



Head Start gives young children from at-risk backgrounds the skills they need to be successful.



American Heart Association



State Investments in Head Start to Support At-Risk Children and Families

More Important Than Ever

Children in Poverty and Access to Head Start

While Head Start programs serve over one million children and families each year in all 50 states, millions of others are left out due to limited funding.



Only **36%** of eligible children ages 3-5 had access to Head Start.



Only **11%** of eligible children under 3 had access to Early Head Start.

States are facing a rising crisis of at-risk young children and families.¹ In 2017, foster care caseloads rose in 39 states. Family homelessness is a persistent problem, especially in high market cities and states, with families making up one-third of the homeless population.² The opioid crisis has contributed to new cases of childhood trauma³—a condition already greater than two times more elevated among children living in poverty.⁴

There is a **ready-built solution** to supporting at-risk children and families that has been embraced by 14 states: local Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Collectively, in their most recent budgets, state lawmakers have directly committed over \$400 million in state funding to expand Head Start to greater than 25,000 children ages birth to five, filling critical services gaps for at-risk children and families.

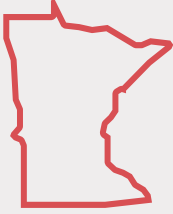
Can your state do more?

Head Start: A Community-Based Birth-to-5 Solution for At-Risk Families

Operated by over 1,600 community partners in all 50 states, Head Start and Early Head Start (collectively referred to as “Head Start”) are comprehensive birth to five programs specifically designed to strengthen families, promote school readiness, and improve child health. They specialize in serving the complex needs of young children and families in poverty, children with disabilities (132,000 in the past program year), children in foster care (26,000) or experiencing homelessness (47,000), among other challenging circumstances.⁵

A Little State Funding Goes a Long Way: 5 State Examples

Whether they commit to \$3 million or \$25 million each year, 14 states are directly investing state funds in Head Start to improve outcomes for at-risk children and families. Here are five state examples that illustrate how a little extra funding for Head Start can go a long way in improving equity and opportunity for at-risk children and families.



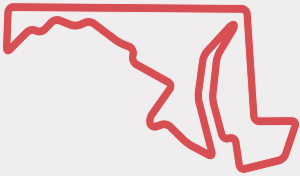
1. **Minnesota:** Expanding Access for Infants and Toddlers

Recognizing a lack of high-quality infant and toddler care throughout the state, Minnesota invests just over \$25 million each year (\$50 million over two years) to expand access to Early Head Start (and Head Start) for at-risk children, including tribal and rural communities. In the most recent year, 1,078 infants and toddlers were served with state funding.



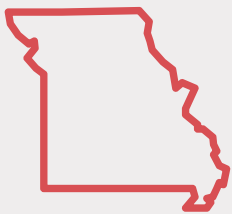
2. **Oregon:** Building a Pre-K System on Head Start

Oregon has built their well-regarded Oregon Prekindergarten (OPK) program on Head Start. Three-fourths of grantees are federal Head Start programs and they follow Head Start's performance standards. In the coming two years, they have budgeted to invest just over \$200 million in OPK to serve over 7,500 low-income and at-risk children. Given the success of this model, lawmakers just decided to invest over \$24 million in Early Head Start in the state.



3. **Maryland:** Meeting the Needs of Working Families

Maryland has committed \$3 million with a focus on expanding the number of hours and days children are able to access Head Start. By extending the duration of Head Start services, Maryland helps 2,300 children and is better able to meet the needs of working families, providing their children with high quality care while they pursue education and work goals.



4. **Missouri:** Improving Child Care Quality

Over a decade ago, Missouri saw a need to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers. Today, \$6 million in state funding annually supports partnerships between Early Head Start programs and local child care providers to help 444 children and families, especially children with incarcerated parents, children with disabilities and pregnant women. The funding not only directly benefits 444 children, it creates a ripple effect that improves the overall quality of care for the other children in the supported child care classrooms.



5. **Massachusetts:** Supporting Teacher-Child Relationships

Lawmakers recently dedicated \$12 million in state funding to support higher teacher salaries and help programs meet their federally-required 20% funding match. Supporting the Head Start workforce benefits children and families by creating more stable and caring adult-child relationships in the classroom.

1. ChildTrends, "[In 2017, the rate of children in foster care;](#)" 2. The National Alliance to End Homelessness, "[Children and Families;](#)" 3. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, "[Child Trauma and Opioid Use: Policy Implications;](#)" 4. ChildTrends, "[Adverse Childhood Experiences;](#)" 5. The National Head Start Association, "[2017 National Head Start Profile.](#)"

States Invest Over \$400 Million to Support More Vulnerable Children

Expanding Access to Head Start Programs

State	Head Start (HS) Funding	Early Head Start (EHS) Funding	Additional HS Children Served	Additional EHS Children Served
Alabama	\$4.34 million	—	1,728	—
Iowa	—	\$574,500	—	58
Maine*	\$3.1 million		208	—
Minnesota*	\$50.2 million		1,202	1,078
Oklahoma	\$13.72^		Not collected	2,830
Oregon*	\$200.82^^	\$24.05 million	7,570^^^	64^^^
Pennsylvania	\$64.18 million	—	7,192^^^^	—
Rhode Island	\$1.19 million	—	130	—
Wisconsin*	\$6.26 million		598	

Improving Quality of Head Start Programs

State	Head Start (HS) Funding	Early Head Start (EHS) Funding	Additional HS Children Served	Additional EHS Children Served
Connecticut*	\$5.08		320	24
Maryland	\$3 million	—	2,324	—
Missouri	—	\$6 million	—	444

Matching Federal Support of Head Start Programs

State	Head Start (HS) Funding	Early Head Start (EHS) Funding	Additional HS Children Served	Additional EHS Children Served
Alaska	\$6.85 million	—	136	—
Massachusetts	\$12 million		—	—

25,906

Additional Children Served

*Five of the 13 states budget biennially and their totals reflect two years of support.

^ Oklahoma directly invests \$1.75 million in Head Start programs through a line-item and \$12 million in Early Head Start through a public-private partnership, the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program.

^^ Reflects the entire allocation for Oregon Prekindergarten (OPK) funds; of the 28 OPK grantees, 21 are Head Start programs and all grantees follow Head Start guidelines.

^^^ Reflects 2019-2020 service numbers. In that program year, Early Head Start funding was \$853,761.

^^^^ Reflects the number of children served in the year prior, 2018-2019, with \$59.18 million in funding.

Head Start programs are proven models of success. They require minimal additional oversight, as they already comply with rigorous federal performance and budget standards.

Multi-Generational Impact of Head Start on Families



Stronger Families

Families in Early Head Start have more positive parent-child relationships, more stable and healthy homes, and less child welfare involvement.



Improved Health

Head Start children are more likely to have hearing and vision screening, be covered by health insurance, receive dental care and be immunized.



Economic Self-Sufficiency

In the most recent program year, more than 128,000 Head Start parents advanced an educational level and over 67,000 received job training.

To view this research on the benefits of Head Start, please visit NHTSA's Resources at [go.nhsa.org/hsa](https://www.go.nhsa.org/hsa).

Ready to Serve, Easy to Fund

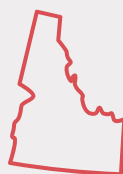
The 14 states that support Head Start lean on this infrastructure:

- Minnesota offers a cost-per-child level of support that reflects federal rates.
- State grantees in Alaska remain eligible for funding if they are in good standing federally.
- Iowa, like many other states, has modest application and data collection requirements.

Most states support Head Start through general funds, but a few states access other revenue:

- Maine directs a portion of their tobacco settlement funds to support Head Start.
- Oklahoma invests in Head Start through their Department of Commerce budget.
- Oregon lawmakers issued a new business sales tax to fund new education investments.

State Snapshot on Idaho



With support from the [Voices for Healthy Kids initiative](#), the Idaho Head Start Association's Head Start, Healthy Start campaign for state Head Start funding has placed a focus on the program's positive impact on literacy—a policy priority of the Governor—and family strengthening.

How Your State Can Help Close the Gap for At-Risk Kids

Persistent childhood poverty, paired with rising rates of foster care and other factors make Head Start and Early Head Start more important than ever as a tool to help at-risk children and families. Thanks to state-level support of over \$400 million, Head Start programs are directly reaching greater than 25,000 additional at-risk children and families and indirectly improving the lives of thousands more through Head Start's ripple effect. Community-based and proven to work, Head Start and Early Head Start programs are ready to help more at-risk children and families in your state.

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