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## Recasting the Parentative: Seeking Balance Amidst the Busyness

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# Recasting the Parentative

Seeking balance amidst the busyness

# The Team



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Communications

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# Background



This research builds off an ACRL 2017 panel session, *When Treading Water Isn't Enough: What Academic Librarian Parents Need to Thrive, that elicited audience participation and feedback on work-life balance issues for academic librarian parents.*

# Survey

Distribution:

40 ALA/ACRL Listservs

Timeline:

October 22 - November 12, 2018

Responses:

1,033 responses total  
(581 viable responses)

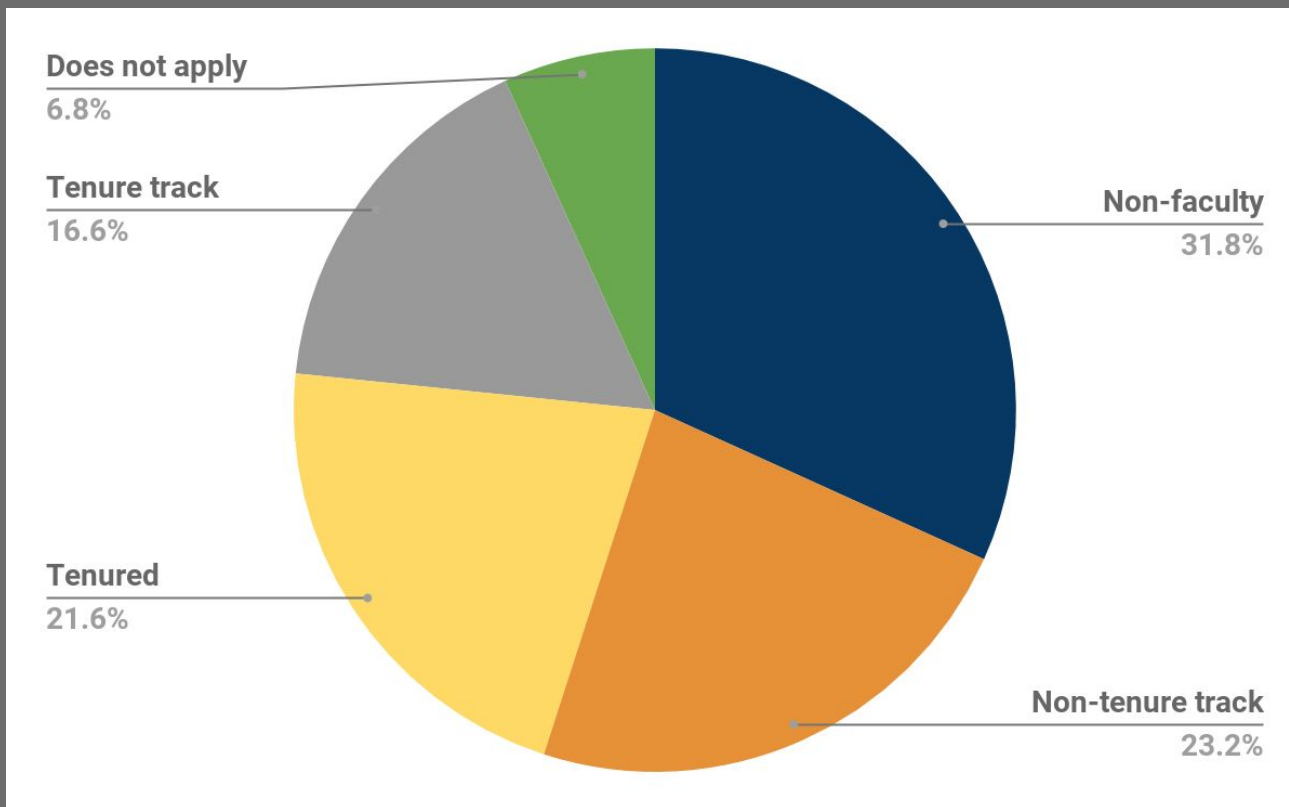
# Main Questions Explored:

What stereotypes about working parents exist within the culture of academic libraries?

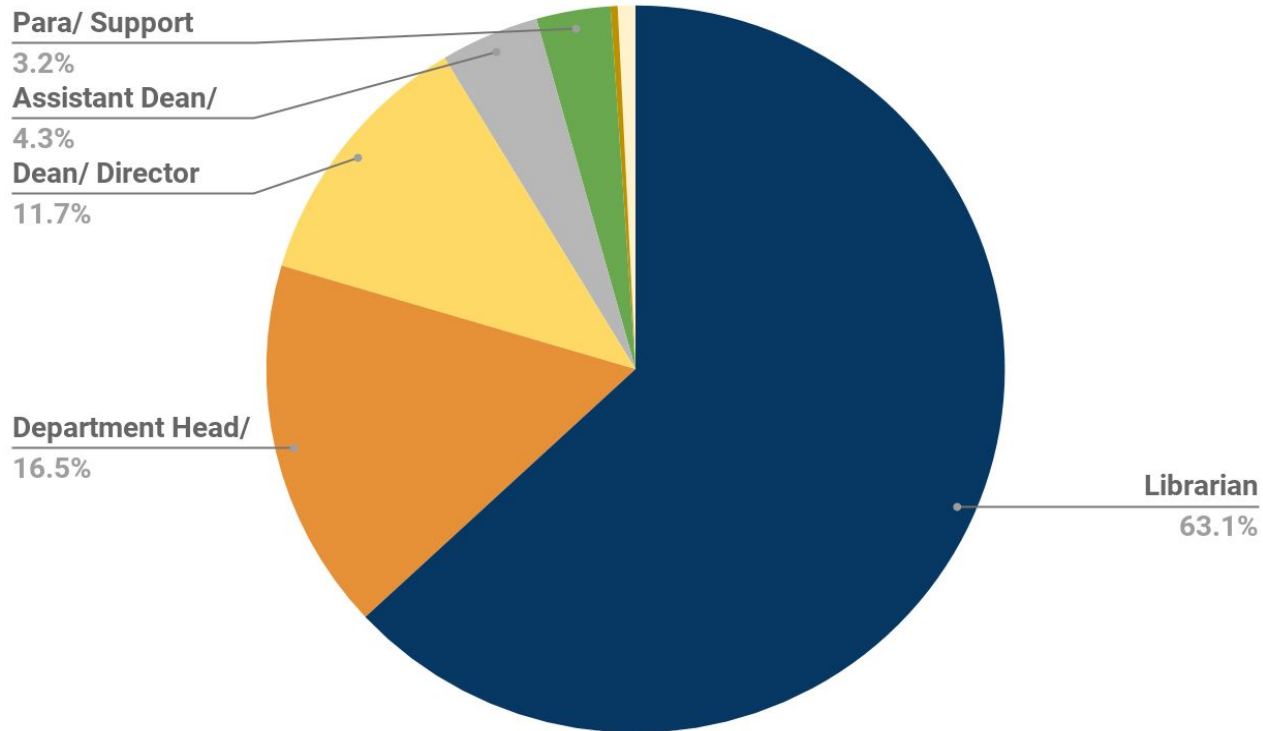
In what ways are working mothers and fathers impacted by these stereotypes?

How can institutions work to challenge these stereotypes and provide support for academic librarians who are balancing career advancement and family obligations?

# What is your current rank?

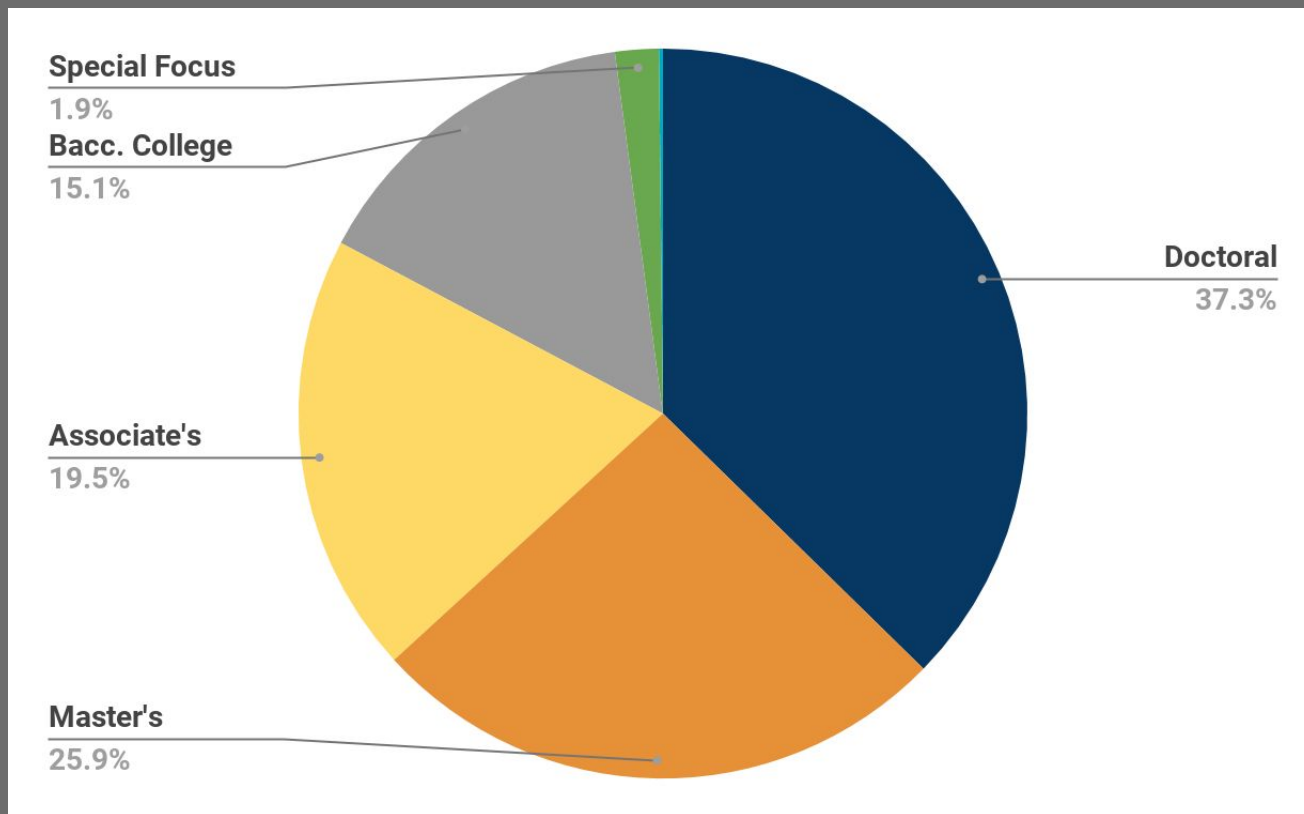


# What is your current role?





# What is your institution's Carnegie Classification?



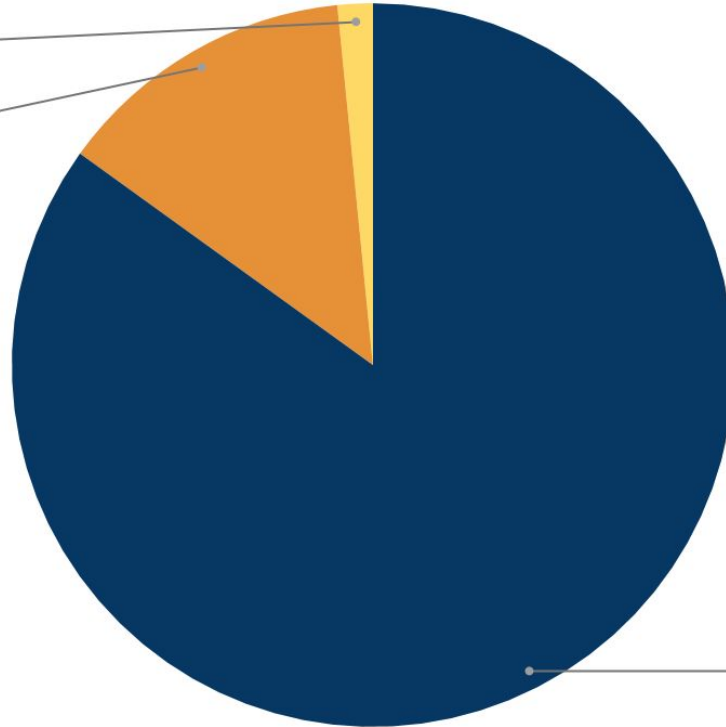
# Do you have children?

**No, but expecting**

1.6%

**No, and not**

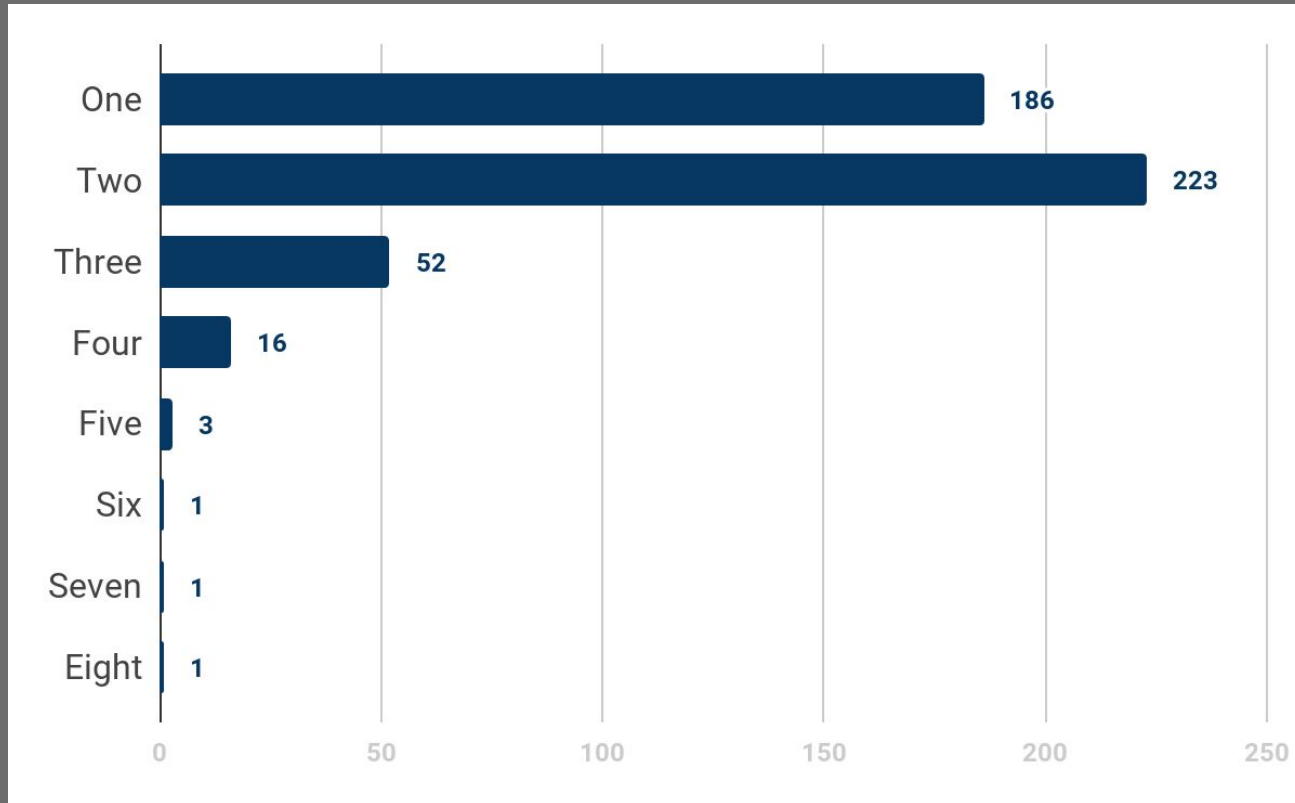
13.5%



**Yes**

84.9%

# How many children do you have?



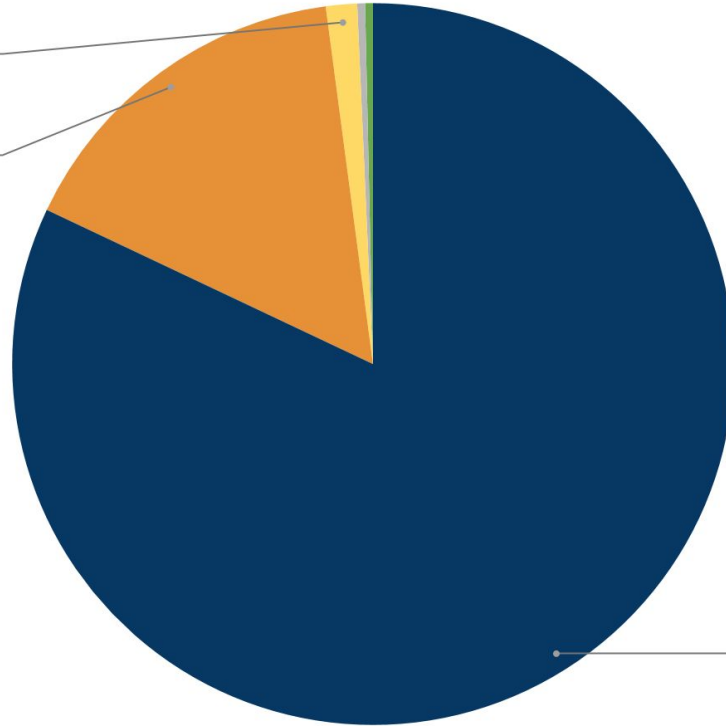
# What is your gender?

**Prefer not to**

1.4%

**Male**

15.9%



**Female**

82.0%

# What is your relationship status?

Prefer not to say

0.9%

In a relationship

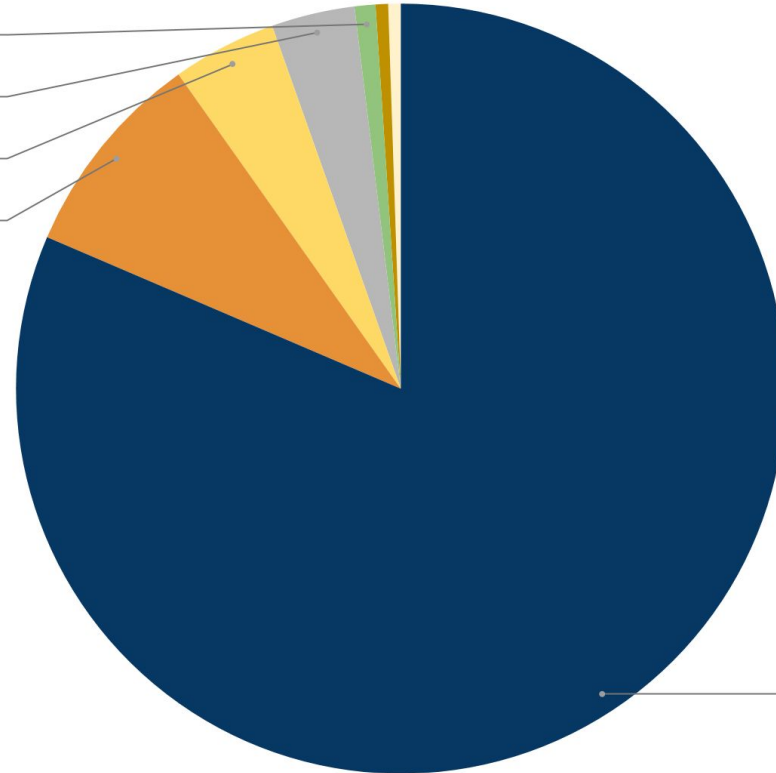
3.5%

Divorced

4.4%

Single

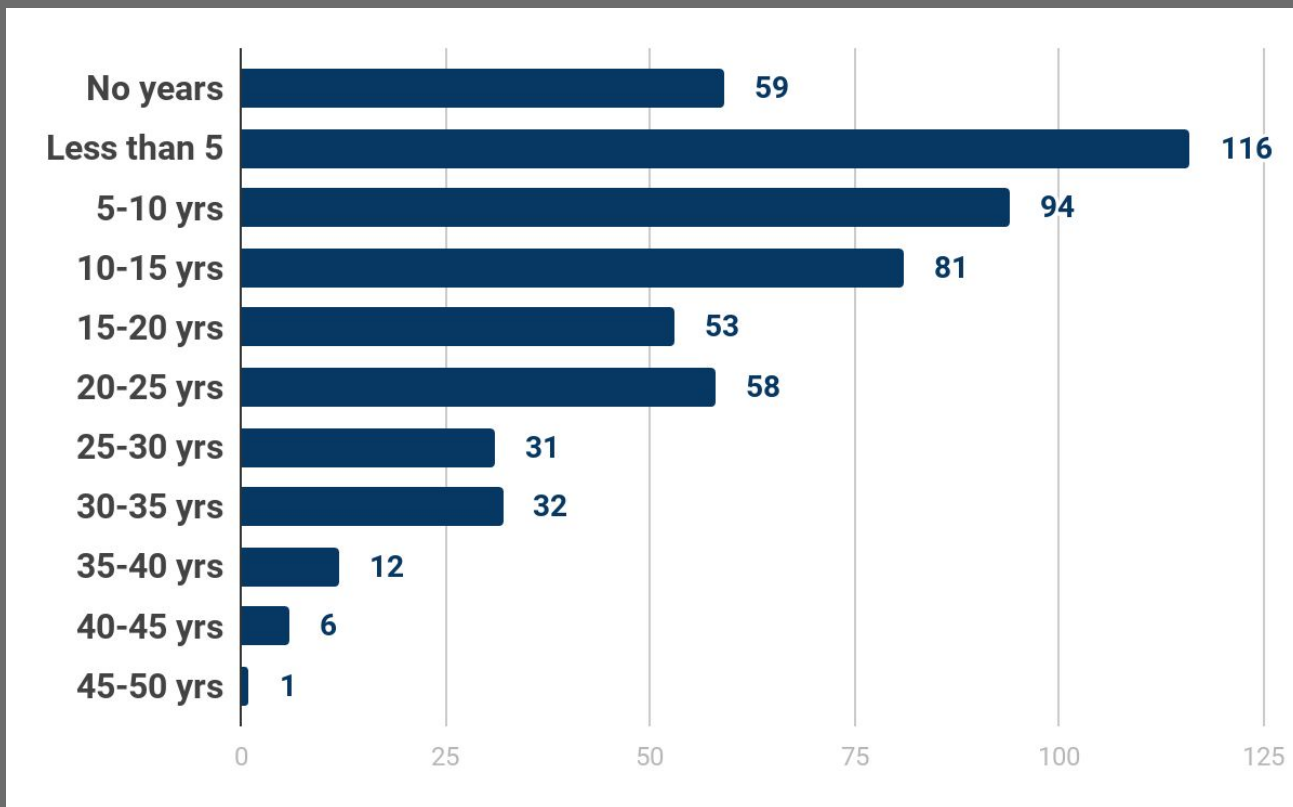
8.8%



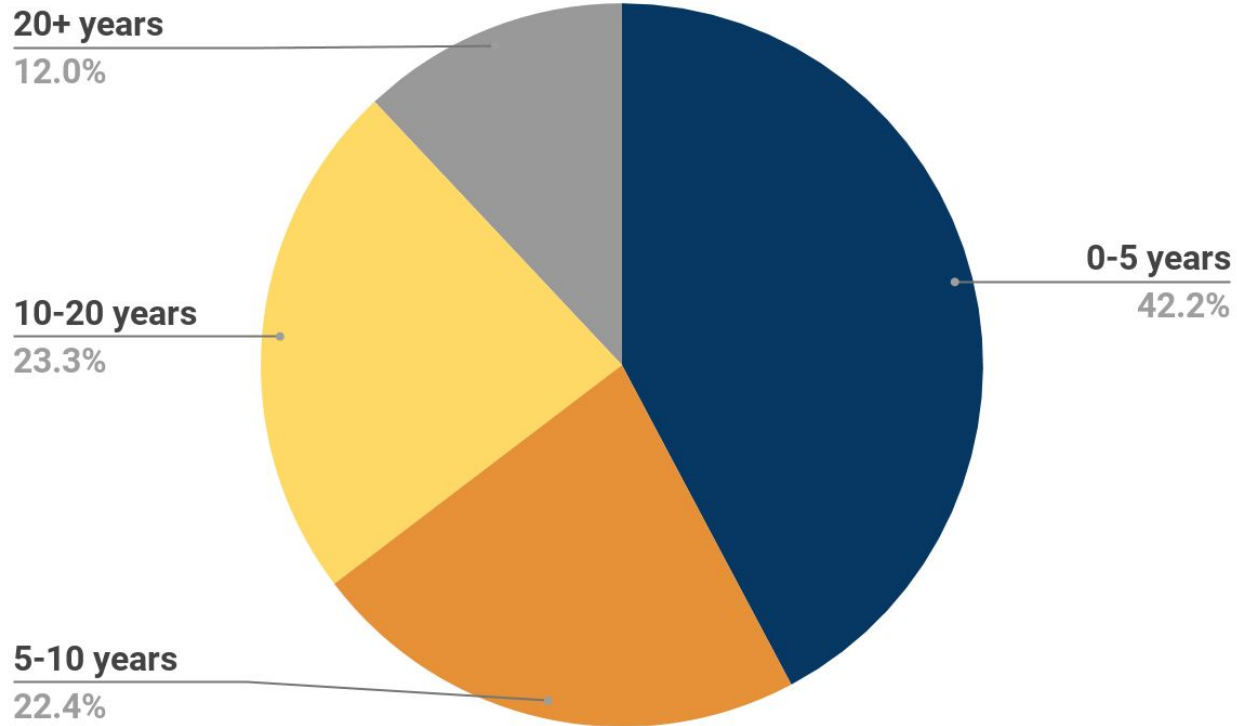
Married

81.4%

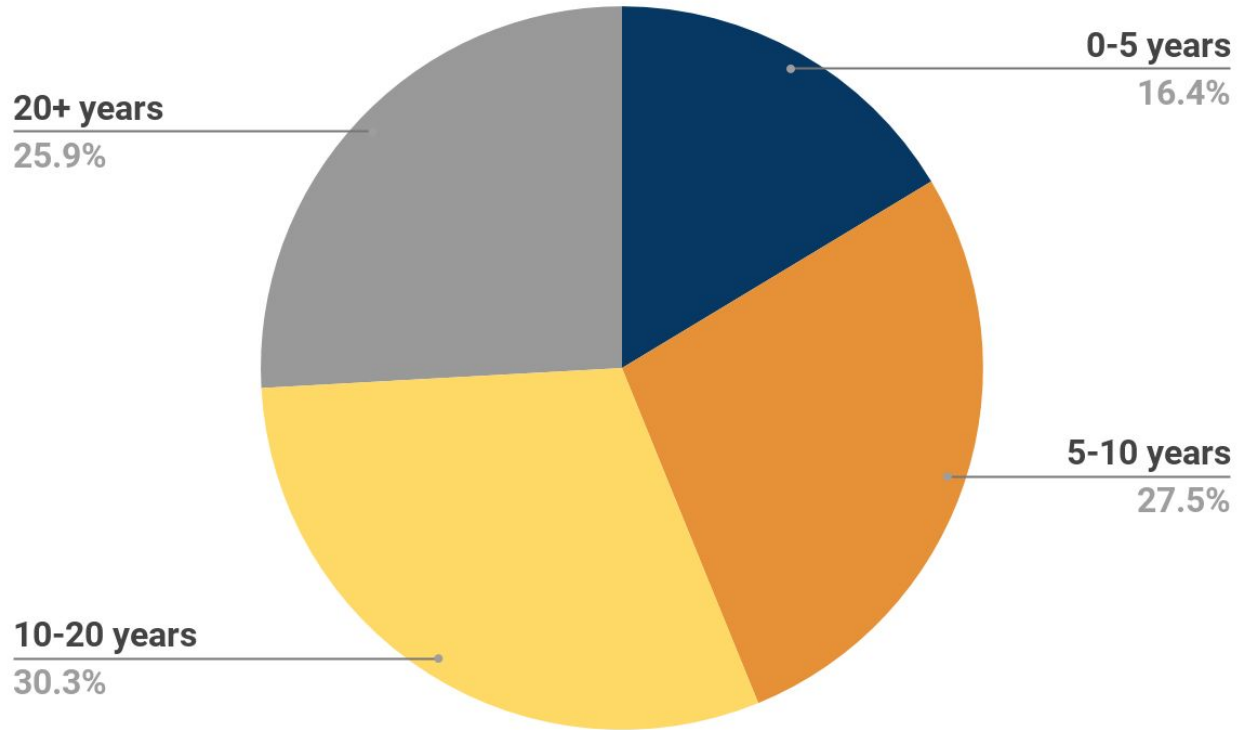
# How many years have you been a parent/guardian?



# Years at current institution



# Years working in academic libraries





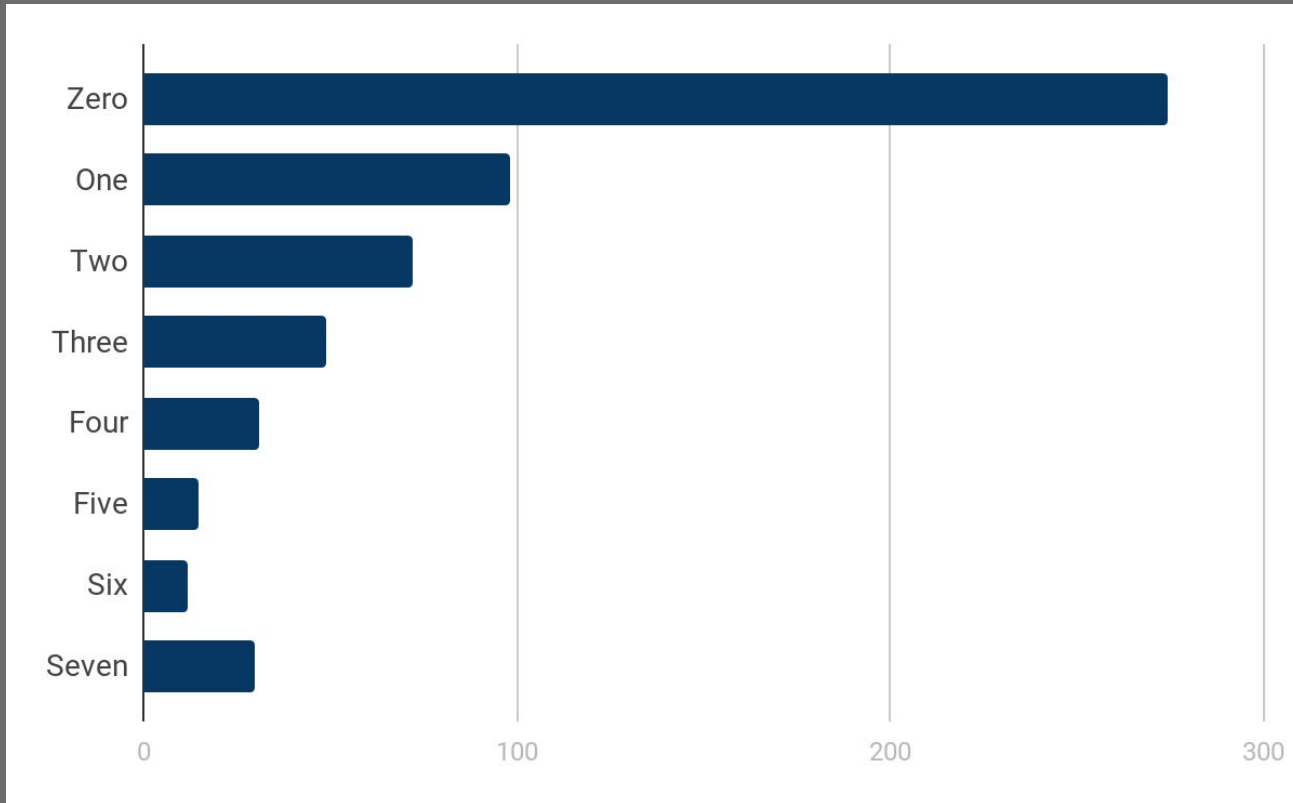
A large, dark, irregular ink blot with the word "Results" written in white in the center. The blot has a rough, splattered edge and is surrounded by a white background with some faint, scattered ink splatters. The word "Results" is centered within the dark area.

# Results

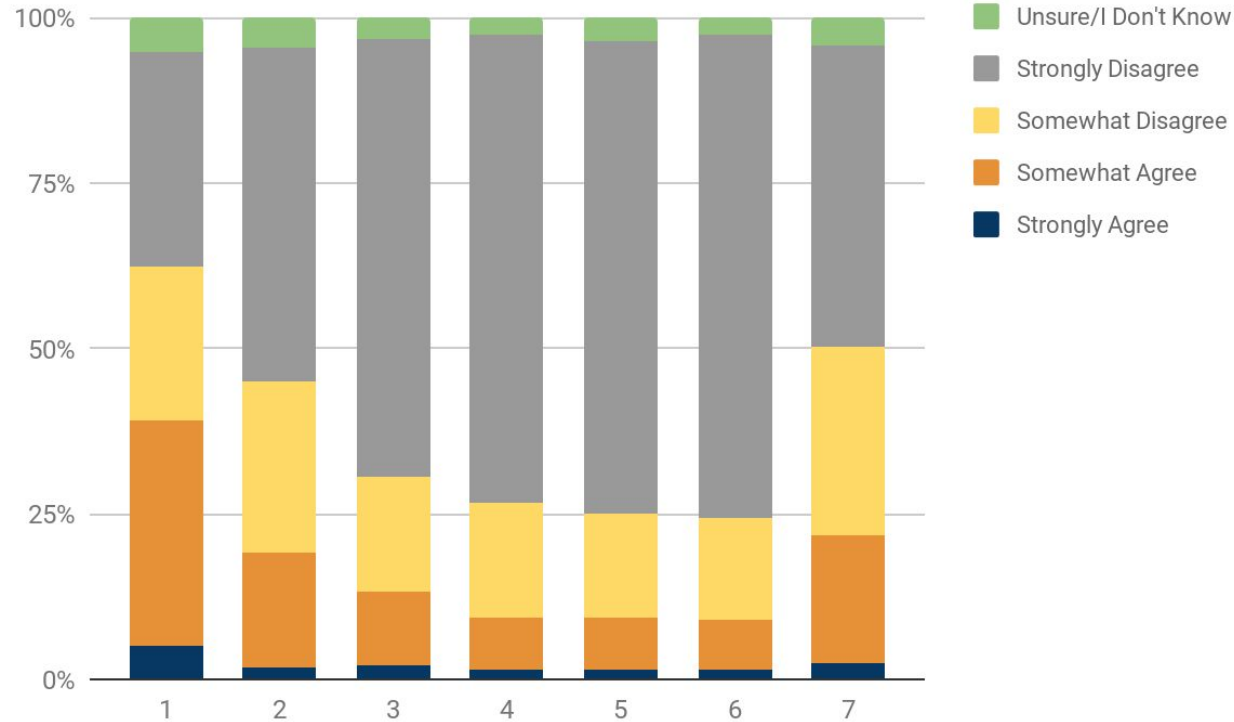
# Stereotypes Researched

1. Library workers with children are always leaving early or coming in late
2. Library workers with children get preferential treatment from their supervisors
3. Library workers with children don't work as much as those without children
4. Library workers with children are unreliable
5. Library workers with children are not as committed to their careers
6. Library workers with children put in less effort than their counterparts without children
7. Library workers with children are distracted at work by thoughts of their children

# How many stereotypes (pre-defined) have you experienced?

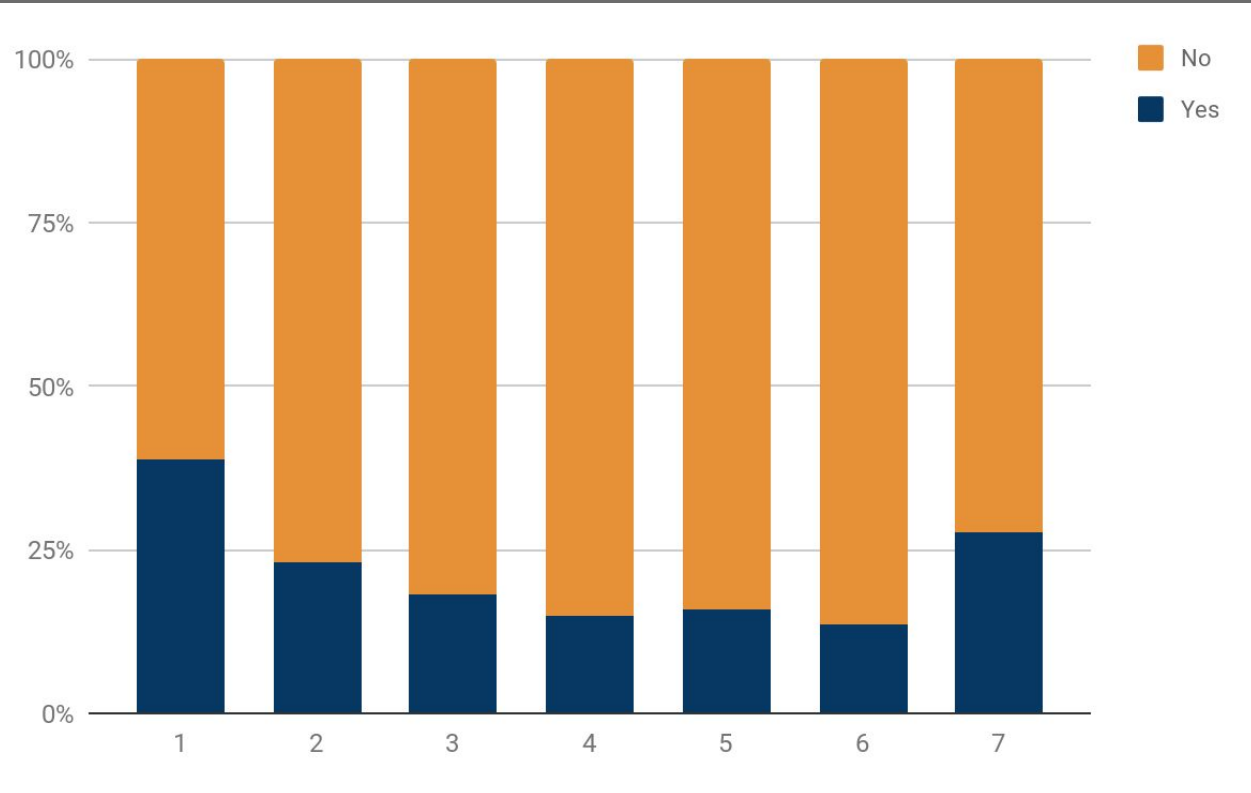


# To what extent do you agree that the following stereotypes exist in your library's work environment?



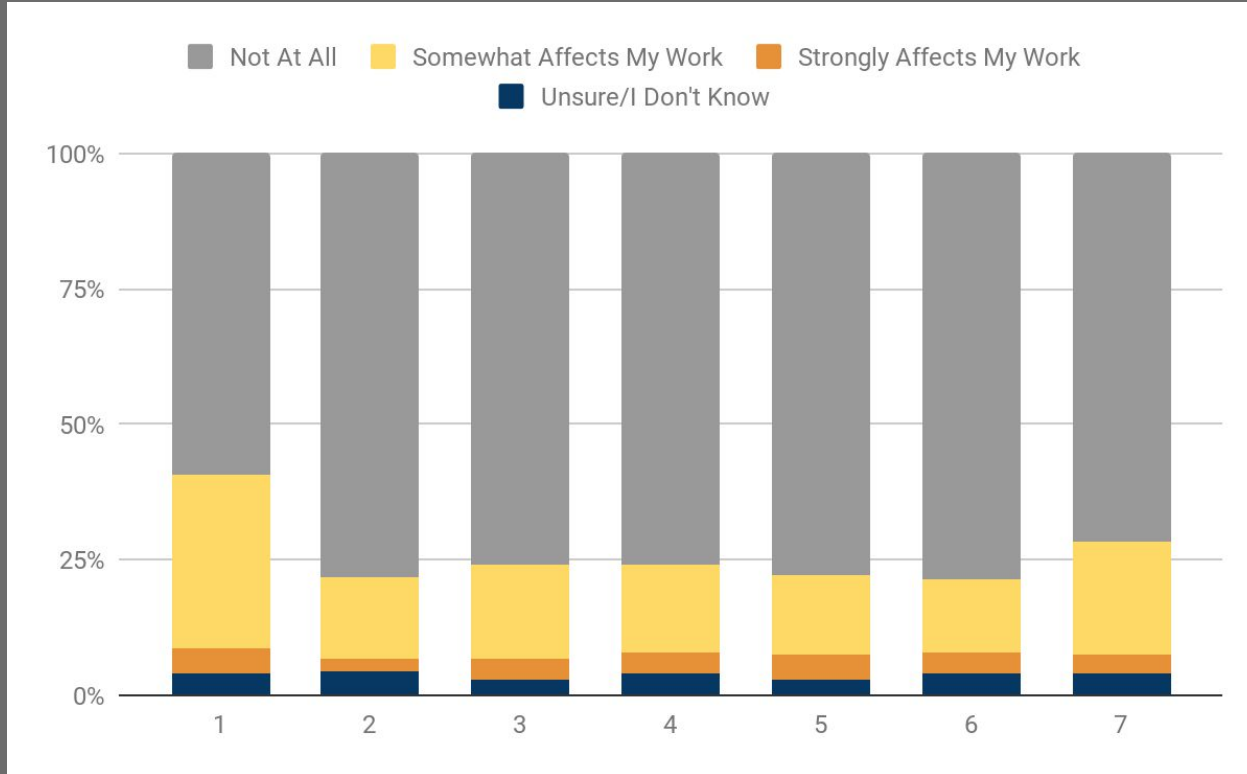
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7. Library workers with children are distracted at work by thoughts of their children

# Have you personally experienced any of the following stereotypes in your library work environment?



1. Library workers with children are always leaving early or coming in late
2. Library workers with children get preferential treatment from their supervisors
3. Library workers with children don't work as much as those without children
4. Library workers with children are unreliable
5. Library workers with children are not as committed to their careers
6. Library workers with children put in less effort at work than their counterparts without children
7. Library workers with children are distracted at work by thoughts of their children

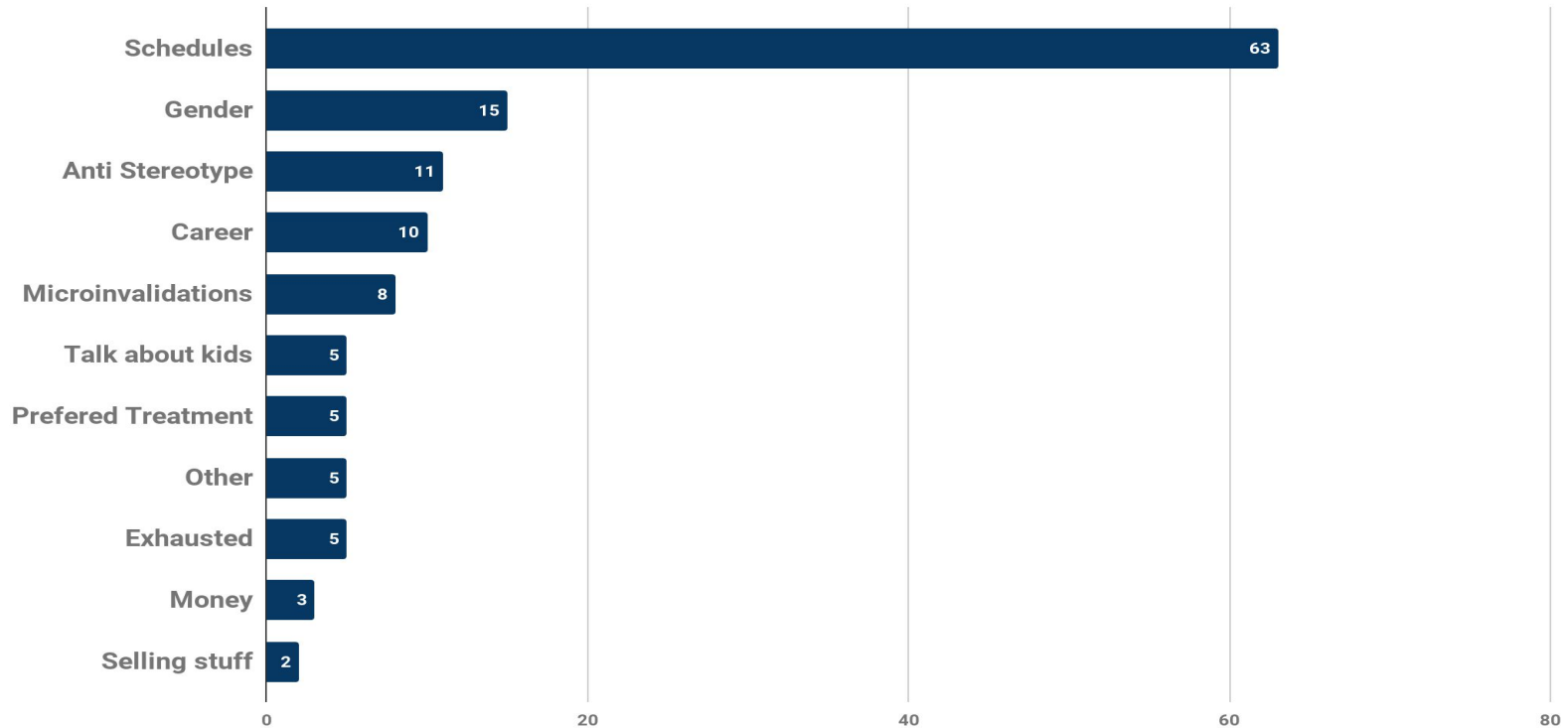
# To what extent do you feel that the following stereotypes affect your ability to be successful at your work?



1. Library workers with children are always leaving early or coming in late
2. Library workers with children get preferential treatment from their supervisors
3. Library workers with children don't work as much as those without children
4. Library workers with children are unreliable
5. Library workers with children are not as committed to their careers
6. Library workers with children put in less effort at work than their counterparts without children
7. Library workers with children are distracted at work by thoughts of their children

# Stereotypes you have encountered not listed above:

Other parenting stereotypes

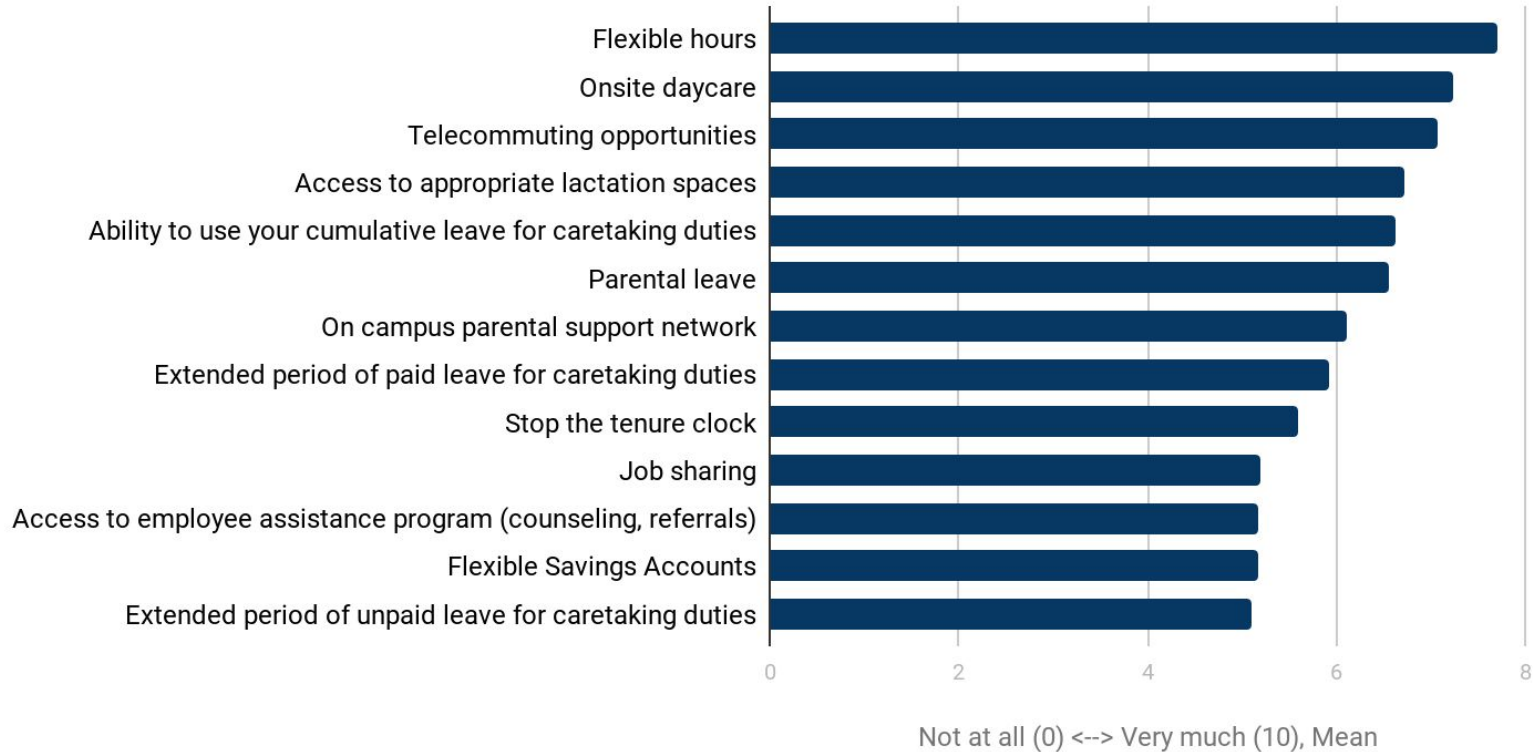


# How have you been impacted by parenting stereotypes in your library work environment?

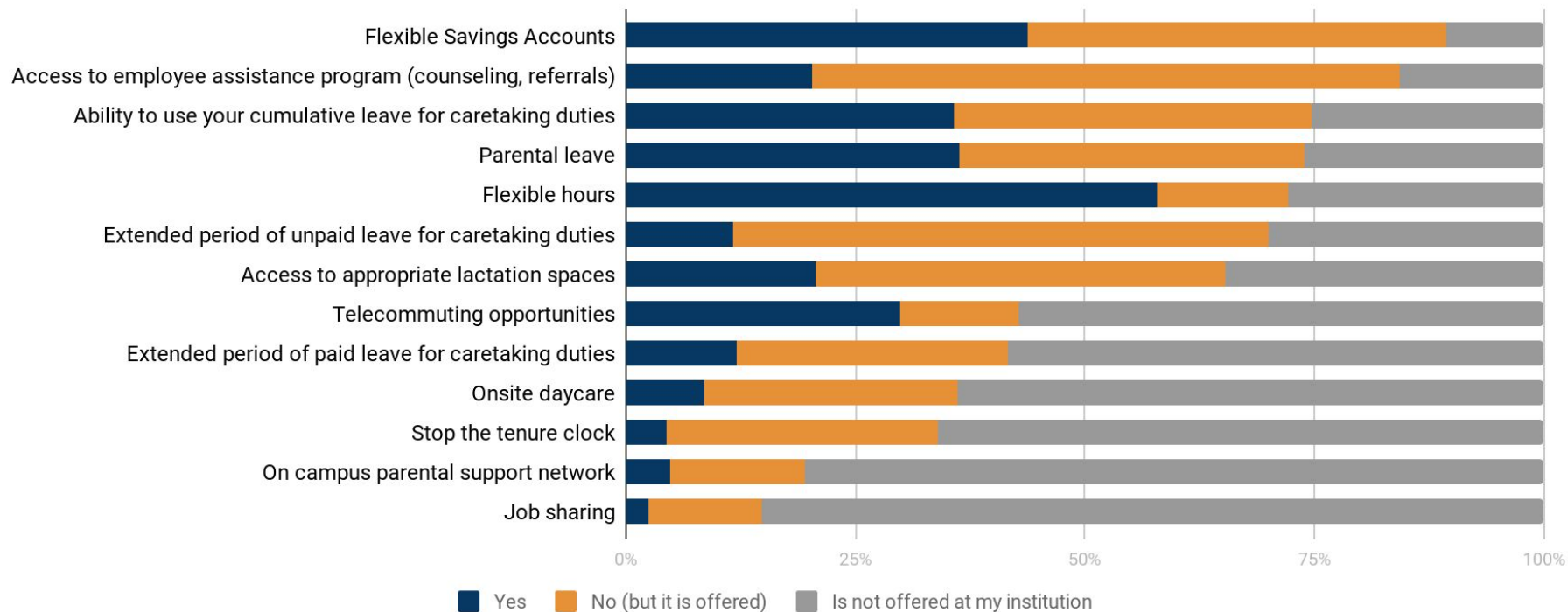
- 80% of respondents said they were not impacted or did not respond.
- Many respondents noted that they benefited from being a parent: e.g. more flexible hours, no weekend shifts.
- Many respondents noted having supervisors with children is a positive thing and directly impacting their work/life balance.
- Inductive Coding Results (20% of total respondents):
  - I am seen as getting preferential treatment
  - I am seen as less dedicated to my job
  - I am seen as more dedicated to my job
  - I am seen as disruptive to operations and others have to pick up the slack
  - I experience a loss of advancement/opportunity
  - My general level of stress is increased
  - I am required to over perform to compensate
  - I am seen as unable to meet work expectations



# To what extent would the availability of the following types of institutional support push back against parenting stereotypes?



# Have you taken advantage of any of the following services at your institution?



A large, dark, irregular ink blot with the word "Analysis" written in white in the center. The blot has a rough, splattered edge and is set against a white background with some faint, scattered ink splatters. The word "Analysis" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

**Analysis**

# Parenting Stereotypes Are Real

- 17% agree that these stereotypes exist
    - Those without children are significantly more likely to agree that these parenting stereotypes exist,  $t(74)=-2.662$ ,  $p<.05$
  - 53% say they have experienced these stereotypes
  - 23% say these stereotypes impact their work
  - 94% say that institutional supports push back against these stereotypes
-

# Women See These Stereotypes Differently

- Women are significantly more likely than men to say that these parenting stereotypes strongly impact their work,  $t(138)=2.02, p<.05$
  - Women are significantly more likely than men to say that the supports will help overcome the stereotypes,  $t(329)=4.313, p<.001$
-

# Time Diminishes the Perception of These Stereotypes

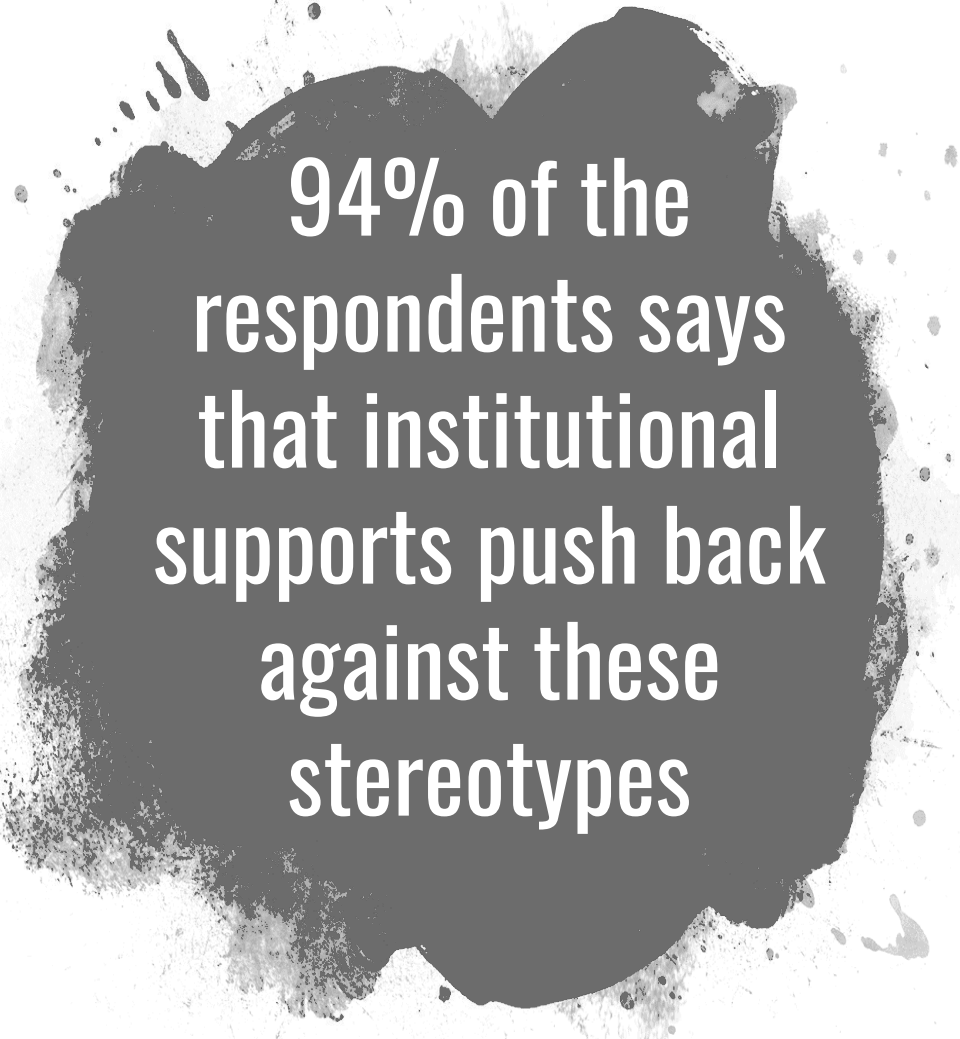
- The longer you've been a parent, the less likely you are to believe that these stereotypes exist,  $r=-.118$ ,  $p<.05$
  - The more children you have the less likely you are to agree that the following stereotypes exist,  $r=-.111$ ,  $p<.05$
  - The longer you've been a parent, the less likely you are to believe that these stereotypes impact your ability to be successful at work,  $r=-.092$ ,  $p<.05$
-



**Literature**

**Changing the narrative:  
Dismantling the Stereotypes/  
Recasting the Parentative**





**94% of the  
respondents says  
that institutional  
supports push back  
against these  
stereotypes**

# And the Non-Library Literature Suggests . . .

## Programs

Work/Family programs that provide working parents an opportunity to validate their effectiveness.

Public funded childcare and extended parental leaves.

Train managers on implicit bias.

## Policies

Better communicate and promote their family-friendly policies.

Paid family leave and flexibility to choose schedules/work from home.

FMLA should be expanded to include smaller employers and a broader variety of parenting responsibilities.

# And the Library and Higher Education Literature Suggests . .

## Programs

Create a mentorship program between tenured faculty parents and tenured-track parents.

Hold a panel session on successful parents/professors during new employee/faculty orientation.

Create a support group for parents.

## Policies

Offer telecommuting, flex-time, or job share/part-time opportunities.

Library administrators should be aware that not all staff may be equally supportive of librarians who choose to be mothers.

Promotion clock stops and tenure-track extensions.

And the literature suggests that no  
one “has it all.”

# Think Pair Share

A chalkboard with a lightbulb in the center. The board is divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal line. Each quadrant contains a hand-drawn circle. The lightbulb is positioned in the center, overlapping the intersection of the lines. The text "Think Pair Share" is written in white across the top of the board.

What do you think would help dismantle these stereotypes at your institution?  
Share your response here:

<http://bit.ly/parentiveACRL2019>

# Think-Pair-Share

What do you think would help dismantle these stereotypes at your institution?

Share your response here:

<http://bit.ly/parentiveACRL2019>



**Questions?**