

# High-Quality Child Care begins with skilled, nurturing caregivers.



**CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE**

*A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families*

## **The Opportunity in 2019**

In early learning settings, a child's relationships with qualified, caring adults are the single biggest driver of their growth and development. Ensure that caregivers have access to the training they need to support healthy growth and learning. Support a diverse workforce by reducing barriers to qualifying credentials. **Fully fund Early Achievers and workforce professional development.**

## **Quality child care requires support for caregivers**

Quality care requires specialized skills and knowledge about child development and what kids need to thrive. New state requirements are intended to ensure caregivers have the skills they need to nurture healthy development. Providers need support to meet those requirements.

Many people practicing in the field today offer a wealth of experience and love for children. They have developed knowledge and skills through mentorship, coaching, and community-based and on-the-job training. With low wages and families of their own, child care providers face many obstacles to higher-ed certification of their expertise. To support providers, we must address barriers like: time, money, availability of local programs and classes in a provider's language, and experiences with bias in the education system.

A credential equivalency process would allow providers to develop and demonstrate their skills locally, affordably, and with culturally and linguistically relevant trainers and evaluators.

## **Legislators must:**

1. Ensure that all early childhood professionals have adequate time to meet new credential requirements. **Pass HB 1866.**
2. Support educators with diverse pathways to develop and demonstrate their skills to support kids' healthy development. **Fund a credential equivalencies proviso.**
3. Support providers with scholarships and coaching to improve the quality of their programs. **Fully fund Early Achievers and pass HB 1391.**