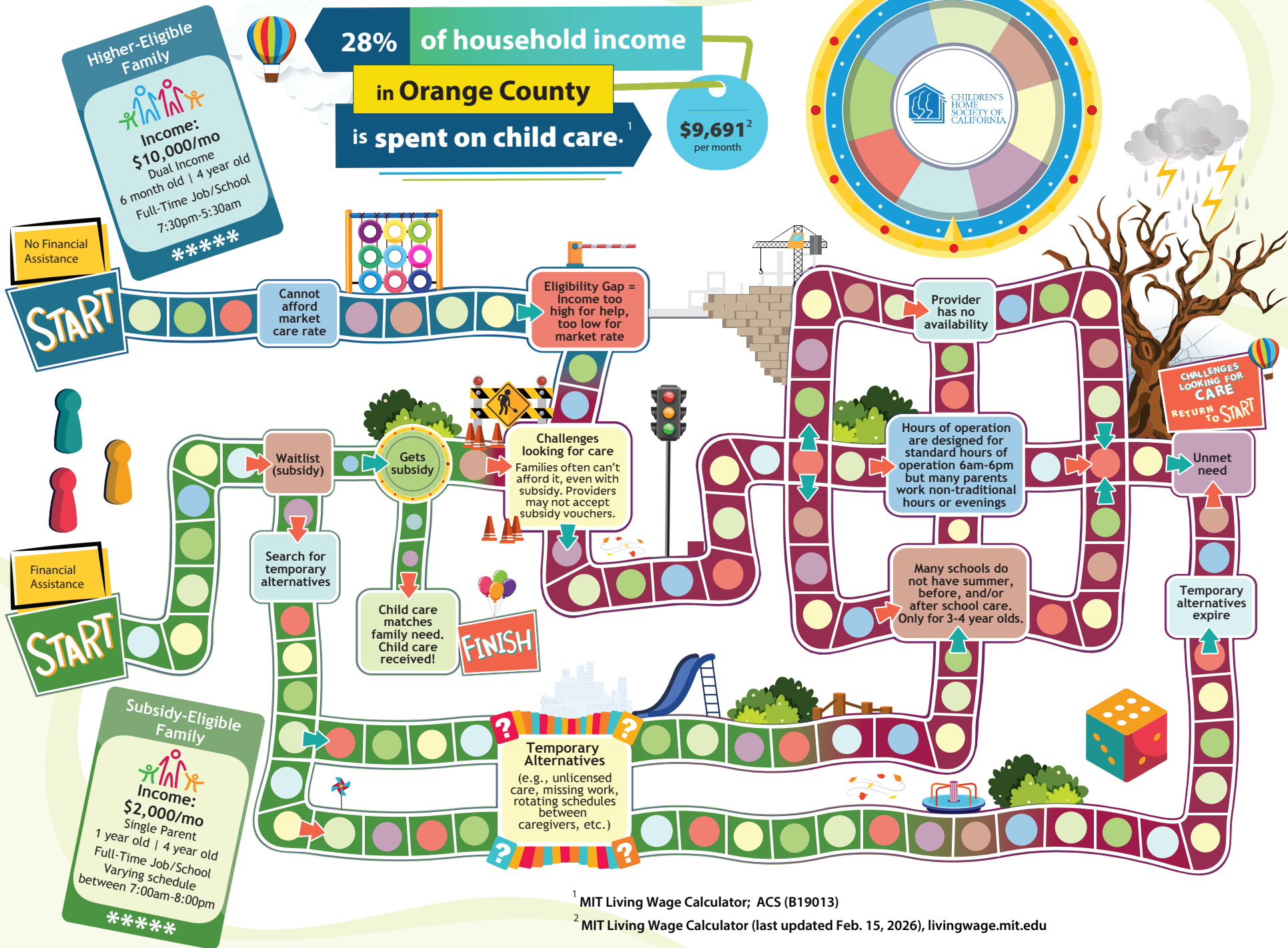


Families Can't Find Affordable Child Care



¹ MIT Living Wage Calculator; ACS (B19013)

² MIT Living Wage Calculator (last updated Feb. 15, 2026), livingwage.mit.edu

Families Can't Find Affordable Child Care

FY24-25

Now is the time to expand and strengthen the community-based child care system, so families can access the care that meets their unique needs.

The system provides licensed spaces for only
1 in 4 children
with working parents³

Child care costs more than in-state college tuition
Child Care (1 child): **\$16,830/year**
Cal State Fullerton:
In-state: **\$6,084/year**

Child Care (2 children): **\$31,996/year** = 28% of their income

190,220 working caregivers of children under 5 in Orange County.⁴

Orange County	
County specific data	\$116,289 Median yearly income (before taxes) in Orange County. ⁵
7,217 Available Licensed Home Spaces ⁶ 74,531 Available Licensed Center Spaces	14,206 Children are enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) ⁷ TK expansion reduced the licensed child care workforce, shrinking available supply for infants, toddlers, and families who need non-traditional hours.

The current child care system is unable to meet demand.

CHS-Orange	
Agency specific data representing a portion of Orange County	1,390 Families on the waitlist at CHS-Orange. Many are on the waitlist for years.
10,387 Providers available for referral	837 Licensed Providers receiving Child Care Subsidies 780 License-Exempt Providers receiving Child Care Subsidies
	77 Subsidized Licensed Spaces Family Child Care Homes 4,245 Subsidized Licensed Spaces Center-Based

Even when care is available, cost and other barriers can make it difficult for families to access care.

³ Child Care Aware of America

⁵ ACS 2024 B19013

⁴ ACS 2024 B23008

⁶ California Community Care Licensing Division (CCL)

⁷ California Department of Education (CDE)