

# WILL THE COVID-19 CRISIS CHANGE WORKFORCE CULTURE FOREVER?

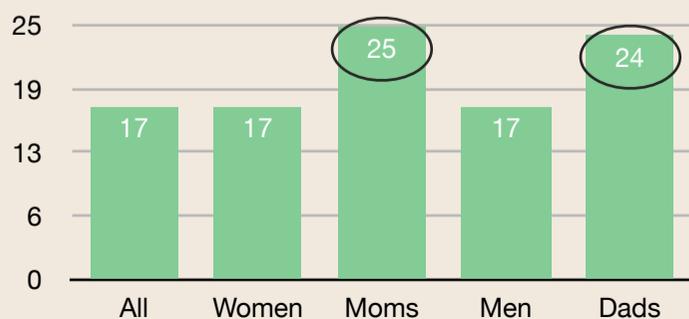
In a very short timeframe, the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed how the workforce works.

Companies have had to make major adjustments to policies and resources in order to support their employees in an effort to continue to do business, although business is anything but usual.

Have Her Back, a gender equity consultancy, wanted to understand how the COVID-19 crisis has affected American workers. This national study focuses on employees of mid to large companies (more than 500) that were still employed through end of March. The results of the study, conducted on March 29th & 30th, point toward potential lasting impacts to workplace culture going forward, including:

- **Caregiver bias against moms** will give way toward caregiver support for working parents.
- **Traditional corporate policies will be forever changed**, particularly around opportunity for remote working and flexible schedules.
- **Companies taking care of their employees now** can expect to be a top retainer and recruiter of talent, particularly with women and people of color.

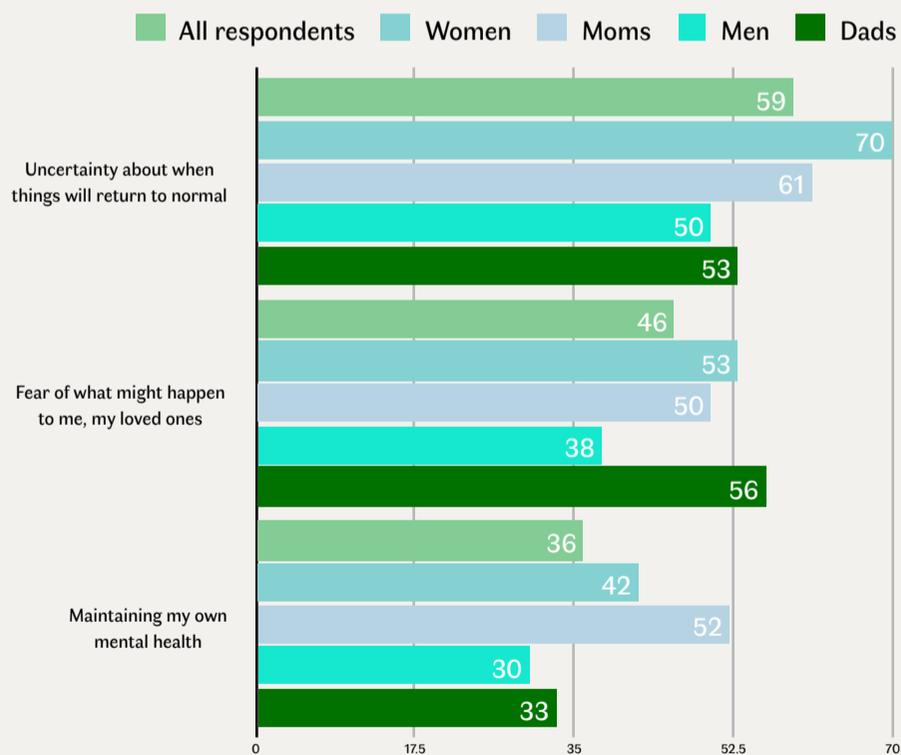
## “Not having the resources I relied on before”



## THE STATE OF CAREGIVING HAS CHANGED

Uncertainty is the most difficult aspect of COVID-19 among all respondents, but moms and dads view what’s most difficult somewhat differently.

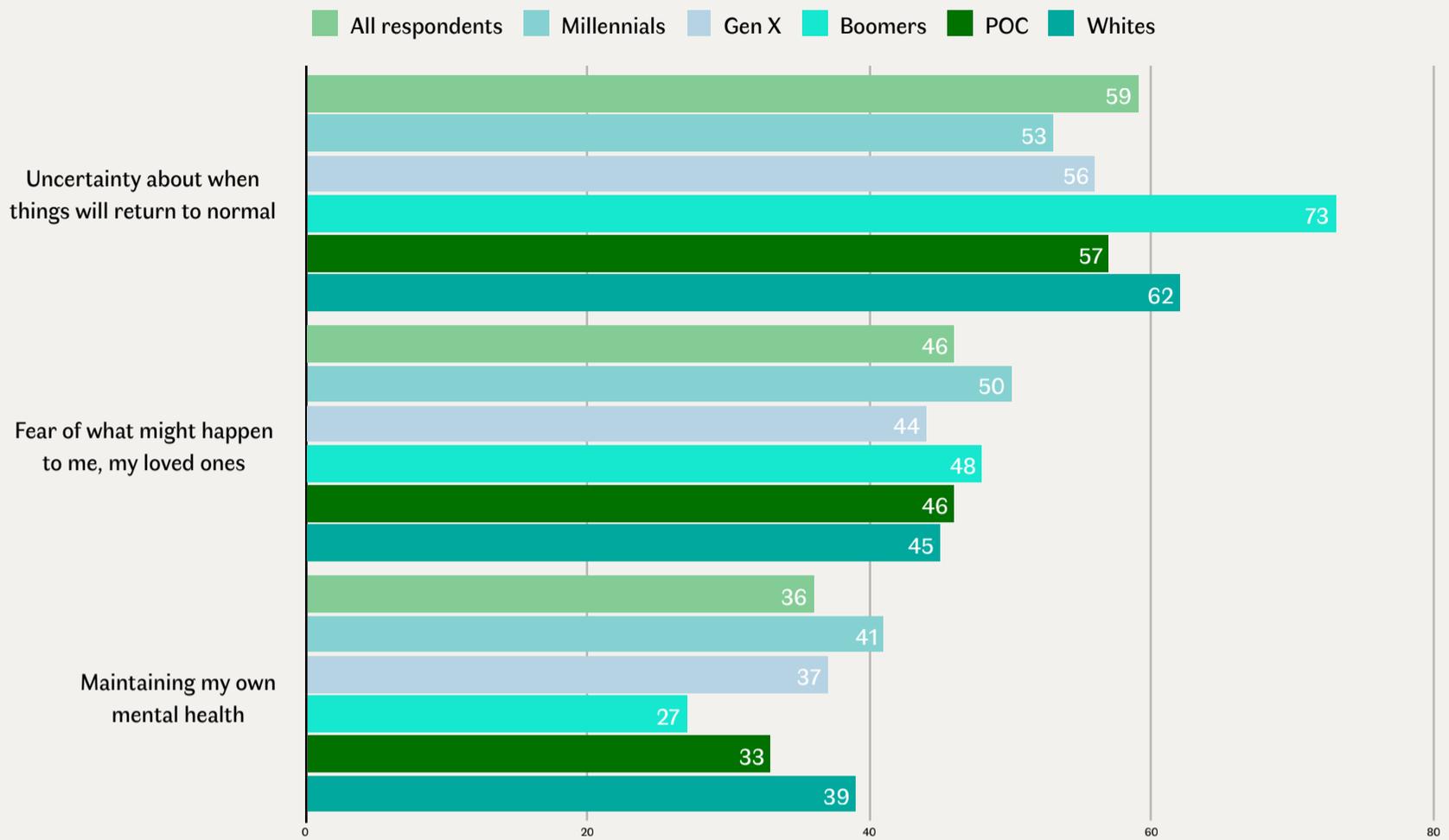
Respondents to our survey claim the most difficult aspect of the COVID-19 crisis is the uncertainty about when things will return to normal. Women and men, particularly mothers and fathers, view the crisis somewhat differently; women are more concerned about the uncertainty, while mothers worry about maintaining mental health throughout this period. Men most fear what might happen to them and to loved ones.



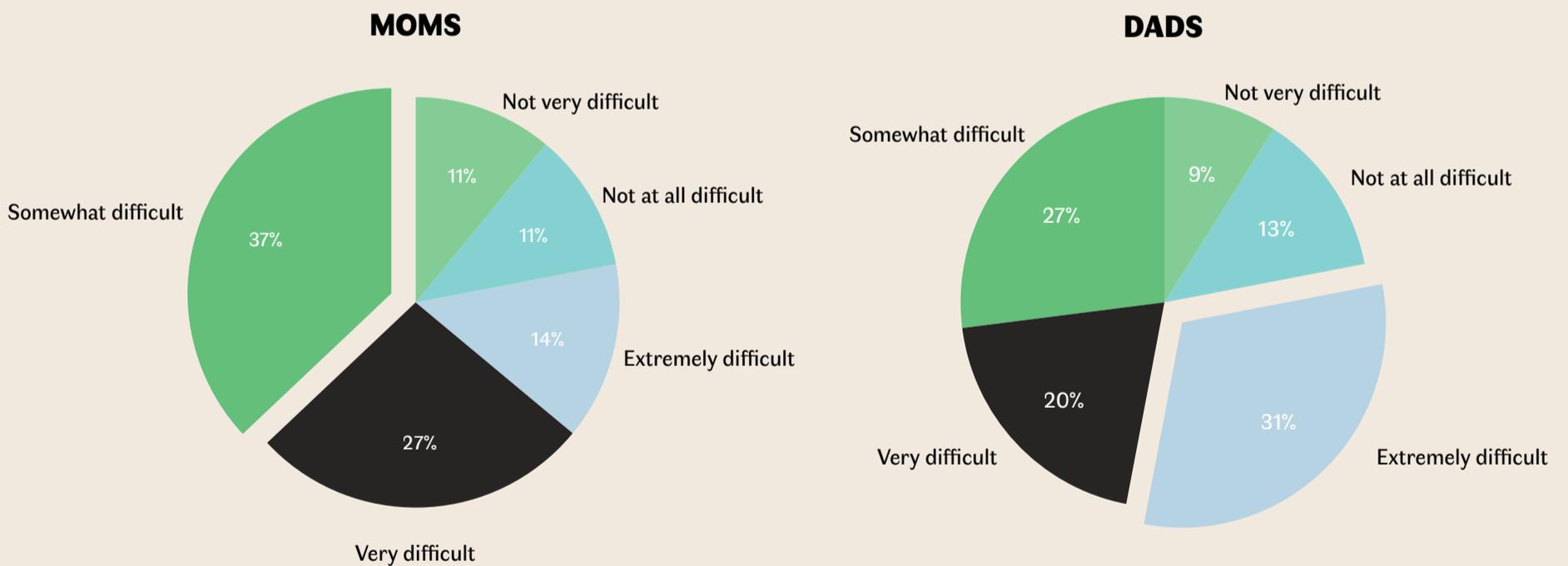
Sudden lack of resources are a leading concern for respondents in general, but especially parents.

Not surprisingly, mothers and fathers are far more likely than other respondents to say “not having the resources I relied on before” the crisis is one of the most difficult aspects of dealing with the COVID-19 quarantine now.

From another perspective, Millennials are most worried about their mental health and what might happen to them, while Boomers dread the uncertainty the most.

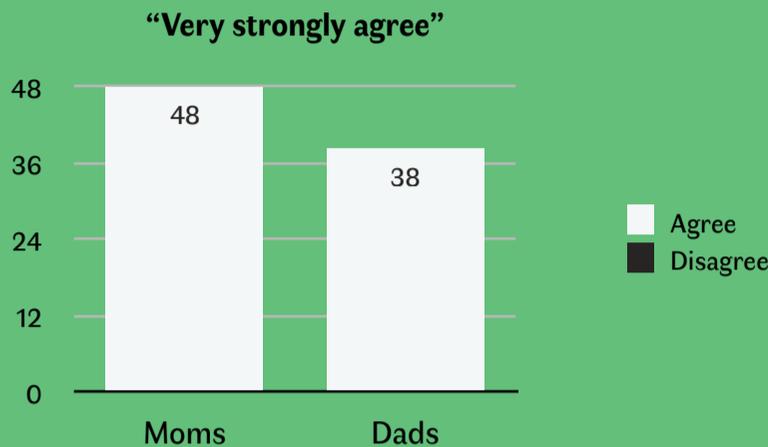


## Working parents struggle with caregiving, dads most of all

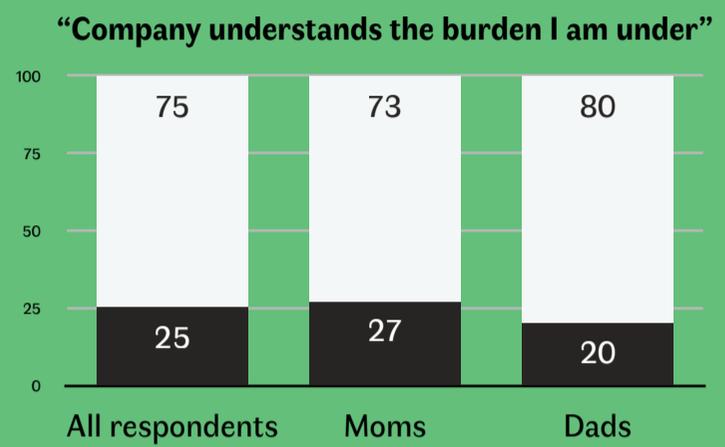


In fact, when asked, “How difficult is it to care for children, family, friends and neighbors without the resources you used to have?” fathers are much more likely to claim extreme difficulty (31%), while mothers say it’s only somewhat more difficult (37%). While mothers have always had to share most of the burden of child-caregiving, this demonstrates just how unaware fathers may have been to the difficulty of that role and the importance of resources such as child daycare, the educational system and employer benefits policies that help working women.

## Women still shoulder more of the burden of caregiving and want more resources from their employers

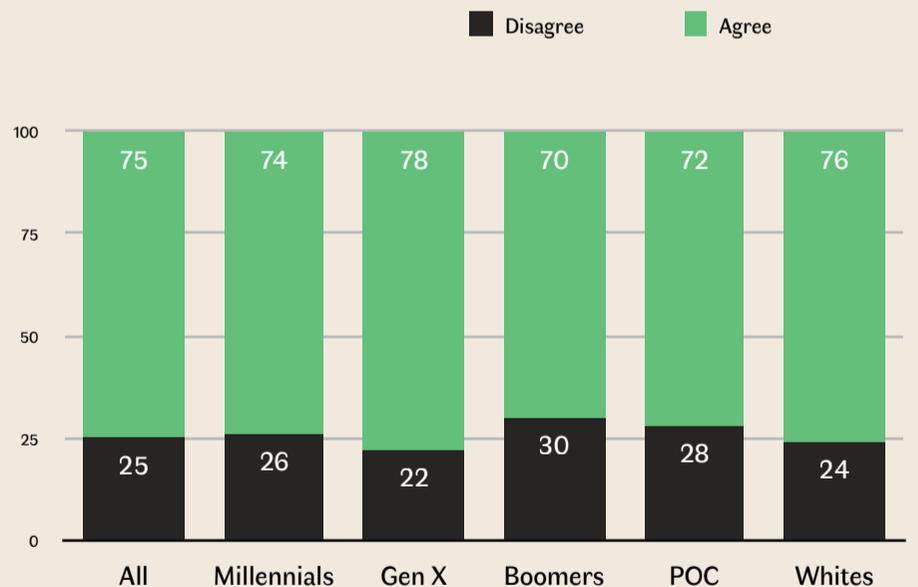


To further illustrate the degree to which women shoulder the burden of caregiving, when asked to what extent they agree with *“I shoulder more of the burden of caring for family during this time than my spouse/partner,”* Moms are 10% more likely to very strongly agree.



The survey then followed that question with the extent to which, *“My company understands the burden I am under as a caregiver and provides me with the resources to manage all my responsibilities effectively”* we see that mothers are much more likely to disagree than fathers are. It is clear that women feel there is room for improvement in how companies understand their caregiving role and develop real-world policies to help them manage work and personal responsibilities successfully.

**“Caring for children while working remotely without resources during the COVID-19 crisis has placed a magnifying glass over the issue of caregiver bias that we have in this country,”** said Erin Gallagher, founding partner of Have Her Back Consulting, a mother of a three year old and 18 month old. **“The quarantine just may be the virtual reality training in gender equity that our world has needed. The biggest question remains: what company will be brave enough to wipe the slate of their workforce policies clean, coming out of this crisis, and prove they are committed to a better way forward?”**

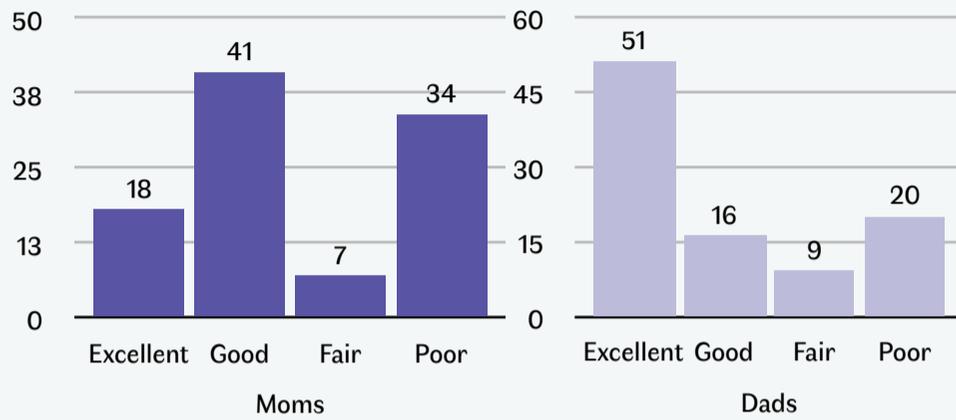


Other groups who are also more likely to disagree that they are getting the assistance they need from their companies are Boomers, people of color and Millennials.

# Corporate policies are being put to the test

The COVID-19 crisis has ushered in a new era of employee attitudes and behaviors about how their employer should treat workers. Companies get mixed reviews on working from home policies with 35% of moms ranking policies as “poor,” followed by Women, People of Color, Boomers and Millennials.

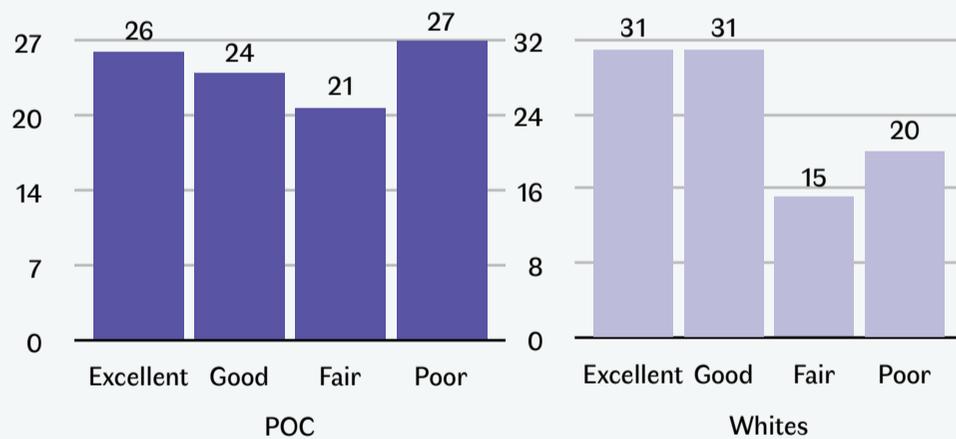
## Remote working policies



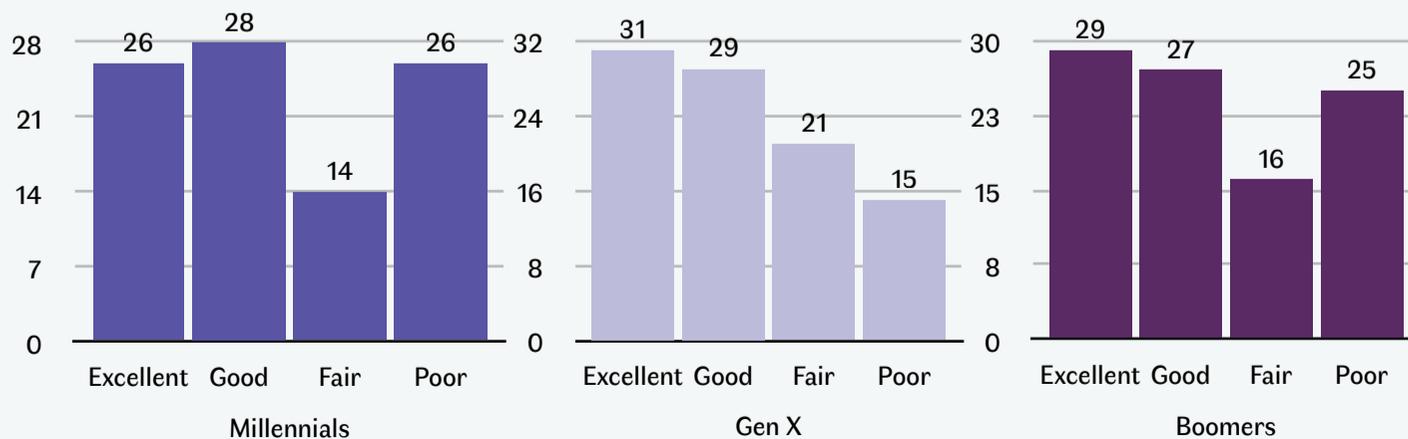
Our survey asked respondents to “rate the resources your company provides in terms of helping you through this crisis.” Moms were most unsatisfied with working-from-home policies, while Dads rated those policies far better.



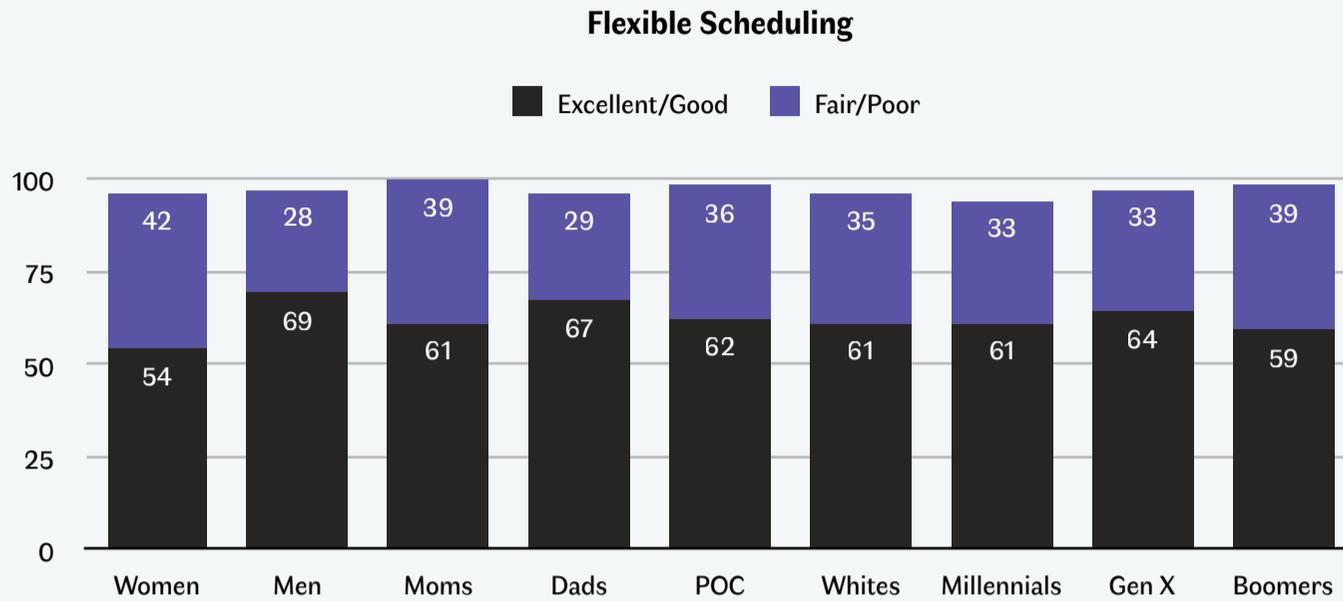
Women in general are more likely to be dissatisfied with working-from-home policies when compared to men in general, and People of Color find them more difficult than Whites.



And Millennials are more likely to be relatively unhappy with work-from-home policies than older workers.



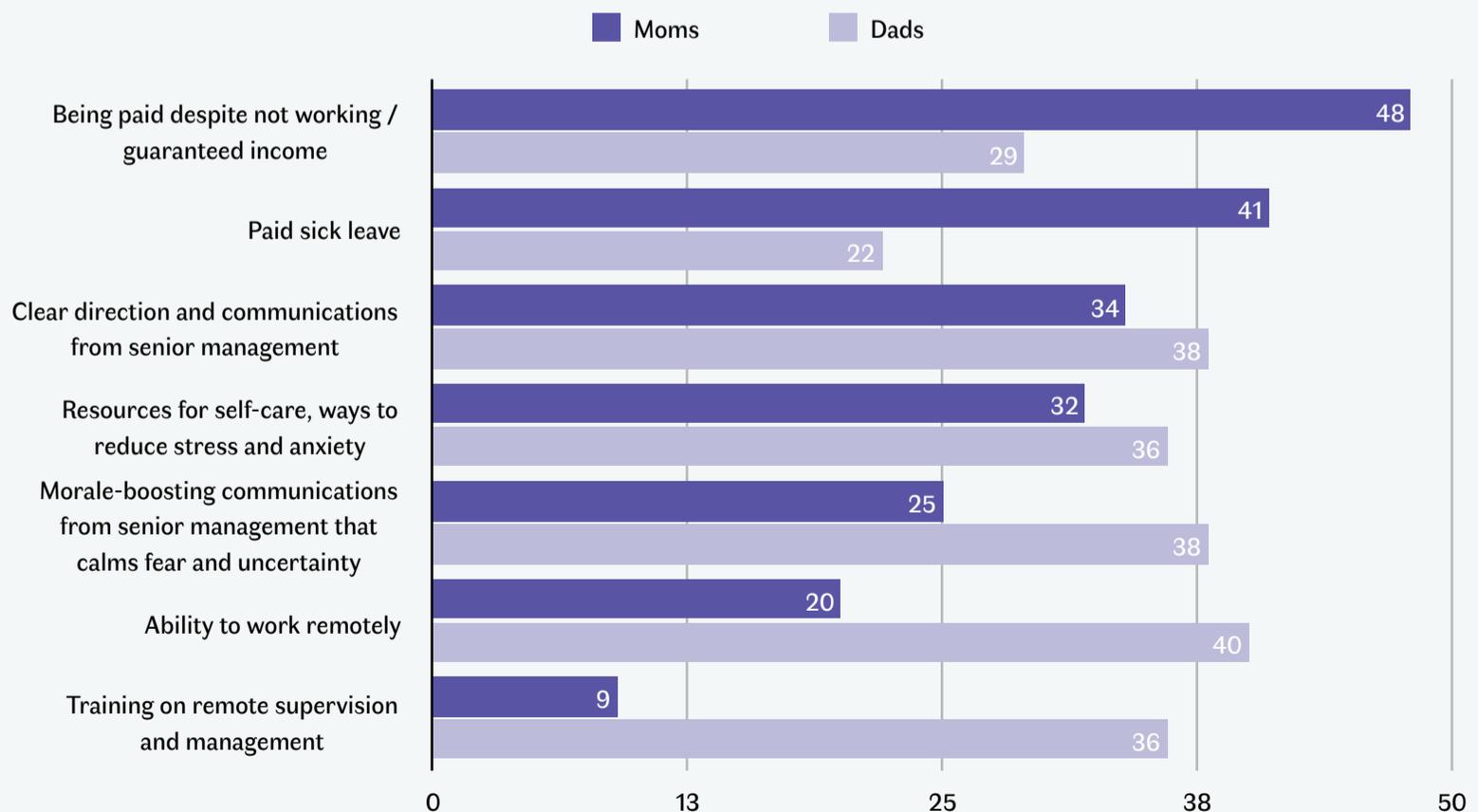
Flexible Scheduling policies also get lower marks from Women, Moms and Boomers, who likely have more responsibility for caregiving than other respondent groups.



The ability to work remotely tops Dads' list of resources they most need from employers.

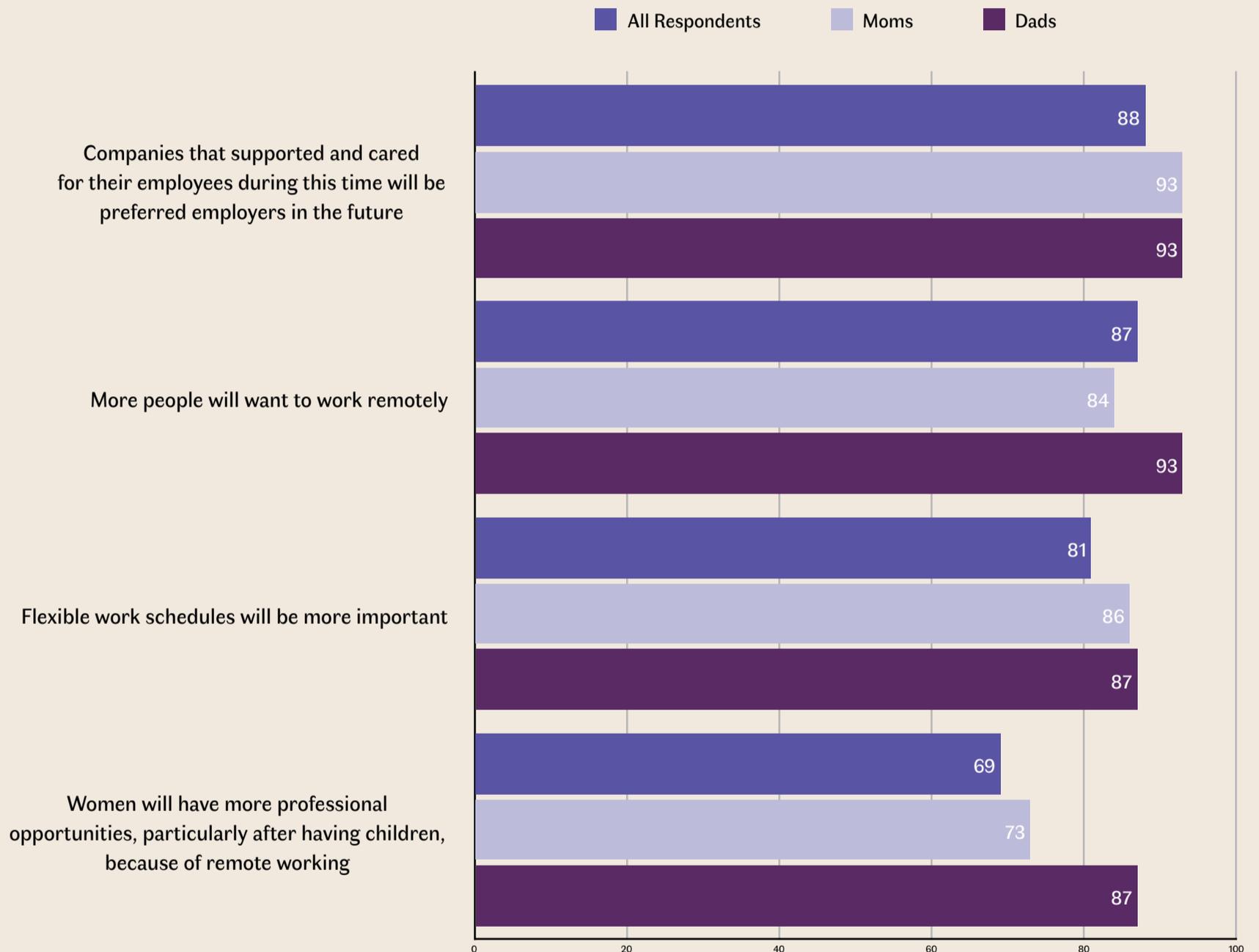
When asked what resources are most needed from their employers, Moms and Dads agree that clear direction and communications from management and resources to reduce stress and anxiety are important, although mothers were much more likely to prefer some kind of income guarantee or paid sick leave, while fathers preferred morale-boosting communications and the ability to do their job remotely.

### What resources do you wish you had from your company that aren't provided?



## Employees See a Better Future Coming to Workplaces

These attitudes are further demonstrated when the question was asked, “Do you think the outcome of the COVID-19 crisis will change how people work and live in the future, and how?” The top answer of all respondents was “companies who supported and cared for their workers during this crisis will become preferred employers in the future,” followed by “more people will want to work remotely.” Both Moms and Dads agree that “flexible work schedules will be more important” but Dads are much more likely to agree that “women will have more professional opportunities because of remote working.”

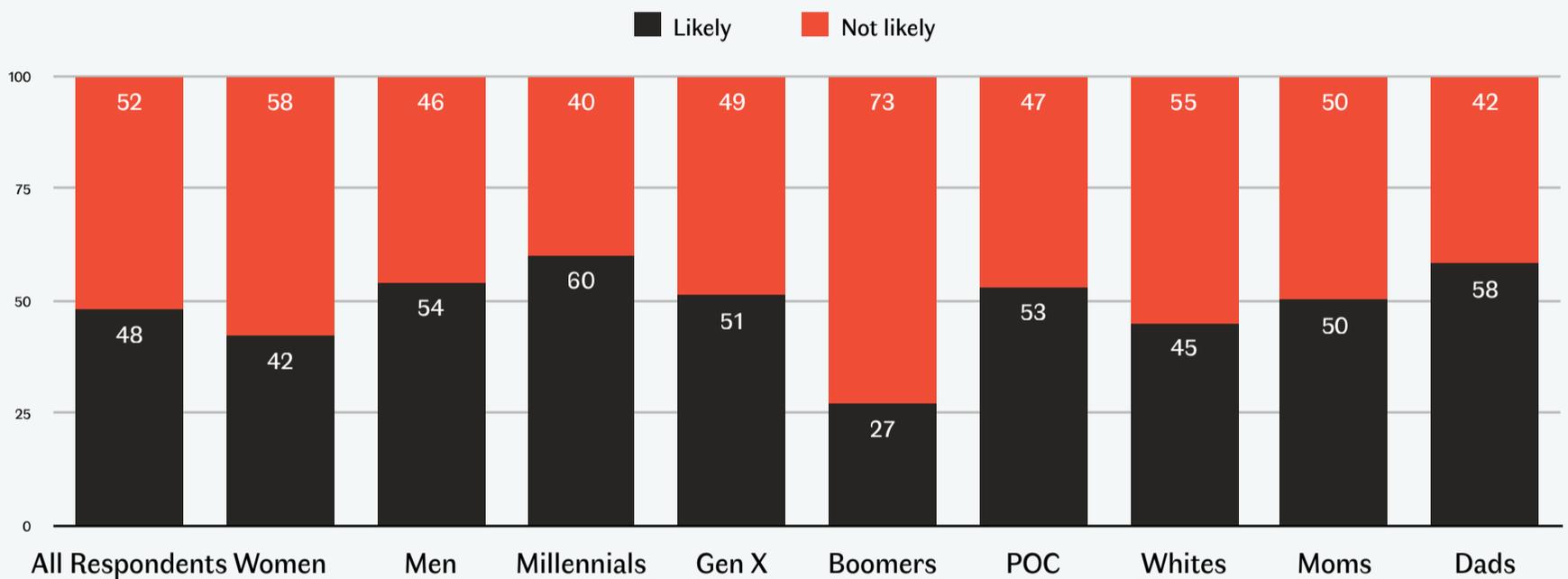


**“Once frowned upon or bestowed upon a privileged few, the ability to work remotely and have flexible schedules is now a normal part of the worker experience across gender and ethnicity and it’s working,”** said Pamela Culpepper, founding partner of Have Her Back Consulting. **“The employers that understand this and change their policies to allow remote work and flexibility beyond COVID-19 will show they are listening to their employees’ needs and acting on them with women standing to benefit most of all.”**

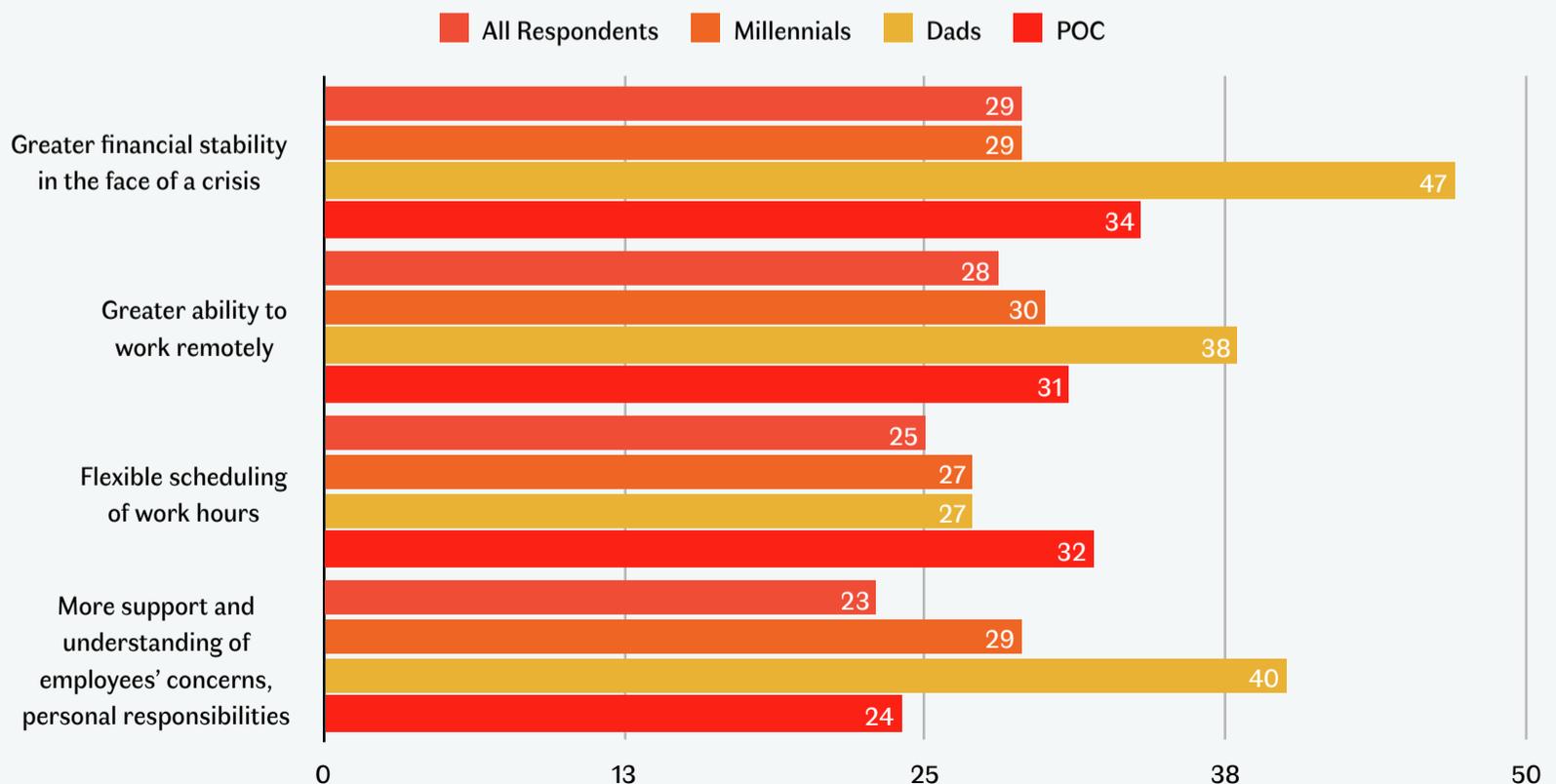
# Employee Retention & Recruitment Hinges on COVID-19 Efforts

The need is clear: 48% of respondents said they would consider switching jobs when the COVID-19 crisis is over, as a result of how their employer handles this situation, with Millennials at 60%, Dads at 58% and people of color at 53%. While the top reason respondents say they would consider changing jobs is greater financial stability, the top reasons for most are the ability to work remotely and/or flexible scheduling of work hours. Fathers were emphatic about their need for financial stability. They also felt strongly about wanting more support and understanding of employees' concerns and personal responsibilities.

Likelihood of switching jobs based on how employer handles this crisis



Top reasons to consider switching jobs



## A new kind of corporate responsibility

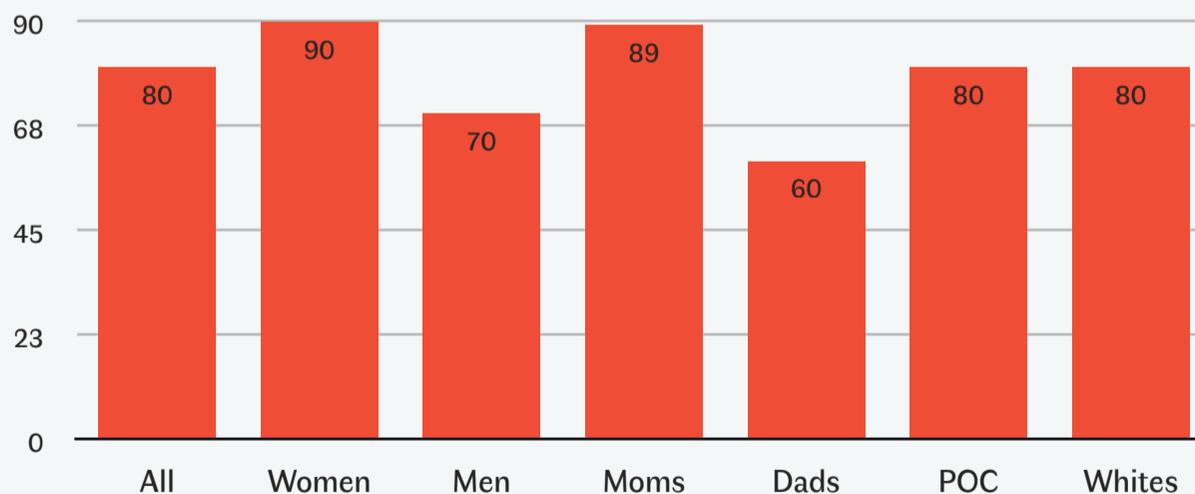
Companies should understand the COVID-19 crisis has created a new mandate in the relationship between employees and their employer.

Now is the time, even before the end of the crisis, to envision what a post-COVID-19 world looks like for their company and industry, and begin to reshape corporate policies and approaches to managing their workforce.

Moms and people of color are less likely to consider working for a company who treated employees poorly during the pandemic.

Successful recruiting in the future will rely on improved employee policies: a majority of respondents say they are less likely to consider working for a company, or recommending working for a company, which has been shown to have treated employees poorly during this crisis.

**Less likely to consider working for that company or recommending that company as a good place to work**



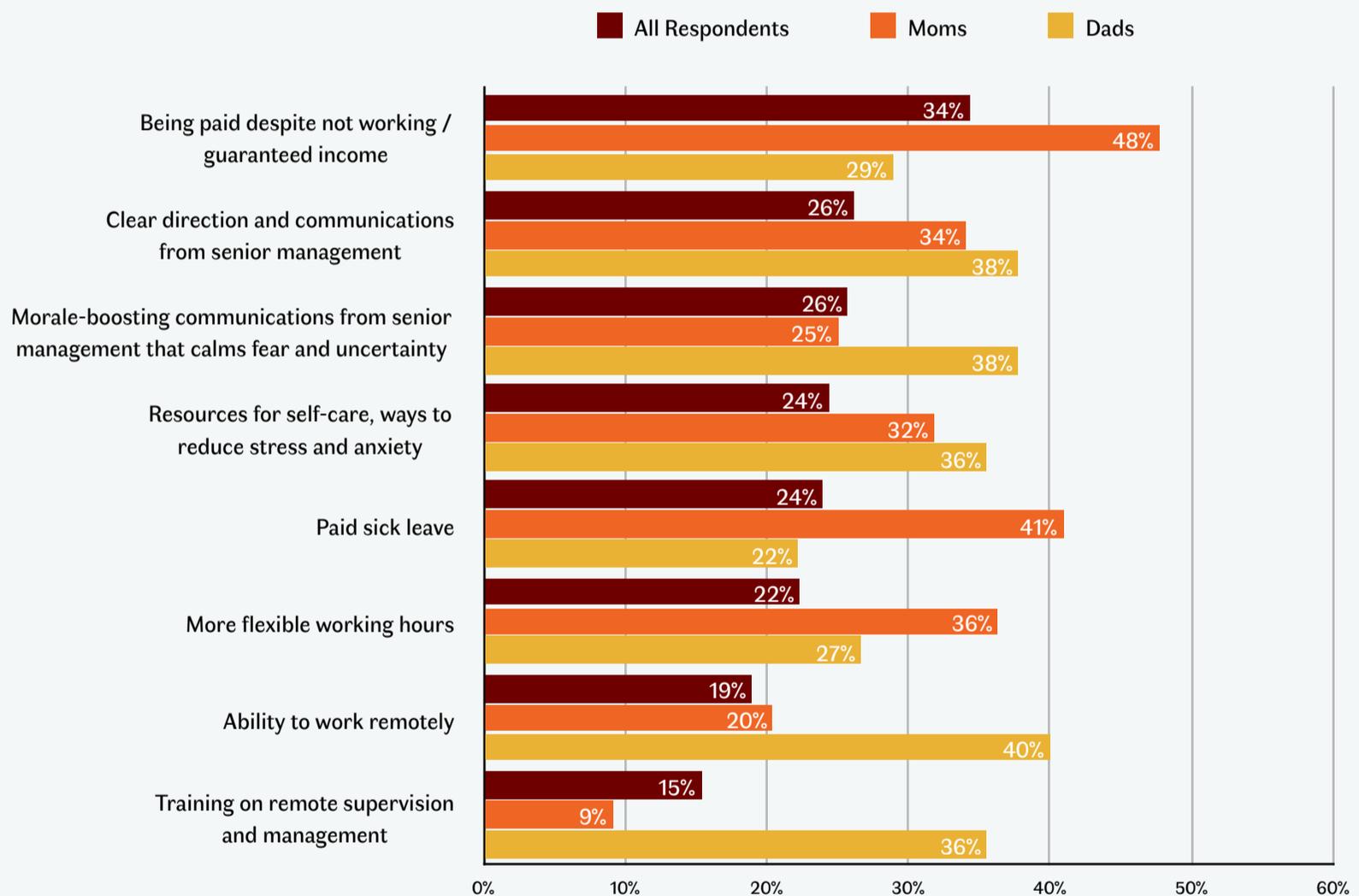
Women and Moms are more likely than any other group to say they would not consider working for, or recommending, companies who treat employees poorly during this crisis. Men and especially Dads are least likely to say workforce treatment would have an impact on their decision to choose an employer in the future.

## A closer look at what companies need to do for working Moms & Dads

When asked, “*what resources do you wish you had from your company, that aren’t provided?*” the top answer from all respondents, but particularly Moms and People of Color was, “guaranteed income” during the crisis. Given the estimated 10 million workers who have already lost their jobs in the first two weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, there is a clear expectation from employees that their companies will do whatever it takes to stand by them in trying times.

Moms were also most interested in having sick leave policies that could be utilized during this time, if guaranteed income was not an option. Clarity from corporate executive management and morale-boosting communications were top choices among Dads, along with training on how to supervise teams remotely, something Moms didn’t seem to think they needed. Mental health and self-care resources were among the most-requested items for both Moms and Dads.

**Which resources do you wish you had from your company that aren’t provided?**



“It might sound counterintuitive to be thinking about recruiting during a financial and health crisis but for companies taking care of their employees, there has never been a better time to set your company apart,” said Caroline Dettman, founding partner of Have Her Back Consulting. “How companies act now will have a profound impact on the workforce evolving to better reflect the diverse world we all live in.”

### About the Survey

This HHB survey was fielded March 29-30, 2020 by Propeller Insights among 500 Americans age 18+ who were still employed at that time. The margin of error is ±3%.