Interim Report - DRAFT
October 15, 2019

of the MIT Graduate Families Support Working Group

Purpose

A working group was convened in order to broadly understand the environment for graduate student families at MIT, and options for ensuring they are appropriately supported within the broader context of priorities identified on the Graduate Student Roadmap.

The team is currently undergoing a discovery process to identify the current state of affairs for graduate families, catalog programs and policies of support, benchmark our peers, and provide information to senior leadership regarding any changes programmatically or financially that can help address family needs at MIT.

This team's work supports the ongoing efforts of the Graduate Student Roadmap, as well as the strategic priority of "Serving our graduate students".
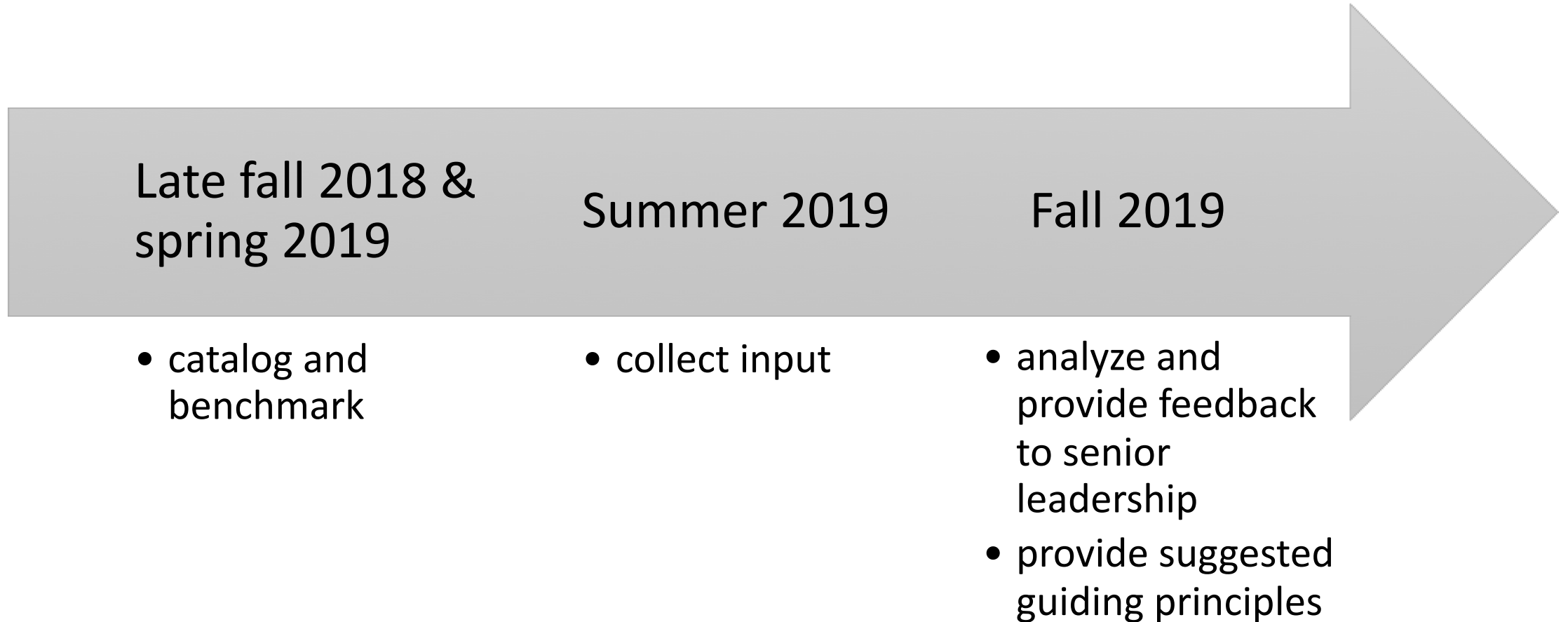
Working group members

The faculty and staff members were selected by Vice Provost Ian Waitz in November 2018. The Graduate Student Council selected four graduate students to serve on the group.

- Prof. Heidi Nepf
  Civil and Environmental Engineering, Faculty Graduate Officer

- Heather Williams
  Assistant Dean, School of Science

- Judy Robinson
  Senior Associate Dean, Residential Education

- Gary Ryan
  Senior Associate Director for Financial Aid

- Naomi Carton
  Associate Dean, Graduate Student Support, Head of House

- Liz Guttenberg
  Program Manager, MIT Work-Life Center

- Jessica Landry
  Program & Policy Administrator, Office of Graduate Education

- Janka Moss
  International Student Advisor and Coordinator, International Student Office

- Greg Harris
  Senior Project Manager, Institutional Research

- Peter Su
  President, Graduate Student Council

- Annie Hudson
  Graduate Women @ MIT

- Mohammad Islam
  Graduate Student Council, Housing & Community Affairs

- ElDante Winston
  House Executive Board, WestGate

- Lauren Pouchak
  Director of Special Projects, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Chair

Charge to the working group

- Identify the current state of affairs for graduate student families at MIT

- Catalog current programs and financial support for graduate families

- Benchmark peer institutions

- Share preliminary work and collect input via public forum

- Develop guiding principles for supporting graduate student families

- Assess different options for changes or additions to programs and policies to strengthen our support for graduate families including estimating the associated costs. These should be evaluated within the context of the broader priorities of the Graduate Student Roadmap.

Timeline

Late fall 2018 &
spring 2019

Summer 2019

Fall 2019

- catalog and benchmark

- collect input

- analyze and provide feedback to senior leadership
- provide suggested guiding principles

Internal and external scan

- The Working Group reviewed the [Family Friendly Campus Toolkit](#) developed by the Program Evaluation & Research Group (PERG) at Endicott College to guide the internal and external review

- The rubric provided by PERG was used to help assess the extent to which programs and services, wider institutional supports, the campus culture, and community partnerships support the needs of pregnant and parenting students at MIT

Guiding Principles

To support MIT's graduate students with children by alleviating stressors related to raising a family while being a student.

- **Listen** - seek, gather and collect information and data to better understand the needs of graduate students with children.

- **Communicate** - raise awareness by providing and sharing concise, organized information regarding available services beginning before students arrive.

- **Advocate** - consider how changes in policies may impact students with children, and involve them in decision-making processes.

- **Be transparent** - programs and policies addressing the needs of graduate students with children should be visible and information should be easy to navigate.

- **Build community** - foster community by being proactive and intentional with programs and policies for students with children both on and off campus.

- **Promote dignity** - allow students to feel like they can ask for and receive help without compromising their self-respect, empowerment and autonomy.

- **Support** - consider financial support models that target and benefit student parents with the greatest need.
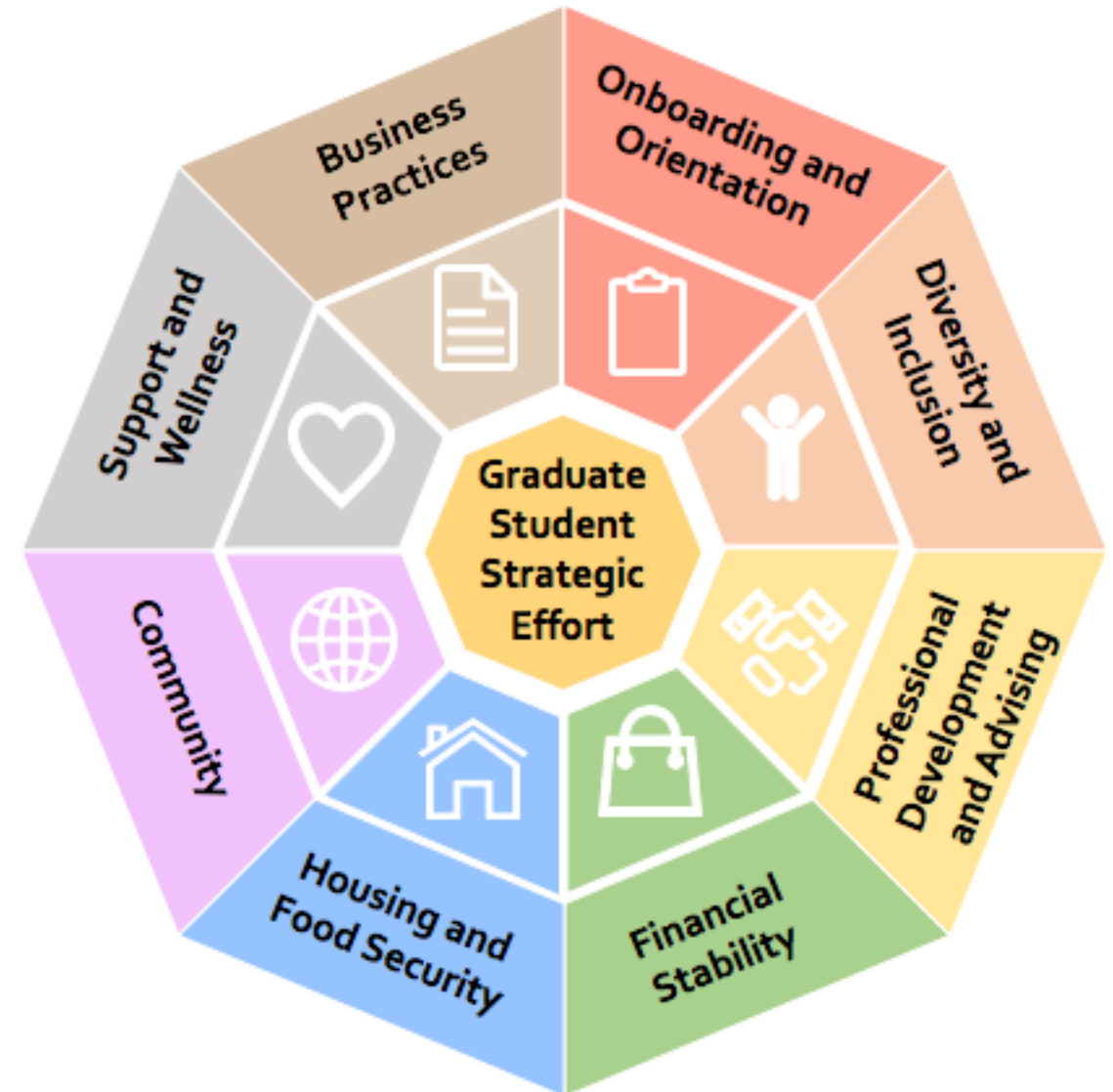
Preliminary recommendations

The Working Group has identified a variety of programs and policies that support graduate students with children.

We believe our recommendations have the potential to help strengthen the graduate student family community by placing an emphasis on:

- centralizing communication and outreach
- collecting information about students with children more intentionally
- providing family friendly spaces around campus
- identifying new ways to support our students with children financially

We believe these recommendations align with the Graduate Student Roadmap.

Business Practices

Onboarding and Orientation

Support and Wellness

Diversity and Inclusion

Graduate Student Strategic Effort

Community

Professional Development and Advising

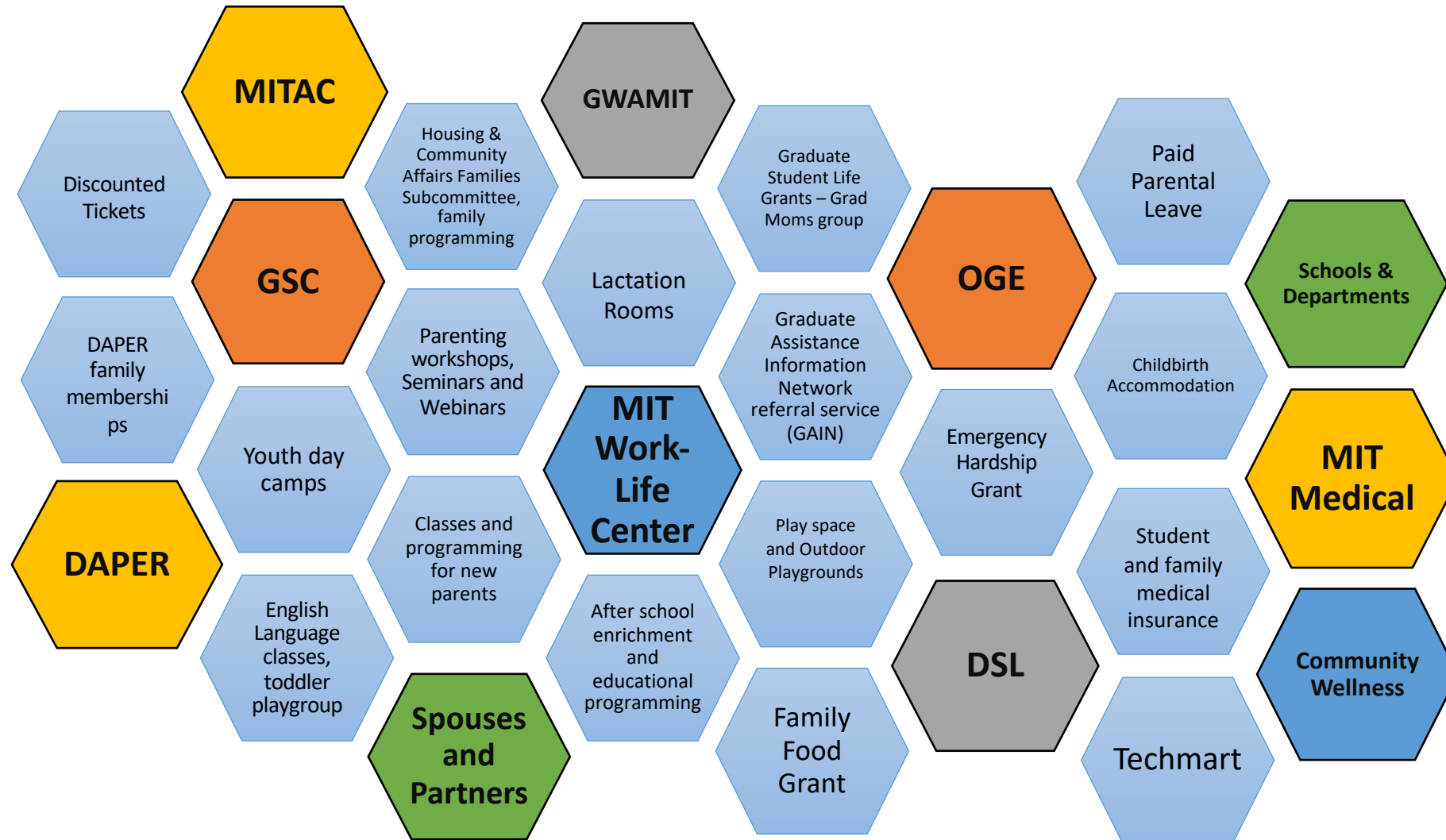Housing and Food Security

Financial Stability

1. Centralize communication and outreach

- Outreach, programmatic and financial support for graduate student families is distributed and handled by many groups across the Institute including DSL, OGE, MIT Work-Life Center, GSC, Spouses & Partners, departments and schools. This makes information hard for families to find.

- MIT is the only Ivy+ that does not have a centralized resource, be it an office or identified staff member, who is responsible for outreach, communication and coordinating programming specifically for graduate students with children.

- This resource is often housed under an Office of Graduate Education, or Vice Provost for Graduate Education at our peer institutions.

1. Centralize communication and outreach

- As a result of the Working Group's meeting with a group of students from Eastgate, Westgate and off campus in the spring of 2019, we understand students with children are looking for information about family resources during the application process, but feel uncomfortable disclosing they have a family at that time. A more coordinated effort around communication is needed to provide families the information they need when they need it, starting much earlier than what happens now.

- Students expressed a desire for earlier communication and help navigating what needs to be done to acclimate to MIT and Cambridge. They requested information preferably beginning during the application process regarding the housing/school/childcare/spouse job opportunities timeline, even if they have not been accepted yet.

- Centralized resources for families that are visible was the biggest ask. This could be an office, or one person who works specifically with families, and is in charge of proactive outreach to graduate student families.

- Students from this group also voiced their concern that often times student families are an afterthought when policies are being developed or changed including changes to ID cards, the monthly to bi-monthly payment process, MITAC, and MIT shuttle schedule changes to name a few. This identified staff member or office could act as a family advocate.

Programs for families are numerous but distributed and often hard for students to find

MITAC

GWAMIT

Discounted Tickets

Housing & Community Affairs Families Subcommittee, family programming

GSC

Graduate Student Life Grants – Grad Moms group

OGE

Paid Parental Leave

Schools & Departments

Lactation Rooms

DAPER family memberships

Parenting workshops, Seminars and Webinars

Graduate Assistance Information Network referral service (GAIN)

Childbirth Accommodation

MIT Medical

Youth day camps

MIT Work-Life Center

Emergency Hardship Grant

DAPER

Classes and programming for new parents

Play space and Outdoor Playgrounds

Student and family medical insurance

English Language classes, toddler playgroup

After school enrichment and educational programming

DSL

Community Wellness

Spouses and Partners

Family Food Grant

Techmart

The Working Group's internal scan shows a variety of support for graduate students with children that are distributed across the Institute.

Office of Graduate Education

- Childbirth accommodation and Parental Leave (FY19 $160K, not including Sloan)
- OGE emergency Financial Hardships (FY19 $3,835 for students with children)

Division of Student Life

- Family food grants (FY19 $14,561)
- Afterschool enrichment & educational programs (FY19 $6,412, $6,412)
- Residential playgrounds and playrooms
- Institute commitment to more family housing

MIT Work Life Center

- Backup childcare (FY20: $120,821, 80 students, 383 days)
- Parenting workshops (FY19 participation rates – 174 in fall)
- Dedicated lactation rooms and map (24 dedicated rooms)

MIT Medical

- Competitive and subsidized MIT Medical family health care and dental plans
- Spouses and Partners Connect

Graduate Assistance and Information Network (GAIN) ($40K annually, utilization 2%, 125 grad student/family users)

Highlights of peer benchmark for structure and support

School	Reporting structure	Staff supporting student with children	Financial Support structure and funding
Harvard	Graduate School of Arts & Sciences	GSAS Office of Student Services & GSAS Office of Student Affairs share duties	Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
Yale	Graduate School of Arts & Sciences	Asst. Dean for Student Life	Mix of areas including student life, provost/chancellor. Student life fee supports all graduate life programming.
Princeton	The Graduate School	Graduate Student Life team of 6 serving entire graduate population	The Graduate School
Stanford	The Graduate Life Office (GLO) is a division of the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs, coordinates closely with Vice Provost for Graduate Education	Under GSAS - 5 GLO Deans serve entire graduate student population at Stanford and their families. Identified 1 Asst Dean to work specifically with families	Vice Provost for Graduate Education
Berkeley	Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of Grad Division	Grad Student Life Specialist coordinates student family efforts, as well as Asst. Dean for Grad Student Services	GS parent grant funding from Vice Provost Office, childcare. Reimbursements from VP who matches union contract for fellowship students (RAs and TAs not part of the union)
UChicago	All efforts to support graduate students sit under the Vice Provost	22 staff in this office to support all grad students 1 staff person to oversee Family Center with 2 full time staff	Funded by Vice Provost Office
Penn	Vice Provost for Education – reporting to Executive Director of Education	3 full time staff members in Family Center that report up to Executive Director of Education, 7 fellows	Family grant paid by the Office of the Provost. Funding comes from part of the PhD stipend fund.

More than a quarter of students with children who responded reported it was very difficult to find appropriate child care, more than half found it at least somewhat difficult

While GAIN is a resource that can refer students to appropriate childcare resources,
the lack of a coordinated communication effort to students with children could contribute to this finding.

		How difficult was it for you to locate appropriate childcare, for any reason?			
		Very difficult	Somewhat difficult	Not difficult at all/ Not applicable	N
What is your primary form of childcare for your children?	Self	40%	40%	20%	10
	Spouse/partner or relative	21%	17%	63%	48
	Paid professional/nanny/babysitter in your home	17%	50%	33%	6
	MIT child care center	20%	67%	13%	15
	Off-campus day care	32%	41%	27%	22
	Total	27%	31%	42%	108

2. Collect information about students with children more intentionally

- Centralized data collection can be used for proactive outreach to offer information and support, coordination with department and schools, and help with future projections regarding graduate students with children and their needs.

- Our current estimates of the number of graduate student families at MIT are based on student and Institutional run surveys, some with low response rates.

- The sample of survey responses may be affected by the topic or timing of the survey, thereby influencing any population estimates.

- The majority of our peers are also struggling with identifying and collecting information on students with children. Those who have a better sense of who their students with children are often have family centers or spaces that students can subscribe or belong to.

- UChicago collects data on students with children administratively when students confirm they are attending. Stanford is working to create a process to collect data administratively as a result of their recent report from their Families Working Advisory Group. Penn collects data when students apply to their Family Center, while Yale collects data at family friendly events. Berkeley makes no attempt to collect family data with surveys.

Summary of survey data shows variation in reported percentage of graduate student families

Our current estimates of the number of graduate student families at MIT are based on student and Institutional run surveys, some with low response rates

		2019 GradESS		2017 GradSQL		2017 GradCoL	
		Survey %	Population Estimate	Survey %	Population Estimate	Survey %	Population Estimate
Has a spouse/partner	Master's	51%	1,470	46%	1,301	39%	1,114
	Doctoral	49%	1,934	43%	1,720	31%	1,226
	Total	50%	3,404	44%	3,021	34%	2,340
Spouse/partner lives in same household	Master's	62%	914	67%	874	80%	891
	Doctoral	59%	1,148	63%	1,084	83%	1,022
	Total	60%	2,063	65%	1,957	82%	1,914
Any children	Master's			11%	313		
	Doctoral			4%	172		
	Total			7%	485		
Children living with you (any)	Master's	12%	340	84%	264	8%	230
	Doctoral	4%	170	88%	151	3%	131
	Total	7%	511	86%	416	5%	361
Children living with you (< 5 years old)	Master's	7%	192				
	Doctoral	4%	160				
	Total	5%	352				

Population estimates based on graduate student counts from 2018-2019 Y-Report.

Y-report (https://registrar.mit.edu/statistics-reports/enrollment-statistics-year)

Using the graduate enrolled student survey from 2019, we estimate more than half of our graduate students with children are from the Sloan MBA program

Student with children by school and degree type*

School	Degree	1 or expecting	2	3	4	more than 5	Total
SLOAN	MBA	120	109	38	16	0	283
SOE	Other Master's	25	34	6	0	3	68
SOE	Doc	60	4	4	0	0	68
SAP	Doc	18	28	0	0	0	46
SOS	Doc	26	6	0	0	0	32
SLOAN	Doc	10	6	0	0	0	16
SHASS	Doc	5	8	0	0	0	13
SAP	Other Master's	7	0	4	0	0	11
SOE	MENG	9	0	0	0	0	9
SHASS	Other Master's	3	0	0	0	0	3

(Source: Grad ESS 2019, estimates may differ from overall population because of different response rates by school and degree type
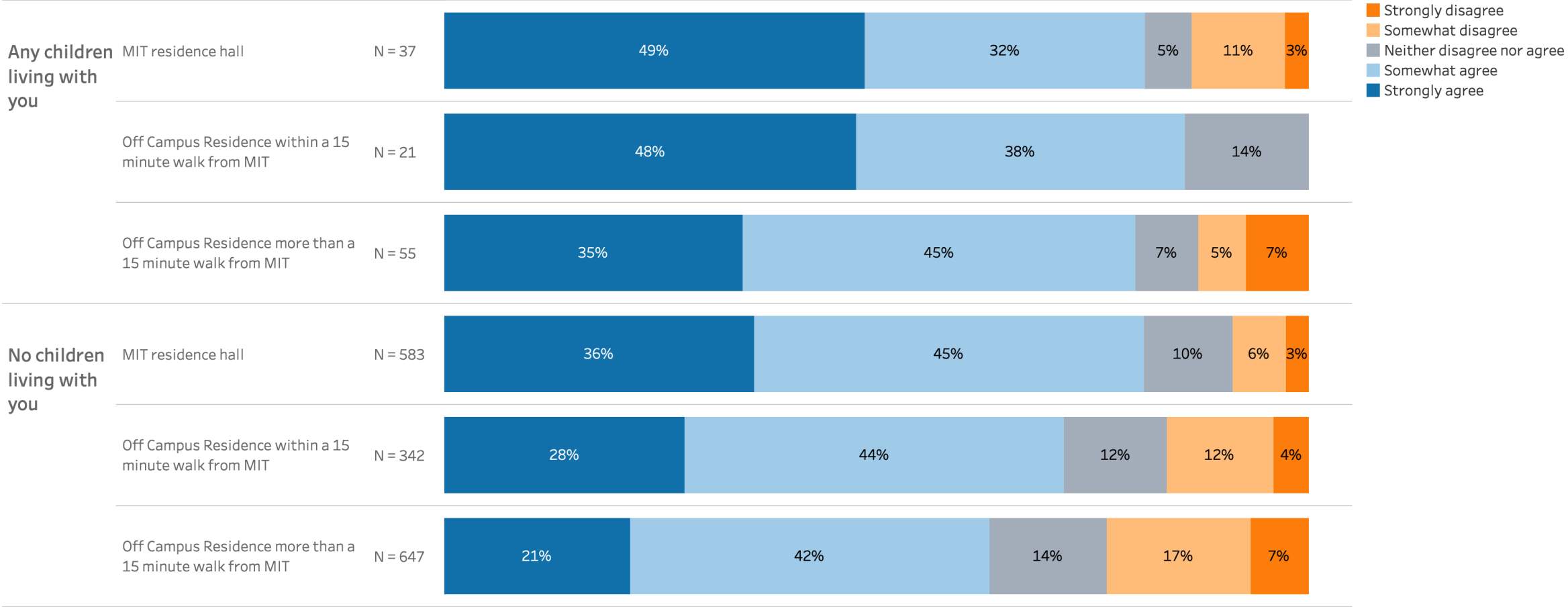*Scaled by response rate in each school)

3. Provide family friendly spaces and create intentional programming for off-campus families

- As a result of meeting with a group of students from Eastgate, Westgate and off campus in the spring of 2019, the Working Group learned it is often difficult for student parents who live off-campus to participate in on-campus events because of parking issues, and that student parents who live off-campus often need special permissions to access certain spaces including playgrounds, playrooms and lactation rooms.

- Survey data shows that among students with children who live on campus or near campus, a higher percentage strongly agree they feel connected to the MIT community versus those who live further away. The ones living farther away may be fulfilled by another community they are affiliated with (e.g., parents who live near them; church group…).

- We recognize a more proactive effort is needed to provide access to family friendly spaces for families who live off campus. There may also be additional opportunities to allocate funding for more family focused events for both on and off-campus families to build community.

- PERG's Family Friendly Toolkit describes family friendly places as a best practice. Many of our peers have family friendly spaces identified and are used by graduate students with children with different levels of support.

Among students with children who live on campus or near campus, a higher percentage strongly agree they feel connected to the MIT community versus those who live further away.

I feel part of the community at MIT.

			Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Any children living with you	MIT residence hall	N = 37	49%	32%	5%	11%	3%
	Off Campus Residence within a 15 minute walk from MIT	N = 21	48%	38%	14%		
	Off Campus Residence more than a 15 minute walk from MIT	N = 55	35%	45%	7%	5%	7%
No children living with you	MIT residence hall	N = 583	36%	45%	10%	6%	3%
	Off Campus Residence within a 15 minute walk from MIT	N = 342	28%	44%	12%	12%	4%
	Off Campus Residence more than a 15 minute walk from MIT	N = 647	21%	42%	14%	17%	7%

Legend:
- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Source: Graduate Enrolled Student Survey, 2019

19

Many of our peers offer spaces for students with children at different levels of support

School	Space
Harvard	Graduate Commons Program, residentially based, hosts family programming.
Yale	McDougal Center, invites graduate spouses and partners and their children to use its common spaces and facilities, and to participate in GSL activities as appropriate.
Stanford	Graduate Community Center, space for all graduate students with family friendly spaces and programming. Currently establishing a student family community center as a result of their Working Advisory Group.
Berkeley	Student Parent Center, centralized multi-purpose campus resource, where students can seek informed advice, develop leadership skills, engage in informal study groups, nurse babies, change diapers, celebrate achievements, recover from setback, and form lasting friendships.
UChicago	Family Center, drop-in center for families that offers family-friendly programs, informational materials for families, and a support network. Membership is free for graduate students and postdocs.
Penn	The Family Resource Center, is a hub for information, resources, activities and advocacy for students and post-docs with children. The Family Center provides a forum for student parents to connect and develop supportive networks, and offers a welcoming and family-friendly environment for Penn students, post-docs, caregivers, and children.

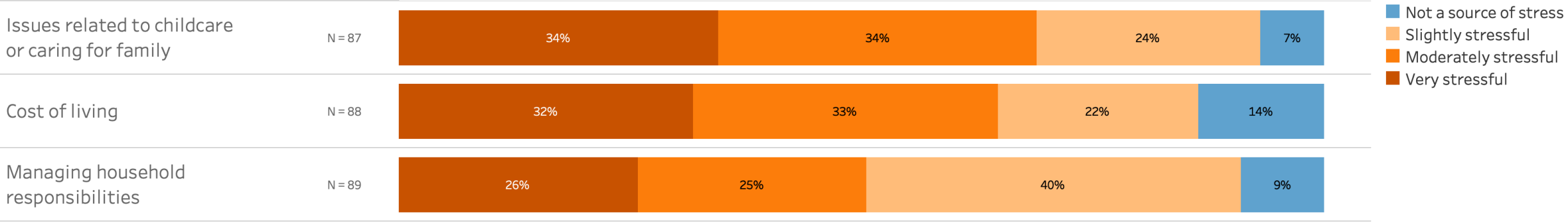# 4. Identify new ways to support students with children financially

- Our Ivy+ peers show similarities in the provision of hardship grants, back up childcare, childbirth and parental leave accommodations, programming, and housing options for students with children.

- Where we differ is the identified financial support models for students with children that cover more than just childcare – dependent health care, flexible childcare, housing, and food in a more coordinated and centralized manner than MIT. MIT is one of the only Ivy+ peer institutions that does not offer a family grant for our students to offset the high costs of childcare, housing and cost of living in Cambridge and the greater Boston area.

- Our peers offering this type of financial support largely offer funding solely to doctoral students and a very small number of specifically identified master's programs. Stanford's pilot program last year funded both doctoral and master's students. Financial support offered by our peers to students with children is often provided by provost offices, centralized administrative units, or graduate education offices. The grants offered range from $2,000 to $12,000.

- While MIT does not have a specifically identified grant offered to students with children, **there is a significant and generous subsidy for family medical insurance which is higher than any of its Ivy+ peer institutions**, historically drawing from the Student Extended Insurance Plan surplus, and charging the same rates for dependents regardless of the number of children covered by the plan.

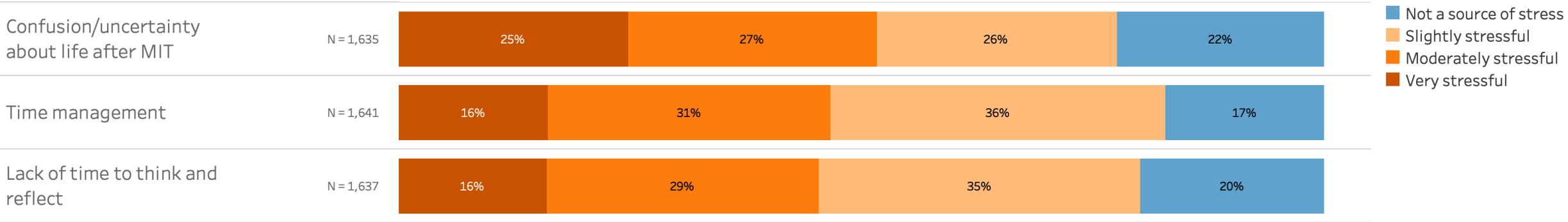# 4. Identify new ways to support students with children financially

- 14% of students with children who responded to the open ended comments of the 2019 Graduate Enrolled Student Survey (2019, n=44) for the question, "Are there aspects of your graduate program that you find problematic?" voiced their concern about financial issues including stipend not enough to support family expenses, and lack of financial support for childcare, and financial problems when international spouses/partners unable to work.

- As a result of meeting with a group of students from Eastgate, Westgate and off campus in the spring of 2019, the Working Group learned the budget margins are very small for students with children, especially if spouse or partner cannot work.

- Making sure to include a voice for families in the room when policy decisions are being made, as any small changes in policies or costs can greatly impact families was very important as well (ie – Housing costs, MIT Medical plan changes, Costco cards, ticketing discounts, spouses paying fee to add Tech Cash to their ID cards, etc.).

- Students in the group thought the Institute should consider reinstating the Technology Childcare Center scholarships for graduate students that are offered currently to MIT administrative, support, and post-doctoral staff members.

- Students appreciated the different sources of funding to help with issues of food insecurity and hardship grants, but voiced frustration that it wears ones dignity down to keep asking for help.

Students with children report issues related to childcare or caring for family, cost of living and managing household responsibilities as their top three sources of stress

Source of stress for you. Top 3 for students with **young children** living with them.

Issues related to childcare or caring for family	N = 87	34%	34%	24%	7%
Cost of living	N = 88	32%	33%	22%	14%
Managing household responsibilities	N = 89	26%	25%	40%	9%

Legend:
- Not a source of stress
- Slightly stressful
- Moderately stressful
- Very stressful

Source of stress for you. Top 3 for students with **no children** living with them.

Confusion/uncertainty about life after MIT	N = 1,635	25%	27%	26%	22%
Time management	N = 1,641	16%	31%	36%	17%
Lack of time to think and reflect	N = 1,637	16%	29%	35%	20%

Legend:
- Not a source of stress
- Slightly stressful
- Moderately stressful
- Very stressful

23

Source: Graduate Enrolled Student Survey, 2019

Students with children report cost of living, family obligations, and work/financial commitments as the top three obstacles to their academic progress

Obstacles to your academic progress. Top 5 for students with **young children** living with them.

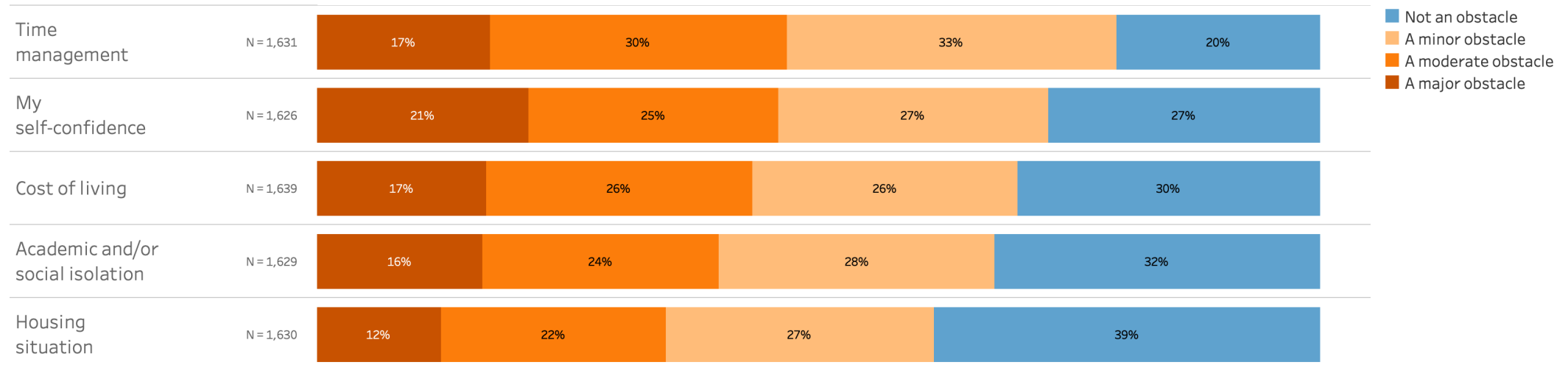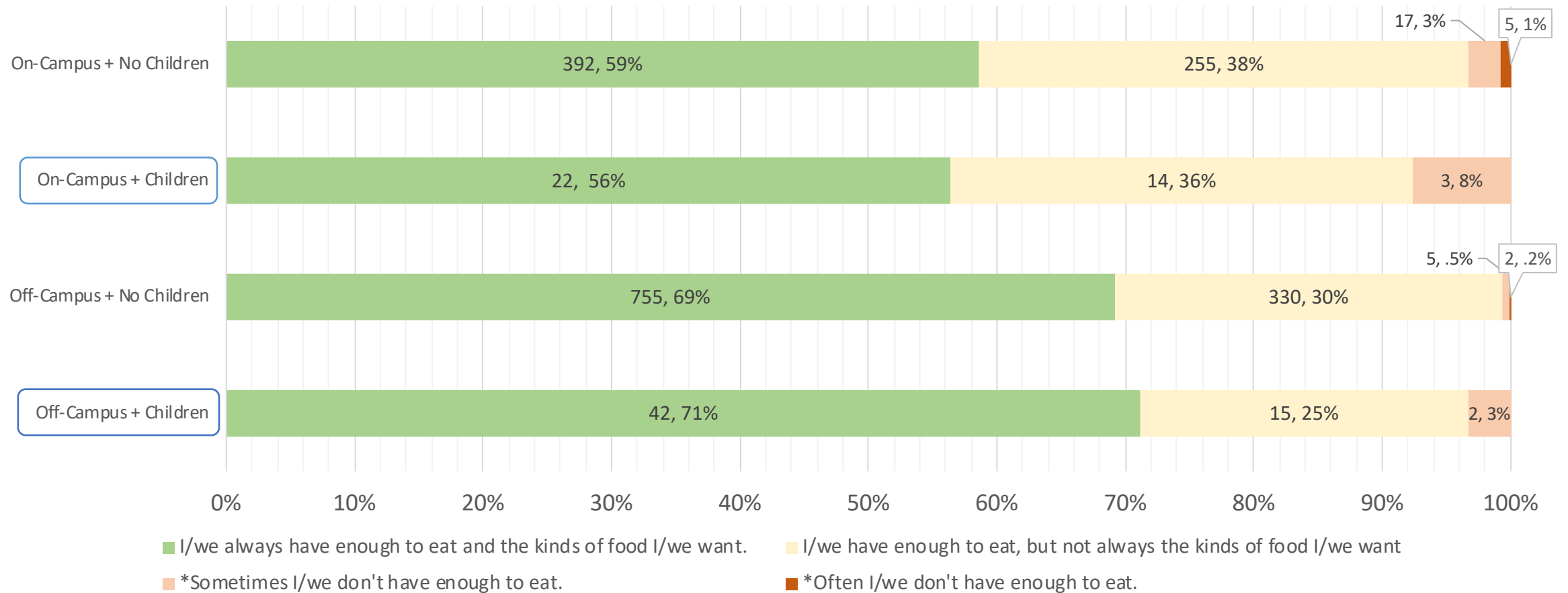|		Not an obstacle	A minor obstacle	A moderate obstacle	A major obstacle

Cost of living	N = 85	33%	31%	20%	16%
Family obligations	N = 88	24%	33%	27%	16%
Work/financial commitments	N = 81	23%	30%	31%	16%
Housing situation	N = 83	24%	23%	20%	33%
Time management	N = 87	13%	33%	31%	23%

Obstacles to your academic progress. Top 5 for students with **no children** living with them.

Time management	N = 1,631	17%	30%	33%	20%
My self-confidence	N = 1,626	21%	25%	27%	27%
Cost of living	N = 1,639	17%	26%	26%	30%
Academic and/or social isolation	N = 1,629	16%	24%	28%	32%
Housing situation	N = 1,630	12%	22%	27%	39%

Legend: Not an obstacle / A minor obstacle / A moderate obstacle / A major obstacle

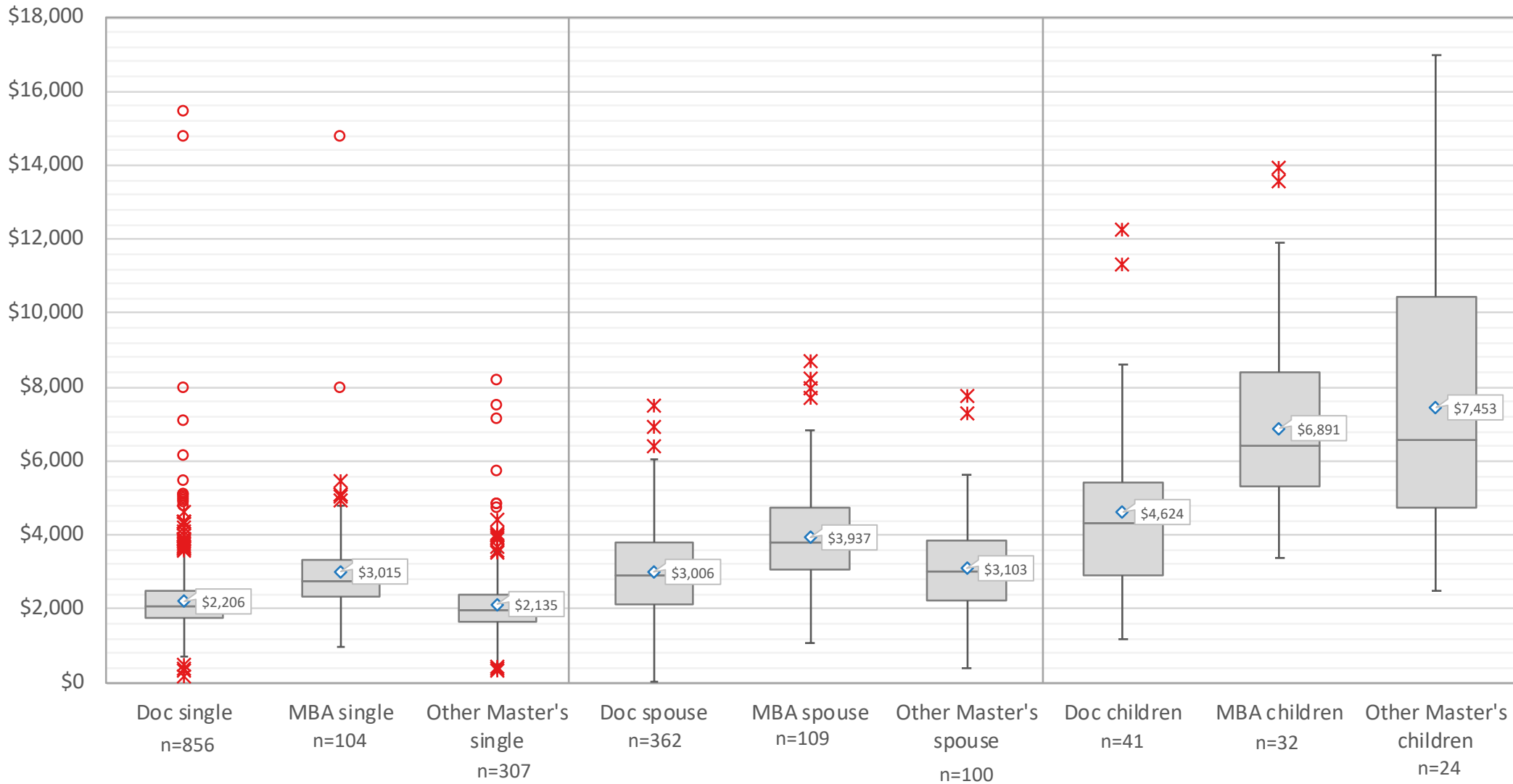Source: Graduate Enrolled Student Survey, 2019

24

Eight percent of families who responded report that sometimes they don't have enough to eat

The Family Food Grant provided by DSL has helped 162 families including couples,
who have encountered food insecurity in the last year and a half.

Chart Title

On-Campus + No Children: 392, 59% | 255, 38% | 17, 3% | 5, 1%

On-Campus + Children: 22, 56% | 14, 36% | 3, 8%

Off-Campus + No Children: 755, 69% | 330, 30% | 5, .5% | 2, .2%

Off-Campus + Children: 42, 71% | 15, 25% | 2, 3%

- ■ I/we always have enough to eat and the kinds of food I/we want.
- ■ I/we have enough to eat, but not always the kinds of food I/we want
- ■ *Sometimes I/we don't have enough to eat.
- ■ *Often I/we don't have enough to eat.

Source: Graduate Enrolled Student Survey, 2019

The median monthly reported expenses are higher for MBA and Master's compared to Doctoral students with children

Doc single
n=856 — $2,206

MBA single
n=104 — $3,015

Other Master's single
n=307 — $2,135

Doc spouse
n=362 — $3,006

MBA spouse
n=109 — $3,937

Other Master's spouse
n=100 — $3,103

Doc children
n=41 — $4,624

MBA children
n=32 — $6,891

Other Master's children
n=24 — $7,453

Source: Cost of Living Survey 2017

Students with children report using a variety of methods to close the income/expense gap

- Half the respondents with children (n=63) to the 2017 Cost of Living Survey say they were short and expect to be short the next year.

- 18 students said yes to "Do you receive support from the city of Cambridge, or government support programs more generally (e.g. food stamps, subsidized housing, etc.)?" Of those, 7 said they were short the previous year, 4 said Yes, their income was enough.
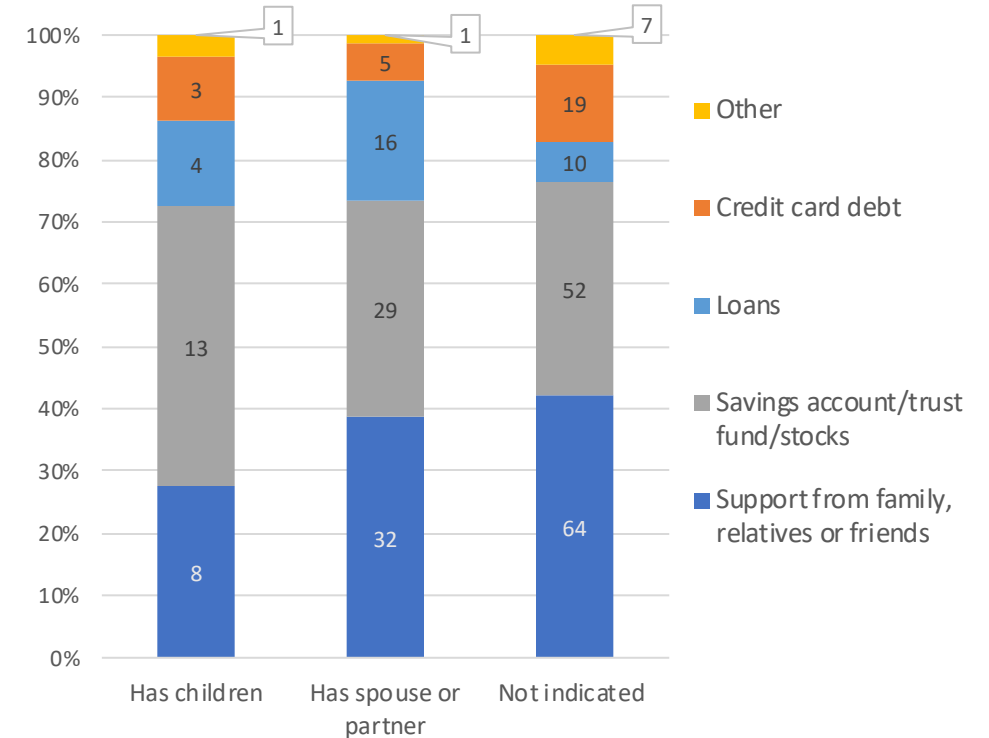
Was your previous year's income enough to cover your household & living expenses during the previous year (from Sep 2016 through Aug 2017)?

	Has children		Has spouse or partner		Not indicated		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	28	44%	259	72%	554	74%	841	72%
No, I was short about $	**30**	**48%**	84	23%	154	20%	268	23%
Not applicable	3	5%	5	1%	15	2%	23	2%
Don't know	2	3%	12	3%	30	4%	44	4%
Total	63	100%	360	100%	753	100%	100	100%

Do you believe your income will be sufficient to cover your household expenses during this academic year (from Sep 2017 through Aug 2018)?

	Has children		Has spouse or partner		Not indicated		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	37	39%	323	61%	774	63%	1134	61%
No	**45**	**47%**	130	24%	264	22%	439	24%
Don't know	13	14%	78	15%	184	15%	275	15%
Total	95	100%	531	100%	1222	100%	1848	100%

What was the primary method you used to resolve the gap between your expenses and your income?

Legend:
- Other
- Credit card debt
- Loans
- Savings account/trust fund/stocks
- Support from family, relatives or friends

Has children: Support from family 8, Savings 13, Loans 4, Credit card debt 3, Other 1
Has spouse or partner: Support from family 32, Savings 29, Loans 16, Credit card debt 5, Other 1
Not indicated: Support from family 64, Savings 52, Loans 10, Credit card debt 19, Other 7

Source: Cost of Living Survey

MIT health insurance rates for spouses/children are significantly lower than our peers

While MIT does not have a specifically identified grant offered to students with children, there is a significant subsidy for family medical insurance which is higher than any of its Ivy+ peer institutions, historically drawing from the Student Extended Insurance Plan surplus, and charging the same rates for dependents regardless of the number of children covered by the plan.

Select Ivy League Institution AY19 Dependent Costs

AY18/19 Rates	MIT	Brown	% difference	Yale[1]	% difference	Harvard	% difference	Dartmouth	% difference
Student	$3,144	$3,846	-22%	$2,402	24%	$3,364	-7%	$3,073	2%
Student + Partner	$6,576	$7,662	-17%	$8,934	-36%	$10,542	-60%	$8,703	-32%
Student + Dependent(s)[2]	$4,212	$11,478	-173%	$8,040	-91%	$9,078	-116%	$11,405	-171%
Family	$7,644	$11,478	-50%	$14,990	-96%	$16,256	-113%	$11,405	-49%

Note: Where possible, rates for student-only coverage do not include the student health fee equivalent to our basic plan; all other rates are inclusive of all fees.
[1] No separate student health fee
[2] Costs for two enrolled children

Peer benchmark of financial and childcare support

School	Grants for Students with Children	On Campus Child Care	Subsidized Child Care	Backup Care Benefit	Other
Penn	Annual Family Grant, $5000 for one child, $10,000 max per family. 90 grants given FY19 Annual Dependent Health Insurance Grant, $1,000 per dependent	One (limited space, long waitlist, preference given to faculty/staff not students)	No	Care.com, 5 days of care/$5 hour	Family Resource Center 1,300 parents 650 active members
Harvard	One time Financial Support Payment of $6,516, combined with Parental Accommodation	Six on campus centers with 380 spots, $2-3,000/Month	No	Care.com, 10 days of care/$5 hour	Child care Bulletin Board and Watch Portal (Harvard Key access), Family Housing
Yale	Annual Family Grant, $4,600, $1,000 for each additional child	No	No	Caregivers On Call, $7/hour, 40 hours a year	Family Housing, Yale Babysitting service, subsidized dependent health insurance
Princeton	Annual Child Care Reimbursement, $5,000 per child	Two, preference given to Princeton students, faculty, staff, 300 spots ~2,000/Month	See Reimbursement Grant	Bright Horizons Backup Care, $4/Hour, 100 hours a year	Discounts at area child care centers
Brown	Annual Grant, $4,000 subsidy (all grad students)	No	No	No	No
Dartmouth	No	Staff only	No	No	Family Housing
Columbia	See Child Care Subsidy	No	$2000, annually	Bright Horizons, 100 Hours, no rate listed	Adoption Reimbursement $5000
Stanford	Annual Grant $10,000 -1st year of grant	Six campus centers, 650+ spots, ~$2000/month	See grant	No	Family Housing
U Chicago	Annual Grant $2,000 -around 100 given a year (only PhD)	Two on campus Bright Horizons Centers, 250 Spots	See Grant	No	Family Resource Center, Free drop in childcare for students, childcare coop fac. by FRC
Cornell	Annual Grant $12,000	On campus Bright Horizons Center, 180 spots	See grant	No, but free Care.com web access	Family Housing
MIT	No	Five centers on campus, 375 spots, $2k-$2700 (37 grad student children)	No	Care.com backup care 10 days, $5/hr	Family Housing, Food Insecurity Grant

Our peers use a variety of assessments to determine need

School	Means Assessment
Berkeley	Evaluates an applicant's family income and assets (excluding certain asset categories) as part of determining need. for the 2018-2019 academic year, the median grant awarded was $8,000, and the median income for students who received a grant was $34,530.
Brown	Total household adjusted gross income of less than or equal to $100,000 in calendar year 2018 (for the 2020 subsidy)
Columbia	None
Cornell	Use a combination of AGI and spouse/partner activity to determine eligibility. Must be under $122,000 Ranges: 0-$73,000, $73,001-$102,000, $102,000-$122,000
Harvard	None
Penn	Grants are not guaranteed. Grants are disbursed as funding allows, with priority given to the students who demonstrate the highest financial need. Grants are awarded in the range of $500-$5,000 per child.
Princeton	Current household income and number of children determines awards. This is currently being re-evaluated to be less stringent. Ranges: $0-$65,000; $65,001-$80,000; $80,001-$95,000; $95,001-$110,000 ; $110,001-$130,000
Stanford	Awards may range from $1,000 to $10,000 per academic year, depending on family financial circumstances. Award levels are based on household's federal taxable gross earnings as determined by prior year's taxes, child support payments received (if applicable), and the age and number of eligible children. Expenses for childcare, healthcare and rent is also considered. Families with children under 10 years old are given greater consideration.
UChicago	Anyone with a child can apply, funds are given to those most in need. Must submit documentation of income and documentation of children claimed as dependents.

As a result of the Working Group's discoveries the following updates and changes have occurred:

- The MIT Guide for Students with Children website was launched to address concerns about information residing in many places.

- New graduate families email list-serve launched (graduate-families@mit.edu).

- Summer orientation webinar provided by Division of Student Life and Spouses & Partners Connect for incoming students with children this July.

- A new WhatsApp group (a group instant messaging service) of new and old families as a mentoring group was created this summer. The WhatsApp group is being used as a family forum.

- All Westgate events are now open to both on and off-campus families.

- New family liaison for Cambridge Public Schools will provide Associate Dean Naomi Carton updates on school information and open spaces to share with student families.

- An Atlas for New Grads family tile is being developed for the next admissions cycle.

The Working Group recommends:

- Identify a designated staff person or centralized office focused on communication, outreach and programs to coordinate support efforts for graduate students with children.
  - Include identified staff member in development or changes in policies may affect graduate student families.

- Capture data on graduate students with children administratively and centrally, rather than relying on survey data.
  - Investigate the feasibility of collecting family status data during term registration process or admissions process.
  - Align questions on family status across Institute surveys.

- Identify family friendly space(s) on campus and provide more opportunities for family friendly events.
  - Consider a combination of a family resource center, a family resource office or a designated space with family friendly set up for events.
  - Actively seek out students living off-campus for family programming and community building, and work to create access to spaces for student parents who do not live on-campus.

- Consider a need-based portable Family Grant to address acute financial needs of the students with children mentioned in this report within the broader networks of support for graduate students.
  - Review and use the 2016 GW@MIT report on childcare to help define need and identify criteria to asses.

We welcome your feedback

To submit comments or questions, please visit:

https://tinyurl.com/gradfamilies

For questions contact:

Lauren Pouchak, Director of Special Projects

Office of the Vice Chancellor

lpouchak@mit.edu