

The challenges of waiting for child care

As a hard-working notary public and Spanish translator, Maria Antonieta had dreams of becoming a lawyer. She was attending San Francisco City College and was well on her way to achieving her goal when she became pregnant.



Six months before her son was born, Maria came to Children's Council. She says, "I loved the facilities at Children's Council right away, it was very child-friendly and everyone made me feel welcome. **But I learned that securing child care was going to be as much of a challenge as finding affordable housing.**"

"I wanted to go back to school after my baby was born, but there are not enough child care providers, especially for infants, and the waiting lists are long." Maria was still on the wait list for child care when her son was born.

With the help of Children's Council she received a voucher to help cover child care costs. But, she says, "The voucher was not enough to cover the actual cost of care, so I started working part-time at San Francisco Homeless Prenatal Program, helping families in the same situation as I was."

For another six months, she anxiously remained on the wait list for full-time child care,

while working part-time and taking classes. **“I wanted to pull myself out of this situation, but I was really struggling. I needed time to work and study, and I was always worried about child care.”**

Maria’s patience and determination paid off when she received the good news from Children’s Council: a subsidized child care slot had opened up for her son. She was off the wait list. “Being able to have child care continuity allowed me to focus on work and my studies.”



She says, **“Child care and stable housing go hand in hand.** When I didn’t have reliable child care, I couldn’t look for housing and put in applications.” After securing stable housing for her and her son, Maria was able to complete her paralegal degree from City College.

Then Maria earned her real estate license in order to better support her family, while still pursuing her law degree at San Francisco State University. She expects to take the bar exam in 3-4 semesters.

And Maria’s son thrived in a high-quality child care program, putting him on the path to success in school. She says, **“It’s very important for children to be in a loving environment where they can learn and get the stimulation they need.”**

Maria is also an active participant in child care advocacy through our chapter of Parent Voices. She has spoken to the Board of Supervisors as they debated the merits of increased funding for child care in the city. She told the Board:

“Affordable child care and stable housing strengthens families and makes them more economically secure while also reducing inequality. It will also keep diversity in our city, because when children learn and play together, they are color blind, and they don’t need to know how much their parents make. I hope children grow up in a culture that does not judge them by the color of their skin or by their economic status.”

Maria says, **“Without Children’s Council, I would not be able to work and go to school. The support I’ve been given has been amazing.”**

Each year at Children’s Council, **we help thousands of parents like Maria break the cycle of poverty.** But every day, thousands more families are still waiting.



During this season of generosity, your gift to Children’s Council will make every day count for kids and families.

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