

Best Starts for Kids: Key Provisions of Proposed Ordinance



Levy Amount

A six-year levy lid lift at a rate of 14 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, which would raise about \$58 million in the first year and a cumulative \$392.3 million, at a cost to the average King County homeowner of about \$56 per year.

Investing Early

Fifty percent of the revenue would be invested in strategies focused on children under age five and pregnant women, including a modest investment to sustain and expand parent and child health services that are delivered through the county's Public Health Centers. The science and evidence shows us that the earlier we invest, the greater the return for both the child's development and our society.

Sustaining the Gain

Thirty-five percent would be invested in strategies focused on children and youth aged five through twenty-four. The science and research tells us that the brain continues to develop during this time and that prevention strategies strategically addressed at key developmental stages or transition points in a young person's life help to sustain gains made earlier in life.

Communities Matter

Nine percent would be invested in community-level strategies through expansion and sustainability of the partnership between King County and The Seattle Foundation on Communities of Opportunity (COO). COO is based on the latest research and evidence regarding the impact of place on a child's success and the importance of supporting communities in building their own capacity to create positive change.

Outcomes-Focused and Data Driven

Six percent would support evaluation, data collection and improving the delivery of services and programs for children and youth. This will ensure Best Starts for Kids strategies are tailored for children from every background in King County and that we deliver on the results for every child in King County.

Initial Collections

Initial levy collections would be used to create a family and youth homelessness prevention initiative modeled on a successful pilot implemented by organizations serving survivors of

domestic violence, to fund additional scientific research to expand the reach of prevention strategies to all King County families, and to establish a reserve for the levy fund.

Advisory Boards

The ordinance proposes that the county establish advisory boards for Best Starts for Kids, with the existing governance group for COO acting as the advisory board for that portion of the levy funds. The King County Department of Community and Human Services will be accountable for financial oversight and reporting responsibilities.

Implementation

In order to reduce inequities in our County, Best Starts for Kids strategies are designed to be both universal and targeted, with the large majority of Best Starts for Kids levy funding competitively bid in outcomes-focused contracts to community-based organizations. This will help ensure that the strategies are implemented in a manner that is appropriate for all cultural and ethnic groups and that each child and her caregivers receive the tools and level of support they need. Should the council place this measure on the ballot and the voters approve it, the county will refine outcomes and indicators through development of a detailed implementation plan with input and consultation from the community.