

Understand your players
Based on the survey results of 20,000 parents

THE COACHING MANUAL

PARENT REPORT 2022

- **Player demographics**
- **Parents' role in player development**
- **Player happiness**
- **Club communication**
- **Soccer as a spectator**
- **What you can do to support your players and parents**

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“All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and someone who believes in them”

- Magic Johnson



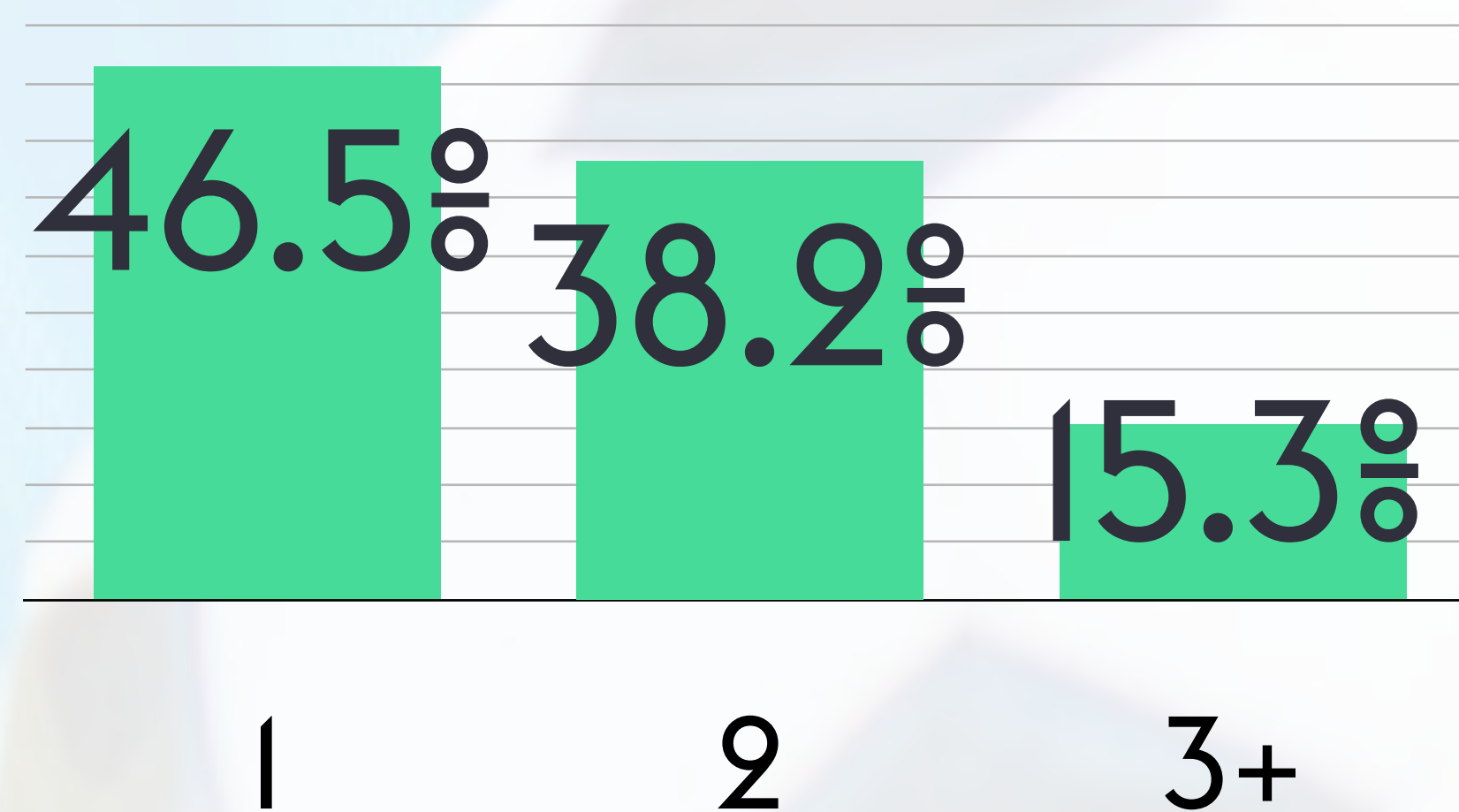
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Survey demographics



In this section, we take an at-a-glance look at the respondents to the TCM Parent Survey 2022.

Later in this report, we will explore some of the interesting findings based around these demographics, including how children's soccer satisfaction differs from country to country.



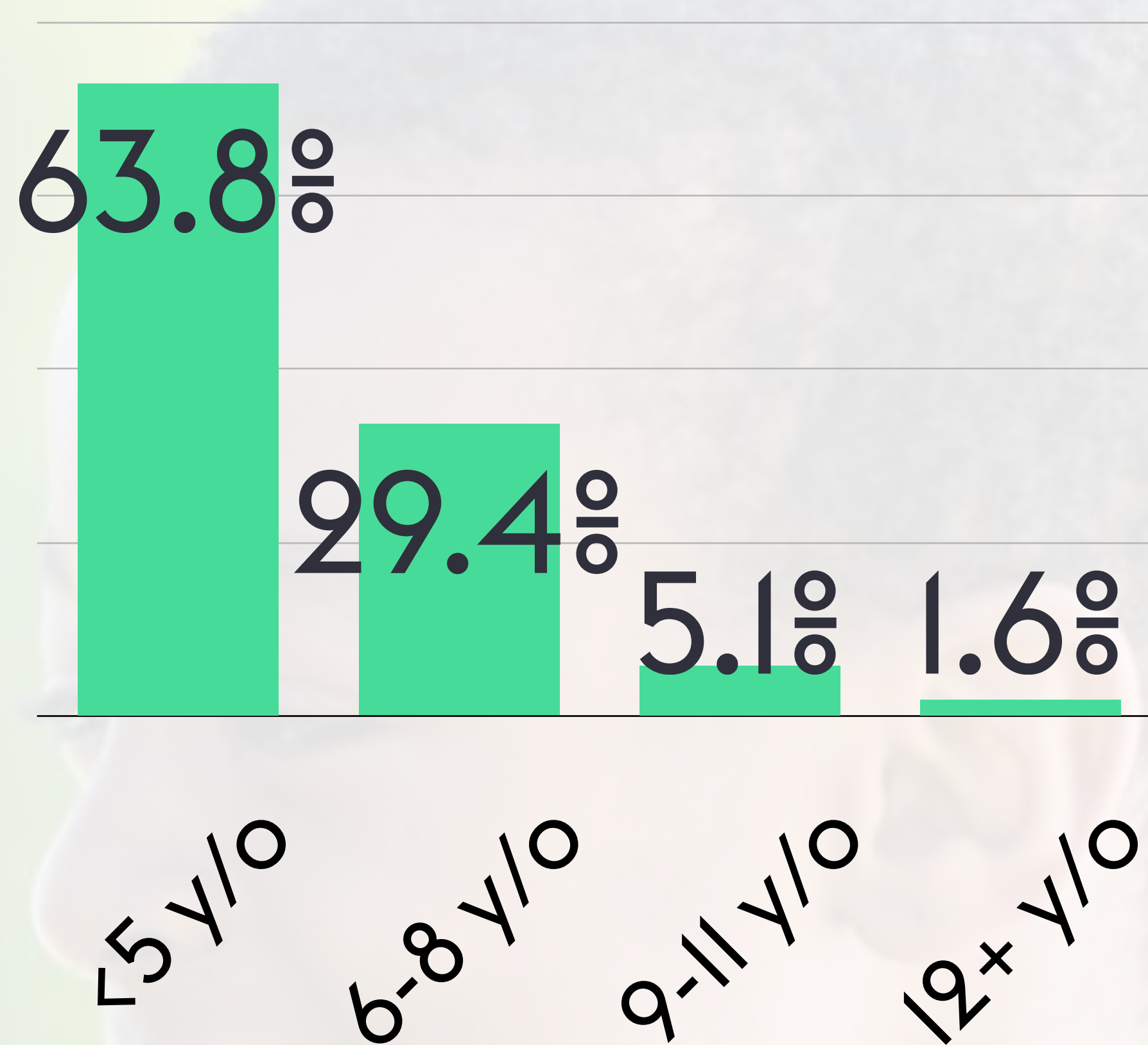
HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE WHO PLAY ORGANISED SOCCER?

"My parents and my grandfather on my mom's side would travel the earth. They went to Australia and China, and they went to probably every soccer game I ever played."

- Brandi Chastain



AT WHAT AGE DID YOUR CHILD START PLAYING SOCCER?



RESPONDENTS: 20,000+
COUNTRIES: 47

HOW LONG HAS YOUR CHILD PLAYED SOCCER?



PARENTS

In the next set of results, we take a look at the parents behind the players: the key decision-makers in every player's soccer journey.

About the parent

In our survey, we asked a number of questions about the parent themselves in order to gain a better understanding of the most important stakeholder in each child's soccer journey.

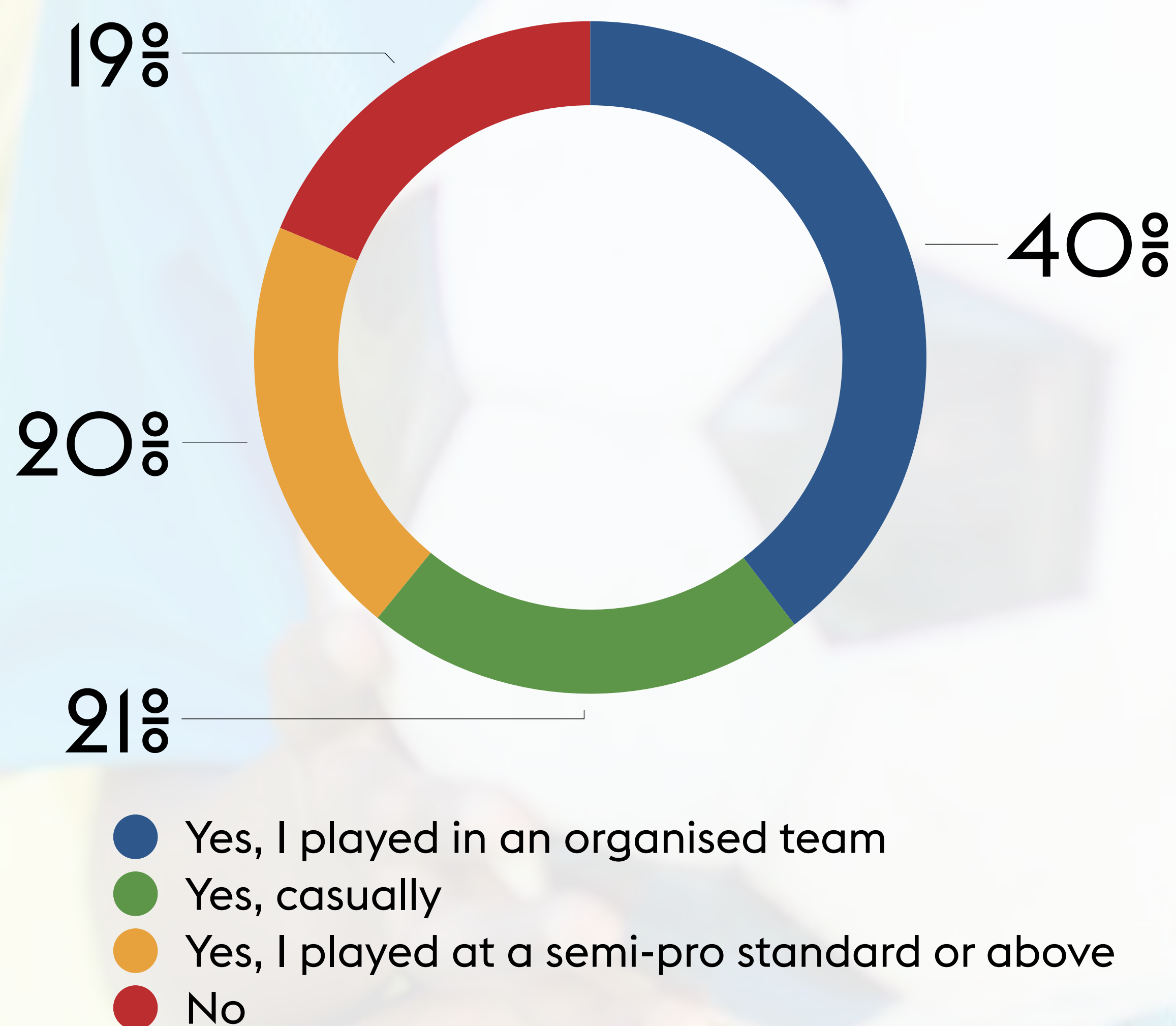
What do they know? What don't they know? What's important to them? And, most importantly, what do they think of their child's soccer club?



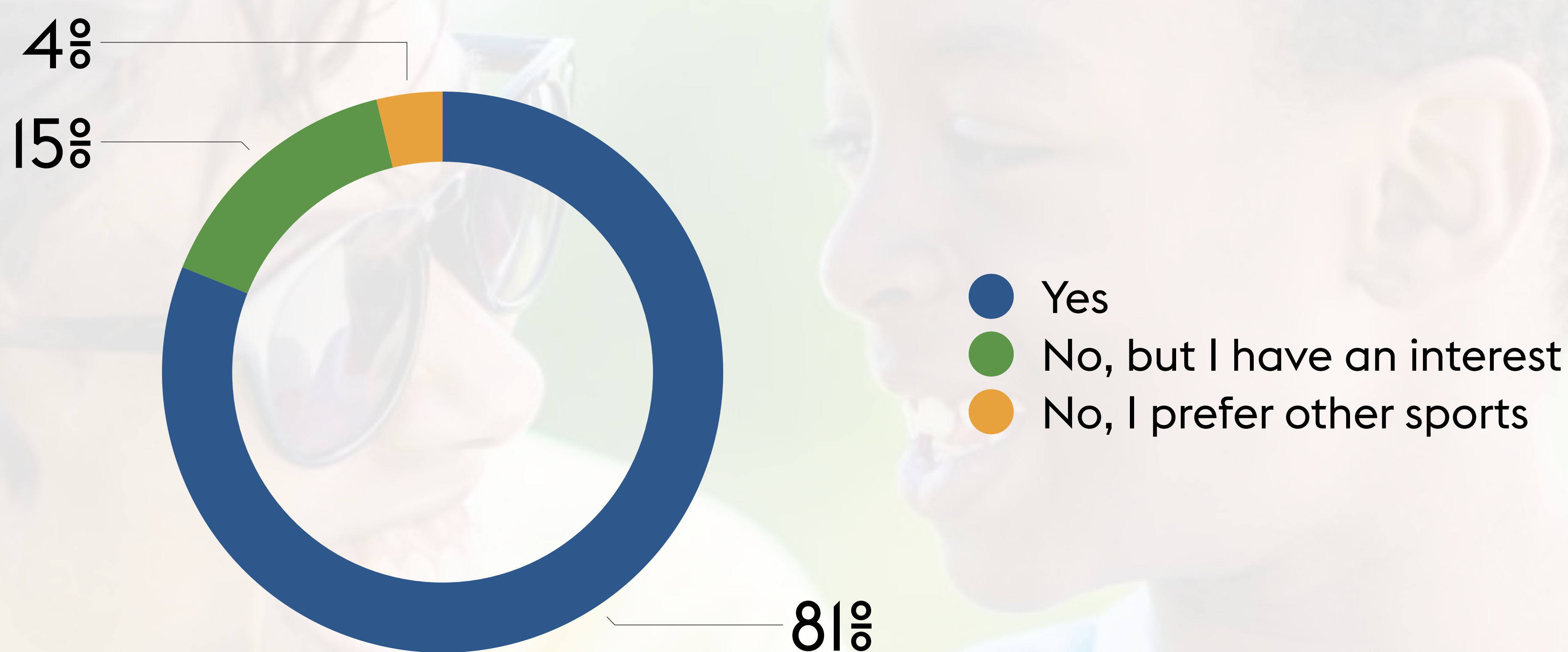
“When I win awards, I think of my father”

- Cristiano Ronaldo

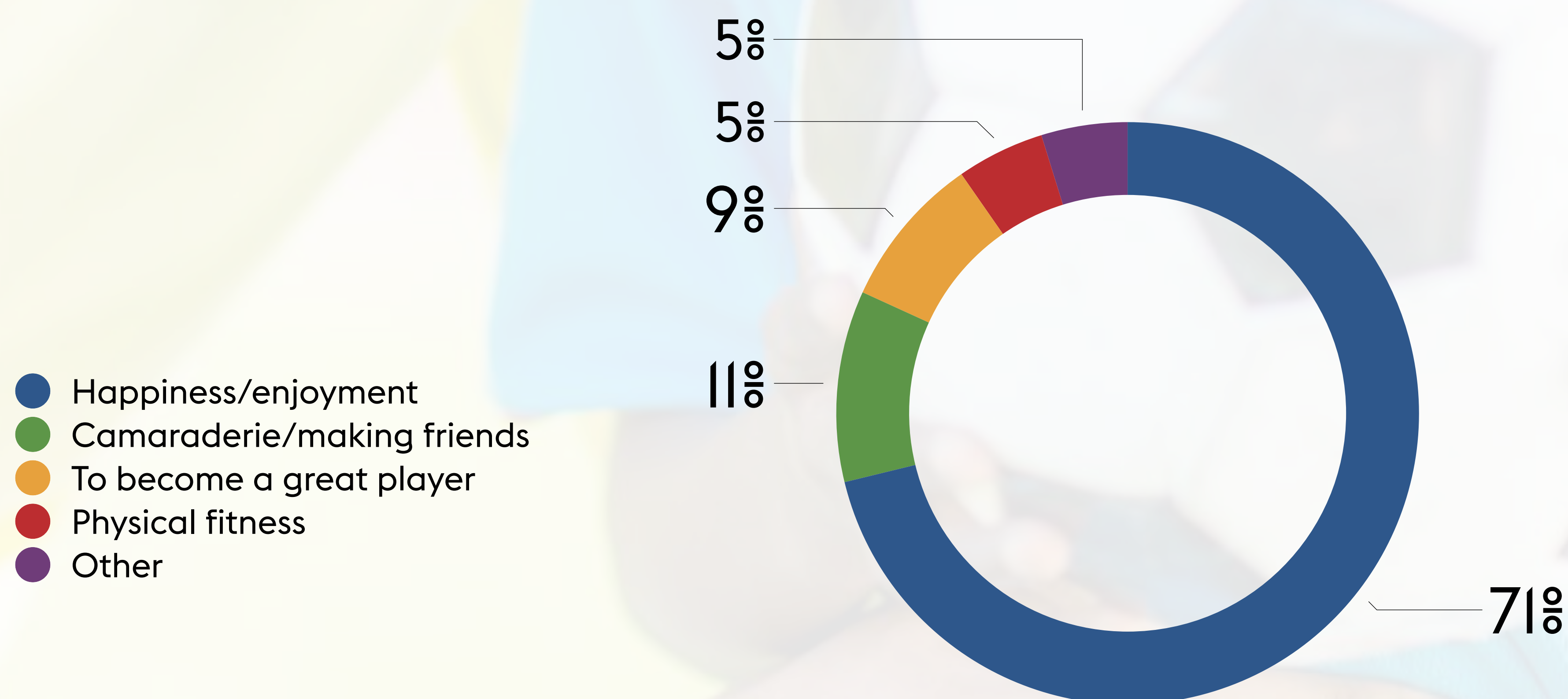
DID/DO YOU
PLAY SOCCER
YOURSELF?



IS SOCCER YOUR PRIMARY SPORT (EITHER AS A SPECTATOR OR PARTICIPANT)?



IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR CHILD'S SOCCER JOURNEY?



CHILDREN

In this section, we delve deeper into the data in order to gain a better idea of which children are more likely to be happy, unhappy, and give up on soccer altogether.

The information in this section tells a number of stories that are useful for coaches of all levels, helping them to understand the motivations, needs, and even grievances of their own players, and players they hope to recruit in the future.

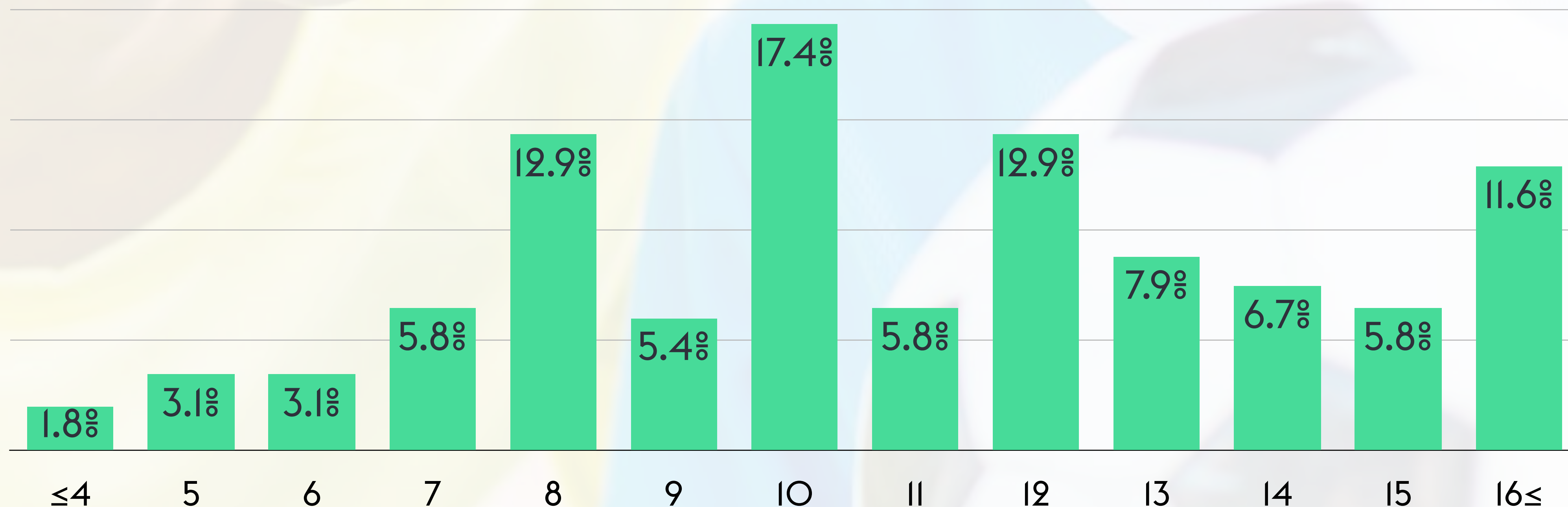
About the child



Players are of course the most important part of our teams. We want what's best for them, and we want to be able to keep them happy, motivated, and developing.

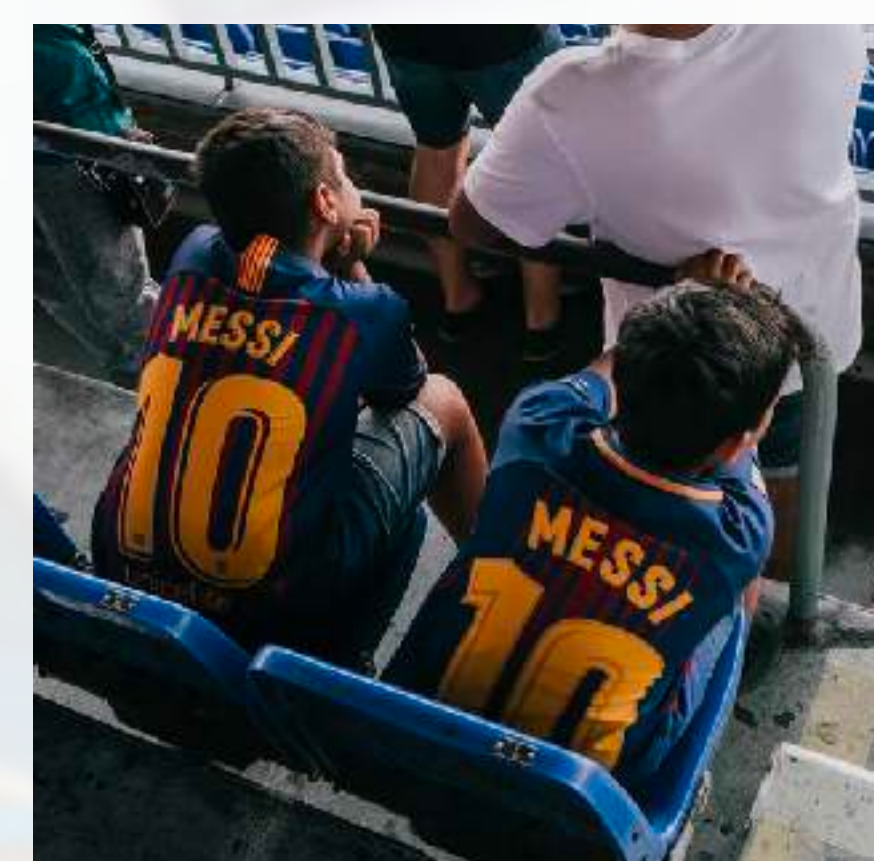
Here, we take a look at the happiness of the players, as well as their training habits.

HOW OLD IS YOUR CHILD?

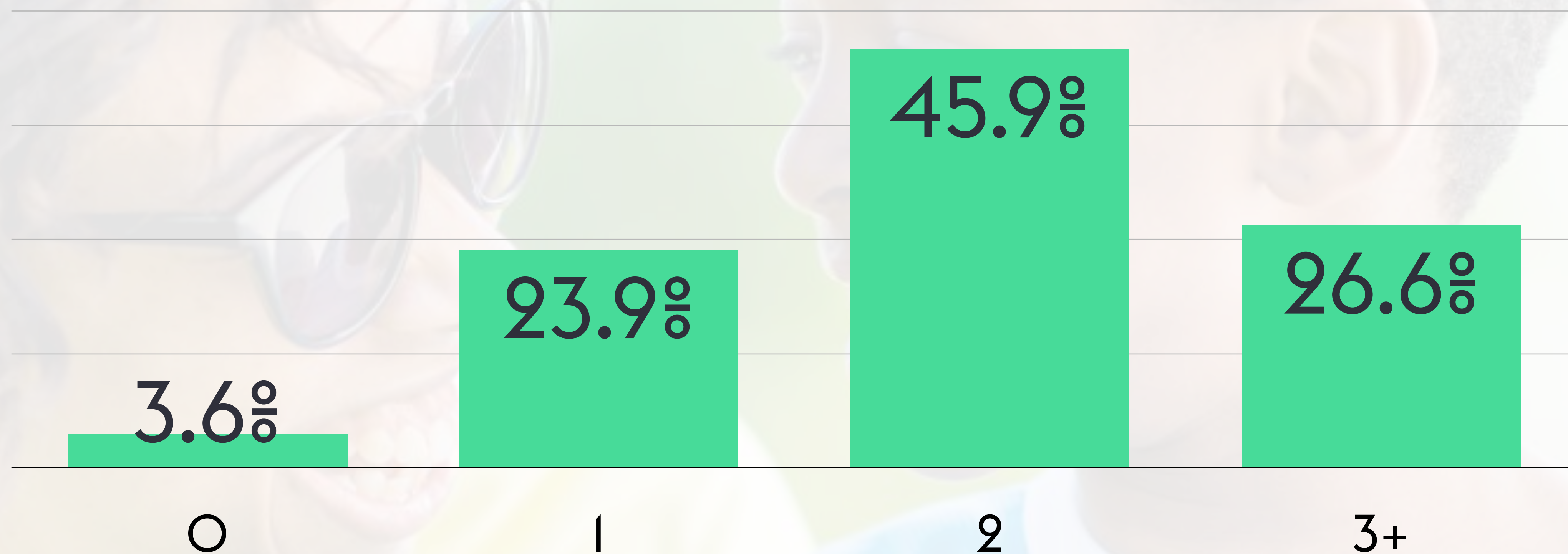


“You have to fight to reach your dream. You have to sacrifice and work hard for it.”

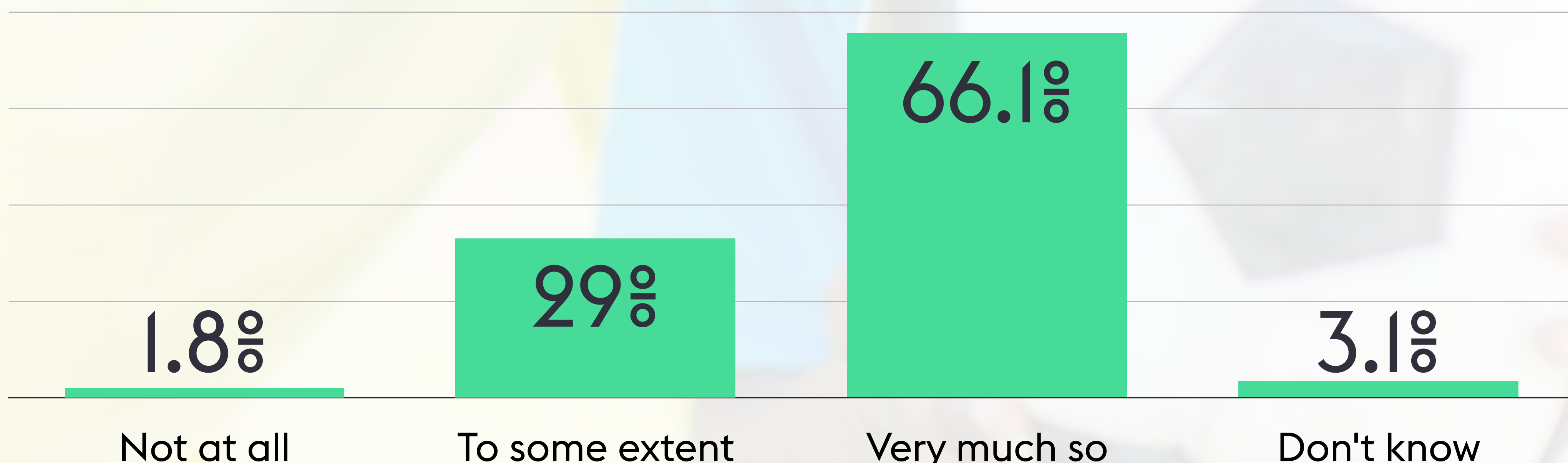
- Lionel Messi



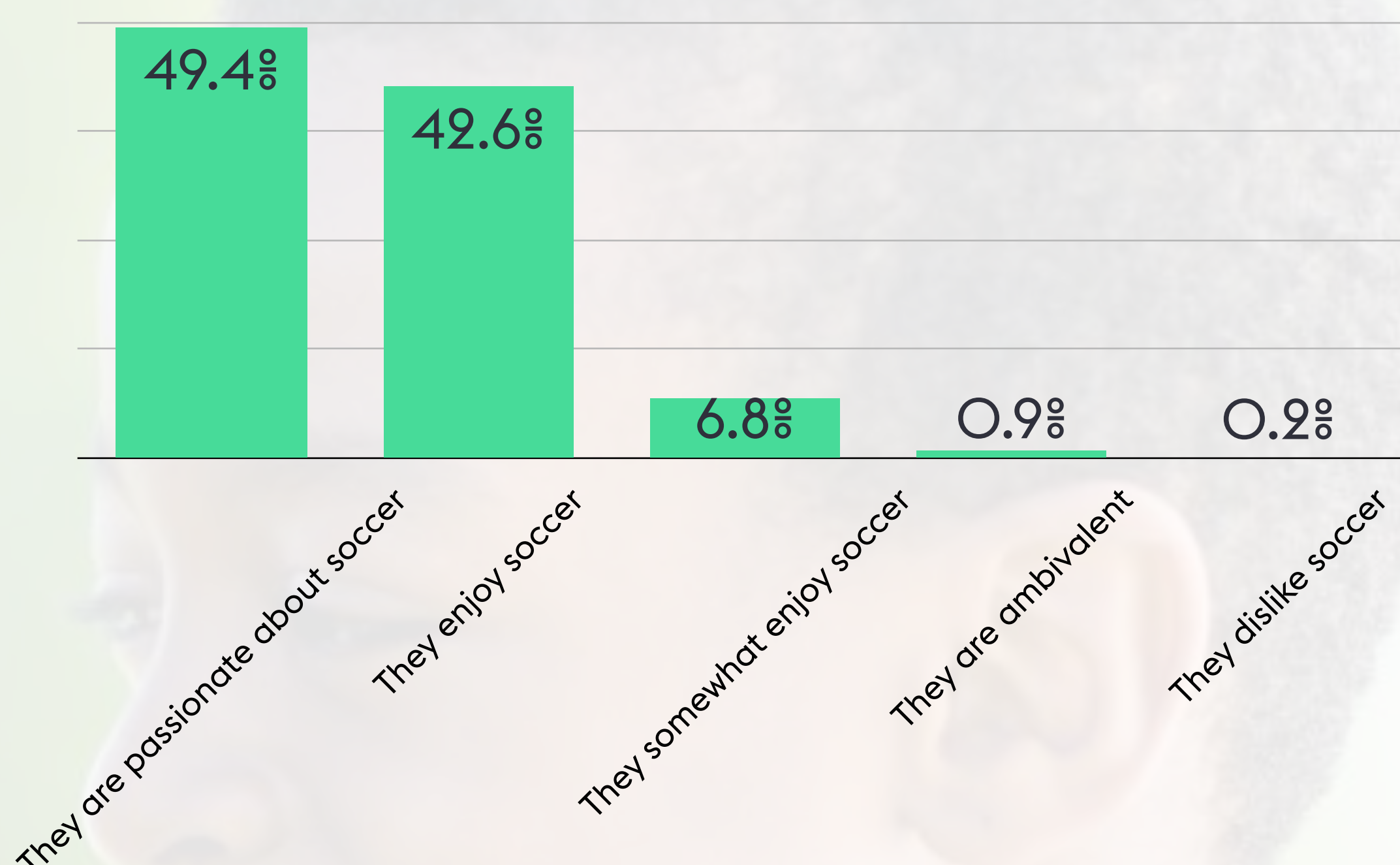
HOW MANY TRAINING SESSIONS DOES YOUR CHILD ATTEND PER WEEK?



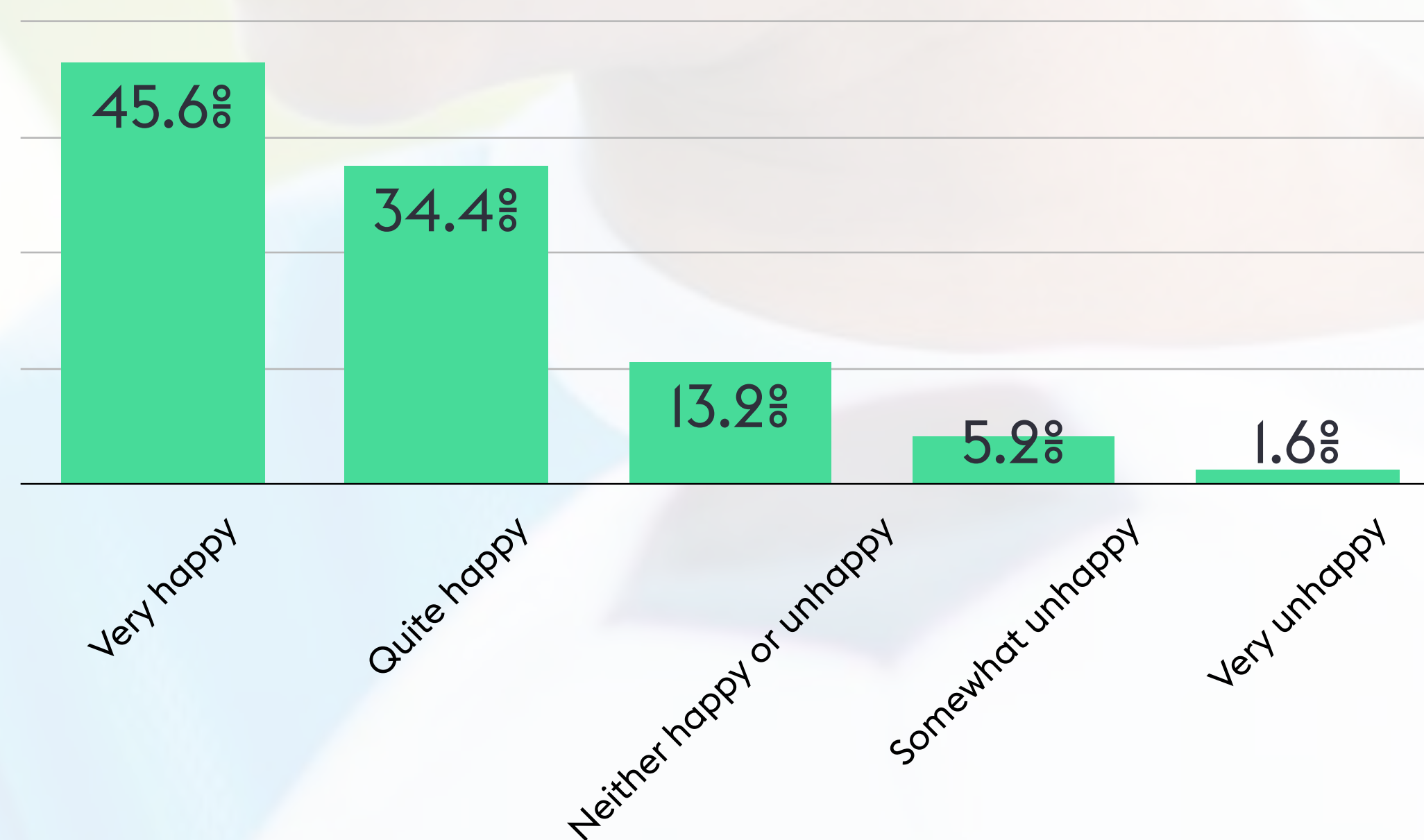
DOES YOUR CHILD ENJOY THEIR TEAM'S TRAINING SESSIONS?



HOW MUCH DOES YOUR CHILD ENJOY PLAYING SOCCER?



IS YOUR CHILD HAPPY WITH THEIR CURRENT TEAM?



WHY HAVE WE ASKED THESE QUESTIONS?

Of course, we want children to be happy with the team they play for - and thankfully, most respondents to our survey are at least somewhat happy. However, there's always work to be done. Later in this report we investigate some of the reasons why players become unhappy at their soccer club.

At-home training

“Keep working even when no one is watching.”

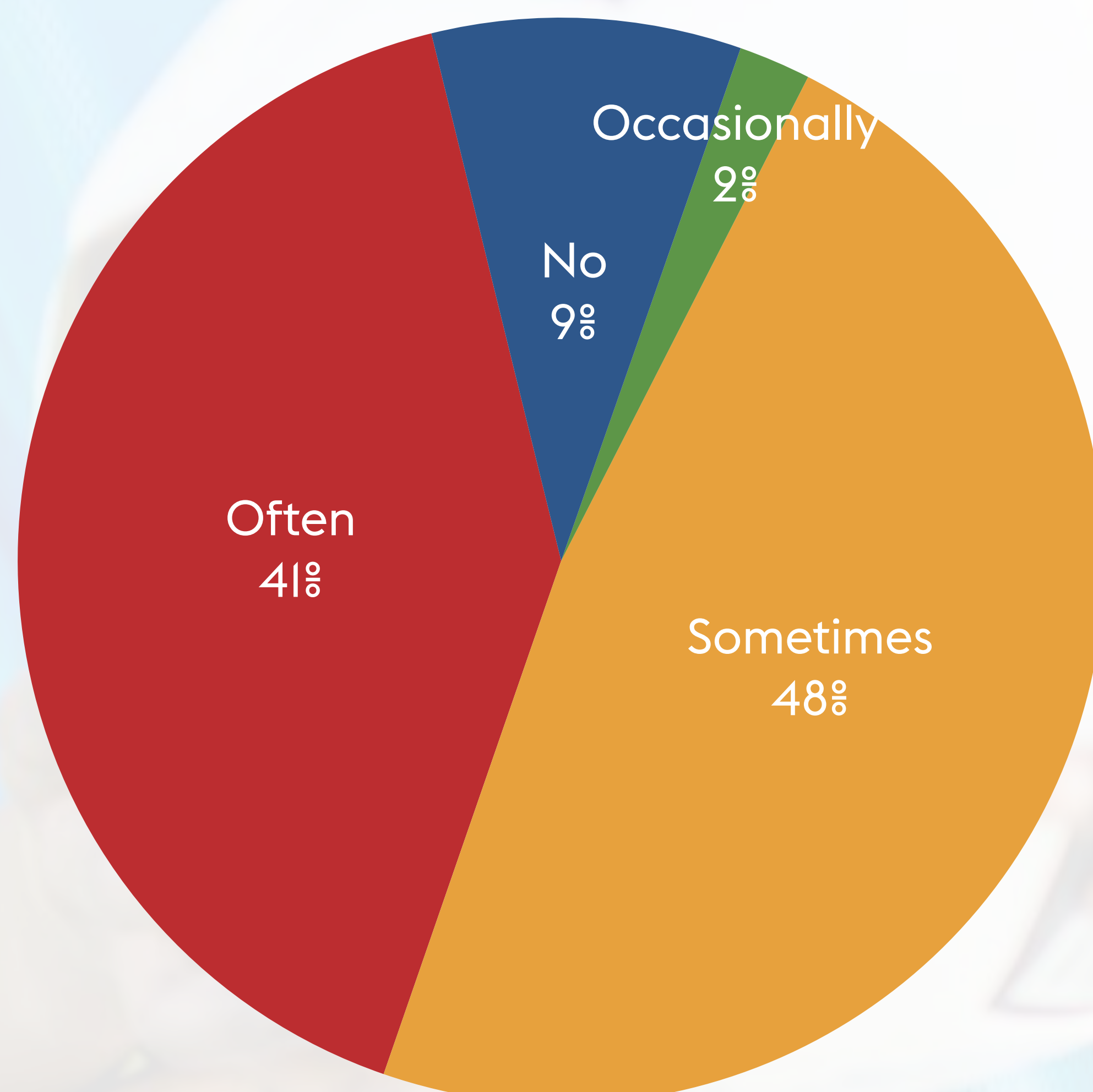
- Alex Morgan



As we have established many times before, a child cannot reach his or her potential in soccer - or any sport for that matter - with just the 1-3 hours of training per week that they receive through structured sessions with their team. In order to become a competent player, children must put in the hours at home.

We wanted to get an idea of how regularly different young players train away from the field, and delve into the effects that not training enough can have.

**DOES YOUR CHILD
PRACTICE SOCCER
AWAY FROM
STRUCTURED
TRAINING
(E.G. AT HOME)?**

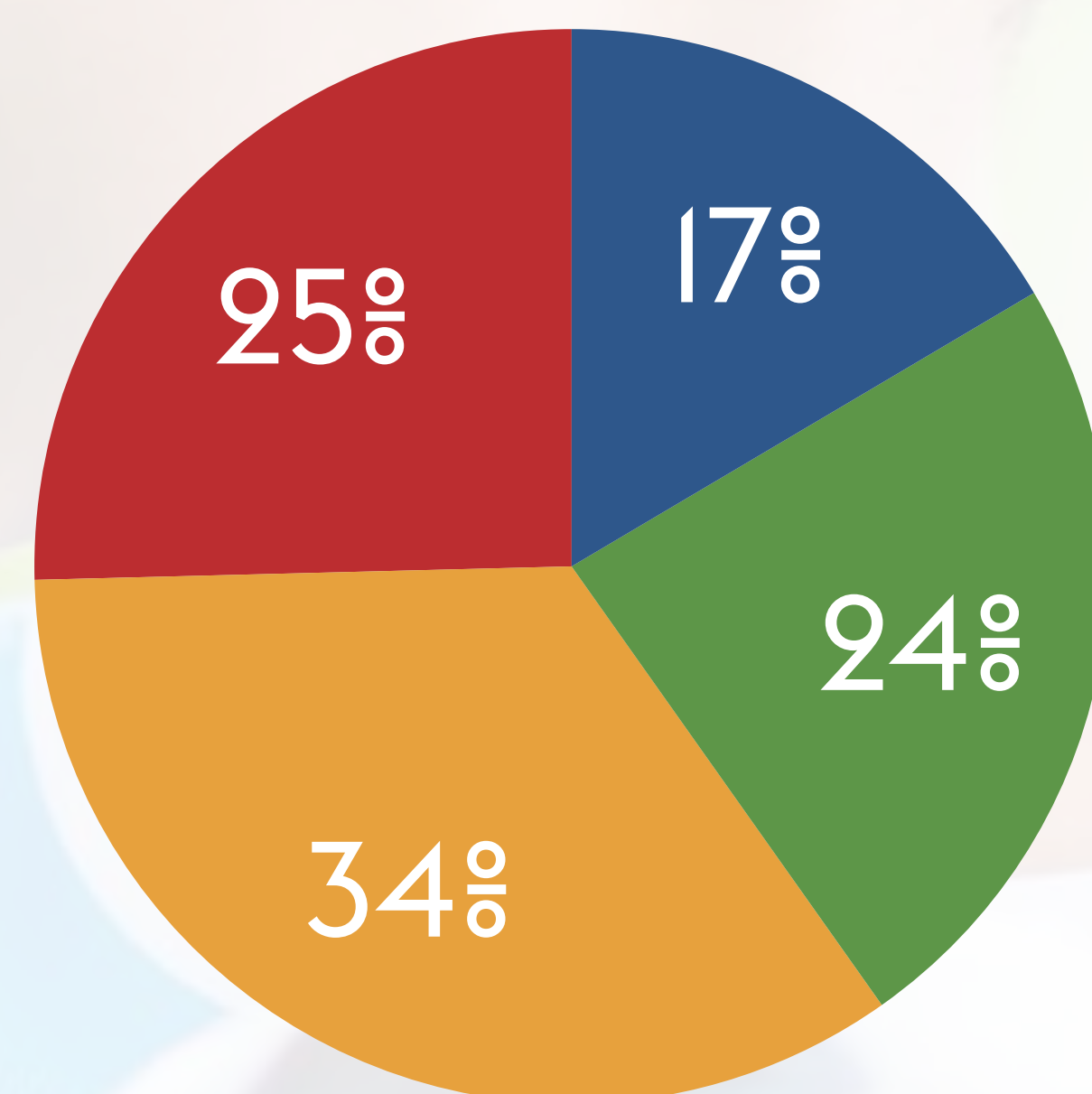


Soccer Spectators: Children as fans of the sport

Largely out of curiosity, and partially for a bit of fun, we wanted to look into the link between players who enjoy the sport as a spectator or 'fan', and those who don't consume soccer outside of playing the game itself.

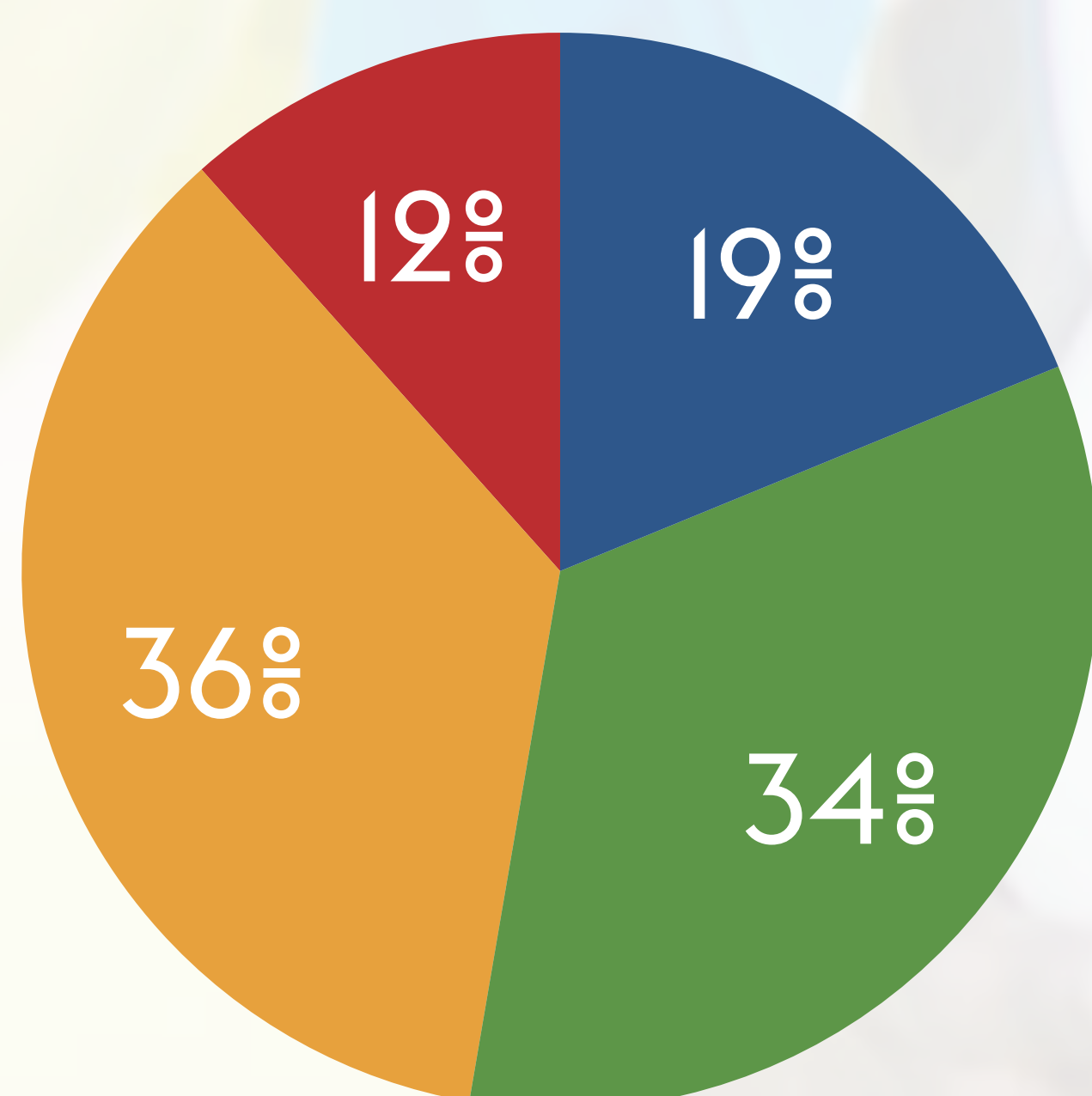
In this section, we look at the percentage of children who watch soccer and play the video games, and ask them who their favourite team and player is.

DOES YOUR CHILD WATCH SOCCER MATCHES ON TELEVISION?



● No ● Occasionally
● Sometimes ● Very often

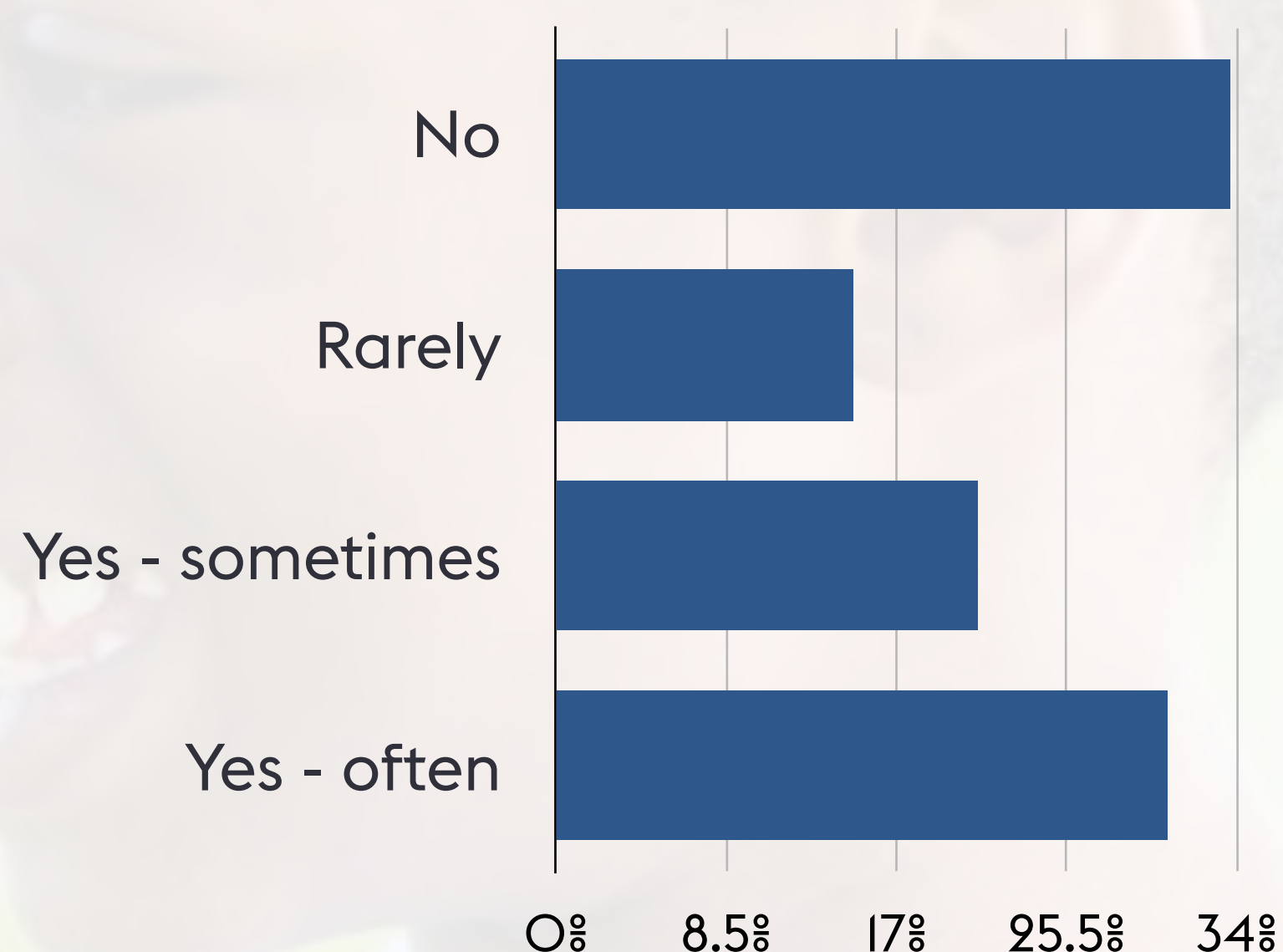
DO THEY ATTEND LIVE SOCCER MATCHES?



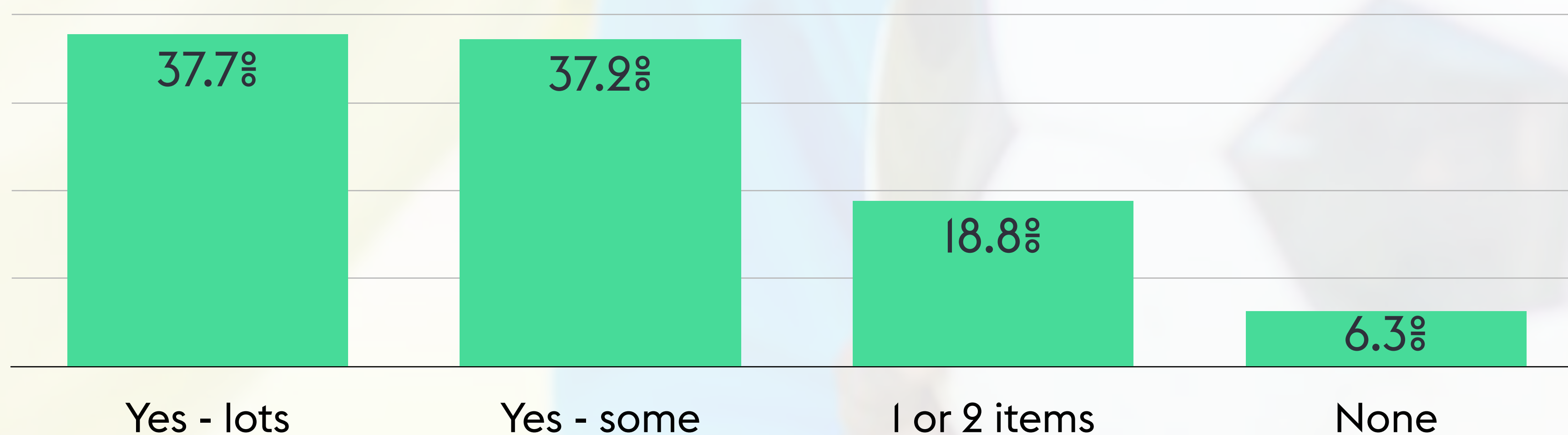
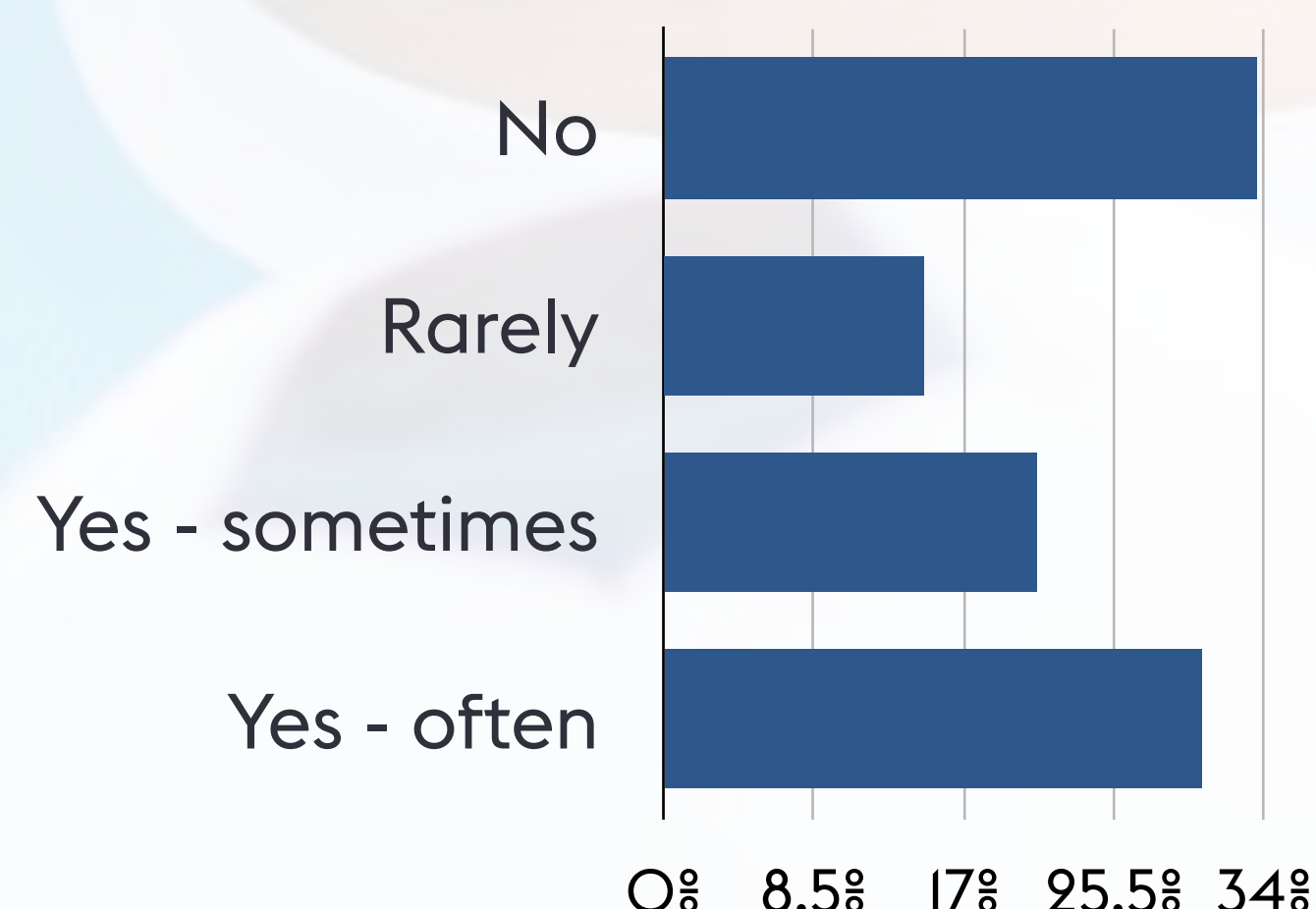
● Never ● Rarely
● Occasionally ● Often



DOES YOUR CHILD PLAY SOCCER VIDEO GAMES LIKE FIFA OR eFOOTBALL?



DOES YOUR CHILD PLAY MOBILE GAMES RELATED TO SOCCER?

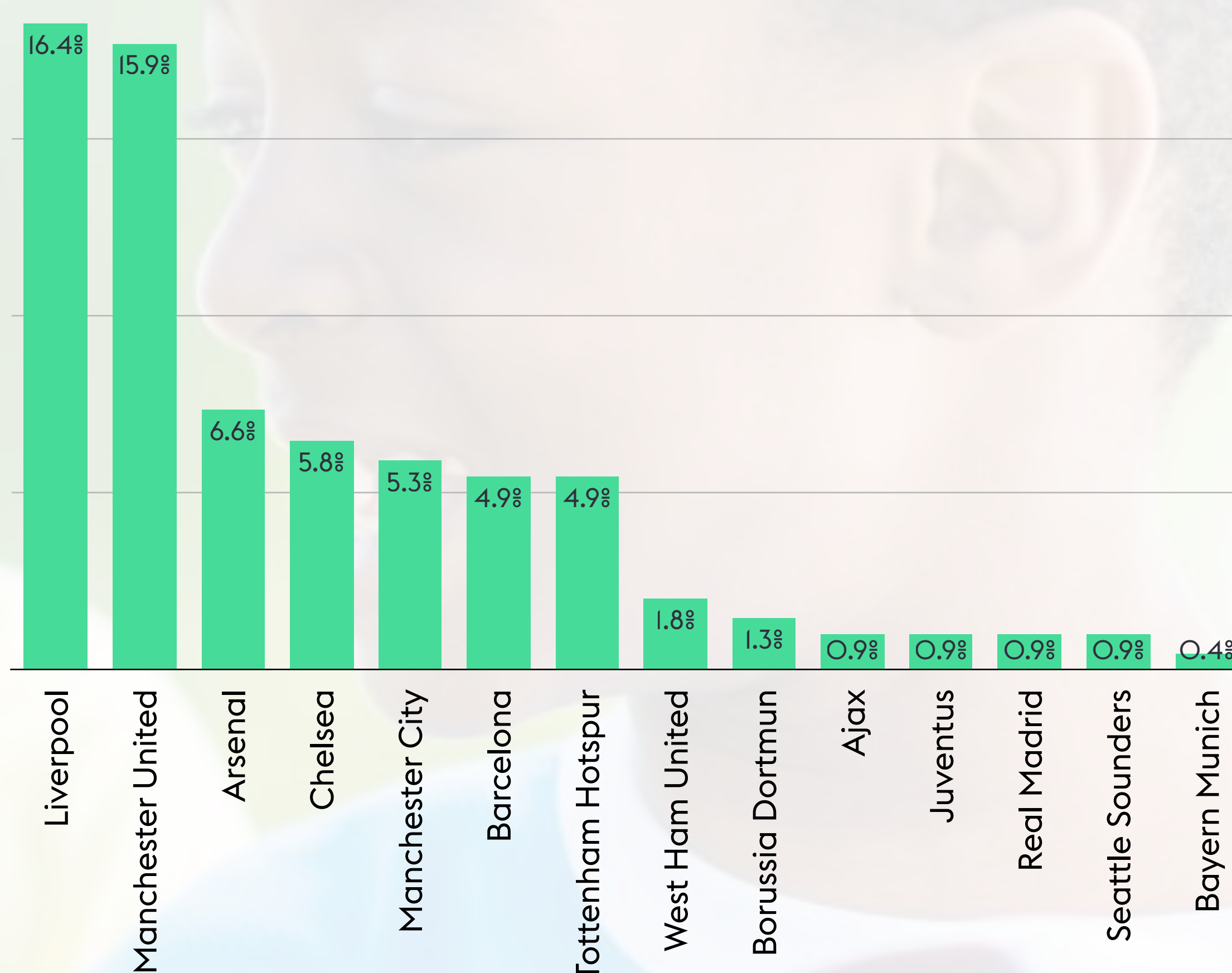


DOES YOUR CHILD OWN ANY SOCCER MERCHANDISE?

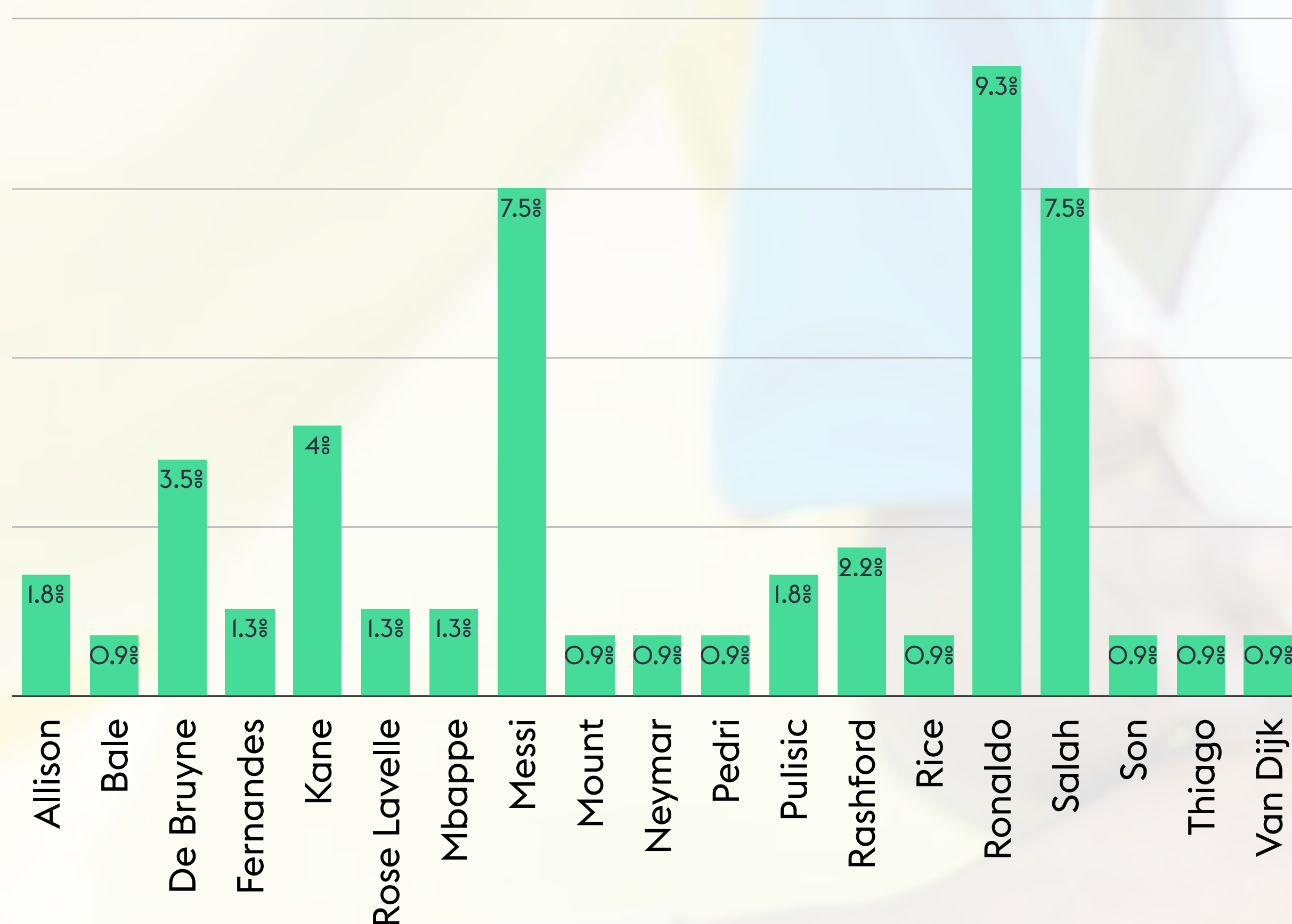
YOUR CHILD'S FAVOURITE SOCCER TEAM

This is always an interesting one. Who is the biggest club among our worldwide audience? There are two clear favourites, whose 1-2 positions may have been reversed 10 years ago.

The main surprise in our player poll is that Ronaldo and Messi are not standalone first and second choices!



YOUR CHILD'S FAVOURITE SOCCER PLAYER



THEIR CHILD'S CLUB

This section should be very useful to clubs and coaches, who cannot reasonably expect to get a straight answer to the questions we asked in this survey: 'Are you happy with the club?' and 'How would you describe your relationship with your club?'

Of course, we have not asked these questions specifically to the players at your club, but this general snapshot of player/parent contentment applies to clubs all over the world.

What parents think of their child's soccer club

With the best will in the world, we as coaches cannot be privy to the inner-most thoughts of our parents and players, nor can we be flies on the wall when a child comes home disgruntled from a bad game or training session.

In this section we asked for honest and anonymous responses to some of the difficult questions that clubs would like to ask



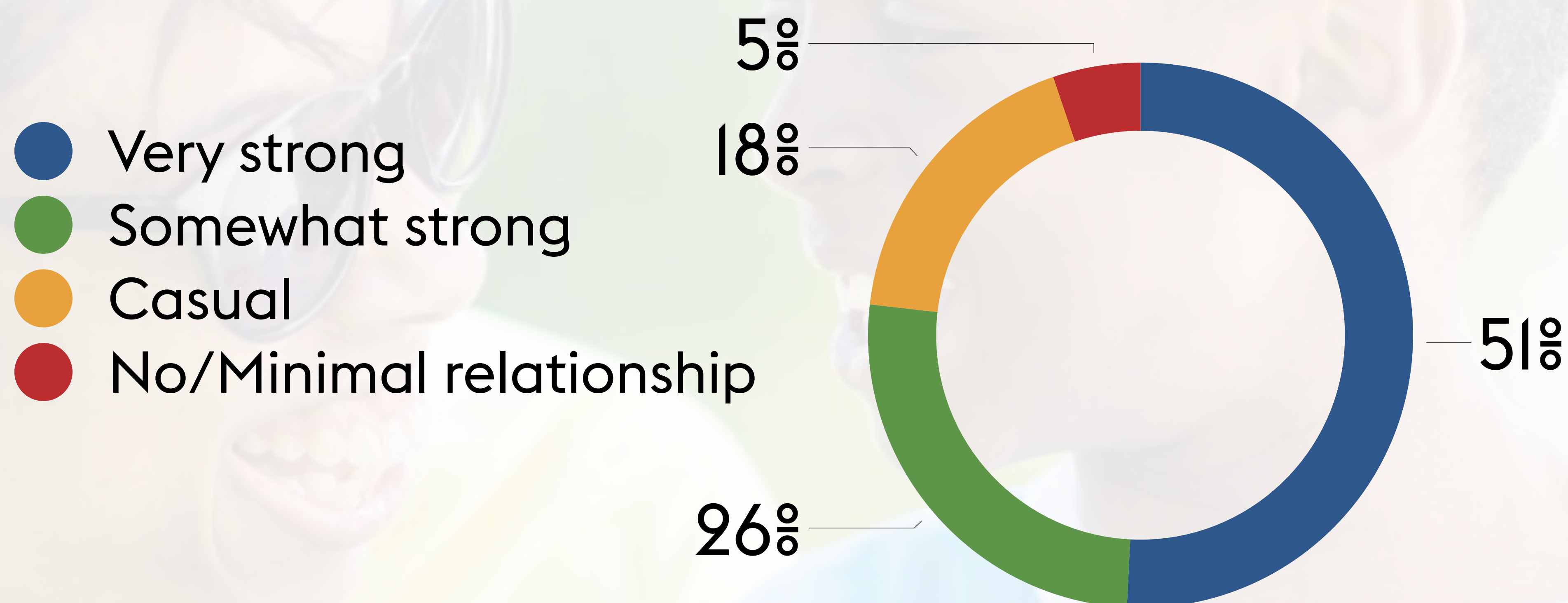
“Play is the highest form of research”

- Albert Einstein

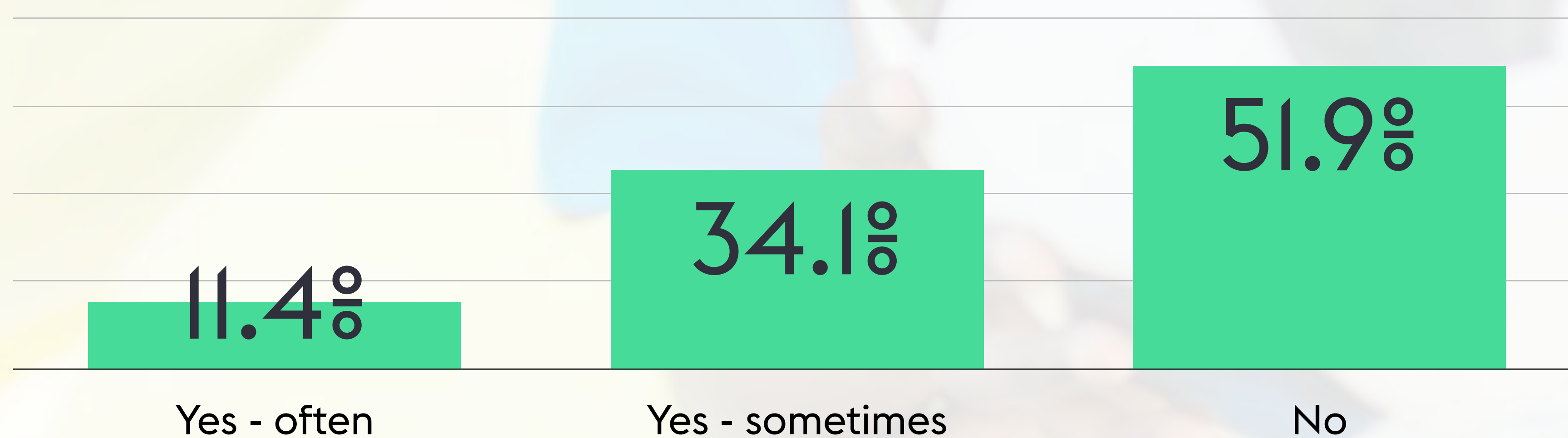
IS YOUR CHILD HAPPY WITH THEIR CURRENT TEAM?

Very happy	45.6%
Quite happy	34.4%
Neither happy or unhappy	13.2%
Somewhat unhappy	5.2%
Very unhappy	1.6%

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD'S COACH/TEAM?



DOES YOUR CHILD'S CLUB SEND YOU PARENT EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS? (NUTRITION GUIDES, TRAINING AT HOME GUIDES, ETC)



INSIGHTS

But what does this all mean? How can we use this information to improve the way we operate our club, and keep the relationship we have with our parents positive?

In this section, we cross reference some of the answers in our survey, to build localised and behaviour-based findings that are useful for coaches everywhere.

What is most likely to cause player unhappiness?

only 4% of children whose club sends regular parent communications (such as practice guides or nutrition guides) said they were unhappy, compared with 23.6% whose club does not send such communications. In other words, children are 6 TIMES more likely to be unhappy at their club, and considering leaving soon, if their club does not maintain a strong relationship with their parent(s)

6x

PLAYERS ARE 6 TIMES
MORE LIKELY TO BE
UNHAPPY AT THEIR
CLUB, IF THE CLUB
DOESN'T COMMUNICATE
WITH THEIR PARENTS

It is vital for parents to take an interest in their child's soccer journey in order for them to get the most out of their overall experience. But sometimes parents can be over-zealous, over-enthusiastic, and end up being a detrimental influence on their child one way or another.

More and more clubs these days have communications strategies that involve sending materials for the benefit of their players' parents as well as their players.



CHILDREN WHO DON'T PRACTICE AT HOME ARE MORE LIKELY TO QUIT SOCCER

We have uncovered some interesting trends regarding the importance of putting in the hours away from the training field, including the fact that children not only become better players when they practice at home - they are HAPPIER at their soccer club.

61% of US soccer players who don't practice regularly at home are likely to give up on soccer in the near future



36% of UK soccer players who don't practice regularly at home are likely to give up on soccer in the near future

This percentage being much lower in the UK is likely down to the 'ubiquitousness' of soccer in that country - it is the number one sport in that country and children naturally gravitate towards it. In the US, the sport of soccer must compete with the likes of American Football, basketball, baseball, and other sports ingrained into the country's culture. Having said that, 35.7% is still far too high.

CHILDREN WHO PRACTICE REGULARLY AT HOME WHO ARE LIKELY TO QUIT SOCCER:

ZERO

None of the 20,000+ respondents to our survey who said that their children practising regularly at home, also said that their child will likely give up on soccer soon.

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SOCCER RUNS IN THE FAMILY

94.2%

Of parents who played soccer themselves say they have a good relationship with their child's team, compared with 79% of parents who never played the game

While this statistic may not be especially surprising, it does tell us that more effort should be made to build and maintain a good relationship with players' parents, where the parent is not experienced in the sport themselves. This can be achieved by including educational parent guides in your club's communications strategy, sharing content that helps parents understand their child's needs in terms of practice, nutrition, emotional support, etc.

“Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do.”

- Pele



GET THEM STARTED EARLY

99.3%

Of children who started playing at five years old or younger enjoy playing the sport, compared with just

71%

Who started playing at nine or older.

Our evidence suggests that the best way to ensure a child enjoys playing soccer, therefore remains likely to stick with the sport and with their team, is to start them on their journey sooner rather than later.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY CLUB?

Investing in a proper Foundation phase structure for players, including lower-age teams, is a good way to create lifetime value for children (and parents) who are likely to be a part of your team for years to come.

Of course, investing in the development of players from a very young age will benefit them and their performance on the pitch, but the residual effect will be happier players, happier parents, and repeat annual subscription fees for the duration of a child's soccer journey.



WHERE DO PARENTS HAVE THE BEST RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR CHILD'S CLUB?

In which countries do parents say they have a good relationship with their child's club? And where do those relationships need improving? In this section we take a look at the percentage of parents from each country who said they have a 'very strong' or 'somewhat strong' relationship with their child's club.



UNITED KINGDOM

86%



U.S.A.

71%



IRELAND

90%



CANADA

89%



AUSTRALIA

57%

ACTIONS

We've learned some very actionable lessons from this data - but what can we do about them?

The Coaching Manual are here to help...

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR PLAYERS' PARENTS

Although children are the most important people in their own soccer journey, we cannot underestimate the importance of the role of the parent. The parent ultimately decides whether their child renews with your team or not at the end of the season, right?

Parents need to be kept abreast of the goings-on with the club, their child's team, what they're learning at training, and ways in which they can support their child. Having a positive relationship with your players' parents is productive for everyone involved.

The Coaching Manual has a number of solutions to improve club-parent relationships, not least of all providing the ability to view their child's training sessions and season plans ahead of time.



EDUCATE YOUR PLAYERS' PARENTS



Parents play an absolutely vital role in the development of young soccer players, and it all starts with having the proper routine and environment at home.

The Coaching Manual has published a series of guides, available for free, that explore the ways in which parents can support their children by encouraging simple habits away from the training field - from nutrition and rest, to practising their skills at home.

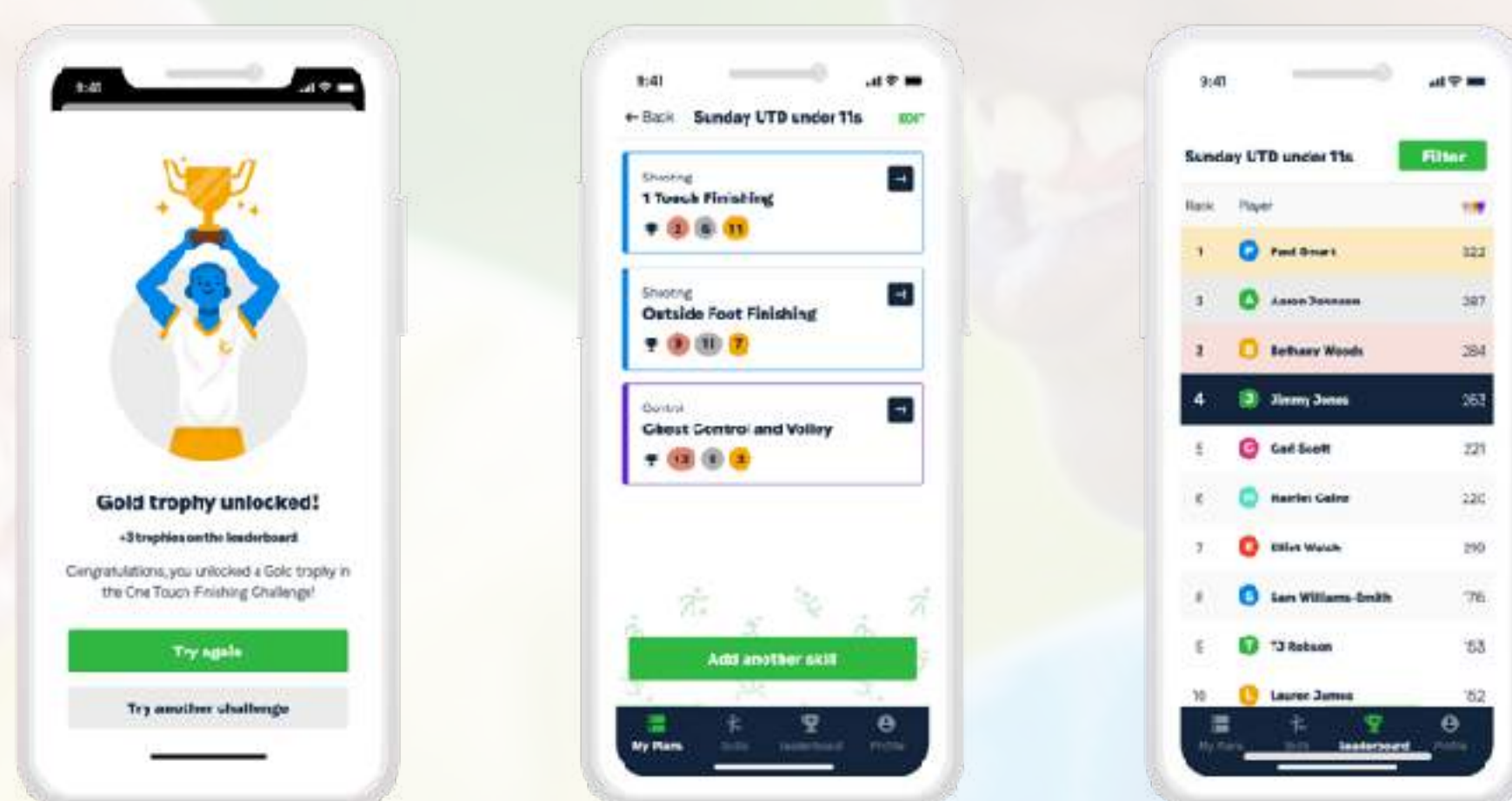
Children today require more encouragement than previous generations to keep an active lifestyle. We've put together a list of solutions to make sure parents have everything they need to ensure their child gets the enjoyment they deserve from sport, and stays healthy by developing habits and routines that will serve them well in soccer and throughout life.

The guides focus on:

- Training
- Nutrition
- Screen time
- Sleep/rest
- Suggested routine



ENCOURAGE YOUR PLAYERS TO TRAIN AT HOME



As we've discovered in this report, players are happier when they train at home. They ultimately get more out of the sport and are more likely to stay with your club.



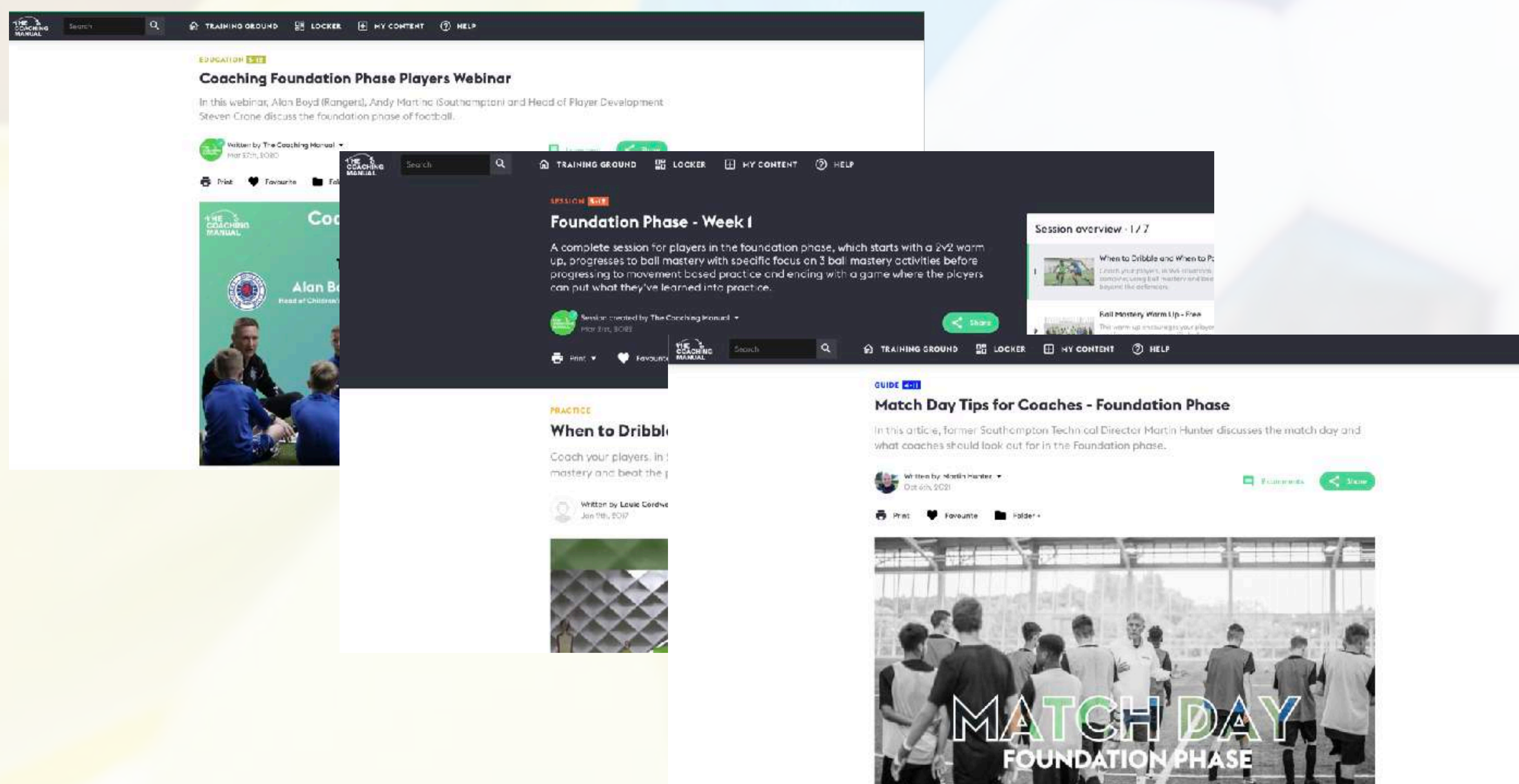
But how do we encourage them to train at home? The Coaching Manual has developed the world's best player development app, TopTekkers, which not only incentivises training at home for children, but gives coaches the ability to set training plans and monitor individual progress at the touch of a button.

For more information about TopTekkers, get in touch with The Coaching Manual.



RECRUIT AND DEVELOP YOUNG PLAYERS (and coaches!)

We can also help with resources for children of all ages. As well as the aforementioned TopTekkers app for children as young as five years old, we also have a library of content suitable for Foundation phase players (5-9), and a host of recreational content designed for casual training sessions for younger players.



WHAT ELSE CAN THE COACHING MANUAL DO TO HELP?

As well as coaching tools, resources, and content, The Coaching Manual offers ready-made and bespoke solutions to maintaining and improving the vital relationship between club and player parents. Integrating a full parent communications plan is proven to keep your players happy, and ensure a lower subscription churn rate over time.



Educational content for parents and players



At-home plans and advice



Visibility of the best-in-class sessions and plans from your coach and club



Nutrition guides



Parent relationship evaluation



Newsletter support

www.thecoachingmanual.com

CONTACT

If you would like to know more about the ways in which The Coaching Manual can help improve your club's relationship with its players' parents, please get in touch below or follow us on social media:

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