



# Child Care Aware of Washington 2019 Public Policy Agenda

Washington is in the midst of a child care crisis. Why? Child care is expensive and unaffordable for many working families. At the same time, some child care providers cannot afford to stay in business.

**High-quality child care and early learning is the best investment the state can make, yet less than one percent of the budget is dedicated to early learning.** With smart, strategic investments, Washington can ensure families have access to the child care they need to work, while their children receive the quality early learning they need to be ready for kindergarten.

## Affordable, high-quality child care is essential to our state's economy

58% of Young Children Live in Homes Where All Adults Work



Child Care Costs More Than College



Not Enough Child Care Capacity to Meet Our State's Needs



Early Childhood Educators Earn Poverty Wages



90% of Brain Development Happens in the First 5 Years



State Reimbursement Rates Do Not Cover Costs & Reduce Access



### Child Care Aware of Washington calls on the 2019 State Legislature to:

- Restore Washington's commitment to programs that provide high-quality child care via Early Achievers
- Increase Working Connections Child Care reimbursement rates and ensure they cover the cost of meeting state standards
- Expand and reform Working Connections Child Care so all families who need child care can access it
- Implement the recommendations of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families Compensation Technical Workgroup
- Make targeted investments for families with unique challenges (families experiencing homelessness; children with special needs; families who use Family Friend & Neighbor child care)