

Understanding the Needs of Autism Families

A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF KEY CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

Presented to

Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders

Subcommittee on Policy

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O V E R V I E W

**This presentation combines data from four polls
conducted among autism parents**

- 1 – Access to Services (72 votes)
- 2 – Schooling Choice (49 votes)
- 3 – Time between diagnosis and first therapy session (32 votes)
- 4 – Top priorities for families (166 votes)

O B J E C T I V E

To Identify critical challenges faced by autism families
and propose actionable solutions for stakeholders

T O T A L R E S P O N D E N T S

Approximately 150–200 parents across polls (exact numbers vary)

CENTRAL CHALLENGES FACED BY AUTISM FAMILIES

Access Barriers

Long waitlists, insufficient therapy hours, and challenges finding providers

Educational Concerns

Over half of parents prefer homeschooling, suggesting gaps in traditional schooling

Financial strain

High costs of care and strong need for financial assistance

Delays in Care

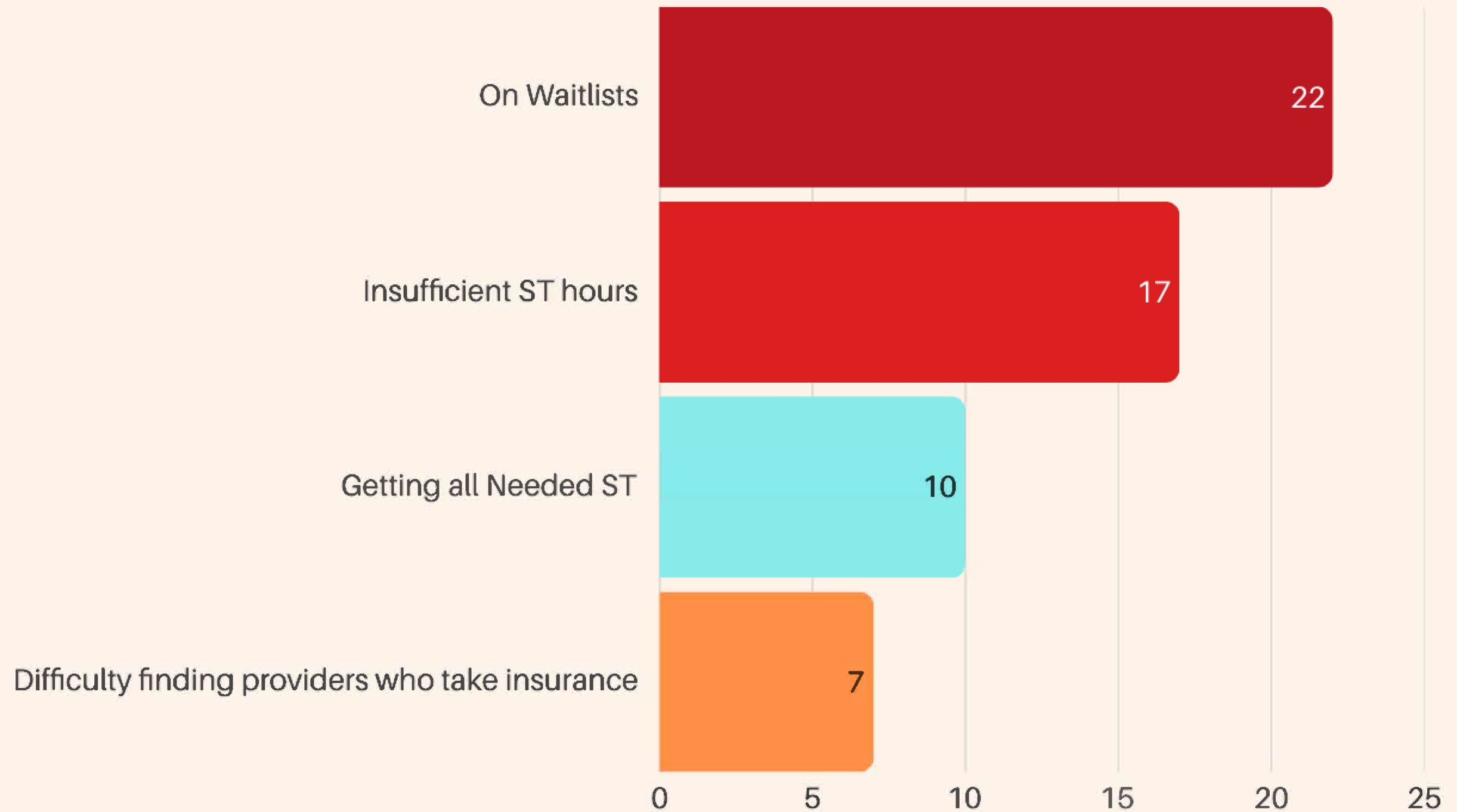
Some families wait over a year for therapy, despite some starting within 6 months

Holistic Needs

Emphasis on education, therapies, mental health, social inclusion, and stigma reduction

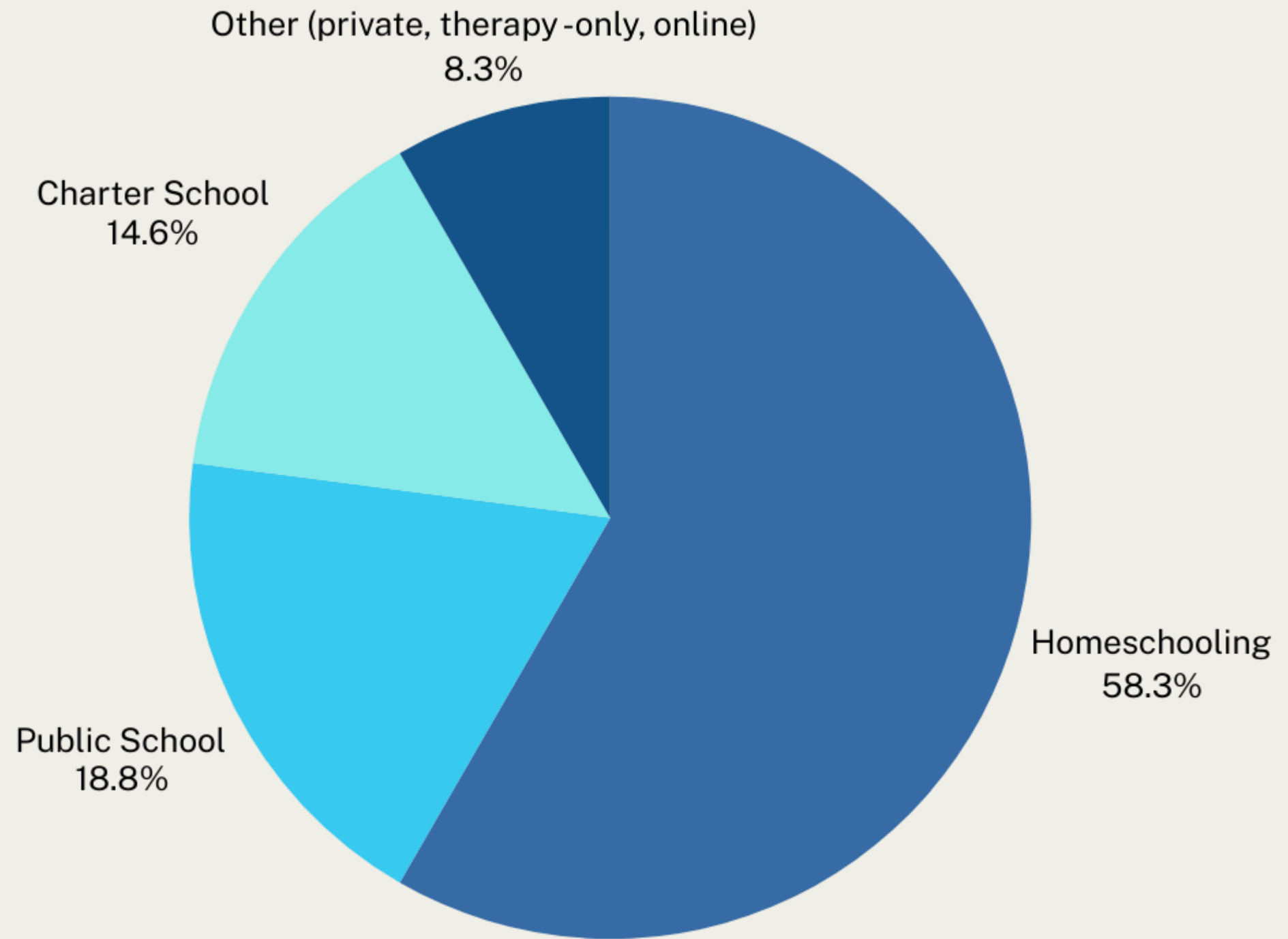
Are Children Getting the Services They Need?

This poll focused on Speech Therapy (ST) 9 out of 72
Votes repost
adequate service access, with most citing waitlists and insufficient therapy hours



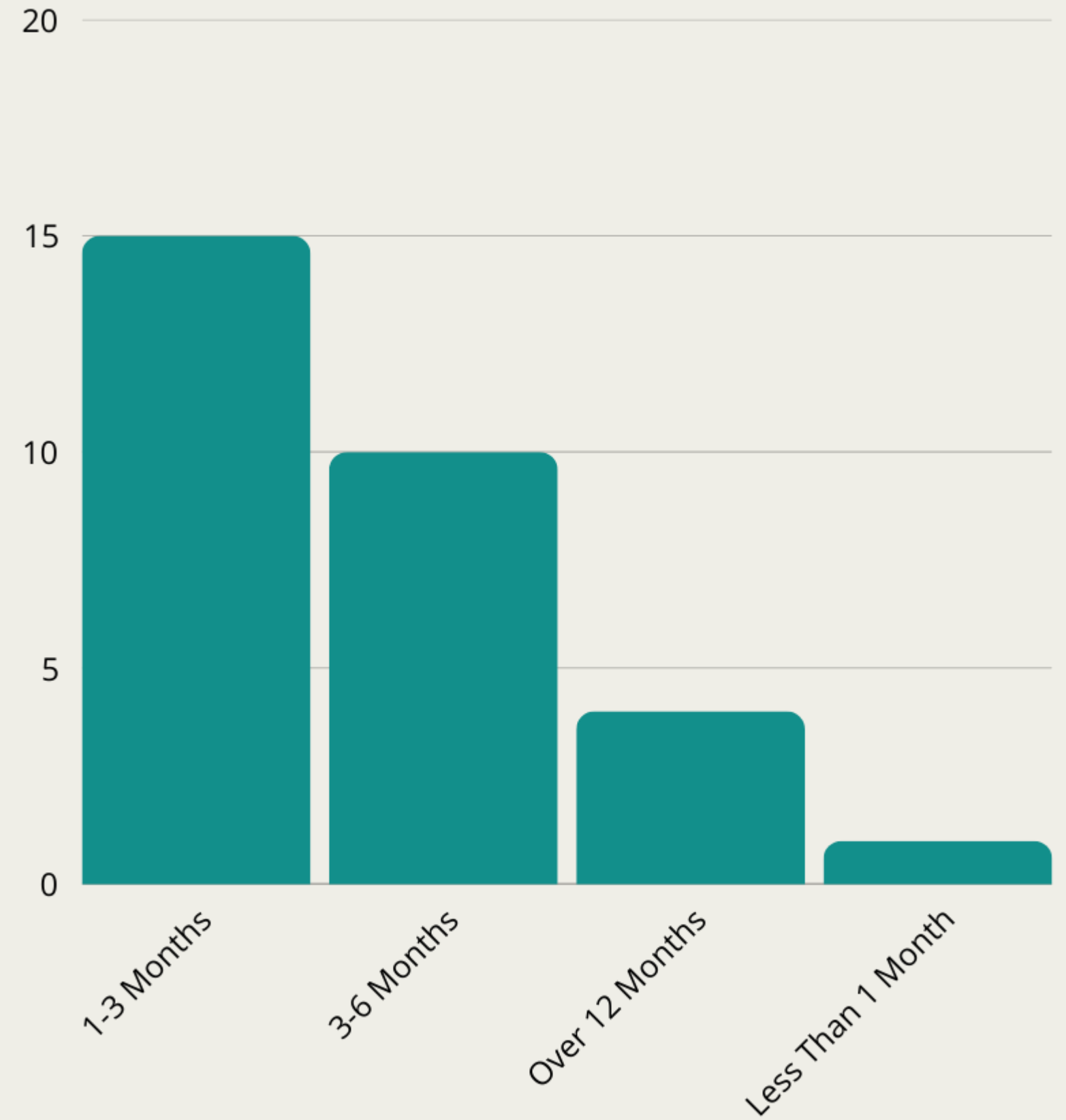
How Are Parents Educating Their Children?

Over 57% of parents chose
homeschooling, possibly reflecting
dissatisfaction with traditional
education options



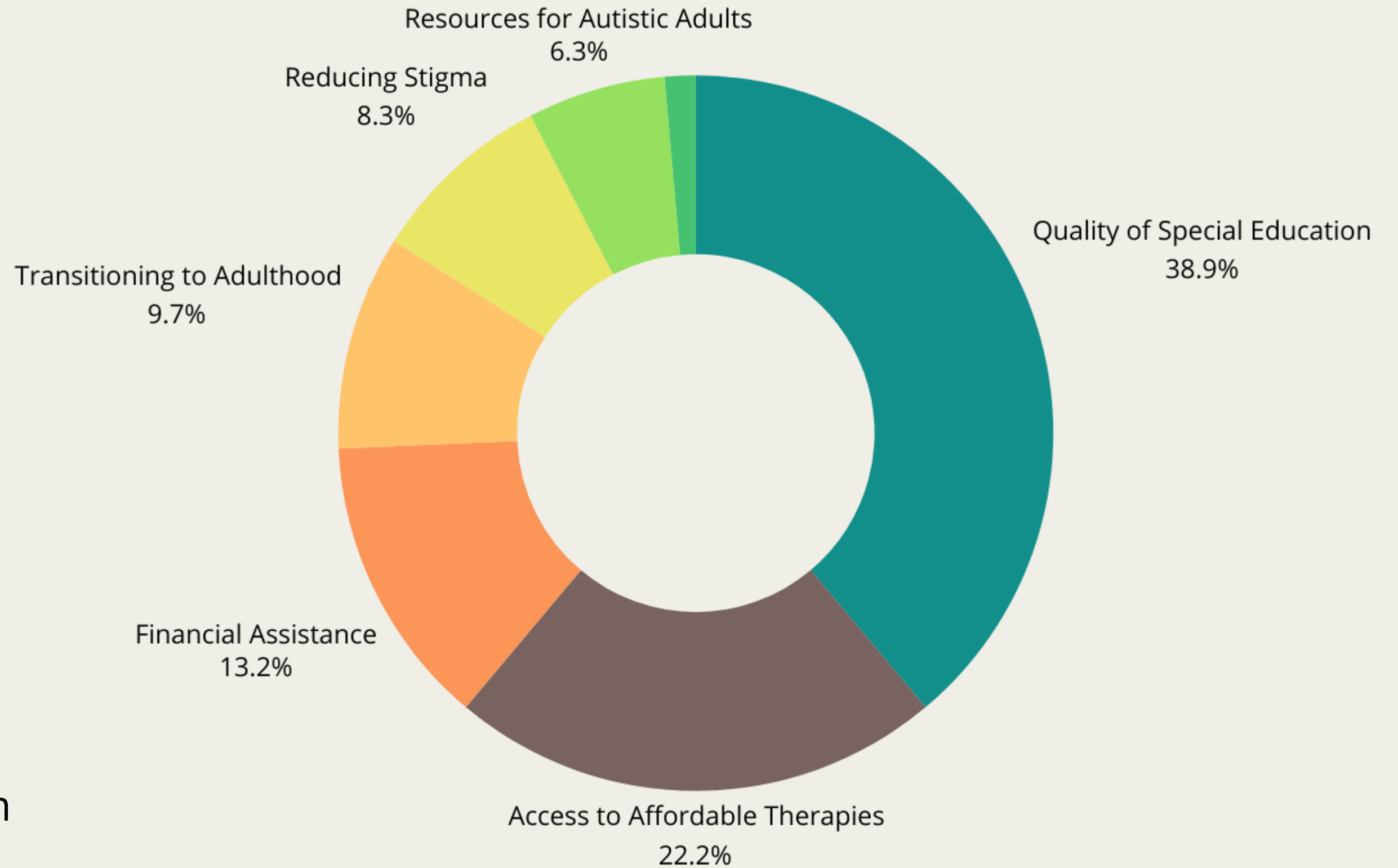
How Long Do Families Wait For ABA Therapy Following Initial Diagnosis?

While 78.2% start therapy within 6 months, 12.5% wait over a year, highlighting access disparities



What Matters Most to Autism Parents?

Immediate needs like education and therapy access outweigh long-term priorities like research



WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

Service Gaps

Most families face waitlists or insufficient therapy with only 12.5% getting adequate speech therapy

Education Trends

Homeschooling's dominance (57.1%) suggests a need for better school support

Financial Pressures

Costs drive demand for financial aid (19 votes) and affordable therapies (32 votes)

Therapy Delays

A minority (12.5%) endure significant delays, indicating uneven service availability

*does not reflect challenges associated with obtaining initial diagnosis

Broader Needs

Families prioritize practical support (education, therapy) alongside social and mental health concerns

Polycymakers

Increase funding to reduce waitlists

Enhance financial assistance programs

Educators

Strengthen special education and offer flexible schooling options

Train teachers on autism needs

Communities

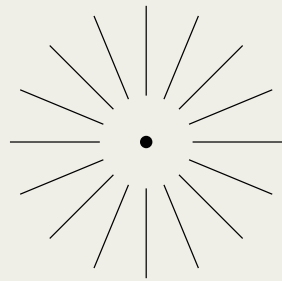
Promote inclusion and reducae stigma through awareness campaigns

Service Providers

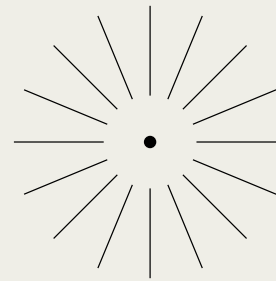
Expand therapy house and provider training

Offer flexible scheduling (evenings/weekends)

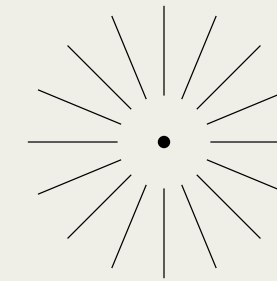
Key Takeaways



Autism families struggle with service access, educational options, financial burdens, and therapy delays



Immediate support (education, therapy, funding) is the top priority



Systemic improvements in funding, education, and service delivery are essential for meaningful change.

Thank you to all parents who contributed their insights