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.² In Maine, the estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $403M.³

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)
3,312 Children Birth Through Age Five Served⁴
12% Eligible Children Birth Through Age Five Served⁵

Learn more about CCDBG in Maine here.

Early Head Start
895 Children Enrolled⁶
14% Eligible Children Served⁷

Head Start
1,776 Children Enrolled⁸
30% Eligible Children Served⁹

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)
1,665 Families Served¹⁰
Learn more about MIECHV in Maine here.

State-Funded Pre-K
5,315 Children Enrolled¹¹
21% of three- and four-year-old children attend public ECE¹²

IDEA Part C
1,036 Children Served¹³

IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
2,243 Children Served¹⁴

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 Maine Snapshot

**Accessibility**

Many families struggle to find the care they need.
- **22%** of Maine 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.”
- **2%** of children under age 3 receive early intervention services.

**Affordability**

The cost of ECE is too expensive for many families.
- The annual price of center-based infant care is **$11,960**, and home-based infant care is **$8,580**.
- Families receiving a CCDBG subsidy pay between **$4** and **$471** per month for one child in care.
- A two-parent household spends **9%** 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.
- **$32,080** child care worker annual salary ($15.42 per hour).

**Program Quality**

Program quality varies substantially across and within states.
- **Met 9/10** of NIEER’s Quality Standards Benchmarks for state-funded pre-K programs. Only 5 states met all 10 benchmarks in 2022.
- **37%** of children received developmental screenings at 9, 18, and 30 months in the past year.

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

Federal and State ECE Funding in Maine

Federal funding is foundational to providing ECE.

Maine received an additional **$160M** through COVID-19 relief.

- $44M ● Head Start and Early Head Start
- $24.4M ● CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
- $6.1M ● MIECHV
- $3.6M ● IDEA Part C
- $2.9M ● IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
- $22M ● TANF Early Learning and Care Expenditures
- $8M ● PDG B-5
- $22.7M ● State-Funded Pre-K
- $3.3M ● CCDBG State Match
- $2.4M ● PDG B-5 State Match

**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, **1,530** child care programs in Maine received support, impacting up to **47,200** 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 through wage bonuses. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services dedicated funds to the early childhood workforce by distributing **$200** per staff member per month (starting for one year).

**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 2023 renewal grant application, among other uses, Maine noted that they would use funding to:
- **Restart and more fully implement** a First 10 Schools and Communities (F10SC) pilot in six sites across Maine.
- **Establish a representative stakeholder group to study the current funding model for public pre-K,** and recommend pilot projects to test new designs that will increase access to public pre-K through partnership models.

*Maine Department of Health and Human Services | **BUILD*