



To learn more about Help Me Grow Washington,
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2025 
Impact Report
Grounded in **Growth**



OUR VISION
is that all families
have access to
what they need
when they need it,
so that they can be
healthy and thrive.

Message from the **Help Me Grow Washington Network**

The Help Me Grow Washington Network believes that every family deserves to feel supported, connected, and seen—and that systems work best when they are built around real people, communities, and relationships. This year's Impact Report reflects that belief in action.

Across Washington, families continued to face uncertainty and strain in 2025—from rising costs and housing instability to funding cuts across health and human services. And yet, alongside those challenges, we witnessed something just as powerful: resilience. This report is a snapshot of how families, communities, and partners came together to ensure families could access what they need, when they need it.

The impact captured in these pages is not the work of one organization alone. It is the result of deep partnership rooted in trust, collaboration, and shared purpose. Local communities, Tribal nations, nonprofit organizations, providers, and state agencies worked together toward a shared vision of family well-being.

As you read, you'll see evidence of growth, including expanded pathways, stronger coordination across systems, new tools that make access easier, and data that helps us better understand and respond to family needs. You'll also find stories that remind us why this work matters.

We remain grounded in our commitment to Help Me Grow Washington centering its design in service of **all families** and the belief that families are the experts in their own lives. Our progress is guided by listening, learning, and continuously improving how systems show up for those they serve.

Thank you to the families who trusted us, the partners who walked alongside us, and the communities who continue to shape this work. We are honored to be part of a statewide network that is growing stronger together, and we look forward to what lies ahead.

With gratitude,

The Help Me Grow Washington Network



2025 Milestones that Mattered

2025 showcased our collective resilience, creativity, and momentum. Together, we expanded partnerships, strengthened processes, and launched impactful new tools. Here are a few key milestones:

Help Me Grow and Child Care Aware Team Up for WA Families

For countless families, **finding high-quality and affordable childcare is the first step** in accessing broader family support. That is why the partnership between Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA) and Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA-WA) is so meaningful. By linking HMG WA's hotline with CCA-WA's Family Center line, families can now **move more seamlessly between support systems**, increasing access to food, healthcare, child development, and family stability supports. Building on lessons from a 2024 pilot, we advanced our partnership this year by building a permanent pathway with automated technology and streamlined processes to reduce duplication, increase navigator capacity, and provide families with more **timely, comprehensive support**. A new evaluation shows this coordinated pathway is already strengthening connections between systems and enhancing the quality of wraparound assistance families receive statewide.



Free Screening Access for Early Care and Education Providers

In 2025, HMG WA and the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) partnered to **expand access to developmental screenings in Early Care and Education (ECE) programs statewide**. The project gives ECE providers **free access to the Ages and Stages Questionnaire online platform**, along with training and technical assistance to support meaningful, consistent use. Funded through the Child Care Development Fund, **19** ECE providers participated in two pilot phases, completing **621** developmental screenings for children in their care. Providers shared strong support for the tool—highlighting its value in identifying children's needs early, strengthening communication with families, and increasing access to early intervention supports. With momentum from the pilot's success, HMG WA and DCYF are now expanding recruitment, with a focus on **reaching ECE providers in rural communities** to ensure more children across Washington receive timely, developmentally supportive care.



Closing the Feedback Loop: Better Communication, Better Care for Families

Through routine well-child visits, healthcare providers work closely with families to **identify needs and connect them with local resources and support**. Traditionally, providers have been able to refer a family to Help Me Grow using our online referral form, but there was **no consistent way for providers to hear back about the outcome of their referral**. In March 2025, we launched a **new closed loop referral process** in response to requests from providers for feedback on what happens after a referral is made. Leveraging technology to share referral outcomes back to providers automatically, we are now able to **enhance coordination, improve follow up, and support stronger continuity of care for families**. Providers who participated in early evaluation shared that they appreciated knowing whether their clients were connected to services for both peace of mind and for future follow up when they meet again with that client.



New Search Features Make Resource Finder Easier to Use

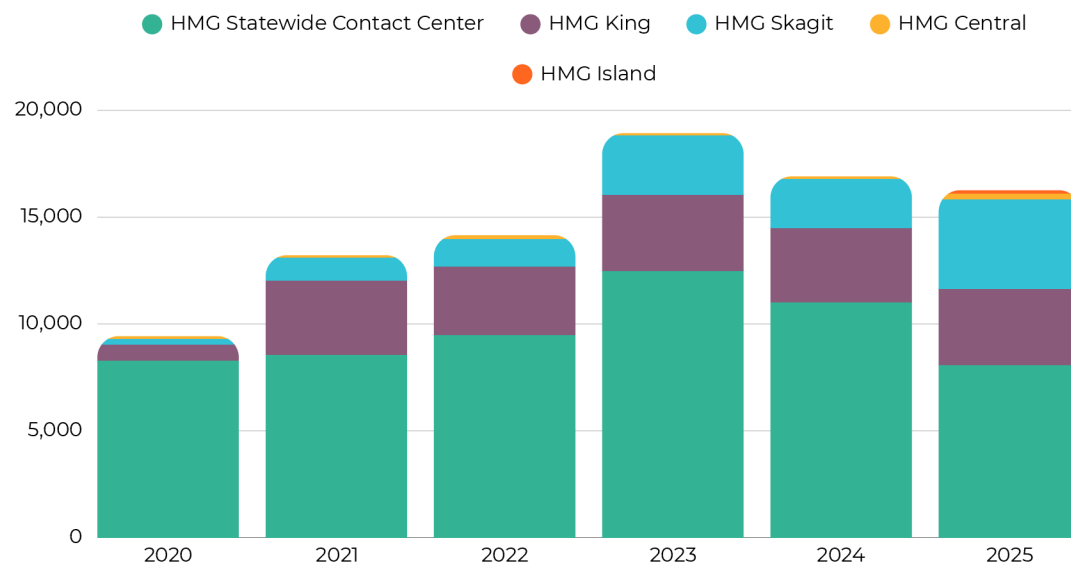
This year, HMG WA launched **new filter fields** on our online Resource Finder, making it easier for families and providers to quickly locate the most relevant support. Users can now filter search results by target population, languages served, age-range of child, and by virtual resources which include online and app-based services. These improvements strengthen the usability of the Resource Finder and helps families **more efficiently connect with the services that best match their needs**.



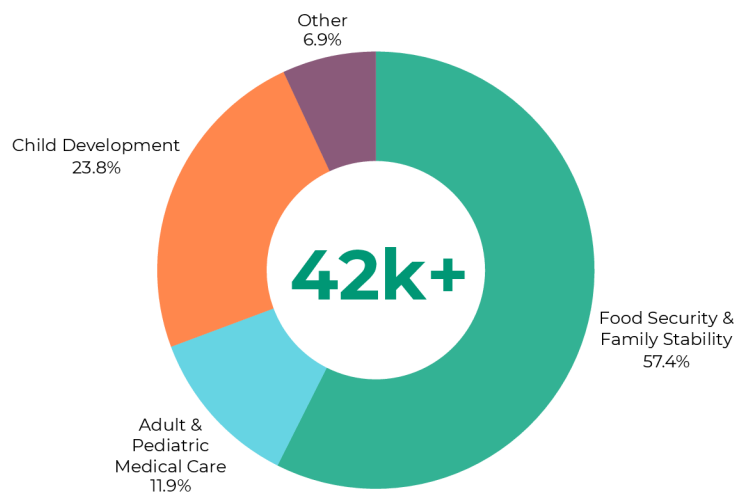
By the Numbers

Help Me Grow Washington weaves together state and community systems, providers, and resources to offer a full spectrum of support services to all families with young children in Washington state. In 2025, Help Me Grow WA responded to 16,082 requests for support. Here is a breakdown of where and how we have supported families from 2020 to 2025.

Requests for Support



Referrals Provided by HMG WA



Help Me Grow Washington provided **42,292 resources and referrals**.

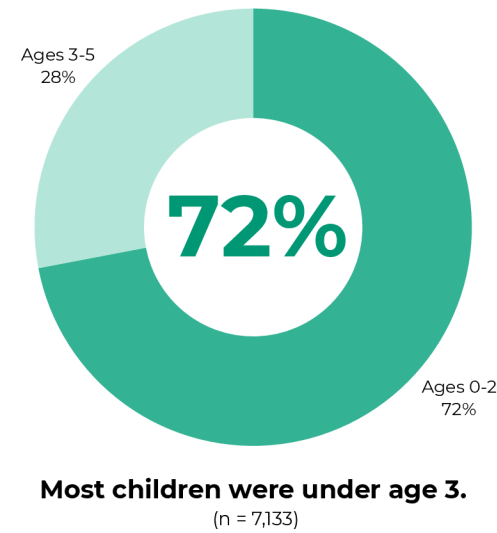
Food security and family stability resources were the most common referrals.

(n=42,292) Food Security & Family Stability resources includes food; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); financial, housing, or utility assistance; clothing; diapers; and transportation. Child Development includes developmental evaluation, services and support as well as childcare, play and learn groups, parenting programs, etc.

The Families We Serve

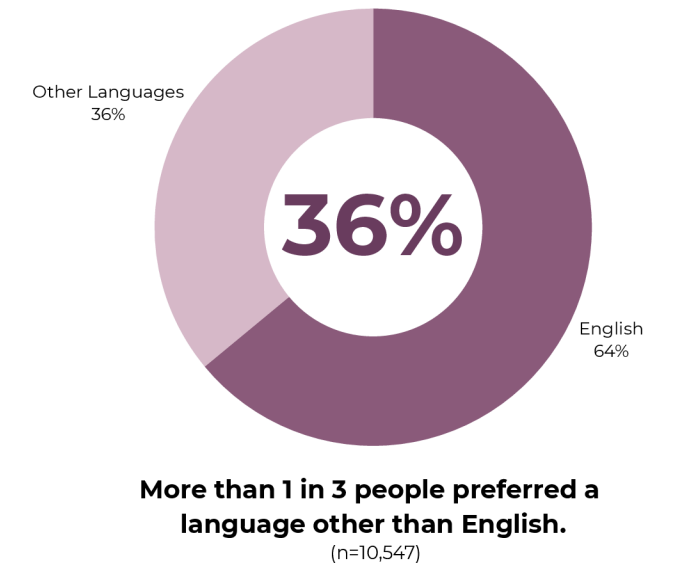
Help Me Grow Washington contact centers fulfilled 16,082 requests for support, serving 11,726 children and 877 expectant families.

Ages of Children Served



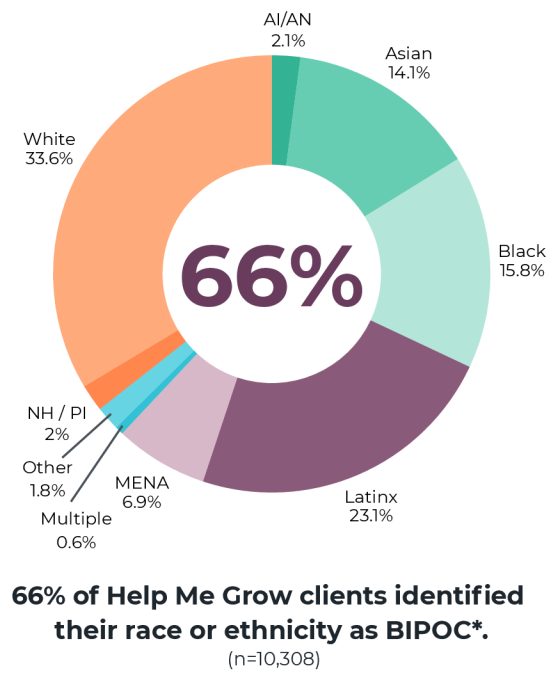
Most children were under age 3.
(n = 7,133)

Preferred Language



More than 1 in 3 people preferred a language other than English.
(n=10,547)
Families who accessed Help Me Grow represented **53 different languages**.

Race or Ethnicity

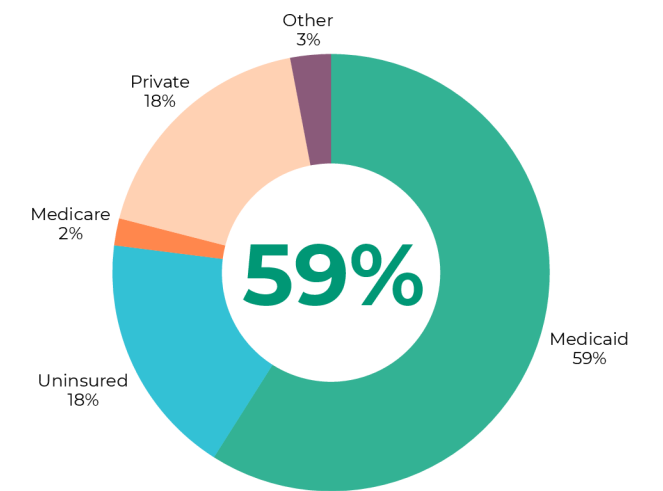


66% of Help Me Grow clients identified their race or ethnicity as BIPOC*.
(n=10,308)

*BIPOC = Black, Indigenous or Person of Color

- American Indian / Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black / African American
- Latinx
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Multiple Races
- Other Race
- Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- White

Insurance



Over half of the people requesting support receive Medicaid / Apple Health benefits.

One in five were uninsured.
(n=2,825)



Portraits of Progress

Help Me Grow Washington Network's commitment to improvement and learning continues to strengthen local-to-state partnerships. Together with Help Me Grow systems in Island, King, Skagit, Central Washington (Kittitas and Yakima counties), and partners in Grays Harbor, Grant, San Juan, and Whatcom counties, we are co-creating a statewide network that is stronger, more connected and more impactful than any one community could achieve alone.

Help Me Grow Island County

In 2025, Help Me Grow Island County strengthened connections for families across our community through care and partnership. The launch of HMG Island County's **online resource directory** created a shared, evolving hub of support shaped by local providers and families. At the same time, the newborn outreach program emerged as a powerful bridge to care. What began as **49 simple resource bags grew into 258 thoughtfully designed welcome kits** filled with essential items and easy access to services.

More than supplies, these bags opened doors. Our dedicated outreach nurses used them to build trust with new parents—often in vulnerable moments—connecting families to critical support like parenting programs and health services. Regional collaboration strengthened the program, while frontline staff ensured its personal impact.

By year's end, expansion to WhidbeyHealth's Birth Center and the addition of HALO Sleep Sacks—thanks to the generous funding from the WhidbeyHealth Foundation—signaled continued growth, demonstrating how **small, compassionate touchpoints can transform access, trust, and early support for families.**

Help Me Grow King County

In 2025, Help Me Grow King County continued strengthening its **Coordinated Access Network of community-rooted partners** through a new **request for proposals**, funding eight organizations: Afghan Health Initiative, Chinese Information and Service Center, FamilyWorks, InterCultural Children & Family Services, Open Arms Perinatal Services, Open Doors for Multicultural Families, Vashon Youth & Family Services, and Voices of Tomorrow.

This year, amid rising housing challenges, one HMG Family Connector at Open Arms helped seven families avoid becoming unhoused. Support included:

- **Securing \$13,000 in past-due rent assistance** so a family could remain housed ahead of a new baby.
- **Connecting a family** to the King County Regional Homelessness Authority's Rapid Rehousing program.
- **Helping a survivor access move-in assistance** after leaving an unsafe situation.
- **Supporting a young person with car repair funds** to maintain employment and housing stability.

Help Me Grow Skagit

The Help Me Grow Skagit Family Resource Center (HMGS FRC) serves many families, one in particular **with three young children**, all in diapers, since November 2023. They have come in every month and have been so grateful for the support of basic need items, including diapers, wipes, formula, and cleaning supplies.

In December 2025, this family's **home was flooded**. They were devastated by the destruction of their home and property. Having an established, trusted relationship with the HMGS FRC, the family reached out for additional assistance. We received special funding through the Skagit Community Foundation, so the HMGS FRC was able to **provide and install two car seats** by two of our team members who are car seat safety technicians. We also provided the family with a **pack & play for safe sleep, blankets, and many extra items**, including for the parents. The HMGS FRC team was also able to connect them with many other resources in the community. They have been incredibly grateful for the ongoing support, especially during a natural disaster.

Help Me Grow Central Washington

In 2025, the Kittitas County Early Learning Coalition (KCELC) brought the **Help Me Grow Central WA mission to life through monthly resource-sharing celebrations in Ellensburg**. These themed events served as a vital bridge, meeting families exactly where they are.

The heart of these gatherings was **play-based learning**. Guided by volunteer facilitators, parents and grandparents played alongside their children to identify unique strengths and developmental areas to work on. Through this side-by-side interaction, families received more than just brochures; they gained tangible tools and direct connections to essential services in a natural, supportive setting.

Watching a family leave with a new book, a milestone tracker, and a sense of confidence reminds us that growth happens best in community. By hosting these monthly touchpoints, KCELC isn't just providing resources—they are **nurturing the village every child deserves to thrive.**





Strides in Strategic Plan

Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA) remains steadfast in our strategic efforts, completing year two of our five-year strategic plan. In 2025, we made strides in many components of our plan.



Advancing Targeted Universalism in Washington's Early Childhood System

In 2025, HMG WA advanced its multi-year Targeted Universalism (TU) effort, building on groundwork started in 2023. Our universal goal: all families with young children (prenatal to age 5) have access to what they need, when they need it. A statewide TU data workgroup **identified subgoals and measures aligned with HMG's four essential services—food security, adult & pediatric medical care, child development, and family stability.** Throughout the year, partners developed a shared theory of change and created HMG WA's first TU aligned evaluation plan, establishing measurable indicators that indicate those families farthest from the HMG universal goal. This framework strengthens the system's ability to **track progress, understand root causes, and design strategies to make targeted investments.**



Strengthening Community-Based Care for Families Impacted by Substance Use

In 2025, HMG WA strengthened our support for pregnant and parenting families affected by substance use. HMG WA serves as the statewide **Plan of Safe Care community pathway entry point for families whose perinatal substance use does not require child welfare involvement.** This year, we've seen **increasing numbers of families referred** to the program. We also distributed welcome bags with essential baby items to perinatal families, which helped boost engagement with families. Listening sessions were also key this year, helping to **identify remaining bottlenecks** and leading to a new set of recommendations to further improve support for these families.



Reducing Housing Instability with Flexible Funding

Beginning in July 2025, HMG WA partnered with Homeward House to pilot a **flexible funding program designed to reduce housing instability among new parents experiencing perinatal substance use disorder.** The pilot tested a collaborative model in which flexible funds were administered by an experienced housing services provider to support families referred by Help Me Grow. The pilot succeeded in helping unhoused families secure stable housing as well as preventing eviction for families at risk of homelessness. Funds were used for a variety of purposes including rental assistance/eviction prevention, move-in costs, and hotels. While Help Me Grow helped these families navigate services for a wide range of needs, Homeward House's deep housing navigation expertise **helped families secure stable housing and prevent homelessness for families at imminent risk of eviction.** The effort reinforced that flexible, responsive financial support—paired with knowledgeable housing navigation services—is a powerful tool for stabilizing families during the perinatal period. This collaboration offers a promising foundation for expanding this model to other regions across Washington.



Strengthening Infant–Early Childhood Mental Health Pathways

Help Me Grow Washington (HMG WA), the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA), and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) are collaborating to **improve how families access mental health therapy and counseling for children from birth to age five.** In 2025, partners worked together to review HMG's intake and screening processes, assess staff training needs, and identify gaps in how early childhood mental health services are identified and accessed. Ongoing cross-agency efforts focus on clarifying referral pathways, ensuring mental health assessments and dyadic therapy options are clearly incorporated into HMG processes, and distinguishing these services from other early childhood supports. This coordinated work is designed to **help families and providers connect young children to timely, developmentally appropriate mental health care and to strengthen Washington's infant and early childhood mental health system.**



Bringing Health Care Providers and HMG WA Closer

The Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP) continues to be an incredible partner to bring healthcare and HMG closer together. This year saw HMG WA and WCAAP **collaborate on designing co-branded bilingual growth charts.** Dr. Maithri Sarangam, a WCAAP member, consulted on the content included on the charts. The goal was to provide milestone information based on the real-world conversations Dr. Sarangam has with her patients and their families. The growth charts are playful and colorful and offer a way for caregivers to **monitor not only their child's growth, but other milestones of a child's development.**





Deepening Relationships with Tribal Partners

Since 2022, HMG WA has been intentionally partnering with Tribal Nations, Urban Indian Organizations, and Indigenous community members to ensure its **online tools are culturally responsive, usable, and aligned with the priorities of American Indian and Alaska Native families**. This long-term effort is grounded in listening, trust building, and cocreation. This year, HMG WA **expanded its engagement with Tribal partners**, including Tribal-led organizations like American Indian Community Center and United Indians of All Tribes.

These emerging conversations have surfaced opportunities to better include Indigenous voices into many areas of our work, including Plan of Safe Care (POSC). This deepened collaboration with Tribal partners is building a culturally responsive approach to perinatal supports—one that **honors Tribal sovereignty, elevates Tribal leadership, improves data and communication**, and ensures HMG WA and POSC pathways reflect Tribal values, preferences, and priorities. Moving forward into 2026, HMG WA will also center Tribal guidance to shape future improvements to the Resource Finder, including how Tribal resources are represented, shared, and accessed.

HMG WA remains committed to moving at the speed of trust, centering Indigenous voices, and ensuring that all of HMG WA's services honor Tribal sovereignty and increase access to essential supports for Native children, families, and caregivers.



Launching the HMG WA Stewardship Council

In 2025, HMG WA **established its new Stewardship Council, a statewide advisory group to help guide progress on the HMG WA strategic plan**. The Stewardship Council is composed of liaisons from mission-aligned organizations, including Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington Communities for Children; Child Care Aware of Washington; Washington Family Support Network; Department of Child, Youth, and Families; Washington Association of Educational Service Districts; Coalition of Accountable Communities of Health; Washington State Early Learning Coordination Plan; and HMG's other governance bodies—Community Partner Board and Coordinating Team. The Stewardship Council is now a key part of HMG WA's governance structure—**driving accountability and supporting a more coordinated early childhood system across Washington**.



Expanding Family Outreach Through Lantern Text Messages

In October 2025, the HMG WA Network launched a new partnership with Lantern, a **free text messaging platform that provides parenting tips and child development information** from pregnancy through the pre-teen years. Messages are tailored by family language preference (Arabic, English, Spanish), zip code, and the age of each child. Families can **sign up easily by texting KIDSWA to 274448**, helping broaden access to trusted, developmentally aligned support.



Protecting State Funding in the 2025 Legislative Session

During the 2025 long legislative session, HMG WA focused on **safeguarding state funding to support its shared infrastructure**. Despite a challenging budget environment, including a projected \$12 billion shortfall and major transitions in state leadership, **strong advocacy efforts successfully maintained the full \$265,000** for each of the next two years. This funding supports essential statewide functions such as resource navigation, database maintenance, and technical assistance for local HMG communities. In addition, HMG WA also advocated to **extend the \$500,000 investment included in the 2023-2025 state operating budget** to strengthen community engagement. While this request was not included in the 2025-2027 state operating budget, the network will continue to pursue opportunities to restore this critical support. We also advocated to protect the programs and services that Help Me Grow families rely on including health care coverage, food security, early learning programs, and other basic needs. While there were cuts in some areas, we were able to **successfully maintain funding for many of these critical family supports**.





Piloting Cost-Model Tools for Local Partners

In partnership with Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies, HMG **developed three complementary cost models**—the State System Tool, the Specialized Referral Pathway Tool, and the Local System Cost Model—designed to help leaders understand the true resources needed to build, sustain, and scale a HMG system and its activities. In 2025, HMG WA shared its cost modeling progress at the Help Me Grow National Forum, elevating Washington’s role as a leader in system level financial planning. Also this year, local HMG communities **piloted the Local System Cost Model**, providing valuable feedback to refine its usability and ensure it supports real world planning needs. Together, these tools **equip state and local partners with clear, data-informed projections, strengthen financial accountability, and support sustainable, equitable growth** of HMG across Washington.



Investing \$100,000 in Local Communities

In 2025, the HMG WA Network **distributed \$100,000 in Preschool Development Grant funding** to support local communities implementing or exploring Help Me Grow. Allocation decisions were made using a collaborative, community-driven review process led by the HMG WA Community Partner Board. Funding supported local activities aligned with statewide priorities, including **Paid Family & Medical Leave integration, Tribal partnership development, specialized referral pathways, and Child Care Aware/HMG WA coordination**. All participating communities also engaged in **Phase II of the Targeted Universalism project**, working to establish shared goals and data-driven strategies to achieve those goals.



About Help Me Grow WASHINGTON

Help Me Grow Washington is a growing, statewide network of nonprofit organizations, Tribal nations, regional and county health and social service agencies, providers, and state partners 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 with young children in Washington state.

We take a whole family approach that supports parents, caregivers, and children across generations. Guided by Targeted Universalism and a commitment to building pathways for all communities, Help Me Grow Washington pursues the universal goal of family well-being while creating tailored pathways so all families can access health care, food, child developmental supports, and family stability supports.

The [2023–2028 Strategic Plan](#), developed in partnership with families, Tribal partners, community leaders, providers, and policymakers, charts the current phase of growth through six focus areas and nine strategic initiatives designed to strengthen family resiliency and well-being across Washington State.

About WithinReach

WithinReach is a Washington-based nonprofit working to ensure every family has access to the resources they need to be healthy and thrive. As the Washington state affiliate for Help Me Grow, WithinReach leads development of the statewide Help Me Grow Washington infrastructure and connects families across the state to essential services including food, healthcare, child development support, and early learning resources.

Because lasting change happens through collaboration, WithinReach partners with communities, providers, organizations, and state leaders to strengthen systems of care and improve access for families across Washington.

WithinReach is on a mission to nurture a future where every family finds support, every child has opportunity, and community health is truly within reach.

