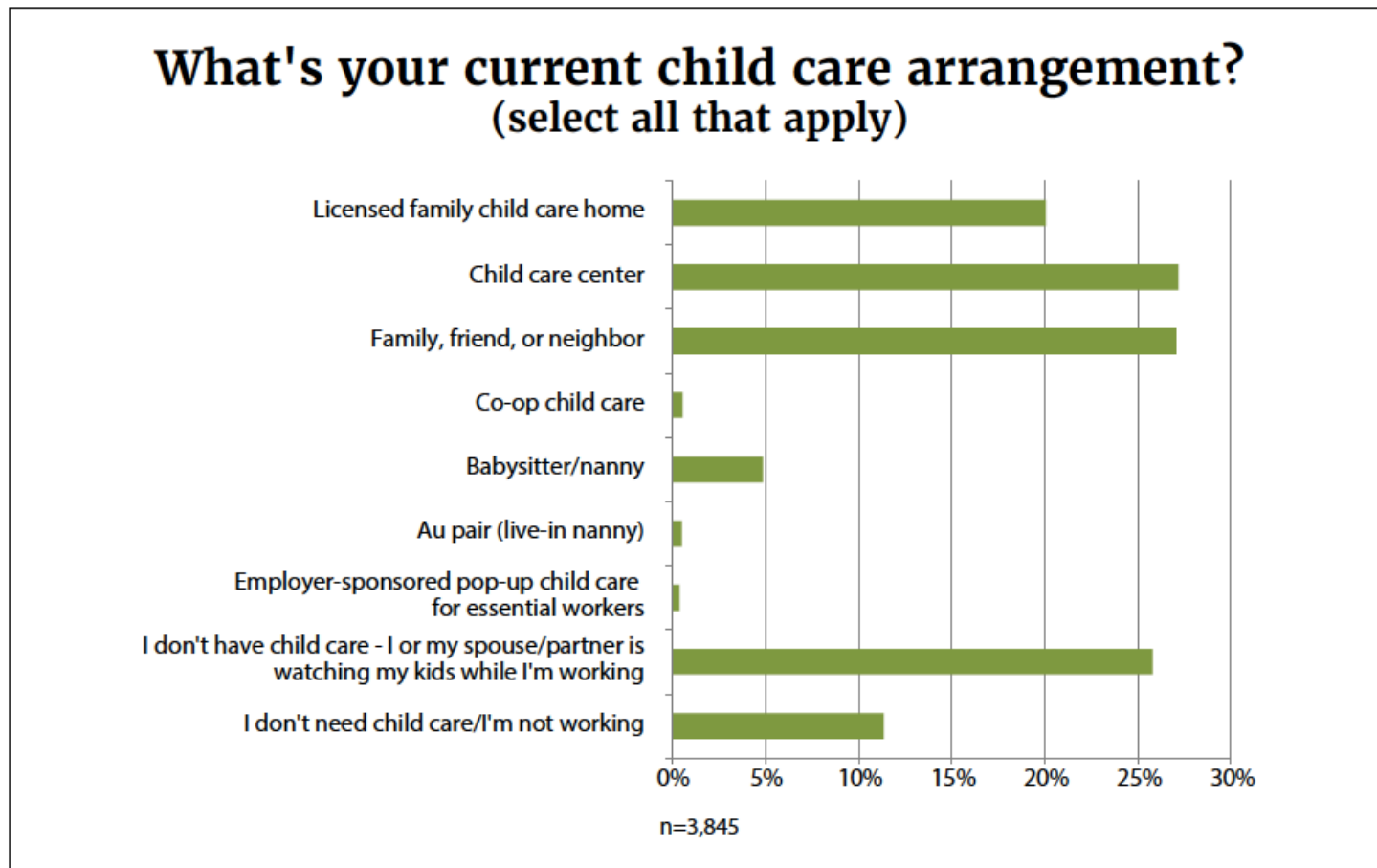
Which child care setting would you feel more comfortable sending your child to right now?



Regional differences



Bay Area

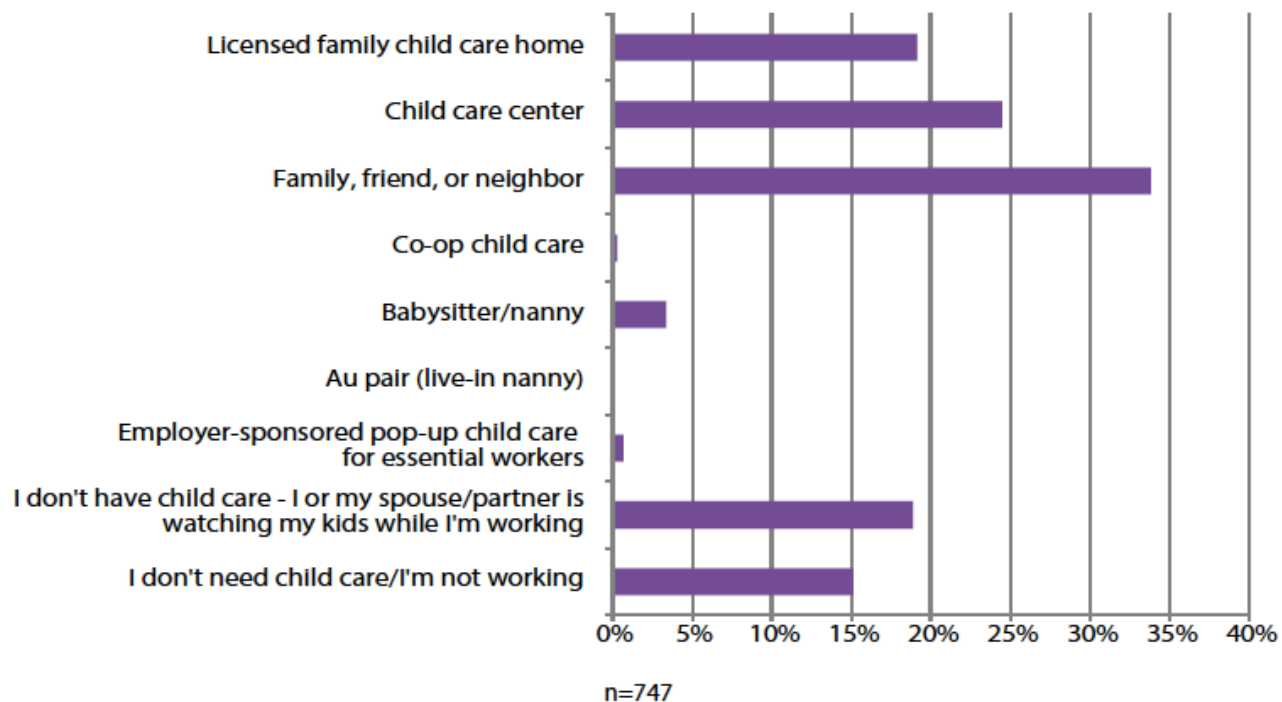


Regional differences



Central Valley

**What's your current child care arrangement?
(select all that apply)**

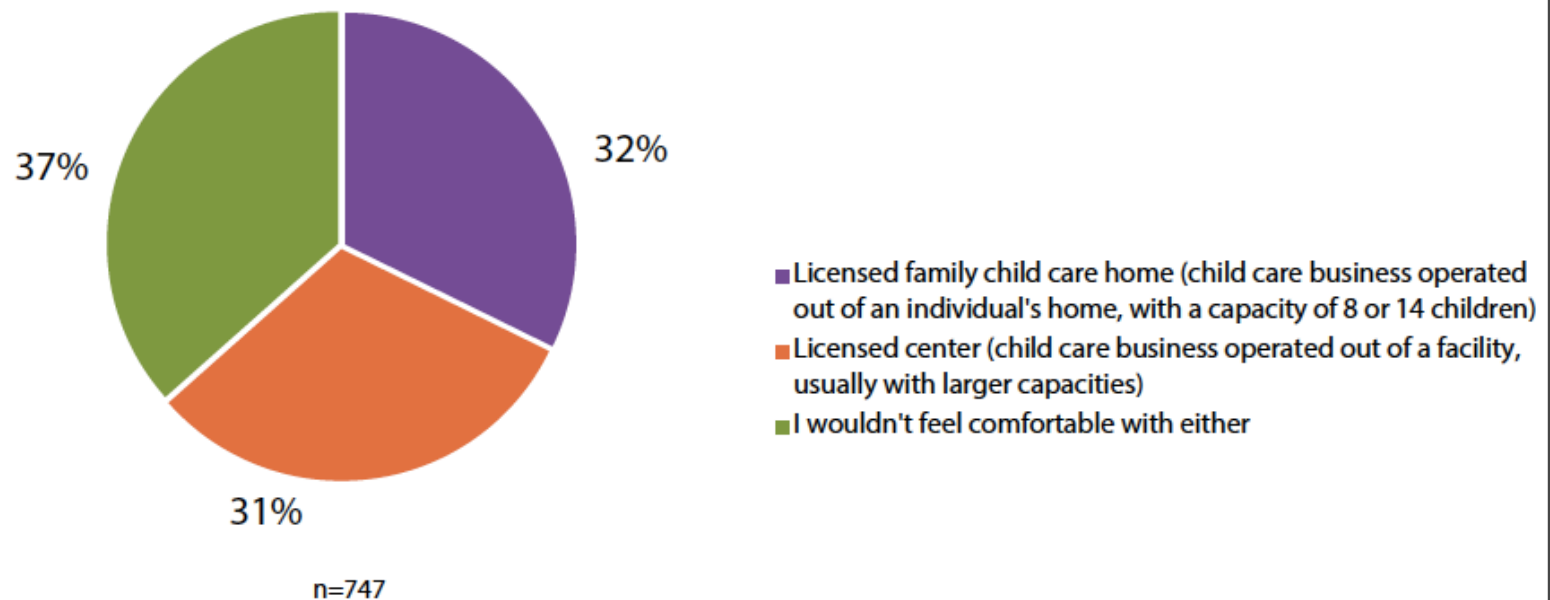


Regional differences



Central Valley

Which child care setting would you feel more comfortable sending your child to right now?



Explanations for preferred setting: center & FCC




- Parents trust people they're already comfortable with
- Center: Follow CDC and other guidelines and regulations, bigger space, sanitation, don't trust people's homes, controls who's on site (parents can't enter), help with homework, curriculum, professional, cameras
- FCC: Smaller group size, communication with provider and parents, sanitation, already know provider, can enter facility (unlike centers)

Explanations for preferred setting: FFN



- Not comfortable with group settings, see family members as the safest option
- Worried about vulnerability of provider, as well as technology and language capacity in helping

Parent insights (open-ended responses)

- 
- Frustration at school closures and the financial and logistical burden of child care being placed solely on them, especially during a time when many are making less money
 - Fear of their child and their family contracting the virus
 - Anxiety around how they were going to piece everything together so that they can work.
 - Uncertainty about being able to keep their child care subsidy
 - Having to quit their jobs or considering quitting their jobs due to a lack of affordable or available child care

Parent insights



“I might have to quit my job because I won’t have day care for kids since schools are not opening up in my area. No afterschool programs. Neighbors have kids who will also be doing remote learning and it’s hard to add 2 additional children for them to help and watch. This is an extremely difficult situation and my anxiety is off the charts.”

Parent insights



“I have enough funds to survive until January, but will have to juggle children and homeschooling and somehow work. I currently have no idea how to keep my head above water with no childcare coverage for the next year when hopefully they will be able to go to kindergarten. As the sole provider and only parent for my children, for the first time I am truly scared without having some form of childcare assistance.”

Conclusions



- 1) Maintain a robust mixed delivery system
- 2) Widening inequality
- 3) Parent supports

1) Maintain a robust mixed delivery system



Recommendations to maintain and efficiently use center-based group settings:

- Provide public or private in-kind and financial assistance
- School-aged care should be done in partnership with schools
- Research additional options to consider temporarily adjusting classroom capacity based on space configuration or mixed age groups with a maximum number of families

1) Maintain a robust mixed delivery system



Recommendations to increase visibility of licensed family child care as an option for parents:

- Program that provides coaching to FCCs and a list of procedures and precautions to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infection and spread, that results in an unofficial badge or certification
- The state should apply for a federal Waiver for Extraordinary Circumstances for relief from specific CCDF requirements for health and safety training for home-based providers


1) Maintain a robust mixed delivery system




Recommendations to increase visibility of licensed family child care as an option for parents (cont.):

- Make an allowance for subsidy payments for license-exempt caregiving to be allowed in the parents' home
- Support for home-based providers to assist children with distance learning


2) Support for parents

- 
- Advocate for federal and state funds to support subsidized child care for families, and encourage local and state incentives for employers to offer or subsidize child care for their employees
 - Encourage workplace flexibility and enable parents to successfully juggle between their caregiving duties and work responsibilities

2) Support for parents

- 
- The state's subsidized child care system should examine and consider if their standard eligibility rules need to be adjusted, as there may be disruptions. This can include eliminating the family fee requirement, lengthening 12-month eligibility, extending hours eligible for reimbursement, and adding more flexible funding in high-growth geographic areas with density of low-wage workers.

2) Support for parents

- 
- Redeploy any staff who are in contact with families to check in with parents and see how they're coping, and offer any resources or support available
 - Where non-English-speaking parents or family members are finding themselves as a caregiver and supporting their child's online participation in school, ensuring there is support for the non-English speaker so they can help their child as needed

3) Widening inequality



Recommendations to slow the widening inequality:

- Child care funds must be targeted and enhanced in low-income communities to shore up the child care supply and make it a safe opportunity for families to use
- Low-income families should have priority in accessing child care subsidies that support them in their parenting responsibilities.
- Support a range of resources and for children and families

3) Widening inequality



- Support parents to create a learning pod for their children using voucher subsidies. Continue to allow parents to hire a TrustLine caregiver while following the Emergency Capacity Waiver under Department of Social Services and explore available public funding targeted to Local Education Agencies, such as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) supplemental or Federal Title I, to partner with FCCs to support and enhance learning of school-aged children.