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 Oklahoma: The estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $1.2B.

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)
17,430 Children Birth Through Age Five Served
Learn more about CCDBG in Oklahoma here.

Early Head Start
4,508 Children Enrolled

Head Start
9,965 Children Enrolled

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)
900 Families Served
Learn more about MIECHV in Oklahoma here.

State-Funded Pre-K
36,628 Children Enrolled

IDEA Part C
2,271 Children Served

IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
4,982 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 Oklahoma Snapshot

### Accessibility

Many families struggle to find the care they need.
- **55%** of Oklahoma residents live in a “child care desert.”
- **Hispanics/Latinos and rural families** 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 **$9,176**, and home-based infant care is **$7,816**.
- Families receiving a CCDBG subsidy pay between **$12** and **$263** 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.
- **$24,280** child care worker annual salary ($11.67 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.
- **31%** of children received developmental screenings at 9, 18, and 30 months in the past year.

Federal and State ECE Funding in Oklahoma

Federal funding is foundational to providing ECE.

- **$169.1M** • Head Start and Early Head Start
- **$145.9M** • CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
- **$6.8M** • MIECHV
- **$8.4M** • IDEA Part C
- **$5.9M** • IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
- **$43.3M** • TANF Early Learning and Care Expenditures
- **$12M** • PDG B-5
- **$184.7M** • State-Funded Pre-K
- **$10.7M** • CCDBG State Match
- **$3.6M** • PDG B-5 State Match

Oklahoma received an additional **$760M** through COVID-19 relief.

Spotlight: ECE Successes in Oklahoma

**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, **2,625** child care programs in Oklahoma received support, impacting up to **107,200** 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 early childhood sector by supporting key operating expenses, wages and benefits, rent and utilities, etc. Speciality grants are available to start new child care programs, including those that provide non-traditional hours and address deserts in low-income and special needs communities, among others.

**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, Oklahoma noted that they would use funding to:

- **Support existing and new programs to build the supply of child care**, administering Child Care Desert Grants and Exceptional Needs Reimbursement Grants to serve children in child care deserts and children with special needs.
- **Promote Care for Kids**, a recruitment platform for ECE positions to increase retention efforts and address providers’ needs.

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

*Oklahoma Human Services | **BUILD*