

August Newsletter



ALREADY IN CRISIS, CHILD CARE CRUCIAL TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Child care has struggled for years with high costs, low wages, and not enough spaces to fill the need. Since COVID-19, the crisis, well known to everyone involved in early childhood and child care, has leapt into the national consciousness.

The Coronavirus Child Care and Education Relief Act, crafted by Washington Senator Patty Murray, would create a \$50 billion child care fund as part of the next COVID-19 relief bill. While it remains at an impasse in the U.S. Senate, some Washington locales are using money from the earlier CARES Act to bolster child care.

Clark County, so far, is not among them.

But in Pierce, Whatcom and Thurston counties and the City of Spokane, child care help from the CARES Act is an essential part of their economic stimulus.

In Pierce County, \$2 million of the \$158 million CARES Act dollars are dedicated to child care through a voucher system for families and relief program for providers. [Click here for details.](#)

Whatcom County's ReStart program has dedicated \$800,000 for licenses child care operators. [Click here for details.](#)

In Thurston County, the [Thurston Childcare Grant Program](#) is reviewing more than 120 applications for child care provider grants, ranging from \$760 to \$15,200.

The City of Spokane, after surveying residents on priorities for CARES Act funding, allocated money for grants to support and stabilize child care providers, and assistance to families earning 80 percent or less of the area's median income. [Click here for details.](#)

BUSINESS LEADER CHILD CARE SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Just as the coronavirus pandemic hit, SELF in partnership with the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce was wrapping up a survey of business leaders to determine the state of child care in Clark County. Of 104 business leaders who responded, representing 17,000 workers, these findings rose to the top:

- 80% had employees with young children turn down a job, more work hours, or a promotion.
- Half have had employees with young children quit their job.
- Half have had employees with young children miss entire days of work so that it impacted their business.

For more Child Care Survey findings, [click here.](#)

Our local findings mirror those of a statewide survey of 400 families with children under six. One of the survey's key finding estimates that the direct costs of turn over and missed work due to child care issue cost the state \$2.08 Billion. For an in-depth statewide look at the affordability and access to child care in Washington, check out "[The Mounting Costs of Child Care.](#)"

NEED CHILD CARE?

One thing the SELF/Vancouver Chamber survey revealed was that few people realize they have a free resource for finding child care: Child Care Aware of Washington. [Check it out!](#)

STATE OF BABIES 2020

The state where babies are born and spend their first three years of life makes a big difference on their chance for a strong start in life. To learn more, [look at this report](#) compiled by Birth to Three and Think Babies. **Hint: Washington looks pretty good!**

BILL NYE ON MASKS

Helping kids learn to wear masks can be a challenge. Bill Nye the Science Guy comes to the rescue with experiments that show just why it's important. [Watch the video.](#)

Stay healthy and safe

Debbie Ham | Executive Director

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