

# ● CHHS Child Care Briefing: King County Investments

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 King County

Best Starts for  
**KIDS**



# The Landscape of Child Care



## ● TYPES OF CHILD CARE



- Licensed centers
- Family child care programs
- School-aged child care
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) and informal care
- Head Start (federally-funded) and ECEAP (state-funded) programs

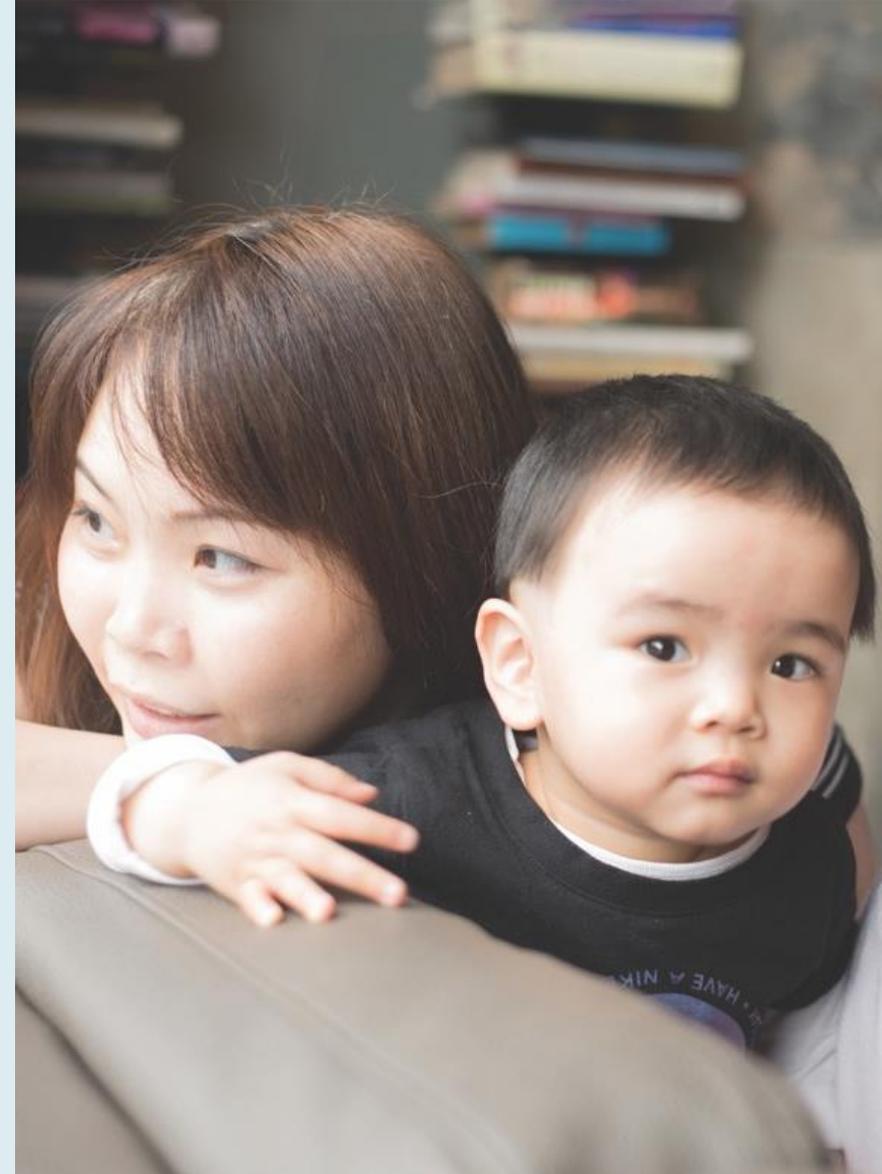
# ● LICENSING PROCESS

- Child care providers are licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)
- May participate in quality improvement through Early Achievers
- Do not need to become relicensed if they have closed due to COVID-19
- PHSKC supports child care providers in safely re-opening after COVID-19 cases



# STATE-LEVEL SUBSIDY PROGRAMMING

- Working Connections Child Care
  - Foundational statewide subsidy system
- Fair Start for Kids Act
  - Broad investments in child care, early learning, and supports for children and families
  - Expands Working Connections income eligibility
  - Increases reimbursement rates for providers
  - Many King County families will still experience financial need due to high regional cost of living
  - Does not increase provider compensation



# RECENT ASSESSMENTS OF THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM

**These recent reports examine the local child care crisis and its equity and economic impacts. Each proposes solutions.**

**All three reports informed the proposal to renew and expand *Best Starts*.**

[Equitable and Accessible Child Care in King County: Recommendations from the Children and Families Strategy Task Force](#) (King County Children and Families Strategy Task Force, 2020)

[The Mounting Costs of Child Care: Impacts of Child Care Affordability and Access to Washington's Employers and Economy](#) (Washington Department of Commerce, 2019)

[Supporting King County's Women, Families & Employers: Improving Child Care Access and Affordability Throughout King County](#) (King County Women's Advisory Board, 2018)





# **Children and Families Strategy Task Force Recommendations**

# FOUNDATIONAL AND SYSTEMIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Includes foundational principles for implementation of child care strategies, including anti-racist principles, guidance for County revenue related to child care, and accountability structures
- Also includes systemic policy needs King County should play a role in advancing, including ***equitable wages and benefits*** and a comprehensive professional development system that actively supports the pipeline of Black and brown providers and men in the early learning and child care field



# PROGRAMMATIC INVESTMENTS

- Focuses on strategic investments King County should prioritize now and moving forward
- Key strategies include reinstating a Comprehensive Child Care Program with ***subsidies for families struggling to afford care and supports for providers***, as well as funding to address barriers to access



# IMMEDIATE COVID-19 RELIEF AND PLANNING FOR FUTURE EMERGENCIES

- Provides guidance for ***financial relief to the child care sector*** during COVID-19 and in planning for future emergencies and disasters



# LEADERSHIP AND A MODEL FOR REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

- Offers recommendations for supports to King County employees, including paid parental leave, equitable supports for employees with infants, and a flexible telecommute policy
- Recommends modeling these strategies and incentivizing regional employers to play a role in supporting their own employees' child care needs



# Current County Investments



# —● VSHSL STUDENT VETERANS PILOT

- \$400k supports families up to 100% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Licensed, school-aged only, and informal care
- Anticipate 60 children served this year
- Deep subsidy and scaled supports for families with higher incomes



# ● PSTAA EARLY LEARNING FACILITIES



- Preserve, improve, and expand early learning facilities
- General Child Care Facilities Fund (GCCFF) and Family Child Care Fund
- Currently developing RFP for GCCFF intermediary
- Anticipate funding to launch in Q4

# ● COVID-19 EMERGENCY CHILD CARE

- Spring program for essential workers
  - Funded 278 slots with 55 child care providers
- Fall program for essential workers and families impacted by COVID
  - Served 496 children, include 56 children living homeless
  - Awarded \$2.75M in grants to child care providers and FFN caregivers



# • Best Starts for Kids Renewal: Child Care



# —● BEST STARTS FOR KIDS RENEWAL: CHILD CARE



- Creates a new child care subsidy program to make child care more affordable for more than 3,000 low-income families
- Establishes a new child care Wage Project to increase the ability of child care workers to earn a living wage in King County as they care for the region's children at a critical time in children's lives
- Implementation Plan to be delivered July 30



— **THANK YOU!**

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