



## Measuring access: Alignment of families' priorities and characteristics of chosen care in Minnesota

CCEEPRC 2023



**MINNESOTA CHILD CARE**  
**Policy Research Partnership**  
*Advancing Equitable Access to Early Care and Education*

# Minnesota Child Care Policy Research Partnership

- The goal of the partnership is to support children and families in Minnesota by addressing pressing questions that policymakers and researchers have related to equitable access to early care and education (ECE) and improving policymakers' understanding of the effectiveness of policies and practices that support access.

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# Thank you!

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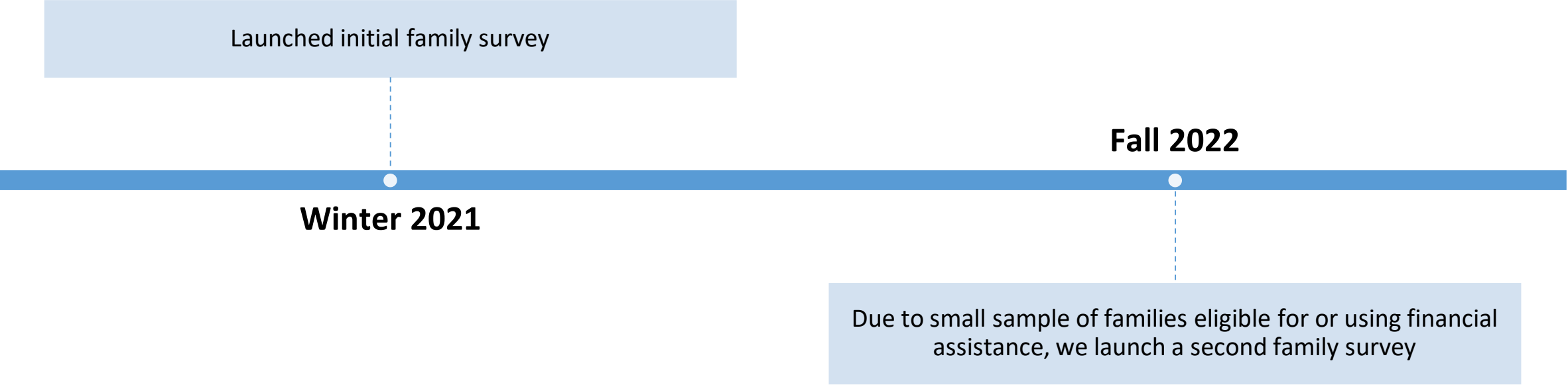


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# Purpose of the study

- To examine the effectiveness of policies and practices aimed to promote the multiple dimensions of access for families
- In particular, we aim to understand the experiences of families in searching for and accessing child care in Minnesota, particularly families with children receiving assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) or Early Learning Scholarships (ELS).

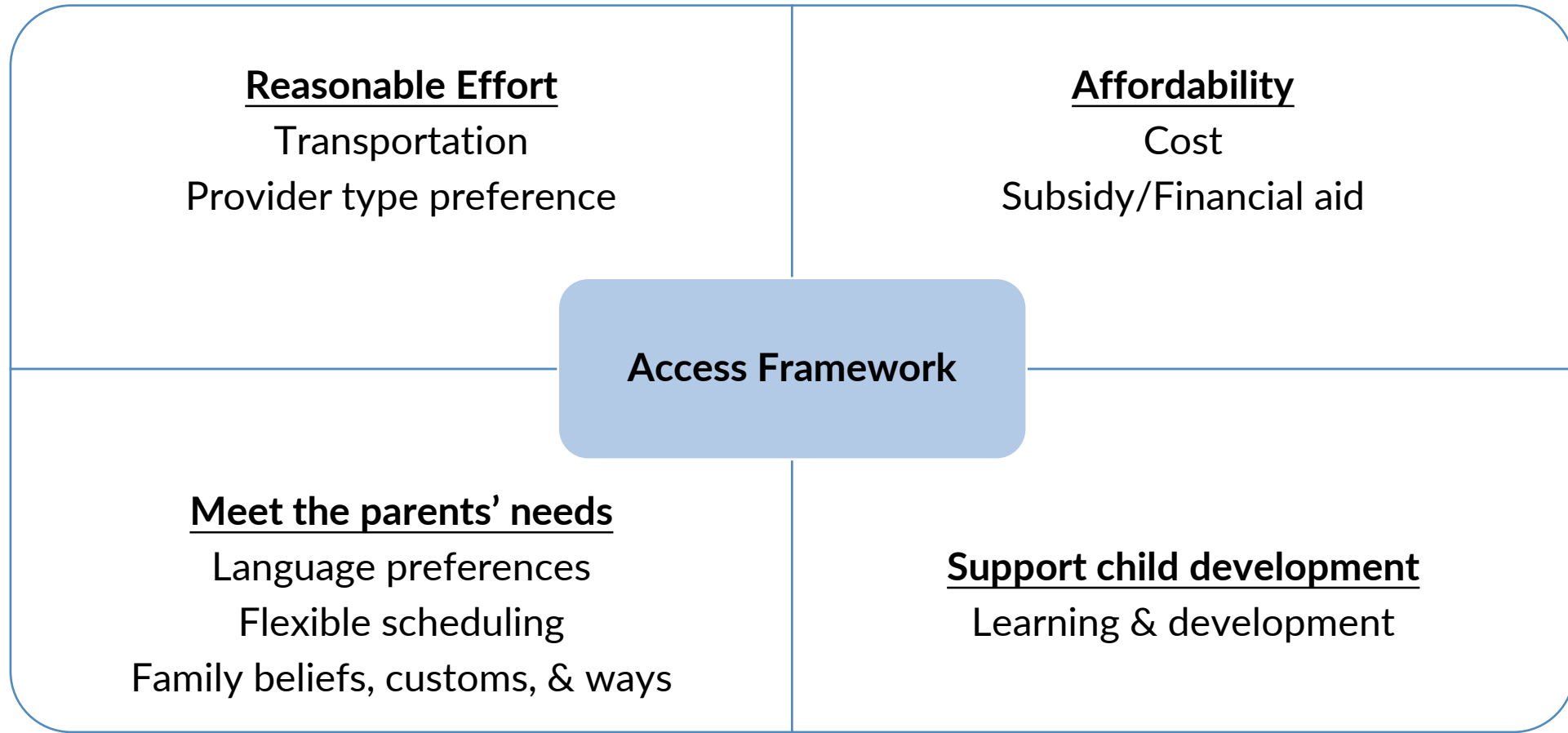
# Family Surveys



# Sample

- Total of 1,043 respondents
  - 57% attended a center-based program
  - 20% attended a home-based program
  - 34% reported receiving financial assistance
  - Even split of respondents lived in the metro- and greater Minnesota

# Applying the Access Framework to a family's experience



# Creating the composite score



**Was the construct a priority, preference, or neither when the family last searched for care?**



**Did priorities or preferences align with their current ECE arrangement?**



**Score – Misalignments receive a higher score.**



**Aggregate all construct scores to create the access composite score.**

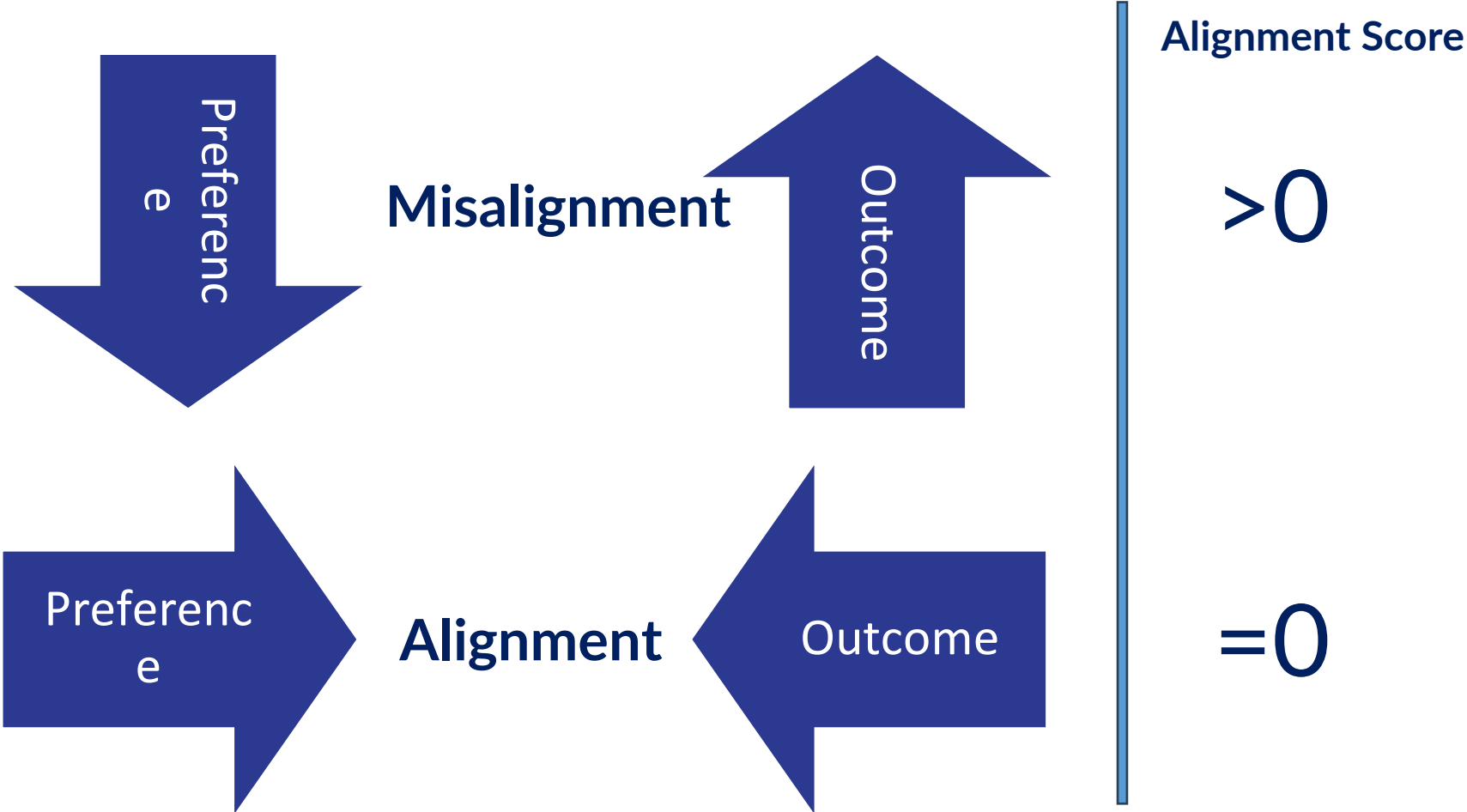


## Determining Priorities v Preferences

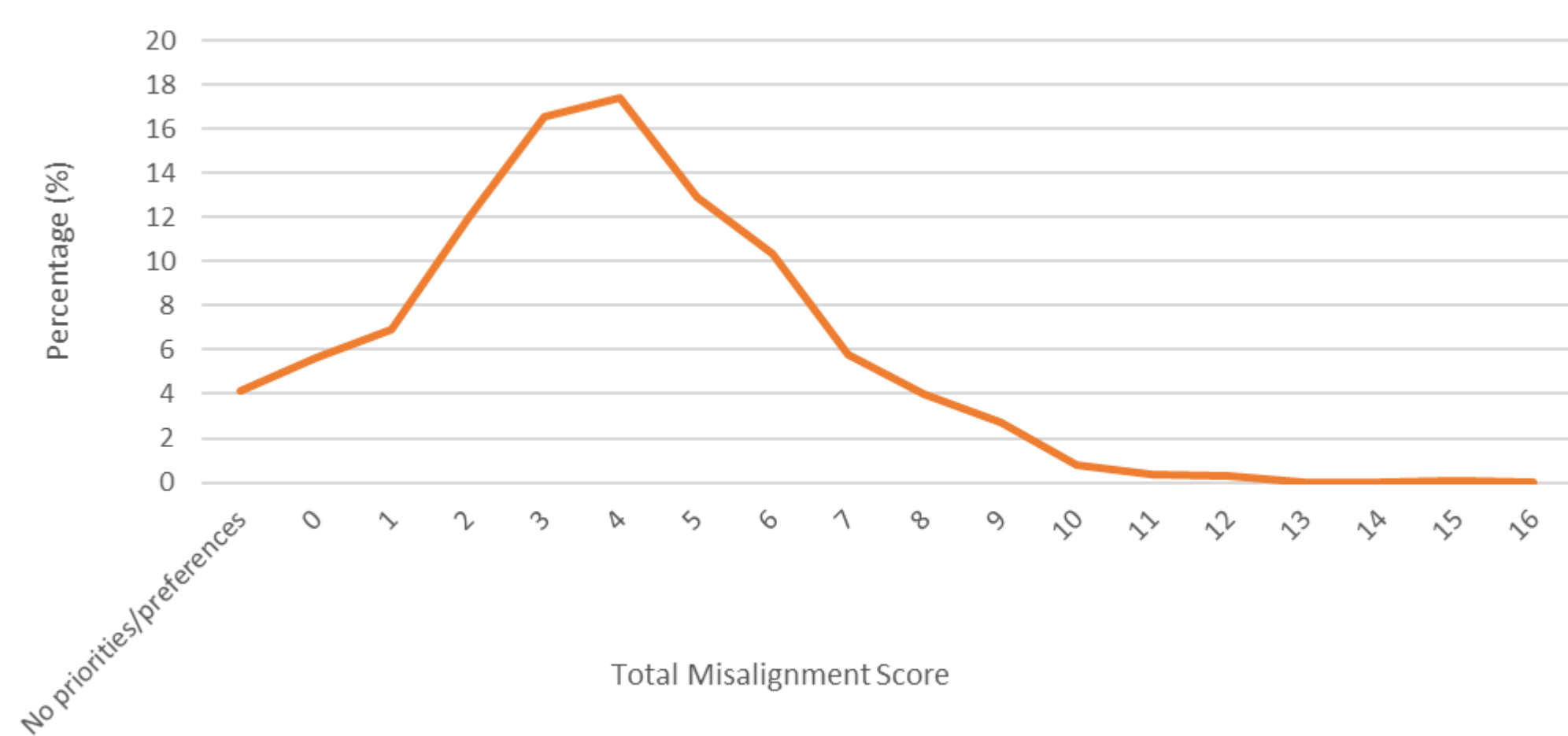
To determine priorities vs preferences, we examined parents ranking of the features of child care that were important when search for care.

- If any features were ranked as being "*Crucially Important – I would not consider a provider who did not provide this,*" then the construct was determined to be a **priority**.
- If any features were ranked as being, "*Very Important*", "*Important*", or "*Slightly Important*", then the construct was a **preference**.
- If all features were ranked as being, "Not at all important," then it was marked as **not a priority or preference**.

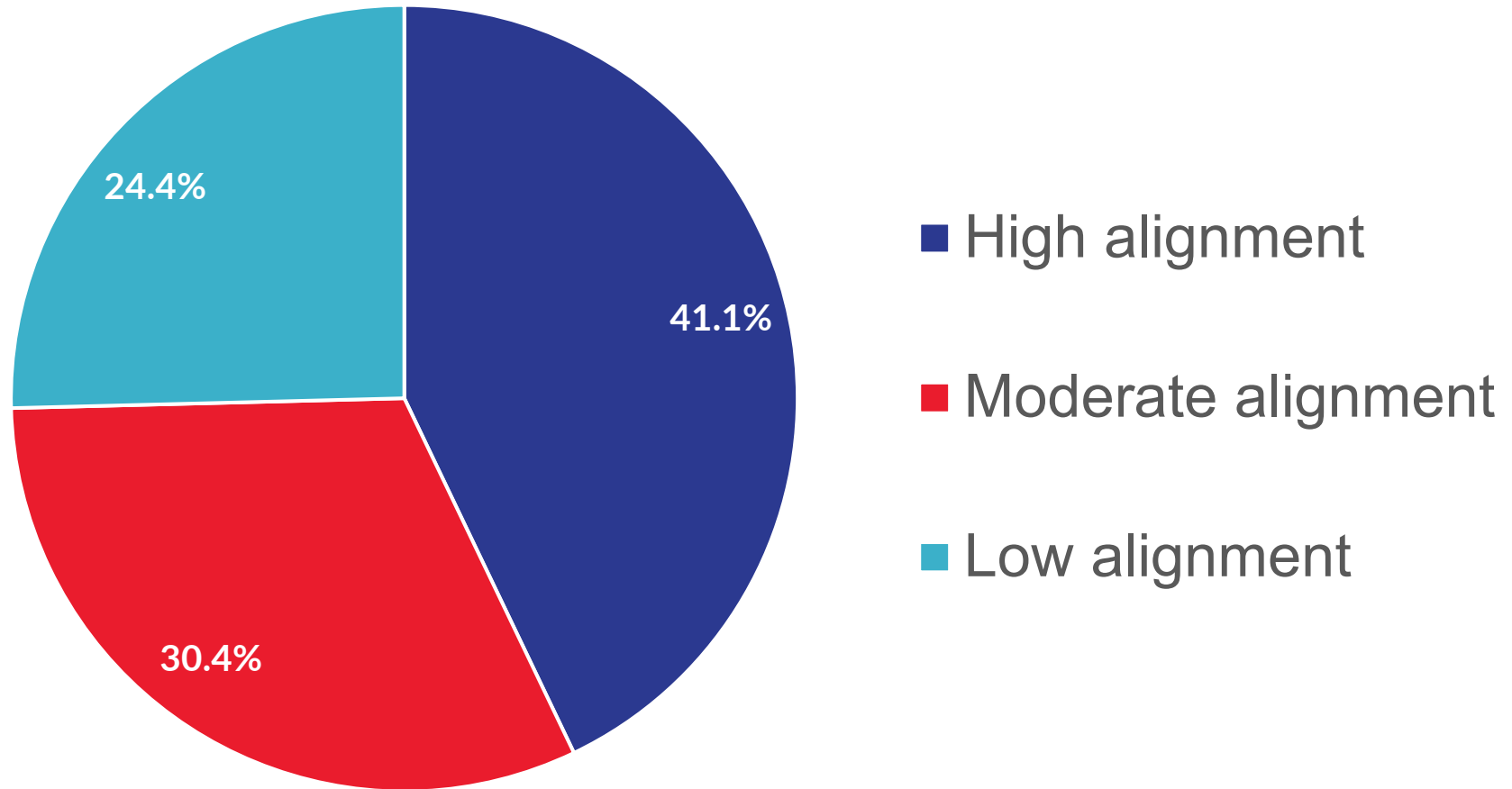
# Alignment of family's priorities and characteristics of chosen care



# Distribution of Misalignment Scores



# Creation of three alignment groups



# Preliminary Findings

Compared to families with higher alignment scores, families with lower alignment scores were significantly more likely to...

- Receive financial assistance
- Earn less (less than \$55,000 annually)
- Have more than one child
- Report their race/ethnicity as being Black, Hispanic, or Multiracial
- Disagree with the following statement, *"I would highly recommend my child care provider to a friend or family member looking for child care."*

## Next Steps

- We will work closely with our state partners to get their feedback on how useful the score is to their work
- Analyzing the validity and stability of the measure
- Any feedback or questions? Please email Ashley Hirilall at [ahirilall@childtrends.org](mailto:ahirilall@childtrends.org)