

# Just for Parents

## Special Interest Articles:

- ECEAP Letters to the Editor
- WSA Parent Ambassadors Testify in Olympia
- Items of interest to Early Learning

## Parent Ambassador of the Week:



**Name:** Brandy Larsen  
**Hometown:** Clarkston, WA

Brandy is married to Joseph and they have 5 children. Her experience with ECEAP began in 2005 when her husband was in Iraq. The program provided her much support and help during this time of need. She enjoys working with parents and kids and wants to encourage more families to become involved and help share information about the benefits of the ECEAP program.

***"Teach your children  
by what you are, not  
just by what you say."***  
- Jane Revell & Susan Norman

## WA State Proposed Budget Reports

Both the House and the Senate have released their proposed budgets that will affect the years 2009-2011. Since the State is facing a \$9 billion deficit, it is being called an "all-cuts budget." Here are the proposed budgets as they relate to ECEAP only:

### Proposed House Budget

ECEAP program is facing cuts of \$2.74 million. There are no changes to the number of ECEAP slots, so there will be no change to the number of children served. However, the rates for enrollment slots are reduced by 2.5%, which is \$166 per slot, per year. This could **possibly** mean increased caseloads for family support workers, reduced classroom hours, the elimination of the third teacher in the classroom (many times the interpreter) and other changes that may affect the quality of the program.

### Proposed Senate Budget

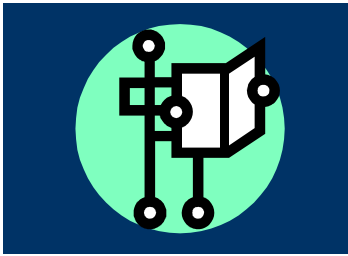
ECEAP program is facing cuts of \$2.3 million. Temporarily reduces the number of slots in 2009-2011 by 2.1% statewide, resulting in about 180 slots eliminated, at an average increase of \$15 per slot. The Senate cited the Federal American Recovery and Investment Act of 2009 provisions for an increase in Head Start and Early Head Start estimated \$10 million to help cover the temporary decrease of available slots for children. Additionally a cut of \$1.36 million for the funding of the Department of Early Learning ECEAP staff and administrative expenses is reduced. Expenditure authority is also reduced to reflect actual expenditures.

## Federal Budget Resolutions Pass

The House and Senate budget Resolutions are the blueprints for how much each appropriations committee can spend in broad areas. Due to cuts in the Labor HHS pot, it appears that there could be less funding for Head Start when we move to the next stage of the appropriations process, which will take place following the congressional recess. To view an article about the passage of the budget resolutions please go to: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090403/ap\\_on\\_go\\_co/congress\\_budget](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090403/ap_on_go_co/congress_budget)

## Support for Head Start's \$1 Billion Ask

The Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) board of directors recently voted to support a \$1 Billion increase in Head Start funding for fiscal year 2010. This number came from the National Head Start Association, the National Indian Directors Association and the Migrant/Seasonal Head Start Association. This increase will help programs maintain the gains they will make as a result of the economic recovery package and serve as a further down payment on the Obama Administration's desire to spend upwards of \$10 billion on early learning.



This newsletter is created by WSA's Parent Ambassador Program. These ambassadors advocate for quality in the early childhood development of at-risk children.

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*We're on the Web!*

*See us at:*

**[www.wsaheadstarteceap.com](http://www.wsaheadstarteceap.com)**

**Finding Resources in  
your community:**

To qualify for basic food (food stamps) your income has to be at or below 200% poverty level:

2 persons - \$2,428/month  
3 persons - \$3,051/month  
4 persons - \$3,675/month  
5 persons - \$4,298/month

Even if your income is higher, you may qualify since you may be able to deduct some of your income.

Call toll-free DSHS Answer Phone - 1-877-980-9220

## WSA Parents Ambassadors Testify

On March 31, 2009, a group of Parent Ambassadors (Bianca Bailey, Heather Gerrard, Mandie Swainston, Taфра Jones and Connie Woodhouse), co-lead by Rudy Taylor and Lucy Kee collaborated and prepared to testify before the legislature in Olympia on behalf of ECEAP. These parents met for daily conference calls to prepare and rehearse their testimonies and to offer each other support during the process. Their testimonies were based on their personal success stories related to early learning, and included the program benefits and how cuts would affect their families.

**"This was the Parent Ambassadors first concerted legislative effort to be both heard and effective – mission accomplished!"**  
- Rudy Taylor

## ECEAP Letters to the Editor Published

Parent Ambassadors Lucy Kee and Heather Gerrard both had published Letters to the Editor in several local newspapers.

Heather's letter published in Quincy Valley News, Ferndale Record, Woodinville Weekly, Valley View and Northlake News:

<http://nwnnews.com/letters-to-the-editor/1119-every-kid-should-have-a-chance.html>

Lucy's letters published in Woodinville Weekly, Valley View, Northlake News, Chinook Observer, Kirkland Reporter and Bellevue Reporter:

<http://nwnnews.com/letters-to-the-editor.html>

Kirkland Reporter Kendall Watson story on ECEAP:

[http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/east\\_king/kir/news/42295057.html](http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/east_king/kir/news/42295057.html)

Sen. Margarita Prentice's blog featuring Lucy Kee's daughter, Alissa:

<http://blog.senatedemocrats.wa.gov/prentice/sen-prentice-receives-painting-from-young-constituent/>

## Items of Interest to Early Learning

**2009-2011 biennial budget proposals:** Please click on the links under "operating" budget and either House, Senate or Governor.

<http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/budget/detail/proposals.asp>

**SB 5600: Making 2009-2011 operating appropriations.** The proposed Senate budget. Was heard in public hearing in the Senate Committee on Ways & Means at 1:30pm on March 31, 2009. Parent Ambassadors testified at this hearing on the behalf of ECEAP.

**HB 1244: Making 2009-2011 operating appropriations.** The proposed House budget. Was heard in executive session in the House Committee on Ways & Means on April 6 and 7, 2009. Was also heard in public hearing in the House Committee on Ways & Means at 3:30pm on March 31, 2009. Parent Ambassadors testified at this hearing on the behalf of ECEAP.

**Contact Your Local Representative.** Please call the toll-free number in Olympia at 1-800-562-6000 and thank them for making ECEAP a priority in legislature and to please continue their support. Please also tell them how ECEAP helps your family.