



Impact Report 2023

Supporting Families to Access
What They Need, When They Need it

Message From the Help Me Grow Washington Network

To Our Friends & Supporters,

We are thrilled to share with you the meaningful impact the Help Me Grow Washington Network has made over the past year. Through our collective efforts, we have breathed life into our 2023-28 strategic plan and made significant advancements in meeting our vision that families have access to what they need, when they need it.

Throughout the year, Help Me Grow Washington has remained deeply committed to providing essential support and resources to families across the state. Innovative initiatives and expanding system partnerships have directly impacted the lives of Washington's children and caregivers, empowering them to navigate the complexities of early childhood development with confidence and resilience.

One of our key achievements this year has been the growth of our specialized referral pathways. We believe everyone should have access to resources, and we also understand that to ensure all have this access, we need to implement targeted strategies for those currently and historically affected by disparities. Through strategic partnerships and community outreach efforts, we are building tailored on-ramps to Help Me Grow Washington to underserved populations, bridging gaps in access to vital resources and support systems. This approach has enabled us to partner with more families, fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment for all.

Help Me Grow Washington Network's commitment to continuous improvement and learning has driven the deepening of local-to-state collaborations and the development of new partnerships with communities. Together with local Help Me Grow systems in King, Skagit, and Central Washington (Kittitas and Yakima Counties) and collaboration in Island, Grays Harbor, San Juan, and Whatcom Counties, we are building a system that is stronger and more impactful than the sum of its individual parts.

Looking ahead, Help Me Grow Washington remains steadfast in our dedication to creating a brighter future for every child in our state. Together, we will continue to build upon our successes, strengthen our partnerships, and champion policies that prioritize the well-being and development of our youngest children.

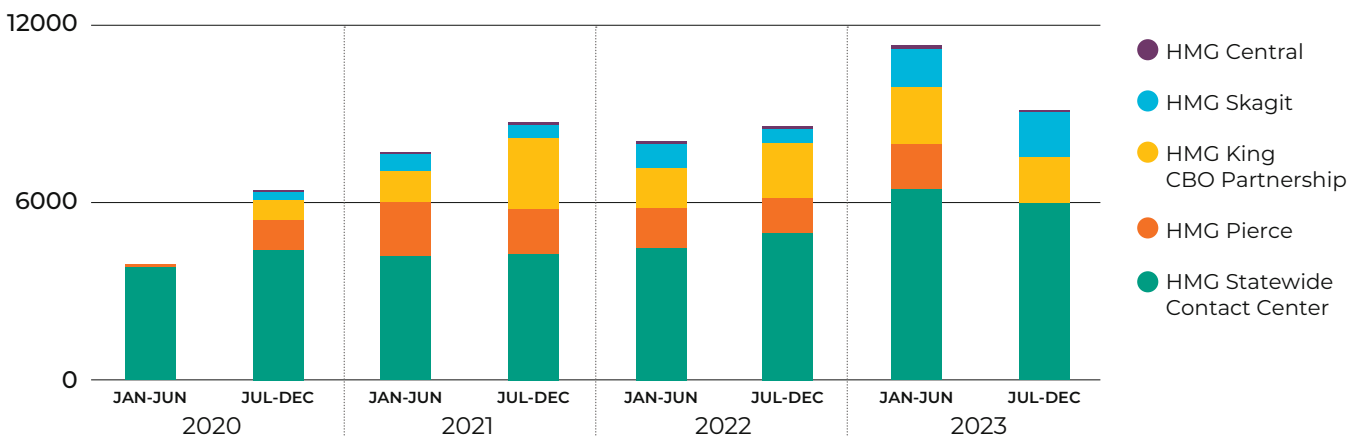




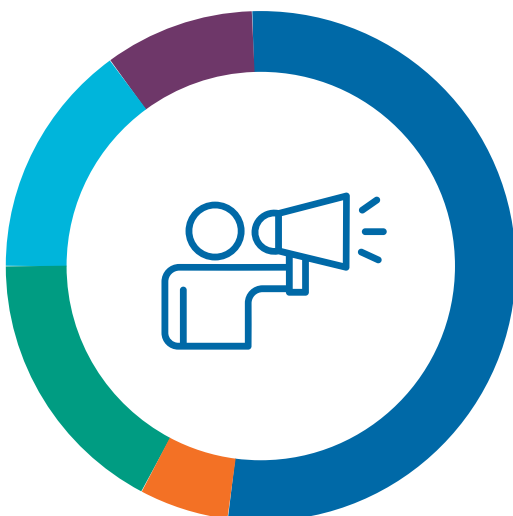
By the Numbers

Help Me Grow Washington weaves together state and community systems, providers, and resources to offer a full spectrum of supports to all families with young children in Washington state. In 2023, HMG WA responded to 20,375 requests for support across the state. Here is a breakdown of where and how we have supported families, and how our support has grown from 2020 to 2023.

Requests for Support



* The five-year HMG pilot in Pierce County ended in June 2023



Referrals Provided by HMG WA

Help Me Grow Washington provided 59,776 referrals

Basic needs support was the most common type of referral

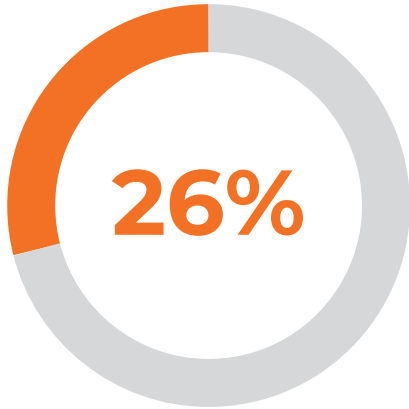
- Basic needs support (51%)*
- Developmental supports (7%)
- Other (17%)**
- Family and community support (14%)
- Health (10%)

(n=59,776) *Basic needs support includes food; special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC); financial, housing, or utility assistance; clothing; diapers; and transportation

**Other includes a wide variety of resources such as childcare, emergency assistance, legal services, and financial

Learn More About the Families We Serve

Help Me Grow Washington contact centers fulfilled 20,375 requests for support, serving 14,909 children and 1,113 pregnant people.



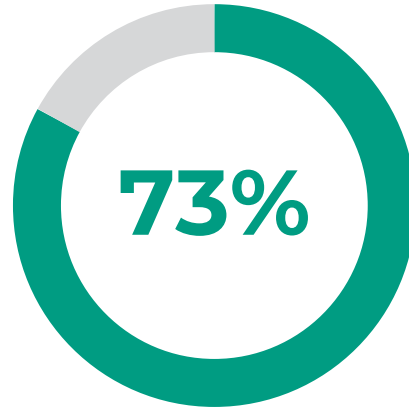
1 in 4 people preferred a language other than English

Language

- English (74%)
- Non-English (26%)

(n = 17,183)

Families that accessed Help Me Grow WA represented 44 different languages

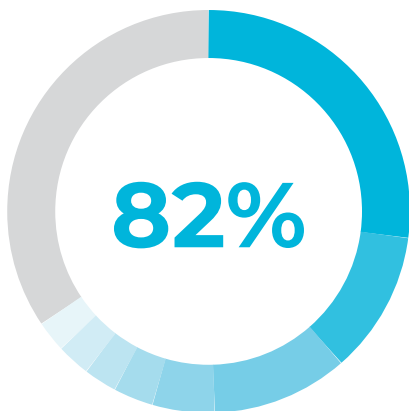


Most children **were under age 3**

Number of children served

- Ages 0-2 years (73%)
- Ages 3-5 years (27%)

n = 8,786

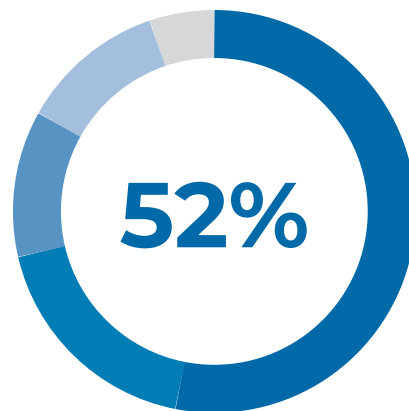


The majority of Help Me Grow clients identified their race or ethnicity as BIPOC

Race or ethnicity

- Black/African American (24%)
- Latinx (19%)
- Asian (10%)
- Multiple races/ethnicities (4%)
- Middle Eastern or North African (3%)
- American Indian/Alaska Native (2%)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (2%)
- Other (2%)
- White (34%)

*BIPOC = Black, Indigenous or Person of Color



More than half of people requesting support **were on Medicaid insurance**

Insurance

- Medicaid (52%)
- Uninsured (18%)
- Medicare (11%)
- Private (13%)
- Other (6%)

n = 3,602

Moving the Needle on Our Strategic Plan

What a year! We saw the launch of Help Me Grow Washington's 2023-28 Strategic Plan, designed to weave together state and community systems, providers, and resources to offer a full spectrum of supports to all families with young children in Washington state.

In 2023, we focused on developing new partnerships, deepening existing relationships, as well as creating specialized referral pathways for accessing Help Me Grow Washington. We are excited to share highlights from this past year with you!

The Key Components of Our Strategic Plan

EQUITY-BASED TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

- Based on universal goal that all families in Washington have access to what they need when they need it
- Identify targeted populations that experience barriers to accessing these services

SPECIALIZED REFERRAL PATHWAYS

- Design outreach, navigation, and support services to meet the unique needs of targeted populations
- Develop statewide partnerships to support pathways

COMMUNITY-LED & TRIBAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Build community-level and Tribal community systems to help families access localized essentials
- Coordinate access with connection points to regional and statewide resources

GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATIONS

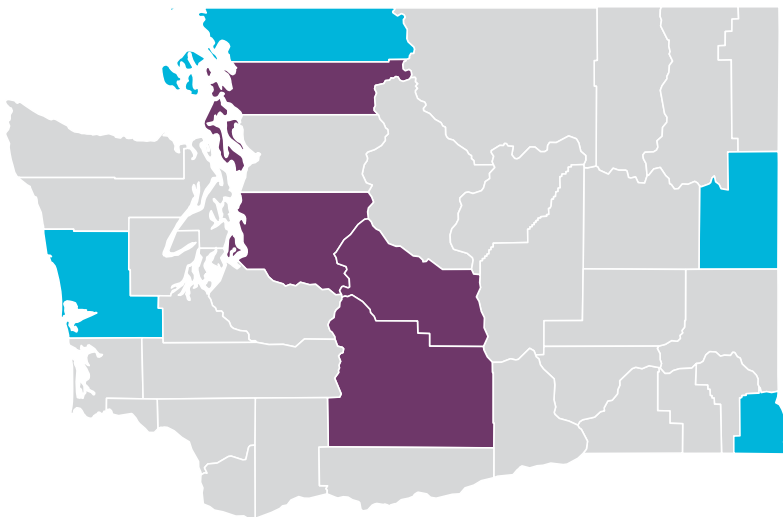
- Build a governance model with community partners, parent and caregiver voices, and state/regional leaders
- Establish two-communication channels, peer learning networks, and deep listening

SPECIAL PROJECTS FUNDING

- Build a process for communities to access catalytic funding, resources, and support to develop local systems

COORDINATE REQUESTS

- Work with communities to highlight local gaps and needs
- Coordinate a systems-wide request for funding based on local, regional, and statewide plans



HMG WA Local Systems

- Skagit
- Central WA (Yakima and Kittitas)
- King County
- Island County

HMG WA Engaged Communities

- Asotin
- Grays Harbor
- Whatcom
- Spokane
- San Juan



Establishing New Partnerships

Help Me Grow Washington is continuously working on better ways for providers, community-based organizations and families to reach our services. Some important partnership-building was done in this area in 2023. Read on to learn more.

Systems Connection with Child Care Aware

Help Me Grow Washington forged a partnership with **Child Care Aware of Washington** to explore increased collaboration and connection points between the two systems with the goal of streamlining access to essential early childhood supports for parents, caregivers, providers and community members.

Throughout fall and winter of 2023, the teams regularly met to conduct internal assessments of Help Me Grow Washington's statewide call center and Child Care Aware's current capabilities, core services, and technologies to identify areas of alignment or compatibility, duplication, gaps, and potential challenges and barriers as they relate to process and technology integration. The goal was to develop an implementation roadmap that details high-level strategic options for investment and partnership of these two systems.

Paid Family & Medical Leave

In partnership with **Washington State Employment Security Department**, we co-created and tested approaches to raise awareness of the **Paid Family and Medical Leave** benefit among workers of low-income and workers of color who have lower than expected utilization of Paid Leave. This work helped to identify additional opportunities to reduce disparities and eliminate barriers to the benefit.

We held several listening sessions to learn more about barriers to access Paid Leave with health care coordinators and families in the populations we seek to serve. By incorporating community voice into understanding systemic barriers and facilitators, we have been able to identify targeted solutions to increase access to the benefit.

In addition, we piloted the integration of a Paid Leave screener question into the comprehensive screening offered to families who call the Help Me Grow Washington hotline. Initial learnings from this pilot showed the importance of key early childhood systems, such as Help Me Grow, in raising awareness of and navigating families to state benefit programs.

Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

We convened with **Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics** (WCAAP) to explore partnership and increase the understanding and utilization of the Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA) system by child health providers. WCAAP and HMG WA provided an overview of each organization's current state, including core services, current priorities, key relationships, outreach and communications efforts, and professional development opportunities. These conversations led to a partnership plan for 2024 and made way for longer term relationships that support local Help Me Grow implementation or systems connection/partnership.

Help Me Grow Washington Tribal Adaptations

In the summer of 2023, HMG WA continued its partnership with **Kauffman and Associates**, (KAI). From the early learnings and lessons from 2022, one that rose to the top was the need expressed by tribes and Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) to have a better understanding of the Help Me Grow system model and the emerging, interconnected network here in Washington. HMG WA contracted with KAI to lead a planning and engagement process with tribes and Urban Indian Organizations exploring the relevance and potential adaptation of the Help Me Grow model for their communities.

Over the past year, we continued our engagement with Tribal nations and communities, and are grateful for the opportunities to listen and learn as we adapt our messaging and tools to be more welcoming and inclusive for tribal communities and families. These interactions resulted in new and revised HMG WA messaging tailored to reflect learnings and opportunities to foster dialogue for future partnerships and linkages. As we build on these relationships, we plan to utilize the customized Help Me Grow communication toolkit created over this past year, which includes a presentation slide deck and outreach and messaging materials that reflect and honor traditional practices and extended family relationships in tribal communities. The adaptation project confirmed that tribes see value in the Help Me Grow model and system approach.

Additionally, KAI provided recommendations for the inclusion of tribal resources in the HMG WA ParentHelp123 Resource Finder and the HMG WA website.

Developing Specialized Referral Pathways

In 2023 Help Me Grow Washington adopted the equity framework of Targeted Universalism (TU). Targeted Universalism suggests that everyone deserves a given aspiration yet recognizes that families are positioned differently in relationship to that aspiration and, therefore, tailored approaches must be implemented to ensure all are able to reach it.

HMG WA's goal that “families with young children have the resources they need, when they need them” embraces the TU framework through the implementation of various strategies to reach the intended outcome in different populations. HMG WA has applied targeted strategies with new partners this year to ensure families have access to important benefits.



Perinatal Substance Use Disorder Supports

Help Me Grow Washington is providing supports to families experiencing substance use both at birth and during pregnancy in an emerging body of work.

Plan of Safe Care is cutting-edge work that showcases our Targeted Universalism approach. Plan of Safe Care (POSC) promotes the safety and well-being of birthing parents and their infants with prenatal substance exposure. Although Help Me Grow Washington is universally offered to all families, HMG WA is providing a specialized pathway — in collaboration with the **Department of Children, Youth and Families** — to support families experiencing substance use disorder who do not present safety concerns that require Child Welfare intervention. Through adapting hospital policies and redesigning the safety and risk assessment, the POSC initiative also removes structural barriers that have historically inhibited families from receiving services and supports outside of the Child Welfare system. Washington is one of the first in the nation to leverage the Help Me Grow system to hold this innovative work.

Parental substance use is a major contributing factor of child placements. As pregnancy is a crucial time to offer voluntary prevention services to individuals using substances, DCYF piloted an upstream referral pathway that connects substance-using pregnant people in screened-out referrals to community care coordinators, who then followed up to offer voluntary prevention services. The pilot launched in three counties and has since expanded to nine counties in partnership with six providers, including HMG WA for King County.

Statewide expansion of this pilot is underway. HMG WA will serve as the statewide hub to connect pregnant people to voluntary prevention services.

Home Visiting Programs Statewide Expansion

In 2023, our work connecting families with low income to home visiting services expanded from King and Snohomish to serving families statewide. The integration of these services for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with Help Me Grow Washington statewide infrastructure offered an opportunity for wraparound support to meet the family's holistic needs.

One highlight of this work was the data system integration approach. The utilization of a shared data system across organizations and referrals to other organizations created a family-centered experience which reduces the need for multiple intakes and screenings. This also facilitated system-level data accuracy and improvements.



Additional Accomplishments & Highlights



In the 2023 Washington state legislative session, we were especially excited to see increased funding provided in the final budget for Help Me Grow Washington, as well as for efforts to prevent placements in the child welfare system. We received \$1M for the biennium, which includes funding for HMG WA statewide capacity and local HMG system expansion.



The Community Partner Board — comprised of local Help Me Grow systems and communities — was formed in July 2023 as the body intentionally focused on elevating community voice within the HMG WA governance structure. This group guides and informs statewide network decisions.



In May 2023, we launched a new, online HMG WA ParentHelp123 Resource Finder with a better user interface and improved search functionality. In addition, the resource provides more up-to-date and inclusive data to better serve families and providers, including more than 5,300 resources in the service directory.



Through an intensive two-month data collection effort supported in late 2023, we compiled and curated public and Help Me Grow Washington specific data, which helps us understand unmet need for Help Me Grow services across population subgroups, identify gaps in service utilization, and identify potential performance metrics for goal setting.



In Fall 2023, the Community Partner Board created a collaborative process for requesting and investing special project funding, provided by the Department of Children, Youth and Families' Preschool Development Grant, to sustain and expand the HMG WA network. Local Help Me Grow systems and community partners worked together to secure more than \$126,000 for five local communities: Island County, Skagit County, Grays Harbor County, Central Washington, and Whatcom County.



WithinReach (the HMG WA state affiliate) and the Department of Children, Youth and Families engaged Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies to develop a comprehensive Help Me Grow WA cost model, which is set to be completed in 2024. This cost model allows communities to select local and state system features to help determine the cost of a local Help Me Grow system unique to their contexts.



Our Collective Vision

Our vision is that all Washington families have access to what they need, when they need it, specifically access to essential services (food and nutrition, adult and pediatric medical care, family stability, and child development) so that their families can be healthy and thrive.

Thank you to the Help Me Grow Washington Network!

Local Help Me Grow Systems

Help Me Grow Central WA/

Ayúdame a Crecer
Yakima Valley Community Foundation

Help Me Grow King County

Public Health — Seattle & King County

Help Me Grow Skagit

Children's Council of Skagit County
(United General District 304)

Communities Working in Partnership with Help Me Grow

Asotin County

Grays Harbor County

- Grays Harbor County Public Health
- Grays Harbor Early Learning Coalition

Island County

- Partners for Young Children
(Whidbey Community Foundation)

San Juan County

- San Juan County Early Learning Coalition

Spokane County

- LaunchNW

Whatcom County

- Whatcom County Health & Community Services
- Opportunity Council

Help Me Grow Washington is a growing system of nonprofit organizations, Tribal nations, regional and county health and social service organizations, providers and provider organizations, and state agencies working together to serve families in Washington. We weave together state and community systems, providers, and resources to offer a full spectrum of supports to all families in Washington state with young children.

Our Approach

We believe in using a whole family approach where we serve the needs of individuals (parents, caregivers, and children) across generations within a family context. Utilizing equity-based strategies, we aim to create and sustain unique pathways for under-invested and therefore marginalized populations to access public health, health care, early learning, education, and social services, while pursuing the universal goal of promoting family resiliency and well-being.

To learn more, please visit helpmegrowwa.org

