



Hispanic Secondary Analysis Report of the Kidsave-Gallup National Study “Americans’ Views of U.S. Foster Care”

In collaboration with Gallup, Kidsave’s EMBRACE Project conducted a national study on American’s perspectives of foster care to better understand and find solutions for the overrepresentation of Black children in the foster care system. In 2020, Black children made up 23% of all kids in foster care in the U.S., even though they only represent 14% of the total child population, according to the 2021 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). This secondary analysis report of the national study focuses on Hispanic Americans’ perspectives of foster care.

Methodology

Data for this study were first collected by Gallup as part of the Kidsave-Gallup Study, “Americans’ Views of U.S. Foster Care: Elevating Black Americans’ Perspectives and Experiences” (Gallup). The full methodology for the study can be found in the report on the Kidsave EMBRACE website. This demographic-level report is a secondary analysis of that data, conducted by Kidsave, analyzing responses of the 831 Hispanic study participants.

Why the Focus on Hispanic adults?

- Hispanic or Latino/a/e children are the second largest population group in the United States, making up 26% of the 72 million total child population. ([Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021](#))
- Hispanic children are also the second largest population group in the U.S. foster care system, making up 22% of the 390,717 youth in care ([Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021](#)).
- Issues that are believed to contribute to Hispanic children entering foster care at this rate are family separation due to immigration status issues, language barrier issues when attempting to navigate the child welfare system, and poverty. ([Schoenberg, 2021](#)).
- By identifying the perceptions and barriers preventing the Hispanic population from providing foster care/adopting, Kidsave aims to provide solutions and ultimately improve outcomes for Hispanic youth in foster care.

Our goal with this demographic-level secondary analysis is to learn more about Hispanics’ confidence in and perceptions of the foster care system; adoption from foster care; and

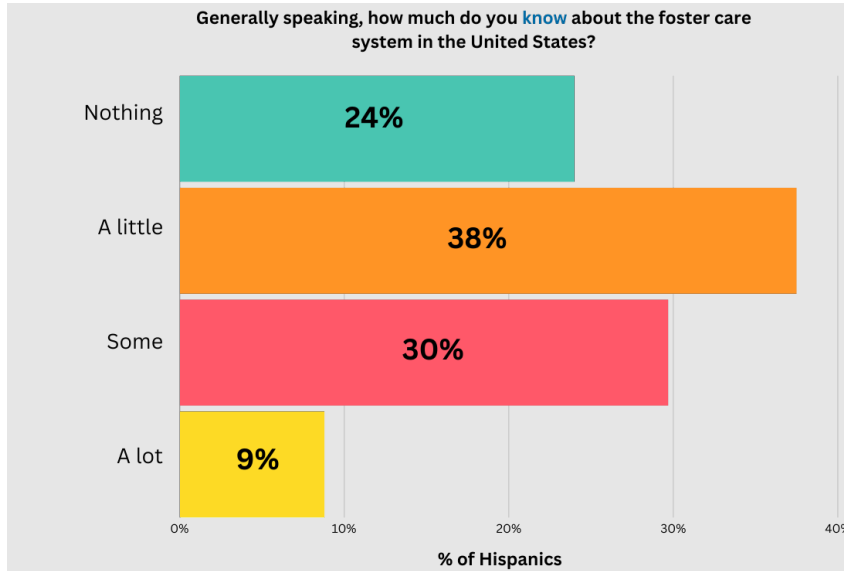
barriers preventing Hispanics from mentoring, fostering, and adopting youth in care. With these learnings in mind, recommendations for actionable steps are made for community leaders, child welfare practitioners, and policy makers to help improve outcomes for the 15,000+ kids—many of whom are children of color—languishing in foster care.

Key Findings

- 62% of Hispanic adults reported that they know little or nothing about the U.S. foster care system. (Figure 1)
- 67% of Hispanic adults do not know if they are eligible to provide foster care. (Figure 2)
- Only 43% of Hispanic adults have ever considered or thought a lot about participating in a program to work with children in foster care; 56% were not aware that these types of volunteer programs (outside of providing foster care) existed. (Figure 3). 67% of Hispanic respondents also say that receiving training and support could make them more likely to participate in a mentoring program to work with youth in foster care.
- 48% of Hispanics stated that the possibility the child will have behavioral or emotional challenges is a major barrier to fostering, and 47% of Hispanic respondents say not having enough resources is another.
- 44% of Hispanic respondents indicated that the possibility the biological parents would be able to reclaim the child after the child was living with them was a major barrier to adopting. It was also a top barrier for 10% of Hispanics.

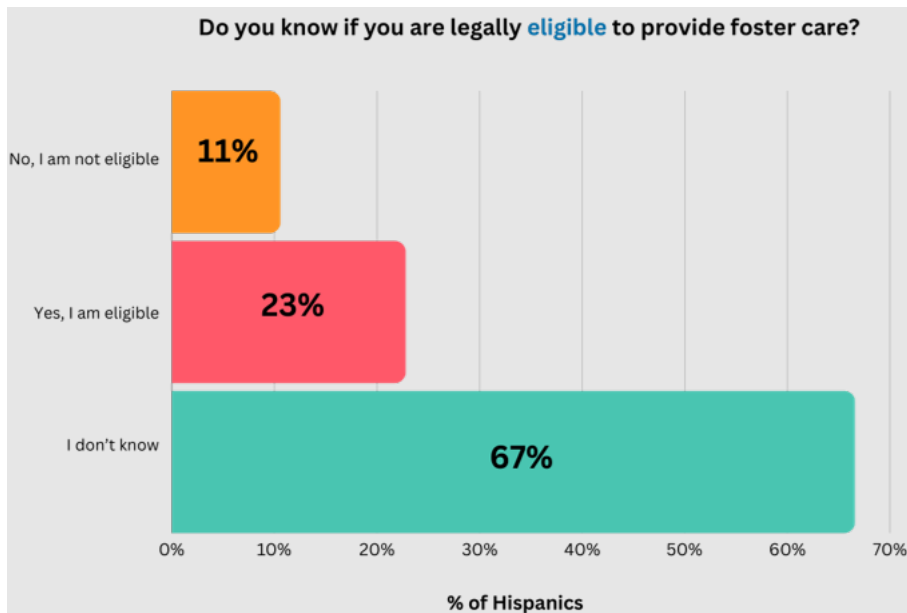
The following are key findings from the secondary analysis conducted on Hispanic adults' responses when asked questions regarding their personal perceptions of, confidence levels in, and barriers to engaging with the U.S. foster care and adoption systems.

Figure 1: Hispanics' knowledge level of the U.S. foster care system



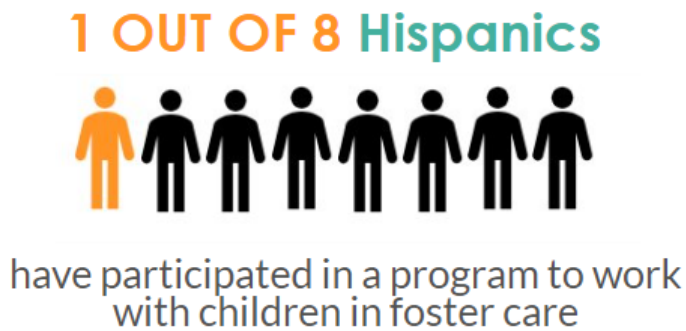
When asked about their knowledge of the foster care system in the United States, the majority of Hispanic respondents (62%) reported knowing either “a little” or “nothing” whereas the minority (39%) reported knowing “some” or “a lot.”

Figure 2: Hispanics' knowledge level of eligibility within the U.S. foster care system



While 57% of Hispanic adults reported that they are interested in providing foster care, 67% of Hispanic respondents are unsure whether they are eligible to provide foster care.

Figure 3: Number of Hispanics who have participated in programs to work with youth in foster care



12.5% of Hispanic adults reported that they have participated in a program to work with children in foster care. For those who haven't participated in such a program, they reported a high rate (43%) of considering participating in a program to work with children in foster care, but over half (56%) did not even know such programs existed.

Conclusion

While interest in providing foster care and adoption is high among Hispanic respondents, their self-reported lack of knowledge about the foster care system and eligibility to provide foster care or adopt shows a need for education and awareness programs. For Hispanics who reported a lower level of interest in providing foster care or adoption, receiving adequate participation in a mentoring program that provides training and support to ensure they felt prepared and safe could increase their interest and comfort. Additionally, almost half of Hispanic respondents reported a fear of the child having behavioral or emotional issues as a major barrier to fostering. They also report a fear that biological parents may reclaim a child after living with them; forty-four percent indicated that this would be a major barrier to adopting a child, and almost a tenth chose it as their top barrier when asked to choose one. Awareness and education campaigns about the training and support that currently exist for foster and adoptive parents, implementation of mental health resources, and education on termination of parental rights could lead to more Hispanics to foster care and adoption and comfort throughout the processes. More mentoring programs or an increase in participation in existing mentoring programs that work with youth in foster care could lead to more Hispanic adults providing foster care and adopting in the future.

Sources

- Administration For Children and Families (AFCARS). (2022, November 1). *The AFCARS Report*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcars-report-29.pdf>
- Gallup, Inc., & Kidsave, (2024, July 8). Americans' Views of U.S. Foster Care: Elevating Black Americans' Perspectives and Experiences. <https://s43633.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Americans-Views-of-U.S.-Foster-Care-Kidsave-Gallup-Report-Web-v2.pdf>
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- The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023, July). *Child population by race and ethnicity: Kids Count Data Center*. Child population by race and ethnicity | KIDS COUNT Data Center. <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/103-child-population-by-race-and-ethnicity#detailed/1/any/false/1095,2048,574,1729,37/68,69,67,12,70,66,71,72/423,424>
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023, April). *Children in foster care by race and Hispanic origin: Kids count data center*. Children in foster care by race and Hispanic origin | KIDS COUNT Data Center. <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/6246-children-in-foster-care-by-race-and-hispanic-origin#detailed/1/any/false/2048,574,1729,37/2638,2601,2600,2598,2603,2597,2602,1353/12992,12993>



Kidsave-Gallup Study Hispanic Secondary Analysis Report

January 2024



METHODOLOGY

- Data for this study were first collected by Gallup as part of the Kidsave-Gallup Study, “Americans’ Views of U.S. Foster Care.” The full methodology for the study can be found in the report on the Kidsave EMBRACE website.
- In the original study, data were collected using both mail and web in March through April 2023. Respondents were primarily identified through the Gallup Panel, a probability-based panel. About one-quarter of respondents were identified through a third-party opt-in sample. Gallup conducted weighting to ensure that the national sample matched national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, and education, with cross-classified targets within race.
- This demographic-level report is a secondary analysis of that data, conducted by Kidsave, using new weighting procedures for state-level estimates.

METHODOLOGY

- As part of the current study, Kidsave conducted post-stratification weighting to adjust the national-level weights to state-level demographic targets.
- Demographic weighting targets were based on the March 2023 Current Population Survey estimates for the age 18+ population.
- For the **831** Hispanic respondents, the adjusted margin of error was ± 5.4 percentage points.

Why the Focus on Hispanic Population

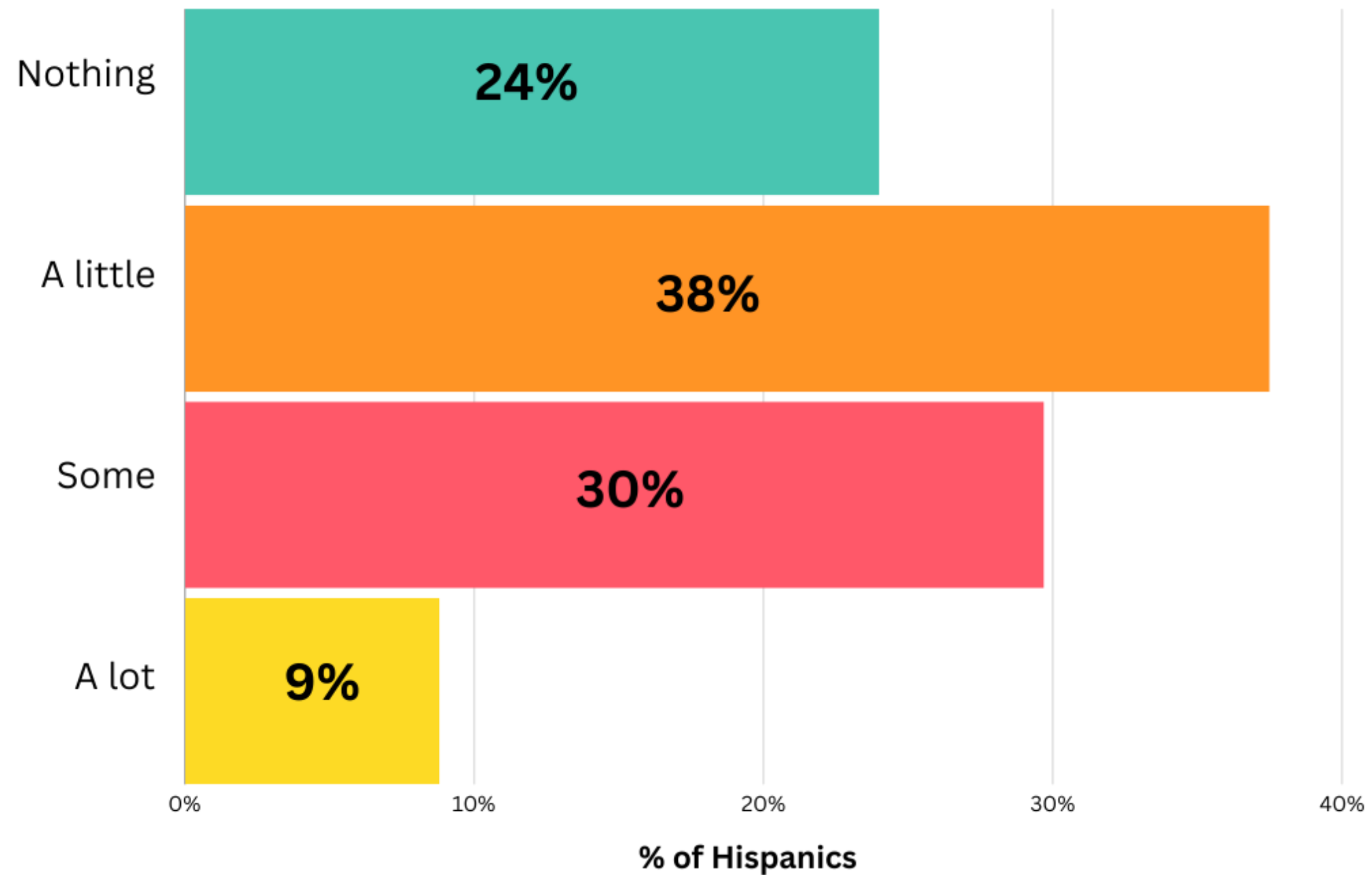
- Hispanic or Latino/a/e children are the second largest population group in the United States, making up 26% of the 72 million total child population. ([Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021](#))
- Hispanic children are also the second largest population group in the U.S. foster care system, making up 22% of the 390,717 youth in care. ([Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2021](#))
- Issues that are believed to contribute to Hispanic children entering foster care at this rate are family separation due to immigration status issues, language barrier issues when attempting to navigate the child welfare system, and poverty. ([Schoenberg, 2021](#)).
- By identifying the perceptions and barriers preventing the Hispanic population from providing foster care/adopting, Kidsave aims to provide solutions and ultimately improve outcomes for Hispanic youth in foster care.

The foster care system:

Perceptions, barriers, and interest

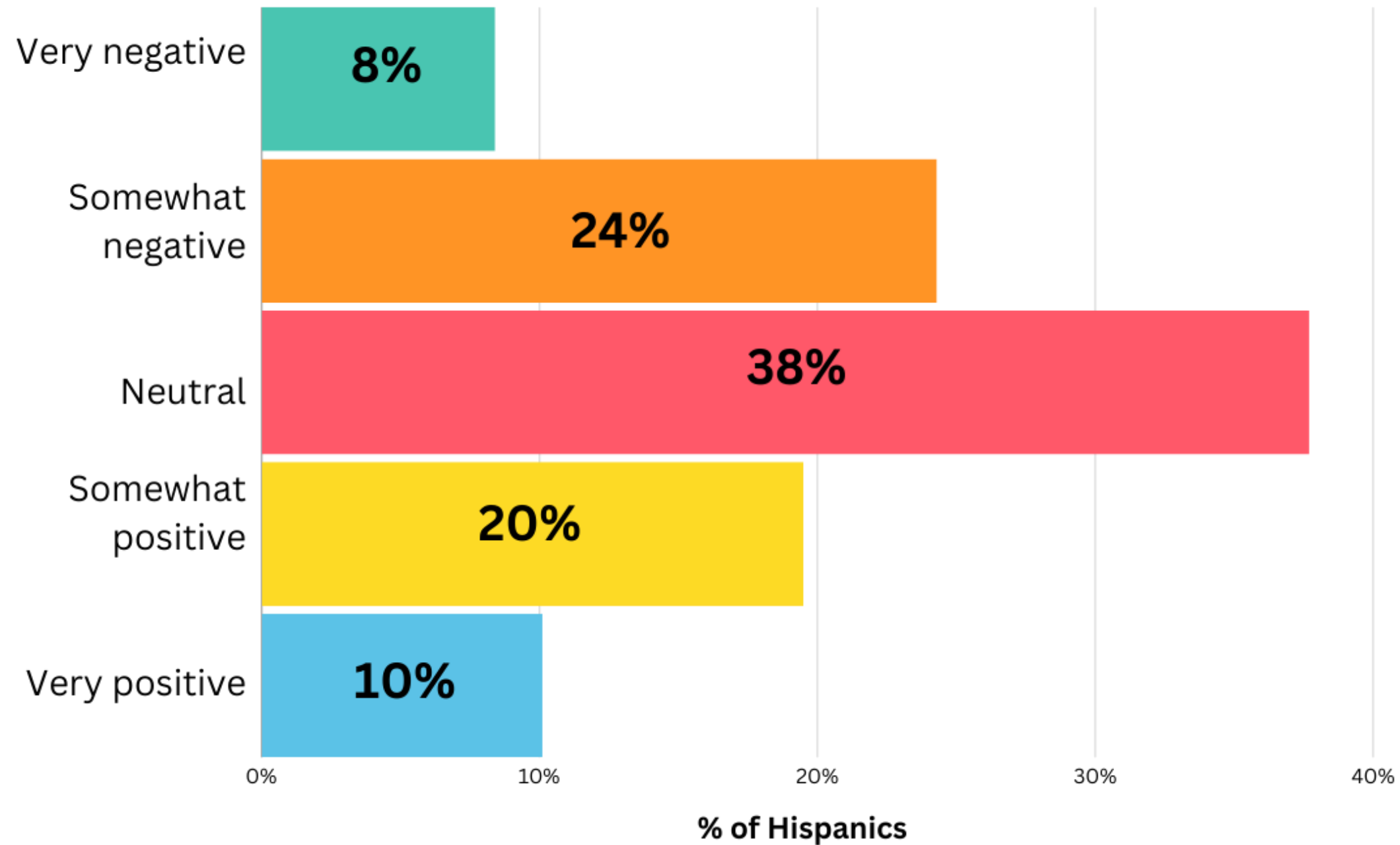
Hispanic adults know little about the foster care system

Generally speaking, how much do you know about the foster care system in the United States?



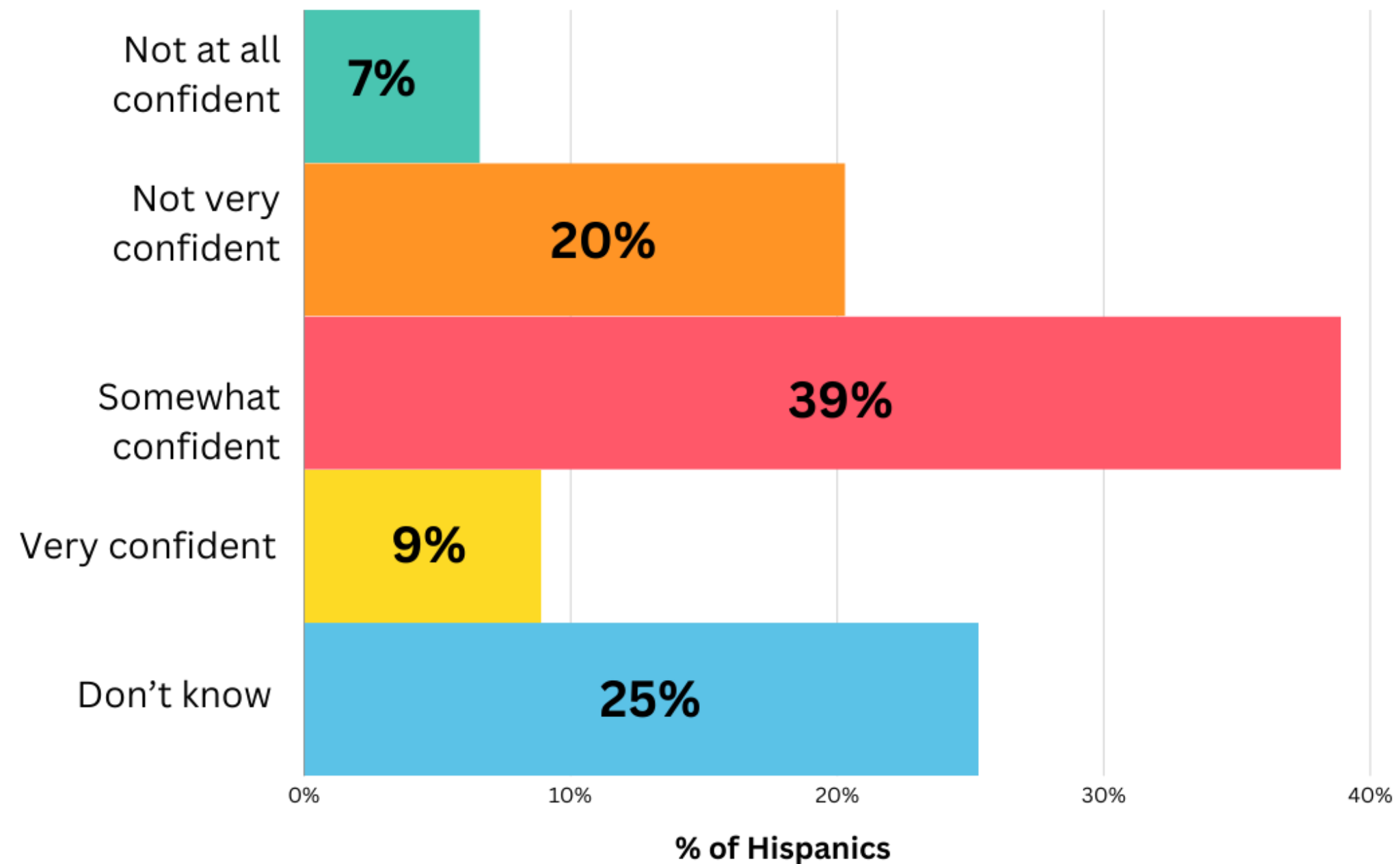
Just one in three Hispanic adults have a positive view of the foster care system

Overall, how would you rate your **feelings** toward the foster care system in the United States?

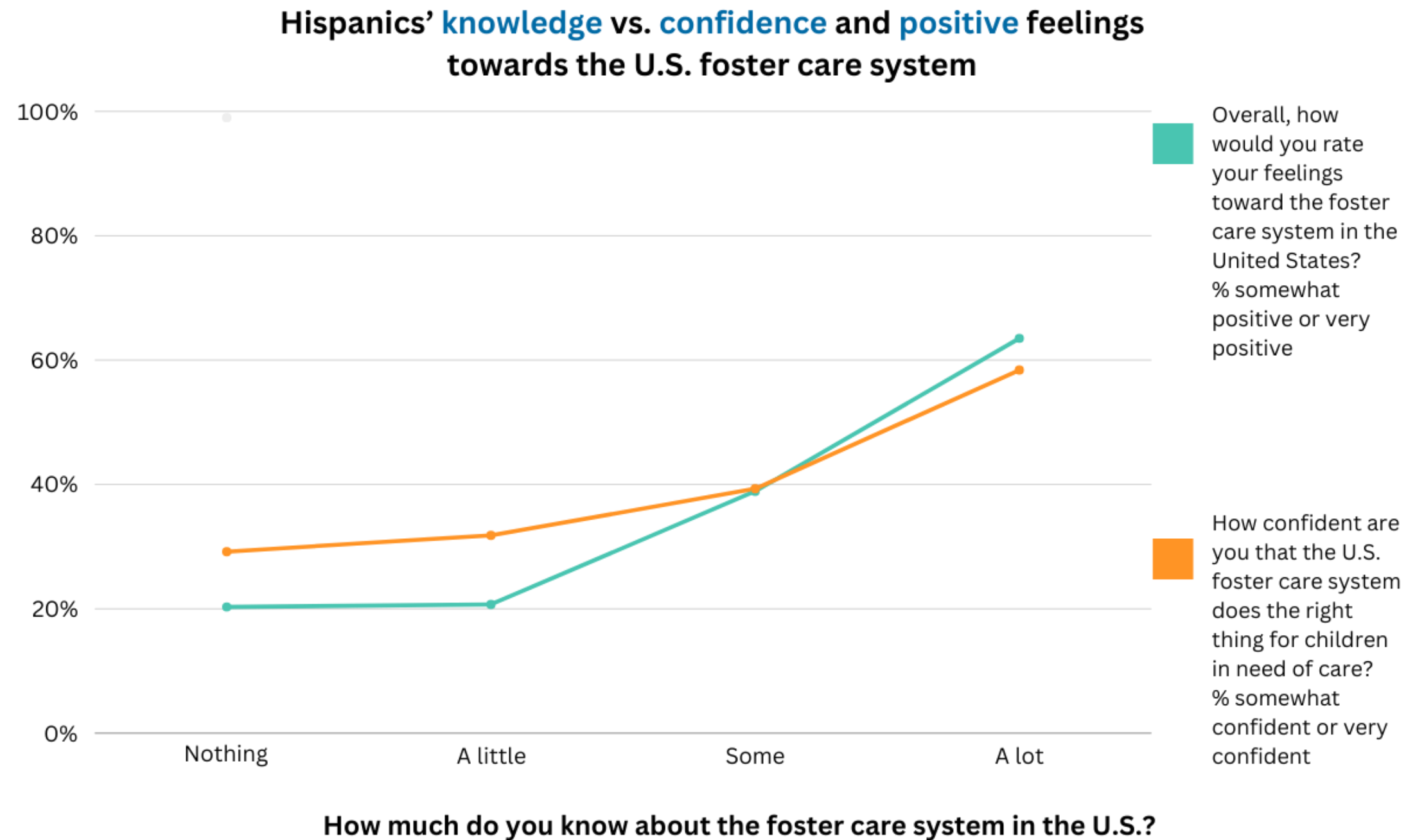


And over a quarter are not at all confident or not very confident in the system

How **confident** are you that the U.S. foster care system does the right thing for children in need of care?

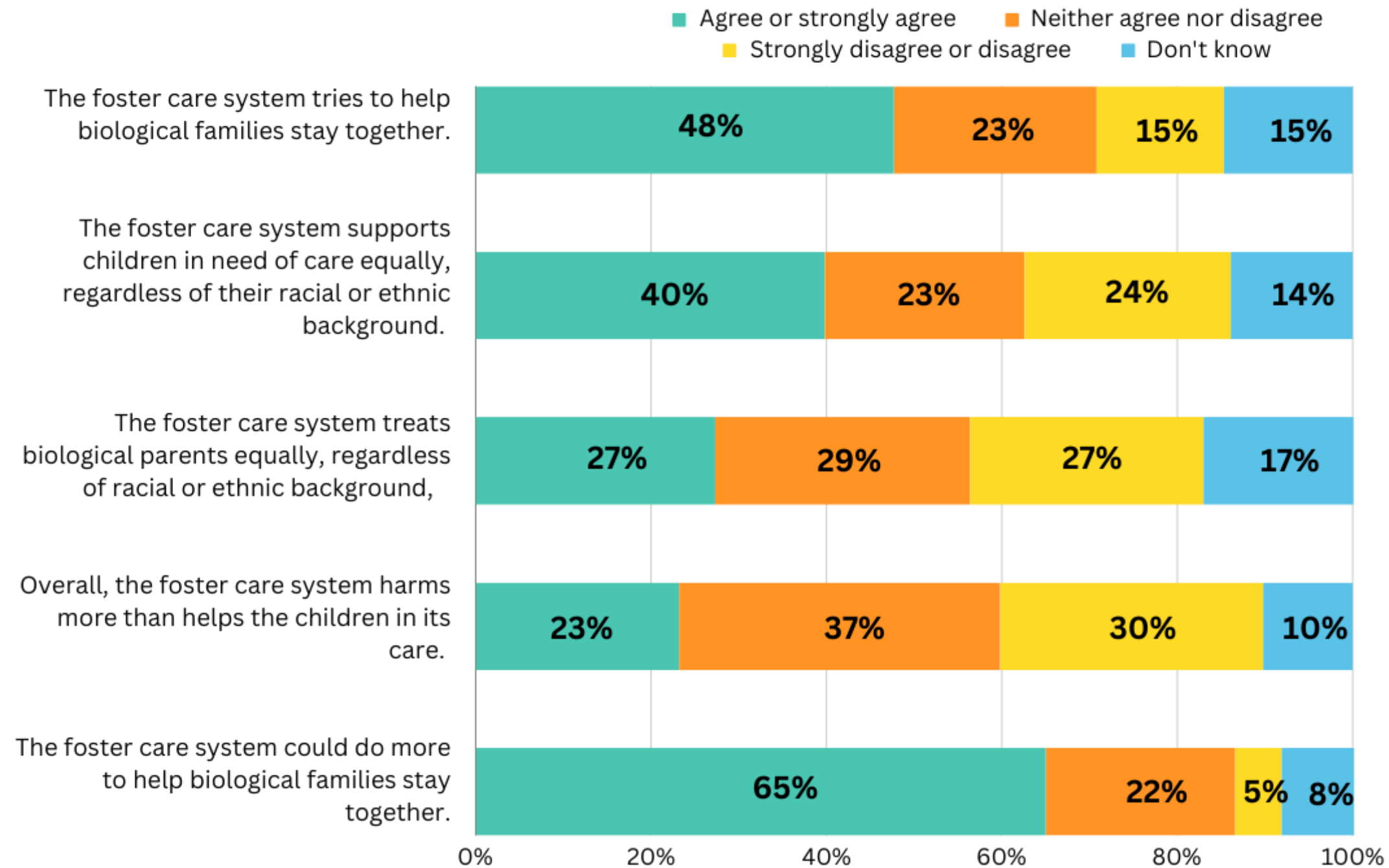


Generally, more knowledge about the system relates to more positive feelings and confidence in it



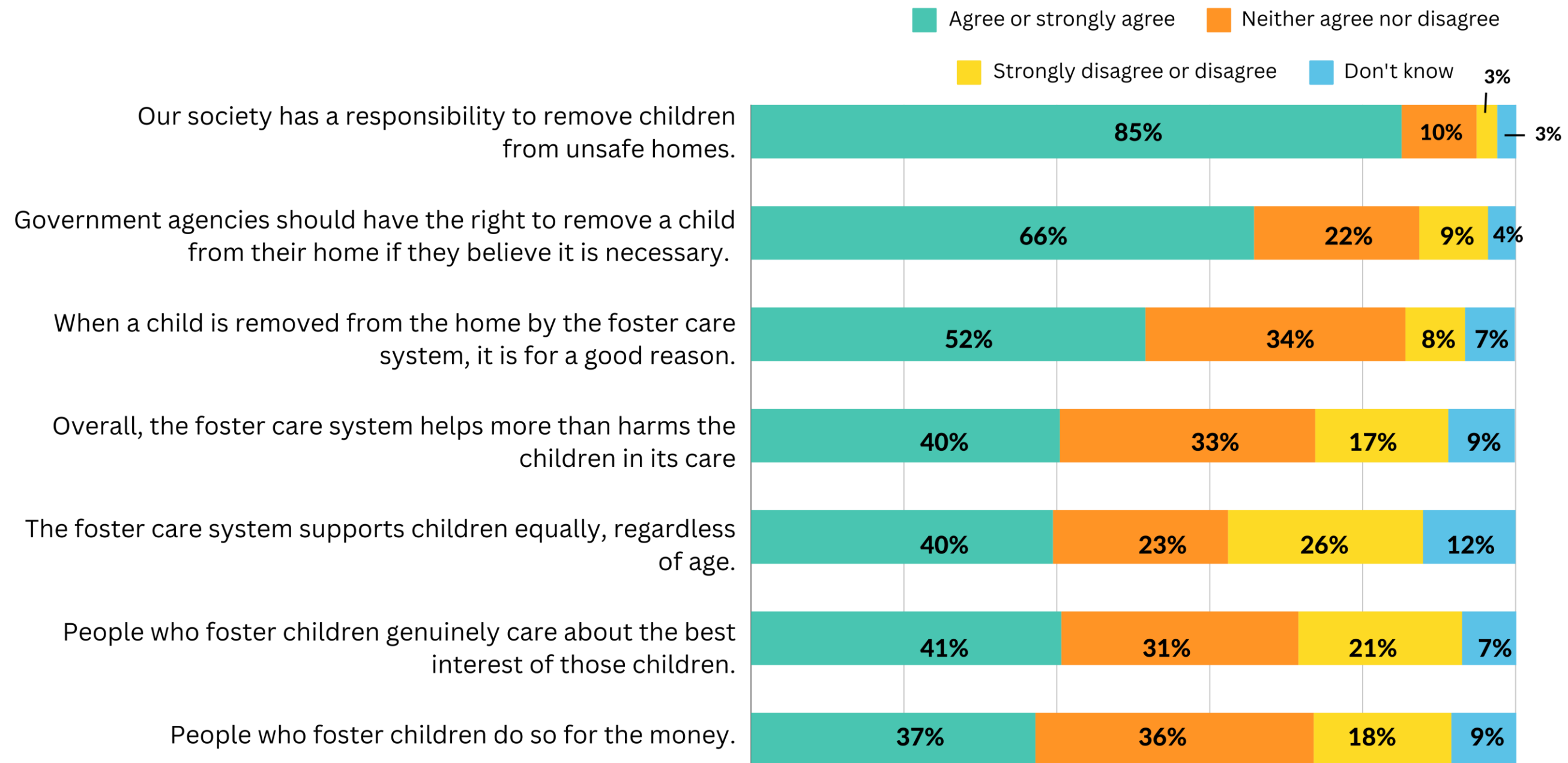
Most Hispanic adults believe the foster care system could do more to help biological families stay together.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Most Hispanics believe the foster care system has certain responsibilities

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Barriers to providing foster care

Top 5 Most Common Barriers to Providing Foster Care Among Hispanics

% Major barrier

1. The possibility the child will have behavioral or emotional challenges. **48.1%**
2. Not having enough access to mental health resources for the child, myself, or my family. **47.0%**
3. Not having enough training and resources to feel prepared to foster. **46.5%**
4. The changes I would have to make to my home or living situation in order to foster. **43.3%**
5. My age or stage in life. **42.3%**

Lack of training and resources are significant barriers to providing foster care

Three of the top five barriers to fostering a child **could be addressed with access to training and supportive resources**, especially those related to child and family mental health.

The possibility the child will have behavioral or emotional challenges.



Not having enough access to mental health resources for the child, myself, or my family.



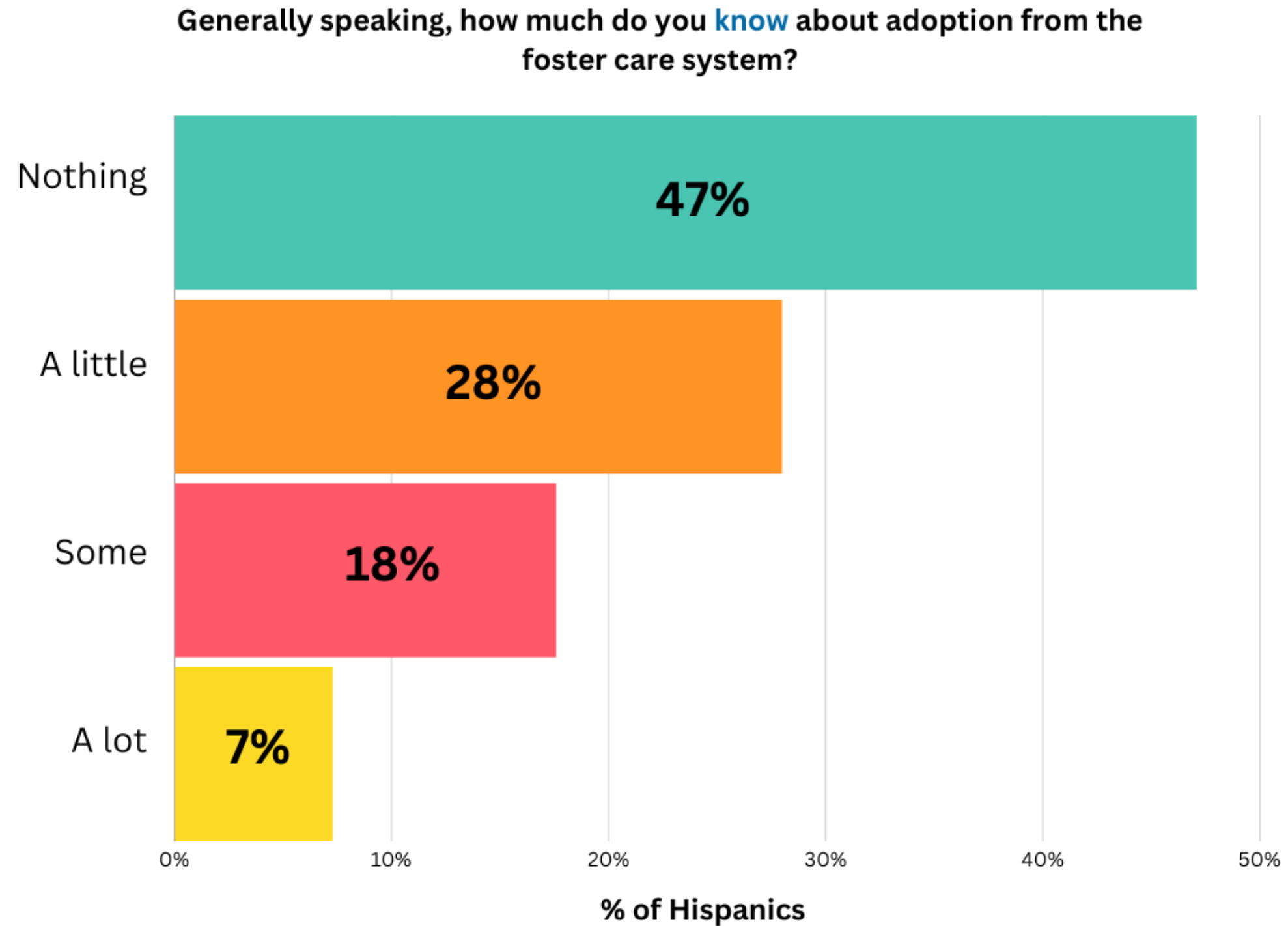
Not having enough training and resources to feel prepared to foster.



Adoption from foster care:

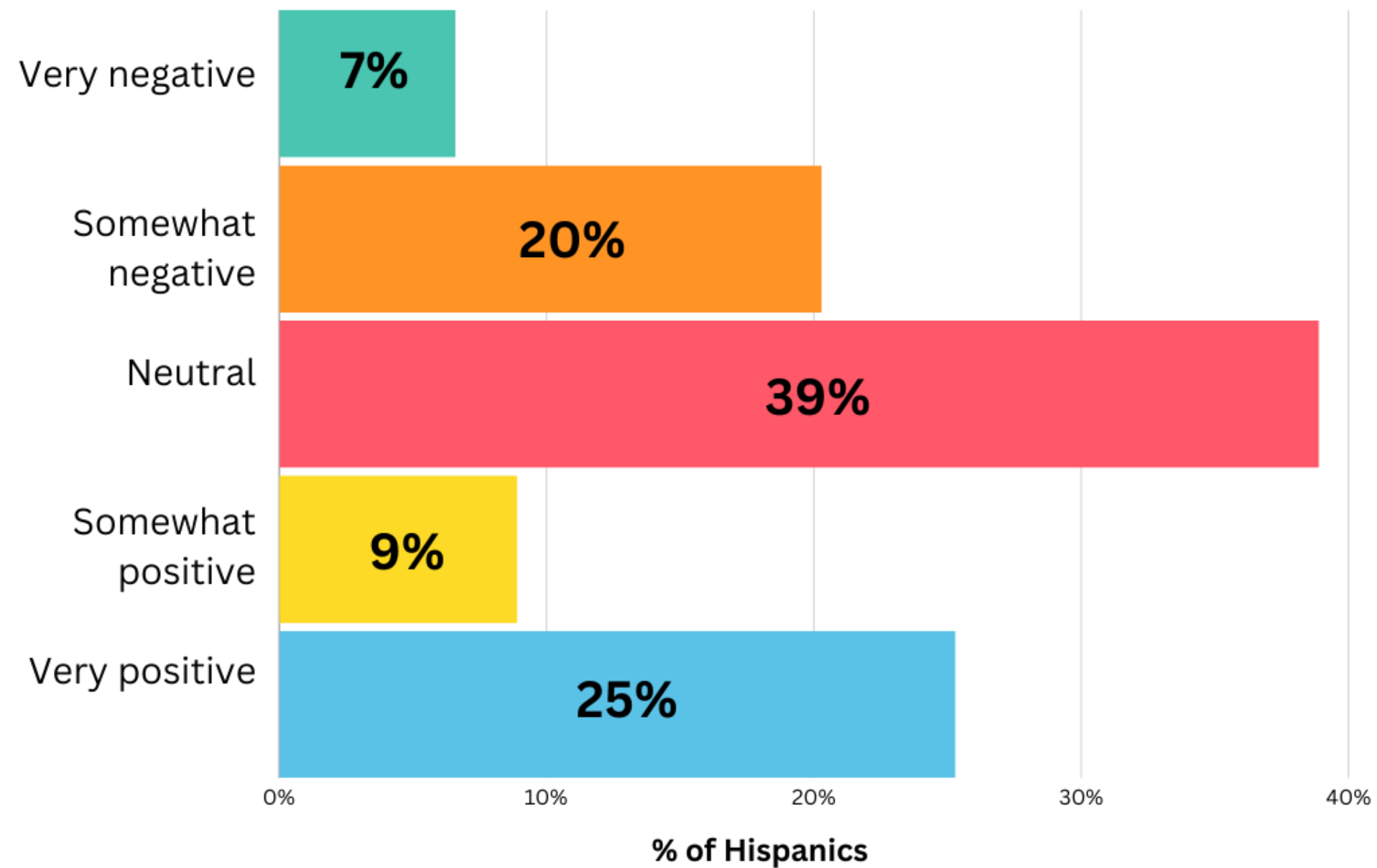
Perceptions, barriers, and interest

Hispanic adults also know little to nothing about adoption from the foster care system...



...and are also **not very confident** in organizations that facilitate adoption

How **confident** are you that organizations that facilitate adoption from foster care do the right thing for children in need of adoption?



Barriers to adopting from foster care

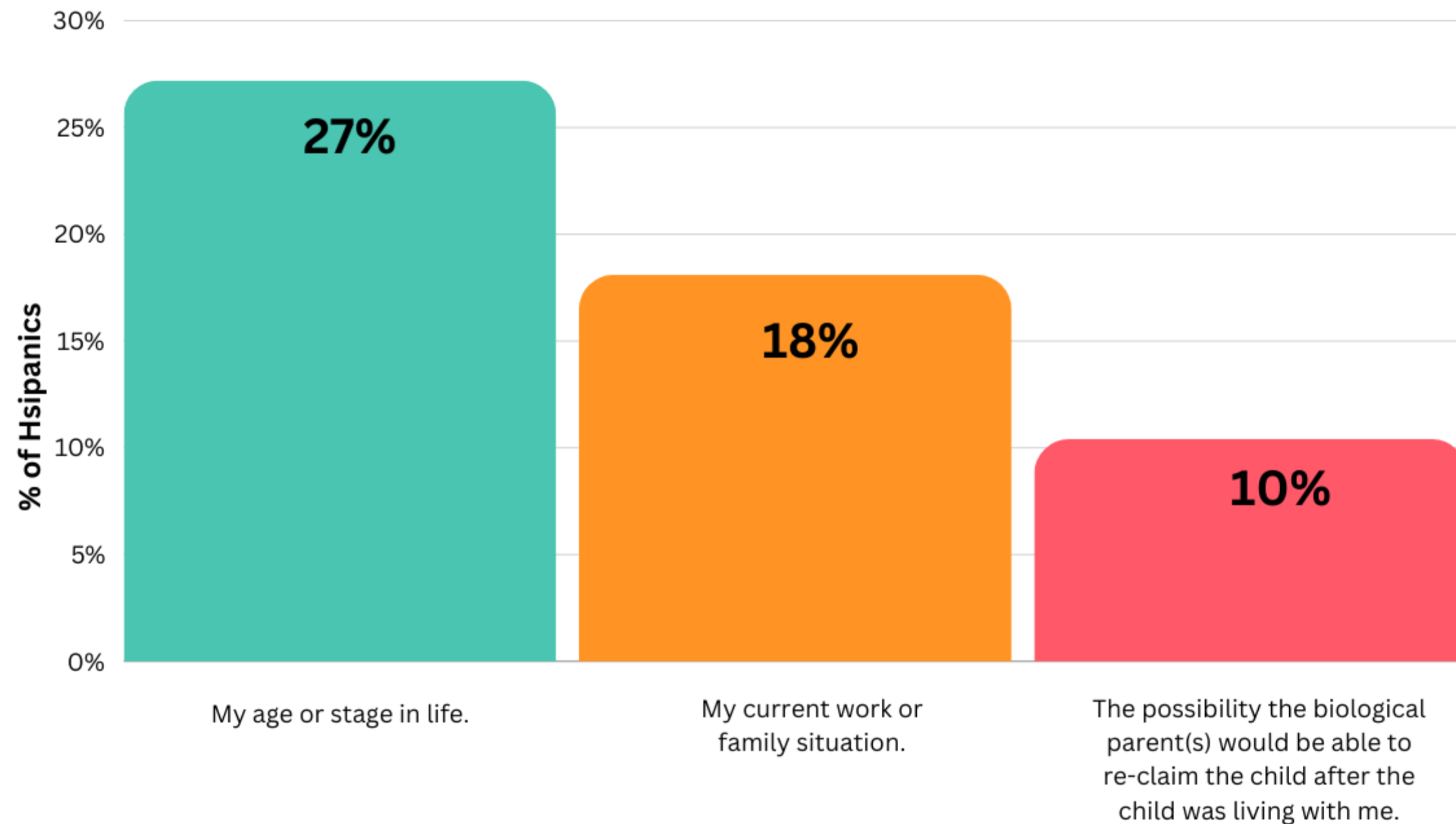
Top 5 Most Common Barriers to Adopting from Foster Care Among Hispanics

% Major barrier

1. My age or stage in life. **51.2%**
2. My current work or family situation. **47.4%**
3. The possibility the biological parent(s) would be able to re-claim the child after the child was living with me. **43.7%**
4. The possibility the child was removed from their home for the wrong reasons. **43.6%**
5. My desire to add a child or have children (i.e., I do not want a child or more children). **42.5%**

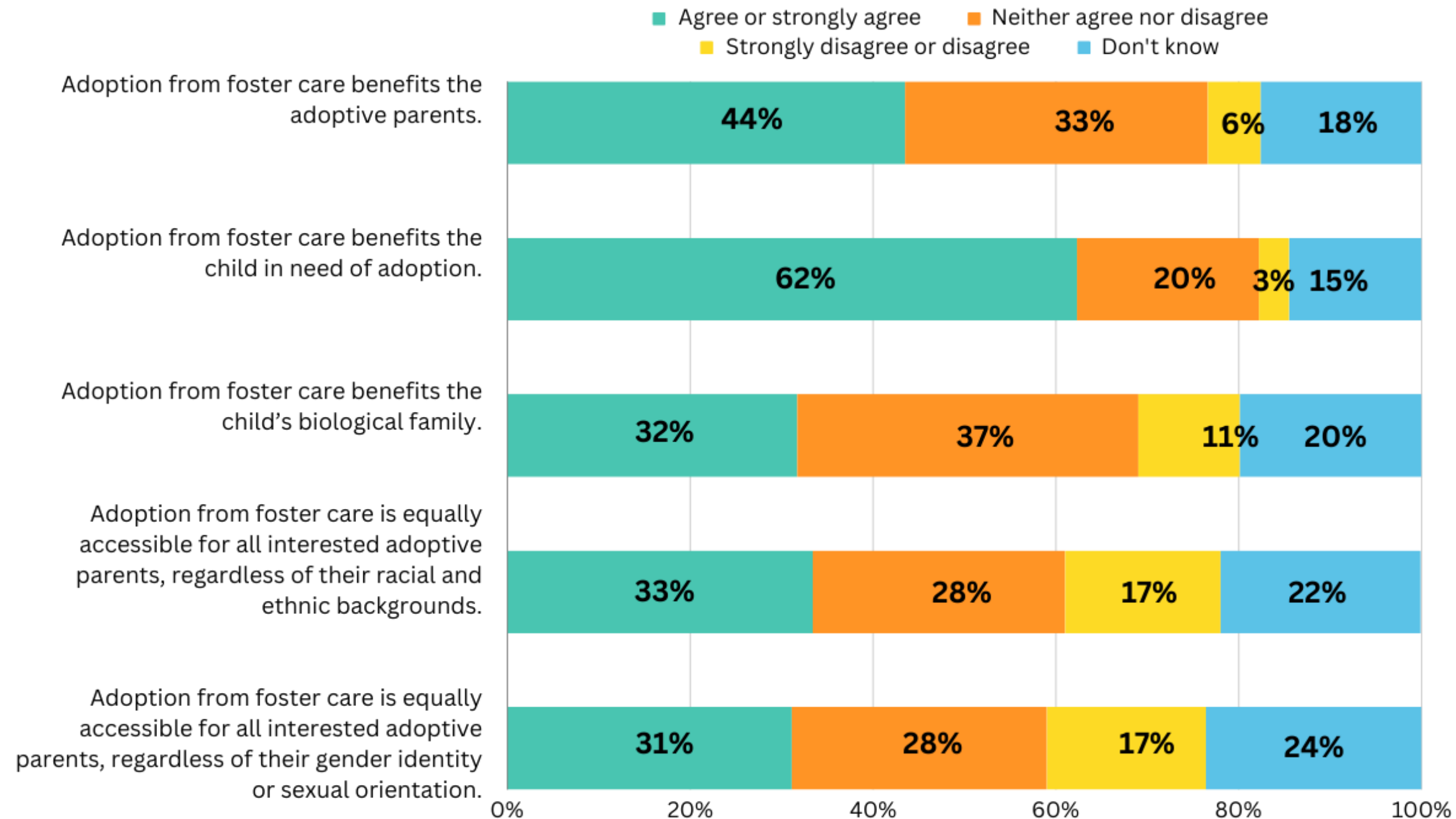
Hispanics also cite "age or stage in life" and "work/family situation" as their **top barriers to adopting**

If you had to choose only ONE barrier as the **most important** to you, which of the previous barriers would you choose?



Not many Hispanic adults believe adoption is an equally accessible or equally beneficial process

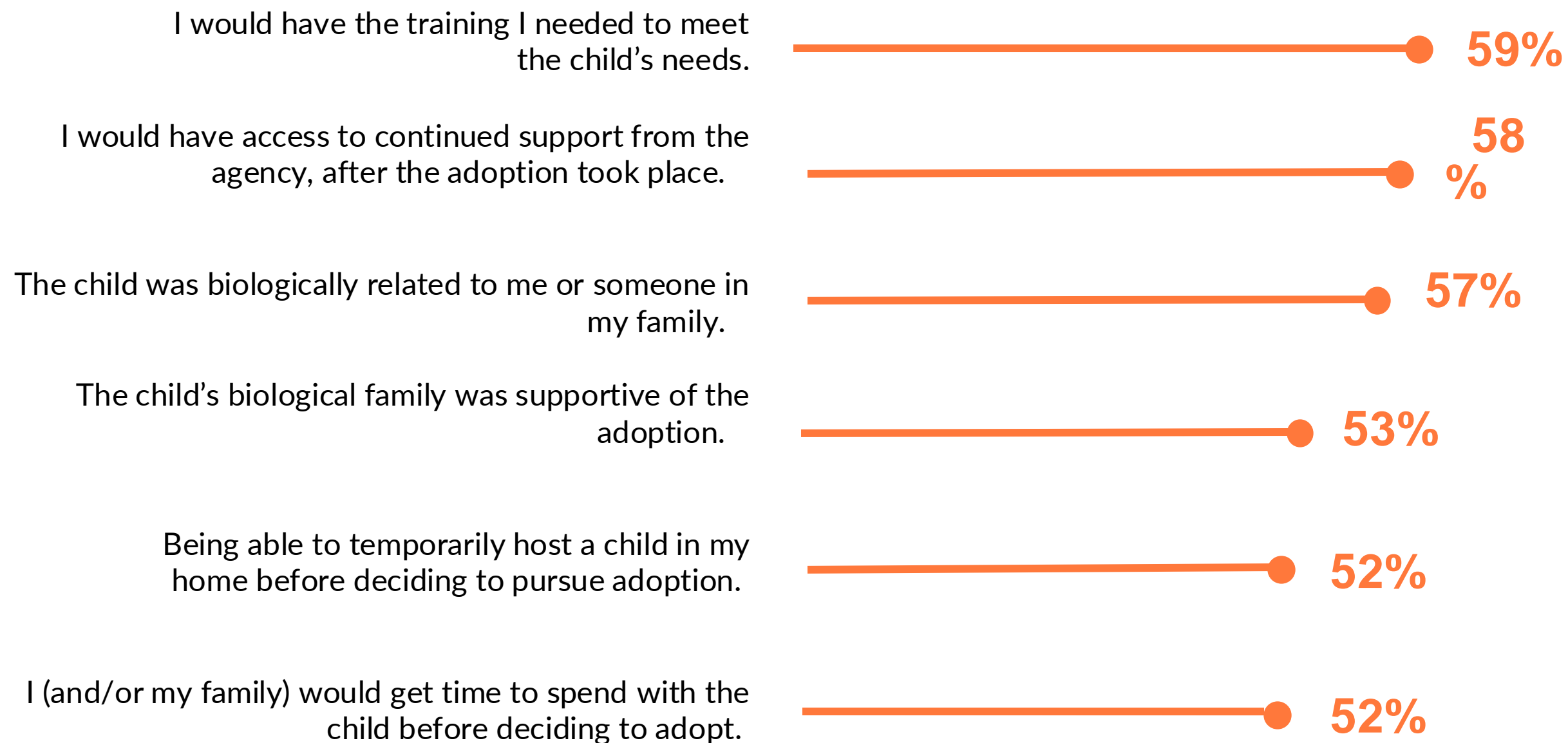
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



Interest in adoption from foster care

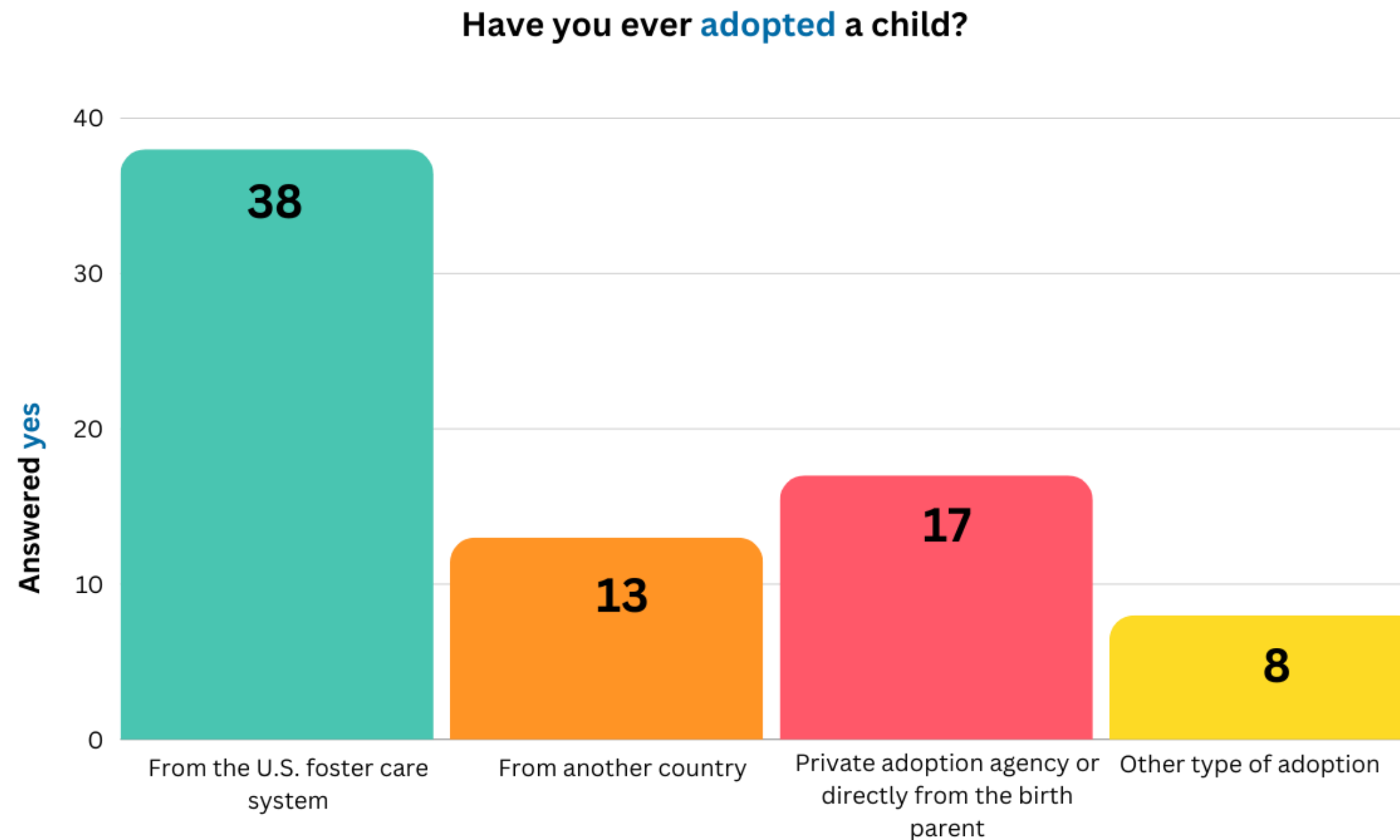
"If the following were true, would it make you more or less likely to consider adoption through foster care in the U.S.? If I knew...."

% somewhat more or a lot more likely



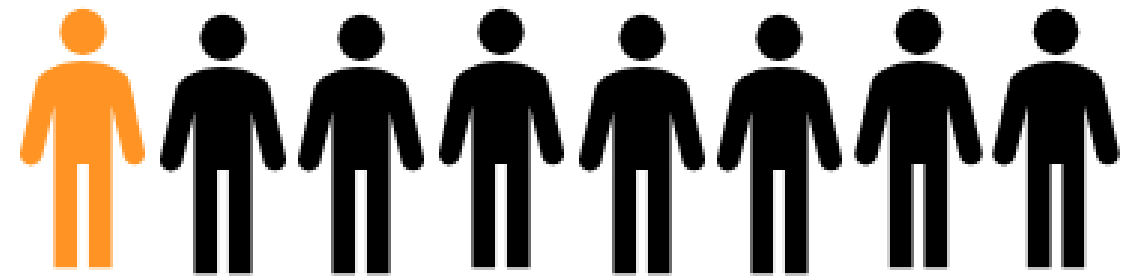
Among Hispanic respondents who have adopted, the plurality are from U.S. foster care

Out of 76 total adoptions



Mentoring program experience

1 OUT OF 8 Hispanics



have participated in a program to work with children in foster care



43% of Hispanics have ever considered or thought a lot about participating in a program to work with children in foster care.



56% were not aware that these types of volunteer programs (outside of foster parenting) existed.

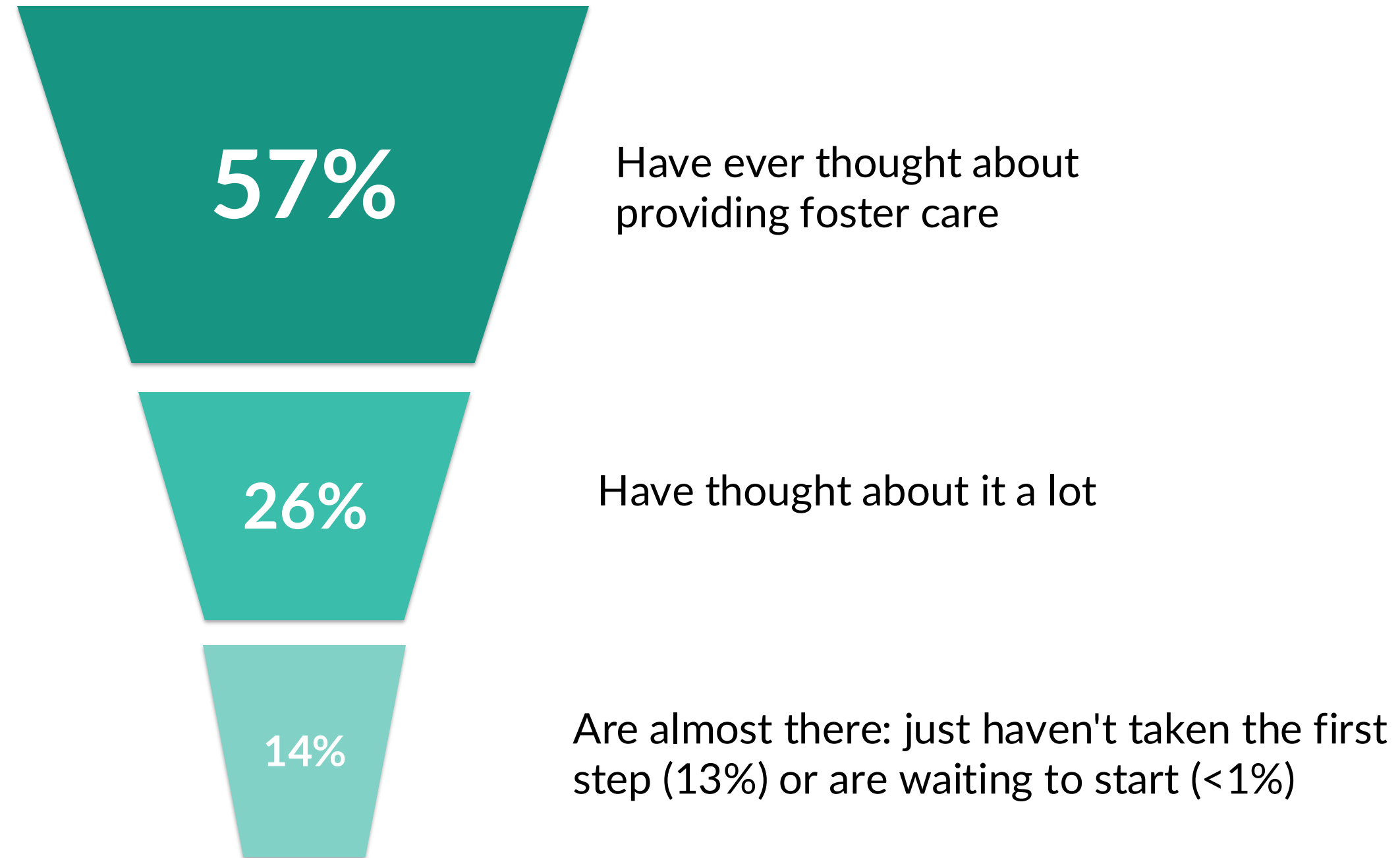
Mentoring program experience

Most Hispanics say **training and the opportunity to form meaningful relationships** could make them more likely to participate in a program working with a child in foster care.

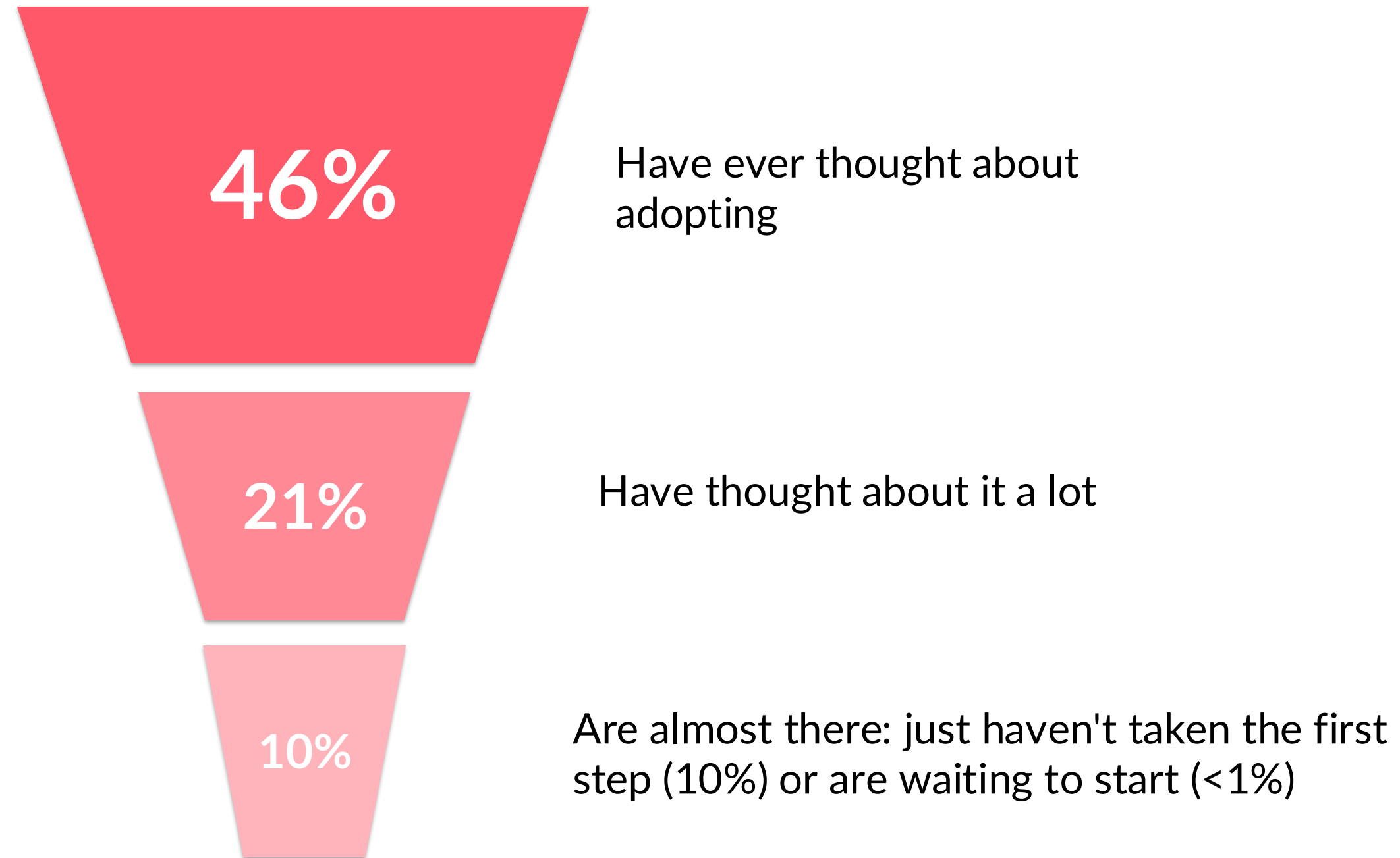
% who say the following would make them more or much more likely to consider participating:

- **67%** Having training and support to ensure I felt safe at all times.
- **66%** Knowing the child has a say in whether they spend time with me.
- **62%** Having regular interaction with other adults participating in the program.
- **62%** Getting to meet and spend time with the child before making a commitment.

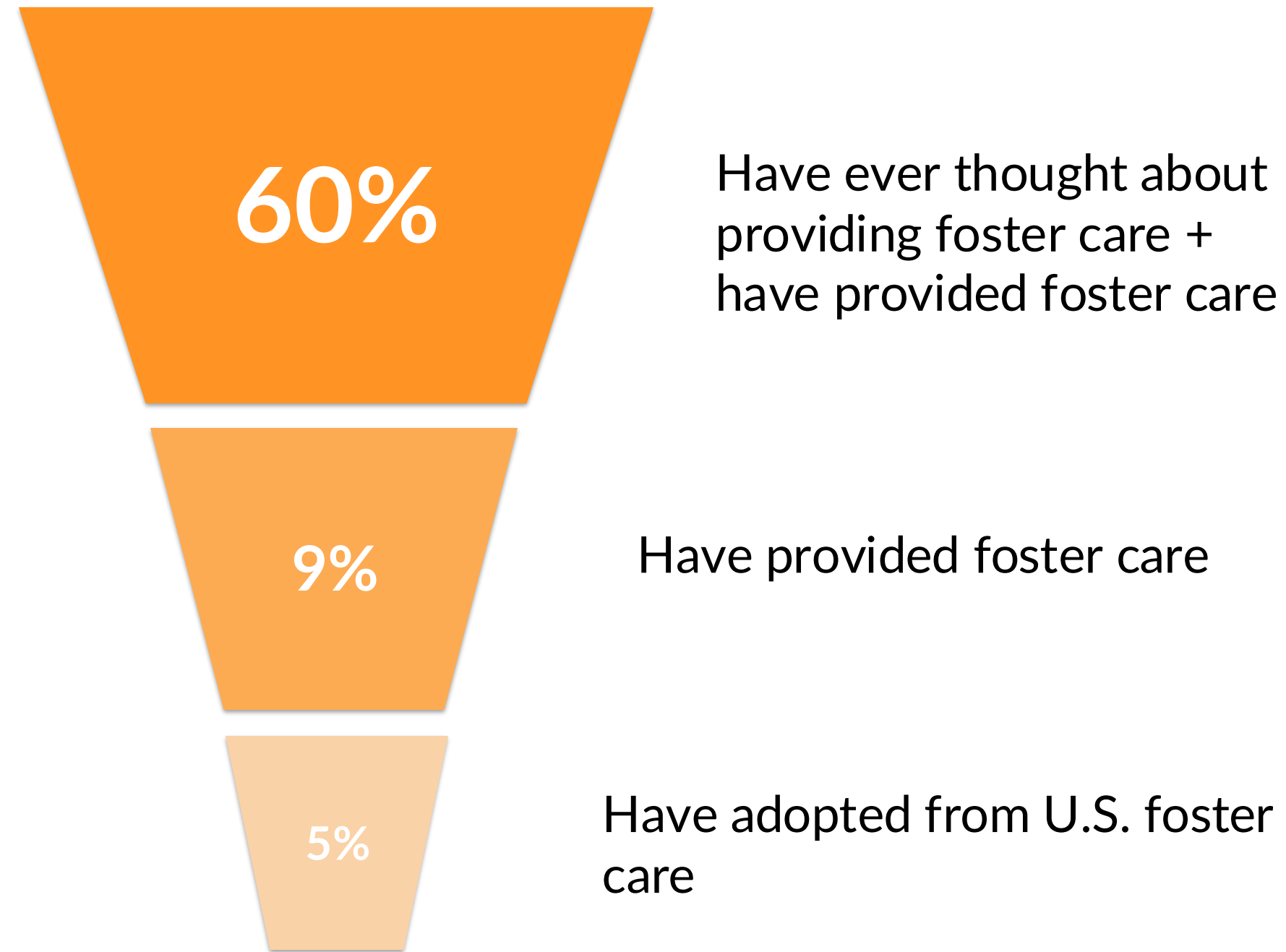
Most Hispanics have thought about providing foster care



Most Hispanics have thought about adopting from foster care

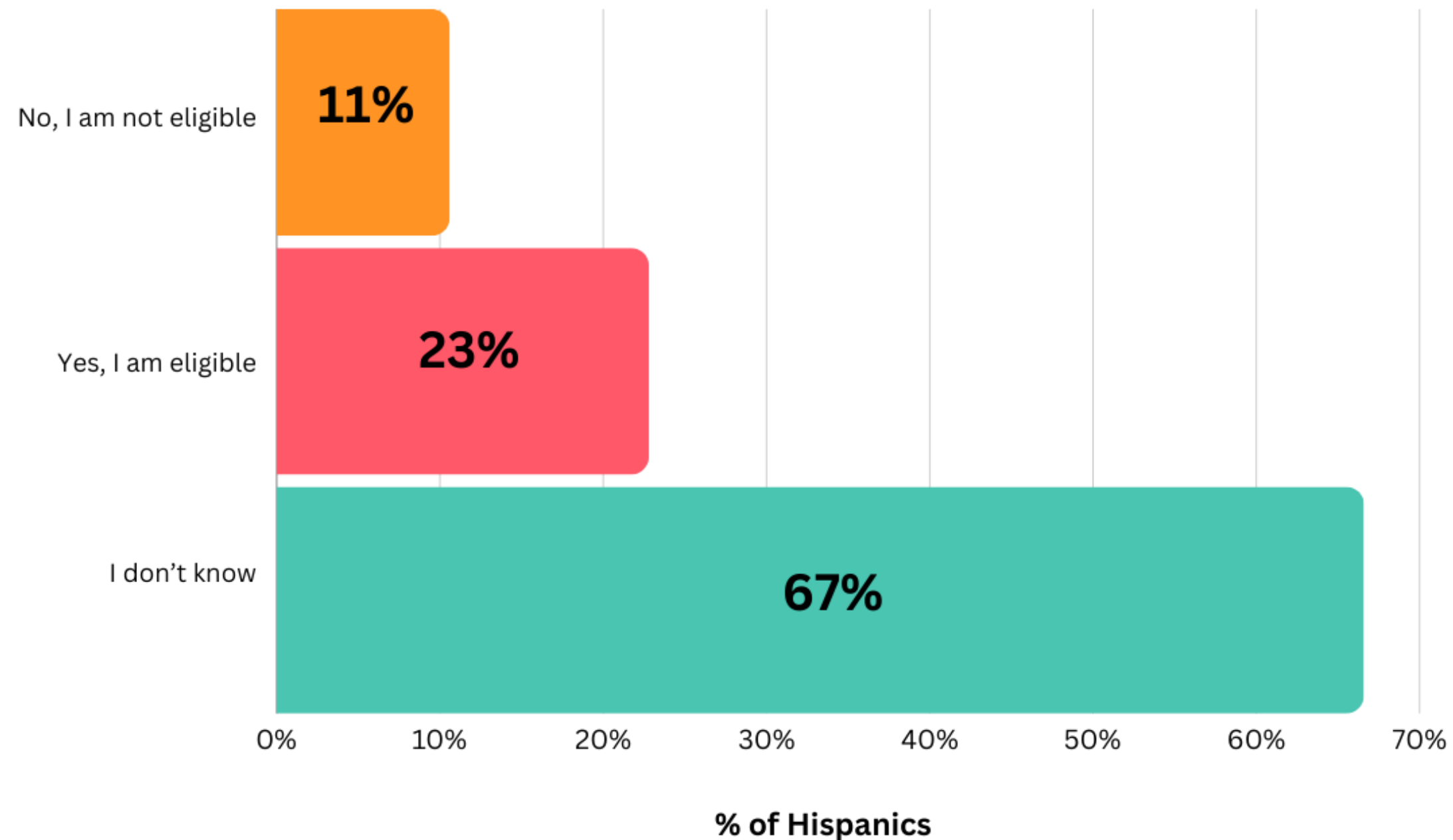


Fostering to adoption gateway



However, most Hispanics don't know if they're eligible to provide foster care

Do you know if you are legally eligible to provide foster care?



Key Findings from the Data

- Fear about children having behavioral and emotional challenges is a major barrier.
- Fear that biological parents would be able to reclaim the child is also a major barrier and the third top barrier.
- Knowing less about foster care/adoption is correlated with a more negative attitude towards the foster care system.
- 62% of respondents feel that adoption benefits the child over the adoptive parents.
- 59% of Hispanic respondents say receiving adequate training could make adoption more likely.
- 67% of Hispanic respondents say receiving training and support could make them more likely to participate in a mentorship program to work with youth in foster care.
- 13% of Hispanic respondents have already participated in a program working with children in foster care; 43% have ever considered doing so.

Recommendations from the data

- Having training throughout the mentoring and adoption process would make Hispanic adults more likely to want to participate in such programs.
- More awareness and education on foster care processes, resources, and programs could help Hispanic individuals better navigate the foster care system.
- Education on eligibility could benefit Hispanic adults in the fostering and adoption process.
- Further education on topics like termination of parental rights could assist Hispanic adults throughout the fostering and adoption process and prevent fears associated with the child returning to the biological parents.
- Having the opportunity to interact with the child could make Hispanic adults more likely to want to participate in mentorship, foster care, and adoption programs.

Thank You!

To learn more about our ongoing research and how we are using the knowledge we've gained to reduce barriers preventing families from mentoring, fostering, and adopting, visit embrace.kidsave.org.

Interested in partnering with us? Contact Shantay Armstrong at shantay@kidsave.org.

Thank you to our funders!



**Leslie Alexander
Foundation**