



Ohio

This annual report meets the requirements in state law¹, which says:

“The Department shall provide an annual report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate and post the report to the Department’s web site, regarding early childhood education programs operated under this section and the early learning program standards.”

Early Childhood Education programs are an important investment in Ohio youngest learners. These programs deliver high quality, comprehensive learning environments and address outcomes and goals essential for healthy development and intellectual, social and emotional success. Research is clear; children exposed to high-quality early learning programs, begin formal schooling better prepared for educational success. Programs use a locally determined, comprehensive early childhood curriculum that aligns with Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards. These standards address academic, physical, social and emotional learning and development. To view and/or download the standards go to www.earlychildhoodohio.org.

Ohio’s Early Childhood Education Programs at a Glance for FY2014

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In fiscal year 2014, the number of Early Childhood Education programs expanded as a result of \$10 million in additional state funding. These additional funds allowed for a total of 276 state-funded grantees that serve 8,150 children. Eligible grantees included public school districts, educational service centers, joint vocational schools, chartered nonpublic schools and community-based childcare providers receiving 3-, 4- or 5-star ratings in Step-Up-To Quality. New funding targeted high needs communities based on the following criteria: percentage of kindergarten children scoring in the lowest score band of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment – Literacy; percentage of economically disadvantaged kindergarten children; and percentage of third-grade children not proficient on the reading portion of the Ohio Achievement Assessment. High-quality preschool programs were identified within each targeted high needs community, invited to apply for new funding, and selected based on a competitive process.

FY2014 Program

Number of state-funded grantees: 276

Total state funding: \$33,048,341

State-funded per child amount: \$4,000

Total number of teachers: 987

Total number of funded slots: 8,150

State law required grantees to provide services based on income eligibility and gave priority to families whose income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

TEACHER CREDENTIALS

Knowledgeable, skilled and thoughtful teachers are critical in helping young children reach their potential. Early Childhood Education programs must meet the teacher credential requirements in early childhood education or a field approved by the Ohio Department of Education. For state Fiscal Year 2014, all programs are compliant with these requirements. Eleven percent of teachers have an associate degree, 42 percent have a bachelor’s degree and 47 percent of teachers have a master’s degree.

CHILD ASSESSMENTS

The experiences and opportunities afforded to children in the early years affect the knowledge, skills and dispositions they acquire before entering kindergarten. While many children enter preschool with some knowledge and skills, many others need targeted instruction. The Ohio Department of Education required Early Childhood Education programs to assess children in the fall of 2013 and again in the spring of 2014 using an existing assessment called *Get It!, Got It!*



It is well documented that children from families with low incomes start formal schooling lagging behind their more advantaged peers.

Ohio’s state-funded early childhood education programs help level the playing field by providing high-quality early learning experiences for the state’s youngest learners.

¹ *Section 263.20 of House Bill 59 (C)

Go! This is a literacy measure focused on picture naming, rhyming and alliteration. Results from the fall and spring administration of this assessment indicated that children served in the program experienced statistically significant growth from fall to spring. Although there are no national norms, a comparison is possible when made to average scores of a similar sample population of children (4-year-old children in poverty). The average score of 4-year-old children in Early Childhood Education classrooms tends to be higher than those of the demographically similar sample population. New expansion programs reported progress by students on a variety of progress measure tools. Ohio will use a new early learning assessment beginning in 2015-2016 for all Early Childhood Education programs and report results for all programs in future years.

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

Development and learning are tied to the health and well-being of children. Risk factors, such as low birth weight, chronic health conditions, inadequate nutrition, poor oral health, and inconsistent social and emotional support, are detrimental to children’s development and learning. The early detection of risk factors through health and developmental screenings can improve outcomes and reduce special education placement. Ohio’s Early Childhood Education programs require health and developmental screenings of all children within 60 business days of entrance into the program. An appropriate professional makes a referral within 90 days of identification of a need.



According to the 2014 survey of Early Childhood Education programs, 79 percent or more of the children served were screened in the areas of hearing, vision, and height and weight. Eighty percent or more of the children served were screened in the areas of speech/language, cognitive, gross/fine motor, social and emotional development. Between one and 10 percent of the total number of children screened were referred for additional assessment or services. When necessary, the required administration of

health and developmental screenings and referrals continues to serve as a catalyst for programs to develop closer ties to community-based health services.

STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up To Quality is Ohio’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System for early childhood programs. The purpose of the system is to improve the quality of early childhood education across the state. All early childhood programs that receive Early Childhood Education funding must participate in Step Up To Quality and must meet Ohio’s Early Learning Program Standards. Step Up To Quality, which serves as a roadmap for continuous improvement efforts, uses a five-star rating system with five as the highest quality rating.

FY2014 Children

Total children served: 8,150
 Children served by age:
 3 year olds: 2,361
 4 year olds: 4,772
 5 year olds: 1017
 English language learners served: 63
 Children with disabilities served: 1206

During 2014, 171 Early Childhood Education programs licensed by the department and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services received ratings in Step Up To Quality. Of those, 27 programs, or 16 percent, received a 3-star rating; 58 programs, or 34 percent, received a 4-star rating; and 86 programs, or 50 percent, received a 5-star rating. The remaining programs will be rated by fiscal year 2016.

To view the program standards or learn more about Step Up To Quality, please visit <http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org/index.php>.

For additional information regarding Ohio’s Early Childhood Education Programs, contact the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at ELSR@education.ohio.gov or 614-995-9974.