



WSA Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP

*Serving ECEAP, Head Start, Migrant Head Start,
Tribal Head Start and Early Head Start
Programs and Families*



Advocacy Alert! Special Session Could Mean Cuts to ECEAP

Governor Gregoire has called for a special session to start on November 28th to deal with the \$1.4 billion deficit. During the special session lawmakers will be expected to figure out which programs will be cut or even eliminated and whether they intend to send a revenue package to the voters for their consideration. We can't be sure how this will play out but we know that lawmakers are already having conversations about which programs should be saved, trimmed, or even eliminated.

ECEAP children and families need your help once again. **Every member of our community should contact their lawmakers and let them know that it is penny-wise and pound foolish to balance the budget by cutting ECEAP.**

- **ECEAP is a proven program** that gets our most at-risk children ready for school, and the legislature understands that – they were very supportive and expanded the number of children served last year.
- **ECEAP saves taxpayers money.** Research shows that programs like ECEAP reduce the need for special education services and grade repetition, ensure that children graduate from high school, and that they stay away from the criminal justice system. Some economists like Nobel Prize Winner James Heckman believe that programs like ECEAP and Head Start achieve a return on investment of about \$7 to \$10 for every tax dollar invested.
- **Child poverty is at a record high** (1 in 5 children under five living in poverty) and many families are unable to access ECEAP services due to already inadequate funding (19,000 children eligible but unserved). Now is not the time to make cuts to ECEAP.

Please email or call your 3 legislators and the Governor TODAY, tell them about your experience with ECEAP, and make sure they know that we can't afford to cut this key program. If you are with Head Start, you can still contact our legislators about the importance of serving as many at-risk children as possible with high-quality early learning programs - we're all in this together!

- Call the legislative hotline: **1-800-562-6000**
- Find your legislators via the leg.wa.gov website, and email them: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Congress is considering cutting Head Start funding as well – Everybody please go to <http://www.supportheadstart.org> and send your messages about the importance of Head Start/Early HS funding to Washington DC!