

Washington Prenatal-to-Three Coalition

2025 Shared Legislative Agenda

The Prenatal-to-Three (PN3) Coalition’s policy and advocacy subcommittee brings together partners who work on legislative efforts that have a lobbying presence with the goal of developing a shared agenda to amplify the legislative work being done on prenatal-to-3 priorities, and identify opportunities to promote and advance systems alignment.

The strategies below represent the priorities for the 2025 shared legislative agenda for the Prenatal-to-Three Coalition as developed by the policy and advocacy subcommittee. The shared priorities fall under one or more of the four goal areas of the PN3 Coalition (see box).

PN3 Coalition Focus Areas

- Focus Area 1: Basic Needs
- Focus Area 2: Perinatal & Pediatric Medical Care
- Focus Area 3: Child Developmental Health
- Focus Area 4: Systems Coordination & Capacity

PN3 Coalition – 2025 Shared Priorities

Protect Programs and Services from Cuts

Lead Organization: All

Brief Description: We urge the legislature prioritize protecting the programs and services that individuals and families rely on to support healthy, safe, and strong households including those that support health care, behavioral health, food security, child development, early learning, public health, and economic security.

Fair Start for Kids Act Implementation

Lead Organization: Start Early

Brief Description: Support implementation of the Fair Start for Kids Act (FSKA) of 2021, which made significant progress in creating an integrated system of child care and early learning in Washington State that is accessible, affordable, and in which providers and child care workers can have the support they need to provide quality care. The FSKA laid out two key milestones for the 2025-27 biennium designed to improve access and affordability of child care: 1) increase income eligibility to 75% of the State Median Income (\$76,626 for a family of three in 2024 wages); and 2) increase the reimbursement rate to the 85th percentile of the 2024 Market Rate Survey.

Home Visiting Rates:

Lead Organization: Start Early

Brief Description: Support funding for rate-based contracting for home visiting, which is a voluntary, long-term parent support program that has been shown to produce a number of positive outcomes, including improved birth outcomes; improved academic readiness; early detection of developmental delays; reduced child abuse and neglect; and improved coordination to other community services. \$7.8 million in funding is requested to fully fund home visiting rates to help support the transition from individual program negotiated contracts to rates-based contracting.

Home Visiting Slots:

Lead Organization: Start Early

Brief Description: Support funding for the continuation of 150 contracted home visiting slots established through E2SSB 6109 of 2024 designed to support families experiencing substance use disorder.

Help Me Grow

Lead Organization: WithinReach

Brief Description: Support funding for Help Me Grow (HMG), which is a statewide, community-driven family resource and referral linkage system that guides families through the complex web of services through a coordinated systems approach. \$500,000 in funding is requested to continue state support for HMG including supporting statewide capacity and system linkages.

Prevention-Community Pathways

Lead Organization: WithinReach

Brief Description: Support the Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) Prevention-Community Pathways decision package, which is a multifaceted approach to safely reduce the number/rate of children in out of home care through increased prevention services for moderate and high-risk families. The proposal includes expansion of the Plan of Safe Care (POSC) Community Pathways and investments in Family Resource Centers (FRCs). It also supports steps needed for future claiming under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). The DP requests \$9.622M for the multiple components under the proposal.

Paid Family & Medical Leave

Lead Organization: WithinReach

Brief Description: Support the Employment Security Department (ESD) decision packages relating to Paid Family & Medical Leave, which is a critical resource for individuals and families when they most need it. ESD has requested \$28.9 million for program operations, and \$5.28 million to support strategies.

Maternity Support Services

Lead Organization: P-5 Relational Health Subcommittee

Brief Description: Support funding to expand Maternity Support Services (MSS) regional coverage (from 25 counties to 39), expand coverage timeline (from 60-days to one year), and expand programming to include wraparound services. provision of wraparound supports. Additionally, and relatedly, support the Health Care Authority's decision package to fully realize the changes approved in 2E2SSB 5580 (2024). The decision package requests \$1.6 million primarily for staffing related to MSS.

Family Psychotherapy Rates

Lead Organization: P-5 Relational Health Subcommittee

Brief Description: Support funding to increase family psychotherapy reimbursement rates to better reflect the complexity of providing relationship-focused treatment that includes parents and caregivers, which is best practice in clinical Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health treatment. Current family psychotherapy rates are up to 36% lower than individual psychotherapy rates for services of equivalent duration, which disincentivizes provision of and billing for these essential services.

Child Welfare Housing Assistance

Lead Organization: Partners for Our Children

Brief Description: Support funding to increase funding for the child welfare housing assistance program, consistent with the legislature's intent in passage of SB 5256 from the 2024 session which expanded the program and made it permanent. The program provides housing vouchers and support services to reunify families earlier or to prevent the removal of a child when housing is the primary barrier to the child remaining in the home.

Redirecting Public Benefits to Children in Care

Lead Organization: Partners for Our Children

Brief Description: Support the Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) decision package to end the practice by DCYF of withholding public benefits that belong to the children in its care. DCYF currently utilizes Social Security Income, Survivors, Retirement, or Disability Insurance (RSDI) and other public benefits due to children and youth in foster care and juvenile rehabilitation to pay for their care. Returning these benefits to children and youth is expected to support reunification efforts by increasing family financial stability and to mitigate economic hardship for youth when they exit care. The DP proposes discontinuing this practice and seeks \$11.7 million from the legislature to backfill lost revenue and hire staffing support.

Early Childhood Courts

Lead Organization: Center for Children & Youth Justice

Brief Description: Increase access to Early Childhood Courts (ECCs), which provide a specialized court program designed to assist families with infants and toddlers who are navigating the dependency system. ECCs provides individual support for families with the help of a Community Coordinator, who navigates challenges by accessing the resources and community support needed for families to reunify. Legislation will seek to increase ECC access through service age and ensure courts are allowed to engage earlier.

Medicaid Access

Lead Organization: WA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Brief Description: Increase access to healthcare for families insured with Medicaid by improving rates. Poor Medicaid reimbursement makes it challenging for many physicians and behavioral health providers to care for children covered by the program. Legislation will seek to restore the pediatric rate passed in 2021, and implement the Medicaid Access Program, which is a financing mechanism to create Medicaid/Medicare parity for primary and specialty care and mental health counseling. These proposals will increase access to healthcare for the approximately 50% of WA children covered by Medicaid.

Free School Meals

Lead Organization: WithinReach

Brief Description: Support efforts to expand free school meals. Funding is needed to expand the number of schools enrolled in the federal community eligibility, and ultimately provide free school meals to all students in Washington.

SUN Bucks

Lead Organization: WithinReach

Brief Description: Support the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) decision package to support implementation of a permanent summer EBT program, also known as SUN Bucks, which is a federal program that provides money to families to support children who lose access to free and reduced-price school meals during the summer months. The DP requests \$299,000 GFS for the state match for administration funding needed to support the program.