

## How to Advocate for Child Care

### Your Voice for Child Care Matters

Thousands of Washington families depend on child care programs so parents can go to work knowing their children are safe in nurturing early learning environments. Child care is an essential part of our economy. Without it, parents cannot work and businesses cannot operate. Yet little funding in Washington exists to support this essential service.

#### Our Advocacy Action Center Makes It Easy

You can easily send a message to your legislators through the Child Care Aware of Washington Advocacy Action Center. Go to <https://childcareawarewa.org/advocacy/take-action/> to share your story in minutes.

There has never been a more important time for parents, child care providers and early learning supporters to tell legislators how important child care is. Here is how you can raise your voice to advocate for child care:

#### 1 Find your legislator

If you do not already know who your legislators are, it's easy to find out. Everyone in Washington has one State Senator and two State Representatives who create and vote on state laws. Visit <https://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/>, enter your address and then click on each legislators' name for their contact information.

Some legislators are familiar with the importance of child care and early learning, however most are not. This is why your voice is so important. YOU may be the person who helps your legislator understand why child care matters to you, your family, your employer and our economy.

#### 2 Share your child care story

When we share our stories we help legislators better understand issues that matter to their constituents, and we help them remember why an issue is important. Make sure to answer these key questions every time you communicate with a legislator:

- Who you are and what viewpoint you offer (child care provider, child care consumer, etc.)
- Where you are from (Are you a constituent or not?)
- What exactly are you asking the legislator to do (invest in child care, vote for family-friendly policies, etc.)
- Why child care and early learning are important - your personal story and child care experience

Remember, legislators WORK FOR YOU and this is your story to tell.

#### 3 Send your message

You can share your message via email, phone or mailing a letter. Some legislators have simple online forms to fill out. Many can be reached on social media, including Twitter and Facebook.

