



UP Child Care Task Force

Data Collection

Employers / Parents / Providers





Surveys and Focus Groups

Surveys were sent to each stakeholder group to gather data. In addition, focus groups were held with each group to collect stories and further explore the issue.

Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 333 Survey Responses• 19 Participants

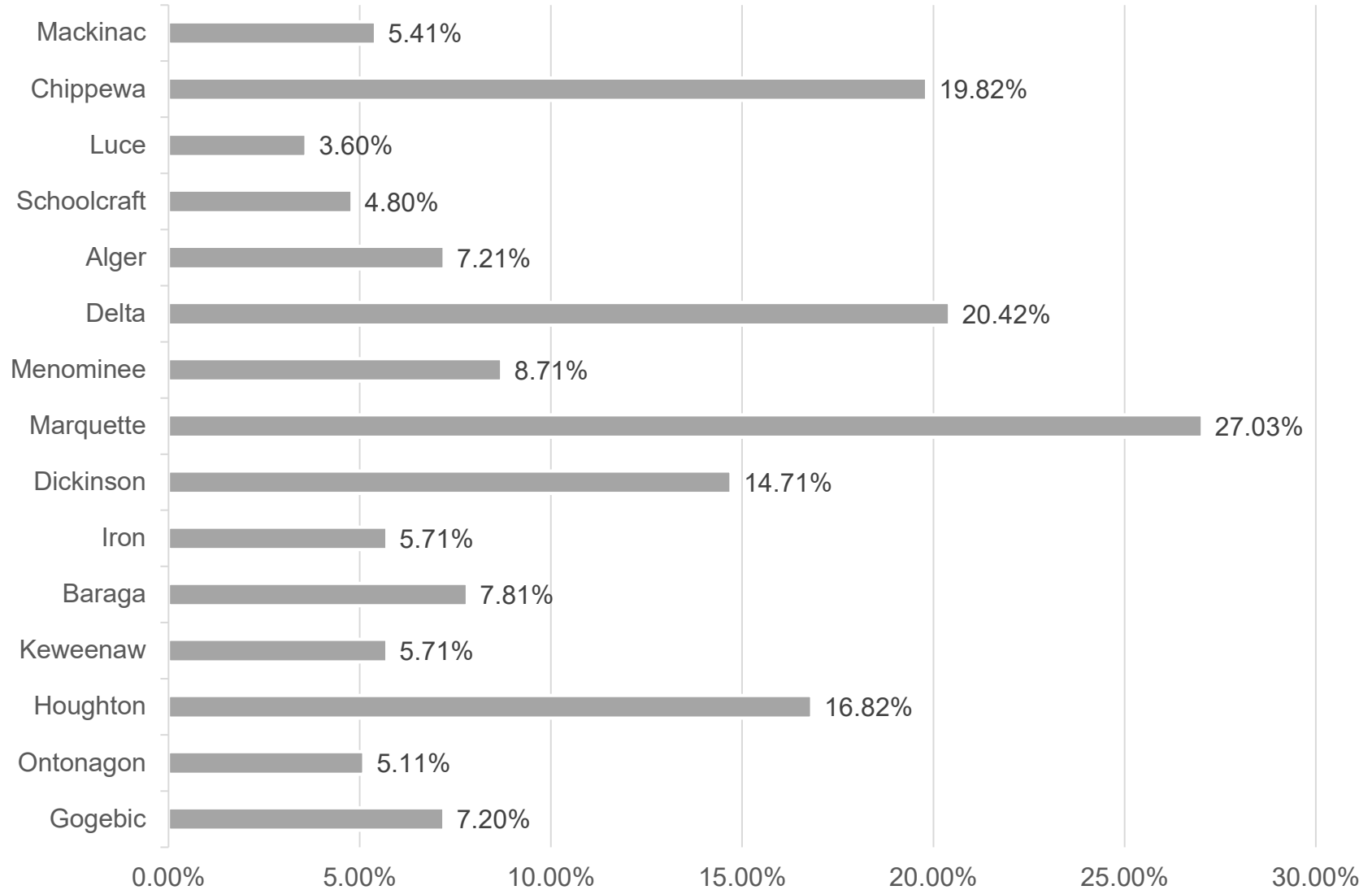
Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1,352 Survey Responses• 15 Participants

Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 163 Survey Responses• 12 Participants

Employer Survey and Focus Groups

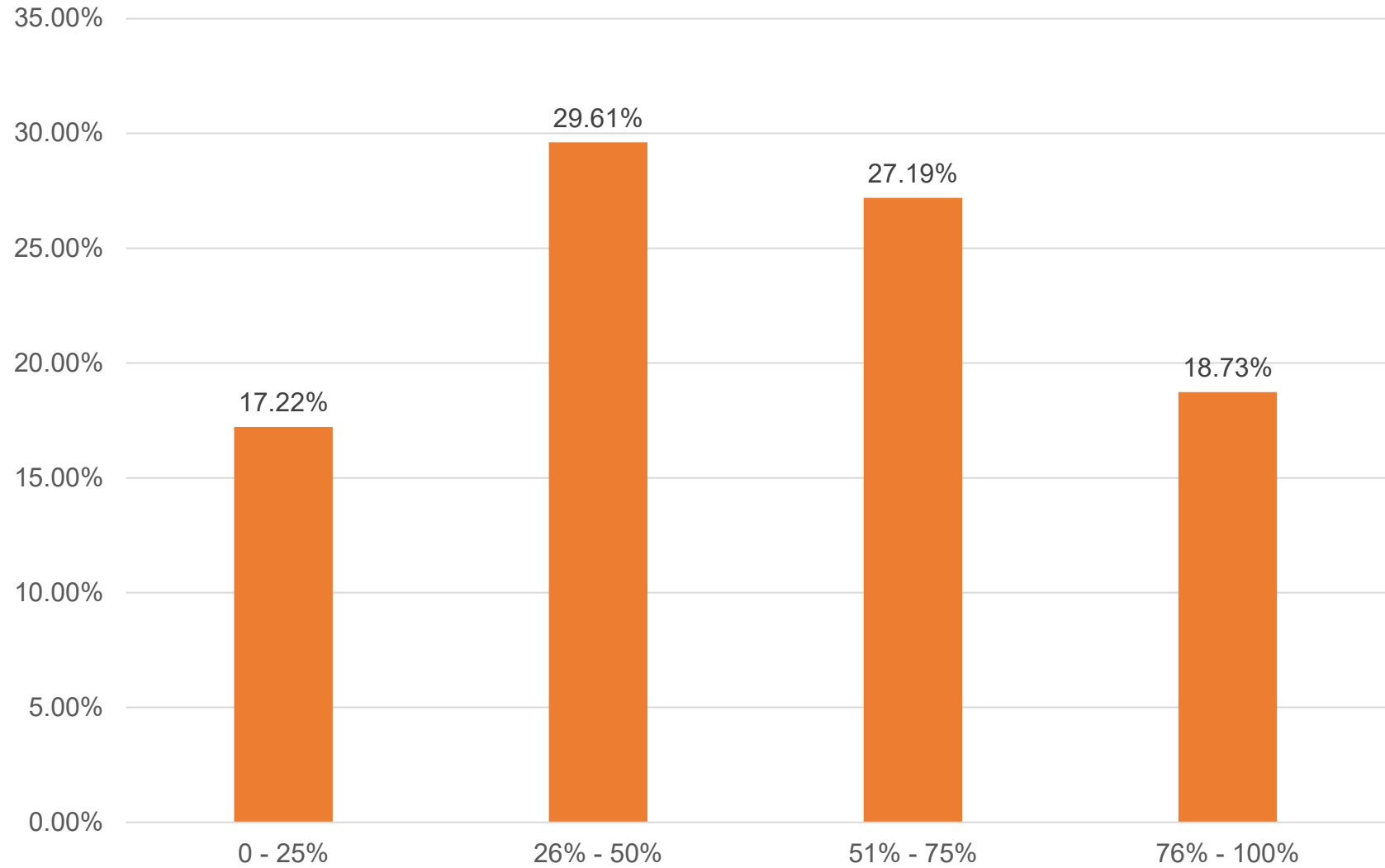


Location



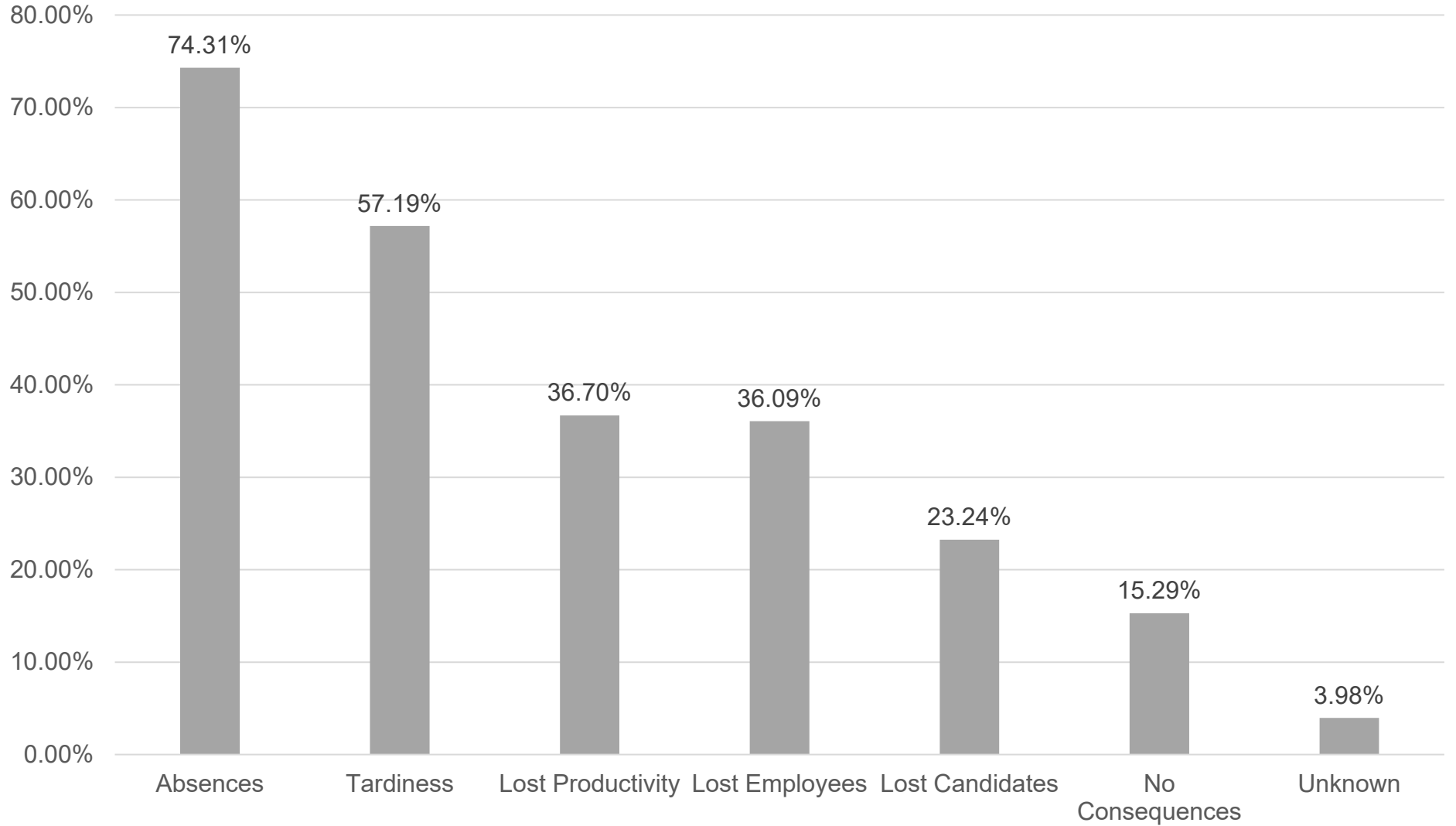


% of Workforce that are Parents or of Age



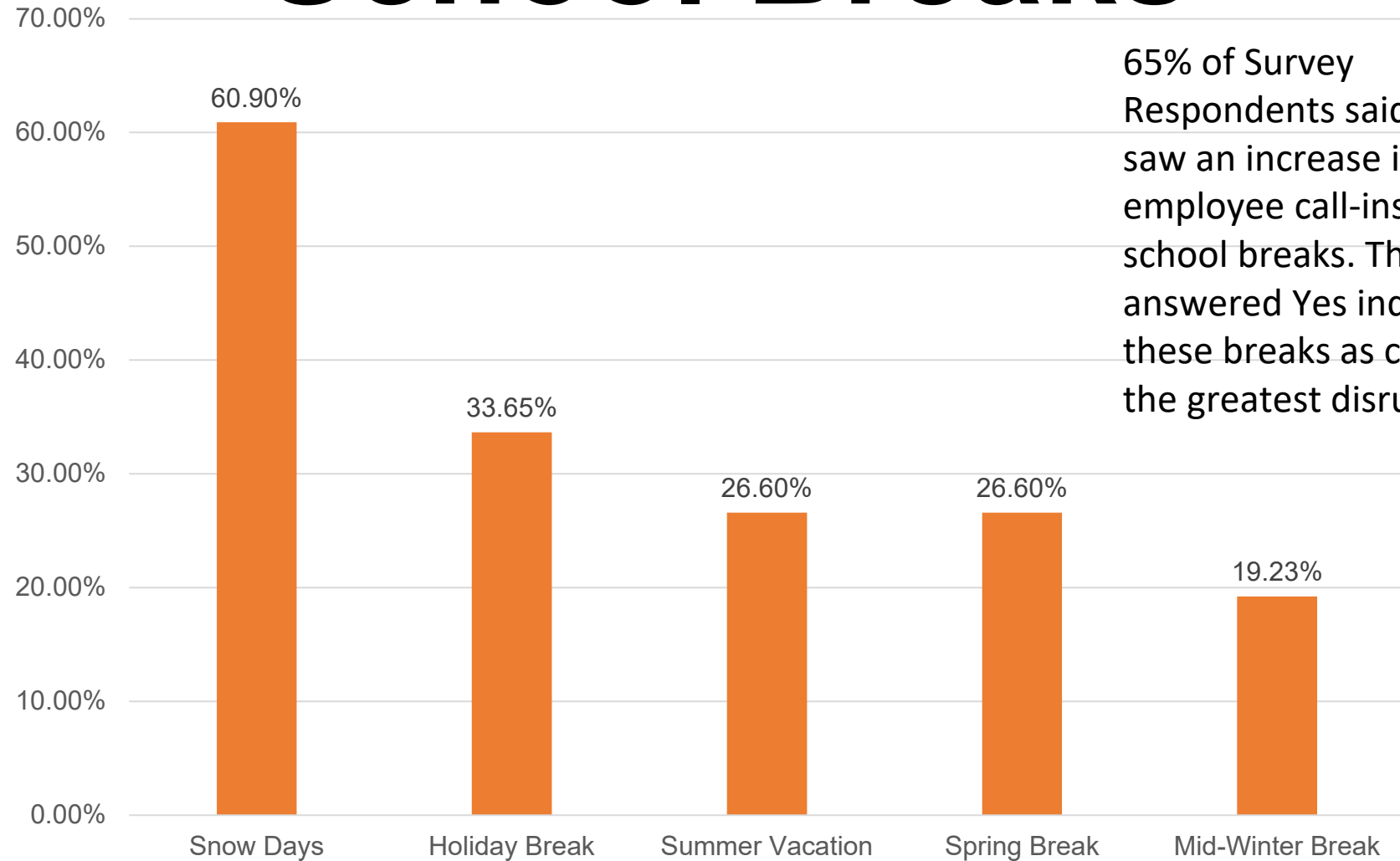


Consequences of Childcare Challenges





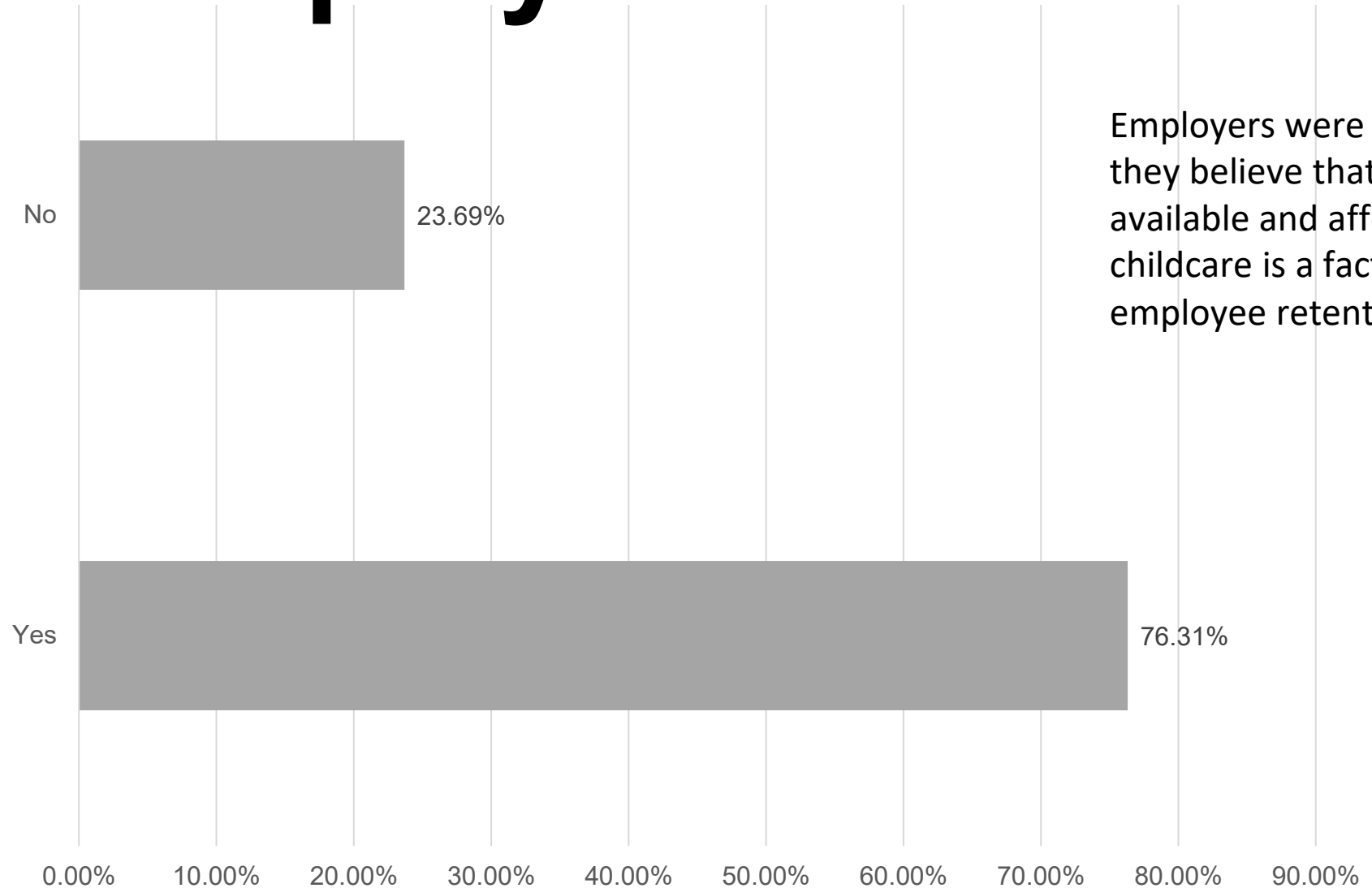
Increased Call-Ins during School Breaks



65% of Survey Respondents said they saw an increase in employee call-ins during school breaks. Those who answered Yes indicated these breaks as causing the greatest disruption.



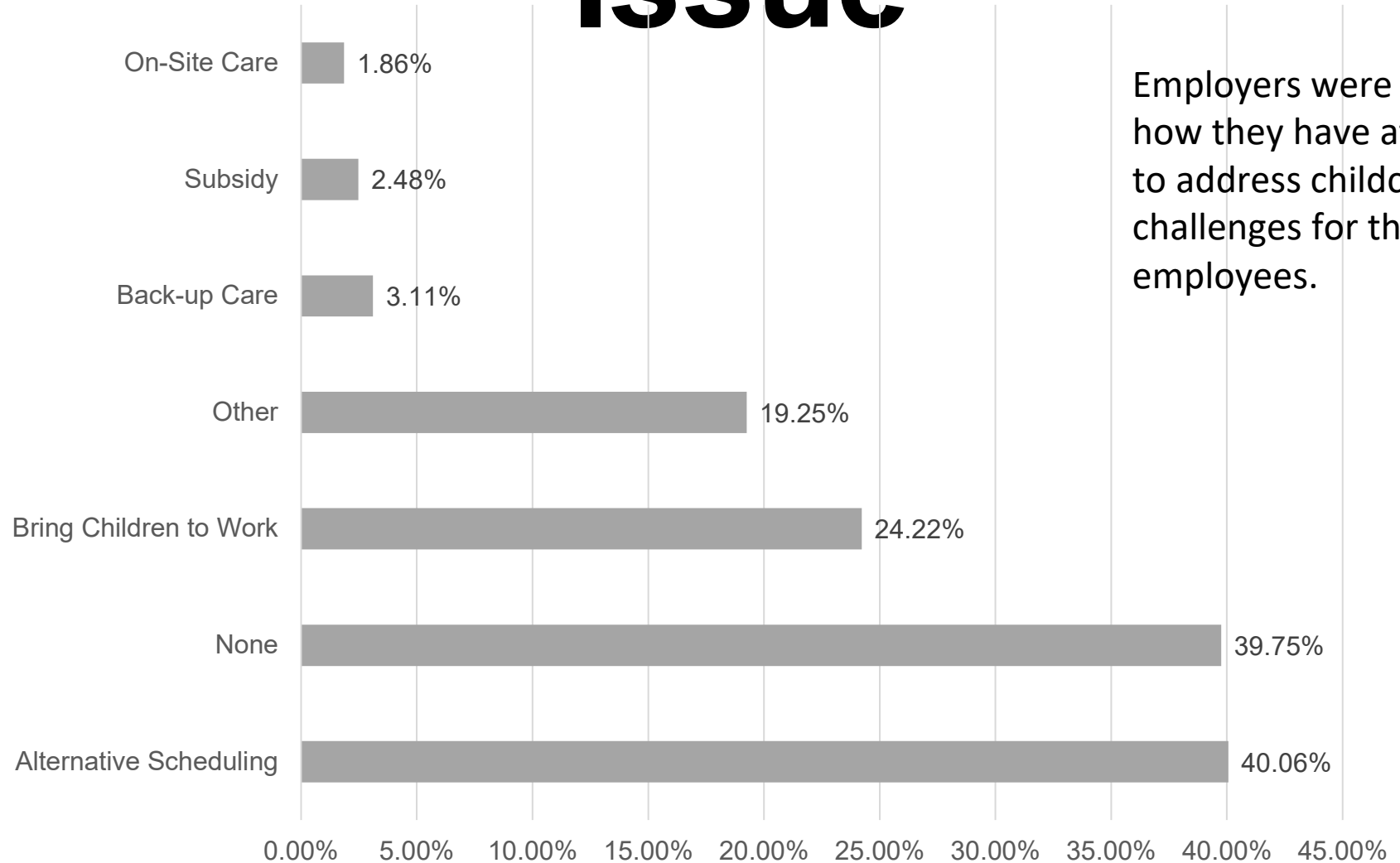
Employee Retention



Employers were asked if they believe that lack of available and affordable childcare is a factor in employee retention.



Attempts to Address the Issue



Employers were asked how they have attempted to address childcare challenges for their employees.



Participation

Four Focus Group sessions were held with employers in the UP. One was available in-person in Marquette, others were offered virtually. 19 Employers participated from a variety of industry, representing at least 2,500 employees.

Manufacturing

Healthcare

Hospitality

Retail

Education

Government

Finance and Insurance

Finance and Insurance

Construction

Tribe



Common Impacts

Employers recognize their role in helping to address the issue, but are struggling to find the best options.

Impacts for all types of work and industries; Crisis for second and third shifts.

Trying to be more flexible with remote work but question level of productivity. It should not be a replacement for daycare.

Many types of jobs cannot be remote.

Morale – employees without kids are picking up the slack.



Common Impacts

Hiring family members without training or resources to support early childhood development.

Employees not returning after having second child – the numbers don't work.

Employees use most/all PTO early in the year for childcare purposes.

Sudden lost availability – COVID outbreaks, providers closing or reducing slots.



Stories

Employee left to take a remote job due to having a second baby.

Full-time employee returned part-time after having a baby.

Employee who was eligible for childcare support program could not find a licensed provider; hired a teenager and paid out of pocket.

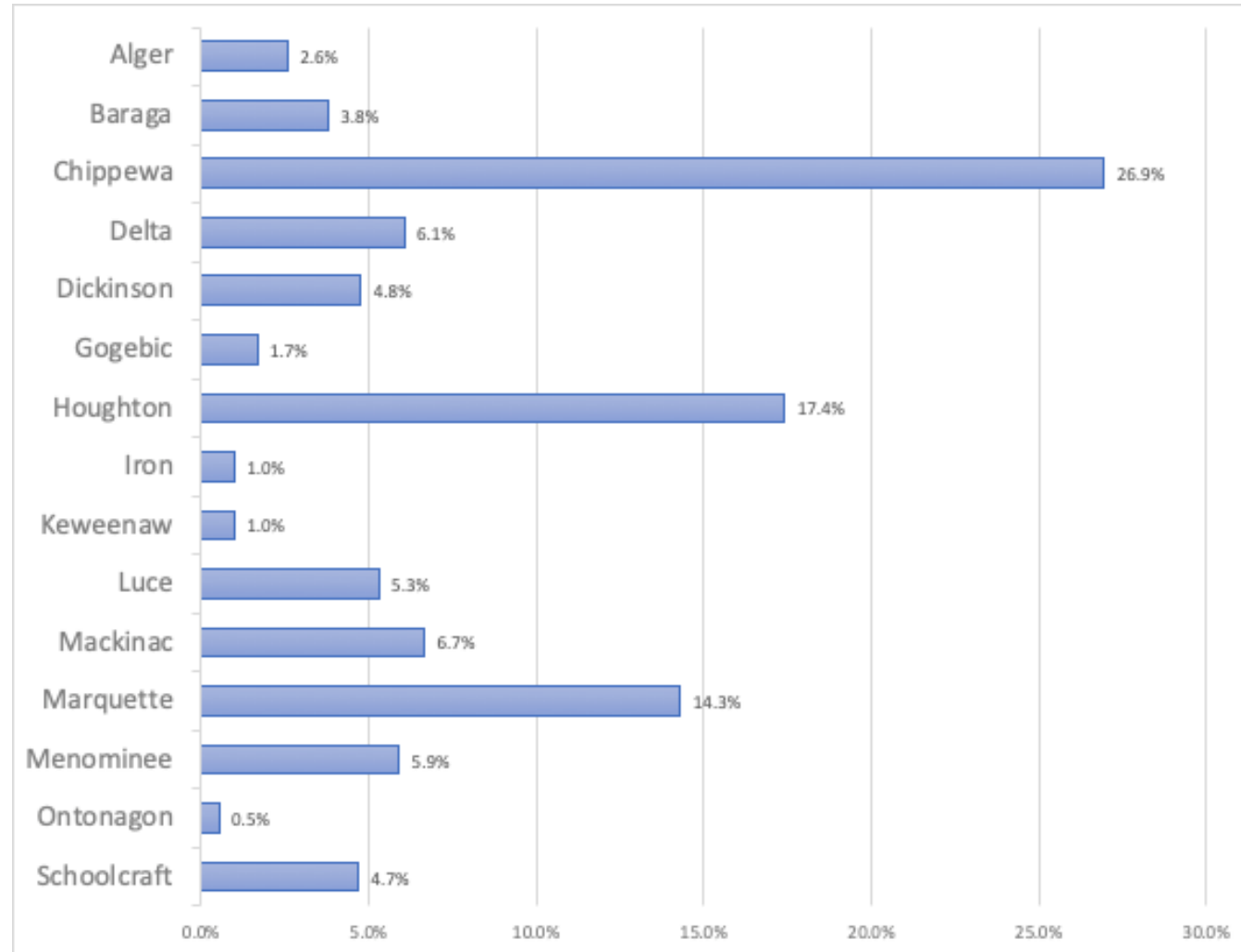
Employee relies on family member with medical issues for childcare; carries phone around during shift to call 911 when needed.

Employees are desperate – posting on social media to find options.

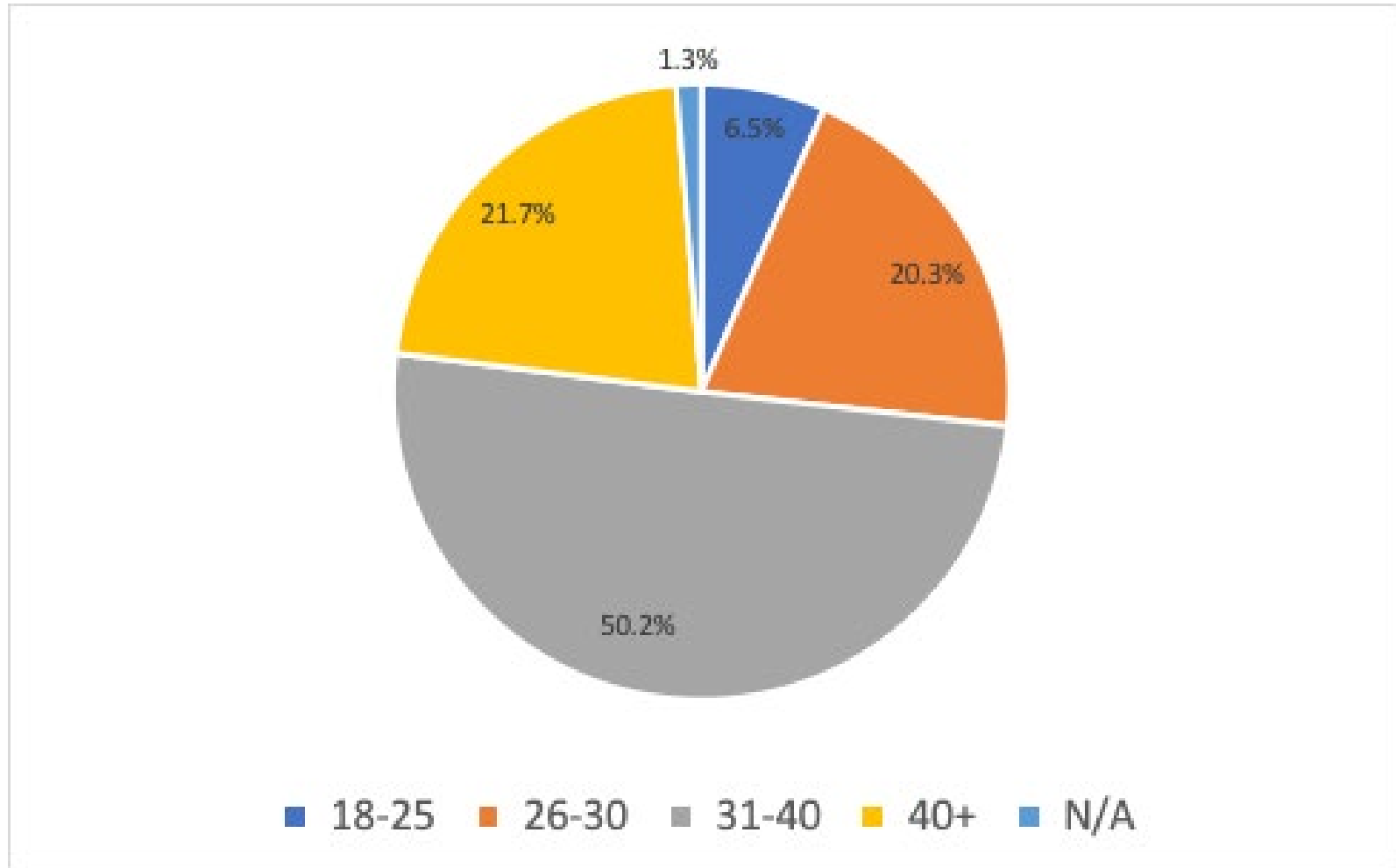
Parent Survey and Focus Groups



Response by Location

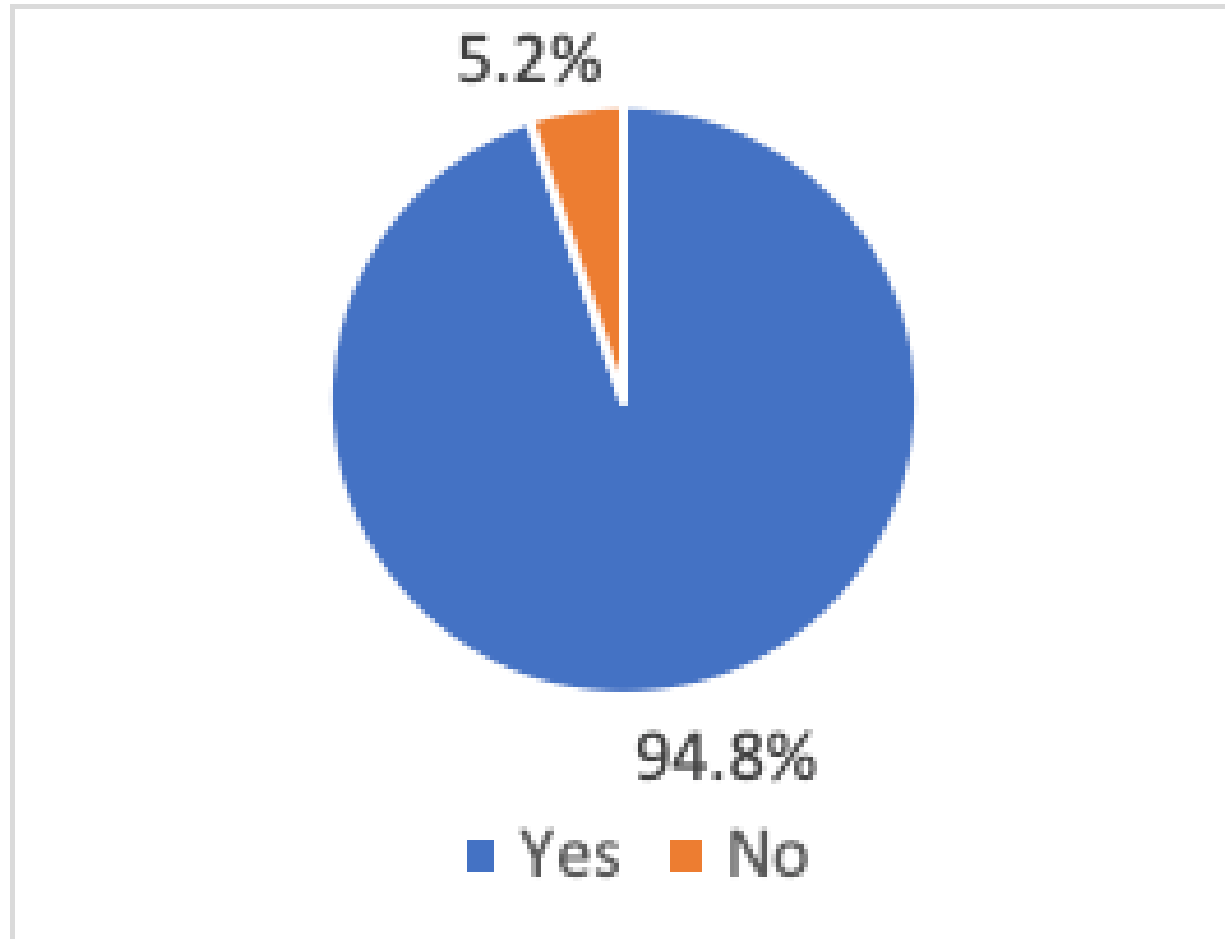


▶ Age of Survey Participants



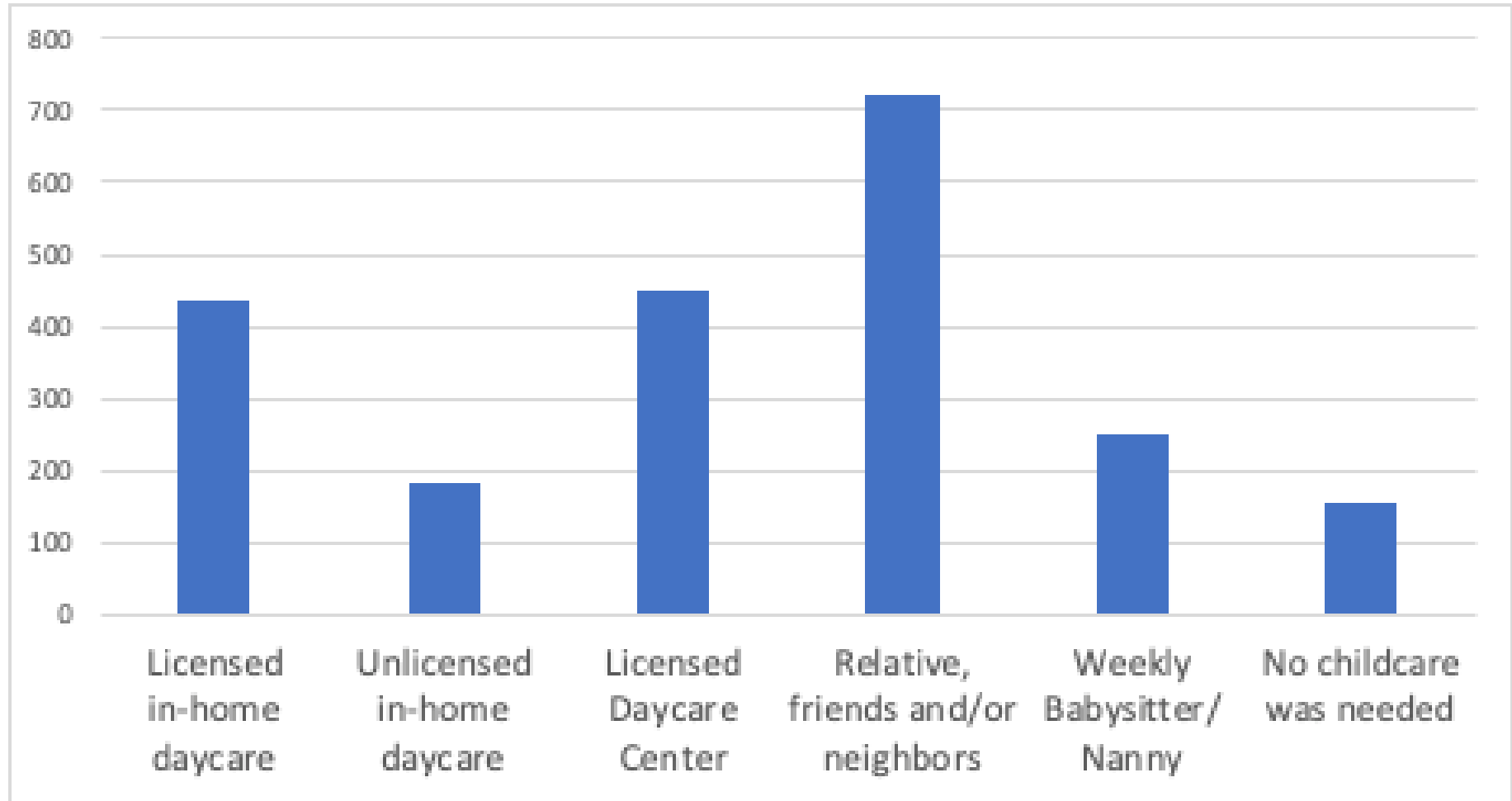


Needed or Use Childcare



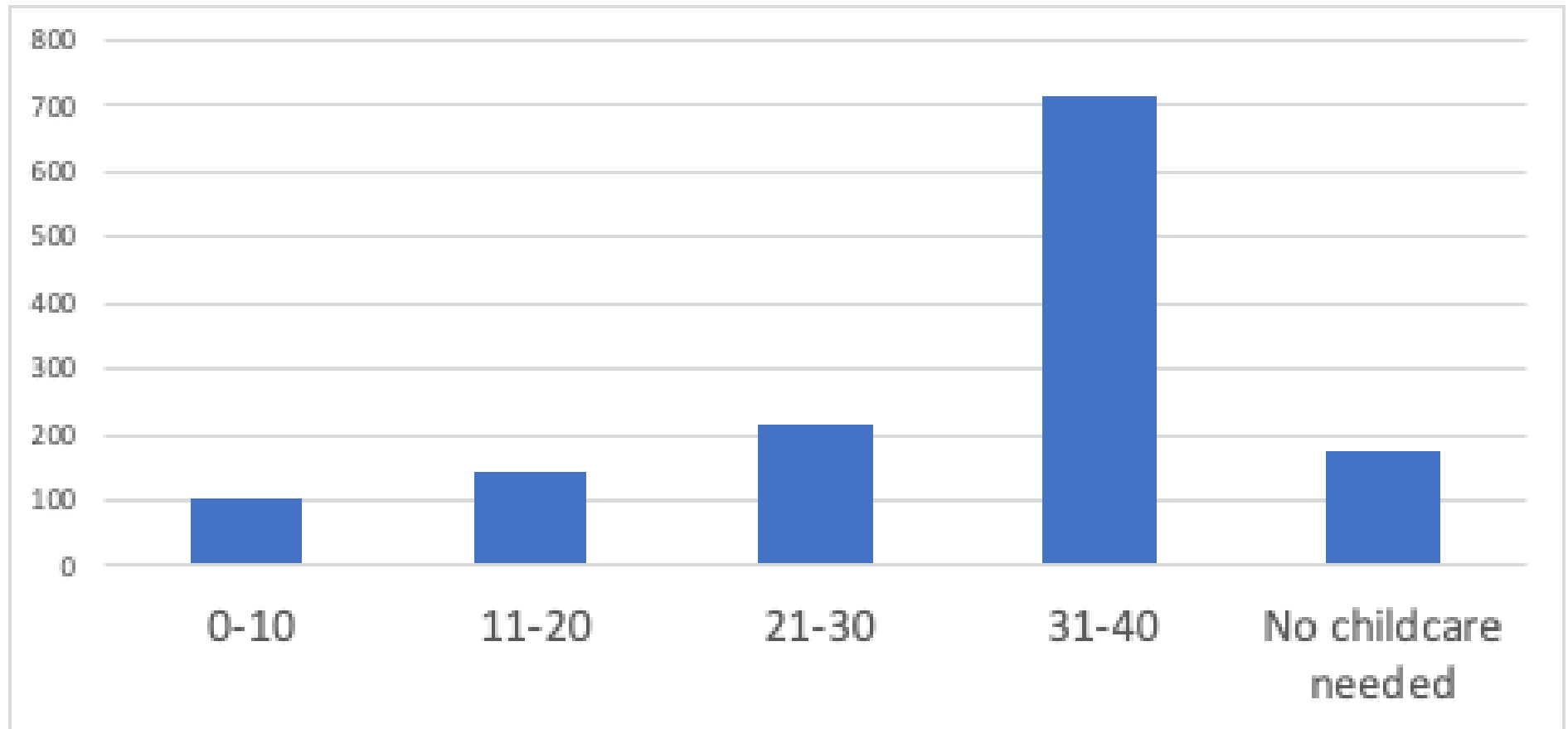


Childcare Options Use



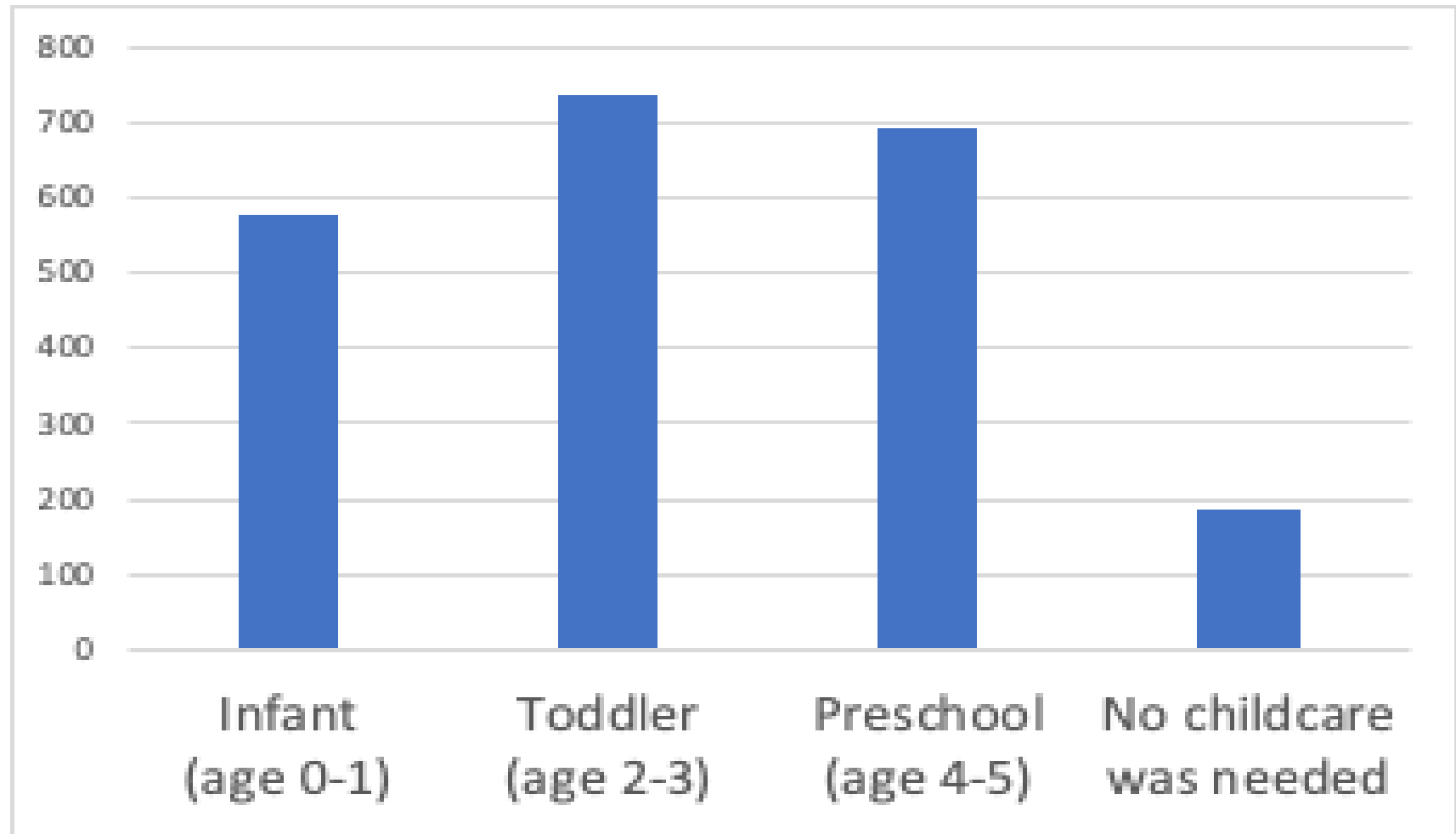


Hours/Week Childcare is Needed





Care Needed by Age of Child



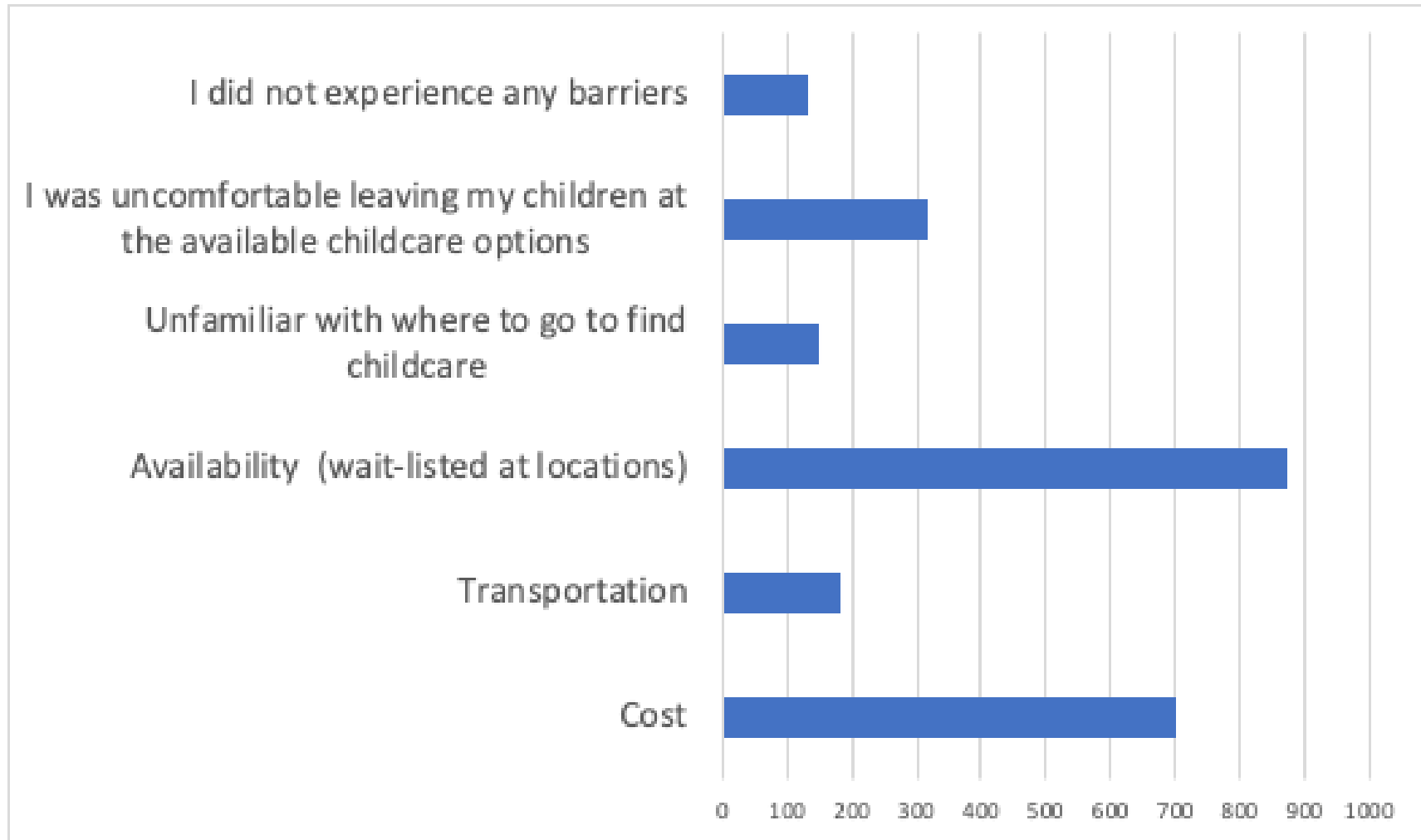


Miles Traveled (one way) for Childcare



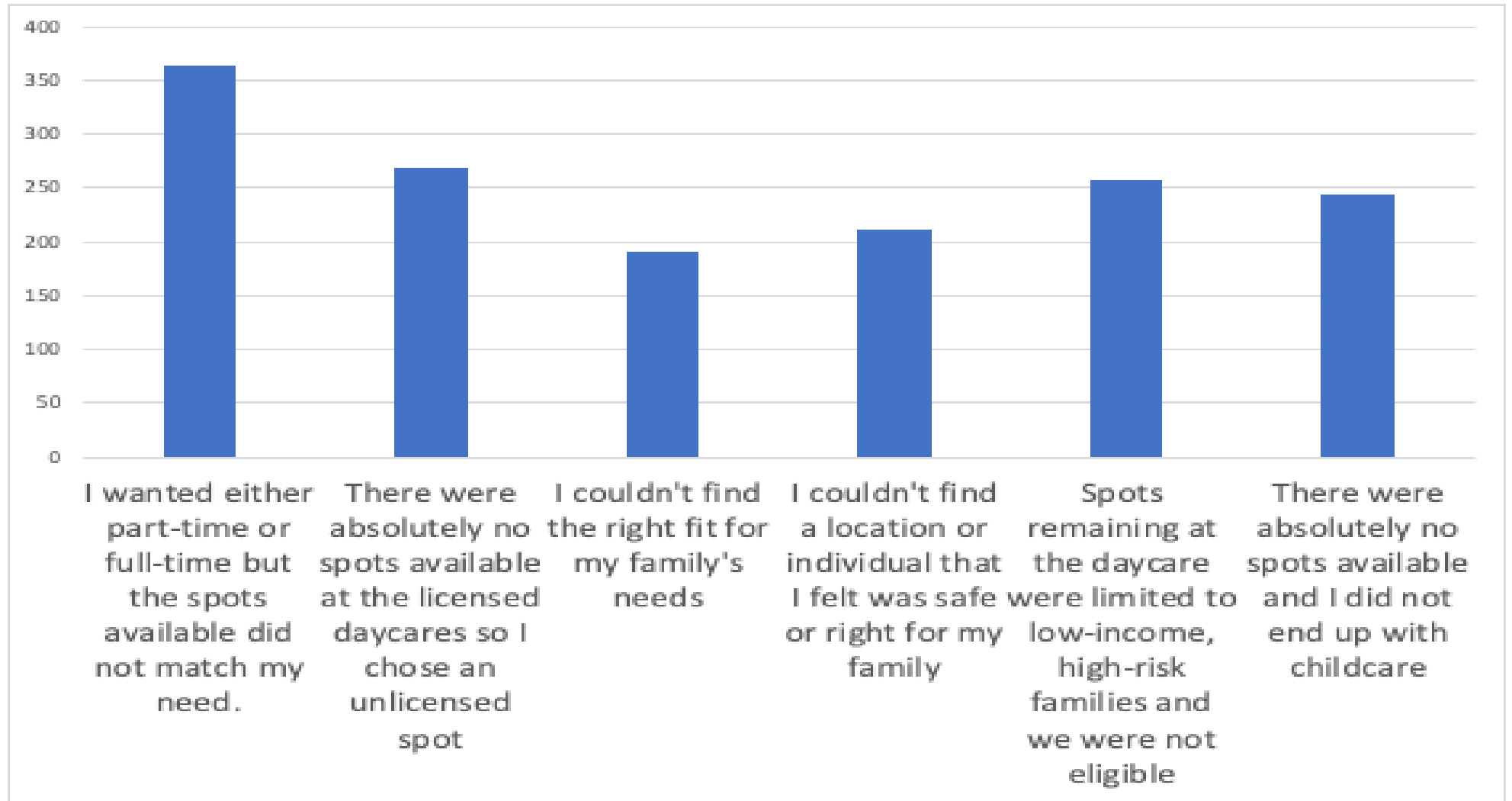


Barriers





Availability Barriers





Common Challenges

Not enough care options available

Families are having to change jobs, work remotely or leave the workforce due to lack of care

Families are spending large portions of their household budgets on childcare or experience a reduced income because of a reduced ability to work

Long waitlists

Concerns about the quality of care their children are receiving



Stories

*Parents reported being ignored, laughed when contacting a center availability.
Waitlists are anywhere from a few months long to years.*

One family was notified 5 days prior to their start date that their child was “disenrolled” due to a staff shortage. Despite actively looking for care, it was another 9 months before their child was able to be placed.

Parents reported they often choose to stay home because their earnings from work were not enough to offset the cost of care.

The lack of availability has also impacted children in foster care and with special needs needing temporary or respite care.

Parents report utilizing individuals to care for their children despite having questions about the quality of care being provided



Possible Solutions Shared

Subsidize the cost of care for families

Work with employers to provide onsite care that includes weekend, evening, school closing and swing shift care

Provide incentives in the form of tax breaks to open new centers

Provide paid maternity / paternity leave for the child's 1st year

Increase the pay of child care providers.



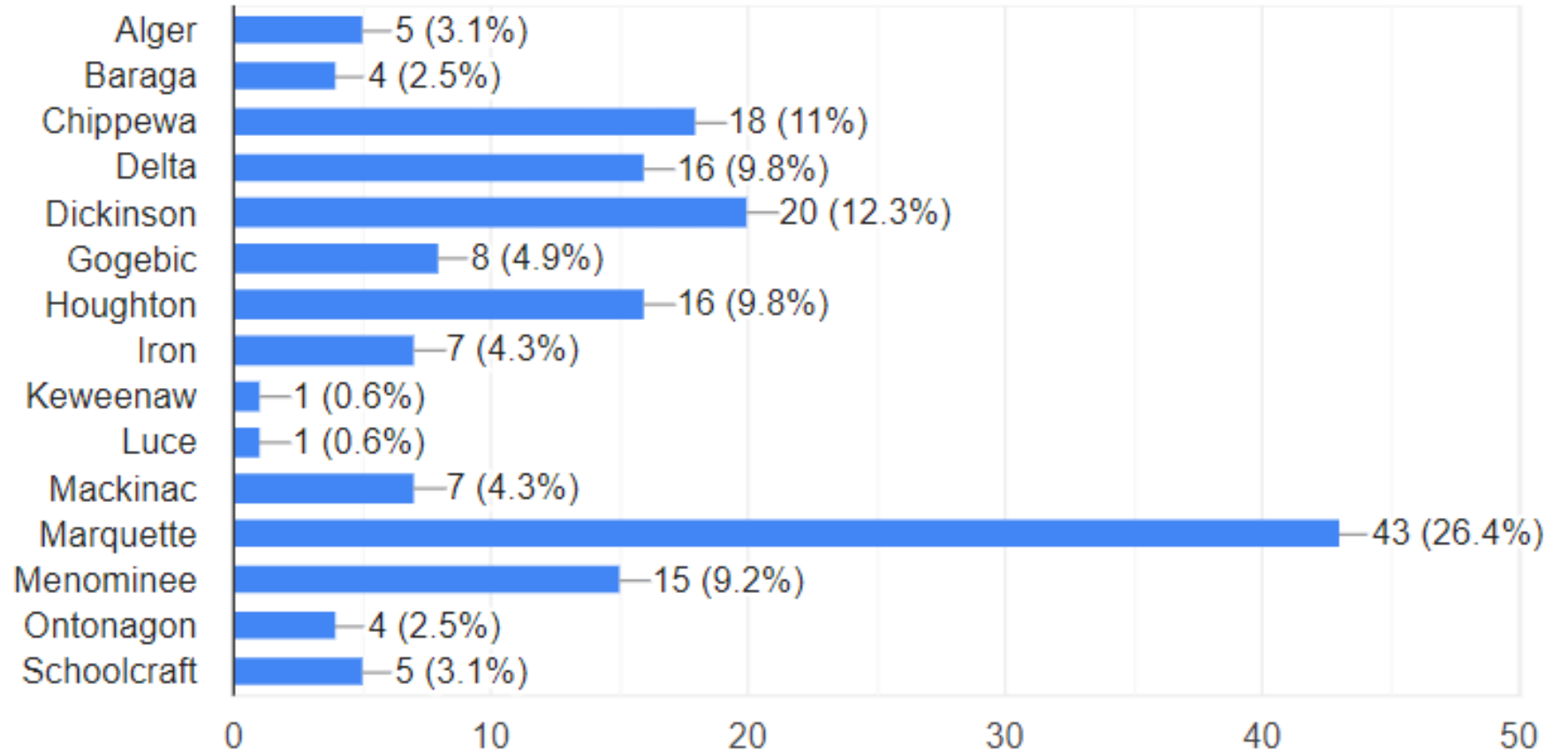
Stories

“I think that this is one of the only downsides to _____ . As a recent transplant, I absolutely love everything about this city. It is exactly what my husband and I were looking for when we began seeking for a place to build our family together. However, the child care issues here have deeply tainted that dream.”

Child Care Provider Survey and Focus Groups

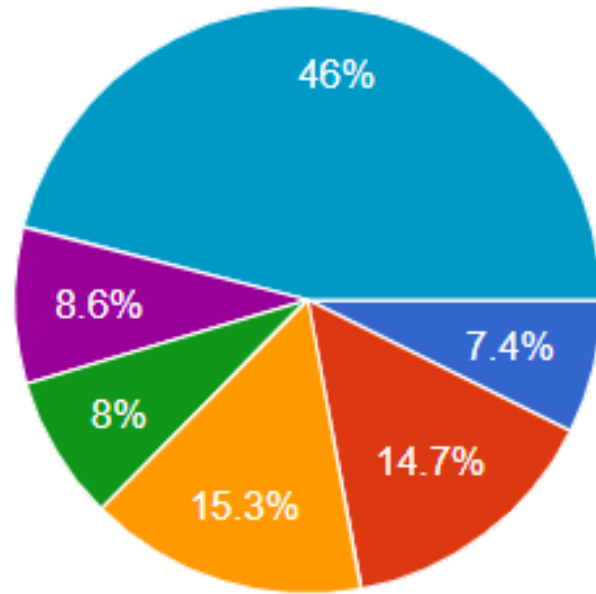


Location





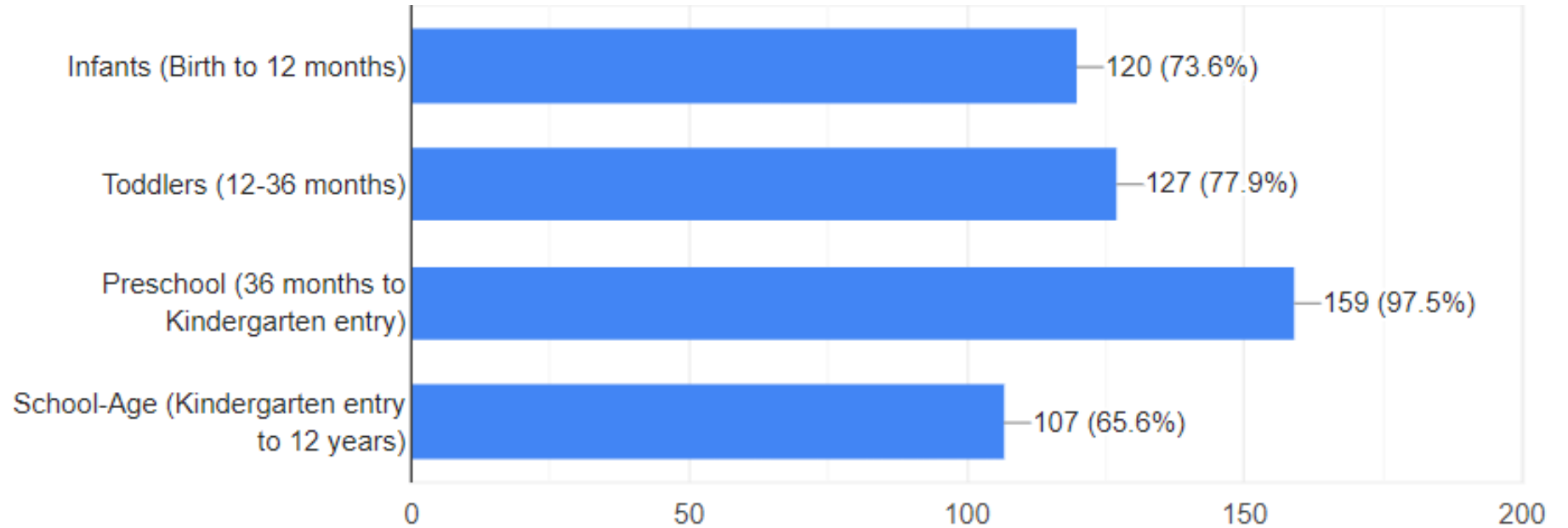
% of Years Providing Care



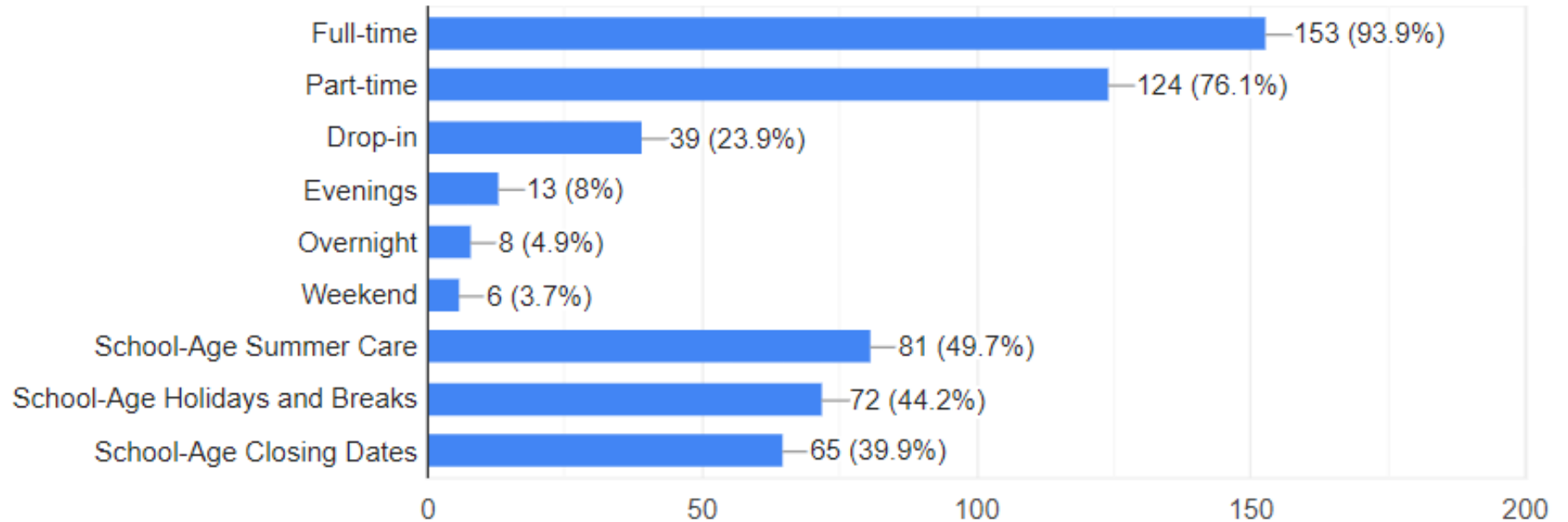
- 1 year or less
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20 years or more



% of Age Groups in Care



% of Type of Schedules Accepted





Common Challenges

Many providers and programs have long wait lists with a high demand for infant-toddler care.

Staffing for center-based programs is the number one challenge. They recognize they could offer more spots if they could find qualified staff. Even when they get staff, getting them qualified is a challenge.

The pandemic accelerated the staffing crisis and presented many other challenges.

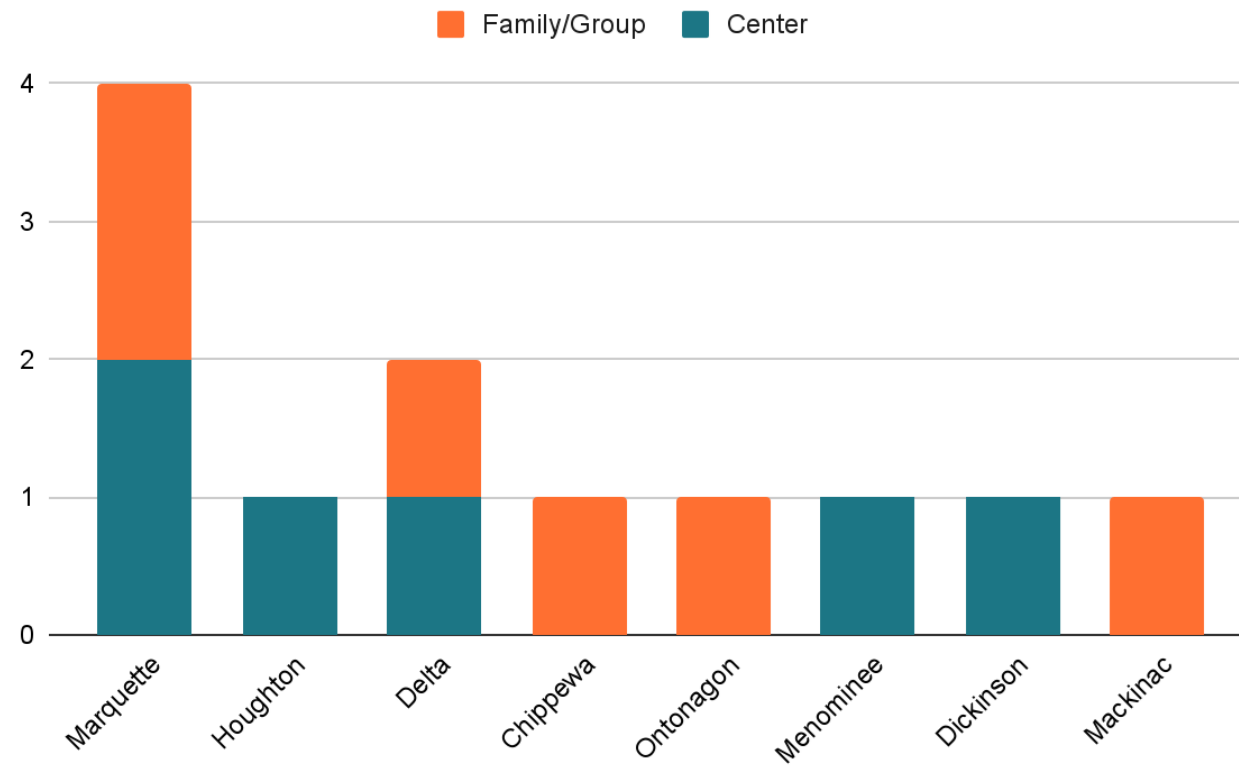
Providers are losing staff to other jobs that can offer more pay and benefits.

Directors of center-based programs are wearing many hats and spread thin. There are no substitutes for staff that call in.



Participation

Four focus group sessions were held virtually with child care providers in the UP. Two sessions were center-based providers and two sessions were family/group care providers.





Common Challenges

Competing for staff- even outside the ECE field.

Staff are burnt out, wearing many hats throughout the day, filling in for staff call-ins.

Programs are losing staff to other jobs that can offer more pay and benefits.
Home providers don't want to license to Group due to inability to pay staff.

Hard to accommodate varying or part-time schedules and schedule staff appropriately.

Many home and center providers are not accepting school-aged children anymore.



Stories

One program has had to call parents to find other care on certain days because they do not have available staff to provide care. Some days they have to close.

One program has reduced number of children accepted in infant room, decreased hours of operation due to staffing and staying within ratios.

One program hires and trains staff, pays for necessary requirements (CPR, Health & Safety Training, Fingerprints, etc.) and they leave once they are trained in.

One program has reduced hours and closed a location to combine staffing.

Several home providers mentioned the “unlicensed” or “underground” care happening, worried about who is caring for the children.



Possible Solutions Shared

Readdress DHHS eligibility and making more accessible to families.

Subsidize all childcare with a voucher system.

Universal Preschool to address better pay and benefits.

Altering payroll taxes for childcare centers.

Media campaign to recruit people into the ECE field.

Support with licensing renewal fees, required training fees, etc.

Look at potential ways to co-op health insurance for home providers.