



Maine Head Start Impact 2025

A Federal-State Partnership Strengthening School Readiness, Families, and Communities

Federal Investment in Maine

- \$49,640,522 in federal Head Start funding
 - 11 Head Start grantees
 - 2 American Indian and Alaskan Native (AIAN) Head Start grantees

Funds supported comprehensive early learning, health, nutrition, and family services, school readiness, and 33 partnerships providing 84 sessions of Public PreK

Federal funding brings high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive services directly into Maine communities.

State Investment in Head Start

\$6.1 million investment from Maine Department of Health and Human Services/Office of Child and Family Services

- State funds help programs to:
- Provide wrap around care and extend programming for working families
 - Support program expansion
 - Maintain lower teacher-child ratios in high-needs classrooms
 - Strengthen community and school partnerships

Maine's investment strengthens Head Start's ability to reach more children, extend programming, and provide more intensive support where it's needed most.

Children and Families Served

Federal Impact:

- 2,706 children served
 - 1,729 preschoolers (age 3-5)
 - 977 infants and toddlers (birth - 2)
- 2,433 families served

State Impact:

- 1,196 children served

Head Start provides high quality early education and comprehensive services for thousands of Maine's children during a critical time in their growth and development.

Early Intervention and Disabilities Support

Head Start programs served 485 children (ages 3-5) eligible for IDEA Part B services

- 217 newly identified during the program year
- 103 children received early learning services while waiting to begin special education

Early Head Start served 148 infants & toddlers (ages birth-3) eligible for IDEA Part C early intervention services

- 46 newly identified during the year

State funding supported 207 children with special needs

Head Start is a key partner in the early identification of special needs and ensures children with developmental needs receive support as early as possible.

Family Stability and Comprehensive Supports

- 1,698 Head Start families had at least one parent/guardian who was
 - employed
 - In school
 - In a job training program

Head Start helps families with economic stability, mobility and workforce participation.

- 231 families served experienced homelessness
 - 70 families secured housing during the program year

Head Start connects families to housing resources and stability supports.

265 children served were in foster care

Head Start provides consistent, nurturing early learning and care for children involved in the child welfare system.

2,236 families received additional support services, including:

- Emergency crisis assistance
- Developmental screening and assessment
- Mental health services
- Preventative health and nutrition education

Head Start partners with families to address urgent needs and build long-term family well-being.

Workforce and Local Employment

- 1,118 staff employed statewide
- 36 contracted partners/providers
- 208 staff members are current or former Head Start parents
- 136 staff members were in process of pursuing or achieved their degrees
- 167 college interns and high school students were hosted by programs

Head Start is both an early childhood program and a local employer, creating jobs, and educated workforce, and building career pathways across Maine.

Family Engagement

Head Start programs hosted 1,524 volunteers in 2025

- 1,010 were current or former Head Start parents
- Parents volunteer in a variety of ways including classrooms support, policy council, and advisory members and board representatives

Head Start families don't just participate—they lead, volunteer, and shape programs.

Why Head Start Matters for Maine

Head Start

- Prepares children for school success
- Supports working families
- Expands provision of Public PreK
- Strengthens local early childhood partnerships
- Helps identify and expand access to services for children with higher needs
- Brings federal dollars into Maine communities

Head Start is a federal-state-local partnership investing in Maine's children, families, and workforce.



2025 marked the 60th anniversary of Head Start's impact as an early learning program. Head Start has transformed the lives of over 40 million children nationally since its inception, making it one of the nation's most impactful early learning programs.