# *Early Learning Groups Award Local Lawmakers*

**Local News**

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Aberdeen, WA - The Grays Harbor Early Learning Coalition, the Mason County Early Learning Coalition and the Early Learning Action Alliance are proud to recognize Sen. Jim Hargrove (24th - Hoquiam), Sen. Derek Kilmer (26th - Gig Harbor) and Rep. Kathy Haigh (25th - Shelton) for their outstanding work in helping more children access early learning opportunities. This Friday, Sept. 21, each will be presented with a Crayon Award.“It is encouraging to have our elected officials bring attention to and promote the importance of early childhood education,” says business leader Sherri Dysart, a member of the Mason County Early Learning Coalition. “We can prepare all children in Washington state for success by supporting parents as their children’s first teachers, and ensuring early childhood programs are accessible and top-quality. ‘Doing the right thing at the right time’ is so critical for children in our state. “

From August through September, 19 state legislators across Washington are receiving Crayon Awards for their outstanding work in helping more children access early learning opportunities in the past two years: from protecting state investments in programs, to advocating for policy changes that increase the continuity of care for children. All 19 legislators awarded understand the value of investing in the first five years of a child’s life. Quality early learning during this time influences experiences in school, at work, with their families and in their communities.Three types of awards are given: Gold, Silver and Bronze Crayon Awards. Gold Crayon Award recipients are leaders who spearhead and champion efforts in early learning. Silver Crayon Award recipients are steadfast advocates who lend their voices and cast their votes for early learning issues. Recipients of the Bronze Crayon Award demonstrate promise as growing early learning leaders; we count on their rising support. See a full list of awardees.