

# Extending the Homeless Grace Period for Working Connections Child Care

The Homeless Grace Period (HGP) was created in 2017 to address existing barriers for families experiencing homelessness in accessing the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy. We have seen in the first year of the program that the 4-month window to prepare to meet full WCCC eligibility criteria is not long enough for families in crisis to stabilize.

Extending the grace period from 4 to 12 months would maintain access to the high-quality early learning environments for homeless children that are critical to childhood development, while giving their families the time needed to resolve issues related to homelessness such as housing and employment.

## Support HB 1574/SB 5820 to increase early learning opportunities for vulnerable children.

### Extend the Homeless Grace Period to create needed continuity of care for kids

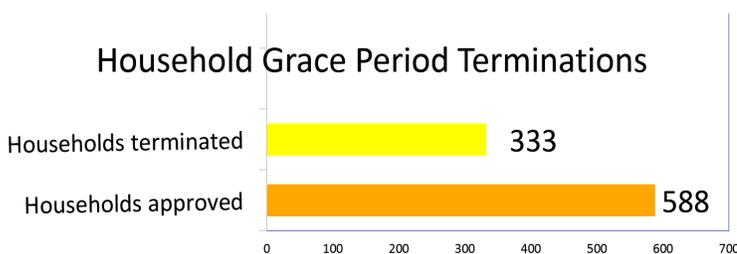
Families in homelessness experience daily trauma that can have long-term impacts for children. Quality child care provides a safe, development-focused environment that is a proven protective factor for kids, and critical to their resilience.

### Consistency across systems

- Extending access to child care to 12 months would prevent families from transitioning to locally-funded homeless services, freeing up resources for other facets of homeless services.
- 12-month authorization is consistent with existing WCCC authorization period for housed families.

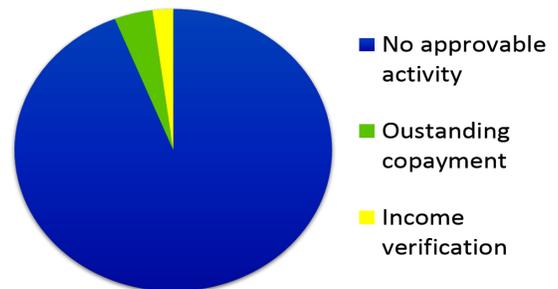
### A snapshot of data July 2017—March 2018 indicates that children are not receiving the stable care they need while their families are experiencing crisis:

Statewide, 588 families were approved for child care through the HGP. 57% of these families (333) lost eligibility for quality child care after the grace period ended.



69% of families were unable to use the subsidy. Given the shortage of slots system-wide and difficulty of finding providers able to take subsidy, 120 days was not long enough to find care.

### Reasons for Terminations



- In 313 terminations the parent did not have an approvable WCCC activity
- 7 families could not provide verification of employment
- 13 were unable to pay outstanding copayments

### Sources:

- ◇ Child Care Resources, Annual Report to Child Care Aware of Washington, July 2018: Helping Families Experiencing Homelessness Navigate and Access Child Care
- ◇ Department of Children, Youth & Families, [2019-21 Biennium Budget Decision Package: GP – Extend CC Grace Period for Homeless](#)

