

## **Children's Alliance // Families of Color Seattle**

### **Parent Advocacy Virtual Workshop**

The COVID 19 crisis has had a disproportionate impact on children and families. However, as the 'stay home, stay healthy' order has been in place the primary focus has been on the experience of businesses and not on families. The goal of this series is to hear from our families what their unique experiences have been during this time, provide space for collective thought on what infrastructure is needed to move forward out of this crisis and to connect families with opportunities to engage in advocacy in their communities for themselves and their children. Each workshop will be two hours long.

#### **Primary Goals for the series**

1. Story Collection
2. Advocacy
3. Development of recommendations for lawmakers

#### **Workshop 1: Early Learning and child needs**

Opening and introductions: Kristina Clark (FOCS) - **5 minutes**

Orienting to the space, advocacy during COVID and storytelling: Emijah Smith, CA - **15 minutes**

Guest Speaker: Lois Martin, WCCA-**10 minutes**

Breakout into small group discussion (Emijah Smith, CA will join each discussion) - **45 minutes**

1. Childcare supports
2. Child health and well-being
3. Anticipated needs as we reopen

Each break out group will develop a few recommendations/legislative asks based in their discussion.

#### *Guiding Questions for group facilitators*

**Childcare supports:** Give a brief overview of top-level dynamics that are going on in early learning right now since COVID 19 stay home, stay healthy order in our state While we know what is going on at the organizational level, we don't know how these decisions are impacting families. If we know what families are experiencing, it will help us as advocates do a better job of advocating. (5-10 minutes).

- *Are you using childcare currently, why or why not? What informed your decision-making process?*
- *What resources have you been able to access, including information?*
- *What would be useful that is not happening right now?*
- *Do you have access to the internet and resources needed to continue online learning at home?*

**Child health and well-being:** This is a very challenging time for our children, as they are not only removed from their teachers, friends and structure in the education system, but they are now having to adjust to a new reality. (5-10 minutes).

- *Does your child have access to the supports they need?*
- *What are some of the challenges you are facing with child mental health and well-being currently?*
- *Do you as parents have access to the supports you need for yourselves and for your children?*
- *What would be useful that is not happening right now?*

**Anticipated needs as we reopen:** As the curve is flattening and declining in some cases, there has been a lot of talk about what society will look like as we reopen. One of the things we do as policy-informers is trying to anticipate the needs of the communities we serve so that the policies we advocate for and that are eventually put in place accurately address your needs. We have heard a lot from providers about their needs moving forward, and it is equally important that we know what parents need. (5-10 minutes).

- *As we think about reopening, returning to work, what kinds of supports will you need to make this possible for your family?*
- *How do you approach finding care for your child? What would you do if your center is not able to reopen?*
- *What are some of the difficult decisions you think you may have to make in the future regarding care for your children and your ability to work?*

Full group summary of legislative asks: led by Kristina Clark, FOCS - **10 minutes**

- *Kristina will ask a representative from each group to share out their recommendations*
- *Kristina will drop the link to waleg-find your representative into the chat box and let everyone know that they can call their legislators and make these recommendations on behalf of themselves, their families and their community.*
- *Kristina will thank all the families that joined the call for their willingness to share their stories*

Close out and invitation to next series: Sarah Clark, CA - **5 minutes**

## **Workshop 2: Financial needs and Family Supports**

Under construction. Stay tuned!