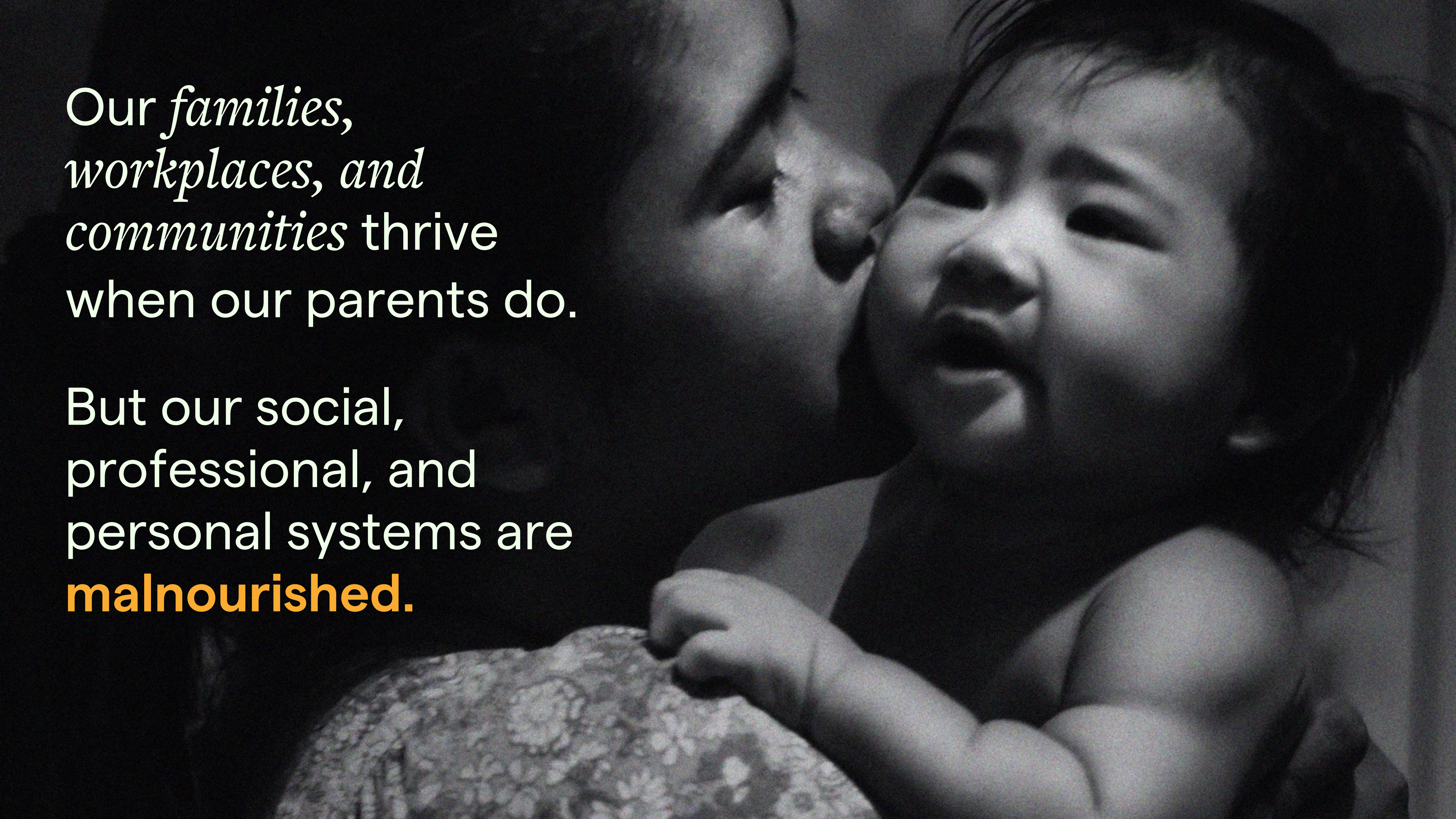




# 2023 BREASTFEEDING SENTIMENT SNAPSHOT

A report by The Lactation Network



A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a woman's face as she gently kisses a baby on the forehead. The baby is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The lighting is soft, creating a warm and intimate atmosphere.

*Our families,  
workplaces, and  
communities thrive  
when our parents do.*

But our social,  
professional, and  
personal systems are  
**malnourished.**

The following data reveals trends The Lactation Network has long observed at the intersection of

*Family need and  
insufficient resources*  
for lactation care.

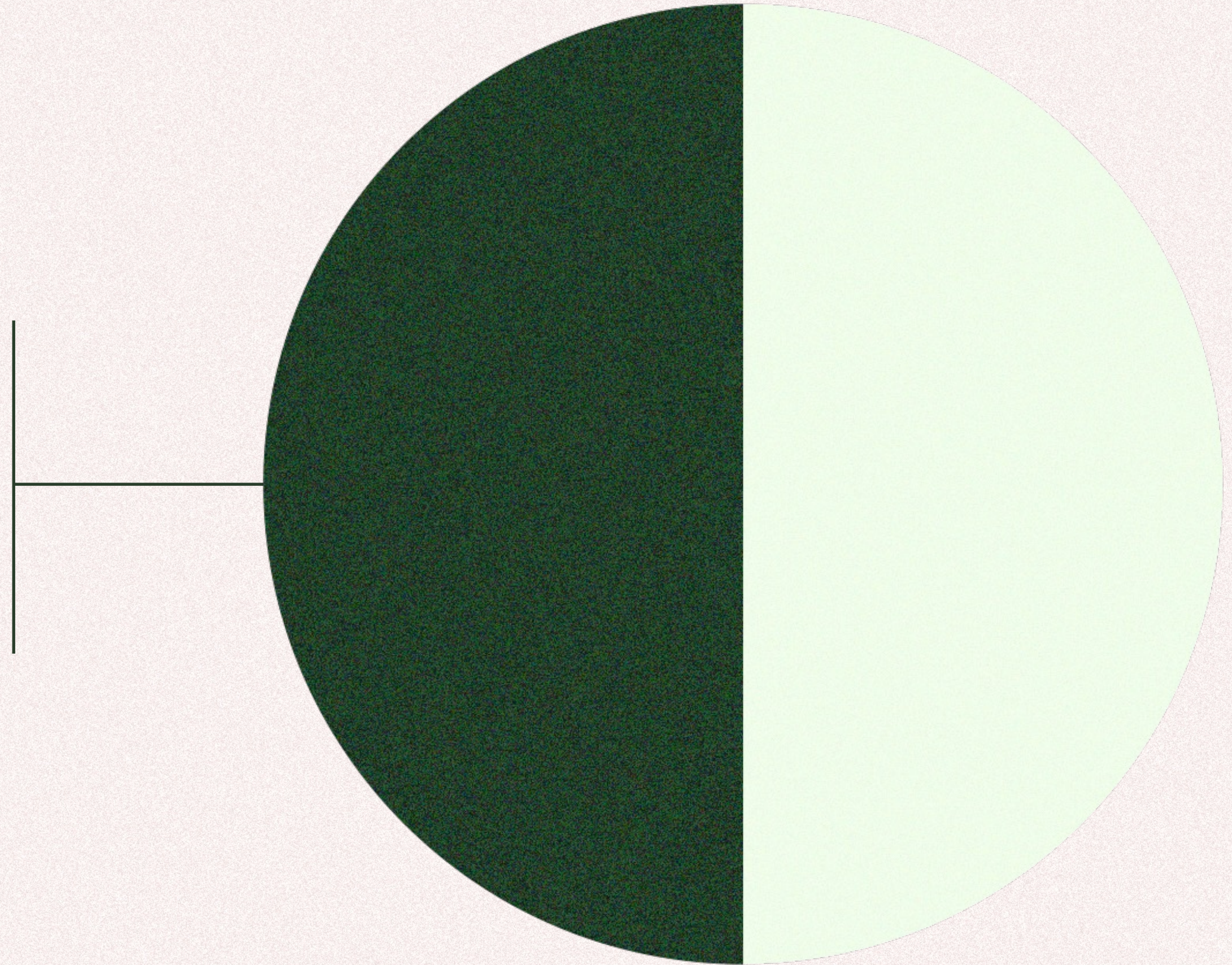
## THE NEED

Parents deserve to support their families, especially after welcoming new life.

But **parents are struggling** to get the acknowledgement, support, and care they need — from employers, the public, and social systems at large.

Most parents find breastfeeding challenging — and expert help is hard to access.

OVER  
**HALF**  
agree **it's too hard for women to access expert help** for breastfeeding challenges.



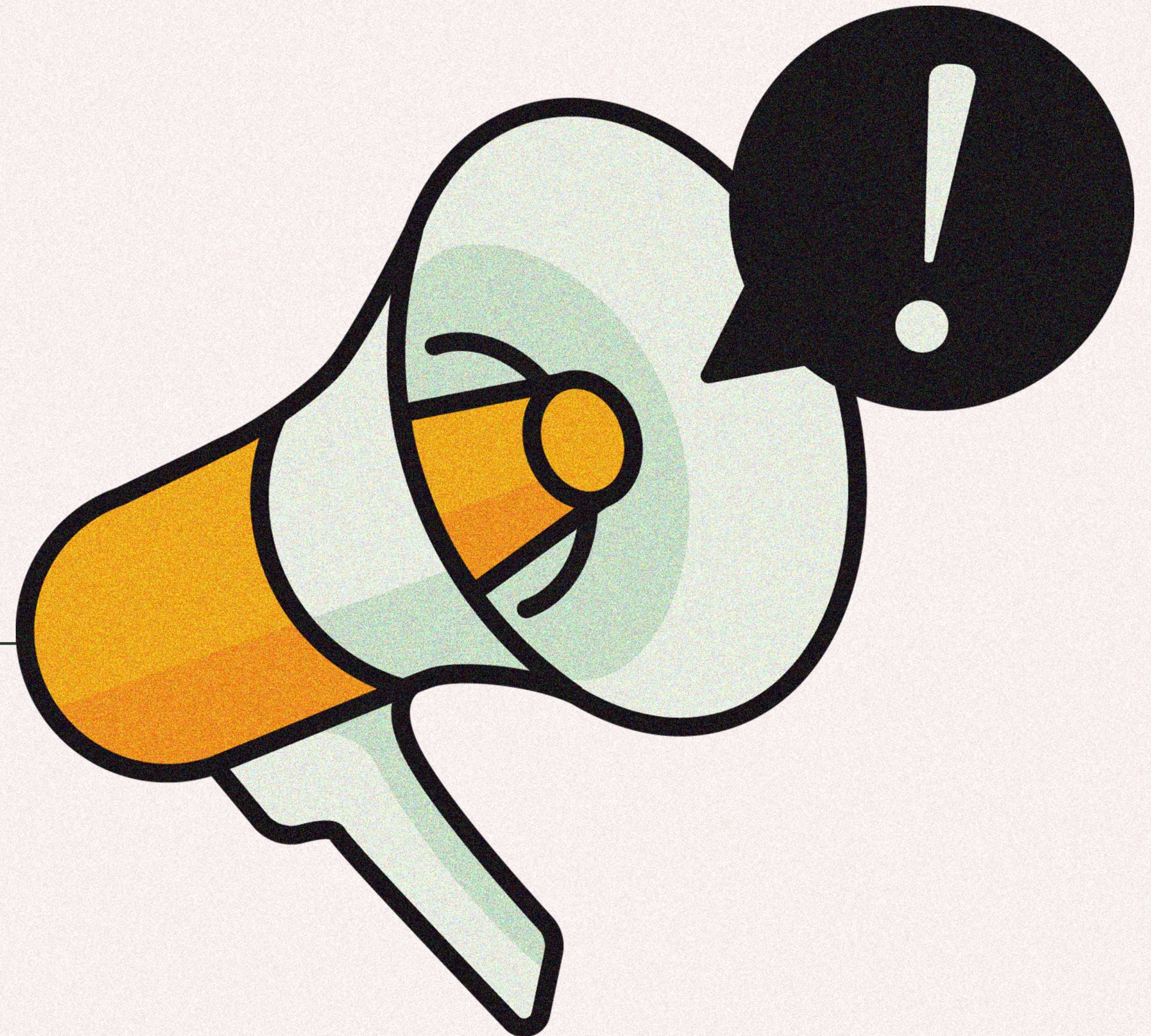
The challenges parents experience are compounded by the silence around breastfeeding — it is a skill that must be discussed, valued, and taught.

**81%**

**agree we should be talking more** about how difficult and challenging breastfeeding is for new mothers, with

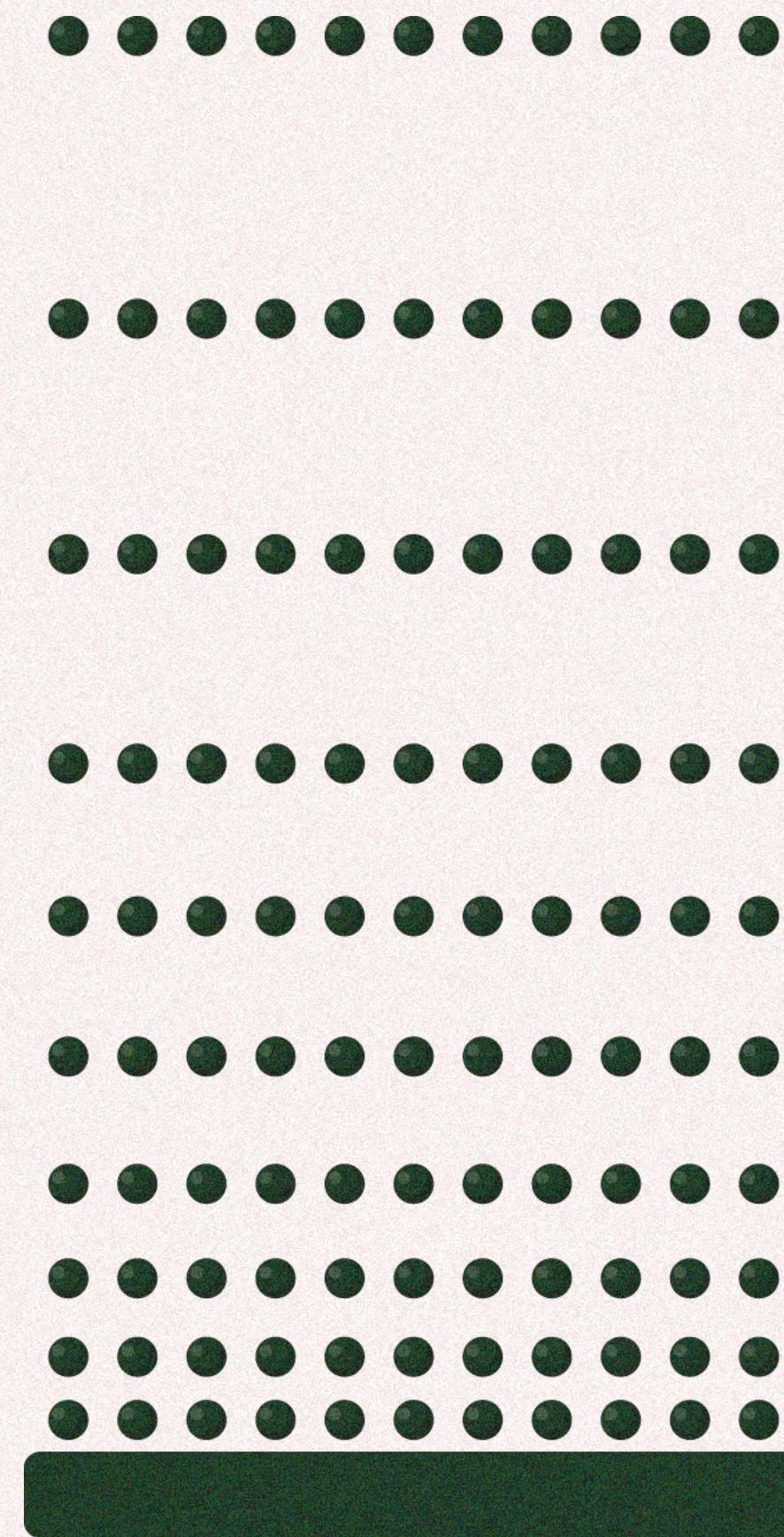
**49%**

saying they **strongly agree**.



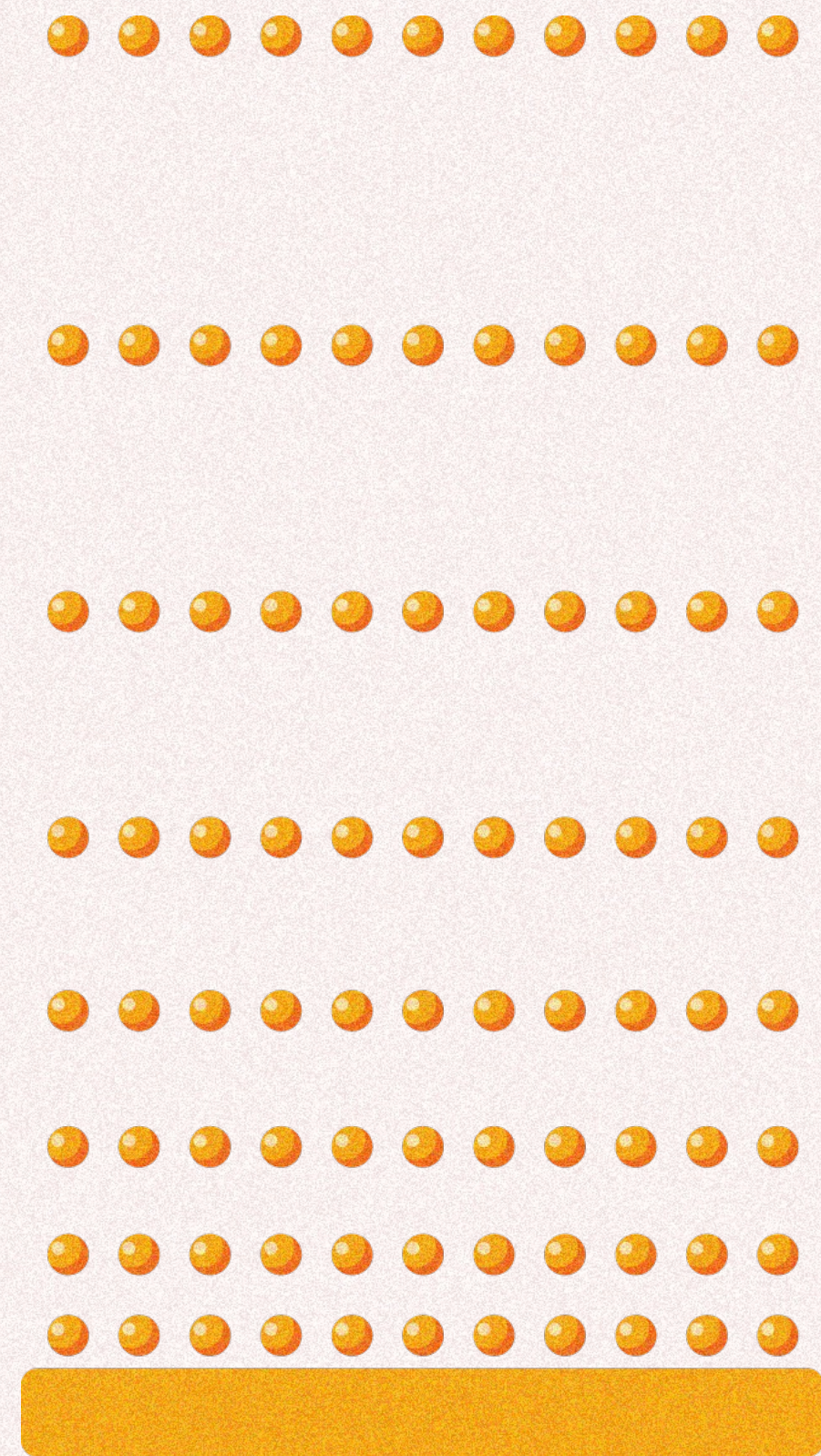
In the absence of supportive discourse in public or professional spheres, parents do their best to provide the sustenance their children need.

**But no matter which feeding method is discussed, parents feel pressure.**



57%

agree that parents are under too much pressure to **breastfeed**.



51%

agree that parents are under too much pressure to **formula feed**.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Employers are on the front lines of *care equity*.

The consequences of insufficient care are *costly*.



# LACTATION CARE IS A *business* IMPERATIVE.

Without it, companies risk retention and acquisition of **key talent** — not just those who are building families, but the colleagues who work alongside them and rely on their leadership.

70%

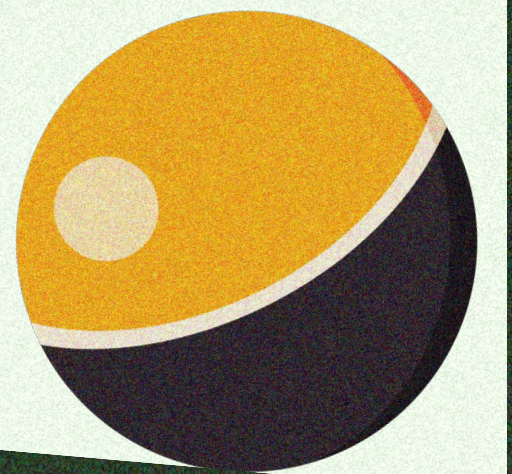
agree that **employers don't do enough** to support new families on their breastfeeding journeys.

43%

**resented their employer** because they made feeding their child difficult when returning to work.

44%

considered **leaving their employer** because of lack of breastfeeding support when returning to work.

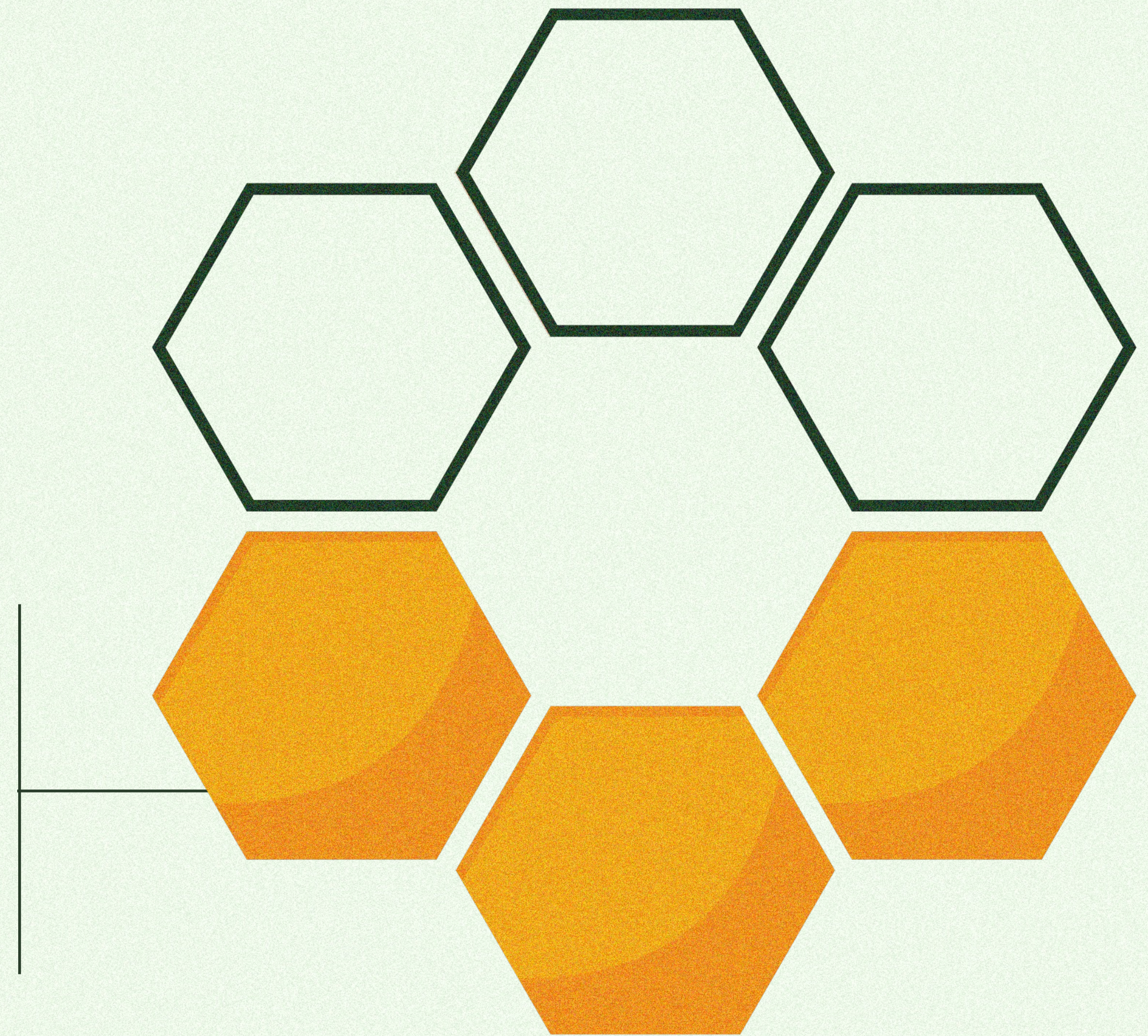


# CARE ACCESSIBILITY IS AN *intersectional* ISSUE.

Employers **must seek clarity** on whether they offer comprehensive, mandated care. Just because employees aren't vocal, doesn't mean it isn't an issue — especially for under-resourced communities.

NEARLY  
**HALF**

of parents **agree that breastfeeding is hardest** for people who are economically disadvantaged.



Whether or not parents speak up isn't simply a matter of desire — a parent's ability to advocate for their lactation care needs is affected by their income.

14%

of parents with a household income of **\$15k or less** said they would talk to their employer about expanded healthcare.

39%

of parents with a household income of **\$150k or more** said they would talk to their employer about expanded healthcare.

# THE SOLUTION IS CLEAR:

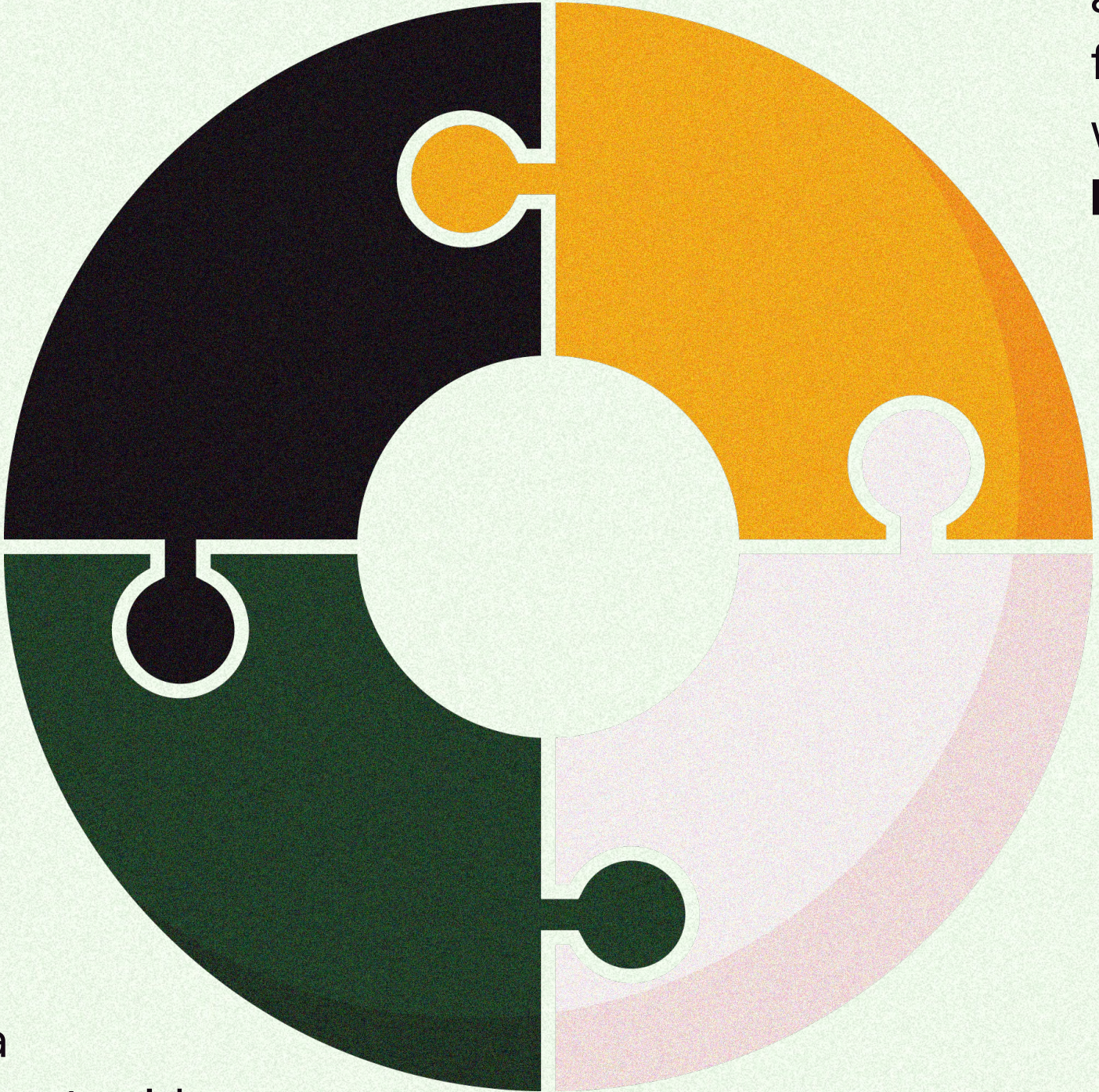
*Employer support AND accessible lactation care.*

## 28%

said a **supportive employer made the biggest difference** in reducing the burden of breastfeeding when going back to work.

## 52%

agreed if they had support from their employer they would have chosen to **breastfeed longer**.



## 21%

who have used a lactation consultant said they did so to **prepare to go back to work**.

## 21%

said a **lactation consultant made the biggest difference** in reducing the burden of breastfeeding when going back to work.

## SEEKING SUSTENENCE

Ever resilient and resourceful, parents who can't access *evidence-based* healthcare are forced to turn to *tips and tricks* from friends and family.



PARENTS  
KNOW *why*  
FEEDING THEIR  
FAMILIES IS  
*important.*



38%

said it helped them **feel empowered** by their ability to support their baby.



48%

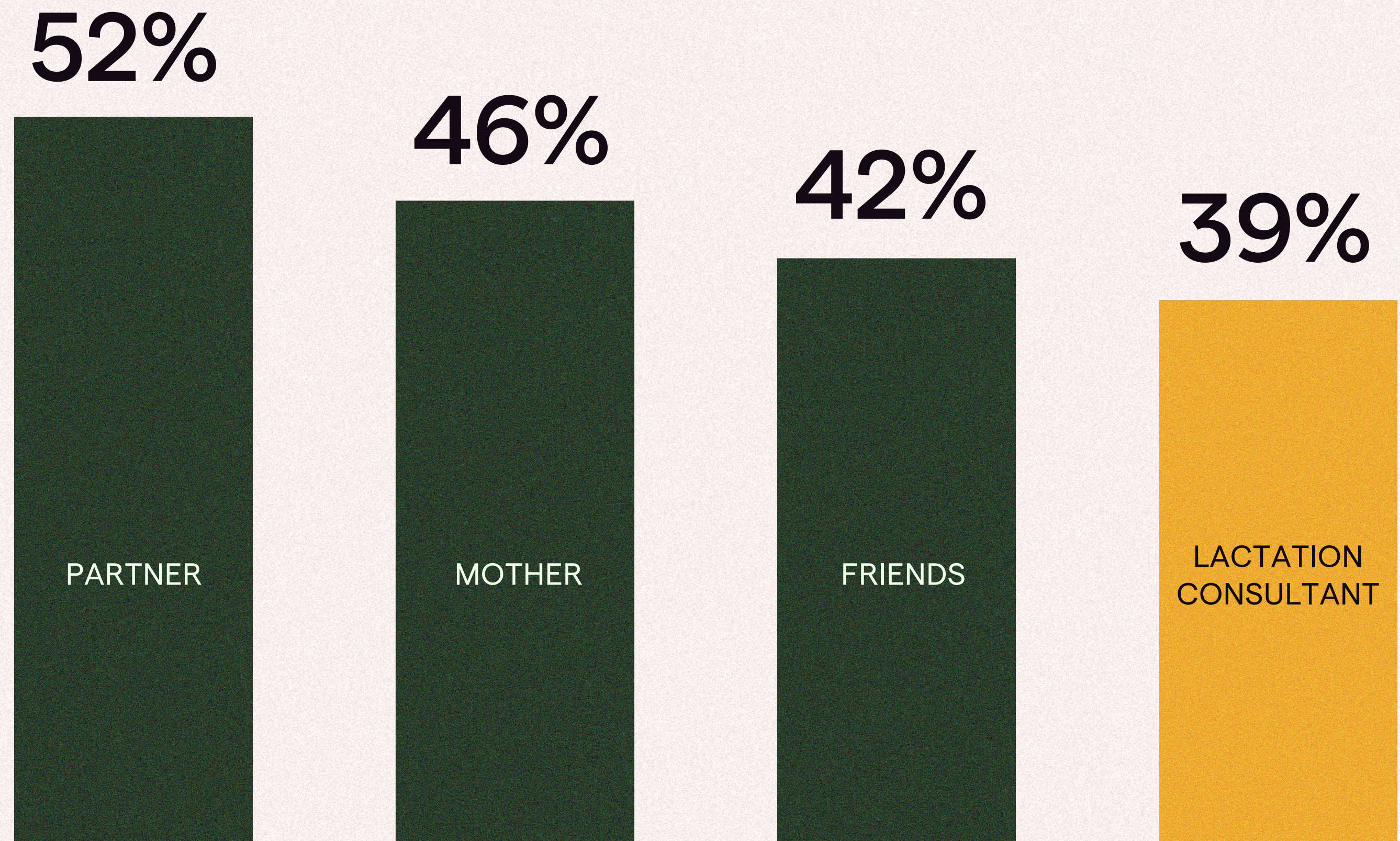
said it gave them **peace of mind** that their child was getting the best nutrition.



57%

said it helped them **feel connected** to their babies.

In the absence of accessible healthcare, families turn to a network of unpaid laborers for support. When they should be able to rely on clinicians, parents instead have to rely on their partners, their parents, and their friends for **informal, inexpert advice.**



PARENT-IDENTIFIED SOURCES OF BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Expert lactation care  
nourishes parents at  
the intersection of  
their personal  
professional, and  
cultural lives,  
**alleviating the invisible  
source of labor  
families provide.**

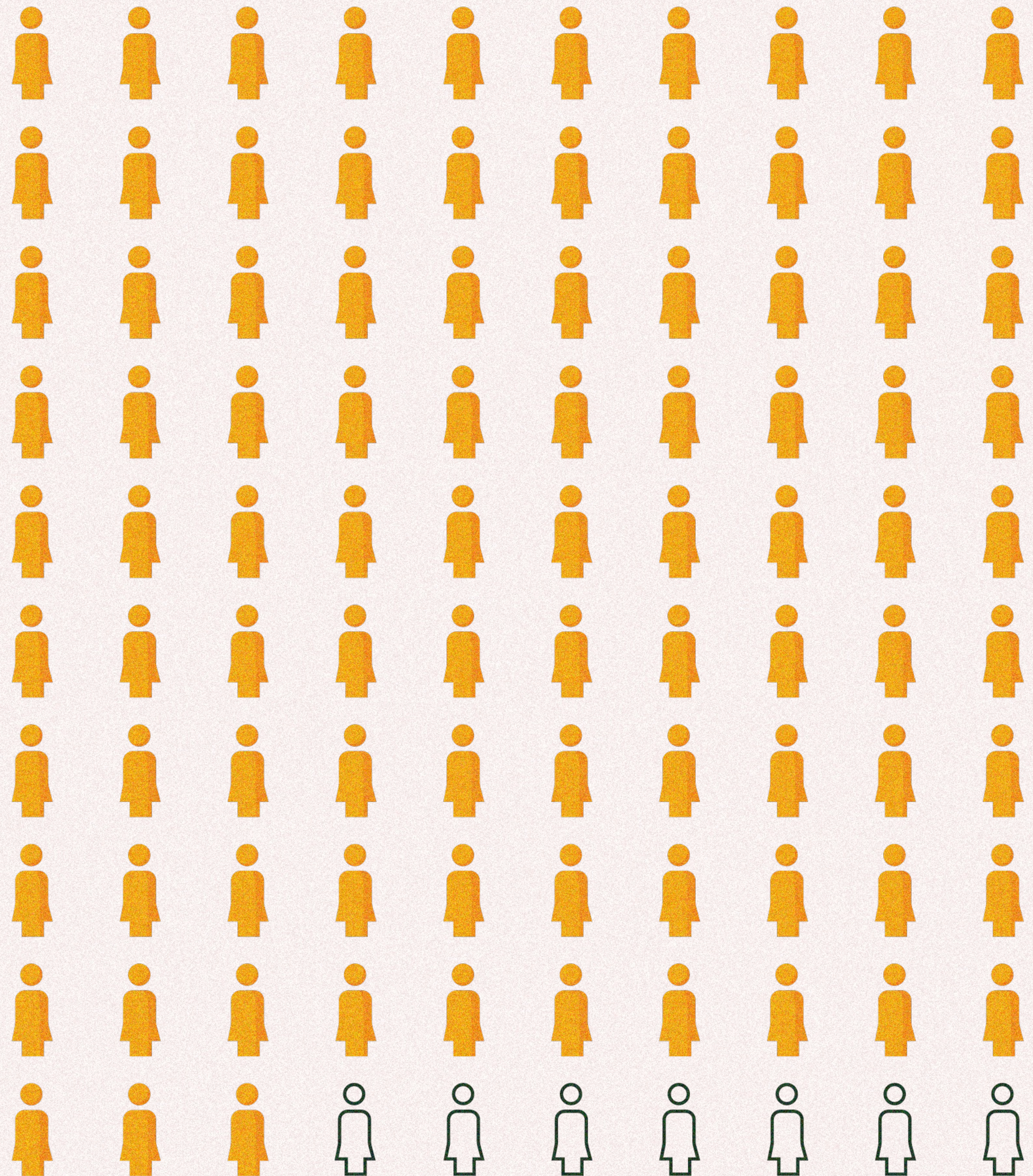




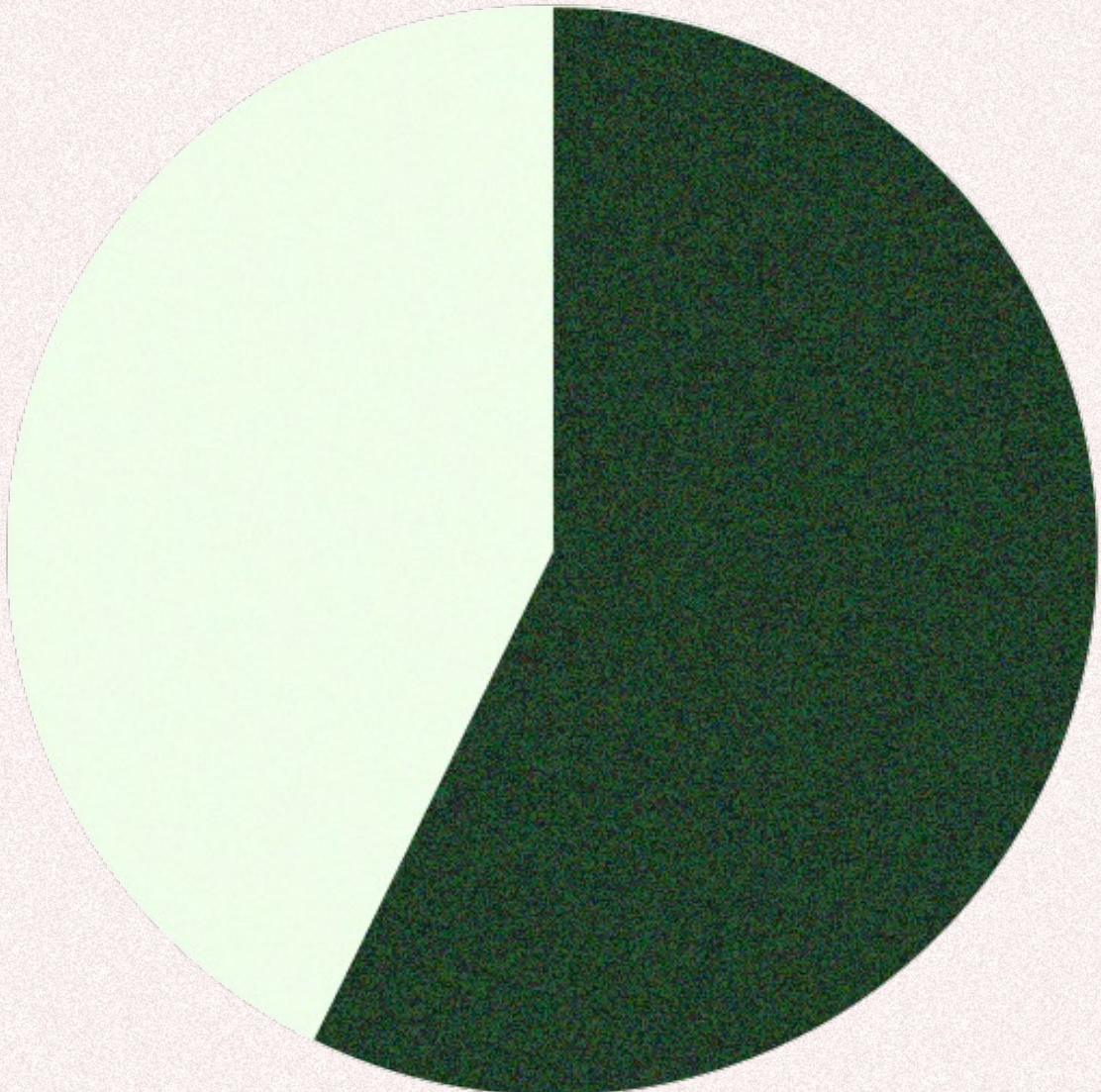
# LACTATION CARE HAS AN UNDENIABLY *positive impact* ON PARENTS.

93%

who had a lactation consultation before their baby was born said it **contributed to their success in breastfeeding.**

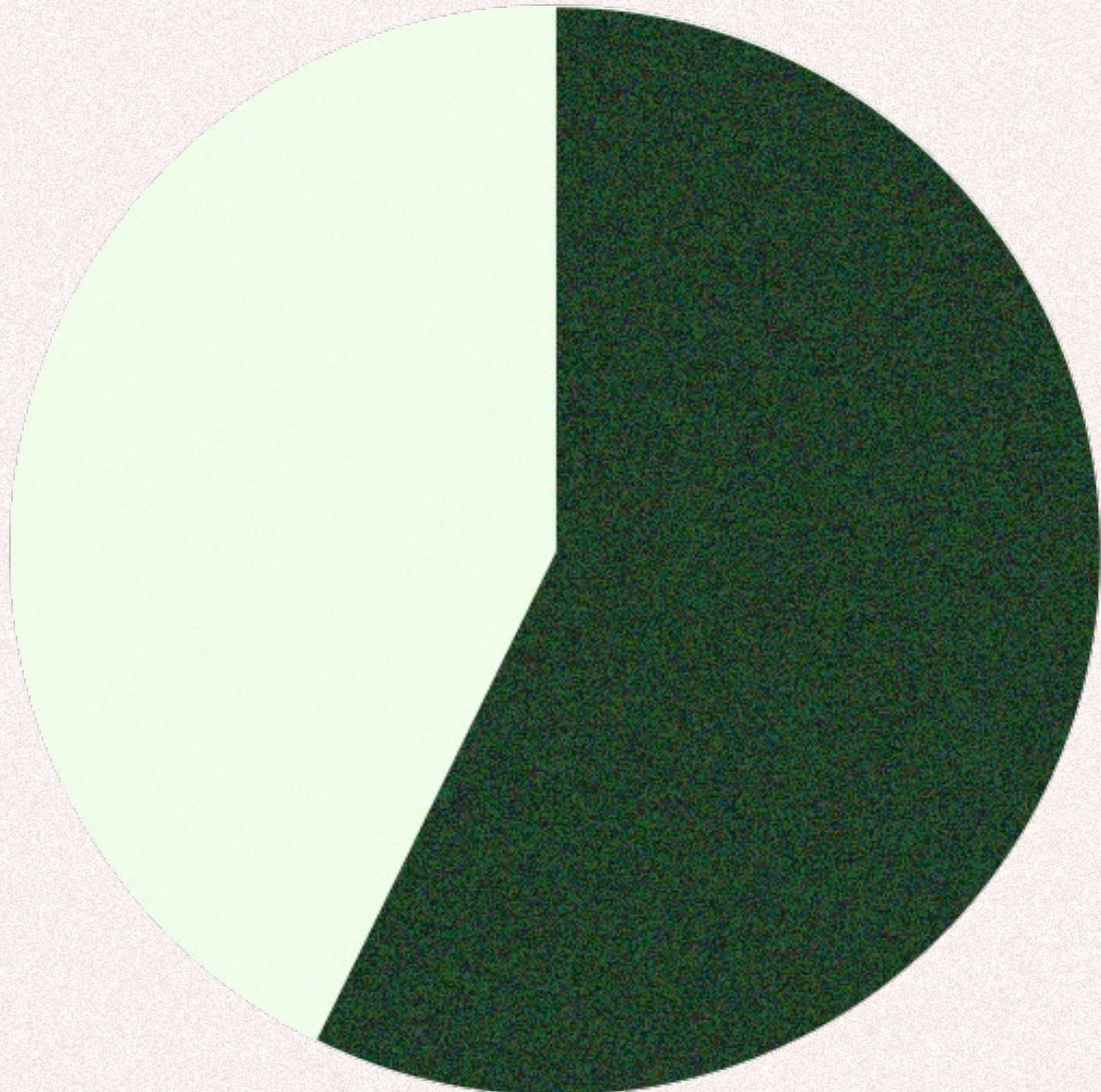


# INSURANCE COVERAGE AND EARLY ACCESS TO CARE ARE *vital*.



**56%**

agreed if their insurance provided any/more coverage for lactation support, **they would have chosen to breastfeed longer.**



**58%**

agreed if their insurance provided any/more coverage for lactation support, **they would have seen a lactation consultant more times.**

# ABOUT THE LACTATION NETWORK

TLN is setting a new standard for parents and lactation consultants alike.

At TLN, our movement goes beyond any single outlet or tool. We activate education, connection, and advocacy to foster the new network of inclusive care between parents and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs): **The network where every caregiver has the resources to thrive.**

TLN is powered by the largest network of IBCLCs in the country.

# METHODOLOGY

The data included in this report was sourced in partnership with Censuswide, a research consultant and member of ESOMAR, a global association. Censuswide complies with the MRS Code of Conduct based on ESOMAR principles.

To acquire this data, Censuswide **surveyed 2508 respondents** who had a baby over the last two years in the United States between March 23, 2023, and April 23, 2023.