

MAJOR FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS*				
PROGRAM	POPULATION SERVED	FUNDING LEVELS	FUNDING MECHANISM	FEDERAL NUTRITION AND ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS**
Head Start & Early Head Start	Low income children ages 0-5 ¹	\$8.6 billion (2014) ²	Grants to organizations that meet federal performance standards. ³	High
Child Care & Development Block Grant	Ages 0-13 ⁴	\$5.21 billion (2015) ⁵	Block grants to states for subsidies (mostly vouchers) to help low-income parents pay for child care, and for investments in child care quality improvement. States must establish minimum standards and monitoring requirements for providers that receive public funds. ⁶	Low
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Very low income families ⁷	According to the GAO, \$2.6 billion of the TANF allocation was spent on child care in 2012. ⁸	Block Grants to states for a host of services, including child care. States that use TANF for child care may choose to transfer up to 30% of funds to CCDBG and up to 10% to SSBG. Or they may spend some TANF dollars directly on child care. ⁹	None
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part B, Sections 619 and 611 are the relevant provisions.)	Children ages 3-5 with disabilities ¹⁰	\$353 million (2015) ¹¹	Grants to states for early childhood special education services. ¹²	Moderate
Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)	States' discretion ¹³	HHS reports that \$296 million of SSBG was spent for child care in 2012. ¹⁴	States may choose to use these funds to support child care. ¹³	None
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Title I, Part A)	Low income children ¹⁵	\$15.5 billion (2015) ¹¹	Apportionments to states for public schools. Fewer than 2.5% of funds currently used for preschool. ¹⁶	None***
Child and Adult Care Food Program	Children ages 0-12; children ages 12-18 in special circumstances; low-income adults with disabilities and seniors ¹⁷	\$3.13 billion (2015 est.) ¹⁸	Grants to states. ¹⁹	Moderate

This table provides a summary of the most important federal funding sources for Early Childhood Education Programs: Head Start (including Early Head Start), the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The first six programs are the largest sources of federal funding for child care. The seventh, CACFP, provides funding to child care centers and other participating providers that in turn serve more than 3.3 million children with nutritious meals and snacks each day (as a component of day care).

* This table was prepared in 2015.

** Programs with a "high" nutrition and activity requirement have specific criteria for food service and physical activity to which program participants must adhere. "Moderate" programs have specific criteria for food service or physical activity, but not both. "Low" programs provide some inducement or broad requirement for nutrition or activity, but leave states considerable latitude in interpreting these requirements. These labels do not necessarily signify the adequacy of the programs' standards.

*** ESEA funds may be used for school nutrition programs—in compliance with USDA rules—if no other funds are available, but the program itself contains no standards.

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