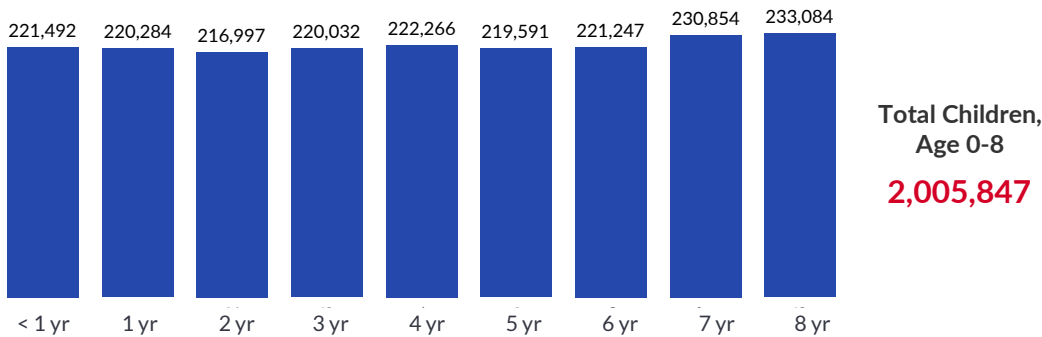# The Early Childhood Landscape in
FLORIDA

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

Age	Number
< 1 yr	221,492
1 yr	220,284
2 yr	216,997
3 yr	220,032
4 yr	222,266
5 yr	219,591
6 yr	221,247
7 yr	230,854
8 yr	233,084

Total Children, Age 0-8

2,005,847

67%
Children with All Available Parents in the Labor Force, Age 0–6 (2015)

26%
Children in Poverty, Age 0–5 (2015)

31%
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	464,755	228,164	354,136	47,711	28,252	2,231
% of All Children	41.3%	20.3%	31.4%	4.2%	2.5%	0.2%

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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.
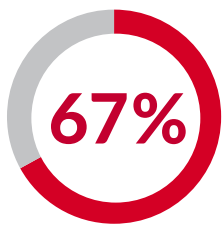
Questions To Consider

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?

Current Status of Infant and Toddler Well-Being

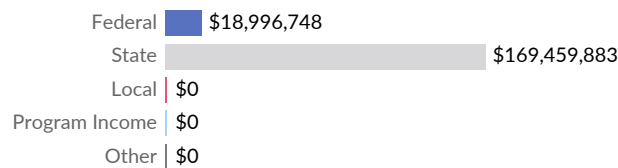| INDICATOR	FLORIDA	NATION
Unintended Pregnancy (% of all pregnancies)	59%	45%
Prenatal Care Before 3rd Trimester (% of live births)	90%	87%
Teen Mothers (% of live births)	2%	7%
Home Health Visit (% of children ages 0-3)	13%	14%
Well-Baby Check (% of babies)	87%	91%
Developmental Screening (% of children ages 10 months to 5 years)	24%	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. **Florida** provides additional funding to the MCH program (as shown below).

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

- **Well-Woman Visit**
- **Breastfeeding**
- **Safe Sleep**
- **Physical Activity**
- **Bullying**
- **Medical Home**
- **Transition** (Children with Special Needs)
- **Smoking**

Florida MCH Funds by Source

Federal	$18,996,748
State	$169,459,883
Local	$0
Program Income	$0
Other	$0

Florida | MCH 2015 Expenditures

POPULATION SERVED	INDIVIDUALS SERVED	2015 EXPENDITURE
Pregnant Women	170,675	$48,743,454
Infants	217,293	$32,410,826
Children (Age 1-22)	2,978,025	$82,415,009
Children with Special Needs	125,455	$23,069,255
Others	0	$0
Total	3,491,448	$186,638,544

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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?

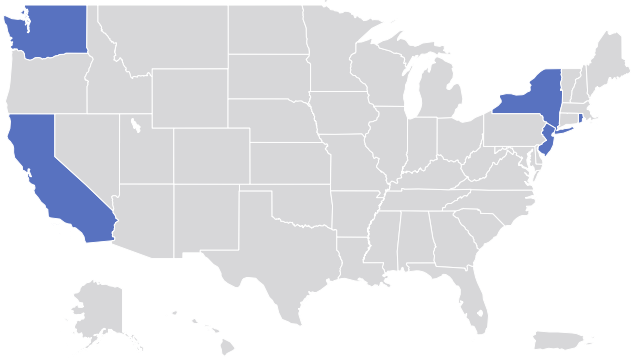*Are families prepared for and educated about the needs of young children?*

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

Paid Family Leave

Florida 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.

4,659

Number of Families Served Through Home Visits in 2016 [2]

38,805

Number of Home Visits Provided in 2016 [1,2]

Florida uses the following evidence-based models for home visiting programs:[1,2]

- **Family Check-Up**
- **Healthy Families America**
- **Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters**
- **Nurse-Family Partnerships**
- **Parents as Teachers**

VIEW DATA RESOURCE 1

VIEW DATA RESOURCE 2

Cost and Affordability of Infant Care

$8,694

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

17%

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

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

30%

of families in **Florida** 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	7,315
			State	0
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.	26,054 monthly average	

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

50.9%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Pre-K** Public and Private (Estimated **225,211** children)

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7.2%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Head Start** Program (Estimated **31,856** children)

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38.2%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **State pre-K** Program (Estimated **169,025** children)

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

Race	%
White	48.4%
Black	59.3%
Asian	46.1%
Hispanic	48.7%
Two or More Races	49.4%
Average	50.9%

The following group(s) have enrollment rates in pre-school programs that are below the state average: **White, Hispanic, Asian, Children of two or more races**

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$9.53

Median Hourly Wage Child Care Worker

62%

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

$11.65

Median Hourly Wage Preschool Teacher

60%

Median Wage for Preschool Teacher as Percent of State Median Income

$7,668

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

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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?

Pre-Kindergarten Policy

FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS	Family Income - Eligibility	No income requirement
	Other Risk Factors - Eligibility	N/A
	Child Age	4-year-olds
	Required District Participation	Required for all
FUNDING	State Agency	Office of Early Learning; Florida Department of Children and Families
	Total Spending (2016)	$397,685,494
	Funds by Source	State, $397,685,494
	Dedicated Revenue Source for State Funds?	Yes: General Revenue
	Agencies Eligible to Receive Funding	Early Learning Coalitions
	Permitted Subcontracting Agencies	Public schools, Head Start, Private agencies, Faith-based centers, Family child care homes, Boys and Girls Clubs, the YMCA16
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	Minimum Daily Hours	Determined locally
	Minimum Days Per Week	Determined locally
	Annual Operating Schedule	Determined locally
	Maximum Class Size	12 (summer); 20 (school year)
	Screening/Referral and Support Services	Determined locally

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?

FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM – CONTINUED

STANDARDS	Early Learning and Development Standards	[Florida Early Learning and Development Standards for Four-Year-Olds](#)
	Year Revised	Currently under revision
	Alignment with College and Career Ready Standards for Early Grades	Not reported
EDUCATORS	Teacher Degree	BA (summer); CDA or equivalent plus specified training (school year)
	Required Specialization in ECE	Yes
	Assistant Teacher Degree	None
ACCOUNTABILITY	Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)	No statewide system. Three counties, Miami-Dade, Duval, and Palm Beach have locally-created QRIS's.
	Required Participation in QRIS	No
	Number of Levels	N/A
	Required Rating for Funding	N/A

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K–3 Policy

	K–3 COMPONENT	FLORIDA
ATTENDANCE	Compulsory Age of Attendance[1]	6
	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]	Yes
	Required Kindergarten Attendance[1]	No
STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS	Required Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA)[2]	Statewide kindergarten screening based on Pre-K performance standards is required within the first 30 school days of each year.
	Statewide KEA[3]	Yes
	KEA Results Use[2]	Results of the KEA are used to determine satisfactory delivery of the voluntary prekindergarten education program.
	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
	3rd-Grade Reading Retention Law[2]	Third grade retention is required with good cause exemptions. Midyear promotion is allowed at any time during the year of retention once the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.
EDUCATORS	Early Childhood Education License Required for Kindergarten Teachers[3]	No
	Science of Reading Test Required for Elementary Teachers[6]	All new elementary teacher candidates in Florida are required to take the Florida Teacher Certification Exam, which will include a separately scored language arts and reading subtest. The subtest addresses the five instructional components of scientifically based reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension
	Teacher-to-Student Ratio Requirement[2]	1:18 for grades PreK-3.

VIEW DATA RESOURCE HERE[1]   VIEW DATA RESOURCE HERE[3]   VIEW DATA RESOURCE HERE[5]

VIEW DATA RESOURCE HERE[2]   VIEW DATA RESOURCE HERE[4]

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?