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 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.⁷ In Utah: The estimated annual economic impact of the infant-toddler child care crisis: $1.2B.⁸

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)

- **7,564** Children Birth Through Age Five Served²
- **10%** Eligible Children Birth Through Age Five Served¹⁰

Learn more about CCDBG in Utah here.

### Early Head Start

- **1,825** Children Enrolled¹¹
- **8%** Eligible Children Served²

### Head Start

- **4,689** Children Enrolled¹³
- **36%** Eligible Children Served⁴

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

- **558** Families Served¹⁶

Learn more about MIECHV in Utah here.

### State-Funded Pre-K

- **2,813** Children Enrolled¹⁶
- **3%** of three- and four-year-old children attend public ECE¹⁷

### IDEA Part C

- **4,892** Children Served¹⁸

### IDEA Part B, Sec. 619

- **7,311** Children Served¹⁹

### 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 Utah

Federal funding is foundational to providing ECE.

$76.6M • Head Start and Early Head Start
$108.5M • CCDBG and Mandatory Funds
$3.1M • MIECHV
$8.2M • IDEA Part C
$5.7M • IDEA Part B, Sec. 619
$24.1M • TANF Early Learning and Care Expenditures
$4.8M • PDG B-5
$6.21M • State-Funded Pre-K
$11.1M • CCDBG State Match
$1.4M • PDG B-5 State Match

Utah received an additional $574M through COVID-19 relief.

Spotlight: ECE Successes in Utah

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, 1,585 child care programs in Utah received support, impacting up to 82,500 children.
• These funds also allowed states to demonstrate what would be possible when equipped with additional resources. Funds have been used to support providers facing financial burdens due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The monthly base grant amount is $250 per child multiplied by the license capacity amount, and there is an enhancement of $300 per child for providers who agree to pay at least $15/hour for at least half of their staff.

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, Utah noted that they would use funding to:

• Increase the number of developmental screenings, including by using a mobile app to engage parents in completing screenings and connecting them with a parent support specialist for referral and assistance.
• Develop a one-stop early childhood website for families, including program and eligibility information, a referral system, information on developmental milestones, and more.

Early Care and Education (ECE) in Utah Snapshot

Accessibility

Many families struggle to find the care they need.

• 77% of Utah residents live in a “child care desert.”
• Rural families are disproportionately represented among those who live in a “child care desert.”
• 3% 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 $11,232, and home-based infant care is $8,400.
• Families receiving a CCDBG subsidy pay between $18 and $198 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.

• $27,250 child care worker annual salary ($13.10 per hour).

Program Quality

Program quality varies substantially across and within states.

• Met 3/10 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.

For full sourcing information, visit here.