



**FIRST FIVE
YEARS FUND**

American Voters' Attitudes Regarding Early Childhood Education

NOVEMBER 2018

Lori Weigel



**PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES**

Jay Campbell



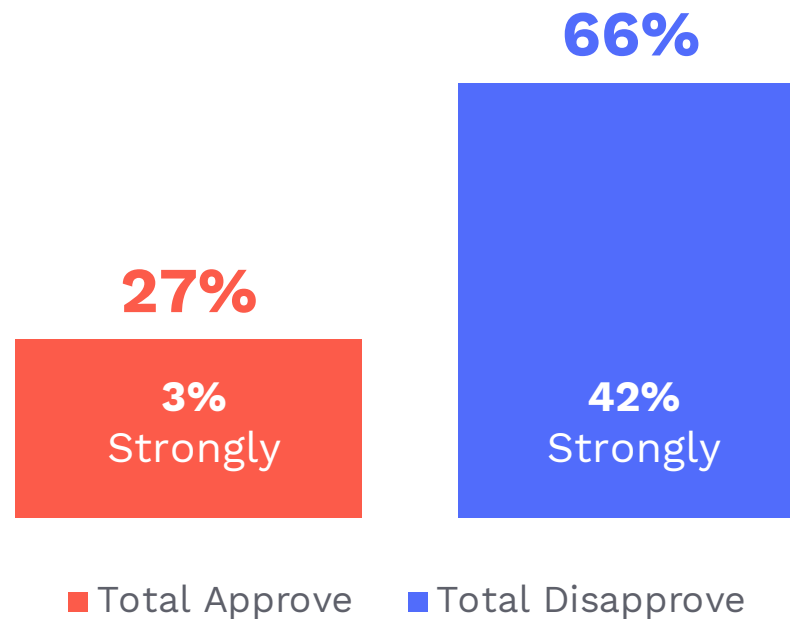
METHODOLOGY

- National survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted on both landlines and cell phones
- Survey completed November 10-15, 2018
- Overall margin of error of $\pm 3.10\%$
- Sample distributed proportionally throughout the country and is demographically representative of the electorate
- Bipartisan research team of Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies
- Comparisons made to similarly conducted surveys in the past five years

Congressional Approval

American voters continue to be fairly negative toward Congress following the election.

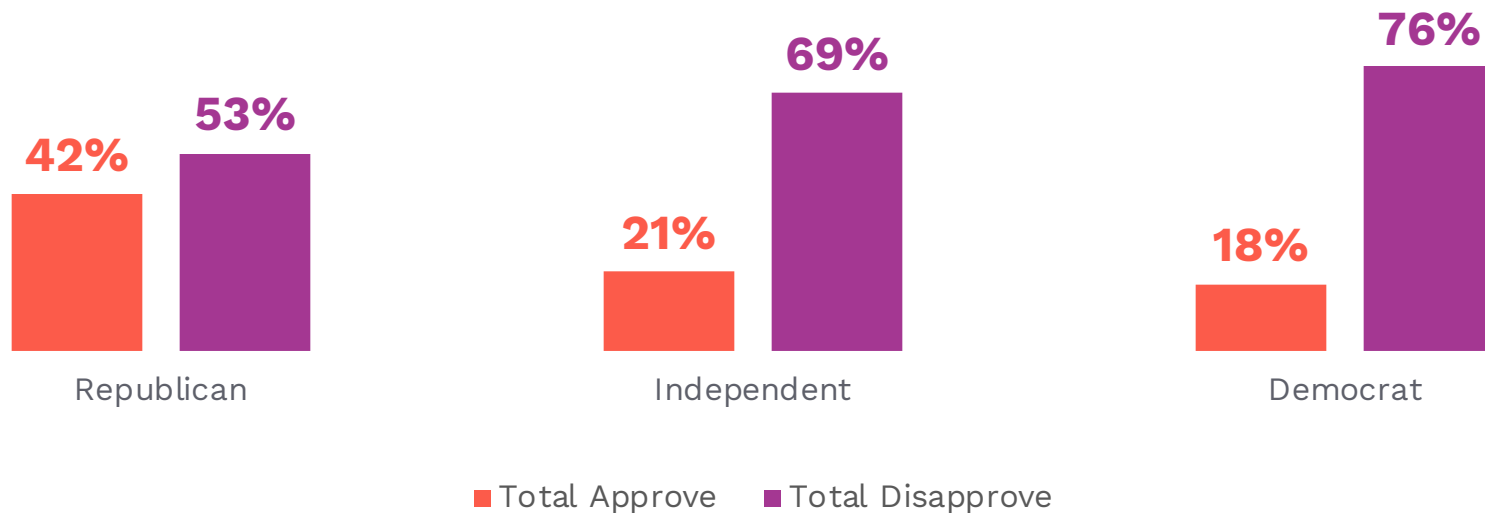
Thinking about the U.S. Congress, do you approve or disapprove of the job Congress is doing?



Congressional Approval by Party

While there is a partisan distinction, majorities of all party sub-groups disapprove of Congress.

Thinking about the U.S. Congress, do you approve or disapprove of the job Congress is doing?



Watching to see if Members of Congress...

Voters say they will be watching Congress closely to see if they work together to get things done.

And looking ahead to a new year and a new Congress, will you be watching more closely to see if Members of Congress

60%

Work together to break partisan gridlock and get things done

OR

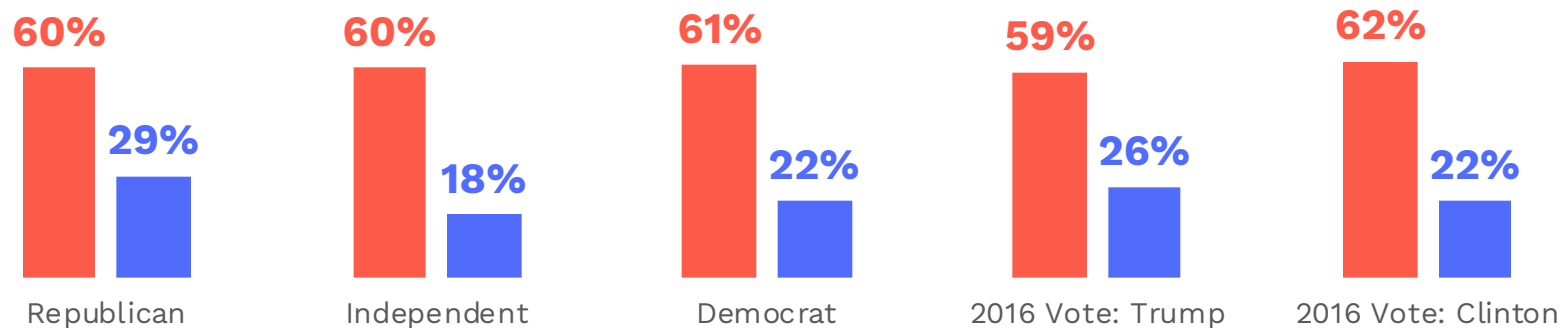
24%

Stand strong on principle and do not give in to political pressure

Watching to see if Members of Congress...

There is a remarkable degree of consensus across party lines that working together should be the priority.

And looking ahead to a new year and a new Congress, will you be watching more closely to see if Members of Congress

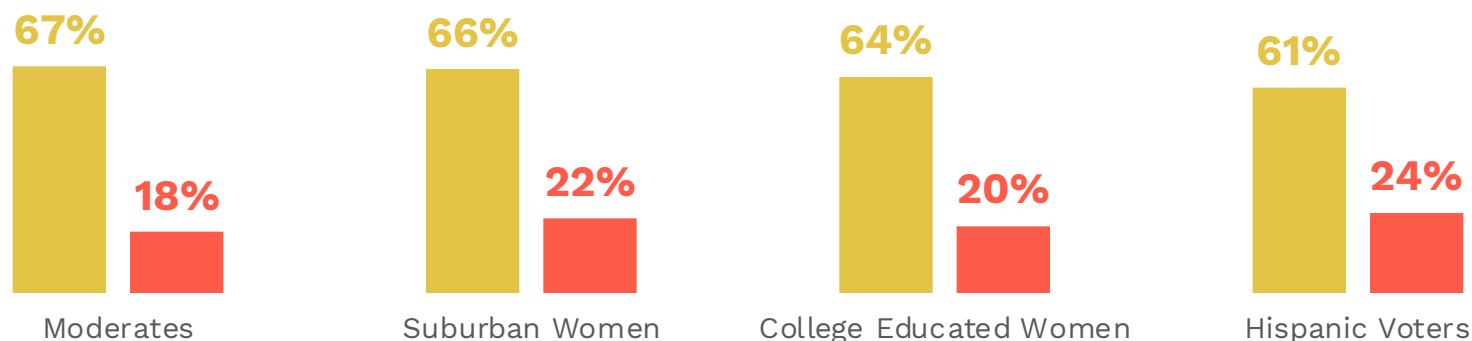


- Work together to break partisan gridlock and get things done
- Stand strong on principle and do not give in to political pressure

Watching to see if Members of Congress...

Voter sub-groups that helped determine the outcome of key races say they will be watching to see if Congress breaks the gridlock.

And looking ahead to a new year and a new Congress, will you be watching more closely to see if Members of Congress



- Work together to break partisan gridlock and get things done
- Stand strong on principle and do not give in to political pressure

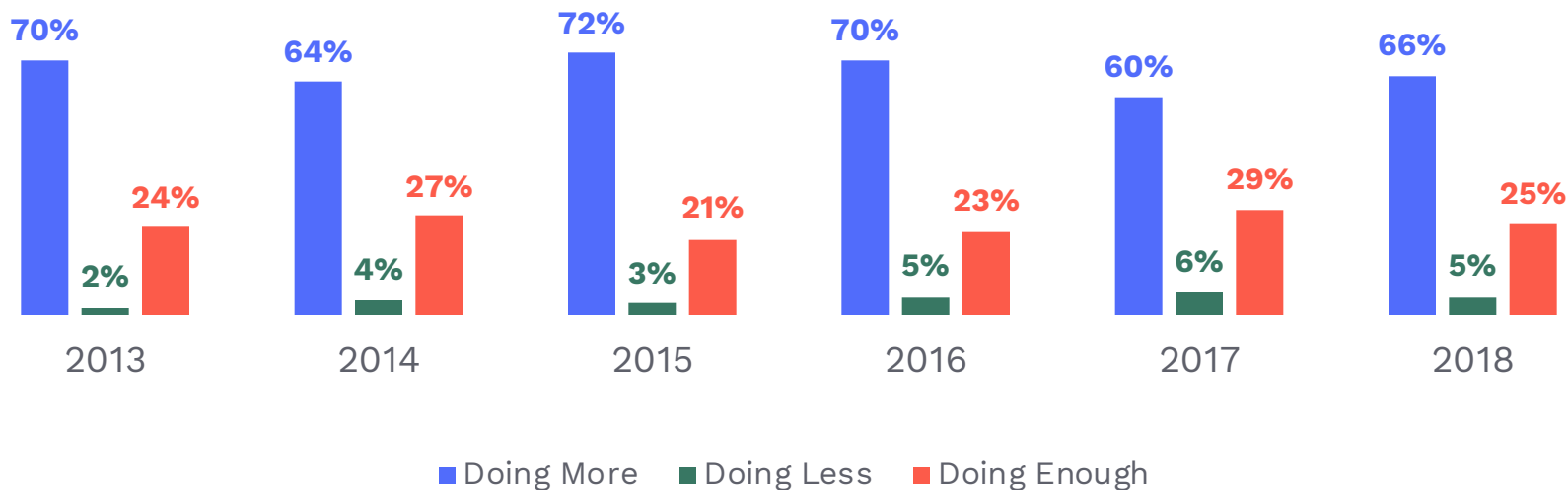


Early Childhood Education

Start Kindergarten with Knowledge and Skills To Succeed (Trend)

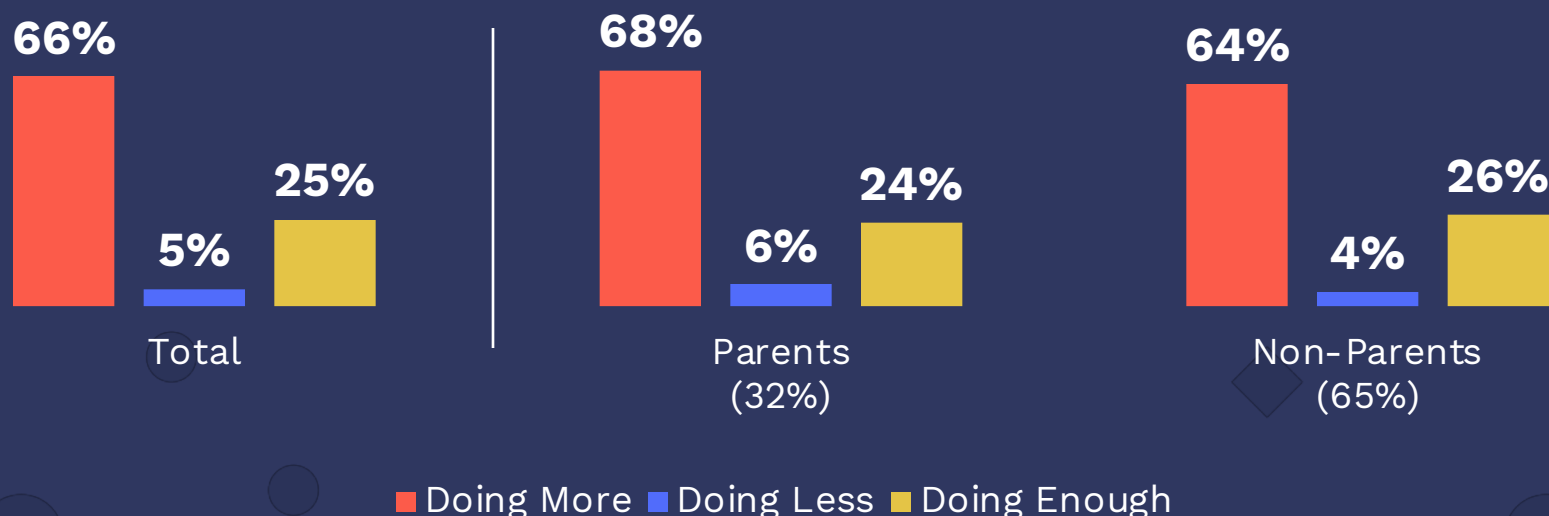
Two-thirds of American voters say we need to do more to ensure children start kindergarten better prepared.

When it comes to ensuring that children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school, do you think we should be doing more, doing less, or are doing enough?



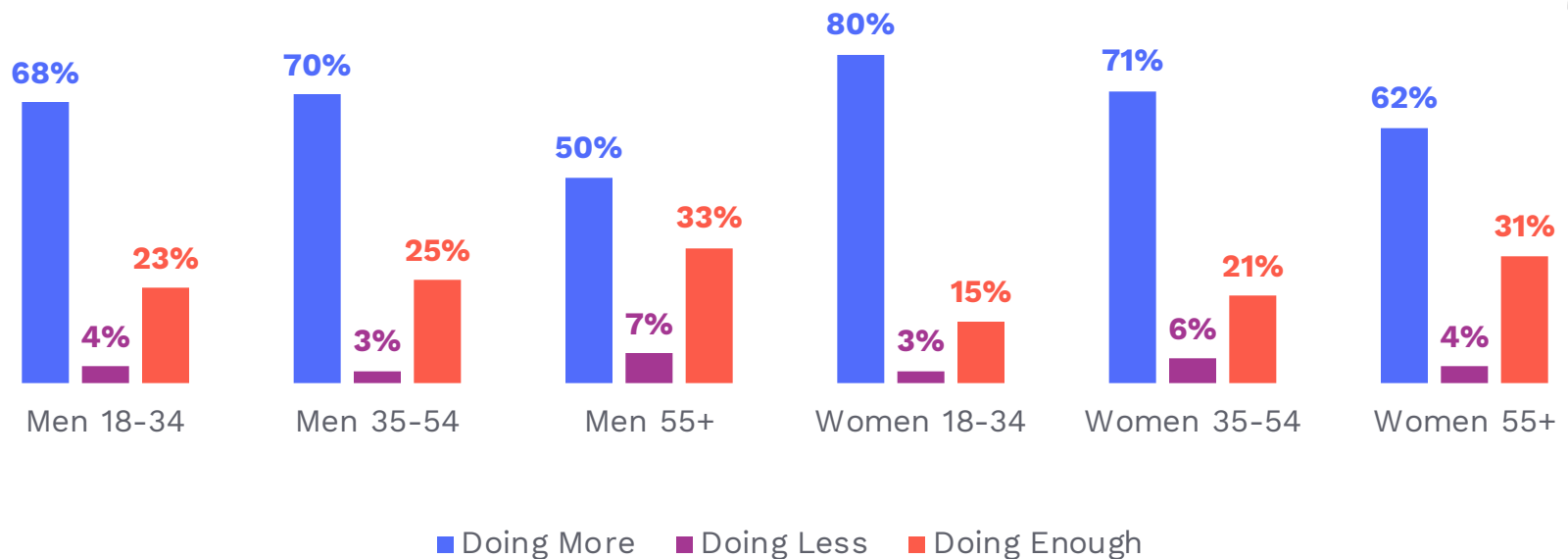
Start Kindergarten with Knowledge and Skills To Succeed By Parents

There is almost no difference in views between parents and those without children at home on doing more to ensure children start school with the skills they need



Start Kindergarten with Knowledge and Skills To Succeed By Voter Group

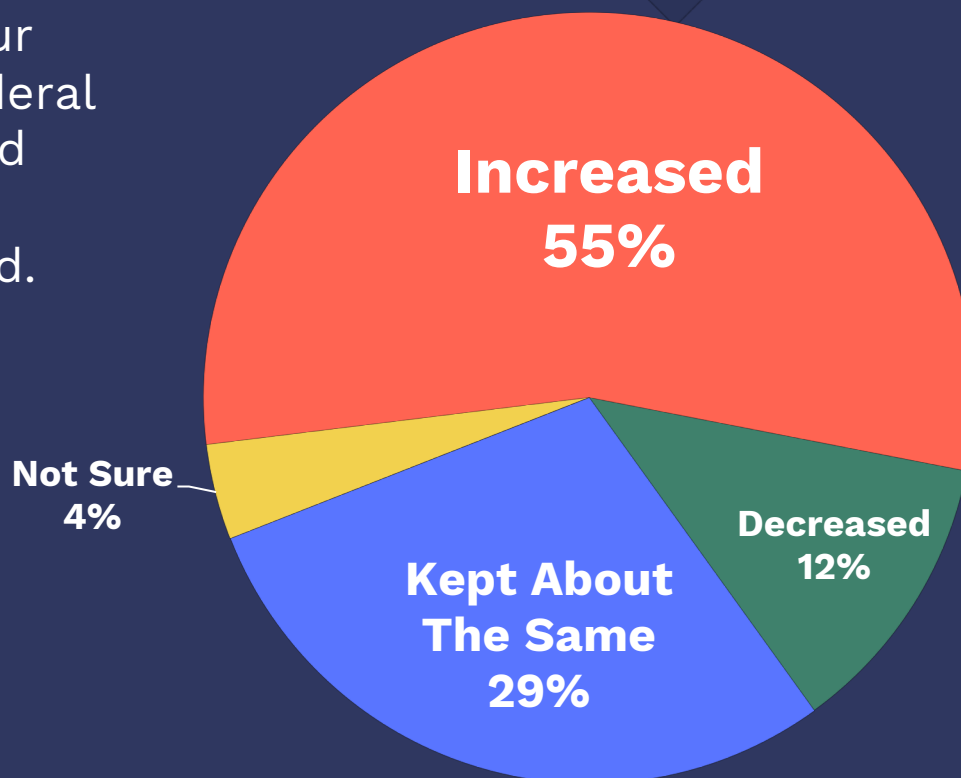
Only older men are more mixed in their views of doing more.



Federal Funding for Quality Early Education Should Be...

Voters are more than four times as likely to say federal funding for child care and preschool should be increased than decreased.

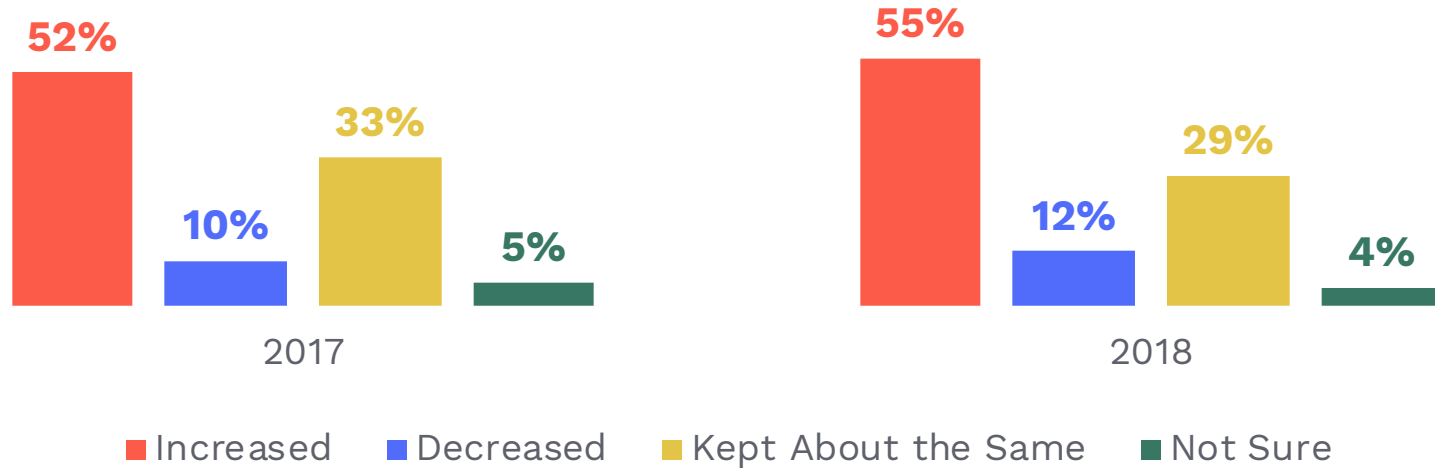
And more specifically do you think that federal funding for quality early education from birth to age five—including child care and preschool—should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as it is today?



Federal Funding for Quality Early Education Should Be...

Voters are consistent in their view that funding should be increased.

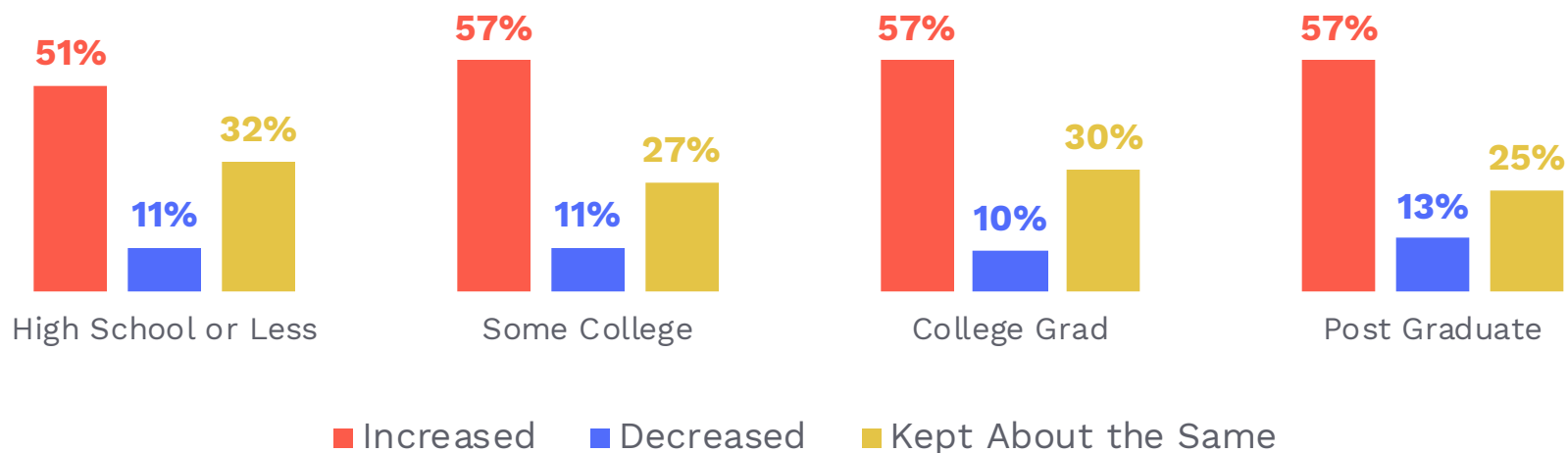
Do you think that federal funding for quality early education from birth to age five—including child care and preschool—should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as it is today?



Federal Funding for Quality Early Education Should Be...

A majority of voters of every education level say funding should be increased.

Do you think that federal funding for quality early education from birth to age five—including child care and preschool—should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same as it is today?



A vast majority view a variety of investments in early childhood programs as important; affordability ranks highest.

Ranked By % Total Important

Helping states and local communities build better preschool services for parents and making them more accessible to children from low- and middle-income families.

**Very
Important**

**Total
Important**

66%

87%

Helping working families afford the cost of early education and child care.

62%

87%

Making available high-quality early learning programs for infants and toddlers to give them a strong start on developing school ready knowledge and social skills.

55%

79%

Providing voluntary home visiting and parent education programs that help first-time parents support their child's early learning, health, and emotional development.

43%

78%

The importance of each type of investment is at an all-time high.

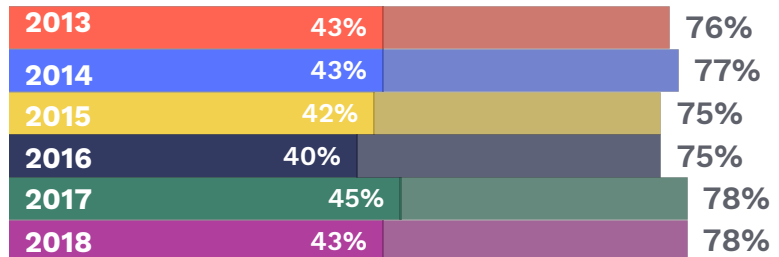
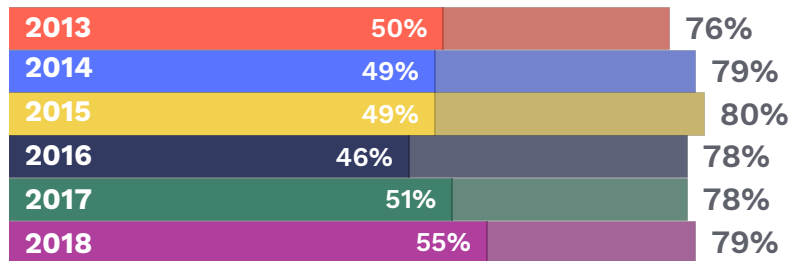
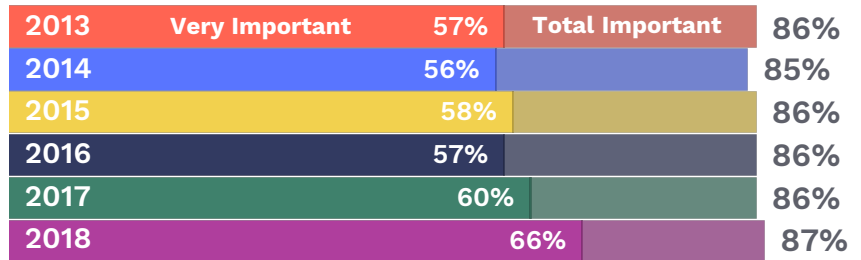
Helping states and local communities build better preschool services for parents and making them more accessible to children from low- and middle- income families.

Making available high-quality early learning programs for infants and toddlers to give them a strong start on developing school ready knowledge and social skills.

Providing voluntary home visiting and parent education programs that help first-time parents support their child's early learning, health, and emotional development.

Now I'm going to read a list of specific ideas related to quality early education for children from birth through age five. Please tell me if you think each of the following is very important, somewhat important, not that important, or not important at all:

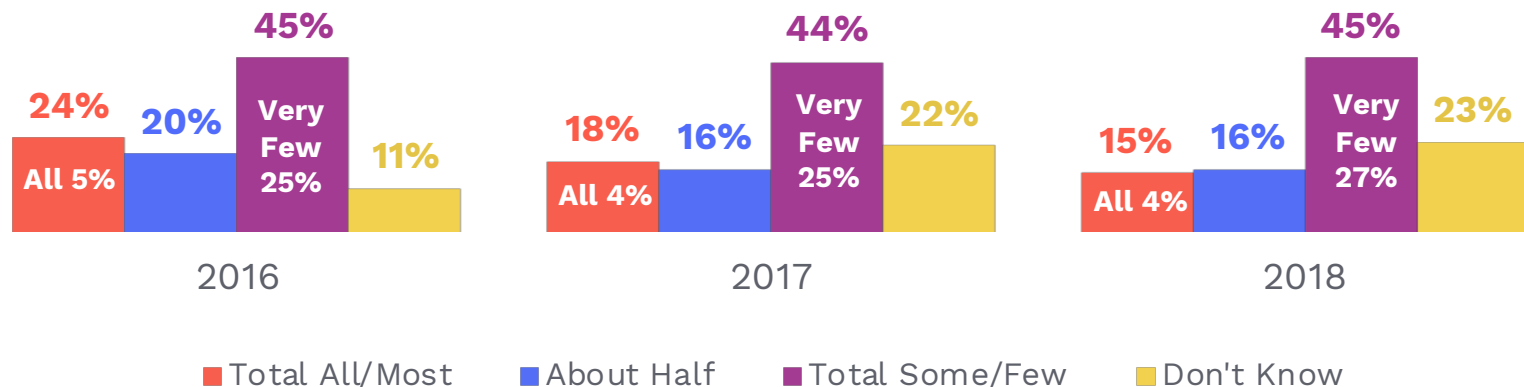
Ranked By % Total Important 2018



Affordable High-Quality Early Childhood Education (Trend)

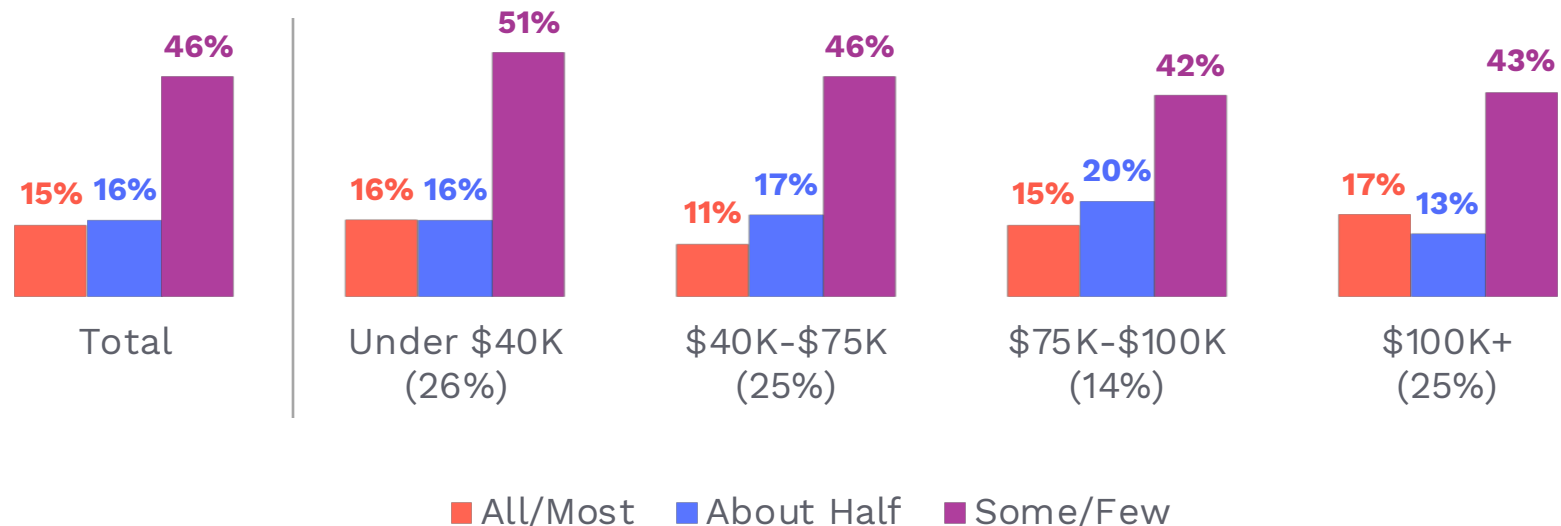
Voters continue to perceive a need for affordable, high-quality early education programs. Far more say that there are only some or very few programs that offer high-quality, affordable programs for lower- and middle-income families in their area.

About how many of the early education programs in your area would you say are high-quality AND affordable for lower- and middle-income families?



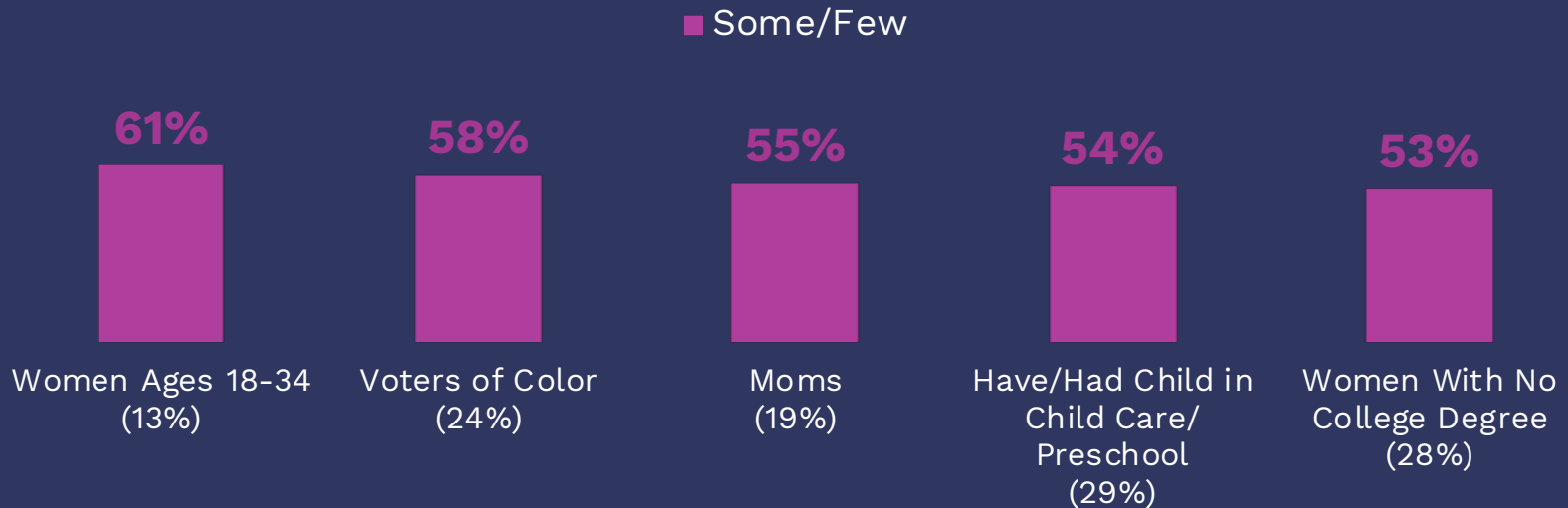
Affordable High-Quality Early Childhood Education by Income

Income has little bearing on perceived affordability of quality early education near them.



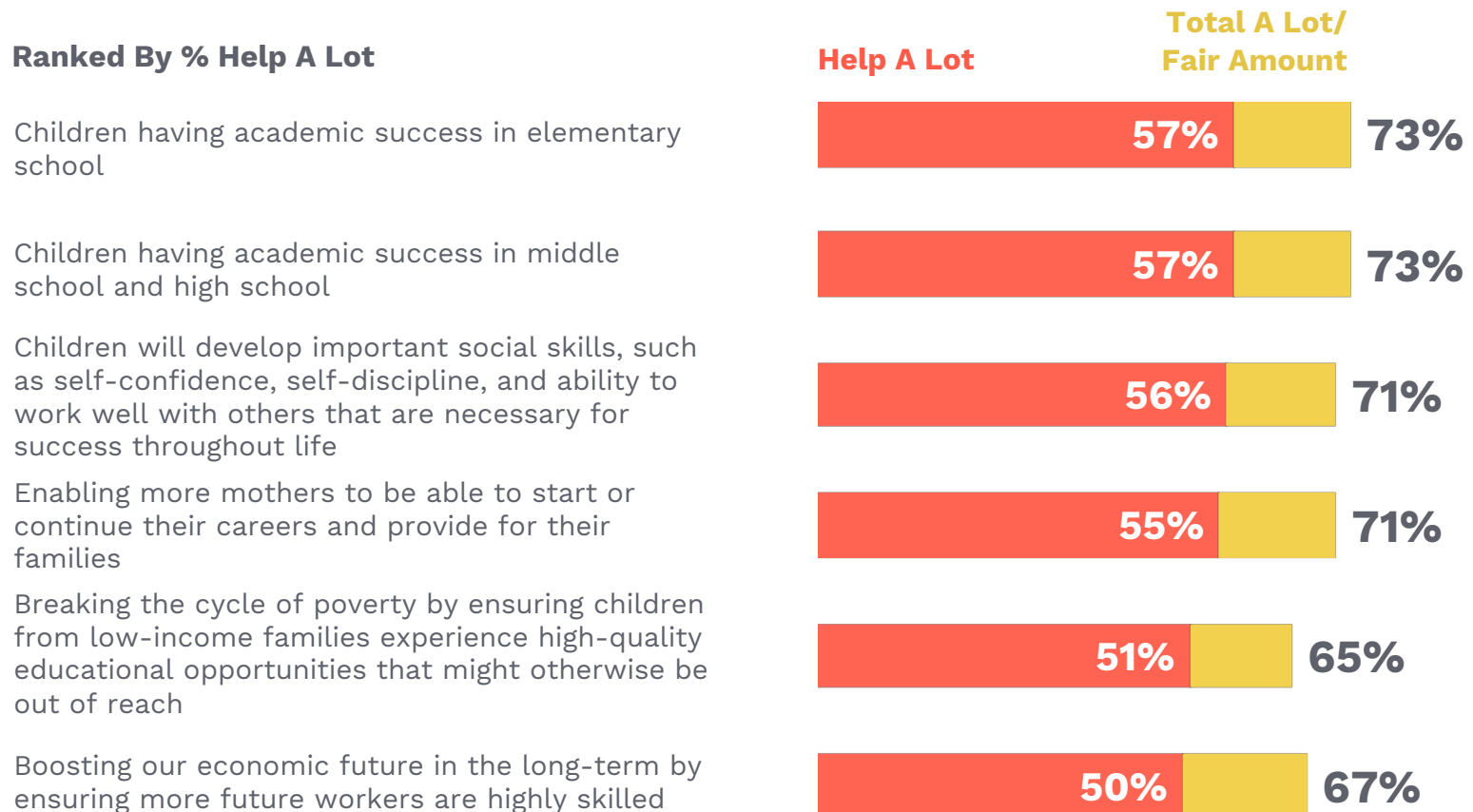
Affordable High-Quality Early Childhood Education by Key Sub-Groups

Women and voters of color are most likely to say there is a lack of affordable, quality early education.



Voters say there are many benefits to children attending high-quality early education, including academic benefits throughout kids' school years.

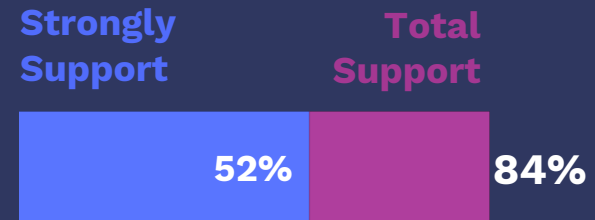
Ranked By % Help A Lot



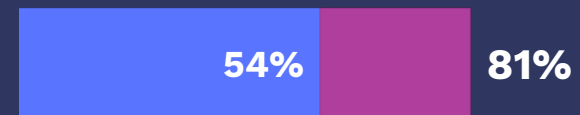
Every single proposal tested receives overwhelming support; the greatest intensity of support is for greater funding for Head Start.

Ranked By % Total Support

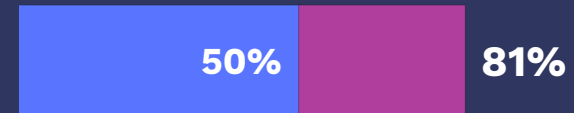
Provide tax incentives to businesses which provide or help their employees afford quality early childhood education programs.



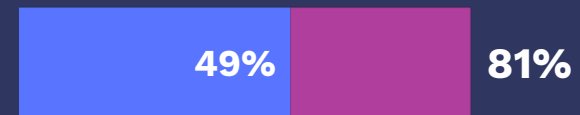
Increase federal funding to states to create or build on their own programs that directly help low-income children, so their parents have quality child care while they work or attend school.



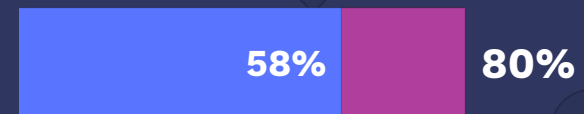
Increase the child care tax credit to help parents better afford quality child care and early education programs, with low- and middle-income parents who need more help getting a larger credit.



Expand the federal partnership through grants and policies that enable states and communities to improve access to quality early childhood education for children from ages birth through five who are from low- and middle-income families.



Provide greater funding to Head Start and Early Head Start which provide quality early education, nutrition, and support services to children in low-income families, so more programs can serve more children and families.



There is majority support for each of these proposals among both Trump and Clinton voters.

Proposals Ranked by Total % Total Support by 2016 Presidential Vote	Total	Trump Voters	Clinton Voters
Provide tax incentives to businesses which provide or help their employees afford quality early childhood education programs.	84%	79%	91%
Increase federal funding to states to create or build on their own programs that directly help low-income children, so their parents have quality child care while they work or attend school.	81%	64%	97%
Increase the child care tax credit to help parents better afford quality child care and early education programs, with low- and middle-income parents who need more help getting a larger credit.	81%	68%	92%
Expand the federal partnership through grants and policies that enable states and communities to improve access to quality early childhood education for children from ages birth through five who are from low- and middle-income families.	81%	63%	96%
Provide greater funding to Head Start and Early Head Start which provide quality early education, nutrition, and support services to children in low-income families, so more programs can serve more children and families.	80%	62%	97%

Similarly, there is majority support for each of these proposals across party lines.

Proposals Ranked by Total % Total Support by Party	Total	GOP	IND	DEM
Provide tax incentives to businesses which provide or help their employees afford quality early childhood education programs.	84%	77%	84%	90%
Increase federal funding to states to create or build on their own programs that directly helps low-income children, so their parents have quality child care while they work or attend school.	81%	62%	81%	96%
Increase the child care tax credit to help parents better afford quality child care and early education programs, with low- and middle-income parents who need more help getting a larger credit.	81%	67%	81%	92%
Expand the federal partnership through grants and policies that enable states and communities to improve access to quality early childhood education for children from ages birth through five who are from low- and middle-income families.	81%	63%	81%	96%
Provide greater funding to Head Start and Early Head Start which provide quality early education, nutrition, and support services to children in low-income families, so more programs can serve more children and families.	80%	62%	81%	96%



Political Importance of Early Childhood Education

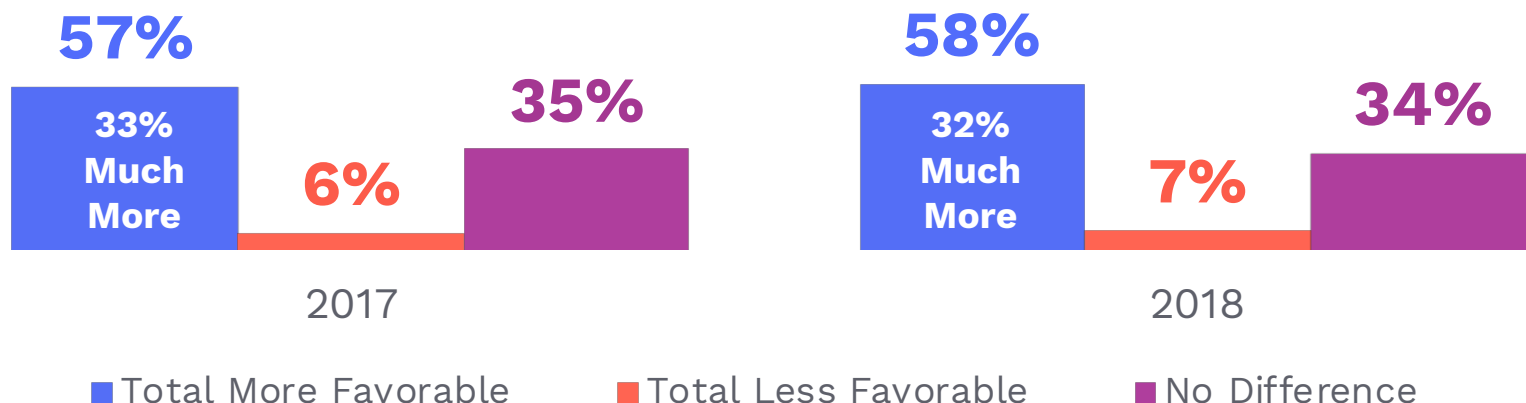


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Change in Impression of Member of Congress Based on Support for Early Education Funding

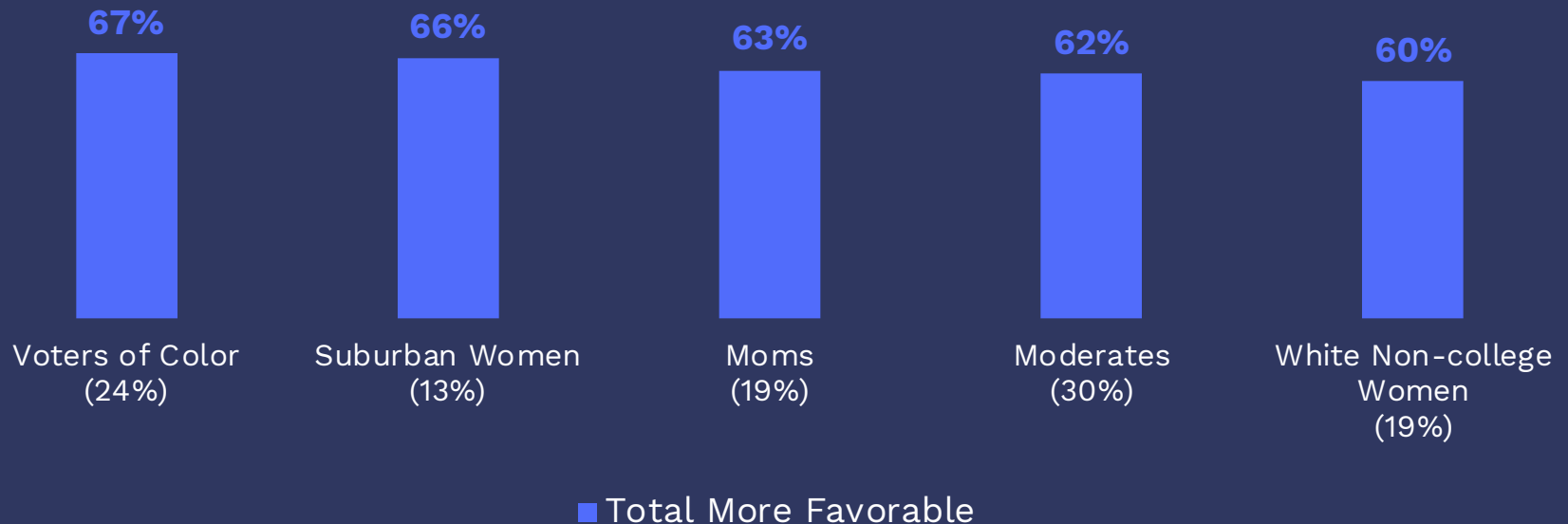
A candidate's support for funding early education continues to impress voters.

And if your Member of Congress supported policies and funding for more families to have quality child care and preschool, would you have a more favorable impression of him or her, less favorable impression, or would it not affect your opinion much one way or the other?



A number of key segments of the electorate are particularly impressed by a member of Congress supporting early childhood education.

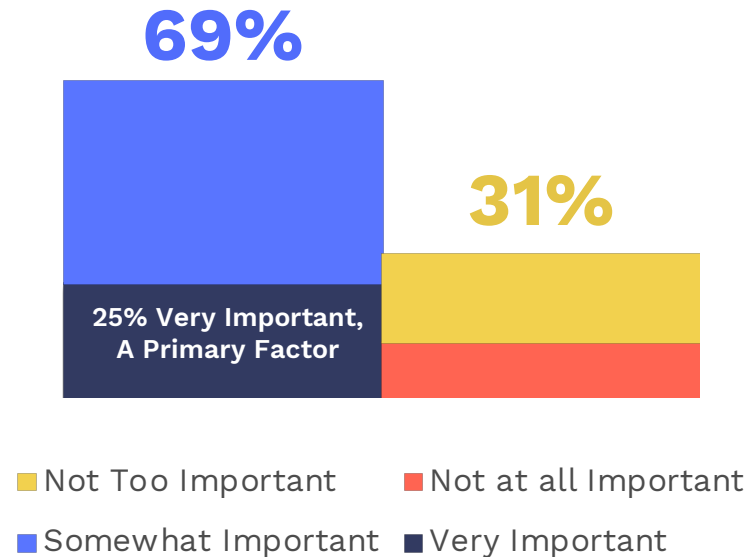
And if your Member of Congress supported policies and funding for more families to have quality child care and preschool, would you have a more favorable impression of him or her, less favorable impression, or would it not affect your opinion much one way or the other?



Importance of Early Childhood Education Issues in Support for Elected Official

More than two-in-five say that early childhood education is a primary factor in decisions about elected officials.

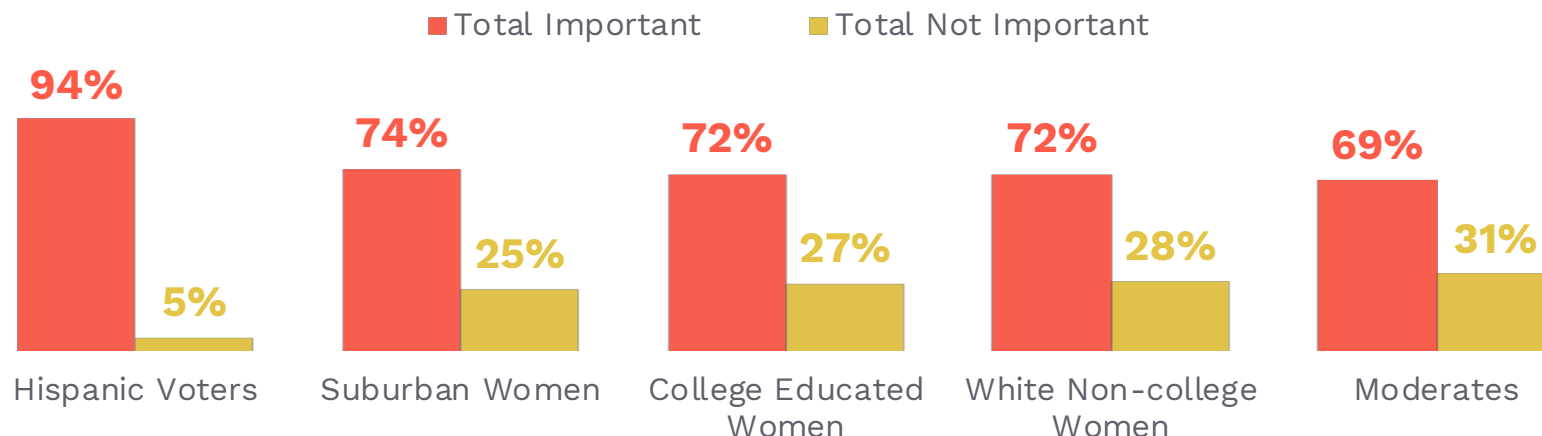
Compared to other issues like the economy or health care, how important are issues involving early childhood education for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...



Importance of Early Childhood Education Issues in Support for Elected Official

Again, some of the key voter sub-groups say this issue is one that will be an important factor in their consideration of elected officials.

Compared to other issues like the economy or health care, how important are issues involving early childhood education for you in deciding whether to support an elected public official? Are they...



Democrats and Independent voters overwhelmingly want to see action taken to increase funding, even if this means the administration is able to take some of the credit.

Which one of the following statements comes closer to your point of view?

74%

Independent

81%

Democrat

It is more important that funding for early childhood education be increased, even if this means the Trump Administration can take some credit for helping children and families.

10%

Independent

11%

Democrat

It is more important that the Trump Administration does not have a chance to take credit for helping children and families, even if this means that funding for early childhood education is not increased.

*Only Asked of Independents and Democrats. N=620

THE BOTTOM LINE

Voters are remarkably consistent in their views of early childhood education over the last several years:

- They perceive many benefits for children and society;
- There is a strong sense of ongoing need where they live;
- Affordability is viewed as of utmost importance; and,
- There is a substantial and sustained desire for more federal funding.

The politics of this issue are simple:

- There is support across the partisan spectrum.
- It is an issue of importance to many critical voter sub-groups.
- Voters want to see progress made, not political games, and this issue provides a unique opportunity to do so.



THANK YOU



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