

WHAT IS THE COST OF CARE STUDY?

This study will gather financial and programmatic information from Washington child care providers to develop a cost estimation model. This model will help understand how much money is really needed to deliver high quality child care in Washington. The study will look at the impact of licensing and quality requirements as well as different program characteristics to understand variations in cost of care.

The cost model is important for informing future child care financing policy, including child care subsidy rate setting at the state and local levels. It is also important for estimating the future funds needed to support a strong, diverse child care system for children birth to 12 years old. The study will also be used as part of a report to the legislature due in November 2022.

WHY SHOULD CHILD CARE PROVIDERS PARTICIPATE?

For this cost of care study to be successful, input is needed from the field. It is imperative that we collect data from those doing the work to help policymakers understand what it really costs to provide high-quality child care, and how far current resources go towards covering that cost.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL I BE ASKED TO SHARE?

Programs have two ways to participate in the study:

1. *An online survey.* You will be asked to share details about your main expenses, including pay, benefits, and occupancy (rent or mortgage), as well as program characteristics including staffing patterns (how many people are on your staff), and ages of children served. The survey will be available in multiple languages and easy to access on mobile and desktop devices. We want to collect information from as many

providers as possible and want to make it easy for you to respond.

2. *A virtual interview.* You will be asked to share the details of your budget, to better understand your expenses (bills) and your income from your child care program. The interview will also collect information on which costs are related to quality standards (Early Achievers, NAEYC, etc.) and provide an opportunity to discuss the anticipated costs of operating at higher quality.

To maintain confidentiality all information is being collected and analyzed by Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies. Only combined information summaries will be shared for the purpose of establishing the cost model.

WHO IS LEADING THIS STUDY?

The Washington Child Care Collaborative Task Force, in partnership with the Department of Commerce, the Department of Children Youth and Families, King County Best Start for Kids, and the Seattle Department of Early Education and Learning are collaborating on this child care cost study.

The study is being conducted by Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, which is led by Jeanna Capito and Simon Workman. Jeanna is a former child care provider with experience serving infants, toddlers, and older children including through private and nonprofit settings and Head Start and Early Head Start funded programs. Simon's career has focused on helping policymakers understand the need for increased public investments in child care and he is also the Board Chair of a nonprofit child care program serving low-income children and families.

In addition, a group of family, center and school-age providers from across the state have been asked to come together to help guide the study and provide real world insight throughout. Those who do the work must be at the center of this study.



CONTACT DETAILS

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