

2022 US Adoption Attitudes Survey

Conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

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Dave Thomas
Foundation
for Adoption[®]

Forever Families for Children in Foster Care



Table of Contents

Section	Slide Number
Background	3
Methodology	4
Report Notes	5
Key Findings	6
Detailed Findings	11
<i>Experience with Adoption</i>	12
<i>Adoption Consideration & Preferences</i>	16
<i>Specific Foster Care Considerations</i>	27
<i>Familiarity & Knowledge of Adoption</i>	36
<i>Opinions of Adoption</i>	45
<i>Evaluation of Healthy Living Arrangements for Children</i>	62
<i>Adoption Information Sources</i>	65
<i>Perceptions of Problems in Adopted Children</i>	71
<i>Perceived Obstacles to Adoption</i>	78
Demographics	101



Background and Objectives

Since the benchmark study in 2007, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) has continued to commission Harris Poll every 5 years (2012, 2017, and 2021) to determine Americans' current level of awareness and knowledge, as well as attitudes and behavior toward adoption and foster care, trending changes over time.

Specifically, this research looks at:

- Why people adopt or do not adopt?
- What are the barriers to foster care adoption?
- What beliefs do people have about foster care adoption ?
- What are the most common sources of information about foster care adoption?
- What are people's concerns about financial support of foster care adoptions?
- What are beliefs around who should be adoptive parents?
- What are the key issues on which the DTFA should be spending their money?
- What is the perceived impact of adoption as a social issue?



Methodology

- The 2021 US Adoption Attitudes Survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of the Dave Thomas Foundation between November 1 and 18, 2021 among 1,411 adults aged 18+ who reside in the U.S., including an oversample of 204 African Americans and 202 Hispanics. This is the fourth wave this study has been conducted:

	2021	2017	2012	2007
Data collection	November 1 - 18, 2021	January 4 – 20, 2017	July 9 – 18, 2012	April 12 – May 1, 2007
Total interviews	1,411	1,448	1,428	1,660

- Data are weighted to be representative of the US adult population by gender, age, region, race/ethnicity, income, education, household size, and marital status. Data are also weighted to reflect respondents' propensity to be online.
- Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in online surveys. Because the sample is based on those who were invited to participate in online research panels, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.



Report Notes

- **In tables and charts:**
 - Unless otherwise specified, data for 2021 (total) is shown
 - A dash (-) denotes a value of zero.
 - An asterisk (*) denotes a value of less than one percent but greater than zero.
 - Percentages may not add up to 100% due to weighting, computer rounding, and/or the acceptance of multiple responses.
 - Results based on small samples ($n < 100$) are too small to report quantitatively for public release and should be interpreted as directional only. Similarly, results based on very small samples ($n < 30$) should be interpreted as qualitative in nature. These are noted with a “*Caution: small base ($n < 100$). Results should be interpreted as directional only.” or “*Caution: very small base ($n < 30$). Results should be interpreted as qualitative in nature.”
- Where appropriate, significant differences at the 95% confidence level between years or key subgroups of interest are indicated within the detailed findings slides. Look for the following indicators:
 - Arrows are used to indicate significant changes from 2017. $\uparrow\downarrow$ indicates that 2021 is significantly higher/lower than 2017.
 - Capital letters are used to indicate significant changes between subgroups (e.g., **A**, **B**).
 - Red boxes are used to indicate significant differences between subgroups within a given year when both trending and subgroup data is shown together.
 - Due to space limitations, not all subgroups or significant differences among subgroups are included; full results are available in the data tables.
- **Adoption definitions shown to respondents:**
 - Private infant adoption – the adoption of a U.S. infant through a licensed adoption agency or adoption attorney.
 - Foster care adoption – the adoption of a foster child who has been freed for adoption when the birthparents’ rights were terminated.
 - International adoption – the adoption of a child who is a citizen of one country by adoptive parents who are citizens of a different country.



Key Findings



Adoption Experiences, Consideration, and Preferences

- Among those who have adopted a child (7%, in line with 8% in 2017), foster care adoption remains the most common form of adoption (65%, in line with 57% in 2017 and higher than private infant adoption (41%) and international adoption (27%). **[slide 14]**
- This year, nearly 2 in 5 adults (37%) say they have considered adoption, up significantly from just one-quarter (25%) in 2017 and the highest proportion of adults to be considering adoption since the inception of the study in 2007. Foster care adoption (82%) and private infant adoption (70%) remain the most common types of adoption considered, with international adoption trailing at 52%, but up significantly from 40% in 2017. **[slide 17]**
- While a majority who are considering each type of adoption say they are doing so seriously (85% foster care, 79% private, 72% international), only around one-quarter are *very seriously* considering it (27%, 24%, 20%, respectively), with the proportion *very seriously* considering foster care and international adoption declining from 2017 (39% foster care, 33% international). **[slides 20, 21]**
- Similar to prior waves, majorities prefer a child 5 or younger (60%) and very few (3%) prefer to adopt a teenager (13+). Those who wouldn't consider adopting a teen cite that it would be harder for them to integrate with the family (57%) and that teenagers are already set in their ways (51%). **[slides 23, 24]**
- Similarly, majorities prefer to adopt a child from foster care that are under 5 years of age (57%) and very few (4%) prefer a teen (13+). This tracks with a sentiment held by half of Americans that a child in foster care is considered 'too old' by age 13 (26%) or 16 (25%), making it harder for them to be adopted. **[slides 34, 35]**
- Familiarity with and consideration of becoming a foster parent have both increased from 2017:
 - 19% extremely/very familiar with foster parent role in caring for abused/neglected children vs. 15% in 2017 **[slide 28]**
 - 38% considered/considering becoming a foster parent vs. 28% in 2017 **[slide 29]**



Familiarity, Knowledge, and Opinions

- Familiarity with adoption remains low and knowledge about the foster care system leaves much room for improvement:
 - Less than one-quarter of American adults are extremely/very familiar with adoption (22%, in line with 19% in 2017) or foster care adoption (17%, in line with 15% in 2017). **[slide 37]**
 - American adults rarely accurately estimate the number of children available for adoption, the proportion of Caucasian children available for adoption, the number of youth who age out of foster care without a permanent family, and the proportion who self-identify as LGBTQ+. **[slides 38, 39, 41, 42]**
 - As of 2020, 117,000 children were available for adoption, and only 6% of adults accurately estimated 'about 120,000; 2 in 3 adults believe it is less than that. **[slide 38]**
 - As of 2020, the average percent of children in foster care who were Caucasian was 44%, but adults estimated it to only be 27%. While they underestimate the proportion of Caucasian children in foster care, they over-estimate the proportion of Black children; 35% vs. the actual of 22%. **[slide 39]**
 - As of 2019, 30% of children in foster care self-identified as LGBTQ+, while American adults estimated it to be nearly half that at 17%. **[slide 41]**
 - As of 2020, 20,000 children age-out of foster care without a permanent family annually, but only 22% of American adults estimate this correctly, with half (50%) estimating that it is more or that they are not sure. **[slide 42]**
- While most adults agree aging out of the foster care system is a large societal issue (85%) and that there should be greater efforts to reduce the number of youth who age out (90%), nearly half say there are more pressing societal matters (47%). In fact, 3 in 10 (30%) feel children not adopted by the time they are adults will be fine on their own. **[slide 44]**



Familiarity, Knowledge, and Opinions, Continued

- Aligning with a lack of deep familiarity and understanding of adoption, opinions are mildly though not strongly favorable. Half of adults (50%) have an extremely/very favorable opinion about foster care adoption, 43% private infant adoption, and just 32% have an extremely/very favorable opinion about international adoption. When it comes to the foster care system itself, fewer have a favorable opinion (30%). Despite all of this, three-quarters (75%) say society should be doing more to encourage foster care adoption, up from 64% in 2017. **[slides 48, 56, 86]**
- A majority of adults approve of parents adopting a child of the same race (66%), though this has declined from 74% in 2017. Nearly 3 in 5 (59%) approve of parents adopting a child of a different race, with most adults saying if they were to adopt a child of a different race (85%) or culture (85%) they would try to keep them connected to their race/culture of origin. Only around half of American adults (52%) approve of parents in a same sex relationship adopting a child. **[slides 59, 26]**
- Dealing with behavioral issues and paying for the adoption remain the most common concerns for both international (78%, 76%) and foster care adoption (81%, 78%). In fact, more adults now consider all adoption types somewhat/very expensive compared to 2017, but foster care adoption is still by far seen as the lowest cost option: **[slides 79, 80, 83]**
 - 81% private infant adoption, up from 66% in 2017
 - 81% international adoption, up from 71% in 2017
 - 55% foster care adoption, up from 39% in 2017
 - Perceptions of the difficulty in completing the steps for adopting a child from foster care have risen to 50% from 36% very/extremely difficult in 2017, and while the other adoption types have remained consistent (62% vs. 59% 2017 private, 74% vs. 71% 2017 international), foster care is still perceived to be the least difficult to complete. **[slide 81]**



Detailed Findings

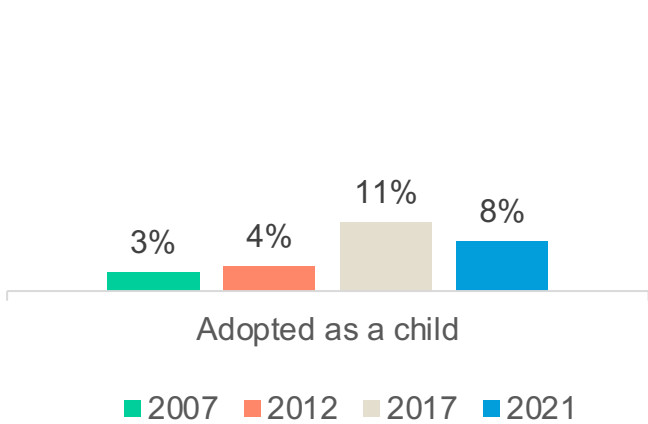


Experience with Adoption

About 1 in 10 US adults are adopted, primarily privately

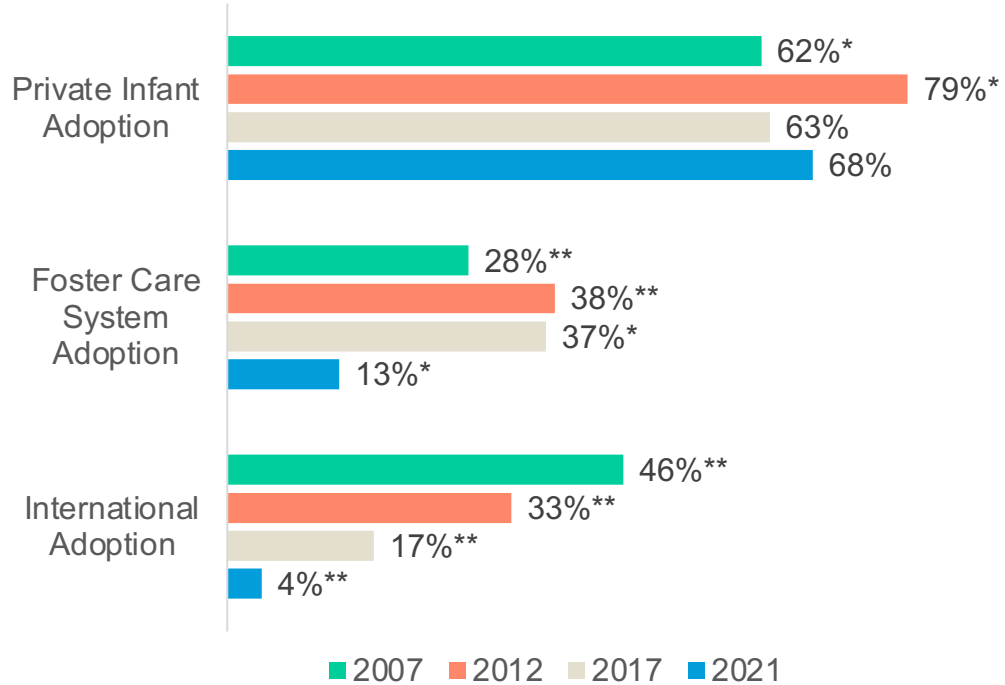
In line with the previous wave, few Americans say they were adopted as a child. Private adoption remains the primary path to adoption, while considerably fewer are adopted via foster care or internationally (caution, small base sizes)

**Adopted as a Child
(% yes)**



**Type of Adoption
(% yes)**

Base: Adopted as a child

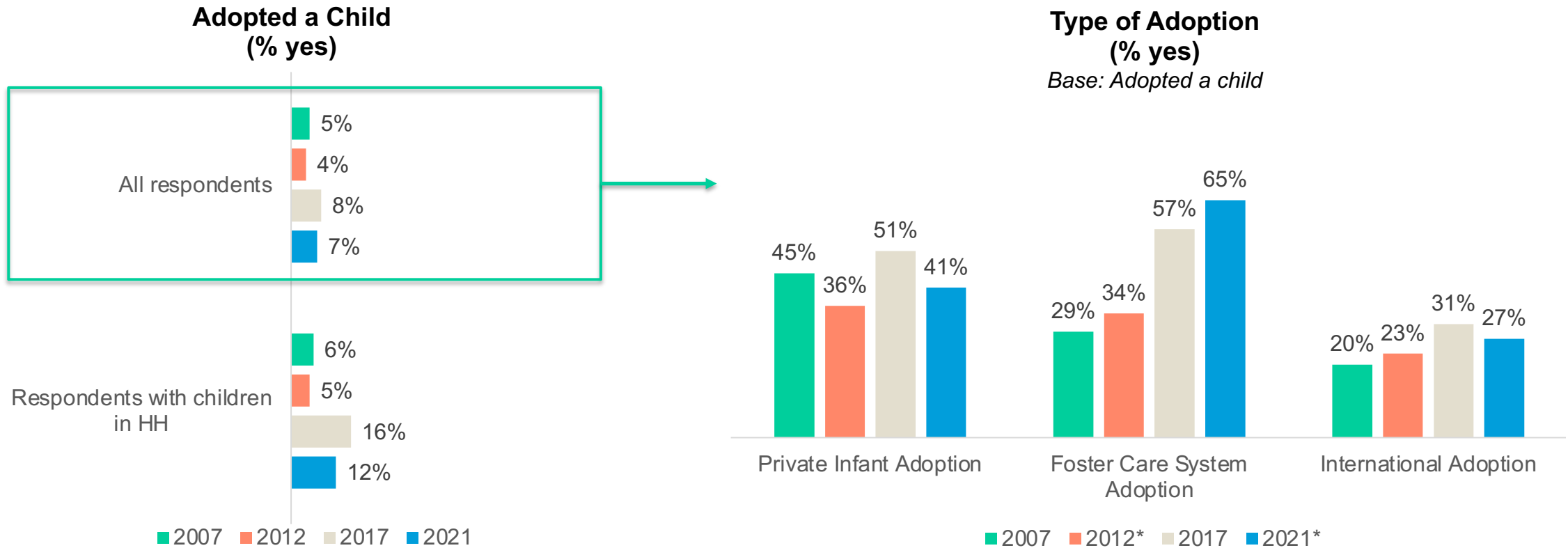


*Caution: small base (n<100). Results should be interpreted as directional only.

**Caution: very small bases (n<30). Results should be interpreted as qualitative in nature.

Adoption remains low, but foster care adoption maintains its 2017 rise*

In line with previous years, fewer than 1 in 10 adults say they have adopted a child. The percentage of those who adopted through the foster care system remains higher than in earlier waves of the study.

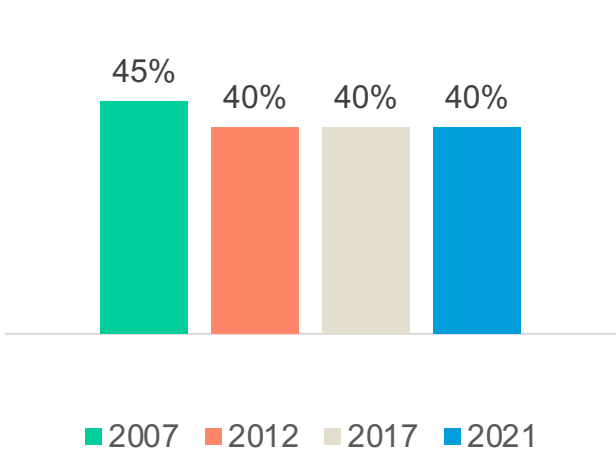


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Adults are more likely to know someone who has been adopted from foster care

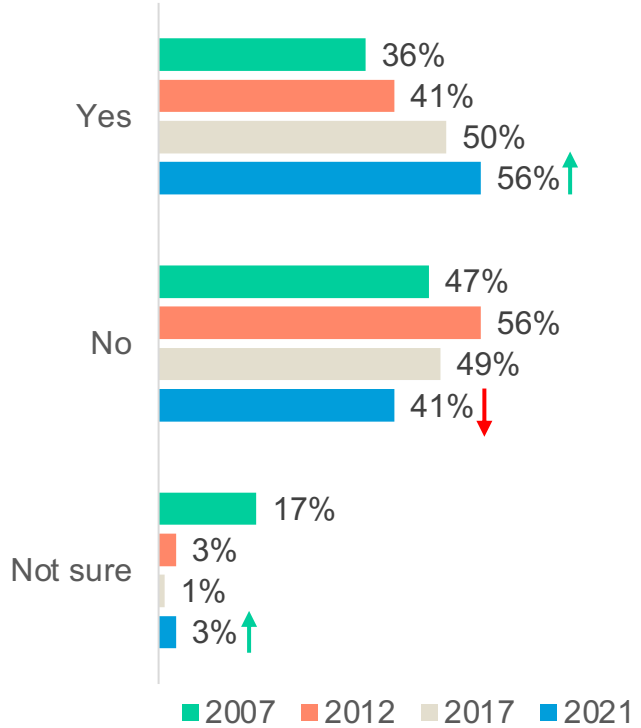
While overall the proportion of adults whose family or close friends were adopted has remained consistent, among them, the proportion who are adopted via foster care continues to rise.

**Family or Friends Adopted
(% yes)**



Family or Friends Adopted from Foster Care System

Base: Adults who know someone who has been adopted



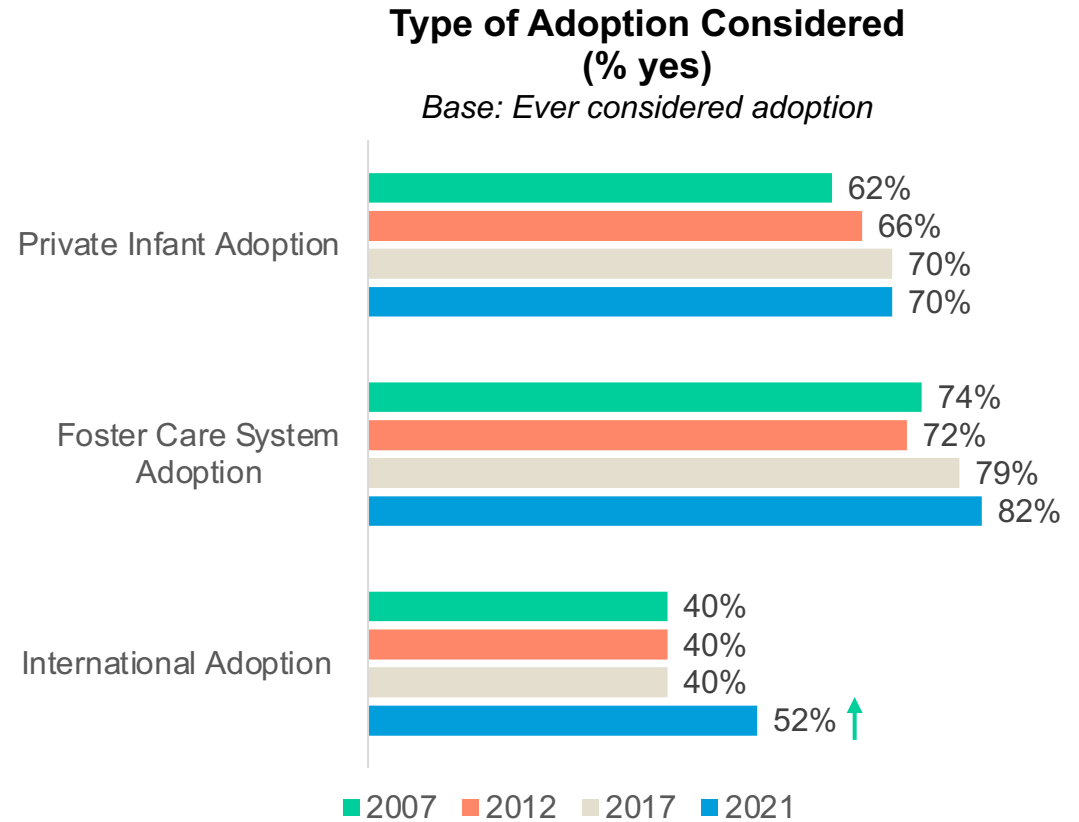
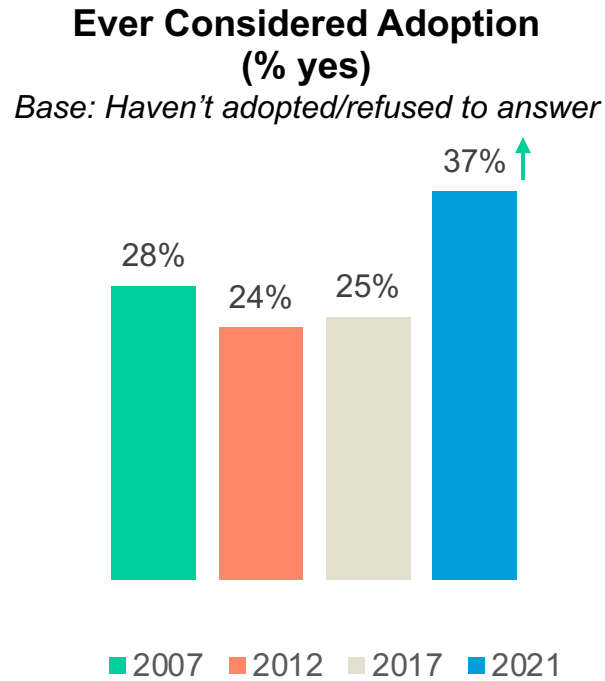
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Adoption Consideration & Preferences

Adults who haven't adopted are more likely to say they've considered it

Among those who haven't adopted, more than one third have ever considered it, up significantly from 2017 and the highest in the study's history. Among potential adopters, consideration of international adoption has increased significantly since 2017.



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



There are distinct demographic groups who are more likely to consider adoption

Adults who have considered adoption are more likely to be younger, Hispanic, moderate-income earners, have personal experience with adoption or children, and have a favorable opinion of adoption in general.

Adults Considering Adoption Are More Likely To Be...

Base: Has not adopted a child or refused to answer



YOUNGER

18-34: 55%
 35-44: 47%
 45-54: 31%
 55-64: 33%
 65+: 13%



A MINORITY

White: 32%
 Black: 39%
 Hispanic: 47%



MODERATE HH INCOME EARNERS

<\$25k: 29%
 \$25k-<\$50k: 44%
 \$50k-<\$100k: 39%
 \$100k+: 35%



KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN ADOPTED

Family/Friend Adopted: 47%
 Family/Friend Not Adopted: 30%



ALREADY HAVE KIDS

Has Kids: 54%
 No Kids: 29%



HAVE A HIGH OPINION OF ADOPTION

Extremely/Very Favorable: 44%
 Somewhat/Not Favorable: 18%



The increase in adoption consideration is reflected across most demographics

Trended Demographic Breakdown of Adults Considering Adoption

Base: Has not adopted a child or refused to answer

	2007	2012	2017	2021
Male	24%	22%	23%	38% ↑
Female	30%	26%	27%	35% ↑
18-24	43%	42%	55%	57%
25-34	36%	38%	45%	54%
35-44	33%	29%	36%	47% ↑
45-54	24%	20%	20%	31% ↑
55-64	22%	14%	13%	33% ↑
65+	10%	10%	5%	13% ↑
High School or Less	21%	22%	29%	34%
Some College/Associate's Degree	32%	25%	20%	41% ↑
College Grad	32%	27%	27%	35%
Post Grad	33%	23%	28%	33%

	2007	2012	2017	2021
Less than \$25K	29%	23%	27%	29%
\$25K - <\$50K	26%	31%	27%	44% ↑
\$50K - <\$100K	30%	23%	28%	39% ↑
\$100K+	32%	21%	21%	35% ↑
White	24%	20%	24%	32% ↑
Black/African American	33%	31%	35%	39%
Hispanic	31%	31%	36%	47% ↑
Single/Never married	32%	28%	34%	45% ↑
Married	27%	17%	23%	36% ↑
Living with Partner	36%	29%	34%	37%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	19%	20%	16%	25% ↑

↑↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

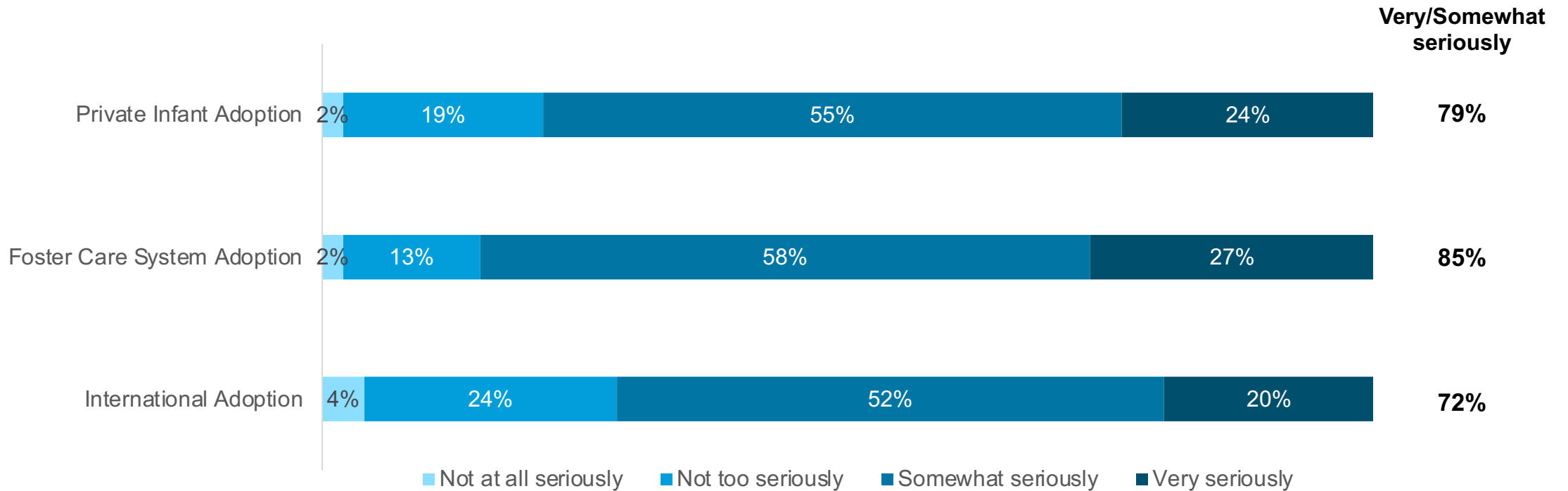


Most who are considering each adoption type are doing so seriously

Around 8 in 10 of those considering foster care or private adoption say they are either somewhat or very serious about it, while around 7 in 10 considering international adoption indicate the same level of seriousness. At least 1 in 5 are *very seriously* considering each type of adoption.

Seriousness of Consideration for Each Type of Adoption

Base: Considered private/foster care/international adoption





Very serious consideration of foster/international adoption falls

Compared to 2017, those considering foster or international adoption are less likely to say they are *very seriously* considering it; this proportion remains stable for private adoption.

Trended Seriousness of Consideration for Each Type of Adoption

Base: Considered private/foster care/international adoption

	Private Infant Adoption				Foster Care System Adoption				International Adoption			
	2007	2012	2017	2021	2007	2012	2017	2021	2007	2012	2017	2021
Very seriously	13%	18%	24%	24%	18%	15%	39%	27% ↓	16%	11%	33%	20% ↓
Somewhat seriously	51%	46%	44%	55%	49%	54%	43%	58% ↑	45%	42%	41%	52%
Not too seriously	32%	30%	31%	19% ↓	30%	27%	16%	13%	30%	44%	20%	24%
Not at all seriously	5%	6%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	9%	4%	6%	4%

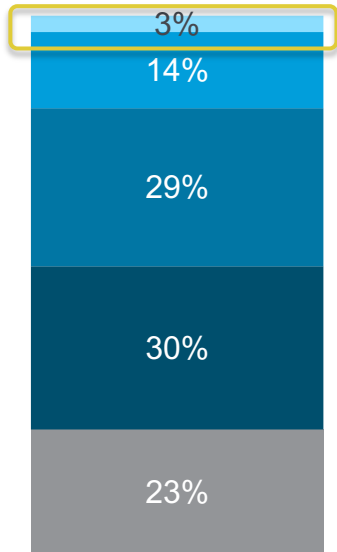
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



The vast majority who have an age preference prefer a non-teen

However, among those who state an initial preference for a non-teen, nearly 3 in 10 say they would consider a teen for adoption.

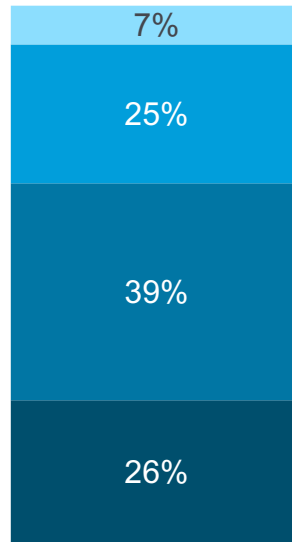
Age Preference When Adopting



All respondents

Youngest Acceptable Age Range

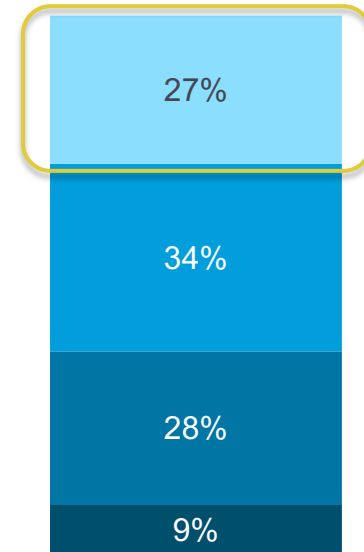
Base: Prefers child at least 2



Prefer a child at least two years old

Oldest Acceptable Age Range

Base: Prefers child 12 or younger



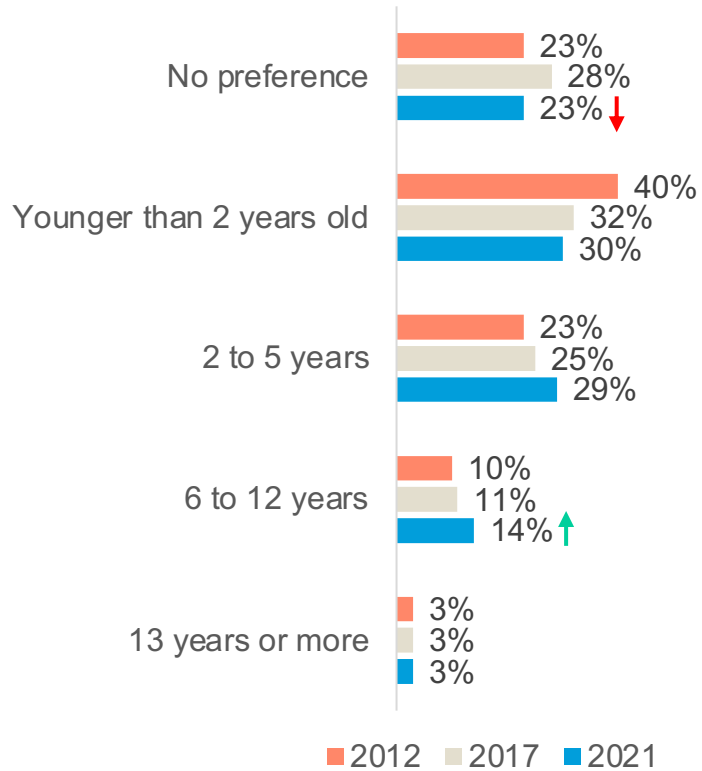
Prefer a child twelve years old or younger

No preference
 Younger than 2 years old
 2 to 5 years old
 6 to 12 years old
 13 years or older

Age preferences for adoption mostly hold from 2017

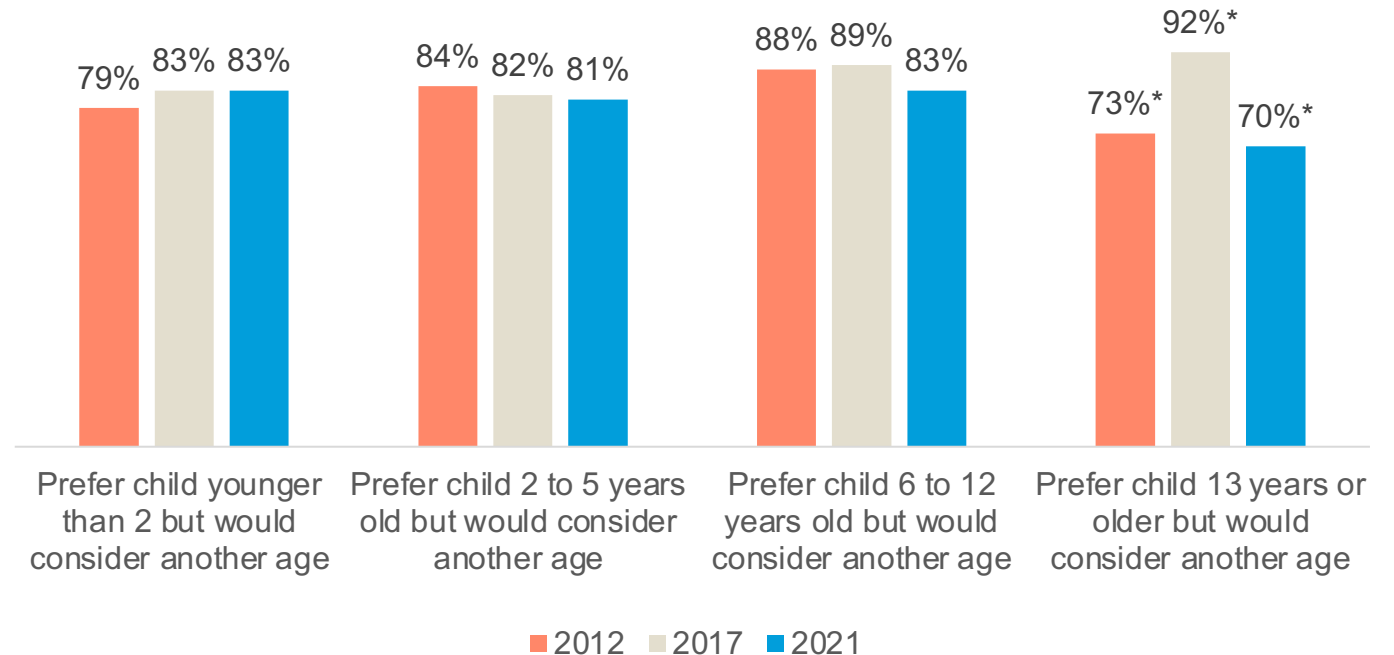
Those without a preference have declined back to 2012 levels, while the proportion who prefer a child 6 to 12 has increased and those preferring a teen continue to be very few. Willingness to adopt a child outside of a preferred age range remains high across all age preferences.

Age Preference When Adopting



Willingness to Adopt a Child Other Than Preferred Age (% yes)

Base: Preferred age range



*Caution: small base (n<100). Results should be interpreted as directional only.

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

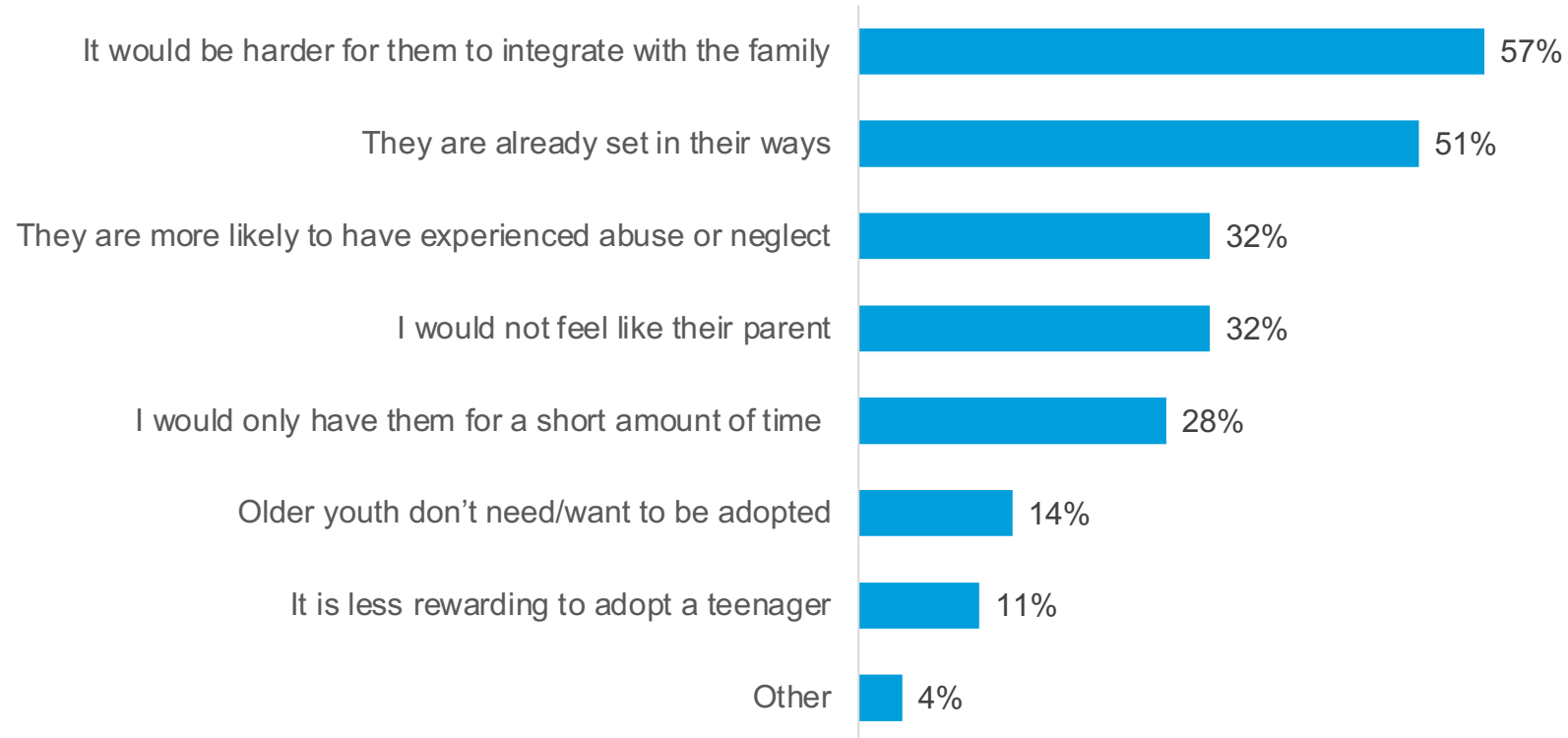


Primary reason for not considering teen adoption is family integration

More than half of those who would not consider adopting a teenager say it would be harder for a teen to integrate into the family and that they're already set in their ways. Other concerns include potential abuse or neglect, not feeling like a parent, and lack of time with them.

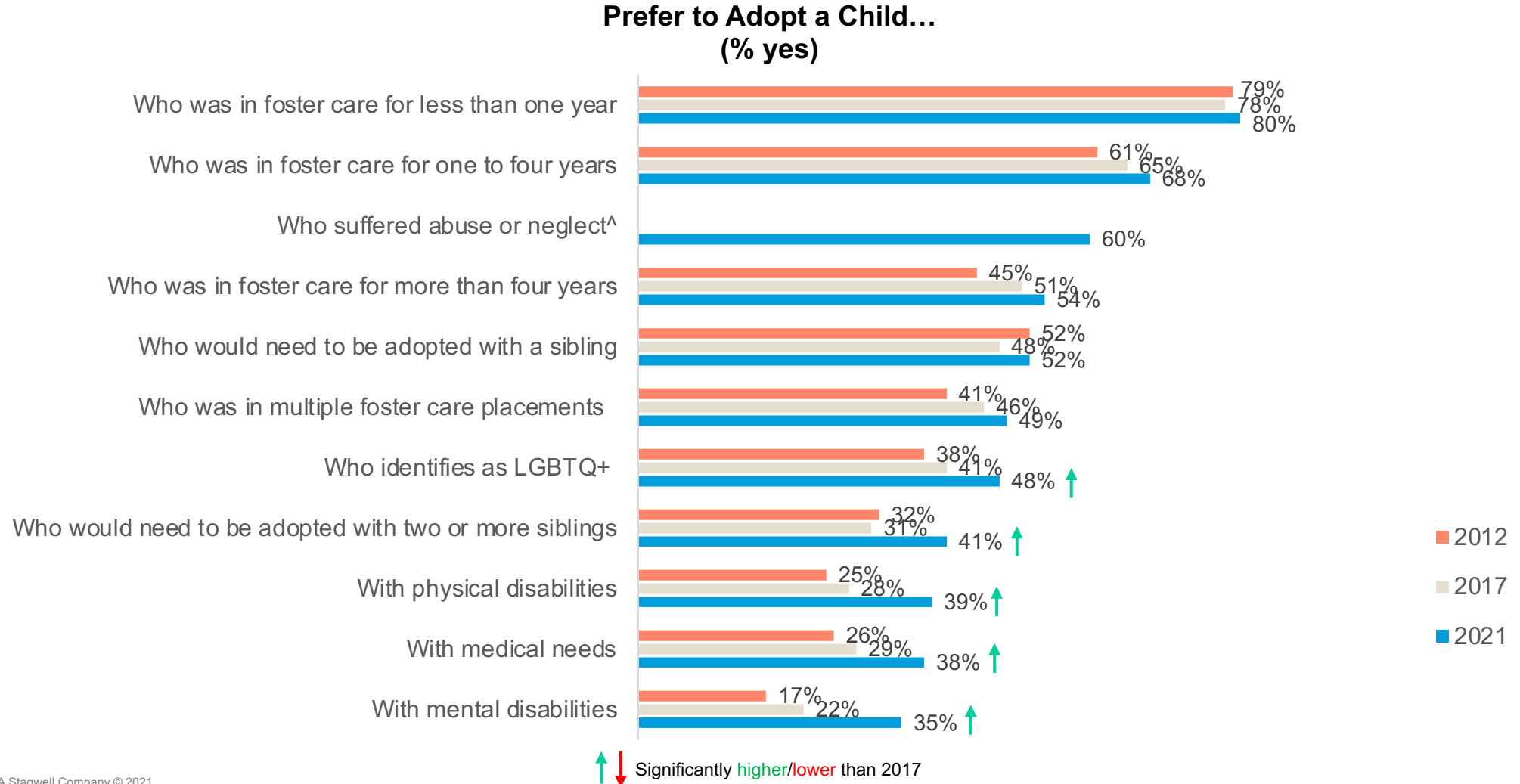
Reasons Would Not Consider Adopting a Teenager

Base: Would not consider adopting a teenager



Increase in preference for children with several specific needs

Compared to 2017, in 2021 more adults say they would prefer to adopt a child who identifies as LGBTQ+, need to be adopted with 2+ siblings, or who have physical or mental disabilities or medical needs.

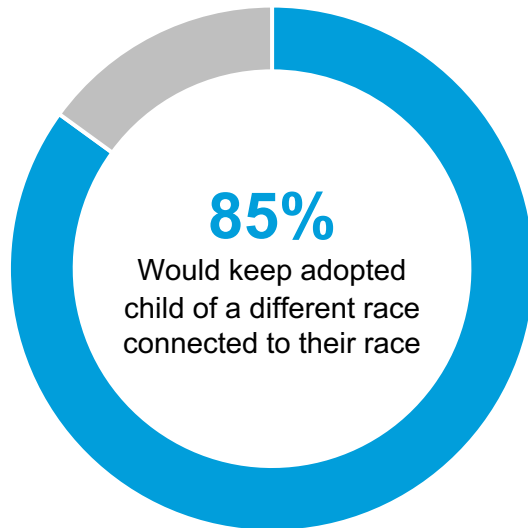




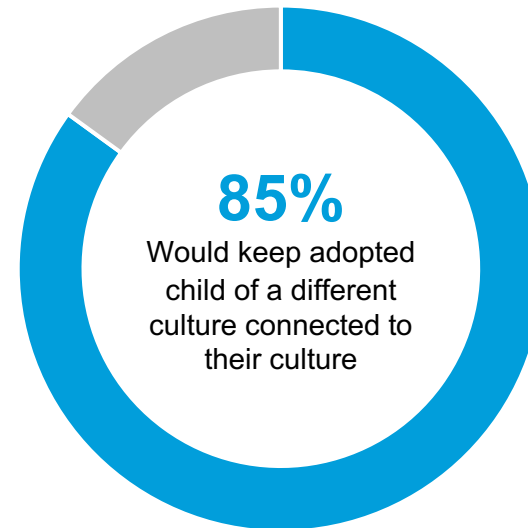
Over 8 in 10 adults would keep an adopted child connected to race or culture

If they were to adopt a child of a different race or culture than their own, most adults say they would try to keep them connected to their race or culture of origin.

Preference for Keeping Adopted Child of a Different Race Connected To Their Race



Preference for Keeping Adopted Child of a Different Culture Connected To Their Culture





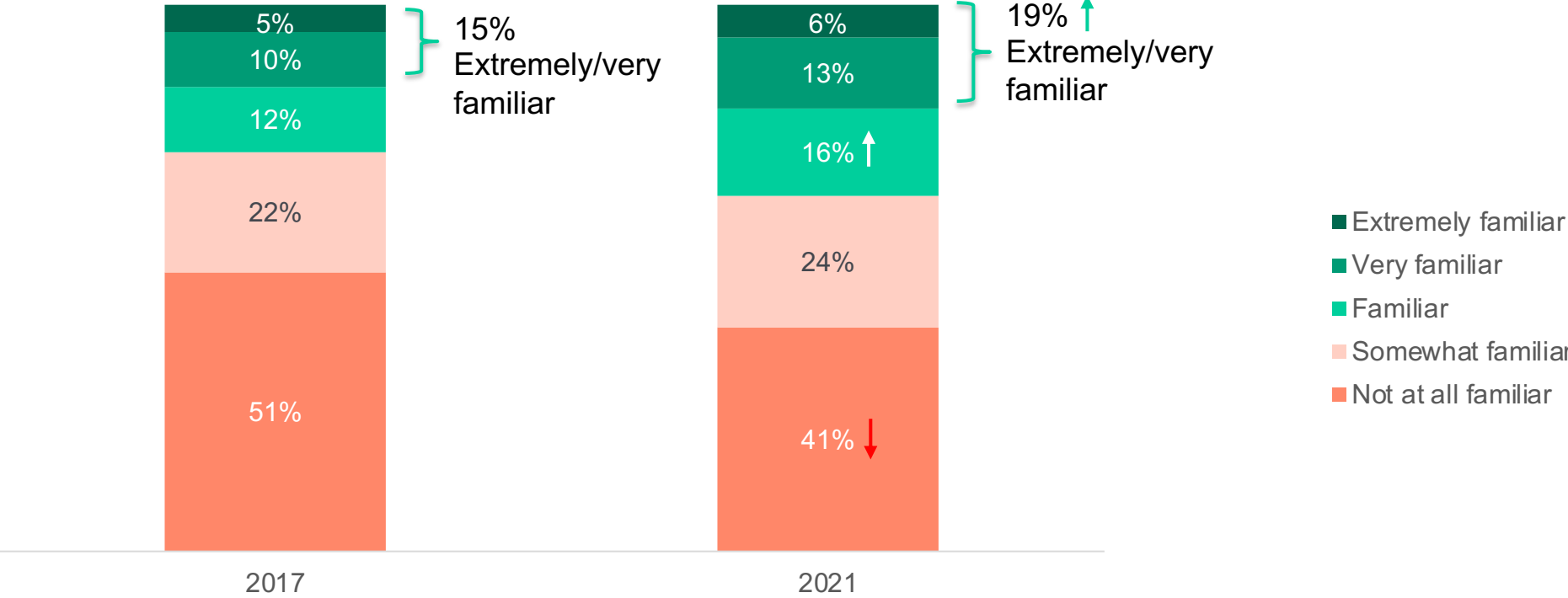
Specific Foster Care Considerations



Increase in familiarity with foster parent role in caring for abused children

Up from 2017, 1 in 5 adults now say they are very/extremely familiar with what foster parents do to care for children who have been abused or neglected. Only around 2 in 5 are completely unfamiliar, down from half in 2017.

Familiarity with Foster Parent Role in Caring for Abused/Neglected Children

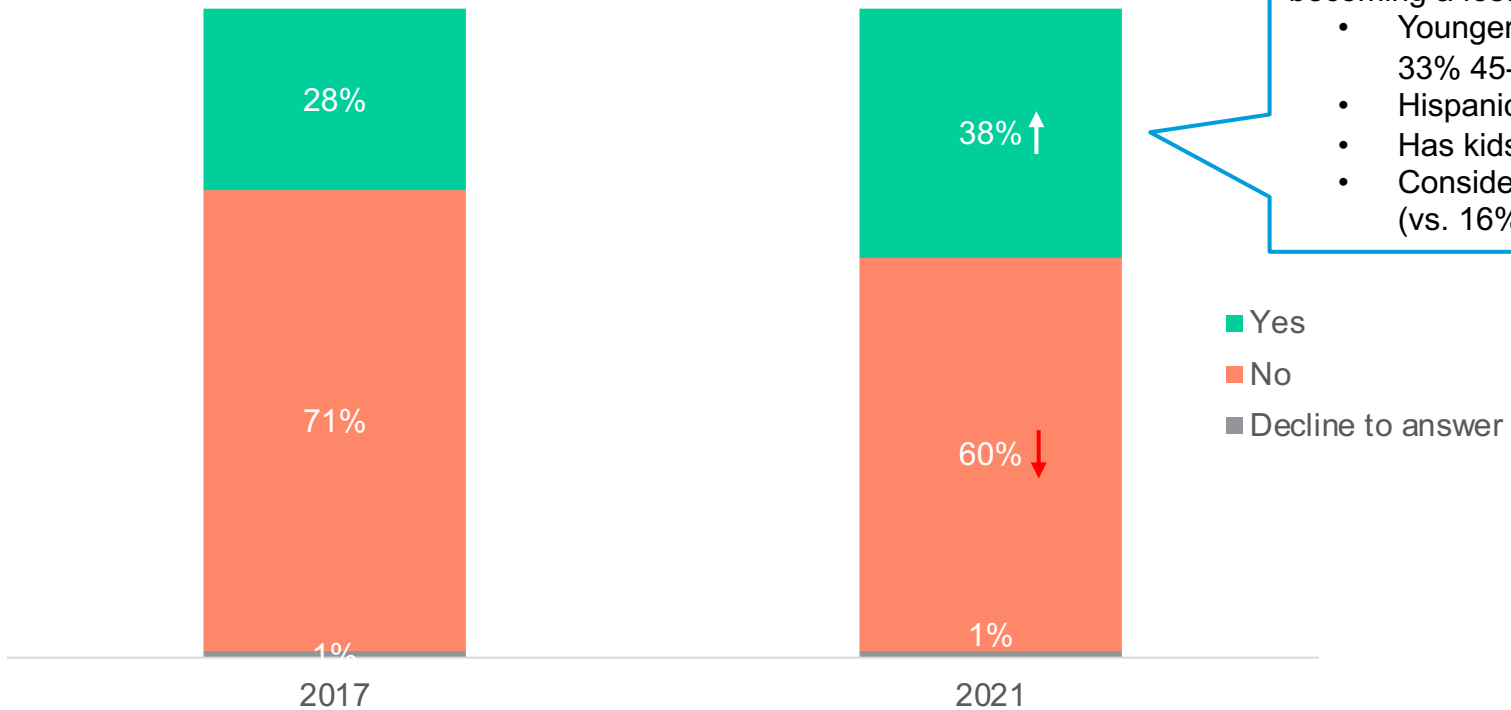


↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Nearly 4 in 10 Americans have considered becoming a foster parent

This represents a sizeable increase from 2017, when fewer than 3 in 10 considered.

Foster Parent Consideration



Demographic groups most likely to consider becoming a foster parent (2021):

- Younger: 52% 18-34, 48% 35-44 (vs. 33% 45-54, 19% 65+) (35% 55-64)
- Hispanic: 48% (vs. 34% White)
- Has kids: 55% (vs. 29% no kids)
- Considered foster care adoption: 76% (vs. 16% not considered)

■ Yes
■ No
■ Decline to answer

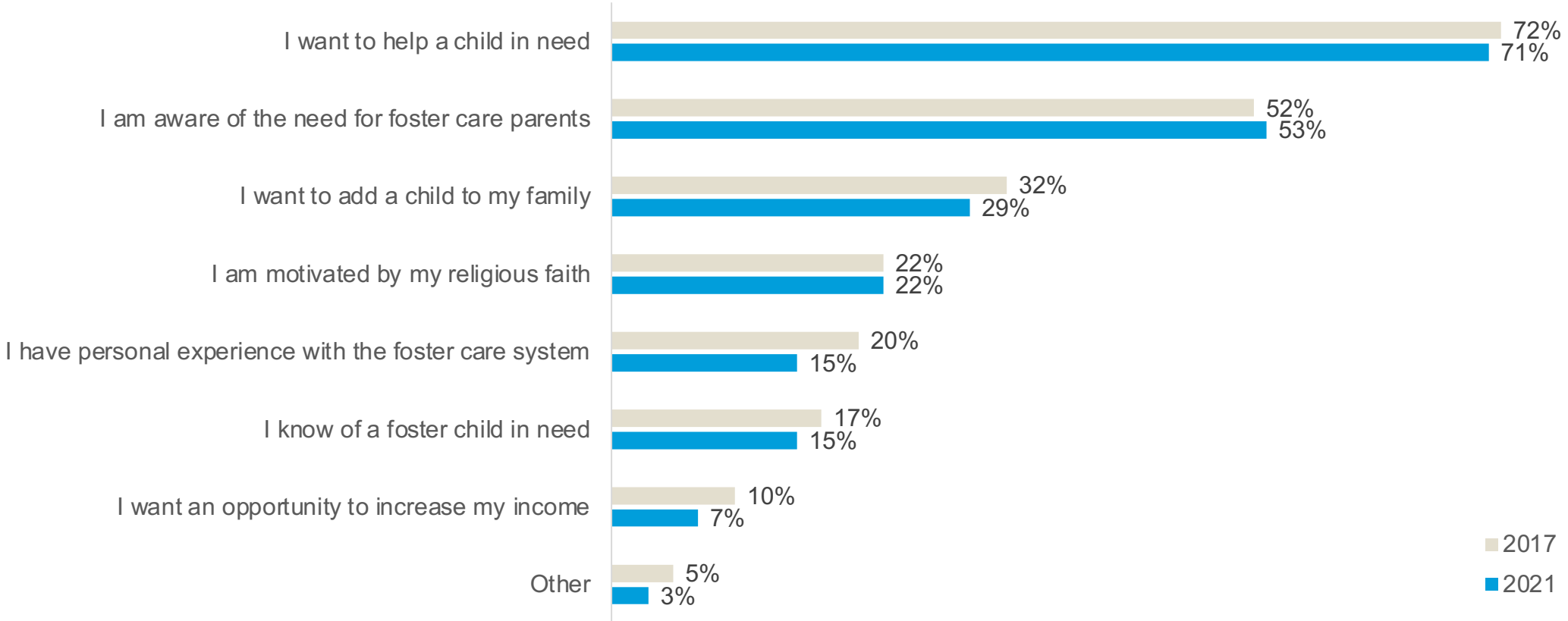
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Main reason for foster parent consideration remains helping a child in need

Similar to 2017, the majority who have considered becoming a foster parent want to help a child in need and half are aware of the need for foster parents.

Reasons for Considering Becoming a Foster Parent

Base: Considered Becoming a Foster Parent



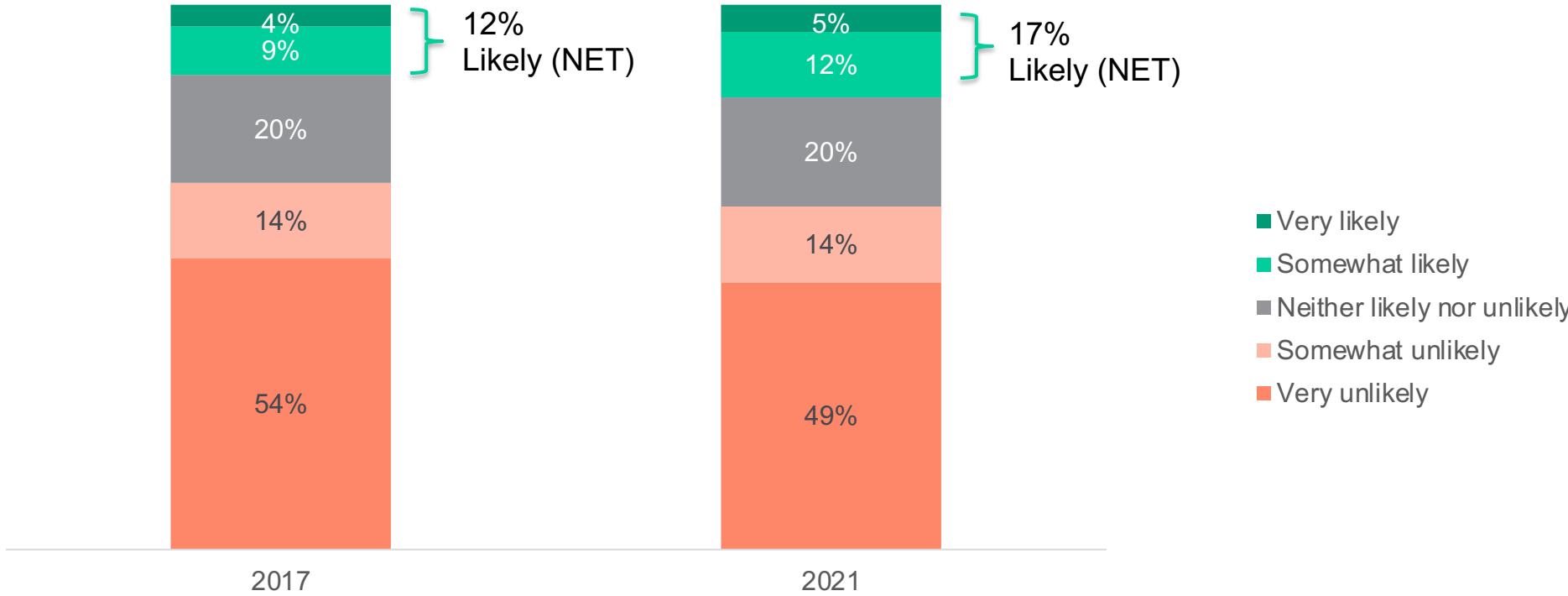


Similar to 2017, guaranteed resources have little effect on likelihood to foster

Among those not currently considering it, certainty of receiving adequate resources makes less than 1 in 5 likely to become a foster parent.

Likelihood of Considering Foster Parent with Proper Resources

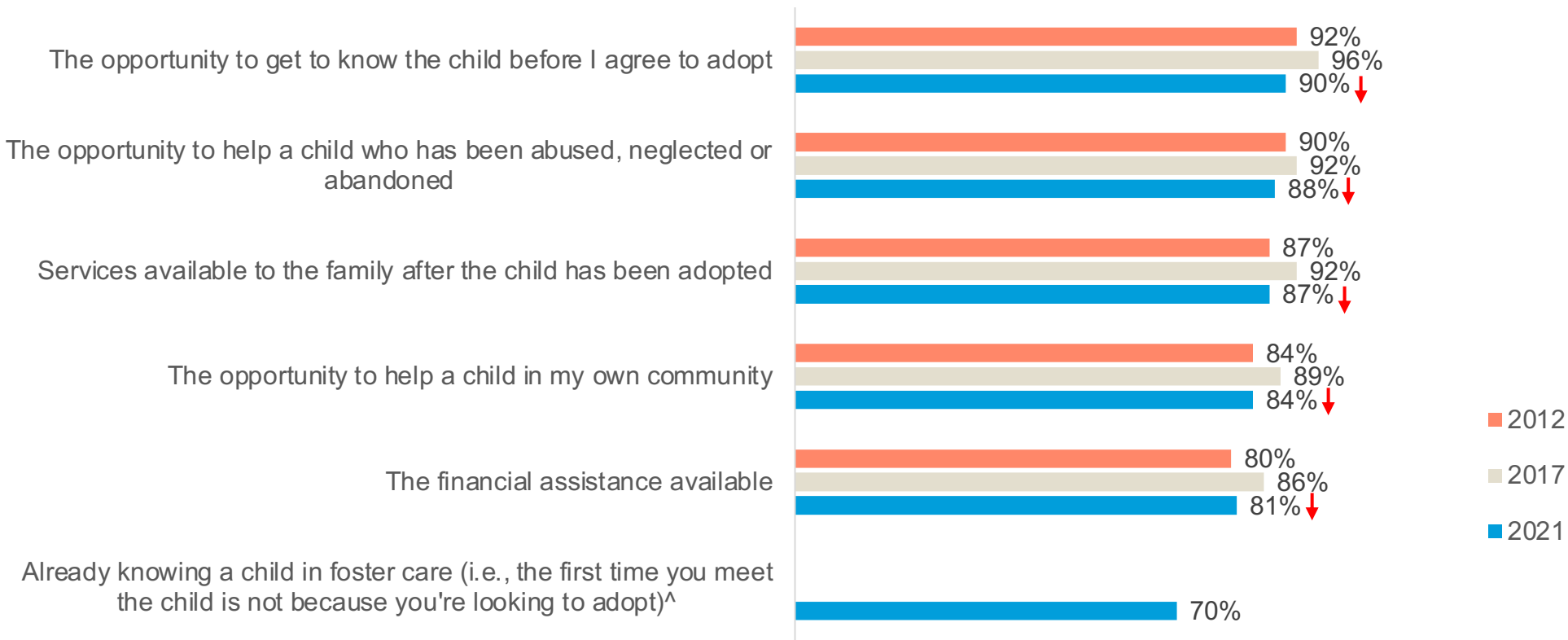
Base: Has not considered becoming a foster parent



All factors remain important in decision to adopt from foster care

While all of the factors in the decision to adopt from the foster care system remain important for a strong majority, importance has dropped back toward 2012 levels after increases in 2017. Already knowing a child in foster care is important for 7 in 10, notably, still high but less than the other factors.

Importance of Factors to Decision to Adopt From the Foster Care System
(% Very/Somewhat Important)



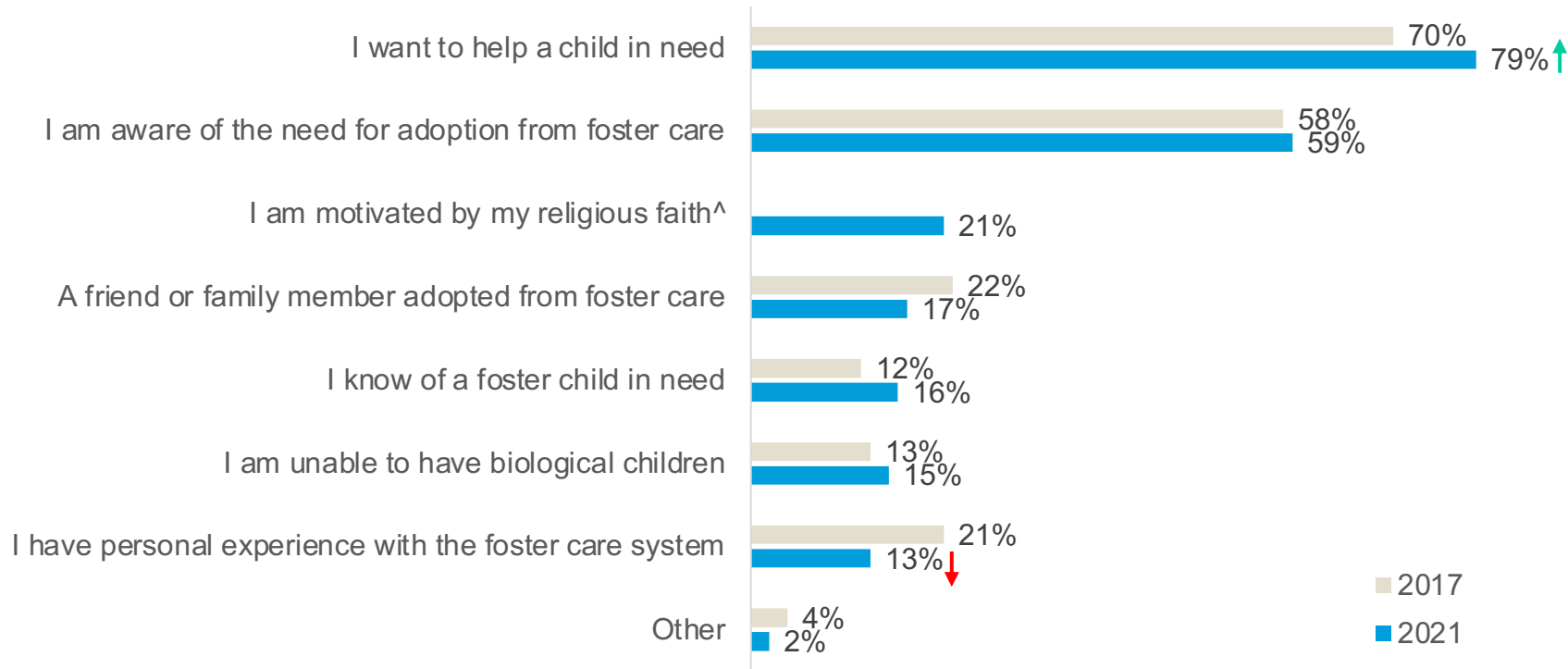
[^]New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Main reason for adopting from foster care remains helping a child in need

Nearly 8 in 10 potential foster care adopters say they would adopt from foster care to help a child in need, up from 7 in 10 in 2017. Many also say it would be due to their awareness of the need for adoption from foster care.

Reasons to Adopt from Foster Care
Base: Considering/considered foster care adoption



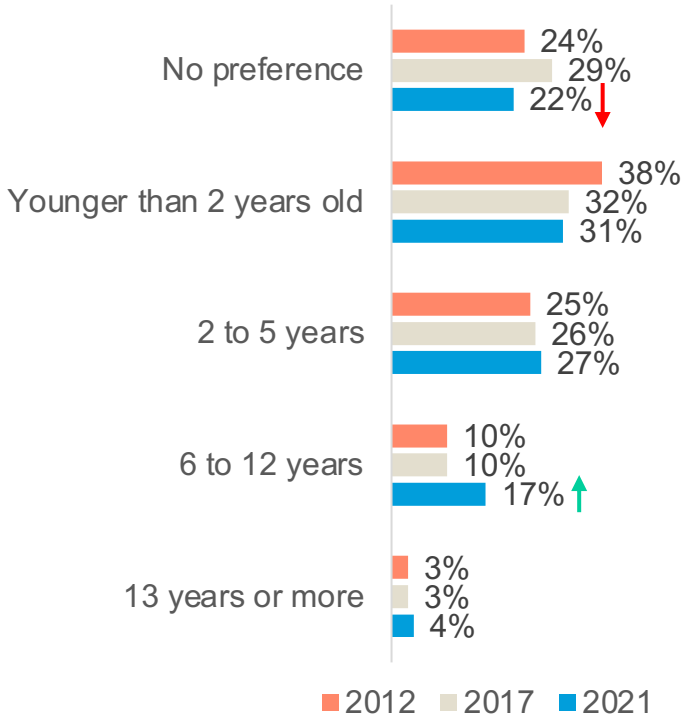
[^]New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Age preferences for foster care adoption mostly hold from 2017

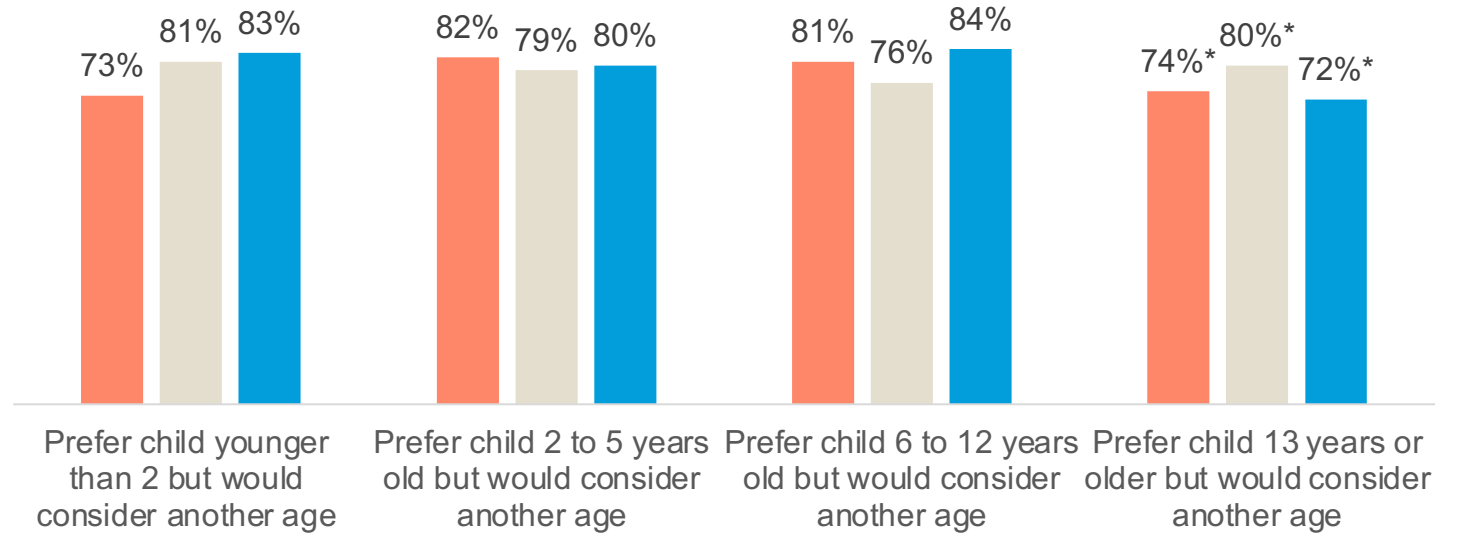
Those without a preference have declined back toward 2012 levels, while the proportion who prefer a child 6 to 12 has increased and those preferring a teen continue to be very few. Willingness to adopt a child outside of a preferred age range remains high across all age preferences.

Age Preference When Adopting From Foster Care



Willingness to Adopt a Child From Foster Care Other Than Preferred Age (% yes)

Base: Preferred age range



*Caution: small base (n<100). Results should be interpreted as directional only.

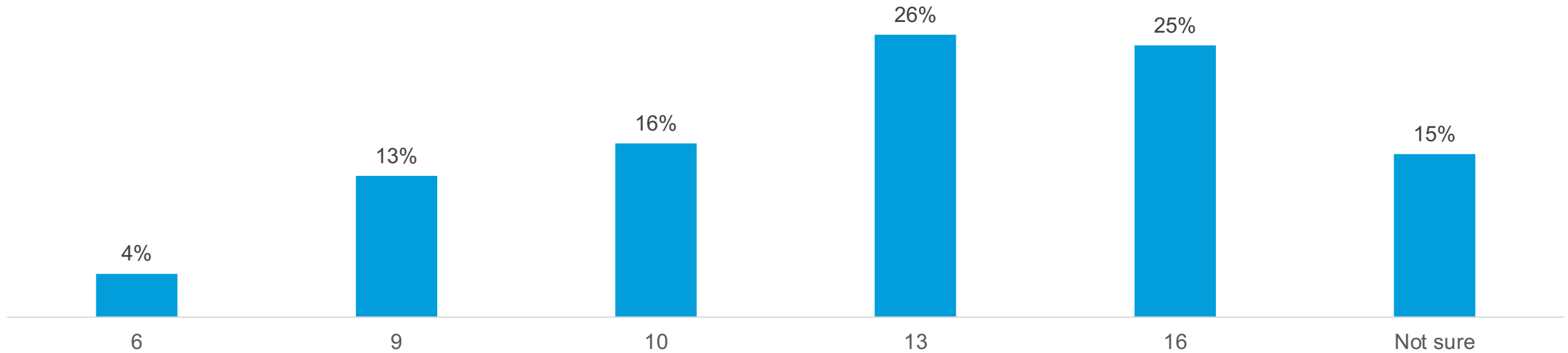
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Half of Americans believe it is harder for teens in foster care to be adopted

Half feel a child is considered “too old”, making it harder to be adopted, by age 13 or 16.

Age it Becomes Harder For a Child in Foster Care to be Adopted Because They are Considered ‘Too Old’





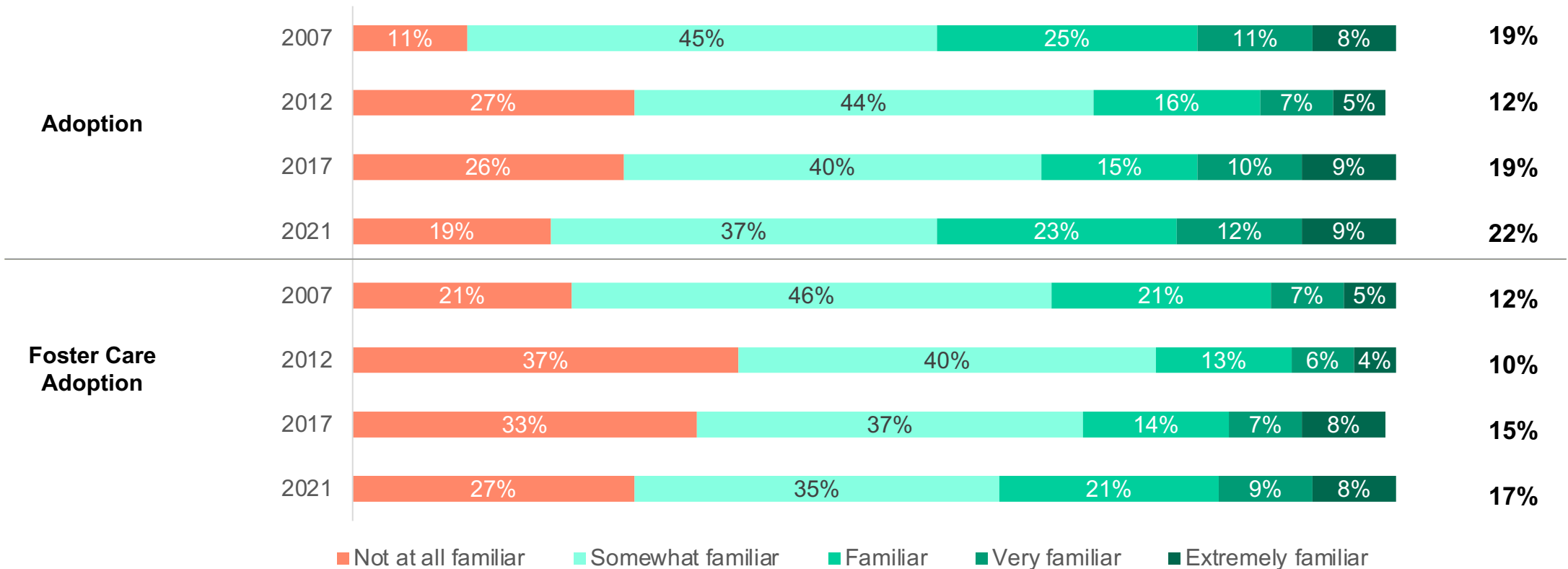
Familiarity & Knowledge of Adoption

Familiarity with general and foster care adoption remains low

This year, only around 2 in 10 US adults are very/extremely familiar with adoption or foster care adoption

Familiarity with Adoption in General & the Foster Care Adoption System

Extremely/
Very Familiar



Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

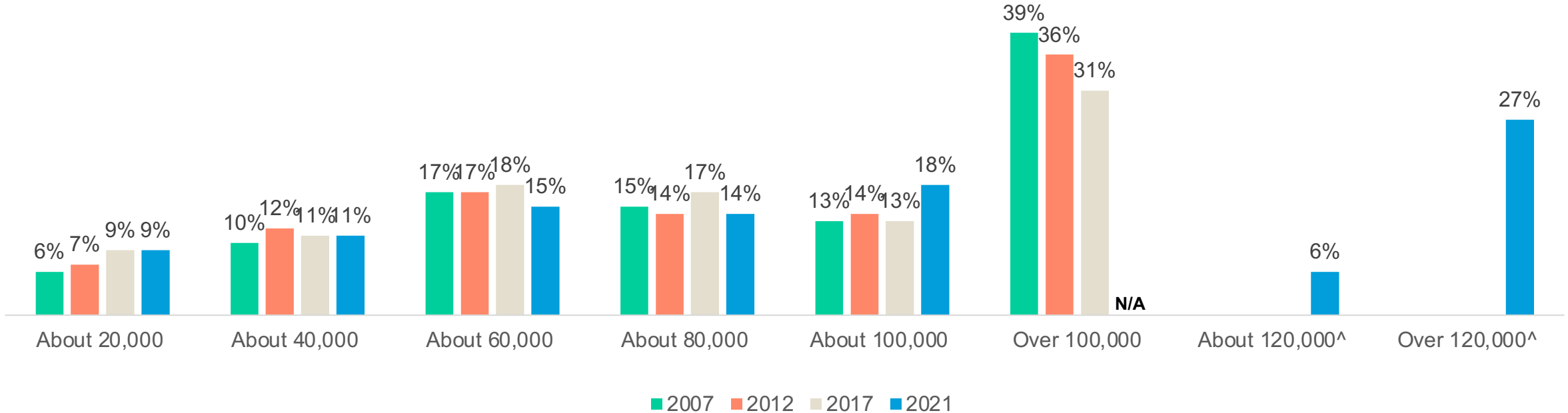


Less than 1 in 10 accurately estimate the number of children in foster care

As of 2020, around 117,000 children were available for adoption in foster care but only 6% of US adults estimate that (about 120,000); 2 in 3 believe it is less than that.

Estimated Number of Children Available for Adoption in Foster Care

Actual in 2007: 114,000
 Actual in 2012: 104,000
 Actual as of 2015: 112,000
 Actual as of 2020: 117,000



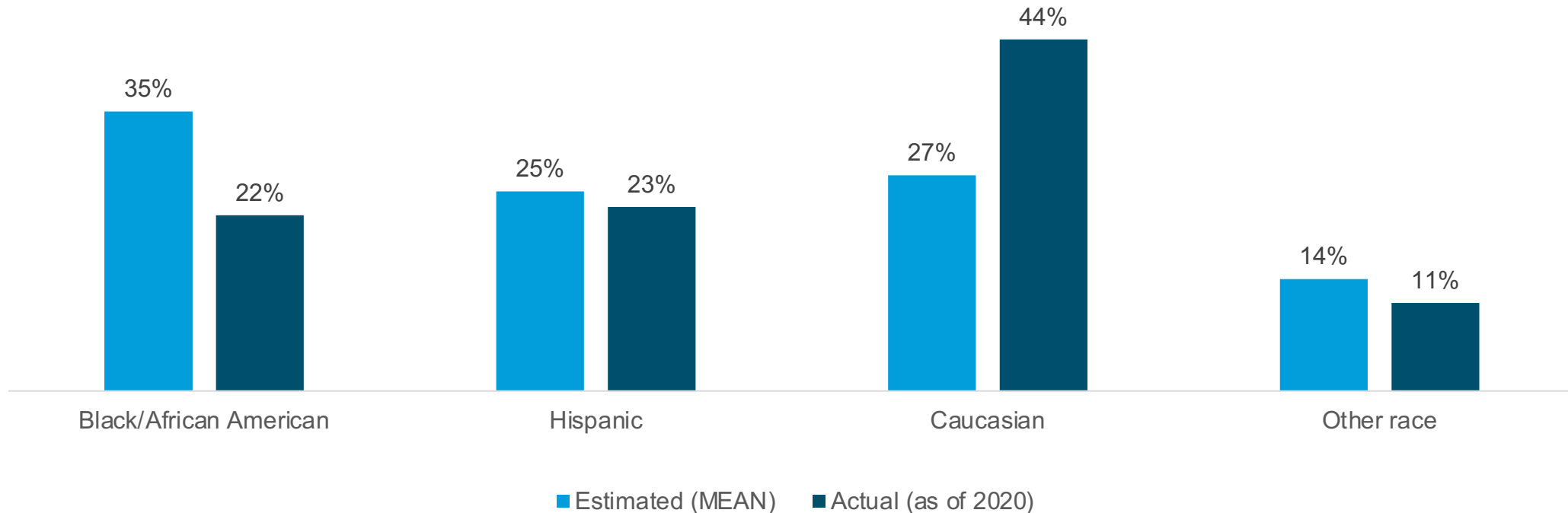
[^]New in 2021



Adults tend to overestimate the proportion of Black children in foster care

Simultaneously, they underestimate the proportion of Caucasian children in foster care.

**Average Estimated Percent of Children in Foster Care Available for Adoption
(MEAN % vs. actual %)**

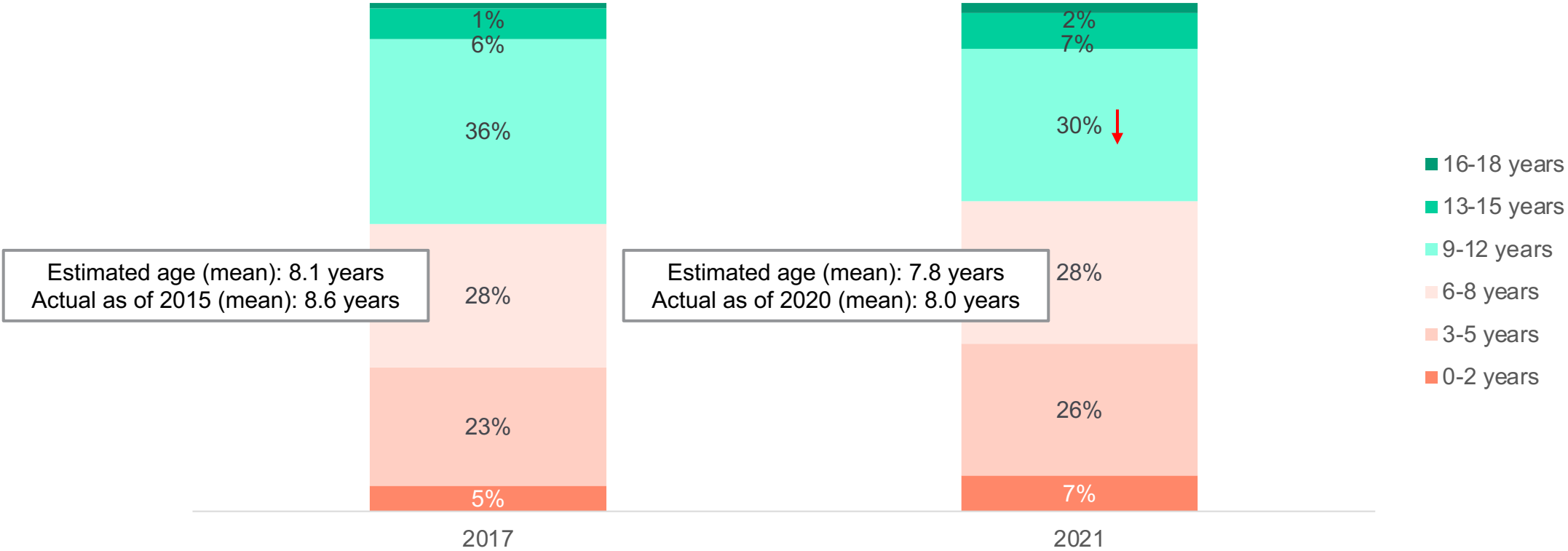




On average, adults closely estimate the average age of children in foster care

As of 2020, the average age of a child in foster care available for adoption was 8.0 and US adults estimate, on average, 7.8.

Estimated Average Age of Children in Foster Care Available to be Adopted



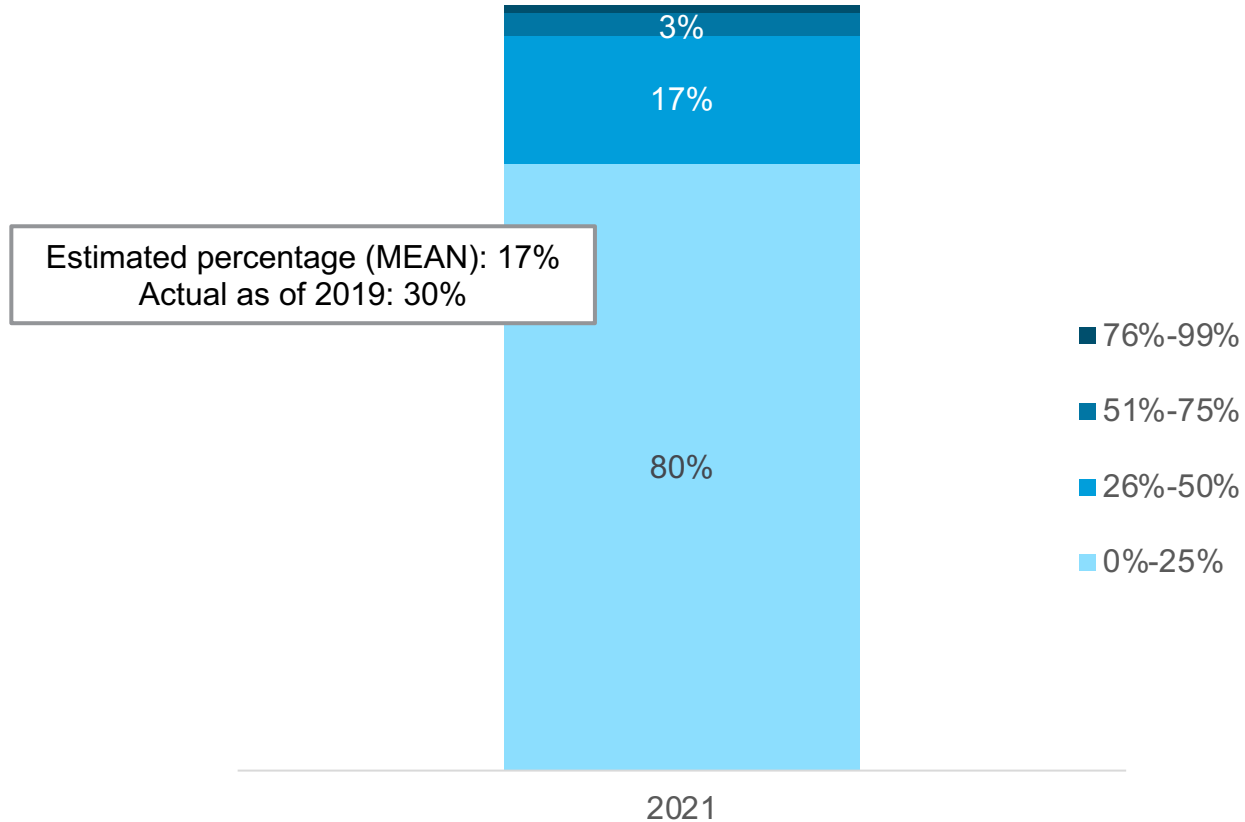
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Adults underestimate the proportion of LGBTQ+ children in foster care

As of 2019, 30% of children in foster care self-identified as LGBTQ+, but US adults, on average, only estimate that to be 17%.

Estimated Average Percent of Children In Foster Care Who Self-Identify as LGBTQ+



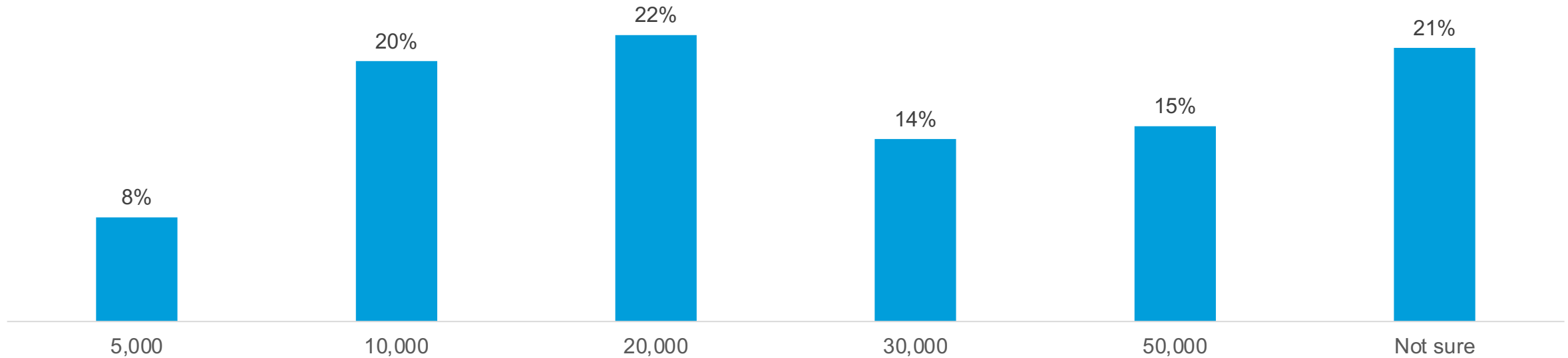


Only 2 in 10 accurately estimate the number of youth who age out of foster care

As of 2020, 20,000 youth age out of the foster care system annually, but only 22% of adults accurately estimate that; half estimate that it is more or are not sure.

Estimated Number of Youth that Age Out of Foster Care Without a Permanent Family (Annually)

Actual as of 2020: 20,000

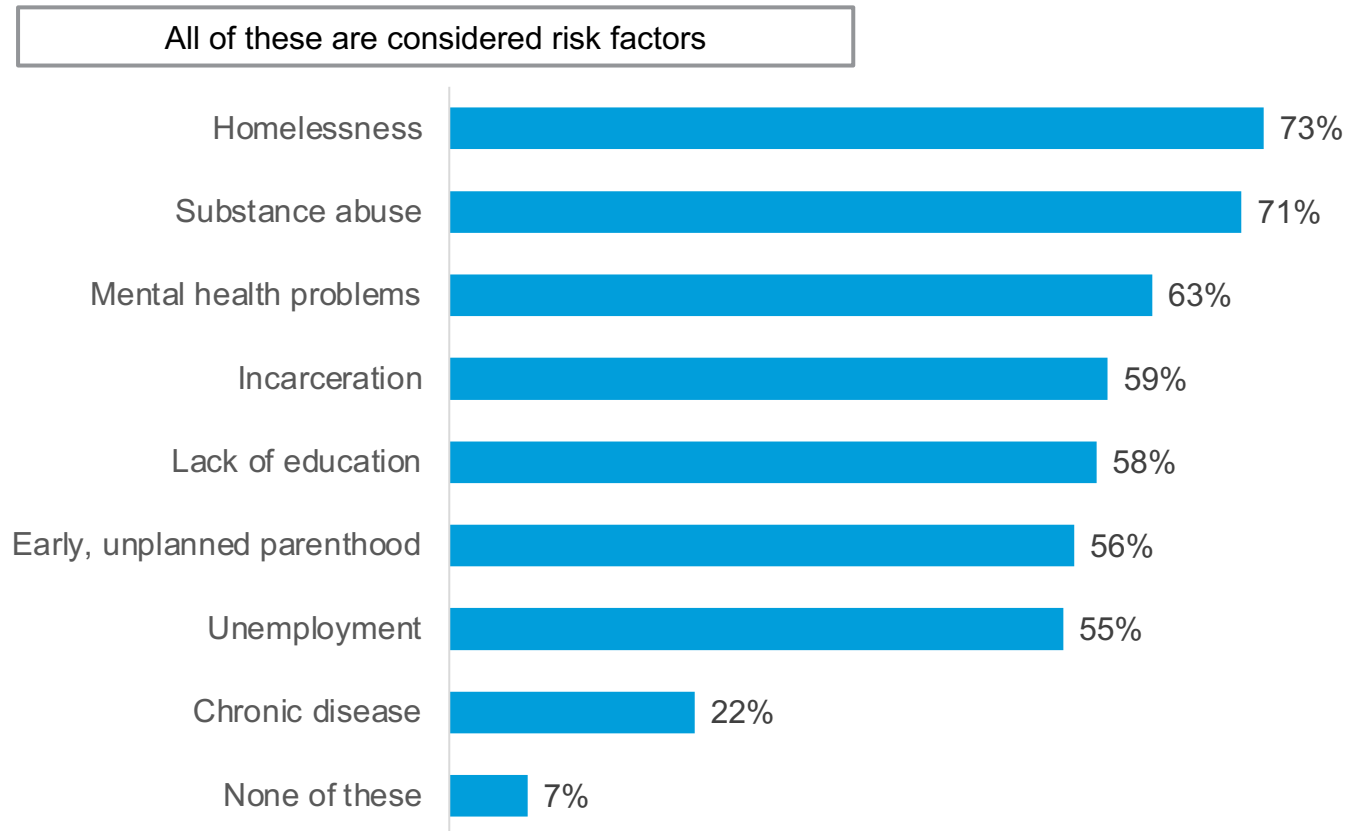




A majority recognize risk factors for youth who age out of foster care

While the vast majority are aware of the risk of homelessness and substance abuse, much fewer are aware that aging out of foster care puts youth at risk for chronic disease.

Perceived Risk Factors for Youth Who Age Out of the Foster Care System Without a Permanent Family

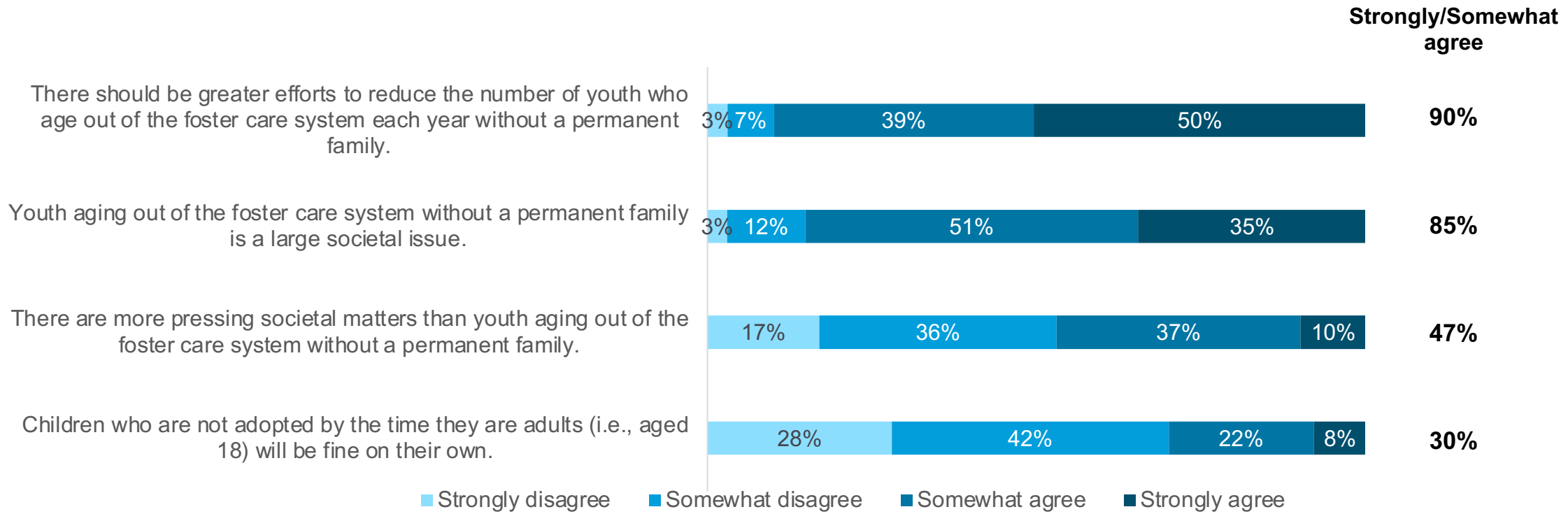




Most adults agree aging out is a societal issue warranting greater efforts

However, nearly half say there are more pressing societal matters, and 3 in 10 feel children who are not adopted by the time they are adults will be fine.

Agreement with Statements about Youth Aging Out of the Foster Care System

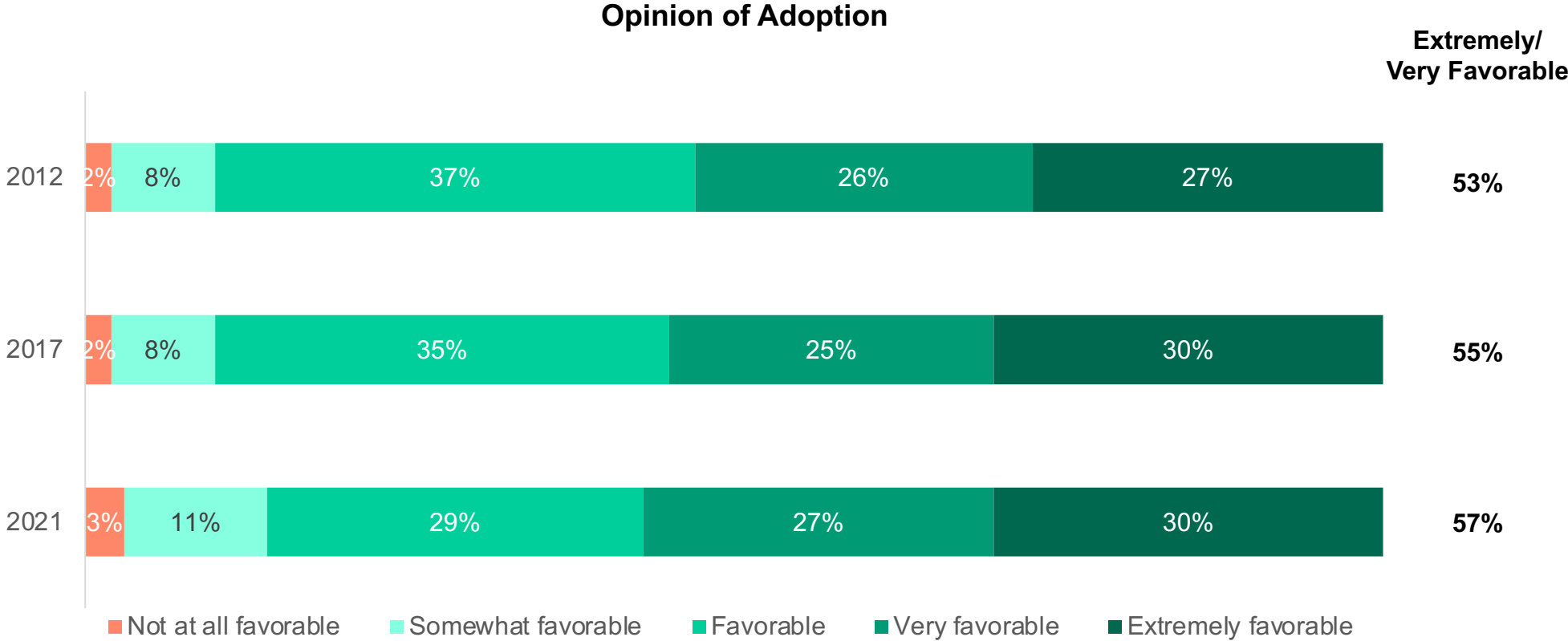




Opinions of Adoption

Opinions of general adoption remain stable

Around half of US adults have a very/extremely favorable opinion of adoption in general, with few having an unfavorable opinion.

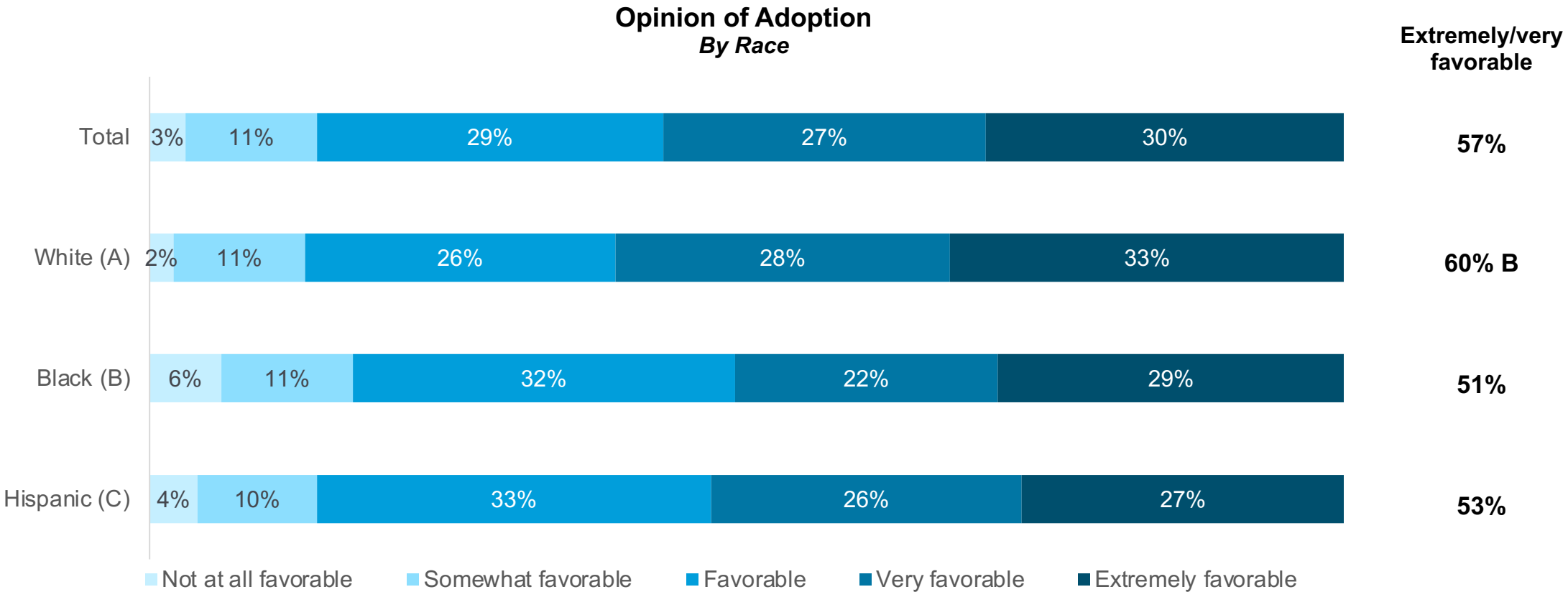


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



White adults most likely to have favorable opinion of adoption in general

Whites are significantly more likely than Blacks to feel extremely/very favorably about adoption in general.

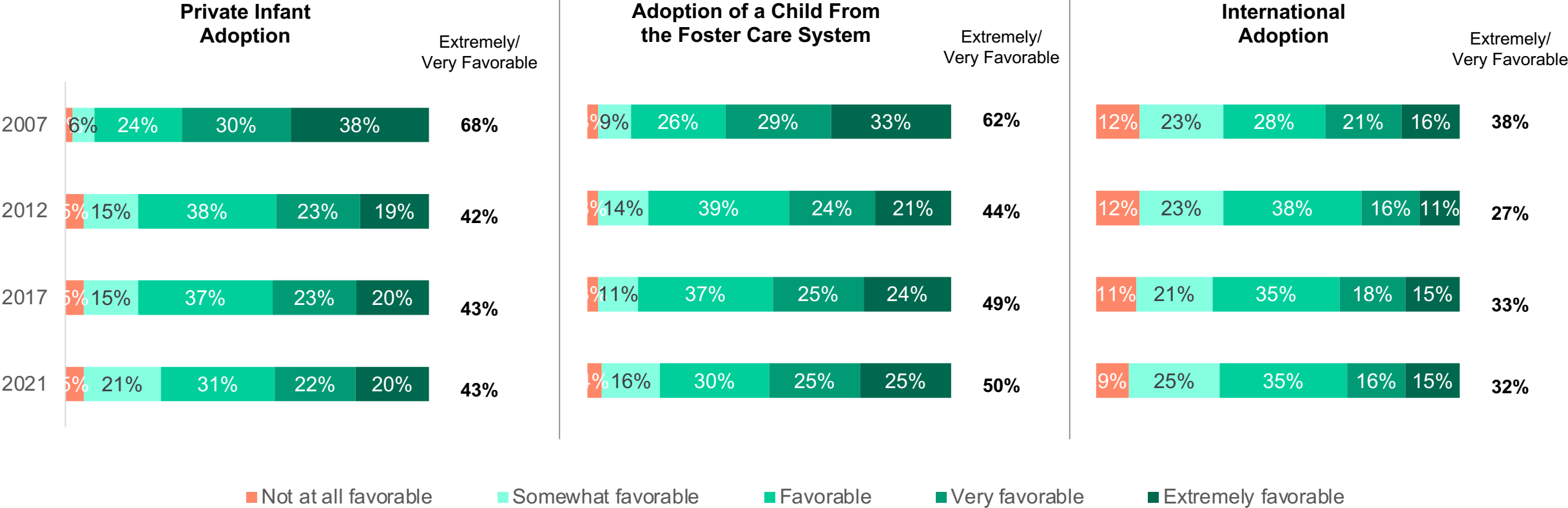


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

Opinions of private, foster, and international adoption remain stable

Half of adults have a highly favorable opinion of adoption from the foster care system, with around 2 in 5 having a highly favorable opinion of private adoption and around one-third having a similar sentiment toward international adoption; all are in line with 2017 levels.

Opinion of Specific Types of Adoption

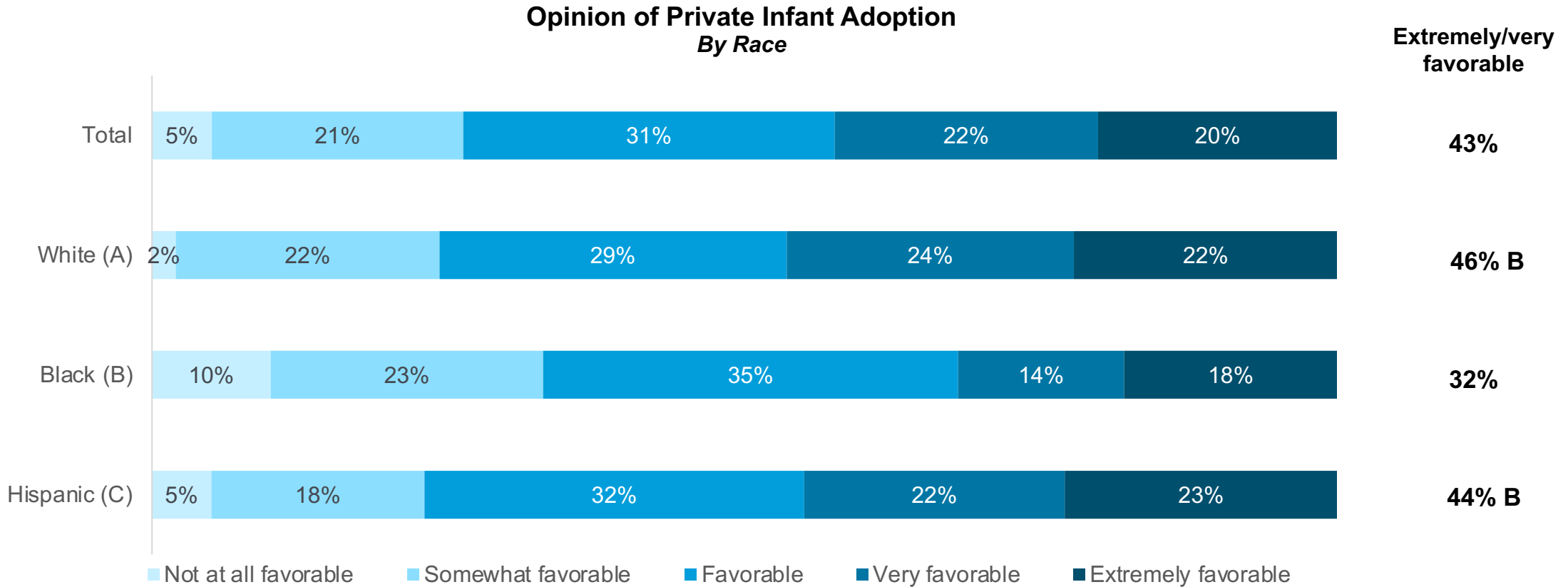


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



Black adults less likely to have favorable opinion of private adoption

Whites and Hispanics are significantly more likely than Blacks to feel extremely/very favorably about private adoption.



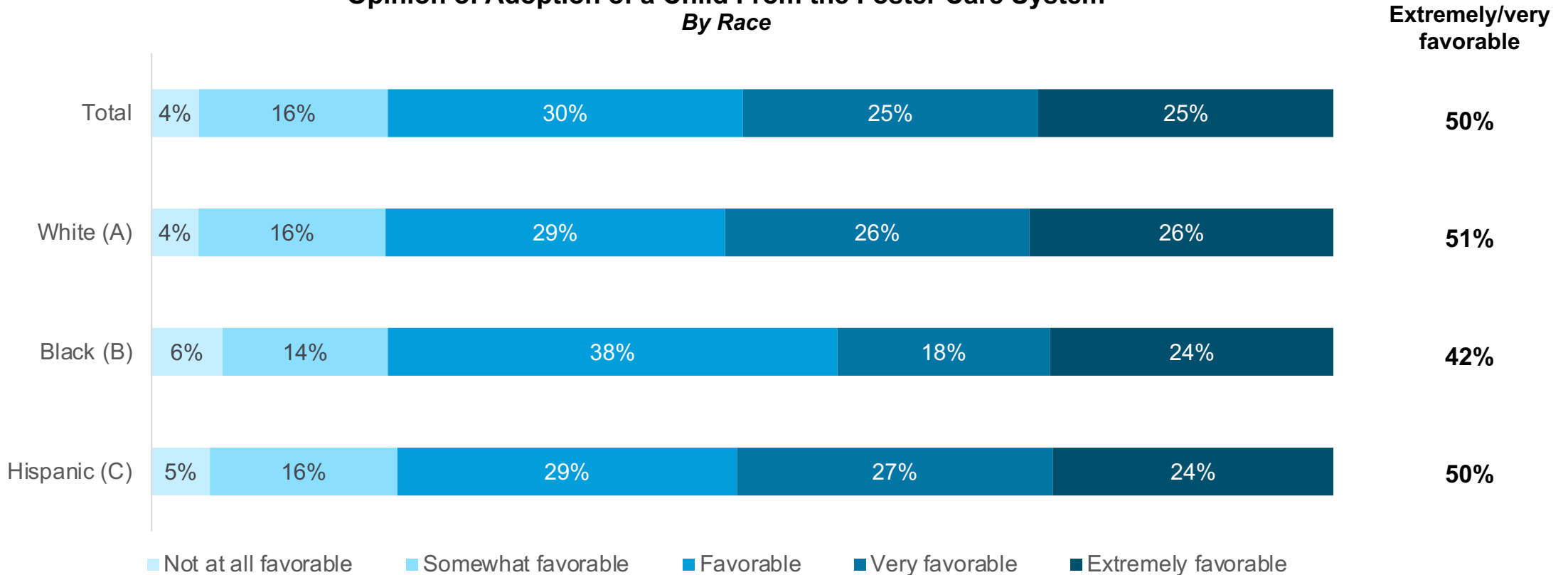
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



Similar opinions of foster care adoption by race

No one race is more or less likely to have a favorable opinion of adoption of a child from the foster care system.

**Opinion of Adoption of a Child From the Foster Care System
By Race**

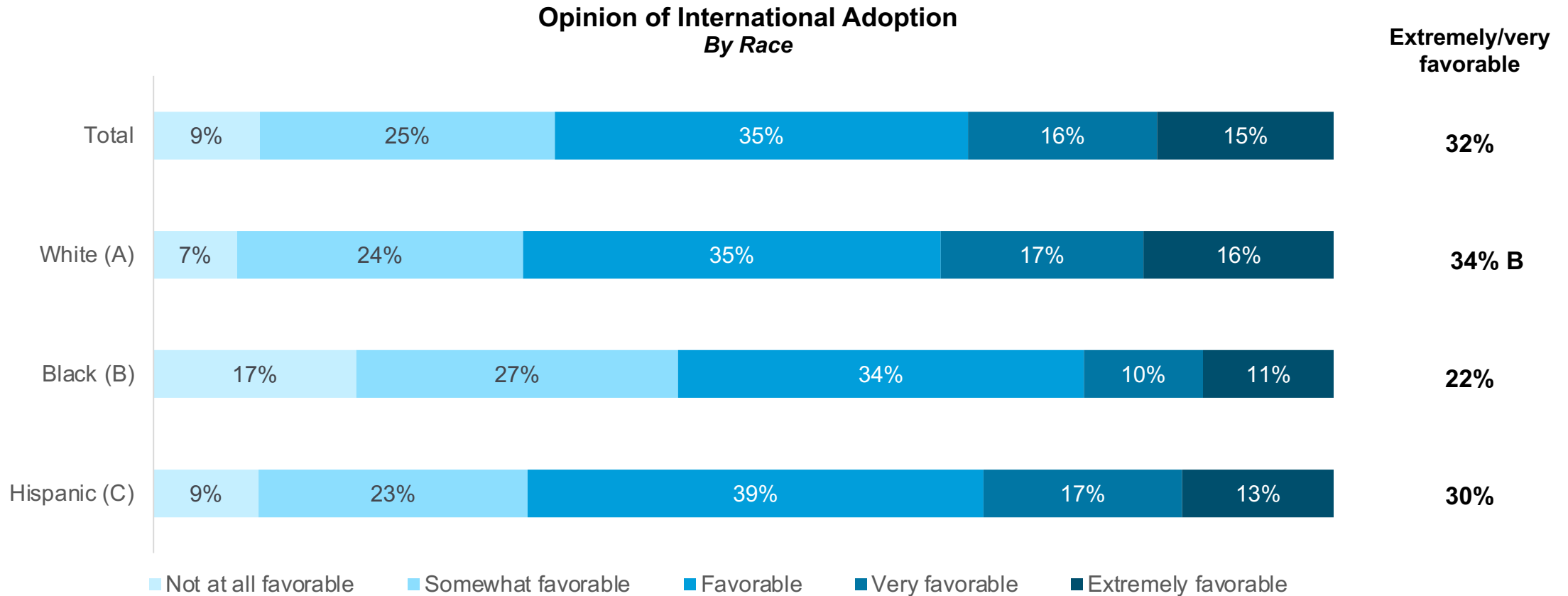


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



White adults most likely to have a favorable opinion of international adoption

Whites are significantly more likely than Blacks to feel extremely/very favorably about international adoption.



Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

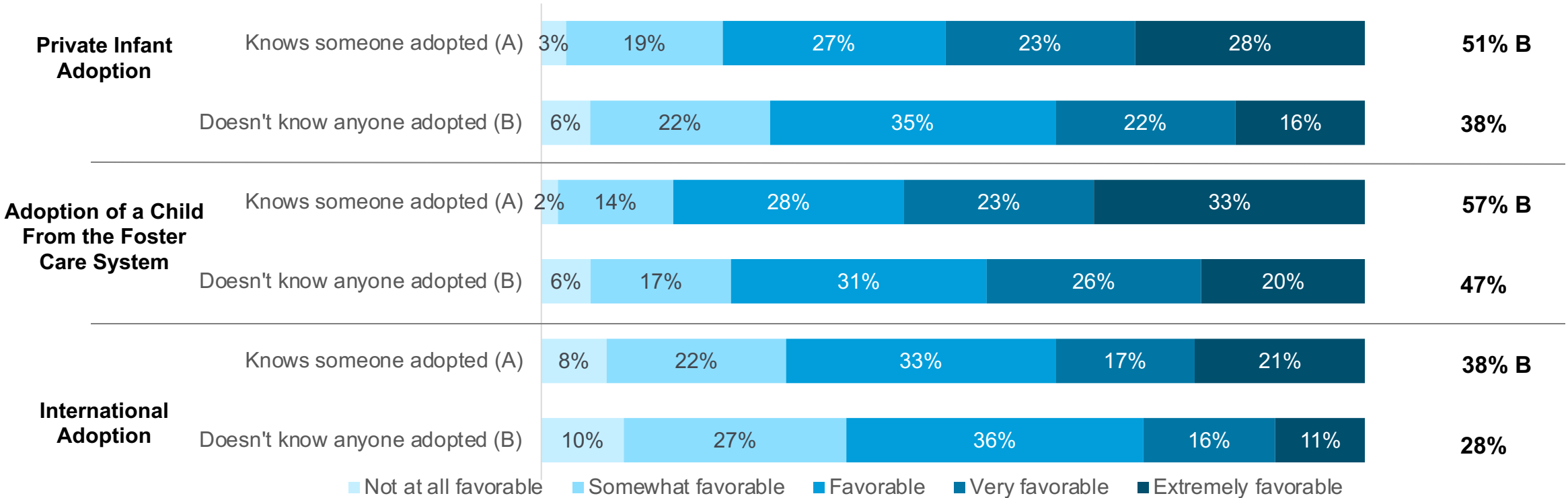


Personal experience improves favorability of all types of adoption

Those who know someone who has been adopted are significantly more likely to feel extremely/very favorable about the three specific types of adoption.

Opinion of Specific Types of Adoption
By Friend/Family Member Adoption Status

**Extremely/
Very Favorable**



Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

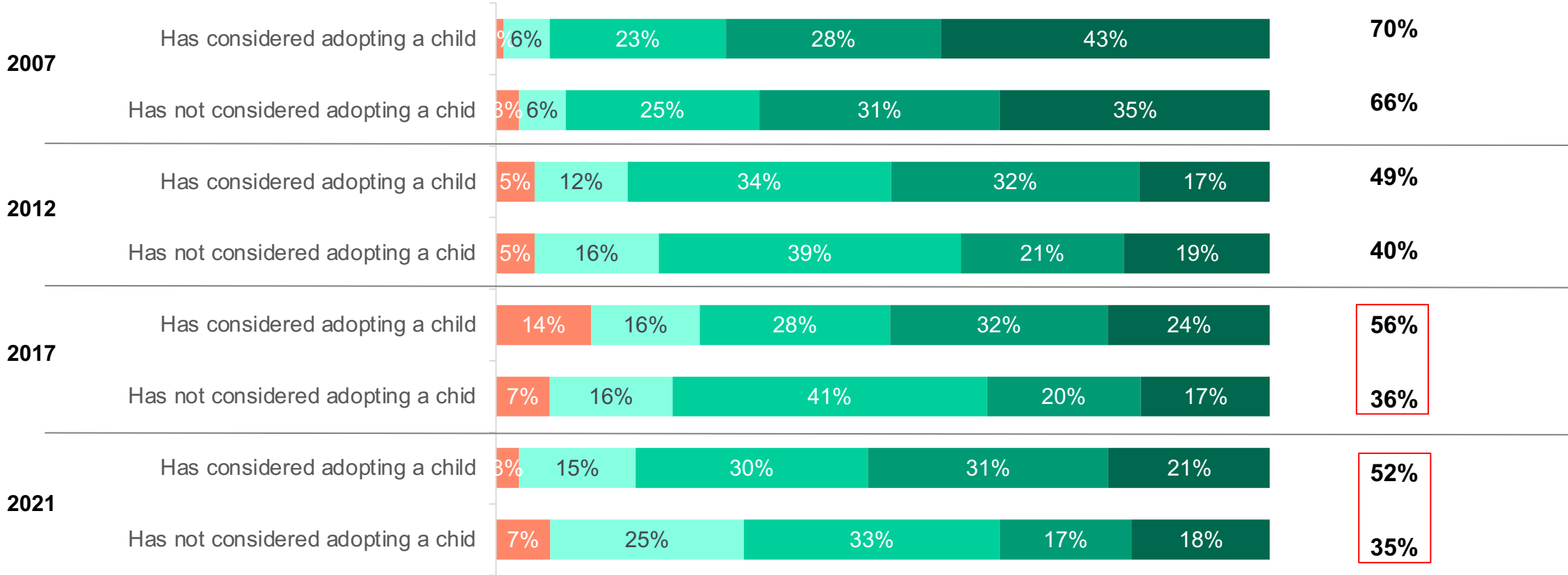


Adoption consideration improves favorability of private adoption

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of private adoption compared to those who haven't considered, both this year in 2021 as well as in 2017.

Opinion of Private Infant Adoption
By Adoption Consideration Status

**Extremely/
Very Favorable**



■ Not at all favorable
 ■ Somewhat favorable
 ■ Favorable
 ■ Very favorable
 ■ Extremely favorable

 Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

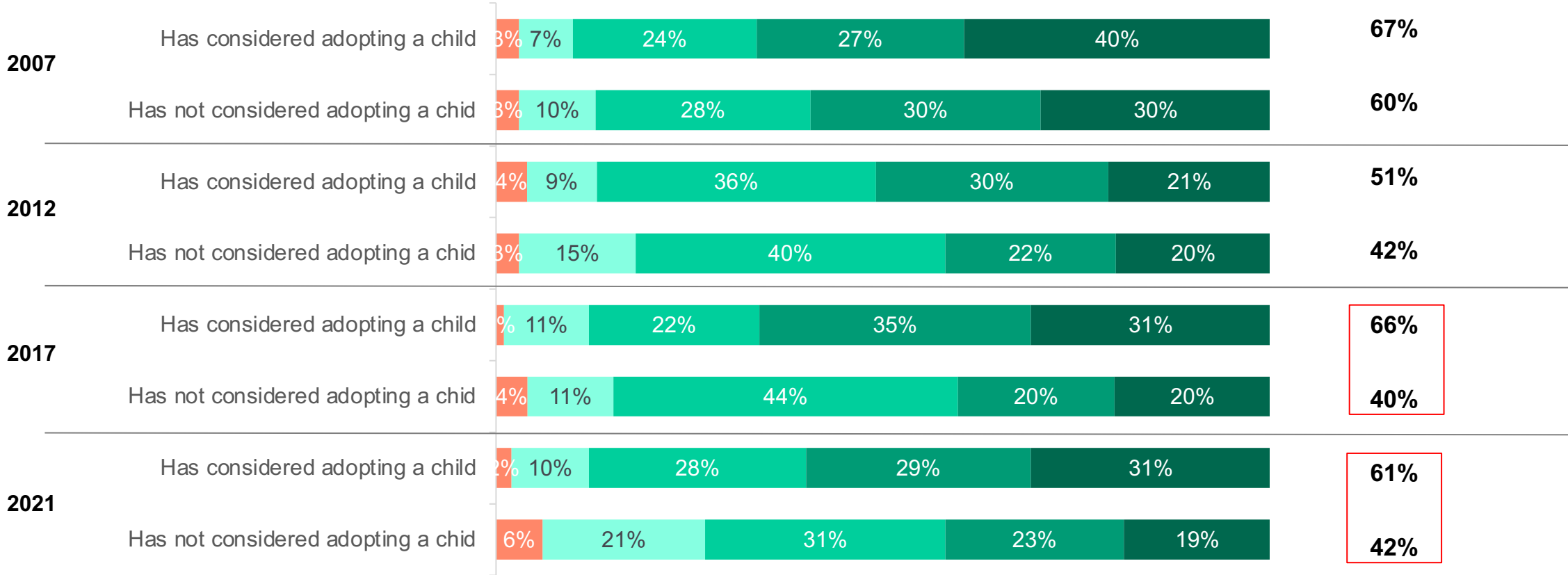


Adoption consideration improves favorability of foster care adoption

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of adoption of a child from the foster care system compared to those who haven't considered, both this year in 2021 as well as in 2017.

Opinion of Adoption of a Child From the Foster Care System
By Adoption Consideration Status

**Extremely/
Very Favorable**



■ Not at all favorable
 ■ Somewhat favorable
 ■ Favorable
 ■ Very favorable
 ■ Extremely favorable

 Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

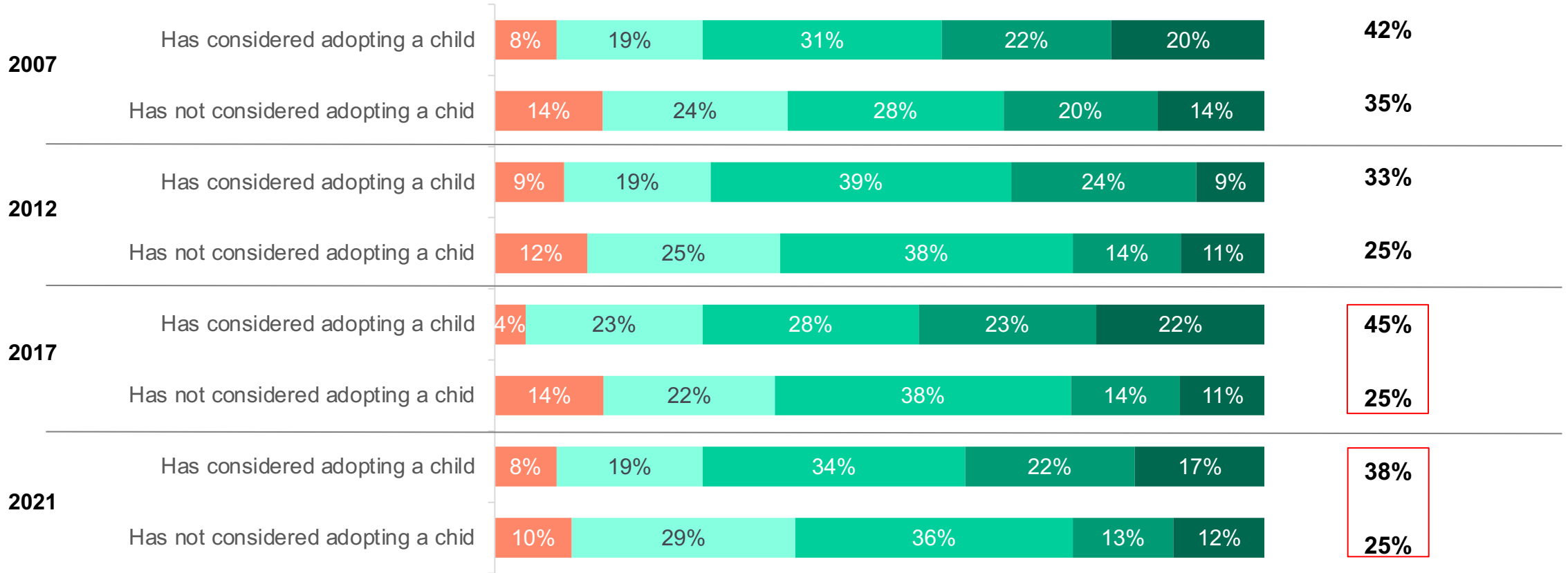


Adoption consideration improves favorability of international adoption

Those who have considered adopting are more likely to have a highly favorable opinion of international adoption compared to those who haven't considered, both this year in 2021 as well as in 2017.

**Opinion of International Adoption
By Adoption Consideration Status**

**Extremely/
Very Favorable**



■ Not at all favorable
 ■ Somewhat favorable
 ■ Favorable
 ■ Very favorable
 ■ Extremely favorable

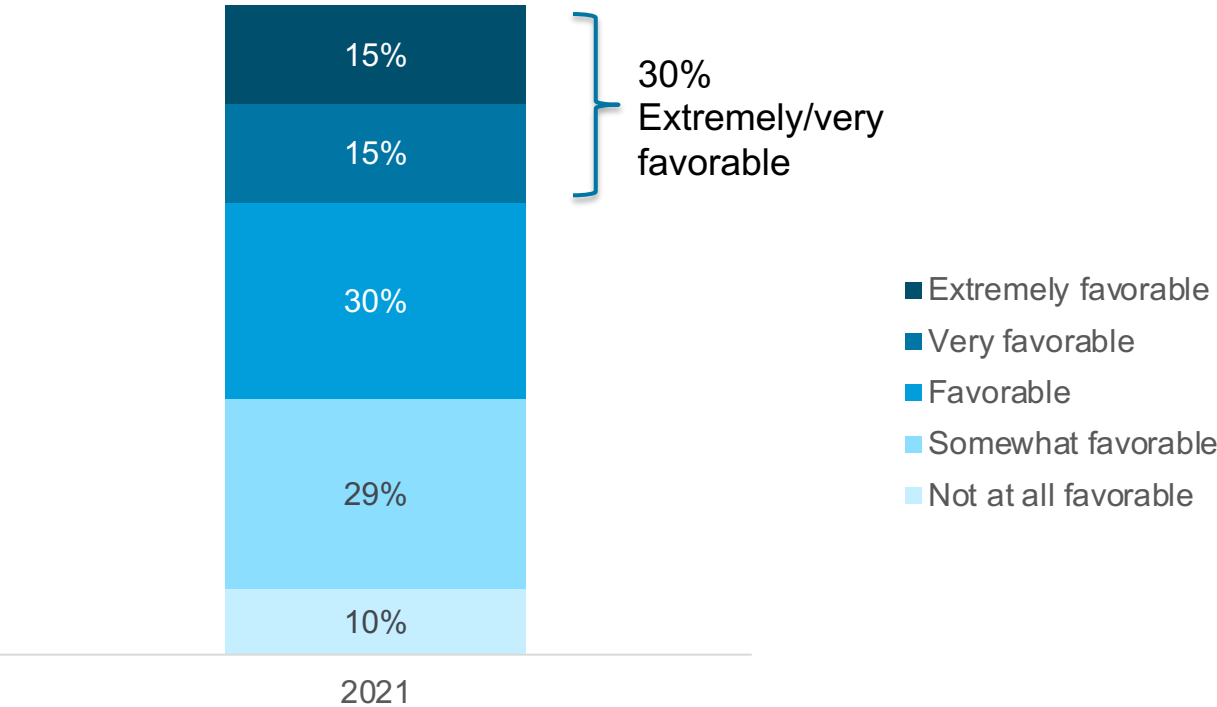
 Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



3 in 10 adults have a highly favorable opinion of the foster care system

While half of Americans have a highly favorable opinion of *adoption* from the foster care system, less than one-third feel the same about the foster care system itself.

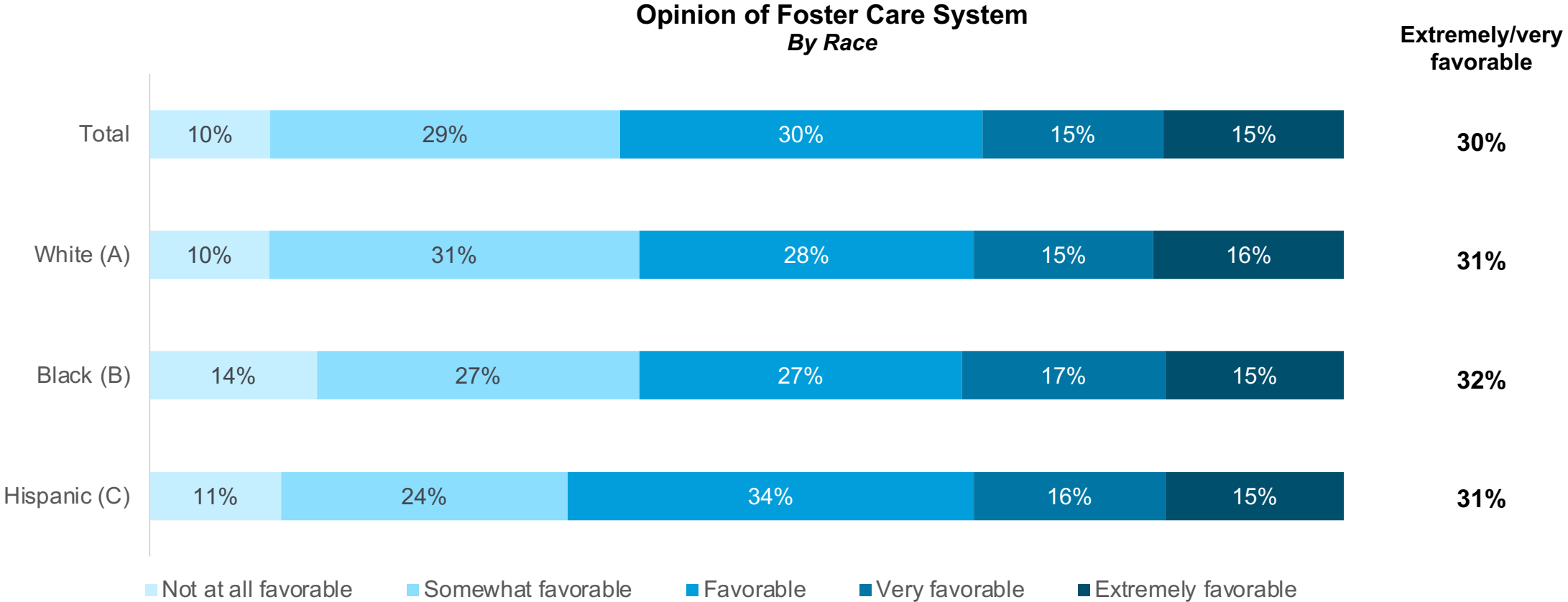
Opinion of the Foster Care System





Similar opinions of the foster care system by race

No one race is more or less likely to have a favorable opinion of the foster care system.



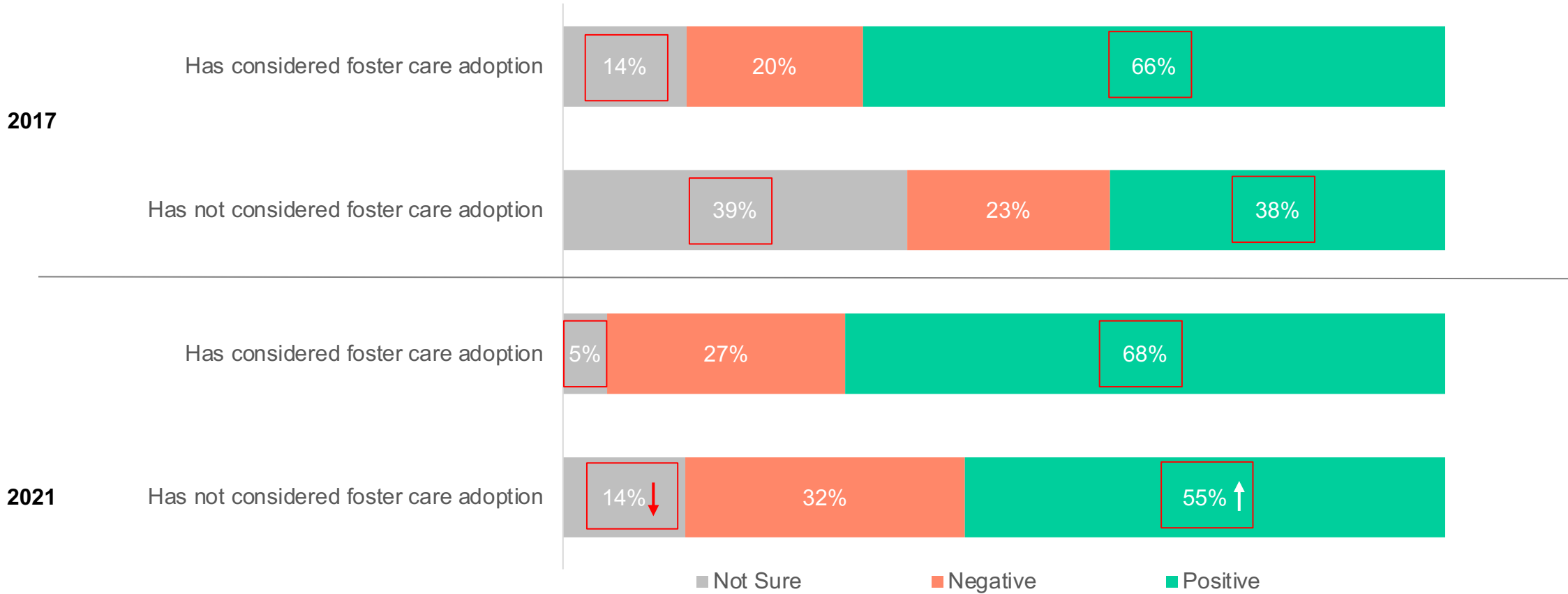
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



Increase in positive opinion of foster care among those not considering

While those who have considered foster care adoption remain significantly more likely than those who haven't to have a positive opinion of the foster care system, there is a large increase in positive opinion among those not considering foster care adoption.

Opinion of Foster Care System
By Consideration of Foster Care Adoption



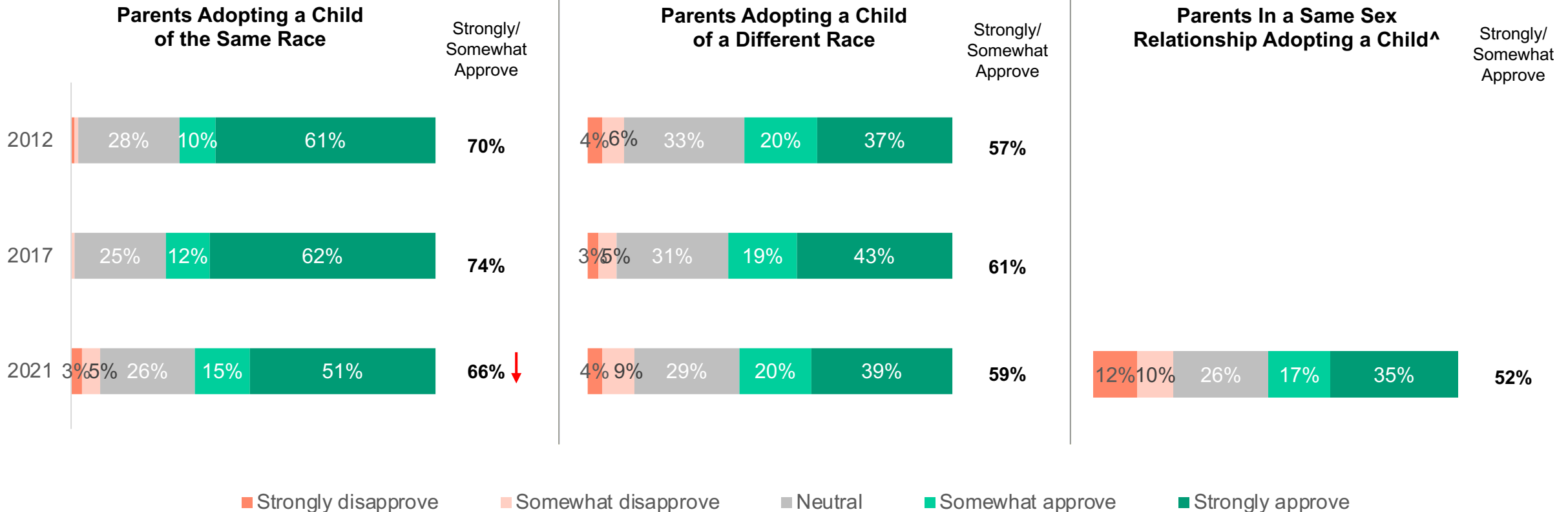
■ Not Sure
 ■ Negative
 ■ Positive

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 □ Indicates significant difference between subgroups

Half of Americans approve of parents in a same sex relationship adopting

Majorities of US adults continue to approve of parents adopting a child either of their same race or a different one, however, the proportion who approve of parents of one race adopting a child of the same race has declined from 2017.

Approval of Specific Foster Care Adoption Scenarios



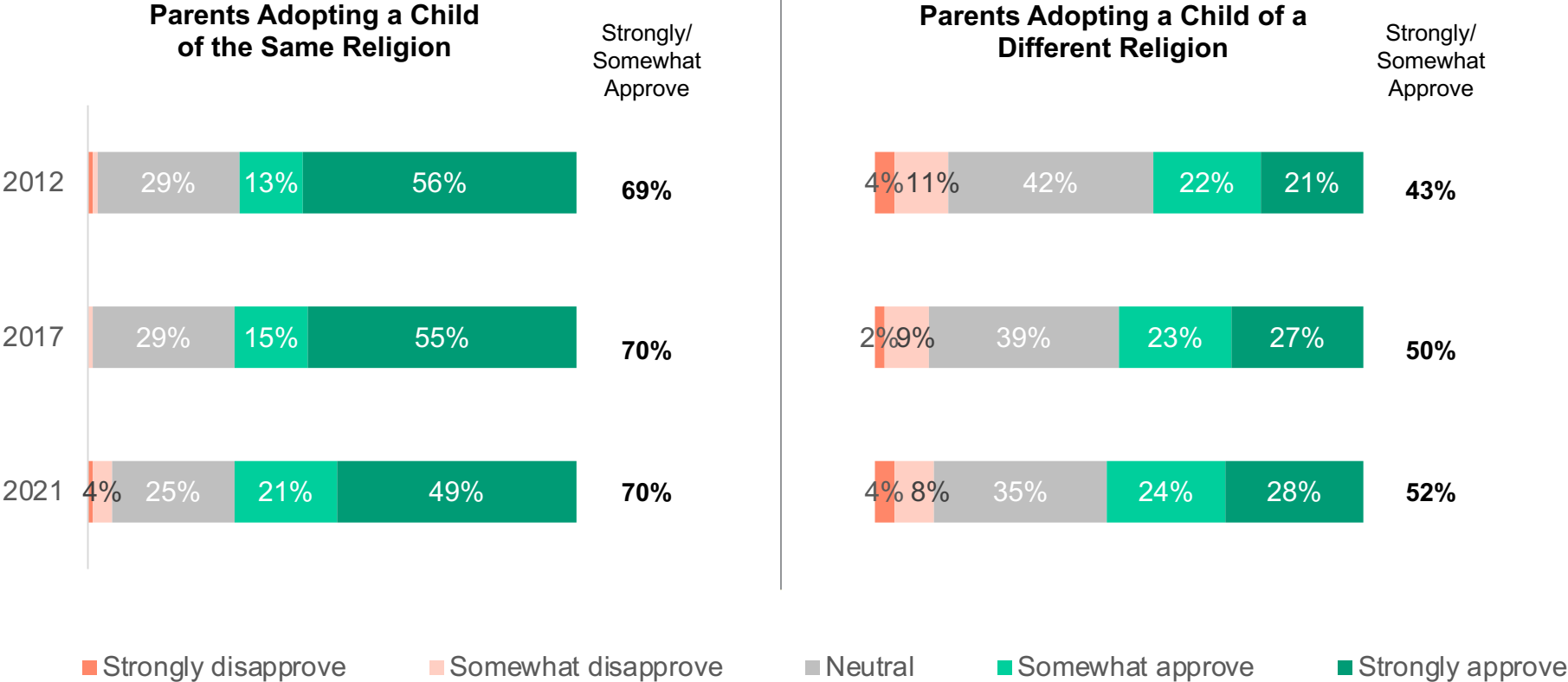
[^]New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Adults more apt to approve of parents adopting a child of the same religion than different

7 in 10 adults approve of parents of one religion adopting a child of the same religion but only half approve of parents adopting a child of a different religion; both on par with 2017 levels.

Approval of Specific Foster Care Adoption Scenarios, Contd.



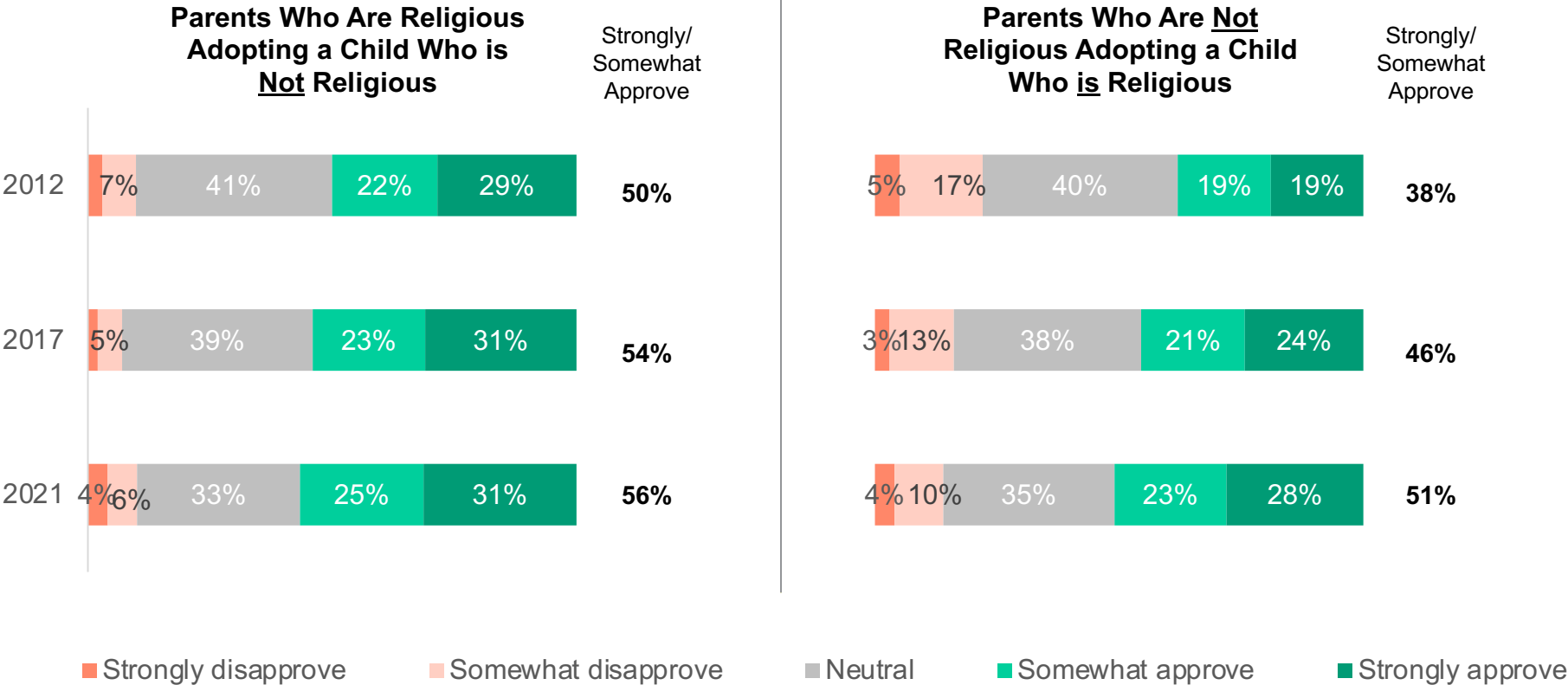
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes **59**



Around half approve of mismatch in religious belief between parents and child

Just over half of US adults approve of parents who are religious adopting a child who isn't and vice versa, parents who aren't religious adopting a child who is. Both are on par with 2017 levels.

Approval of Specific Foster Care Adoption Scenarios, Contd.



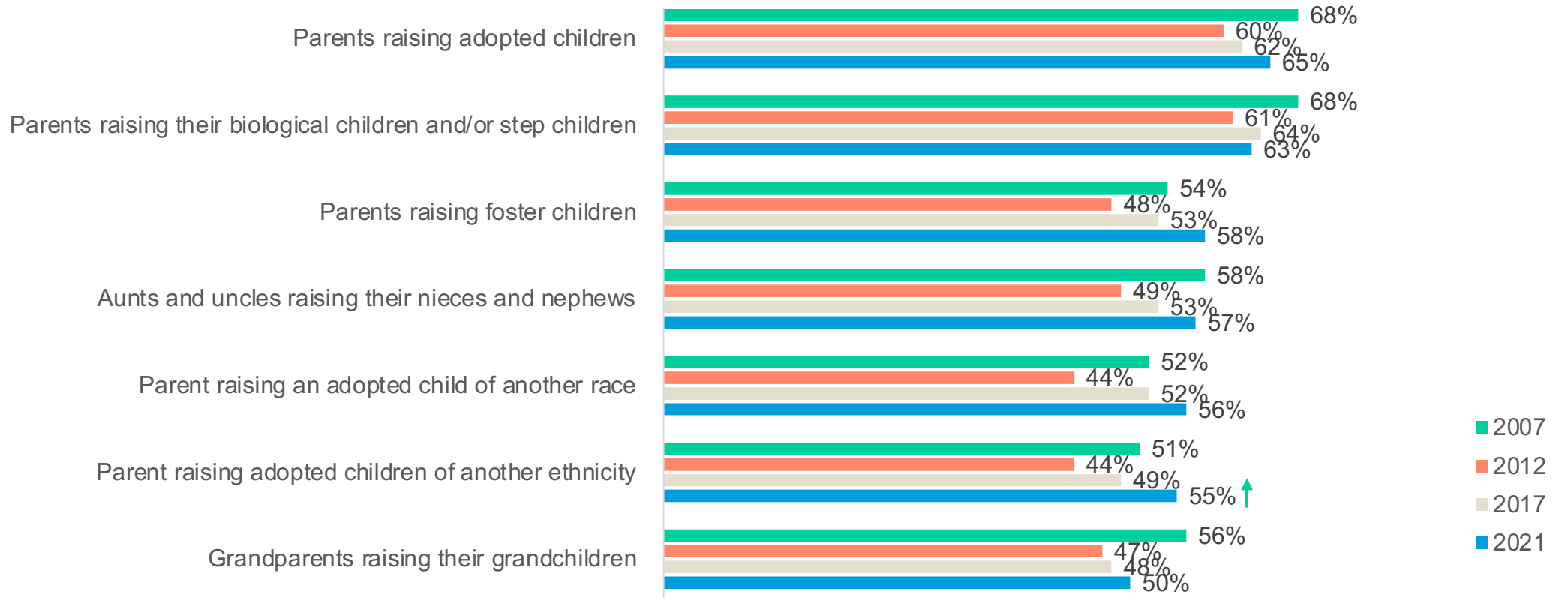
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes **60**

Evaluation of Healthy Living Arrangements for Children

Parents raising adopted or biological child both believed to provide loving home

Adults perceive parents raising an adopted child are equally as likely to ‘definitely’ provide a healthy and loving living arrangements as for their own biological child. Compared to 2017, adults are more likely to feel parents raising adopted children of another ethnicity definitely provide a healthy and loving environment.

**Healthy and Loving Living Arrangements – Top 7
(% Definitely Provides a Healthy and Loving Environment)**



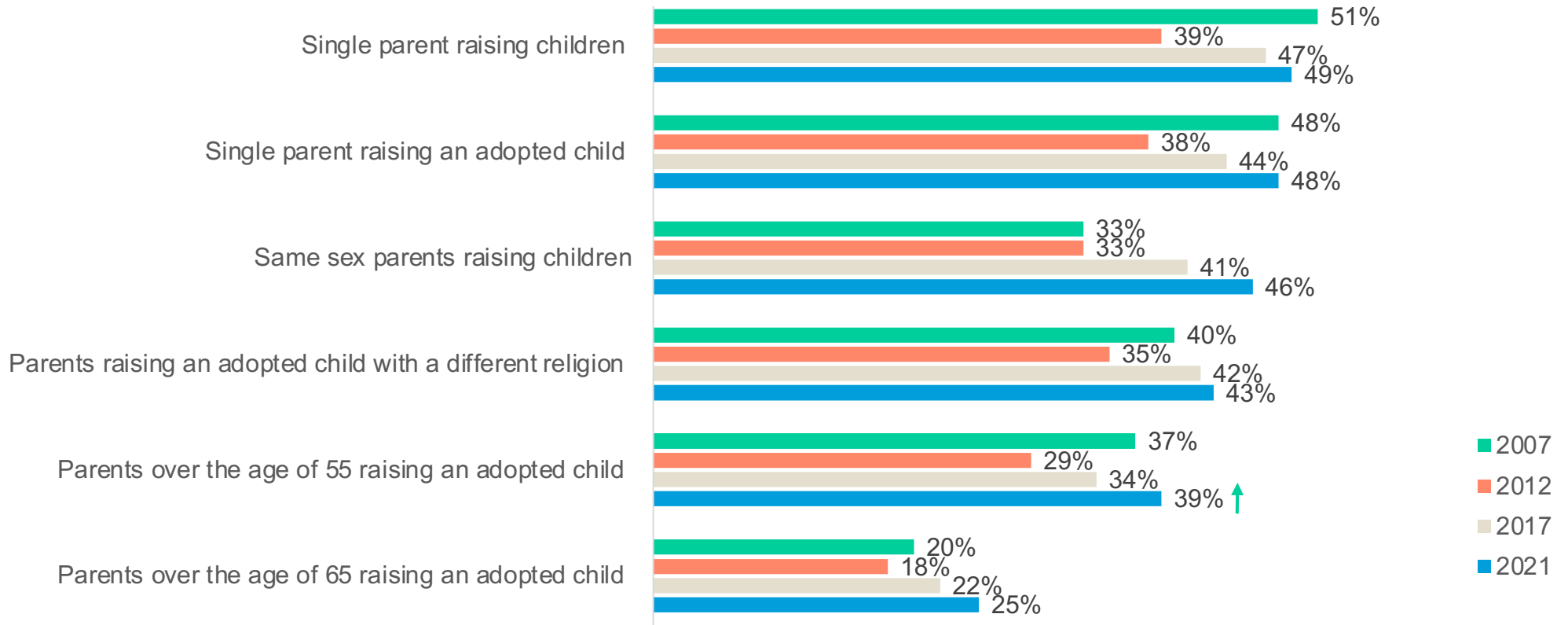
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Few feel parents over 65 provide a healthy environment for adopted child

Compared to 2017, Americans are more likely to say parents over 55 can 'definitely' provide a healthy and loving living arrangement.

**Healthy and Loving Living Arrangements – Bottom 6
(% Definitely Provides a Healthy and Loving Environment)**



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

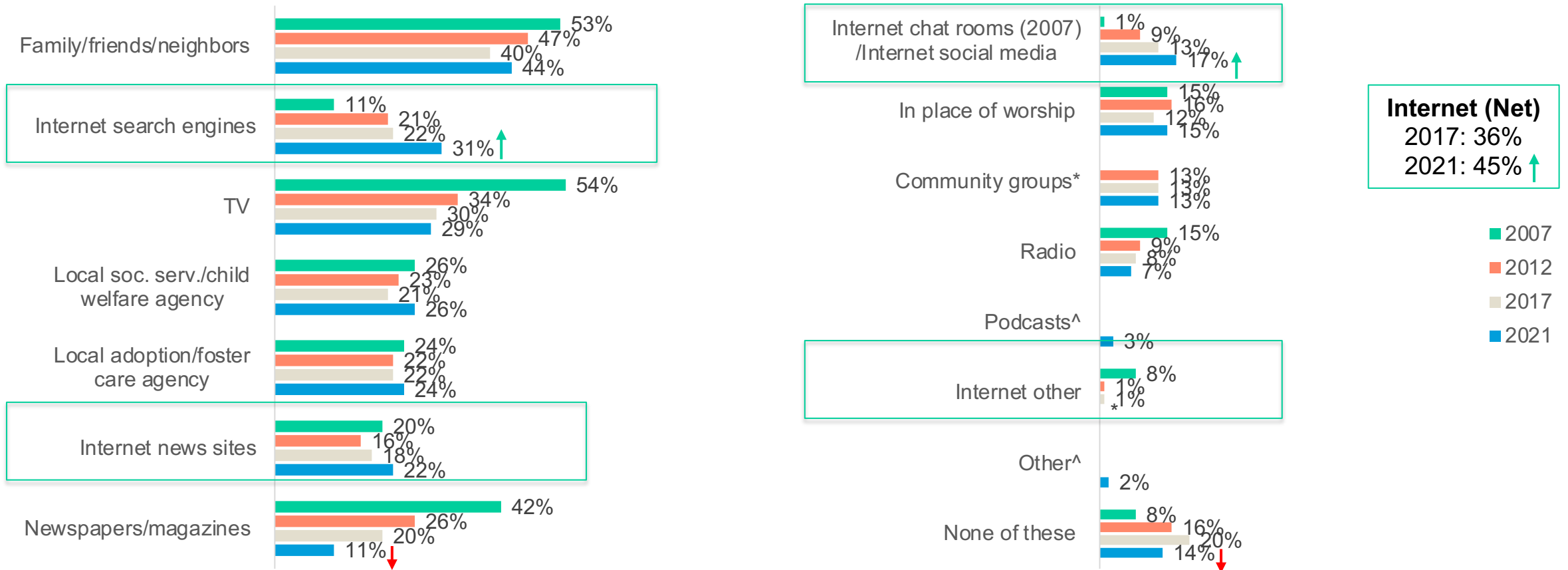


Adoption Information Sources

Continued rise in use of search engines for adoption information

Friends and family still top the list of adoption information resources, but internet search is on the rise. Social media has also increased, though is still relatively low. Newspapers/magazines continue to decline as a resource for adoption information.

Sources of Adoption Information



[^]New in 2021
^{*}not asked in 2007
 Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company © 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

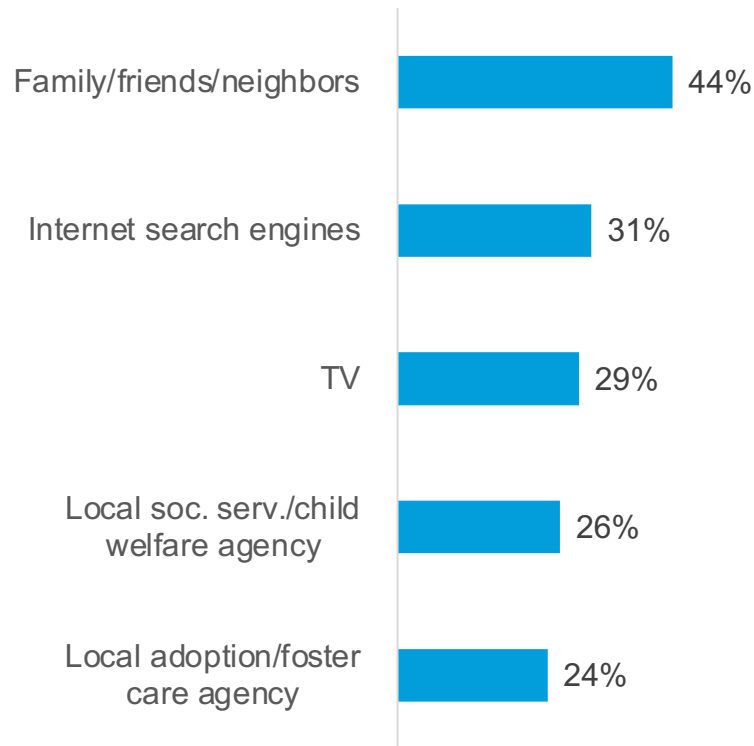


Top sources of adoption information consistent among considerers

Those considering adoption in general and those specifically considering foster care adoption have the same top sources of information: family/friends/neighbors and internet search engines.

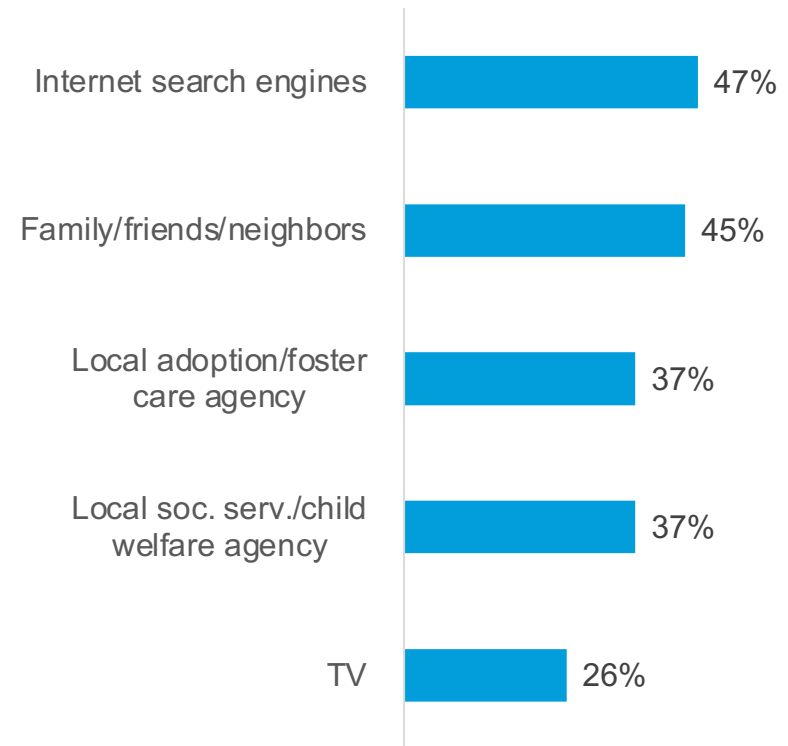
Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information

Base: Have considered adoption



Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information

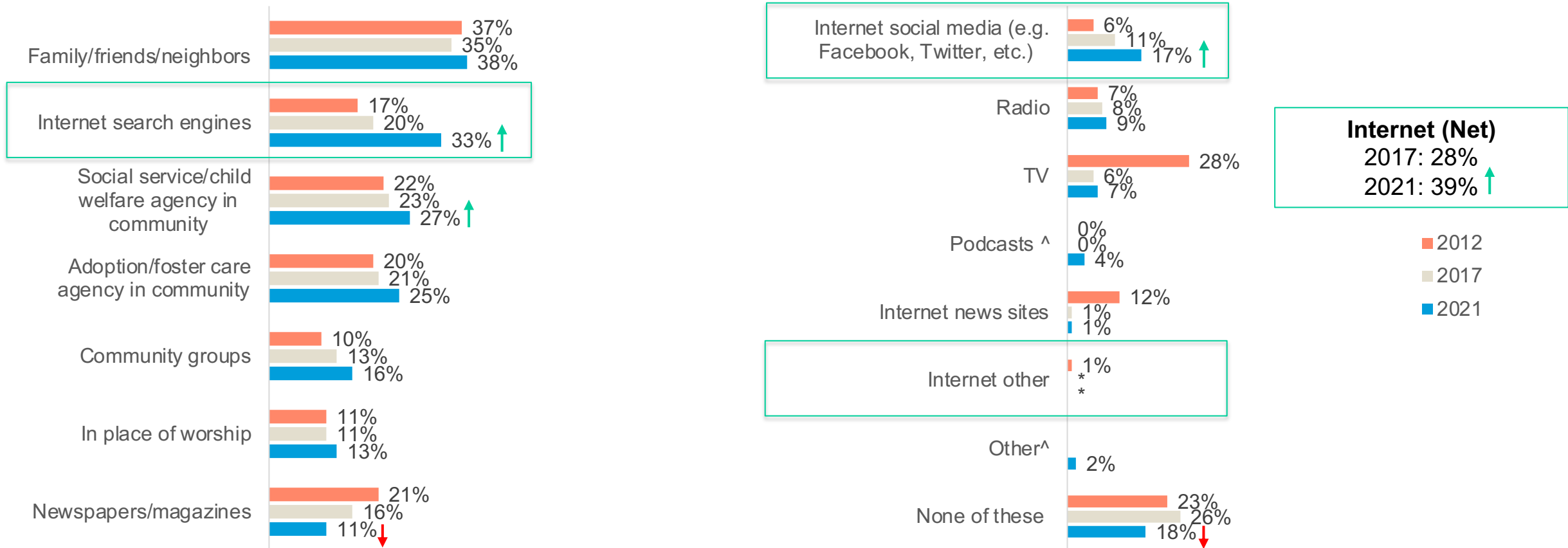
Base: Have considered foster care adoption



Continued rise in use of search engines for foster care adoption information

Also on the rise as sources for foster care adoption information are local social service agencies and internet social media. Newspapers/magazines continue to decline as a resource for foster care adoption information.

Sources of Foster Care Adoption Information



^New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

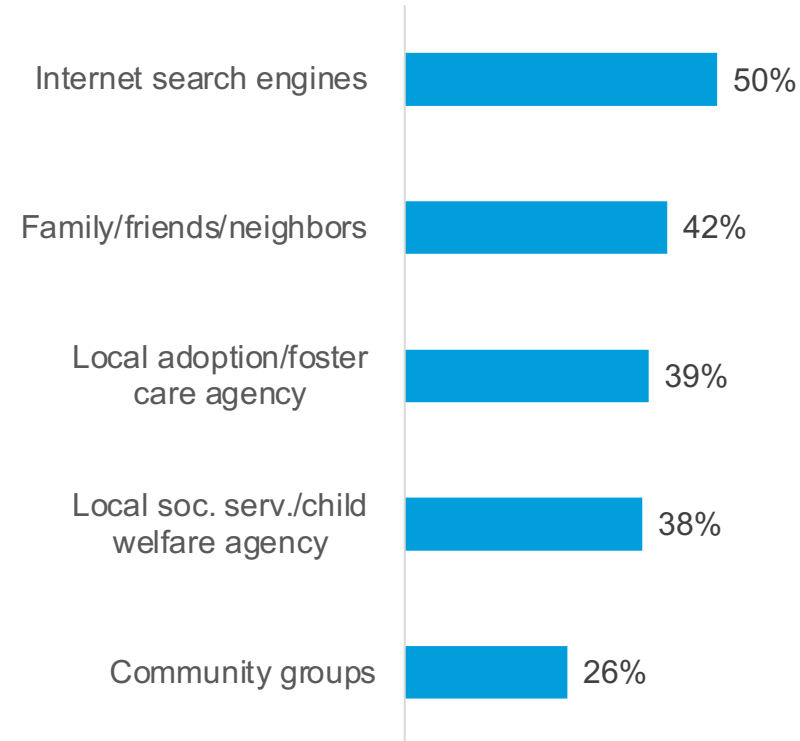


Adults considering foster care adoption most commonly use internet search

Other common sources of information among foster care considerers are personal networks and local adoption/foster care agencies and social service agencies.

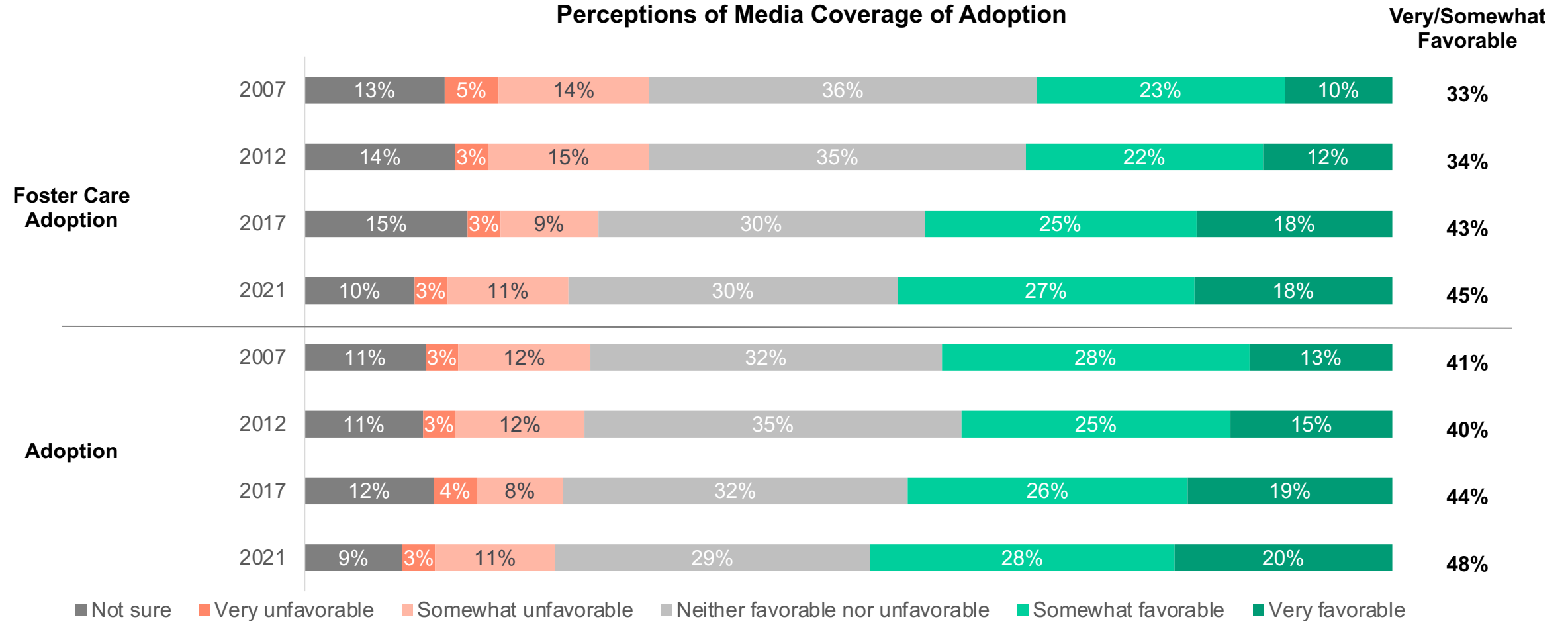
Top 5 Sources of Foster Care Adoption Information

Base: Considering foster care adoption



Stable perceptions of favorable media coverage of foster care/adoption

For both foster care adoption and general adoption, close to half of adults feel media coverage is favorable, with many neutral or unsure. There are no significant changes to media favorability from 2017.

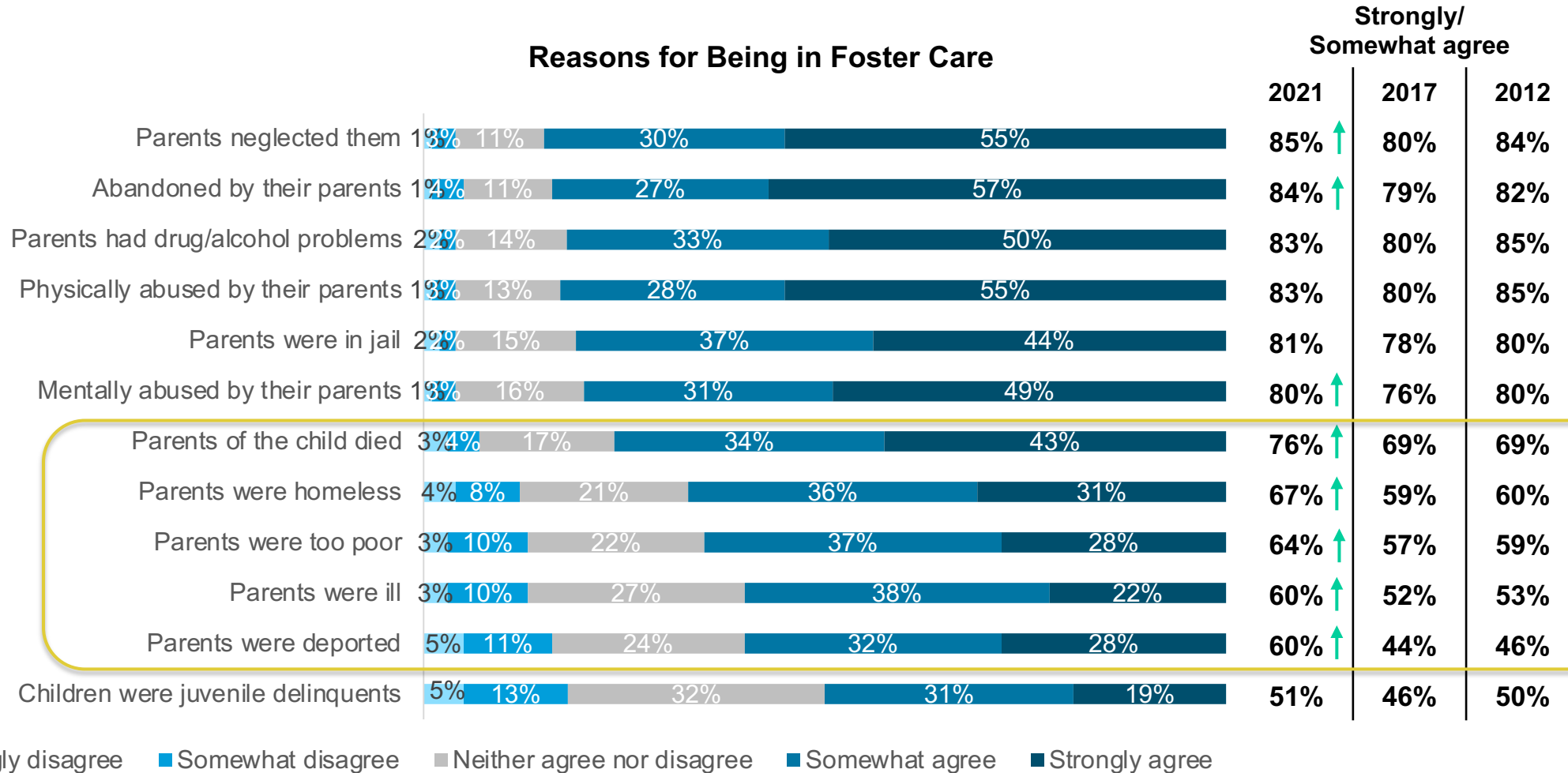




Perceptions of Problems in Adopted Children

Majority see foster care placement a result of various parental neglect/problems

Several of the top reasons related to parental neglect or improper behavior have increased back toward 2012 levels. However, there seems to be real increases in reasons less in parental control, such as parents have died, are ill, are homeless or too poor, or parents who have been deported.



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

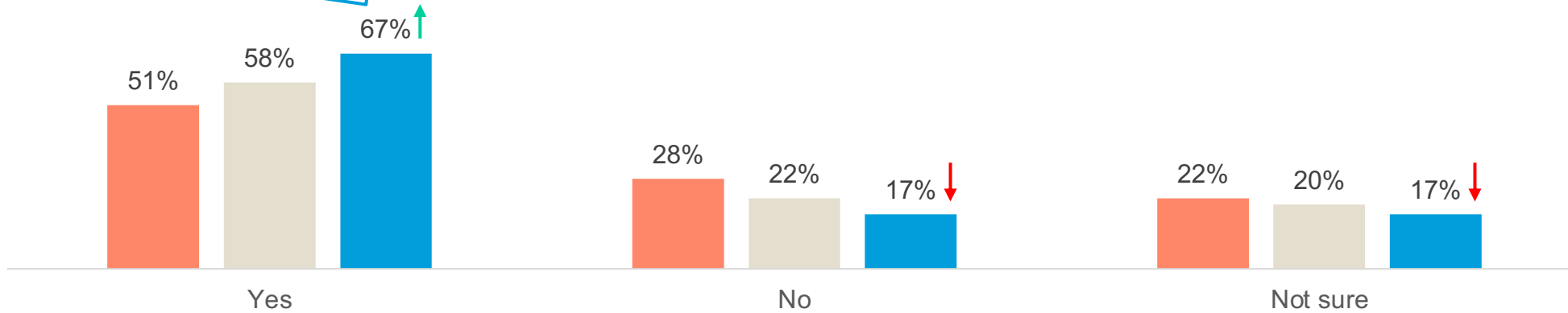
Improvement in belief that every child is adoptable

Up from 2017, two-thirds of adults believe every child is adoptable, while the proportion who either do not believe every child is adoptable or are unsure have both declined.

Most likely (2021):

- Women: 72% (vs. 61% men)
- Under 65: 69% 18-34, 76% 35-44, 69% 55-64 (vs. 55% 65+) (66% 45-54)
- White or Hispanic: 69%, 70% (vs. 51% Black)
- Has kids: 76% (vs. 61% no kids)
- Considering adoption: 71% (vs. 62% not considering)

Belief of Adoptability of Every Child



■ 2012 ■ 2017 ■ 2021

Most likely (2021):

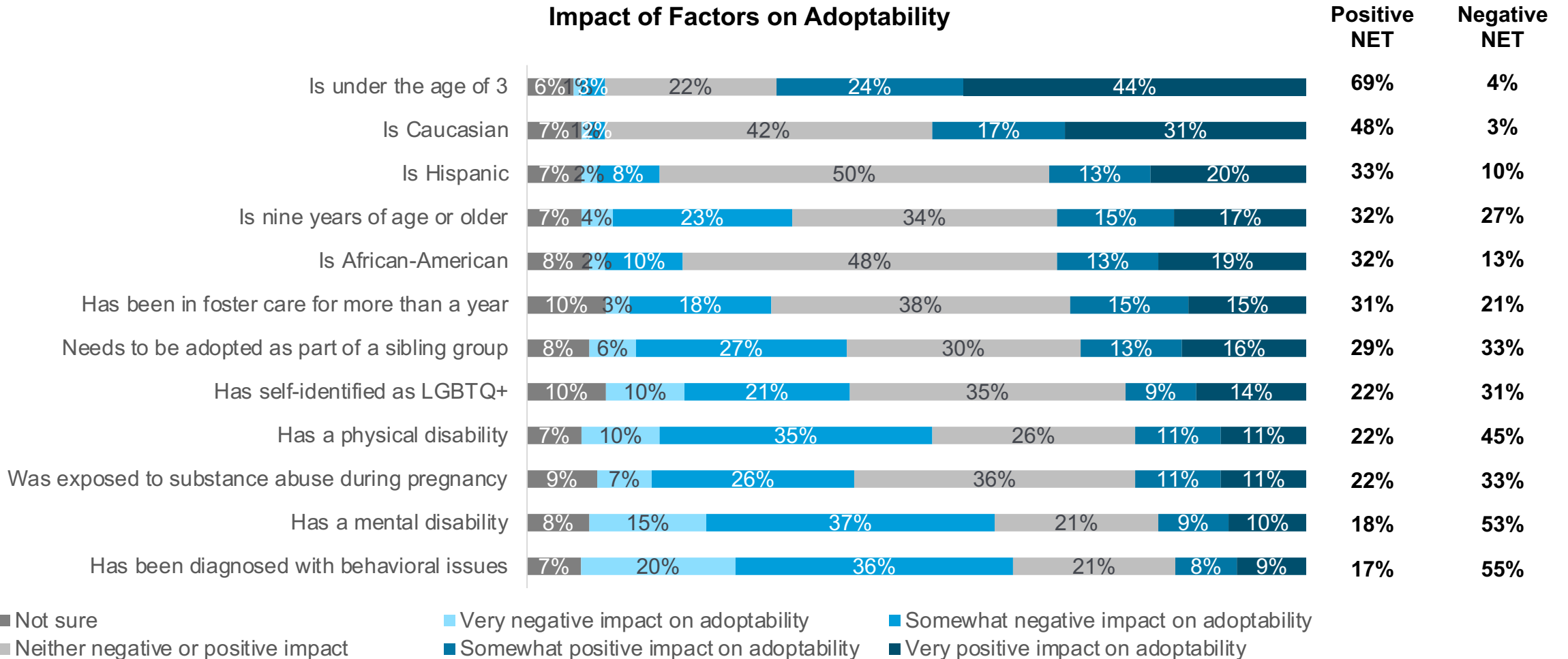
- Men: 22% (vs. 12% women)
- 65+ years old: 24% (vs. 16% 18-34, 12% 35-44, 15% 55-64) (15% 45-54)
- Black: 29% (vs. 15% White, 17% Hispanic)

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Being under 3 seen as the factor most likely to positively impact adoptability

Nearly half say being Caucasian positively impacts adoptability. Conversely, having a mental disability or behavioral issues are seen as having the most negative impacts.

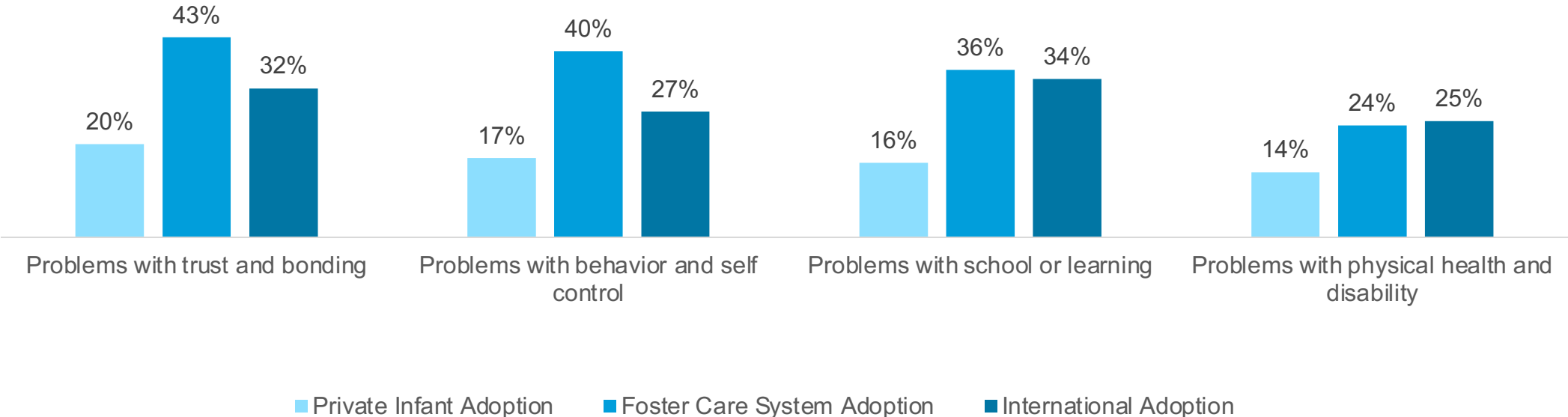




Children adopted through foster care seen as most likely to have problems

The top concern for private and foster care adoption is problems with trust and bonding; for international adoption it is problems with school or learning (though trust and bonding is a close second).

**Potential for Problems in Adopted Children
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)**



Adults perceive children adopted privately as more likely to have problems

Perceptions that children adopted privately are more likely to have problems with trust, behavior, school or health have significantly increased from 2017; perceptions about foster care and international adoption has remained stable.

**Potential for Problems in Adopted Children
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)**

	Private Infant Adoption				Foster Care System Adoption				International Adoption			
	2007	2012	2017	2021	2007	2012	2017	2021	2007	2012	2017	2021
Problems with trust and bonding	16%	12%	13%	20% ↑	64%	53%	45%	43%	35%	32%	29%	32%
Problems with behavior and self control	13%	10%	12%	17% ↑	59%	46%	40%	40%	25%	23%	23%	27%
Problems with school or learning	10%	7%	10%	16% ↑	49%	38%	33%	36%	35%	30%	32%	34%
Problems with physical health and disability	9%	6%	8%	14% ↑	34%	23%	22%	24%	32%	23%	23%	25%

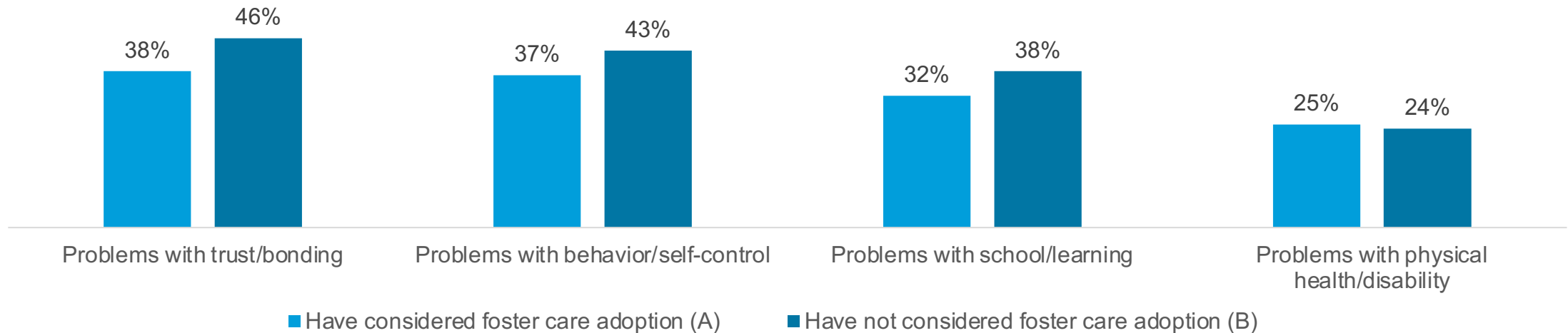
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Perceptions of problems with foster care children not impacting consideration

Those who say they have considered foster care adoption are just as likely as those who have not to view foster care children as being more likely than other children to have problems with trust, behavior, school, or physical health.

**Potential for Problems in Adopted Children
(% saying child is more likely to have issue)**





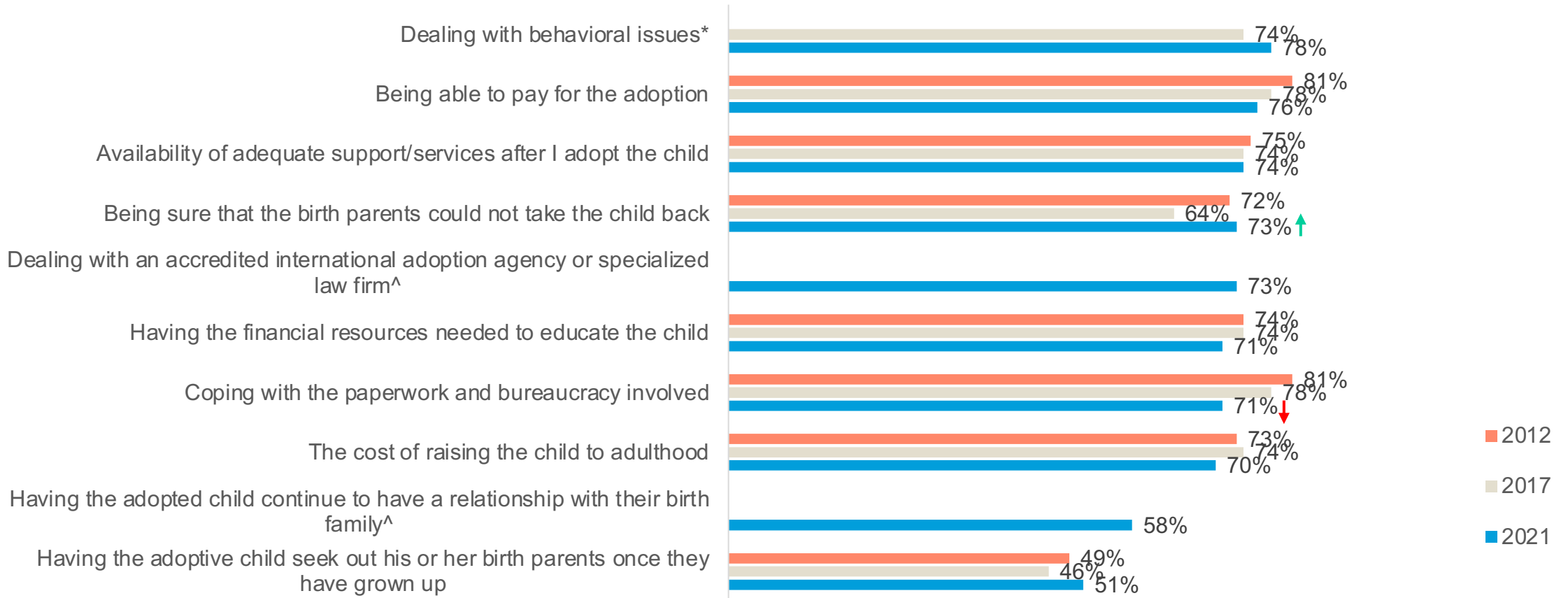
Perceived Obstacles to Adoption



Most prominent concern with international adoption is behavioral issues

Compared to 2017, adults are more likely to express concern about being sure the birth parents could not take the child back. Fewer adults are concerned about paperwork/bureaucracy involved in international adoption.

Concerns About International Adoption
(% saying major/minor concern)



[^]New in 2021

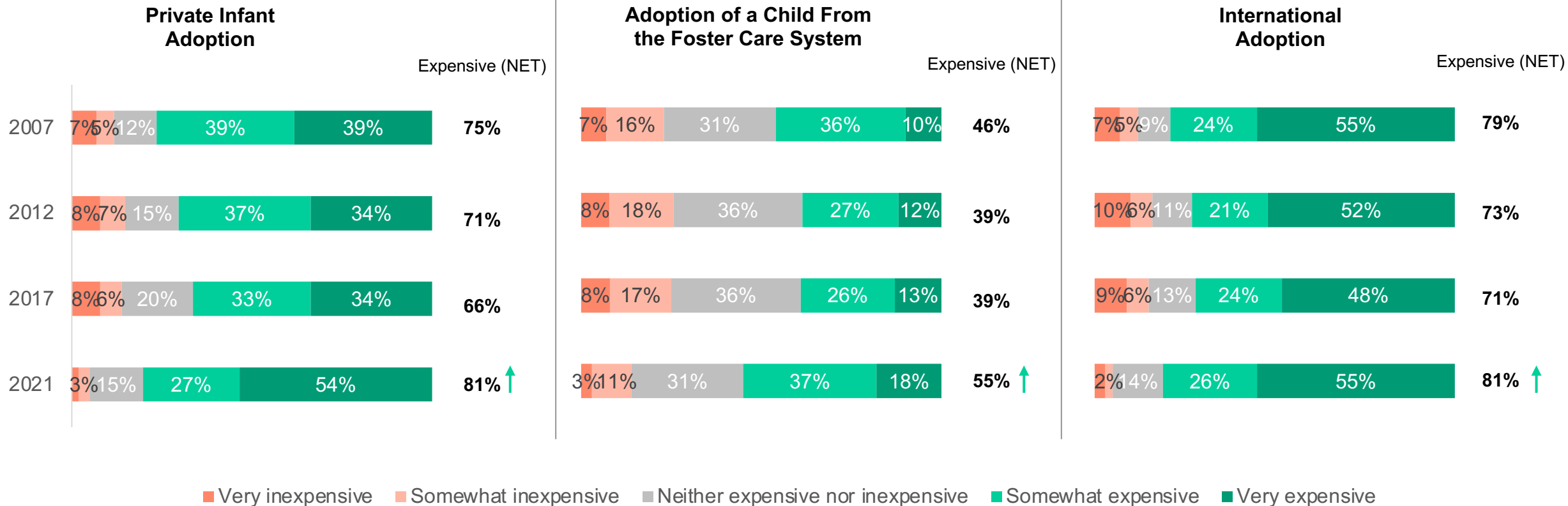
^{*}Not asked in 2012

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Compared to 2017, adults more apt to feel all types of adoption are expensive

By far, foster care adoption still viewed as the least expensive option.

Perceived Expense of Each Type of Adoption



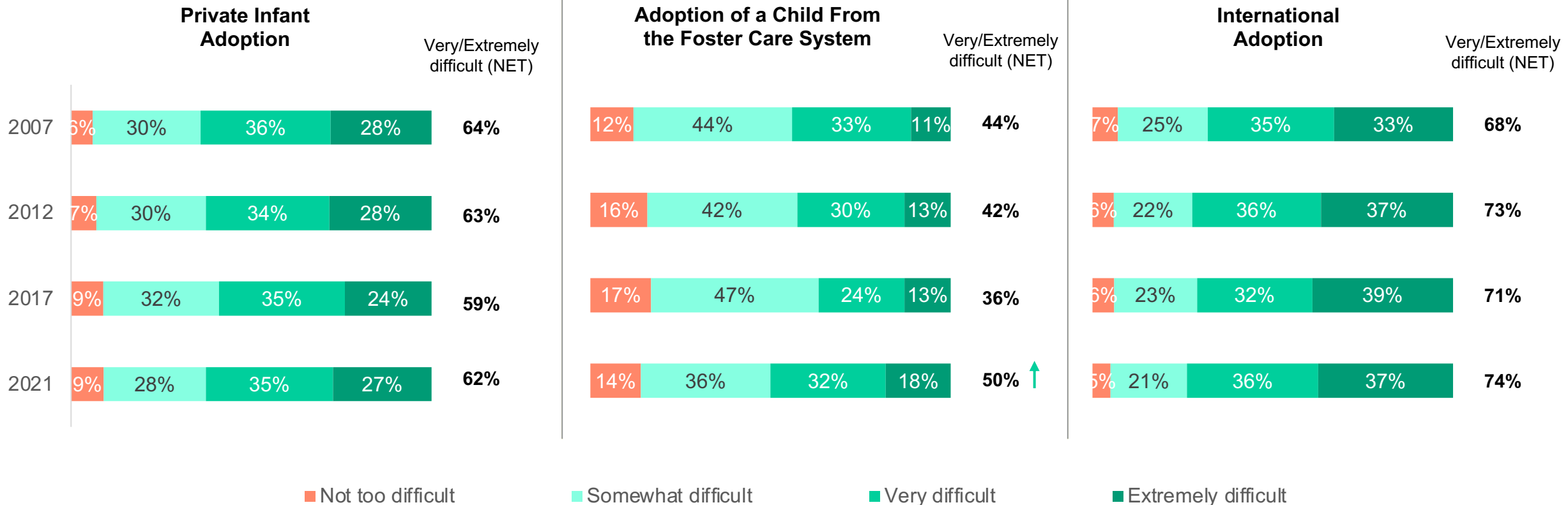
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes **79**

Increase in perceived level of difficulty for foster care adoption

This year, half of adults believe adoption of a child from the foster care system is very/extremely difficult, up significantly from 2017. Despite the increase, the perceived difficulty of foster care adoption is still lower than private or international adoption, which have remained stable from 2017.

Perceived Difficulty of Each Type of Adoption



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

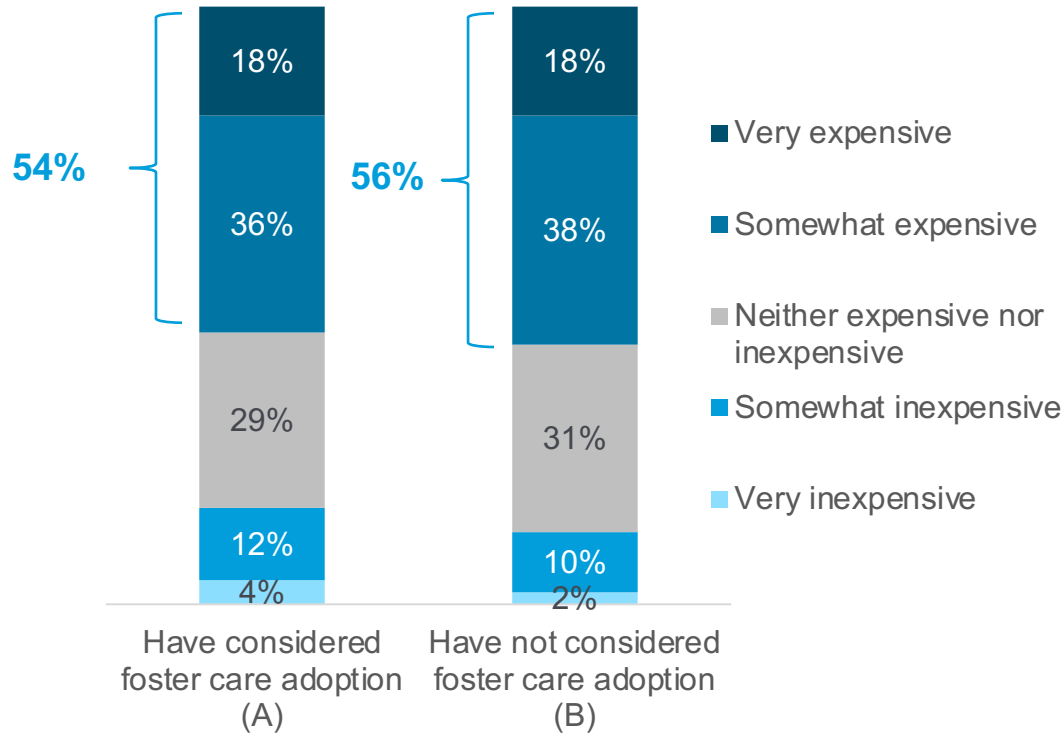
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



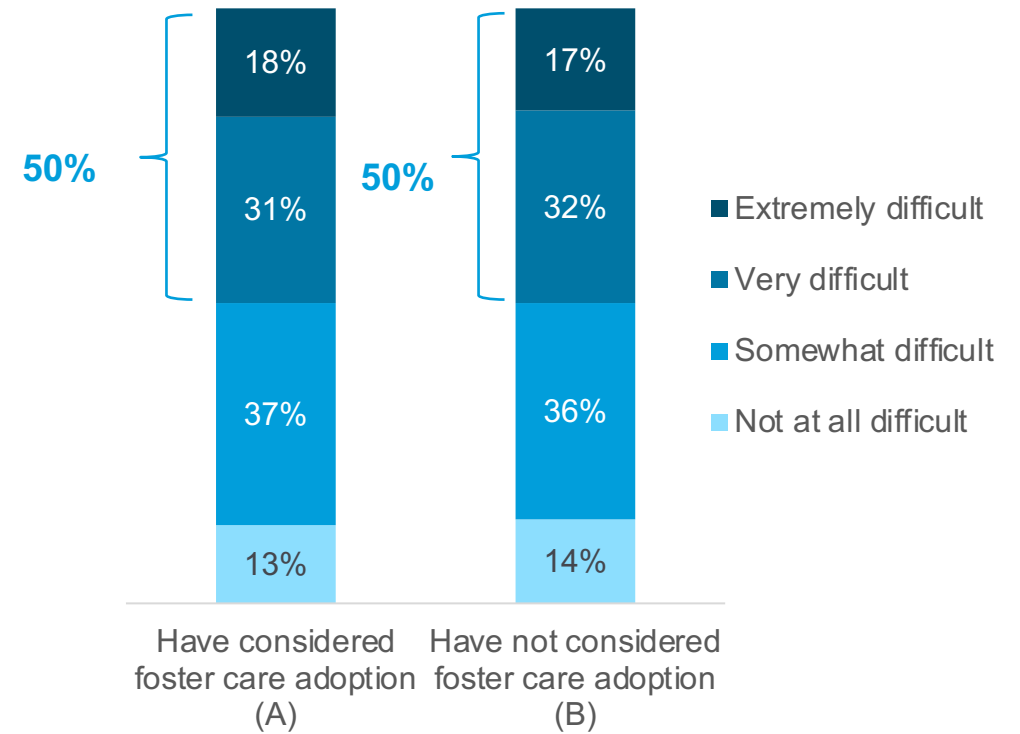
Perceptions of cost and difficulty similar regardless of consideration

Around half of adults, whether they are considering foster care adoption or not, perceive foster care adoption as expensive or difficult.

Perceived Expense of Foster Care Adoption
By Foster Care Adoption Consideration Status



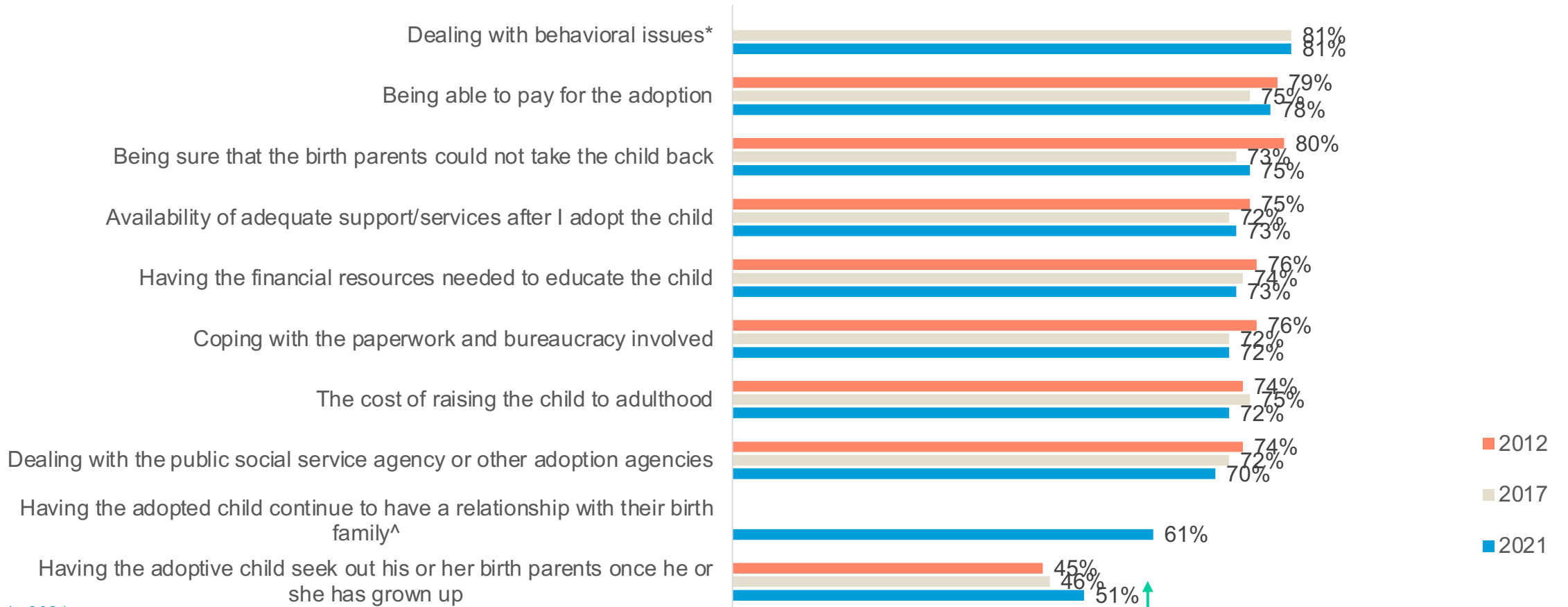
Perceived Difficulty of Foster Care Adoption
By Foster Care Adoption Consideration Status



Dealing with behavioral issues tops list of foster care adoption concerns

Compared with 2017, adults are now more likely to be concerned about having the adoptive child seek out his or her birth parents once he or she has grown up.

Concerns About Foster Care Adoption
(% saying major/minor concern)



^New in 2021
*Not asked in 2012

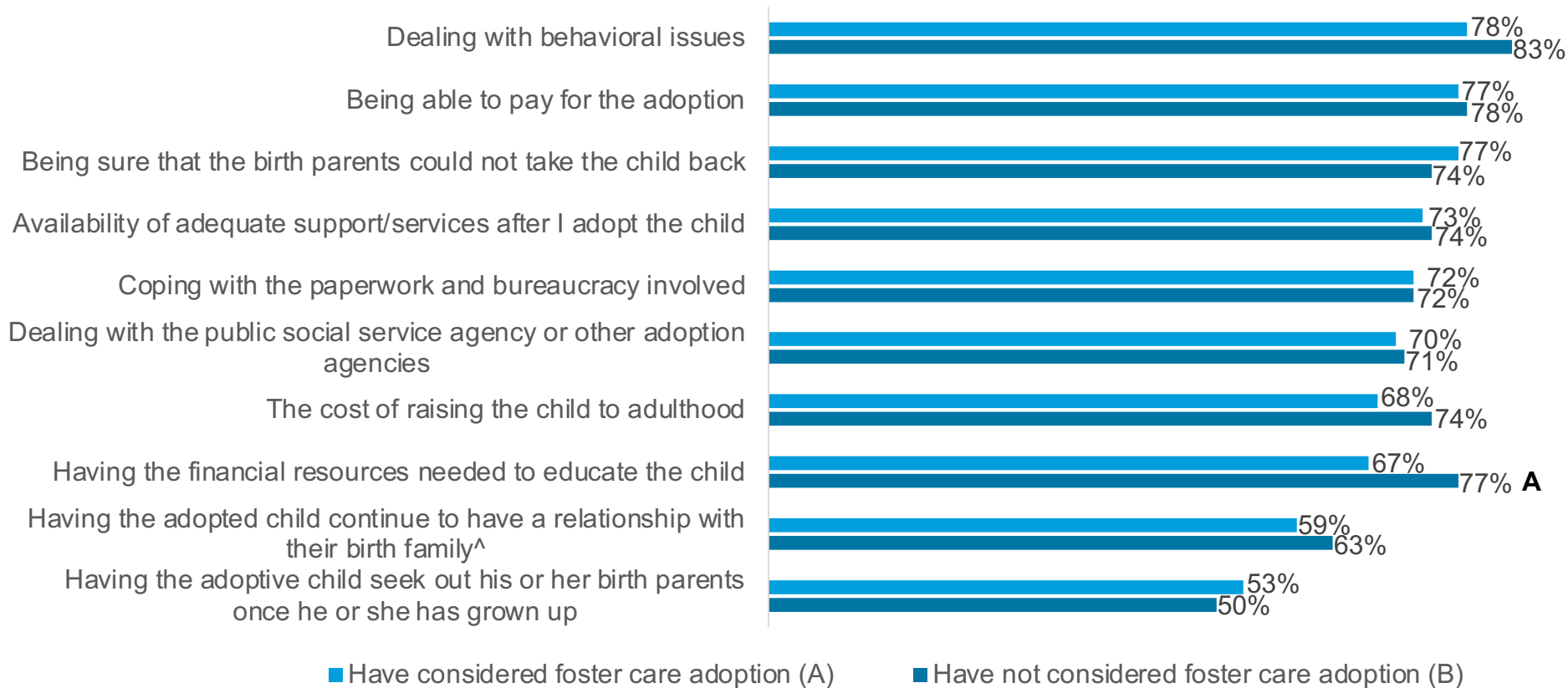
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Foster care considerers more likely to have educational financial concerns

Those who have considered adopting a child through foster care are significantly more likely than those who haven't to be concerned about having the financial resources needed to educate the child. However, for all other items of concern, there is no difference between considerers and non-considerers.

Concerns About Foster Care Adoption
 (% saying major/minor concern)
 By Adoption Consideration Status



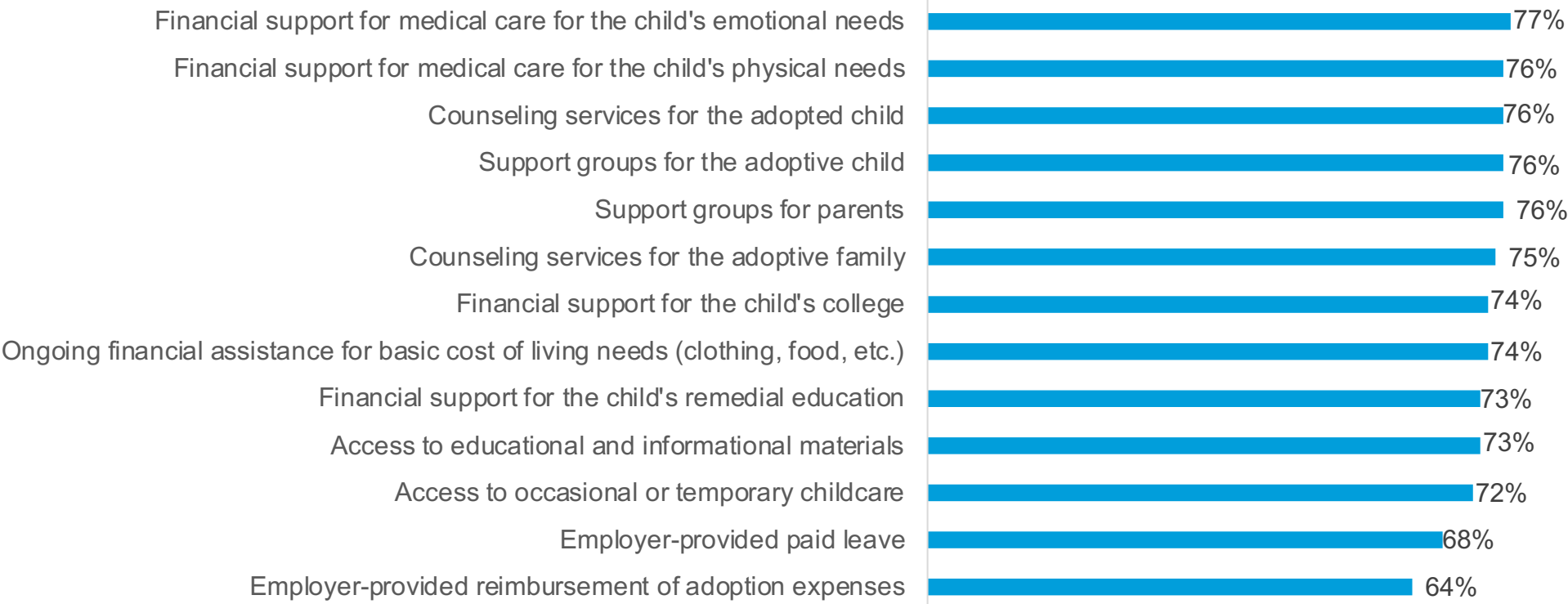
[^]New in 2021



Financial, emotional support make biggest difference in adoption decision

Those considering foster care adoption say having financial support for the child’s emotional and physical needs, as well as various emotional supports such as counseling services and support groups, would make a difference in their decision to pursue foster care adoption.

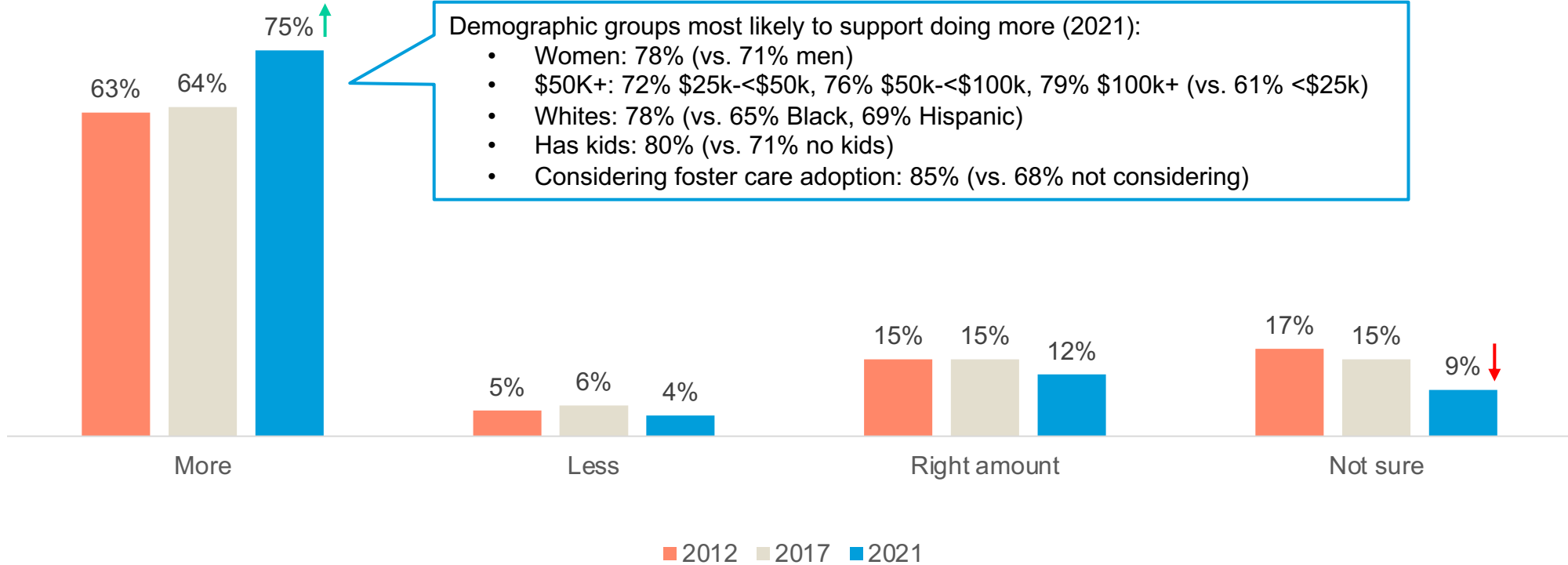
Potential Impact on Pursuit of Foster Care Adoption
(% saying major/minor difference)
Base: Has Considered Foster Care Adoption



3 in 4 feel society should do more to encourage foster care adoption

Compared to 2017, Americans are significantly more likely to say society should be doing more to encourage foster care adoption.

What Society Should Be Doing to Encourage Foster Care Adoption



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



Demographics



Demographic Profile



Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%



Age

18 – 24	11%
25 – 34	18%
35 – 44	17%
45 – 54	16%
55 – 64	17%
65 and over	22%
Mean	47.9



Region

Northeast	17%
Midwest	21%
South	38%
West	24%



Marital Status

Never married	29%
Married of civil union	46%
Divorced	10%
Separated	2%
Widow/Widower	5%
Living with partner	8%



Race

White	63%
Hispanic	17%
Black/African American	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%
All Other	3%



Employment

EMPLOYED (NET)	54%
Employed full time	39%
Employed part time	7%
Self-employed full time	5%
Self-employed part time	2%
Not employed, but looking for work	6%
Not employed and not looking for work	2%
Not employed, unable to work due to a disability or illness	6%
Retired	22%
Student	4%
Stay-at-home spouse or partner	7%



Children (under 18) in HH

Yes	35%
No	65%



Demographic Profile, Continued



Household Income

Less than \$15,000	7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	15%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	10%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	10%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	3%
\$250,000 or more	1%



Education

HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS (NET)	27%
Less than high school	2%
Completed some high school	4%
Completed high school	21%
ATTENDED COLLEGE OR COLLEGE DEGREE (NET)	57%
Some college, but no degree	22%
Associate Degree	13%
College (such as B.A., B.S.)	22%
ATTENDED GRAD SCHOOL OR GRADUATE DEGREE (NET)	14%
Some graduate school, but no degree	2%
Graduate degree (such as MBA, MS, M.D., Ph.D.)	12%
Job-specific training program(s) after high school	3%