2019 was another successful year for COPC and our work in advocating for policy and systems change to secure the health and well-being of all of Washington’s children and families. We continued ongoing work in several important areas and also dove into some new issues. Our top priorities this year focused on increasing access to healthy foods, which included successful advocating for new state funding for fruit and vegetable incentives in food benefit programs and also securing a third round of capital funding for the Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools grant program, which includes helping schools purchase school kitchen and physical education equipment and water bottle filling stations. We also had big wins in the areas of access to physical activity and outdoor recreation and improving safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

We also continued our dedication to and focus on successful implementation of new policies and programs for which we have advocated. At COPC we believe staying close to policy implementation can be critical to ultimate success. In this past year, we continued to work hard to ensure that Seattle’s Sugary Beverage Tax is successfully implemented and that funding is directed to the programs outlined in the ordinance, including improving access to healthy foods in those communities hardest hit by sugary drink consumption. COPC also actively monitored and stayed engaged with the Department of Children, Youth & Families on the implementation of the new child care licensing standards that went into effect on August 1, 2019. These new licensing standards included tremendous progress in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and screen time. A summary of the new standards in these areas can be found here.

So, thank you to all of our partners that make our work possible – our funders, our coalition members (and your networks) and our grass roots supporters. Let’s keep working together to make healthy choices easier for all Washingtonians! Now let’s look at these policy successes in more detail.
POLICY SUCCESSES

Healthy Food Incentives
Accessing healthy food can be difficult, especially for those who struggle with the typical high cost of healthier foods. We successfully advocated for state funding to continue providing fruit and vegetable incentives under the highly successful Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program. The final 2019-21 operating budget provided $2.5 million for fruit & vegetable incentives.

We also made progress in highlighting the benefits of doing a technology upgrade that would allow these healthy food incentives to seamlessly be added back onto their food benefit (EBT) card. While the technology upgrade was not ultimately funded, there was an increase in awareness of the incentives and the benefits of being able to add them back onto the EBT card. We will continue to look for opportunities to advocate for funding this upgrade.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools Grants – Round III
COPC successfully secured a third round of funding for school health improvement through the Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools grant program, which provides funds for kitchen and physical education equipment, as well as water bottle filling stations. The final 2019-21 capital budget provided $3.25 million in funding for the grant program.

Improve Safety for Bicyclists and Pedestrians
COPC supported the successful effort to pass SB 5723, which strengthened the state’s vulnerable user law in order to help make streets safer, which in turn will produce more active transportation users, resulting in healthier communities. The bill increases the fine for six specific traffic infractions that have the worst outcomes for the most vulnerable users. Additionally, it ushers in new safe passing language for people driving passing people biking and walking.

No Child Left Inside
COPC supported the successful effort to renew funding for the No Child Left Inside program, which provides under-served youth with quality opportunities to experience the natural world. Ensuring kids have easy access to the outdoors helps increase physical activity and improve health outcomes. Grant funds are available for outdoor environmental, ecological, agricultural, or other natural resource-based education and recreation programs. The final 2019-21 operating budget provided $1.5 million in funding for the No Child Left Inside program.

Capital Budget Investments
COPC supported the successful efforts to secure capital investments in key programs to improve access to physical activity. Such programs include the Youth Athletic Facilities grant, which provides money to buy land and renovate outdoor athletic facilities, and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, which provides funding for a broad range of land protection and outdoor recreation. The final 2019-21 capital budget provided $5.88 million for the Youth Athletic Facilities grant program, and $85 million for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation program.
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Early Learning Standards
One of the cornerstone policy priorities for the COPC in recent years has been to improve physical activity, nutrition and screen time standards in licensed child care across Washington State. On August 1st this year, the Department of Children, Youth and Families began full implementation of new licensing requirements for early learning facilities. The new standards include great improvements in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and screen time:

- Nutrition standards: requiring snacks to include a fruit or vegetable; prohibiting the serving of flavored milk and sugar-sweetened beverages; making water readily available; and accommodating/supporting breastfeeding mothers
- Physical activity standards: promoting both moderate and vigorous activity, including time outdoors and a mixture of activities
- Screen time standards: limiting screen time for kids over 2 years old and intentional screen time is prohibited for kids under two years old

COPC has continued to monitor and engage with agency partners to ensure implementation of these new standards is going well and identify any barriers to implementation. Note that there are close to 6,000 licensed day care providers in our state that serve approximately 130,000 children. Childcare settings are critical places for obesity prevention efforts. When healthy eating and physical activity habits are learned and practiced during the early years, they can last a lifetime.

Sugary Beverage Tax – City of Seattle
COPC (through the Seattle Healthy Kids Coalition) continues to play an active role in the ongoing policy and funding implementation of the strong sugary drink tax ordinance in the City of Seattle. This year there was a successful effort to ensure the revenue from the tax, which has far exceeded original projections, is being directed to new programs or the expansion of existing programs in the areas specified in the ordinance, including increasing access to healthy food, rather than supplanting existing program funding.

Assessments of Physical Education in Schools
In 2017 COPC successfully passed HB 1235, which requires school districts to conduct and annual review of their physical education programs. The first round of data was just released by OSPI and COPC will be analyzing the data for potential future policy work.
COPC is directly involved with multiple partners and collaboratives that promote healthy communities strategies and initiatives around our state on a wide variety of issues. See below for a current list:

- American Heart Association -- Policy Committee
- Early Learning Action Alliance
- Governor’s Council for the Healthiest Next Generation
- Health Coalition for Children and Youth
- Healthy King County Coalition
- Prevention Alliance
- Public Health Roundtable
- Safe Routes to School Action Network
- Seattle Healthy Kids Coalition
- WA State Dept of Health -- Community Health Advisory Committee (CHAC)
- Washington’s Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives (FINI) Project

While we derive a tremendous amount of in-kind support from many of our members and allies we also wanted to call out those partners who support our work monetarily:

- Arcora Foundation
- Seattle Children’s
- Voices for Healthy Kids
- Washington State Department of Health

OUR FUNDERS

ADVISORY/PARTNERSHIP BODIES

COPC is directly involved with multiple partners and collaboratives that promote healthy communities strategies and initiatives around our state on a wide variety of issues. See below for a current list:
MEMBERS

Action for Healthy Kids – WA Chapter
American Academy of Pediatrics – WA Chapter
American Cancer Society’s Cancer Action Network
American Cancer Society, Inc.
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
Arcora
Beecher’s Foundation
Cascade Bicycle Club Education Foundation
Children’s Alliance
Coalition for Safety and Health in Early Learning
Empire Health Foundation
Feet First
Forterra
Foundation for Healthy Generations
Healthy King County Coalition
Healthy Food America
MultiCare Health Systems
Nutrition First
Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic
Physical Therapy Association of Washington
Public Health Roundtable
San Juan County Health & Community Services
Sea Mar Community Health Centers
Seattle Children’s
Seattle and King County Public Health
SHAPE Washington
Snohomish Health District
Spokane Regional Health District
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
Transportation Choices
WA Assoc. of Community & Migrant Health Cntrs
Washington Bikes
Washington Recreation & Park Association
Washington School Nutrition Association
WA State Assn of Local Public Health Officers
WA State Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Washington State Dairy Council
Washington State PTA
Washington State Public Health Association
Washington Trails Association
WithinReach
Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital
YMCA of Greater Seattle

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