

WASHINGTON'S Fair Start for Kids Act

COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

NOVEMBER 2021



WASHINGTON
COMMUNITIES
for CHILDREN

Introduction

The [Fair Start for Kids Act](#), signed into Washington State law on May 7, 2021, focuses on making child care more accessible and affordable for all families and child care providers. With numerous local and state agencies connected to and impacted by this legislation, it can be difficult to sift through the messages and find a reliable source of information.



This Fall 2021 Toolkit was developed in an effort to coalesce multiple communications into a centralized source. An updated toolkit is anticipated for release in February 2022, and additional translated materials are forthcoming. If you represent a community agency, employer, or other provider serving families and children in Washington State, we encourage you to customize and use this toolkit to help spread the word locally about the benefits of the Fair Start for Kids Act. For questions or more information on this toolkit, please contact Linden Obel, MPH, [Washington Communities for Children Family & Community Outreach State Specialist](#), at linden@nwelcoalition.org.

What’s Inside

Key Messages.....	P3
Sample Newsletter Article.....	P7
Sample Public Service Announcements (PSAs)	P8
Social Media Posts.....	P9
Fair Start for Kids Act One-Sheets.....	P16

Additional Resources

- [Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families \(DCYF\)](#)
- [Moms Rising](#)
 - [Moms Rising FSFKA Toolkit](#)
- [Child Care Aware](#)
- [Washington Connection](#)

KEY MESSAGES

1) A NEW KIND OF

LEGISLATION: Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before.

- a) WA Governor Inslee signed the Fair Start for Kids Act into law on May 7, 2021.
- b) This legislation is intended to assist families with young children and licensed child care programs by making child care more accessible and affordable.



2) NEW BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY: New child care benefits are available for families and providers in Washington State.

- a) Changes to eligibility mean that more families now qualify for child care benefits.
 - i) The income eligibility for households has been increased effective October 1, 2021. This means that families of four can earn up to \$5,139 per month (60% of the state median income) and qualify for help.
 - ii) The new limits are tied to the **state median income** instead of the federal poverty level.
 - (1) DCYF will switch from using Federal Poverty Level to using State Median Income (SMI) to determine WCCC eligibility. Income eligibility will gradually increase, beginning at 60% in October 2021.
- b) If you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now!
 - i) You or the families you serve may be eligible for these benefits.
- c) Families and child care providers should find out if they are eligible for benefits.
- d) You can find out if you are eligible and sign up for benefits at www.washingtonconnection.org/home. If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

Washington State's Fair Start for Kids Act Communication Toolkit

3) WAYS THE ACT HELPS: **The Fair Start Act takes a multi-pronged approach at improving child care in Washington State.**

- a) A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) can be found on the DCYF website at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.
- b) Child care is not affordable. The FSKA aims at increasing compensation for providers and assuring that no family must pay more than 7% of their household income to cover the cost of child care.
 - i) Starting in 2023, family child care copays will be capped at 7% of income.

The Fair Start for Kids Act...

- c) Reduces copays and expands eligibility for the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC).
 - i) The child care copay will be reduced to \$115 per month from 10/1/2021 to 1/1/2022 for households at or below 50% of SMI. From 1/1/2022 through 7/30/2023, the copay will be capped at \$90. For households at or below 60% of SMI copayments are capped at \$115 through June 30, 2023.
- d) Expands eligibility for enrollment and increases rates for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).
 - i) Find an ECEAP near you at www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/eceap/ECEAP-Site-Locator.pdf
- e) Strengthens child care programs by expanding access to support services, mental health consultations, dual language supports, complex needs funding, and more.
 - i) Increases the number of facilitated play and learn groups available for caregivers of young children.
 - ii) Provides increased funding to child care programs and state-funded preschool programs (ECEAP) to better serve families experiencing low incomes, dual-language families and children with unique needs.
 - iii) Funds infant-early childhood mental health consultation services for child care providers and the children and families they serve.
- f) Grows recruitment and retention for child care businesses by increasing subsidy rates, expanding access to health insurance for providers, and providing resources for professional development and scholarships.



4) THERE'S STILL WORK TO BE DONE: **The Fair Start for Kids Act is a great step in the right direction, but there is still much work to be done.**

- a) High-quality child care and early learning are critical to a child's success in school and life.

Additional Talking Points

Target audience: Caregivers

Do you live in Washington State?

Do you have children?

The Fair Start for Kids Act may increase the resources available to you!

If you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now! You can find out if you are eligible and sign up for benefits at

www.washingtonconnection.org/home/.



If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

The child care copay will be reduced to \$115 per month from 10/1/2021 to 1/1/2022 for households at or below 50% of SMI. From 1/1/2022 through 7/30/2023, the co-pay will be capped at \$90. For households at or below 60% of SMI copayments are capped at \$115 through June 30, 2023.

Target audience: Child Care Providers

Are you a child care provider in Washington state?

The Fair Start for Kids Act may increase the resources available to you!

Examples of how the FSKA can support the important work you do:

- Raises the amount of money providers earn when they serve families who rely on state child care subsidies to 85% of market rates starting July 1, 2021.
- Funds grants for child care programs that help them recover from the pandemic and keep their doors open.
- Provides funding for programs to provide trauma-informed care.
- Funds health insurance for child care providers. (Most child care small businesses cannot afford to offer health insurance to their staff.)
- Increases earnings for programs that offer dual-language child care.
- Increases earnings for programs that provide infant care.
- If you are a Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) provider, find out if you are eligible and apply at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act/stabilization-grant-ffn.
- If you are a licensed child care provider, find out if you are eligible and apply at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act/stabilization-grant

Target audience: Employers

Do you or your employees in Washington state struggle with child care barriers? The Fair Start for Kids Act may help your staff qualify for lower child care subsidy payments. Increased eligibility limits will support a greater number of children being eligible for resources. Share this info with your employees! They can find out if they are eligible and sign up for benefits at www.washingtonconnection.org/home/. If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.



SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Target audience: Caregivers

Title: Can the Fair Start for Kids Act Help your Family?

Content: Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before! This act is intended to assist families with young children by making child care more accessible and affordable. *Even if you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now!* Find out if you're eligible for these new benefits by visiting [washingtonconnection.org/home](https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home). If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

Target audience: Child Care Providers

Title: Can the Fair Start for Kids Act Help your Child Care Center?

Content: Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before! The act increases compensation for providers and aims to strengthen child care programs by expanding access to support services, mental health consultations, dual language supports, complex needs funding, and more. A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the act can be found [here](#).



Target audience: Employers

Title: Can the Fair Start for Kids Act Help your Employees?

Content: Do you or your employees in Washington state struggle with child care barriers? The Fair Start for Kids Act may help your staff qualify for lower child care subsidy payments. Increased eligibility limits will support a greater number of children being eligible for resources. Share this info with your employees! They can find out if they are eligible and sign up for benefits [here](#).

SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSAs)

Option 1:

Do you want to go back to school but are worried about the cost of child care?

The recent Fair Start for Kids Act made changes to the Working Connections Child Care Subsidy make it easier to have child care and go to school. Full time students no longer have to work and go to school to qualify for the subsidy. Visit www.washingtonconnection.org to see if your family qualifies. If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

Option 2:

Do you feel like safe, quality child care is out of reach for your family? See if you are eligible for the expanded Working Connections Child Care program. The Fair Start for Kids Act increased subsidy eligibility to 60% of State Median Income. This means families of four can earn up to \$5,139 per month and still qualify. Families' co-pays are also capped at \$115 per month. Even if you applied before, you can apply again. Go to www.washingtonconnection.org to see if you qualify. If you need help completing your application or have questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

Option 3:

As a child care provider, you may not have been able to accept subsidy in the past. Did you know you may be able to do so now? Visit childcareawarewa.org/fair-start-for-kids-act-benefits to learn more. If you need assistance in completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

Option 4:

Do your employees need help paying for child care? They may be eligible for child care fee assistance through the expanded Working Connections Child Care program. The Fair Start for Kids Act increased subsidy eligibility to 60% of State Median Income. This means families of four can earn up to \$5,139 per month and still qualify. Families' co-pays are also capped at \$115 per month. Tell them to go to www.washingtonconnection.org to see if they qualify. If you need help completing your application or have additional questions, please contact Child Care Aware of Washington at 1-800-446-1114.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The following sample social media posts may be customized and shared to meet the needs of your organization. Partners are welcome to add their agency logo or branding to accompany the WCFC logo and imagery or use the non-branded versions. **High-quality versions of all social media graphics can be found on the WCFC website at www.washingtoncfc.org/fair-start-for-kids-act-communication-toolkit.**

Add any of the hashtags below to posts as needed.

Hashtags: #FSKA #FSKA2021 #FairStartForKidsAct #ChildCare #EarlyLearning #ECEAP #DCYF

Social Media Posts: THE FAIR START FOR KIDS ACT



Make sure to visit the WCFC website to download all social media graphics at www.washingtoncfc.org/fair-start-for-kids-act-communication-toolkit.

Examples of social media graphics that can be found on the WCFC website:

A NEW KIND OF LEGISLATION!

Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before.
Learn more at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.

WASHINGTON COMMUNITIES for CHILDREN

NEW BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY

If you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now!
Families can find out if they are eligible for benefits by going to www.washingtonconnection.org/home or by calling 1-800-446-1114.

WASHINGTON COMMUNITIES for CHILDREN

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) can be found on the DCYF website at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.

WASHINGTON COMMUNITIES for CHILDREN

Social Posts Theme 1: A NEW KIND OF LEGISLATION!

Post #1:

A NEW KIND OF LEGISLATION!

Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before. Learn more at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act

Post #2:

A NEW KIND OF LEGISLATION!

Washington State Governor Inslee signed the Fair Start for Kids Act into law on May 7, 2021.

Post #3:

A NEW KIND OF LEGISLATION!

This legislation is intended to assist families with young children and licensed child care programs by making child care more accessible and affordable.

Social Posts Theme 2: NEW BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY

Post #4:

NEW BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY

New child care benefits are available for families and providers in Washington State.

Post #5:

NEW BENEFITS AND ELIGIBILITY

If you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now! Families can find out if they are eligible for benefits by going to www.washingtonconnection.org/home, or call 1-800-446-1114.

Social Posts Theme 3: WAYS THE ACT HELPS

Post #6:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

The Fair Start Act takes a multi-pronged approach at improving child care in Washington State.

Post #7:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) can be found on the DCYF website at dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.

Post #8:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

Child care is not affordable. The FSKA aims at increasing compensation for providers and ensuring that, starting in 2023, family child care costs will be capped at 7% of income.

Post #9:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

A family of four whose income is less than \$5,085 per month can receive child care benefits. Go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114 to see if you qualify.

Post #10:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

A family of three whose income is less than \$4,275 per month will pay no more than \$115 per month for child care. Go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114 to see if you qualify.

Post #11:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

Full-time student parents can receive child care assistance without working. Go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114 to see if you qualify.

Washington State's Fair Start for Kids Act Communication Toolkit

Post #12:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

FSFK strengthens child care programs by expanding access to support services, mental health consultations, dual language supports, complex needs funding, and more.

Post #13:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

The act increases the number of facilitated play and learn groups available for caregivers of young children.

Post #14:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

FSFK provides increased funding to child care programs and state-funded preschool programs (ECEAP) to better serve families experiencing low incomes, dual-language families and children with unique needs.

Post #15:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

The act funds infant-early childhood mental health consultation services for child care providers and the children and families they serve.

Post #16:

WAYS THE ACT HELPS

FSFK grows recruitment and retention for child care businesses by increasing subsidy rates, expanding access to health insurance for providers, and providing resources for professional development and scholarships.

Social Posts Theme 4: THERE'S STILL WORK TO BE DONE

Post #17:

THERE'S STILL WORK TO BE DONE:

The Fair Start for Kids Act is a great step in the right direction. High-quality child care and early learning are critical to a child's success in school and life.

Social Media Case Examples: SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Most of the following social media sets include both a single graphic with all relevant information and a series of posts for a range of platform compatibility. There are full versions with the WCFC logo and versions without a logo that may be customized as needed on the WCFC website.



Make sure to visit the WCFC website to download all social media graphics at www.washingtoncfc.org/fair-start-for-kids-act-communication-toolkit

Set #1:

Need help finding child care?

Call the Child Care Aware Family Center at 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Single, without logo:



Set #2:

If you weren't eligible for child care benefits in the past, you could be now!

To see if you qualify, go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Series, with WCFC logo:



Washington State's Fair Start for Kids Act Communication Toolkit

Set #3:

Families, you may qualify for child care assistance!

A family of four whose income is less than \$5,086 per month can get child care benefits.

To see if you qualify, go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Series, with WCFC logo:



Set #4:

The Fair Start for Kids Act helps more families pay for child care!

A family of three whose income is less than \$4,275 per month will pay no more than \$115 per month for child care.

To see if you qualify, go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Series, with WCFC logo:



Washington State's Fair Start for Kids Act Communication Toolkit

Set #5:

Families, you may qualify for child care assistance!

A family of three whose income is less than \$4,275 per month will pay no more than \$115 per month for child care.

To see if you qualify, go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Series, with WCFC logo:



Set #6:

Now, more families can get help paying for child care!

Full-time student parents can receive child care assistance without working.

To see if you qualify, go to washingtonconnection.org or call 1-800-446-1114

Single, with WCFC logo:



Series, with WCFC logo:



INFORMATIONAL ONE-SHEETS



Download high-quality, printable versions of the one-sheets below on the WCFC website at www.washingtoncfc.org/fair-start-for-kids-act-communication-toolkit.

Get to Know the Fair Start for Kids Act

The Fair Start for Kids Act may help your family!



A New Kind of Legislation - Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and families that is unlike any we have seen before. This act is intended to assist families with young children by making child care more accessible and affordable.

New Benefits and Eligibility - Changes to eligibility means that more families now qualify for child care benefits. **If you didn't qualify for child care benefits before, you may qualify now!** Families and caregivers can find out if they are eligible for these new benefits by visiting washingtonconnection.org/home/

Ways the Act Helps -

- The act will reduce the cost of child care to no more than 7% of a family's income by 2023.
- Reduces copays and expands eligibility for Working Connections Child Care.
- Expands eligibility for enrollment for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.
- Expands access to support services, mental health consultations, dual language supports, complex needs funding, and more.



A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the act can be found here: dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.

Get to Know the Fair Start for Kids Act

The Fair Start for Kids Act may help your center!



A New Kind of Legislation - Washington's Fair Start for Kids Act is an investment in children and child care providers that is unlike any we have seen before. This act is intended to assist families with young children by making child care more accessible and affordable.

New Benefits and Eligibility - Changes to eligibility means that more providers now qualify for benefits. **If you didn't qualify for benefits before, you may qualify now!** Child care providers can find out if they are eligible for these new benefits by visiting dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.

Ways the Act Helps -

- Expands eligibility for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC).
- Expands eligibility for enrollment and increases rates for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).
- Strengthens child care programs by expanding access to support services, mental health consultations, dual language supports, complex needs funding, and more.
- Grows recruitment and retention for child care businesses by increasing subsidy rates, expanding access to health insurance for providers, and providing resources for professional development and scholarships.



A complete list of the benefits and programs impacted by the act can be found here: dcyf.wa.gov/about/government-affairs/fair-start-for-kids-act.