

COVID-19 Survey at a Glance

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**COVID-19 Supports for
People with Disabilities
and Caregivers**

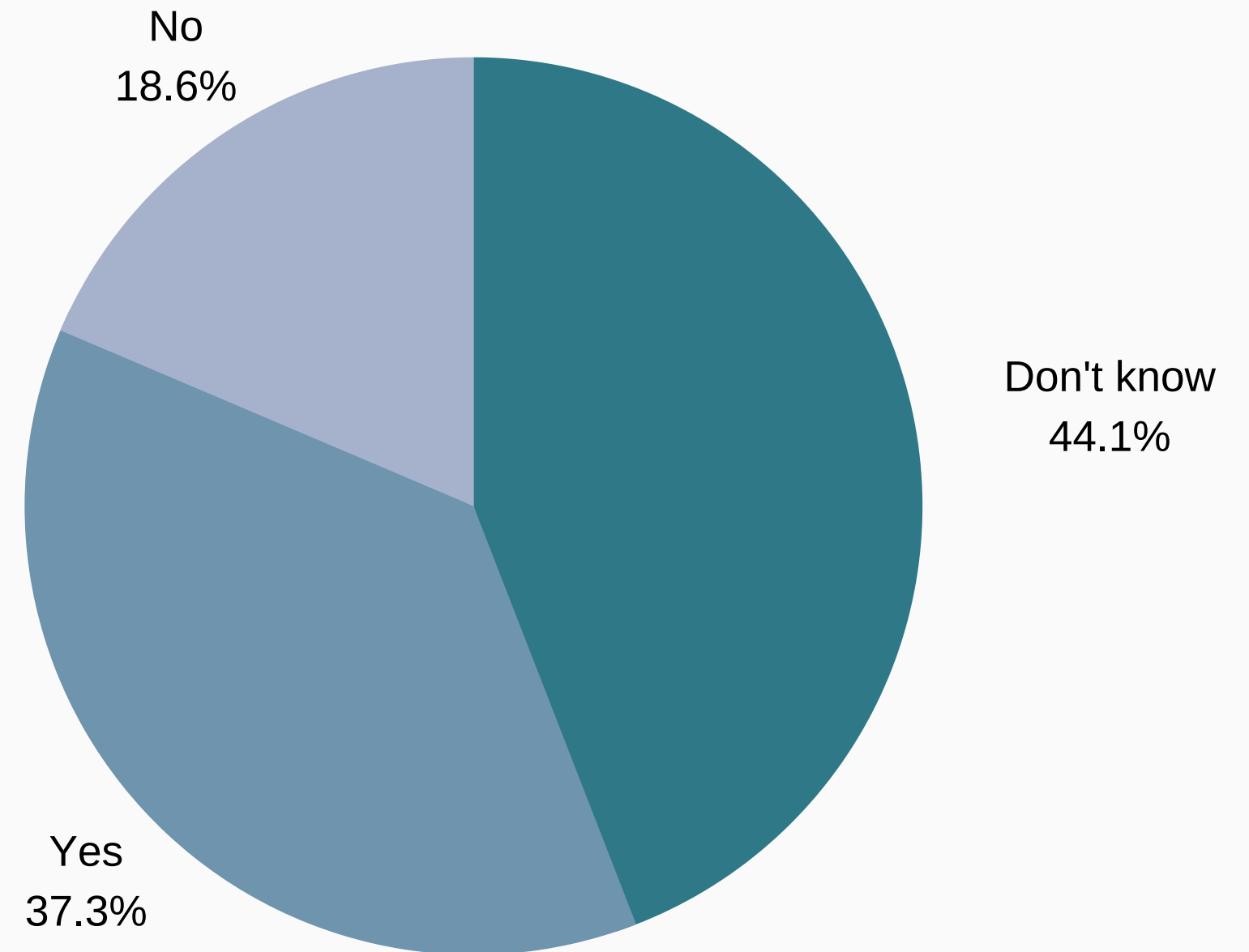
Who participated?

WE HEARD FROM 161 CANADIANS

- 73% (117) are **parents/caregivers**
- 93.8% (151) identified themselves as **female**
- 41.5% (66) live in urban areas, 40.3% (64) in suburban areas, and 18.2% (29) in rural areas
- 78.9% (127) are from **Ontario**, 10 from Alberta, 9 from British Columbia, 3 from Quebec, 2 from Saskatchewan, 2 from Newfoundland and Labrador, 2 from Nova Scotia, 1 from New Brunswick, 1 from Manitoba, and 4 are not known.

What participants said about Screening Options

- 37.3% of people said their community has accessible screening options
- 44.1% did not know if screening options were available
- 18.6% said there are no accessible screening options available



Barriers and Supports to Screening

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS?

Some testing centres are inaccessible because they are:

- poorly labelled
- difficult to access with a wheelchair
- not allowing a drive-through option

Smaller communities may not have a testing centre

Transport services may have been cancelled or reduced

Children can find tests difficult to tolerate

WHAT WOULD HELP?

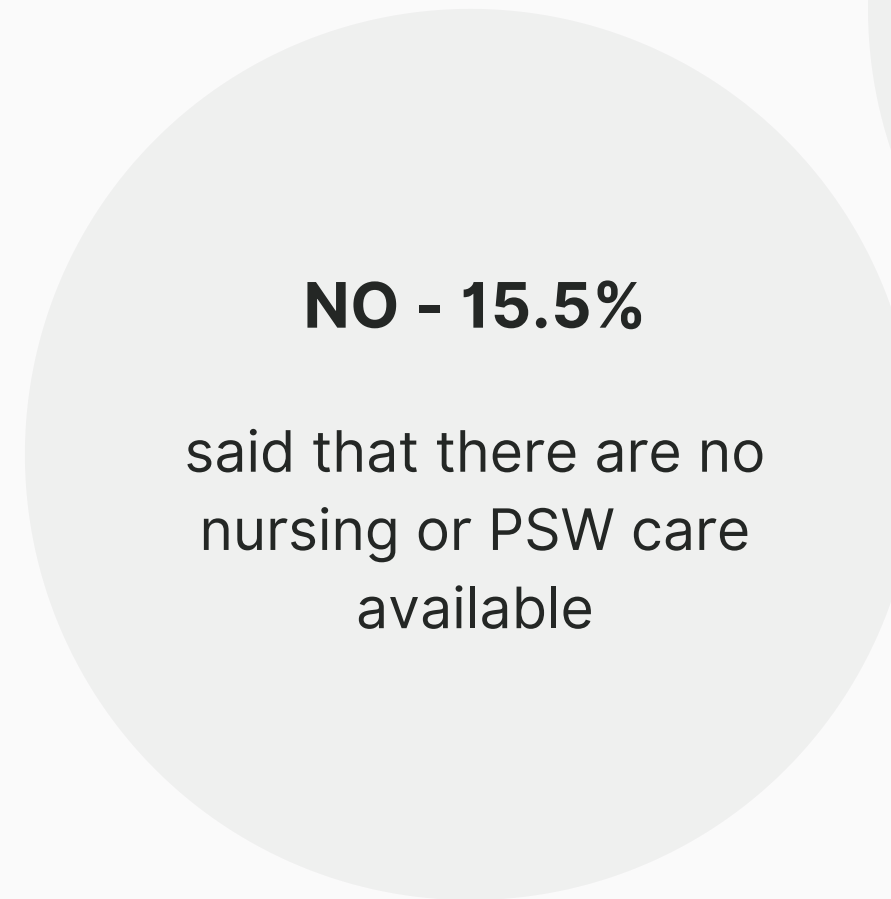
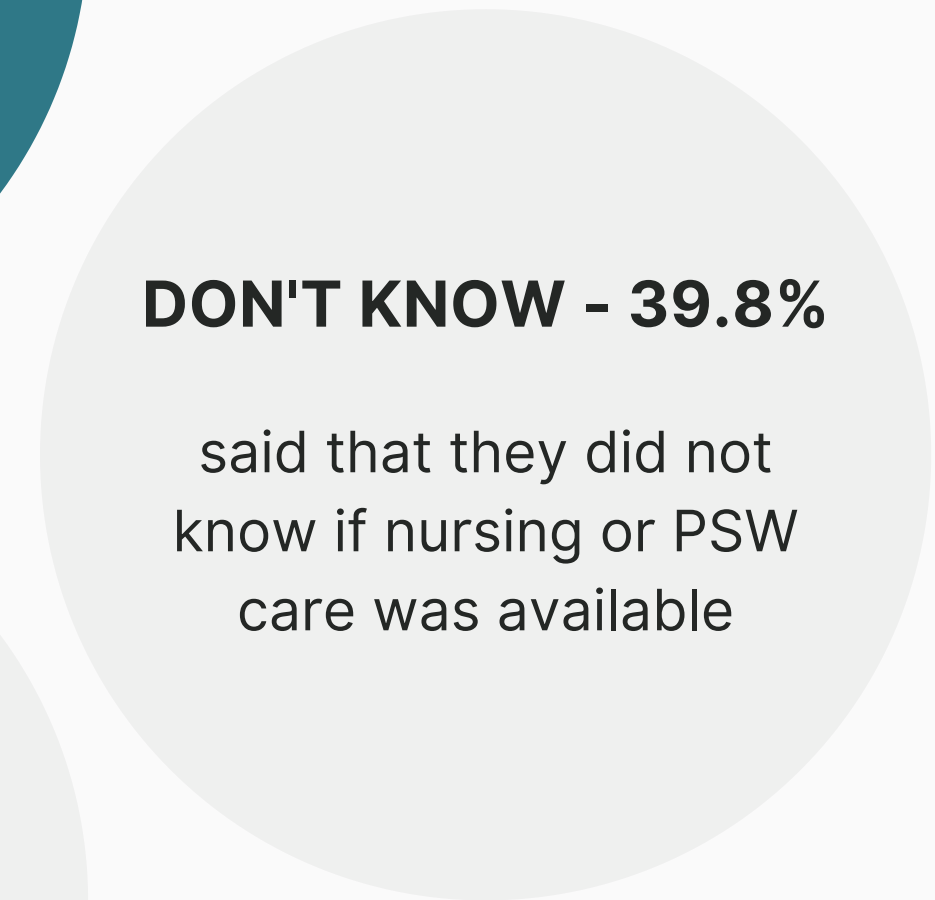
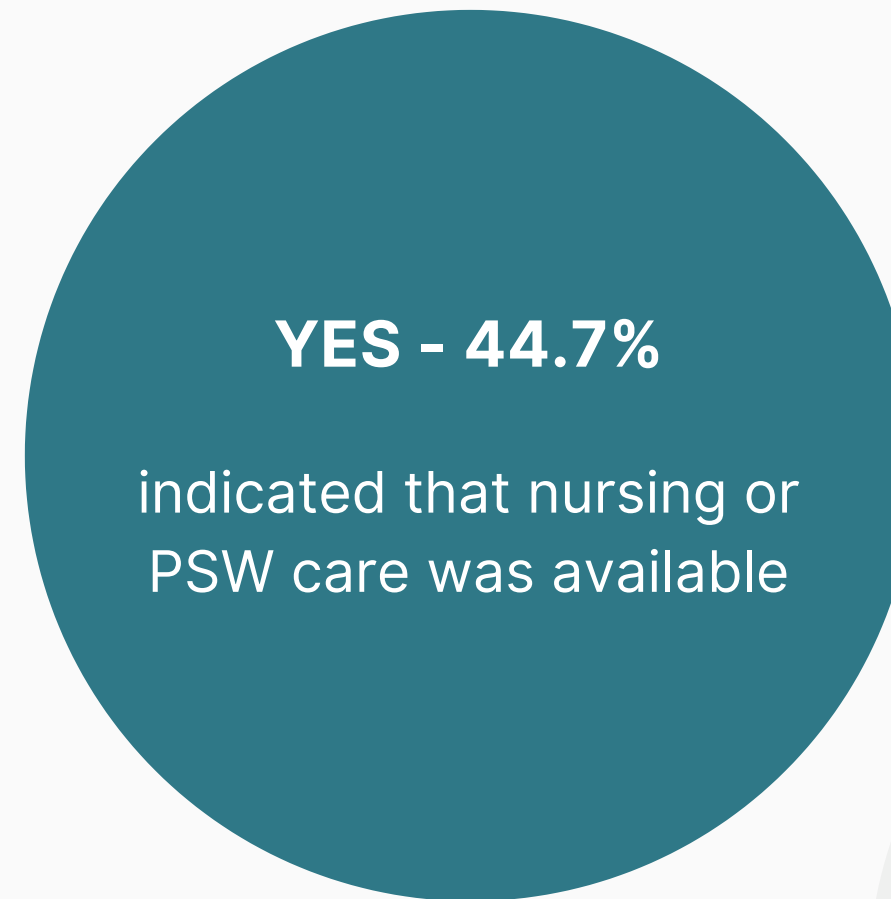
At home tests for those who cannot easily access a testing centre

Well-labelled, wheelchair accessible testing centres with a drive-through option

Simpler and less traumatic tests for children and those who find the existing test difficult to tolerate



What participants said about Personal Support Worker (PSW) or Nursing Care



But even when nursing or PSW support is available:

- Some chose not to use it out of fear of getting infected
- It is at 'bare minimum levels' (e.g. bathing limited to 1 time per week)
- Some families had difficulty obtaining it even prior to COVID-19
- Some families have insufficient funding to afford it
- Many nurses or PSWs are not provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by their agencies



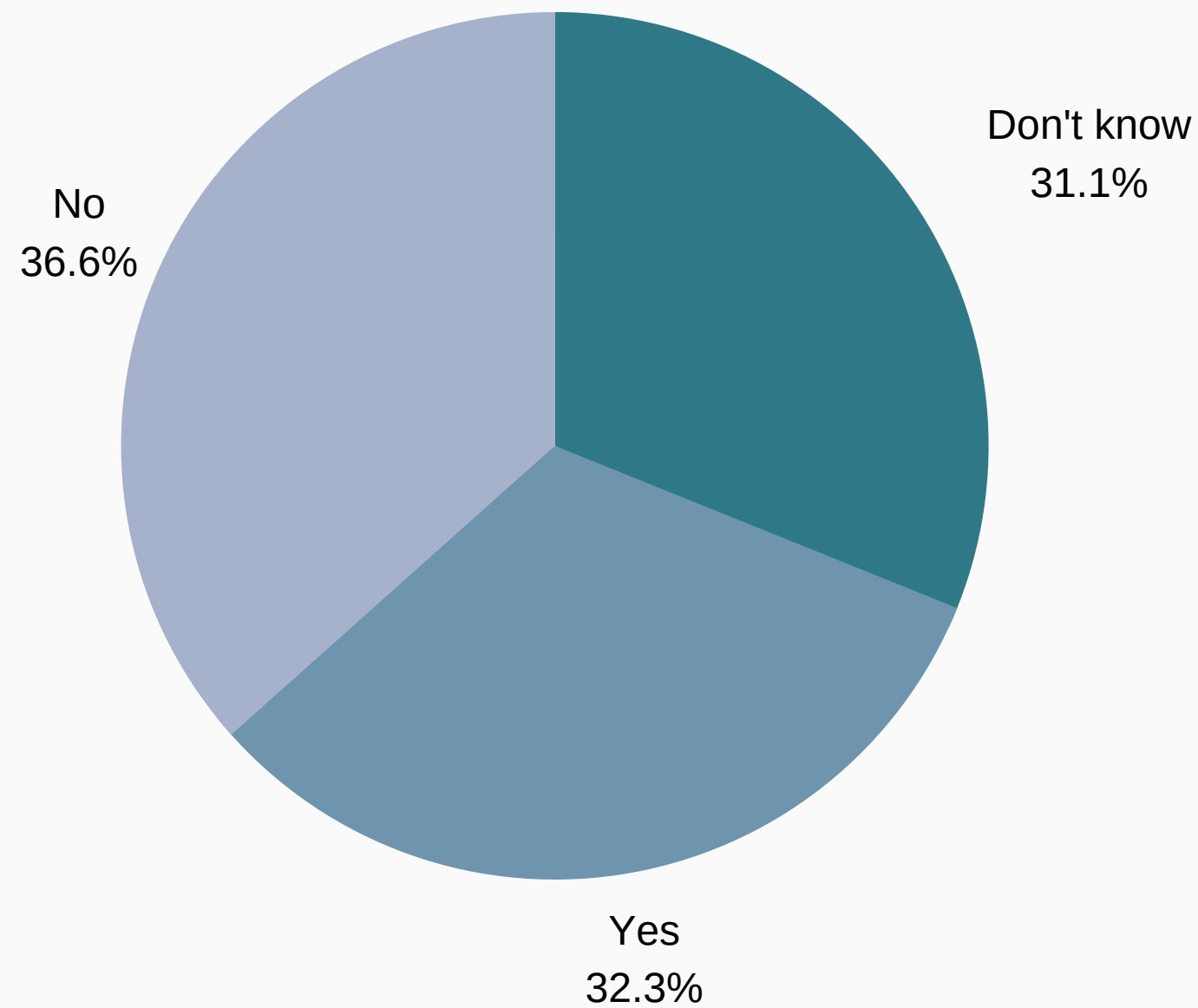
What would help?

- A **comprehensive** and **flexible** infrastructure of support for families
- Adequate nursing, PSW, or respite support based on families needs
- Less 'red tape'
- Well-compensated workers
- All agencies to provide nurses and PSWs with PPE

What participants said about Education

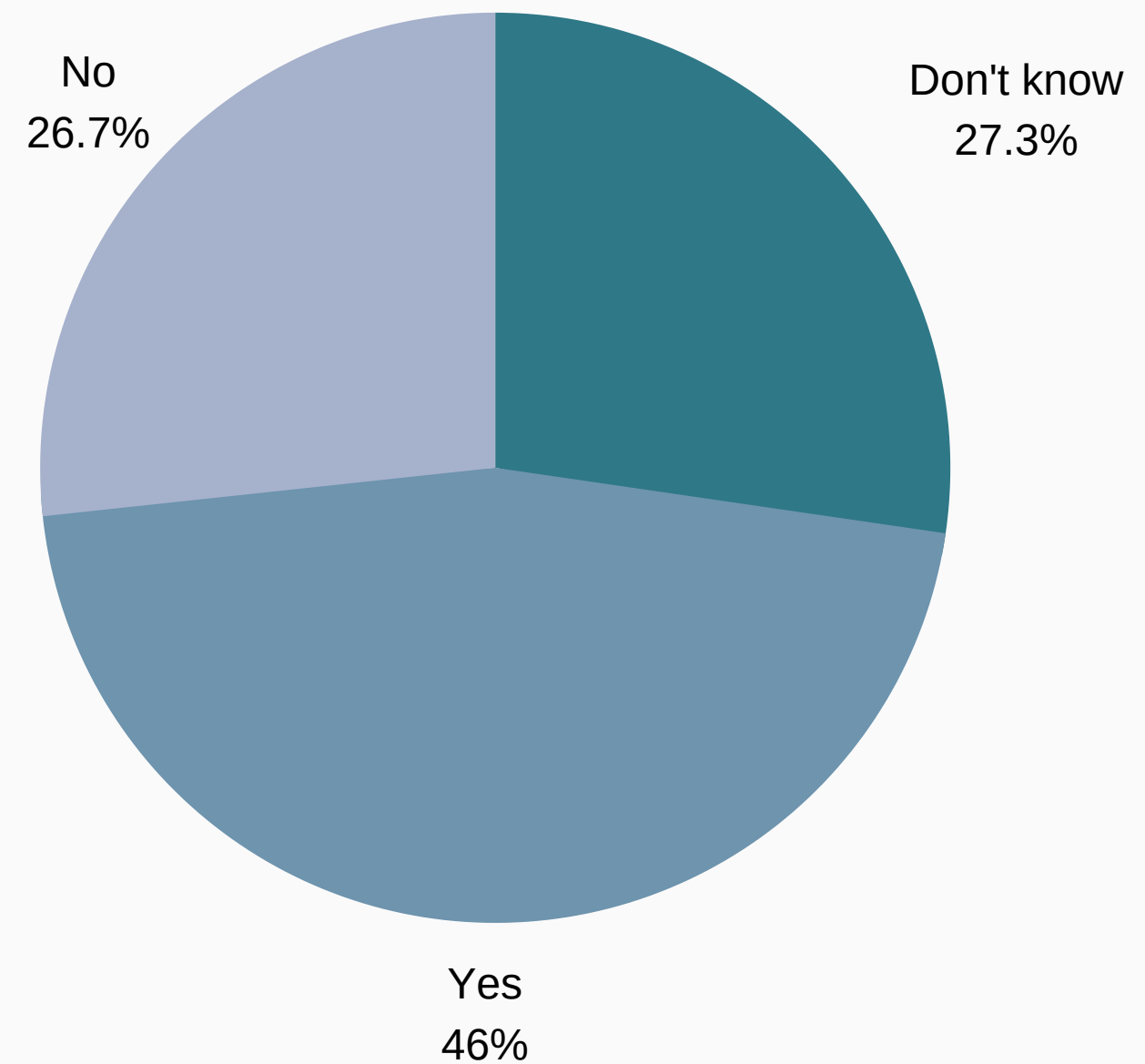
36.6%

of people said there was **no support** for special education online



46%

of people said laptops or iPads were available to students with disabilities who didn't have their own



Barriers and Supports to Education

BARRIERS:

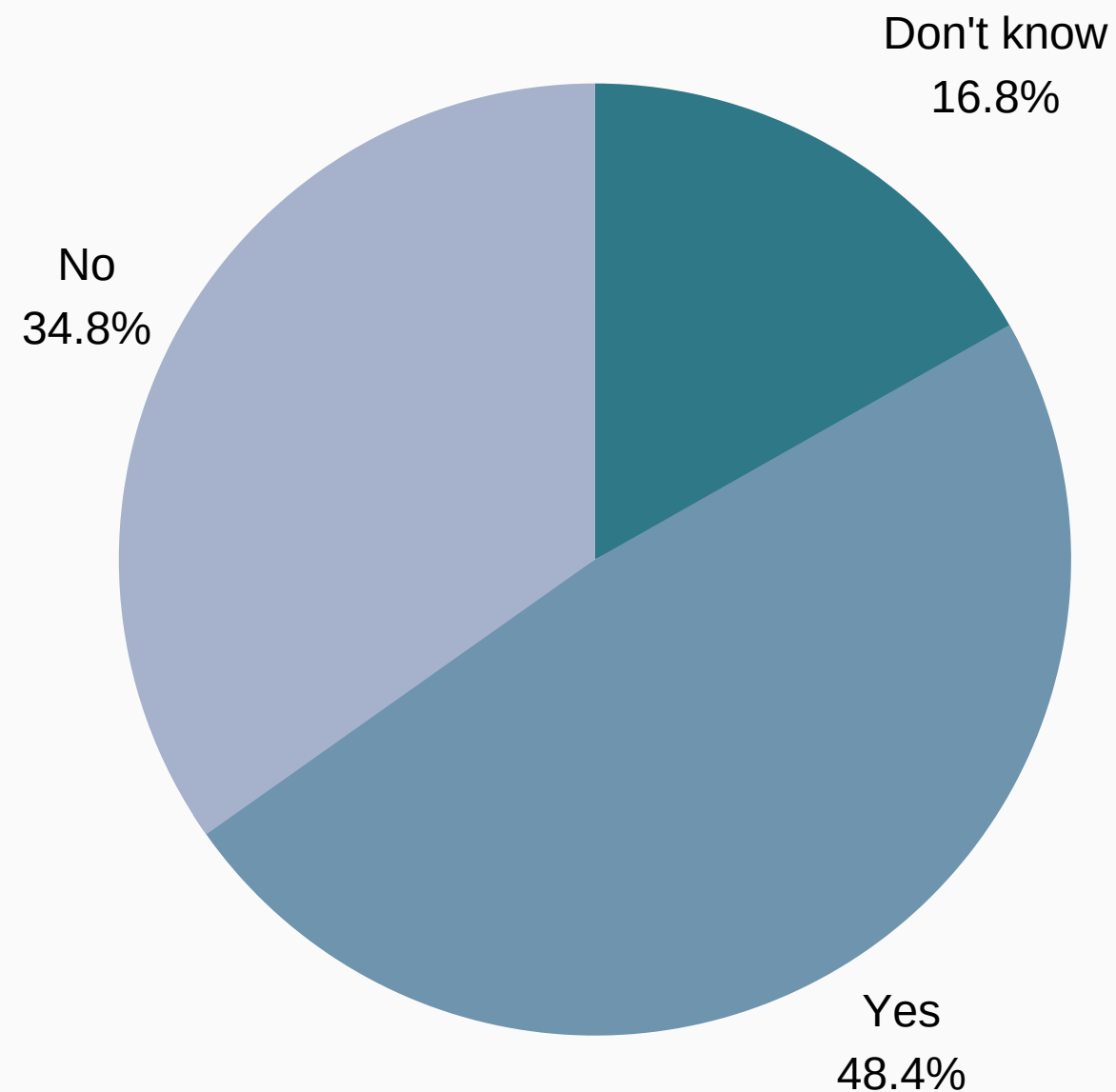
- Some children may have trouble staying focused
- Many children need parent support
- Parents often need to modify the curriculum
- Internet in rural areas may not be good enough for access
- Inadequate Education Assistant support for online learning
- Parents have difficulty working from home and homeschooling
- Amount and quality of support varies between schools and even between classrooms

SUPPORTS:

- Flexible schooling options based on needs of child and family
- Frequent regular Education Assistant support both in person and virtually
- Children to keep their in-person support workers even when learning remotely
- Schools to provide technology (e.g. iPads) to children who need it
- Adequate financial assistance for parents who stay home to support their children's learning



What participants said about Healthcare



48.4% of people said online medical care is available to people with disabilities.

People who receive care remotely access it either through the phone (**87.2%**) or video consult (**80.8%**).

PEOPLE HAD **MIXED EXPERIENCES** WITH VIRTUAL CARE:

- Some physicians provided virtual care, others did not, and some did in-person visits
- Virtual care sometimes went great and other times experienced technical difficulties

WHAT WOULD HELP?

- **Flexible** system including a combination of in-person, virtual and at-home care
- Easy-to-use technology platforms for virtual care using the family's technology of **choice**



Accessibility in the Community

- **44.7%** said there are delivery services for those who needed them, but these can be costly and unreliable.
- **42.2%** said there is accessible information about COVID-19



WHAT WOULD HELP?

- Agencies to **regularly check in** with clients regarding their needs
- Agencies to provide free delivery services to those who need it
- Agencies to provide information in a variety of formats to those who need

Have your say!



Do you have a story about how COVID-19 has impacted your life that goes with the numbers?

Share it with us! Contact Kinga Pozniak at pozniakk@mcmaster.ca