

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**  
Sally Vilardi, Committee for Children  
206-438-6501 (o), 425-985-5385 (c)  
[svilardi@cfchildren.org](mailto:svilardi@cfchildren.org)

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## Four area education organizations honored *Local nonprofit recognizes Visionary Leaders*

SEATTLE — Local nonprofit Committee for Children celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary by honoring Denise Louie Education Center, Highline Public Schools, Snohomish County Human Services Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, and Lake Washington School District with Visionary Leadership Awards for their outstanding work.

Committee for Children Executive Director Joan Duffel, who presented the awards, said, “We created them to recognize those who go above and beyond to make sure children learn the essential social and emotional skills to be safe and to succeed throughout their lives. The Committee for Children Visionary Leadership Awards honor some of our most outstanding education partners in the Puget Sound area for their extraordinary work to implement our programs.”

The first Visionary Leadership Award was received by Board President Jennie Fox and Executive Director Janice Deguchi on behalf of the Denise Louie Education Center. The Denise Louie staff, who use Committee for Children’s *Second Step* and *Talking About Touching* programs, have advised in the development of new programs and in exploration of reliable assessment tools to measure children’s social and emotional skills.

Highline Public Schools, represented by Head Elementary Counselor Jinna Risdal, received the second award for its district-wide, 20-year commitment to Committee for Children’s *Second Step* and *Steps to Respect* curricula. Highline has been an essential partner and advisor in helping develop and pilot-test new and revised curricula and helping engineer the programs to be simple to teach, effective and relevant to diverse populations of teachers, children and parents.

The third award was received by Director Ken Stark and Program Manager Joe Varano on behalf of Snohomish County Human Services Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). The ECEAP, which believes that quality early learning

requires lessons in social and emotional competence, implements and tracks the impact of the *Talking About Touching* and *Second Step* programs and has taken the vital step of presenting their positive results in a simple, well-designed report for the Snohomish County area.

Lake Washington School District was represented by Counseling Coordinator Rita Smith on behalf of Superintendent Chip Kimball and received the fourth award for addressing bullying in a visionary manner. The District implements the *Steps to Respect* anti-bullying program district-wide and uses a proactive, preventive approach. The result is a model of bullying prevention for school districts across the state and nation.

The gala event — held last week in a reception room donated for the evening by Perkins Coie's Seattle offices — was hosted by Committee for Children and involved many of the key players in its 30-year history, including founder Jennifer James, State Senator Jeanne Kohl Welles, and State Representatives Phyllis Gutierrez Kenny and Mary Lou Dickerson.

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### **About Committee for Children**

Seattle-based nonprofit Committee for Children is the world's leading provider of educational programs that teach skills to prevent violence, sexual abuse and bullying. Today, Committee for Children is helping more than 9 million students in 25,000 schools in 26 countries around the globe stay safe, respect themselves and others, succeed in school today, and build a better world tomorrow. To learn more, go to [www.cfchildren.org](http://www.cfchildren.org).