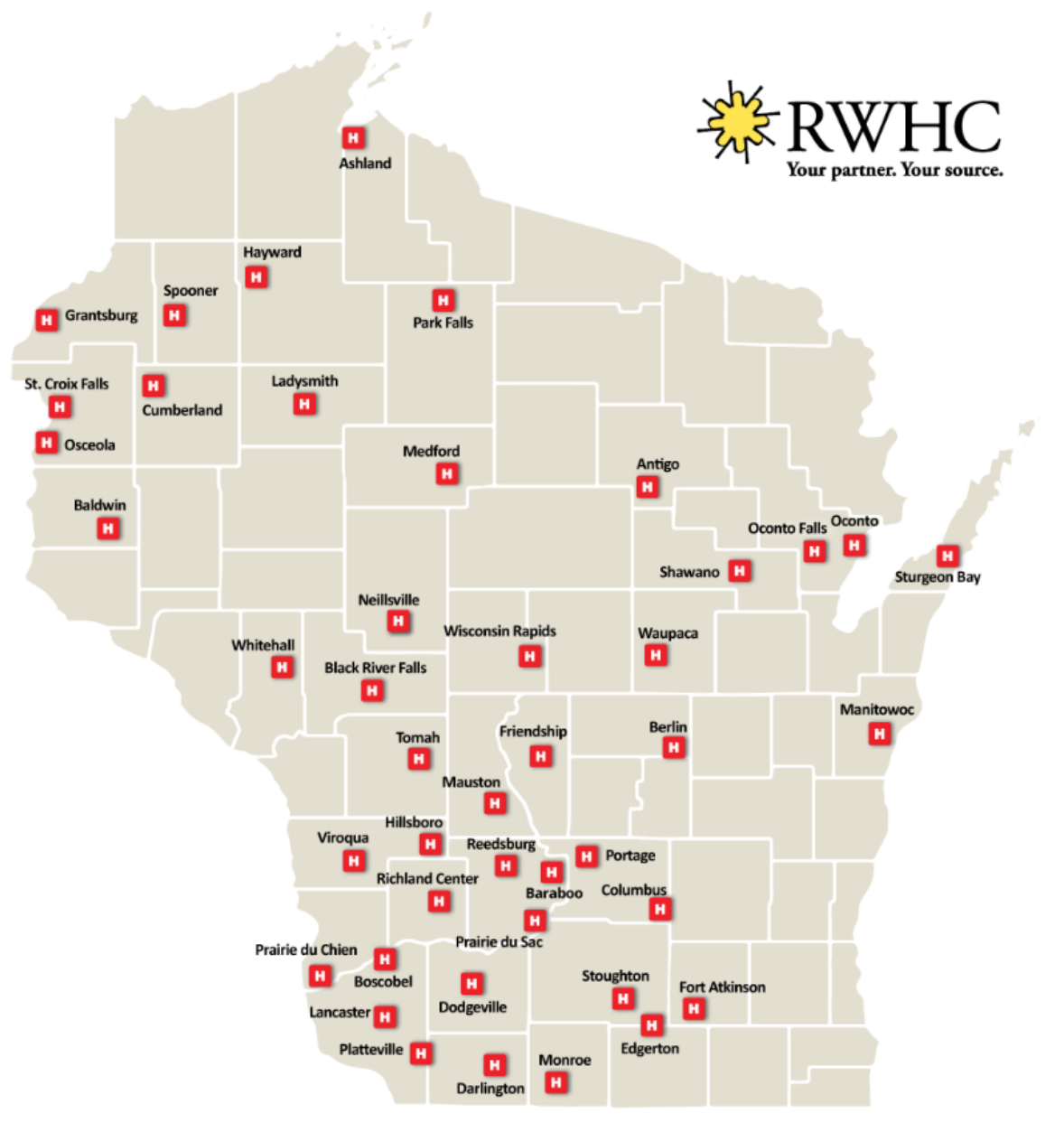


**RWHC  
COMMUNITY  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**





# Goals for Today

- Report Out on Employee Survey
- Report Out on Provider Conversations
- Group Conversation Around Findings
- Discuss Next Steps of Proposed Work Plan

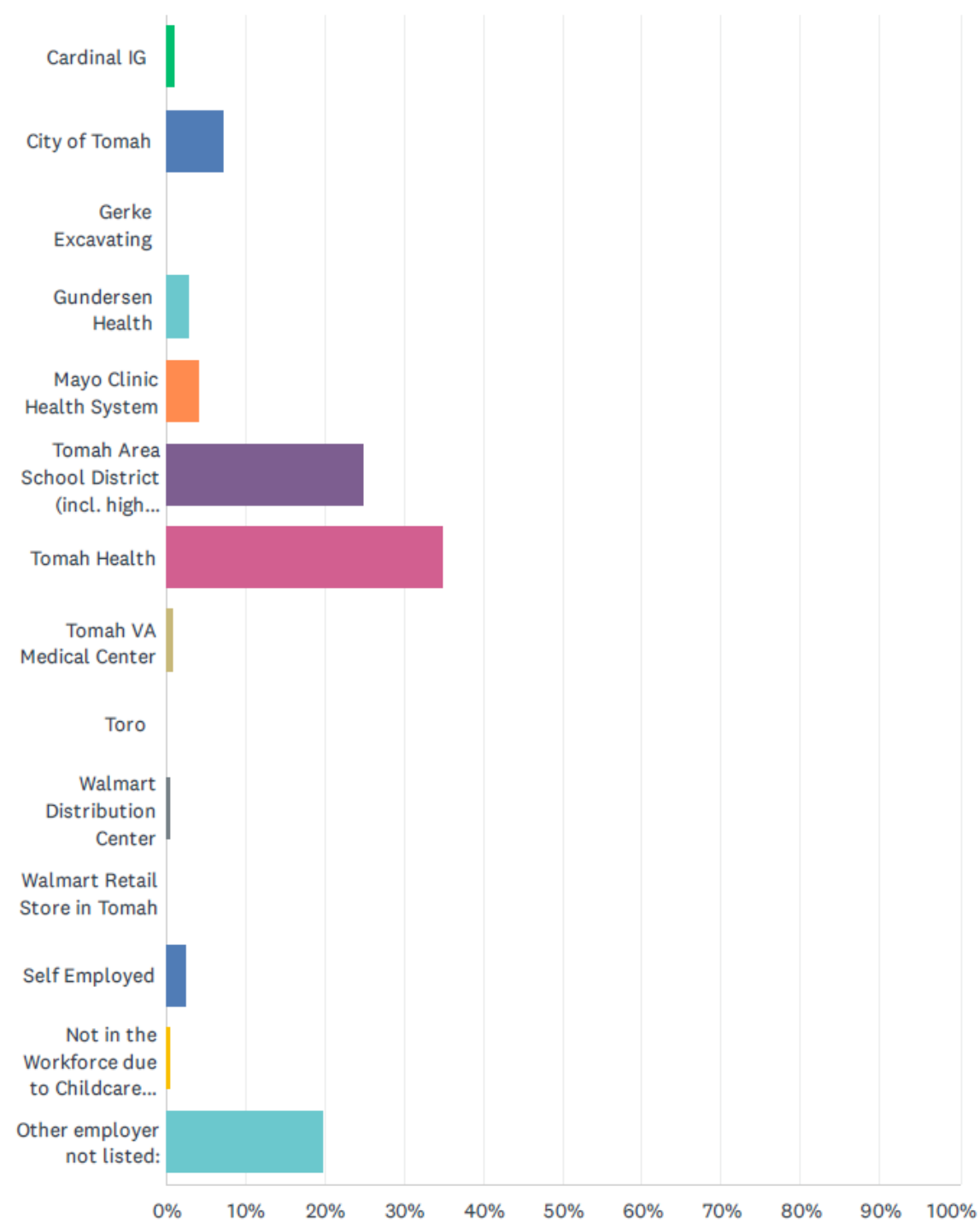
# Proposed Work Plan

# Phase One (Concurrent)

- Conduct Survey of Tomah Employees
  - Verify significance of childcare as a workforce issue
  - Quantify need for childcare services
  - Collect info about areas of highest need (i.e. infant, overnight, summer, etc.)
- Learn About Tomah Business Community's Childcare Perception/Action
  - Learn what, if anything, businesses are currently doing to aid employees w/ childcare
  - Synthesize any existing data businesses have on employee childcare need
  - Gauge business interest in participating in a childcare solution for their employees
- Prepare Inventory of Existing Childcare Facilities in Tomah
  - Identify existing childcare facilities serving Tomah
  - Identify capacity/interest of existing providers in expansion
  - Learn about current, local challenges in the industry

# Survey of Employees

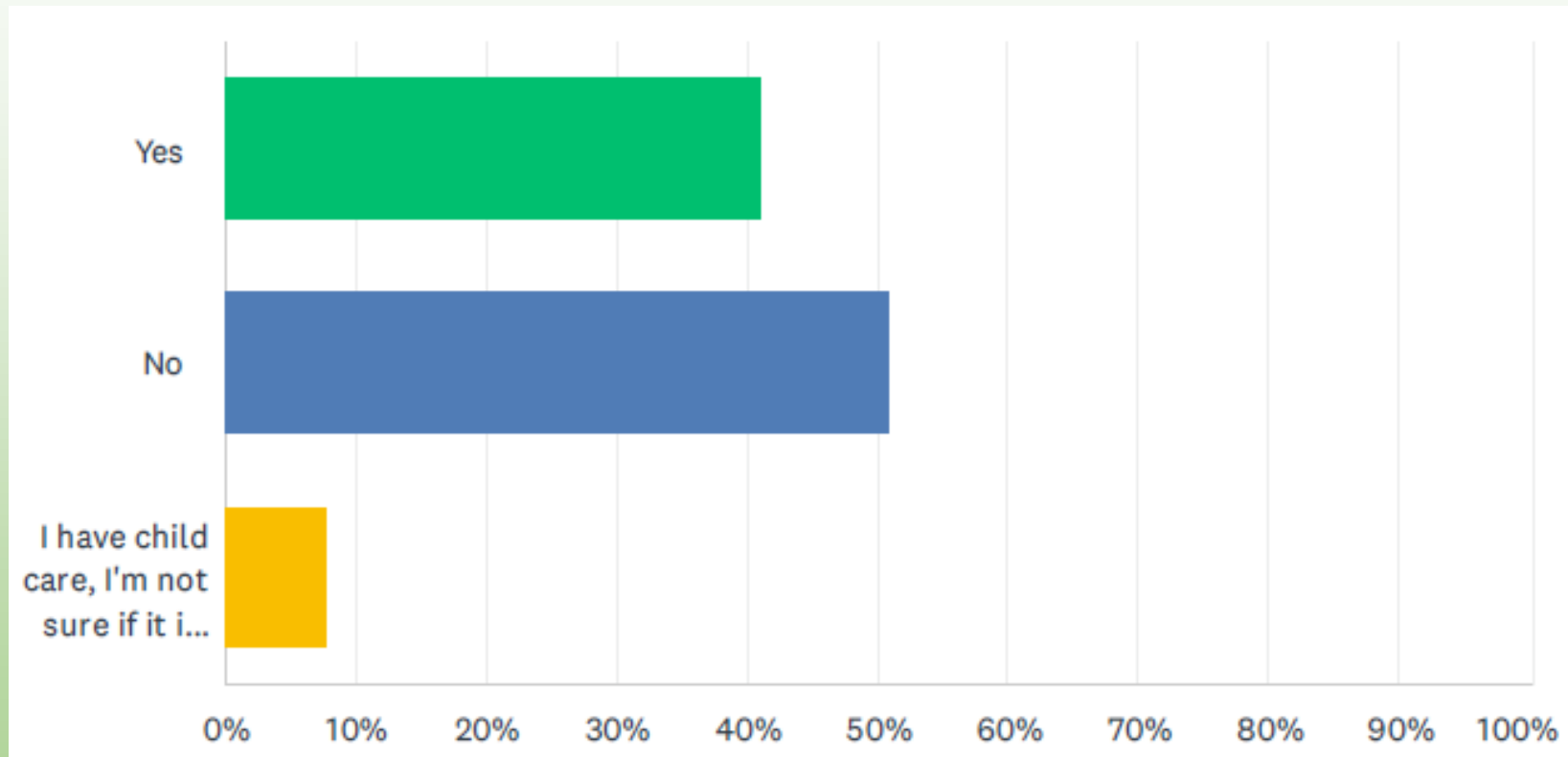
- 552 Respondents
- Distributed via employers (email, flyer w/ QR codes), Chamber newsletter, Chamber website, flyers, word of mouth
- Open for ~3 weeks for responses
- Received no printed completed surveys – only digital responses



### Other:

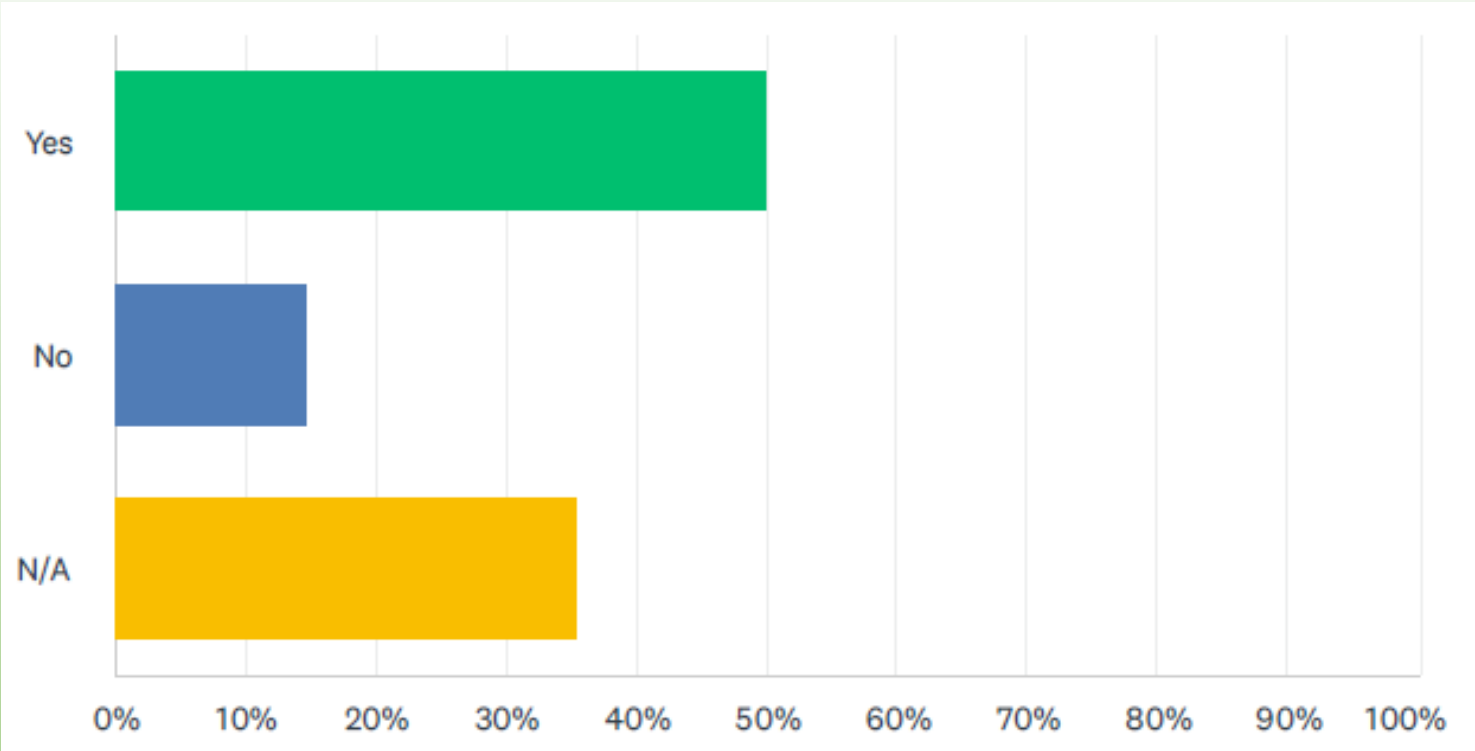
- Monroe County
- Hotels
- Bank First
- Cost Cutters
- Sutton Transport
- 1<sup>st</sup> Community Credit Union
- Universal Forest Products
- Realtruck
- USEMCO
- Volk Field
- Antique Mall
- Real Estate
- Plumbing
- Gas Stations
- Manpower
- Town n' Country Title
- Mars Petcare

# Do you have children in licensed or certified (regulated) childcare?





If you don't have regulated childcare, do your children attend child care such as a family, friend or neighbor? (Paid or Unpaid?)



Noah Ark Christian

Fort McCoy Boys Girls Club Learning Center

home daycare Daycare Family

child care child WI summer

Kids Company home

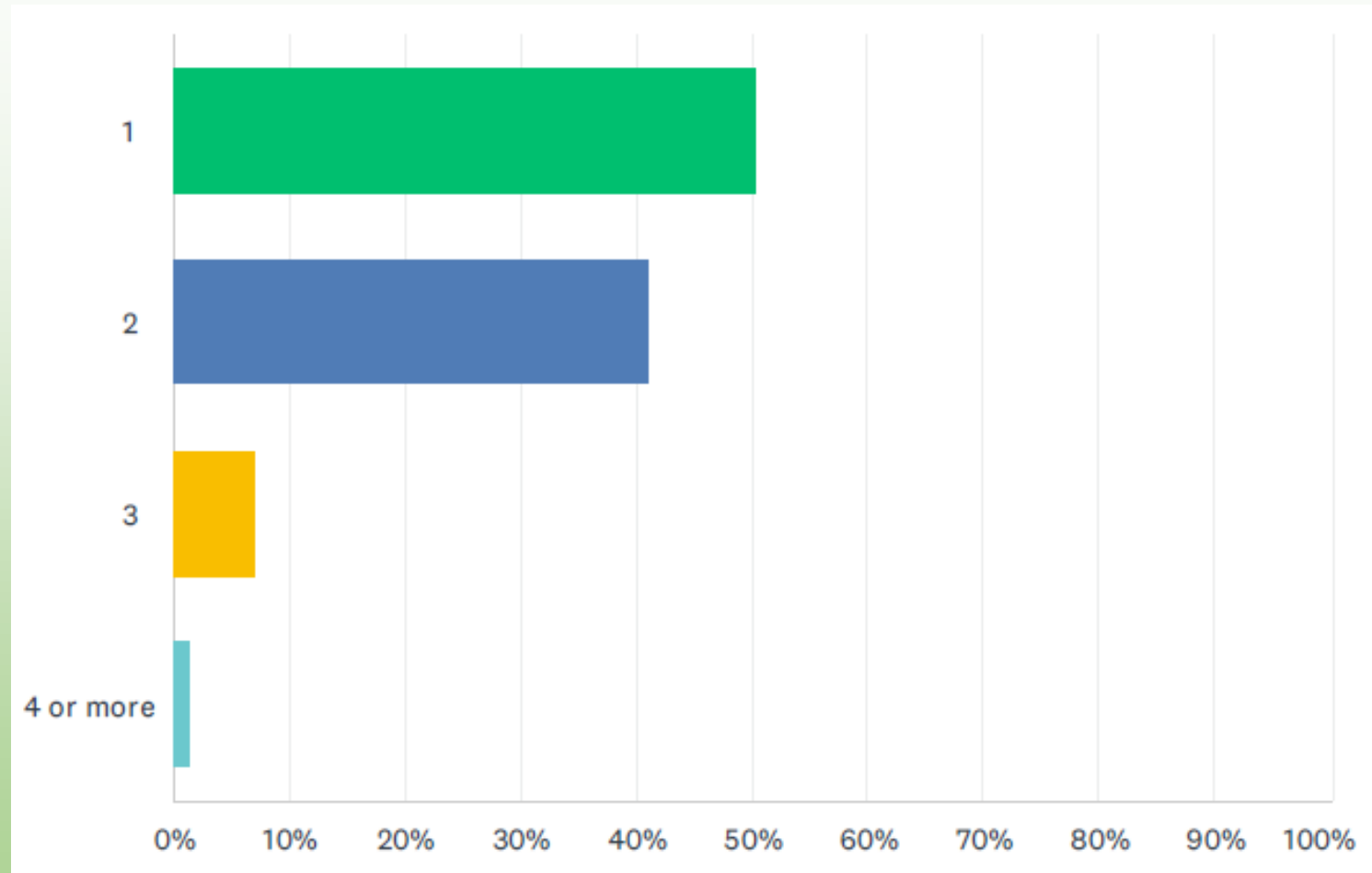
Tomah Noah Ark

school Kids Kountry

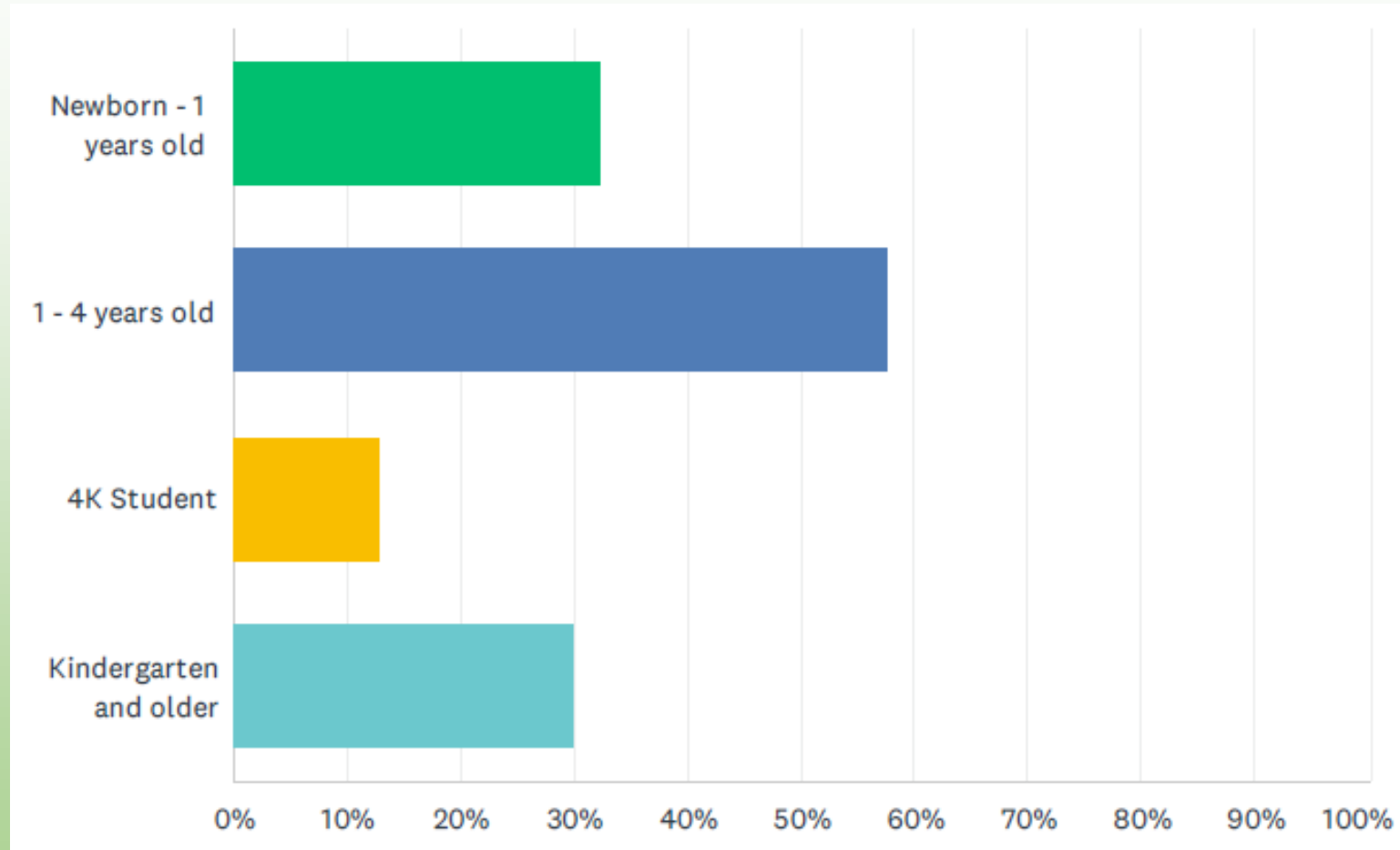
Leaps Bounds

Little Learners Family

# How many children do you have in childcare?



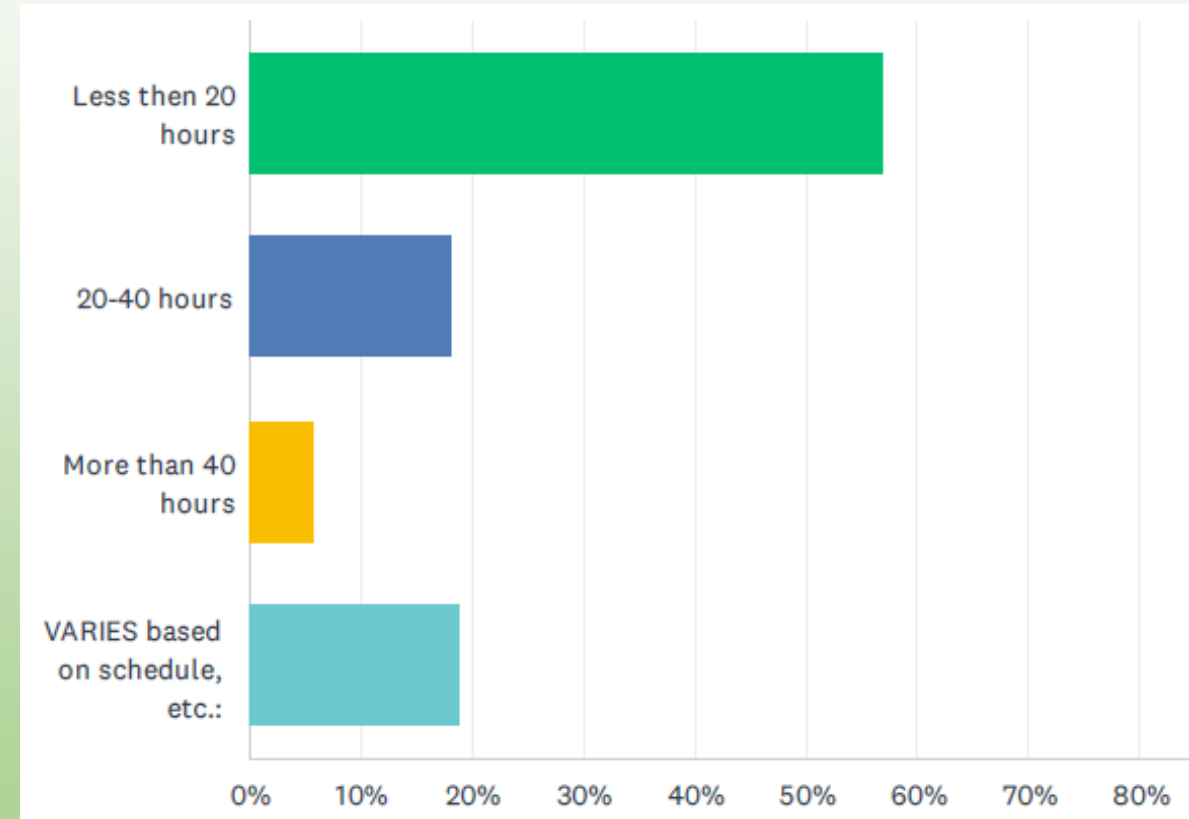
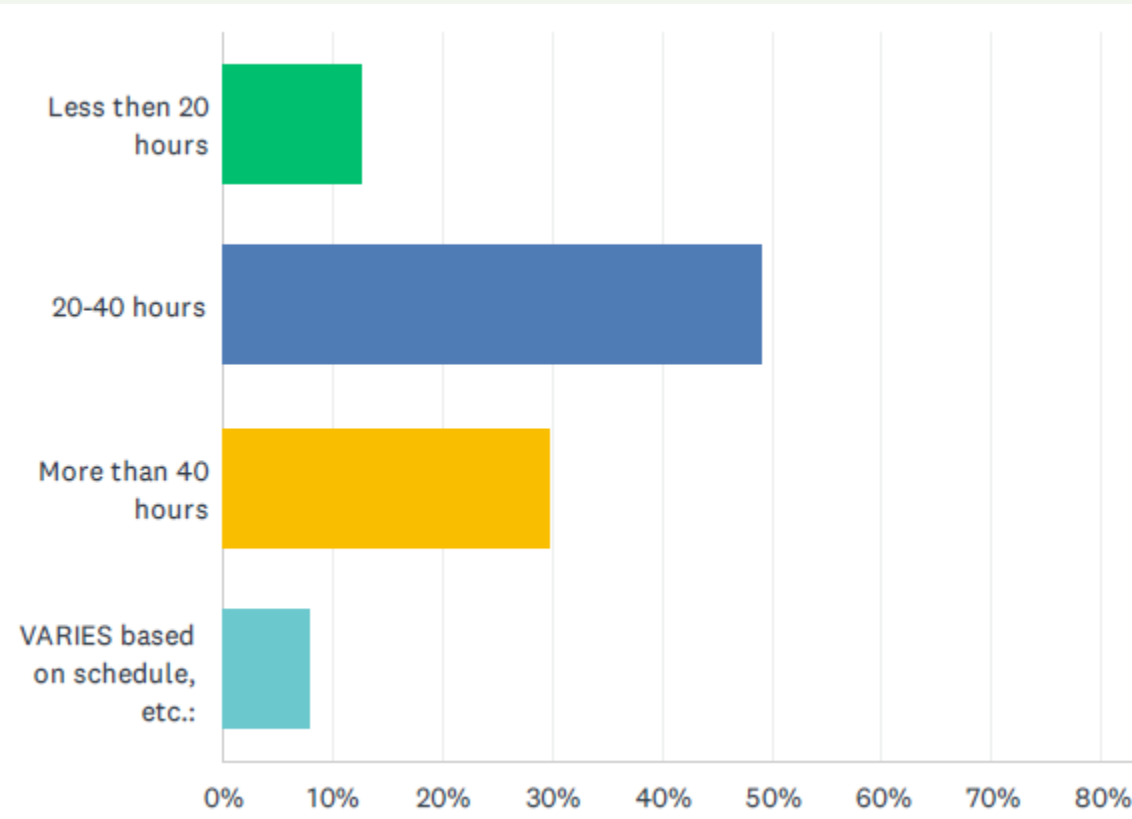
# What are the ages of the children that you have in child care?

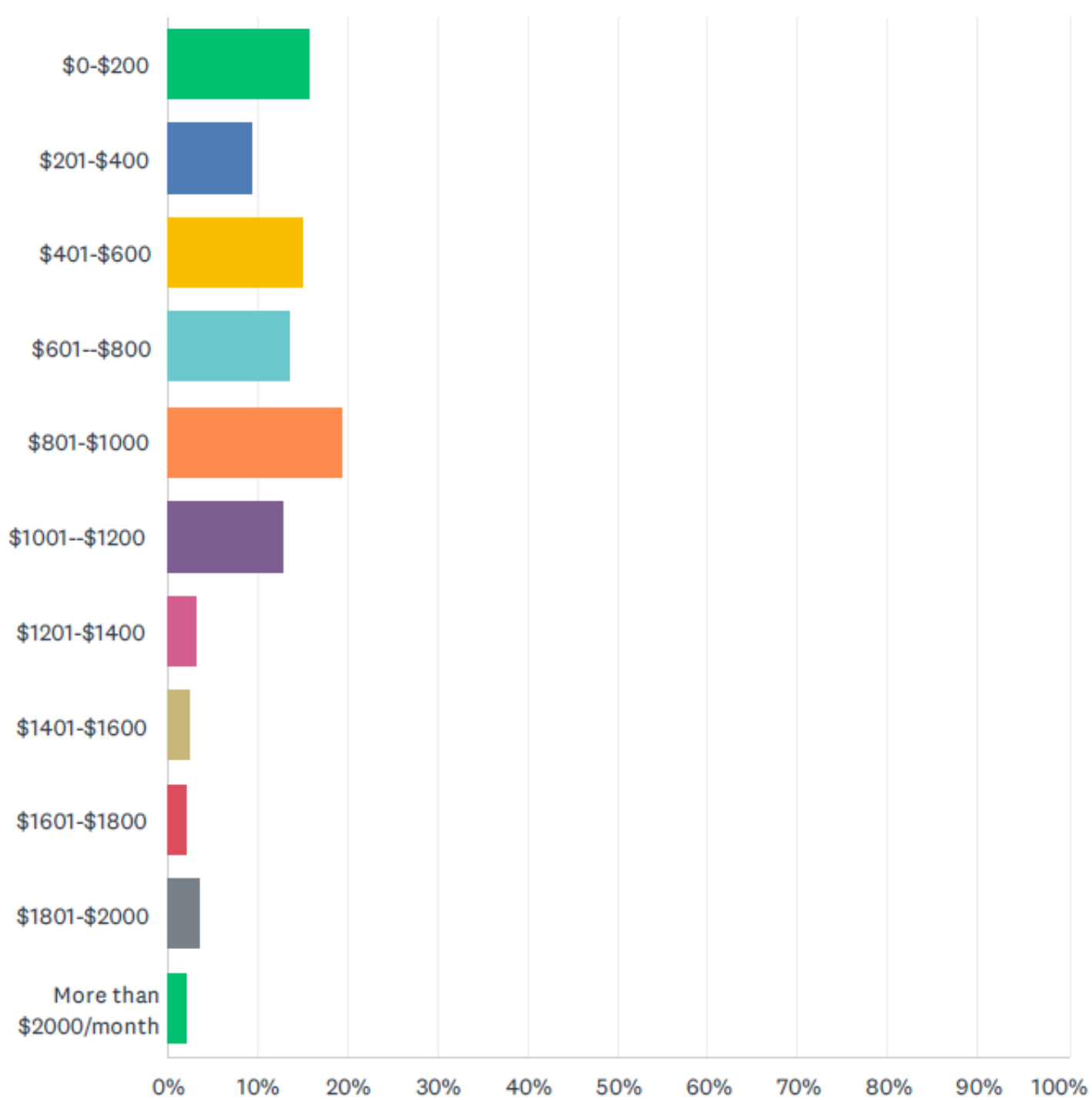


# How many hours per week, on average, do your children attend childcare?

Under 4 y/o

Over 4 y/o





What is your  
total monthly  
childcare cost?

If you work non-traditional hours (ex: swing shift, night shift, etc.), how do you coordinate childcare for these hours?

THEMES/EXAMPLES:

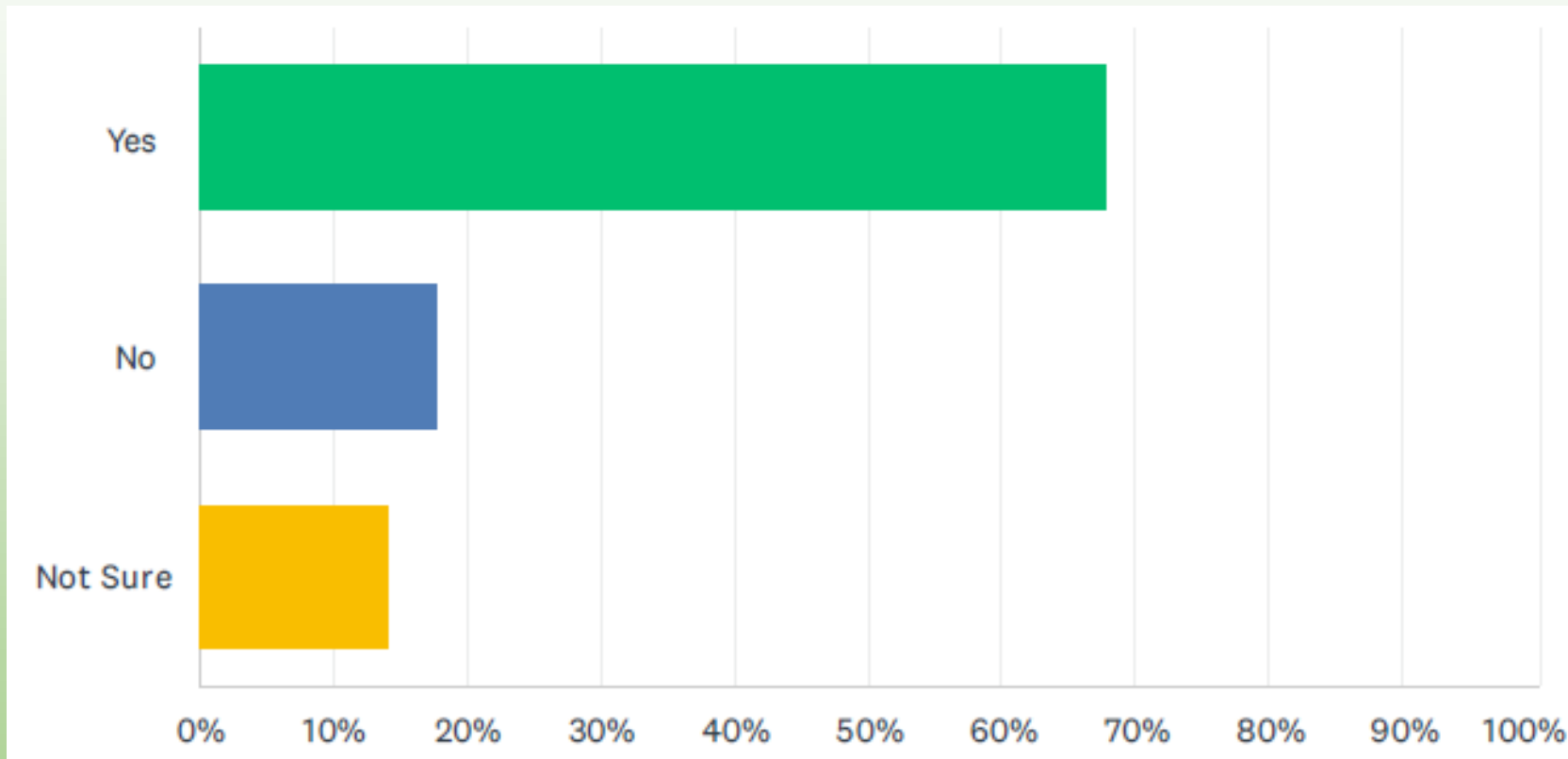
- Work opposite schedules as other parent
- Unlicensed in home childcare takes infant from 3 am – 8 am
- Grandparents, Neighbors, Friends

# If you work non-traditional hours (ex: swing shift, night shift, etc.), how do you coordinate childcare for these hours?

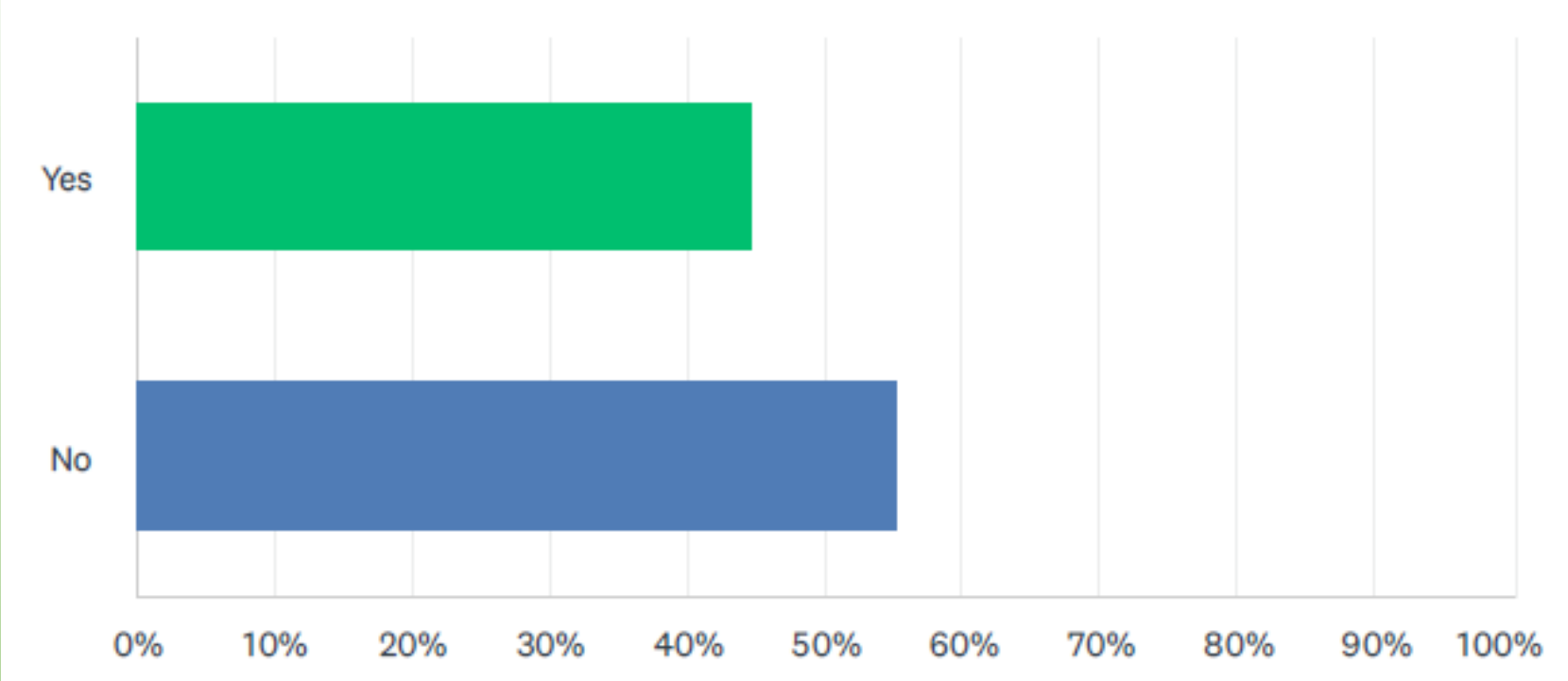
- “Due to childcare costs and lack of availability of childcare centers, I work only 1 day per week as my mother-in-law is only available to watch the child one day per week.”
- “Mother In Law watches him for now. BUT when she decides not to will not have anybody else.”
- “I work night shift. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, my oldest will go to daycare from 8am to 12. My youngest has no childcare and stays with me. He takes a 1.5 hour nap around 9. That is when I sleep, otherwise I dont.”
- “I have changed my career to fit traditional daycare hours”



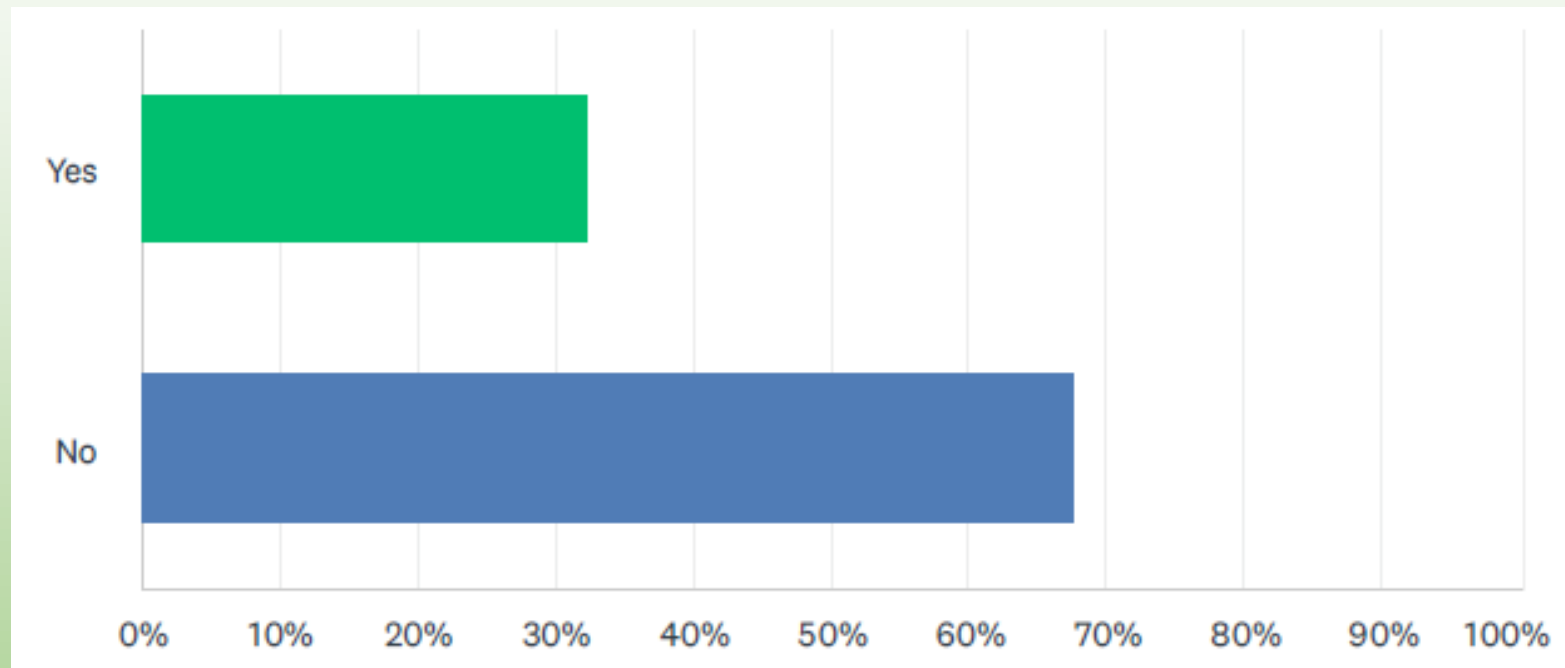
# If you have school aged children, do you need / are you interested in afterschool or summer care?

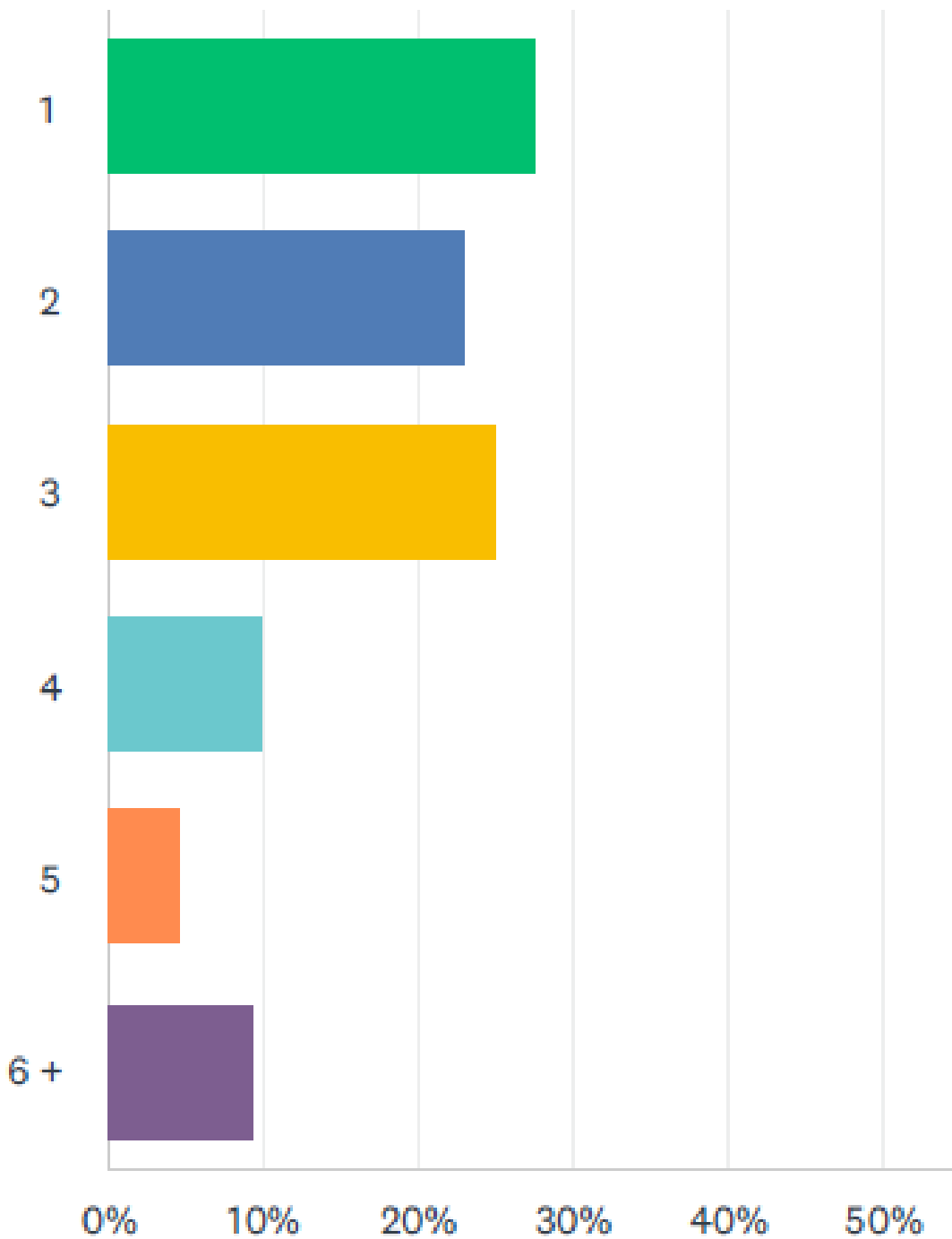


# Do you utilize childcare in the City of Tomah?



# Are you utilizing multiple childcare providers simultaneously?

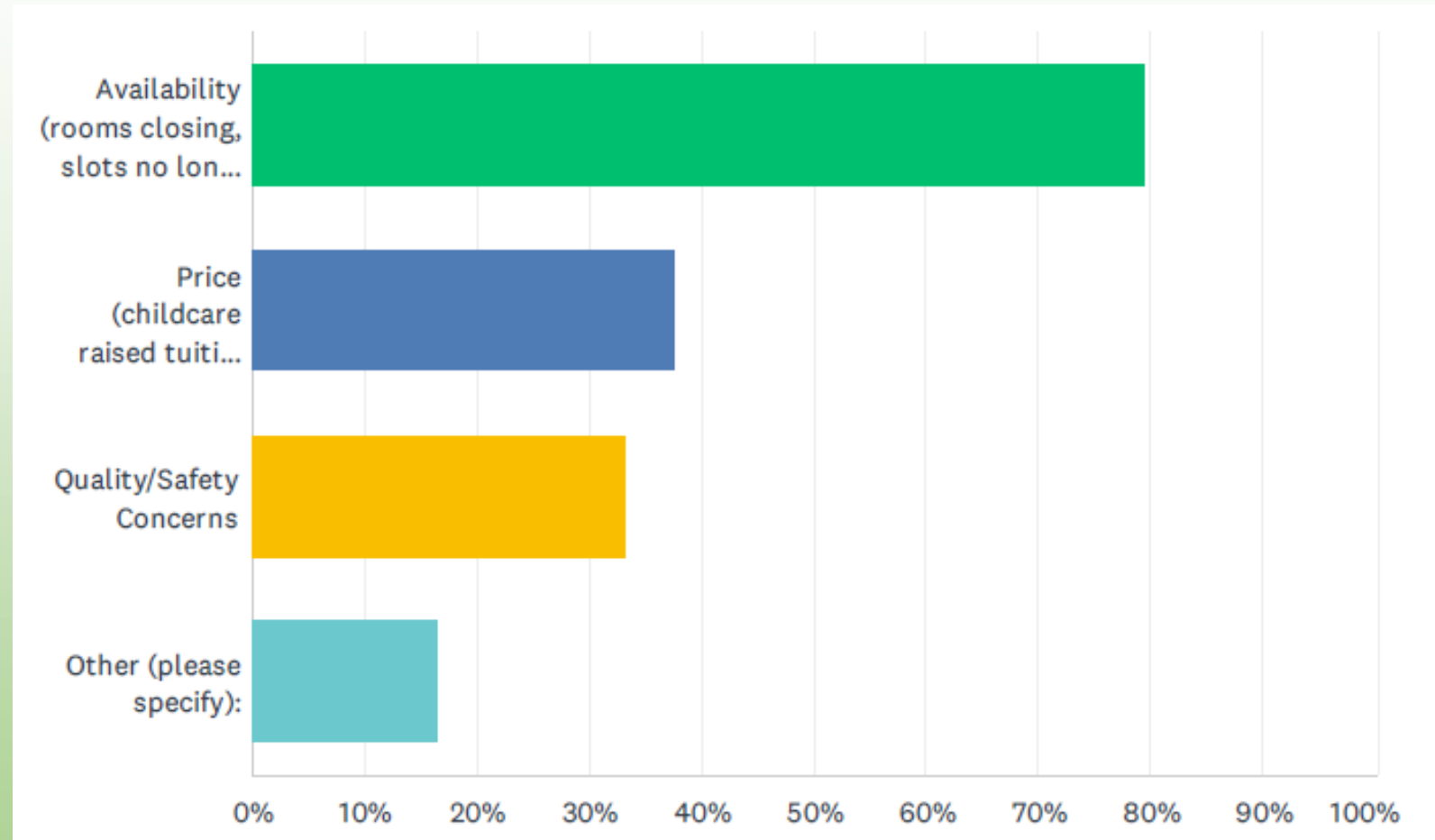




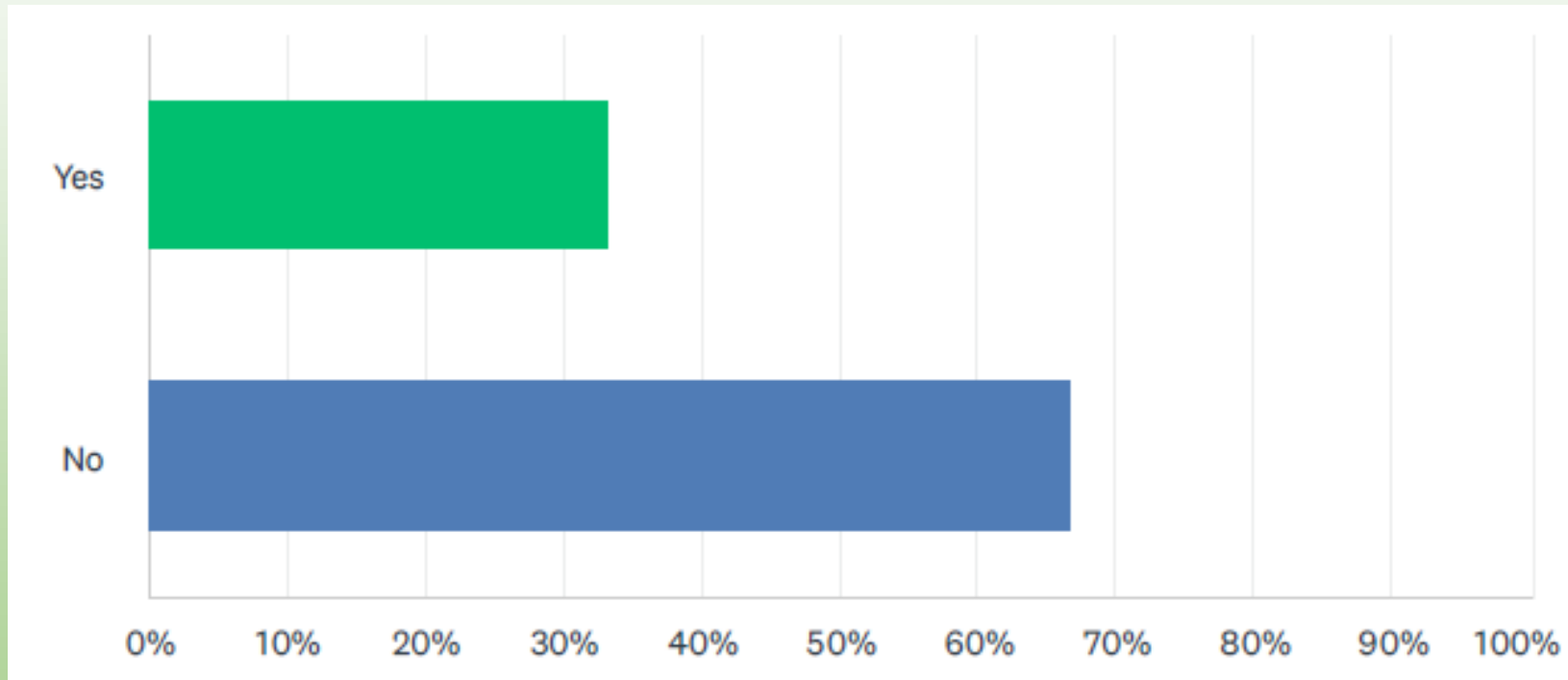
How many childcare providers have you used from the time your child was born until the time they entered kindergarten?

# What were the reasons for these childcare transitions?

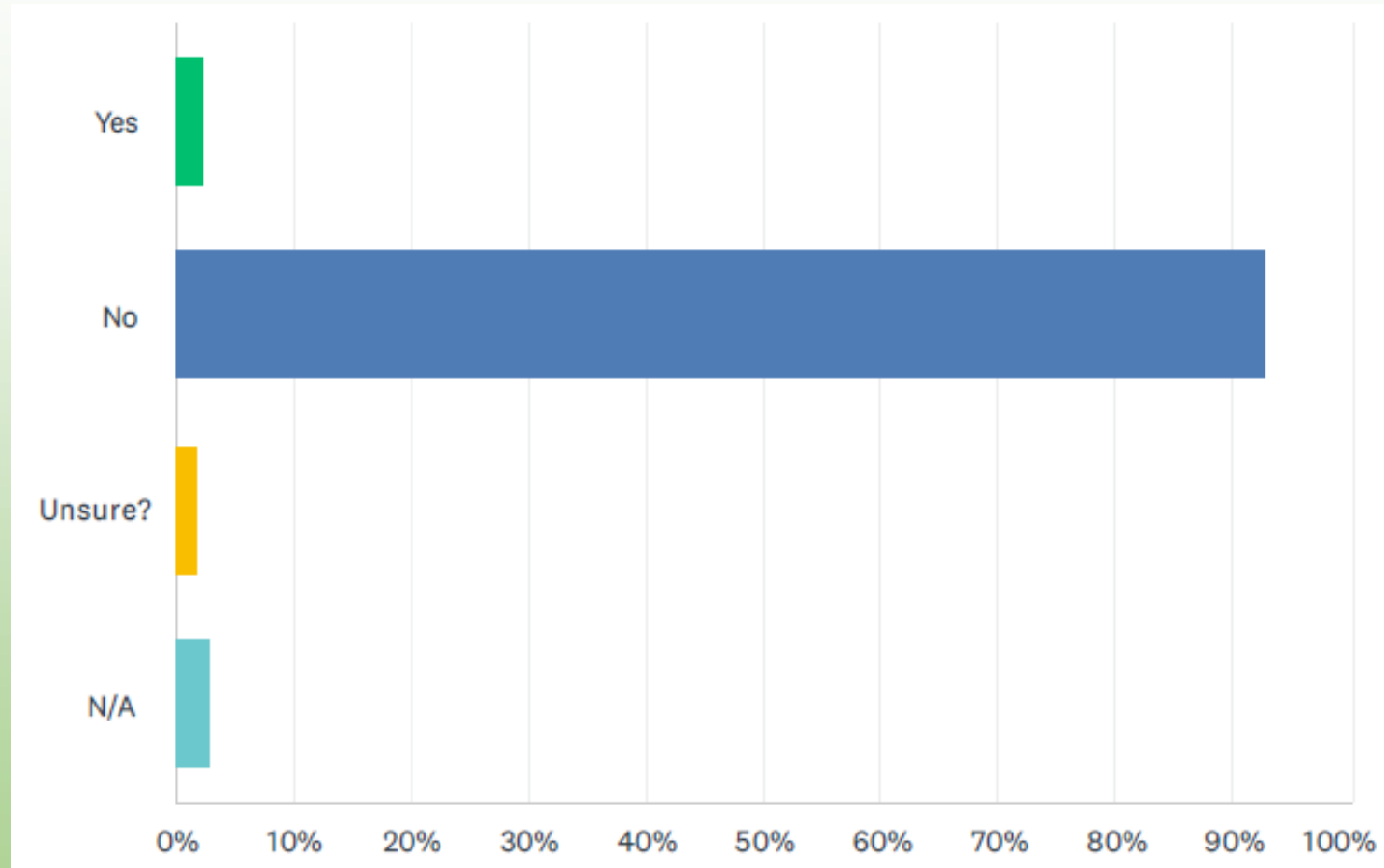
- Unlicensed / Informal Providers Closing
- Periods of Parents Staying Home Due to Childcare Challenges
- Special Needs
- “Unreliable Care”
- “Can’t Afford”



Do you travel more than 10 miles outside the route of your daily commute to reach your child care provider?

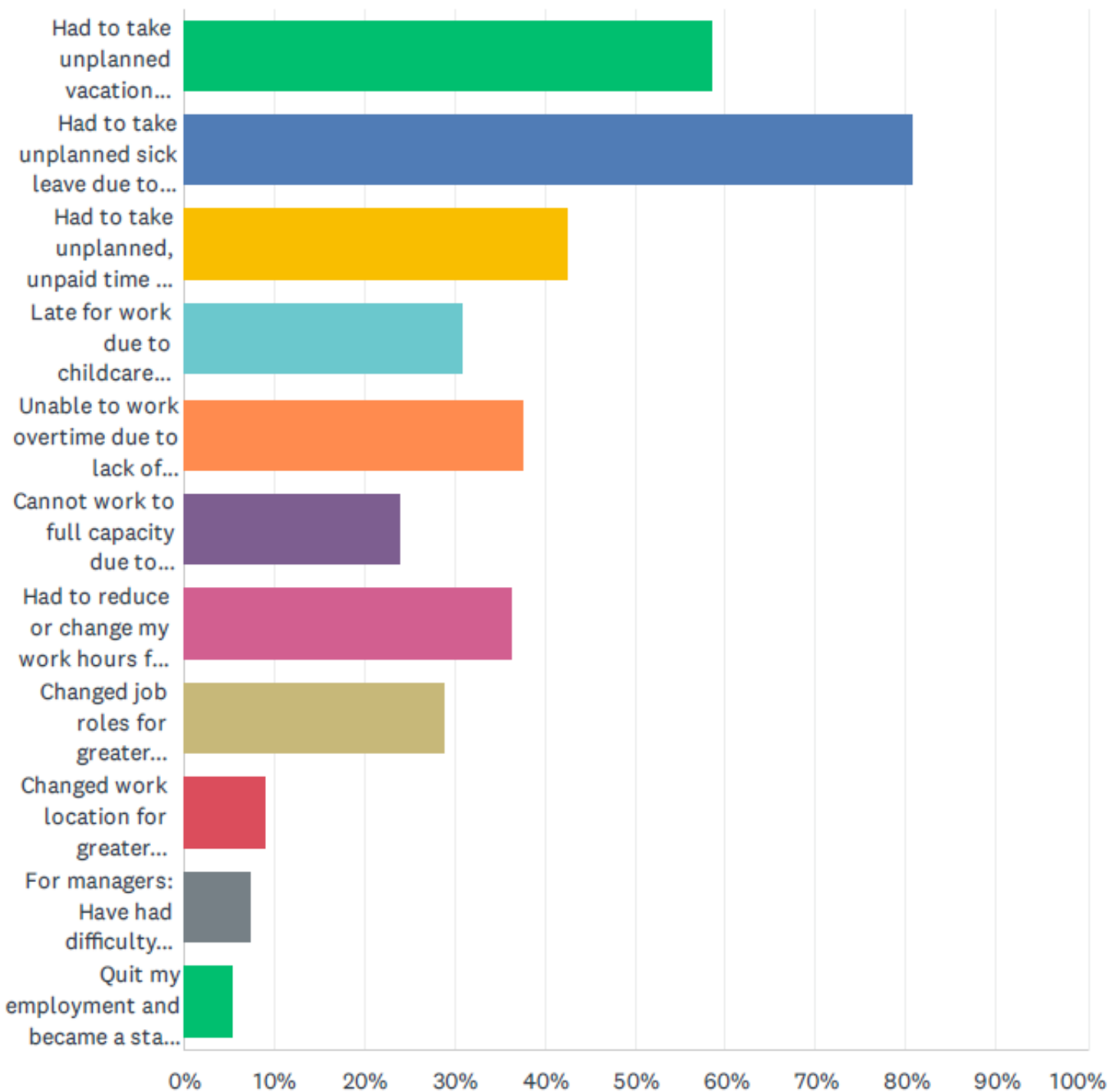


# Do you receive Wisconsin Shares benefits for childcare?





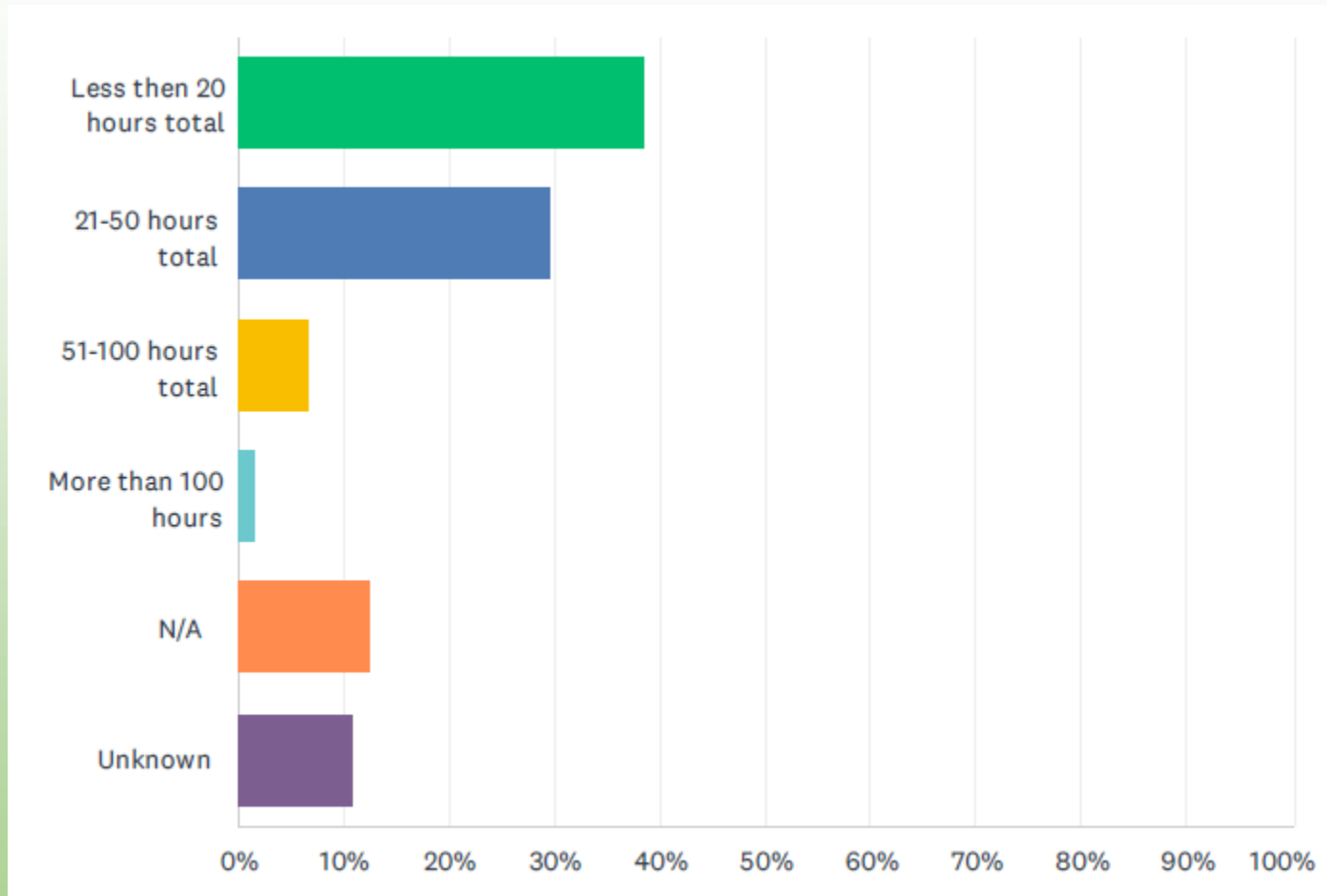
In the last year,  
has childcare  
influenced  
your  
employment in  
any of the  
following ways:



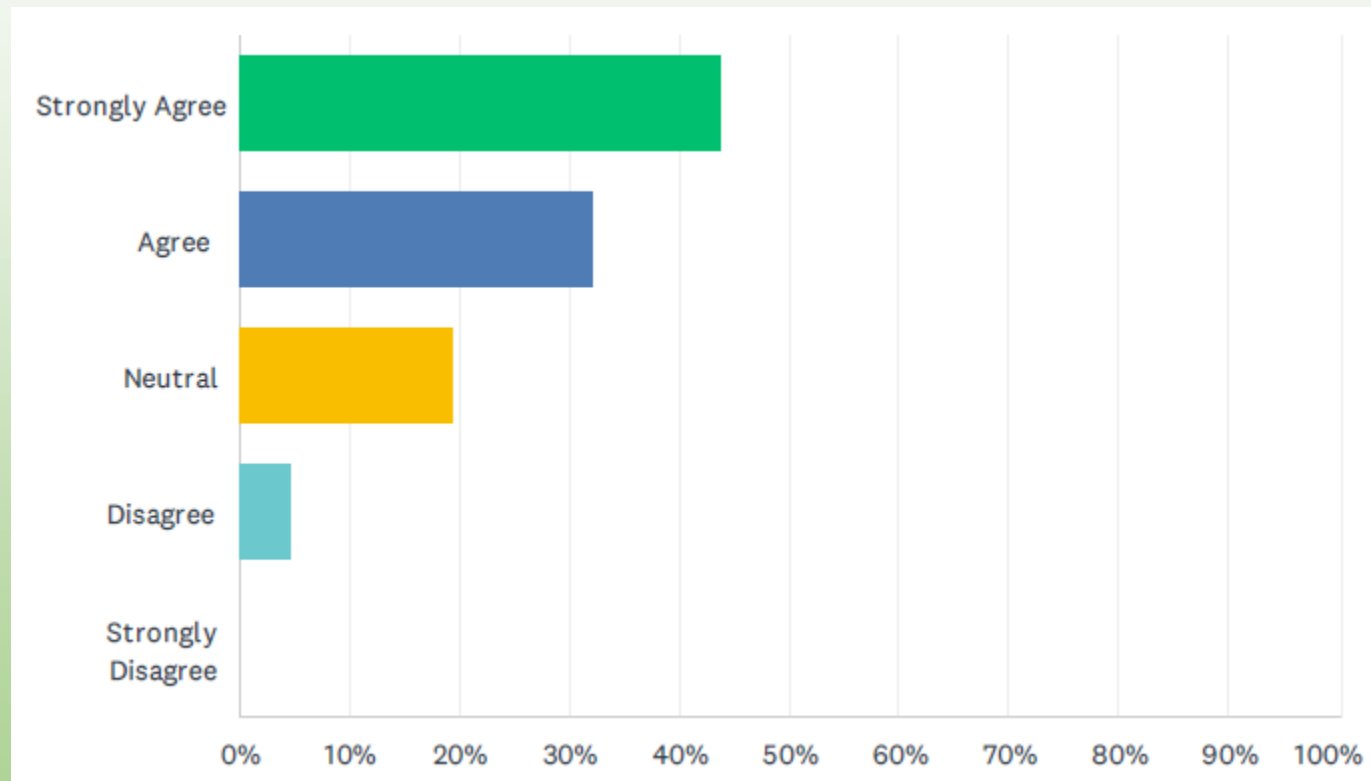


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Had to take unplanned vacation time/paid time off due to child care closures	58.64%
Had to take unplanned sick leave due to a child's illness	80.86%
Had to take unplanned, unpaid time off due to childcare disruption	42.59%
Late for work due to childcare issues	30.86%
Unable to work overtime due to lack of childcare	37.65%
Cannot work to full capacity due to stress/concern about childcare arrangements	24.07%
Had to reduce or change my work hours for more than just a few days	36.42%
Changed job roles for greater flexibility	29.01%
Changed work location for greater flexibility	9.26%
For managers: Have had difficulty managing or hiring team members	7.41%
Quit my employment and became a stay at home parent	5.56%

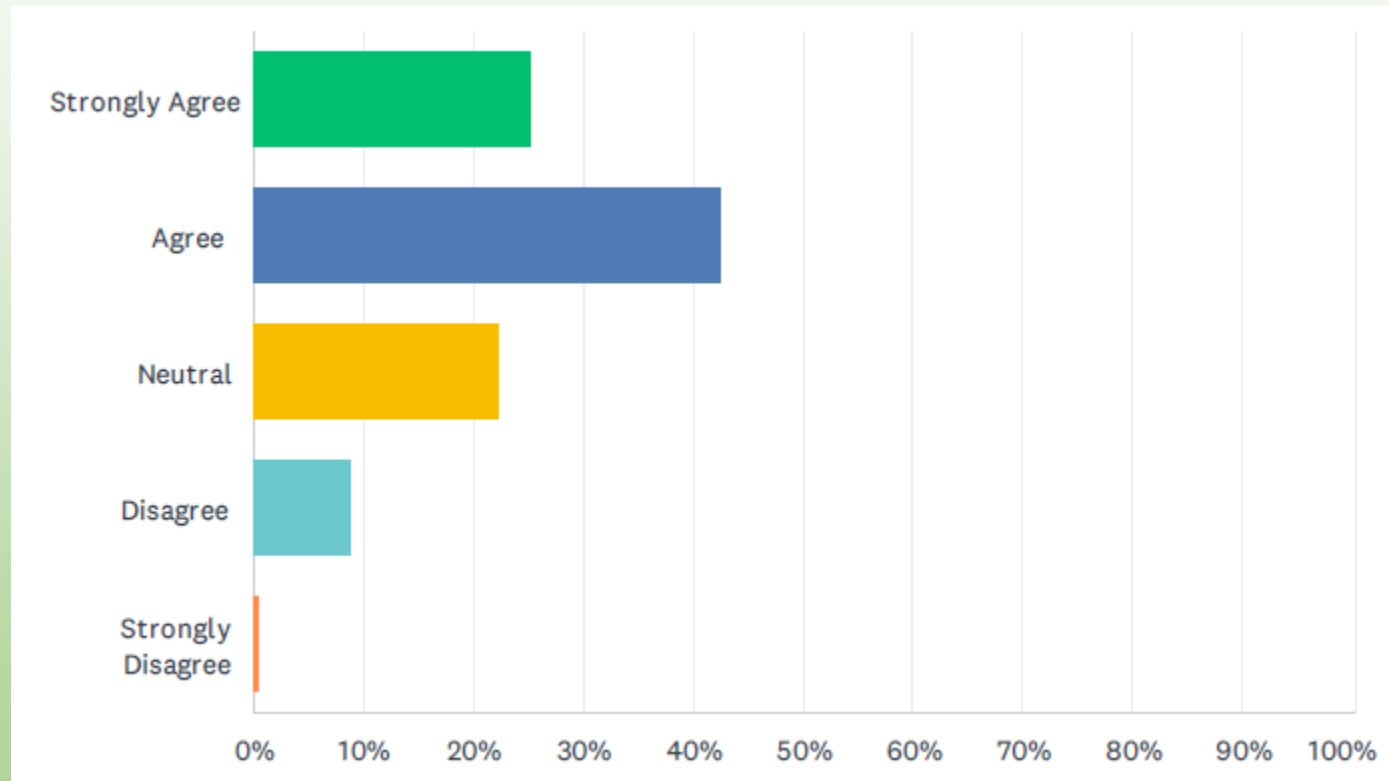
# How many lost hours of work have you had due to lack of childcare in the last 6 months?



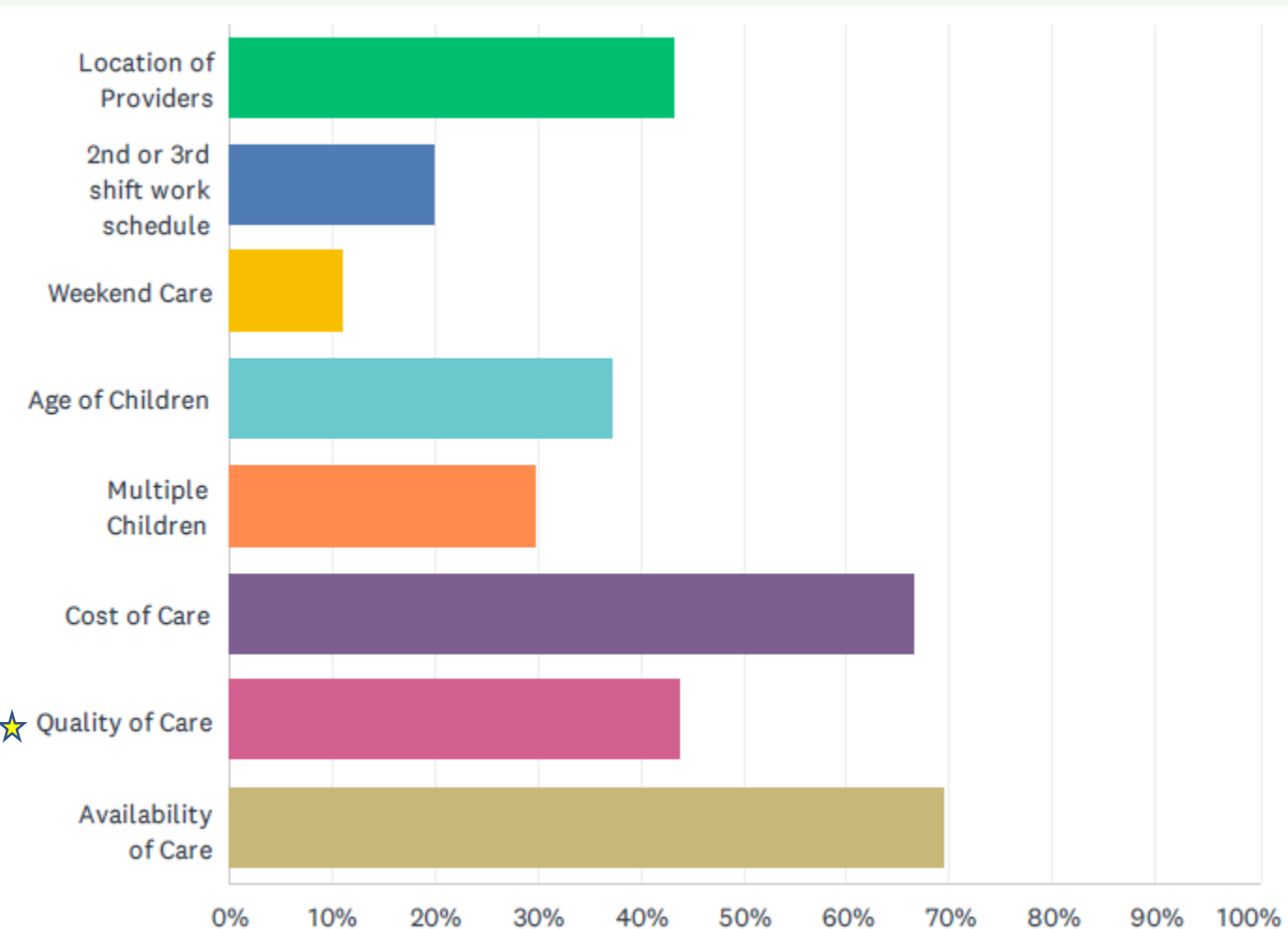
“While I am at work I know my child is well taken care of and I can focus on my job without concerns about my child.”



“I can rely on my childcare provider to be there when I need them so I don’t have to miss work”

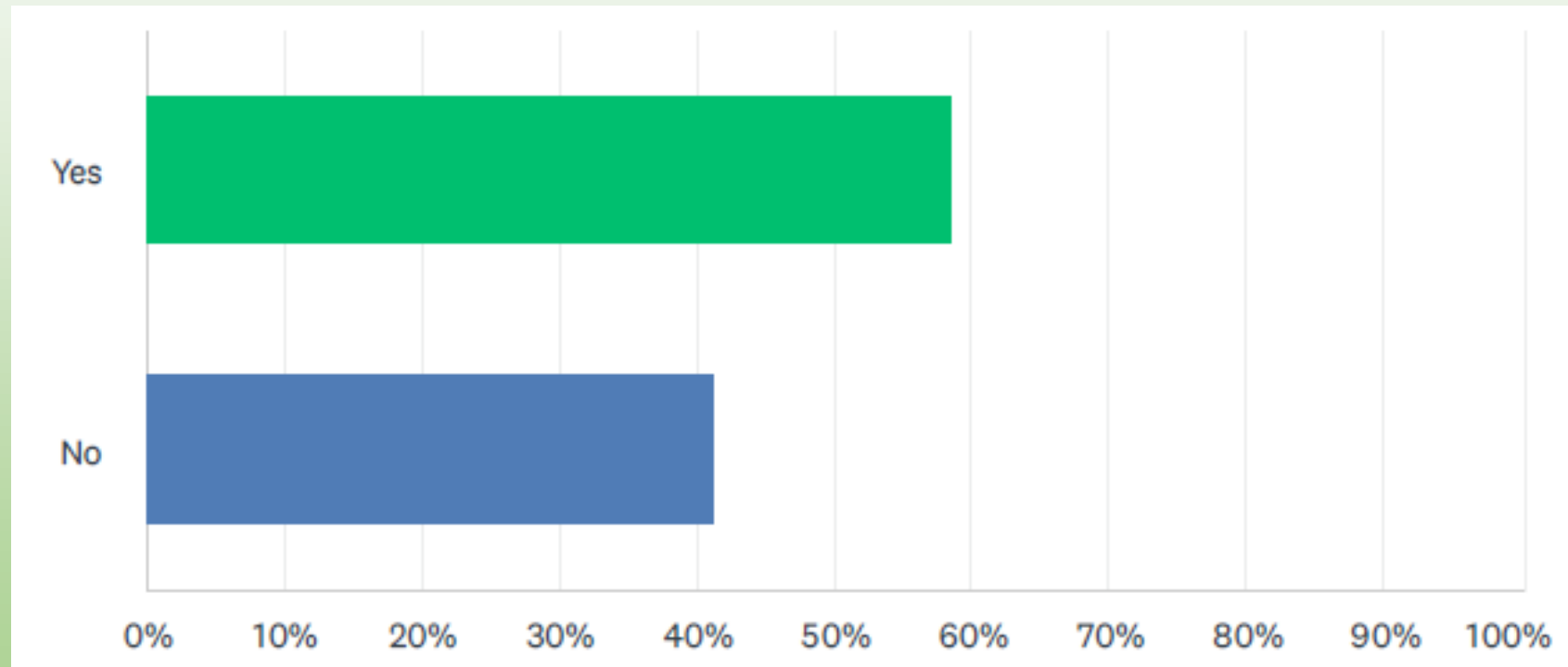


# Which of the following have been challenges in finding childcare that meets your needs?



- “Made a change to my job role to be home more with my children”
- “Childcare provider being burnt out from having multiple children”
- “Allergies / EpiPen”
- “Cost-Prohibitive”
- “Extreme Overcrowding”
- “Extremely Sketchy Places”
- “Since they are not licensed they do not follow state rules/regulations. I wish they would feed my child better food and when child was a baby, not have them sleep in a swing. Since my daycare is not licensed, they are able to cut costs so though which makes childcare cheaper.”

Have you or someone in your immediate family considered or decided to stay home, rather than utilizing a childcare program?



I stayed at home for a period of time

The cost is crazy, not a lot of people take kids under the age of 2 years old and the dependency of child care is going down hill

Me due to no day care

Unable to afford

The cost of child care almost does not outweigh the income.

briefly considered because it is so hard to find childcare for an infant

We have had 7 different childcare providers in-home and center in the last 8 years. Some due to closing/retiring. A couple due to reliability and safety concerns.

We are asking our in-laws to move in with us so they can provide structured daycare that won't stunt our child's development.

I work to pay for daycare; My house does not benefit financially from me working because it all goes to child care.

Still deciding if i need to quit my job because we are currently unable to find another daycare as my daycare got turned in for having too many littles for the amount she is supposed to have but we were desperate and dont have any other options.

Even with the savings of costly daycare, the inflation rate requires two full-time incomes if you're not supplemented for benefits from the state, which most of the working force is NOT. If you have a strong job and benefits, you have to have two incomes because the other pieces are not covered and costs are up and so are taxes.

Considered; will almost be required to have one parent quit work if we have another child

Had to stay home until child was "old enough" for daycare to take my child

My husband works evening shift so that he can stay home with our daughter while I work day shift. We have a grandparent watch our daughter two days per week so he can get enough rest.

Do to price my Mother has decided to stay home with her

Have thought about due to lack of options or cost of childcare but have continued working for now.

Can't afford to stay home.

have considered in past 6 months due to cost and closure issues at times. things have improved for past 2 months.

almost cheaper to stay home and live off of one income then work and pay for the child care

We have been talking about me staying home to not have to deal with the hassle of finding child care, going to child care, and or anything child care related.

I had to quit my job due to not being able to afford daycare for my 3 kiddos. Maybe it was the job, Idk. I ended up starting my in home daycare to barley make ends meet. Now to transition back into working and needing care for the kids.

Cost and availability for my children to be together.

Can't afford it.

Can't afford a family on just one income

We like the boys to be around family.

cost

Cost effective and consistent eye for watching

Have thought about it multiple times to significantly cut down on hours or quit my job a couple times when we did not have childcare. Fortunately things fell into place and were able to find childcare.

Can't afford to stay home

Not available to take siblings. It doesn't make sense to drive over 20 minutes to drop one child off at one daycare and take the other to another daycare. They should be able to stay in one childcare facility with each other. The cost for infant care is exponential.

It's expensive, and we're paying more in our mortgage for childcare...my whole pay check is going to childcare.

Cost and availability

Its cheaper, the children know who they are with. And you just can not find sitters around this area that have openings.

One of our incomes would be just to cover daycare costs, so why waste the time and money when I can stay home and just live off one income anyways and know my child is being well taken care of by myself or spouse.

Due to the cost of day care.

Cost of care, quality of care.

save cost and reduces tax burden

Cost and stress of care

We can only afford part time care with our salaries so we had to utilize one of us to make the hours we cant afford in daycare.

Our children get sick so often, it is hard to take off and cause work conflict.

Cost of childcare versus pay are unequal.

Lack of options

Concerns about quality/safety/cleanliness/staff. Scared for the safety and well-being of our children. Ongoing discussion in my home. Fortunately have the means to pay for services in my home. But if that ever becomes unavailable, I would quit my job in an instant before I sent my children to center in this town.

The cost of it eats most of my check but I am the one who carries the insurance so I need to still work. My partner makes more than I do so it doesnt make sense for them to not work

Can't afford childcare and nothing close to home

I pay more in childcare then I make and more than my mortgage. My 6 year old would cost the same as newborn but does not require half the care a baby does.

The cost of daycare is almost as much as my take home pay after insurance.

Due to lack of quality, affordable care in the area for infants.

Cost and having to pay during the summer months to hold my children's spots for the school year.

Went to college for 7 years and still working on higher education, so i choose to work as it would feel like wasted time but also money would be tight if i did not work and relied on my husbands income

need the job income

Need income of both parents!

Cannot afford it





If your employer contributed to a community partnership that improved childcare in Tomah, what would be the most important factor for you in deciding whether to utilize the partnership?

- 1) Qualifications of Staff
- 2) Cost of Care
- 3) Learning Environment / Play Spaces + Materials (Inside + Outside)

“Tomah needs a safe and quality space for children, so parents can work effectively and efficiently and not constantly worry about their kids”

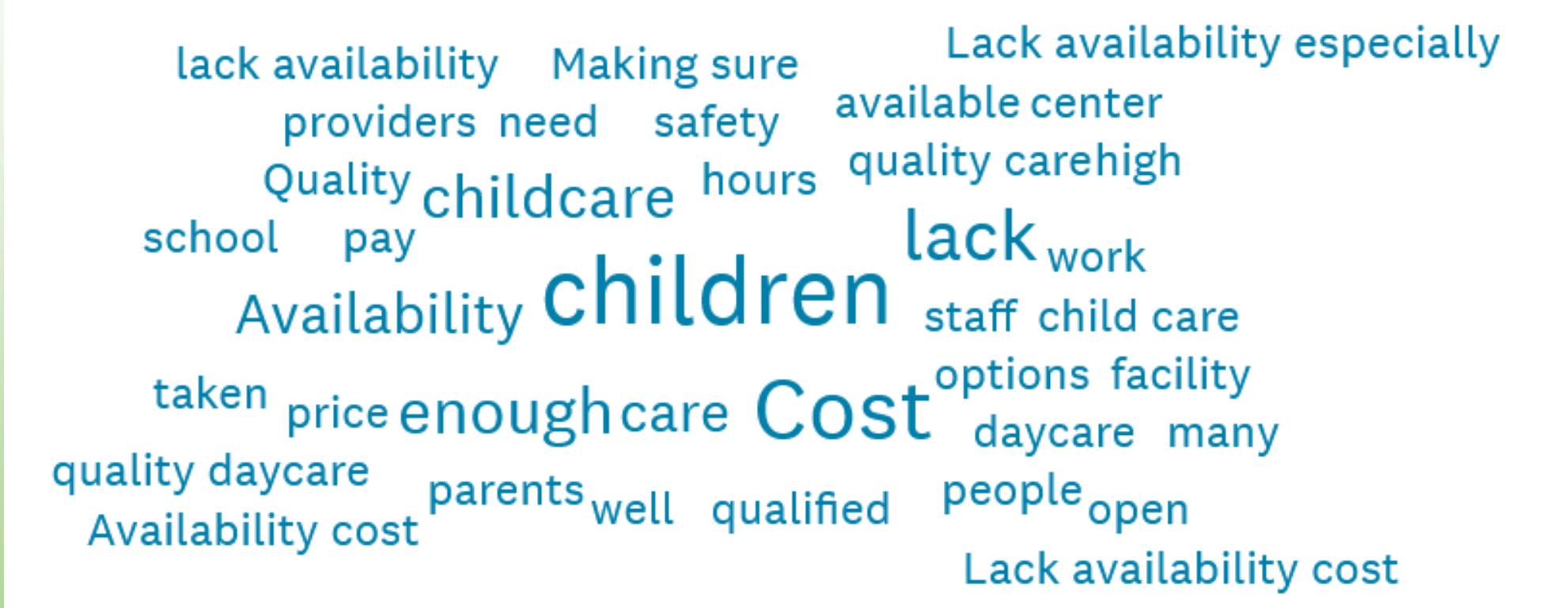
# Respondent Suggestions

- “Provide funds toward an additional facility to increase capacity; provide pooled funds to decrease costs for all families (or those under a certain income limit)”
- “Maintain cost effectiveness and ensure SAFE provider to child ratios.”
- “Help increase the number of childcare center daycares within the city of Tomah. They are very hard to get into with very long wait times, especially for infants.”
- “Provide more options at an affordable cost.”
- “Making sure there is QUALITY care where I don’t need to worry if my child is taken care of. AFFORDABLE”

# Respondent Suggestions

- “Increase the amount of service providers for childcare by providing funding and locations for daycares. Provide a financial assistance for those utilizing daycare to offset the considerable amount of the paycheck that goes towards daycare, as this could help us keep working.”
- “Provide a stipend or some sort of cost share as a benefit to reduce childcare expense. Or create another daycare center (certified and with respectable staff) to eliminate the risk of missing work because an in home daycare has to close due to schedules/illness, etc.”

# What is your #1 concern about childcare in our community?



# Other Comments

- “My daughter was asked to leave 3 separate in home daycares due to her disability and special needs”
- “Tomah has a round the clock workforce of families which contribute to the community. Yet, the infrastructure of the town is not gauged towards them. There is a significant gap in care in this community for the most important part of the community, the kids. Parents having to shuffle between which in home daycare is the least worst in order to keep coverage. Leaving the weight on extended family or having to miss work due to lack of GOOD care.”
- “In the past childcare greatly impacted my stress level, finances, and overall led to my husband and I intentionally working opposite shifts to limits our need for child care. This also directly impacted our decision to have more children an grow our family.”

# Existing Childcare Providers in Tomah

Per the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families ([DCF](#)):

Name	Accepts Infants?	<a href="#">Quality Score (1-5)</a>	Capacity	Type
Tomah Head Start Center*	No	5	19	Licensed Group
Kids and Company Day Care	Yes	5	40	Licensed Group
Country Cabin Daycare	Yes	3	8	Licensed Family
Tomah School of Childhood	No	3	35	Licensed Group
A Little Learners Family Daycare	No	3	8	Licensed Family
Learning Ladder Family Daycare	Yes	3	8	Licensed Family
Kathryn Shisler	Yes	2	3	Certified Family
Superior Children's Learning Center	Yes	2	29	Licensed Group
Kids Kountry Learning Center	Yes	2	80	Licensed Group
Kenworthy Christian Childcare	Yes	2	3	Certified Family
Noah's Ark Christian Learning Center	No	2	50	Licensed Group
Leaps and Bounds Childcare	Yes	2	16	Licensed Group
Beatles and Butterflies Daycare	Yes	2	8	Licensed Family
Little Golden Doodlers Family Childcare	No	Not Yet Rated	3	Certified Family
Ahuco Head Start Center*	No	N/A	20	Licensed Group
<b>TOTAL/AVERAGE:</b>	<b>6 No 9 Yes</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>8 Group 7 Family</b>

# Engaged Providers

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| ▪ Noah's Ark (Danielle Anderson)                   | Group Mtg     |
| ▪ Kids and Co (Heather Wilcox + 3 Staff)           | Group Mtg     |
| ▪ Kids Kountry (Vera Kress)                        | Indiv. Mtg    |
| ▪ Krishna Battista / Bible Evangelical Free Church | Group Mtg     |
| ▪ Sheila Thornten (Licensed In Home)               | Group Mtg     |
| ▪ Lori Duncan (Licensed In Home)                   | Group Mtg     |
| ▪ Learning Ladder (Nancy Storkel)                  | Via Email     |
| ▪ All Other Providers                              | Email + Phone |



# Findings

- All group centers operating below full capacity due to staffing shortages
- All in home providers were full with a wait list
- In home providers experiencing landlord / banking challenges
- Stressed importance of state-level advocacy for policy change
- “No incentive to be regulated”
- Strong network of regulated in home providers that collaborate
- Infant care challenges

# Findings

Consistent with other communities:

- High regulatory burden
- Hard work
- Low pay
- Little external support
- Workforce shortages
- Need for additional support (financial, administrative, etc.)
  - La Crosse County, Jackson County, etc.

# Pause

- Thoughts?
- Question?
- First Impressions?
- Ideas / Brainstorms?

# Phase Two (Sequential)

1. Produce a brief report synthesizing info from phase 1
  - Share back to business + community members via a meeting or open forum
  - Gather feedback and question on findings; Gauge willingness for engagement
2. Develop a committed group of stakeholders willing to co-create a childcare solution for Tomah
3. Align info from Phase 1 report with childcare best practices, models, examples, etc.
  - Conduct, as necessary, outreach to other community/orgs who have implemented aligned solutions to learn more
  - Research potential solutions, best practices, etc.
4. Prepare a recommended action plan as a group and transition into implementation

# Marie Barry

Director of Community Economic Development

Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative

[mbarry@RWHC.com](mailto:mbarry@RWHC.com)