For Washington to thrive, all of our children must thrive. That’s why Children’s Alliance partners with parents and other community leaders to push for public investments in key areas of child well-being.

Public policies govern the lives of all of us. It’s important that those policies—the laws, budgets, rules and other choices we make—be founded on a bedrock of equal opportunity, justice and the common concern for everyone’s welfare.

When parents and community leaders advocate, they do more than work for better results for kids. They build the capacity of Washington’s communities to act for the common good. When people from all walks of life can speak to their legislators, progress is on its way.

We advocate for a particular reason. Racism plays an enormous role in influencing the course of every child’s life.

Public policies have long been instruments of creating and maintaining inequality.

Have a Heart for Kids Day brings hundreds of advocates for kids to the capitol steps, then into meetings with elected representatives like Rep. Pat Sullivan D-Covington.
This year, by opening the doors of power in Olympia to parents and advocates from across the state, we achieved two historic victories.

On March 4, advocates for kids came back to the Capitol with an advocacy message delivered by banana: restore State Food Assistance!
RESULTS
Strong Kids – Strong Families – Strong Communities

✓ Early Learning
   Historic funding for early learning via the bipartisan Early Start Act

✓ Fighting Hunger
   Full restoration of food assistance for thousands of children in immigrant families

Surrounded by supporters of all ages, Governor Jay Inslee signed the Early Start Act into law on July 6. Combined with a historic $158 million investment in early learning in the 2015-17 budget, the Act marks a new level of commitment to early learning in Washington. Now, child care providers can count on free, flexible coaching to improve their work, and kids and families can get greater access to high quality early learning.
This year, we worked to give kids a clear path forward by partnering with advocates in communities all across Washington. We chose our work strategically to build a strong future for kids in families struggling to get by.

The 2015-17 state operating budget included historic investments in high-quality early learning and sufficient funding for the Early Start Act, which passed the House and Senate with strong bipartisan majorities.

Parents, grandparents, local leaders and anti-hunger advocates have advocated with the Children’s Alliance for five years for equity and justice. The cut to State Food Assistance unfairly burdened immigrant families—primarily in communities of color—with hunger. Families and advocates spoke up courageously and persistently, and their advocacy worked! Full funding for the State Food Assistance program was restored in the budget agreement.

Thanks to our advocacy, more children in Washington State will have stable, high-quality early learning that suits them and their families. The budget agreement also includes funding for 12-month authorization for Working Connections Child Care and unprecedented investments to strengthen and support high quality, culturally responsive care.

Now, more children in cities and communities across our state have nutritious food to grow strong bodies and minds. More kids will get a great start with culturally relevant early learning. Our success supports kids and strengthens families for years to come.

With you, we succeeded in advocating for the biggest investment in early learning in the history of our state!
“The Children’s Alliance really knows what it takes to make Washington state a great place for all kids. The organization’s long-term commitment to the well-being of our state’s youngest learners created the political will for bipartisan support for the Early Start Act of 2015.”

—Sen. Steve Litzow, R-Mercer Island

“The Children’s Alliance is one of the most strategic, thoughtful, knowledgeable and responsive organizations I have seen in Olympia. The organization’s deep commitment to racial equity helped inspire other legislators this year to restore food assistance to immigrant families—and to keep working for justice in the long term.”

—Sen. Pramila Jayapal, D-Seattle
“Children’s Alliance understands the many facets and nuances of advocating for kids and families, listening carefully to feedback and integrating multiple perspectives into policy solutions. We simply would not have made the historic investments in early learning and critical support services that we did in 2015 without the brains and the heart of the Children’s Alliance.”

—Sen. Pramila Jayapal, D-Seattle

“The Children’s Alliance cares deeply about outcomes for children and particularly children of color. The focus on racial equity in the entire early learning system was largely driven by the Children’s Alliance.”

“Society views troublemakers as making trouble, but you and I know that we are, in fact, making progress.”

—Immaculate Ferreria-Allah, honored with the Children’s Alliance Brewster C. Denny Rising Advocate Award, June 2015