



Head Start in Ohio

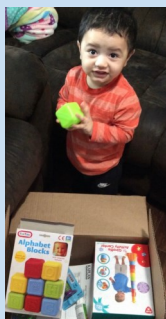
Response to COVID 19 for the 2020-2021 Program Year—March 2021 Update

Ohio Head Start Response to COVID 19

Ohio's 61 Head Start provider agencies have served the children and families in their communities without interruption throughout the COVID 19 Pandemic, beginning in March, 2020 and continuing today and moving forward.

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 learn in a virtual setting.

During times of virtual learning, 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 electronic devices, where needed, that enabled them to stay connected with their Head Start provider through virtual learning. Efforts were made to ensure that each family, rural or urban, had access to internet connections.

As summer and fall arrived, programs responded to local needs, prioritizing health and safety, and the needs of children and families, reopening centers with safety protocols, and continually shifting models as needed.

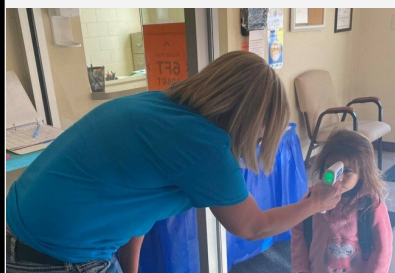
Through it all, whether in-person, virtual or hybrid, programs ensure that children and families are receiving all comprehensive services provided in Head Start and Early Head Start.



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 have used these funds to:



Operate Special Summer Programs in 2020 for children going on to Kindergarten

*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

Most of these one-time dollars were 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 prolonged pandemic protocols.



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 some providers hired additional staff because of the challenges of providing services during COVID.

CAC of Belmont County



In addition to in-person and virtual comprehensive services, Community Action Commission of Belmont County Head Start's monthly "Craft & Chat" creates connection within and among families to reduce the sense of isolation.



Over **1,000** Head Start children were served in 2020 COVID-funded Summer Programs to support their transition to kindergarten.

No programs reported COVID-19 closures. All programs are providing in-person and/or virtual services.

December, 2020



Cincinnati-Hamilton CAA



"The food boxes are great. I like the healthy foods and snacks that are provided. The learning boxes help with the things his teacher and he do on a daily basis. The

virtual sessions are good. I like the one-on-one's. he really gets the attention he needs and is really learning a lot. I see how his learning and development is increasing along with how his attention span has grown. I do miss the classroom setting, but virtual is going well for my son. Thank you." **Huberta Wilcox**



Over **8,500** children and families received services through virtual platforms.

Throughout the pandemic, 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. This is an important service for working families and for partner Child Care providers.