

Rhode Island

NO PROGRAM

While Rhode Island does not have a distinct state prekindergarten initiative that meets the definition used in this report, the state has several programs that aim to expand access to early education. Rhode Island's Comprehensive Child Care Services Program (CCCSP), established in 2001, supports comprehensive services in child care settings for children from low-income families. Program settings include state-approved child care centers and family child care homes that belong to a state-certified network. Children ages 3 and 4 are eligible for the program if their families' incomes are below 108 percent of poverty. The program was supported with \$1,291,938 from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality set-aside in 2003–2004.

The CCCSP is closely coordinated with the state's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which is funded with federal and state CCDF dollars. The majority of children served through the CCCSP also receive CCAP subsidies to support full-day programming. In addition, children in families with incomes too high to qualify for the CCCSP, but still low enough to qualify for the child care subsidy program (incomes between 108 and 225 percent of poverty) are served using CCAP funding in the same classrooms. In this way, both groups of children are able to benefit from the quality enhancements supported by the CCCSP. In 2003–2004, \$3,396,358 in CCAP funds were used in coordination with CCCSP funds to serve a total of 609 children. As of June 2005, enrollment reached 805 children. Most CCCSP classrooms also serve children who do not qualify for assistance and whose tuition is paid through parent fees or other private sources.

The CCCSP provides children and families with the same comprehensive services as required by Head Start, including health screenings and referrals, meals, and parent support services. Class sizes for 3-year-olds must be no larger than 18 and have no more than nine children per adult; for 4-year-olds, class sizes are limited to 20 children with staff-child ratios of 1:10. Teachers must have a Child Development Associate credential with 15 credits in early childhood education. CCCSP staff also participate in training on the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards, which are comprehensive and specific to prekindergarten children. Programs are not required to follow the standards, but they are offered as guidance.

In addition to the CCCSP, the state provides funding to supplement the federal Head Start program. In 2003–2004, Rhode Island spent nearly \$2 million in state funds that were matched with \$1.5 million in state-secured federal Medicaid funds to support 400 additional Head Start slots as well as training and technical assistance.

Another source of funding for prekindergarten programs is the state's Early Childhood Investment Fund. This fund is a flexible financing stream that school districts can use for many different purposes. Some districts choose to use the fund to support prekindergarten classes.

Finally, the state has taken a significant step to ensure access to early care and education by offering an entitlement to child care assistance for low-income families. It is the only state in the nation with such an entitlement. In fiscal year 2004, child care subsidies were provided to 13,810 children, and expenditures totaled \$82.4 million, with state funding accounting for the majority of this total.

ACCESS RANKING—4s

ACCESS RANKING—3s

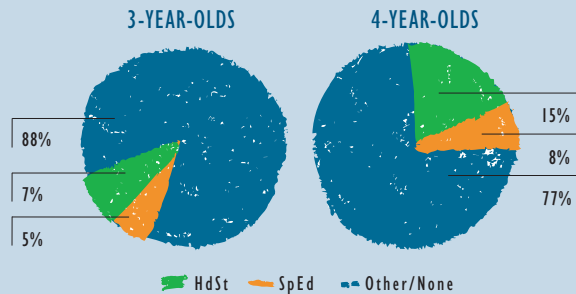
RESOURCES RANKING

No Program

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment	1,630
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03-'04	2,337
State-funded Head Start enrollment	400

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

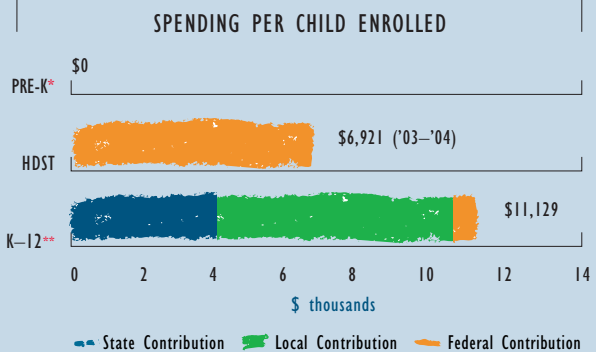


QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
State Head Start spending	\$1,828,959
State spending per 3-year-old	\$0
State spending per 4-year-old	\$0



* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '04-'05 school year, unless otherwise noted.

† Rhode Island was not able to break its state-funded Head Start enrollment down by single year of age. As a result, this figure is an estimate based on the percentage of federal Head Start enrollees in Rhode Island who were 3 or 4 years old.