



Strength, Love, and Hope

Born at just 28 weeks gestation, one little girl has faced extraordinary medical challenges since birth. She depends on a tracheotomy, ventilator, and feeding tube and lives with multiple congenital conditions that will require ongoing surgeries and specialized medical care throughout her childhood.

When her parents were unable to provide the care she needed, her grandmother stepped forward as her legal guardian and medical decision-maker. She spent months by her granddaughter's bedside, learning to manage complex medical equipment and preparing to bring her home.

The transition home brought new challenges. Although in-home nursing provides valuable support, staffing shortages often leave her grandmother providing around-the-clock care, including overnight feedings, medications, and continuous monitoring of her granddaughter's tracheotomy and ventilator. Frequent specialty appointments, emergency department visits, and hospitalizations remain part of their daily lives.

During her hospitalization, the family was referred to Parenting Partnership. Their Family Support Worker became a trusted partner—helping the grandmother navigate a complex medical system, advocating during care conferences, attending appointments, connecting the family with resources, and providing encouragement throughout every stage of the journey. As their relationship grew, so did the grandmother's confidence in caring for her granddaughter at home.

Today, despite everything she has endured, this little girl is a happy, social toddler with a bright personality and an infectious smile. She continues to make remarkable progress. Her grandmother's unwavering commitment, together with the support of Parenting Partnership and her medical team, has helped create a foundation where she can thrive. Their story demonstrates the resilience of children, the strength of family caregivers, and the life-changing impact of compassionate, relationship-based home visiting support.

Concrete Supports for Families

Since 2021, the Washington State Legislature has provided the Department of Children, Youth and Families \$2 million per year to provide access to concrete goods to low-income families. The Strengthening Families Washington (SFWA) team in the Division of Partnership, Prevention and Services collaborates with teams across DCYF to identify and contract with community partners with expertise in engaging low-income families. Organizations including social service agencies, Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) programs, family resource centers, and diaper banks purchase and distribute concrete goods to low-income families in their communities.

Family Economic Insecurity and Child Welfare

A parent's ability to meet their family's needs is severely impacted by economic hardship, resulting in an increase of parental stress. Persistent stressful conditions, such as extreme poverty, can lead to "toxic stress." Research shows that toxic stress increases the likelihood of neglect investigations by nearly threefold.

Additionally, research shows that if families experience multiple types of hardship after experiencing no hardship, the likelihood of being investigated for physical abuse nearly quadruples.

Providing concrete goods for families helps buffer parental stress and ensures children's needs are met.

In 2026, all of our home visiting contracts included a funding offer for concrete supports for families enrolled in home visiting programs.

Concrete supports: Access to tangible goods and services that addresses a family's needs and helps minimize stress caused by challenges

DCYF's Concrete Goods Impact

In State Fiscal Year 2025 (SFY25), approximately 85 organizations provided concrete goods to over 42,590 families across the state. This funding provided over 242,000 goods including food, gift cards, diapering and baby supplies, personal hygiene products and school supplies.

Since July 2021 DCYF and its partners have spent over \$5.1 million to provide families around the state with essential concrete goods.

Commonly Used Goods SFY25:

Packs of Diapers and Baby Supplies	Hygiene Supplies	Food and Groceries	School Supplies	Clothing	Household Items/Furniture
196,858	27,106	10,193	4,452	1,146	1,016