



MOMS ARE RISING FOR A FAIR START FOR KIDS



What is Fair Start for Kids?

Fair Start for Kids ([House Bill 1213](#) and [Senate Bill 5237](#)) is a legislative proposal that would make early learning – including child care, preschool, and programs for infants and toddlers – more affordable and accessible for families and more sustainable for providers.

What is included in Fair Start for Kids?

Fair Start for Kids is an omnibus bill – that means it includes a lot of different policies that, collectively, will better serve our state’s children and families, including:

- **Making child care more affordable:** Expand Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) assistance to serve more families
- **Reducing the financial burden of child care co-payments:** Eliminate WCCC co-payments for low-income families and cap co-payments for all other families receiving WCCC at no more than 7% of family income
- **Inviting more children to participate in preschool:** Expand the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) to provide comprehensive services to additional families in need
- **Providing urgently-needed rate increases for child care and preschool providers:** Increase payments to providers who serve children through WCCC and ECEAP to better reflect the true cost of high-quality early learning. Importantly, providers would receive rate enhancements for providing essential services to children in their care, including: trauma-informed care, dual language instruction, and non-standard hours care
- **Advancing racial equity in early learning through provider grants:** Make grants available to providers who are incorporating culturally and linguistically relevant practices into their early learning programs



CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

RIGHT NOW	BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025	BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025 (with additional appropriation)
Child care assistance available to families with incomes at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level.	Child care assistance available to families with incomes at or below 85% of State Median Income.	Child care assistance available to families with incomes at or below 100% of State Median Income.
For a family of three that's \$43,440	For a family of three that's \$73,389	For a family of three that's \$86,340
For a family of four that's \$52,400	For a family of four that's \$87,373	For a family of four that's \$102,792

“I’m a single immigrant mom with a 1 year-old and 4 year-old without any social support. I can’t find jobs and child care. I don’t have stimulus checks from the federal government...Please help our immigrant families and single parents and fund more in child care and early learning.”

- Anonymous, Auburn

PRESCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

RIGHT NOW	BY 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR	BY 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR	SUBJECT TO RULES MADE BY DCYF
Preschool available to families earning less than or equal to 110% of the Federal Poverty Level	Preschool available to families earning less than or equal to 36% of State Median Income	Preschool available to families earning less than or equal to 50% of State Median Income	Preschool available to a limited number of families earning less than or equal to 100% of State Median Income who meet certain “risk factors”
For a family of three that's \$23,643	For a family of three that's \$31,082	For a family of three that's \$43,170	For a family of three that's \$86,340
For a family of four that's \$28,325	For a family of four that's \$37,005	For a family of four that's \$51,396	For a family of four that's \$102,792



Why do we Need a Fair Start Now?

Early learning has always been an essential infrastructure for children, families, communities, and our economy. Unfortunately, after years of underinvestment, that infrastructure has been cobbled together on the backs of working families and early learning providers. COVID-19 is making apparent what parents, caregivers, and providers have long-known: Parents and caregivers can't work when early learning isn't working for them.

Why do PARENTS need a fair start?

We struggle to find and afford child care and it impacts our financial security and well being. Child care expenses push approximately 9% of working families with children under age six out of the middle class – infant child care costs 113% more than public college in WA.

Why do PROVIDERS need a fair start?

Margins were already laser thin, even before COVID-19 with many providers sacrificing their own family economic security to serve their communities. The early learning workforce – made up of 94% women – is one of the lowest paid workforces in the country. In Washington State dog groomers are paid more than early learning providers.

Why does our ECONOMY need a fair start?

The child care crisis costs Washington employers over \$2 billion and the overall state economy \$6.5 billion annually in lost revenue and growth.

We can #RecoverTogether by passing the Fair Start for Kids Act and raising progressive revenue to pay for it. Take action today: bit.ly/FairStart4Kids

“...To manage it all, I had to start taking Fridays off, which meant reducing our family’s income - all while facing much higher - and unexpected - day care costs. To make ends meet, we had to reduce expenses and dip into savings. I’m really worried about cuts to the social safety net...COVID has shown us that we have to take care of the most vulnerable populations so that all of us can be okay.”

- Karina, Wenatchee



“Due health department ratio recommendations, I have lost half of my income as an in-home child care provider. The processes we take to bring children in our program on a daily basis has added extra work for staff and families.”

- Katherine, Seattle

