



## **Investing in Kids – Investing in Washington’s Future**

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### **All Kids Deserve A Strong Start.**

By age 5, a child’s brain is already nearly completely developed.

### **The Problem.**

According to the Census Bureau, 43 percent of U.S. 3-year-olds and 66 percent of 4-year-olds attended preschool at least part time in fall 2014. The National Institute for Early Education Research ranked Washington 33rd in the nation for access to state preschool for 4-year-olds, meaning thousands of the state’s children from middle-and lower-income homes do not arrive at school with opportunities equal to those of their more well-off peers. Without access to high-quality early learning programs, children fall behind. Many never catch up.

### **The Solution.**

Save the Children Action Network (SCAN) is working with Washington’s early learning coalition partners to call on elected leaders to prioritize a child’s early years and give all kids a bright future. We want to further Washington’s reputations as a nationally recognized leader in early learning by implanting smart policies that will ensure more of the state’s children have access to high-quality early education programs so all kids have a bright future. We helped enact and are working on effective implementation on key pieces of legislation:

**Early Start Act:** This bill, which Governor Jay Inslee signed into law in July, improves the quality framework for early learning in Washington State. The bill will improve access to high-quality early learning for Washington children by making critical resources such as coaching and technical assistance available to providers to improve the quality of care for children. The legislation also gives parents the information they need to make better informed decisions about the early learning opportunities available to their families.

**Best Starts for Kids:** In November 2015, King County voters approved a six-year levy to fund Best Starts for Kids. The measure will help families best prepare children to succeed in school by expanding early learning and intervention programs for children from birth through age 5. The initiative will also invest in key developmental milestones on a child’s journey to adulthood to sustain gains made in the early years.

### **The Strategy.**

High-quality early childhood education is an investment Washington needs to make in order to give all kids a strong start. If we’re going to build the business, political, military and community leaders of the future, we need to invest in young children today. Effective early childhood education programs not only prepare children for school, but also empower parents to influence their child’s academic success.

### **About Us.**

Founded by Save the Children in 2014, Save the Children Action Network (SCAN) is the political voice for kids. We believe that every child deserves the best start in life. As the political advocacy arm of Save the Children, we’re building bipartisan will and voter support to make sure every child in the U.S. has access to high-quality early learning and that no mother or child around the globe dies from a preventable disease or illness. By investing in kids and holding leaders accountable, we are helping kids from birth to age five survive and thrive.

