



**GENDER  
ON THE  
BALLOT**

# She Votes:

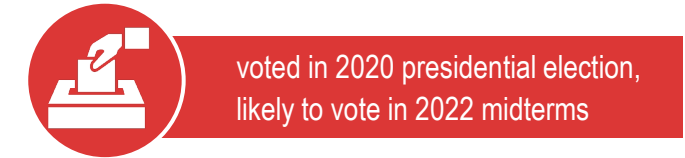
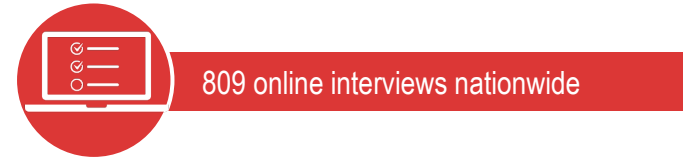
WOMEN, THE WORKPLACE AND PANDEMIC POLITICS



March 2021

# Methodology

- Benenson Strategy Group conducted 809 online interviews nationwide from February 24 – March 1, 2021 among women who voted in the 2020 presidential election and are likely to vote in the 2022 midterm election.
- The margin of error for the dataset overall is +/- 3.5% at the 95% confidence level and is higher among subgroups.
- Due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to 100%.



February 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



## Key Findings

# Key Findings

## 2020 Election



- **American women believe the 2020 election was the most important of their lifetime so far.** Their minds were made up well before the November 3rd election.
- **Vice President Harris was a real factor for a majority of 2020 voters.** Among Biden voters, 68% said she was a factor in their voting decision. Over 60% of American women express excitement about having a woman as Vice President for the first time, including even one in four Republicans.

## Pandemic Politics and Policies



- **Women agree the pandemic has exposed some of America's major structural flaws – and we should do something about them.** Huge majorities of women across the political spectrum say they now support changes that would once have been considered left of center– expanding American health care access, paying caregivers more, investing in aged care, and policies on sick and family leave. Notably, nearly three quarters of Republicans and Fox News viewers would support these moves.
- **Most women with children would not automatically send their kids to in-person learning if schools were to open tomorrow.** Though two in three moms with school-age kids can't wait for them to be back in real school, they think re-opening schools without knowing all the risks would be the wrong move. Plus, despite acknowledging that taking care of kids during this time is stressful, they love that they're able to spend more time with them.

# Key Findings (continued)

## Economic impacts, mental health and the workplace



- **The pandemic is taking a mental and economic toll on women.** Especially among young women, Covid-19 is impacting their mental health and relationships with close family and friends. Economically, over one in three women say their financial situation has gotten worse since the beginning of the pandemic and a quarter of working women indicate that it has affected their careers by delaying raises, bonuses and promotions – with mothers feeling this more acutely.
- **Women are not super eager to head back to the office.** Three quarters believe that we need to rethink the 9-5 model to allow more flexibility, and though some have found working from home more stressful, most say their level of stress around work has been the same or less than usual.
- **Many women of color and low-income women feel that their employers value profits over the well-being of employees.** Moreover, a quarter of women feel their employer has put them at risk of catching Covid – a number that is higher among low-income women, women of color and young women.



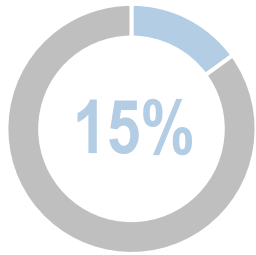
# Political Lay of the Land

# Unprecedented Number of Women Believe the 2020 Election to Be the Most Important of Their Lifetime, and Almost Two in Three Decided on Their Vote Six Months Out

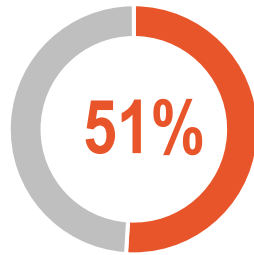
*Stakes were lower in the 2018 midterms, opinions less concrete leading up to deadline*

Thinking about your decision to vote in the November election, would you say you believe that:

*This election was the most important of my lifetime so far*



November 2018\*

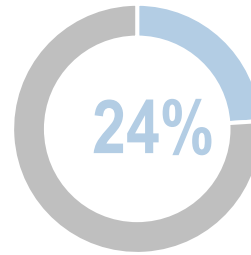


March 2021

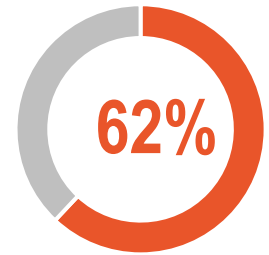
This election was...	Nov. '18	Mar. '21
More important than most	60	36
No more or less important than any other election	23	11
Less important than most elections	3	2

When did you decide who you would vote for?

*More than six months before the election*



November 2018\*



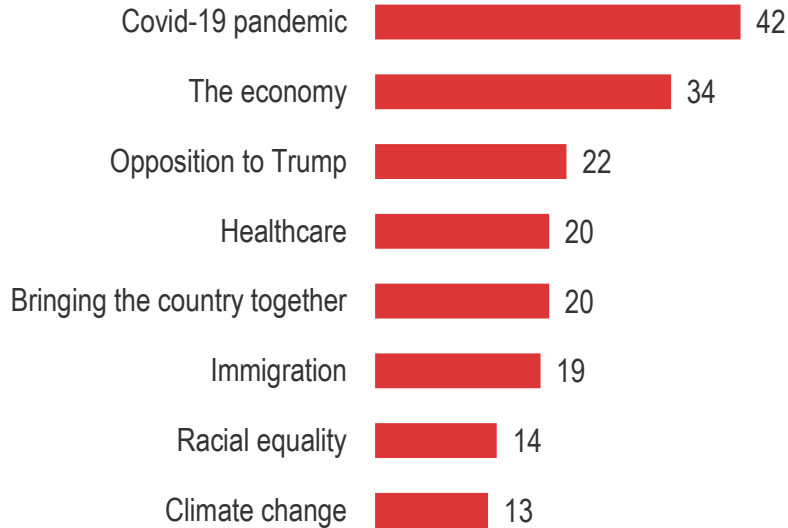
March 2021

Decided to vote...	Nov. '18	Mar. '21
More than a month before the election	28	19
Within the last month before election	25	11
Within the last week before election	22	7

\*November 2018 numbers from post-midterm election poll among women fielded Nov. 15-20, 2018

# Covid and the Economy Were the Biggest Vote Motivators for Women; Going Forward Women Prefer a Focus on the Economy Over Issues Related to Injustice

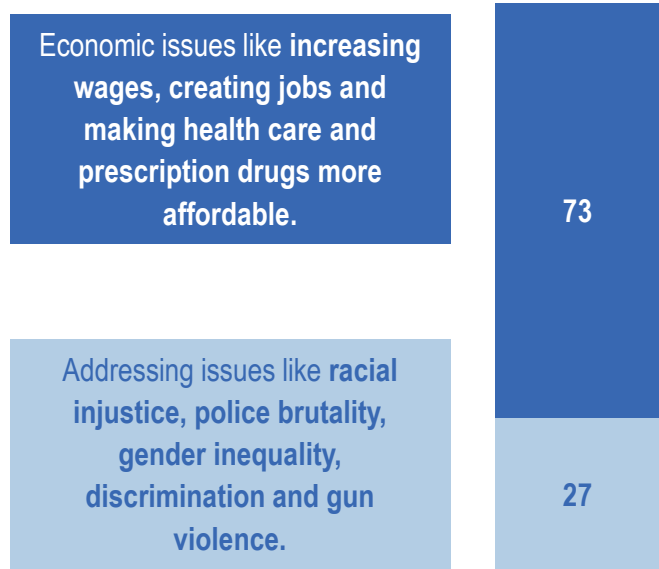
Which of the following were the most important issues when deciding whom to vote for? *You may select up to three.\**



*\*Only showing top 8 responses, other issue responses include:*

*Jobs, support for Trump, crime & safety, taxes, abortion, guns, freedom of speech, gov't spending, foreign policy, police violence, gender equality, student debt, the Supreme Court, none of these*

Putting the Covid-19 pandemic aside for a moment, which of the following would you most like to see Congress and the President focus on?

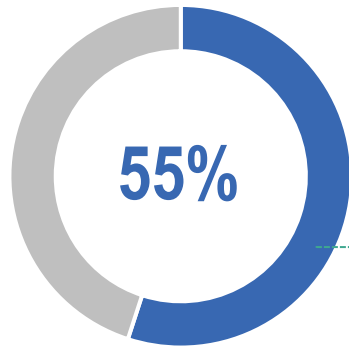




# VP Harris Was a Real Factor in Majority of Women's Votes – Especially Biden Voters; Having First Woman VP Is Exciting, Even Close to One in Three Republican Women

How much of a factor was Vice President Kamala Harris in your vote?

Total factor (major + somewhat of a factor)



Biden voters: 68%  
Trump voters: 39%

Regardless of who you voted for in the presidential election, in your view, is having **a woman / Black and South Asian woman** Vice President for the first time...

EXCITING (very + somewhat)

NOT EXCITING (not very + not at all)

Woman Vice President



Women of color: 79%  
Dems: 89%  
Reps: 30%

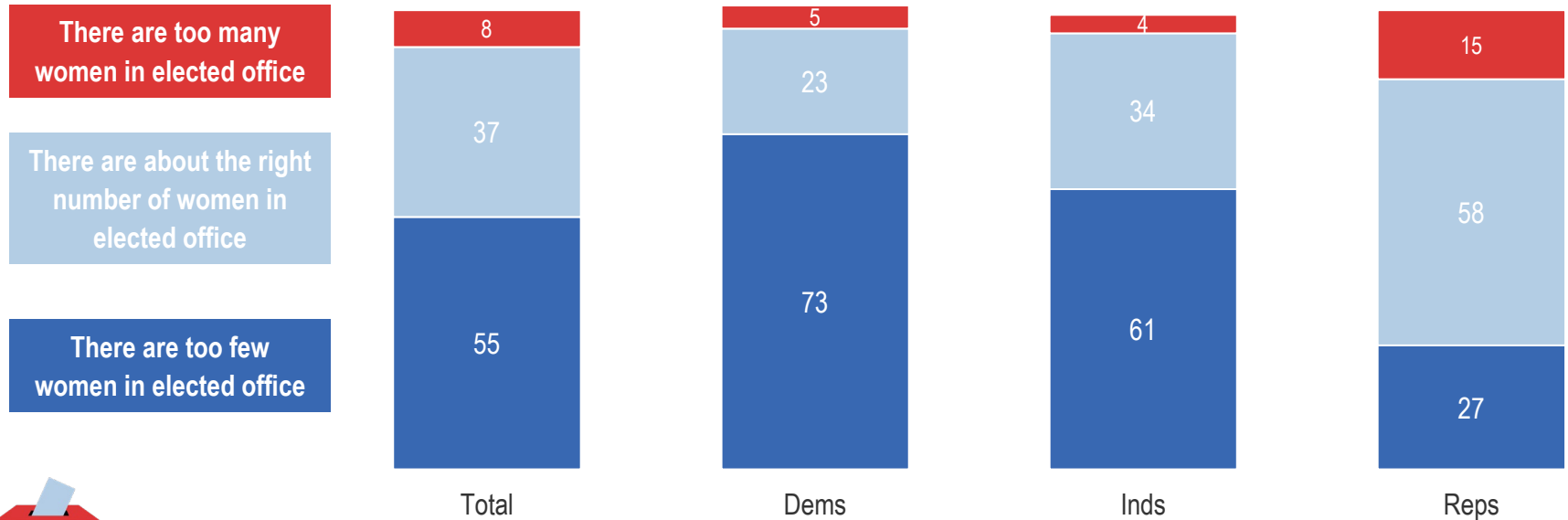
Black and South Asian woman Vice President



Women of color: 76%  
White, non-college: 48%  
White, college+: 66%

# Women Voters Largely Think There Are Too Few Women in Office, Republican Women Tend to Think the Current Number Is About Right

Thinking about the number of women in political office, which is closer to your view?

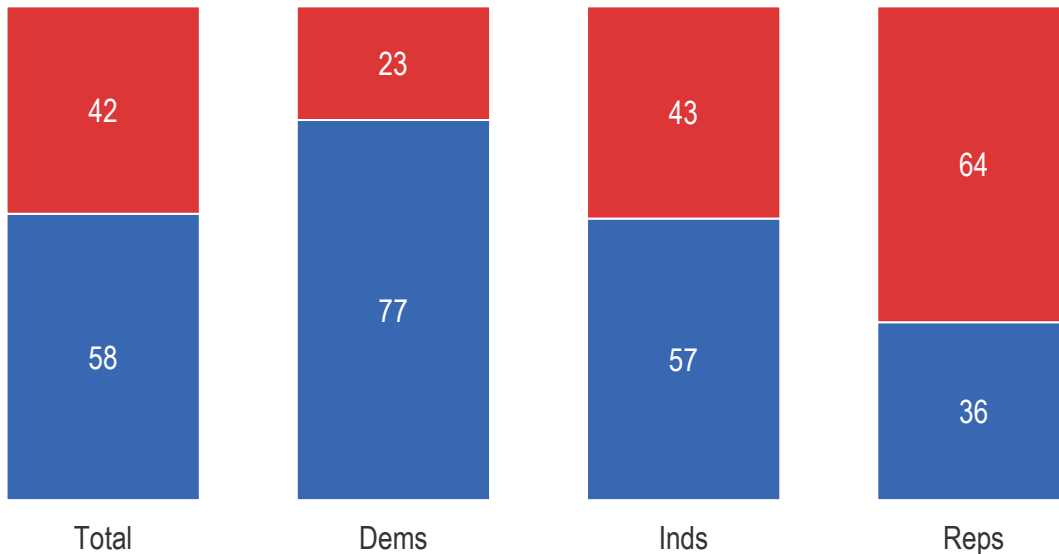


# Women Harbor Some Hope That the Record Number of Women in Congress Will Help Break the Gridlock, But Republican Women Are Much Less Optimistic About Change

Which of the following comes closer to your view?

There is so much gridlock in Washington and that won't change, so I am **not hopeful** the women in Congress will be able to get things done.

The record number of women now serving in Congress makes me **hopeful** that they will work collaboratively to break through gridlock and get things done.



# Though Gender Alone Isn't a Vote Motivator, Women Overwhelmingly Agree That More Women in Power = Progress, More Opportunities and Even Better Covid Management

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this statement.

*Total agree (strongly + somewhat agree)*

When women succeed, it opens up doors and provides more opportunities for women and girls everywhere.



When I see a woman succeed, it makes me feel like **society will value the contributions and achievements of women like me more too.**



Women **politicians bring a new and different perspective to the office** – not better than a man, just different – and that will **help our country move forward.**



I like the idea of having more women in political office, but when I go to cast my vote, the thing that matters most to me is whether the candidate is a **Democrat or a Republican, not whether they are a man or a woman.**



If there were more women in political office, it would help us do a better job of dealing with the country's problems, like Covid-19.

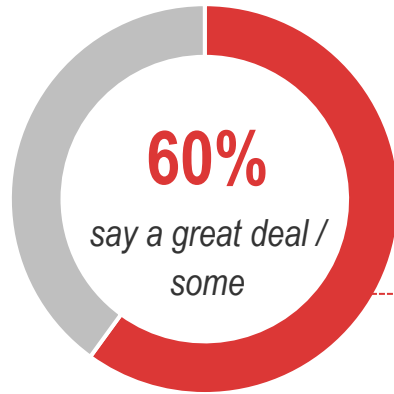




# COVID-19's Impacts on Mental & Economic Health

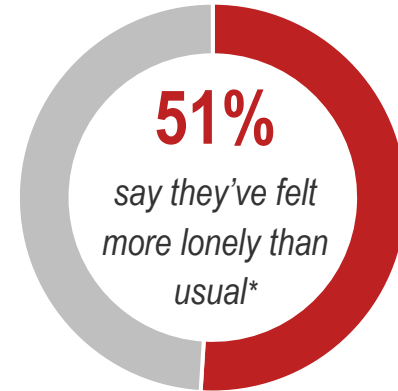
# The Pandemic Is Taking a Significant Toll on Women's Mental Health – Especially Younger Women; Half Say They've Felt Lonelier Than Usual This Past Year

Would you say that the situation with Covid-19 has affected your mental health...?



71% of women under 40 years old say the pandemic **has affected their mental health**

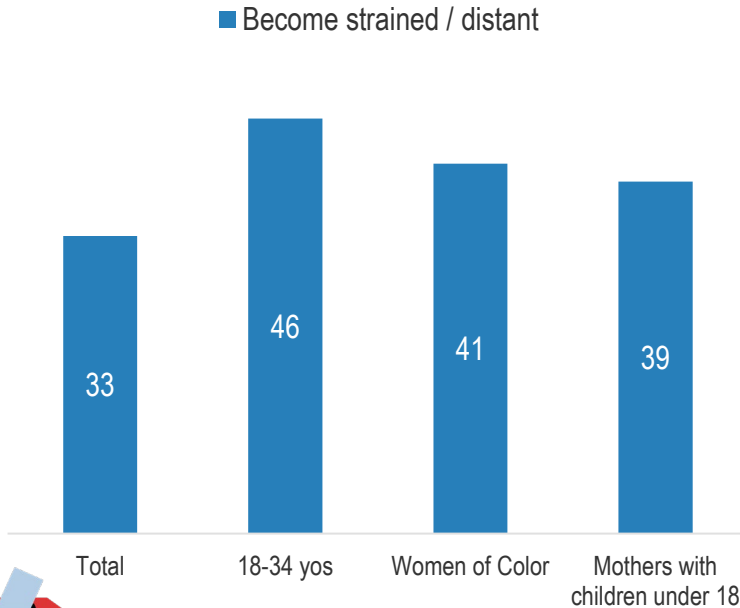
Since the pandemic began, would you say you have felt lonely...?



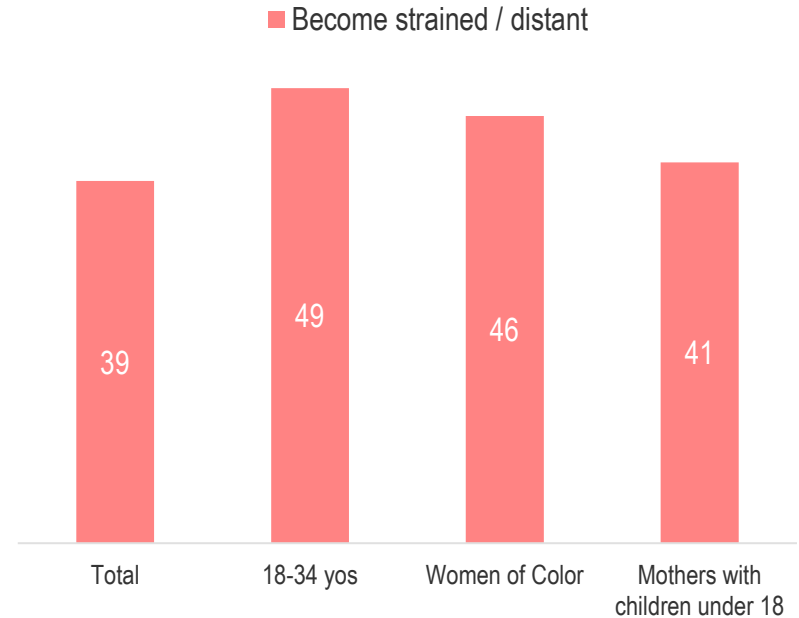
\*much more than usual + a little more than usual

# One in Three Women Say They Are Experiencing Tension in Their Relationships with Family and Friends, Higher Among Younger Women and Women of Color

During the pandemic would you say that your relationships with close family members have...?

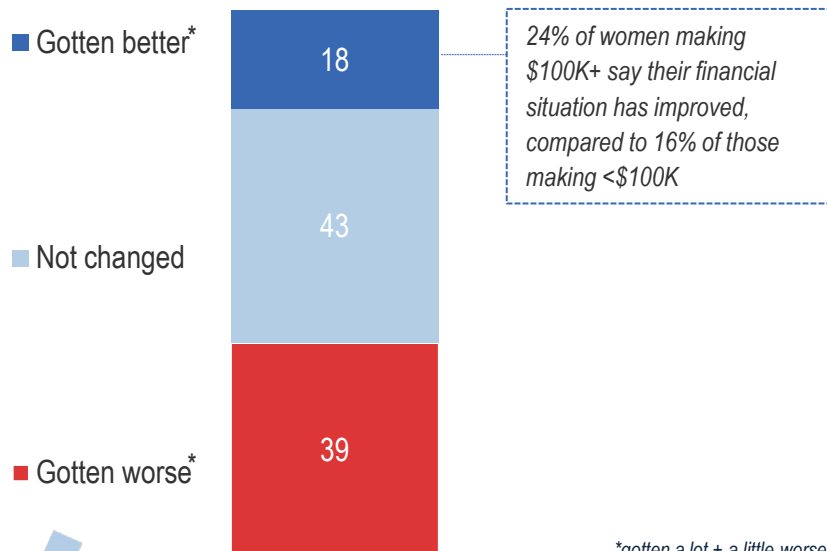


During the pandemic would you say that your relationships with close friends have...?



# Almost 40% of Women Say Their Financial Situation Has Gotten Worse, While Over a Quarter Report Experiencing Career Setbacks, Higher Among Young Women & Moms

Since the pandemic began, has your personal financial situation...



\*gotten a lot + a little worse  
\*gotten a lot + a little better

Which of the following statements describe how you've personally been affected by the pandemic? *Please select all that apply.*

(among women currently employed)

I was supposed to be up for a raise / bonus / promotion but because of the pandemic did not get one



43% among women under 40 yrs old

45% among mothers with kids under 18 yrs old

I've had less work since the pandemic began



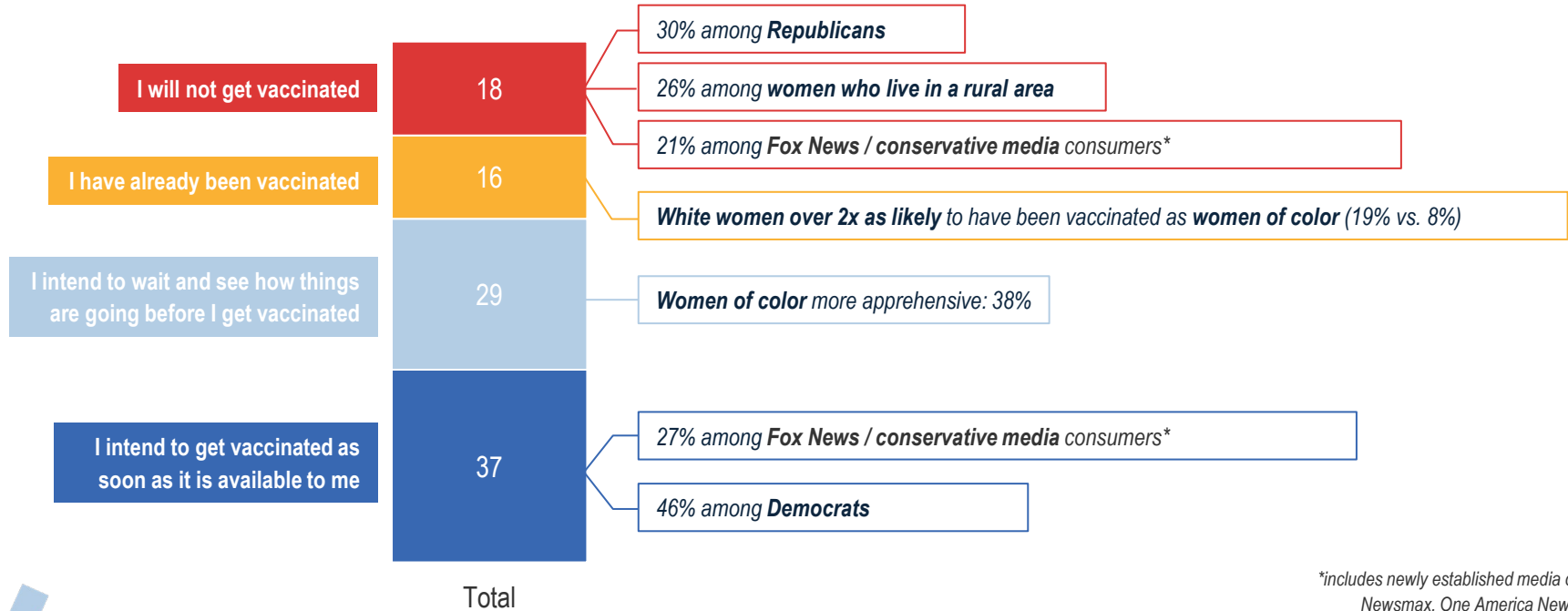




# Pandemic Politics & Policies

# Over 80% of Women Intend to Get Vaccine Though Republicans and Women in Rural Areas More Likely to Refuse; Racial Disparities Emerge in Vaccination Rates and Trust

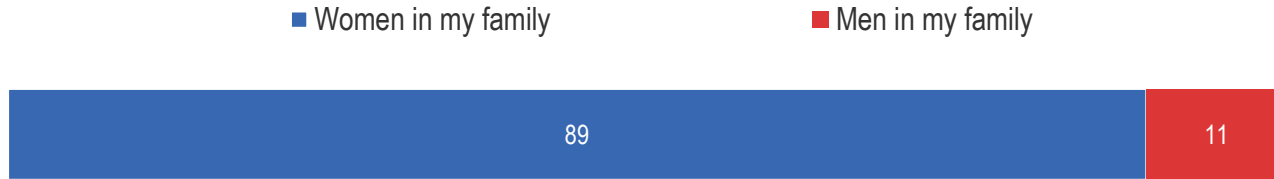
Which of the following comes closest to your view of the Covid-19 vaccines that are available?



\*includes newly established media outlets like Newsmax, One America News Network ('OAN'), Breitbart, etc.

# Women Say Helping Family Members Navigate Vaccine Sign Ups Is a Responsibility That Falls Squarely on Their Shoulders

As a general rule, who in your family usually takes responsibility for helping other family members do things like getting signed up for the Covid-19 vaccine?



# Covid's Impact on Low-Income Workers, the Elderly and People of Color Is Highly Concerning, Especially to Suburban Women Who Are Key Swing Voters

How much do each of the following statements concern you?

*Total concerning (very + somewhat concerning)*



# Covid Has Heightened Women's Belief in the Need for More Health Care Investment to Near Universal Levels – Including Expanding Medicare, Medicaid and the ACA

*Large swathes of Republicans, Fox Viewers agree with expanding health care, even when ACA is explicitly invoked*

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*Total agree (strongly + somewhat agree)*

The pandemic has **exposed even more flaws in our health care system** and made me believe that **we really need to a better system** – one that is more affordable and gets people decent care.



The pandemic has **exposed even more flaws in our health care system** and made me believe that **we really need to expand Medicaid, Medicare and the Affordable Care Act** so more people can get decent care.



	Among Reps	Among Fox News / conservative media consumers*
Statement 1: Need for a better health care system	73	77
Statement 2: Need to expand Medicaid, Medicare and the ACA	62	70

*\*includes newly established media outlets like Newsmax, One America News Network ('OAN'), Breitbart, etc.*

# Covid Has Prompted 8 in 10 Women to Throw Their Support Behind Paid Sick and Maternity Leave Policies, Better Pay for Caregivers, Public Investment in Aged Care

*Again, strong numbers of Republicans, Fox viewers are supportive of these ideas, traditionally seen as progressive*

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*Total agree (strongly + somewhat agree)*

This pandemic has made me think that the **people who take care of our kids, the sick and the elderly don't get paid well enough.**



Among Reps

Among Fox News / conservative media consumers\*

77

78

The pandemic has made me feel that **we need more public investment in aged care and nursing homes.**



79

86

This pandemic has made me **more supportive of policies like paid sick leave and paid family or maternity leave.**



77

77

*\*includes newly established media outlets like Newsmax, One America News Network ('OAN'), Breitbart, etc.*



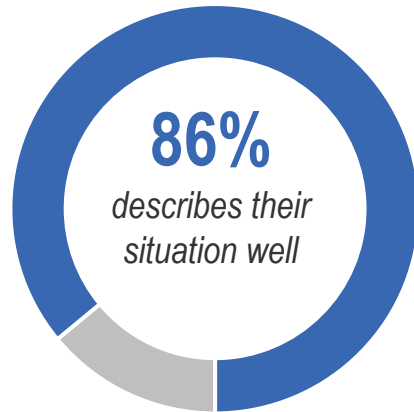
# Pandemic Caregivers

# Mothers Feel Conflicted About Their New Reality: They Both Love How Much Time They're Getting With Their Kids and Also Can't Wait for Them to Go Back to School

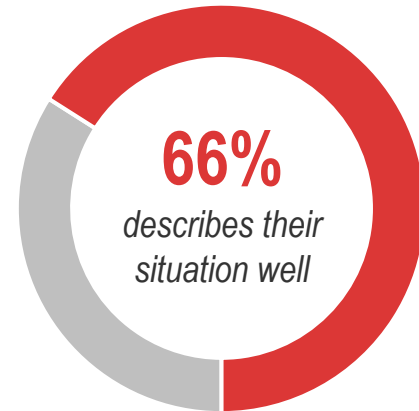
How well do each of the following statements describe you and your current circumstances?

“Though the pandemic has been stressful, **I love having so much more time with my children**”

(among all women with kids **under 18 years old**, very + somewhat well)



“I cannot wait for my kids to be **back in a real school**”  
(among women with kids **ages 3-18 years old**, very + somewhat well)



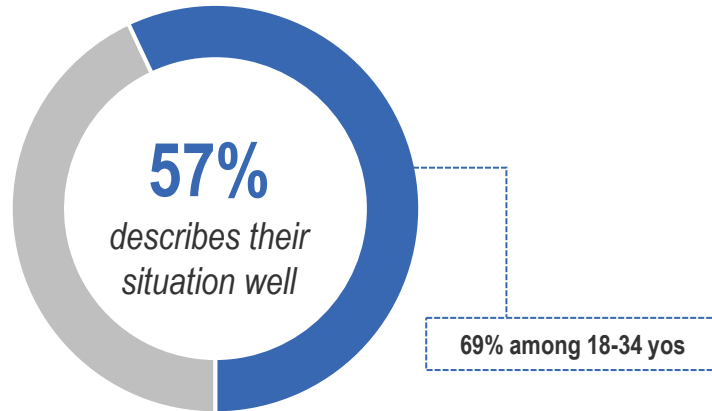


# Covid Is Tough on Moms: Over Half Feel That Taking Care of Their Kids During This Time Has Been More Isolating & Stressful Without Help from Others

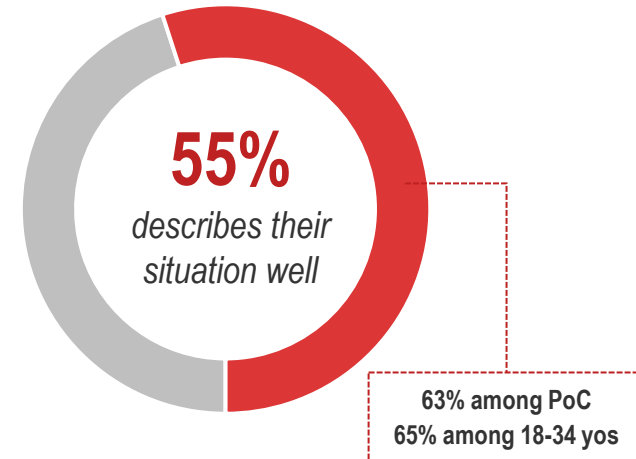
How well do each of the following statements describe you and your current circumstances?

(among all women with kids under 18 years old, very + somewhat well)

“The pandemic has made caring for my children a **lonelier and more isolating experience**”



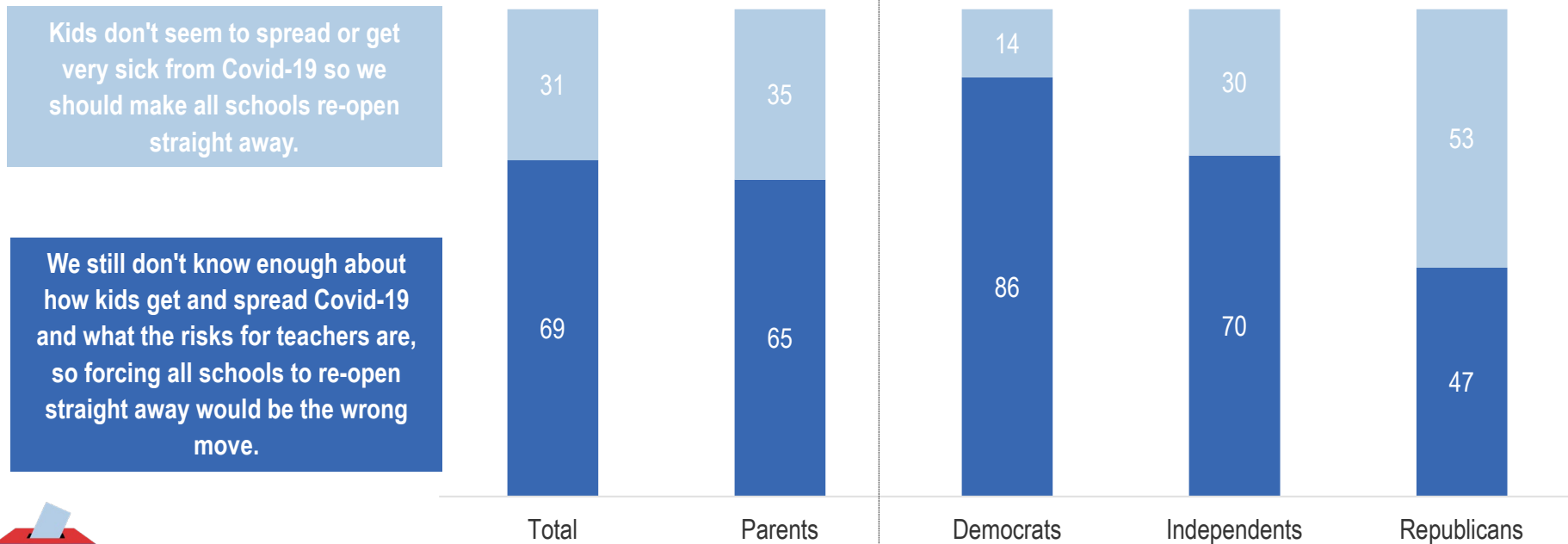
“The pandemic has made caring for my children more stressful because I can’t ask the usual people I go to for help with watching them (like family, friends, nanny or babysitter)”



# Over Two-Thirds of Women Are Wary of Immediate School Re-openings, Worried About What We Still Don't Know About Kids and Covid, and Risks to Teachers

*Republican women are an exception with a little over half wanting to force schools to open*

Which of the following comes closer to your view?

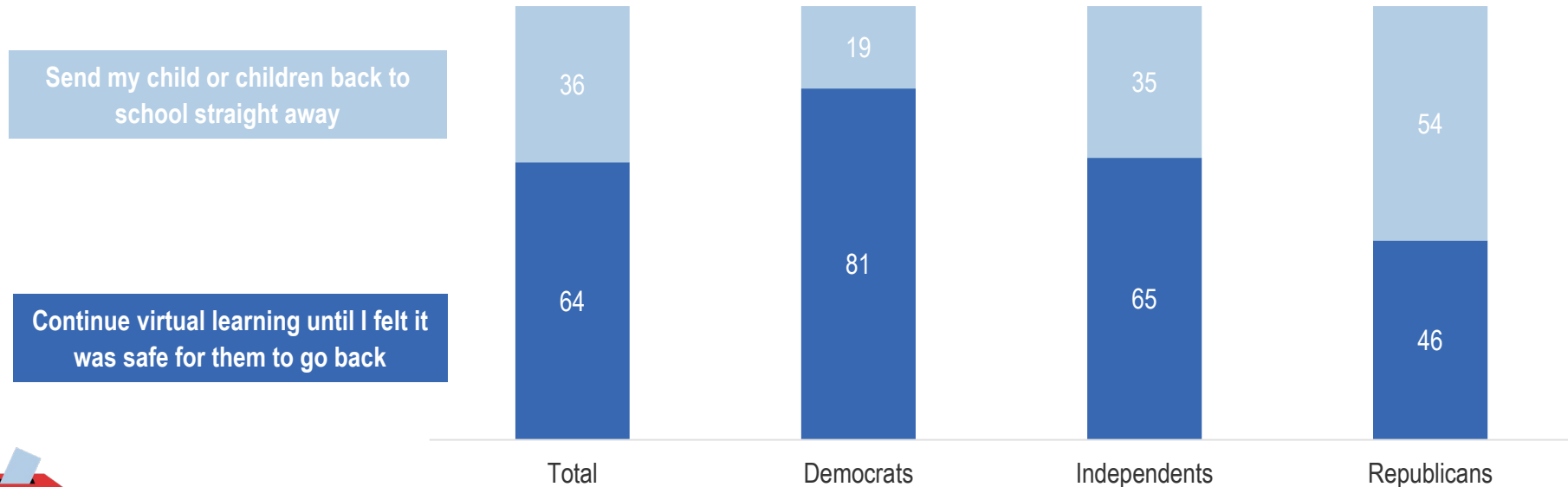


# If Schools Reopened Tomorrow, Nearly Two in Three Mothers Would Choose to Continue Virtual Learning Until They Felt It Was Safe

*But a majority of Republicans would send their kids back to school*

Imagine if all the schools in America re-opened tomorrow, but because of Covid-19, you had a choice to send your child or children to school, or continue virtual learning until you felt it was safe. What would you do?

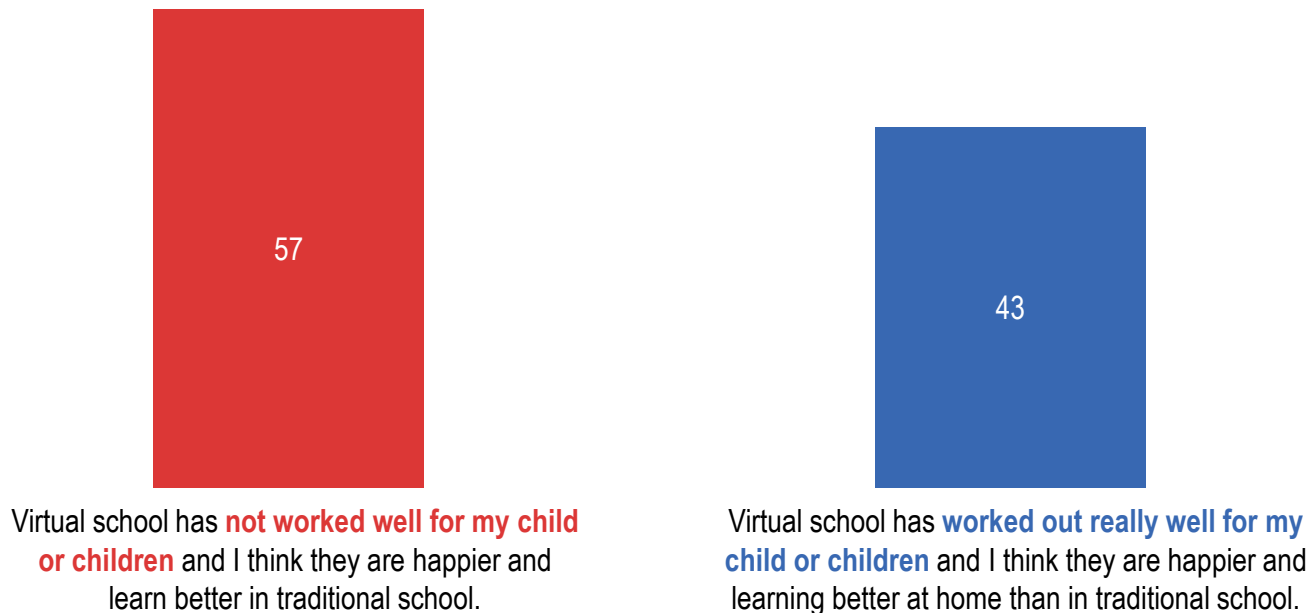
*(among all women with kids, including those with kids ages 18+ years old)*



# Though Most Women With School-Age Kids Feel That Virtual School Hasn't Worked, a Decent Subset Believe Their Children Are Happier Learning at Home

Which of the following best describes your experience?

(among women with kids ages 3-18 years old)



# Virtual School Can Be a Strain: One in Two Working Moms Find It Hard to Juggle Work With Virtual School

How well do each of the following statements describe you and your current circumstances?

*(among working women with kids ages 3-18 years old, very + somewhat well)*

Virtual schooling for my kids requires so much extra work for me that it is **compromising my ability to do work for my employer**



Virtual schooling for my kids has made it **extremely hard to go to my place of work and feel confident my kids are being cared for while I'm there**



# Working Moms Admit It's Been Hard Balancing Responsibilities Right Now; Over One in Three Have Had to Pass Up Opportunities at Work

How well do each of the following statements describe you and your current circumstances?

*(among all working women with kids under 18 years old, very + somewhat well)*

Since the pandemic began, it has gotten harder than ever to balance caring for my kids with all my other responsibilities



55

*63% among women who work from home*

Since the pandemic began, I've had to pass up opportunities or promotions at work because it would make things even harder than they already are on my kids



38

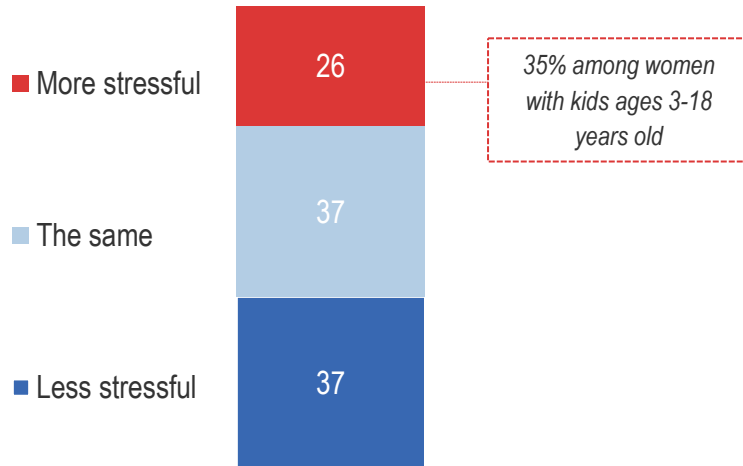


# Pandemic Impacts on Women in the Workforce

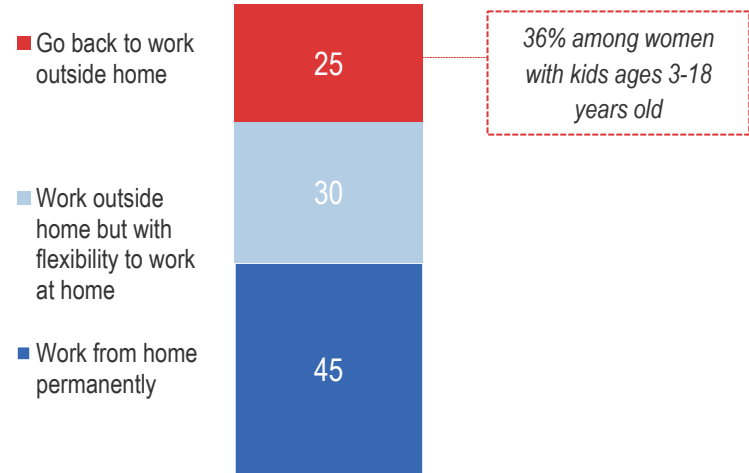
# Overall, Working from Home Has Not Created Additional Stress for Most Women; Few Want to Return to Workplace Full Time – 78% Say We Need More Workplace Flexibility

Among Those Working from Home (52%)

Would you say working from home has made your job more or less stressful?



When the Covid-19 pandemic is over, which of the following would be your preference?



78% of all women agree: “The pandemic has made me think that the old model of going to a workplace or office 9-5 with no flexibility is outdated and needs to change”



# Over a Third of Working Women Feel Like Their Employer Only Cares About Profits During This Pandemic; One in Four Believe They've Been Put at Risk of Catching Covid

*These numbers are higher among women of color, low-income and younger women*

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

*(among working women, strongly + somewhat agree)*

"I feel like my employer **only cares about profits** in this pandemic, **not its employees**"

"I believe **my employer has put me at risk of catching Covid-19**"



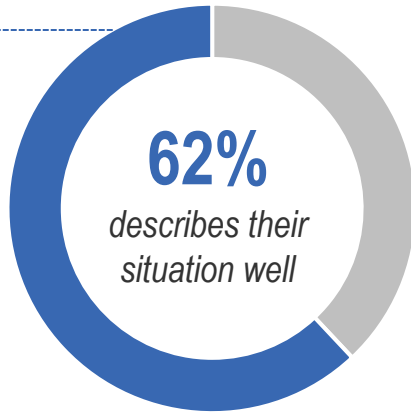
# Though Women Have a New Appreciation for Working Mothers, Parenting Demands of Their Co-Workers Can Make Some Feel They Are Doing More Work

*Though fellow mothers appreciate each other, they're also feeling the impacts of each other's parenting demands*

How well do each of the following statements describe you and your current circumstances?

*(Among those employed, very + somewhat well)*

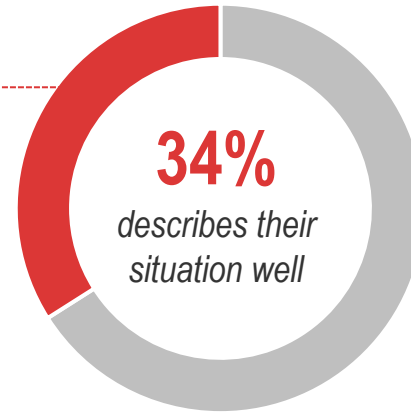
“Seeing my co-workers try to care for children at home and work full time during the pandemic has given me a **new appreciation for how difficult it is to be a working mother**”



74% among women w/kids <18 yrs old

75% among women of color

“Having to work around the parenting demands of my co-workers with children **is causing me extra stress and putting extra work on my shoulders**”



43% among 18-34 yrs

53% among women w/kids <18 yrs old