Read Aloud 15 MINUTES

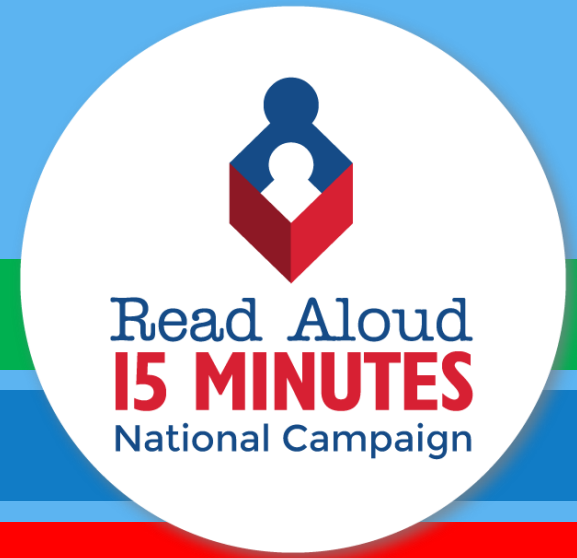
National Campaign Survey

Read Aloud 15 MINUTES Survey Report How America Reads Aloud to its Children

February 27, 2018

YouGov®

Report Organization



1 **Background, Methodology and Sample Characteristics**

2 **Executive Summary**

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- EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT & READING ALOUD FROM BIRTH
- ADVICE ON READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN
- CURRENT READ-ALOUD TRENDS

Study Background:

In 2013, Read Aloud 15 MINUTES launched a 10-year National Campaign to make reading aloud every day for at least 15 minutes, from birth, the national caregiving standard. Through three campaign pulses each year, Read Aloud 15 MINUTES and its diverse network of national and grassroots partners in all 50 states reach millions of parents with messages that stress the importance of daily reading aloud to promote healthy brain development, close language gaps, build literacy skills, foster social-emotional growth and ultimately prepare children to succeed in the transition from home to school to career.

The survey was undertaken to gauge the current state of American families' efforts to read aloud, their understanding of brain development and the central role reading aloud can play.

Read Aloud
15 MINUTES
National Campaign

Study qualifications include:

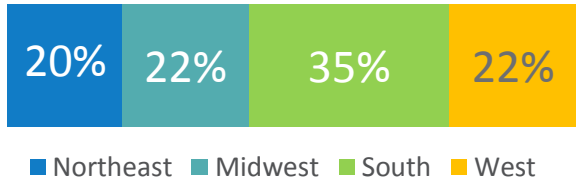
Parents who:

- Have a child in the household between the ages of 0 and 8
- Are between the ages of 18 and 65

Sample (n=1,022) was constructed and balanced to be representative of the population of parents with children between the ages of 0 and 8

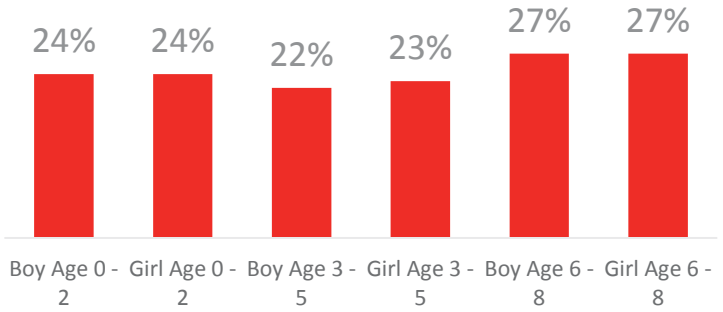
Sample Characteristics (n=1,022)

Region

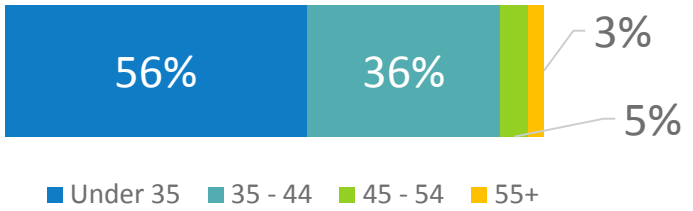


Children in Household

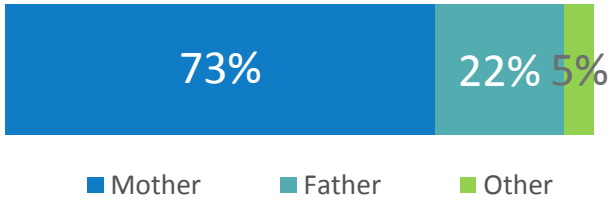
Average Number of Children: 1.74



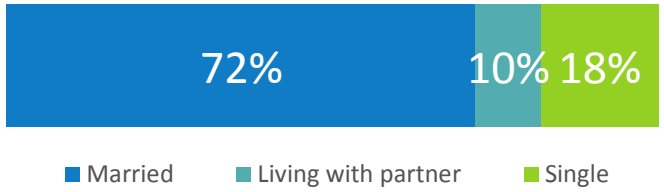
Parent Age



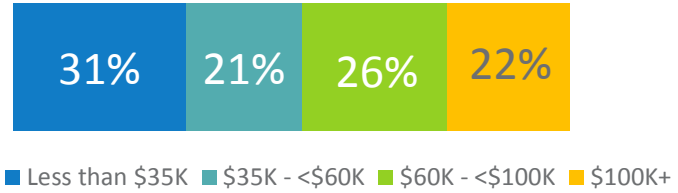
Respondent Relation to Child



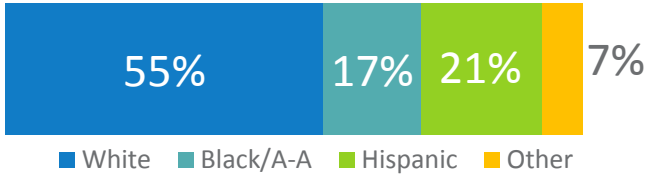
Marital Status



Household Income



Parent Ethnicity



There are estimated to be 36,178,312 children ages 0-8 in the United States.

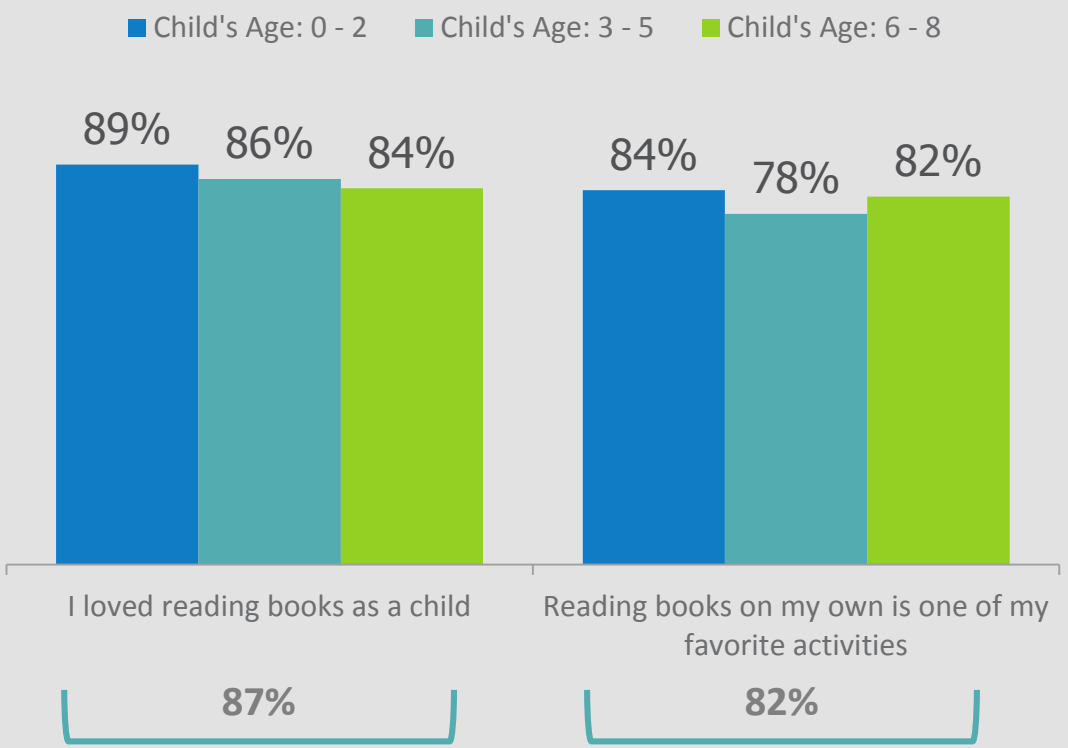
AGE 0-2: 11,957,307 AGE 3-5: 12,002,245 AGE 6-8: 12,218,760

Source: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk

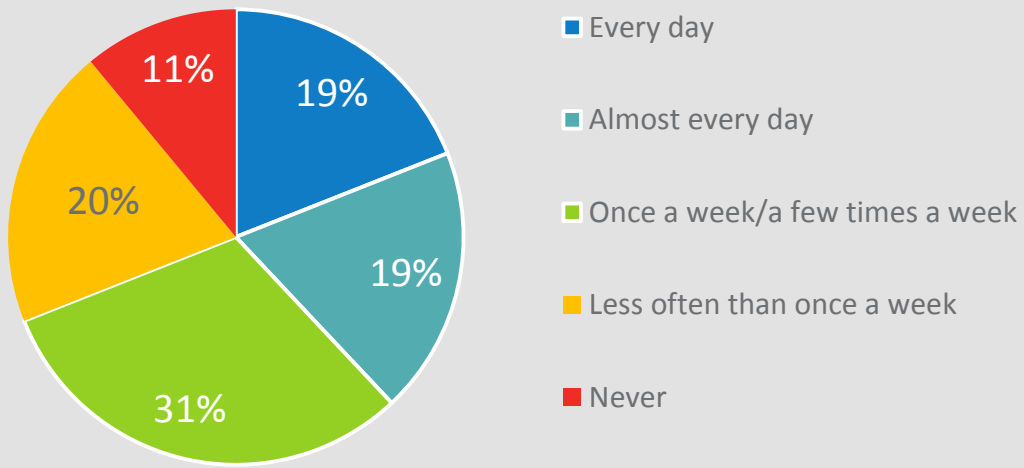
Sample Characteristics: Parents' Reading Attitudes and Behaviors

A majority of parents of children across ages loved reading as a child and say that reading is currently one of their favorite activities. However, only 38% of parents read books for pleasure every day or almost every day, with another 31% reading once a week to a few times a week.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO AGREE WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT PERSONAL READING



READING FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PARENTS READ FOR PLEASURE



Q37. TOP 2 BOX AGREE STRONGLY/AGREE - Please use the scale below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT & READING ALOUD FROM BIRTH

- As was the case in 2016, parents realize that many activities, and especially being talked to, being read books aloud, playing, and being cuddled and snuggled have an extremely positive impact on children's early brain development. Far fewer say playing with electronic toys and watching TV have a positive impact. *(Page 10)*
- About six in ten parents (61%) have had a conversation about how children's brains develop; those from the highest income households are somewhat more likely to have had this conversation. *(Page 11)*
- Three in ten parents (30%) report their child was read aloud to from birth. This is up from 15% in 2016 and increases are seen across ages of children and across household income ranges. The increase points to a growing awareness that reading from birth is important, with more parents acting on this knowledge. *(Page 12)*
- While 30% of parents report their child was read aloud to from birth, only 14% are spending/spent at least 15 minutes a day doing this. However, 14% is a significant improvement from 2016 when only 8% of parents reported that their child was read aloud to from birth for at least 15 minutes daily. Importantly, income gaps in reading from birth behaviors have closed somewhat relative to 2016. *(Page 13)*
- Opportunities exist to promote book giving to babies—starting with baby registries. While books and book sets are common gifts to give and receive, compared to "staples" like baby equipment, layette items and diapers, books are far less likely to be among the items soon-to-be-parents register for. *(Page 14)*

Reading aloud from birth is up relative to 2016, but still has a long way to go to ensure all children reap the benefits of being read aloud to from birth.

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ADVICE ON READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN

- While parents know that reading books aloud positively impacts brain development, only half of parents know that children's brains respond to being read books aloud from birth. *(Page 16)*
- Just over half (56%) of parents have received the advice to read aloud to their children for 15 minutes every day, starting from birth. While this is down from 62% in 2016, income differences have leveled off with lower income parents now being just as likely as higher income parents to have received this advice. *(Page 17)*
- Similar to 2016, parenting books and pediatricians/nurses are among the most common sources from whom parents received the advice to read aloud to their child 15 minutes daily, starting from birth. *(Page 18)*
- When the above advice is received, specific benefits are not always shared or explained. Similar to 2016, six in ten parents say the source of advice explained that reading aloud promotes strong vocabulary and language skills, yet fewer than half say their sources explained the bonding and social benefits of reading aloud. *(Page 19)*
- Despite not always receiving the advice to read aloud from birth, many parents strongly agree that reading aloud makes a positive impact on vocabulary and language skills, listening skills, academic success and readiness for kindergarten. *(Page 20)*
- About half of parents (49%) have given advice to others to read aloud to children. Among those who have done so, advice is most commonly given to close friends, following by family members. *(Page 21)*

Moving beyond generalities to share specifics on the multifaceted benefits of reading aloud from birth may help move the needle on the behavior.

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CURRENT READ-ALOUD TRENDS

- 2018 data shows a slight decrease, from 46% to 42%, in the frequency with which children ages 0-8 are being read aloud to every day. This decrease is driven mostly by parents of children ages 6-8. *(Page 23)*
- Only 30% (of total parents) say their child is currently read aloud to every day, for at least 15 minutes. This too is down slightly from 2016 (34%). *(Page 24)*
- Most parents report their children are read books aloud at home at bedtime (71%) or during a special time designated for reading (40%). Similar to 2016, opportunities to read aloud are being missed, with far fewer parents incorporating reading into other activities or situations like bathtime, playtime or mealtime. *(Page 25)*
- Relative to 2016, parents who read aloud to children only a few times a week or less are more likely to say that they are doing other activities that are just as good as reading aloud (35%) up from 19% in 2016. *(Page 27)*
- Similar to 2016, parents report an average of 61 children's print books in their homes. While very few have zero children's print books in their home, about one in five, across children's ages, only have between one and nine books. *(Page 30)*
- Close to six in ten parents with children who are currently read books aloud at home say they do not know at what age they will stop reading books aloud to their child. Only about two in ten say they'll stop before the age of 9. *(Page 31)*

Although parents realize how important it is to read books aloud to their children, there are still opportunities to read aloud more frequently, and in different situations

EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT & READING ALOUD FROM BIRTH

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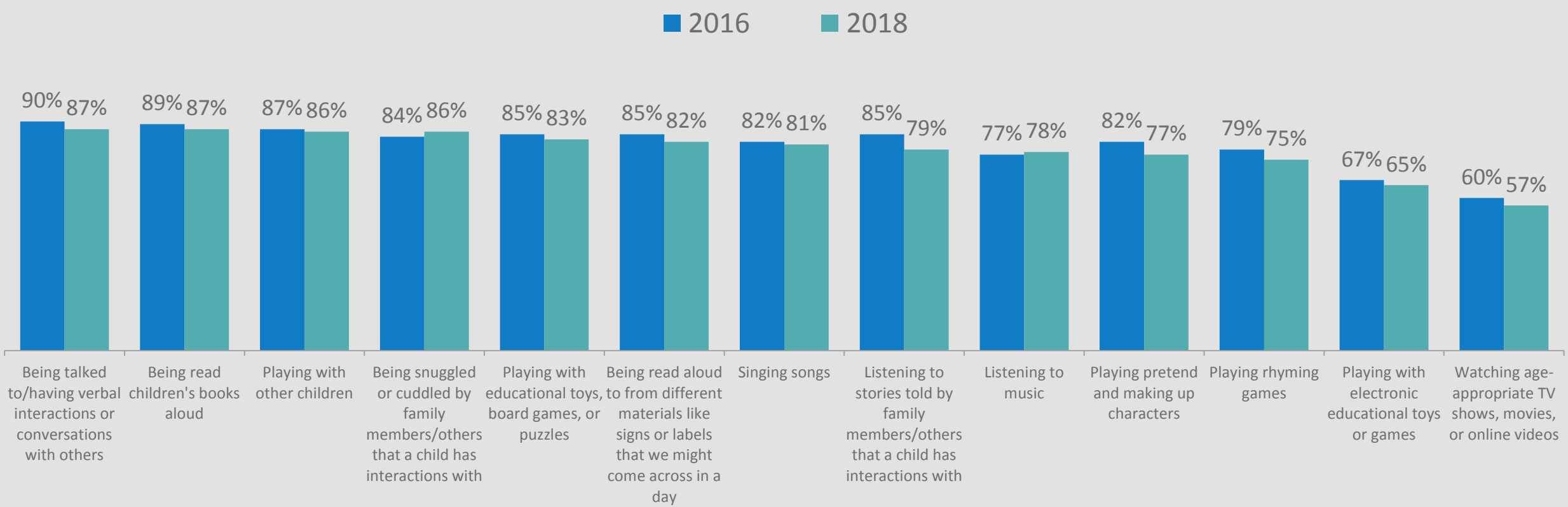
As was the case in 2016, parents realize that many activities, and especially being talked to, being read books aloud, playing, and being cuddled and snuggled have an extremely positive impact on children's early brain development. Far fewer say playing with electronic toys and watching TV have a positive impact.

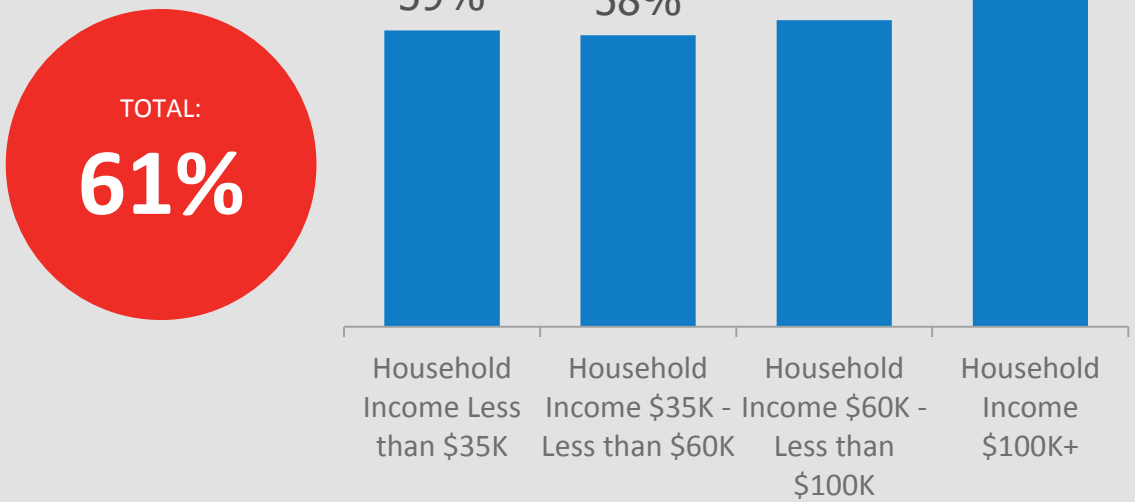
ACTIVITIES RESPONDENTS FEEL HAVE A VERY OR EXTREMELY POSITIVE IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



Q5. How much of an impact do you think each of the following activities has on children's early brain development? For purposes of this survey, when we say "brain development" we mean the things that happen in the brain that make academic, social and emotional learning possible.

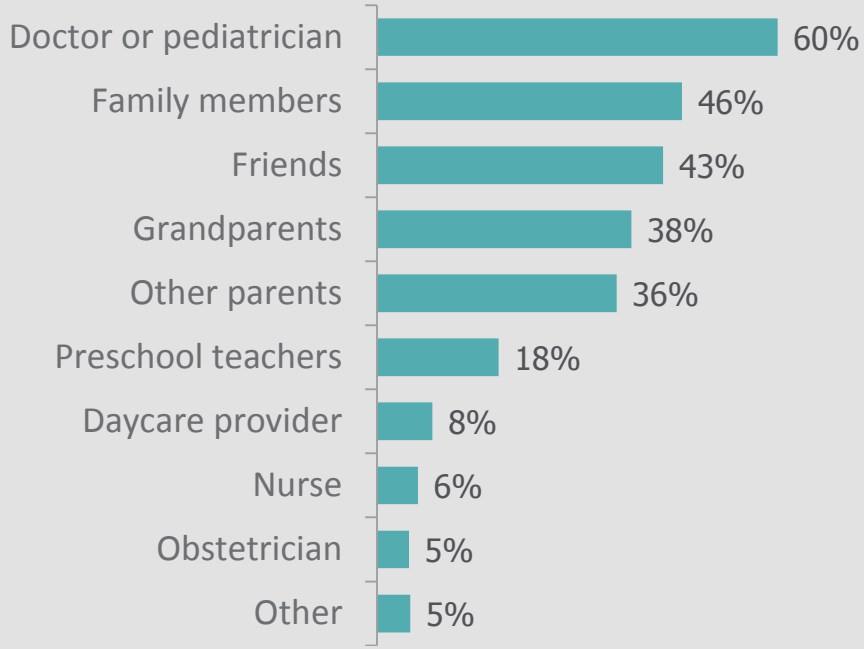
About six in ten parents (61%) have had a conversation about how children's brains develop; those from the highest income households are somewhat more likely to have had this conversation.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO HAVE HAD A CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW CHILDREN'S BRAINS DEVELOP



PEOPLE WITH WHOM PARENTS HAVE HAD A CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW CHILDREN'S BRAINS DEVELOP

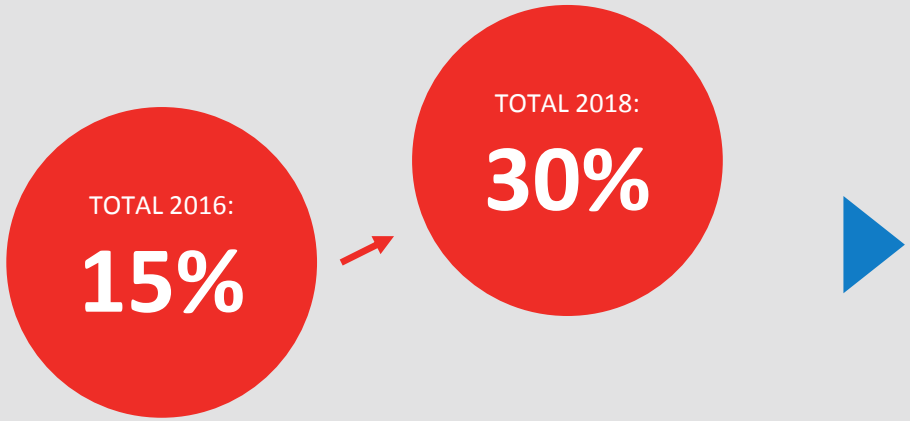
(Base: Have Had a Conversation About How Children's Brains Develop)

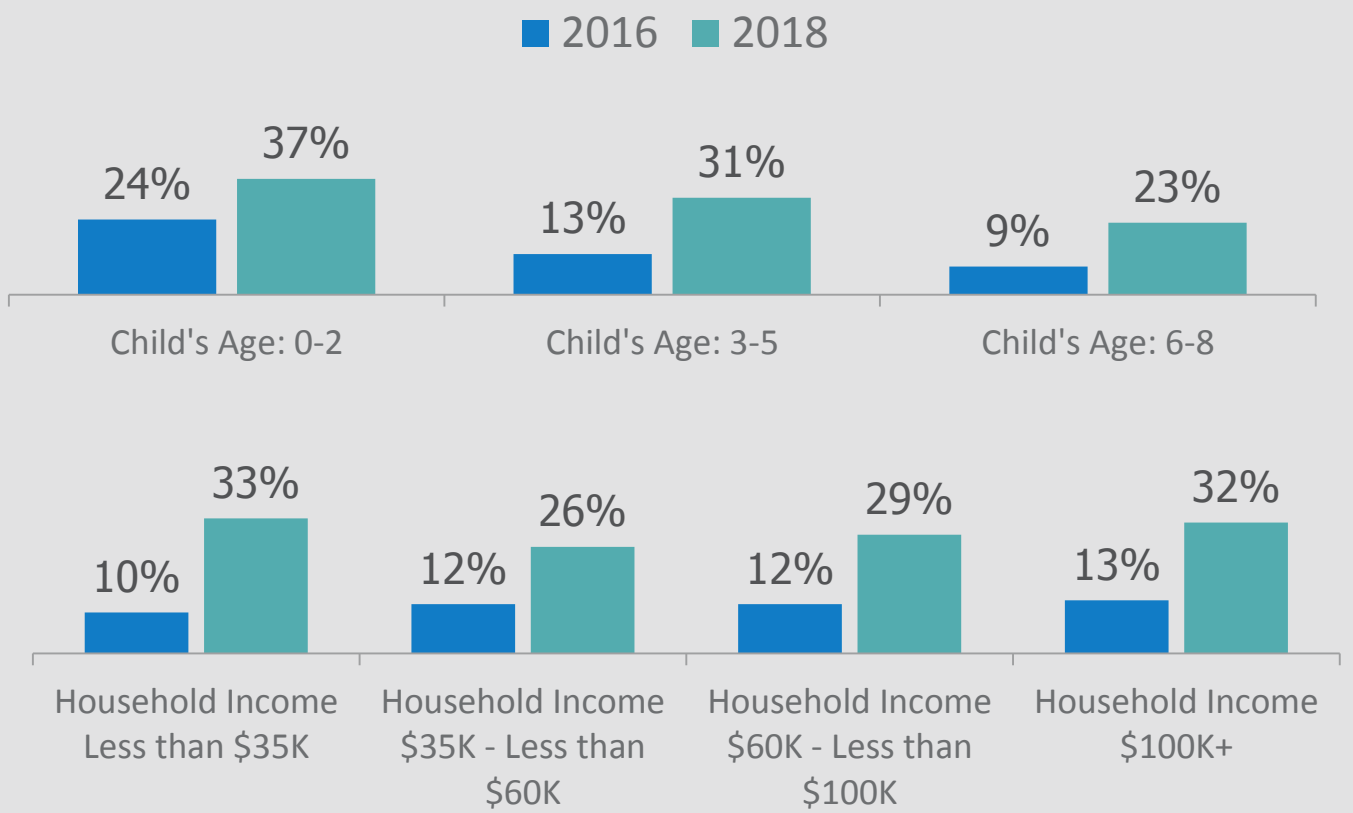


Q6A. Have you ever had a conversation with a friend, family member, childcare or medical professional or other adult about how children's brains develop?

30% of parents report their child was read aloud to from birth. This is up significantly from 2016, across ages. This may indicate a growing awareness that reading from birth is important, with more parents of older children recalling they read aloud from birth this year than recalled the same in 2016.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO SAY THEIR CHILD WAS READ ALOUD TO FROM BIRTH

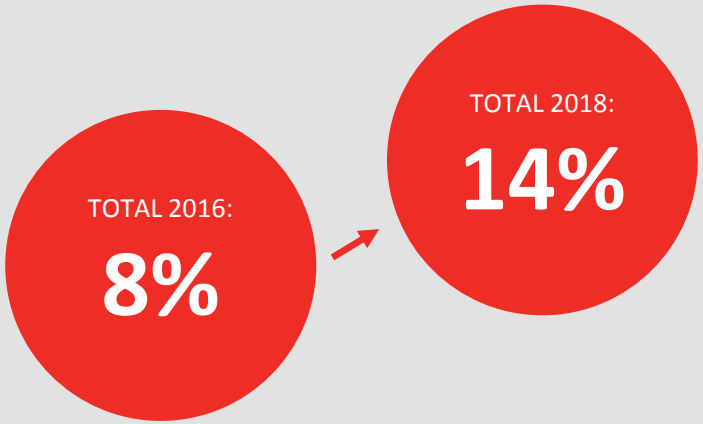


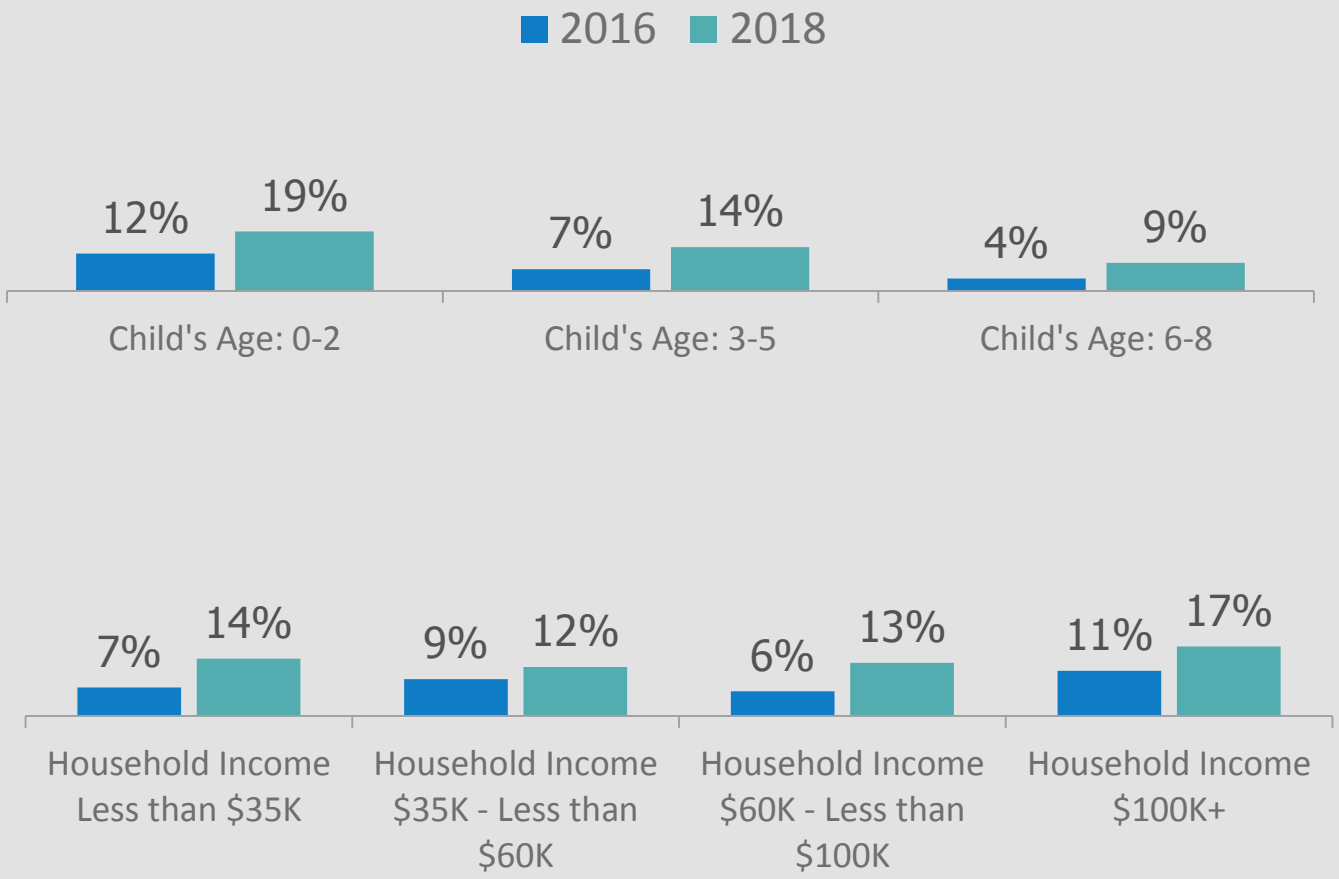


Q14. How old was your child when you or another family member started reading books aloud to him/her at home?

While only 14% of parents report reading aloud daily for 15 minutes from birth, this is an improvement from 2016 when only 8% of parents reported this to be the case. Further, income gaps have closed somewhat relative to 2016.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO SAY CHILD IS READ ALOUD TO EVERY DAY, FOR AT LEAST 15 MINUTES, STARTING FROM BIRTH

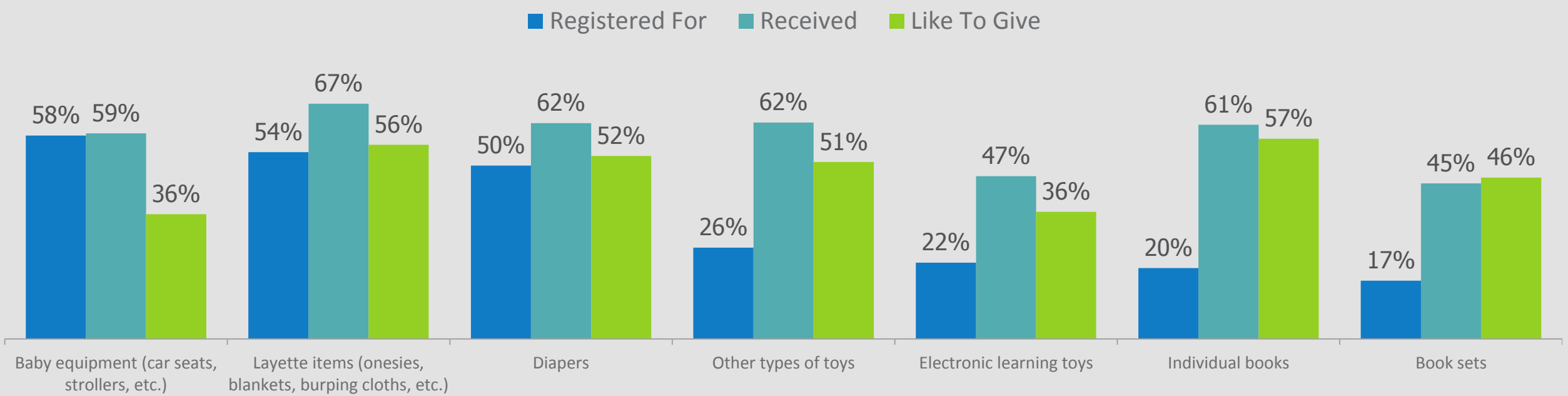




Q9. When you think about all the people in your home who read books aloud to your child, how often would you say your child is read books aloud at home?
Q12. When books are read aloud to your child, about how many minutes do you or another family member spend reading?
Q14. How old was your child when you or another family member started reading books aloud to him/her at home?

While books or book sets are common gifts to give and receive, compared to “staples” like baby equipment, layette items and diapers, books are far less likely to be among the items soon-to-be-parents register for.

GIFTS REGISTERED FOR/RECEIVED/LIKE TO GIVE



Q3. For this question, we’d like to know about the types of gifts you received for your child and the types of gifts you like to give to babies. In the first column, please say, to the best of your recollection, which of the following were received as a baby shower gift or a gift at or around the time your child was born. In the second column, please say which you like to give as baby shower or new baby gifts.
Q4. And to the best of your recollection, which of the following are things that you/your spouse registered for prior to your child’s birth?

ADVICE ON READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN

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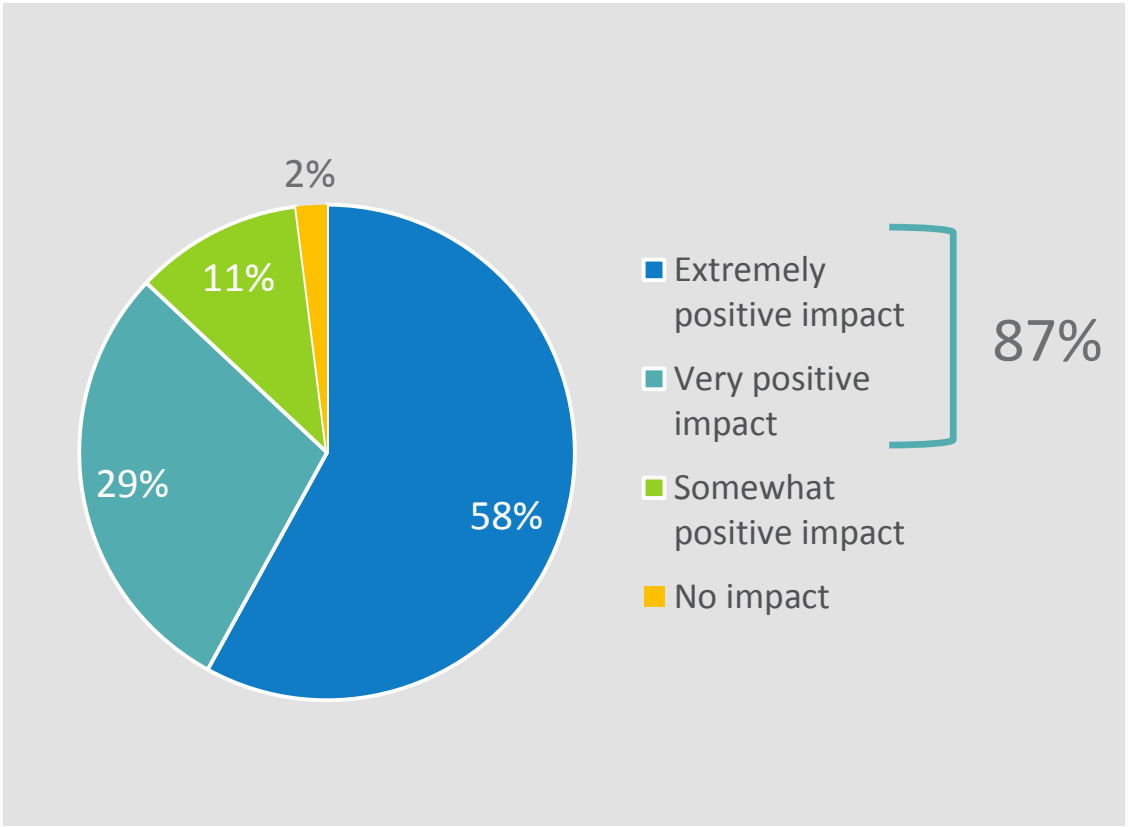
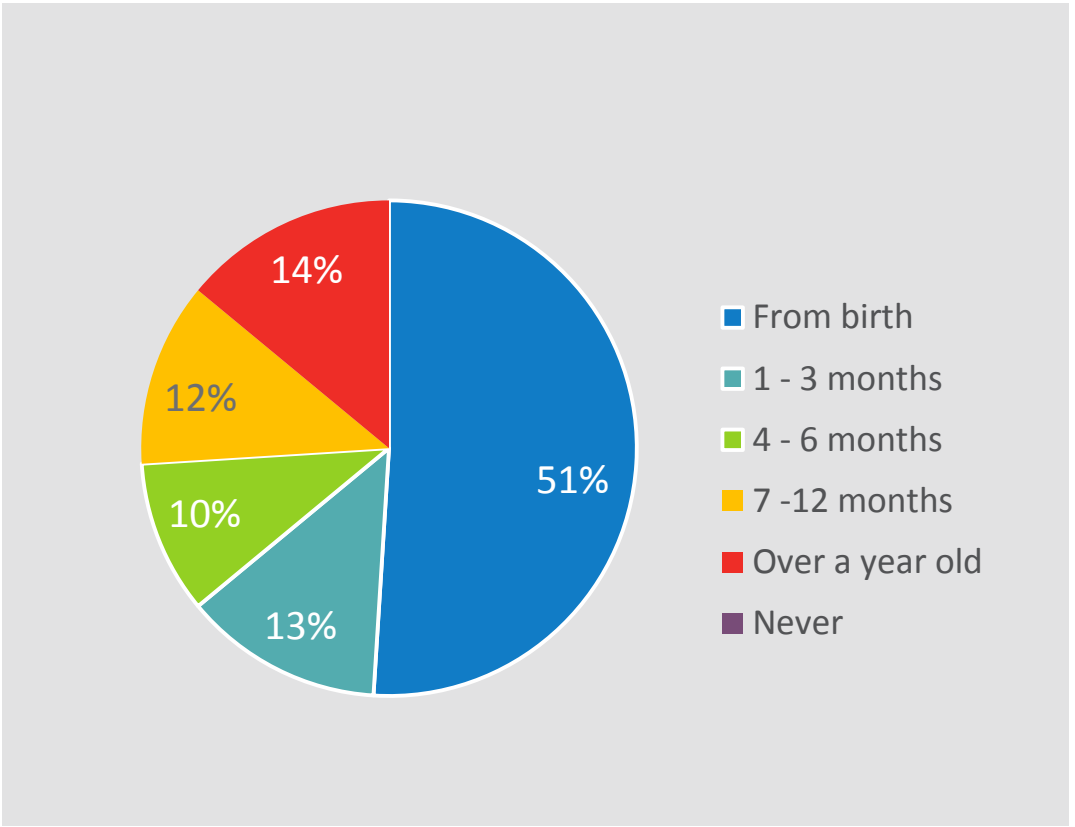
While parents know that reading books aloud positively impacts brain development, only half of parents know that children's brains respond to being read books aloud from birth.

IMPACT PARENTS THINK READING BOOKS ALOUD HAS ON CHILDREN'S EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT



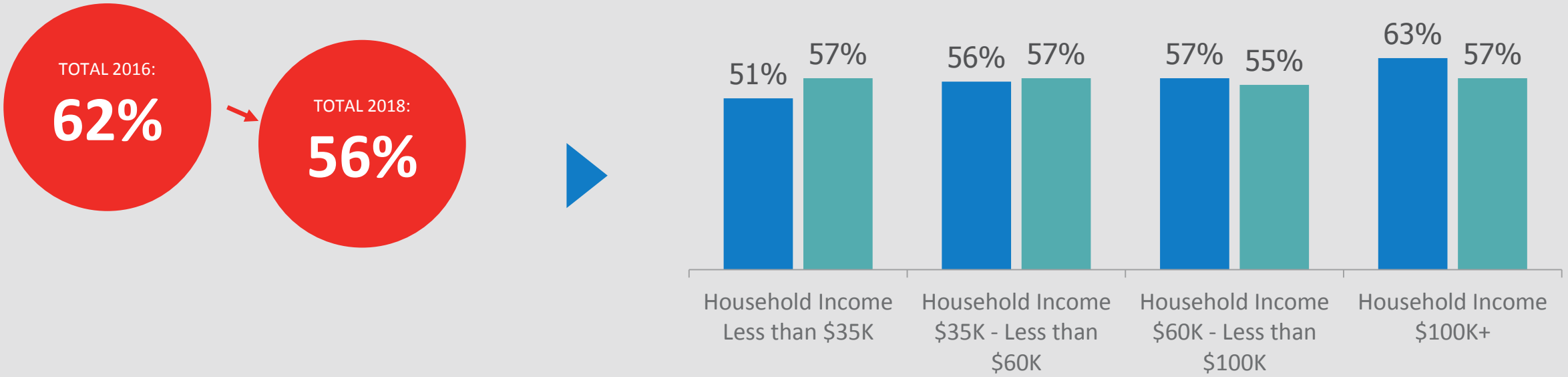
AGE AT WHICH PARENTS BELIEVE CHILDREN'S BRAINS BEGIN RESPONDING TO BEING READ BOOKS ALOUD



Q5. How much of an impact do you think each of the following activities has on children's early brain development? For purposes of this survey, when we say "brain development" we mean the things that happen in the brain that make academic, social and emotional learning possible.
Q6c. At what age do you believe children's brains begin responding to being read books aloud?

Just over half (56%) of parents have received the advice to read aloud to their children 15 minutes every day, starting from birth. While this is down from 62% in 2016, income differences have leveled off with lower income parents now being just as likely as higher income parents to have received this advice.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED ADVICE TO READ ALOUD TO THEIR CHILDREN 15 MINUTES EACH DAY, STARTING FROM BIRTH

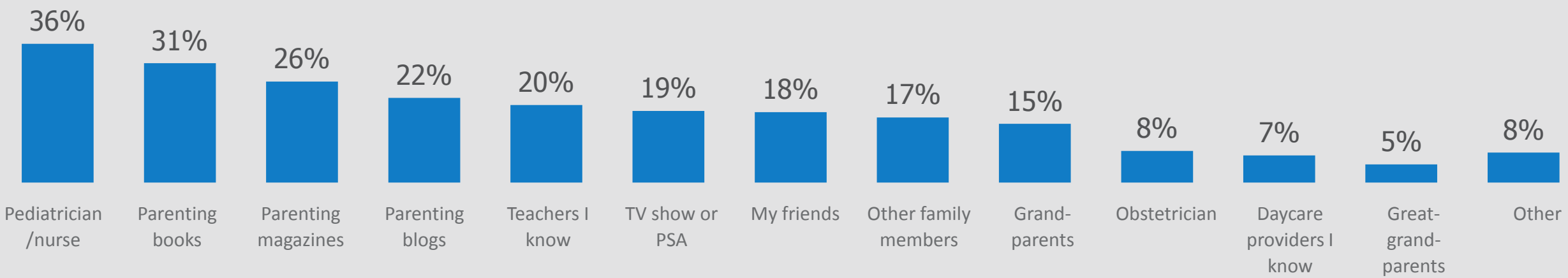


Q28. Have you ever received or seen the advice to read aloud to your child/future children for 15 minutes every day, beginning at birth?

Similar to 2016, parenting books and pediatricians/nurses are among the most common sources from whom parents received the advice to read aloud to their child 15 minutes daily, starting from birth.

SOURCES OF ADVICE TO READ ALOUD TO CHILD 15 MINUTES DAILY, BEGINNING AT BIRTH

(Among Those Who Received Advice to Read Aloud to Child)

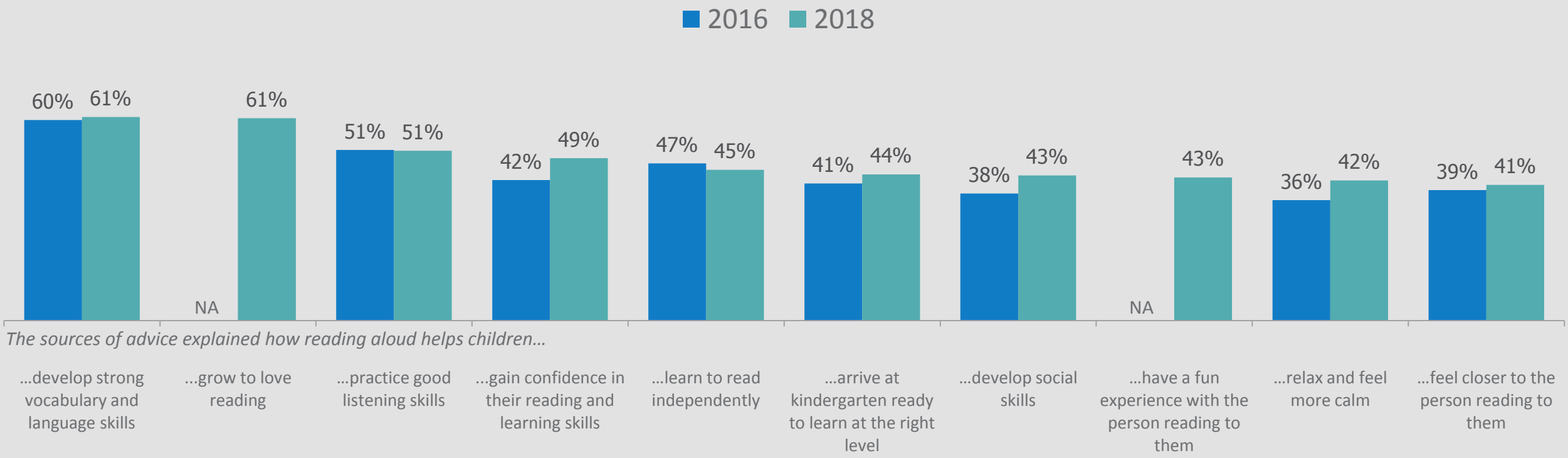


Q29. Who gave you the advice or where did you see the advice to read aloud to your child 15 minutes every day, beginning at birth? BASE: RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED ADVICE TO READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN FROM BIRTH

When advice is received to read aloud from birth, specific benefits are not always shared or explained. Similar to 2016, six in ten parents say the source of advice to read aloud from birth explained that reading aloud promotes strong vocabulary and language skills, yet fewer than half say their sources explained the bonding and social benefits of reading aloud.

BENEFITS THAT WERE DISCUSSED WHEN RECEIVING ADVICE TO READ ALOUD FROM BIRTH

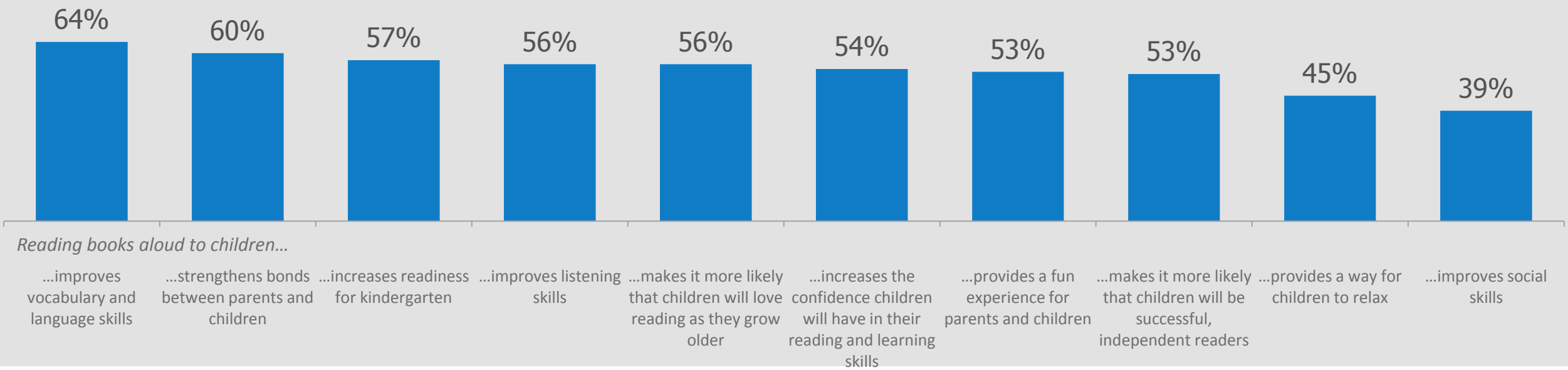
(Among Those Who Received Advice to Read Aloud from Birth)



Q30. Did the source or sources of advice to read aloud to your child explain any of the following benefits of reading aloud for brain development, social skills, or bonding? BASE: RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED ADVICE TO READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN FROM BIRTH

Despite not always receiving the advice to read aloud from birth, many parents *strongly* agree that reading aloud makes a positive impact on vocabulary and language skills, listening skills, academic success and readiness for kindergarten. When both “agree” and “strongly agree” are considered, all the percentages below rise to about nine in 10 and higher.

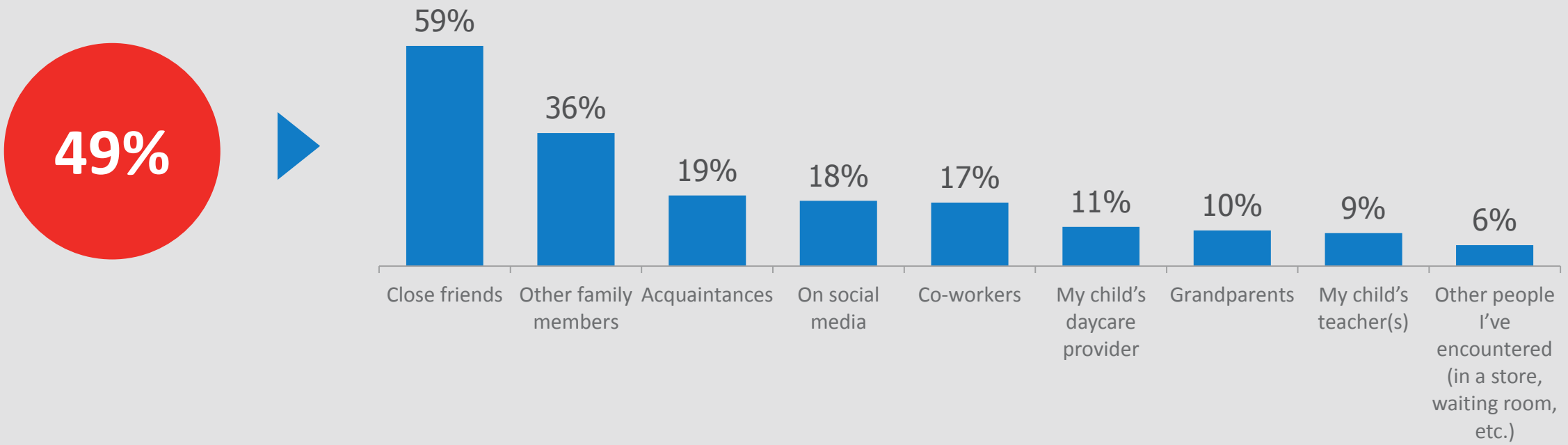
PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO STRONGLY AGREE THAT EACH IS A BENEFIT OF READING BOOKS ALOUD TO CHILDREN



Q19. Whether or not you currently read books aloud to your child, please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree that reading books aloud to children results in each of the following.

About half of parents (49%) have given advice to others to read aloud to children. Among those who have done so, advice is most commonly given to close friends, followed by family members.

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO HAVE GIVEN ADVICE TO OTHERS TO READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN, AND TO WHOM THEY HAVE GIVEN THIS ADVICE

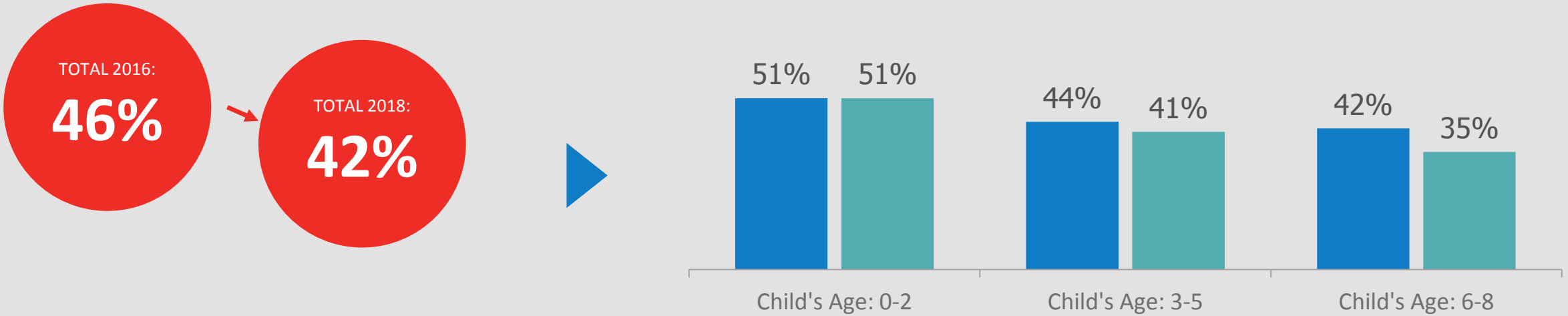


Q30a. Whether or not you currently read books aloud to your child, have you ever given someone advice to read aloud to their child(ren)?
Q30b. And to whom did you give this advice? BASE: THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN ADVICE

CURRENT READ-ALOUD TRENDS

There is a slight decrease in the frequency with which children are being read aloud to every day. This is down among the total sample, from 46% to 42%, driven mostly by parents of children ages 6-8.

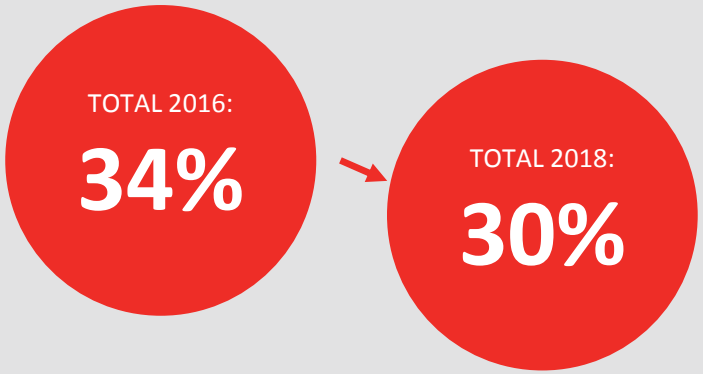
PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO SAY CHILD IS CURRENTLY READ ALOUD TO EVERY DAY

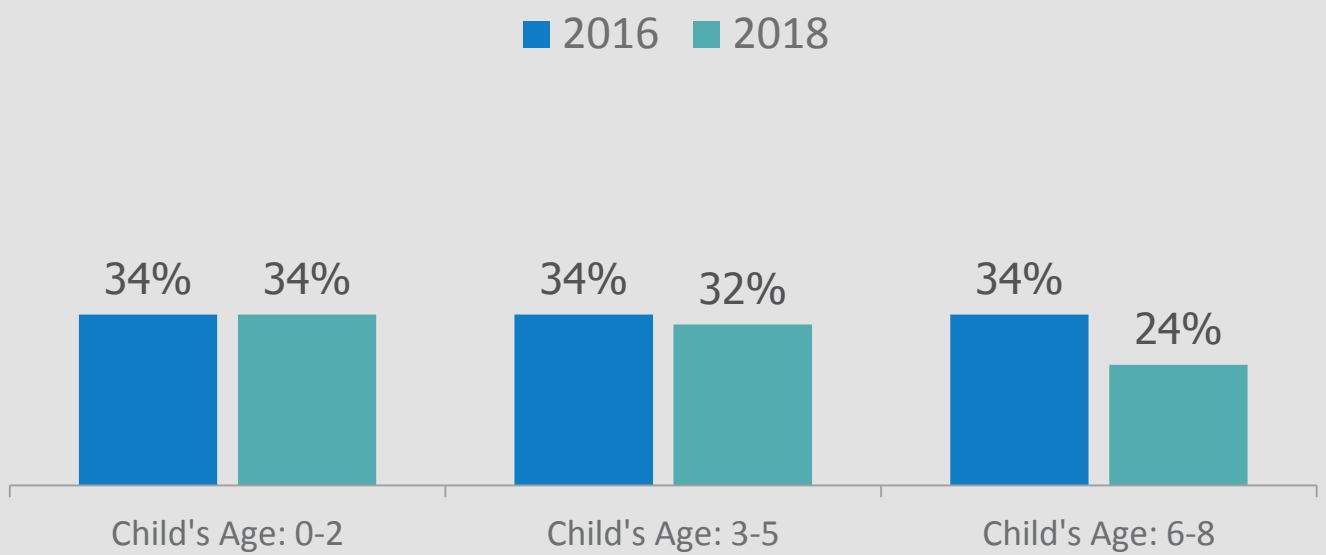


Q9. When you think about all the people in your home who read books aloud to your child, how often would you say your child is read books aloud at home?

Only 30% (of total parents) say their child is currently read aloud to every day, for at least 15 minutes. This too is down slightly from 2016 (34%).

PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO SAY CHILD IS CURRENTLY READ ALOUD TO EVERY DAY, FOR AT LEAST 15 MINUTES



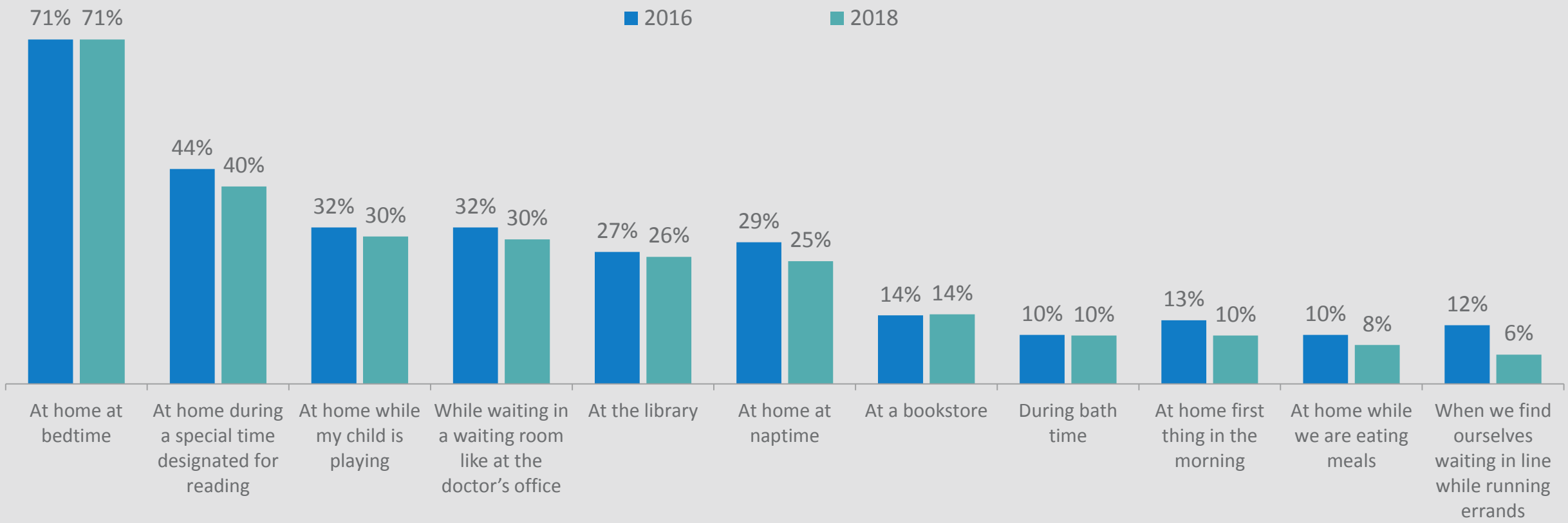


Q9. When you think about all the people in your home who read books aloud to your child, how often would you say your child is read books aloud at home?
Q12. When books are read aloud to your child, about how many minutes do you or another family member spend reading?

Most parents report their children are read books aloud at home at bedtime or during a special time designated for reading. Similar to 2016, opportunities to read aloud are being missed, with far fewer parents incorporating reading into other activities or situations.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD

(Base: Parents Who Report Child is Read Books Aloud at Home)

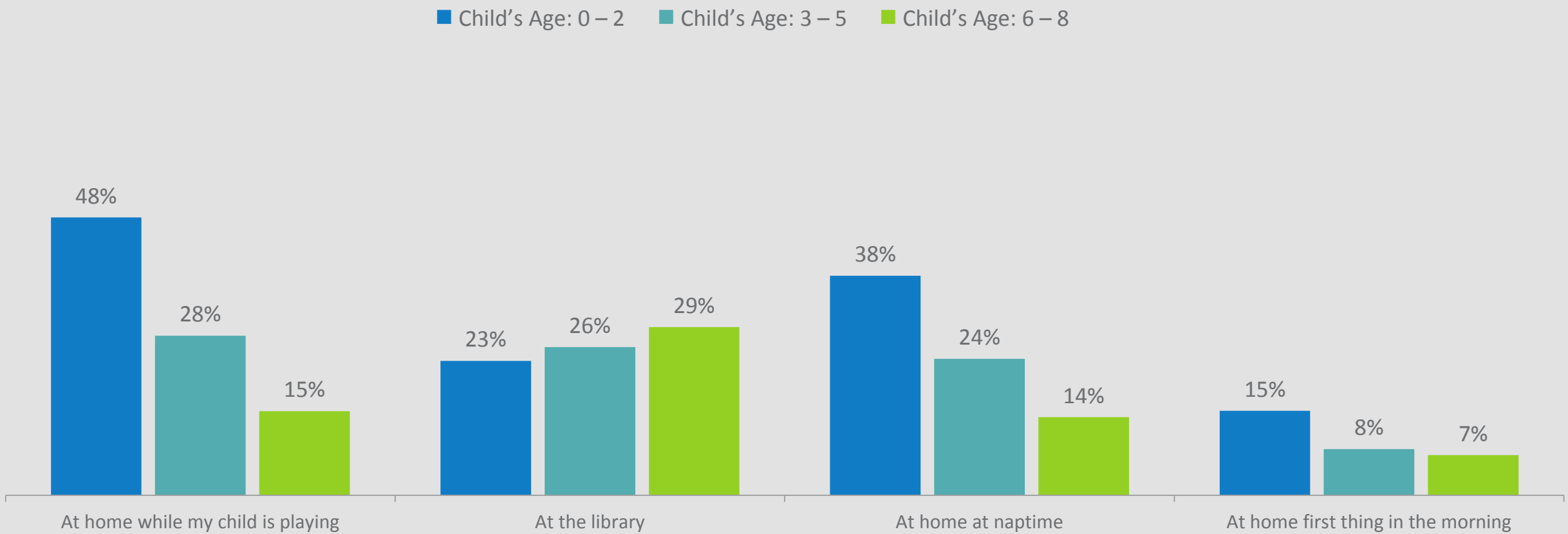


Q21. In which places or situations do you or another adult read aloud to your child? BASE: PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD

Most differences in the situations where reading aloud occurs are driven by differences in the child rearing habits and situations across children's ages. Babies and toddlers are more likely to be read to at home during playtime, naptime and first thing in the morning.

SITUATIONS IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD, DIFFERENCES ACROSS AGE GROUPS

(Base: Parents Who Report Child is Read Books Aloud at Home)

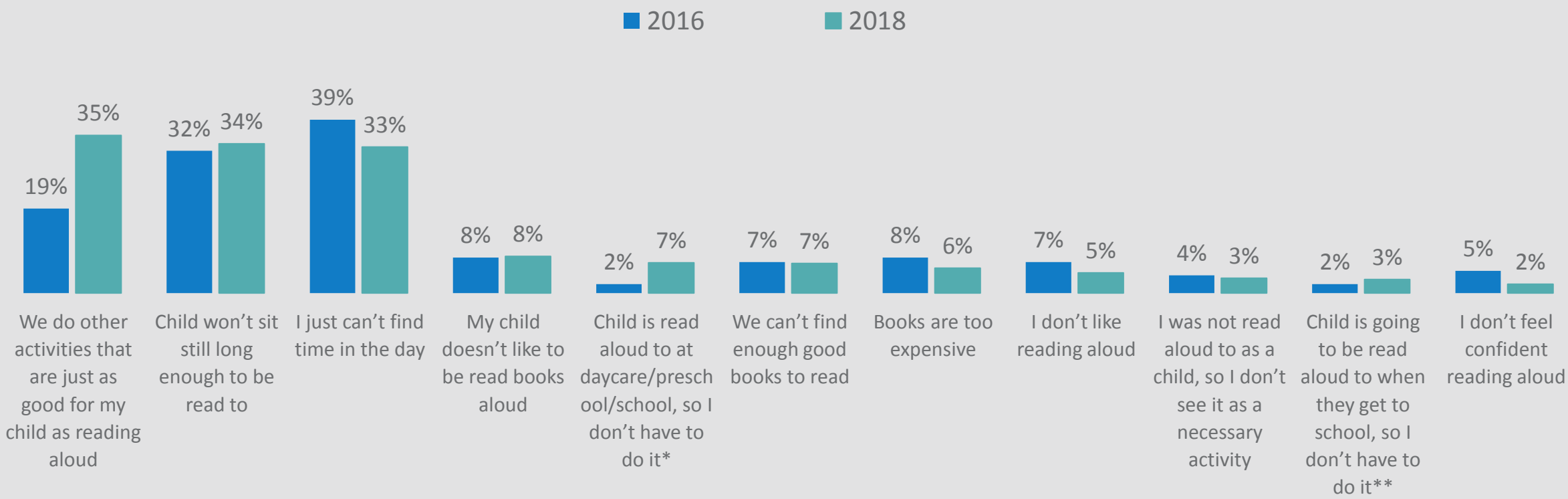


Q21. In which places or situations do you or another adult read aloud to your child? BASE: PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD

Relative to 2016, parents who read aloud to children only a few times a week or less are more likely to say that they are doing other activities that are just as good as reading aloud. Other barriers to reading aloud are relatively steady from 2016.

FACTORS THAT PREVENT PARENTS FROM READING BOOKS ALOUD TO THEIR CHILDREN MORE OFTEN

(Base: Parents Who Report Their Children Are Not Read Books Aloud or Read Aloud to Less Often Than Almost Every Day)



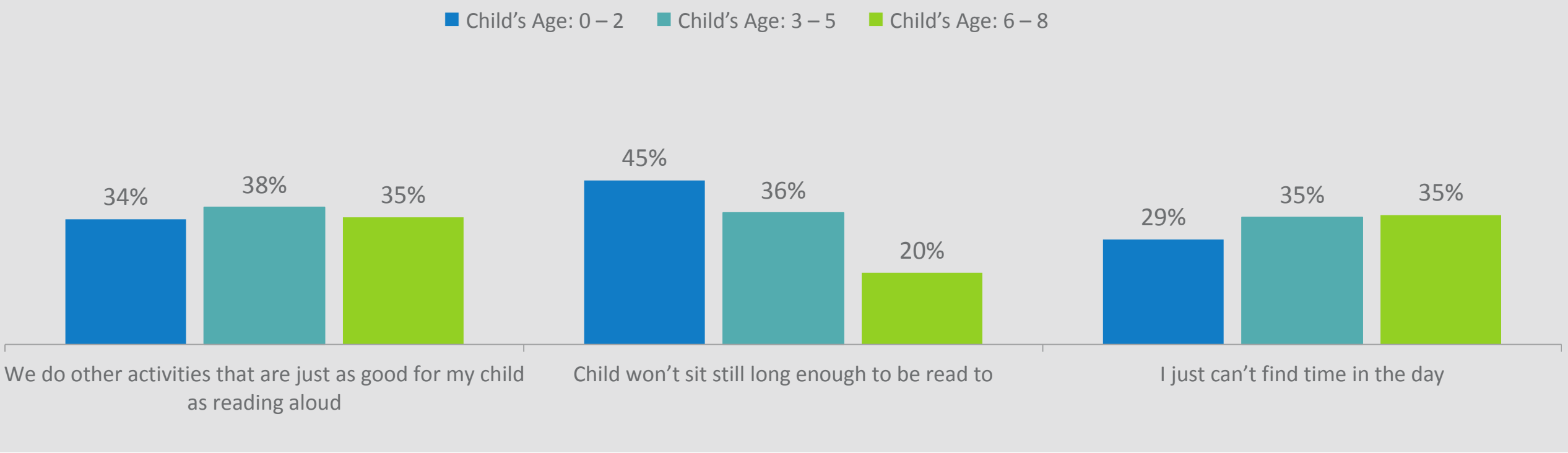
Q18. Which of the following are reasons that prevent you or another adult from reading books aloud to your child more? BASE: PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD LESS OFTEN THAN ALMOST EVERY DAY

*Among parents with children in school or preschool ** Among parents with children not in school or preschool

As might be expected, the younger a child is, the more likely it is that “child won’t sit still” is a factor that prevents an increase in read aloud time. Parents of children ages 3-8 are more likely than parents of babies and toddlers to say they cannot find time in the day to read aloud to their children more often.

TOP FACTORS THAT PREVENT PARENTS FROM READING BOOKS ALOUD TO THEIR CHILDREN MORE OFTEN, BY AGE OF CHILD

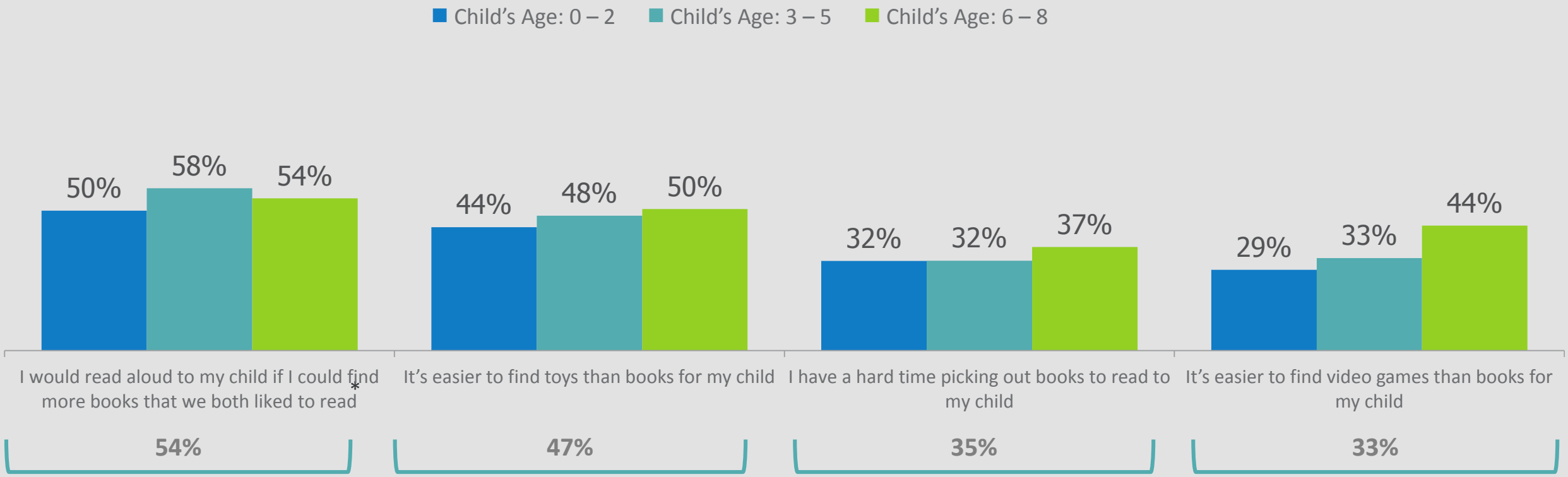
(Base: Parents Who Report Their Children Are Not Read Books Aloud or Read Aloud to Less Often Than Almost Every Day)



Q18. Which of the following are reasons that prevent you or another adult from reading books aloud to your child more? BASE: PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD LESS OFTEN THAN ALMOST EVERY DAY

For many parents, difficulty in finding books to read to their child creates a barrier to read aloud time.

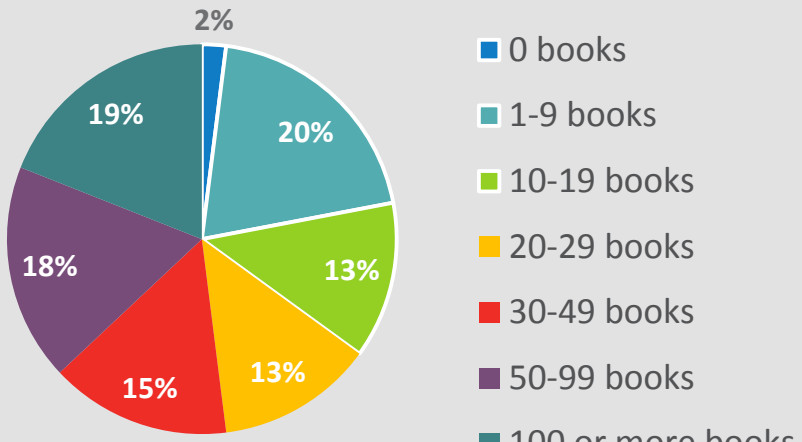
PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT FINDING BOOKS TO READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN



Q37. TOP 2 BOX AGREE STRONGLY/AGREE - Please use the scale below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
*Among parents with children who are read books aloud at home

Similar to 2016, parents report an average of 61 children's print books in their homes. While very few have zero children's print books in their home, about one in five, across children's ages, only have between one and nine books. Children's books are most commonly acquired from bookstores or as gifts.

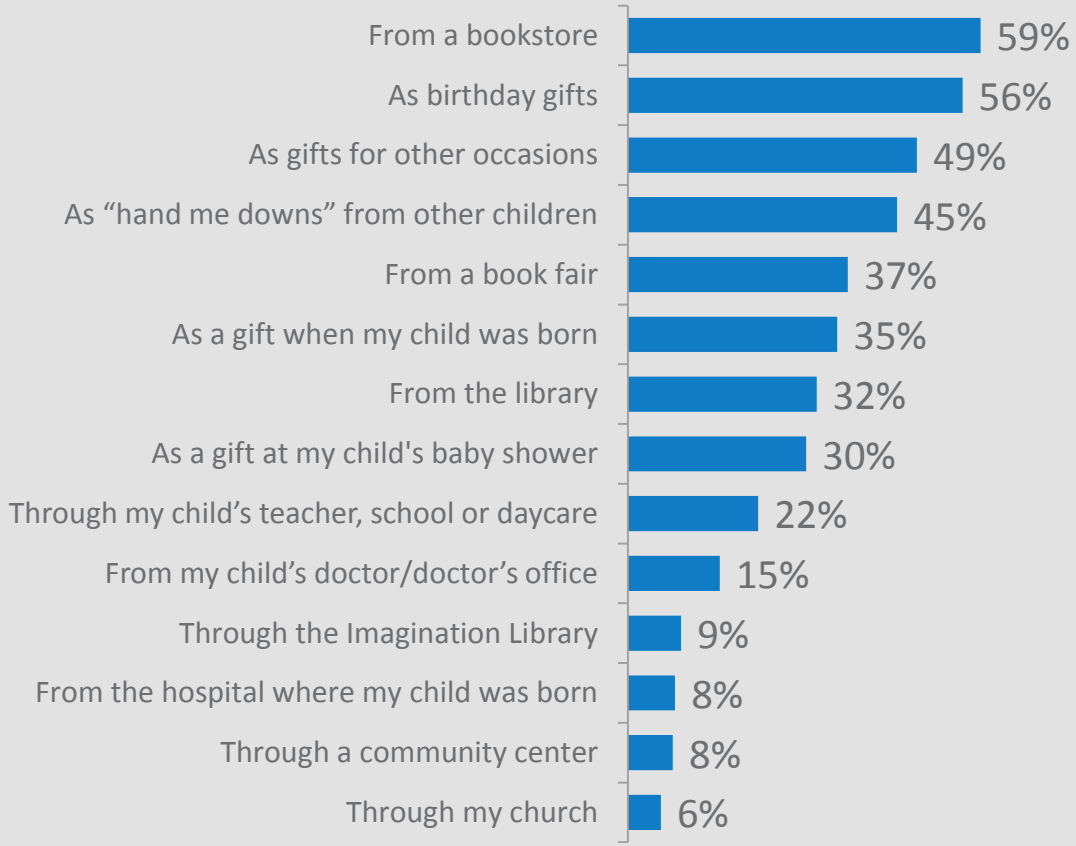
NUMBER OF CHILDREN'S PRINT BOOKS IN HOME



On average, parents report having 61 children's print books in their home

SOURCES FROM WHICH BOOKS ARE ACQUIRED

(Among Parents with Children's Books in Their Homes)

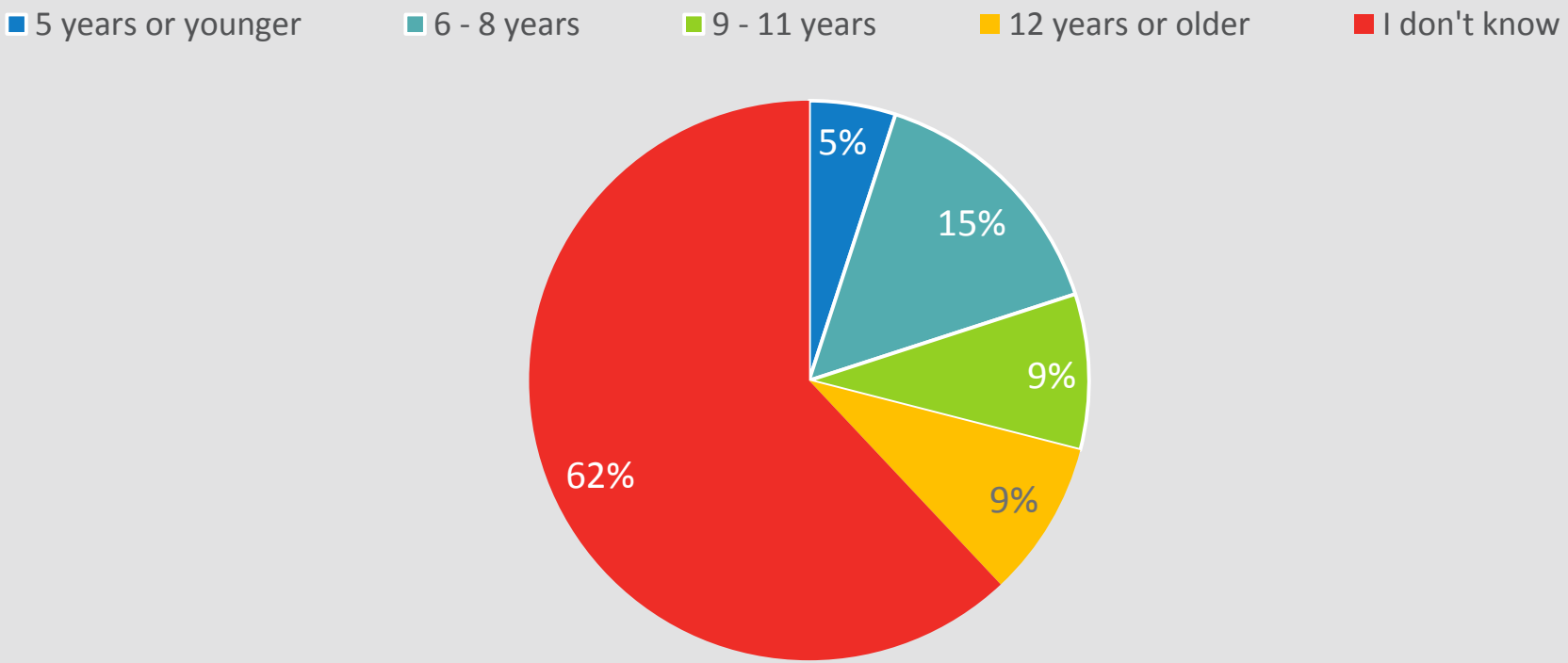


Q34A/B. How many print books do you have in your home? /How many of these books are children's books?
Q36. Thinking specifically about the children's books you have in your home for [INSERT NAME], in which of the following ways or places were [his/her] books acquired or purchased.
BASE: PARENTS WHO REPORT THERE ARE PRINT BOOKS OR EBOOKS IN THE HOME

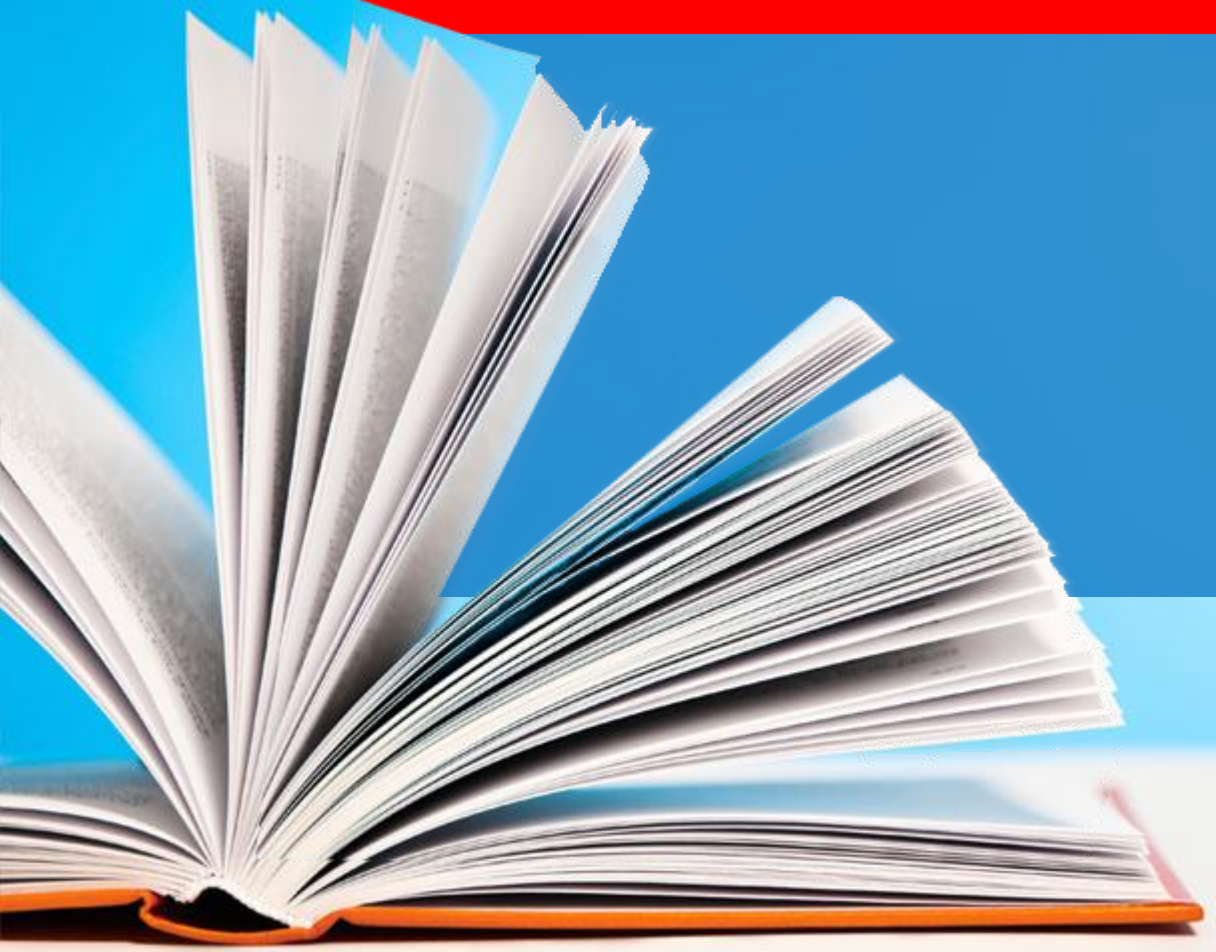
Close to six in ten parents with children who are currently read books aloud at home say they do not know at what age they will stop reading books aloud to their child. Only about two in ten say they will stop before the age of 9.

AGE AT WHICH PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN WILL NO LONGER BE READ BOOKS ALOUD AT HOME

(Base: Parents Who Report Child is Read Books Aloud at Home)



Q22A. At what age do you plan to stop reading books aloud to your child? BASE: PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE READ BOOKS ALOUD



Questions and Comments?

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