Early Childhood Education in Alabama

State and federal funding enables more than 62,080 children and families in Alabama to access high-quality, public and private, early childhood programs.¹

Federal and State Early Childhood Education Funding in Alabama

- $146.6M Head Start and Early Head Start²
- $146.9M CCDBG and Mandatory Funds³
- $6.6M CCDBG State Match⁴
- $986.1M CCDBG COVID-Relief Allocations: CARES⁵ | CRRSA⁶ | ARPA (CCDF + Stabilization)⁷
- $127.4M State-Funded Pre-K⁸
- $6.7M MIECHV⁹
- $9.8M IDEA Part C¹⁰
- $8.8M IDEA Part B, Sec. 619¹¹
- $34.9M TANF¹² Early Learning and Care Expenditures¹³
- $14.5M Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five¹⁴

Alabama Quick Facts

- 9,101 Children Enrolled in Head Start¹⁵
- 17.94% Eligible Children Served by Head Start¹⁶
- 3,134 Children Enrolled in Early Head Start¹⁷
- 5.74% Eligible Children Served by Early Head Start¹⁸
- 21,708 Children Under Six Served by CCDBG and Mandatory Funds¹⁹
- 18.1% Eligible Children Under Six Served by CCDBG and Mandatory Funds²⁰
- 18,906 Children Enrolled in State Funded Pre-K²¹
- 1,854 Families Served by MIECHV²²
- 3,500 Children Served by IDEA Part C²³
- 3,877 Children Served by IDEA Part B, Sec. 619²⁴
- 25.39% Three- and Four-year old Children who Attend Public ECE²⁵

Early Childhood Education Economic Impact

In addition to the benefits to young children, access to affordable, high-quality child care can increase parental labor force participation and family economic stability. Child care problems, however, adversely affect both state and national economies. As a direct result of child care issues, the national economy loses upward of $57 billion annually in the form of lost earnings, productivity, and revenue.¹⁶

In Alabama

- 8.8% of parents make career sacrifices due to child care issues.¹⁶
- Labor force participation of mothers with children under the age of 5 decreased from 62.2% in 2019 to 60.1% in 2021.¹⁷

Nationwide²⁶

- The percent of families that reported difficulty finding space in a home- or center-based program increased dramatically from 22% in December 2021 to 58% in January 2022.
- 71% of parents report that difficulty finding child care has impacted their ability to work.
Alabama Early Learning and Care Snapshot

High Price of Care
Too often, the care that is available costs more than families can afford.

Annual Price of Infant Care in Alabama

Center-Based _____________ $7,800 per year

- Married Parents
  - Percent of Median Income: 8.9%
- Single Parent
  - Percent of Median Income: 35.0%

Home-Based _____________ $7,280 per year

- Married Parents
  - Percent of Median Income: 8.3%
- Single Parent
  - Percent of Median Income: 32.6%

Low Compensation for Early Educators

Despite the critical nature of their work, early educators are among the most underpaid workers in the nation.

- Child Care Workers Hourly Rate: $9.19
- Child Care Worker Est. Annual Salary: $19,120
- Federal Minimum Wage: $15,080
- Poverty Line*: Nationally, child care workers make less than 98% of all occupations

The Temporary Impact of ARPA Funding

In Alabama, 43,259 child care spots were saved by ARPA funds.

- Of providers who received stabilization grants:
  - 92% said funding helped them stay open.
  - 46% used funds to pay debts taken on in the course of the pandemic, including
  - 75% used funds for compensation but still struggle to provide competitive wages and benefits.
  - 63% of those in family child care homes.