## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Making Affordable, High-Quality Early Learning and Care Accessible to All Children in the Walla Walla Valley

2022

# Project Summary

The Elevate Early Learning Working Group's "Big Goal" is for all children aged 0-5 in Walla Walla and Columbia counties and the Milton-Freewater area to have access to age-appropriate, affordable, and high-quality early learning and care.

This document summarizes the results of a study that estimated the number of young children in the project area who do not participate in or have access to these programs, the one-time facilities and annual direct service costs associated with closing the gap for eight scenarios, and strategies to fund the "Big Goal." The key takeaways are included in the Executive Summary and the in-depth information for each analysis can be found in the respective appendices.

### PREPARED FOR

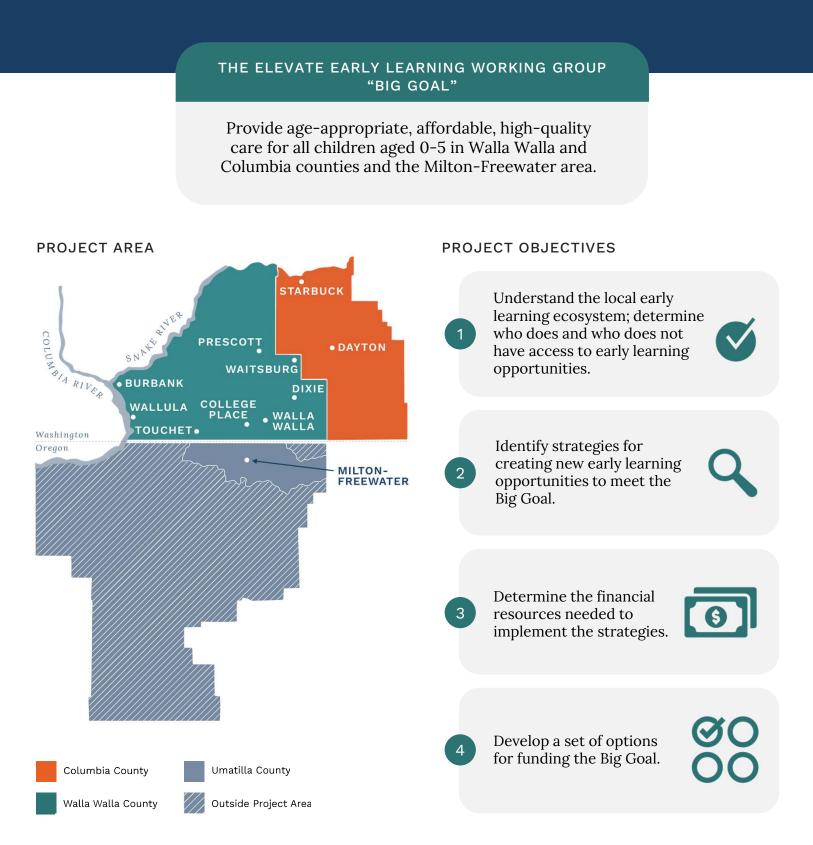
Elevate Early Learning Working Group <a href="https://www.uwbluemt.org/elevate">https://www.uwbluemt.org/elevate</a>

### PREPARED BY

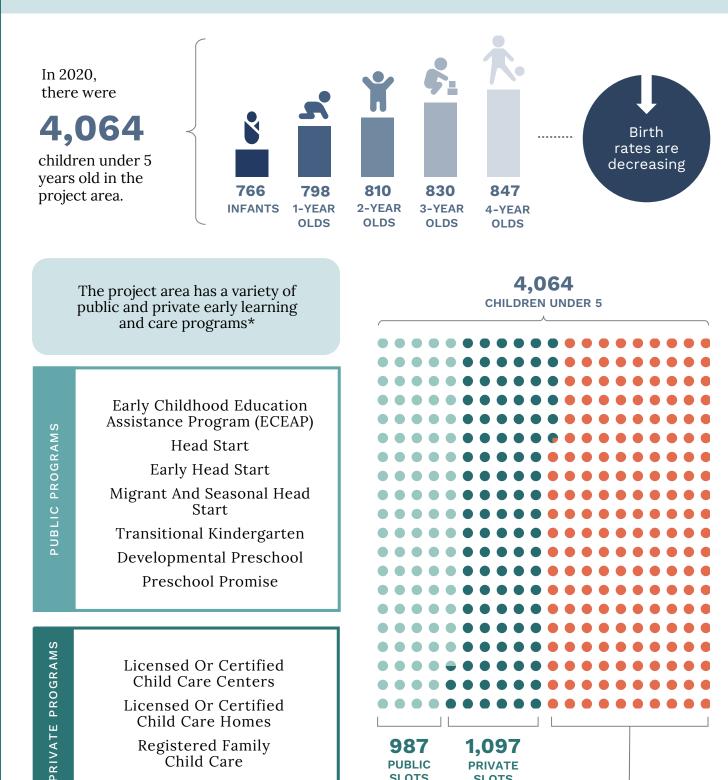
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# Making Affordable, High-Quality Early Learning and Care Accessible to All Children in the Walla Walla Valley



Currently, 44% of children under 5 do not participate in an early learning or care program in the project area.



Child Care

\*There are also Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers in the area, but they were not included in the estimations because their capacity and location data is unavailable.

2,084 **TOTAL EARLY LEARNING** AND CARE SLOTS **CURRENTLY** 

PRIVATE

**SLOTS** 

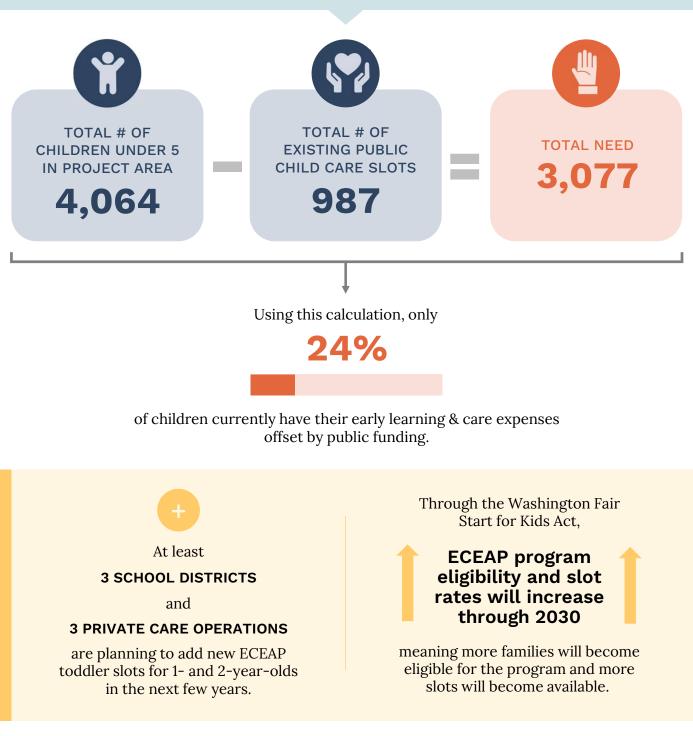
PUBLIC

**SLOTS** 

1.980 **UNSERVED CHILDREN** 

# We calculated the maximum number of early learning and care slots in need of subsidy

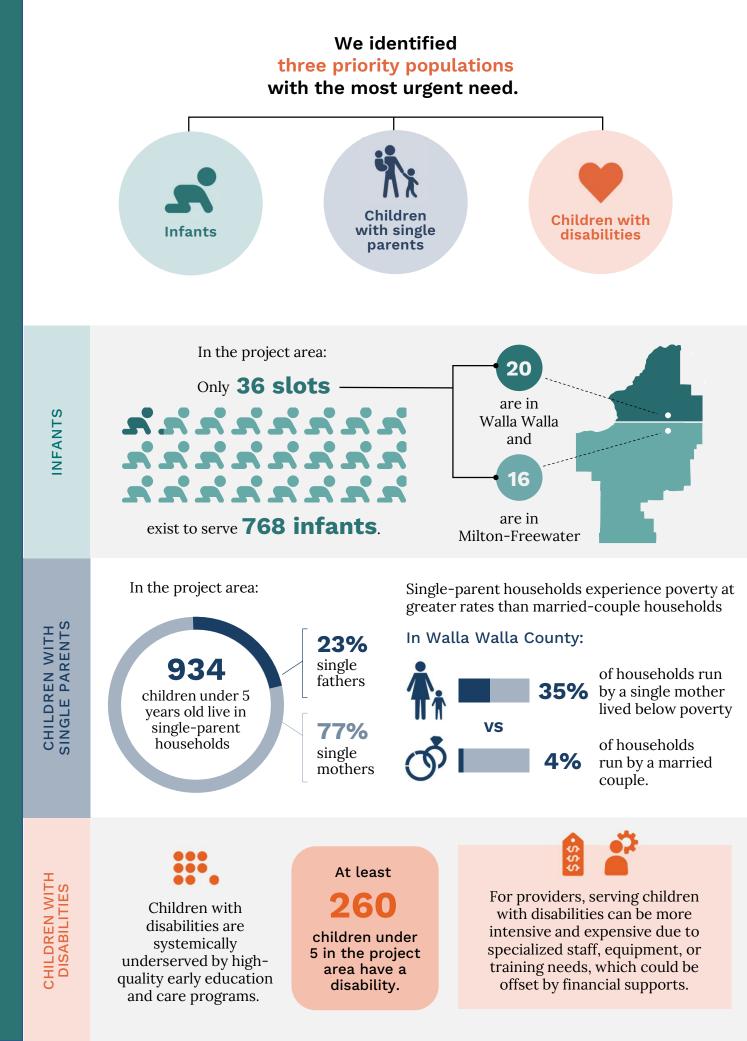
by subtracting the number of existing public slots from the number of children who live in the project area.\*



\*Ideally, we would also subtract the number of children who already receive subsidies through the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and other state programs; however, this data was unattainable.

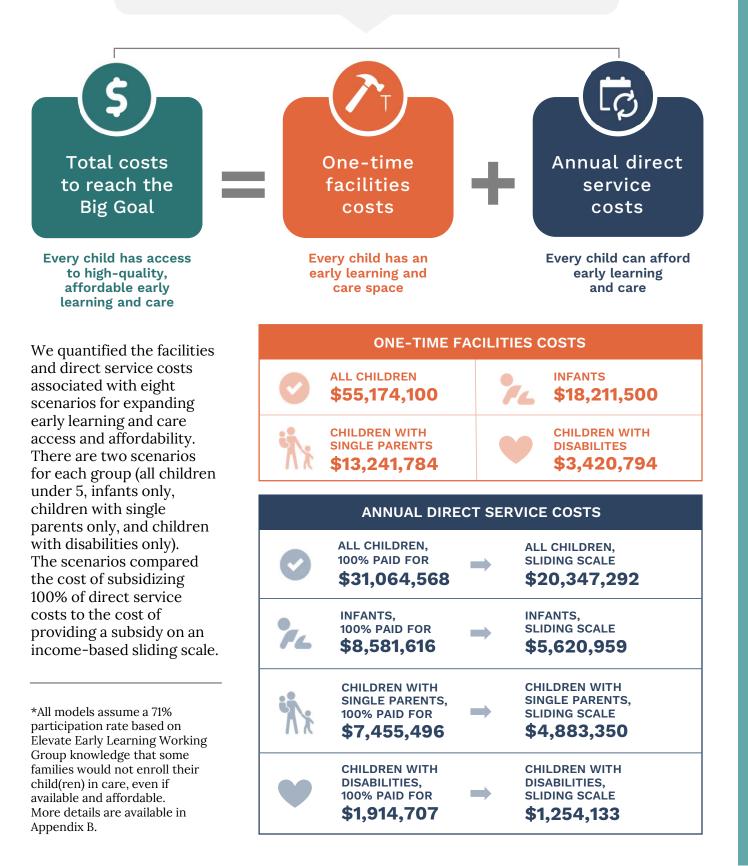
Children enrolled in publicly funded programs do not require additional funds to support their early learning experiences as they are already being supported by state and federal sources.

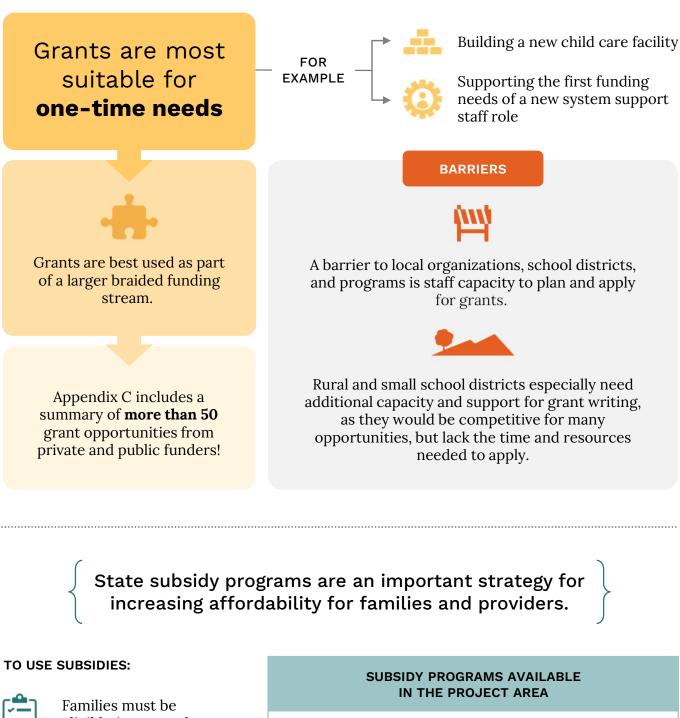
Children currently enrolled in private programs do not necessarily have their enrollment supported and thus count toward the gap of children not currently served by a public program.



# For every child to have access to early learning and care, there must be a physical space available to them, and every family must be able to afford the services.

Therefore, the price tag for reaching the "Big Goal" will include the one-time costs associated with building the facilities, along with the annual costs of providing the child care services.\*





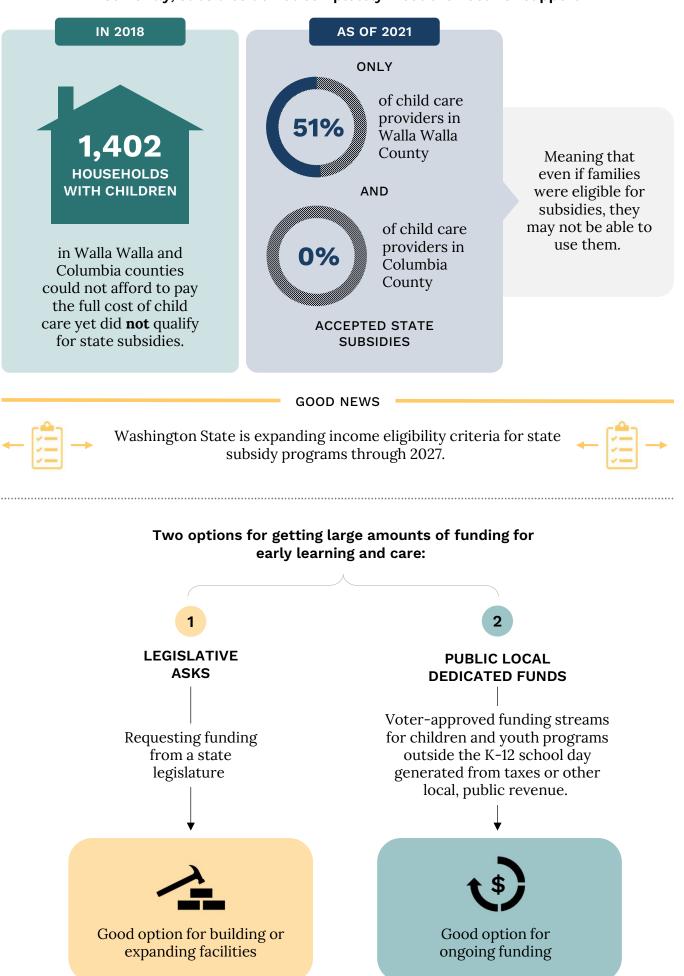
- ✓ WASHINGTON STATE WORKING CONNECTIONS CHILD CARE SUBSIDY
- ✓ WASHINGTON STATE SEASONAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDY
- ✓ OREGON'S EMPLOYMENT RELATED DAY CARE SUBSIDY
- ✓ MILITARY CHILD CARE FEE ASSISTANCE
- ✓ PROVIDER-SPECIFIC DISCOUNTS

Families must be eligible (meet work or school, and income requirements).



Providers must be licensed and approved by Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families or Oregon Department of Human Services.

## Currently, subsidies do not completely meet the need for support





Blue Mountain Community Foundation (BMCF) can manage private funding streams to support early learning and care projects and programs. → 💟

A Child Care Assistance Fund is already established at BMCF.

Private funds could be used for capacity building and to leverage greater resources

#### **APPENDIX G SUMMARY** | Other Funding Strategies

current funding is supporting the "Big Goal."

#### OTHER IMPORTANT FUNDING STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

