



UNDERSTANDING RURAL PARENTS CHILD CARE NEEDS

AUGUST 2021

BACKGROUND + METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

The research conducted by Morning Consult on behalf of the Bipartisan Policy Center seeks to understand current use of and demand for child care among parents in rural communities. Specific research objectives include:

1. *Understand child care needs among rural parents*
2. *Explore accessibility of child care providers in rural communities*
3. *Understand the extent rural parents have considered formal child care options when selecting a care arrangement and top-of-mind considerations when choosing a child care provider.*
4. *Use of financial supports for child care, including federal tax credits*

AUDIENCE

Survey respondents were screened on having a child at home under the age of 5, living in a small city or town or a rural area, indicating the population of their town is less than 50,000 residents, and having at least one parent employed.

For simplicity, throughout the report, this audience is referenced as ‘rural parents.’

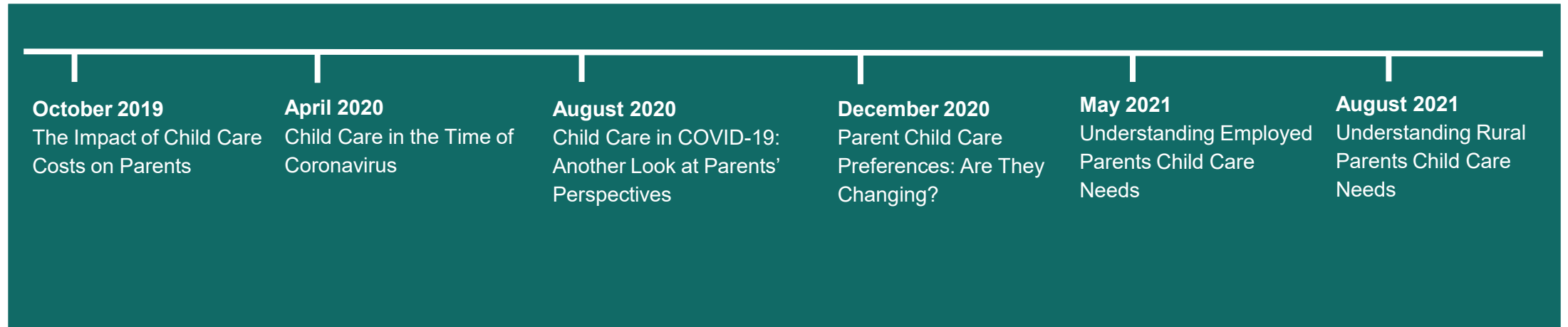
METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted from July 29-August 19, 2021 among a national sample of 654 rural parents with children under the age of 5, including an oversample of Hispanic rural parents, n=57. The interviews were conducted online with fielding targets based on gender to facilitate responses from both mothers and fathers. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

— BACKGROUND

PARENT SURVEY SERIES

BPC and Morning Consult have conducted a series of parent surveys to understand parents’ need and preferences for child care.



Parent Survey Series: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/blog/parent-survey-resource-center/>

AGENDA

WORK ARRANGEMENTS

RURAL COMMUNITY
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ARRANGEMENTS

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CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON
CHILD CARE
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FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR
CHILD CARE

RESPONDENT PROFILE



Work Arrangements

- 1 A majority of rural parents (57%) work onsite full time, while a third (31%) work remotely full-time or in a hybrid environment.

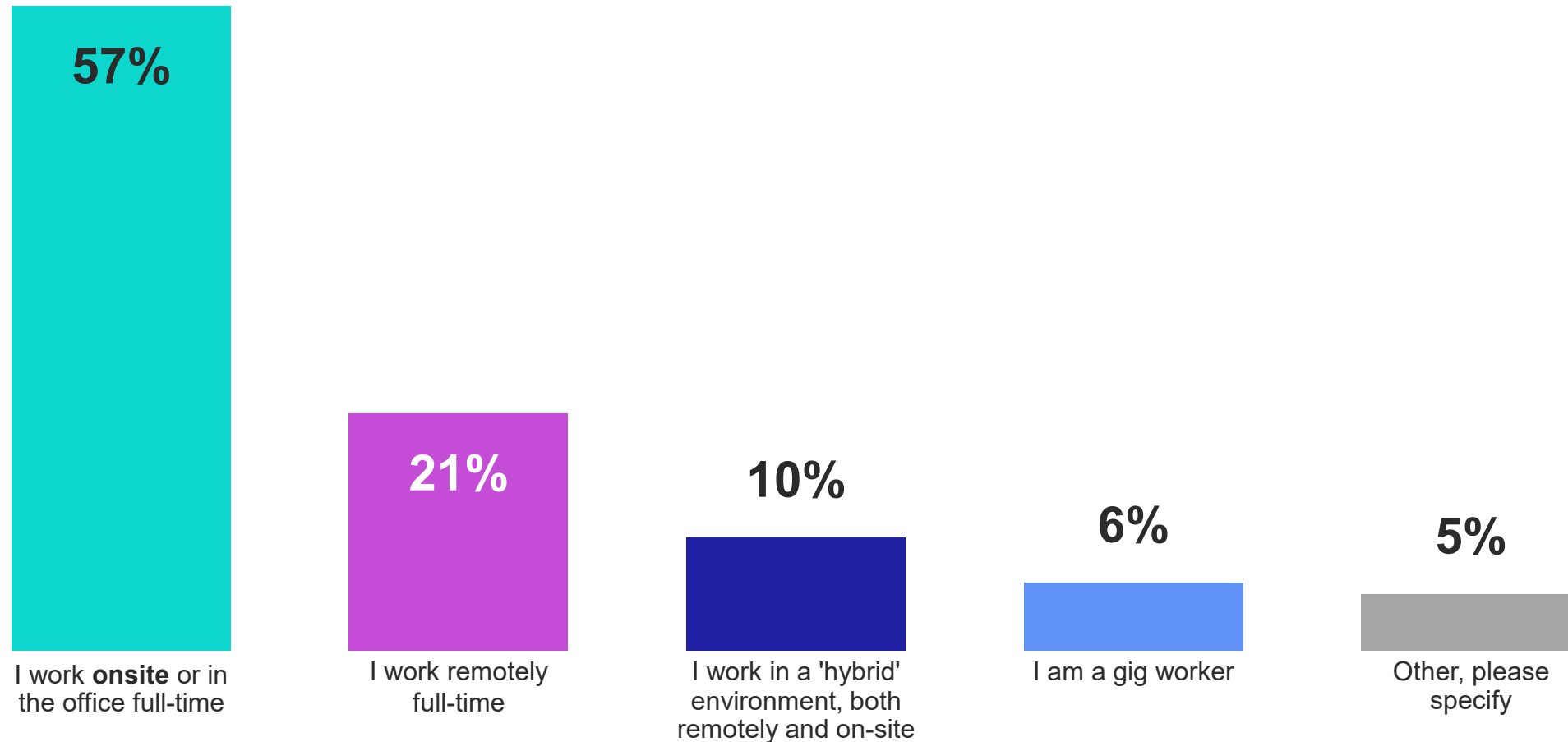
 - Similar to research conducted in May 2021, Black rural parents (19%) are more likely than parents of other racial and ethnic groups to say they are a gig worker.
- 2 How far in advance parents are aware of their work schedule significantly differs across demographic groups.

 - Employed rural parents with a higher education level are more likely to have a fixed work schedule, while 36% of rural parents with less than a college degree are aware of their schedule in 2 weeks in advance or less.
 - Two in five rural parents with an income under \$50k are aware of their work schedule in 2 weeks in advance or less, double the percent compared to mid (20%) and high income earners (16%).
 - White rural parents (46%) are more likely than rural parents of other racial and ethnic groups to say they have a fixed work schedule.
 - Two in five (42%) Black rural parents are aware of their work schedule in 2 weeks advance or less.
 - Awareness of work schedule differs significantly across job classification. Half of service workers (49%) are aware of their work schedule 2 weeks in advance or less.

WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Over half (57%) of employed rural parents work onsite full-time, while a third (31%) work remotely full-time or in a hybrid environment.
Which of the following best describes your current work situation?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493



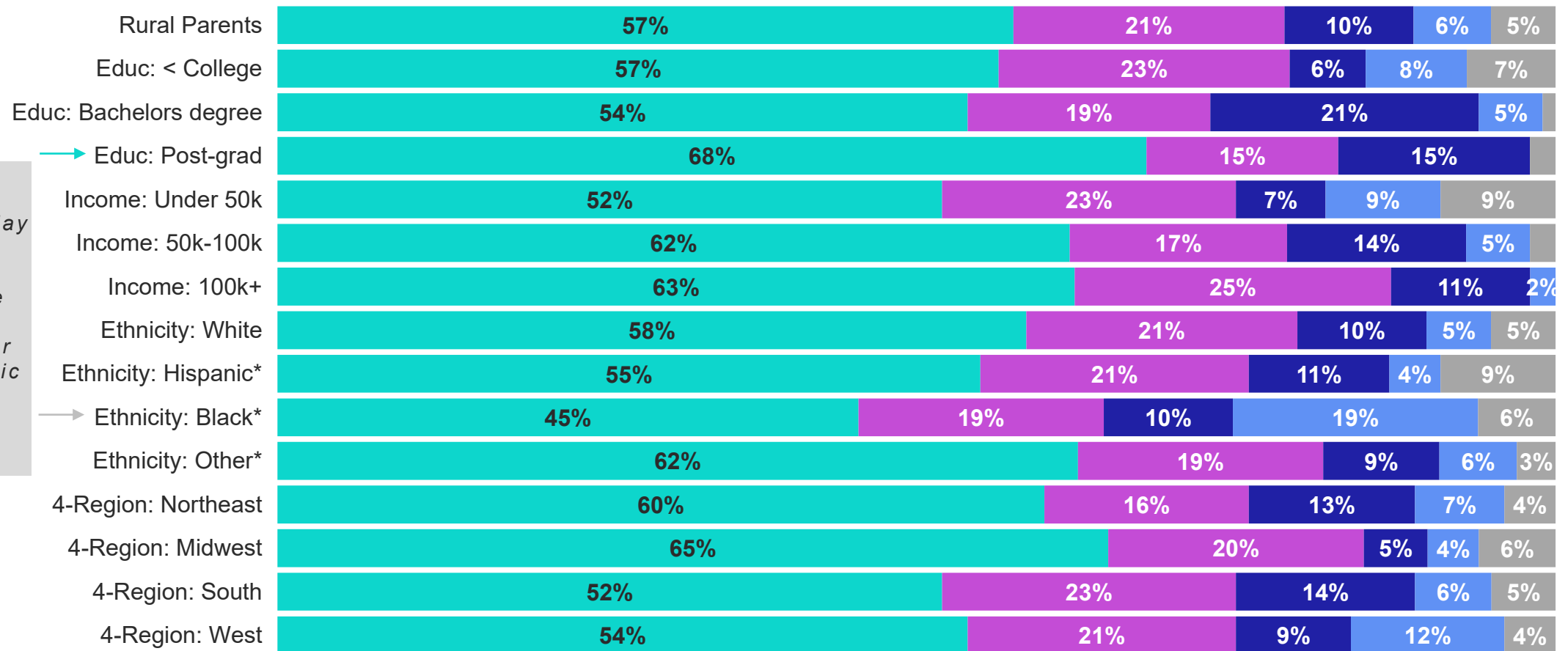
WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Employed rural parents with a post-grad degree are more likely than parents with a lower level of education to be working in the office full-time (68%)

Which of the following best describes your current work situation?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

■ I work onsite or in the office full-time ■ I work remotely full-time ■ I work in a 'hybrid' environment ■ I am a gig worker ■ Other, please specify



Similar to research conducted in May 2021**, Black rural parents (19%) are more likely than parents of other racial and ethnic groups to say they are a gig worker.

*Caution small n size, Hispanic n=47, Black n=31, Other n=32

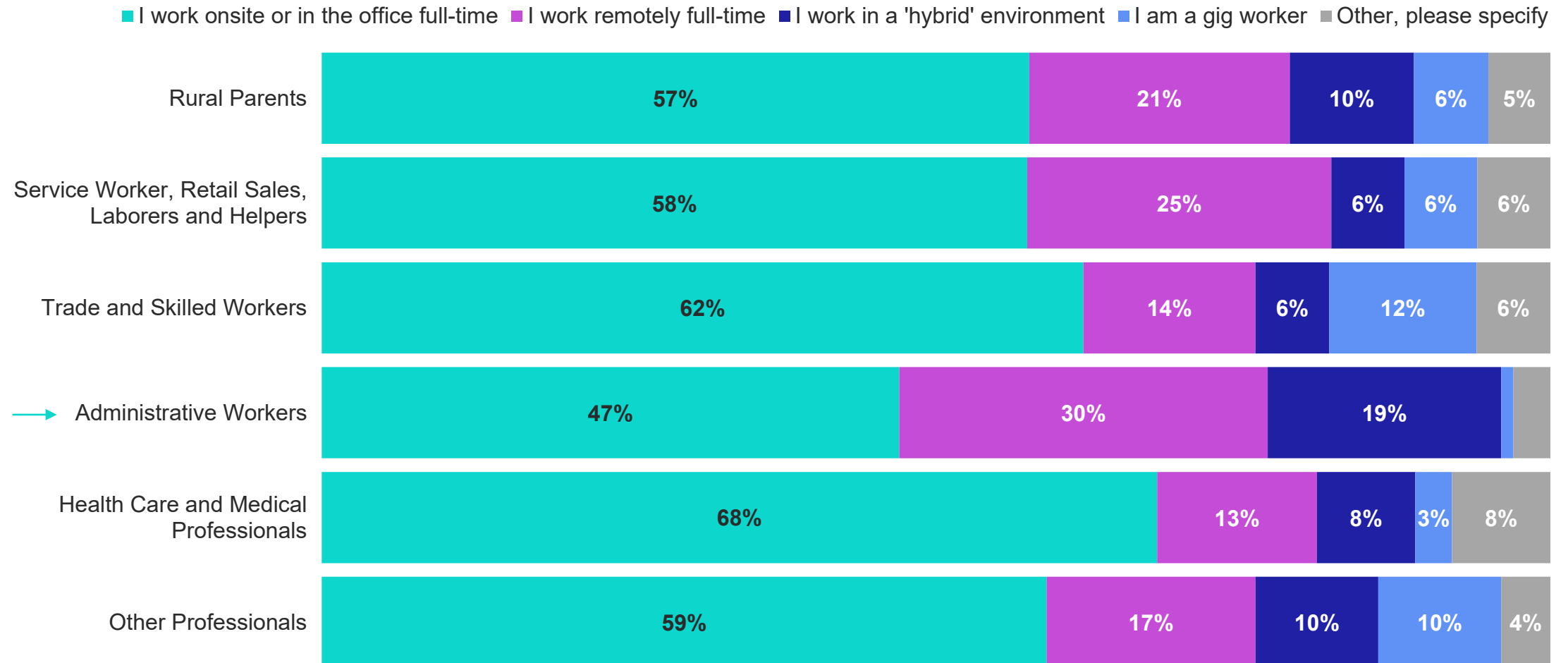
**Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Employed rural parents who classify their job as an *administrative worker* are working in the office full time (47%) and in a fully remote or hybrid environment (49%).

Which of the following best describes your current work situation?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

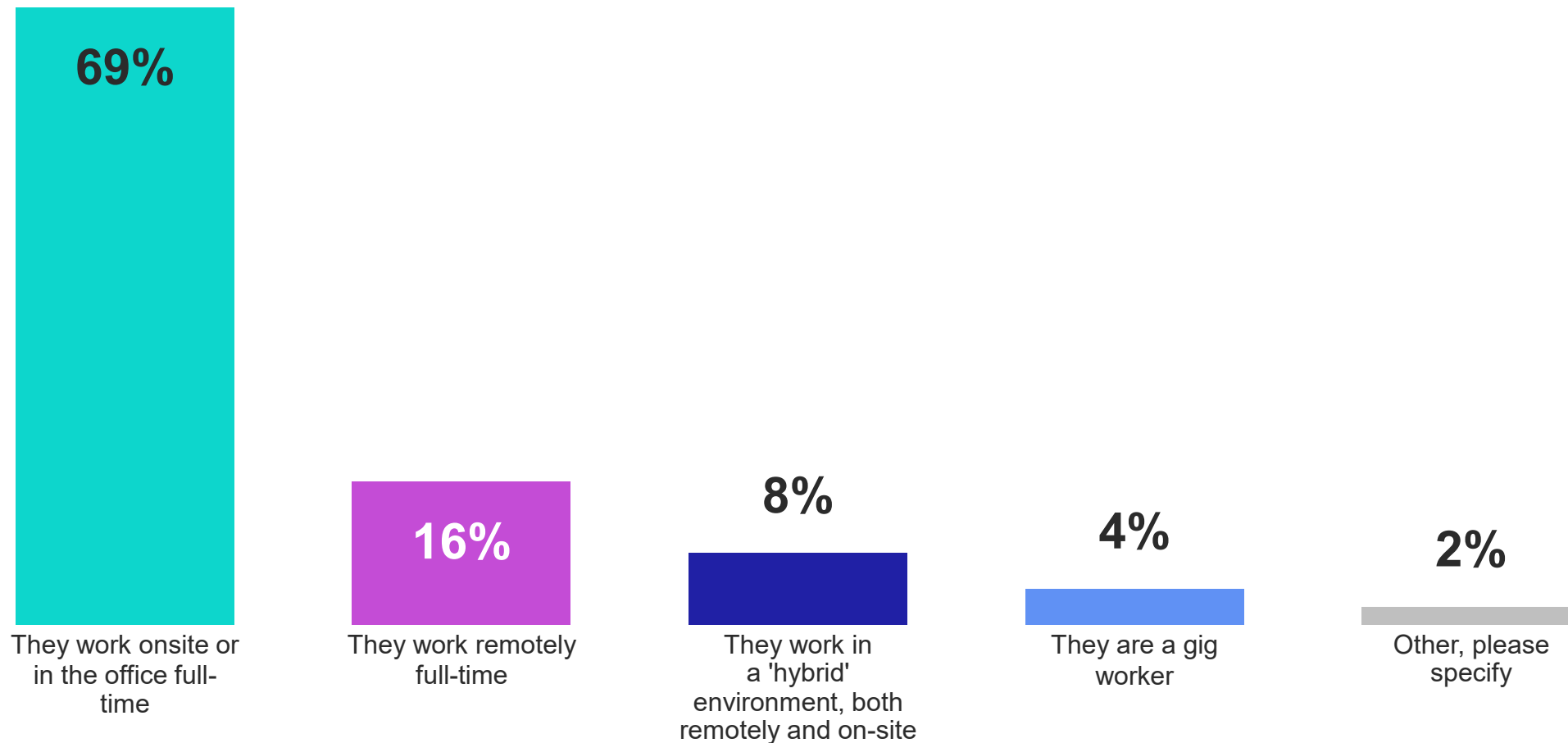


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Over two-thirds of rural parents say their spouse/partner is working onsite full-time (69%).

Which of the following best describes your spouse or partner's current work situation?

SPOUSE/PARTNER EMPLOYED, N=478

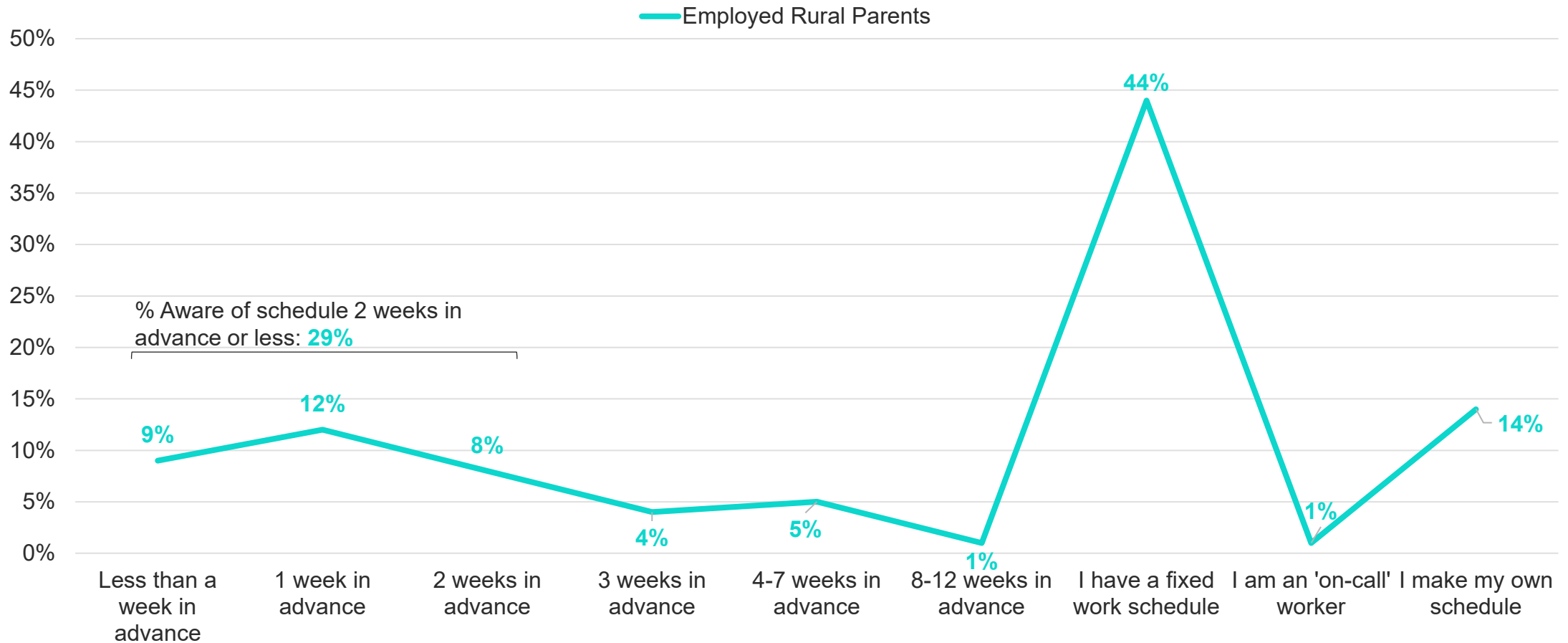


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Nearly a third (29%) of employed rural parents are aware of their work schedule 2 weeks in advance or less, while 44% have a fixed work schedule.

Thinking about your work hours, how far in advance are you aware of your work schedule, or do you have a fixed work schedule?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

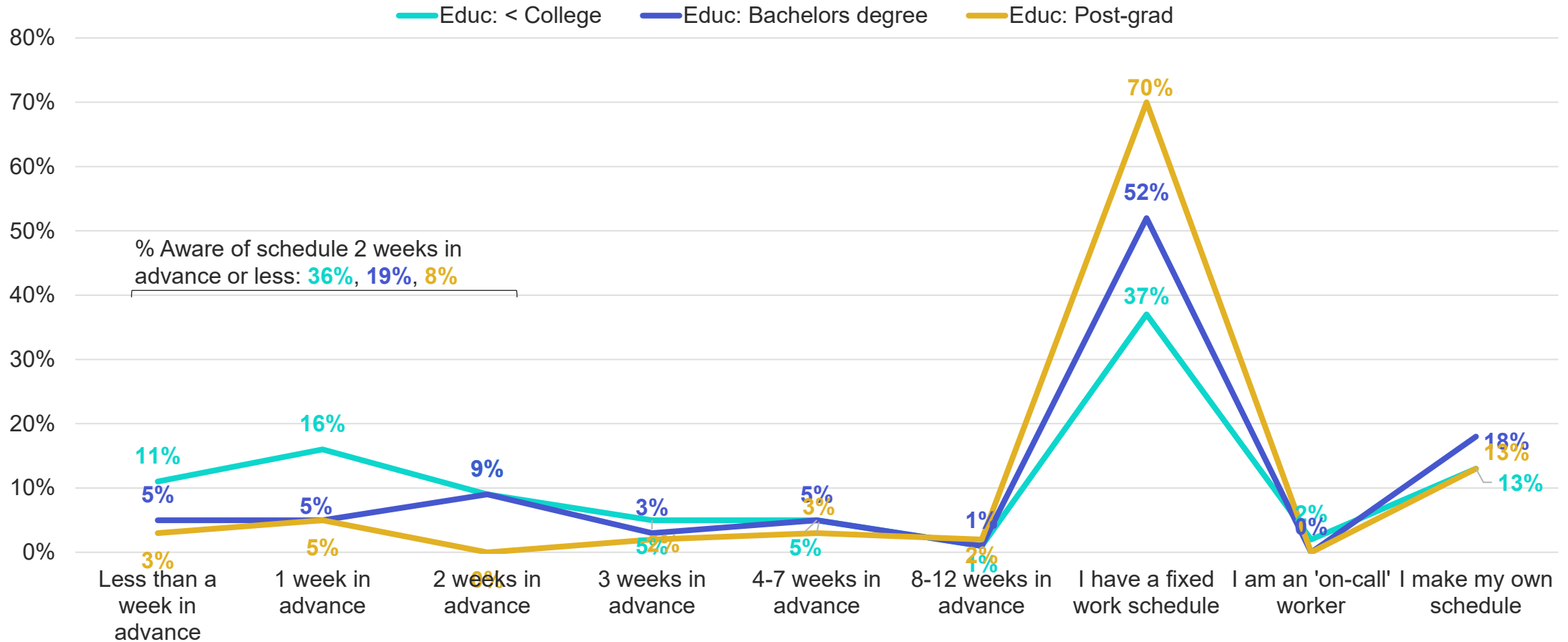


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Employed rural parents with a higher education level are more likely to have a fixed work schedule, while 36% of rural parents with less than a college degree are aware of their schedule in 2 weeks in advance or less.

Thinking about your work hours, how far in advance are you aware of your work schedule, or do you have a fixed work schedule?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

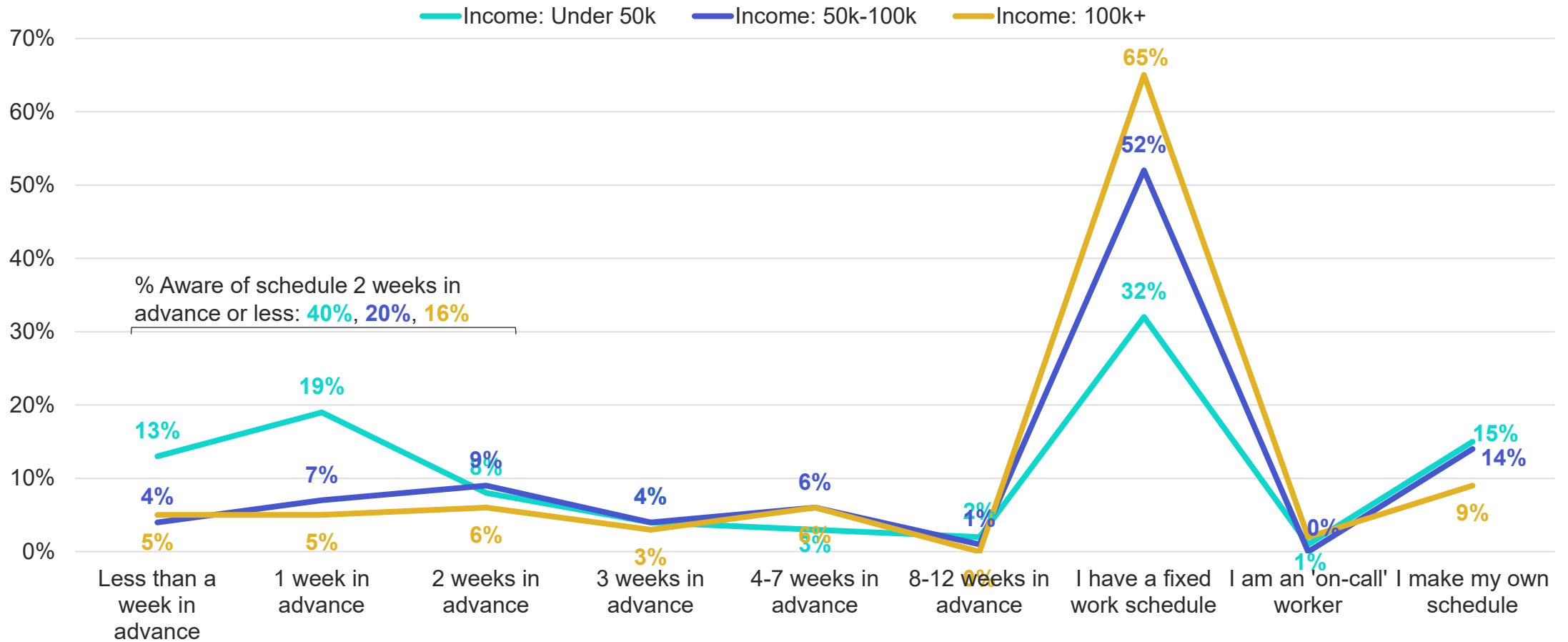


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Two in five rural parents with an income under \$50k are aware of their work schedule in 2 weeks in advance or less, double the percent compared to mid (20%) and high income earners (16%).

Thinking about your work hours, how far in advance are you aware of your work schedule, or do you have a fixed work schedule?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

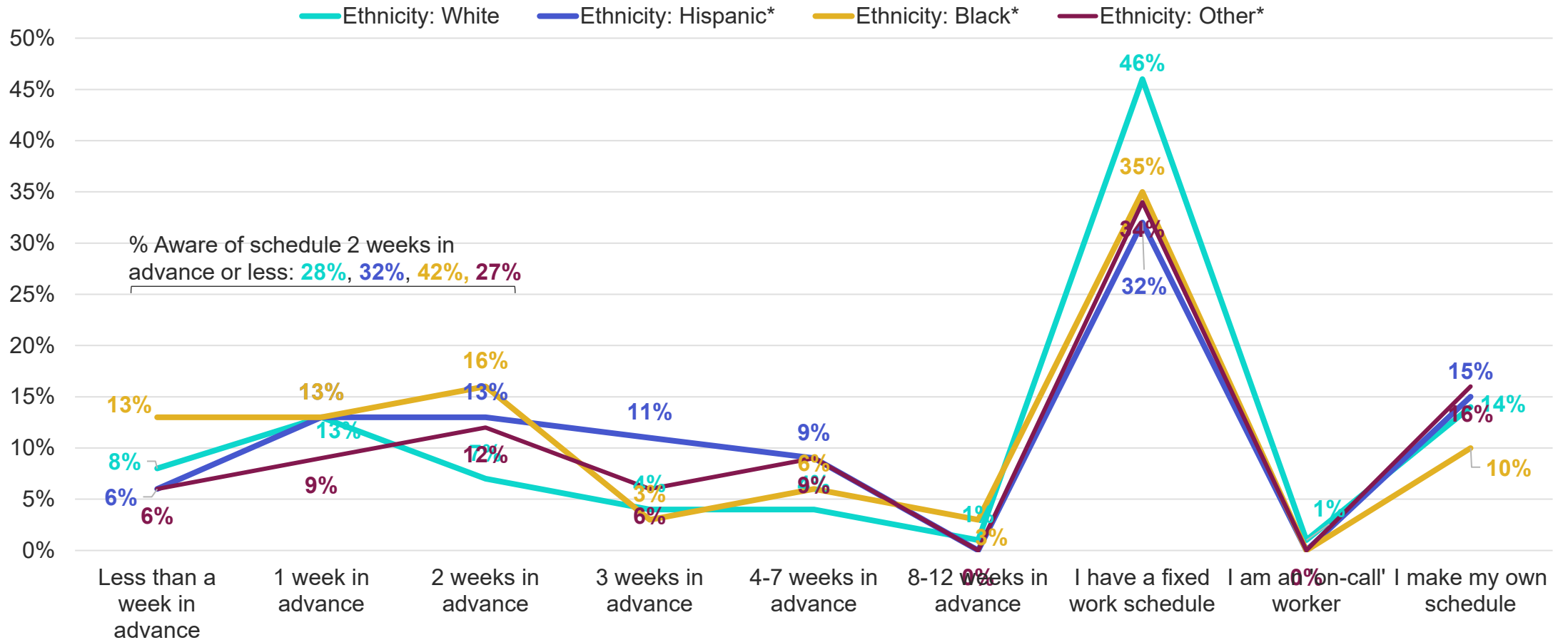


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

White rural parents (46%) are more likely than parents of other racial and ethnic groups to say they have a fixed work schedule.

Thinking about your work hours, how far in advance are you aware of your work schedule, or do you have a fixed work schedule?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493

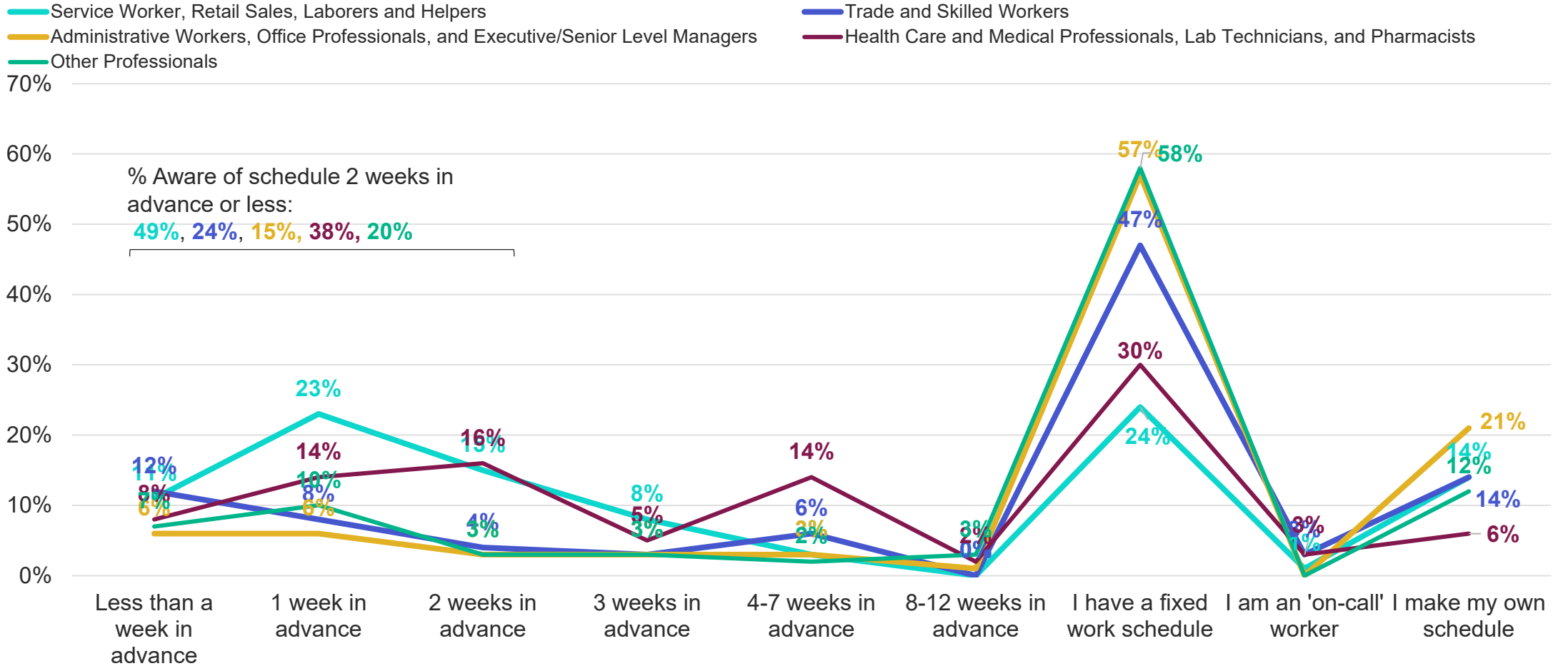


WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Half of service workers (49%) are aware of their work schedule 2 weeks in advance or less.

Thinking about your work hours, how far in advance are you aware of your work schedule, or do you have a fixed work schedule?

EMPLOYED RURAL PARENTS, N=493



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KEY FINDINGS

Rural Community Resources

1

Overall, rural parents have access to child care providers in their community.

- 65% of rural parents say a child care provider is within a 10 mile one-way from their home.
- About two in three rural parents say a child care center (73%), part-day pre-k program (69%), and head start program (66%) are within their community. However, they are less likely to say a family child-care center is in their community (46%).
- Nearly half (46%) of rural parents say there is a free public pre-k program in their community, while a third (30%) of parents are unsure.

2

However, rural parent's access to child care providers is driven by education and income level.

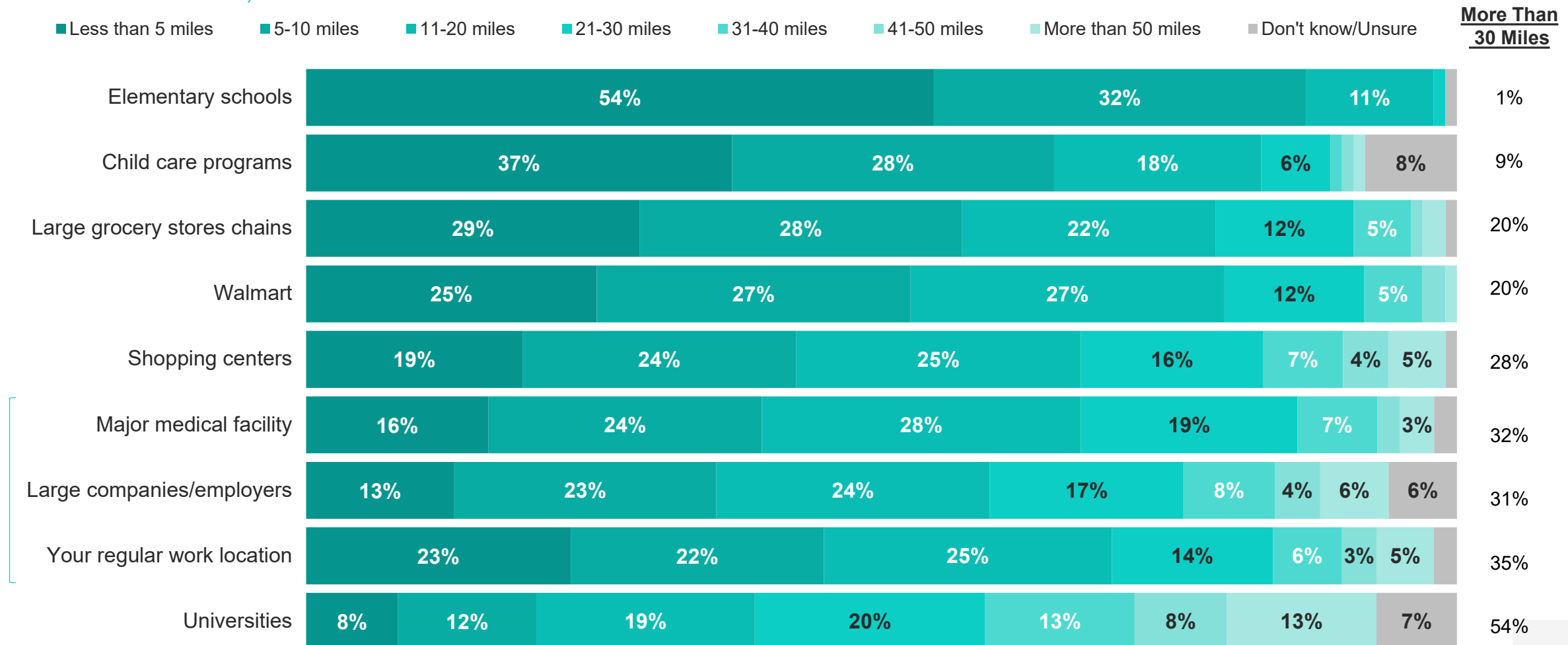
- Rural parents with a higher income level are more likely to say they are closer to a child care program.
- Rural parents with a higher level of education and income are more likely to have access to a child care center and part-day Pre-K program in their community.
- Rural parents with a higher level of education are more likely to say there is a free public pre-k program in their community (55%)

RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

A third of rural parents say they are more than 30 miles away from a major medical center (32%), large companies/employers (31%), and their regular work location (35%).

Approximately how many miles is a **one-way drive** from your home to each of the following?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

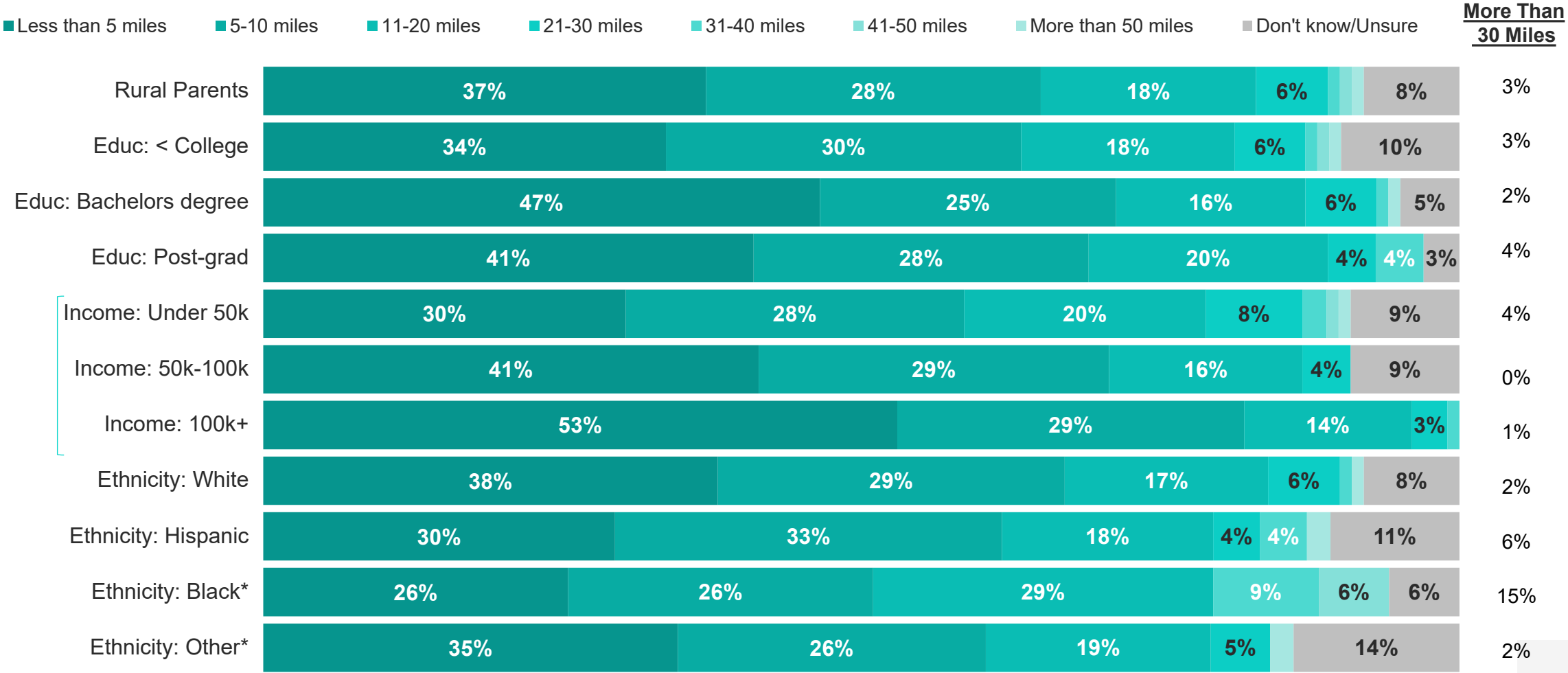


RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rural parents with a higher income level are more likely to say they are closer to a child care program.

Approximately how many miles is a **one-way drive** from your home to each of the following? **Child care programs**

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

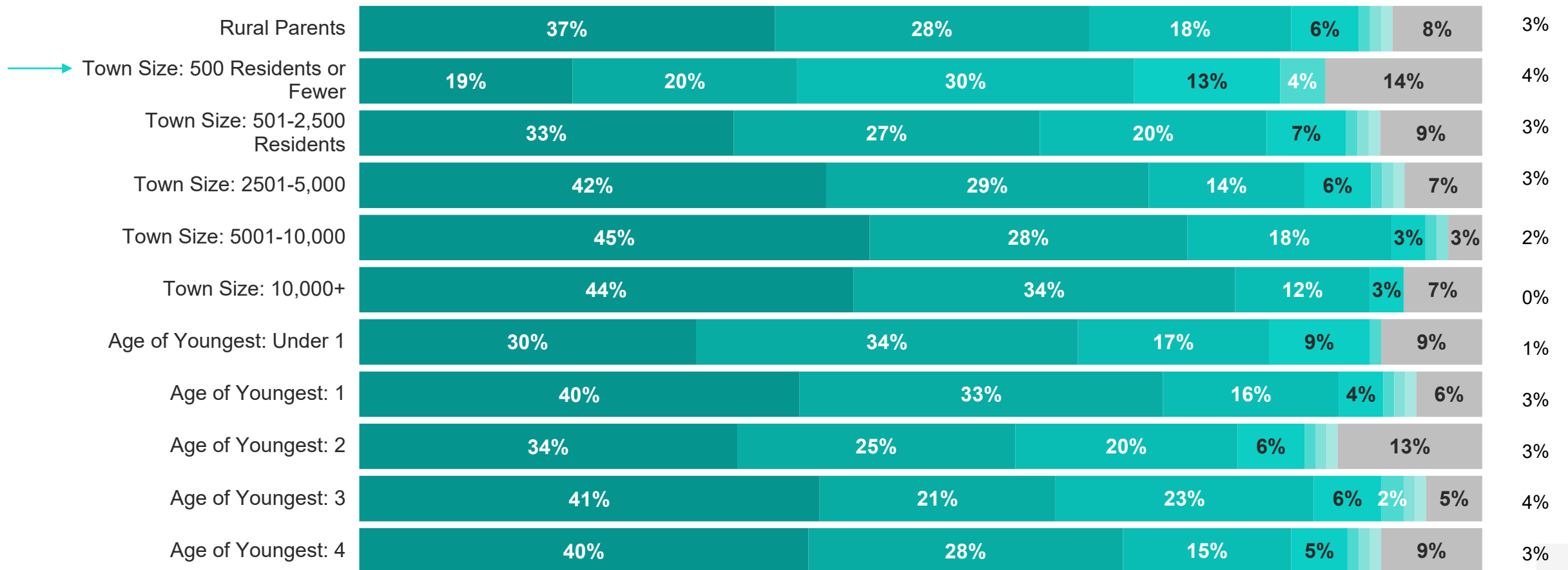
Two in five (39%) rural parents living in a town with less than 500 residents say a child care program is within 10 miles of their home.

Approximately how many miles is a **one-way drive** from your home to each of the following? **Child care programs**

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

■ Less than 5 miles ■ 5-10 miles ■ 11-20 miles ■ 21-30 miles ■ 31-40 miles ■ 41-50 miles ■ More than 50 miles ■ Don't know/Unsure

**More Than
30 Miles**

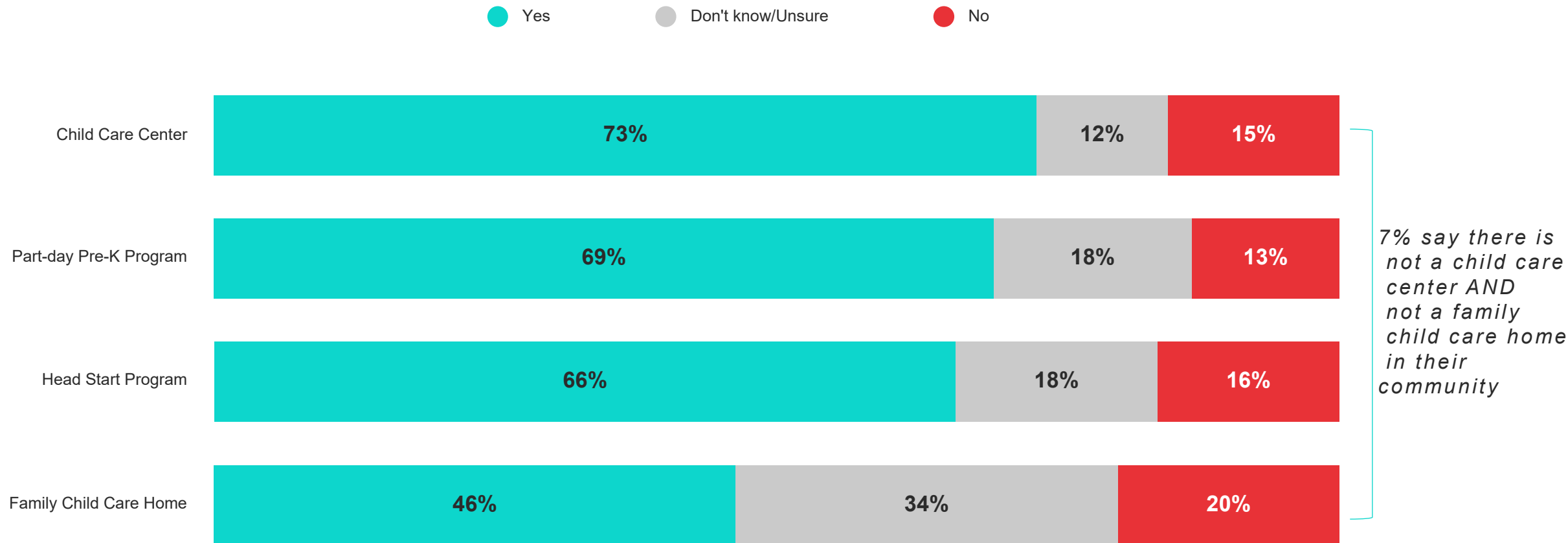


RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Three in four rural parents (73%) say there is a child care center in their community, but they are less likely to say there is a family child care home (46%).

Do you have access to the following child care programs in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rural parents with a higher level of education and income are more likely to have access to a child care center and part-day Pre-K program in their community.

Do you have access to the following child care programs in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

% Yes	Rural Parents	Educ: < College	Educ: Bachelors degree	Educ: Post-grad	Income: Under 50k	Income: 50k-100k	Income: 100k+
Child Care Center	73%	70%	78%	83%	65%	80%	84%
Part-day Pre-K Program	69%	66%	72%	81%	64%	72%	81%
Head Start Program	66%	67%	67%	59%	66%	66%	66%
Family Child Care Home	46%	45%	46%	57%	41%	51%	52%

RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

White rural parents are more likely than parents of other racial and ethnic groups to have access to a child care center in their community.

Do you have access to the following child care programs in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

% Yes	Rural Parents	Ethnicity: White	Ethnicity: Hispanic	Ethnicity: Black*	Ethnicity: Other*	Live in a Small Town	Live in a Rural Area
Child Care Center	73%	75%	67%	57%	65%	76%	71%
Part-day Pre-K Program	69%	70%	67%	57%	65%	72%	68%
Head Start Program	66%	66%	67%	71%	56%	67%	65%
Family Child Care Home	46%	46%	47%	37%	58%	51%	43%

*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rural parents living in larger communities are more likely to have access to the tested child care programs in their community.

Do you have access to the following child care programs in your community?

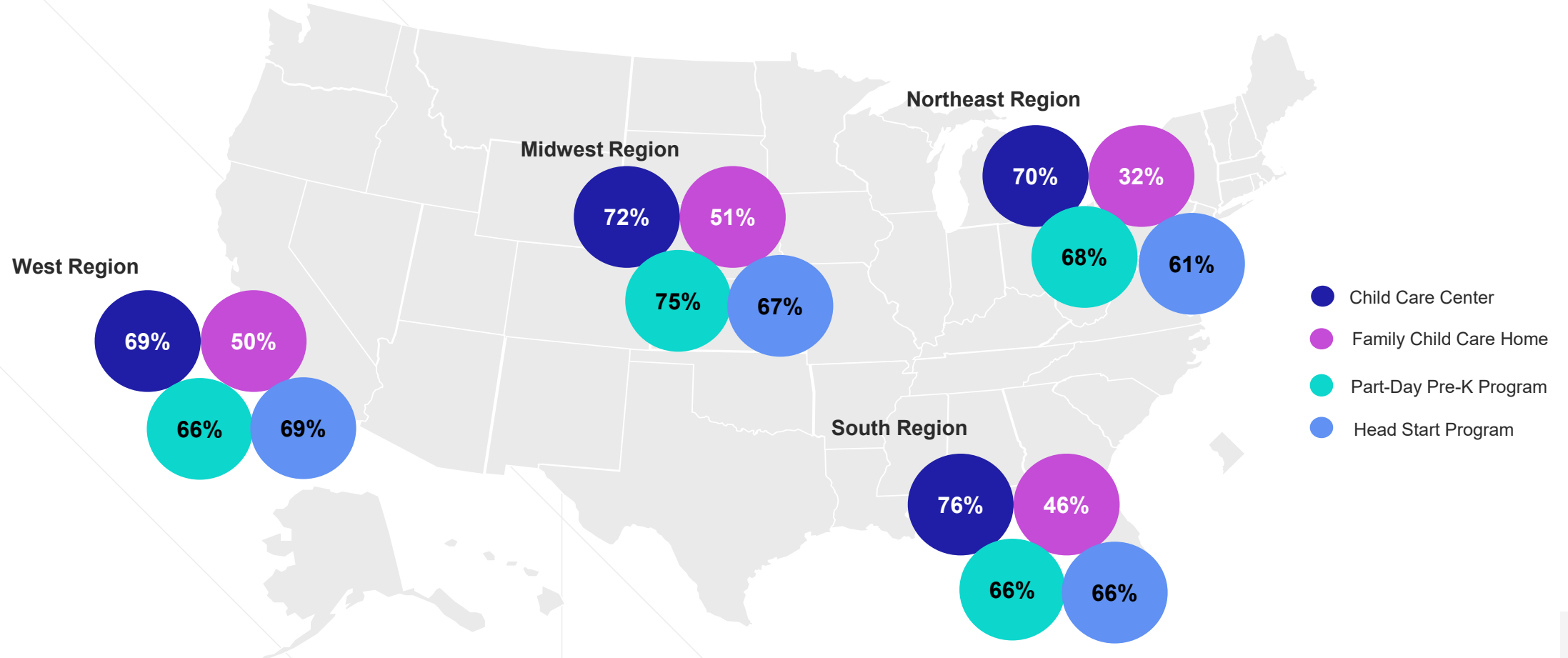
RURAL PARENTS, N=654

% Yes	Rural Parents	Town Size: 500 Residents or Fewer	Town Size: 501-2,500 Residents	Town Size: 2501-5,000	Town Size: 5001-10,000	Town Size: 10,000+
Child Care Center	73%	51%	70%	73%	81%	84%
Part-day Pre-K Program	69%	56%	65%	64%	73%	85%
Head Start Program	66%	49%	64%	64%	78%	71%
Family Child Care Home	46%	34%	41%	40%	53%	64%

Rural parents in the Northeast region are twice as likely to have access to child care centers (70%) part-day Pre-K (68%) and a head start program (61%) in their community compared to family child care (32%).

Do you have access to the following child care programs in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

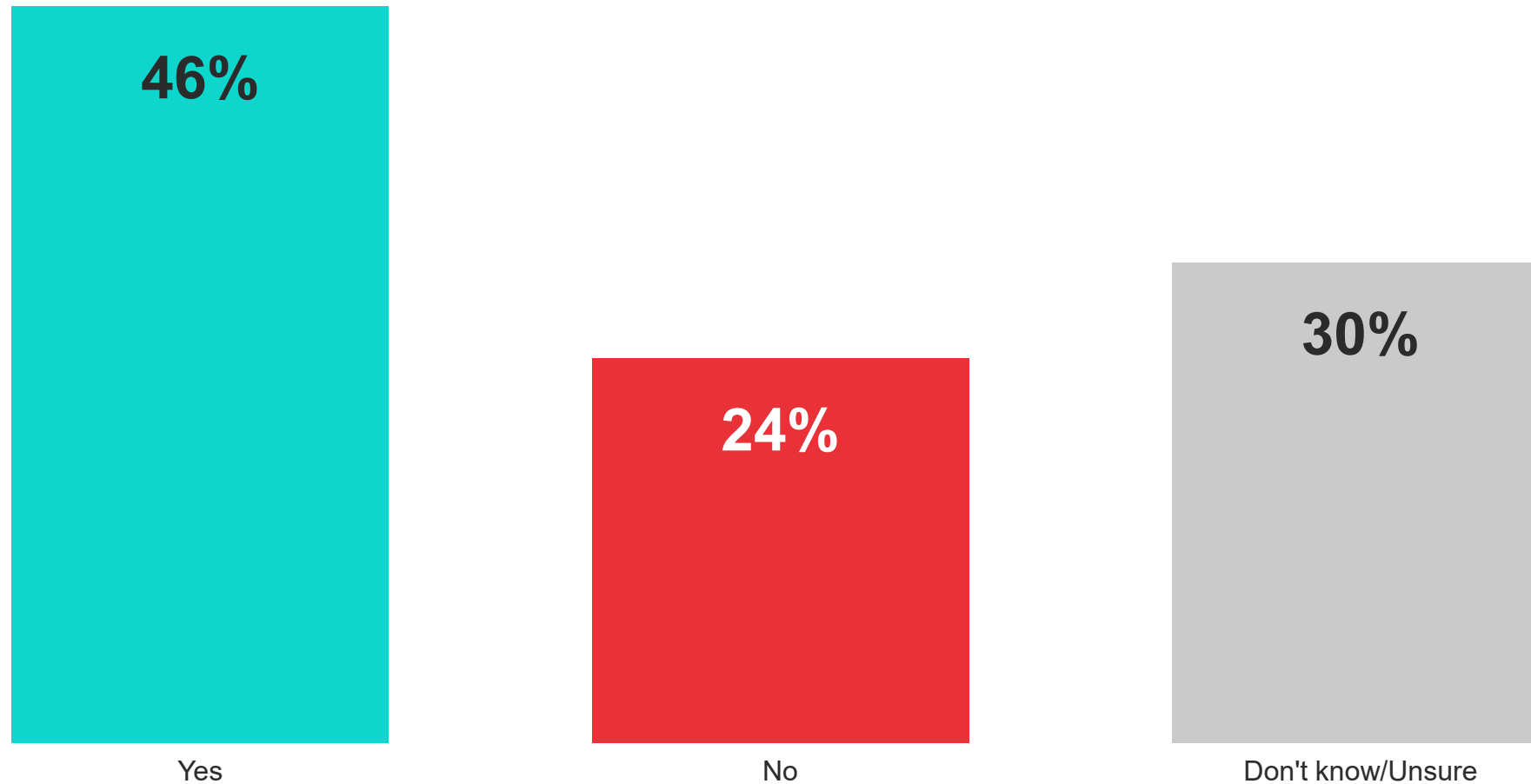


RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Nearly half (46%) of rural parents say there is a free public pre-k program in their community, while a third (30%) of parents are unsure.

Is there a free public pre-k program in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

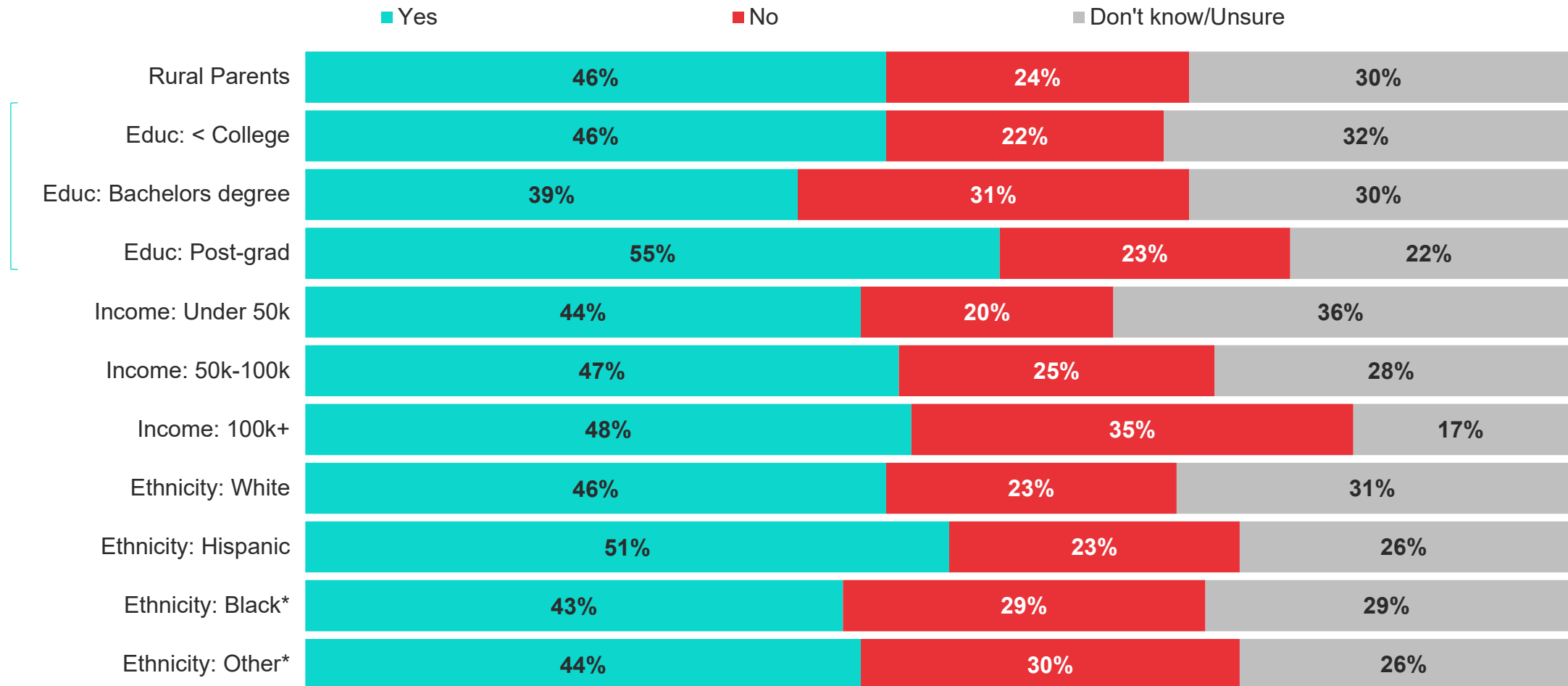


RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Rural parents with a higher level of education are more likely to say there is a free public pre-k program in their community (55%)

Is there a free public pre-k program in your community?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

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KEY FINDINGS

Child Care Arrangements

- 1 A quarter (25%) of rural parents currently need a child care arrangement outside of traditional work hours, and they need care outside of traditional work hours in the evening (58% need care from 6pm-8pm).

 - Parents with a higher income level are more likely to need child care during traditional work hours. On the other hand, parents with a lower income are more likely to need child care outside of traditional work hours.
 - Half of Black rural parents (49%) and a third of Hispanic rural parents (30%) need a child care arrangement outside of traditional work hours.
 - Across job classifications, a third of service workers (31%), trade and skilled workers (28%), health care workers (33%), and other professionals (39%) need a child care arrangement in non-traditional work hours.
- 2 Similar to data collected in December 2020, a majority of rural parents not paying for child care and are relying on their own family to provide care for their child.

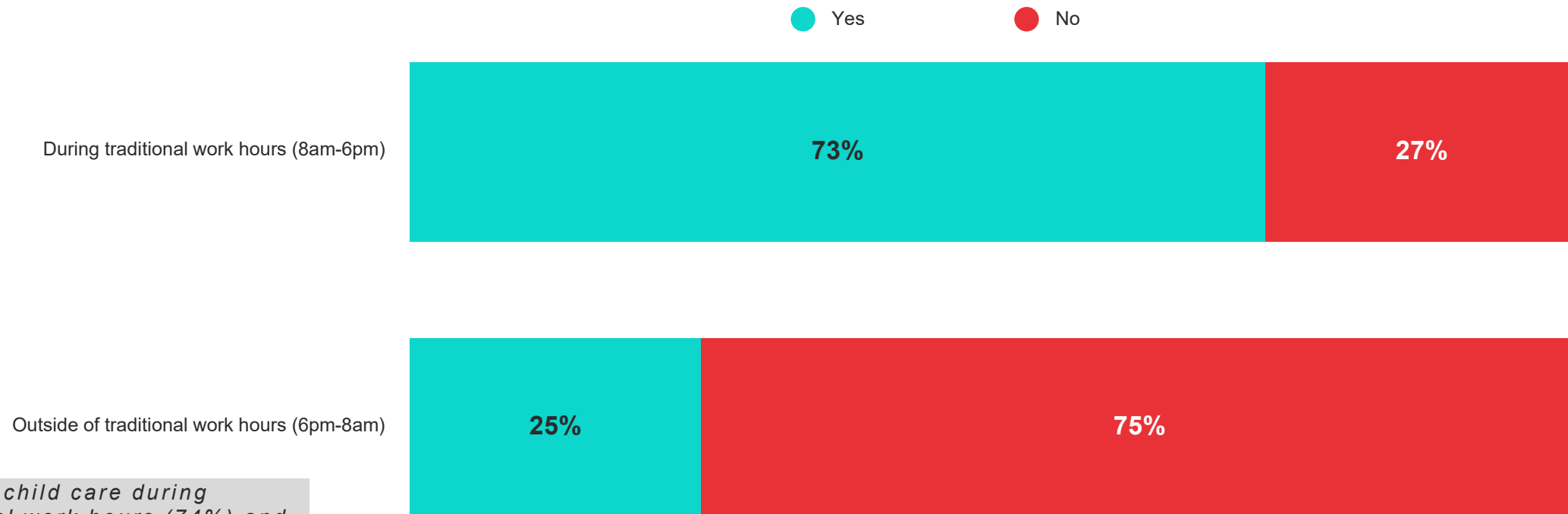
 - While half of rural parents (52%) are not paying for child care or receiving government assistance, 41% are paying for child care entirely themselves.
 - Nearly half (45%) of rural parents say they or their spouse/partner provide care for their youngest child, and 17% say their relatives are providing care.
 - Rural parents with a lower level of education and income are more likely to say they or their partner/spouse provides care for their child.
 - A third of rural parents are using a formal child care arrangement, such as a child care center or family child care home.
- 3 Three quarters of rural parents say the maximum amount their household can afford to pay per child per week for child care is less than \$200.

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

A quarter of rural parents indicated they need a child care arrangement outside of traditional work hours.

A child-care arrangement can include child care centers, family child care, pre-k, relatives, parents, etc. In a typical week, does your family need a child care arrangement for your children under 5 so that you (or both you and your spouse/partner) can work during the following hours?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



Need for child care during traditional work hours (74%) and non-traditional work hours (29%) is similar to results from May 2021 among employed parents.*

*Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Parents with a higher income level are more likely to need child care during traditional work hours. On the other hand, parents with a lower income are more likely to need child care outside of traditional work hours.

A child-care arrangement can include centers, home-based child care, pre-k, relatives, parents, etc. In a typical week, does your family need a child care arrangement for your children under 5 so that you (or both you and your spouse/partner) can work during the following hours?

% Yes	Rural Parents	Educ: < College	Educ: Bachelors degree	Educ: Post-grad	Income: Under 50k	Income: 50k-100k	Income: 100k+
During <u>traditional</u> work hours (8am-6pm)	73%	72%	74%	81%	72%	70%	91%
<u>Outside of traditional</u> work hours (6pm-8am)	25%	27%	16%	30%	29%	23%	13%

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Half of Black rural parents (49%) and a third of Hispanic rural parents (30%) need a child care arrangement outside of traditional work hours.

A child-care arrangement can include centers, home-based child care, pre-k, relatives, parents, etc. In a typical week, does your family need a child care arrangement for your children under 5 so that you (or both you and your spouse/partner) can work during the following hours?

% Yes	Rural Parents	Ethnicity: White	Ethnicity: Hispanic	Ethnicity: Black*	Ethnicity: Other*
During <u>traditional</u> work hours (8am-6pm)	73%	73%	74%	71%	72%
Outside of <u>traditional</u> work hours (6pm-8am)	25%	24%	30%	49%	23%

*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Across job classifications, a third of service workers (31%), trade and skilled workers (28%), health care workers (33%), and other professionals (39%) need a child care arrangement in non-traditional work hours.

A child-care arrangement can include centers, home-based child care, pre-k, relatives, parents, etc. In a typical week, does your family need a child care arrangement for your children under 5 so that you (or both you and your spouse/partner) can work during the following hours?

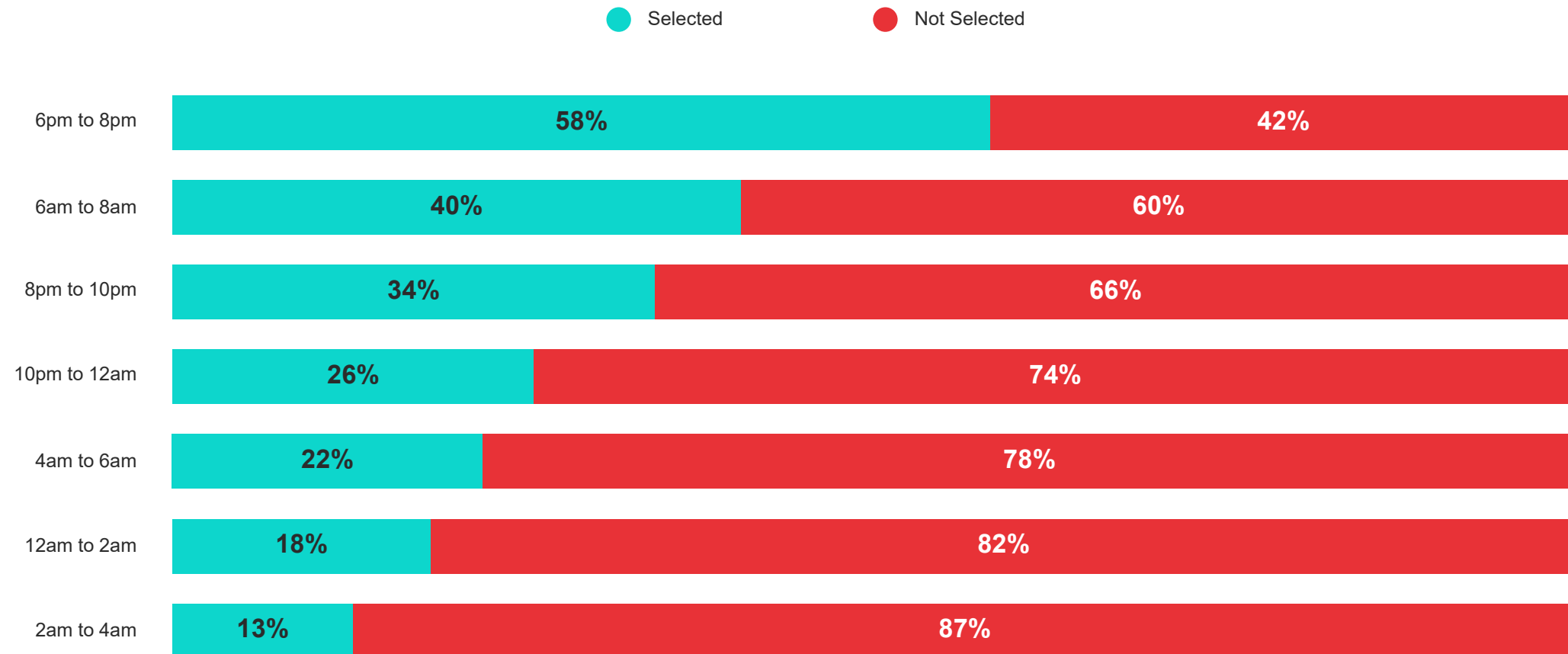
% Yes	Rural Parents	Service Worker, Retail Sales, Laborers and Helpers	Trade and Skilled Workers	Administrative Workers, Office Professionals, and Executive/Senior Level Managers	Health Care and Medical Professionals, Lab Technicians, and Pharmacists	Other Professionals
During <u>traditional</u> work hours (8am-6pm)	73%	74%	78%	87%	84%	79%
Outside of <u>traditional</u> work hours (6pm-8am)	25%	31%	28%	15%	33%	39%

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Among those who need child care outside of traditional work hours, they are most likely to need care in the evening (6pm-8pm).

Which of the following hours do you require a child care arrangement? Please select all that apply.

RURAL PARENTS NEED CHILD CARE OUTSIDE OF TRADITIONAL HOURS, N=163

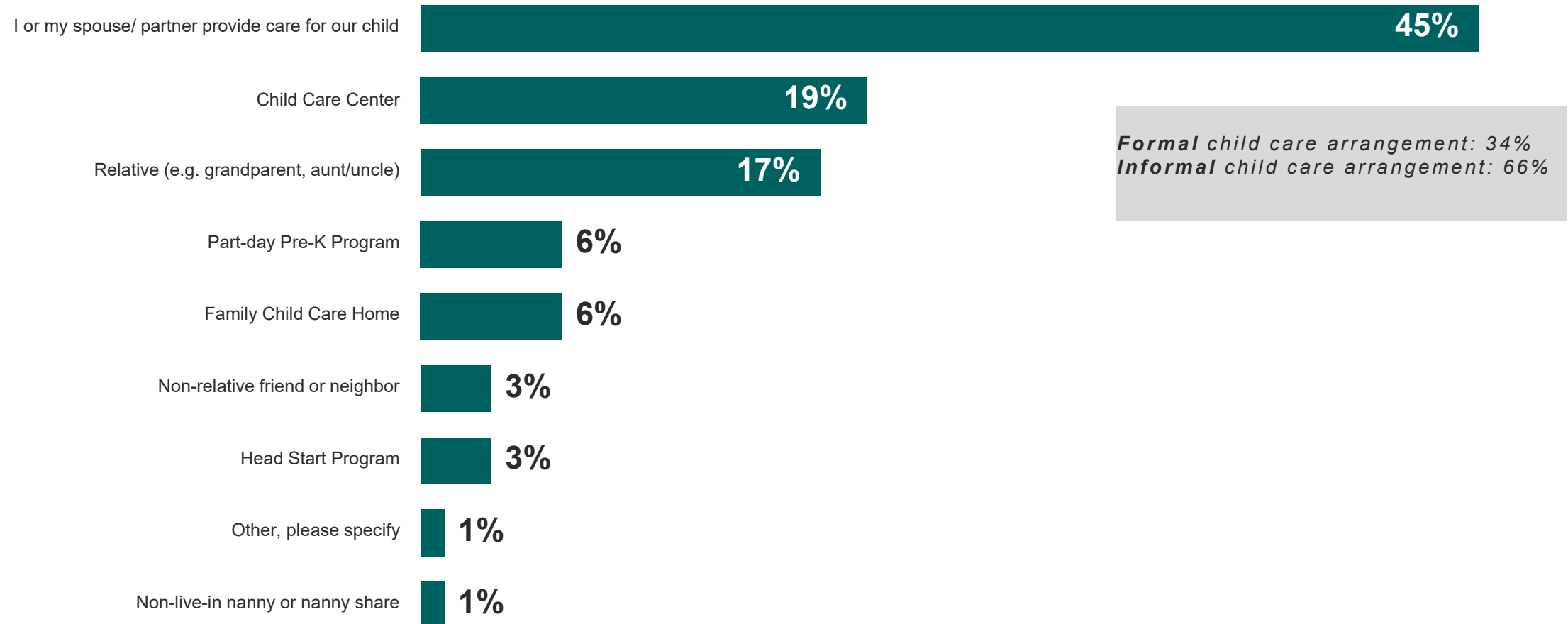


CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Nearly half (45%) of rural parents say they or their spouse/partner provide care for their youngest child.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Rural parents with a child care center in their community are 5x more likely than rural parents without a child care center in their community to be using this as their care arrangement.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

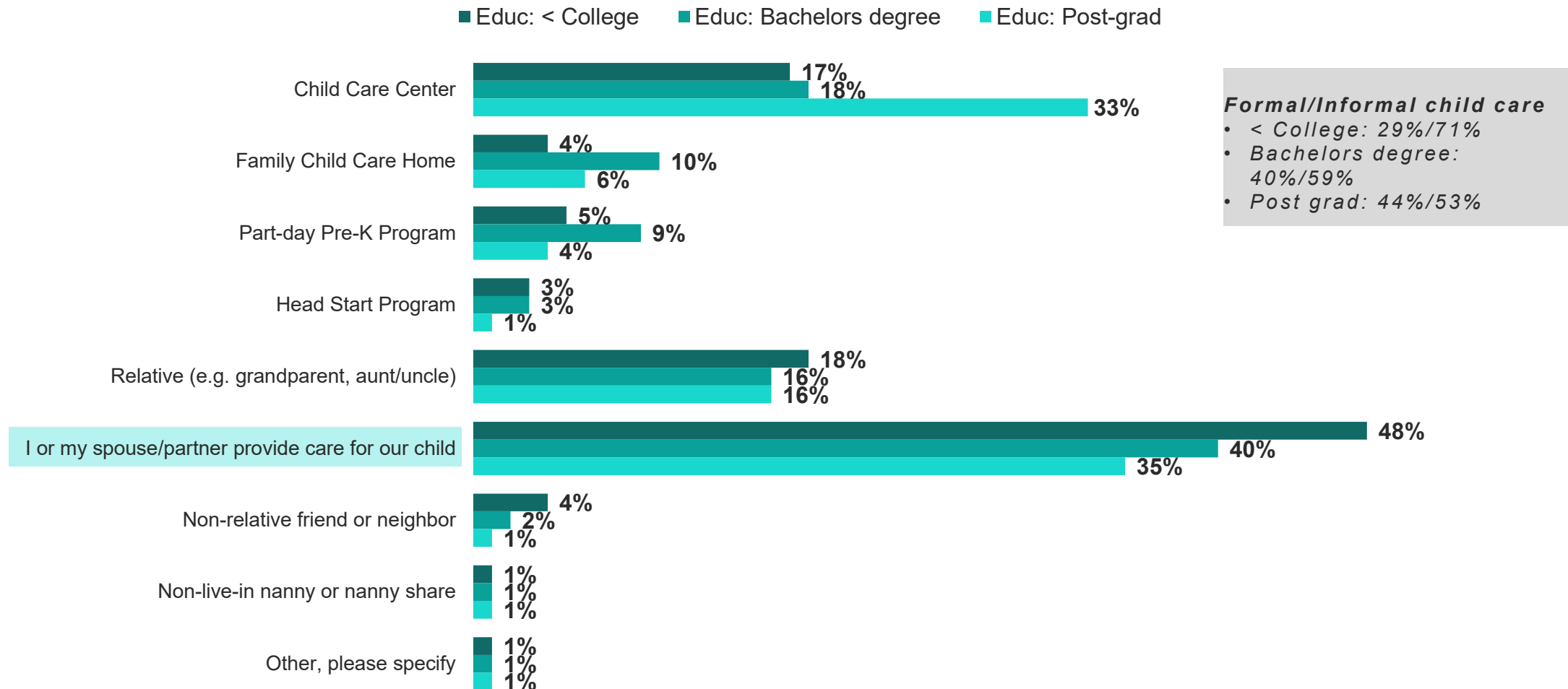
<i>% Current Care Provider</i>	Child Care Center in Community	No Child Care Center in Community	Family Child Care Center in Community	No Family Child Care Center in Community	Part-Day Pre-K Program in Community	No Part-Day Pre-K Program in Community	Head Start Program in Community	No Head Start Program in Community
Currently using Child Care Center	25%	4%	24%	13%	21%	14%	20%	12%
Currently using Family Child Care	5%	9%	9%	3%	6%	5%	6%	6%
Currently using Part-day Pre-K Program	6%	4%	7%	8%	8%	1%	6%	6%
Currently using Head Start Program	3%	5%	2%	5%	3%	0%	4%	1%

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Rural parents with a lower level of education are more likely to say they or their partner/spouse provides care for their child.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

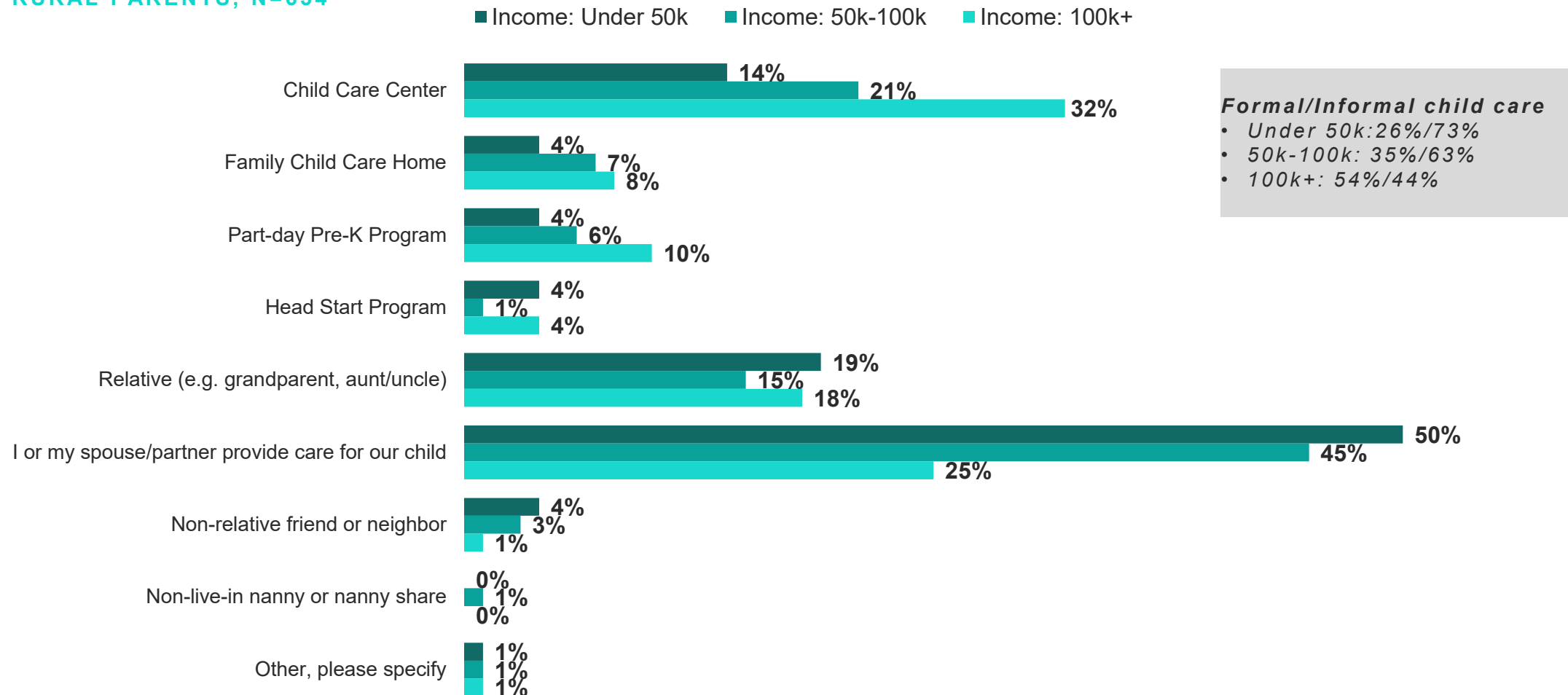


CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Rural parents with an income over 100k are twice as likely as rural parents with an income under 50k to be using a formal child care arrangement (54% vs. 26%).

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



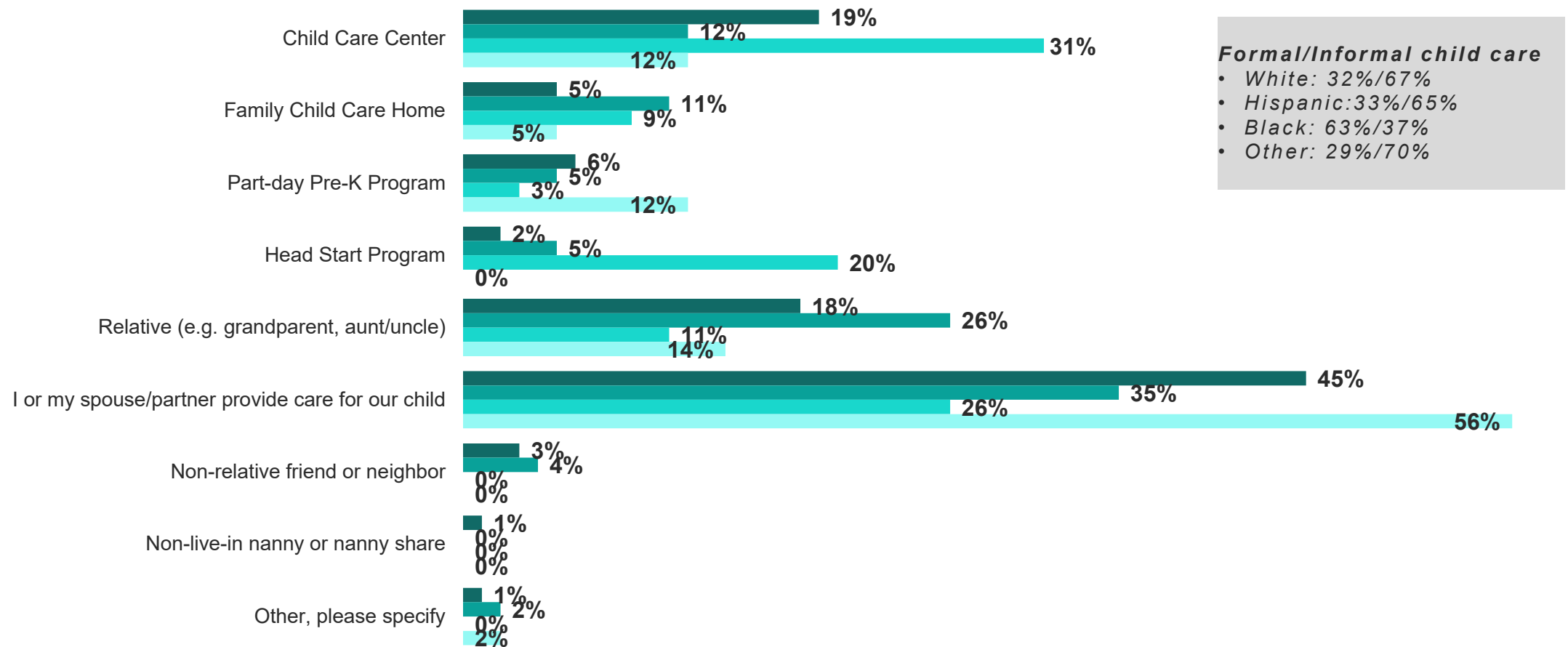
CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Black rural parents are more likely than parents of other racial and ethnic groups to use a formal (63%) rather than an informal (37%) child care arrangement.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

■ Ethnicity: White ■ Ethnicity: Hispanic ■ Ethnicity: Black ■ Ethnicity: Other



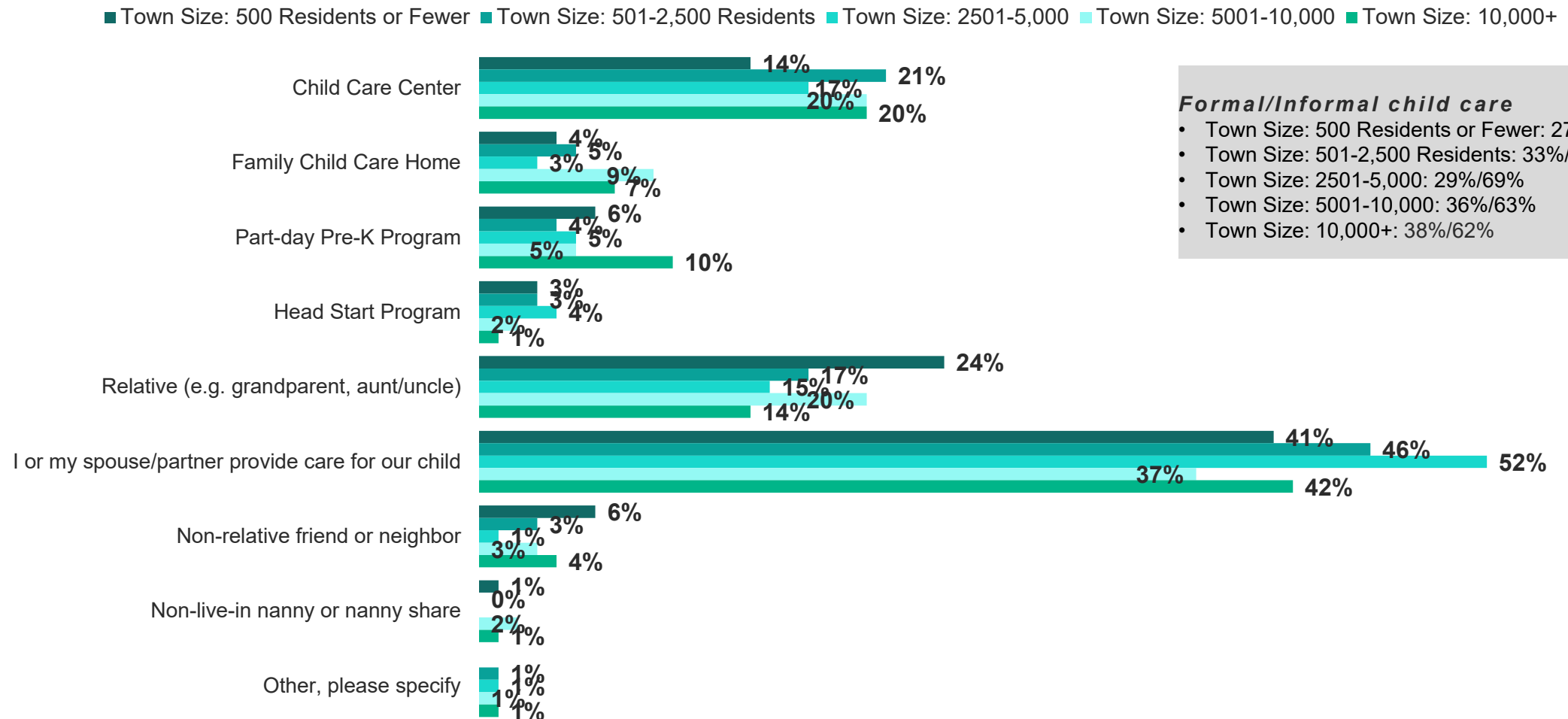
*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Rural parents living in larger towns are more likely to use a formal child care arrangement.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



Formal/Informal child care

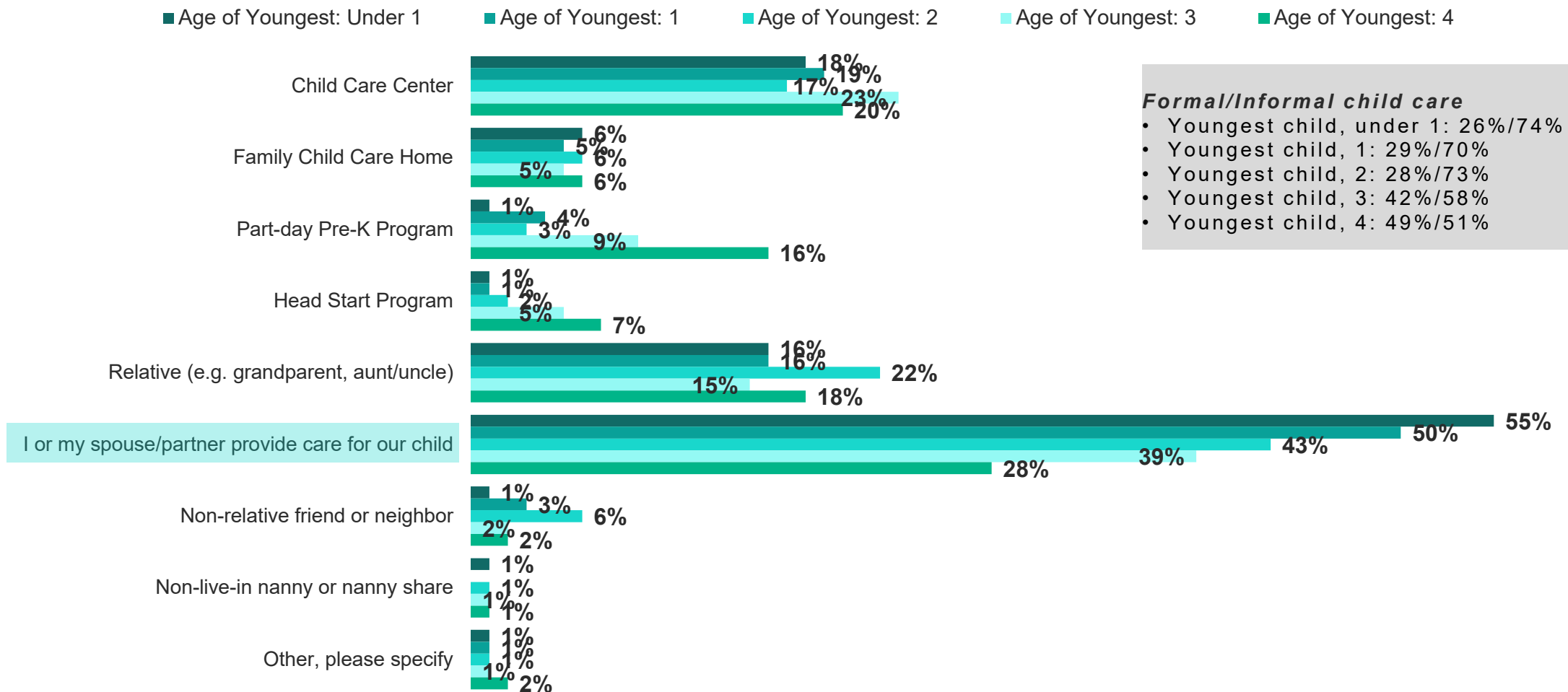
- Town Size: 500 Residents or Fewer: 27%/72%
- Town Size: 501-2,500 Residents: 33%/67%
- Town Size: 2501-5,000: 29%/69%
- Town Size: 5001-10,000: 36%/63%
- Town Size: 10,000+: 38%/62%

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Rural parents with younger children are more likely to be using informal child care, specifically personally or their spouse/partner providing care.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

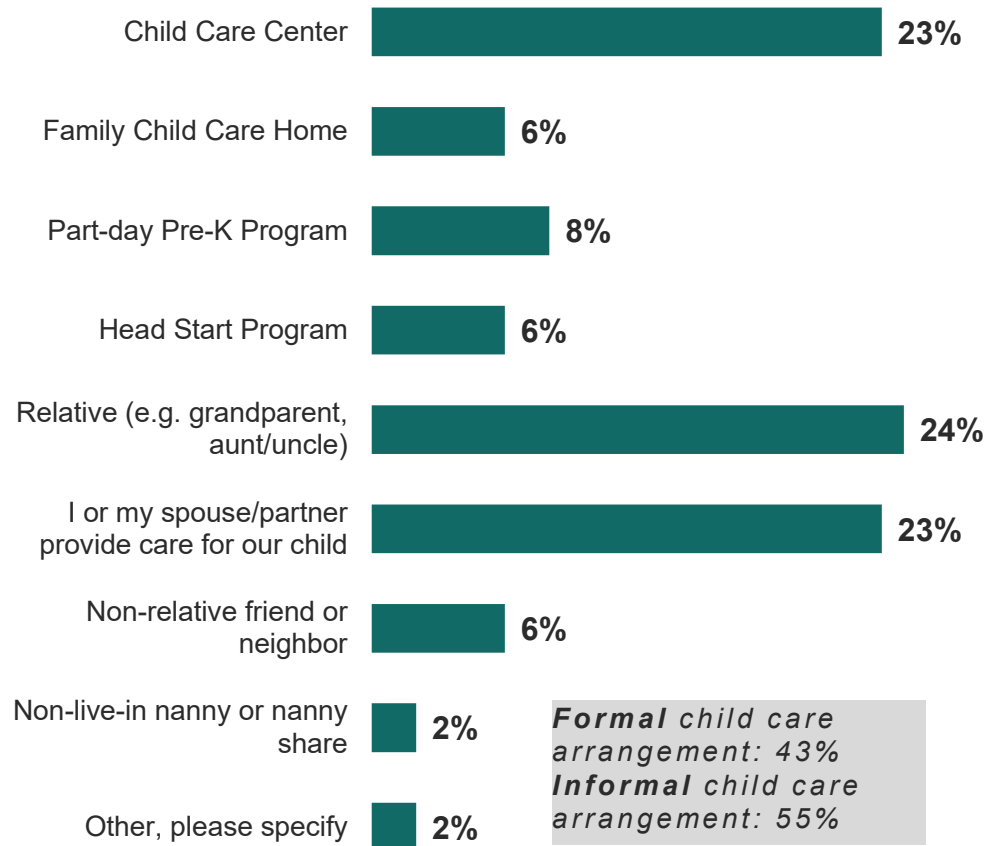


CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

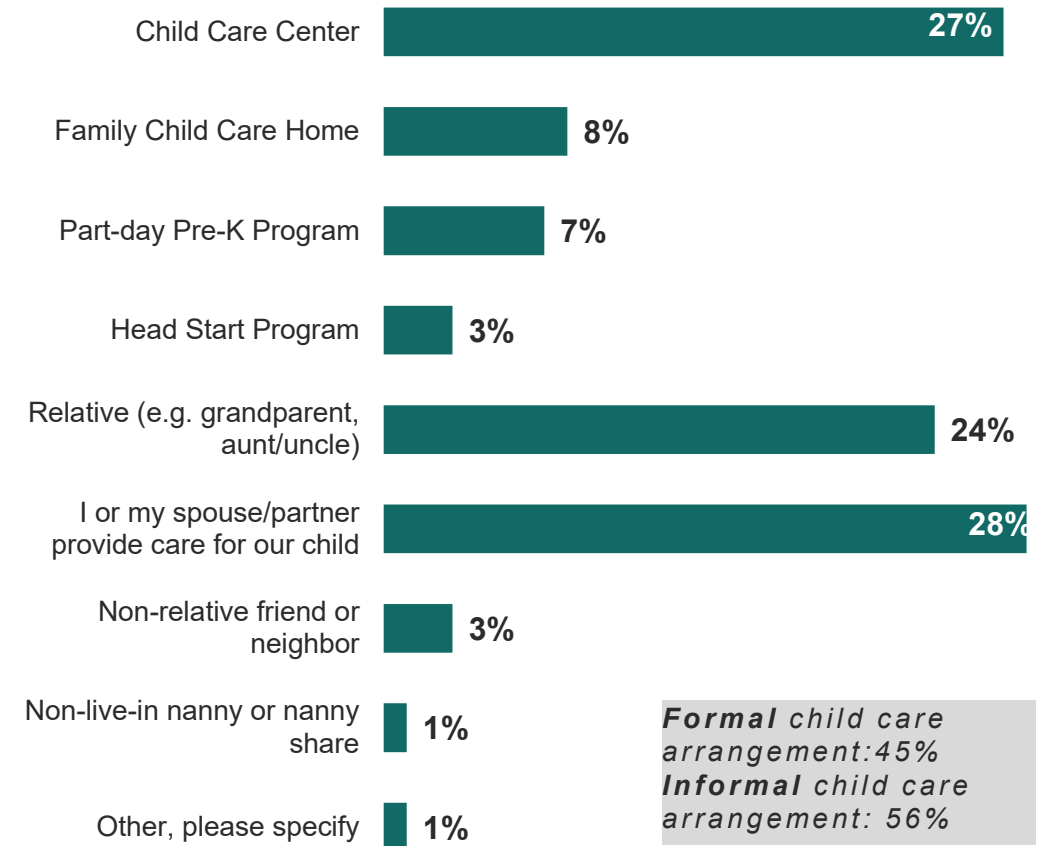
There are no significant differences across single parent households and households where both adults are employed in the type of care they are using.

Which of the following best describe the current primary child care arrangement for your youngest child?

SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLD, N=124



BOTH ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYED, N=317

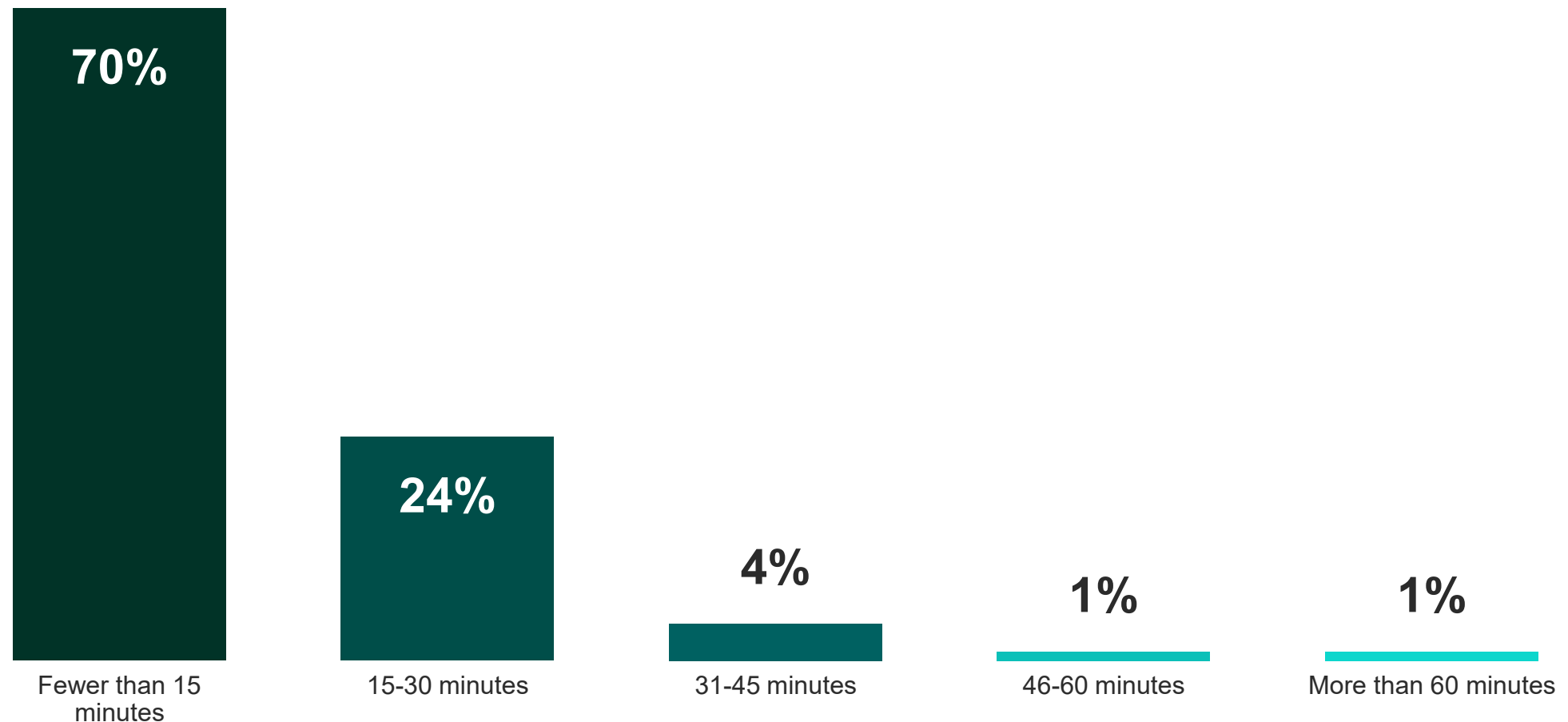


CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Among rural parents who are using a child care provider outside of personally providing care, 70% say it takes less than 15 minutes to drive to their child care arrangement.

Approximately how much time does it typically take to transport your youngest child one-way to their primary child care arrangement?

USING A CHILD CARE PROVIDER OUTSIDE OF PERSONALLY PROVIDING CARE, N=361

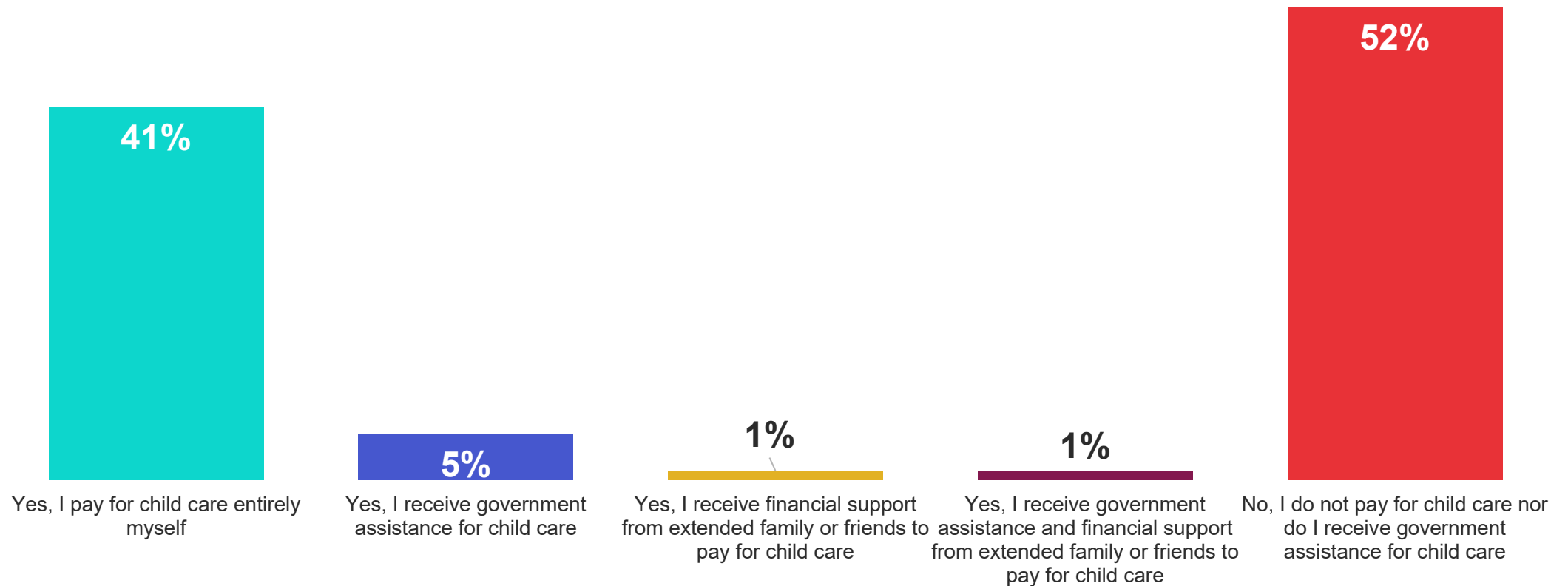


CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

While half of rural parents (52%) are not paying for child care or receiving government assistance, 41% are paying for child care entirely themselves.

Are you currently paying for child care for any of your children under the age of 5?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



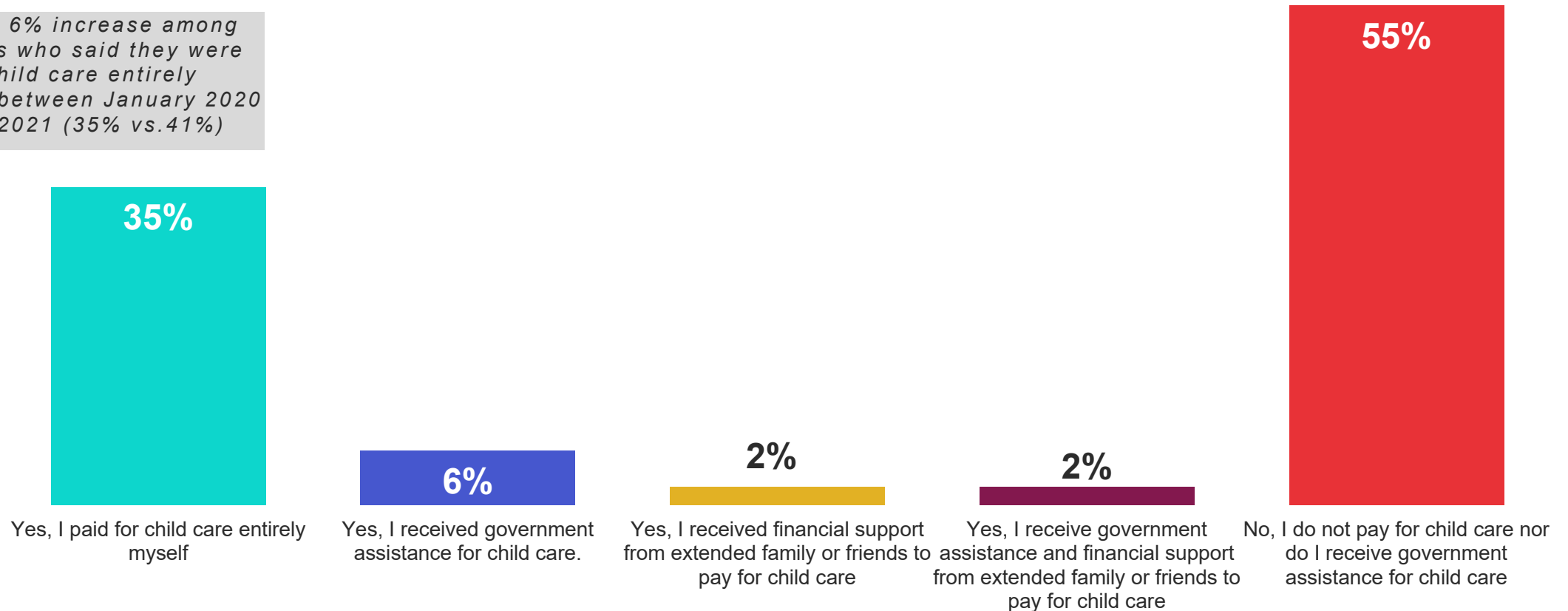
CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Similarly, when surveyed in December 2020 about paying for childcare in January 2020, a majority of rural parents (55%) did not pay or receive government assistance for childcare.

Thinking back to January 2020, were you paying for child care for any of your children under the age of 5?

RURAL PARENTS, N=339

There was a 6% increase among rural parents who said they were paying for child care entirely themselves between January 2020 and August 2021 (35% vs. 41%)



*Data from survey conducted in December 2020 among a national sample of 1,500 parents with children under the age of 5.

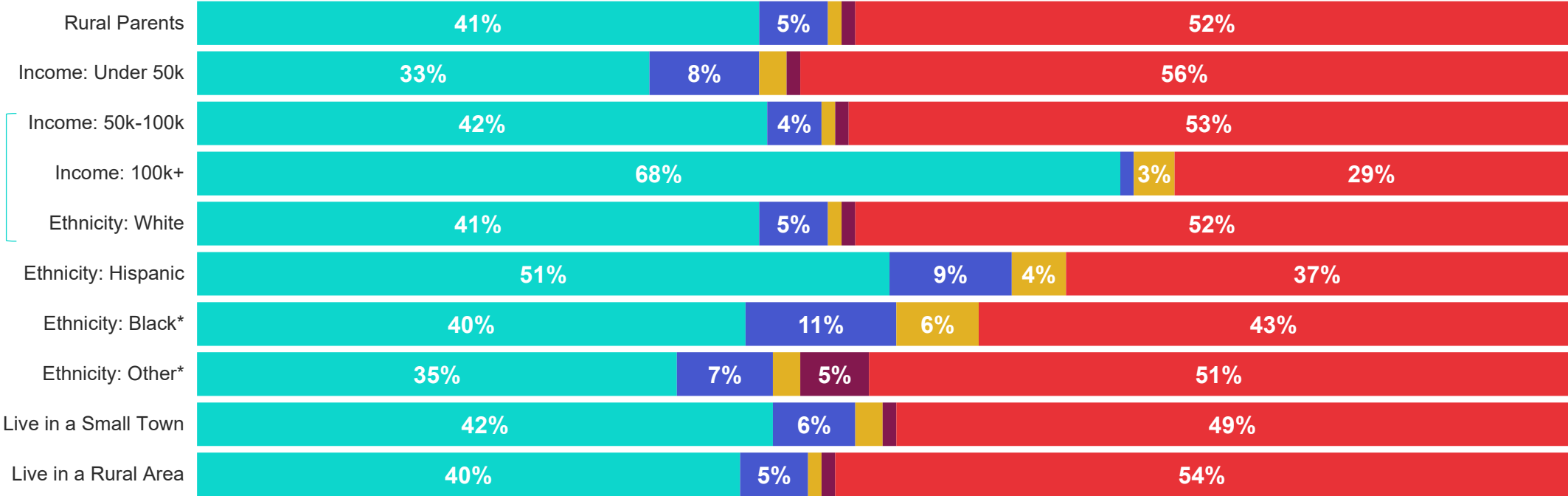
CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Whether rural parents are or are not paying for child care is driven by income level.

Are you currently paying for child care for any of your children under the age of 5?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

- Yes, I pay for child care entirely myself
- Yes, I receive government assistance for child care
- Yes, I receive financial support from extended family or friends to pay for child care
- Yes, I receive government assistance and financial support from extended family or friends to pay for child care
- No, I do not pay for child care nor do I receive government assistance for child care



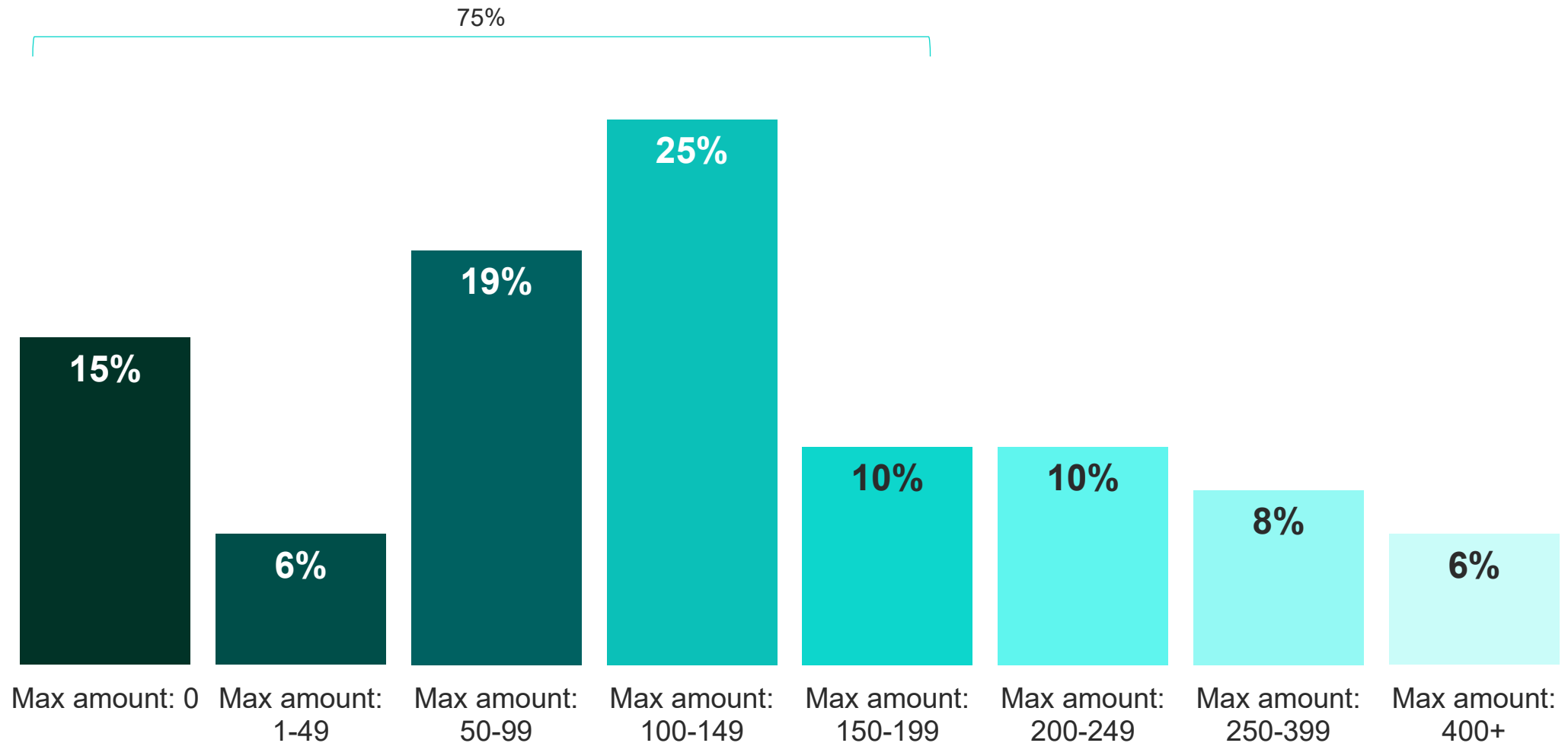
*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Three quarters of rural parents say the maximum amount their household can afford to pay per child per week for child care is less than \$200.

What is the maximum amount you/your household can afford to pay per child for child care each week?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

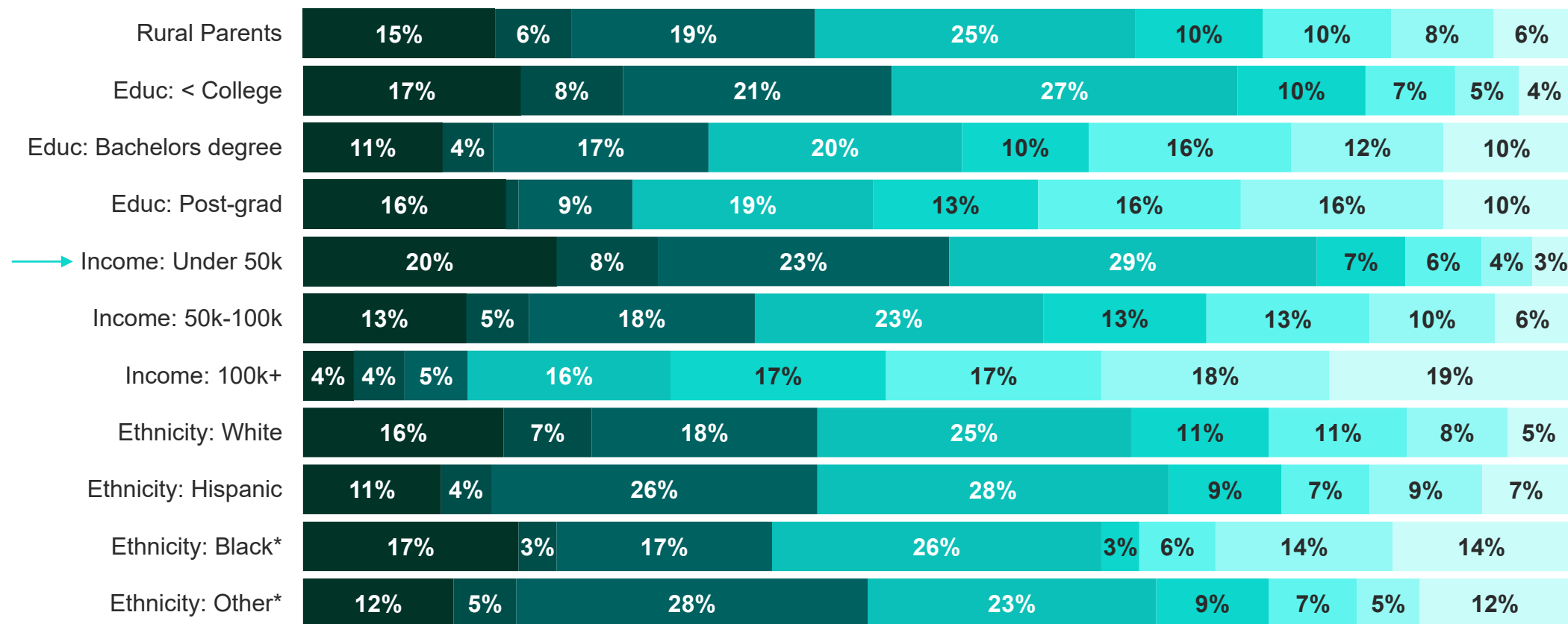
A fifth of rural parents with an income under \$50k say they cannot afford to pay for child care each week.

What is the maximum amount you or your household can afford to pay per child for child care **each week**?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

Maximum amount: 0
 Maximum amount: 1-49
 Maximum amount: 50-99
 Maximum amount: 100-149

 Maximum amount: 150-199
 Maximum amount: 200-249
 Maximum amount: 250-399
 Maximum amount: 400+



*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

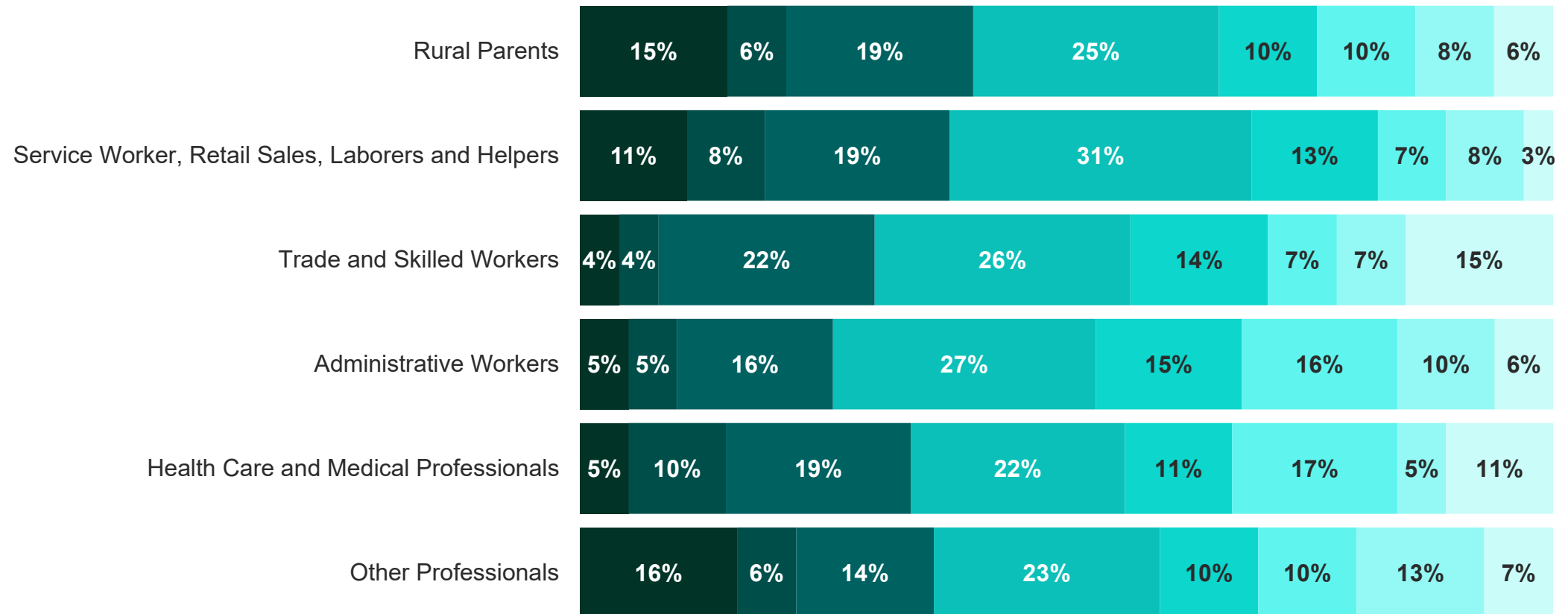
DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Across job classifications, about two thirds of parents say the maximum amount they can afford for child care each week is less than \$200.

What is the maximum amount you or your household can afford to pay per child for child care **each week**?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

- Maximum amount: 0
- Maximum amount: 1-49
- Maximum amount: 50-99
- Maximum amount: 100-149
- Maximum amount: 150-199
- Maximum amount: 200-249
- Maximum amount: 250-399
- Maximum amount: 400+



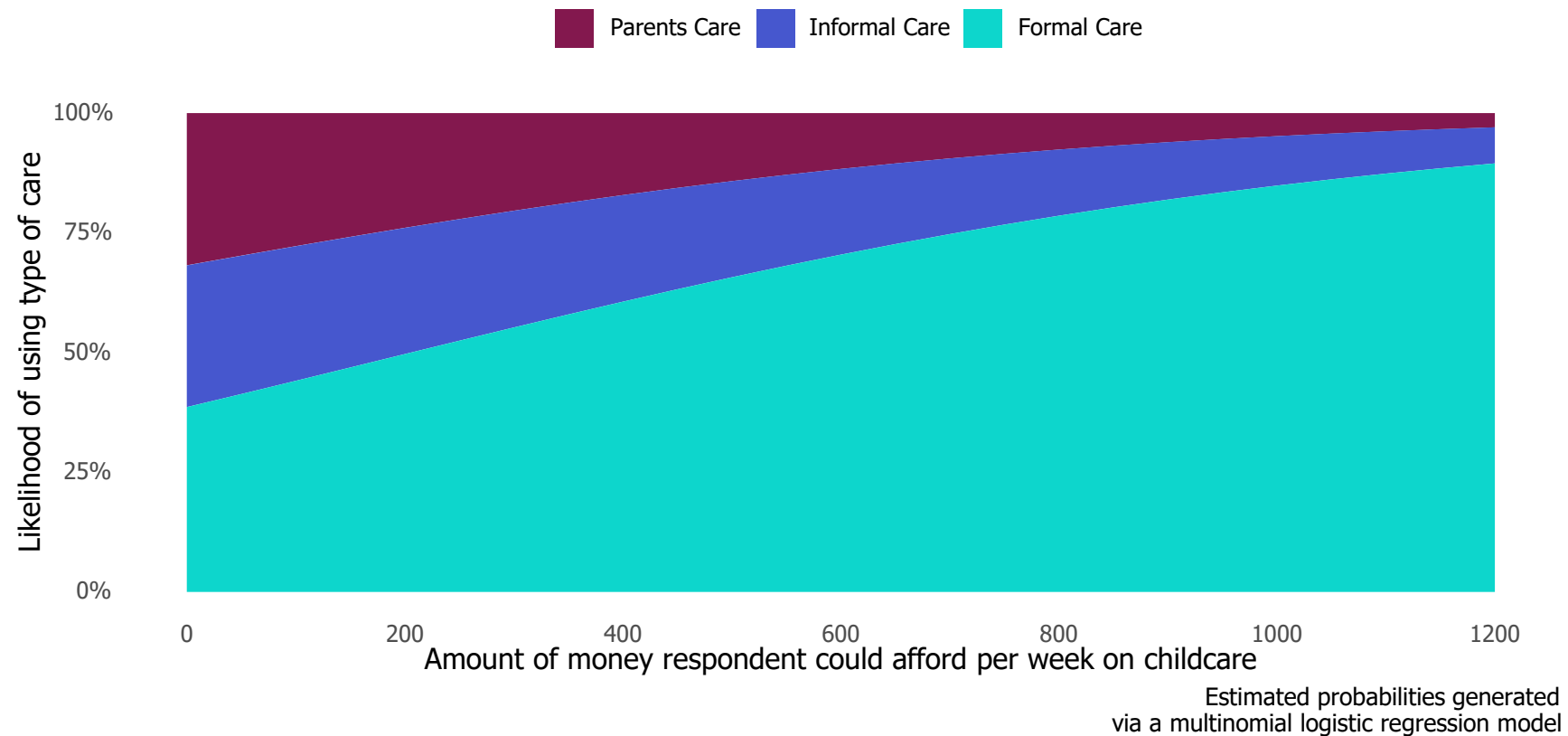
*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

The more respondents can afford for child care, the more likely it is that they have their children in a formal child care arrangement.

What is the maximum amount you or your household can afford to pay per child for child care **each week**?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



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Deciding on a Child Care Arrangement

- 1 Rural parents are considering their options before making a child care decision.

 - Two thirds of rural parents (68%) considered a formal child care option with they made a child care decision.
 - Among rural parents currently using an informal child care arrangement, 56% considered formal child care options.
- 2 Trust and cost are a double edged sword when deciding on a child care provider.

 - Rural parents using a formal child care provider are most likely to say trust and cost were the impacted their decision to select their formal child care provider, and rural parents who considered a formal child care provider but chose not to, also say trust and cost most impacted their decision.
- 3 Child care responsibilities are impact rural parents decisions to work.

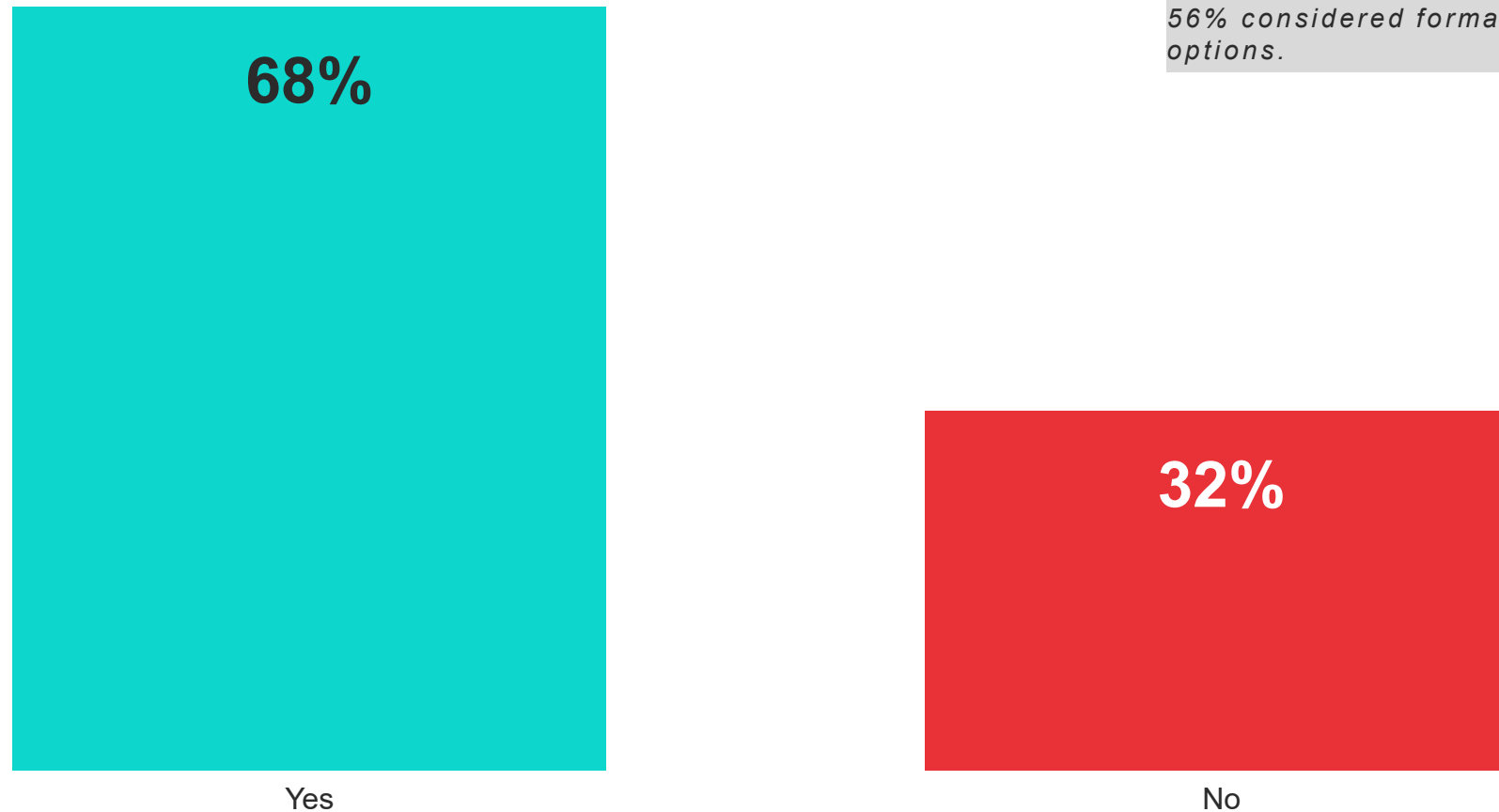
 - Over 4 in 5 rural parents who are personally or their spouse/partner is not currently working say child care responsibilities influenced their decision to not work (86%), including 64% who said they *significantly influenced* their decision.
 - Three quarters of rural parents who are not personally or their spouse/is not currently working say not working is a personal choice, while 26% say it is not a personal choice.

DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Two thirds of rural parents (68%) considered a formal child care option with they made a child care decision.

When making child care decisions for your youngest child, did you consider formal child care options, such as a child care center, a family child care home, or pre-k program?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



Among rural parents currently using an informal child care arrangement, 56% considered formal child care options.

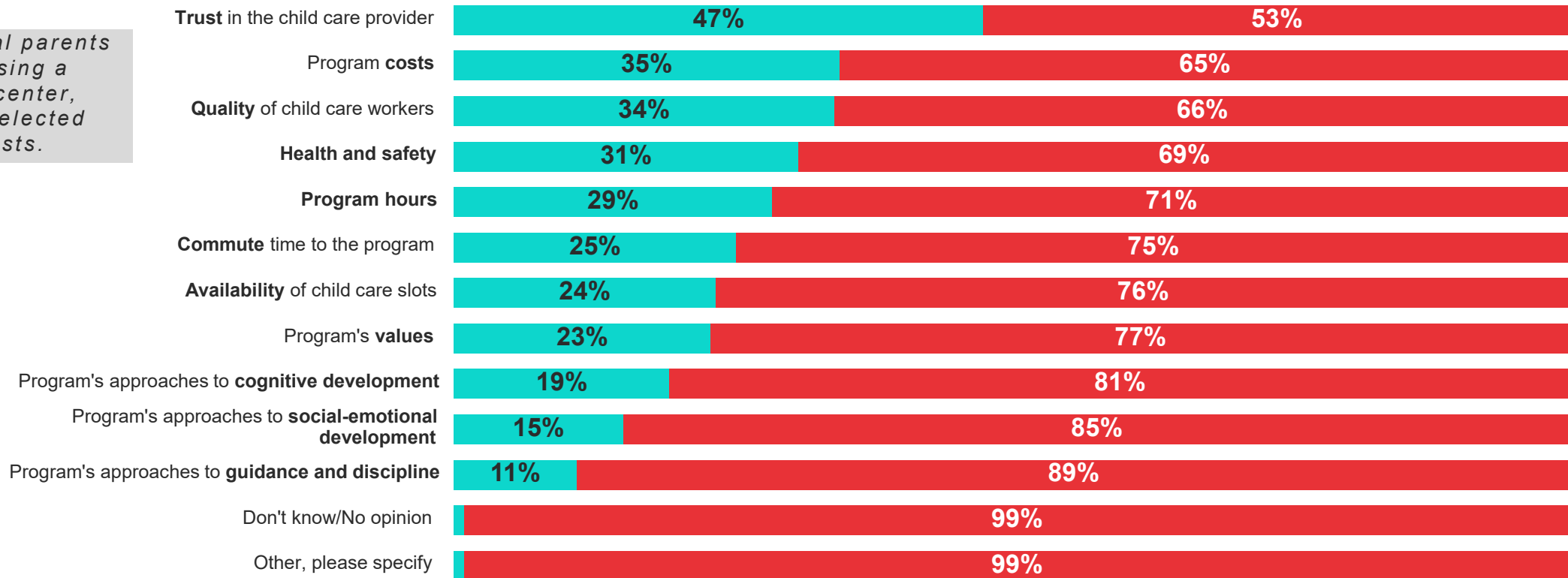
DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Among rural parents using a formal child care provider, half (47%) say trust most impacted their decision to select their child care provider, followed by costs (35%) and quality of workers (34%). Which of the following most impacted your decision to select your child care provider for your youngest child? Please select the top 3.

RURAL PARENTS USING A FORMAL CHILD CARE PROVIDER, N=217

Selected Not Selected

Among rural parents currently using a child care center, only 26% selected program costs.



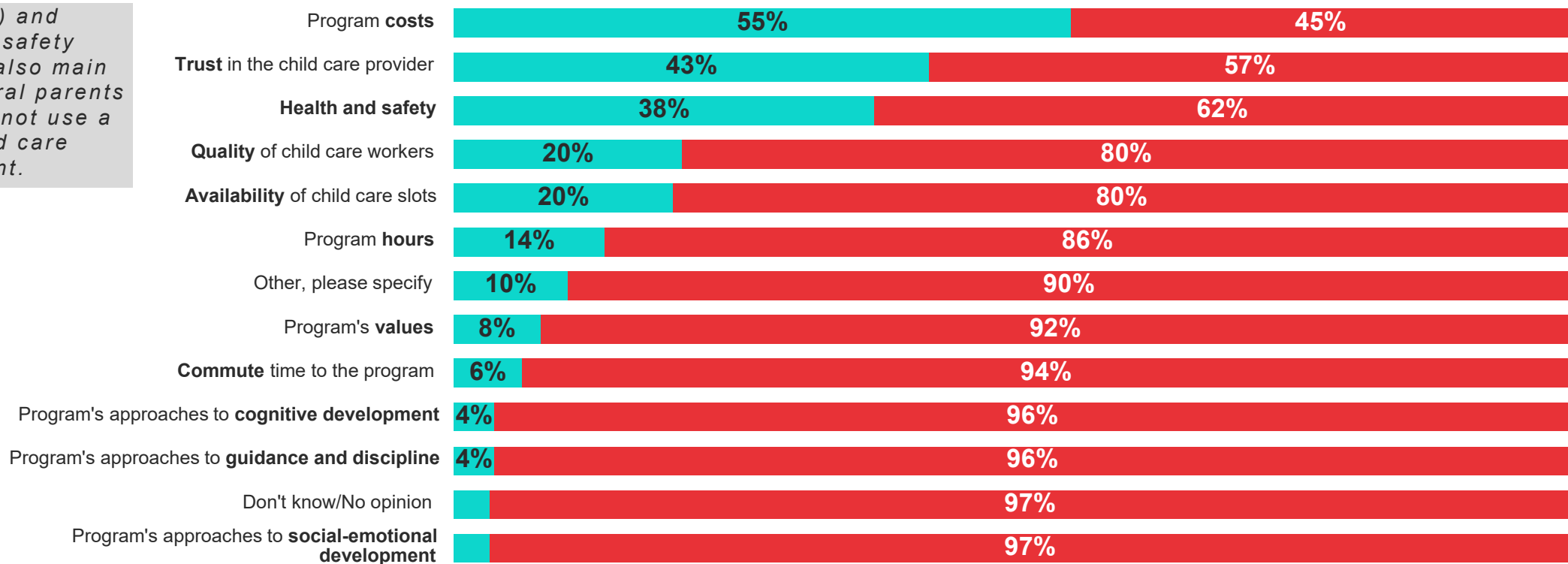
DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Among parents who considered a formal child care arrangement but currently use informal care, 55% say program costs most influenced their decision to not use a formal arrangement.

You previously indicated you had considered using a formal child care arrangement, but that is not currently your child care provider for your youngest child. Which of the following most impacted your decision to **not use a formal child care arrangement** for your youngest child. Please select the top 3.

RURAL PARENTS USING AN INFORMAL CHILD CARE PROVIDER BUT CONSIDERED FORMAL CARE, N=244

Selected Not Selected



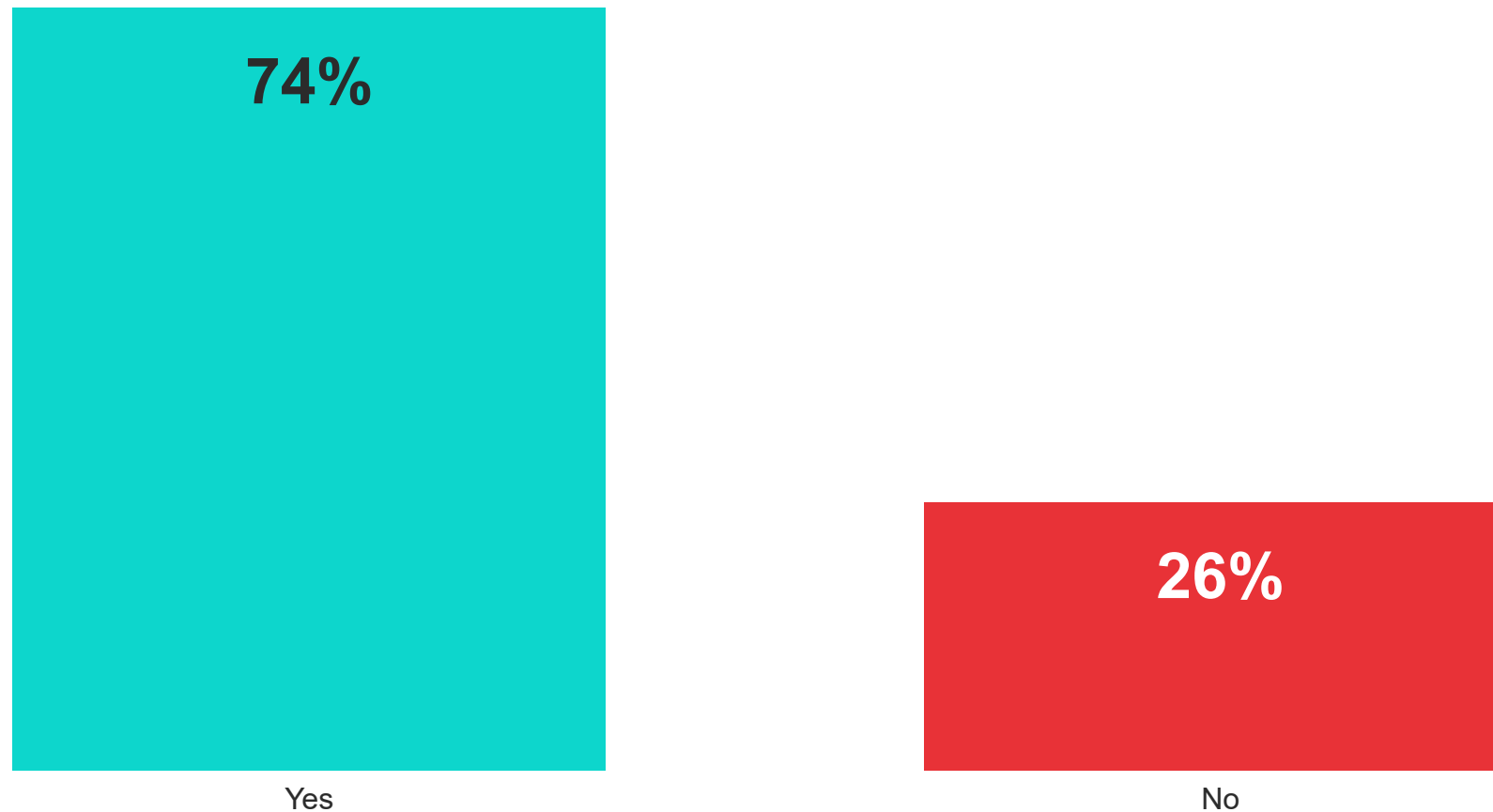
Trust (43%) and health and safety (38%) are also main reasons rural parents decided to not use a formal child care arrangement.

DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Three quarters of rural parents who are not personally or their spouse/is not currently working say not working is a personal choice, while 26% say it is not a personal choice.

Have you and/or your partner or spouse decided not to work out of personal choice? This could include not wanting or not needing to work.

RURAL PARENTS WHO ARE PERSONALLY OR SPOUSE/PARTNER IS NOT CURRENTLY WORKING, N=206

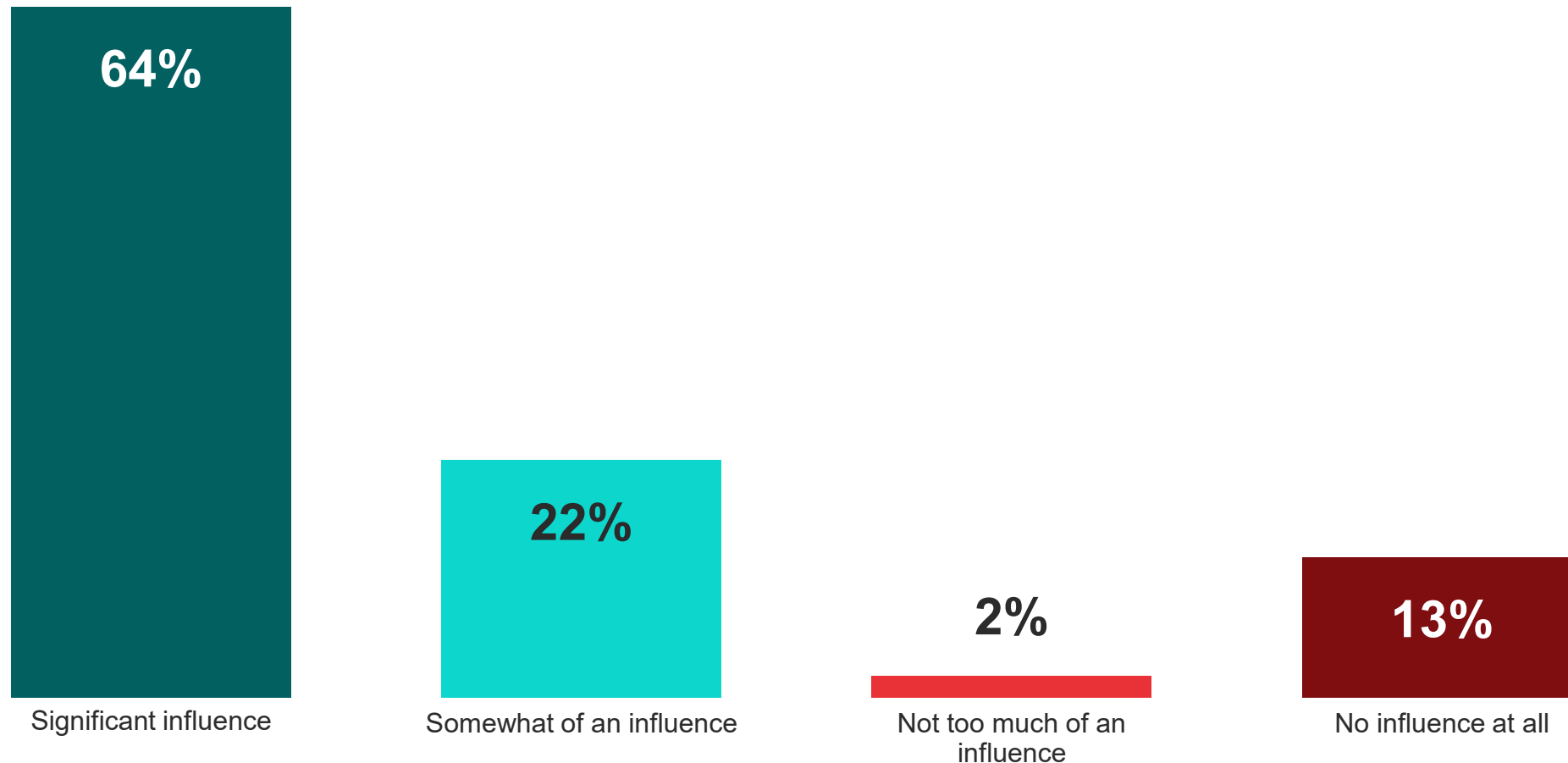


DECIDING ON A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT

Over 4 in 5 rural parents who are personally or their spouse/partner is not currently working say child care responsibilities influenced their decision to not work (86%), including 64% who said they *significantly influenced* their decision.

How much of an influence, if at all, did child care responsibilities have in your and or your partner or spouse's decision not to work?

RURAL PARENTS WHO ARE PERSONALLY OR SPOUSE/PARTNER IS NOT CURRENTLY WORKING, N=206



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RESPONDENT PROFILE



Child Care Preferences

- 1 If child care were free and in a convenient location, 25% of rural parents would prefer to personally provide care for their child, and 22% would prefer a child care center. However, preferences differ across demographic groups.

 - Rural parents with a higher income are more likely to prefer a child care center or part day pre-k, while rural parents with a lower income are more likely to prefer relative care.
- 2 If child care were free for their family, a plurality of parents say that they would prefer the child care arrangement they currently use.

 - Rural parents who are currently using formal child care would prefer a formal child care arrangement if it were free, while those currently using informal child care would most prefer their child to remain in this type of care.
- 3 Rural parents are interested in public pre-k as a child care option.

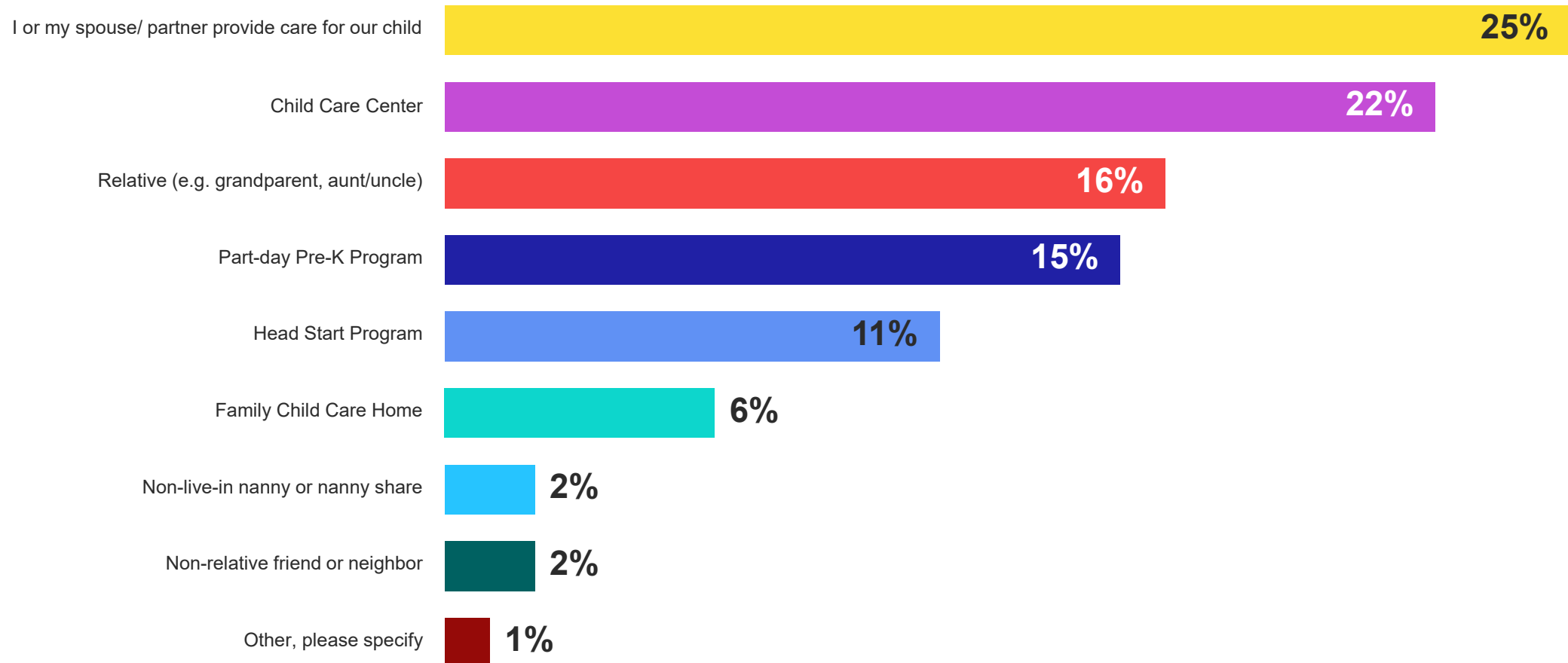
 - Half (56%) of parents say that if public pre-k were co-located in a child care program that offered longer hours of care it would be a better option for their family, while 22% say it would not be a better option.
 - Rural parents are **less likely** than employed parents surveyed in May 2021 to say public pre-k would be a better option for their family (56% vs. 73%).

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

If child care were free and in a convenient location, 25% of rural parents would prefer to personally provide care for their child, and 22% would prefer a child care center.

If child care were free and in a convenient location for your family, what type of child care arrangement would you most prefer?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Rural parents with a higher income are more likely to prefer a child care center or part day pre-k, while rural parents with a lower income are more likely to prefer relative care.

If child care were free and in a convenient location for your family, what type of child care arrangement would you most prefer?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

	Rural Parents	Income: Under 50k	Income: 50k-100k	Income: 100k+	Ethnicity: White	Ethnicity: Hispanic	Ethnicity: Black*	Ethnicity: Other*
Child Care Center	22%	22%	21%	30%	22%	19%	29%	16%
Family Child Care Home	6%	4%	7%	6%	5%	11%	9%	7%
Part-day Pre-K Program	15%	13%	15%	23%	15%	14%	9%	23%
Head Start Program	11%	14%	8%	8%	11%	5%	6%	16%
Relative (e.g. grandparent, aunt/uncle)	16%	19%	15%	8%	15%	25%	20%	19%
I or my spouse/partner provide care for our child	25%	24%	28%	22%	26%	21%	17%	19%
Non-relative friend or neighbor	2%	2%	3%	0%	2%	4%	9%	0%
Non-live-in nanny or nanny share	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%

*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Rural parents who are currently using formal child care would prefer a formal child care if it were free, while those currently using informal child care would most prefer their child to remain in this type of care.

If child care were free and in a convenient location for your family, what type of child care arrangement would you most prefer?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

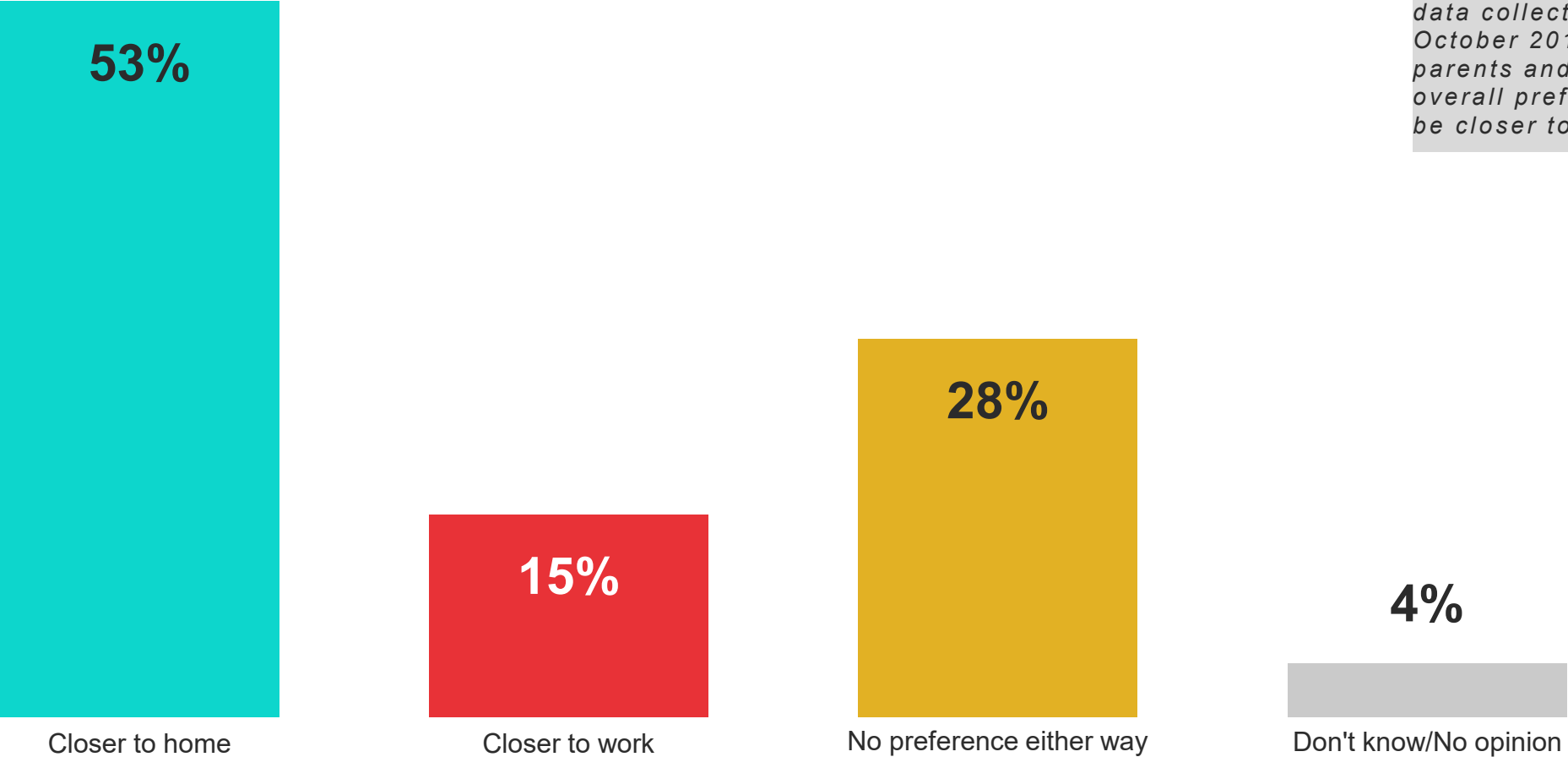
	Current: Child Care Center	Current: Family Child Care Home	Current: Part-Day Pre-K	Current: Relative	Current: Personally or Spouse Provides Care	Current: Formal Child Care	Current: Informal Child Care
Prefer: Child Care Center	62%	25%	13%	20%	7%	44%	12%
Prefer: Family Child Care Home	5%	44%	0%	4%	3%	11%	3%
Prefer: Part-day Pre-K Program	6%	0%	61%	10%	18%	15%	16%
Prefer: Head Start Program	6%	3%	11%	12%	11%	10%	11%
Prefer: Relative (e.g. grandparent, aunt/uncle)	9%	11%	0%	41%	12%	7%	20%
Prefer: I or my spouse/partner provide care for our child	7%	11%	11%	11%	45%	8%	34%
Prefer: Non-relative friend or neighbor	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Prefer: Non-live-in nanny or nanny share	4%	3%	3%	1%	2%	4%	1%

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Half of rural parents prefer their child care location is closer to home (53%) rather than work (15%).

Do you prefer your child care location is closer to your home or work?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



In comparison to survey data collected in October 2019, both rural parents and parents overall prefer child care be closer to home.

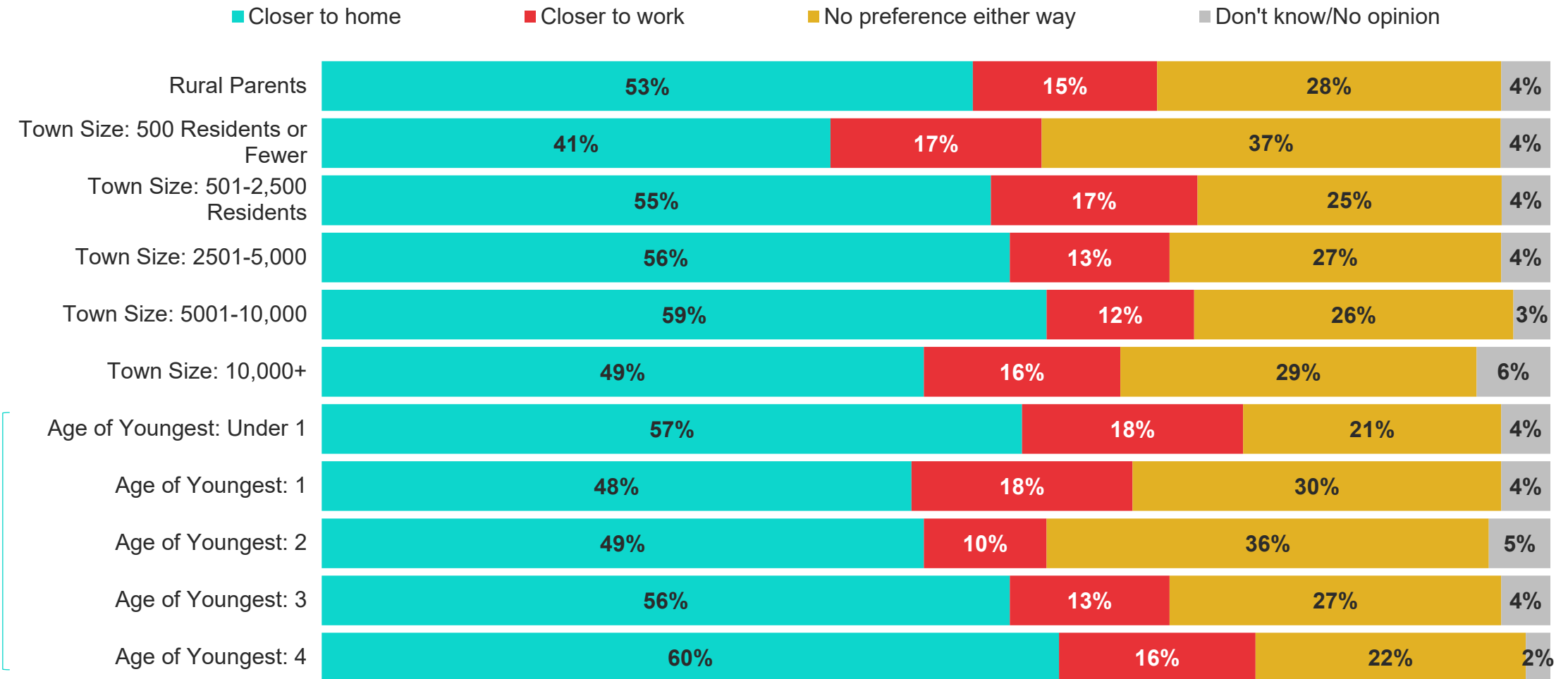
*Data from survey conducted in October 2019 among a national sample of 800 parents with children under the age of 5 currently paying for child care and have a household member who is employed.

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Rural parents with younger children (under 1), and older children (3 or 4), are more likely to prefer their child care location is closer to home.

Do you prefer your child care location is closer to your home or work?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

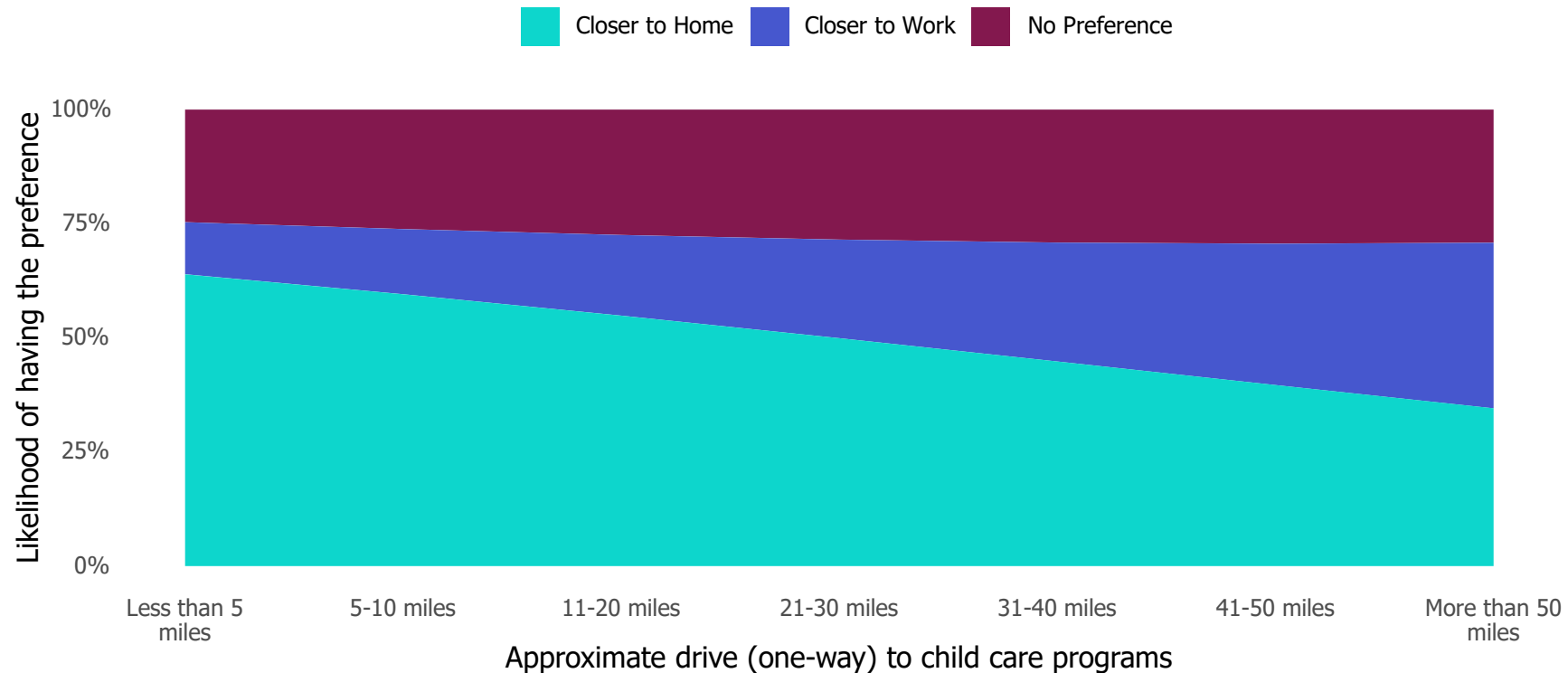


CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Child care closer to home is the preference for most rural parents, but that preference decreases, while closer to work gains, as rural parents travel further for child care.

Do you prefer your child care location is closer to your home or work?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



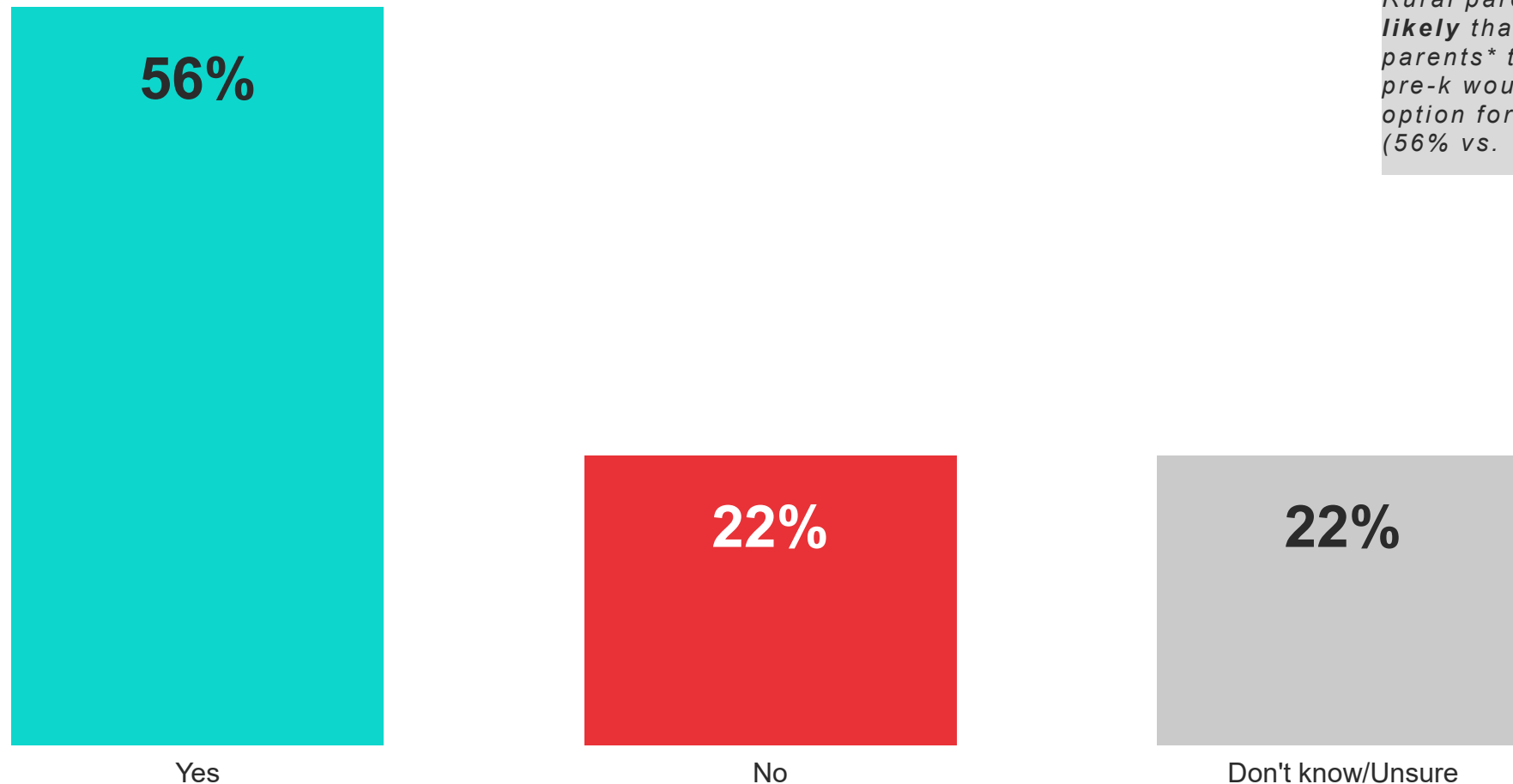
Estimated probabilities generated via a multinomial logistic regression model

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Half (56%) of parents say that if public pre-k were co-located in a child care program that offered longer hours of care it would be a better option for their family, while 22% say it would not be a better option.

Many public pre-k programs operate at times aligned to a K-12 school day, which is shorter than a typical work day for most parents. If free public pre-k were co-located in a child care program that offered longer hours of care, would this be a better option for your family?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



Rural parents are *less likely* than employed parents* to say public pre-k would be a better option for their family (56% vs. 73%).

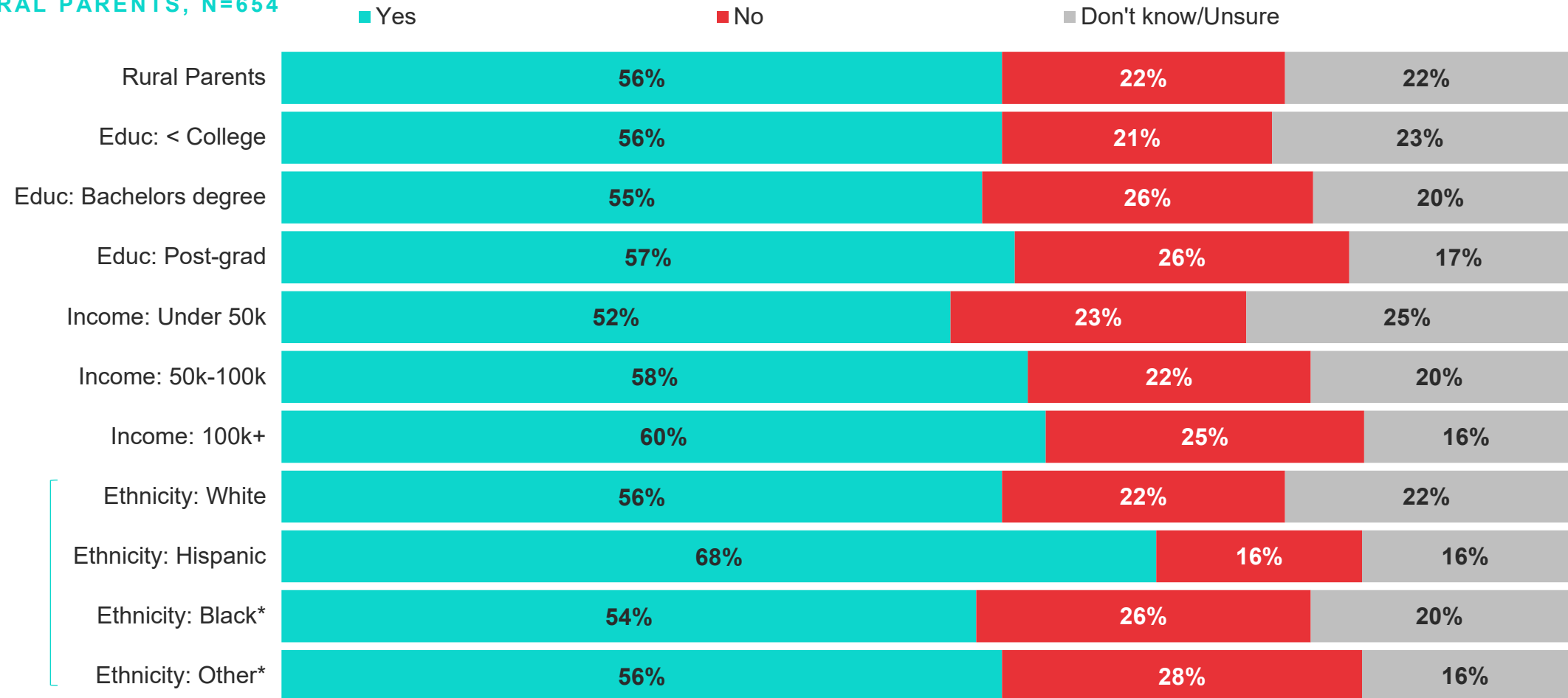
*Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

CHILD CARE PREFERENCES

Hispanic parents are more likely than parents of other ethnicities to say free public pre-k would be a better option for their family.

Many public pre-k programs operate at times aligned to a K-12 school day, which is shorter than a typical work day for most parents. If free public pre-k were co-located in a child care program that offered longer hours of care, would this be a better option for your family?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

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Impact of COVID-19 on Child Care Arrangements

- 1 Similar to their current child care arrangement, a plurality of rural parents were personally providing care for their child prior to the pandemic.

 - Two in five rural parents (43%) say they were personally or their spouse/partner was providing child care prior to the pandemic, followed by 20% relying on relatives.
 - A plurality of rural parents are currently using the same child care arrangement they used prior to the pandemic.
- 2 The impact of the pandemic on child care providers varies, but overall child care providers used by rural parents remain open, but some are experiencing employee shortages.

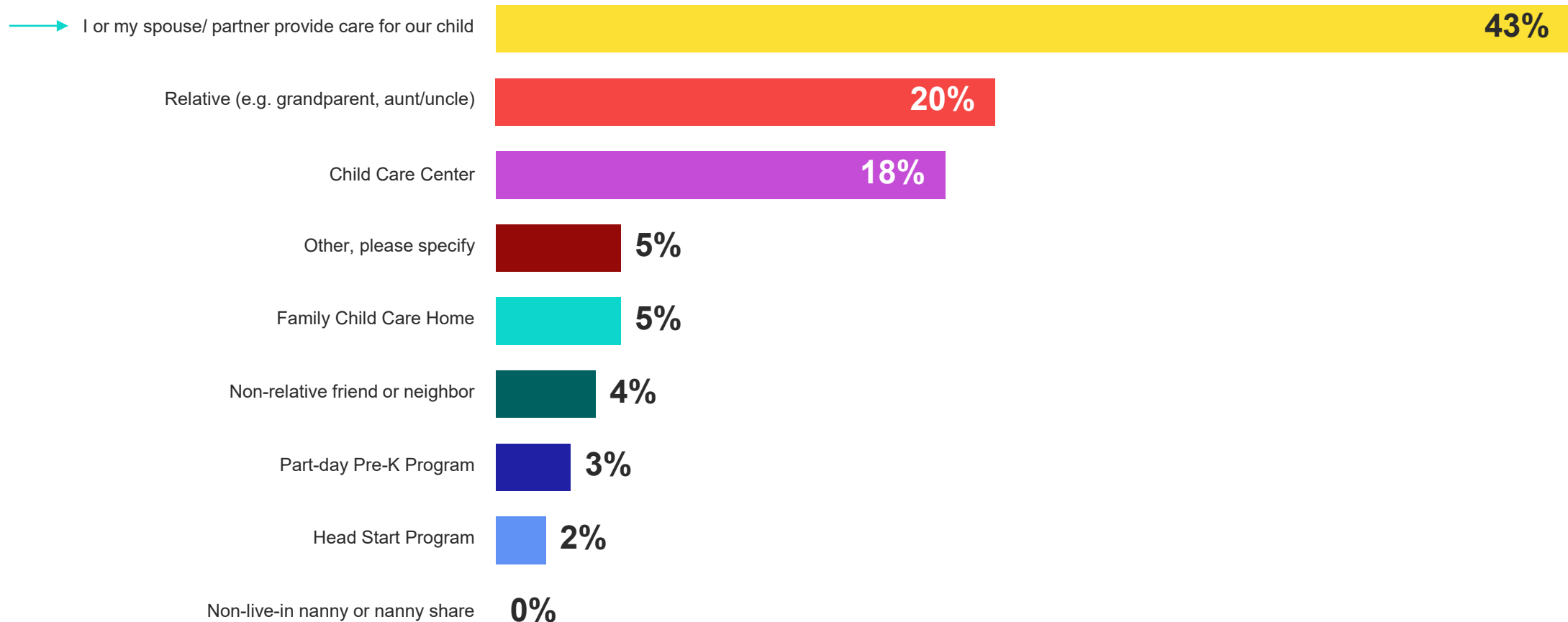
 - Among rural parents who used a formal child care arrangement prior to the pandemic, 7% say their provider is currently closed while 89% say it remains open.
 - A third of rural parents (34%) say their child care provider is experiencing employee shortages.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Two in five rural parents (43%) say they were personally or their spouse/partner was providing child care prior to the pandemic, followed by 20% relying on relatives.

Which of the following best describe the primary child care arrangement you used **prior to the pandemic** for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

A plurality of rural parents are currently using the same child care arrangement they used prior to the pandemic.

Which of the following best describe the primary child care arrangement you used **prior to the pandemic** for your youngest child?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

Child Care Arrangement Prior to the Pandemic

<i>Current Child Care* Arrangement</i>	Child Care Center	Family Child Care Home	Part-day Pre-K Program	Head Start Program	Relative (e.g. grandparent, aunt/uncle)	I or my spouse/partner provide care for our child	Non-relative friend or neighbor	Non-live-in nanny or nanny share	Other, please specify	
	Child Care Center	74%	4%	0%	1%	4%	10%	2%	0%	4%
	Family Child Care Home	14%	53%	0%	3%	11%	17%	3%	0%	0%
	Part-Day Pre-K	13%	11%	42%	3%	5%	26%	0%	0%	0%
	Relatives	4%	0%	0%	2%	77%	7%	4%	0%	6%
	Personally or spouse/partner provides care	3%	1%	1%	1%	8%	79%	2%	0%	5%

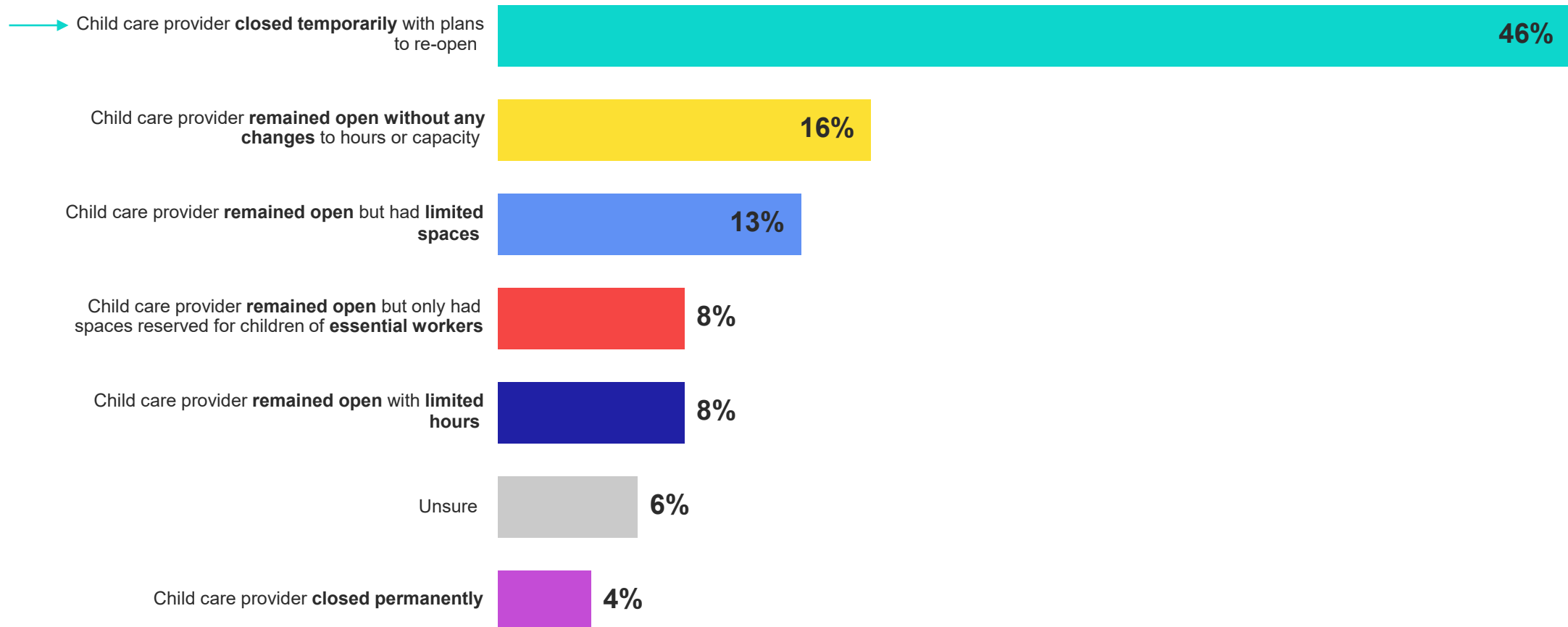
*Current child care arrangement comes from BPC7, other arrangements not included due to small sample size.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Nearly half of rural parents who were using formal child care prior to the pandemic (46%) say at the height of the pandemic their provider closed temporarily with plans to re-open.

What happened to your child care center at the height of the pandemic?

RURAL PARENTS WHO USED FORMAL CHILD CARE PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC, N=183



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Among rural parents who used a formal child care arrangement prior to the pandemic, 7% say their provider is currently closed.

Is the primary child care arrangement you used prior to the pandemic for your youngest child currently open or closed?

RURAL PARENTS WHO USED FORMAL CHILD CARE PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC, N=183

Among rural parents who were using a child care center prior to the pandemic, 92% say the provider is open and 7% say the provider has closed.

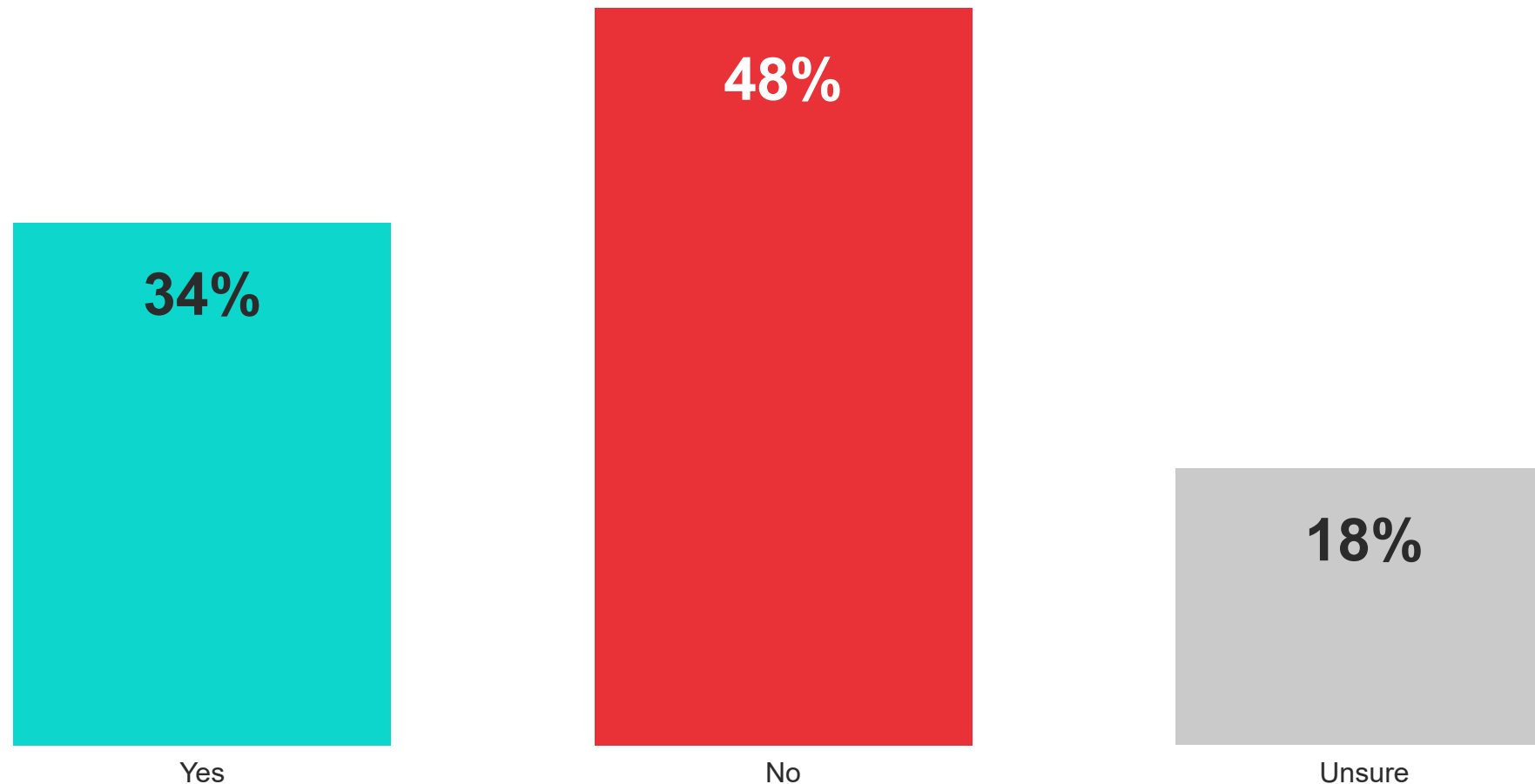


IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

A third of rural parents (34%) say their child care provider is experiencing employee shortages.

Is your current child care provider experiencing any employee shortages? This could include not having enough caregivers to open, having to reduce classroom size, or having limited availability because they do not have enough staff.

RURAL PARENTS CURRENTLY USING A FORMAL CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT, N=217



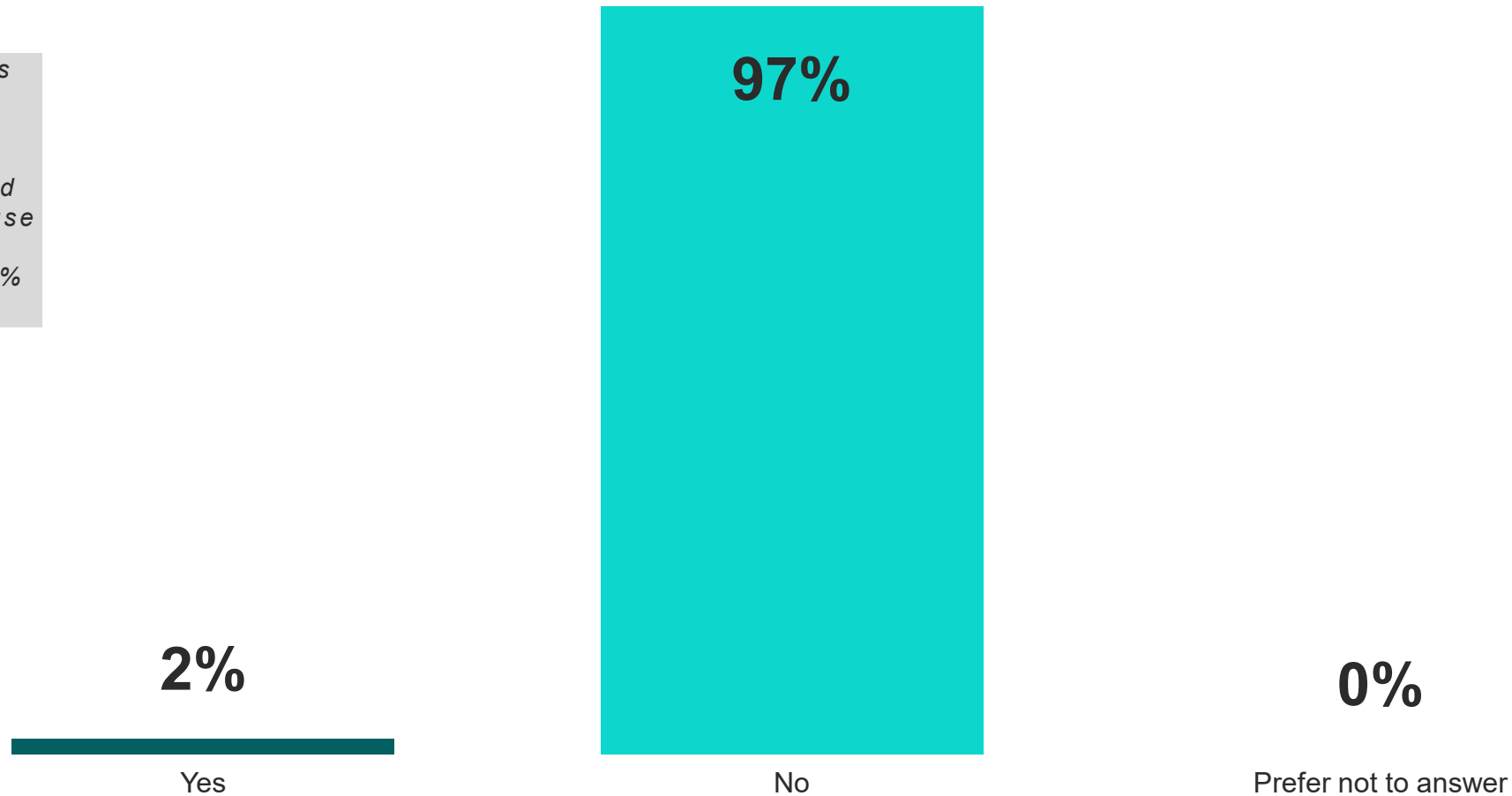
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Only 2% of rural parents say their child has been suspended or expelled from child care because of behavioral or disciplinary issues.

Has your child under age 5 ever been suspended or expelled from child care because of behavioral or disciplinary issues?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

Rural parents are less likely than employed parents to say their child has been suspended or expelled from child care because of behavioral or disciplinary issues (2% vs. 8%).*



*Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

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Financial Supports for Child Care

- 1** Three in five rural parents say they have not received a federal tax credit for their child care expenses.

 - Rural parents are more likely than employed parents surveyed in May 2021 to say they have NOT received a federal tax credit for their child care expenses (60% vs. 51%).
 - Black rural parents are more likely than parents of other ethnicities to say they have received a federal tax credit for child care expenses.
- 2** There is a lack of awareness among rural parents around they type of federal financial support they can receive for child care.

 - Among rural parents that have not received federal credit for their child care expenses, a quarter say it is because they were not aware that they could (25%).
 - The main reasons rural parents have not received a federal credit for their child care expenses is not having child care expenses (29%)

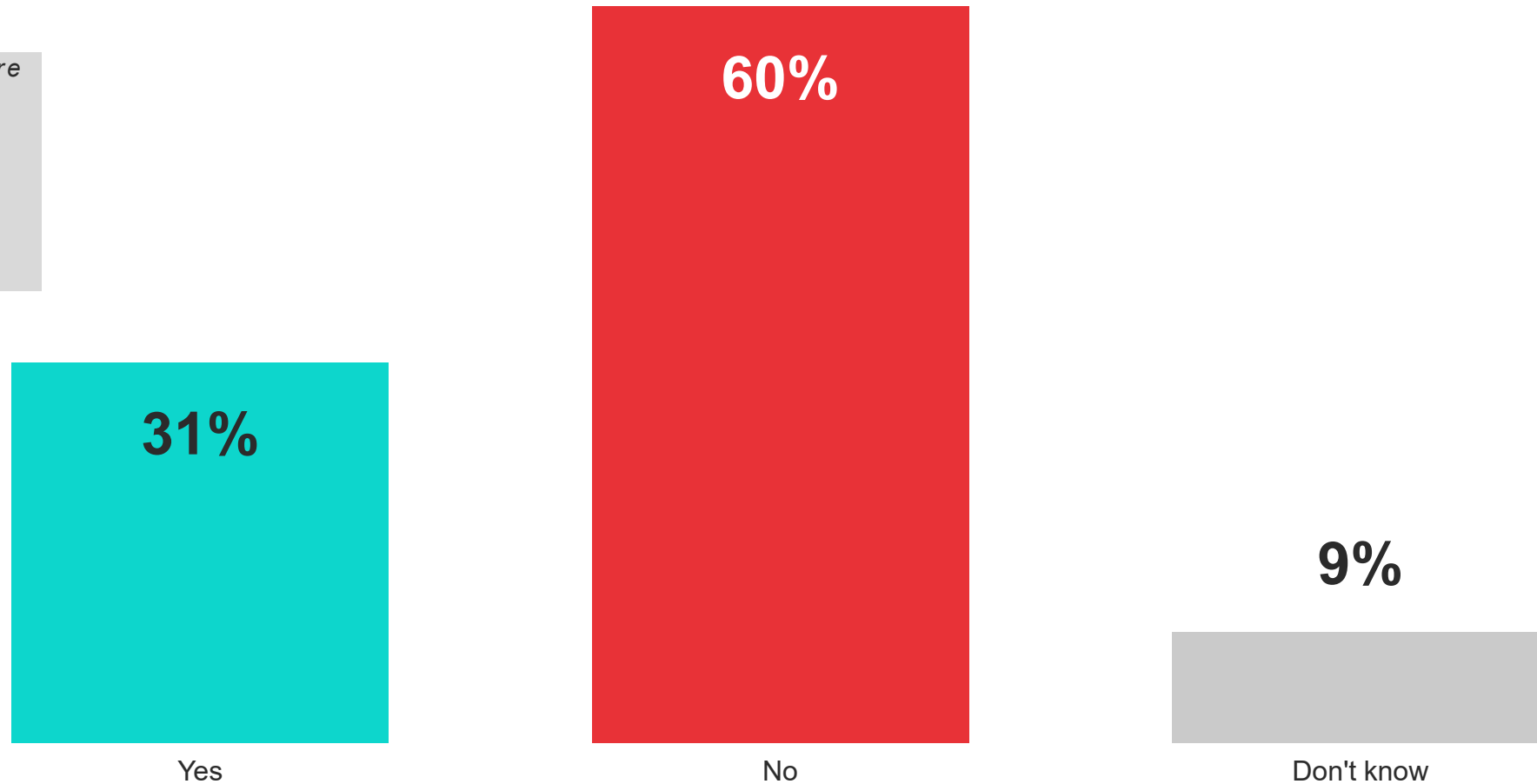
FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR CHILD CARE

Three in five (60%) of rural parents say they have not received a federal tax credit for their child care expenses.

Have you ever received a federal tax credit for your child care expenses?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

Rural parents are more likely than employed parents to say they have NOT received a federal tax credit for their child care expenses (60% vs. 51%).*



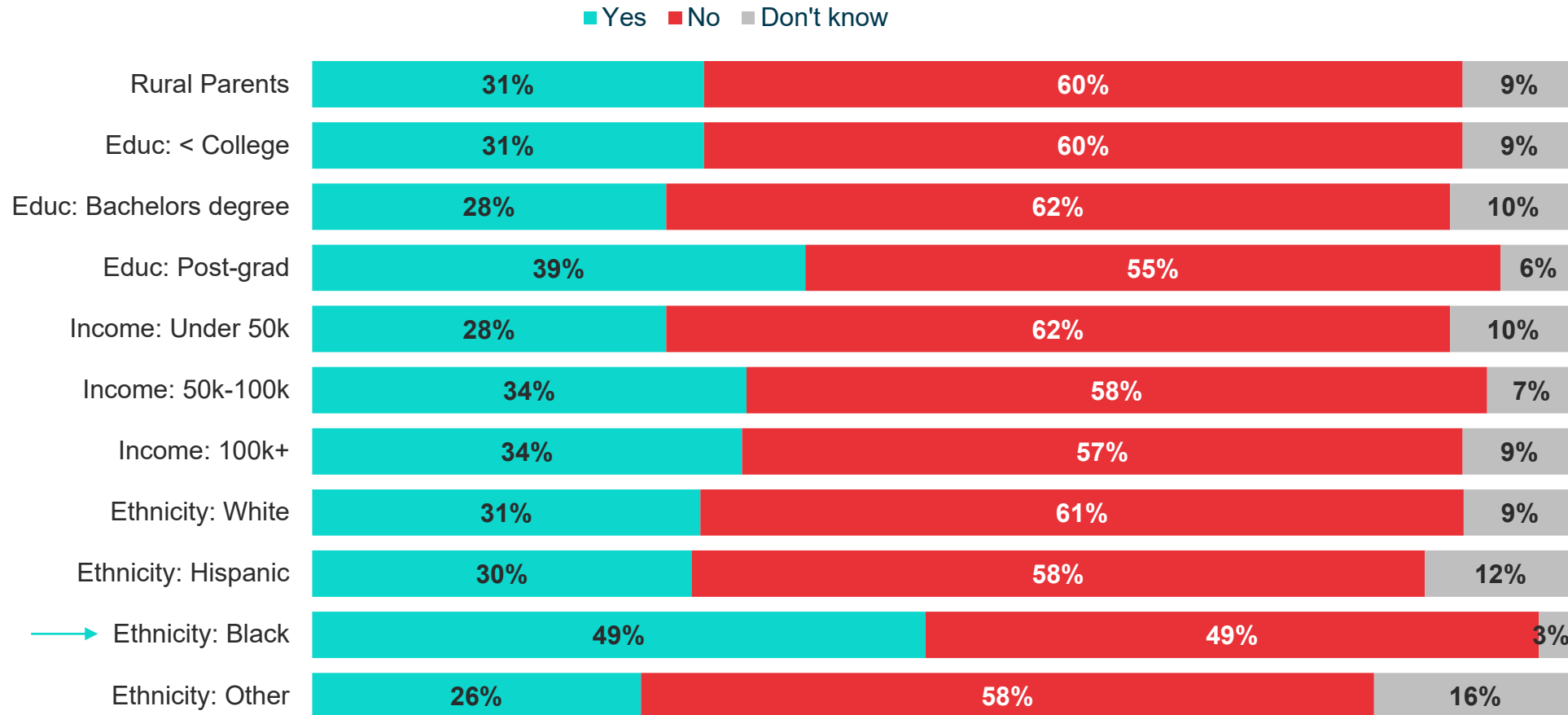
*Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR CHILD CARE

Black rural parents are more likely than parents of other ethnicities to say they have received a federal tax credit for child care expenses.

Have you ever received a federal tax credit for your child care expenses?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

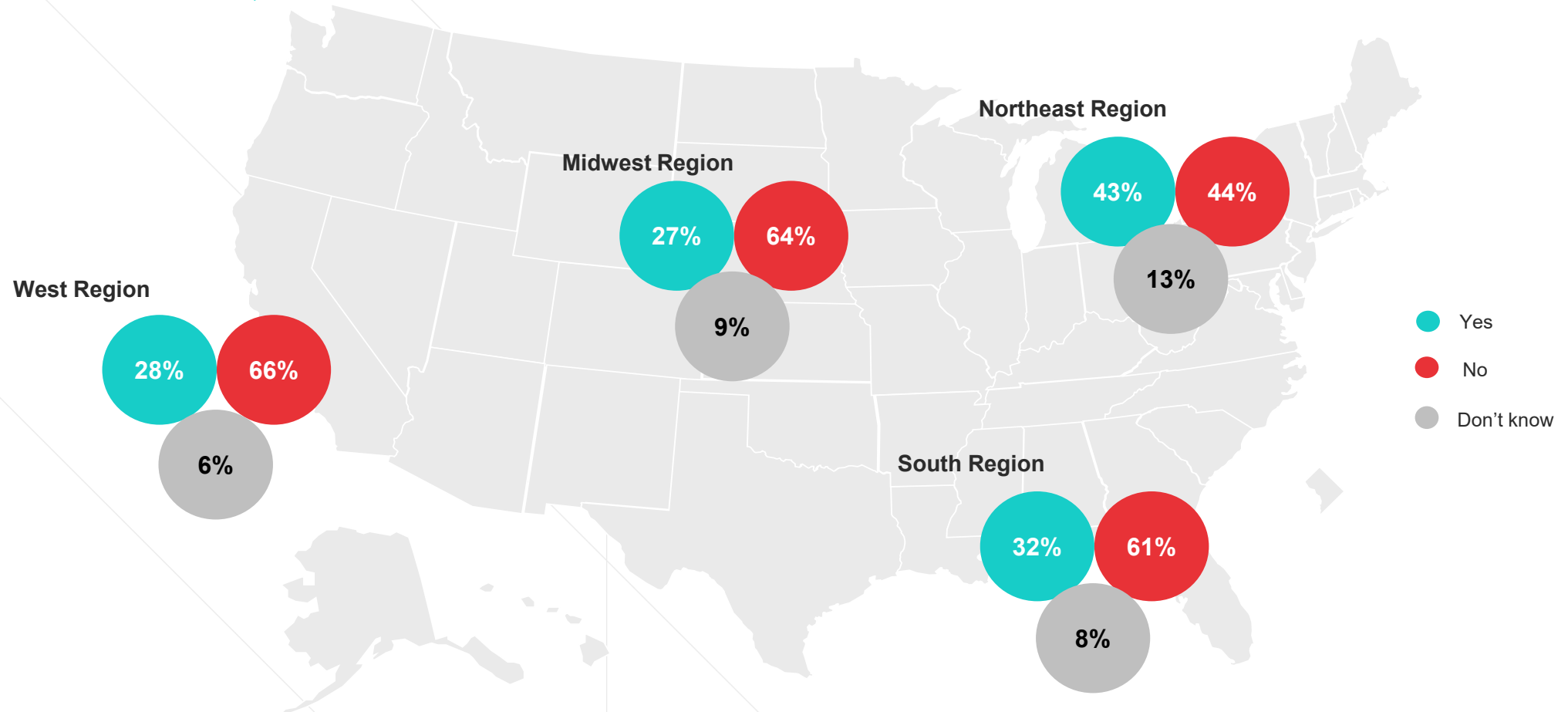


*Caution small n size, Black n=35, Other n=43

Rural parents in the Northeast are more likely than rural parents in other parts of the country to say they have received a federal tax credit for their child care expenses.

Have you ever received a federal tax credit for your child care expenses?

RURAL PARENTS, N=654

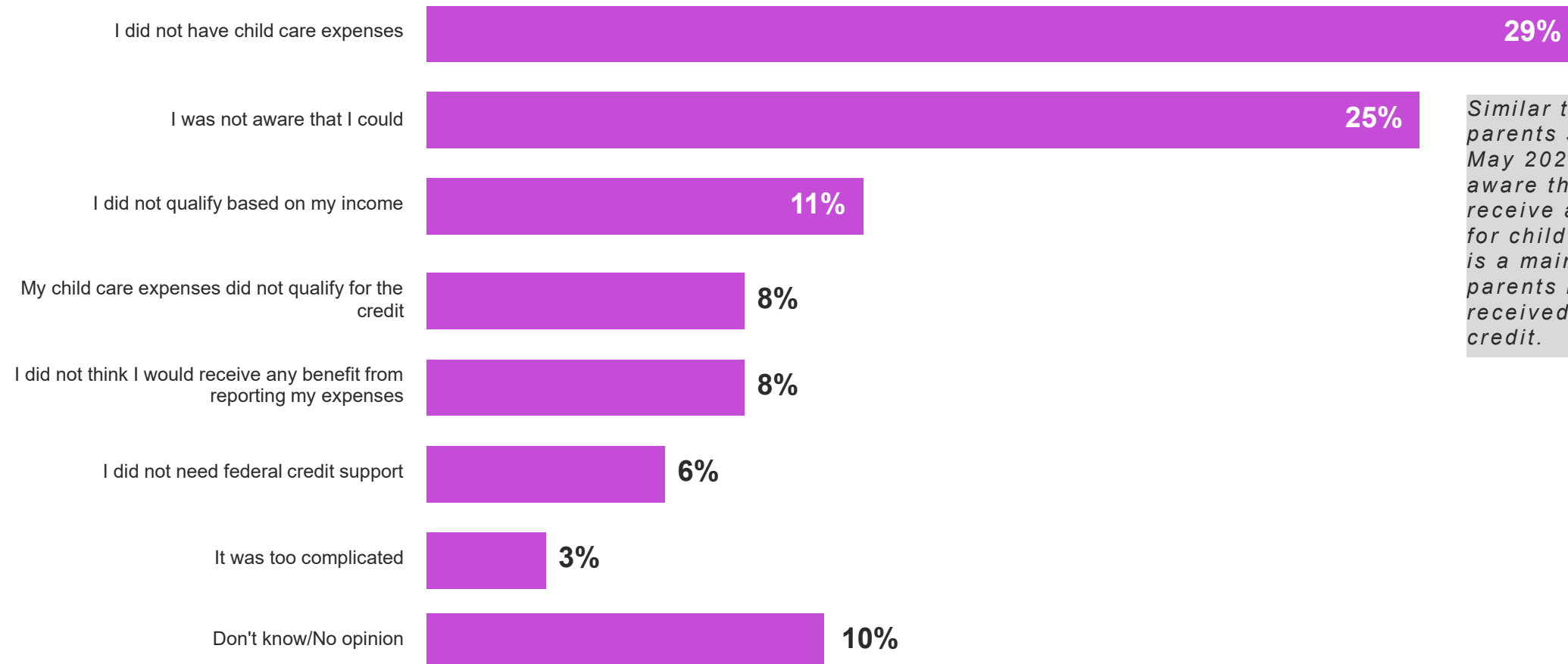


FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR CHILD CARE

The main reasons rural parents have not received a federal credit for their child care expenses is not having child care expenses (29%) followed by not being aware they could (24%).

You mentioned that you have not received federal credit for your child care expenses. Which of the following best describes why?

RURAL PARENTS WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED A FEDERAL CREDIT, N=393



Similar to employed parents surveyed in May 2021, not being aware they could receive a federal credit for child care expenses is a main reason parents have not received a federal credit.*

*Data from survey conducted in May 2021 among a national sample of 800 employed parents with children under the age of 5.

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DECIDING ON A CHILD
CARE ARRANGEMENT

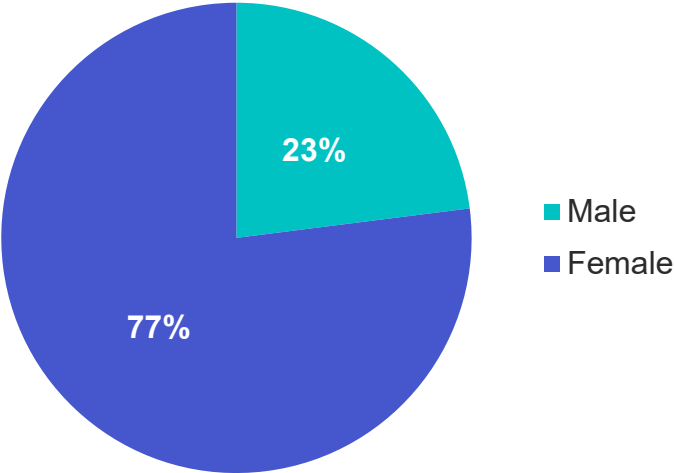
RESPONDENT PROFILE



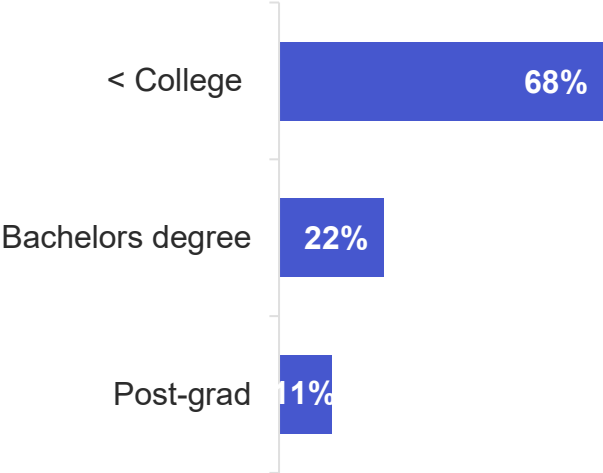
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Demographic Information

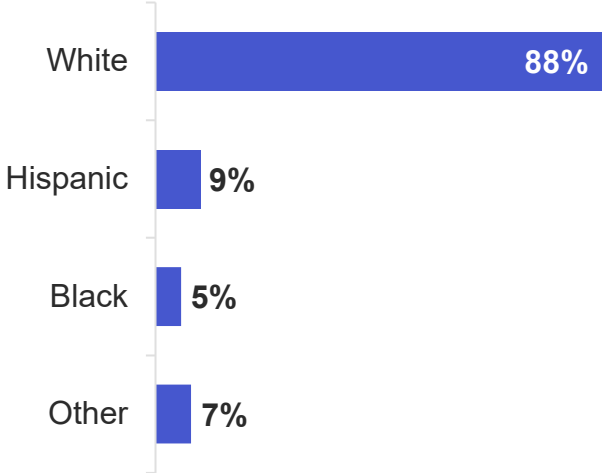
Gender



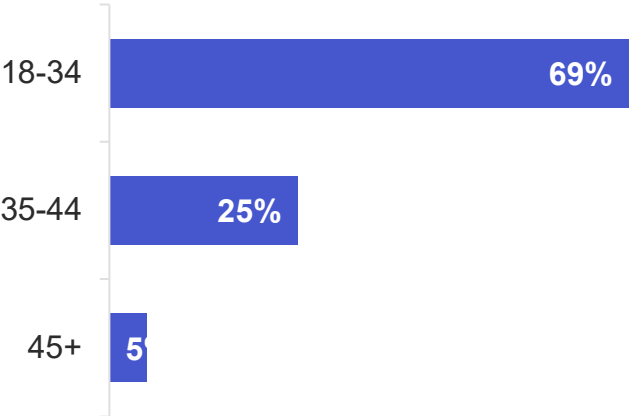
Education



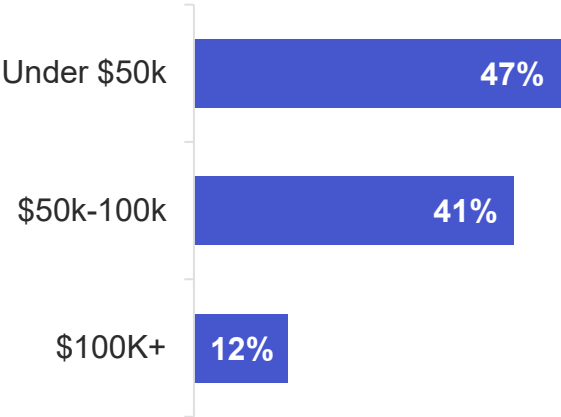
Ethnicity



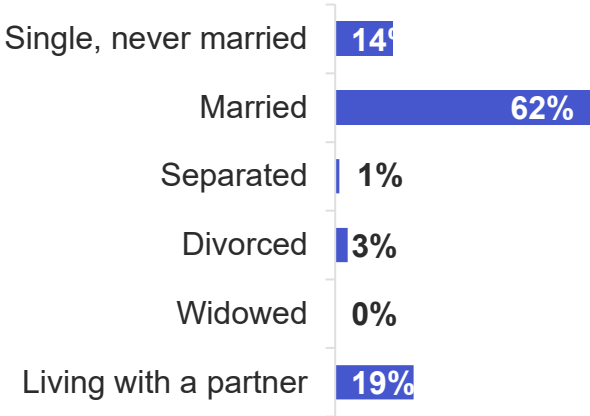
Age



Income



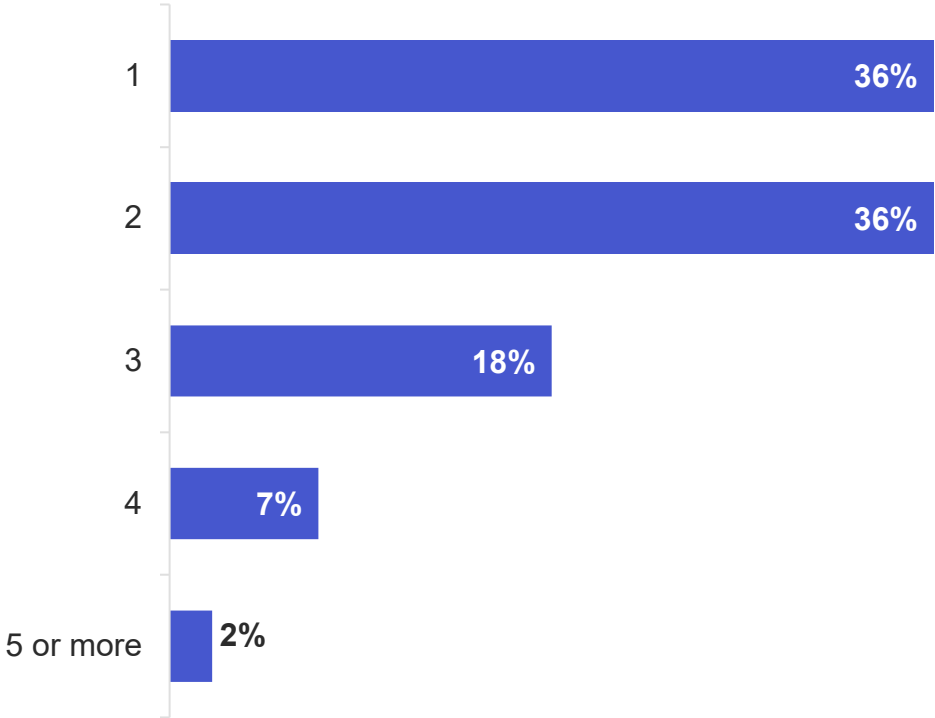
Marital Status



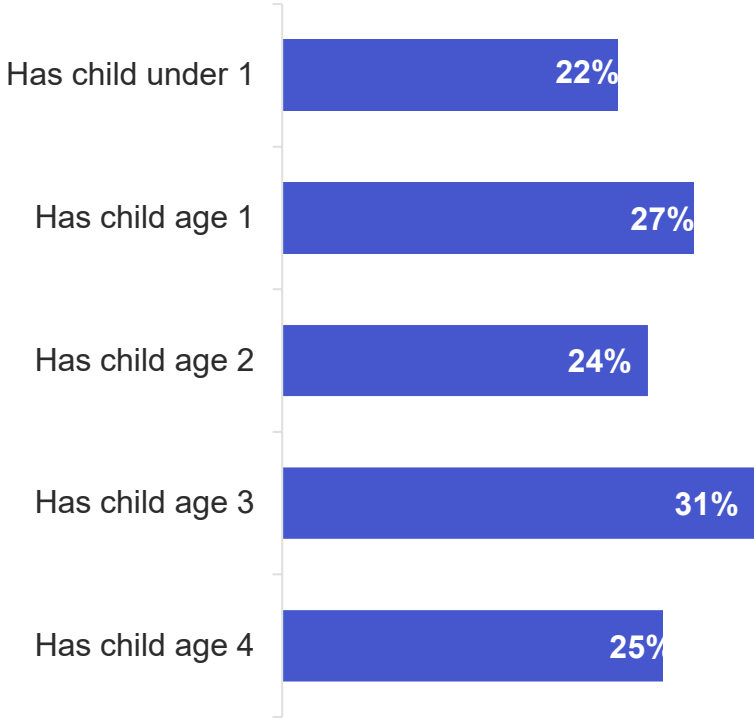
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Family Demographics

How many children under the age of 18 do you have?



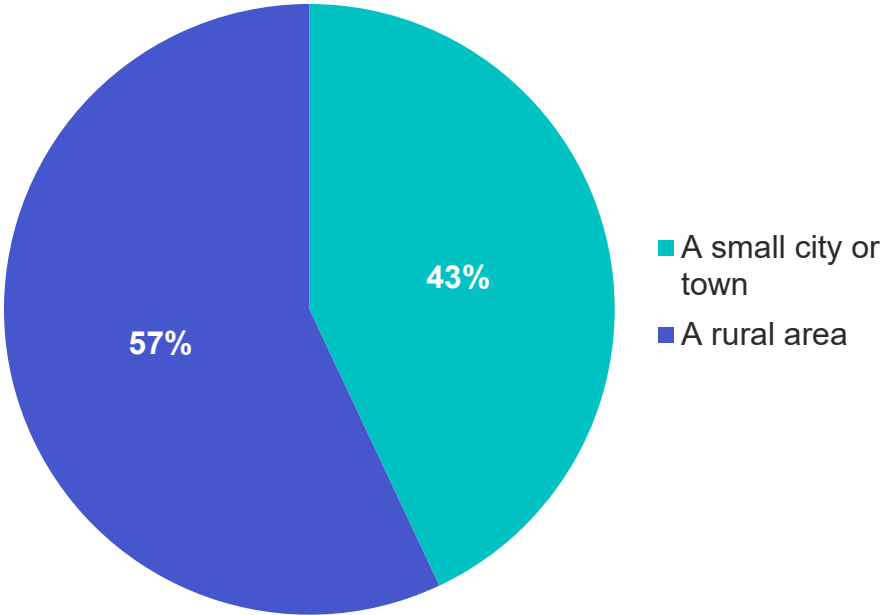
Age of children



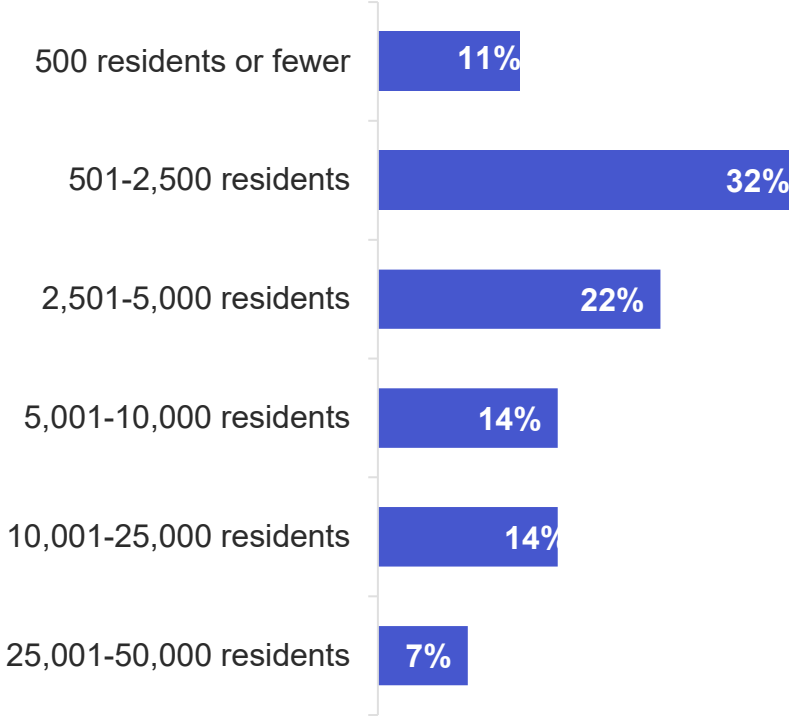
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Community Demographics

Which of the following best describes where you now live?



What is the approximate population in your town?



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Employment Demographics

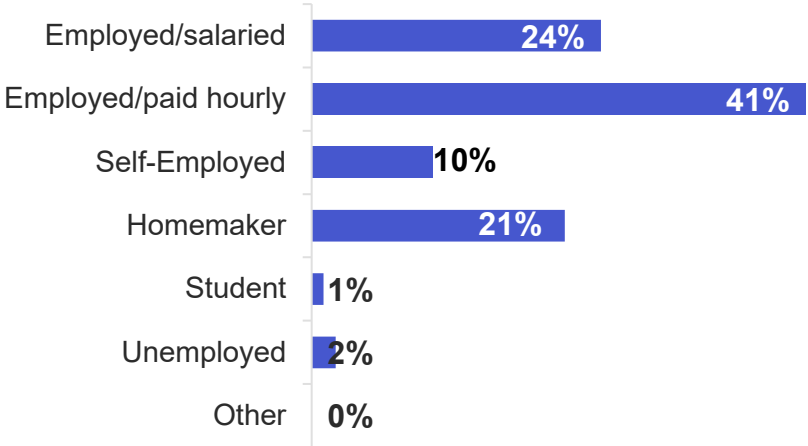
Which of the following categories best describes your current job?



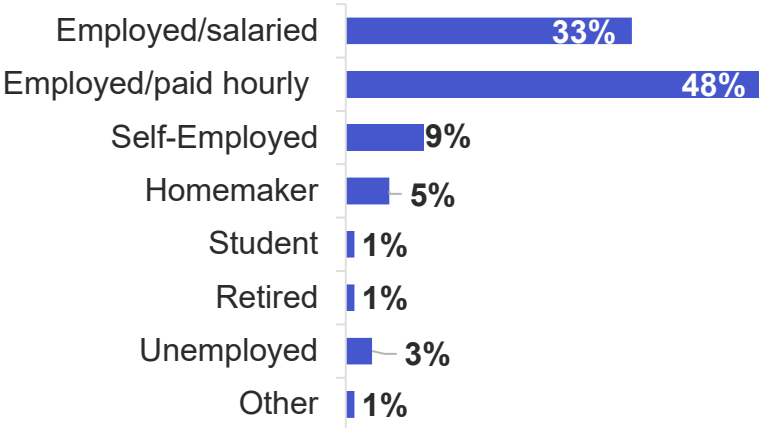
Which of the following categories best describes your spouse's or partner's current job?



How would you describe your present employment situation?



How would you describe your spouse's or partner's present employment situation?





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