

Partners for Our Children

2020 Washington state policy priorities

IN 2020, WE WILL PROMOTE POLICIES THAT KEEP CHILDREN AND RELATIONSHIPS AT THE CENTER, HELPING ENSURE THAT WASHINGTON'S CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES HAVE THE SERVICES AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO THRIVE

CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

- **Family Connections Program:** *Establish foster parent/parent ally teams to facilitate relationship building between caregivers with whom the child is placed and the parent(s)*
- **Parent Child Visitation:** *Support a rate increase to ensure an adequate workforce and to allow visitation practice that incorporates supportive approaches*
- **Certificate of Parental Improvement (CPI):** *Promote establishing a CPI for individuals with a founded allegation of child abuse or neglect (along with other strategies to improve the background check process)*
- **Kinship Care:** *Support increased financial assistance for kinship caregivers: support modifications, training, and information regarding the new guardianship law; increase access to school meals; support families engaging in the home study process; and increase availability of respite care*
- **Parents for Parents:** *Support statewide expansion of the Parents for Parents program*

QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM

- **Quality childcare, pre-k, and parent supports:** *Support proposals to develop a quality, comprehensive early learning system and the revenue to ensure its viability*
- **Early Parent Support:** *Promote the expansion of effective home visiting*
- **Working Connections Homeless Grace Period and Authorization Timeline:** *Address issues related to the grace period, as well as 12-month authorization timeline*

ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- **Children's Behavioral Health Workgroup (CBHWG) recommendations:** *Support the CBHWG's recommendations related to workforce, birth to age five relational health, school-based services, financing for the Partnership Access Lines, rates, and modifications to the Family Initiated Treatment law passed in 2019*

FAMILIES IN CRISIS/YOUTH AT-RISK

- **Implementation of SB5290:** *Support increased family reconciliation capacity, service enhancements within youth shelters, availability of receiving homes, expansion of the Mockingbird Family Model, establishment of Safe Harbors receiving centers (per CSEC involved youth), and additional HOPE and inpatient treatment beds*

POVERTY REDUCTION

- **TANF improvements:** *Legislatively eliminate harmful policies established during the 2008 recession, including restrictive time limit extensions, full family sanctions, timing of mandatory orientation, and time to 'cure' a sanction*
- **GRADS:** *Support the expansion of the GRADS program by allowing a student parent to qualify for Working Connections Childcare without additional work requirements or availability of the other parent to provide care*
- **Child Support Pass-through:** *Re-establish the pass-through money for families who receive TANF benefits*

SUSTAIN A QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

- **Provider Rate:** *Support the establishment of a mechanism to provide objective information to the legislative and executive branches regarding the cost of achieving and sustaining quality health and human services*

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WE ALSO SUPPORT THE PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED BY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- **Child welfare workers:** *Support additional FTEs to move towards an appropriate caseload size for child welfare workers*
- **Child placing agency rate:** *Increase the rate in order to maintain the viability of community based agencies providing foster care services*
- **DCYF infrastructure:** *Provide IT support that ensures DCYF is able to operate efficiently/effectively*
- **Foster youth who have developmental disabilities:** *Support strategies to ensure that children/youth in foster care with developmental disabilities are being appropriately served*
- **Implementation of the FFPSA:** *Support changes, if necessary, to continue effective implementation of FFPSA*
- **Increase the availability of affordable and accessible housing:** *Support efforts to address the lack of available affordable housing, as well as policies and practices that negatively impact people with low incomes*
- **Parent Sentencing Alternative:** *Expand the Parent Sentencing Alternative to individuals who meet specified eligibility criteria*
- **Recommendations from SB 6560:** *Support increased service capacity to meet the requirements from SB6560 (discharging youth into homelessness), such as post-discharge residential options*
- **Wendy's Wonderful Kids:** *Support funding that ensures continuing this intensive adoption home recruitment approach for legally free children/youth*

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