

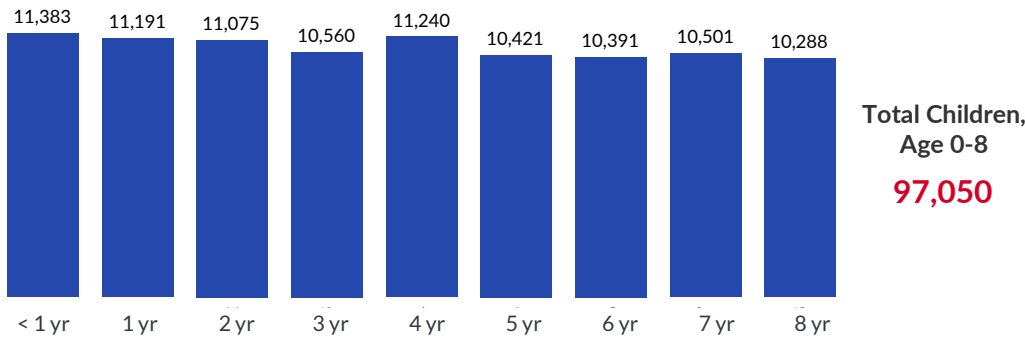
The Early Childhood Landscape in ALASKA



OVERVIEW

Learning is a continuum that begins from our first day in the world, not just the first day of school. As we begin to understand how the opportunities and environments early in life impact long-term learning and life outcomes, our systems of education have begun to gradually encompass children of younger ages. Because early childhood learning is largely undefined and decentralized, this packet is meant to serve as a compilation of the various statistics, data, and research available. While by no means comprehensive, we hope it provides a foundational understanding of the current landscape of early learning in your state.

Number of Children Age 8 and Younger, 2015



STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Early childhood initiatives are often crafted to support specific populations within a state—such as infants, children from low-income families, and English language learners—which is why it is important to first understand your state’s demographics.

Questions To Consider

How many young children are in my state?

How does this impact the scale of policies?

What is the economic status of families with young children?

Are there unique cultural needs for young children in my state?



Children with All Available Parents in the Labor Force, Age 0–6 (2015)



Children in Poverty, Age 0–5 (2015)



Children in Low-Income Working Families, Age 0–6 (2015)

Children Age 0–4 by Race, 2015

	White	Black	Hispanic	Two or More Races	Asian	American Indian
# Children	26,352	1,867	5,983	6,952	2,556	9,566
% of All Children	48.7%	3.5%	11.1%	12.8%	4.7%	17.7%

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Current Status of Infant and Toddler Well-Being

INDICATOR	ALASKA	NATION
Unintended Pregnancy (% of all pregnancies)	48%	45%
Prenatal Care Before 3rd Trimester (% of live births)	88%	87%
Teen Mothers (% of live births)	3%	7%
Home Health Visit (% of children ages 0-3)	12%	14%
Well-Baby Check (% of babies)	92%	91%
Developmental Screening (% of children ages 10 months to 5 years)	33%	31%

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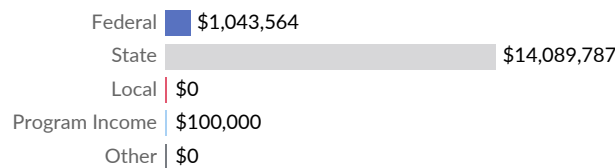
Maternal and Child Health Grant

The federal government allocates the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant to states. **Alaska** provides additional funding to the MCH program (as shown below).

The state has identified eight national performance measures to focus on:

- **Well-Woman Visit**
- **Safe Sleep**
- **Developmental Screening**
- **Injury Hospitalization**
- **Bullying**
- **Medical Home**
- **Preventive Dental Visit**
- **Smoking**

Alaska MCH Funds by Source



Alaska | MCH 2015 Expenditures

POPULATION SERVED	INDIVIDUALS SERVED	2015 EXPENDITURE
Pregnant Women	12,723	\$1,212,915
Infants	10,738	\$1,586,816
Children (Age 1-22)	227,331	\$1,285,600
Children with Special Needs	2,580	\$8,921,686
Others	0	\$2,028,240
Total	253,372	\$15,035,257

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INFANT AND TODDLER SUPPORT

Infants and toddlers develop and learn at exponential rates as they explore and engage with the environments and adults around them. In order to support their **health and development**, pregnant women, infants and toddlers, and parents need access to information and services.

Questions To Consider

Are women and children receiving health care services before and after birth?

Are families prepared for and educated about the needs of young children?

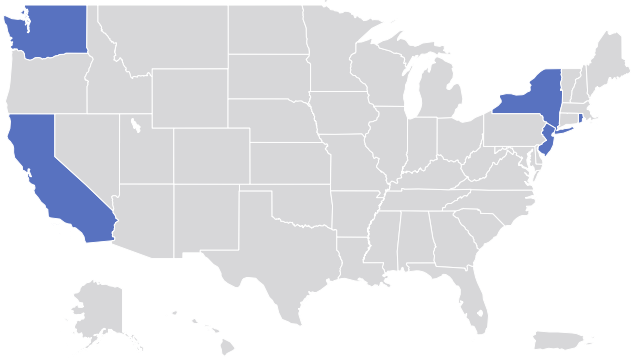
What areas of maternal and child health is my state focusing on?



Paid Family Leave

Alaska does not have a statewide paid family leave policy.

States with Paid Family Leave Policies



State	First Year	# Weeks	Benefit (% Income)
CA	2004	6	Up to 70%
DC	2020	8	Up to 90%
NJ	2009	6	Up to 66%
NY	2018	8	Up to 50%
RI	2014	4	Up to 60%
WA	2020	12	Up to 90%

Home Visiting

Home visiting is a type of service targeted to expectant parents and parents with children ages 0-5 to support healthy child development. Though models and programs vary, home visits typically allow trained experts to provide services, share best practices, and connect families to other resources all within the home setting.

968

Number of Families Served Through Home Visits in 2016 ²

7,539

Number of Home Visits Provided in 2016 ^{1,2}

Alaska uses the following evidence-based models for home visiting programs:^{1,2}

- **Nurse-Family Partnership**
- **Parents as Teachers**

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INFANT AND TODDLER SUPPORT

Questions To Consider

*What does paid family leave look like across the country?
Is that conversation happening in my state?*

*Is my state funding a significant percentage of home visits?
Were home visits an MCH priority for my state?*

What models for home visiting is my state utilizing? How are different models used to support families' unique needs?



Cost and Affordability of Infant Care

\$10,957

Average Annual Cost of Infant Care in **Alaska**

14%

Infant Care Cost as a Share of Median Family Income in **Alaska**

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, child care is affordable if it costs no more than 10% of a family's income.

By this standard, only

36%

of families in **Alaska** can afford infant care.



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Public Support for Infant Care

PROGRAM	FUNDING SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGES 0-3 SERVED	
Early Head Start	Federal (with optional state supplement)	Funds child care slots for children ages 0-3 from low-income families in addition to some health and family services.	Federal	184
			State	42
Child Care and Development Fund	Federal and State	Provides financial assistance to low-income families to access child care so they can work or attend a job training or educational program.	1,103 monthly average	

INFANT AND TODDLER SUPPORT

Questions To Consider

Is the cost of infant care in my state affordable?

What percentage of families have all available parents in the labor force? What does that mean for the demand for infant care?

What type of public support is available in my state for infant care?



Pre-Kindergarten Trends

41.7%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Pre-K** Public and Private (Estimated **9,092** children)

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5.2%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Head Start** Program (Estimated **1,124** children)

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1.5%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **State pre-K** Program (Estimated **319** children)

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Percentage of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled in Pre-K, Public & Private by Race



The following group(s) have enrollment rates in pre-school programs that are below the state average: **N/A**

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THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

At ages three- and four, children may be eligible to enroll in pre-Kindergarten, or “pre-K,” programs, both private and public. Pre-K programs are not compulsory, and families may elect to continue any arrangement of their choice.

Questions To Consider

How many children are attending pre-K, public or private?

Are certain populations more likely to attend pre-K?

What percentage of children are enrolled in pre-K due to public support?

How expensive is child care for 4-year-olds?

\$11.80

Median Hourly Wage Child Care Worker

53%

Median Wage for Child Care Worker as Percent of State Median Income

\$7,652

Average Annual Cost of Child Care for 4-year-old

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\$17.51

Median Hourly Wage Preschool Teacher

84%

Median Wage for Preschool Teacher as Percent of State Median Income



Pre-Kindergarten Policy

ALASKA PRE-ELEMENTARY

ACCESS	Family Income - Eligibility	150% of FPL
	Other Risk Factors - Eligibility	Locally determined risk factors
	Child Age	4-year-olds
	Required District Participation	Not required, but funds are available to any district/county/town choosing to offer the program
FUNDING	State Agency	Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
	Total Spending (2016)	\$2,000,000
	Funds by Source	State, \$2,000,000
	Dedicated Revenue Source for State Funds?	No
	Agencies Eligible to Receive Funding	Public schools, Head Start
	Permitted Subcontracting Agencies	Head Start
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	Minimum Daily Hours	3.5
	Minimum Days Per Week	Determined locally
	Annual Operating Schedule	Determined locally
	Maximum Class Size	20
	Screening/Referral and Support Services	Developmental

THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

As states begin to develop and fund pre-Kindergarten program, eligibility and quality requirements have also been adopted.

Questions To Consider

Does my state support pre-K enrollment? If so, for which children?

What are the funding sources for pre-K?

What requirements must providers meet in order to be eligible for the state pre-K program?



ALASKA PRE-ELEMENTARY - CONTINUED

STANDARDS	Early Learning and Development Standards	Alaska Early Learning Guidelines
	Year Revised	2007
	Alignment with College and Career Ready Standards for Early Grades	Alignment is in progress
EDUCATORS	Teacher Degree	BA
	Required Specialization in ECE	Yes
	Assistant Teacher Degree	CDA, 12 ECE credits, or an AA in ECE
ACCOUNTABILITY	Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)	In Development
	Required Participation in QRIS	No
	Number of Levels	N/A
	Required Rating for Funding	N/A

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THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Questions To Consider

Are pre-K standards aligned with goals of the K-12 system?

Does my state require pre-K teachers to have a certain degree? If so, what?

Has my state developed a system to assess the quality of pre-K and child care providers? Is participation mandatory for state pre-K programs?



K-3 Policy

	K-3 COMPONENT	ALASKA
ATTENDANCE	Compulsory Age of Attendance ¹	7
	Kindergarten Entrance Age ¹	5 on or before 9/01
	State-Required Full-Day Kindergarten ¹	No, full-day kindergarten is not required.
	State-Required Half-Day Kindergarten ¹	No
	Required Kindergarten Attendance ¹	No
STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS	Required Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA) ²	Districts must submit to the department a developmental profile for each student entering kindergarten or first grade with indicators such as: physical health, social and emotional development, cognition and general knowledge, language and literacy.
	Statewide KEA ³	Yes
	KEA Results Use ²	Not specified in statute, rules or regulations.
	K-3 Formative Assessment Consortium Member ³	No
	Dual Language Learner (DLL) Assessment ⁴	Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for ELLs (ACCESS 2.0)
	Number of States Using DLL Assessment ²	36
	3 rd -Grade Reading Retention Law ²	Retention is a local decision.
EDUCATORS	Early Childhood Education License Required for Kindergarten Teachers ³	No
	Science of Reading Test Required for Elementary Teachers ⁶	None
	Teacher-to-Student Ratio Requirement ²	Not specified in statute, rules or regulations.

FIVE- TO EIGHT-YEAR-OLDS

At age five, children are eligible to begin kindergarten—generally considered the start to their formal education. In these early grades, there is a strong focus on learning to read due to research indicating that 3rd-grade literacy is crucial for success in school and life.

Questions To Consider

Are districts required to offer full-day kindergarten?

At what age are children eligible to attend school? At what age is attendance compulsory?

How are children assessed in grades K-3? What are assessment results used for?

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