

Parents are children's first and most important teachers. By becoming familiar with the parenting, child care, and early learning resources available in Washington State, doctors can help families access needed information and services. **Doctors can help children be healthy and ready for school.**

Parenting Information

CHILD Profile Parent Information Mailings

Children born in Washington are automatically enrolled in CHILD Profile, a program of the Department of Health. Families receive 17 mailings from CHILD Profile (which is also Washington's Immunization Registry) from birth to age 6 with reminders about well-child check ups, immunizations, safety, nutrition, development, and other parenting topics. CHILD Profile supports parents in making positive health and development decisions for their children. Professionals and parents review materials to ensure the information is accurate, up-to-date, and useful.

Parents not receiving CHILD Profile mailings (including adopted children and those born elsewhere); or who would prefer materials in Spanish, can call the Family Health Hotline at 1.800.322.2588 or visit www.childprofile.org.

WithinReach—Family Health Hotline 1.800.322.2588

WithinReach's Family Health Hotline helps families and caregivers get information about services for children in their communities. Each year, WithinReach connects more than 50,000 callers with affordable health insurance, prenatal resources, food and nutrition assistance, immunization information, local health clinics, breastfeeding support, family planning services, early learning opportunities, child development screening services, child care referral agencies, parenting support programs and many other social and health programs. The Family Health Hotline is staffed by bilingual (Spanish/English) Information and Referral Specialists, and callers who speak other languages can use AT&T language line interpreters. **Families and providers can call 1.800.322.2588.**

www.ParentHelp123.org

ParentHelp123 is a program of WithinReach that helps Washington State families apply for health and food programs including Medicaid, Basic Health, WIC and Basic Food (food stamps). Families can locate resources in their local communities like breastfeeding support, child care and immunization clinics; and find health information for pregnant women, parents of new babies, and families with children. **Families can complete applications or search for information 24 hrs/day at www.parenthelp123.org.**

Home Visiting and Child Care Programs

Home Visiting Programs

Prenatal and postnatal home visiting programs can have a dramatic positive impact on the social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children. The most successful programs address a broad spectrum of needs for both children and their families. First Steps, the Nurse Family Partnership Program, and Parents as Teachers are examples of programs available in some Washington communities. **Interested families should talk with their doctor, birth hospital, public health department, or family center for more information.**

Early Head Start

Early Head Start is a federally funded program providing comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income pregnant women and their children from birth to three years of age, as well as to families of children with disabilities. Children in foster care are automatically eligible for Early Head Start. Services are provided in-home and/or at an Early Head Start center. Early Head Start supports children's development and health through prenatal and child development services including early childhood education, health services, family services, nutrition services, transportation, and mental health services. **Families interested in Early Head Start programs can contact 1.866.763.6481, or visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>.**

Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Services provide valuable resources for parents, including referrals to help them obtain financial assistance for child care, find local licensed child care programs, choose a high-quality program for their child, and information on how to further their own education. There is a statewide organization supporting local CCR&R's serving each community. **Families wanting more information, or help finding their local agency can call 1.800.446.1114 or visit <http://childcarenet.org/>.**

Child Care Licensing and Information

The Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL) is responsible for child care licensing. The department was created in 2006 and is continually improving its services and information for parents. DEL is also collaborating with private partners to pilot a Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care. This will make it easier for parents to understand their child care choices. **Families wanting to learn more can visit www.del.wa.gov/.**

Preschool Programs and Services

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program providing comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income families with children between 3-5 years of age and children with disabilities. Children in foster care are automatically eligible for Head Start. Head Start programs are designed locally and vary according to the needs of the community. Head Start services include early childhood education, health services, family services, nutrition services, transportation, and mental health services. **Families interested in Head Start programs can contact 1.866.763.6481 for the nearest location, or visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>.**

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)–Preschool Program

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington's state-funded preschool program. ECEAP provides preschool education, family support, and health and nutrition services to low-income 3- and 4-year-old children, and to some children and families with special needs, to promote school success. Children in foster care are automatically eligible for ECEAP. The goal of ECEAP is to help all children in Washington State begin kindergarten in good health, with strong social and emotional skills, with empowered families involved in their education, and ready to learn. **Interested families can visit www.del.wa.gov/eceap/eceapsites.shtml or call 1.360.725.2830.**

Paying for Child Care and Preschool

Children's Administration Child Care Program The DSHS Children's Administration child care program pays for child care and preschool to support the children and families it serves when the social worker and family determine that enrollment in a program promotes the child's safety, permanency and well-being. Children and families who might access this program are those in foster care or relative care, as well as other children and families where child care is a part of their Children's Administration case plan. **For more information, families can call their Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) social worker.**

The Working Connections Child Care Program helps low-income families pay for child care expenses while the adults are working, looking for work, or in an approved training program. This program is funded by state and federal funds, and is administered by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Eligibility is determined by income. **Families wanting to learn more can call the Working Connections Customer Service Center at 1.877.980.9180**

Early Intervention Services

Early intervention programs help identify and address developmental delays and special needs in children. Recognizing and providing individualized services to support social, emotional, physical or cognitive delays in young children will help them be ready for kindergarten. Early intervention programs help support, educate, and actively engage parents in understanding and caring for their child's special needs. It is better to talk early about any concerns a parent might have than to wait until a child is older.

Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program (ITEIP) for Children Ages 0-3

Early Intervention is available for children birth to three with developmental delays or disabilities and their families under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C. An eligible child might have delays in physical, cognitive, communication, social, emotional, or adaptive development, or may have a diagnosed condition that often results in a developmental delay. Families connect with services via a Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) from the lead agency in their community. An FRC partners with each family to identify needs and implement services through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Services can include health, education and social services, and are provided locally with statewide funding and support. **Families with concerns about their child's development before age 3 can connect with their local FRC by calling the Family Health Hotline at 1.800.322.2588.**

Preschool Special Education Program for Children Ages 3-6 years

Preschool services are available for children three and older with developmental delays or disabilities and their families under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. Families connect with services via school districts. Local schools partner with parents to develop Individual Education Programs (IEPs) to meet the unique needs of each child. The goal is for all preschool children with disabilities or developmental delays to receive specially designed instruction at no cost to the parents so that they will be prepared to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. **Families with concerns about their 3-6 year-old child's development can connect with Special Education services by calling their local school district or the Family Health Hotline at 1.800.322.2588.**

Early Learning Health Connections (ELHC) resources support children and families in Washington state by connecting doctors and health systems with early learning. ELHC is a project of Reach Out and Read Washington State. (www.reachoutandreadwa.org). Contact Dr. Jill Sells jill.sells@reachoutandreadwa.org.