

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

COVID-19 COMMUNITY IMPACT SURVEY: PARENTS & FAMILIES

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Results as of June 8, 2021



REMINDER

This webinar is meant to be watched after you have already seen the [CCIS Introduction Webinar](#).

The introduction contains important background information explaining how to interpret these results, how we did the survey, and how to frame these findings with a racial justice lens so that we can all turn the CCIS data into action!

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for more!

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CCIS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Many groups that were critical in the success of this effort and gave important input on the development and deployment of the survey:

- Health Resources in Action (HRiA)
- John Snow International (JSI)
- Academic Public Health Volunteer Corps and their work with local boards of health and on social media
- Mass in Motion programs, including Springfield, Malden, and Chelsea
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance
- The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
- The Immigrants' Assistance Center, Inc
- Families for Justice as Healing
- City of Lawrence Mayor's Health Task Force
- The 84 Coalitions, including the Lawrence/Methuen Coalition
- Boys and Girls Clubs, including those in Fitchburg and Leominster and the Metro South area
- Chinatown Neighborhood Association
- Father Bill's
- UTEC
- MassCOSH
- Stavros Center for Independent Living
- Greater Springfield Senior Services
- Center for Living and Working
- DEAF, Inc.
- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Viability, Inc.



PURPOSE AND INTENT

COVID-19 & PARENTS AND FAMILIES



This webinar will share some key findings from the COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (CCIS) showing the pandemic's impact on parents and families. The goal is that these findings:

- Inform immediate and short-term actions
- Identify ways to advance new, collaborative solutions with community partners to solve the underlying causes of inequities
- Provide data that stakeholders at all levels can use to "make the case" for a healthy future for ALL.

Remember to watch the [CCIS Introduction Webinar](#) for important background, tools, and tips to frame these findings with a racial justice lens to turn the CCIS data into action!

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for all things CCIS!

FRAMING MATTERS

Despite the common belief that the responsibility for raising children lies solely with parents, the data shows us that parents and families interact with systems that can limit access to financial means and social support, due to racism and inequitable access to jobs, education, housing and childcare. Access to equitable resources increases the ability of parents to financially provide for their children and create socially supportive environments.



PARENTS & FAMILIES

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PARENTS & FAMILIES

Compared to respondents who were not parents, parents or guardians of children were:



35% more likely to be worried about any expenses



35% more likely to lose their jobs or reduce hours/take leave.

- Nearly 1 in 3 who lost their jobs cited needing to take care of children as a reason.



50% more likely to be worried about housing



More likely to report delaying healthcare

PARENTS & FAMILIES



Parents have unique needs:

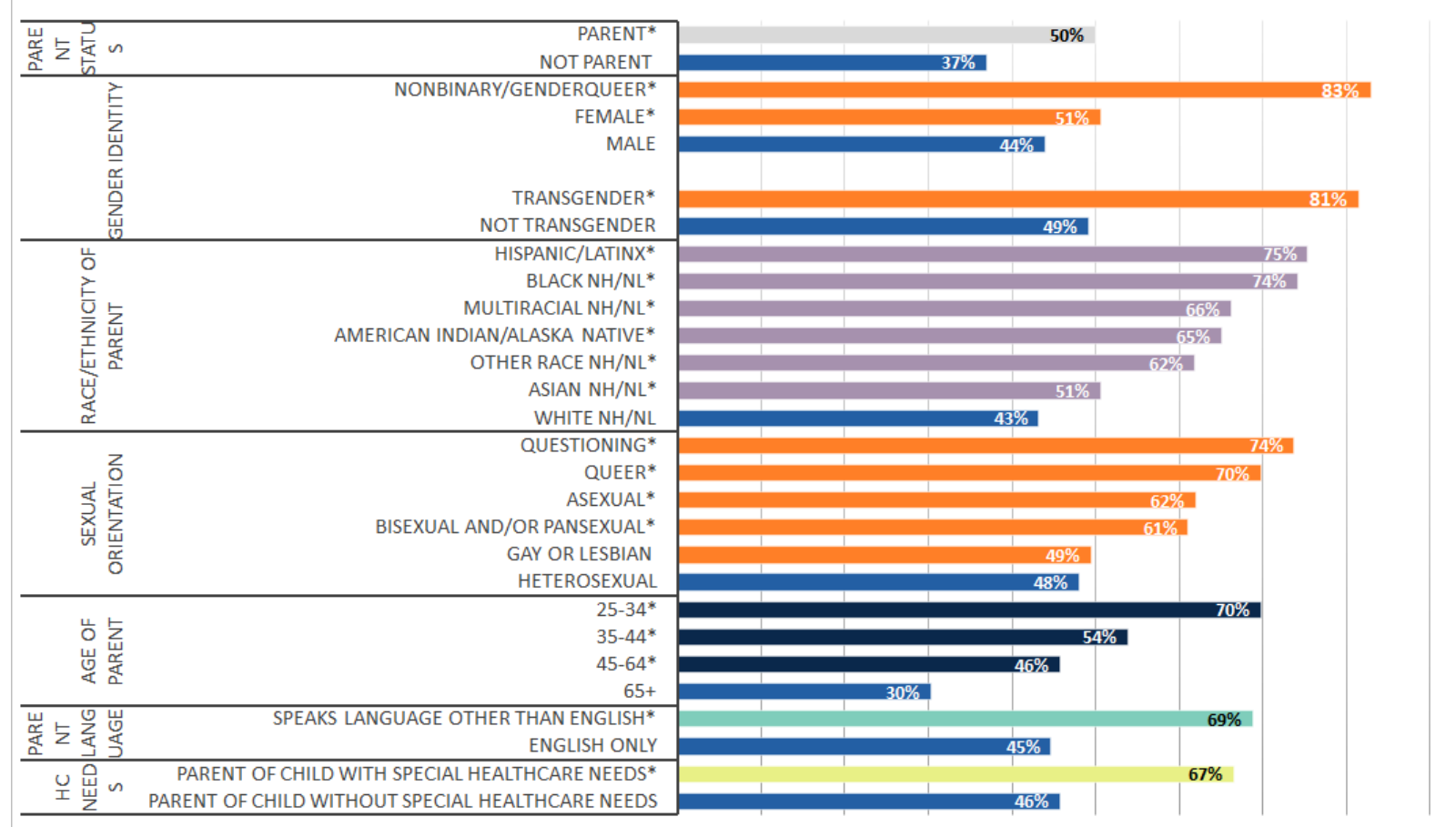
- Nearly 1 in 5 parents reported being worried about accessing available and affordable childcare.
- Parents were more likely to report 15+ days of poor mental health in the last month, but less likely to request certain mental health resources.
- Parents who were worried about expenses, housing, and childcare were more likely to report 15+ days of poor mental health.
- Parents of children with special healthcare needs were more likely to report being concerned about meeting basic needs compared to all parents, particularly for food and healthcare.

EXPENSES AMONG PARENTS

1 in 2 parents reported being worried about expenses, including housing, utilities, vehicle, and debt expenses. Parents are 35% more likely to be worried about expenses than non-parents.

% Parents Worried about Any Expenses in Next Few Weeks

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%



Prior to the pandemic, MA had the 4th highest level of income inequality and 1 in 9 children were living below the FPL.¹ The pandemic has further exacerbated financial strains on families.

As many as 3 in 4 parents in certain groups were worried about expenses:

- Nonbinary/genderqueer parents
- Transgender parents
- Hispanic/Latinx parents
- Black nH/nL parents
- Queer and Questioning parents
- Parents aged 25-34

¹Source: American Community Survey 2019; Analysis by talkpoverty.org
 Data notes: 1) "Non-binary" includes respondents identifying as non-binary, genderqueer, not exclusively male or female. Those "questioning/unsure of their gender identity" was suppressed due to small numbers; 2) "nH/nL"=non-Hispanic/non-Latinx; 3) "American Indian/Alaskan Native" includes Hispanic/Latinx; 4)* denotes rate is significantly different (p<0.05) compared to the reference group; 5) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥25 years.

HOUSING NEEDS AMONG PARENTS

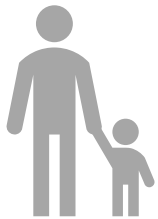
1 in 3 parents reported being worried about housing expenses.



Prior to the pandemic, Massachusetts had the second highest number of homeless families with children in the US and the number of homeless families with children in MA nearly doubled from 2007-2018.¹

While parents and non-parents were equally worried about having to move in the next few months, parents were almost twice as likely to say that this was due to not being able to pay the rent or mortgage.

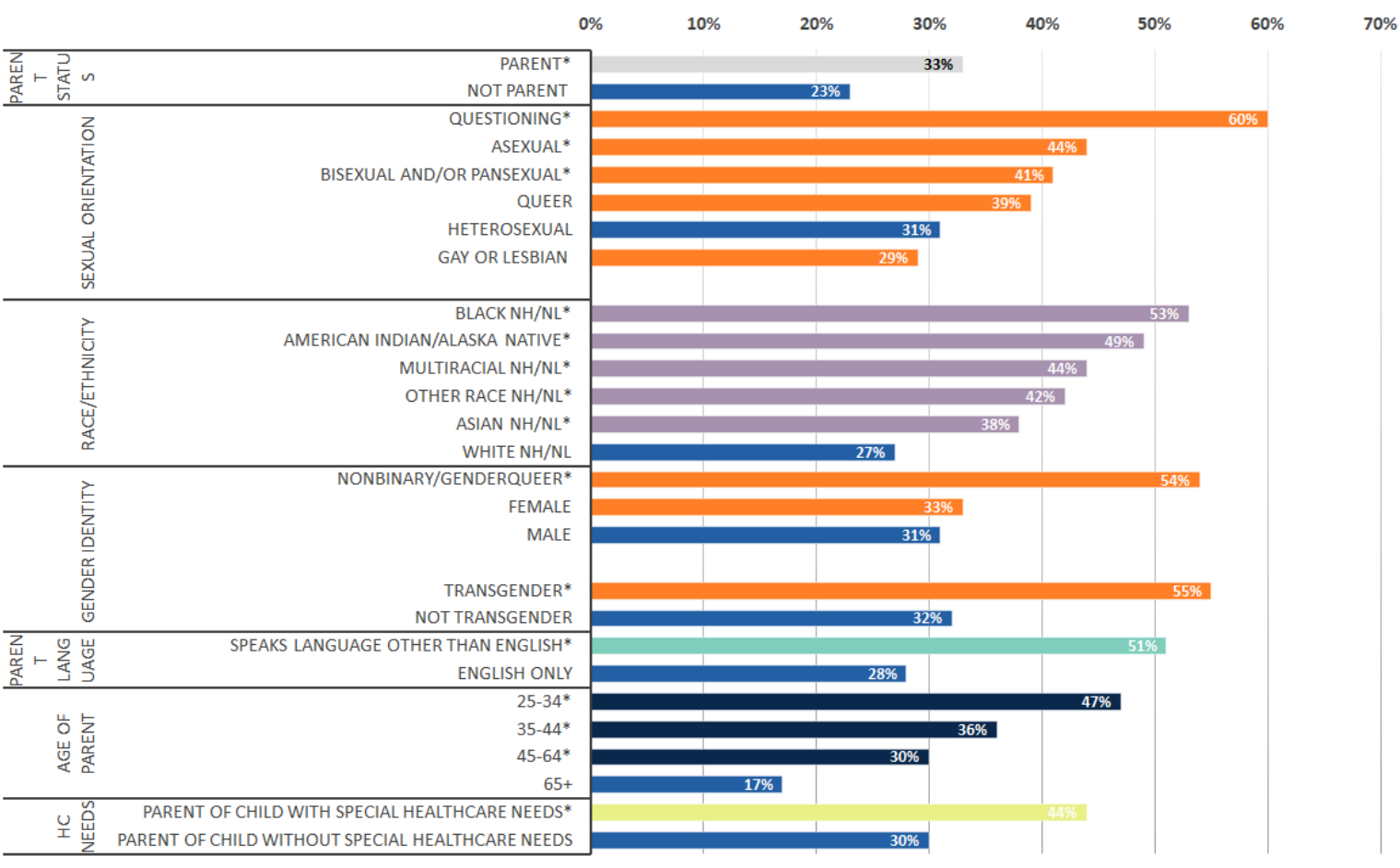
Unstable housing impacts the whole family, including the mental health and education of children.



HOUSING NEEDS AMONG PARENTS

1 in 3 parents reported being worried about housing expenses.

% Parents Worried about Housing Expenses in Next Few Weeks



Certain groups of parents are more likely to report being worried about housing expenses:

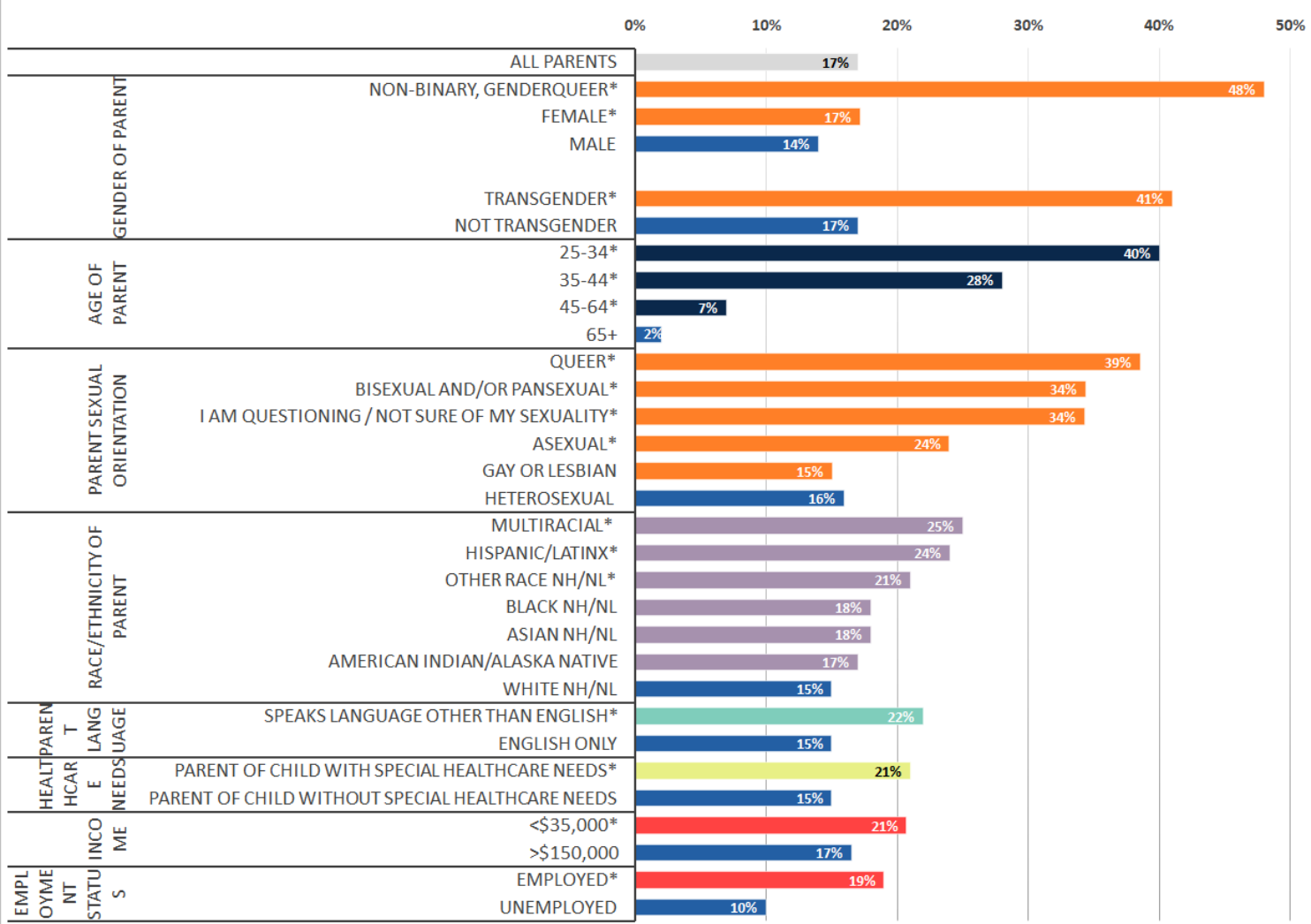
- Questioning, Asexual, Bisexual and/or Pansexual parents
- Parents of Color
- Non-binary/genderqueer parents
- Transgender parents
- Parents who speak a language other than English
- Parents under the age of 45
- Parents of children with special healthcare needs

Source: (1) US Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2018). *The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*. Retrieved from: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2018-AHAR-Part-1.pdf> Data notes: 1) "Non-binary" includes respondents identifying as non-binary, genderqueer, not exclusively male or female. Those "questioning/unsure of their gender identity" was suppressed due to small numbers; 2) "nH/nL"=non-Hispanic/non-Latinx; 3) "American Indian/Alaskan Native" includes Hispanic/Latinx; 4) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) compared to the reference group; 5) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥ 25 years.

AVAILABLE & AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE

Nearly 1 in 5 parents reported being worried about accessing available and affordable childcare.

% Parents Worried about Available Childcare Services



Lack of childcare may affect employment, parent and child mental health, and access to healthcare.

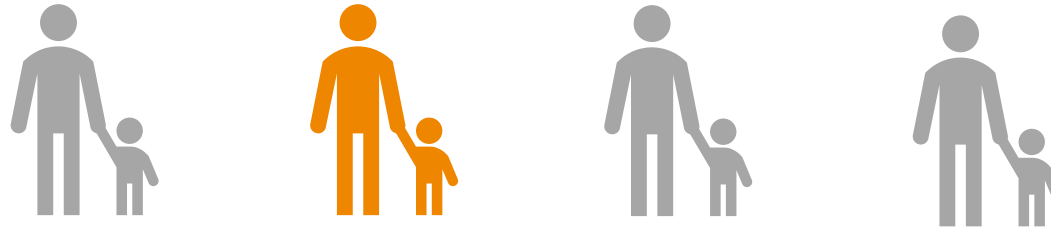
Several groups of parents reported rates that were 2 times higher than parents overall:

- Non-binary/genderqueer parents
- Transgender parents
- Parents under 35 years old
- Queer, Bi-sexual and/or Pansexual, and parents questioning their sexuality

Data notes: 1) "Non-binary" includes respondents identifying as non-binary, genderqueer, not exclusively male or female. Those "questioning/unsure of their gender identity" was suppressed due to small numbers; 2) "nH/nL"=non-Hispanic/non-Latinx; 3) "American Indian/Alaskan Native" includes Hispanic/Latinx; 4) * denotes rate is significantly different (p<0.05) compared to the reference group; 5) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥25 years.

EMPLOYMENT & CHILDCARE

1 in 4 employed parents lost their jobs or reduced hours/took leave.
Parents were 35% more likely to report reducing hours/taking leave than non-parents.



43% of parents who reduced hours/took leave and 32% of parents who lost jobs listed needing to take care of children as a reason.

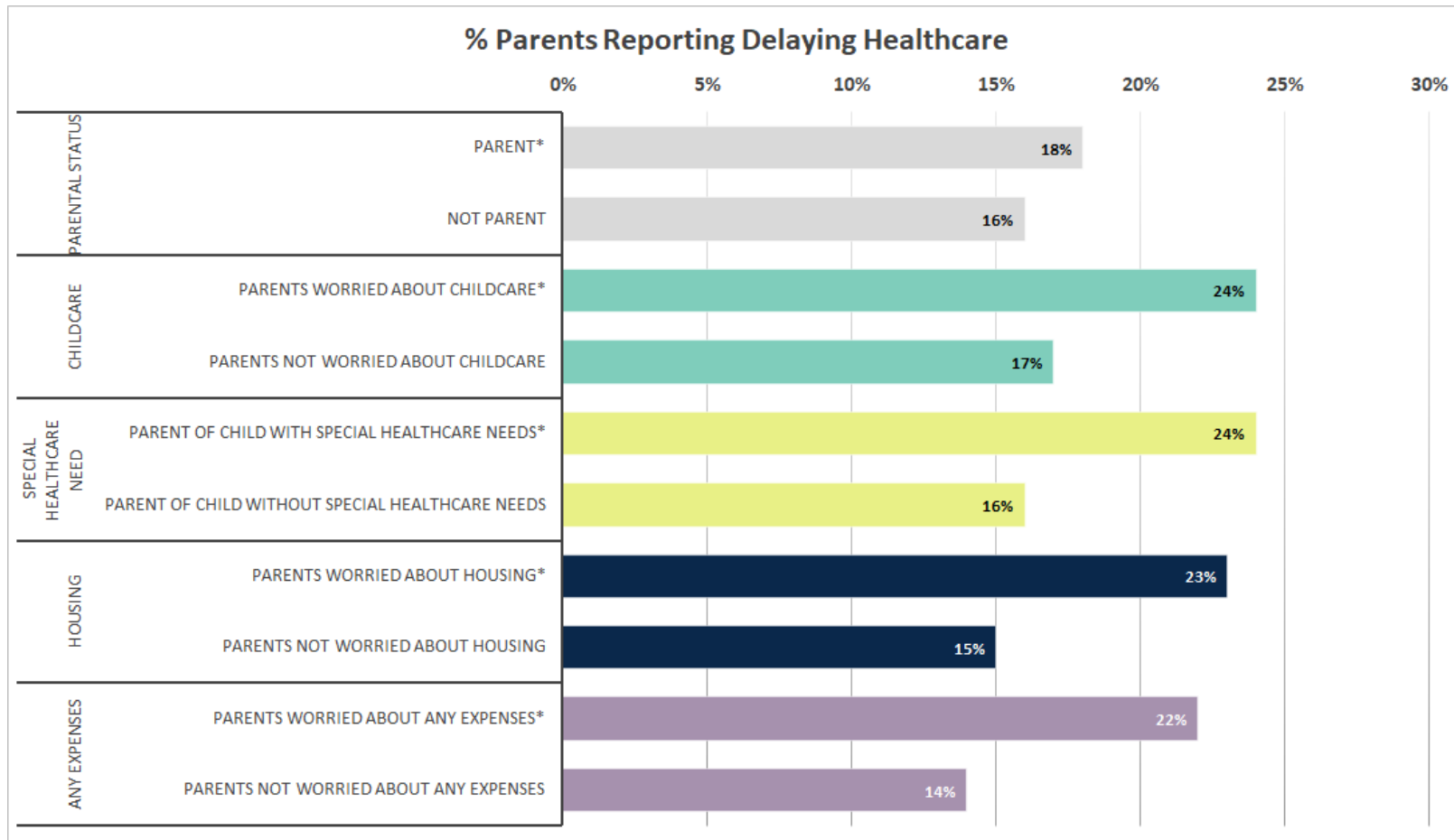
Populations who have experienced inequities in other areas face additional challenges in balancing parental stressors.

The following parental groups were more likely to report a change in status or nature of employment in order to take care of children:

- Questioning of sexual orientation, **Bisexual** and/or **Pansexual**, and **Queer** parents
- **Non-binary**, and **female** parents
- **Younger** parents
- **Hispanic/Latinx** and **Multiracial** parents
- Parents with **lower income** or **lower education**
- Parents of **children with special healthcare needs**

HEALTHCARE ACCESS & DELAYS: PARENTS

Parents were more likely to delay healthcare than non-parents.



Parents worried about childcare, expenses, and housing and parents of children with special healthcare needs were especially likely to delay healthcare.

The most common reasons for delaying care were:

1. Appointment cancelled, delayed or wait was too long*
2. Worried about getting COVID-19 from seeing doctor in-person
3. Worried couldn't afford the care or insurance didn't cover it*
4. Didn't have time for appointment
5. Didn't have a private place for a phone call or video chat.

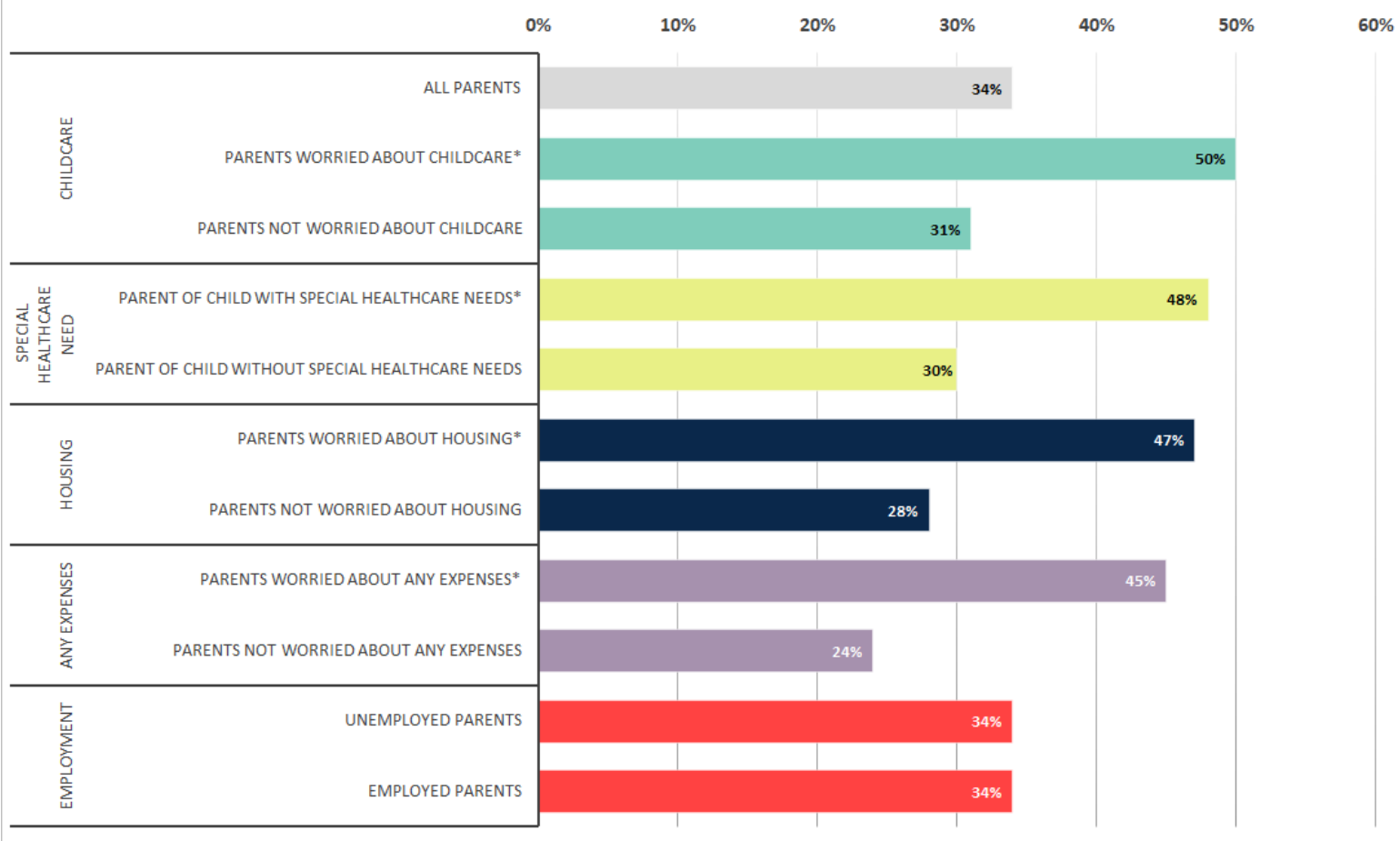
*Indicates significantly higher among parents than non-parents

Data notes: 1) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) compared to the reference group; 2) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥ 25 years.

MENTAL HEALTH OF PARENTS

Parents worried about basic needs and parents of children with special healthcare needs are more likely to report poor mental health for 15+ days in the past month

% Parents Reporting 15+ Days of Poor Mental Health Last Month



Parents worried about housing, childcare, or any expenses are between **61% - 88%** more likely to report poor mental health. Poor parental mental health affects not only parents, but also their children.

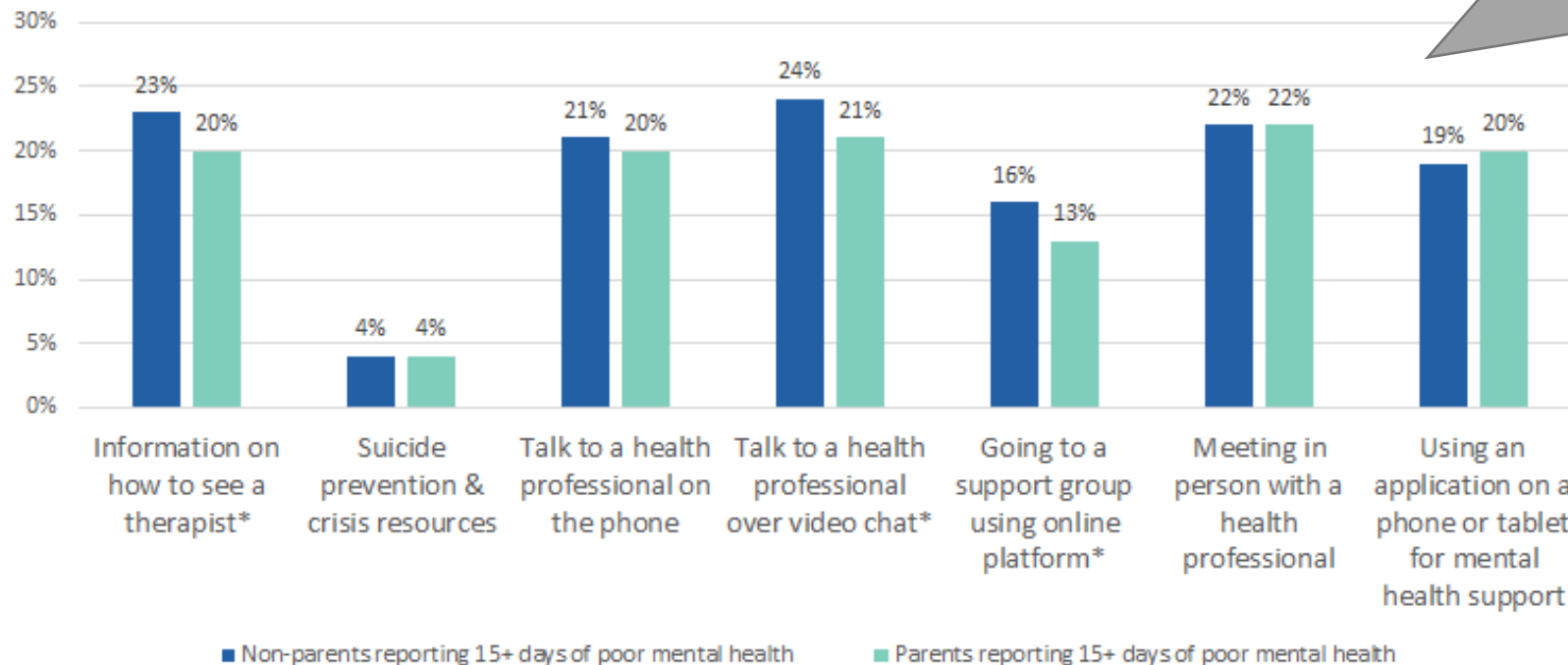
Parents of children with special healthcare needs are **60%** more likely to report poor mental health. Parents of children with special healthcare needs who do not have access to respite care or programs outside of the home to support their children may have little time to work, perform household tasks, or rest.

Data notes: 1) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) compared to the reference group; 2) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥ 25 years.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: PARENTS

While parents were more likely to report 15+ days of poor mental health than non-parents, they were **less likely** to indicate that mental health resources would be helpful.

Which of these resources would be most helpful to you right now to help you with your mental health and well-being?



Instead they expressed needs for a variety of childcare and basic needs resources:

- "When would I have the time for this with my child home all day every day?"
- "The most helpful thing has been getting a nanny (at tremendous cost) so I could get adequate sleep while ensuring my professional and parental responsibilities are met."
- "Time and childcare. None of the above options matter if I don't have the time and capacity to engage with them."
- "Childcare, income assistance. These will help my mental health the most."

Data notes: 1) * denotes rate is significantly different ($p < 0.05$) between parents and non-parents; 2) All percentages are weighted to the statewide age and educational distribution of those ≥ 25 years.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Parents were more likely than non-parents to reduce their hours/lose their jobs, to report concerns about expenses and housing, and to delay healthcare.
- Childcare is a major reason why parents have reduced their hours/lost jobs.
- Certain groups of parents - in particular, parents of children with special healthcare needs, non-binary parents, transgender parents, parents of color, parents who speak a language other than English, and parents under the age of 45 are more likely to worry about expenses and childcare.
- Parents who are concerned about expenses or childcare are significantly more likely to report poor mental health.
- Resources typically targeted to those experiencing poor mental health, such as individual or group therapy, may need to be supplemented with, or offered after provision of resources for childcare and income assistance to parents.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit <http://mass.gov/covidsurvey> for more information on how residents of Massachusetts have been impacted by the pandemic and how we can all work together to turn these data into action!