Over one in three infants, toddlers, and primary school-age children experience poverty, and rates are highest among children as they transition to adulthood (18 to 24). Poverty rates for children of all ages remain near pre-recession levels.

Percentage of children living below 200% of federal poverty level by age group
Washington State, 2006 - 2016

200% of the federal poverty level for a family of three in 2018 = $41,560

Source: IPUMS 1-year American Community Survey data, 2006-2016
HOW HAS ADULT POVERTY CHANGED IN WASHINGTON?

Poverty declines during young adulthood (25 to 34) and the middle-age years (35 to 74), and increases again after age 75. Poverty rates remain near pre-recession levels for every age group except seniors, for whom poverty dropped.

Percentage of adults living below 200% of federal poverty level by age group
Washington State, 2006 - 2016

200% of the federal poverty level for a family of three in 2018 = $41,560

Source: IPUMS 1-year American Community Survey data, 2006-2016
WHO IS MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE POVERTY IN WASHINGTON?

On average, 27 percent of people living in Washington state are struggling to make ends meet, but a person’s likelihood of experiencing poverty is influenced by many factors, including race, sex, relationship status, citizenship, and disability status.

Percentage of people living below 200% of federal poverty level by key demographics
Washington State, 2016

200% of the federal poverty level for a family of three in 2018 = $41,560

Source: IPUMS 1-year American Community Survey data, 2016
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE ENDS MEET IN WASHINGTON?

The median cost of meeting basic needs for a young family of three in Washington is $49,554, but the cost varies considerably depending on the county a family lives in. Child care and housing are the largest expenses for a young family.

Annual cost of meeting basic needs for a family of three (one adult + two young children)
Washington State Counties 2017

Breakdown of a basic needs budget for a young family of three in Washington state

- 32% Child care ($1,329/mo)
- 18% Housing ($745/mo)
- 14% Food ($574/mo)
- 13% Health care ($525/mo)
- 9% Taxes ($372/mo)
- 8% Miscellaneous ($342/mo)
- 6% Transportation ($244/mo)

Source: The 2017 Self-Sufficiency Standard, University of Washington Center for Women’s Welfare
DO JOBS PAY ENOUGH TO MAKE ENDS MEET IN WASHINGTON?

The majority of jobs pay far below what it takes for a family of three to make ends meet on one income. Occupations that pay well - including those in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) - represent a small share of jobs in Washington.