High-quality early care and education (ECE) is proven to dramatically improve a child’s opportunities for a better future while offering parents greater job stability and overall economic security.

**The Economic Impact**

Access to affordable, high-quality child care can increase parental labor force participation and family economic stability. However, widespread problems finding and paying for child care adversely affect both state and national economies. As a direct result of child care issues, the national economy loses $122 billion annually in the form of lost earnings, productivity, and revenue. In D.C.: The estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $769M.

There are several early learning programs that provide working families with access to high-quality, affordable ECE opportunities, but currently the demand for care far outweighs the supply, and funding constraints leave many eligible children unserved. Each of these programs has its own eligibility requirements, purpose, and service delivery model. Together they form a mixed-delivery system that supports parental choice and aims to meet children’s individual needs.

- **Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG)**
  - 1,296 Children Birth Through Age Five Served
  - 7% Eligible Children Birth Through Age Five Served
  - Learn more about CCDBG in D.C. [here](#).

- **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)**
  - 615 Families Served
  - Learn more about MIECHV in D.C. [here](#).

- **State-Funded Pre-K**
  - 12,277 Children Enrolled
  - 76% of three- and four-year-old children attend public ECE

- **Head Start**
  - 456 Children Enrolled
  - 13% Eligible Children Served

- **Early Head Start**
  - 1,594 Children Enrolled
  - 45% Eligible Children Served

- **IDEA Part C**
  - 1,095 Children Served

- **IDEA Part B, Sec. 619**
  - 1,021 Children Served

- **Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC)**
  - Through the tax code, the CDCTC helps parents with the cost of work-related child care expenses.
  - Learn more about CDCTC [here](#).
Early Care and Education (ECE) in D.C. Snapshot

Federal and State ECE Funding in D.C.

Federal funding is foundational to providing ECE.

Spotlight: ECE Successes in D.C.

COVID-19 Relief: Throughout the pandemic, there was strong bipartisan support for federal relief funding to keep the child care sector afloat.
- As a result, 485 child care programs in D.C. received support, impacting up to 23,800 children.
- These funds also allowed states to demonstrate what would be possible when equipped with additional resources. Funds have been used to support and stabilize the workforce. Grants were available to all providers—not only those serving low-income children—and used to pay for staff, rent or utilities, personal protective equipment, mental health support, and more.

Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5):
PDG B-5 is a competitive federal grant designed to improve states’ early childhood systems. In their 2018 planning grant application, among other uses, D.C. noted that they would use funding to:
- Support better data integration and service coordination, by understanding participation rates across programs while supporting the transitions from ECE settings into K-12 school.
- Provide professional development to an additional 4,000 ECE professionals in the mixed delivery system, including DCPS, public charter schools, early interventionists, and home visitors.

Fed Office of the State Superintendent of Education | **DC PDG B-5 Application

For full sourcing information, visit here.

Affordability

The cost of ECE is too expensive for many families.
- The annual price of center-based infant care is $24,417, and home-based infant care is $18,143. Families receiving a CCDBG subsidy pay between $20 and $155 per month for one child in care. A two-parent household spends 8% of their income on child care, while HHS defines spending over 7% to be a burden.

ECE Workforce

Early childhood educators have some of the lowest paying jobs in the United States, earning poverty-level wages.
- $40,370 child care worker annual salary ($19.41 per hour).

Program Quality

Program quality varies substantially across and within states.
- Met 4/10 of NIEER’s Quality Standards Benchmarks for state-funded pre-K programs. Only 5 states met all 10 benchmarks in 2022.
- 30% of children received developmental screenings at 9, 18, and 30 months in the past year.

Accessibility

Many families struggle to find the care they need.
- 27% of D.C. residents live in a “child care desert.”
- Hispanics/Latinos and families with low incomes are disproportionately represented among those who live in a “child care desert.”
- 4% of children under age 3 receive early intervention services.

Accessibility

Many families struggle to find the care they need.
- $37M Head Start and Early Head Start
- $16.5M CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
- $1.6M MIECHV
- $3.6M IDEA Part C
- $0.4M IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
- $53.1M TANF Early Learning and Care Expenditures
- $251.9M State-Funded Pre-K
- $1.3M CCDBG State Match

D.C. received an additional $87M through COVID-19 relief.

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- Hispanics/Latinos and families with low incomes are disproportionately represented among those who live in a “child care desert.”
- 4% of children under age 3 receive early intervention services.

For full sourcing information, visit here.

*DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education | **DC PDG B-5, Application