

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Early Head Start is the number and percentage of low-income infants and toddlers enrolled in a Rhode Island Early Head Start program.

SIGNIFICANCE

Established in 1995, Early Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood program serving low-income children birth to age three, pregnant women, and their families. Early Head Start programs serve children in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (\$20,780 for a family of three in 2018).^{1,2,3} The federally-funded Early Head Start program is designed to address the comprehensive needs of low-income infants and toddlers and pregnant women by providing high-quality early education, nutrition and mental health services, medical and dental referrals, and fostering the development of healthy family relationships.⁴

Pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start are assessed for risks to a successful pregnancy. Individualized plans are developed to support prenatal health, promote healthy behaviors, and prepare for the baby's arrival.⁵ After the baby is born, families participate by enrolling in either a center-based or a home-based program. Home-based programs use weekly home visits to support child development and twice-monthly group meetings. Children in center-based

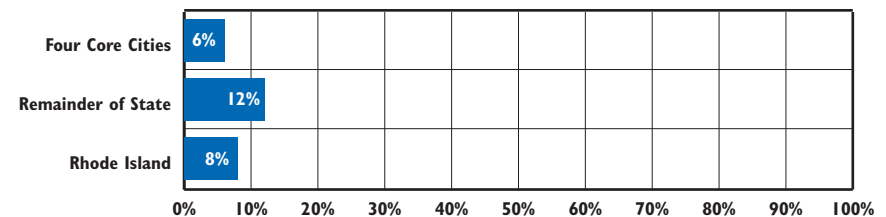
models attend a center-based early care and education program and families receive at least two home visits per year. Some provide a combination of home-based and center-based services.⁶

As of October 2017, of the 641 children and pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start, 383 (60%) were enrolled in home-based services and 258 (40%) were in center-based programs.⁷ An Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant awarded in 2015 created 100 new center-based Early Head Start slots in Rhode Island through partnerships with child care programs to increase the number of infants and toddlers enrolled.^{8,9}

Early Head Start has been shown to produce significant cognitive, language, and social-emotional gains in participating children and more positive interactions with their parents. Early Head Start parents provide more emotional support and more opportunities for language and learning to their children, and are more likely to pursue education and job-training activities and to be employed.^{10,11} Children who enroll in preschool after Early Head Start have better outcomes in early reading skills.¹²

As of October 2017, 629 infants and toddlers and 12 pregnant women were receiving Early Head Start services in Rhode Island and there were 191 eligible pregnant women or children on the waiting list.¹³

Estimated Percent of Eligible Infants and Toddlers Enrolled in Early Head Start, 2017



Source: Rhode Island Kid Count calculations using Early Head Start program enrollment October 2017 as the numerator and number of children under age 3 from Census 2010, Summary File 1 multiplied by the percent of children under age 6 living in families with incomes below the federal poverty level according to the Population Reference Bureau's (PRB) analysis of 2012-2016 American Community Survey data as the denominator.

◆ As of October 2017 in Rhode Island, there were 641 children and pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start, 8% of the population in poverty and 5% of the population in low-income families. There were 325 children and pregnant women from the four core cities (6% of the population in poverty and 5% of the population in low-income families). In the remainder of the state, 316 children and pregnant women were enrolled in Early Head Start (12% of the population in poverty and 6% of the population in low-income families).^{14,15}

◆ As of October 2017, 2% of Early Head Start clients were pregnant women, 19% were infants under age one, 31% were age one, 46% were toddlers age two, and 3% were age three.¹⁶

◆ Rhode Island Early Head Start programs serve significant numbers of children with high needs including: 103 infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities (16% of all children enrolled), 31 children who were in foster care, and 14 children who were homeless.¹⁷ Early Head Start programs are required to prioritize enrollment for children with special needs and to screen all enrolled children to identify developmental delays and disabilities.¹⁸

◆ As of October 2017, 34% of the children enrolled in Early Head Start were also participating in the Child Care Assistance Program.¹⁹ Center-based Early Head Start programs do not cover the entire day for many working parents. CCAP is used to provide additional coverage for working parents.²⁰

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

Table 33. Children Ages Birth to Three and Pregnant Women Enrolled in Early Head Start, Rhode Island, 2017

SCHOOL DISTRICT	ESTIMATED # OF CHILDREN <AGE 3	% LOW-INCOME CHILDREN IN DISTRICT	ESTIMATED # LOW-INCOME CHILDREN <AGE 3	# ENROLLED IN HOME-BASED EARLY HEAD START	# ENROLLED IN CENTER-BASED EARLY HEAD START	# ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % OF LOW-INCOME INFANTS AND TODDLERS ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START
Barrington	582	5%	29	0	0	0	0%
Bristol Warren	759	31%	235	8	0	8	3%
Burrillville	405	29%	117	4	8	12	10%
Central Falls	522	76%	397	38	25	63	16%
Charlho	552	17%	94	4	0	4	4%
Coventry	951	30%	285	7	8	15	5%
Cranston	2,109	43%	907	0	20	20	2%
Cumberland	1,026	22%	226	0	5	5	2%
East Greenwich	441	5%	22	3	0	3	14%
East Providence	1,122	51%	572	11	12	23	4%
Exeter-West Greenwich	345	14%	48	2	1	3	6%
Foster	93	20%	19	0	0	0	0%
Glocester	249	14%	35	0	0	0	0%
Jamestown	153	10%	15	0	0	0	0%
Johnston	687	45%	309	12	6	18	6%
Lincoln	594	23%	137	0	3	3	2%
Little Compton	60	9%	5	0	0	0	0%
Middletown	504	31%	156	5	7	12	8%
Narragansett	210	18%	38	0	4	4	11%
New Shoreham	24	18%	4	0	0	0	0%
Newport	570	64%	365	12	26	38	37%
North Kingstown	618	22%	136	7	0	7	5%
North Providence	738	52%	384	14	11	25	7%
North Smithfield	333	17%	57	0	1	1	2%
Pawtucket	1,986	61%	1,211	28	35	63	5%
Portsmouth	459	17%	78	0	0	0	0%
Providence	5,061	87%	4,403	162	26	188	4%
Scituate	234	16%	37	1	0	1	3%
Smithfield	447	14%	63	5	2	7	11%
South Kingstown	612	17%	104	6	3	9	9%
Tiverton	402	23%	92	1	1	2	2%
Warwick	1,932	31%	599	25	23	48	8%
West Warwick	558	37%	206	23	20	43	21%
Westerly	885	46%	407	5	0	5	1%
Woonsocket	1,434	72%	1,032	0	11	11	1%
Charter Schools	2,343	67%	1,570	NA	NA	NA	NA
RI School for the Deaf	18	64%	12	NA	NA	NA	NA
Four Core Cities	9,003	79%	7,112	228	97	325	5%
Remainder of State	18,654	30%	5,596	155	161	316	6%
Rhode Island	30,018	47%	14,108	383	258	641	5%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Early Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2017. Children enrolled are listed by residence of child, not location of the Head Start program.

The estimated number of low income children under age three in each school district is based on October 2017 kindergarten enrollment (3x kindergarten enrollment) multiplied by the percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced price lunch (at or below 185% of the federal poverty level).

Due to changes in methodology, the percentage of children enrolled in Early Head Start should not be compared with Factbooks prior to 2018.

Charter Schools with kindergarten include: Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, The Compass School, Paul Cuffee Charter School, Highlander Charter School, Hope Academy, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, The Learning Community, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, and South Side Elementary Charter School.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

- ^{1,610} Vogel, C. A., et al. (2015). *Toddlers in Early Head Start: A portrait of 2-year-olds, their families, and the programs serving them*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation.
- ² *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, § 42 U.S.C. 9801, § 645 (2007).
- ³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018). Annual update of the HHS poverty guidelines. *Federal Register*, 83(12), 2642-2643.
- ⁴ Cosse, R. (2017). *Head start preschool participants, programs, families, and staff in 2016*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy.
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2011). *Should EHS programs enroll pregnant women/expectant families? Early Head Start tip sheet no. 15*. Retrieved February 8, 2017 from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov>

(continued on page 185)