

# WAITING

For

## CHANGE

Affordable, high-quality child care enables children to flourish and prepare for school; parents to participate in the workforce and obtain the education and training they need to advance, confident that their children are nurtured and safe; and employers to operate free of the workforce instability that lack of reliable child care can cause.

Unfortunately, quality, affordable child care is beyond the economic reach of many low-income working mothers. State and federal funding for child care is woefully inadequate; leaving mothers to add their names to a wait list.

Waiting for Change seeks to unearth the challenges mothers face as they wait, including the daily sacrifices and perseverance required to figure out who will care for their children.

Using a participatory action research technique called Photovoice, we asked parents to share a glimpse of their lives through photographs and stories. The photos and excerpts you see here bring to light the issues they and their children face because they lack access to subsidized child care.

Armed with this knowledge, we must urge policymakers to seize the opportunity to authentically engage and support working parents to structure a solution that is informed by those whom it will impact.

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# Child Development



**Isabel**

*-Fresno-*



"I worry about my children's education, health and safety and overall well-being...[My son] gets anxious and has trouble focusing and reading in school."

**Miriam**

*-Marin-*



"I want a child care place where they can teach her and read books to her....I can't pay anything better than that and that is why I leave her like that."

**Dawn**

*-Contra Costa-*



"I can definitely tell the difference in my child's learning ability... she is not getting the child care action like she would be at daycare."

**Anna**

*-Oakland-*

"If I had child care, my oldest daughter who is 4 years old, would not have to take on adult responsibilities like changing her sisters diaper."





# Employment Difficulties



Apryl- Oakland



"I gave up a job making \$4,000 per month with travel opportunities because I have no child care."

Vasante- Los Angeles



"It feels so good to have these [two] jobs...[but] if I don't have a babysitter then I can't work so I have to choose one or the other."

Jane Doe- San Diego



"It's hard to get a job to pay for child care when you don't have money to pay for child care to look for work."

Mary- Marin



"I have had to take my child to work [cleaning houses on her back]...I don't take her everyday just when my babysitter says she can't watch her"



# Parental Stress



**Vanessa**  
*-San Diego-*

"I work from 9 AM-5PM...She's so tired...the long commute [3 hrs total] is hard on a little person...there might be traffic and baby is crying, and I can't melt down in front of the baby. When you walk into work, you need to ...give yourself a 'pep talk'...because you are bitter or angry. And it's not the baby's fault."

**Nyccol**  
*-Contra Costa-*



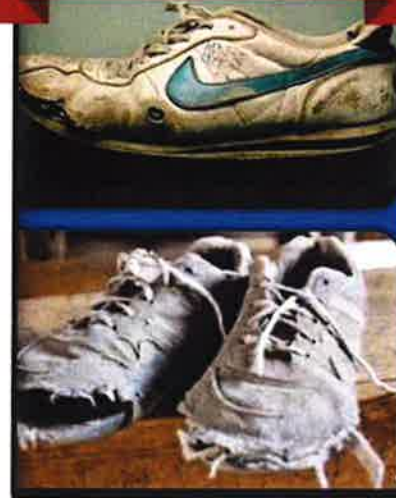
"I stress because I can't afford to send my child to daycare so I can't go to a school or get a job."

**Shuntera**  
*-Los Angeles-*



"When taking this photo I was trying to smile, but I wanted to cry. I am an independent person... if I can work I want to get out there and work my butt off."

**Vanessa**  
*-San Francisco-*



"The children's shoes. If you walk a day in our shoes, you would be really, really tired."

**Jasmine**  
*-Fresno-*



"Waiting for baby sitter to show up...sometimes up to 1 hour late. I was constantly showing up late to class because I had to rely on family to care for my children since I could not pay a professional person or program"

**Luz**  
*-Marin-*



"When I arrived to the babysitters house and they were [watching TV and] still in their pajamas... [this makes me angry] because I took a backpack with clothes for them to wear and be changed!!"

## Child Care Difficulties

**Anna**  
*-Oakland-*



"My mother is 70 years old so it's very tough on her. They get to bed very late each night, and don't get enough sleep....Everyone is always angry at each other because no one in the family are sleeping."

**Claudia**  
*-San Francisco-*



"My daughter is in the school yard – waiting before mom gets there...She wished she can play with other kids in the programs..."

# How to Build a Stable Child Care Ecosystem



Successful outcomes for children, parents, & providers depend on four key interdependent issues: (1) updating the state median income (SMI) to qualify for care; (2) setting a 12 month minimum eligibility period; (3) increasing the number of slots available; and (4) increasing the reimbursement rates given to child care providers.

**We support the Legislative Women's Caucus (LWC) \$800 million ask to stabilize our system**

## Updating SMI

### FAMILY OF THREE

Current Child Care Subsidy Income Limit More than a Decade Old	\$42,216
Estimated Additional Income Families Could Earn & Still Qualify	+\$7,500
Estimated Maximum Federal Eligibility Limit (85% SMI)	\$60,122 <sup>6</sup>



Outdated guidelines are stunting the economic growth of these families by forcing them to turn down raises, promotions, or cut hours in order to remain eligible for subsidized care.

## 12 Month Eligibility



Eliminates fear of losing subsidy & therefore needing to quit job/school. This promotes emotional & financial stability for everyone in the family

Research shows clients receive child care assistance for a median period of only six to seven months<sup>4</sup>



Providers are wary of accepting subsidized children, because of the instability in maintaining voucher/slots



Continuity of care is vital for the healthy development of young children. Disruptions in services can stunt or delay socio-emotional and cognitive development.<sup>1</sup>



## Increase Slots

# 80%

Of eligible children are NOT BEING SERVED in 54 Counties in California<sup>7</sup>



# 85%

Requests are for Full Time Care in CA<sup>5</sup>

# 72%

Parents on the wait list surveyed by Parent Voices had to quit their job, refuse a promotion or turn down a job opportunity because they did not have a child care subsidy

## Increase Rates

# \$24,006



Mean annual wage Child Care workers<sup>3</sup>. The low rates lead providers unable to pay their workers living wages



Child care providers are serving less subsidized children because rates are too low

*Sorry, We are Closed...*

CDE indicates providers typically terminate contracts due to insufficient funding<sup>2</sup>

Increasing rates would help uplift small business child care centers and homes in local communities

Rise of Child Care Administration for Children and Families, "Policies and Practices that Promote Continuity of Child Care Services and Enhance Subsidy Systems," <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ce/ncs/newsroom/2011/08>  
 1. Legislative Assembly's Office, "Restructuring CA's Child Care and Development System," Page 13  
 2. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ia/iv/iv201401.asp>  
 3. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/wagehour.t01.htm>  
 4. <https://www.nrcse.org/sites/default/files/2014/11/2014-11-12-Child-Care-Waitlist-Study.pdf>  
 5. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ia/iv/iv201401.asp>  
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 7. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ia/iv/iv201401.asp>