

BLUEPRINT

FOR A

JUST & EQUITABLE FUTURE



The 10-Year Plan to
Dismantle Poverty
in Washington





A WORD FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

“As people experiencing the issues addressed in this plan, we are as hopeful as we are anxious about submitting it. Trust is something that comes hard for many of us, and a plan without action is just a plan. We wholeheartedly want to believe that the time and energy we invested in this effort will result in the policy and program changes so desperately needed for our children, families, and communities, but remain concerned that politics and privilege will trump the bold steps needed for more Washingtonians to achieve the independence, self-determination, and economic success that can be shared with our children and grandchildren.

We are deeply grateful to Governor Inslee for taking a stand on poverty and inequality. For those of you with the power to now decide whether and how to act, please remember that millions of Washingtonians, just like us, will continue to struggle to keep a roof over our head, struggle to feed our children, and live without peace of mind that things will be okay. Please don't forget that we are the people behind the numbers, the lives that will benefit should you choose to act.” ~ *Drayton Jackson and Juanita Maestas, Co-Chairs*



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 10-year Plan for the Future would not have been possible without the substantial contributions of individuals and organizations throughout Washington state with a vested interest in reducing poverty and inequality. We are deeply grateful to the following people and organizations who dedicated their time, talents, and expertise to this effort.

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Extra special thanks to our PRWG interns, **Roxanne Garcia** and **Amy Willerford**, for their excellent research and overall support of the workgroup's efforts. Roxanne and Amy went above and beyond the call of duty and produced truly extraordinary work. We are deeply grateful for their contributions.

And last, but most certainly not least, a very special thank you to the PRWG Writing Team – **Roxanne Garcia, Claude Greene, Drayton Jackson, Jorji Knickrehm, Patricia Lally, Daisye Orr, Sharon Pesut, Lori Pfingst, Maria Siguenza, Marisol Tapia, Lindsay Morgan Tracy, Jan Weichert, and Amy Willerford** – who volunteered their time and energy to write the plan.





For Amina Ahmed and Tony Lee, who inspired so many to advocate for a just and equitable world.

“In Washington State, more than a half-million children live in families that struggle to make ends meet. This is unacceptable anywhere, but especially in a state with so much prosperity.” ~Governor Jay Inslee

Blueprint for a Just & Equitable Future

For two years running, Washington has made national headlines for ranking as the Best State in the Nation by U.S. News & World Report.¹ Strong technology, manufacturing, and energy sectors, combined with high scores for health care, education, and opportunity, propel us to the top of the list. It is exciting many people recognize our state for what Washingtonians already know — our beautiful corner of the Pacific Northwest is indeed unique for all it has to offer.

While there is much to be celebrated, data about our most precious resource — the individuals, children, families, and communities that call Washington state home — paint a more nuanced picture. **In 2019, 1.75 million Washingtonians — over 500,000 of them children — lived in a household that struggles to make ends meet; enough to fill 25 stadiums the size of Lumen Field.** Recent data show that the current economic downturn will only deepen these trends, possibly pushing poverty and inequality to their highest rates in 50 years.²

For at least one in four of our neighbors — likely many more due to the economic consequences of COVID-19 — the foundation needed to support them reaching their full potential is cracked, making it challenging to build for the future. Many more live on a financial fault line, with few resources to weather the life storms that can affect all of us — a sudden illness, a major car repair, or getting laid off. Before COVID-19 most were working, but finding it increasingly difficult to afford the basics in communities throughout the state. A disproportionate share of these people are Indigenous, Black, and Brown — the legacy of a social and economic system built on our history of colonialism, racism, oppression, and exclusion.

Washington state cannot reach its full potential until our residents can. That is why Governor Inslee created a Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG) and tasked it with creating a comprehensive 10-year plan to reduce poverty and inequality in Washington state. This 10-year Plan is the culmination of PRWG’s work over the last two years, and includes recommendations that agencies, legislators, businesses, community-based organizations, and funders can all work on together to ensure social and economic opportunity and well-being exists for all Washingtonians, and that it be passed on from this generation to the next ... and the next ... and the next.

The goal of this strategic plan is to build a just and equitable future in which all Washingtonians have their foundational needs met, and the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

Figure 1: Poverty Reduction Work Group Membership & Process



Governor Inslee's Poverty Reduction Work Group

Governor Inslee created the Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG) via directive³ in November 2017. PRWG is co- led by the state departments of Commerce, Employment Security, and Social & Health Services, in partnership with tribal and urban Indians, state racial and ethnic commissions, employers, community-based organizations, legislators, advocates, and philanthropy. A steering committee made up of 22 people reflecting the diverse demographic and geographic experience of poverty set priorities and direction for the development of strategies and recommendations.

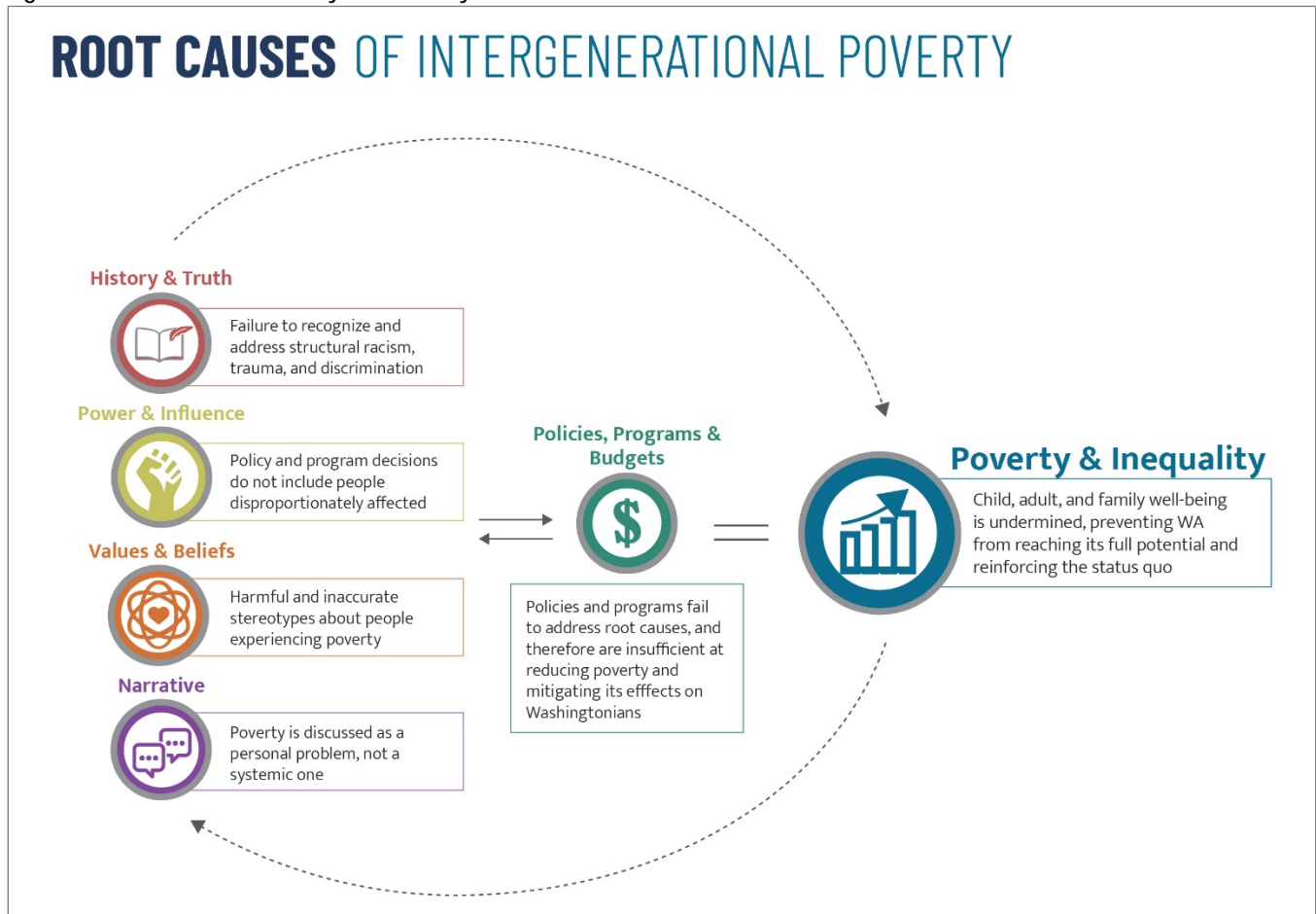
Process & Principles for Developing the Plan

The Steering Committee and general work group met monthly, but separately, with two co-chairs from the Steering Committee attending both meetings (Figure 1). Collectively, PRWG adopted the following principles to develop and prioritize recommendations in the strategic plan.

Addressing root causes AND the urgency of now. PRWG prioritized addressing the root causes of poverty in the development of the strategic plan, recognizing that past poverty reduction efforts fell short by focusing too narrowly on symptoms rather than the underlying causes (Figure 2).⁴ Yet, there is also an urgent need to provide resources to the 1.75 million children, adults, and families struggling to make ends meet today. Our recommendations, therefore, address root causes and the urgency of now. In doing so, they are designed to mitigate the experience of poverty, as well as prevent it from happening altogether.

Elevating the expertise and influence of people experiencing poverty. As the foremost experts on their lives, people experiencing poverty are essential to the design of effective solutions. Through the creation of the Steering Committee, PRWG ensured people disproportionately affected by poverty had a direct say in the strategies and recommendations from which they stand to benefit (Bright Spot #1). PRWG also enlisted hundreds of experts from organizations serving people experiencing poverty, as well as communities throughout the state, to inform the 10-year Plan.

Figure 2: Root Causes of Poverty Identified by PRWG





#1: STEERING COMMITTEE

Recognizing that people experiencing poverty are the foremost experts in their lives, PRWG prioritized elevating the leadership and expertise of those most affected by poverty in the development of strategies and recommendations for the 10-year strategic plan. Toward that end, the group unanimously decided to create a Steering Committee whose role was to set priorities for the plan and provide honest and critical feedback throughout the process. Quotes from Steering-Committee members are presented throughout the report to give voice to the specific issues, themes, and solutions highlighted throughout the plan.

The 22-member Steering Committee was convened by PRWG member Statewide Poverty Action Network. Membership includes people from urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas in Washington state, and has diverse representation from communities most affected by poverty, including: Indigenous, Black and Brown people, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, immigrants and refugees, and single parents. The steering committee held monthly, full-day meetings to determine priorities, and elected two co-chairs to represent them in the full PRWG meetings.

The Steering Committee provided the knowledge and expertise PRWG needed to develop a strategic plan that, if implemented, would actually work. They are also the heart and soul of the effort – grounding the larger group in what it means to experience poverty in Washington state, and why listening to people most affected by it is essential for us to succeed in reducing it.

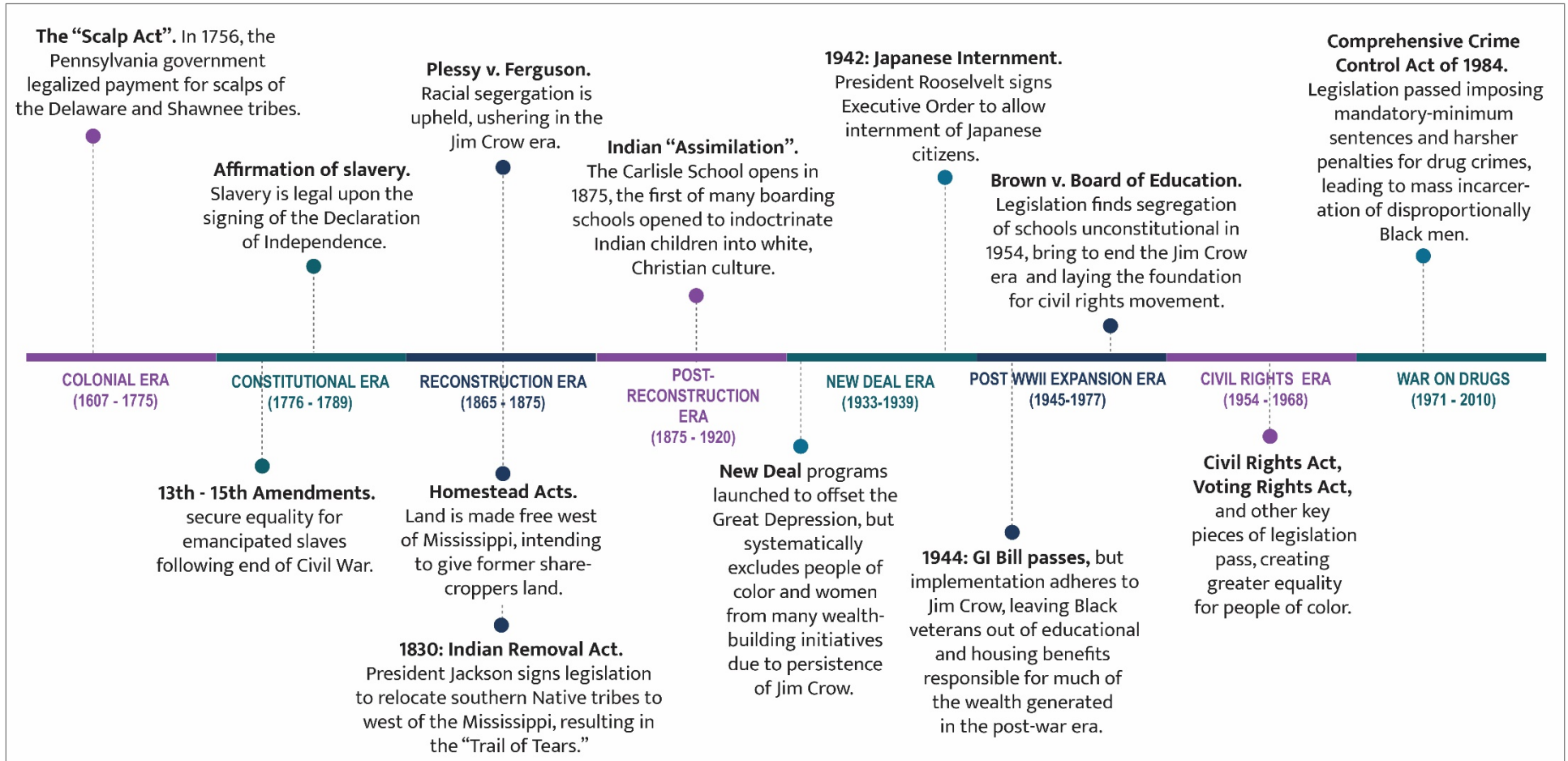
*“If you truly believe that racial groups are equal, then you also believe that racial disparities must be the result of racial discrimination.” ~Ibram X. Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning**

Race and social justice at the center. The experience of poverty is not shared equally. Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians, women, families with young children, youth, rural residents, immigrants and refugees, seniors, LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities have poverty rates above the state average. Reducing poverty in a way that achieves equity for each of these groups is essential for Washington state to maximize the well-being of its residents and fully realize the talent, potential, and contributions they have to offer.

The plan centers racial equity. With poverty rates nearly double that of the state average, we cannot untangle the undue burden of poverty among Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians from the history and perpetuation of colonialism, oppression, and racism embedded throughout systems that influence the opportunities we need to succeed, such as education, employment, and housing. Indeed, throughout history policies have systematically excluded people of color from the opportunities we all need to thrive, directly affecting their disproportionate experience of poverty today (Figure 3).

Racial discrimination also overlaps with other forms of discrimination — ageism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and ableism — to deepen the experience of poverty. Understanding the intersection

Figure 3: Examples of Significant U.S. Policies Affecting Poverty Outcomes by Race and Ethnicity



Source: Adapted from Ellis, W. (2019) *Community Resilience: A Dynamic Model for Public Health*. Retrieved from ProQuest and Theses Database (UMI No. 13811038)

of race with all forms of inequality, and how they compound, is necessary to fully realize the potential of the 10-year Plan strategies and recommendations upon implementation.

A racial equity consultant facilitated PRWG’s work with a racial equity toolkit (**Appendix A**) — a process designed to guide, inform, and assess how policies, programs, and practices burden or benefit people of color — to ensure strategies and recommendations address the disproportionate experience of poverty among Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians with intention.

Blending evidence, innovation, and collaboration. PRWG placed a high priority on using existing research and evidence to formulate the recommendations and, in many cases, relied on the efforts of other work groups and task forces with expertise on specific issues related to poverty. However, existing knowledge and practice has thus far failed to meaningfully reduce the demographic and geographic gaps in poverty among people of color and other groups disproportionately affected. Therefore, PRWG also prioritized innovative approaches informed by groups most affected, including and especially those recommended by Steering Committee members. We believe this approach — blending strong evidence with solutions informed by people experiencing poverty — increases the likelihood that the recommendations will succeed once implemented.

Inspiring hope and building on resilience. Current policies, programs, and practices are based upon a long legacy of shaming and punishing people in poverty, instilling a sense of fear and undermining progress. Strong and growing evidence from brain science and behavioral economics shows that children, adults, and families experiencing poverty are remarkably resilient, especially when they have a sense of hope. The recommendations contained in this plan are intentionally crafted to eliminate shame and punishment from the experience of poverty, instill hope, and leverage people’s innate resiliency.

Building Momentum & Taking Action

Systemic change becomes possible when we recognize the “system” is us — people working in state and local government, non-profits, businesses, and philanthropic entities across the state all have a role to play. It simply takes a willingness to act. To stay informed about the state’s poverty reduction efforts and learn how you can support the strategies and recommendations, visit www.dismantlepovertyinwa.com and sign up for updates and events.



DEFINING & MEASURING POVERTY & INEQUALITY

“The opposite of poverty is not wealth — it’s justice.” ~ Bryan Stevenson, author, Just Mercy

A Washington Without Poverty & Injustice

The effects of economic hardship are well-documented and crystal clear: poverty causes negative outcomes for children, adults, and families⁵ and costs the U.S. economy over \$1 trillion annually.⁶ A Washington without poverty and injustice would be substantially better off (Figure 4) — well-being would soar due to improved education, health, and employment outcomes, and rates of homelessness, child neglect, addiction, and crime would decrease. Our communities would be more vibrant, healthy, and safe, with substantial economic benefits: for every \$1 spent on reducing childhood poverty, we save at least \$7 in return.⁷ **In Washington state, the economy would be nearly \$40 billion stronger if poverty were reduced and racial disparities in income were eliminated.**⁸

Reducing poverty and inequality is not just about the economic returns — it is also about dignity, humanity, and belonging.⁹ When Washingtonians have their foundational needs met and believe their lives are valued, they are more likely to thrive and fully contribute to their families, schools, communities, and jobs. Investments in economic stability, equity, and inclusion benefit all of us.

Figure 4



Visibility & Belonging: Data Trends & Limitations

To fully realize a just and equitable future in Washington state, we need to take stock of the past. Despite the narrative of a strong economy before the COVID-19 induced economic downturn, conservative estimates show nearly one in four Washingtonians — 1.75 million people, including 500,000 children — struggled to make ends meet.¹⁰

The burden of poverty is not equal — Indigenous, Black, and Brown people are disproportionately affected, as are rural residents, single mothers and fathers — especially those with young children — youth, seniors, people with disabilities, the LGBTQIA+ community, and immigrants and refugees. Structural racism intersects with all forms of oppression and inequality to undermine our collective well-being — when nearly a quarter of Washingtonians lack the basic building blocks of well-being, such as having enough food and a stable home, it prevents us from reaching our full potential as a state.

These outcomes are not due to chance, but rather are the product of inherently unjust and unequal policies, programs, and practices that have underwritten our economy for decades. Recent data show that the current economic downturn will only deepen these trends, possibly pushing poverty and inequality to their highest rates in 50 years.¹¹

But even our best data systems are limited in the story they tell and contain significant cultural bias, reflective of the perspectives and interests of the people that created them. To address the root causes of poverty we need to disaggregate existing data to the greatest extent possible, as well as look beyond traditional data systems to tell a better story.

Decolonizing Data: The Pathway to a Better Story about Poverty & Inequality

Abigail Echohawk, Chief Research Officer for the Seattle Indian Health Board, explains how current data systems harm Indigenous people and why “decolonizing” data and storytelling is essential for making progress for all marginalized communities:¹²

“When we think about data and how it's been gathered from marginalized communities, it was never gathered to help or serve us. It was primarily done to show the deficits in our communities, to show where there are gaps. And it's always done from a deficit-based framework ... what they don't talk about is the strengths of our community. Decolonizing data is about controlling our own story, and making decisions based on what is best for our people.” ~Abigail Echohawk, Chief Research Officer, Seattle Indian Health Board

Decolonizing data is a pathway to telling a better story about poverty and inequality. Working in partnership with communities most affected by poverty to improve data collection that is representative of their perspectives, experience, and strengths is key to dismantling myths and developing the most effective solutions. PRWG encourages policymakers and stakeholders to adopt the practice of letting people represented by data bring meaning to it to tell a better story and inform more effective solutions. In the meantime, triangulating existing data can provide some understanding of the size and extent of poverty and inequality in Washington state.

What Available Data Shows About the Burden of Poverty in Washington State

Official Poverty Measure. The official poverty level for the U.S. is based on a measure developed in 1963 during the War on Poverty and remains in wide use today to track economic hardship and determine eligibility and assistance levels for programs. In 2020, a family of three falls under the official definition of poverty if they make under \$21,330 per year, no matter where they live in the continental U.S.¹³ The severity of poverty is often defined as a ratio to the federal poverty level (FPL) (Table 1).

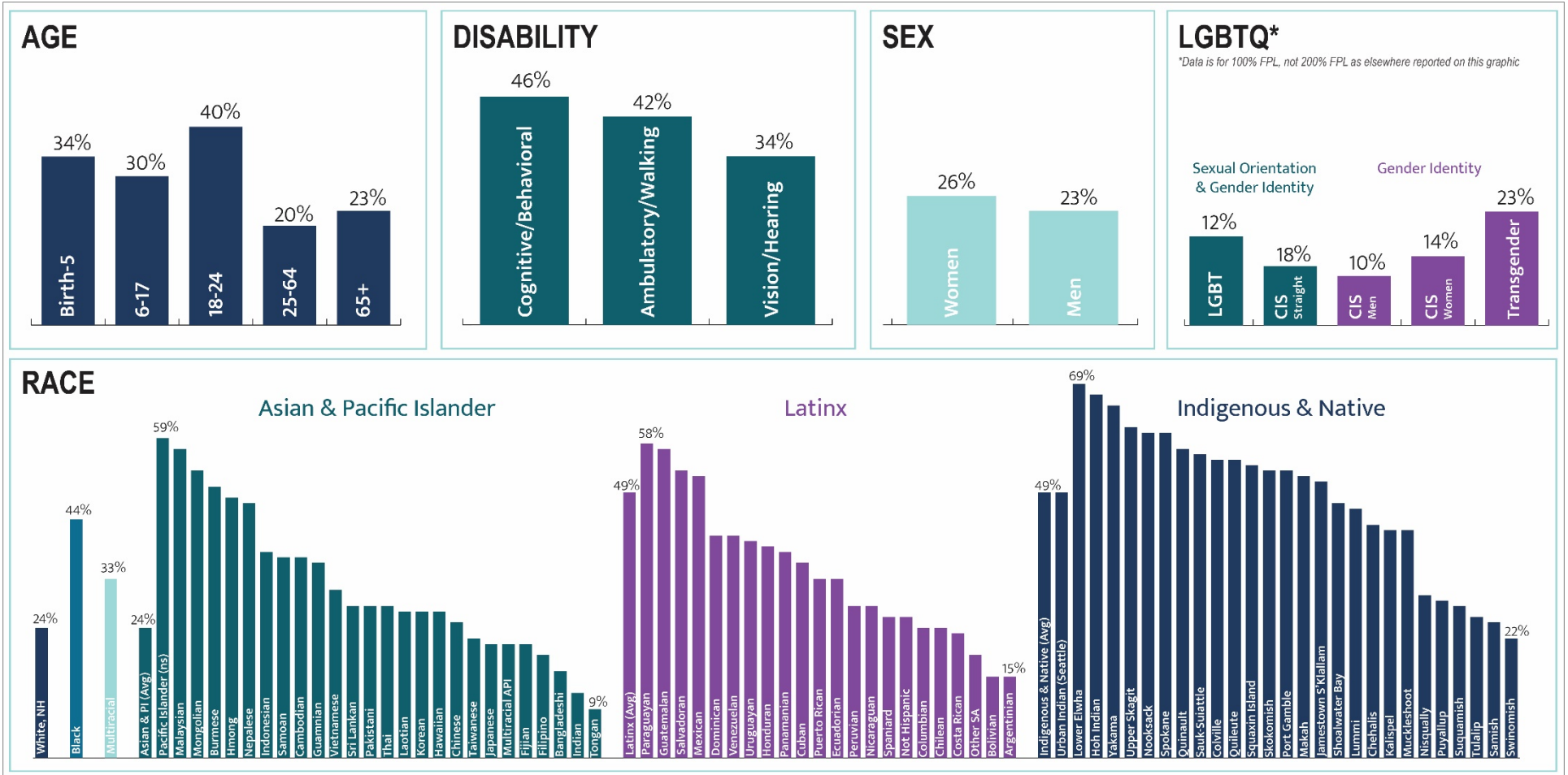
Table 1

SEVERITY	FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL	INCOME FOR A FAMILY OF 3
Deep Poverty	0% – 49%	\$0 – \$10,859
Poverty	50% – 99%	\$10,860 – \$21,719
Low Income	100% – 200%	\$21,720 – \$43,440

Many researchers have increasingly criticized the official measure as outdated and insufficient at capturing the true extent of economic hardship in the U.S.¹⁴ In recent decades, new measures have emerged to overcome limitations of the official poverty measure by estimating actual cost-of-living for basic needs — such as housing, food, child care, and transportation — for different geographies, family size, and age of children (see Cost-of-Living Measures below). These measures consistently show that it takes at least 200% FPL to meet the basic needs of most families in most communities in Washington state. Therefore, PRWG uses 200% FPL to provide a conservative estimate of the size and extent of economic hardship in Washington state.

The official measure shows that 1.75 million Washingtonians — one in four (25%) — live below 200% FPL. Disaggregating the data shows that Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians experience much higher rates than the state average (with significant variation within racial and ethnic groups), as do young children and youth, women, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, LGBTQIA+, and rural populations (Figure 5 and Table 2).

Figure 5: Percent of People Living Below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level by Age, Race, Disability, Sex, Sexual Orientation, & Gender Identity, Washington State 2014-2018*



Source: All data retrieved from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey, with the exception of LGBTQ data, retrieved from the UCLA Williams Institute.

Table 2: Percent of People Living Below 200% by County, 2014-2018

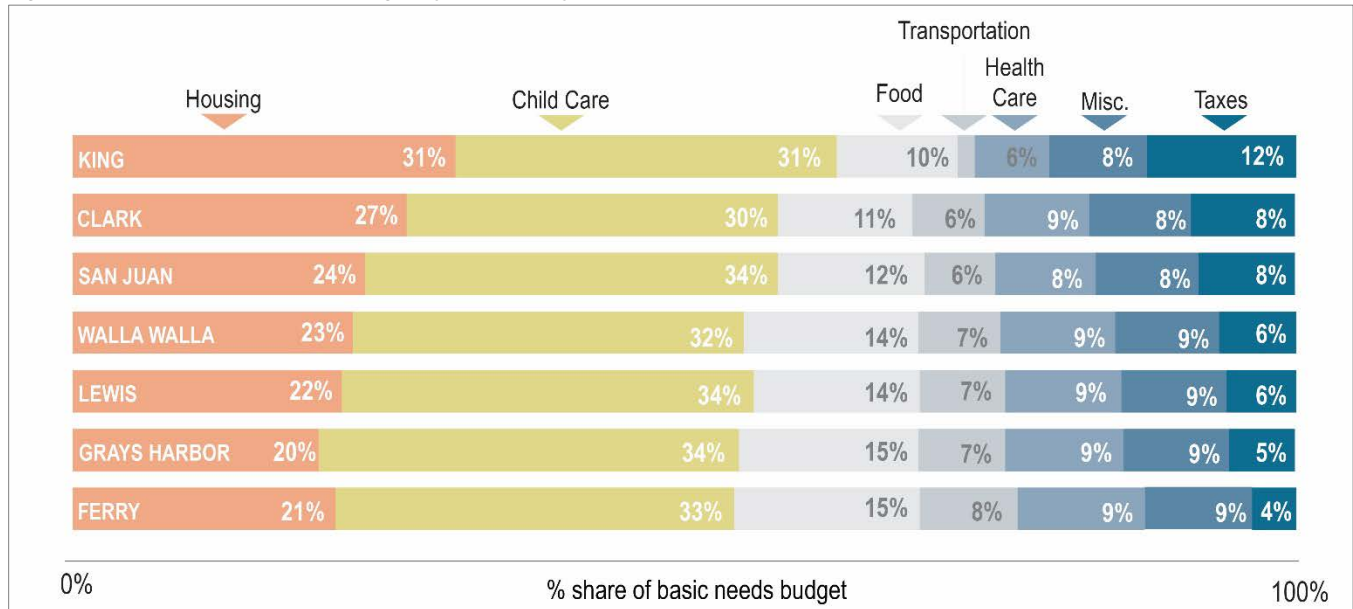
PERCENT LIVING BELOW 200% FEDERAL POVERTY BY COUNTY, WASHINGTON, 2014-2018			
Adams	50%	Lewis	34%
Asotin	35%	Lincoln	30%
Benton	28%	Mason	32%
Chelan	32%	Okanogan	45%
Clallam	34%	Pacific	37%
Clark	24%	Pend Oreille	34%
Columbia	30%	Pierce	25%
Cowlitz	34%	San Juan	25%
Douglas	33%	Skagit	27%
Ferry	41%	Skamania	27%
Franklin	37%	Snohomish	19%
Garfield	28%	Spokane	32%
Grant	42%	Stevens	34%
Grays Harbor	35%	Thurston	25%
Island	22%	Wahkiakum	25%
Jefferson	30%	Walla Walla	33%
King	19%	Whatcom	31%
Kitsap	21%	Whitman	46%
Kittitas	33%	Yakima	45%
Klickitat	38%	Washington	23%

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey

Cost-of-Living Measures. While using 200% FPL is a step in the right direction for how we measure the extent of economic hardship, it still suffers from the limitations inherent to the official measure, most notably: it does not reflect the modern costs incurred by families in the 21st century, and it does not adjust for geography, family structure, or age of children, all of which significantly influence what a household needs to get by.

Over the last two decades, new measures and tools have emerged to overcome the limitations of the official measure and provide a more accurate picture of the budget needed for an individual or family to meet their foundational needs. One such measure — the Self-Sufficiency Standard¹⁵ — shows that in most places in Washington state, it takes much more than 200% FPL to make ends meet, regardless of household size (Figure 6). Housing and child care alone for families with children consumes over half of a family’s budget in many communities in Washington state (Table 3).

Figure 6: Cost of a Basic Needs Budget by Expense Type, Select WA Counties 2020



Source: University of Washington Center on Women's Welfare 2020 Self-Sufficiency Standard

Table 3: Self-Sufficiency Standard by Family Type as a Ratio of the Federal Poverty Level

COUNTY	SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD BY FAMILY TYPE							
	1 Adult	SSS: FPL Ratio	1 Adult + 1 Preschooler	SSS: FPL Ratio	1 Adult + 1 Preschooler + 1 School-Age	SSS: FPL Ratio	2 Adults + 1 Preschooler + 1 School-Age	SSS: FPL Ratio
Benton (Kennewick-Richland)	\$24,329	112%	\$46,006	212%	\$54,373	250%	\$62,044	286%
Clark	\$30,757	142%	\$55,285	255%	\$64,600	297%	\$72,706	335%
Grays Harbor	\$20,721	95%	\$42,376	195%	\$51,171	236%	\$59,240	273%
Island	\$24,973	115%	\$50,830	234%	\$61,448	283%	\$69,762	321%
King (City of Seattle)	\$36,065	166%	\$69,215	319%	\$82,045	378%	\$86,193	397%
King (East)	\$43,774	202%	\$79,386	365%	\$92,661	427%	\$95,488	440%
King (South)	\$32,506	150%	\$64,925	299%	\$77,145	355%	\$81,902	377%
Kitsap (South)	\$25,356	117%	\$48,498	223%	\$57,662	265%	\$65,709	303%
Lewis	\$21,495	99%	\$43,763	201%	\$52,342	241%	\$60,224	277%
Pend Oreille	\$19,754	91%	\$36,400	168%	\$45,949	212%	\$53,779	248%
Pierce (West Cities)	\$26,610	123%	\$50,480	232%	\$59,612	274%	\$67,909	313%
Skagit	\$25,186	116%	\$51,102	235%	\$61,243	282%	\$69,138	318%
Snohomish	\$36,791	169%	\$64,053	295%	\$74,590	343%	\$82,658	381%
Spokane	\$20,768	96%	\$41,923	193%	\$50,549	233%	\$58,360	269%
Thurston	\$25,466	117%	\$47,669	219%	\$56,279	159%	\$64,277	296%
Whatcom	\$24,517	113%	\$50,727	234%	\$60,985	281%	\$68,941	317%
Yakima	\$21,896	101%	\$41,123	189%	\$49,040	226%	\$56,765	261%

Source: University of Washington Center on Women's Welfare 2020 Self-Sufficiency Standard

Intergenerational Poverty Measures. The duration of an individual's or family's experience with poverty may be episodic or longer-term, depending on the circumstances. Following the Great Recession in 2008, for example, many middle-class families found themselves struggling to make ends meet for the first time, but rebounded as the economy recovered. For families with a history of poverty, the experience can be harder to recover from,

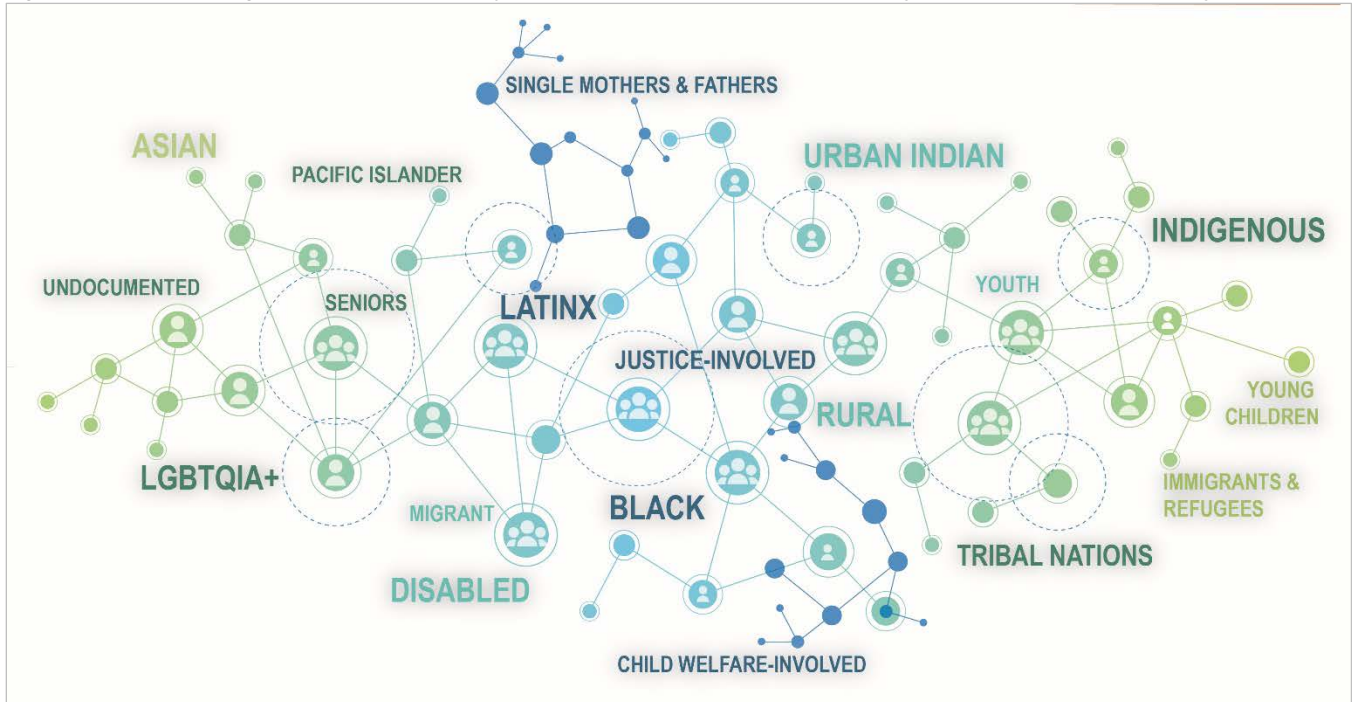
often spanning generations. Increasingly, poverty is a condition that people cycle in and out of overtime, a product of a changing economy, unstable labor market, and growing inequality.

Research shows that the experience of child poverty, even if short, can have a lifelong impact and consequences for future generations. Efforts are emerging around the country to define and measure intergenerational poverty, as well as evaluate “two-generation” or “multigenerational” policies and programs to end the cycle of poverty in families. While there is not yet a consensus on how to measure and track intergenerational poverty, estimates show that 46% of children receiving food assistance in 1997 remain on food assistance today, suggesting that rates of intergenerational poverty are likely high and that policies and programs could be more effective in reducing it.¹⁶

Increasing Visibility of People Disproportionately Affected in Poverty Discussions

Taken together, the above data show that poverty and inequality in Washington state is extensive, with significant intergenerational consequences, but available data is limited in the story it tells. Traditional poverty data only scratches the surface of the experience of poverty in Washington state, too often causing harm to the people it represents and those it doesn't. Most data systems are limited in their ability to show how race intersects with other identities (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation) and circumstances (e.g., rural, single parent) to deepen the experience of poverty, and many groups disproportionately affected don't even show up in traditional data systems, rendering them invisible in discussions that have a significant impact on their lives (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Understanding How Racial & Social Injustice Contributes to Disproportionality in the Experience of Poverty is Essential



For example, the U.S. Census Bureau does not collect information on gender identity, so historical poverty rates for the LGBTQIA+ community are unavailable. Yet, recent data show that members of the LGBTQIA+ community have higher rates of poverty than their straight peers, and within the LGBTQIA+ community transgender women and men have higher rates than their cisgender peers.¹⁷ Historical oppression and legal exclusion plays a significant role in LGBTQIA+ poverty, leading to lower education and health outcomes, higher rates of psychological distress, and barriers in obtaining adequate services.¹⁸ For LGBTQIA+ of color, the disparities deepen.

Data on poverty for people with disabilities is also limited. Census data provides a cursory understanding, showing that people with disabilities have higher rates of poverty than the state average, especially among those with a behavioral or physical disability. Further breakdowns show that race exacerbates the burden of poverty among children and adults with disabilities, and over half of working-age adults with a disability are not in the work force. Severity of disability plays a role, but social exclusion and lack of workplace accommodations are key factors to address to reduce their disproportionately high rates of poverty.¹⁹

There are unique issues affecting any group that disproportionately experiences poverty, but race and social injustice is too often the common denominator. Greater understanding of the intersection of race with age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, and disability is foundational to building a Washington without poverty and injustice. Data systems need to be disaggregated to the greatest extent possible and triangulated with multiple sources, and the stories of children, adults, and families most affected by poverty and injustice are data too. A just and equitable future is dependent on increasing visibility, power, and influence of people historically excluded from data and policy discussions.



STRATEGIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

“I am the light at the end of the tunnel for my family. I need someone who is truly committed to helping me succeed so I can overcome this generational curse.” ~ PRWG Steering Committee member

Overall, eight strategic themes emerged from the work group (Figure 8), with 60 specific recommendations that broadly accomplish three objectives: (1) lay a solid foundation for building a just & equitable future; (2) mitigate the experience of poverty by maximizing the system we have; and (3) preventing the experience of poverty by building the inclusive economy we need. The strategies and recommendations are informed by existing data and research, people experiencing poverty and organizations working on their behalf, and innovations happening in communities in Washington state and throughout the country. Collectively, they serve as a blueprint for a just and equitable future in which all Washingtonians have their foundational needs met and the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

Figure 8



STRATEGY 1. Understand structural racism, inequality and historical trauma, and take action to undo their harmful effects in state policy, programs, and practice.

The causes and consequences of poverty are experienced most profoundly among Indigenous people and people of color from all backgrounds and identities in Washington state. A large body of research draws a direct, causal relationship between structural racism, historical trauma, and the creation of policies, programs, and practices that result in inequitable outcomes.²⁰ Reducing poverty in Washington state, therefore, requires an approach that strategically centers race and how it intersects with other forms of inequality and injustice to lay a foundation for a just and equitable future.

Recommendation 1a. Require state entities to collaborate with the Office of Equity (Bright Spot #2) to develop trainings on historical trauma, institutional racism, and implicit bias that are required of all public employees in systems that touch upon the lives of people experiencing poverty. The curriculum should be developed in collaboration with Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led leaders from diverse age, gender, class, language, immigration, LGBTQIA+, and disability backgrounds throughout Washington state, and be free of charge to state partner organizations.

Recommendation 1b. Require state entities to collaborate with the Office of Equity to develop data, processes, and tools that prioritize equity in state policies, programs, practices, and partnerships, including:

- Developing a racial and social equity tool and process to evaluate the effects of policy, program, and funding decisions on eliminating disproportionate economic, social, and health outcomes;
- Implementing human resource practices that increase diversity among leadership and staff throughout state government, and support the career trajectories of underrepresented people and communities;
- Implementing contracting practices that increase the diversity of state vendors and partners; and
- Building representative, integrated data systems that allow for accurate, robust, and consistent analyses on the well-being of the diverse people and communities residing in Washington state.



#2: OFFICE OF EQUITY

The Office of Equity Task Force was created through a proviso in the state's 2019-2021 operating budget (Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1109). The Task Force recently submitted a proposal to create the Office of Equity, which outlines the following vision and mission.

VISION: Everyone in Washington has full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential.

MISSION: The Office of Equity will promote access to equitable opportunities and resources that reduce disparities and improve outcomes statewide across government.

Read the full proposal for the Office of Equity at:
<https://healthequity.wa.gov/TheCouncilsWork/OfficeofEquityTaskForceInformation>

STRATEGY 2: Make equal space for the power and influence of people and communities disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality in decision-making.

“We love our children. We work hard to get by. We are smarter than we are typically given credit for. How do you design a system without the input of the people using it and expect it to work? I think the greatest opportunity we have is to build understanding about our experiences and design a system together that is based in reality and believes we can be successful.” ~PRWG Steering Committee member

People experiencing poverty are the foremost experts on their lives and possess considerable knowledge as users of the systems and programs intended to assist them. Incorporating the knowledge and expertise of those most affected by poverty, as well as sharing power and resources with them, is essential to the design of equitable policies, programs, and practices that build a just and equitable future.

Recommendation 2a. Provide resources to the Office of Equity for a collaboration with Indigenous, Black, and Brown leaders and organizations to develop a formal process for truth and reconciliation. Truth and reconciliation efforts can be a powerful way to educate people about injustice, both past and present, and accelerate healing from the effects of historical trauma and its present day impacts. The process should include, but not be limited to:

- Acknowledgement of past injustices, including decolonization of education curriculums;
- Resources and spaces to support forgiveness and healing; and
- Investment to promote the health, wealth, and well-being of Indigenous, Black, and Brown communities.

Recommendation 2b. Establish a state entity to elevate the expertise and influence of people disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality in the implementation of the 10-year Plan. This entity should be designed in collaboration with the PRWG Steering Committee, agencies, legislators, and other major stakeholders to ensure:

- System-wide adoption of ensuring the active participation of people most affected by poverty throughout the development, finalization, and implementation of policies, programs, and practices that affect their lives;
- An organizational structure, principles, and practice that grants sufficient authority for such a body to have influence; and
- Members receive professional development, education, and training opportunities that maximize their participation and contributions.

Recommendation 2c. Invest state resources to increase ownership capacity in communities most affected by poverty. Partner with communities most affected by poverty to develop ownership capacity in poor

communities by building new “capital assets” that revitalize community centers, become financial assets owned by community organizations, employ local community members, support community-centered small business enterprise, and root people to a place with an incentive to remain and build it up for generations to come. (Bright Spot #3).

Recommendation 2d. Fund meaningful access to legal assistance and representation for children, adults, and families disproportionately affected by poverty and racially biased systems. Such aid should be available on an individual basis and in policy and program development to ensure just and equitable access to services and the successful implementation of the 10-year Plan.

Recommendation 2e. Make high-speed, broadband internet universally available. The digital divide has long been a concern for people with low incomes, and has become especially acute during COVID-19. Digital equity is necessary for full engagement in education and employment, and is increasingly important to support civic participation.



#3: COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN COMMISSION

The Communities of Concern Commission is a coalition of leaders from communities of color and poor rural communities that are disproportionately affected by poverty and have yet to fully benefit from the economic growth that is so apparent in many areas of Washington State.

Community organizations strongly rooted in poor communities of color and rural communities have the cultural understanding, imagination, and vision to create capital assets that will help reduce poverty and build stronger and more sustainable communities. These capital assets should be self-determined, managed and owned by the communities they serve. The Communities of Concern Commission doing business as the Washington Community Development Authority seeks to change structural barriers by partnering with the state to build the capacity of communities to conceive, design, finance, construct and manage the types of assets that are essential to reducing poverty. Communities of Concern seeks to:

- Make immediate changes to simplify public processes and procedures and remove barriers;
- Design funding for public programs to have the greatest strategic impact on poverty by designating it for and allowing access directly by communities to be invested for long term self-sufficiency;
- Involve community members in leading the effort to identify needs and design solutions to meet those needs through the development of community growth plans and funding strategies; and
- Increase collaboration with other federal, state, and local programs to provide more access and resources (e.g., education, employment related, health) based in poor communities.

(see Appendix B for the full Briefing Paper on Communities of Concern)

STRATEGY 3: Target equitable education, income growth, and wealth-building opportunities for children, adults, and families with low incomes.

In 2019, income inequality in the U.S. reached its highest level in the 50 years since the U.S. Census began tracking data, part of a decades-long trend²¹ now widening due to the COVID-19-induced economic downturn.²² Pre COVID-19, Washington had the 11th highest income inequality in the nation.²³ High levels of income inequality contributes to poverty by: stagnating wages and income of low- and middle-income households; limiting revenue that the state can invest in policies and programs that promote widespread social and economic mobility; and compounding racial gaps in health, wealth, and well-being.²⁴

Simply having a job is often not enough to make ends meet — the majority (51%) of people with incomes below 200% FPL are working or actively looking for work. Even with recent minimum wage increases, many full-time workers are still unable to afford “the basics” — housing, food, transportation, health and child care — in communities throughout Washington state, primarily due to a lack of living-wage jobs and/or not having the advanced education and skills needed for higher-paying jobs. Employers in lower-paying fields, such as food service, caregiving, and retail, are less likely to offer full-time work and employee benefits (e.g., health insurance, retirement plans), leaving an increasing number of workers with little choice but to cobble together multiple part-time “gigs” to make ends meet. Furthermore, wages for workers in lower- and median-wage jobs have been stagnant for decades, while those in higher-paying jobs have reaped the most from economic growth.²⁵

Those who are not working often have a good reason. They may have a disability or illness that requires accommodation, or is so severe they are unable to work. Some may be unable to find a job that allows the family to afford the high cost of child care, or they may face other barriers — such as lack of viable public transportation or the need to care for an aging parent. Low wages, high cost of living, and unequal opportunities combine to undermine the social and economic well-being of Washingtonians.

Reducing income inequality, therefore, is a necessity for reducing poverty, as well as improving the lives of all Washingtonians and the state’s economy — eliminating racial disparities in income and wealth alone, for example, would increase Washington state’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by \$38 billion annually.²⁶

Washington state can achieve greater income equality in three main ways: advancing educational and vocational attainment; increasing worker incomes, compensation, and wealth-building opportunities; and making cost-of-living more affordable. Detailed recommendations in these three categories are outlined below.

ADVANCING EDUCATIONAL & VOCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Recommendation 3a. Implement *Washington Kids for Washington Jobs* recommendations, but bolster with more intentional strategies to achieve equity. Education is a foundation of economic and workforce development, and the majority of jobs today require postsecondary education. Yet, only 57% of adults in Washington state have earned a credential beyond high school. The WK4WJ initiative estimates that there will be 740,000 job openings by 2021, the majority of which will require a post-secondary credential (including those in two- and four-year institutions, as well as through apprenticeship).²⁷ The effort aims to meet the state goal of increasing the share of Washington students with a credential to 70% (Table 4).

Table 4

WASHINGTON KIDS FOR WASHINGTON JOBS RECOMMENDATIONS		
Increase high-quality early learning options for low-income students.	Increase utilization of concurrent enrollment and dual-credit programs.	Invest in student wraparound supports, especially for systemically underserved populations.
Make third-grade reading the “North Star” for assessing the impacts of early learning investments and for holding the system accountable for student achievement.	Reduce financial barriers to postsecondary program enrollment.	Include students who “drop out” of the system in the P-16 longitudinal data system to better understand and address leaks in the education pipeline.
Raise achievement at low-performing schools.	Make postsecondary education more convenient for students.	Increase support for and access to workforce development programs and targeted interventions for opportunity youth (adults younger than 26 who are not working or enrolled in school).
Support Washington’s 24-credit high school diploma and communicate its flexibility.	Ensure students enroll in their “best-fit” postsecondary programs.	Invest in building pathways to high-quality certificates (e.g., apprenticeships).
Maintain Washington’s competency-based high school graduation requirements.	Increase transfer support for students advancing from two-year to four-year schools.	Support “HS 21+” competency-based diploma programs at Washington’s two-year colleges.
Improve consistency of “High School and Beyond” plan implementation.	Continue to build and evaluate Guided Pathways at state community and technical colleges.	Expand access and availability of high-quality online programs that lead to a credential.

Source: Washington Roundtable (2018) *The Path to 70% Credential Attainment for Washington Students* available at <https://www.waroundtable.com/policy-center/>

WK4WJ acknowledges that the above strategies will only be accomplished by eliminating achievement gaps for systemically underserved students. PRWG supports the following additional recommendations to increase the likelihood of the WK4WJ strategies achieving equity:

Recommendation 3a-i. Increase funding to accelerate the process of naturalization for immigrants and refugees. There are nearly one million immigrants, refugees, and asylees living in Washington state.²⁸ Citizenship is an essential stepping stone to education and employment opportunities and drastically reduces

poverty; people born outside of the U.S. with citizenship have poverty rates 17 percentage points lower than those yet to obtain citizenship.²⁹

Recommendation 3a-ii. Strengthen literacy programs and services for children and adults across the entire education and workforce-development pipeline. Limited English proficiency is a major barrier to education and employment for immigrants and refugees. There are currently over 250,000 people in Washington state age five and older who do not speak English well enough to navigate social, education, and employment opportunities.³⁰ Ensuring all children and adults have access to culturally relevant literacy programs and services will improve education and employment outcomes.

Recommendation 3a-iii. Eliminate harsh discipline practices in schools and increase investment in culturally responsive wrap-around supports. Practices such as suspension and expulsion disproportionately affect children that are Indigenous, Black, Brown, male, non-binary, low income, disabled, homeless, involved in the foster care system, or with a special education plan,³¹ leading to their increased involvement with the homeless, child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice systems. Replacing discipline with stronger social and emotional programs, behavioral health supports, and family and community engagement strategies can keep more kids in school and improve equity in graduation rates.³²

Recommendation 3a-iv. Increase investment in Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) statewide. ELOs are high-quality youth development programs that provide innovative, hands-on learning after school and throughout the year, including summer. Research shows that quality ELO programs improve grades and attendance, and decrease juvenile crime.³³ Continued investment is needed to support a connected high-quality care continuum, birth through youth for programs that serve as a workforce support to families.

Recommendation 3a-v. Increase investments to improve high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment of children and youth experiencing foster care and/or homelessness.³⁴ Specifically:

- Align, coordinate, and monitor policy, services, resources and outcomes to ensure academic success for students experiencing foster care/homelessness statewide;
- Prioritize keeping foster children in the same school and community with consistent access to teachers, neighbors, friends, coaches, and others for critical ongoing supports for foster youth's mental and emotional health,³⁵ and
- Use data to inform real time, individualized education supports for students, as well as longitudinal analysis of education outcomes.

Recommendation 3a-vi. Increase the availability of affordable child care and housing for student parents on or near college campuses. Parental education is one of the best protections against intergenerational poverty. Yet, student parents, especially single mothers and fathers with young children, face significant obstacles to furthering their education due to a lack of affordable child care and housing options. Programs like the [*Jeremiah*](#)

Program and *Keys to Degrees*, co-locate high-quality early learning, human services, affordable housing, and peer-to-peer support systems on college campuses, and have a proven track record of reducing intergenerational poverty.³⁶

Recommendation 3a-vii. Remove residency requirements for immigrants and refugees seeking higher education. Residency requirements for tuition and financial aid make it difficult for immigrants and refugees to pursue education that can improve their social and economic circumstances. Removing these barriers would help them to stabilize more quickly and accelerate education and career pathways.

Recommendation 3a-viii. Improve onramps for Washington adults disconnected from the educational system to prepare for and access affordable and high quality postsecondary educational pathways.

Washington students enrolling in postsecondary education complete at rates above the national average.³⁷ Yet, too few Washingtonians are pursuing education beyond high school to fill employer demand for more highly educated workers. Nearly four in 10 graduating high school seniors delay or forego college enrollment, placing the state 49th on this measure,³⁸ and students of color have college completion rates 16 percentage points lower than the state average. One strategy for increased engagement, high school or beyond, is to connect all learners with mentors in their aspirational career field to foster success and relationship building. Engaging students and adults no longer connected to the educational system is a key strategy for improving their income, as well as ensuring employers have a competitive workforce. The Washington Student Achievement Council, representing all sectors of education, recommends the following to improve post-secondary outcomes in Washington state:

- Leverage the Washington College Grant and increase awareness of the importance of completing financial aid applications;
- Support College Bound Scholarship students from low-income families with college readiness activities;
- Reach adults through the new statewide adult reengagement College and Career Compass initiative;
- Increase the number of low-income students enrolled in dual-credit courses (receiving college credit while in high school);
- Understand and address basic needs of college students including food and housing insecurity; and
- Continue to learn and pursue equity-focused policies and strategies to increase educational postsecondary success of students of color.

INCREASING INCOMES, COMPENSATION & WEALTH-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Recommendation 3b. Enforce stronger salary/wage transparency and fair labor practices among employers to ensure pay equity. Women and people of color continue to make less than their white male peers, even when they have the same education and professional experience.³⁹

- Collaborate with businesses and labor organizations to define and enforce wage transparency guidelines for employers in Washington state; and

- Enact stronger legal protections that allow workers to exert their rights when fair labor standards are violated.

Recommendation 3c. Expand access to no- or low-cost financial resources and education that empower, rather than prey upon, people experiencing poverty. A lack of access to affordable capital in low income communities and communities of color, paired with a history of bank and mortgage redlining, has led to an extreme racial wealth gap. As these disparities in wealth and income have continued, households of color are less likely to have the safety net of home equity or cash on hand to handle unexpected expenses or a loss or reduction of income. As a result, communities of color are targeted by abusive and predatory lenders, putting households of color at great risk of debt, a significant barrier to escaping poverty.

Consumers need strong protections that safeguard their crucial assets and their ability to meet their basic needs, especially in times of crisis. The financial services sector has a responsibility to address its contributions in the disparities of its outcomes and contribute to a more equitable and inclusive financial system. Specifically:

- Establish Individual Development Account programs for children and adults to encourage savings and investments in their future, like education, purchasing a home, or saving for retirement;
- Expand and subsidize financial institutions that lower the cost of banking, lending, and moving money for people with low incomes (**Bright Spot #4**);
- Expand protections on the payday lending industry to ensure that fringe financial services cannot take advantage of low-income consumers; and
- Regulate debt buying and debt collection practices so that the process for collecting debt is transparent to consumers. This enables people to defend themselves in the face of alleged debt adequately and allows people to meet basic needs while paying back debt.

Recommendation 3d. Enact changes to the state tax system that lower the effective tax rate for low-income households. Specifically:

- Offer refundable state Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) that extend to all households, including immigrants and refugees. State EITCs can amplify the effects of the federal EITC, the most effective antipoverty policy tool in the U.S.;⁴⁰
- Create a property tax “circuit breaker” that limits the amount of property taxes low- to moderate-income homeowners and renters pay as a share of their income; and
- Create refundable state child tax credits that support the economic stability of families with young children, from birth to age eight. Research suggests generous child tax credits are on the most powerful tools to reduce poverty.⁴¹

Recommendation 3e. Work in partnership with local labor organizations and the government to modernize labor laws and the rights of workers. Increasing the rights of workers to organize and exercise power on their

behalf has historically been an essential strategy to raise wages and reduce racial and gender disparities in earnings. Nationally, the share of workers belonging to unions is at its lowest point in history, a trend that is causally linked to stagnant wages. Workers of all ages, across all industries and occupations, strongly support the rights of workers to unionize.⁴² Yet, there is widespread recognition that current laws overseeing unions are outdated given current employment conditions, and should be updated. Recent research suggests the top priorities for workers in a modernized union system are:⁴³

- Stronger collective bargaining models;
- Portable health and retirement benefits; and
- Job-search assistance.

MAKING COST-OF-LIVING MORE AFFORDABLE

Recommendation 3f. Implement the Child Care Collaborative Taskforce strategies and recommendations to increase the availability of affordable, high quality early care and education. The benefits of high-quality early care and education for children are well-established, especially for children from families with low incomes. Yet, prior COVID-19, nearly half of all families in Washington found it challenging to find, afford, or keep child care, affecting their ability to work and costing employers in Washington state over \$2 billion annually in employee turnover and missed work.⁴⁴ COVID-19 has exacerbated the crisis, with 20 percent of providers shutting down at least temporarily statewide and over 60 percent reporting lost revenue.⁴⁵ The industry is essential for economic recovery and growth, yet access and affordability remain out of reach for a critical mass of families.

Washington state’s *Child Care Collaborative Taskforce* (CCC Taskforce) was created in 2018 to “achieve a goal of access to affordable, high-quality child care for all Washington families by 2025.”⁴⁶ The recent CCC Taskforce report makes 31 recommendations within four strategies to accomplish this goal, and will complete a full strategic plan by 2025 (Table 5). PRWG supports the adoption of these recommendations and the forthcoming strategic plan, and urges the CCC Taskforce to ensure community-led definitions of quality are factored into the plan to respect the diversity of cultures, languages, and experiences of children and families in Washington state.

Table 5

CHILD CARE COLLABORATIVE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS		
Support compensating the child care workforce competitively with educators in the state’s education continuum in order to provide living wages, reduce turnover and promote longevity of skilled providers in the child care workforce.	Educate employers on the business case for supporting child care and reducing barriers to participation in employer-supported child care programs.	Simplify and streamline licensing process for change of ownership of existing child care programs.
Ensure child care staff can access employment benefits and other strategies to prevent workforce burnout and support the	Develop and promote an informational web-based menu of options for employers to support employee provision of child care,	Create a graduated co-pay structure that eliminates the “cliff effect” for all state-administered child care subsidies.

well-being of child care staff. This could include access to health insurance, dental insurance, paid leave and retirement benefits.	such as what options exist, how to evaluate and access them, and available recognition or incentive programs.	
Develop a network of local substitute pools across the state to allow child care staff and providers time off to attend training, take personal or vacation time, and recover from illness.	Implement a tiered business tax incentive program to match business expenditures for provision of employee child care.	Increase eligibility for state-administered child care subsidies to support more low- and middle-income families.
Support professional development of the current and future workforce.	Provide a retail sales (and use) tax exemption or deferral for construction, renovation, and remodeling of child care facilities.	Prioritize increasing affordability of child care for families disproportionately affected by barriers and furthest from opportunity.
Foster a culture of support and mutual respect among child care licensors, regulators and providers.	Provide a point-of-sale, sales (and use) tax exemption on consumables used in providing child care.	Enable child care providers to care for children eligible for state child care subsidies by adjusting provider subsidy rate payments to cover the full cost associated with providing high-quality child care.
Support child care provider startup and expansion.	Pilot within state government a model “bring your infant to work” policy to demonstrate how other employers could scale and implement the model policy. Include alternative infant care options and other family-friendly policies for workplaces and jobs unable to consider hosting infants given workplace conditions.	Support and enable child care and related programs to implement trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and bias-reducing practices, including providing opportunities for education on implicit and explicit bias and other types of cultural competency-focused training.
Increase access to grants, loans and other funding sources to offset child care operating and capital facility costs, including but not limited to the Early Learning Facility Fund, small grants and microloans.	Invest in technical assistance for construction or renovation of child care facilities to ensure timely and efficient startup and expansion.	Incentivize provision of nonstandard-hour child care, including evening, weekend, and overnight care, to increase access to child care for those who work or attend school during nonstandard hours.
Support development of child care facilities.	Streamline licensing during child care facility development.	Incentivize provision of child care in the child’s home language, and support dual language learning.
Provide state funds to leverage public-private partnerships with community development financial institutions (CDFIs) to develop child care financing options, such as loan programs.	Partner with appropriate entities and jurisdictions to limit or eliminate local construction impact fees for child care facilities.	Offer information in multiple languages to reduce language barriers in seeking and accessing child care.
Promote diverse and inclusive child care settings so children have equitable opportunities for learning that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners.	Evaluate child care licensing standards and their impact on the development and maintenance of child care facilities.	Enable families to navigate and access child care and related programs through informational resources, technical assistance, outreach, and other supports.
		Support provision of child care in underserved geographic areas and rural areas so families may access child care in their local communities.

Source: Department of Commerce (2019) Child Care Collaborative Task Force Recommendations available at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/child-care-collaborative-task-force/>

Recommendation 3g. Increase and preserve affordable housing for renters and owners. Lack of affordable housing is the primary driver behind homelessness in Washington state (see Strategy 7 for recommendations to address the urgency of homelessness). There are fewer than 30 units of housing available for every 100 low-income⁴⁷ families that need one, and vacancy rates in Washington are the lowest in the country at 2%.⁴⁸

The lack of affordable housing also prevents people with lower incomes from owning a home; the primary way families build wealth and financial security over time. This is one of the primary drivers behind the racial wealth gap, a product of discrimination in housing policy and one of the most profound examples of how the root causes of poverty intersect to influence outcomes.⁴⁹ Discriminatory practices (e.g., predatory lending) continue today, and gentrification — the process of displacement that occurs from unequal economic growth — is forcing people of color from the same neighborhood cities redlined them into. In the third quarter of 2020, the Census reported that Black households had the lowest homeownership rate at 46%, nearly 30 percentage points behind white households.⁵⁰ From past recessions and economic downturns, the homeownership gap widened between people of color and white people due to the wealth gap, thus making homeowners of color more vulnerable to loss of a home.⁵¹

Increasing the availability of affordable homes to rent and own will reduce homelessness and increase social and economic mobility for all Washingtonians. Also, targeting investments to communities historically excluded from wealth-building opportunities is essential for eliminating the racial wealth gap. Specifically:

- Increase the state’s Housing Trust Fund to build 10,000 subsidized housing units in 2021, and an additional 90,000 subsidized units over the next decade;
- Increase state funding for weatherization and upgrades to preserve existing housing, reduce carbon emissions, and offset increased energy costs due to potential future carbon reduction initiatives; and
- Provide housing vouchers for homeownership in community land trusts⁵² that build individual capital while preserving long-term affordability in a community, preventing displacement of future generations **(Bright Spot #5).**

Recommendation 3h. Enact changes to the tax system that support equitable economic growth. Enacting reforms to Washington’s tax system — which taxes people with low incomes more than any other state — can provide the funding needed to invest in the income, education, and employment opportunities people need to thrive, as well as ensure more residents benefit from the state’s robust economic growth.⁵³ The most promising policies to ensure economic growth that is more widely shared include:

- Taxes on personal and corporate wealth above a specified threshold which are used to invest in opportunities critical to social and economic mobility for all Washingtonians, such as early care and education, higher education, rural economic development, affordable housing, and workforce development; and

- Tax incentives for businesses that are accountable to specific, antipoverty outcomes⁵⁴ and promote equitable education, training, and job opportunities in rural areas, communities of color, and neighborhoods experiencing gentrification.



#4: WEALTH-BUILDING INITIATIVES

Washington’s Asset-Building Coalition (ABC) is a statewide association working to promote policies and programs in Washington that assist low-and-moderate income residents build, maintain & preserve assets through investments in education, homeownership, personal savings and entrepreneurship.

Sound Outreach in Tacoma, WA – part of the Pierce County ABC – connects unemployed and underemployed individuals to job training and employment opportunities, as well as resources and tools through their partnership with Harborstone Credit Union (a not-for-profit cooperative credit union). The partnership connects people who are engaged with a Sound Outreach financial counselor to the credit union’s low-cost financial products and services. Through the partnership, individuals are able to refinance loans they would otherwise not be able to – due to low credit scores, debt-to-income, or loan-to-value issues – freeing up money in their monthly budget that can be used to further advance their financial empowerment.

Also in Tacoma, WA, **Goodwill of the Olympic and Rainier Region’s (GORR)** provides financial education and coaching to help neighbors in reaching their fullest potential through education, job placement, and career pathway services. GORR operates the “Key to Change” Financial Literacy course in collaboration with Key Bank to help participants gain the knowledge necessary to achieve personal financial stability and independence (including how to set financial goals, create and maintain a budget, banking basics etc.). Recently, Goodwill collaborated with Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) and the city of Tacoma to provide “Key to Change” and one on one personalized financial coaching sessions to low income TPU customers. If they qualify, customers can receive up to \$160 in credit toward their utility bill for participating in financial education at Goodwill.



#5: EL CENTRO de la RAZA & PLAZA MAESTAS

Communities of Concern Commission member and Community Action Partner, El Centro de la Raza, developed the nationally recognized, award winning Plaza Maestas in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. El Centro de la Raza spearheaded Plaza Maestas when it learned light rail would be extended through the neighborhood, bringing opportunity for residents but also intensifying the threat of gentrification. The Plaza provides transit-oriented affordable housing for residents so they can remain in the neighborhood, prioritizes people of color- and women-owned businesses, and offers a beautiful public space for community members to celebrate and convene in.

STRATEGY 4: Strengthen health supports across the life span to promote equitable outcomes and the intergenerational well-being of whole families.

“I live with a disability and chronic illness. I have a Master’s degree and am attending law school, but I live in my van because my insurance does not cover the basic medical care I need and I cannot afford rent. People ask me, ‘What does ‘being healthy’ look like to you?’ and I respond, ‘Being healthy basically looks like being rich.’”

~PRWG Steering Committee member

The individual and compounding effects of racism, oppression, poverty, and historical trauma follow people throughout their lives and can affect the health and well-being of their children and grandchildren. Poverty increases the likelihood of traumatic experiences in childhood — known as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (Table 6) — which can have a cumulative, lifelong impact on an individual’s physical and mental health. ACEs can be passed down to future generations as well via “epigenetics” — the process by which behaviors and environment cause changes that affect the way genes work.⁵⁵

The higher the number of ACEs, the greater the likelihood of developmental delays and later health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, substance abuse, depression, and early death.⁵⁶ In 2017-2018, 14% of children in Washington state experienced two or more ACEs.⁵⁷ State-level data by race and ethnicity is limited, but national data shows that Indigenous, Black, and Brown children are twice as likely to have two or more ACEs compared to their peers.

Table 6

EXAMPLES OF ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES		
Somewhat often/very often hard to get by on income	Parent/guardian served time in jail	Lived with anyone mentally ill, suicidal, or depressed
Parent/guardian divorced or separated	Saw or heard violence in the home	Lived with anyone with alcohol or drug problem
Parent/guardian died	Victim/witness of neighborhood violence	Often treated or judged unfairly due to race/ethnicity

Source: CAHMI (2016) Adverse Childhood Experiences Among U.S. Children available at https://www.cahmi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/aces_fact_sheet.pdf

Strategies 1-3 in the 10-year Plan would substantially reduce ACEs from occurring because they focus on equitable “upstream” policy, program, and practice changes needed to substantially reduce ACEs for all children, adults, and families in Washington state. Collectively, the recommendations in these strategies are consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on how to both prevent ACEs and mitigate its impacts, including strengthening economic supports in families, encouraging planned pregnancies, ensuring a healthy start for children, and prioritizing early interventions.⁵⁸ Data show that children and families are remarkably resilient when the stressors related to ACEs are removed.

Until Strategies 1-3 are fully realized, however, the cumulative impact of poverty and ACEs will remain a threat to the health and well-being of Washingtonians throughout the lifespan, and are most certainly affecting a larger number of people in the wake of COVID-19. Investments in comprehensive, health supports for every age group yield intergenerational benefits — health supports for mothers and fathers with young children yield especially large returns, but investments in youth, working-age adults, and seniors improve the well-being of whole families and communities, reducing the likelihood of trauma in the future. Targeted and culturally appropriate investments aimed at closing gaps in health outcomes for people historically underserved — Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians, immigrants and refugees, homeless, rural residents, and LGBTQIA+, and people with disabilities — are also needed.

Washington state is a national leader in policies that support intergenerational health and well-being, such as Medicaid expansion, paid family and medical leave, and long-term care insurance. These strong policies can be amplified with the following recommendations.

Recommendation 4a. Strengthen the Apple Health program by creating a state-funded assistance benefit.

Follow the lead of Massachusetts — which has the highest rate of health insurance coverage in the country, as well as the best health outcomes for children — by subsidizing all medical premiums for people with incomes below 150%, and gradually phase out for people with incomes up to 300 percent FPL.⁵⁹

Recommendation 4b. Ensure funding and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and support services before, during, and after pregnancy. Specifically:

- Increase health care and support services — including pre- and postnatal care, doulas, behavioral health, screening, treatment, and monitoring — through all phases of pregnancy and the first year postpartum (**Bright Spot #6**).⁶⁰ The *Bree Collaborative* is one example of how care providers bundle services to provide comprehensive pre- and postnatal care while reducing disparities in infant and maternal mortality and saving taxpayer resources.⁶¹
- Expand home visiting so all eligible families can receive it. Home visiting programs provide physical, social, and emotional health services and referrals to expectant mothers and families with young children to optimize early childhood development. Currently, just one in four eligible families receive home visiting, leaving more than 29,000 families unserved.⁶²

Recommendation 4c. Ensure access to free and low-cost contraceptive options and family planning counseling, including long-term acting reversible contraceptives (LARCS) for people who want it.

Resources and services for quality reproductive care and contraceptives are not equally accessible to everyone statewide. The highest rate of unplanned pregnancies is among people under age 20,⁶³ which can worsen circumstances that may already be causing stress and increase the likelihood that a child and family will experience poverty. LARCS help people plan better for pregnancy and dramatically decrease teen pregnancy and abortion rates when made widely available (**Bright Spot #7**).

Recommendation 4d. Increase funding to support the availability of culturally diverse, nutritious foods in assistance programs like Women, Infants, and Children, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. Food is medicine, and eating nutritious foods is vital to health and well-being. Fruits and vegetables, healthy proteins, and other nutrient dense foods are often too expensive or unavailable in lower income communities. Nutrition assistance programs should be evaluated to better understand and reduce barriers for participation for underserved communities.

Recommendation 4e. Develop, implement and evaluate health and human service programs to better meet the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ children, adults, and families. Health and human service programs should be framed within an equity and intersectional framework (including age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, geographic location, and ability) to ensure attention to diversity of experience within the LGBTQIA+ community.

Recommendation 4f. Increase Medicaid funds for supported, in-home care and long-term services so people with disabilities and aging adults can remain in environments they know and trust, as well as avoid costly residential programs.



#6: BIRTH JUSTICE INITIATIVES

The **Black Infant Health Program (BIHP)** is a public-private partnership between the Tacoma Health Department, Health Care Authority, state Department of Health, and churches, pastors, community groups, nurses and non-profit organizations in Tacoma, WA. BIHP links women and babies to needed resources, including: enrolling churches in the program; training health ministers on health messages for pregnant women and families with infants; and providing referrals to prenatal care, social services, resources, and support. Outcomes to date include an increase in healthy pregnancies and births and greater social capital and goodwill in the church community and beyond. The ultimate goal of the program is to eliminate disparities in birth outcomes for black infants.

The **Tt̓awaxt Birth Justice Center** of Yakama Nation is an Indigenous birth justice movement that supports and strengthens systems and services that are cultural, community-driven, and that provide responsive and respectful care. Tt̓awaxt believes that Indigenous birth justice is present when Indigenous people honor their ancestors by making the best decisions they can during pregnancy, labor, childbirth, and after the baby arrives to ensure the next generation continues. The ultimate outcome is to reduce infant and maternal mortality in tribal communities.



#7: LONG-ACTING REVERSE CONTRACEPTIVES

Investing in family planning can have a seismic impact on the health and wellbeing of women and their families and on state economies as well. In 2008, the **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment** launched their family planning initiative to provide training, operational support, and expand access to LARCs for low income and uninsured women. As of 2019, this initiative drove a 50% reduction in teen birth and abortion rates and saved \$70 million in public assistance costs.

STRATEGY 5: Address the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness, violence, mental illness, and/or addiction.

“Never underestimate the power of giving someone a second chance.”

~Resident of Washington Women’s Correctional Center

People experiencing poverty often face significant obstacles that prevent them from achieving economic stability, the most common of which are homelessness, violence, mental illness, and addiction. The relationship between poverty and these conditions works in both directions — people in poverty are at heightened risk of experiencing one or more of them, and any one of these conditions can increase a person’s likelihood of entering poverty.

Homelessness, violence, mental illness, and addiction had reached the point of crisis in Washington state prior to COVID-19, and are now deepening in the wake of the pandemic’s economic consequences. Race and its intersection with historically marginalized identities has further threatened the safety, physical and mental health, and housing stability of Indigenous, Black, and Brown Washingtonians, LGBTQIA+, youth, and people with disabilities during COVID-19.

Homelessness, violence, mental illness, and addiction are often co-occurring and contribute to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), toxic stress, and lifelong trauma, increasing the likelihood that a child, adult, or family will experience intergenerational poverty. Unless they have close, trusting relationships to family and friends with ample resources, a child, adult, or family experiencing homelessness, violence, mental illness, and/or addiction will inevitably need financial assistance and other services to support their safety, stability, and long-term well-being.

Numerous organizations and efforts are working on the homelessness, violence, and behavioral health crises in Washington state.⁶⁴ PRWG respects the work of these existing efforts and does not wish to be duplicative, but feels it important to recognize significant strategies stemming from their work to ensure the importance of addressing the urgency of homelessness, violence, mental illness, and addiction for reducing poverty and inequality is made clear.

Recommendation 5a. Provide greater resources for consistent and timely community-led data collection and storytelling to deepen our understanding of the disproportionate impact of homelessness, violence, mental illness, and/or addiction on historically underserved Washingtonians. Data for children, adults, and families experiencing homelessness, violence, or a behavioral health issue is improving, but remains an obstacle to fully understanding the size and extent of these crises and their relationship to poverty. Investing in community-led data collections efforts — such as the Urban Indian Health Board’s [Our Bodies, Our Stories Report](#) and the [Williams Institute](#) data profiles on the LGBTQIA+ community (**Bright Spot #8**) — are a necessity

to gain a more comprehensive and accurate understanding homelessness, violence, and behavioral health among groups most affected, and to inform the most promising solutions.

Recommendation 5b. Adopt the “housing first” approach as the foundation to health and human service delivery and remove discriminatory barriers. Specifically:

- Better integrate coordinated entry with health and human service programs across state agencies; and
- Reform the criminal background check process so that formerly incarcerated individuals can fully reintegrate into society after time served.

Recommendation 5c. Increase state and local rental assistance and diversion programs that prevent children, youth, adults, and families from becoming homelessness. Diversion programs help families obtain temporary housing outside of the homeless assistance system while connecting them to the services and resources they need to secure stable, permanent housing. Successful diversion programs improve the ability of the homeless assistance system to target shelter resources effectively and, most importantly, help families safely avoid a traumatic and stressful homeless episode.⁶⁵

Recommendation 5d. Increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing options. Increasing the number of affordable housing units across Washington state is the most preventive approach to the homelessness crisis, but it is a long-term strategy (see Strategy 4). To address the urgency of the current crisis, public and private partners at the state and local levels should increase investment in the availability of housing options across the spectrum of need and ensure human service supports are embedded at every stage of the process.

Recommendation 5e. Develop stronger public-private partnerships to increase opportunities for supported education, job training, and employment. Children, adults, and families experiencing homelessness, violence, or a behavioral health issue often require significant time to stabilize their situation, connect with support services, and heal from trauma. Embedding supportive services in education and employment settings provide a continuum of ongoing supports that can meet a wide range of needs (**Bright Spot #9**).⁶⁶

Recommendation 5f. Create a Medical-Financial Partnership model for Washington state.⁶⁷

Financial stress has been shown to impact health outcomes among low-income children and their families. Medical-Financial Partnerships (MFP) models are showcasing positive impacts on the social determinants of health via this cross-sector collaboration in which health care systems and financial service organizations are co-located (in the same area in the medical building) to improve health and reduce patient financial stress.⁶⁸

Recommendation 5g. Improve access to behavioral health prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.⁶⁹ Expand efforts to enhance Washington state’s behavioral health prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery programs. These efforts should continue to promote solutions that reduce harm to children, adults, and families with deadly, preventable diseases such as depression, substance abuse, and addiction.

- Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates to incentivize more medical providers to accept Apple Health;
- Incentivize insurers to provide a broader range of inpatient/outpatient services, including stabilization, counselling, diversion, and respite care;
- Integrate and co-locate services across housing, social, health, education, and workforce development systems and bolster community-led programs;
- Use human-centered design and other person-centered practices to define a reimagined, modernized continuum of care across jurisdictions (see Strategy 6).

Recommendation 5h. Improve integration of behavioral health treatment in early learning settings and K-12. Children struggling with a behavioral health issue are not adequately or accurately screened or cared for at school, which can negatively affect their learning, social relationships, and physical well-being. However, early learning settings and schools are often trusted family-centered spaces which should be leveraged. Services can be improved by:

- Improving training for teachers and school health providers to support screening and early recognition/intervention, particularly for ACEs;
- Improving the Individual Education Plan (IEP) system to increase flexibility and minimize the removal of kids to special education classrooms or out-of-school placements;
- Increase peer counseling and mindfulness programs in schools;
- Increase educational programming to decrease cultural stigma around mental health conditions and improve access to appropriate after-school care and programming.

Recommendation 5i. Require state entities to collaborate with civil legal aid providers and community-led programs to increase comprehensive support for children, adults, and families experiencing homelessness, violence, or a behavioral health issue. Urgent needs involving homelessness, violence, or a behavioral health issue often include multiple emergent needs simultaneously, requiring collaboration between several systems so individuals and families may connect with appropriate services and stabilize their situation.



#8: COMMUNITY-LED DATA COLLECTION

Our Bodies, Our Stories is a series of reports produced by the Urban Indian Health Institute (Seattle, WA) that details the scope of violence against Native women and girls across the nation. Data for Indigenous people is historically lacking, inaccurate, and misleading, often leaving them invisible in public policy and program discussions. **Our Bodies, Our Stories** is an Indigenous-led effort to provide a baseline understanding of the sexual violence Indigenous women face, as well as document for the first time the number of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (MMIWG) in the country. The reports are a powerful example of why community-led data collection is needed to better understand and prioritize solutions for issues affecting the well-being of Indigenous people.

The **Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles** is the leading research center on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. They collect data and conduct research specific to the LGBTQIA+ community to advance their well-being through laws, policies, and judicial decisions.



#9: SUPPORTED HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT

The **Foundational Community Supports** program provides statewide supportive housing and employment services to people with complex physical or behavioral health care needs. The primary goal of these services is to help people with a significant behavioral health need or disability obtain and maintain stable housing or competitive employment. The program is administered by Health Care Authority, and preliminary results show significant gains in housing stability, employment, and earnings for participants.

STRATEGY 6: Build an integrated human service continuum of care that addresses the holistic needs of children, adults, and families.

“As soon as I take a breath and have a second to just sit and play with my kids on the floor and not worry about how I am going to get dinner on the table tonight or how to pay the rent ... the rug gets pulled out from underneath me. It’s like a game of Chutes & Ladders ... I climb up, just to fall back down repeatedly, and getting to the top seems dependent on a lucky roll of the dice.” ~PRWG Steering Committee member

Programs serving children, adults, and families experiencing poverty in Washington state are spread out across a multitude of agencies and sectors that work in partnership to deliver cash and food & housing assistance; health care and services; early care and education; and education, training, and employment opportunities. Feedback from people being served by these agencies overwhelmingly points to the inadequate, onerous, and fragmented nature of programs, which are like “a full-time job to navigate.”⁷⁰ Too often, people fall through the cracks within and between systems, increasing their likelihood of becoming involved with other systems that can compound and perpetuate poverty, such as juvenile justice, criminal justice, child welfare, and homeless systems. Moreover, human services are in dire need of modernization to better reflect the structure and diversity of families today — emphasis on the economic inclusion of single mothers and fathers, LGBTQIA+ families, grandparent caregivers, people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, and child welfare- and justice-involved families is critical for a just and equitable future.

The current state of our human service systems exacerbates what brain science refers to as a “scarcity mindset.”⁷¹ People with low incomes incur significant financial, temporal, and cognitive costs⁷² that tax a person’s mental bandwidth to such a great extent it affects their ability to problem solve and plan.⁷³ Cutting these costs for people experiencing poverty by easing access to services, allowing time to “take a breath,” and removing punitive measures would alleviate the toxic stress poverty can impose and better support children, adults, and families in achieving long-term economic success and well-being.

Notable examples of human service transformations exist in Colorado⁷⁴ and Tennessee⁷⁵ and are afoot in other states as well. Lessons from these efforts suggest that, at a minimum, a human service continuum of care should (Table 7):

Table 7

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INTEGRATED CONTINUUM OF CARE		
Support diversion when appropriate; address urgent needs first; empower and build resilience; customize pathways; and continue to support until a child, adult, or family is set up to thrive.	Use human-centered design and other person-centered practices to define a reimagined, modernized continuum of care across jurisdictions.	Serve the holistic needs of families by providing services to children and adults simultaneously to support healthy families.

Integrate and co-locate services across housing, social, health, education, and workforce development systems and bolster community-led programs.	Offer culturally relevant care by building a more racially and ethnically representative workforce and offering services in the preferred language of the person or family served.	Incorporate race- and trauma-informed policies, programs, and practices. ⁷⁶
Use behavioral economics and “plain talk” to communicate clear and effective information to people served.		

Recommendations for a continuum of care include:

Recommendation 6a. Develop a shared set of outcomes for individual, child, and family well-being, in partnership with communities most affected by structural racism and poverty that each agency is collectively held accountable to achieve. Selected outcomes should focus on improving multiple dimensions well-being, ensuring individuals, children, and families have the tools and resources they need to: meet their foundational needs; the dignity of having power and autonomy over their lives; and being engaged and valued in their community.⁷⁷ Baseline data for identified outcomes should be disaggregated by key demographic and geographic dimensions, which at a minimum should include: age, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, LGBTQIA+, disability status, immigration status, zip code, and family type.

Recommendation 6b. Update “Standard of Need,” assistance levels, and eligibility to reflect the real costs of what it takes for individuals and families to make ends meet. Specifically:

- Develop a “Standard of Need”⁷⁸ that accounts for what individuals and families need to be healthy and thrive when getting support from anti-poverty programs. The standard should account for variations in costs by geographic region, family size and composition, and age of children. The standard should be updated annually, and public benefit levels across all programs should be tied to this standard.
- Base eligibility for programs on a decent standard of living for the community in which one resides. Tools such as the *Self-Sufficiency Standard*⁷⁹ and *United Way’s ALICE* (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed)⁸⁰ measure adjust for geography, family size, and composition, and can be used to set targets to expand eligibility for assistance programs.

“Programs do not communicate with one another. I have to tell my story 20 times, each time reliving the trauma of it. It’s exhausting.” ~PRWG Steering Committee member

Recommendation 6c. Develop a universal intake, data sharing, and technology platform so that we can share *essential* information on people across agencies, systems, and sectors. In this intake process, clear information should be offered about what would be shared and how, giving those with safety concerns the ability to opt out. Sharing information across systems will ease the burden of sharing one’s story repeatedly, save time and resources, and help break down silos across different systems. However, this may be dangerous

for some children, adults, and families — particularly survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking — who worry about who is able to access their information with intention to cause harm.

Recommendation 6d. Increase unconditional cash assistance. Evidence suggests that unrestricted cash assistance is an effective strategy for poverty reduction.⁸¹ Furthermore, the majority of literature shows that work requirements are just as likely to increase poverty as decrease it and that employment-focused poverty reduction strategies do not result in meaningful poverty reduction.^{82,83} Specifically:

- Update existing cash grants in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD), and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) programs to align with cost-of-living and adjust annually for inflation;
- Pass through 100% of child support to children and their custodial parent for anyone on assistance while strengthening familial supports; and
- Pilot a state program that provides unrestricted cash assistance to individuals and families and evaluate its effect on key elements of well-being and return on investment compared to current programs **(Bright Spot #10)**.

Recommendation 6e. Smooth on-ramps and off-ramps for programs. Individuals or families applying for assistance are often under significant stress, especially if they are experiencing homelessness, mental illness, addiction, or violence. Many programs impose immediate, onerous requirements (e.g., requiring orientation as a condition of eligibility, threat of sanction) or intake processes (identifying career goals before stably housed, etc.), which can exacerbate stress and undermine well-being. Eligibility levels vary widely across programs **(Figure 9)**, leaving significant gaps depending on an individual’s income and personal circumstances (e.g., single vs. married, disabled, with or without shelter). Similarly, assistance can abruptly end before an individual or family is ready, or if a person begins earning just \$1 over a given eligibility threshold, hindering economic mobility (a.k.a. “cliff effect”). On-ramps and off-ramps can be smoothed by:

- Giving children, adults, and families time to “take a breath” by addressing urgent needs and stability before making onerous program requirements;
- Removing asset limits to qualify for public assistance programs;
- Easing harsh sanction and time limit policies in the TANF program;
- Eliminating the cash, child care, and medical “cliff effects”;
- Allow for categorical eligibility when possible and appropriate; and
- Align eligibility across programs to ensure people can meet foundational needs as they work along the continuum of care.

Recommendation 6f. Revamp policies, programs, and practices to inspire hope and build resilience. The emerging science of hope and resilience suggests that it is one of the most essential elements of well-being and success. Specifically:

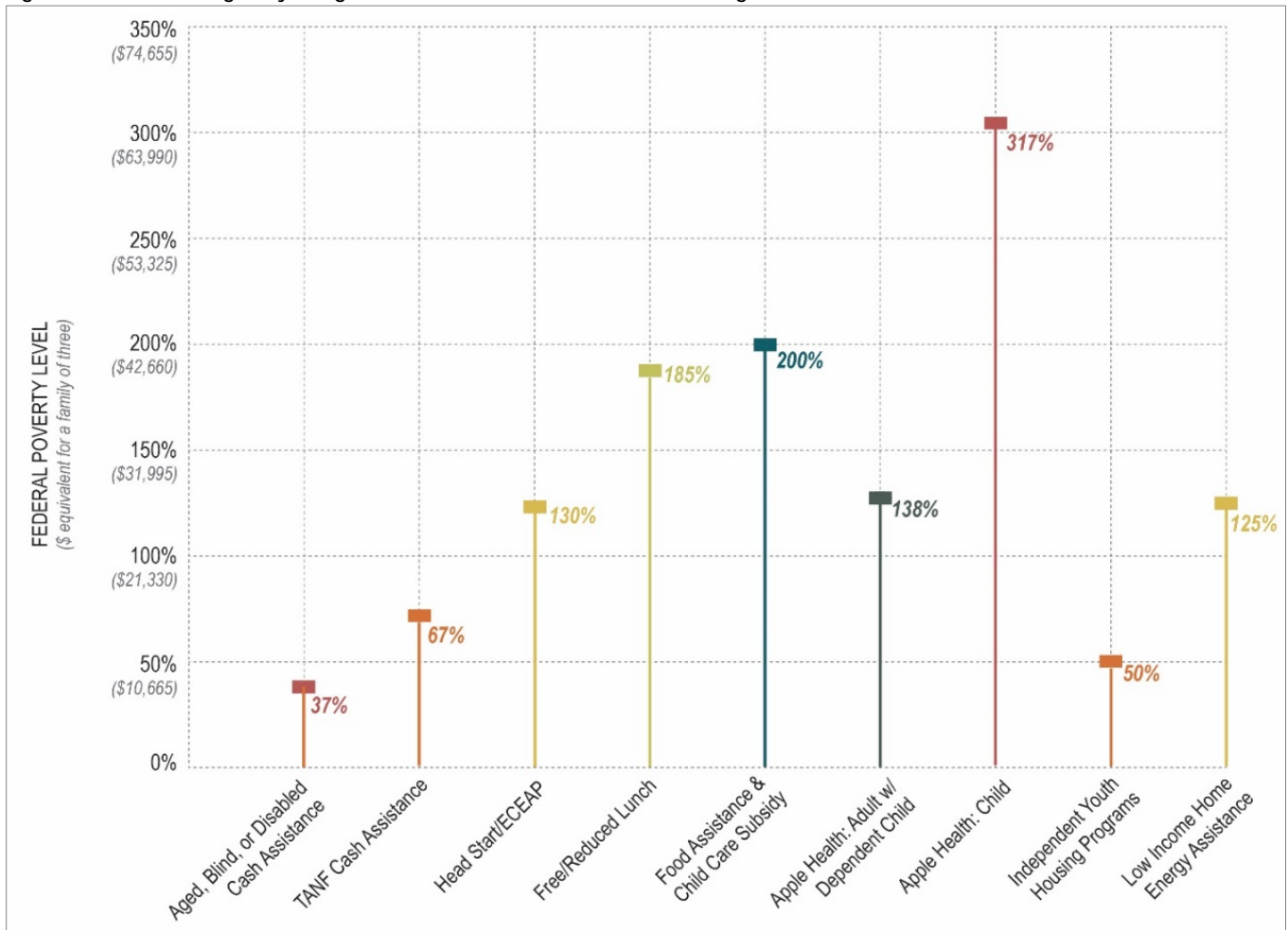
- Develop and train coaching and navigator care teams to support people as they navigate state and local resources and services; and
- Invest in community-based peer-to-peer support models for individuals, children, and adults experiencing poverty.

“Most of the time I am like, what’s the secret handshake? How do I navigate this to get what I need?”

The burden of figuring out the system is on the people being served ... it’s a full-time job.”

~PRWG Steering Committee member

Figure 9: Maximum Eligibility Ranges Across Select Public Assistance Programs





#10: UNCONDITIONAL CASH ASSISTANCE

Providing cash assistance to children, adults, and families with no strings attached is gaining traction in the United States. Unrestricted cash assistance can alleviate the “scarcity mindset” that people in poverty experience, freeing up resources and time to plan for the future.

Research shows giving people money with no restrictions does not deter employment, and is a more effective poverty reduction tool than programs that require work to receive cash.

Many pilots are underway testing unrestricted cash assistance programs in the U.S.

One of these studies – **Baby’s First Years** – will be the first study in the country to assess the impact of unrestricted cash assistance on family life and infant and toddlers’ cognitive, emotional, and brain development.

STRATEGY 7: Decriminalize poverty and reduce reliance on the criminal justice, juvenile justice, and child welfare systems.

People assume that just because I am poor, I must be a bad parent. It's almost as if case workers are looking for a reason to take my kids away — just because I need help, doesn't mean I don't love my kids.

~PRWG Steering Committee member

Families in poverty, especially deep poverty, are at greater risk of experiencing high levels of stress compared to economically stable families. This can result in a higher number of ACEs and potentially toxic levels of stress to home environments. Such conditions can negatively affect a child's health and well-being, performance in school, and their relationships, increasing their chances of becoming involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems when they are young, as well as the criminal justice system when they are an adult.⁸⁴

Child and adult behaviors that are caused or exacerbated by the experience of poverty are often “criminalized” — meaning they are punishable through formal or legal action. The vast majority of child neglect cases, for example, occur in families with incomes below 50% FPL.⁸⁵ Providing more generous cash assistance and supports would help stabilize the family, but children are often placed in a foster home instead. Children from lower income backgrounds are disciplined or expelled from schools at a higher rate than their peers, when receiving social, emotional, and behavioral supports would serve them better. And people experiencing a mental illness or addiction often end up in prison instead of receiving proper behavioral health care and treatment.

Criminalizing poverty has lifelong impacts that extend to whole families and communities. Once involved in these systems, children and adults often lack the support needed to successfully exit them and face numerous barriers in acquiring the education and employment opportunities they need to achieve economic stability. As a result, child welfare- and justice-involved families have a high rate of recidivism and are at high risk of experiencing discrimination, unemployment, homelessness, and other factors that perpetuate the cycle of poverty in families. Moreover, the disproportionate burden of poverty by race, gender, immigrant status, disability, and zip code maintains systemic social and economic inequality.

Strategies 1-6 in the 10-year Plan would substantially reduce the likelihood of becoming involved with the child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice systems by mitigating the experience of poverty and substantially reducing the incidence of it. In the meantime, these systems are in need of comprehensive reforms that extend beyond the scope of the 10-year Plan (e.g., ending mass incarceration), and PRWG strongly encourages Washington to look to those reform efforts for guidance. The recommendations below focus on reducing

reliance on these systems for dealing with poverty, and how to mitigate their effects on children, adults, and families once involved.

BEFORE & UPON ENTRY

Recommendation 7a. Shift resources away from child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice toward comprehensive social, economic, and health supports for children, adults, and families.⁸⁶ Shifting resources away from these systems and investing in services that support the economic stability and health and well-being of families. Specifically:

- Redirect resources to prevention, treatment, and support services in early learning, behavioral health, and human services for whole families;
- Embrace a harm reduction approach when responding to non-violent crimes with a strong association to poverty, such as street camping, loitering, drug use, and sex work by enlisting the help of social workers and behavioral health specialists;
- Invest in equity, diversity, and inclusion training and culture change to protect the lives of people disproportionately affected by these systems (e.g., Indigenous, Black, and Brown people, LGBTQIA+, immigrants and refugees, men and boys).
- Increase law enforcement training on trauma-informed interventions and de-escalation training; and
- Rapidly engage whole families when a child or adult is at risk of becoming child welfare- or justice-involved.

Recommendation 7b. Connect child-welfare and justice-related families to legal resources and civil legal assistance to mitigate further negative consequences of criminalization. Specifically:

- Identify evolving civil legal needs and protections of children, youth and adults, depending on their point of involvement in the criminal and welfare systems; and
- Fund legal services programs to increase capacity to provide legal assistance and representation to incarcerated people, formerly incarcerated people and justice-related families in their ongoing civil legal needs from entry to release.

Recommendation 7c. Keep families together as much as possible, when safe and appropriate. Keeping children with parents, in friend and family networks, communities, and schools they feel most connected to can mitigate trauma and build resilience. Specifically:

- Raise the burden of proof for removal and placing children with relatives able to provide care instead of entering the system;
- Create clearer, culturally-informed standards for what constitutes “high quality” parenting to reduce stigma of parents with low incomes;
- Create age-appropriate opportunities for children and youth to voice their opinions and be an active participant in case decisions;

- Establish a transportation fund for students to reduce school changes for children involved with the child welfare system;
- Increase financial assistance to children and their kinship caregivers by ensuring payments are at parity with foster parents and create a child-only benefit within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; and
- Pilot school-based recruitment for foster homes so children can stay in their school systems and friendship networks.

WHILE INVOLVED

Recommendation 7d. Provide robust, trauma-informed case management to children, adults, and families involved in child welfare, juvenile, and criminal justice systems. Specifically:

- Increase the number of providers — including mental health professionals, case managers, and social workers — with expertise in trauma and rehabilitative care to expand high quality services for children, youth, and adults involved in these systems; and
- Create an early detection system to quickly identify children and families with a criminal justice-involved family member so they can be connected to case managers, assistance, and support services if needed.

Recommendation 7e. Expand education, job training, and employment opportunities for children and adults while they are in the care of the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Specifically:

- Initiate re-entry planning and case management early in an individual’s sentence to address trauma, build resilience, and set long-term goals;
- Provide youth in juvenile justice settings the same school services as youth in mainstream schools, including special education services, mentoring, and career counseling;⁸⁷
- Allow youth and adults in justice settings to obtain a meaningful post-secondary credential or degree that prepares them for re-entry; and
- Expand mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities for justice-involved youth and adults while in detention.

Recommendation 7f. Eliminate Legal Financial Obligations (LFOs). Strengthen and enforce LFO reform laws. Specifically:

- Limit “pay to pay” and “pay to stay” fees while individuals are incarcerated;
- Limit incentives for defendants to take two-year probation plea deals; and
- Suspend child support payment responsibilities while a non-custodial parent is incarcerated.

Recommendation 7g. Provide adequate funding to increase the availability of safe, culturally responsive foster homes and permanent living options for children and youth involved with the child welfare system.

Specifically:

- Increase safety regulations and oversight of group and family homes that foster numerous children;
- Eliminate the practice of sending children and youth to sleep in hotels or be located out of state; and
- Provide more permanent supportive housing options for extended care youth and youth exiting the child welfare system.

UPON RELEASE & RE-ENTRY

Recommendation 7h. Connect children, adults, and families to public assistance and support services *at least* three months before they exit a system. Specifically:

- Allow children, youth, and adults to apply and receive public assistance before exiting a system to help them quickly stabilize upon re-entry;
- Prepare individuals for exit or re-entry through the provision of wrap-around navigation services, connection to employee mentors with lived experiences, career exploration, and advice on useful community organizations regarding access to housing, healthcare, education, and job opportunities before release; and
- Ensure compliance with the Fair Chance Housing ordinance and urge public and private housing providers to limit the use of criminal history when screening tenants so that non-violent arrests do not exclude individuals experiencing homelessness from city- and county-controlled housing placement lists.

Recommendation 7i. Eliminate housing, education, and employment barriers, and invest in stronger, better-coordinated exit and re-entry policies, services, and programs. Specifically:

- Reform the criminal background check system to rapidly house people with a criminal record;
- Evaluate the efficacy of the recently created Certificate of Restoration Program (CROP) for former offenders and strengthen if needed;
- Increase incentives for employers to hire and support formerly incarcerated people of color as leaders, caseworkers, and managerial staff to help people exiting the criminal justice system; and
- Strengthen K-12 school re-engagement for youth exiting the juvenile justice system.

Recommendation 7j. Expand and strengthen post-release family and peer support services. Specifically:

- Fund aftercare support and case managers for all youth released from residential commitment;
- Expand the number of programs that support peer-to-peer training and mentoring opportunities for children, youth, and adults exiting systems; and
- Provide public assistance and support services after exit or re-entry until individuals and families self-determine they have social and economic safety, stability, and security.

STRATEGY 8: Ensure a just and equitable transition to the future of work.

Washington state's economy is continuously undergoing significant and rapid change, especially in the wake of the COVID-19-induced downturn. Emerging technology (e.g. automation, artificial intelligence) is, and will continue, disrupting both the type of work available and the workforce needed for a thriving economy and communities. Economic downturns will continue to occur and, regardless of the cause (e.g., pandemic or cyclical), always hit people with lower incomes the hardest. Without updated policies that adapt to economic fluctuations, too many children, families, and communities are at risk of being left behind.

People experiencing poverty are especially susceptible to the changing economy and future of work. As the recent report from the *Future of Work Taskforce* (FOW Taskforce) notes, by 2025 an estimated 70% of projected job openings in Washington state will require some postsecondary education, yet some 758,000 Washingtonians under age 45 lack education beyond high school,⁸⁸ a disproportionate share of which are people of color.⁸⁹

Moreover, the FOW Taskforce notes that full-time employment is no longer a guarantee in the emerging economy, and people will increasingly rely on a patchwork of part-time “gigs” to make ends meet. As Washingtonians continue to struggle in the wake of COVID-19, lacking a post-secondary credential should not be a prerequisite for earning a living wage and benefits. If our public assistance programs do not modernize to adapt to the future of work, many workers will experience longer periods of financial instability, “wreaking havoc” on family and community well-being. The economic disruption of the current downturn powerfully emphasizes their point.

Protecting workers and their families during the current downturn and from future disruptions in employment, while simultaneously investing in the education and skills they need for the jobs of the future, can ensure a just and equitable transition to the future of work.

Recommendation 8a. Adopt the recommendations detailed in the FOW Taskforce report,⁹⁰ and bolster it with more specific, intentional strategies to achieve equity for workers of color, LGBTQIA+, women, immigrants and refugees, and rural Washingtonians. The FOW recommends 13 actions within the following five strategies (Table 8):

- Prepare for use and adoption of advancing technology in the workplace;
- Improve labor market data and credentialing transparency;
- Modernize worker support systems;
- Ensure equal access to economic development resources across Washington and
- Provide comprehensive worker upskilling and lifelong learning opportunities;

Table 8

FUTURE OF WORK TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS		
Support the Workforce Board’s request for additional funding for incumbent worker training.	Provide funds to establish a career and education-counseling network to support LiLA account holders and other workers who are planning for professional development and economic opportunity.	Prioritize the use of state-funded economic, workforce and community development resources to support and generate family-wage jobs, with a focus on rural vitality.
Extend the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Customized Training Program.	Perform a worker-impact audit on the selection and adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other advanced technologies within Washington State government.	Continue funding rural broadband efforts and seek out similar initiatives that may constitute best practices in other areas of the nation.
Establish a requirement for a worker-management oversight body for each awardee of state incumbent worker training funds.	Develop a methodology for assessing and evaluating advanced technology within state government.	Enlist libraries to become greater hubs for community training, credentialing, and entrepreneurship/small business development.
Add and evaluate new outcome metrics on the Job Skills and Customized Training programs.	Extend and utilize the Workforce Board’s Career Bridge-Credential Engine project on credential transparency and competency-based credentialing as a learning laboratory among the higher education community.	Fund the development of accessible collaborative applied research (CAR) models that will bring two- and four-year college faculty and students together with small and midsize businesses and their workers to invent or adopt new technology or processes.
Remove the six-credit eligibility requirement from the Washington College Grant program for students co-enrolled in High School+ and I-BEST who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent.	Add a new occupation data field to Unemployment Insurance Wage Reports, provided by employers for each W-2 employee.	Reinstate a state office of employee ownership.
Fund the Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA) program, where employers and employees jointly fund an employee-owned educational savings account, as written in state statute (RCW 28C.18.180)	Analyze the impact of existing worker benefit and protection structures, and provide recommendations to better support workers as the nature of work changes.	

To increase the likelihood of the FOW Taskforce strategies achieving equity, PRWG recommends the following additional strategies:

Recommendation 8a-i. Dramatically expand mentorship and career-connected learning for people of color, LGBTQIA+, refugees and immigrants, people with disabilities, and rural communities (Bright Spot #11). In the ever-changing economy, there is an even higher premium on social capital, connections to employers, and direct workplace experience. Yet, these experiences are hardest to acquire for people furthest away from opportunity. To increase mentorship and career-connected learning programs for people of color, immigrants and refugees, rural communities, and people with disabilities:

- Require mentorship from employers, community members, or other caring adults for youth and adults in career-connected learning programs;

- Create a 1:1 state-employer matching fund for programs that combine mentorship, career planning, and career-connected learning with helping people move out of poverty;
- Work in partnership with the business community to ensure appropriate supports are in place to address trauma and the wrap-around services needed for staff from low-income backgrounds to succeed in the workplace (**Bright Spot #12**); and
- Certify LGBTQ-owned businesses as minority-owned institutions.

Recommendation 8a-ii. Accelerate pathways for immigrants and refugees with advanced degrees and/or training from their home country to become accredited in the U.S.

Many immigrants and refugees bring considerable education, training, and professional experience from their home countries, but face obstacles to employment in the U.S. because states fail to recognize their education and employment credentials obtained outside the U.S. Accelerating accreditation for immigrants and refugees with advanced training and degrees will increase the economic security of their families and provide Washington with the talent needed to fill shortages in high-demand occupations, such as medicine, education, science, and engineering (**Bright Spot #13**). Specific to medical graduates, the state can:

- Create a Limited License for International Medical Graduates (LLIMG) who have passed all the United States Medical License Examinations to practice under the supervision of a Board Certified Physician;
- Ensure Managed Care Organizations that serve Medicaid clients provide credentialing and reimburse international medical graduates who hold a LLIMG;
- Ensure 10% of Washington funded ACGME accredited residency positions are dedicated to immigrant and refugee doctors living in Washington; and
- Create a committee that oversees state funded residency positions and assures that residency programs are actively integrating immigrant and refugee doctors into our health care system.

Recommendation 8b. Create tax structures for employers that offer full-time employment with living wages and robust benefit packages. Specifically:

- Increase incentives to employers that hire, mentor, and train workers who are most at risk of skills becoming irrelevant in the new world of work into higher wage, in-demand jobs; and
- Increase incentives to employers that offer medical and dental insurance, long-term care, and retirement plans for all workers.

Recommendation 8c. Protect Washingtonians from economic downturns by developing an economic “trigger” to provide countercyclical funding in human services, education, and economic and workforce development. Economic downturns inevitably occur and planning for them can mitigate the effects on people most affected. Specifically:

- Develop a state budget protocol to prepare for economic downturns; and

- Identify policy and program changes (e.g., extending or expanding human service benefits, easing job search requirements, income supports) that can be automatically implemented in the event of a downturn.
- Target economic and workforce development resources to sustain vital industries that are especially vulnerable during downturns (e.g., food service and the arts and culture sector during COVID-19 shutdowns); and
- Ensure workers displaced as a result of economic downturns have pathways to economic stability, as well as opportunities to retool and retrain for other employment opportunities.

Recommendation 8d. Develop and pilot a portable benefits model and a guaranteed basic income

program. In an economy that does not guarantee full-time work, benefit models must be updated to prevent worsening poverty rates and crises related to it, such as homelessness, mental illness, and addiction. Specifically:

- Develop and pilot a portable employee benefits model that stays with a worker when they switch jobs; strengthening the labor laws under 3e such that workers’ boards could empower employers and workers to collaborate in system design for a portable benefits model; and
- Develop and test a guaranteed basic income program to protect people from anticipated disruptions to employment due to technological advancements.



#11: SI SE PUEDE

Connell, in southeastern Washington, is small town America at its best. But like so many rural towns, jobs have passed Connell by and over half of Connell’s residents live in deep poverty or working poverty. Via Governor Inslee’s Economic Security for All initiative (EcSA), four local communities are testing ways to minimize barriers, simplify intake, improve information sharing, and work as a unified team - with the singular goal of helping 895 families who are currently receiving SNAP benefits move permanently above 200% of FPL. Connell is one of those communities.

Local leaders in Connell are focusing on helping single Latina mothers move out of poverty and into secure middle class careers. Their initiative, Si Se Puede, won funding from the state’s Economic Security for All Initiative, which provides local teams of community leaders, employers and service organizations resources to improve economic self-sufficiency in their region. A young woman named Jessica heard about Si Se Puede. This was personal for Jessica, who was raised by a single Latina mother in a small rural town. She moved out of poverty to become a successful young professional and teacher. Jessica joined the Si Se Puede team to help more people move up and live the American dream, like she did.



#12: MOSES LAKE RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In Grant County, the average annual unemployment rate dipped from 6.3% in 2017 to 6.2% in 2018, which is the lowest percentage since 1990. In this timeframe, they added over 1,300 jobs for a 4.7% increase compared to the State's 2.5% increase for the same time period. One of the sectors seeing an increase in jobs is manufacturing and the county is working with their Economic Development Council and their Workforce Development Council to partner with K-12 schools, colleges and the business sector to create a pipeline of trained youth and adults to invest in the skills needed locally to retain talent in the region. This cross-sector partnership is boosting rural Washington's economic pipeline through innovative partnerships with public- and private-sector support.



#13: WA ACADEMY FOR INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES

Washington Academy for International Medical Graduates is working to break down the barriers that prevent Washington international medical graduates from accomplishing their professional and medical career goals. Such doctors face a steep path towards licensure and often come across many obstacles. As a result of WAIMG's efforts, in 2019 Governor Inslee signed legislation establishing a work-group to recommend strategies for international medical graduates to gain access to residency programs necessary for licensing in Washington. In doing so, the group hopes to improve the economic prospects of immigrants and refugees and also fill the large and growing doctor shortage in Washington state.



Stakeholder Engagement

PRWG conducted the majority of its work between February 2018 and February 2020, and circulated a coordinating draft just prior to COVID-19 and its economic consequences taking hold in Washington state. The timing was fortuitous — having a strategic plan to dismantle poverty grounded in race and social justice and informed by data, research, best practices, and the expertise of people experiencing poverty was well positioned to meet the moment. History shows that times of profound disruption are followed by significant social, cultural, and economic change. This time will be no different, and the timely release of the 10-year Plan outlines the strategies and recommendations we can begin implementing today to build a just and equitable future.

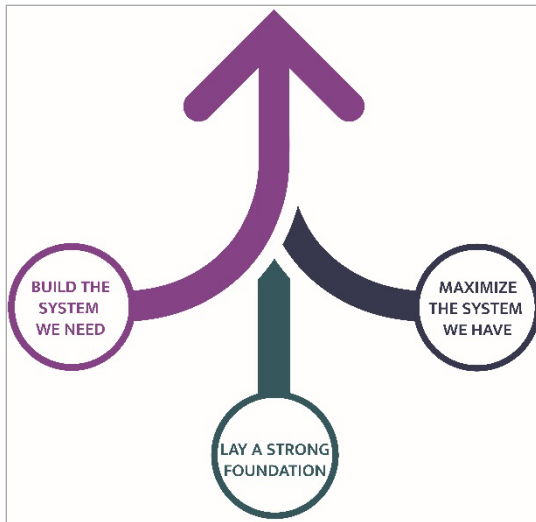
Yet, while PRWG was a large and diverse work group, members also recognized the need to gather input from an even larger group of stakeholders to ensure the 10-year Plan was robust enough to meaningfully and measurably reduce poverty and inequality, especially in the wake of COVID-19. Over 10 months, PRWG conducted over 50 briefings with the public and with organizations representing people most affected by poverty to refine the strategies and recommendations. We are deeply grateful to the hundreds of people from the following organizations for their contributions to the 10-year Plan (Figure 10) – their feedback was invaluable to the process, and the plan will remain a living, breathing document that we sincerely hope stakeholders will participate in and continue to refine in the future.

Figure 10: Organizations Contributing Feedback on the 10-year Plan Recommendations

- Amara • ARC of Washington • Ballmer Group • Blacks United in Leadership & Diversity • Catholic Charities of Washington • City of Olympia • City of Olympia Economic Development Team • Coalition for Children of the Incarcerated • Community Action Agencies of WA, ID, AL and OR • Department of Commerce • Department of Commerce Tribal Resource Group • Department of Veteran Affairs • Disability Inclusion Network • Essentials for Children • Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma • Fatherhood Council • Gender Alliance of the South Sound • IF Project • Indian Policy Advisory Committee • Inland NW Business Alliance • Investing in Children Coalition • Lavender Rights Project • Legal Counsel for Youth and Children • Legal Voice • Legislative Executive WorkFirst & Poverty Reduction Oversight Taskforce • LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce • LGBTQ Commissioners of Eastern Washington • Metropolitan Development Council • Migration Policy Institute • Neighborhood House • New Life Baptist Church • NW Justice Project • Odyssey Youth • Pew Charitable Trust • Pierce County AIDS Foundation • Qlaw Foundation • Rainbow Alliance & Inclusion Network • Seattle Foundation • Seattle Pride • Sexual Violence Law Center • Solid Ground • Spectrum Center of Spokane • Tacoma Pierce County Chamber of Commerce • Tacoma Pierce County Economic Development Board • The Black Collective • Thurston Strong Economic Development Council • Trans Women of Color Solidarity Network • Tri-County Refugee Planning Committee • United Way of Pierce County • United Ways of the Pacific Northwest • WA Council on Youth Homelessness • WA Low Income Housing Alliance • WA State Association of Head Start and ECEAP • WA State Board of Health • WA State Department of Social & Health Services • WA State Department of Social Health Services Division of Child Support • WA State Disability Council • WA State Health Benefits Exchange • WA State Health Disparities Council • WA State Healthcare Authority • WA State Housing Finance Commission • WA State LGBTQ Commission • WA State Pro Bono Council • Washington Anti-Poverty Advocates Group • Washington Immigrant Network • Washington Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance • Washington Recovery Group • Washington Workforce Association • What’s Next Washington

Implementation of the 10-year Plan

There is no silver-bullet policy, program, or practice for reducing poverty and inequality. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Systemic change becomes possible when we recognize the “system” is us — people working in state and local government, non-profits, businesses, and philanthropic entities across the state all have a role to play, and implementation of the strategies and recommendations can be organized over the next ten years as follows:



Lay a strong foundation. Take immediate action on Strategies 1 and 2 to form a foundation that centers people experiencing poverty and race and social justice in implementation.

Maximize the system we have. Address the urgency of now through stronger policy, integration, and collaboration across systems, sectors, and jurisdictions to make the most of the system we have.

Build the system we need. Begin to dismantle poverty by addressing root causes through bold systemic and cultural change.

Table 8 provides a draft guide to implementation using these categories, as well as a rough estimate of timing and anticipated costs. This guide provides initial direction, and serves as a point of departure for discussion for implementation.

We encourage any individual or organization to use the [Action Toolkit](#) to identify their unique role and contribution to building a just and equitable future in Washington state.

Table 8: Implementation Guidance for 10-year Plan

STRATEGIES/RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION			ESTIMATED TIME TO IMPLEMENT			ESTIMATED COST RANGE*
	Maximize the System We Have			5+ Years			
	Build the System We Need			3-5 Years			
	Lay a Strong Foundation			1-2 Years			
STRATEGY 1: Understand structural racism and historical trauma, and take action to undo their harmful effects in state policy, programs, and practice.							
1a. Require state entities to collaborate with the Office of Equity to develop trainings on historical trauma, institutional racism, and implicit bias that are required of all public employees in systems that touch upon the lives of people experiencing poverty.	●			●			\$
1b. Require state entities to collaborate with the Office of Equity to develop data, processes, and tools that prioritize equity in state policies, programs, practices, and partnerships.	●			●			\$
STRATEGY 2: Make equal space for the power and influence of people and communities most affected by poverty and inequality in decision-making.							
2a. Provide resources to the Office of Equity for a collaboration with Indigenous, Black, and Brown leaders and organizations to develop a formal process for truth and reconciliation.	●			●			\$
2b. Establish a state entity to elevate the expertise and influence of people disproportionately affected by poverty and inequality in the implementation of the 10-year Plan.	●			●			\$\$
2c. Invest state resources to increase ownership capacity in communities most affected by poverty.	●			●			\$\$\$
2d. Fund meaningful access to legal assistance and representation for children, adults, and families disproportionately affected by poverty and racially biased systems.	●						\$\$
2e. Make high-speed, broadband internet universally available.	●						\$\$\$\$

STRATEGY 3: Target equitable education, income growth, and wealth-building opportunities for people with low incomes.

3a. Adopt the <i>Washington Kids for Washington Jobs</i> recommendations, but bolster with more specific, intentional strategies to achieve equity.		●					\$\$\$
3a-i. Increase funding to accelerate the process of naturalization for immigrants, refugees, and asylees.	●			●			\$\$
3a-ii. Strengthen literacy programs and services for children and adults across the entire education and workforce-development pipeline.	●				●		\$\$
3a-iii. Eliminate harsh discipline practices in schools and replace them with culturally responsive social, emotional, and engagement supports.	●				●		\$\$
3a-iv. Increase investment in Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) statewide.		●			●		\$\$
3a-v. Increase investments to improve high school graduation and post-secondary enrollment of children and youth experiencing foster care and/or homelessness.		●			●		\$\$\$
3a-vi. Increase the availability of affordable child care and housing for student parents on or near college campuses.	●					●	\$\$\$\$
3a-vii. Remove residency barriers for college students with refugee status.	●			●			\$
3a- viii. Increase opportunities for Washington students and adults who are disconnected from the educational system to prepare for and access affordable and high quality postsecondary educational pathways.		●			●		\$\$\$
3b. Enforce stronger salary/wage transparency and fair labor practices among employers to ensure pay equity for women and people of color.		●		●			\$\$\$
3c. Expand access to no- or low-cost financial resources and education that empower, rather than prey upon, people experiencing poverty.		●			●		\$\$
3d. Enact changes to the state tax system that lower the effective tax rate for low- and moderate-income households (bottom two quintiles).	●				●		\$\$\$\$
3e. Work in partnership with local labor organizations and the government to modernize unions and the rights of workers.	●					●	\$
3f. Adopt the Child Care Collaborative Taskforce recommendations to increase the availability of affordable, high quality* early care and education.	●				●		\$\$\$\$
3g. Increase and preserve affordable housing for renters and owners.	●			●			\$\$\$\$

3h. Enact changes to the tax system that support equitable economic growth.		●				●		\$\$\$\$
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STRATEGY 4: Strengthen health supports across the life span to promote the intergenerational well-being of families.

4a. Strengthen the Apple Health program by creating a state-funded assistance benefit.			●			●		\$\$\$
4b. Ensure funding and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and support services before, during, and after pregnancy.			●			●		\$\$\$\$
4c. Ensure access to free and low-cost contraceptive options and family planning counseling, including long-term acting reversible contraceptives (LARCS) for people who want it.			●			●		\$\$\$
4d. Increase funding to support the availability of culturally diverse, nutritious foods in assistance programs like Women, Infants, and Children, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.			●			●		\$\$\$
4e. Develop, implement and evaluate health and human service programs to better meet the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ children, adults, and families.			●		●			\$\$\$
4f. Increase Medicaid funds for supported, in-home care and caregivers so people with disabilities and aging adults can remain in environments they know and trust, as well as avoid costly residential programs.			●			●		\$\$\$\$

STRATEGY 5: Address the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness, violence, mental illness, and/or addiction.

5a. Provide greater resources for community-led data collection.	●				●			\$\$\$
5b. Adopt the “housing first” approach as the foundation to health and human service delivery and remove discriminatory barriers.								
5c. Increase state and local rental assistance and diversion programs that allow children, youth, adults, and families to avoid homelessness.		●				●		\$\$\$
5d. Increase the number of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing options.			●		●			\$\$\$\$
5e. Develop stronger public-private partnerships to increase opportunities for supported education, job training, and employment.		●			●			\$\$\$
5f. Create a Medical-Financial Partnership model for Washington state.			●			●		\$\$

5g. Improve access to behavioral health prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.			●		●		\$\$\$\$
5h. Improve integration of behavioral health treatment in early learning settings and K-12.		●			●		\$\$\$\$
5i. Require state entities to collaborate with civil legal aid providers and community-led programs to increase comprehensive support for children, adults, and families experiencing homelessness, violence, or a behavioral health issue.	●				□		\$\$

STRATEGY 6: Build an integrated human service continuum of care that addresses the holistic needs of children, adults, and families.

6a. Develop a shared set of outcomes for individual, child, and family well-being, in partnership with communities most affected by structural racism and poverty that each agency is collectively held accountable to achieve.	●			●			\$
6b. Update "Standard of Need," assistance levels, and eligibility to reflect the real costs of what it takes for individuals and families to make ends meet.		●			●		\$\$\$\$
6c. Develop a universal intake, data sharing, and technology platform so that we can share <i>essential</i> information on people across agencies, systems, and sectors.		●				●	\$\$\$\$
6d. Increase cash assistance and make it unconditional upon work.		●			●		\$\$\$
6e. Smooth on-ramps and off-ramps for programs.			●		●		\$\$\$\$
6f. Revamp policies, programs, and practices to inspire hope and build resilience.		●			●		\$\$\$\$

STRATEGY 7: Decriminalize poverty and reduce reliance on the criminal justice, juvenile justice, and child welfare systems.

7a. Shift resources away from child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice toward comprehensive social, economic, and health supports for children, adults, and families.		●				●	\$
7b. Connect child-welfare and justice-related families to legal resources and civil legal assistance to mitigate further negative consequences of criminalization.			●		●		\$\$\$
7c. Keep families together as much as possible, when safe and appropriate.			●	●			\$\$\$
7d. Provide robust, trauma-informed case management to children, adults, and families involved in child welfare, juvenile, and criminal justice systems.		●			●		\$\$\$\$

7e. Expand education, job training, and employment opportunities for children and adults while they are in the care of the juvenile and criminal justice systems.			●			●		\$\$\$
7f. Eliminate Legal Financial Obligations (LFOs).		●				●		\$
7g. Provide adequate funding to increase the availability of safe, culturally responsive foster homes and permanent living options for children and youth involved with the child welfare system.		●					●	\$\$\$
7h. Connect children, adults, and families to public assistance and support services <i>at least</i> three months before they exit a system.		●			●			\$\$\$
7i. Eliminate education and employment barriers, and invest in stronger, better-coordinated exit and re-entry policies, services, and programs.			●			●		\$\$
7j. Expand and strengthen post-release family and peer support services.			●			●		\$\$\$

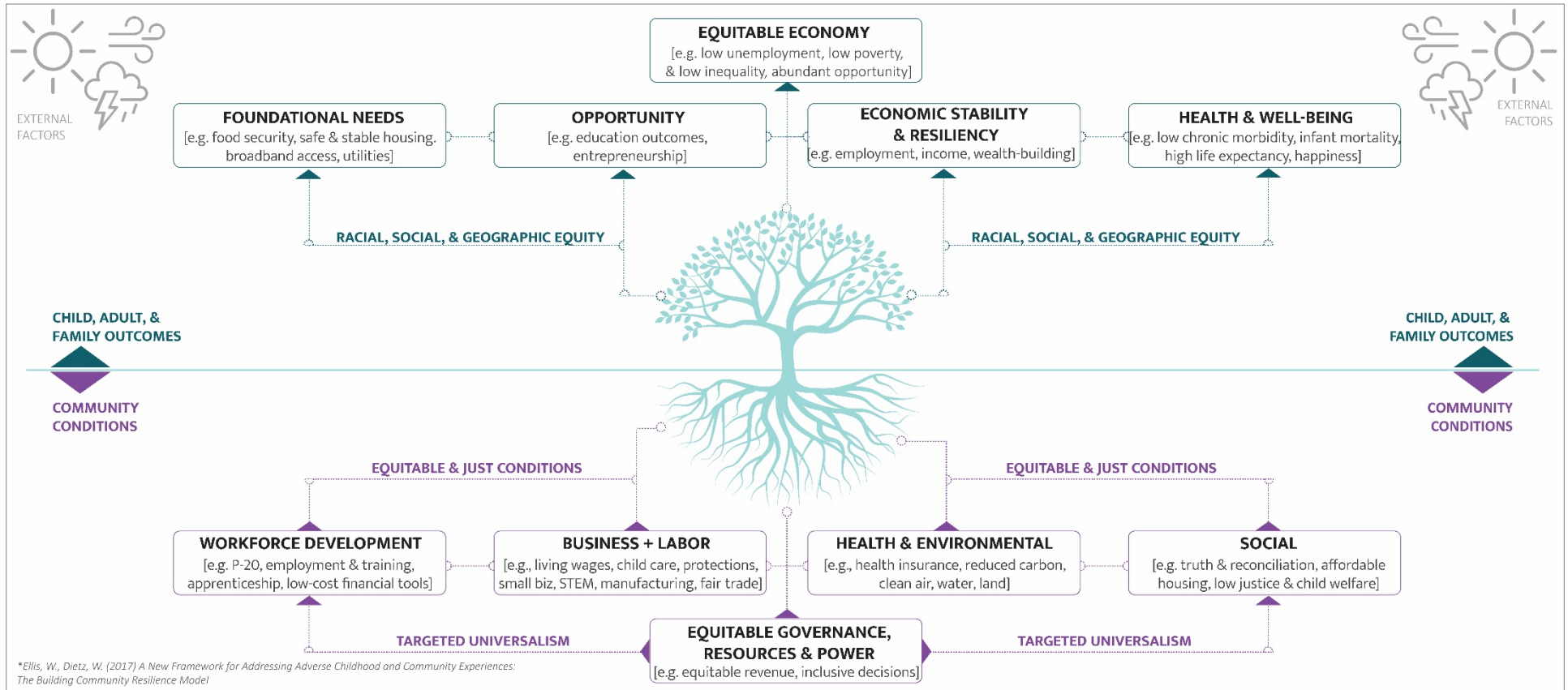
STRATEGY 8: Ensure a just transition to the future of work.

8a. Adopt the recommendations detailed in the FOW Taskforce report, and bolster it with more specific, intentional strategies to achieve equity for workers of color, LGBTQIA+, women, immigrants and refugees, and rural Washingtonians.		●				●		\$\$\$\$
8a-i. Dramatically expand mentorship and career-connected learning for people of color, LGBTQIA+, refugees and immigrants, people with disabilities, and rural communities.			●		●			\$\$\$\$
8a-ii. Accelerate pathways for immigrants and refugees with advanced degrees and/or training from their home country to become accredited in the U.S.			●		●			\$\$
8b. Create tax structures for employers that offer full-time employment with living wages and robust benefit packages.		●					●	\$\$\$\$
8c. Protect Washingtonians from economic downturns by developing an economic "trigger" to provide countercyclical funding in human services, education, and job training.		●					●	\$\$
8d. Develop and pilot a portable benefits model and a guaranteed basic income program.	●						●	\$\$\$



*\$ = No/Low Cost (\$0 - \$1 million); \$\$ = Low Cost \$1 million - \$5 million); \$\$\$ = Moderate Cost (\$5 million - \$50 million); \$\$\$\$ = High Cost (\$50 million+)

Figure 11: What's in the Soil Bears the Fruit: Draft Vision for a Just & Equitable Future



Accountability for a Just & Equitable Future

Washington State is at a turning point. Without intentional investments to build an inclusive, equitable economic recovery, deeply rooted demographic and geographic inequalities that existed prior to COVID-19 will intensify and put an unprecedented number of Washingtonians at risk of poverty and its intergenerational consequences. Right now the 10-year Plan is just a plan — it will require intention and accountability among leaders from all sectors, systems, and jurisdictions to bring it to fruition.

As a start, PRWG co-lead agencies convened a group of technical experts from state entities and community organizations to develop a draft vision for what a just and equitable future looks like, and how to measure progress toward that vision. The vision (Figure 11) is based on the idea that what's in the soil bears the fruit, and if Washington state invests in just and equitable conditions in communities, equitable outcomes for all children, adults, and families will result. Economic data tools known as “triggers” can help guide the state toward this vision, but will need to be decided in collaboration with a diverse group of stakeholders, especially people most affected by poverty and the current downturn, to ensure the robust and inclusive recovery Washingtonians deserve.



Now is the time to invest in an economy underwritten by equity, in which all Washingtonians have their foundational needs met and the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. Fortunately, we have a plan to meet the moment and build a just and equitable future for all.

These recommendations were created in conjunction with the Steering Committee in an attempt to elevate the experience and influence of people experiencing poverty. Together, we blended evidence and innovation, and created trust through collaboration. We embarked on a journey that brought forward real solutions to poverty reduction and inequality in Washington State. This plan is now in your hands to make this vision a reality — a place where all Washingtonians live with dignity and have access to opportunities for reaching their fullest potential in life.

The bold solutions presented in this report will require fearless leaders willing to champion the urgency of now and a strong commitment to elevate the expertise and influence of people experiencing poverty and to center race and intersectionality in all aspects of policy development and systems change.

Through this process we built trust where it didn't exist before, with individuals who have been let down before — we cannot let them down. We hope you will join us.

Appendix A – Racial Equity Toolkit

The Racial Equity Toolkit (as shown below) was created in 2008 by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights’ Race and Social Justice Team. The purpose of the Toolkit is to “center race” with the goal of eliminating racial disparities and advancing racial equity. More information can be found here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/programs/race-and-social-justice-initiative/racial-equity-toolkit>.

Step 1. Set Outcomes

Leadership communicates key community outcomes for racial equity to guide analysis.

Step 2. Involve Stakeholders + Analyze Data

Gather information from community and staff on how the issue benefits or burdens community in terms of racial equity.

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden

Analyze issue for impacts and alignment with racial equity outcomes.

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm

Develop strategies to create greater racial equity or minimize unintended consequences.

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Awareness. Be Accountable.

Track impacts on community of color overtime. Continue to communicate with and involve stakeholders. Document unresolved issues.

Step 6. Report-Back.

Share information learned from analysis and unresolved issues with Department leadership and change team.



Washington Community Development Authority DBA Communities of Concern Commission PDA Legislation

Who we represent: The Communities of Concern Commission is a coalition of leaders from communities of color and poor rural communities that are disproportionately affected by poverty and have yet to fully benefit from the economic growth that is so apparent in many areas of Washington State.

Our request: The Communities of Concern Commission is seeking recognition status as a statewide public development authority to work with poor communities of color and rural communities to build the capacity to meet the needs of their communities.

Rationale: Community organizations strongly rooted in poor communities of color and rural communities have the cultural understanding, imagination and vision to create capital assets that will help reduce poverty and build stronger and more sustainable communities. These capital assets would be self-determined, managed and owned by the communities they serve. The Communities of Concern Commission doing business as the Washington Community Development Authority seeks to change structural barriers by partnering with the state to build the capacity of communities to conceive, design, finance, construct and manage the types of assets that are essential to reducing poverty.

Why a statewide public development authority: Many of our communities are not geographically defined, and our members have not been included in local government planning processes. As a public development authority, the Washington Community Development Authority (WCDA) could better facilitate ongoing state investment to a dedicated fund to accelerate the creation of affordable housing and other essential facilities in the communities we represent. The WCDA would work with communities to create community growth plans to identify capital projects, and help selected capital projects. State funding would also be sought for the development of the WCDA.

Partnerships: The Washington Community Development Authority will work with the Department of Commerce to develop criteria and evaluate proposed capital projects. The WCDA will also work with Commerce and the Washington State Housing Finance Commission to identify appropriate project funding allocations.

Our Results: The 2018 Capital Budget funded the Communities of Concern at \$1 million. Working with the Department of Commerce, the Commission funded ten community projects including pre-development and community planning work – Billy Frank Jr. Heritage Center (Nisqually), Equity Alliance of Washington (Seattle), Community to Community (Whatcom County), Ethiopian Community Affordable Senior Housing (Seattle), El Centro de la Raza (Seattle), Lummi Stepping Stones Emergency Repairs, Seattle Indian Services Commission, Latino Civic Alliance (south King County), Partners for Rural Washington (Methow Valley/Stevens County Fire District/Ritzville), and United Indians of All Tribes (Seattle). A report was provided to the Legislature in December 2018 of the projects' outcomes. A final report will be provided July 2020.

For further information contact:
Josephine Tamayo Murray, Vice-President for Public Policy

Washington Community Development Authority dba Communities of Concern Commission
Certificate of Incorporation 05/16/2017 from WA State Secretary of State: UBI# 604-127-812

Commission Board of Directors: Asian Pacific Cultural Center (Tacoma); Bethel Christian Church (Seattle); Catholic Community Services of Western WA; Catholic Housing Services of Western WA; Chief Seattle Club; Community to Community (Bellingham); El Centro de la Raza (Seattle); Ethiopian Community in Seattle; FilAm Resources for Educational Advancement for Culture & Technology (statewide); First AME Church (Seattle); Latino Civic Alliance (statewide); Lummi Stepping Stones; Native Action Network (statewide); Partners for Rural WA (statewide); SeaMar Community Health Centers (statewide); Seattle Indian Services Commission; St. Charles Parish (Burlington); Survival of American Indians Association (Nisqually); Tibetan Association of Washington (statewide), United Indians of All Tribes (Seattle); Washington Housing Equity Alliance (Seattle); and, the Washington State Catholic Conference.

Executive Committee: President-Bishop Thomas Davis (Bethel Christian Church, Seattle), Vice-President-Jesus Sanchez (SeaMar Community Health Centers), Secretary-Josephine Tamayo Murray (Catholic Community Services of Western WA), Treasurer-Claudia Kauffman (Seattle Indian Services Commission).

Loaned Executive Director: Josephine Tamayo Murray.

Fiscal Agent: SeaMar Community Health Centers.

Commission Operations:

Meetings: Monthly with Executive Committee meetings as needed.

How Decisions Are Made: By consensus of the Director organizations present at a meeting. Each Director is entitled to only one vote. Directors with more than one representative designate a voting member to cast the vote of that Director.

Board of Director Criteria: Currently, a non-profit organization serving poor communities of color and/or poor rural communities in Washington state who have an idea for a self-determined, community owned and operated capital asset.

How New Directors Are Appointed: Currently, interested organizations submit a letter of interest and description of their capital asset idea to the Executive Director who will vet the request with affiliated Commission members. If the affiliated Commission members agree, an interview with the interested organization will be scheduled. After the interview the affiliated Commission members will recommend to the Commission as a whole as to whether an interview will be scheduled between the interested organization and the whole Commission. The Commission will then determine whether the interested organization is appointed as a Director. As a public development authority, there will be no membership requirement.

How Funding Awards Are Determined: An application form has been developed that includes descriptions of the applicant organization, project/community growth plan, organization staff and board, financial statements, project team, project status and budget. The applications are reviewed and rated by an ad-hoc committee. The Executive Director recommends to the Commission the project amounts to be funded. The Commission meets with Commerce who affirms the project funding awards. As a public development authority, the Initial Board will be composed of community of color and poor rural community organizations' representatives who do not have a capital project to be funded by the PDA.

- ¹ U.S. News & World Report Best State Rankings available at <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings>
- ² U.S. News & World Report (May 14, 2019) “Why Washington is the Best State in the Nation” downloaded on June 5, 2019 @ <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings>
- ³ Office of the Governor (November 6, 2017) Directive 17-13. Retrieved from <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/directive/17-12%20-%20Poverty%20Reduction.pdf>
- ⁴ See PRWG Progress Report for data, research, and evidence identifying root causes of poverty.
- ⁵ National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019) A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press
- ⁶ Michael McLaughlin and Mark R Rank (2018) Estimating the Economic Cost of Childhood Poverty in the United States. *Social Work Research*, v42(2); 73–8
- ⁷ Michael McLaughlin and Mark R Rank (2018) Estimating the Economic Cost of Childhood Poverty in the United States. *Social Work Research*, v42(2); 73–8
- ⁸ National Equity Atlas (2018) downloaded at <http://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries/Washington>
- ⁹ U.S. Partnership on Mobility from Poverty: <https://www.mobilitypartnership.org/>
- ¹⁰ DSHS analysis of 2019 American Community Survey data
- ¹¹ Parolin, Z. & Christopher Wimer (April 2020) Forecasting Estimates of Poverty during the COVID-19 Crisis. Center on Poverty and Social Policy at Columbia University Policy Brief available for download at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5743308460b5e922a25a6dc7/t/5e9786f17c4b4e20ca02d16b/1586988788821/Forecasting-Poverty-Estimates-COVID19-CPSP-2020.pdf>
- ¹² Secaira, M. (2019, May 31). Abigail Echo-Hawk on the art and science of 'decolonizing data'. Retrieved from <https://crosscut.com/2019/05/abigail-echo-hawk-art-and-science-decolonizing-data>
- ¹³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (2019). U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines to Determine Financial Eligibility for Certain Federal Programs. Retrieved from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>; Alaska and Hawaii have slightly higher poverty thresholds than the contiguous 48 states
- ¹⁴ Blank, R., (2008, July 17). Why the United States Needs an Improved Measure of Poverty. Congressional Testimony available at <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/why-the-united-states-needs-an-improved-measure-of-poverty/>
- ¹⁵ The University of Washington’s Self-Sufficiency Standard is a similar tool and has a high correlation to ALICE. ALICE is chosen for the purposes of this report because, unlike the Self-Sufficiency Standard, ALICE establishes a cost-of-living threshold and provides estimates for who is living above and below it.
- ¹⁶ DSHS|EMAPS analysis of TANF and SNAP administrative data 1997-2018
- ¹⁷ UCLA School of Law Williams Institute (October 2019) LGBT Poverty in the United States: A study of differences between sexual orientation and gender identity groups available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/lgbt-poverty-us/>
- ¹⁸ UCLA School of Law Williams Institute (September 2020) *Pathways Into Poverty: Lived experiences among LGBTQ people* available at <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/pathways-into-poverty/>
- ¹⁹ 2019 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Department of Social and Health Services; Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, pg.11, <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/dvr/2019CSNAFinal.pdf>
- ²⁰ There are numerous books and articles that could serve as a reference for this point. PRWG recommends *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by the historian, Ibram X. Kendi, for a comprehensive overview.
- ²¹ Institution on Taxation and Economic Policy. (2018, October). *Who Pays? 6th Edition*. Retrieved from <https://itep.org/whopays/>
- ²² <https://inequality.stanford.edu/news-events/center-news/poverty-inequality-and-covid-19>
- ²³ Sommeillier, E., & Price, M. (2018, July). The Unequal States of America: Income inequality in Washington. Retrieved from <https://www.epi.org/multimedia/unequal-states-of-america/#/Washington>

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- ²⁴ Leachman, M., Mitchell, M., Johnson, N., & Williams, E. (2019, October 2). Advancing Racial Equity with State Tax Policy. Retrieved from <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/advancing-racial-equity-with-state-tax-policy>
- ²⁵ Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data
- ²⁶ National Equity Atlas (2020). Data to Build an Equitable Economy: Washington. Retrieved from <https://nationalequityatlas.org/data-summaries/Washington>
- ²⁷ The Washington Round Table (2018) Washington Kids 4 Washington Jobs. Retrieved from <https://www.waroundtable.com/wa-kids-wa-jobs/>
- ²⁸ Migration Policy Institute analysis of 2013-2017 American Community Survey data available at <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/us-immigrant-population-state-and-county>
- ²⁹ DSHS analysis of 2018 American Community Survey data
- ³⁰ DSHS analysis of 2018 American Community Survey data
- ³¹ Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2018 School Report Card Discipline data
- ³² National Education Association. (2016). Discipline and the School-To-Prison Pipeline. Retrieved from <https://ra.nea.org/business-item/2016-pol-e01-2/>
- ³³ School's Out Washington. (2017). *The Facts About Expanded Learning* available at <https://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/pages/the-facts-about-expanded-learning>
- ³⁴ Washington State Department of Children, Youth, & Families. (2019). *Achieving Educational Success for Washington's Children, Youth and Young Adults in Foster Care and/or Experiencing Homelessness*. Retrieved from <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/reports/FosterHomelessEducation.pdf>
- ³⁵ <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/the-child-welfare-placement-continuum-what-s-best-for-children.aspx>
- ³⁶ Amhersth Wilder Foundation (April 2014) Return On Investment in the Jeremiah Program, Summary <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/return-investment-jeremiah-program-summary>
- ³⁷ WSAC staff analysis of 8-year Outcome Measure data as reported by Integrated Postsecondary Education and Data System for entering cohort of 2008.
- ³⁸ NCHEMS Information Center for Higher Education and Policymaking and Analysis (2014). College Participation Rates: College-Going Rates of High School Graduates Directly from High School. Retrieved from <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?measure=32>
- ³⁹ Anderson, J., & Clark, J. (2018, March 28). *The Economic Status of Women in the United States: IWPR*. Retrieved from <https://iwpr.org/publications/status-of-women-fact-sheet-2018/>
- ⁴⁰ Tax Policy Center available at <https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/briefing-book/how-does-earned-income-tax-credit-affect-poor-families>
- ⁴¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019). *A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.17226/25246>
- ⁴² Boushey, H. (2017, January 26). The challenging and continuing slide in U.S. unionization rates. Retrieved from <https://equitablegrowth.org/the-challenging-and-continuing-slide-in-u-s-unionization-rates/>
- ⁴³ Hertel-Fernandez, A. (2019, August 28). What kind of labor organizations do U.S. workers want? Retrieved from <https://equitablegrowth.org/what-kind-of-labor-organizations-do-u-s-workers-want/>
- ⁴⁴ Washington Child Care Collaborative Task Force. (2019, November). Retrieved from <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/child-care-collaborative-task-force/>
- ⁴⁵ <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/0zhchxkrczin71bs6uww8lh58j0rt6zk>
- ⁴⁶ <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/child-care-collaborative-task-force/>
- ⁴⁷ Low income is defined here as below 80% area median income.
- ⁴⁸ Washington State Department of Commerce (2019). *2018 Affordable Housing Update*. Retrieved from <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/COMMERCE-affordable-housing-update.pdf>
- ⁴⁹ For example, people of color were systematically excluded from the GI Bill, one of the most significant wealth-building policies of the post-World War II era, and through the practice of “red-lining”, which heavily restricted the neighborhoods in which people of color could live.

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- ⁵⁰ <https://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/files/currenthvspress.pdf>
- ⁵¹ <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/102320/how-economic-crises-and-sudden-disasters-increase-racial-disparities-in-homeownership.pdf>
- ⁵² In a community land trust you own your home, but the land is leased. You receive a standard mortgage, own the home, and can gift the home to your children. If you sell the home it must be under the conditions of the land trust, which is usually something like you are allowed to sell it for no more than the purchase price plus 1.5%-3% per year in appreciation, and the family you sell it to must be income qualified. This prevents neighborhoods such as the Central District or International District turning from a diverse low income communities, to one only accessible to high-income people. Land Trust properties can also aid in integration or prevention of segregation, but instead of apartments they are home ownership opportunities.
- ⁵³ Davis, A., & Hill, M. (2018, September 17). State Tax Codes as Poverty Fighting Tools: 2018 Update on Four Key Policies in All 50 States. Retrieved from <https://itep.org/state-tax-codes-as-poverty-fighting-tools-2018/>
- ⁵⁴ Layser, M. D. (2019). The Pro-Gentrification Origins of Place-Based Investment Tax Incentives and a Path Toward Community Oriented Reform. Retrieved from <https://lowellmilkeninstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Layser-The-Pro-Gentrification-Origins-WIP.pdf>
- ⁵⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/genomics/disease/epigenetics.htm>
- ⁵⁶ Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (n.d.). Toxic Stress. Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/toxic-stress/>
- ⁵⁷ Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2017-2018 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by Cooperative Agreement U59MC27866 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA MCHB). Retrieved [01/09/2020] from www.childhealthdata.org. CAHMI: www.cahmi.org.
- ⁵⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). *Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingACES-508.pdf>
- ⁵⁹ 2020 KIDS COUNT Data Book available at https://www.aecf.org/resources/2020-kids-count-data-book/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIhtmv8ryN7gIVKR6tBh0GjAdcEAAYASAAEgLXkFD_BwE#2020-State-Data-Profiles-on-Kids-Well-Being
- ⁶⁰ Washington State Department of Health. (2019). *Washington State Maternal Mortality Review Panel: Maternal Deaths 2014-2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/141-010-MMRPMaternalDeathReport2014-2016.pdf>
- ⁶¹ Dr. Robert Bree Collective. (2019). *Maternity Bundled Payment Model*. Retrieved from <http://www.breecollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/Maternity-Bundle-DRAFT-19-1101.pdf>
- ⁶² Washington State Department of Children, Youth, & Families . (2019). *Home Visiting in Washington State*. Retrieved from <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/HomeVisitinginWashingtonState.pdf>
- ⁶³ Washington State Department of Health (2019). *Washington State Maternal Mortality Review Panel: Maternal Deaths 2014-2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/141-010-MMRPMaternalDeathReport2014-2016.pdf>
- ⁶⁴ For example, *Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Urban Indian Health Institute, Office of Youth Homelessness, Building Changes, A Way Home Washington, Low Income Housing Alliance, Catholic Community Services, Community Action Partnership, and the Children's Mental Health Workgroup*.
- ⁶⁵ National Alliance to End Homelessness (2011). *Creating a Successful Diversion Program for Homeless Families*. Retrieved from <http://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/creating-a-successful-diversion-program.pdf>
- ⁶⁶ Taylor Danielson, PhD ☒ David Mancuso, PhD ☒ Barbara E.M. Felver, MES, MPA (*forthcoming*) The Foundational Community Supports Program: Preliminary Evaluation Findings
- ⁶⁷ Bell, O. N., Hole, M. K., Johnson, K., Marcil, L. E., Solomon, B. S., & Schickedanz, A. (2019). *Medical-Financial Partnerships: Cross-Sector Collaborations Between Medical and Financial Services to Improve Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1876285919304279>
- ⁶⁸ National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (2018, August). *Integrating Medical and Financial Health*. Retrieved from <https://nurseledcare.phmc.org/images/pdf/technical-assistance/MFP-Webinar-Resource.pdf>

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- ⁶⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2018, September). *Strategy to Combat Opioid Abuse, Misuse, and Overdose*. Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/sites/default/files/2018-09/opioid-fivepoint-strategy-20180917-508compliant.pdf>
- ⁷⁰ DSHS, SPAN, NW Harvest Listening Sessions
- ⁷¹ Ideas 42 (2015, May). *Poverty Interrupted: Applying Behavioral Science to the Context of Chronic Scarcity*. Retrieved from http://www.ideas42.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/142_PovertyWhitePaper_Digital_FINAL-1.pdf; Crittenton Women's Union (2014). *Using Brain Science to Design New Pathways Out of Poverty*. Retrieved from <http://s3.amazonaws.com/empath-website/pdf/Research-UsingBrainScienceDesignPathwaysPoverty-0114.pdf>
- ⁷² Ibid.
- ⁷³ Sendhil Mullainathan & Eldar Shafir (2015) *Scarcity: Why Having Too Little Means So Much*. Time Books: New York, NY
- ⁷⁴ Ascend at the Aspen Institute (2017, June). *Colorado Guide to 2Gen*. Retrieved from <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/colorado-guide-to-2gen/>
- ⁷⁵ Ascend at the Aspen Institute (2018, June). *Building a Thriving Tennessee: A 2Gen Approach*. Retrieved from <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/building-a-thriving-tennessee-a-2gen-approach/>
- ⁷⁶ From Babcock, Elisabeth (March 2018) *Using Brain Science to Transform Human Services and Increase Mobility from Poverty*. "Trauma-informed care can be defined as "a strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment." The following six core principles are the basis of TIC: (1) safety; (2) trustworthiness and transparency; (3) peer support; (4) collaboration and mutuality; (5) empowerment, voice, and choice; and (6) cultural, historical, and gender issues.
- ⁷⁷ Ellwood, D. T., & Patel, N. G. (2018, June 1). *Restoring the American Dream*. Retrieved from <https://www.mobilitypartnership.org/restoring-american-dream>
- ⁷⁸ Specifically the need standard for cash assistance as outlined by RCW 74.04.770 should be updated (from the original 1990 market basket study) and should be reconfigured to reflect regional variations in cost. Actual assistance levels should be linked to a percentage of this standard.
- ⁷⁹ University of Washington (n.d.). *Self Sufficiency Standard: Washington*. Retrieved from <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/node/86>
- ⁸⁰ United Ways of the Pacific Northwest (n.d.) *ALICE in the PNW*. Retrieved from https://www.uwpnw.org/alice_in_pnw
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- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ Ideas42 (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.ideas42.org/>
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- ⁸⁵ Partners for Our Children (2016, January) *Research Brief: Poverty & Involvement in the Child Welfare System*. Retrieved from <https://partnersforourchildren.org/sites/default/files/Poverty%20and%20Child%20Welfare%20Involvement%205-3-16.pdf>
- ⁸⁶ In some rural communities, people depend on the jobs created by the prison system. Support economic investments in rural communities while increasing thriving wage job opportunities outside the prison system in rural communities to mitigate the shift away from funding incarceration. Consider applying the "Just Transition" framework from [Front and Centered](#) to the disinvestment of over-incarceration.
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- ⁹⁰ Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (2019, December). *Future of Work Task Force 2019 Policy Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.wtb.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Future-of-Work-2019-Final-Report.pdf>