



Seattle Preschool Program

voluntary, high-quality, affordable



Telephone Survey of
Parents/Guardians
March 2014

Methodology

- ▶ Telephone survey of parents/guardians of children in Seattle Public Schools in Kindergarten through 3rd grade
- ▶ Conducted March 4-23, 2014
- ▶ 1,301 interviews (margin of error ± 2.7 points)
- ▶ Balanced geographic distribution in the City

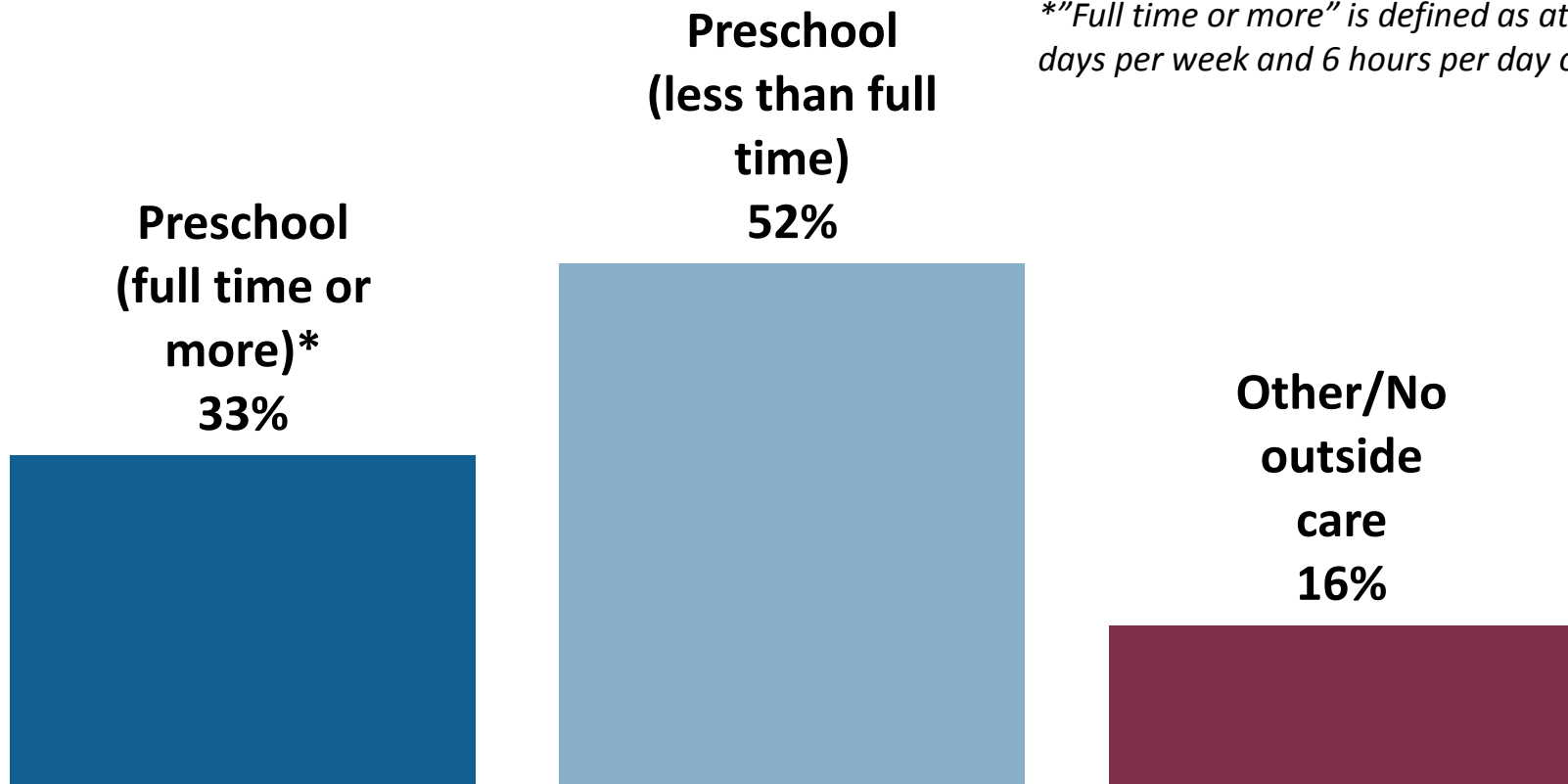
23% in SE Seattle	23% in NW Seattle	16% in Central Seattle
20% in SW Seattle	19% in NE Seattle	
43% in South Seattle	42% in North Seattle	

- ▶ Very diverse respondent backgrounds: interviews conducted in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali and Cantonese
 - 32% of respondents were born outside the U.S., compared with 19% of the overall population in the District

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%

Preschool Attendance Profile

A third (33%) of Seattle parents report having kids in full time preschool, and half (52%) report having kids in part time preschool. The remainder did not use preschool or had no care outside the home.



Q6. Did your child attend preschool, head start, ECEAP, or a step ahead program?

Q7. Was your child cared for by a daycare or other childcare outside the home on a regular basis?

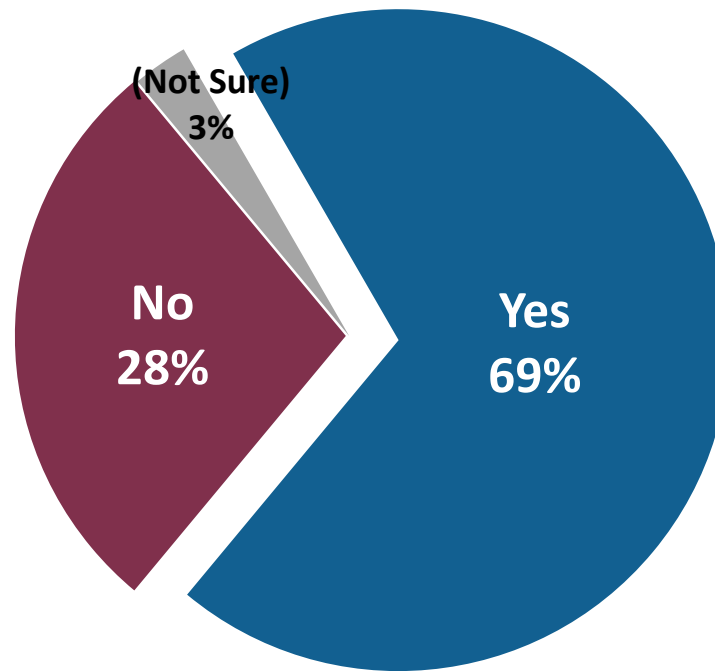
Q11. How many days in an average week did your child attend (preschool/daycare or childcare)?

Q12. How many hours per day did your child go to (preschool/daycare or childcare)?

No Outside Care

A larger proportion (69%) of parents who did not use outside home care would have been interested in high quality preschool for their child if it had been available and affordable.

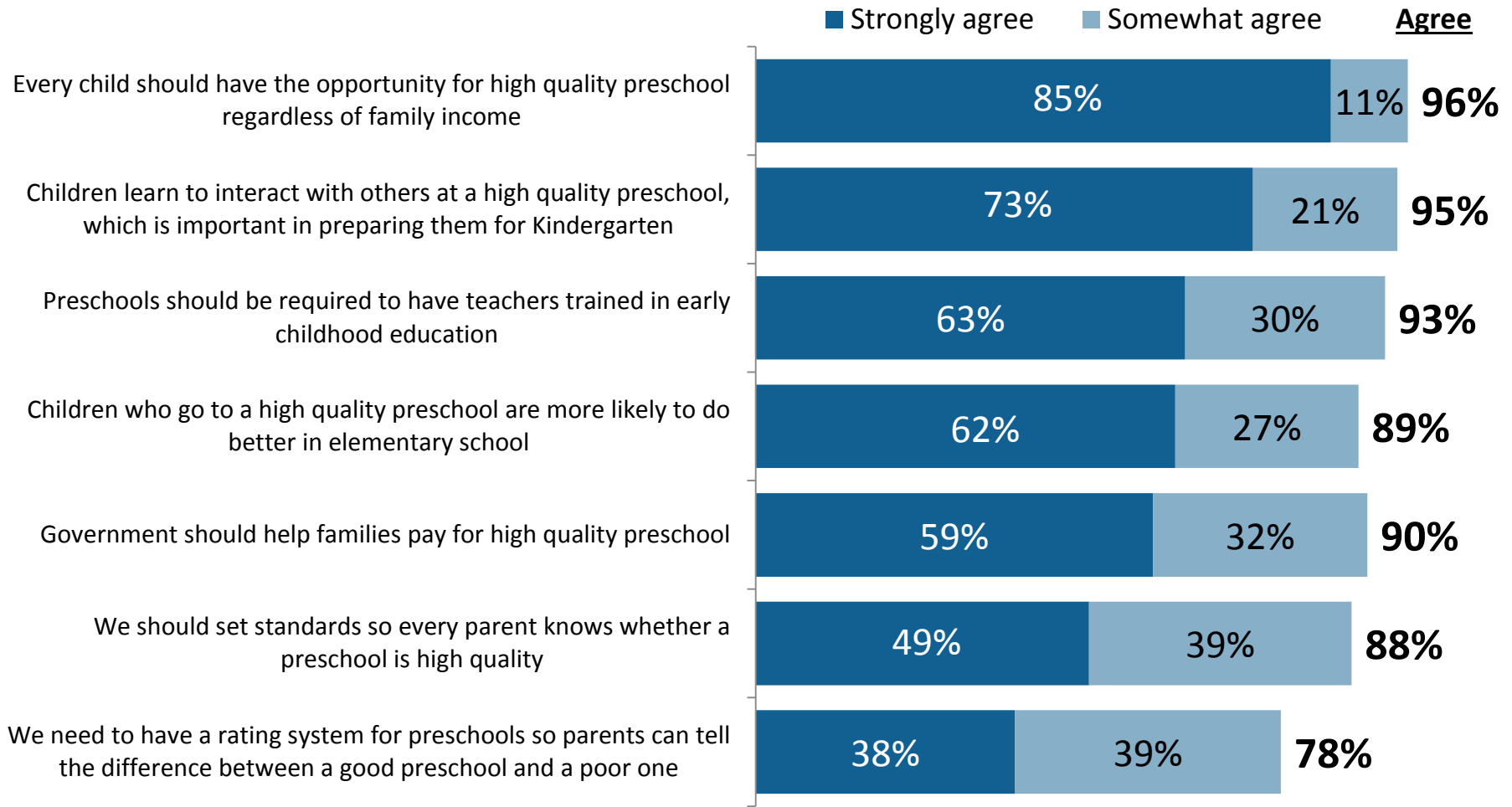
Interested in Preschool



Q10. If high quality preschool had been available and affordable, would you have been interested in it for your child?

Statements about Preschool

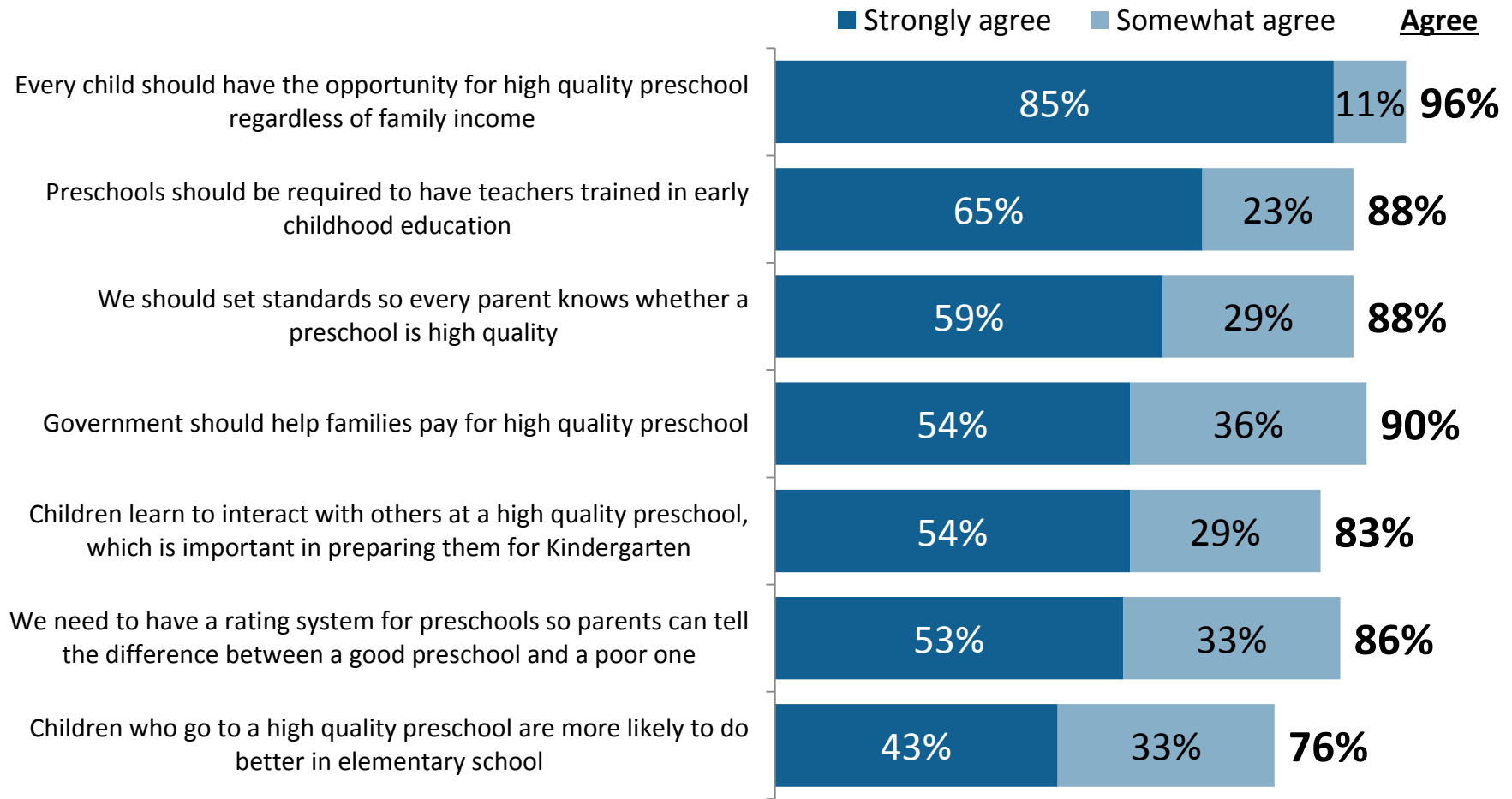
Almost all parents agree that universal access is critical – 85% strongly agree. Nine out of ten (90%) parents agree that government should help families pay for high quality preschool.



Q38-Q44. Now I'm going to read you some statements people have made about preschool programs. For each one I read, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement.

Statements - No out of home care

As with parents overall, parents with no out of home care place a very high importance on universal access and they are more likely to agree that we should set standards and have a ratings system.

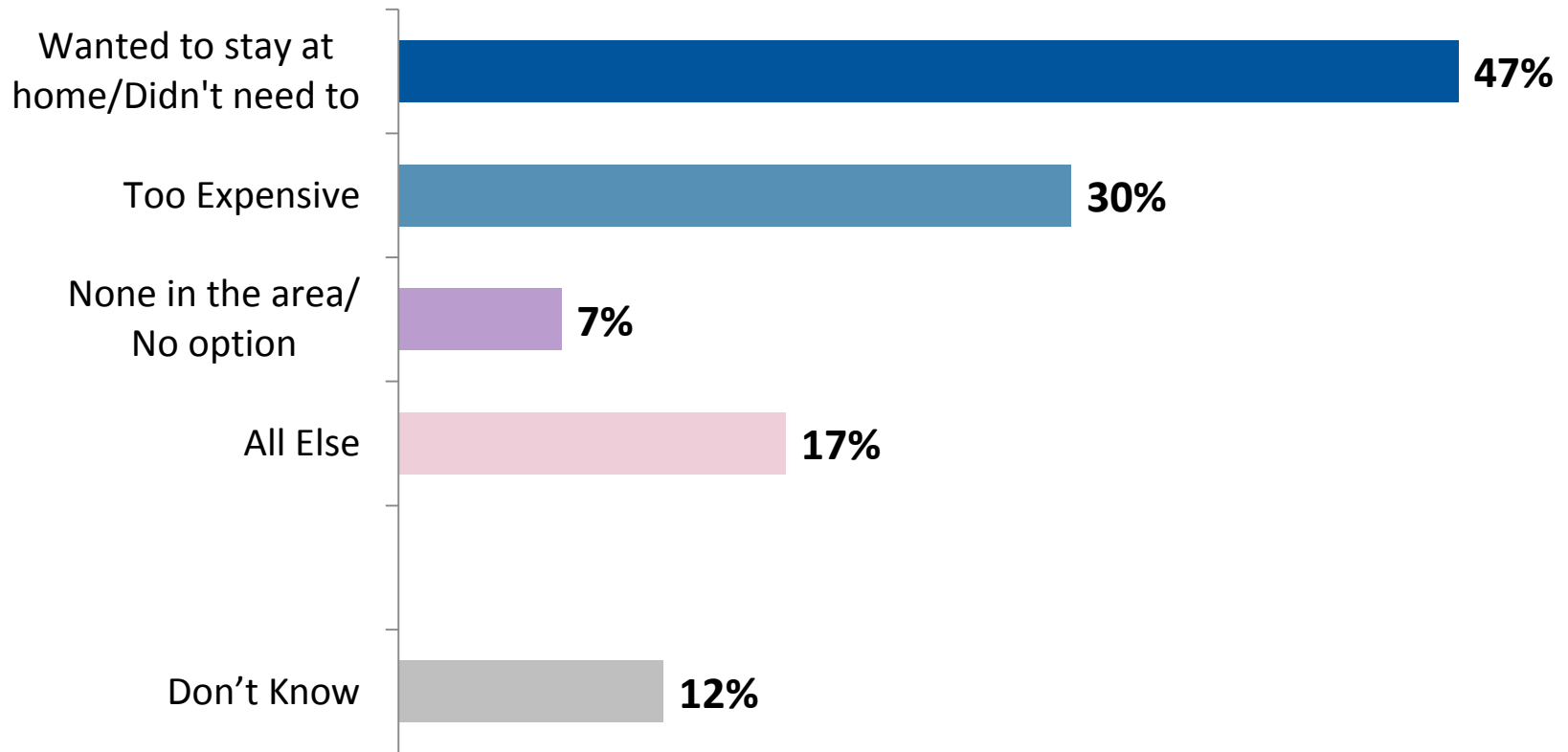


Q38-Q44. Now I'm going to read you some statements people have made about preschool programs. For each one I read, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with that statement.

Reasons for No Out of Home Care

Wanting to stay home and the expense are the top two reasons respondents gave for not using out of home care.

Among No Out of Home Care Respondents (N=111)



Q9. What was the primary reason your child did not attend preschool, daycare, or childcare?

Voluntary High Quality Preschool Program

Almost all parents, including those who had no out of home care, think a voluntary high quality preschool program is a good idea.

Q45. "The City of Seattle is considering a new program to fund voluntary, high quality preschool. The program will give every family access to high quality preschool by setting standards and requiring preschools to provide teaching that helps kids learn and grow. It would be free for the poorest families with a sliding payment scale for higher income families. Given what you've heard, do you think this voluntary high quality preschool program would be a good idea or a bad idea for the City of Seattle?"

Good Idea

90%

20%

Very

70%

Bad Idea

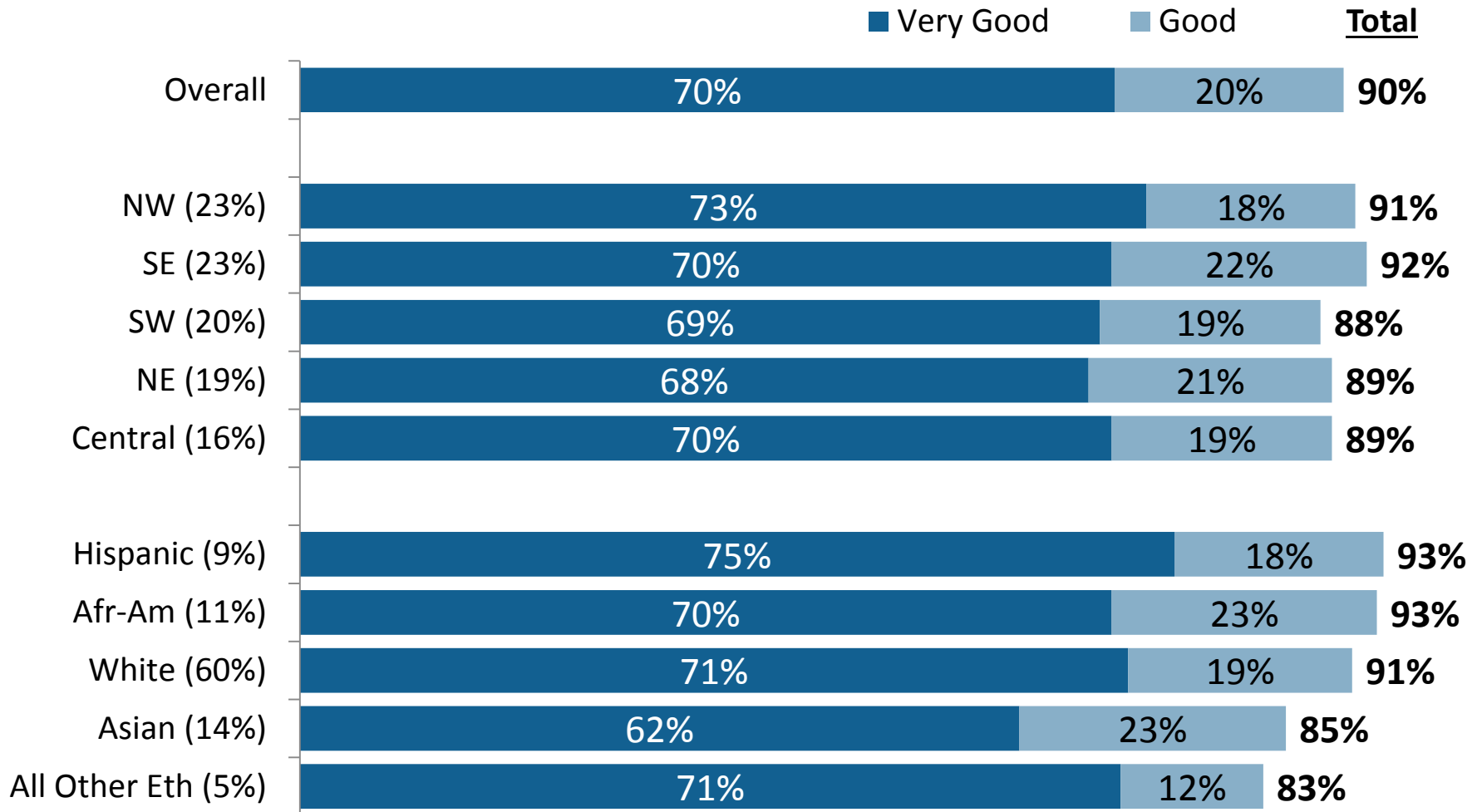
5%

(Don't know)

5%

Support for Program by Demographics

Support for the program is very high among other major subgroups including all geographies and ethnicities.



Q45. Given what you've heard, do you think this voluntary high quality preschool program would be a good idea or a bad idea for the City of Seattle?

Key Findings

- ▶ Parents overwhelmingly agree with statements about the value and importance of high quality preschool, and expect preschools will have set quality standards and trained teachers.
 - There is near universal agreement that “every child should have the opportunity for high quality preschool regardless of family income” and that “government should help families pay for high quality preschool.” The lowest income respondents are the most likely to agree.
 - Almost all parents agree that “children learn to interact with others at a high quality preschool, which is important in preparing them for Kindergarten” and that “children who go to a high quality preschool are more likely to do better in elementary school.”
 - Parents expect high standards at their preschools. Nearly all agree that “preschools should be required to have teachers trained in early childhood education” and that “we should set standards so every parent knows whether a preschool is high quality.”
- ▶ Parents overwhelmingly support a city funded preschool program that would “give every family access to high quality preschool by setting standards and requiring preschools to provide teaching that helps kids learn and grow, free for the poorest families with a sliding scale for higher income families” Support is very strong among all major subgroups including:
 - Respondents with kids in lower income schools
 - Respondents who identify as Hispanic or African-American
 - Parents in Southeast and Northwest Seattle
 - Respondents who speak something other than English at home

Key Findings

- ▶ Safety, impressions when visiting the facility, licensing, and convenience are the most important factors in choosing a high quality preschool, although all 14 factors tested are important to a majority of parents.
 - Among parents whose children did not go to preschool/daycare, safety is also the top factor, however, these parents place higher importance on affordability and availability of subsidies than do parents using preschool/daycare.
 - Parents who did not have any out-of-home care are also more likely than parents using preschool/daycare to agree that we should set standards and that we need a ratings system.
- ▶ A third of K-3rd Grade SPS parents had kids in full time preschool. Non-white and lower income respondents were less likely to have their children in preschool.
- ▶ Two thirds of parents who did not use outside home care for their child indicated that they would have been interested high quality preschool for their child if it had been available and affordable.

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