

Campaign to Address Child Care Workforce Retention and Recruitment

The problem: Even before COVID-19, the child care workforce in Washington State had a 43 percent turnover rate. Child care providers rank in the third percentile of occupational wages (below pet groomers) with the average child care employee making under \$15 per hour in 2020. Early learning providers fuel economic growth, but frequently it's at the expense of their own family economic security. In fact, 39% of Washington's child care providers rely on one or more sources of public assistance programs.

The solution: The Washington Legislature is poised to take action to stabilize the child care workforce, but first child care stakeholders need to unify and identify policy priorities. To this end, Child Care Aware convened a state team of child care stakeholders as part of the <u>T.E.A.C.H.®</u> <u>National Center</u>'s Moving the Needle on Workforce Compensation project. The WA State Team on Workforce Compensation identified early on that compensation policy should be set by members of the workforce and identified <u>liberatory design</u> as an effective model for building consensus rooted in racial equity.

Design team: Approximately 20-25 members of the workforce, representing diverse professional roles, programmatic settings, racial and ethnic identities, educational backgrounds, and geographic locations will be selected to participate in a series of design meetings and corresponding advocacy trainings. Individuals and organizations participating in the design team will participation with a willingness to compromise and to advocate for the final product.

Child Care Aware of WA's leadership role: As a neutral party with strong relationships across programs and expertise in liberatory design, Child Care Aware is well positioned to lead this community-wide effort. Child Care Aware will provide liberatory design facilitation, project management, and community leadership and support. Throughout the design process and all the way through the 2023 legislative session,

Child Care Aware will also lead communications, mobilization, and advocacy campaigns to build grassroots and grasstops support for the resulting policy proposal.

Project Timeline

January - November 2022

At the request of the Washington State Legislature, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) develop a cost model to better understand the true cost of providing high-quality child care, including cost drivers related to workforce stability.

June - October 2022

Child Care Aware (CCA) leads a liberatory design process, with a representative group of the workforce, to identify key policy priorities for promoting retention and recruitment. Design process informs: 1) the Child Care Collaborative Task Force's (C3TF) recommendations to the Washington State Legislature and 2) 2023 legislation to to stabilize the child care workforce.

November 2022

C3TF submits recommendations to the WA State Legislature for using the Cost of Quality Care model to address workforce stability. Recommendations provide a platform for legislative, administrative, and public outreach and education on 2023 legislation.

January - April 2023

CCA leads advocacy campaign in support of 2023 legislation. This session is an opportunity for legislative education and engagement and for incrimental progress.

2023 - 2024

CCA ramps up regional grassroots and grasstops campaign strategies and builds a runway, including making updates to legislation, for legislative success in 2025. CCA advocates for DCYF to incorporate legislation into 2025 decision package.

November 2024

DCYF presents a decision package to the Governor for reforming payments for subsidized child care to be based on the Cost of Quality Care model rather than the Market Rate Survey. Child Care Aware leverages DCYF's decision package as a vehicle (or platform) for advancing complementary legislative proposal.

January - April 2025

CCA leads community-wide effort that results in passage of legislation to improve child care workforce retention and recruitment.