



# Head Start in Ohio

Response to COVID 19 for the 2020-2021 Program Year  
*Compiled by the Ohio Head Start Association*

## Ohio Head Start Response to COVID 19

Ohio's 61 Head Start provider agencies have served the children and families in their communities throughout the COVID 19 Pandemic, beginning in March, 2020 and continuing throughout the fall and coming winter.

Responding to the needs of each community, and following sound public health guidance, the service models provided by the local Head Start provider included porch or nearby park visits, virtual visits, face to face center based services and in center child care partnerships.

During the spring shutdown, programs made virtual visiting a primary method of contact

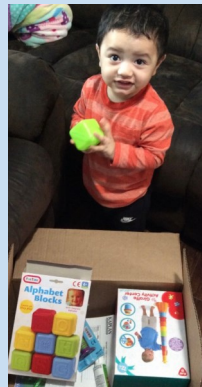
with families and provided materials for each child to have at home so they could work in a virtual setting.

In addition, meals were provided for each child, and delivered to each family routinely.

For infants and toddlers served in these

programs, diapers and formula was also provided each family.

Families were provided, where needed, electronic devices that enabled them to stay connected with their Head Start provider through virtual learning, and all efforts were made to ensure that each family, rural or urban, had access to internet connections.

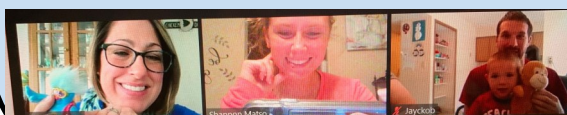


- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Supplies*
- Technology to support families in remote learning*
- Extra staff needed to support smaller group size*

- Extra staff needed to provide cleaning support*
- Additional transportation costs in support of social distancing*
- Mental Health supports for staff and families*
- and*

### ***Special summer programming for children going on to Kindergarten.***

Most of these one-time dollars will be used to ensure appropriate precautions and health restrictions for services across the state in the 2020-2021 program year. Programs have indicated, however, that they will not necessarily cover the additional costs of operating during the pandemic as the year progresses.



## Ohio Head Start and the Federal CARES II Act

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES II) Act included over \$29.6 million dollars for Ohio Head Start programs under the Federal Head Start Act, to support preventative, preparedness and responsive activities during the coronavirus pandemic.

This one-time funding was allocated to Head Start programs to address the additional health and safety requirements to support enrolled families during the COVID 19 pandemic. Ohio's Head Start programs were awarded these funds to use toward:

## Head Start Workforce Commitment

The shift in service models in the Spring of 2020 resulted in few if any staff layoffs. Programs were able to creatively reassign staff and change approaches to services in order to keep staff employed.

Over **95%** of Ohio's Head Start providers reported **NO** layoffs and **30%** of providers indicated they might need to hire additional staff because of the challenges of providing services during COVID.

## Ironton-Lawrence County CAO and Head Start Farmers to Families Food Distribution Partnership



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ironton-Lawrence County Community Action knew that families would be affected in many ways that would cause hardship. People in financial crisis often turn to community resources for assistance with basic needs such as food and clothing, assistance with rent and utilities, and other resources.

Ironton-Lawrence County CAO Head Start was excited to learn that ILCAO would be providing “Farmers to Families Food Distribution” in partnership with the Ohio Foodbank Association. This would be every Wednesday, and Head Start was offered the opportunity to partner. This isn’t new for Head Start Family Advocates; they are connecting families to community resources daily. Of course, they wanted to partner!

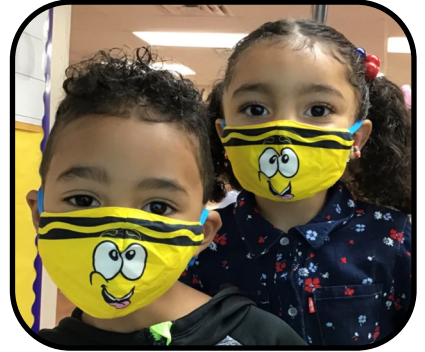


Ironton-Lawrence County CAO and Ironton-Lawrence County Head Start Program provided food boxes with fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products to 2500 families during June and July.



Over **1,000** Head Start children were served this summer in COVID-funded programs to support their transition to kindergarten.

This fall, **14,000** preschoolers and **4,000** infants will be served in a classroom setting.



**8,500** children and families will receive services through virtual platforms.

In all settings, Head Start families are supported with meals and social service supports.



## Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships

There are ten grantees in Ohio that are funded for Early Head Start / Child Care Partnership services. These grantees report that ALL of them continued to serve their children in partnership slots during the pandemic, including the spring months. They indicated that a total of **1,251** children were served in these partnerships or **97%** of the funded slots in Ohio. All of the grantees funded for these partnerships indicate that they will continue to serve these children and families throughout the duration of the pandemic and beyond.