

Iowa State Fact Sheet

Access to high quality early childhood education (ECE) boosts the well-being of children and helps parents get and keep a job. It's time for policymakers to build the supply and quality of child care and early learning by investing in early childhood education and educators working in centers, schools, and homes.

Our State's Families Need Quality, Affordable Child Care and Early Learning



225,279

children are between
the ages of 0-5⁽¹⁾

75%

of children have all available parents in the workforce⁽²⁾

11%

of family income is spent on child care⁽³⁾

51%

of child care programs report staffing shortages that limit the number of slots available for families⁽⁴⁾

23%

of people are living in a child care desert⁽⁶⁾

Investing in Quality Child Care and Early Learning Helps Meet Families' Needs and Boosts the Economy

169,133 Children have a potential need for child care⁽¹⁾

95,214 Licensed capacity in centers and family child care homes⁽²⁾

\$1.1–1.7 B Long term impact of child care gaps on the state's economy⁽⁵⁾

28,189 Children in state funded PreK programs⁽⁶⁾

5,865 Children served in NAEYC accredited early learning programs⁽⁷⁾

66 NAEYC accredited early learning programs⁽⁸⁾

 **1,516**

Licensed child care centers in 2024⁽³⁾

Compared to 1,832 in 2022

 **1,878**

Licensed family child care homes in 2024⁽⁴⁾

Compared to 2,115 in 2022

Our State's Early Childhood Educators Need Support and Compensation

25,200 Educators working with children birth through 5 ⁽¹⁾

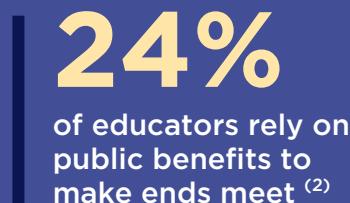
Est. Annual Salary ⁽⁴⁾

\$22,651

Poverty Line+



Currently **provides** scholarships to support early childhood educators in accessing professional development, and earning credentials and degrees ⁽⁸⁾



37% of educators depend on Medicaid for health insurance ⁽³⁾

42% of educators indicate they are more burned out than they were in previous year ⁽⁶⁾

7% of immigrant early educators make up the state's ECE workforce ⁽⁷⁾

Federal Investments Support Access to Child Care and Early Learning and Increase the Well-Being of Children, Families, and Educators in Our State

13,200

children receive child care assistance per month, on average ⁽¹⁾

11%

eligible children receive child care assistance per month, on average ⁽²⁾

34,318

children access CACFP for nutrition while they attend early learning programs ⁽³⁾

7,299

children are served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs ⁽⁶⁾

7,906

children access special education services through IDEA Preschool Special Education Part B (619) and Early Intervention (part C) ⁽⁴⁻⁵⁾

Programs including CCDBG, Head Start, IDEA, CCAMPIS, CACFP, CHIP, TANF, SNAP, MIECHV, and Medicaid, as well as tax credits such as the Child Care and Dependent Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, provide critical investments to support the well-being of young children, their families, and the early childhood educators who support them.

From the ECE field

“I have had more stress in the past year due to staffing and child behaviors, and parent concerns.”
—Director/Administrator

Resources on Policy Solutions to Address the Child Care Crisis and Advance the Early Childhood Education Field

- [NAEYC Federal Policy Agenda](#)
- [Compensation Means More Than Wages: Increasing Early Childhood Educators' Access to Benefits](#)
- [The Costs of Deregulating Child Care: Decreased Supply, Increased Turnover, and Compromised Safety](#)
- [The Cost of Cuts: What Families and Educators Will Lose in the Wake of the Budget Battle](#)
- [Medicaid is a Critical Support for the Early Childhood Education Workforce](#)



Scan QR code for citations.

+2025 Federal Poverty Guideline for a family of four in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia is \$32,150 per year. The poverty guidelines are updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2).