

# Education: Cradle to Career



## Early learning, including child care

*House Democrats are committed to the safety and success of all Washington's children. We want to give parents, child care providers, and preschool teachers the tools they need to do their jobs and make sure every child gets a strong start.*

### Preventing infant child deaths

**Child care Fatality Review / [HB 2165](#)** - After two babies died in the same child care facility in King County over a period of 10 years, it became clear that our state needs a stronger child care fatality review process. This bill would have required the Department of Early Learning to conduct a thorough review of child fatalities if they occur in licensed child care centers, child care family homes or in Early Childhood Education and Assistance Programs. This rigorous review process would have included outside experts, and would have determined if the provider did everything he or she could to ensure the child's safety and if systemic changes are needed to prevent future tragedies. *(Died in Senate)*

### Ensuring all Washington's children have a strong start

**Early Start Act / [HB 2377](#)** - This bill would have improved the quality of child care provided in Washington. It would increase stability for families by keeping children in the same child care for 12 months, even if the family circumstances change. The bill would also increase transparency and decision-making power for parents by requiring the Dept. of Early Learning to clearly post the quality ratings of child care programs on their website. We know that high quality care is good for children and low quality care is actually bad for them. The bill would incentivize higher quality care by using a tiered reimbursement system – higher pay for higher quality care. This shift recognizes that it costs more to provide higher quality programs. *(Died in Senate)*



### Helping at-risk children get the education and support they need

**Child Welfare System, Early Education / [HB 2519](#)** - Family Assessment Response, or FAR, is a new approach to addressing cases of potential child abuse and neglect. This strategy is used in less serious cases, and it keeps families together by using a process that is more collaborative and less adversarial than traditional investigations by Child Protective Services workers. This bill will require FAR workers, when appropriate, to refer families to preschool programs that rate at least at level 3 in the Early Achievers quality rating system under certain circumstances. It allows FAR workers to refer families to child care programs that rate at least at level 3. For families involved in either a FAR process or the traditional CPS investigation, the bill allows the Department of Early Learning to make children eligible for ECEAP until 2018 if funding is provided specifically for this purpose. *(Delivered to Governor)*



### Helping grandparents afford to care for their grandchildren

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families / [HB 2585](#)** - This bill would allow DSHS to exempt half of a caregiver's unearned income when determining whether certain children are eligible for benefits under the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. This applies to children who live with a caregiver who is not the child's parent and who is not a foster parent – the so-called Child-Only TANF benefit. Retirement income is unearned income; the bill was intended to address the needs of children being cared for by, for example, grandparents whose retirement income might disqualify the child from TANF. *(Died in Senate)*

### Understanding child homelessness in order to prevent it

**Homeless Youth / [HB 2610](#)** - This bill would direct the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) to conduct an analysis of the homeless youth population, from the ages of birth to ten. While some data is available about the school-age population of homeless youth, much less is understood of the characteristics of child from birth to five years of age who are homeless. *(Died in Senate)*