In Iowa, federal and state early learning opportunities serve more than 52,251 children and families, or 22% of children birth through age 5.

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 Iowa: The estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $1.1B.

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)

10,496 Children Birth Through Age Five Served

12% Eligible Children Birth Through Age Five Served

Learn more about CCDBG in Iowa here.

Early Head Start

2,102 Children Enrolled

9% Eligible Children Served

Head Start

5,137 Children Enrolled

20% Eligible Children Served

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

809 Families Served

Learn more about MIECHV in Iowa here.

State-Funded Pre-K

26,771 Children Enrolled

34% of three- and four-year-old children attend public ECE

IDEA Part C

2,722 Children Served

IDEA Part B, Sec. 619

4,214 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.
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, **2,155** child care programs in Iowa received support, impacting up to **73,900** children.41
• 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 through wage bonuses. Through the Iowa Worker Premium Pay Program, early educators received recruitment and retention bonuses of $1,000 each.42

Program Quality
• **Met 8/10** of NIEER’s Quality Standards Benchmarks for state-funded pre-K programs. Only 5 states met all 10 benchmarks in 2022.28
• **36%** of children received developmental screenings at 9, 18, and 30 months in the past year.29

For full sourcing information, visit [here](#).