



Providers' Perspectives on Advantages and Challenges of Participating in Maryland's Child Care Scholarship Program and Quality Rating and Improvement System

Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEPRC) 2023 Meeting

June 28, 2023

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Maryland Child Care Policy Research Partnership (MD CCPRP)

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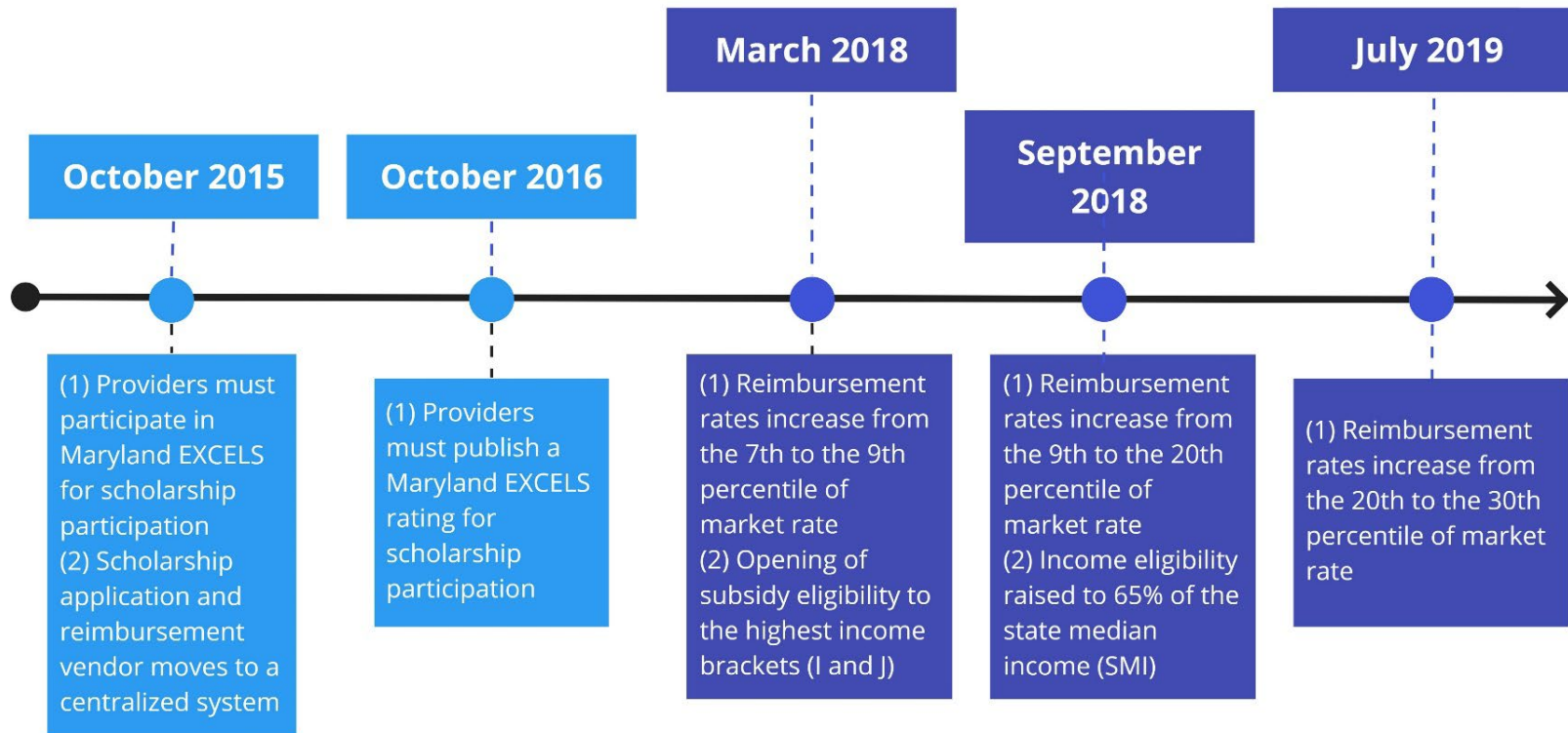
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Acknowledgement

The Maryland Child Care Policy Research Partnership is supported by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through (Grant No. 90YE0220-01-0 0). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by OPRE/ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government or MSDE.

Project Context

Maryland's child care policy changes:



Research Questions

Provider willingness to enroll children who have a subsidy (scholarship):

- *RQ1: Why do some providers enroll children who have a child care scholarship?*
- *RQ2: What is preventing some providers from enrolling children who have a scholarship?*

Provider willingness to participate in the state QRIS (Maryland EXCELS):

- *RQ3: Why do some providers participate in Maryland EXCELS?*
- *RQ4: What is preventing some providers from participating in Maryland EXCELS?*

Mixed Methods Research Approach

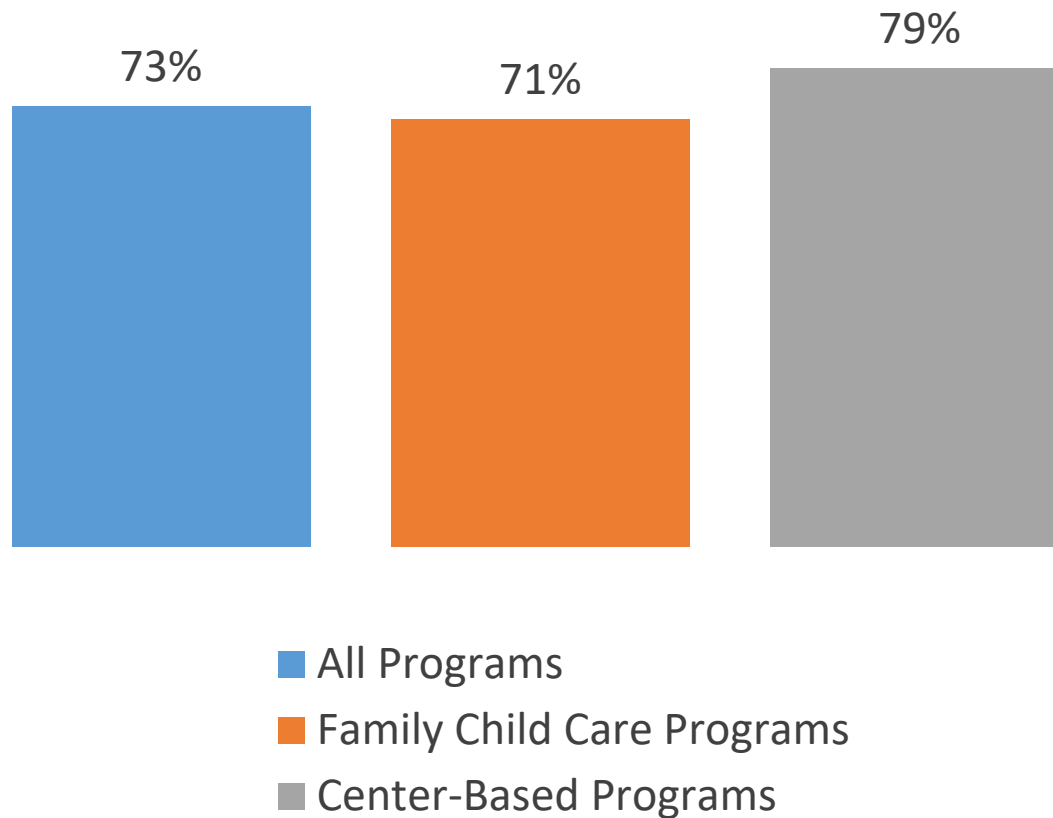
Online Surveys (June - July 2021)

- 984 licensed providers (69% FCCs; 31% centers)
- 33% response rate (sent to 3,000 providers statewide)
- Perceptions/experiences with child care scholarships
- Perceptions/experiences with Maryland EXCELS

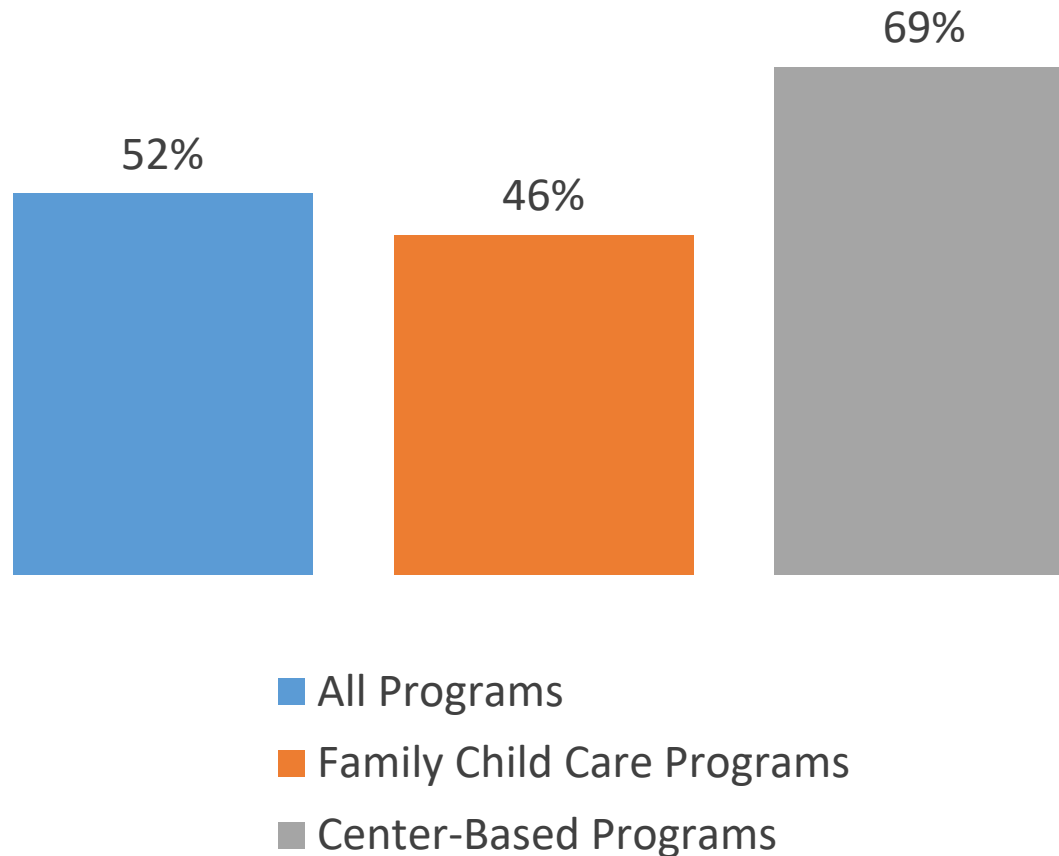
Virtual Interviews (Sept 2021 - Jan 2022)

- 46 providers who completed the survey (37% FCCs; 63% centers)
- Explore survey findings in more depth

Context: How many programs enrolled or were willing to enroll children with scholarships?

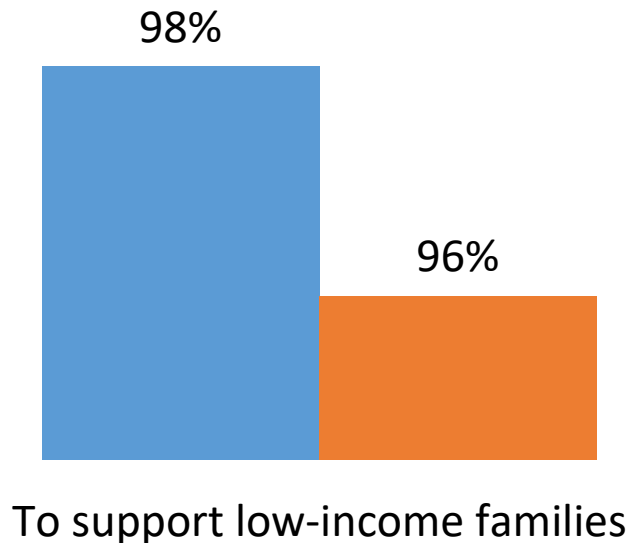


Context: How many programs participated in Maryland EXCELS?

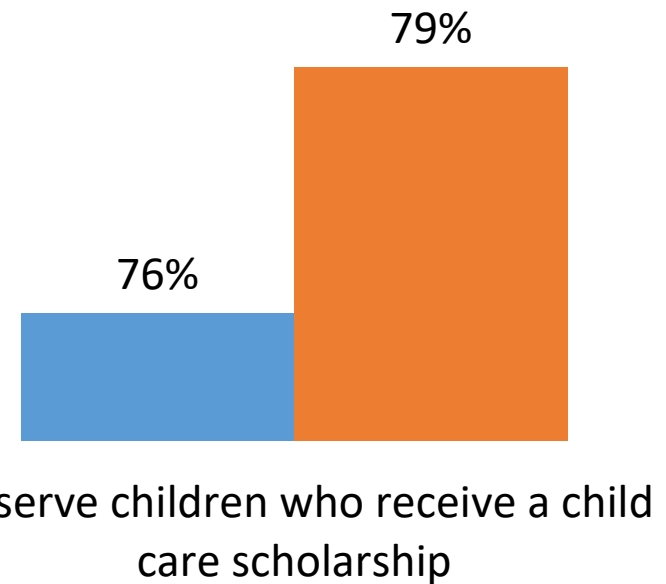


Key Finding #1: Providers want to support low-income families

Why enroll children who have a child care scholarship?



Why participate in Maryland EXCELS?



■ Family Child Care Programs

■ Center-Based Programs

Why do some providers enroll children who have a child care scholarship?

To support low-income families:

“I know what families go through. And I know how little help they really do get; it is so meager. And with welfare reform and requiring families to go to work, they couldn't do it if there wasn't child care for them. So, I have always wanted to support low-income families.”

~Center-based provider

“I just love the fact, when [parents] know that they can bring their kids here [because I accept scholarships] they're like so happy! ... They know they're gonna get quality care.”

~Family child care provider

Why do some providers participate in Maryland EXCELS?

To serve children who receive a child care scholarship:

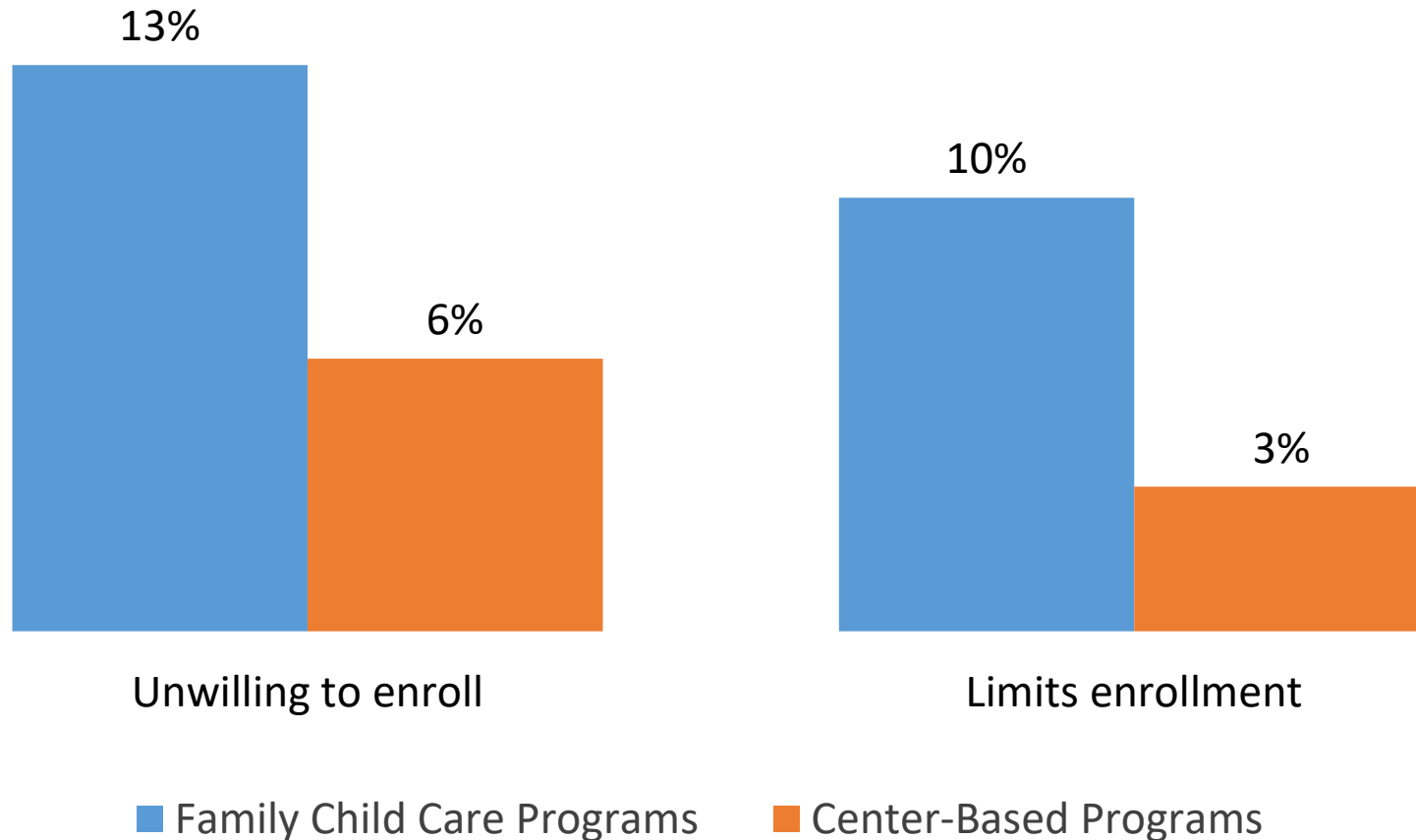
“We get to participate in [the] voucher program, which helps a lot of families.”

~Center-based provider

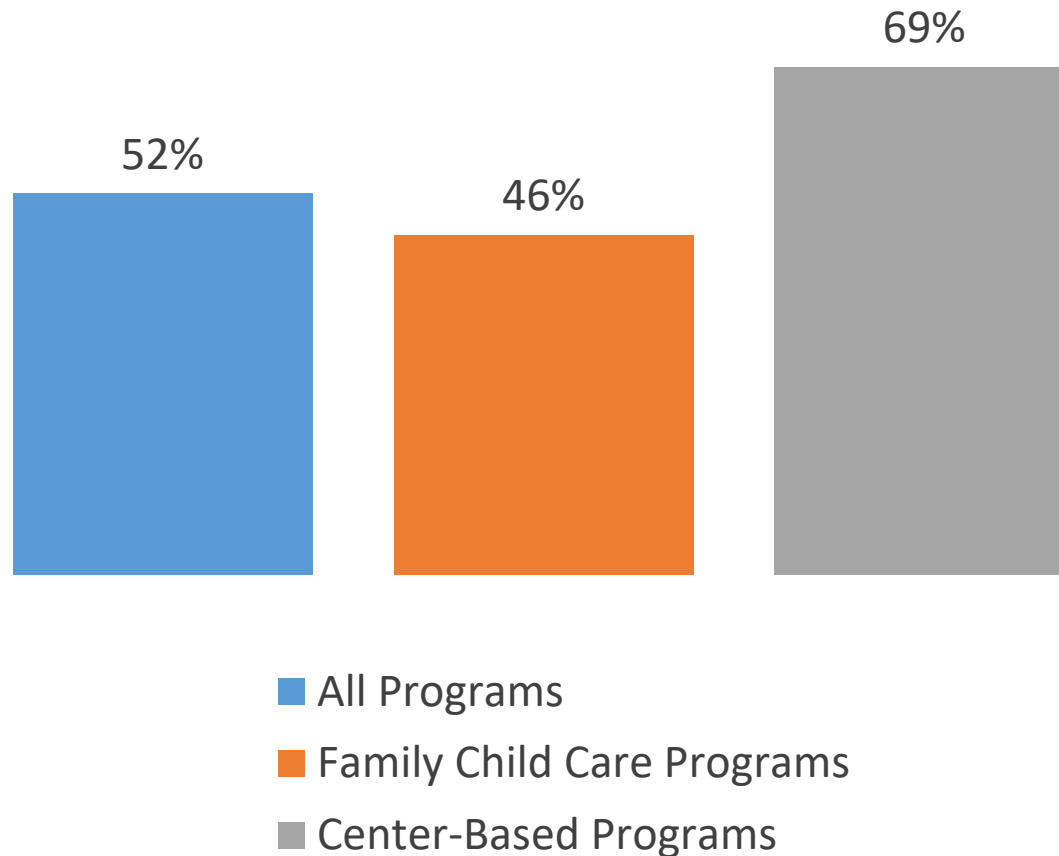
“Because of [the needs of struggling families], they need an extra-qualified provider, not just somebody who's licensed. ... I do think that EXCELS provides that.”

~Family child care provider

Context: How many programs were unwilling to enroll or limited their enrollment of children with scholarships?

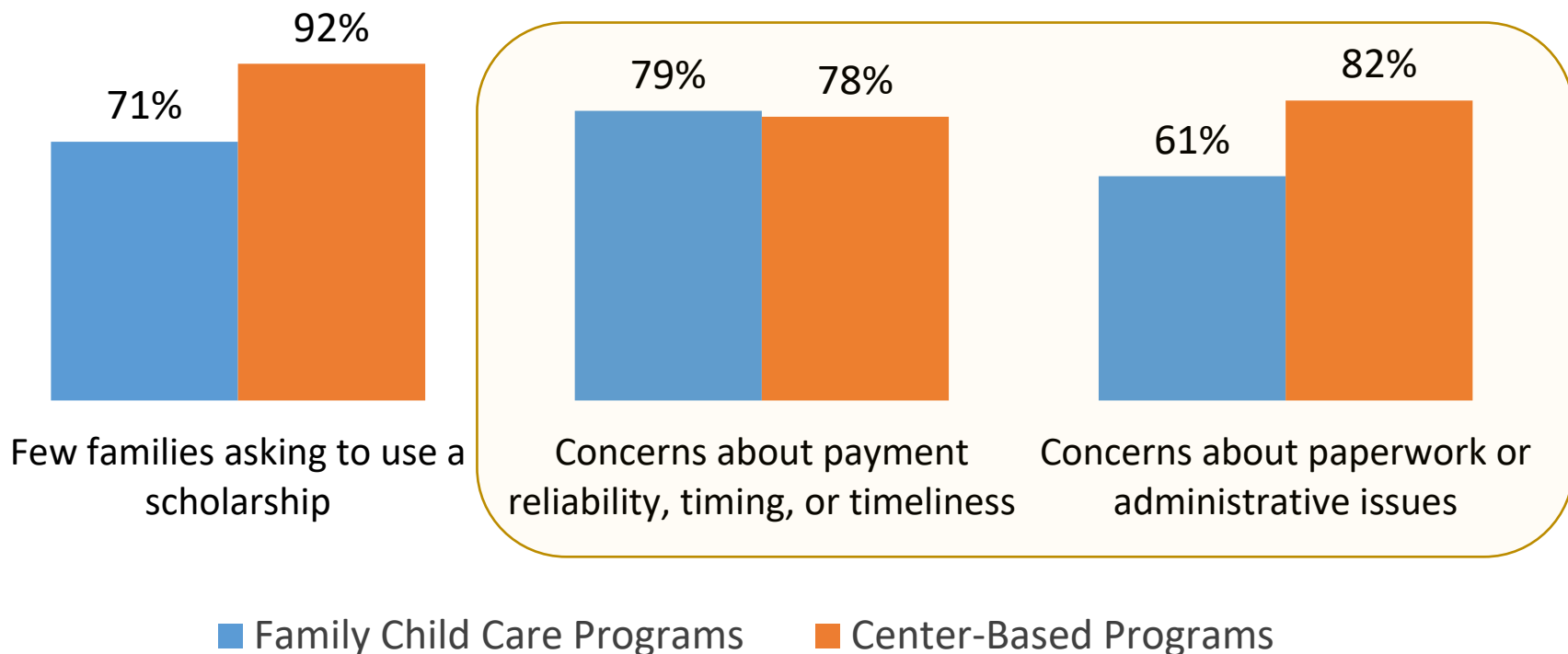


Context: How many programs participated in Maryland EXCELS?



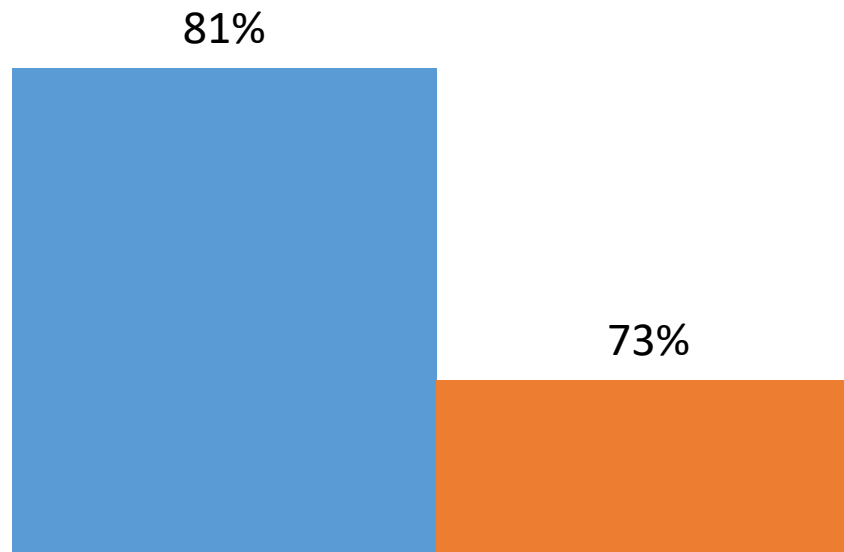
Key Finding #2: Providers are deterred by administrative tasks and payment delays

Why do some providers not enroll or limit their enrollment of children who have a child care scholarship?



Key Finding #2: Providers are deterred by administrative tasks and payment delays (cont'd)

Why do some providers not participate in Maryland EXCELS?



The application or rating process is too time-consuming or not worth the time.

■ Family Child Care Providers

■ Center-Based Providers

What is preventing some providers from participating in Maryland EXCELS?

Too time-consuming, not worth the time investment:

“I have a bachelor's degree I have written my own curriculum. ... My program is almost always completely full, with a waiting list. ... There is really not much that's driving me to do extra work to do it.”

~Family child care provider

“A lot of the things they're looking for [in Maryland EXCELS] are very much the same [as NAEYC]. So, you know ... putting together two different PowerPoints to send [to] two different organizations is not really a good use of my time ... [or] my teachers' time. ... They're looking for the same answers, but they're asking the questions in different ways.”

~Center-based provider

What is preventing some providers from serving children who have a scholarship?

Payment delays and administrative tasks:

“It was extremely difficult to get paid. You never knew if your invoices were gonna be coming on time in order to get reimbursed and the audits were very, very, very frequent [Also, some families] would not get their paperwork in on time. So, then they would [lose their scholarship] ... it would take time to get them re-enrolled, and then I'm out money. So, it was just a huge headache.”

~Family child care provider

“I have plenty of experience with the subsidies, and I think the one thing I have to say is that, you know, it's a lot of paperwork.”

~Center-based provider

What is preventing some providers from serving more children who have a scholarship?

Payment delays and administrative tasks:

“Because of the experience of not receiving my money for 10 weeks— I have teachers that I have to pay, insurance ... So, I just limit it to four to five kids out of my 12.”

~Family child care provider

“I take my hat off to people that work just with scholarship. ... [I] prefer not to ... [because I would] need an extra 2 or 3 hours a week to deal with this paperwork.”

~Family child care provider

Recent Changes in Maryland

- Presumptive eligibility
- Advanced, enrollment-based payments
- Fewer attendance verification audits
- Online provider and parent portal

Implications

- Continue to assess the impact of program improvements on:
 - Provider and family participation in the child care scholarship program
 - The practice of limiting enrollment of children with scholarships
- Consider ways to further support providers who currently limit enrollment

Questions?

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