



# 2022 Legislative Agenda

Though it's less than a year old, the 2021 Fair Start for Kids Act is already lowering the high cost of quality child care for families across Washington state. Despite this progress, many of our families, businesses, and essential early childhood professionals are still struggling.

Together, parents, providers, and employers look forward to partnering with legislators to address workforce compensation once and for all by paying providers for the true cost of care, providing a living wage floor with comprehensive benefits, and offering opportunities for professional and financial growth.

As we continue through the pandemic, we must address the early learning workforce crisis which impacts child wellbeing and the ability for workers across all industries to continue working.

**Legislators should use available funding for strategies to recruit and retain new providers to the early learning field.**

- **Support compensation for lived experience:** Work in conjunction with other advocacy groups to compensate participants with lived experience at department meetings and working groups.
- **Reduce barriers to workforce recruitment:** Reform the background check process with a long-term investment to ensure a 72-hour turnaround for early learning applicants. Support funding background check application and fingerprint processing fees for early learning workers.
- **Support the Fair Start for Kids programs that need consistent funding sources:**
  - \$185K for continuing the infant and early mental health consultation.
  - \$3.1 million for expansion of the Family Friend and Neighbor caregivers statewide.
- **Fund data collection on transitional kindergarten:** Request a budget proviso that requires school districts to collect key information related to transitional and developmental preschool, prior to further expansion of the program.

# Support Agenda

- **Maintain an enhanced rate for providers:** Fund a per-slot, quality support rate for DCYF to provide curriculum and assessment supports to Early Childhood Education and Assistance program providers. (\$1.3 million)
- **Minimize learning loss among our youngest learners:** Fund nearly nine weeks of ECEAP during summer 2022. (\$5.9 million)
- **Improve educational availability for children:** The budget will increase affordable, high-quality, early learning programs by converting a portion of the part day Early Childhood Education Assistance Program slots to school and working-day slots. (\$9.3 million)

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The Early Learning Action Alliance is a broad coalition of organizations representing a diverse array of Washington nonprofits, professional associations, businesses, and industries. We are united by the belief that all children in Washington state deserve to have the opportunities and support they need in their first five years of life to be prepared for school and a bright future.

The Arc of King County \* Child Care Action Council \* Child Care Aware of Washington \* Child Care Action Council \* Child Care Resources \* Child Haven \* Children's Alliance \* Children's Campaign Fund \* Children's Home Society of Washington and Trust Foundation \* Children's Therapy Center \* Columbia City Consulting \* Committee for Children \* Community Day Center for Children, Inc \* Early Care and Education Consortium \* Economic Opportunity Institute \* Educare Seattle \* Elty Consulting \* First 5 FUNDamentals \* Foundation for Tacoma Students \* Help Me Grow Pierce County \* League of Education Voters \* Mission: Readiness \* MomsRising \* Neighborhood House \* Nurse Family Partnership \* OneAmerica \* Partners for Our Children \* Project Child Success \* Puget Sound Educational Service District \* Ready Nation \* Save the Children \* Save the Children Action Network \* School's Out Washington \* Sound Child Care Solutions \* Southeast Seattle Education Coalition \* Teach for America - Washington \* Tiny Trees Preschool \* United Way of King County \* United Ways of the Pacific Northwest \* Washington Association for the Education of Young Children \* Washington Association for Infant Mental Health \* The Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics \* Washington Childcare Centers Association \* Washington Federation of Independent Schools \* Washington Home Visiting Coalition \* Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility \* Washington State Alliance of YMCAs \* Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP \* Washington State Budget & Policy Center \* Washington State Community Action Partnership \* Washington STEM \* Washington Communities for Children \* Washington State Parent Ambassadors \* Wellspring Family Services \* WithinReach \* Zeno

