

Florida's 2021 CHILD CARE SURVEY



ABOUT THE SURVEY

The Children's Movement of Florida wanted a clear picture of the challenges families have encountered in their search for and experience with child care in Florida.

KEY FINDINGS

1

When defining quality, parents emphasize the student-teacher relationship and a safe and loving environment.

2

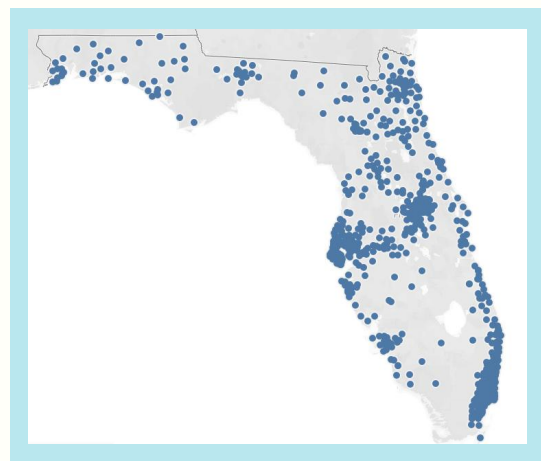
Parents mostly feel the quality of their child's care could improve.

3

Affordability is a top barrier to families accessing quality care.



4

Parents especially struggle to find care for infants and toddlers.





METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

| METHODS | | |
|---|----------------|---|
|  | +6,400 | Florida parents and guardians of children ages 0-6. |
|  | 23 days | Survey took place June 15-July 8. |

LIMITATIONS

- We received 5,845 responses in English and 639 responses in Spanish. Due to the relatively low number of Spanish responses, our Spanish data may not be representative compared to the larger sample size of the English survey. When added together for a total, the Spanish data does not significantly change the results viewed in English. We present both results for your information but suggest you take the English results as the most representative snapshot of the state.
- We are grateful to the numerous respondents who took the time to complete our survey, which averaged at about 8 minutes to complete. Given the length, we understand long-answer questions are more work-intensive for respondents, and as a result we had fewer substantive responses to qualitative questions.
- We had the unique challenge of wanting to offer respondents the opportunity to distinguish between up to three different children's experiences in child care. In the end, the majority of our responses were gathered in the Child #1 section of our survey, with participation dropping drastically for Child #2 and #3. This survey design made it difficult to aggregate statewide data, particularly across English and Spanish versions of the survey. As such, much of the data shown is just from the Child #1 section.
- We did not have the resources and network to create and circulate a Creole version of the survey and as a result, the Haitian population may not be fully represented in our findings.
- Given that the survey was only offered online, those who do not have reliable or regular access to the Internet may not be fully represented in our findings.

FINDING #1

When defining quality, parents emphasize the student-teacher relationship and a safe and loving environment.

Respondent definitions of "high-quality child care"

“Good environment and teaching quality. Care and guide children's learning.”

“A safe environment where the child is motivated to learn and develop social skills. Clean and healthy place with reasonable teacher-to-child ratio. A place where I can trust.”

“A safe and nurturing environment that promotes learning and creativity. Structured, clean, as well as well-trained staff.”

“The degree of the teacher, the size of the class and the atmosphere.”

Over and over, parents noted they felt that high-quality child care is tied to the education-level of the staff, a safe, clean, and loving environment, and the connection between the student and the teacher. When parents see happy children, they feel that is high quality.

“For me, high quality is easy. It is enough to make children happy and safe.”

FINDING #2

Parents mostly feel the quality of their child’s care could improve.

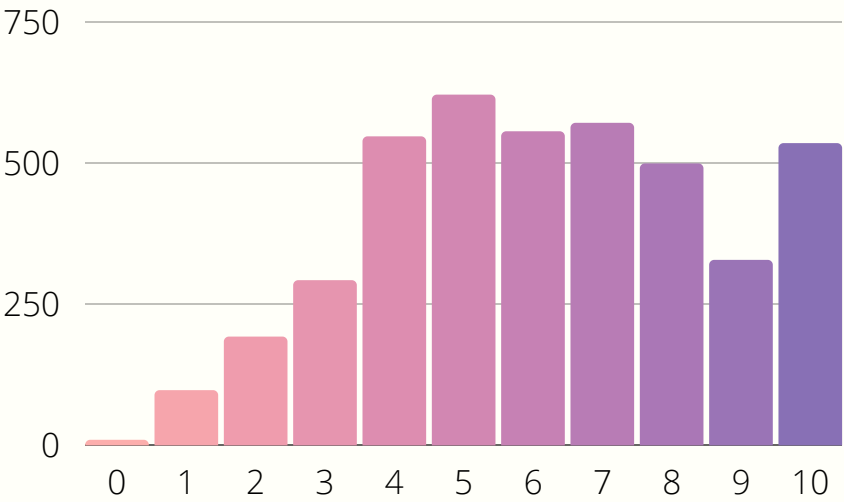
Please note we received 5,845 responses in English and 639 responses in Spanish. So our above statement about parents corresponds to the larger sample size from the English survey responses

English-speaking parents don't say their child care is "high-quality"

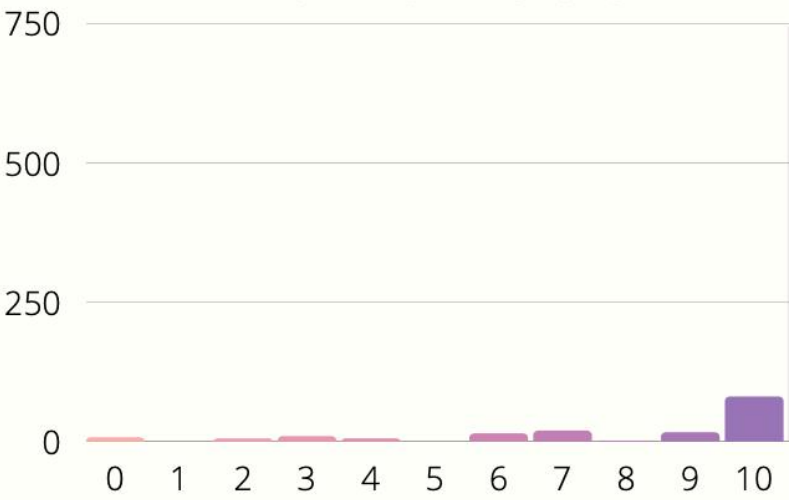
When asked to rate the quality of their child care, respondents answered on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being “low quality” and 10 being “high quality.”

The average response in English was 6.5. In Spanish it was 8.

ENGLISH RESPONSE



SPANISH RESPONSE

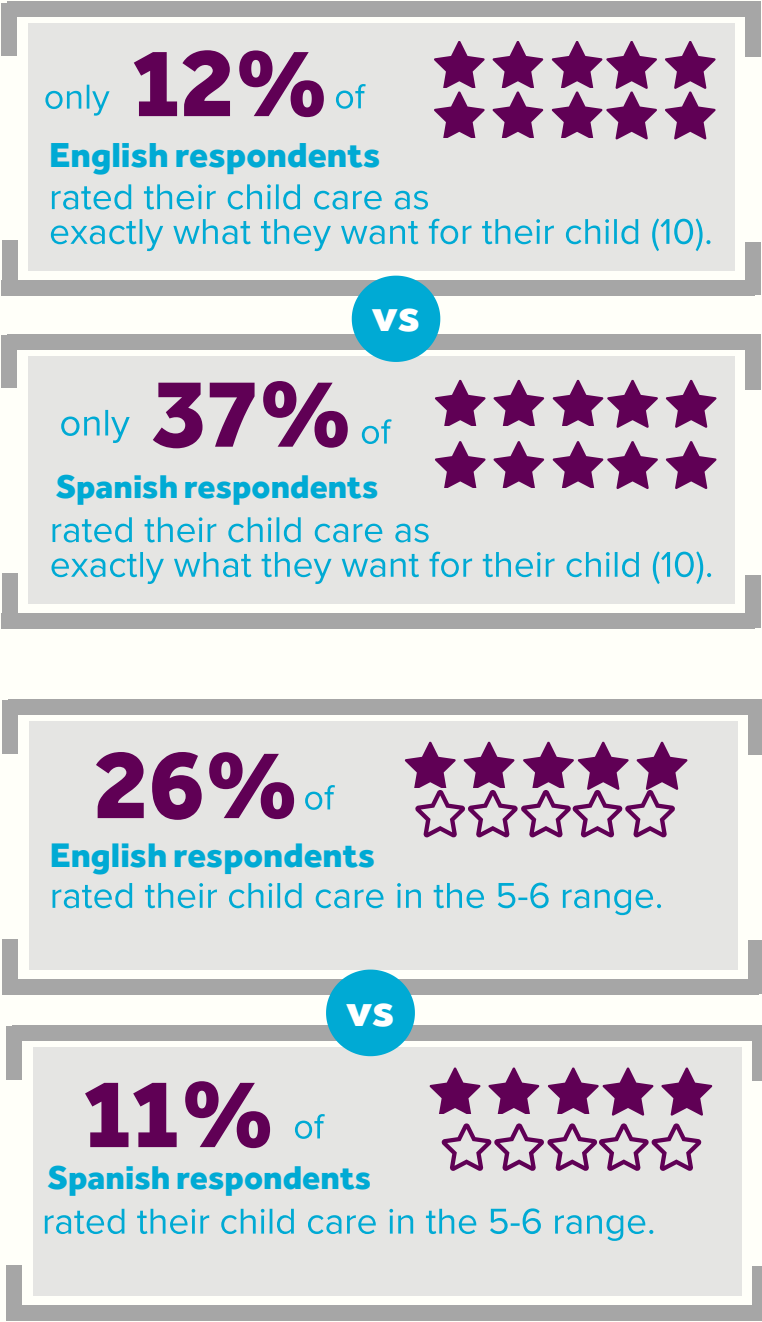


FINDING #2

Parents mostly feel the quality of their child’s care could improve.

Florida parents want more from their child care

When asked to rate how close to exactly what they wanted from a child care center their child's care was, respondents answered on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being “not at all what you want” and 10 being “exactly what you want.”



FINDING #2

Parents mostly feel the quality of their child’s care could improve.

Respondents were asked

Which of the following are you having trouble finding when looking for child care?

ENGLISH RESPONSE



#1

Staff with higher education and ongoing training



#2

Director with excellent prior experience and education



#3

Low teacher/child ratio



#4

Small group size



#5

Low teacher turnover

SPANISH RESPONSE



#1

Convenient location



#2

Open hours that meet my needs



#3

Low teacher/child ratio



#4

Good health and safety practices



#5

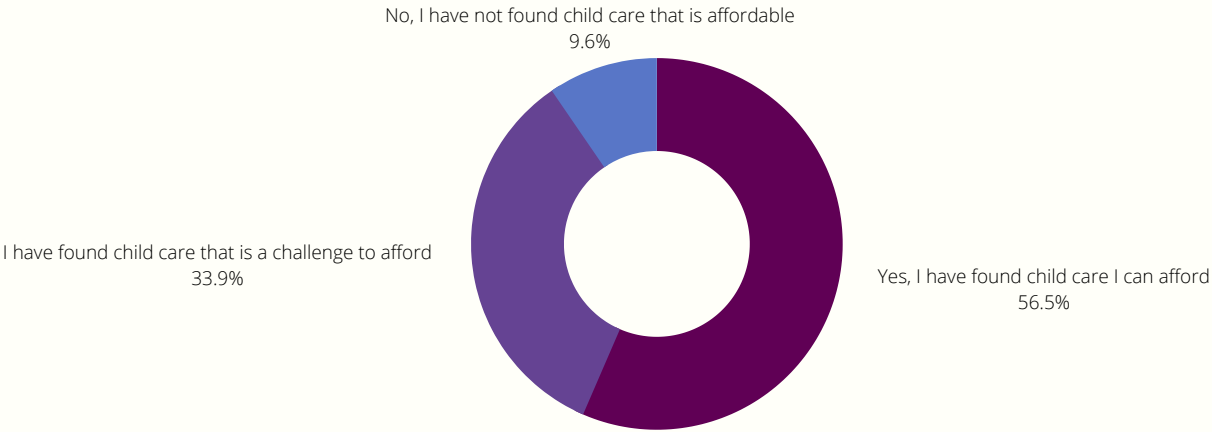
Positive teacher/child interaction

FINDING#3

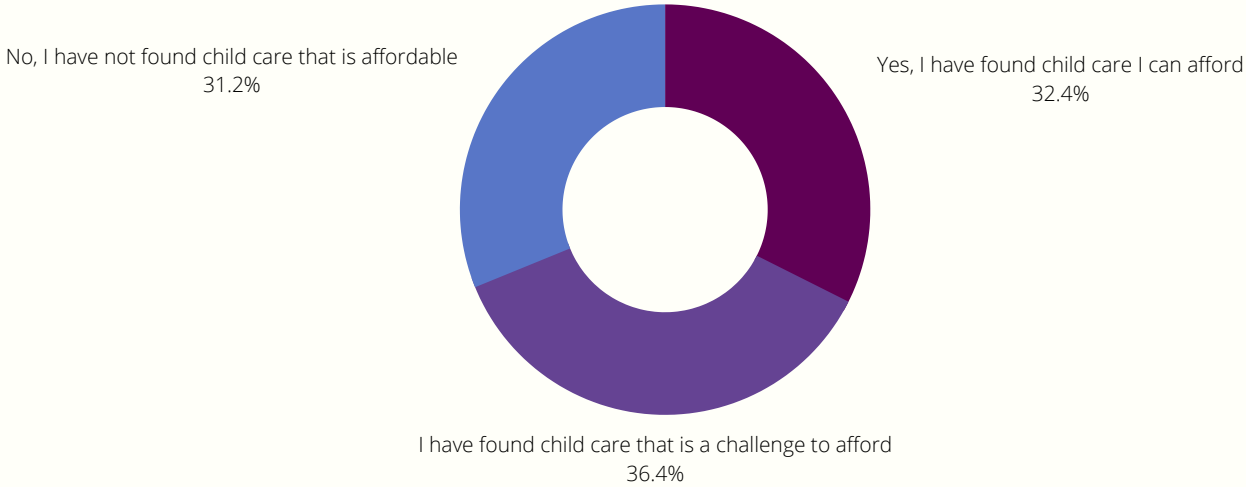
Affordability is a top barrier to families accessing quality care.

43% of English respondents and 67% of Spanish respondents either cannot afford child care or take on a significant financial burden to send their child to care.

ENGLISH RESPONSE



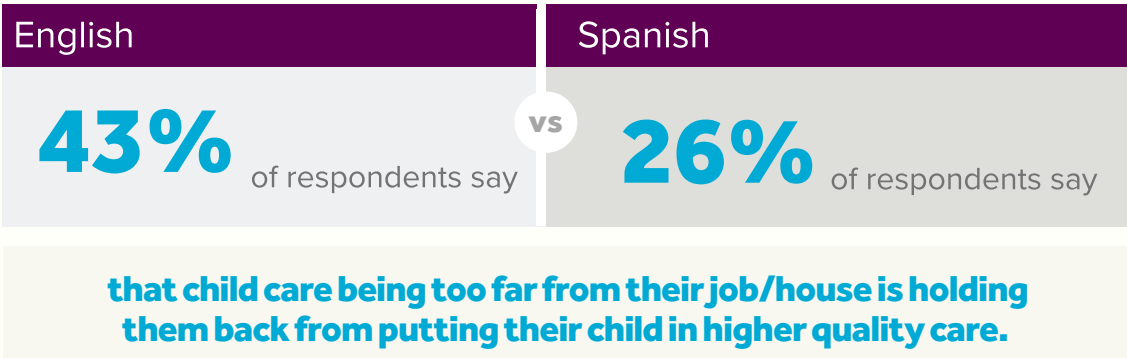
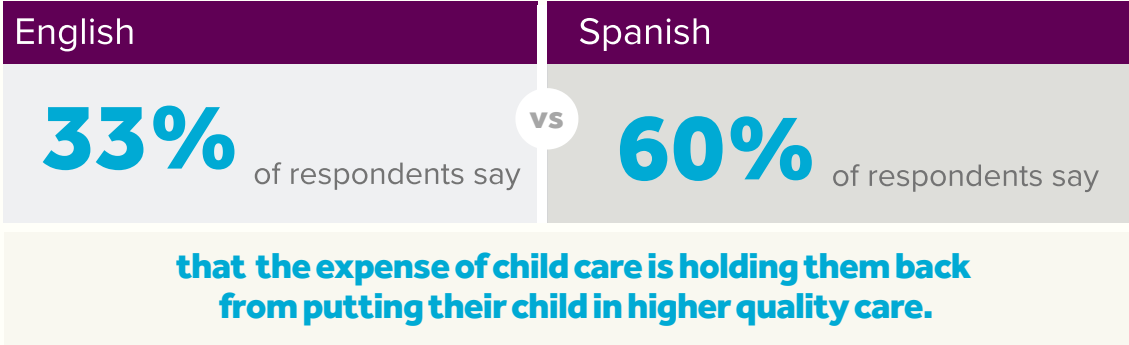
SPANISH RESPONSE



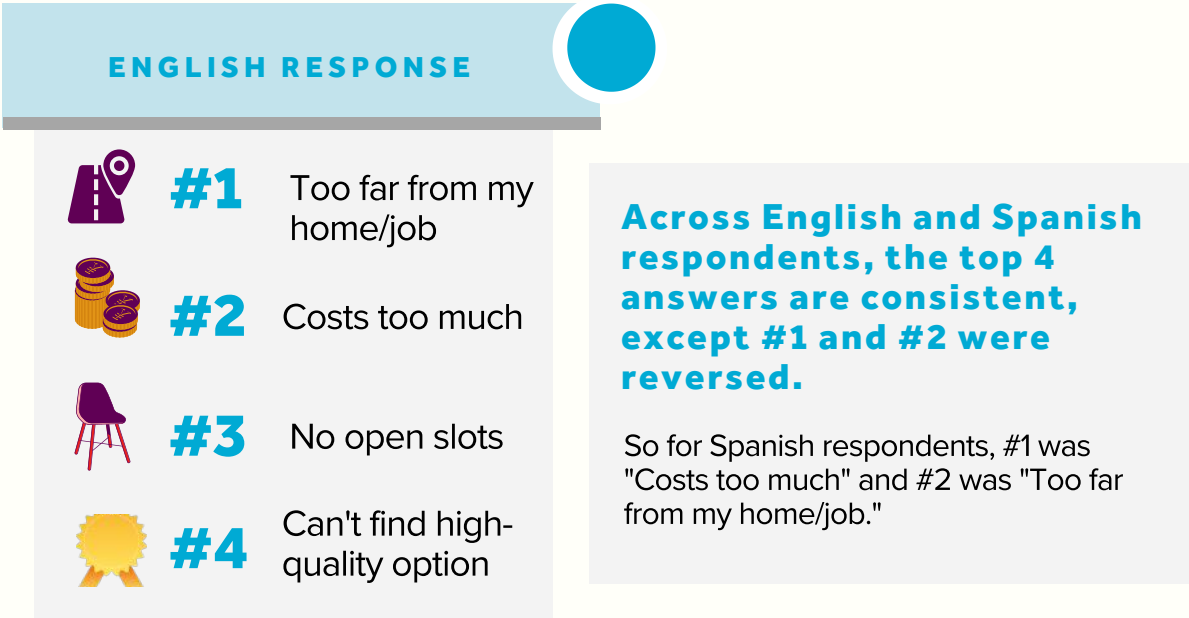
FINDING#3

Affordability is a top barrier to families accessing quality care.

Parents have a lot holding them back from accessing quality



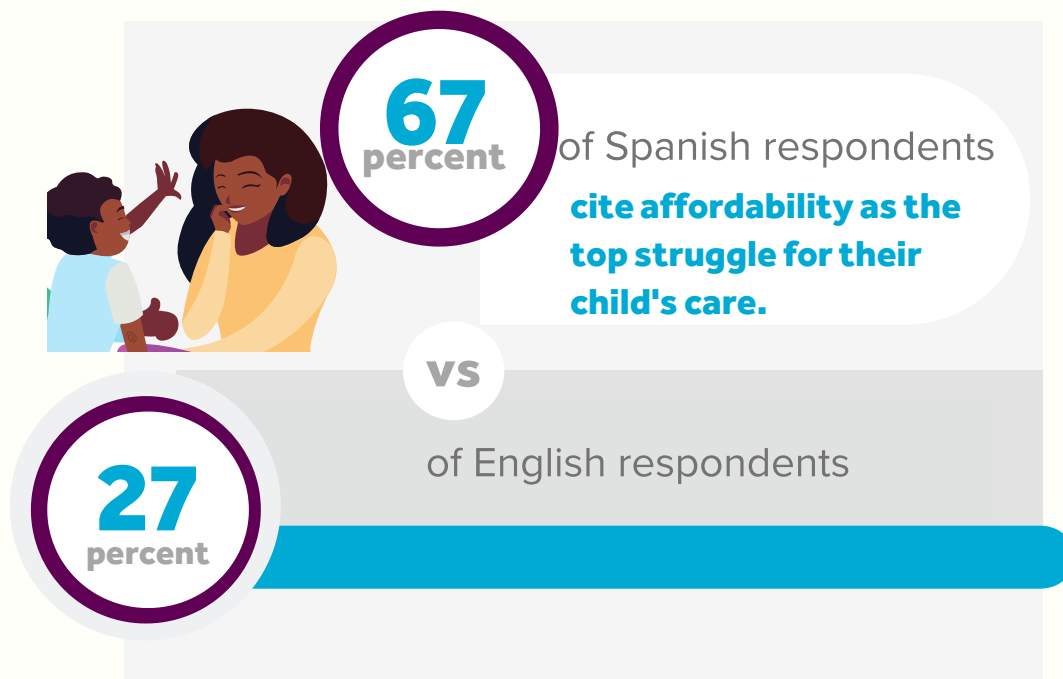
Respondents were asked
What are the top reasons you do not move your child to a higher quality center?



FINDING #3

Affordability is a top barrier to families accessing quality care.

Affordability is rated as the highest struggle for Spanish respondents (67%), and the second highest struggle for English respondents (27%).



Parents who do not have affordable child care or who struggle to afford their child care report using unlicensed or unregulated child care or leaving their children with a friend or family member to work or go to school more frequently than people who do have affordable child care.

18% of respondents who struggle to or cannot afford child care have left their child in unlicensed care 20+ times in the last two years to work or go to school.

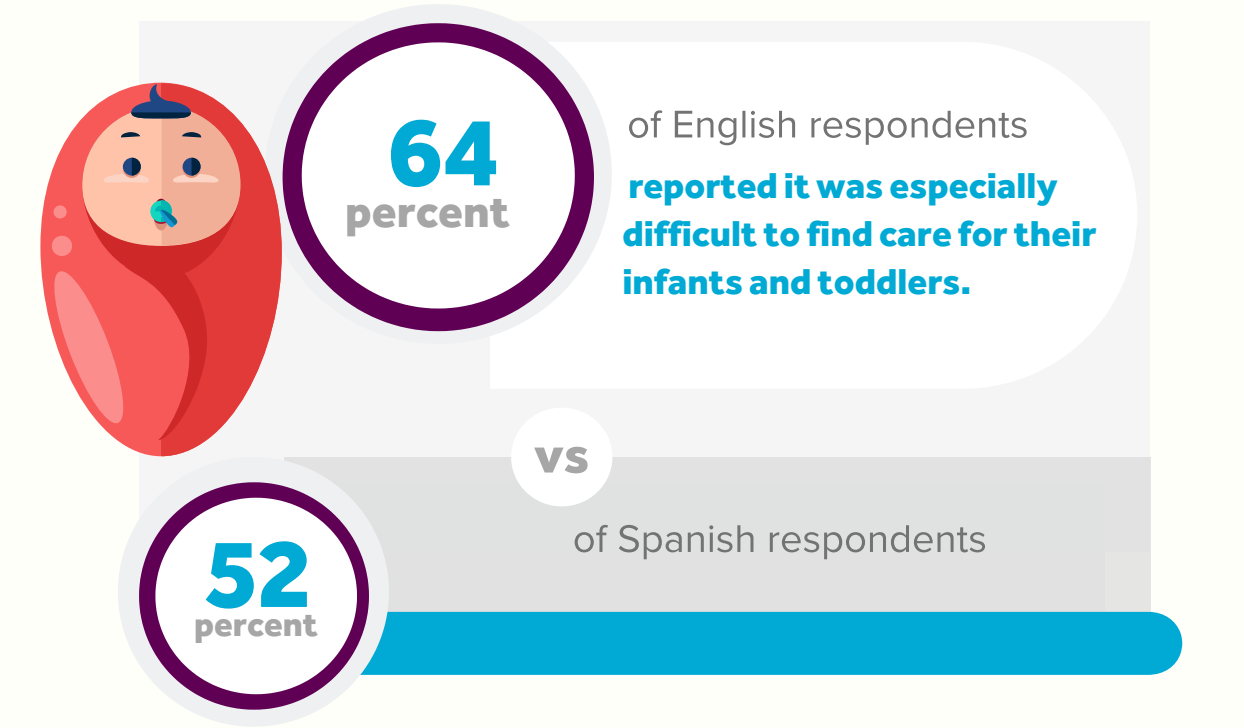
VS

6% of respondents who do not struggle to afford child care.



FINDING #4
Parents especially struggle to find care for infants and toddlers.

*For the purposes of this survey, we rated infant/toddler as the age range between 0-2 years old. *



For both English and Spanish respondents, the top two kinds of care infants/toddlers are using are child care centers/preschools and family child care homes.

“The cost of the care and the distance were a headache.”

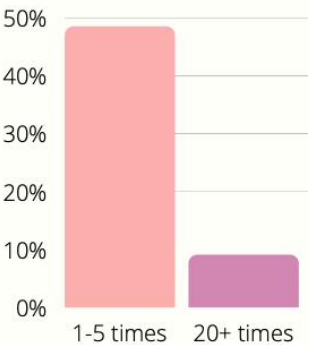
“Hard to find openings in good daycares. Long wait lists.”

FINDING #4

Parents especially struggle to find care for infants and toddlers.

20% of Spanish respondents and 10% of English respondents with infants/toddlers have used unlicensed care +20 times in the last two years to work or go to school.

ENGLISH RESPONSE



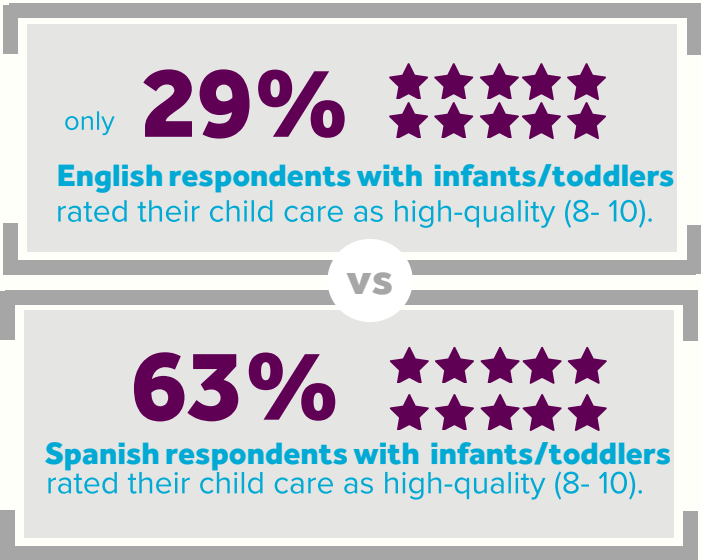
SPANISH RESPONSE



English parents of infants/toddlers don't rate their child care as high quality

When asked to rate the quality of their child care, respondents with infants/toddlers answered on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being “low quality” and 10 being “high quality.”

Please note we had 2,913 responses in English and 137 responses in Spanish.



The number rises when looking at respondents with children ages 3-5.

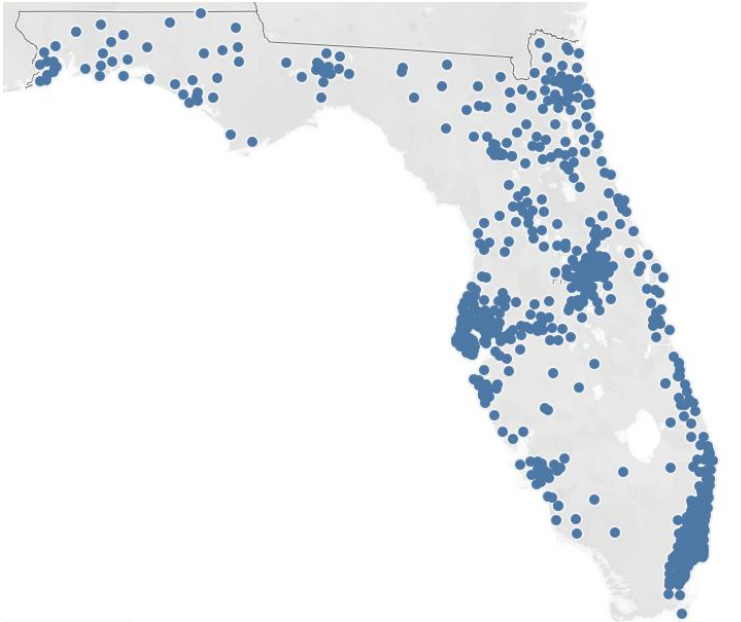
35% of English respondents with children ages 3-5 rate their center as high quality (8-10).

71% of Spanish respondents with children ages 3-5 rate their center as high quality (8-10).

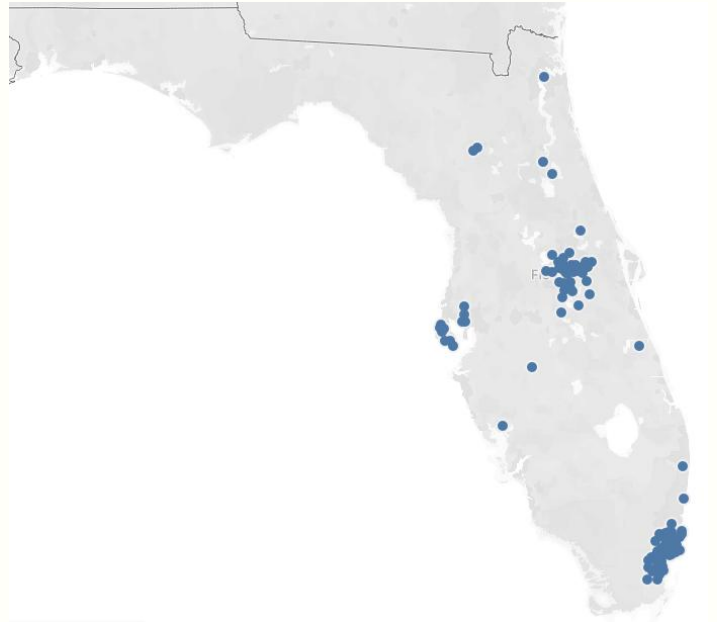
APPENDIX 1: SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Map of Respondents

ENGLISH RESPONSE



SPANISH RESPONSE

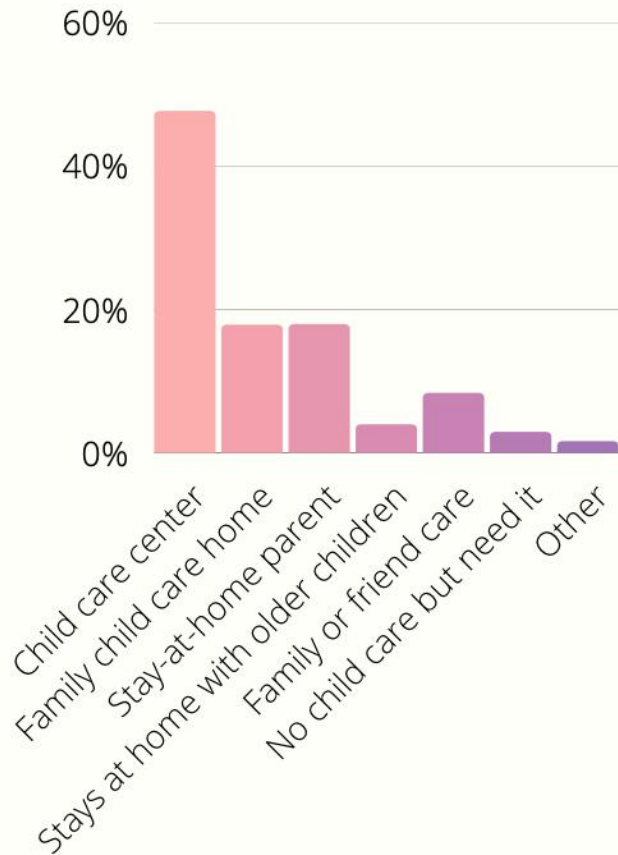


| English Respondents | | Spanish Respondents |
|---|---|---|
| 5,845 | + | 639 |
| Number of responses for Child #1 Section | | Number of responses for Child #1 Section |
| 4,736 | - | 275 |

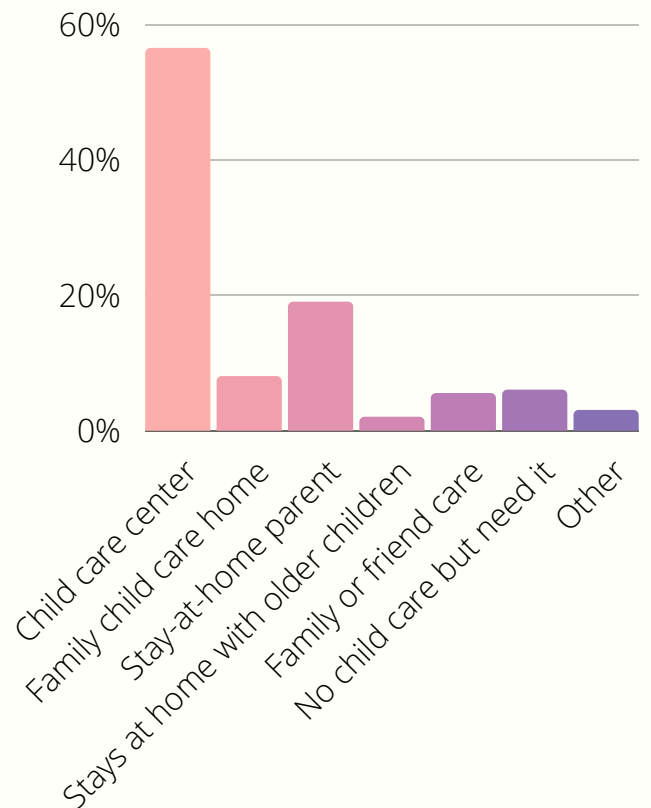
APPENDIX 1: SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

What kind of care are respondents' children in?

ENGLISH RESPONSE



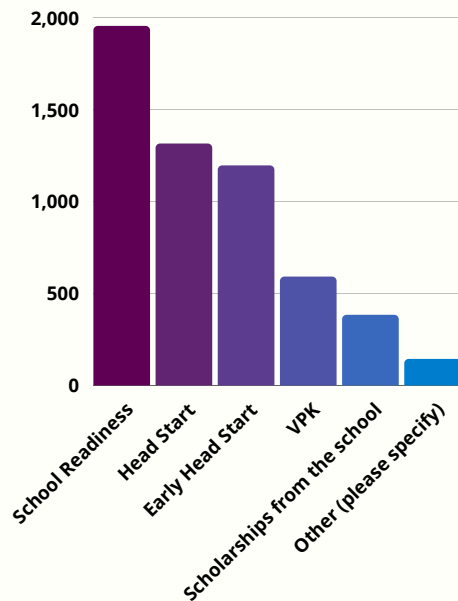
SPANISH RESPONSE



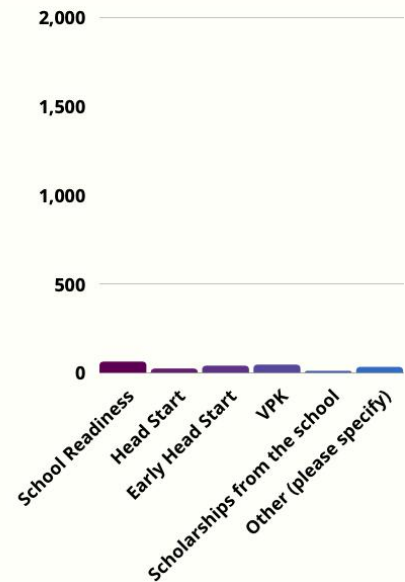
APPENDIX 1: SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Total number of children whose parent/guardian reported they receive financial assistance for their care.

ENGLISH RESPONSE



SPANISH RESPONSE



Total number of children whose parent/guardian reported they have a disability across 4791 English and Spanish respondents.

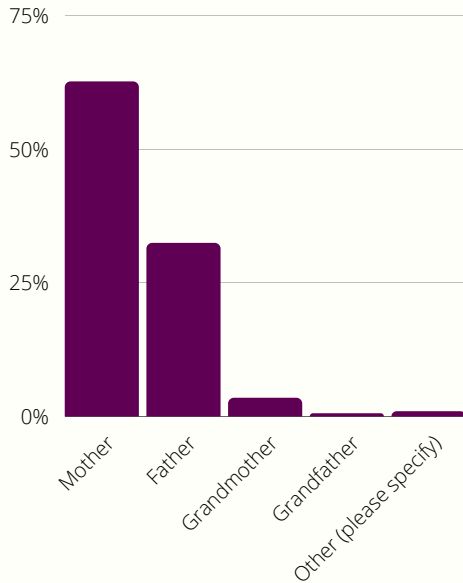
1,742

Percentage of English and Spanish respondents reporting their child has a disability.

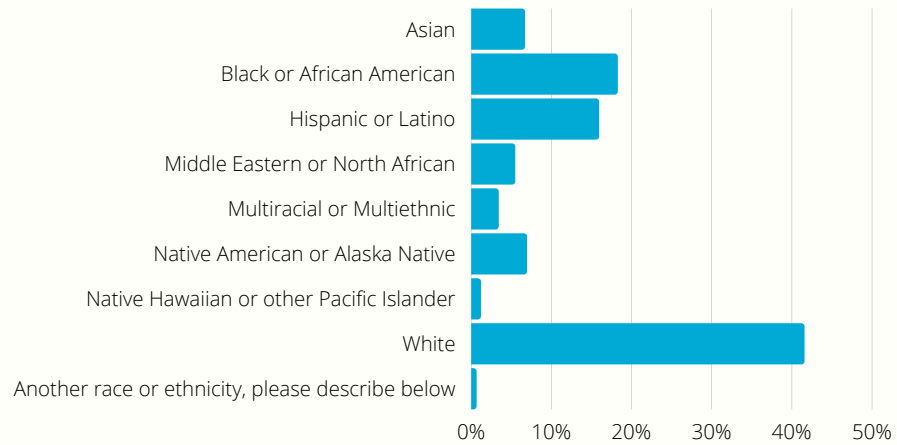
36%

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS ENGLISH RESPONSES

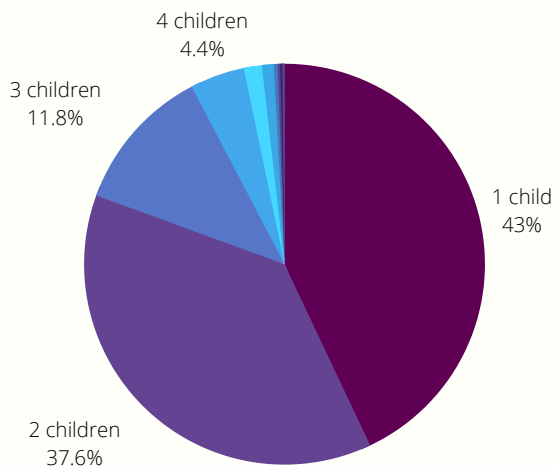
Role



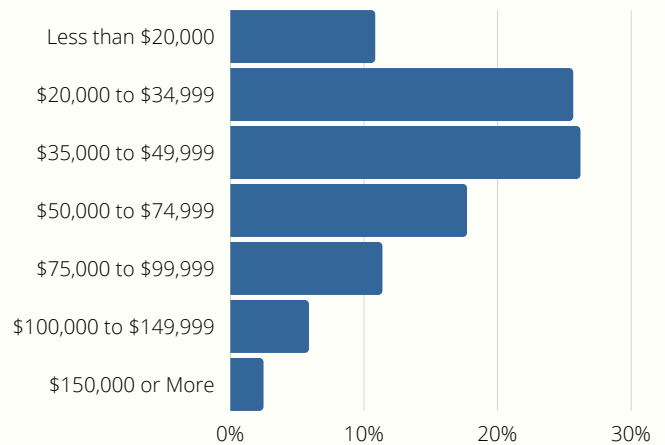
Race



Number of children respondent has

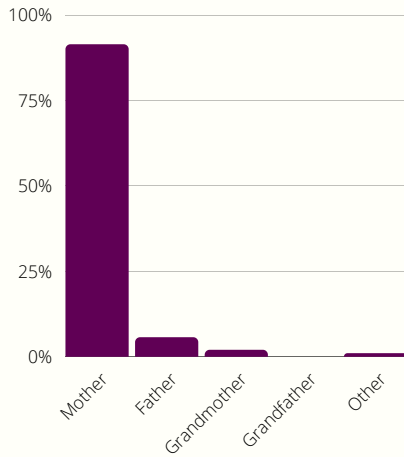


Household Income

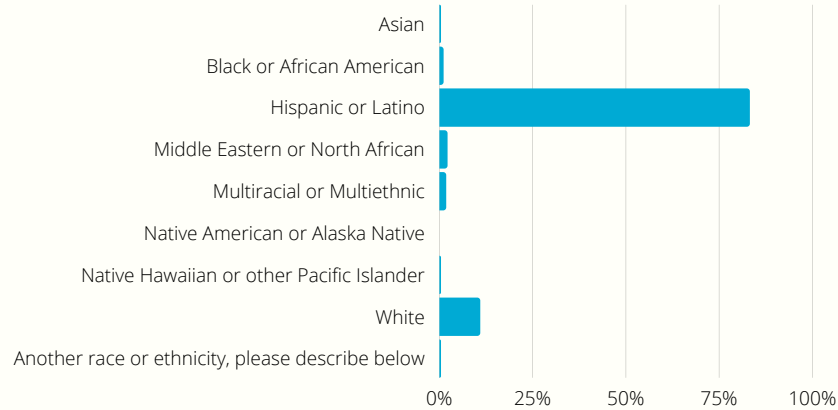


APPENDIX 1: SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS SPANISH RESPONSES

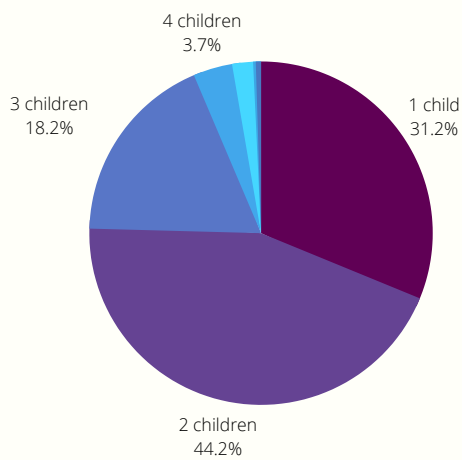
Role



Race



Number of children respondent has



Household Income

