

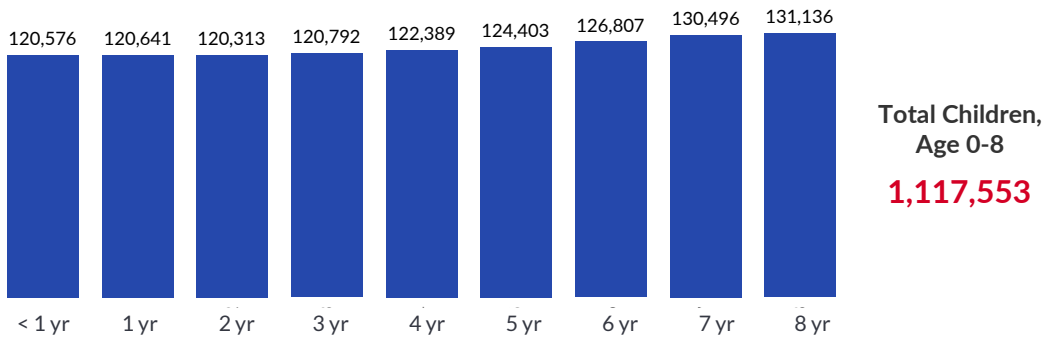
The Early Childhood Landscape in NORTH CAROLINA



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?

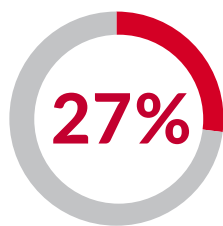
How does this impact the scale of policies?

What is the economic status of families with young children?

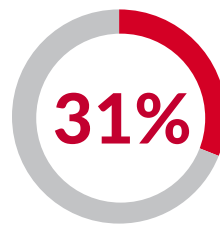
Are there unique cultural needs for young children in my state?



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	306,993	137,711	105,758	28,474	19,684	7,115
% of All Children	50.6%	22.7%	17.4%	4.7%	3.2%	1.2%

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Current Status of Infant and Toddler Well-Being

INDICATOR	NORTH CAROLINA	NATION
Unintended Pregnancy (% of all pregnancies)	54%	45%
Prenatal Care Before 3rd Trimester (% of live births)	93%	87%
Teen Mothers (% of live births)	3%	7%
Home Health Visit (% of children ages 0-3)	17%	14%
Well-Baby Check (% of babies)	90%	91%
Developmental Screening (% of children ages 10 months to 5 years)	58%	31%

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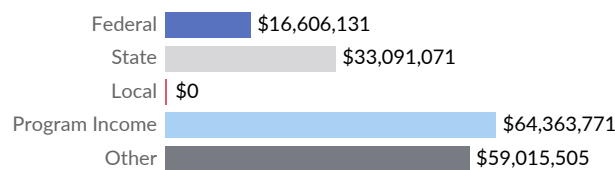
Maternal and Child Health Grant

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

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

- **Well-Woman Visit**
- **Risk-Appropriate Perinatal Care**
- **Breastfeeding**
- **Developmental Screening**
- **Adolescent Well-Visit**
- **Medical Home**
- **Smoking**
- **Adequate Insurance**

North Carolina MCH Funds by Source



North Carolina | MCH 2015 Expenditures

POPULATION SERVED	INDIVIDUALS SERVED	2015 EXPENDITURE
Pregnant Women	120,948	\$41,646,383
Infants	120,948	\$17,227,939
Children (Age 1-22)	184,754	\$64,926,933
Children with Special Needs	82,936	\$31,612,154
Others	179,124	\$16,875,720
Total	688,710	\$172,289,129

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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?

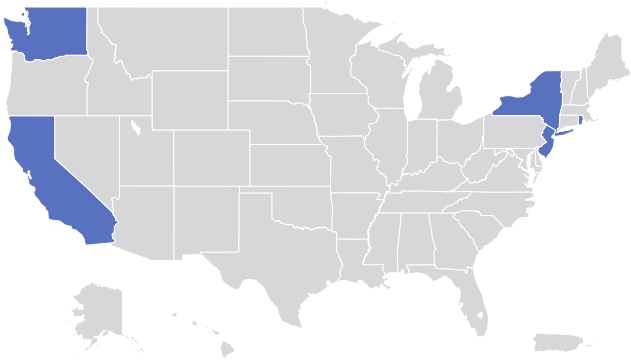
What areas of maternal and child health is my state focusing on?



Paid Family Leave

North Carolina 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.

4,511

Number of Families Served Through Home Visits in 2016 ²

56,923

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

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

- **Family Connects**
- **Healthy Families America**
- **Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters**
- **Nurse-Family Partnership**
- **Parents as Teachers**

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[VIEW DATA RESOURCE 2](#)

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

\$9,255

Average Annual Cost of Infant Care in **North Carolina**

17%

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

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

27%

of families in **North Carolina** 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	4,415
			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.	15,576 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

43.7%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Pre-K** Public and Private (Estimated **106,191** children)

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7.0%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **Head Start** Program (Estimated **16,982** children)

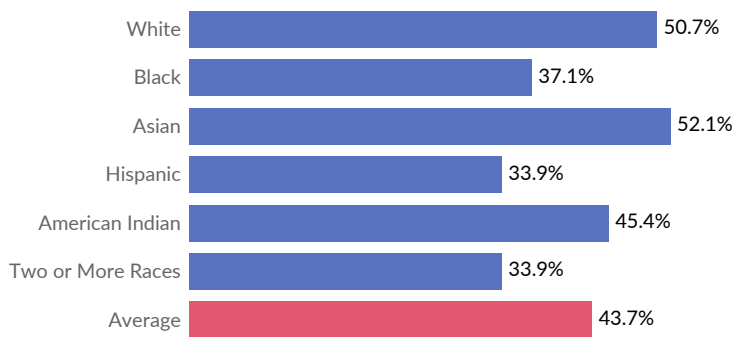
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11.0%

3- and 4-Year Olds Enrolled in **State pre-K** Program (Estimated **26,851** 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: **Black, Hispanic, Children of two or more races**

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\$9.45

Median Hourly Wage Child Care Worker

59%

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

\$7,592

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

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\$12.48

Median Hourly Wage Preschool Teacher

75%

Median Wage for Preschool Teacher as Percent of State Median Income

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

NORTH CAROLINA PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS	Family Income - Eligibility	75% of SMI; 20% of a county's NC Pre-K slots may be used to serve children above 75% of SMI if they have another risk factor
	Other Risk Factors - Eligibility	Child disability or developmental delay; Home language other than English; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Parent is on active military duty; Chronic health condition; Child has an IEP
	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	North Carolina department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education
	Total Spending (2016)	\$210,920,929
	Funds by Source	State, \$126,163,890; Federal, \$62,371,661; Non-required local, \$22,385,378
	Dedicated Revenue Source for State Funds?	Yes: General Fund: \$47,911,780; Lottery: \$78,252,110
	Agencies Eligible to Receive Funding	Public schools, Head Start, Private agencies, Faith-based centers, Public-private partnerships (local Smart Start partnerships)
	Permitted Subcontracting Agencies	Public schools, Head Start, Private agencies, Faith-based centers
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	Minimum Daily Hours	6.5
	Minimum Days Per Week	5 days per week
	Annual Operating Schedule	School or academic year
	Maximum Class Size	18
	Screening/Referral and Support Services	Vision; Hearing; Height/weight/BMI; Blood pressure; Immunizations; Psychosocial/behavioral; Dental; Developmental; Full physical exam

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?



NORTH CAROLINA PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM - CONTINUED

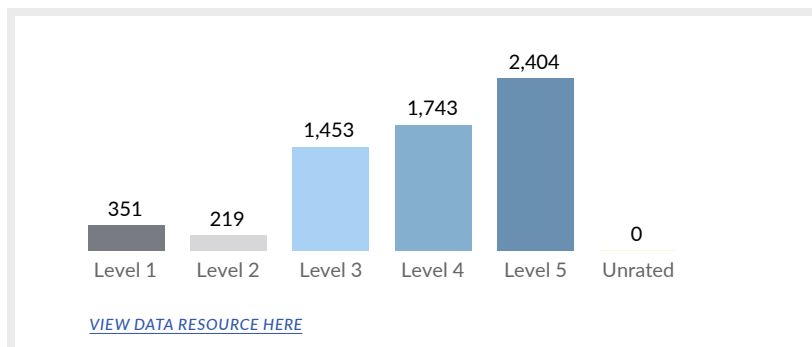
STANDARDS	Early Learning and Development Standards	North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development
	Year Revised	2013
	Alignment with College and Career Ready Standards for Early Grades	Yes
EDUCATORS	Teacher Degree	BA
	Required Specialization in ECE	Yes
	Assistant Teacher Degree	CDA
ACCOUNTABILITY	Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)	Star Rated License System
	Required Participation in QRIS	Yes
	Number of Levels	5
	Required Rating for Funding	4 or 5 star

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Quality Ratings of Child Care Programs

In recent years, many states have designed Quality Ratings and Improvement Systems (QRIS) to evaluate child care providers. The QRIS rating is often a reflection of various measures such as teacher-child interactions, classroom environment, family engagement, and staff educational attainment. Often voluntary, QRIS systems are meant to help improve the quality of child care providers and help families choose the right provider for their children.

Child Care Providers By QRIS Level



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	NORTH CAROLINA
ATTENDANCE	Compulsory Age of Attendance ¹	7
	Kindergarten Entrance Age ¹	5 on or before 8/31
	State-Required Full-Day Kindergarten ¹	Yes, full-day kindergarten is required.
	State-Required Half-Day Kindergarten ¹	No
	Required Kindergarten Attendance ¹	No
STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS	Required Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA) ²	All students entering kindergarten must be administered a developmental screening of early language, literacy, and math skills within 30 days of enrollment. All students entering kindergarten must complete a KEA within 60 days of enrollment. The developmental screening instrument may be composed of subsections of the KEA.
	Statewide KEA ³	In Progress
	KEA Results Use ²	The results of both the KEA and the developmental screening tests are used to inform instructional strategies, efforts to reduce the achievement gap at kindergarten entry, and continuous improvement of the early childhood system. Assessment results are entered in the state longitudinal data system.
	K-3 Formative Assessment Consortium Member ³	Yes
	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	Third grade retention is required with good cause exemptions. A midyear promotion policy exists for any student who demonstrates reading proficiency by November 1.
EDUCATORS	Early Childhood Education License Required for Kindergarten Teachers ³	No
	Science of Reading Test Required for Elementary Teachers ⁶	All elementary candidates in North Carolina have to pass the MTEL Foundations of Reading test.
	Teacher-to-Student Ratio Requirement ²	1:18 for K-3

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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