



# **THE AUSTRALIAN EARLY LEARNING MONITOR.**

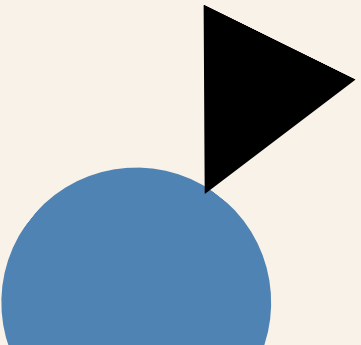
South Australia results  
June 2021.



**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**

# KEY FINDINGS.

1. Most South Australians 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 South Australians believe that cheaper ECE would be good for the economy as a whole, and that support has increased over the last year.
4. Two-thirds 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 and social inequality.



# METHODOLOGY.

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

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**Sample:** **n=348 South Australian 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.

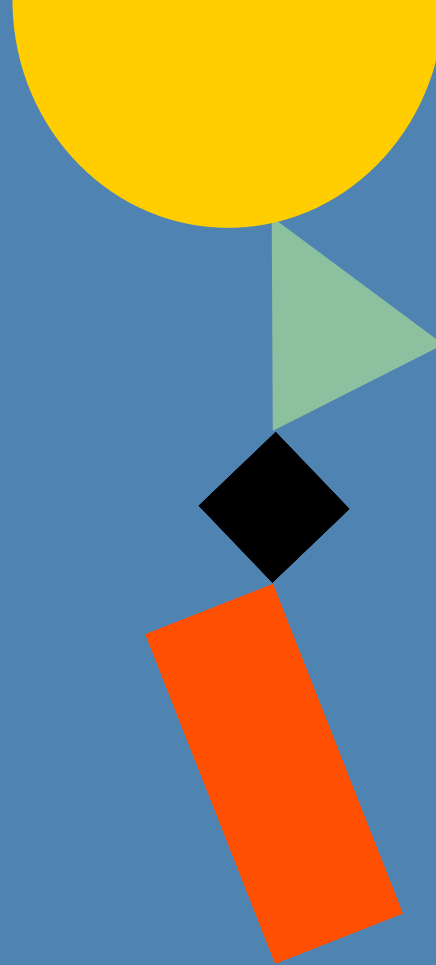
Note that some questions were asked of only half the sample to maximise the number of questions without increasing respondent burden.

The maximum margin of error is  $\pm 5.3\%$  at a 95% confidence level for the full sample. For questions asked of half sample, maximum margin of error is  $\pm 7.4\%$ .

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

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

# **CURRENT ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS.**



**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**

# THE VAST MAJORITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIANS BELIEVE PLAY-BASED LEARNING IS ESSENTIAL FOR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.

## Understanding of early learning (%)

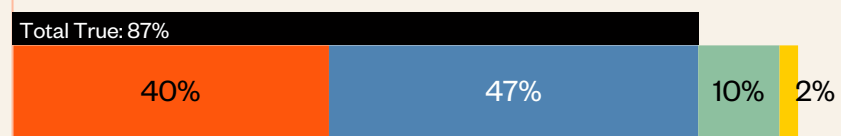
Play-based learning is essential for the brain development of children between the ages of zero to five



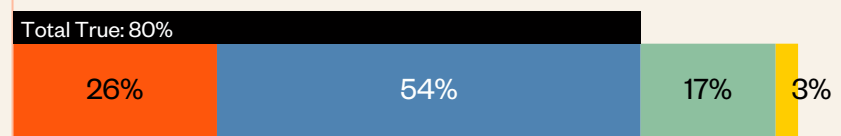
The cost of early childhood education and care has risen substantially in the last 3 years\*\*\*



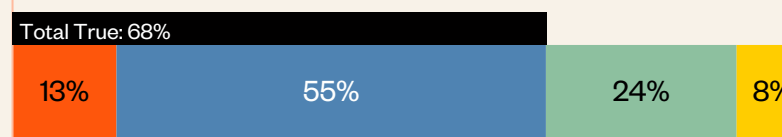
Many families don't send their children to early childhood education and care or limit how long they send them, because of the cost



Children who attend daycare or preschool at a centre will often have more opportunities for play-based learning than those who do not



Children who have not been exposed to play-based learning between the ages of zero to five either start school behind, or are not ready to learn



■ 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: SA respondents, n=348

\*\*\*Only shown to parents with a child that attends/attended daycare, n=56

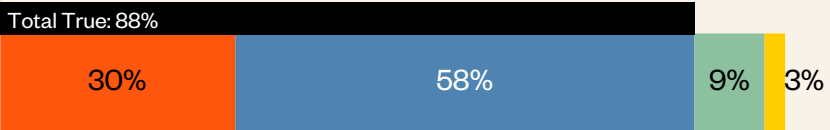
**MOST SEE THE VALUE OF  
PICKING UP LEARNING  
DIFFICULTIES BEFORE  
PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

**Understanding of early learning (%)**

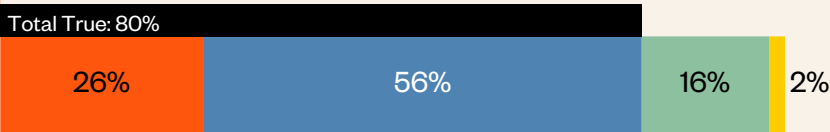
If learning difficulties and disabilities such as dyslexia, ADHD and autism can be picked up before children start primary school, the children are likely to be much better off in the long-term



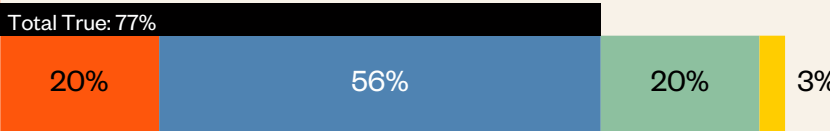
Many families rely on long-day care being open 52 weeks per year to support their work and other commitments



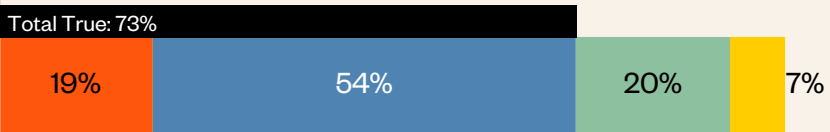
A high-quality early childhood education and care system would help ensure better outcomes for those children when they graduate Year 12



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



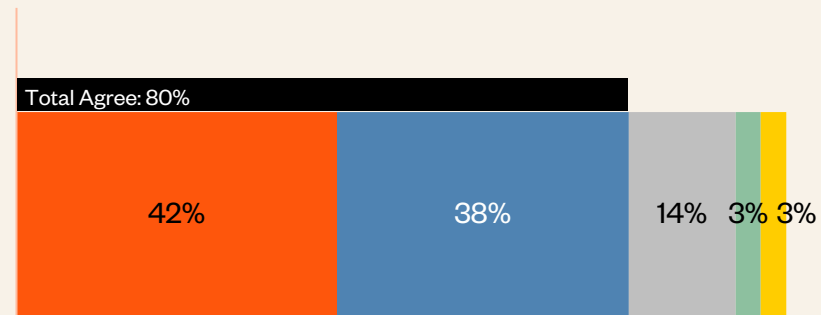
Definitely true   Probably true   Probably not true   Definitely not true

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: SA respondents, n=348

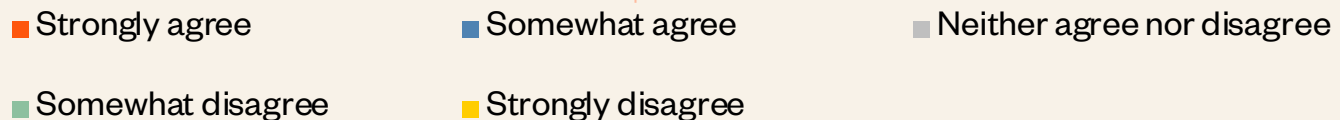
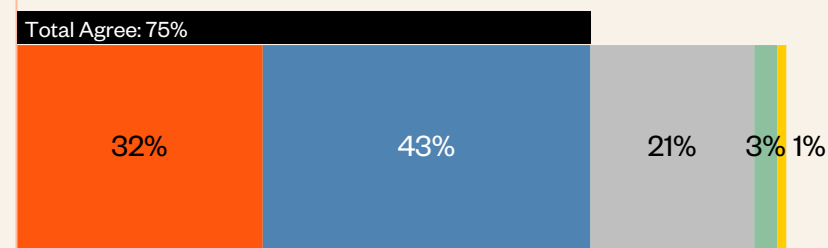
**MOST PARTICIPANTS  
AGREE EARLY LEARNING  
SHOULD BE PART OF THE  
EDUCATION SYSTEM AND  
QUALITY WOULD BE  
IMPROVED IF THE  
SYSTEM WAS MORE  
COORDINATED.**

## A coordinated future for early learning (%)

Early learning should be treated as part of the education system

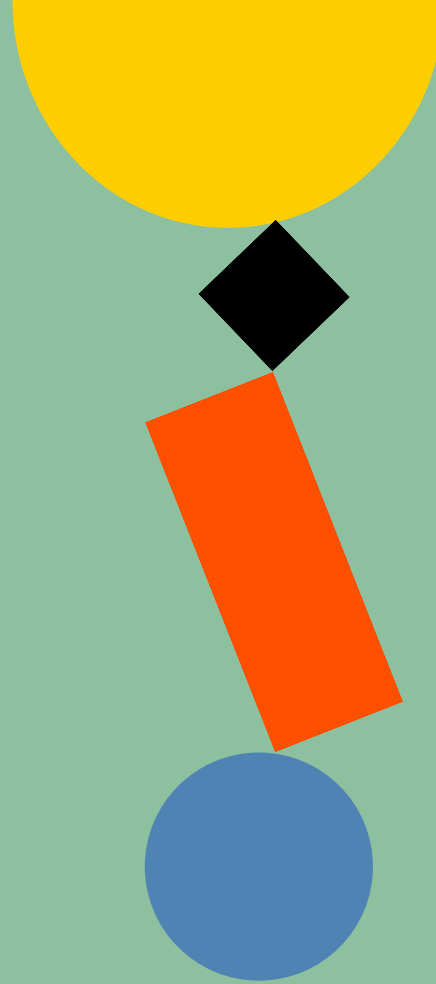


The quality of early childhood education and care would improve if the system was more coordinated



Q. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
Base: SA respondents, n=348

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

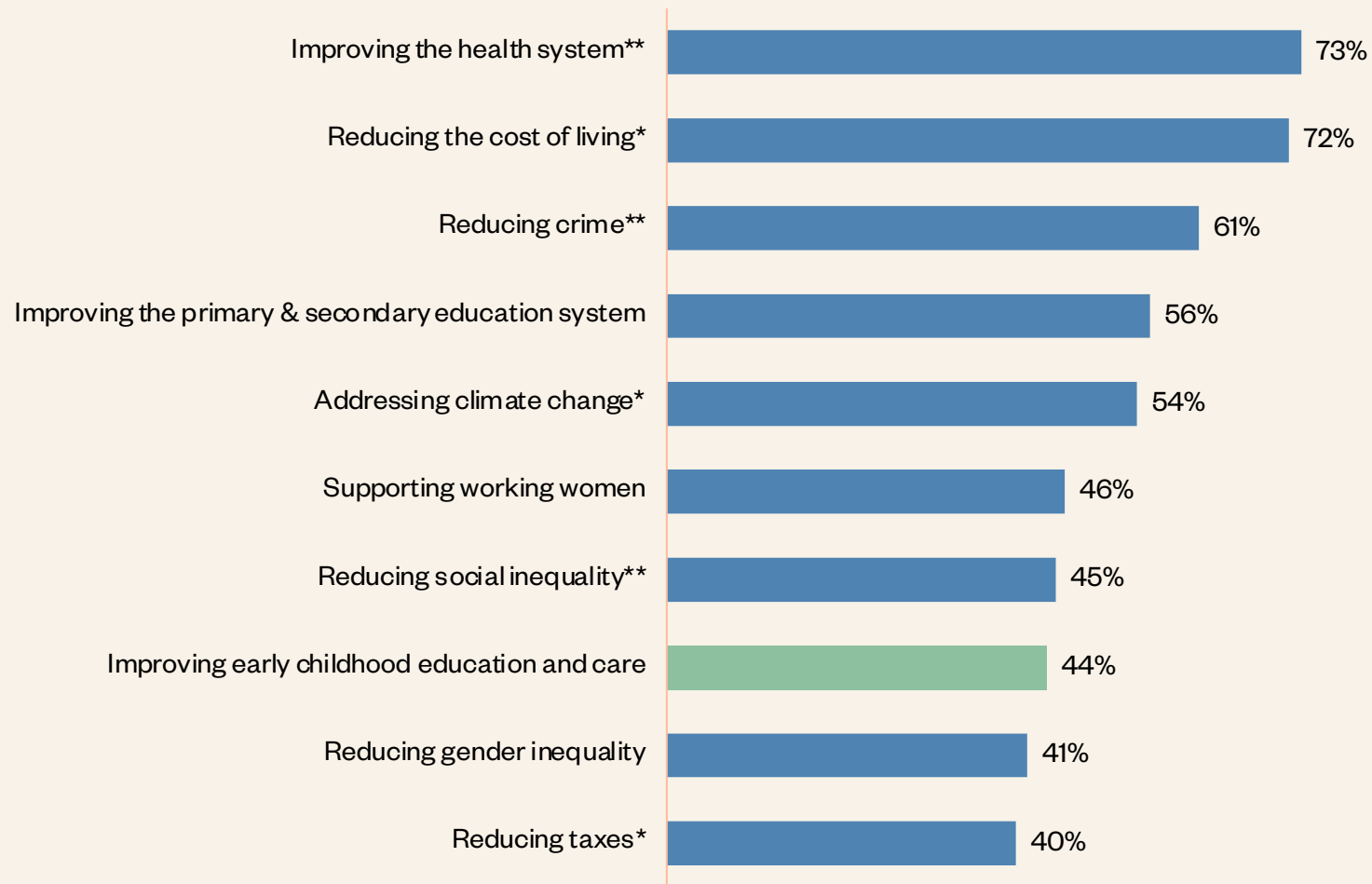


**THRIVE  
BY FIVE**



# IMPROVING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IS CURRENTLY A **SECOND- TIER ISSUE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**

## 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?

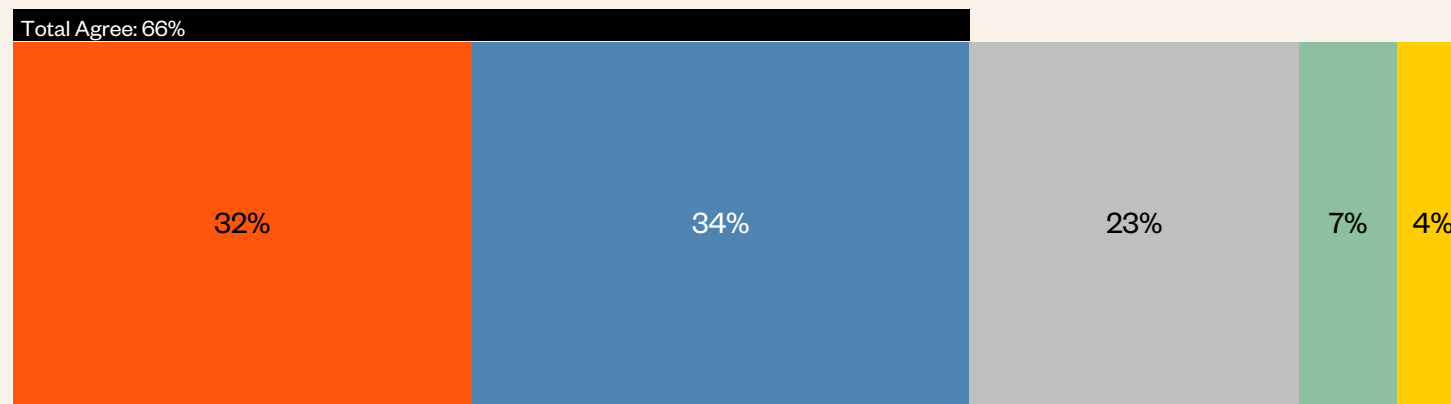
Base: SA respondents, n=348

\*Only shown to half sample, n=170

\*\* Only shown to half sample, n=178

# TWO-THIRDS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIANS AGREE 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 (%)



Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat disagree

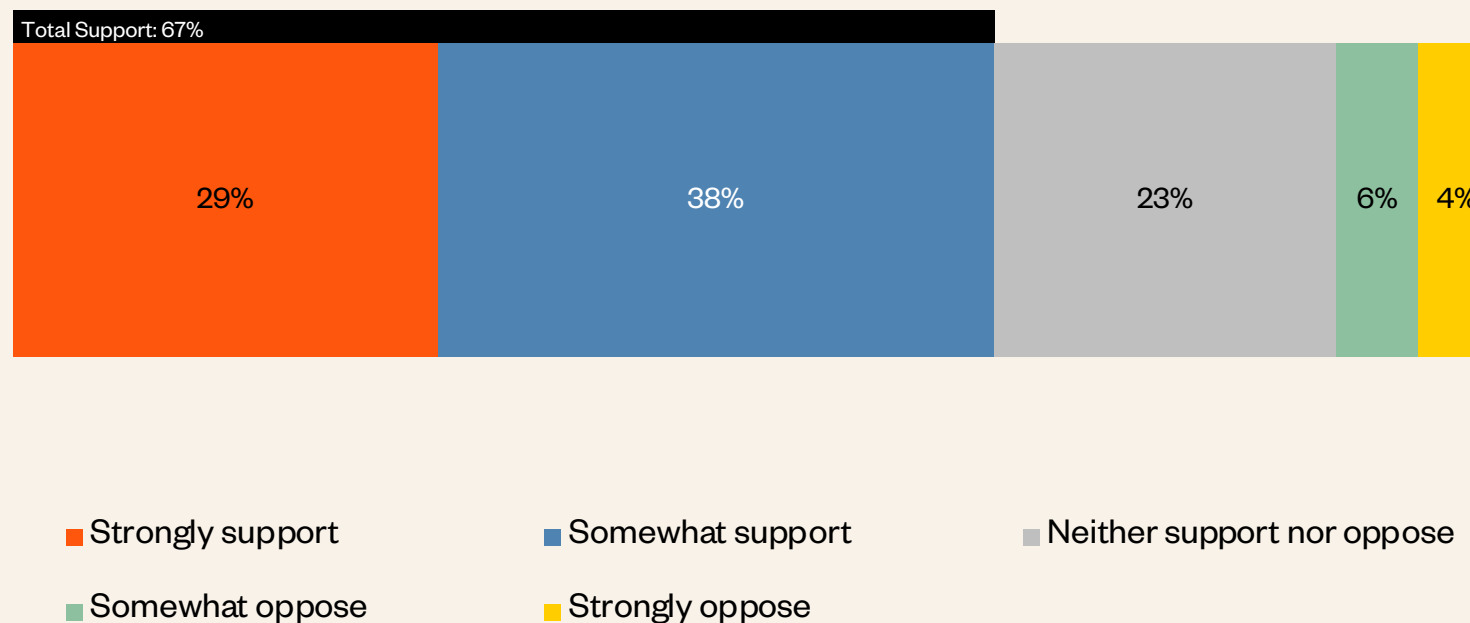
Strongly disagree

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

Base: SA respondents, n=348

# THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT FOR A UNIVERSAL EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM.

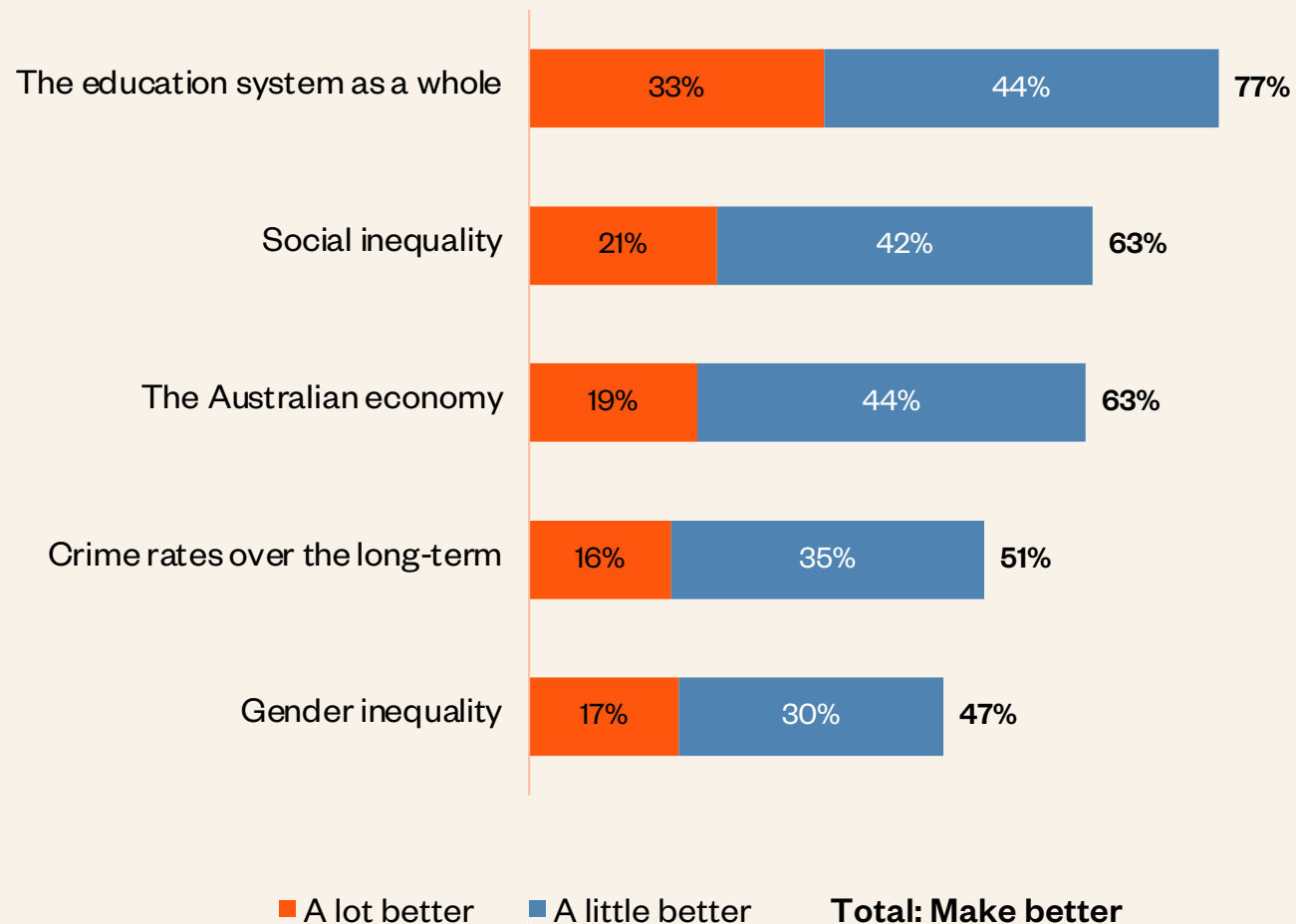
## Support for a universal high-quality early childhood education and care system (%)



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?  
Base: SA respondents, n=348

# MOST SOUTH AUSTRALIANS SEE THE **BENEFIT TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

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: SA respondents, n=348