

Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

DEFINITION

Children enrolled in Early Head Start is the percentage of eligible children under age 3 enrolled in a Rhode Island Early Head Start program as of October 2004.

SIGNIFICANCE

Early Head Start was established in 1994 to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, support the early care and education of infants and toddlers younger than age three and foster healthy familial relationships while building community resources.¹

Children are eligible for Early Head Start if their families' incomes are below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines, the family receives Supplemental Security Income, is enrolled in the Family Independence Program or is using supportive services that are federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits (i.e. transportation vouchers, subsidized child care, or job training). Children in foster care and pregnant women who intend to enroll children after birth are also eligible to participate.^{2,3}

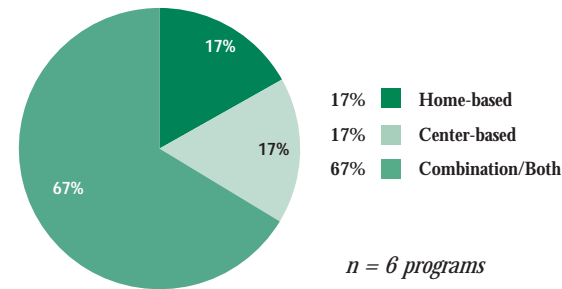
There are three types of Early Head Start Programs: home-based, center-based and a combination of the two. Home-based programs use weekly home visits to support child development and the parent-child relationship and offer

group activities two times per month. Center-based programs provide enrollment for children in an early care and education program and twice yearly home visits. Combination programs combine regular home visits with center-based programming. Nationally, 46% of Early Head Start programs are center-based, 43% are home-based, and the remainder are either combination or locally designed models.⁴

Pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start are assessed for risks to a successful pregnancy (e.g. environmental toxins, domestic violence and inadequate nutrition and prenatal care). Pregnancy plans are developed to support prenatal health, the promotion of healthy behaviors and preparation for each baby's arrival.⁵

The National Evaluation of Early Head Start showed that the program produced significant cognitive and language development gains in participating children and more positive interaction with their parents. Early Head Start parents provided more emotional support and greater opportunities for language and learning to their children. Early Head Start mothers also have fewer subsequent births within two years of enrollment and are more likely to participate in education and job-training activities.⁶

Type of Early Head Start Programs in Rhode Island, 2004



Note: percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

◆ During 2004 in Rhode Island, 31 pregnant women and 379 infants and toddlers received Early Head Start services, representing approximately 5% of the income-eligible children younger than 3 in Rhode Island.⁷

Quality Standards for Early Head Start Programs

- ◆ Teachers in Early Head Start centers must have, at a minimum, a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or its equivalent at the time of hire or within one year of hire.⁸
- ◆ The staff-to-child ratio for all infants and toddlers in an Early Head Start center must be no less than 1:4. The maximum group size is limited to no more than 8 children for all age groups.⁹
- ◆ Each child in an Early Head Start center is assigned a primary caregiver who is responsible for his or her regular care. These primary care giving relationships are continued throughout the child's tenure in the program.¹⁰
- ◆ Early Head Start programs must ensure that child care services used by families meet the Early Head Start Performance Standards either by providing the care directly or by working in collaboration with other community providers.¹¹

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Table 26. Percent of Eligible Children Under Age 3 Enrolled in Early Head Start, Rhode Island, 2004

CITY/TOWN	# OF PREGNANT WOMEN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED ELIGIBLE CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3*	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	% OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN UNDER AGE 3 ENROLLED
Barrington	0	13	0	0%
Bristol	0	57	1	2%
Burrillville	0	50	8	16%
Central Falls	1	400	53	13%
Charlestown	0	11	0	0%
Coventry	2	72	23	32%
Cranston	2	211	24	11%
Cumberland	0	51	0	0%
East Greenwich	1	28	1	4%
East Providence	1	204	30	15%
Exeter	0	26	0	0%
Foster	0	0	0	N/A
Glocester	0	15	3	20%
Hopkinton	0	17	0	0%
Jamestown	0	0	1	100%*
Johnston	1	81	10	12%
Lincoln	0	33	0	0%
Little Compton	0	5	0	0%
Middletown	1	40	12	30%
Narragansett	0	22	0	0%
New Shoreham	0	2	0	0%
Newport	3	371	52	14%
North Kingstown	0	114	0	0%
North Providence	1	99	8	8%
North Smithfield	0	26	0	0%
Pawtucket	1	842	0	0%
Portsmouth	0	33	2	6%
Providence	4	3,092	36	1%
Richmond	0	10	0	0%
Scituate	0	17	0	0%
Smithfield	0	6	7	100%*
South Kingstown	0	41	0	0%
Tiverton	0	25	1	4%
Warren	0	23	5	22%
Warwick	8	188	55	29%
West Greenwich	0	8	0	0%
West Warwick	5	299	47	16%
Westerly	0	77	0	0%
Woonsocket	0	733	0	0%
<i>Core Cities</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>5,737</i>	<i>188</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>1,605</i>	<i>191</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>7,342</i>	<i>379</i>	<i>5%</i>

*Estimated Number Eligible is based on Census 2000 and may not reflect increases or decreases in eligible population

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Early Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2004.

The denominator is the estimated number of eligible children based on the number of children under age 3 in each community multiplied by the poverty rate for children under 5, according to Census 2000, Summary File 3 tables P87 and P8. This is an estimate of the eligible population and does not take into account any increases or decreases in the number of eligible children enrolled in Head Start since 2000. Children younger than 3 are more likely to be poor than children ages 3 to 5. Thus, using the poverty rate for children under 5 probably underestimates the numbers of children younger than 3 below poverty (and eligible for Early Head Start).

Core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

References

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- ^{8,9,10,11} Mann, T. L., Bogle, M. M., & Parlakian, R. (2004). Early Head Start: An overview. In J. Lombardi & M.M. Bogle (Eds.). *Beacon of hope: The promise of Early Head Start for America's youngest children* (pp.1-19). Washington, DC: Zero to Three Press.
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