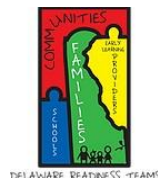




DELAWARE FAMILY SURVEY RESULTS



February 2023

ABOUT THE DELAWARE FAMILY SURVEY

This survey was designed for parents and/or caregivers of children under age five in Delaware. It was issued by Rodel, deaeyc, the Delaware Readiness Teams, and other members of the First State Pre-K coalition.

A total of 227 responses were collected from Delaware parents and/or caregivers of children ages zero to five between November 2022 and January 2023. The survey was available in both English and Spanish.

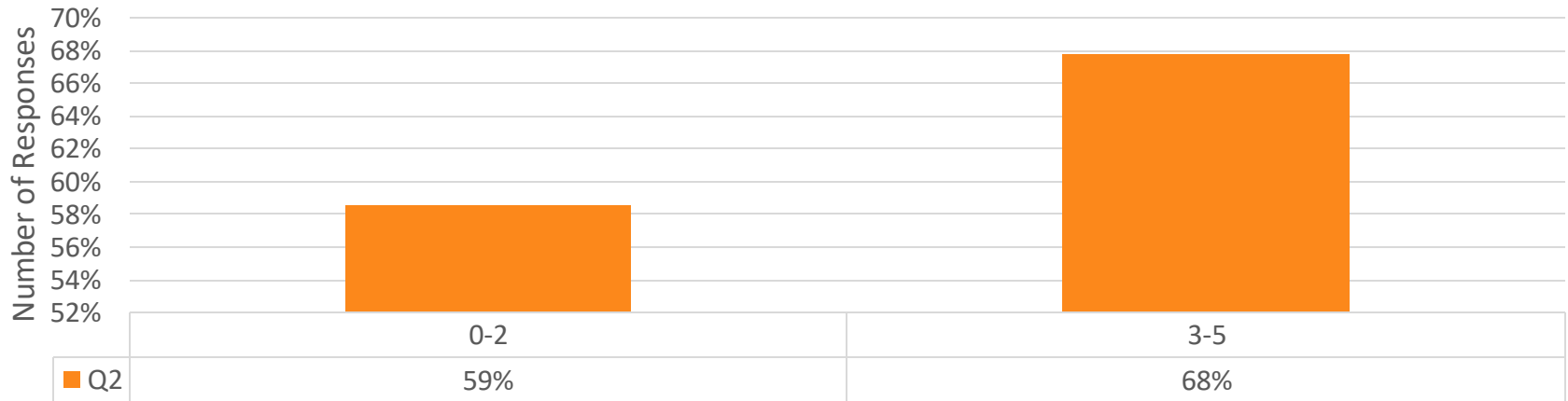
Most respondents live in New Castle County and have children in a child care center or pre-K. Data showed that 59 percent of respondents had at least one child aged zero to two and 68 percent of respondents had at least one child aged three to five.

DELAWARE FAMILY SURVEY FINDINGS SUMMARY

- Approximately 80 percent of respondents reported a **lack of affordable child care** that fully meets their needs **held their family back from improving their situation in at least one way** (take a job or increase hours at work, go back to school, buy a home, and/or other).
- Approximately 83 percent of respondents have **difficulty accessing child care programs for one or more reasons** (too expensive, hours of program don't meet your needs, lack of providers in your area, programs in the area are full, programs unable to meet child's special needs, providers do not speak the child's language, transportation, cultural/ religious reasons, confidence/ trust in child care provider, and/or other).
- **Expenses:** Nearly half of respondents (46 percent) report that **child care is their biggest monthly expense**. For more than a third (34 percent) of respondents, child care expense are **more costly than their mortgage**.
- **Waiting lists:** More than a third (37 percent) of respondents were placed on a waitlist by two or more of the centers that they contacted. Many respondents said waitlists were months long, so to be put on one was essentially to be turned away.

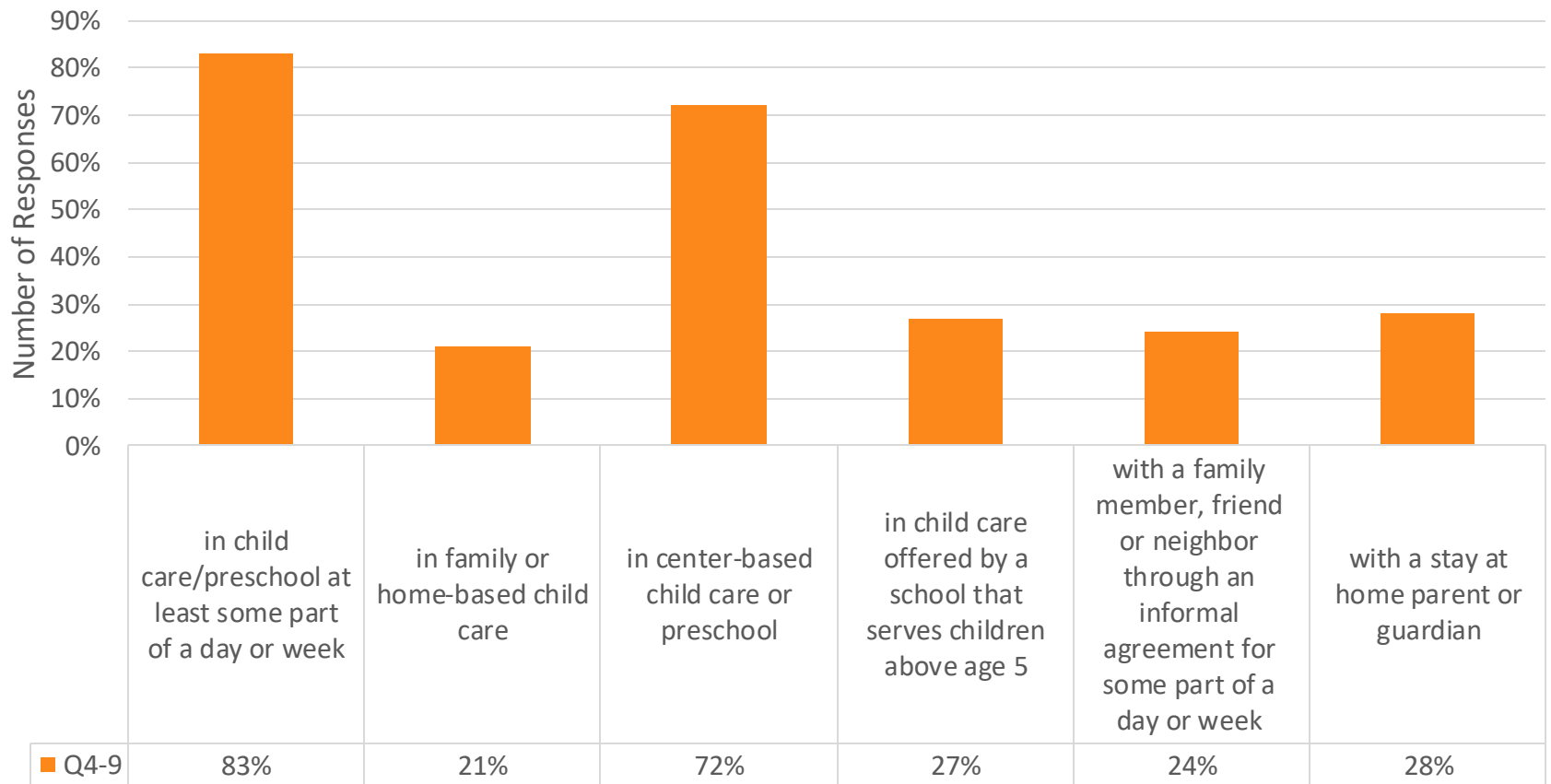
HOW OLD IS/ARE YOUR CHILD/REN? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

59% of respondents had at least one child aged 0-2 and 68% of respondents had at least one child aged 3-5.



PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE AT LEAST ONE CHILD THAT IS...

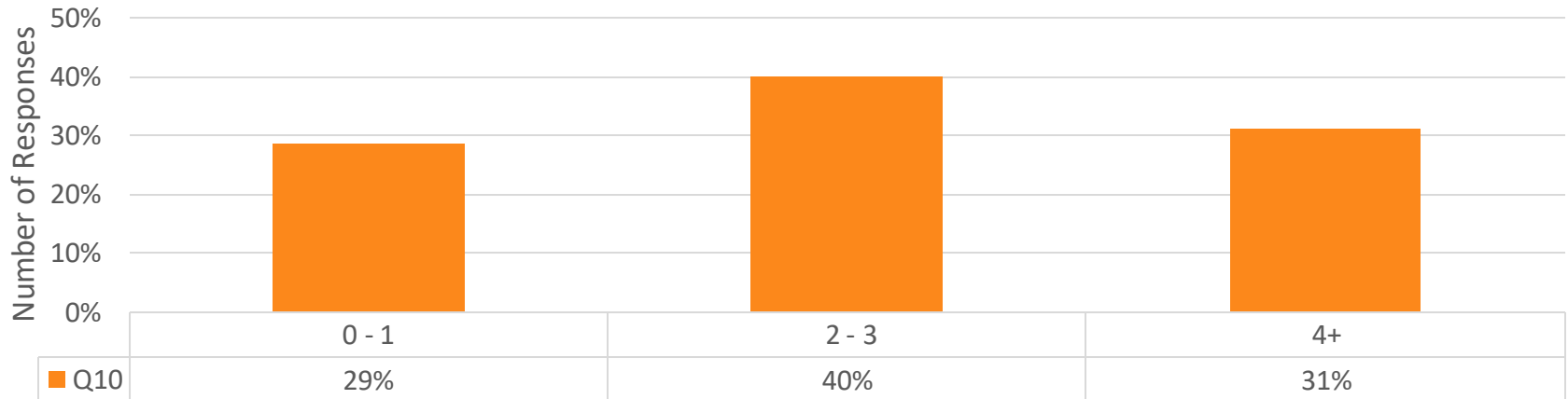
Most respondents have children in a child care center or pre-K.



Note: Respondents could report one or more children in each of the categories. Therefore, percentages may not total 100 percent.

HOW MANY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS DID YOU LOOK INTO, CONTACT, OR APPLY TO FOR YOUR CHILD?

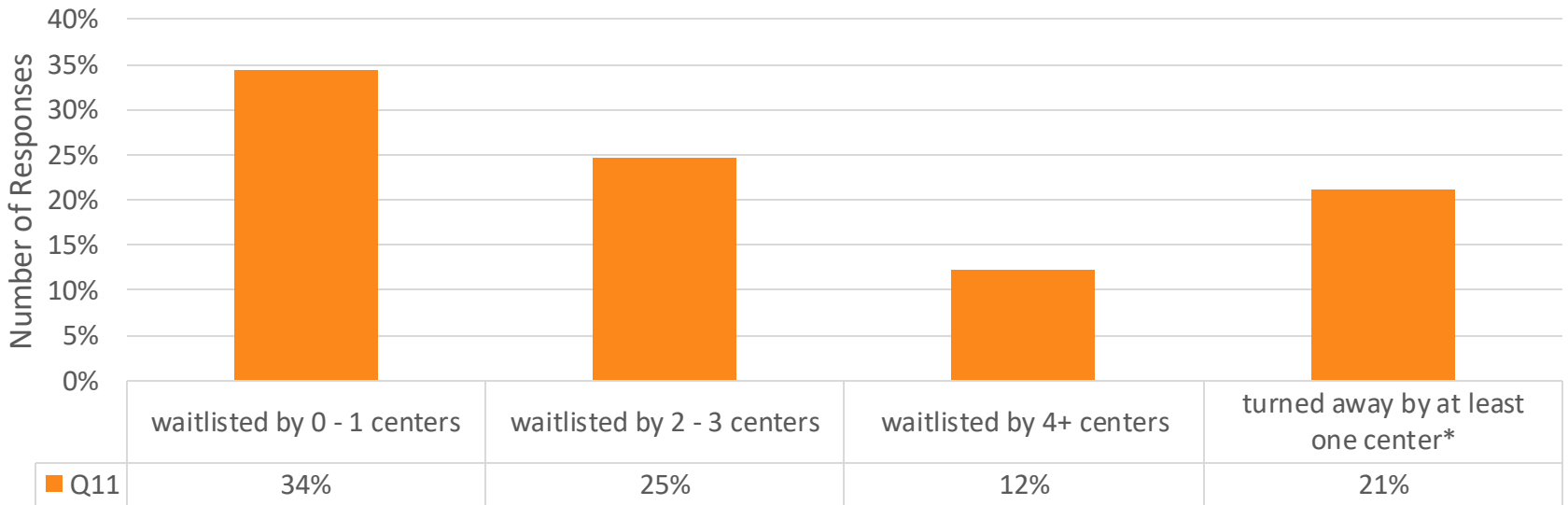
Nearly three quarters (71%) of respondents looked into, contacted, or applied to two or more child care programs.



HOW MANY OF THE CENTERS YOU CONTACTED PLACED YOU ON A WAITLIST OR TURNED YOU AWAY?

More than a third (37%) of respondents were placed on a waitlist by two or more of the centers that they contacted. In addition, more than 20% of respondents were turned away by one or more of the centers that they contacted without being placed on a waitlist.

Many respondents stated that the waitlists were months long, so to be put on one was essentially to be turned away. Furthermore, some reported other breakdowns in communication, such as not receiving a call back. This indicates that the percentage of people turned away from one or more of the centers that they contacted could be much higher.



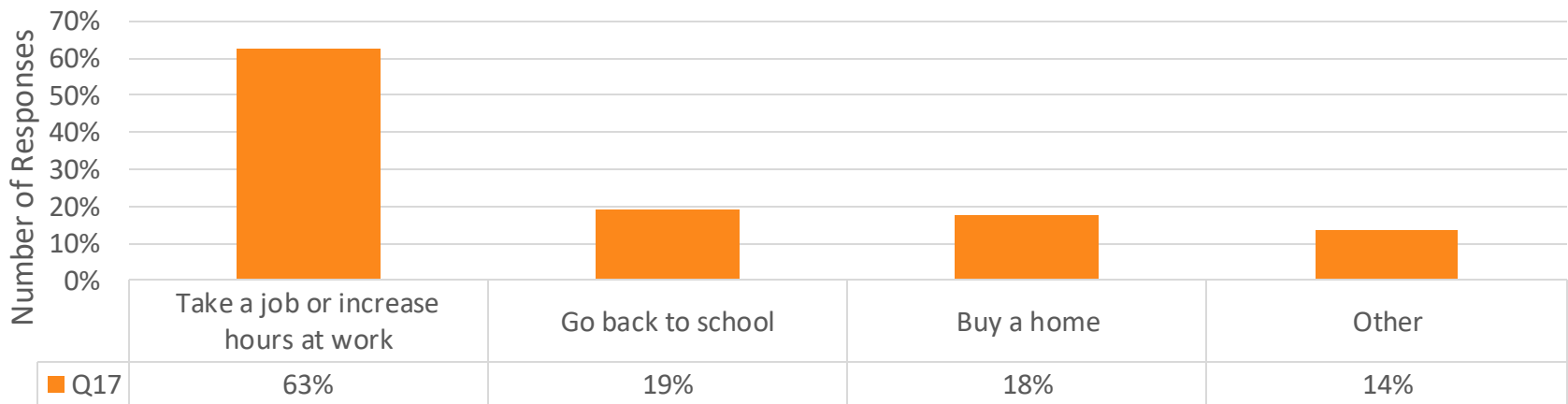
*without being placed on a waitlist.

Note: the options of being waitlisted at X number of centers and being turned away by at least one center are not mutually exclusive.

IF YOU FOUND AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE THAT FULLY MET YOUR NEEDS, WHAT DID/WOULD YOU DO? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

More than 80% of respondents reported that lack of affordable child care that fully meets their needs held their family back from improving their situation in at least one way (i.e., take a job or increase hours at work, go back to school, buy a home, and/or other*).

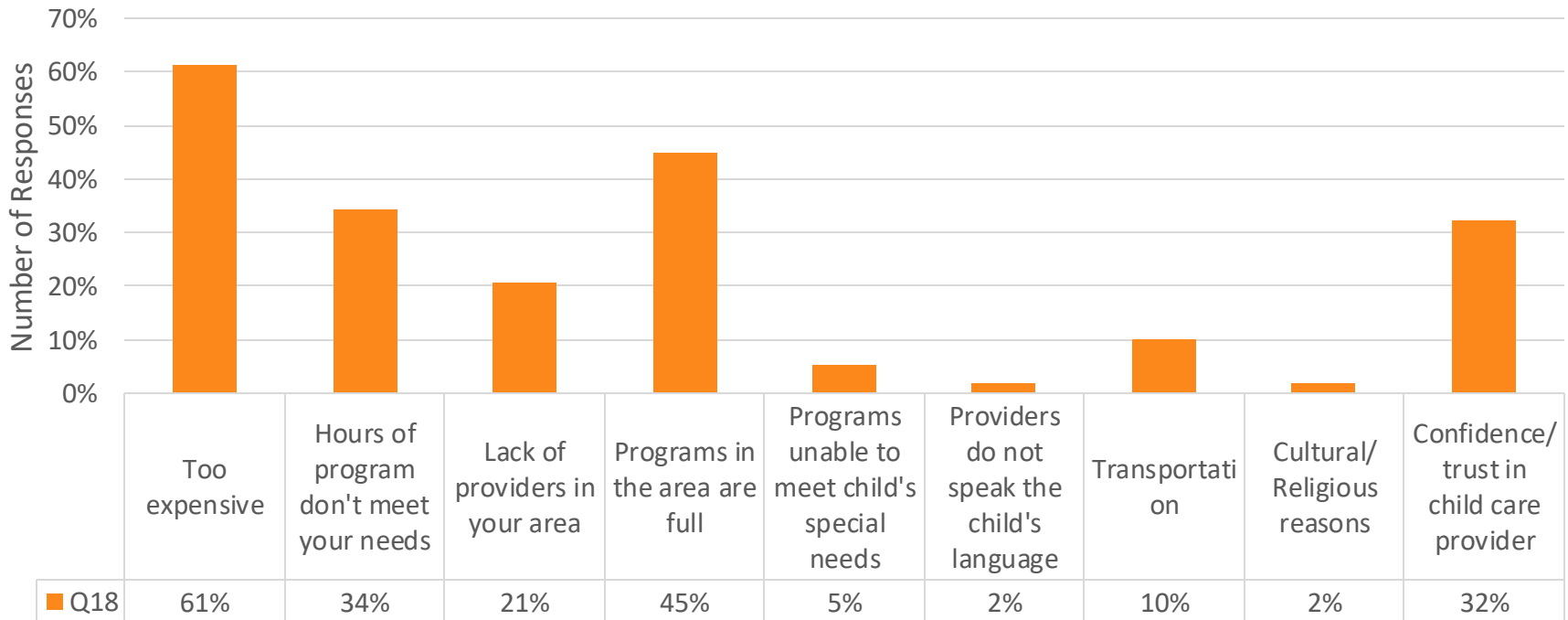
*Ex., save more money, get out of debt, not live month to month, make better financial decisions, etc.



Note: respondents could select multiple options. Additionally, some respondents did not answer this question. Therefore, percentages may not total to 100.

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY ACCESSING CHILD CARE PROGRAMS? IF SO, WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST DIFFICULTY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

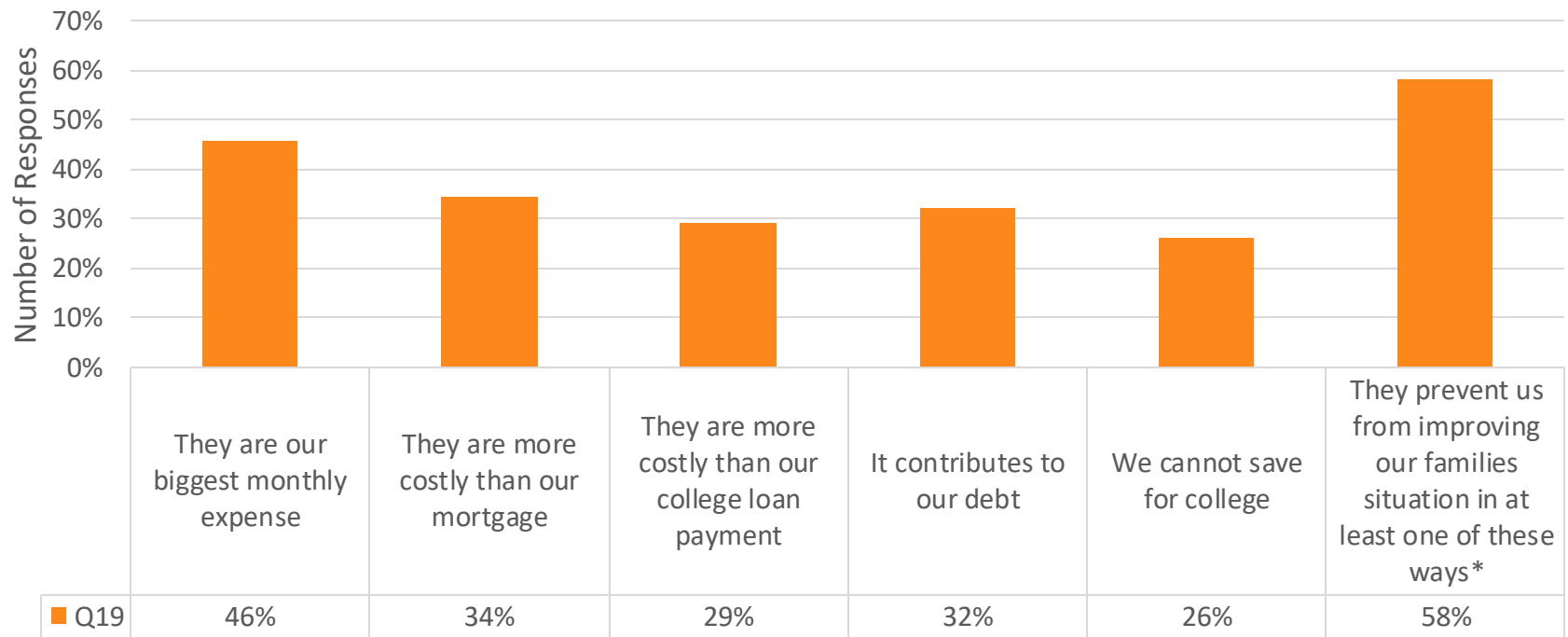
Approximately 83% of respondents have difficulty accessing child care programs for one or more reasons (i.e., too expensive, hours of program don't meet your needs, lack of providers in your area, programs in the area are full, programs unable to meet child's special needs, providers do not speak the child's language, transportation, cultural/ religious reasons, confidence/ trust in child care provider, and/or other).



Note: respondents could select multiple options. Additionally, some respondents did not answer this question. Therefore, percentages may not total to 100.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE ABOUT YOUR CHILD CARE EXPENSES? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

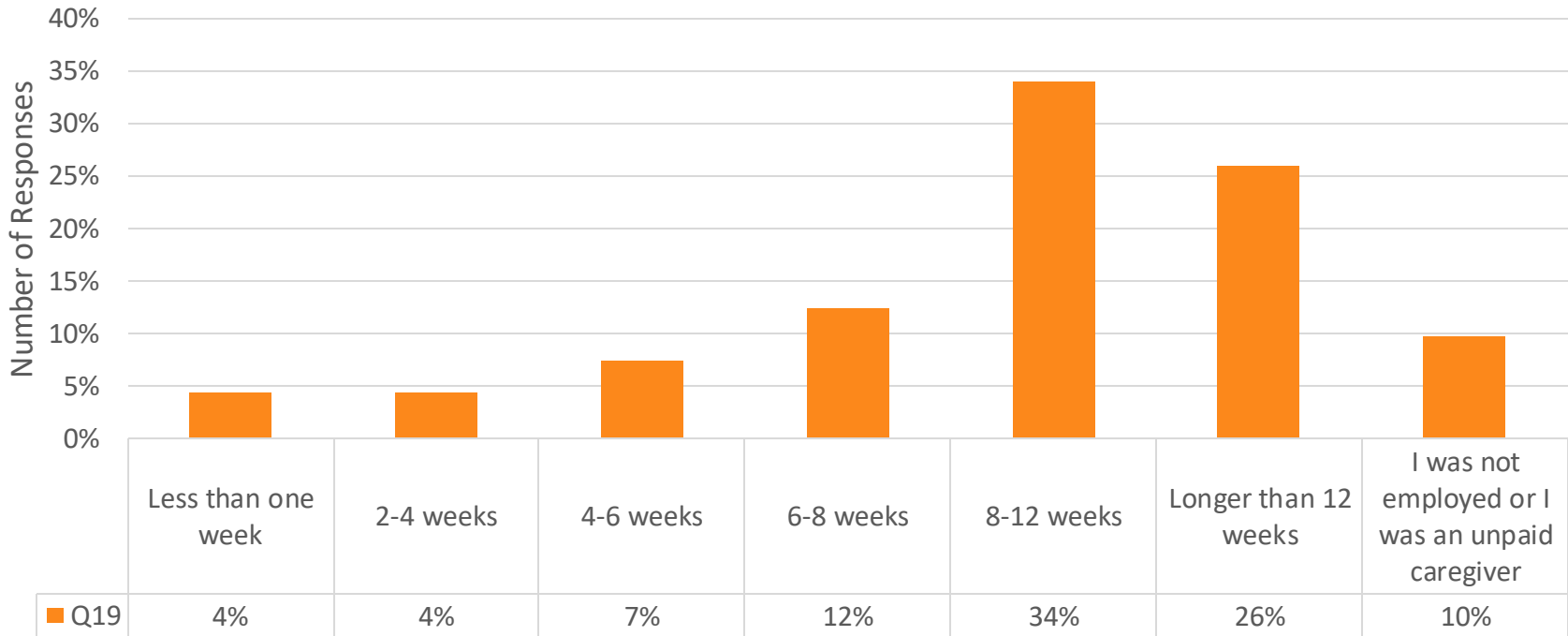
Nearly half of respondents (46%) report that child care is their biggest monthly expense. For more than a third (34%) of respondents, child care expenses are more costly than their mortgage.



*having another child, buying a home, starting a business, taking a job, going back to school, or something else.

DID YOU HAVE ACCESS TO PAID FAMILY LEAVE WHEN YOUR CHILD JOINED YOUR FAMILY? HOW QUICKLY DID YOU RETURN TO WORK AFTER WELCOMING YOUR CHILD(REN) INTO YOUR FAMILY THROUGH BIRTH, FOSTERING, OR ADOPTION?

Only 50% of respondents had access to paid family leave when their child joined the family. 30% of respondents returned to work after 6-8 weeks or less.



DELAWARE CAREGIVERS SHARE THEIR STORIES

"We have been on waitlists at other centers for years. It is expensive and is one the reasons (probably a main reason) we are not expanding our family."

"If I don't have care, I can't work."

"Our experience with finding child care has been a series of epic failures. We were put on numerous waitlists for centers in our area - most with a year+ waiting list and insanely expensive."

"It is simply impossible [to have another child] with the cost of care, student loans, and the rise in housing prices. My husband and I both work full time... paying for child care stretches us to the limit."

