

September 2023

## Early Head Start

Early Head Start (EHS) is a program serving low-income pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families by providing child development and family support services in various child care settings. Pregnant women, infants, and toddlers are eligible for EHS services if their family income is at or below the federal poverty level. Although EHS is primarily a federally funded program that supports local grantees, states have leverage to invest in EHS by braiding and blending federal and state funds to support EHS programs, child care partnerships, and similar programming. Below is a list of policy options state leaders may consider to expand access to EHS. **States should consider the implications of these policy choices and their collective impact on equitable access to EHS for their state.**

We use the following symbol to highlight where policy choices can promote greater equity. 

Research indicates high-quality EHS services and supports bolster children’s wellbeing and development directly and indirectly, by providing children with individualized services, high-quality early care and learning environments, and by building parents’ skills and community connections.

This checklist covers the following components of state policy related to Early Head Start:

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<b>STATE FUNDING</b>	<b>EARLY HEAD START - CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>SUPPLEMENTAL STATE PROGRAMS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State funding</li> <li>• Federal funding</li> <li>• Services supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees</li> <li>• Funding targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current program</li> <li>• Population eligible</li> <li>• Settings available</li> <li>• Additional services</li> </ul>

To learn more about how states vary in their support of Early Head Start, please visit our website.



## State Funding

Although EHS funds traditionally flow from the federal government to local organizations, states can allocate state and other federal funds (e.g. MIECHV) to EHS programs to expand the reach of services. As of September 2022, only 12 states invest state funds in EHS.



Using available state funding to target specific equity gaps (e.g., low workforce compensation, child care deserts) to support EHS programs may increase access to needed services and promote greater equity.

### 1. Does your state directly invest state funds in EHS?

- Yes. The value of the state investment in FY \_\_\_\_\_ : \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .
- No.

### 2. If so, which of the following funding sources does your state use to support EHS programming?

Check all that apply.

- General fund
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
- Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)
- Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. If your state uses state funds for EHS, what are the funds used to support? Check all that apply.

- Opening new EHS programs
- Expanding existing EHS programs to serve more children
- Increasing pay for EHS staff
- Improving quality
- Extending hours of available care
- Ensuring localities can meet the federal matching requirement
- Supporting home-based programming
- Supporting center-based programming
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership

Though most Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grantees are local, states can also leverage federal funding by acting as grantees and contributing a state match to participate in the program. As of September 2022, six states are EHS-CCP grantees. The EHS-CCP program brings together EHS programs and child care providers participating in the federal child care subsidy program by layering program funding. Participating child care providers must meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards, which promote high-quality care and education environments and access to comprehensive services for participating children.

### 1. Is your state an EHS-CCP grantee?

- Yes
- No

### 2. If so, how are EHS-CCP funds used to support high-quality child care in the state?

Check all that apply.

- Increasing per-child payments to child care partners
- Providing services and supports to child care partners through regional hub models
- Investing in quality improvement
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Supplemental State Programs

State support of EHS can also include creating, funding, and implementing a state-specific program designed with similar quality performance standards and program structures as EHS. As of September 2022, four states operate statewide programs similar to EHS.

**1. Does your state administer a program with similar quality and performance standards as EHS?**

- Yes. Name of program: \_\_\_\_\_
- No.

**2. If so, what population(s) does your program serve? Check all that apply.**

- Income eligibility: \_\_\_\_\_
- Age groups: \_\_\_\_\_
- Specific population(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**3. If so, what settings are supported through your state-specific program? Check all that apply.**

- Center-based settings
- Home-based settings (through home-visiting services)
- Family child care settings
- School-based settings

**4. What EHS-aligned services are provided through your state-specific program? Check all that apply.**

- Asset building services
- Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals
- Emergency/crisis intervention
- Health education for parents
- Language learning assistance
- Mental health services
- Parenting curriculum
- Program transition support
- Public benefits assistance
- Screening and assessment support
- Substance misuse education and support
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_