

## By the Numbers

The Vanderbilt Child Health poll surveyed 1,025 Tennessee parents with children under 18 years old from October 25 — November 22, 2023. 82% of all parents surveyed are registered voters. All reported percentages have survey weights applied, so their interpretation can be broadened to all parents in Tennessee. For example, “38.9% of Tennessee parents list Bullying, including cyber bullying as one of their top 3 concerns for their child.”

All summaries are listed as weighted proportions of Tennessee parents  $\pm$  Standard of Error

### *Top Concerns*

Education and school quality	42.8% $\pm$ 2.3
Bullying, including cyberbullying	38.9% $\pm$ 2.3
Child mental health and suicide	36.6% $\pm$ 2.2
School gun violence	31.5% $\pm$ 2.1
Drug and alcohol use	23.1% $\pm$ 2.0
Community gun violence	17.8% $\pm$ 1.9
Not enough exercise or physical activity	15.2% $\pm$ 1.7
Safe and affordable housing	14.4% $\pm$ 1.4
Car accidents	14.2% $\pm$ 1.6
Childcare availability or affordability	12.8% $\pm$ 1.6
Smoking and tobacco use (including vaping, e-cigarettes)	11.1% $\pm$ 1.5
Racial inequality	10.0% $\pm$ 1.4
Sexual behavior and teen pregnancy	9.2% $\pm$ 1.3
Body image/eating disorders	8.4% $\pm$ 1.1
Obesity	7.4% $\pm$ 1.2
Getting sick from COVID	6.5% $\pm$ 1.2

### *Top 5 Concerns by Race*

<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	
Education and school quality	42.4% $\pm$ 2.6
Bullying, including cyberbullying	41.4% $\pm$ 2.6
Child mental health and suicide	35.3% $\pm$ 2.5
School gun violence	30.3% $\pm$ 2.4
Drug and alcohol use	24.3% $\pm$ 2.3

<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	
Education and school quality	42.1% $\pm$ 5.9
Bullying, including cyberbullying	35.8% $\pm$ 5.9
School gun violence	34.8% $\pm$ 5.4
Child mental health and suicide	30.4% $\pm$ 5.5
Community gun violence	28.9% $\pm$ 4.6

<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	
Child mental health and suicide	49.6% ± 7.3
Education and school quality	46.0% ± 7.3
School gun violence	34.5% ± 6.9
Bullying, including cyberbullying	28.7% ± 5.7
Drug and alcohol use	22.1% ± 6.4

*Top 5 Concerns by Region*

<b>West</b>	
Education and school quality	48.2% ± 5.2
Bullying, including cyberbullying	39.5% ± 5.0
School gun violence	35.2% ± 4.9
Child mental health and suicide	29.4% ± 4.7
Community gun violence	26.2% ± 4.3

<b>Middle</b>	
Education and school quality	41.4% ± 3.6
Bullying, including cyberbullying	37.8% ± 3.5
Child mental health and suicide	37.1% ± 3.4
School gun violence	32.7% ± 3.4
Drug and alcohol use	22.8% ± 3.2

<b>East</b>	
Education and school quality	41.4% ± 3.7
Child mental health and suicide	40.6% ± 3.7
Bullying, including cyberbullying	39.7% ± 3.6
School gun violence	27.7% ± 3.3
Drug and alcohol use	24.6% ± 3.3

**Education**

*Top Education Concerns*

My child's learning and educational progress	50.8% ± 2.3
My child's social and emotional well being	50.1% ± 2.3
My child's feelings of safety at school	37.9% ± 2.2
School policies and communication with parents	29.3% ± 2.0

Supports available to my child at their school	29.0% ± 2.1
I do not have concerns	22.1% ± 1.8
My child's school attendance	13.2% ± 1.4

*Top 3 Education Concerns by Race*

<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	
My child's social and emotional well being	49.9% ± 2.6
My child's learning and educational progress	49.4% ± 2.6
My child's feelings of safety at school	32.7% ± 2.4

<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	
My child's learning and educational progress	56.0% ± 5.6
My child's feelings of safety at school	48.3% ± 5.7
My child's social and emotional well being	43.5% ± 5.7

<b>Other/2+ races, Non- Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	
My child's social and emotional well being	58.4% ± 7.0
My child's feelings of safety at school	53.9% ± 7.0
My child's learning and educational progress	52.9% ± 7.2

Corporal Punishment

*How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The use of physical discipline like spanking/paddling should be banned in Tennessee public schools for all students.*

*Overall Agreeance*

Strongly disagree / Disagree	28.1% ± 2.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	19.9% ± 1.7
Agree / Strongly Agree	52.0% ± 2.3

*Agreeance by Race*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Strongly disagree/disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/Strongly Agree</b>
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	29.6% ± 2.5	17.8% ± 1.8	52.5% ± 2.6
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	23.2% ± 4.8	32.7% ± 5.3	44.0% ± 5.7
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	25.1% ± 6.1	17.1% ± 5.3	57.8% ± 7.0

*Agreeance by Region*

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Strongly disagree/disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/Strongly Agree</b>
<b>West</b>	30.6% ± 4.6	22.7% ± 4.0	46.7% ± 5.0
<b>Middle</b>	30.9% ± 3.4	16.6% ± 2.4	52.6% ± 3.5
<b>East</b>	23.3% ± 3.1	22.0% ± 2.9	54.7% ± 3.6

Federal Funding

*Tennessee lawmakers are exploring rejecting \$1.9 billion in federal funding that supports public schools, especially those public schools that serve students from districts with lower incomes. Lawmakers in favor of rejecting federal dollars cite concerns that the funding comes with requirements on Tennessee schools that the state must meet. Lawmakers who want to keep the federal dollars are concerned that losing this funding will negatively impact Tennessee public schools and public school students.*

*Do you favor or oppose Tennessee rejecting federal funds for public school education?*

	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>
<b>Overall</b>	24.7% ± 1.9	75.3% ± 1.9
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	26.2% ± 2.3	73.8% ± 2.3
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	18.8% ± 4.2	81.2% ± 4.2
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	23.6% ± 5.9	76.4% ± 5.9

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Favor</b>	<b>Oppose</b>
<b>West</b>	26.5% ± 4.6	73.5% ± 4.6
<b>Middle</b>	23.4% ± 2.8	76.6% ± 2.8
<b>East</b>	25.3% ± 3.2	74.7% ± 3.2

Special Education Plans

*Which of the following best describes your oldest child’s education?*

My child has a special education plan called a 504 plan or individualized education program (IEP).	14.8% ± 1.5
My child needs extra help at school but does not have it.	0.0% ± 0.0
I don’t know how to get help for my child at school.	3.6% ± 1.0
My child does not need a special education plan.	81.6% ± 1.8

*Special Education Plans by Race*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>My child has a special education plan called a 504 plan or individualized education program (IEP).</b>	<b>My child needs extra help at school but does not have it.</b>	<b>I don’t know how to get help for my child at school.</b>	<b>My child does not need a special education plan.</b>
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	15.7% ± 1.9	0.0% ± 0.0	1.8% ± 0.6	82.5% ± 1.9
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	12.2% ± 3.2	0.0% ± 0.0	7.7% ± 4.7	80.1% ± 5.2
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	13.1% ± 4.2	0.0% ± 0.0	8.6% ± 4.5	78.3% ± 5.7

<b>Region</b>	<b>My child has a special education plan called a 504 plan or individualized education program (IEP).</b>	<b>My child needs extra help at school but does not have it.</b>	<b>I don't know how to get help for my child at school.</b>	<b>My child does not need a special education plan.</b>
<b>West</b>	13.3% ± 3.6	0.0% ± 0.0	3.3% ± 2.4	83.4% ± 4.1
<b>Middle</b>	13.5% ± 2.1	0.0% ± 0.0	3.3% ± 1.5	83.2% ± 2.5
<b>East</b>	17.4% ± 2.7	0.0% ± 0.0	4.2% ± 1.7	78.4% ± 3.0

### **Firearms & School Safety**

49% of parents surveyed are firearm owners.

*In the past year, have you and your child(ren) had a conversation about school shootings?*

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Overall</b>	65.8% ± 2.4	34.2% ± 2.4
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	67.3% ± 2.7	32.7% ± 2.7
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	63.5% ± 6.5	36.5% ± 6.5
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	60.6% ± 7.9	39.4% ± 7.9

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>West</b>	61.4% ± 5.8	38.6% ± 5.8
<b>Middle</b>	68.8% ± 3.6	31.2% ± 3.6
<b>East</b>	65.1% ± 3.8	34.9% ± 3.8

*How worried is/are your child(ren) about school shootings?*

	<b>Very unworried/Unworried</b>	<b>Neither worried nor unworried</b>	<b>Worried/Very worried</b>
<b>Overall</b>	28.6% ± 2.5	32.9% ± 2.3	38.5% ± 2.4
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	31.7% ± 2.9	32.9% ± 2.7	35.4% ± 2.7
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	10.1% ± 4.7	47.2% ± 6.4	42.6% ± 6.1
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	30.9% ± 8.0	18.7% ± 6.1	50.3% ± 8.2

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Very unworried/Unworried</b>	<b>Neither worried nor unworried</b>	<b>Worried/Very worried</b>
<b>West</b>	25.4% ± 5.6	35.6% ± 5.4	39.0% ± 5.3
<b>Middle</b>	27.6% ± 3.7	32.9% ± 3.6	39.5% ± 3.8
<b>East</b>	32.0% ± 4.2	31.2% ± 3.6	36.8% ± 4.0

*Since the last school year (2022-2023), have you considered changing your child(ren)'s school or beginning homeschooling due to concerns about school safety?*

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Overall</b>	21.3% ± 2.0	78.7% ± 2.0
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	20.3% ± 2.1	79.7% ± 2.1
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	23.7% ± 5.5	76.3% ± 5.5
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	24.0% ± 6.7	76.0% ± 6.7

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>West</b>	22.5% ± 4.2	77.5% ± 4.2
<b>Middle</b>	19.8% ± 2.9	80.2% ± 2.9
<b>East</b>	22.2% ± 3.5	77.8% ± 3.5

*How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Compared to last year, schools are safer from gun violence.*

*Overall Agreeance*

Strongly disagree / Disagree	37.4% ± 2.2
Neither Agree nor Disagree	45.4% ± 2.3
Agree / Strongly Agree	17.2% ± 1.6

*Agreeance by Race*

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Strongly disagree/disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/Strongly Agree</b>
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	35.5% ± 2.5	46.9% ± 2.6	17.7% ± 2.0
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	47.7% ± 5.7	38.5% ± 5.7	13.9% ± 3.5
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	36.8% ± 7.0	44.9% ± 7.2	18.3% ± 4.5

*Agreeance by Region*

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Strongly disagree/disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree/Strongly Agree</b>
<b>West</b>	42.9% ± 5.0	40.1% ± 4.9	17.0% ± 3.5
<b>Middle</b>	37.0% ± 3.4	46.4% ± 3.6	16.6% ± 2.5
<b>East</b>	34.5% ± 3.4	47.5% ± 3.6	18.0% ± 2.7

*In the last school year, did your child's school go into lockdown?*

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Overall</b>	33.4% ± 2.1	66.6% ± 2.1
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	33.1% ± 2.5	66.9% ± 2.5
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	36.5% ± 5.3	63.5% ± 5.3
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	31.4% ± 6.5	68.6% ± 6.5

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>West</b>	25.8% ± 4.0	74.2% ± 4.0
<b>Middle</b>	38.2% ± 3.5	61.8% ± 3.5
<b>East</b>	32.2% ± 3.5	67.8% ± 3.5

*In August 2023, the Tennessee governor called for a special legislative session on public safety following the Covenant School shooting in Nashville, Tennessee. Did you follow the legislative session?*

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Overall</b>	32.5% ± 2.1	67.5% ± 2.1
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	35.2% ± 2.5	64.8% ± 2.5
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	28.4% ± 4.5	71.6% ± 4.5
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	22.7% ± 4.7	77.3% ± 4.7

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>West</b>	28.0% ± 4.0	72.0% ± 4.0
<b>Middle</b>	37.5% ± 3.4	62.5% ± 3.4
<b>East</b>	29.3% ± 3.4	70.7% ± 3.4

*How satisfied you were with the results of the session?*

	<b>Don't know enough about the session</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied / Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied / Very satisfied</b>
<b>All parents surveyed</b>	44.6% ± 2.3	13.5% ± 1.6	20.3% ± 1.6	21.6% ± 1.8
<b>Parents who followed the session</b>	5.1% ± 1.7	32.4% ± 3.8	23.9% ± 3.0	38.6% ± 3.8

*Satisfaction by Race*

	<b>Don't know enough about the session</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied / Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied / Very satisfied</b>
<b>White, Non-Hispanic</b>	3.9% ± 1.4	36.6% ± 4.6	19.8% ± 3.3	39.8% ± 4.6
<b>Black, Non-Hispanic</b>	9.1% ± 6.9	14.5% ± 5.5	45.7% ± 8.4	30.8% ± 6.8
<b>Other/2+ races, Non-Hispanic/Hispanic</b>	9.6% ± 8.9	22.7% ± 8.6	28.4% ± 8.9	39.3% ± 9.7

*Satisfaction by Region*

<b>TN Region</b>	<b>Don't know enough about the session</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied / Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied / Very satisfied</b>
<b>West</b>	1.2% ± 0.8	18.2% ± 6.2	32.0% ± 6.8	48.6% ± 7.2
<b>Middle</b>	7.5% ± 3.1	42.1% ± 5.7	21.1% ± 4.4	29.3% ± 4.9
<b>East</b>	3.5% ± 2.0	25.3% ± 6.1	23.7% ± 4.9	47.4% ± 7.2

*School Safety Perceptions*

**Parents surveyed were asked how much they agreed with statements that began with “Schools are safer if...” The percentages shown are the percentage of parents surveyed that either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements.**

<b>Schools are safer if...</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Active shooter drills are conducted routinely	71.2% ± 1.9	69.0% ± 2.1
Teachers are armed	35.9% ± 2.1	37.3% ± 2.2
There are one or more school resource officers/law enforcement officers who work in the school	83.1% ± 1.5	80.8% ± 1.8
Guns are not allowed on school property	54.7% ± 2.2	55.5% ± 2.3
Students, staff, and visitors have to go through a metal detector prior to entering	69.5% ± 2.0	67.4% ± 2.2
Schools have a single point of entry (in other words, there is only one way to enter the building)	60.6% ± 2.1	58.7% ± 2.2
The age to purchase a gun is increased to 21	53.7% ± 2.2	49.9% ± 2.3
Background checks are expanded to be required on all gun sales (including private sales or sales at gun shows)	70.5% ± 1.9	63.9% ± 2.2
The sale of high-capacity magazines is restricted	50.0% ± 2.2	46.8% ± 2.3
The sale of bump stocks and conversion devices (which allow for more shots to be fire is restricted)	46.7% ± 2.2	46.2% ± 2.3
Families or law enforcement can temporarily restrict a person's access to a gun through civil court order if that person poses a risk to themselves or others	63.6% ± 2.1	65.6% ± 2.1
Laws are in place to require people to store their guns securely at home to prevent unsupervised access to guns	60.7% ± 2.1	59.7% ± 2.2