

 fanfinders **your** babyclub

State of Parenting in the **US**

2026



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About this report

Your Baby Club

Your Baby Club helps expecting and new families discover trusted products, relevant offers and support throughout the earliest stages of family life.

Home to over **7.5 million parents worldwide**, Your Baby Club combines personalized journeys with trusted content, product recommendations and amazing deals, helping parents navigate one of life's most important transitions.

At the same time, we help brands connect with families during one of the most influential periods of the consumer journey through customer acquisition, product sampling, sponsorships and audience intelligence.

This Report

This report is based on responses from over **1,000 expecting parents and parents of young children** who completed the Your Baby Club US State of Parenting Survey in 2026.

The audience represented here is concentrated around pregnancy, infancy and the first year of family life - a period when families are making some of their biggest purchasing, financial and lifestyle decisions.

The findings provide a snapshot of the priorities, behaviours and opportunities shaping early parenthood across the United States today.

Understanding families in the early years

The first few years of parenthood represent one of the most influential periods in the consumer journey. Families establish routines, evaluate products across dozens of categories and form relationships with brands that often last well beyond this period.

This audience is highly engaged. They're actively researching purchases, seeking trusted advice and making decisions that influence everything from healthcare and household finances to mobility, childcare and everyday family life.

While many of the respondents are currently expecting, the wider audience is concentrated around pregnancy, infancy and baby's first years, providing a valuable picture of the early parenthood experience in the United States.

Snapshot of respondents

- **92%** identify as female
- **70%** are aged 18-34
- **51%** are currently expecting
- **81%** of parents have a child aged 0-2
- **64%** have at least one pet
- Members are represented across every major US region

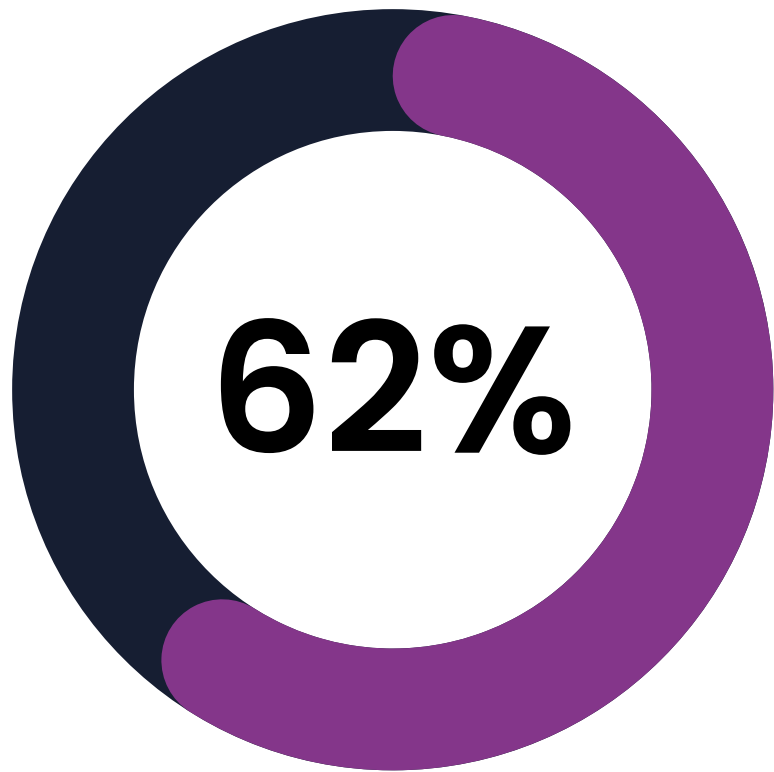
Key Insight

The earliest years of parenthood remain one of the most active periods for product discovery, brand trial and long-term purchasing decisions.

The intentional consumer

The arrival of a child changes almost every aspect of household spending.

From everyday essentials to major purchases, American families are evaluating value more carefully than ever before.



of US parents describe themselves as financially strained

Financial pressures are changing purchasing behaviour

Financial pressure has become a defining feature of family life for many American parents. Yet the biggest story isn't rising costs - it's how families are adapting to this new norm.

Parents are becoming increasingly deliberate about spending. They're comparing products, researching purchases more thoroughly and looking for ways to maximise value without compromising on quality or safety.

"American parents haven't stopped spending. They've become more intentional about where their money goes."

Major purchases receive greater scrutiny, while everyday spending decisions are increasingly influenced by value, relevance and necessity. As opposed to reducing demand, financial pressure has instead just created a more intentional consumer.

For brands, this means earning confidence before purchase. Families continue to spend, but they expect every product to clearly demonstrate its value.

Key Figures

- 62% describe themselves as financially strained
- Only 13% describe themselves as very financially comfortable
- 51% are very or extremely concerned about the cost of raising a child
- Only 16% follow a detailed household budget
- 35% save when they can without a formal plan
- 43% rent their home, highlighting the financial pressures facing many young families

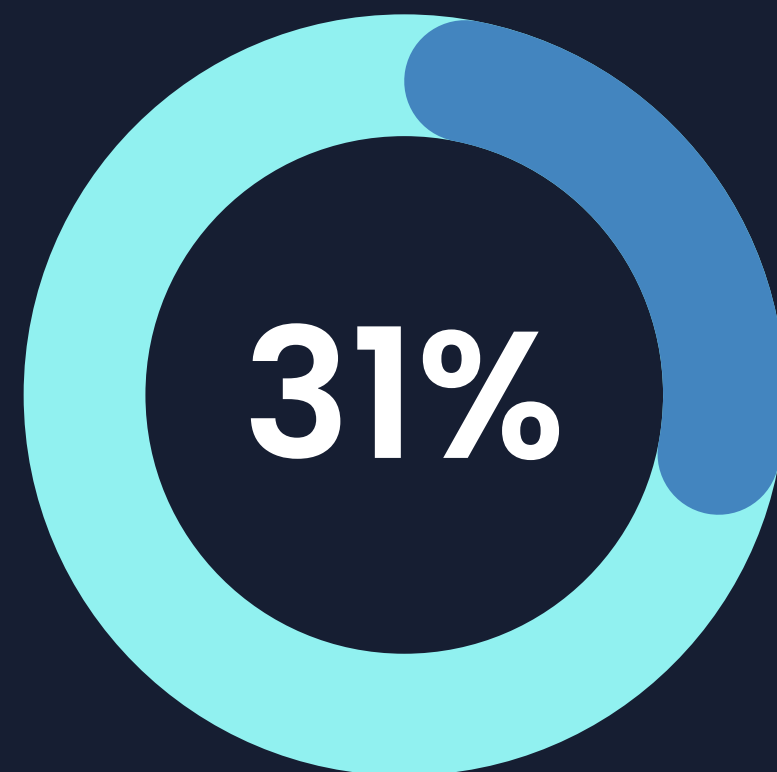
Key Insight

Value has become a decision-making filter across almost every category.

Closing the support gap

Access to financial support is only part of the challenge.

Understanding what's available has become just as important.



aren't sure which government benefits
they're eligible for

Parents want information, not complexity

The research suggests many parents are navigating financial support with uncertainty.

While programmes such as WIC, Medicaid, CHIP and SNAP provide valuable assistance, a significant proportion of families remain unsure which benefits they qualify for or how to access them. That uncertainty extends beyond government support into their wider financial planning.

"Helping families navigate complexity is becoming just as valuable as helping them save money."

Parents have consistently told us they want practical guidance that simplifies budgeting, explains available support and helps them make informed financial decisions during one of life's most expensive stages.

For organizations supporting families, reducing complexity can be just as valuable as reducing costs.

Key Figures

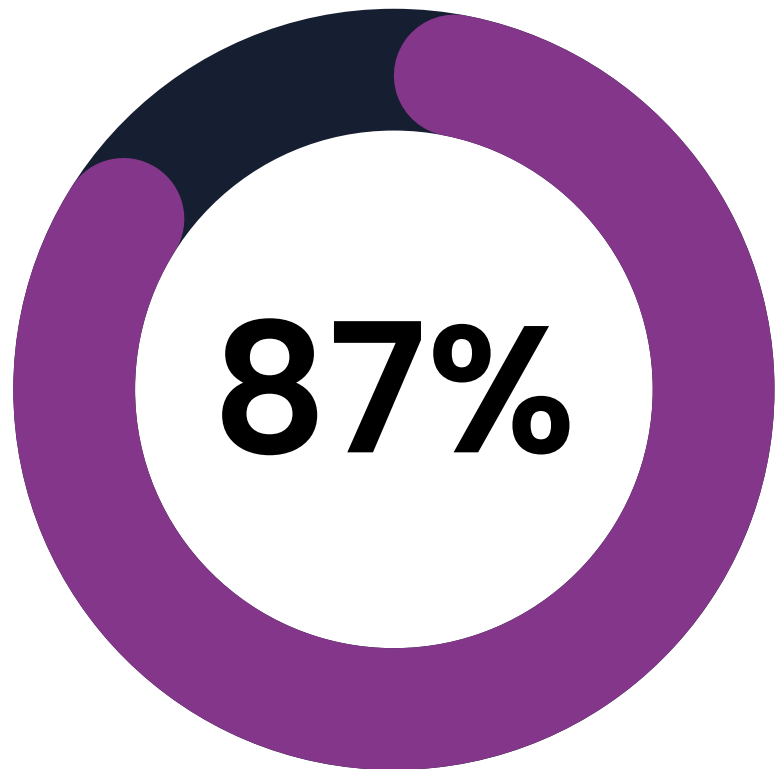
- **40%** are claiming or planning to claim WIC
- **32%** access Medicaid or CHIP
- **26%** access SNAP
- Budgeting is the **number one** financial topic parents want more support with

Key Insight

Parents aren't asking for more information - they want clear actionable guidance.

Confidence before commitment

Today's parents don't make fast purchasing decisions.
They make more informed ones.



always or often look for deals before making a purchase

Parents are researching carefully before purchasing

Preparing for a new baby means making dozens of first-time purchasing decisions, many of which carry significant financial or emotional importance.

Parents are comparing products more carefully, reading reviews, seeking recommendations and increasingly using multiple sources of information before committing. Price remains the strongest purchase driver, but quality, trust and reassurance play an equally important role in reducing perceived risk.

"Today's parents are going beyond comparing prices, to comparing confidence in products."

For brands, success depends on becoming part of the research journey and showcasing credibility - not simply appearing at the point of purchase.

Key Figures

- 87% always or often look for deals before purchasing
- 73% say price and discounts influence purchase decisions
- 61% prioritize product quality
- 58% are influenced by recommendations from friends and family
- 46% rely on customer reviews and ratings
- 27% say social media and influencers influence purchasing decisions

Key Insight

Credibility is now just as important as cost in the path to purchase.

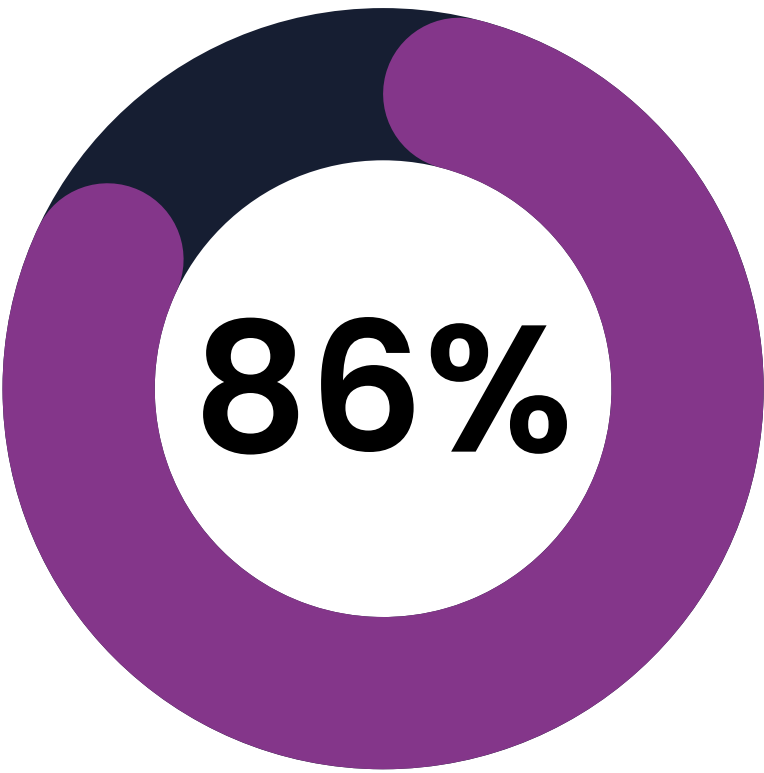


Discovery starts with trust

Parents remain remarkably open to trying new products.

The challenge isn't convincing them to discover something new.

It's reducing the perceived risk.



would be more likely to try a new brand after receiving a free sample

Reducing risk drives product trial

Few marketing tactics align as closely with modern parent behaviour as product sampling.

Parents actively seek reassurance before switching brands or trying unfamiliar products. Sampling provides that reassurance by allowing families to experience a product in their own home and hold it in their hands before making a financial commitment.

"Parents don't need convincing to discover new brands - they want the opportunity to try them."

Importantly, this isn't simply stated intent. Three quarters of respondents have already purchased a product after receiving a free sample, making product trial one of the clearest conversion opportunities identified in the research.

At a time when acquisition costs continue to rise, reducing perceived risk has become a powerful driver of both trial and long-term loyalty.

Key Figures

- 86% would try a new brand after receiving a free sample
- 78% are motivated by discounts and special offers
- 62% want positive reviews before trying something new
- 43% would switch brands for a better offer
- 75% have purchased a product after receiving a free sample

Key Insight

Product trial remains one of the strongest drivers of brand adoption.

Where parents place their trust

Not all purchases carry equal weight.

When preparing for a new baby, parents prioritise products that support safety, wellbeing and everyday functionality. These are the categories where confidence matters most and where trust is often established for years to come.

“No category commands more agreement than car seats. Safety remains at the foundation of early parenthood purchasing.”

The results reveal a clear hierarchy of importance. Safety-related purchases sit firmly at the top, followed by products that support everyday care and routines. Aesthetic purchases, by comparison, play a much smaller role in decision-making.

For brands, this ranking offers a useful picture of where parents are investing the greatest attention, research effort and emotional consideration.

Trust extends beyond baby products

The earliest years of parenthood influence far more than purchases for a new baby.

Families are simultaneously making decisions across groceries, healthcare, insurance, household products and mobility, creating one of the broadest periods of consumer decision-making in the lifecycle.

“Early parenthood creates the ultimate household decision-maker.”

This research reinforces that expecting and new parents aren't just shopping within the baby category, but actively shaping purchasing decisions across the entire household.

For brands outside traditional parenting sectors, this represents a significant opportunity to engage consumers while new habits and loyalties are still being formed.

Key Figures

Products rated 'Very Important'

- **97%** Car seats
- **89%** Diapers and wipes
- **86%** Strollers
- **84%** Feeding equipment
- **77%** Cribs

Household purchasing influence

- **90%** influence cleaning product purchases
- **88%** influence grocery shopping
- **85%** influence laundry purchases
- **70%** influence wider household purchasing
- **53%** are the primary decision-maker for family vehicle purchases
- A further **37%** influence that decision

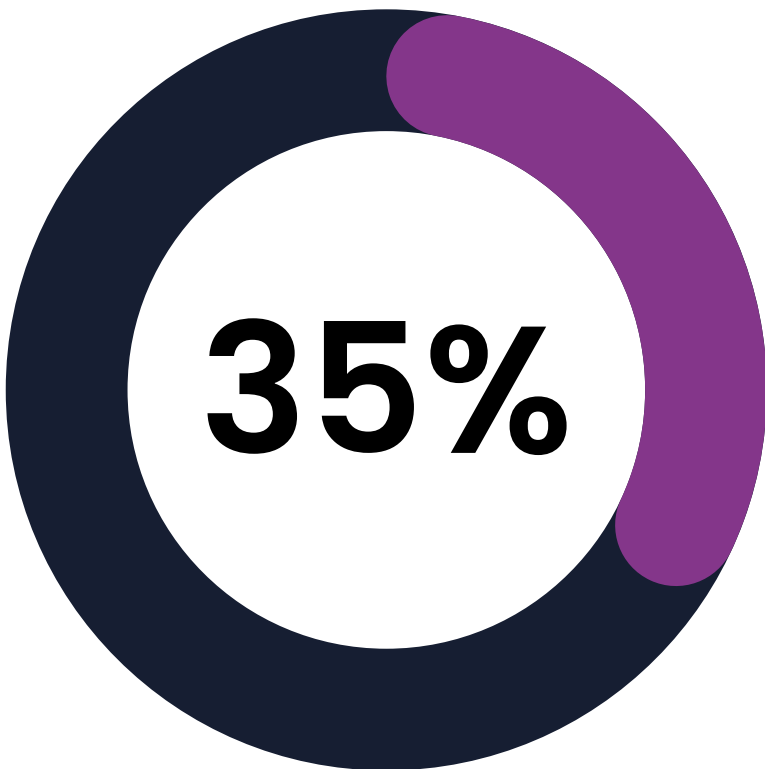
Key Insight

Early parenthood represents one of the broadest periods of household purchasing influence, and is not only about spending on baby products.



Family infrastructure

Childcare shapes far more than childcare costs.
It influences how families work, spend and plan for the future.



found finding suitable childcare difficult

Childcare shapes family decisions

Few decisions have a greater impact on family life than childcare.
For many parents, affordability is only one part of the challenge. Availability, location, safety and trust all influence where families live, how they work and how household budgets are allocated.

Almost a third of respondents haven't yet started looking for childcare, highlighting just how complex the process can feel during early parenthood.

“For many families, childcare isn't another expense but the infrastructure that makes modern family life possible.”

For employers, retailers and service providers alike, childcare is more than a parenting issue and presents as one of the foundations of household decision-making.

Key Figures

Finding childcare

- Only **18%** found childcare easy to secure
- **35%** found it difficult
- **30%** have not yet started looking

Biggest concerns

- **51%** are highly concerned about childcare costs
- Cost is the **#1** decision factor
- Reputation and reviews remain highly influential

Planned childcare arrangements

- **30%** expect one parent to stay home
- **27%** plan to rely on family or friends
- **14%** expect to use a daycare centre
- **24%** are still deciding

Key Insight

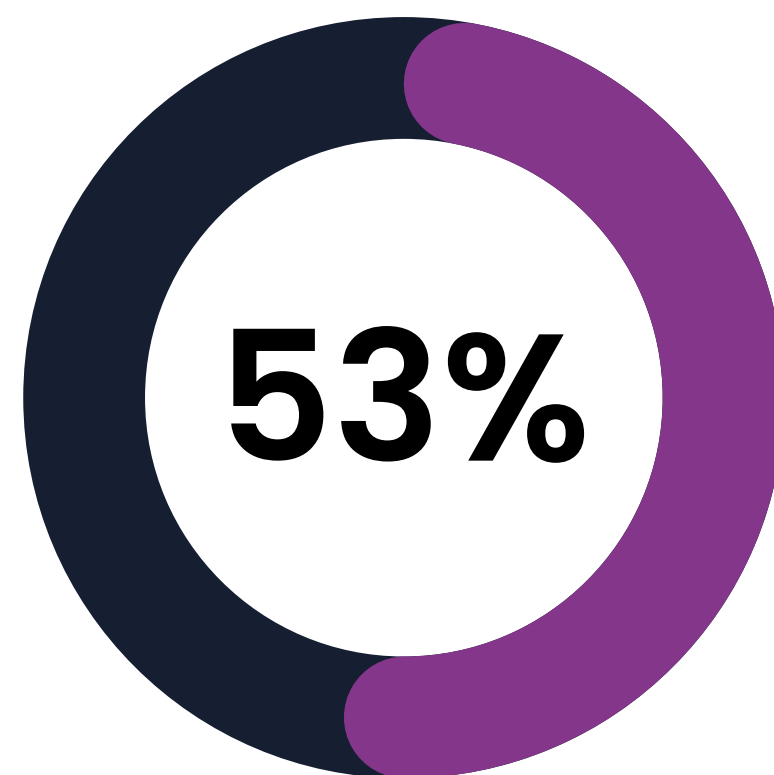
Childcare’s influence is shaping household income, routines and purchasing behaviour.

Returning to work

Returning to work has become a balancing act.

Parents are looking beyond **whether** to return.

And focusing on **how**.



say remote working would make returning to work easier

Flexibility is the new family benefit

Returning to work has become a series of trade-offs rather than a single decision.

Parents are balancing childcare, commuting, finances and family responsibilities while deciding what employment looks like after having a child. The strongest demand isn't for one specific benefit, but for greater flexibility that allows work to fit around family life

“*The future of work is increasingly being shaped by the realities of family life.*”

Remote working tops the list, followed closely by affordable childcare and flexible hours. Better parental leave and employer-supported childcare also rank highly, reinforcing that family-friendly policies increasingly influence where parents choose to work.

For employers, supporting parents is no longer an employee benefit - it acts as a direct recruitment, retention and loyalty strategy.

Key Figures

What would make returning to work easier?

- **53%** Remote working options
- **51%** More affordable childcare
- **48%** Flexible working hours
- **39%** Better parental leave
- **38%** Employer-supported childcare

Planned return to work

- **34%** Full-time in office
- **15%** Part-time work
- **12%** Full-time remote
- **11%** Hybrid working

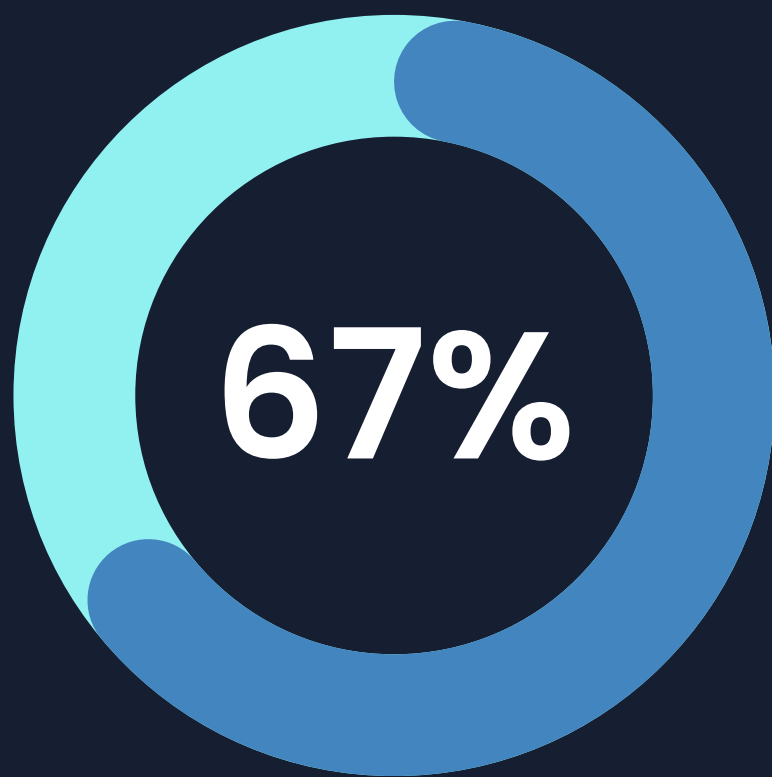
Key Insight

Family-friendly workplaces are increasingly becoming a competitive advantage for employers.

Digital discovery

Parents don't rely on one source of information.

They build trust by combining many.



say short-form video is the content format they engage with most

Useful content wins

Parents have more information available than ever before.

Rather than relying on a single platform, they move between social media, search, online communities, retailer websites, reviews and increasingly, AI-powered tools, to answer questions and validate decisions.

Across every channel, one pattern stands out.



"Parents are looking for more content that provides genuine value."

Parents consistently value content that helps them make better decisions. Practical advice, expert guidance and genuine product recommendations all outperform content designed simply to entertain.

For brands, discoverability matters but usefulness matters a lot more.

Key Figures

Most used platforms

- 36% Facebook
- 27% Instagram
- 21% TikTok

Product discovery

- 33% Facebook
- 30% TikTok
- 24% Instagram

Preferred content

- 61% Practical how-to content
- 47% Expert advice
- 43% Product recommendations
- 34% Emotional support

Email content parents value

- Discounts and offers
- Parenting advice
- Product reviews
- Product samples

Key Insight

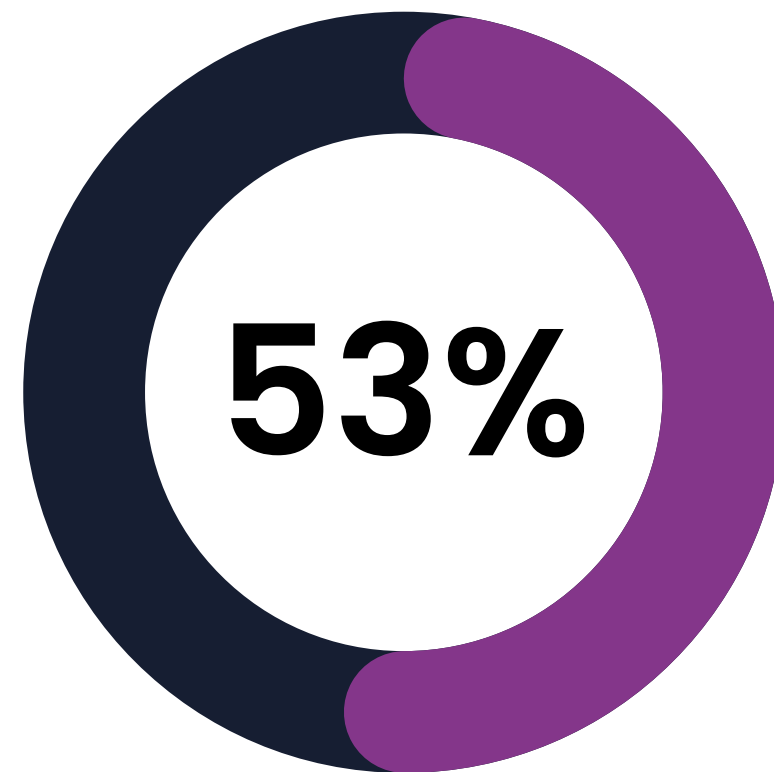
Useful content consistently outperforms promotional content.



Parenting in the age of AI

Artificial intelligence has become another research tool.

But it's yet to replace trust for parents.



have used AI for parenting advice or support

AI is changing research, but not trust

AI has quickly become part of the parenting research journey.

Parents are using it to compare products, ask health questions, plan routines and explore recommendations before making decisions. But while adoption is growing rapidly, the research suggests AI complements traditional sources of information rather than replacing them.

Healthcare professionals, communities and customer reviews remain the strongest drivers of confidence when decisions matter most.

"AI is going to help build the shortlist - but people will still make the recommendation that matters."

For brands, this creates a new challenge. Success increasingly depends on being discoverable through AI while continuing to build trust through expertise, reviews and authentic customer experiences.

Key Figures

AI adoption

- **53%** have used AI for parenting advice or support
- **20%** use AI regularly
- **20%** use it occasionally
- **13%** have tried it once or twice
- **47%** have never used AI

Most common uses

- **34%** Health-related questions
- **28%** Comparing products
- **24%** Product recommendations
- **22%** Planning routines
- **22%** Sleep advice
- **21%** Feeding question

AI & purchasing

- **33%** use AI to discover new products
- **23%** say AI helped narrow their options
- **11%** have purchased following AI advice
- Only **9%** rely on AI to make final purchasing decisions

Most trusted sources

- **47%** Healthcare professionals
- **33%** Other parents and communities
- **14%** Customer reviews
- **2%** Direct brand advertising
- **2%** Influencers
- **2%** AI tools

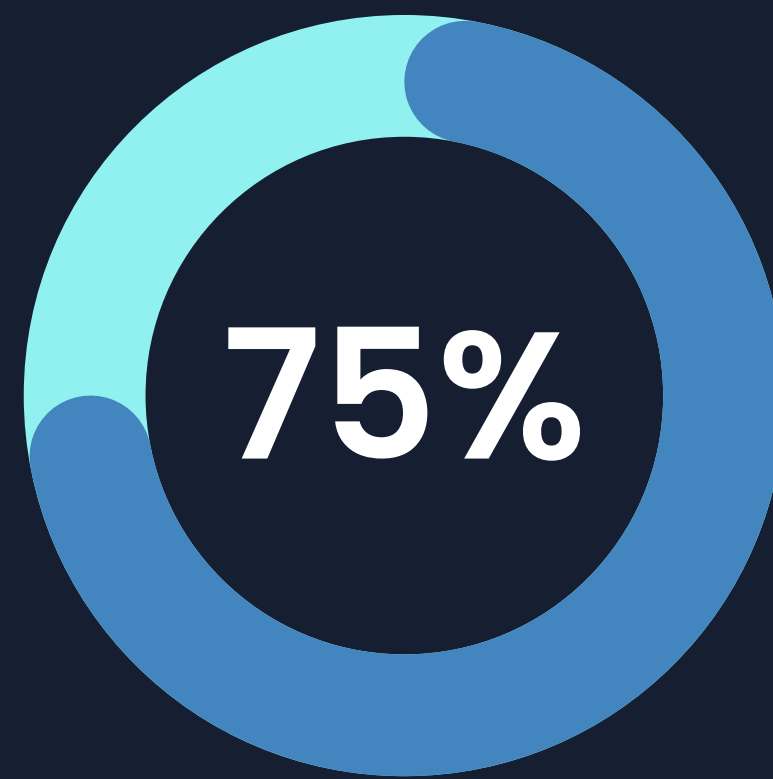
Key Insight

AI is accelerating discovery, while trust still drives decisions.

The product discovery opportunity

Parents remain highly open to discovering new products.

The opportunity lies in reducing the risk of trying something new.



have purchased a product after trying a free sample

Product trial turns reach into conversion

Throughout this report, one theme has remained consistent.

Parents actively seek reassurance before making decisions. They compare products, read reviews, ask other parents and increasingly use AI to explore their options. Product sampling fits naturally into this behaviour by removing uncertainty and allowing families to experience products before committing.

The data suggests that sampling actually impacts and changes behaviour. Three in four parents have already purchased a product after receiving a free sample, making it one of the clearest conversion opportunities identified in the research.

"The most effective way to build confidence is to let parents experience the product for themselves."

For brands, the opportunity extends beyond trial. Positive first experiences can establish trust during one of the most influential stages of the consumer journey.

Key Figures

Interest in baby boxes

- **72%** are interested in curated baby boxes
- Around half describe themselves as **very interested**

What parents want most

- Samples from trusted brands
- Baby essentials
- Coupons and exclusive offers
- Products matched to their child's age and stage
- Full-size products

What drives subscriptions?

- A free first box
- Flexibility to skip or cancel
- Strong value for money

Proven behaviour

- **75%** have purchased a product after trying a free sample

Key Insight

Reducing perceived risk remains one of the fastest routes to product trial and long-term brand adoption.

Key takeaways

The earliest years of parenthood remain one of the most commercially significant stages of the consumer journey.

Families are establishing routines, making first-time purchasing decisions across multiple categories and actively seeking trusted advice before they commit. Throughout this research, four consistent themes emerged.

Interest in product trials

Financial pressure hasn't stopped spending.

But it has greatly increased research, comparison and purchase consideration.

Confidence drives conversion

Parents actively seek reviews, recommendations, expert advice and product trials before making decisions.

Reducing risk is one of the strongest drivers of adoption for brands.

Discovery is becoming increasingly digital

Parents now combine social media, online communities, retailer content and AI-powered tools throughout the research journey.

Being discoverable matters.

Having clear credibility in the online space matters more.

Early parenthood shapes long-term consumer behaviour

Few life stages influence purchasing across so many categories at once.

Brands that establish trust during this period have an opportunity to build relationships that extend well beyond the early years.

Final Insight

Understanding early parenthood is about understanding one of America's highest-intent consumer audiences.

About Your Baby Club

Your Baby Club helps brands connect with expecting parents and young families through audience intelligence, customer acquisition, product sampling and sponsorships.

Through our growing community of 7.5 million parents worldwide, we help brands reach families during one of the most influential periods of the consumer journey - when new habits are formed, trust is established and long-term purchasing decisions begin.

By combining first-party audience data with meaningful consumer engagement, we help brands understand how families think, research and decide, while creating opportunities to introduce products in ways that deliver genuine value for both parents and businesses.

How we help brands

- Audience intelligence built from first-party parent data
- Customer acquisition across pregnancy and early parenthood
- Product sampling and trial campaigns in Your Baby Box
- Sponsored content and strategic partnerships
- Insight-led activation that reaches families at the moments that matter most

[Learn More](#)