



## Protect Services that Support Families:

*How can we ensure families have the support they need to thrive?*

**February 4, 2026**

### Families Are the Backbone of the Care System

Families are the primary long-term care system for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). In Washington State, **78% of Developmental Disabilities Community Services (DDCS) clients live with and receive care from a parent or relative**. Of those individuals, **more than half (56.5%, or 17,382 people) are adults**.

Thousands of families are aging alongside their loved ones with disabilities. It is estimated that **over 2,000 individuals with I/DD who are age 40 or older live with aging parents**, many of whom are managing their own health challenges.

At the same time, families provide this care with **limited formal supports**. Individuals on the **Basic Plus Waiver use an average of just \$1,096 per month in Medicaid waiver services** and **\$143 a month on the Individual and Family Services waiver**- a modest investment that allows families to continue providing care at home and prevents more costly residential placements.

To maintain this family-based system, **adequate and stable supports are essential**—both to help families continue caregiving today and to ensure residential options are available when families can no longer provide care.

### What Do Families Need to Succeed?

Families need practical, reliable supports that allow them to work, stay healthy, and plan for the future, including:

- **Affordable, accessible, and reliable childcare and after-school programs**
- **Adequately funded day and employment services** that provide meaningful activities for individuals with I/DD while family members work
- **Respite services** to provide occasional breaks from intensive caregiving
- **A stable, well-trained, and well-paid direct care workforce**
- **Timely, easy-to-use services** that families can access when needs arise
- **Clear information and ongoing support**, including help navigating complex systems

- **Future planning assistance for aging families**, with assurance that appropriate supports and services will be available when they can no longer provide care

## What Are Families Worried About?

In the face of current and projected budget constraints, families are deeply concerned that their loved ones may:

- **Lose eligibility for critical services**
- **Experience reductions in already-limited supports**
- **Lose trusted providers due to rate cuts and workforce instability**

These outcomes would place families at risk of burnout and crisis—and ultimately lead to **higher-cost emergency and institutional care**.

## Why This Matters

Protecting and strengthening family supports is both **fiscally responsible and morally imperative**.

When families are supported, individuals with I/DD can thrive in their communities, the direct care workforce is stabilized, and the state avoids far more costly interventions.

### What you should watch for this session:

[SB 6163](#)- Eliminating wait lists for the Individual and Family Services Waiver (IFS)

[HB 2337](#)- Concerning training requirements for individual providers caring for a family member

**Investing in families today prevents crises tomorrow!**