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Every child. Cradle to career.

# **Cradle-to-Career Outcomes Playbook: Kindergarten Readiness**

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## >>>>>> Contributors

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# Introduction

Learning starts long before a child enters school. The years between birth and kindergarten are critical for a child's development. Research shows that children who are ready for kindergarten are far more likely to excel in school and thrive in life. Yet significant racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities begin early in children's lives and contribute to vastly different outcomes as adults.

Preparing children for kindergarten requires a coordinated community investment in education, quality health care and child care, and healthy neighborhoods. Community-based organizations can build an aligned movement toward a shared goal: a strong start for young learners.

To do this well, community leaders need research on what matters most in kindergarten readiness, but good data can be hard to find. Leaders sink time into tedious desk research that could be better spent in the community. Consider three real examples:

- An organization is about to launch a new early childhood effort. It needs a comprehensive overview of essential questions to consider in its planning.
- An organization is leading an inclusive community brainstorm on new early learning efforts. It needs to orient the group to evidence-based practices.
- An organization that supports city planning for children is meeting with local business representatives. It needs clear research on kindergarten readiness to build its case.

This playbook is a comprehensive guide to the latest research and best practices on kindergarten readiness. It helps community leaders **identify opportunities, co-design strategies with their community and build buy-in** for collective investment in kindergarten readiness.

The playbook is organized around 17 essential questions that help communities understand their starting point and identify potential focus areas. Each question aligns to research-based topics that support kindergarten readiness and offers a menu of possible indicators to track, as well as practices and policies to implement. These indicators, practices and policies have been compiled from a variety of frameworks with sources indicated in parenthesis.

## >>>>>> Example

### Essential Question *Areas to focus*

Question 3: Are high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs available to eligible children?

### Indicators *Metrics to track*

Percentage of public pre-K programs that meet state benchmarks of quality ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#))

### Practices and Policies *Actions to take*

State monitors the credentials, licenses, and certification of all early childhood educators ([National Education Association](#))

# Essential Questions for Kindergarten Readiness

**Kindergarten success.** High-quality, full-day kindergarten programs continue to prepare young learners, giving them the learning experiences they need to stay on their developmental path.

**1** Are young learners demonstrating kindergarten readiness across the five learning elements?

**2** Do learners have access to high-quality, full-day kindergarten?

**High-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten.** Full-day pre-kindergarten programs enable caregivers to return to work, thereby supporting the development of young learners and the earning potential of their families.

**3** Are high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs available to eligible children?

**4** Are eligible children enrolled in high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs?

**5** Are pre-kindergarten programs adequately funded to support access for families with limited incomes?

**Teaching and learning.** Trained, certified, representative early childhood educators make a big difference in the day-to-day experience of young learners.

**6** Do young learners have trained, certified, representative early childhood teachers and leaders?

**7** Do young learners have access to quality curricula and instruction?

**Positive school environments.** Young learners want to attend school consistently when environments are positive and supportive.

**8** Do young learners have access to quality pre-kindergarten environments and facilities?

**9** Do young learners attend schools with safe, inclusive and supportive environments?

**10** Do young learners attend schools that support their social, emotional and physical development and well-being?

**11** Are young learners demonstrating consistent attendance?

**12** Are there young learners who disproportionately experience exclusionary discipline?

**13** Are young learners demonstrating positive behavior?

**Early experiences and environments.** Kindergarten readiness starts before children are born, with access to quality health care and healthy neighborhoods with adequate resources.

**14** Do expecting parents have access to quality prenatal and neonatal care?

**15** Do families live in well-resourced neighborhoods?

**16** Do families with young children have access to public supports?

**17** Do children aged 0-3 have access to the developmental resources they need?

# The Case for Kindergarten Readiness

The years between birth and kindergarten are a critical time for a child's development. An abundance of research and evidence supports the importance of early learning experiences and positive, healthy relationships with caregivers. However, significant racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities begin early in children's lives that contribute to vastly different long-term outcomes as adults ([Cradle to Kindergarten](#); Chaudry et al. 2017). Gaps in early learning are prevalent among children experiencing poverty due to limited access to quality early learning programs ([StriveTogether Cradle-to-Career Outcomes Data Guides: Kindergarten Readiness](#)).

For these reasons, kindergarten readiness efforts are a worthy endeavor that should be led by local communities. This necessitates empowering community members with knowledge about how kindergarten readiness is linked to future success, what high-quality child care and education looks like, and how kindergarten readiness starts with quality prenatal care and early childhood development, particularly between the ages of 0-3. The takeaways from leading research, below, offer methods to discuss why kindergarten readiness matters with different community leaders, from parents to policy makers.

**Kindergarten readiness paves the way for life success.** Ensuring that all students receive the best education from the very beginning sets them up for success throughout their lives. Kindergarten readiness is closely linked to future academic achievement and life outcomes. Strong early childhood strategies that focus on family health and stability, as well as preparing children academically, socially and emotionally from ages 0-5 contribute





to young learners being ready for kindergarten ([Cradle-to-Career Outcomes: Achievement and Economic Impact](#)). Supporting this, economist Dr. Raj Chetty and his colleagues found that key later-in-life outcomes — such as college attendance rates, the quality of colleges attended, home ownership and 401(k) savings — are strongly correlated with kindergarten test scores ([Chetty et. al. March 2011, “How does your Kindergarten Classroom affect your Earnings?” HKS](#)).

**Kindergarten readiness unlocks academic success.** Children who enter kindergarten ready to learn are more likely to achieve positive academic outcomes through elementary and middle school, avoid risky behaviors in adolescence, graduate from high school and pursue postsecondary education ([Economic Mobility Catalog - Results for America](#)). Early learning is key to the long-term achievement of young children. For example, kindergartners who perform better on math, reading and attention skills are more likely to demonstrate higher achievement in third grade (Duncan et al. 2007) because kindergarten literacy skills are strong predictors of third grade reading. Educational disparities emerge early on, making early childhood a key point in addressing larger issues around equity (e.g., structural racism, xenophobia, opportunity) ([ASU](#)). Families experiencing poverty have less access to early learning programs than families not experiencing poverty ([Chaudry et al. 2017](#)).

**Kindergarten readiness starts before and continues after birth.** Children born at a low birth weight are at higher risk for long-term illness or disability and are more likely to be enrolled in special education classes or to repeat a grade. Teens, women who smoke, Black women and women with inadequate prenatal care are more likely than other women to have an infant who is born at a low birth weight ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Access to early and comprehensive prenatal and neonatal care increases the likelihood that a child will be born healthy and will stay healthy ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). High-quality early child care and education is

also crucial for positive development and serves as a foundation for later academic performance, with the first eight years being critical for brain development and future success (CDC 2022). *For more resources on brain development, see Harvard's Center for the Developing Child: [Brain Architecture](#).*

**Kindergarten readiness benefits individuals, families and overall communities.** A kindergarten class of twenty students that is one standard deviation higher in quality (per end of kindergarten test scores) generates, on average, over three-quarters of a million dollars more over their lifetimes (in 2011 value earnings) (Chetty et. al, March 2011, [“How does your Kindergarten Classroom affect your Earnings?” HKS](#)). Investing in early childhood education creates upward mobility by providing all children with a solid foundation for long-term success in life. These benefits do not end with one child but extend to their entire families and communities in the years to come ([First Five Years Fund. Lifelong Gains](#)). High-quality preschool participation can increase quality time that children experiencing poverty spend with caregivers — such as time spent reading, playing and talking ([StriveTogether Outcomes Data Guide](#)). Lastly, cost benefit analysis research shows providing high-quality early learning opportunities can impact the social and economic trajectory of children, leading to a large financial return to society ([Dalziel et al.2015; Sylvia & Wiltshire 2007](#)).

## What is kindergarten readiness?



There are five domains of kindergarten readiness:

- 1. Language and literacy development:** Early language and literacy milestones at kindergarten include basic vocabulary and the ability to communicate thoughts and needs. These two interrelated skills are often grouped together.

This category also often includes social uses of language; vocabulary, meaning and print awareness; story sense; and the writing process ([Kagan et al. 1995](#)). Young learners' language and literacy skills are key areas of development underlying their later academic success.

2. **Cognition and general knowledge:** Cognitive development and knowledge represent the process of growth and the reorganization of experiences that children internalize from their environments ([ECLKC 2021](#)). This category includes physical knowledge (e.g., facts about animals) and social knowledge (e.g., construction of relationships). Children's cognition, including math and scientific reading skills, is essential for a growing number of tasks. Children's early skills in this domain set the course for their later achievement, with the skills that children demonstrate at an early age being the strongest predictors of their later school achievement.
3. **Approaches toward learning:** Predispositions, learning styles and approaches are the main aspects of learning assessed within this domain. Children with positive approaches to learning have better school readiness and achievement outcomes than those with less developed approaches to learning. Studies have also consistently found positive associations between measures of children's ability to control and sustain attention, and academic gains in the preschool and early elementary school years.
4. **Physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills:** Physical well-being in young children is associated with optimal motor development, from large motor movements that occur on the playground to small work required for holding a crayon or putting together puzzles ([Kagan et al. 1995](#)). Measures related to physical development may target the rate of growth, physical fitness and body physiology. Gross motor skills predict children's social competencies and physical well-being, and are a gateway to engagement in learning and social

activities, including sports and games, throughout the school years ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Fine motor skills are associated more robustly with academic achievement.

5. **Social-emotional development:** This domain is associated with the evaluation of a child's ability to express their feelings and emotions. This area focuses on a child's executive function and self-regulation ([Developing Child Center](#)). This includes a child's interaction with others and considers their social-emotional understanding, relationship with peers and adults, and forms of play. Children with positive social and emotional development tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities and demonstrate higher academic performance than peers with social and emotional behavior issues.

Several key studies and resources that provide valuable insights into kindergarten readiness include Kagan (1995), Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (2021) and the Center on the Developing Child. Collectively, these sources have significantly informed the understanding of the five elements of kindergarten readiness. While there is a general federal definition of kindergarten readiness, there is no standardized assessment applied nationwide. Approaches to assessing readiness vary by state, and, in some cases, by individual districts and schools.

# About the Kindergarten Readiness Playbook



**StriveTogether’s Cradle-to-Career Playbook: Kindergarten Readiness synthesizes leading research, indicators and evidence-based practices to promote equitable outcomes for kindergarten readiness across communities. While the playbook is grounded in existing frameworks that are valuable in their own right, it does not replace them. Instead, it serves as a comprehensive tool that guides you to resources in areas where deeper exploration is needed. Communities can use the 17 essential questions to navigate to topics relevant to their specific needs, interests and goals.**



# The Education-to-Workforce Framework and supporting research



Mathematica's [Education-to-Workforce Framework](#) is the inspiration behind the playbook's organization and content. StriveTogether's Cradle-to-Career Playbook: Kindergarten Readiness includes all of the applicable research, content and aligned essential questions included in the Education-to-Workforce Framework. It is also organized in a similar way. The playbook supplements the Education-to-Workforce Framework by incorporating research on prenatal and neonatal care, child development for ages 0-3 and the need for high-quality, certified, representative educators. Additional practices and policies expand on the Education-to-Workforce Framework to improve accessibility for community-based organizations. Seventy percent of the indicators, practices and policies included in the Kindergarten Readiness Playbook come from the Education-to-Workforce Framework.

The playbook also analyzes nine other frameworks to identify indicators that support kindergarten readiness across multiple sectors.

## Indicators: metrics to track



**Contributing indicators** that help communities see what it looks like when kindergarten readiness improves for historically marginalized learners across a community. Contributing indicators are valuable because research shows they influence outcomes in a positive direction and are **measured**

**at the individual learner level** (e.g., percentage of 3- and 4-year olds enrolled in high-quality pre-K). They can help communities establish student-centered priorities. They typically provide information earlier than outcome data is available, allowing communities to know if an initiative is working and can support continuous improvement of multiple initiatives.

**Systems indicators** help communities track the supports that influence outcomes at the system level, such as district, city, county or state efforts. These indicators are crucial because they allow communities to monitor the system, identify inequities and address them proactively. Measured at the family, caregiver or geographic level, systems indicators reflect institutional actions and their impact. For example, the percentage of eligible families receiving assistance to pay for child care is a key systems indicator that reveals how well resources are being distributed.

## Practices and policies: actions to take



**Practices and Policies** describe what can be done at every level of the system. Practices are evidence-based efforts, like teacher professional development, that create strong conditions for results. Policies are laws, regulations, procedures, administrative actions or incentives of governments or other institutions. Communities may see a policy listed that is currently not enacted in their district, city or state, offering an opportunity to align on advocacy efforts. Federal policies are listed to create awareness so communities can leverage or utilize them to support state and local efforts.

Scaling a solution often has a lifecycle that starts with a local practice that is proven effective, scaled locally (e.g., scaled from a classroom to a district, then to another district) then used to inform the

creation of a state-level policy that provides access to funding for further scaling. This approach is outlined within the [StriveTogether Theory of Action™](#). This playbook categorizes strategies into a practice or policy. But, a practice can turn into a policy over time or a policy can initiate a practice if it comes first. Lines begin to blur as scale takes over.

Not every contributing indicator has an identified systems indicator, practice or policy. That may be a result of limited research available or identified to date. Indicators, practices and policies can help answer multiple essential questions, but for the sake of simplicity we've grouped each indicator with one essential question. To help communities choose the most relevant indicators for their context, each indicator is presented as it appears in its original source. This allows communities to understand the specific nuances that may be important to them. However, this approach means the language of indicators may vary, some may be duplicated across different sources and language choices may need to change based on local preferences.

This resource aims to be a library of evidence-based indicators and implementation strategies that can be used with community groups, referenced during annual planning and leveraged to prioritize initiatives as needed. Its purpose is to help you and your community understand possible levers at every level — learner, neighborhood, school, district, city and state — to improve kindergarten readiness.

## How to use this playbook



How this playbook is used will be different for each organization or community, depending on their planning process, goals and priorities. The playbook might be shared with a community

working group in its entirety, referenced internally as a way to brainstorm potential solutions to discuss with others, or leveraged in various other ways. After reading it, leaders can ask: *How do we want to use this with our community?*

This resource does not replace the voice and perspective of community members, who often know the solutions that will work best in their communities. Instead, consider this playbook a resource that community members can also access to support the co-designing of solutions and to inform your planning. For support on engaging with your community, visit the StriveTogether's [Results-Based Facilitation 101](#) course, available for free on the Training Hub.

This playbook offers several practical uses for community organizations. It can be used to onboard new staff or introduce organizations to cradle-to-career (C2C) work. It helps explore aligned practices and policies, guiding the selection of working group topics and potential solutions. Communities can share the entire playbook with working groups or community members to support exploration and implementation. Additionally, it serves as a valuable resource during internal reviews for annual goal-setting and planning. Finally, this playbook can be used alongside other StriveTogether resources for a more comprehensive approach. If you are interested in diving deeper into the research supporting the indicators, visit the citations included throughout the playbook. The appendix also includes an annotated bibliography.

Due to the limited research on place-based partnerships, StriveTogether's Cradle-to-Career Playbook: Kindergarten Readiness highlights initiatives and examples from StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network members making clear progress on their kindergarten readiness outcomes, illustrating what has worked for them.

# Kindergarten Success

High-quality, full-day kindergarten programs continue to prepare young learners, giving them the learning experiences they need to stay on their developmental path.



1

**Are young learners demonstrating kindergarten readiness across the five learning elements?**

## Why it matters



**Assessing kindergarten readiness:** Assessing the readiness of children as they enter kindergarten can be useful for planning more effective services and investments for young children and their families. There are models of effective kindergarten assessment that either assess all children or a representative sample of children. Effective school readiness assessment practices are conducted annually, address all domains of child development and are appropriately aligned with early learning standards and K-3 education standards (Rhode Island

Kids Count). Ideally, there should be one universal kindergarten readiness assessment used statewide.

**Transitions to kindergarten:** The transition from early childhood care and education settings or home to kindergarten is a significant milestone in the lives of young children, their families and their teachers. A smooth transition into kindergarten forms the basis for later academic achievement and success. When transitions are well-planned, children have fewer adjustment problems and more continuous developmental progress (Rhode Island Kids Count).





## Indicators <sup>2</sup>

### Contributing indicators

- Children ready in all five domains of development as measured by kindergarten surveys/assessments ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)):

#### o Language and literacy development

- › Percentage of children almost always recognizing the relationships between letters and sounds at kindergarten entry ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- › Child identifies letters of the alphabet and produces correct sounds associated with letters ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child understands and uses a wide variety of words for a variety of purposes ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child shows understanding of word categories and relationships among words ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child demonstrates awareness that spoken language is composed of smaller segments of sound ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child demonstrates an understanding of how print is used (functions of print) and the rules that govern how print works (conventions of print) ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child demonstrates an understanding of narrative structure through storytelling/re-telling ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child asks and answers questions about a book that was read aloud ([Head Start](#)).

#### o Cognition and general knowledge

- › Percentage of children recognizing basic shapes at kindergarten entry ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- › Percentage of children at kindergarten entry who can count beyond 10, sequence patterns and use nonstandard units of length to compare numbers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- › Child knows number names and the count sequence ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child recognizes the number of objects in a small set ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child understands the relationship between numbers and quantities ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child compares numbers ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child associates a quantity with written numerals up to five and begins to write numbers ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child understands addition as adding to and understands subtraction as taking away from ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child understands simple patterns ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child measures objects by their various attributes using standard and non-standard measurement. Child uses differences in attributes to make comparisons ([Head Start](#)).

<sup>1</sup>The majority of the indicator groups included in this playbook are derived from the E-W Framework (38 out of 54 indicator groups), with additions based on research in early childhood development, prenatal and neonatal care, and teaching and learning. Those indicator groups derived from the E-W Framework are designated with a blue color in the section header; those derived from other sources are designated with a green color in the section header.

<sup>2</sup> Indicators are compiled from a variety of sources, resulting in variations in framing; some are presented as population-level measures, while others are articulated at the individual level.

- › Child identifies, describes and composes shapes ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child explores the positions of objects in space ([Head Start](#)).
- o **Approaches toward learning**
  - › Percentage of kindergarten students with moderate to severe difficulties following directions ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
  - › Child demonstrates initiative and independence ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child shows interest in and curiosity about the world around them ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child expresses creativity in thinking and communication ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child uses imagination in play and interactions with others ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child demonstrates flexibility in thinking and behavior ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child maintains focus and sustains attention with minimal adult support ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child persists in tasks ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child holds information in mind and manipulates it to perform tasks ([Head Start](#)).
- o **Physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills**
  - › Percentage of children with age-appropriate fine motor skills ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
  - › Child demonstrates control, strength and coordination of large muscles ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child uses perceptual information to guide motions and interactions with objects and other people. ([Head Start](#))
- › Child demonstrates increasing control, strength and coordination of small muscles ([Head Start](#)).
- o **Social-emotional development and executive functioning**
  - › Percentage of children who often or very often exhibit positive social behavior when interacting with their peers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
  - › Child manages emotions with increasing independence ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child follows classroom rules and routines with increasing independence ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child appropriately handles and takes care of classroom materials ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child manages actions, words and behavior with increasing independence ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child demonstrates an increasing ability to control impulses ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child engages in and maintains positive relationships and interactions with adults ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child engages in prosocial and cooperative behavior with adults ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child engages in and maintains positive interaction and relationships with other children ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child engages in cooperative play with other children ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child uses basic problem-solving skills to resolve conflicts with other children ([Head Start](#)).
  - › Child expresses a broad range of emotions and recognizes these emotions in self and others ([Head Start](#)).

- › Child recognizes self as a unique individual having own abilities, characteristics, emotions and interests ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child expresses confidence in own skills and positive feelings about self ([Head Start](#)).
- › Child has sense of belonging to family, community and other groups ([Head Start](#)
- Additional domains of development as identified by the [Head Start Framework](#):
  - o **Scientific inquiry**
    - › Child observes and describes observable phenomena such as objects, materials, organisms and events.
    - › Child engages in scientific talk.
    - › Child compares and categorizes observable phenomena.
  - o **Health, safety and nutrition**
    - › Child demonstrates personal hygiene and self-care skills.
    - › Child develops knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits.
    - › Child demonstrates knowledge of personal safety practices and routines.
- Number and percent of children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning as determined using developmentally-appropriate early learning measures ([Promise Neighborhoods; The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).
- Percentage of students demonstrating readiness at kindergarten entry ([National](#)

[Education Association](#)).

- Participation in a transitional kindergarten program ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Results from kindergarten entry assessments (KEAs) ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal<sup>3</sup> populations meeting benchmarks across all developmental domains (language/literacy, cognition, social emotional development, approaches to learning and physical development). ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#))
- Percentage of families from focal populations who report that their program offers transition supports that meet their needs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

*The **parent- or teacher-reported and direct child kindergarten readiness assessments** below help identify the number and percent of children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning as determined using developmentally-appropriate early learning measures.*

- Parent-reported kindergarten readiness assessments:
  - o **Developmental screening**
    - › Ages & Stages Questionnaires: a developmental screening tool that pinpoints developmental progress in children between the ages of one month to 5½ years ([Ages and Stages](#)).
- Teacher-reported kindergarten readiness assessments:
  - o **Language and literacy development**
    - › Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Language and Literacy Development domain; Ready 4 Kindergarten Early Learning

<sup>3</sup> “Focal” population is defined by local communities, typically considering historically marginalized populations and local data points.



Assessment (R4K ELA) Language and Literacy domain; Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) Language and Literacy subscales ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Cognition and general knowledge**

- › Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Cognition domain; Ready 4 Kindergarten Early Learning Assessment (R4K ELA) Mathematics and Science domains; Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) Cognitive and Mathematics subscales ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Approaches toward learning**

- › The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Approaches to Learning – Self-Regulation domain; Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD Cognitive subscale ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills**

- › The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Physical Development – Health domain; Ready 4 Kindergarten (R4K) English language arts (ELA) Physical Well-Being and Motor Development domain; Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD Physical subscale ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- › Children’s executive function measures, such as the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Social-emotional development**

- › The Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS); Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment Preschool Program (DECA-P2) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- › The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Social and Emotional Development

domain; Ready 4 Kindergarten (R4K) English language arts (ELA) Social Foundations domain; Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD Social-Emotional subscale ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- Direct child kindergarten readiness assessments:

- o **Language and literacy development**

- › Administered by trained assessors, such as: Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Early Cognition and Academic Development (ECAD) LetterWord and Writing subtests; Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) Early Literacy assessment ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Cognition and general knowledge**

- › Woodcock-Johnson IV Tests of Early Cognition and Academic Development (ECAD) Number Sense subtest; Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) Early Numeracy assessment; Research Based Early Mathematics Assessment (REMA) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- o **Approaches toward learning**

- o **Physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills**

- › The Heads Toes Knees Shoulders (HTKS) task, administered by teachers; the Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS), self-administered on a tablet; the Peabody Developmental Motor Scale, administered by teachers, health care professionals or other qualified adults ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

## **Systems indicators**

- Percentage of kindergarten teachers surveyed indicating alignment between early learning

programs and kindergarten ([National Education Association](#)).

- Percentage of parents surveyed who received transition information from their district ([National Education Association](#)).
- School readiness assessment at kindergarten entry ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of schools with formal working transition plans between early childhood settings and kindergarten ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Transition to kindergarten ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of programs that minimize the number of transitions when supporting children with learning accommodations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

([National Education Association](#)).

- State provides funding for transition activities ([National Education Association](#)).
- State-funded pre-K programs implement early childhood curricula aligned with state pre-K through third grade early learning standards ([National Education Association](#)).
- State-subsidized early learning programs are required to implement early childhood curricula that are aligned with state pre-K through third grade early learning standards ([National Education Association](#)).
- State-subsidized early learning programs receive funds for joint professional learning activities for child care providers as well as pre-K and kindergarten teachers ([National Education Association](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts conduct transition activities for pre-K students and their families ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide joint professional learning activities for child care providers as well as pre-K and kindergarten teachers ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide transition information to pre-K students and their families ([National Education Association](#)).
- Local organizations (a trusted source), districts and/or states educate parents on the skills needed to be kindergarten ready ([Chattanooga 2.0](#)).

### Policies

- State adopts and requires a common kindergarten readiness assessment.
- State has a policy outlining transition from early learning programs to elementary schools



## 2

## Do young learners have access to quality, full-day kindergarten?

### Why it matters



**Full-day kindergarten:** Young learners who attend full-day kindergarten have been shown to have greater self confidence, better academic outcomes the following year and are better at playing with others when compared to peers who attended

half-day kindergarten ([Cooper et al](#)). Full-day kindergarten creates more time for free play and art, critical developmental activities that often get limited in half-day programs to emphasize academic activities.

#### Access to full-day kindergarten

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of eligible students in full-day, five-day-per-week kindergarten ([National Education Association](#)).
- Child participates in a transitional kindergarten program ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions; Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percent of entering first graders who previously attended full-day kindergarten ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

#### Systems indicators

- Percentage of schools and districts offering kindergarten programs that are six hours per day for five days per week ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#) ).
- Percent of schools and/or districts offering full-day kindergarten ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).



# High-Quality, Full-Day Pre-Kindergarten

High-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs enable caregivers to return to work, thereby supporting the development of young learners and the earning potential of their families and making them one of the most effective levers for improving kindergarten readiness across a community.



3

**Are high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs available to eligible children?**

## Why it matters



**High-quality pre-K:** A high-quality pre-K program can meaningfully enhance children's early learning and development, producing long-term improvements in school success and generating benefits to both individuals and society that far exceed the costs. The positive effects of access to quality pre-K on children's math and reading achievement are even larger in districts with a majority of Black students ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Compared to children in lower-quality child care and early education programs, children in higher-quality programs have more advanced language and pre-math skills, more advanced social skills and war-

mer relationships with their teachers. Elements of quality include well-trained and well-compensated teachers, language-rich classroom environments, small group sizes, low staff-to-child ratios, low staff turnover rates and practices that involve and support parents ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Full-day pre-K:** Attending a full-day pre-K program is linked to improved outcomes for students, including greater school readiness in language development, math and reading. Full-day pre-kindergarten programs also help ensure more caretakers can re-engage in the work environment, benefiting both the child and the overall family.

Expanding access to full-day pre-K programs increases children's enrollment in these programs. For example, after Chicago Public Schools expanded full-day pre-K, Black students' enrollment more than quadrupled. Expanding access to full-day pre-K can also raise mothers' participation in the workforce. In Washington, DC, introducing universal access to full-day pre-K led to a 10-percentage point increase in mothers' workforce participation rates, with even

larger increases for Black mothers and those with low incomes. Enrollment in full-day (versus half-day) programs is more common in households where the mother works outside the home. However, access to affordable, full-day pre-K is still limited: among districts that offer publicly funded pre-K, less than half offer full-day programs ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

## Access to full-day kindergarten

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of public pre-K programs that are six hours per day for five days per week ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of 3-year-olds and/or 4-year-olds from low-income households enrolled in publicly funded pre-K in a district ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of 3-year-olds and/or percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in publicly funded pre-K in a district ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations enrolled in a program whose care is subsidized ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations who are on a waitlist for at least one preschool program ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations who did not experience a change in teacher/provider during the program, school or calendar year ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who do not pay above a system-defined threshold of affordability ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who report being able to afford to enroll their children in the preschool program of their choice ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations

who report having knowledge and understanding of their preschool options ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

- Percentage of families from focal populations who were able to enroll in their preferred preschool program ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Number of pre-K seats offered versus kindergarten class size ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of available full-time slots (i.e., available six hours per day for five days per week) ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that offer transportation services between a child's home and preschool site ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of programs that provide before- and after-school programming ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Preparing 3- and 4-year-olds for kindergarten ([Results for America](#)).
- Launching a child care business incubator ([Bridgeport Prospers](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of child care centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Children ages 3 to 5 enrolled in early childhood Part B Preschools special education programs ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of child care and early education classrooms that rank at the top level in a statewide quality rating system ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students ages 0 to 3 enrolled in an early intervention program ([National Education Association](#)).
- Share of 3- and 4-year-old children enrolled in nursery school or preschool ([Urban Institute](#)).
- QRIS ratings for school-based pre-K programs ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Children attending early care and education centers with high quality ratings ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of family child care homes accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#); [Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Cadence of systematic collection of data on classroom quality and its use by local programs and the state to improve policy or practice through the CQIS ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of kindergarten teachers licensed and/or certified in early childhood education and development ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers of state-funded pre-K with a bachelor's degree or higher ([National Education Association](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of child care centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of child care and early education classrooms that rank at the top level in a statewide quality rating system ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of public pre-K programs that meet Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) state benchmarks of quality ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that meet Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) state benchmarks of quality ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Access to top-rated early childhood programs in the school community ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Assessing and ensuring quality. This includes planning for and participating in quality ratings and improvement systems (often run by a state education agency alongside multiple partners); formalizing a system for assessing and delivering feedback to staff; and tracking student development against recognized standards and key milestones ([Results for America](#)).
- Child care quality rating and improvement systems ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Systemic approaches to assess and improve



the quality in early and school-age care and education programs ([Results for America](#)).

- Child care ratios ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Early Head Start ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Smart Start North Carolina: Comprehensive, statewide early childhood initiative providing communities with funding for educational child care, health care and family support services ([Results for America](#)).
- State monitors the credentials, license and certification of all early childhood educators ([National Education Association](#)).
- Supporting healthy development for infants and toddlers in child care centers by promoting healthy brain development, developing language and numerical skills, and early interventions for children with disabilities ([Results for America](#)).
- Child-Parent Centers, an early education model for children ages 3 to 9 that integrates preschool with early elementary grades ([Results for America](#)).

credential or equivalent ([National Education Association](#)).

- State provides financial support for teachers seeking certification in early childhood education and development ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for professional learning and technical assistance to state-funded pre-K programs ([National Education Association](#)).
- Creating universal preschool programs for all 3- and 4-year-olds ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Developing recruitment, training and retention strategies for building a high-quality workforce of early childhood caregivers ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Encouraging parental involvement in preschool education and educating parents about the benefits of formal preschool programs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Supporting parents and informal child care providers in learning about evidence-based practices that can be used at home to support healthy development ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Policies

- State compensates teachers certified in early childhood education and development on the same pay scale as comparably educated K-12 teachers ([National Education Association](#)).
- State implements a Continuous Quality Improvement System (CQIS) ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy has standards for preparation of early childhood educators ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy prohibits the use of expulsion, suspension and other exclusionary discipline practices in publicly funded early childhood programs ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides financial support for educators seeking a Child Development Associate (CDA)



## 4

## Are eligible children enrolled in high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten programs?

### Why it matters



**Enrollment:** Pre-K is a child's starting step for K-12 educational success, establishing an enduring foundation for future learning. Attending pre-K can boost children's school readiness, start them on trajectories of academic and life success, and produce a return on investment over time, particularly for children experiencing poverty and children of color. Lifelong benefits of participating in high-quality early learning include higher earnings, improved health, lower participation in social services programs and lower chances of involvement with the criminal justice system ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). However, pre-K enrollment patterns vary by race and ethnicity. As of 2017, enrollment rates among Latine children were lower (30%) than

those among Black children (34%) in publicly funded pre-K programs in their neighborhood ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Currently no states require that children enroll in pre-K.

**High-quality programs:** Children who attend a high-quality early education program in the year or two before kindergarten are better prepared for school — academically, socially and emotionally. Economically disadvantaged 3- and 4-year-old children who participate in high-quality preschool programs have better school achievement, social skills and behavior than children who do not participate in a preschool experience or who are enrolled in a low-quality program ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Enrollment in quality pre-kindergarten programs** *Key source: Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of eligible students enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs of the total number of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in school using the data sets at [schoolfinancedata.org](https://schoolfinancedata.org) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students enrolled in state-funded Early Head Start ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) in poverty who are enrolled in Early Head Start ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of children without access to Early Head Start ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students enrolled in state-funded Head Start ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#) and [National Education Association](#)).
- Number of 3- and 4-year-old children enrolled in a center-based early childhood care and education program (including child care centers,

nursery schools, preschool programs, Head Start programs and pre-kindergarten programs) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

- Early learning and care duration of enrollment ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Early learning and care entry age ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Average length of enrollment for children from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in public preschool from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who report no barriers to enrolling children in the program of their choice ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of preschool-aged children from focal populations enrolled in high-quality preschool ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Number of 3- and 4-year-olds receiving special education in schools/centers in the state ([NIEER](#)).

### Systems indicators

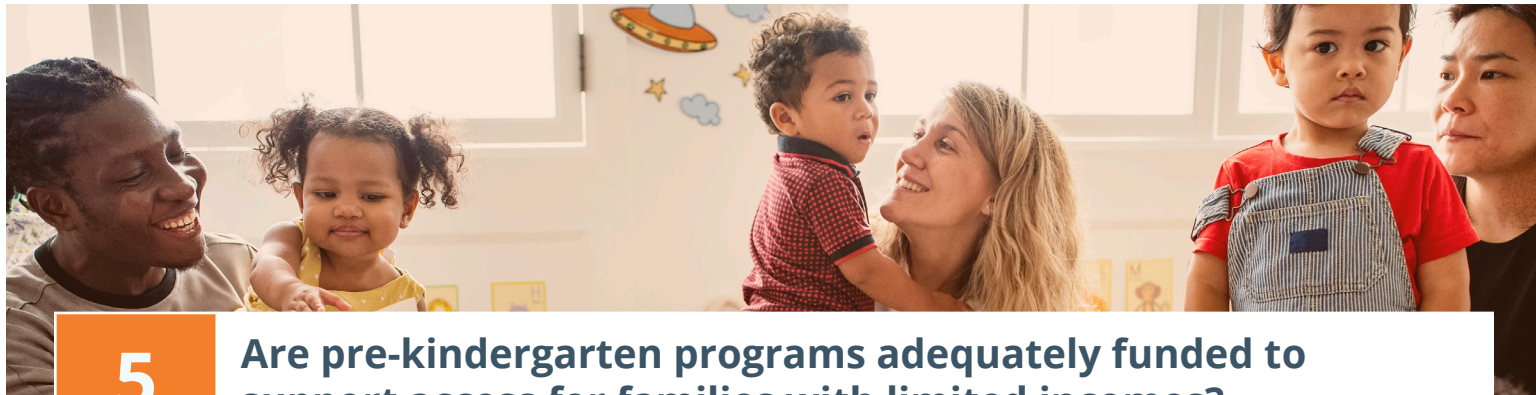
- Percentage of eligible 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in public pre-K ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of child care providers not participating in the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that offer at least two types of supportive enrollment resources to families, especially families from focal populations, to support enrollment in the programs families want to attend ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of programs that have a defined process dedicated to helping families from focal populations with preschool enrollment applications ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

- Percentage of programs that offer multiple ways for families to verify their child's eligibility for enrollment ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of programs that use more than one outreach strategy to inform families from focal populations about preschool options ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Availability of preschool openings for the number of children who want to attend preschool, especially those from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Cadence of changes made by preschool systems leaders to eligibility criteria, based on community assessments, to help families from focal populations attend their preferred preschool program ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Cadence of community assessments conducted by preschool systems leaders to understand the eligibility of children from focal populations to attend their preschool program of choice ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Early Head Start: Federally-funded early preschool program for children aged 3 or younger ([Results for America](#) and [Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Head Start: Federally-funded preschool program with significant flexibility in service design ([Results for America](#)).
- State subsidizes Early Head Start and Head Start ([National Education Association](#)).
- High-quality, universal pre-kindergarten programs for 3- and 4-year old children ([New America](#)).
- Increase access and funding for 3-year-old children ([NIEER](#)).
- Raise income eligibility threshold for high-quality child care and preschool to include more families as eligible ([Center for American Progress](#)).
- Reimburse providers based on enrollment instead of attendance ([Center for American Progress](#)).



5

## Are pre-kindergarten programs adequately funded to support access for families with limited incomes?

### Why it matters



**Pre-K funding:** School funding has been shown to contribute to better outcomes for students. One study of national data found that reading and vocabulary scores among children in Head Start programs are higher where funding for Head Start is higher ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Child care subsidies and affordable preschool opportunities are important tools for ensuring that children experiencing poverty have access to high-quality early care and education. State-funded pre-kindergarten initiatives that build on the state's existing child care and education infrastructure can increase access to early education experiences

for all children. Tiered reimbursement rates and other efforts to develop high-quality early education programs are important strategies to achieve school readiness ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Access to child care subsidies:** Families rely on child care to be able to work and provide the early education experiences needed to prepare their children for school. The high cost of pre-kindergarten programs puts quality care and early education out of reach for many families, particularly those experiencing poverty. Access to child care subsidies helps families afford higher-quality child care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Enrollment in quality pre-kindergarten programs** *Key source: Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Income-based early childhood schooling gap, or the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds from families experiencing poverty enrolled in school ([National Education Association](#)).

#### Systems indicators

- Equitable weighted student funding formula (Data sources: Local policy and practice assessments) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Equity factor, or the degree of variance between district per-student funding to state average (Data source: U.S. Department of Education) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of families that spend no more than 10% of the regional median family income on



quality care ([National Education Association](#)).

- Predicted class size (average class size by district poverty for both departmental and self-contained classes, adjusted for district size, regional wage variation and population density) using the data sets at [schoolfinancedata.org](#); can be compared with high- and low-poverty districts in each state ([National Education Association](#)).
- State expenditures per child enrolled in pre-K ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- State has an independent body of stakeholders that includes active pre-K through grade 12 educators and administrators who annually assess if state funding is sufficient to provide all students the opportunity to meet rigorous academic standards ([National Education Association](#)).
- Conduct a cost of quality study ([National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers](#)).

### Policies

- Financial assistance for child care to working parents ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center: Results for America](#)).
- Districts implement measures to broaden their tax base ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts use “pupil weights” in their base formula to adjust for diverse student needs ([National Education Association](#)).
- State funds local efforts to diversify revenue streams ([National Education Association](#)).
- State allocates funding to increase access to full-day pre-kindergarten, such as in [this example](#) from New York.
- Passage of voter-approved children’s funds at local levels ([Children’s Funding Project](#)).
- State implements measures to broaden its tax base ([National Education Association](#)).
- Access to resources: School finance equity ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Reimbursement rates for providers are increased ([Center for American Progress](#)).

# Teaching and Learning

Well-trained, certified, representative early childhood educators make a big difference in the day-to-day experience of young learners.



6

**Do young learners have trained, certified, representative early childhood teachers and leaders?**

## Why it matters



### **Educator recruitment, retention and tenure:**

Recruiting and retaining high-quality caregivers and teachers is among the most crucial components in operating a child care or early education program. However, sufficient staffing is one of the sector's most significant challenges; access to specialized training can be costly, while wages are often uncompetitive ([Results for America](#)). Research in early childhood programs shows that having the same teacher throughout an academic year is linked to higher rates of school readiness ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Educator turnover tends to be more common in schools that

serve a higher share of disadvantaged students; for example, in 2017, 21% of school leaders in high-poverty schools left their positions, compared to 15% of school leaders in low-poverty schools ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Research consistently shows that more experienced teachers make greater contributions to student achievement, especially compared to teachers who are early in their careers ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**Effective program and school leadership:** Pre-K and K-12 school leaders play a key role in student

learning, school discipline and culture, and teacher professional growth.

**Representational racial and ethnic diversity of educators:** Students benefit from a racially and ethnically diverse teaching staff, with students of color in particular benefiting from having teachers of their own race or ethnicity. Research links student-teacher race match to positive outcomes for students of color, including higher achievement, reduced experiences of exclusionary discipline, increased referrals for gifted and talented programs, decreased likelihood of dropping out of school, increased parental engagement and better school adjustment ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**Teacher credentials:** Early care and education programs (including preschool programs, center-based child care programs and family child care homes) with highly qualified staff are more likely to produce positive outcomes for children's learning and development. Research shows that preschool teachers with at least a four-year

degree and specialized training in early childhood are more effective and more actively engaged with the children they teach ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Research also shows that early childhood teachers who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher are more effective. Knowledge of early childhood development, including social-emotional development and emergent literacy, is essential for early care and education teachers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Teacher training, learning and development:** Professional development and coaching in pre-K settings generally focus on improving teacher-child interactions and instruction ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). A review of multiple studies suggests that professional development and coaching programs can improve the quality of pre-K instruction, as well as children's learning and development outcomes ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Early research suggests that technology and assessment data may play a role in effective teacher coaching and professional development.

## Educator retention and tenure

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of school leaders who have served in their current positions for less than two years, two to three years, and four or more years ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who return to teaching in the same school from year to year ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers with less than one year, one to five years, and more than five years of experience ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who leave the profession after five years ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of principals who remain in school/district leadership for more than seven years ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Pre-K: Percentage of teachers with less than one year, one to five years, and more than five years of experience ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families and workforce members reporting positive relationship quality with one another ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Retention rates of workforce members from focal populations compared to the overall population of preschool workforce members ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of administrators rated effective based on multiple measures of performance ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of principals who remain in school/district leadership for more than seven years ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of school leaders rated as effective, using an evaluation system that includes multiple measures, such as the Administrator Evaluation component of the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of preschool systems leadership and management that identify as members of focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Cadence of evaluation by preschool system leaders of the number of programs that implement early learning standards, curricula, assessments/screenings, professional development activities and quality monitoring tools for classroom environment and/or child-adult interactions that meet stated guidelines ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Cadence of evaluation by preschool system leaders to determine whether their guidance meets the needs of children and families from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Districts use multiple measures to evaluate administrators and school leaders ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy codifies principal retention ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy promotes ongoing professional learning and support for principals ([National Education Association](#)).



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Same-race student-teacher ratio by race/ethnicity (Data sources: Local school, LEA or SEA human resources, administrative and/or enrollment data) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#) and [StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Educational staff composition by race and ethnicity compared to student composition by race and ethnicity ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#) and [StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that support a language other than English ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites where children from focal populations are exposed to staff in their program who reflect their own identities ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who are fluent in the language spoken by the children they serve ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts have plans to recruit educators from



underrepresented populations ([National Education Association](#)).

- Districts have plans to retain educators from underrepresented populations ([West Ed](#)).
- Re-evaluate “last-in, first-out” practices which are more likely to remove early career teachers who identify as people of color ([TNTP](#)).
- Engaging young men of color in early childhood education initiatives, like the Literacy Lab’s Leading Men Fellowship ([Results for America](#)).

## Policies

- State policy supports recruitment of promising future educators, including underrepresented populations ([National Education Association](#)).
- Making educator diversity data visible and actionable to all stakeholders ([Education Trust](#)).
- Setting clear goals at the state, district and teacher preparation levels to increase educator diversity ([Education Trust](#)).
- Investing in efforts to retain teachers of color that improve working conditions and provide opportunities for personal and professional growth ([Education Trust](#)).

## Teacher credentials

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of early childhood teachers with a bachelor’s degree and specialized training in early childhood ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of kindergarten teachers that have passed a pre-service performance assessment prior to obtaining their initial license ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of lead pre-K teachers with at least a bachelor’s degree ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of lead teachers with specialized training in pre-K ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites where children with a disability or developmental delay are enrolled in which workforce members have early childhood special education training or experience working with children with special needs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who have early childhood education endorsements, certification or training, or experience working with preschool-age children ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts develop selection criteria to identify cooperating teachers ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts partner with teacher preparation programs on teacher residencies and induction ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide training for cooperating teachers ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of preparation program graduates surveyed indicating satisfaction with their preparedness to serve as the teacher-of-record ([National Education Association](#)).
- Preparation programs survey graduates about their preparedness to serve as the teacher-of-record and report their response rates ([National Education Association](#)).
- Preparation programs use pre-service performance assessments to determine candidate preparedness prior to program completion and/or initial licensure ([National Education Association](#)).
- Preparation programs work with local school districts to recruit high-achieving high school graduates to pursue careers in education ([National Education Association](#)).

## Policies

- Child care workforce qualifications ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Districts mandate successful completion of a residency program prior to obtaining initial licensure ([National Education Association](#)).
- Preparation programs require school-based experiences beyond a semester of student teaching ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for induction programs ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for preparation programs to establish residency programs with local school districts ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides resources to grow preparation programs in minority-serving institutions ([National Education Association](#)).
- Investing in hiring, training and retaining a high-quality and diverse workforce of educators ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Teacher leadership

## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of teacher leaders rated effective based on multiple measures of performance ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teacher leaders who occupy hybrid roles ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teacher leaders with a leadership endorsement/certificate ([National Education Association](#)).
- Number of career pathway supports the preschool system offers that are intentionally tailored to workforce members from focal populations to support their unique needs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

- Presence of an educator shortage ([National Education Association](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- State codifies the Teacher Leadership Competencies and/or other standards for teacher leadership ([National Education Association](#)).
- State includes a state-level endorsement/certificate for teacher leaders ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides resources to complete voluntary national certification and endorsements that promote teacher leadership opportunities ([National Education Association](#)).

## Teacher recruiting and hiring

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts begin cultivation and recruitment a year prior to the present school year ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts have plans to recruit and retain accomplished educators ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts have plans to recruit educators for shortage areas, such as special education and second language acquisition ([National Education Association](#)).
- Hiring high quality staff ([Results for America](#)).
- State tracks educator shortages ([National Education Association](#)).

### Indicators

#### Systems indicators

- Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the conditions of employment ([National Education Association](#)).
  - Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the terms of employment ([National Education Association](#)).
  - Percentage of workforce members from focal populations who receive benefits comparable to those received by the overall preschool workforce population ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
  - Workforce members from focal populations earn wages comparable to the overall population of preschool workforce members. ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- at least a minimum wage ([National Education Association](#)).
  - State and/or district contributions for health coverage increase at least enough to keep up with health care inflation ([National Education Association](#)).
  - State or district provides access to affordable, quality health insurance for education employees and their families ([National Education Association](#)).
  - Early Educator Investment Fund: A collaborative effort in Nebraska to accelerate progress in the early childhood education profession and ensure educators have the support needed to be well-prepared and appropriately compensated ([Early Educator Investment Fund](#)).

### Practices and policies

#### Practices

- Districts have differentiated pay structures for clearly defined roles and responsibilities that account for hybrid/varied educator roles within a school ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts offer financial incentives for educators working in hard-to-staff schools ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts offer financial incentives for teachers to earn National Board certification ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts offer incentives for teachers to take on differentiated or hybrid roles ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts offer teachers starting salaries comparable to other professionals with similar skills, knowledge and education. Additionally, education support professionals (ESPs) are paid

#### Policies

- Child care workforce compensation ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Child Care Wage\$ Tennessee: A program that provides supplemental income to early childhood workers based on education level and tenure ([Child Care Wage\\$ Tennessee](#)).

### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Teacher coaching and professional development ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

#### Systems indicators

- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating alignment among professional learning, standards, curriculum and assessments ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with professional learning time and opportunities ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators who participated in job-embedded professional learning opportunities in the previous year ([National Education Association](#)).
- Number of professional development opportunities the preschool system offers that are intentionally tailored to workforce members from focal populations to support their unique needs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who receive training in culturally-responsive instruction, especially to understand a child's developmental progress to inform instruction ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who receive training on reducing or eliminating bias in their work ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who receive training on trauma-informed care or responsiveness ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### Practices and policies

#### Practices

- Child care coaching ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Districts align professional learning with

standards, curriculum and assessments ([National Education Association](#)).

- Districts have professional learning plans, including induction and mentoring, for teachers, education support professionals (ESPs) and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts integrate theories, research and models of human learning into the planning and design of professional learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide educators with targeted support based on formative and summative evaluation results ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide extra resources and assistance for those educators in hard-to-staff schools ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide funding for educators to access professional learning that addresses new education research and technology that will help improve instruction or support for students ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide ongoing professional learning and support to administrators, including training in equity and racial and social justice to better support Indigenous educators and students as well as educators and students of color ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide teacher leadership development ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts support regular, job-embedded professional learning opportunities ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts use a variety of student, educator and systems data to plan, assess and evaluate professional learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Providing training and classroom materials ([Results for America](#)).
- Preschool systems provide guidance on professional development activities that represent, reflect and uniquely support workforce members



from diverse backgrounds, including those from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Policies

- State develops a comprehensive culturally-responsive teaching policy, covering equity and racial and social justice, to increase educators' cultural and linguistic competence through pre-service education, licensure and ongoing professional learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding and technical assistance to strengthen professional learning in areas with high concentrations of poverty, Indigenous students and students of color, with emphasis on mentoring, implicit bias and cultural competency ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for job-embedded professional learning opportunities to help educators improve their instructional repertoire ([National Education Association](#)).

## Teacher voice in decision making

## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the number of formal teacher leadership opportunities ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the number of opportunities to participate in district policy setting ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the number of opportunities to participate in school policy setting ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members from focal populations who report that they are consulted, involved, collaborate or are a co-creator in the preschool system ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

and evaluation of administrators) ([National Education Association](#)).

## Policies

- Districts dedicate funding to support educator engagement with educator leadership organizations and learning networks ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts dedicate resources to design professional learning that supports educator leadership and teacher agency ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts dedicate resources toward lifting and amplifying educator voice (e.g., dedicate funds to engagement) ([National Education Association](#)).
- State has an autonomous standards board, the majority of whom are active pre-K through grade 12 educators and are ethnically and racially representative of the student body ([National Education Association](#)).
- State requires that all planning and decision-making bodies related to the educator profession include active pre-K through grade 12 educators ([National Education Association](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts obtain educator input on instructional minutes ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide formal opportunities for educators to participate in district policy setting (e.g., accountability systems, hiring



## 7

## Do young learners have access to quality curricula and instruction?

### Why it matters



#### **Quality, culturally-responsive curriculum:**

Using skill-based curricula in early childhood education programs is tied to large improvements in children's cognitive abilities, pre-academic skills and overall outcomes — especially for literacy or language-specific curricula ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). A culturally-responsive education seeks to foster strong, positive relationships between students, families and school staff by utilizing teaching practices and curricula that are inclusive of the diverse histories, cultures and experiences in the United States ([StriveTogether 2021](#)). Typically, programming is divided by age: 0-2 (infants and toddlers) and 3-4 (preschoolers) ([Results for America](#)).

**Assessments:** Assessments enable educators and parents to identify early intervention needs as well as understand areas of strength and developmental needs for each young learner.

#### **Classroom observation of instructional**

**practice:** Some teacher observations, instructional quality reviews and teacher/student interaction measures have a strong research base linking them to teacher quality and student achievement, and evidence of reliability and validity at the classroom or program level. For instance, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is a widely used observational measure of teacher-student

interaction. CLASS is available for infant through secondary grades, but it is primarily used in early childhood and elementary school settings. CLASS measures three domains: emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support. Unlike other popular teacher observation models, CLASS has been validated for use in early childhood education settings ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

**English learner progress:** Early childhood education can play an essential role in preparing young English Language Learners (ELLs) for later success in school. Children who have an opportunity to develop basic foundational skills in language and literacy in preschool enter kindergarten ready to learn to read and write ([Ballantyne, Sanderman, & McLaughlin, 2008](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributin indicators

- Availability of skill-based curricula ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Availability of social skills training ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Availability of evidence-based curricula ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of kindergarten students enrolled in a physical education course that meets NASPE standards ([National Education Association](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Availability of social-emotional learning curricula and programs (such as growth mindset interventions) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating access to sufficient curriculum resources ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating alignment among standards, curriculum, resources and assessments ([National Education Association](#)).
- Quality and extent of use of culturally-responsive curriculum (Data sources: Local policy and practice assessment, inventory or review) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Schools implement an anti-racist curriculum ([National Education Association](#)).
- Access to arts education and/or well-rounded curriculum ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that use materials, projects, activities, curricula and resources that reflect or celebrate the identities of children from focal populations and their communities ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Preschool system provides guidance on the

types of culturally-responsive curricula that represent, reflect and uniquely support children and families from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

- Preschool system provides guidance or training on recommended culturally-responsive assessments/screenings that represent, reflect and uniquely support children and families from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Schools implement the Welcoming Schools program founded by the Human Rights Campaign ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools include educators in curriculum design ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools use the community as a contextualized learning environment ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools include educators in implementation plan development for standards and curriculum ([National Education Association](#)).
- Building Blocks Pre-K: Supplemental math curriculum that uses software, manipulatives and print material ([Results for America](#)).
- Delivering evidence-based curricula in small classes ([Results for America](#)).
- HighScope: Play-based, child-centered early education curriculum ([Results for America](#)).
- Stepping Stones to Literacy is a supplemental early literacy curriculum for preschool and kindergarten students. It has been demonstrated to produce positive impacts on phonological awareness, letter knowledge and phonics ([Results for America](#)).

- Districts provide resources to help educators understand and apply content standards. Resources may include funding for professional learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is an early literacy curriculum and peer home visiting program designed for parents and caregivers of children aged two through five. The model aims to build parents' capacity to support their children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development ([Results for America](#)).
- Offering individual and group learning: Evidence-based early childhood curricula can be delivered in three settings — with individual students, small groups or an entire class. Comprehensive curricula often include programming for all three. Many curricula also supplement in-school learning with home-based activities to be delivered by a parent or caregiver ([Results for America](#)).
- Playing and learning: Broadly, learning through play can take two forms — child-directed and teacher-guided. For instance, children may be encouraged to explore their creativity and interpersonal skills by playing with blocks. After a certain period, a teacher may add some structured learning to the activity, such as asking children to count the number of blocks or to describe what they are building ([Results for America](#)).
- State develops a plan to solicit feedback from classroom teachers and adjust curriculum guidelines and resources accordingly ([National Education Association](#)).
- Stepping Stones to Literacy: Supplemental curriculum designed for preschoolers and kindergarteners having trouble with reading ([Results for America](#)).
- Curriculum quality audits are performed ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Evidence-based curricula that fulfill students' diverse needs are created ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Making Pre-K Count and High 5s programs: Enhanced childhood math instruction, coupled

with the Building Blocks curriculum and aligned professional learning for educators ([Results for America](#)).

## Policies

- State develops a policy that requires alignment between curricular content and rigorous standards and is inclusive of every ability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and gender identity ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy mandates alignment among content standards, curriculum, resources and assessments ([National Education Association](#)).
- State has an autonomous curriculum review board with a majority of active pre-K through 12 educators ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy recognizes physical education as a core subject ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy recognizes the value of fine arts in curricula ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy requires educator involvement in developing content standards and curriculum guidelines ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding to all districts for fine arts education ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding to all districts for physical education ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding to ensure curricular content is inclusive of students of every ability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and gender identity. ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides high-quality resources that are aligned with standards and curriculum. Resources may include textbooks, workbooks, technology and supplies ([National Education Association](#)).



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating feelings of confidence in analyzing and interpreting formative and summative assessment data ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the time allotted to analyze assessment results and inform instruction ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of schools that exit improvement status within five years ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers indicating satisfaction with the sources used to measure student growth ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating assessments adhere to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers surveyed indicating satisfaction with the quality of student assessments ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts release assessment results in time to inform learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts train school personnel to interpret data system results to inform and improve instruction and identify needed supports ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts use both formative and summative student assessments that adhere to the principles of UDL ([National Education Association](#)).
- State collaborates with educators to develop school performance indicators ([National Education Association](#)).
- State offers additional support to schools identified for improvement ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides sufficient support to all schools so that they perform well across multiple measures of school quality and student success ([National Education Association](#)).
- State requires that districts provide resources and job-embedded professional learning for teachers to become proficient users of formative and summative assessment data ([National Education Association](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts engage educators, families and students in the school improvement process ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts involve educators in assessment design and development ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide resources and funding for job-embedded professional learning for teachers to become proficient users of formative and summative assessment data ([National Education Association](#)).

### Policies

- State accountability system holds schools accountable for multiple measures of school quality and student success (multiple measures may include chronic absenteeism, school climate and access to advanced and rigorous courses) ([National Education Association](#)).
- State develops a policy that requires educators to be involved in assessment design and development ([National Education Association](#)).

- State develops a policy that requires the use of both formative and summative student assessments that adhere to the principles of UDL ([National Education Association](#)).
- State has a comprehensive, aligned and integrated information management system that enables districts and schools to analyze,

evaluate and continuously improve student, educator and school performance ([National Education Association](#)).

- School and district accountability systems advance continuous improvement and a comprehensive vision of student success ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Classroom observation of instructional practice

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Teachers' overall and subscale scores on an observation rubric associated with an educator observation system ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers rated effective based on multiple measures of performance ([National Education Association](#)).
- Scores on measures of teacher-child interactions which assess equitable classroom interactions, such as the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) Interactions subscale or the Assessing Classroom Sociocultural Equity Scale (ACES) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members that demonstrate high-quality instructional practices and interactions with children ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Preschool system provides guidance or training on quality monitoring tools for classroom environment and/or child-adult interactions that represent, reflect and uniquely support children and families from diverse backgrounds, including those from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Teacher observations, instructional quality reviews and teacher/student interaction measures ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts design, monitor and implement evaluation systems based on state framework in partnership with educators and their associations ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide "peer assistance" or "peer assistance and review" (PAR) teams ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts use evaluations aligned with induction ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts use performance evaluations employing multiple measures ([National Education Association](#)).

### Policies

- State policy mandates multiprofessional collaboration on educator support and evaluation systems staffed by active pre-K through 12 educators ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy requires that evaluations be based on multiple measures of performance to determine effectiveness. Measures may include classroom observations, portfolios, leadership roles and professional learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for "peer assistance" and "peer assistance and review" (PAR) teams ([National Education Association](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of students meeting benchmarks ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of students proficient in core academic subjects ([Promise Neighborhoods: The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- State allocates funding to programs to ensure positive achievement outcomes for all students, including strategies to reduce opportunity and learning gaps ([National Education Association](#)).

## Effective use of instructional time, planning time, collaboration and instructional support

## Indicators

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with collaborative time ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with guidance and support for instruction ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with instructional time ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating satisfaction with the time dedicated to planning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of workforce members who report that they utilize more than one form of evidence to inform their instruction ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts implement scheduled job-embedded planning, instructional support and collaborative time ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide resources to guarantee dedicated time for teacher teams to plan and review student data to improve instructional results ([National Education Association](#)).

### Practices

- State policy supports regular job-embedded planning, instructional support and collaboration ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides resources for planning, instructional support and collaboration. Instructional support and collaboration may include professional learning communities, professional learning teams, lesson study, cohort learning, mentoring and induction ([National Education Association](#)).
- State requires districts to obtain educator input on instructional minutes ([National Education Association](#)).

## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Usage of Response to Intervention (RTI) early detection and prevention strategy ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students enrolled in an extended learning opportunity ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students who participate in a peer support program, are part of a mentoring program and/or regularly visited by specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel supported in their school ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations who can fully participate in learning activities ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations who have a learning accommodation provided to them in an inclusive setting ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations with identified concerns who are connected to services ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who are satisfied with the learning accommodations provided to their children ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who receive professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities, as needed ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who receive professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with gifts and talents ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who receive professional learning on analyzing student data to differentiate instruction for students with limited English proficiency ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools implement Response to Intervention (RTI) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of programs that have a funding mechanism for allocating funds to be spent on identified needs for children, families and workforce members from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Preschool system provides guidance on early learning standards, including how to uniquely support children and families from diverse backgrounds, including those from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### System indicators

- Percentage of teachers trained in Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS/PBS) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports/Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS/PBS) ([National Education](#)

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts have outreach plans for underserved student populations. Outreach may include



peer support programs, mentors, and full-time specialized SISP ([National Education Association](#)).

- Districts implement and track guidance standards and benchmarks for all students ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide extended learning opportunities for students (before- and after-school programs, academic enrichment, mentoring, tutoring and programs that extend the school day or school year for students in need of such services) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide job-embedded professional learning to help educators provide accommodations to meet the range of students' needs ([National Education Association](#)).
- Developing additional supports for underprivileged students, such as afterschool programs, high-impact tutoring and summer learning programs ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Policies

- State allocates funding toward comprehensive school guidance systems with standards and benchmarks that address the social and academic needs of all students ([National Education Association](#)).
- State develops a policy that requires equitable accommodations and differentiations in curriculum, instruction and assessment to meet the range of students' needs ([National Education Association](#)).
- State develops a policy that requires supports for students' social, emotional and physical well-being ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides funding for accommodations and differentiations in curriculum, instruction and assessment ([National Education Association](#)).

## Student perception of teaching

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of students surveyed indicating satisfaction with the amount of one-on-one time they receive from their teacher ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of students surveyed indicating they feel listened to and understood by their educators. *Note that students in kindergarten are typically surveyed by an adult on campus (e.g., through an interview) given their young age* ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations reporting positive feelings toward their program ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### System indicators

- Students' perceptions of their teacher's effectiveness, using a survey instrument such as the Pedagogical Effectiveness subscale of the Panorama Student Survey, the Tripod Student Survey, the Ambitious Instruction and Supportive Environment domains of the 5Essentials Survey, or the Elevate survey's Feedback for Growth, Meaningful Work, Student Voice, Teacher Caring, Learning Goals, Supportive Teaching, and Well-Organized Class scales ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).



## Indicators

### System indicators

- Days and percent of school year missed by homeroom teachers, by school and student subgroups ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percent of student school days and/or learning time taught by a substitute teacher, by grade and subgroup ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of teachers missing ten or more days of regular school, per year (required biennially at the school district level by the CRDC) ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percentage of highly-effective teachers, as measured by the state or local teacher evaluation system ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts track the distribution of effective teachers and leaders ([National Education Association](#)).

### Policies

- State policy requires school districts to track the equitable distribution of effective teachers and leaders (teachers with full licensure who are rated effective in their positions according to multiple measures of performance) ([National Education Association](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Young English Language Learners (ELLs) are regularly screened using linguistically- and culturally-appropriate screening tools. Results of screenings are used to determine what further supports and services are needed ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Assessments of young English Language Learners are used primarily to understand and improve children's learning; to track, monitor and support development in all areas, including language development; and to identify disabilities or other special needs ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Young English Language Learners are included in program evaluation and accountability systems, and culturally- and linguistically-appropriate assessment instruments and procedures are used. Inclusion of English Language Learners in accountability systems never acts as a

disincentive for programs to serve English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).

### System indicators

- All screenings and assessments used with young English Language Learners are culturally appropriate ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- All screenings and assessments used with young English Language Learners are linguistically appropriate ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Translations of English language instruments are carefully reviewed for linguistic and cultural appropriateness by native speakers well versed in the complex issues of assessment and translation ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Assessments for young English Language Learners are based on multiple methods and measures ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).

- Assessments are ongoing; special attention is given to repeated assessments of language development over time ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Assessments are age appropriate ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Decision makers and those conducting assessments are aware of the concerns and cautions associated with using standardized formal assessments with young English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Decision makers and test developers carefully attend to test development issues, including equivalence and norming ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Decision makers and those conducting assessments know appropriate conditions for using and interpreting standardized formal assessments with young English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Ensuring that ELLs have ample opportunities to talk with both adults and peers and provide ongoing feedback and encouragement ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- English Language Learners need lots of opportunities to engage in social interactions with other children, but they also need support from adults as they develop the language skills they need to negotiate those interactions ([Ballantyne et al., 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- For group activities, pair English Language Learners with children who have strong English language skills, and make sure that all the children who speak the same home language (L1) are not grouped together ([Barone & Xu, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Providing opportunities for self-directed activities so that ELLs can choose activities that match both their interests and their language abilities ([Bunce & Watkins, 1995](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Encouraging child talk by providing prompts when children need help in expressing themselves; for example, “Tell Bobby, ‘May I have the red crayon now?’” ([Colorín Colorado](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Providing explicit, systematic instruction in vocabulary ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Children require multiple exposures to words in order to develop a rich understanding of their meaning and use. Teachers should make a point of introducing interesting new words for children to learn into each classroom activity ([Tabors, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Presenting vocabulary thematically helps children make associations between words and scaffolds students’ learning ([McGee & Richgels, 2003](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Read-alouds that include explanations of targeted vocabulary can support word learning ([Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002](#); [Coyne, Simmons, Kame’enui, & Stoolmiller, 2004](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Dramatic play organized around a carefully chosen theme can support word learning ([Barone & Xu, 2008](#); [Tabors, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Using open questions, or questions that can have multiple answers, to help ELLs expand their own utterances; for example, “Why do you like this doll best?” instead of “What is this doll’s name?” ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Exposing ELLs to rich language input. Exposure to rich language, whether through shared book reading or through teacher talk, has been shown to enhance children’s oral language development ([Aukrust, 2007](#); [National Early Literacy Panel, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- One effective strategy to expose ELLs to rich language input is for the teacher to provide an ongoing commentary on activities that are taking place in the classroom in order to expose children to language associated with the immediate context ([Bunce & Watkins, 1995](#); [Tabors, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Structuring the classroom space and routine to provide scaffolding for ELLs’ language learning ([Colorín Colorado](#)).

- Arranging the classroom in a way that supports each type of instructional activity that will take place, and then keeping changes to the physical environment to a minimum. Once ELLs learn which activities take place in various parts of the classroom (e.g., centers, circle), the physical environment will cue them as to what they are to do and how they are to behave in that area ([Barone & Xu, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Predictable classroom routines can also provide scaffolding for English Language Learners by allowing them to anticipate what will happen each day, including the type of language they will need for each activity ([Bunce & Watkins, 1995](#); [Tabors, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Encouraging parents to talk and read to their children in their home language as a way of strengthening children's L1 language skills ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Incorporating children's home language in the classroom when possible. Songs and videos can be used effectively for this purpose if teachers do not speak their students' language ([Gillanders, 2007](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Designing instruction that focuses on all of the foundational literacy skills. Activities that promote early literacy skills in preschool include: interactive storybook reading; "pretend" reading and writing; games and other activities to help children identify the letters of the alphabet; interactive experiences with language and print through poems, nursery rhymes and songs. The emphasis should be on code-based instruction, or instruction that helps children understand the relationship between spoken language and print ([National Early Literacy Panel, 2008](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Recognizing that many literacy skills can transfer across languages. A child who has developed early literacy skills in his or her first language will find it easier to develop those same skills in English. Parents who are not proficient in English should be encouraged to help prepare their children for learning to read by using the home language to: teach rhymes and songs, play word games and share storybooks ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Teachers can support parent-child reading by sending home books in the child's home language. This makes L1 text available to parents, and it lets them know that the teacher considers reading to children in the home language to be important ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Accelerating English literacy development by helping ELLs make the connection between what they know in their first language and what they need to know in English ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Similarities between English and the child's home language can be used as a foundation for instruction ([Helman, 2004](#) as cited in [Colorín Colorado](#)). For example, if L1 has some of the same phonemes as English, start with those phonemes for rhyme or beginning sound activities because those are sounds the child is already familiar with ([Colorín Colorado](#)).
- Early proficiency in both children's home languages and English at kindergarten entry is critical to becoming academically proficient in a second language. Systematic exposure to English and ongoing support of a child's home language is critical ([Promoting Kindergarten Readiness for Dual Language Learners](#)).
- Incorporating instructional supports in English literacy instruction, including interactive and dialogic reading. Interactive and dialogic reading promotes literacy skills for dual language learners by building oral language, including listening, comprehension and vocabulary. Instructional strategies include: anchoring text by giving a clear, intentional message as to what you are trying to teach; reinforcing vocabulary through songs and chants; using gestures and other visual clues to indicate the meaning of a word ([Promoting Kindergarten Readiness for Dual Language Learners](#)).
- Other strategies to incorporate instructional supports include pre-reading in a home language (parent volunteers are helpful here), and interactively reading a book or other literary selection multiple times with students. Each reading can have a different focus, fostering vocabulary and concept development. Students are also encouraged to speak and tell stories.



Even when the teacher may communicate entirely in English, all of the children's language attempts in any language should be encouraged and praised ([Promoting Kindergarten Readiness for Dual Language Learners](#)).

- Involving families in the language learning process by conducting a Languages and Interests Interview. This interview covers topics not only about languages spoken at home, but also about family members, toys, books, songs, child interests and any talents that the child has exhibited ([Promoting Kindergarten Readiness for Dual Language Learners](#)).
- Teachers can use environmental supports in the classroom to help children feel safe, accepted, understood and respected. Teachers can label items around the classroom in English and other languages, and color-code objects — providing young students with environmental literacy cues. For example, displaying the words for “Hello” and singing a “Hello” song in every home language can help students understand that they and their home language are valued in the class ([Promoting Kindergarten Readiness for Dual Language Learners](#)).
- The cognitive, communicative, cultural and economic benefits of knowing two languages (e.g., English and a home language) are most likely to occur when individuals have high levels of linguistic and functional competence in both languages, including speaking, listening, reading and writing in both. This is most likely to occur if development of the home language is maintained throughout the preschool and school years as dual language learners learn English ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Research indicates that children's language development benefits from the input of adults who talk to them in the language in which the adults are most competent and with which they are most comfortable ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Dual languages learners' (DLLs') language development, like that of monolingual children, benefits from the amount and quality of child-directed language — that is, language that is used frequently in daily interactions, is contingent on the child's language and focus of attention, and is rich and diverse in words and sentence types. For most DLL families, this quantity and quality of child-directed language are more likely to occur in the home language, not English ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Young dual language learners' language development can benefit from shared book reading and storytelling that are characterized by diverse and rich language that promotes interaction and engagement between another person and the child. Infants and toddlers have not been shown to learn language from television or computer applications that do not involve interactions with other people ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Dual language learners (DLLs) need both systematic exposure to English and ongoing support for L1 maintenance and development for two major reasons: (1) DLLs exposed to both languages show as much growth in English language and literacy skills as those instructed only in English; and (2) children immersed in English at an early age often show declines in their L1 skills, and strong language skills in a child's first language have been shown to facilitate English language development ([Promising Futures](#)).
- It is important for early care and education and home visiting providers to know specific information about individual dual language learners' backgrounds, including their early language learning opportunities, family cultural values and prior knowledge, so they can individualize instruction and services ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Dual language learners benefit from consistent exposure to both their L1 and English in early care and education settings. Research is limited on how much and what type of support for each language is most effective in supporting bilingual development ([Promising Futures](#)).
- All early care and education teachers of dual language learners can learn and implement strategies that systematically introduce English during the infant, toddler and preschool years

while simultaneously promoting maintenance of the home language — an important principle. Not all teachers can teach in all languages, but all teachers can learn specific strategies that support the maintenance of all languages ([Promising Futures](#)).

- The following characteristics of instructional programs support English learners' oral language development: specialized instruction focused on components of oral language proficiency, opportunities for interaction with speakers proficient in the second language, feedback to students during conversational interactions and dedicated time for instruction focused on oral English proficiency ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Promising methods for engaging the families of dual language learners include creating a welcoming environment, providing orientation programs, using technology to enhance two-way communication, instituting district- and school-level parent advisory committees and school support teams that include parents of ELLs to support ELLs' academic success and emotional well-being, and instituting adult education programs for parents of ELLs ([Promising Futures](#)).
- Case studies of districts and schools that demonstrate their effectiveness in educating English Language Learners find that such districts and schools are led by superintendents and principals who foster a common commitment to high expectations for all students; invest in teacher collaboration and ongoing, focused professional development; implement a coherent instructional program for students; attend to the needs of ELLs who are struggling to meet grade-level expectations; and engage families and communities ([Promising Futures](#)).
- To conduct an accurate assessment of the developmental status and instructional needs of dual language learners/English learners, it is necessary to examine their skills in both English and their home language ([Promising Futures](#)).
- When used for developmental screening for dual language learners/English learners with potential disabilities, effective assessments use multiple

measures and sources of information, involve consultation with a multidisciplinary team that includes bilingual experts, collect information over time and include family members as informants ([Promising Futures](#)).

- Assessments and significant assessment decisions involve two or more professionals ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Programs rely on systematic observational assessments, using culturally- and linguistically-appropriate tools as the primary source of guidance to inform instruction and to improve outcomes for young English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- It is primarily teachers who assess young English Language Learners, but paraprofessionals, assessment assistants and specialized consultants also play an important role ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Those assessing young English Language Learners are bilingual and bicultural ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Those assessing young English Language Learners know the child ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Those assessing young English Language Learners are knowledgeable about language acquisition, including second language acquisition ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Those assessing young English Language Learners are trained in and knowledgeable about assessment in general and about considerations in the assessment of young English Language Learners in particular ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Professionals involved in the assessment of young English Language Learners seek information and insight from family members in selecting, conducting and interpreting assessments ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Programs refrain from using family members to conduct formal assessments, interpret during formal assessments or draw assessment conclusions ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Professionals involved in assessment regularly inform and update families on their child's

assessment results in a way that is easily understood and meaningful ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).

- Scholars provide an expanded knowledge base about second language acquisition and the development of young English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
  - More and better assessments are developed to meet the most pressing needs of English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
  - Policy makers, institutions of higher education and programs adopt policies and practices to recruit and retain a diverse early childhood workforce, with a focus on increasing the number of bilingual and bicultural early childhood professionals ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
  - Early childhood professionals, including program administrators, receive ongoing opportunities for professional development and support in the area of assessing young English Language Learners ([NAEYC, Where We Stand](#)).
- Districts provide English Language Learner services and programs that are educationally sound in theory and effective in practice ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - English Language Learner programs are designed to enable ELLs to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable length of time ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - Districts offer English Language Learner services and programs, until ELLs are proficient in English and can participate meaningfully in educational programs without English Language Learner support ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - Districts provide appropriate special education services to English Language Learners with disabilities who are found to be eligible for special education and related services ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - Districts provide the personnel necessary to effectively implement English Language Learner programs. Necessary personnel include teachers who are qualified to provide English Learner services, core-content teachers who are highly qualified in their field as well as trained to support ELL students and trained administrators who can evaluate these teachers ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - Districts provide adequate professional development and follow-up training in order to prepare English Language Learner program teachers and administrators to implement the English Language Learner program effectively ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
  - Districts ensure that administrators who evaluate English Language Learner program staff are adequately trained to meaningfully evaluate whether English Language Learner teachers are appropriately employing their training in the classroom in order for the English Language Learner program model to successfully achieve its educational objectives ([Department of Education](#)

## Policies

- Districts have a plan to identify in a timely manner English Language Learner students in need of language assistance services ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts administer a home language survey (HLS) effectively to ensure accurate results ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts have a plan to assess all potential ELLs with a valid and reliable assessment to determine if they are in fact ELLs ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts inform parents and guardians in a timely manner of their child's English Language Proficiency level and ELL program options ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts communicate information regarding a child's English Language Proficiency level and English Language Learner program options in a language the parent understands ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).

[English Learner Toolkit](#)).

- State education agencies ensure that districts have qualified teachers and administrators for their English Language Learner programs ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- State education agencies and school districts design and implement services and programs that enable English Language Learners to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program, within a reasonable length of time ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- State education agencies and school districts provide equal opportunities for English Language Learner students to meaningfully participate in curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular programs and activities ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- State education agencies ensure that school districts and schools use appropriate, reliable and valid evaluations and testing methods to measure English Language Learners' acquisition of English and core-content knowledge ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts limit the segregation of English Language Learners to the extent necessary to reach the stated goals of an educationally sound and effective program ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts do not keep English Language Learners in segregated English Language Learner programs (or "ELL-only" classes) for periods longer or shorter than required by each student's level of English proficiency, time and progress in the English Language Learner program, and the stated goals of the English Language Learner program ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- While English Language Learners may receive intensive English language instruction or bilingual services in separate classes, it would rarely be justifiable to segregate English Language Learners from their non-ELL peers in subjects like physical education, art, music or other activity periods outside of classroom instruction ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts identify, locate and evaluate English Language Learners with disabilities in a timely manner ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts consider the English language proficiency of English Language Learners with disabilities in determining appropriate assessments and other evaluation materials ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts provide and administer special education evaluations in the child's native language, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, to ensure that a student's language needs can be distinguished from a student's disability-related needs ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts do not identify or determine that English Language Learner students are students with disabilities because of their limited English language proficiency ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts provide English Language Learner students with disabilities with both the language assistance and disability-related services they are entitled to under federal law ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Parents have the right to opt their children out of English Language Learner programs or particular ELL services. This decision must be voluntary and based on a full understanding of the English Language Learner child's rights, the range of services available to the child and the benefits of such services to the child. If a parent decides to opt his or her child out of English Language Learner programs or particular ELL services, that child still retains his or her status as an English Language Learner ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts continue to monitor the English language proficiency (ELP) and academic progress of students who opt out of English Language Learner programs and services. If a student does not demonstrate appropriate growth in ELP or



maintain appropriate academic levels, the school district must inform the parents in a language they understand and offer English Language Learner services ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).

- School districts monitor the progress of all English Language Learners in achieving English language proficiency (ELP) and in acquiring content knowledge ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts establish rigorous monitoring systems that include benchmarks for expected growth and take appropriate steps to assist students who are not adequately progressing toward those goals ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- State education agencies monitor school districts to ensure that they are providing ELLs meaningful access to grade-level core content instruction and remedying any academic deficits in a timely manner ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- For a student exiting from English Language Learner status, districts document that an English Language Learner has demonstrated English proficiency using a valid and reliable ELP assessment that tests all four language domains ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Students exiting from English Language Learner status must be monitored for at least two years, to ensure that (1) they have not been prematurely exited; (2) any academic deficits incurred as a result of participating in the ELL program have been remedied; and (3) they are meaningfully participating in the standard program of instruction comparable to their never-English Language Learner peers ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) now requires school districts to report on the number and percentage of former English Language Learners meeting state academic standards for four years ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts implement successful English Language Learner programs that enable ELL students to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable period of time ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Districts collect longitudinal data to monitor and compare the performance of current English Language Learners, former English Language Learners, and never-English Language Learners in the school district's standard instructional program. Data should not be limited to data collected for Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) accountability purposes ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- When English Language Learner programs do not produce both English proficiency and parity of participation within a reasonable period of time, state education agencies and school districts must modify the English Language Learner program ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- State education agencies and school districts communicate meaningfully with limited English proficient (LEP) parents and to notify LEP parents adequately of information about any program, service or activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- School districts have a process to identify LEP parents and provide them with free and effective language assistance, such as translated materials or an appropriate and competent interpreter ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).
- Appropriate and competent translators or interpreters have proficiency in target languages; ease of written and oral expression; knowledge of specialized terms or concepts; and are trained on their role, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need for confidentiality ([Department of Education English Learner Toolkit](#)).

# Positive School Environments

Positive school environments create the conditions for safety, inclusivity and support by focusing on holistic child development and approaches. Young learners want to attend school consistently when environments are positive and supportive.



8

Do young learners have access to quality pre-kindergarten environments and facilities?

## Why it matters



**Class size:** Smaller classes (with a lower pupil-to-teacher ratio) give teachers the ability to identify the needs of young children and address them with individualized strategies. Research has found that smaller class sizes, especially in the early grades, result in increased student achievement ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Health and hygienic needs:** Addressing health and hygiene needs in pre-kindergarten environments is crucial for creating safe and supportive learning environments. Young

learners are especially vulnerable to illnesses, and promoting good hygiene practices helps prevent the spread of germs, reducing the frequency of illnesses that can disrupt learning. Meeting health needs — such as regular handwashing, proper sanitation and access to nutritious food — also supports children's physical development and overall well-being. When centers and schools prioritize these needs, they help ensure that children are healthy, present and ready to engage in learning activities.

## Indicators

### System indicators

- Average teacher/child ratio in K-1 classrooms ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Class size ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that have the infrastructure necessary to support student learning, in systems where focal populations make up at least half of the student population ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that meet children and workforce members' health and hygienic needs, in programs where focal populations make up at least half of the student population ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts have class size limits on subject matter and grade level ([National Education Association](#)).

### Practices

- State policy mandates class size limits based on subject matter and grade level ([National Education Association](#)).
- State allocates funding to class size reduction ([National Education Association](#)).



9

**Do young learners attend schools with safe, inclusive and supportive environments?**

## Why it matters



**Safe, inclusive and supportive environments:** A sense of belonging in school and work contributes to improved achievement, well-being and health. When young learners feel they belong, they experience higher levels of motivation, engagement and tenacity ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Climate surveys, which measure experiences beyond academic ones, are typically used to understand the extent to which students and

educators feel safe, seen and connected. Positive climate survey results are positively associated with stronger academic and behavioral outcomes ([StriveTogether 2021](#)). Children have safe, inclusive and supportive learning experiences when their identities are considered, reflected and celebrated in their learning environment. This kind of environment also offers resources that allow their teachers to provide an inclusive environment for

children. Children who see themselves in books, in artwork, in characters and who have teachers who look like them have more equitable, engaging learning experiences ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

**Inclusive workplace conditions:** The administration of a pre-K program or school encompasses the policies, processes and infrastructure that facilitate how schools operate, as well as the individual(s) who lead the preschool system. Equitable administration occurs when school leaders share leadership and decision making beyond a defined leadership team — for example, they share decision-making power with families and workforce members, especially those from focal populations. Focal populations who are brought into decisions or whose perspectives are considered can provide insight and solutions that would best meet their needs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)). Leaders will know that early childhood programs are functioning equitably when all system programs are sufficiently funded, implement culturally- and developmentally-affirming policies, and retain a qualified and supported workforce ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

**School and workplace racial and ethnic diversity:** Greater diversity is shown to reduce intergroup prejudice and improve intelligence and innovation ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Racial and ethnic diversity is positively associated with children's language development in early learning programs ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Workplaces with a diverse team see better employee interpersonal skills and innovation, better financial performance and less conflict ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**School and workplace economic diversity:** The disparity in average school poverty rates between white and Black students is the single most important predictor of differences between their academic achievement ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). The relationship between economic segregation and outcomes begins in early childhood, where children's academic achievement

and social-emotional development have been linked to the average socioeconomic status of their classroom, regardless of a child's own economic or demographic background ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**School safety:** School safety is a core component of a school's climate, which is linked to higher attendance and academic achievement ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Research shows disparities in students' feelings of safety according to their race and ethnicity. For example, one study found that students in schools serving predominantly Black and Latine populations report feeling less safe and having less positive peer interactions than those at schools with predominantly white and Asian populations, on average ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Even within the same schools, Black and Latine students report feeling less safe than their white and Asian peers ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**School and family engagement:** Early learning programs designed to teach parents how to better support their children's development by providing stimulating interactions during daily routines and playtime at home are related to large improvements in children's behavioral, health and some dimensions of social-emotional outcomes, as well as modest improvements in their cognitive abilities and overall life outcomes ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). School engagement with families provides benefits to students academically and socially, both in short-term school success and long-term outcomes ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Although family engagement is key to students' educational success, not all schools successfully build a culture that welcomes and engages all families, and especially families of color. For example, an analysis of parent survey data in California found that perceptions of how well the school encouraged parental involvement were significantly lower among Indigenous parents compared to other groups ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).





## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of children in pre-K reporting positive feelings toward their school, as measured by questionnaires such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) How I Feel About My School questionnaire, or percentage of classrooms demonstrating equitable socio cultural interactions, as measured by observational assessments, such as Assessing Classroom Sociocultural Equity Scale (ACSES) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of students in K-12 reporting belonging in school, as measured by surveys such as the Sense of Belonging subscale of the CORE Districts school culture and climate survey, the Classroom Belonging subscale of the Panorama Student Survey, or the Elevate survey's Affirming Identities and Classroom Community scales ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of students experiencing mechanical versus physical constraint and seclusion (Data source: Civil Rights Data Collection) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of students experiencing school-related arrests (Data source: Civil Rights Data Collection) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of students receiving in-school or out-of-school suspensions (Data source: Civil Rights Data Collection) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Sense of belonging and connection to school community (Data sources: Youth Risk Behavior Survey; local school climate surveys) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Student perceptions of their school's inclusion of their history, culture and racial identity (Data sources: Local school climate surveys) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).

### System indicators

- Percentage of teachers who have received professional development in culturally-responsive pedagogy ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who have received professional learning time in equity and racial and social justice ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who have received professional learning time in implicit bias ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of teachers who have received professional learning time in trauma-related practices ([National Education Association](#)).
- Measurement of bullying, harassment and discrimination (Data sources: Youth Risk Behavior Survey; local school climate surveys) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Schools annually report on school climate and student engagement ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools have data-driven, site-based school climate and student engagement plans ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of programs where classrooms demonstrate equitable socio-cultural interactions ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of system-level funding that is allocated to equity-focused activities targeted to children, families and/or workforce members from focal populations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Results from publicly available school climate surveys ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts dedicate professional learning time to culturally-responsive pedagogy ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts dedicate professional learning time to equity and racial and social justice ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts dedicate professional learning time to implicit bias ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts dedicate professional learning time to trauma-informed practices ([National Education Association](#)).

### Practices

- Districts allocate funds to advance educators' awareness of implicit bias ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts allocate funds to advance educators' competence in culturally-responsive pedagogy

([National Education Association](#)).

- Districts allocate funds to advance educators' understanding of equity and racial and social justice ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts allocate funds to advance educators' understanding of trauma-informed practices ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts allocate resources to a workforce wellness and safety program, ensuring educators of color and LGBTQ+ educators feel safe and cared for in their schools ([National Education Association](#)).
- State develops a policy that requires annual reporting by school on school climate and student engagement ([National Education Association](#)).
- Fostering positive learning environments for students, including by reducing class sizes, developing programs that prevent bullying, moving away from punitive disciplinary practices and applying other trauma-informed practices ([Urban Institute](#)).

### School and workplace racial and ethnic diversity

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### System indicators

- Student body composition by race and ethnicity ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

### School and workplace economic diversity

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### System indicators

- Student body composition by income ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Share of students attending high-poverty schools, by race or ethnicity ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Creating more equitable school attendance boundaries ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Developing centralized school lottery application systems that prioritize school diversity ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Ending school and neighborhood segregation, including by expanding affordable housing in resource-rich neighborhoods and reforming zoning policies to allow for more diverse, high-density, mixed-income communities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Implementing more equitable school funding policies and advocating for reforms to state and federal funding ([Urban Institute](#)).

## School safety

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of students indicating they feel safe and cared for at their school ([National Education Association](#)).

### System indicators

- Percentage of students reporting high levels of physical, mental and emotional safety in school climate surveys, such as the U.S. Department of Education ED School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS), the Sense of Safety subscale within the CORE Districts school culture and climate survey, or the School Safety subscale within the Panorama Student Survey ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of educators surveyed indicating they feel safe and cared for at their school ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of public school employees in each job category who have received in-service training on intervention techniques, such as restorative practices ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools report disaggregated data on incidents of student bullying on a daily or weekly basis ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of program sites that ensure the safety and security of children and workforce members, in programs where focal populations make up at least half of the student population ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Districts educate all school personnel on intervention techniques in incidents of student bullying and harassment, such as restorative practices and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) ([National Education Association](#)).

### Policies

- Districts allocate resources toward interventions around student safety issues (e.g., LGBTQ+ bullying and harassment) ([National Education Association](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Implementation of parent programs ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Implementation of out-of-school programs (such as summer programs) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Families and community members support learning in schools ([Promise Neighborhoods; The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who report that they are consulted, involved, collaborate, or are a co-creator in systems-level changes, policies or programmatic decisions ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families from focal populations who use whole family services ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### System indicators

- Mean scores on family surveys, such as the Panorama Family-School Relationships Survey or CORE Districts School Culture & Climate Survey parent assessment of school-community engagement ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Number of formal school-parent collaborations ([National Education Association](#)).
- Parent and family experiences, connection and relationships with school, teachers and other school staff (data sources: Local data collection, school climate surveys) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of educators who have taken coursework, including continuing education, on family and community engagement ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of parents surveyed indicating knowledge of and satisfaction with parent and family services ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of parents surveyed indicating

satisfactory access to school materials and information ([National Education Association](#)).

- Percentage of parents surveyed indicating school-parent collaboration has contributed to improved student achievement ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of parents surveyed indicated that they had been made aware of opportunities to join decision-making groups focused on school improvement and annual planning, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and income ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of parents surveyed indicating they feel listened to and included, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and income ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of parents that attended a school training for families in the previous year ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of school personnel who have participated in professional learning designed to improve family and community engagement ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of families and percentage of pre-K teachers or caregivers reporting positive relationship quality with one another, using a tool such as the Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ) parent survey ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Schools develop data-driven, site-based family and community engagement plans ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools have a formal agreement with a community partner to provide student health services ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools host trainings for families ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations to provide development activities for caregivers, which may include family literacy and financial education ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations



with community providers to offer support for at-risk youth. Support includes summer school, after-school programs, mentoring and tutoring ([National Education Association](#)).

- Schools maintain partnerships/collaborations with community providers to provide access to family support services/social services ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools provide access to extended on-site services for students and families (e.g., school library, computer facilities, gym, etc.) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools provide on-site family/caregiver volunteer opportunities ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools provide opportunities for parents to observe and support learning ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools recognize the diversity among families as an asset and strive to leverage this to improve student outcomes ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of programs that offer whole family services in their programs ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of programs that provide referrals to families from focal populations about whole family services ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Adult literacy, adult education and English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Districts and schools include parents and families in decision making on school improvement and yearly planning, purposefully seeking input from underrepresented families, such as Indigenous families and other families of color ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts annually report on family and community engagement ([National Education Association](#)).

- Districts collect parent and caregiver feedback (methods of collection include surveys, focus groups, parent governing councils, etc.) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts hire school-community liaisons who enhance outreach efforts with knowledge of a community's history, language and cultural background ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts offer early education services for the home (e.g., home visitation, early literacy, prenatal, social services) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide professional learning in family and community engagement for all school personnel, specifically highlighting engagement of underrepresented families, such as Indigenous families and other families of color ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts share information on academic standards, school procedures and student progress data in multiple formats and languages ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts support collaborations with educators and community-based organizations to provide home visits ([National Education Association](#)).
- Evidence-based home visiting programs ([Pn3 Policy Clearinghouse](#)).
- State maintains a state-level appointee or initiative for family and community engagement ([National Education Association](#)).
- State maintains an information-sharing system readily available to families and communities in multiple formats and languages ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides districts with technical assistance and support to address engagement strategies ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides resources for an integrated system of academic enrichment and social services, such as the Community Schools model, to support children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical and linguistic development ([National Education Association](#)).
- State provides resources to school districts to engage families and the community on school

district policies, processes and procedures ([National Education Association](#)).

## Policies

- State funds innovative engagement strategies targeting historically marginalized students, such as Indigenous students and students of color ([National Education Association](#)).
- State mandates family and community outreach ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy provides employer incentives for parents and/or caregivers to participate in school-related activities ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy provides resources for professional learning around family and community engagement for all school personnel ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy supports family engagement connected to student learning as a driver of student academic performance and a vital component of meeting school improvement goals ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy supports the implementation of the Community Schools model ([National Education Association](#)).
- State requires annual reporting at the district level on family and community engagement ([National Education Association](#)).



10

**Do young learners attend schools that support their social, emotional and physical development and well-being?**

## Why it matters



**Access to health, mental health and social supports:** Regular well-child visits provide an opportunity for health professionals to monitor children's physical and behavioral health and development, provide age-appropriate guidance to parents and screen for maternal depression ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Well-child visits screen children for common concerns in early childhood, including lead poisoning, hearing and vision problems, behavior problems and delayed speech and language development ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Timely, age-appropriate immunizations usually indicate that a child has access to regular medical care. Vaccines are cost-effective tools that

prevent children from developing severe diseases ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Social-emotional skills and well-being:** Schools can be a critical place to access support for students' physical, mental and social-emotional health. For example, three out of four students who ever access mental health services do so through their school ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Schools that provide access to nurses, school psychologists and social workers tend to see improved learning outcomes, school climate and student well-being ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Children under age 6 with [medical homes \(Project Thrive, NCCP\)](#).
- Young children (ages 19-36 months) who complete the basic series of age-appropriate immunizations against measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, haemophilus influenza and hepatitis B (series 4-3-1-3-3) ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of children ages 19-35 months who have been fully immunized ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children ages 0-8 who have received all required immunizations ([National Education Association](#)).
- Children ages 2-6 years receiving dental care in the last 12 months ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children ages 2 to 5 who receive WIC services with a BMI at or above the 85th percentile ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children hospitalized for asthma (ICD-9 Codes: 493.0-493.9) per 100,000 children less than 5 years of age ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children under age 6 with blood lead levels at or above 10 micrograms per deciliter ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect among children from birth to age 6 ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children with special health care needs age 0-6 who receive coordinated, ongoing comprehensive care within a medical home ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of eligible students enrolled in free and reduced-price school breakfast and lunch programs ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of 2-year-olds with a recent well-child visit that included a lead screening, vision screening, hearing screening and comprehensive developmental screening ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

- Percentage of children under age 6 who received a well-child check-up in the past year ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Proportion of youth experiencing poor mental health (Data Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System) ([StriveTogether 2021](#))

### System indicators

- Child care centers that have access to ongoing health or mental health consultation ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Eligible schools are enrolled in free and reduced-price school breakfast and lunch programs ([National Education Association](#)).
- Ratio of number of students to number of health, mental health and social services full-time equivalent (FTE) staff (for example, school nurses, psychologists and social workers) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Number and type of in-school health workers ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) surveyed indicating satisfaction with time dedicated toward collaboration ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of programs offering health, mental health and social services, or staff or consultants providing infant and early childhood mental health consultation (IECMHC) services ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Proportion of schools with behavioral/mental health services and on-site staff ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of programs offering health, mental health and social services in-house, including staff or consultants providing infant and early childhood mental health consultation (IECMHC) services ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

# Practices and policies

## Practices

- Districts provide adequate resources for student-to-specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) to collaborate with teachers, education support professionals (ESPs), parents and students. ([National Education Association](#)).
- Districts provide student-to-specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) with adequate time to collaborate with teachers and education support professionals (ESPs) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Pediatricians use developmental milestone assessments, like the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), during regular well visits.
- School-based supports for child health and

well-being, such as physicals, vaccinations, dental and vision care, therapy and other mental health services ([Results for America](#)).

## Practices

- Providing access to health care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Districts require a favorable student-to-specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) ratio (Optimal ratios include: school counselors – 250:1; school nurses – 750:1; school psychologists – 500-700:1; school social workers – 250:1) ([National Education Association](#)).
- State and/or district pays for school-based health workforce, including nurses and counselors ([National Education Association](#)).
- State requires that all school-age children are appropriately immunized before entering school ([National Education Association](#)).

## Social-emotional skills and well-being

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of students in K-12 reporting a high level of social awareness on surveys such as the CORE Districts SEL Survey social awareness scale, or percentage of students meeting benchmarks on teacher ratings of social skills drawn from Elliott and Gresham's Social Skills Rating Scale. ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#))
- Percentage of youth in K-12 with mental or emotional health needs as identified by a universal screening tool. For a list of mental health screening tools that may be appropriate for school-based use, see the following guide from the National Center on Safe Supportive

Learning Environments: "Mental Health Screening Tools for Grades K-12" ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- Percentage of children in pre-K with identified health or developmental concerns as identified by a developmental screening tool. For a list of screening tools that may be appropriate for children younger than age 5, see the following guide from the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center: "Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! A Compendium of Screening Measures for Young Children" ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).





11

## Are young learners demonstrating consistent attendance?

### Why it matters



**Absenteeism:** Research demonstrates a strong relationship between absenteeism and learning outcomes, and higher rates of absenteeism for disadvantaged students can widen achievement gaps ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

Absenteeism is a big challenge for young learners, with at least 10% of kindergarten and first graders nationwide chronically absent from school, with students living in poverty four times more likely to be chronically absent ([New America](#)).

#### Consistent attendance

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- K-12 chronic absenteeism ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- K-12 days of attendance ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- K-12 days of expected attendance ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Percentage of students who are present for more than 90% of their enrolled days, excluding students enrolled for fewer than 90 days ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of students with less than 10 absences in a school year (or less than 5 percent of the school year) ([National Education Association](#)).
- Proportion of K-12 chronically absent students ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Average number of days children from focal populations were present in preschool ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of enrolled preschool children from focal populations who are present for more than 90% of their enrolled days, excluding children enrolled for less than three months ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### Practices and policies

#### Practices

- Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP): A home visiting program that identifies

and partners with families to improve student attendance and family engagement ([Connecticut Department of Education](#)).

- School employs a tiered approach to improving attendance by promoting positive conditions for learning ([Attendance Works](#)).
- Creating a culture of attendance by taking a positive, not punitive, approach to absenteeism that is centered on belonging and engagement, and helping everyone to understand why daily attendance matters in pre-K through 12th grade ([Attendance Works](#)).

## Policies

- States establish standards for accountability, adopt regulations and provide guidance that

sets expectations for school districts and schools to achieve ([Attendance Works](#)).

- States ensure consistent and comparable data across schools and districts by specifying how attendance concepts are defined and offering guidance on how to collect accurate data ([Attendance Works](#)).
- The U.S. Department of Education collects and reports chronic absence data. States must track chronic absenteeism as a school quality indicator, along with more traditional academic measures for accountability in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) ([Attendance Works](#)).



12

## Are there young learners that disproportionately experience exclusionary discipline?

## Why it matters



**Discipline Practices:** Research documents persistent disparities in exclusionary discipline — that is, disciplinary actions that remove students from their educational setting, such as an in- or out-of-school suspension — along race, socioeconomic background and disability status ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). Research also suggests that high rates of suspension and expulsion reduces students' opportunity to learn, increases likelihood of dropping out or becoming

disengaged from school and disproportionately affects Black and Latine students as well as students receiving special education ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)). School practices play a key role in determining students' disciplinary outcomes. Different approaches to discipline, such as restorative justice and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), may be related to improvements in school culture and climate ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Children under age 6 who are expelled from child care or preschools due to behavioral problems ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of students subjected to disciplinary action in the past year ([National Education Association](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Differences in the rates at which students from key demographic subgroups ever experience different forms of school discipline (office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, restraint and exclusion) relative to those students' representation in their school population as a whole ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Disproportionalities along the lines of key demographic characteristics in the level of school discipline experienced (for example, number of days suspended) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- K-12 institution suspension rate ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Schools collect and publicly report demographic data recording behavior and behavioral interventions leading to disciplinary exclusion from school ([National Education Association](#)).
- Behavioral reasons for discipline (Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework).
- Discipline equity gaps by student subgroups ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Percent of total instructional time missed ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).
- Suspension, expulsion and overall exclusionary discipline rates and numbers of students

impacted ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Schools offer alternatives to traditional behavioral interventions, such as restorative practices ([National Education Association](#)).
- Schools use Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) ([Results for America](#)).
- The Incredible Years: A series of early intervention programs for children ages 3-9 aimed to reduce the prevalence of behavioral and conduct issues ([Results for America](#)).

### Policies

- Districts allocate resources toward restorative practices ([National Education Association](#)).
- State policy requires schools to collect and publicly report demographic data recording behavior and behavioral interventions leading to disciplinary exclusion from school. Disciplinary actions include in-school/out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, arrests and referrals to law enforcement ([National Education Association](#)).
- Policies support the integration of behavioral health services in schools to address underlying issues before they result in disciplinary actions.



13

## Are young learners demonstrating positive behavior?

### Why it matters



**Positive behavior:** Young learner’s school experience is more positive and productive when they have a sense of personal well-being established through stable, caring relationships in their early lives. Emotional health and social competence enable children to participate in learning and form good relationships with teachers and peers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Success in

school depends not only on academic skills, but also on the learning styles, habits and attitudes with which students approach learning ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Student behavior is a strong predictor of later outcomes and is a component of many early warning indicators, along with attendance and course grades ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

Positive behavior

Key source: Education-to-Workforce Framework

A decorative graphic consisting of four vertical bars of different colors: grey, green, blue, and yellow.

### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of children who often or very often exhibit positive social behaviors when interacting with their peers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of kindergarten students with moderate to serious difficulty following directions ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children who do not experience any of the following: in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, disciplinary use of restraint and seclusion, or expulsions ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).



# Early Experiences & Environments

Early experiences and environments, such as access to quality prenatal and neonatal care, are crucial for supporting the healthy development of babies, ensuring maternal health and equipping families with the knowledge and resources needed for a healthy start.



14

Do expecting parents have access to quality prenatal and neonatal care?

## Why it matters



**Quality prenatal care:** Early, comprehensive prenatal care improves the chances that a child will be born healthy. Prenatal care presents a critical opportunity to identify and treat maternal health conditions that threaten the birth of a healthy child. Mothers who receive good prenatal care are less likely to have preterm or low birthweight infants and are more likely to obtain regular pediatric care for their young children ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Having access to quality prenatal care supports the healthy development of babies and equips expectant parents with knowledge and resources

for a healthy pregnancy, how to care for a newborn and how to care for maternal and family's health postpartum ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Quality neonatal care:** All newborns should have access to essential newborn care, called neonatal care, which is critical for all babies in the first days after birth. This care includes delayed cord clamping, assessment of breathing, skin-to-skin contact and initiating breastfeeding ([World Health Organization](#)).

## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of births to women who receive late or no prenatal care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of births to women not receiving adequate prenatal care ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of births to women who receive early and ongoing prenatal care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#), [Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of children whose mother reports never breastfeeding ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of people who breastfeed their infants at 6 months of age ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 not up to date on immunizations ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Number of infant deaths per 1,000 births ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of infants born weighing at or over 5.5 pounds ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#), [Project Thrive, NCCP](#), [Urban Institute](#)).
- Share of low-weight births (Data source: National Center for Health Statistics) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Maternal/pregnancy-related death incidence (National Center for Health Statistics) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of pregnant people receiving WIC benefits with nutritional counseling (StriveTogether).
- Health care access and utilization, prenatal/maternal health and mental health ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Prevalence of maternal mental health conditions, screening coverage rates and access to mental health support services ([World Health Organization](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- MOMS Partnership Model: A program supporting maternal mental health for women facing economic hardship ([Yale School of Medicine - Child Study Center](#)).
- California Home Visiting Program: Gives parents the tools and know-how to independently raise their children ([California Home Visiting Program](#)).
- Family-friendly work environments that support breastfeeding mothers ([Best Place for Working Parents](#)).
- Group Prenatal Care: A model of care facilitated by a trained health care provider and delivered in a group setting. States can financially support Group Prenatal Care ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Community-based doulas: Specializing in culturally competent perinatal care, they provide families with support and knowledge ([Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- AVANCE Parent-Child Education Program (PCEP): Nine-month intensive bilingual program for child development ([Results for America](#)).
- Breastfeeding promotion programs: Provide education and information about breastfeeding to women throughout prenatal and postnatal care (Results for America).
- CenteringPregnancy: Group maternity care that

### System indicators

- Health care access and utilization of prenatal/perinatal health for pregnant people (StriveTogether).

provides health assessments, education and support to pregnant women ([Results for America](#)).

- Clinic-based programs for pregnant and parenting teens: Comprehensive programming focused on delivering medical and social services to new and expecting teen parents ([Results for America](#)).
- Criando con Amor: Promoviendo Armonía y Superación (CAPAS): Culturally-adapted program for Latine parents focused on reciprocity of positive interaction between parents and children ([Results for America](#)).
- Family Foundations: Education and skills-based program for first-time expectant parents ([Results for America](#)).
- Nurse-Family Partnership: Provides home visits by registered nurses to low-income first-time mothers ([Results for America](#)).
- ParentCorps: Early childhood, family-centered intervention that takes place in schools and Head Start programs ([Results for America](#)).
- Perinatal telehealth services ([Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Preschool with family support services: Combination of high-quality early childhood education, parent education and training programs, home visiting and other support services ([Results for America](#)).
- SafeCare: Skills-based parent training program for caregivers of young children ([Results for America](#)).
- Triple P – Positive Parenting Program: Offers families simple and practical strategies to help their children foster healthy relationships and manage behavior ([Results for America](#)).
- Offering varied staffing and delivery sites that are convenient and desirable to expecting parents: Many evidence-based supports are delivered by registered nurses or licensed social workers. Given the diversity of these supports, however, staffing structures can vary significantly. Delivery sites also vary, but most frequently include clients' homes, health clinics and high schools ([Results for America](#)).

- Hello Family's Prenatal and Newborn Resources and Support ([Hello Family Spartanburg](#)).

## Policies

- Health care access and utilization, prenatal/maternal health and mental health ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Group Prenatal Care: a model of care facilitated by a trained health care provider and delivered in a group setting. States can financially support Group Prenatal Care ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Perinatal telehealth services: Refers to the use of technology to deliver or enhance health care services in a remote setting ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Increasing access to high-quality health care and education ([Results for America](#)).
- Smart Start North Carolina: Comprehensive, statewide early childhood initiative providing communities with funding for educational child care, health care and family support services ([Results for America](#)).
- CT Department of Social Services' Husky Maternity Bundle ([CT Department of Social Services](#)).
- Medicaid extended postpartum coverage, part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, aims to improve maternal health, coverage stability and address racial disparities in maternal health ([KFF](#)).
- DC Paid Family Leave, which includes 2 weeks of prenatal leave for doctor's appointments needed during pregnancy, totaling up to 14 weeks of paid leave for pregnant persons ([DC Paid Family Leave](#)).
- Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, which is a federal-state partnership to improve maternal and child ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)).
- Creating parenting support and education programs for expecting families, including programs that focus on prenatal care ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Creating targeted supports for vulnerable groups, such as teenage parents ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Establishing home visiting programs for first-time parents ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving access to healthy food, including by creating fruit and vegetable incentive programs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving access to prenatal care, including by expanding the use of birth centers ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Promoting awareness of existing programs, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) ([Urban Institute](#)).



15

## Do families live in well-resourced neighborhoods?

### Why it matters



**Well-resourced neighborhoods:** Students and families in lower-income neighborhoods have limited access to resources and opportunities that promote economic mobility. The size of the middle class in an area is associated with levels of upward mobility. Moving to a lower-poverty area before age 13 improves the likelihood of students eventually attending college and earning more as adults. Economic segregation varies by race, with a higher percentage of Black and Latine people from low-income households living in low-income communities compared to white people from similar economic backgrounds ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**Affordable housing:** A lack of affordable housing leads to material hardships like reduced access to food, clothing, medicine and transportation, while also negatively impacting mental and physical health, such as increased depression among tenants behind on rent and developmental delays in children living in poor housing conditions.

This issue is also linked to higher eviction rates, disproportionately affecting families in low-income households, women and people of color ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

**Well-resourced neighborhoods and family well-being:** A well-resourced neighborhood, in contrast, has affordable housing in safe communities, diversity of income and demographics, access to technology, transportation and other resources that help families thrive. Affordable, stable and safe housing is foundational to individual and family well-being. Children who grow up in safe and stable housing are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn, succeed in elementary and middle school and graduate from high school. Adults living in stable housing are more likely to complete postsecondary training and obtain and keep high-quality employment. And individuals with lower incomes living in mixed-income neighborhoods tend to experience better outcomes at all life stages ([Results for America](#)).





## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of residential units that are unoccupied, or vacant, in a given year, disaggregated by rentals and homeownership ([US Census Bureau](#)).
- Average age of housing stock, which helps communities isolate potential issues, like exposure to asbestos and/or lead paint and connect people to resources ([US Census Bureau, American Community Survey](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 living in crowded households ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Number of times a student changes schools between kindergarten and fourth grade ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Number of children enrolled in grades K-3 who experience homelessness or are doubled up with family members or friends ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Number of children under age 6 receiving emergency housing services ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Student mobility rate ([Promise Neighborhoods; The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).
- Students experiencing housing instability and changing schools as a result (Data sources: Local SEA, LEA or school records or analysis) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Number of students experiencing housing instability that requires changing schools ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Number of students who experience homelessness during the school year ([StriveTogether 2021](#) and [Urban Institute](#)).
- 6 paying more than 30% of their income for housing (rent or mortgage plus heat and utilities) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#) and [StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percent of household income spent on rent ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Number of affordable and available housing units per 100 households with low, very low, and extremely low incomes. This metric reflects the extent of housing options for households with low incomes. Housing is considered affordable when monthly costs fall at or below 30 percent of a household's income ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Location affordability index ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Eviction rate ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Environmental racism, as measured by air quality index ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Environmental racism, as measured by environmental health hazards ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Level of public investment in neighborhoods as measured through programs like Opportunity Zones, Community Development Blocks and tax credits (StriveTogether).
- Share of people experiencing poverty who live in high-poverty neighborhoods. A high-poverty neighborhood is where more than 40% of residents are experiencing poverty. This metric reflects the extent of economic segregation in a community ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Balancing resident needs with inspector capacity ([Results for America](#)).
- Healthy home environment assessments: Professional home inspections evaluating environmental health risks ([Results for America](#)).
- Proactive inspections to help maintain safe and healthy housing. The foundation of

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of families with children under age

many effective programs is a more strategic deployment of a jurisdiction's home inspection capacity. Oftentimes, this includes using data analysis to identify high-risk blocks or neighborhoods and then sending inspectors to walk those areas, conduct visual exterior assessments, speak to residents and schedule proactive inspections ([Results for America](#)).

- Raising tenant and landlord awareness about maintaining safe and healthy housing. Many successful programs include a robust education component — often run by inspectors — to help landlords and tenants identify home hazards and other threats to home safety. This can include written materials, videos and public workshops (for instance, walking through a home to demonstrate an inspection). Such efforts also often include information on how to request a home inspection ([Results for America](#)).
- Guided play through playscapes, like Play on Purpose sites that encourage children and adults to engage in “guided play” ([Results for America](#)).

## Policies

- Housing rehabilitation loan and grant programs: Funding in the form of loans and/or grants to income-eligible owner-occupants to assist with repair, rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of homes ([Results for America](#)).
- To ensure property owners have the financial capacity to address home hazards, some programs provide income-eligible property owners with grants and/or loans to assist with repair, rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of homes. Funding is often tied to specific forms of home improvement, such as insulation, plumbing or mold removal ([Results for America](#)).
- Lead paint abatement programs: Programs focused on removing lead-based and contaminated surfaces from homes and other buildings ([Results for America](#)).
- Percentage of eligible households receiving federal rental assistance ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Ratio of the number of affordable housing units to the number of households with low and very low incomes in an area (by city or county). Housing units are defined as affordable if the monthly costs do not exceed 30% of a household's income. Households with low incomes are defined as those earning below 80% of area median income (AMI), and very low-income households are defined as those earning below 50 percent of AMI ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Adopting rent regulation, eviction prevention, just-cause eviction and right-to-counsel policies to protect tenants ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Balancing community development with creating opportunities for residents with low incomes to move to more resource-rich communities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating affordable homeownership opportunities, including by providing down payment or closing-cost assistance and expanding access to financing, such as through the use of subsidized or shared appreciation ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating more dedicated affordable housing, including by subsidizing affordable housing development, establishing incentives for developers to create affordable units (e.g., density bonuses) and exploring ways to build affordable housing on publicly-owned land ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating permanent supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Enacting foreclosure prevention, property tax relief and rehabilitation assistance programs to assist homeowners ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Enforcing fair housing laws ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Expanding affordable housing in resource-rich neighborhoods ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Increasing the overall housing supply, including by reforming zoning and land-use policies, streamlining permitting processes and creating incentives for developers to build new housing ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Preserving subsidized and unsubsidized affordable rental housing ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Providing rental assistance to residents and incentivizing landlords to rent to tenants receiving assistance ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reforming property taxes and property assessment processes to ensure that they do not

disproportionately burden residents with low incomes ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Supporting community development in high-poverty neighborhoods, including by addressing vacancy and blight; and investing in schools,

transportation and job creation ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Supporting permanently affordable housing models, such as community land trusts ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Access to high-speed broadband internet

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Number and percent of students who have school and home access to broadband internet and a connected computing device ([Promise Neighborhoods: The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Access to internet and computer/devices and technical support ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of the community that has access to a desktop or laptop, a smartphone, a tablet or another computer (Data source: American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of households that have broadband internet subscriptions (Data source: American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Residential fixed broadband deployment (Data source: Federal Communications Commission) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of individuals who have both (1) access to at least one desktop or laptop computer owned by someone in the home and (2) reliable broadband internet ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Share of households with a computer and broadband internet subscription in the home. This metric reflects a community's digital divide by measuring in-home access to a computer and the internet, including DSL, cable modem, cellular data and fiber connections ([Urban Institute](#)).
- State has a broadband task force/commission to promote broadband access ([National Council of State Legislatures](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Local and state coalitions who advocate for access to broadband with city and state officials and by partnering with telecommunications companies ([National Council of State Legislatures](#)).
- Addressing financial barriers to home broadband internet access, including by providing direct cash transfers or subsidies for the costs of broadband service and devices, such as laptops, tablets and phones ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Addressing physical barriers to home broadband internet access, such as the lack of appropriate infrastructure or wiring ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating free, public options for accessing the internet, including by providing Wi-Fi in public, accessible spaces like libraries ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Providing digital literacy training for residents, particularly underserved residents, to close the digital divide ([Urban Institute](#)).

### Policies

- State subsidizes broadband subscriptions for families with limited incomes ([FCC](#)).<sup>4</sup>
- Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Offers broadband infrastructure and digital equity grants ([Connected Nation](#)).
- [Smart Cities](#) policies and resources.

<sup>4</sup>Federal funding for this program has ended but we chose to include it so that communities see what federal programs can look like.



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Distance to school and average student travel time ([Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework, 2017](#)).
- Average commute time to work, school or college ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Average travel time to school (Data sources: Local SEA, LEA or school records or analysis) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Average travel time to work (Data sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology; American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of workers who commute by walking and by biking (Data sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology; American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Trips made to work by mass transit (Data sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology; American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Access to mass transit departure and arrival points ([Measuring Accessibility](#)).
- Share of income spent on transportation. This metric reflects how much households spend on both public transit and cars ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Transit trips index. This metric reflects a community's access to public transportation. It is percentile-ranked nationally based on the number of public transit trips taken annually by an average household earning 80% of the area median income ([Urban Institute](#)).
- The Low Transportation Cost Index, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Complete Streets approach to ensure the design of streets balance the needs of different modes of transportation, support local land uses, economies, cultures and natural environments ([Smart Growth America](#)).

### Policies

- Complete Streets policies ([Smart Growth America](#)).
- Availability of public transportation subsidies for students (Data sources: Local SEA, LEA or school records or analysis) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Affordable housing within walking distance from public transportation (Data source: Center for Neighborhood Technology) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Transit connectivity index (Data source: Center for Neighborhood Technology) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Encouraging housing development near transit, including affordable housing and housing for people with disabilities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Expanding transportation options, including public transportation, such as buses and light rails, and active transportation, such as bike lanes and sidewalks ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving the quality and frequency of public transportation ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving transportation accessibility for people with mobility challenges, including by creating paratransit systems and ensuring existing transit is accessible to people with disabilities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reducing barriers to using public transportation, including by providing fare subsidies, making systems easy to navigate (e.g., having clear signage and route maps in multiple languages), and centralizing fares across different modes of transportation ([Urban Institute](#)).



## Indicators

### System indicators

- Juvenile arrests per 100,000 juveniles. High number of arrests among young people, ages 10 to 17, is a strong indicator of elevated criminal legal system involvement and over policing. This metric includes arrests for any crime or status offense ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Minimizing the use of over-policing strategies, including stop-and-frisk, pretextual and non-safety-related traffic stops and “broken windows” policing ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Shifting funding from police departments to other local agencies where appropriate, such as funding programs in schools to address truancy instead of relying on police officers to enforce truancy laws ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Creating community responder or co-responder programs for nonviolent emergencies, such as mental health or behavioral crises, domestic disputes, traffic safety issues and homelessness ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating diversion programs and other alternatives to arrest, trial and incarceration ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving police officer recruitment, retention and training, as well as addressing officer wellness ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Shifting toward evidence-based policing, in partnership with communities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Supporting greater police accountability, including by publishing data on police misconduct and use of force, advocating for the reform of qualified immunity and creating civilian oversight boards that operate independently of law enforcement agencies ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Exposure to neighborhood crime

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Number and percentage of students who feel safe at school and traveling to and from school, as measured by a school climate survey ([Promise Neighborhoods: The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#))
- Proportion of children with a parent or guardian who has served time in jail (Data source: Health Resources and Services Administration) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Rates of reported violent crime and property crime (Data source: Federal Bureau of Investigation) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)) ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Rate of juvenile arrests by city or county (number of arrests per 100,000 residents) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Rate of juvenile justice arrests (Data source: Federal Bureau of Investigation) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Rate of violent felonies and property felonies by city or county (number of incidents per

100,000 residents) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

- Creating reentry supports for those recently released from jail or prison ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Implementing restorative justice approaches, which can help reduce recidivism ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving neighborhoods by redeveloping vacant or abandoned properties, installing street lighting and supporting community development activities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving residents' financial security, including by strengthening the social safety net and

reducing obstacles to accessing public benefits ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Preventing gun violence by limiting access to firearms and raising awareness of gun safety best practices ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Promoting community-led violence prevention initiatives, which identify residents at highest risk and intervene before conflict occurs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Shifting toward evidence-based policing, in partnership with communities ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Neighborhood economic diversity

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of children under age 6 living in neighborhoods in which more than 20% of the population lives in poverty ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

#### System indicators

- Percentage of city or county residents experiencing poverty who live in a high-poverty neighborhood (defined as a neighborhood in which more than 40% of residents experience poverty) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of families who have lived in poverty for two generations or more ([Brookings Institute](#)).

## Neighborhood racial diversity

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### System indicators

- Neighborhood exposure index, or share of a person's neighbors who are people of other races and ethnicities (Data source: American Community Survey) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of an individual's neighbors who are members of other racial or ethnic groups, calculated as a Neighborhood Exposure Index ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Proportion of community residents who are immigrants (Data source: National Equity Atlas) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).

- Ratio of the share of local elected officials of a racial or ethnic group to the share of residents of the same racial or ethnic group (Data sources: American Community Survey; local elections data) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Share of the voting-eligible population who are registered to vote and share who turn out to vote (Data source: Census) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Index of people's exposure to neighbors of different races and ethnicities. Racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods are hallmarks of inclusive communities. This metric calculates separately for each racial or ethnic group the average share of that group's neighbors who

are members of other racial or ethnic groups ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Narrowing racial homeownership gaps, including by creating affordable homeownership opportunities for households

of color ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Reducing housing discrimination in the private market, including by enacting source-of-income laws and funding fair housing organizations ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reforming zoning policies to allow for more diverse, high-density, mixed-income communities ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Political participation and representation

## Indicators

### System indicators

- Ratio of the share of local, elected officials of a racial or ethnic group to the share of residents of the same group. Political scientists commonly use this metric to capture the extent to which racial and ethnic groups are represented by their community's elected leaders ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Share of the voting-age population who turns out to vote. Voter turnout is a well-established and broadly available reflection of political engagement in a community ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Restoring voting rights to formerly incarcerated people ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Scheduling local elections to coincide with state or national elections, which can lead to a more representative electorate ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Scheduling local elections to coincide with state or national elections ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Strengthening and diversifying the local government workforce, including by investing in hiring, recruitment, training and compensation ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Strengthening civics education courses in schools ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Supporting labor unions and the right to organize ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Switching from at-large to district elections, adopting proportional representation systems and moving to choice voting or cumulative voting systems to make local governments more representative of their constituents ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Policies

- Adopting direct democracy practices, such as participatory budgeting, to empower community members and encourage them to participate in local governance ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating public financing systems for local elections ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reducing barriers to voting, including by automatically registering voters, expanding the number of voting sites and their voting hours and offering additional options, such as mail-in, early and absentee voting ([Urban Institute](#)).

### Indicators

#### System indicators

- Economic connectedness index. This metric reflects the extent to which people with low socioeconomic status and people with high socioeconomic status are friends, as measured through connections on Facebook ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Number of community membership associations per 10,000 people. Membership associations provide opportunities for people to form robust social networks in a community ([Urban Institute](#)).

### Practices and policies

#### Policies

- Creating and maintaining parks and other public spaces such as libraries that give residents the opportunity to interact with one another ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Encouraging the formation of neighborhood associations ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Encouraging socialization across socioeconomic groups, including by designing public spaces intentionally and fostering connections across neighborhoods ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Promoting civic engagement and participation, including by creating connections between neighborhood residents and city leaders ([Urban Institute](#)).

### Indicators

#### System indicators

- Air quality. Carcinogenic, respiratory and neurological toxins in the air can harm people's health. A higher value for this metric indicates better air quality and lower exposure to toxins ([Urban Institute](#)).

### Practices and policies

#### Policies

- Addressing home health hazards, such as lead paint and pipes, to foster safe and healthy home environments ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Developing parks and other green spaces to absorb carbon and improve air quality ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving the quality and frequency of public transportation and encouraging housing development near transit to reduce reliance on personal vehicles ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Incentivizing private-sector actors to reduce their carbon footprints, including by leveraging government procurement and contracting procedures ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Investing in green infrastructure, such as permeable pavements, that can help mitigate exposure to environmental stressors like extreme heat ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reducing the carbon footprint of all public-sector operations, including by transitioning to clean energy sources, electrifying bus and vehicle fleets, retrofitting city-owned buildings and implementing other energy efficiency measures ([Urban Institute](#)).





# 16

## Do families with young children have access to public support?

### Why it matters



**Access to public support:** Families with young children need access to support, especially those facing economic challenges and the persistent effects of racial inequities. Supports include employment services, access to health care, child care subsidies and income support programs.

**Access to child care subsidies:** Families rely on child care to be able to work and provide the early education experiences needed to prepare their children for school. The high cost of child care puts quality care and early education out of reach for many families, particularly families experiencing poverty. Access to child care subsidies helps families afford higher-quality child care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Family economic stability:** Poverty experienced during early childhood can have negative effects on children's health and development. On average, children experiencing poverty between the ages of 2 and 5 have significantly lower scores on intelligence and verbal tests than other children. They are more likely to experience behavioral problems that affect their learning and are less likely to be ready for school due to the lack of economic resources in the family. Social factors associated with poverty, such as low parental education, teen parenting and lack of community resources are significant obstacles for young learners and their families to overcome ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Food security:** Food security and access to healthy food are related to improved health, emotional well-being and social functioning. Food insecurity is correlated with a host of negative outcomes, including gaps in children's development. Marginalized populations are more likely to experience food insecurity. For example, food insecurity in Black and Latine households is twice the rate as that in white households. Families experiencing or close to poverty are more likely to be food insecure and have access to less nutritious food. Although participation in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reduces the prevalence of very low food insecurity by about one-third, not all eligible individuals enroll in this program ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)). ■■■

**Health insurance coverage:** Children and families with health insurance are more likely to access primary health care services that can prevent health problems or address existing chronic or acute health conditions. Lack of health insurance can affect a child's school attendance and ability to participate in school activities. Lack of health care or delays in treating children's health problems can negatively affect cognitive, emotional, behavioral and physical development ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Income support programs:** Research shows that although income supports, such as WIC, health

insurance, food stamps and child care subsidies do not increase a family's cash income, they do provide real economic resources to families and greatly enhance quality of life. Income support programs increase the chances that young children

will have food, housing and health insurance, and that their families can maintain jobs and enroll children in high-quality early education programs ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

## Access to child care subsidies

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Children under age 6 receiving child care subsidies ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of eligible children under age 6 receiving child care subsidies ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

#### System indicators

- Percentage of eligible families receiving assistance to pay for child care through subsidies ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

### Practices

#### Practices

- Governance structures established, like Children's Cabinets, to promote collaboration across state agencies and improve the well-being of children ([National Governors Association](#)).

## Family economic stability (e.g., poverty levels)

### Indicators

#### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of eligible units with children under age 18 not receiving SNAP (Desired outcome: Families have access to necessary services through expanded eligibility, reduced administrative burden or programs to identify needs and connect families with services) ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- CalWORKS status: California's work opportunity program that provides temporary financial assistance and employment-focused services to families with children who are minors whose income and property are below state maximum limits for their family size ([California](#)

[Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).

- Percentage of children under age 3 without any full-time working parent ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Medi-Cal status: California's Medicare health care program ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Proportion of K-12 socioeconomically disadvantaged students ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 in poverty ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

- Children from birth to age 6 living in families with income below the poverty threshold (Project THRIVE, The National Center for Children in Poverty, [Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Children from birth to age 6 living in extreme poverty (i.e., family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty level) ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).

## System Indicators

- Family income level ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Household income at 20th, 50th and 80th percentiles. This metric captures the financial resources available to low-, middle-, and high-income households and the extent of income inequality in a community. Larger gaps between values for the three income groups indicate greater inequities ([StriveTogether 2021](#) and [Urban Institute](#)).
- People with overdue debt typically have few assets or negative wealth ([StriveTogether 2021](#) and [Urban Institute](#)).
- Household income and incarceration for children from low-income households ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Income segregation and intergenerational mobility across colleges ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Pay on an average job compared with the cost of living. This metric reflects the supply of jobs in a community that pay enough to meet the local cost of a family's basic needs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Ratio of the share of total home values owned by a racial or ethnic group to the share of households of the same group. This metric shows the degree of racial and ethnic disparity in housing wealth. The larger the difference between the two values, the greater the inequities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Share of adults in the community ages 25 to 54

who are employed. This is a common metric for measuring employment levels among prime-age workers, also known as the employment-to-population ratio ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Households that have at least \$400 in emergency savings ([The Federal Reserve Bank](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Fair work scheduling ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

### Policies

- Child allowance ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Income support programs ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Paid family leave ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Paid sick leave ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- State earned income tax credit ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- State minimum wage ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Two-generation programs for parental employment ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- State child tax credits that are fully refundable ([IRS](#)).
- Adopting community wealth-building strategies, such as establishing a public bank, supporting cooperatives and worker-owned businesses, implementing progressive procurement policies and supporting community land trusts and other models of collective ownership ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Establish baby bonds, publicly-funded child trust accounts designed to address racial/ethnic wealth inequality ([Prosperity Now](#)).

- Creating a local living-wage ordinance that requires employers to pay wages higher than the federal minimum wage ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating programs that allow renters to earn equity through their rent payments and share in the long-term appreciation of their homes ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating workforce development programs that support workers in reskilling and upskilling, such as public-sector apprenticeships ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating matched savings accounts for residents with low and moderate wealth ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Establishing a local reparations program to make amends for historical harms and address the structural roots of ongoing wealth disparities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Helping families with low and moderate incomes overcome barriers to homeownership, such as by providing down payment assistance ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Helping parents access high-quality and affordable child care ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Helping residents access financial services and build credit safely, including by regulating predatory lending practices, such as payday loans ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Increasing wages for local government workers ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Investing in infrastructure and other amenities (e.g., roads, public transit, parks and schools), which both creates jobs and enhances longer-term employment opportunities for residents ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Investing in baby bonds and other child development accounts ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Investing in job placement services and supports to help residents find stable jobs, including transitional and reentry support programs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Leveraging public procurement processes to incentivize employers to pay living wages ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Partnering with large community-serving institutions, such as universities and hospitals, to funnel capital and resources toward improving local communities ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Prioritizing job quality in addition to wages, such as by supporting employee-owned businesses, integrating job-quality requirements in local government contracts and recognizing “high road” employers that pay living wages and provide other elements of high-quality jobs, such as paid leave, workplace flexibility and stable scheduling ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Providing local entrepreneurs and small-business owners with the support they need to succeed, including capital and technical assistance ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Providing direct cash transfers to residents, such as through guaranteed income programs or local tax credits ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Providing financial education and counseling services to residents ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Reforming government fines and fees, which disproportionately affect residents with low incomes and wealth ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Strengthening and diversifying the local government workforce, including by investing in recruitment, training and retention ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Strengthening the social safety net and reducing obstacles to accessing public benefits, such as asset limits ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Supporting existing employers, particularly locally-owned businesses, to grow and thrive ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Supporting residents in accessing and completing postsecondary education ([Urban Institute](#)).





## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of eligible units with children under age 18 not receiving SNAP ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of households reporting child food insecurity ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Number and percent of children who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily ([Promise Neighborhoods; The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).
- Percentage of eligible individuals receiving WIC benefits ([U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Security Survey Module ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Proportion of eligible students participating in the School Breakfast Program (Data source: U.S. Department of Agriculture) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Proportion of households experiencing food insecurity (Data sources: Census, Child Protective Services) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Percentage of eligible individuals participating in SNAP ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of individuals living in a census tract with low access to healthy food, as defined by the USDA's Food Access Research Atlas ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of individuals with high or marginal food security, as measured by the
- States expand access to WIC benefits (e.g., increasing income threshold, extending benefits for postpartum people).
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): Allows educational programs in eligible low-income areas to serve a free meal and/or snack to students 18 and younger ([No Kid Hungry](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Reduced Administrative Burden for SNAP ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

### Policies



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Children under age 6 without health insurance ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 6 without health insurance ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of uninsured women with low income ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of children with untreated tooth decay ([North Carolina Early Learning Foundation](#)).
- Percentage of children who have seen a dentist in the past year ([North Carolina Early Learning Foundation](#)).
- Percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving regular well-child visits ([North Carolina Early Learning Foundation](#)).

## System indicators

- Percentage of adults who rate their general health as excellent (Data source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) ([StriveTogether 2021](#)).
- Percentage of eligible individuals (children or adults) enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of individuals with health insurance ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Number of people per primary care physician. Primary care providers play central roles in the provision of health services. A lower number of residents per physician suggests better access to essential health services in a community ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Availability of pediatricians, family physicians and dentists (particularly those who accept Medicaid) ([North Carolina Early Learning Foundation](#)).
- Percentage of parents screened for depression at child well-visits, identified with depression, referred for services and receiving services for depression ([North Carolina Early Learning Foundation](#)).
- accessing health services, including by offering patients transportation to health care and alternative treatment options, such as virtual visits, mobile clinics, or school-based health centers. ([Urban Institute](#))
- Creating programs that assist residents in obtaining health insurance, navigating care, and improving their health literacy. ([Urban Institute](#))
- Expanding the number of federally qualified health centers, which can provide lower-cost care to underserved residents. ([Urban Institute](#))
- Improving access to reproductive health care. ([Urban Institute](#))
- Increasing access to mental health services, including substance use treatment and prevention. ([Urban Institute](#))
- Investing in building a high-quality, culturally competent pipeline of health workers, including by providing financial incentives to encourage health professionals to serve in rural or otherwise underserved areas and expanding the number of community health workers. ([Urban Institute](#))

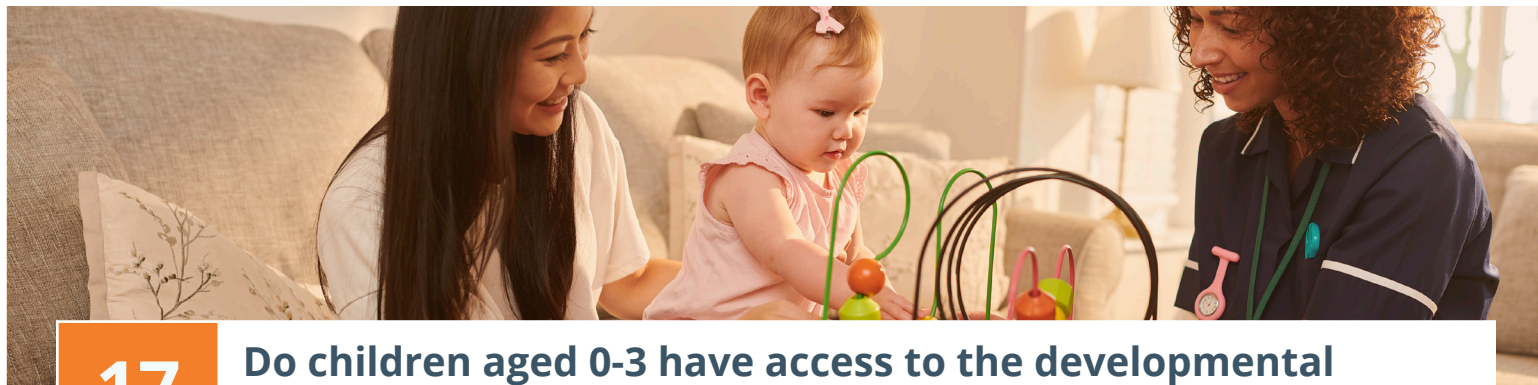
## Practices and policies

### Practices

- State applies the broadest possible enrollment and reimbursement criteria for in-school Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medicaid programs. ([National Education Association](#)).
- State ensures the broadest possible enrollment for eligible children in CHIP and Medicaid. ([National Education Association](#))
- State has implemented streamlined procedures to facilitate enrollment in CHIP and Medicaid. ([National Education Association](#))
- Addressing barriers that prevent residents from

### Policies

- Expanded income eligibility for health insurance ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Health insurance ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).



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## Do children aged 0-3 have access to the developmental resources they need?

### Why it matters



**Family reading to young children:** Young children who are read to regularly by caregivers develop better early literacy skills, are better readers when they reach elementary school and are more likely to succeed in school. Reading to young children helps to develop imagination, creativity, vocabulary and early literacy skills. Children who are read to on a regular basis and who have books in the home are more likely to enjoy books and to read on their own ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Parent involvement in early care and education programs:** Parent involvement in early care and education settings benefits children, families and programs. Parents become more knowledgeable about their children's development and are more able to continue the learning process at home. Families can receive support and referrals if additional resources are needed. Programs that incorporate parent input and involvement on a regular basis are more likely to improve child and family outcomes ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Children in foster care:** Children need stability, permanency and safety in order to thrive. All children, but especially young children in the process of establishing trust with adults, require a safe and stable home and nurturing, permanent relationships. Long-term stays in temporary out-of-home placement can negatively affect children, causing emotional, behavioral and educational

problems ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Mother's education level:** Higher levels of maternal education are associated with better school readiness among young children, better health throughout childhood and adolescence, and an increased likelihood of finishing high school and going to college. Higher education levels of parents contribute to a more supportive home learning environment and more involvement in the child's school ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Teenage parenthood:** Children born to teen parents are more likely to be born low birthweight, suffer poor health, experience behavior problems and have limited language and literacy skills. Teen parents are less likely to have the financial resources, social support and parenting skills needed for healthy child development ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Child abuse and neglect:** Children who have been neglected or abused are more likely to have cognitive and emotional problems. Abuse and neglect are strongly linked with many negative outcomes for children including poor school performance, frequent grade retention, juvenile delinquency and teenage pregnancy. Children are most at risk of maltreatment if their families are overwhelmed by multiple problems such as inadequate income, lack of a job, inadequate

housing, emotional stress, drug or alcohol abuse, mental illness or domestic violence ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Lead poisoning:** Young children with elevated blood lead levels are more likely to have a lowered IQ and behavioral challenges, resulting in academic struggles, need for special education services and increased risk of juvenile delinquency. Lead exposure is a significant problem in poor and urban communities. The lack of affordable housing forces many families experiencing poverty to live in older dwellings with deteriorating lead paint, placing children at risk for exposure to lead-based paint chips and lead-contaminated dust and soil ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Maternal depression:** Young children with depressed mothers are more likely than other children to demonstrate social-emotional and behavior problems, difficulties in school, trouble with self-control, poor peer relationships and aggression. Parents who are depressed experience feelings of sadness, stress, inability to sleep and other symptoms that can compromise their ability to parent their children effectively. Mothers suffering from depression are less likely to interact with, play with or read to their children ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Physical well-being and motor development:** Healthy children are more able to engage in the

full range of life experiences that promote early learning. Children's motor skills and coordination have an important influence on their cognitive and social-emotional development, as well as their academic achievement ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

**Early intervention screening:** Access to developmental screening and assessment throughout infancy and early childhood is critical in order to identify problems early and provide appropriate intervention. A comprehensive developmental assessment that addresses all domains of child development (physical health and motor development, speech and language, social-emotional, cognitive and approaches to learning) is an important component of well-child care for infants, toddlers and preschoolers ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Without appropriate support in the early years, children with special educational needs are less likely to be ready for school and are at higher risk for poor educational outcomes. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C, each state has an Early Intervention program that provides services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)). Participation in Early Intervention services can improve children's cognitive, motor, behavioral and language development, especially for infants born preterm or at a low birth weight, for whom the most rigorous research exists ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

## Childhood experiences

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Children from birth to age 3 with substantiated cases of abuse and neglect referred to Part C Early Intervention (based on CAPTA) ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 6 with blood lead levels at or above 10 micrograms per

deciliter ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

- Maltreatment rate per 1,000 children under age 3 ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Physical, sexual and emotional abuse in childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Emotional and physical neglect in childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Children living with a family member with mental health or substance use disorders



([Head Start ECLKC](#)).

- Witnessing domestic violence in childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Sudden separation from a loved one in childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Childhood poverty ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Racism and discrimination in childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).
- Violence in the community during childhood ([Head Start ECLKC](#)).

### Systems indicators

- Rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect among children from birth to age 6 ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Deaths caused by injury per 100,000 people. These deaths both reflect and cause trauma in a community. They include planned deaths (e.g., homicides or suicides) and unplanned deaths (e.g., from motor vehicle and other accidents) ([Urban Institute](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Lead paint inspection and abatement ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of individuals with fewer than three adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Lena Early Talk “Pedometer”: A tech-enabled device that measures the quality of interactions between children and adults to deepen early language exposure and development ([LENA](#)).

### Policies

- Creating programs to educate parents and families on children’s health, development and care needs ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Creating targeted supports for vulnerable

groups, including children and young people — particularly those in foster care and those returning from juvenile detention — and survivors of domestic or intimate partner violence ([Urban Institute](#)).

- Fostering positive learning environments for students, including by developing programs that prevent bullying, moving away from punitive disciplinary practices and applying other trauma-informed practices ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Improving traffic safety by implementing calming measures, building complete streets and creating safer environments for pedestrians and bicyclists ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Increasing access to mental health services, including substance use treatment and prevention ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Preventing gun violence by limiting access to firearms, keeping guns out of schools and raising awareness of gun safety best practices ([Urban Institute](#)).
- Strengthening workplace safety regulations and creating paid sick leave and predictable scheduling laws to enhance worker well-being ([Urban Institute](#)).
- The First 1,000 Days on Medicaid: A program under NYC’s Medicaid Redesign effort that aims to improve the physical, social and emotional needs of children and their families ([NYC Department of Health](#)).

# Indicators

## Contributing indicators

- Percentage of births to mothers with less than a 12th grade education ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Children from birth to age 6 in out-of-home placement (foster care) that had no more than two placements in a 24-month period ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Births to teens ages 15-17 per 1,000 girls ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Childhood Migrant Education Program participant ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 not nurtured daily ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 not read to daily ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Children enrolled in multiple elementary schools ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Percentage of children ages 3 to 5 who were read to by a family member every day in the past week ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of infants and toddlers (ages 4 months to 35 months) who were read to by their caregivers every day in the last week ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Number and percentage of caregivers that read to or encourage their children to read three or more times a week (from birth to age 5) or who reported their child read to themselves three or more times a week (kindergarten through eighth grade) ([Promise Neighborhoods; The Urban Institute, prepared for U.S. Department Of Education](#)).
- Foster youth status ([California Department of](#)

[Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).

- Percentage of kindergartners with parents considered at risk for depression ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of mothers experiencing depression (of all mothers with young children) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 whose mother reports fair/poor mental health ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 whose parent reports they are not coping very well ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 whose parent lacks parenting support ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

## Systems indicators

- Number of births to teens ages 15-17 per 1,000 girls ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Mothers of children under age 6 who are screened and referred for depression ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of early care and education programs with multiple strategies to involve and support parents ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

# Practices and policies

## Practices

- AVANCE Parent-Child Education Program (PCEP): Nine-month intensive bilingual program for child development ([Results for America](#)).
- Triple P Spartanburg (Positive Parenting Program): Free services to help develop parenting skills and understanding of child development ([Triple P Spartanburg](#)).
- Hello Family Spartanburg: Parent support and education initiative ([Hello Family Spartanburg](#)).

- Child-Parent Centers: Preschool program prioritizing family engagement for children and families experiencing poverty ([Results for America](#)).
- ParentCorps: Early childhood, family-centered intervention that takes place in schools and Head Start programs ([Results for America](#)).

- Evidence-based home visiting programs ([Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

## Policies

- Alliance for Early Success: A 50-state strategy to achieve equitable state early childhood policy ([Alliance for Early Success](#)).

## Cognitive, physical development and well-being

Key source: *Education-to-Workforce Framework*



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of children with age-appropriate fine motor skills ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds with age-appropriate skills and behaviors (in each of the five domains of child development) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 3 not receiving developmental screenings ([Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Percentage of students in K-12 meeting benchmarks on self-rated surveys of physical health, such as the California Healthy Kids Survey Physical Health & Nutrition module ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Perceptual, motor and physical development indicator ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Parents report child exhibits bedtime resistance behaviors that interfere with child's sleep quality (e.g., needing parent in the room to sleep) ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child exhibits sleep onset delay (e.g., greater than 20 minutes) that interferes with child's sleep quality ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child sleeps for the right amount of time each night ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child experiences anxiety around sleep (e.g., sleeping in the dark, sleeping

alone) ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).

- Parents report child experiences night wakings ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child experiences parasomnias (e.g., behaviors like bed wetting, sleep walking, teeth grinding and sleep talking that interrupt sleep) ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child experiences sleep disordered breathing (e.g., snoring, gasping, stopping breathing) ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Parents report child experiences daytime sleepiness ([Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire](#)).
- Sparkler: Mobile app that helps parents check in on how their child is doing against key milestones with aligned activities ([Connecticut Office of Early Childhood](#)).
- My Family Bridge: An umbrella of programs to help parents empower themselves as their children's first teacher ([My Family Bridge](#)).
- Vroom: An app that helps parents boost their child's learning during the time they already spend together ([Vroom](#)).

## Policies

### Policies

- Comprehensive screening and connection programs ([Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center](#)).
- Alliance for Early Success: A 50-state strategy to achieve equitable state early childhood policy ([Alliance for Early Success](#)).



## Indicators

### Contributing indicators

- Percentage of children with age-appropriate fChildren with undetected developmental delays or chronic health problems at kindergarten entrance ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children birth to age 3 who receive Part C Early Intervention Services ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Intensive, individualized support for students off track on early warning indicators ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percent of toddlers (ages 13 to 36 months) who receive at least one EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment) periodic screen in a year ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Children under 6 receiving developmental and mental health screenings ([Project Thrive, NCCP](#)).
- Percentage of infants and toddlers with developmentally-appropriate skills and behaviors (in each of the five domains of child development) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children from birth to age 3 in the care of the state child welfare system who received a developmental assessment through Early Intervention (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children under age 6 with a comprehensive developmental screening within the previous year ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Desired Results Developmental Profile© scores ([California Department of Education & WestEd, Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions](#)).
- Percentage of children who have undergone developmental and comprehensive child health screenings ([National Education Association](#)).
- Percentage of kindergarten children enrolled in special education who were not previously

enrolled in Early Intervention (Part C) or preschool special education services ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).

- Percentage of children from focal populations who are screened for learning accommodations ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations who have an identified need for a learning accommodation ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children from focal populations with identified health or developmental concerns as identified by a developmental screening tool ([STEP Forward with Data Framework](#)).

### System indicators

- Early and appropriate intervention for children with special needs ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Percentage of children needing special education services in kindergarten who were not identified and connected to services before kindergarten ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).
- Percentage of children with identified concerns who are connected to services ([Education-to-Workforce Framework](#)).

## Practices and policies

### Practices

- Developmental screenings as a routine part of well-child care ([Rhode Island Kids Count](#)).
- Early intervention services ([Prenatal to 3 Policy Impact Center](#)).

### Policies

- State requires that all school-age children undergo developmental and comprehensive child health screenings (e.g., ear, oral, vision) ([National Education Association](#)).







# Appendix

## A. Design principles

Based on interviews with network members and conversations with StriveTogether staff, the following design principles were used to guide the writing of this playbook.

- **Expand depth and breadth:** Expand on existing frameworking by including indicators from multiple domains.
- **Universal navigation:** The playbook will be a tool for all audiences, Cradle to Career Network members, their communities and any organization working to improve cradle-to-career outcomes. Organize the playbook in an accessible way, using flags/tags and including detailed research in the appendix.
- **Honor local context:** Organizations work closely with their communities to identify and pursue solutions that they believe will work. We will create the playbook as a way to enhance the hyper-local process communities use. This means referencing the community-centered planning processes, which starts by consulting the community and letting community voices lead the planning process. The playbook will likely be part of the second or third step, but not necessarily the first.
- **Speak the language:** Align to StriveTogether language but no jargon.
  - › Make the playbook language easy to understand.
  - › Create consistent language by resolving

similar concepts using different terminology. By aligning other frameworks behind the E-W framework, we can “crosswalk” and translate concepts into a common language.

- **Clear sourcing:** Cite all sources so that readers can dig deeper in areas of interest.
  - › Highlight and center various source frameworks within the playbook, not just in the appendix.
  - › Provide an annotated bibliography.

## B. Spreadsheet

Essential questions, indicators, practices and policies have been added to a spreadsheet to make it easier for communities to sort by priority area. The spreadsheet is available [here](#).

## C. A fractured system of services: Understanding federal funding for early childhood education and care

Multiple agencies in every state administer the array of public programs supporting young children and families as they get ready for kindergarten. Each agency, and often each program, has different eligibility requirements, access procedures, services, funding restrictions, etc. The disparate nature of these supports make it harder for families to get the support they need and are entitled to receive. Many states,

however, recognize these challenges and are working to improve efficiency and effectiveness by streamlining and/or combining services (Sara Watson, StriveTogether).

At the federal level, several longstanding federal funding programs exist, but span multiple agencies and, similar to states, take different approaches. Funding available at the state level generally compliments federal funding programs for early childhood education and care. Below, we outline the main federal funding streams to bring awareness to these enabling, but fractured, means of support ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).

#### *Funding streams for early childhood education and care:*

- Child care and development fund: Designed to support states, territories and tribes to create child care subsidies. This combines mandatory and discretionary funding for states ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).
- Child care entitlements to the states: Two-part funding that goes directly to states to support families receiving, transitioning from or at risk of needing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) support ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).
- Child care and development block grants: Provides flexible funding to states for child care subsidies for families with limited incomes, working families with children under 13. Eligible families who receive a subsidy may choose any child care provider that meets state health and safety requirements ([Alliance for Early Success](#)).
- Head Start, Early Head Start and Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships: The federal Head Start program offers education, nutrition, health and other support services to children and families experiencing poverty ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)). Head Start preschool programs are for children ages 3 through school age and Early Head Start programs are for children ages 0-2 and pregnant women. Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships are competitive grants that allow Early Head Start grantees to partner with

local child care providers who serve children in low-income households ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)). All Head Start grants flow directly to local public and private organizations running early childhood programs which can be center-based, home-based or another locally-designed delivery method ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).

- Preschool development grants: A competitive grant program designed to help states and territories improve coordination and collaboration between existing early childhood systems through a mixed-delivery model ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA): IDEA allocates federal funds to states and school districts to help cover the expenses of early intervention, education and related services for children and youth with disabilities. It also sets guidelines for identifying children with disabilities and delivering suitable services and educational support based on their age. Additionally, IDEA mandates that states must use these funds to add to, rather than replace, existing financial support for students with disabilities ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).
- Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS): CCAMPIS is a competitive grant program that assists colleges and universities in offering affordable child care for student parents with low incomes, either on or near campus, while they pursue undergraduate or graduate degrees. To qualify for the grant, institutions must meet specific criteria, such as utilizing their own resources and applying a sliding fee scale for child care services. Student parents benefiting from CCAMPIS subsidies can also access other federal child care programs they are eligible for ([NCSL, Katz 2024](#)).

Several federal funding sources can be used to support early childhood education and care, though they are not exclusively designated for that purpose. To learn more, you can visit the National Conference of State Legislatures. ([National Conference of State Legislatures](#))

# Bibliography



## A. Frameworks incorporated

Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
California Department of Education, WestEd	<a href="#">Cradle-to-Career Data System Public Data Definitions</a>	x	The <i>Cradle-to-Career Data Point Definitions</i> document outlines the data elements collected within California's Cradle-to-Career data system. It provides standardized definitions for metrics spanning education, employment and social services, facilitating cross-sector data alignment and informed decision-making. The resource is designed to support policymakers, educators and researchers in advancing equitable outcomes and effective program evaluation.
Child Trends	<a href="#">System Transformation for Equitable Preschools (STEP Forward with Data) Framework</a>		The <i>System Transformation for Equitable Preschools: A STEP Forward Data Framework</i> outlines a comprehensive approach to using data for advancing equity in preschool systems. It emphasizes leveraging data to address systemic inequities, improve access and enhance outcomes for marginalized children and families. The framework provides actionable steps for policymakers and educators to build more inclusive, data-driven early childhood education systems.



Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
The Council of Chief State School Officers & Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes	<a href="#">Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework</a>	x	The <i>Birth to Grade 3 Indicator Framework</i> provides a set of indicators to track and improve early childhood education outcomes, from birth through third grade. It focuses on key areas such as school readiness, family engagement and educational quality. The framework is designed to help policymakers and educators evaluate and strengthen systems supporting young children's development and learning.
Education-to-Workforce	<a href="#">Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework</a>	x	The <i>Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework</i> offers a structured set of metrics to assess the effectiveness and equity of pathways from education to workforce outcomes. It focuses on tracking access, progress and success across K-12, postsecondary education and employment, with an emphasis on addressing systemic inequities. This framework supports stakeholders in building data-driven strategies to improve opportunities and outcomes for all learners.
Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center	<a href="#">Interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five</a>		The <i>Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five</i> is a guide outlining key developmental goals for children from birth to age five. It focuses on five central domains, including language, cognition and social-emotional development, providing a comprehensive roadmap for early childhood education. The framework supports educators and families in fostering equitable learning opportunities and preparing children for school readiness.

Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	<a href="#">Where we stand on assessing young English Language Learners (2009)</a>		The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a professional membership organization that works to promote high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy and research. This publication puts forward recommendations to help policy makers, program administrators, teachers and others improve screening and assessment practices for young English Language Learners.
National Education Association (NEA)	<a href="#">Great Public Schools indicators framework</a>	x	In 2008, the National Education Association (NEA) renewed its commitment to advocate for a “great public school” for every student. Shortly thereafter, the NEA launched the Great Public Schools (GPS) Indicators Project. The primary goal of the GPS Indicators Project was to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in states’ and districts’ support of public schools. The project’s objectives were to develop criteria in seven critical areas (i.e., characteristics or qualities of public schools, staff and students); identify appropriate ways to measure the key criteria; and report on the status of these indicators in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)	<a href="#">2022-2023 State of Pre-K Yearbook and Data Explorer</a>		The National Institute for Early Education Research's (NIEER) <i>State of Preschool Yearbook</i> tracks state-funded preschool efforts annually since 2001-2002, monitoring program funding, access and policies, and offering vital insights for informed early childhood education decisions. The Yearbook equips policymakers, advocates and researchers with crucial insights, enabling them to make well-informed decisions that shape the landscape of early childhood education.
North Carolina Early Learning Foundation	<a href="#">Shared Measures of Success to Put North Carolina's Children on a Pathway to Grade-Level Reading</a>		The <i>Measures of Success Framework</i> provides a comprehensive set of indicators to assess and strengthen early childhood education systems. It emphasizes key outcomes such as school readiness, equitable access and family engagement, offering a tool for policymakers and practitioners to evaluate and improve early learning programs. The framework aims to guide decisions that promote positive developmental outcomes for all children.
Pn3 Policy	<a href="#">PN3 Policy website</a>		The <i>PN-3 State Policy Clearinghouse</i> is an online resource that compiles state-level policies aimed at improving outcomes for children from prenatal to age 3. It provides access to a comprehensive collection of policies related to early childhood education, health and family support. The clearinghouse is designed to help policymakers and advocates identify best practices and drive policy changes that support the well-being of young children and their families.

Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
Project THRIVE (The National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University)	<a href="#">State Indicators for Early Childhood</a>	x	The <i>Basic Facts about Low-Income Children: Birth to Age 6</i> report from the National Center for Children in Poverty provides an overview of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of young children experiencing poverty, including factors like access to early childhood education, health disparities and family structure. It offers critical insights for policymakers and practitioners working to address the needs of young children experiencing poverty.
Promise Neighborhoods (The Urban Institute)	<a href="#">Measuring Performance: A Guidance Document for Promise Neighborhoods on Collecting Data and Reporting Results</a>		The <i>Measuring Performance: A Guidance Document for Promise Neighborhoods on Collecting Data and Reporting Results</i> provides a framework for collecting and reporting data on the effectiveness of Promise Neighborhoods programs. It offers practical guidance on selecting indicators, tracking progress and ensuring data quality to measure outcomes related to education, health and community well-being. The document is designed to help Promise Neighborhoods demonstrate impact and improve service delivery to support vulnerable children and families.
Results for America	<a href="#">Economic Mobility Catalog</a>		The <i>Results for America</i> catalog features a database of evidence-based programs that deliver measurable outcomes across sectors like education, health and criminal justice. It helps policymakers and practitioners identify proven strategies to improve public services and address social challenges.



Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
Rhode Island Hospital, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Brown University School of Medicine	<a href="#">The Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire (CSHQ): Psychometric Properties of A Survey Instrument for School-Aged Children</a>		The <i>Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire (CSHQ)</i> article provides a detailed description of a screening tool used to assess sleep patterns and behaviors in children. It outlines the tool's development, structure and validity, highlighting its utility in identifying sleep-related issues that may affect a child's health and development. The resource is intended for clinicians and researchers to evaluate sleep disturbances and guide interventions.
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT	<a href="#">Getting Ready: Findings from the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative, A 17 State Partnership</a>	x	The <i>Getting Ready</i> resource outlines strategies for fostering young children's school readiness through family engagement, quality early education and community support. It provides guidance for creating systems that promote positive development and equitable outcomes.
StriveTogether	<a href="#">A guide to racial and ethnic equity systems indicators</a>	x	The <i>Guide to Racial and Ethnic Equity Systems Indicators</i> offers a framework for measuring and addressing racial and ethnic disparities in educational and community systems. It provides specific indicators to assess equity and supports organizations in tracking progress toward more equitable outcomes. The guide aims to help stakeholders create data-driven strategies to advance racial and ethnic equity.

Organization	Publication	Included in E-W Framework	Description
Urban Institute	<a href="#"><u>Upward Mobility Initiative</u></a>		The <i>Upward Mobility Framework</i> from the Urban Institute provides a comprehensive approach to measuring economic mobility. It identifies key drivers such as education, housing and employment, offering a tool to assess how policies impact long-term opportunities. The resource helps policymakers create strategies that promote economic mobility and reduce disparities.
U.S. Department of Education, National Center for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)	<a href="#"><u>English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies</u></a>		The <i>English Learner Toolkit</i> is designed to help state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) in meeting their legal obligations to English Language Learners and in providing all ELLs with the support needed to attain English language proficiency while meeting college- and career-readiness standards. The toolkit is intended primarily for state, district and school administrators, as well as teachers, but may also inform other stakeholders concerned with the education of ELLs.



## B. Organizations or programs referenced

Organization	Publication	Description
Alliance for Early Success	<a href="#">Alliance for Early Success</a>	The Early Success initiative works to improve outcomes for young children by advocating for equitable access to high-quality early education and family support. It provides a range of resources, including policy recommendations, research and tools to help state and local leaders build effective systems for early childhood development. The initiative specifically targets closing opportunity gaps for children experiencing poverty and communities of color to ensure they have the foundational skills needed for future success.
Bezos Family Foundation	<a href="#">Vroom mobile app</a>	Vroom is an initiative that provides free, research-based resources to help parents and caregivers support the brain development of young children. The platform offers practical, everyday activities and tips designed to turn routine moments into learning opportunities, promoting school readiness and cognitive skills. Vroom aims to empower families, especially those from under-resourced communities, to foster positive early childhood development.
Bridgeport Prospers	<a href="#">Early Care and Childhood Initiatives</a>	Bridgeport Prospers' Early Care and Childhood initiative focuses on enhancing early childhood education in Bridgeport, Connecticut, by improving access to high-quality learning experiences for young children. The initiative works to strengthen the early childhood workforce, increase family engagement and ensure that all children are prepared for school. Through collaborative partnerships, Bridgeport Prospers aims to create a strong foundation for the development and success of children in the community.

Organization	Publication	Description
California Department of Public Health	<a href="#">California Home Visiting Program (CHVP)</a>	The California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) provides evidence-based home visiting services to support expectant and new parents, particularly those in at-risk communities. The program connects families with trained professionals who offer guidance on child development, parenting and health, aiming to improve outcomes for both parents and children. CHVP focuses on enhancing family well-being, promoting early childhood development, and preventing adverse childhood experiences.
Child Care Wages Tennessee	<a href="#">Child Care Wages Tennessee</a>	The Tennessee Early Childhood Wage Supplement Program (TNWAGES) provides financial supplements to early childhood educators as an incentive to remain in the field and pursue professional development. By linking compensation to education levels and work continuity, the program aims to improve teacher retention and the quality of early childhood education. TNWAGES supports the stability and growth of Tennessee's early education workforce.
Connecticut Department of Social Services	<a href="#">HUSKY Maternity Bundle</a>	The HUSKY Maternity Bundle is a Connecticut initiative designed to improve health outcomes for pregnant individuals and their babies enrolled in HUSKY Health. It provides coordinated care through a bundled payment model, covering prenatal, delivery and postpartum services. The program emphasizes access to comprehensive, quality care while addressing social and medical needs to promote healthier pregnancies and births.
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood	<a href="#">Sparkler mobile app</a>	The Sparkler initiative, supported by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, offers a mobile app to promote child development and family engagement. It provides developmental screening, interactive learning activities and resources for parents to support their children's growth from birth to age 5. Sparkler connects families with early childhood professionals, helping to ensure children meet developmental milestones and are ready for school.



Organization	Publication	Description
<b>D.C. Office of Paid Family Leave</b>	<a href="#"><u>DC Paid Family Leave</u></a>	The DC Paid Family Leave program offers prenatal leave benefits to provide financial support for expectant parents in Washington, D.C. Eligible individuals can receive up to two weeks of paid leave for prenatal medical appointments and care. This initiative aims to promote healthier pregnancies by reducing financial barriers to accessing prenatal services.
<b>Early Educator Investment Collaborative</b>	<a href="#"><u>Early Educator Investment Collaborative</u></a>	The National Early Childhood Education Professional Development Collaborative advocates for elevating the early childhood workforce through better compensation, professional development and equitable policies. It brings together organizations to advance a unified vision for a well-supported and diverse early education workforce. The initiative aims to improve outcomes for young children by strengthening the professionals who care for and educate them.
<b>Family Bridge</b>	<a href="#"><u>Family Bridge home visiting program</u></a>	The Family Bridge programs provide comprehensive services to support families in achieving stability and self-sufficiency. These programs focus on areas such as housing assistance, parenting education, financial literacy, and access to healthcare. By addressing diverse family needs, Family Bridge aims to empower families to build stronger foundations for their well-being and future success.
<b>Hello Family of Spartanburg</b>	<a href="#"><u>Prenatal and Newborn Programs</u></a>	The Hello Family initiative in Spartanburg, South Carolina, provides a range of resources and services to support families from pregnancy through early childhood. Programs include prenatal care, newborn support and parenting education, aimed at promoting healthy child development and strong family bonds. Hello Family focuses on ensuring equitable access to these services, helping families build a foundation for long-term success.

Organization	Publication	Description
Hope Center for Children	<a href="#"><u>Triple P Spartanburg, a Positive Parenting Program</u></a>	Triple P Spartanburg (Positive Parenting Program), offered by Hope Child and Family Center, provides parents with strategies to build strong, healthy relationships with their children. The program focuses on improving parenting skills, managing challenging behaviors and fostering positive child development. Through workshops and personalized support, Triple P empowers families to create nurturing and supportive home environments.
KFF	<a href="#"><u>Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Extension Tracker</u></a>	The Medicaid Postpartum Coverage Extension Tracker by KFF monitors state efforts to extend Medicaid coverage beyond 60 days postpartum. It provides up-to-date information on policies aimed at improving maternal health outcomes by ensuring continuous access to health care during the critical postpartum period. The tracker supports policymakers and advocates in addressing maternal health disparities and promoting comprehensive care for new mothers.
LENA	<a href="#"><u>LENA Early Talk Technology</u></a>	LENA's technology uses wearable devices and software to measure and support early language development in children. The program tracks conversational turns and adult-child interactions, providing insights and tools to help families and educators foster strong communication skills. By focusing on the critical early years, LENA aims to improve school readiness and long-term developmental outcomes.
NYC Department of Health	<a href="#"><u>First 1,000 Days on Medicaid</u></a>	The First 1,000 Days initiative in New York focuses on improving maternal and child health during the critical first 1,000 days of life, from pregnancy through a child's second birthday. Through Medicaid redesign, the program aims to enhance access to health care services, promote healthy pregnancies and support early childhood development. The initiative prioritizes the well-being of mothers and young children to ensure positive long-term health outcomes.

Organization	Publication	Description
Smart Growth America	<a href="#"><u>National Complete Streets Coalition</u></a>	The National Complete Streets Coalition, led by Smart Growth America, advocates for the development of streets that are safe, accessible and efficient for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and transit riders. The program works with local, state and federal governments to promote policies and design practices that prioritize safety and equity in transportation infrastructure. By fostering community engagement and providing resources, the Coalition aims to create healthier, more livable communities.
Yale School of Medicine	<a href="#"><u>The MOMS Partnership Model</u></a>	The MOMs Partnership model, part of Yale Child Study Center's ELEVATE program, is a community-driven initiative that partners with local organizations to provide mental health support to mothers facing stress and adversity. Through peer support networks and evidence-based practices, the model helps mothers build resilience and access resources to improve their well-being and their children's outcomes. The partnership focuses on creating sustainable, community-based solutions that address the unique needs of mothers and families.



## C. Background research

Organization	Publication	Description
Brookings Institute	<a href="#"><u>Policies that reduce intergenerational poverty</u></a>	This Brookings resource outlines evidence-based policies to reduce intergenerational poverty by addressing systemic barriers and promoting economic mobility. It emphasizes strategies such as expanding access to quality education, improving workforce development and supporting family stability through targeted interventions.
Colorín Colorado	<a href="#"><u>8 Strategies for Preschool ELLs' Language and Literacy Development, Karen Ford</u></a>	Colorín Colorado is a bilingual website providing resources for educators and families of English Language Learners from pre-K through grade 12. Colorín Colorado has been providing free research-based information, activities and advice to parents, schools and communities around the country for more than a decade.
Comprehensive Center Network (WestEd)	<a href="#"><u>Kindergarten Entry Assessments: An Examination of Best Practices, National Trends and Recommendations</u></a>	This report explores best practices for implementing Kindergarten Entry Assessments (KEAs) to support school readiness and early learning outcomes. It examines common commercially available KEAs, such as Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Brigance assessments, and highlights how states are leveraging these tools to inform instruction and policy. The report emphasizes the importance of aligning KEAs with developmental standards, providing teacher training and ensuring equitable assessment practices.
Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center	<a href="#"><u>Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences</u></a>	This resource from the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center provides an overview of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), emphasizing their impact on children's development and well-being. It offers strategies for early childhood professionals to create supportive, trauma-informed environments that foster resilience and healing. The resource highlights the importance of understanding ACEs to better support children and families in overcoming challenges.
Institute of Education Sciences, Regional Educational Laboratory Program	<a href="#"><u>Supporting Dual Language Learners in the PreK Classroom</u></a>	This webinar focuses on how teachers can support dual language learners in the pre-K classroom, providing evidence from research, classroom strategies and instructional models to best serve dual language learners.



Organization	Publication	Description
Internal Revenue Service	<a href="#"><u>Refundable tax credits</u></a>	The IRS outlines refundable tax credits that provide financial relief, even if taxpayers owe no federal income tax. Credits like the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Child and Dependent Care Credit offer support to families, including those managing child care expenses. These credits help offset the cost of raising children or paying for care, providing critical assistance to working families.
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine	<a href="#"><u>Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press (2017).</u></a>	Despite their linguistic, cognitive and social potential, many young English Language Learners — who account for more than 9% of enrollment in grades K-12 in U.S. schools — are struggling to meet the requirements for academic success, and their prospects for success in postsecondary education and in the workforce are jeopardized as a result. This report addresses both the assets that DLLs/ELLs bring to their education and the factors that support or may impede their educational success.
National Conference of State Legislatures	<a href="#"><u>State Broadband Task Forces, Commissions, or Authorities</u></a>	This resource from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) provides an overview of state-level broadband task forces, commissions and authorities working to expand internet access. It highlights state initiatives aimed at addressing digital divides, promoting infrastructure development and ensuring equitable access to high-speed broadband. The resource serves as a guide for policymakers and stakeholders to explore strategies for improving connectivity nationwide.
National Governors Association	<a href="#"><u>A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets</u></a>	This report from the National Governors Association explores the role of Children's Cabinets in coordinating state-level policies and services for children and families. It highlights best practices for creating and managing these cross-agency partnerships to improve outcomes in areas such as education, health and child welfare. The resource provides actionable recommendations for states to align resources and foster collaboration across sectors.
US Department of Agriculture	<a href="#"><u>WIC Works Resource System</u></a>	The WIC Works Resource System, provided by the USDA, supports the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) by offering tools, guidance and resources for program staff and partners. It includes information on nutrition education, breastfeeding support and data management to improve program delivery and outcomes. This platform helps WIC staff enhance services that promote health and well-being for families experiencing poverty.

Organization	Publication	Description
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<a href="#"><u>HRSA Maternal and Child Health, Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant</u></a>	The HRSA Maternal and Child Health Bureau's TVIS (Title V Information System) provides data and resources related to the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program. It offers detailed reports, performance measures and state-level data to track progress in improving health outcomes for mothers, children and families. This tool supports transparency, accountability and informed decision-making for stakeholders and policymakers.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<a href="#"><u>Birth To 5: Watch Me Thrive! A Compendium Of Screening Measures For Young Children</u></a>	This compendium from the Administration for Children and Families provides an overview of screening tools used to assess developmental, behavioral and social-emotional health in young children. It includes detailed descriptions of various tools, their purposes and guidelines for implementation in early childhood settings. The resource supports practitioners in selecting and using effective screening methods to identify and address developmental needs early.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	<a href="#"><u>OPRE Report 2014-11: Early Childhood Developmental Screening: A Compendium Of Measures For Children Ages Birth To Five</u></a>	This resource from the Institute of Education Sciences offers a comprehensive guide on early childhood assessment practices, focusing on the role of assessment in supporting young children's development and learning. It outlines best practices for selecting, implementing and interpreting assessment tools in early childhood settings. The guide is designed to help educators and policymakers ensure that assessments are meaningful, effective and equitable for all children.
U.S. Federal Reserve	<a href="#"><u>Report on the Economic Well-Being of US Households</u></a>	This resource from the Federal Reserve provides an interactive data visualization tool to explore how unexpected expenses impact households across the United States. It highlights key findings from the Survey of Household Economics and Decisionmaking (SHED), showing the financial strain many families face when confronted with unforeseen costs. The tool helps users understand the broader economic implications of emergency expenses and financial instability.
World Health Organization	<a href="#"><u>Maternal Mental Health</u></a>	The World Health Organization (WHO) provides a comprehensive resource on maternal mental health, emphasizing the impact of mental health conditions during pregnancy and postpartum. It highlights that approximately 10% of pregnant women and 13% of women who have recently given birth experience mental health disorders globally. The resource underscores the importance of integrating mental health support into maternal health care to improve outcomes for both mothers and their children.



## D. Additional resources

Organization	Description
<a href="#"><u>What Works Clearinghouse - Resources</u></a>	A searchable collection of evidence-based resources and approaches for schools and classrooms.
<a href="#"><u>Bright Start Tennessee Strategies Clearinghouse</u></a>	A curated collection of evidence-backed and promising strategies that align to TN's Bright Start goals and measures of success.
<a href="#"><u>National Institute for Early Education Research</u></a>	The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) provides resources to enhance early childhood education, including research reports, policy briefs and professional development opportunities like the BELLE program for Latine educators. NIEER also evaluates early childhood programs, offering data-driven insights to inform policies and practices.
<a href="#"><u>National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers</u></a>	The National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers (NCIT) provides resources to support early childhood systems, including toolkits, guides and reports. Key offerings include the “Conducting a Child Care Cost of Quality Study” toolkit, which helps policymakers and advocates assess the costs of high-quality child care, and resources for developing comprehensive prenatal-to-age-three systems. These tools aim to advance equity and improve outcomes for young children and families.
<a href="#"><u>Pritzker Children’s Initiative</u></a>	The Pritzker Children’s Initiative (PCI) offers resources to enhance early childhood development from prenatal stages to age three. Their initiatives include capacity-building programs for early childhood leaders and coalitions, systems-building support for state and community prenatal-to-three services, and efforts to increase public demand for equitable policies benefiting infants, toddlers and their families.



# StriveTogether®

Every child. Cradle to career.

StriveTogether is a national network of community partnerships that join together neighbors, including youth and families, nonprofits, businesses, schools and more, to work toward a future where youth can thrive in their communities. Cradle to Career Network members change the way their communities work together by building connections, sharing resources and using data to put more young people on a path to economic mobility. Our work helps young people meet seven key life milestones so that they have the opportunities they need to reach their goals, and, ultimately, thrive.

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