

MOMS IN THE WORKPLACE SURVEY

2023 FINAL REPORT

August 16, 2023



MOMS F1RST



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OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

Demonstrate Moms First as a leading resource for moms advocating on their behalf in the workplace, in culture and in the government.

Drive the conversation around the challenges moms experience at work - once they become pregnant, when they return to work after welcoming a child and how they manage work with young children under the age of 5.

Go deeper on insights uncovered in recent focus groups within the Moms First community on the pain points of returning to work and interviewing for a job as a new mom.

Inform a unique point of view for advice or a toolkit to help new Moms navigate the return back to work, while uncovering learnings relevant for employers on ways to change their workplace culture and to hire

AUDIENCE

1,000 Moms in the U.S.
1,000 general population
480 with children 0 to 5

FIELD DATES

The survey was fielded between
June 26 – July 10, 2023



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KEY FINDINGS

Experience Expecting and on Parental Leave

Worries about juggling parenting and work starts early when moms learn they are expecting a child.

A majority of moms were dissatisfied or had concerns about their parental leave, and more than half dreaded returning to work after leave.

Roughly a third considered quitting their job.

Experience at Work

Moms who are dissatisfied with their work are struggling to keep up – citing the struggle to balance work and parenting, burn out and a lack of back-up childcare.

3 in 4 moms say their company could be doing more to support for working parents of young children.

While moms report getting support from their managers and co-workers, leadership is not setting the example.

Moms report feeling sidelined or excluded at work as a parent of young children and are struggling to balance parenting and their careers.

Exploring New Job Opportunities

Of the moms thinking about quitting or changing their jobs (4 in 10), roughly half cited burnout and the desire to spend more time with their kids as the reason.

Among moms who have recently applied for a new job, more than half report encountering challenges during the process, such as a lack of job options with benefits for parents or discomfort with negotiating flexible work arrangements.

Desired Solutions

In the workplace, the most helpful ways employers can support parents of young children is through:

- Tangible benefits (e.g., onsite childcare)
- A part-time transition period after parental leave
- A manager who is supportive of parents' needs

Outside the workplace, Moms are craving advice, guidance and talking points to:

- Advocate for public policy changes to support working parents
- Raise opportunities for their employees to better support parents of young children
- Start the job search after a caregiving gap



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EXPERIENCE EXPECTING AND ON PARENTAL LEAVE

Worries about juggling parenting and work starts early when moms learn they are expecting a child.

42%

of moms considered leaving their job once they welcomed their child

On the positive side

more than half

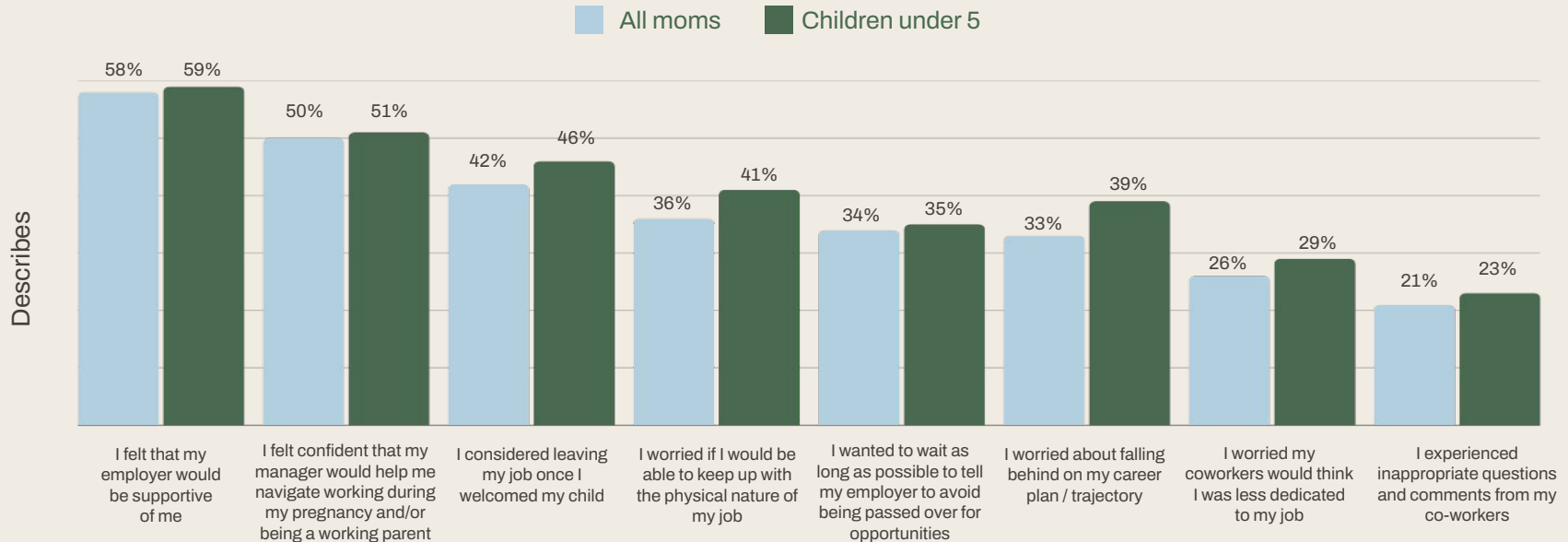
of all moms felt their employer would be supportive of them.



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Q8. How well do the following describe your experience at work when you found out you were pregnant or expecting a child (e.g., through adoption, surrogacy)?



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**Data shown is the NET of "Describes very well" and "Describes extremely well"

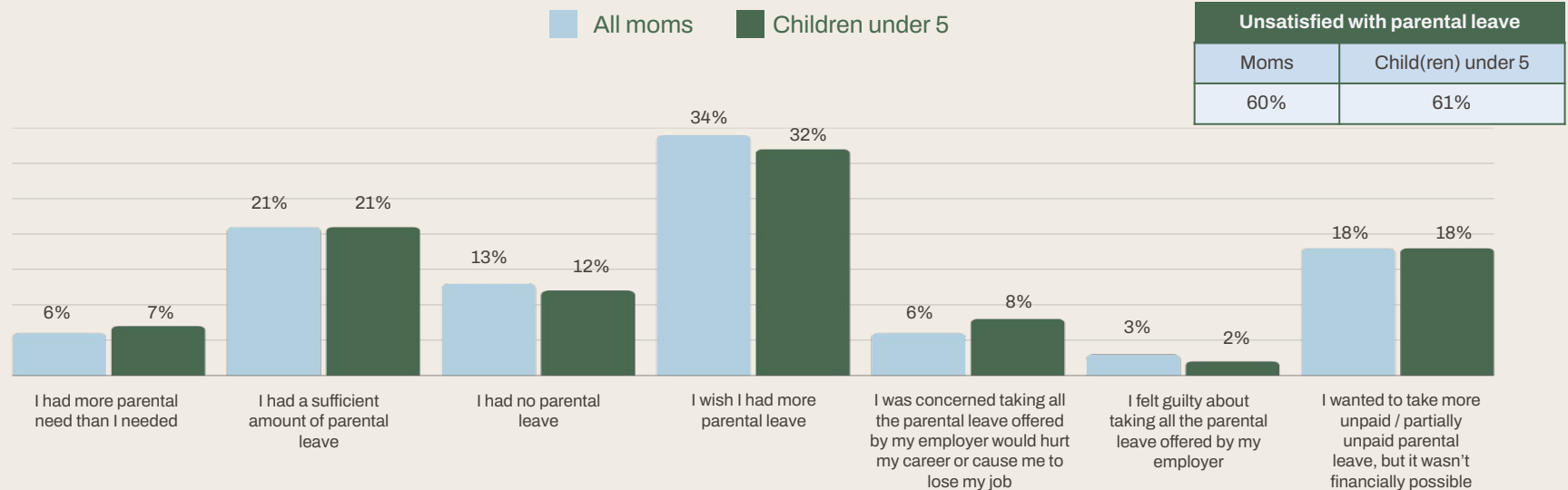


Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

EXPERIENCE EXPECTING AND ON PARENTAL LEAVE

60% of moms expressed some level of concern or dissatisfaction around their parental leave

Q10. Which of the below best reflects your view on your parental leave?



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EXPERIENCE EXPECTING AND ON PARENTAL LEAVE

At the end of their leave,
less than a third of moms

(28%)

said they felt eager and
ready to go back to work.

And more than half
dreaded going back.



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64%

dreaded going back to work but had to
return for financial reasons

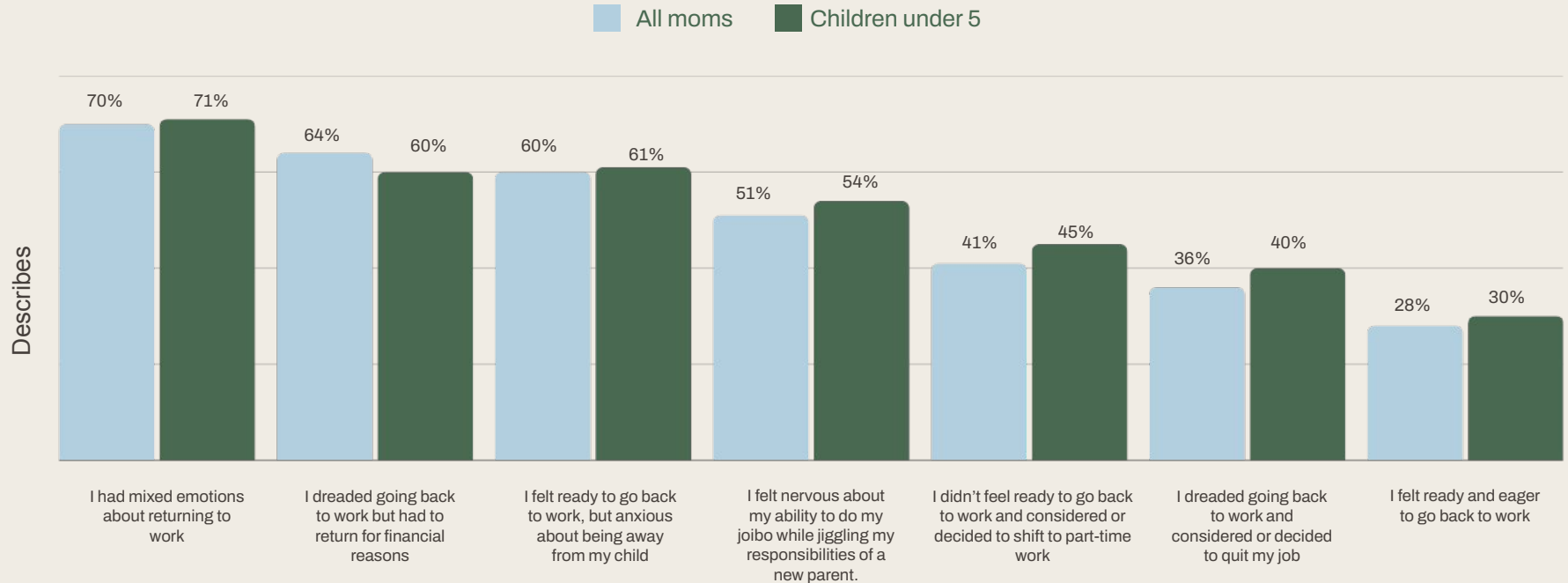
41%

didn't feel ready to go back to work and
considered or decided to shift to
part-time work

36%

dreaded going back to work and
considered or decided to quit their job

Q12. How well do the following describe how you felt as the end of your parental leave approached, but before you returned to work?



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Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY OF MOMS RETURNING TO WORK IS COMPLEX AND MULTIFACETED

When asked in an open-ended question to describe their emotions about returning to work after parental leave, Moms' responses show a complex and diverse journey, encompassing a wide range of feelings. Many moms feel anxious, stressed and exhausted as they navigate the challenges of balancing work and family responsibilities. They may also experience sadness and guilt about leaving their children or not being fully present at home. On the other hand, some moms, in many cases the same moms, feel excited and ready to rejoin the workforce, finding fulfillment and purpose in their careers.

Mixed feelings are common, as moms grapple with conflicting emotions and uncertainties. Unfortunately, some moms may also feel unsupported, struggling to find the necessary resources and understanding from their workplace or support systems.

Overall, the return-to-work journey for moms is a unique and personal experience, shaped by a combination of emotions that evolve over time.



Sad to leave him, happy to be back to work



I felt very emotional and physically drained. I wasn't ready at all, but my family needed me to return in order to pay our bills

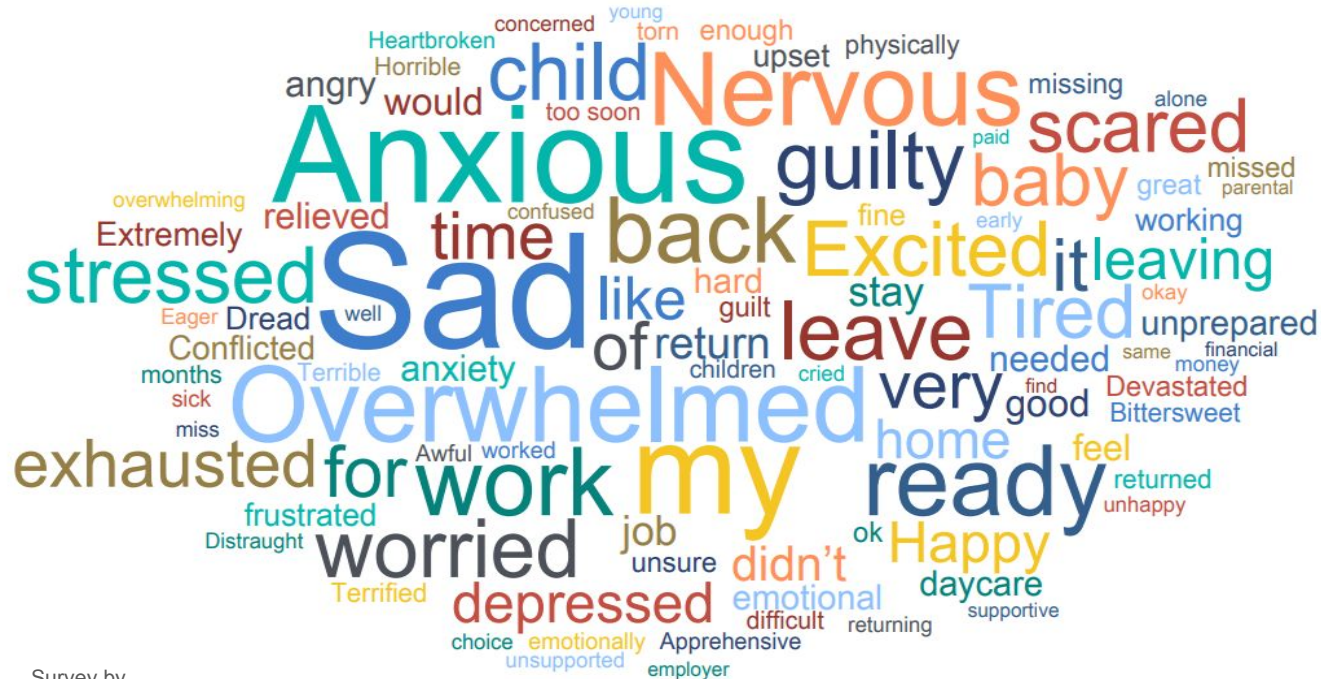


Anxious and behind the career curve



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Q11. How did you feel right before going back to work after welcoming your child? Please describe your emotions using one or two words.



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Total sample; Unweighted; base n = 1813

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Moms who are dissatisfied with their work are struggling to keep up

30%

of moms are (or were) dissatisfied with their work situation while raising children under 5 years old



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Top 3 reasons why they are (or were) dissatisfied:

76%

88%

are struggling to balance the demands of work and caring for their children (this jumps to 90% among self-employed moms)

75%

85%

are burnt out

70%

76%

don't have back-up childcare options

KEY

Moms

Stay-at-Home Moms (Not Seeking Employment)

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

And moms earning less than \$50,000 per year were more likely to cite the lack of support from their employer, manager and spouse

To what extent does each of the statements below describe why you're feeling unsatisfied with your employment status as a parent of children under the age of 5?



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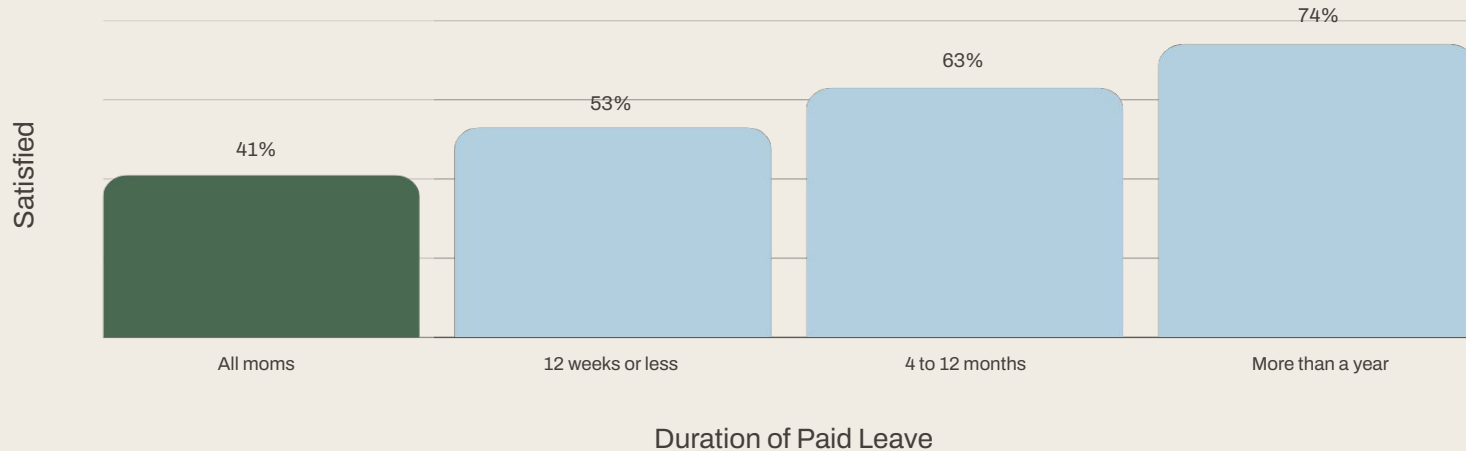


Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Moms with more paid parental leave report higher levels of satisfaction with their current employment

Q6. Thinking about your employment situation as a parent of children under the age of 5, how satisfied are/were you?



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EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Moms are looking for their employers to provide more support for parents of young children.

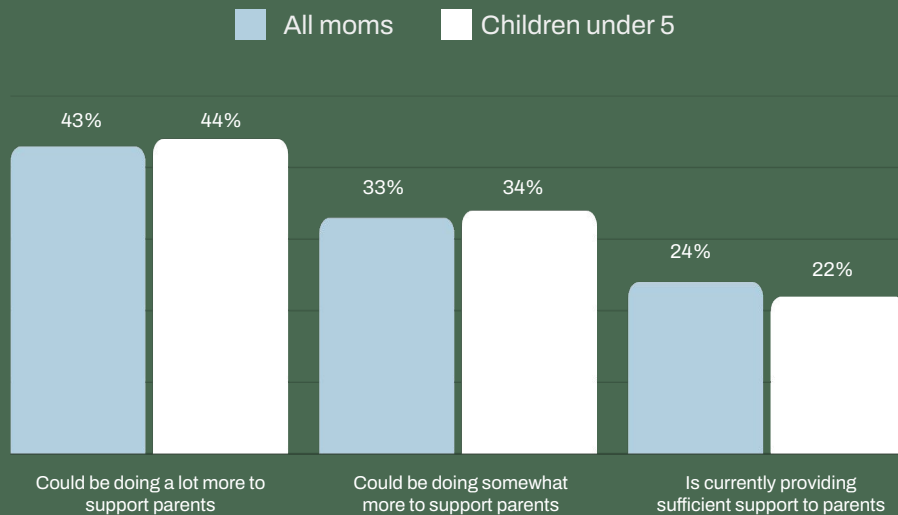
76%

say their company could be doing more to support parents



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Q17. How would you assess the level of support your company currently provides to parents of young children? Please select one option that best reflects your opinion:



Significant testing between
ALL shown audiences

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

While moms report they're getting support from their direct managers and co-workers, support from leadership to set the example and drive a parent-friendly work culture is lacking

THE GOOD NEWS:

63%

said their co-workers were understanding of last-minute changes to my schedule due to childcare responsibilities

59%

had a manager / direct supervisor who was supportive and empathetic of parents' needs

THE BAD NEWS:

36%

said their company leadership team served as role models

Only 34%

said their workplace culture encouraged calls/meetings not to be scheduled at times inconvenient to parents of young children



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EXPERIENCE AT WORK

And moms who permanently left the workforce to be stay-at-home parents were less likely to report experiencing support as a parent at their last job overall

THE GOOD NEWS:

↓ 43%

said their co-workers were understanding of last-minute changes to my schedule due to childcare responsibilities

↓ 42%

had a manager / direct supervisor who was supportive and empathetic of parents' needs

THE BAD NEWS:

↓ 16%

said their company leadership team served as role models

↓ 18%

said their workplace culture encouraged calls/meetings not to be scheduled at times inconvenient to parents of young children



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EXPERIENCE AT WORK

Moms report feeling sidelined or excluded at work as a parent of young children...

24%

29%

Have received negative comments from co-workers on my ability to complete my work because of my childcare responsibilities

35%

47%

Had less opportunities for career growth (e.g., not offered trainings, mentorship opportunities, networking events)

32%

44%

Said their achievements or contributions are not adequately recognized or celebrated possibly due to their reduced visibility during parental leave



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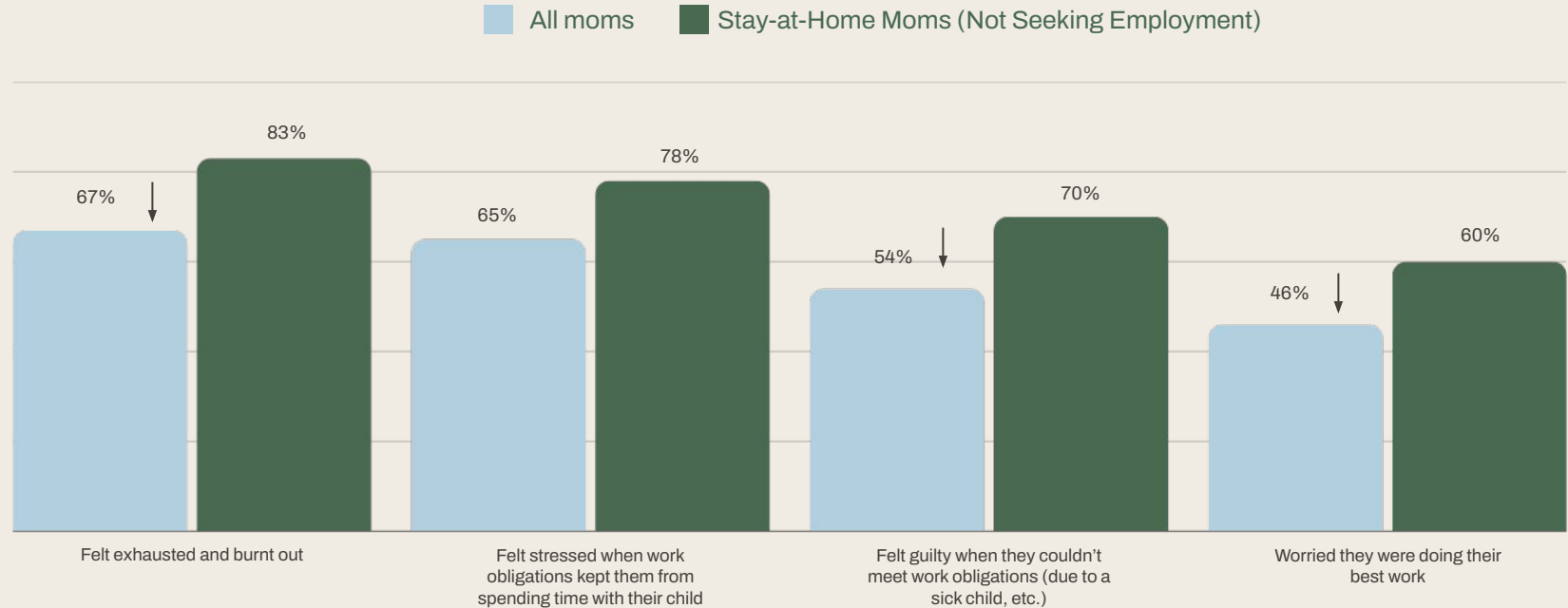
KEY

Moms

Stay-at-Home Moms (Not Seeking Employment)

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

More than half of the moms surveyed relay feeling stressed out, exhausted and experiencing feelings of guilt about juggling work and parenting.



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**Data shown is the NET of "Describes very well" and "Describes extremely well"



Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

EXPERIENCE AT WORK

When it comes to juggling work with their responsibilities as a parent, their top concerns largely center on home life...

69%

I will miss out on time with my child(ren) due to work

43%

I will not have enough time for myself

40%

I will fall behind on household tasks



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EXPLORING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

41%

are thinking about quitting their job to...

15%

take on full-time childcare responsibilities

17%

apply for a similar job with a different workplace culture

9%

start freelancing

Of the moms thinking about quitting or changing their jobs, roughly half cited burnout and the desire to spend more time with their kids as the reason

Because they...

56%

want to be more actively involved in their children's lives

54%

want more quality time with their children

49%

are burnt out

47%

are struggling to balance the demands of work and caring for children



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EXPLORING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Among moms who have recently applied for a new job, more than half report encountering challenges during the process

41%

have
applied and/or
interviewed for
a new job

Top 4 challenges going through the job search process:

75%

wish they could find more job options with flexibility and benefits for parents.

56%

wish the interviewers shared more about the workplace culture

51%

felt uncomfortable asking about and negotiating flexible work options

50%

encountered job descriptions that made me feel I shouldn't apply as a parent of young children



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DESIRED SOLUTIONS

The top 3 most helpful ways employers can support a working parent of young children:

47%

Access to tangible benefits to support parents, such as onsite childcare

47%

Employer that offered a part-time transition period post-parental leave (e.g., 2-3 months) before returning to full-time work

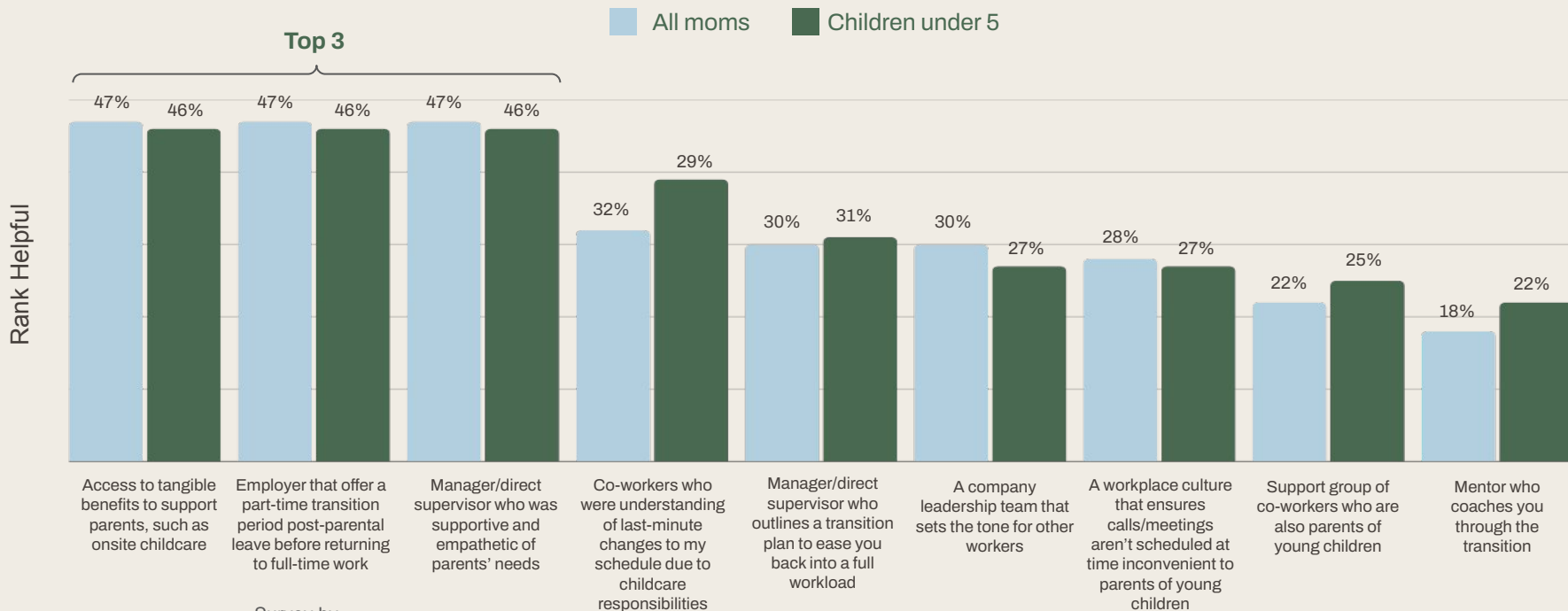
47%

Manager / direct supervisor who is supportive and empathetic of parents' needs



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Q24. Please rank how helpful you think each of the following would be to a working parent of young children.



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**Data shown is items that were ranked 1, 2 or 3



Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

DESIRED SOLUTIONS

Top 3 most helpful ways to support a working parent of young children outside the workplace:

67%

Provide quick and simple ways to advocate for policy changes to support working parents

64%

Give advice and talking points on how to raise opportunities for your employer to better support parents with young children

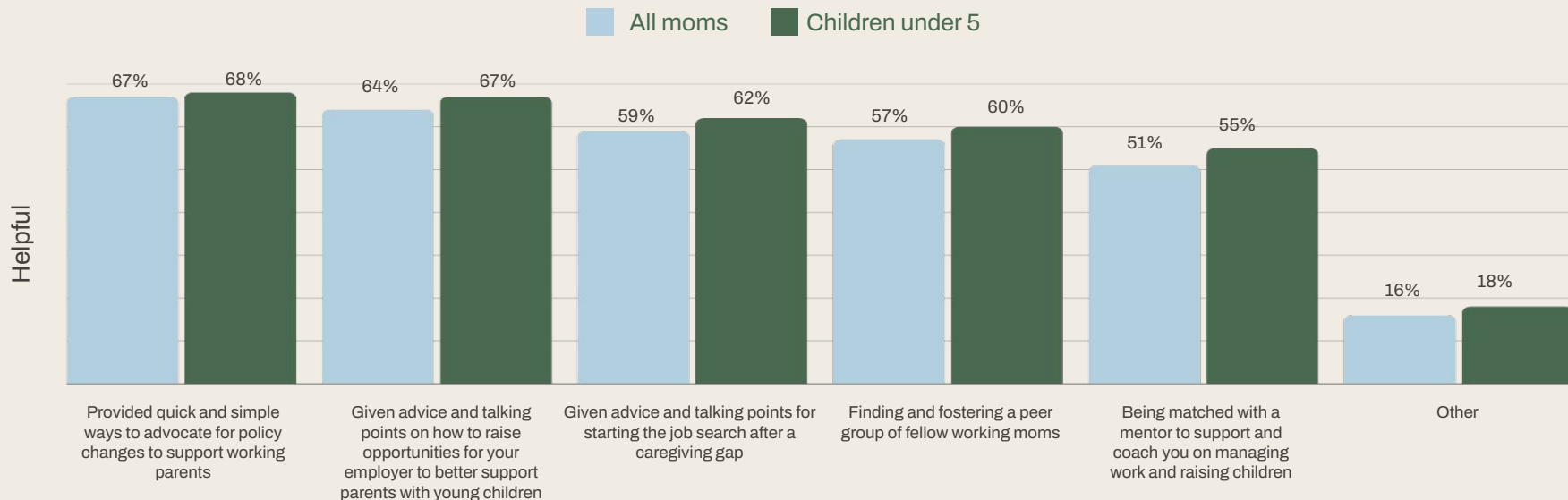
59%

Give advice and talking points for starting the job search after a caregiving gap



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Q25. How would you rate the helpfulness of the following potential areas of support outside of the workplace to help parents manage working while raising a young child/children?



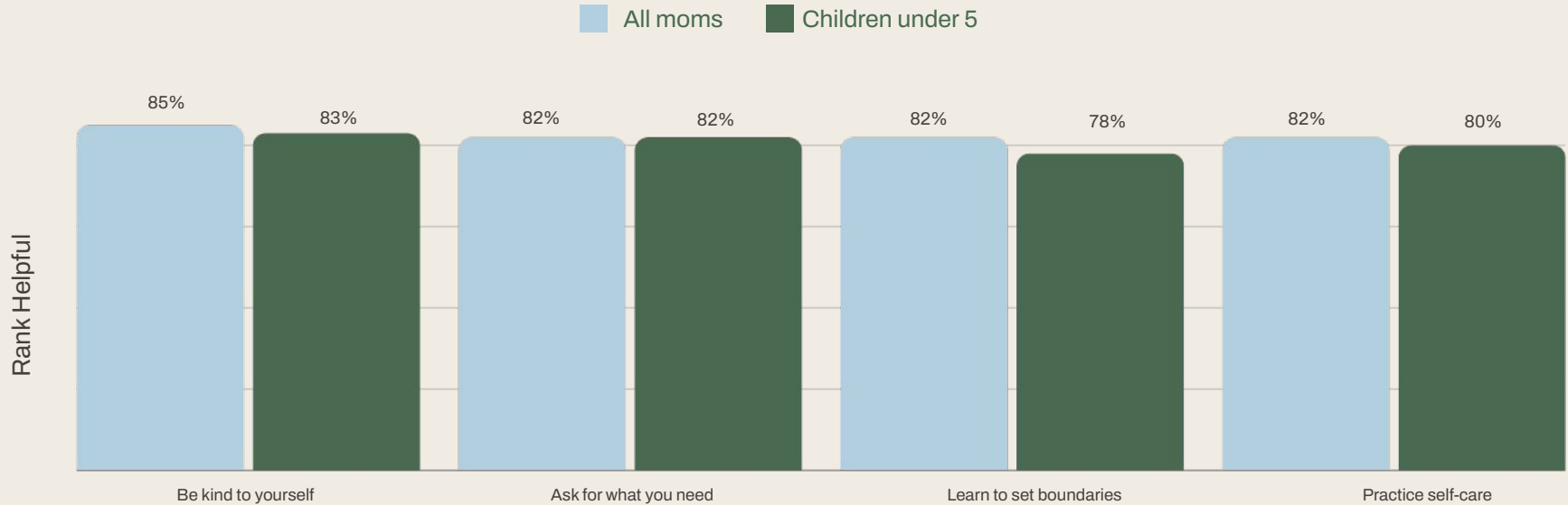
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**Data shown is the NET of "Very helpful" and "Extremely helpful"



Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

When it comes to advice, moms rate “Be kind to yourself” as the most helpful while “Don’t let imposter syndrome get you” to be the least helpful



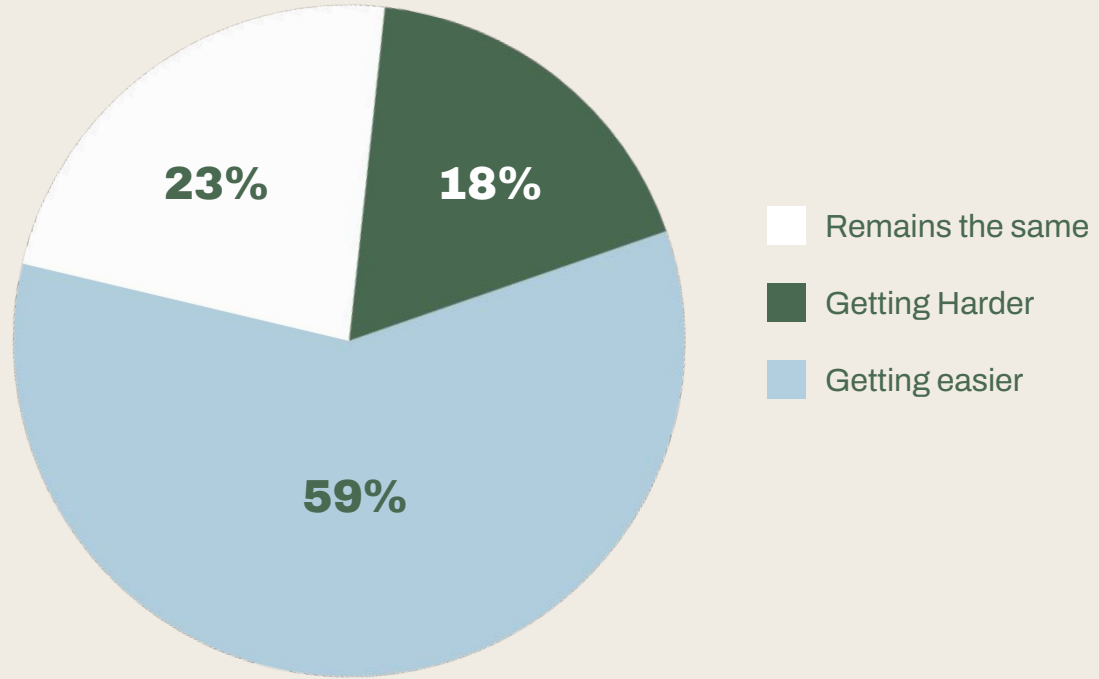
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**Data shown is the NET of “Very helpful” and “Extremely helpful”



Significant testing between ALL shown audiences

When reflecting on their experience juggling work with their responsibilities as a parent, a majority say it is getting easier.



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Significant testing between
ALL shown audiences

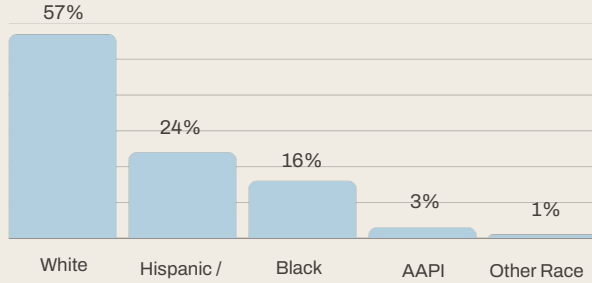
A woman with a colorful headwrap is in a kitchen, talking on a green mobile phone. She is holding a baby who has a pacifier in their mouth. The scene is dimly lit, with a bamboo steamer and a cutting board with fruit visible in the foreground.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

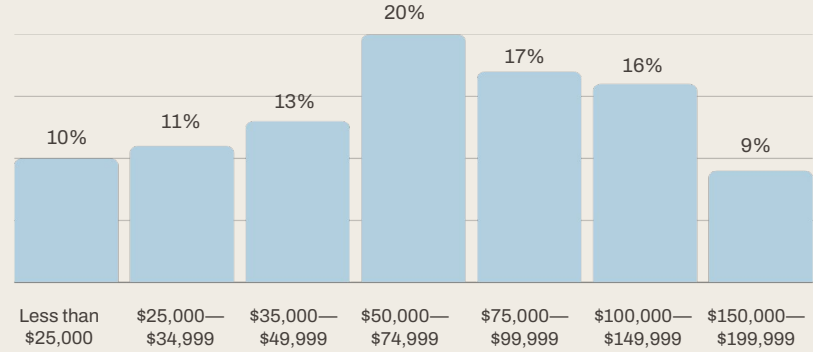


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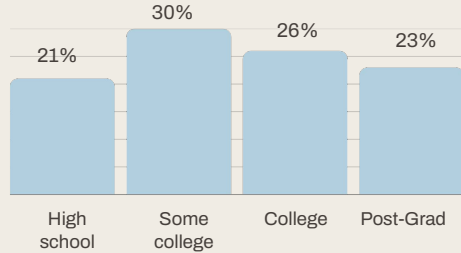
Race / Ethnicity



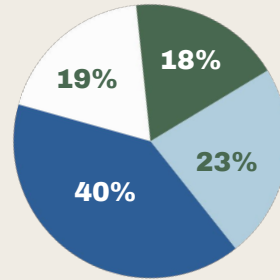
HHI



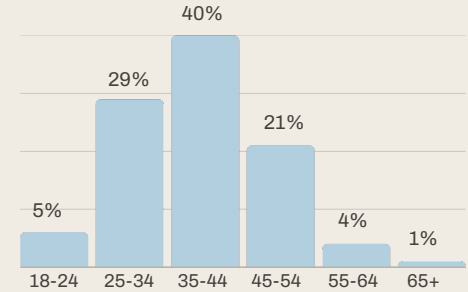
Education



Region



Age



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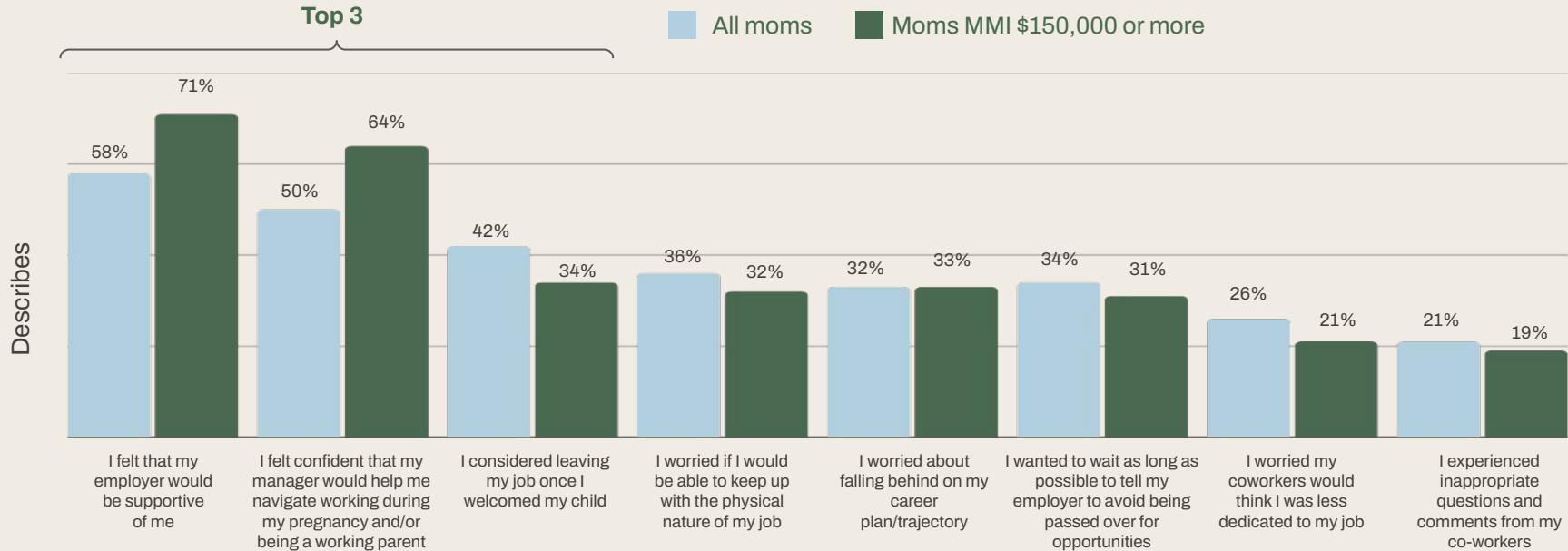
A woman with curly brown hair, wearing an orange blazer, is smiling as she looks at a laptop screen. A baby is sitting in front of her, looking at the screen. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a green plant and a mirror.

APPENDIX



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Appendix: Q8. How well do the following describe your experience at work when you found out you were pregnant or expecting a child (e.g., through adoption, surrogacy)?



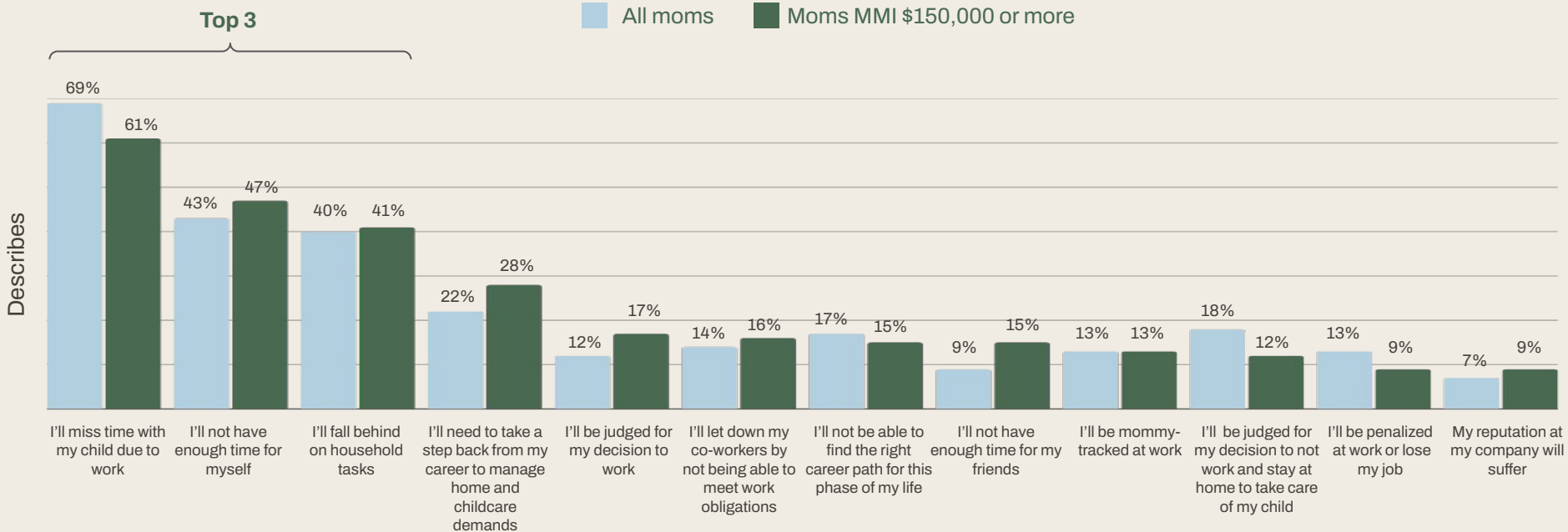
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**Data shown is the NET of "Describes very well" and "Describes extremely well"



Significant testing between all moms HHI \$150,000 or more

Appendix: Q16. Please rank the top 3 concerns you have when it comes to juggling work with your responsibilities as a parent.



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**Data shown is items that were ranked 1, 2 or 3

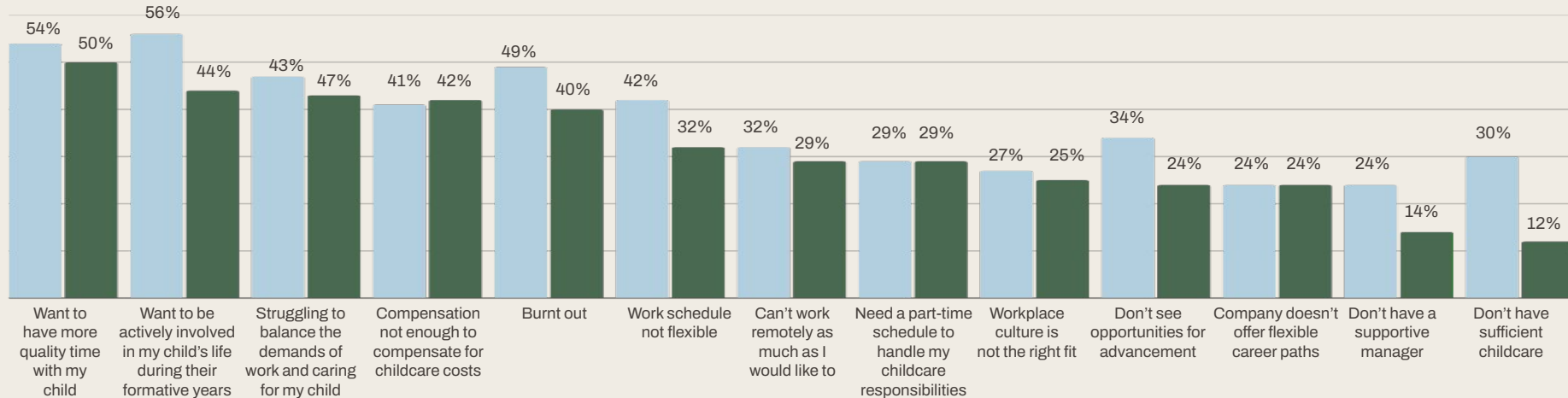


Significant testing between all moms HHI \$150,000 or more

Appendix: Q19. Which of the following describes why you're thinking about quitting your job?

■ All moms ■ Moms MMI \$150,000 or more

Base: Those who are thinking of quitting their job

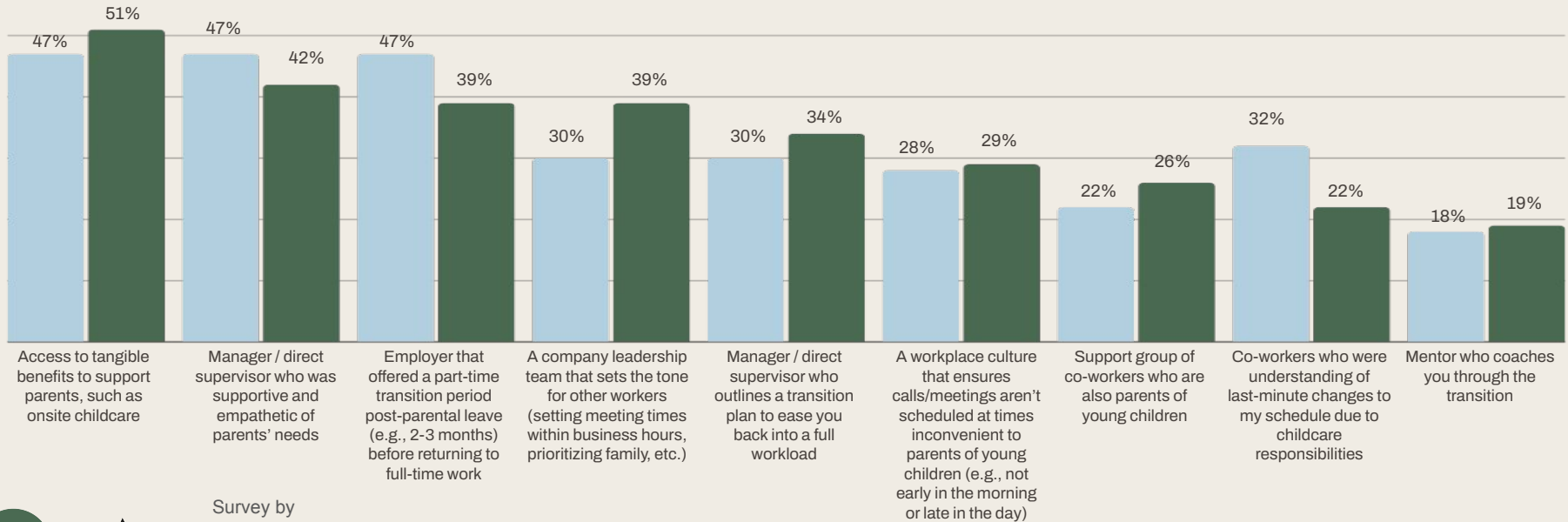


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↑ ↓ Significant testing between all moms HHI \$150,000 or more

Appendix: Q24. Please rank how helpful you think each of the following would be to a working parent of young children. Assign a rank from 1-9.

■ All moms ■ Moms MMI \$150,000 or more



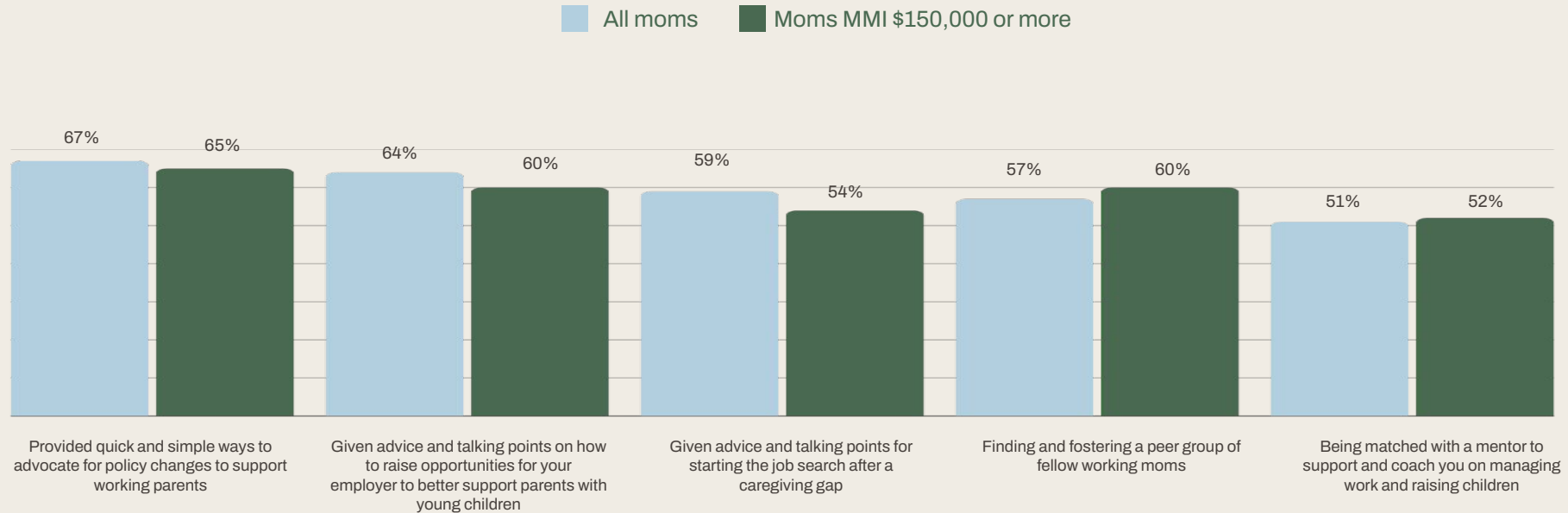
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Significant testing between all moms HHI \$150,000 or more

Appendix: Q25. How would you rate the helpfulness of the following potential areas of support outside of the workplace to help parents manage working while raising a young child/children?



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Significant testing between all moms HHI \$150,000 or more