

# Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

## DEFINITION

*Children enrolled in Early Head Start* is the number and percentage of children enrolled in a Rhode Island Early Head Start program.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Established in 1994, Early Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood program serving low-income children birth to age three, pregnant women, and their families. Early Head Start programs serve children in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (\$20,160 for a family of three in 2016).<sup>1,2,3</sup> The federally-funded Early Head Start program is designed to address the comprehensive needs of low-income infants and toddlers and pregnant women by providing high-quality early education, nutrition and mental health services, medical and dental referrals, and fostering the development of healthy family relationships.<sup>4</sup>

Pregnant women enrolled in Early Head Start are assessed for risks to a successful pregnancy. Individualized plans are developed to support prenatal health, promote healthy behaviors and prepare for the baby's arrival.<sup>5</sup> After the baby is born, families participate by enrolling in either a center-based or a home-based program. Home-based programs use weekly home visits to support child development and twice monthly group meetings. Children in center-based

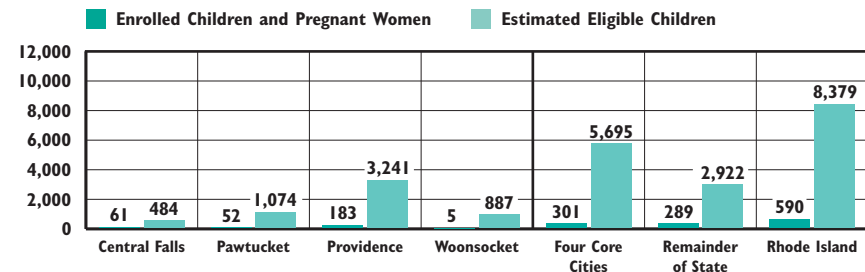
models attend a center-based early care and education program and families receive at least two home visits per year. Some provide a combination of home-based and center-based services.<sup>6</sup>

In Rhode Island in 2015, there were 629 federally-funded Early Head Start slots, of which 58% were home-based and 42% were center-based.<sup>7</sup> An Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant awarded in 2015 created 100 new center-based Early Head Start slots in Rhode Island. The federal grant incentivizes partnerships between Early Head Start programs and child care programs to increase the number of very low-income infants and toddlers enrolled.<sup>8,9</sup>

Early Head Start has been shown to produce significant cognitive, language, and social-emotional gains in participating children and more positive interactions with their parents. Early Head Start parents provide more emotional support and more opportunities for language and learning to their children, and are more likely to pursue education and job-training activities and to be employed.<sup>10,11</sup> Children who enroll in preschool after Early Head Start have better outcomes in early reading skills.<sup>12</sup>

As of October 2015, 582 infants and toddlers and eight pregnant women were receiving Early Head Start services in Rhode Island and there were 257 eligible pregnant women or children on the waiting list.<sup>13</sup>

## Access to Early Head Start for Low-Income Children and Pregnant Women, Rhode Island, 2015



Source: Rhode Island Early Head Start program enrollment data compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, October 2015. Estimated eligible children is the number of children under age three according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data.

- ◆ In 2015 in Rhode Island, federal funding enabled 590 children and pregnant women to participate in Early Head Start, 7% of the estimated eligible population. There were 301 children and pregnant women from the four core cities (5% of the estimated income-eligible population) and 289 children and pregnant women from the remainder of the state (10% of the estimated income-eligible population). The estimated percentage of the eligible population enrolled in Early Head Start for each core city is: Central Falls – 13%, Pawtucket – 5%, Providence – 6%, and Woonsocket – 1%.<sup>14,15</sup>
- ◆ As of October 2015, 1% of Early Head Start clients were pregnant women, 24% were infants under age one, 38% were age one, 35% were age two, and 2% were age three.<sup>16</sup>
- ◆ Rhode Island Head Start programs serve significant numbers of children with high needs including: 67 infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities (12% of all children enrolled), 24 children who were in foster care, and 31 children who were homeless.<sup>17</sup> Early Head Start programs are required to prioritize enrollment for children with special needs and to screen all enrolled children to identify developmental delays and disabilities.<sup>18</sup>
- ◆ As of October 2015, 31% of the children enrolled in Early Head Start were also participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).<sup>19</sup> Center-based Early Head Start programs are open six hours per day and do not cover the entire day.<sup>20</sup> CCAP is used to provide additional coverage for working parents.

# Children Enrolled in Early Head Start

Table 32. Children Ages Birth to Three and Pregnant Women Enrolled in Early Head Start, Rhode Island, 2015

CITY/TOWN	ALL CHILDREN <AGE 3	% CHILDREN <AGE 6 IN POVERTY	ESTIMATED ELIGIBLE POPULATION <AGE 3 IN POVERTY	# OF PREGNANT WOMEN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	# OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % CHILDREN <AGE 3 ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START	ESTIMATED % ELIGIBLE POPULATION ENROLLED IN EARLY HEAD START
Barrington	366	1.3%	5	0	0	0%	0%
Bristol	507	5.6%	28	0	3	1%	11%
Burrillville	460	12.6%*	58	1	9	2%	17%
Central Falls	1,028	47.1%**	484	2	59	6%	13%
Charlestown	186	32.3%***	60	0	0	0%	0%
Coventry	940	25.9%**	243	0	14	1%	6%
Cranston	2,318	16.4%*	380	0	24	1%	6%
Cumberland	970	6.8%*	66	0	0	0%	0%
East Greenwich	299	13.4%**	40	0	1	0%	3%
East Providence	1,560	23.6%*	368	0	25	2%	7%
Exeter	166	NA	NA	0	0	0%	NA
Foster	113	13.8%***	16	0	1	1%	6%
Glocester	247	9.6%**	24	0	0	0%	0%
Hopkinton	258	14.5%***	37	0	0	0%	0%
Jamestown	85	7.9%***	7	0	0	0%	0%
Johnston	816	20.4%*	166	0	16	2%	10%
Lincoln	587	13.8%*	81	0	0	0%	0%
Little Compton	68	17.8%***	12	0	1	1%	8%
Middletown	502	13.3%*	67	0	10	2%	15%
Narragansett	271	9.7%*	26	0	0	0%	0%
New Shoreham	21	10.0%***	2	0	0	0%	0%
Newport	820	13.3%*	109	0	54	7%	50%
North Kingstown	728	20.0%**	146	0	0	0%	0%
North Providence	851	21.1%**	180	0	20	2%	11%
North Smithfield	290	3.6%*	10	0	4	1%	40%
Pawtucket	2,959	36.3%*	1,074	0	52	2%	5%
Portsmouth	429	4.0%*	17	0	0	0%	0%
Providence	7,609	42.6%*	3,241	4	179	2%	6%
Richmond	235	15.7%***	37	0	0	0%	0%
Scituate	193	9.4%**	18	0	0	0%	0%
Smithfield	402	NA	NA	0	4	1%	NA
South Kingstown	640	13.1%**	84	0	0	0%	0%
Tiverton	398	11.1%*	44	0	1	0%	2%
Warren	296	12.8%**	38	0	5	2%	13%
Warwick	2,322	8.7%	202	1	50	2%	25%
West Greenwich	178	NA	NA	0	2	1%	NA
West Warwick	1,044	24.1%**	252	0	43	4%	17%
Westerly	726	14.5%**	105	0	0	0%	0%
Woonsocket	1,900	46.7%*	887	0	5	0%	1%
Four Core Cities	13,496	42.2%	5,695	6	295	2%	5%
Remainder of State	20,292	14.4%	2,922	2	287	1%	10%
Rhode Island	33,788	24.8%	8,379	8	582	2%	7%

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Early Head Start Programs, children enrolled as of October 2015. Children enrolled are listed by residence of child, not location of the Head Start program.

The estimated number of children under age three in each community is from Census 2010, Summary File 1. Estimated eligible children is the number of children ages three and four according to Census 2010 multiplied by the % of children under age six living in families with incomes below the federal poverty line (FPL) according to the Population Reference Bureau's (PRB) analysis of 2010-2014 American Community Survey data. Estimated eligible children for the four core cities, remainder of state, and Rhode Island is calculated using PRB estimates for those groupings and is not a sum of estimates by community.

The American Community Survey is a sample survey, and therefore the number and percentage of children living in poverty are estimates. The reliability of these estimates varies by community.

\* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 5 but less than 10 percentage points.

\*\* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than 10 but less than 15 percentage points.

\*\*\* The Margin of Error around the percentage is greater than or equal to 15 percentage points.

NA: American Community Survey estimate of % of children under age six in poverty is not available for this community.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

### References

<sup>1,6,10</sup> Raikes, H. H., Chazan-Cohen, R., Love, J. M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2010). Early Head Start impacts at age 3 and a description of the age 5 follow-up study. In A. J. Reynolds, A. J. Rolnick, M. M. Englund & J. A. Temple (Eds.), *Childhood programs and practices in the first decade of life*. (pp.99-118). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>2</sup> *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, § 42 U.S.C. 9801, § 645 (2007).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2016). Annual update of the HHS poverty guidelines. *Federal Register*, 81(15), 4036-4037.

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