

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Choose Children 2022:
How do voters feel about child care?
Public opinion survey indicates support for local government efforts
to reduce child care costs**

Tuesday, May 3, 2022:

Today, Choose Children 2022 and Silicon Valley Community Foundation released the results of a [survey](#) that showcases the economic struggles felt by many voters in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties and the associated issue of the high costs and limited availability of high-quality child care.

Choose Children 2022 is a non-partisan initiative in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties committed to prioritizing issues relevant to our youngest kids and their families in 2022 local elections. In addition to releasing the results of its survey, Choose Children will hold a series of candidate forums related to early learning and care in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. These are scheduled for May 3, 5 and 9. Details are shown below and at <https://choosechildren.org/>.

Choose Children encourages policies, investments and approaches that make our region a place where families with children can live and thrive.

“The economic vibrancy of Silicon Valley relies on our region becoming a place where all parents can access affordable, high-quality child care. Parents must be able to go to work confident that their babies, toddlers and young children are happy and safe,” said Christine Thorsteinson, Silicon Valley Community Foundation’s director of Early Childhood Development.

The survey results capture the economic struggles felt by many Peninsula and South Bay voters. Nearly 80% of respondents in both counties said they were losing confidence in the ability of future generations to afford living in their communities. Majorities of parents and voters under age 50 in both counties said that they are seriously considering moving out of the Bay Area in the next few years.

Meanwhile, about half of respondents said that it was very or somewhat difficult to balance their childcare responsibilities with other duties, and 2 in 5 acknowledged having to make difficult life decisions due to the high cost of childcare and preschool. These decisions

include having a partner stay home rather than work, placing a child in lower quality care, choosing less convenient childcare, or delaying having another child due to cost concerns. According to kidsdata.org the average cost of full-time, center-based infant child care in Silicon Valley was \$21,300 per year.

“For many families with young children the high cost and limited availability of high-quality child care is often the breaking point in deciding whether to stay in the Bay Area, which is already a very expensive place to live,” said Gina Dalma, Executive Vice President of Community Action, Policy and Strategy at Silicon Valley Community Foundation. “This poll makes clear that voters in the two-county area overwhelmingly support a range of options that would make early learning and care more affordable and available -- helping our counties become places where all families with children can live and thrive.”

The Choose Children 2022 survey was conducted by FM3 Research in late March 2022 and included 1,367 likely November voters across the two counties.

Other key findings of this survey include:

- 81% of Santa Clara County voters and 79% of San Mateo County voters support making high-quality childcare and preschool for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers affordable for all families.
- 83% of Santa Clara County voters and 80% of San Mateo County voters support increasing mental health programs for young children and caregivers.
- Two-thirds of voters in both counties support creating a county-level department focused on the well-being, care and learning of young children.
- 77% of San Mateo County voters and 81% of Santa Clara County voters support guaranteeing 3 months of paid family leave for new parents to care for their newborn child.
- 86% of San Mateo County voters with children under 5 and 79% of Santa Clara County voters with children under 5 are not confident that future generations, such as their children or grandchildren, will be able to afford to live in their community.

Choose Children 2022 is an initiative of Silicon Valley Community Foundation that works to advance solutions that make our region a place where families with children, particularly families of color and those of undocumented status, can live and thrive. When young children are supported with the resources to begin their lives healthy, safe and ready to learn, there are lasting, significant impacts for everyone. Choose Children’s work strives to:

- Advance children - By giving our youngest learners the resources to thrive, they have better educational and economic outcomes and pass those advantages on to future generations.
- Support caregivers - Promoting economic mobility for the early care workforce (and their children and families) and developing a pipeline of essential workers.
- Strengthen local economies – Bolstering economic and community development, both by supporting employed parents and the next generation of workforce talent.

Choose Children 2022 is co-sponsoring three virtual primary candidate forums in early May on issues related to early learning and care in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

- Tuesday, May 3, 6:00-7:30 pm: Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 1
- Thursday, May 5, 6:00-7:30 pm: San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Districts 2 & 3
- Monday, May 9, 5:00-6:30 pm: San Jose Mayor

Results of the public opinion survey can be found [here](#). For more information on Choose Children 2022 and its upcoming local election candidate forums, visit our website at <https://choosechildren.org/>.