

# 2022 Canada Adoption Attitudes Survey

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Dave Thomas  
Foundation  
*for Adoption*<sup>®</sup>

Forever Families for Children in Foster Care



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# 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 Canadians' 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 why do people do not adopt?
- What are the barriers to foster care adoption?
- What beliefs do people have about foster care adoption and how were those beliefs developed?
- 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 Canada Adoption Attitudes Survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of the Dave Thomas Foundation between November 1 and 18, 2021 among 1,012 adults aged 18+ who reside in Canada. The survey was offered in both English and French-Canadian. This is the third wave this study has been conducted:

|                  | 2021                  | 2017                  | 2012               |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Data collection  | November 1 - 18, 2021 | January 17 – 24, 2017 | July 12 – 18, 2012 |
| Total interviews | 1,012                 | 1,007                 | 1,049              |

- Data are weighted to be representative of the Canadian adult population by gender, age, region, race, education, and language. 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 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 PR and should be interpreted as directional only and stat testing is not shown. 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.   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 adoption – the adoption of an 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

- The percentage of Canadians who have adopted a child this year (5%) is up significantly from 1% in 2017 and 3% in 2012). In addition, this year nearly 1 in 3 Canadian adults (32%) say they have considered adoption, up significantly from just one-quarter (26%) in 2017 and the highest proportion of adults to be considering adoption since the inception of the study in 2012. Foster care adoption (73%, up significantly from 58% in 2017) and private adoption (67%) remain the most common types of adoption considered, with international adoption trailing at 50%. **[slides 14, 17]**
- While a majority who are considering each type of adoption say they are doing so seriously (79% foster care, 78% private, 70% international), only around 1 in 5 or fewer are *very seriously* considering it (22%, 12%, 18%, respectively). The proportion who are very seriously considering each type of adoption are in line with 2017 (13%, 8%, 10%), but the proportion who are somewhat seriously considering international adoption has increased from 38% in 2017 to 52% in 2021. **[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 (59%) and that teenagers are already set in their ways (57%). **[slides 23, 24]**
- Similarly, majorities prefer to adopt a child from foster care that are 5 years of age or younger (59%) and very few (3%) prefer a teen (13+). This tracks with a sentiment held by half of Canadians that a child in foster care is considered 'too old' by age 13 (27%) or 16 (24%), making it harder for them to be adopted. **[slides 34, 35]**
- Familiarity with and consideration of becoming a foster parent have both maintained their 2017 levels:
  - 11% extremely/very familiar with foster parent role in caring for abused/neglected children vs. 8% in 2017 **[slide 28]**
  - 31% considered/considering becoming a foster parent vs. 27% in 2017 **[slide 29]**



# Familiarity, Knowledge, and Opinions

- Familiarity with adoption has increased but remains low. Knowledge about the foster care system leaves much room for improvement:
  - Less than 1 in 5 Canadian adults are extremely/very familiar with adoption (15%, up from 9% in 2017) or foster care adoption (11%, up from 7% in 2017). **[slide 37]**
  - There is little consensus among Canadian adults regarding the number of children available for adoption from foster care or the average age of children available for adoption from foster care:
    - Around one-quarter each believe the number of children available for adoption from foster care is about 2,000 or 5,000 (26%), about 10,000 or 15,000 (30%), about 20,000 or 30,000 (25%), or over 30,000 (20%). The proportion who say 'over 30,000' has increased from 14% in 2017. **[slide 38]**
    - Around one-quarter each believe the average age of children available for adoption from foster care is between 3-5 (26%), 6-8 (29%), and 9-12 (32%), with Canadian adults on average estimating the mean age is 7.5 years old. **[slide 39]**
- Canadian adults estimate the average percent of children in foster care who identify as LGBTQ+ is 15%, with a strong majority (84%) thinking it is 25% or less of the total foster care population. **[slide 40]**
- While a majority of adults recognize many risk factors for youth who age out of the foster care system such as substance abuse (74%), homelessness (74%), and mental health problems (65%), they are much less aware that aging out of foster care puts youth at risk for chronic disease (23%). **[slide 41]**
- While most adults agree aging out of the foster care system is a large societal issue (81%) and that there should be greater efforts to reduce the number of youth who age out (92%), more than 2 in 5 (42%) say there are more pressing societal matters. In fact, one-quarter (25%) feel children not adopted by the time they are adults will be fine on their own. **[slide 42]**





# Familiarity, Knowledge, and Opinions, Continued

- Aligning with a lack of deep familiarity and understanding of adoption, opinions are mildly though not strongly favorable. Two in 5 adults (40%) have an extremely/very favorable opinion about foster care adoption, 32% private adoption, and 29% have an extremely/very favorable opinion about international adoption. When it comes to the foster care system itself, fewer have a favorable opinion (27%). Despite all of this, nearly 3 in 4 Canadian adults (74%) say society should be doing more to encourage foster care adoption, up from 65% in 2017. **[slides 45, 50, 79]**
- A majority of adults approve of parents adopting a child of the same race (66%), though this has declined from 74% in 2017. Just over half (56%) approve of parents adopting a child of a different race (also down from 63% in 2017), with most adults saying if they were to adopt a child of a different race (82%) or culture (83%) they would try to keep them connected to their race/culture of origin. Only around half of Canadian adults (54%) approve of parents in a same sex relationship adopting a child. **[slides 52, 26]**
- Dealing with behavioral issues and paying for the adoption remain among the most common concerns for both international (82%, 81%) and foster care adoption (84%, 76%). In fact, adults now are more likely to say they 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 72, 73, 76]**
  - 79% private adoption, up from 71% in 2017
  - 87% international adoption, up from 76% in 2017
  - 47% foster care adoption, up from 30% in 2017
- Perceptions of the difficulty in completing the steps for adopting a child from foster care have remained consistent from 2017, with foster care still being perceived to be the least difficult to complete (% very/extremely difficult): **[slide 74]**
  - 79% international adoption, in line with 77% in 2017
  - 58% private adoption, in line with 60% in 2017
  - 45% foster care adoption, in line with 46% in 2017



# Detailed Findings

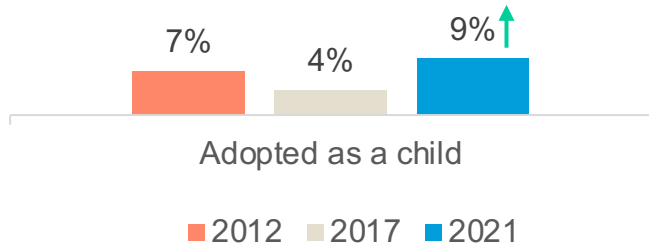


# Experience with Adoption

# Less than 1 in 10 Canadian adults are adopted

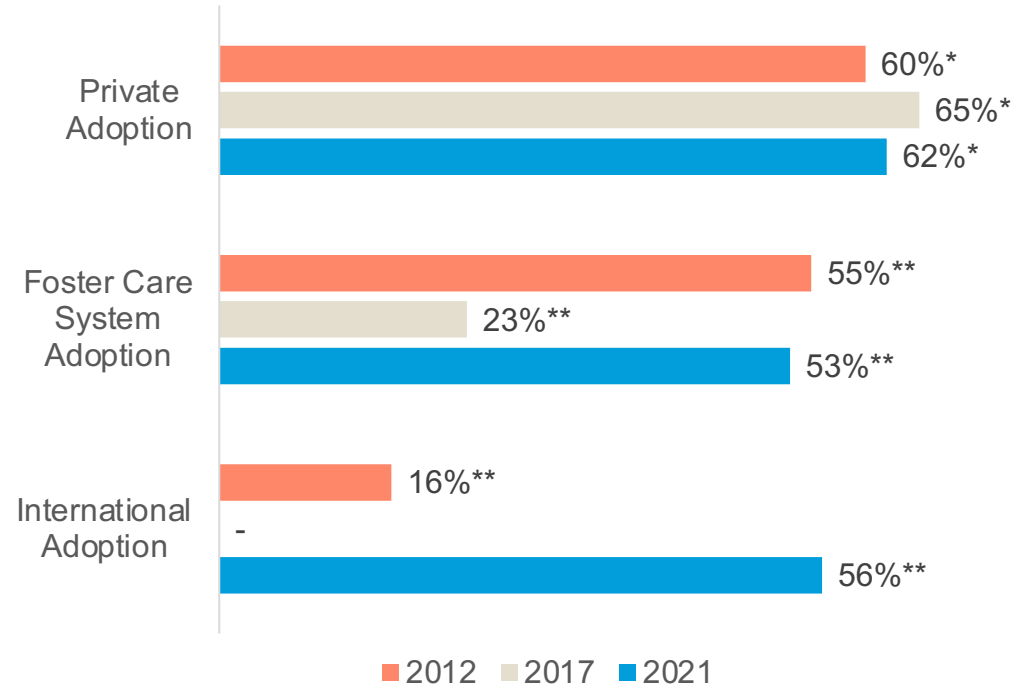
Up significantly from 2017 and more in line with 2012, just under 1 in 10 Canadian adults report they were adopted as a child.

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



**Type of Adoption  
(% yes)**

Base: Adopted as a child

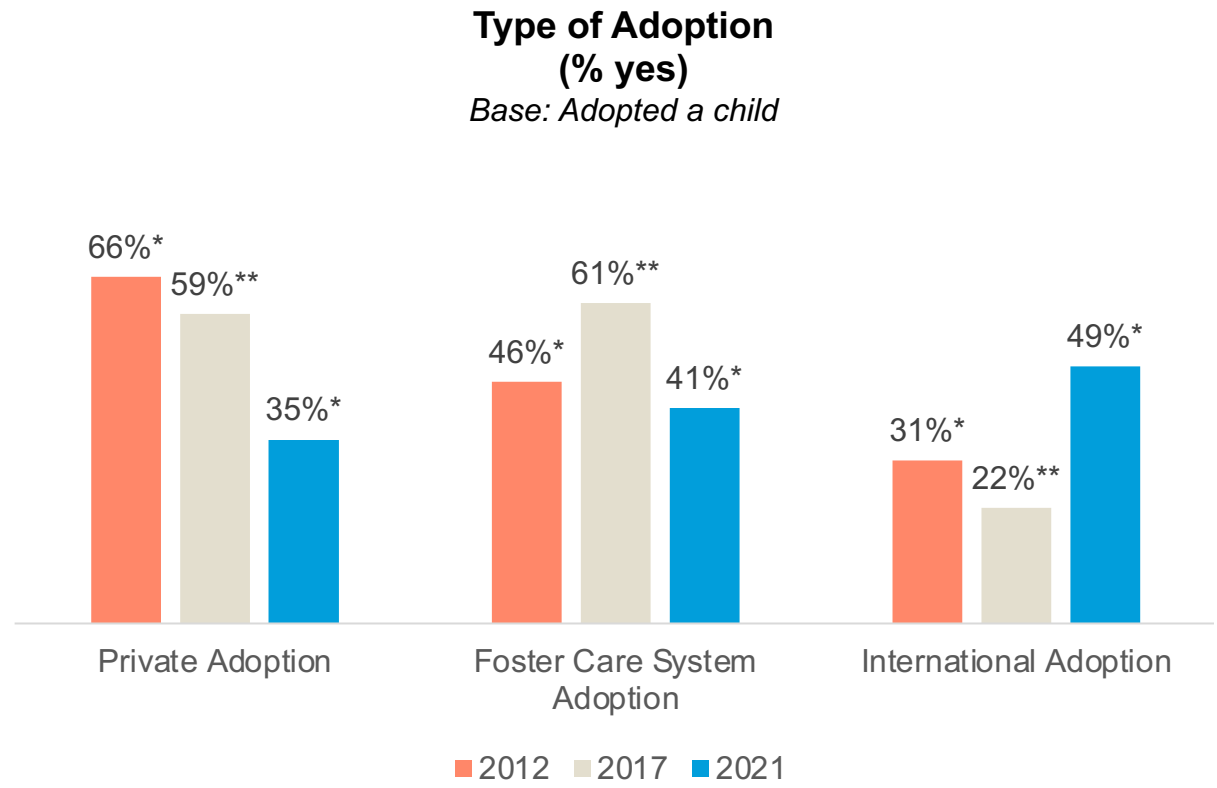
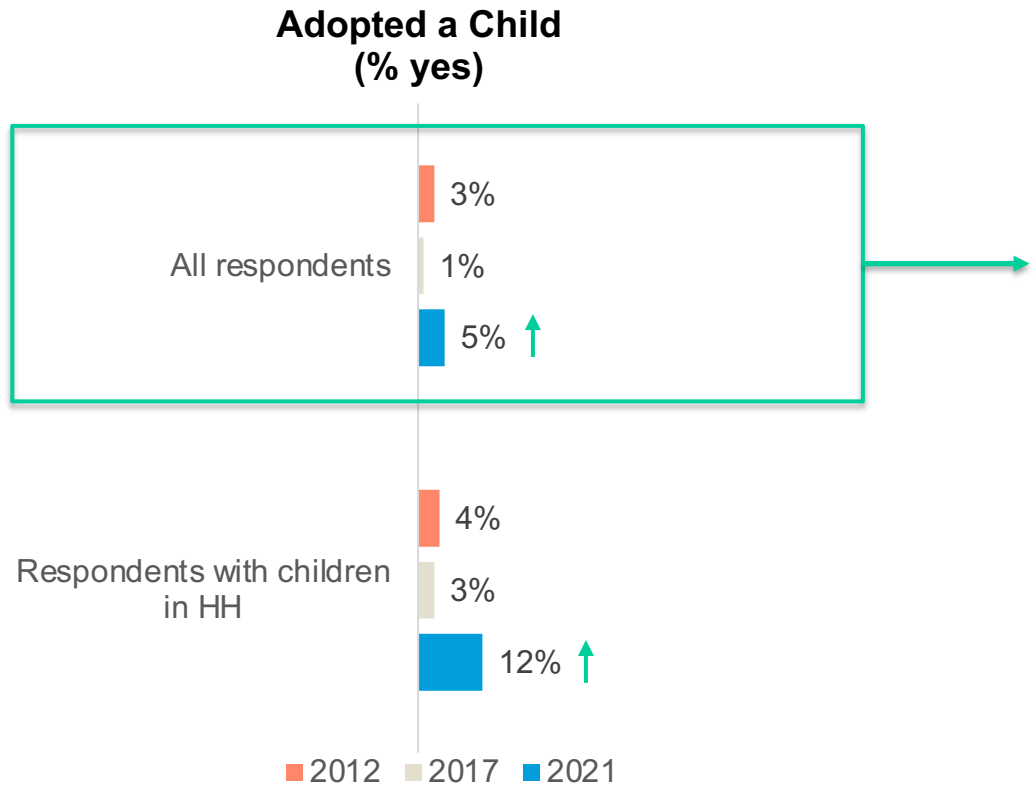


\*Caution: small base (n<100). Results should be interpreted as directional only.

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

# Adoption remains low, but up from 2017

In line with previous years, very few adults say they have adopted a child.



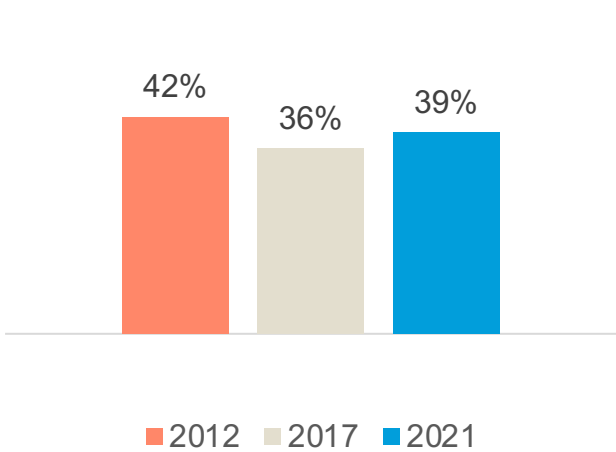
\*Caution: small base (n<100). Results should be interpreted as directional only.  
 \*\*Caution: very small bases (n<30). Results should be interpreted as qualitative in nature



# Similar to prior waves, about 2 in 5 have friends/family that were adopted

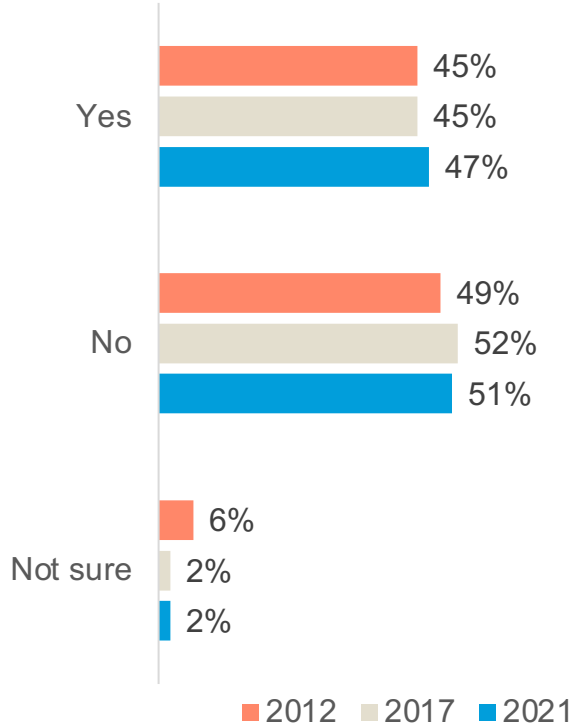
Also in line with prior waves, just under half who know someone who has been adopted were adopted through foster care.

### Family or Friends Adopted (% yes)



### Family or Friends Adopted from Foster Care System

Base: Adults who know someone who has been adopted





# Adoption Consideration & Preferences

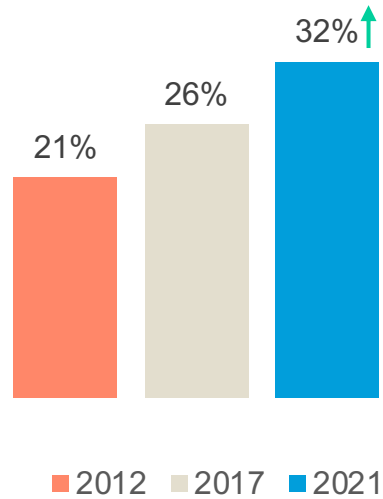


# Adults who haven't adopted more likely to say they've considered it this year

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

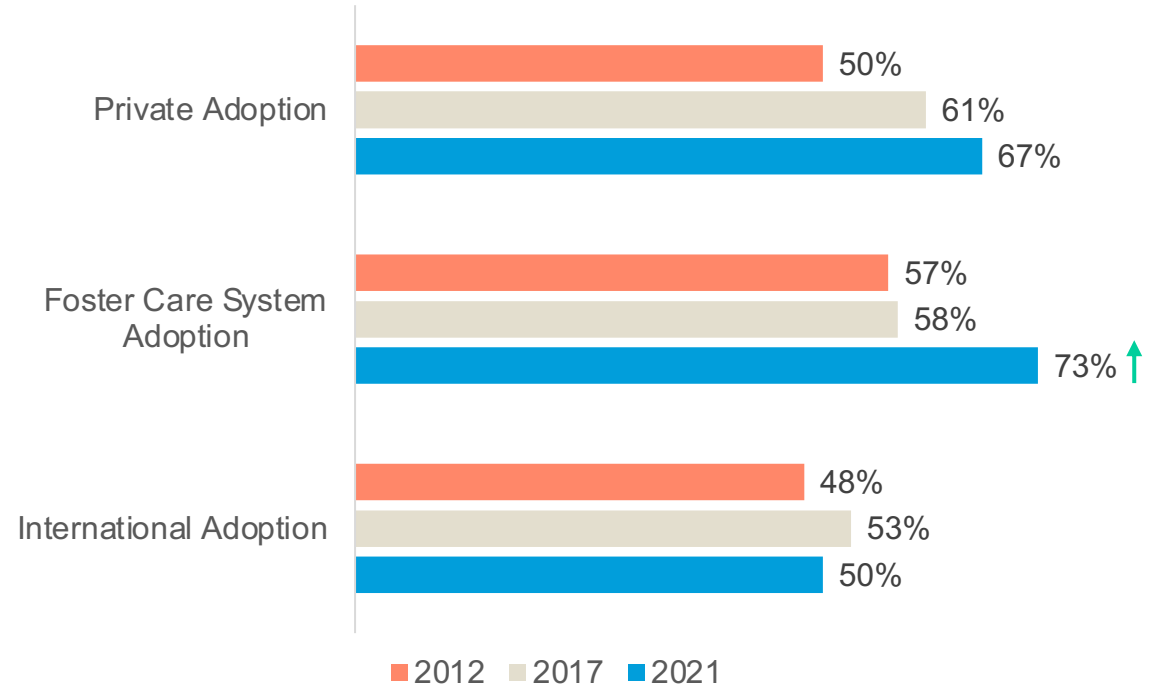
## Ever Considered Adoption (% yes)

Base: Haven't adopted/refused to answer



## Type of Adoption Considered (% yes)

Base: Considering or have considered adopting a child



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017





# There are distinct demographics more likely to consider adoption

Adults who have considered adoption are more likely to be younger, Non-White, are not divorced/separated/widowed, 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: 60%  
 35-44: 36%  
 45-54: 32%  
 55-64: 20%  
 65+: 7%



### A MINORITY

White: 28%  
 Non-White: 42%



### NEVER MARRIED/LIVING WITH SOMEONE/ MARRIED

Singe/Never married: 35%  
 Married: 33%  
 Living with Someone: 39%  
 Divorced/Separated/Widowed: 19%



### KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN ADOPTED

Family/Friend Adopted: 41%  
 Family/Friend Not Adopted: 25%



### ALREADY HAVE CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Kids in HH: 52%  
 No kids in HH: 25%



### HAVE A FAVORABLE OPINION OF ADOPTION

Extremely/Very Favorable: 39%  
 Somewhat/Not Favorable: 16%



# 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

|                                 | 2012 | 2017 | 2021  |
|---------------------------------|------|------|-------|
| Male                            | 18%  | 24%  | 31% ↑ |
| Female                          | 23%  | 28%  | 33% ↑ |
| 18-34                           | 36%  | 42%  | 60% ↑ |
| 35-44                           | 24%  | 31%  | 36% ↑ |
| 45-54                           | 19%  | 24%  | 32% ↑ |
| 55-64                           | 12%  | 18%  | 20%   |
| 65+                             | 9%   | 12%  | 7% ↓  |
| High School or Less             | 12%  | 18%  | 24% ↑ |
| Some College/Associate's Degree | 23%  | 30%  | 35% ↑ |
| College Grad                    | 29%  | 28%  | 32%   |
| Post Grad                       | 36%  | 23%  | 38% ↑ |

|                            | 2012 | 2017 | 2021  |
|----------------------------|------|------|-------|
| Less than \$25K            | 21%  | 20%  | 24% ↑ |
| \$25K - <\$50K             | 19%  | 27%  | 22% ↓ |
| \$50K - <\$100K            | 21%  | 27%  | 39% ↑ |
| \$100K+                    | 23%  | 29%  | 38% ↑ |
| White                      | 18%  | 22%  | 28% ↑ |
| Non-White                  | 34%  | 37%  | 42% ↑ |
| Single/Never married       | 20%  | 29%  | 35% ↑ |
| Married                    | 20%  | 27%  | 33% ↑ |
| Living with Partner        | 20%  | 29%  | 39% ↑ |
| Divorced/Separated/Widowed | 23%  | 16%  | 19%   |

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

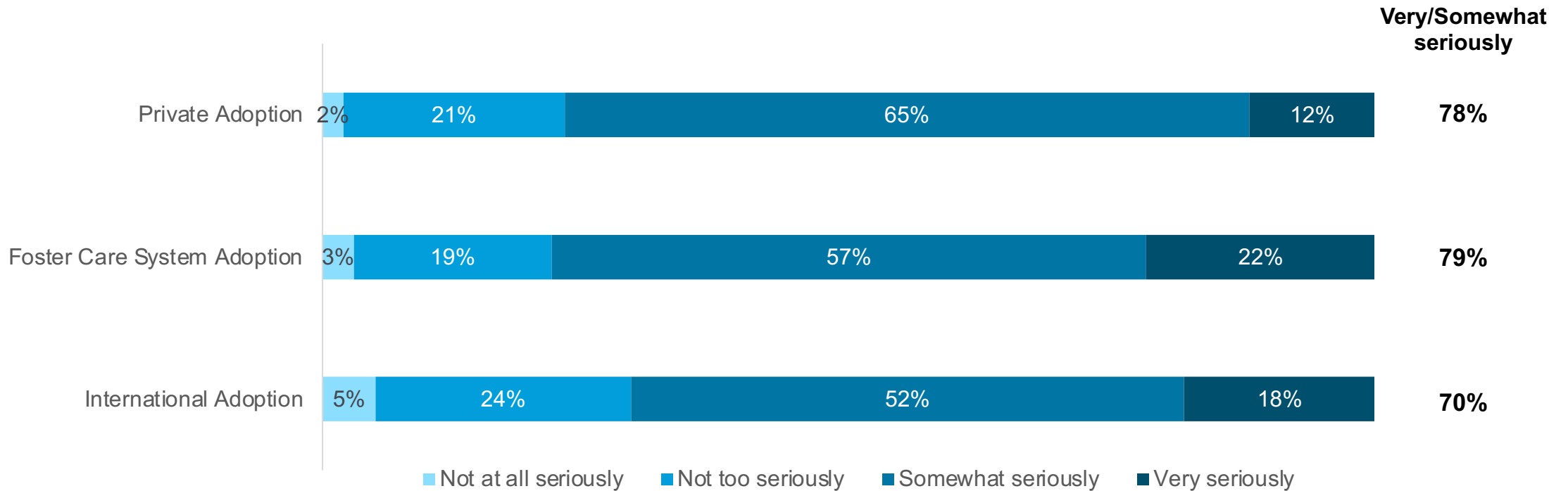


# Majorities who are considering each adoption type are doing so seriously

Around 8 in 10 of those considering foster care or private adoption say they are either somewhat or very serious about it, while 7 in 10 considering international adoption indicate the same level of seriousness.

## Seriousness of Consideration for Each Type of Adoption

Base: Considered private/foster care/international adoption





# Seriousness of consideration remains mostly flat

Compared to 2017, those considering international adoption are more likely to say they are *somewhat* seriously considering it; otherwise, seriousness remains stable.

## Trended Seriousness of Consideration for Each Type of Adoption

Base: Considered private/foster care/international adoption

|                      | Private Adoption |      |            | Foster Care System Adoption |      |            | International Adoption |      |              |
|----------------------|------------------|------|------------|-----------------------------|------|------------|------------------------|------|--------------|
|                      | 2012             | 2017 | 2021       | 2012                        | 2017 | 2021       | 2012                   | 2017 | 2021         |
| Very seriously       | 14%              | 8%   | <b>12%</b> | 15%                         | 13%  | <b>22%</b> | 10%                    | 10%  | <b>18%</b>   |
| Somewhat seriously   | 39%              | 56%  | <b>65%</b> | 40%                         | 53%  | <b>57%</b> | 33%                    | 38%  | <b>52%</b> ↑ |
| Not too seriously    | 37%              | 31%  | <b>21%</b> | 36%                         | 30%  | <b>19%</b> | 41%                    | 41%  | <b>24%</b>   |
| Not at all seriously | 9%               | 5%   | <b>2%</b>  | 10%                         | 3%   | <b>3%</b>  | 15%                    | 12%  | <b>5%</b>    |

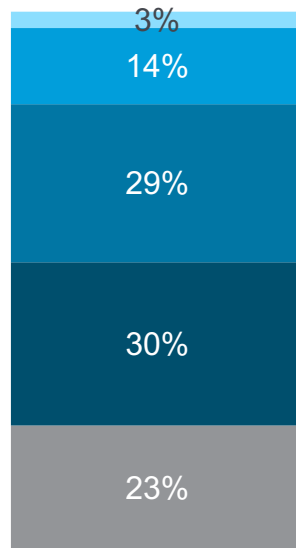
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



# 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.

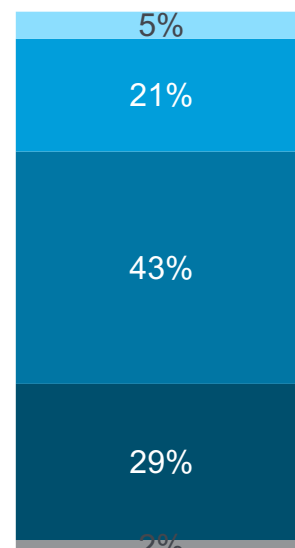
**Age Preference When Adopting**



All respondents

**Youngest Acceptable Age Range**

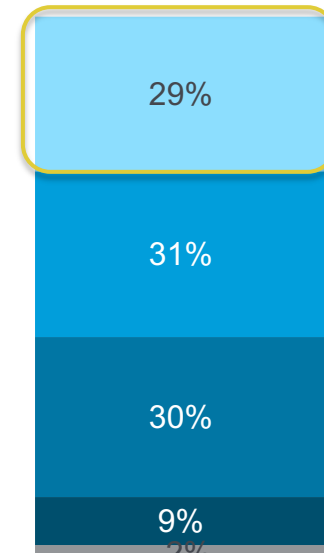
*Base: Prefers child at least 2*



Prefer a child at least two years old

**Oldest Acceptable Age Range**

*Base: Prefers child 12 or younger*



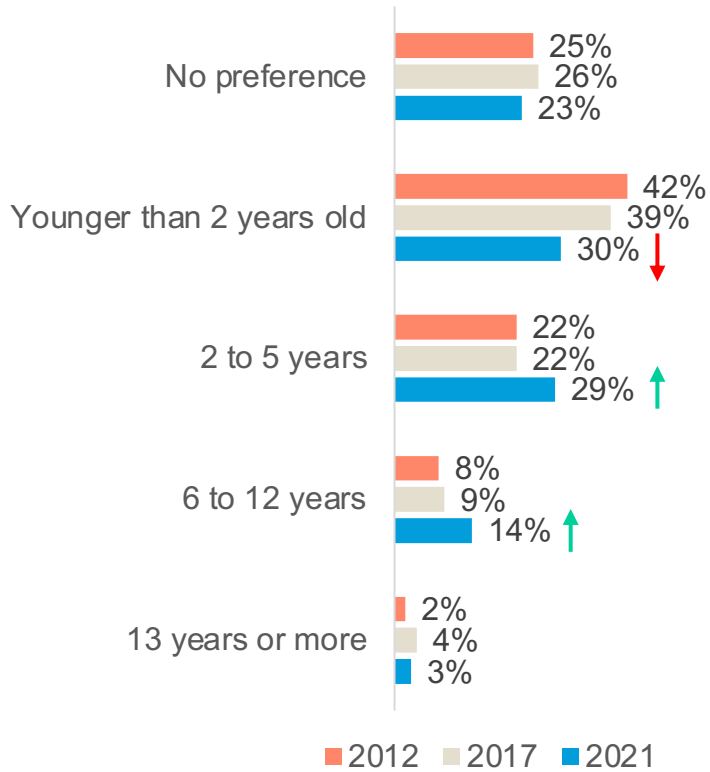
Prefer a child twelve years old or younger

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

# Increase in preference for slightly older, non-teen children

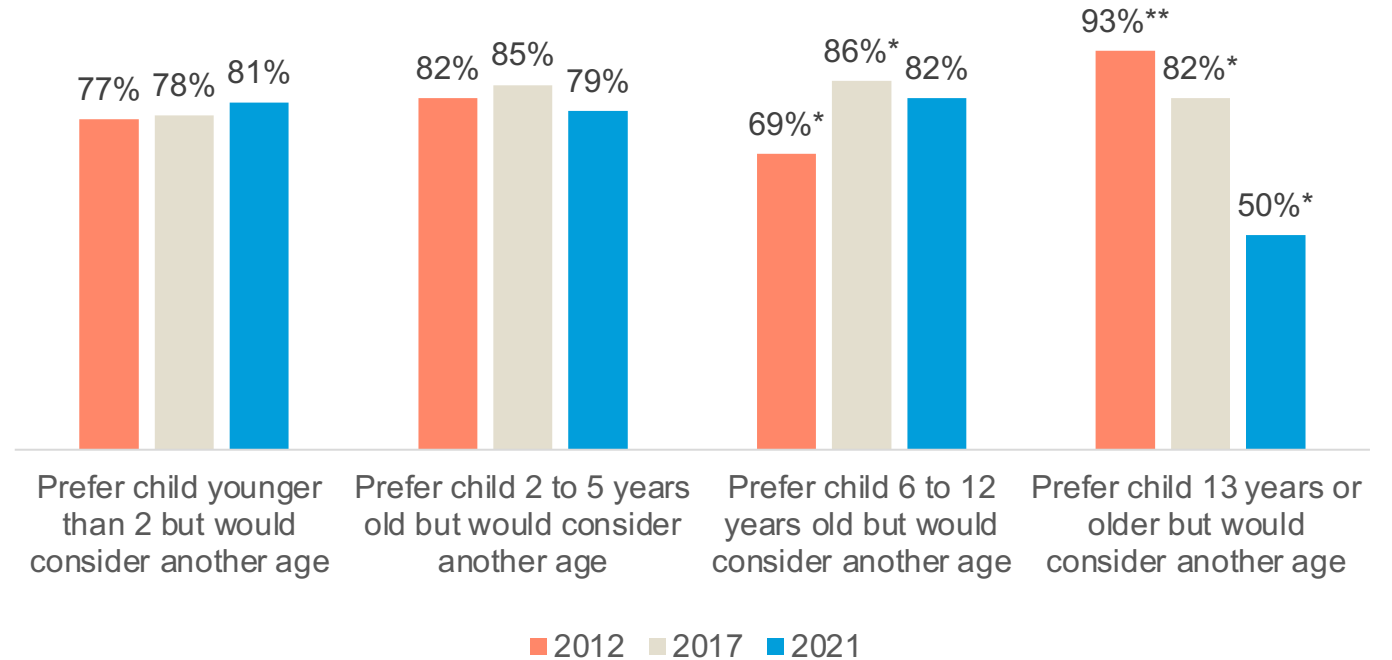
An increase in the proportion who prefer a child 2 to 5 and a decrease in the proportion who prefer a child under 2 (historically the most preferred age) now make the two nearly equivalent. In addition, the proportion who prefer a child 6 to 12 has increased from 2017. Willingness to adopt a child outside of a preferred age range remains high among most age preferences.

**Age Preference When Adopting**



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

Base: Preferred age range



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

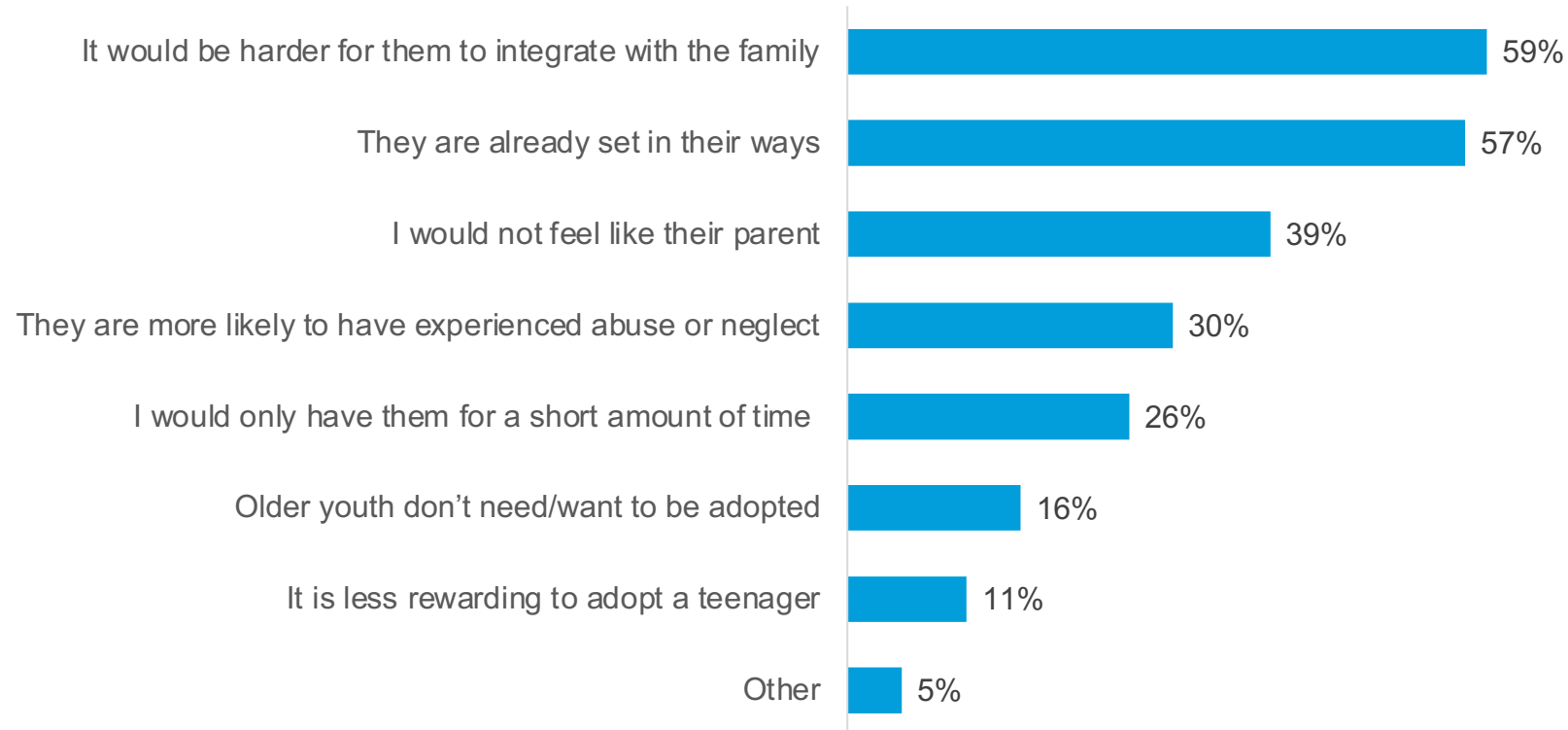


# Primary reason for not considering teen adoption is family integration

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

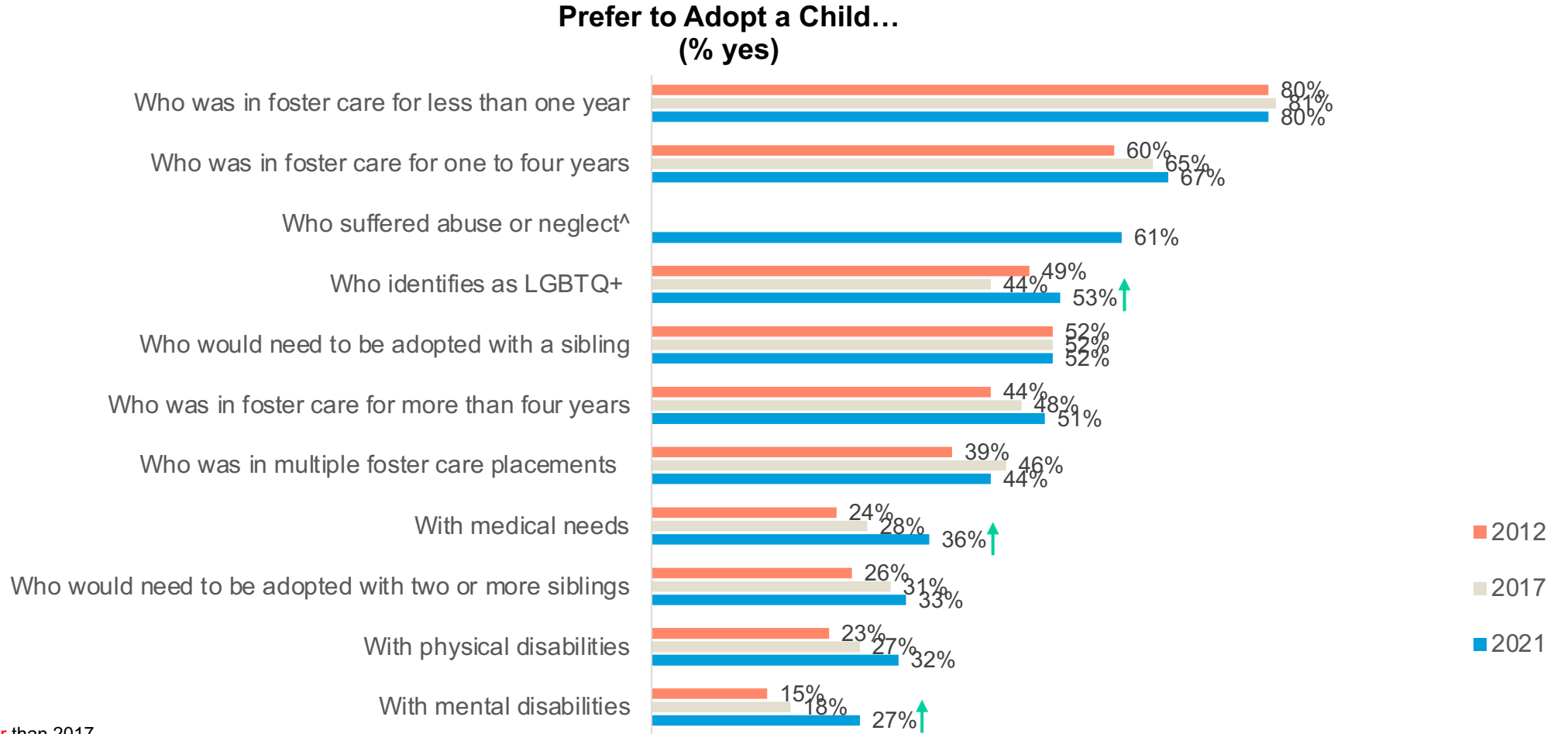
## Reasons Would Not Consider Adopting a Teenager

Base: Would not consider adopting a teenager



# Increase in preference for children with a few specific needs

Compared to 2017, in 2021 adults are more likely to say they would prefer to adopt a child who identifies as LGBTQ+ or who have medical needs or mental disabilities.



↑ Significantly higher than 2017  
↓ Significantly lower than 2017

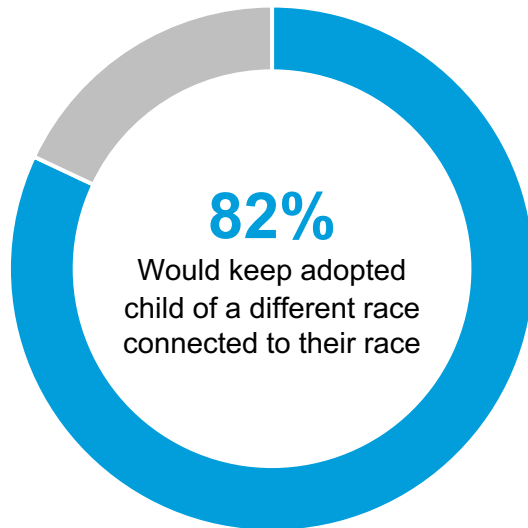




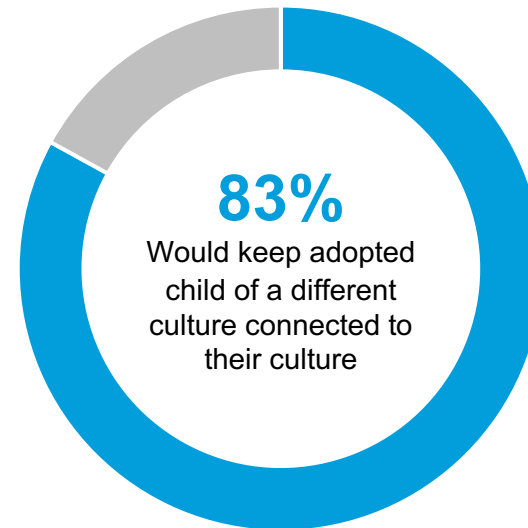
# Over 8 in 10 adults would keep an adopted child connected to race or culture

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**





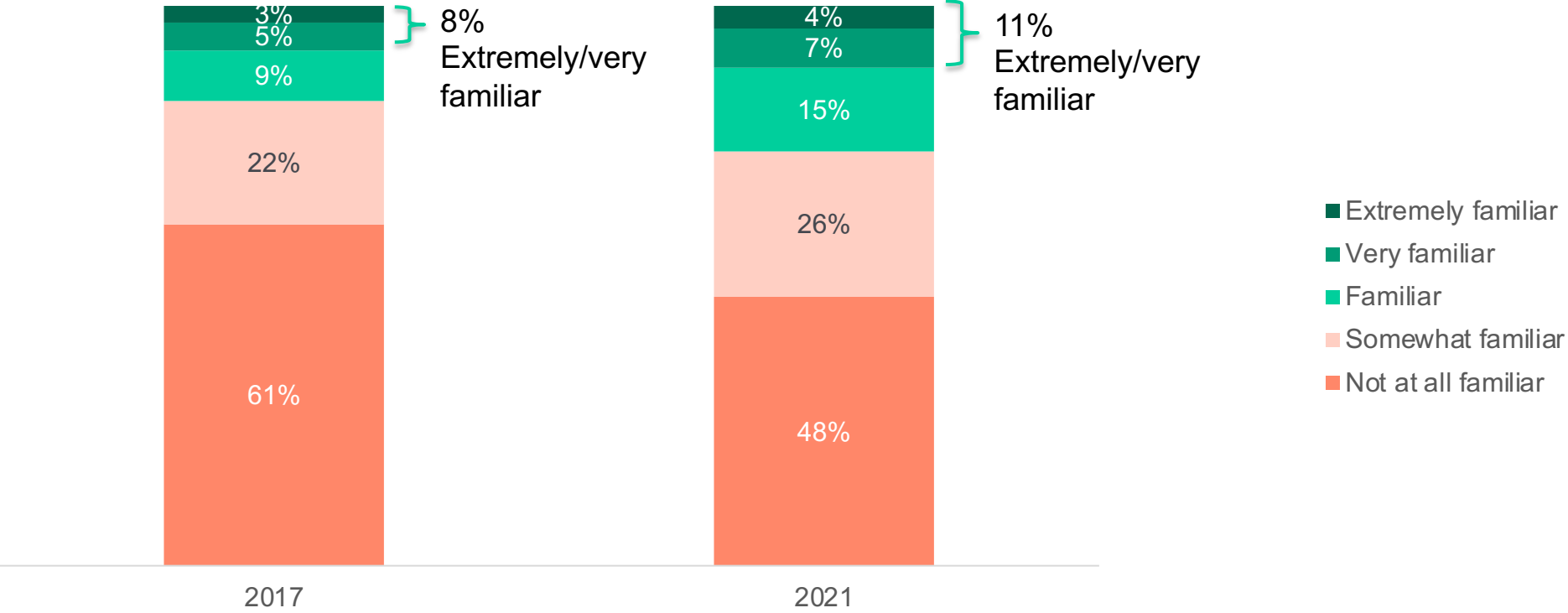
# Specific Foster Care Considerations



# Very low familiarity with foster parent role in caring for abused children

Similar to 2017, only around 1 in 10 Canadian adults say they are very/extremely familiar with what foster parents do to care for children who have been abused or neglected. Around half are not at all familiar.

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

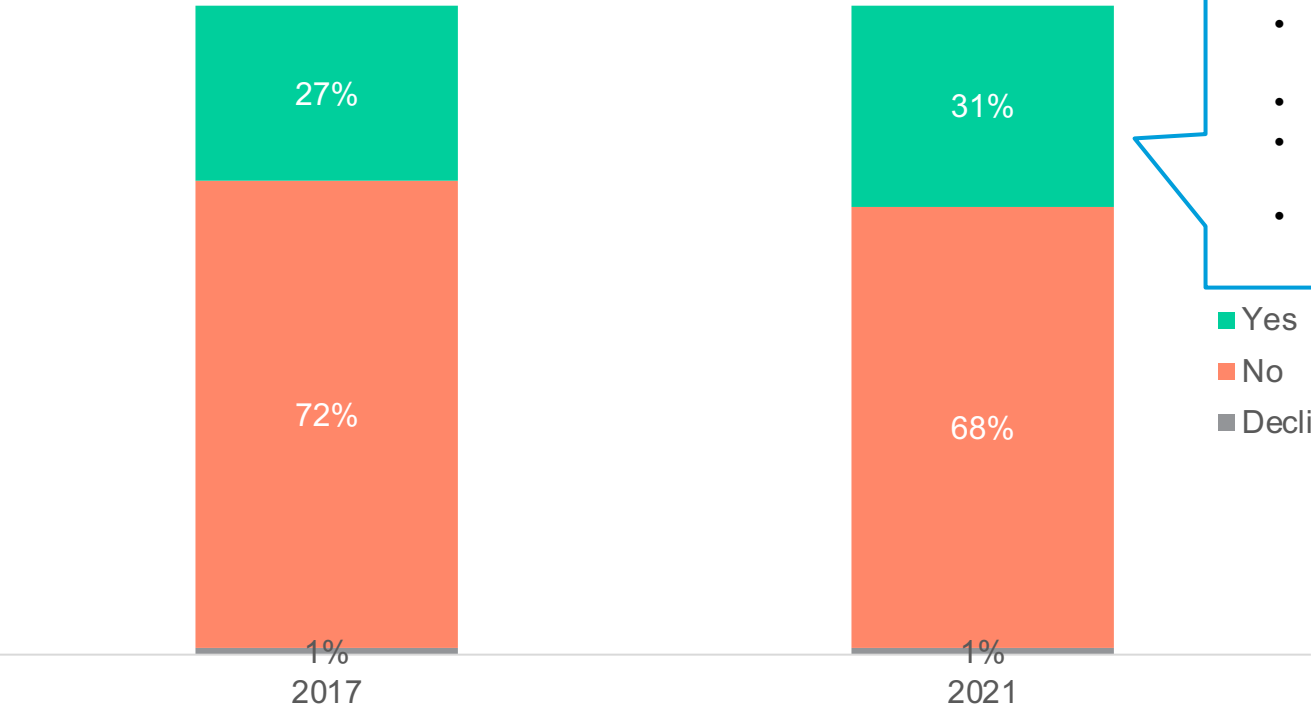


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# Nearly 3 in 10 Canadians have considered becoming a foster parent

Foster parent consideration is in line with 2017.

### Foster Parent Consideration



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

- Younger: 18-34: 44% (vs. 31% 35-44, 25% 55-64, 22% 65+)
- Has kids in household: 49% (vs. 25% no kids)
- Considering adoption: 62% (vs. 14% not considering)
- Considering foster care adoption: 71% (vs. 16% not considering)

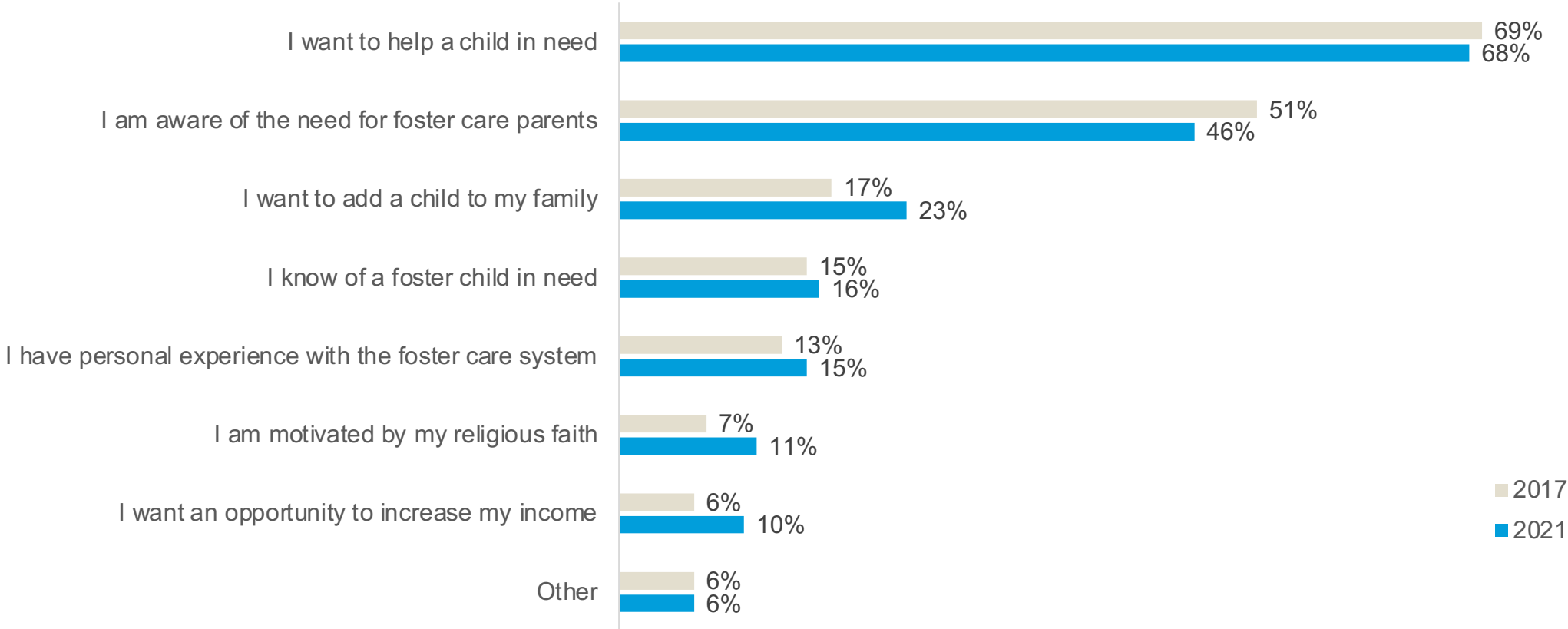
■ Yes  
■ No  
■ Decline to answer

# 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 around half are aware of the need for foster parents.

## Reasons for Considering Becoming a Foster Parent

Base: Considered becoming a foster parent



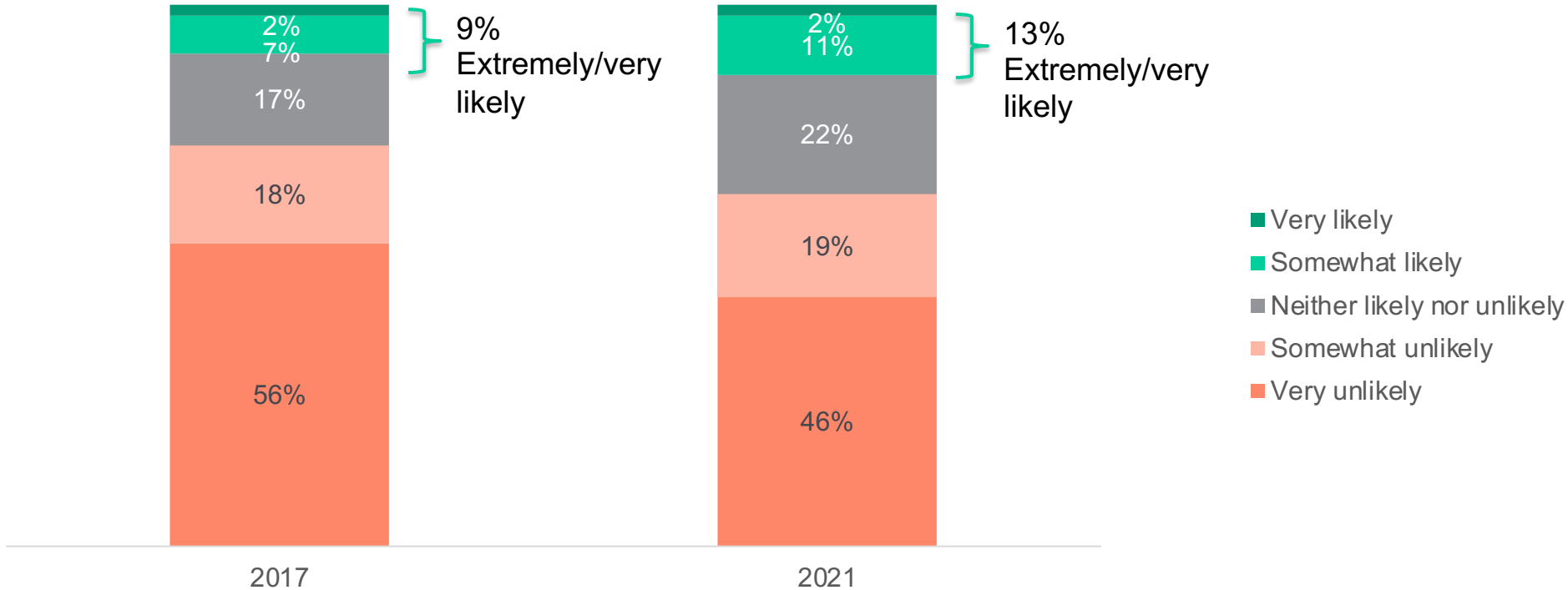


# Similar to 2017, guaranteed resources have little effect on likelihood to foster

Among those not currently considering it, certainty of adequate resources makes only around 1 in 10 likely to become a foster parent.

## Likelihood of Considering Foster Parent with Proper Resources

Base: Has not considered becoming a foster parent

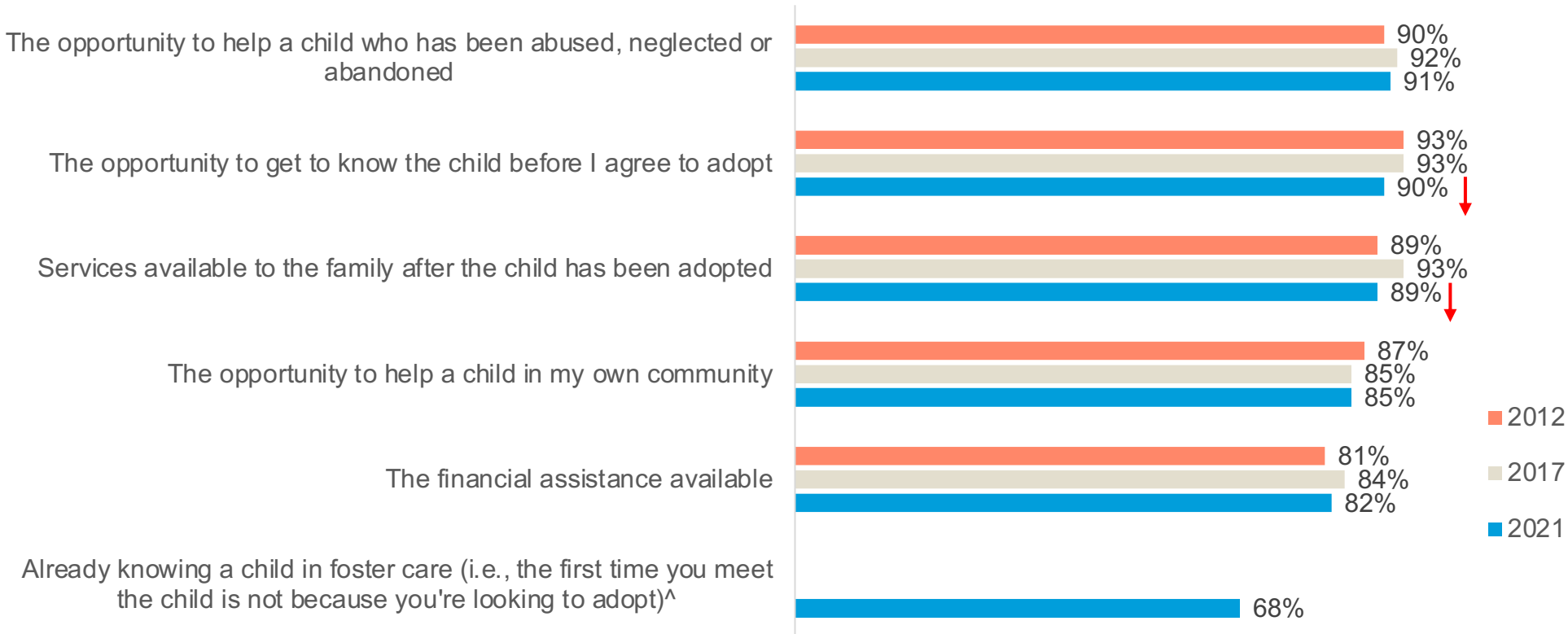


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# 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 of having the opportunity to get to know the child before they agree to adopt and having services available after adoption have declined from 2017. Already knowing a child in foster care is important for nearly 7 in 10, notably, still high but lower than the other factors.

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



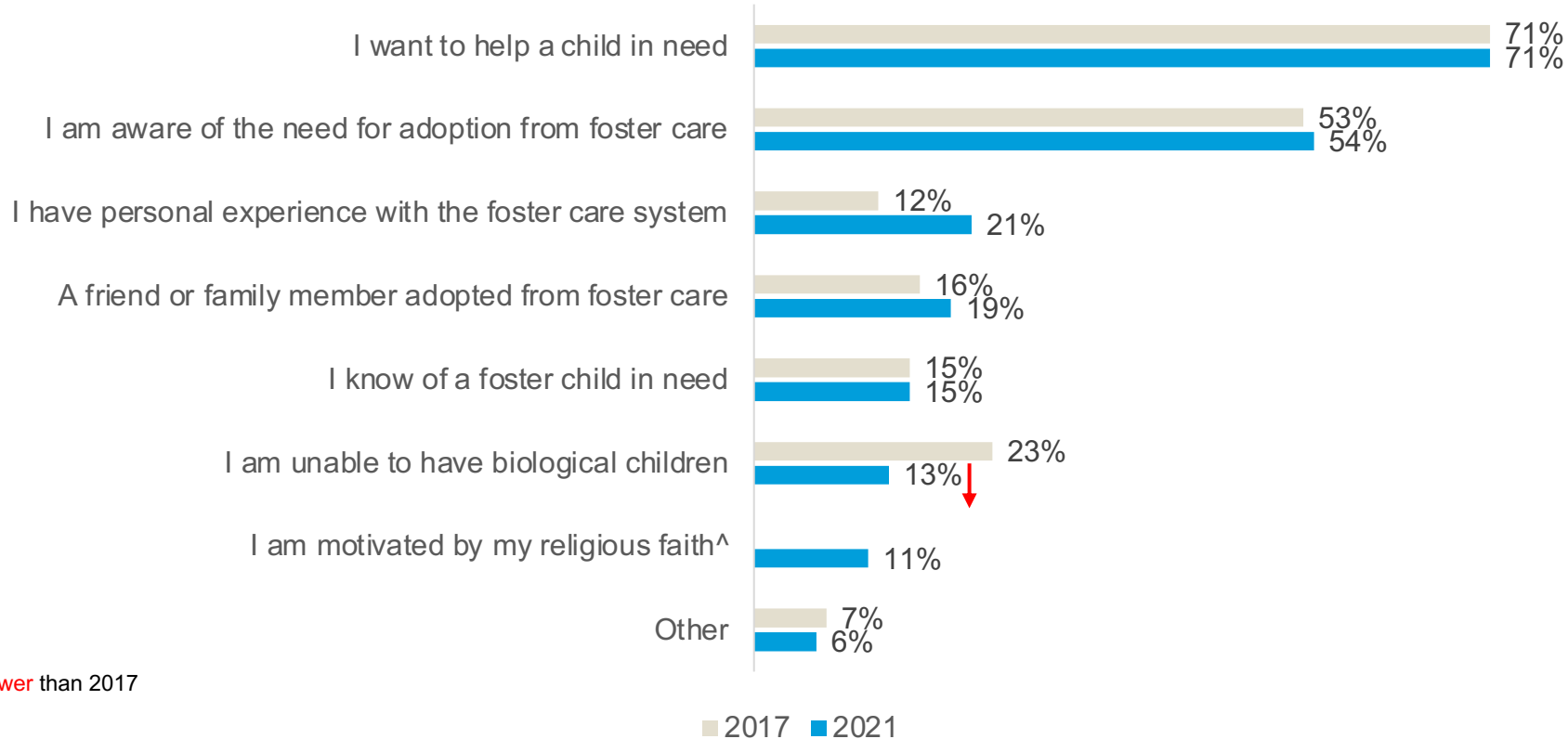
<sup>^</sup>New in 2021



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

7 in 10 potential foster care adopters say they would adopt from foster care to help a child in need, in line with 2017. Many also say it would be due to their awareness of the need for adoption from foster care. The proportion who say it is because they are unable to have biological children of their own has declined.

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



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

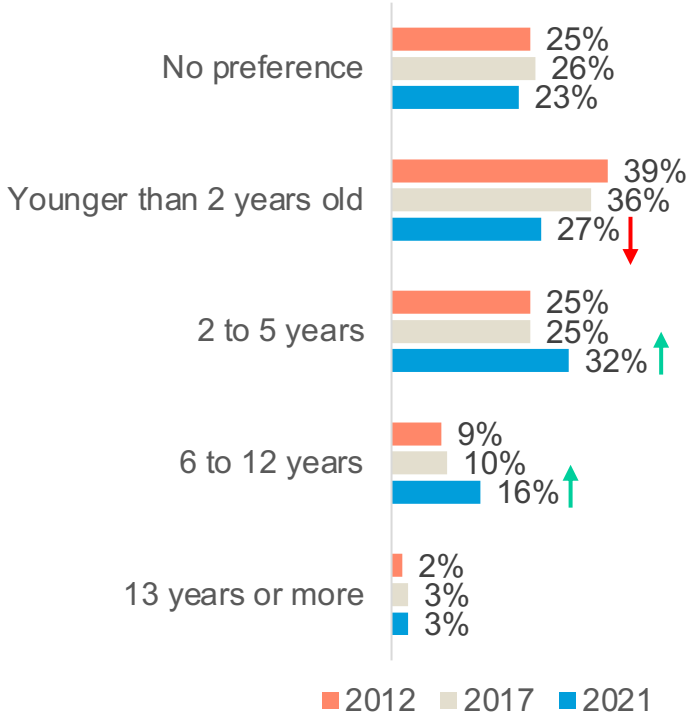
<sup>^</sup>New in 2021



# Increase in preference for foster care adoption of slightly older, non-teen children

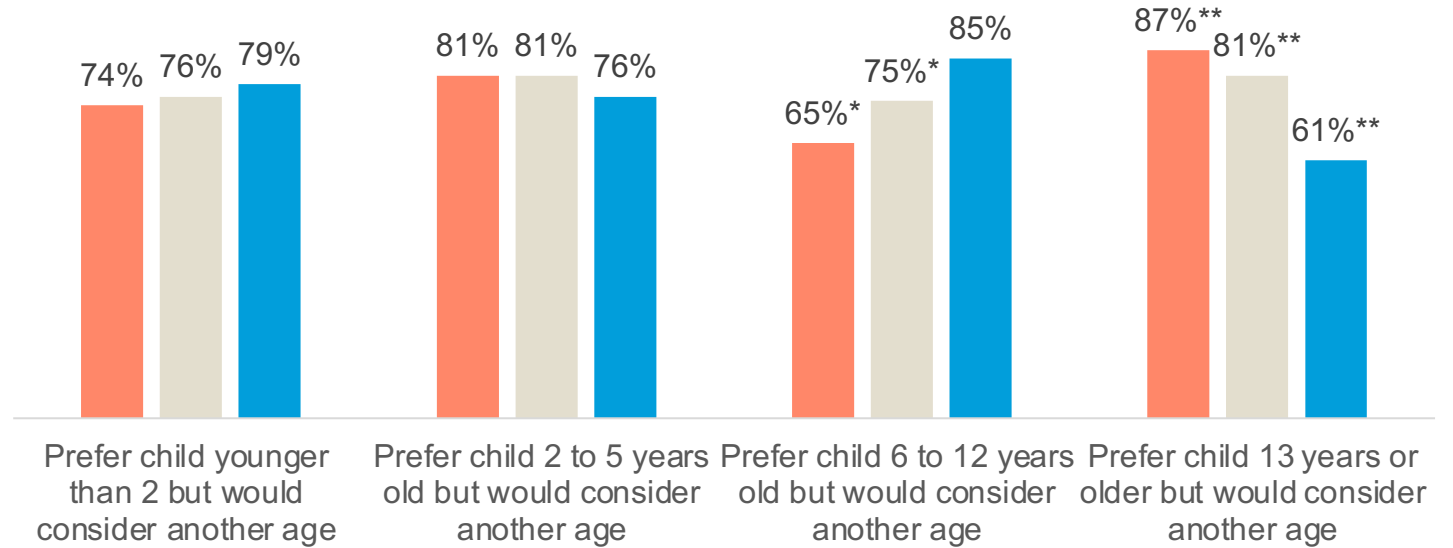
Similar to the patterns in general adoption preferences, an increase in the proportion who prefer to adopt from foster care a child 2 to 5 and a decrease in the proportion who prefer a child under 2 (historically the most preferred age) now make the two nearly equivalent. In addition, the proportion who prefer a child 6 to 12 has increased from 2017. Willingness to adopt a child outside of a preferred age range remains high among most 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.

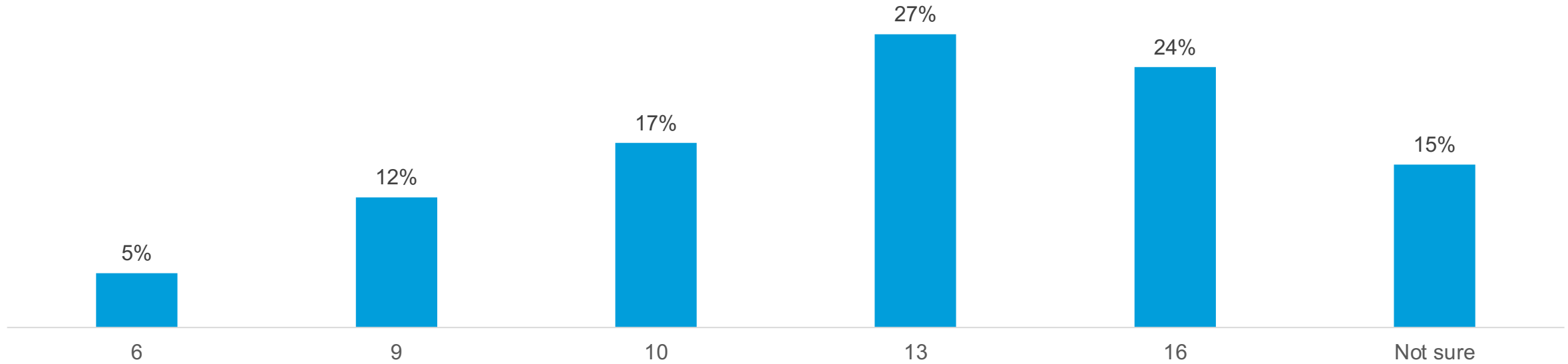
\*\*Caution: very small bases (n<30). Results should be interpreted as qualitative in nature.



# Half of Canadians 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

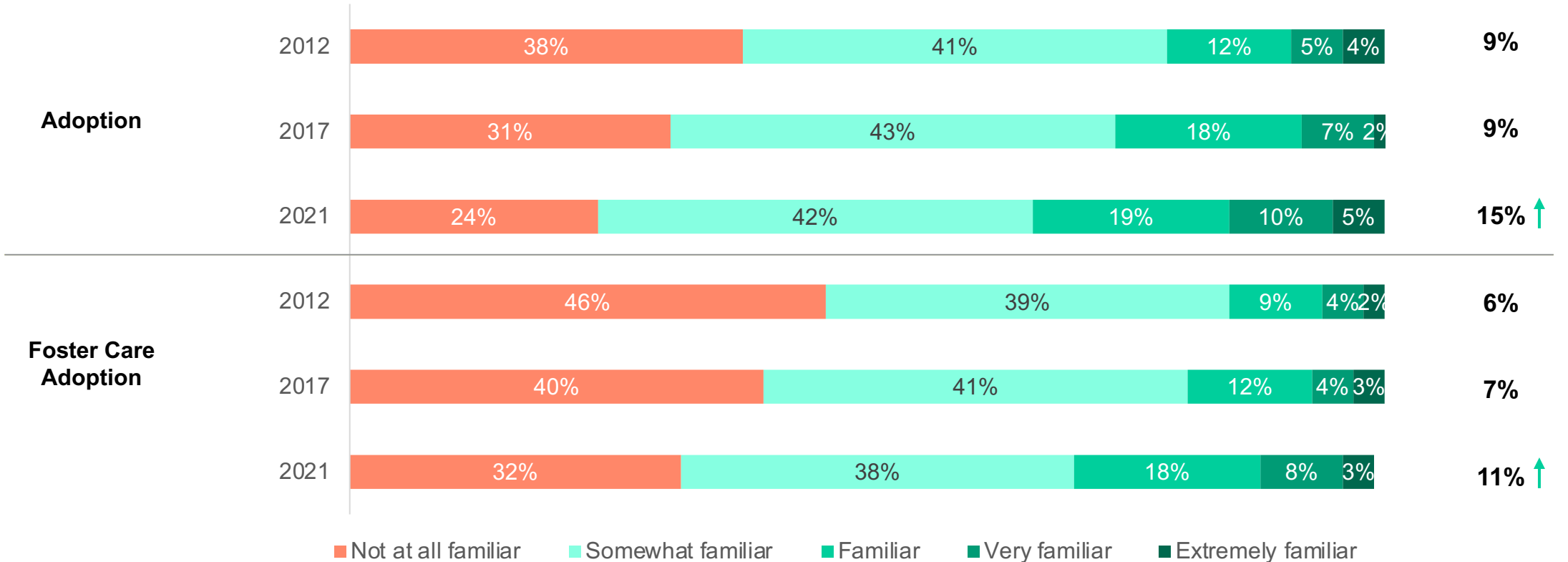


# Familiarity with general and foster care adoption increases, but remains low

This year, only around 1 in 10 Canadian adults are very/extremely familiar with adoption or foster care adoption, both up from less than 1 in 10 in prior waves.

Familiarity with Adoption in General & the Foster Care Adoption System

Extremely/  
Very Familiar

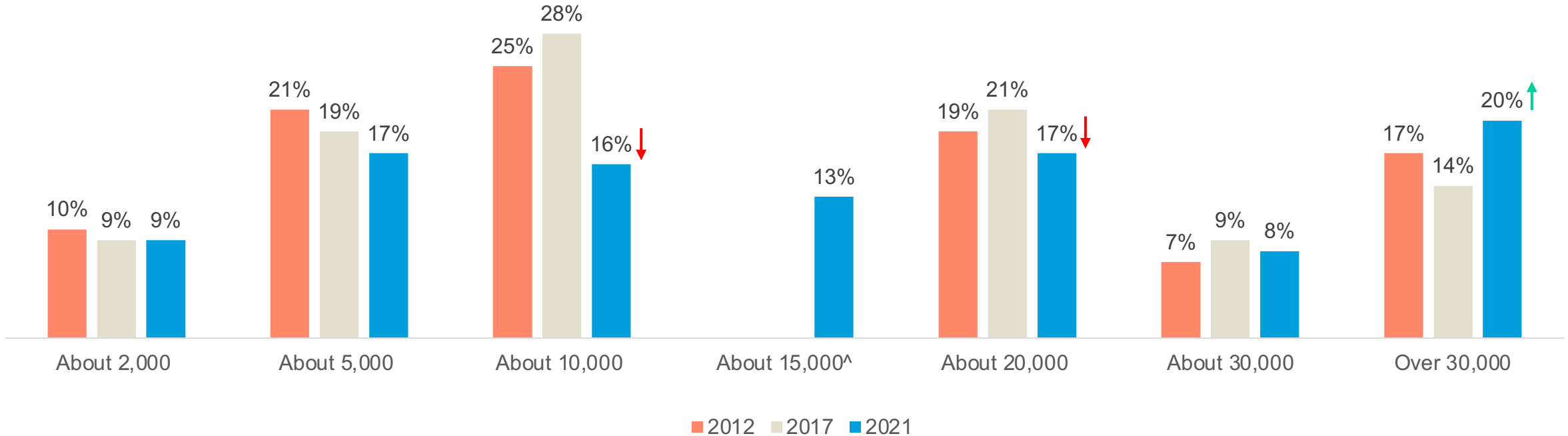


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# Estimates vary for number of children available for foster care adoption

More than half estimate that there are less than 20,000 children available for adoption in foster care in Canada.

Estimated Number of Children Available for Adoption in Foster Care



<sup>^</sup>New in 2021

# Adults estimate the average age of a child in foster care to be about 8 years old

This is in line with 2017.

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

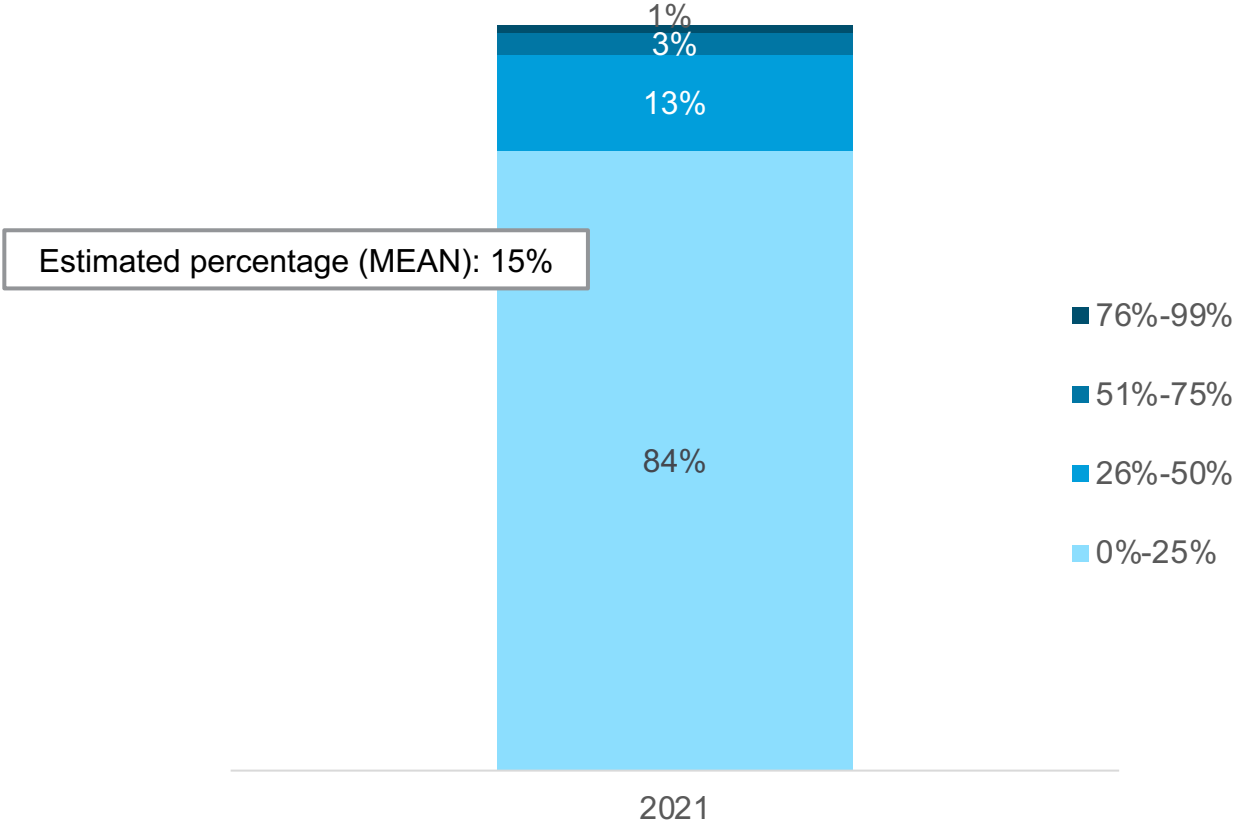




# On average, adults estimate that fewer than 2 in 10 children in foster care identify as LGBTQ+

Few believe that more than one-quarter of children in foster care self-identify as LGBTQ+.

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

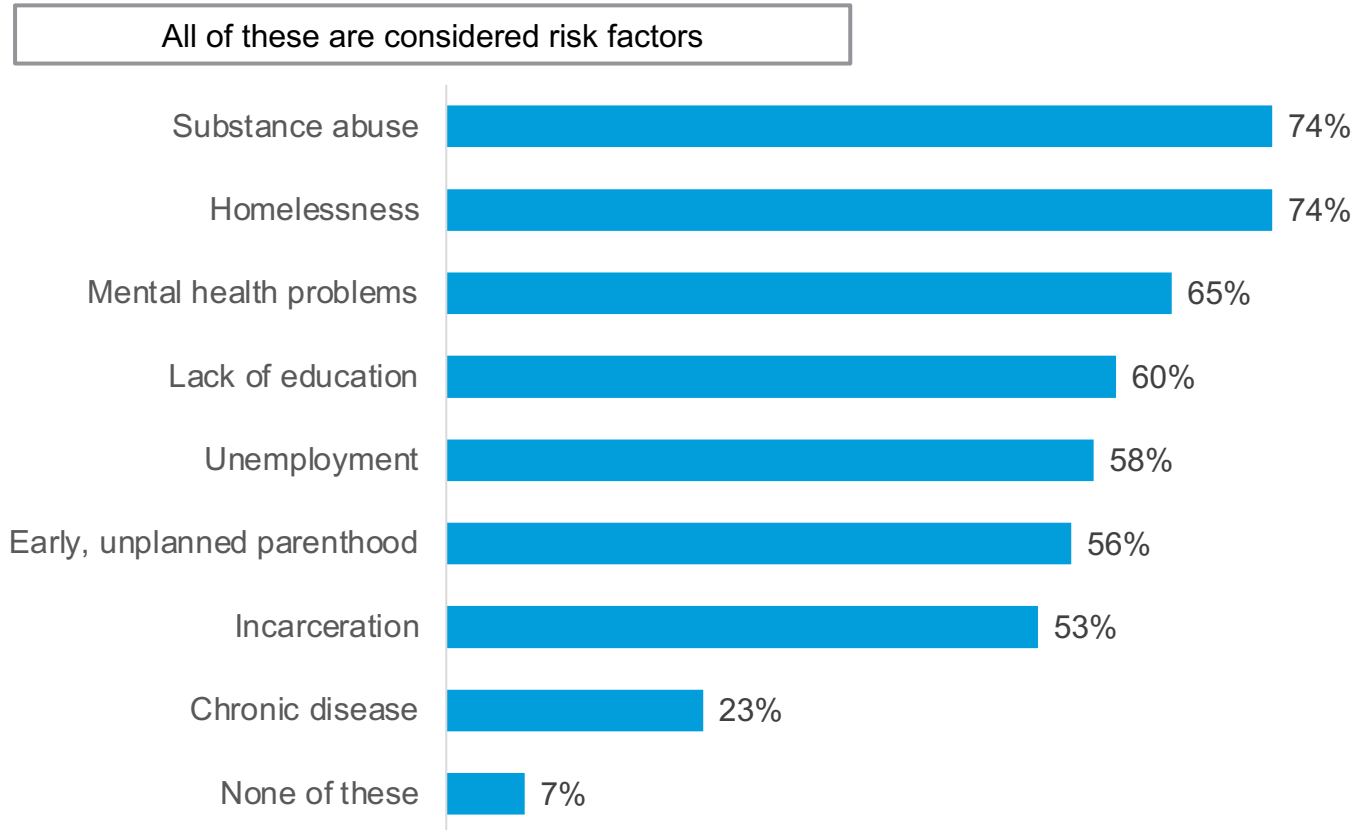




# A majority recognize risk factors for youth who age out of foster care

Canadian adults are more aware of the risk of substance abuse and homelessness and far less 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**



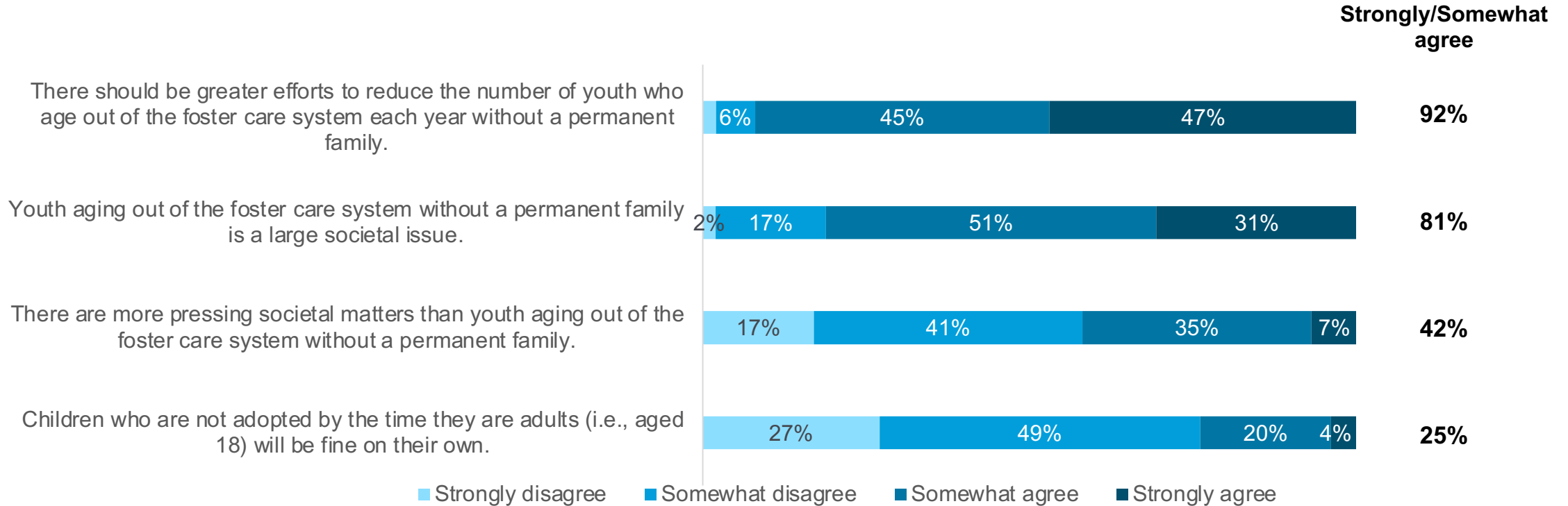




# Most adults agree aging out is a societal issue warranting greater efforts

However, more than 2 in 5 say there are more pressing societal matters, and one-quarter 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**

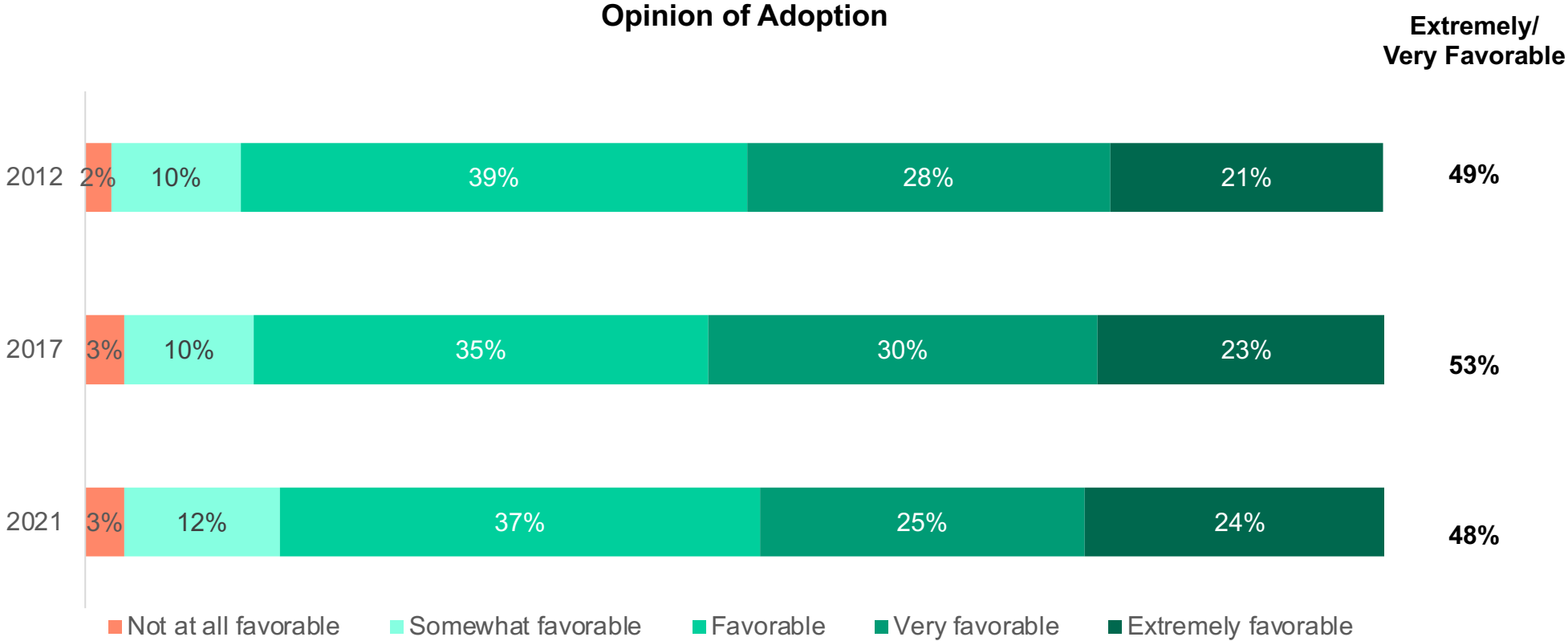




# Opinions of Adoption

# Opinions of general adoption remain stable

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

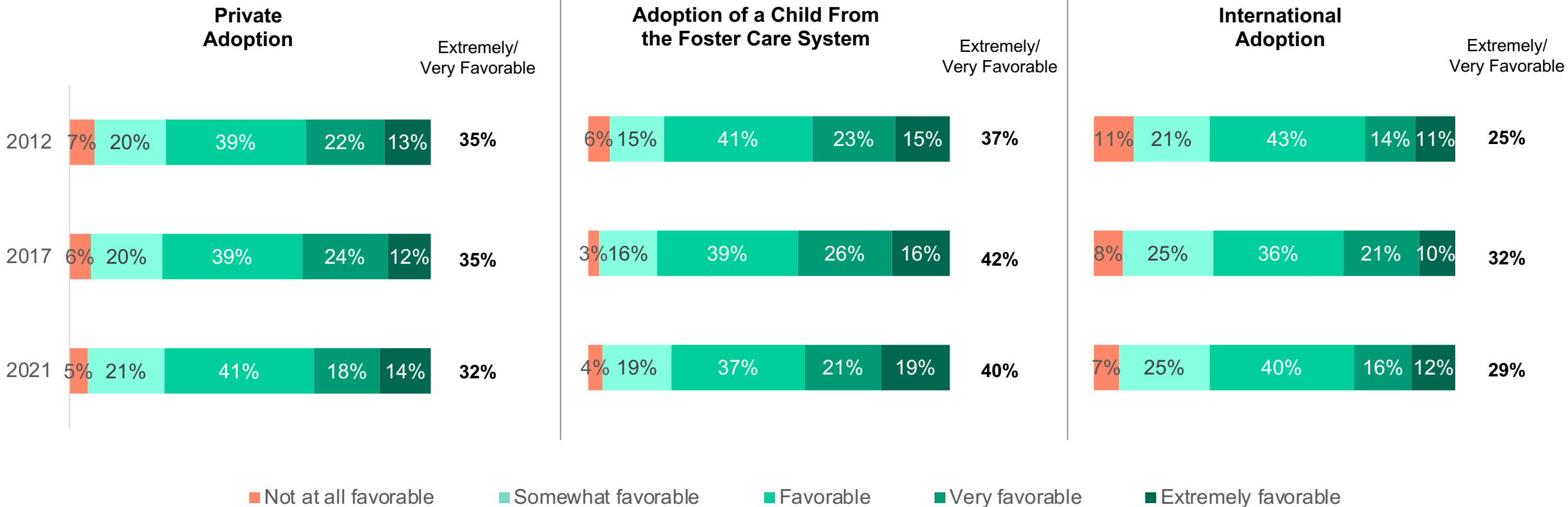


Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# Opinions of private, foster, and international adoption remain stable

Four in 10 adults have a highly favorable opinion of adoptions from the foster care system, with around 3 in 10 having a highly favorable opinion of private or international adoption; all are in line with 2017 levels.

## Opinion of Specific Types of Adoption



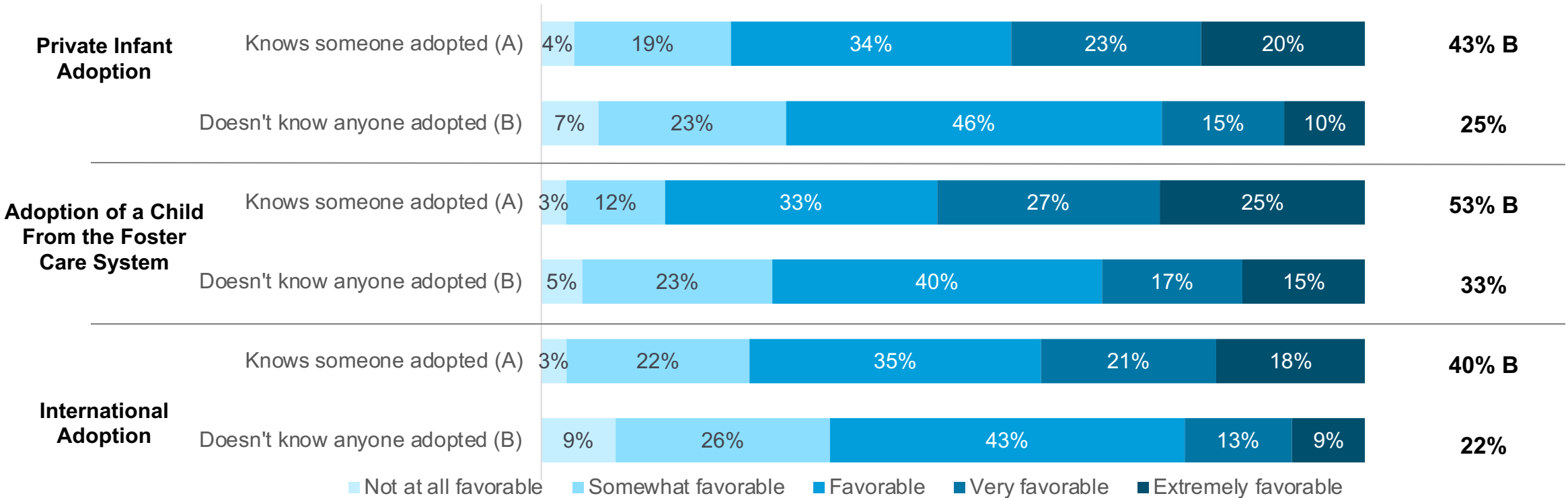


# Personal experience improves favorability of all types of adoption

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

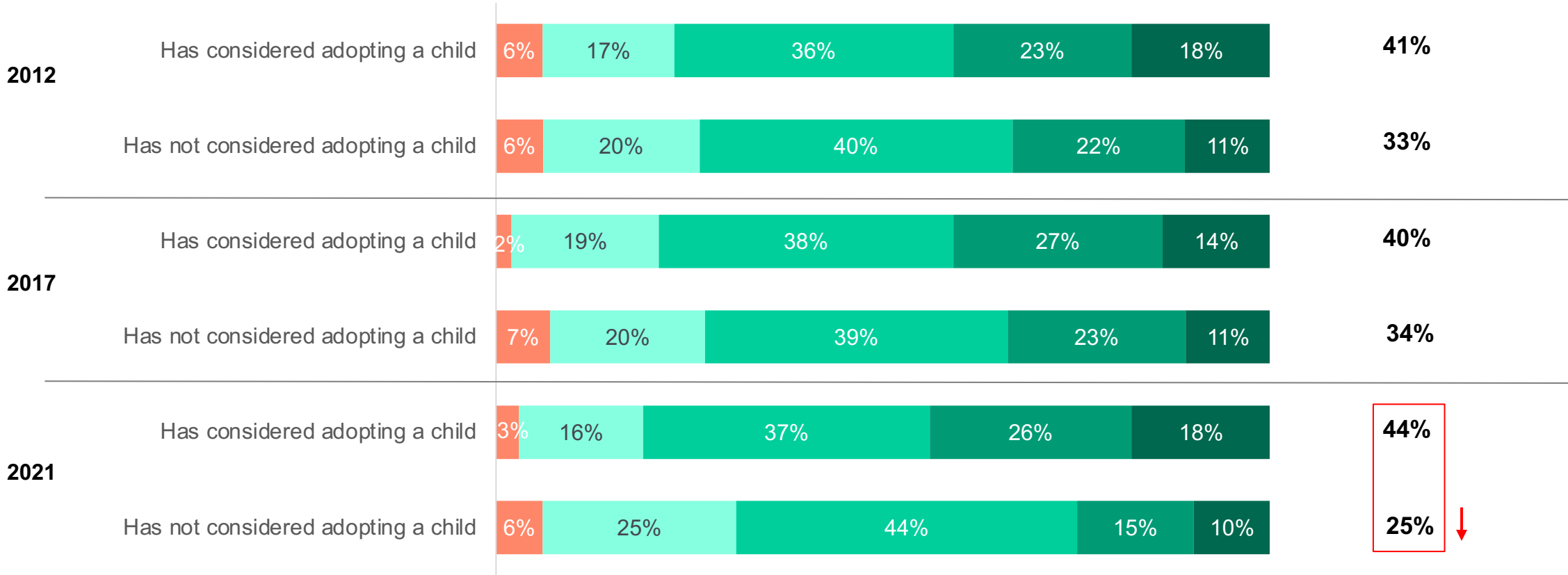


# This year, adoption consideration improves favorability of private adoption

Those not considering adoption are less likely to have a favorable opinion of private adoption this year as compared to 2017.

**Opinion of Private Adoption  
By Adoption Consideration Status**

**Extremely/  
Very Favorable**



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

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

44% ↓ Indicates significant difference between subgroups; Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

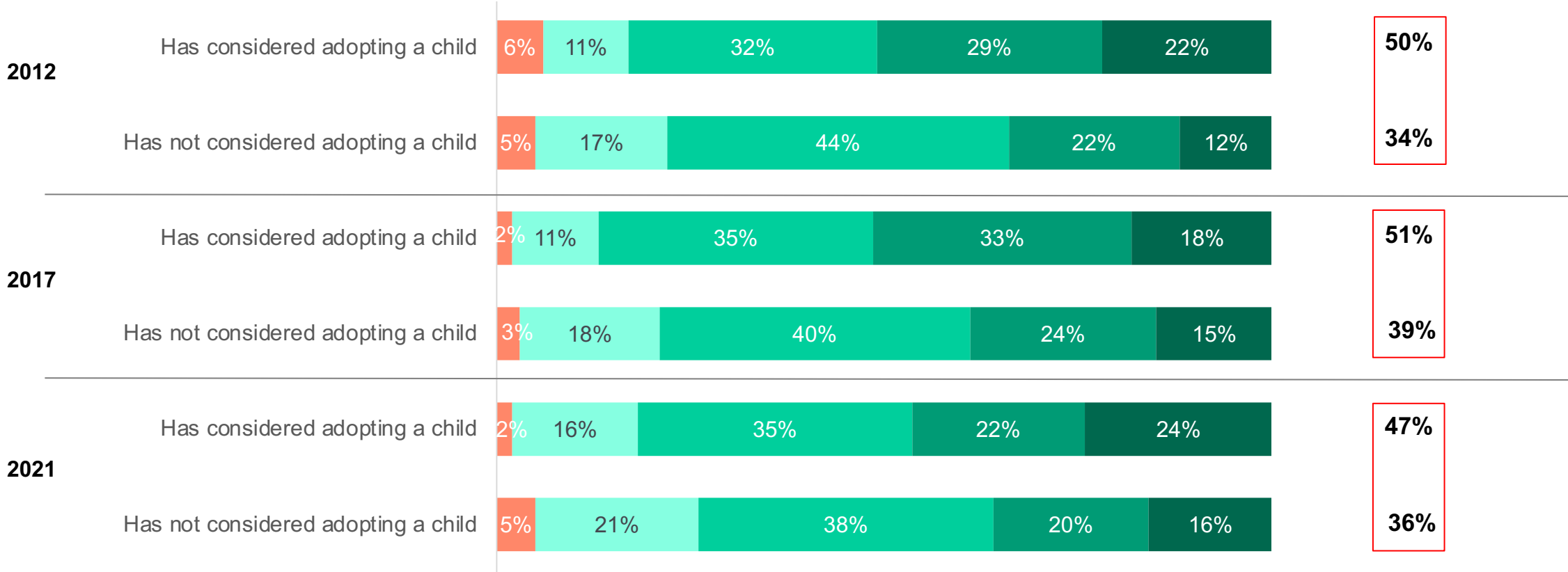


# Adoption consideration improves favorability of foster care adoption

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 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

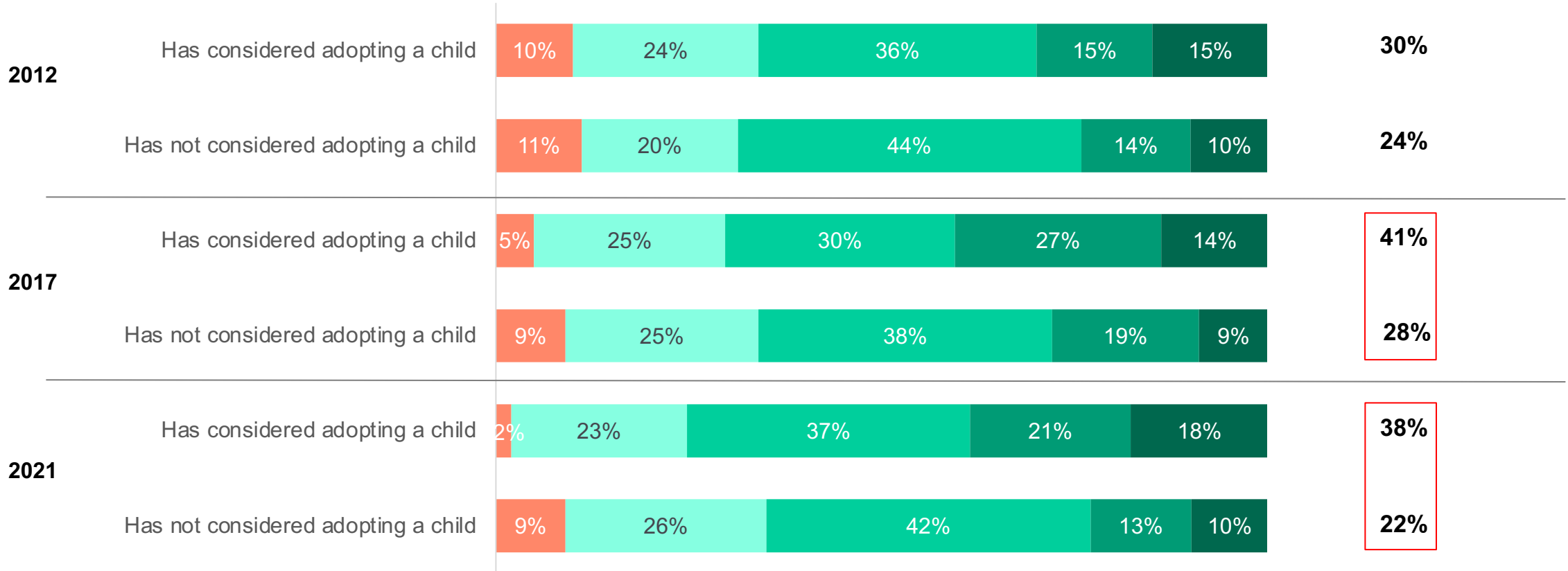


# Adoption consideration improves favorability of international adoption

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 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

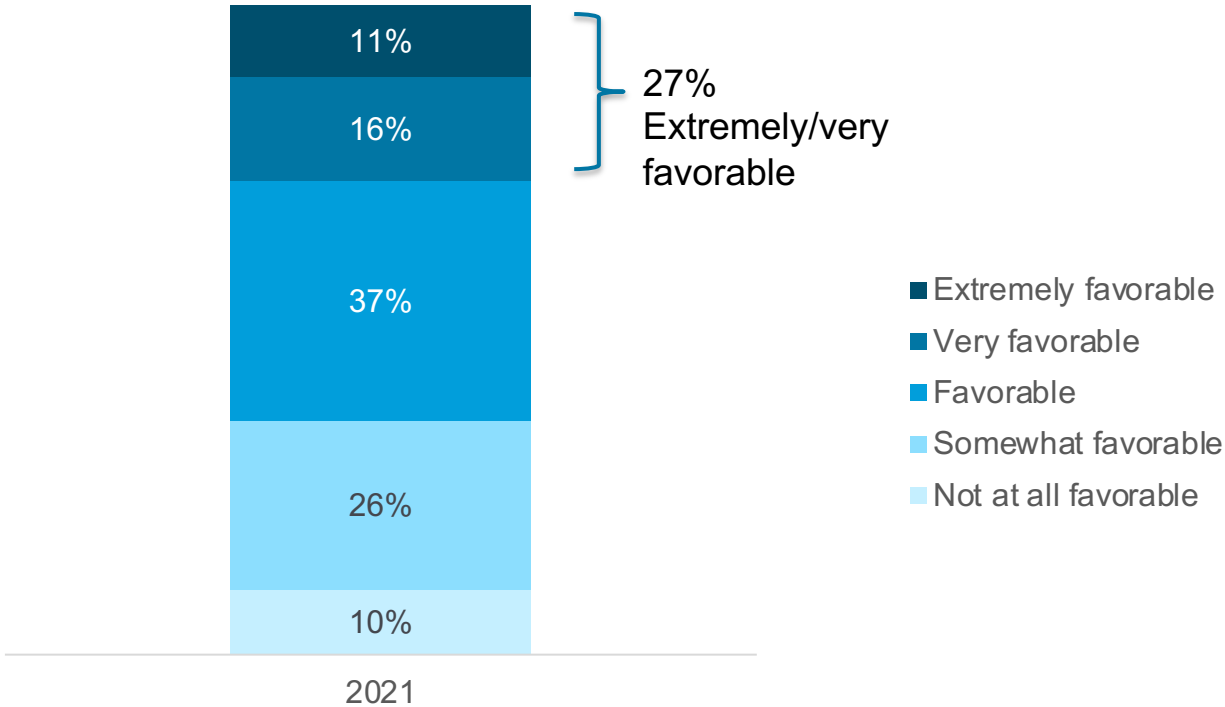




# More than 1 in 4 have a highly favorable opinion of the foster care system

While 2 in 5 Canadians have a highly favorable opinion of *adoption* from the foster care system, only around one-quarter feel the same about the foster care system itself.

Opinion of the Foster Care System



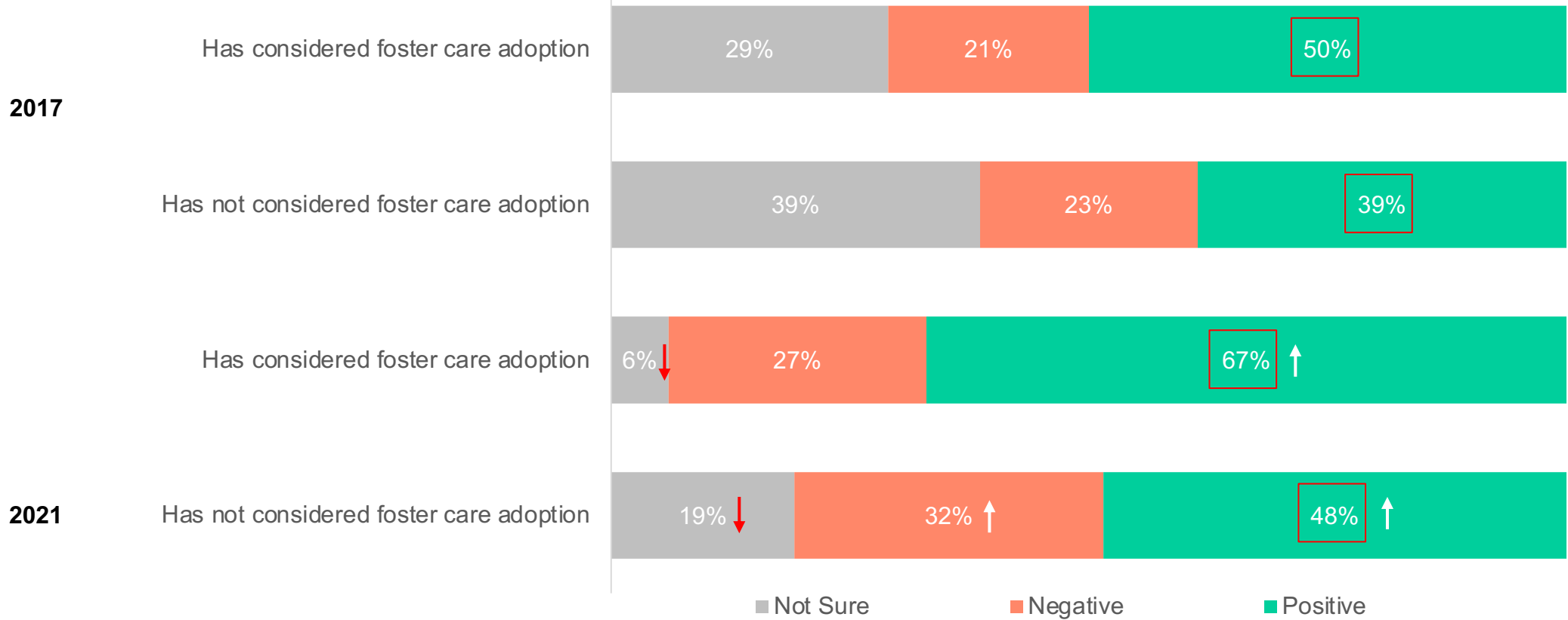
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



# Increase in positive opinion of foster care

Among both foster care adoption considerers and non-considerers, there has been an increase in positive opinion from 2017. However, there has also been an increase in negative opinion among non-considerers.

**Opinion of Foster Care System  
By Consideration of Foster Care Adoption**

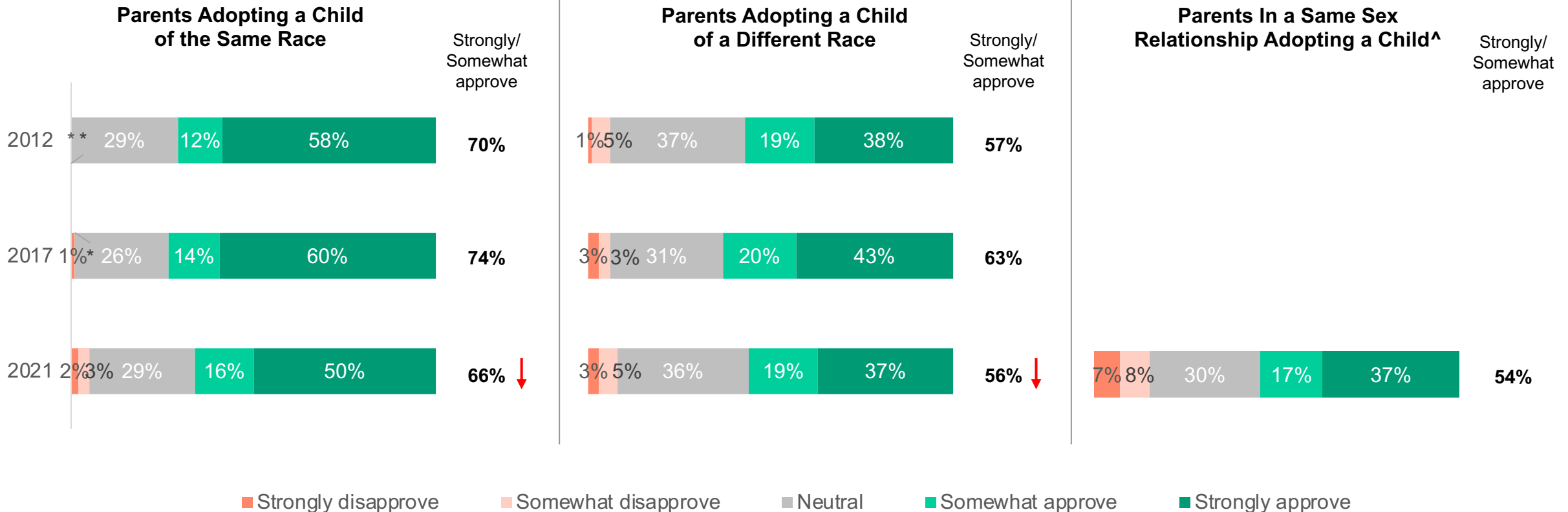


■ Not Sure    
 ■ Negative    
 ■ Positive  
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017    
   Indicates significant differences between subgroups

# Half of Canadians approve of parents in a same sex relationship adopting

Majorities of Canadian adults continue to approve of parents adopting a child either of their same race or a different one. However, both have declined from 2017 back toward 2012 levels.

## Approval of Specific Foster Care Adoption Scenarios



<sup>^</sup>New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

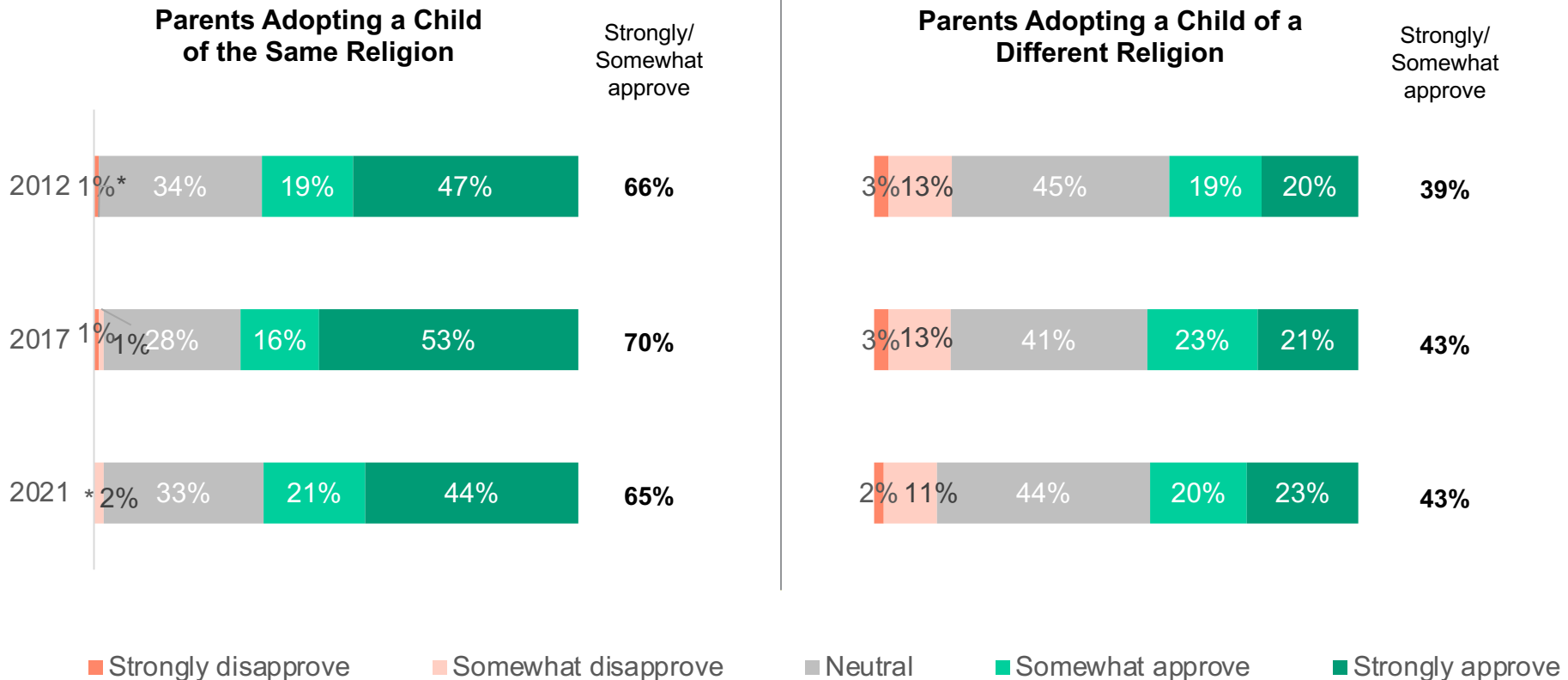
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



# More approve of parents adopting a child of the same religion than different

Around two-thirds of adults approve of parents of one religion adopting a child of the same religion but only about 2 in 5 approve of parents adopting a child of a different religion; both on par with 2017 levels.

## Approval of Specific Foster Care Adoption Scenarios, Contd.

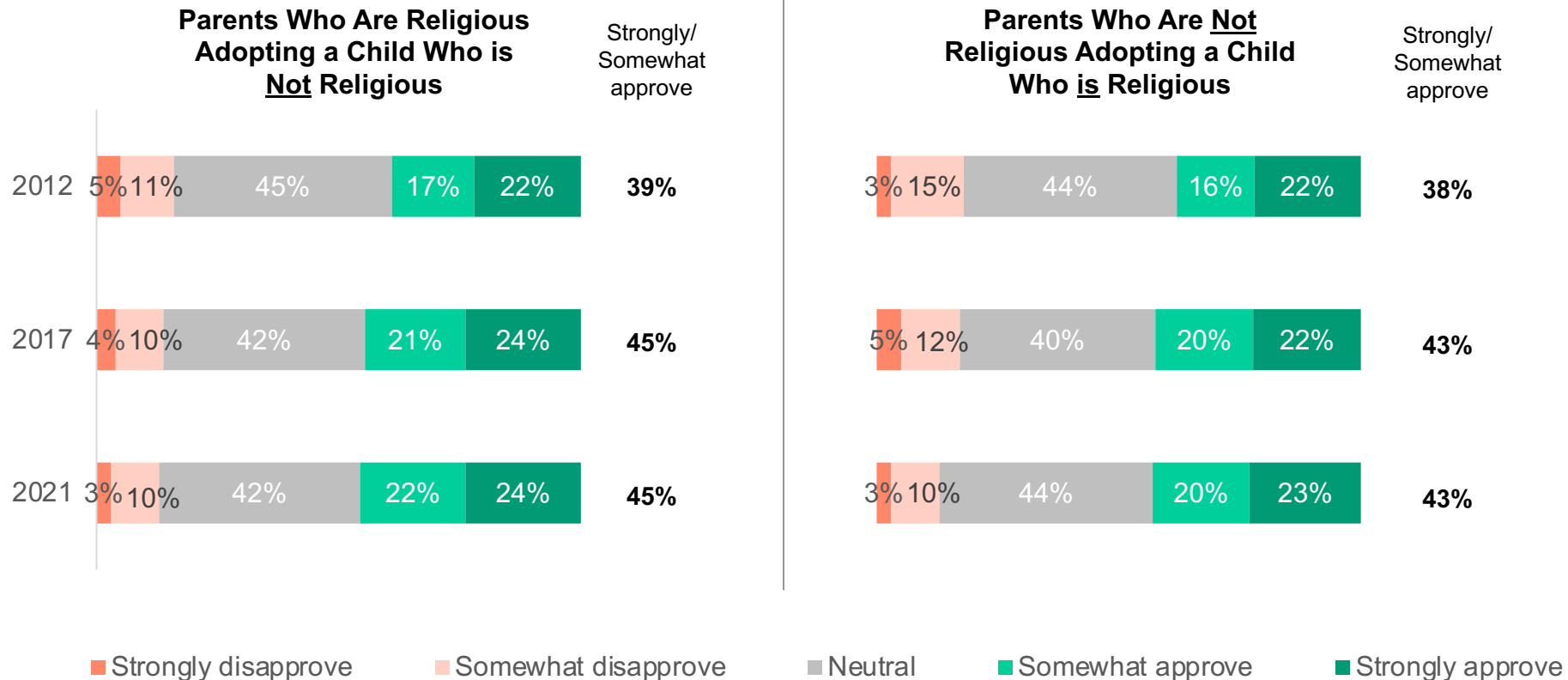




# Around 2 in 5 approve of mismatch in religious belief between parents, child

Just over 2 in 5 Canadian 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, Continued

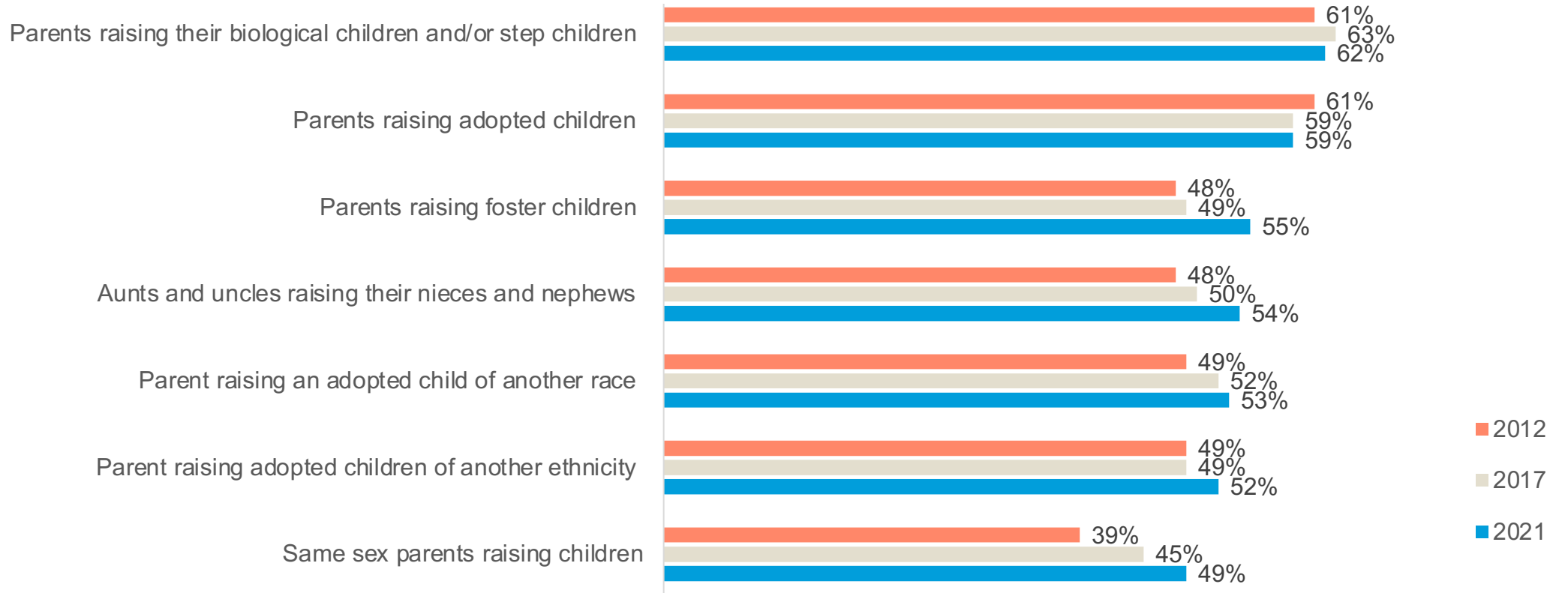


# Evaluation of Healthy Living Arrangements for Children

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

Adults perceive parents raising an adopted child are equally as likely to ‘definitely’ provide healthy and loving living environment as for their own biological child.

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

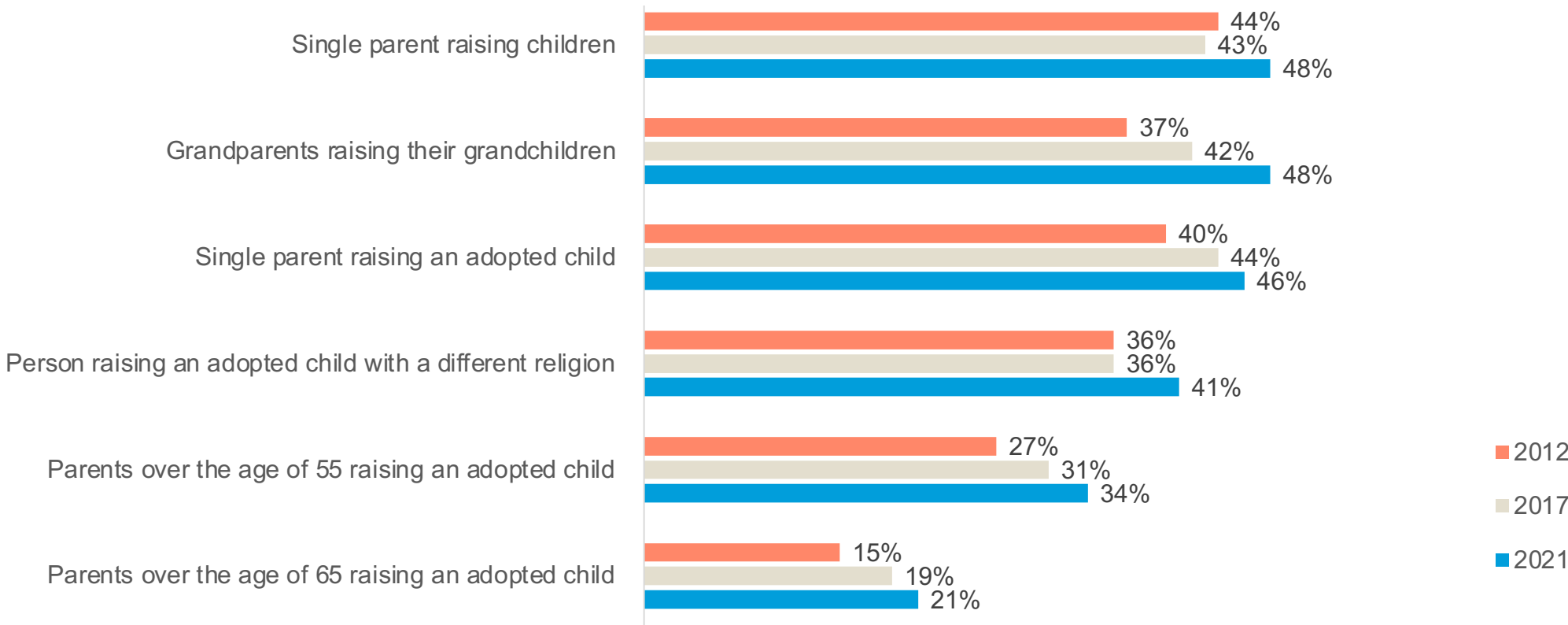




# Few feel parents over 65 can provide a healthy environment for adopted child

Similar to 2017, more than 2 in 5 adults say a single parent raising an adopted child and a single parent raising any children can provide a healthy living arrangement.

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





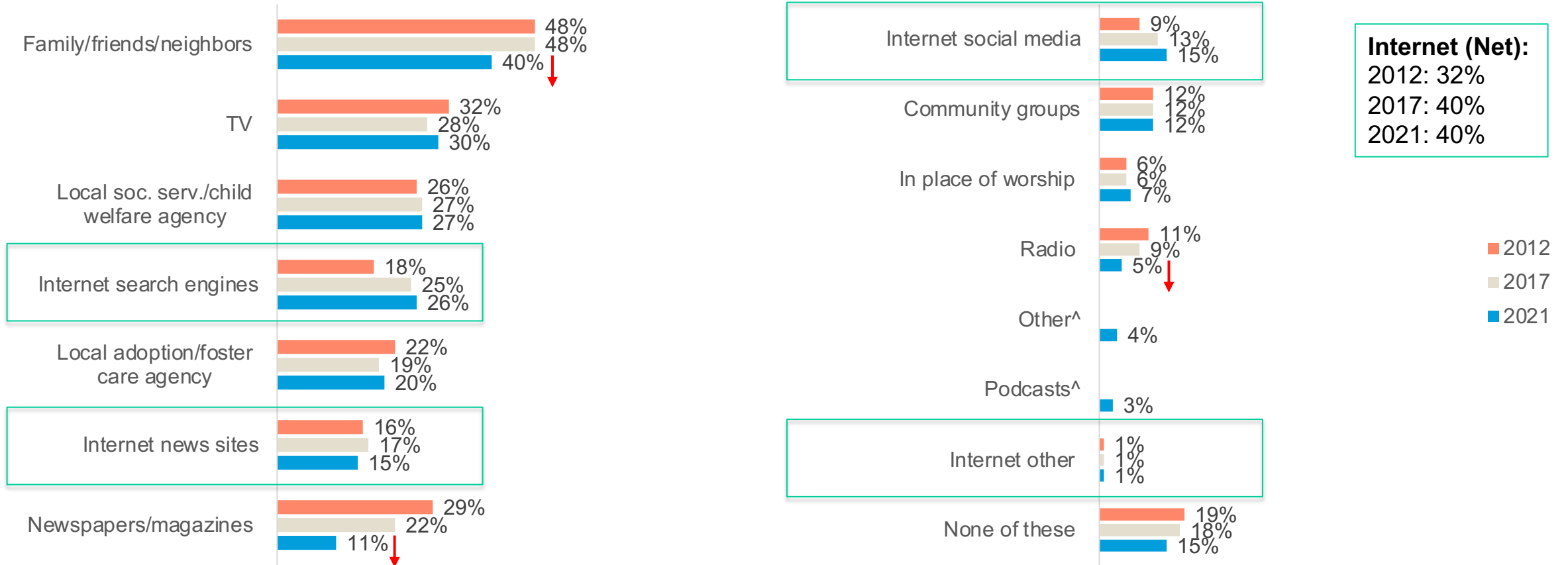


# Adoption Information Sources

# Continued decline of newspapers, radio as adoption information sources

Friends and family remain the top source of information, though this has declined from 2017. TV, social service, and Internet search engines also top the list of main adoption information resources.

Sources of Adoption Information



<sup>^</sup>New in 2021

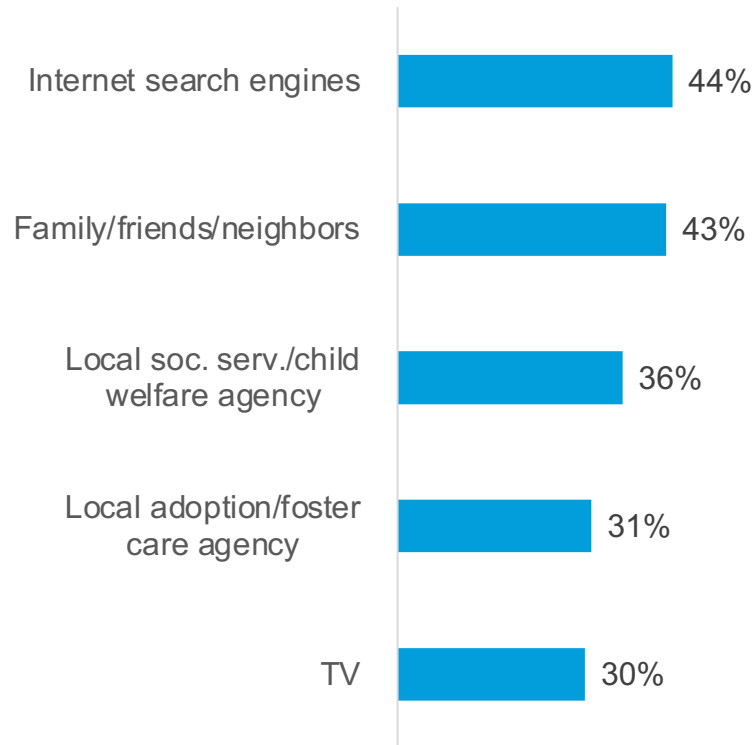


# Top sources of adoption information consistent among considerers

Those considering adoption in general and those specifically considering foster care adoption have the same top sources of information: Internet search engines, family/friends/neighbors and local social service agencies. Compared to the general public, considerers appear to use Internet searches more and TV less (though still a top source).

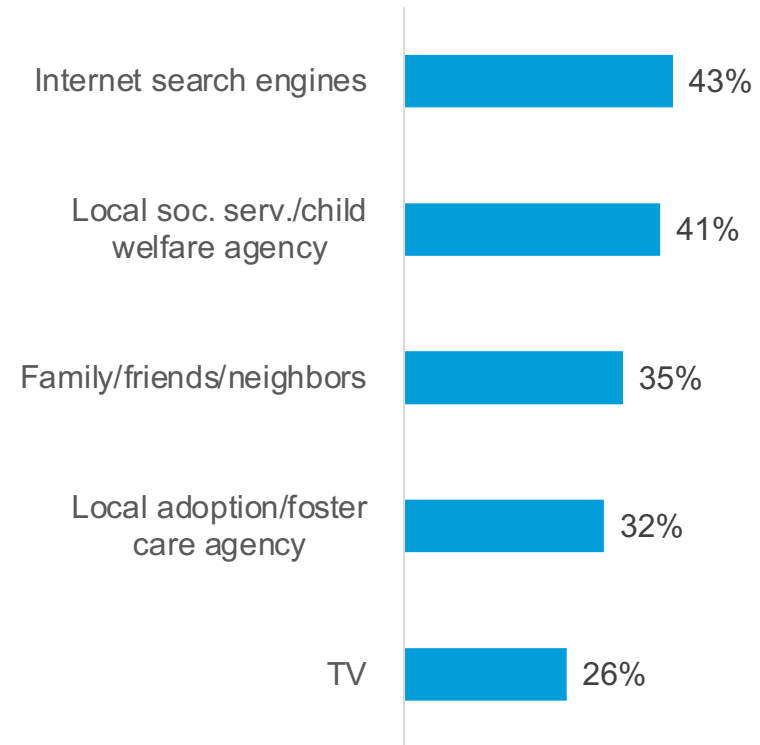
**Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information**

*Base: Have considered adoption*



**Top 5 Sources of Adoption Information**

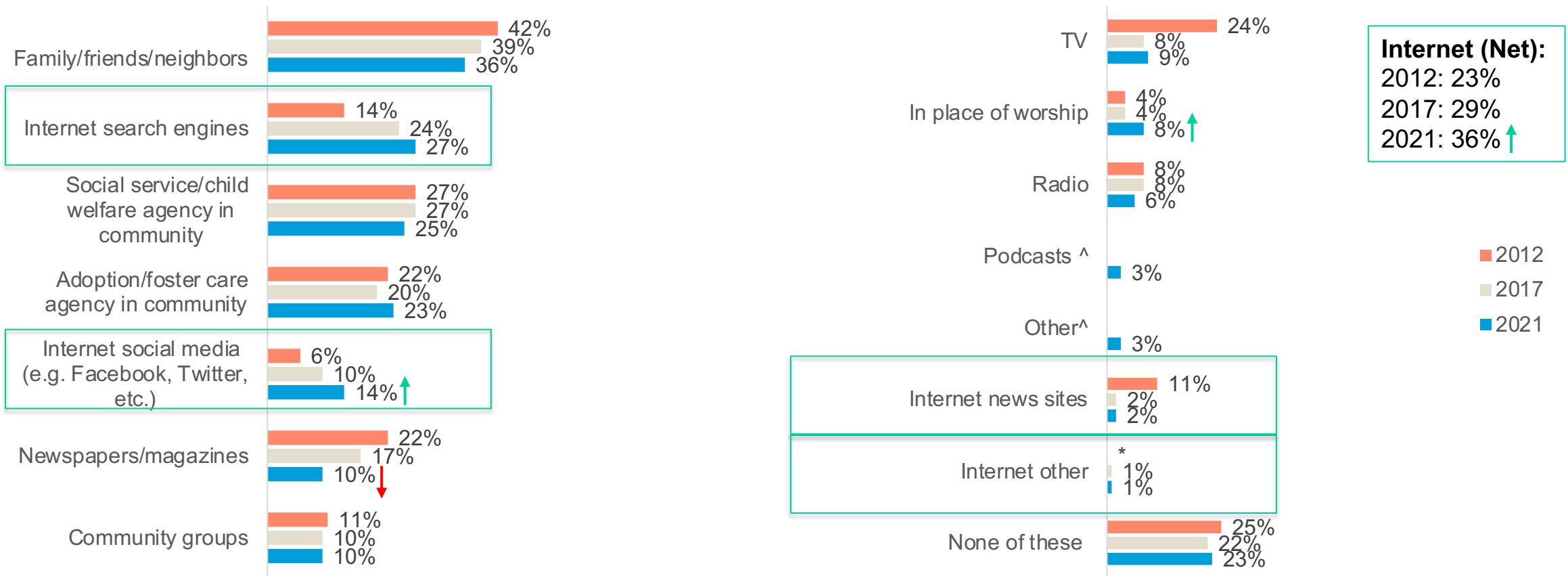
*Base: Have considered foster care adoption*



# Continued rise in use of social media for foster care adoption information

Family/friends/neighbors remain the top source for foster care adoption information, while newspapers/magazines continue to decline.

Sources of Foster Care Adoption Information



^New in 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

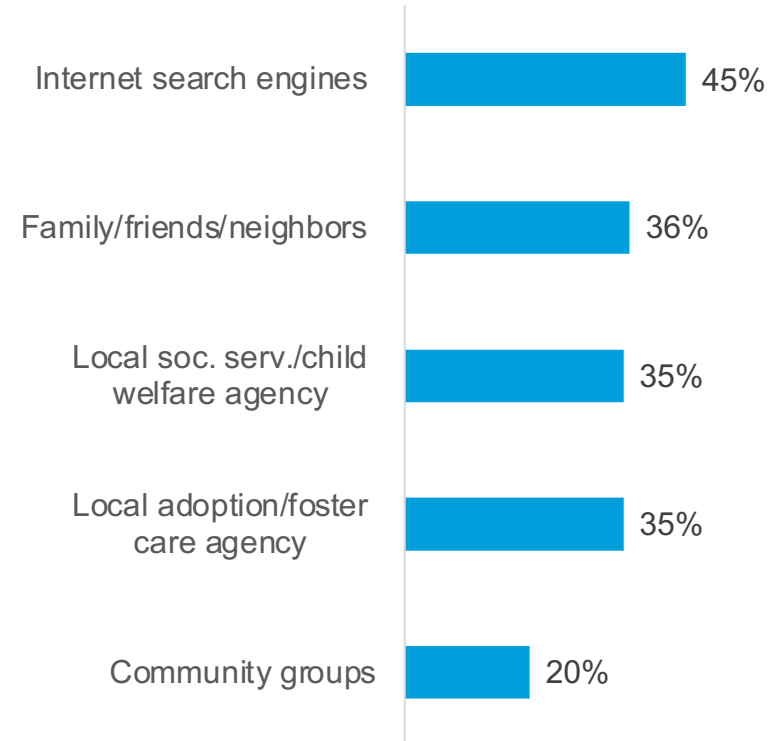


# Adults considering foster care adoption most commonly use internet search

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

## Top 5 Sources of Foster Care Adoption Information

*Base: Considering foster care adoption*

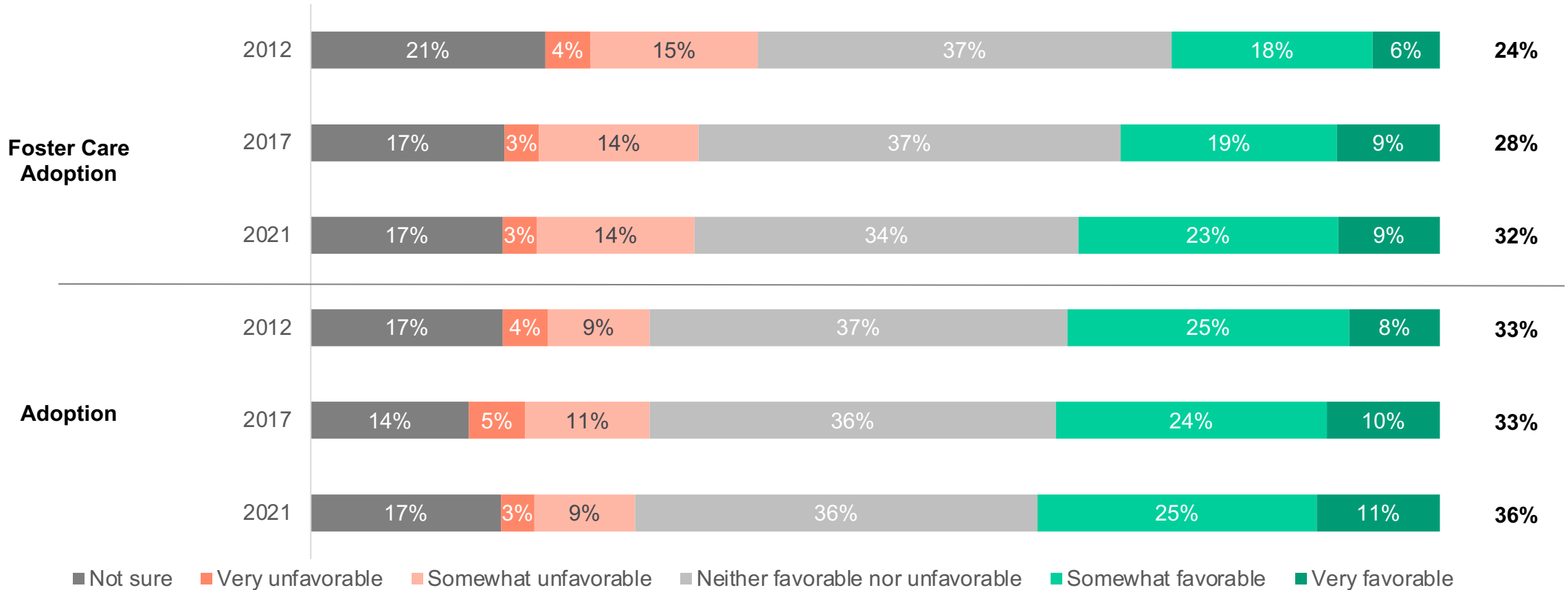


# Stable perceptions of favorable media coverage of foster care/adoption

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

Perceptions of Media Coverage of Adoption

Very/Somewhat Favorable



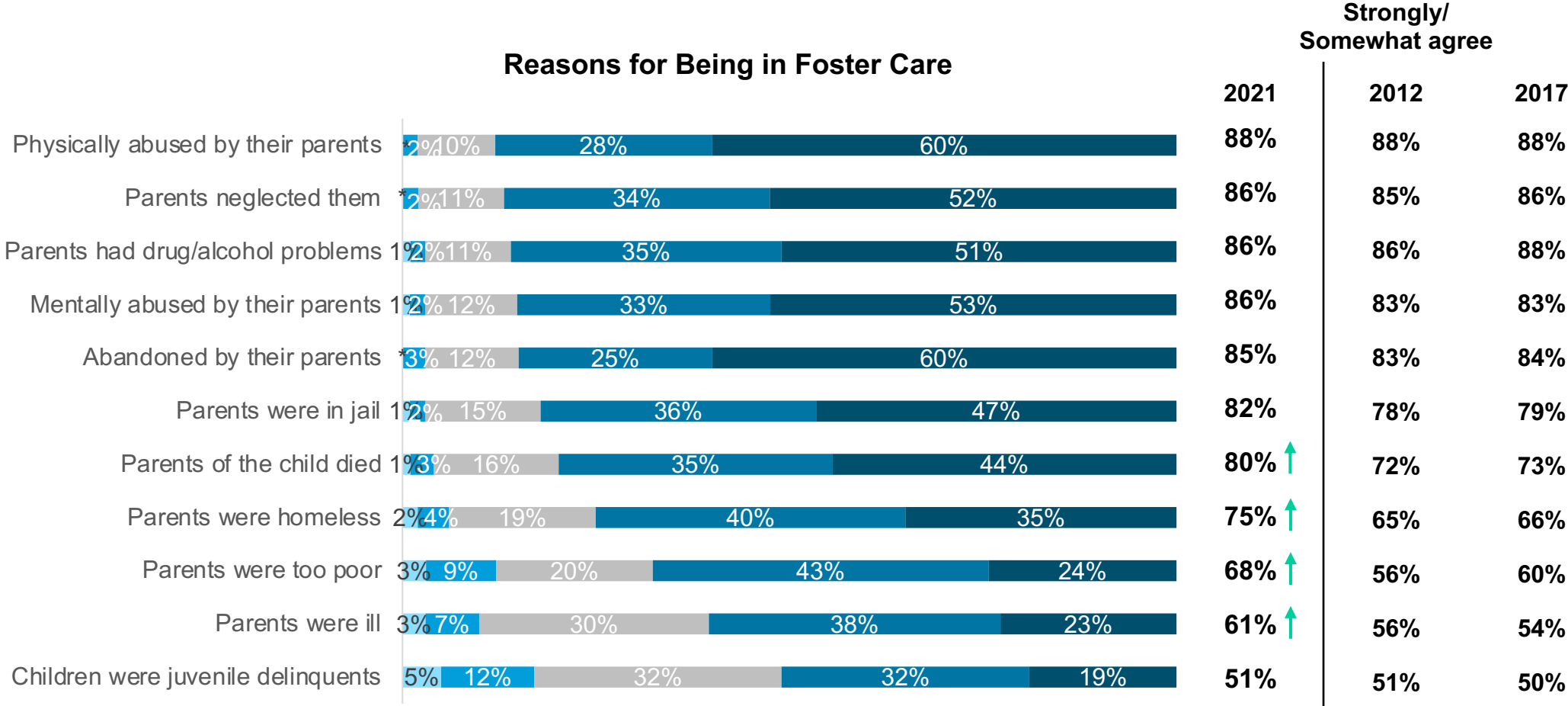
■ Not sure ■ Very unfavorable ■ Somewhat unfavorable ■ Neither favorable nor unfavorable ■ Somewhat favorable ■ Very favorable

Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes

# Perceptions of Problems in Adopted Children

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

While the top reasons remain related to parental neglect or improper behavior, there has been an increase in the reasons less in parental control, such as parents dying, are ill, or are homeless or too poor.



Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



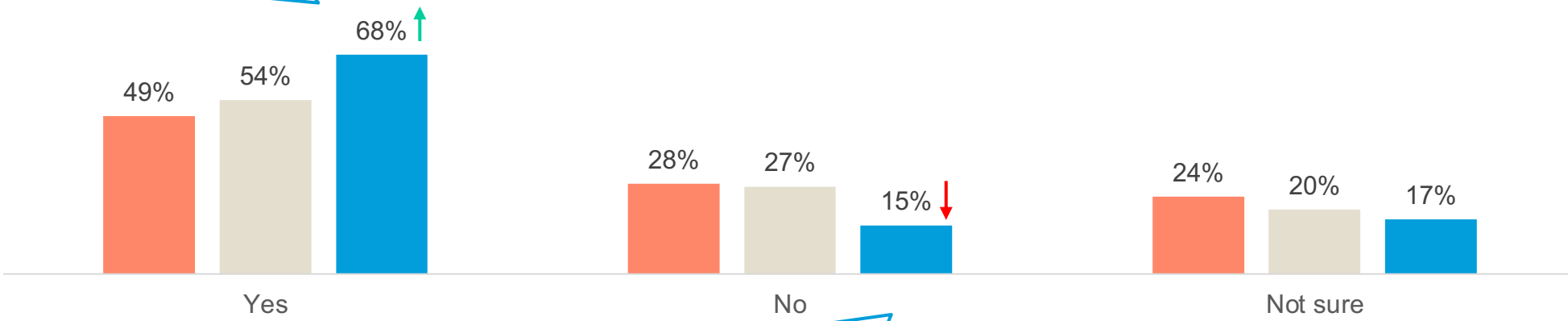
# Improvement in belief that every child is adoptable

Up from around half in 2017, this year more than two-thirds of adults believe every child is adoptable, while the proportion who do not believe every child is adoptable has declined.

**Belief of Adoptability of Every Child**

Most likely (2021):

- 18-34 years old: 78% (vs. 65% 55-64, 56% 65+)
- Considering adoption: 77% (vs. 63% not considering)



Most likely (2021):

- Non-favorable opinion of adoption: 25% (vs. 10% favorable opinion)
- Not considering adoption: 17% (vs. 11% considering)

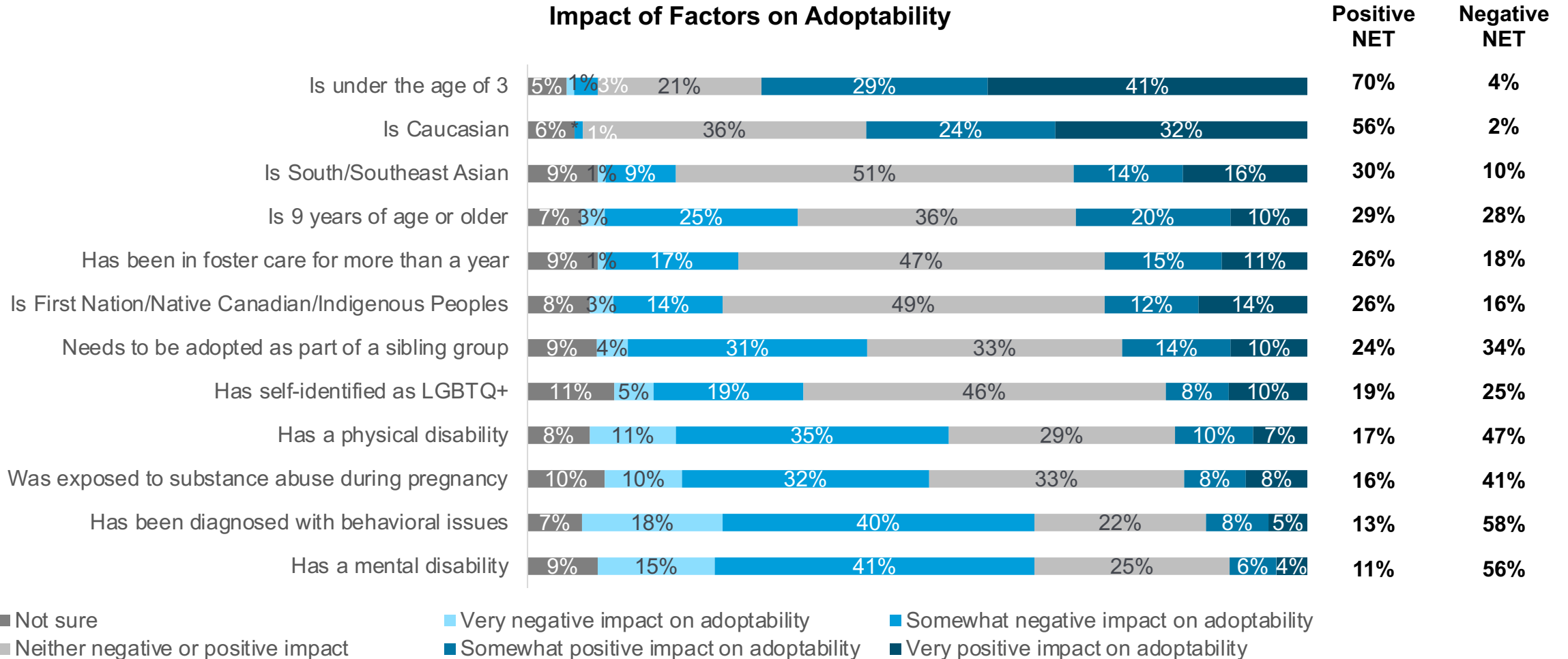
■ 2012 ■ 2017 ■ 2021

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



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

More than half say being Caucasian positively impact adoptability. On the other hand, having a mental disability or behavioral issues are seen as having the most negative impacts.

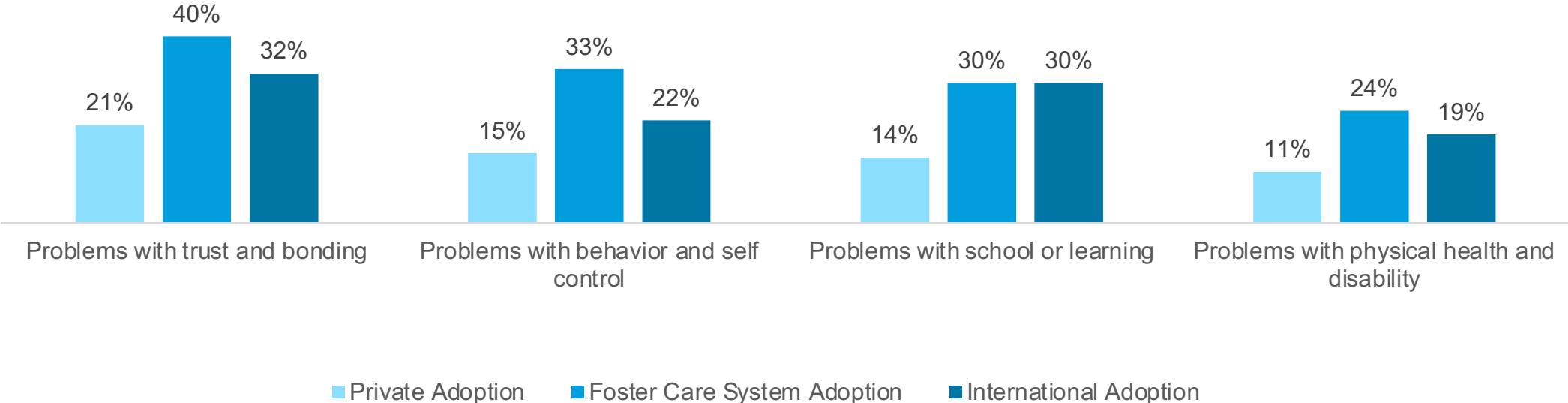




# Children adopted through foster care seen as most likely to have problems

The top concern for all three types of adoption is problems with trust and bonding, but adults feel children adopted through foster care or via international adoption are more likely to have this problem.

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



# Potential for problems in adopted children mostly stable from 2017

Perceptions that children adopted internationally are more likely to have problems with trust and bonding have significantly increased from 2017; otherwise, perceptions have remained in line with 2017.

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

|  | Private Adoption |      |      | Foster Care System Adoption |      |      | International Adoption |      |       |
|--|------------------|------|------|-----------------------------|------|------|------------------------|------|-------|
|  | 2012             | 2017 | 2021 | 2012                        | 2017 | 2021 | 2012                   | 2017 | 2021  |
| Problems with trust and bonding              | 15%              | 21%  | 21%  | 45%                         | 45%  | 40%  | 23%                    | 26%  | 32% ↑ |
| Problems with behavior and self control      | 12%              | 16%  | 15%  | 40%                         | 38%  | 33%  | 16%                    | 18%  | 22%   |
| Problems with school or learning             | 10%              | 14%  | 14%  | 36%                         | 34%  | 30%  | 24%                    | 33%  | 30%   |
| Problems with physical health and disability | 5%               | 9%   | 11%  | 22%                         | 21%  | 24%  | 16%                    | 18%  | 19%   |

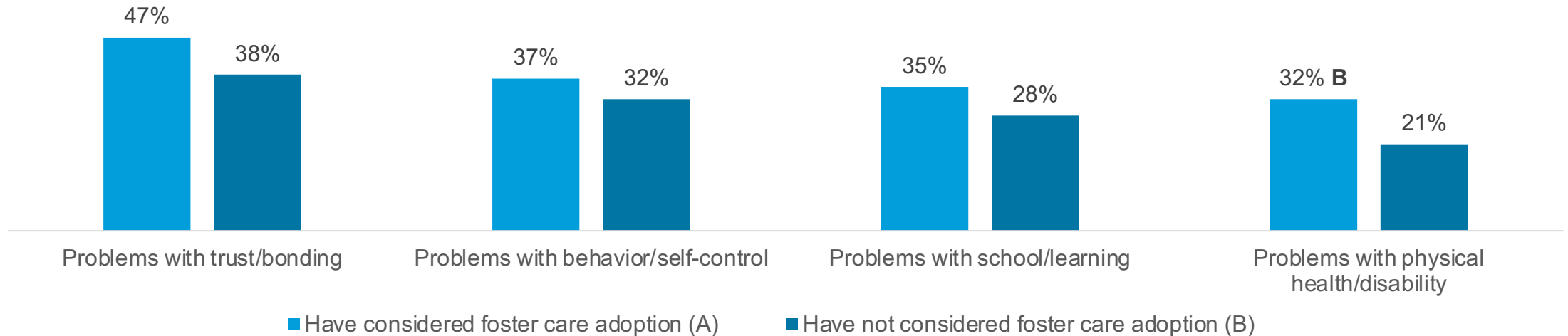
↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



# Foster care adoption considerers more likely to perceive health problems

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

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



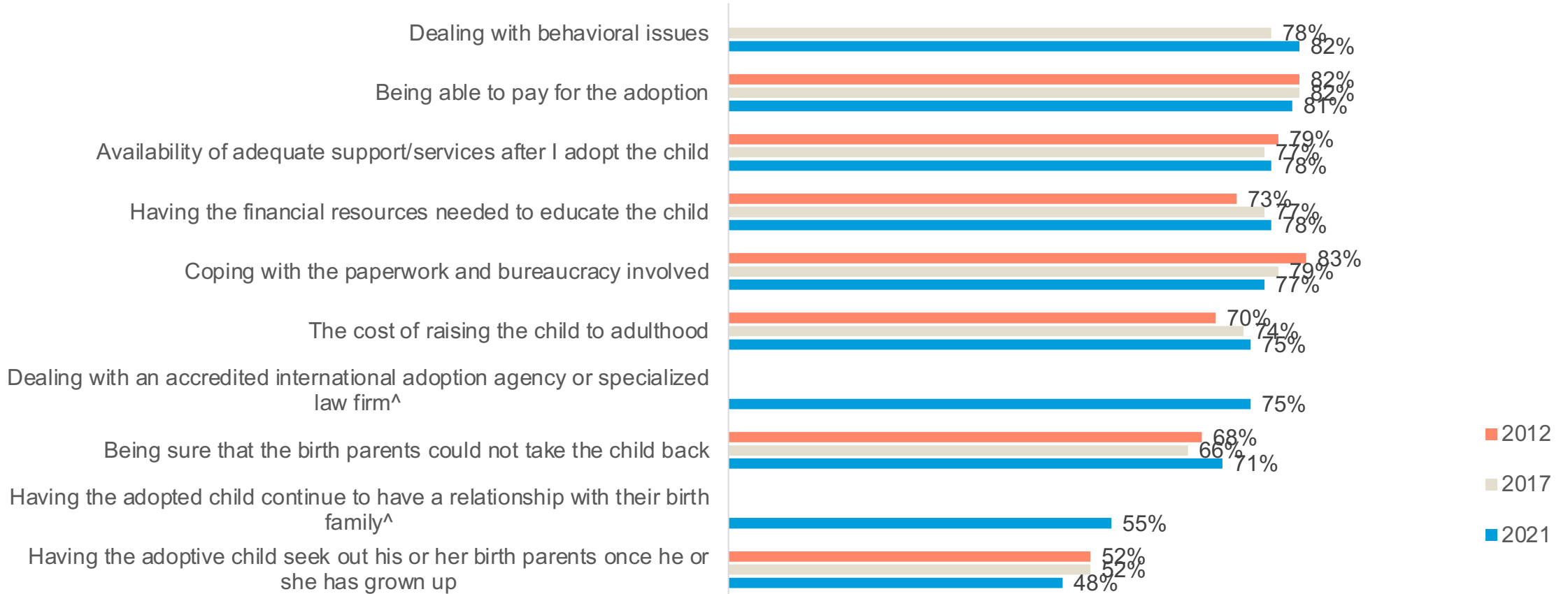


# Perceived Obstacles to Adoption

# Most prominent concern with international adoption is behavioral issues

Concerns about international adoption are in line with 2017.

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

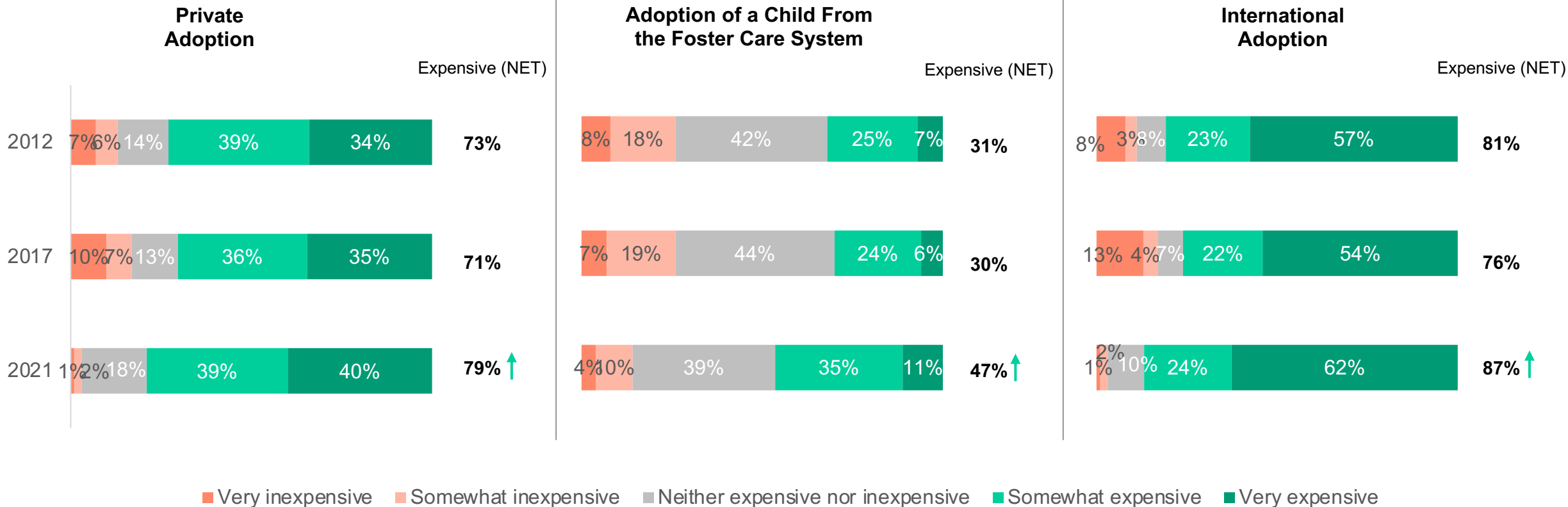


<sup>^</sup>New in 2021

# Compared to 2017, adults more likely to say all types of adoption are expensive

Foster care adoption still far and away seen as the lowest cost option.

## Perceived Expense of Each Type of Adoption



↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

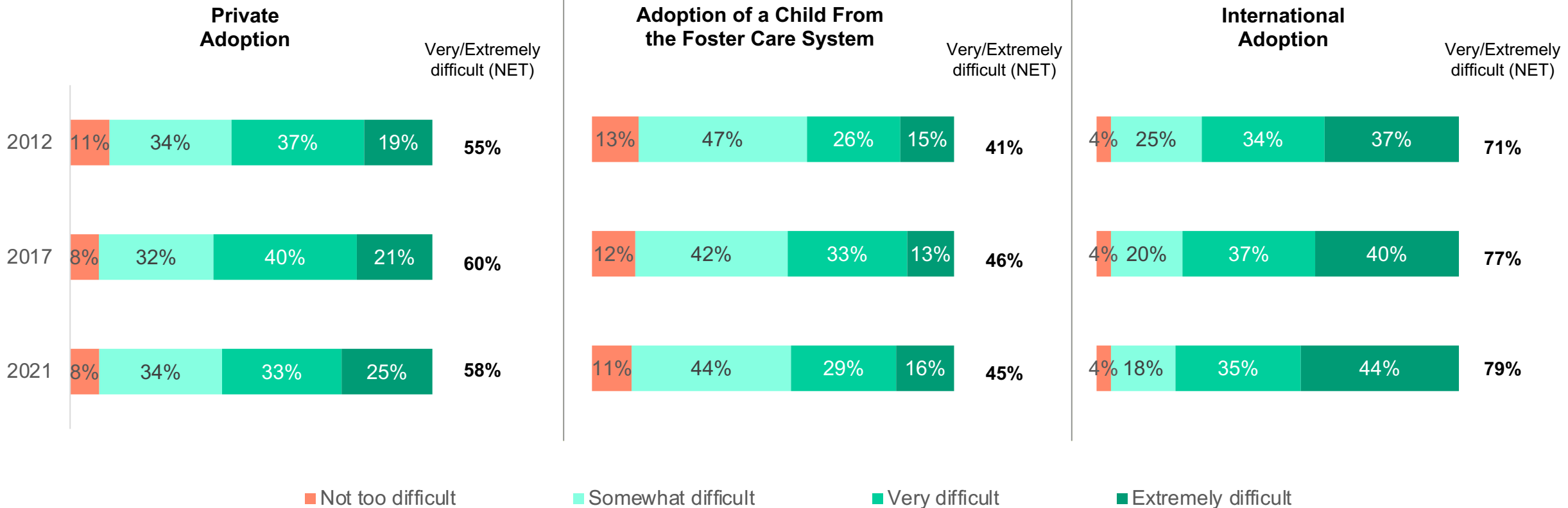
Statistical significance is only shown for top 2 boxes



# Perceived difficulty of adoption remains stable

Similar to 2017, around 8 in 10 adults feel international adoption is very/extremely difficult to complete, while about 6 in 10 feel the same about private adoption and less than half say the same of foster care adoption.

## Perceived Difficulty of Each Type of Adoption

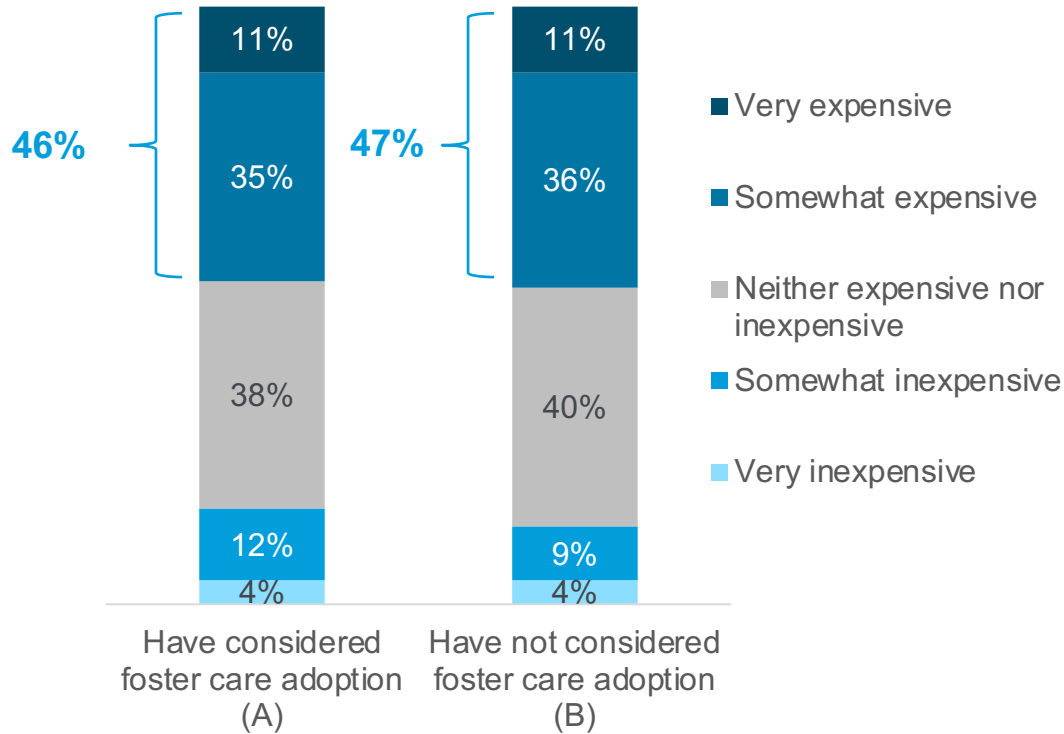




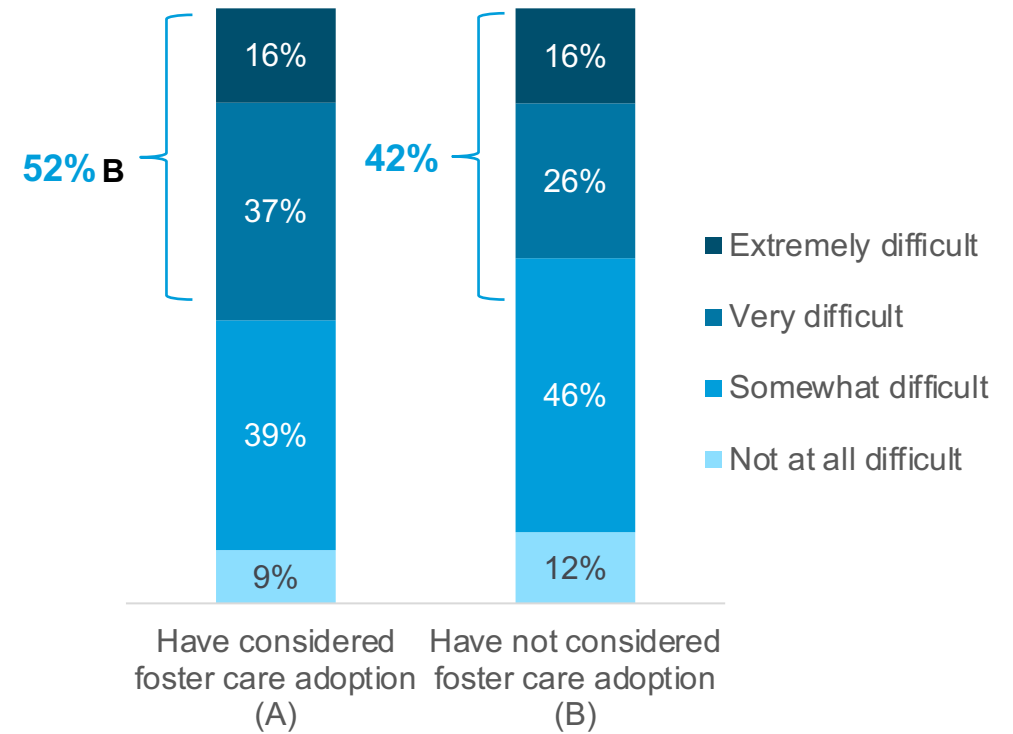
# Perceptions of difficulty higher among those considering foster care adoption

Whether or not an adult is considering foster care adoption, perceptions of cost are similar, but half considering foster care adoption perceive it to be very/extremely difficult compared to just 2 in 5 who aren't considering.

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



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

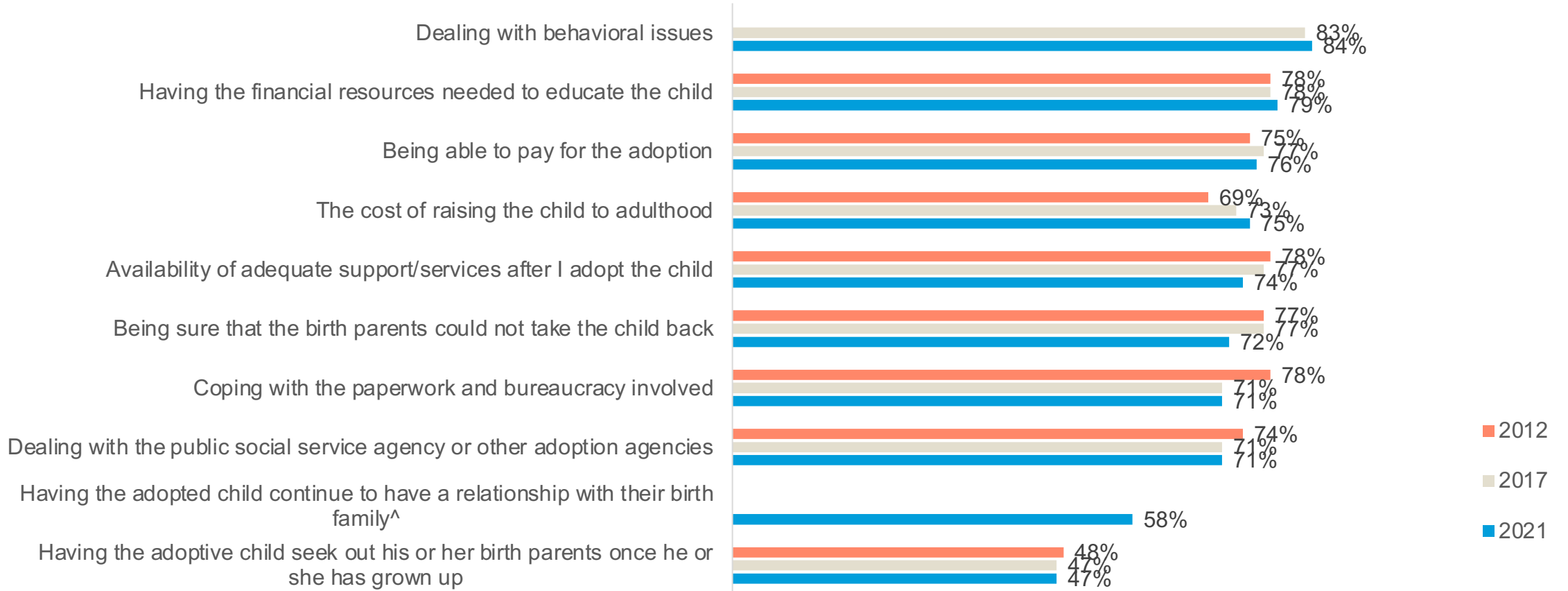




# Dealing with behavioral issues tops list of foster care adoption concerns

Concerns about foster care adoption are in line with 2017.

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



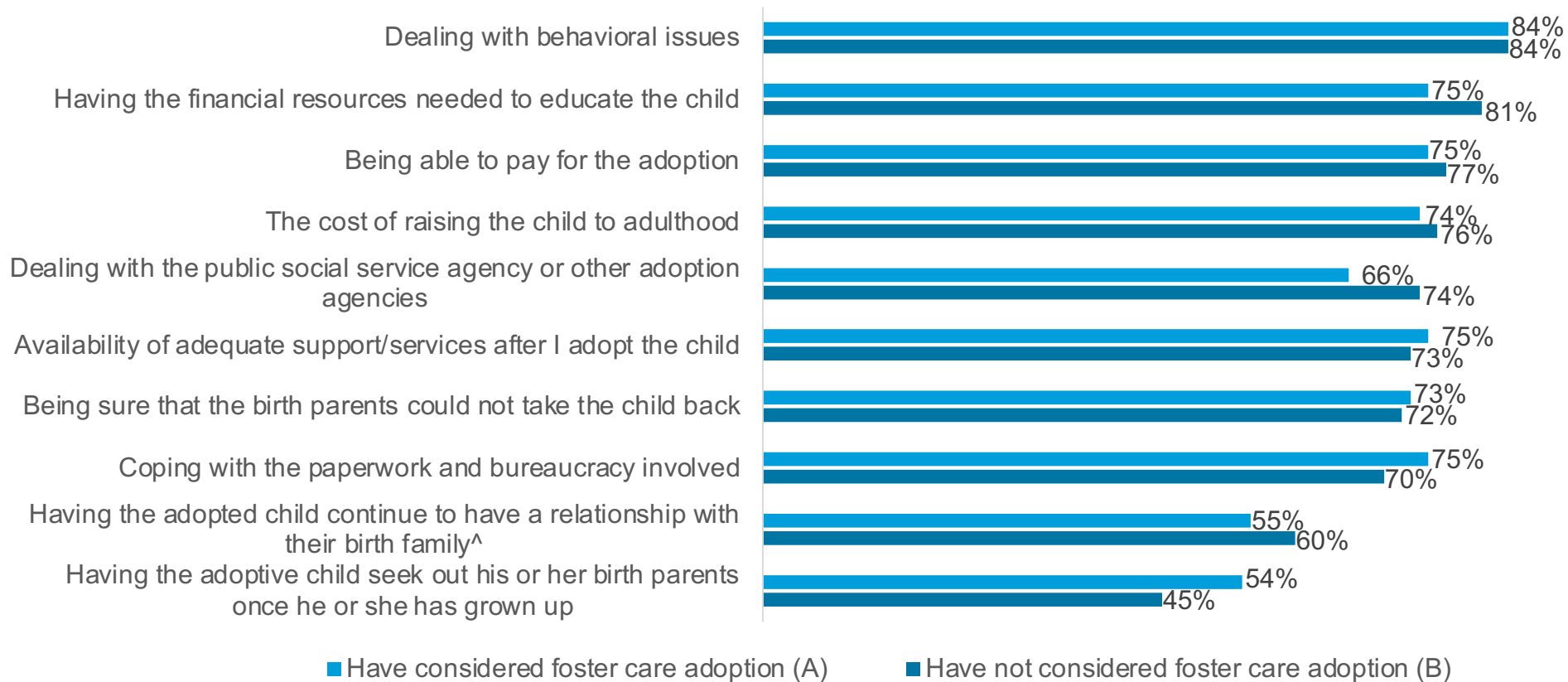
<sup>^</sup>New in 2021



# Foster care considerers equally likely as non-considerers to have concerns

Considerers and non-considerers express similar levels of concern about all of the items listed.

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



<sup>^</sup>New in 2021

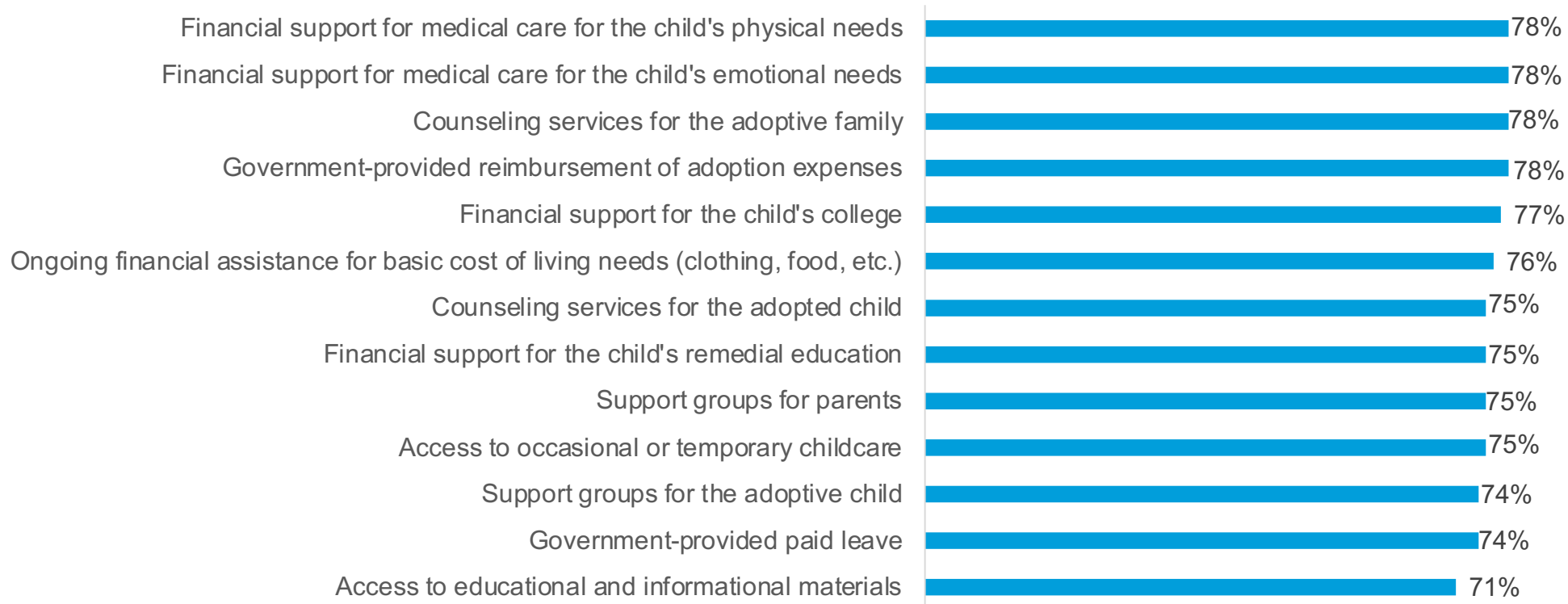


# Various financial supports make big difference in adoption decision

Those considering foster care adoption say having financial support for the child’s physical and emotional needs, government-provided reimbursement for adoption expenses, financial support for college, and ongoing financial assistance for basic cost of living needs, would make a difference in their decision to pursue foster care adoption.

## Potential Impact on Pursuit of Foster Care Adoption (% saying major/minor difference)

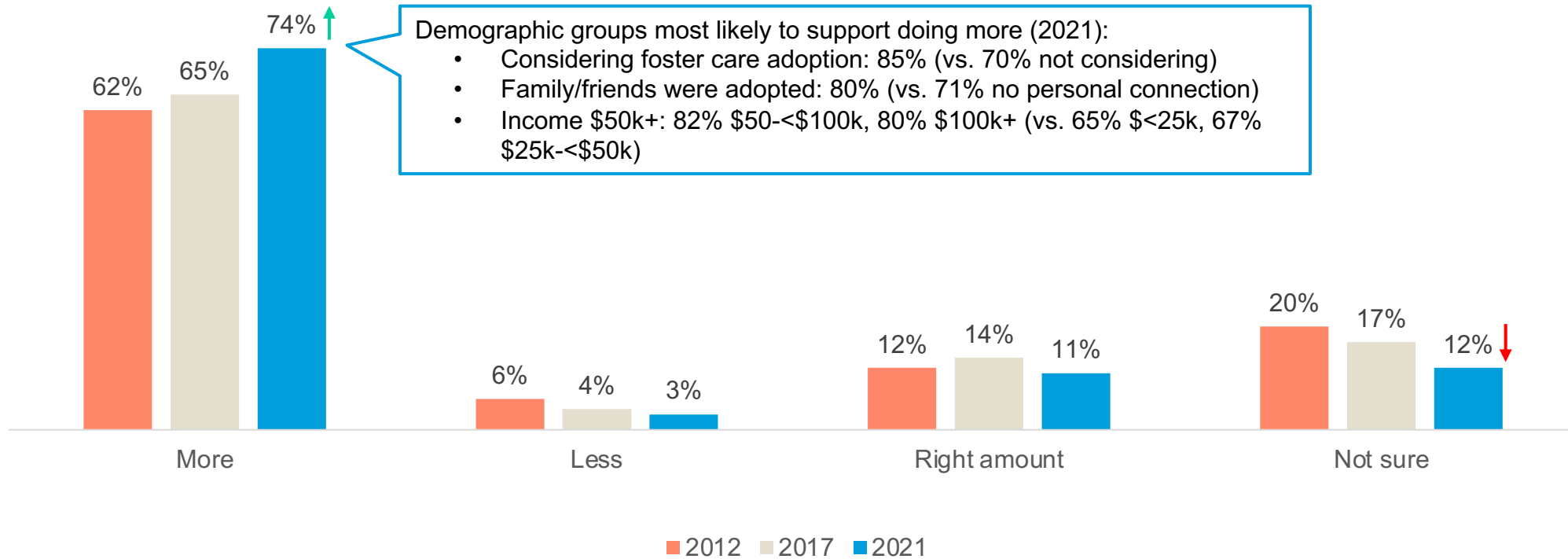
*Base: Has Considered Foster Care Adoption*



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

Compared to 2017, this year Canadians are more likely to say society should be doing more to encourage foster care adoption.

## What Society Should Be Doing to Encourage Foster Care Adoption



Demographic groups most likely to support doing more (2021):

- Considering foster care adoption: 85% (vs. 70% not considering)
- Family/friends were adopted: 80% (vs. 71% no personal connection)
- Income \$50k+: 82% \$50-<\$100k, 80% \$100k+ (vs. 65% \$<25k, 67% \$25k-<\$50k)

↑ ↓ Significantly higher/lower than 2017



# Demographics



# Demographic Profile



## Gender

|        |     |
|--------|-----|
| Male   | 47% |
| Female | 52% |



## Age

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| 18 – 24     | 9%          |
| 25 – 34     | 17%         |
| 35 – 44     | 17%         |
| 45 – 54     | 16%         |
| 55 – 64     | 18%         |
| 65 and over | 23%         |
| <b>Mean</b> | <b>48.8</b> |



## Region

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Atlantic              | 7%  |
| Quebec                | 24% |
| Ontario               | 35% |
| Manitoba/Saskatchewan | 7%  |
| Alberta               | 13% |
| British Columbia      | 14% |
| Northwest             | *   |



## Marital Status

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Never married          | 32% |
| Married of civil union | 41% |
| Divorced               | 10% |
| Separated              | 2%  |
| Widow/Widower          | 5%  |
| Living with partner    | 10% |



## Race

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| White   | 74% |
| Black   | 4%  |
| First Nation/Native Canadian/Indigenous Peoples | 5%  |
| South/Southeast Asian                           | 7%  |
| Other   | 11% |



## Employment

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>EMPLOYED (NET)</b>                                       | <b>53%</b> |
| Employed full time  | 38%        |
| Employed part time  | 10%        |
| Self-employed full time                                     | 3%         |
| Self-employed part time                                     | 2%         |
| Not employed, but looking for work                          | 5%         |
| Not employed and not looking for work                       | 1%         |
| Not employed, unable to work due to a disability or illness | 6%         |
| Retired   | 27%        |
| Student   | 4%         |
| Stay-at-home spouse or partner                              | 3%         |



## Children (under 18) in HH

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| Yes | 27% |
| No  | 73% |





# Demographic Profile, Continued



## Household Income

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Less than \$15,000     | 7%  |
| \$15,000 to \$24,999   | 8%  |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999   | 12% |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999   | 16% |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999   | 19% |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999   | 15% |
| \$100,000 to \$124,999 | 7%  |
| \$125,000 to \$149,999 | 4%  |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999 | 5%  |
| \$200,000 to \$249,999 | 2%  |
| \$250,000 or more      | 2%  |
| Decline to answer      | 3%  |



## Language

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| English                    | 64% |
| French                     | 9%  |
| Both English and French    | 26% |
| Neither English nor French | *   |



## Education

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Below Upper Secondary (NET)</b>                                       | <b>8%</b>  |
| Less than Secondary School (high school)                                 | 2%         |
| Completed some Secondary School (high school)                            | 6%         |
| <b>Upper Secondary or Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary (Vocational) (NET)</b> | <b>31%</b> |
| Graduated from Secondary School (high school)                            | 19%        |
| Trade Certificate or Diploma   | 6%         |
| Completed some University study, but no degree                           | 6%         |
| <b>Tertiary (Higher Education) (NET)</b>                                 | <b>61%</b> |
| Certificate or Diploma from Community College, Institution, CEGEP        | 25%        |
| Teaching Certificate from Provincial Department of Education             | 1%         |
| University Certificate or Diploma below Bachelor Level                   | 6%         |
| Bachelor or First Professional Degree                                    | 20%        |
| Graduate or Professional Degree above Bachelor Level                     | 8%         |