

Primary Care Provider Referral and Reasons for First Dental Visit in Children

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PURPOSE

The goal of this cross-sectional study is to gather information on the age and reasons for a child's first visit to a pediatric dentist, whether they were referred by their PCP and the timing of that referral in Brooklyn, New York. We also would like to gather data on social determinants of health factors to see how they may contribute to delaying a child's first dental visit with or without primary care provider referral.

METHODS

An anonymous 18-item questionnaire will be given to new patients aged <72 months presenting for their first dental visit to any of 5 dental clinics associated with One Brooklyn Health located in Brooklyn, NY. The questionnaire will assess demographic factors, age at time of first dental visit, reasons for first dental visit, as well as reasons that parents may have delayed their child's first dental visit. Frequency and descriptive statistical analyses will be conducted for all study variables. Independent group t-tests and analysis of variances will be used to assess differences in groups. Chi square analysis will be used to assess relationships where variables are categorical and correlational analysis will be used when variables are continuous.

FIGURES

What is your child's gender?

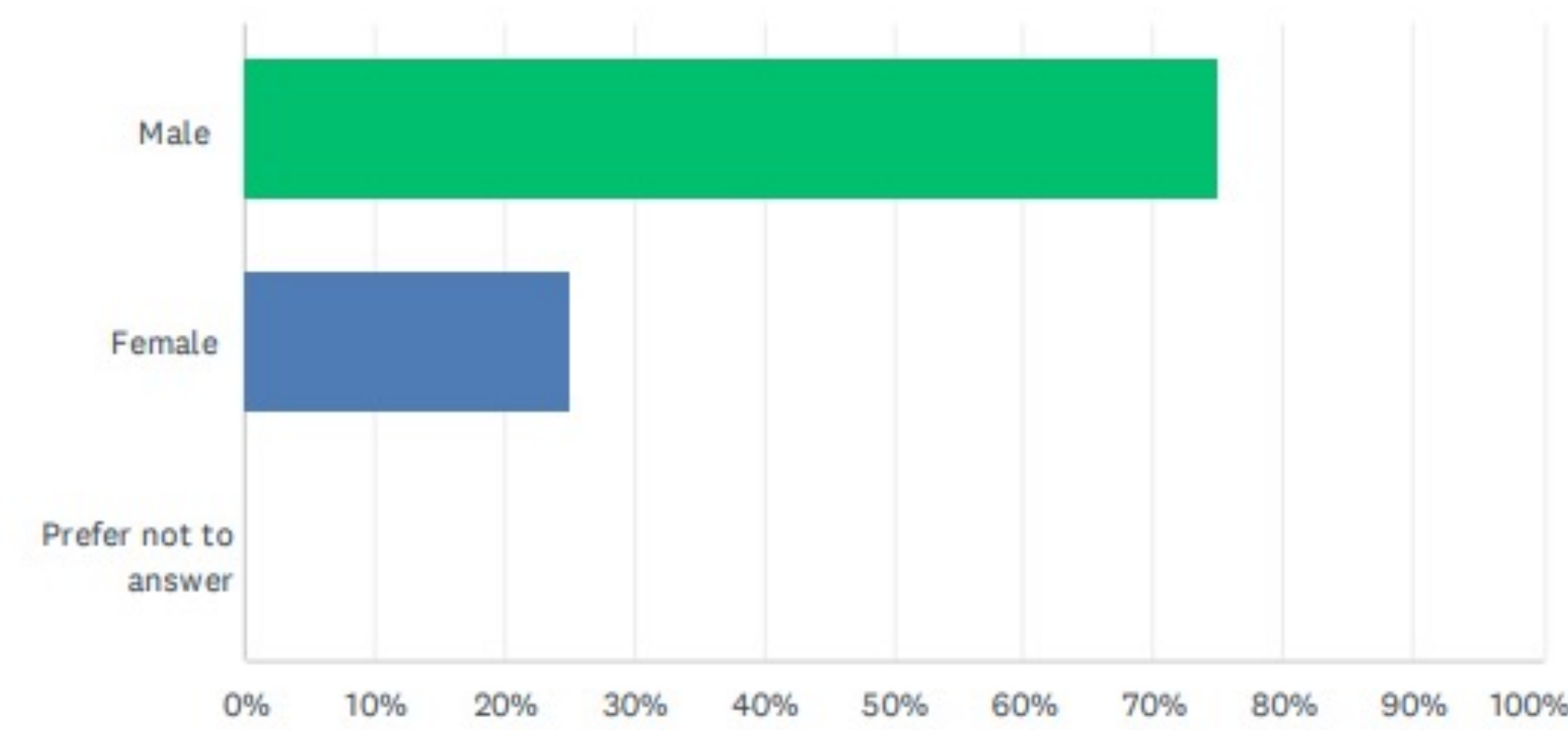


Fig A

Was your child born in the United States?

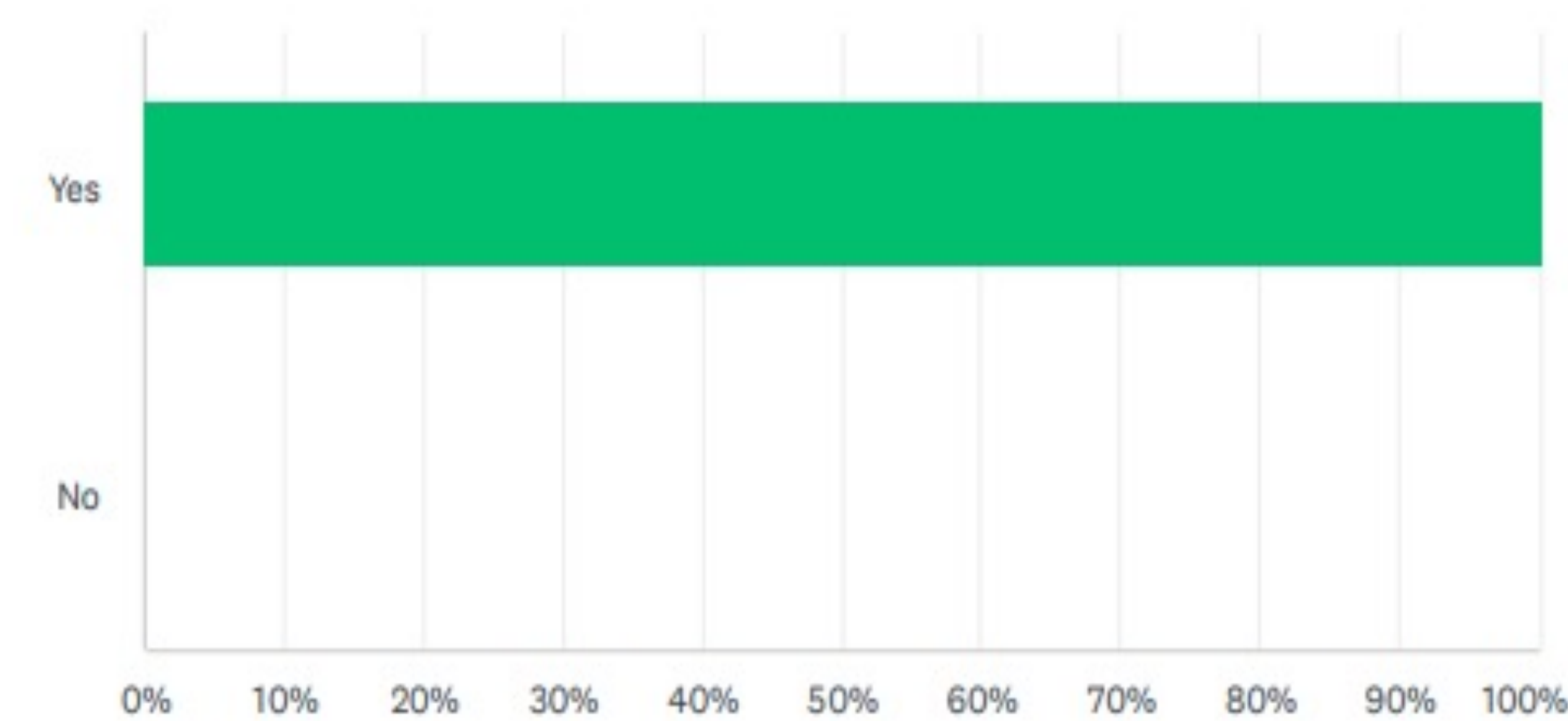


Fig B

Do you believe keeping your child's baby teeth healthy is important?

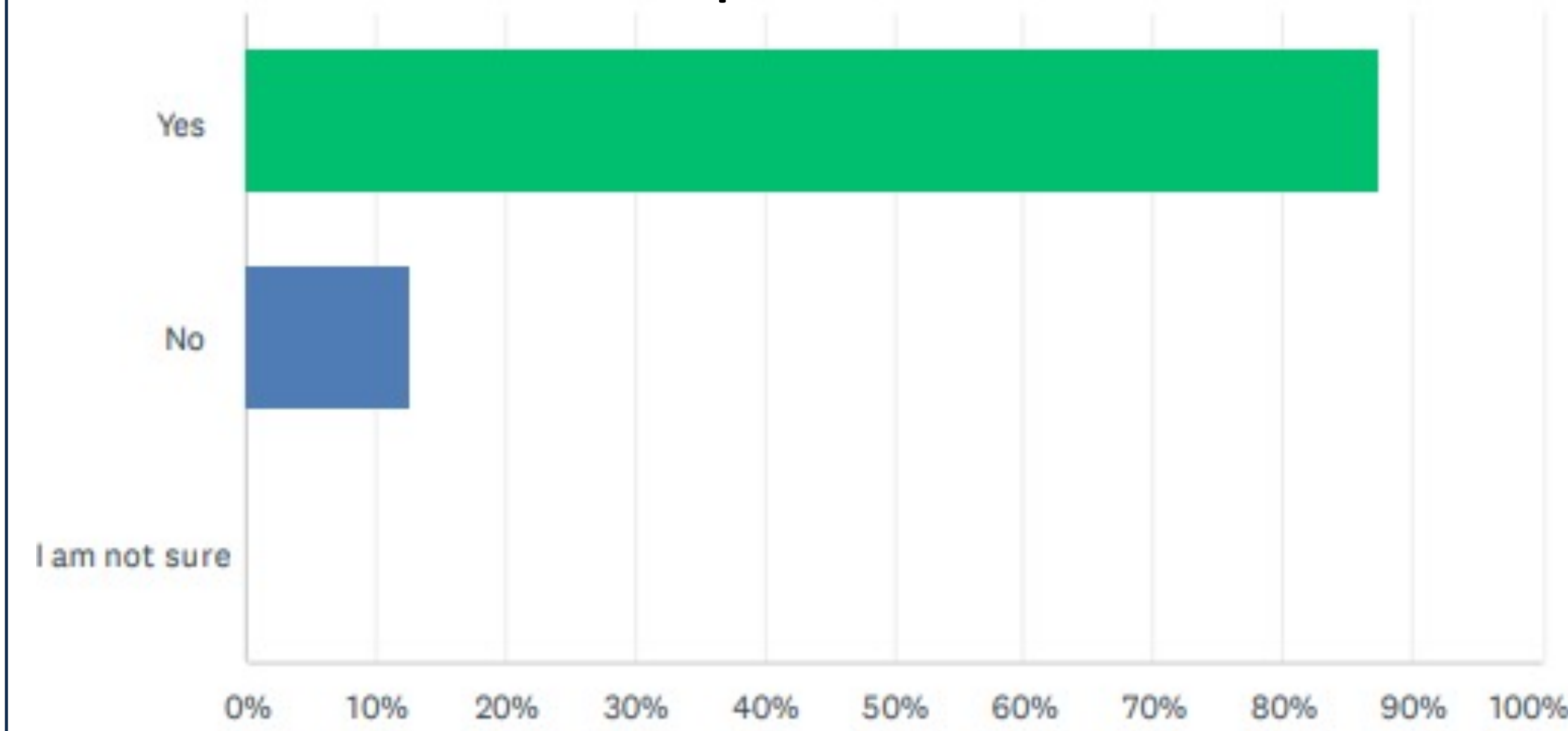


Fig C

At what age do you think a child should first see a dentist?

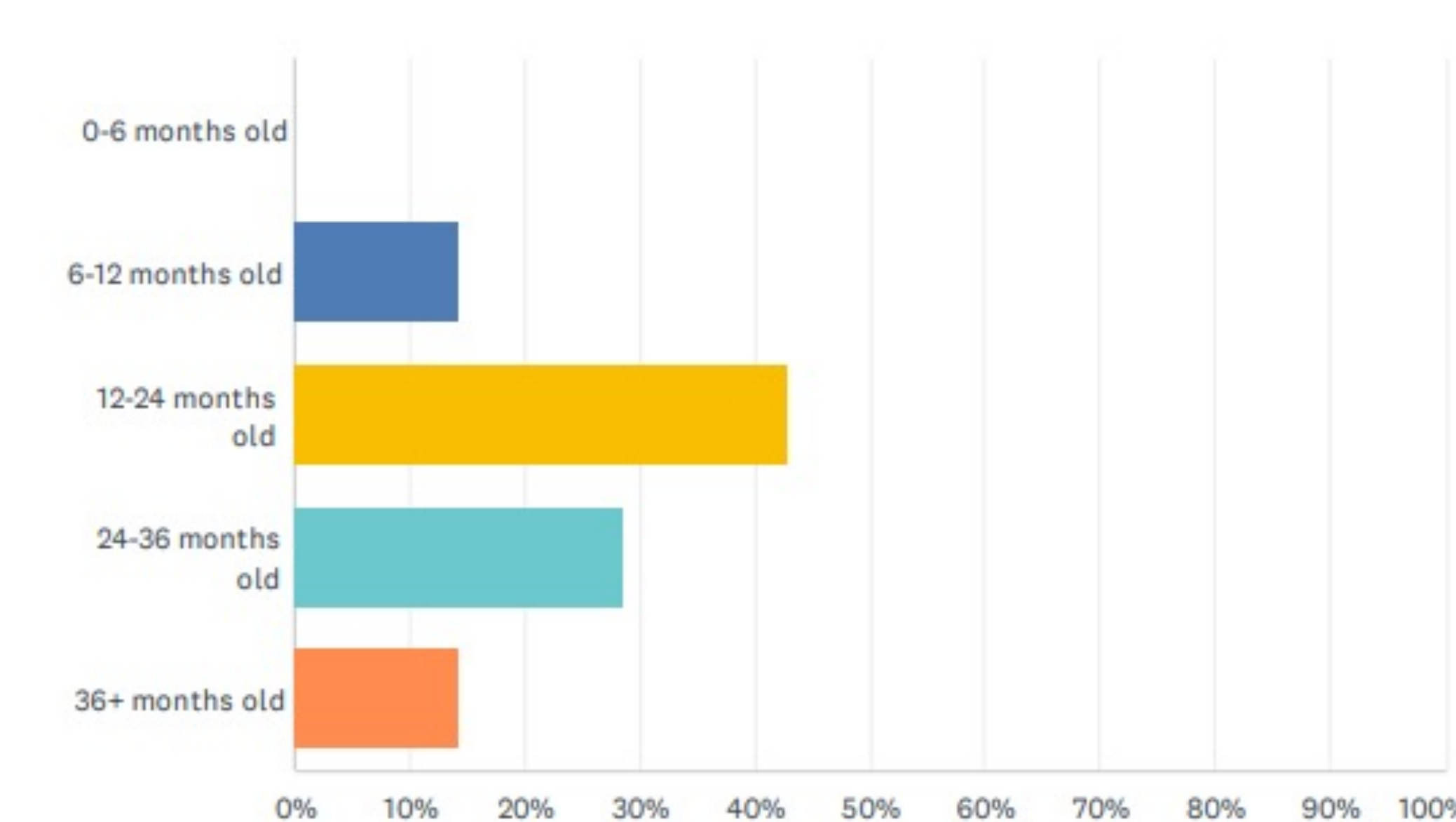


Fig D

Did your child's PCP recommend your child see a dentist?

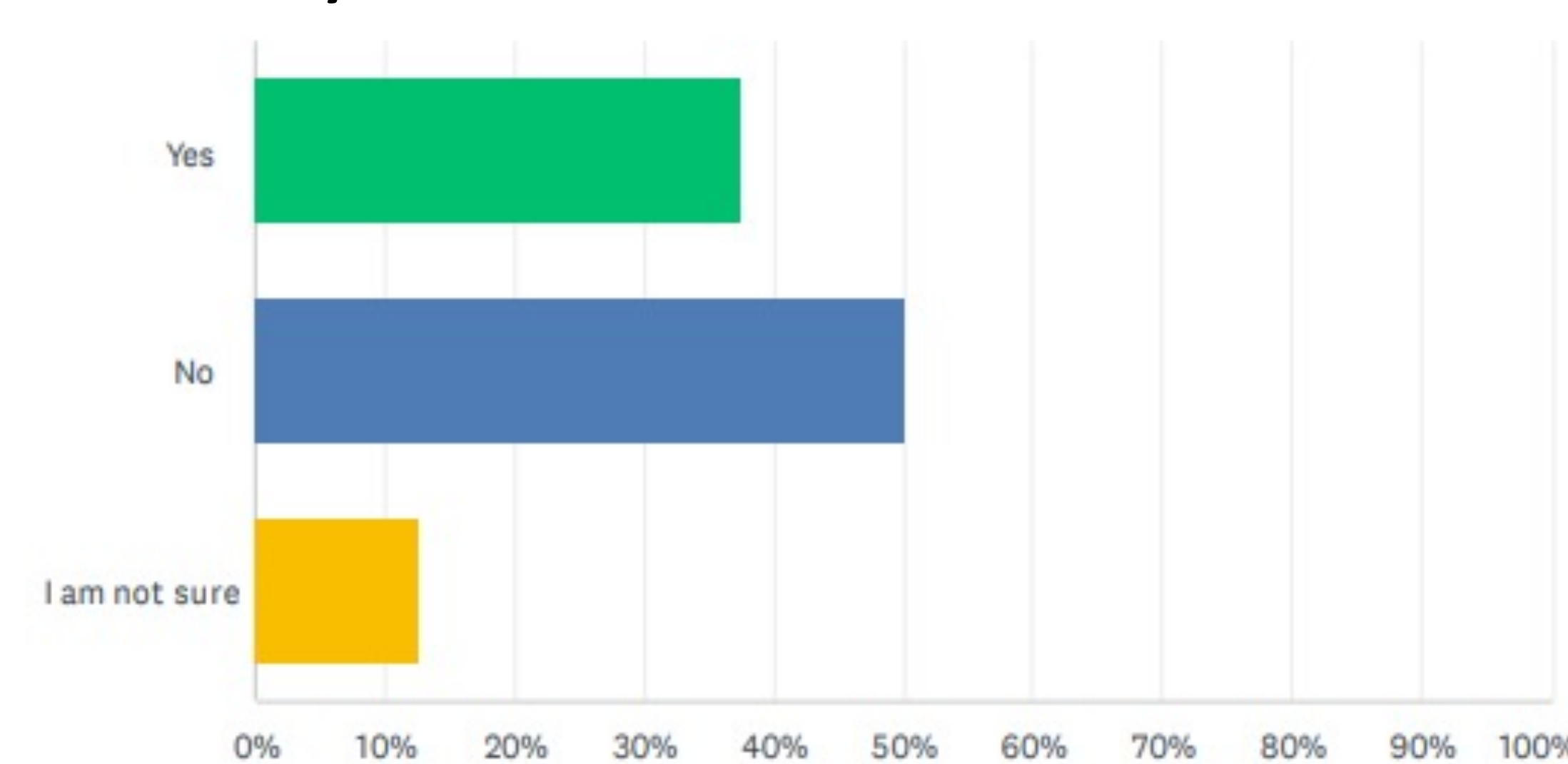


Fig E

At what age did your child's PCP recommend they first see a dentist?

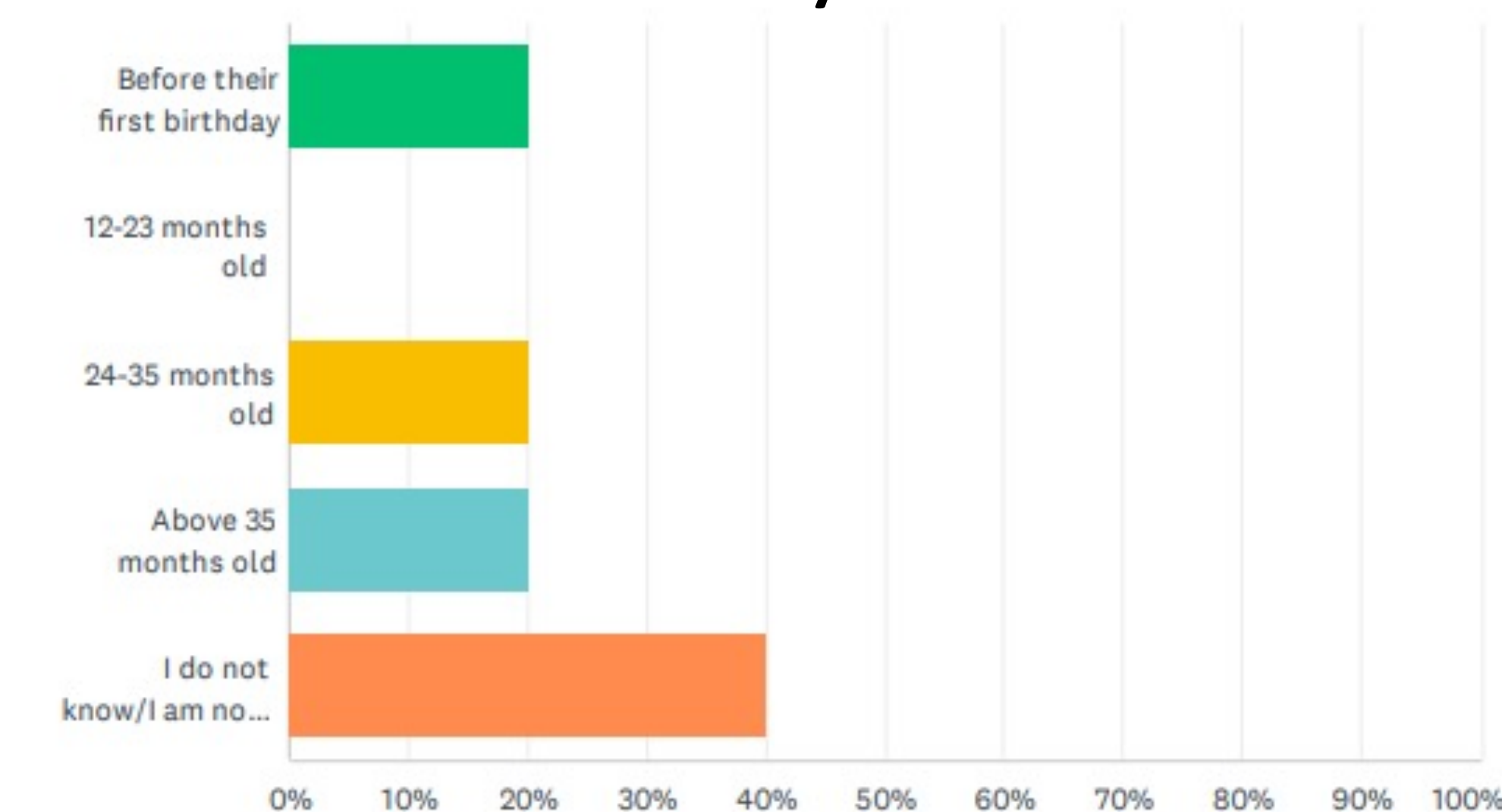


Fig F

RESULTS

Eight surveys have been collected thus far at one clinic in the hospital system. Out of the 8 surveys, the average age of participants was 2.9 years old. Fig A. shows that 75% of participants were Male, and 25% were female. Fig B shows that 100% of participants were born in the United States. Fig C shows that 87.5% of caregivers believe that keeping their child's baby teeth healthy is important, while 12.5% do not. Fig D shows at what age caregivers believe a child should first see a dentist, 42.86% believe the first visit should be between 12-24 months old. Fig E shows that 50% of caregivers responded that their child's PCP did not recommend their child see a dentist. Fig F shows that of the 37.5% of children who did have referrals to a dentist from their PCP, one referral was made before their first birthday, the second was recommended for 24-35 months old, and the third was above 35 months old at time of referral.

DISCUSSION

While only preliminary data has been collected thus far, the responses collected have provided guidance towards continuing this study in the future. Methods of delivering surveys to potential participants needs to be discussed in order to obtain an adequate number of participants. Issues noted by the investigators of this study include lack of new patients ages 0-6 presenting for initial exams, as well as lack of functional systems for recruiting new participants by clinic staff.