



# Parents' Voices 2020

# Ascend at the Aspen Institute

 **ASCEND**  
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE



# Ascend Commitment to Family Voice, Parent Expertise, and Lived Experience: Core Values Since 2010

**Oversampling by race and ethnicity:** At our founding, Ascend prioritized and invested in BIPOC family perspectives to capture a more accurate and nuanced picture of the resilience, challenges, and insights of families with low incomes in the United States.

**Commitment to diverse family structures:** With rapidly shifting family structures, Ascend has ensured that our focus groups include the perspectives of single, non-custodial, and married parents & caregivers. This shapes a broader understanding of diverse families' economic and educational priorities and ensures resonant messages & tools to advance 2Gen policies.

**Focus on bipartisanship:** The Aspen Institute is a nonpartisan nonprofit. Ascend is committed to building support across political affiliations and conducts bipartisan analysis of focus groups and polling. We recognize it is essential to elevate the opportunities and challenges of families with low incomes beyond a blue, red, or even purple frame.

**Inclusion of rural, suburban and urban areas:** We have ensured geographic diversity as part of our polling, looking closely at urban/rural differences as well as geographic differences. Recently we have intensified efforts to understand rural voices.

## Ascend Landscaping Timeline: Centering Parent Voices Since 2010

2010

**Population Reference Bureau** census analysis by Mark Mather, commissioned by W.K. Kellogg Foundation Family Economic Security Program, demonstrated that the families most likely to live in poverty following the 2008 recession were young parents with young children.

2011

**Focus group series:** “Voices for Two-Generation Success” – 10 focus groups in six sites focused on the exploration of 2Gen issues, ideas, and opportunities.

**Child Trends research project:** in partnership with Child Trends, Ascend undertook the first national analysis of census data from a 2Gen perspective, informing our inaugural report *Two Generations, One Future*.



## Ascend Landscaping Timeline: Centering Parent Voices Since 2010

2012

**National poll:** national survey of 1,011 adults focused on messaging, priorities, and experiences around economic mobility; the concept of the American Dream; early childhood and workforce development opportunities; racial equity; and understanding of state and federal programs to support families with low incomes.

2013

**Focus group series:** “Voices for Two-Generation Success: Seeking Stable Futures” cont’d – this series of 10 focus groups centered women’s voices to inform both 2Gen efforts and The Shriver Report, along with perspectives from teenage girls and boys on opportunity and mobility.

## Ascend Landscaping Timeline: Centering Parent Voices Since 2010

2014

**National survey project:** “National Voices Project” – We partnered with the National Voices Project and the University of Michigan to conduct a national survey of adults who work and volunteer on behalf of children. This survey was focused on key components for 2Gen approaches and barriers to economic security and serving two generations.

**National poll:** election-eve omnibus poll of 1,005 adults focused on opportunities from “Top 10 for 2Gen,” with close look at specific policy ideas targeted at the public and nonprofit sectors.

2016

**Focus group series:** six focus groups with mothers and fathers across race and ethnicity with young children (under five) in three cities (Denver, Philadelphia, Cleveland).

**National poll:** election-eve omnibus poll reaching 2,400 likely voters pre-election and on Election Night, with a focus on policy and practice issues related to the 2Gen approach

## Ascend Landscaping Timeline: Centering Parent Voices Since 2010

2017

**Partnership/guidance on focus groups series:** Catalyzed by the Aspen Forum on Children and Families, Ascend provided guidance to bi-partisan commissioned focus group and polling research focused on on childcare, early learning and paid family leave policies.

2018

**National poll:** election-eve omnibus poll questions focused on work-family supportive policies as well as examining increase in support of 2Gen approaches since 2012.

**Focus group series:** Ascend provided guidance and partnership on a series of focus groups conducted by Imaginable Futures and communications firm RALLY to understand views of student parents.

2020

**Focus group series:** Comprehensive engagement of parents across race and ethnicity captured impact of COVID-19 and racial unrest & justice on parents with young children living on low-incomes. Twelve groups conducted nationwide with focus on ten states to inform 2021 transition and strategies.

**National Poll:** Election-eve omnibus survey of 1200 voters nationwide gauged increase of voter support for 2Gen approaches and policies.

# Centering Parent Voices: Principles Shaped By This Work

- 🗨 Engage Parents as Experts
- 🗨 Ensure Equity
- 🗨 Partner with Parents
- 🗨 Foster Parent Safety, Authenticity, and Autonomy
- 🗨 Prioritize Social Capital Building
- 🗨 Compensate Parents Appropriately
- 🗨 Cultivate Learning and Evaluation
- 🗨 Thank and Recognize Parents





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## Parents' Voices

Findings based on focus groups, an online bulletin board, and a national survey

**November 2020**



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# Methodology – Focus Groups

## Focus Groups

- Lake Research Partners conducted a recent set of online focus groups with parents of children under the age of 5 with household incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, distributed as follows.
- Locations included Ascend target states with a COVID-19 and racial justice overlay:
  - NJ/CT/MD – hit early with COVID-19, robust response
  - TN/MS/GA – more anemic COVID-19 response
  - WA/OR/CO – average early COVID-19, robust response
  - MN – robust COVID-19 response, site of racial justice movement actions

Date	Location	Demographics
September 28	NJ/CT/MD	Mixed race mothers, <200% FPL as a result of pandemic
September 29	MN	Mixed race mothers, <200% FPL prior to pandemic
September 30	TN/MS/GA	African American mothers ages 18-29
October 1	NJ/CT/MD	Mixed race mothers who are current college students
October 5	Nationwide	African American fathers
October 6	WA/OR/CO	Latino fathers
October 7	WA/OR/CO	Latina mothers
October 8	Nationwide	Native American mothers
October 19	TN/MS/GA	White mothers
October 20	Nationwide	Asian American/Pacific Islander mothers
October 20	TN/MS/GA	African American fathers
October 22	National	White non-custodial/semi-custodial fathers ages 18-39

# Methodology – Bulletin Board

## Bulletin Board

- Lake Research Partners conducted an online bulletin board discussion with mothers of children under the age of 5 with household incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.
- The Bulletin Board convened October 12-14.
- Participants logged on twice a day for three days to answer questions and react to each others' responses.
- Participants were screened to be mothers of children ages 5-years-old or younger, who are ages 25 to 40, who have household incomes under 200% FPL, and live in Ascend targeted states.
- We invited to participate a mix of mothers of different racial and ethnic groups, a mix of mothers who are married and unmarried, and a mix of mothers who are currently enrolled in post-secondary programs.

Age	Race/Ethnicity	Children's Ages	Marital Status	State
28	Black	4, 6, 11	Married	GA
28	Asian/Pacific Islander	1	Married	NJ
27	White	3, 6, 9	Separated/divorced	TN
32	White	1, 5, 8	Married	GA
31	Black	3	Single	MD
36	Black	2	Married	MD
25	White	3	Unmarried with partner	GA
34	Latina	1, 13, 14	Single	NJ
25	White	1, 3, 4	Married	TN
39	Black	4, 17	Separated/divorced	MD
36	White	3, 9	Married	GA
28	Black	1, 5, 6, 11	Married	GA
25	White	1	Married	MN
29	Black	1, 3	Married	GA
35	Black	1	Single	MD
31	Black	3, 10, 12	Unmarried with partner	MD
31	Latina	3, 5	Separated/divorced	NJ
33	Asian/Pacific Islander	4, 8, 10	Married	OR
40	Black	2	Single	MD
30	White	3	Single	GA
29	Asian/Pacific Islander	3	Married	MN
27	White	2	Unmarried with partner	MD
35	Native American	1	Separated/divorced	GA
35	White	Infant	Married	NJ
39	White	3	Married	MD

# Qualitative Research Statement of Limitations

- In opinion research, qualitative research seeks to develop insight and direction rather than quantitatively precise or absolute measures. Because of the limited number of respondents and the restrictions of recruiting, this research must be considered in a qualitative frame of reference.
- The reader may find that some of the information seems inconsistent in character upon first reading this report. These inconsistencies should be considered as valid data from the participant's point of view. That is, the participant may be misinformed or simply wrong in his or her knowledge or judgment, and we should interpret this as useful information about their level of understanding.
- This study cannot be considered reliable or valid in the statistical sense. This type of research is intended to provide knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and opinions about issues and concerns.
- The following limitations are inherent in qualitative research and are stated here to remind the reader that the qualitative data presented here cannot be projected to any universe of individuals.
  - Statement 1. Participants who respond to the invitation of a stranger to participate in this research show themselves to be risk takers and may be somewhat more assertive than non-participants.
  - Statement 2. Some participants speak more often and more forcefully in focus group sessions than other participants, so their opinions tend to carry more weight in the findings.
  - Statement 3. Participants "self-select" themselves.
  - Statement 4. Participants were not selected randomly; as a result each person in the pool of possible participants did not have an equal chance to be selected.

# Methodology - Survey

## Election Omnibus Survey

- Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group designed and administered this pre-election and election night survey which was conducted using professional interviewers from October 31 – November 3, 2020. The questions about voting and the demographics reached a total of 2,400 voters nationwide who voted in the 2020 elections or who were planning to vote later on Tuesday – 1,335 interviews among voters who were reached on cell phones, including 600 interviews completed by text-to-online, and 1,065 interviews among voters who were reached on landlines. Issue questions reached a total of 1,200 voters nationwide who voted in the 2020 elections or who were planning to vote later on Tuesday (margin of error of +/- 2.8%).
- Telephone numbers were drawn from the TargetSmart voter file. The sample was stratified geographically based on the proportion of likely voters in each region. The data were weighted to reflect the aggregated Presidential vote as reported in the 2020 exit polls, as well as by gender, age, race, party identification, education, marital status, union household, and census region to reflect the actual proportions of the electorate. The margin of error for the total likely voter sample is +/-2.0%.
- Due to rounding some of the numbers in the presentation will not always add to 100%.

# Key Findings – Highlights from Parent Voices

- With the anxieties and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, parents are feeling overwhelmed, worried, frustrated, and stressed. They feel judged for their parenting choices, and the pandemic exacerbates that. Although, many see additional family time as a silver lining.
- The sudden national focus on racism, police brutality, and racial justice issues put into focus the personal experiences with racism that many Black, Latinx, Asian American, and Native American parents face. They are profoundly concerned for their children, but have strategies and interventions prepared for when their children inevitably face prejudice or racism.
- Parents really see a need to create more programs that support fathers in their role as parents, in addition to the ones we have for mothers.
- The need for quality, affordable child care remains paramount, even as top concerns shift to safety and cleanliness in the COVID-19 context.
- There is tremendous appetite for increased access to emotional and mental health services. Parents are very receptive to both parents and children having access to health care at the same time.
- Parents are mixed about direct cash deposits. There is concern across groups about misuse of the money. On the other hand, others say this program would help close the gap between economic insecurity and economic security. Among those who like the idea, some say \$1,000 per month is not enough money for a family.



## Key Findings – Voter Support for a Two-Generation Approach

- The two-generation approach has become a core value.
- Trump and Biden voters both strongly favor a two-generation approach.
- The policies that represent the two-generation approach are very popular and among political partisans and Independents:
  - Support for a two-generation program that helps parents get education and skills training is broad and deep. Voters are tax sensitive, but a majority still strongly favor it even if it increased their taxes.
  - Voters favor creating more programs that support fathers in their role as parents.
  - Voters agree that mental health screenings and services should be available to parents and children together, even if only one is enrolled in a health insurance plan.
  - Voters favor making education workforce training eligible for child care subsidies.
  - About half agree with providing \$1,000 per month for a year through direct cash deposits. As we saw in qualitative research, this is more polarizing.
- The bipartisan support of the two-generation approach is especially notable given that many other key issues do not enjoy bipartisan support.



# Life for Parents of Young Children Today

## Parents of young children are feeling stressed, frustrated, and worried about how things are going for themselves and their families today. COVID-19 has dramatically increased these sentiments.

- "I feel great with the way things are going with me and my family. **Of course COVID-19 took a toll on all of us.** I was a stay-at-home mom for, my son's two now so about two years. **My husband lost his job due to COVID, but I was able to get a job within two weeks of him leaving his job. So, we're progressing, so I feel great.**" — Native American mother, nationwide
- "I chose stress because **I've been looking for a job for a while** and, since we moved here, the beginning of last year. **And then Corona hit** so it's been kind of like a stick in the mud being able to find something. So I'm a little bit stressed and overwhelmed with that part." — White mother, TN/MS/GA
- "Being that I'm new to the state that I'm in right now, before COVID I was using the time that I had with my children, being able to be elsewhere, to work on things with myself, like therapy and getting my health and stuff together. **Now that COVID is rampant, I don't have that free time anymore because I'm dealing with the distance learning, all of the things, my daughter, she be gone, but all the stuff that I was doing to get my health and therapy and mental, all that together, I don't have the time anymore** because I have to take that time to deal with special needs son that's distance learning, so it's kind of overwhelming because I really need to be trying to get myself together, but it's hard with everything going on." — Mother under 200% FPL prior to pandemic, MN
- "**You don't really have a lot of control.**" — Mother, under 200% FPL due to pandemic, NJ/CT/MD
- "With handling a two-year-old let's just start there. It's crazy, you know, **it's a stressful time. It's very hard to try and weigh the risk of taking your kids out,** what if that's the time that you all run into somebody who's asymptomatic or, you know, they get sick. **I've lost people in my family already unfortunately...**" — Latina mother, WA/OR/CO



# Parents express that parenting today means instilling values, filling all gaps for children, all while handling critiques from others.

- "To me it would just really mean **instilling whatever values and beliefs that you were taught and given and trying to pass that on to the next generation** being your own offspring and **trying to get that little human being to be a decent, productive, person in society.**" — Latino father, WA/OR/CO
- "Well, I feel being a mom today, I guess **because I'm a single mother, is even harder for me** because as well as me teaching other people's children, the ones that do still allow their kids to come to my daycare, **I now have to be a first-grade teacher.** I have to sit at the computer and do stuff with her that I didn't really think I was going to have to do. So it's like a mom is a big thing. Well, parent, because there's some dads, too. **Being a parent right now is really a big thing.**" — Mother (mixed races), under 200% FPL due to pandemic, NJ/CT/MD
- "A superhero. You just got to, you got to be able to **just to roll with the punches and be able to do anything at anytime, anywhere and for your child, and that means anything.**" — African American mother, TN/MS/GA
- "I feel like **the standard of parenting has also been raised.** Like **you're judged for everything that you do,** whether you do it this way or that way. So I feel like a lot of that instead of back when, people would be like; oh you're doing it that way, that's cool, and they would support you. Where now, like if you do it, just the slightest bit different than someone else, you're shunned, or your mom shamed for like certain things." — White mother, TN/MS/GA
- "I definitely feel like being a mom today is more on the side of **having to overcome other people's opinions, and how judgmental it seems like everybody is, especially with social media** and stuff like that. It's definitely being powerful and strong and being able to just keep ongoing, despite whatever's going on around you." — Mother (mixed races), under 200% FPL due to pandemic, NJ/CT/MD

Parents express that parenting is a big and never-ending job, with constant “performance reviews” from the people with whom they interact. The pandemic exacerbates these dynamics.

# Today, parents are navigating many roles, many of which are unexpected.

- "Responsibility is that **you have to be a doctor, a psychiatrist, a nurse, a teacher, a coach...**I mean you have to be a whole bunch of personalities all built into one. Sometimes. Not all the time." — African American father, nationwide
- "To me, I think it's regardless of what's going on. What you're dealing with when you actually leave the home, **you can always come back to your mom. Your mom always has your back.** There's nothing your mom will turn you away from. You can always be honest with her, come to her about anything and **she will always be there for you no matter what.**" — African American mother, TN/MS/GA
- "Thinking of my son, he has gaps with school, so he's not up to grade level where he should be, so just **playing that teacher role, just making sure he's caught up and where he should be.**" — Mother (mixed races) and college student, NJ/CT/MD
- "Well at first it was **helping a small child to learn how to use an iPad**, showing him how to sign on to Zoom and like figuring out...like he has so many apps that he has to learn for school, and the teachers are using like at least four or five apps and everything is different. And okay now he needs...mom, can you come put in this Username password because he can't do that. And he is also learning how to read and write. **If he was a little bit older, maybe that would be easier for him, but we are not there yet.** And then in-between having to cook meals and groceries coming in. I am sure everybody can relate to that. And now with Coronavirus —my mom lives with us —we wash all our groceries, and everything we are doing in the house...we don't go out that often at all." — Asian mother, nationwide
- "Mon-Fri I'm home with my children **overseeing their virtual learning and ensuring their daily assignments are completed.** It's put many household chores on the backburner, but we are slowly easing into our roles more and more each day. I had to forfeit a day of work to fulfill my new duties as my children's virtual learning facilitator. Sat and Sun are the only two days **I'm currently working. I've also had to put my own distance learning on hold because it's been a challenge juggling the over abundance of responsibilities.**" — Mother, (mixed races), national bulletin board

Parents wear a lot of different hats even in good times, and with the pandemic, they have been given a few more.

Participants across groups also touched on how they are feeling pulled in many directions and that no one is getting what they need right now.

*The challenges of parenting in this moment...*

**CREATE WORRY THAT KIDS AREN'T GETTING WHAT THEY NEED**

"The number one challenge right now is them staying at home because of COVID. They can't get the proper education that they are supposed to get because of the COVID. So, that's my number one challenge right now." — African American father, nationwide



**WHILE MANY WORKING FAMILIES CANNOT STOP MEETING WORK, FINANCIAL, OR FAMILY OBLIGATIONS**

"We can't just not go to work, we always going to have to pay some type of bill. We always gone have to cook some type of meal. It never stops for mothers. So you saying how are we not handling? We handling, whether we want to or not." — African American mother, TN/MS/GA



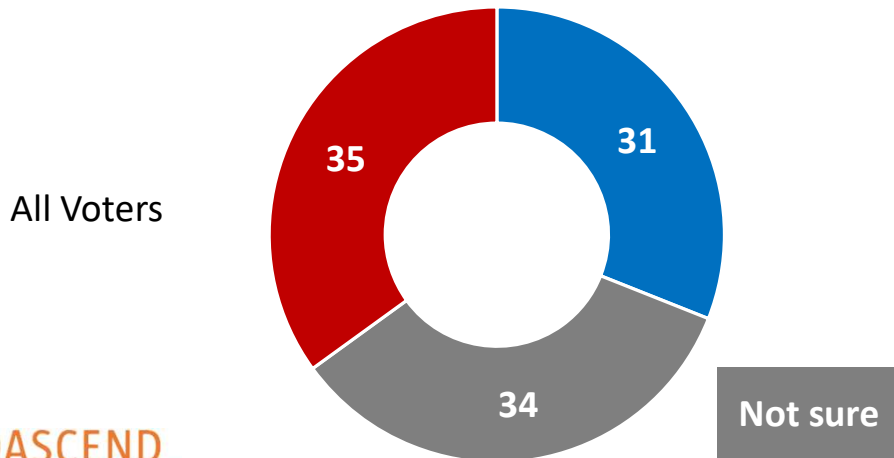
**WHICH EXACERBATES STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES**

"My stress level is through the roof. I literally never sleep. If I want to get done everything that I need to get done —both family and professional, plus my business —then I have to sacrifice everything, and I don't see other people in my family or non-female people doing that." — Asian mother, nationwide



In the survey of 2020 voters, men, voters with no minor children at home, Biden voters, Democrats, Independents, college-educated white voters, Black voters, and Latinx voters do not believe parents of young children are getting the help and support they need. The Trump coalition believes they are. Women and parents are evenly split.

Is it your sense that parents with children from birth to age 5 are getting the help and support they need to raise a family right now or are they not getting the help and support they need right now, or are you not sure?

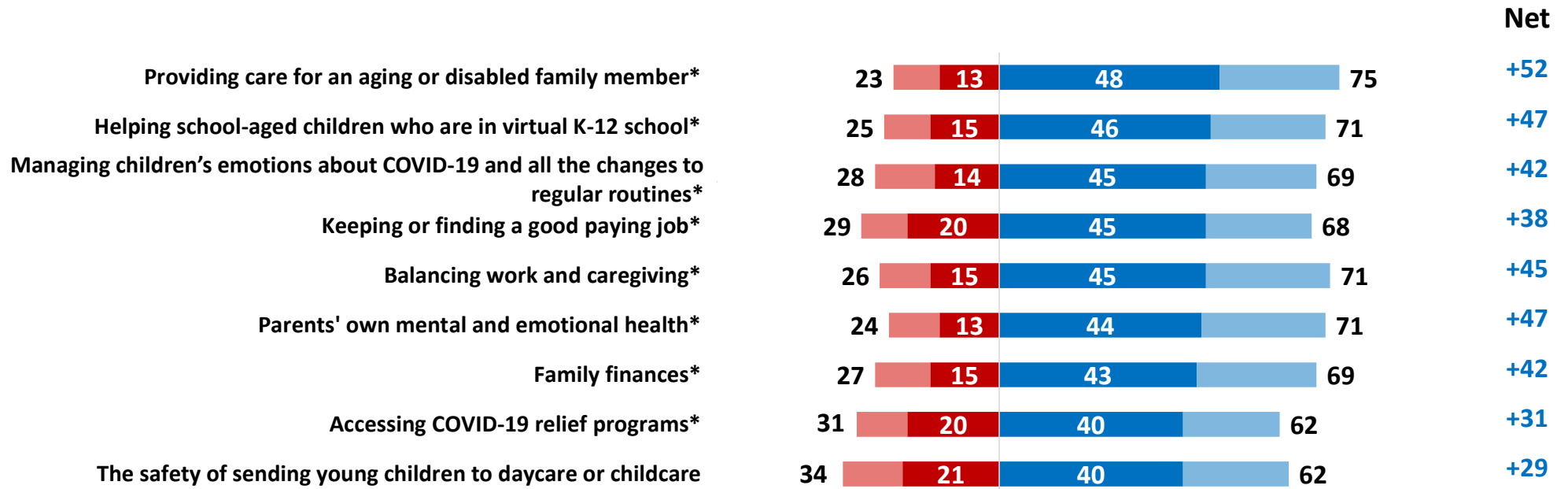


	Getting Help and Support	Not Getting Help and Support	Margin
Men	31	35	-5
Women	31	34	-2
Children under 18 at home	36	37	-1
No children under 18 at home	30	34	-4
Men Trump voters	49	15	+33
Women Trump voters	50	15	+35
Men Biden voters	13	58	-45
Women Biden voters	17	50	-43
Democrat ID	18	53	-35
Independent ID	28	32	-4
Republican ID	48	17	+31
White non-college men	34	31	+3
White non-college women	37	27	+10
White college men	28	33	-5
White college women	29	40	-11
Black men	25	50	-24
Black women	21	45	-24
Latino men*	33	37	-4
Latina women	28	34	-6

\*Note small sample size

**Voters perceive that parents of young children are struggling with a range of issues – from caregiving to COVID-19 complications to economic security. The most salient concern is caring for an aging or disabled family member, but there are many concerns – from children to jobs to finances to childcare to COVID-19.**

Here are some things that parents of young children from birth to age 5 have said they are struggling with right now. For each, how concerned are you personally – very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, not concerned at all?



# The most acutely concerned about the struggles of parents of young children are women who voted for Biden, Black voters, Latinx voters, and Democrats.

Here are some things that parents of young children from birth to age 5 have said they are struggling with right now. For each, how concerned are you personally – very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, not concerned at all?

% Very concerned	All	Gender		POTUS Vote x Gender				White x Education & Gender				Race		Parental Status				Party Identification		
		M	W	TM	TW	BM	BW	WNCM	WNCW	WCM	WCW	B	L	F	M	CFM	CFW	D	I	R
Providing care for an aging or disabled family member*	48	45	51	38	39	53	60	41	49	43	44	62	64	45	46	46	53	58	43	42
Helping school-aged children who are in virtual K-12 school*	46	43	49	38	36	50	61	31	41	50	51	58	51	51	53	40	47	56	49	35
Managing children's emotions about COVID-19 and all the changes to regular routines*	45	44	47	36	33	54	56	33	43	47	38	69	56	48	54	43	45	56	46	33
Keeping or finding a good paying job*	45	42	48	34	36	50	57	42	44	34	40	72	57	44	52	41	47	57	44	34
Balancing work and caregiving*	45	40	48	31	36	50	59	42	43	38	45	62	56	50	56	38	46	57	40	33
Parents' own mental and emotional health*	44	40	48	33	33	48	61	31	46	42	37	51	49	36	54	41	46	55	39	35
Family finances*	43	46	40	35	23	60	54	40	37	42	35	53	46	47	46	46	38	58	33	34
Accessing COVID-19 relief programs*	40	39	41	21	17	62	61	36	37	34	33	59	48	33	39	42	42	62	30	25
The safety of sending young children to daycare or childcare	40	38	41	25	22	51	56	32	36	34	36	65	47	37	39	39	42	55	39	25

# Racism and Racial Justice



## Across groups, Black parents relayed examples of experiencing racism, as did Latinx parents, Asian moms, and Native American moms.

- “There is **like a lot of like racial tensions going on right now**. You can kind of like address the elephant in the room.” — African American father, nationwide
- “I agree it’s (racism) been there. I’ve been on jobs where, you know, they’ve, you know **the Caucasian people have had their own like meetings about something and didn’t include me and a friend, a co-worker named Jose**. Didn’t really include us in it and then just went on with their day.” — Latino father, WA/OR/CO
- “**I see a lot of it when we go out**. Like the other day, I think we was out, and somebody asked me, because I’m in --- custody so I live in a --- home. And somebody came up to me and they was like; is that your mother? She’s white to be your mother. And it just made me mad, I was like, **there is really racist people in this world still**...Like I just didn’t know what to say for myself, so I just walked out crying. Because I didn’t know what to do, I had my son there and I was like; it’s just sad that I have to grow up and he have to deal with this.” — African American mother, TN/MS/GA
- “Yeah, it is a problem. It is an absolute problem. I grew up in New Jersey and I dealt with it my entire childhood —getting **made fun of by all the white kids at my school because I was not white**. And when we moved to California several years ago, I thought that that would change, and to see our country...racism has always been there, but to see it more vocal in my lifetime, I guess, has just been sickening to watch. I know about my ancestors and my aunts and uncles having to deal with it coming from India to the U.S. But now, yeah, I mean it is huge. And seeing it in the election and hearing stories about you know Indian grandfathers going for a walk and being beaten to a bloody pulp in the street. I mean these are things that are happening. **Asian people being blamed for Coronavirus and being called KungFlu**. I mean there are just horrible, horrible things that we are waking up to every single day. So, yeah, it is there. I see it every day.” — Asian mother, nationwide
- “I think what we’re seeing race in our communities now is **nothing different than how it has been since the beginning of time**. It’s just kind of more in our face now because **people are actually starting to pay attention to it more and seeing it**, you know. We’re watching the news or always on our phones seeing it being lively updated. So I don’t think that what we’re seeing now is anything different than how it has been.” — Native American mother, nationwide

The Black moms and dads experience racism now and they always have, but they feel that tensions are higher now across the U.S., and in their own cities.

The Latino moms and dads say they have experienced racism, some with racial profiling and judgement for speaking Spanish.

The Asian moms personally have experienced racism and say Asian people are being blamed for COVID-19.

The Native American moms talk about how racism has always been a problem in their communities and there is renewed attention.

# Black moms and dads and Latino dads spoke explicitly about the impact of police brutality on their communities, their families, and themselves.

- “If you look what happened over the last couple of months, it is horrible. What they did to George Floyd and what they did to Brianna Taylor and what they did to Ahmad Arbery, like they were upstanding members of our community. Brianna Taylor, if I specifically remember, she was a nurse, and **they just killed them. And there was no good reason for the police officers to do that.** And I think that when we get into the mentality that racism isn’t a problem, we are just pulling the wool over our eyes. And like for my children, **I am worried about what are they going to do in this world they grow up in and how they are going to be judged. I always worried about what would happen if I had a son, but now looking at what happened to Brianna, like what if I happened to have a daughter and the police officer is pulling her over late at night and he reaches for his gun?**” — African American father, nationwide
- “It just, I feel like, you know, **it traumatizes you.** I used to live in Georgia, and you know I’ve gotten pulled over, over there and I’ve been told **and harassed by the police** that I know had just bought my truck and, a little pick-up truck and they pulled me over and said; that truck is stolen we need you to step out of the vehicle. Then he had searched the vehicle and I was like; well I don’t have anything, **I wasn’t doing anything wrong, you know. Being harassed it traumatizes you.**” —Latino father, WA/OR/CO
- “**It makes my child’s father scared to do certain things.** I’m scared for my child to grow up because... it’s made it to where **you’re just scared to be Black,** is you’re scared, live the everyday streets? You’re scared to walk the streets, run the streets, because you don’t know what’s going on. **There’s no reason why everybody should be so terrified just to get, just for a traffic ticket or anything of that nature, there’s no reason why everybody should be terrified to get pulled over, whenever they see these blue lights.**” — African American mother, TN/MS/GA
- “It scares me because **I do not want them to fall victim to some mess as innocent bystanders or to police brutality.**” — Mother, (mixed races), national bulletin board

The increased attention and scrutiny on police brutality mirrors Black and Latino parents’ own experiences and amplifies their justifiable fears for their loved ones and their communities.



# Across groups, Black, Latinx, Asian, and Native American parents are concerned about how racism impacts their children.

- “Before we had moved to Las Vegas we were in Virginia, and she (my daughter) used to get picked on a lot. She used to get picked on a lot. **She went to a mostly white school and my daughter has really dark skin, but really long, curly hair and she would always get made fun of and other students would always tell her that it wasn’t her real hair and that she wasn’t pretty. So, it was really hard** when we were in Virginia. But I’ve gotten to learn that it really goes on how the children are raised. So, I remember when we had to have a mediation with another little girl. **Her mother and her father were acting like they were surprised of what their daughter was saying, but she learned it from somewhere.** So when it comes to my kids, I always teach them to have a tough skin and that what others say, you know don’t bother them. They, I constantly tell my daughters all the time that they’re beautiful and everything just to work on their confidence. So things like that, if someone does say anything to them it doesn’t bother them.” — Native American mother, nationwide
- “Yes. I actually don’t want to move out of California. **We want to live in a diverse place where she has other Indian kids in school because my husband was 10 when he came here and all the stories of how growing up in the Midwest in the 90s that he was the odd kid.** He had funny smelling food and a lot of self-confidence and problems fitting in with basically Caucasian kids because they were so different. I don’t want to ever go to a place like any rural place or even mid/center. As soon as you go out 100 miles out of any major city, you start seeing differences in people and how they even look at you.” — Asian mother, nationwide
- “I had to put a lot of time into, which I don’t mind, but I **had to put a lot of time into teaching my children to be, to have high self-esteem,** and to know like, you know there’s certain things. Like when I was in school people used to throw stuff in my hair. Used to pull my hair, call me ugly because I was brown. So **I had to let them know there’s nothing wrong with them or their hair, anything about them.** Every, you know that all stems, whenever someone says something like that it comes from, you know, the hate that they have from them, for themselves you know. So I had to put a lot of time into educating my children about self esteem and history, and all of that.” — African American mother, TN/MS/GA
- “It is just one of those things **since I know that they are going to have to deal with it and I am just going to try to prepare them the best.** I got baby girls and so I got a girl seven months old and then twins that are a boy and girl, **so I am just trying to set them up in the best position to either not have to deal with it or deal with it from a better point than I had to.** Like I am cool, and I had to deal with a bunch of stuff that you go through with discrimination and racist type of things, but you deal with it. Like it is just part of life, but you deal with things and you keep pushing. But I think for them, I want to set them up in the best possible way financially, and like I said, mentally to deal with it. Some things it shouldn’t affect you because it is not...I am like I don’t worry about it. Just keep pushing with what you are supposed to do.” — Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA

Many parents have strategies and interventions to help their children navigate the racism that they have already experienced or that parents anticipate their children will experience, like engaging parents of children who bully their children, choosing to live in more inclusive communities, reinforcing their children’s inherent worth, and building up their self-esteem.

## The white parents are of multiple perspectives. Some attempt to place some of the blame for racial tensions on Black movements, communities, and people, while others acknowledge racism is systemic and enduring, and others see it both ways.

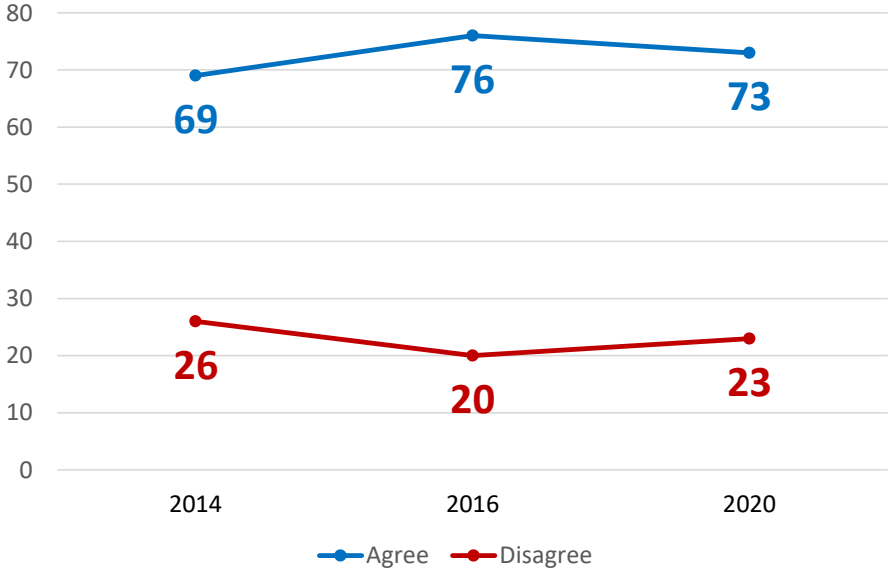
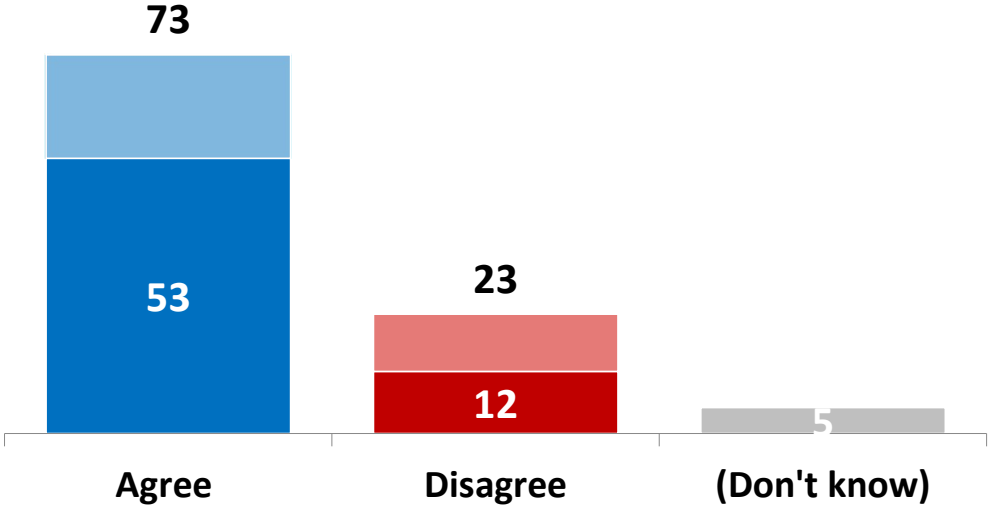
- "In my community we don't really feel it that much. I mean I'm down in the south to where it's always been a white and Black type of matter. But I mean the people around here, they've known everyone for years, **race is not really an issue. It's these big things like Black Lives Matter coming in and stirring up stuff that doesn't need to be stirred up.**" — White mother, TN/MS/GA
- "I think it's also really devastating, just the different amount of hatred that's happened in the world and **I think it's also devastating, how it's being handled and seeing the country divide and it seems like people that have experienced hurt, which is awful and there's no excuse for it, maybe want to hurt other people back** and it's hard for me because I don't know how peace is going to ever come." — White mother (mixed races), MN
- "Well, Mississippi is supposed to be the hospitality state, but it's been the most racist state for as long as I can remember. Recently I was working at Domino's delivering pizzas, and **I'd have to deliver to the not-so-great part of town, and I would have Black folks just look at me all types of funny.** I've had people come up to me and talking about some; don't be scared because they were Black and stuff. And I was raised around Black people, I love Black people, and it's just, it's been like **for no good reason at all, white people are being targeted as racist even if you haven't done anything whatsoever.** I understand that Black people are going through it too, but that doesn't fix the racists. You can't fix racism with more racism." — White mother, TN/MS/GA
- "I do believe it is a problem. However, **I do believe that the racism is on all sides not just a white on black issue. I have met a few African Americans who were very racist against whites.**" — Mother, (mixed races), national bulletin board
- "**It's everywhere, it's in the bones of our country. I feel like it's very systemic so it's hard to imagine life without that.** And I think once I, you know, I had a Black son, my eyes were open to that in a way that they weren't before. So I think, you know, for a lot of white people it's, it's not something they experience so they don't understand and don't care to, but, you know, that's obviously wrong. So yeah, **it's everywhere, it's, you know, in the grocery store, in the parking lot, like you name it, it's everywhere.**" — Mother (mixed races) and college student, NJ/CT/MD
- "I will say that **I don't know that it is any different than it has ever been.** The only thing is the access to it with the constant media or social media that is in your face all the time. **It's pretty hard to not see it or not here about now, whereas in the past, you probably didn't hear about it as much, even though I think it was still there and going on.**" — White non/partial-custodial father, Nationwide



# Voter Views of the Two-Generation Approach

# Clear support continues for the two-generation approach. This has become a durable core value.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: If we want to make sure children in families with low incomes are successful in their early learning, then we have to also invest in their parent's economic well-being.

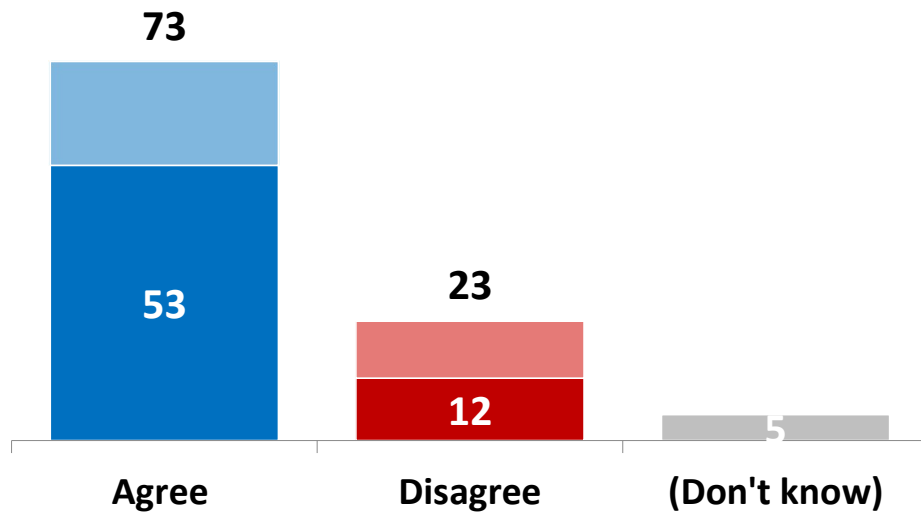


The same trend over time exists for intense agreement.  
 Nov. '14 – 51% strongly agree. Nov. '16 – 60% strongly agree

# As a concept, the two-generation approach has bipartisan support that also crosses gender, parental status, and racial subgroups.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: If we want to make sure children in families with low incomes are successful in their early learning, then we have to also invest in their parent's economic well-being.

All Voters

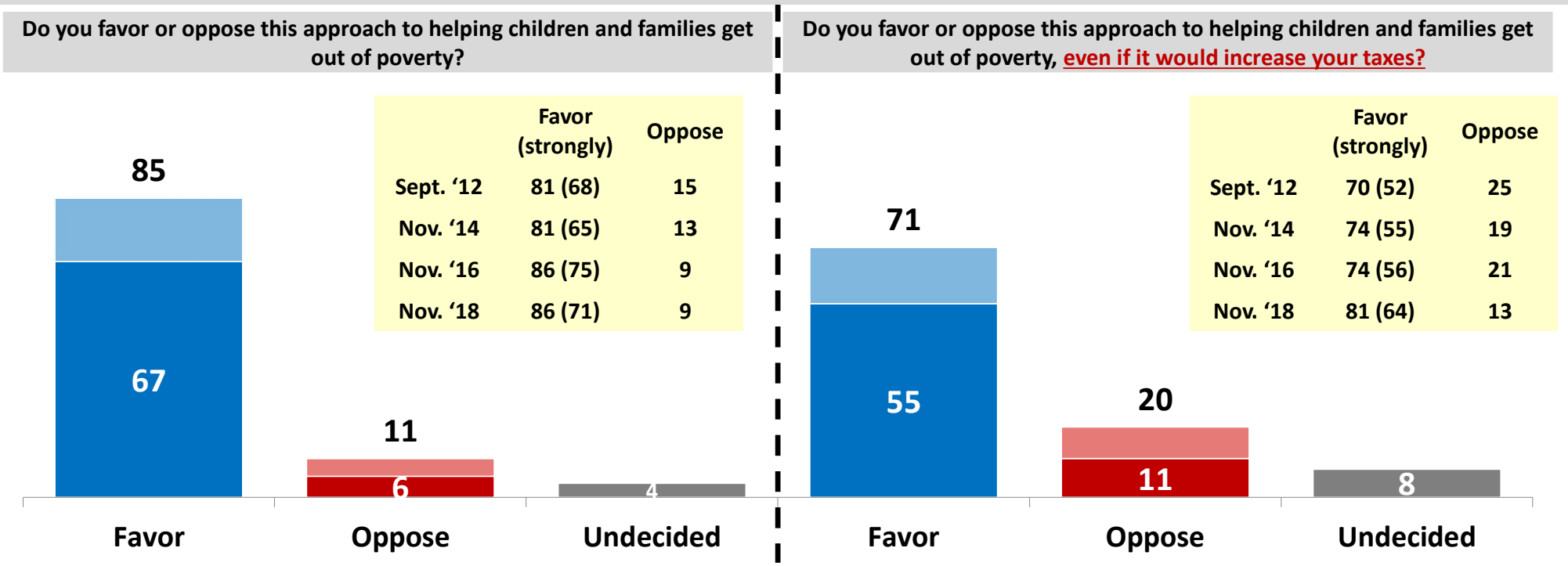


	Agree	Disagree	Margin
Men	73	24	+49
Women	73	22	+51
Children under 18 at home	76	20	+56
No children under 18 at home	72	24	+48
Men Trump voters	60	35	+25
Women Trump voters	56	37	+19
Men Biden voters	89	9	+80
Women Biden voters	88	8	+80
Democrat ID	87	11	+76
Independent ID	70	24	+46
Republican ID	59	34	+25
White non-college men	69	30	+39
White non-college women	67	25	+43
White college men	74	23	+51
White college women	73	21	+51
Black men	89	10	+79
Black women	77	18	+60
Latino men*	81	14	+67
Latina women	76	21	+54

\*Note small sample size

# Support for a two-generation approach that helps parents get education and skills training while children get a good start is broad and deep. Voters are tax sensitive, but a majority still strongly favor it even if it increased their taxes.

One program designed to help children and families who are living in poverty get out of poverty targets both parents and their children, so that parents get education and skills training to get a better job and at the same time their children get a good start with Head Start, early education, and quality schools.

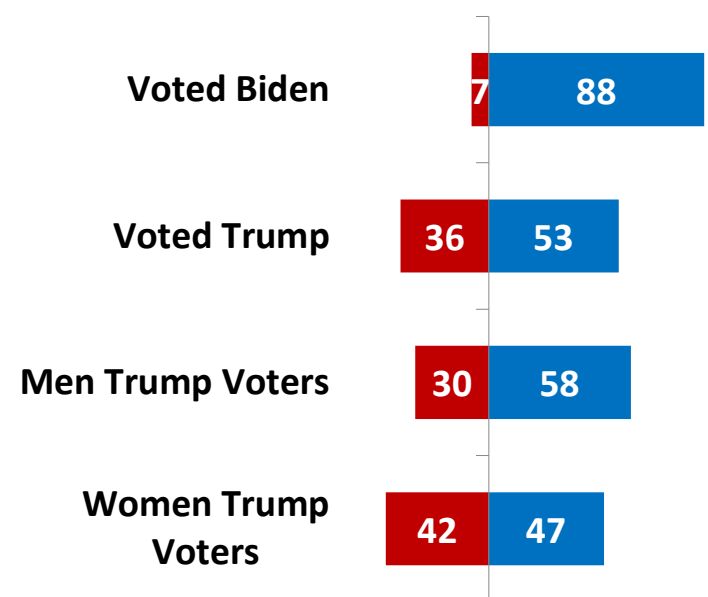
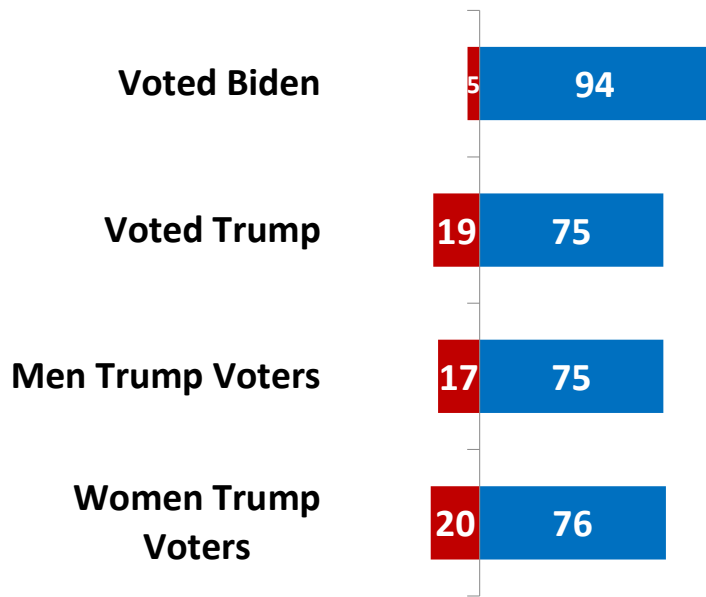


# Biden and Trump voters favor a two-generation program, even if it increased their taxes.

One program designed to help children and families who are living in poverty get out of poverty targets both parents and their children, so that parents get education and skills training to get a better job and at the same time their children get a good start with Head Start, early education, and quality schools.

Do you favor or oppose this approach to helping children and families get out of poverty

Do you favor or oppose this approach to helping children and families get out of poverty, even if it would increase your taxes



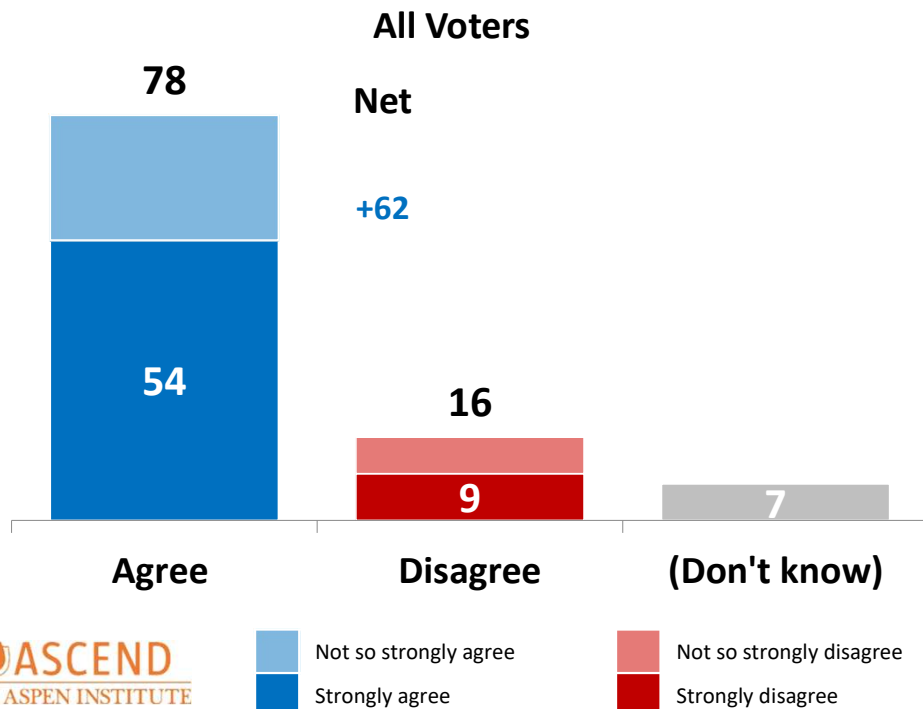
Favor Oppose

\*Split sampled questions



# Majorities across demographics agree with increasing family well-being by supporting children and parents intentionally and simultaneously together. Biden voters, Black voters, and Democrats are the most likely to agree.

Here are some ideas that other people have had for changes to programs and policies that help parents and children. For each, please tell me if you agree or disagree with it. *Design programs to increase family well-being by supporting children and parents intentionally and simultaneously together.*



	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Margin
Men	77	52	17	+60
Women	78	55	14	+64
Children under 18 at home	78	55	17	+61
No children under 18 at home	78	53	15	+63
Men Trump voters	66	39	28	+38
Women Trump voters	64	37	26	+38
Men Biden voters	87	65	7	+80
Women Biden voters	90	69	5	+85
Democrat ID	88	70	8	+80
Independent ID	78	48	13	+65
Republican ID	66	41	26	+39
White non-college men	73	51	22	+51
White non-college women	75	50	15	+61
White college men	81	48	11	+69
White college women	79	56	13	+66
Black men	84	68	13	+71
Black women	84	64	10	+75
Latino men*	78	61	12	+66
Latina women	78	57	15	+63

\*Note small sample size

# Programs for Dads



# Parents share their enthusiastic support for programs for fathers.

- “I do feel like **fathers should get equal support**. They are parents too. And I feel like there isn't enough support out there for them now. **They definitely get overlooked a lot**. It's definitely something that I feel strongly about.” — Mother (mixed races), MN
- “This is why I believe in it. I think, as a family unit, it takes two. I think it takes a whole community to raise a child, but I think it starts with the parents. So, **I think you have both that need to be supported so that they can make good decisions for the kids so that the kids can grow up and live, hopefully, a good life**. So, I think that by not only giving...by giving support to the father that is going to encourage both mother and father to have to work together and pull the resources together so that they can raise a kid.” — African American father, nationwide
- “I strongly agreed with this. **I felt that as a mom when I left the hospital, I had a huge support system**. I breast fed so I had a group there, there's mom groups to talk with children and things like that, Mommy and Me groups before COVID happened. **And I feel like husband didn't get the same support. He just kind of was like here's your kid, like do what your wife says or whatever the case may be**. And I felt like a lot of the questions came up would go to me because I was the mom and any kind of class or anything it all fell onto the mom's pressure, where I feel like the **dads should be able to get those same resources if they have questions**.” — Latina mother, WA/OR/CO
- “I definitely think **there's a stereotype that women are to be the mothers and women are to care for their children and that's it; and that's a stereotype that's perpetuated by these types of government assistance programs**. If fathers were given the same amount of opportunities as we are, maybe there would be a little bit of more even distribution of effort toward raising a child. You know, **we can't expect, you know, fathers to be equally as involved if they're not as equally supported**. So I definitely think it's imperative.” — Mother (mixed races) and college student, NJ/CT/MD
- “I strongly agree because my children's father would benefit from this kind of program as I know MANY other fathers and families in America would benefit as well. **Generationally, men have been socially constructed to bury their feelings so when they're in relationships and must take on the roles of fathers, they're lacking the ability to efficiently communicate**.” — Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board

Parents notice a double standard in existing programs and society that leaves fathers less supported than mothers.

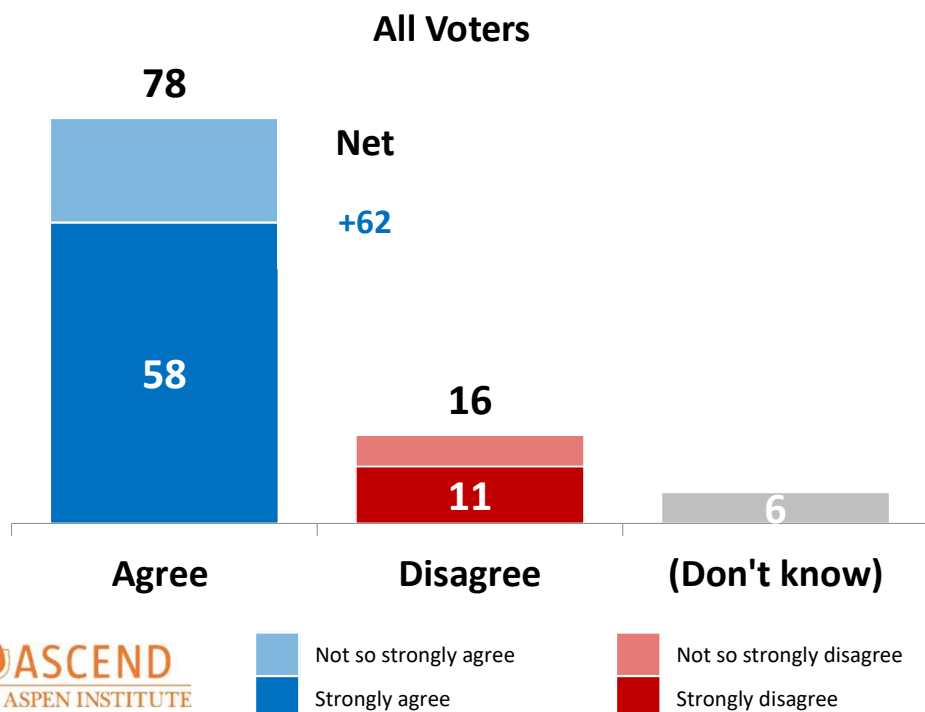
# Parents imagine a program for fathers could include everything from paternity leave to skill building.

- "Mine was more the leaning towards the **paternity leave**. I know with all four kids it was the same; she got a couple months off, I got **two weeks that I had to use vacation for and wasn't able to have that vacation for other things down the line because of not having the paternity leave.**" — Latino father, WA/OR/CO
- "**Paternity leave**, an equal amount to the mothers." — Mother (mixed races) and college student, NJ/CT/MD
- "**Financial support and advice**. You know basically how to manage money better and investments to make to better the family financially." — African American father, nationwide
- "My boyfriend and group of his friends who are also fathers have kind of took it upon themselves to try to incorporate kind of that support system. They try to kind of find different, they have like these different little like focus groups. **They've been doing like Zoom meetings and stuff and it's kind of just like the Mommy and Me's being able to talk as females about how the kids are doing and like the things that they're struggling with. And so my boyfriend and a lot of his father friends have took it upon themselves to try and like create their own little group that they can support each other.**" — Latina mother, WA/OR/CO
- "I think **housing services** because I know like even being able to have them, wouldn't be able to take them and actually spend time with them **especially when it's like joint custody**. You know having the ability for them to be able to setup and have a room for them, have a bed for them, clothes, everything. You know and kind of take away from the cost too, of the mothers when they have, you know when the father has them they don't have to send everything with them or worry if like he's eating, where is she sleeping, whatever." — Native American mother, nationwide
- "Like **how to communicate with the child and how to educate them**. I think it's important for the growth for kids with father." — Asian mother, nationwide

Parents want a program for fathers to include financial support, housing support, communication training, and paternity leave.

Majorities across demographic and partisan groups favor creating more programs that support fathers in their role as parents. Black voters, white college educated women, women Biden voters, and Democrats are the most likely to agree. Agreement is strong with Republicans as well.

Here are some ideas that other people have had for changes to programs and policies that help parents and children. For each, please tell me if you agree or disagree with it. *Create more programs that support fathers in their role as parents, in addition to the ones we have for mothers.*



	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Margin
Men	75	54	19	+56
Women	81	62	14	+67
Children under 18 at home	78	63	18	+60
No children under 18 at home	78	57	16	+63
Men Trump voters	66	43	27	+39
Women Trump voters	71	48	22	+49
Men Biden voters	83	64	12	+71
Women Biden voters	90	72	7	+83
Democrat ID	87	70	9	+78
Independent ID	74	54	17	+57
Republican ID	71	48	23	+47
White non-college men	72	53	25	+49
White non-college women	76	58	15	+61
White college men	76	49	19	+57
White college women	85	63	11	+74
Black men	82	69	12	+70
Black women	86	71	13	+73
Latino men*	79	64	14	+66
Latina women	81	64	15	+66

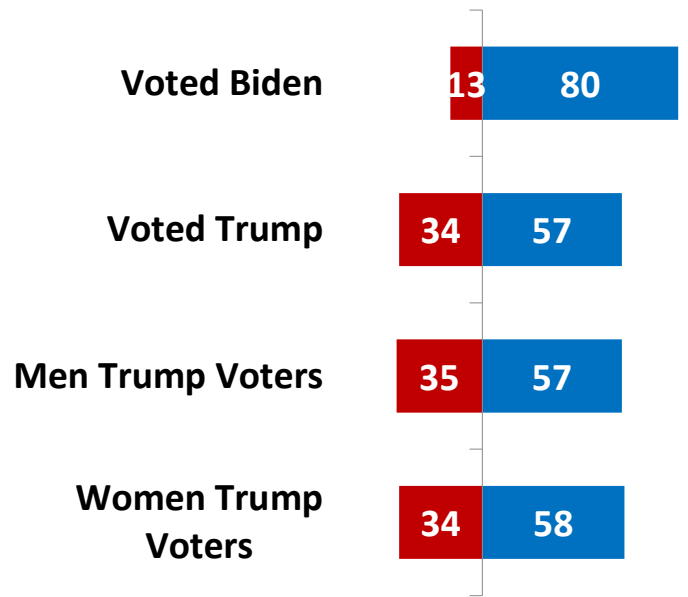
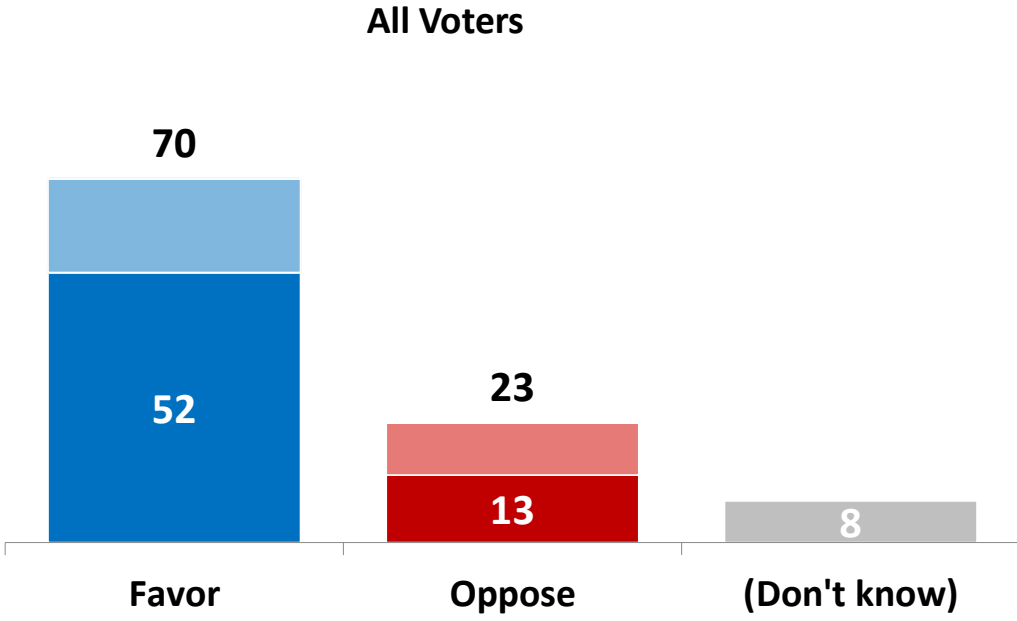
\*Note small sample size



# The Economic Link

# Seven-in-ten voters favor making parents enrolled in college or workforce training programs eligible for state-funded childcare subsidies. Majority support crosses partisanship.

Do you favor or oppose making parents enrolled in college or workforce training programs eligible for state-funded childcare subsidies?



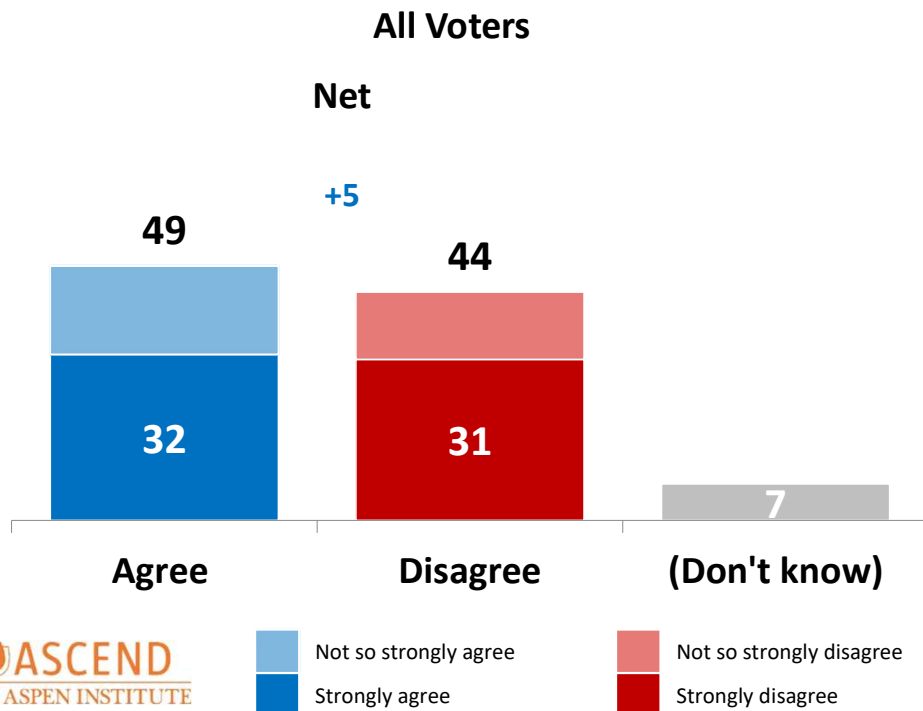
■ Not so strongly favor  
■ Strongly favor  
■ Not so strongly oppose  
■ Strongly oppose

■ Disagree  
■ Agree



About half agree with providing \$1,000 per month for a year through direct cash deposits. This is a more polarizing program. While Biden voters, Black voters, Latinx voters, parents, and Democrats agree, Trump voters, white non-college voters, white college men, and Republicans disagree. Men overall, white college women, and Independents are more evenly split.

Here are some ideas that other people have had for changes to programs and policies that help parents and children. For each, please tell me if you agree or disagree with it. *Provide \$1,000 per month for a year through direct cash deposits to families so that they can make their own choices about how best to meet their family's basic needs.*



	Agree	Disagree	Margin
Men	45	47	-2
Women	53	41	+12
Children under 18 at home	53	44	+9
No children under 18 at home	48	44	+4
Men Trump voters	27	68	-41
Women Trump voters	32	62	-30
Men Biden voters	63	25	+39
Women Biden voters	72	24	+48
Democrat ID	72	23	+49
Independent ID	44	45	-1
Republican ID	28	66	-38
White non-college men	40	54	-14
White non-college women	42	52	-10
White college men	43	50	-6
White college women	46	46	+1
Black men	63	22	+41
Black women	76	20	+56
Latino men*	50	40	+10
Latina women	67	26	+41

\*Note small sample size

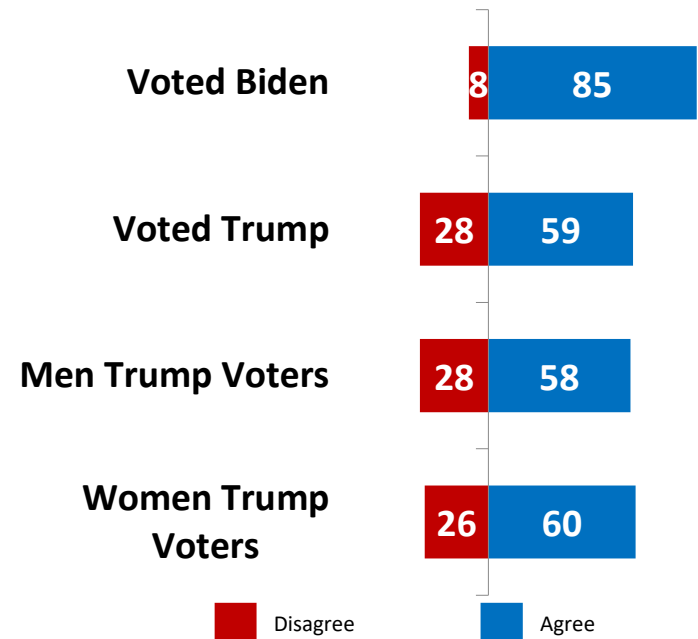
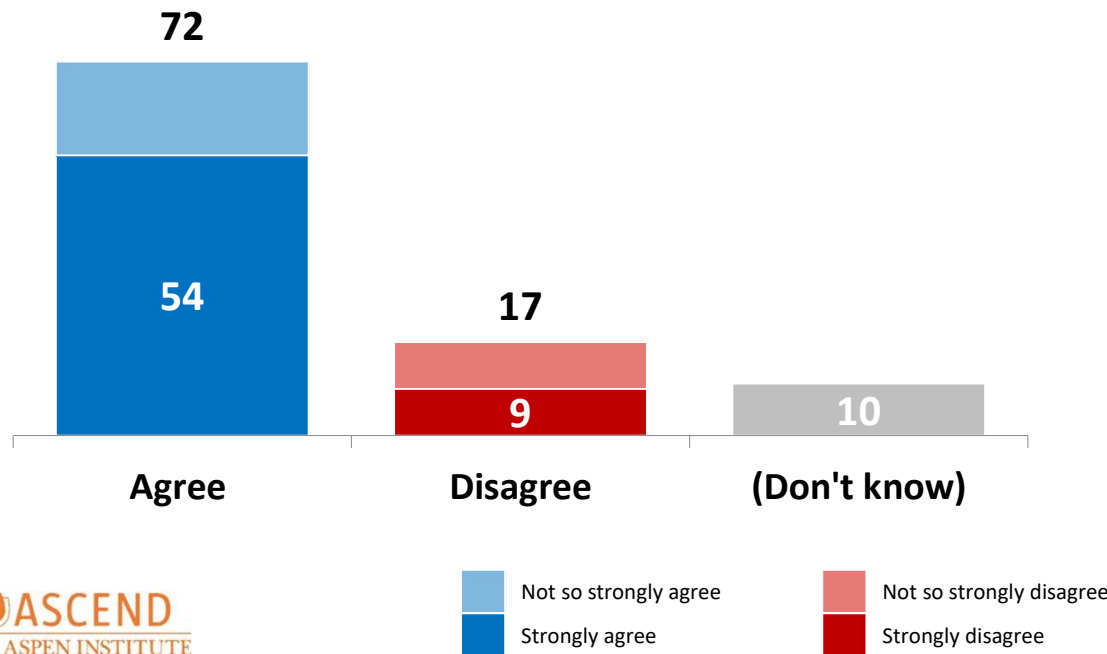


# Mental Health and Support

# More than seven-in-10 voters agree that mental health screenings and services should be available to parents and children together, even if only one is enrolled in a health insurance plan. This has bipartisan appeal.

Currently health insurance plans and Medicaid cover mental health preventive screenings for parents and children who are enrolled. Do you agree or disagree that parents and children should get emotional and mental health screenings and services together even if only one of them is enrolled?

## All Voters





# Parent Voices to Elected Officials

# If mothers could talk to their governor or the President, their top asks focus on education, housing, health (including mental health), nutrition, and policies to ease financial burdens.

- “I proposed an **educational program surrounding emotional/mental/nutritional health and basic finance management**. I feel like these topics are not covered in school curriculums.” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “**Better housing opportunity** for working moms , meaning housing incentives. I don't think you should be considered not eligible because you make \$50,000 or more you don't need help. That is one of the biggest misconception there is that you don't need help when in actuality you still do especially with taxes and being a single mom and bills.” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “I will ask for a **better healthcare plan, housing plan, feeding plan** for low-income families. Everything seems expensive these days and these affect family growth and balance.” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “To try and pass a bill for employers **to increase pay rates by more than \$2**, find a way to provide **volunteer transportation for before school times and after school times** for those of us that are still working, but can't get our full-time hours.” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “**Better police training, better unemployment benefits and better benefits for 1099 employees** in GA.” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “To **lower taxes** and to provide the public with financial resources that they may need. I would also ask them to **make the cost of healthier foods lower so that people could afford to eat healthy.**” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board
- “I will tell the president to consider **more support for mental health for better education for children, lower taxes, and affordable housing.**” – Mother (mixed races), national bulletin board

# Questions







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