

Best Start for Kids 2021 Levy

WHEREAS, King County Best Start for Kids was initially passed by King County voters in 2015 and has served more than 500,000 children, youth, young adults, and families, providing comprehensive supports from pre-natal development all the way to young adulthood; and

WHEREAS, the Best Start for Kids initiative expires in December 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Best Start for Kids program will be up for a six-year renewal on the August 2021 ballot to continue programs that focus on health and well-being for children, youth, and families throughout the region, along with new investments to improve access to childcare for families with low incomes; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ballot measure maintains or expands current Best Starts for Kids programs that support the County's youngest residents through to early adulthood. These programs include:

- Home-based services for new parents – provides support for new families throughout the first years. In these programs, an average of 97 percent of new parents started breastfeeding, helping their babies off to a healthy start. This exceeded the goal of “Healthy People 2020,” a federal initiative with a goal of 82 percent of new parents breastfeeding.
- Programs that promote healthy development for youth – provides support for children and young people to develop leadership skills, connect with their community, and succeed in school. The levy served 40,000 children and young people with programs before, during, and after school, and throughout the summers.
- Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative – flexible funds and intensive case management helped 9,200 young people and families. Ninety percent of enrollees did not enter the homeless system, and 92 percent remained housed at least one year after exiting the program.
- New funding for 3000 children under 5 who currently have no access to childcare.
- The proposed 2021 levy will expand these services by approximately 40% for King County children, young adults, their families, and caregivers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the First District Democrats support passage of the King County Best Start for Kids Levy which is on the 2021 August primary ballot; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the First District Democrats urge King County voters to vote YES on the Best Start for Kids Levy on the August 2021 ballot.

Proposed by Linda Tosti-Lane, May 6, 2021

Recommended DO PASS by the First District Democrats Issues Committee, June 3, 2021

Passed – General Meeting June 21, 2021