



Best Starts for Kids Outcomes

Building on the deep knowledge, connections, and skills within King County communities, and backed by what science and research tells us about human development, Best Starts for Kids meets children and families with the right services at the right time.

The first Best Starts for Kids levy reached 490,000 of King County's youngest children and their families and 40,000 youth and young adults, catalyzing strong starts in a child's earliest years, and sustaining those gains through to adulthood.



Promoting healthy starts from day one

Breastfeeding is an important way to bond with a new baby, but can be challenging for first-time parents. Among Best Starts programs that provide post-partum breastfeeding supports, 96% of parents started breastfeeding, helping their babies off to a healthy start from day one.

Supporting families during a child's earliest years

Home visiting provides parents with a trusted source of support in a child's earliest years. Home visitors in Best Starts-funded programs have provided over 212,000 visits to new families.

Kids whose families participated in the Parent-Child Plus home visiting program showed a 57% improvement in kindergarten readiness compared to when they started the program.

99% of families in community-designed home visiting programs reported that they felt more concrete support from our community, and 96% said they increased their knowledge of parenting and child development.

Ensuring families can meet their basic needs

Since 2018, Best Starts for Kids supported 89,000 children and families with nearly 6.5 million items that are critical for raising children like healthy food, diapers, car seats, or clothes.

96% of families reported eating more fruits and vegetables after they received Best Starts-funded Good Food Bags .

Promoting healthy development

Using Best Starts funding, Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers increased the number of families receiving developmental support by 34% since 2015, serving nearly 15,000 children under age 3.

Over 70% of these children made progress in key developmental areas such as social and emotional development (74%), acquiring knowledge and skills (71%), or taking action to meet their needs (72%).



Building the capacity & knowledge of people who care for our kids

Best Starts for Kids equipped over 17,000 people who care for King County's youngest children with information and skills to support healthy development. Collectively, this group cares for over 70,000 children in King County.

Best Starts for Kids provided training and support to over 8,000 people who work with King County's youth and young adults, with the potential to impact 300,000 young people in King County.

Making strong connections for youth

Over 7,700 youth participated in programs to build their leadership skills, develop a positive sense of identity, and learn how to maintain healthy relationships.

Prior to the pandemic, almost 2 out of 3 young people in youth development programs strengthened their ability to set short and long-term goals and make plans to reach them. Even as COVID-19 pandemic had deep social and emotional impacts for young adults, 23% of young people in these programs were still able to make positive plans for their future.

Increasing opportunities to learn & grow outside of the school day

Since 2018, over 11,000 young people participated in Best Starts-funded before- and after-school and summer programs, receiving over 133,500 hours of additional learning time outside of school.

In 2020, 93% of students in these programs improved their academic skills like reading and math, and grew in their social and emotional skills like problem solving, leadership, and ability to develop positive relationships with peers and adults.

Partnering with schools to provide a foundation for growth & development

Prior to the pandemic, Best Starts partners worked with over 11,000 youth, parents, caregivers, teachers, and school staff in over 70 schools to create safe, welcoming environments for students facing trauma or adversity. 80% of youth in these programs said they felt safer and more valued at school, and 94% started coming to school more frequently.

Students made over 16,000 visits to new Best Starts-funded school-based health centers since construction in 2017. Prior to the pandemic, 75% of students using these school-based health centers passed all of their classes.

Launching our kids into college and a career

Best Starts funding supported education and employment programs in the Department of Community and Human Services to increase their enrollment by 71%, serving over 2,700 young people through 2020.

73% of students who completed the Work Training Education program stayed in school, graduated, or enrolled in post-secondary education.

Strengthening our communities

Communities of Opportunity collaborated with 150 organizations to create more than 241 new community partnerships and build the skills and capacity of approximately 2,500 people serving in leadership positions.

Preventing homelessness

Since 2017, Best Starts for Kids' Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative served over 10,200 youth and families at risk of losing their housing—96 percent of those completing the program remained housed one year after completing the program.

COVID-19 Impacts

The COVID-19 pandemic deeply impacted many Best Starts for Kids programs, performance measures, and outcomes as partners pivoted to provide services in a changing environment.

When schools closed to in-person teaching in March 2020, Best Starts partners and staff pivoted to meet new needs and adjust strategies to continue ongoing work.

