

Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap 2025

EARLY HEAD START

What progress have states made in the last year in Early Head Start?

State	State Context and Policy Progress
Alabama	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Alabama is one of four state-level Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees. As a grantee, the state dedicates matching funds and the program is administered by the Alabama Department of Human Resources in collaboration with the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 8.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Alabama have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Alaska	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Alaska legislators allocated \$9.4 million for Fiscal Year 2026 to support EHS programs, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 14.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Alaska have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Arizona	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No Although Arizona does not provide state funding for EHS programs or models, the state allocates federal Preschool Development Grant funds to support high-quality early learning programming in high-need communities for infants and toddlers.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Arizona have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Arkansas	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Arkansas has a state-specific program known as the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program that serves children from birth to age 5 through home- and center-based care, as well as home visiting. ABC has similar requirements to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and is funded, in part, through state general revenue funds. For Fiscal Year 2026, the legislature allocated \$114 million to support the ABC program, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 16.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Arkansas have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8% and does not include the number of children served through the ABC program.</p>

California	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes California is one of four state-level Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees. As a grantee, the state dedicates matching funds and the program is administered by the California Department of Education.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 14% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in California have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Colorado	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 11.3% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Colorado have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is just below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Connecticut	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Connecticut legislators allocated \$5.8 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for Head Start and EHS services, an increase of \$800,000 from the prior year's funding. Although Connecticut is not a state level Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grantee, the state allocated \$1.5 million for FY2026 to support local EHS-CCP grant recipients, the same amount allocated in FY2025.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 10.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Connecticut have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Delaware	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Delaware is one of four state-level Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees. As a grantee, the state dedicates matching funds and the program is administered by the Delaware Department of Education.</p> <p>Additionally, Delaware has a state-specific program known as the State Funded Early Care and Education Program that serves children from birth to age 5 through home- and center-based care. In prior years, the program only served children ages 3 to 5. The program follows the Head Start Program Performance Standards and is funded through state general revenue funds. For Fiscal Year 2026, the legislature allocated \$15.8 million from the general fund to support the State Funded Early Care and Education Program.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.5% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Delaware have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8% and does not include the number of children served through the State Funded Early Care and Education Program.</p>
District of Columbia	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes The District of Columbia allocated \$1.7 million for Fiscal Year 2026 for EHS, a decrease of \$600,000 from the prior year's funding level. Additionally, the District of Columbia is one of four state-level Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grantees and allocated, on top of EHS funding, \$2.2 million for the EHS-CCP for FY2026, a decrease of \$400,000 from the prior year's funding level. The EHS-CCP is administered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 70% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in the District of Columbia have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is the highest in the country at approximately six times the national median of 11.8%.</p>

Florida	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 8.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Florida have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Georgia	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No Georgia served as a state-level EHS-Child Care Partnership grantee through July 31, 2024.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 7.3% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Georgia have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%, placing Georgia among the bottom five states for access.</p>
Hawaii	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 20% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Hawaii have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%, placing Hawaii among the top five states for access.</p>
Idaho	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Idaho have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Illinois	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Illinois has a state-specific program known as the Illinois Prevention Initiative that serves children from birth to age 3 through grants for home- and center-based services, as well as home visiting. The program has similar requirements to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and is funded with state general revenue funds through a set-aside of the Early Childhood Block Grant. For Fiscal Year 2026, the state maintained the prior year's funding level for the Early Childhood Block Grant.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 18.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Illinois have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%. In addition to the number of children with access to EHS, the state served 15,828 children age 2 and under in 2024 through the Prevention Initiative.</p>
Indiana	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 5.9% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Indiana have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%, placing Indiana among the bottom five states for access.</p>
Iowa	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Iowa legislators allocated \$574,500 for Fiscal Year 2026 for the implementation and expansion of EHS pilot projects, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Iowa have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%.</p>

Kansas	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Kansas have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Kentucky	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Kentucky have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Louisiana	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Louisiana have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Maine	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Maine legislators allocated \$4.8 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund, as well as \$1.3 million from the Fund for a Healthy Maine, to support Head Start and EHS programs. These allocations maintain the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>Although not available statewide, Maine is implementing a 3-year pilot program, First4ME, that is influenced by the Head Start and EHS-Child Care Partnership model. First4ME works with child care providers to improve quality of care, strengthen community partnerships, and increase family engagement.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 16.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Maine have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Maryland	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Maryland legislators allocated \$3 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for Head Start and EHS programs, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Maryland have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Massachusetts	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Massachusetts legislators allocated \$20 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for Head Start and EHS programs, an increase of \$1.5 million from the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 10.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Massachusetts have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is just below the national median of 11.8%.</p>

Michigan	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No Although Michigan is not a state-level EHS-CCP grantee, the state does reimburse local EHS-CCP grantees for a portion of their child care costs.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.5% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Michigan have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Minnesota	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Minnesota legislators allocated \$34.4 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for Head Start and EHS programs, a decrease of \$700,000 from the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 13.6% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Minnesota have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Mississippi	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 17.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Mississippi have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Missouri	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Missouri legislators allocated nearly \$6 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for EHS programs, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 11.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Missouri have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is just below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Montana	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 22.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Montana have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is almost double the national median of 11.8%, placing Montana among the top five states for access.</p>
Nebraska	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Nebraska has a state-specific program known as the Sixpence Early Learning Fund that serves parents and children from the prenatal period to age 3 through grants for home-based services, center-based services, and school-child care partnerships. The program has similar requirements as the Head Start Program Performance Standards and is funded through an endowment managed by a public-private partnership. For Fiscal Year 2026, the state allocated \$7.5 million for the Sixpence Early Learning Fund, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 21.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Nebraska have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is almost double the national median of 11.8%, placing Nebraska among the top five states for access. In addition to the number of children with access to EHS, the Sixpence Early Learning Fund served 1,254 children and 107 expectant parents in 2023-2024.</p>

Nevada	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 4.5% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Nevada have access to EHS through local grantees. Nevada serves the fewest number of eligible children, at less than half of the national median of 11.8%.</p>
New Hampshire	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 14.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in New Hampshire have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
New Jersey	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 10% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in New Jersey have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
New Mexico	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 16.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in New Mexico have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
New York	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 11.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in New York have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is just below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
North Carolina	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in North Carolina have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
North Dakota	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 19.9% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in North Dakota have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Ohio	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 8.9% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Ohio have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>

Oklahoma	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes</p> <p>Oklahoma has a state-specific program known as the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program (OECF) that serves children from birth through age 3. The program follows select Head Start Program Performance Standards and provides services through child care centers, school districts, tribal and community agencies, local Head Start and EHS programs, and home visiting. OECF provides the fiscal structure to combine state and private funds to increase access to early learning programming. For Fiscal Year 2026, the state allocated \$14 million for OECF, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>In addition to OECF, the state allocated \$2.2 million for Fiscal Year 2026 for Head Start and EHS programs, an increase of over \$195,000 from the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update</p> <p>According to data from 2023, approximately 12.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Oklahoma have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%. In addition to the number of children with access to EHS, the state served 3,666 children during the 2023-2024 program year through OECF.</p>
Oregon	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes</p> <p>Oregon has a state-specific program known as the Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten program that serves parents and children from the prenatal period to age 5. The program follows the Head Start Program Performance Standards and includes all models of EHS (i.e., center-based, home-based, locally designed options, family child care partnerships). For Fiscal Year 2025, Oregon allocated \$39 million for both the Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten program and EHS.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update</p> <p>According to data from 2023, approximately 11.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Oregon have access to EHS through local grantees, which is equal to the national median but does not include the number of children served through the Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten program. According to the governor's proposed budget, Head Start, EHS, and the Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten program serve an estimated 14,810 children per year.</p>
Pennsylvania	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update</p> <p>According to data from 2023, approximately 10.4% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Pennsylvania have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Rhode Island	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes</p> <p>Rhode Island allocated \$3 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from federal funds for Head Start and EHS programs, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update</p> <p>According to data from 2023, approximately 19.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Rhode Island have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
South Carolina	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update</p> <p>In the last year, legislators introduced H.B. 3573 which would have required the state to create a 5-year plan to provide universal access to Head Start and EHS for all eligible families. The bill did not pass this session.</p> <p>According to data from 2023, approximately 7.9% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in South Carolina have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>

South Dakota	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.1% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in South Dakota have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Tennessee	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 4.7% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Tennessee have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is less than half of the national median of 11.8%, placing Tennessee among the bottom five states for access.</p>
Texas	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 6.5% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Texas have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%, placing Texas among the bottom five states for access.</p>
Utah	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 9.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Utah have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Vermont	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 36.6% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Vermont have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is more than three times the national median of 11.8%, placing Vermont among the top five states for access.</p>
Virginia	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 8.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Virginia have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Washington	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>Washington had a state-specific program known as the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) that served children from birth to age 3 in 10 centers across the state. Although the program remains in statute, it did not receive funding to operate during the 2025-2026 school year.</p> <p>Additionally, though Washington does not directly fund EHS programs, the state provided Tribal Early Learning Grants to Tribal Nations for EHS and ECEAP programs through June 30, 2025.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 13.2% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Washington have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>

West Virginia	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 7.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in West Virginia have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure falls below the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? Yes Wisconsin allocated \$6.3 million for Fiscal Year 2026 from the state general fund for Head Start and EHS programs to support expanded enrollment and quality improvement efforts, maintaining the prior year's funding level.</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 12.8% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Wisconsin have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is slightly above the national median of 11.8%.</p>
Wyoming	<p>Does the state provide funding for Early Head Start (EHS) programs or models? No</p> <p>State Context and Policy Update According to data from 2023, approximately 13.3% of income-eligible infants and toddlers in Wyoming have access to EHS through local grantees. This figure is above the national median of 11.8%.</p>

Find additional information on the [methods and sources](#) used throughout the Roadmap and for each state.