

## Federal Policies, Programs, and Technical Assistance

This page provides links and brief descriptions of federal policies, programs, and technical assistance resources related to early care and education.

### Policies and Programs

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
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    - Office of Early Childhood Development (ECD)
      - Office of Child Care (OCC)
      - Office of Head Start (OHS)
    - Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE)
    - Office of Family Assistance (OFA)
    - Office of Community Services (OCS)
  - Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
    - Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)
  - Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)
- U.S. Department of Education (ED)
  - Office of Early Learning (OEL)
  - Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
- Joint U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
  - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)
  - Office of Family Policy, Children and Youth

### Training and Technical Assistance

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
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    - Joint Office of Child Care (OCC) and Office of Head Start (OHS)
      - National Center on Early Head Start—Child Care Partnerships (The Partnership Center)
      - National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (The PFCE Center)
      - National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning (The DTL Center)

- National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness (ECHW Center)
  - National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (ECQA Center)
  - Early Educator Central (EEC)
- Office of Child Care
  - National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development (NCTECD)
  - National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability (NCCSIA)
  - National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment (NCASE)
  - Child Care State Capacity Building Center
- Office of Head Start
  - National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations (PMFO Center)
  - Regional Head Start T/TA System
  - Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
  - National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness (ECHW Center)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  - National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health
- U.S. Department of Education (ED)
  - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)
    - Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)
    - National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
    - Preschool Development and Expansion Grant (PDG) Technical Assistance Program
  - Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
    - DaSy Center
    - National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)
    - Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)
    - Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA)
    - Early Childhood Personnel Center
  - Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
    - Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Technical Assistance
- Joint U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education

- Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance (ELCTA)

- The [U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services \(HHS\)](#) aims to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans. It fulfills that mission by providing for effective health and human services and fostering advances in medicine, public health, and social services.
- The [U.S. Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\)](#) promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals and communities with partnerships, funding, guidance, training and technical assistance.
- The [Office of Early Childhood Development \(ECD\)](#) promotes a joint federal approach to improve early childhood education and development. ECD includes the Offices of Child Care and Head Start, and the Interagency Team. ECD works on various [programs, initiatives](#), and [projects](#) within ACF and across federal agencies.
- The [Office of Child Care \(OCC\)](#) supports low-income working families through child care financial assistance and promotes children's learning by improving the quality of early care and education and afterschool programs.
- The [Office of Head Start \(OHS\)](#) manages grant funding and oversees local agencies providing Head Start services, including Early Head Start. Head Start and Early Head Start promote school readiness of children under 5 from low-income families through education, health, social and other services.
- The [Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation \(OPRE\)](#) studies ACF programs and the populations they serve through rigorous research and evaluation projects. These include program evaluations, research syntheses and descriptive and exploratory studies
- The [Office of Family Assistance \(OFA\)](#) administers several key federal grant programs, including [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#), which is designed to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency. States receive block grants to design and operate programs that accomplish one of the purposes of the TANF program. States may spend TANF funds on child care.
- The [Office of Community Services \(OCS\)](#), partners with states, communities and agencies to eliminate causes of poverty, increase self-sufficiency of individuals and families, and revitalize communities, including through the [Social Services Block Grant \(SSBG\)](#), which enables each state or territory to meet the needs of its residents through locally relevant social services. States may spend SSBG funds on child care.
- The [Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#), [Maternal and Child Health Bureau \(MCHB\)](#), [Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting \(MIECHV\)](#) program gives pregnant women and families, particularly those considered at-risk, necessary resources and skills to raise children who are physically, socially, and emotionally healthy and ready to learn.
- The [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation \(ASPE\)](#) is the principal advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on policy development, and is responsible for major activities in policy coordination, legislation development, strategic planning, policy research, evaluation, and economic analysis.
- The [U.S. Department of Education \(ED\)](#)'s mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. ED programs that support early learning include: the [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#)

Title I, which provides all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [Part C](#), which serves infants and toddlers through age 2 with developmental delays or who have diagnosed physical or mental conditions with high probabilities of resulting in developmental delays; [IDEA Part B Section 619](#), which provide special education and related services to children with disabilities aged 3 through 5; The [21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center \(21CCLC\)](#) program, which provides academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools; the [Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program](#), which promotes school readiness and improved learning outcomes of young children by providing high quality professional development programs to early childhood educators and caregivers; the [McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program](#), which supports the education of homeless children and youths; and [School Improvement Grants \(SIGs\)](#), which allow states to competitively award funds from ED to local school districts to improve the lowest-performing schools, including through early learning models.

- The ED [Office of Early Learning \(OEL\)](#) is charged with supporting ED's Early Learning Initiative with the goal of improving the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for children from birth through third grade.
- The [Institute of Education Sciences \(IES\)](#) is the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of ED. IES's centers include the [National Center for Education Research \(NCER\)](#), the [National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance \(NCEE\)](#), [National Center for Education Statistics \(NCES\)](#), and the [National Center for Special Education Research \(NCSEER\)](#).
- [HHS and ED](#) are committed to working together to significantly expand and improve services for young children and their families, and to support state-level innovation.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture, [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) provides aid to child and adult care institutions and family or group day care homes for the provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons.
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for [Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.
- The [U.S. Department of Defense \(DoD\), Office of Family Policy, Children and Youth](#) offers child care on military installations, including child development centers, family child care, and school-age care programs.

- Technical assistance resources from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for state child care administrators, Head Start grantees, and the early care and education field as a whole are available on a range of topics. Resources are organized by the [Child Care Technical Assistance Network](#) on the following topics: Early Childhood Program Design and Management; Equal Access to Child Care; Family Engagement and Consumer Education; Leadership and Coordination; Professional Development; Program Integrity and Accountability; Promoting Children's Development; Protecting Children's Health and Safety; Quality Improvement; and Stable Financial Assistance to Families. Resources are organized in the [Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#) (ECLKC) by the following topics: Education and Child Development; Family and Community; Health; Program Management; and Cross-Cutting Approaches. The [ACF Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance \(T/TA\) System](#) promotes excellence through high-quality, practical resources and approaches designed to build early childhood program capacity and promote consistent practices across communities, states, Tribes, and territories. The Centers in the ACF T/TA System bring together the knowledge and skills from Head Start, child care, and health partners across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- The [National Center on Early Head Start—Child Care Partnerships \(the Partnership Center\)](#) supports the effective implementation of the new Early Head Start—Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships.
- The [National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement \(The PFCE Center\)](#) supports family well-being, effective family and community engagement, and children's school readiness, including transitions to kindergarten.
- The [National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning \(The DTL Center\)](#) advances best practices in the identification, development, and promotion of the implementation of evidence-based child development and teaching and learning practices that are culturally and linguistically responsive and lead to positive child outcomes across early childhood programs.
- The [National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness \(ECHW Center\)](#) advances best practices for linking health and early childhood education systems, health care professionals, and families with the goal of maximizing resources for developing comprehensive and coordinate health and wellness services within early childhood education (ECE) settings. This Center is jointly funded and administered by the Health Resource Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Division of Home Visiting and Early Childhood Systems.
- The [National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance \(ECQA Center\)](#) supports state and community leaders and their partners in the planning and implementation of rigorous approaches to quality in all early care and education settings for children from birth to school age.
- [Early Educator Central: Pathways to Credentials and Degrees for Infant-Toddler Educators \(EEC\)](#) is an on-line initiative that focuses on the careers of infant-toddler educators, seeking to advance their education and improve their competencies. Early Educator Central leverages previous federal investment in high quality coursework in support of infant-toddler educators, providing access to these courses.

- The [National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development](#) assists Tribal grantees with the administration and implementation of Child Care and Development Fund programs. The Center's activities, expertise, and resources support Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations in their efforts to increase the quality, affordability, and availability of child care in Native American communities.
- The [National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability](#) provides technical assistance to Child Care and Development Fund programs in developing child care subsidy systems that are child-focused, family-friendly, and fair to providers.
- The [National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment](#) provides training and technical assistance to the state, territory, and tribal CCDF lead agencies and their designated networks, which include the statewide afterschool networks, State and Local Education Agencies (SEAs/LEAs), provider associations, and child care resource and referral agencies.
- The [Child Care State Capacity Building Center](#) works with State and Territory leaders and their partners to create innovative early childhood systems and programs that improve results for children and families.
- The [National Center on Program Management and Fiscal Operations](#) (NCPMFO) supports the dissemination of clear, consistent messages on OHS priorities for the development and implementation of sound management systems and strong internal controls.
- The goal of the regional Head Start T/TA system is to create a seamless, easily accessible team of professional development providers at the state, tribal, and local levels, who can work with Head Start programs directly to improve the quality of teaching and other services. Regional Head Start T/TA Specialists focus on school readiness, health, and linkages to early care and education systems at the local level.
- The [Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#), created through an Office of Head Start grant in October 2008, translates research in healthy mental development into materials tailored to the needs of its target audiences: mental health consultants, Head Start Program administrators, Head Start staff, and training and technical assistance providers. Its Web site provides a range of materials that address these audiences' needs for effective ways to promote young children's social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors.
- The [Georgetown University National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health](#) is dedicated to increasing the capacity of communities, States, Tribes, and Territories to improve, sustain, and expand systems of care and the services and supports provided within them. Its goal is to improve the lives of children, youth, and young adults with or at-risk of mental health challenges, as well as the lives of their families.
- The [Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes](#) (CEELO) aims to strengthen state education agencies' capacity to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. Topics addressed on CEELO's Web site include teacher evaluation and financing. The site also includes contact information for state agencies.
- The [National Center for Homeless Education](#) provides research, resources, and information enabling communities to address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness.

The Center also supports educators and service providers through producing training and awareness materials and providing training at regional and national conferences and events.

- The [Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Technical Assistance Program](#) provides resources, technical assistance, and the latest news to development and expansion grantees.
- The [DaSy Center](#) provides technical assistance and resources to assist state agencies with the development or enhancement of data systems for Part C early intervention and Part B preschool special education programs supported through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The materials on the DaSy Center Web site are primarily designed for state IDEA staff.
- The [National Center for Systemic Improvement](#) (NCSI) helps States transform their systems to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. NCSI provides States with technical assistance to support their school districts and local early intervention programs in improving education results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities.
- The [Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children](#) (TACSEI) uses research on practices that improve social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk of, delays or disabilities to create free products and resources that help decisionmakers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day.
- The [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#) (ECTA) provides technical assistance to state early intervention and early childhood special education services systems (Part C and Section 619) by improving systems, practices, and outcomes.
- The [Early Childhood Personnel Center](#) (ECPC) facilitates the development, implementation and evaluation of integrated and comprehensive systems of personnel development (CSPD) for the early childhood workforce serving infants and young children with disabilities
- [Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems \(SLDS\) Technical Assistance](#) provides resources on the successful design, development, implementation, and expansion of longitudinal data systems for kindergarten through 12th grade and early learning through the workforce.
- [Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance](#) (ELC TA)'s mission is to provide and facilitate responsive, timely, and high-quality TA to support the successful implementation of RTT-ELC grantee state projects, and provide cross-sector early learning resources to all states and territories. ELC TA is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and run in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families.