



Child Care Aware of Washington Family Center News for Families

As spring 2021 begins, it's hard to believe that we have been navigating the COVID-19 pandemic for over a year. Parents and guardians may be thinking "Where did the time go?" at the same time they also remember days and weeks that seemed to drag on and on. In so many ways, our thoughts about time have changed.

One thing that has not changed and has held many families together is the love we have for our children and our desire to make their lives safe, meaningful and happy. All of us at Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA of WA) support families' efforts to help their children thrive. When it's time to find child care, and figure out how to pay for it, we are here to help.

Speaking of child care, if your children will need summer programming it is a good idea to begin your search and register soon. Many child care providers offer summer care for children ages 0-12 and other community organizations often provide summer camps for kids ages 5—12. Unlike last summer when many summer programs closed, more programs are expecting to open this summer. Some programs have already opened registration. The CCA of WA Family Center can help families find summer care options. Simply call 1-800-446-1114 Monday—Friday, 8:30 am—4:30 pm.

Since a COVID-19 vaccine for children has not yet been developed, most summer programming this year will be outside and social distancing and other COVID-19 prevention practices will be followed. Be sure to ask about these when you register and make sure you children know what to expect.

In the meantime, while we wait for more of Washington's adults to be vaccinated, we may be feeling exhausted and even frustrated that our lives are still disrupted by the virus. It is important to know these feelings are normal and that these difficult times will not last forever. To help you and your loved ones cope with these feelings and others resulting from the pandemic and the economic stress it has caused, try to make time every day for something you enjoy and for something the children in your life enjoy. Whether it's reading a special book together, taking a walk or cooking a favorite meal—making time to take care of your social and emotional health will help everyone in your circle get through these times better.

Many experts are beginning to report that the United States is over the worst of the COVID-19 upheaval, and that by late spring or early summer, things should be approaching a "new normal." Of course, this is not the case for families who have lost family members to COVID-19. To families who are experiencing loss, we extend our sincere condolences. Grief is a long journey. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers tips for coping with grief during the pandemic—<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/stress-coping/grief-loss.html#loved-one>.

News for Families

Spring 2021

Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is May 7	2	Financial Assistance	3
April is Child Abuse Prevention Month	2	Finding Child Care	3
Help for Families Experiencing Homelessness	2	Virtual Play and Learn Groups	3
COVID-19 Vaccines for Children	2	Early Achievers	3
		Resources for Families	4



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. To celebrate, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families's Strengthening Families team is offering free downloadable activity packs to families that include a printable coloring book, a word search and more https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/FS_0053.pdf.

Families can learn about the five protective factors for strong, resilient families while they enjoy coloring with the children in their lives.



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Help for Families Experiencing Homelessness

This is an especially hard time to experience homelessness. Children who experience homelessness frequently live in unpredictable, chaotic circumstances, with disruptions in their environments and relationships. These experiences can impair their emotional, cognitive and behavioral development.

It's critically important that young children experiencing homelessness receive the opportunity to play, learn and create friendships with their peers. Attending child care can provide all of this and more. Research shows quality child care can even act as a buffer for young children against the harmful effects of toxic stress.

Child Care Aware of Washington's Family Center helps families with young children who are experiencing homelessness find child care at no cost to them for up to one year. For more information, please visit us at <https://childcareawarewa.org/services-for-families-experiencing-homelessness/> or call 1-800-446-1114.



Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is May 7

National Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is Friday, May 7. Are you planning to recognize your child care provider on this special day? There are so many ways to show your provider you appreciate all they do for your children and family—write a special note, have your child create a card or picture and/or give them a special gift or treat. Providers have worked tremendously hard this year staying open during the pandemic, following new safety and cleaning guidelines, wearing face masks all day and more. It's important to show them you care.

When Will COVID-19 Vaccines for Children be Available?

As more American adults become eligible for COVID-19 vaccines, many parents want to know when a vaccine for children ages 0-16 will be available. Right now, the answer is, no one knows for sure.



Several experts, including Dr. Fauci, M.D., director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, have said it is possible that at least one vaccine for older children may be available by late summer or early fall, and a vaccine for younger children could be ready in early 2022.

Safety testing on the three main vaccines currently available to adults (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson) is happening at several children's hospitals around the U.S. Until results of these testing programs are known and vaccines are approved for children, parents should rely on their child's pediatrician for details on when their child may be ready to be vaccinated.

Heading Back to Work In-Person?

Finding child care that works for you and your family has never been easy. Now, there's even more to consider when thinking about heading back to the office.

The first thing to know is that thousands of Washingtonians have been working not-from-home for the duration of the pandemic. In addition to health care workers and first responders, these workers include grocery workers, warehouse employees, delivery drivers and, yes, child care providers. While probably no one would describe working on the "front lines" as "easy," they have demonstrated that it can be done, in most cases, safely.

Washington's child care providers were deemed essential by Governor Inslee in the early days of the pandemic. They quickly learned how to adapt to ever changing schedules and frequently changing guidelines. After year of navigating providing quality child care during COVID-19, many are ready to enroll new children, or plan to beginning this summer or fall.

When looking for a new child care program, remember they are required to follow COVID-19 prevention strategies like social distancing and wearing face masks. Make sure to ask about these when interviewing potential providers. Also, make sure to allow yourself plenty of time to find a new provider because many are enrolling fewer children to meet safety standards.

Remember, our Family Center is always ready to help you find care and can help you find out if you're eligible for financial assistance too.

<https://childcareawarewa.org/families/> or 1-800-446-1114.

Free Virtual Play & Learn Groups for Caregivers & Children

Looking for fun ways to engage the young children you care for in great play-based early learning? Our Family Center can connect you to free online play and learn groups that create opportunities for young children and their caregivers to explore fun and simple ways to support child development and school readiness at home.

With most in-person play groups paused due to the pandemic, virtual play groups can help keep little ones laughing, playing and learning during these difficult days.

For help finding a play and learn group near you, call us at 1-800-446-1114.



Help Paying for Child Care

Washington families often have options when it comes to finding help to pay for child care. Our Family Center representatives can explain the options and check eligibility to help families find out where they can find the assistance they need and are eligible for. Just call 1-800-446-1114 M-F 8:30 am—4:30 pm, or visit <https://childcareawarewa.org/families/>.

Early Achievers— Improving Washington's Child Care System

Washington's Early Achievers program helps child care providers across our state improve the quality of their programs. It also gives families a rating system to help them better understand a particular child care program's quality. Early Achievers programs are rated by the University of Washington and earn ratings from Level 2 to 5. A Level 3 or higher is considered to be a "Quality Level of Excellence."

Early Achievers is free for providers to join. It opens up great supports and resources like early learning coaching. There are more than 3,800-providers participating in Early Achievers and over 75,000 young children enrolled in Early Achievers programs.

To see what high-quality child care looks like and how Early Achievers is making an impact, watch our short Early Achievers Impact videos online here: <https://childcareawarewa.org/providers/early-achievers-success-stories/>.





1225 S. Weller, Ste 300
Seattle, WA 98144

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 5022

Advocacy:	Phone:	Website
MomsRising		https:// www.momsrising.org/
Children's Alliance	(800) 854-5437	www.childrensalliance.org
Child Development		
Seattle Children's Hospital—classes & wellness information	(866) 987-2000 (206) 987-2000	www.seattlechildrens.org
Parenting Counts	(800) 637-3652	www.parentingcounts.org
Children's Therapy Center	253-854-5660	https://www.ctckids.org/
Zero to Three		www.zerotothree.org
PAVE Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment	1-800-5-PARENT	https://wapave.org/
American Academy of Pediatrics		www.healthychildren.org
Community Resources		
Child Care Subsidy Contact Center	1-844-626-8687	
Parent Trust for Washington	(800) 932-4673	www.parenttrust.org
Parent Help 123	(800) 322-2588	www.parenthelp123.org
Department of Children, Youth, and Families	(866) 482-4325	https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/
Apple Health	(855) 900-3066	www.applehealth.org
Washington Information Network	211	www.win211.org



Family Center: (800) 446-1114

Follow [Child Care Aware of Washington](#) on Facebook

and Instagram

[@wachildcarematters](#)

and Twitter

[@childcarewa](#)

Published Quarterly