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# Early Childhood Education in Massachusetts

September 2020

# About the Survey



<b>Mode</b>	Data was collected through an online panel and on the phone. The telephone portion was conducted by trained professional interviewers from a central, monitored location; respondents were interviewed on cell phones and landlines.
<b>Sample</b>	599 parents of young children in Massachusetts
<b>Dates</b>	August 13-26, 2020
<b>Note</b>	Some data may not add up to 100% due to rounding

### **Sampling Methodology Note:**

Households with young children proved hard to contact, as parents were hesitant to answer questions about their children. After initial outreach, we included an introduction stating that "This research is being sponsored by Strategies for Children, a Boston-based not-for-profit organization that advocates for policies to support the childcare needs of families across Massachusetts" which helped to increase the response rate.



## KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Fewer families anticipate utilizing childcare now, compared to before coronavirus (76% prior to COVID, 62% anticipate using in the fall).
- ◆ The main factor behind the drop in childcare utilization is concerns about children and family safety during coronavirus (82% of families not using childcare this fall say that *minimizing coronavirus exposure risk* was a factor).
  - ◆ But a significant segment of families also say their preferred provider hasn't reopened or is out of business due to the pandemic.
- ◆ Parents are very concerned that not sending their children to childcare will lead to negative social, health, and learning consequences.



## KEY FINDINGS, Cont.

- ◆ Working parents are also very concerned that their job performance will suffer as a result of their fall childcare arrangements.
- ◆ Families with young children and school-age children are highly dependent on school plans when making decisions about fall childcare arrangements (52% dependent), and many of them are considering suboptimal arrangements, like having older children care for younger children during the school day.
- ◆ Children's pediatricians, the CDC, and childcare providers are most trusted on childcare decisions.

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## DETAILED FINDINGS





# Profile of the Sample

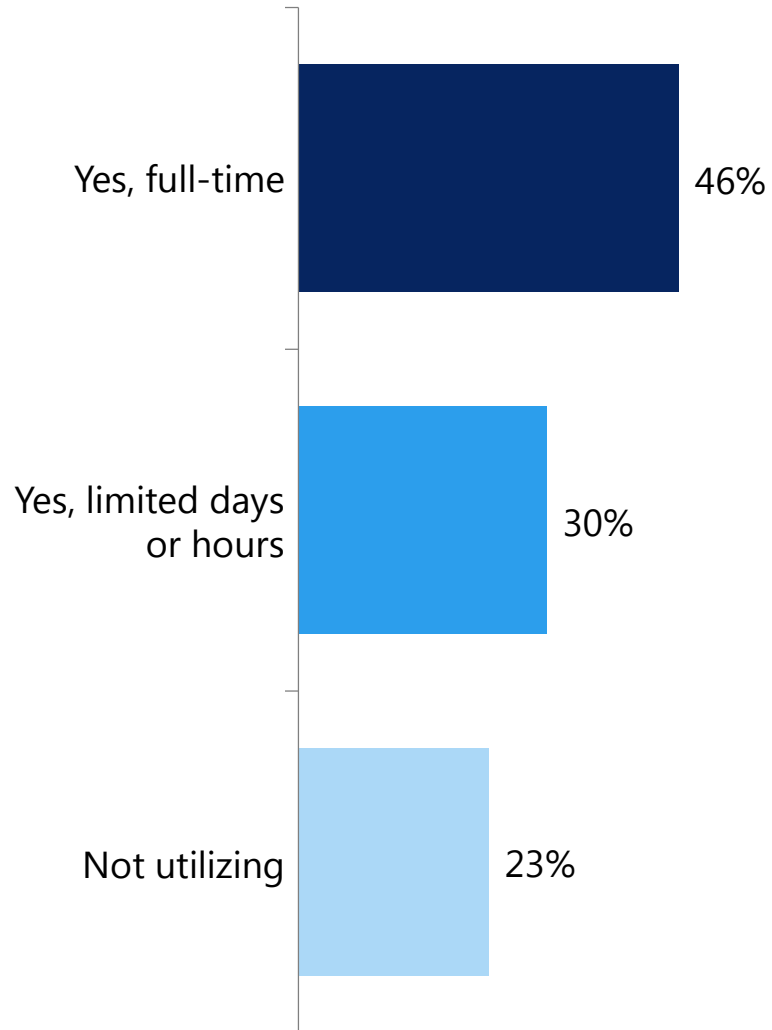
Category	Group	% of Sample
Gender	Male	34
	Female	64
Age	Under 30	18
	30-44	72
	45+	11
Children	Under age 6	100
	Age 6-12	49
Education	Noncollege	35
	College degree	64
Ethnicity	White	73
	Black	10
	Latinx or Hispanic	16

Category	Group	% of Sample
Region	South	20
	North	13
	West	25
	Suburbs	30
	Boston	12
Household Income	Under \$30k	12
	\$30k-\$60k	20
	\$60k-\$100k	25
	Greater than \$100k	38

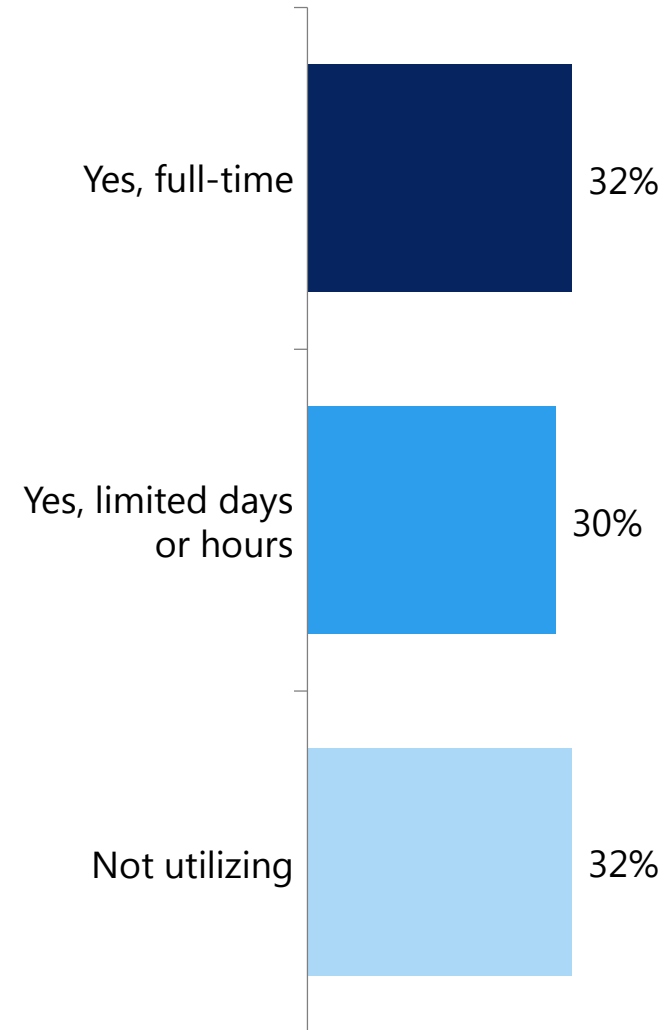


# Fewer families utilizing childcare as a result of coronavirus.

**Childcare Prior to Coronavirus**



**Anticipated Childcare this Fall**

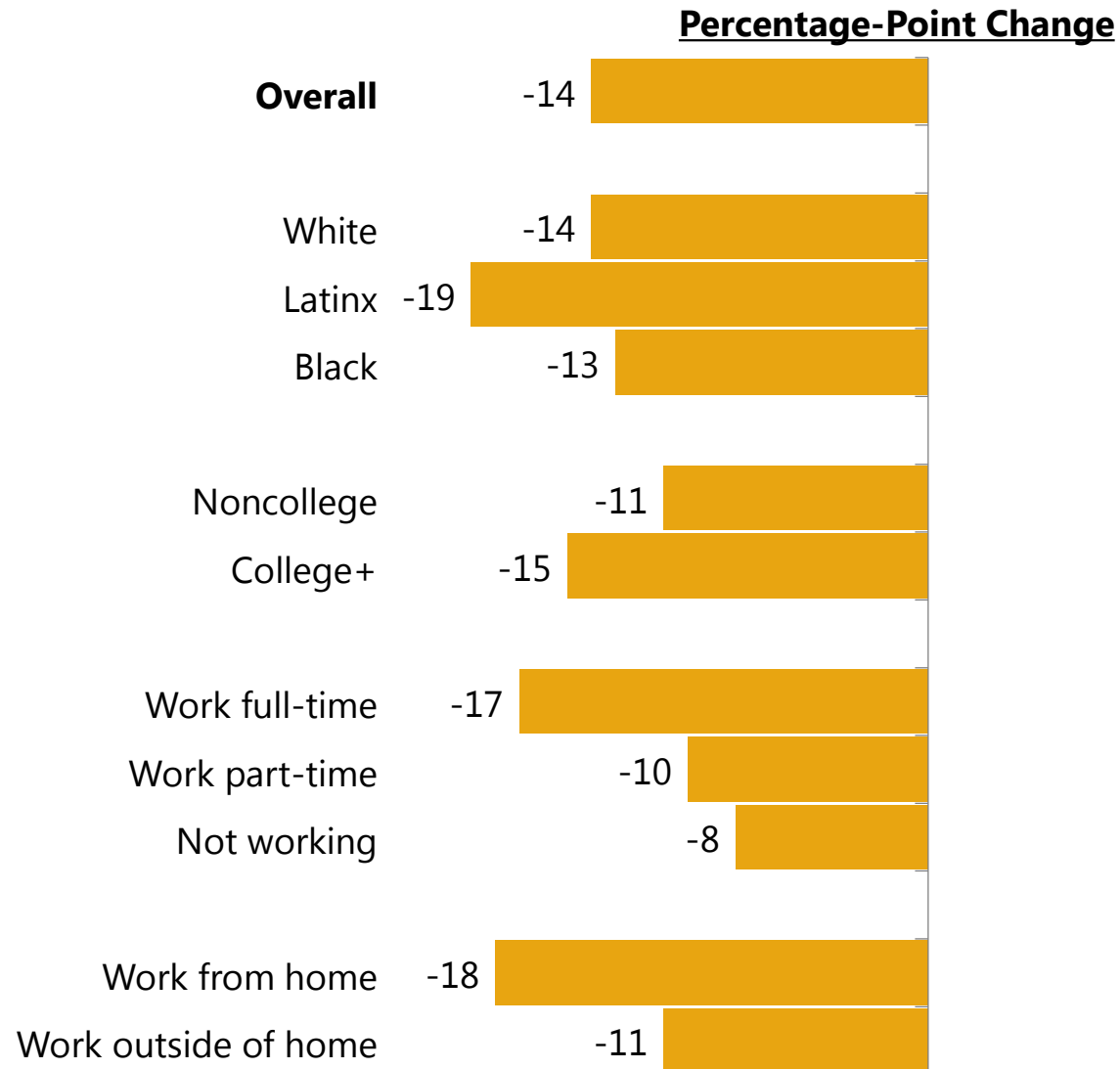


Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

Q6: Prior to March 2020 and the coronavirus pandemic, were you using childcare of any kind? AND Q7: This fall, do you anticipate utilizing childcare full-time Monday through Friday, for a limited number of hours or days, or not at all?



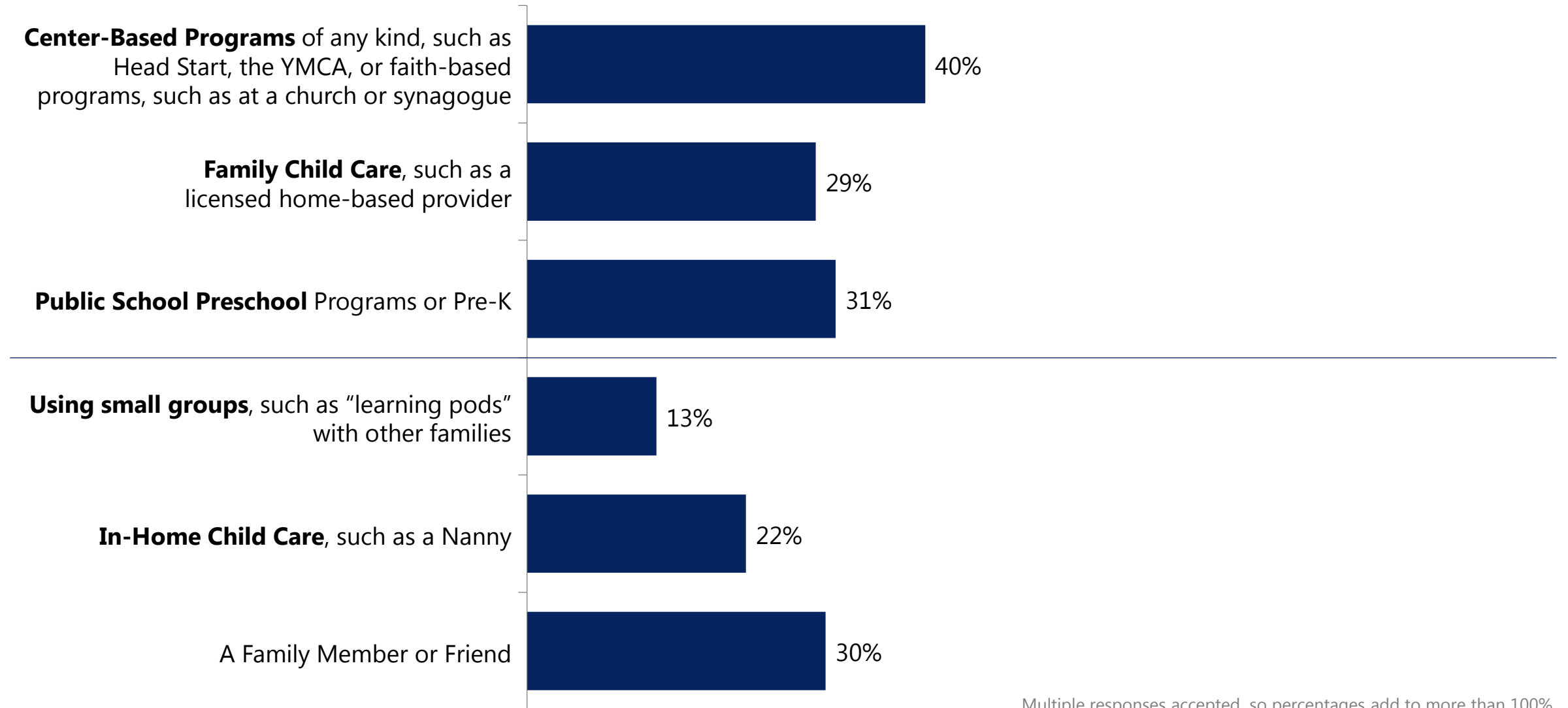
# Biggest drops in childcare utilization among Latinx and full-time workers.







# Expected childcare arrangements for the fall.

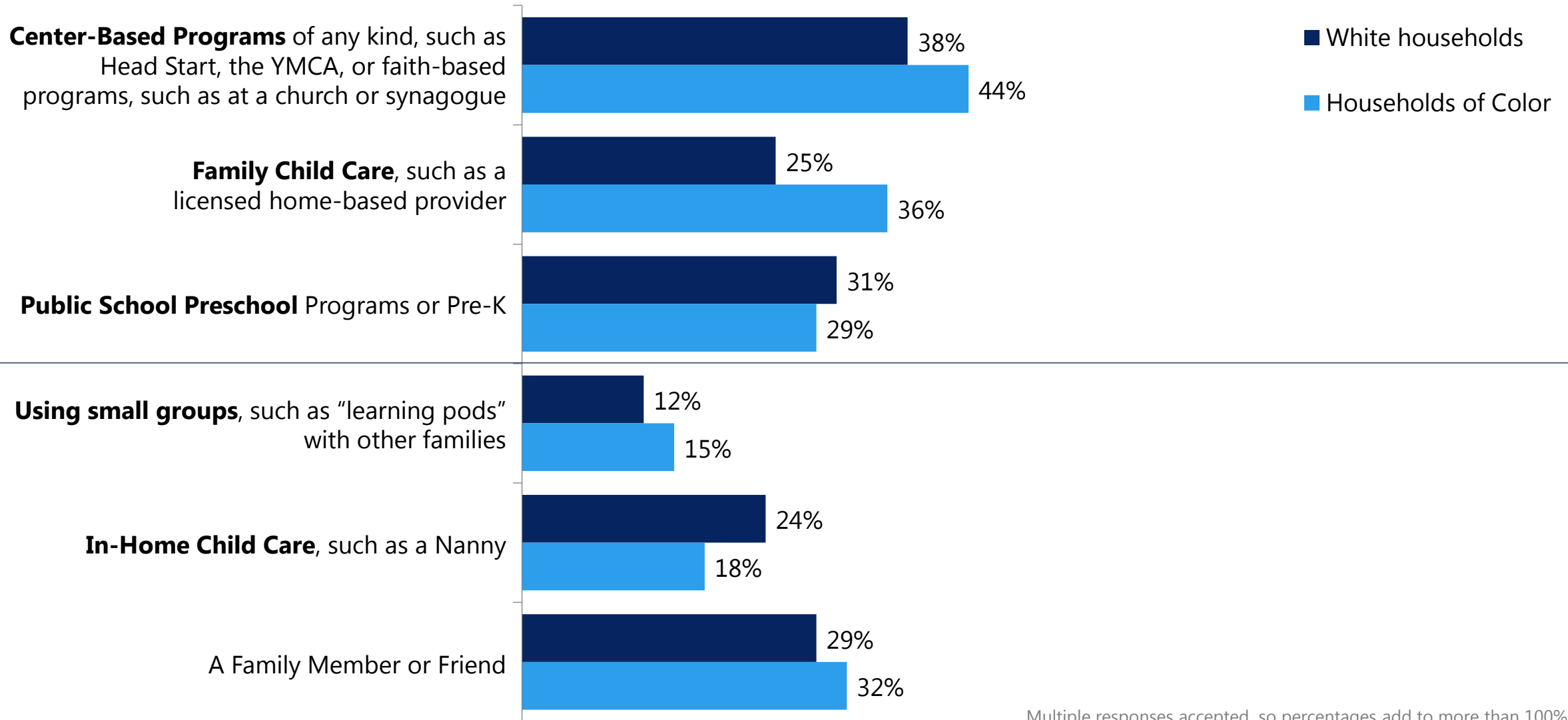


N=369

Multiple responses accepted, so percentages add to more than 100%.  
Note: Remainder Other / Not sure / Refused



# Expected childcare arrangements for the fall, by ethnicity.

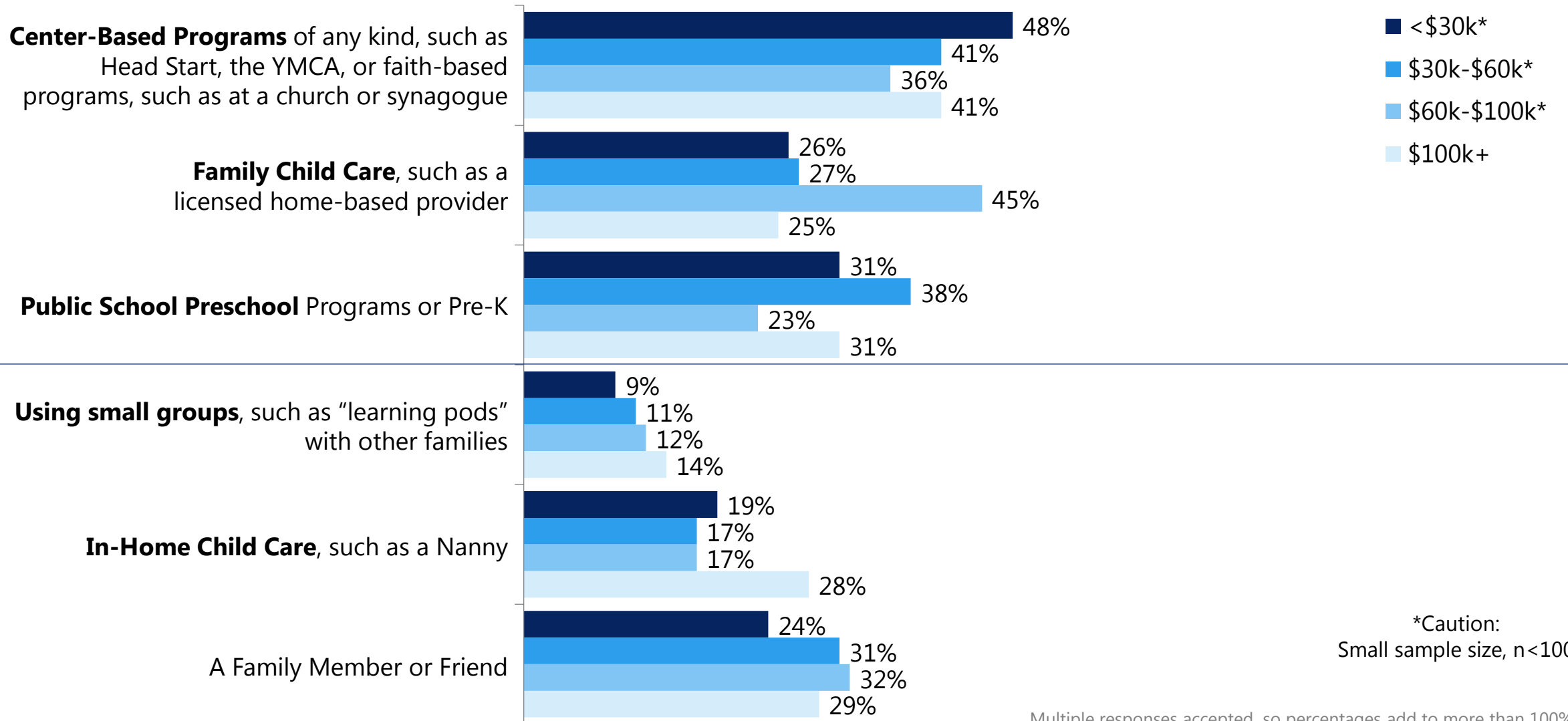


N=369

Multiple responses accepted, so percentages add to more than 100%.  
Note: Remainder Other / Not sure / Refused



# Expected childcare arrangements for the fall, by household income.



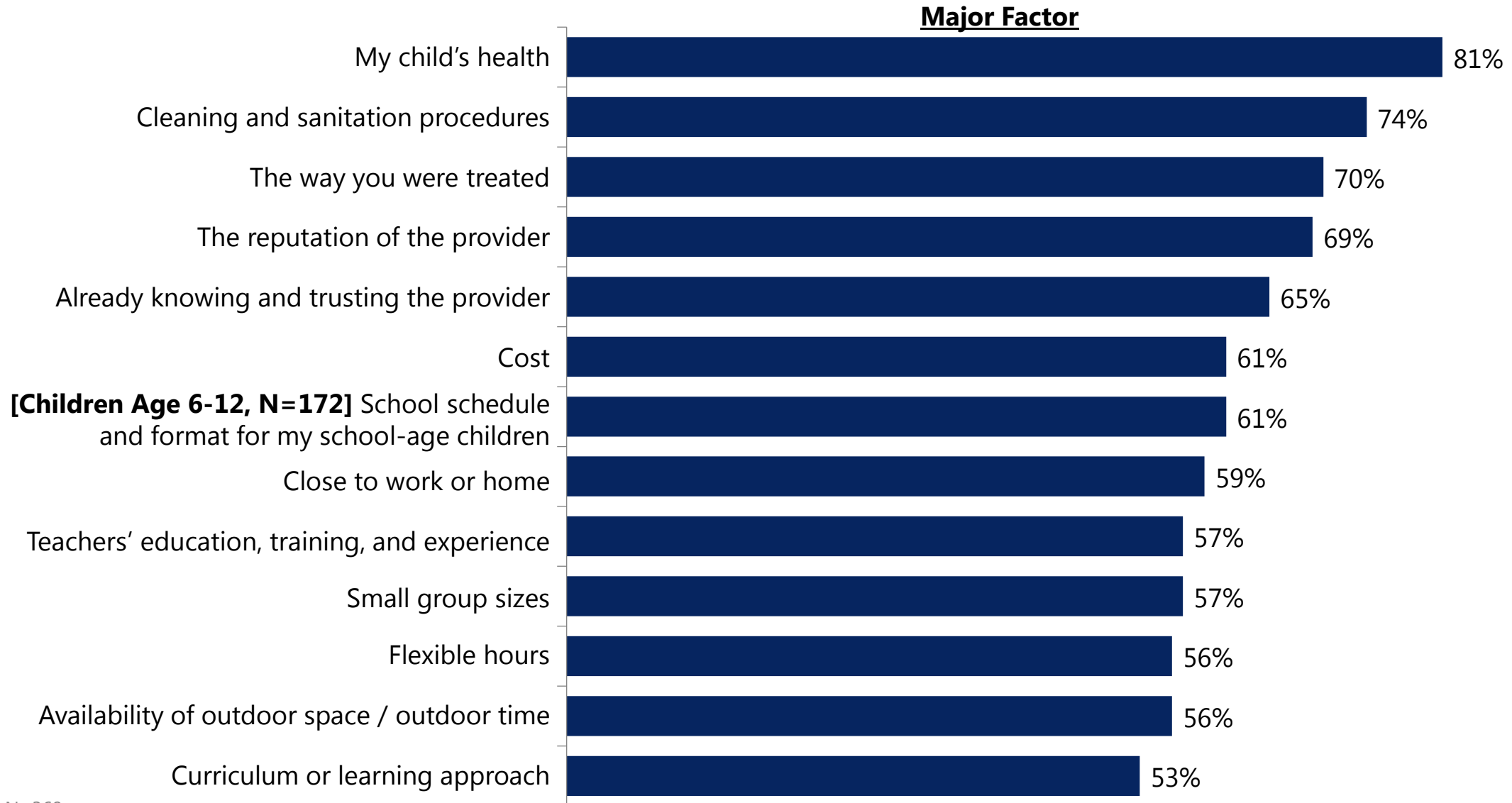
\*Caution:  
Small sample size, n<100

Multiple responses accepted, so percentages add to more than 100%.  
Note: Remainder Other / Not sure / Refused

N=369



# Families weighing many factors in deciding on childcare arrangements.



N=369

[AMONG THOSE ANTICIPATING USING CHILDCARE IN THE FALL] Q9-21: Thinking now about deciding on childcare for the fall, please tell me if each item is, or was, a major factor, minor factor, not much of a factor, or not a factor at all when deciding on childcare arrangements for the fall.



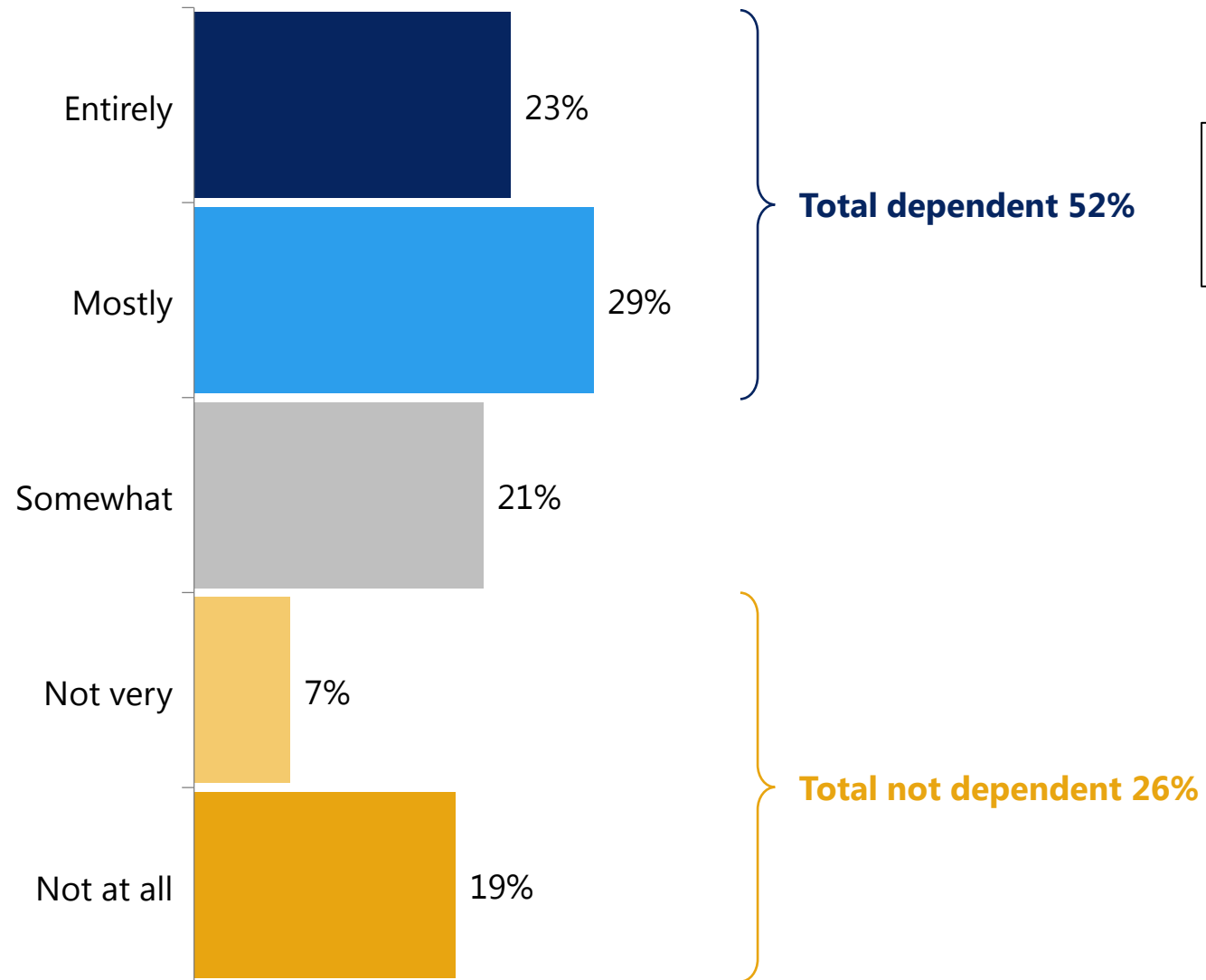
## Safety and sanitation considerations top list of factors.

Most Important Factor when Deciding on Childcare for the Fall	
Coronavirus / health concerns / cleanliness / sanitary	32%
Safety	27
Affordability / cost	10
Curriculum / quality education	10
Schedule / meeting my schedule needs	8
Trust	7
Availability	7
Child is comfortable / likes it	4
Reputation of daycare / facility	4

Responses under 4% not included.  
Multiple responses accepted, so percentages add to more than 100%.



# School plans have major impacts on decisions about childcare arrangements.



HHI under \$30k\* 60%  
\$30k-\$60k\* 63%  
\$60k-\$100k\* 47%  
Over \$100k 50%

\*Caution:  
Small sample size, n<100

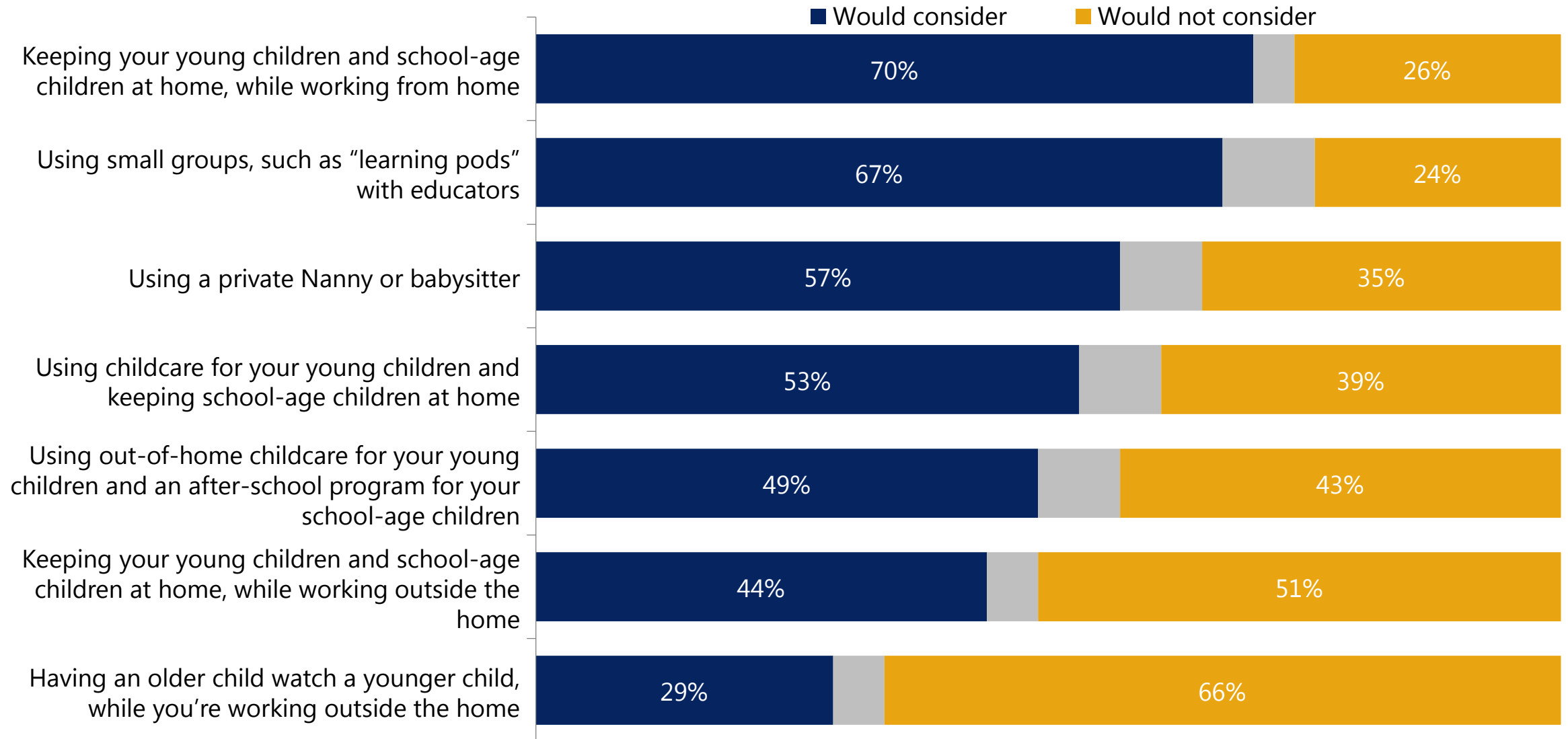
N=294

Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

[AMONG THOSE WITH A CHILD 6-12] Q23: How much, if at all, are your childcare arrangements for your young children dependent on what schools do for your older children in the fall?



# Families with school-age kids considering a range of childcare options.



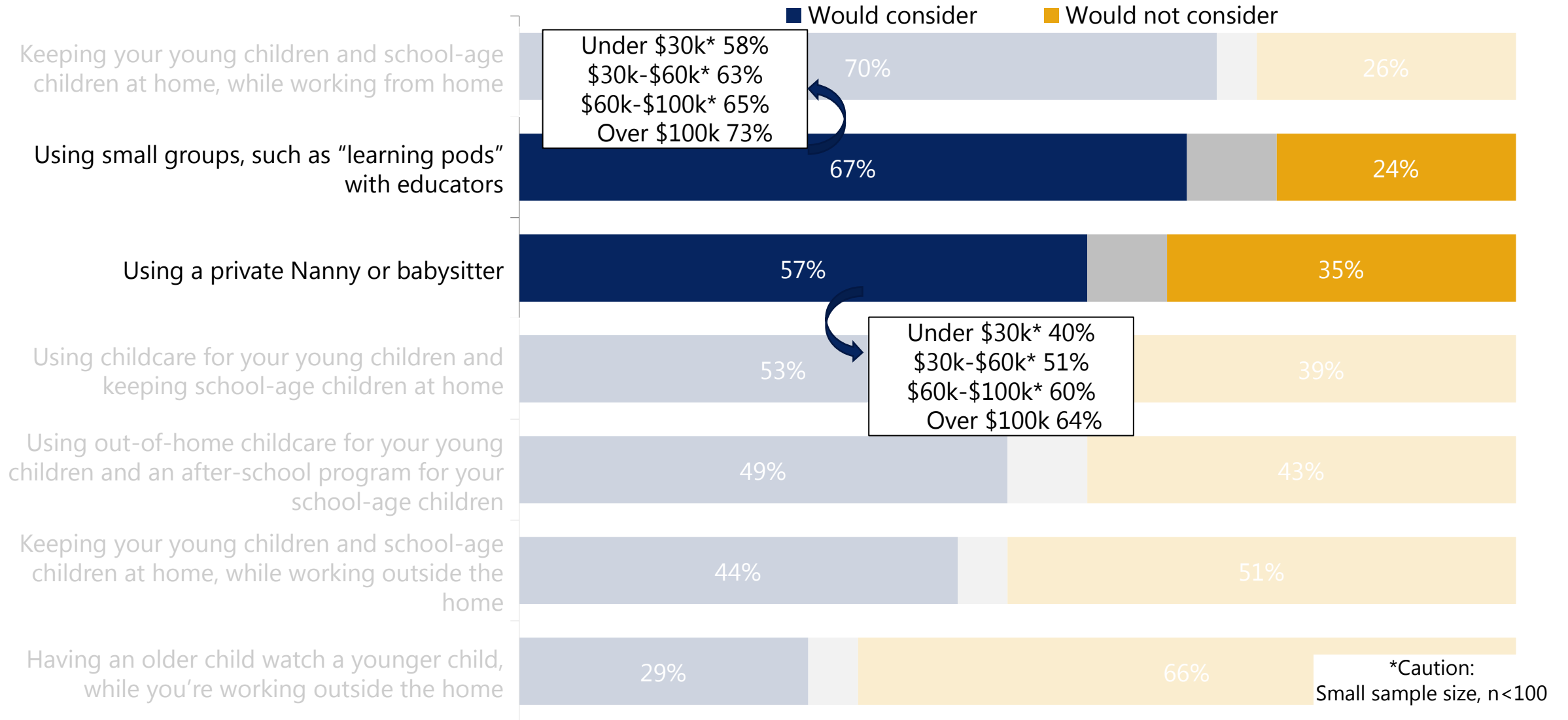
N=294

Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

[AMONG THOSE WITH A CHILD 6-12] Q24 – Q30: I'm going to mention some items that families are considering for childcare if schools implement remote or hybrid learning in the fall. Please tell me if you would or would not consider each one.



# Families with school-age kids considering a range of childcare options.



N=294

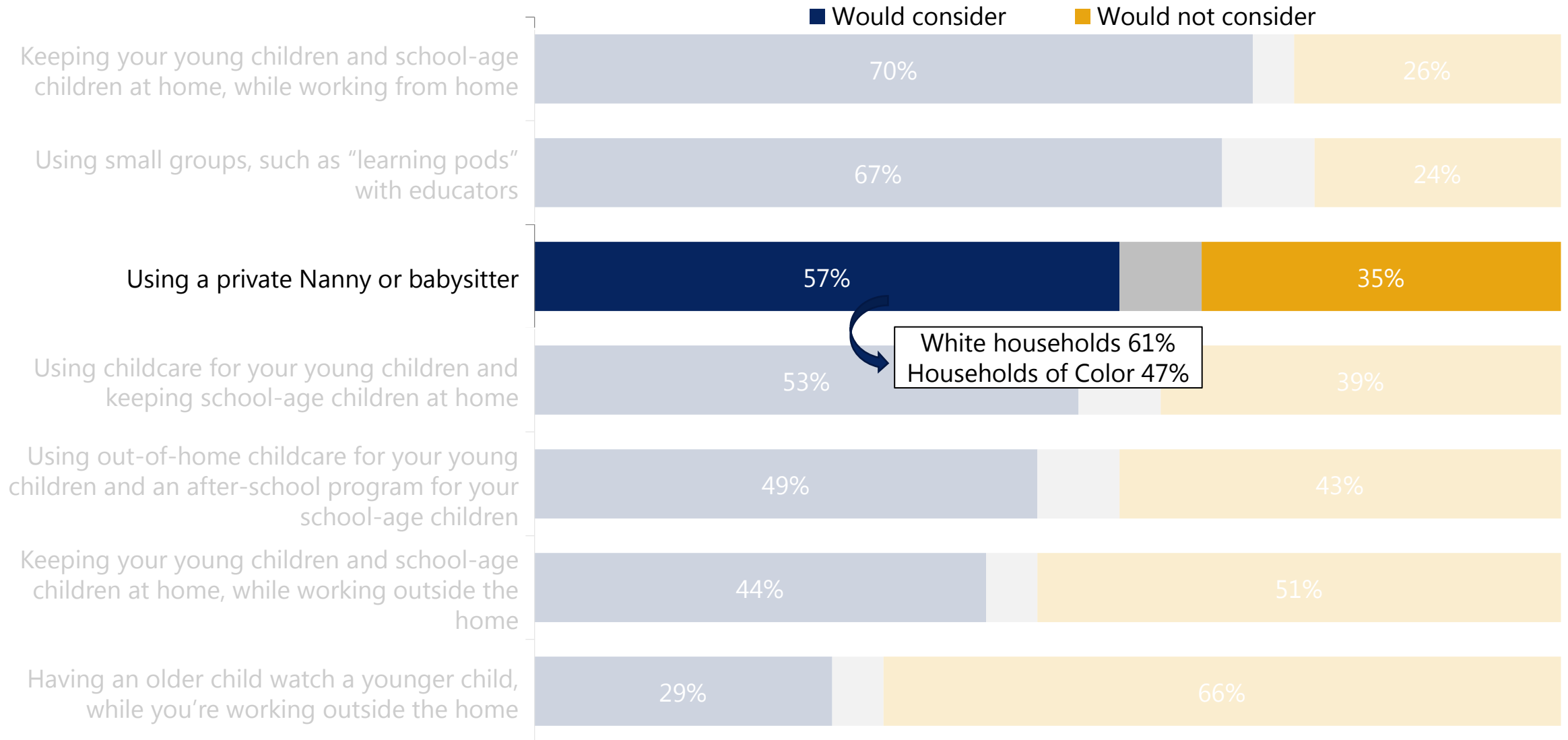
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# Families with school-age kids considering a range of childcare options.



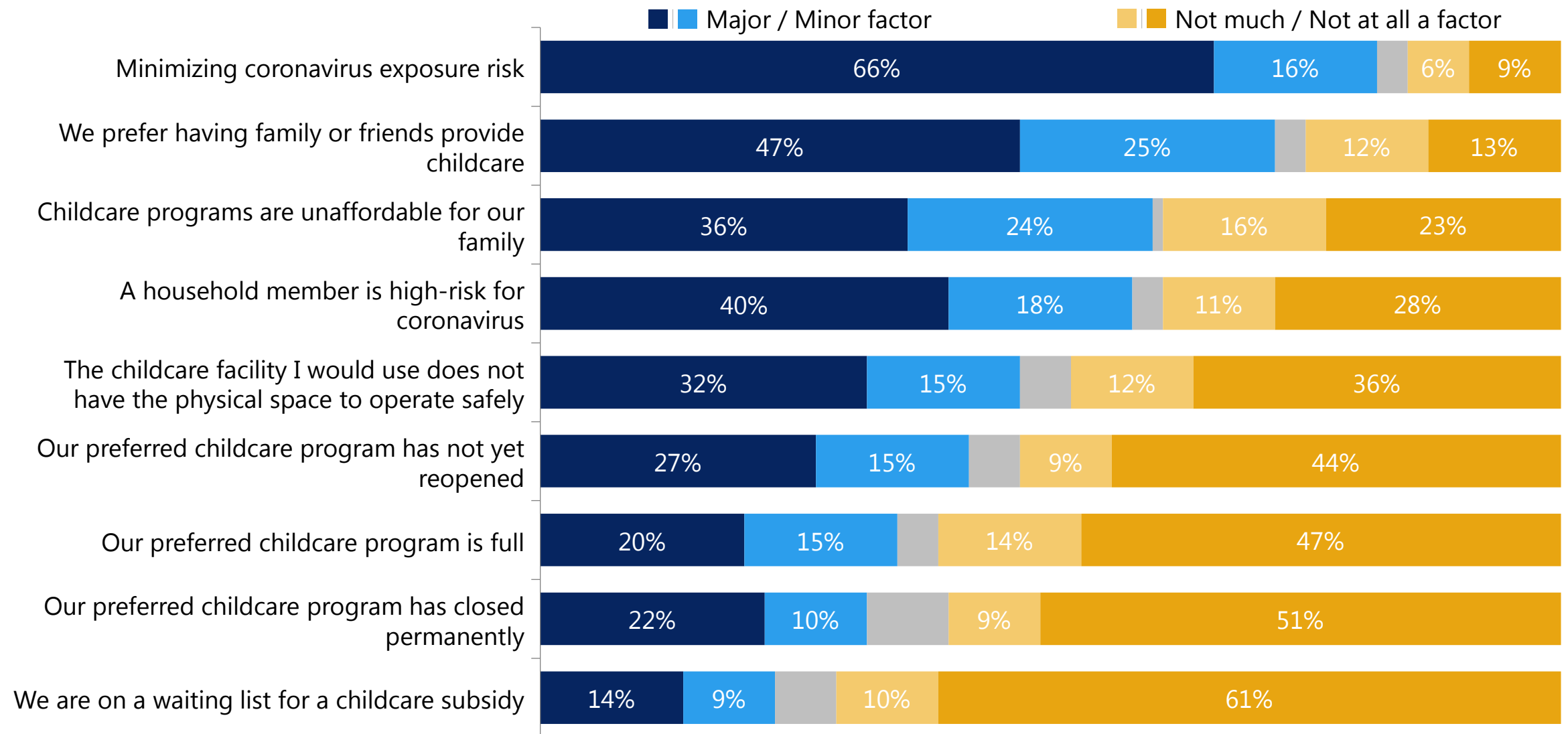
N=294

Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

[AMONG THOSE WITH A CHILD 6-12] Q24 – Q30: I'm going to mention some items that families are considering for childcare if schools implement remote or hybrid learning in the fall. Please tell me if you would or would not consider each one.



# Coronavirus top reason for foregoing formal childcare this fall.



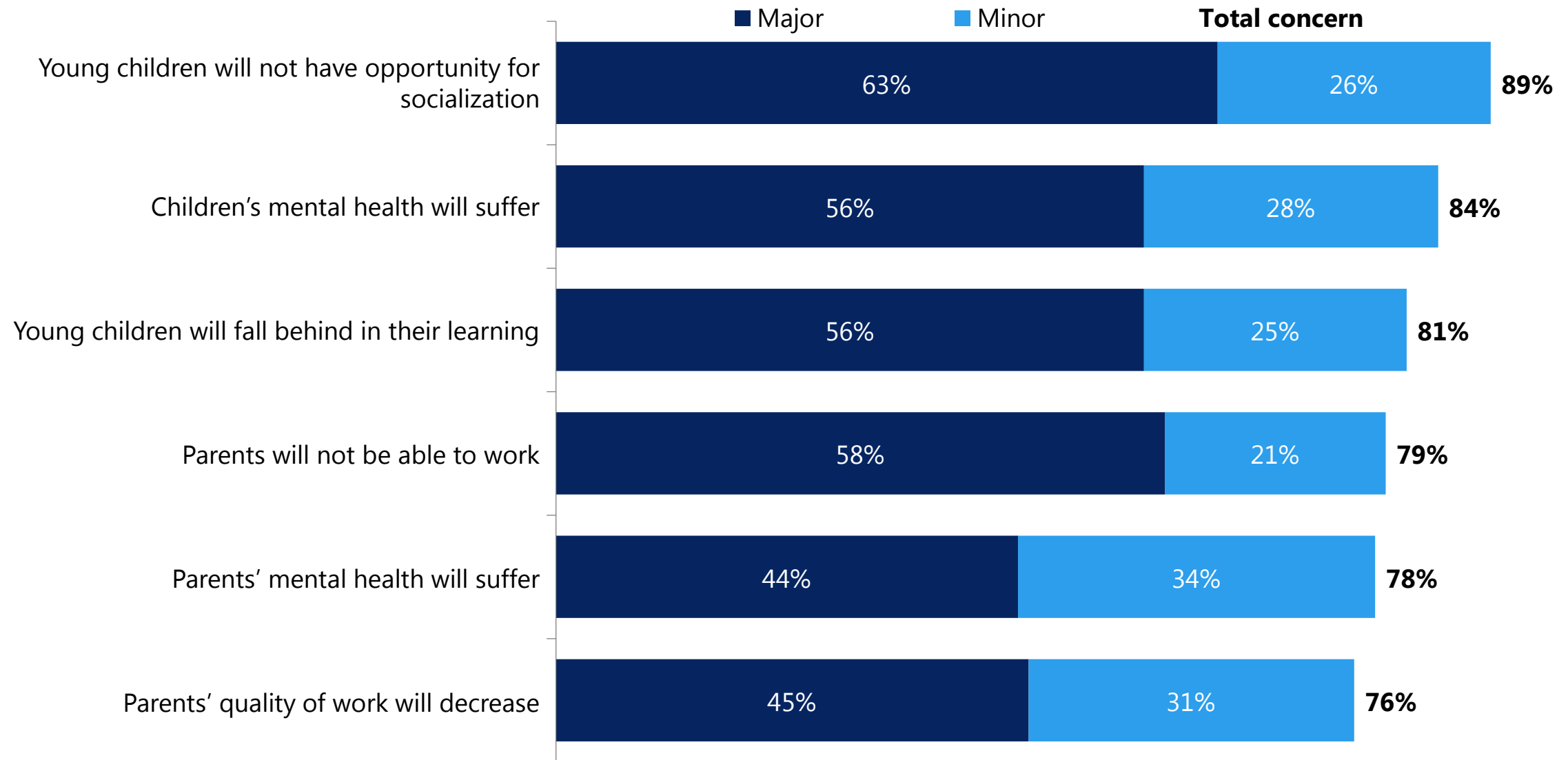
N=358

Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

[AMONG THOSE NOT USING OR IN FORMAL CHILDCARE FOR THE FALL] Q31-Q39: I am going to mention some reasons why families might not use childcare programs this fall. Please tell me if each one is a major factor for not using a childcare program this fall, a minor factor, not much of a factor, or not a factor at all.



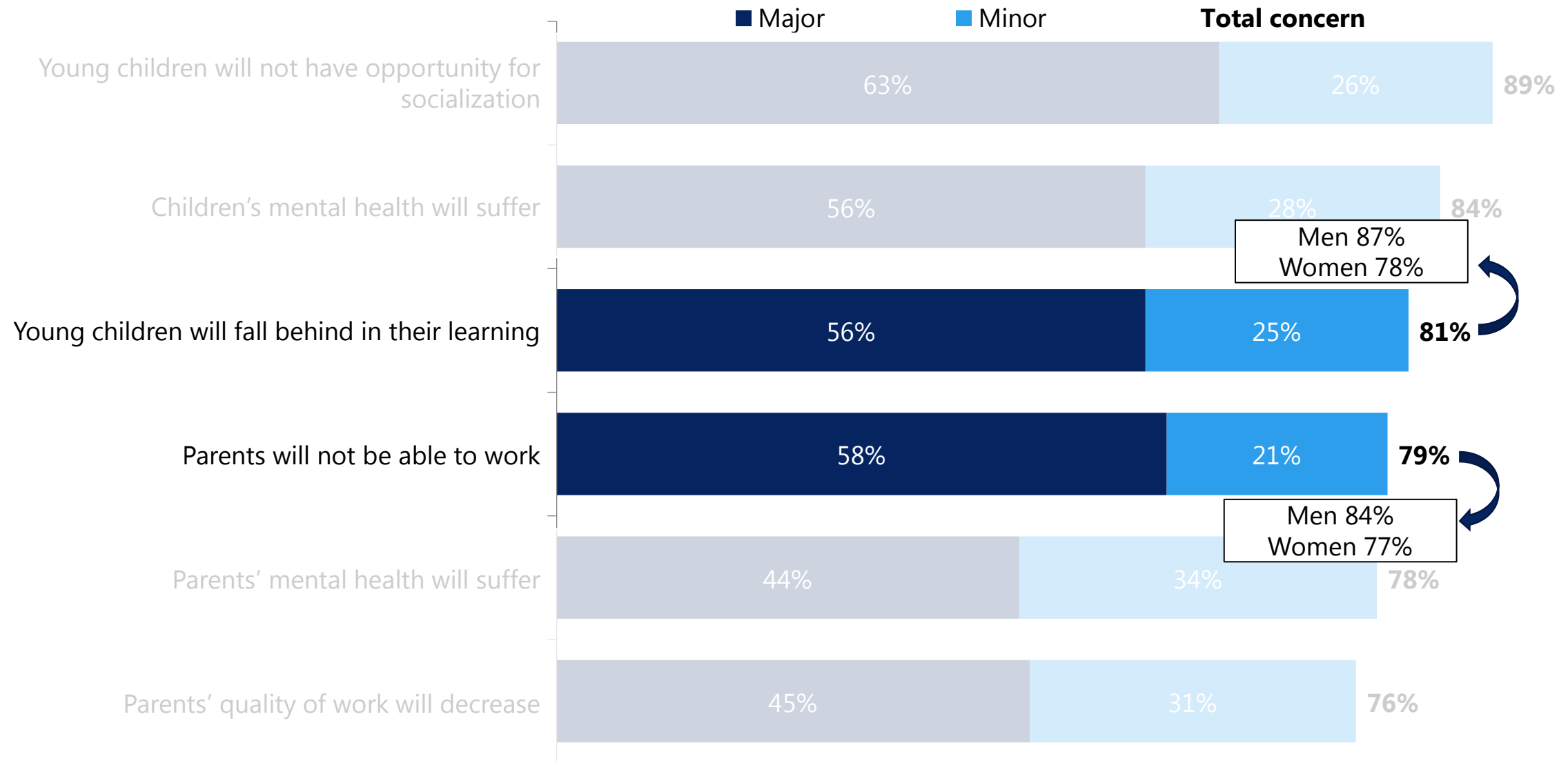
# Families see negative consequences of foregoing formal childcare.



Q41-Q46: I'm going to read a list of concerns that have been raised about keeping young children at home instead of going to childcare because of the pandemic. Please rate if you think each is a major concern, minor concern, not much of a concern, or not a concern at all.



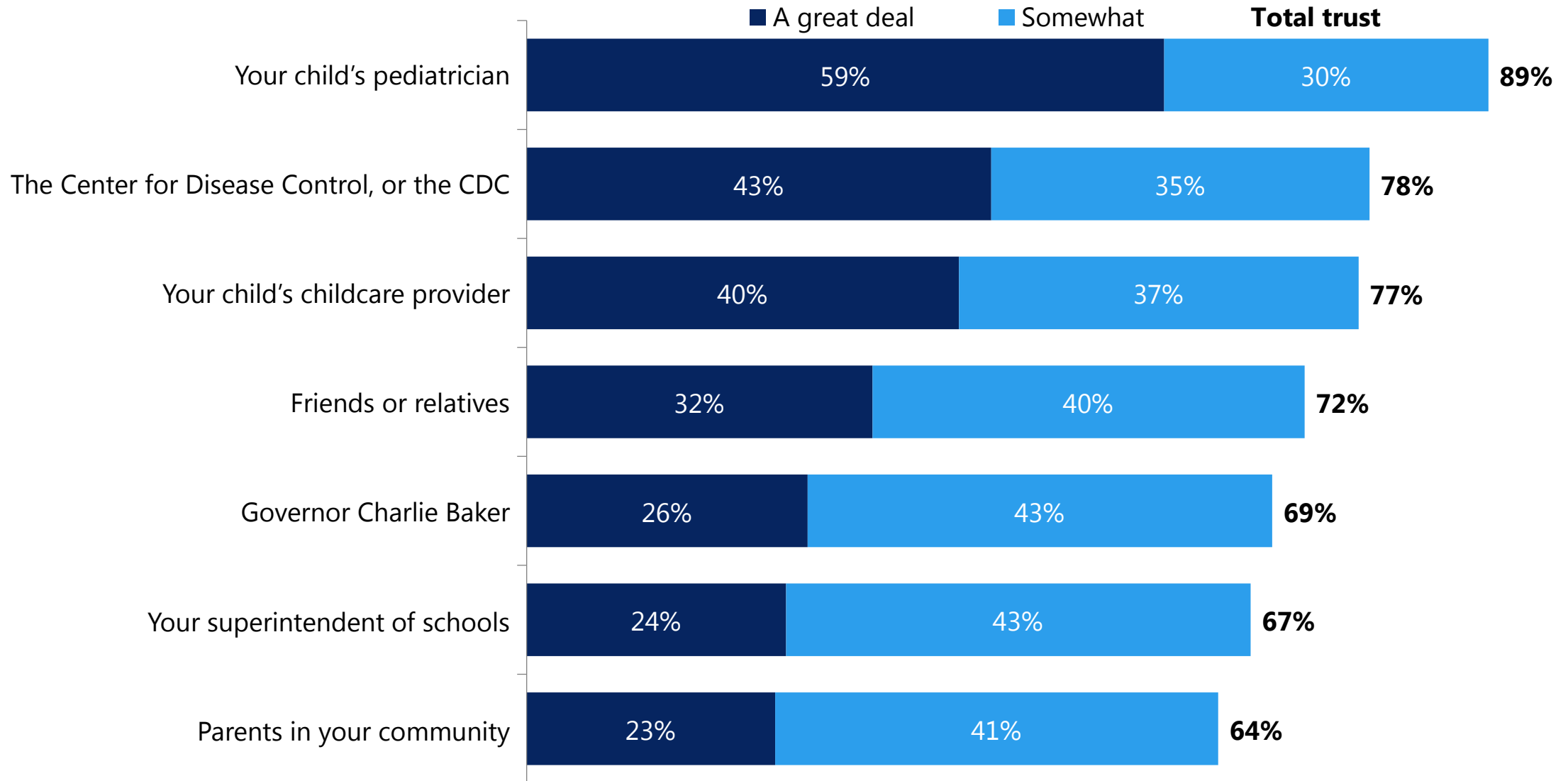
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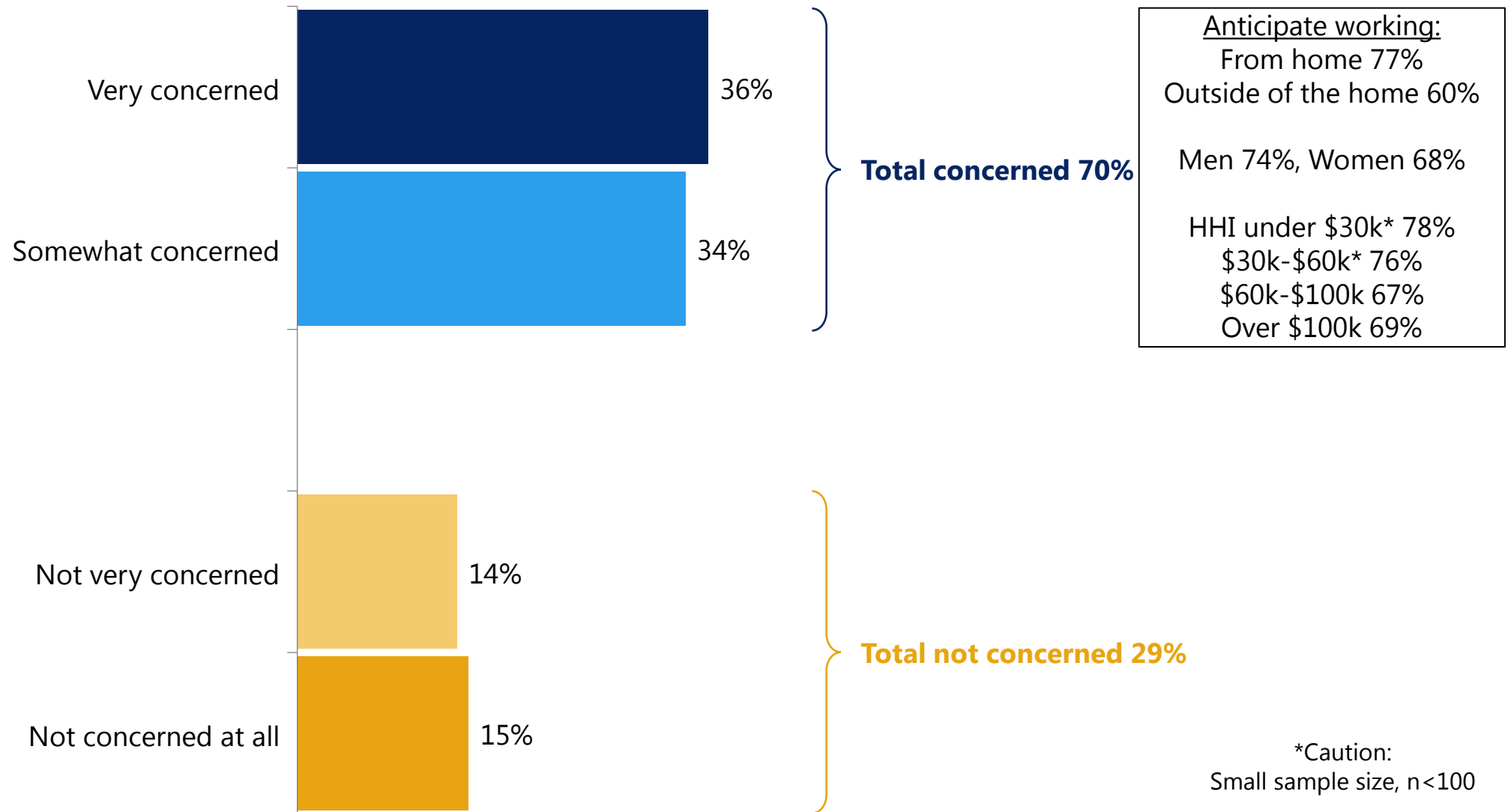
Q41-Q46: I'm going to read a list of concerns that have been raised about keeping young children at home instead of going to childcare because of the pandemic. Please rate if you think each is a major concern, minor concern, not much of a concern, or not a concern at all.



# Doctors, CDC and childcare providers most trusted on childcare decisions.



# Families are concerned job performance will suffer due to childcare arrangements.



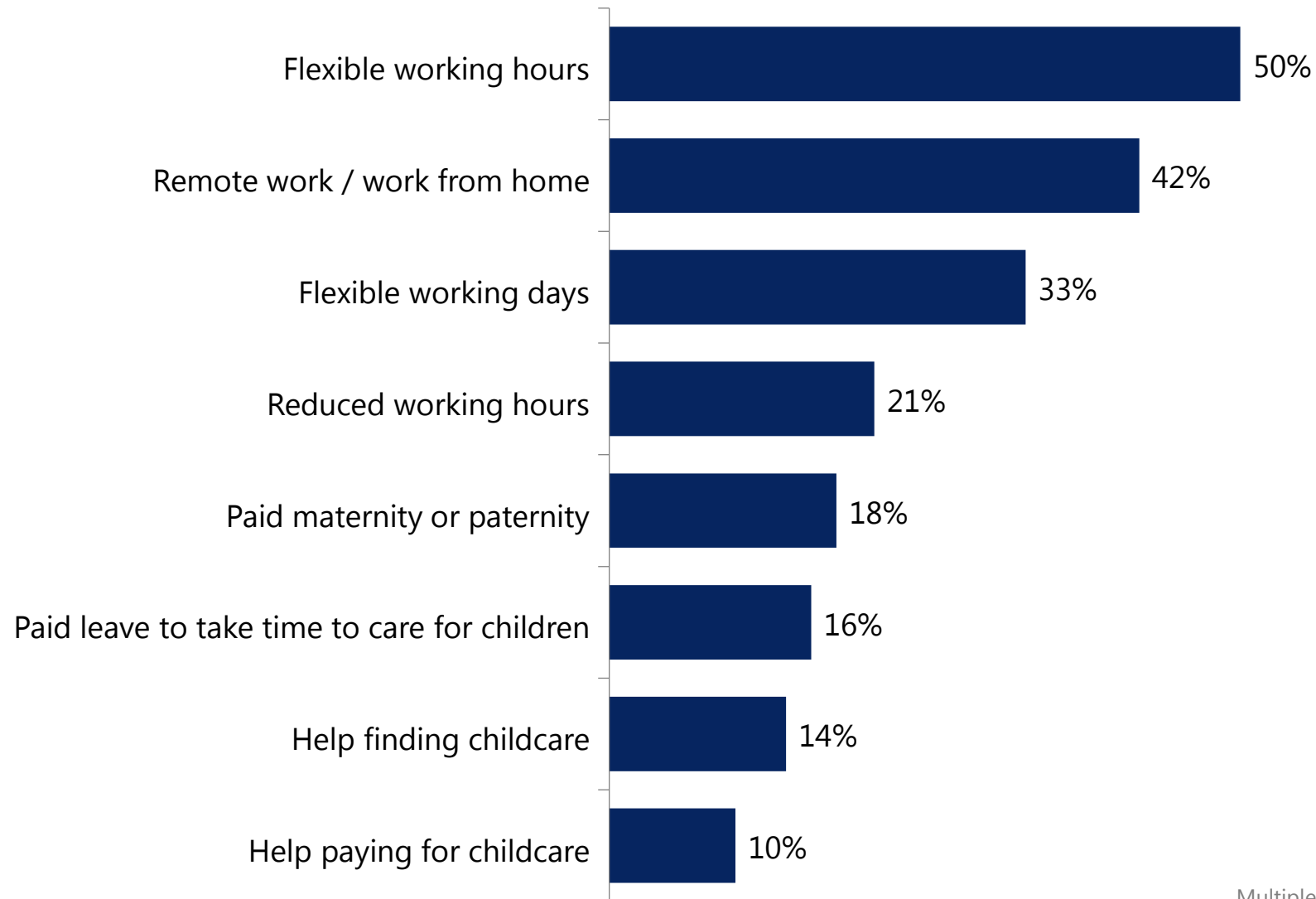
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Note: Remainder Not sure / Refused

[AMONG EMPLOYED] Q58: How concerned are you that your job performance will suffer based on your childcare plans for the fall?



# Half say employers are providing flexible work hours for parents.



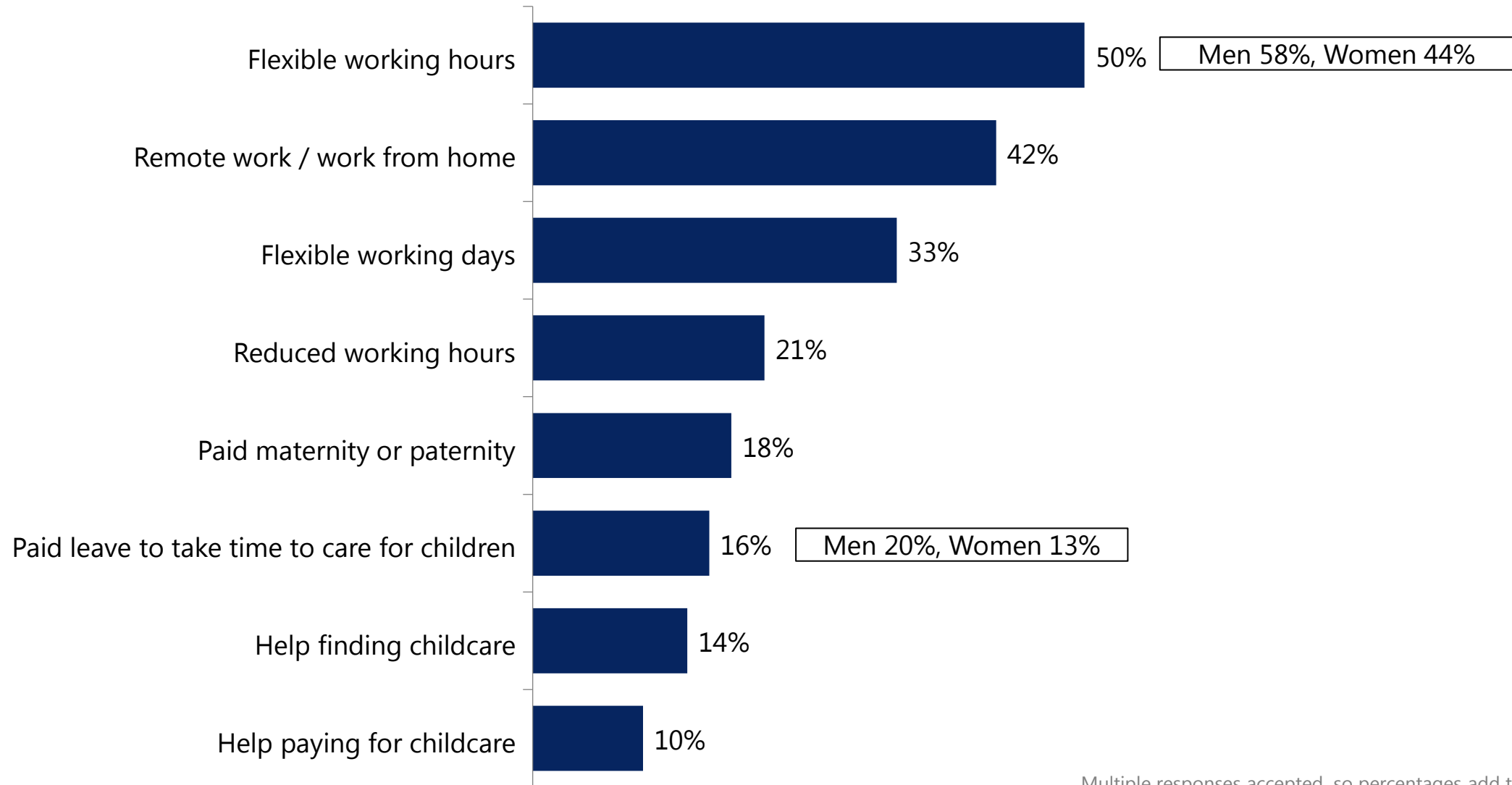
N=480

Multiple responses accepted, so percentages add to more than 100%.  
Note: Remainder Other / Not sure / Refused

[AMONG EMPLOYED] Q62: Which, if any, of the following is your employer offering for parents?



# Half say employers are providing flexible work hours for parents.



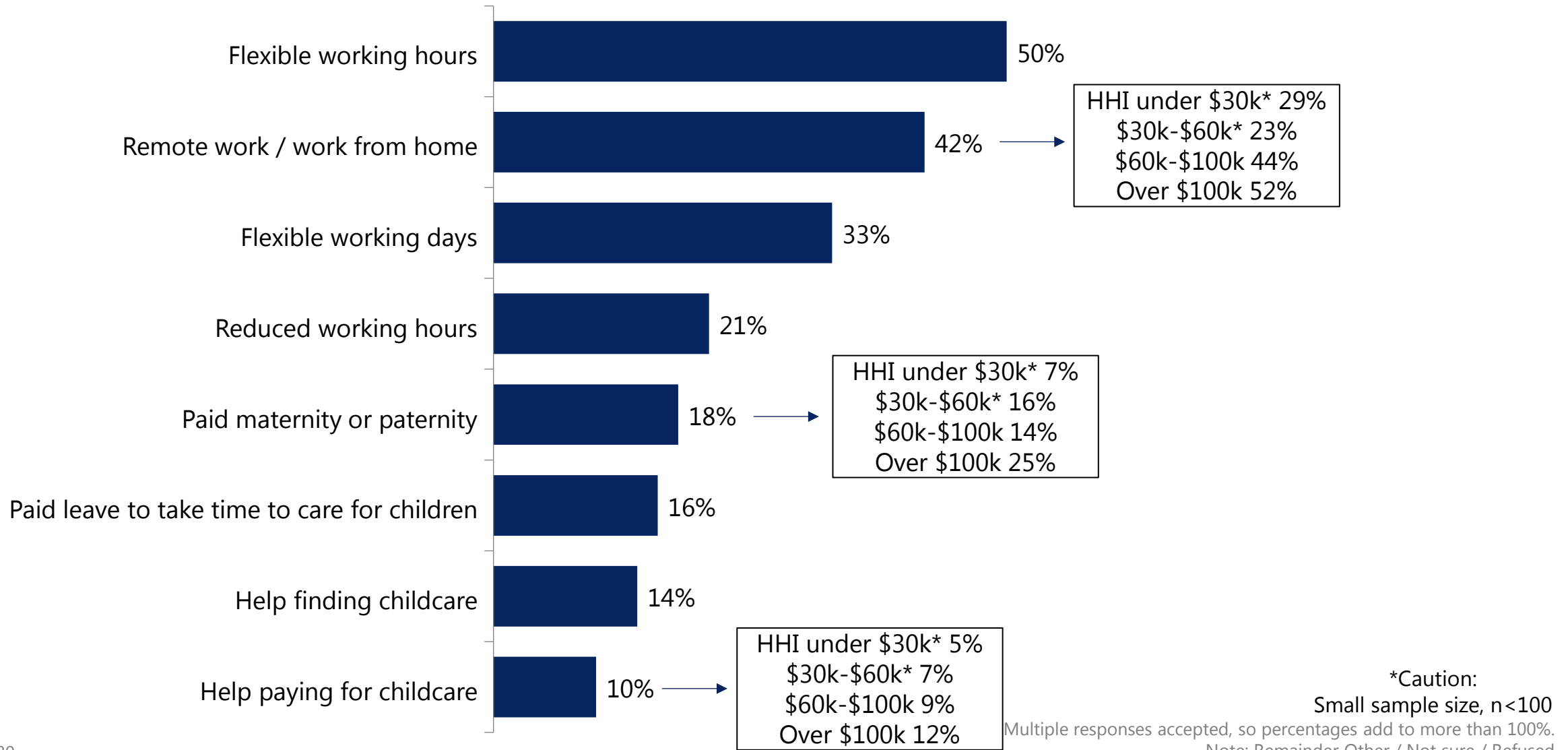
N=480

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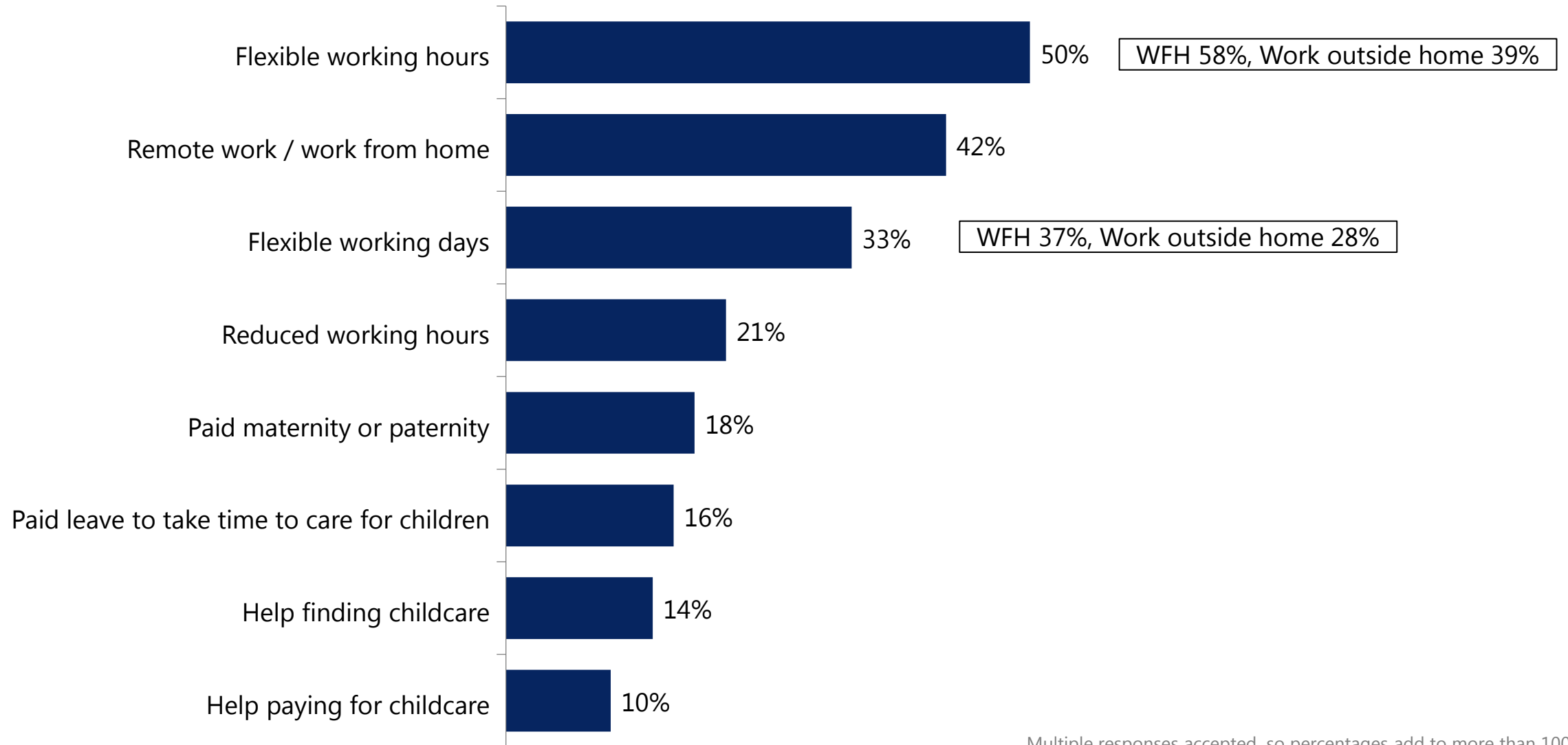


N=480

[AMONG EMPLOYED] Q62: Which, if any, of the following is your employer offering for parents?



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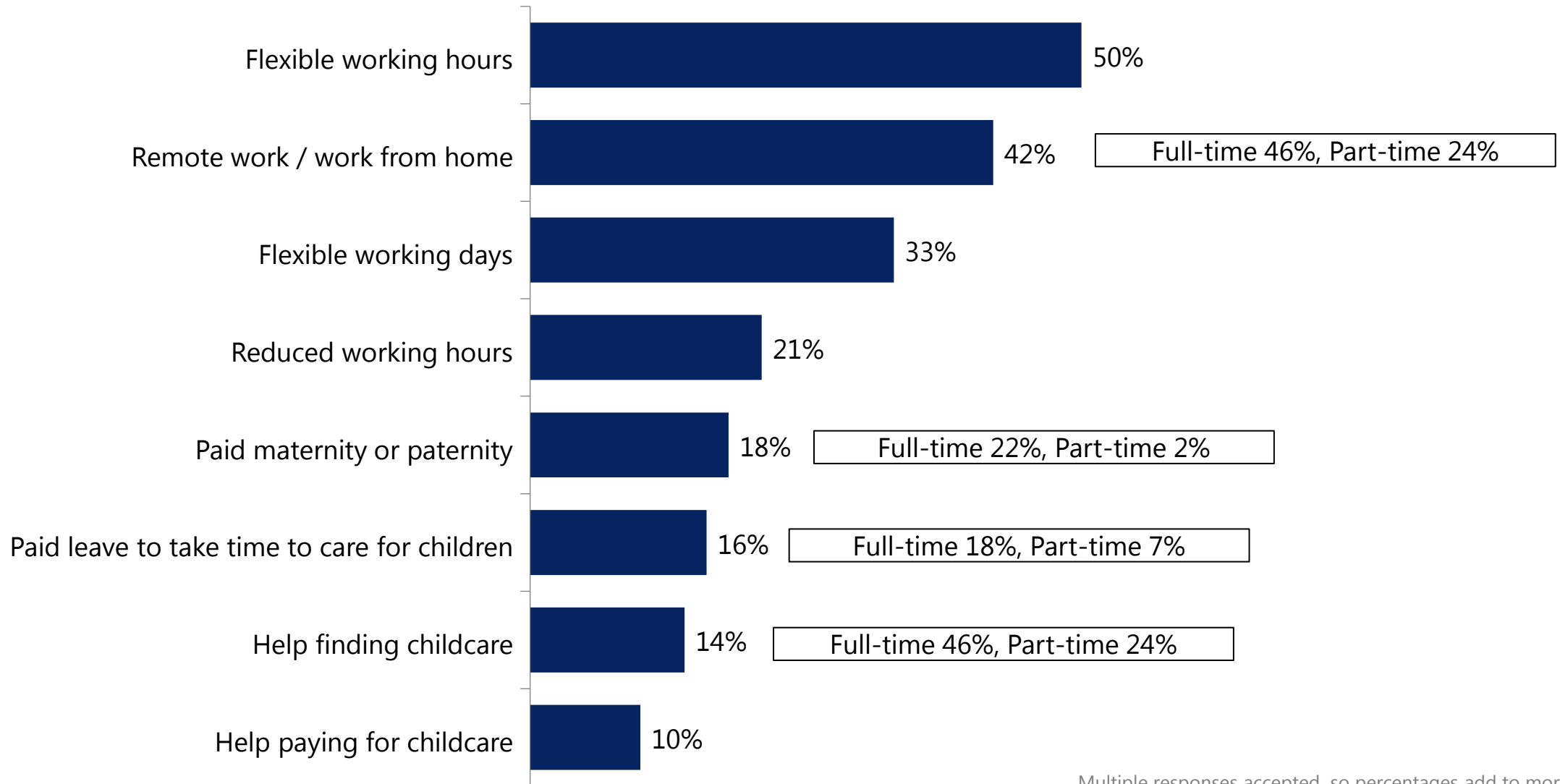


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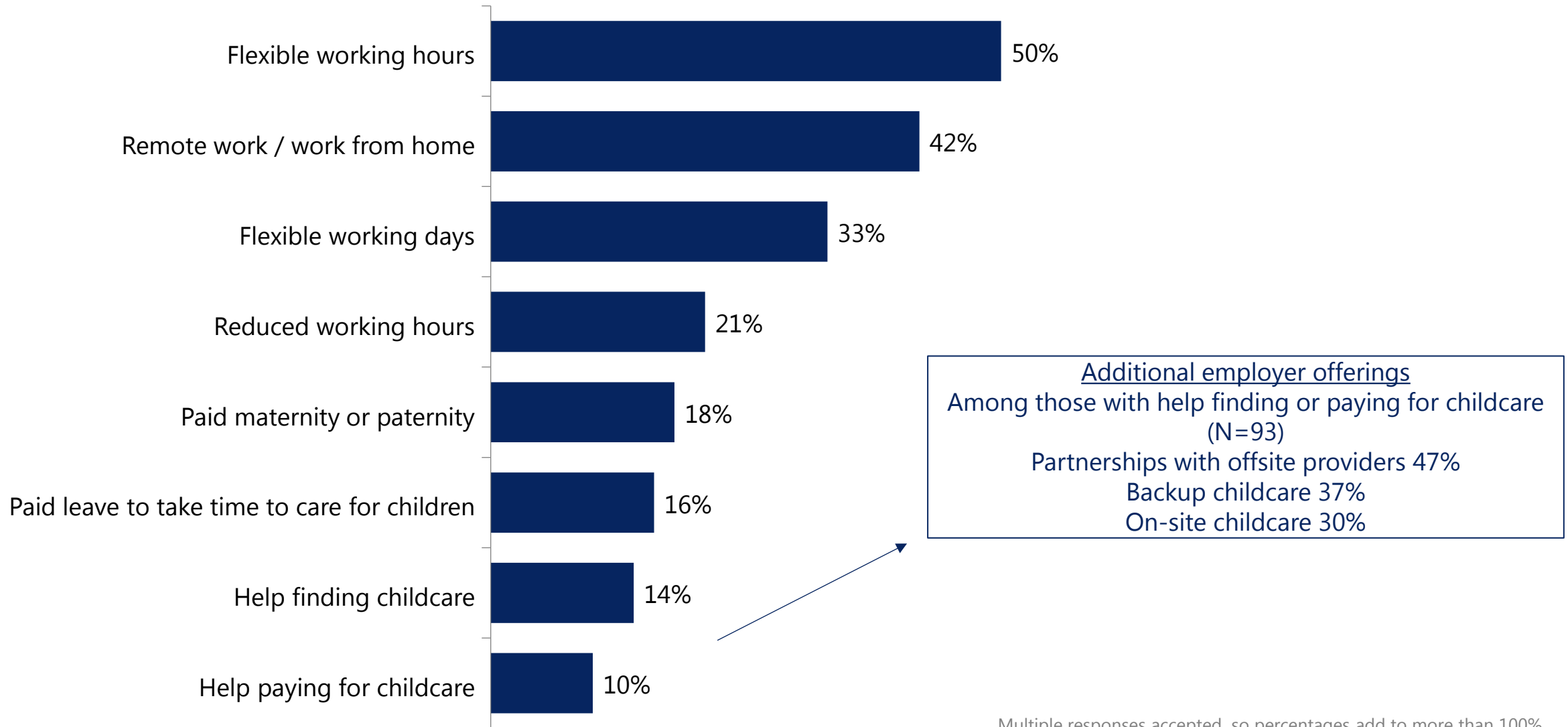


N=480

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N=480

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Note: Remainder Other / Not sure / Refused

[AMONG EMPLOYED] Q62: Which, if any, of the following is your employer offering for parents? AND  
[AMONG THOSE WITH HELP FINDING/PAYING FOR CHILDCARE] Q63: Does your employer offer any of the following childcare options?



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R E S E A R C H

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT**

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