



Trade Pathways Research

December 2023

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about the research





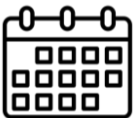
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this research was to understand whether parents have changed their attitudes towards trades as a career pathway for their children and what has caused this shift in behaviour.



CONSUMER SAMPLING

The research consisted of a sample of n=1,105 parents with children in high school (or equivalent such as TAFE, vocational training). Quotas were set on state, household income and what school year their child was in to ensure data was nationally representative.



TIMING

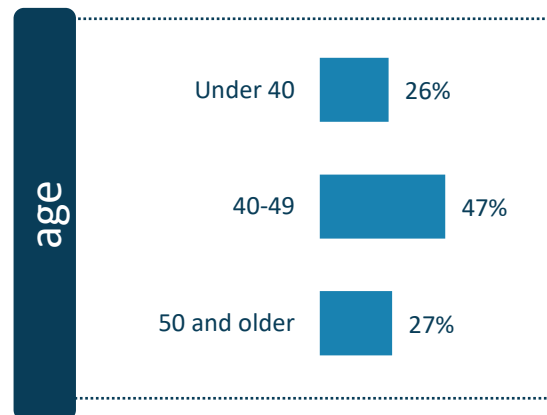
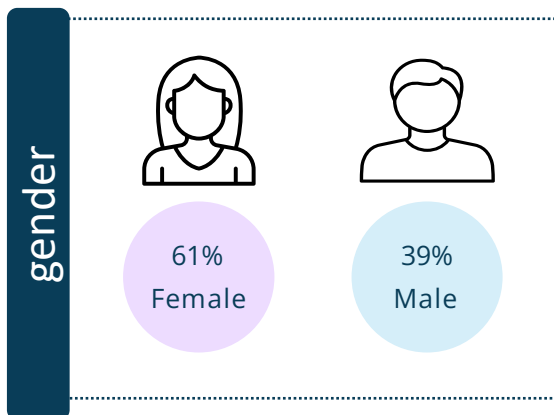
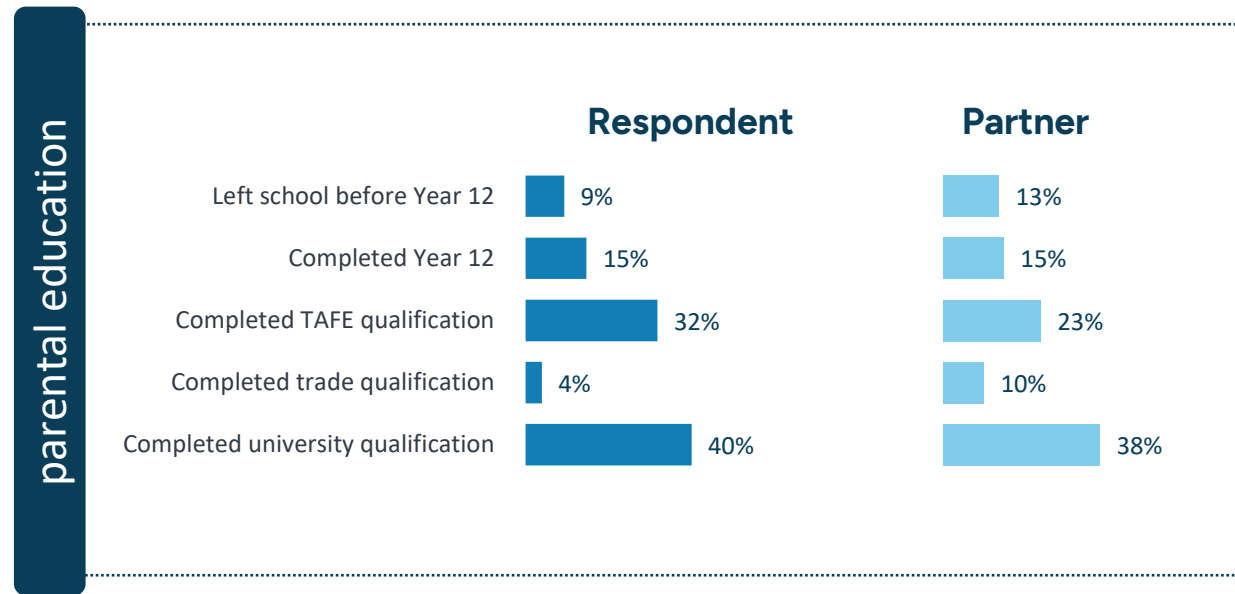
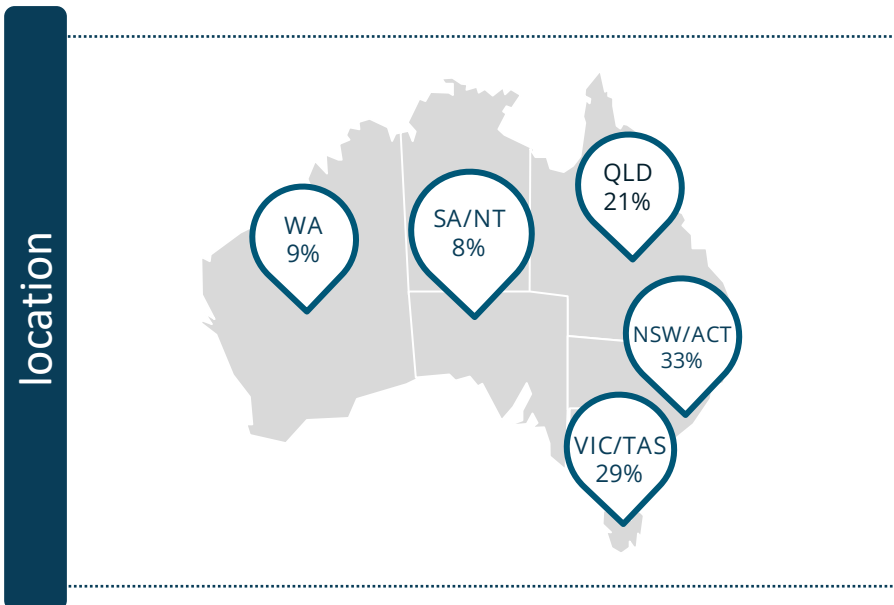
The research was in field from the 4th to the 9th of December 2023.



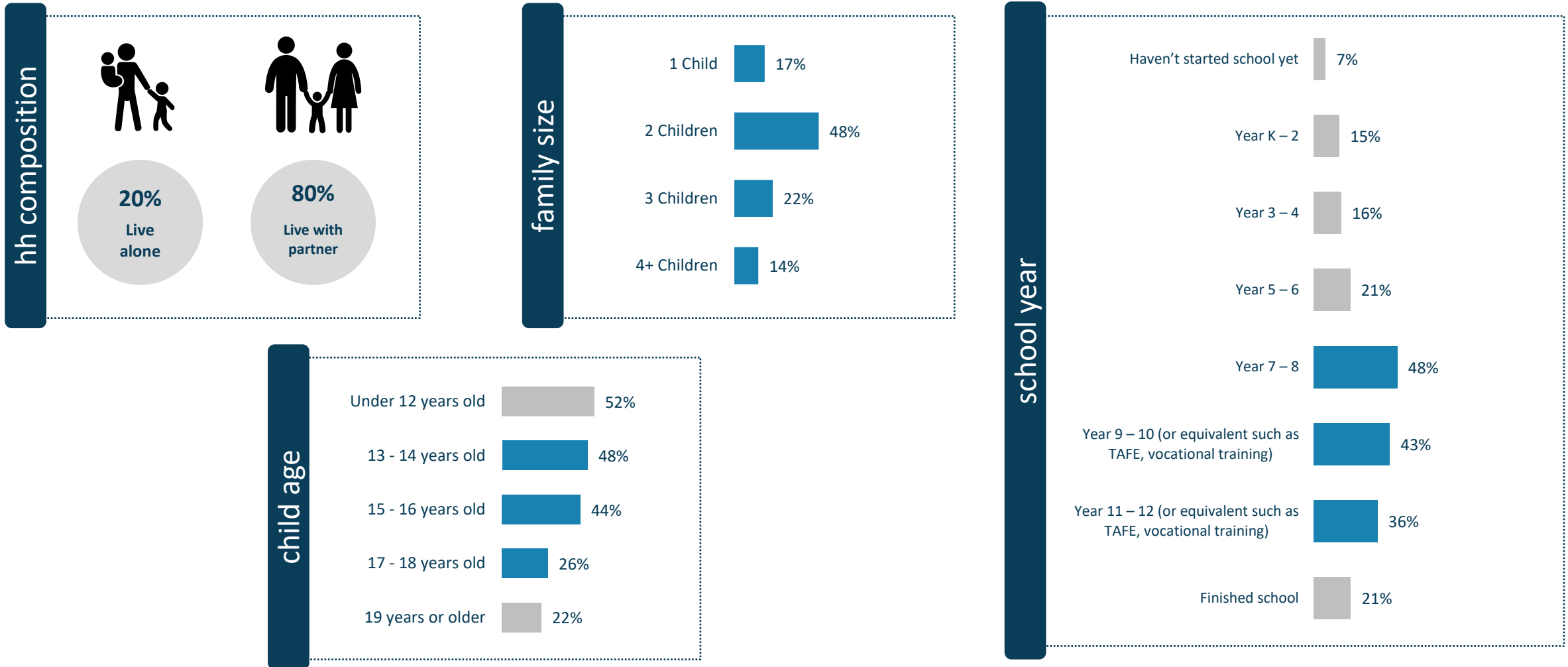
METHODOLOGY

Online self-completion survey. The research was carried out in compliance with the AMSRS Guidelines and National Privacy Principles. Sample was sourced through consumer panels, with participants incentivised for completing the survey.

The sample was distributed across the country and demographic subgroups to ensure a diverse cohort of participants



The majority of respondents live with a partner and have at least 2 children with an even spread across their age and year group at high-school



key insights



parental influence

Over half (52%) of parents claim they have considerable influence over their child's future education and career choice, but 47% claim to have very little influence.

child's career direction

Just under three in four (74%) parents say their child has at least some idea of what they would like to do post-school.

career planning

Parents with a background in trades are understandably more inclined to recommend pursuing a trade qualification, just as parents with a university background tend to favor academic pathways.

trade recommendation

Three in five parents (60%) would recommend that their child enrolls in a trade qualification.

working in trade

Parents are becoming more widely accepting to a career in trade (41%).

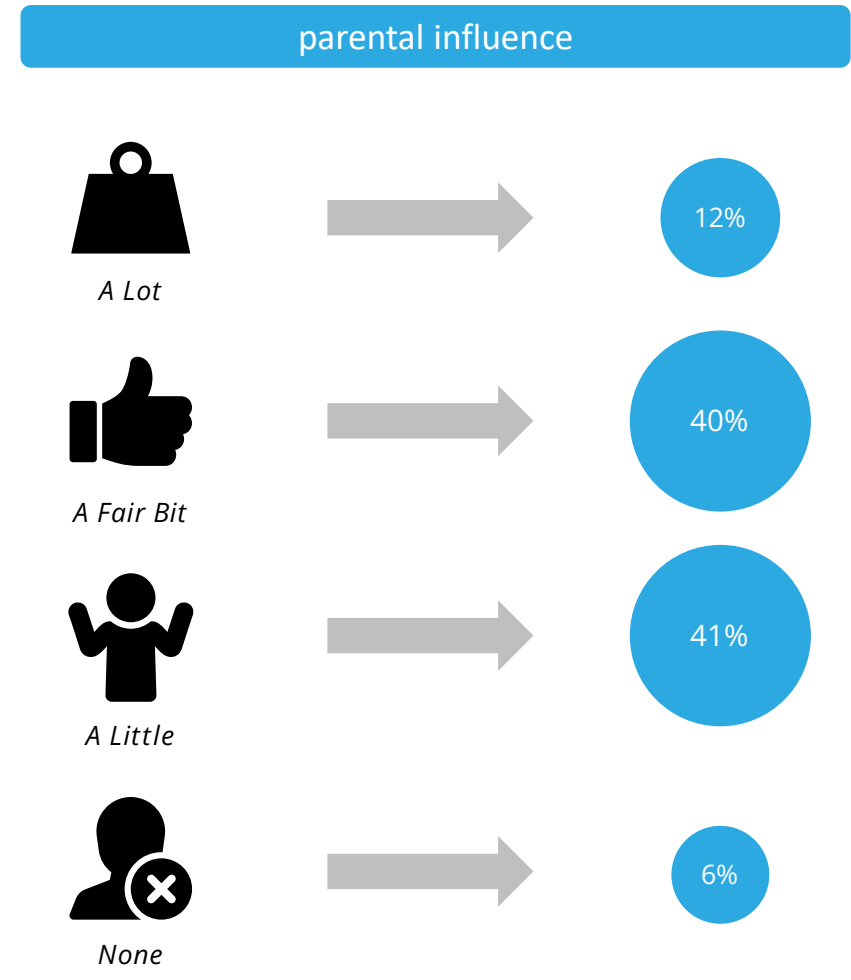
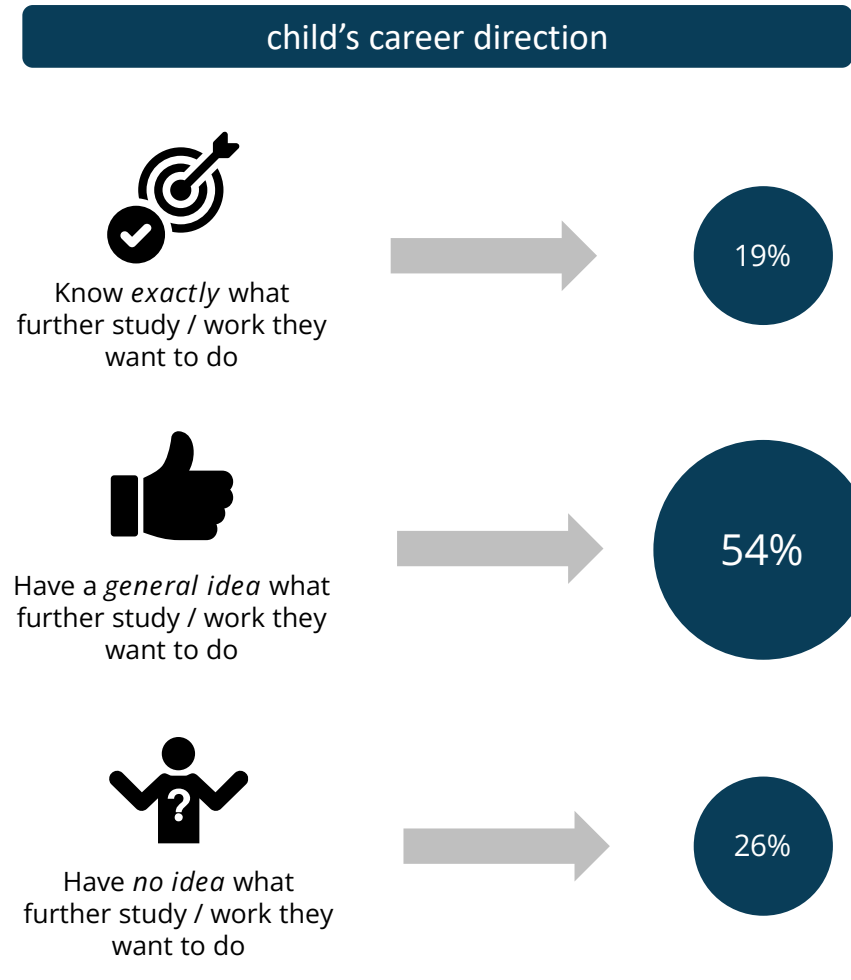
trade benefits

Parents believe that trade jobs offer more ability to work for themselves (41%), earn whilst they learn (39%) and have market demand for skills (30%) than professional jobs.

parental influence



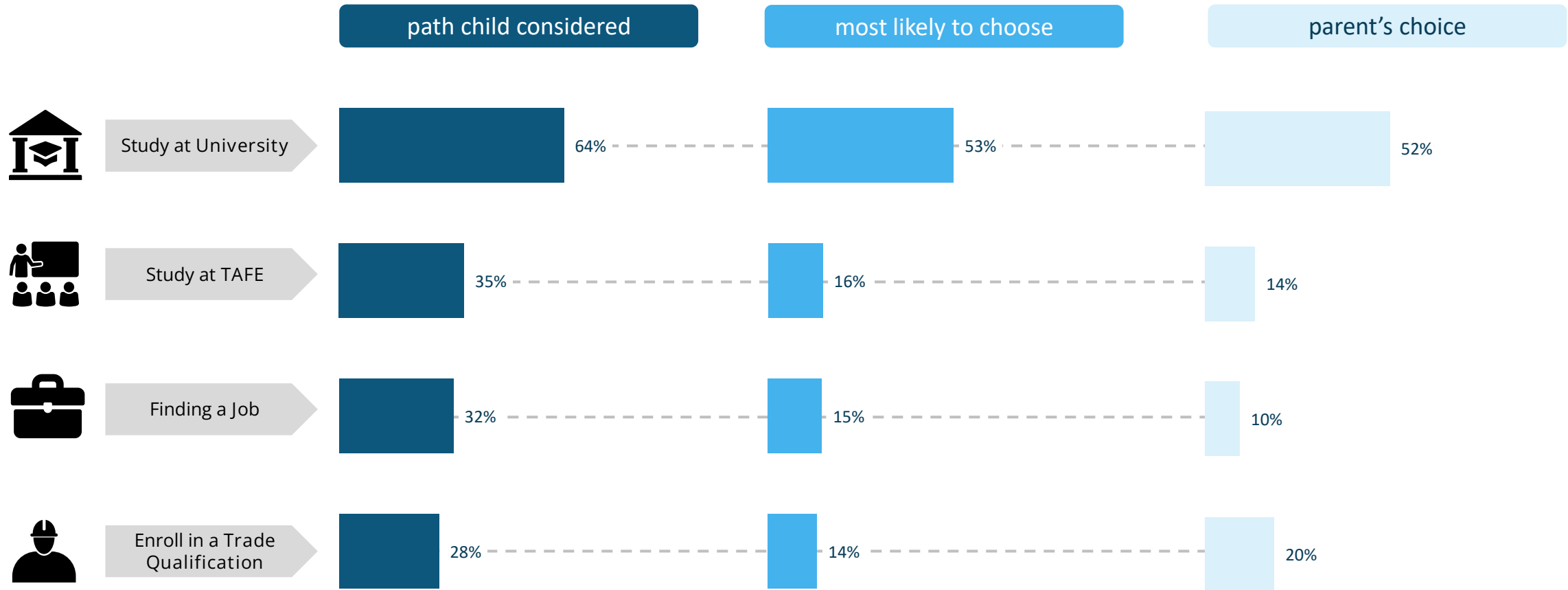
Surprisingly, just 19% of parents feel confident that their child has a clear post-high school plan, and only 12% believe they wield significant influence over their child's choice of career or educational path. In fact, 47% claim to have little or no influence.



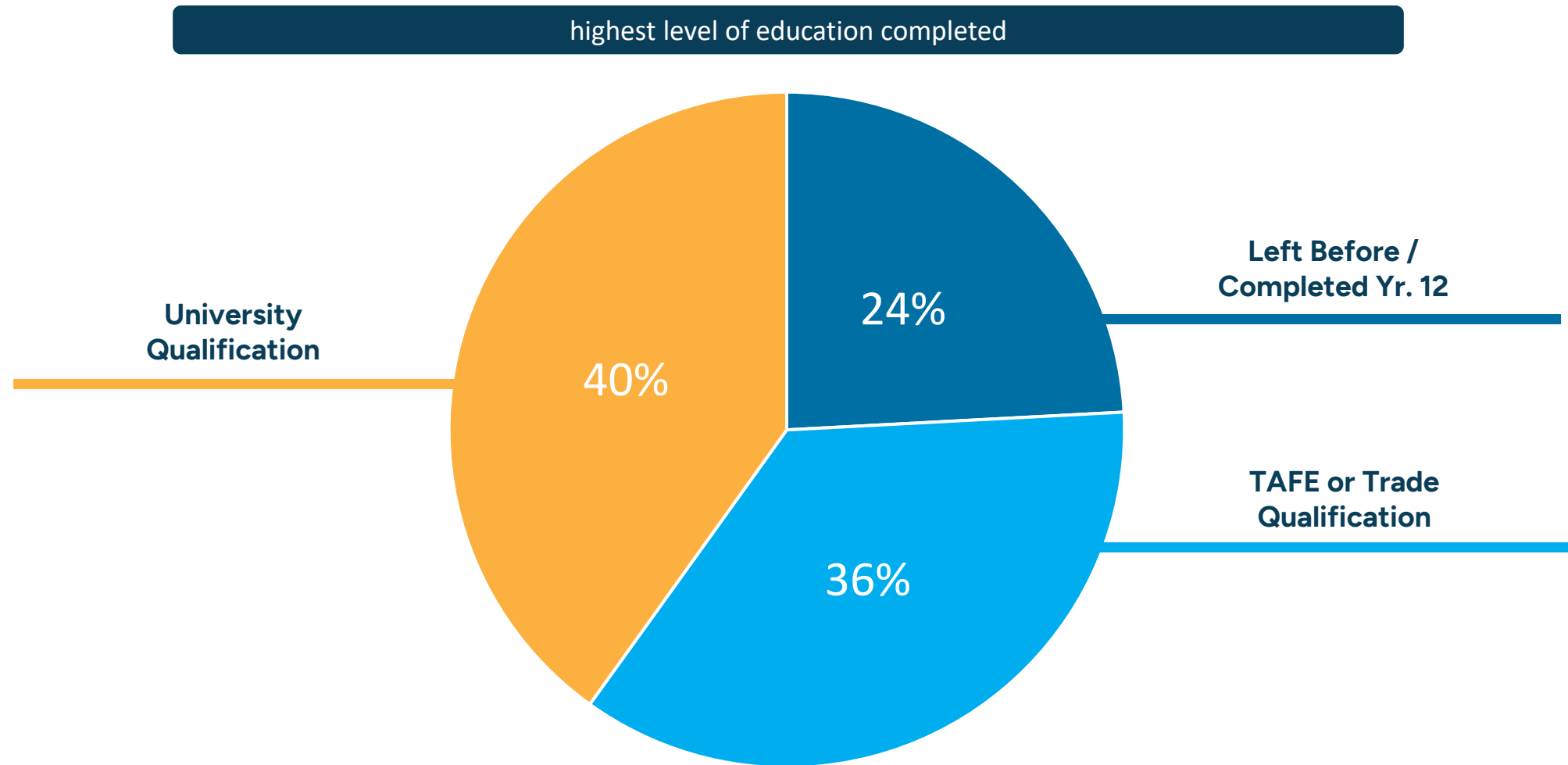
Q1. Thinking now about your child aged 12-18, which of the following best describes their plans for studying and working after they leave school? Q10. How much influence do you have over your child's future study and career choices?
Base: All Parents n=1,105

post high-school paths

Although pursuing a university education remains the most considered and endorsed path after high school, 28% of parents think their children are contemplating enrolling in a trade qualification, with 20% believing the trade qualification pathway is the best choice for their child.



The research showcased a broad spectrum of educational backgrounds, with our objective to investigate the varying degrees of influence exerted by parents from diverse educational backgrounds on their children's future.

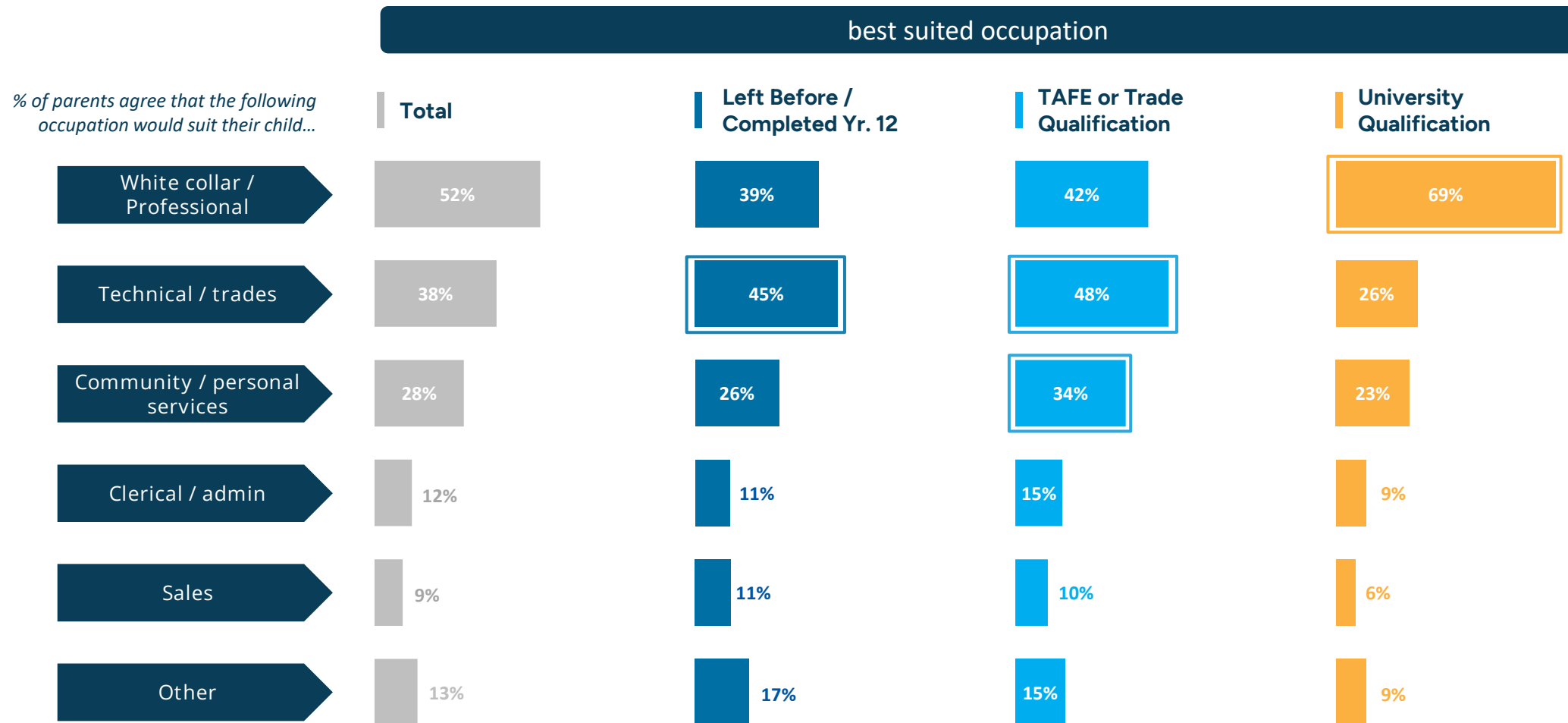


career planning

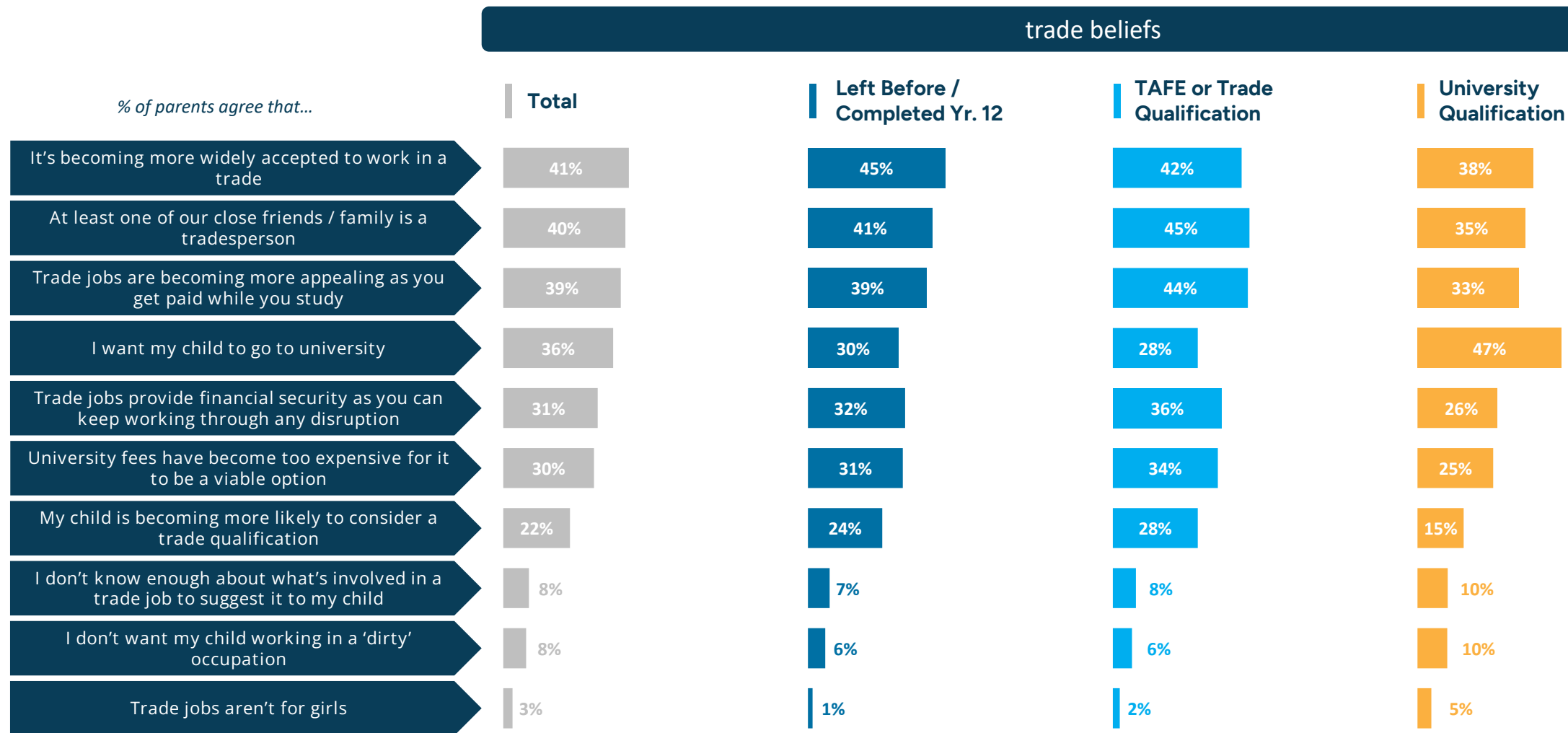


best suited career path

While white-collar jobs remain predominant, a significant 38% of parents are inclined to believe that a technical/trade career would be well-suited for their child. This inclination is particularly pronounced among those parents who have firsthand experience with a trade pathway.



Across all educational backgrounds, parents acknowledge that pursuing a trade is a viable career path, with 41% perceiving an increased acceptance of trade jobs. Additionally, the financial advantage of earning while learning (39%), and the capacity to withstand disruptions (31%) are also valued. This reflects a broadening perspective on the practical and economic merits of vocational paths.

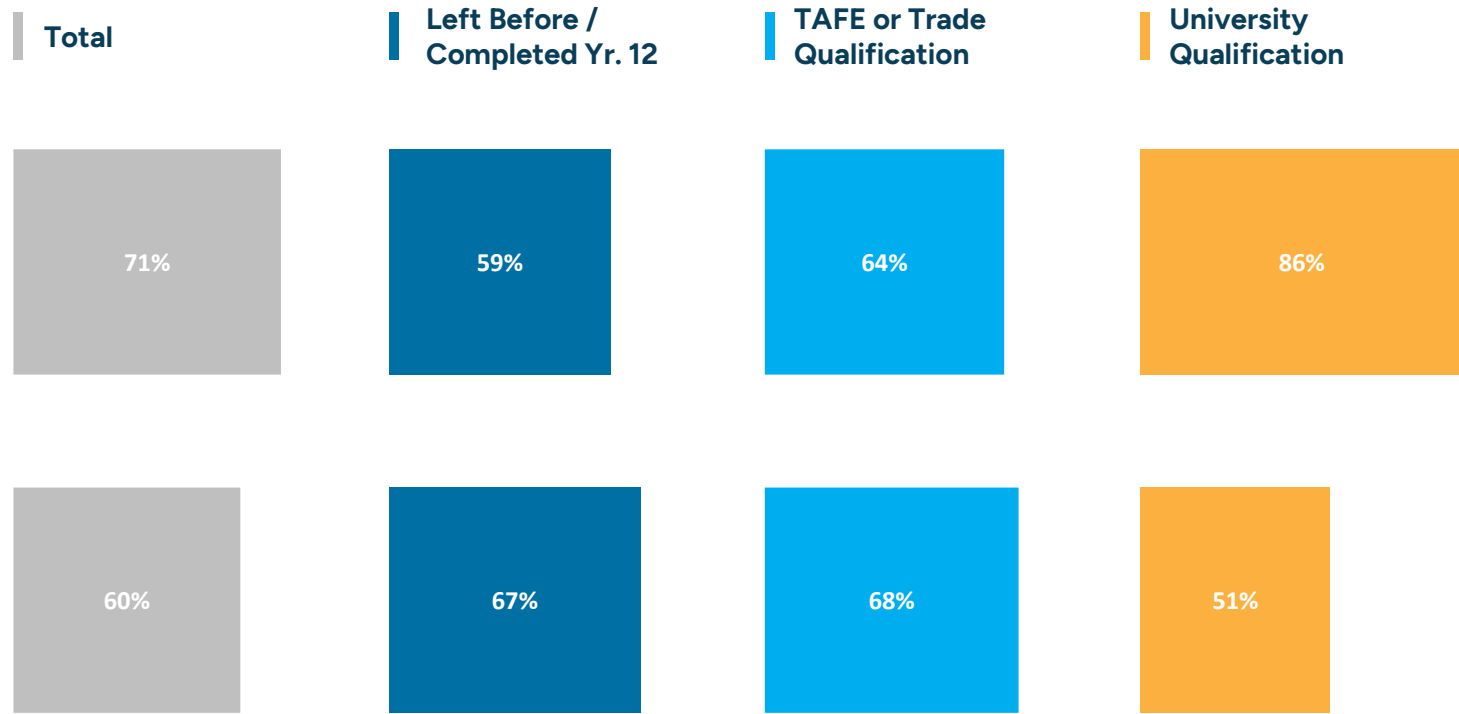


recommended education path

Similarly, while parents tend to favour university education for their children, there's a significant openness towards vocational pathways, with 60% willing to recommend enrolling for trade qualifications indicating a broad acceptance among Australian parents.

likelihood to recommend

% of parents are somewhat/extremely likely to recommend...

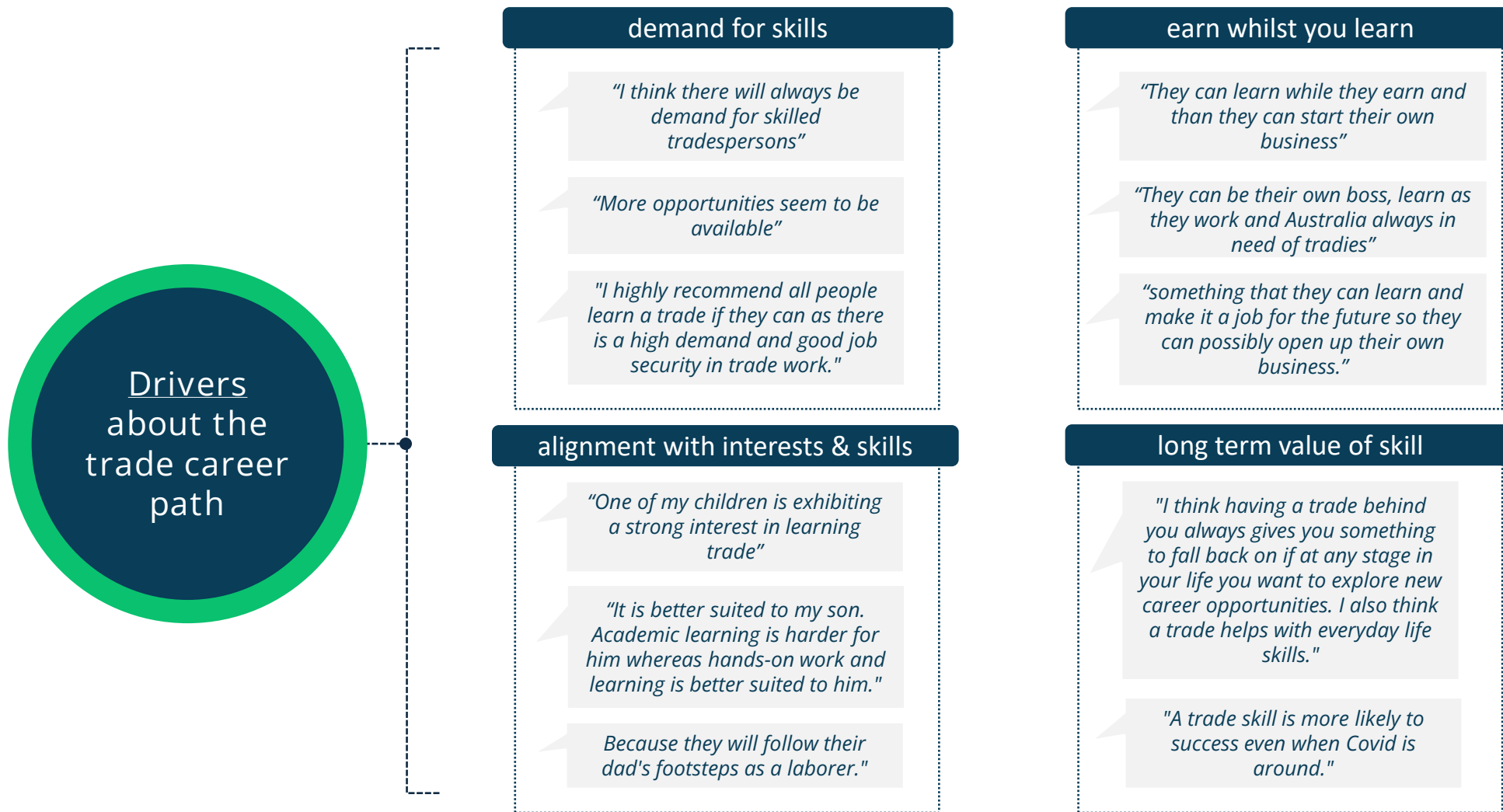


Studying at University



Enrolling in a Trade Qualification

Trade jobs are attractive to parents because they perceive the benefit of always having a demand for their skills. In addition, the ability to earn whilst they learn is favorable, especially for those who already have an interest in a practical line of work.



Shift in advocacy – over past 4 years

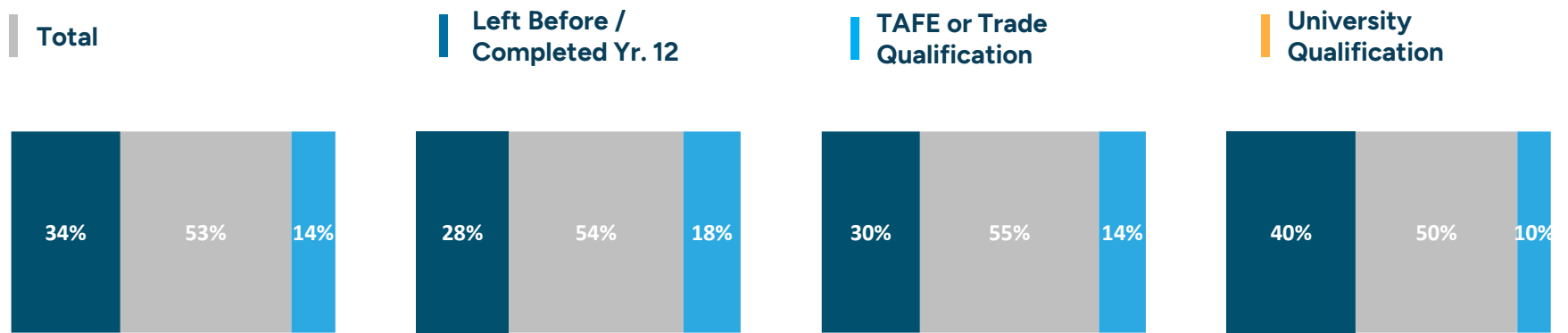
Despite the general recommendation for further education at university and enrolling in a trade qualification, a third of parents claim they are less likely to recommend both University and Trade Qualifications than prior to the pandemic. Potentially the impact of COVID on education outcomes and current cost of living pressures are pushing some parents to rethink higher education options.

shift in advocacy – over past 4 years

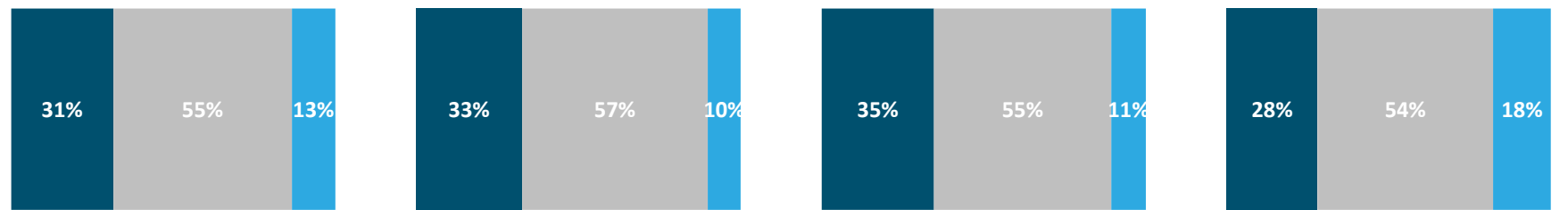
% of parents are somewhat/a lot more likely to recommend...



Studying at University



Enrolling in a Trade Qualification



■ Less likely to recommend ■ Neither more or less likely ■ More likely to recommend

The reason for this lack of recommendation for a career in trade is a combination of perceptions such as the physical nature, including safety issues, and concerns about workplace culture. In addition, some parents don't see the opportunity for career advancement and growth, and therefore question the level job security and stability.



not interested/suited for trade

"I am not sure it would suit my child's skillset and abilities but potentially my mindset could change as they grow older"

"I don't see the need for them to go down this path if they are highly intelligent"

They are more suited to white-collar professional work"

physically demanding

"This is labour intensive and doesn't have a very long career span"

"The pain they might suffer from like back pain and so on at an early age"

"The workload is difficult and taxing on the aging body especially out in the weather"

workplace culture

"The culture in the trade section can be toxic"

I'm worried about the culture of trades."

"The trade industry is not as good as it used to be and there's lots of tradies that make mistakes and do not have the skills"

security and stability

"Professional job is more long lasting. A blue-collar job is high paying but not long lasting."

"Job security (and) long term development"

"The trade sector is very on again off again, many tradies don't get paid upfront, then end up in debt later on."

career advancement & growth

"University of definitely the way to go these days, long term it's better pay wise"

"Professionals earn more than tradies."

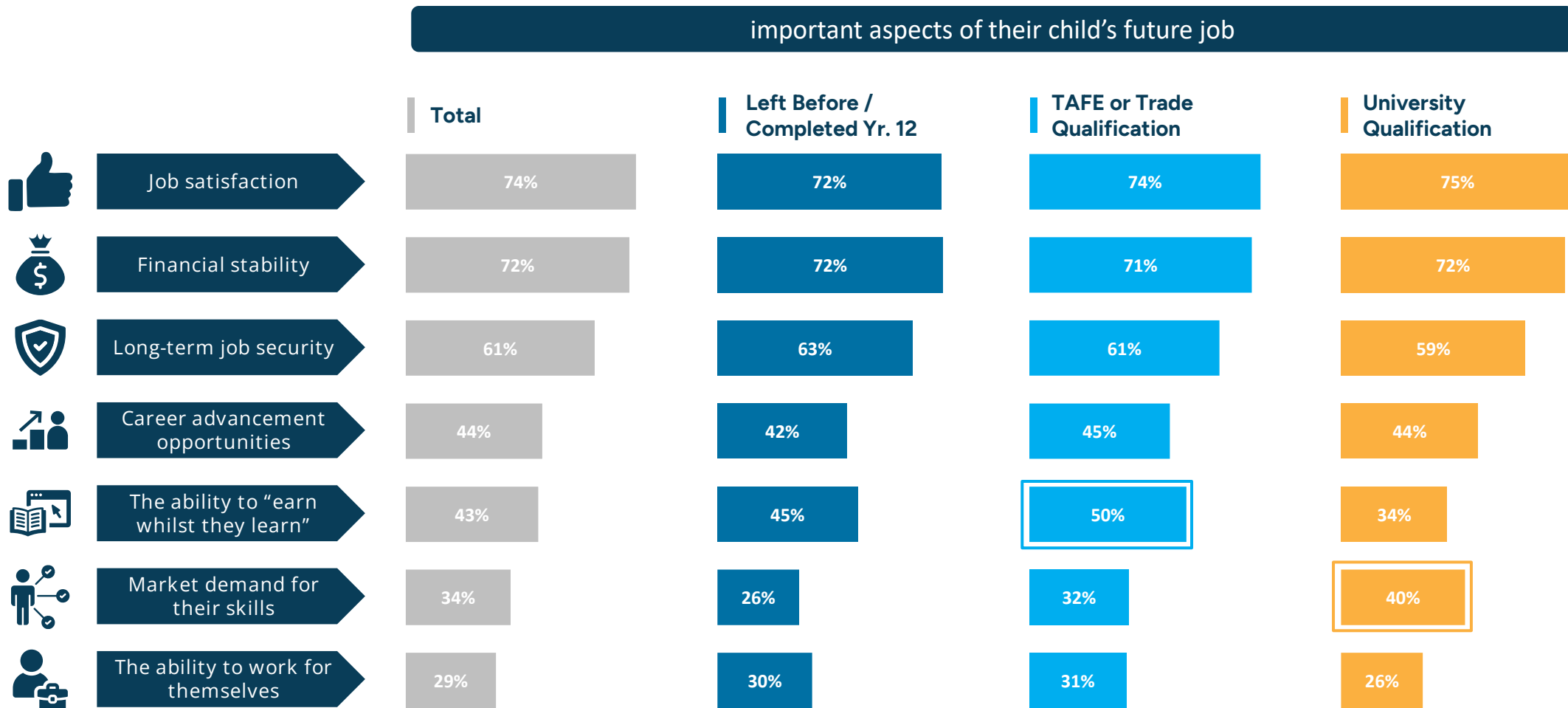
"I think studying in the university is the best way for this generation, so they have something to fall back on when required."

prospects



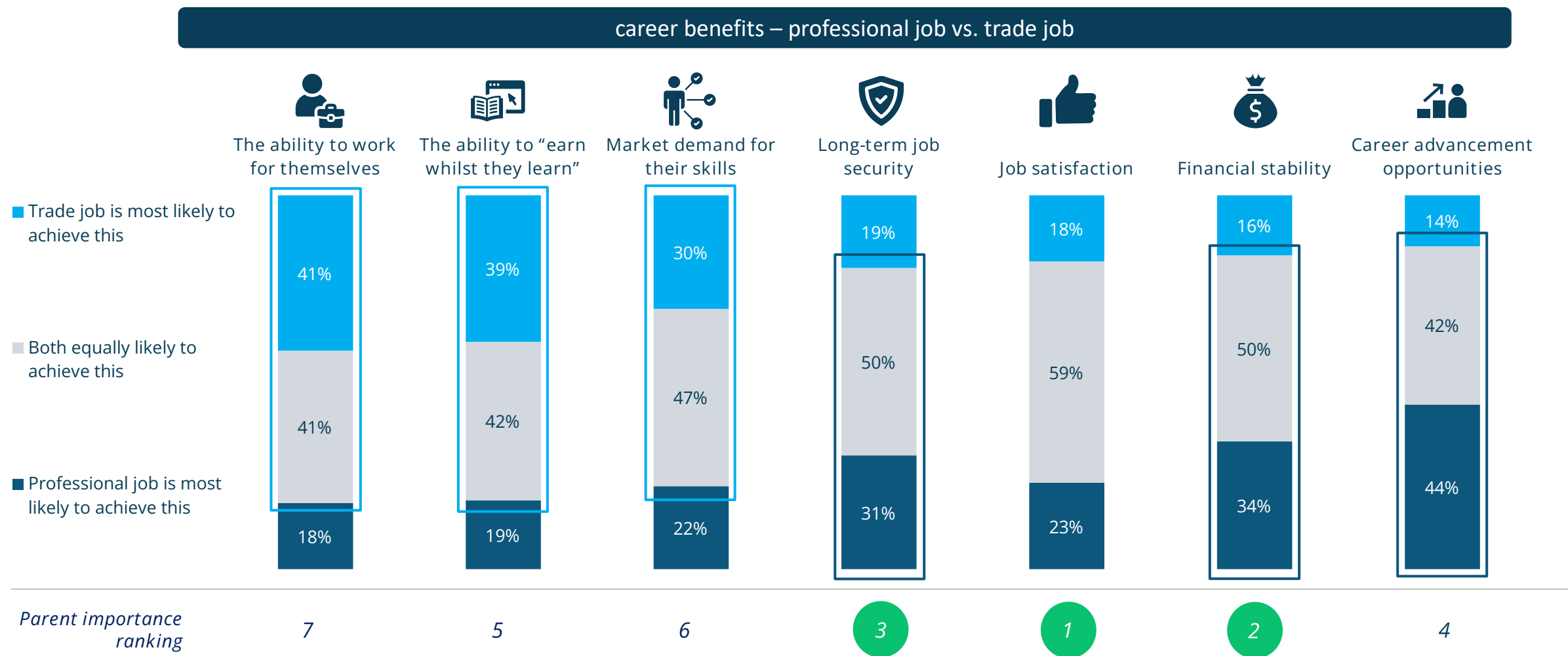
important aspects of the job

Parents believe job satisfaction and financial stability are the two frontrunners when it comes to important aspects of their child's working life, whereas the ability to "earn whilst they learn" is important for parents with a TAFE or trade qualification.

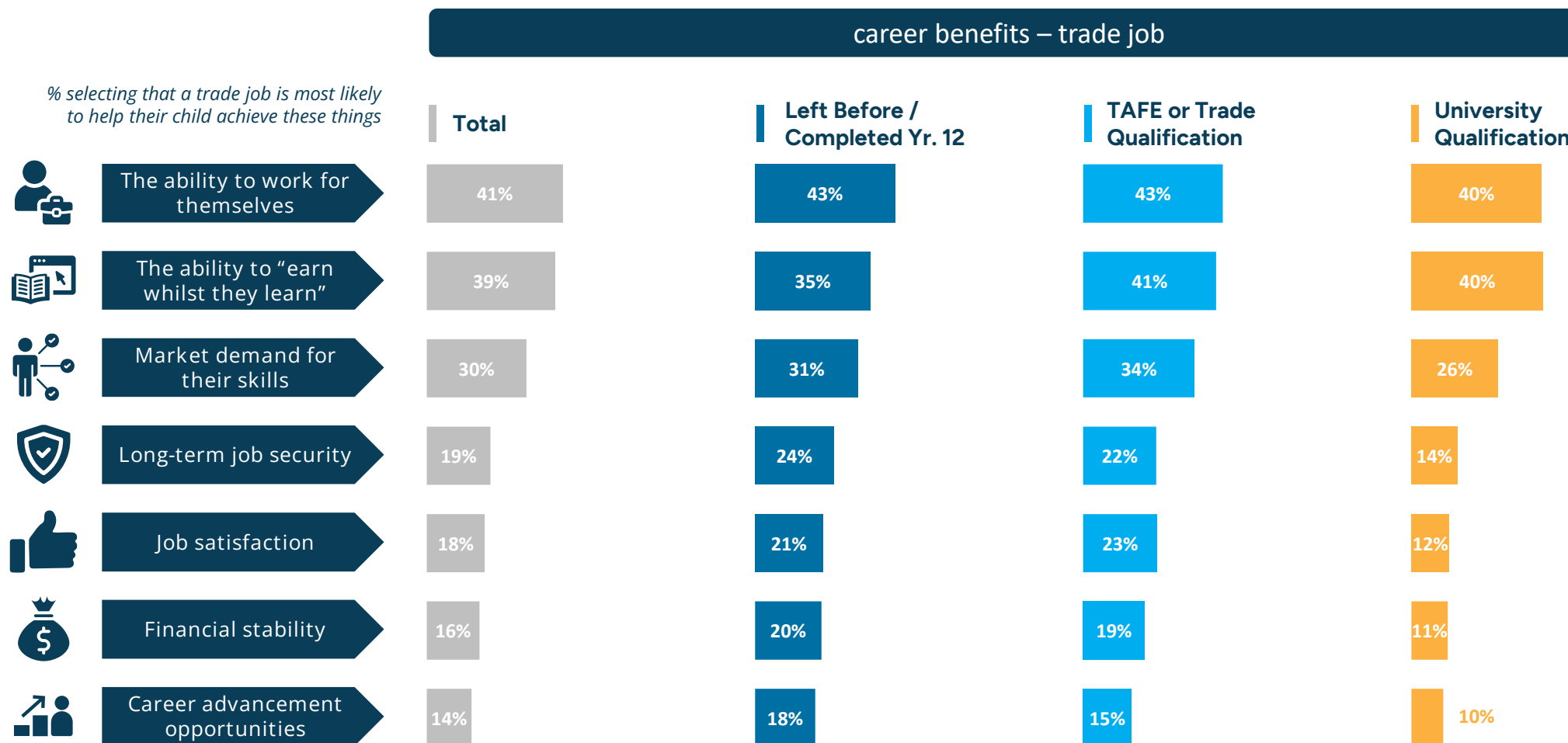


career benefits – professional job vs. trade job

Parents perceive trade jobs to present the best opportunity for their child to work for themselves or “earn whilst they learn”, while professional jobs are seen as presenting better career advancement opportunities and financial stability. Despite these distinctions, most parents maintain a balanced perspective regarding the merits of both career paths across the various criteria.



As expected, university educated parents are less likely to agree a trade job will provide the career benefits to their children, compared to a professional job.





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Numbers don't answer business questions by themselves, but they still feel tangible.

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