

# **ELEA Quantitative Analysis | Parent and Caregiver Analysis**

Barna Group

Summer 2023

From April to May 2023, Barna administered a quantitative online survey to 1,000 U.S. adults. Barna observed quota random sampling methodology and collected data through online market research panels.

This survey specifically interviewed samples of  $n=250$  among the following four key community groups: adults under 40 who are disconnected from the church, young adults with kids, adults who identify as LGBTQIA+, and unchurched and dechurched individuals. The overall margin of error for the study is +/- 2.96%.

*\* $n=250$  represents the sample size of each of the community groups: adults under 40 who are disconnected from the church, young adults with kids, adults who identify as LGBTQIA+, and unchurched / dechurched individuals*

## Churched and Unchurched

- **Churched:** Has attended a church service in the past 6 months
- **Unchurched:** Has not attended a church service in the past 6 months
- **Dechurched:** Grew up attending a Christian church or at one point in their life they were a member of a Christian church and now Unchurched
- **Less than 40 disconnected from church:** Less than 40 years old and either unchurched or dechurched

## LGBTQIA+

- **LGBTQIA+:** Identify as LGBTQIA+
- **LGBTQIA+ Churched:** Identify as LGBTQIA+ and has attended a church service in the last 6 months
- **LGBTQIA+ Unchurched:** Identify as LGBTQIA+ and has not attended a church service in the last 6 months or grew up Christian and now is not
- **LGBTQIA+ Parent:** Identify as LGBTQIA+ and is a legal guardian or parent of a child under 18 in their household\*\*

## Parent

- **Young Parent:** Less than 40 years old and legal guardian or parent of a child who is under the age of 18 in their household\*\*
- **Churched Parent:** Parent or legal guardian of a child who is under the age of 18 in their household and has attended a church service in the last 6 months\*\*
- **Unchurched Parent:** Parent or legal guardian of a child who is under the age of 18 in their household and has not attended a church service in the last 6 months or grew up Christian and now is not\*\*

*Note: Several of these groups have overlap with each other, even within the groups. E.g., LGBTQIA+ Parents may be churched OR unchurched*

*\*\*Non-parent caregivers with children under 18 living in their household also qualify*

# Analysis of Parents / Caregivers

# Parents Summary of Findings

## A. Parenting in Today's Day and Age

A significant majority of parents agree that being a parent today is harder than ever, and more than half of parents agree that society isn't built to support parents. However, half of unchurched parents are at least somewhat confident their children's generation will be better than theirs, while three-fourths of churched parents say the same.

## B. Early Child Learning Center

Parents want schools to be friendly, open-minded, and creative. Two-thirds of young adults with children view early child learning centers in their community positively. Overall, parents are satisfied with their early child-learning center via engagement with staff, other parents, and their child's teachers. More than anything, parents want church-based early learning centers to be safe (55%). Churched parents compared to unchurched are significantly more interested in opportunities for religious instruction (37% to 26% respectively), opportunities for worship (42% to 20% respectively), and experienced and dedicated Christian teachers (40% compared to 26% respectively).

## C. Church-based Learning Programs

An overwhelming majority of young parents with children are interested in a church-based child learning center. However, when broken out by churched vs unchurched parents, unchurched parents do show less enthusiasm, but on the whole they are still interested.

# Parents Summary of Findings

## **D. Pressing Social Concerns**

Parents are most concerned about school safety, mental health, social media, and gun violence while bullying, depression, and suicide top the lists as important social topics that should be covered.

## **E. Parental Support**

Nearby family members are relied on most heavily for caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, many parents feel supported, but unchurched parents less so.

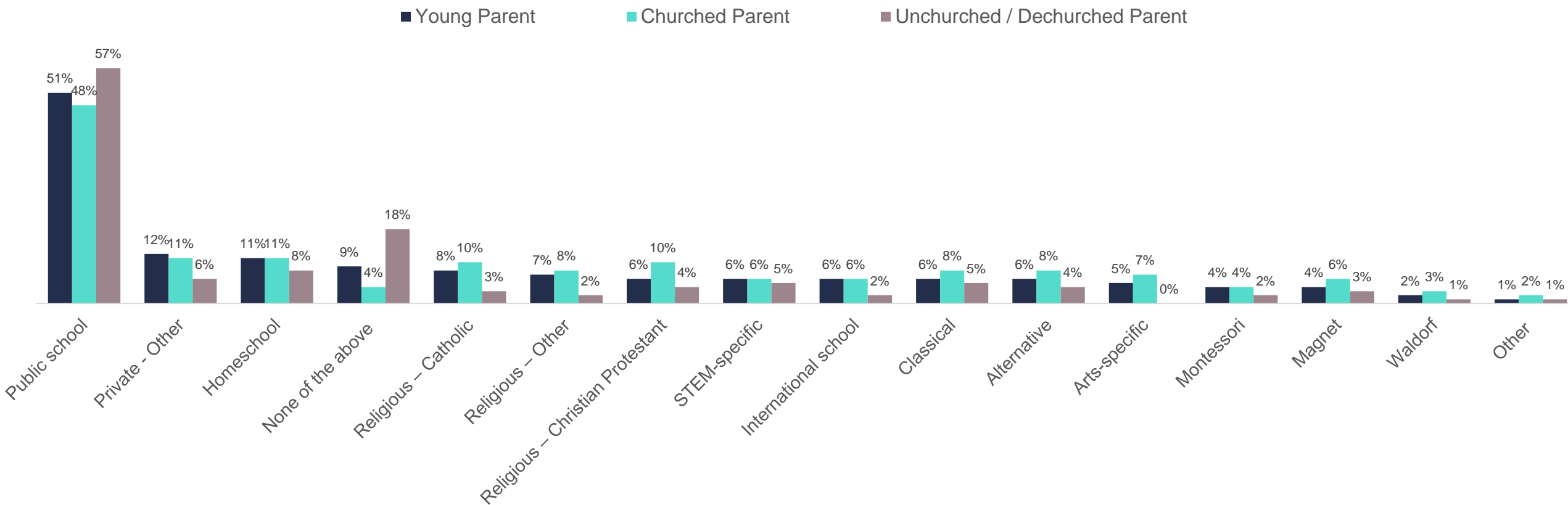
## **Section A. Parenting in Today's Day and Age**

# Half of all parents in the sample send their children to public school.

- While majority of parents in the sample said their children attend “public school”, 12% said “private – other” and 18% of unchurched parents said “none of the above”.
- Churched parents are less likely to say “public school” than unchurched parents (48% compared to 57% respectively).

## What kind of school does your child(ren) attend?

Select all that apply. | Base: Parent / Caregiver





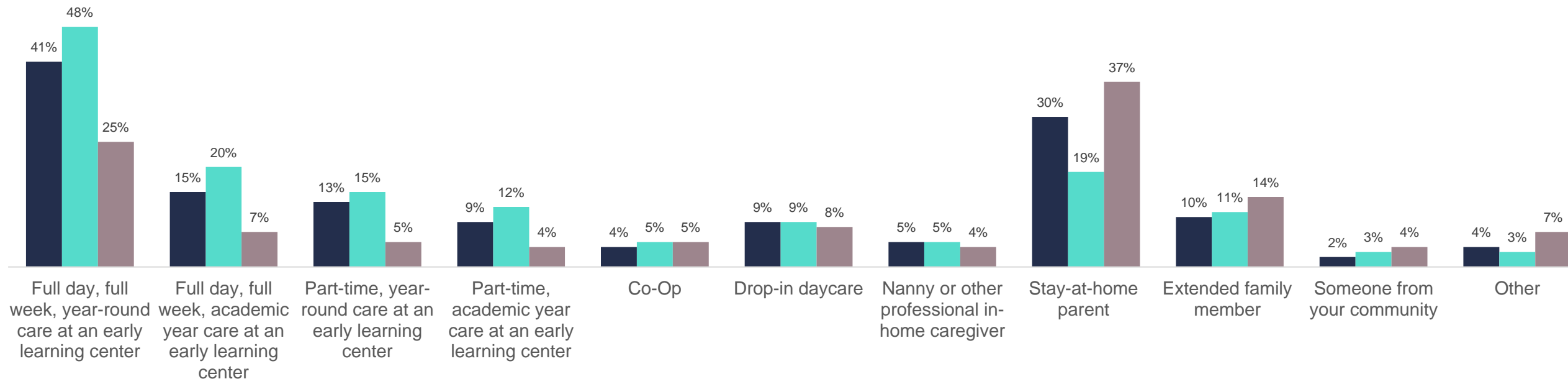
# Churched parents likely send their children to “full day, full week, year-round care at early learning center” whereas unchurched parents more likely keep them at home.

- While 48% of churched parents send their children to a “full-day, full week, year-round care at an early learning center”, only 25% of unchurched parents do the same. Instead, they are more likely than a churched parent to keep their child at home at offer stay-home-parent childcare (37% compared to 19% respectively).

*Which of the following best describes your childcare arrangement for your child(ren) under 5?*

Select all that apply. | Base: Parent / Caregiver

■ Young Parent    ■ Churched Parent    ■ Unchurched / Dechurched Parent



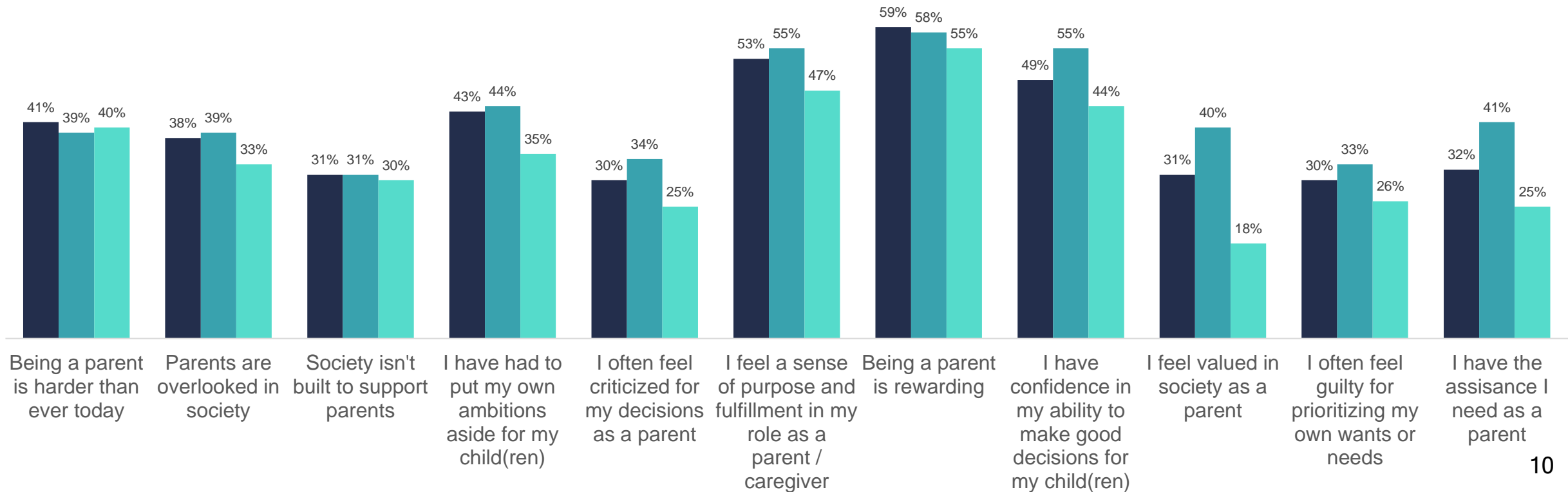
# Most parents can *strongly* agree... “being a parent is rewarding”.

- Over half of all parents (young, churched, unchurched, and dechurched alike) strongly agree that “being a parent is rewarding”.
- Churched parents are significantly more likely than unchurched / dechurched parents to strongly agree that they “have confidence in their ability to make good decisions for their child(ren).”

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*% strongly agree*

■ Young Parent    ■ Churched Parent    ■ Unchurched / Dechurched Parent

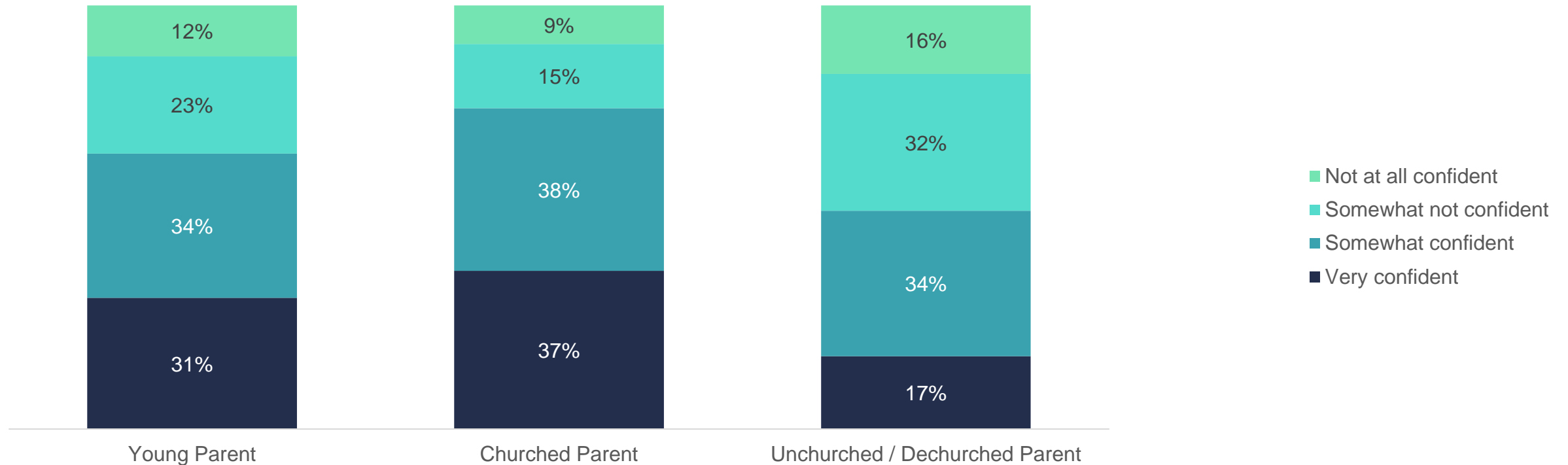


# 65% of young adults with children say they are confident that life for their “children’s generation will be better than it has been for them”.

- 51% of unchurched parents are at least somewhat confident their children’s generation will be better than theirs, while 75% churched parents say the same.

*How confident do you feel that life for our children’s generation will be better than it has been for us?*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



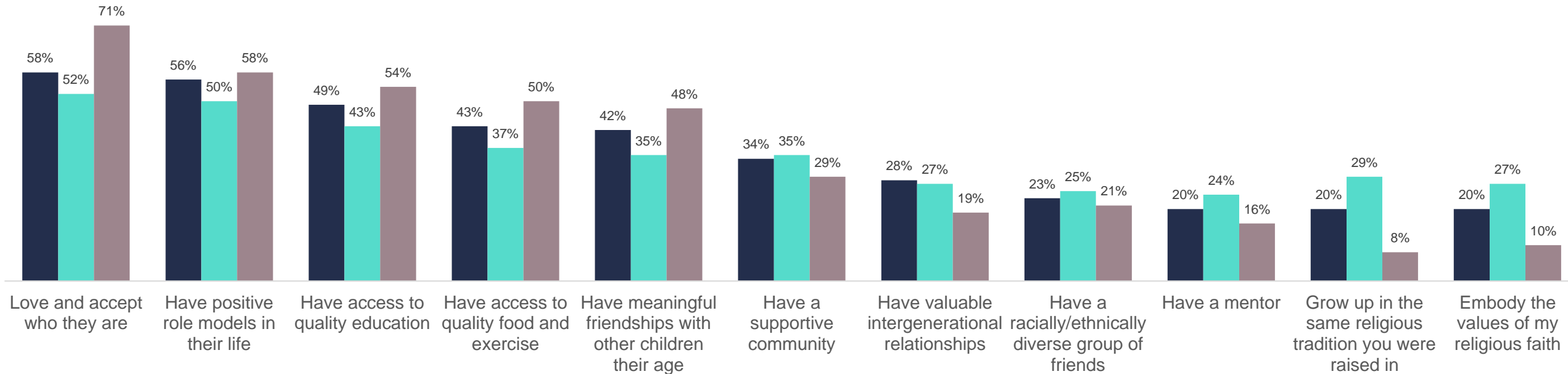
# Parents said their top goals for their children are to “love and accept who they are” and “have positive role models in their life”.

- While unchurched parents are significantly more likely than churched parents (71% to 52% respectively) to say that they value having their children “love and accept who they are”, both groups show significant interest in this statement.
- Unchurched parents were significantly more likely to value “having access to quality education” (54% to 43% respectively), having “access to quality food and exercise” (48% to 35%), and having “meaningful friendships with other children their age” (48% to 35%).

## As a parent, which of the following goals are most important for your child(ren)?

Select up to five | Base: Parent / Caregiver

■ Young Parent    ■ Churched Parent    ■ Unchurched / Dechurched Parent



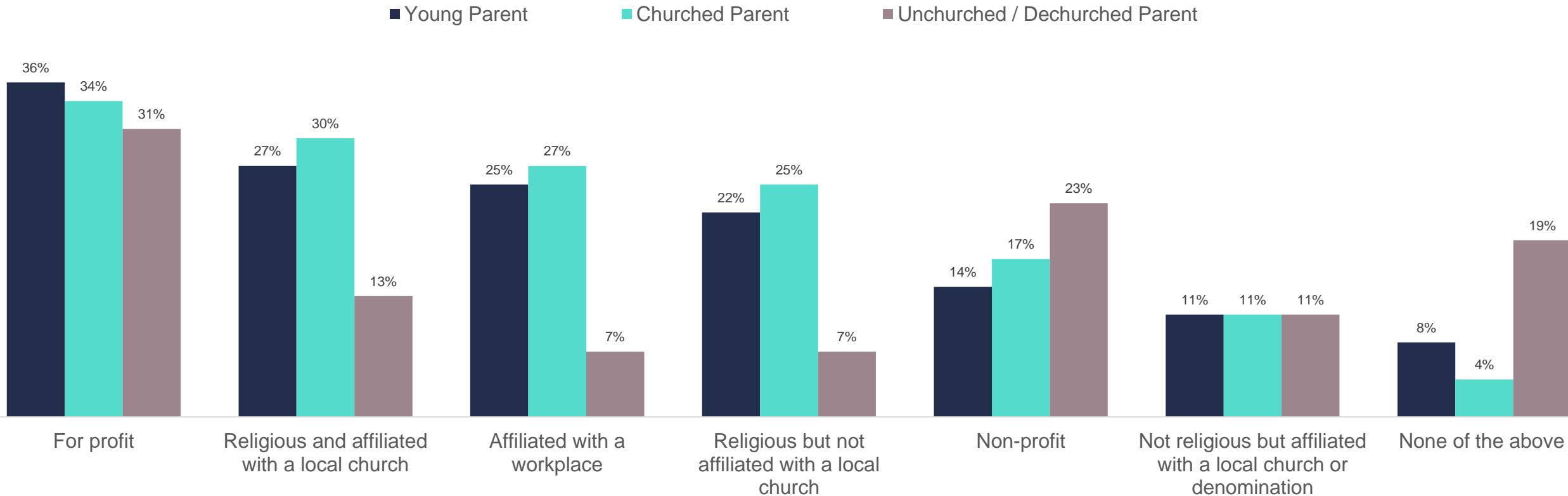
## **Section B. Early Child Learning Center**

# A third of all parents in the sample said they send their children to “for profit” early childcare centers.

- 36% of young adults with children send their children to a “for-profit” early childcare center, and a quarter (27%) send them to schools that are “religious and affiliated with a local church”, although churched parents are significantly more likely than unchurched parents to do so (30% compared to 13% respectively).

## What kind of early childcare center does your child(ren) attend?

Select all that apply. | Base: Early learning center parent

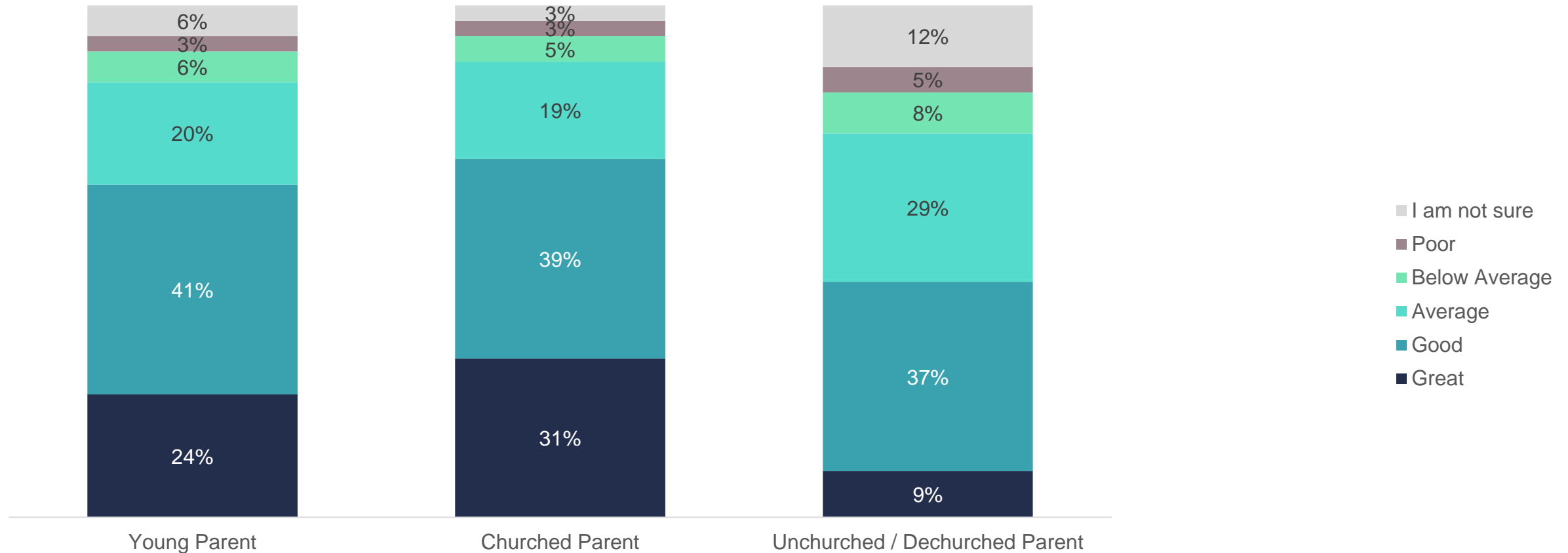


# Nearly two-thirds of all parents rate the early child learning centers in their community as at least “average”.

- While nearly 3 in 10 churched parents said that the quality of early child learning centers in their communities were “great”, only 9% of unchurched / dechurched parents said the same.

*How would you rate the quality of the following schools in your community?  
“Early child learning centers (e.g. daycares, preschools)”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver

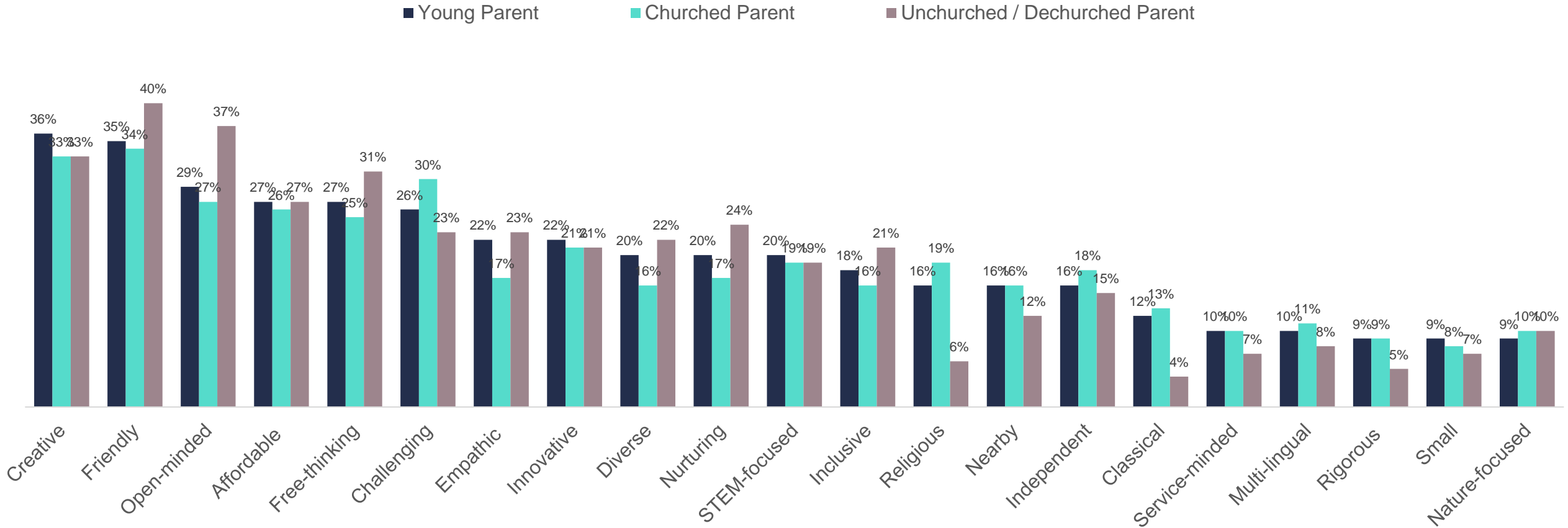


# Parents say they want schools to be “friendly”, “open-minded”, and “creative”.

- Unchurched parents are significantly more likely than churched parents to say they want their school to be open-minded (37% compared to 27% respectively), and friendly (40% compared to 34% respectively).

## In thinking about your child's education, what are the most important qualities in a school?

Select five | Base: Parent / Caregiver

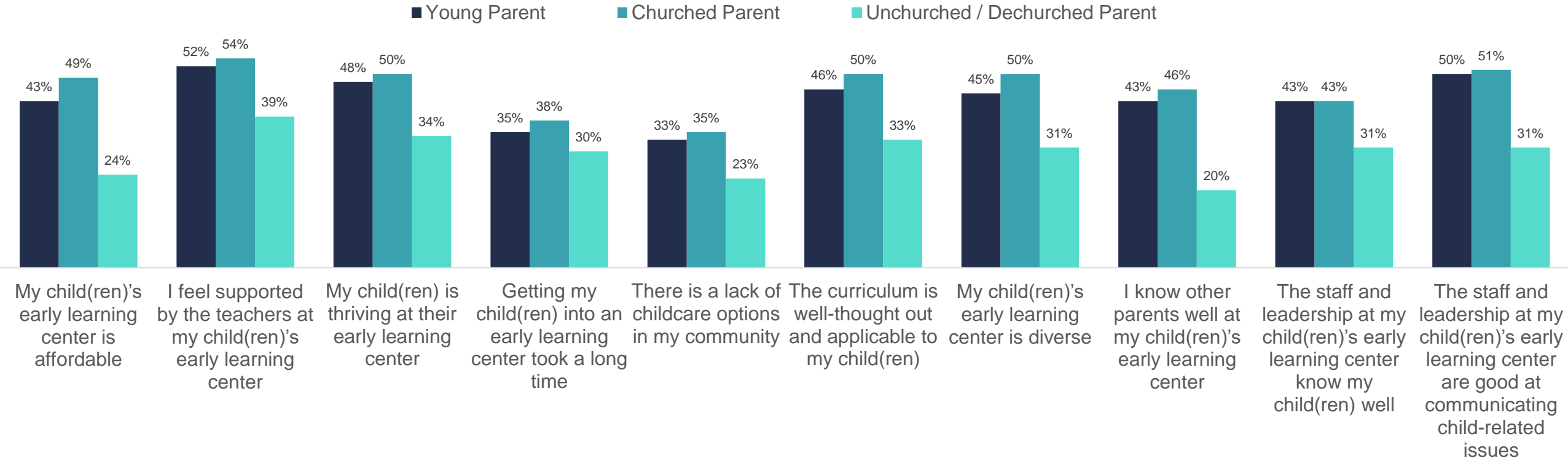




# Nearly 2 in 5 unchurched / dechurched parents say they strongly agree that they “feel supported by the teachers at their child(ren)’s early learning center”.

- A majority of parents (young adults, churched, and unchurched alike) say they “feel supported by the teachers at their children’s early learning center”.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*  
% strongly agree



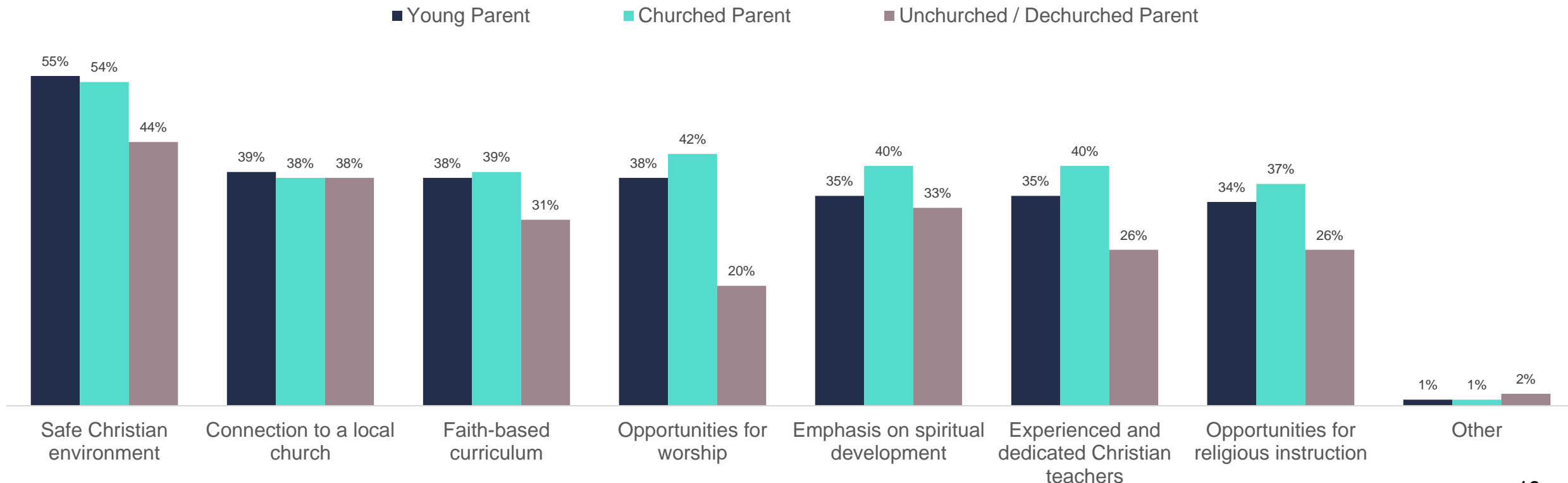
## **Section C. Church-based Learning Programs**

# For parents interested in a church-based early learning center, safe environments are most appealing.

- More than anything, parents want church-based early learning centers to be “safe Christian environments” (55%). Churched parents compared to unchurched are significantly more interested in “opportunities for religious instruction” (37% to 26% respectively), “opportunities for worship” (42% to 20% respectively), and “experienced and dedicated Christian teachers” (40% compared to 26% respectively).

## What aspects of a Church-based early learning center are most appealing to you?

Select all that apply. | Base: Interested or Somewhat interested in a Church-based early learning center



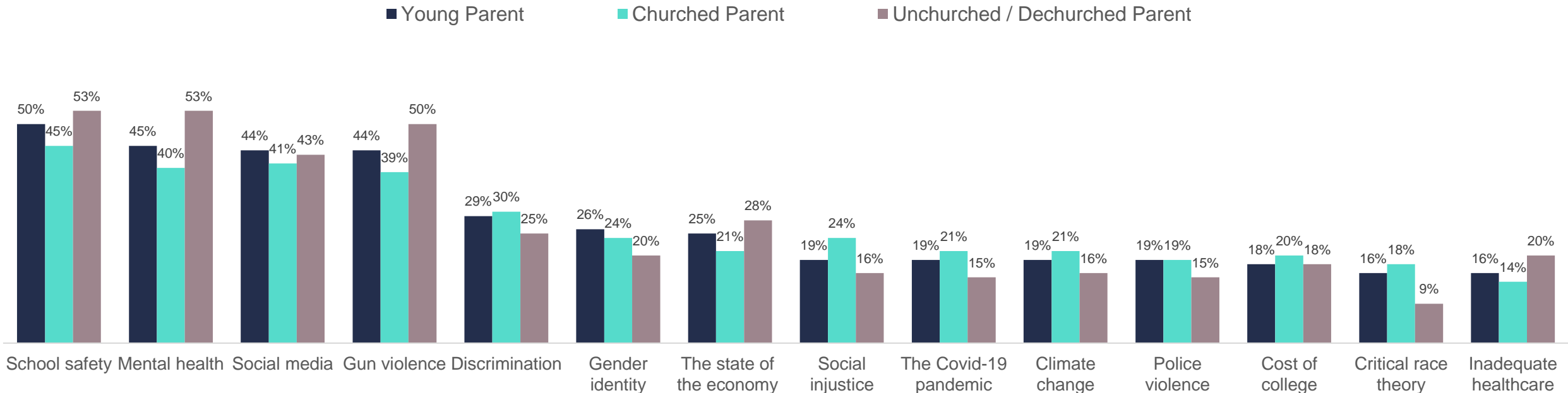
## **Section D. Pressing Social Concerns**

# Parents said they are most concerned about school safety, mental health, social media, and gun violence.

- Churched and unchurched / dechurched parents alike are both concerned about school safety affecting their children today (45% and 53% respectively).
- Unchurched parents are more likely than churched parents to be concerned about gun violence (50% compared to 39% respectively).

*When you think about the issues affecting children today, which of the following are most concerning to you?*

Select up to five | Base: Parent / Caregiver

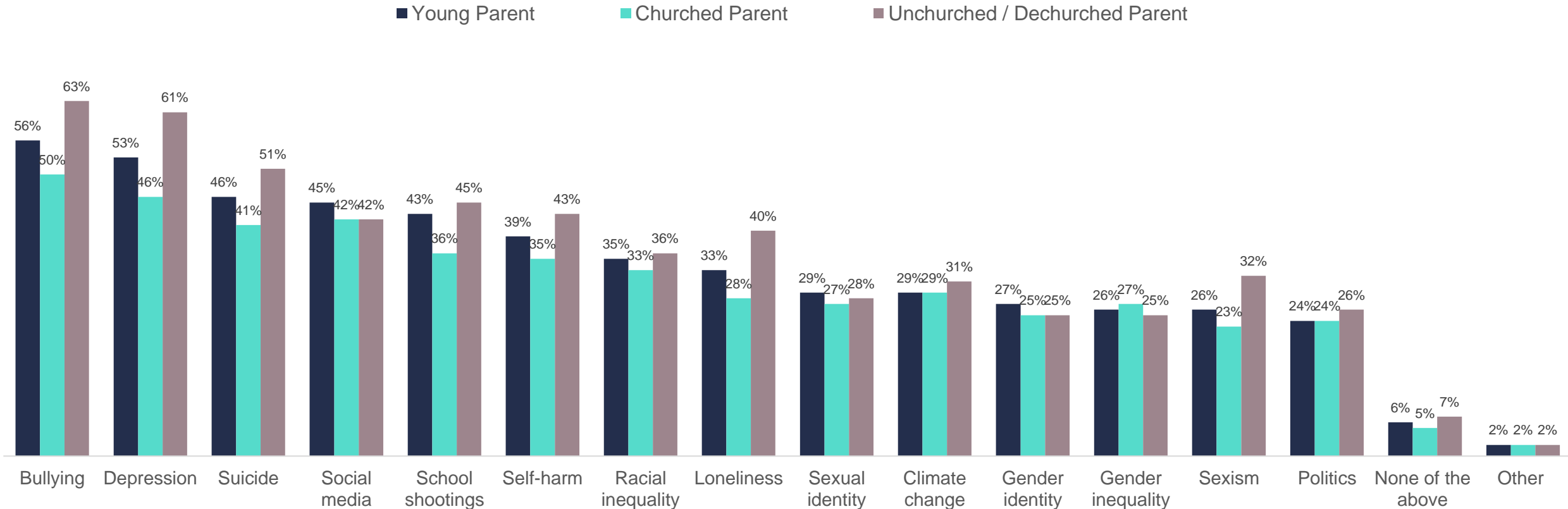


# Parents said they believe “bullying”, “depression”, and “suicide” to be the most important social topics covered in school.

- While unchurched parents were significantly more likely than churched parents to say both bullying and depression (bullying, 63% to 50% respectively; depression, 61% to 46%), both groups showed significant concern for these subjects.

## Which of the following social topics do you believe high schools should cover in their curriculum?

Select all that apply | Base: Parent / Caregiver

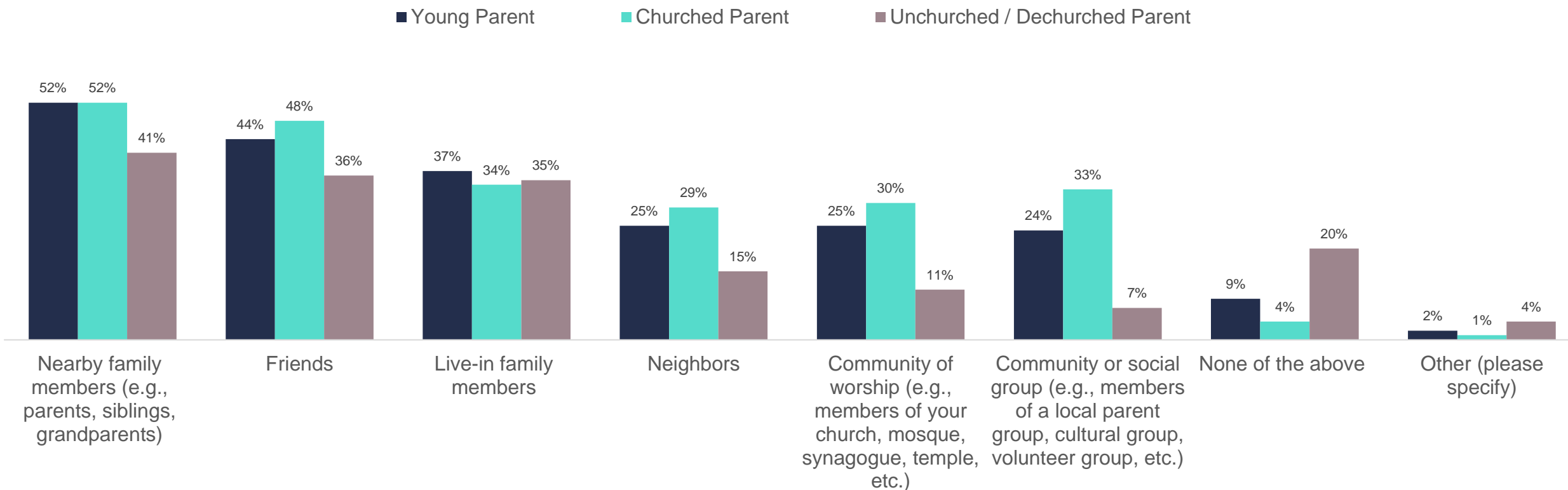


## **Section E. Parental Support**

# Parents said they rely on family members for caregiving responsibilities.

- Parents said they rely nearby family members for childcare support (52% for churched, 41% for dechurched / unchurched).
- Churched parents are significantly more likely than unchurched parents to rely on friends (48% compared to 36% respectively), neighbors (29% compared to 15%), church members (30% compared to 11%), or community social groups (33% compared to 7%).

*Today, who do you rely on for support with childcare or other caregiving responsibilities?  
Select all that apply | Base: Parent / Caregiver*





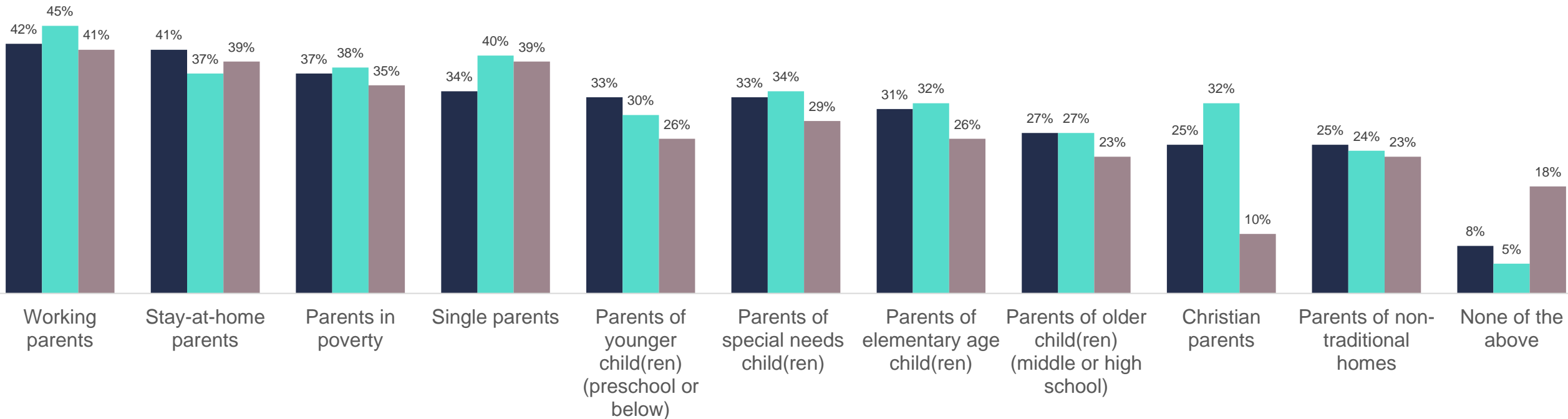
# Parents are interested in organizations that provide support for working parents, stay-at-home parents, parents in poverty, and single parents.

- Young adults with children are most interested in organizations who provide support for working parents (42%), stay-at-home parents (41%), and parents in poverty (37%).

*In your local community are you interested in organizations that provide support to parents who meet any of the following descriptions?*

Select all that apply | Base: Parent / Caregiver

■ Young Parent      ■ Churched Parent      ■ Unchurched / Dechurched Parent



# Expanded Findings from Parents

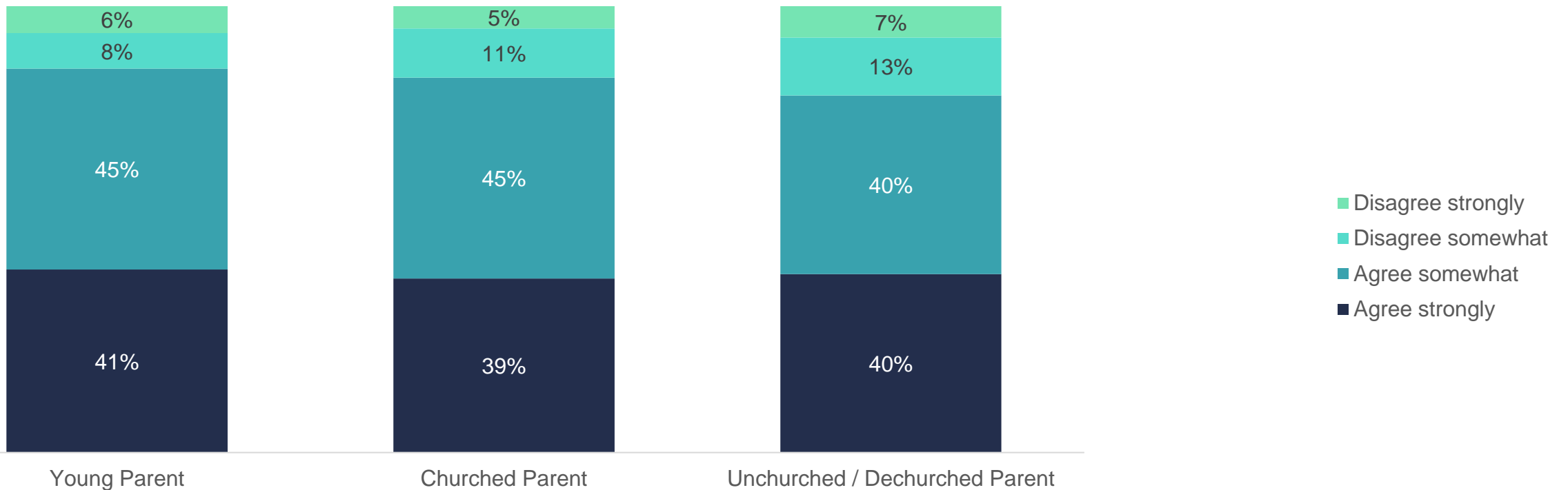
# A significant majority of parents agree that “being a parent today is harder than ever”.

- Young adults with children, churched parents, and unchurched / dechurched parents all at least somewhat agree (80% and above) that “being a parent today is harder than ever before”.

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“Being a parent is harder than ever today”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



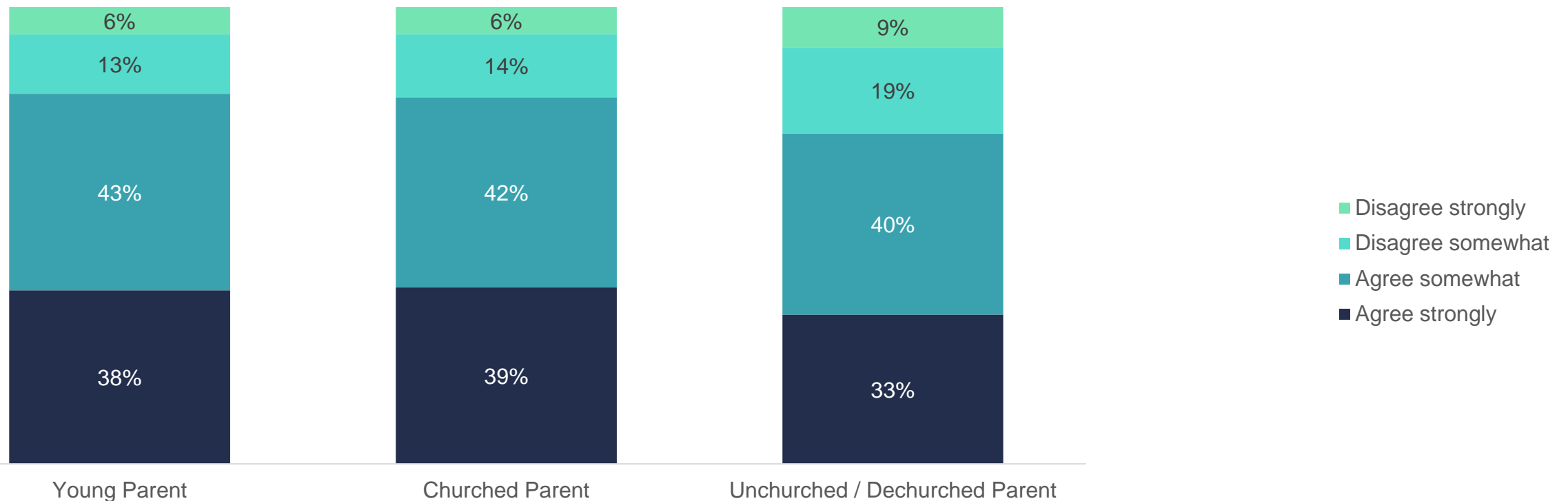
# 1 in 3 unchurched / dechurched parents disagree that “parents are overlooked in society”.

- While young adults with children and church parents agree strongly that parents are overlooked in society (38%, 39% respectively), 33% of unchurched / dechurched parents strongly agree with this statement. 1 in 3 at least somewhat disagree with this statement.

*We'd like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today's world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“Parents are overlooked in society”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



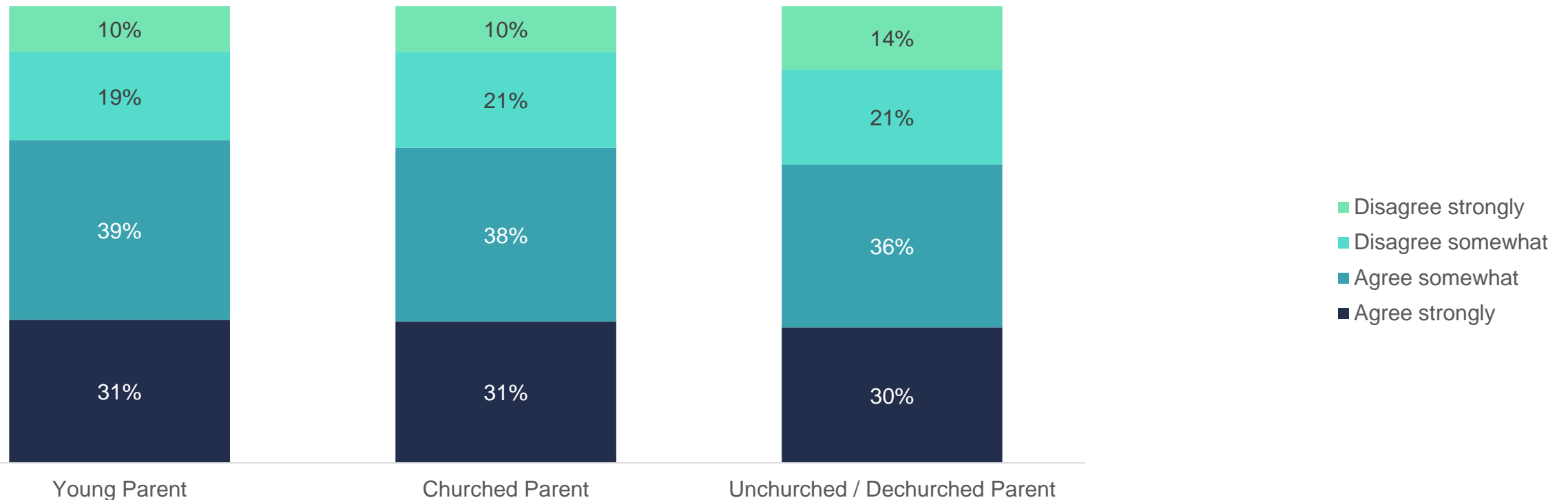
# More than half of parents at least somewhat agree that “society isn’t built to support parents”.

- 7 in 10 young adults with children agree at least somewhat the society isn’t built to support parents, whereas only 10% strongly disagree with this statement.

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“Society isn’t built to support parents”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



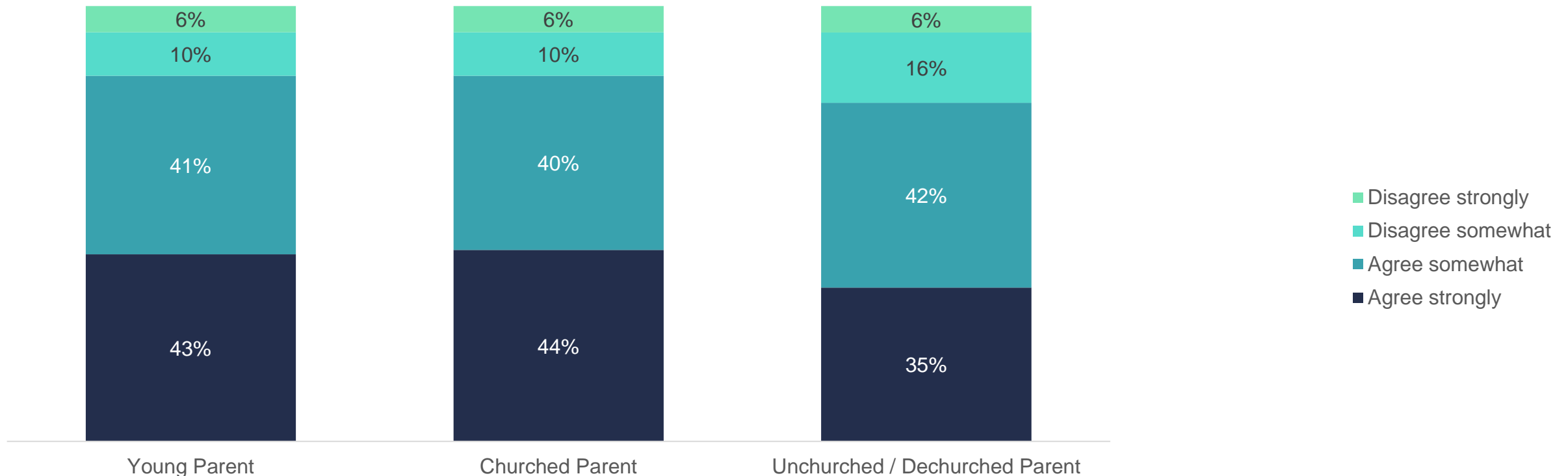
# Parents agree that they “have had to put their own ambitions aside for their children”.

- Across the board, parents responded similarly when asked if they have had to put their own ambitions aside for their children. The sacrifice is felt by the young, churched, dechurched, and unchurched alike.

*We'd like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today's world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“I have had to put my own ambitions aside for my child(ren)”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver

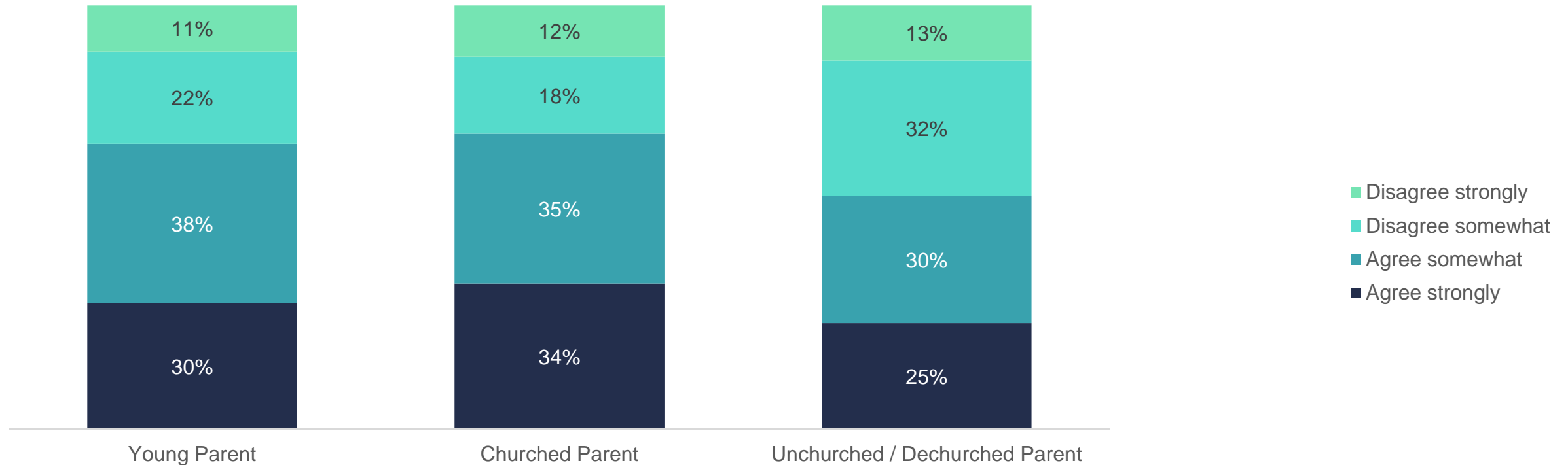


# Churched parents are more likely to strongly agree that they “feel criticized for their decisions” than unchurched / dechurched parents.

- While 7 in 10 churched parents at least somewhat agree that they “feel criticized for their decisions as a parent”, dechurched / unchurched parents are less likely to say the same (55%).

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...  
“I often feel criticized for my decisions as a parent”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



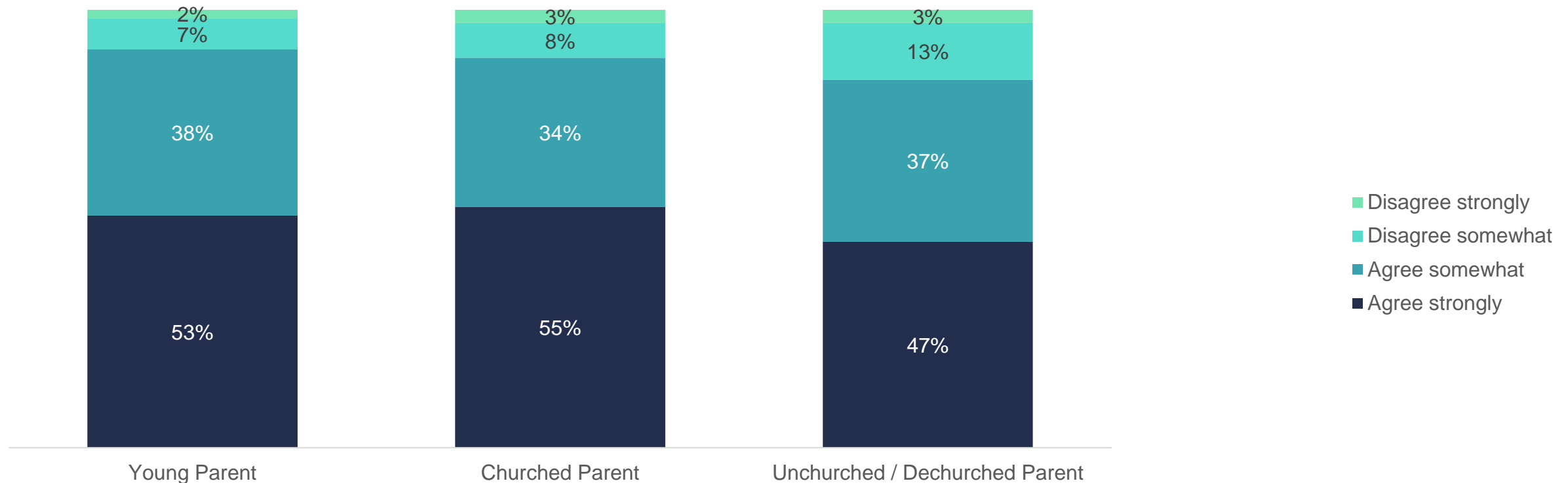
# 3 in 4 parents in this sample said they “feel a sense of purpose and fulfillment in [their] role as a parent / caregiver”.

- Churched parents are more likely than unchurched parents to say they strongly agree to feeling “a sense of purpose and fulfillment in their role as a parent / caregiver” (55% compared to 47% respectively).

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“I feel a sense of purpose and fulfillment in my role as a parent / caregiver”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver





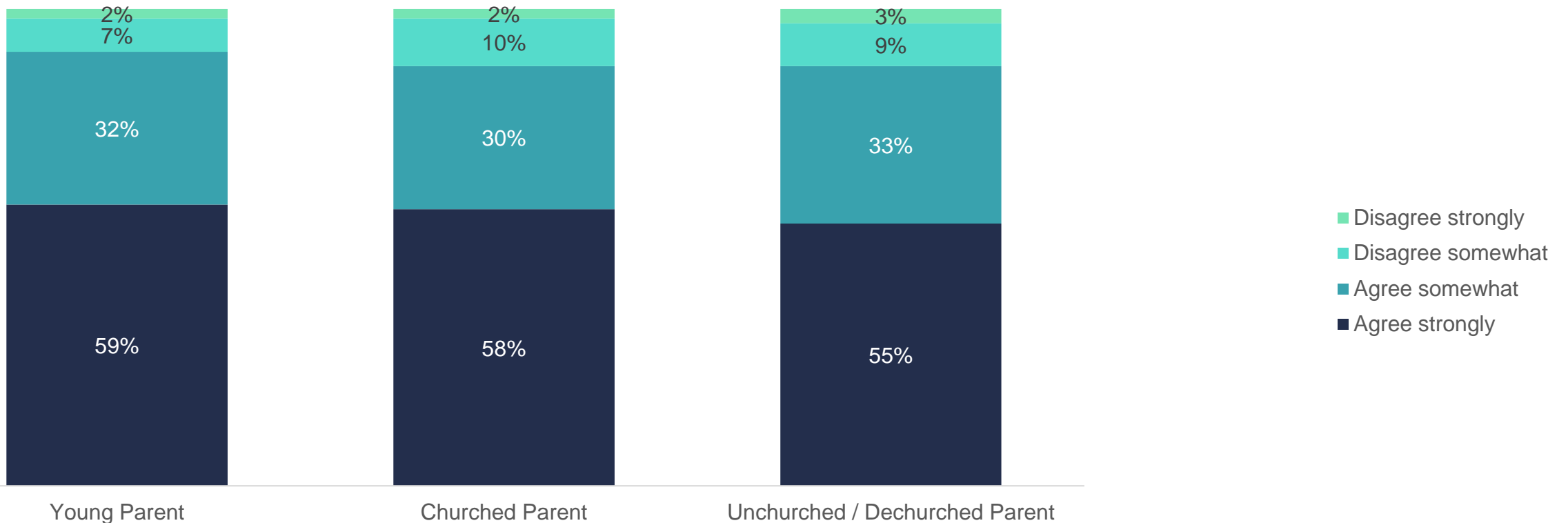
# Parents strongly agree that “being a parent is rewarding”.

- Almost all parents at least somewhat agree that being a parent is rewarding, churched and unchurchd alike.

*We'd like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today's world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“Being a parent is rewarding”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



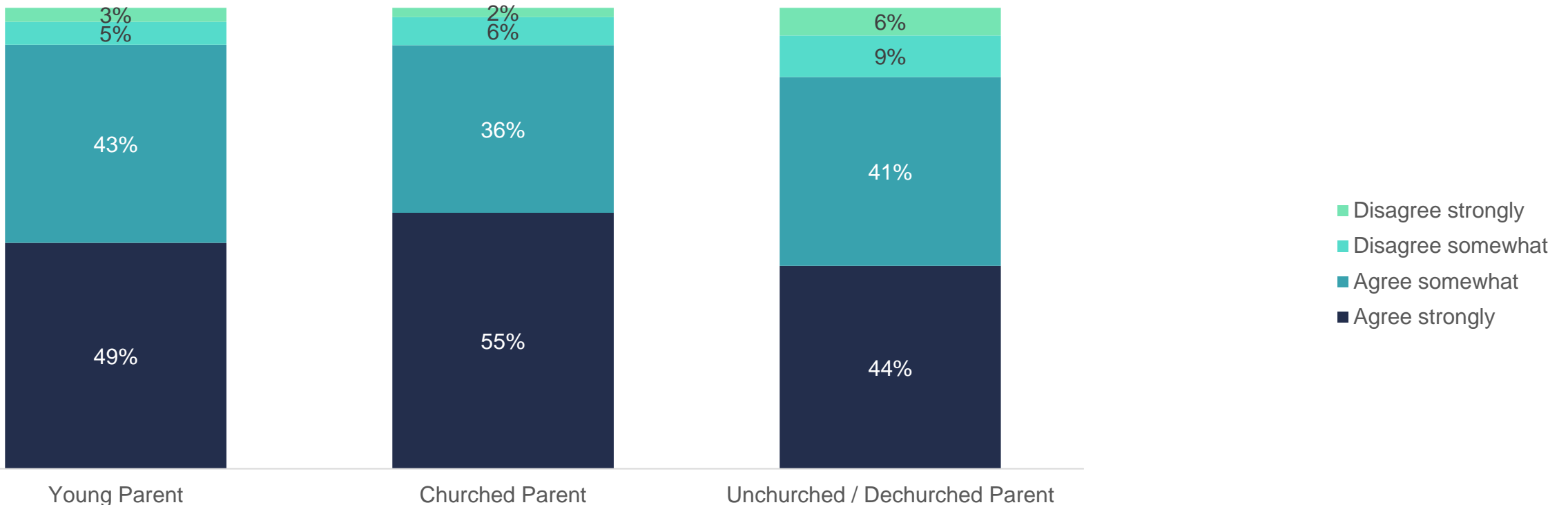
# Churched parents more strongly agree than unchurched parents that they “have confidence in their ability to make good decisions for their children”.

- While 91% of churched parents said they at least somewhat agree with the statement that they have confidence in their ability to make good decisions for their children, less unchurched / dechurched parents said the same (85%).

*We'd like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today's world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“I have confidence in my ability to make good decisions for my child(ren)”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



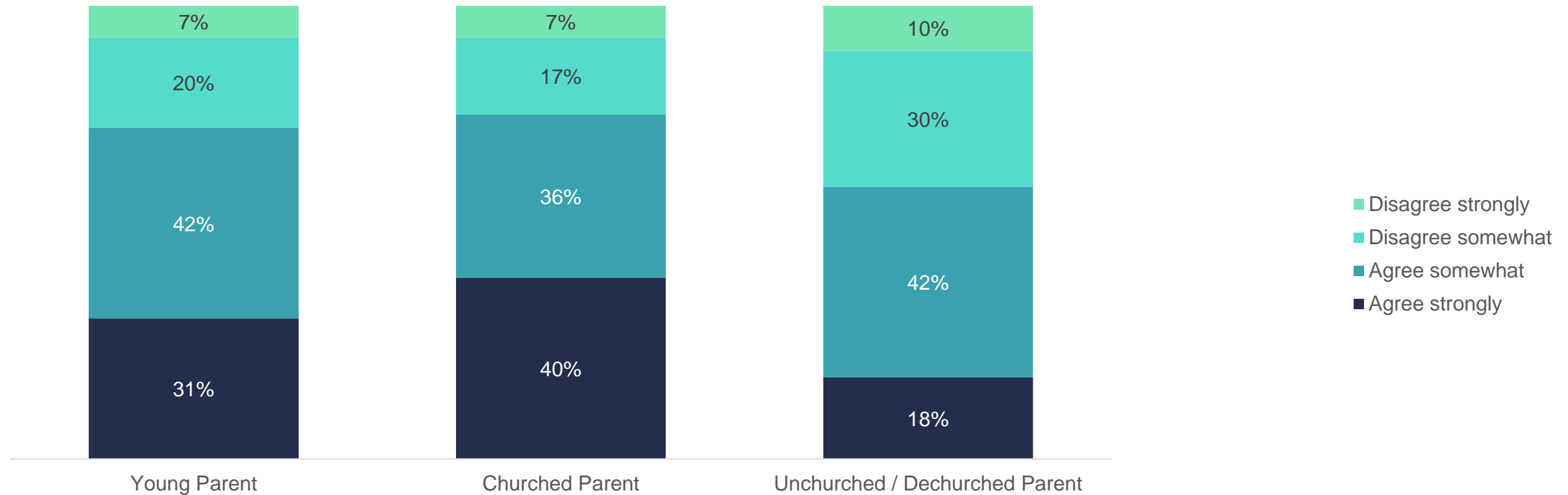
# Churched parents are significantly more likely to agree that they “feel valued in society as a parent”.

- While 40% of churched parents strongly agree that they “feel valued in society as a parent”, only 18% of unchurched / dechurched parents said the same.

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“I feel valued in society as a parent”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver

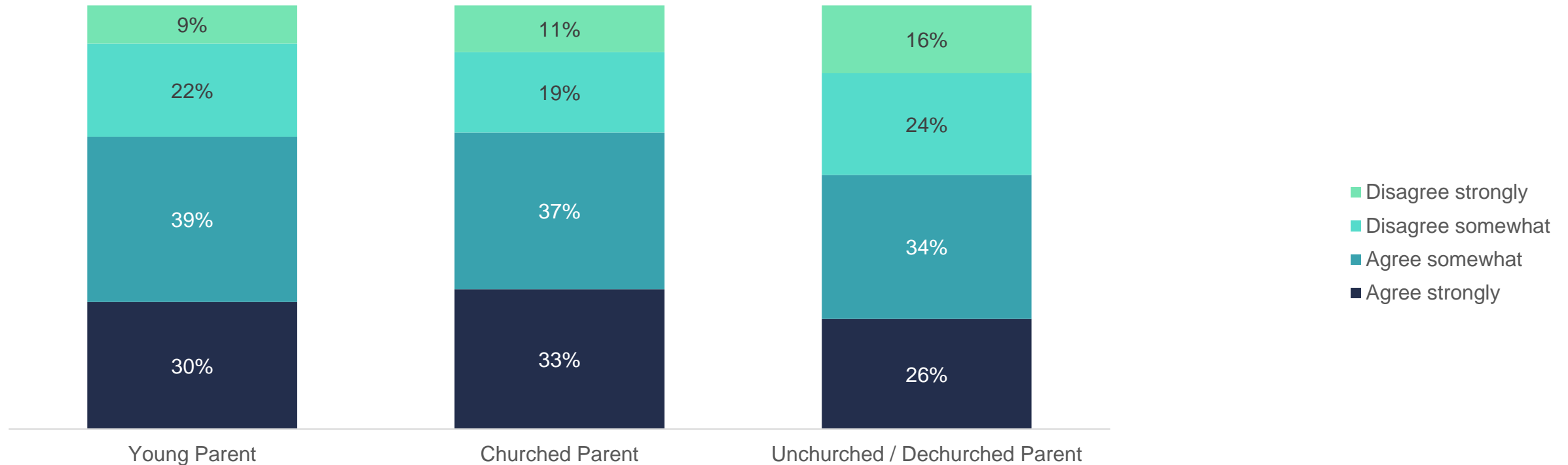


# Churched parents are more likely than unchurched parents to agree that they “often feel guilty for prioritizing their own needs and wants”.

- 7 in 10 churched parents are likely to say they at least somewhat agree that they “feel guilty for prioritizing their own wants and needs”, while 6 in 10 of unchurched parents say the same.

*We’d like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today’s world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...  
“I often feel guilty for prioritizing my own wants or needs”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



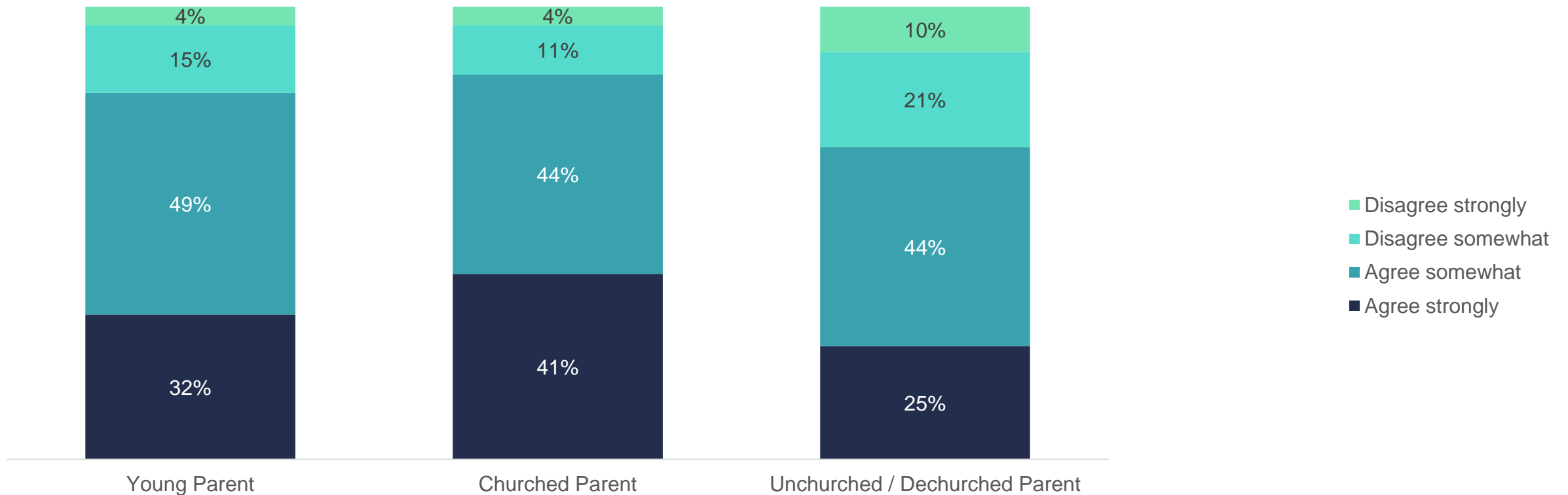
# Many parents say they feel supported as a parent, but unchurched parents less so.

- Nearly 1 in 3 (31%) unchurched / dechurched parents say that they at least somewhat or strongly disagree that they “have the assistance they need as a parent”, whereas only 19% of churched parents said the same thing.

*We'd like to ask you a few questions about being a parent or caregiver in today's world. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following...*

*“I have the assistance I need as a parent”*

Base: Parent / Caregiver



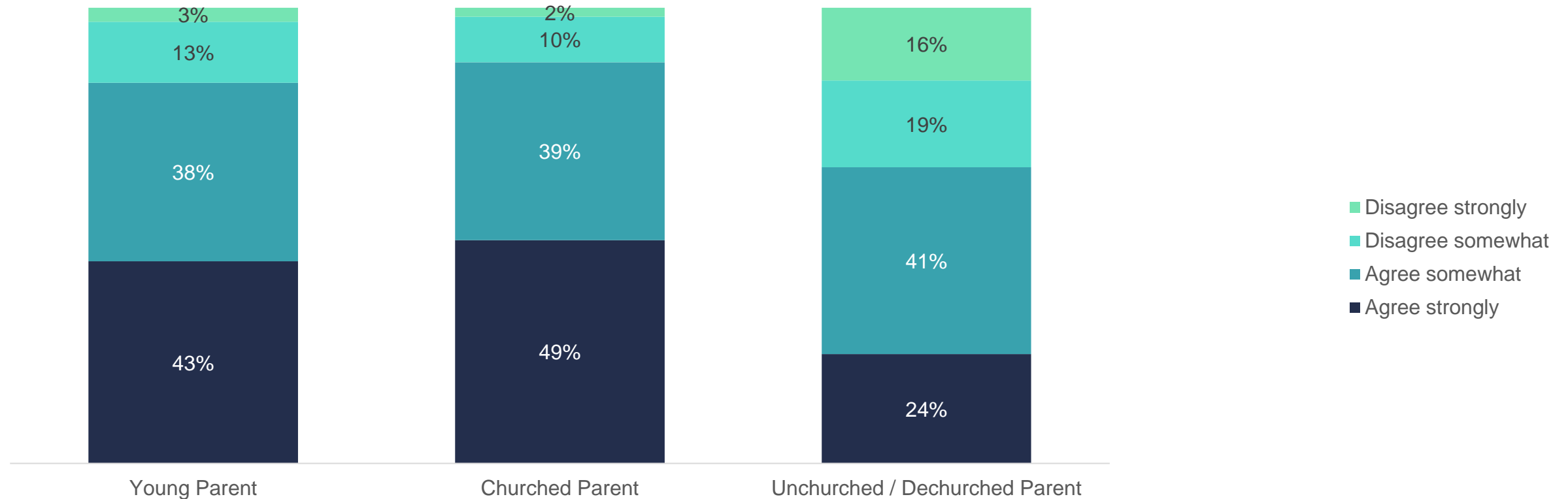
# 8 in 10 parents at least somewhat agree that their child's "early learning center is affordable".

- While majority of churched and unchurched parents at least somewhat agree that "early learning centers are affordable", unchurched parents are significantly less likely to say the same (65% compared to 88%. respectively).

*Thinking about your child(ren)'s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

*"My child(ren)'s early learning center is affordable"*

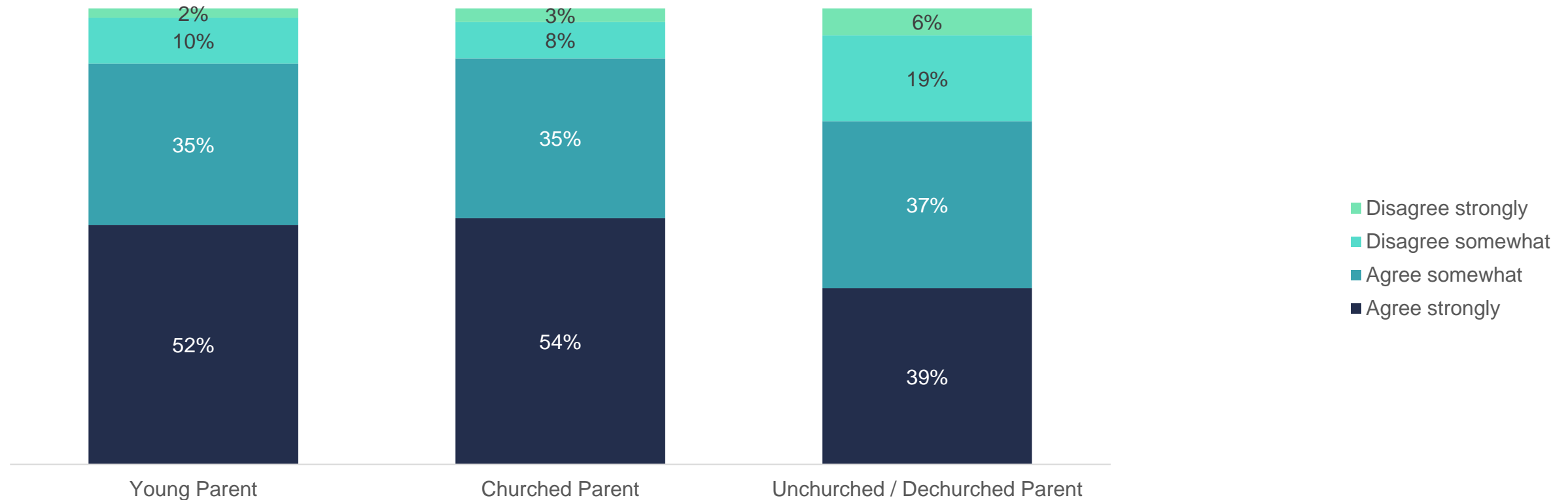
Base: Early child learning center parent



# Half of young adults with children and churched parents strongly agree that they “feel supported by the teachers at their children’s early learning center”.

- While 76% of unchurched parents at least somewhat agree to feeling supporting by teachers at their child’s early learning center, nearly 9 out of 10 churched parents say the same.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
“I feel supported by the teachers at my child(ren)’s early learning center”*  
Base: Early child learning center parent



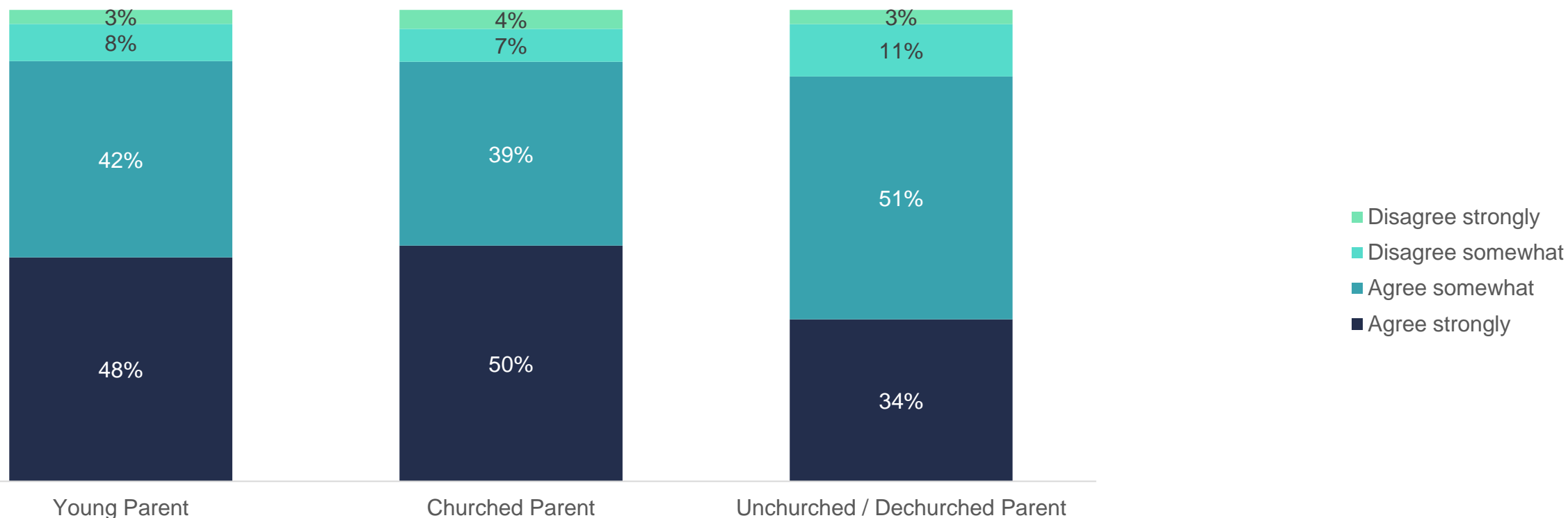
# Parents at least somewhat agree that their children are “thriving at their early learning centers”.

- Over 90% of young adults who have children in an early child learning center agree they their “child is thriving at their early learning center”. 1 in 3 unchurched parents strongly agree with this statement.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

*“My child(ren) is thriving at their early learning center”*

Base: Early child learning center parent

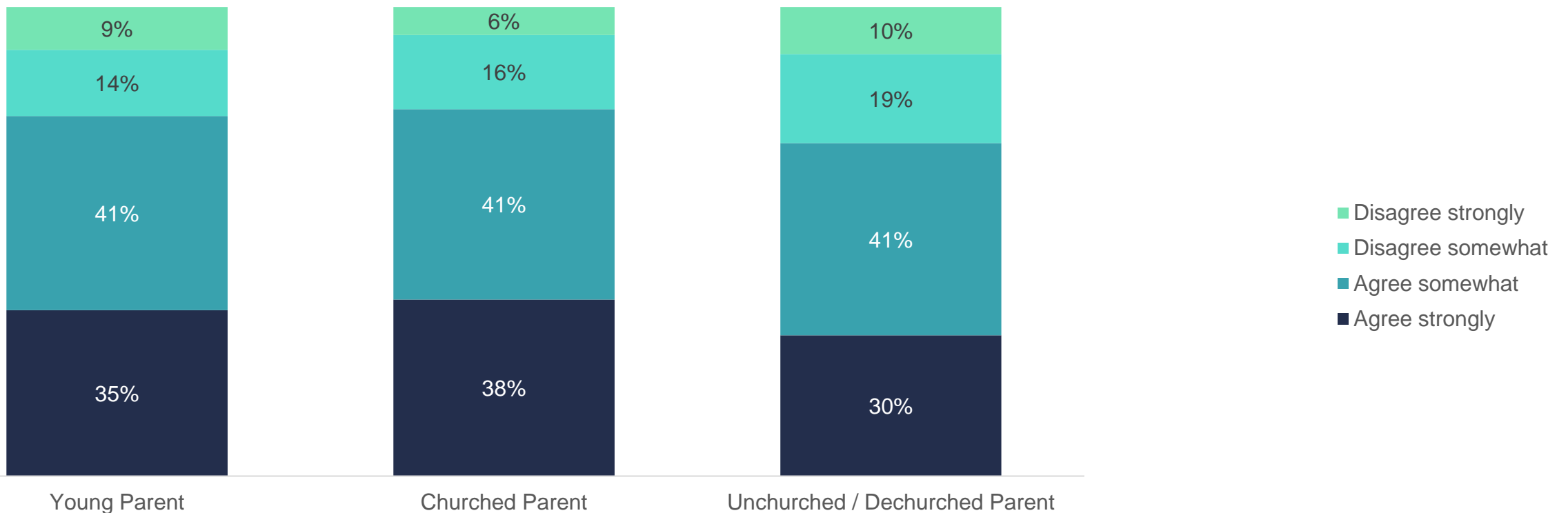




# 3 out of 4 parents at least somewhat agree that it took a while to get their child in an early learning center.

- Nearly 70% of all parents at least somewhat agree with the statement that “getting their child into an early learning center took a long time”.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
“Getting my child(ren) into an early learning center took a long time”*  
Base: Early child learning center parent



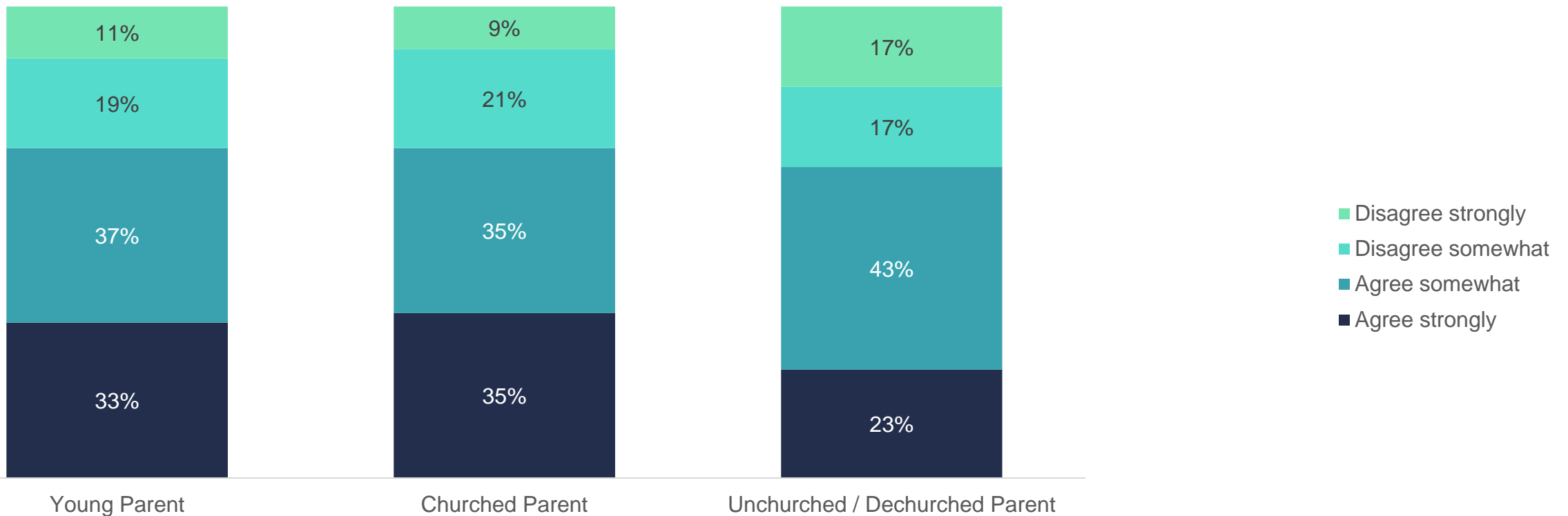
# Nearly 7 in 10 parents at least somewhat agree that “there is a lack of childcare options” in their community.

- Nearly 70% of young adults with children, unchurched parents, and unchurched parents agreed that “there is a lack of childcare options” in their community.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

*“There is a lack of childcare options in my community”*

Base: Early child learning center parent

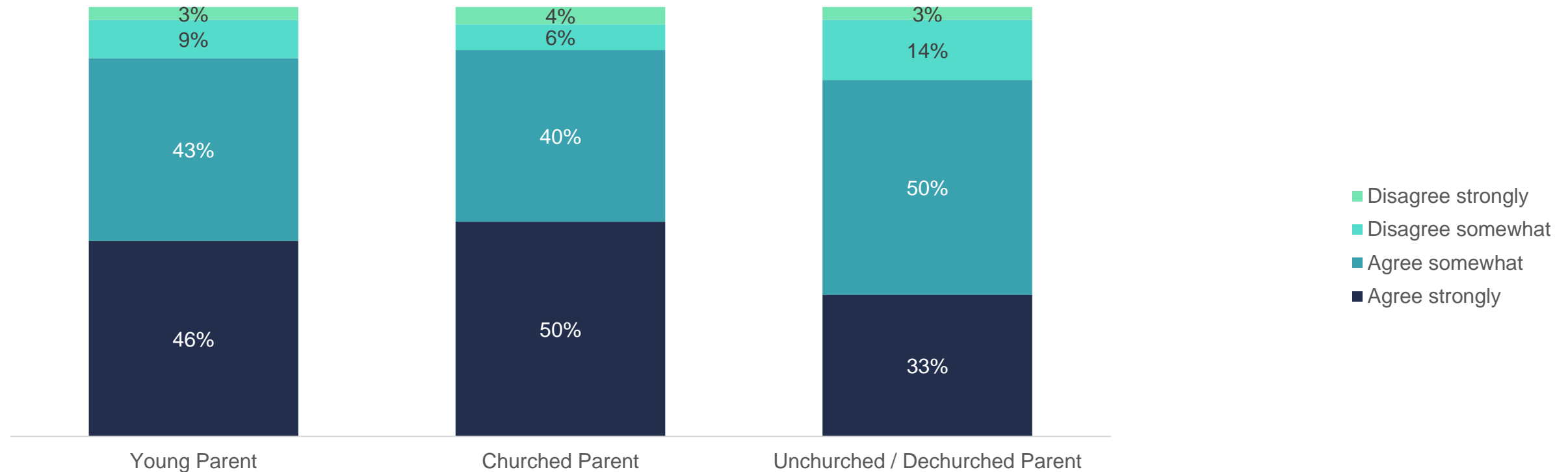


# Parents at least somewhat agree that their early learning center offers a “well-thought out and applicable” curriculum.

- Nearly 9 in 10 parents at least somewhat agree that their child’s early learning center “is well-thought out and applicable to their children”. Less than 5% of parents strongly disagree with this statement.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
“The curriculum is well-thought out and applicable to my child(ren)”*

Base: Early child learning center parent



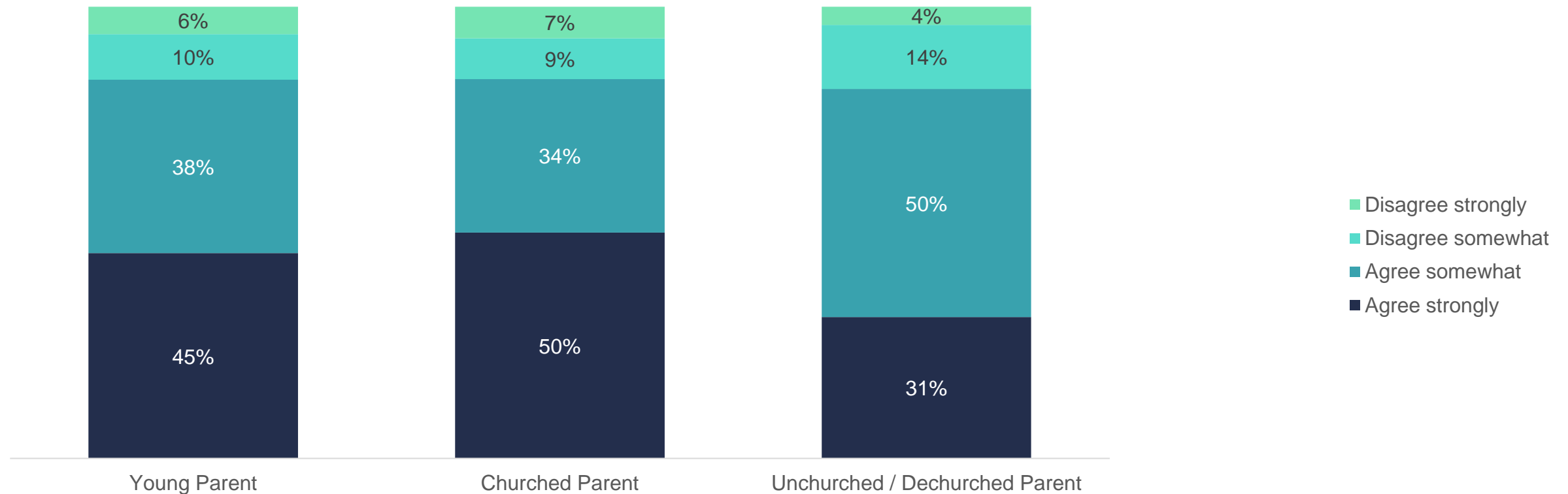
# More than 75% of parents say that their child's "early learning center is diverse".

- While both churched and unchurchd parents agree that their child's early learning center is diverse, 50% of churched parents, as compared to 31% of unchurchd parents, agree strongly to this statement.

*Thinking about your child(ren)'s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

*"My child(ren)'s early learning center is diverse"*

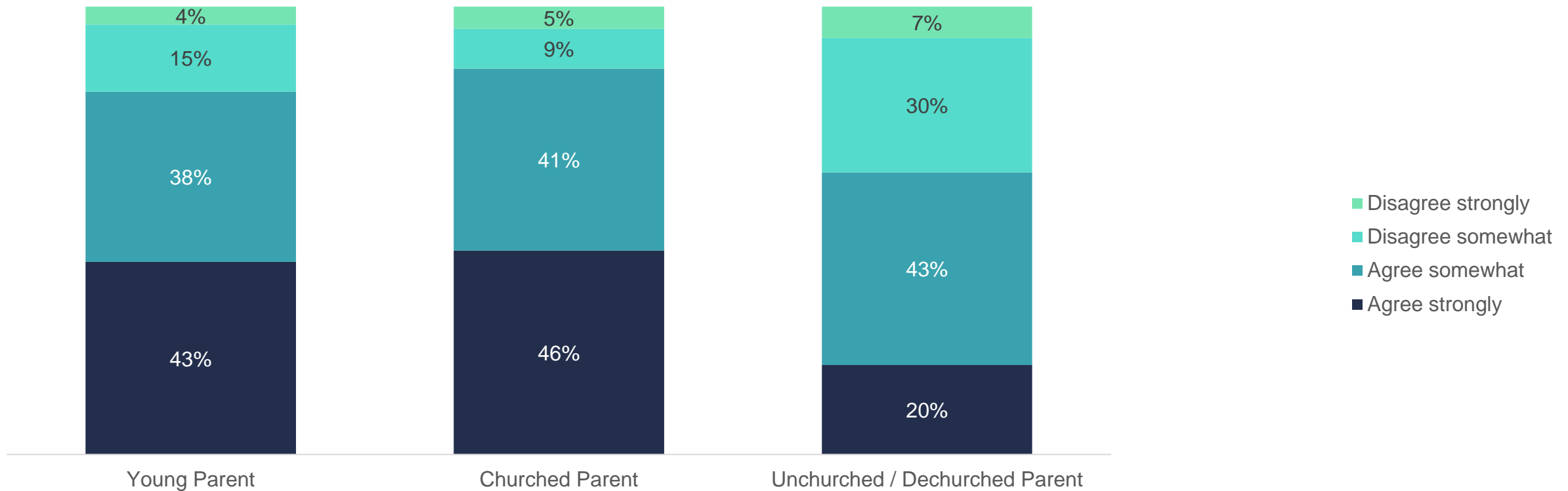
Base: Early child learning center parent



# Unchurched parents are less likely than churched parents to agree that they know other parents at their early learning center.

- 20% of unchurched parents say they strongly agree to knowing other parents at their child's early learning center, compared to nearly half of (46%) churched parents who would say the same.

*Thinking about your child(ren)'s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
"I know other parents well at my child(ren)'s early learning center"*  
Base: Early child learning center parent



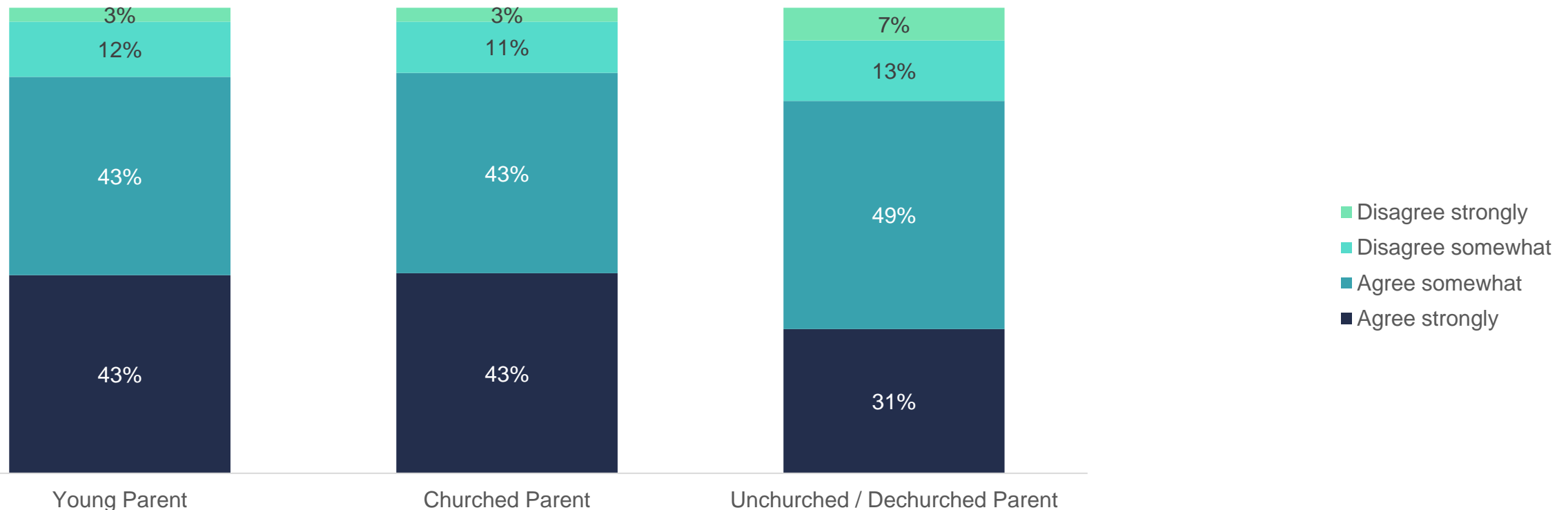
# More than 80% of parents at least somewhat agree that early learning center staff know their children well.

- 8 in 10 parents at least somewhat agree that “the staff at their child’s school knows their child(ren) well”. Only 1 in 5 unchurched parents at least somewhat disagree with this statement.

*Thinking about your child(ren)’s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

*“The staff and leadership at my child(ren)’s early learning center know my child(ren) well”*

Base: Early child learning center parent



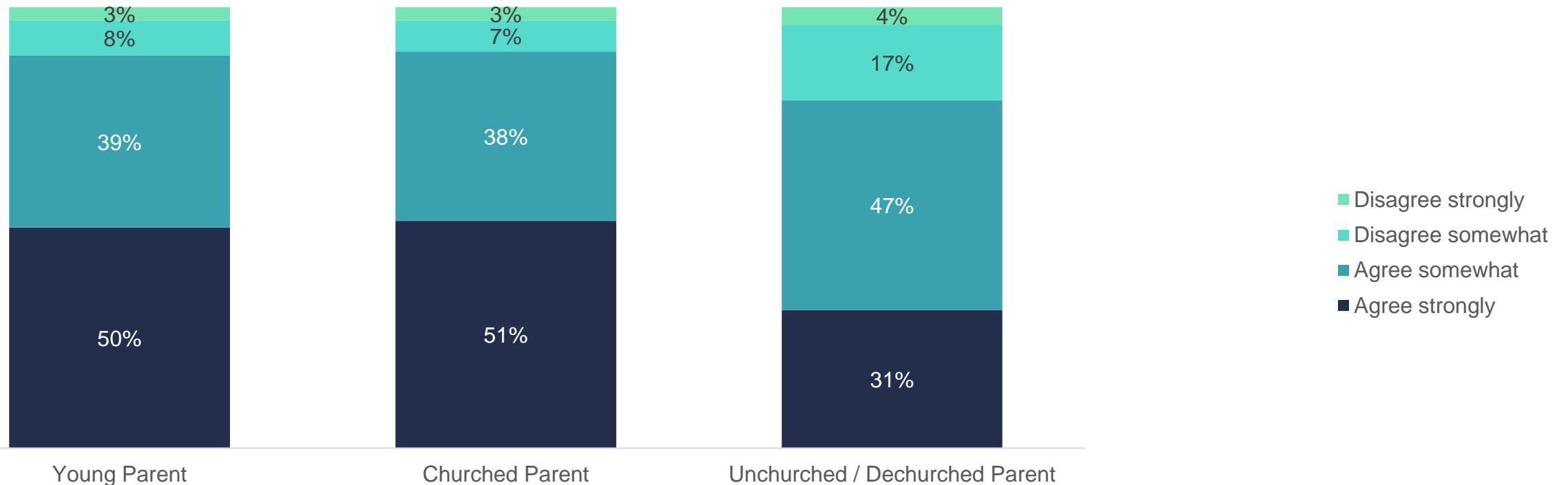
# Most parents agree that leadership and staff are good about communicating child-related issues.

- Nearly 90% of parents at least somewhat agree that staff and leadership at their child's school does a good job of communicating child-related issues to them. Unchurched parents are slightly less likely to strongly agree to this statement, compared to young adults with children and churched parents (31% compared to 50% and 51%, respectively).

**Thinking about your child(ren)'s early learning center (e.g. daycare, preschool, etc.) to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*"The staff and leadership at my child(ren)'s early learning center are good at communicating."*

Base: Early child learning center parent



# Over half of unchurched parents say they are “very interested” in a church-based early learning center.

- Nearly all churched parents expressed at least some interest in a church-based early learning center, whereas 55% of unchurched parents say the same. 8 in 10 young adults with children said they are at least somewhat interested.

## How interested are you in a Church-based early learning center?

Base: Parent / Caregiver

