

# Ohio's Early Childhood Strengths & Challenges

The data below provides a summary of Ohio's most notable early childhood strengths and challenges based on recent trends, comparisons to the U.S. overall, and rank among all states.

## State rank

Ohio consistently ranks in the middle or bottom of the pack compared to other states on important early childhood measures, including:

	Ohio's rank out of 50 states and D.C.
<b>Food insecurity.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, whose household could not always afford to eat good, nutritious meals in the past 12 months	23
<b>Early Head Start access, income-eligible infants and toddlers.</b> Percent of income-eligible children, ages 0-2, who had access to Early Head Start (EHS)	24
<b>Preventive medical care.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who had a preventive medical care visit in the past 12 months	29
<b>Maltreatment, infants.</b> Number of children who experienced maltreatment (child abuse and/or neglect), per 1,000 infants under age 1	31
<b>Poverty, young child.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who live in poverty (below the federal poverty level [FPL]) and extreme poverty	39
<b>Family resilience.</b> Percent of families with children, ages 0-5, who reported family resilience	50

# Strengths

While there is still room for improvement, Ohio is moving in the right direction or performs better than the U.S. average in these areas:

Ohio's performance	Comparison
<b>Ohio compared to U.S.</b>	
<b>Preschool suspension.</b> Number of public preschool students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions, per 1,000 children enrolled (2017-2018)	<b>Better</b>
<b>Housing cost burden.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived in households where 30% or more of monthly income is spent on rent (2019)	<b>Better</b>
<b>Eighth grade math proficiency.</b> Percent of eighth grade students proficient in math based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2019)	<b>Better</b>
<b>Trend</b>	
<b>Home visiting, households enrolled.</b> Number of households enrolled in evidence-based home visiting programs funded by the Ohio Departments of Health (ODH) and Medicaid (ODM) (FFY 2019, FFY 2021)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Immunizations, toddlers.</b> Percent of children, ages 19-35 months, who received all recommended doses of seven key vaccines (2017, 2020)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Poverty, young child.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who live in poverty (below the federal poverty level [FPL]) and extreme poverty (2016, 2019)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Problems paying bills, pregnant women.</b> Percent of women who had problems paying bills in the 12 months before their baby was born (2016, 2020)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Zero-vehicle households.</b> Percent of households with children, ages 0-5, that have no vehicles available (2016, 2019)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Housing cost burden.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived in households where 30% or more of monthly income is spent on rent (2016, 2019)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Elevated blood lead levels, young child.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who received a blood lead test and had elevated blood lead levels (2017, 2020)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Young child mortality.</b> Number of child deaths, ages 1-5, from all causes, per 100,000 children, ages 1-5 (2017, 2020)	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Homeless students.</b> Percent of kindergarten students experiencing homelessness (2018-2019, 2021-2022)	<b>Improved</b>

Ohio's **Supporting Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act**, passed in 2018, limited most out-of-school suspensions and expulsions of students in pre-K through 3rd grade.

Ohio policymakers increased funding for home visiting services in the last two state budgets, allowing more families to be served.

Policies such as Ohio's **Lead Abatement Tax Credit Program** and **Lead Line Mapping Grants** have supported efforts to reduce lead exposure.

**Note:** Some metrics represent both strengths and challenges (e.g., trend improved but Ohio performs worse than the U.S. overall).

# Challenges

These are key areas where Ohio's performance is moving in the wrong direction and/or worse than the U.S. average:

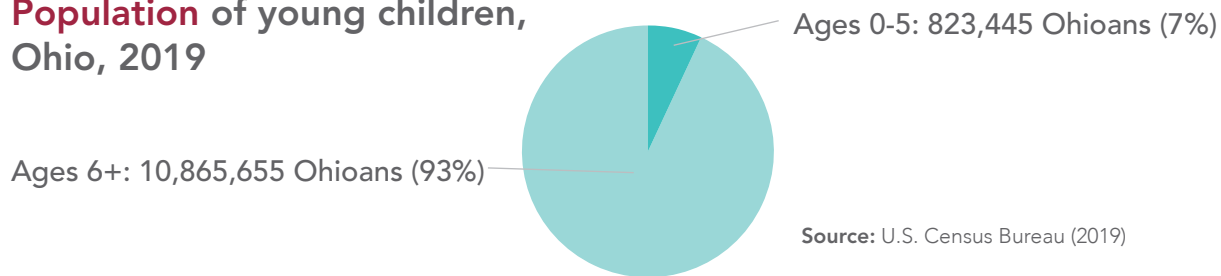
Ohio's performance	Comparison
<b>Ohio compared to U.S.</b>	
<b>Early Intervention service access, infants and toddlers.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-2, receiving IDEA Part C Early Intervention services (2020-21)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Maltreatment, infants.</b> Number of children who experienced maltreatment (child abuse and/or neglect), per 1,000 infants under age 1 (2020)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Poverty, young child.</b> Percent of children, ages 0-5, who live in poverty (below the federal poverty level [FPL]) and extreme poverty (2019)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Eligible for and receiving WIC.</b> Percent of children, ages 1-4, who were eligible for WIC and received WIC benefits (2019)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Zero-vehicle households.</b> Percent of households with children, ages 0-5, that have no vehicles available (2019)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Maternal mortality.</b> Number of deaths from causes related to pregnancy or its management, per 100,000 live births (2019)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Neonatal abstinence syndrome.</b> Number of neonatal abstinence syndrome cases among newborn hospitalizations, per 1,000 newborn hospitalizations (2018)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Infant mortality.</b> Number of infant deaths, under age 1, per 1,000 live births (2019)	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Trend</b>	
<b>Maltreatment, infants.</b> Number of children who experienced maltreatment (child abuse and/or neglect), per 1,000 infants under age 1 (2017, 2020)	<b>Worsened</b>
<b>Postpartum depression.</b> Percent of women with a live birth who experienced postpartum depression (2017, 2020)	<b>Worsened</b>
<b>On track for literacy.</b> Percent of students "on-track" for language and literacy based on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Revised (KRA-R) (2018-2019, 2021-2022)	<b>Worsened</b>
<b>Chronic absenteeism.</b> Percent of students in grades K-3 missing at least 10% of school attendance time in a year (2018-2019, 2021-2022)	<b>Worsened</b>
<b>Positive social-emotional skills, special needs preschool.</b> Percent of preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who demonstrate improved positive social-emotional skills by the time they turned 6 years old or existed the program (FY 2019, FY 2021)	<b>Worsened</b>
<b>Language, communication and literacy, special needs preschool.</b> Percent of preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills including early language, communication, and literacy by the time they turned 6 years old or exited the program (FY 2019, FY 2021)	<b>Worsened</b>

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected student learning and attendance in Ohio and across the country.

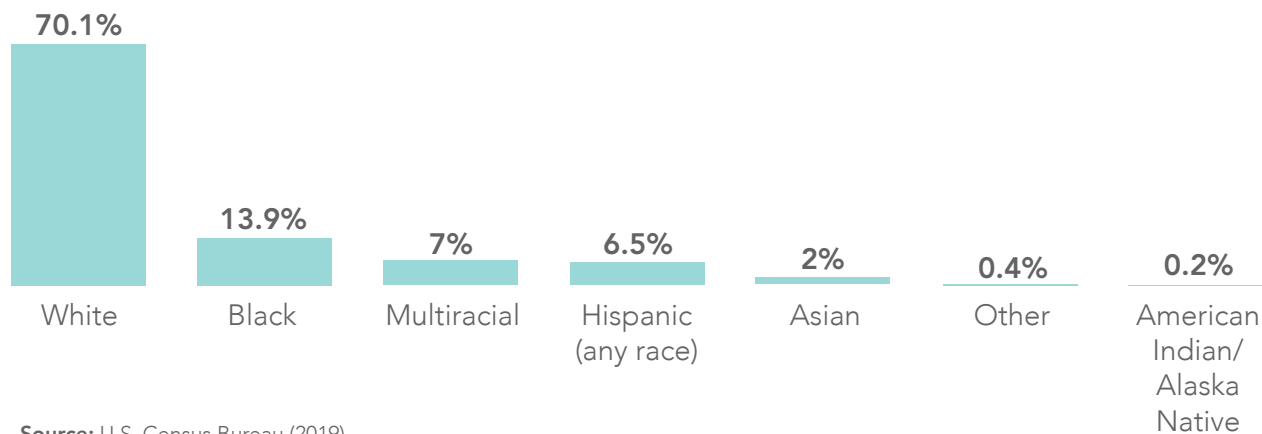
**Note:** Some metrics represent both strengths and challenges (e.g., trend improved but Ohio performs worse than the U.S. overall).

# Demographics of Ohio's Young Children

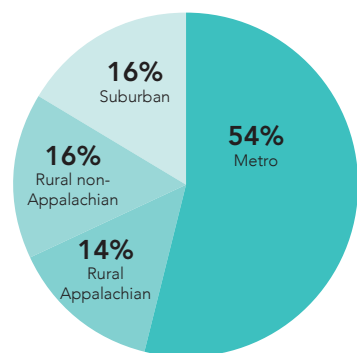
## Population of young children, Ohio, 2019



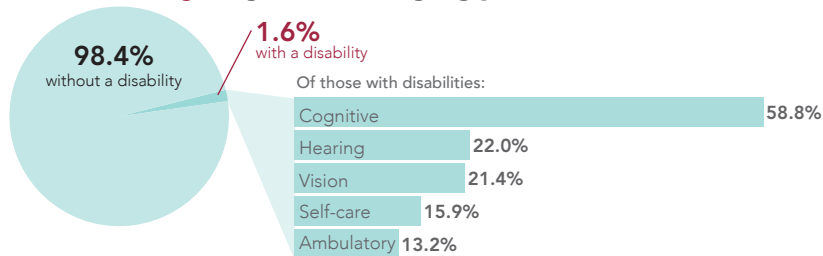
## Population of young children, ages 0-5, by race and ethnicity, Ohio, 2019



## Population of young children, ages 0-5, by county type, Ohio, 2019



## Population of young children, ages 0-5, with a disability (by disability type)



**Note:** An individual can have more than one disability, so the percentages do not add up to 100.

**Note:** Percent of population, ages 0-5, in Ohio who report a disability in any one or more of the following categories: Vision, hearing, ambulatory, self-care, or cognitive.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2019)

# Citations & Notes

1. Basch, Charles E. "Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in School Reforms to Close the Achievement Gap." *Journal of School Health* 81, no. 10 (2011): 593-598. doi: 10.1111/j.1746-1561.2011.00632.x
2. Egerter, Susan et al. Issue Brief 6: Education and Health. *Education Matters to Health*. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a Healthier America, 2009. <http://www.commissiononhealth.org/PDF/c270deb3-ba42-4fbd-baeb-2cd65956f00e/Issue%20Brief%206%20Sept%2009%20-%20Education%20and%20Health.pdf>
3. Lu, Michael C. and Neal Halfon. "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes: A Life-Course Perspective." *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 7, no. 1 (2003): 13-30. doi:10.23/A:1022537516969; see also Kramer, Michael R. and Carol R. Hogue. "What Causes Racial Disparities in Very Preterm Birth? A Biosocial Perspective." *Epidemiologic Reviews* 31, no. 1 (2009): 84-98. doi: 10.1093/ajerev/mxp003; see also Goosby, Bridget J and Chelsea Heidbrink. "Transgenerational Consequences of Racial Discrimination for African American Health." *Sociology Compass* 7, no. 8 (2013): 630-643. doi:10.1111/soc4.12054
4. Fishman, Samuel et al. "Race/Ethnicity, Maternal Educational Attainment, and Infant Mortality in the United States." *Biodemography and Social Biology* 66, no. 1 (2020): 1-26. doi: 10.1080/19485565.2020.1793659]
5. Key Findings: Public Health Reporting of NAS Offers Opportunities for Treatment and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/pregnancy/features/public-health-reporting-of-NAS.html>
6. Goldstein, Jessica, D. Betsy McCoach, and HuiHui Yu. "The predictive validity of kindergarten readiness judgments: Lessons from one state." *The Journal of Educational Research* 110, no. 1 (2017): 50-60. doi: 10.1080/00220671.2015.1039111
7. Kurdek, L. A. and R. J. Sinclair. "Predicting reading and mathematics achievement in fourth-grade children from kindergarten readiness scores." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 93, no. 3 (2001): 451-455. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.93.3.451>; see also Duncan, G. J., et al. "School readiness and later achievement." *Developmental Psychology*, 43, no. 6 (2007): 1428-1446. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.43.6.1428>
8. Medicaid: How Does it Provide Economic Security for Families? Georgetown University Health Policy Institute: Center for Children and Families, 2017. <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Medicaid-and-Economic-Security.pdf>
9. Carroll, Rebecca Sustersic and Reem Aly. *Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visit Needs Assessment Update*. Columbus, OH: Ohio Department of Health, 2020.
10. "Prevent Children's Exposure to Lead." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/leadpoisoning/index.html>
11. Health Policy Institute of Ohio. *A Strategic Approach to Prevent ACEs in Ohio*. August 2021.

Visit [GroundworkOhio.org/dashboard](https://GroundworkOhio.org/dashboard)

for more information on the:

- *Background, Process, & Methodology*
- *Data Appendix*



The mission of Groundwork Ohio is to ensure all young children in Ohio are healthy and ready to learn. You can join us in this mission by making a gift of support at [GroundworkOhio.org/donate](https://GroundworkOhio.org/donate). Together, we will work to make sure every child has a strong start in life.