

## Just for Parents Newsletter

February 2014

### AMAZING NEWS FOR HEAD START!

The annual federal funding bill has been passed and is being sent to the president. Head Start will receive an additional 1 billion dollars, largely restoring Head Start's funding lost due to "sequestration".

Of the 1 billion, 500 million dollars will undo cuts made by sequestration, plus a small cost of living increase (COLA). The remaining 500 million dollars will be used for the creation of Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. This includes 154 million dollar increase for child care and 250 million dollar for competitive pre-k grants.

The cuts last year affected more than 57,000 children in Head Start and Early Head Start. Those children lost access to their programs and over 1.3 million service days were lost, transportation cut, staff was laid off and centers were closed. We can now look forward to the future of Head Start and see the impact of Head Start in the lives of vulnerable children.

### Advocacy Day 2014

Hundreds will gather on the State Capitol Steps to advocate for ECEAP and Early Learning on February 12! Let your legislator know how important ECEAP is to you and your community. Contact your Legislator at **1-800-562-6000** and make an appointment!



### Bills in session

#### **HB 2519 and SB 6538: Increasing Access to High Quality Early Education for Children in the Child Welfare System:**

This legislation will break down the silos and connect children in the child welfare to high quality early learning settings. The legislation will make it easier for children in the child welfare system to enroll in ECEAP and it will ensure that they get to the front of the line.

#### **Early Start HB 2377 and SB 6127:**

This legislation would improve the quality of early education by: a) requiring that only child care providers at a Level 3 on Early Achievers can take working connections child care subsidies b) children receiving a working connections child care subsidy maintain a full 12 month authorization; c) increasing the number of full day options available for ECEAP children.

### Fact of the day

The early years matter because, **in the first few years of life, 700 new neural connections are formed every second.** Neural connections are formed through the interaction of genes and a baby's environment and experiences, especially "serve and return" interaction with adults.

# Welcome our new 2014 Parent Ambassadors!



Our 2014 Parent Ambassadors are already getting their hands dirty. They just had their first training and some have testified down in Olympia. This year they are not only participating in a financial literacy program but also received a grant from Thrive by Five to do racial equity training.

## 12 Month Authorization

This year one of the legislative priorities for WSA is to extend 12-month authorization to ALL children receiving Working Connections Child Care. Many studies show the importance of children building relationships with their caregivers. Those children that experience frequent changes in child care providers at an early age show more aggressive and less outgoing behaviors at age 4 and 5. Evaluations have also shown that more frequent reauthorizations require more administrative time and effort on DSHS staff. Expansion of 12-month authorization would increase administrative savings, therefore, saving taxpayers money.

## Bedtime Math

You read your child a bedtime story but why not do some bed time math?

Your child's math skills at kindergarten entry are a better predictor of school success than reading skills or attention span.

Example: If you drop 8 corn puffs on the floor and your dog eats 6 of them, how many are left for you?

To learn more about bedtime math go to [Bedtimemath.org](http://Bedtimemath.org)



The Just For Parents newsletter is provided by the WSA Parent Ambassadors. Any ideas for stories? **Contact us at [katy@wsaheadstartceap.com](mailto:katy@wsaheadstartceap.com), 425.453.1227**