



Real Education Report 2022

March 2022



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About the report

The *Real Education Report 2022* forms part of the Real Insurance Research Series and explores feelings around parents and children returning to face-to-face learning. The research also looks at school preferences, private vs. public and other considerations that go into choosing a school.

The report is compiled based on research commissioned by Real Insurance and conducted by CoreData between 28 January and 8 February 2022.

The research was conducted via a quantitative online survey, gathering **5,007** responses from Australians over 18 years old with at least one child aged 19 years old and below.

Important things to note about the charts and references

- Footnotes directly underneath the charts (e.g. * Respondents who feel undervalued) mainly refer to the sampling involved per question. This is to differentiate who was asked that particular question in the survey.
- Charts without a specific note represent questions that were asked to all respondents.
- The types of questions asked are also noted. For instance, '*Multiple answers allowed' appears when the question called for more than one answer from the respondent.
- Some charts and figures may not be equal to 100% due to rounding differences. This is also true for summed up figures.



Key findings

Key findings

COVID-19 has impacted and disrupted education

- Over 3 in 5 parents feel their children (6-19yrs) have been seriously impacted by continued disruptions due to COVID-19 (64%).
- 3 in 5 parents are concerned their children have fallen significantly behind in their studies due to COVID-19 lockdowns and home schooling (61%).

Struggling to catch up

- 1 in 2 feel the COVID-19 disruption to their children's education will lead to them falling behind academically and struggling to catch up (51%) or will lead to long-term impacts on their job prospects (46%).
- 1 in 3 (33%) have sought special considerations in their education due to difficult circumstances during COVID-19 (such as missing class or passing an exam).

Impact of COVID-19 on the mental wellbeing of children

- 3 in 5 parents feel home schooling and/or COVID-19 disruptions have had an impact on their children's mental wellbeing (62%) – with 29% being a significant or considerable impact.
- More than half of the parents that feel homeschooling and COVID-19 disruptions have had a mental impact, feel that COVID-19 has led to their children losing confidence or social skills (55%) and experiencing anxiety or stress (54%).

The home schooling experience

- 8 in 10 parents with children 6-19 years old experienced home schooling in the last year (78%).
- Many parents feel the experience made them more engaged with their child and their learning however 1 in 2 home schooling parents did find the experience difficult (50%).

Juggling home schooling is a challenge for many parents

- Most commonly when home schooling, parents who had a difficult experience, found keeping their children engaged and focused (74%) most difficult, followed by having the time and attention to complete their own work/duties at home (61%).

Remote learning has run its course for many parents

- Over 8 in 10 home schooling parents also had some concerns about home schooling (86%). Top of mind are the reduced opportunities to socialise in person with peers (55%), reduced quality and depth of the education experience (46%) and the increased screen time (45%).
- 3 in 5 parents feel that remote learning is not effective (62%).

Key findings

Getting back to school benefits social interactions

- 9 in 10 parents report their children have really missed their social interaction at school (90%).
- Despite plenty of children having negative emotions about returning to classrooms, parents are more likely to feel apprehensive (26% vs 18%) while their children are more likely to be excited (38% vs 22%).

Apprehension and uncertainty about the school year still lingers

- 3 in 4 households are still bracing for another disrupted school year (73%).
- 3 in 5 are very apprehensive about the safety and health of their children returning to school this year (62%).

Choosing a school starts early for parents

- Parents typically think far ahead about the right school for their children - 1 in 2 before they are even 3 years old (51%).
- 3 in 5 parents report their household's experiences through COVID-19 influenced the relative importance of these considerations around school choice (62%).

Private school vs. public school

- While 4 in 10 parents prefer private school for their children (39%), 3 in 10 prefer public school (30%) and a further 3 in 10 have no preference either way (31%).
- According to parents, the top 5 private school advantages are the standard of facilities (45%), education standards (37%), level of discipline (36%), academic results achieved (36%) and more individual attention (35%). The disadvantages of course are that private schools are more expensive, with 2 in 3 parents saying this (66%).
- When it comes to achieving superior NAPLAN results, parents said private schools do it best (37%), however public schools are said to be the strongest in developing better social skills (27%).
- Over 2 in 5 admit they would like to send their child to a private school but can't afford it (44%).

Key findings

Public school advantages include being more engaged in a local area

- Parents preferring public schools identify many advantages for this system like to be able to send child to school in the local area (93%) and more diverse student populations (89%).
- Many are also willing to move or purchase a residence in a particular area to secure access to a preferred public school (50%).

Increasing fees is a significant barrier for private schooling

- Parents with children currently attending or planning to attend private school feel that if fees keep increasing they would consider removing their child(ren) from private schooling (56%).
- High fees are also making some consider not enrolling their child(ren) in private schooling (70%).

Cost of private schools usually involves financial sacrifice

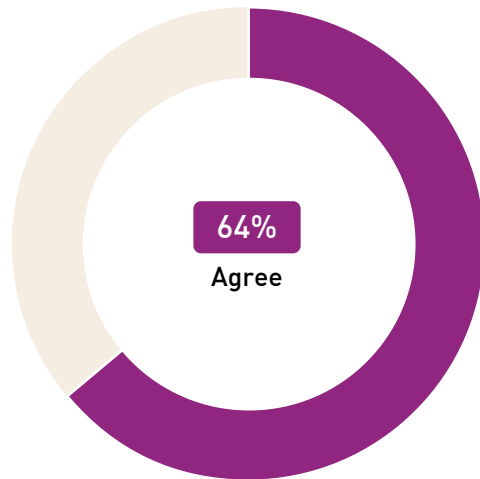
- 3 in 5 private school parents report paying 10% or more of their total household income for children's annual private school fees cost (58%) – with 26% of parents paying over 20%.
- 1 in 5 feel this is a big financial sacrifice (22%) and 1 in 2 that it is considerable but manageable sacrifice (52%). Most common methods of cutting back are budget tightening (38%), cutting back on holidays (34%) and cutting back on entertainment (34%).
- 1 in 5 parents who plan to send their children to private school anticipate a big financial sacrifice (18%) and more than 1 in 2 anticipate considerable but manageable sacrifice (58%). The financial sacrifices anticipated are similar but 1 in 3 are also ensuring that they earn a double income in the family (32%).



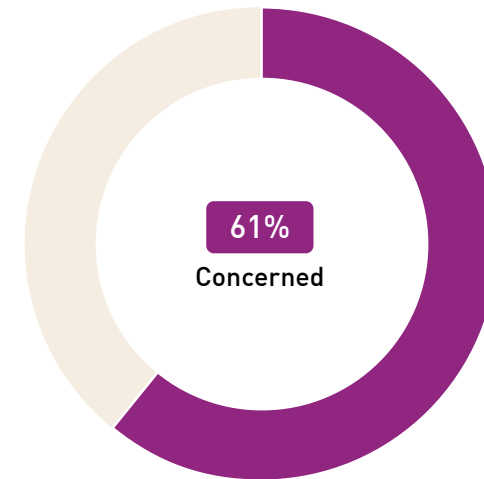
COVID-19 concerns

Impact of COVID-19

Our child(ren) has been seriously impacted by continued disruptions due to COVID-19



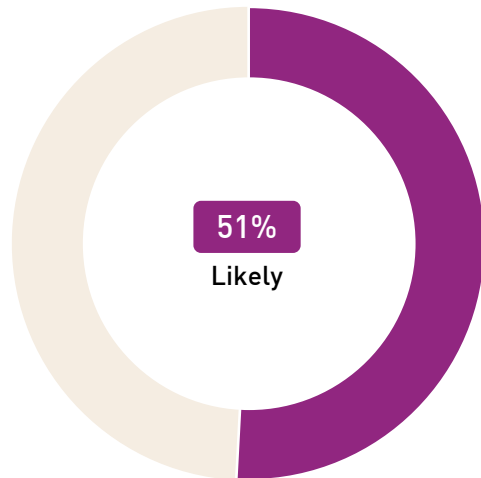
How concerned are you that your child(ren) has fallen significantly behind in their studies due to COVID-19 lockdowns and homeschooling?



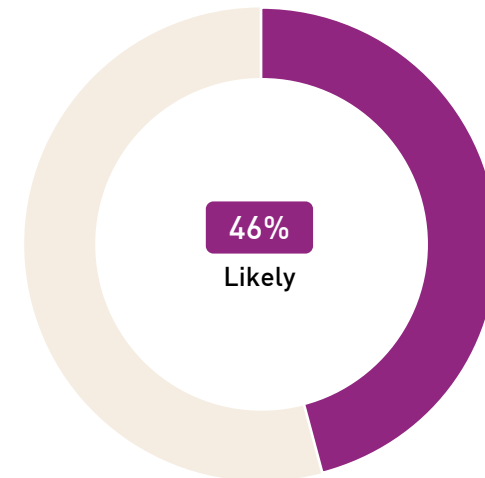
Over 3 in 5 parents feel their children (6-19yrs) have been seriously impacted by continued disruptions due to COVID-19 (64%). 3 in 5 parents are concerned their children have fallen significantly behind in their studies due to COVID-19 lockdowns and home schooling (61%).

Long-term impacts

Do you feel the COVID-19 crisis disruption to your child(ren)'s education will lead to long-term impacts of them falling behind academically and struggling to catch up?



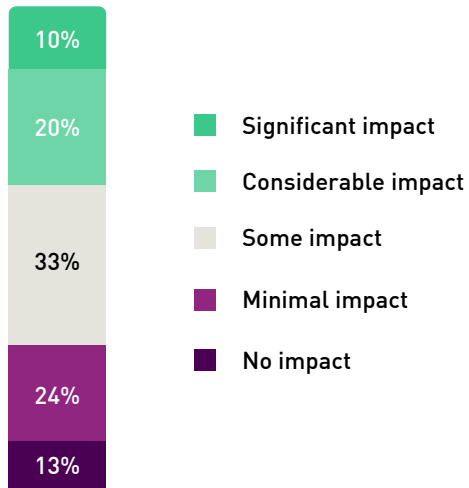
Do you feel the COVID-19 crisis disruption to your child(ren)'s education will lead to any long-term impacts on their academic progress or job prospects?



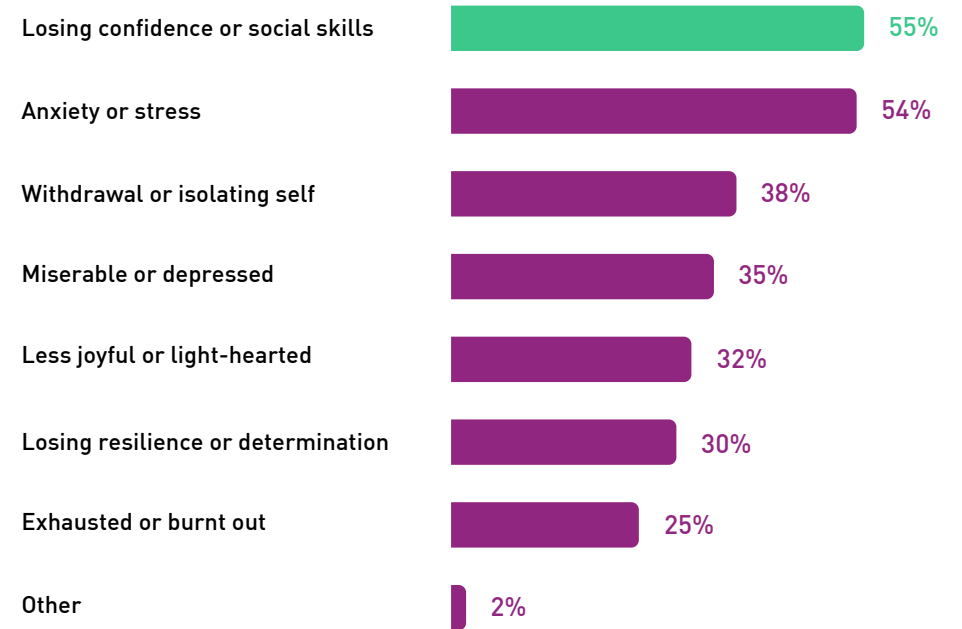
Around 1 in 2 feel the COVID-19 disruption to their children's education will lead to them falling behind academically and struggling to catch up (51%) or will lead to long-term impacts on their job prospects (46%).

Mental wellbeing

Do you feel as though homeschooling and/or COVID-19 disruptions have had an impact on your child(ren)'s mental wellbeing?



What kind of impacts do you feel this has had on your child(ren)'s mental wellbeing?



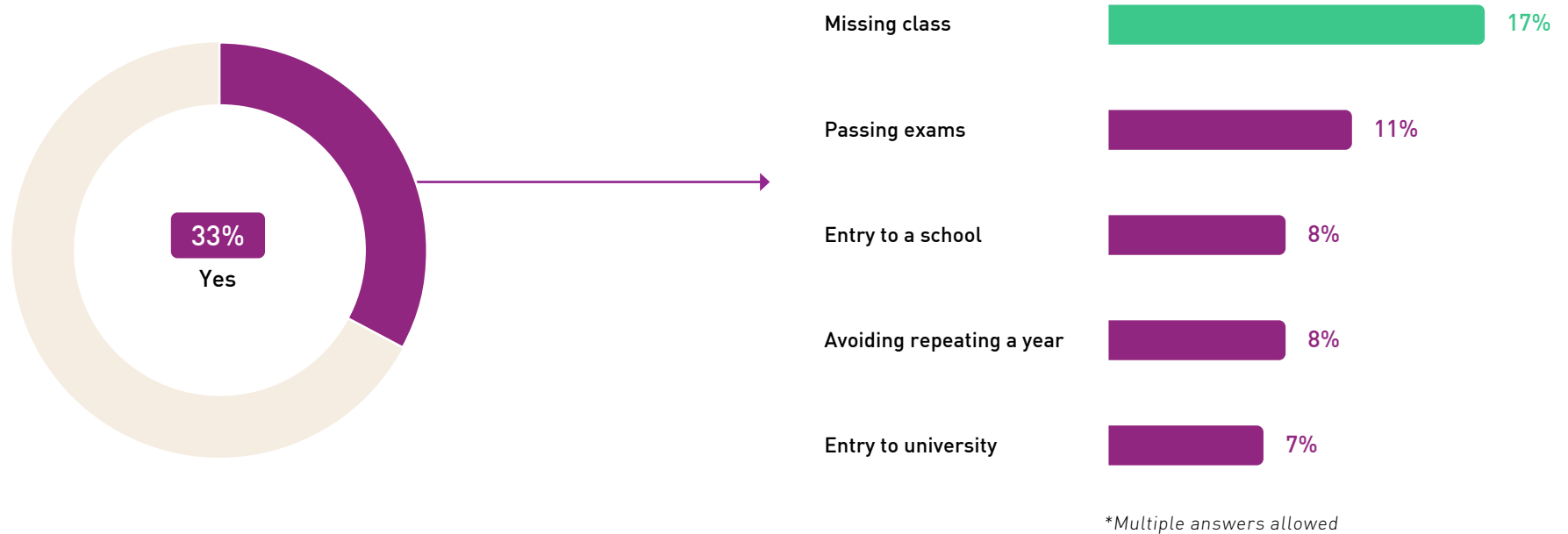
**Respondents that feel homeschooling and COVID-19 disruptions have had a mental impact on their child(ren)*

**Multiple answers allowed*

3 in 5 parents feel home schooling and/or COVID-19 disruptions have had an impact on their children's mental wellbeing (62%) – with 29% being a significant or considerable impact. More than half of parents who believe these disruptions have impacted their child's mental wellbeing, feel that COVID-19 has led to their children losing confidence or social skills (55%) and anxiety or stress (54%).

Special considerations

Have your children sought any of the following special considerations in their education due to difficult circumstances during COVID-19?



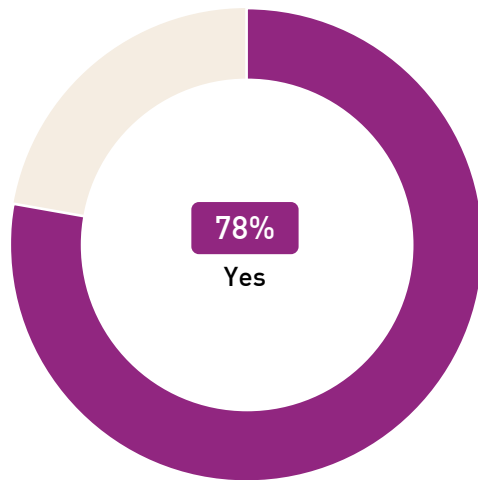
1 in 3 (33%) have sought special considerations in their education due to difficult circumstances during COVID-19, with the most common being missing class (17%), passing exams (11%) and entry to a school (8%).



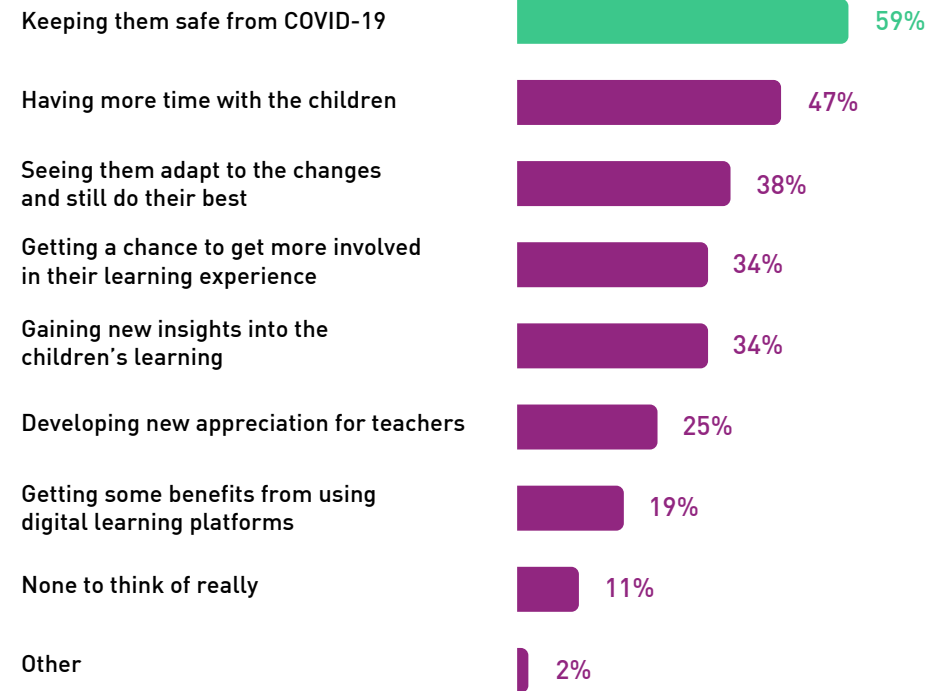
Home schooling

The home schooling experience

Have your children been homeschooling at all in the last year?



What were the best things about this homeschooling experience?

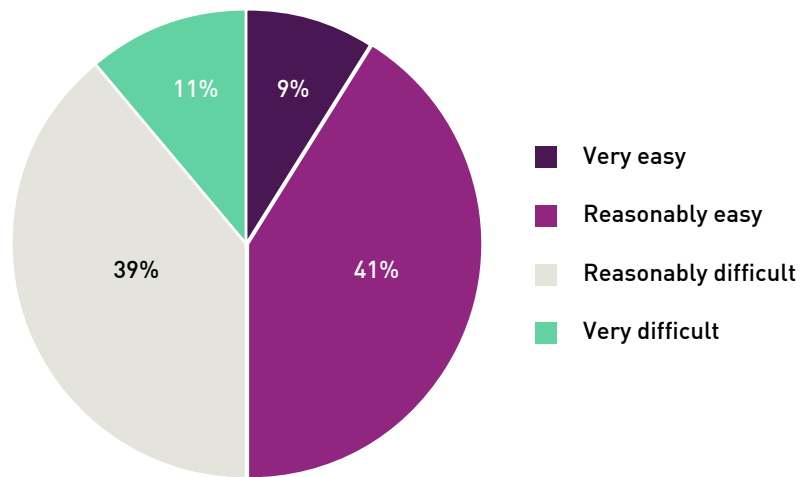


*Multiple answers allowed

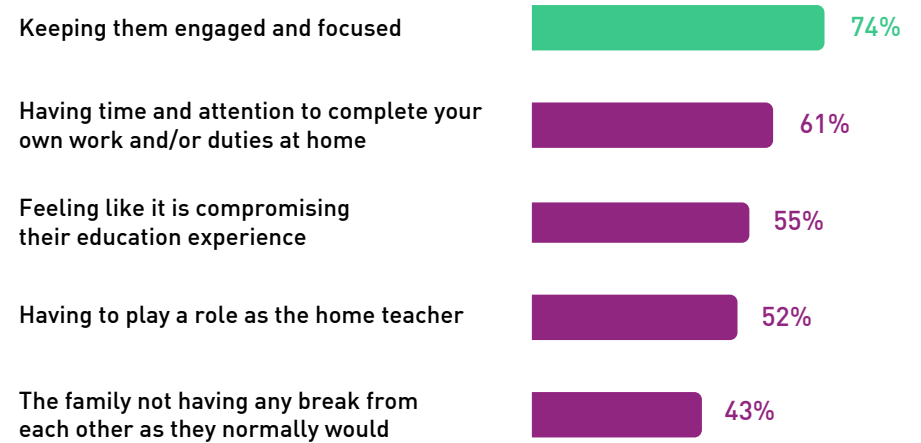
8 in 10 parents with children 6-19 years old experienced home schooling in the last year (78%). Many parents feel the experience made them more engaged with their child and their learning, signalling some unintended benefits beyond just safety from COVID-19.

Challenges

How have/did you find the experience of having your children home schooled?



What have been/are the hardest things to deal with regarding homeschooling?

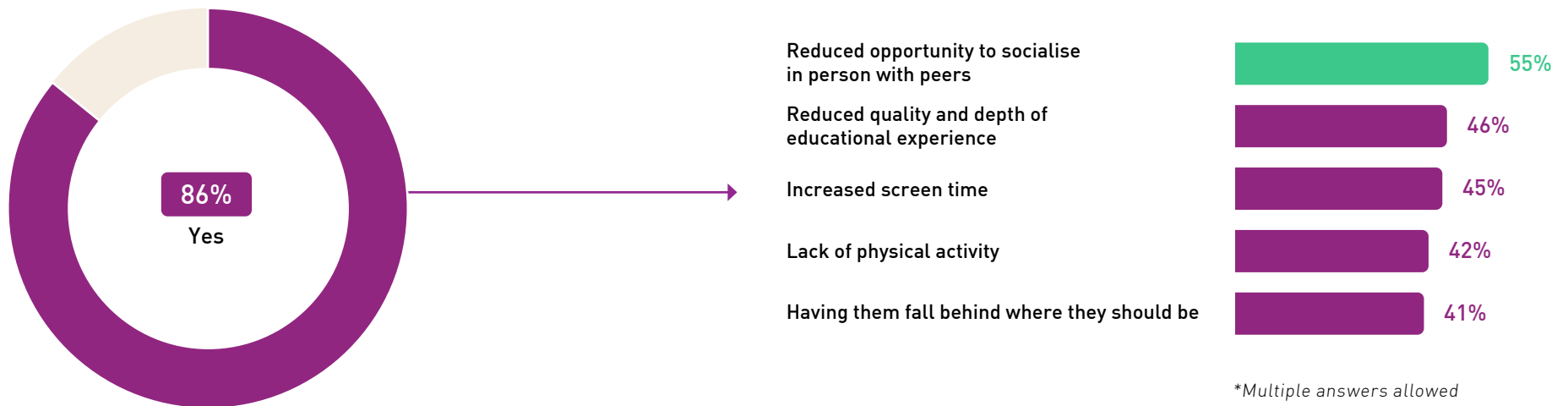


**Respondents that found homeschooling reasonably to very difficult
 *Multiple answers allowed
 Top 5 answers only

1 in 2 home schooling parents did however find the experience difficult (50%) . Most commonly those parents found keeping their children engaged and focussed (74%) difficult, followed by having the time and attention to complete their own work/duties at home (61%). 3 in 5 parents also said that remote learning is not effective for their children (62%).

Concerns

Did you have any concerns about having your children home schooled?



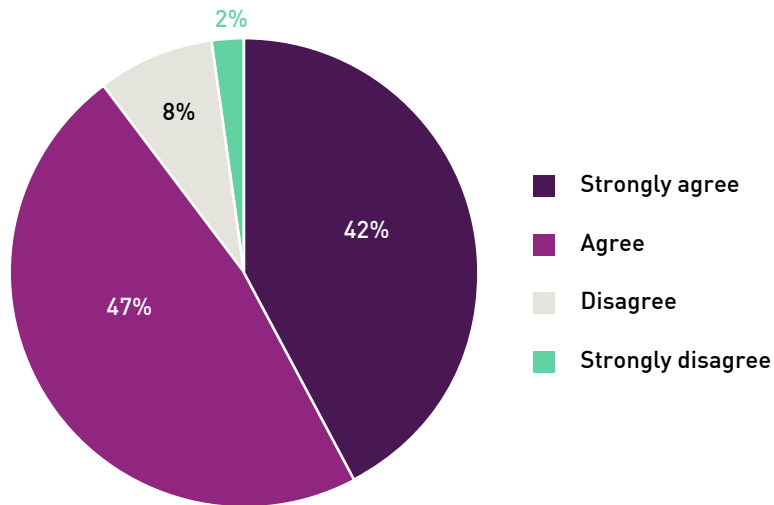
Over 8 in 10 home schooling parents also had some concerns about home schooling (86%). Top of mind are the reduced opportunities to socialise in person with peers (55%), reduced quality and depth of the education experience (46%) and the increased screen time (45%). 3 in 5 parents feel that remote learning is not effective (62%).



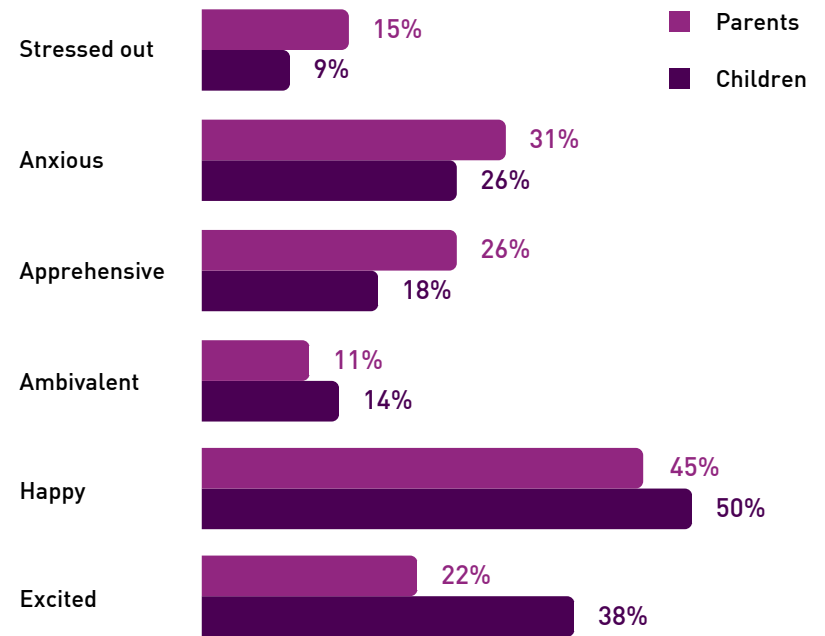
Back to the classroom

Feelings about going back to the classroom

Our child(ren) really miss(ed) their social interaction at school



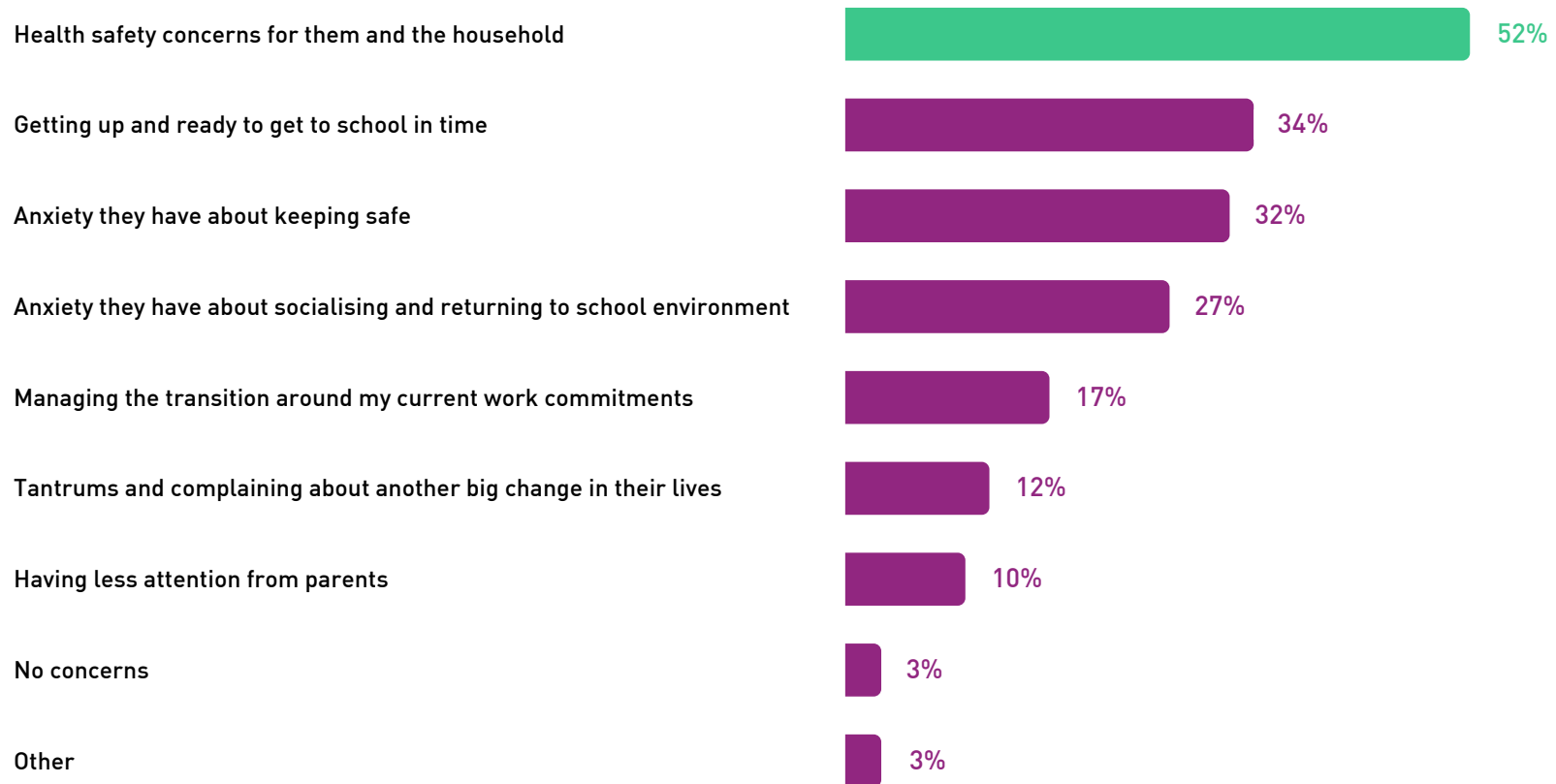
What best describes how you and your children are feeling about the return to school this year? Choose all that apply.



9 in 10 parents report their children really missed their social interaction at school (90%). Despite plenty of children having negative emotions about returning to classrooms, parents were more likely to feel apprehensive (26% vs 18%) while their children were more likely to be excited (38% vs 22%). 2 in 5 parents report being more anxious about the return to school than last year (39%) with 2 in 5 about the same (42%). 1 in 4 children are reported to be more anxious about the return to school than last year (27%) with 1 in 2 about the same (50%).

Face-to-face education concerns

What are your greatest concerns about your children's return to face-to-face learning?

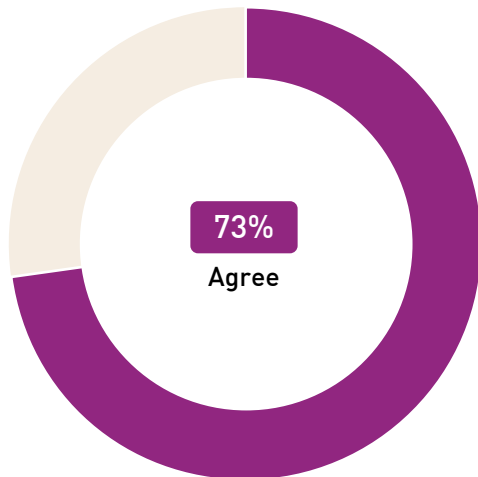


*Multiple answers allowed

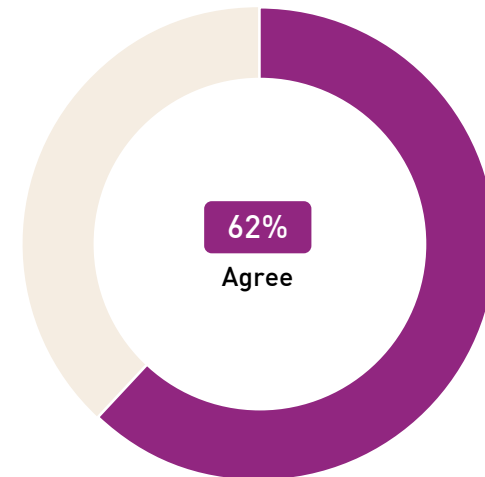
Health and safety the top concern about returning to face-to-face learning (52%). 1 in 3 parents are concerned about getting up and ready for school time (34%) and the anxiety they have about keeping them safe (32%).

Apprehensive about the return to school

Our household is bracing for another disrupted school year



Our household is very apprehensive about the safety and health of our children returning to school

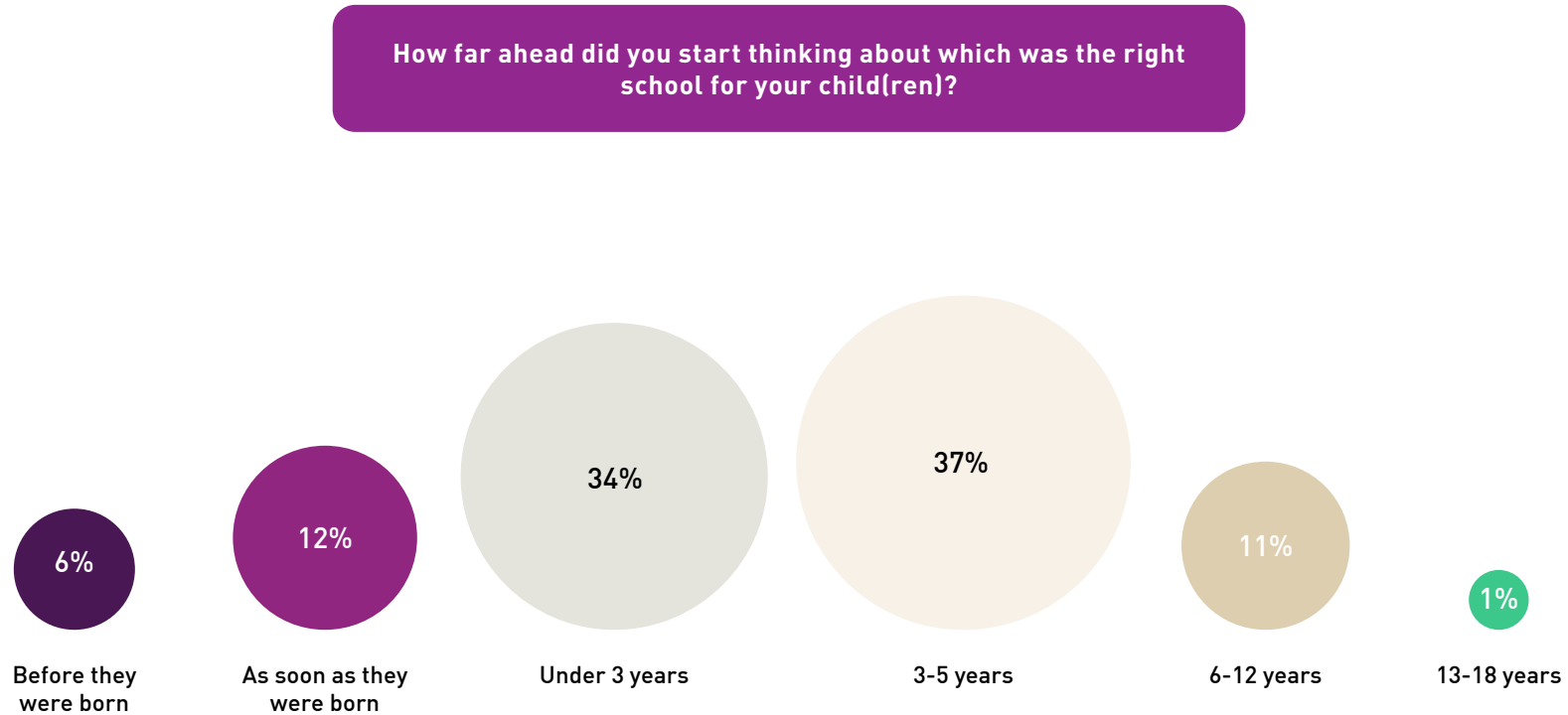


3 in 4 parent households are still bracing for another disrupted school year (73%). 3 in 5 are very apprehensive about the safety and health of our children returning to school (62%).



School choice drivers

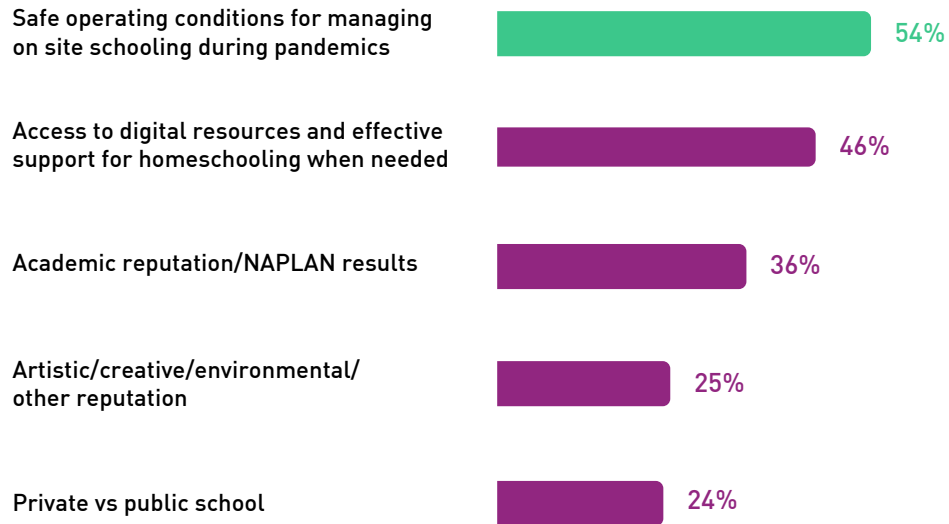
Considerations



Parents typically think far ahead about the right school for their children - 1 in 2 before their children are even 3 years old (51%). When it comes to what is most important when considering a school in 2022, safety comes out on top (54%) followed by access to online resources and effective support during home schooling (46%).

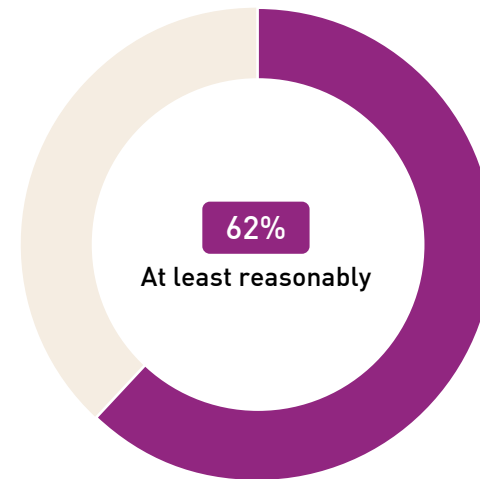
Weighing up COVID-19

Which considerations when choosing a school for your children have become more important?



**Multiple answers allowed
Top 5 answers only

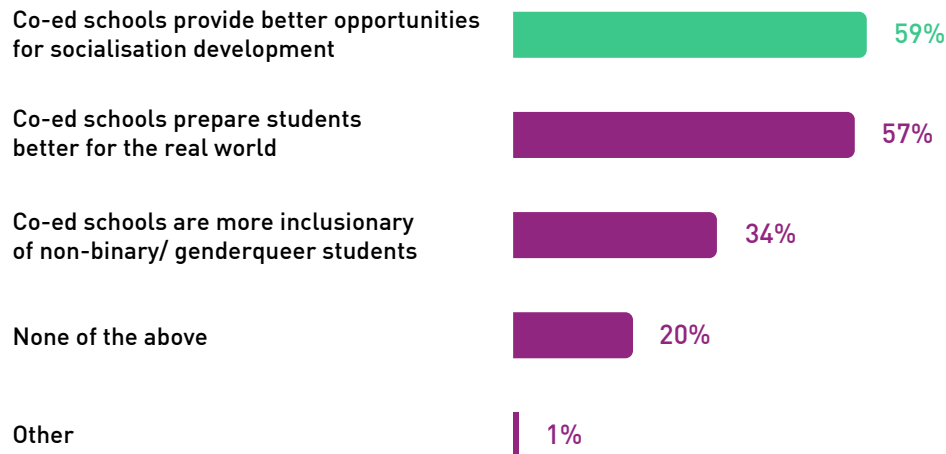
How much has your household's experiences through COVID-19 influenced the relative importance of these considerations around school choice for your child(ren)?



When it comes to what is most important when considering a school in 2022, safety comes out on top (54%) followed by access to online resources and effective support during home schooling (46%). 3 in 5 parents report their household's experience through COVID-19 influenced the relative importance of these considerations around school choice (62%).

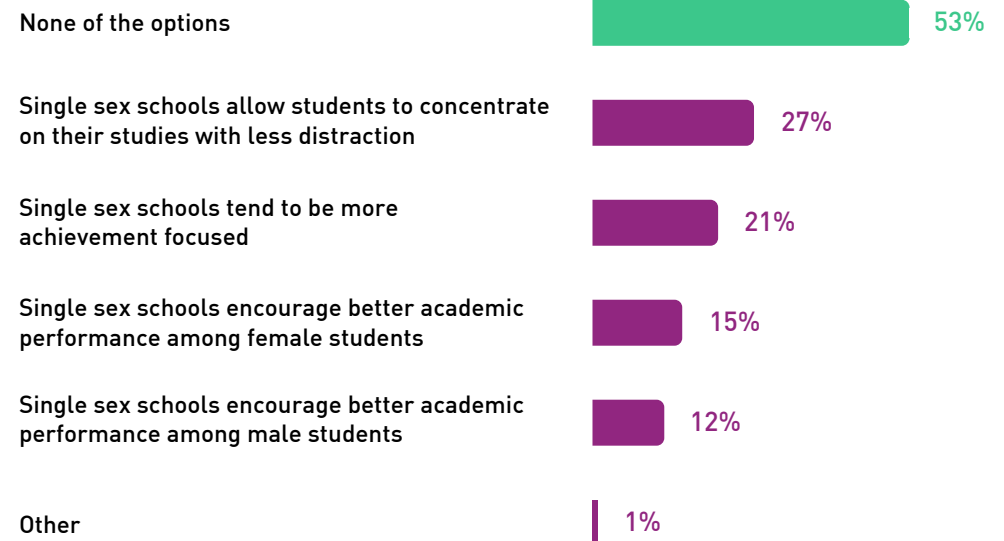
Co-ed vs. single sex schools

What do you see as the greatest advantages of co-ed schools/
disadvantages of single sex schools?



*Multiple answers allowed

What do you see as the greatest disadvantages of co-ed schools/
advantages of single sex schools?



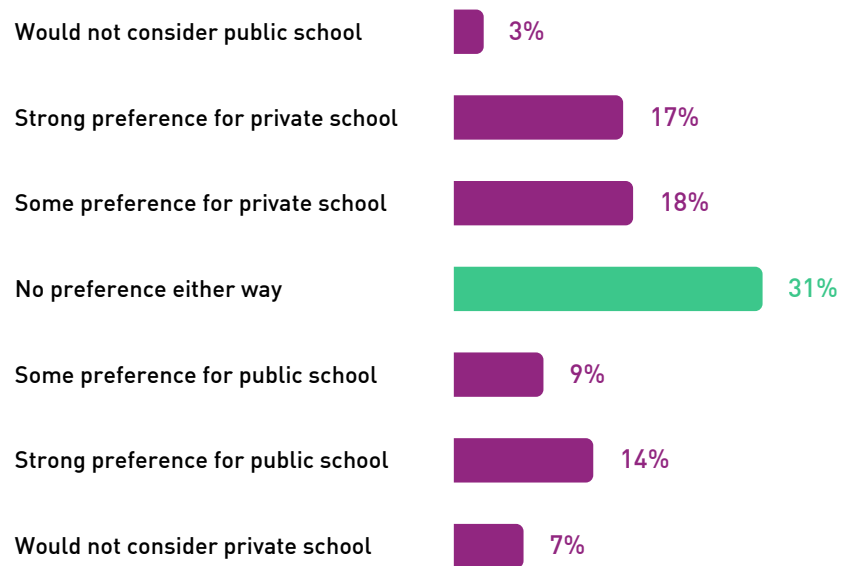
Parents view the greatest advantages of co-ed schools as having better opportunities for socialisation development (59%), better preparing students for the real world (57%) and being more inclusionary of non-binary students (34%). More than 1 in 2 parents feel (53%) feel that there are no advantages of single sex schools.



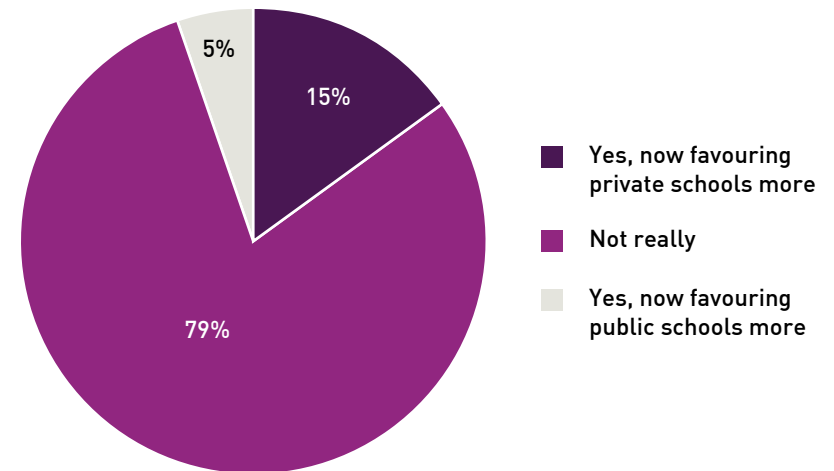
Private vs. public schools

Parents' preferences

Do you have a preference between private and public schools for your kids' education?



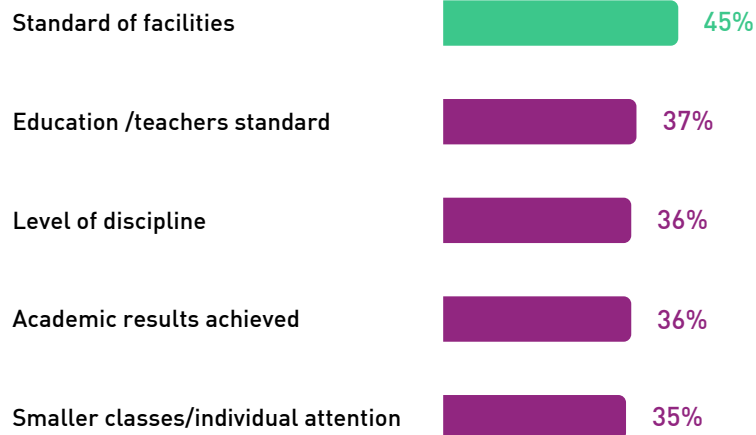
Has your experiences through COVID-19 changed your preferences between public and private schools or perspectives on the benefits they do or do not provide?



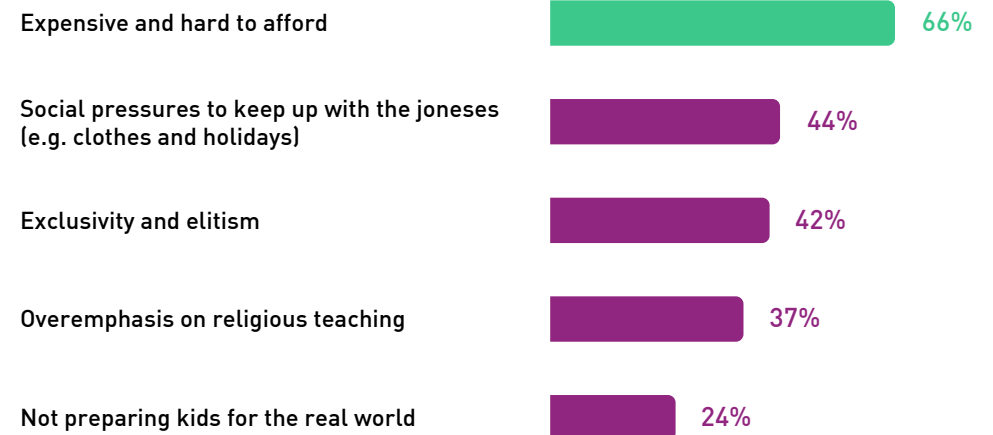
While 4 in 10 parents prefer private schools for their children (39%), 3 in 10 prefer public schools (30%) and a further 3 in 10 have no preference either way (31%). 15% are now favouring private schools after their COVID-19 experiences and only 5% are now favouring public school because of this.

The pros and cons of private schools

What do you see as the greatest advantages of private schools?



What do you see as the greatest disadvantages of private schools?



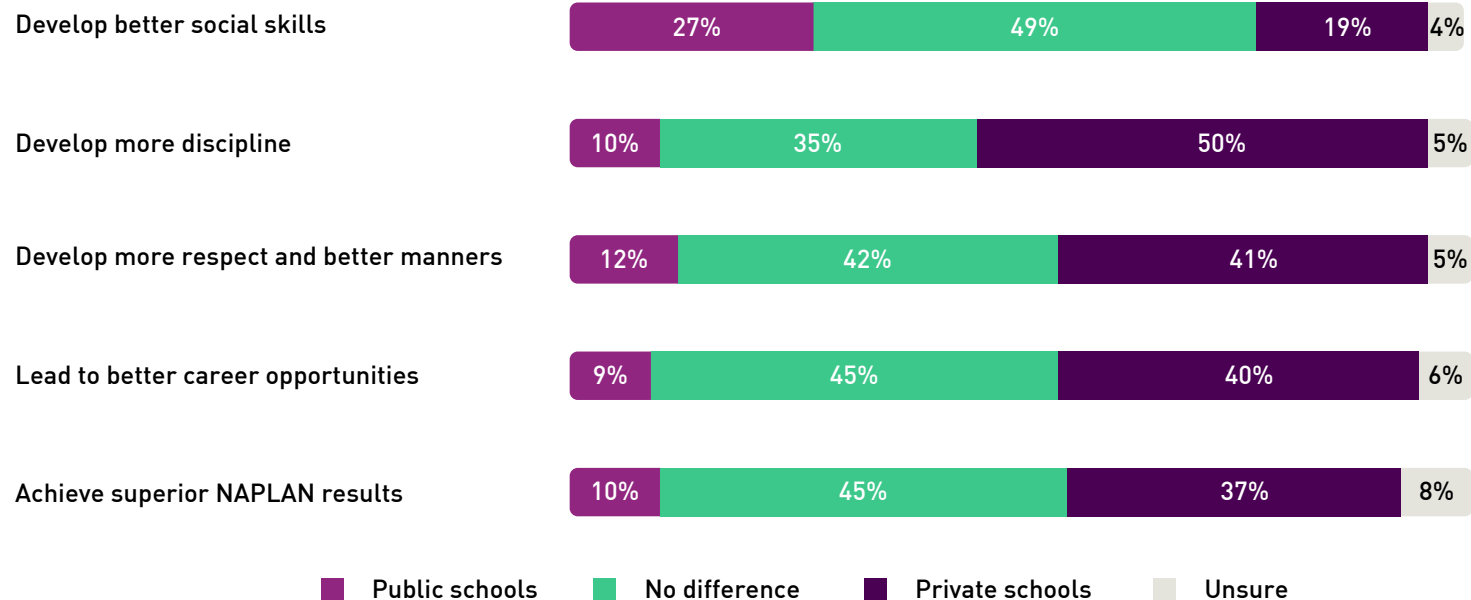
*Multiple answers allowed

**Top 5 answers only

Among the top 5 perceived advantages for private school are the standard of facilities (45%), education standards (37%), level of discipline (36%), academic results achieved (36%) and more individual attention (35%). The disadvantages of course are that private schools are more expensive, with 2 in 3 parents saying this (66%).

Private vs. public achievements

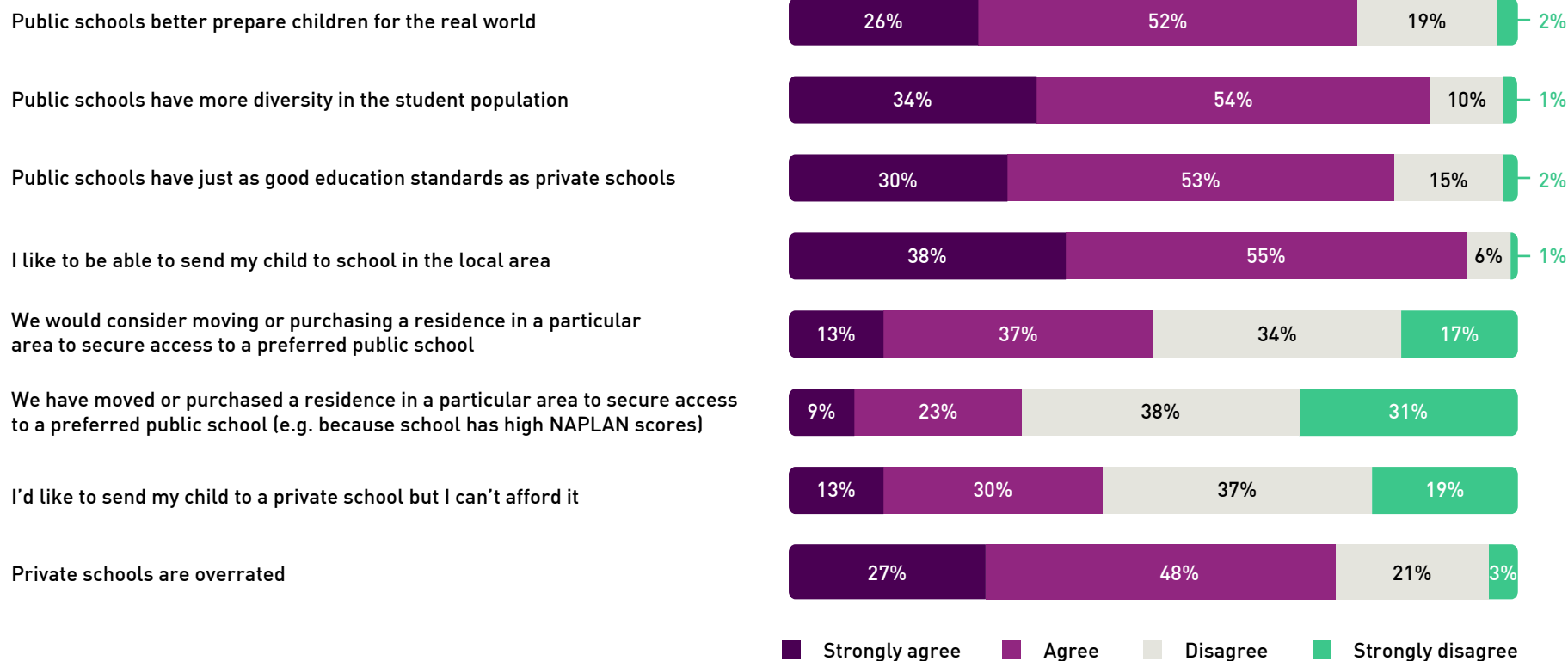
Please indicate which school system (public or private) you think can best achieve the following for your children?



When it comes to achieving superior NAPLAN results, parents perceptions were that private schools do it best (37%), however public schools are said to be the strongest in developing better social skills (27%). Private schools achieved better comparisons with public schools in all but the ability to develop better social skills.

Public school advantages

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to your child attending a public school?



*Parents with children currently attending/planning to attend public school

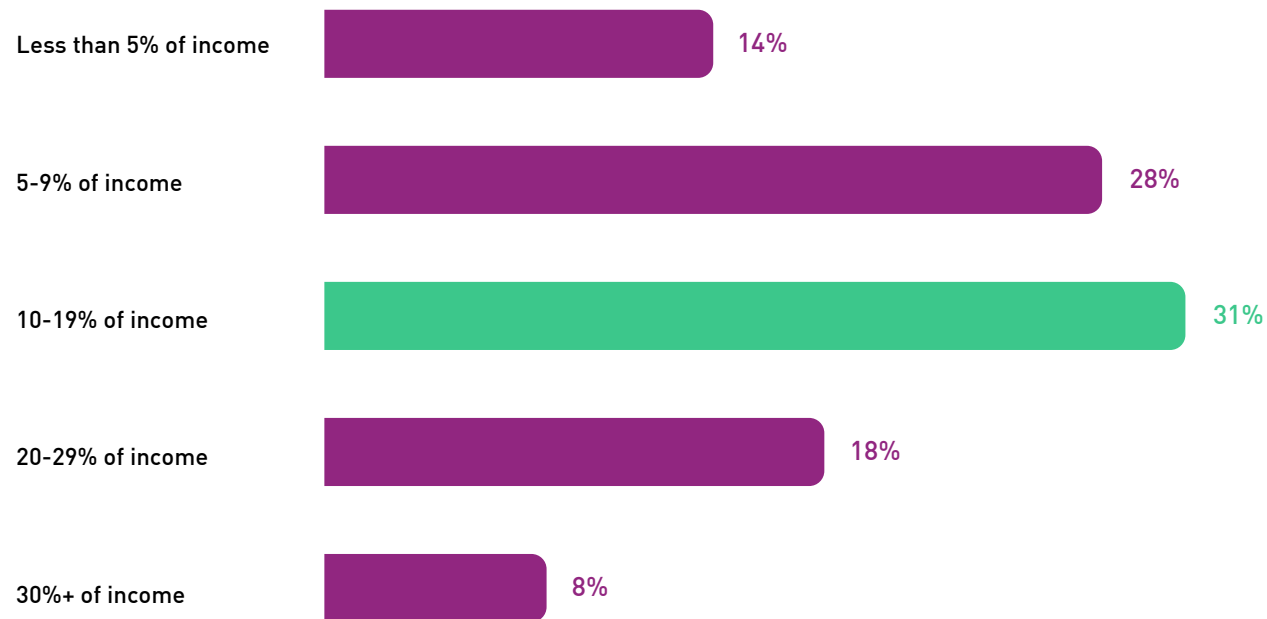
Parents preferring public schools identify many advantages for this system like to be able to send child to school in the local area (93%) and more diverse student populations (89%). Over 2 in 5 admit though they would like to send their child to a private school but can't afford it (44%). Many are also willing to move or purchase a residence in a particular area to secure access to a preferred public school (50%).



Paying for a private school

Private school fees

What percentage of your total household income would you estimate your children's annual private school fees cost?

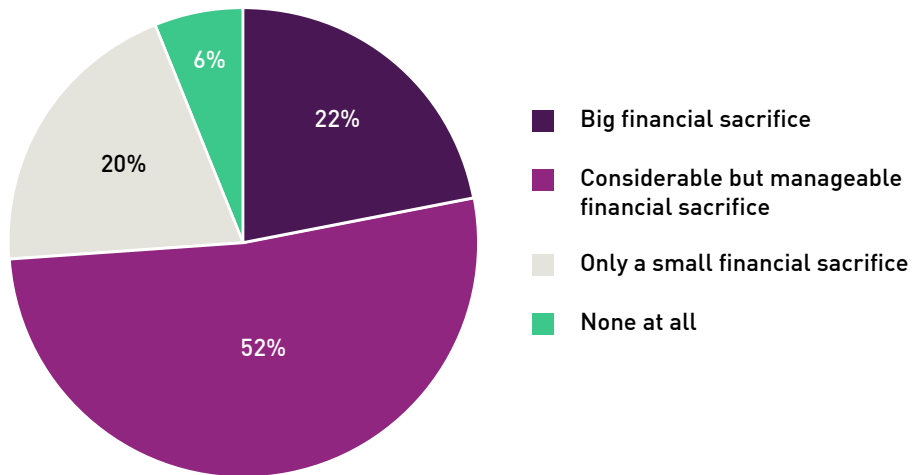


**Parents with children currently attending private school*

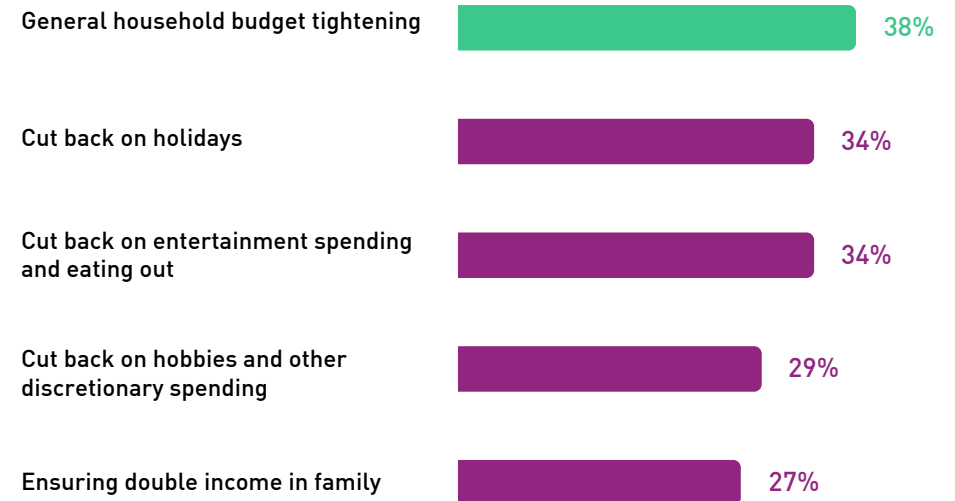
3 in 5 private school parents report paying 10% or more of their total household income for children's annual private school fees cost (58%) – with 26% of parents paying over 20%.

Financial sacrifices

How much of a financial sacrifice do you feel is paying your children's private school fees?



What kind of financial sacrifices are you making in your household to pay your children's private school fees?



*Parents with children planning to attend private school
 *Multiple answers allowed
 *Top 5 answers only

1 in 5 feel this is a big financial sacrifice (22%) and 1 in 2 that it is considerable but manageable sacrifice (52%). Most common methods of cutting back are budget tightening (38%), cutting back on holidays (34%) and cutting back on entertainment (34%). For those who are planning to send their children to private school, 1 in 5 anticipate a big financial sacrifice (18%) and more than 1 in 2 anticipate considerable but manageable sacrifice (58%). The financial sacrifices anticipated are similar but 1 in 3 are also ensuring that they earn a double income in the family (32%).

Fees are the biggest barrier

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to the cost of your child(ren) attending a private school?

High fees are making me consider not enrolling my child(ren) in private schooling



*Parents with children planning to attend private school

If fees keep increasing I would consider removing my child(ren) from private schooling



*Parents with children currently attending private school

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree

Parents with children currently attending private school feel that if fees keep increasing they would consider removing their child(ren) from private schooling (56%) and parents with children planning to attend private school say that high fees are making them consider not enrolling their child(ren) in private schooling (70%).

More research from Real Insurance coming soon...

About Real Insurance

Real Insurance is an award-winning provider of insurance products, specialising in life, funeral, pet, car, home, and bike insurance. In the market since 2005, Real Insurance has protected the quality of life of many Australians, through the delivery of innovative products. Real Insurance is the proud recipient of many product and service awards, recently being announced the winner of the 2022 ProductReview awards for Life Insurance and Funeral Insurance, and the Reader's Digest 2022 Gold Quality Service Awards for Funeral Insurance and Pet Insurance. Real Insurance is a trading name of Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd.

