Opinion poll: Small businesses support policy solutions to address our nation’s childcare challenges

Released: April 9, 2024

Download full report from our website: https://smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/workforce/opinion-poll-small-businesses-support-policy-solutions-address-our-nation's-childcare-challenges

Methodology
This poll reflects a survey of 566 small business owners nationwide who are parents and/or have employees with children. The poll was an online survey conducted Jan. 30-31, 2024 via SurveyMonkey’s online panel. The margin of error is +/- 4% at 95% confidence level.

Survey Toplines

1. How many people does your company/organization employ, including yourself? Please include full-time and part-time employees, but do not include independent contractors
   - Self-employed .......................................................................................................................... 25%
   - Small business, 2-10 employees .......................................................................................... 25%
   - Small business, 10-24 employees ...................................................................................... 12%
   - Small business, 25-49 employees ...................................................................................... 15%
   - Small business, 50-74 employees ...................................................................................... 11%
   - Small business, 75-100 employees ..................................................................................... 11%

2. To your knowledge, does at least one of your employees have children? (Asked of employers with employees N=424)
   - Yes ........................................................................................................................................ 94%
   - No ......................................................................................................................................... 6%

3. Are you a parent, or not?
   - Yes ........................................................................................................................................ 92%
   - No ......................................................................................................................................... 8%

4. Please select your business industry
   - Agriculture and Mining ......................................................................................................... 3%
   - Consulting and Business Services ......................................................................................... 8%
   - Education and Youth Services .............................................................................................. 10%
   - Energy and Utilities ............................................................................................................... 2%
   - Engineering ............................................................................................................................ 5%
   - Food and Beverage ................................................................................................................ 5%
   - Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals and Biotech ............................................................................ 8%
   - Health, Beauty, and Fitness .................................................................................................... 5%
   - Insurance and Financial Services .......................................................................................... 6%
   - Manufacturing ......................................................................................................................... 6%
5. What year did you start your business?

   - Less than Two Years................................................. 4%
   - Two to five years.................................................... 25%
   - Six to 10 years...................................................... 25%
   - More than 10 years.................................................. 46%

6. What is your business’ annual revenue?

   - Less than $25,000 .................................................... 14%
   - $25,000-$49,999...................................................... 10%
   - $50,000-$99,999...................................................... 12%
   - $100,000-$249,999.................................................. 24%
   - $250,000-$499,999.................................................. 14%
   - $500,000-$999,999.................................................. 15%
   - Over $1 million....................................................... 9%
   - Prefer not to say ..................................................... 2%

7. How optimistic or pessimistic are you about your business prospects over the next 6 months?

   - Very optimistic....................................................... 41%
   - Somewhat optimistic............................................... 33%
   - Neutral ..................................................................... 17%
   - Somewhat pessimistic.............................................. 6%
   - Very pessimistic..................................................... 3%
   - Optimistic ................................................................. 74%
   - Pessimistic................................................................. 9%

8. Rank the overall state of your business, where 1 indicates that your business is performing very poorly and 5 indicates it is performing very well.

   - 1 ............................................................................. 3%
   - 2 ............................................................................. 8%
   - 3 ............................................................................. 27%
   - 4 ............................................................................. 38%
   - 5 ............................................................................. 23%
9. In the past three months, have your revenue, expenses and headcount increased, decreased or stayed the same?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Stayed the same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headcount</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Do you identify with any of the following racial or ethnic groups? (Select all that apply)

- Asian, Asian American, East Asian, South Asian, and/or Southeast Asian 
  - 12%
- Black, African or African American
  - 14%
- Hispanic, Latino/a or Spanish Origin
  - 12%
- Middle Eastern or North African
  - 5%
- Native American or Alaskan Native
  - 4%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 2%
- White or Caucasian
  - 70%
- Prefer not to answer
  - 2%
- Other
  - 1%

11. Gender?

- Male
  - 50%
- Female
  - 48%
- Non-binary
  - 1%
- A gender not listed here
  - 0%
- Prefer not to answer
  - 1%

12. Is your primary language English? N=521

- Yes
  - 94%
- No
  - 6%
- Prefer not to say
  - 1%

13. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Lack of access to affordable, high-quality childcare for my own children created an impediment for me to START my business? (Asked of those with children. N=521)

- Strongly agree
  - 34%
- Somewhat agree
  - 24%
- Neutral
  - 16%
- Somewhat disagree
  - 15%
- Strongly disagree
  - 12%
- Agree
  - 58%
- Disagree
  - 27%
14. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Lack of access to affordable, high-quality childcare for my own children created an impediment for me to GROW my business? (Asked of those with children. N=521)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. How often do you or did you adjust your own work schedule due to childcare issues? (Asked of those with children. N=521)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a month</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few times a year</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Have you experienced any of the following due to your own childcare issues? (Select all that apply) (Asked of those with children. N=521)

- Taken substantial time away from the business ........................................ 56%
- Shut my own business and rejoined the workforce ..................................... 26%
- Lost out on business opportunities ....................................................... 39%
- Had to hire additional help ....................................................................... 28%

17. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: my childcare issues negatively affected productivity. (Asked of those with children. N=521)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. To your knowledge, what percentage of employees in your company do you estimate have children under 18?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-10 percent</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-25 percent</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50 percent</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-75 percent</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-100 percent</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. How often do your employees adjust work schedules due to childcare issues? (Asked of those with employees with children. N=398)

- Weekly .......................................................... 26%
- A few times a month ........................................... 49%
- A few times a year ............................................. 21%
- Never ............................................................... 4%

20. Have you experienced any of the following due to your employees’ childcare issues? (Select all that apply) (Asked of those with employees with children. N=398)

- Unplanned work absences .................................. 62%
- Had an employee quit ....................................... 30%
- Had a job candidate turn down an offer .............. 30%
- Had an employee turn down a job promotion ........ 27%
- Had to eventually fire an employee who was routinely absent ............. 16%

21. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: My employees’ childcare issues have negatively affected their ability to do their job as efficiently as they and I would like. (Asked of those with employees with children. N=398)

- Strongly agree ............................................... 22%
- Somewhat agree ............................................. 39%
- Neutral .......................................................... 19%
- Somewhat disagree .......................................... 10%
- Strongly disagree ........................................... 10%
- Agree ............................................................ 61%
- Disagree ........................................................ 20%

22. What have been the impacts on your business when your employees are facing childcare issues? (Select all that apply) (Asked of those with employees with children. N=398)

- Lost revenue or earnings ................................... 31%
- Unable to operate longer hours ................................ 44%
- Lower productivity ........................................... 51%
- Had to hire temporary workers ............................. 28%
- Other (please specify) ........................................ 4%

23. Do you have any of the following workplace policies in place to ease your employees’ childcare burden? (Select all that apply) (Asked of those with employees with children. N=398)

- Offer on-site childcare ......................................... 29%
- Allow employees to bring children to work ........... 50%
- Flexible scheduling / remote work ....................... 57%
- Other .................................................................. 3%
24. Do you agree or disagree that policymakers need to take action to address the cost of childcare?

Strongly agree ................................................................. 41%
Somewhat agree ............................................................. 28%
Neutral ............................................................................. 17%
Somewhat disagree .......................................................... 8%
Strongly disagree ............................................................. 7%

Agree .................................................................................. 68%
Disagree .............................................................................. 14%

25. Below are a series of policy proposals the government is considering to address the lack of affordable, high-quality childcare. For each, indicate whether you support or oppose:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat oppose</th>
<th>Strongly oppose</th>
<th>Total support</th>
<th>Total oppose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renew the program that provided $16B in grant funding annually to childcare providers and was terminated last fall</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow nonprofit childcare providers to access the Small Business Administration’s main loan programs for working capital and real estate expansion. Such nonprofits are currently prohibited from accessing those loans.</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand eligibility to more families for the national Head Start program, which provides early education and childcare at centers throughout the country</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide grants to states to better recruit and train childcare workers, and help workforce training program participants with childcare costs</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double the amount of money that can be saved by a family in a tax-exempt Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account to cover child care expenses, to $10,000 annually</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce complex state licensing requirements and other red-tape for childcare providers</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand a tax credit aimed at helping businesses provide childcare to their workers by increasing the credit’s rate and caps, allowing businesses to jointly create and operate a childcare facility for their employees, and adding in-home services as an eligible use</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-60</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 60</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>