PDG B-5 2021 Family Survey:
Ready Region 7 - Capital Area

STUDY OF
EARLY EDUCATION
THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Community-Level Search Process Findings

This profile summarizes community-level information from the 2021 PDG B-5 Family Survey to match the state-level takeaways presented at the Ready Regions, Mixed Delivery, & PDG TA Session on March 31, 2022. Due to small sample sizes in some PDG communities, results are presented by Ready Region.

Who took the survey?

In November 2021, families with children ages 0-5 but not yet in kindergarten at sites participating in the PDG were invited to take a short survey about their experiences finding and using care for their youngest child. In total, 3,909 families in Virginia completed the survey, including 600 families in Ready Region Capital Area, which includes the Alexandria and Fairfax PDG communities. These findings reflect only the experiences of families who participated in the survey and may not accurately represent all families across the state or in this community.

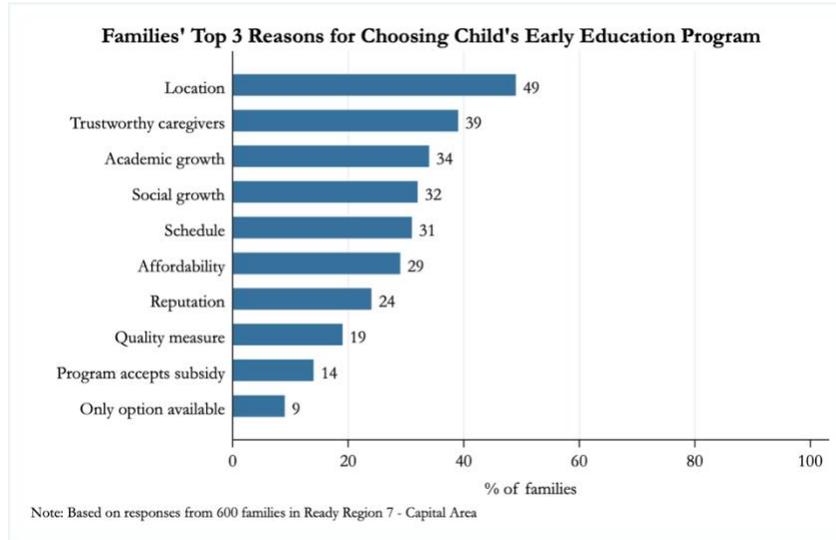| Household Characteristic		Southwest Sample	Full PDG Sample
Household Income	Household under 150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	17%	14%
	Household between 150-300% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	44%	45%
	Household over 300% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	39%	41%
	Primary household language not English	36%	11%
Care Type	School-based program	40%	47%
	Center-based program	29%	36%
	Home-based program	29%	14%
	Needs care during nontraditional hours	37%	32%

Child Characteristic		Southwest Sample	Full PDG Sample
Age	Age 2 and under	39%	30%
	3 years old	19%	21%
	4 or 5 years old, not in kindergarten	42%	49%
Special Needs	Has IFSP or IEP	8%	12%
	Evaluated but not eligible	16%	10%
	May need an evaluation	8%	5%
Race/Ethnicity	Black, non-Hispanic	22%	22%
	Hispanic	27%	11%
	White, non-Hispanic	36%	57%
	Other / multiracial	14%	10%

Note: Household FPL group is estimated using household size and reported income range. Nontraditional hours are defined as needing care before 7 am or after 6 pm on weekdays, overnight care, and/or care on weekends. The survey asked families about the race/ethnicity of their children using the same approach as the Virginia Department of Education. It asked whether families identified their children as one or more race/ethnicity groups, including American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or other Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, White, or any other race/ethnicity. In the table above, we show the percentages for the largest race/ethnicity groups.
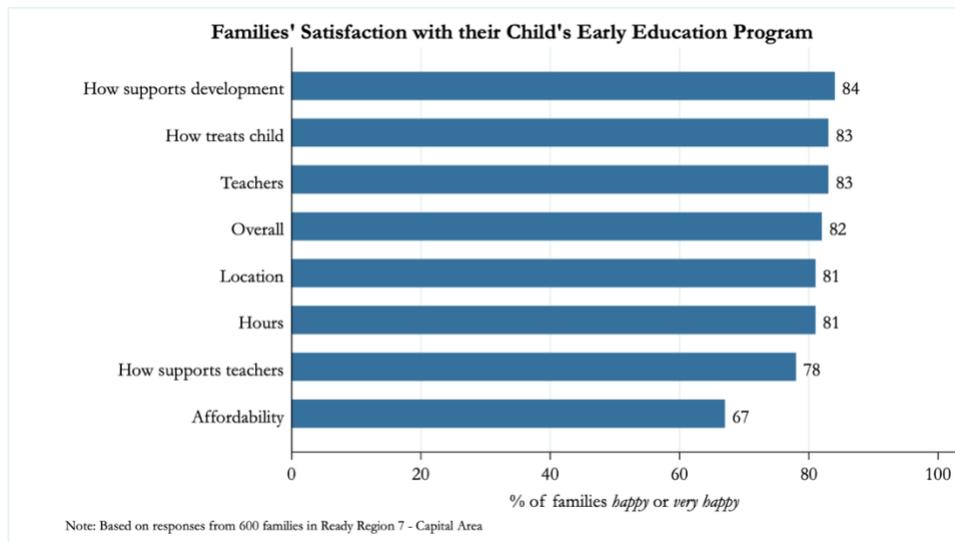
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Reasons for choosing early care & education programs

Families reported prioritizing both convenience and learning opportunities when choosing an early care and education program for their child. As shown in the graph below, families named location, trustworthy caregivers, and academic growth as the top reasons for choosing their child's program.

Families' Top 3 Reasons for Choosing Child's Early Education Program

Reason	% of families
Location	49
Trustworthy caregivers	39
Academic growth	34
Social growth	32
Schedule	31
Affordability	29
Reputation	24
Quality measure	19
Program accepts subsidy	14
Only option available	9

Note: Based on responses from 600 families in Ready Region 7 - Capital Area

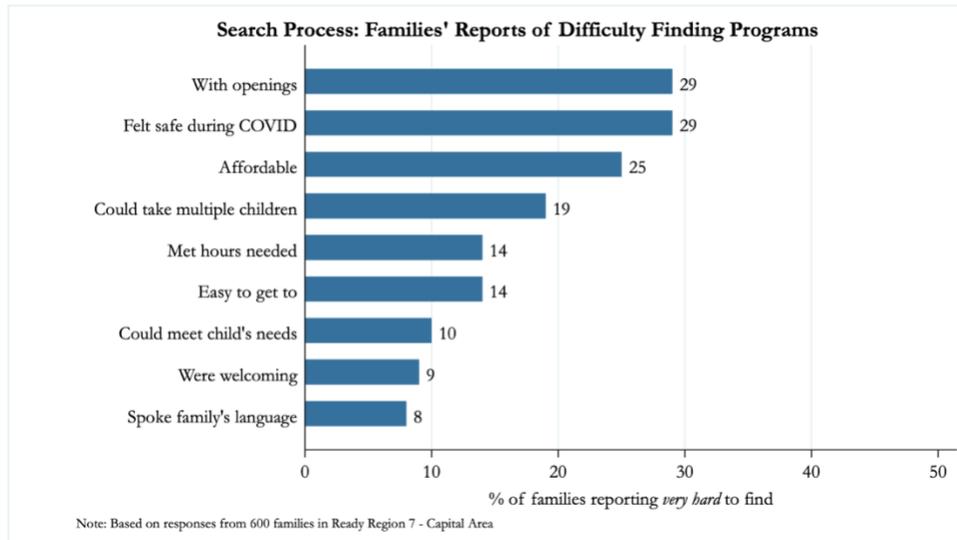## Satisfaction with early care & education programs

When asked about their satisfaction with their child's current early care and education program, most families reported that they are happy with key aspects, including the way the program is supporting their child's academic and social development, how their child is treated, and their child's caregivers/teachers.

Families' Satisfaction with their Child's Early Education Program

Aspect	% of families happy or very happy
How supports development	84
How treats child	83
Teachers	83
Overall	82
Location	81
Hours	81
How supports teachers	78
Affordability	67

Note: Based on responses from 600 families in Ready Region 7 - Capital Area

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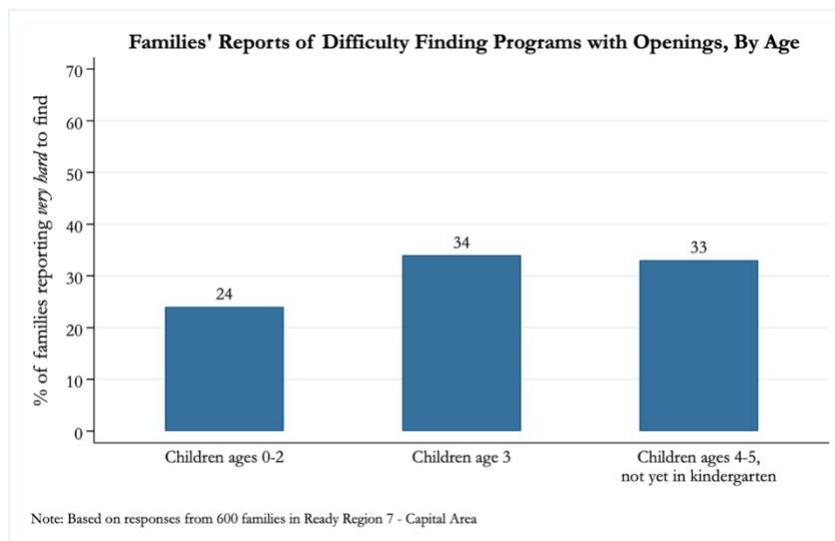## Difficulty finding early care & education programs

Despite satisfaction with key aspects of their child's program, many families reported that it was very hard to find programs that could meet their needs. As shown in the graph below, families marked that it was particularly hard to find programs that had openings, felt safe during COVID, and were affordable.

Search Process: Families' Reports of Difficulty Finding Programs

Category	%
With openings	29
Felt safe during COVID	29
Affordable	25
Could take multiple children	19
Met hours needed	14
Easy to get to	14
Could meet child's needs	10
Were welcoming	9
Spoke family's language	8

% of families reporting *very hard* to find

Note: Based on responses from 600 families in Ready Region 7 - Capital Area
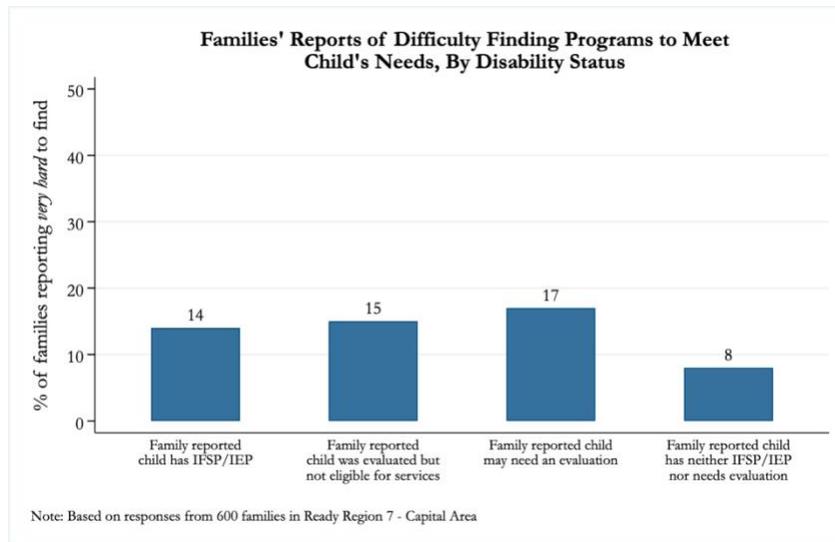
Challenges finding programs by subgroups

Challenges with finding programs differed by key family and child characteristics, including child's age, child's disability status, and the language the family speaks at home.

Age. Families with older children were slightly more likely to report that it was very hard to find a program that had openings.

Families' Reports of Difficulty Finding Programs with Openings, By Age

	% of families reporting *very hard* to find
Children ages 0-2	24
Children age 3	34
Children ages 4-5, not yet in kindergarten	33

Note: Based on responses from 600 families in Ready Region 7 - Capital Area

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Disability status. Families who reported that their child had a diagnosed disability or that they had concerns about their child's development were more likely to report that it was very hard to find a program that met their child's needs.

Note: Based on responses from 600 families in Ready Region 7 - Capital Area

Language. Across languages, some families reported difficulties finding a program with staff who speak their primary language.

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