

Survey Findings from October 19 - November 2, 2022

# MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM

THE ROLE OF CHILD CARE  
INVESTMENTS IN SUPPORTING  
WORKING FAMILIES





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## OVERVIEW

*The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC), with partners, began surveying Louisiana parents with young children in 2020 as part of a larger effort to understand the impact of COVID-19 on families and child care in Louisiana. This now annual survey of Louisiana parents with children under the age of 5 focuses on their child care arrangements, including their needs and experiences related to child care.*

2022 included several highs, and lows, for Louisiana families. The state experienced some of its lowest monthly unemployment rates, with rates below 4% for much of the year. The Louisiana Legislature appropriated \$84 million in new state funds toward early care and education, and leveraged one-time federal stimulus dollars to increase funding for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). These investments enabled over 28,500 in-need children and their working families to afford high-quality early care and education programs. A number of local communities also raised or dedicated new revenue for early care and education, many hoping to double their investments through the state matching funds available through the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.

At the same time, families and child care providers faced increasing costs. Early care and education providers struggled with many of the same staffing challenges as other industries. Together, these compounded many families' difficulties when trying to find affordable, high-quality child care. The impending fiscal cliff from the expiring one-time federal funding threatens to leave tens of thousands of young children without care while their parents work or attend school. And this is on top of the hundreds of thousands of other children in the state who currently lack access to affordable, high-quality child care.



## SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

This survey provides insights into the continued needs and challenges of families with young children in Louisiana.

### Year-over-year, Louisiana families with young children rely on child care to support parent employment and education.

- **Most responding parents** were working or attending school, full time and outside of the home.
  - The unemployment rate was **three times as high** for parents with a family income below \$20,000 per year.
- Families with young children relied **heavily on some type of formal child care outside the home**. Formal care options include child care centers, preschools in a school, Head Start or Early Head Start, family or home-based child care providers, and employer-sponsored child care at a workplace.
- **Over 80%** of parents reported utilizing child care for 30 or more hours per week, with children in child care for an average of **38 hours per week**.
- Parents indicated the **main reasons for using their current child care arrangements were hours/availability, child interactions with others, supporting kindergarten readiness, and convenient location**.
- **Over half** of parents made some sort of adjustment to their work or school schedule to provide child care in the previous six months.
  - Parents not receiving any type of subsidized care were **more likely** to experience an adjustment to their work or school schedule.
  - Parents in the Capitol Region and southeast Louisiana were **more likely** to have alternated work or school hours, worked fewer hours, worked remotely, and/or worked outside of normal business hours to provide care for their children.
  - Parents with a family income below \$20,000 per year were almost **twice as likely** to have quit their job in order to care for their children.

### Child care costs continue to rise, especially for families paying the entire cost of care.

- On average, families in Louisiana reported currently paying **\$348 per child per month** for child care – for a family with two children, that would translate to **\$8,341 per year**.
  - For families paying for child care and not receiving any type of subsidized care, the average monthly cost of child care was **\$709 per child per month**, or **\$17,023 per year** for a family with two children.
  - For families receiving some sort of subsidized child care but still having to pay some amount, the average monthly cost of child care was **\$433 per child per month**, or **\$10,395 per year** for a family with two children.
- **Over 50%** of families received some type of subsidized child care in 2022, either through enrollment in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and/or a free child care program.
  - Families in Acadiana, northeast, and northwest Louisiana were **more likely** to receive some sort of subsidized child care.



## Working families benefit from increased supports, and any reductions will have a greater impact on those who are struggling the most.

- **Almost half** of parents were concerned about being unable to afford child care.
  - Parents with family incomes between \$35,000 and \$100,000 per year were **more likely** to be concerned about their inability to afford child care.
- **Over 50%** of parents indicated having trouble paying for basic household expenses, including utilities, child care, food, and clothing, in the prior six months.
  - Parents in northeast Louisiana and those with family incomes below \$50,000 per year were **more likely** to have had trouble paying for basic household expenses.
- **Nearly half** of parents claimed or planned to claim School Readiness Tax Credits for Child Care Expenses on their 2021 Louisiana tax return.

## Child care challenges persist for working families.

- **Over one-fifth** of parents said it was difficult to find their current child care arrangements.
  - Parents in the Capitol Region and southeast Louisiana, as well as parents who did not receive any type of subsidized care, were **more likely** to report difficulty finding child care.
- **Nearly 75%** of parents reported having to take at least one day off from work in the prior three months because of a child care closure.



## ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE CHILD CARE HELPS US ALL

High-quality early care and education benefits everyone in Louisiana. Children are prepared for success in school and life. Working parents and caregivers can maintain workforce participation. Employers have a reliable workforce with minimal interruptions. Communities throughout the state enjoy robust employment rates, economic growth, and tax revenues. For the state to maintain its momentum, Louisiana must:

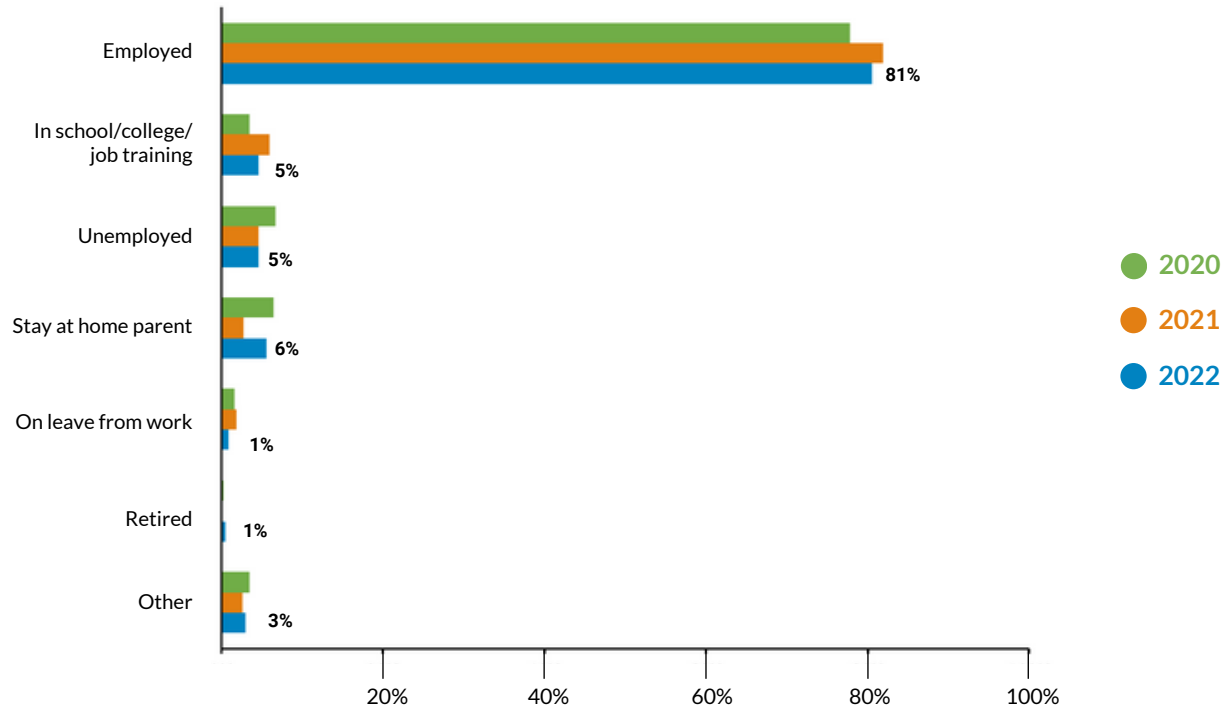
- **Continue state investments in early care and education** to increase access to high-quality child care, especially for children birth through age 3, including funding for programs that received one-time federal stopgap investments.
- **Encourage local governments to generate revenue for early care and education** through continued state investment in the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.
- **Support continued professionalization of the early care and education workforce** compensation and training strategies implemented by the Louisiana Department of Education and Louisiana Workforce Commission.
- **Encourage increased federal investments in early care and education** to support increased access to affordable child care for working families.

## SURVEY FINDINGS

### Year-over-year, Louisiana families with young children rely on child care to support parent employment and education.

Almost 90% of responding parents were working or attending school, most full time (74%) and outside of the home fully or at least part of the time (75%).

Figure 1  
Work or School Situation of Responding Parents



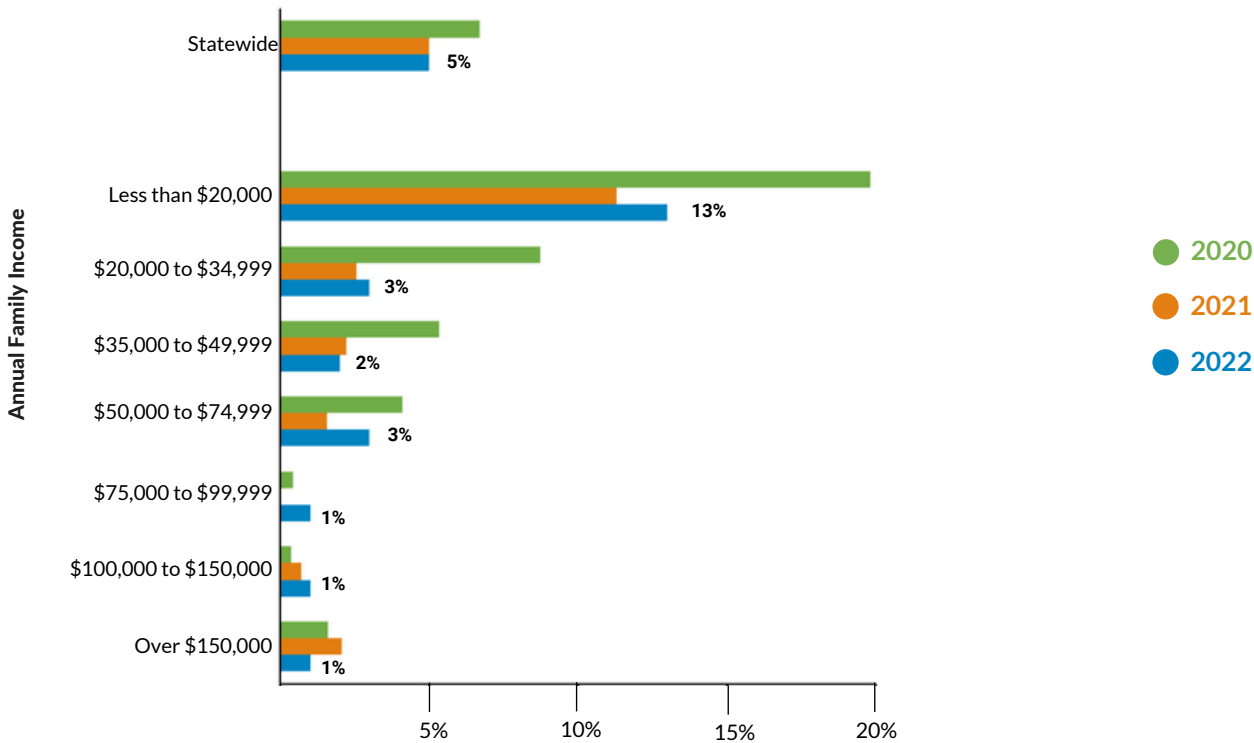
Question: What best describes your current work or school situation?

Note: In 2020, "unemployed" response options began with "Unemployed due to COVID-19 pandemic"



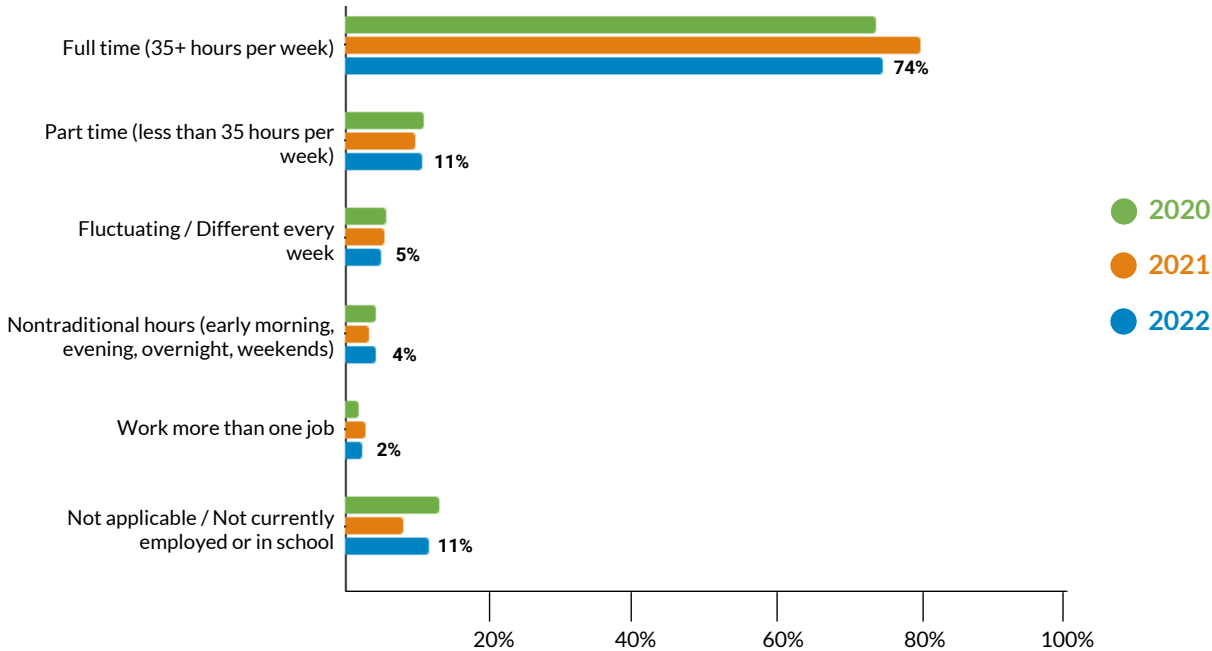
Overall, **5%** of parents reported being unemployed, however, that rate was three times as high for parents with a family income below \$20,000 per year.

**Figure 2**  
**Unemployment Rates of Responding Parents**



Question: What best describes your current work or school situation?

**Figure 3**  
**Work or School Schedule for Responding Parents**



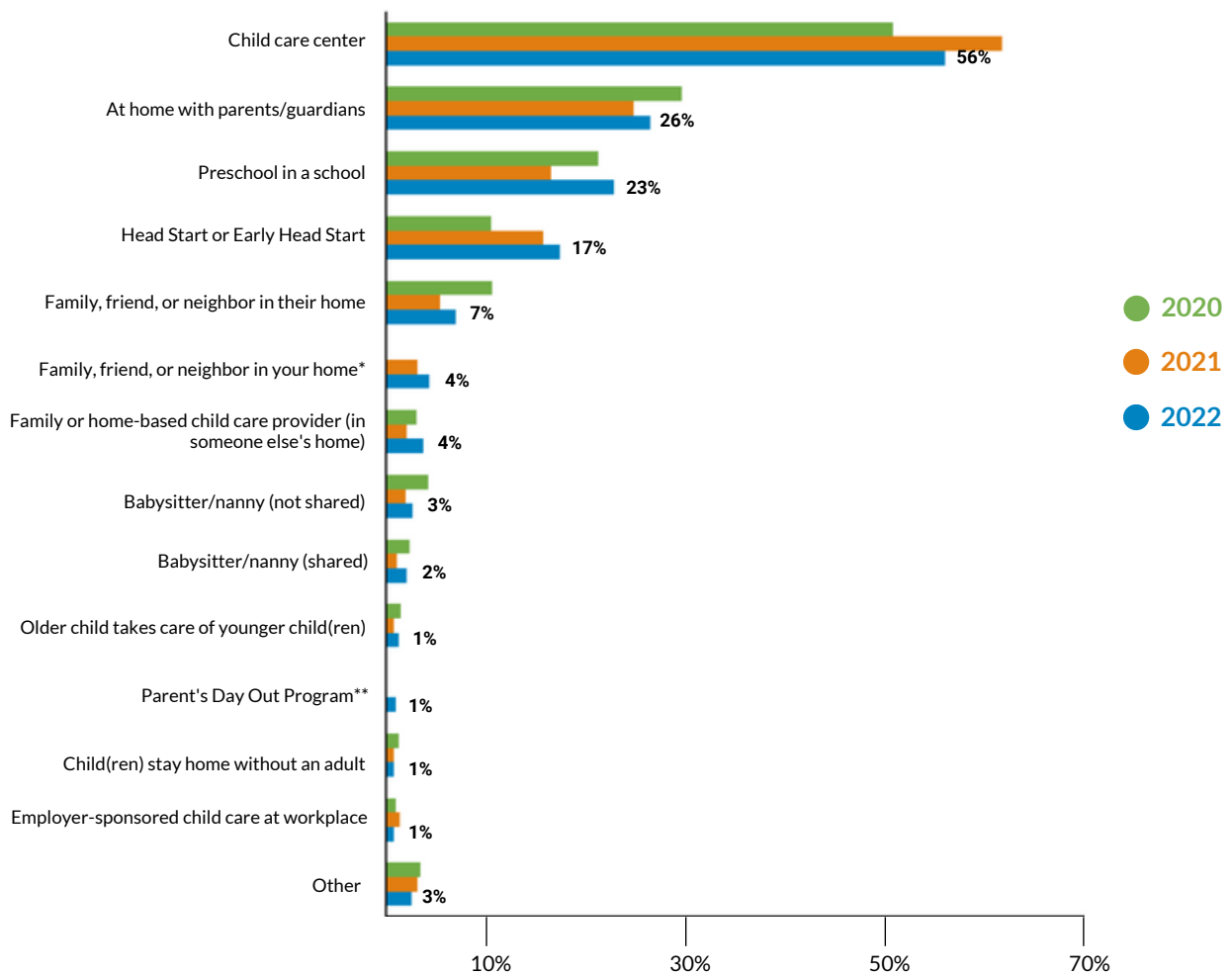
Question: What is your current work or school schedule? Please check all that apply.  
 Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.





Families with young children relied heavily on some type of formal child care outside the home. Formal care options include child care centers, preschools in a school, Head Start or Early Head Start, family or home-based child care providers, and employer-sponsored child care at a workplace.

**Figure 4**  
**Current Child Care Arrangements Used by Responding Parents**



\*Response option not available in 2020

\*\*Response option not available in 2020 or 2021

Question: What best describes your current child care arrangement(s)? Please check all that apply.

Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.

Over 80% of parents reported utilizing child care for 30 or more hours per week, with children in child care for an average of 38 hours per week.

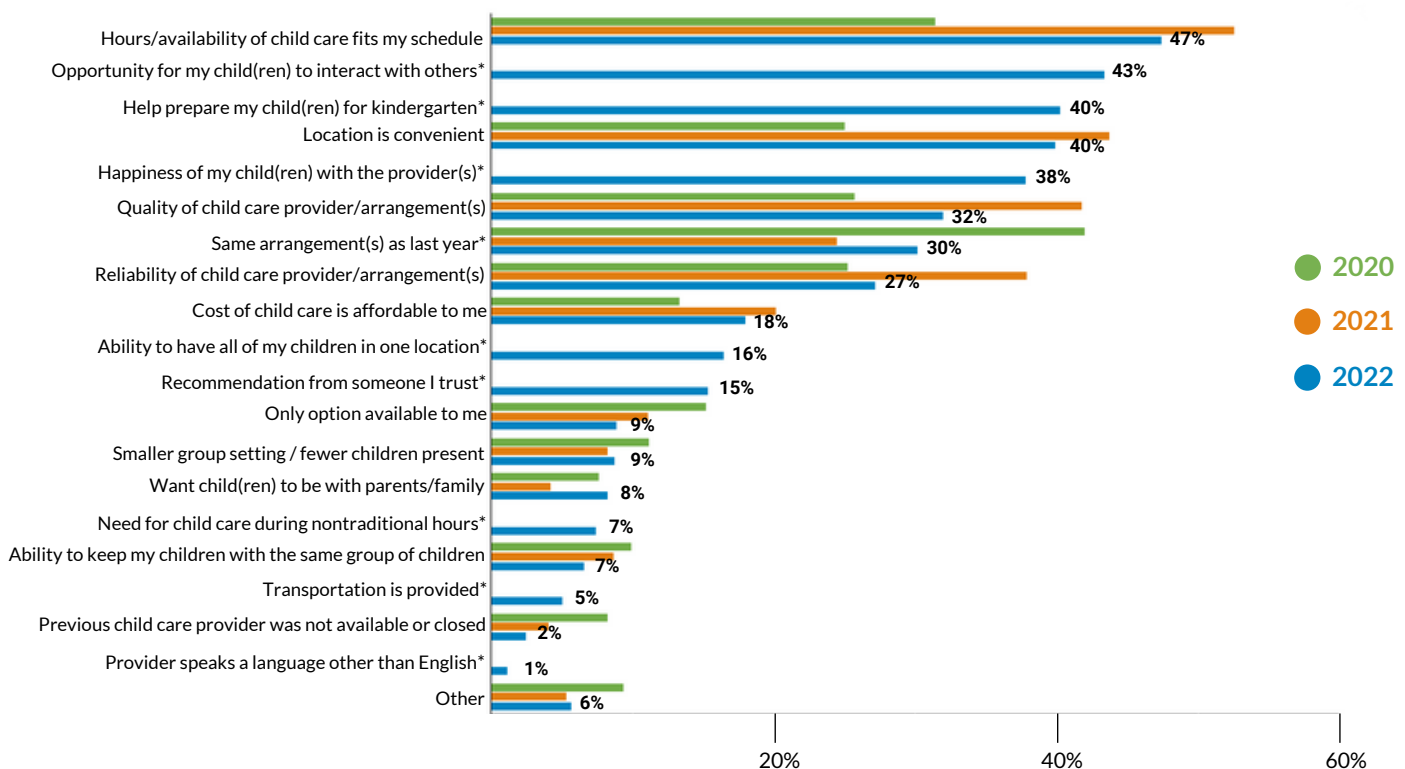
**Table 5**  
**Typical Weekly Hours of Child Care Currently Used by Responding Parents**

Weekly Child Care Hours Used	2020	2021	2022
0 hours	3%	3%	2%
1 to 10 hours	6%	7%	9%
11 to 20 hours	5%	3%	5%
21 to 30 hours	9%	7%	8%
31 to 40 hours	56%	57%	55%
41 to 50 hours	16%	18%	16%
51 to 60 hours	2%	2%	2%
More than 60 hours	4%	4%	4%

Question: How many hours per week do you typically use your current child care arrangement(s) for your child(ren)? If you use more than one child care arrangement, please provide the total combined hours for ALL of your current child care arrangements.

Parents indicated the main reasons for using their current child care arrangements were hours/availability (47%), child interactions with others (43%), supporting kindergarten readiness (40%), and convenient location (40%).

**Figure 6**  
**Reasons for Using Current Child Care Arrangements by Responding Parents**



\*Response option not available in 2020 or 2021

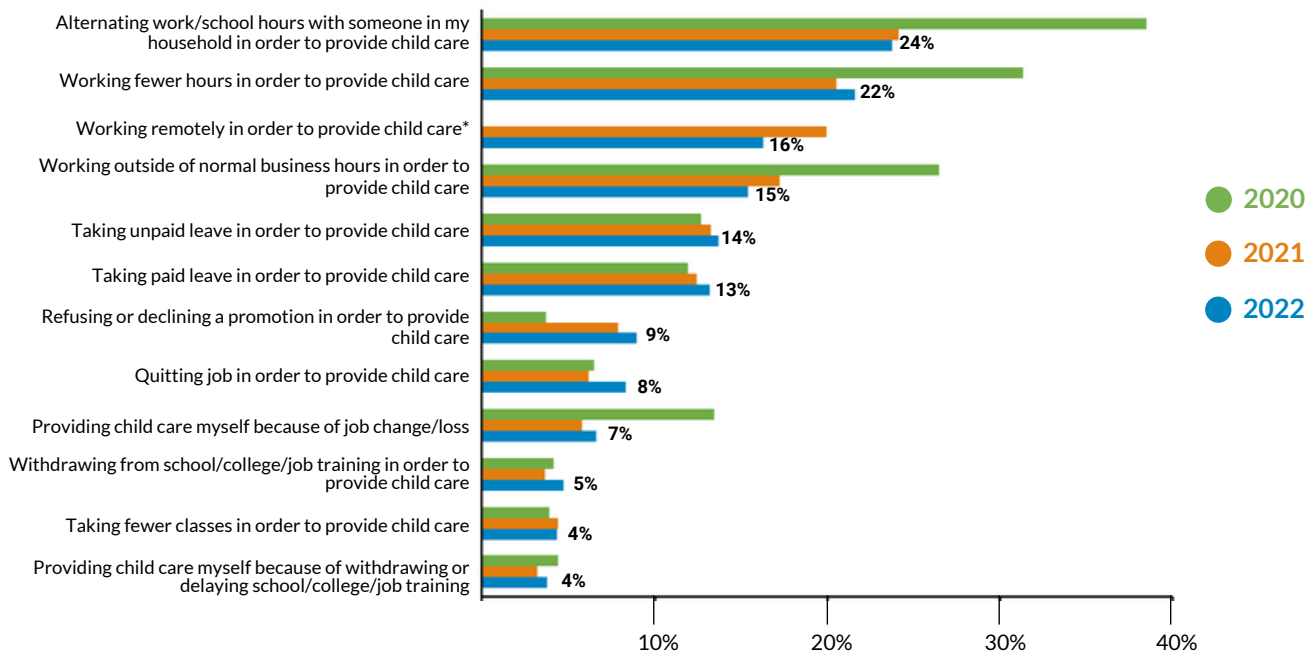
Question: What are the main reasons for using your current child care arrangement(s)? Please check all that apply.

Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.



**Over half (52%)** of parents made some sort of adjustment to their work or school schedule to provide child care in the previous six months – 24% of parents alternated work or school hours, 22% worked fewer hours, 16% worked remotely, 15% worked outside of normal business hours, and 6% quit their job.

**Figure 7**  
**Schedule Adjustments Related to Providing Child Care Made by Responding Parents**



\*Response option not available in 2020

Questions: [2020] Since March 2020, have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply. / [2021] Since April 2021, have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply. / [2022] In the past six months (since April 2022), have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply.

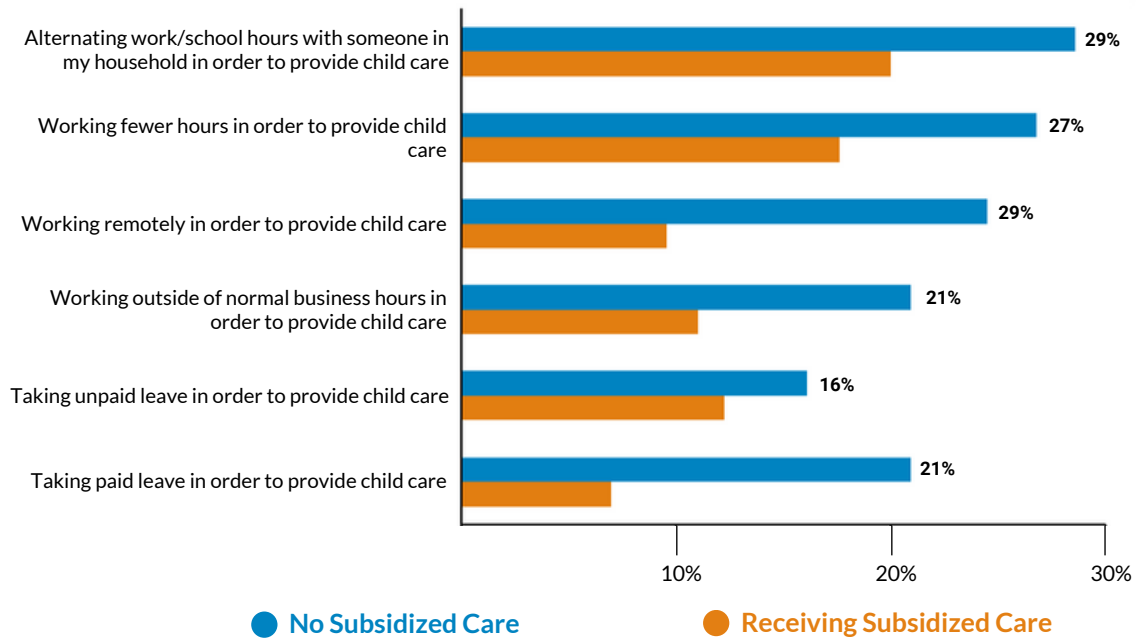
Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.



Parents not receiving any type of subsidized care were **more likely** to experience an adjustment to their work or school schedule.

**Figure 8**

**Selected Schedule Adjustments Related to Providing Child Care Made by Responding Parents, by Receipt of Subsidized Care**

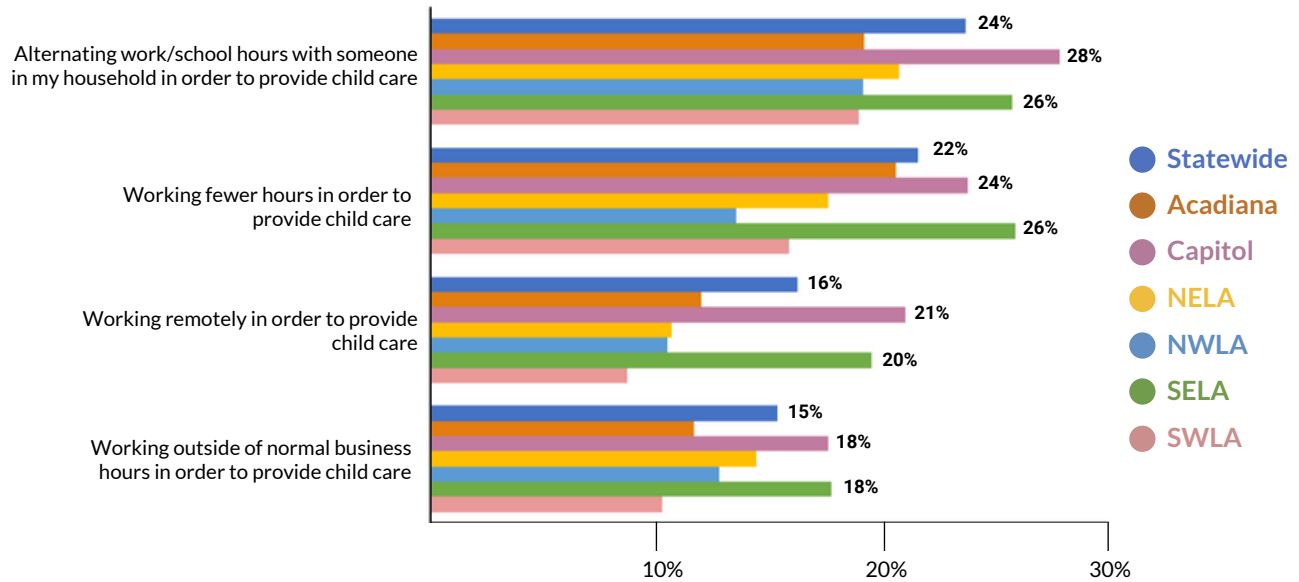


Question: In the past six months (since April 2022), have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply.  
 Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.



Parents in the Capitol Region and southeast Louisiana were **more likely** to have alternated work or school hours, worked fewer hours, worked remotely, and/or worked outside of normal business hours to provide care for their children.

**Figure 9**  
**Selected Schedule Adjustments Related to Providing Child Care Made by Responding Parents, by Region**

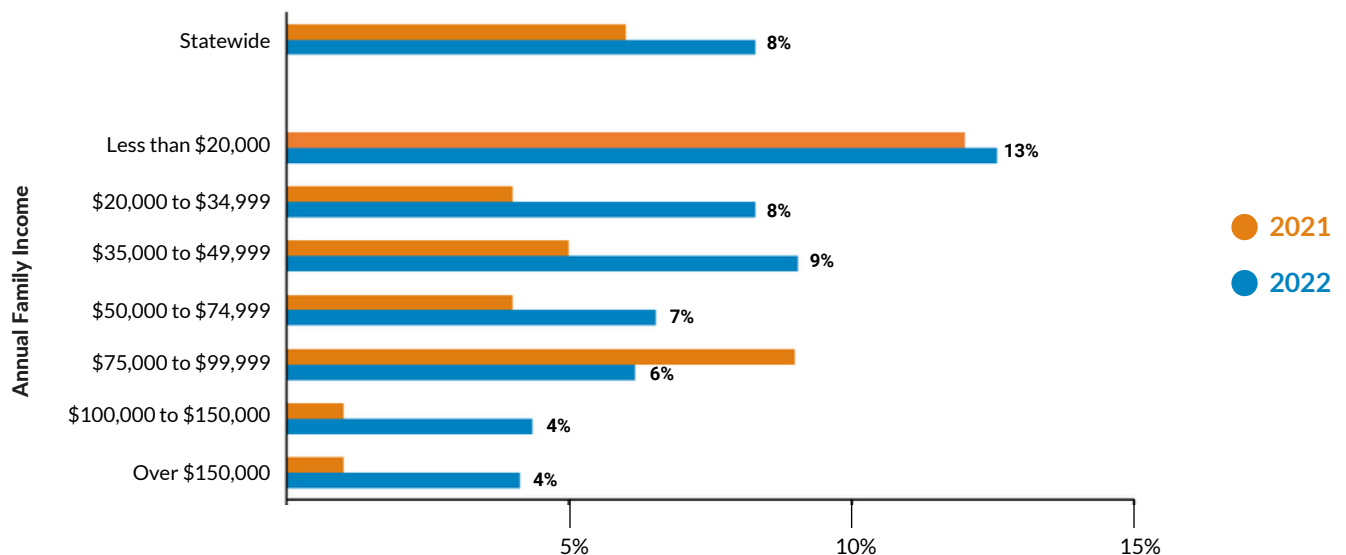


Question: In the past six months (since April 2022), have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply.

Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.

Parents with a family income below \$20,000 per year were **almost twice as likely** to have quit their job in order to care for their children.

**Figure 10**  
**Percent of Responding Parents Who Quit Job to Provide Child Care**



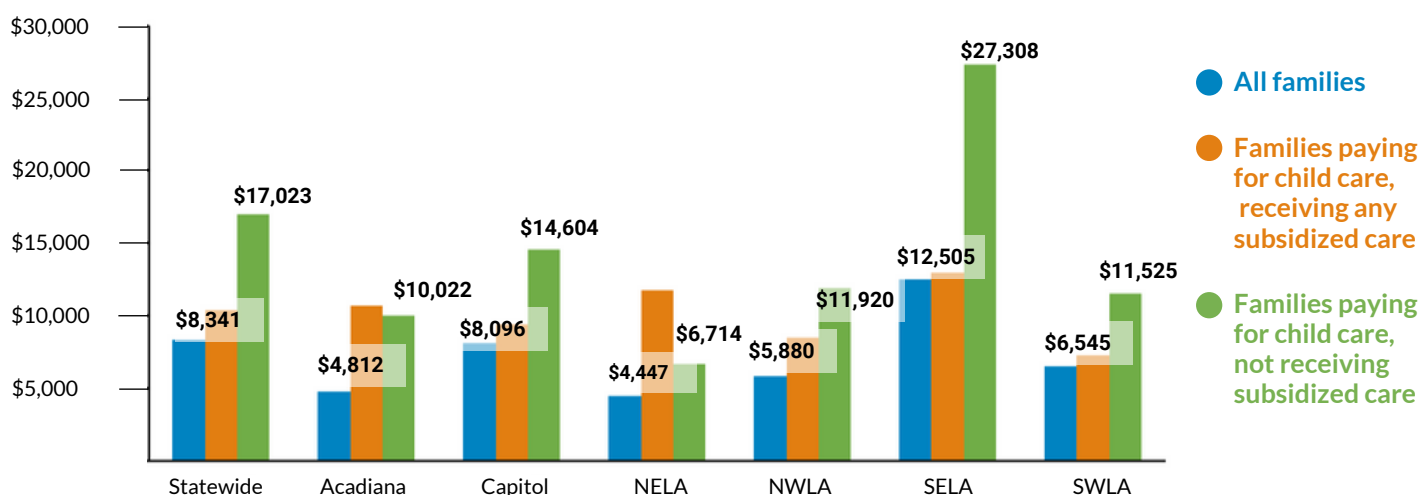
Question: In the past six months (since April 2022), have you or another parent/guardian in your household experienced any of the following? Please check all that apply.

## Child care costs continue to rise, especially for families paying the entire cost of care.

On average, families in Louisiana reported currently paying **\$348 per child per month** for child care – for a family with two children, that would translate to **\$8,341 per year**.

- For families paying for child care and **not receiving any type of subsidized care**, the average monthly cost of child care was **\$709 per child per month**, or **\$17,023 per year** for a family with two children.
- For families receiving **some sort of subsidized child care** but still having to pay some amount, the average monthly cost of child care was **\$433 per child per month**, or **\$10,395 per year** for a family with two children.

**Figure 11**  
Average Annual Cost of Child Care for Family with Two Children



Question: How much do you pay for your current child care arrangement(s) per week? Please provide the typical dollar amount you pay per week for ALL of your children under age 5. If you pay a monthly rate, please divide the monthly rate by 4.

Note: Results for "families paying for child care, receiving any subsidized care" only include respondents paying at least \$1 and who indicated they are receiving at least one type of subsidized care. Results for "families paying for child care, not receiving subsidized care" only include respondents paying at least \$1 and who indicated they are not receiving subsidized care.







**Over 50%** of families received some type of subsidized child care in 2022, either through enrollment in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and/or a free child care program.

- Families in Acadiana, northeast, and northwest Louisiana were **more likely** to receive some sort of subsidized child care.

**Table 12**  
**Receipt of Subsidized Child Care by Responding Parents**

Response	2022							2021	2020
	Acadiana	Capitol	NELA	NWLA	SELA	SWLA	Statewide	Statewide	Statewide
<b>Received any subsidized care</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Received child care subsidy/CCAP	41%	26%	43%	47%	32%	28%	34%	43%	18%
Child care provided at no cost / for free through publicly funded program at a school or child care center	20%	19%	16%	17%	21%	20%	20%	15%	9%
Child care provided at no cost / for free by family, friend, or neighbor	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	6%
Child care provided at no cost / for free by employer	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0.4%	1%	1%	--
<b>Did not receive subsidized care</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>68%</b>

Question: Do you receive a child care subsidy or are these child care arrangements provided at no cost/for free? Please check all that apply.  
Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.

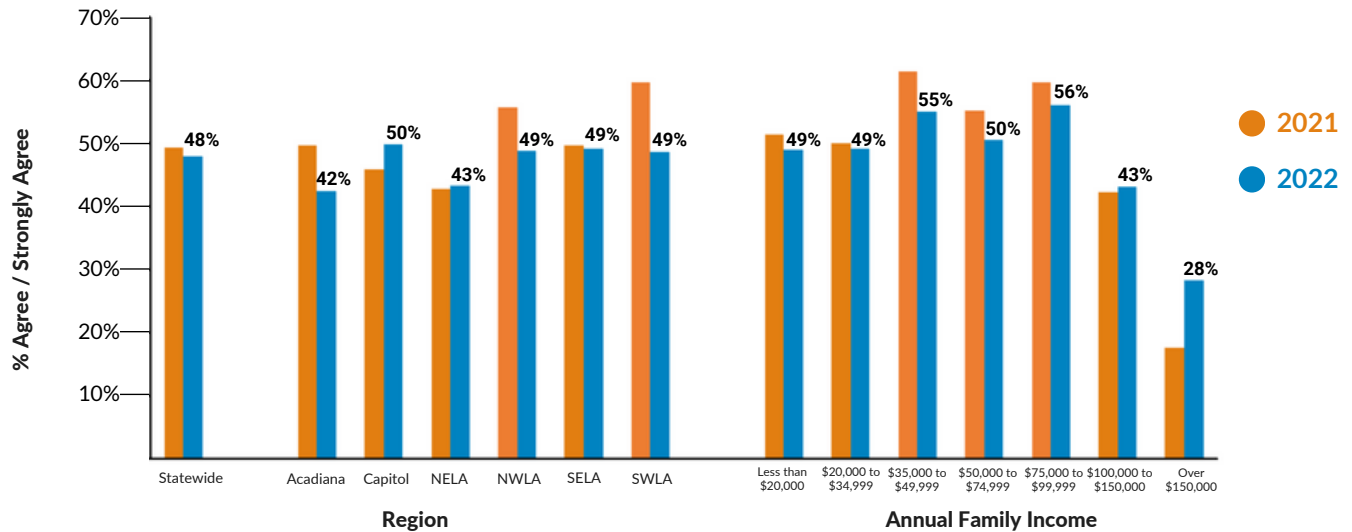
## Working families benefit from increased supports, and any reductions will have a greater impact on those who are struggling the most.

Almost half (48%) of parents were concerned about being unable to afford child care.

- Parents with family incomes between \$35,000 and \$100,000 per year were **more likely** to be concerned about their inability to afford child care.

Figure 13

Percent of Responding Parents Concerned About Affording Child Care



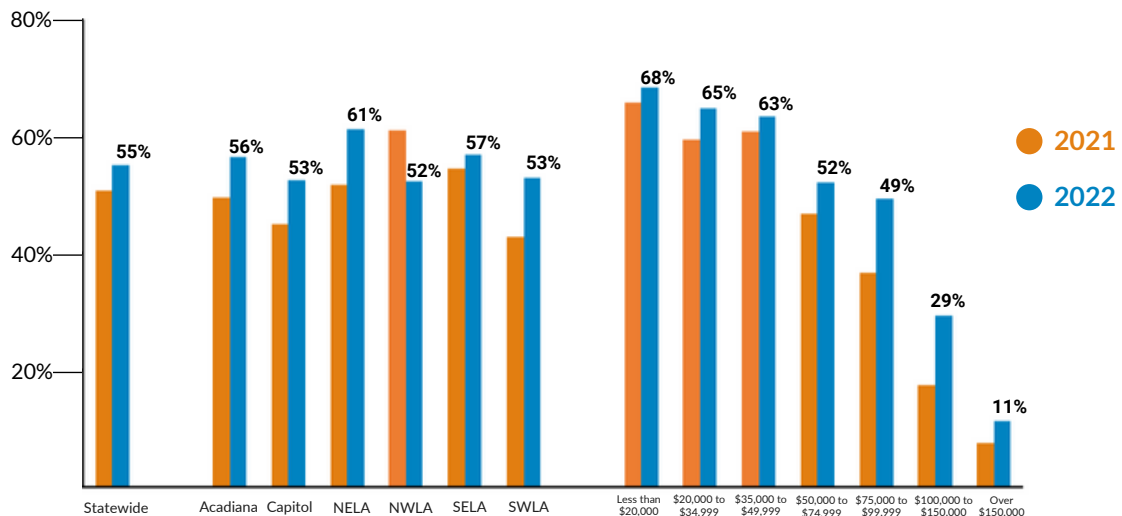
Question: Thinking about your family's current situation, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? "I am worried about being able to afford child care"

**Over 50%** of parents indicated having trouble paying for basic household expenses, including utilities, child care, food, and clothing, in the prior six months.

- Parents in northeast Louisiana and those with family incomes below \$50,000 per year were **more likely** to have had trouble paying for basic household expenses.

Figure 14

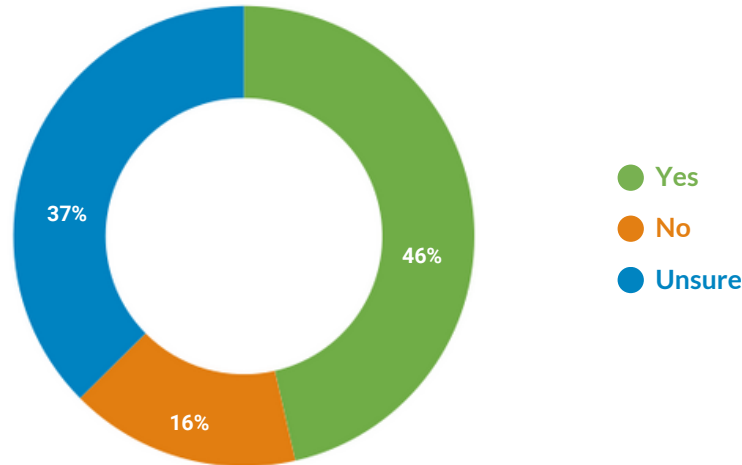
Percent of Responding Parents Having Trouble Paying for Any Basic Household Expense



Questions: [2021] Since April 2021, have you had trouble paying for any of the following for your family? Please check all that apply. / [2022] In the past six months (since April 2022), have you had trouble paying for any of the following for your family? Please check all that apply.

Nearly half (46%) of parents claimed or planned to claim School Readiness Tax Credits for Child Care Expenses on their 2021 Louisiana tax return.

Figure 15  
Receipt of School Readiness Tax Credits by Responding Parents



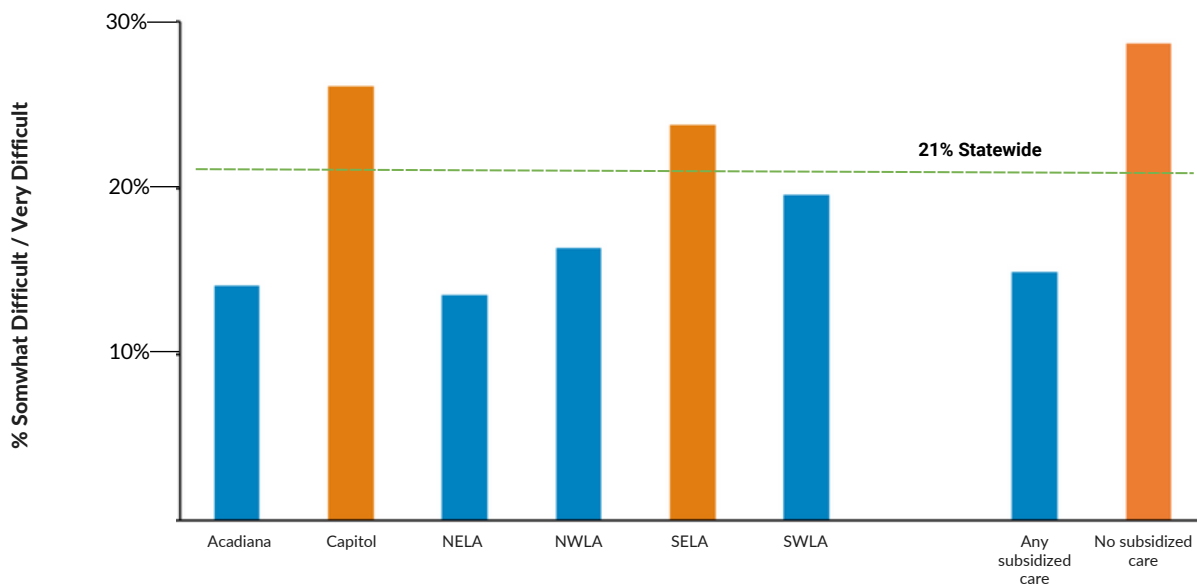
Questions: Did you, or do you plan to, claim the School Readiness Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses on your 2021 Louisiana tax return? The School Readiness Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses is allowed for taxpayers who have a qualified dependent under the age of 6 who attended a child care facility that participates in the quality rating program and has earned at least 2 stars.

## Child care challenges persist for working families.

Over one-fifth of parents said it was difficult to find their current child care arrangements.

- Parents in the Capitol Region and southeast Louisiana, as well as parents who did not receive any type of subsidized care, were more likely to report difficulty finding child care.

Figure 16  
Percent of Responding Parents Reporting Difficulty Finding Child Care Arrangements



Question: How easy or difficult was it to find your current child care arrangement(s)?



Nearly 75% of parents reported having to take at least one day off from work in the prior three months because of a child care closure.

Figure 17  
Percent of Responding Families with Parent Work Absences Due to Child Care Closure

Response	Acadiana	Capitol	NELA	NWLA	SELA	SWLA	Statewide
0 days	31%	25%	38%	28%	22%	28%	26%
1 to 5 days	38%	41%	33%	43%	41%	42%	40%
6 to 10 days	19%	20%	19%	17%	22%	19%	20%
11 to 15 days	6%	8%	4%	5%	7%	2%	6%
16 to 20 days	5%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
21 to 30 days	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
More than 30 days	0%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	1%

Question: In the past three months (since July 2022), how many days have you or another parent/guardian in your household had to take off from work because your child(ren) could not attend their regular child care arrangement(s) for any reason? Reasons could include child(ren) with a confirmed or suspected illness or child care closure for staff training or weather-related issues.



# APPENDIX

## Survey Methodology

LPIC developed and administered the Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll survey online through Survey Monkey from October 19, 2022, through November 2, 2022. Prior to administration of the survey, questions were reviewed by the Louisiana Department of Education and partner organizations. The survey link was shared by LPIC, the Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana United Ways, resource and referral agencies, and nonprofit organizations through email newsletters and social media. The Louisiana Department of Education also distributed a letter to parents about the survey through Type I, II, and III child care centers.

In addition, individuals who applied for or received assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program in 2022 and provided a phone number to the Louisiana Department of Education received up to three text message reminders about the survey during the survey window. All text messages were sent at 11am Central Time. The first text message was sent to 10,774 phone numbers. After the first text message, approximately 1,973 provided phone numbers were identified as non-cell phone numbers and removed from subsequent texts. Another 329 phone numbers unsubscribed from future text messages during the survey window.

Prospective respondents included any parent or guardian in Louisiana with at least one child under the age of 5 living in their home. Within the survey window, 3,005 responded to the survey, answering some or all of the survey questions.

For questions where some survey respondents did not provide an answer, the included results percentages reflect calculations based only on the number of survey respondents providing an answer to the question. For example, if only 100 survey respondents answered a question, the results would reflect what percentage of those 100 respondents selected each answer.

## Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Table A1

### Geographic Regions of Survey Respondents

Region (Parishes)	Percent of Survey Respondents	State Population (2020)
<b>Acadiana</b> (Acadia, Avoyelles, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, Rapides, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Vermilion, Vernon)	13%	18%
<b>Capitol Region</b> (Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana)	28%	21%
<b>Northeast Louisiana</b> (Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll)	8%	7%
<b>Northwest Louisiana</b> (Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, De Soto, Grant, Jackson, La Salle, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Winn)	11%	13%
<b>Southeast Louisiana</b> (Assumption, Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, Terrebonne, Washington)	31%	33%
<b>Southwest Louisiana</b> (Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis)	9%	7%

**Table A2**  
Children in Household of Survey Respondents

Number of Children in Home	Percent of Survey Respondents
1	29%
2	36%
3	20%
4	9%
5	3%
6 or more	3%

**Table A3**  
Ages of Children in Household of Survey Respondents

Age of Children in Home	Percent of Survey Respondents
Younger than 12 months	10%
12 months to 24 months	10%
2 years old	11%
3 years old	14%
4 years old	14%
5 to 12 years old	25%
13 to 18 years old	15%

**Table A4**  
Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Survey Respondents
American Indian / Native American / Alaska Native	2%
Asian	1%
Black / African American	35%
Hispanic / Latina / Latino / Latine	4%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0.2%
White	35%
Other	1%
Not Provided	27%

Note: Respondents may have selected more than one response. Percentages may total to more than 100%.

**Table A5**  
Family Income of Survey Respondents

Family Income Range	Percent of Survey Respondents
Less than \$20,000	25%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	28%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	10%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8%
\$100,000 to \$150,000	11%
Over \$150,000	7%



