

High Quality Child Care:

Good for Babies, Families & Communities

The Opportunity in 2019

Inadequate *Working Connections Child Care* subsidy reimbursement rates are standing in the way of access to affordable, high quality early learning opportunities for Washington's young children and families. **Invest in strong families and communities by increasing child care subsidy rates for infants and toddlers to 75 percent of the market rate.**



What is Working Connections?

Our state's largest early learning funding stream, *Working Connections Child Care*, combines federal and state funds to help thousands of working families stay on the job by helping offset the cost of high quality care for their children.

High Quality Child Care Builds Great Futures

High quality child care feeds a baby's growing brain, building the foundation for the development and learning necessary for them to thrive as adults. Children's brains develop more rapidly during the first three years than at any other time of life, forming more than 1 million neural connections per second. The quality of child care ultimately boils down to the relationship between the child care provider and the child; skilled and stable providers promote positive development. Caregivers and teachers should have specialized knowledge and skill in early childhood development, with a focus on



infant and toddlers. Skilled and stable providers promote positive development.

This helps ensure that Washington's future workforce – today's babies and toddlers – arrive at school ready to learn and prepared for success.



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

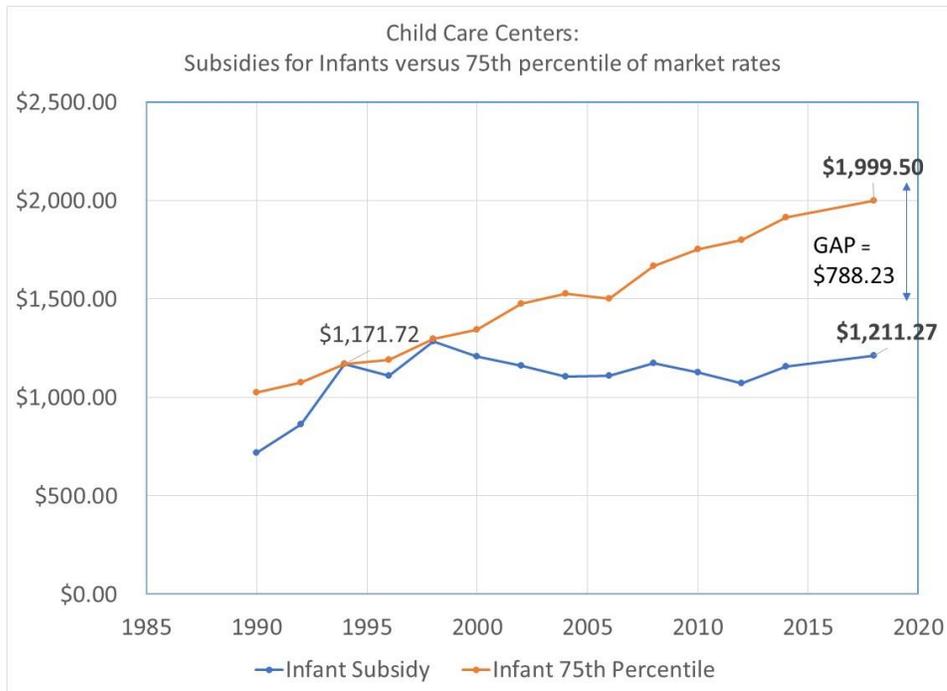
A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families



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Working Families Can't Access High Quality Child Care

High quality child care, especially for infants and toddlers, is expensive and hard for parents to find. In Washington State, the average annual cost of care for an infant exceeds the cost of in-state college tuition. Despite research that shows that at-risk children—children from families with few resources and under great stress – benefit most from quality child care, low quality care is often the only care available to low-income families.



State Investments in Child Care Have Not Kept Up with Market Rates

The disparity between the subsidy rate and the 75th percentile of market rates for infant care in center-based and family child care home settings ranges from \$244 to \$788 monthly.

Inadequate subsidy rates are limiting the ability of families to find care and of child care providers to invest in quality.

Increase Child Care Subsidy Rates in 2019

Policymakers should invest in Washington families and communities by increasing the Working Connections Child Care subsidy rate to 75 percent of the market rate for infants and toddlers.

For more information, contact Allison Krutsinger at allison.krutsinger@childrensalliance.org or 253.426.0410.

Coalition Members: Children's Alliance, MomsRising, Child Care Aware of WA, Save the Children Action Network, Parent Ambassadors, Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP.



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