In Massachusetts, federal and state early learning opportunities serve more than 88,167 children and families, or 21% 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 Massachusetts: The estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $3.3B.

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)
18,368 Children Birth Through Age Five

Eligible Children Birth Through Age Five

13%

Learn more about CCDBG in Massachusetts here.

Early Head Start
2,730 Children Enrolled

Eligible Children Served

10%

Head Start
8,069 Children Enrolled

Eligible Children Served

29%

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)
1,837 Families Served

Learn more about MIECHV in Massachusetts here.

State-Funded Pre-K
26,450 Children Enrolled

19% of three- and four-year-old children attend public ECE

IDEA Part C
20,316 Children Served

IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
10,397 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.
Federal and State ECE Funding in Massachusetts

Federal funding is foundational to providing ECE. Throughout the pandemic, there was strong bipartisan support for federal relief funding to keep the child care sector afloat.

- As a result, 6,530 child care programs in Massachusetts received support, impacting up to 202,400 children.
- These funds also allowed states to demonstrate what would be possible when equipped with additional resources. Funds have been used to support child care providers to keep their doors open.

The Commonwealth Care for Children (C3) formula distributes grants based on capacity and staffing costs and includes an equity adjustment for providers serving vulnerable communities and children. The goal was to cover a minimum of 10% of providers' operational costs during the course of the grant.

**COVID-19 Relief:**
Massachusetts received an additional $678M through COVID-19 relief.

**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, Massachusetts noted that they would use funding to:
- Launch and sustain child care programs that respond to local gaps in child care availability, with a particular focus on supporting family child care providers with initial expenses and learning necessary skills for success.
- Provide training to help programs build their marketing skills and learn to communicate more effectively with families.

For full sourcing information, visit here.