**Child Welfare Advocacy Coalition**

**2020 Policy Priorities**

*The Child Welfare Advocacy Coalition (CWAC) brings together over 50 organizations from across Washington state in an effort to present a unified voice for child welfare policy and practices. CWAC works to ensure that policy and practice reforms are shaped by the voice of the children, youth and families they impact, and views every decision through the lens of addressing racial disproportionality, gender equality and the best interests of children and families.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PREVENTION**  Expand Community Based Family Reconciliation Services that focus on youth and families who are experiencing family conflict and hoping to avoid court involvement  [This is a component of phase 1 implementation of SB5290]  *Budget ask: TBD*  Ensure the availability of in- home family preservation and reunification services by increasing the hourly rate for time spent travelling to families  *Budget Ask: $2,000,000* | **SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS**  Change the culture of foster care through the establishment of the Family Connections Program  *Budget ask: $654,000 Total*  Preserve Child Placing Agencies by increasing the rate paid by the state for their services  *Budget ask: $7.75m Total* | **PERMANENCY**  Promote kinship placements by providing training regarding the guardianship law, addressing issues with the licensing and home study processes, and providing resources for respite  *Budget ask: $75,000 [Training and respite like supports] + $500,000 [Home study and licensing process]*  Expand the Parents for Parents Program statewide  *Budget Ask: $200,000* | **TRANSITION**  Build capacity with research-based services for transition-age youth by maintaining the YVLifeSet program in King County and expanding to Spokane  *Budget ask: $636,000 [to be matched with philanthropic funds]*  Increase the capacity within DCYF to address services for adolescents  *Budget Ask: $246,000 [Funds for two FTEs]* |

**LEGACY ITEMS**

* Ensure full implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act
* Address background check issues so that they do not preclude qualified individuals from becoming licensed or working in certain jobs
* Establish the Certificate of Parental Improvement

**SUPPORT ITEMS**

**Child Welfare:**

Increase the rate for parent/child visitation and direct the DCYF to begin forecasting in a way that ensures supported visitation approaches

Increase funding for effective early parent support services (i.e. intensive home visiting services, such as Parents as Teachers, NFP)

Include foster youth with developmental disabilities in the caseload forecast

Reduce child welfare caseloads by increasing the number of caseworkers

Expand the Mockingbird Family Model

Support capital funding for a community-focused master planning process for Amara's 29-acre property to create a hub for kids and families that will offer services and support in an effort to prevent children from entering the child welfare system

**Behavioral Health**:

Increase the availability of behavioral health services for youth, young adults and parents

Provision of funding for Rising Strong

**Diversion:**

Fund the Central Diversion Fund prioritizing the Anchor Community Initiative to provide flexible funding and immediate support to youth and young adults facing homelessness

**Education:** Support passage of the Achieving Educational Success for Foster and Homeless Students Act

**Commercial Sexual Exploitation:** Establish effective ways to address the needs of victims of commercial sexual exploitation

**Identification Cards:** Establish ID cards for homeless students

**SB 5290 Implementation:** Establish services to address implementation of SB5290, phase 1

**GLOSSARY**

**Child Placing Agencies** (CPA) are private agencies that contract with the state to license, train, and support foster parents as well as to provide case management services to the children in their care. The ask is to conduct a CPA rate study and contract review, fund an incremental rate increase and fully fund CPA service by 2020 consistent with results of rate study.

**Parents for Parents Program** provides peer mentoring which enhances parent engagement in court-ordered plans and the safe and

timely reunification of children with their parents. The Program is currently active in 14 counties in Washington state.

**YVLifeset** is a proven, comprehensive, model designed to serve transition-age youth. Intensive community-based support and guidance is provided to help them make a successful transition to adulthood.