Affordable Childcare for All!

It’s time for us to open the doors of opportunity for children and families in Washington State and invest in affordable childcare for all!

The Problem

Parents can’t work if their childcare isn’t working for them and the childcare workforce needs a livable wage to support their own families and provide high-quality care. Recent studies show that access to affordable, high-quality child care could add $8.2 billion into the pockets of working families and the overall economy.

The fact of the matter is that childcare costs are sky high – the average cost of infant care in Washington is nearly a year's worth of mortgage.

Compounding that, families lack access. 63% of Washington families live in a “childcare desert,” meaning they can’t access the quality child care they need. And the situation is even more stark for families in need of a childcare provider who accepts Working Connections Child Care. Childcare providers accepting the WCCC subsidy are being asked to care for children at between 10% and 20% of the market rate for infant care – making it impossible for providers to stay in business. Meanwhile, early learning providers, 94% of whom are women, are struggling significantly since childcare is one of the lowest paying industries in the U.S. – and here in Washington pet groomers are paid more.

Our Budget Holds Families Back

Just 0.8% of the Washington State budget (yes! 0.8 - you read that right!) is devoted to early learning, compared 52.2% on k-12. 90% of a child’s brain development happens in the years between birth and 5 years old and yet our state spends 1/50 the amount on children during this period of rapid development than when a child turns 5.

The Solution

Families need safe, enriching environments where they know their children are safe, loved, and learning. Childcare providers need to be paid a living wage to support themselves and their families, and children need to thrive. It’s time to open the doors of opportunity for ALL children and families by making high-quality childcare accessible and affordable by capping family childcare expenses, increasing WCCC reimbursement rates, and working towards adequate compensation for providers. Children and families thrive with stable, skilled caregivers, who require a living wage to support themselves and their families.

Sources: