

Best Starts for Kids

Best Starts for Kids (Best Starts) is a community-driven initiative to support every baby born or child raised in King County so they reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving.

Through investing in community supports from prenatal development to adulthood, Best Starts catalyzes strong starts in early childhood and sustains those gains as kids progress to adulthood, launching King County's kids on a path of lifelong health and well-being.



Our philosophy



Promotion

We increase the positive things available to babies, children, young people and their families.



Prevention

We decrease things that may prevent babies, children and young people from growing up to be healthy and happy.

Policy & Systems change

We work to change systems and policies so that all communities in our region can thrive and prosper regardless of race or place.



Early Intervention

We intervene early to support children and young people who need additional resources to succeed.



How do we do it?

The first Best Starts levy, approved by King County voters in 2015, invested \$400 million into our community over six years and supported more than half a million children, youth, young adults, and families in partnership with over 500 community-based organizations.

The second Best Starts levy was renewed by King County voters in August 2021 and will invest over \$800 million in funding through 2027, maintaining our current investments in promotion, prevention, and early intervention, and deepening our investments to address critical needs in our community. [Learn more about our outcomes in Best Starts 1.0 here.](#)

● Investing early

Best Starts prenatal to five investments reach children and families where they are — in their homes, child care settings, and communities — to support healthy child development and family well-being. *Click on each strategy to learn more!*

- [Workforce Development](#)
- [Community-based Parenting Supports](#)
- [Early Support for Infants and Toddlers](#)
- [Maternal and Child Health Services](#)
- [Home-based Services](#)
- [Child Care Health Consultations](#)
- [Innovation Supports](#)
- [Universal Developmental Screening](#)
- [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health](#)
- [Help Me Grow](#)
- [Environmental Supports: Lead and Toxics](#)

● Sustaining the gain

Best Starts 5 to 24 investments continue the progress made in early childhood with school- and community-based opportunities to learn, grow, and develop through childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood. *Click on each strategy to learn more!*

- [Expanded Learning](#)
- [Youth Development](#)
- [School-Based Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment/ Services](#)
- [School-Based Health Centers](#)
- [Healthy and Safe Environments](#)
- [Positive Family Connections](#)
- [Stopping the School-to-Prison Pipeline](#)
- [Transitions to Adulthood](#)
- [Child and Adolescent Immunizations](#)
- [Liberation and Healing](#)

● Preventing youth & family homelessness

Best Starts' Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative invests in case management and flexible funds to support families that are on the verge of homelessness. Learn more [here](#).

● Child Care Subsidy Program & Workforce Demonstration Project

We expand access for children and their families who are not eligible for existing federal, state, or local subsidy programs or for whom these programs are insufficient and supports investments in the child care workforce through a wage boost demonstration project. Learn more [here](#).

● Strengthening communities

Best Starts invests in Communities of Opportunity, a unique community-public-private initiative that believes the most meaningful, just, and sustainable solutions are generated in partnership with communities, who know what they need to be healthy and thrive. Learn more [here](#).

● Capital projects

If the total projected levy proceeds exceeds \$822M, additional funding - up to \$50M - will be used to provide grants to support repairs and expansion of buildings and facilities, and to support the construction of new buildings and facilities that will serve children and youth.

We value data and evaluation to understand how our investments are impacting King County's children and communities. Learn more [here](#).