

# Puerto Rico

## NO PROGRAM

Puerto Rico has preschool education programs that are funded by grants from various areas. This description shows how Puerto Rico, which operates as a single school district, supports several early childhood education initiatives.

Early childhood preschool programs are administered by the Administration for Integral Child Care and Development (ACUDEN) and the Department of Education has authority over early childhood special education. There are seven levels of education in Puerto Rico, and Level One is nursery school for children under age four, which is optional and consists of Early Head Start, Head Start and other prekindergarten programs. Level Two is compulsory preschool, also known as kindergarten, which is mandatory for 5-year-olds. It should be noted that Puerto Rico does not have a uniform transition for kindergarten, but was an activity project of the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5), in alliance with the Department of Education.

ACUDEN is responsible for administering Federal Head Start/Early Head Start, child care and PDG B-5. The agency guarantees the provision of and access to comprehensive care and development for the neediest children from their early formative stages, and encourages the participation of fathers, mothers, caregivers and relatives of the child in the educational and formative process. ACUDEN also funds child care service providers and centers.

Head Start operates throughout Puerto Rico. In 2021-2022, there were 21,308 federally-funded Head Start slots and 6,030 Early Head Start slots. There is an active multi-sectoral regulatory council for Head Start, which has representation from various sectors and meets every two months.

Puerto Rico has not had an active Multisector Council for Early Childhood since 2016. Under the work of the PDG B-5 grant, attempts were made to have it appointed by the Executive Branch but were not successful.

In December 2019, Puerto Rico was awarded an initial PDG B-5 grant for the purpose of updating early childhood planning efforts in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico received \$547,000 to support the development of planning and coordination of the early childhood development and education system. As part of this grant, a COVID-19 Pandemic Needs Assessment was conducted, which yielded important data on economic inequality among children in Puerto Rico, as well as mental health, access to services and system coordination. As a result of these findings, training was initiated for service providers in the area of mental health, specifically psychological recovery from trauma after disasters.

In December 2020, Puerto Rico was awarded a three-year PDG B-5 renewal grant in the amount of \$4.5 million. This grant provides continuity to the activities designed to achieve an integrated system of early childhood services. Puerto Rico PDG B-5 is currently working on a strategic planning process and has the collaboration of more than 60 professionals representing all sectors involved in early childhood.

Puerto Rico does not currently have infant/toddler or preschool standards. However, through the PDG B-5, development standards were designed and created in collaboration with the state of Arkansas and early childhood professionals in Puerto Rico. These standards were submitted to the Department of Education and are currently under review.

Through an agreement established with the University of Puerto Rico, ACUDEN developed a pilot quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) called PASITOS in 2010, which was validated to serve as a self-assessment for participating public and private care centers. This instrument is currently under revision since it does not include several pertinent areas such as center administration and home visitation networks. Through the PDG B-5, DANDO PASITOS (Taking steps), will be developed and will contemplate all areas that imply a quality system, as well as support to reach quality levels.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
No Program	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
No Program	

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

## PUERTO RICO

### ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment .....	0
School districts that offer state program .....	NA
Income requirement .....	NA
Minimum hours of operation .....	NA
Operating schedule .....	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	4,968
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	22,245
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	0

### QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

# NO PROGRAM

### RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$0
Local match required? .....	NA
State Head Start spending .....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$0

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

† Head Start per-child spending includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds.

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

### SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

