

CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING HELP OUR STATE THRIVE



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Access to high quality early childhood education (ECE) boosts the well-being of children and helps parents get and keep a job. It's time for policymakers to build the supply and quality of child care and early learning by investing in early childhood education and educators working in centers, schools, and homes.



NAEYC AFFILIATE

District of Columbia Association for the Education of Young Children

Our State's Families Need Quality, Affordable Child Care and Early Learning



46,268

Number of children birth through 5 ⁽¹⁾



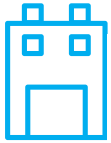
11%

Average percentage of family income spent on child care ⁽³⁾



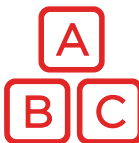
50%

Percentage of child care programs reporting staffing shortages that limit the number of slots available for families ⁽⁴⁾



45%

Percentage of child care programs reporting they had to increase tuition to keep their doors open ⁽⁵⁾



27%

Percentage of people living in a child care desert ⁽⁶⁾

Our State's Children Receive Their Child Care and Early Learning Experiences in Many Places

27,315

Licensed capacity in centers and family child care homes ⁽¹⁾

12,750

Number of children in state funded PreK programs* ⁽²⁾

68%

Percentage of children receiving child care assistance who are served in child care centers ⁽³⁾

2,270

Number of children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs ⁽⁴⁾

5,707

Number of children served in NAEYC accredited early learning programs ⁽⁵⁾

2%

Percentage of children receiving child care assistance who are served in family child care homes ⁽⁶⁾

63

Number of NAEYC accredited early learning programs ⁽⁷⁾

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Our State's Early Childhood Educators Need Support and Compensation

4,600 Number of educators working with children birth through 5 ⁽¹⁾



Scholarships to support early childhood educators in accessing professional development, and earning credentials and degrees ⁽⁶⁾



Initiatives to increase educators wages and benefits ⁽⁷⁾



43%*

PERCENTAGE OF EDUCATORS THAT RELY ON PUBLIC BENEFITS TO MAKE ENDS MEET ⁽²⁾

36%

percentage of educators indicating they are more burned out than they were in previous year ⁽⁵⁾

“We have benefited from DC Pay Equity and Healthcare4Childcare, which has increased salaries and provided free health insurance. However, my program suffers from under-qualified staff and difficulties in hiring. An influx of workers with little experience and little education in child development has hurt our quality.”

- Early Childhood Educator

Federal Investments Support Access to Child Care and Early Learning and Increase the Well-Being of Children, Families, and Educators in Our State

900

Number of children receiving child care assistance per month, on average ⁽¹⁾

6%

Percentage of eligible children receiving child care assistance per month, on average ⁽²⁾

20,851

Number of child care programs relying on CACFP to feed children while they attend early learning programs ⁽³⁾

2,598

Number of children accessing special education services through IDEA Preschool Special Education (part B 619) ⁽⁴⁾ and Early Intervention (part C) ⁽⁵⁾



Currently receiving a Preschool Development Grant to improve our ECE system ⁽⁶⁾

Programs including CCDBG, Head Start, IDEA, CCAMPIS, CACFP, CHIP, TANF, SNAP, MIECHV, and Medicaid, as well as tax credits such as the Child Care and Dependent Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, provide critical investments to support the well-being of young children, their families, and the early childhood educators who support them.

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Resources on Policy Solutions to Address the Child Care Crisis and Advance the Early Childhood Education Field

- [NAEYC Federal Policy Agenda](#)
- [Compensation Means More Than Wages: Increasing Early Childhood Educators' Access to Benefits](#)
- [The Costs of Deregulating Child Care: Decreased Supply, Increased Turnover, and Compromised Safety](#)



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for citations.

+2025 Federal Poverty Guideline for a family of four in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia is \$32,150 per year. The poverty guidelines are updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).

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