



It's time to invest in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers!

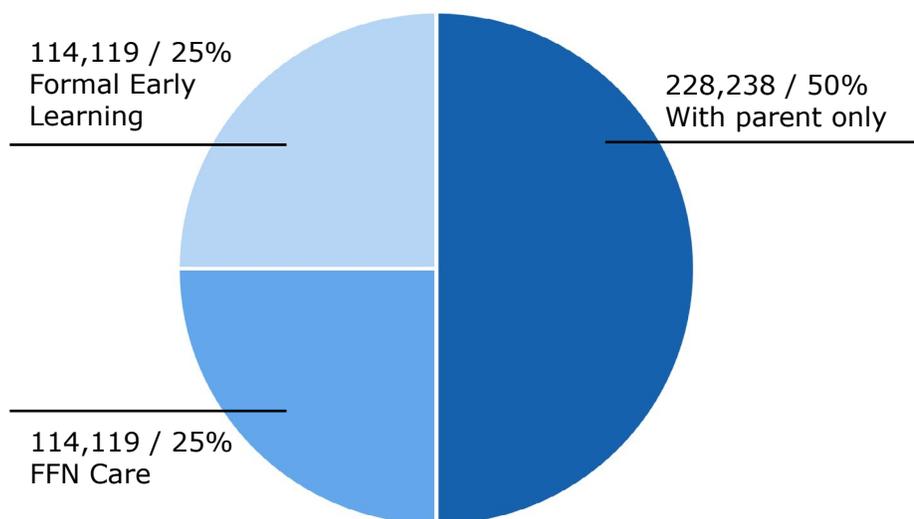
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Embracing FFN Care Moves Us Toward Racial Equity

Nearly 75% of our state's young children 0-5 are not in formal early learning programs. 25% are in the care of Family, Friend or Neighbor caregivers (FFN) while their parents are at work or school. FFN care is the preferred type of care by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color families because FFN caregivers are people that they know and trust to care for their child within the family's home culture and language. As extended family members, FFN caregivers have life-long relationships with children, and they continue to be among children's first and most important teachers beyond early childhood.

Who's taking care of Washington's children?



Kids Count Data Center, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>
Estimates based on several sources related to the prevalence of FFN care, including Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care: Facts and Figures, National Women's Law Center, 2018; Early Childhood Program Participation, US Department of Education, 2017; Demographics of Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care in the United States US Department of Health & Human Services, 2008

FFN FACTS

- FFN caregivers are grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, and close family friends
- Parents are more likely to choose FFN care when:
 - They are Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color
 - Their children are infants, toddlers and school-age
 - The child has a disability or medical condition
- 82% of child care during non-standard hours is provided by FFN caregivers
- With shifting work schedules, child care availability, school closures and openings, families are relying now more than ever on FFN care

FFN QUOTES

"I have introduced my children to new activities. I am reading and playing more with them. The follow up calls from the facilitator helped me a lot because it reminded me I am not alone and people care about me and my child's well-being."
-Caregiver, Horn of Africa Services Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Group in Seattle

"The information I've been given about what's going on in the community helps me a great deal. [The facilitator] sends me information about COVID-19, food banks, face masks, and activities."
-Caregiver, Early Connections Play & Learn in Central Washington

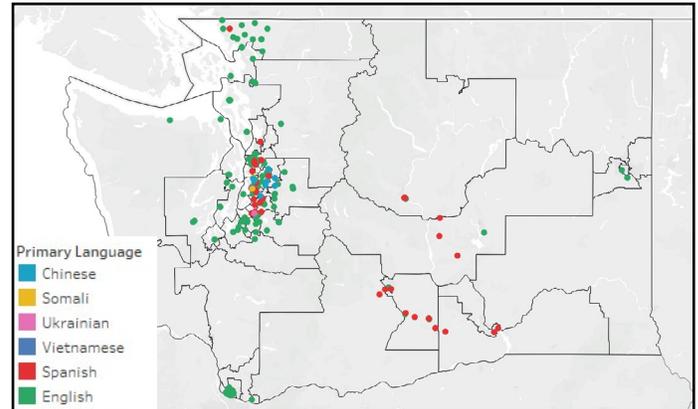
"[My child] loves all the songs and stories and he tells us about the numbers and letters he learns. This has just been an amazing opportunity for him and we are very grateful for this program!"
-Caregiver, 1-2-3 Grow & Learn in Vancouver, WA

Invest in FFN Caregivers & Children in Their Care with Evidence-Informed Programs

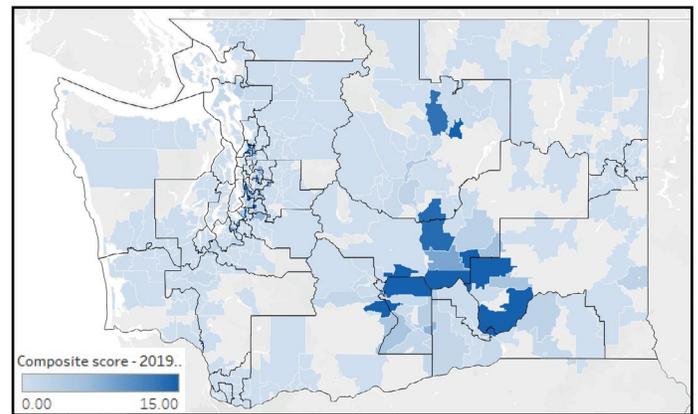
Child Care Aware of Washington's growing network of FFN programs include 2 weekly facilitated play group models (1-2-3 Grow & Learn and Kaleidoscope Play & Learn) and Early Connections, a Spanish/English text messaging program that sends caregivers information about child development and connects them with vital community resources. All programs help FFN caregivers and parents learn more about child development and how they can help their children be ready for Kindergarten. Our statewide network currently includes 165 weekly play groups in 11 languages, with Early Connections' text message program covering 9 Central Washington counties. During the pandemic, our network of FFN programs have been a lifeline connecting families to COVID prevention information and supplies, basic needs, and mental health support. Virtual play groups have been a source of enjoyable early learning opportunities and have reduced social isolation for caregivers and children.

About Our Participants

- 55% identify as Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color
- 46% reported incomes at or below the federal poverty guidelines
- 85% reported spending more time helping children build school-readiness skills
- 83% accessed additional services to help children learn and be healthy



Current locations of our FFN programs



Areas for expansion based on numbers of young children and concentration of low-income and BIPOC families

CALL TO ACTION

Washington's Early Learning System Needs Supports for FFN Care

To respond to community demand, CCA has a multi-year plan to significantly increase the number of FFN programs statewide. Our vision is that all families have a facilitated play group and other FFN programs available in their neighborhood and in their home language. We are committed to prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color families in our expansion plan.

Currently, the State of Washington funding for FFN programs is \$630,000 – just 16% of total investments when combined with local public and private financial support. Right now, state funding pays for 7 facilitated play groups and a small portion of the text messaging program.

An investment of \$3.1 million for FY23 will:

- Increase the number of state-funded facilitated play groups from 7 to 37
- Increase the number of text messaging program locations from 9 to 12 counties
- Provide program access to 1,400 more children and 900 more FFN caregivers and parents
- Fund vital infrastructure for staff training, materials translations, evaluation, technology, and leveraging local funding