Report

Back-to-School Season

A survey of Canadians



September 1st, 2026

Methodology

This week, we surveyed Canadians with children in school on their attitudes and feelings about the back-to-school season.

Method

Online survey among respondents 18 years of age or older with children school-age children in the household. (Canadian sample: **n= 372**)

Respondents had the option of completing the survey in French and English and were randomly recruited using LEO's online panel.

Weighting

Results were weighted according to **age, gender, mother tongue, region, education and presence of children in the household** in order to ensure a representative sample of the Canadian population.

Notes

A more detailed methodology is presented in the Appendix.

When

Data collection from **August 29th to August 31st, 2025**.

Margin of error

For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size yields a margin of error no greater than **±5.01%**, (19 times out of 20) for the sample.

Significant differences

Data in bold **red** characters indicate a significantly lower proportion than that of other respondents. Conversely, data in bold **green** characters indicate a significantly higher proportion than that of other respondents.

Rounded data

The numbers presented have been rounded up. However, the numbers before rounding were used to calculate the sums presented and might therefore not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.

Questions

Have questions about the data presented in this report? Please contact one of the following people :

Andrew Enns, Executive Vice-President, Central Canada at aenns@leger360.com

Sébastien Dallaire, Executive Vice-President, Eastern Canada, at sdallaire@leger360.com.

The Most Accurate Polling Firm in Canada

CANADA 2025

	LEGER POLL Published on April 26, 2025	OFFICIALS RESULTS 2025 Canada Federal Election
L	43%	43.7%
C	39%	41.3%
NDP	8%	6.3%
B	6%	6.3%
GREEN PARTY	2%	1.2%

BRITISH COLUMBIA 2024

	LEGER POLL Published on October 18, 2024	OFFICIALS RESULTS 2024 British Columbia Provincial Election
BC NDP	46%	45%
C	42%	43%
greens	9%	8%
Others	3%	4%

UNITED STATES 2024

	LEGER POLL Published on November 4, 2024	OFFICIALS RESULTS 2024 United States Presidential Election
	49%	50%
	49%	48%
Others	2%	2%

Key Highlights

Some of **the key highlights** of our survey…

- **Most parents prefer to purchase school supplies themselves.** Among respondents with children in school, 72% prefer buying supplies item by item, either in store or online, compared with 15% who prefer a ready-made kit from the school's supplier and 10% who prefer paying the school to provide the supplies.
- **Purchasing all supplies at the beginning of the school year is the most common approach.** Overall, 61% report buying everything at the start of the school year, while 36% purchase items throughout the year as needed.
- **Big-box retailers are the most frequently reported purchase location for school supplies.** 69% plan to shop at big-box retailers, followed by online retailers (37%) and dollar stores (33%).
- **Price is the most frequently cited factor in retailer or supplier selection.** Nearly three-quarters (73%) identify price as one of their main selection criteria, followed by product quality (50%) and the availability of items in one place (30%).
- **A strong majority of parents (81%) are confident that their child's school is adequately preparing them for life after school**, including one in four (25%) who are very confident. Only 15% express a lack of confidence.
- **Financial literacy is the skill parents most frequently believe schools should emphasize further.** 63% select financial literacy and money management, followed by critical thinking and problem-solving (47%) and practical life skills (43%).
- **Mental health and emotional well-being is the most frequently reported concern for the upcoming school year.** It is selected by a third of parents (34%), followed by academic performance (30%), bullying or cyberbullying (27%), screen time (27%), and making friendsor fitting in socially (26%).

Detailed Results

Preferred Method for Purchasing School Supplies

Q2. When it comes to school supplies, which of the following do you prefer?

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



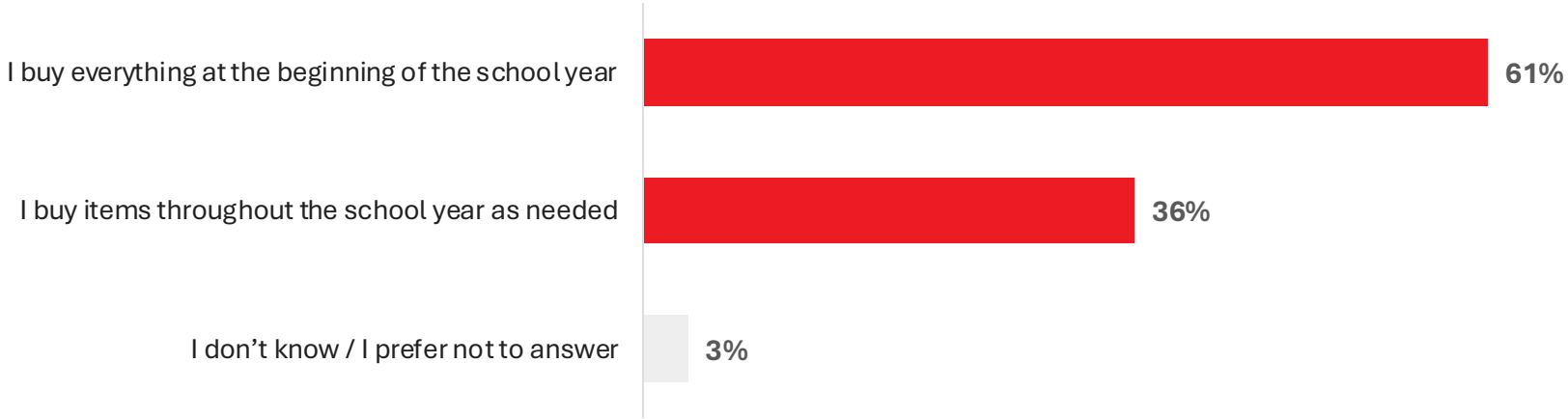
	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Total 2025	Gap
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***	***316***	
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****	***319***	
Buying the supplies myself, item by item (in store or online)	**72%**	75%	**85%**	69%	49%	93%	57%	70%	75%	66%	74%	95%	**62%**	+10
Purchasing a ready-made kit from the school's supplier	**15%**	1%	10%	20%	16%	7%	17%	14%	16%	20%	12%	0%	**23%**	-8
Providing payment to the school and they provide the supplies	**10%**	7%	**4%**	8%	24%	0%	26%	12%	7%	13%	8%	5%	**11%**	-1
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**3%**	17%	1%	3%	10%	0%	0%	5%	2%	1%	5%	0%	**4%**	-1

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Timing of School Supply Purchases

Q3. When it comes to school supplies, do you purchase everything at the beginning of the school year, or do you buy items throughout the year as needed?

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



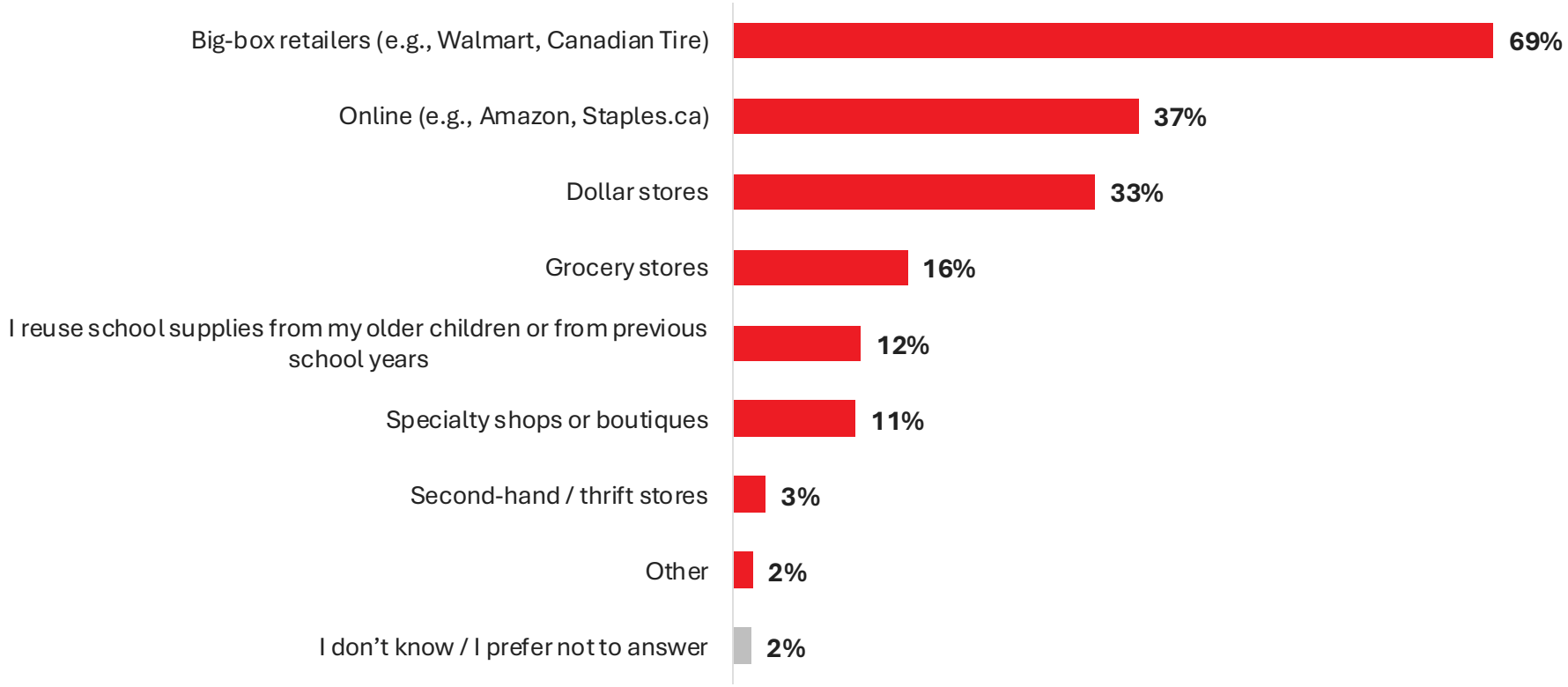
	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Total 2025	Gap
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***	***316***	
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****	***319***	
I buy everything at the beginning of the school year	**61%**	60%	**80%**	**53%**	67%	74%	44%	**55%**	**68%**	66%	59%	41%	**58%**	+3
I buy items throughout the school year as needed	**36%**	22%	**19%**	**44%**	23%	26%	56%	39%	31%	32%	36%	59%	**39%**	-3
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**3%**	18%	1%	3%	10%	0%	0%	**6%**	**0%**	2%	5%	0%	**3%**	-

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Planned School Supply Purchase Locations (1/2)

Q4. Where do you plan to purchase most of your school supplies? Multiple Mention

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



Planned School Supply Purchase Locations (2/2)

Q4. Where do you plan to purchase most of your school supplies? Multiple mention

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)

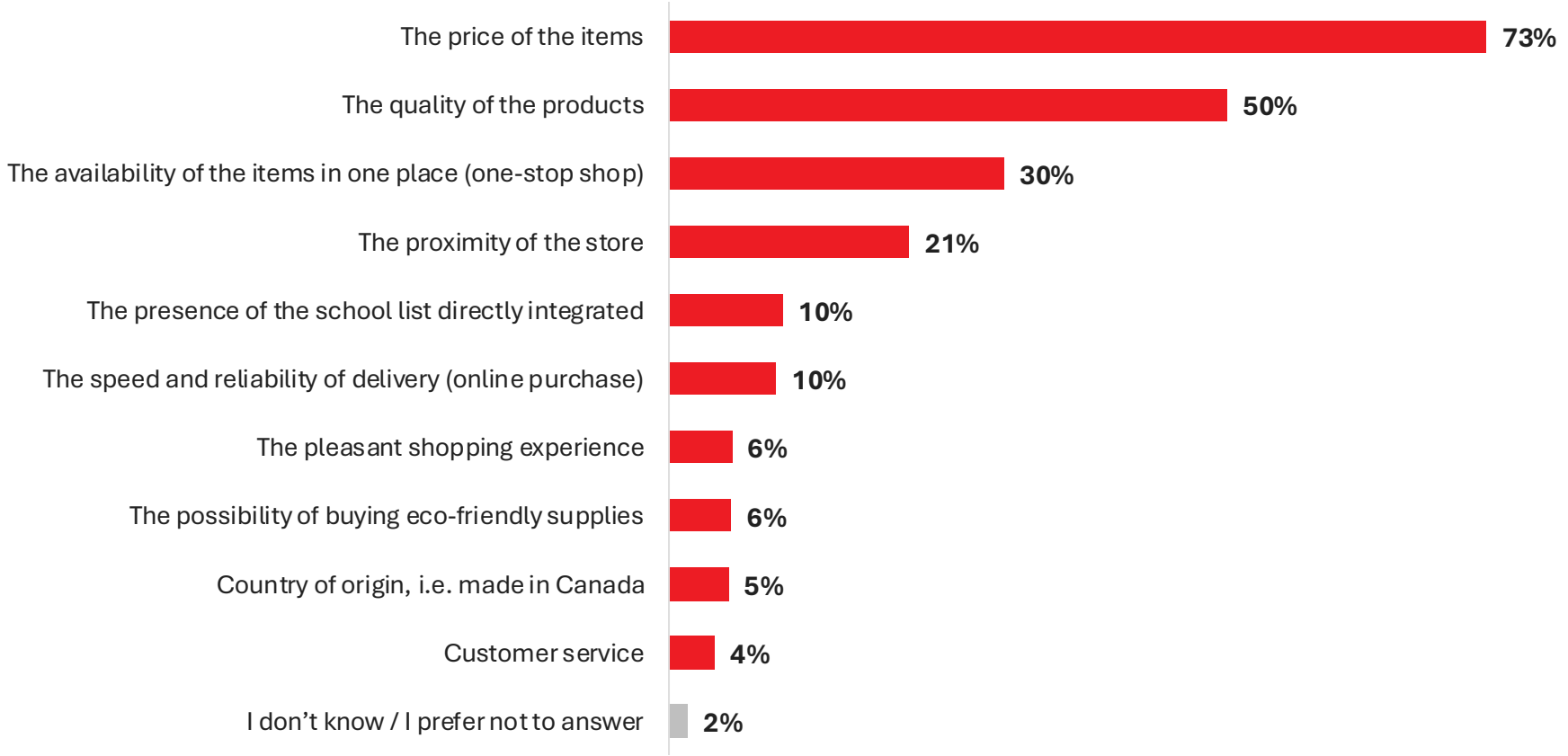
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Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***	***316***	
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****	***319***	
Big-box retailers (e.g., Walmart, Canadian Tire)	**69%**	62%	63%	70%	72%	90%	61%	65%	73%	63%	72%	86%	**61%**	+8
Online (e.g., Amazon, Staples.ca)	**37%**	35%	33%	**47%**	36%	22%	25%	41%	32%	37%	39%	17%	**38%**	-1
Dollar stores	**33%**	20%	25%	**42%**	25%	31%	32%	**26%**	**41%**	33%	32%	41%	**38%**	-5
Grocery stores	**16%**	14%	10%	16%	19%	14%	25%	**20%**	**11%**	**23%**	12%	2%	**11%**	+5
I reuse school supplies from my older children or from previous school years	**12%**	7%	**25%**	9%	6%	0%	13%	**8%**	**16%**	7%	14%	14%	**34%**	-22
Specialty shops or boutiques	**11%**	7%	**27%**	7%	4%	10%	4%	13%	9%	10%	12%	12%	**9%**	+2
Second-hand / thrift stores	**3%**	7%	1%	3%	0%	1%	6%	4%	2%	4%	2%	11%	**7%**	-4
Other	**2%**	0%	**7%**	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	**5%**	-3
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**2%**	5%	1%	1%	12%	0%	0%	**3%**	**0%**	2%	2%	0%	**3%**	-1

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Key Factors Influencing Choice of School Supply Retailer or Supplier (1/2)

Q5. Which of the following criteria most influences your choice of stores or supplier for school supplies? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



Key Factors Influencing Choice of School Supply Retailer or Supplier (2/2)

Q5. Which of the following criteria most influences your choice of stores or supplier for school supplies? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)

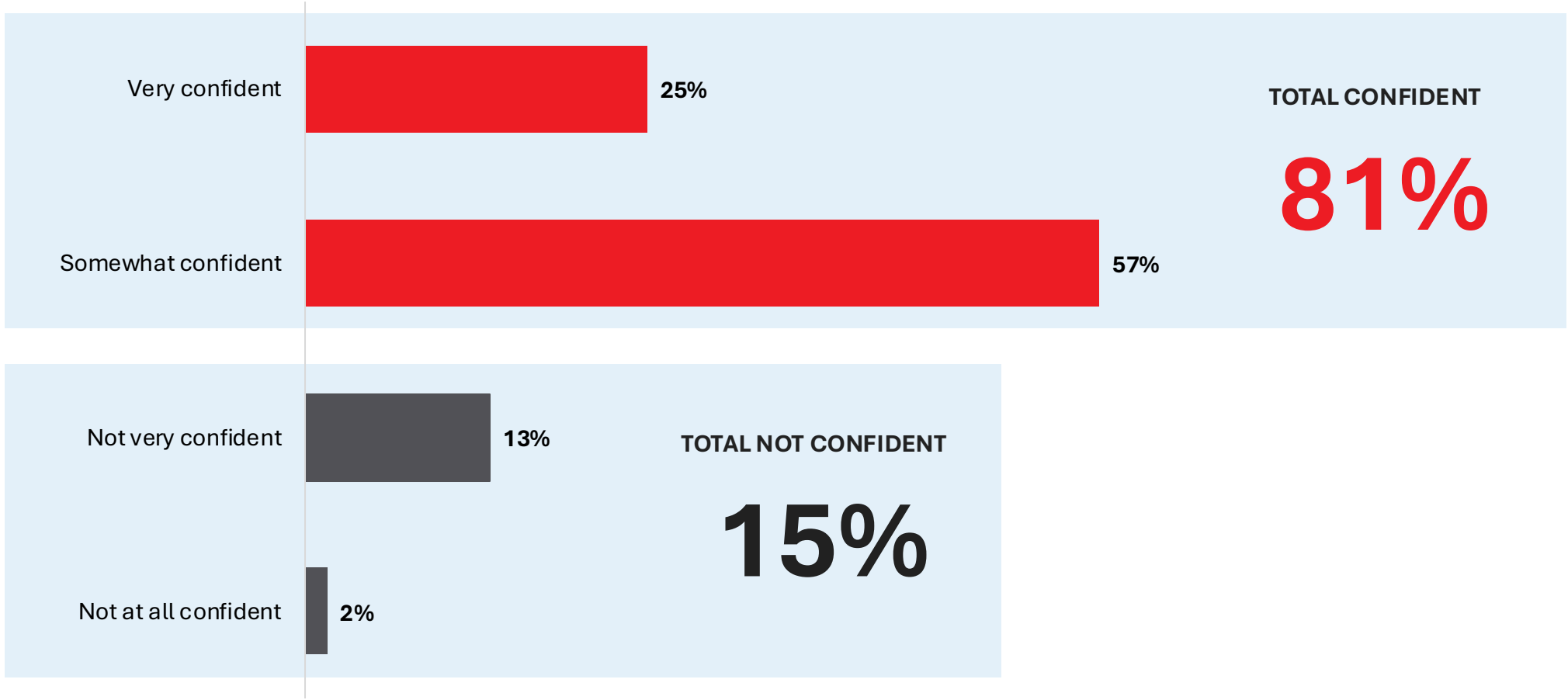
	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	Total 2025	Gap
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***	***316***	
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****	***319***	
The price of the items	**73%**	74%	**82%**	73%	57%	59%	75%	**66%**	**81%**	70%	74%	80%	**75%**	-2
The quality of the products	**50%**	46%	53%	55%	19%	76%	29%	50%	49%	50%	49%	56%	**54%**	-4
The availability of the items in one place (one-stop shop)	**30%**	19%	35%	31%	49%	15%	25%	31%	29%	29%	31%	21%	**28%**	+2
The proximity of the store	**21%**	26%	26%	22%	28%	16%	12%	21%	22%	20%	22%	23%	**23%**	-2
The presence of the school list directly integrated	**10%**	2%	10%	9%	10%	23%	9%	8%	12%	11%	10%	5%	**8%**	+2
The speed and reliability of delivery (online purchase)	**10%**	4%	10%	11%	10%	7%	8%	12%	7%	9%	10%	6%	**10%**	-
The pleasant shopping experience	**6%**	12%	4%	4%	7%	12%	6%	8%	3%	8%	5%	0%	**7%**	-1
The possibility of buying eco-friendly supplies	**6%**	3%	4%	8%	9%	3%	4%	8%	3%	8%	4%	6%	**3%**	+3
Country of origin, i.e. made in Canada	**5%**	5%	3%	8%	2%	3%	5%	5%	5%	3%	6%	14%	**6%**	-1
Customer service	**4%**	4%	5%	3%	4%	1%	8%	**6%**	**2%**	7%	3%	4%	**4%**	-
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**2%**	2%	**0%**	2%	10%	0%	0%	**3%**	**0%**	1%	2%	0%	**4%**	-2

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Confidence in Schools Preparing Children for Life After School (1/2)

Q6. Thinking about the skills your child(ren) will need in the future, how confident are you that their school is adequately preparing them for life after school?

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



Confidence in Schools Preparing Children for Life After School (2/2)

Q6. Thinking about the skills your child(ren) will need in the future, how confident are you that their school is adequately preparing them for life after school?

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)

	Total	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****
NET CONFIDENT	**81%**	74%	87%	82%	88%	84%	70%	85%	77%	83%	82%	61%
Very confident	**25%**	7%	25%	28%	28%	23%	20%	29%	20%	26%	24%	21%
Somewhat confident	**57%**	67%	61%	54%	60%	61%	50%	57%	57%	56%	59%	40%
NET NOT CONFIDENT	**15%**	21%	13%	13%	1%	12%	30%	12%	18%	14%	14%	31%
Not very confident	**13%**	21%	12%	12%	1%	9%	25%	10%	17%	14%	12%	23%
Not at all confident	**2%**	0%	2%	1%	0%	3%	5%	1%	2%	**0%**	2%	8%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**4%**	6%	**0%**	5%	10%	4%	0%	3%	5%	3%	4%	8%

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Skills Schools Should Emphasize to Prepare Students for the Future (1/2)

Q7. Which of the following skills or areas do you think schools should place more emphasis on to better prepare students for the future? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



Skills Schools Should Emphasize to Prepare Students for the Future (2/2)

Q7. Which of the following skills or areas do you think schools should place more emphasis on to better prepare students for the future? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)

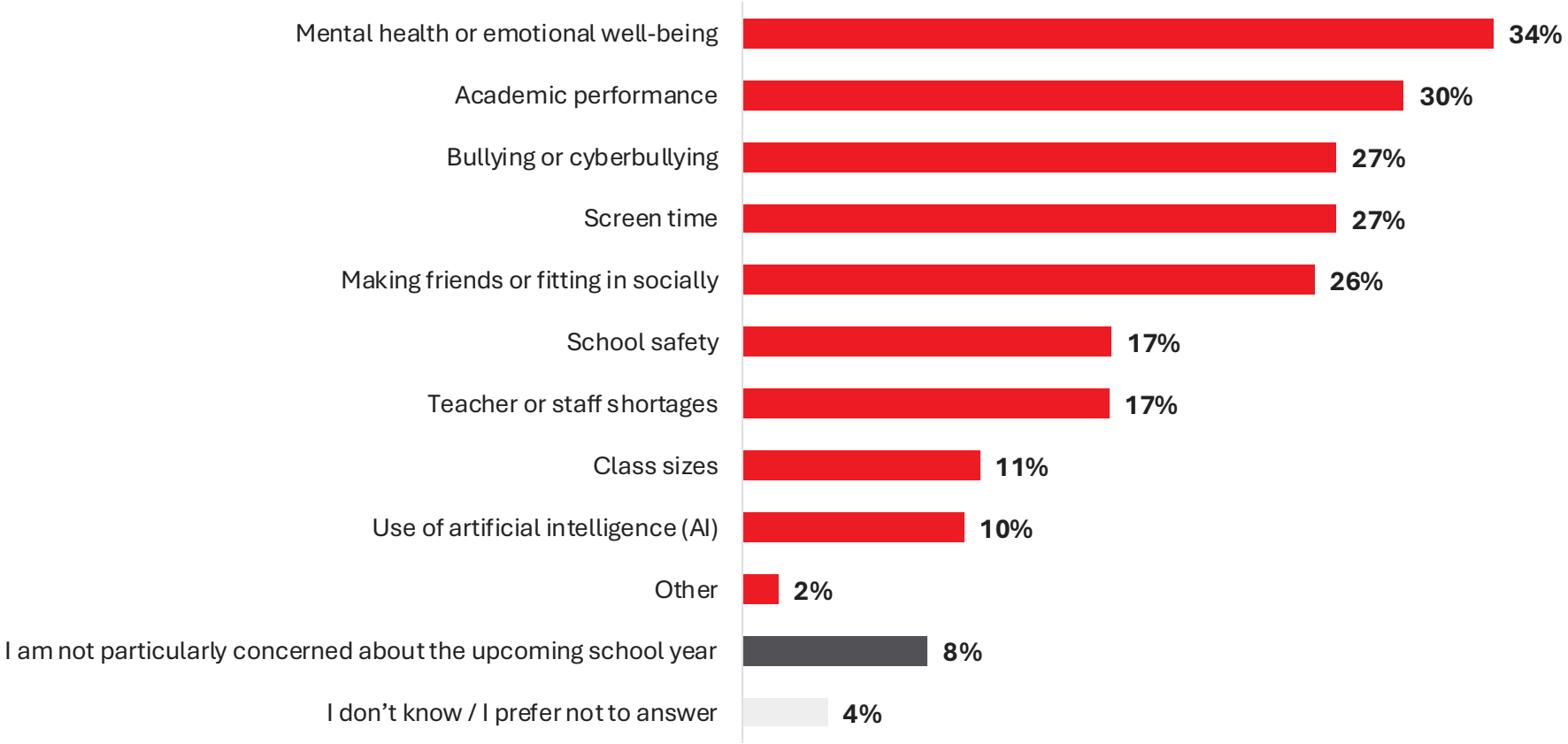
	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****
Financial literacy and managing money	**63%**	64%	66%	64%	50%	53%	70%	63%	62%	64%	62%	68%
Critical thinking and problem-solving	**47%**	56%	39%	52%	44%	59%	34%	42%	53%	50%	45%	52%
Practical life skills	**43%**	31%	48%	46%	42%	34%	44%	**36%**	**52%**	43%	44%	37%
Artificial intelligence and digital literacy	**21%**	22%	16%	24%	17%	12%	31%	**28%**	**14%**	**29%**	**15%**	30%
Communication and interpersonal skills	**19%**	8%	25%	23%	13%	1%	20%	21%	16%	18%	20%	18%
Mental health, resilience and emotional well-being	**18%**	0%	27%	17%	25%	31%	5%	14%	23%	**11%**	**24%**	8%
Career preparation and employability skills	**15%**	9%	12%	15%	15%	9%	24%	12%	17%	16%	14%	13%
Traditional academic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics	**14%**	12%	22%	**9%**	19%	15%	15%	16%	11%	**8%**	17%	27%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**3%**	0%	2%	**0%**	12%	17%	0%	3%	4%	**1%**	**5%**	0%

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Top Concerns for Children in the Upcoming School Year (1/2)

Q8. Thinking about the upcoming school year, which of the following, if any, are you most concerned about for your child(ren)? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)



Top Concerns for Children in the Upcoming School Year (2/2)

Q8. Thinking about the upcoming school year, which of the following, if any, are you most concerned about for your child(ren)? *Please select up to three answers.*

Base: Respondents with children in school (n=372)

	Total Canada	ATL	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Weighted n=	***340***	***23***	***73***	***137***	***25***	***34***	***48***	***179***	***161***	***130***	***193***	***16***
Unweighted n=	***372***	***23****	***93***	***164***	***31***	***25****	***36***	***238***	***134***	***167***	***183***	***22****
Mental health or emotional well-being	**34%**	30%	36%	37%	20%	39%	27%	31%	37%	40%	31%	20%
Academic performance	**30%**	12%	24%	35%	40%	29%	28%	34%	25%	35%	27%	27%
Bullying or cyberbullying	**27%**	15%	37%	27%	27%	24%	18%	24%	30%	25%	27%	35%
Screen time	**27%**	25%	27%	27%	17%	23%	33%	29%	25%	24%	30%	16%
Making friends or fitting in socially	**26%**	19%	28%	27%	31%	15%	28%	**17%**	**36%**	25%	27%	19%
School safety	**17%**	26%	13%	19%	13%	18%	13%	16%	17%	17%	16%	20%
Teacher or staff shortages	**17%**	0%	23%	12%	13%	33%	19%	14%	19%	12%	20%	10%
Class sizes	**11%**	16%	**2%**	15%	7%	21%	4%	12%	9%	8%	12%	17%
Use of artificial intelligence (AI)	**10%**	4%	7%	15%	7%	11%	5%	**14%**	**6%**	11%	8%	19%
Other	**2%**	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%	5%	2%	2%	0%	2%	7%
I am not particularly concerned about the upcoming school year	**8%**	18%	13%	6%	14%	0%	6%	9%	8%	7%	8%	20%
I don't know / I prefer not to answer	**4%**	6%	2%	2%	10%	4%	7%	2%	6%	4%	4%	0%

*Given the number of respondents (n<30), the results are presented for indicative purposes only.

Respondent Profile

Respondent profiles

(Base n=372)

The table below presents the Canadian population distribution of respondents (parents) before weighting.

Gender

	Unweighted	Weighted
Male	238	179
Female	134	161

Language (Mother Tongue)

	Unweighted	Weighted
French	78	63
English	266	249
Other	28	28

Age

	Unweighted	Weighted
18 to 34	167	130
35 to 54	183	193
55+	22	16

Province

	Unweighted	Weighted
British Columbia	36	48
Alberta	25	34
Manitoba/Saskatchewan	31	25
Ontario	164	137
Quebec	93	73
Atlantic	23	23

Our Credentials

Canada

Leger is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC), the industry association for the market/survey/insights research industry.

Europe

Leger is a member of ESOMAR (European Society for Opinion and Market Research), the global association of opinion polls and marketing research professionals.

America

Leger is also a member of the Insights Association, the American Association of Marketing Research Analytics.

International

Leger is a member of the Worldwide Independent Network of Market Research (WIN), a global alliance of leading independent market research and polling firms that collaborate to share expertise, methodologies, and insights across diverse markets.

Our services

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Marketing research and polling

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Strategic and operational customer experience consulting services

Leger Analytics (LEA)
Data modelling and analysis

Leger Opinion (LEO)
Panel management

Leger Communities
Online community management

Leger Digital
Digital strategy and user experience

International Research
Worldwide Independent Network (WIN)

300
employees

185
consultants

8
offices

MONTRÉAL | QUÉBEC |
TORONTO | WINNIPEG
EDMONTON | CALGARY |
VANCOUVER | NEW YORK

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