

Serving Washington's Children, Youth and Families

Prevention, Early Learning, Safety and Accountability

Department of Children, Youth and Families

The way government is organized signals its priorities. Washington State should restructure state services into a single agency that emphasizes prevention, reports directly to the Governor, and is accountable for improving outcomes for children, youth and families.

If we want kids to do better, we owe it to them to change the way the system works and provide effective services at the right time and not wait until a crisis occurs.

Prioritize children, youth and families.

Build on our approach to early learning. The Department of Early Learning was created to close the opportunity gap and increase kindergarten readiness with the highest quality programs based on brain science. The same kind of data-driven, research-based practices can now link kids with early learning and other services they need to address risk factors that hinder healthy development.

Provide services sooner, focused on prevention, well-being, and the science of brain development.

- ◆ Prioritize children and youth most at risk of factors linked to low rates of kindergarten readiness, school dropout, substance abuse, incarceration, homelessness and other negative outcomes later in life.
- ◆ Address racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality that impact how children, youth and families are served, and meet the unique needs of Tribes.
- ◆ Understand the impact of poverty and the many factors that contribute to poverty.
- ◆ Tighten linkages to K–12 schools so struggling or disengaged children and youth are identified early and supported by the agency, schools and communities.

Create a seamless, easier to navigate system, and use technology to share data, fix gaps and ensure accountability.

- ◆ Focus on innovation, alignment and accountability to:
 - lead reform work;
 - create cross system data-sharing to measure outcomes and accountability;
 - ensure quality assurance and evaluation;
 - create a children, youth and families budget; and
 - lead partnerships with research and teaching institutions, the philanthropic community and community partners
- ◆ Fewer people will be involved in multiple systems for long periods of time, saving the state money that can then be reinvested in providing better access to services statewide.

Timeline

- ◆ Legislation approved (2017)
- ◆ Children's Administration and Department of Early Learning merge (2018)
- ◆ Juvenile Rehabilitation, and the Office of Juvenile Justice added (2019)



Department of Children, Youth and Families

RESTRUCTURING AND SUPPORTING SERVICES

Reorganizing and supporting effective programs and services into one agency that specifically serves children, youth and families in the following sectors:



EARLY LEARNING

- ◆ High quality child care and preschool
- ◆ Family support and information
- ◆ Services for infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays
- ◆ Support for the early learning workforce



CHILD WELFARE

- ◆ Child safety and protection
- ◆ Foster parenting
- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Out-of-home placement



JUVENILE JUSTICE

- ◆ Juvenile rehabilitation services and facilities
- ◆ Compliance with federal law
- ◆ Juvenile justice system improvement

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR POSITIVE OUTCOMES

These tenets will serve as the restructured department's foundation. All Washington's children and youth will grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally and educationally, nurtured by family and community.

Prevention

Innovation

Accountability

Partnerships

Community

Parents and Family

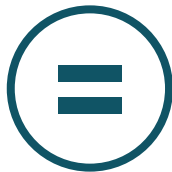
Safe, healthy children and youth; thriving physically, emotionally and educationally



Improved school readiness and academic success



Improved economic opportunity and self-sufficiency



Reduced racial disproportionality and disparity



Reduced substance abuse and mental health issues



Improved transitions into adulthood

Improved reintegration of juvenile offenders with community and family



Reduced child abuse and neglect



Reduced involvement in the criminal justice system



Improved child and family safety and well-being

