



# Study of Nontraditional-Hour Child Care in the District of Columbia

CCEEPRC Conference Plenary  
April 17, 2019

# Study goals

- Child Care Study Act of 2017
  - Mandated a study “to determine the number of child development facilities with nontraditional hours in the District that is sufficient to meet the needs of District families” (DC Act 22-72)
  - The Act defines nontraditional hours facilities as those open outside 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, or on a 24-hour basis
  - Particular interest in better meeting the needs of low-income families

# Research Methods

# Data sources to estimate child care supply and providers' experiences

Child development facility licensing records

Survey of providers licensed for nontraditional hours (NTH)

- Administered in April-May 2018
- 38 out of 56 eligible providers (68% response rate)

Semistructured phone interviews with providers not licensed for NTH

- Purposive sample from three high-need communities
- 12 program directors (4 centers, 4 expanded homes, 4 homes)

# Data sources to estimate potential demand

## Public-use national survey data on parent work hours

- American Community Survey (2012-2016)
- Survey of Income and Program Participation (2014)

## Child care referral ticket records

- For calendar year 2017
- 121 records mentioned need for NTH care; 9% of all tickets

## Key informant interviews (N=35)

- Experts in child care and early childhood, child care licensing, subsidy, city planning, quality improvement
- Employers in hospitality, food service, custodial services, security, retail, and nursing

Who provides nontraditional-  
hour care?

# Most child development facilities in the District operate during traditional hours

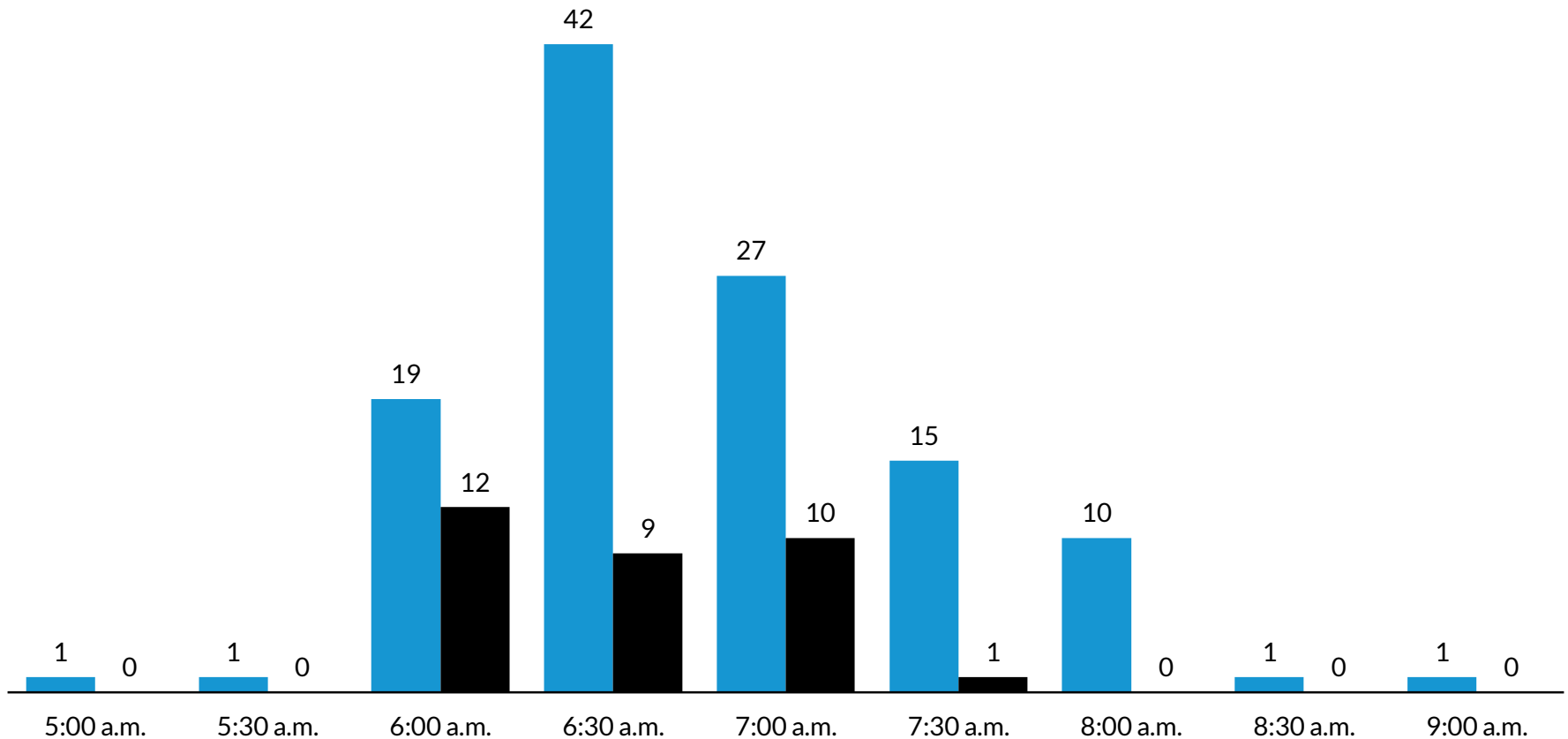
Out of 444 full-time, licensed facilities:

- 267 (60%) operate only during traditional hours
- 177 (40%) are licensed to provide care beyond M-F 7 a.m. – 6 p.m.
  - 125 (71%) centers, 39 (22%) homes, 13 (7%) expanded homes
  - 28 facilities hold a 24-hour license
  - 34 facilities operate more than 12 hours, but less than 24 hours
  - 7 centers and 7 homes operate on Saturdays
  - 6 centers and 4 homes operate on Sundays

# Most licensed NTH facilities open 6:00-7:30 a.m.

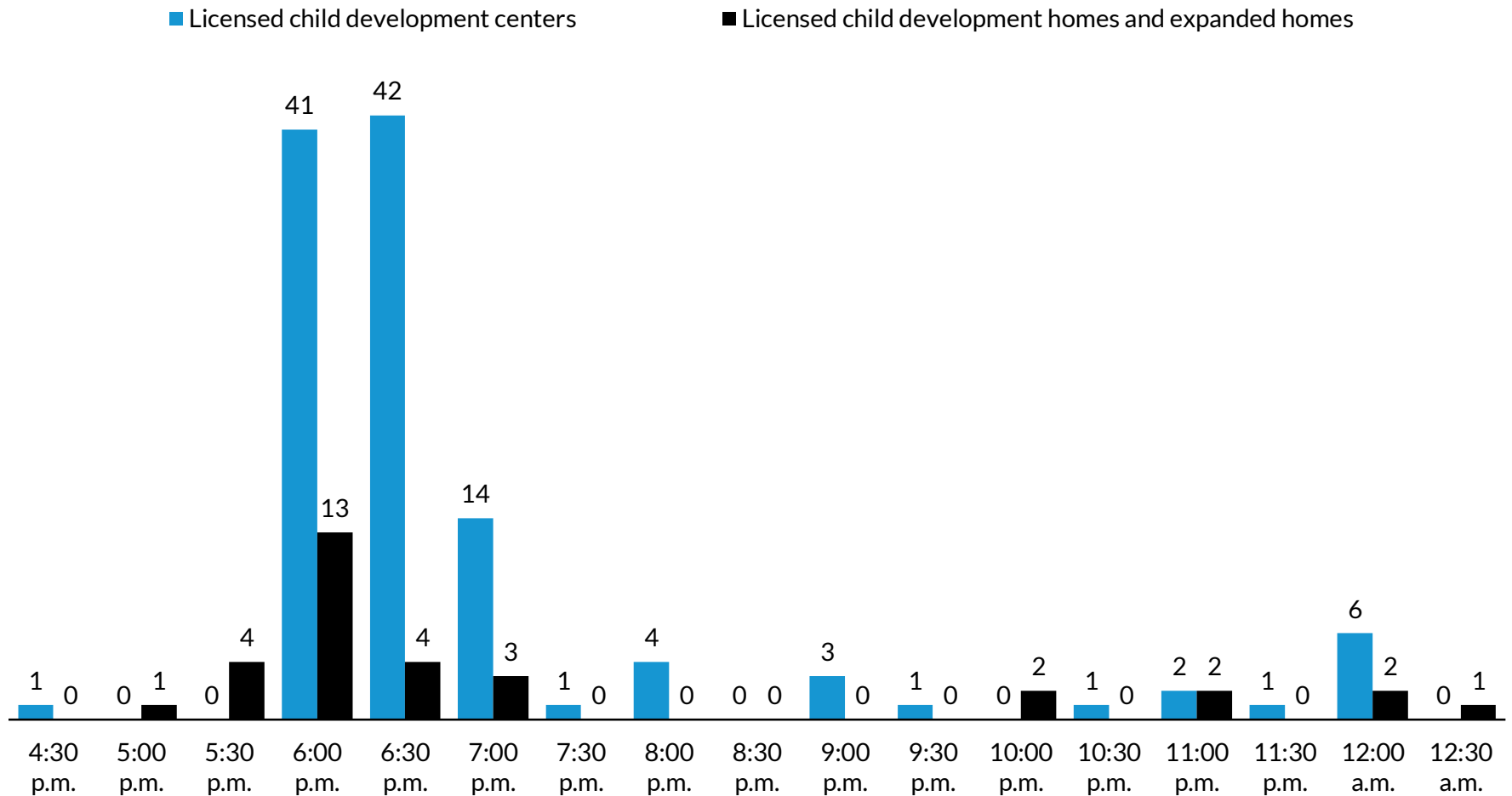
■ Licensed child development centers

■ Licensed child development homes and expanded homes

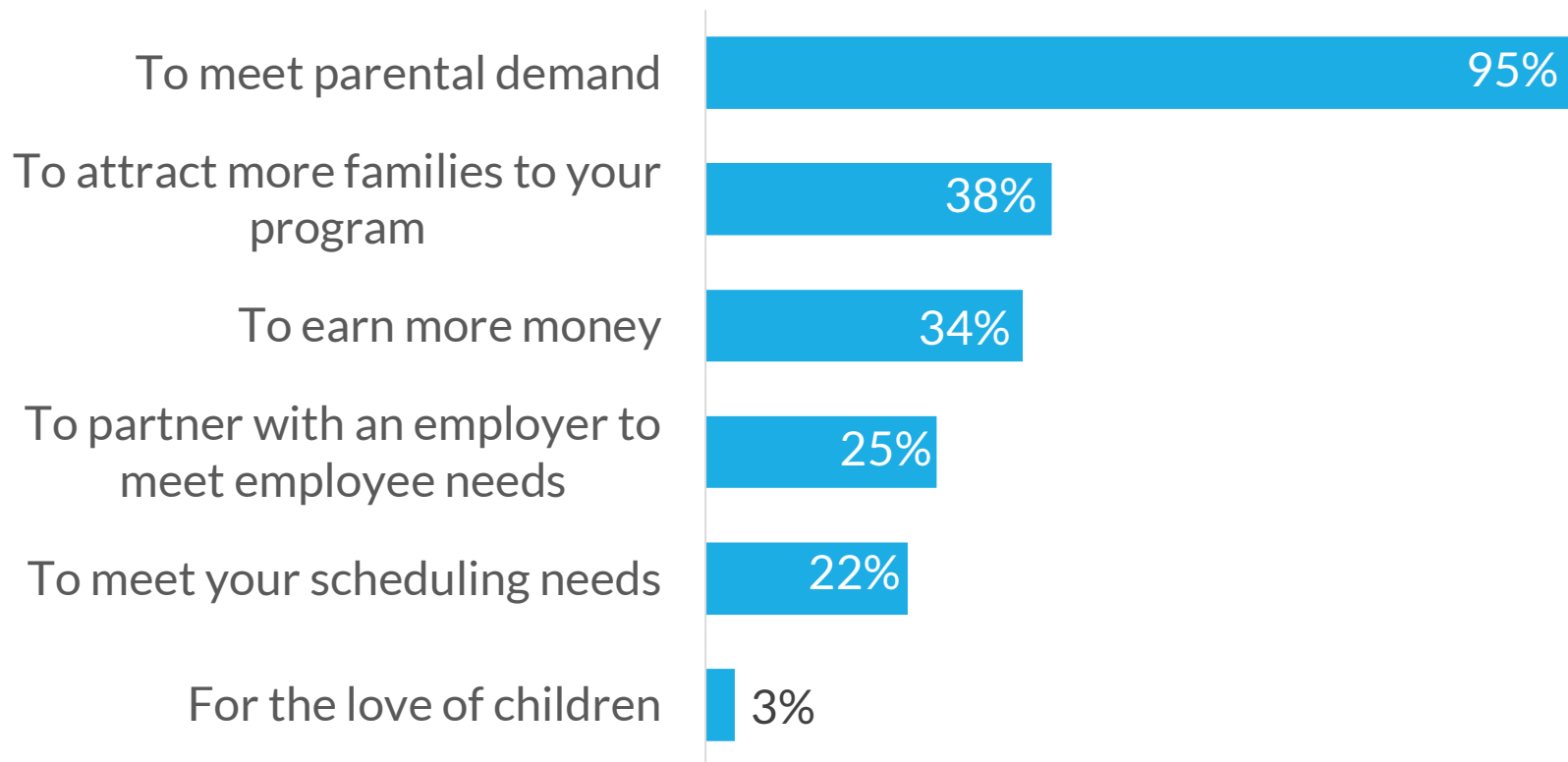




# Most licensed NTH facilities close at 6-7 p.m.



# Reasons for providing nontraditional hours



**Source:** Urban Institute survey of nontraditional-hour child care providers. N=38.

How many District children  
have parents working  
nontraditional hours?

# Maximum potential demand

**19,050** resident children age 12 and under

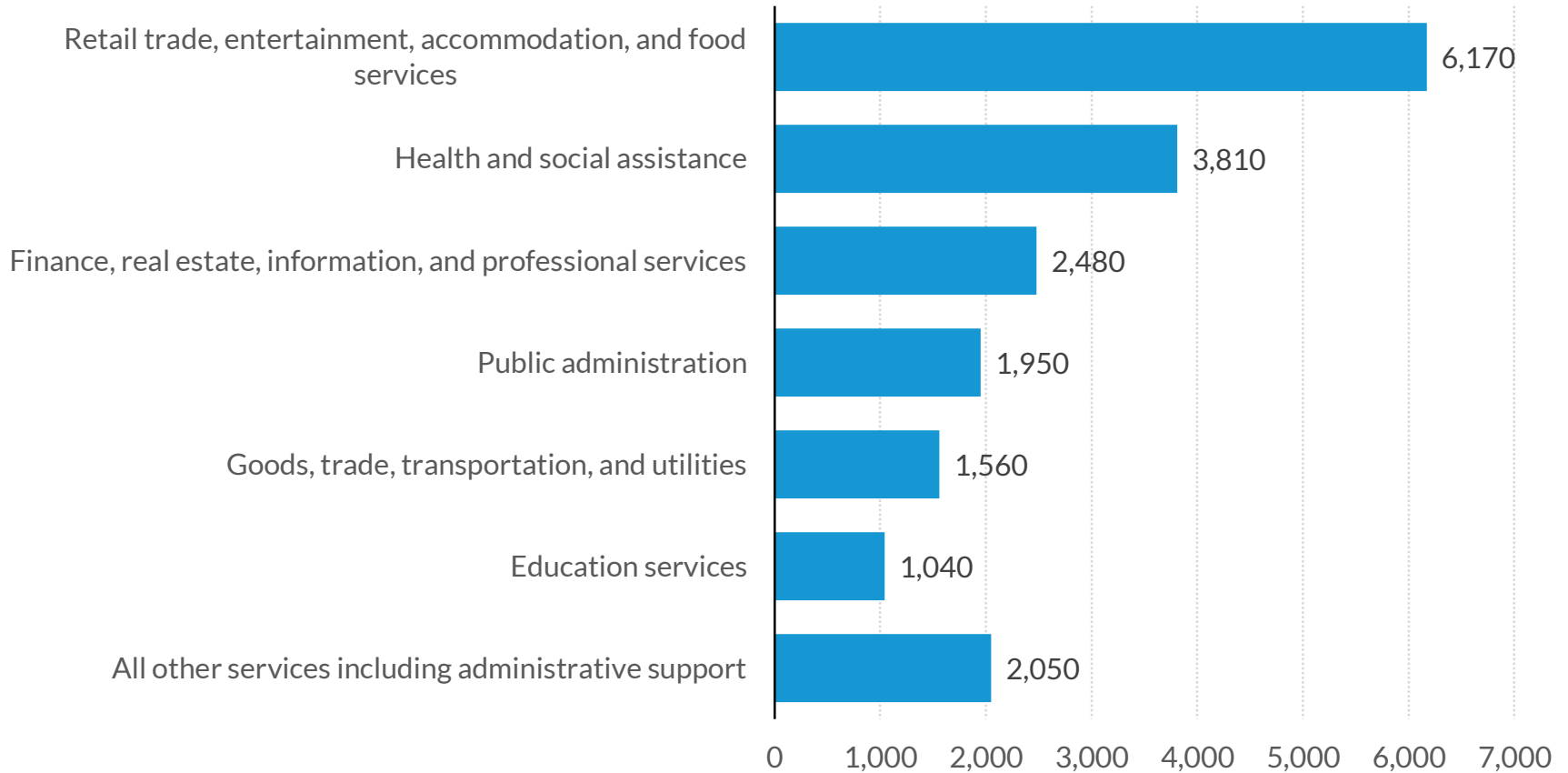
**22%** of District children of that age group

**64%** are income-eligible for child care subsidy

In what industries are  
nontraditional-hour employees  
working?

# Potential demand is highest in healthcare, retail, accommodation, and food services

Industry

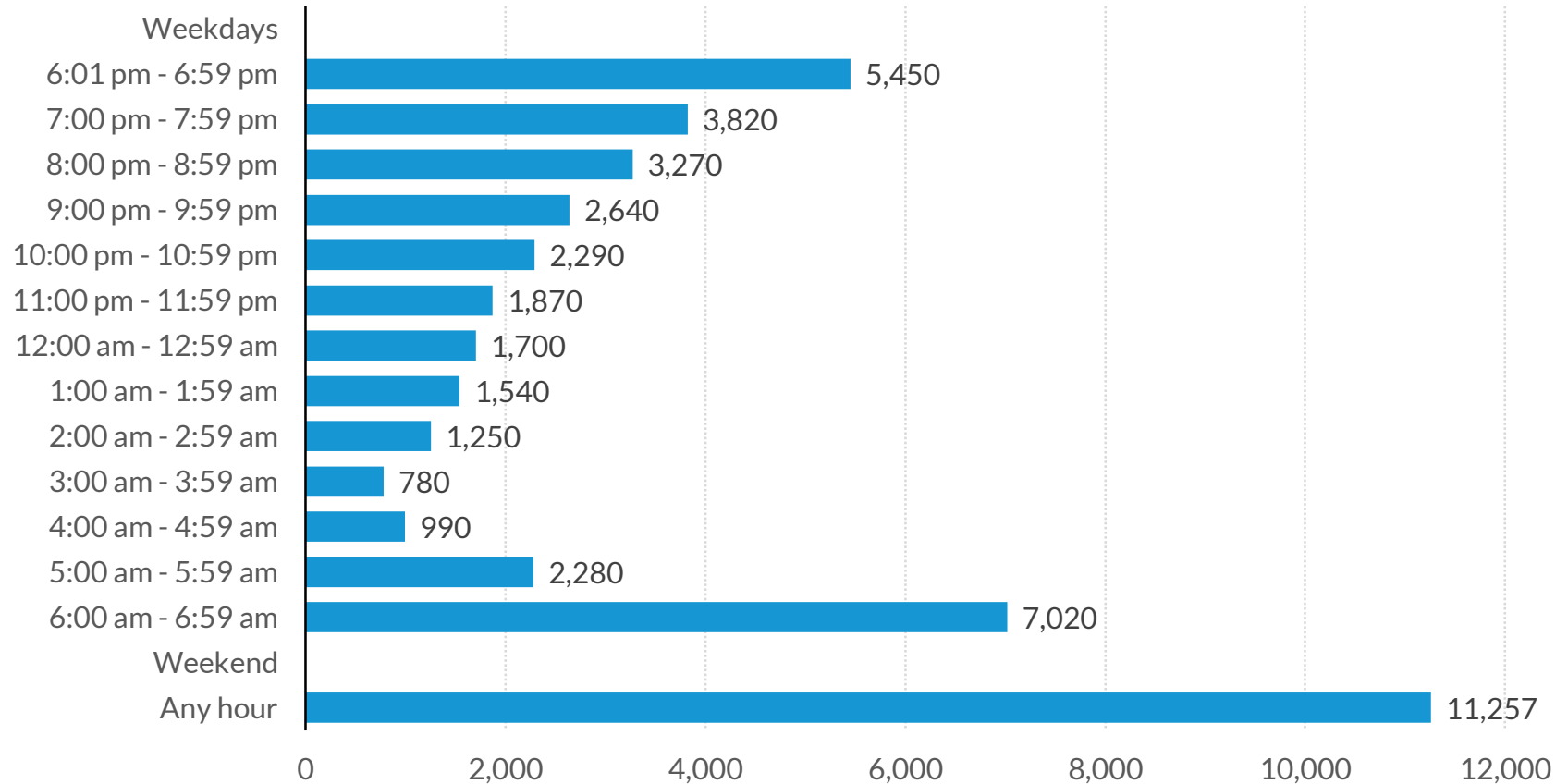


*Number of children potentially needing NTH care*

When is demand highest?

# Potential demand is highest on the weekend and 6-7 a.m., sustained demand into evening

Day and hour



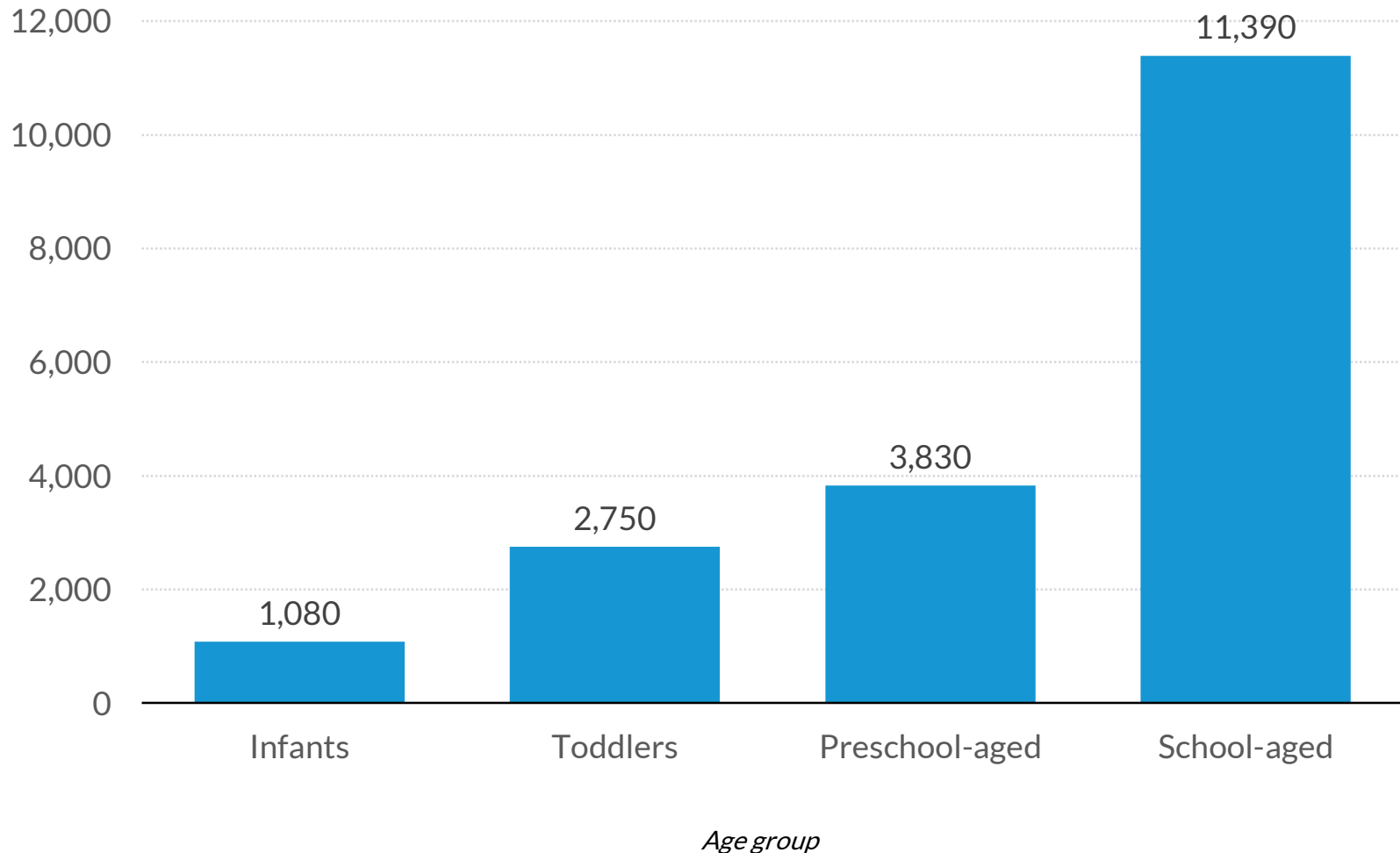
*Number of children potentially needing NTH care*



What age groups need care during nontraditional hours?

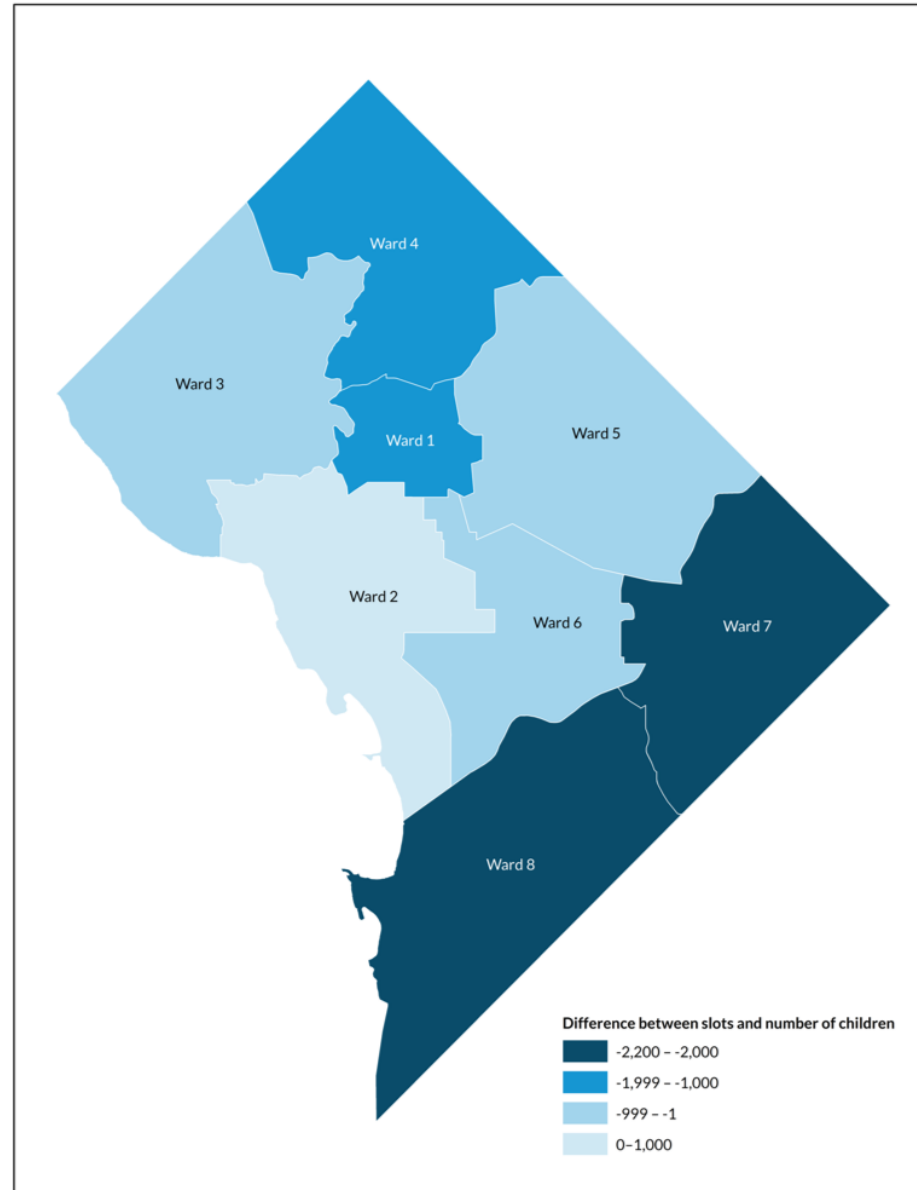
# School-age children as a whole have greater potential need for nontraditional-hour care

Number of children potentially needing NTH care



What is the extent of unmet  
need?

# Potential unmet need greatest in Wards 7 and 8



# Stakeholders observe high demand for NTH care, but parental preferences vary

- Many workers rely on friends and family
- Preferences for care near home or work are highly varied
- Parents may prefer different care settings for different ages
- Transportation and cost are key considerations

*“A lot of people have to scramble to find child care with a family member. And if the family member falls through, and that’s a recurrent problem, they can end up losing their jobs. It’s hard for single parents, young parents, or when both parents work odd hours.” - Local supervisor*

# Employers see unmet demand for NTH care as a challenge for business

- Employers are concerned that limited NTH options reduce the qualified labor pool
- Employers face financial and informational barriers to addressing unmet demand themselves

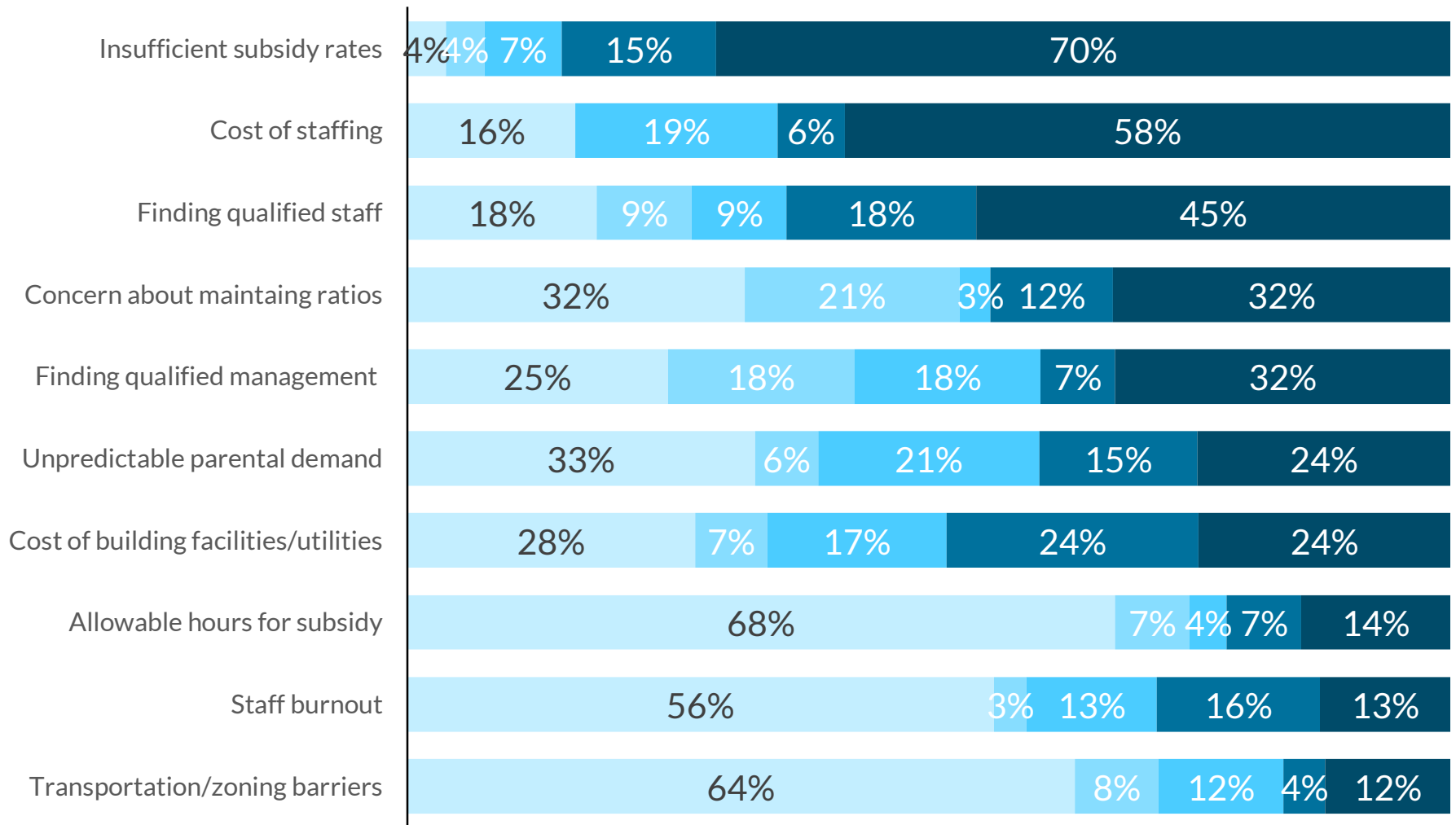
*“Having more flexible [child care] hours would get us a larger pool of job candidates. I think our candidate pool is self-selecting because of the hours people have to work. A lot of people just cross off [this industry] because they know they can’t work those hours since they have no child care.”*

– Local assistant manager

What challenges do providers face providing nontraditional-hour care?

# Key challenges providing NTH care

1 (Not at all challenging)    2    3    4    5 (Extremely challenging)







For more information, see our full report at <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/nontraditional-hour-child-care-district-columbia> or contact Erica Greenberg at [egreenberg@urban.org](mailto:egreenberg@urban.org).

