

Child Care in Manitoba: Parent Survey Highlights

MCCA | Manitoba Child
Care Association

Manitoba Child Care Association

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PROBE RESEARCH



Contact:

Mary Agnes Welch, Principal

(204) 470-8862

maryagnes@probe-research.com

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603 – 191 Lombard Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0X1

(204) 926-6565

www.probe-research.com

[LinkedIn](#)

Methodology

Research Objectives

As a major element of a larger research project, Probe Research surveyed parents and caregivers who have children in licensed and unlicensed child care facilities in Manitoba. The purpose of the survey was to understand and track parents' satisfaction with care, the impact of waitlists and affordability and their views on key policy changes.

Methodology

Probe collaborated with MCCA to design the questionnaire. A 12-minute (average) online survey was in field between April 2 and 25, 2025 with 1,878 parents responding.

All data analysis was performed using SPSS statistical analysis software.

Sample

Probe and MCCA recruited parents to the survey in a variety of ways. Using an open, sharable link, MCCA asked centre and family care directors to share the link with parents via email, internal newsletters and posters in each facility. An outreach and messaging strategy was developed to raise awareness about the survey among parents.

As well, MCCA shared the survey link via its social media channels. In addition, Probe used its proprietary panel to identify 92 parents willing to complete the survey.

The survey responses were carefully cleaned to remove any suspect or duplicate responses.

Because this survey involves a sample of convenience, we cannot ascribe a margin of error. The survey was not randomly sampled, and we cannot be sure the responses are perfectly representative of all parents who use child care in Manitoba.

This report includes key highlights of the survey of parents.

Profile of Respondents

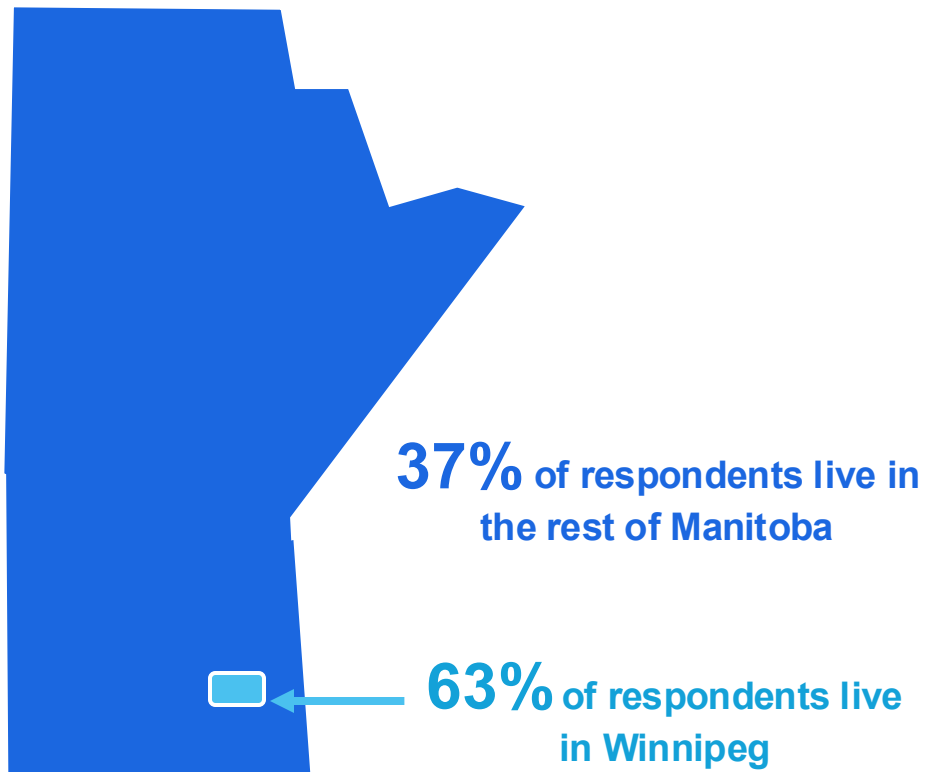
(Unweighted)	Total (N=1,878) (%)	Region		Number of Children in Child Care		
		Winnipeg (n=1,178) (%)	Rural (n=700) (%)	One (n=973) (%)	Two (n=785) (%)	Three or more (n=120) (%)
Gender						
Male	14	15	12	14	12	19
Female	86	85	88	86	87	81
Income						
<\$60K	14	14	13	18	10	13
\$60K-\$99K	24	23	26	28	19	25
\$100K+	62	63	61	54	71	62
Education						
High school or less	8	7	11	9	7	11
Some post-secondary	22	21	23	24	20	20
Graduated post-secondary	70	72	66	67	74	69

Profile of Respondents

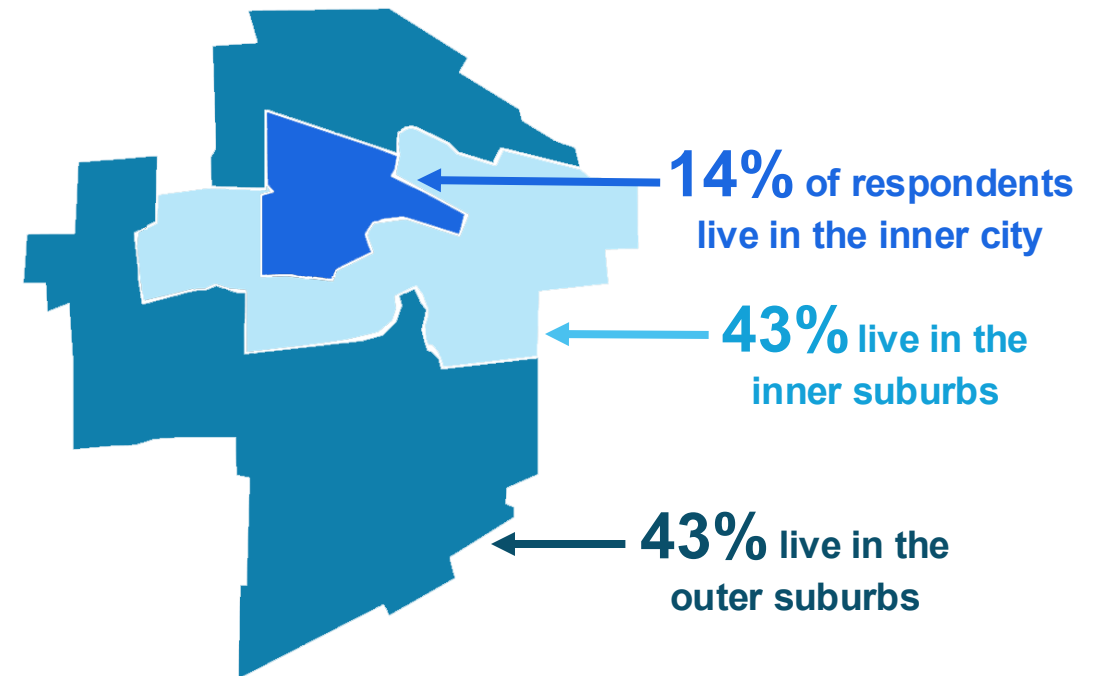
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Marital Status						
Married/common-law	88	87	91	85	92	90
Single	12	13	9	15	8	10
Employment						
Full-time	78	79	77	77	78	82
Part-time	12	11	14	12	12	13
Other	10	10	9	11	9	6
Equity Cohorts						
Indigenous	14	13	16	15	12	15
Person of Colour	14	18	5	16	11	10
Born outside Canada	17	21	10	20	12	13

Profile of Respondents

By Provincial Region



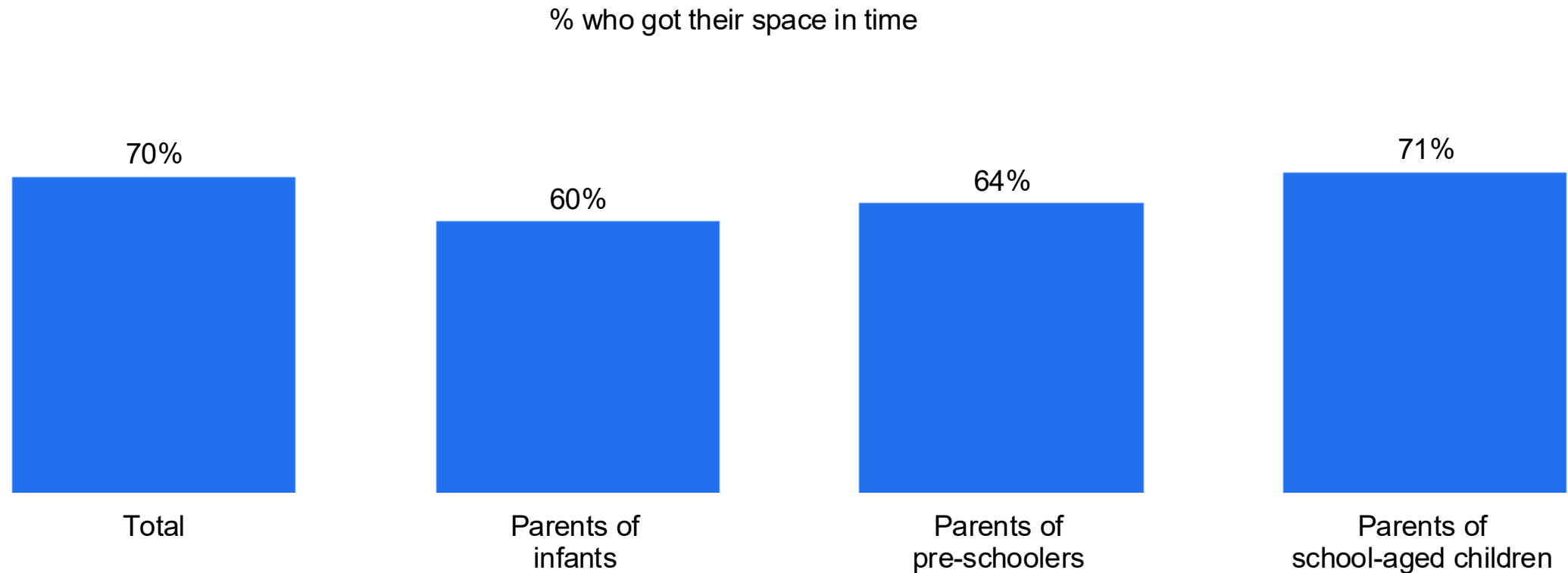
By Winnipeg Region



Space Availability When Needed

Seven in ten parents got their child care space when needed

Q7. Did you get the space this child is currently in by the time your family needed it? (Base: All respondents, N=1,750)

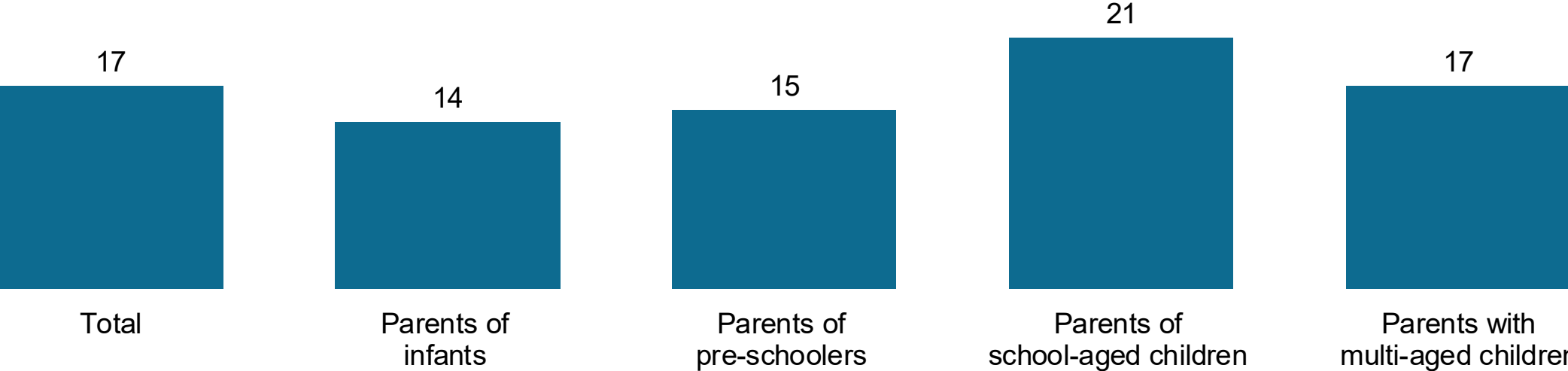


Average Wait Times for Parents with a Space

Parents put their child on a wait list an average of 17 months in advance to get their preferred space

Q8. How long in advance did you put this child on the waiting list for this space? (Base: Parents who got their space in time, n=1,221)

Average number of months parents with a space put their child on a waiting list

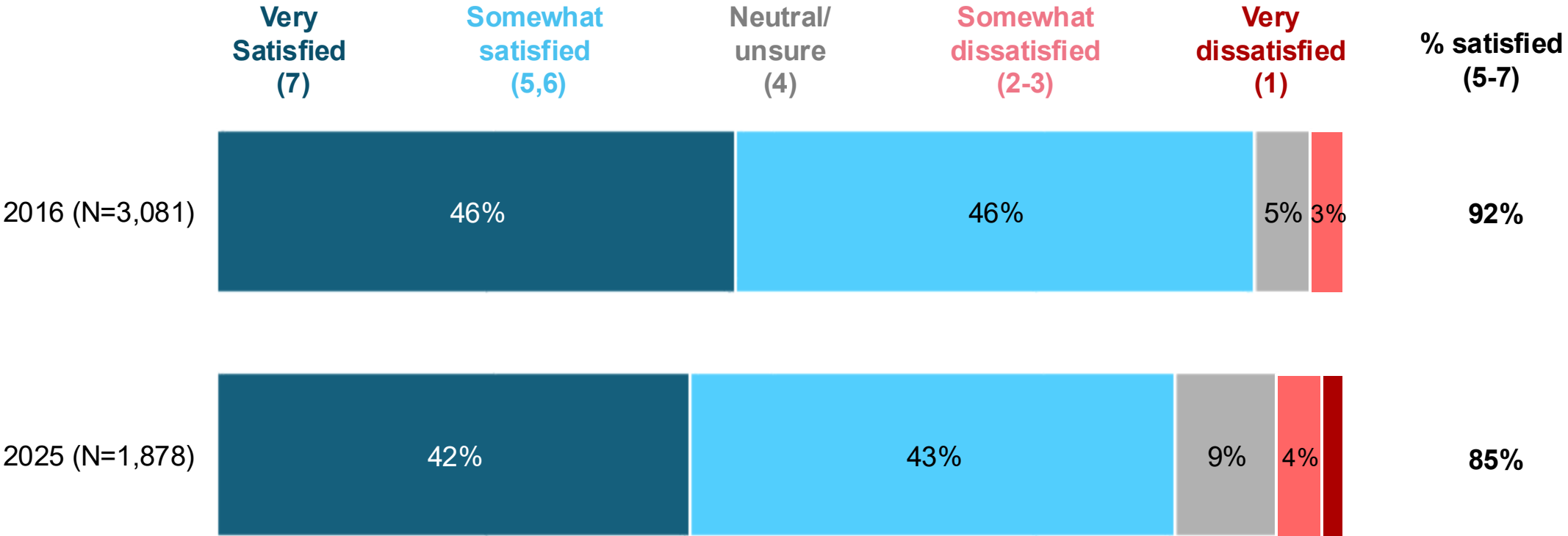


20% of parents reported no wait for their preferred space.

Satisfaction with Child Care Overall

Overall satisfaction softens slightly since 2016

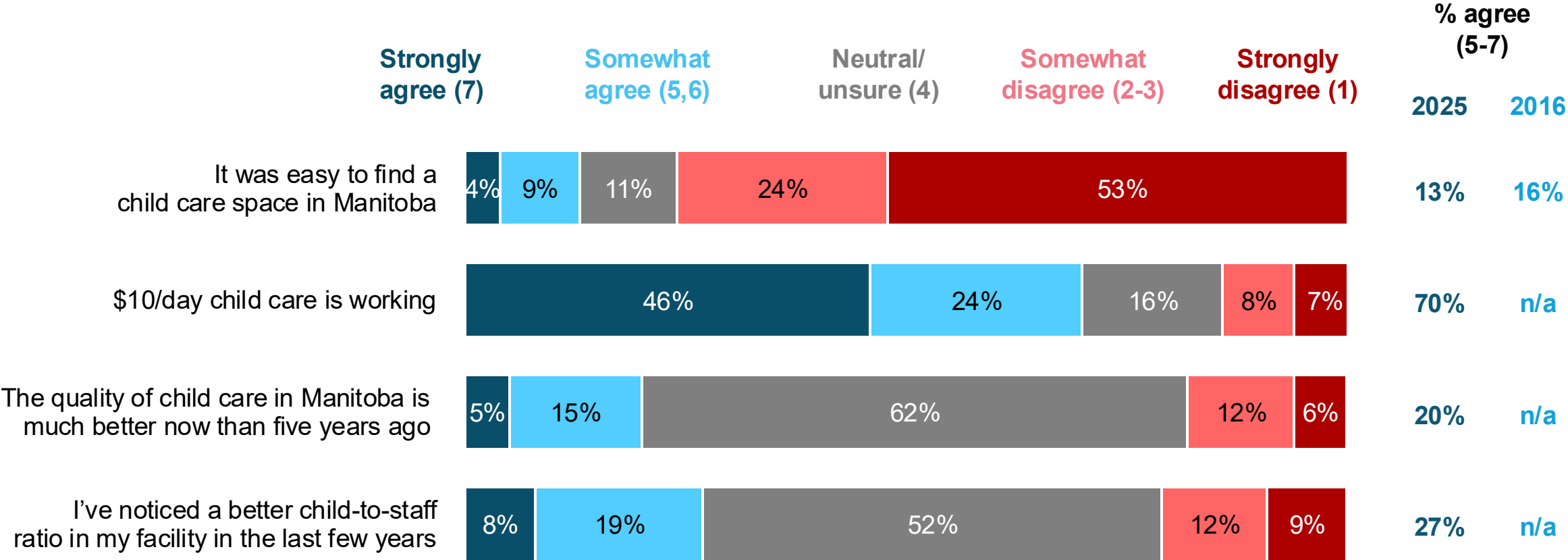
Q18. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your child care facility or facilities overall? Please use the scale below where 1 means you are “not at all satisfied” and 7 means you are “very satisfied” overall. (Base: All respondents)



Views on Current Child Care Issues

Three-quarters of parents say it was not easy to find a child care space in Manitoba

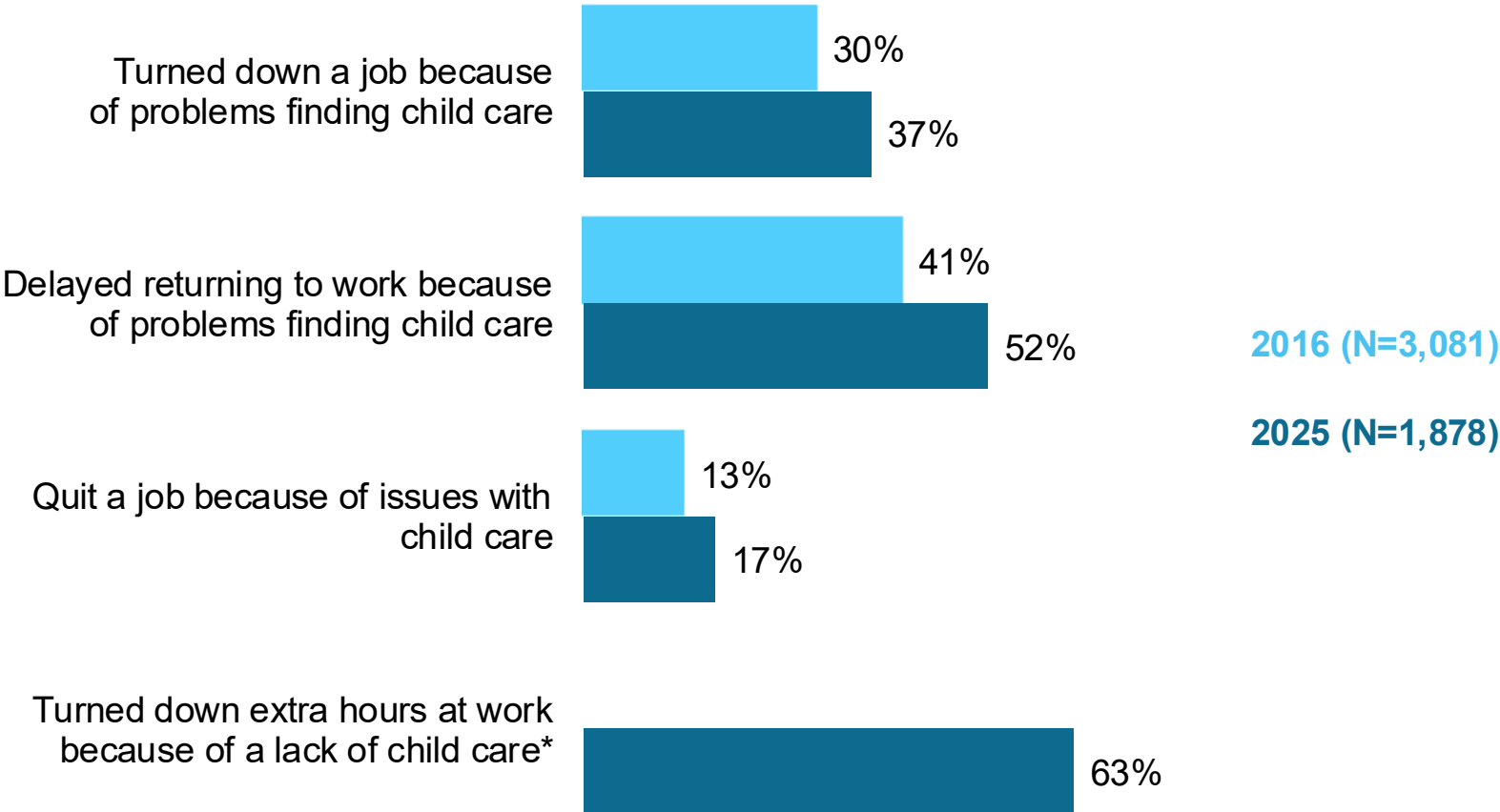
Q17/21. How much do you agree with each of the following statements? (Base: All applicable respondents, N=1,878)



Effects of Child Care on Parental Employment

Child care as a barrier to employment is increasing

Q19. Please indicate if you or your partner have ever...? (Base: All “applicable” respondents indicating “yes”)



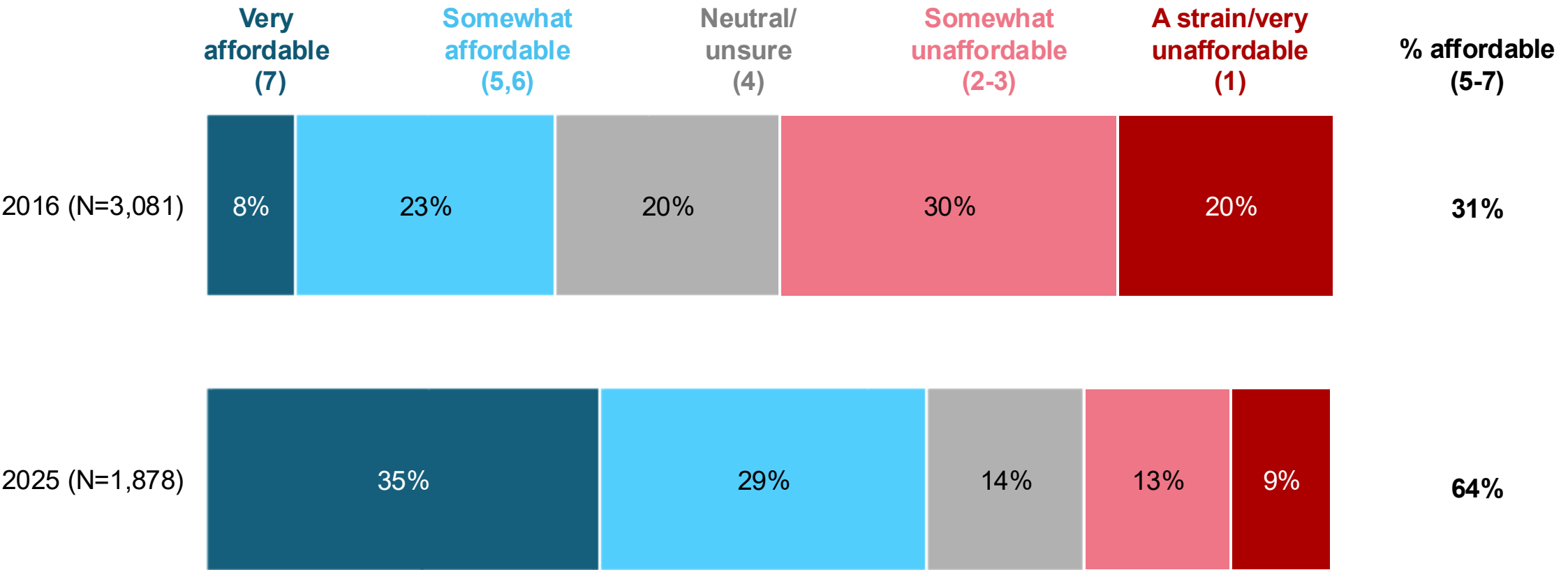
Those most likely to have experienced all these job-related issues include:

- Those with three or more children in child care.
- Those who are still waiting for their preferred space.
- Those who use unlicensed child care.
- Parents from low-income households.

Views on Cost of Child Care

Parents are twice as likely now to say child care is affordable

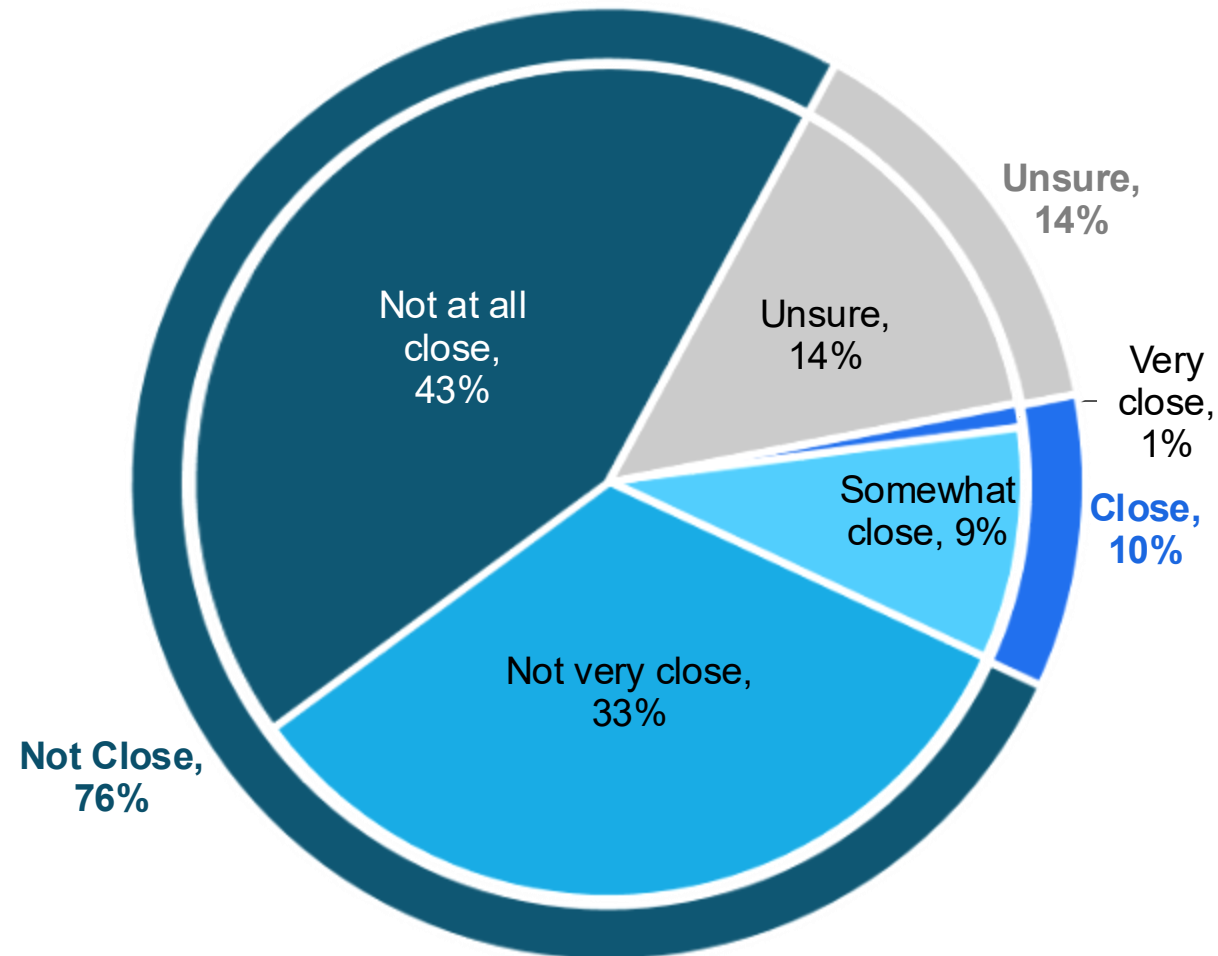
Q20. Thinking about the child care services you receive and the fees you pay, how would you characterize the effect on your household budget? Please use the 7-point scale below, where 1 means your child care fees are a big strain on your budget and 7 means your fees are very affordable. (Base: All respondents)



Views on Changes to Child Care Policy

Three quarters of parents say universal child care is not close to being a reality

Q22. Based on what you know, how close, if at all, is Manitoba toward creating a universal child care system where every child who needs a day care space gets one? (Base: All respondents, N=1,878)





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