

INVESTING IN WASHINGTON'S FUTURE

Save the Children Action Network (SCAN) was founded in 2014 as the political advocacy arm of Save the Children and is the political voice for kids. Today, SCAN is working to mobilize more than **9,000 supporters in Washington** to make sure every child in the United States has access to high-quality early childhood education and that no mother or child around the globe dies from a preventable disease or illness.

Our volunteer leadership network—based in **Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma and Vancouver**—actively engages parents, teachers, medical professionals and local business leaders who are passionate about advocating for kids. Additionally, we have Student Ambassador Programs at the **University of Washington, Seattle University, Washington State University, Union High School, Redmond High School and Anne Wright Upper School**. Learn more about how to get involved at www.SaveTheChildrenActionNetwork.org/Washington.



Opportunities for All Children in Washington

Investing in early childhood education is one of the most effective ways to break the cycle of poverty. These investments lay the foundation for success later in school and in life.

The Challenge

The environment and interactions children are exposed to during the first five years of life greatly influence their futures. Unfortunately, these programs are out of reach for families across the nation, including in Washington, where **16 percent of children live in poverty and 70 percent of 3- and 4-year olds from low-income families are not enrolled in preschool or nursery school programs**. Further, according to the Washington State Department of Early Learning, **only 47 percent of Washington's kids were prepared for kindergarten in the 2016-17 school year**.

By age 4, children in poverty are as many as 18 months behind other children. By age 5, a child's brain is nearly completely developed, so it's critical to provide early learning opportunities from birth until kindergarten.

The Solution

Two generational high-quality early learning and care programs offer benefits to families and the entire country. A December 2016 report from Nobel Prize-winning University of Chicago economist James Heckman shows the rate of return on investments in early childhood development for children in high-quality programs can be 13 percent per child, per year due to improved outcomes in education, health, sociability, productivity and reduced crime.

We know that expanding access to high-quality education is the best way to close the growing opportunity gap in our country. **That's why SCAN is continuing to work with Republicans, Democrats and coalition partners in Washington to expand access to high-quality early childhood education and home visiting programs, including**





Save the Children's Early Steps to School Success program, which assists babies and young children with language, social and emotional development; equips parents with the skills and knowledge to be the first and most important teacher for their child; and develops strong home-school connections. **Save the Children has been implementing education and health programs in Washington since 2008 and currently works with six schools in two counties to deliver these programs to nearly 1,000 children.**

Helping Children Around the World Survive

Children all around the world deserve to survive until their fifth birthdays and beyond. Investing in the health of moms and kids reduces poverty, sparks economic growth, creates more secure nations and, most importantly, saves lives.

The Challenge

Globally, 5.6 million children under age 5—nearly half of whom are infants—die each year from preventable causes such as pneumonia, malnutrition and malaria. More than 800 mothers die every day from problems related to their pregnancies. In too many cases, moms and kids around the world do not have access to the medical care or supplies they need to survive. This is heart breaking, but the good news is that because of leadership from the U.S. more moms and kids are surviving—and we can do even better.

The Solution

In the last 20 years, the number of mothers and kids dying from preventable diseases has dropped by half. Simple and inexpensive solutions, like basic medicine, thermometers and clean water, are saving lives. That's why SCAN is building bipartisan support for the Reach Every Mother and Child (Reach) Act, a bipartisan bill in the U.S. House and Senate which would help end the preventable deaths of mothers and children around the world.

Our Successes

With the help of our activist base in Washington, we have made great progress in advancing our goals for children in the Evergreen State and around the world.

In King County, SCAN supported the Best Starts for Kids ballot measure in 2015. The ballot measure passed with the benefit of our broad public education campaign, which included direct mail to more than 130,000 households in King County, targeted door-to-door canvassing and volunteer phone calls to more than 1,300 households. As a result, there are new early learning and intervention programs in King County for children ages 5 and under, as well as expanded access to early learning and home visiting programs. In 2017, we worked with the Seattle City Council to pass a sweetened beverage tax that will provide additional funding to early learning and care programs in the city.

Looking Ahead

With elections coming up in 2018, our work is needed now more than ever. We will continue to advocate to make sure every child has the opportunity to succeed. In 2018, we are focused on renewing the Seattle Preschool Levy so that low- and middle-income families can continue to access this high-quality early learning program. At the state level, we are continuing to work on protecting and increasing funding for early childhood education programs. At the federal level, we are protecting Head Start and building support among Washington's congressional delegation for the Reach Act.

Children may only be 20 percent of our population, but they are 100 percent of our future. Investments in our kids are the best ones we can make.