



## **Revenue: Take a balanced approach to the state's economic challenges**

Washington is at what we hope is the bottom of the recession. The job of lawmakers as the economy slowly recovers is to make sure children and families have what they need. That means maintaining support for health care, education, and other public structures that families rely on. Lawmakers already cut billions out of the state budget. **Lawmakers must take a balanced approach to the economic problems our state faces. Substantial revenue must be raised to protect vital services for children and families.**

## **Early Learning: Don't let early learning fall behind**

Further cuts to early learning programs would erode the strong foundation we have been building and harm Washington's ability to compete with other states for new federal funds. Early learning programs reduce the preparation gap that leads to the achievement gap in schools between white kids and children of color. To ensure that children most at risk of starting school under-prepared get the support they need to succeed, **lawmakers should add pre-kindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds to the state definition of Basic Education, while also committing to programs and services for infants and toddlers. Lawmakers also should protect current state investments for early learning programs serving vulnerable children.**

## **Childhood Hunger: Feed hungry kids in the summer**

Childhood hunger should have no place in Washington State, but 300,000 families struggle to put food on the table. That number rises over the summer months when kids no longer have school meals to count on. Small investments in start-up grants for summer meal programs would yield big results and bring federal money to communities all over the state. **Lawmakers could leverage \$3 million in federal funds, and expand summer meal sites by a dozen locations, by investing in a fall cycle of start-up grants for summer meals programs.**

## **Children's Health: Protect kids' health coverage through the recovery**

Apple Health for Kids is doing what it's supposed to do: It's protecting children in difficult economic times from the loss of health coverage. Cuts to Apple Health for Kids will hurt the state's fragile economic recovery, and thousands of children will no longer see a doctor for regular immunizations and screenings. Now is not the time to undo ten years of progress in children's health. Protect the program parents rely on to protect their kids. **Lawmakers should preserve full coverage through the Apple Health for Kids program.**

## **Foster Care: Preserve our commitment to racial equity**

All foster kids should be getting what they need to lead successful adult lives. Today, they aren't. African-American and Native-American children end up in foster care more often and stay longer once they're there. The Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (RDAC) is leading Washington's effort to use research and best practices to identify and root out bias and inequality in our child welfare system. **Lawmakers should maintain RDAC and protect our state's commitment to an equitable child welfare system that protects every child.**

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