

# Family Child Care During COVID-19

**Accessibility During the Pandemic.** Early in the pandemic, parents identified the most likely child care providers to remain open were family child care homes:

- **28% of family child care programs remained open for parents without any scheduling changes in April 2020.**
  - By comparison, parents reported **10% of multi-site child care centers** were reported as open in April 2020.
- **29% of family child care programs remained open for parents in August 2020.**



# Child Care Affordability

**What parents can afford.** Parents identified the maximum amount they can afford to pay for child care. Many families reported amounts that cannot afford the high cost of child care.

- **61% of parents who used family child care reported that the maximum weekly amount they can afford to pay is less than \$200 per child (39% said they could pay less than \$100).**



# Family Child Care Use by Region

**Family child care use before the pandemic.** Parents in rural communities used family child care in more than parents in urban and suburban communities. Of families who used formal care prior to the pandemic:

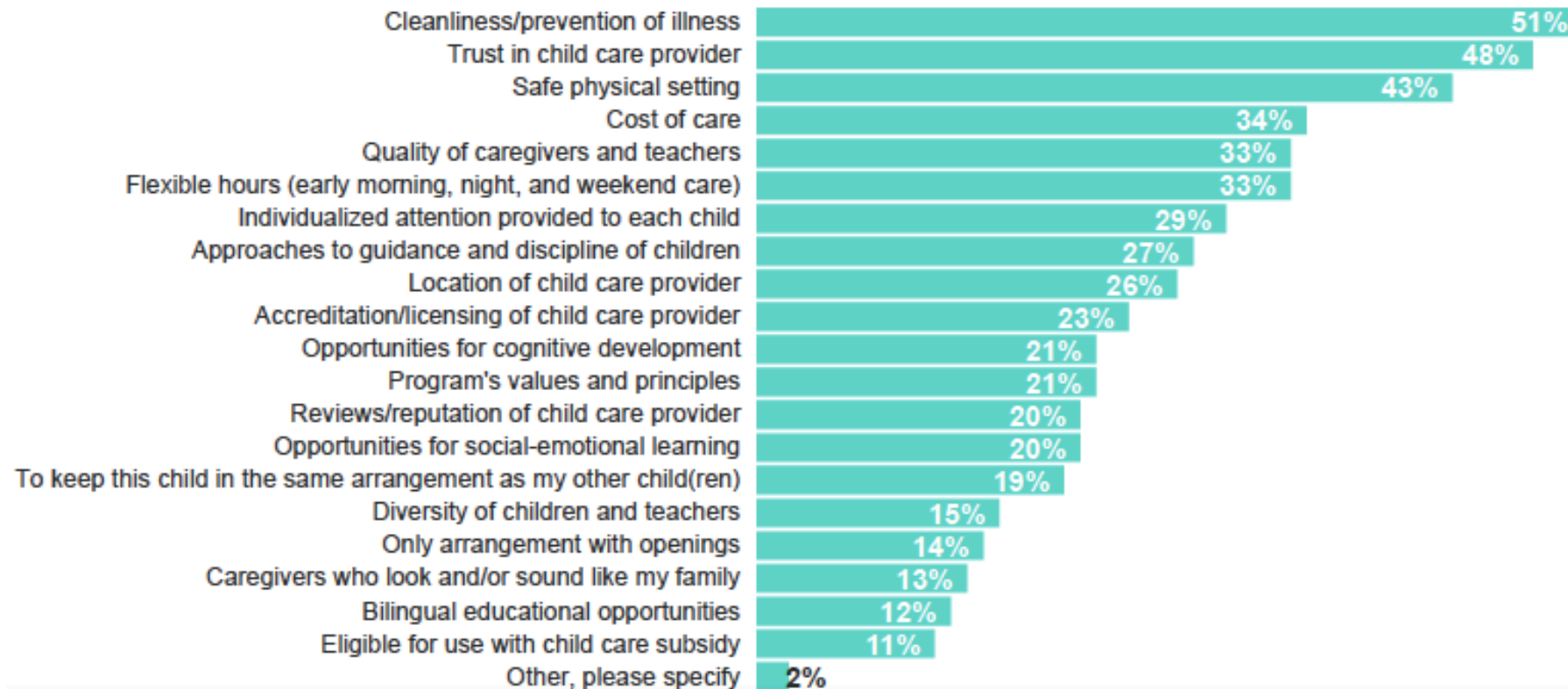
- **40%** in rural communities used family child care
- **30%** in suburban communities used family child care
- **28%** in urban communities used family child care


Percent of Parents Choosing FCC for Youngest Child by Age of Child				
	0-1	2	3	4
Family Child Care	21%	24%	20%	34%




# Safety

**Factors for selecting child care.** For parents who used a formal child care provider prior to COVID-19, “safety, cleanliness, and prevention of illness” is currently the most important factor when selecting child care. Notably, parents who used family child care place emphasis on flexible care hours, reviews and reputation of providers, providers’ approaches to guidance and discipline prior to the pandemic.







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## Family Child Care Policy Framework

### Overview

Child care provided in home-based settings is a critical component in the overall child care market and encompasses a broad range of child care types—from child care programs that meet state licensing requirements to informal care options such as family members, friends, and neighbors caring for a small number of children. For the purposes of this policy framework, the term “family child care” is used throughout the document and defined as home-based child care providers that appear on a national or state list (see definitions box on page 2).<sup>1</sup>

Family child care offers flexibility and convenience for parents with accessible neighborhood locations, a trusted and consistent caregiver, small groups of children, and is a resource for parents who face barriers to accessing child care. For some children, a small learning setting is the optimal environment for their healthy development and provides continuity in child care from infancy to school age. For communities, family child care is an economic and social asset that supports a diverse workforce. During COVID-19, family child care offers specific features that may appeal to parents concerned about health and safety, such as small groups of the same children and very few adults who enter and exit a program on a daily basis.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE**  
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