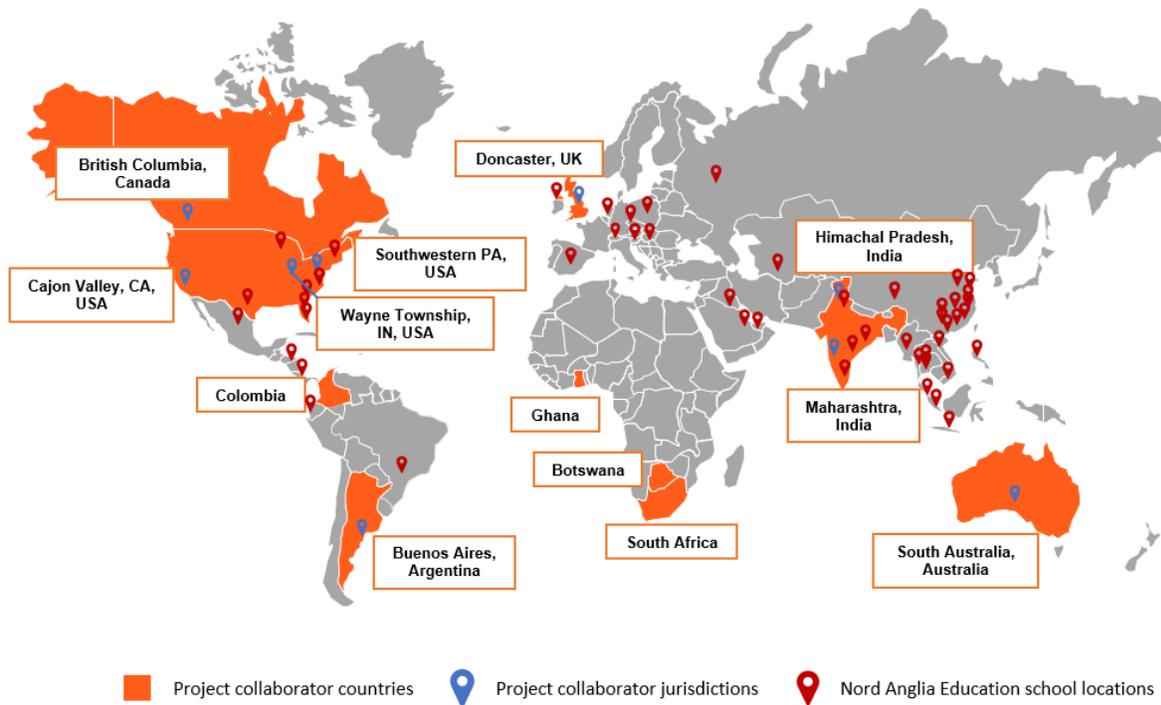


## PERSPECTIVES FROM PARENTS IN THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Rebecca Winthrop

Mahsa Ershadi



### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION NETWORK

In January 2020, the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at Brookings launched a new project focused on family and parent engagement in education.<sup>1</sup> The project emerged

<sup>1</sup> The suggested citation for this report is: Winthrop, R. & Ershadi, M. (2021, March). *Family engagement in education network technical report: Perspectives from parents in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina*. Center for Universal Education at Brookings.

out of CUE’s work on harnessing [education innovations](#) to address inequality and help all young people, regardless of the community in which they are born, develop the full breadth of competencies and skills they will need to thrive in work, life, and citizenship in the 21st century. In 2019, CUE conducted consultations across 15 countries with 50 decisionmakers—from ministers of education to school leaders—that were focused on advancing teaching and learning strategies that supported whole child development, or as some call it, the development of academic plus 21st century skills. A recurring theme from the consultations was a desire of decisionmakers to have more and better strategies for engaging parents and families. Together with 41 project collaborators across 10 countries, members of CUE’s [Family Engagement in Education Network](#), CUE has been exploring what it takes to build strong family-school partnerships, especially in contexts striving to address inequality and deliver a broad suite of skills and competencies for their children.

## **EDUCATION IN ARGENTINA**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused mandatory shutdowns and mass disruption of schooling worldwide. In Argentina, over 11 million students enrolled in grades equivalent to pre-kindergarten to grade 12 were affected (Ministerio de Educación, 2018). Educators responded to the crisis by rapidly suspending classes throughout the month of March 2020, shifting their in-class lessons online so that students could continue to learn remotely (Ministerio de Educación, 2021). As a result, parents<sup>2</sup> and families have been given a front row seat to how and what their children learn ‘in school,’ and academic outcomes and student success hinge on parent involvement now more than ever before. The coronavirus-related school aided in identifying educational problems and propelled new and necessary ways of teaching and learning to guarantee the right to education for all students (Ministerio de Educación, 2021). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires has implemented multiple innovative

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<sup>2</sup> We use the term “parent” throughout to denote a child’s parent, guardian, or caregiver.

initiatives designed to alleviate the burden of COVID-19 on families, including biweekly nutritional food basket deliveries through the *Canastas Escolar Nutrivita (CEN)* program which includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and aims to mitigate the risk of contagion (Buenos Aires Ciudad, 2021). Currently, the country's 23 provinces and the City of Buenos Aires are slated to begin a gradual process of sending children back to in-person schooling starting on March 1, 2021.

## **CITY OF BUENOS AIRES SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Schools**

There are 1,371 schools in the City of Buenos Aires, serving children in preschool (*inicial*), primary (*primario*), and secondary (*secundario*) school. These schools serve over 700,000 students; around 353,000 students in state schools and 369,000 students in private schools (Ministerio de Educación, 2018). As of 2019, the rate of attendance for children ages 3-17 across schools in the City of Buenos Aires was 97.5% ("INDEC," 2018).

In the 2018 results of the TESBA national standardized assessment of mathematics and literature, where around 99% of establishments were evaluated, approximately 76%-86% of students in their third year of secondary school were able to successfully answer simple mathematics tasks, 55%-74% were able to successfully complete medium-difficulty tasks, and 34%-54% were able to complete difficult tasks. For the literature portion, a range of 76%-81% of students were able to complete easy tasks, 60%-75% for medium tasks, and 34%-60% for difficult tasks ("TESBA", n.d.).

## **SURVEY OF PARENTS**

From June 29, 2020 to August 8, 2020, CUE distributed a 39-item online survey to parents and caregivers of students enrolled in the City of Buenos Aires. A total of 2,782 primary caregivers responded to the survey. To collect data representative of the

population in the City of Buenos Aires, we determined our sample size before commencing data collection by assuming that the student population in this jurisdiction was equal to the parent population, thus using a conservative approach, which dismissed the possibility of siblings. We set our confidence level at 95% and margin of error at 5%, according to guidelines for research activities (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Based on our prior calculations, we aimed to collect 384 responses from primary caregivers in the City of Buenos Aires. All survey items were optional such that respondents could choose to provide a response to a question without having responded to a previous question. As a result, the response proportions per survey item options do not always sum to 100%.

## **SURVEY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

A selection of survey responses is presented below. The order in which the results are presented here does not reflect the order in which the respondents completed the questions on the survey. However, CUE will share the survey instrument upon request. Please send inquiries to: [leapfrogging@brookings.edu](mailto:leapfrogging@brookings.edu).

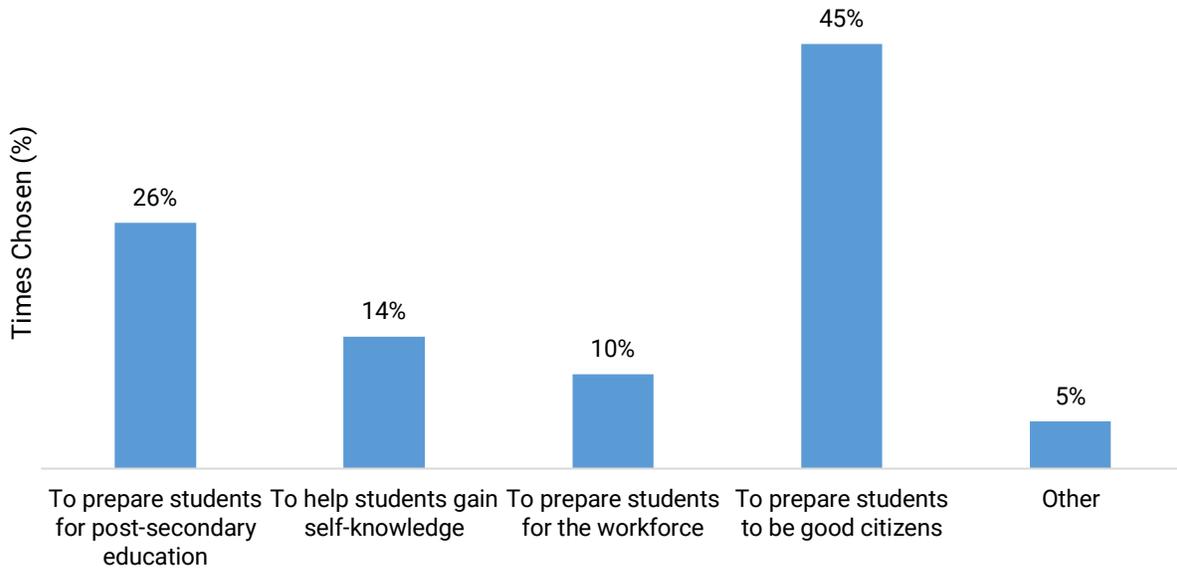
## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank our project collaborators at the Ministry of Education of the City of Buenos Aires, without whom we would not have been able to conduct this survey.

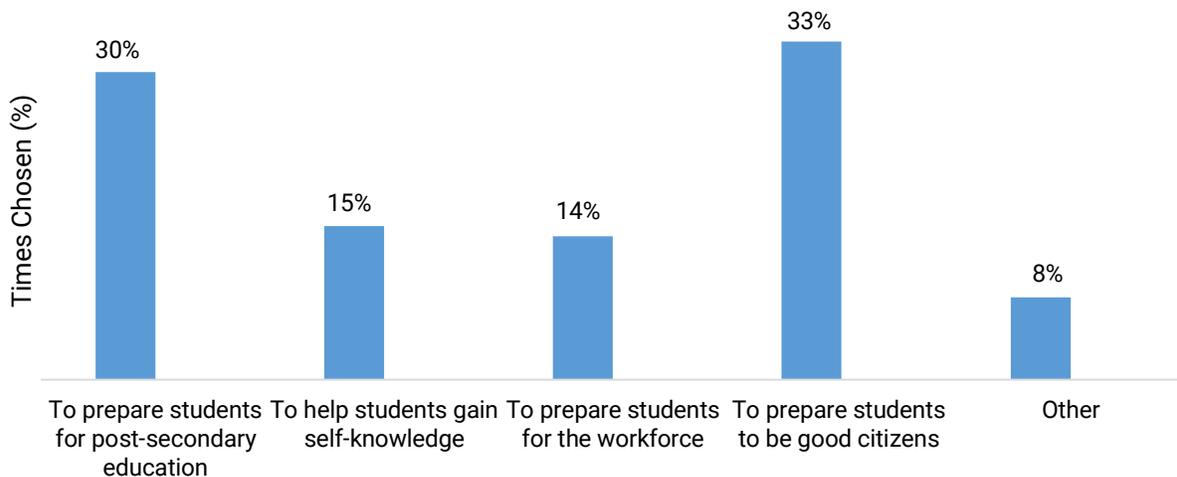
## SURVEY FINDINGS

### Parents' beliefs on the purpose of school and perceived alignment with teachers

**I believe that the most important purpose of school is:  
(sample size=1761)**

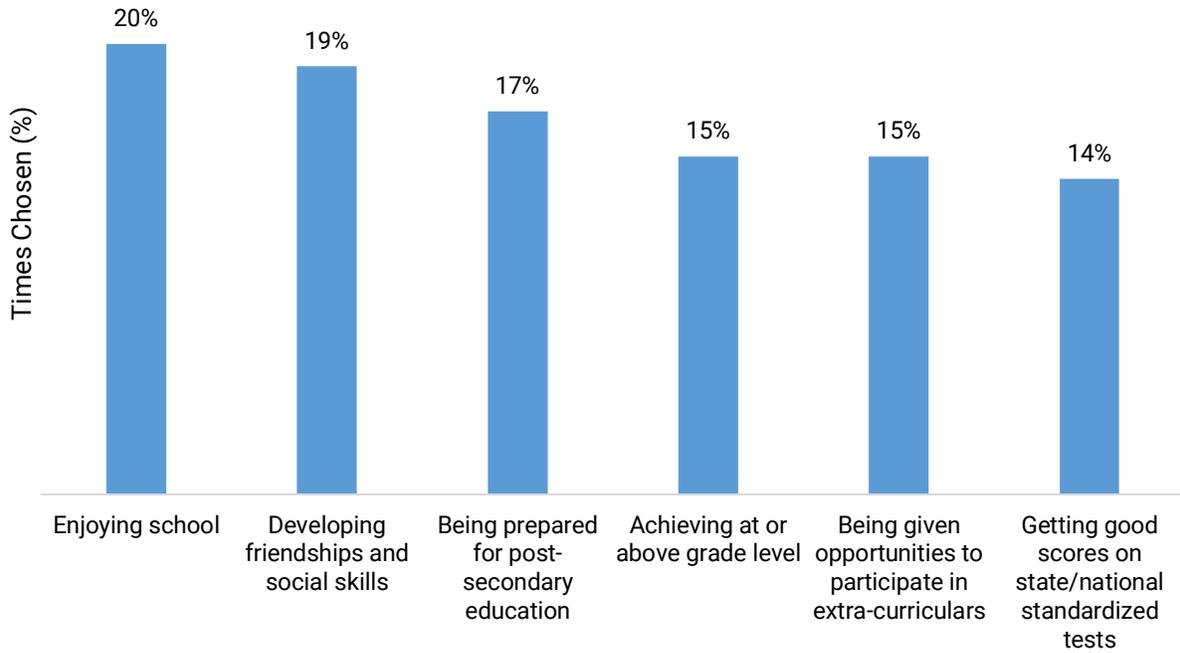


**I believe that my child's educators believe that the most important purpose of school is:  
(sample size=1616)**



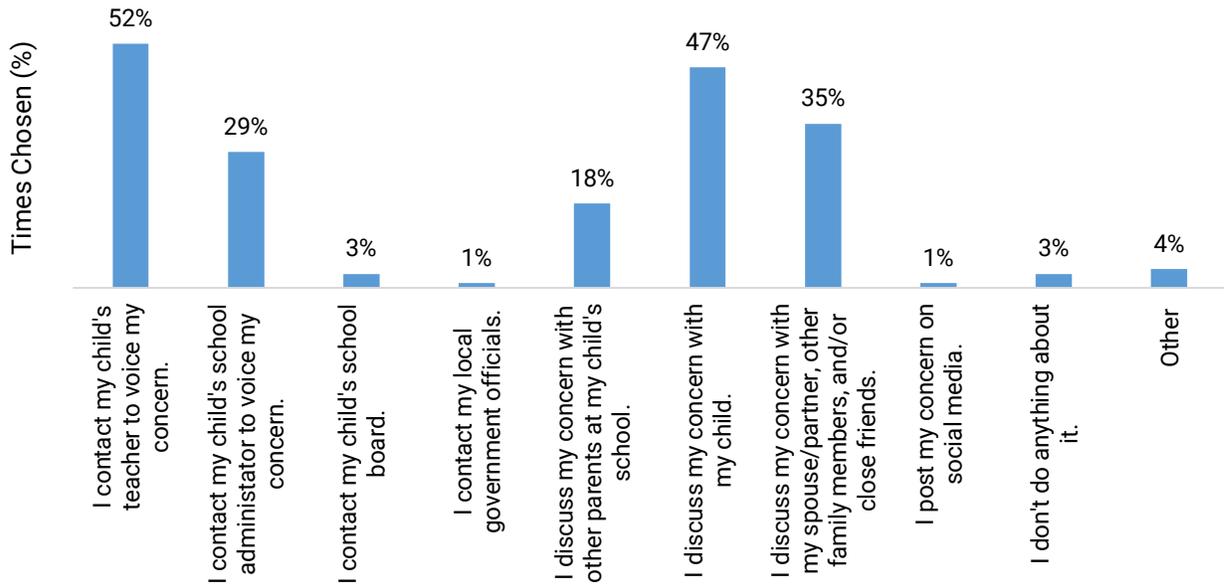
## Parents' indicators of quality and perceived alignment with educators

I am satisfied with my child's education when my child is:  
(sample size=1674)

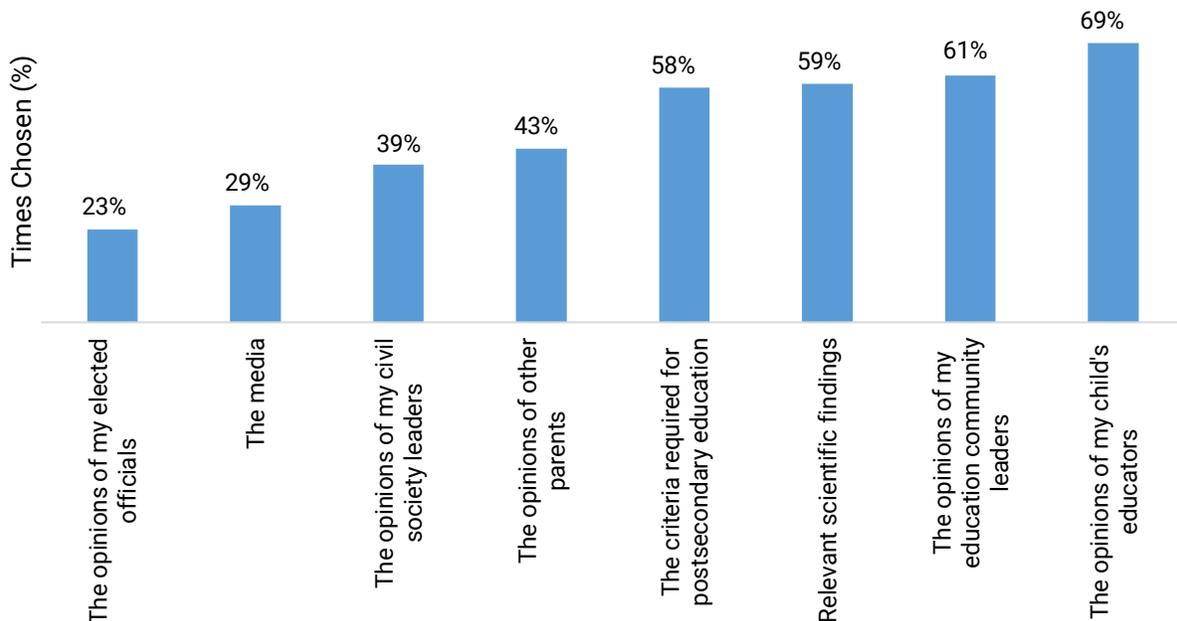


## Parents' sources of information

**How do you react when something about your child's education bothers or upsets you?**  
(sample size=1487)

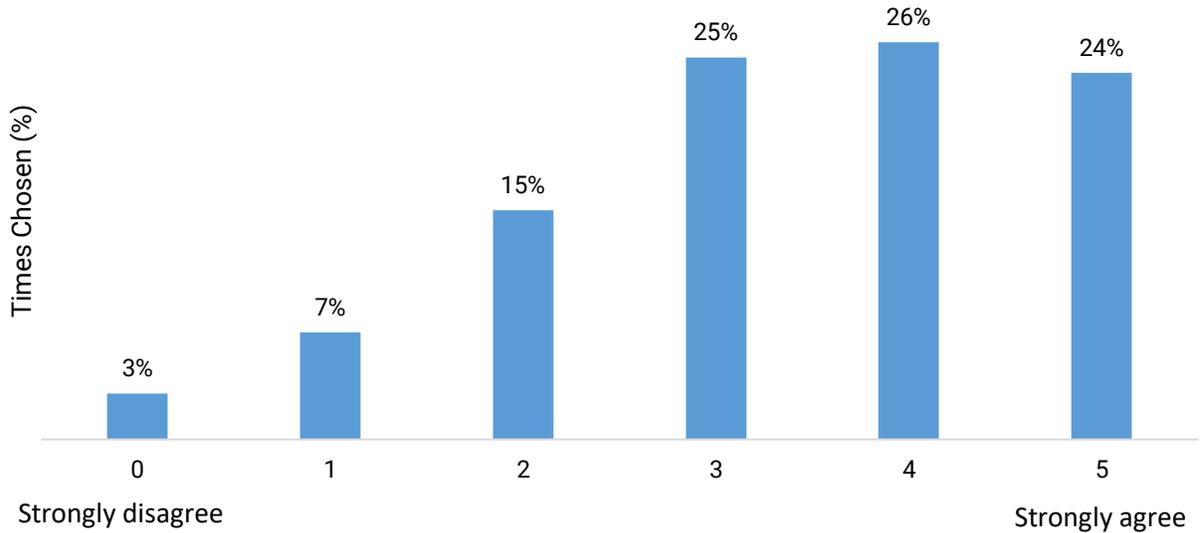


**What influences your perspective about what makes for a good quality education for your child?**  
(sample size=1296)

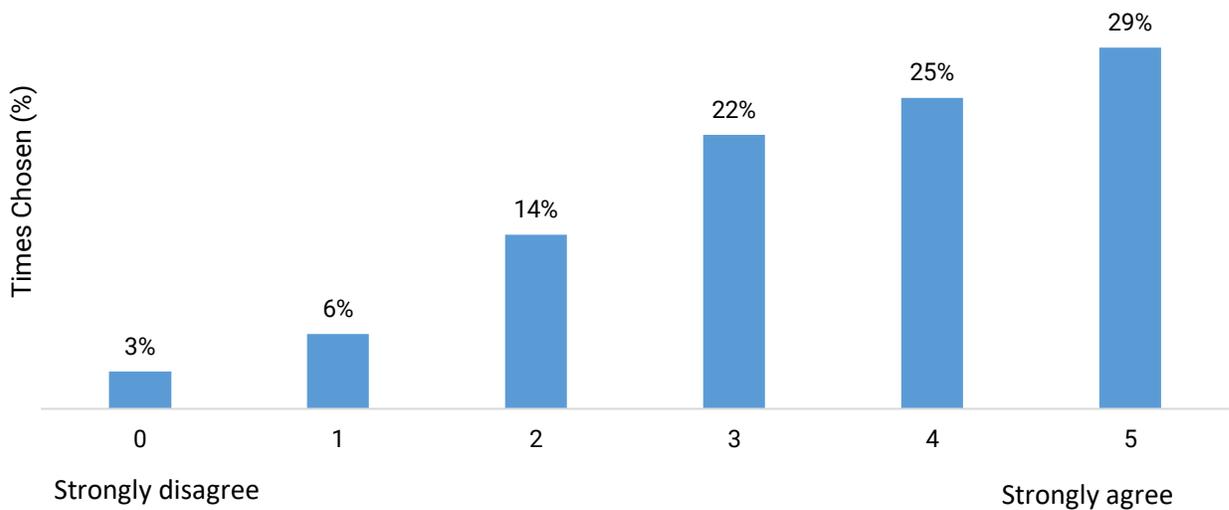


## Parents' trust of and perceived alignment with teachers

**My child's teachers share my beliefs about what makes a good education  
(sample size=1426)**

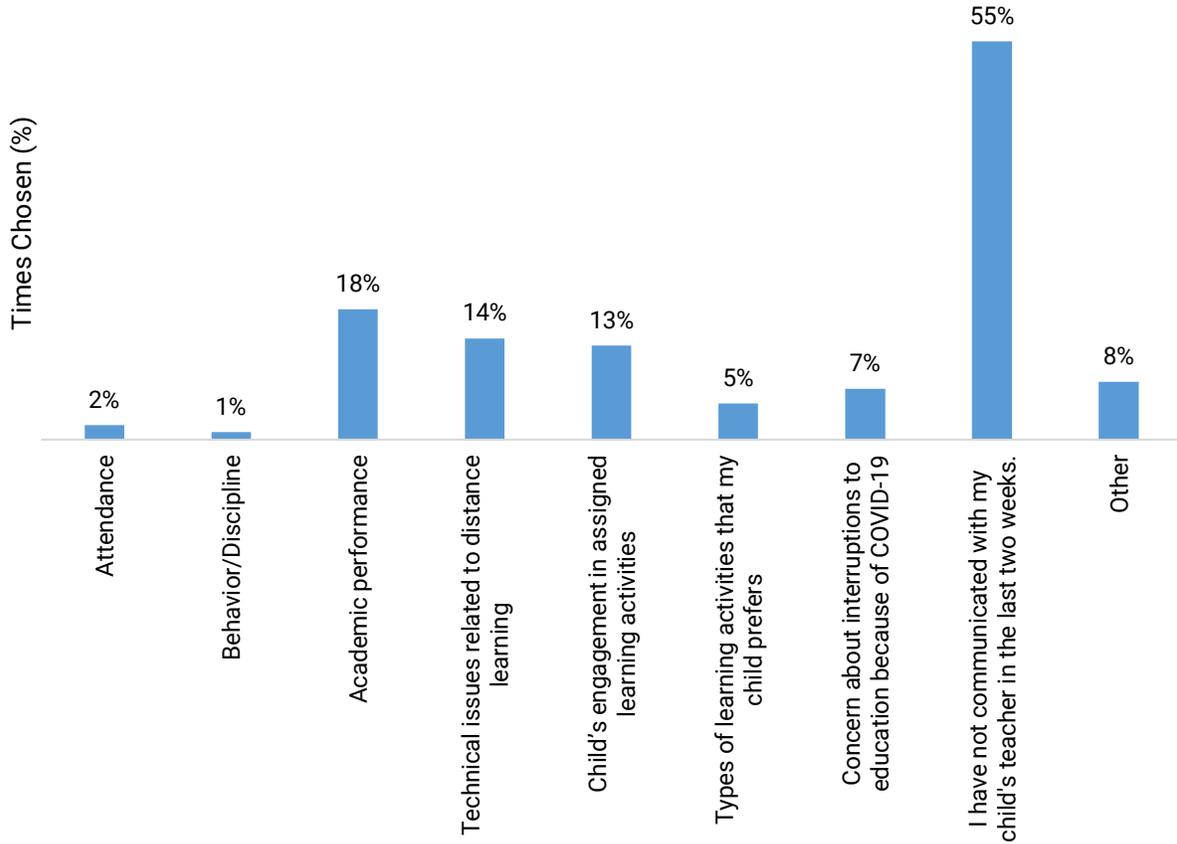


**My child's teachers are receptive to my input and suggestions  
(sample size=1453)**

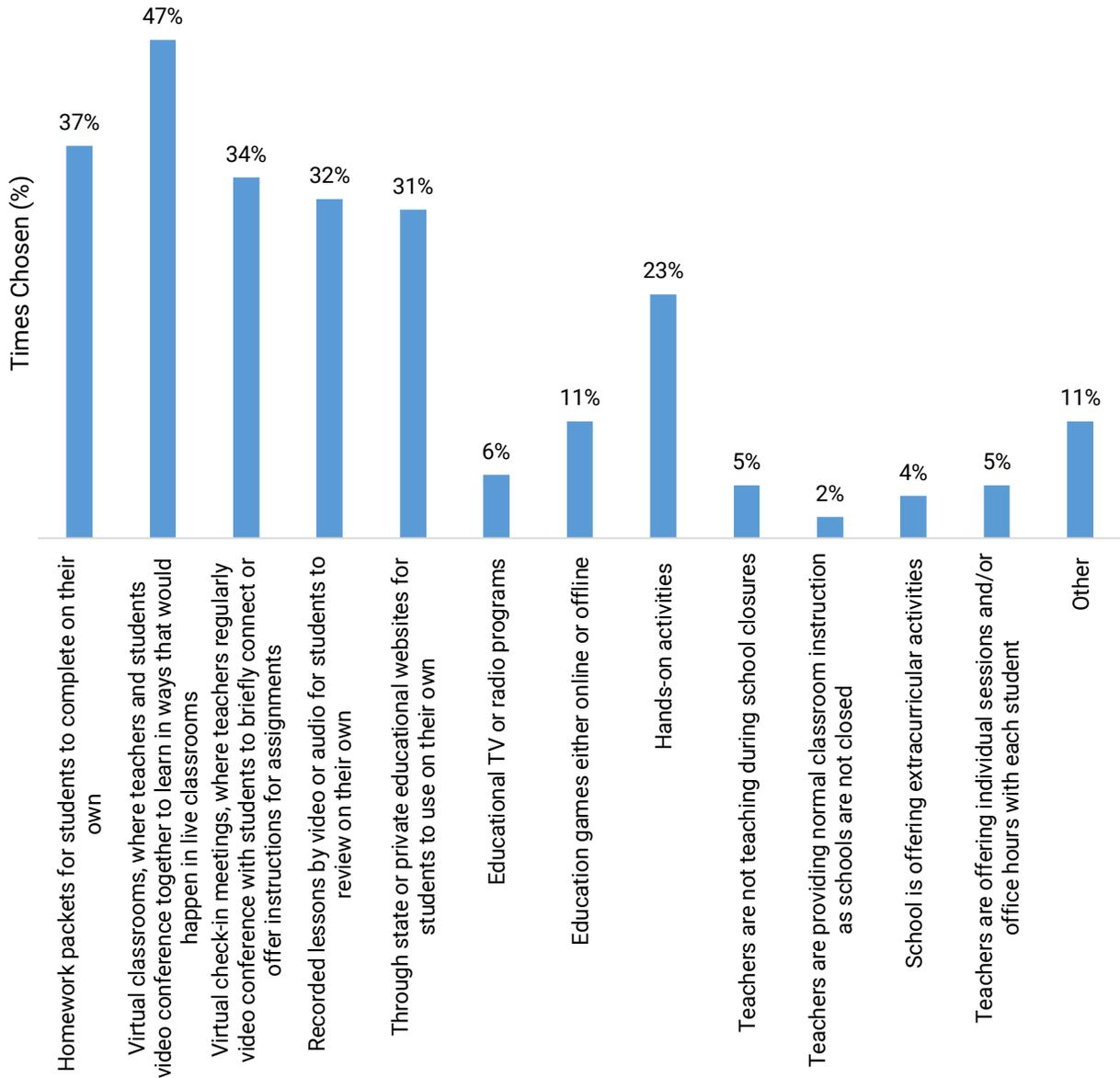


## Parents' opinions on pedagogy

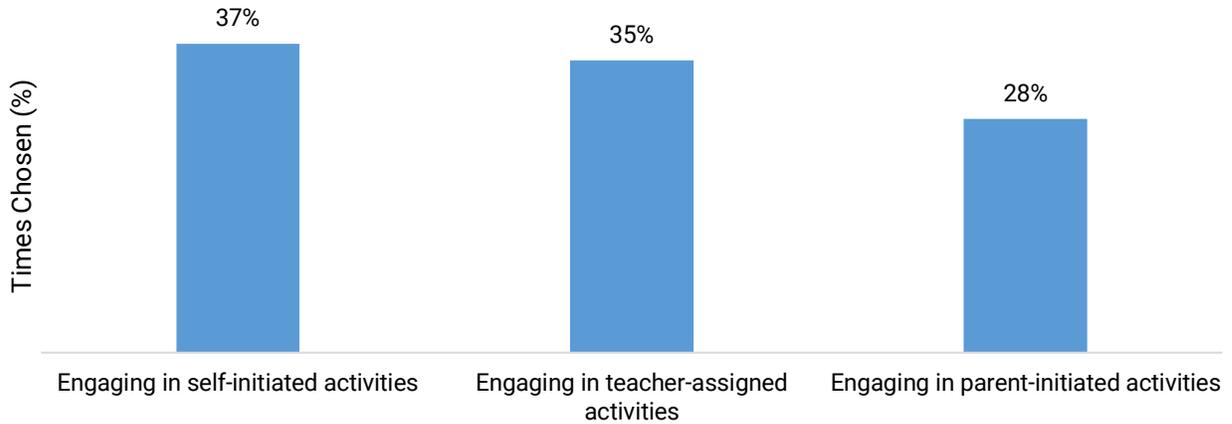
**In the last two weeks, what have you communicated to your child's teacher about?  
(sample size=1819)**



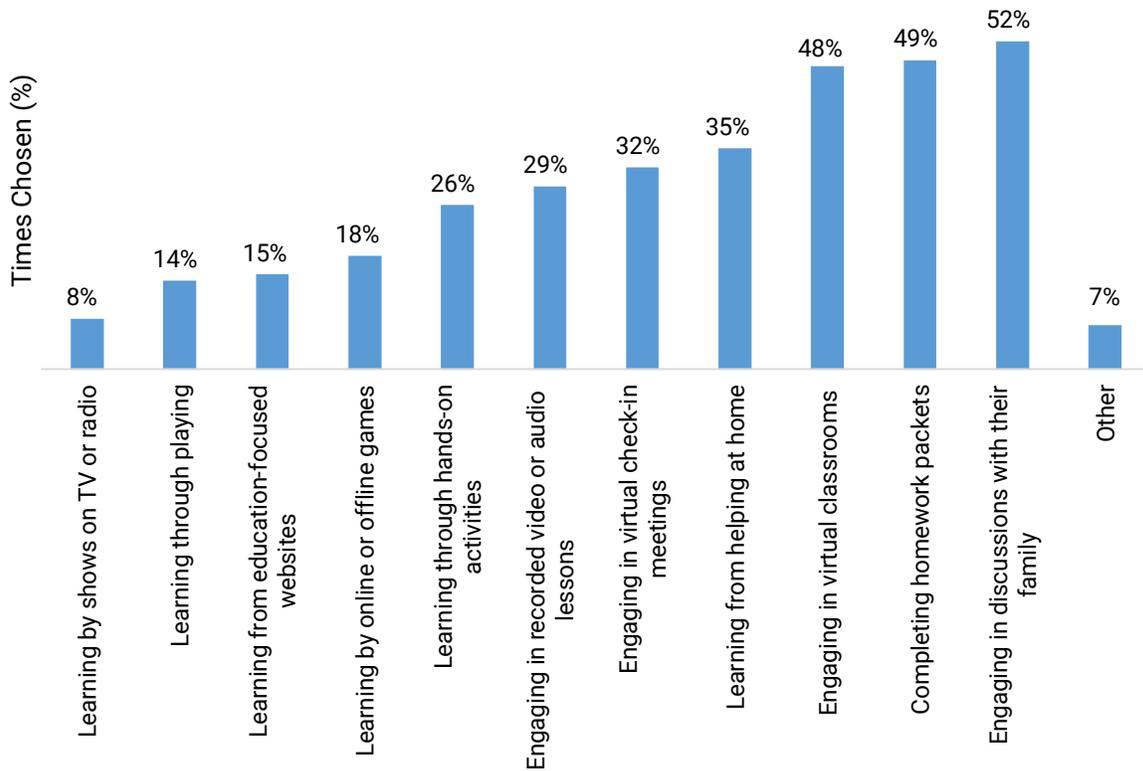
**In the last two weeks, how are your child's teachers continuing to teach right now?  
(sample size=2040)**



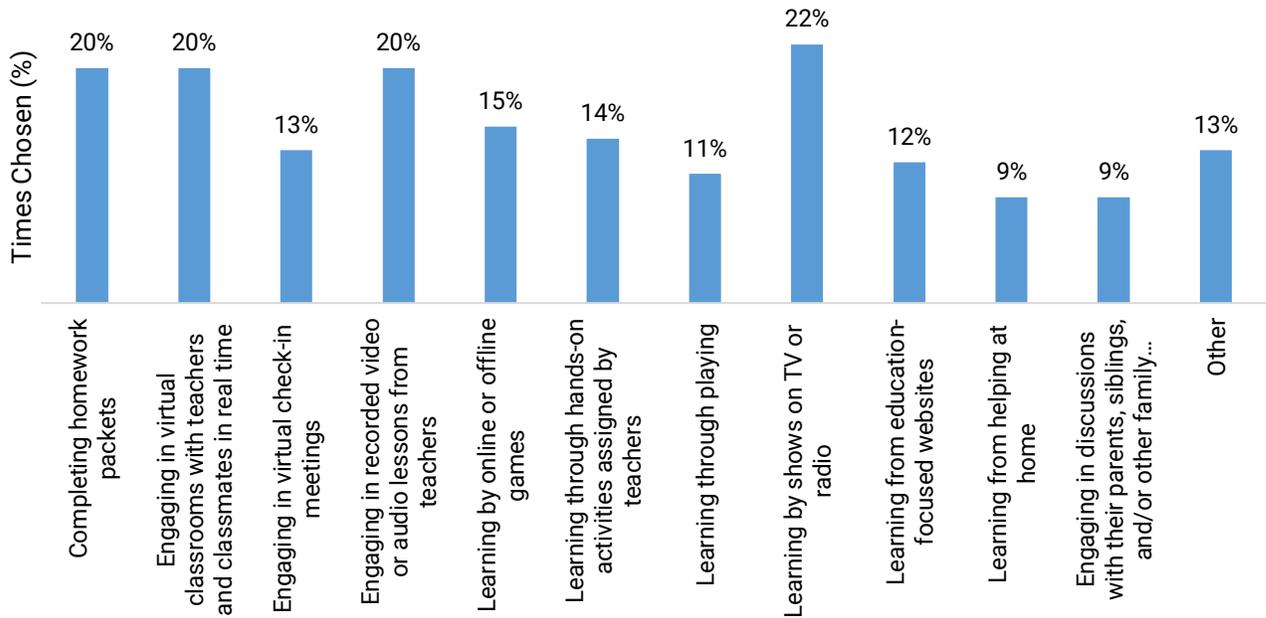
**How is your child spending the majority of their time right now?  
(sample size=1952)**



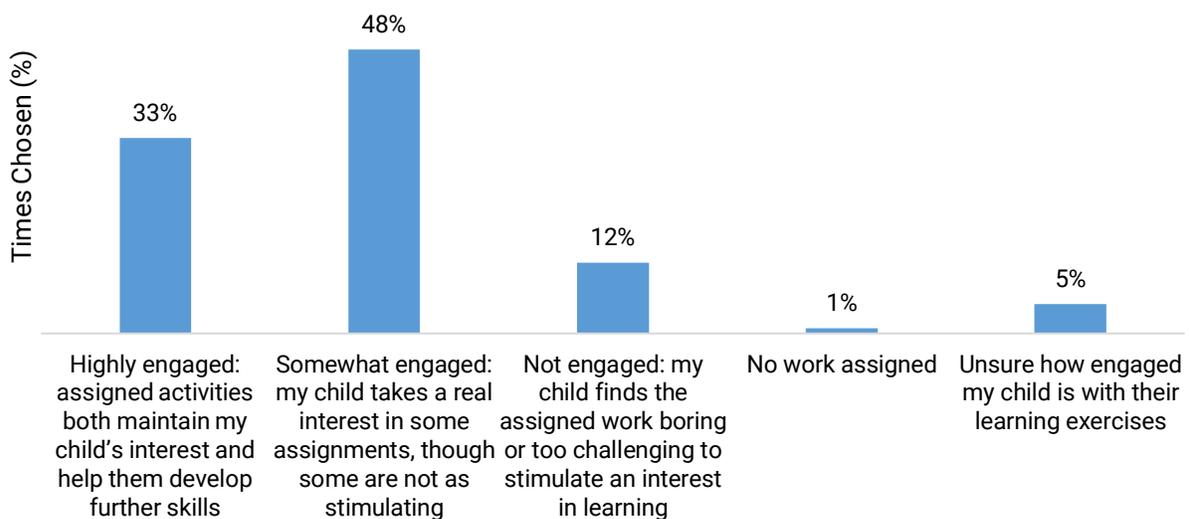
**When you think about the different ways in which your child is or was learning during their school closure, which are you the MOST satisfied with?  
(sample size=1889)**



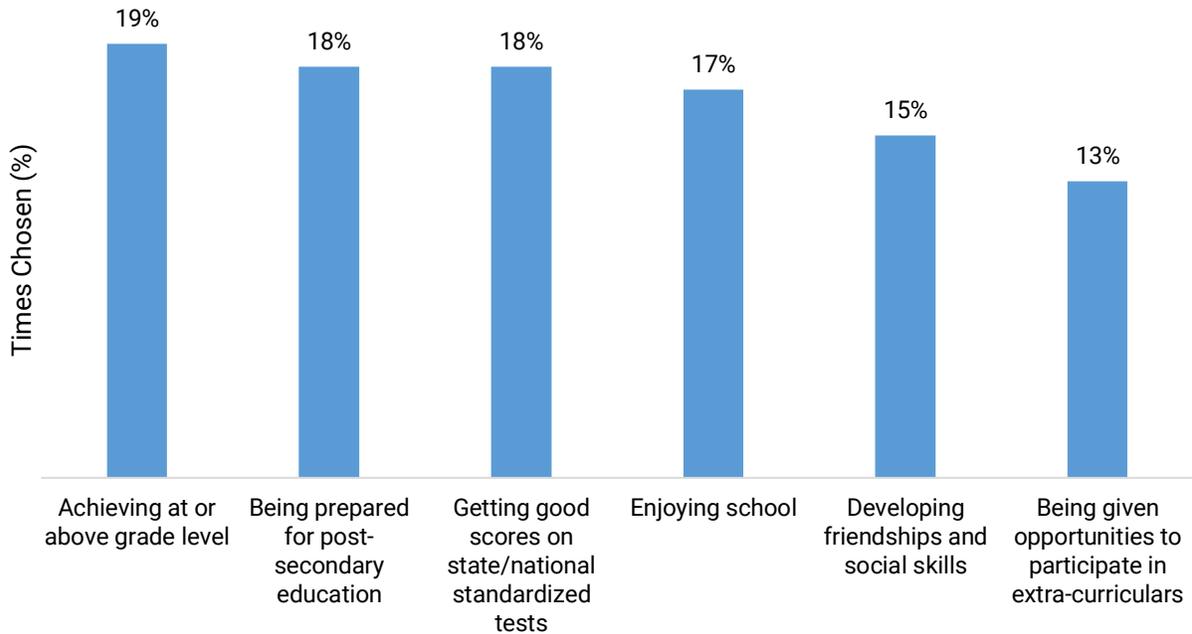
**When you think about the different ways in which your child is or was learning during their school closure, which are you the LEAST satisfied with?  
(sample size=1543)**



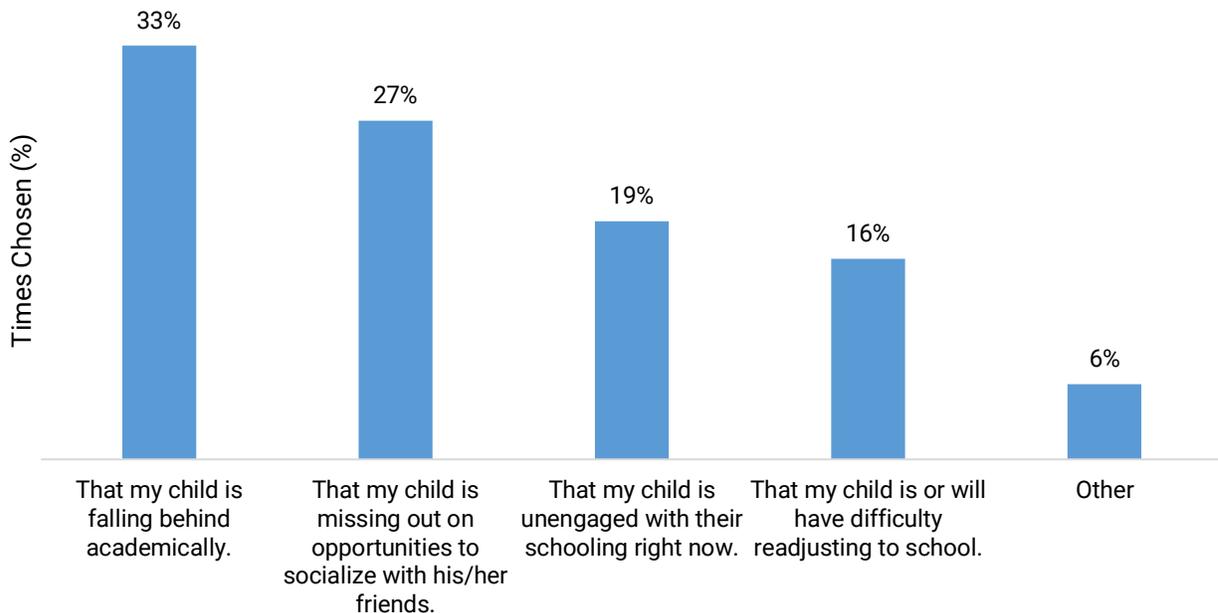
**How engaged is your child with the activities their teacher has assigned?  
(sample size=1504)**



**I believe that my child's educators (e.g. school administrators and teachers) are satisfied with their students' education when their students are:  
(sample size=1468)**

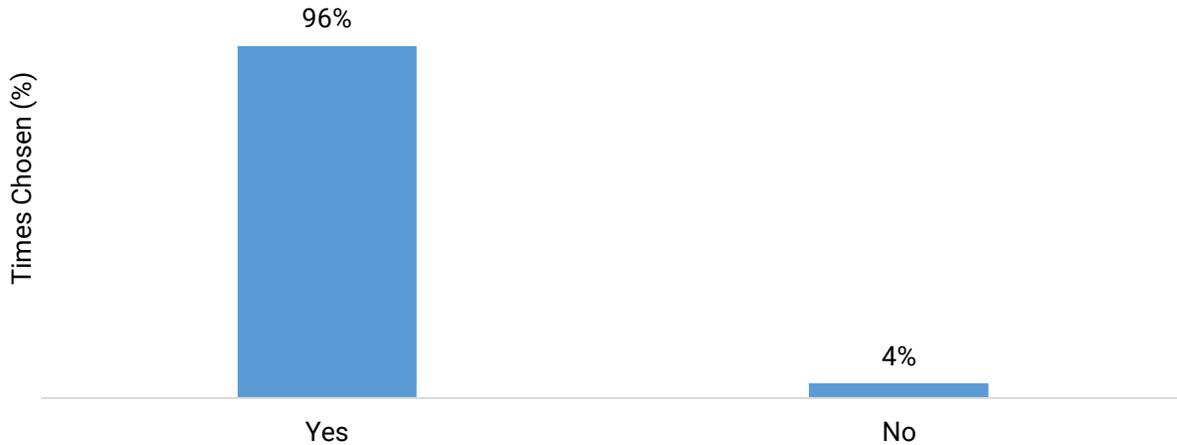


**With regards to your child's education right now, what worries you the most?  
(sample size=1518)**

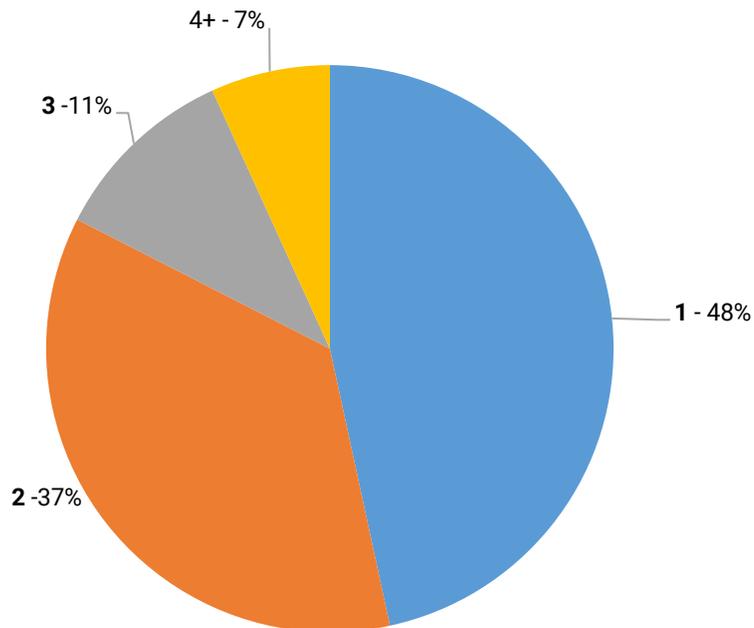


## Demographics of survey respondents from the city of Buenos Aires

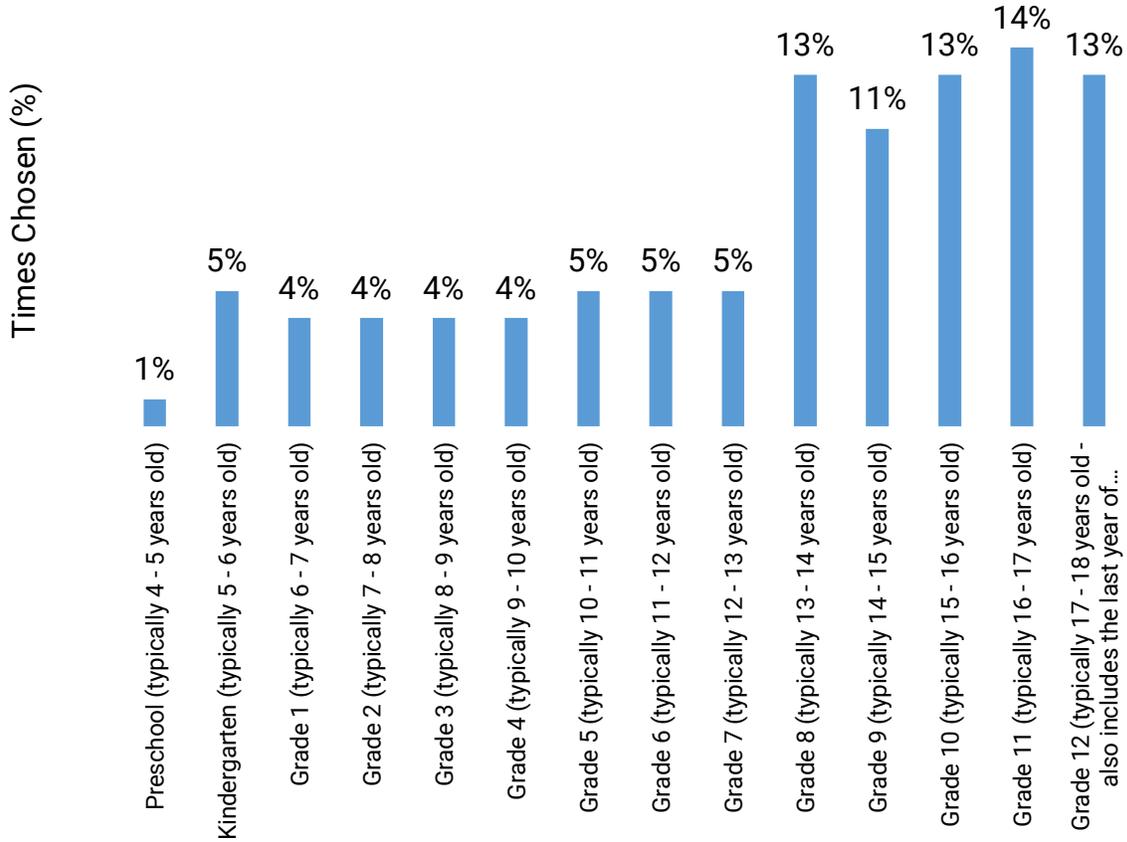
**Are you your child's primary caregiver?  
(sample size=1347)**



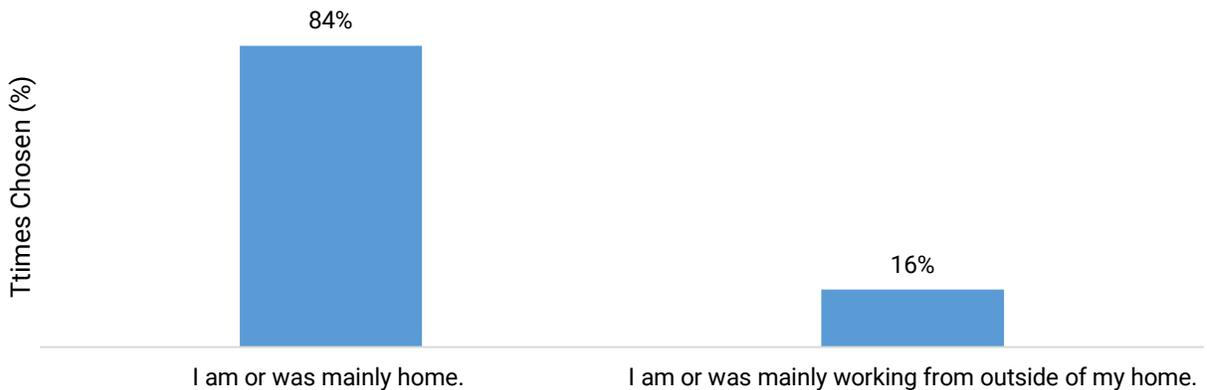
**How many children do you have who are currently in preschool through grade 12 in school and live at home with you?  
(sample size=2387)**



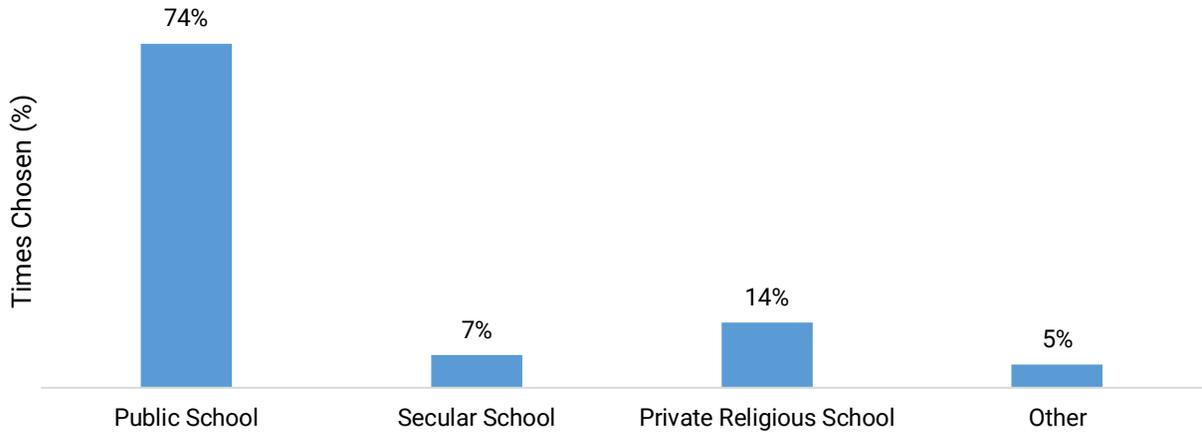
**In which grade is your oldest child who is enrolled in school (preschool to grade 12)?  
(sample size=2261)**



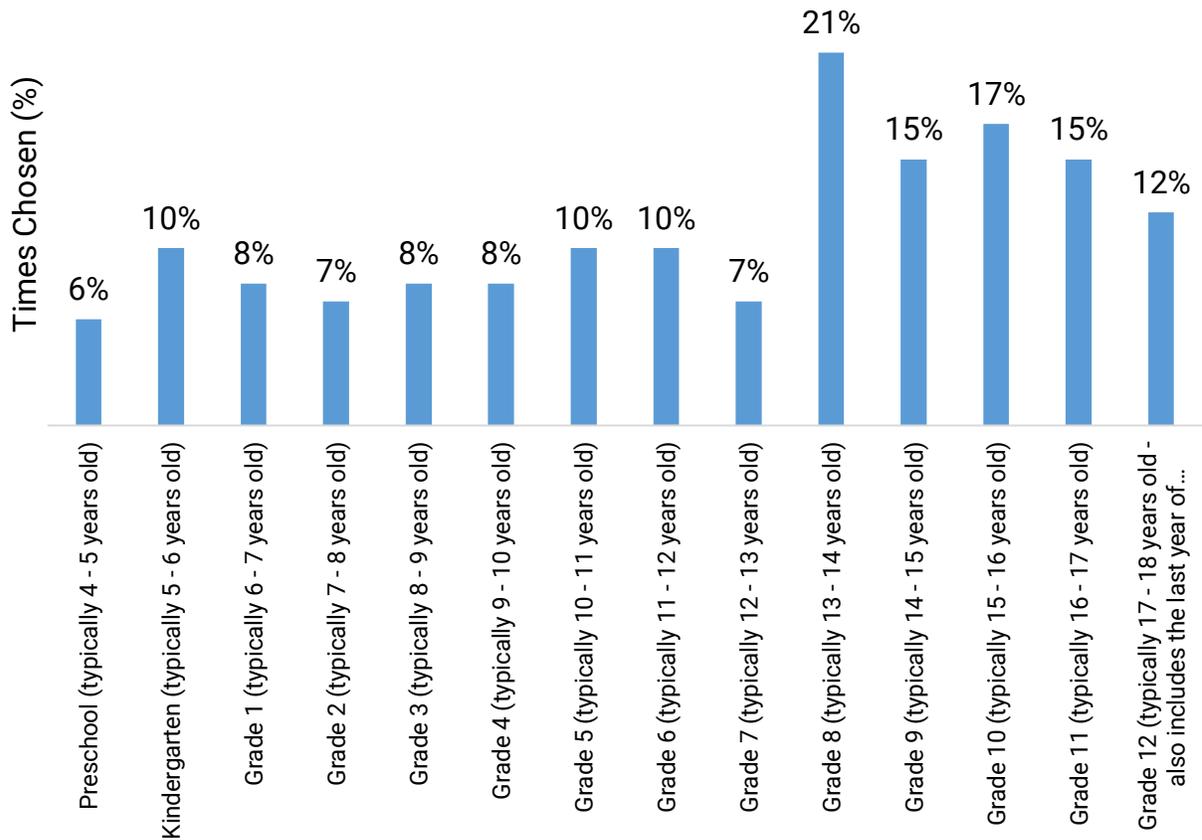
**During your child's school closure, are or were you mainly home (whether employed or unemployed) or are or were you mainly working from outside your home?  
(sample size=1351)**



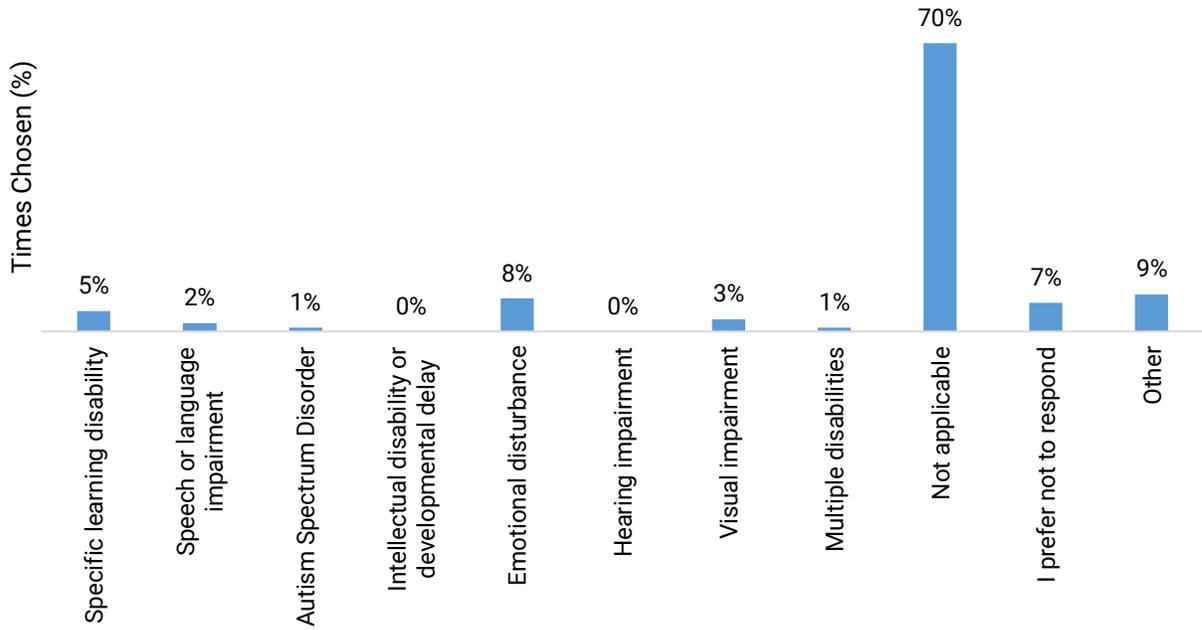
**In what type of school is your child enrolled?  
(sample size=1345)**



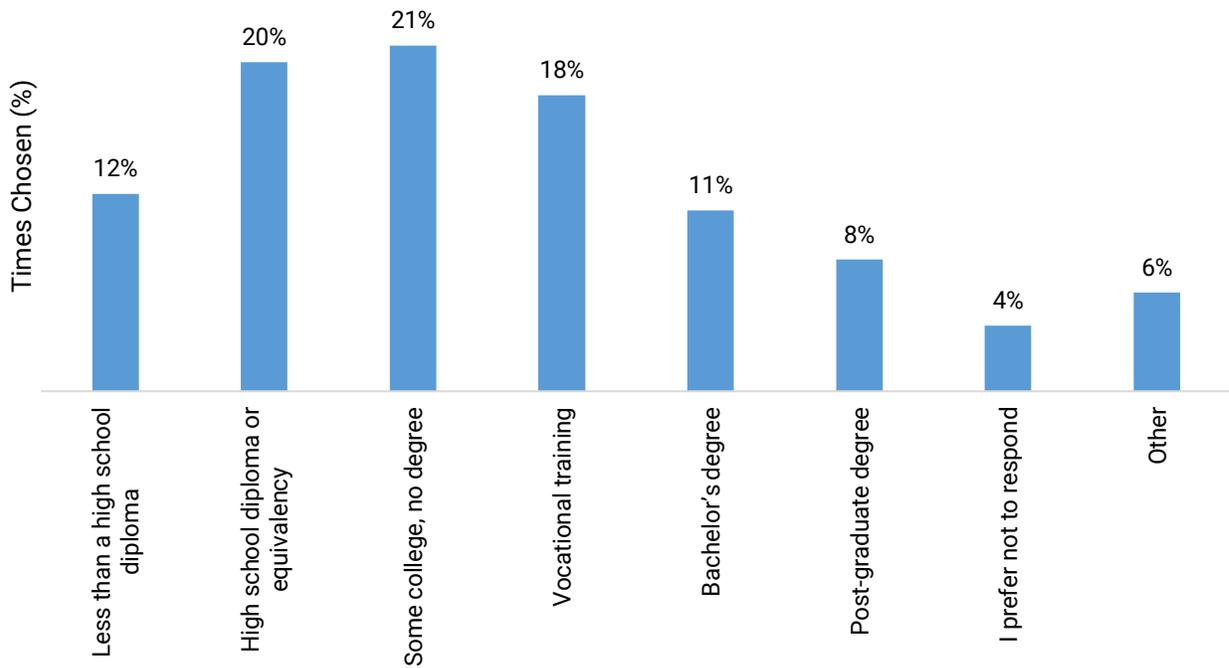
**In what grade(s) is/are all your school aged children?  
(sample size=1321)**



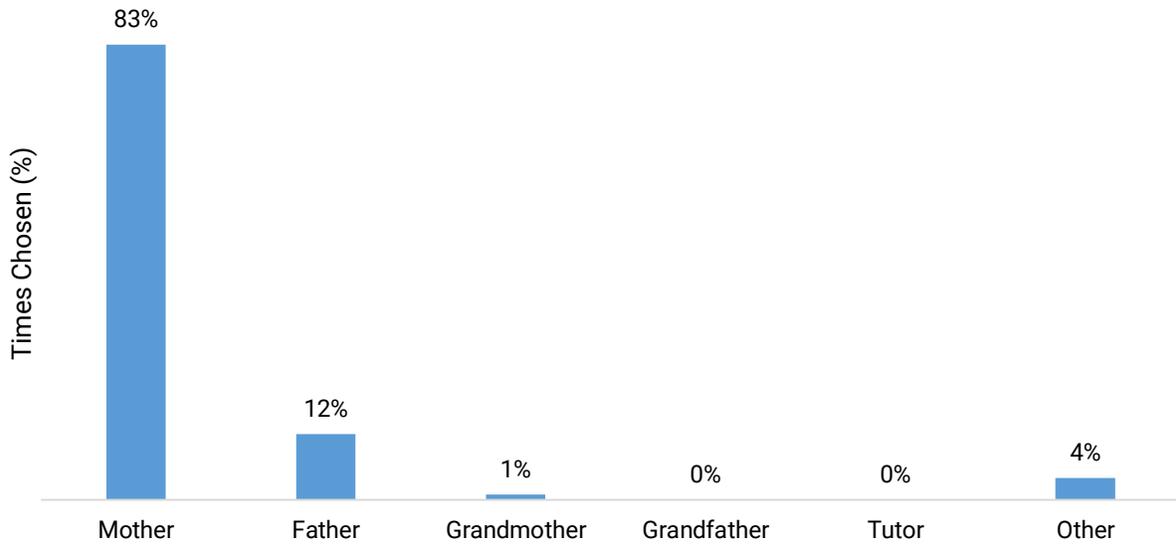
**Has your child been diagnosed with any of the following?  
(sample size=1082)**



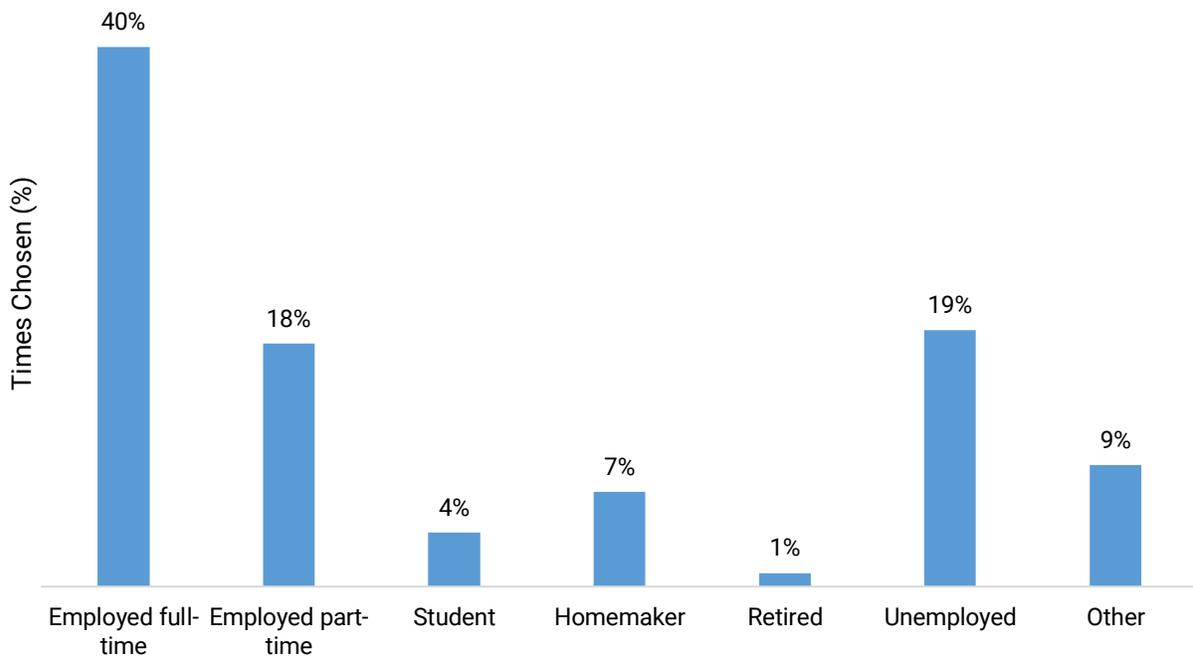
**What is your highest level of education attained?  
(sample size=1317)**



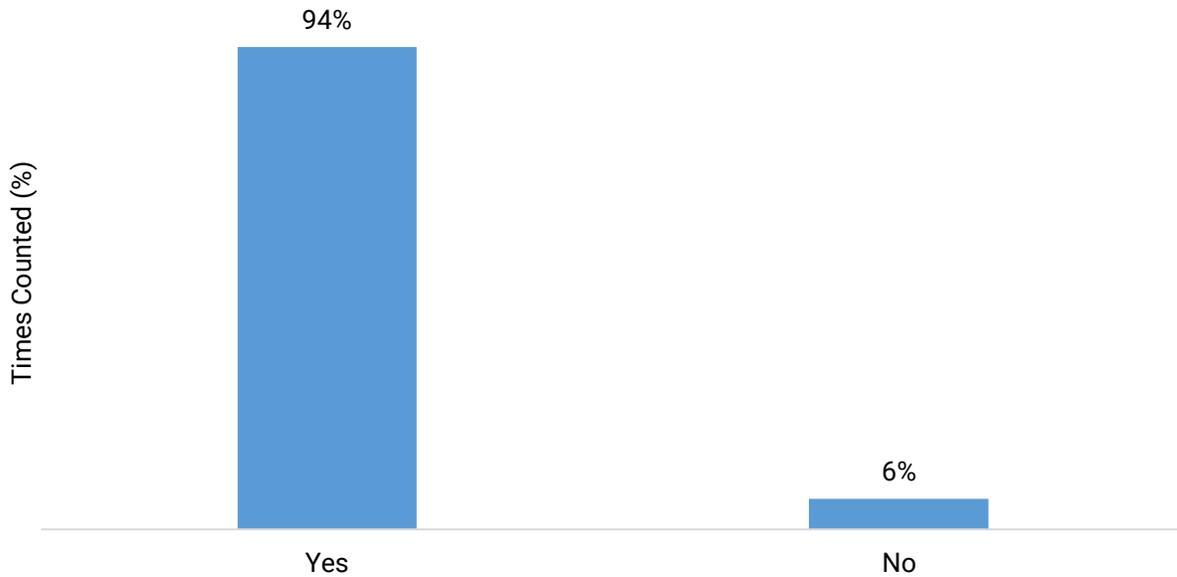
### What is your relationship to your oldest child? (sample size=1356)



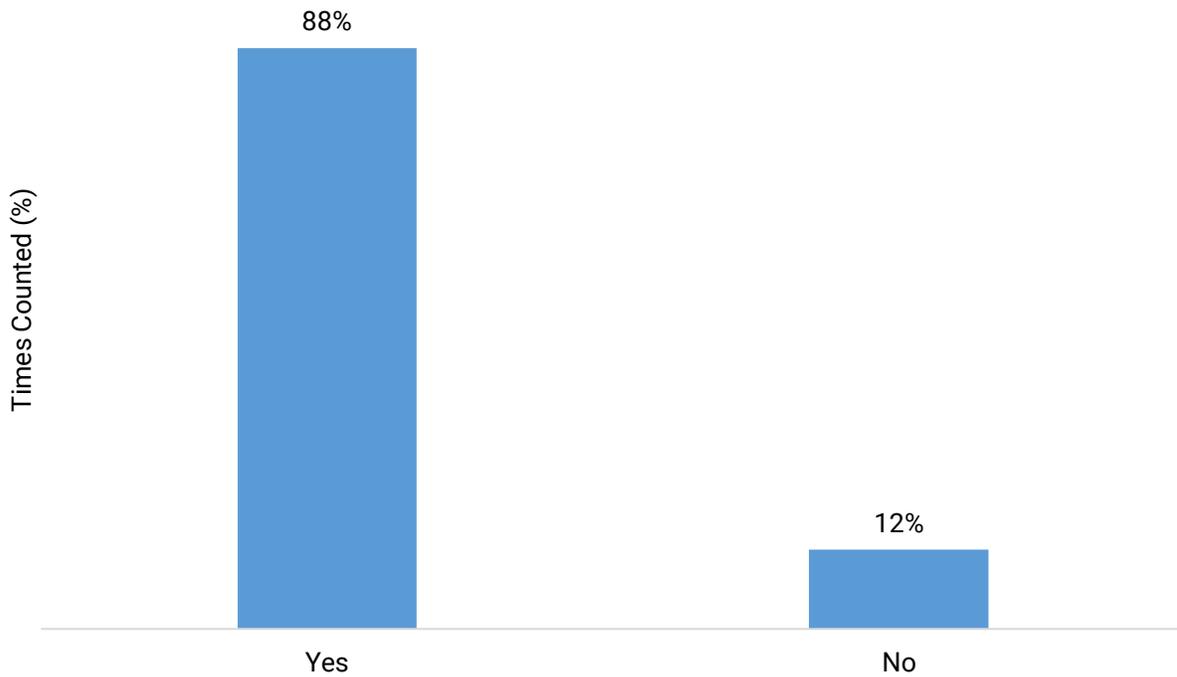
### What is your current employment status? (sample size=1332)



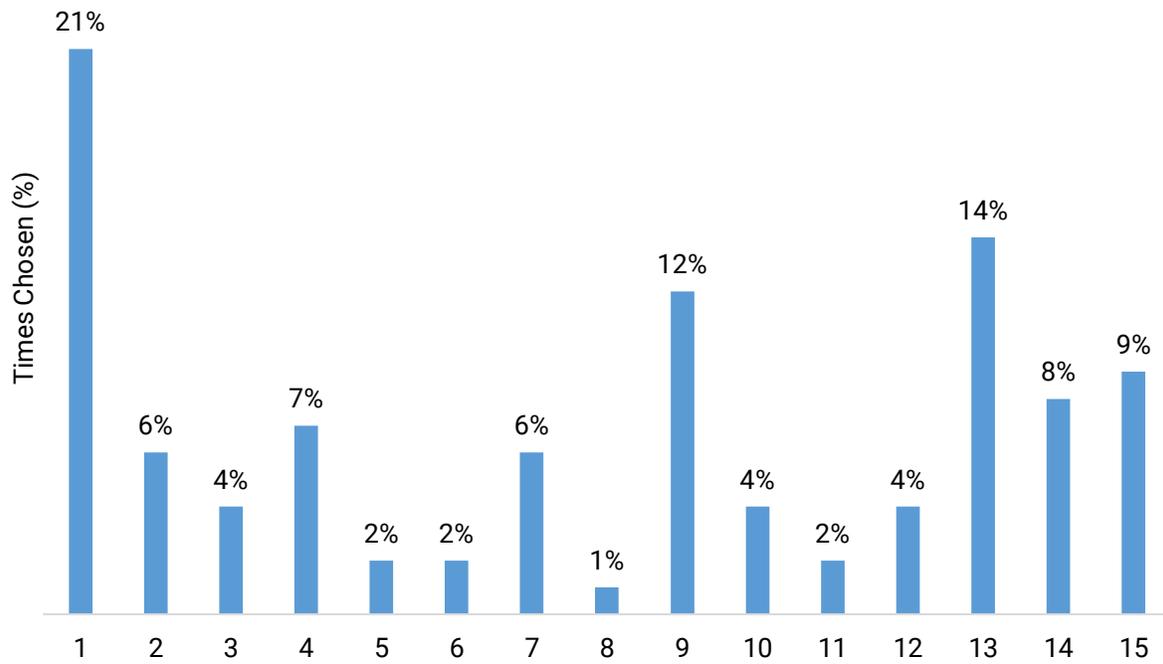
**Do you have internet access from your home?  
(sample size=1347)**



**Does your child have access to a computer or tablet for  
school work?  
(sample size=1337)**

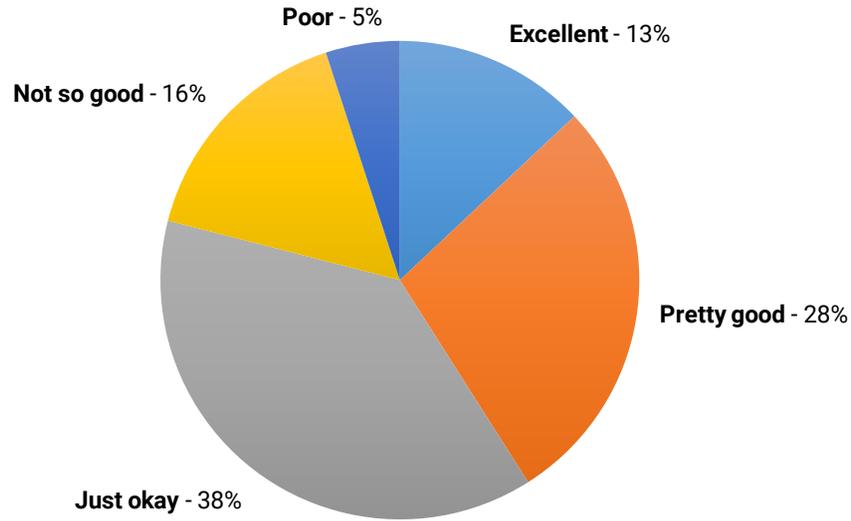


**In which commune is your child's school located?  
(sample size=1124)**

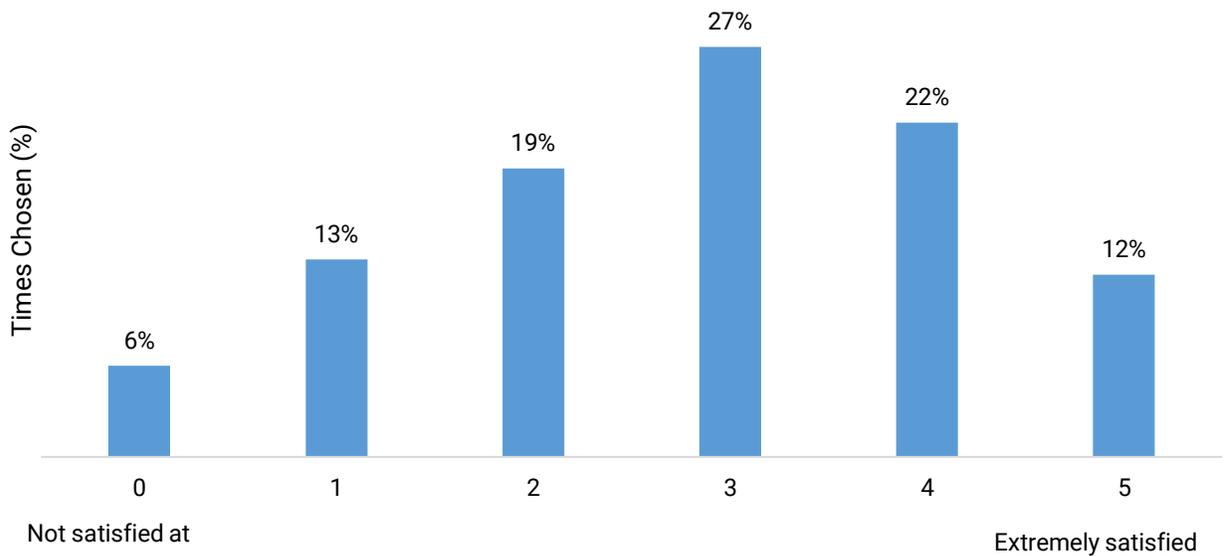


## Parents' satisfaction with their children's education

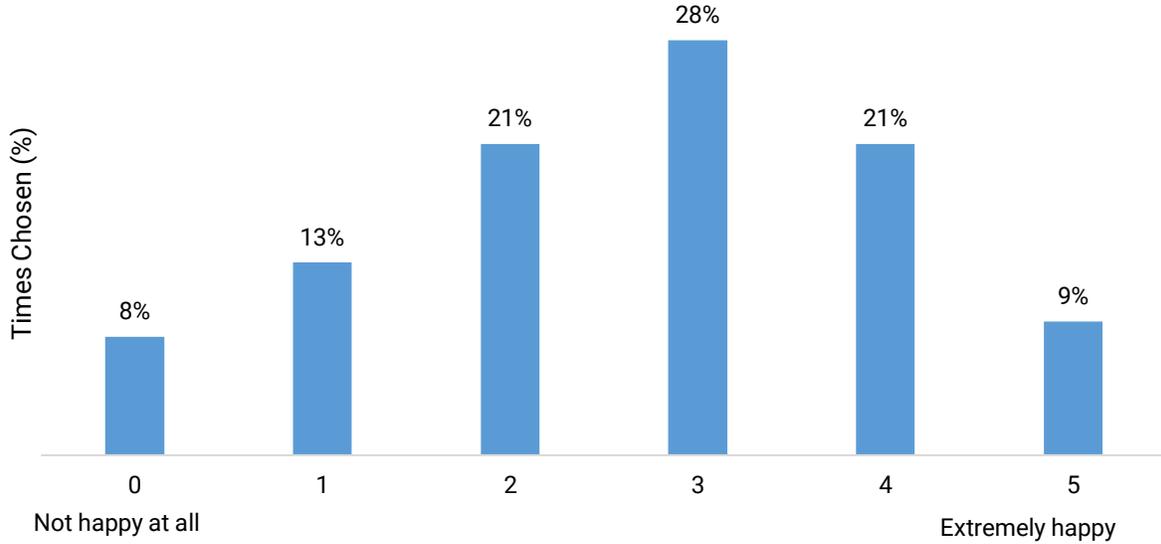
**How would you rate the education that your child is getting from their school right now?  
(sample size=2189)**



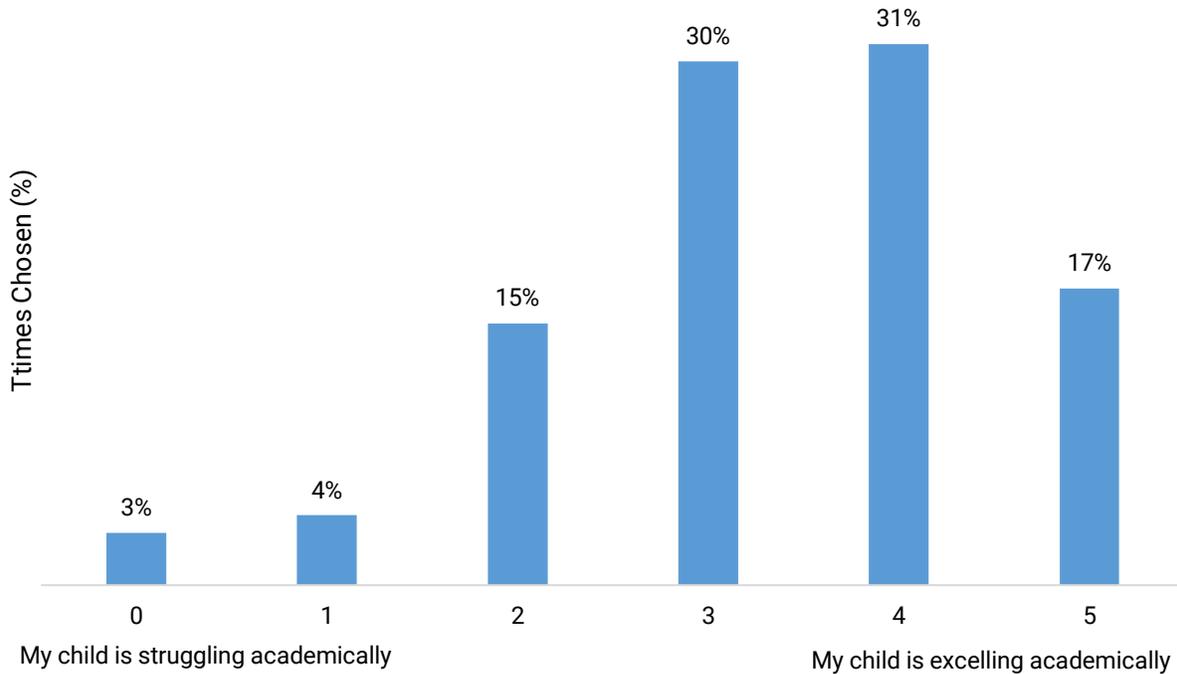
**At the time of this survey, how satisfied are you with your child's education?  
(sample size=1801)**



**At the time of this survey, how happy is your child with their education?  
(sample size=1846)**



**How well do you believe your child is doing academically right now?  
(sample size=2167)**



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