



# Eastside Human Services Forum

## 2010 Legislative Agenda

[www.eastsideforum.org](http://www.eastsideforum.org)

***Now more than ever, families need to know the community is there to support them.***

Assistance with basic needs, preventing homelessness, helping parents to find affordable and high quality childcare, and providing important assistance to the growing population of seniors are all priorities for the well being of our residents.

The Eastside Human Services Forum makes the following legislative recommendations for the 2010 Legislative Session:

### Preventing and Ending Homelessness

- Restore the Housing Trust Fund to the \$200 million level.
- Stabilize Washington Families Fund

*East King County continues to have the lowest proportion of affordable housing compared to other regions in King County, while the need is nearly as great as other areas. Among East King county cities, the average percent of rental housing that is affordable to low-income households earning 50% or less of median income is 7.4%, far below the King County average of 33.8%. (Source: King County 2008-2009 Benchmarks Report: Affordable Housing)*

#### **For more information:**

The Committee to End Homelessness in King County (CEH): [www.cehkc.org](http://www.cehkc.org); Washington Low Income Housing Alliance: [www.waliha.org](http://www.waliha.org); United Way of King County: [www.uwkc.org](http://www.uwkc.org); Washington State Coalition for the Homeless: [www.endhomelessnesswa.org](http://www.endhomelessnesswa.org)

### Early Childhood and School Readiness

- Preserve and restore Home Visiting funds to 2009 levels for a continuum of programs such as Parents as Teachers and the Parent Child Home Program.
- Support training for child care professionals
- Change policies regarding state child care subsidy rates such as amount of co-pays, or frequency of eligibility reauthorization

*Research has proven that healthy interactions, such as those fostered by home visiting programs, in the early years are linked to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and later prevent children's involvement in the criminal justice system. In 2008, 96% of participants in Healthy Start, one such home visiting program serving North and East King County, improved their parenting skills.*

*Childcare for an East King County family with an infant and a pre-schooler can cost between \$21,424 and \$26,312 a year. This is 31-38% of the county's median household income. As of January 2009, of the 440 childcare centers and childcare family homes in East King County, less than half (45%) report accepting DSHS subsidies. (Source: Child Care Resources, Child Care Facilities and Rates in King County)*

#### **For more information:**

United Way of King County – [www.uwkc.org](http://www.uwkc.org); Parent Trust for Washington Children/Parents as Teachers State Office- Kathy Zeisel MEd: [kzeisel@parenttrust.org](mailto:kzeisel@parenttrust.org); Early Learning Action Alliance: [www.childrensalliance.org/our-current-work/early-learning-now/early-learning-action-alliance](http://www.childrensalliance.org/our-current-work/early-learning-now/early-learning-action-alliance)

## Access to Basic Needs

- Increase access to public benefits, such as Food Stamps and the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Washington Information Network 2-1-1: Maintain current level of funding, improve quality and accessibility of services

*Between January and September, 2009 over 6,400 East King County residents called 2-1-1 for help. The top requests for assistance – and where the needs exceed availability of resources – are rent/mortgage assistance, utilities, holiday related assistance, emergency shelter, and transportation.*

*In September 2007, the number of households receiving food stamps in East King County was 7,075. By September 2009, that number grew to 14,392.*

### **For more information:**

United Way of King County: [www.uwkc.org](http://www.uwkc.org); Early Learning Action Alliance: [www.childrensalliance.org/our-current-work/early-learning-now/early-learning-action-alliance](http://www.childrensalliance.org/our-current-work/early-learning-now/early-learning-action-alliance); WIN 2-1-1: [www.win211.org](http://www.win211.org)

## Older Adults

- Restore funding for Adult Day Health including transportation.
- Continue current funding for the Senior Citizens Services Act (SCSA is a primary source of funding for the critical Senior Information and Assistance programs operated through Area Agencies on Aging.)

*Due to changes in State funding for low-income people receiving Medicaid, effective June 30, 2009, 68 people attending Elder and Adult Day Services' Bellevue site and 11 persons attending the Issaquah site were no longer able to receive services.*

While the population of seniors in Washington has grown by about 24.5% between 1998 and 2007, SCSA funding has increased by only 2% during that period.

### **For more information:**

Washington Area Agencies on Aging: [www.agingwashington.org](http://www.agingwashington.org); WA Senior Lobby: [www.waseniorlobby.org](http://www.waseniorlobby.org); Bellevue Network on Aging: [www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/network\\_on\\_aging.htm](http://www.ci.bellevue.wa.us/network_on_aging.htm); Kirkland Senior Council: [www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/parks/Senior\\_Services/Senior\\_Council.htm](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/depart/parks/Senior_Services/Senior_Council.htm)

## Issues to Monitor

- Simplify the process for cities to waive impact fees for affordable housing, by eliminating the current requirement of identifying alternative public fund sources
- Support maintaining the GAU (General Assistance Unemployable) policy recommendations
- Restore funding for out-of-school-time programs for school aged children and youth
- Designate county developmental disabilities base rate funding for each eligible child to address the increased demand for early intervention services
- Support state solutions to address the King County funding crisis
- Assure stable long-term funding for Public Health