



MASSACHUSETTS  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
FOR **Infants & Toddlers**

**PARTNER MEETING**

The Boston Foundation

February 10, 2020



Photo credit: Kate Samp and Micaela Bedell

# Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- MPIT recap: project timeline
- MPIT family engagement: initial findings
- EEC strategic roadmap, findings related to MPIT
- MPIT phase 2: sustainability discussion and group activity
- Next steps and conclusion

# Introductions

- Name
- Organization
- One-sentence description of your organization

# About MPIT



## Phase 1 goals:

Convene partners interested in infants and toddlers.

Collect input and perspectives of families and family engagement specialists to inform the state PDG B-5 Strategic Plan.

Participate in Pritzker Children's Initiative prenatal-to-age three learning network, and learn best practices that can be applied in Massachusetts.

## What makes us unique?

- Inside + outside government
- State + local
- Early education + health

# About MPIT

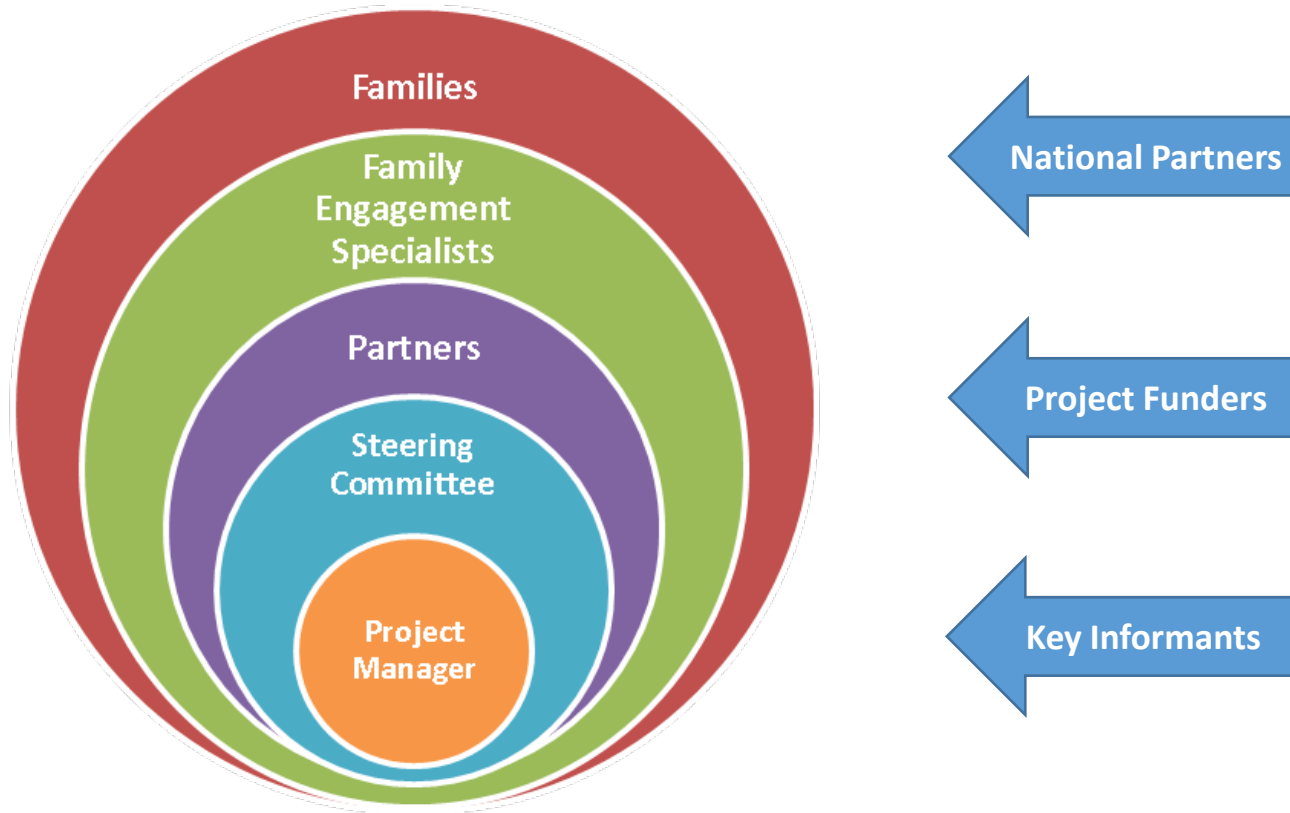


- 45 partner organizations
- 20 family engagement specialists
- Six funders:
  - Boston Opportunity Agenda
  - Commonwealth Children's Fund
  - Gisela B. Hogan Foundation
  - Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation
  - The Boston Foundation
  - United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
- Steering committee
  - Boston Children's Hospital
  - Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
  - Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
  - Massachusetts Department of Public Health
  - Massachusetts Executive Office of Education
  - Strategies for Children
  - United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley

# MPIT recap: project timeline

- September 23: Kickoff Meeting
- October-November: Family Survey design
- November 13: Family Engagement Specialists meeting
- November 21: PDG B-5 webinar for MPIT partners
- November-January: Family Survey period
- January: Family Focus Groups
- February 10: Partner Meeting

# MPIT stakeholders



# MA PDG B-5 Areas of Focus



**Grant Timeline:** December 2019 through September 2020

**Agencies Involved:** EOE, EOHHS, DPH, EEC, DESE, Children's Trust

## **State and Local Agencies: Coordinate Planning and Data Systems**

- **Strengthen alignment** among and between state programs serving children B-5, building on existing programs and local efforts
- **Connect existing early childhood data** collected at the state level, and use analysis to inform coordination and data-driven policymaking at state and local level

## **Families: Build Partnerships and Voice**

- **Streamline communication** about developmental milestones and related services and supports
- **Enhance communication techniques** to reach vulnerable families and promote equitable access

## **Children: Support Development through Family Engagement**

- **Connect existing developmental screening** to help families learn more about how their child is developing, identify possible delays, and inform need for further evaluation
- **Connect existing referral tracking systems** to ensure more children are enrolled in programs and receive services that meet their needs and their families' needs

## **Providers: Strengthen Family Engagement and Child Development Skills**

- **Build a professional development framework** related to effective child/family engagement through use of developmental screening; build training linkages across home visitors, early educators and public school teachers
- **Support and align training** on best use of tools, resources and strategies to help families learn more about how their child is developing and identify possible delays, and inform next steps



# Family Survey and Focus Groups: Initial analysis and findings



- **Goal:**

- Learn about families with young children, and their experiences with birth-5 programs and services.
- What works? What doesn't? What would you like to see in your community?
- Comprehensive: all program types included, “whole child”
- Use findings to inform state plans for early childhood, including PDG B-5 and EEC strategic plan.

# Family Survey and Focus Groups: Initial analysis and findings

- Survey format:
  - English and Spanish
  - Edited by partners, tested by parents
  - Online, mobile friendly, multiple choice
  - Anonymous, can skip any question, avg. time 10 minutes
  - Disseminated throughout partner networks
- Focus groups:
  - Qualitative complement to survey
  - Translation available
  - Targeted communities with higher need
  - 8-12 parents per session, five sessions completed
    - Quincy, Brockton, Yarmouth, New Bedford, Springfield

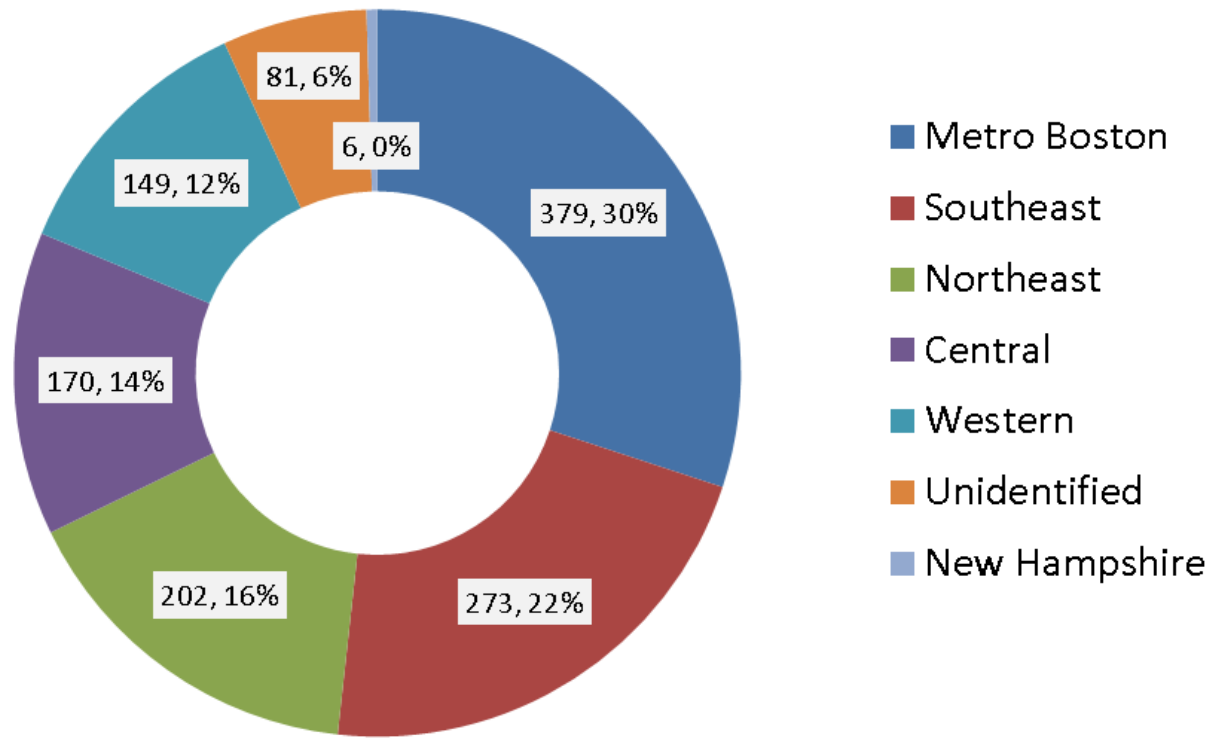
# Family Survey and Focus Groups: Initial analysis and findings



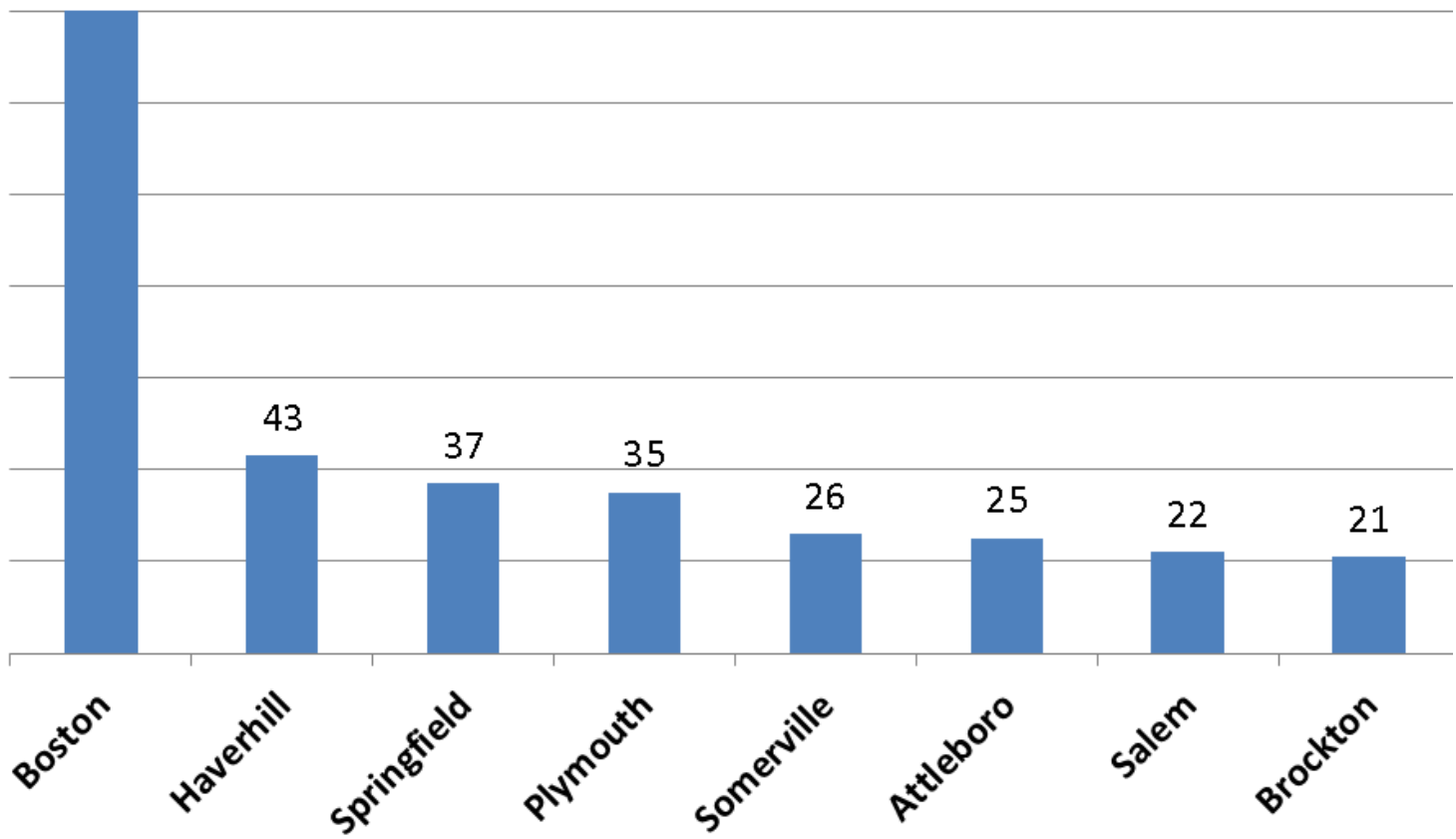
- Survey sample:
  - 1,260 responses, including 33 in Spanish
  - Good geographic representation
  - Higher income, education levels than expected
  - Predominately white

## Family Survey Responses by Region

n=1,260



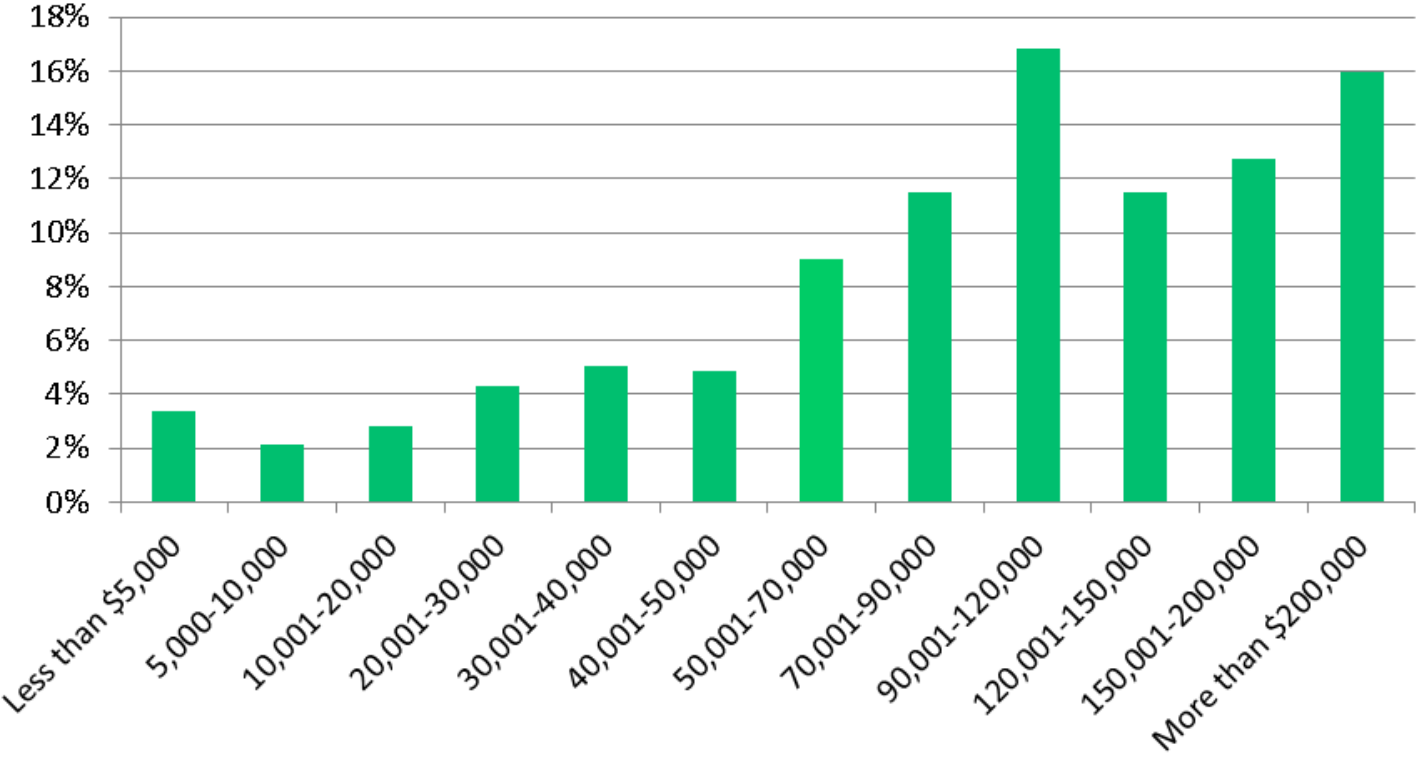
### Cities with the most survey responses



# Income

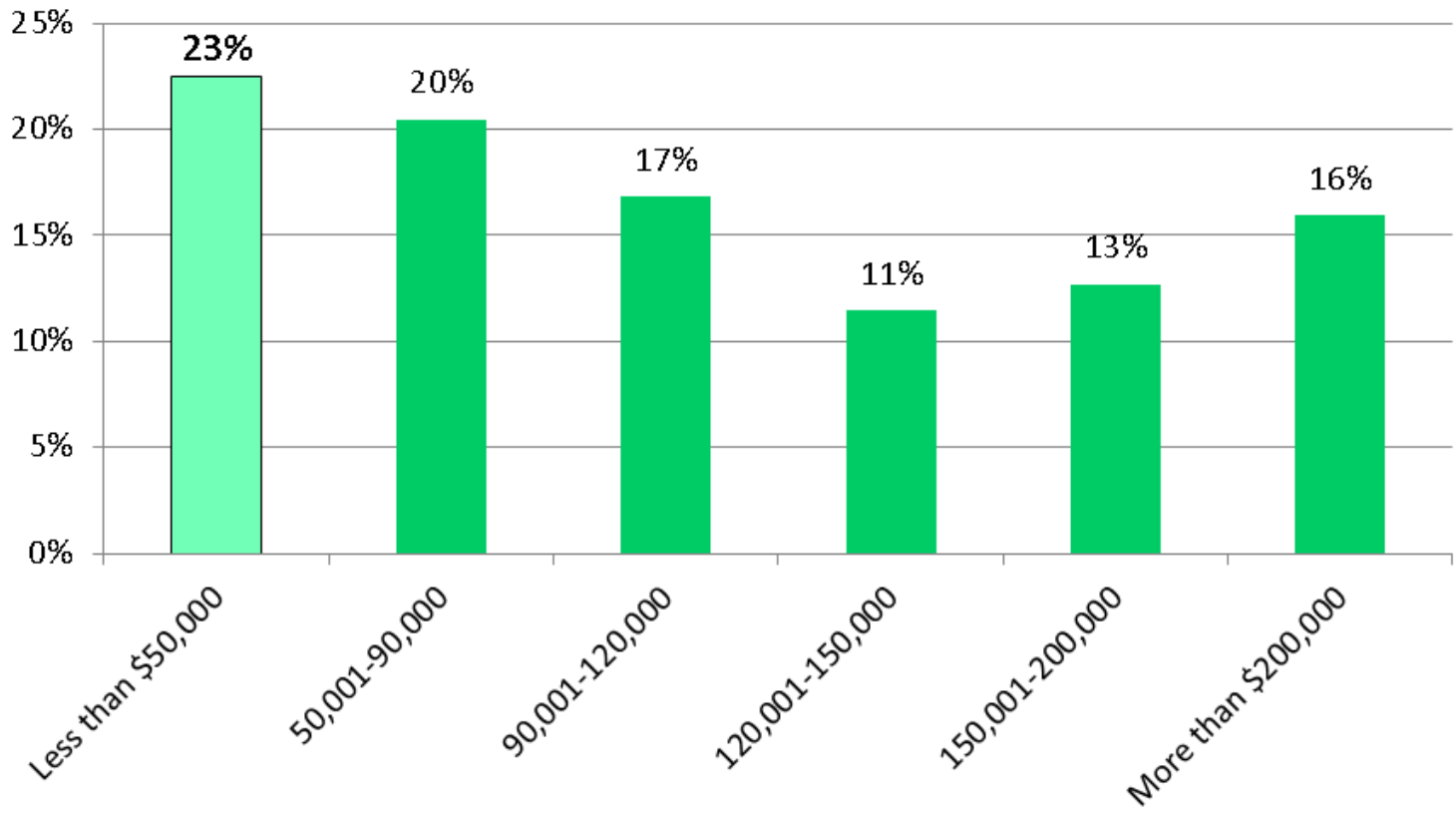


Q24: From these categories, choose the one that represents your family's total income range from all sources:  
n=1,133, skipped=99

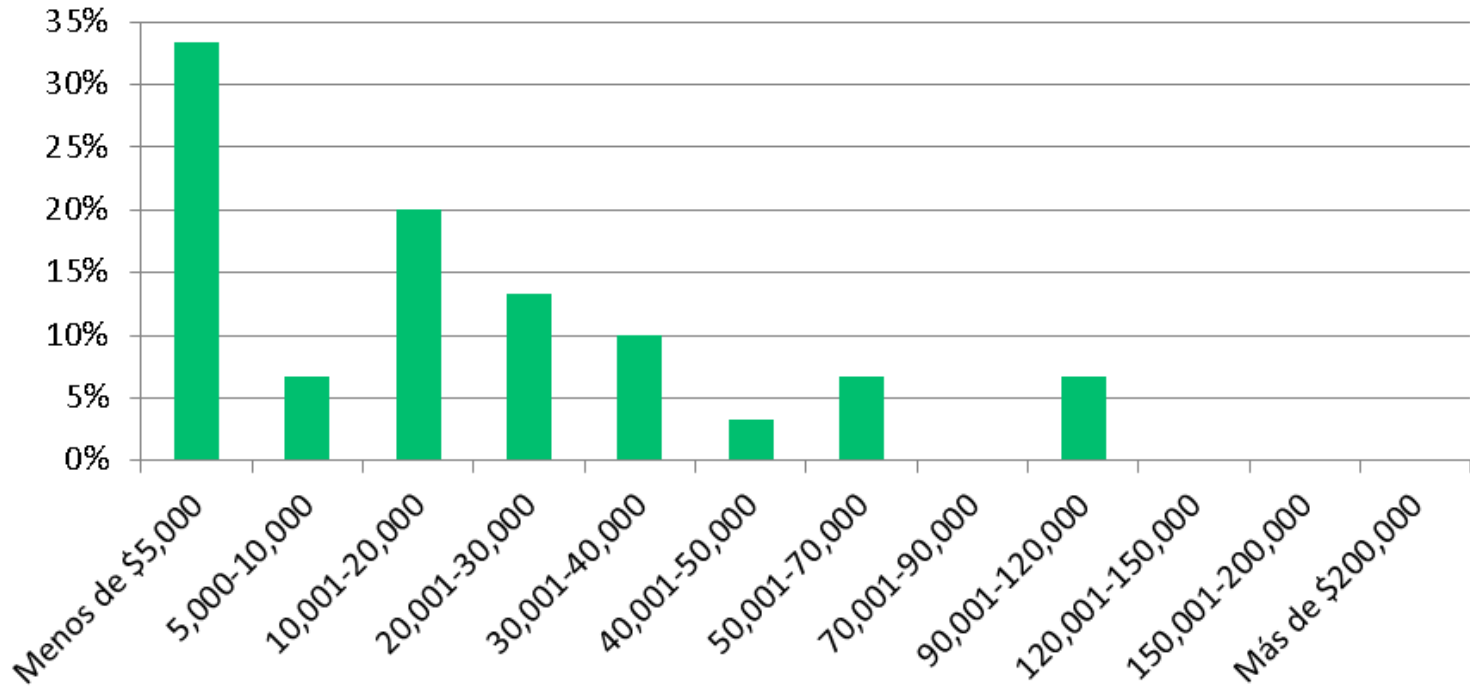


# Income

Q24: From these categories, choose the one that represents your family's total income range from all sources:  
n=1,133, skipped=99



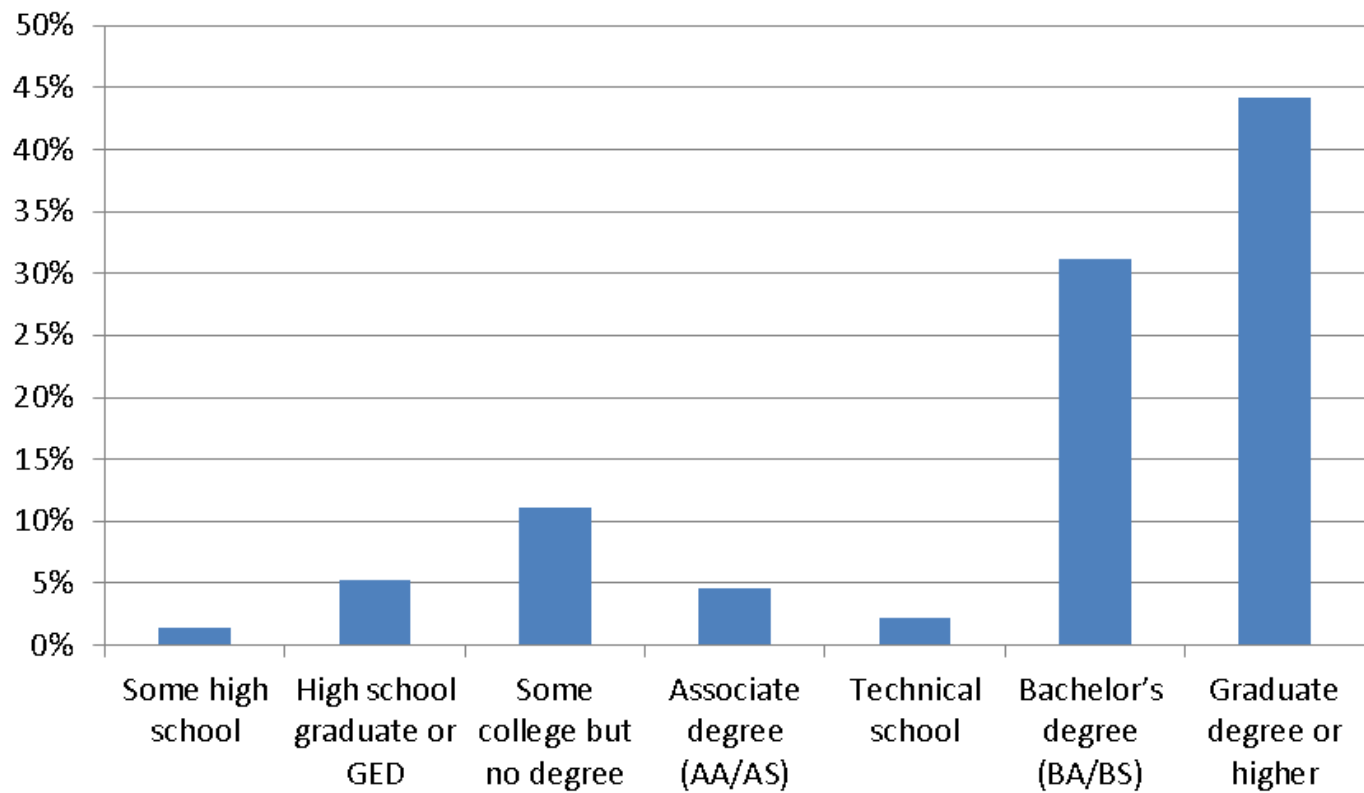
Q24: De estas categorías, elija la que represente el rango de ingresos totales de su familia de todas las fuentes:  
n=30, skipped=3







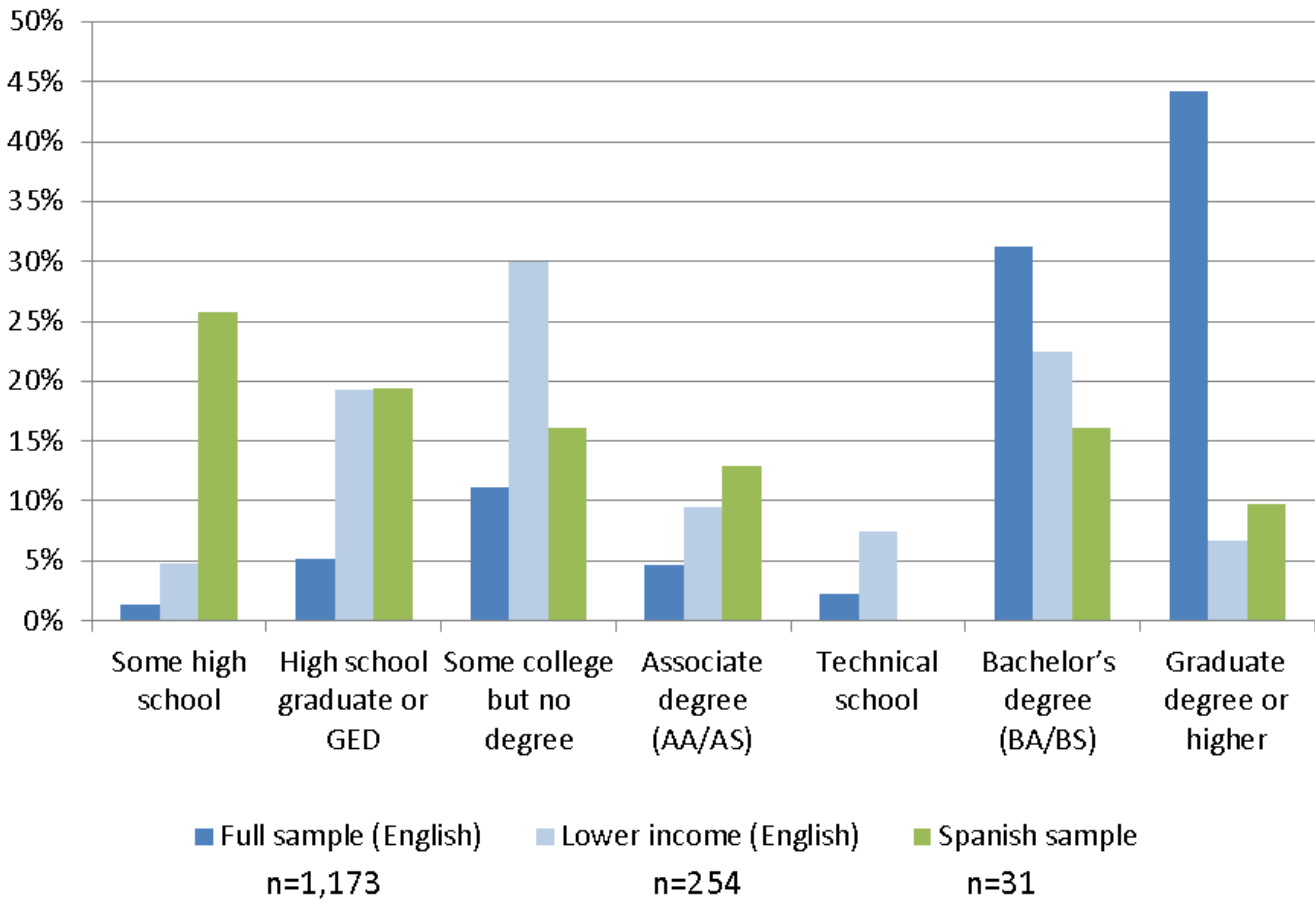
## Q23: What is your highest education level?



■ Full sample (English)

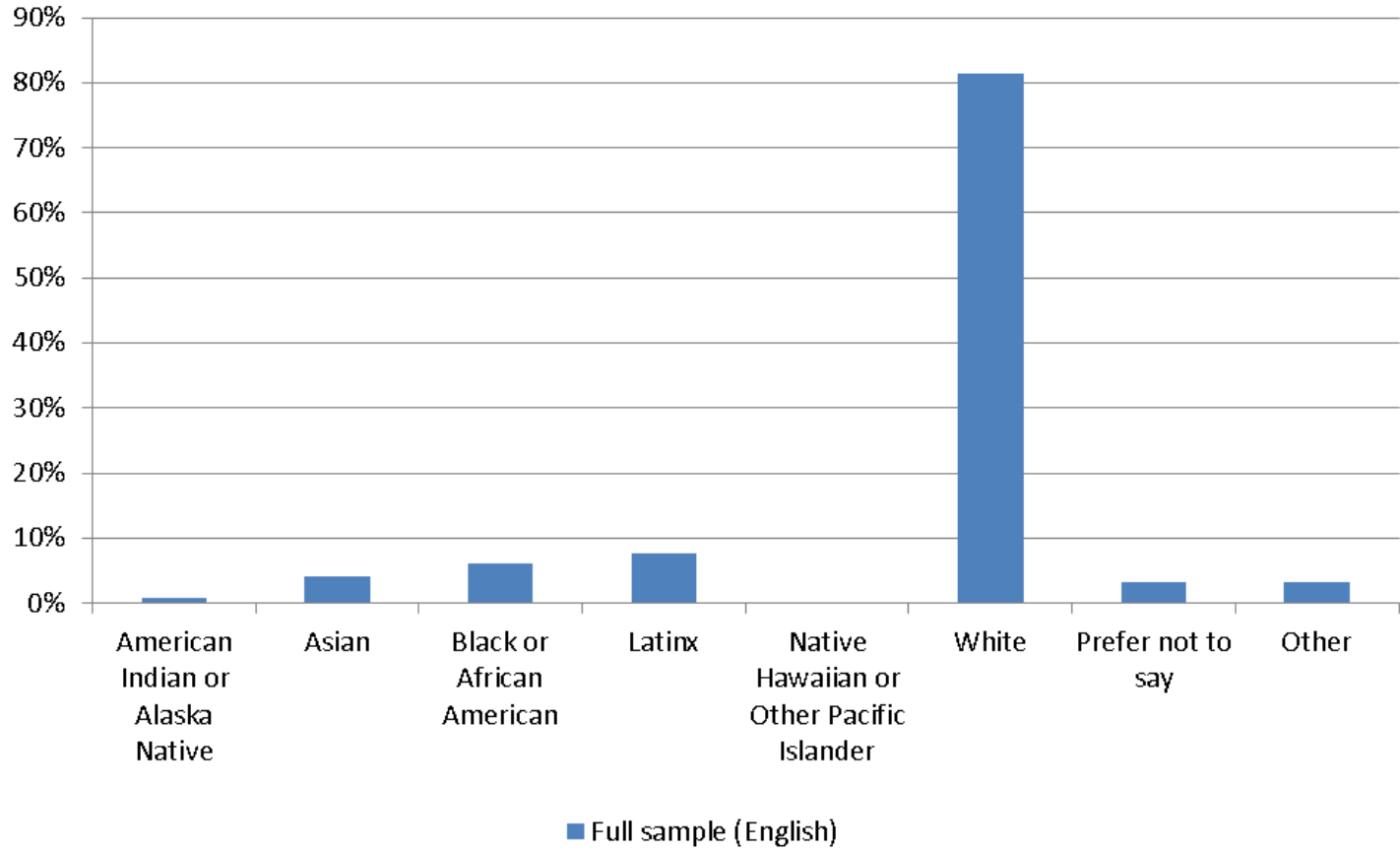


## Q23: What is your highest education level?



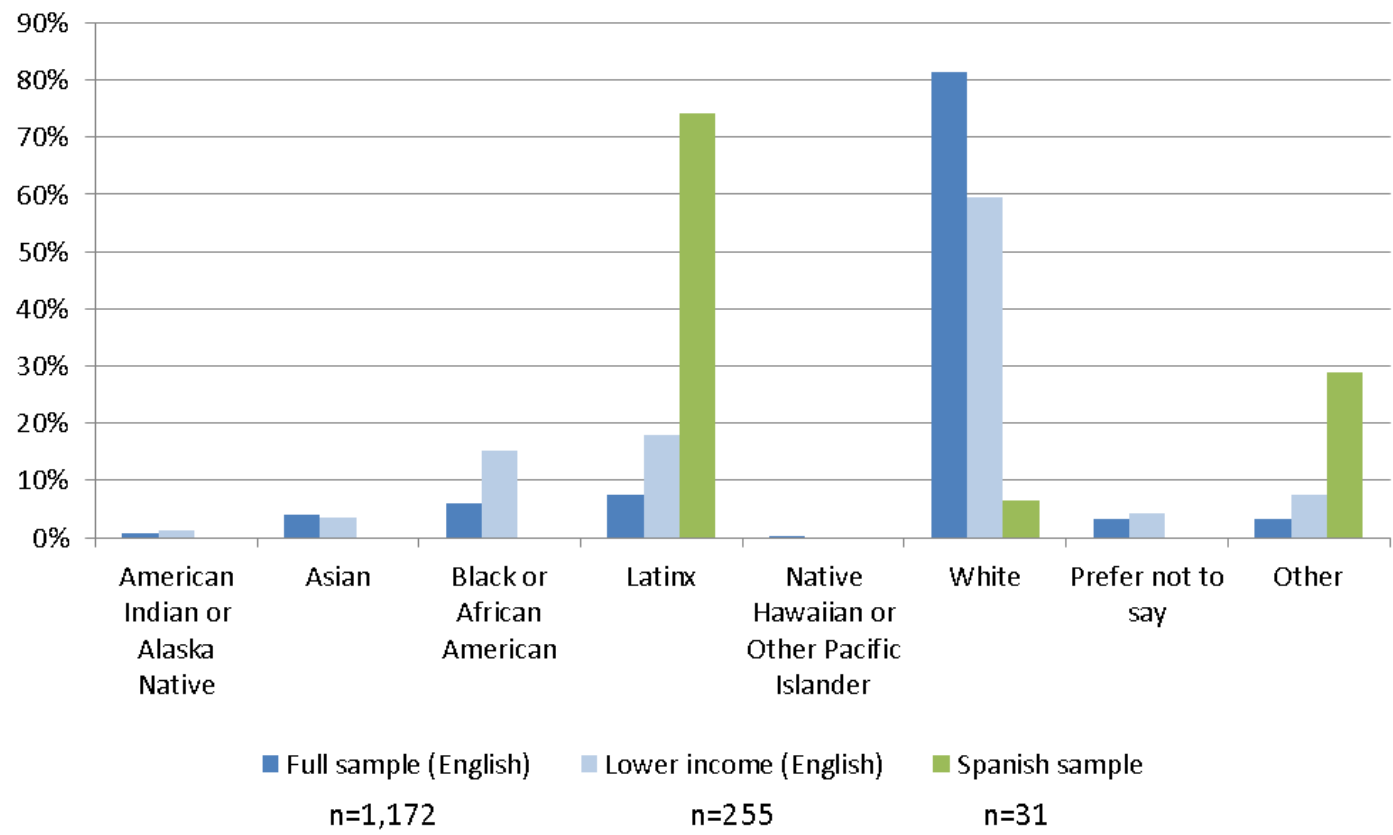


## Q20: What is your race and/or ethnicity? You may choose all that apply (U.S. Census categories):



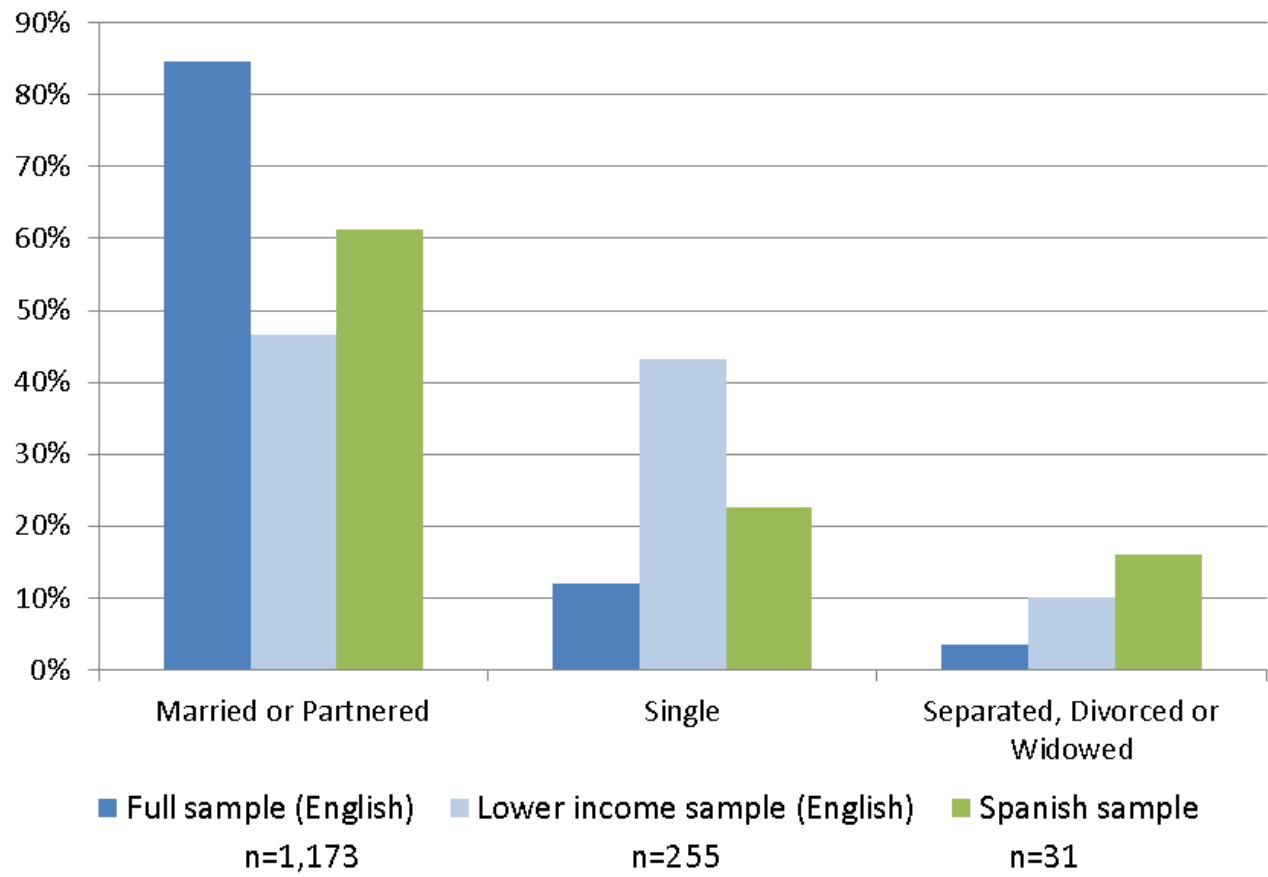


## Q20: What is your race and/or ethnicity? You may choose all that apply (U.S. Census categories):





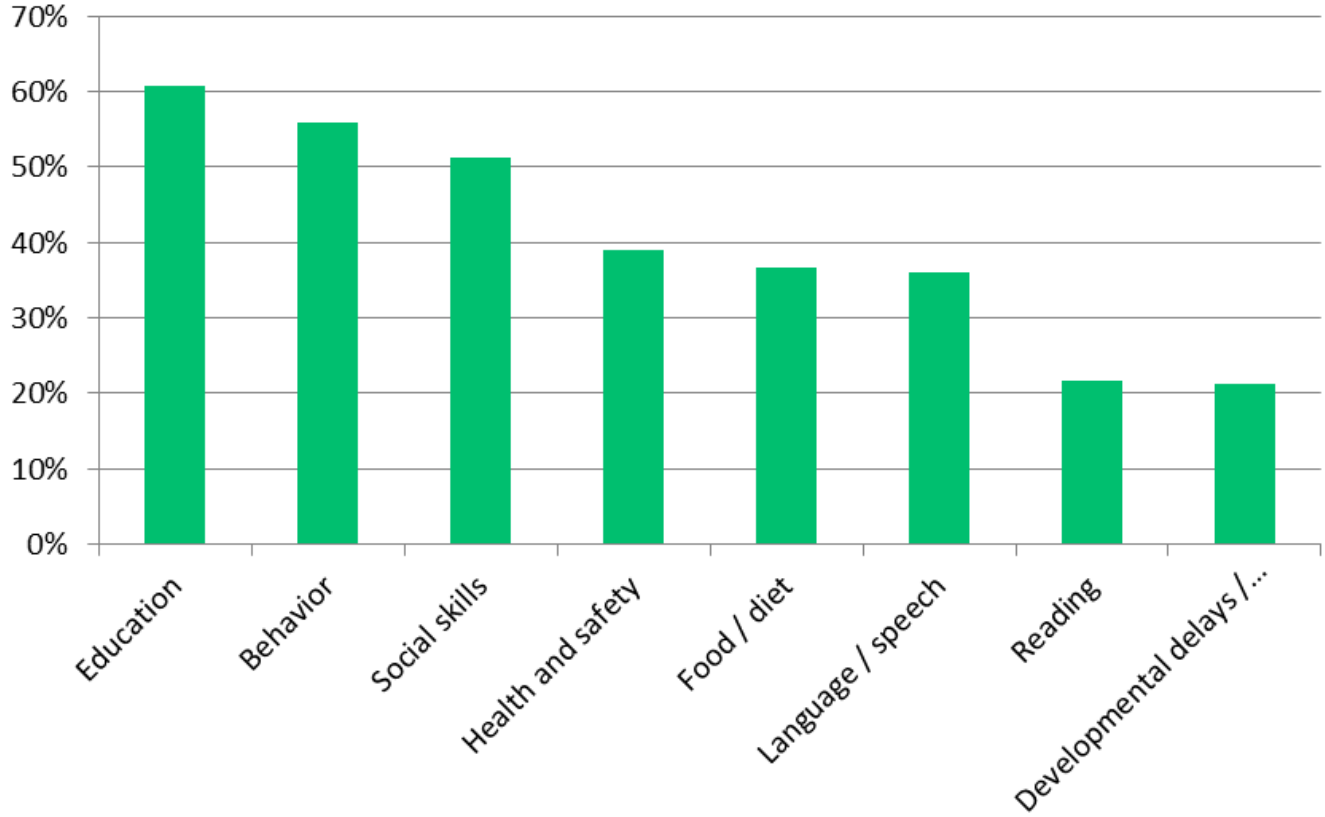
### Q22: How would you describe your marital/partner status?



# Child's needs



Q1: What topics do you have the most questions about regarding your child's needs? [check all that apply]  
n=1,216, skipped=16, Full English sample. Responses sorted.



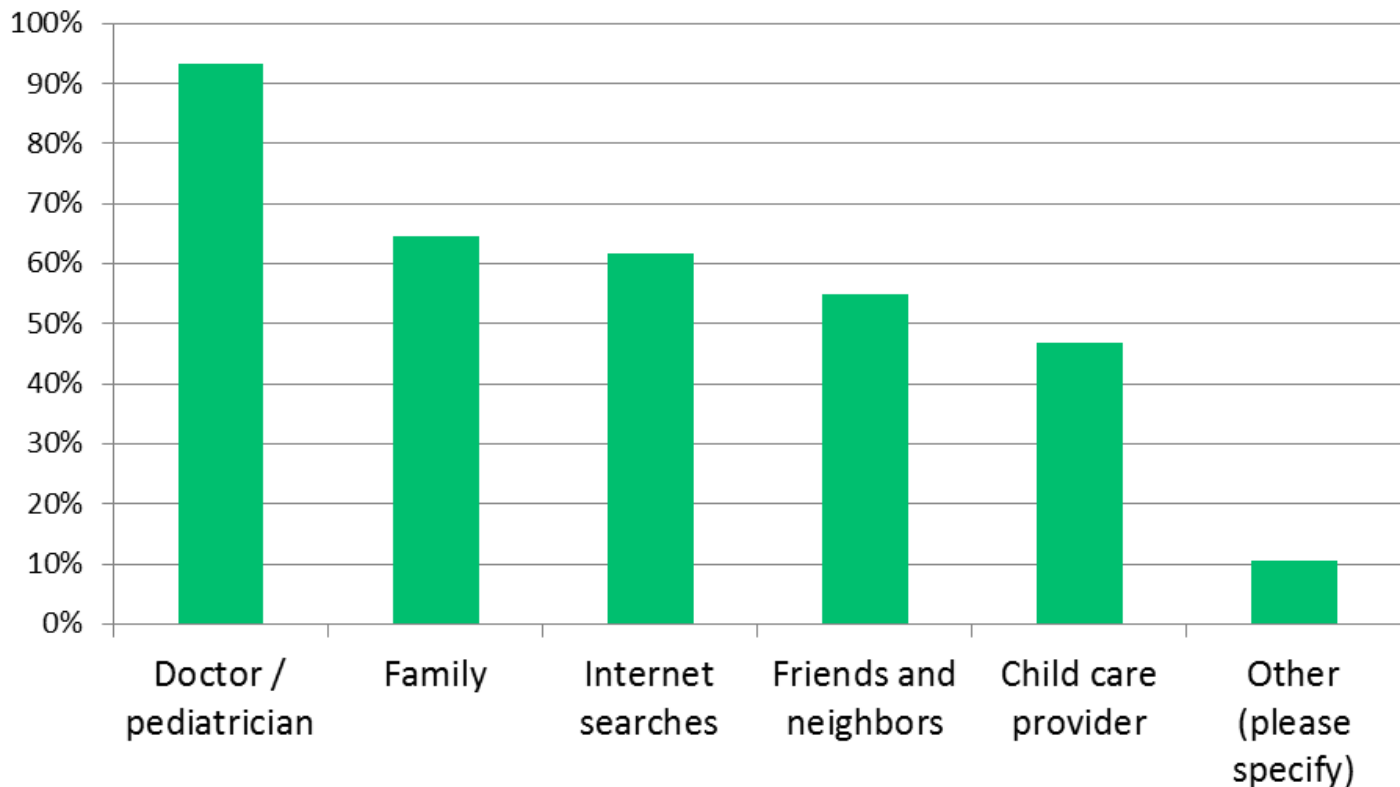
# Child's needs



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Q2: If you have questions or concerns about your child,  
who do you ask? [check all that apply]

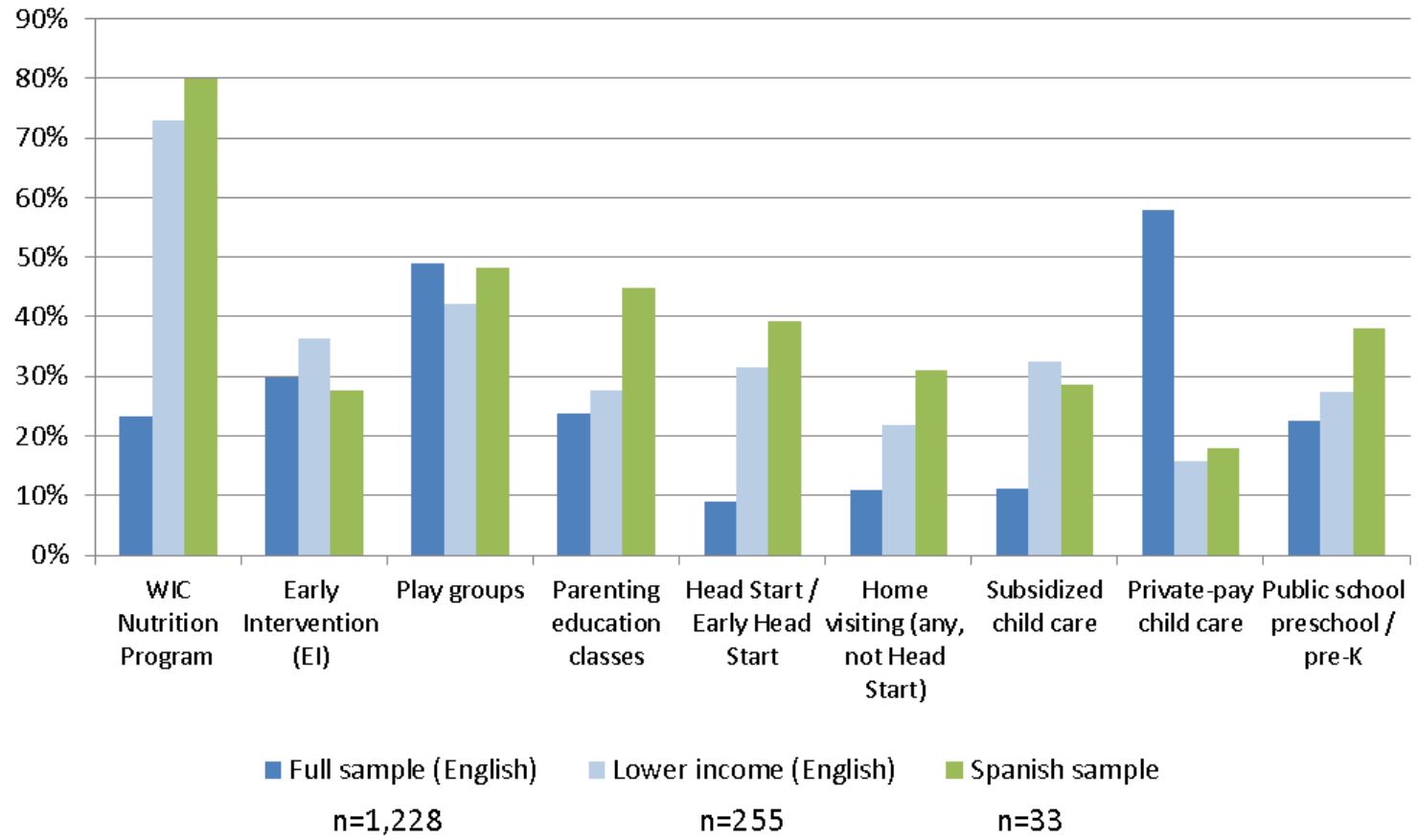
n=1,225, skipped=7. Full English sample. Responses sorted.



# Enrollment



Q3: Are you or your children currently enrolled, or have you been enrolled, in any of the following programs? [check all that apply to you and your children]





# Q4: If you answered “Yes” for play groups, parenting education, or home visiting, who provided these services?



	RESPONSES
<b>Library</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>CFCE—any</b> (includes 24 for Beginning Bridges, Uxbridge; 17 for Project Connect, Attleboro)	<b>96</b>
<b>Parent/Family Centers</b> (includes 16 for Family Nurturing Center)	<b>82</b>
<b>Early Intervention</b> (includes 7 for Thom Child and Family Services, 4 for Reach in Western Mass.)	<b>79</b>
Local / city-town run	35
Hospital (includes 3 pediatricians)	26
Cape Cod Childrens Place	23
Plymouth Family Network (PFN)	20
Public Schools	16
Ability Specific (i.e. autism spectrum, deaf, blind)	15
Somerville Family Learning Collaborative	14
An individual (program not specified)	12

	RESPONSES
Self / parent co-op	12
Kennedy Donovan Center	9
Private (i.e. a private company, or parent arranged for group privately)	8
Faith Based	7
ParentChild+	7
ABA provider (adaptive behavior)	6
Little Lovage Club	6
Gym	5
Online / Facebook groups	5
Music Groups	4
Other	127
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>727</b>

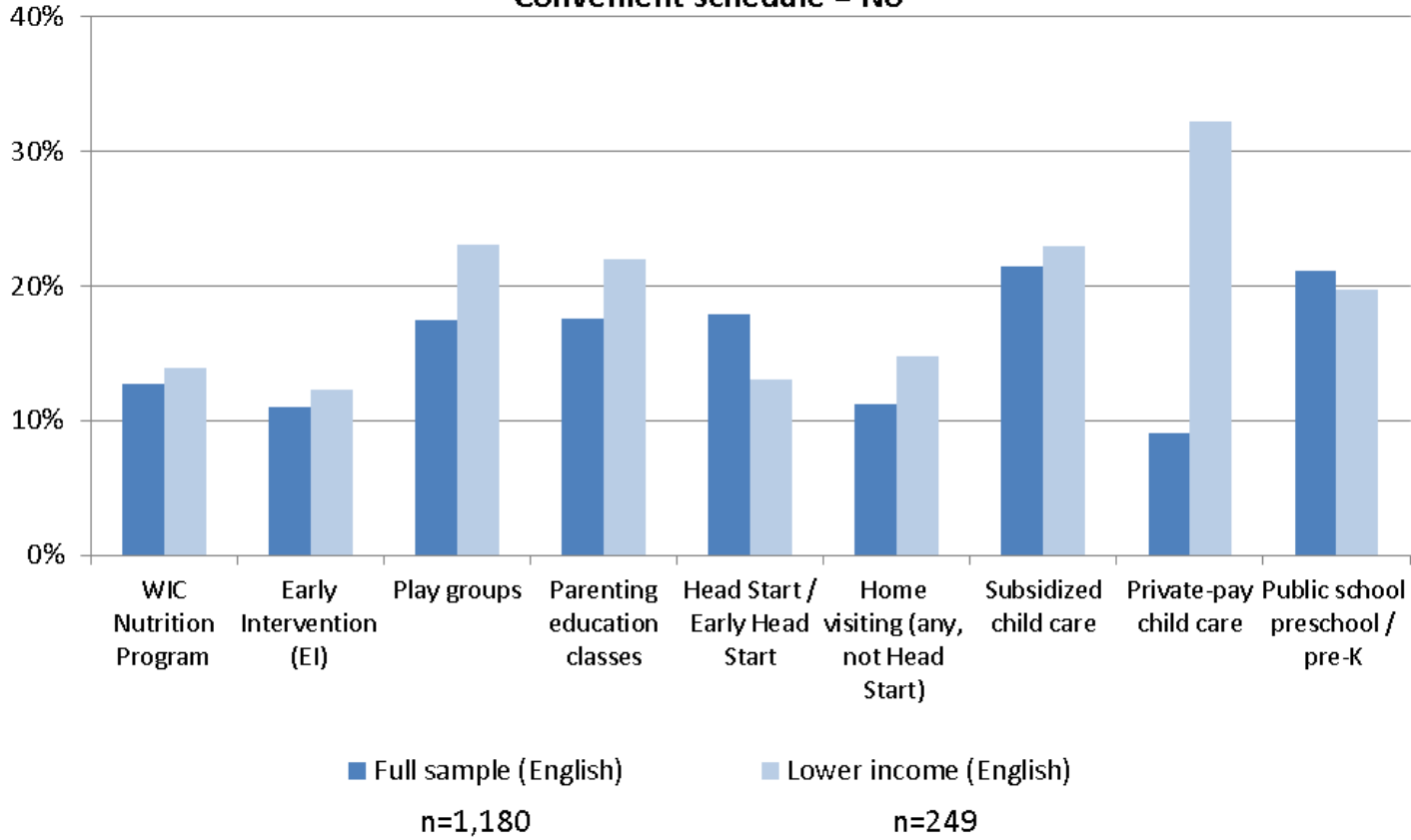
# Schedule and location



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Q5: For programs you are/were enrolled in, were your family's needs met by the following for each program?

**Convenient schedule = No**

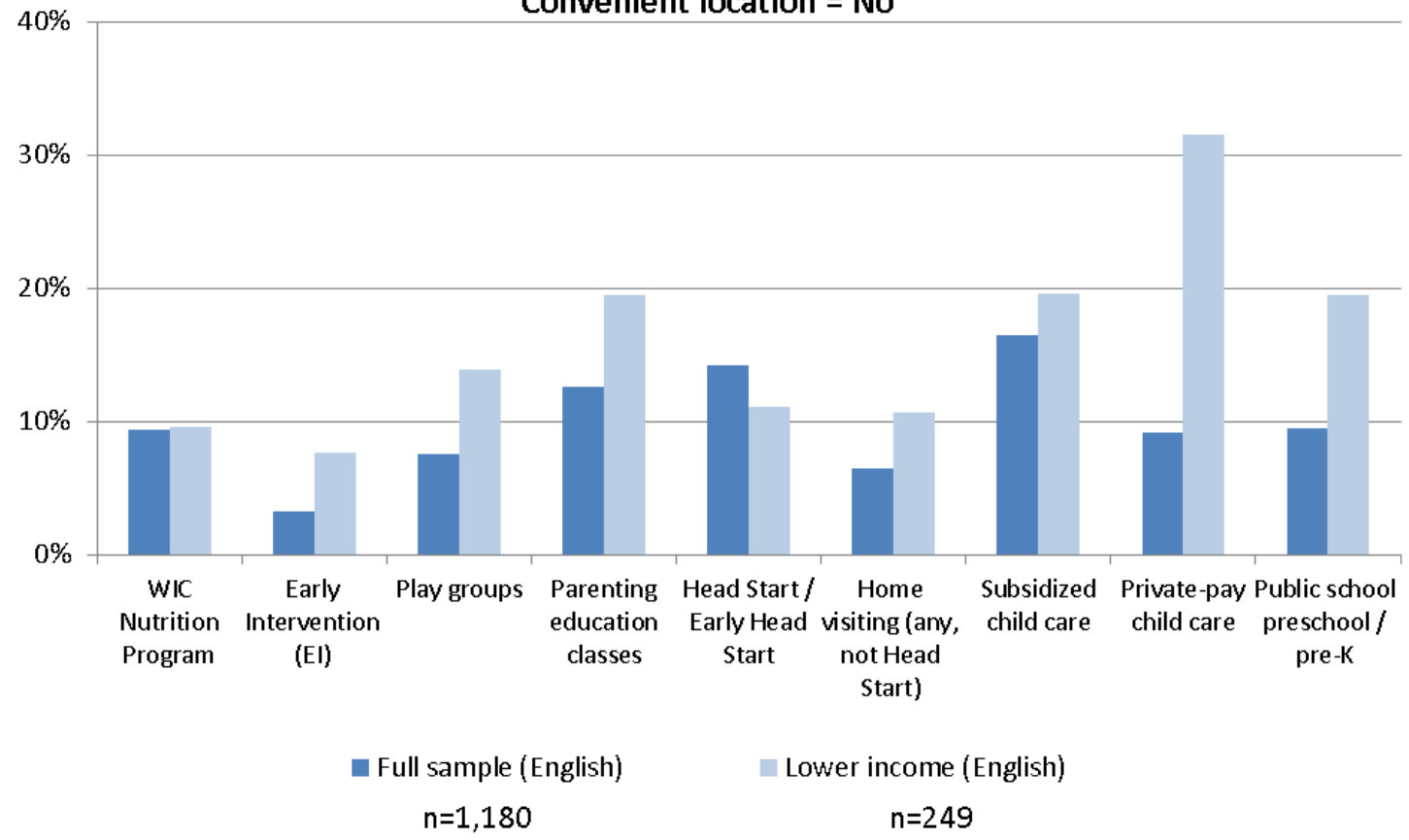


# Schedule and location



Q5: For programs you are/were enrolled in, were your family's needs met by the following for each program?

**Convenient location = No**



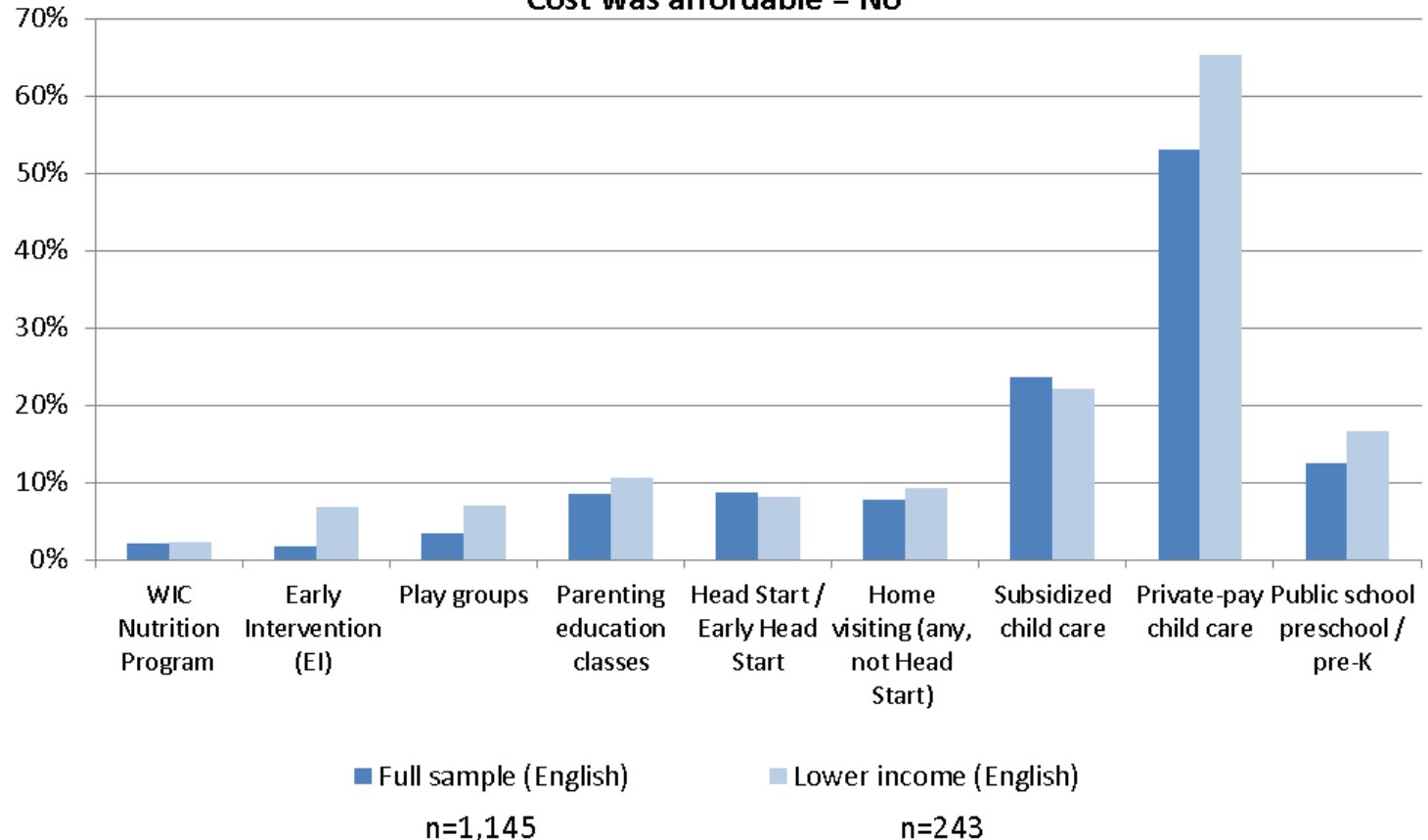
# Affordability



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Q6: For programs you are/were enrolled in, were your family's needs met by the following for each program?

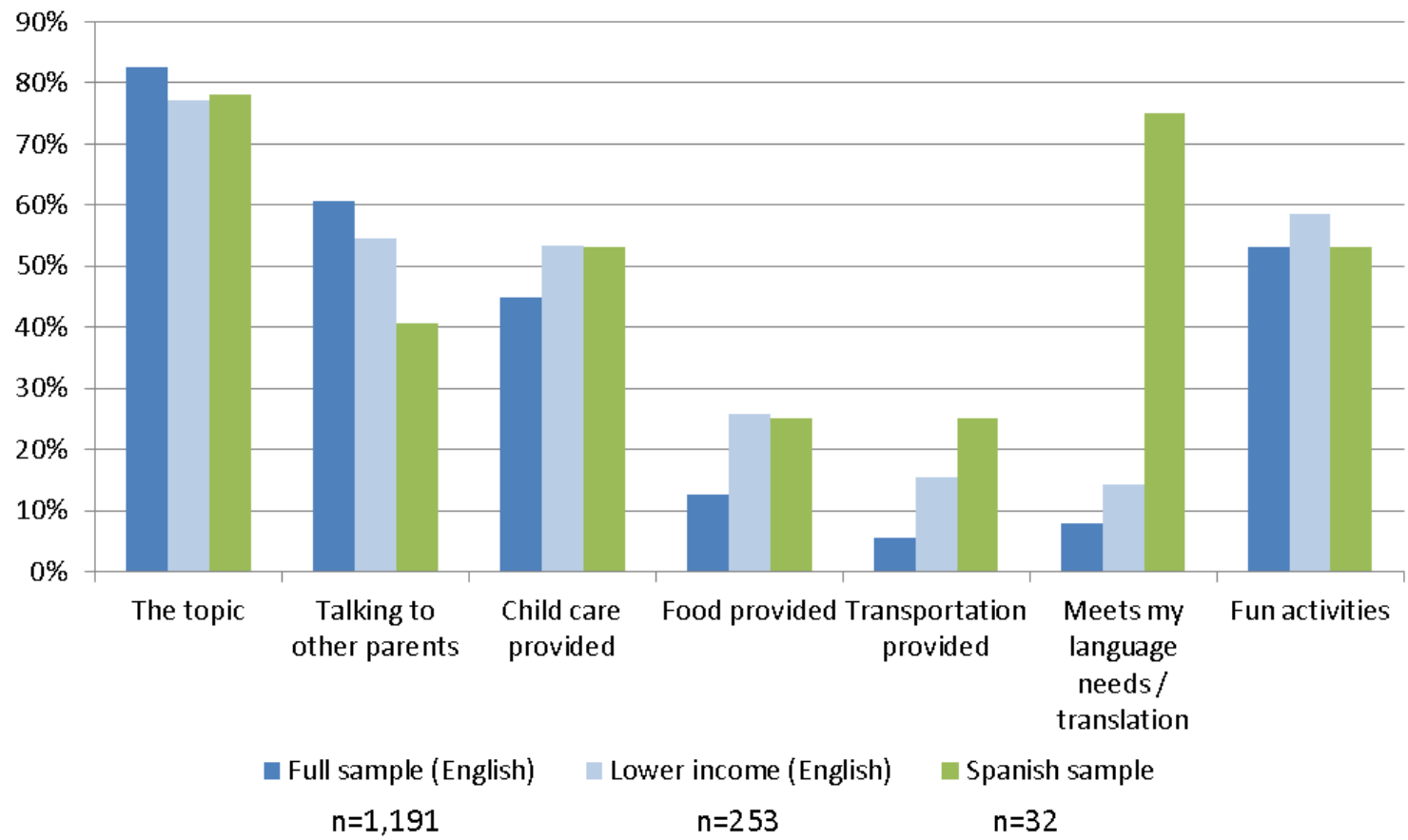
**Cost was affordable = No**



# Meetings and events



Q9: What is important to you about meetings or events organized by any program?

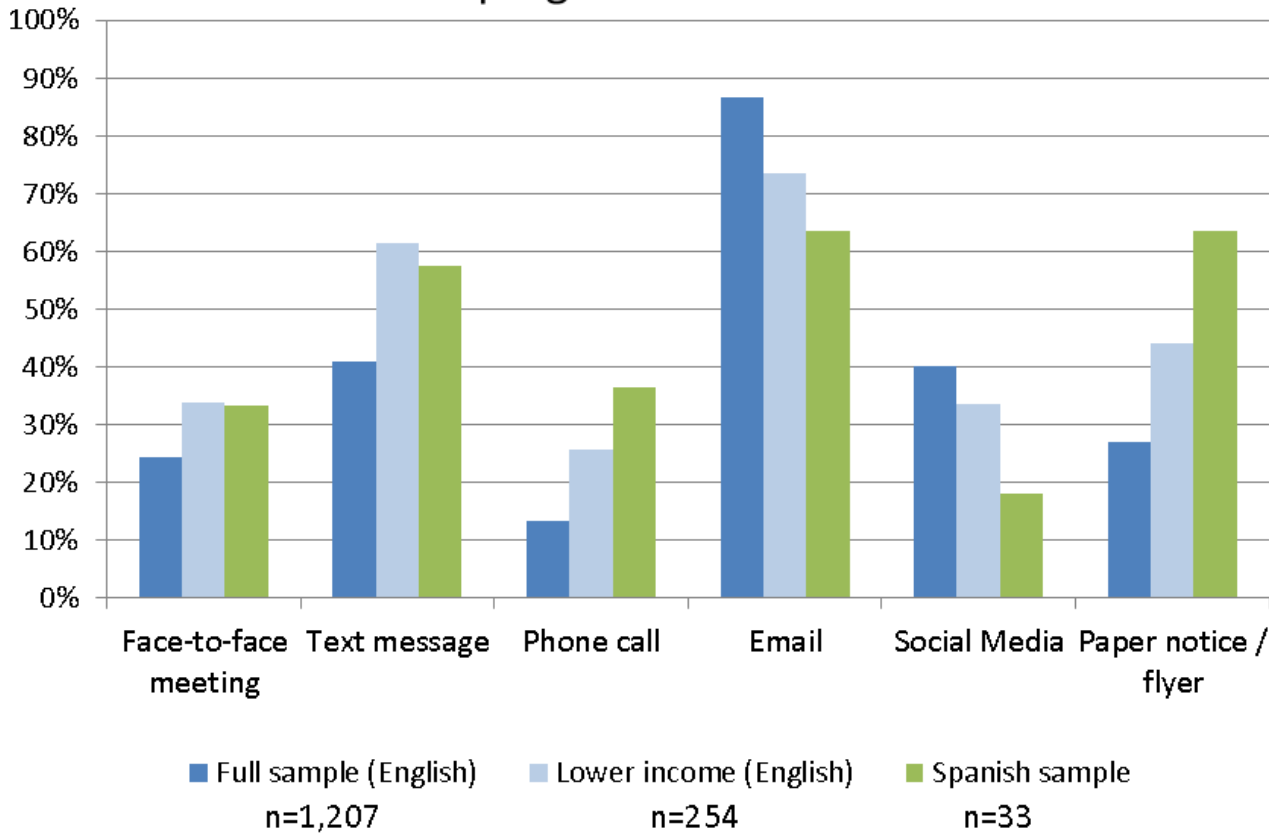


# Communication formats



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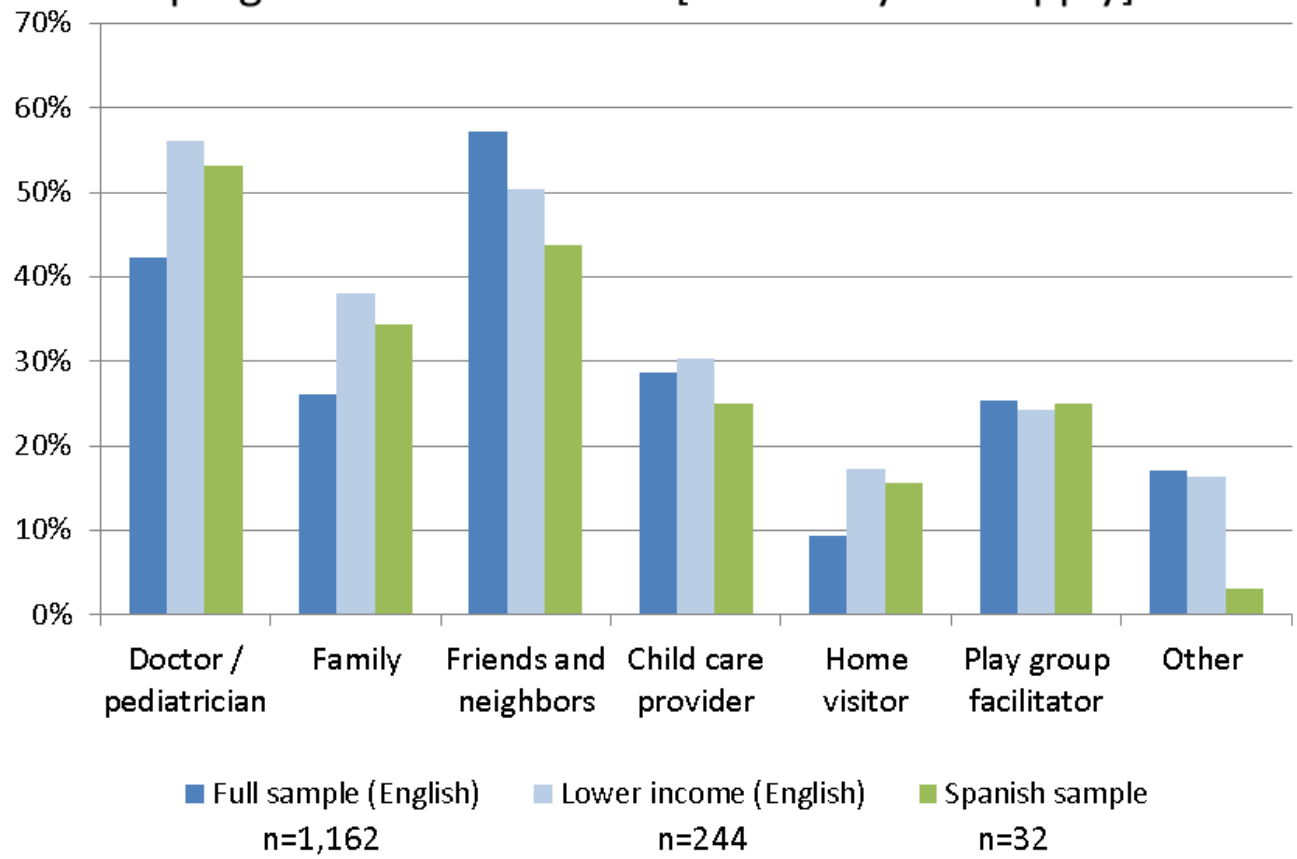
### Q10: How do you prefer to receive updates from programs or services?



# Referral sources



### Q12: Who has given you information on these programs and services? [check any that apply]

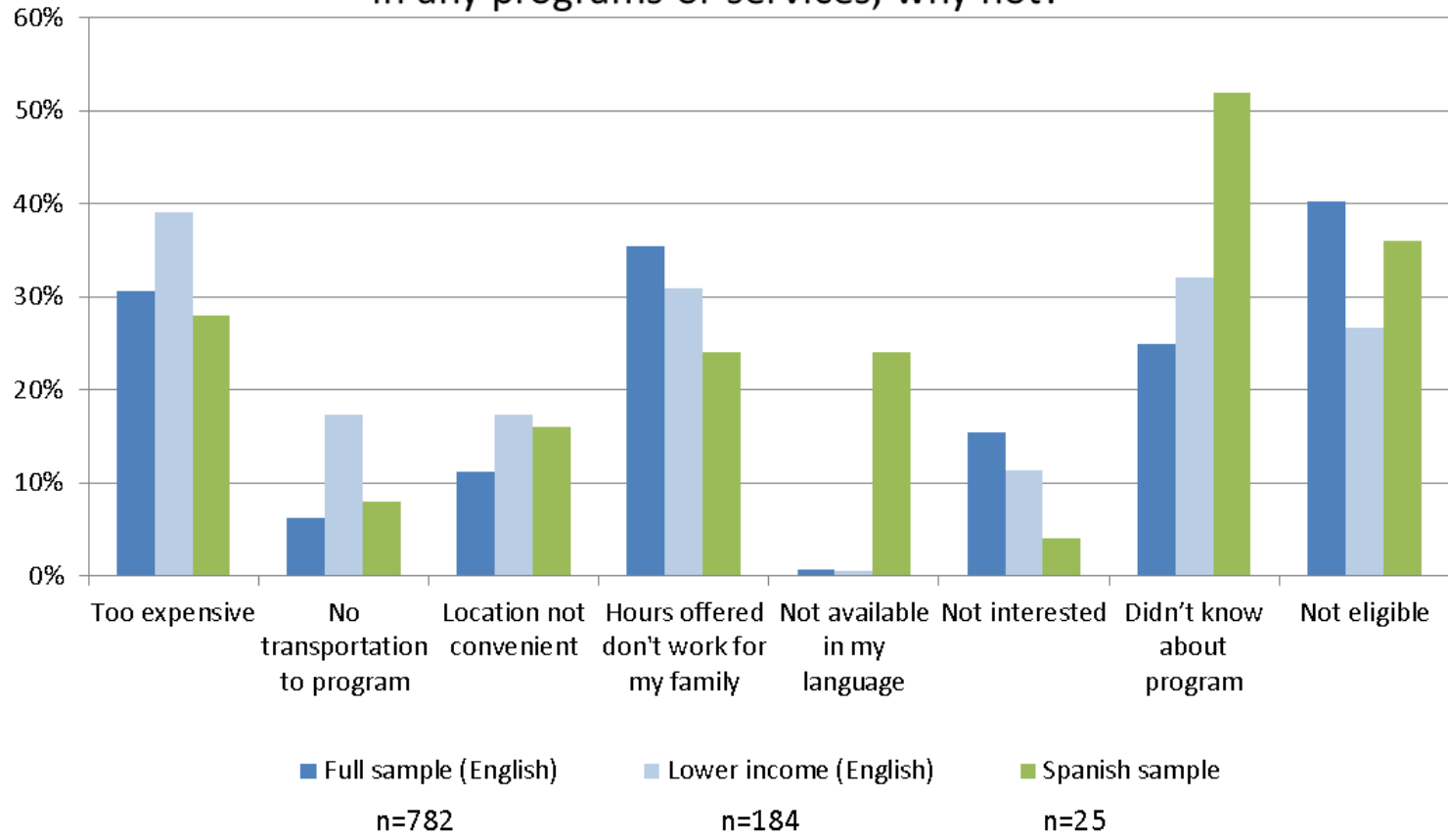


# Barriers to enrollment



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Q16: If you or your children are not enrolled in any programs or services, why not?





# Q13: Which program or service has been most helpful?



## WIC (top response in Spanish survey, 34%)

- *Porque me enseñó cuáles son los mejores alimentos para tener una vida más saludable*  
Because it taught me what the best foods are for a healthier life – **Hyde Park, Boston parent**
- *Desde q estaba embarazada de mi niño mayor de 7 años me an ayudado on todas mis preguntas y preocupaciones aún teniendo mi segundo niño de 4 años siempre me ofrecen todo lo q ellos pueden para ayudarme sea en las comidas y leche q brindan como nutrición informaciones y todo lo q yo tenga duda ellos buscan para contestarme todo lo q necesito y si no lo tienen buscan donde puedo conseguir más información ... la gente cree q esto solo es comida gratis pero ellos son más q eso.*  
Since I was pregnant with my eldest, who's 7, they have helped me with all my questions and concerns, and even my child, who's 4, they always offer me everything they can to help me, whether it's food and milk, or provide information on nutrition. Anything I have doubts about, they try to respond with everything I need, and if they do not have it, they look for where I can get more information ... people think it is only free food, but they are more than that. – **Haverhill parent**

# Q13: Which program or service has been most helpful?



## Early Intervention (EI)

- *Me dio apoyo y asistencia con mi hijo prematuro. Su ayuda fue vital en el desarrollo y evolución de mi hijo. Su personal altamente calificado.*  
They gave me support and assistance with my premature son. Their help was vital in the development and evolution of my son. The staff are highly qualified. – **Springfield parent**
- Corrected a congenital problem. Convenient, free, professional, friendly. – **Northampton parent**
- Our counselor has been amazing. Very responsive and if she doesn't know the answer to a question she always finds someone who can. She's a great listener and has had great advice. I feel like I can text her anytime and get a response like a friend. – **Southbridge parent**

# Q13: Which program or service has been most helpful?



## Private-pay child care (top response in English survey (33%))

- We were very lucky to find someone we trusted who has lots of flexibility to help our family pay our bills while helping our son grow. – **Worcester parent**
- They are a customer service based provider. They make sure my child's education meets certain standards. – **Sudbury parent**
- Because having my 3 yr old in day care and almost 5 yr old in Pre-K allows me to work full time. – **New Bedford parent**
- It's the only one we use. I wish we qualified for more support. The cost of living and a child in Cambridge is too much. – **Cambridge parent**

# Q13: Which program or service has been most helpful?



## Play groups (second highest response in English survey, 22%)

- The playgroups offered by Project Connect Family Center in Attleboro mimic a pre-school with play stations, hand washing, snack, and circle time with singing. I feel that it provided a great transitional stepping stone for real pre-school. – **Attleboro parent**
- The CFCE Building Bridges program in Uxbridge, MA, has been a great resource for my child and I. It has helped me understand my child's needs and behavior. The instructors have made us feel welcomed and comfortable. It has also greatly helped with my child's development and social skills. We both love it and register every time it is being offered! I will be forever grateful for this program and the opportunity to be a part of it! – **Whitinsville parent**
- Gets me and my 2 children ages 2 and 4 out of the house, on a routine. Builds social skills, healthy emotional support for all. I'm a stay at home mom on very tight budget, these programs save my sanity alleviates isolation and have countless benefits for my children. – **Dennis parent**
- Didn't ask for income guidelines , which every other place asked for and low income families always got preferred . Our family was always over income, due to it we always got put on the waitlist . I just got turned away and felt I had to be poor to get my child a early education. – **Haverhill parent**

## Q15: Do you have suggestions to make any of the programs more helpful? Please tell us.



- *En los talleres y programas para padres deberían tener diferentes horarios y ofrecer cuidado de los niños, para que así haya mayor participación de los padres. También un poco más de promoción de los mismos.*

In workshops and programs for parents they should have different schedules and offer childcare, so that there is greater participation of parents. Also a little more promotion of them. – **Hyde Park, Boston parent**

- *Una forma de hacerles llegar a los padres más información de los diferentes programas q hay pq más de la mitad de los padres incluyéndome no sabemos de muchos de los programas o solo lo escuchamos por personas escucharon de otra persona quisas aya un programa q me pueda interesar para mis hijos y ni se q exista.*

A way of getting more information to parents about the different programs that there are, because more than half of the parents, including me, don't know about many of the programs, or we only hear it from people that heard from someone else. Perhaps there's a program that might interest me for my children and I don't even know that it exists. – **Haverhill parent**

## Q15: Do you have suggestions to make any of the programs more helpful? Please tell us.



- Provide more story times across the week and during times working parents have off. For example, I wanted to bring my toddler somewhere for Veterans Day but every library was closed. Didn't know of any playgroups. – **Auburn parent**
- Once I started working full time again, the scheduling of all programs (play groups, EI, parent workshops, etc.) was not conducive to working parent hours- most activity takes place during the day during the week. – **Ipswich parent**
- I make too much money for MOST of the programs listed. And I'm not rich. Problem 1. Childcare is astronomical and I am not poor enough for help, so my child stays with family. There's no help for the middle class that we dont pay for. That said, lactation is FREE at BIDMC and its lovely because I had a health scare and they helped so much. – **Dorchester, Boston parent**
- More communication. The center, us and the home care provider are very stand-alone. The provider comes to the house and that is it. We barely communicate with the provider and never hear from the center. They have my email. Would love more education/ information that might be helpful to the education of our premie twins. – **Plymouth parent**

# Q17: What programs or services for yourself or your children would you like to see more of in your community?



- *Grupo de apoyo a los padres de otros idiomas*  
Support groups for parents in other languages – **Northbridge parent**
- *Orientación temprana de temas que sean de crecimiento personal para los niños*  
Early guidance on issues related to children’s personal growth – **Lawrence parent**
- *Day care que apliquen todas las clases sociales*  
Day care that all social classes can apply for. – **Holyoke parent**
- *Un programa donde puedan ejercitarse o hacer alguna actividad motora en el invierno*  
A program where they can exercise or do some motor activity in the winter – **Hyde Park, Boston parent**
- *Sinceramente es la primera vez que conosco estos programs y bueno aun no estoy enterada que mas programs hay aparte de la escuela donde va mi hijo*  
Honestly this is the first time that I’ve known about these programs, and well I am still not aware what more programs are out there, apart from the school where my son goes – **Springfield parent**

## Q17: What programs or services for yourself or your children would you like to see more of in your community?



- Combination mom/kid outing where the parents and kids get to do separate activities. – **Rowley parent**
- Fun weekend events for the whole family. Or date night events where the kids play and we get grown up time. – **Brighton, Boston parent**
- Affordable sports, dance, theater, music instruments, arts, self defense classes – **New Bedford parent**
- Play groups!!! And affordable child care; my mom watches the baby while I work because we can't afford day care. – **Somerville parent**
- I would like to connect more with other moms/families – **Lenox parent**



## So, what do families want?

- **Affordability:** existing programs are too expensive, many aren't eligible or miss cut-off for subsidies.
- **Flexible schedules:** nights, weekends, holidays, vacations. Many families are not free to participate during the standard work week.
- **Variety:** yoga, Zumba, exercise, swim, dance, art, music, two-gen programming (together and separate).
- **Communication, tailored to preference:** some like email, others prefer fliers. Most want clearer communication about child's development and program information. Provide translation.
- **Connection to other parents:** more opportunity for meeting, socializing, support and tips, grouped by child's specific age or parent type (single parents, Spanish language).
- **Connection to local experts:** "Once you know the CFCE coordinator, you're in the pipeline. But what if you never find that person, or what if you're shy?" – Yarmouth focus group
- **Information:** website listing what is available throughout the community. Coordination and referral needs improvement. Many programs don't know what else is available in the community, and so they don't make referrals.

# EEC strategic roadmap, findings related to MPIT

## MPIT phase 2: sustainability discussion and group activity

# Next Steps

- Leave your “phase 2” notes
- Steering Committee begin drafting mission and vision
- Reporting to funders (March)
- Full report of family survey and focus group findings (March)
- Contact us any time with your ideas:
  - Titus DosRemedios, 617-330-7387, [tdosremedios@strategiesforchildren.org](mailto:tdosremedios@strategiesforchildren.org)

# Strategies for Children



Early  
Education  
for All

Stay  
informed



 eye on early  
education BLOG

