

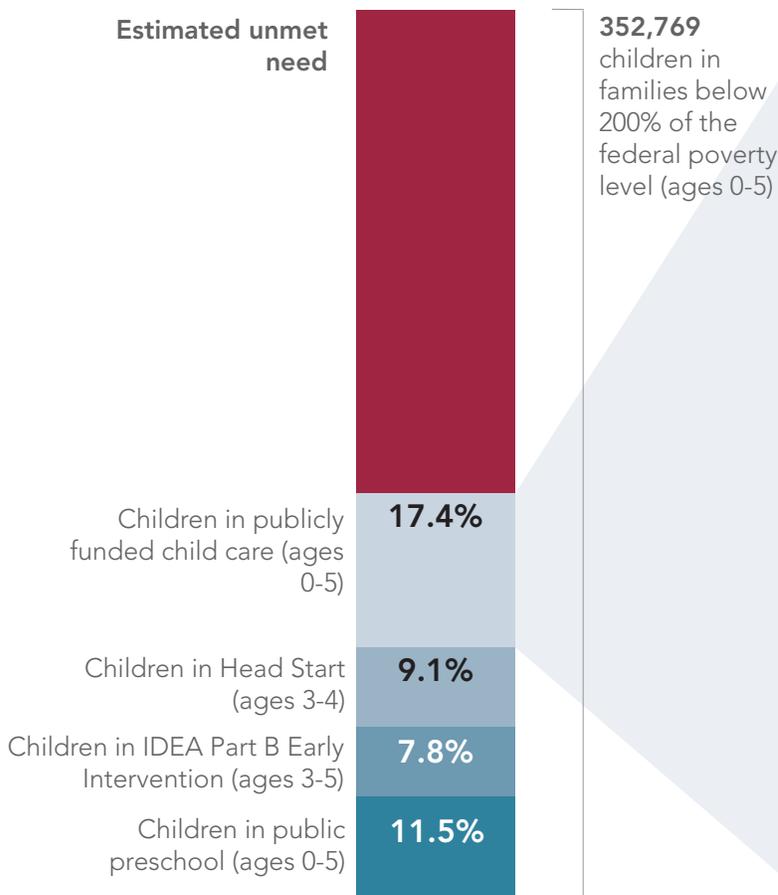


# How is Ohio doing on early learning access and quality?

**Access to quality early learning** is necessary to build a strong foundation for young children in Ohio. Children with access to high-quality early learning experiences within their first five years of life are more likely to be kindergarten ready, graduate from high school, and have higher earnings and better health later in life.

The data below provide a snapshot of Ohio's performance on early learning access and quality.

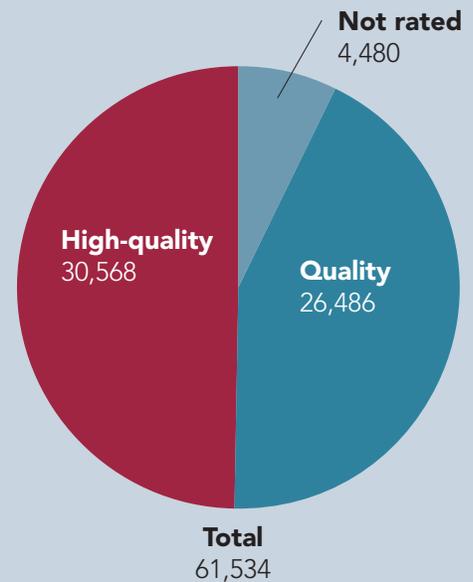
Many low-income children in Ohio **did not have access to these early learning opportunities** in 2019-2021.



**Note:** There is potential for overlap among children served because data for these programs come from multiple sources. This likely results in an underestimate of unmet need.

**Sources:** Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (2021); U.S. Office of Head Start data as reported by the Annie E. Casey Kids Count Data Center (2019); U.S. Department of Education (2019-2020); Ohio Department of Education (2020)

93% of Ohio children in publicly funded child care were **enrolled in quality programs**, with nearly half in high-quality programs in 2021.



**Note:** Programs that are rated by Step Up To Quality, Ohio's child care quality rating and improvement system, as one or two stars are considered "quality." Programs that are rated as three to five stars are considered "high-quality." Some programs are working towards achieving their rating or are exempted from the Step Up To Quality program.

**Source:** Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (2021)

**Low birthweight** can result in developmental delays. Data suggests that many of Ohio's babies and young children at higher risk for developmental delays are not getting the early intervention services they may need.



Children receiving IDEA Part C  
Early Intervention services



Children born with low  
birthweight

Source: U.S. Department of Education (2019-2020); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020)

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Young Black children are much more likely to receive one or more **out-of-school suspensions during preschool** than their white peers.

**11.6 times worse** for Black preschoolers



Source: U.S. Department of Education (2017-2018 school year)

## What is the impact of racial disparities in early childhood education?

Racial disparities in early education access and attainment, combined with racism experienced in education settings, can impact the long-term health and well-being of students of color.<sup>11</sup> For example, school officials are significantly more likely to suspend students of color, with Black preschoolers suspended at a rate 11.6 times greater than that of white preschoolers.

This reduces the amount of instruction students receive each year and contributes to racial differences in educational attainment.<sup>12</sup> Missed opportunities for education can deplete a student's potential for good health and economic stability throughout their life.

## Why should Ohio prioritize access to high-quality early childhood education?

Safe, stable, and nurturing environments and early learning experiences are essential for children's healthy growth and development. Children's early experiences lay the groundwork for physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth later in life. High-quality early childhood education, such as Head Start, public preschool, and early intervention services can improve school readiness and build the foundation for future educational achievement. Quality early childhood education and early learning supports can also counteract the harms and stressors to which children living in poverty or other difficult circumstances may be exposed.<sup>13</sup>

Further, a poll conducted by Groundwork Ohio in November 2021 found that access to quality early learning is critical for the economic stability of Ohio's families. More than four in ten parents with children, ages 5 and younger, surveyed reported having to work fewer hours to care for their children. Almost two-thirds of mothers with children, ages 5 and younger, who did not work or who worked part-time reported that they would go back to work or work more hours if they had access to quality child care at a "reasonable cost."<sup>14</sup>

### Ohio's performance

	Most recent	Trend	Ohio compared to U.S.
<b>Early learning</b>			
<b>Early learning access.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, in families with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level enrolled in early childhood education (see note for years)	45.8%	N/A	N/A
<b>Early Intervention service access.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-2, receiving IDEA Part C Early Intervention services (2019-2020 school year)	5.9%	Improved	Worse
<b>Preschool suspension.</b> Number of public preschool students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions, per 1,000 children enrolled (2017-2018 school year)	1.1	N/A	Better

**Note:** Early childhood education programs include: number of children in public preschool (October 2020); number of children served under IDEA Part B, ages 3-5 (2019-2020); number of children in Head Start, ages 3-4 (2019-2020); number of children in publicly funded child care (July 2021). For additional information on the data and analysis, see the data appendix.