

This week in WPR:

- John Burbank: Legislators must focus on working families
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- Hot off the Blog: Economic woes endangering Washington's children; Looking past the banking crisis
- Washington's Working Women: Not Equal Yet
- Governor Gregoire: Parents should pay for basic education



Editor's Note: WPR welcomes back guest blogger Stan Sorscher for the second installment of his three part series: "Looking past the banking crisis".

Questions or Comments? Email [Aaron Keating](mailto:Aaron.Keating@eoii.org), Communications Director

Legislators must focus on working families

~John Burbank, Executive Director

Everett Herald || The big banks have just gotten another steroid injection from the federal government, courtesy of the taxpayers. The feds want to make sure that the private banks which got us into trouble will not go bankrupt. So we are left holding the bag for these banks' losses, while creating "private" profits for them. It is only another \$100 billion of our money to "kick start" this latest bail-out of the "too-big-to-fail."

How about those of us "too-small-to-matter"? Hundreds of thousands of Washington residents are losing their health insurance, falling behind in mortgage payments, defaulting on college debt. What happens when these personal catastrophic events happen not just to someone across town, but to entire communities? || [More](#)



Policy Focus: Paid leave, proposed budgets, health care reform



Progress on Paid Leave: House panel OK's [paid family leave](#) for federal workers, and the [paid sick leave](#) bug seems to be spreading throughout the [nation](#), with organizations in 14 [states](#) and localities advancing the measure.

Deal or no deal?: With the release of state [House](#) and [Senate](#) budget proposals, lawmakers try to find a [middle ground](#) between 'horrific' and 'truly ugly'. Meanwhile, [debate](#) continues over new revenue proposals -- but with [fewer people](#) at the table.

Feeling the pain: Workers are [losing their jobs](#) -- and their [health insurance](#) -- faster than ever, and the state's [safety net](#) isn't much help. Meanwhile, discussions on [health care reform](#) legislation are underway in the "other" Washington.

Watch for: The state House and Senate will work to [reconcile](#) differences in their budget proposals in the coming weeks. Will new revenue options come to the fore?

Hot off the Blog

Washington's Children Hurt By Economic Woes, Literally || A new [report](#) released by *Fight Crime, Invest In Kids Washington* shows a sharp increase in cases of child abuse and neglect over the past year - a time during which financial turmoil has caused mounting family stress. || [More](#)

Looking past the banking crisis: Households adjust (Part 2 of 3) || Households have made a series of accommodations to stretch limited resources to maintain our standard of living. At least three major adjustments can be counted: additional wage earners, reduced savings, and tapping into housing equity. || [More](#)

Washington's Working Women: Not Equal Yet



~Marilyn Watkins, Policy Director

Women's earnings are essential to economic security for the majority of families in Washington State. Women comprise about half of the state's workforce, yet as a group they continue to earn significantly less than men.

Our children, families, businesses, and communities all pay the price for our failure to step up to the public policy needs of today's working women.

Read: [On the blog](#) || [Full Report](#)

Gregoire: Parents should pay for basic education

~Hannah Lidman, Senior Policy Associate



If you have not heard it enough times already, basic education is the "paramount duty" of Washington State.

Of course, as we know from years of systematic underfunding and the resulting lawsuits, the state does not always live up to this obligation.

But who would outright suggest that parents should pay for public education?

Apparently, Governor Gregoire. || [More](#)