



MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Head Start 101

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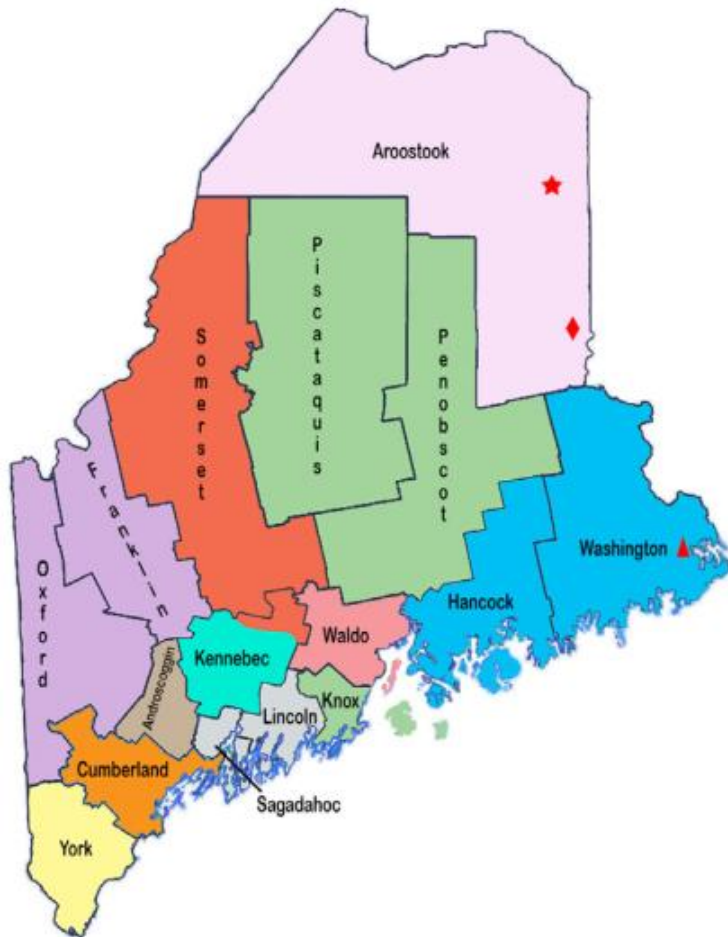


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Head Start in Maine:

- 11 Head Start Grantees
 - 9 in Community Action Partnership (CAP) organizations
- 3 American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN) Head Start Grantees
- Maine Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO)
- Interactive Map on DOE Early Learning page



Head Start

- Established in 1965 by President Johnson
- Part of his War on Poverty Initiative
- Goal: develop a comprehensive child development program to meet the needs of disadvantaged preschool children ages 3-5
- Governed by Head Start Program Performance Standard (HSPPS) Regulations



The first Head Start Programs began as eight-week projects designed to help break the cycle of poverty.

Early Head Start

- Established in 1995
- Serves pregnant women and infants and toddlers under the age of 3
- Follows Head Start model/services, but tailored for unique needs of age group



8 of Maine's 11 EHS programs have funded slots for expectant women

HSCO



Head Start Collaboration Office

- Position first piloted in 1990
- Federally-funded via 5-year grant
- Congress has directed HSCOs to facilitate cross department collaboration among Head Start and state initiatives supporting low-income children from birth to school entry
- State, Regional, and National priorities
- Scope of work has limitations (rules clarification comes from Regional Office)



HEAD START





Key Tenets of Head Start

- Culturally responsive to the communities served
- Communities invest in program success
 - Required 20% in nonfederal share (donations, volunteer hours, discounted services)
- Federally funded/Locally designed
- Multi-Gen/Families as partners
- Comprehensive service delivery
- Assisting the most vulnerable kids where they reside



Head Start has served more than 30 million children since 1965

Head Start's Comprehensive Services

Helping children get [ready to succeed in school](#) and in life through learning experiences tailored to their changing needs and abilities

Early Learning and Development

- Implement developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood curricula and effective practices to promote growth in:
 - approaches to learning
 - social and emotional development
 - language and literacy
 - Cognition
 - physical development
- Engage parents in learning as child's first teacher
- Support full inclusion of children with disabilities
- Every program has an Education Manager and a Disability Services Coordinator to oversee and support the delivery of education



Programs are federally required to ensure that 10% of their enrollment are children eligible for services under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)



Health and Wellness

- Engage in indoor and outdoor [physical activity](#)
- Serve healthy breakfast, lunch, and snacks
- Ensure medical, dental, hearing, vision, and behavioral [screenings](#)
- Promote [oral health and hygiene](#)
- Help families understand their child's health and behavioral needs
- Assist with [mental health services](#) for children and families
- Programs have Health and Nutrition Managers to oversee the delivery of these services



Family Engagement

- Parents share insights as child's first and most important teacher
- Celebrate male caregivers through [father engagement](#)
- [Support parents](#) as their child's lifelong advocate
- Include parents in improving program experiences and governance via [Policy Council](#) and parent advisory groups
- Support families with [transitions](#) to Head Start, kindergarten, and other early childhood programs
- All Programs have a Family Services Manager to support family engagement and wellness



Family Well-Being

- Provide [parenting support](#) and strategies
- Support parent health
- Connect families to community/federal assistance
- Assist families in identifying/reaching goals
 - finances and [economic mobility](#)
 - Housing
 - Employment and education
- Provide career pathways



Approximately 25% of program staff
are former Head Start parents!



3 Program Options

- **Center Based**
 - located in child development centers
 - over half of HS children are enrolled in center-based services
- **Home Based**
 - delivered in a family's own home
 - includes planned group socialization activities
- **Early Head Start/ Family Childcare Partnerships (CCPs)**
 - located in a family-based or partner center settings
 - Head Start grantee supports partners to meet Head Start Performance Standards
 - Helpful connection to other children and partners in your community



Eligibility includes families who...

- Meet the [federal low-income guidelines](#) with incomes at or below federal poverty guidelines
 - New adjustment for families whose housing costs exceed more than 30 percent
- Receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Are in foster care
- Are experiencing homelessness according to the McKinney-Vento definition
- Meet local eligibility and selection criteria
- All Programs have Enrollment Coordinators who oversee the enrollment, recruitment, selection, and eligibility of families



Always speak with an enrollment specialist to confirm eligibility and learn about the selection process

Research tells us that children enrolled in Head Start are more likely to...

- Graduate from high school
- Attend college
- Have improved social, emotional, and behavioral development
- Be more prepared as parents themselves
- Have significantly fewer child welfare encounters related to sexual or physical abuse
- Show a broad pattern of impacts at the end of their Head Start enrollment

Head Start's two-gen design and research-based, quality comprehensive services has the power to change the trajectory for children's outcomes.





Maine Head Start Early Intervention Data (9 of 11 agencies reporting)

Early Head Start

- Percentage of enrolled children statewide with an active IEP – 19%
- Percentage of enrolled children statewide who are receiving services – 100%*

Head Start

- Percentage of Enrolled children statewide who have an active IEP – 26% (ranges from 19% - 34%)
- Percentage of enrolled children statewide who are receiving services – 78%* (ranges from 48%-100%)

*Data *does not* reflect the number of children who are not receiving all services listed on IEPs

Program notables this fall:

- Currently experiencing a large % of identified children who are not receiving services
- Continued increase in # of children with significant developmental and behavioral needs
- Continued increase in diagnosis of Autism and ADHD
- Increase in children requiring 1:1 support resulting in modified schedules in order to share staffing resources
- Increased need for mental health consultation involvement for children, families, and staff
- High level of combined flagged concerns and identified needs in classrooms, some well over 50%
- Increase in dual language and English language learners

Head Start as Partners

What are the requirements and benefits?

Head Start Programs fall under an umbrella of federal and state requirements and monitoring systems:

- Head Start Performance Standards and Head Start Act
- Maine Child Care Licensing
- Chapter 124
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Federal Monitoring
 - Program and Fiscal
 - Enrollment and attendance requirements
 - Class Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation

Head Start follows both state and federal guidelines as well as the most stringent policy:

- Example: Head Start Public PreK partnerships use Chapter 124 for class size (maximum of 16 children) vs. Head Start Performance Standards (maximum of 20 children ages 4/5)
- Background checks, safety trainings, and transportation requirements
- Your local Head Start can support you in this area

Federal Requirements and Guidance on Collaboration

[Dear Colleague Letter from the Department of Education and Health and Human Services on Collaboration highlights:](#)

- OSEP and OHS strongly encourage SEAs, LEAs, and Head Start programs to prioritize building and maintaining collaborative relationships to ensure that young children with disabilities eligible under IDEA Part B and enrolled in Head Start programs receive FAPE in the LRE.
- **SEAs, LEAs, and Head Start programs all have responsibilities for implementing IDEA:**
 - SEAs are responsible for establishing and enforcing policies and procedures to ensure full implementation of child find and other IDEA requirements to ensure that FAPE is made available to all eligible children with disabilities in the State
 - LEAs are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating children suspected of having disabilities in a timely fashion and developing and implementing IEPs for eligible children with disabilities in accordance with the applicable IDEA requirements;
 - Head Start programs are responsible for referring children and families for IDEA evaluations as well as supporting implementation of children's IEPs.

Federal Requirements and Guidance continued...

- Each Head Start program **must ensure a minimum of 10% of all slots occupied by children with disabilities**. This requirement ensures programs recruit children who are already identified as eligible for IDEA services prior to entering Head Start, and accurately screen and refer for evaluation any children who may benefit from early intervention services.
- Local Head Start programs are **required to complete or obtain a current developmental screening to identify any concerns regarding a child's developmental skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program to identify children who may need further evaluation**. With parental consent, Head Start personnel are then required to make a referral to the LEA.
- When developing IEPs, **the placement team should consider how the child is developing and learning in their current early childhood program (e.g., Head Start)** and must determine whether and what supplementary aids and services would be needed to enable the education of the child in the regular education setting to be achieved satisfactorily. **The placement group, which always includes the parent, may determine that the Head Start classroom is the LRE in which the child's IEP can be implemented.**
- **Collaboration with Head Start to Support Implementation of IEPs:** Head Start programs are required to design and implement a coordinated approach that ensures the full and effective participation of all children with disabilities and their families. The Head Start Disability Services Coordinator serves as a resource for families to help navigate the special education system and to support the Head Start program's coordination with the LEA.

- **504 Plans**/necessary accommodations for children who have special needs but who do not qualify under IDEA: When a child enters Head Start with an established 504 Plan, or one is obtained during the child's enrollment, the program must ensure the plan is fully implemented.
- When children are required to receive IDEA services at another site, careful planning of the child's transition to and from each program is established. **The time away from Head Start or Early Head Start is minimized to ensure receipt of comprehensive services.**

The IDEA statute and regulations and the Head Start Performance Standards include specific requirements related to collaboration, identifying young children who may have or be at risk for disabilities, and the provision of services in inclusive environments. These requirements can be found at:

- IDEA Part B (Section 619, Preschool) — Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities
- Head Start Program Performance Standards — Coordination and collaboration with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA.

Other resources:

- Office of Special Education programs (OSEP) and the Office of Head Start (OHS) [Guidance of Creating an Effective Memorandum of Understanding to Support High-Quality Inclusive Early Childhood Systems PDF](#) Support for creating clear understanding and a coordinated approach to service delivery
- [The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released the Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs and the Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings.](#)
- OSEP released [the Dear Colleague Letter on Preschool Least Restrictive Environment](#) covers the interagency coordination provisions and natural and least restrictive environments requirements included in Part C and Part B, Section 619 of IDEA and their implementing regulations, the Head Start Performance Standards, and the relevant policy and position statements provide the necessary policy framework to build and sustain statewide infrastructure.

Other ways Head Start partners with SAUs:

- **Public PreK Partnerships**
 - all 11 grantees have at least 1 public PreK partnership
- **Expanded Early Childhood Programming**
 - (KVCAP/Head Start/MSAD 54)
- **McKinney-Vento**
- **First 10 Community School Pilots**
- **Transition to Kindergarten, IEP meetings and screening events**
- **Sharing Data**
 - Program Information Report (PIR), child outcome and program data (DRDP/COR/TSG, CLASS)
- **Layered and Braided Funding for programming**



Head Start can help with the how.

**"I can do things you cannot,
you can do things I cannot;
together we can do great
things."**

—Mother Teresa

Head Start Resources



Head Start Collaboration Office Page (DOE Early Learning website)

- Map of Head Start Grantees
- HSCO Priority Areas
- Head Start Snapshot Report

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/index.php/learning/earlychildhood/headstart>

HeadStart.gov (formerly ECLKC)

- Policies and regulations
- Print resources, webinars
- Upcoming events and more

<https://headstart.gov/>

Questions? Contact stacie.mccoy@maine.gov



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