

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START IN MARYLAND

What are Head Start and Early Head Start programs?

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded, comprehensive child development programs for low-income families with children from birth to age five, pregnant women, and children with disabilities. Families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level are eligible for services. In Maryland:

- ❖ 12,869 children and 189 pregnant women currently receive services
- ❖ Early childhood education, health services, parent education, nutrition, and family partnership agreements are integral components of Head Start and Early Head Start comprehensive services
- ❖ Approximately \$78,000,000 in Federal Funding is provided to grantees for direct services to children and their families and for quality improvements to programs
- ❖ \$3 million in Head Start and Early Head Start State Supplemental Funding are provided for program expansion and quality improvements
- ❖ Directly funded and monitored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 32 Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies and 12 Early Head Start Grantees operate 280 program sites throughout Maryland
- ❖ More than 10% of Head Start and Early Head Start enrollees are children with disabilities
- ❖ Information on Early Childhood Initiatives: Head Start and Early Head Start can be found at www.mdk12.org/instruction/ensure/readiness

What is the purpose of Head Start?

To promote school readiness and enhance social and cognitive development through the provision of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services.

What are the benefits of Head Start and Early Head Start?

Longitudinal studies and evaluations reveal that children demonstrate improved skills in vocabulary, writing skills, and social competence after completing Head Start programs. Children in Early Head Start programs perform better in cognitive and language development.