

# The fight for affordable child care options <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

Dozens of mothers demonstrated outside the State Capitol Wednesday, showing support for affordable child care. There are proposals that would invest \$600 million in child care subsidies and increase state reimbursement for child care providers.

Organizers said without affordable child care options, it is impossible for many mothers to support their families.

"You cannot walk out the door to go to work, to go to school, to do anything without knowing their child is safe and taken care of, so childcare is the lynchpin, the main component," Mary Ignatius, Director of Parent Voices said.

Her organization says child care in California can range between \$8,00 and \$17,000 a year, a hefty price tag for working families. And parents that struggle the most financially are most often those that work non-traditional shifts.

"I'm a single parent; I go to work, I have two jobs and I go to school full-time. I'm trying to raise my family out of poverty, and if I didn't have the childcare that I have, I wouldn't be able to do anything that I'm doing," Jessica Wood said.

Some facilities, like Kids Park in Natomas, have extended hours to help parents, they are open until 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, until 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and Sunday they open for half a day.

"We're a non traditional childcare center. You never have to make reservations. It's completely drop in and we like to cater to those parents that may need us outside of those traditional hours. So whether you're going to school, or back to a night class or have a doctor's appointment," Kids Park said.

The cost, at \$8 an hour, can be too much for long-term care for many parents.

As for the legislative proposals for affordable child care. Parent Voices says there are currently more than 193,000 children on the waiting list for subsidies in California. The proposals would increase funding to those subsidy programs.

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**Region:** United States <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** subsidy <sup>[4]</sup>

affordability <sup>[5]</sup>

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