

State of Child Care in Oregon

Turning “Crisis Mode” to Aspirations

We hear a lot about a “child care crisis”

When we are in “crisis mode” we may miss the nuance in challenges and go for “quick fixes” that may not actually get us to our goals.

Child care crisis pushing Oregon families to breaking point

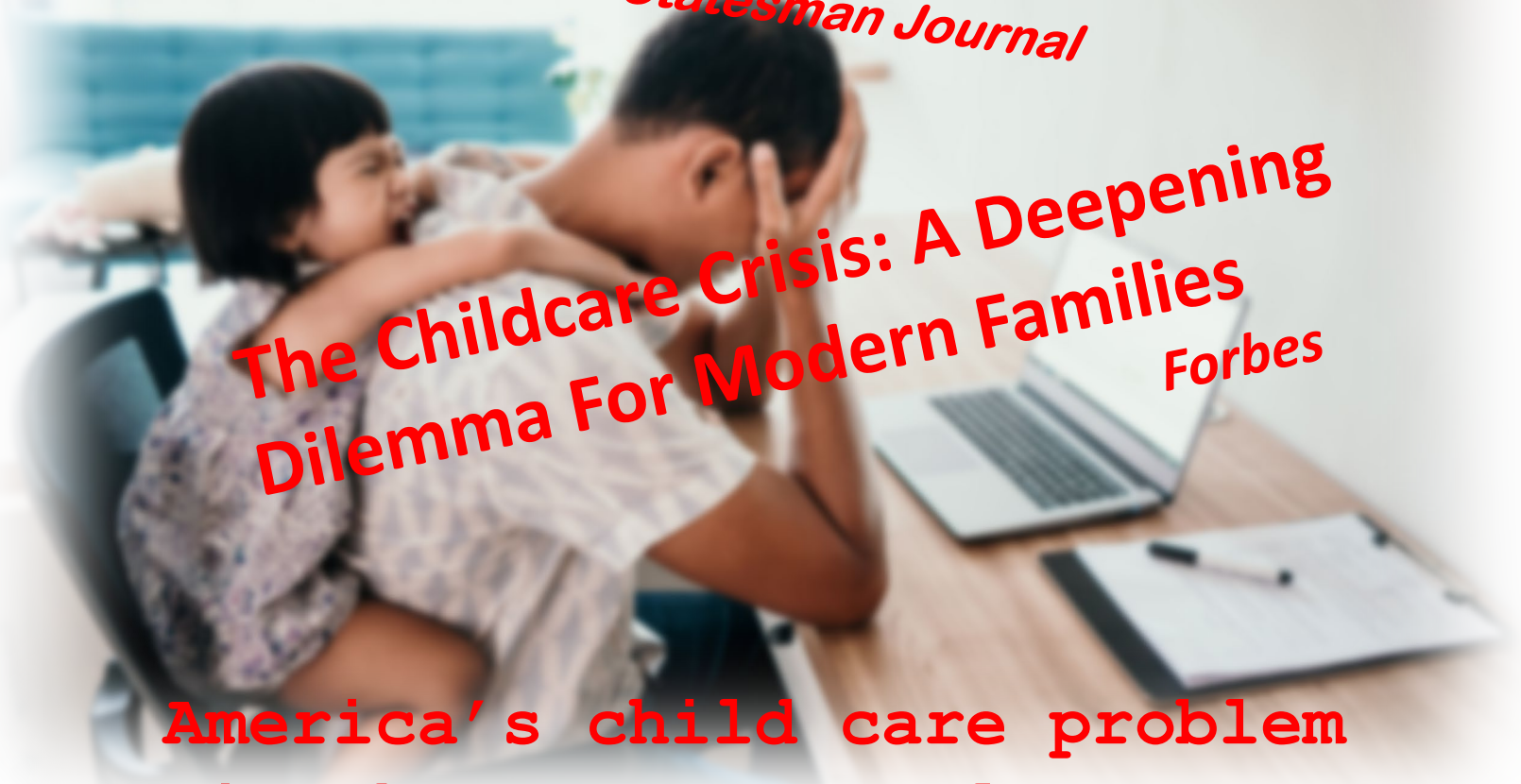
Statesman Journal

The Childcare Crisis: A Deepening Dilemma For Modern Families

Forbes

America's child care problem is about to get a lot worse

CNN



Start with the aspirations and goals of Raise Up Oregon (RUO) and others¹.....

Child care is a public good.

(RUO Goals #1 & 3)

- Child care has long-term benefits for children, women, families, businesses, the economy and society overall
- Child providers are doing the work that makes other work possible
- Child care providers must be fairly and adequately compensated as well as supported and respected

All families should have access to equitable, inclusive, anti-racist child care.

(RUO Goals #1 & 2)

- Child care should meet families' diverse needs and preferences
- What is "quality child care" is likely to vary by community
- Families and educators in those communities are the experts

¹ Sources: *Raise Up Oregon: A Statewide Early Childhood System Plan 2024-2028*
Re-Envisioning CCDF: Toward an Anti-Racist Child Care System that Serves Families & Educators

Today's questions

- How well are we meeting those goals according to the providers and families who deliver and utilize ECE?
- What does their input tell us that we need to do differently to improve the system for families and providers?



The Data

PDG Provider Survey

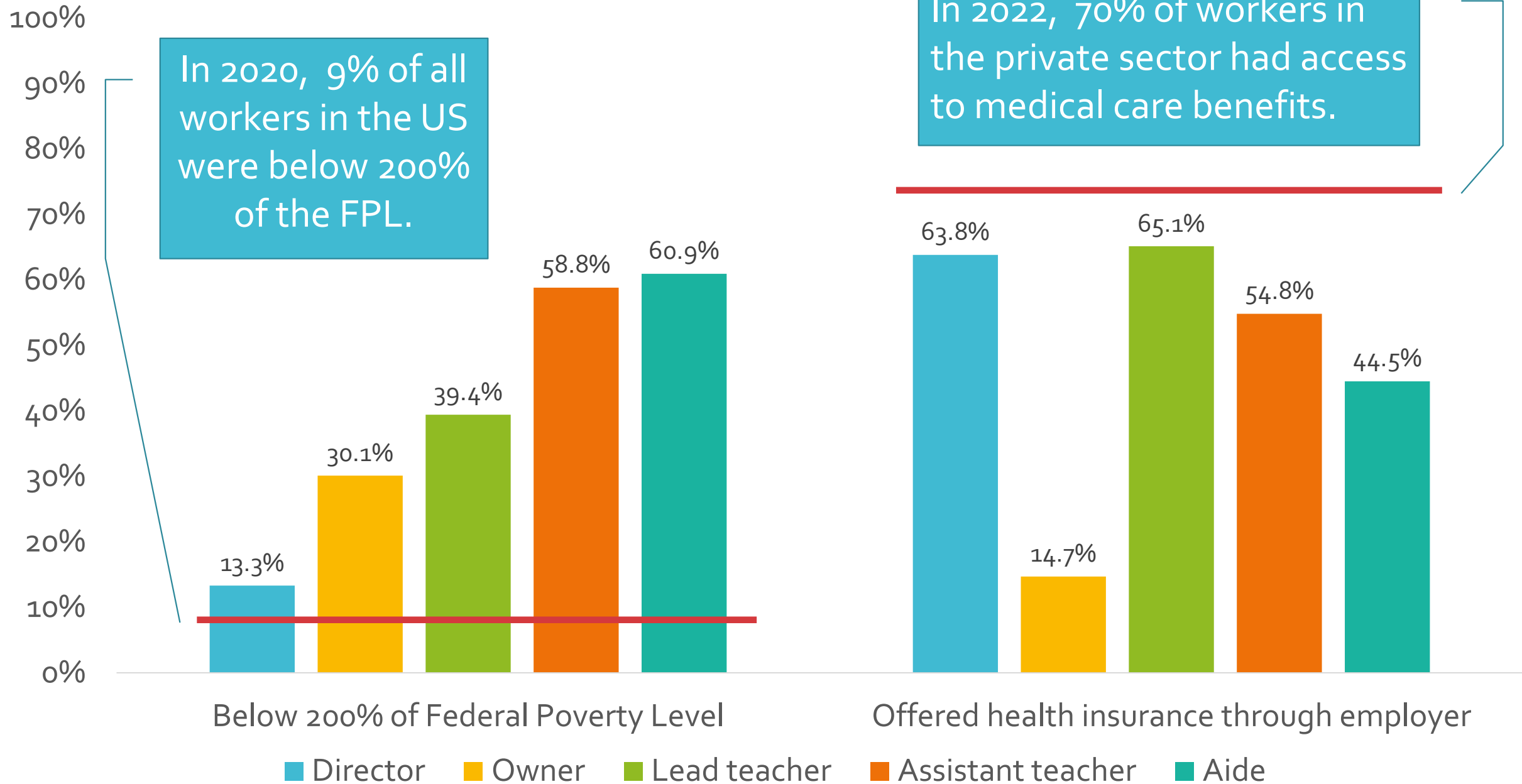
- Annually since 2019 using funds from the Preschool Development Grant (which ended in December 2023)
- All providers on the registry were invited to participate
- In 2023, **2507 providers** participated

PDG Household Survey

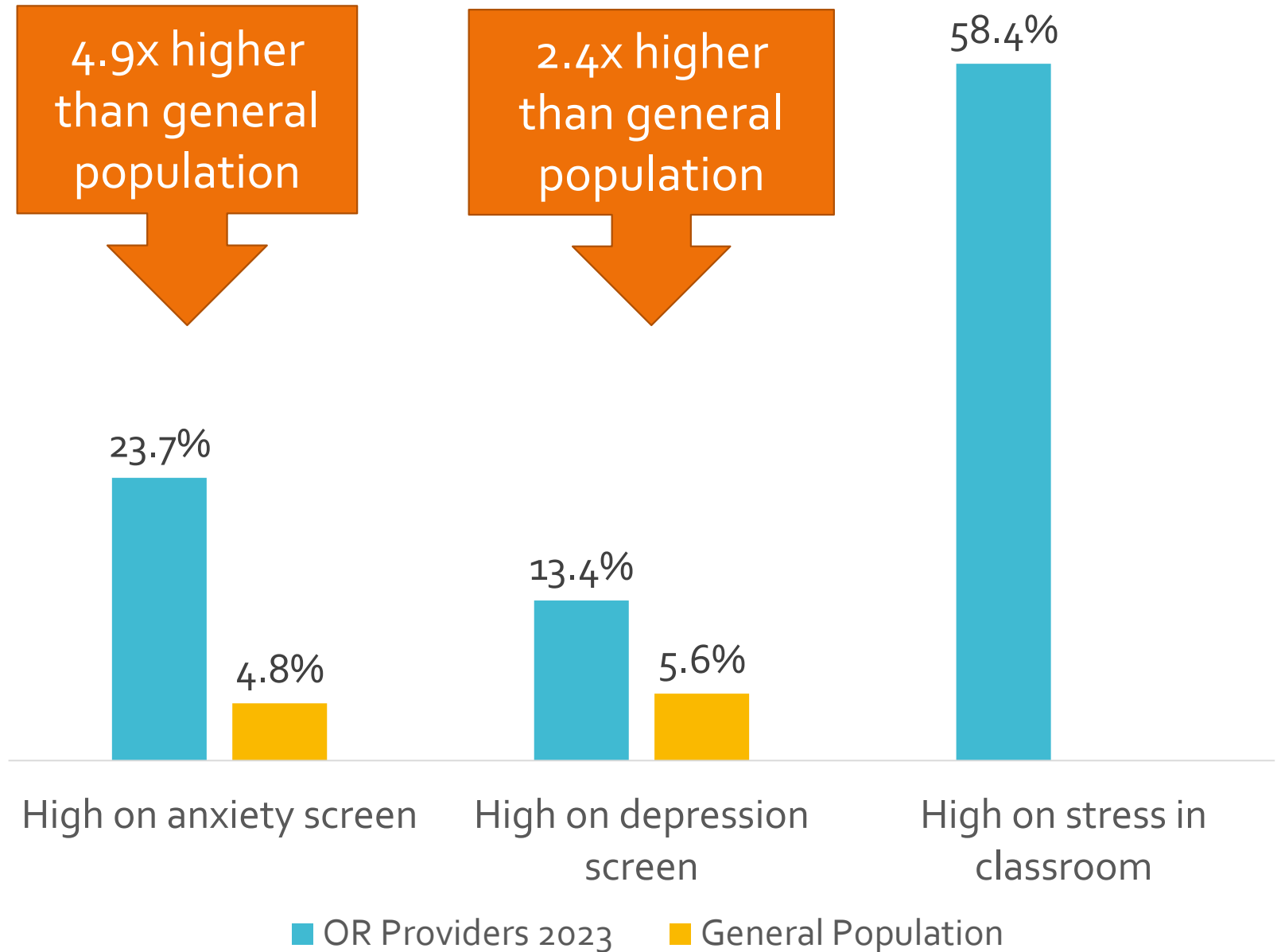
- Semi-annually since 2019
- Flyers and information sent to families via community agencies, schools, other organizations and social media
- In 2022, **3705 families** participated



What Providers Tell Us



Providers across OR are feeling high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.



So in 2022-2023.....

37%

of programs
**lost staff or
staff hours**

84%

of staff loss
was due to
staff quitting

46%

of programs
experienced a
staff shortage

Providers ranked what would help them stay in the ECE field.....

(n = 1787)



Although staff
want help in
managing
behaviors....

There is no meaningful association between providers' reported feelings of being overwhelmed and whether they had:

- Received training in managing challenging behaviors
- Received coaching or mentoring

A glimmer of
inspiration....

Providers in family- and home-based programs consistently report **lower levels of:**

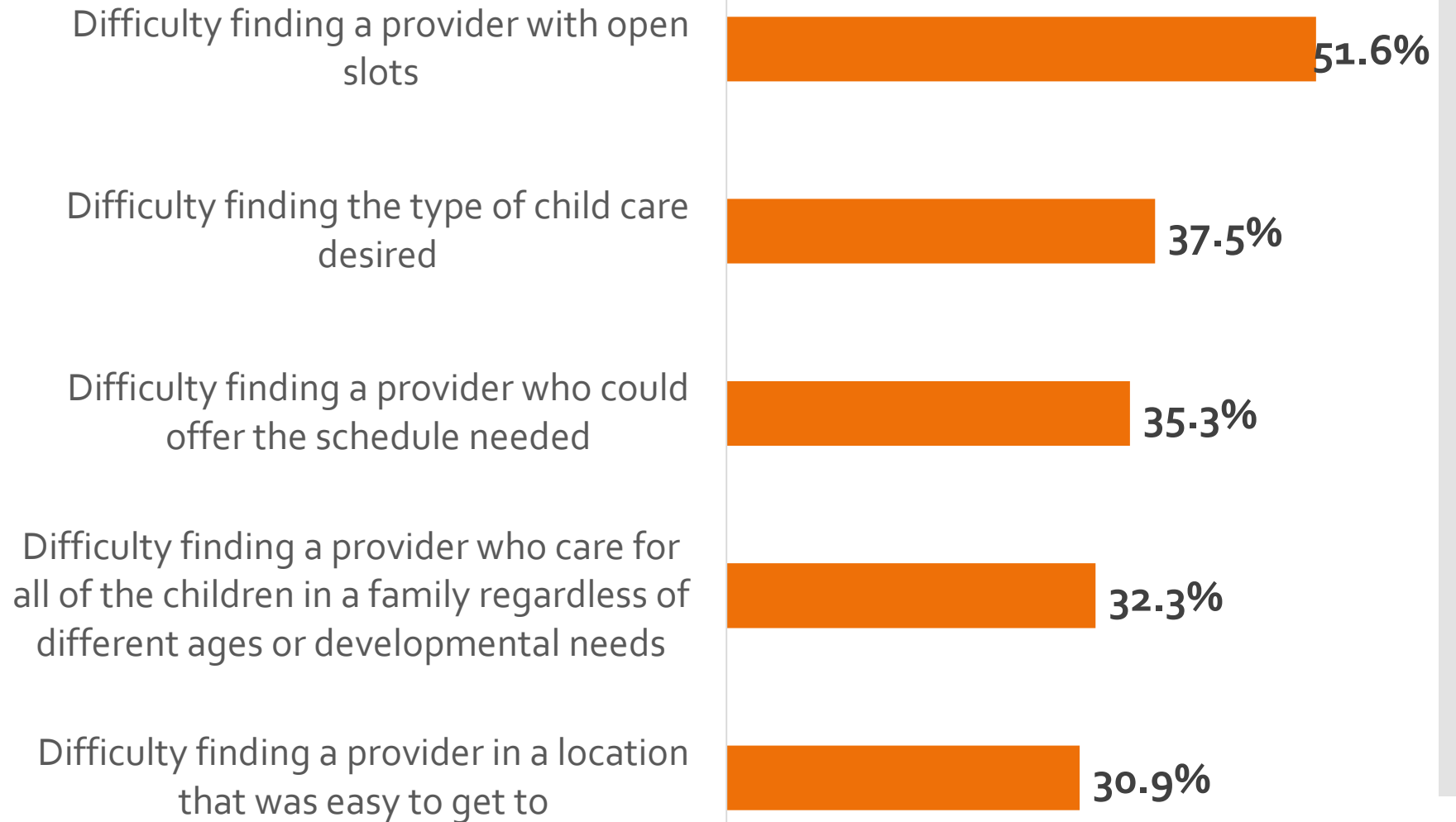
- anxiety and depression
- feeling overwhelmed and unable to respond to the needs of children with perceived challenging behaviors
- staff loss
- asking children to leave their care



What Families Tell Us

73%
of families
were either
using ECE or
looking for
ECE

Barriers experienced by families when trying to find ECE

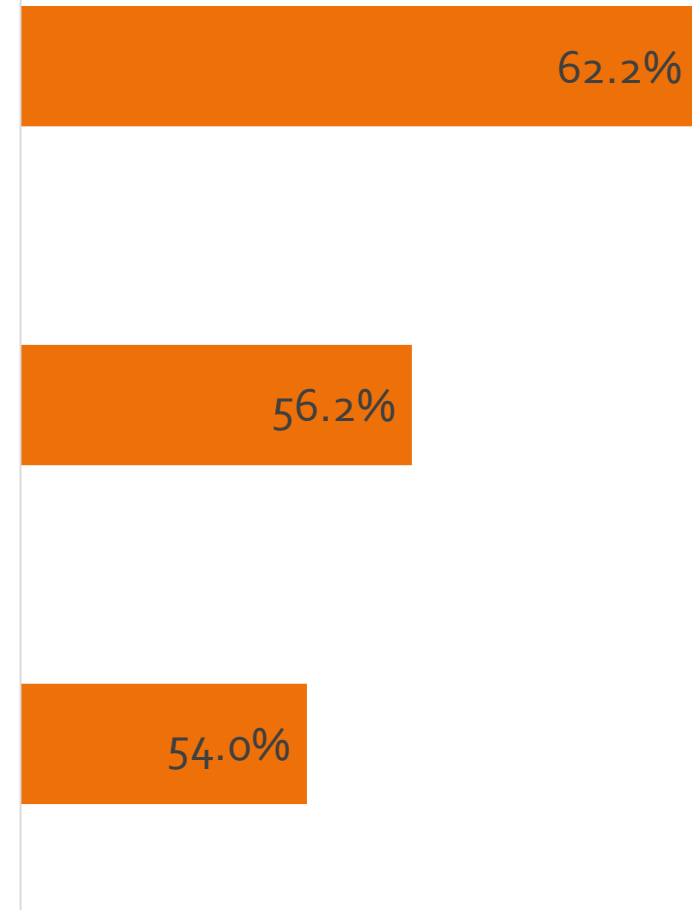


The top 3 things that do NOT work well for families who have ECE...

The cost of care

The number of arrangements necessary to get the coverage they needed

The hours that care is available

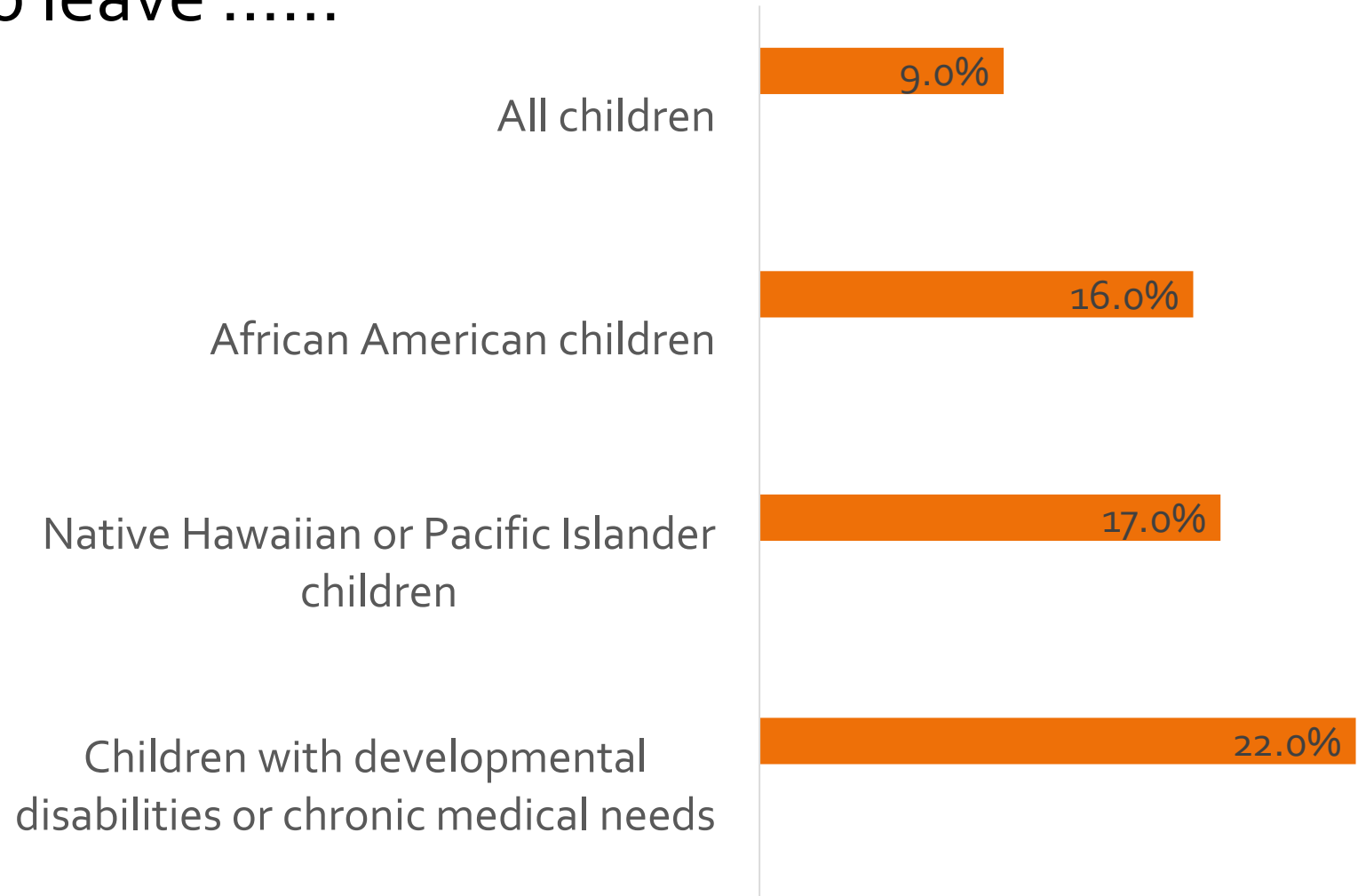


These difficulties were more likely to be experienced by families who...

- are BIPOC
- live in rural or frontier areas
- have incomes at or below 200% of the poverty level
- have children experiencing a developmental disability or chronic medical needs

But some children are more likely to be asked to leave

9%
of children
were asked
to leave care



41%

of families' employment was negatively affected by problems with ECE

- This negative effect was more likely for families who:
 - are BIPOC
 - have a primary language other than English
 - have incomes at or below 200% of the poverty level
 - have a child with a developmental disability or chronic medical needs

Conclusions

Providers and families are NOT getting what they need out of the current ECE system

- Providers are vastly undercompensated and undervalued at the same time that they are expected to take on more work due to staffing shortages
- Families cannot access the care they need and the negative effects of this disproportionately fall on families of color, and those with low incomes or children with developmental disabilities or chronic medical needs

What to do?

Child care is a public good.

(RUO Goals #1 & 3)

- Fairly and adequately compensate providers
 - This will take state and federal financial support
- Support providers in ways that work for them
- Respect providers' experience and expertise

Collaborate with providers and families to co-envision and co-design ECE that works for **EVERYONE.**

All families should have access to equitable, inclusive, anti-racist child care.

(RUO Goals #1 & 2)

- Ensure that child care meets the diverse needs of families
- Understand that “quality” will have different meanings within different communities
- Respect families' expertise in what they and their children need

Current efforts
of note within
DELIC

- Early Childhood Equity Fund
- SPARK Re-design
- Reports from PDG:
 - Reconceptualizing Quality
 - Household Survey Improvement Project

Thank You!

For more information contact Katherine Pears (katherinep@oslc.org).

For the PDG reports go to:

<https://www.oregon.gov/delc/providers/pages/pdg-assessment.aspx>