

2022 CT OEC Parent Survey

*CT Office of Early Childhood
Beth Bye, Commissioner*

Introduction to the 2022 Parent Survey



- An online survey asked Connecticut parents of young children how they were doing.
- Responses were collected from August-October, 2022 from 5,747 parents.
- Topics included child care access and preferences, employment impact, and concerns about child developmental status.

Our Process



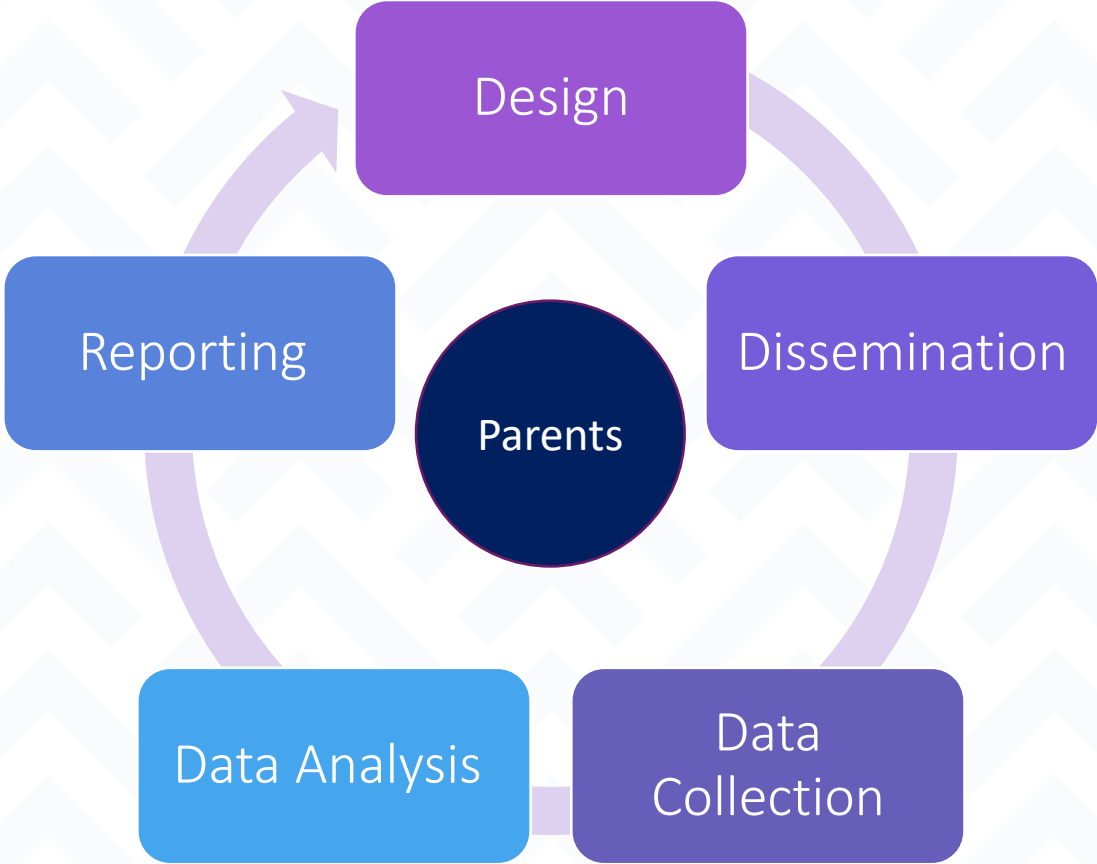
Parent Driven

The **OEC Parent Cabinet** established a Parent Survey Subcommittee that included:

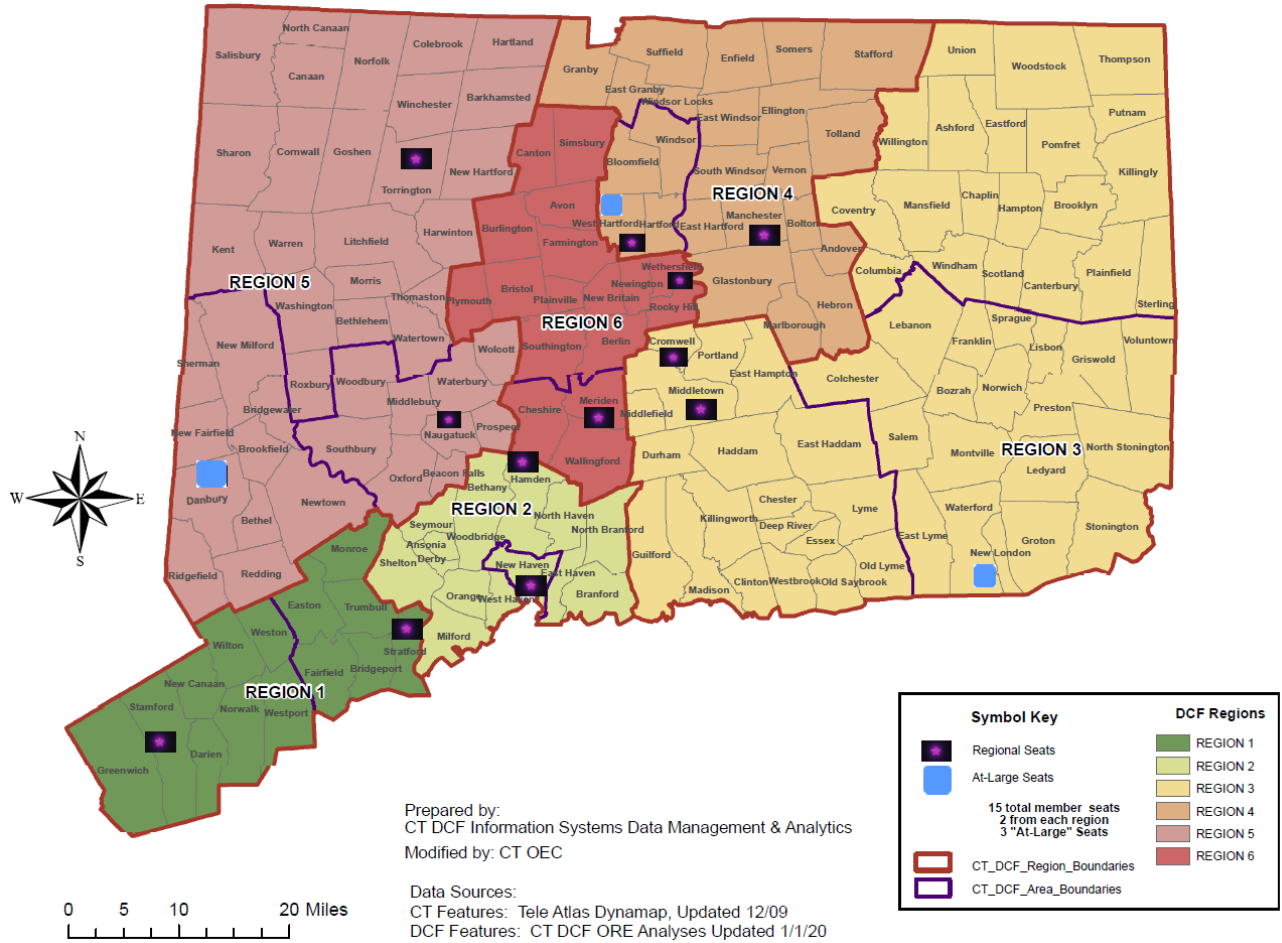
- Parent Cabinet Members
- OEC Staff
- UConn Research Staff

Together they designed the survey, tested it, and invited parents statewide to describe their experiences, and tell us what they think parents need.

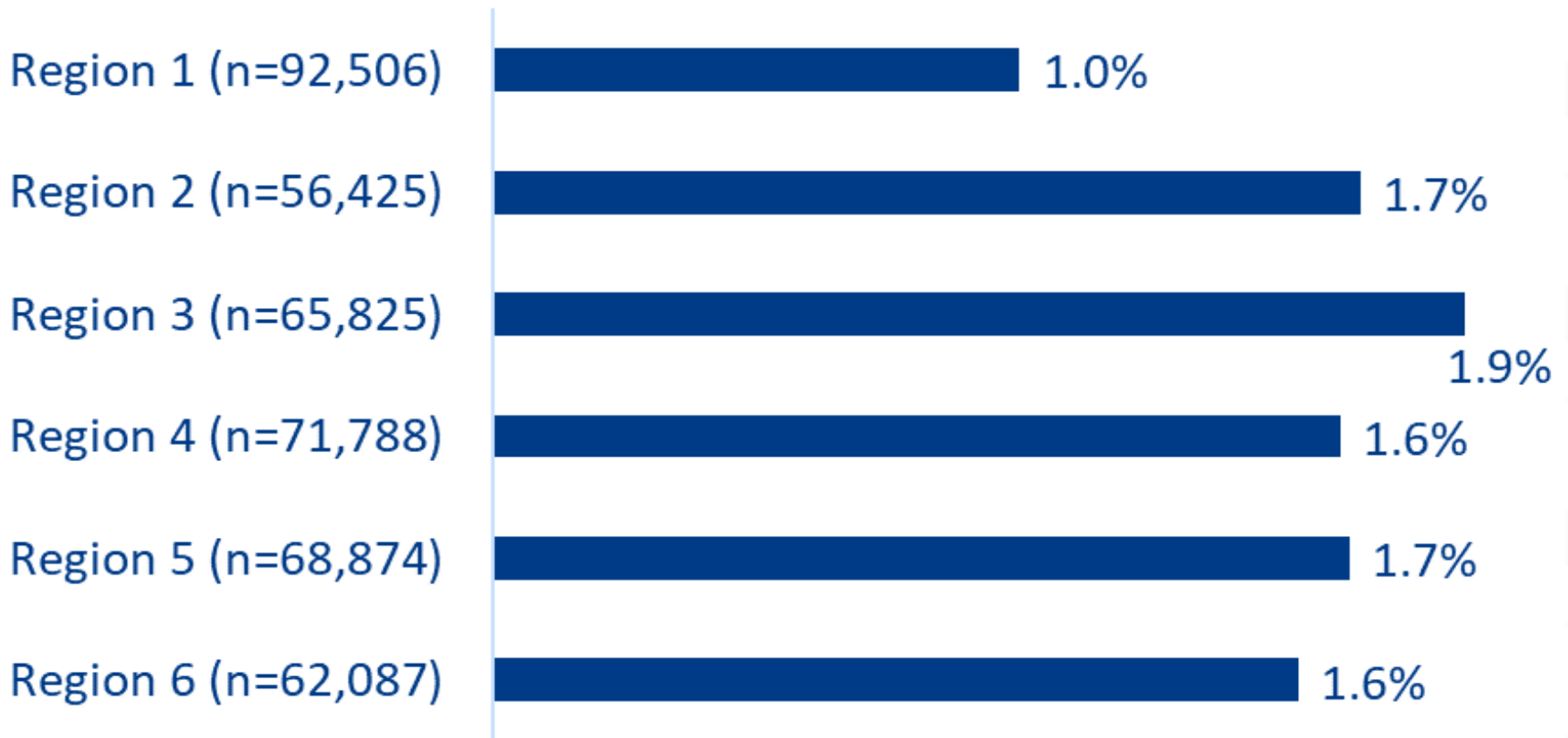
Parents at the Center



Regional data reflect the OEC Parent Cabinet Regions (also aligned with CT DCF regions)



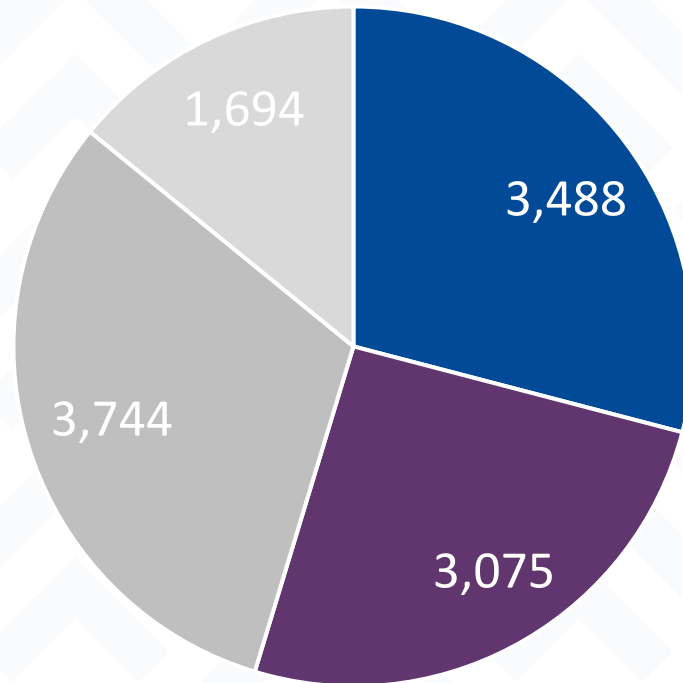
Parental Population* by Region (Census vs. Survey)



*Each region's n refers to the number of parents with children ages 0-11 (pulled from the US Census)

Children by Age Group

(N = 5,474)



75% of families who responded had at least one **Infant/Toddler** or **Preschool Aged Child**

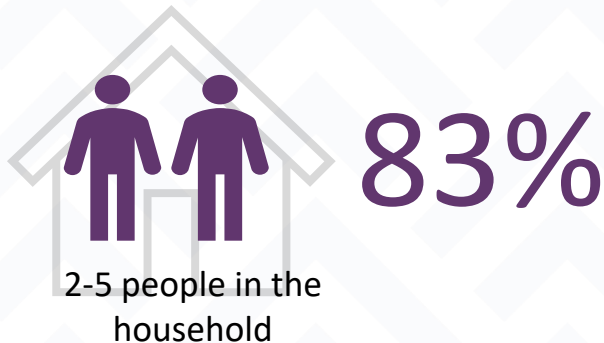
- Infant/Toddler (0-2 years old)
- Preschool-Aged (3-4 years old)

This survey represents approximately **3%** of all Connecticut families with children ages 0-12.

Families who Responded to our survey



Family Size (N=5,168 replies)



Family Income compared with the SMI (State Median Income (N=4,817 replies)

Under 50% of the SMI.....**30%**

50-65% of the SMI.....**16%**

75-85% of the SMI.....**12%**

100% of the SMI+.....**42%**

CHILD CARE

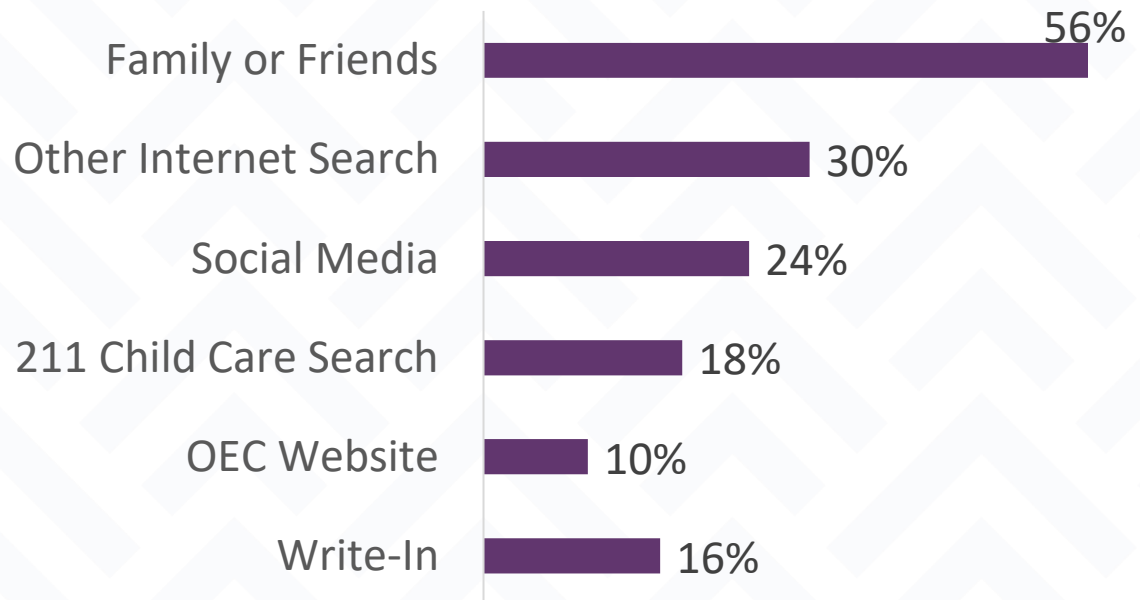
Where Families Learn about Child Care (N = Varies)



"I'm in this field and know where to look and have contacts."

"I have been trying so hard to get my children in the right places and nothing has come out of it."

Sources of Child Care Info



“How Do You Learn about Child Care Options? *(select all that apply)*” - Percentage of Respondents by Race and Source

	Family or friends (n=3126)*	Other internet search (n=1711)**	Social media (n=1394) **	211 child care search tool (n=1042) **	OEC website (n=540)**
White / Caucasian	59.4%	68.3%	62.8%	52.6%	50.7%
Black / African-American	8.5%	6.0%	7.7%	11.1%	8.9%
Hispanic / Latinx	19.2%	12.4%	14.8%	21.0%	21.9%
Asian	3.2%	4.3%	4.1%	2.7%	3.3%
Middle Eastern	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
Native American	0.7%	0.6%	1.0%	2.2%	3.7%
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%
Other race	2.7%	2.5%	2.7%	3.4%	2.8%
Multiracial	6.0%	5.7%	6.4%	6.1%	8.0%

* Statistically significant association, $p < 0.05$ ** Statistically significant association, $p < 0.01$

Maximum value

Minimum value



Child Care Preferences

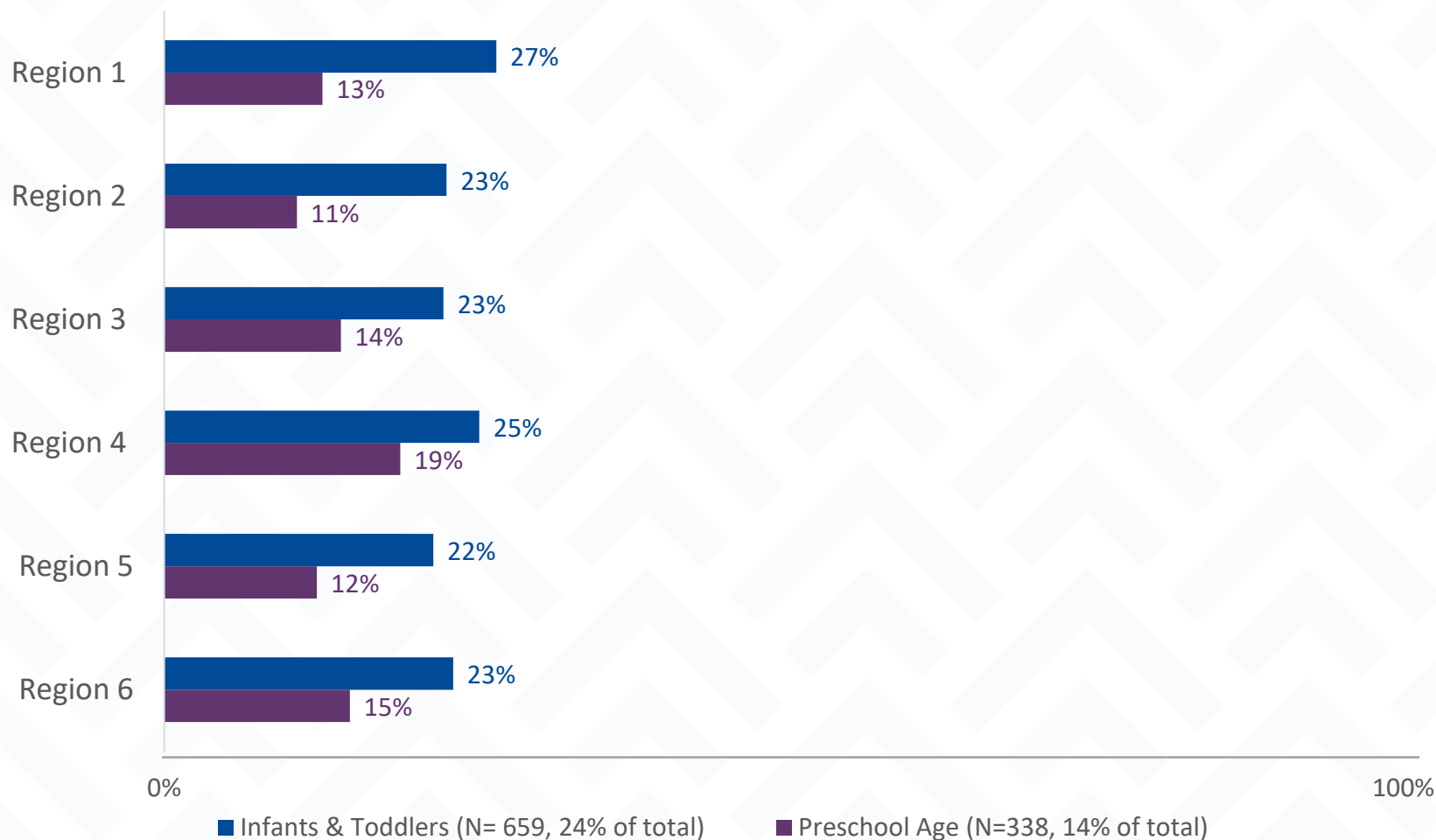
Center-based care was the preferred choice for families.

- **55%** of parents with infants and toddlers
- **64%** of those with preschool aged children

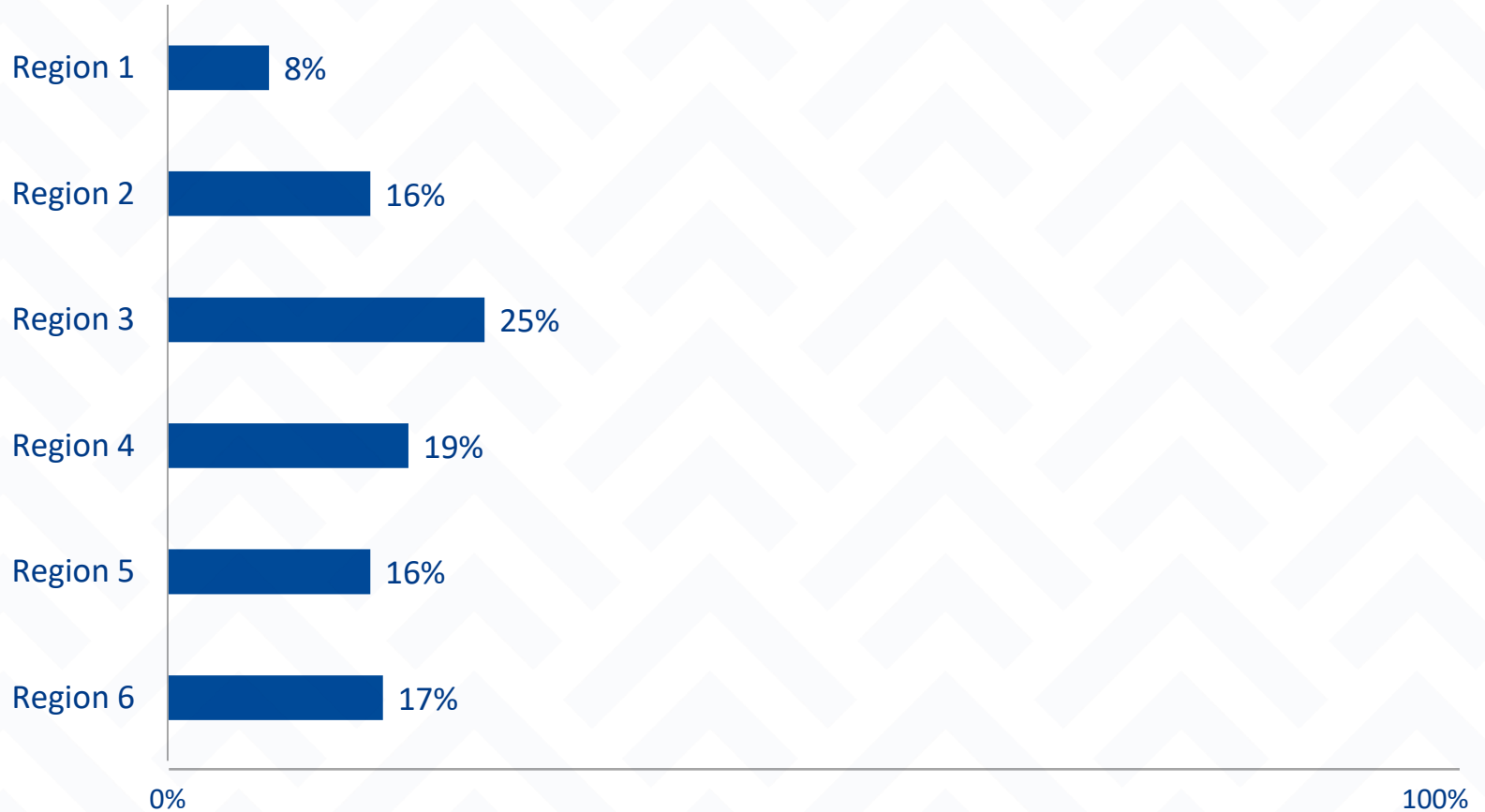
The remaining preferences for families with **infants & toddlers** were evenly split, with **22%** preferring **licensed family care** and **22% other** types of care.

The remaining preferences for families with **preschool aged children** were **licensed family care (18%)** and **other (16%)** types of care.

Respondents Who Are Not Able to Access Preferred Child Care Arrangement



Respondents Paying 7% or Less of Income on Child Care (n=726)



*Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program. 45 CFR Part 98. (2016).

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-09-30/pdf/2016-22986.pdf>

EMPLOYMENT

Employment & Child Care



Career Sacrifices

"I have had to decline work opportunities so I can keep the flexibility in my current position to be there for my children."

Flexibility

"I love my job. However, I worry that child care needs will cause me to lose my job or have to take a job with less hours/pay and more flexibility"

Post-Secondary Education

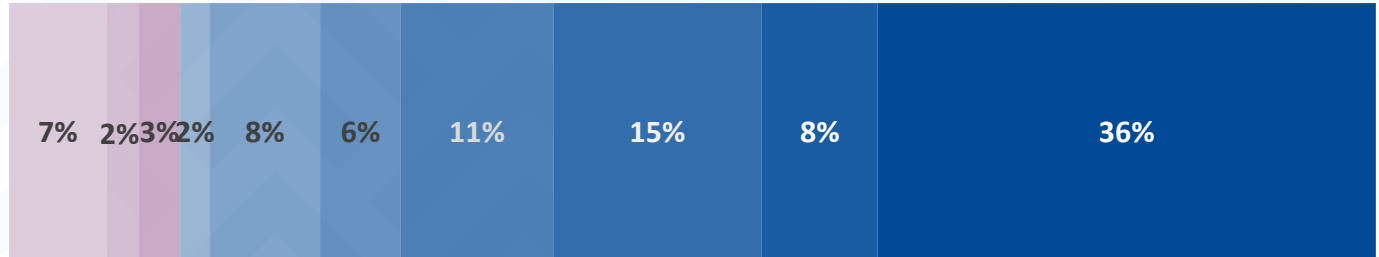
*"I had to take my current job because I needed it to fit my daughter's school schedule as much as possible and it is still not a perfect fit but it is close as I can get. But child care and **the lack of affordable child care has made it difficult for me to return for more education and to pursue other jobs"***

Child Care has an Impact on Job Choice

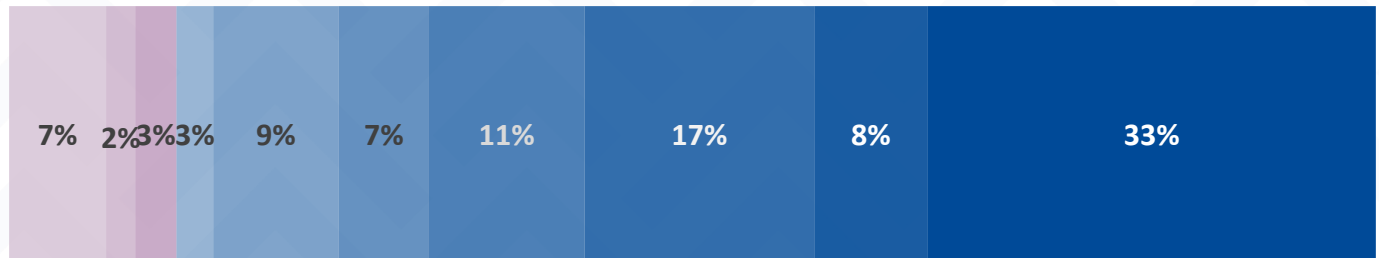
(average = 7.4 on a scale from 1 – 10)



Infants & Toddlers



Preschoolers



1= Not at all

10 = A great deal



How the Need for Child Care Affects Parental Job Choice - mean ratings (1-10) by Race and Ethnicity - *

Racial Group	Infants/Toddlers	Preschoolers
Black/African-American	8.1	8.2
Multiracial	7.8	7.4
Middle Eastern	7.4	7.5
White/Caucasian	7.4	7.3
Hispanic/Latinx regardless of race	7.5	7.1
Asian	7.3	7.0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6.3	7.7
Native American	5.3	6.5

*Statistically significant ($p < .01$)

Back-Up Child Care



- **38% of families work less** to stay home and care for their children and **lose pay** for hours missed.
- **35% of families work less** to stay home and care for their children but use their sick time and **still get paid**.
- **35% of families rely on a trusted adult** to care for their children
- **5% rely on older children** to care for their children.



Employment and the Pandemic

- **50% of families** reported that either they or another adult in their household **reduced working hours or quit their job** to care for their children during the pandemic.
- Of these families, **34% had not fully returned to work** at the time of the survey (Aug-Sept, 2022).

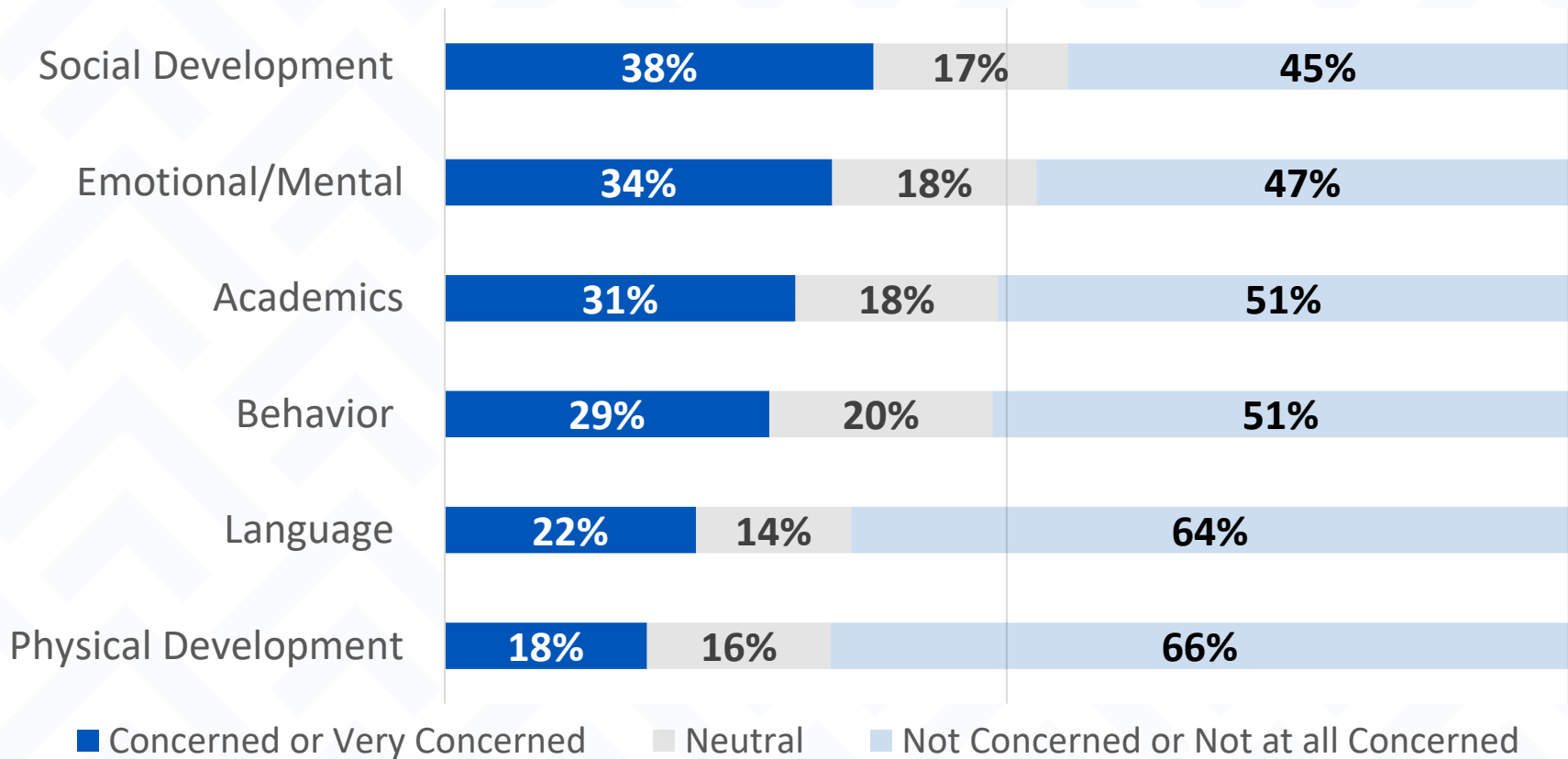


CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Pandemic Impact on Concerns for Child



Parent Concerns about Child's Progress





Concern about Children's Social and Emotional Needs



Parent who is an Educator

"As a teacher I am deeply concerned about young children's social / emotional wellness needs because of the pandemic. Many kids feel that masking and isolation is normal and had a very hard time transitioning into real school."

Community Support Helps

"Our family fared very well through the pandemic vis-a-vis social/emotional wellness because we attended religious services on a weekly basis. All congregants in our religious community live in the same one square mile neighborhood so our social needs were very much met."

Stressed Parents

"Stressed out parents produce stressed out children. We need more time with our kids without having to worry about finances."

Mean Concern Ratings on Child's Health and Well-Being By Child Age Group

1=Very Concerned/Concerned; 2=Neutral; 3=Not Very Concerned or Not At All Concerned

	Language *	Behavior	Academic	Mental Health	Physical Development **	Social Skills
Infants / Toddlers (Ages 0-2)	2.41	2.20	2.20	2.10	2.50	1.99
Preschool- Age (Ages 3-4)	2.39	2.23	2.25	2.20	2.52	2.10
School-Age (Ages 5- 12)	2.41	2.15	2.05	1.99	2.44	2.01

*Statistically significant; $p < .05$

**Statistically significant; $p < .01$

Mean Concern Ratings on Child's Health and Well-Being By Racial Group

1=Very Concerned/Concerned; 2=Neutral; 3=Not Very Concerned or Not At All Concerned

	Language **	Behavior	Academic **	Mental Health	Physical Development **	Social Skills
BIPOC Respondents	2.32	2.21	2.15	2.15	2.38	2.07
White Respondents	2.48	2.23	2.23	2.12	2.54	2.07

**Statistically significant (p<.01)



What Do Parents Need?



Affordability *“Daycare for my children costs more than my monthly salary.”*
N=2,469 (55%)

Flexibility *“Need backup care for illness or daycare closures.”*
N=934 (21%) *“Our childcare provider...[has] limited hours of 8am-5:30pm. Being open later, until 6pm at least, would make a huge difference.”*

Accessibility *“Every day care in our area is full with a waiting list and I think a lot of families struggle to find day care near them.”*
N=648 (15%)

“Is there anything else you would like to share with the OEC at this time?”



Thankful

"Keep sending out surveys and hearing our needs. Please do your best to meet them. I can only speak for me but I appreciate that you guys actually want to hear about we're affected and if there's things you can do to ease that. Much appreciated."

"Thank you for taking the time to gather this information. I feel validated."

Supports/ Resources

"We need more parent support groups across CT."

"Thank you for collecting this information. I hope to see support created for middle-class families - not just low-income."

Equitable Survey Participation



OEC Wants to Hear **All** Parent Voices

- Innovations to equitable data collection
 - Survey Accessibility: going beyond digital
 - Language Justice

Parent Infrastructure Building – Pathways to Leadership



For More Information go to:

<https://www.ctoec.org/agency-program-reports/#2022-Parent>

or contact

Elena Trueworthy, Director

CT Head Start State Collaboration Office

elena.trueworthy@ct.gov

Chenae Russell, MSW

OEC Parent Cabinet Co-Founder, Commissioner's Assistant

chenae.russell@ct.gov