

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Parent themes

01

Attendance inflexibility

Funding status is tied to attendance. however, program hours don't match the reality of many families' work schedules or transportation challenges. As a result, families often can't meet attendance expectations which can affect eligibility.

04

Information feels exclusive

Awareness of, and access to, information and support seems to be reserved for white, English-speaking families who know how to navigate the system and mold themselves to fit its requirements.

02

Lengthy determination process

The application and enrollment experience for CCCAP and Head Start can be time-consuming, confusing, and redundant which prevents families from planning, budgeting, and securing employment when schedules seem uncertain.

05

Fear of repercussions

Word-of-mouth within some communities causes families to fear perceived consequences of seeking financial assistance (e.g. loss of custody, immigration issues, etc.).

03

Funding process can feel shameful

Determination and redetermination of funding is an invasive experience that can cause a sense of shame, conflict within the home, and is often enough of a barrier in and of itself to prevent families from seeking the support for which they qualify.

06

Limited care options

Quality ratings often don't factor into families' limited choices about where to place their children. It's more so about where is there an opening, is it safe, does it accept the right type of financial assistance, and/or is it close enough to the home or on the way to work

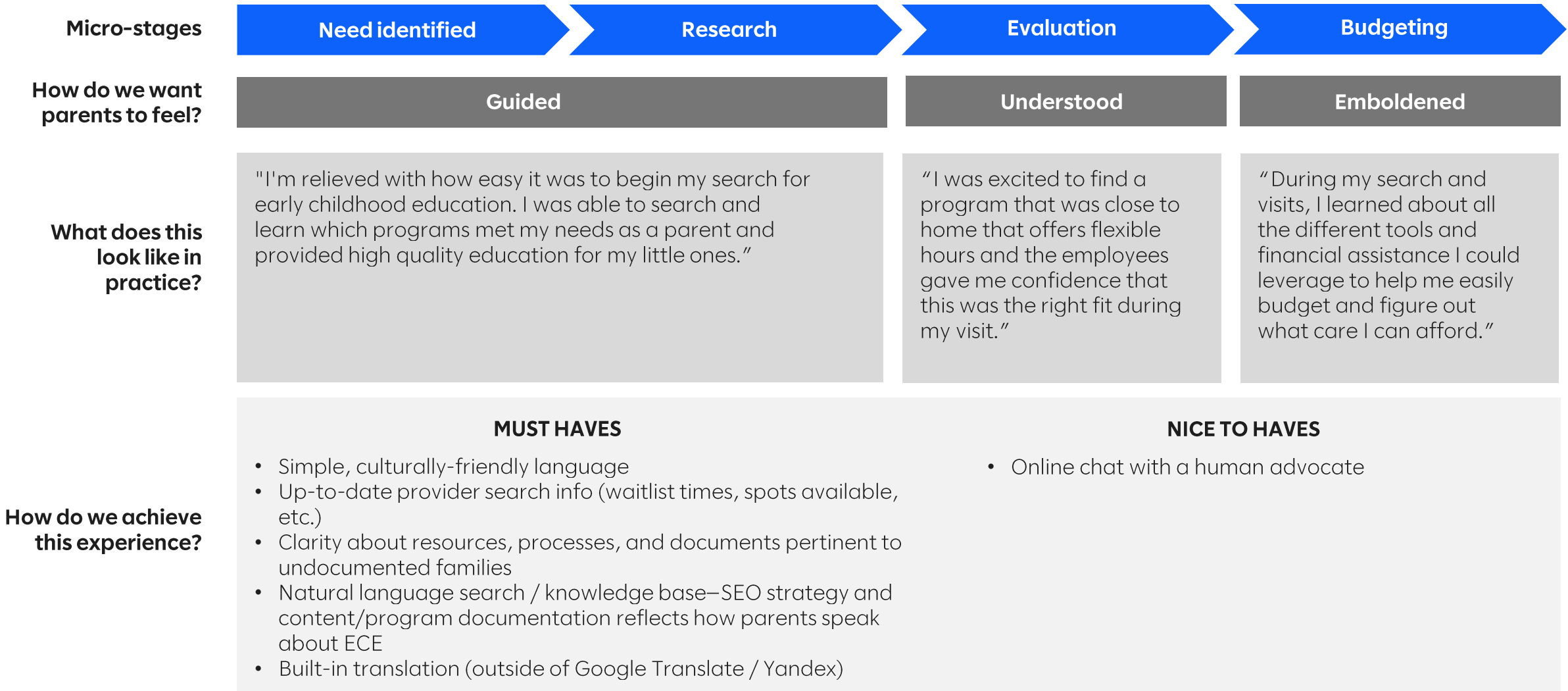
The Journey of Finding and Securing Care

We sought to understand how parents find and secure childcare or preschool for their children today, and how we could create a better experience in the future.



We then brainstormed with parents to understand how they want to *feel* and *what they want their experience to be* along each step of this journey

Stage 1: Grow Awareness



Stage 2: Apply & Enroll



Micro-stages
How do we want parents to feel?

Guided	Reassured	Encouraged	Empowered	Informed	Excited
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What does this look like in practice?

<p>“Applying for financial assistance was so easy! The website made it clear what I needed to apply, where I was in the process, how long my application would take to process.”</p>	<p>“I had confidence that my application was submitted because I received a confirmation email with a tracking ID - so I knew my application was being processed.”</p>	<p>“I was contacted by a pleasant support team member to fill out additional details in the application and was reminded about financial assistance and other resources I could leverage when during my childcare experience.”</p>	<p>“It felt really nice to know how long my eligibility was going to take to process and when I’d receive a decision by. This allowed me to work with providers to identify a start date for care.”</p>	<p>“ECE is expensive! I like how the site and people I talked to encouraged me to apply for ECE financial assistance to see what I qualify for, even if I didn't think I would receive any funding support. It was easy to fill out one application to figure out if I qualify. When I had a question I was able to reach a person to discuss the process.”</p>	<p>“Wow! I'm relieved that I was able to find ECE that our needs. My little one and I are both looking forward to the first day of school.”</p>
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How do we achieve this experience?

MUST HAVES		NICE TO HAVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One application for all resources related to ECE subsidies • Simple, culturally-welcoming language • Progress trackers for both application completion and determination process • Humans to help parents navigate ECE financial assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visualization of process and timeline with eligibility calculator • Non-invasive minimum required fields that don't cause domestic strife or threatening situations (i.e., child support enforcement) • Standardized documentation requirements across programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Error handling • SMS / email notification of determination status and/or missing documentation • Natural language search knowledge base • 311 - type hotline

Stage 3: Activate Care

Micro-stages	Day to Day	Payment
How do we want parents to feel?	Connected	Protected
What does this look like in practice?	<p>“I bet my parents would have loved to have this level of communication and information back when they were dropping me off for school! I have a website I can go to for information as well as the ability to communicate with my child's teacher and school throughout the school year. It helps me understand how my child is doing and helps me be a better parent once they're home.”</p>	<p>“I didn't even know that switching jobs could affect my provider or my financial assistance. Luckily, someone from the program supported me and helped me adjust my coverage so that I could continue paying what I can afford.”</p>
How do we achieve this experience?	<p>MUST HAVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent reviews / surveying of web experience • Simple, culturally-friendly language • Mobile-first design • ClassDojo-type solution for parent/provider collaboration • Built-in translation outside of Google Translate • Clarity about resources, processes, and documents pertinent to undocumented families and staff 	<p>NICE TO HAVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow families to check in for ECE (attendance) on your phone based on your GPS location or through ATS

Stage 4: Reapply

Micro-stages



How do we want parents to feel?



What does this look like in practice?

"I received an email to update my information for redetermination of my eligibility. I chose to apply for eligibility after tax season so I had all the necessary documents ready to go to start the process. My redetermination began at the same time the following year, when I was prepared again.

How do we achieve this experience?

- MUST HAVES**
- Streamline the process for reapplying for the following school year
 - Consider communicating opportunity to align CPP and CCCAP eligibility determination to tax season timeline when parents have income and employment documentation readily available and prepared
 - SMS / email notifications 2 months prior to key redetermination dates and tasks to get parents adequate time to prepare
 - Provide parents with easy-to-follow documents and explanations that illustrate implications of additional income and job changes on eligibility