

Head Start Program Facts

Fiscal Year 2019

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social, and other services. Since its inception, Head Start has served more than 37 million children, birth to age 5, and their families. In 2019, Head Start was funded to serve nearly 1 million children and pregnant women in centers, family homes, and family child care homes in urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout the nation. ([More on Head Start](#))

Throughout this fact sheet, unless otherwise specified, the term "Head Start" refers to the Head Start program as a whole, including: Head Start services to preschool children; Early Head Start services to infants, toddlers, and pregnant women; services to families by American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) programs; and services to families by Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs.

The term "funded enrollment" refers to the number of children and pregnant women that are supported by federal Head Start funds in a program at any one time during the program year; these are sometimes referred to as enrollment slots. Funded enrollment numbers include enrollment slots funded by state or other funds when used by grantees as required nonfederal match. States may provide additional funding to local Head Start programs, which is not included in federal Head Start reporting.

The term "cumulative enrollment" refers to the actual number of children and pregnant women that Head Start programs serve throughout the entire program year, inclusive of enrollees who left during the program year and the enrollees who filled those empty places. Due to turnover, more children and families may receive Head Start services cumulatively throughout the program year, all of whom are reported in the Program Information Report (PIR), than indicated by the funded enrollment numbers.

Federal Appropriations

The Congress of the United States authorizes the amount of federal spending for Head Start each year. The Head Start program is administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Federal grants are awarded directly to public agencies, private nonprofit and for-profit organizations, tribal governments, and school systems for operating Head Start programs in local communities.

Activity	Amount
Head Start Program, incl. Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships	\$9,658,096,317
Training and Technical Assistance	\$239,679,418
Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation	\$21,695,911
Monitoring Support	\$41,994,808
Program Support	\$41,994,256
Designation Renewal System (DRS) Transitions Support	\$24,999,980
Total	\$10,028,460,690

Annual Federal Funding and Funded Enrollment by State

The Head Start program serves children, families, and pregnant women in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and six territories. The table in this section presents the total actual funding awarded and funded enrollment of Head Start programs in each state and territory.

AIAN funding is awarded to AIAN tribal governments. AIAN programs operate in 26 states, and in some cases, their services cross state lines. MSHS funding and funded enrollment are shown as one total, as this program supports children and families who receive services in various states during the year. Thus, federal funding and funded enrollment for these services cannot simply be attributed to individual states.

Annual Federal Funding and Funded Enrollment

State/Territory	Head Start (excl. AIAN)		AIAN ¹	
	Federal Funding	Funded Enrollment	Federal Funding	Funded Enrollment
Alabama	\$146,609,797	14,285		
Alaska	\$20,243,229	1,474	\$38,417,013	1,924
Arizona	\$173,969,609	13,376	\$38,345,454	3,198
Arkansas	\$102,417,442	9,597		
California	\$1,265,359,776	89,211	\$14,055,836	801
Colorado	\$112,877,319	9,631	\$2,564,882	183
Connecticut	\$69,178,458	5,755		
Delaware	\$20,776,828	2,147		
District of Columbia	\$36,771,010	3,727		
Florida	\$416,038,192	40,632		
Georgia	\$243,412,108	24,088		
Hawaii	\$29,519,230	2,941		
Idaho	\$41,710,002	2,944	\$5,176,608	319
Illinois	\$386,044,040	34,803		
Indiana	\$152,941,851	13,973		
Iowa	\$79,245,564	7,273		
Kansas	\$78,907,931	7,060	\$2,238,450	109
Kentucky	\$182,663,585	15,167		
Louisiana	\$197,650,528	20,819		
Maine	\$43,450,433	3,027	\$845,254	60
Maryland	\$116,690,113	9,483		
Massachusetts	\$154,250,347	11,771		
Michigan	\$360,603,806	29,394	\$7,763,228	566
Minnesota	\$127,808,660	11,173	\$15,494,569	1,004
Mississippi	\$210,014,339	22,540	\$2,297,640	268
Missouri	\$180,326,154	14,663		
Montana	\$36,775,718	3,051	\$20,841,764	1,790
Nebraska	\$59,017,652	4,912	\$5,612,114	349
Nevada	\$41,018,761	3,021	\$4,373,076	362
New Hampshire	\$20,472,038	1,563		

New Jersey	\$178,712,857	15,464		
New Mexico	\$73,767,106	7,055	\$28,273,120	2,452
New York	\$592,046,929	47,947	\$1,531,472	143
North Carolina	\$226,397,225	21,078	\$2,857,859	230
North Dakota	\$24,074,470	1,954	\$12,342,131	969
Ohio	\$368,199,563	34,004		
Oklahoma	\$129,916,951	14,377	\$36,060,470	3,007
Oregon	\$107,056,750	12,724	\$4,314,780	396
Pennsylvania	\$343,775,074	35,979		
Rhode Island	\$33,774,515	2,682		
South Carolina	\$125,025,938	11,882	\$1,717,029	112
South Dakota	\$27,809,998	2,759	\$25,534,394	1,820
Tennessee	\$178,917,777	16,716		
Texas	\$675,896,889	70,265	\$450,170	34
Utah	\$76,788,664	5,624	\$6,057,812	242
Vermont	\$24,995,665	1,447		
Virginia	\$141,690,923	14,029		
Washington	\$173,888,939	11,360	\$26,864,529	1,486
West Virginia	\$72,413,335	7,849		
Wisconsin	\$151,144,315	13,372	\$13,565,175	1,089
Wyoming	\$21,439,385	1,590	\$2,896,335	295
American Samoa	\$4,072,098	1,332		
Guam	\$3,838,120	534		
No. Marianas	\$3,425,297	460		
Palau	\$1,759,055	350		
Puerto Rico	\$309,915,230	32,043		
Virgin Islands	\$10,321,207	1,014		
Subtotal:	\$9,187,828,795	819,391	\$320,491,164	23,208
MSSH	\$458,774,791	30,420		

Total	
Funding	\$9,967,094,750
Enrollment	873,019

.AIAN funding is awarded to AIAN tribes. For reference, the funding and enrollment has been split out by the state in which the tribe is headquartered. Some tribes serve children across state lines.

Program Year Statistics

Each year, Head Start programs are required to submit a PIR on the services they have provided to children and families throughout the program year, including child, family, and staff demographics and program characteristics.

For a copy of the PIR form, detailed reports, and data sets for prior years, and for further information, please visit: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/pir>.

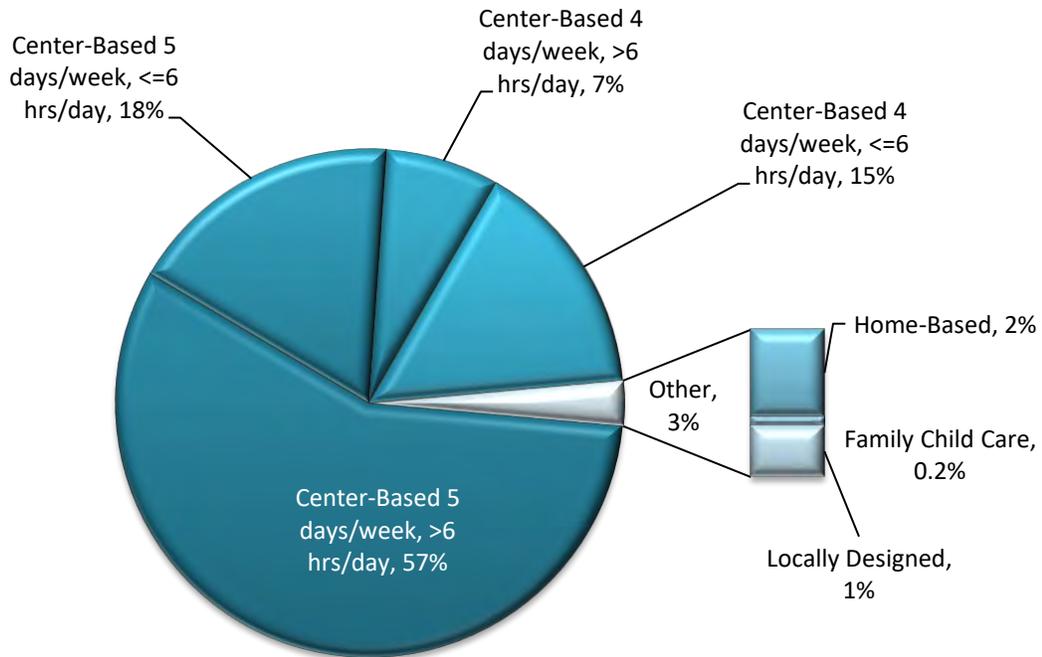
Program Characteristics:

Most grantees provided both Head Start and Early Head Start services. The methodology for calculating the percent of grantees by program type has been updated for this fact sheet, and moving forward, to reflect the agency level to account for multi-grant agencies.

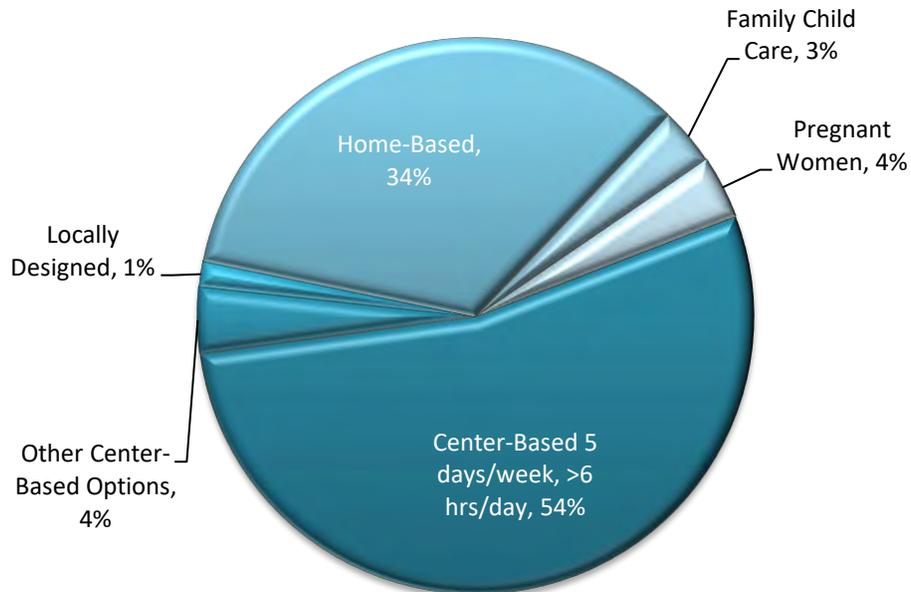
- Twenty-nine percent of grantees provided Head Start preschool services only.
- Thirteen percent of grantees provided Early Head Start (EHS) services only.
- Fifty-eight percent of grantees provided both Head Start and Early Head Start services.

Most Head Start preschool services were provided in center-based settings that, based on local design, vary in the number of days per week and hours per day classes are in session. Over half of EHS services were provided in center-based settings, and less than half were offered in home-based program settings.

% of Enrolled Children by Head Start Preschool Program Options



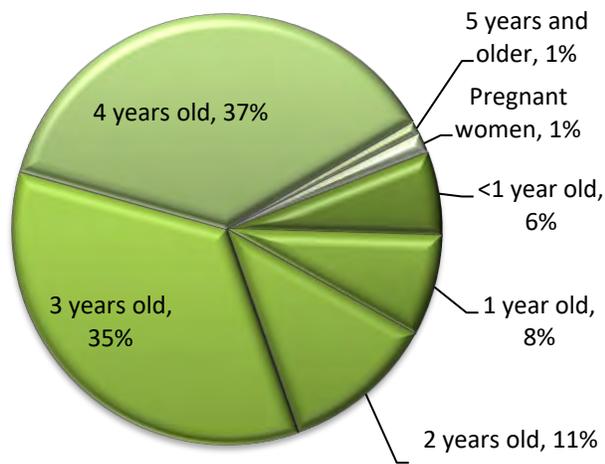
% of Enrolled Children by Early Head Start Program Option



Child and Family Demographics:

Head Start programs cumulatively served 1,047,000 children ages birth to 5 and pregnant women throughout the 2018–2019 program year.

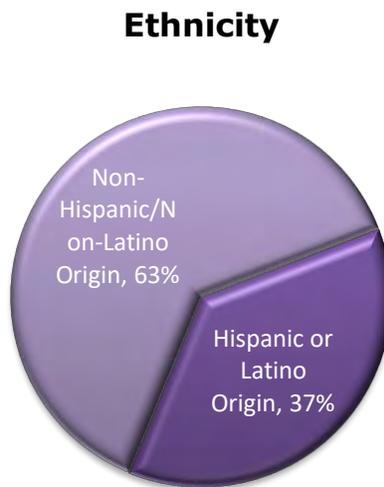
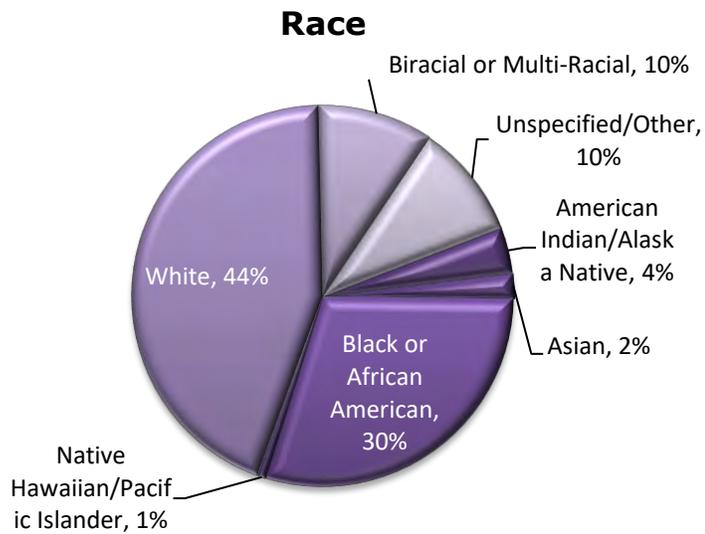
Cumulative Enrollment by Age



Head Start served a diverse group of children, families, and pregnant women. Thirty-seven percent identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino, and 30% were Black/African-American.

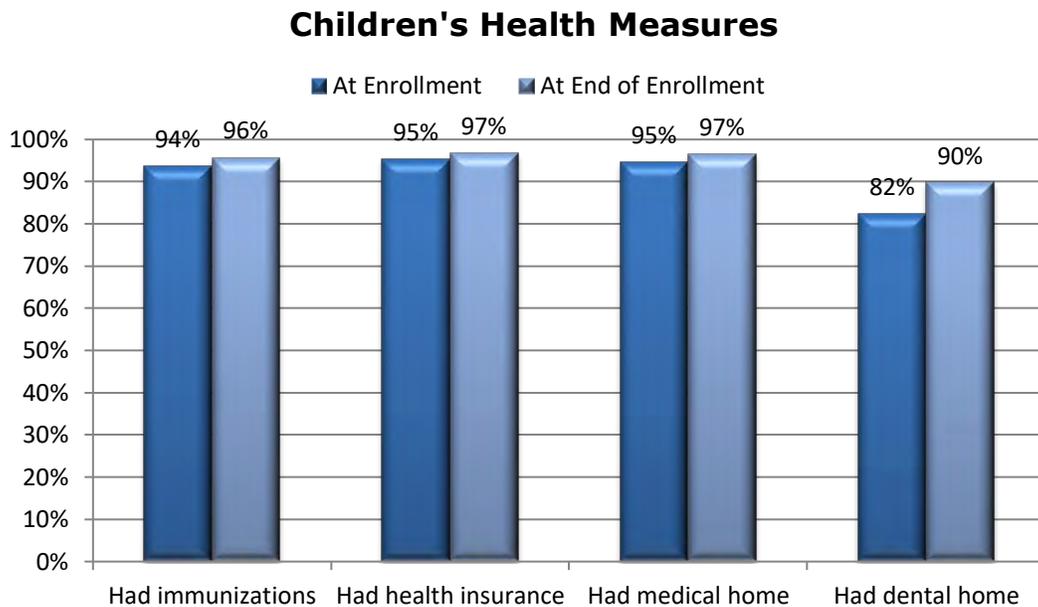
Families were asked to self-identify both an ethnicity and a race category based on U.S. Census Bureau measures. For example, a family that identifies their child as Black and Cuban was counted in the "Black or African-American" race category for the race question and counted in the "Hispanic or Latino" category for the separate question on ethnicity.

Twenty-eight percent of participants were from families that primarily spoke a language other than English at home. Approximately 22% of participants were from families that primarily spoke Spanish at home.



Services to Children and Families:

Head Start programs work with families to help ensure children have access to needed services and resources. The number of children who received immunizations increased from the beginning of the program year to the end of the program year. Also, more families had health insurance and medical and dental homes for their children at the end of the 2018–2019 program year than at the beginning.



Head Start programs work with families to ensure they have the means to obtain health insurance, services for children with disabilities, adequate housing, job training, and more. In fiscal year 2019:

- Most children had public health insurance. At the end of the program year, 90% of children were enrolled in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or a state-funded child health insurance program.
- Thirteen percent of Head Start cumulative enrollment was made up of children with disabilities, defined as children having special plans under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In comparison, nationally, about 3% of infants and toddlers and 6% of preschool-age children have identified disabilities. Head Start serves a greater percentage of children with disabilities than found in the overall population.
- Among pregnant women enrolled in EHS, approximately 79% received prenatal education on fetal development and 21% had medically high-risk pregnancies.
- Head Start served about 947,000 families cumulatively throughout the program year. The number of families served is less than the number of participants served, since some families have more than one child enrolled.
- Approximately 59,000 families served during the enrollment year experienced homelessness. Of those families, 27% found housing during the program year.

Approximately 69,000 Head Start families received housing assistance, such as subsidies, utilities, and repairs.

- Approximately 151,000 families, or 16%, received services related to job training and adult education, such as general equivalency diploma (GED) programs and college selection.

Program Staff:

Head Start programs employed and contracted with 273,000 staff. Parents of current or former Head Start children made up 23% of Head Start staff.

- Approximately 1,061,000 adults volunteered in their local Head Start program. Of these, 749,000 were parents of Head Start children.
- About 127,000 staff members provided child development services to children, including teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers.
- Among child development staff, 30% were proficient in a language other than English.
- Seventy-two percent of all Head Start center-based preschool teachers had a baccalaureate degree or higher in early childhood education, or in a related field with experience. The Head Start Act specifies that 50% of center-based preschool teachers nationwide should have had these credentials by 2013.

Center-Based Preschool Teachers' Degrees

