



# State of Childcare in the United States

*Polling by Morning Consult on behalf of The  
Century Foundation*

JUNE 2023

# KEY FINDINGS

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- 1. The need for childcare is widespread.** Two-in-five parents in the United States pay for childcare weekly or more often, and a majority say they *would* if not for the cost of doing so.
- 2. Childcare alternatives are not readily available.** Most parents who pay for childcare on a regular basis expect it would take them longer than 1 month to find a suitable replacement if their current provider(s) became unavailable.
- 3. Expiration of federal childcare funding provisions defies public opinion.** Nearly two-thirds of adults express concern about the upcoming expiration of pandemic-era funding for childcare providers, and most believe the federal government should be *investing more* into childcare than it currently does.
- 4. Championing expansion of childcare options for families is popular with voters.** Seventy percent of adults would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports expanding childcare options for families.

**Methodology:** This poll was conducted between June 12 – June 15, 2023, among a sample of 2201 U.S. adults. The interviews were conducted online, and the data were weighted to approximate a target sample of U.S. adults based on age, gender, race, educational attainment, region, gender by age, and race by educational attainment. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

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# CHILDCARE EXPERIENCES

OPINIONS RE: FEDERAL  
CHILDCARE FUNDING



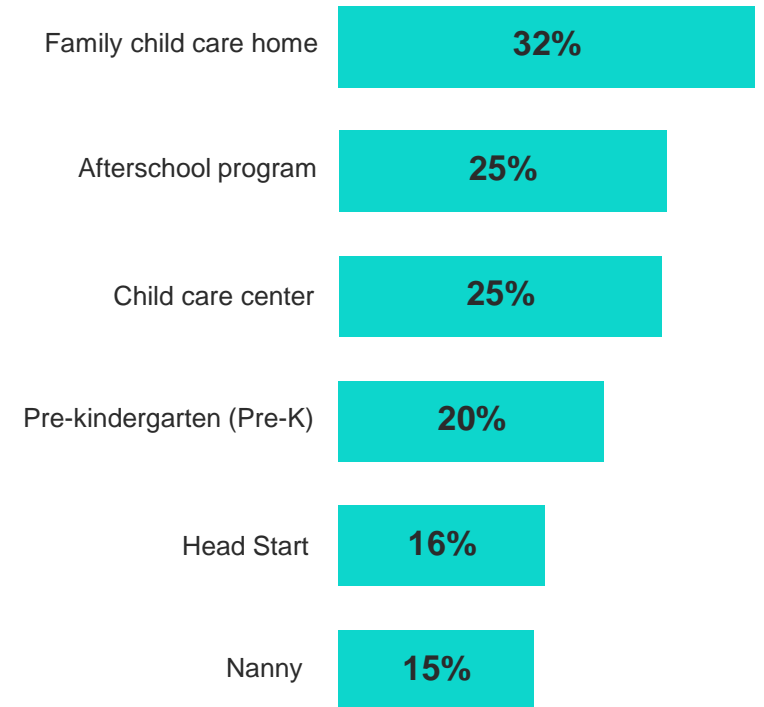
The cost and availability of **childcare options** are issues directly impacting tens of millions of parents in the United States.

**39%** of U.S. parents (18+) pay for childcare weekly or more often

**28%** of parents who do not pay for childcare say cost is the main factor inhibiting them

**59%** of parents DO or WOULD have a regular childcare arrangement (money permitting)

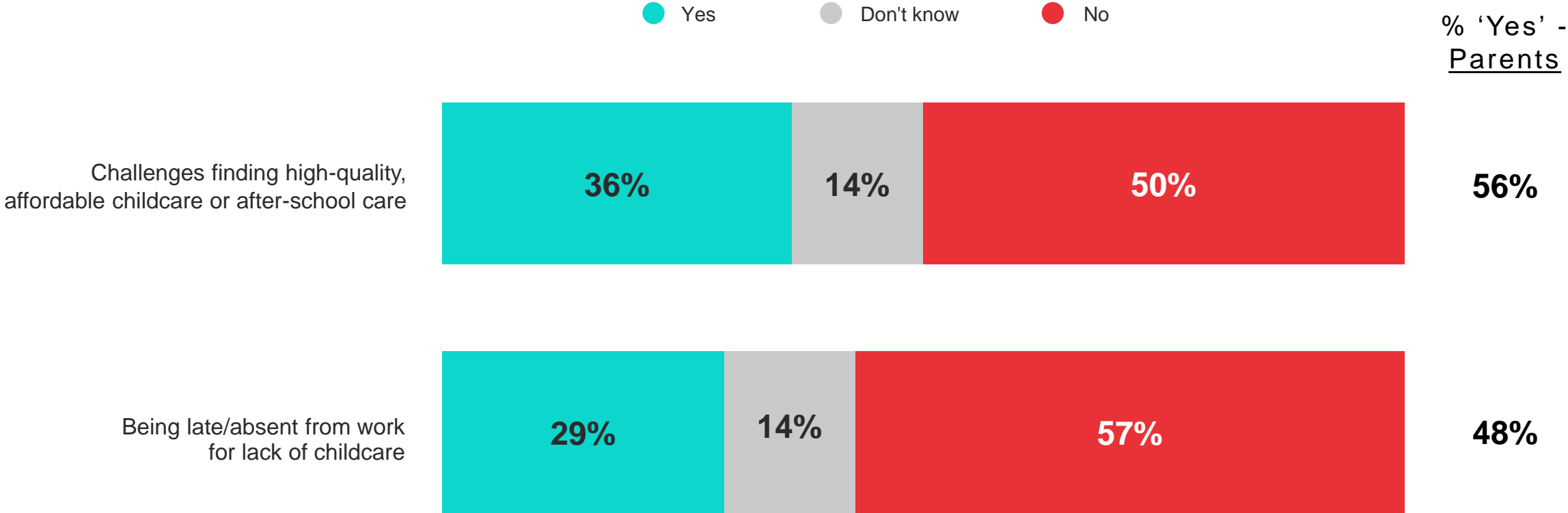
**Type(s) of Childcare Parents Pay for Regularly**



CHILDCARE EXPERIENCES

More than one-third of all adults, including most parents, report they or someone they know have experienced challenges finding affordable/high-quality childcare in recent years. Nearly a third have missed work due to lack of childcare, including almost half of U.S. parents.

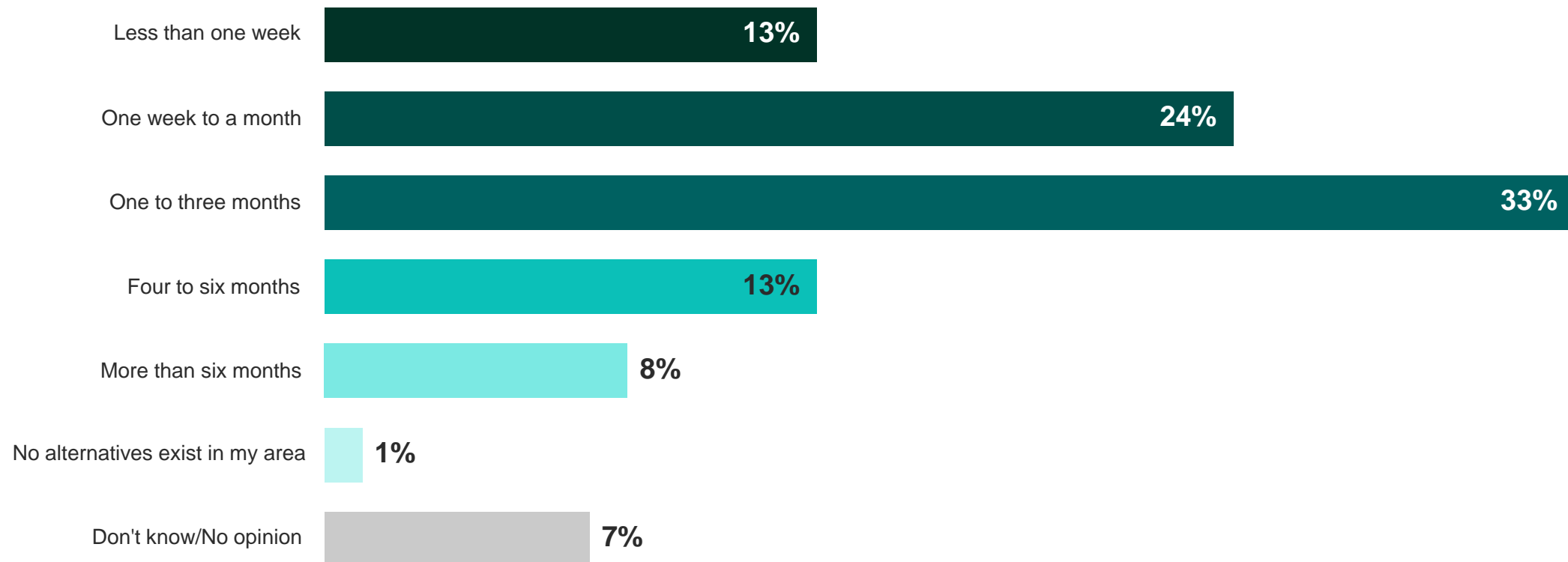
Have you or someone you know experienced the following in the last five years?



## CHILD CARE EXPERIENCES

Half of parents who regularly pay for childcare expect it would take them **longer than 1 month** to find a suitable childcare alternative if theirs suddenly became unavailable. One-in-five estimate 4 months or longer to find a replacement.

If your childcare or afterschool care program closed permanently tomorrow, how long do you think it would take to find a high-quality, affordable childcare alternative?



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# CHILDCARE EXPERIENCES

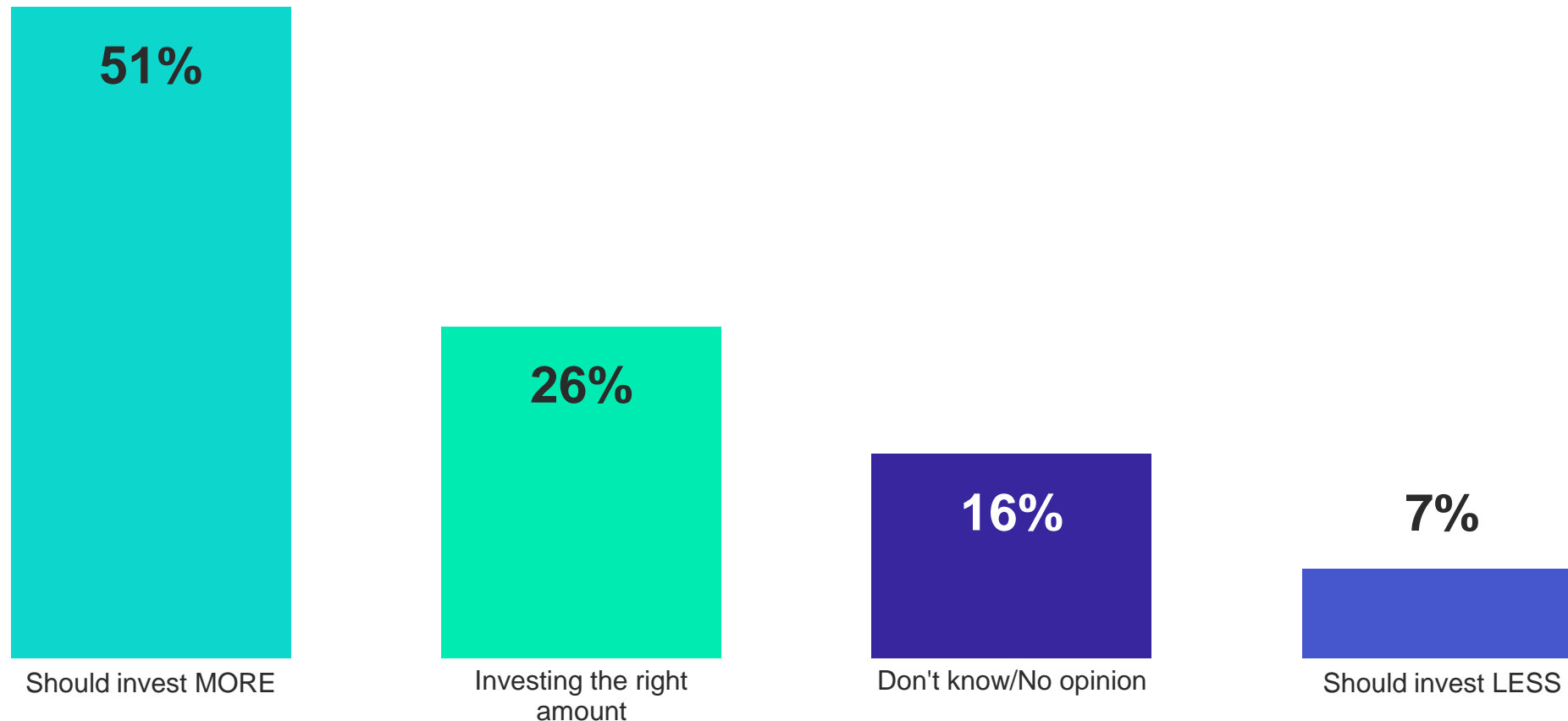
## OPINIONS RE: FEDERAL CHILDCARE FUNDING



## OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

Most U.S. adults believe the federal government should be investing more in childcare programs – more than 7x the share who say there should be *less* investment (51% vs. 7%).

Based on what you know, should the United States government be investing more or investing less in childcare programs, such as pre-K, daycare, and afterschool care?

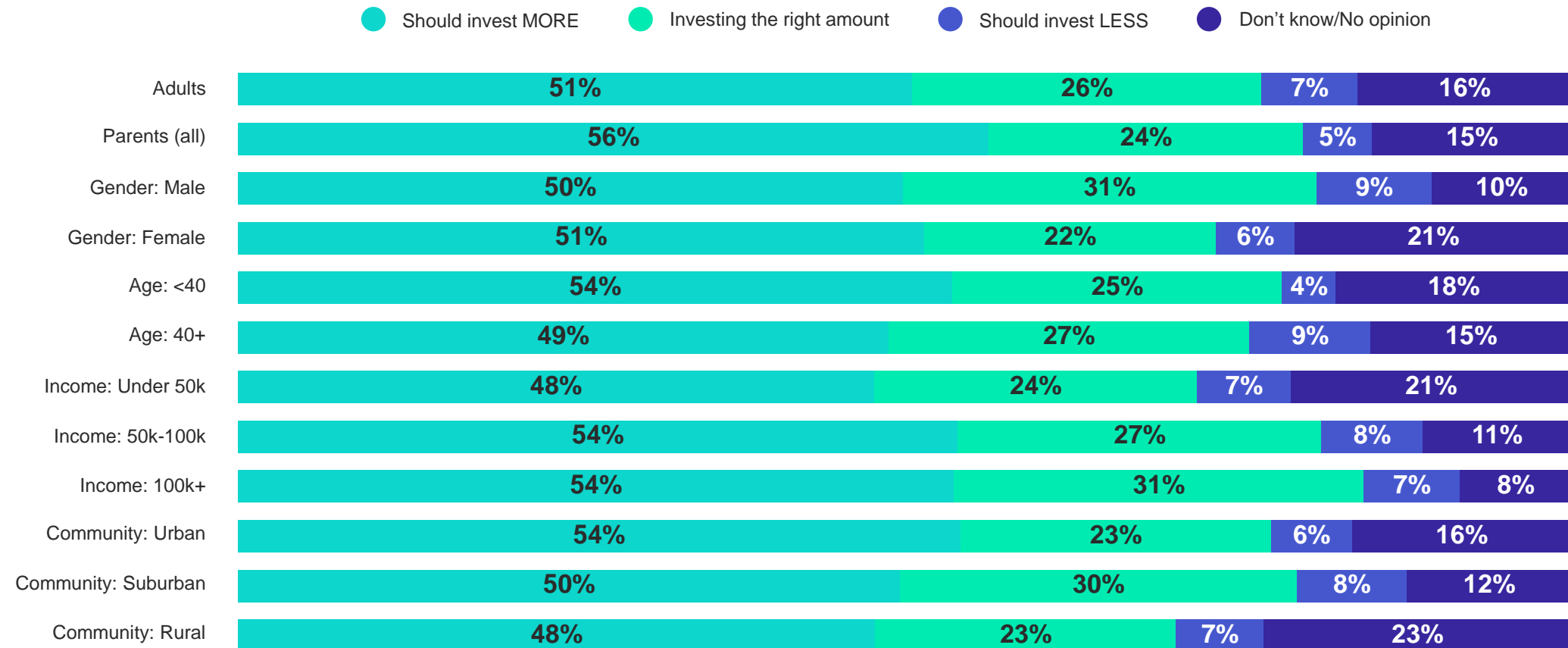




OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

# Parents are more likely than others surveyed to say the government should be providing greater support for childcare programs.

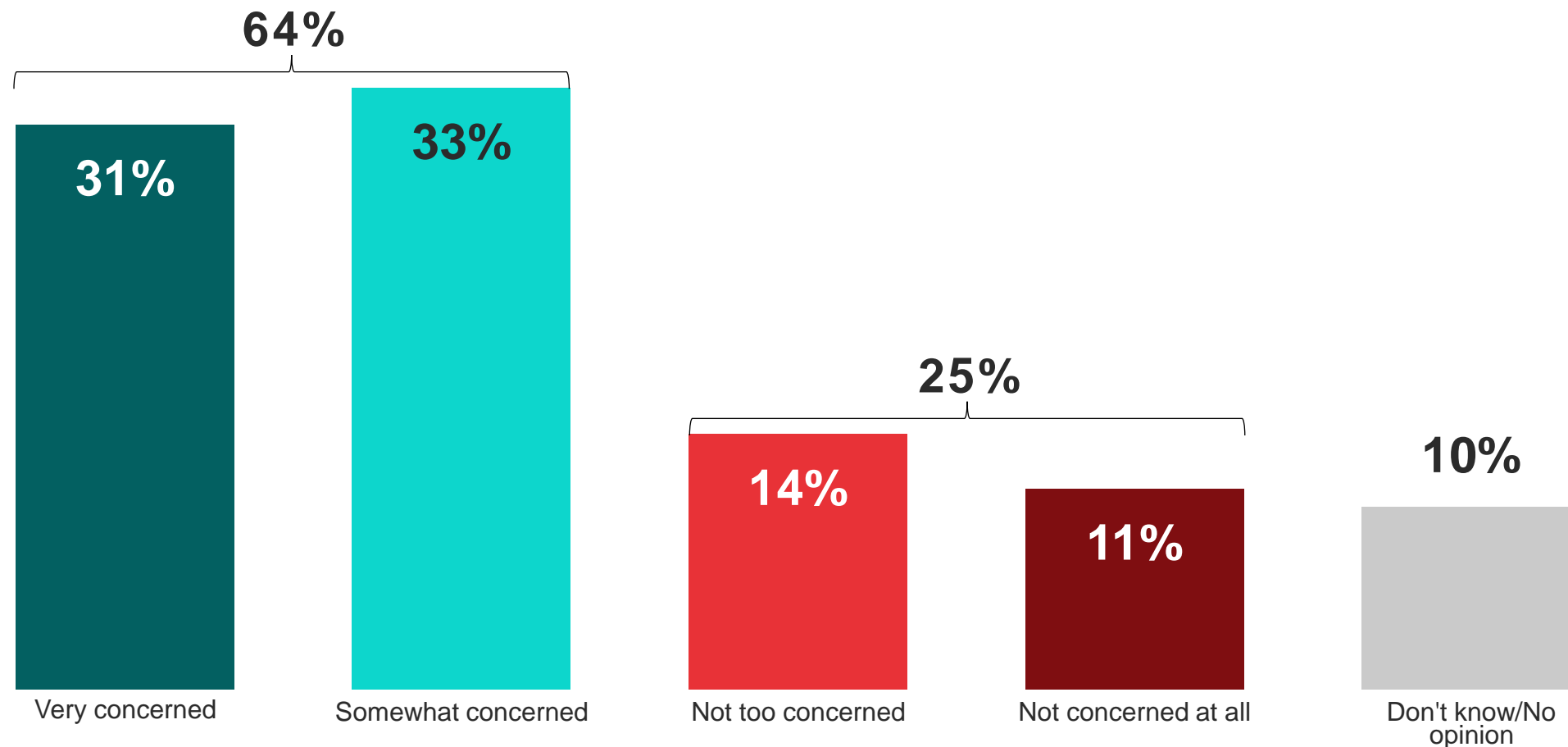
Based on what you know, should the United States government be investing more or investing less in childcare programs, such as pre-K, daycare, and afterschool care?



OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

More than three-in-five U.S. adults express **concern** about the upcoming expiration of pandemic-era funding for childcare programs, including nearly one-third who are *very concerned*.

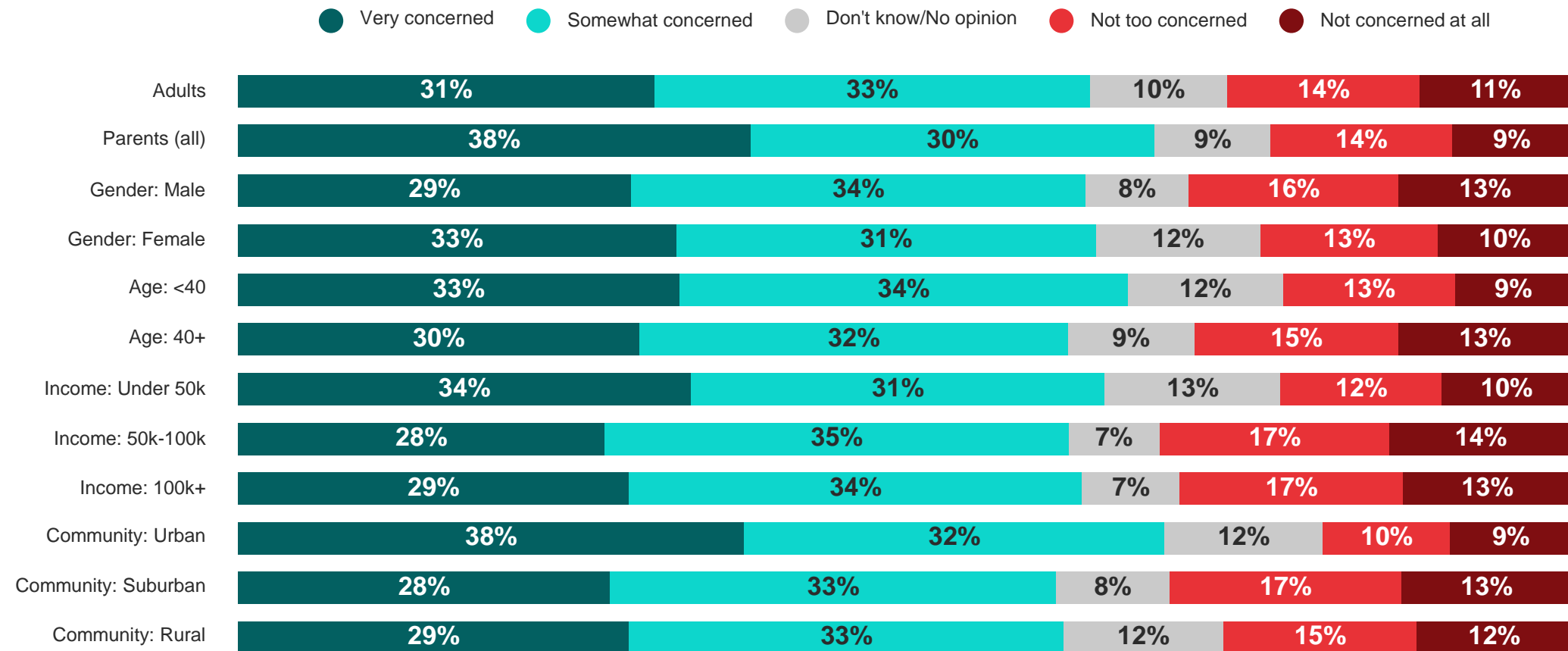
How concerned, if at all, are you about the expiration of federal funding for childcare programs (pre-K, daycare, afterschool programs, etc.) that is expected to take place in September?



OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

# Parents, lower-earning (<\$50k), and urban-dwelling respondents express greater concern than others re: the federal funding set to expire in September.

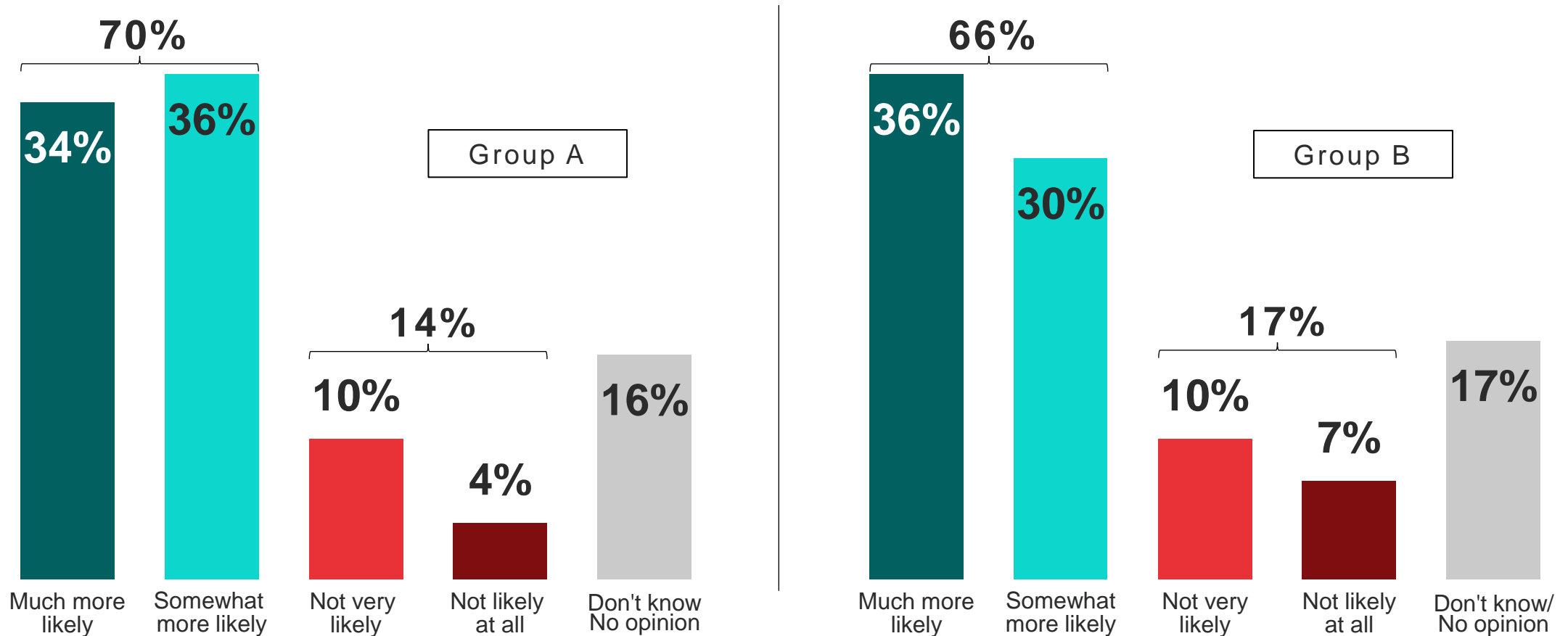
How concerned, if at all, are you about the expiration of federal funding for childcare programs (pre-K, daycare, afterschool programs, etc.) that is expected to take place in September?



OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

Responses predict a broad, positive reaction to **candidates** who support expanding affordable childcare options for families. Public support is not strengthened by proposing an increase on taxes for billionaires to fund such an expansion.

Would you be more or less likely to support a candidate for Congress who supports expanding affordable childcare options for families *[by raising taxes on billionaires]*? ← Red wording shown only to Group B.

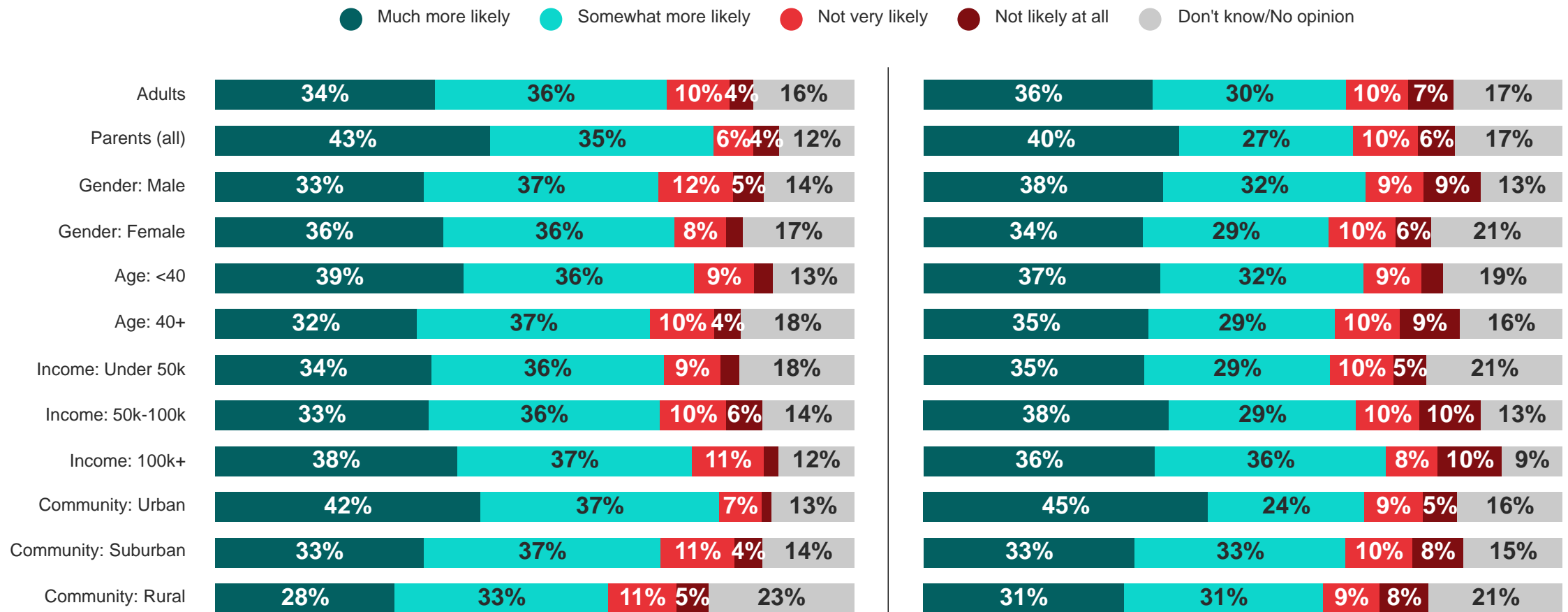


Each wording shown to a random half of the total sample ("A" n=1074; "B" n=1127)

OPINIONS RE: CHILDCARE FUNDING

Parents, urbanites, younger (<40) adults, and higher-earners tend to express greater likelihood than others to support political candidates who advocate for expanding childcare options.

Would you be more or less likely to support a candidate for Congress who supports expanding affordable childcare options for families *[by raising taxes on billionaires]*? ← Red wording shown only to Group B.



Each wording shown to a random half of the total sample ("A" n=1074; "B" n=1127)



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