



# **THE AUSTRALIAN **EARLY** LEARNING MONITOR.**

New South Wales results

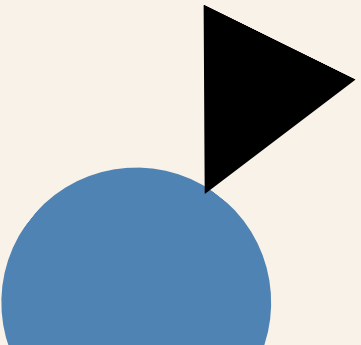
June 2021.



**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**

# KEY FINDINGS.

1. Most people in New South Wales recognise the importance of play-based learning and acknowledge that children are more likely to experience play-based learning if they attend centre-based daycare or preschool.
2. They believe, however, that the cost of ECE and care has risen sharply over recent years and that many parents do not send their children to centre-based daycare or preschool because of the cost.
3. A clear majority of people in New South Wales believe that cheaper ECE would be good for the economy as a whole, and that support has increased over the last year.
4. 7 in 10 support the introduction of a universal high-quality ECE and care system, and most think such a system would be good for the education system, the economy and social inequality.



# METHODOLOGY.

**Fieldwork:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

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**Sample:** **n=1,542 New South Wales residents**

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**Prepared by:** Essential Research

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Our researchers are members of the Research Society. This research is compliant with the Australian Polling Council Quality Mark standards.

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**Australian  
Polling Council  
Quality Mark**

The quantitative poll was developed to canvas a representative sample of the Australian public on their views, attitudes and experiences with the early learning and childcare system in Australia, and to understand their views on relevant issues related to family life, working life and society more broadly.

The national online survey was hosted by Qualtrics and took respondents approximately 15 minutes to complete.

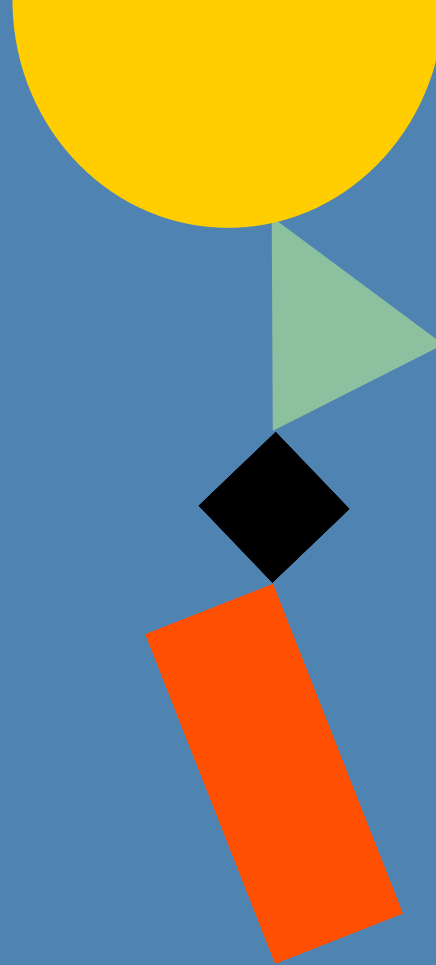
Note that some questions were asked of only half the sample to maximise the number of questions without increasing respondent burden.

The maximum margin of error is  $\pm 2.5\%$  at a 95% confidence level for the full sample. For questions asked of half sample, maximum margin of error is  $\pm 3.5\%$ .

Some figures in this report will not total 100% due to rounding. Full methodology can be found [here](#). For more results from the Early Learning Monitor go to:

<https://thrivebyfive.org.au/earlylearningmonitor/>

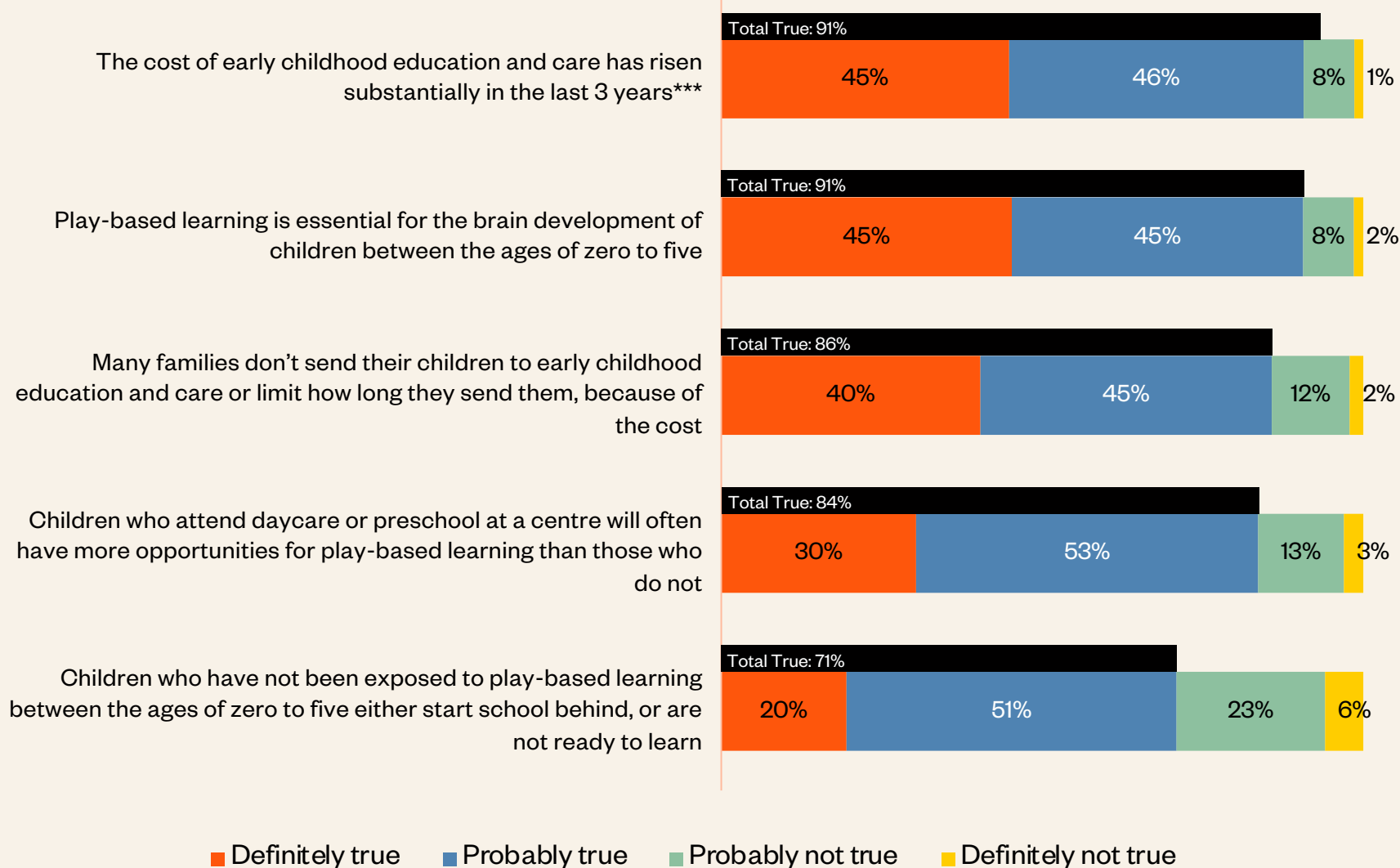
# **CURRENT ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS.**



**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**

**91% OF PARENTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES WHO HAVE USED CHILDCARE, SAY THE COST OF EARLY EDUCATION IS A BARRIER TO ACCESS.**

## Understanding of early learning (%)



Q. For each of the following statements about early childhood education and care, please indicate if you think they are definitely true, probably true, probably not true or definitely not true.

Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542

\*\*\*Only shown to parents with a child that attends/attended daycare, n=326

**MOST SEE THE VALUE OF  
PICKING UP LEARNING  
DIFFICULTIES BEFORE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

**Understanding of early learning (%)**

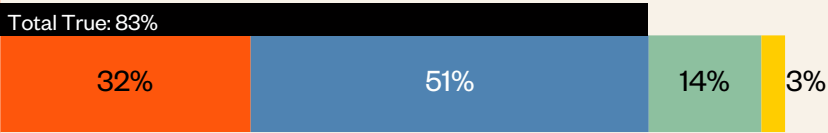
If learning difficulties and disabilities such as dyslexia, ADHD and autism can be picked up before children start primary school, the children are likely to be much better off in the long-term



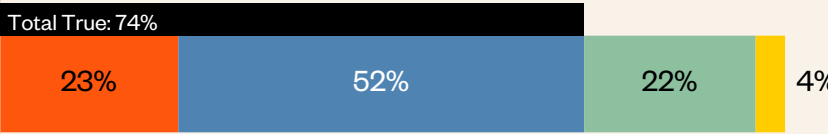
Many families rely on long-day care being open 52 weeks per year to support their work and other commitments



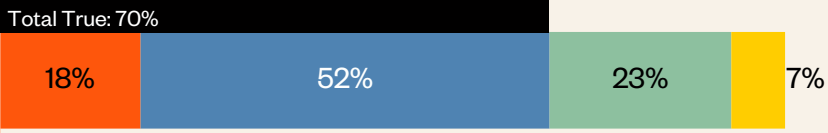
A high-quality early childhood education and care system would help ensure better outcomes for those children when they graduate Year 12



Australia's early childhood education and care system doesn't follow a consistent approach or deliver uniform standards of education and care



Many people who get into trouble with the law later in life have learning difficulties that weren't picked up early enough



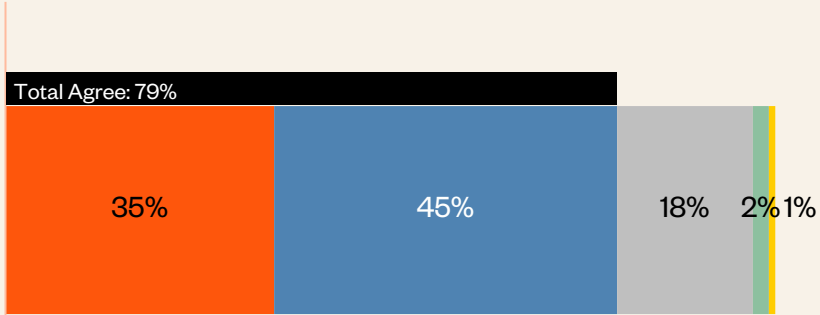
Definitely true   Probably true   Probably not true   Definitely not true

Q. For each of the following statements about early childhood education and care, please indicate if you think they are definitely true, probably true, probably not true or definitely not true.  
Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542

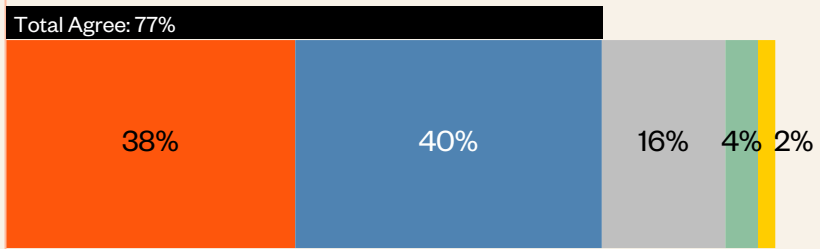
**MOST PARTICIPANTS  
AGREE EARLY LEARNING  
SHOULD BE PART OF THE  
EDUCATION SYSTEM AND  
QUALITY WOULD BE  
IMPROVED IF THE  
SYSTEM WAS MORE  
COORDINATED.**

A coordinated future for early learning (%)

The quality of early childhood education and care would improve if the system was more coordinated



Early learning should be treated as part of the education system

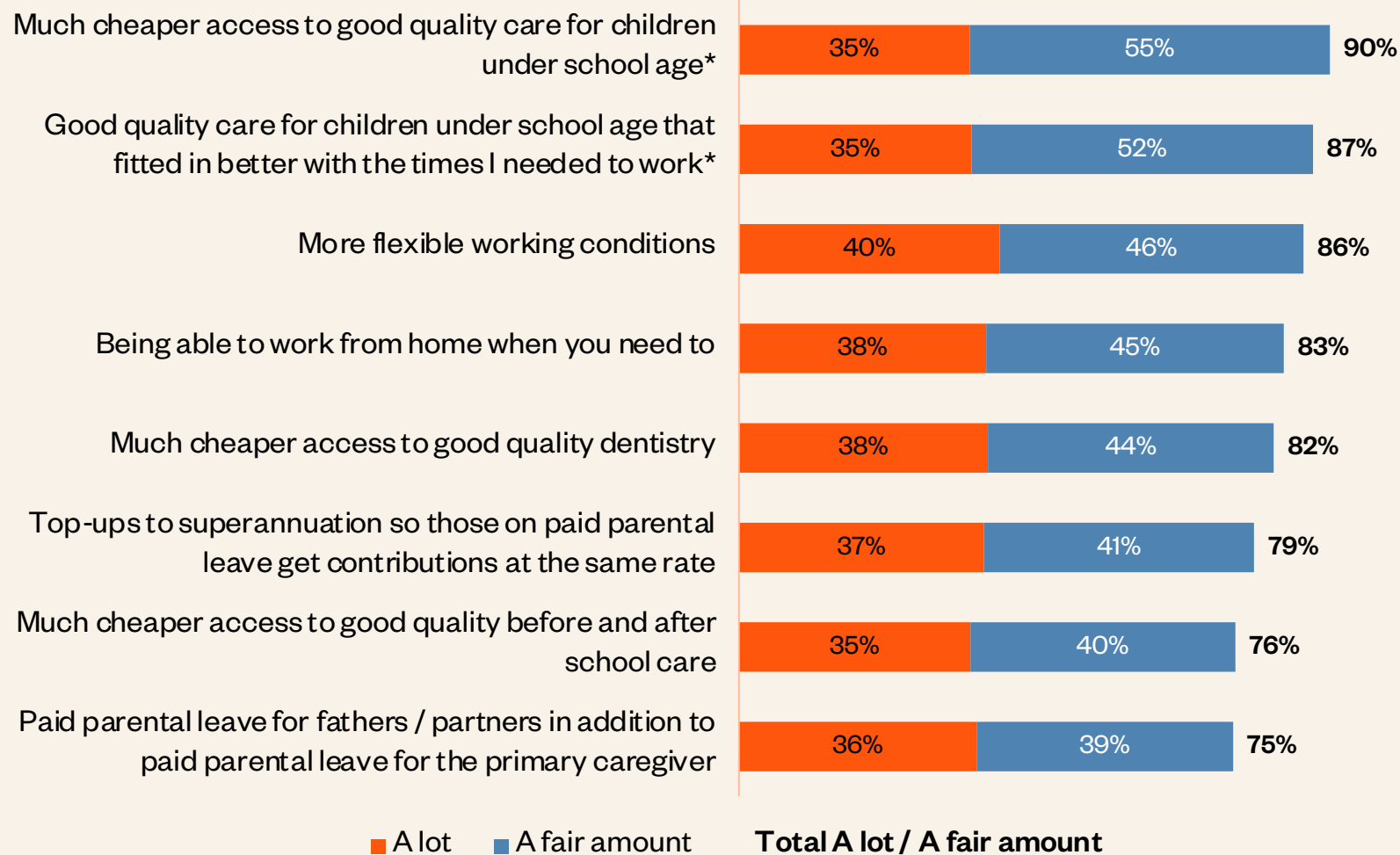


- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542

# THE MAJORITY OF PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN WANT CHEAPER ACCESS TO GOOD QUALITY CARE THAT FITS IN WITH THEIR WORK SCHEDULES.

## What would help respondents and their families (% A lot /A fair amount)



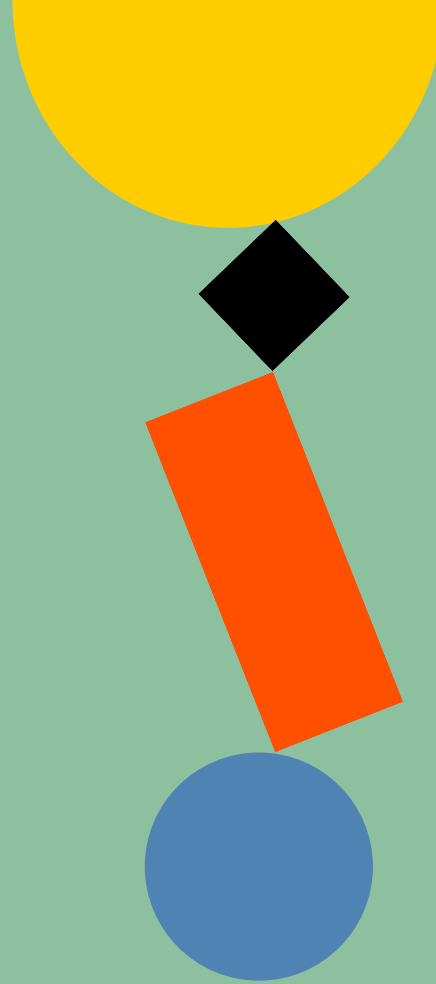
Q. How much would each of the following help you and your family, now or in the future?

Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542

\*Only shown to parents with at least one child under school age, n=242



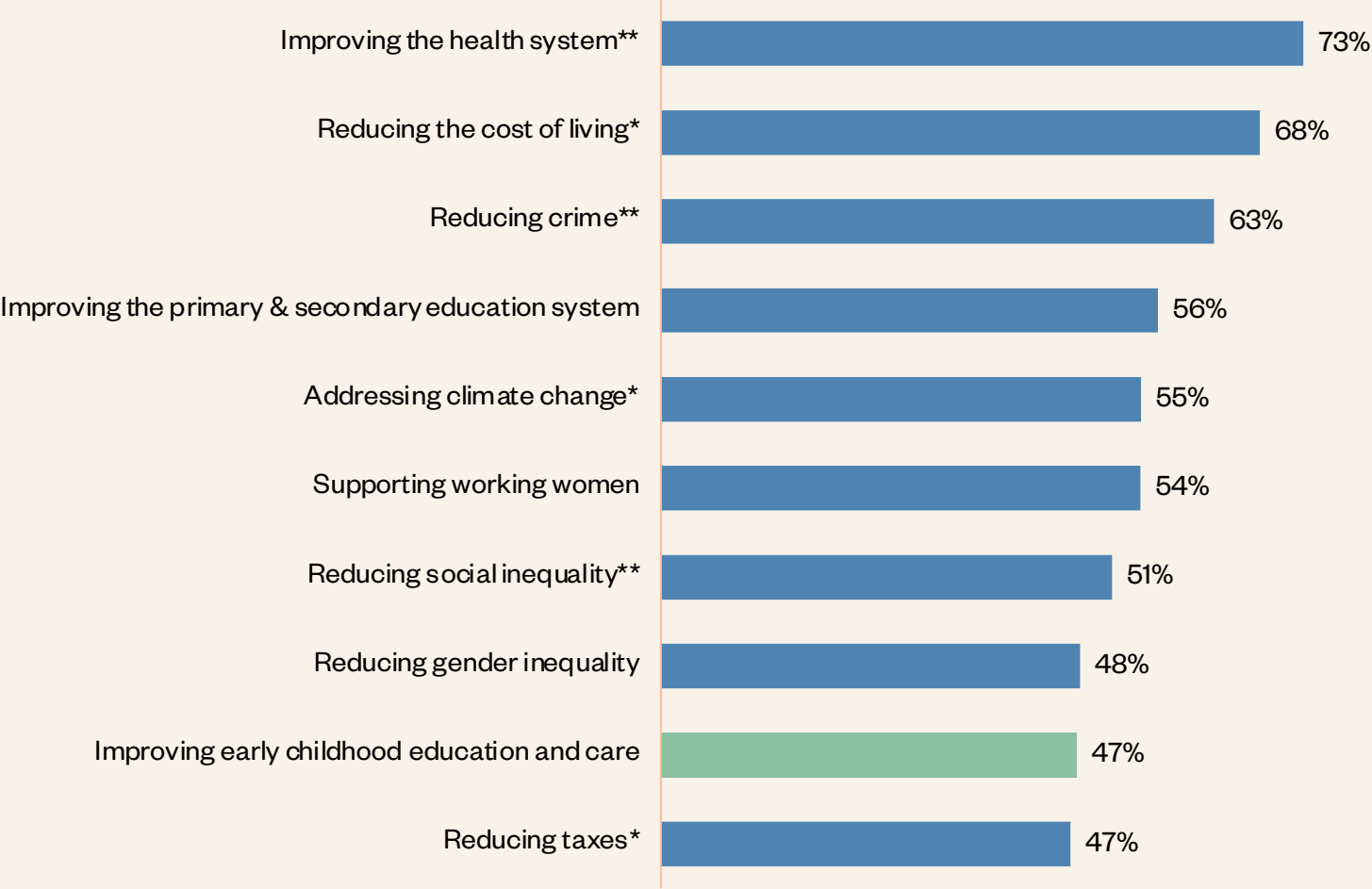
# **TOWARDS A UNIVERSAL, HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM.**



**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**

IMPROVING EARLY  
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
IS CURRENTLY A SECOND-  
TIER ISSUE IN NSW.

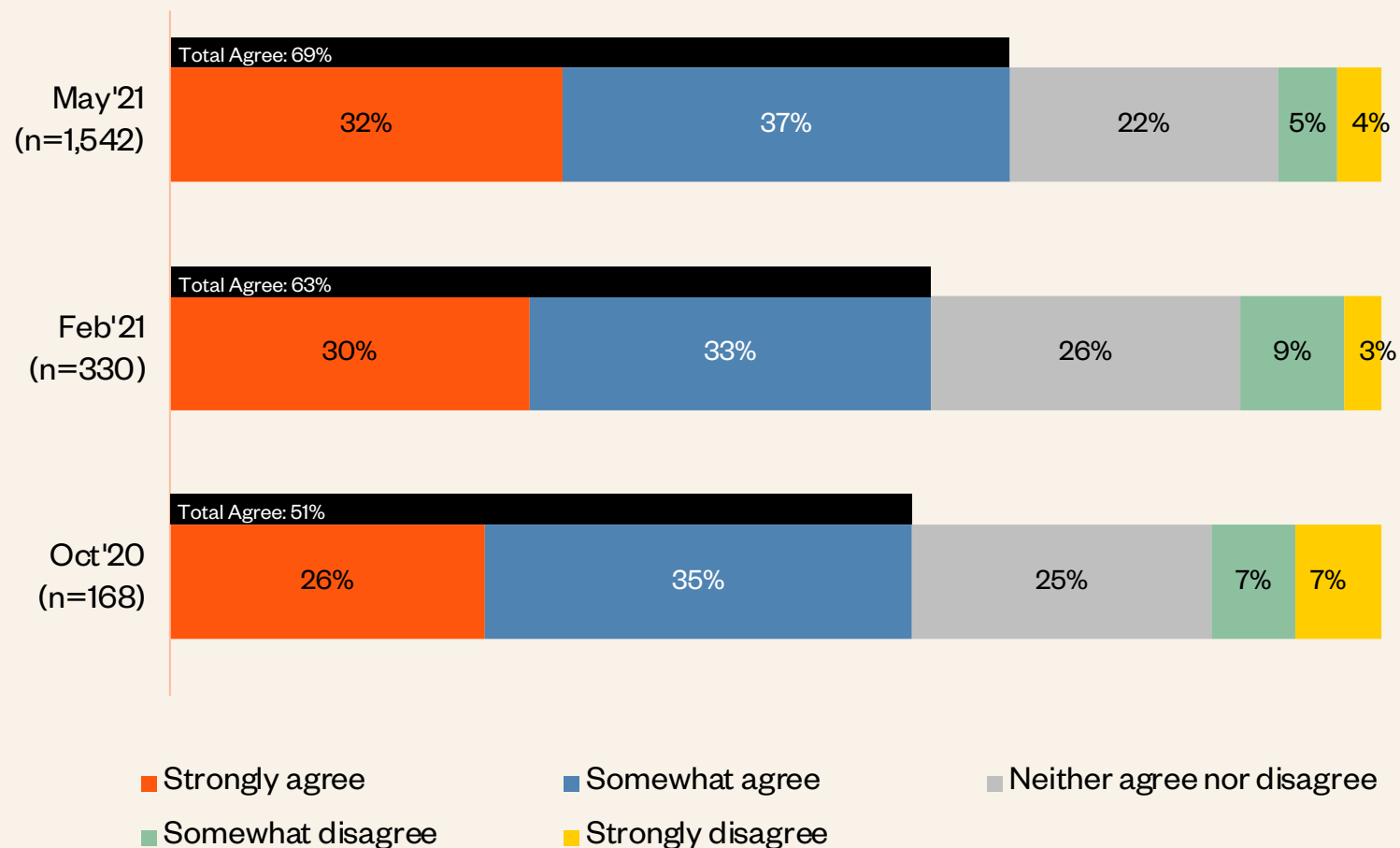
Importance of issues when voting at federal elections  
(% Extremely/very important)



Q. How important are each of the following issues when it comes to voting at federal elections?  
Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542  
\*Only shown to half sample, n=779  
\*\* Only shown to half sample, n=763

# 7 IN 10 NEW SOUTH WALES RESIDENTS AGREE THAT **CHEAPER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION** WOULD BE VERY GOOD FOR OUR ECONOMY.

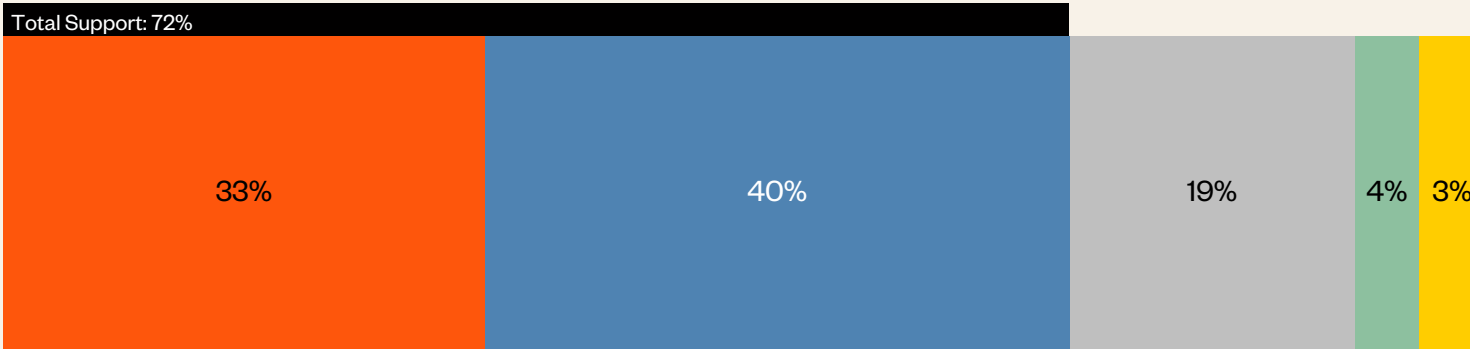
Agreement that cheaper early childhood education and care would be very good for the Australian economy as a whole (%)



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT  
FOR A UNIVERSAL EARLY  
LEARNING SYSTEM.

Support for a universal high-quality early childhood education  
and care system (%)



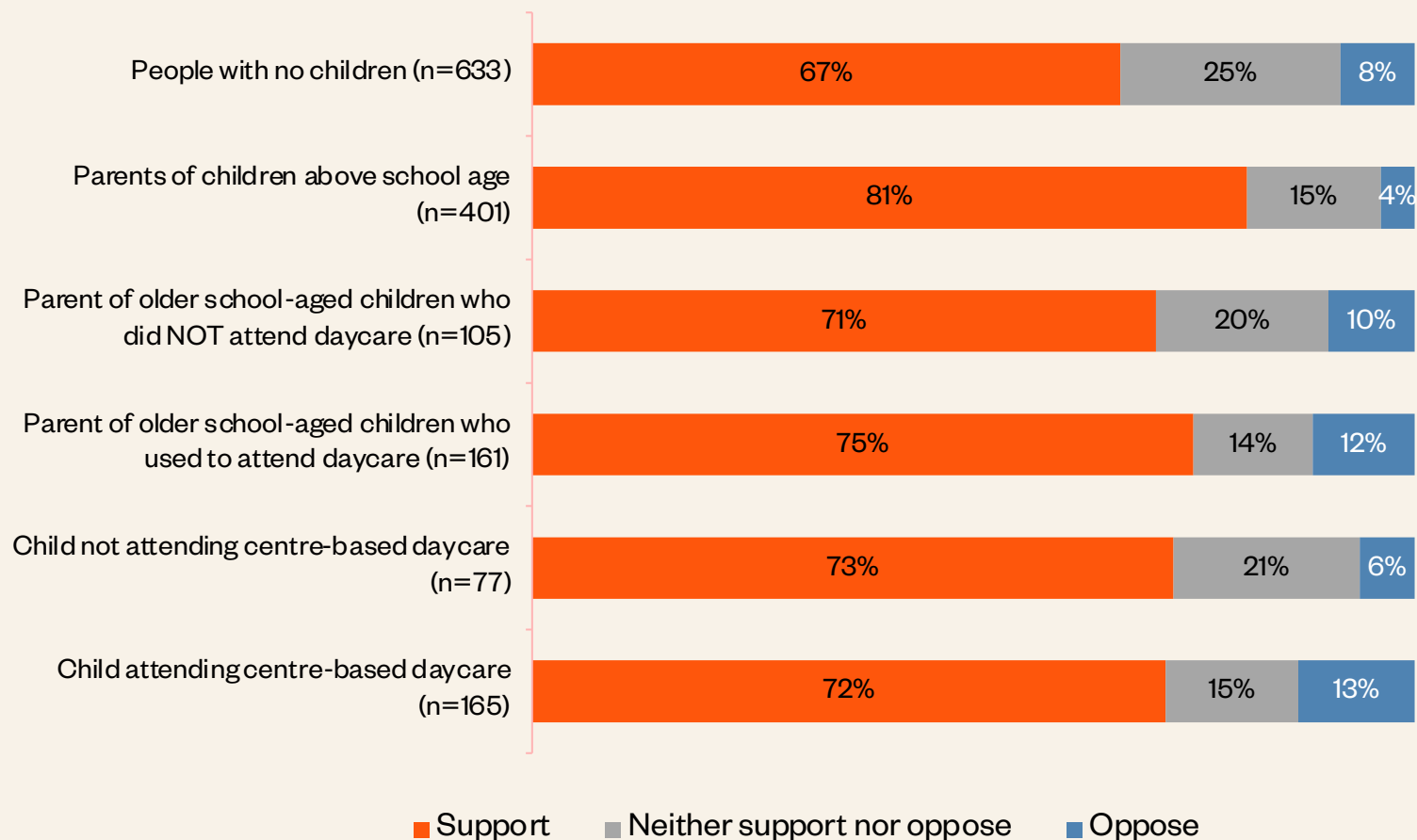
- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose

Q. For the purpose of the next few questions, please assume that 'a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system' would be one that was connected to the primary and secondary education system with a standard set of teaching priorities based around play-based learning. The system would be available at low or minimal cost to anyone who wants to use it, but using it would not be compulsory. How strongly do you support or oppose introducing a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system along those lines?

Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542

# THERE'S SUPPORT FOR A UNIVERSAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SYSTEM, WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE PRESCHOOL CHILDREN.

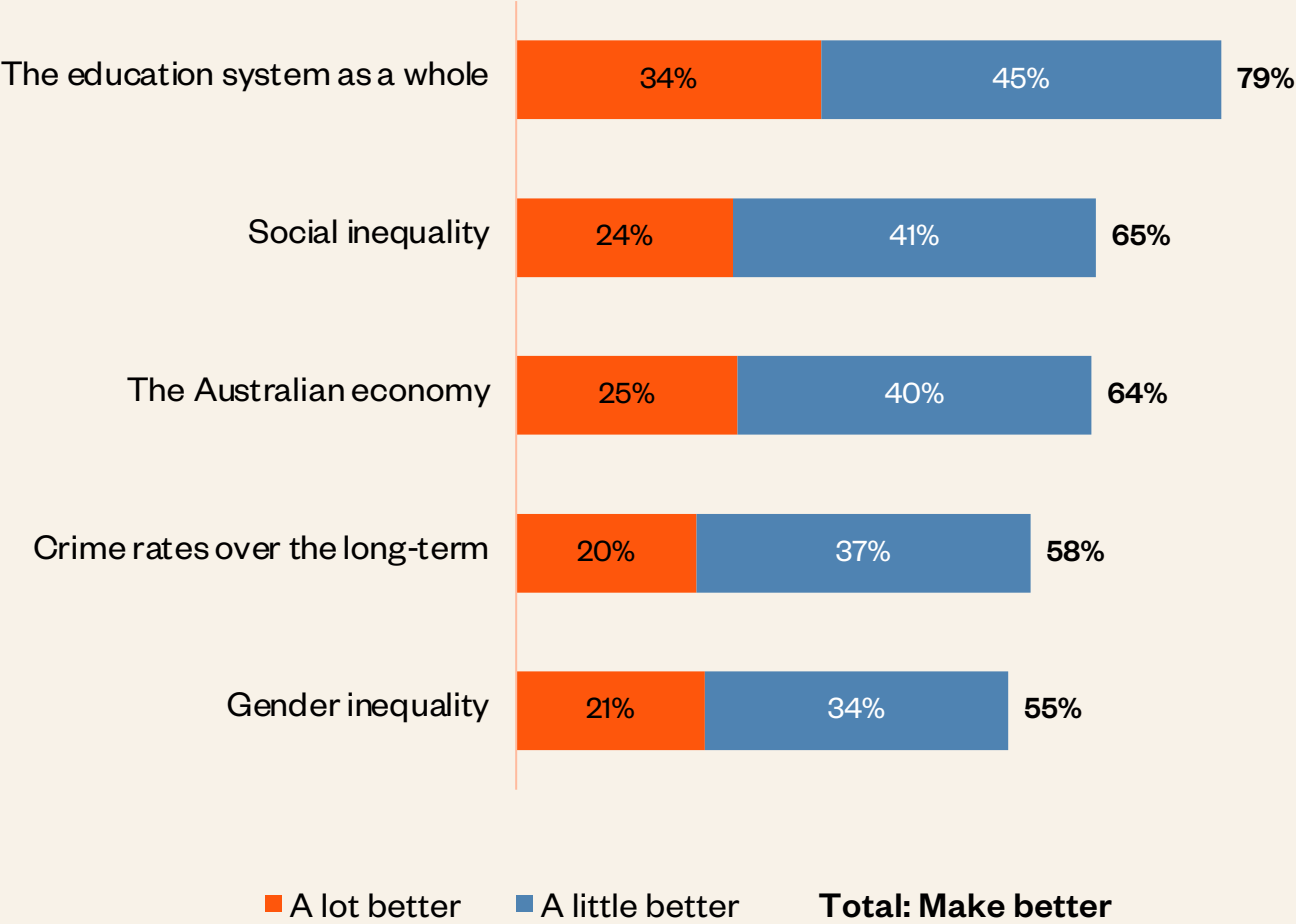
## Support for a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system (%)



Q. For the purpose of the next few questions, please assume that 'a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system' would be one that was connected to the primary and secondary education system with a standard set of teaching priorities based around play-based learning. The system would be available at low or minimal cost to anyone who wants to use it, but using it would not be compulsory. How strongly do you support or oppose introducing a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system along those lines?

**MOST NEW SOUTH WALES  
RESIDENTS SEE THE  
BENEFIT TO THE EDUCATION  
SYSTEM AND TO THE  
ECONOMY.**

Effect of universal high-quality early childhood education and care system (% Make it a lot/a little better)



Q. If there was a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system, how do you think it would affect each of the following?  
Base: NSW respondents, n=1,542