

Child Care Aware of Washington 2020 Legislative Agenda

Washington is experiencing a child care crisis with far-reaching impacts for children, families, businesses and communities.

The Washington State Legislature can help Washington's employers and working families with key investments during the 2020 short session. Last year legislators created a pathway to universal child care by 2025 via the WA CAN Act (HB 1344). To meet this goal and move our economy forward, Child Care Aware of WA calls on the legislature to:

- Increase Working Connections Child Care rates so more low-income children can be served
- Expand the Working Connections Child Care Homeless Grace Period from 4 to 12 months, so young children experiencing homelessness receive the crucial early learning they need, while their families address their crises and move into stability



Additionally, we ask policymakers to partner with us, early educators and families to increase their knowledge of the critical child care issues we must solve to grow our economy, strengthen our workforce and realize universal child care by 2025. The key needs are:



- More Early Achievers coaching hours and increased coaching wages to meet increased coaching demand and higher state standards for quality care
- To raise child care early educator wages to retain and expand the child care workforce and reduce turnover that breaks caregiving bonds between children and teachers
- To strengthen and clarify Washington's child care educator professional development pathways and education requirements to meet higher state standards and support workforce diversity
- Increased supports for license-exempt family, friend and neighbor caregivers, so they can better support young children's development and help Washington meet its goal to have 90% of all entering kindergartners ready for school when they enter