
MAKING A FAIR START FOR WASHINGTON FAMILIES AND KIDS

The Fair Start for Kids Act makes a \$1.1 billion investment to make child care and early learning more affordable for Washington families by expanding access, capping co-pays, and providing resources to support child care and early learning providers.

The changes made under the Act will help create an integrated system of child care and early learning in Washington State that is accessible, affordable, and in which providers and child care workers can have the support they need to provide quality care.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is the agency tasked with implementation of the Fair Start for Kids Act. Our vision is that all Washington State's children and youth grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally, and academically, nurtured by family and community.

THE NEED:

- Child care costs are one of the biggest challenges for families, along with food and housing.
- Child care can cost more than college tuition.
- Child care causes anxiety that impacts both parents and children.
- Parents want a nurturing environment and well-trained staff.
- Parents want opportunities to continue their careers, which benefits Washington businesses and the economy.
- Child care and early learning providers need additional support to continue to offer high-quality care.



IF WE SUCCEED, CHILD CARE WILL BE:

- **Accessible:** For families in both urban and rural areas, and those who work non-standard hours.
- **Affordable:** To every family, and especially to single parents and Black and Indigenous communities, and other Communities of Color.
- **High-quality:** Offering a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment.

HOW THE FAIR START FOR KIDS ACT GETS IT DONE:

- Capping copays at \$115 a month for many Washington families, such as a family of four making \$64,248 or less annually.
- Expanding eligibility for more than 4,000 families, and supporting family, friend, and neighbor providers (FFN).
- Creating more pre-k slots and converting slots for Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).
- Expanding Washington's home-based services offered to expectant parents and families with babies and young children.
- Increasing subsidies and technical assistance offerings for child care providers, as well as offering access to \$0 premium health care.

THE FAIR START FOR KIDS ACT OFFERS NEW FUNDING FOR PROVIDERS:

- \$360 million in stabilization grants to keep provider doors open.
- \$5.1 million in equity grants to expand early learning services with a priority placed on BIPOC providers and provides serving BIPOC children.
- \$9.6 million in complex needs funding to further support care for children with developmental delays, disabilities, behavioral needs, or other unique needs.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2022-2023:

- An additional 1,116 pre-k slots through ECEAP.
- Expansion of therapeutic care and specialized treatment for children and families furthest from opportunity.
- Implementation of dual language rate enhancement and trauma-informed care supports for providers.

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, sexual orientation, age, veteran's status, or presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability.

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