

Washington State's

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

A UNIFIED VISION TO SUPPORT CHILD OUTCOMES AND FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Washington State's Success Starts With **STRONG VALUES**



Affordable, Equitable, High-Quality Early Care and Education Available to All



Racial Disproportionality Eliminated



Skilled and Trained Early Learning Workforce Earning a Living Wage



Early Learning Providers Receive Professional Development and Funding Support



Collaborative Partnerships



Mixed Delivery System and Family Choice



Promoting Development and Belonging for Every Child

Washington State's Success Starts With **STRONG FOUNDATIONS AND A FOCUS ON EQUITY**

2015



EARLY START ACT

Expanded high-quality early care and education.



Expanded coaching opportunities for providers.



Early Achievers required for all subsidy and ECEAP providers.



Provided families with 12 months of subsidy, when eligible.



Aligned Licensing, Early Achievers, and ECEAP standards.

2021



FAIR START FOR KIDS ACT

Investments to help early care and education be more affordable for Washington state families.

4,000 more families served and 6,800 children receiving child care subsidies. Currently 44,000 children being served.



Expanded access, capped copays, and resources to support providers.



2,500+ new pre-k slots through ECEAP with expanded eligibility. Currently 16,404 ECEAP slots.



Increased stability to some of our most vulnerable families and children, including those without housing.



Focus on equity through dual language and equity grants, as well as trauma-informed and mental health supports.

2023 AND BEYOND



HIGH-QUALITY CARE

Identifying gaps in Washington state's child care and early learning system between private market, subsidy rates, and true cost-of-care, with family need and workforce impacts considered.



Washington State's Success Continues with Ongoing Commitments:



AFFORDABILITY:

Increased child care eligibility for more families by capping copays and family's contributions at 7%.

Working toward living wage.

Health benefits for early learning providers.



ACCESSIBILITY:

Year-round access to early care and education for infants, toddlers, preschoolers (ECEAP, Working Connections Child Care, Transition to Kindergarten, etc.) and school-age children.

Coordinate recruitment and enrollment to support families.

Integrated, holistic, mixed-delivery system in all communities across Washington.



QUALITY:

Focus on quality standards, such as:

- child outcomes • interactions and environments • curriculum and staff support
- family engagement and partnerships
- staff professionalism

Trauma-informed and healing-centered early care and education.

Academic and social-emotional benefits to all children.



PROVIDER AND PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS:

Community engagement, communications, and soliciting feedback to refine provider supports.

Collaboration among providers and districts to meet the needs of families at the community level.

Ongoing collaboration among DCYF, OSPI, Child Care Aware of WA, Dept. of Commerce, Tribes, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 925.

Washington State's Future Success for Early Learning Looks Like:

VISION:

An integrated mixed-delivery system of affordable, high-quality, early care and education for ALL of Washington's children. Options include child care, ECEAP, Transition to Kindergarten, developmental preschool, school-age care, and more.

Providers have the skills and training to be successful and are paid a living wage with benefits.



IMPACT GOAL:

80% of Washington children are ready for kindergarten.



Unified Vision Partners:



Washington State Department of **CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



DCYF does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran or military status, status as a breastfeeding mother, and the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability or use of a dog guide or service animal. If you would like free copies of this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations at 1-800-723-4831 or email communications@dcyf.wa.gov.

DCYF PUBLICATION EL_0080 (04-2024)