



# A Glossary for Partnerships

It is important when building and developing partnerships that each party have a common understanding of the terminology being used. In order to have productive discussions and a sound working relationship, it is imperative that everyone be on the same page. The definitions provided below offer a starting point for discussion. It may be helpful to add to this list as the partnership takes shape to ensure a common understanding.



National Center on  
Program Management and Fiscal Operations



# glossary

## **Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**

The branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities with funding, strategic partnerships, guidance, and training and technical assistance (TTA). ACF administers federally funded Child Care, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, Community Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Child Support programs. Programs are administered through Regional Offices across the country. Learn more at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/>. **Note:** As it is used throughout this document, Head Start includes both Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

## **Administrative Costs**

The costs of developing and administering a direct service program, which are separate from the costs of the services themselves. Administrative costs refer to central executive functions that do not directly support a specific project or service. Rather, administrative costs are incurred for common objectives that benefit multiple programs managed by the grantee organization, or the organization as a whole, and as such, are not readily assignable to a particular program funding stream. What is considered an administrative cost may vary from program to program. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management>

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. In 2008, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) was signed into law and became effective on January 1, 2009. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/human-resources/article/facts-about-americans-disabilities-act>

## **Block Grant**

A mechanism for consolidating and streamlining federal funding streams, giving more authority to states, territories, and tribes for the design, delivery, and oversight of services.

## **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**

A state-administered program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides federal reimbursement for meals and for income-qualifying participants in licensed nonresidential child care centers and licensed or license-exempt family or group child care homes.

## **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)**

A federal and state partnership program authorized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act and administered by states, territories, and tribes with funding and support from HHS, ACF, Office of Child Care (OCC). CCDF programs provide financial assistance to eligible families to obtain child care so they can work or attend a job training or educational program. In addition, states use the CCDF to invest in quality by guiding the skills and qualifications of the teacher workforce, supporting child care programs to achieve higher standards, and providing consumer education to help parents select child care that meets their family's needs.



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## **CCDF Plan**

A plan based on a reasonable interpretation of the CCDBG Act, developed by the designated CCDF child care agency in each state, territory, and tribe. The CCDF plan provides a description of how the Child Care Lead Agency will administer child care services and quality improvement activities in accordance with the CCDF rules and regulations.

## **Center-Based Child Care**

Programs licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services in a nonresidential setting.

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

One of the major operating components of the Department of Health and Human Services. The CDC serves as the national focus for developing and applying disease prevention and control, environmental health, and health promotion and health education activities designed to improve the health of the people of the United States. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/browse/keyword/diseases> and <https://www.cdc.gov/>

## **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)**

Also called the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), CCDBG is the primary source of federal funding for state child care subsidies. States pass this assistance to help provide child care for low-income working families or those participating in education or training activities. Funds in the CCDBG are also included to improve child care quality

## **Child Care Certificate**

A certificate (which may be a check or other disbursement) that is issued by a state, tribe, or territory (or their designated entity) directly to a parent to use as payment for child care services. This may be used concurrently with copayments by eligible families to a child care provider. Also referred to as a “voucher.”

## **Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Agency**

An organization that provides families with information about the early care and education services that are available in their communities. In addition, CCR&R agencies provide parenting supports, child care provider T/TA and other initiatives to increase the quality and availability of early care and education. CCR&R agencies may be funded with both public and private funds.

## **Child Care Subsidy**

Payments typically made by the state agency that administers CCDF funds to local child care providers to cover a portion of the total cost of child care for families who meet state subsidy eligibility criteria. May be provided through contracts with providers, child care certificates, or cash payments to families. Also referred to as “Child Care Assistance.”





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## **Child Development Associate (CDA)**

A credential based on a core set of competency standards which guides early care professionals in knowing how to nurture the emotional, physical, intellectual, and social development of children. The CDA credentialing process is administered by the Council for Professional Recognition. Some states and territories also have credentialing requirements which may apply.

## **Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)**

The codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government. It is divided into 50 titles that represent broad areas subject to federal regulation. Each volume of the CFR is updated once each calendar year and is issued on a quarterly basis.

## **Community Action Agency (CAA)**

Either a public or private nonprofit organization, funded by the state through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). They administer and coordinate a variety of anti-poverty programs on a communitywide basis including Head Start services, job training, food pantries, utility bill assistance, home weatherization, and other community initiatives. Also referred to as “Community Action Program (CAP).”

## **Community Assessment**

The community assessment provides Head Start programs with a way for making sure that programs remain responsive to the needs of the children and families they serve. The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) refer to community assessment as the “community-wide strategic planning and needs assessment.” Community assessments provide a starting point for understanding community strengths and identifying gaps in services. When the community assessment is used in conjunction with other program data, it informs program planning. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/program-planning/community-assessment-foundation-program-planning-head-start/community-assessment-foundation-program-planning-head-start>

## **Comprehensive Services**

An array of services that meet the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and families enrolled in the program. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/comprehensive-services-foundation-head-start>

## **Continuity of Care**

Services provided to children in a manner that promotes primary caregiving and minimizes the number of transitions in teachers and teacher assistants that children experience over the course of the day, week, program year, and to the extent possible, during the course of their participation from birth to age 3. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/promoting-continuity-care-infant-toddler-settings>



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## Copayment

See Parent Fees.

## Cost Allocation Plan

A written account of the basis — the methods, formulas, and rules—used by the grantee agency to allocate costs to its various funding sources. Cost allocation means the process of assigning to two or more programs the costs of an item shared by the programs. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management>

## Cost Per Child

For Head Start programs, an amount calculated by dividing the total program budget of the Head Start program by the number of children served. Because costs per child are determined by a range of things (e.g., relative to program-specific services; geographic, historical, and community factors; and cost components), these figures are not always useful in making comparisons across programs.

## Delegate Agency

A public or private nonprofit (including a community-based organization, as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)), or for-profit organization or agency to which a grantee has delegated all or part of the responsibility of the grantee for operating a Head Start program.

## Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

DAP is an approach to teaching that is based on how young children develop and learn and what is known about effective early education. DAP involves teachers meeting young children where they are — both as individuals and as part of a group — and helping each child meet challenging and achievable learning goals. These practices are grounded in research and defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in its book, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8* (Third Edition).

## Dual Language Learners (DLL)

Used by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and by the Department of Education (ED) to describe young children, birth to age 5, who are learning two or more languages at the same time, or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language. Research shows that supporting bilingualism from early ages can have wide ranging benefits, from cognitive and social advantages early in life, to long term employment opportunities and competitiveness in the workplace later in life. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/browse/keyword/dual-language-learners>



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## **Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT)**

Medicaid's comprehensive and preventive child health program for individuals under the age of 21. EPSDT has two purposes: to assure health care resources are available and accessible, and to help Medicaid recipients and their caregivers use these resources. Health care professionals who work with children in Head Start programs, child care organizations, and clinics may access their state's EPSDT schedule to ensure children's health needs are met. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/physical-health/article/early-periodic-screening-diagnostic-treatment-epsdt>

## **Early Care and Education Partnerships**

Two or more early care and education providers or funding sources combining resources to provide, enhance, or expand services for children and families. This may include engaging nontraditional partners in collaborative efforts to support children's optimal development (e.g., child welfare agencies, faith communities, community centers, libraries, etc.).

## **Early Head Start (EHS)**

An intensive, comprehensive child development and family support model for the delivery of services to low-income pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families. EHS is designed to nurture healthy attachments between parent and child, parent and caregiver, and child and caregiver. The program was created by Congress as part of the 1994 Reauthorization of the Head Start Act. Children remain eligible for EHS services from enrollment until they are 3 years old. Eligibility must be redetermined when the child is transitioning to a Head Start program. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>

## **Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership**

EHS-CC Partnerships bring together EHS and child care through layering of funding to provide comprehensive and continuous services to eligible infants, toddlers, and their families, particularly families with parents who are working or in training or school. EHS-CC Partnerships enhance developmental services and supports for infants and toddlers enrolled by providing strong relationship-based experiences and preparing them for the transition into Head Start programs and preschool. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/local-early-childhood-partnerships>

## **Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)**

The Office of Head Start (OHS) launched the ECLKC in 2006 with a clear and innovative mission: to provide timely information and learning opportunities relevant to the Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) community, and to serve as a comprehensive resource for anyone involved in early childhood education. Head Start programs and parents visiting the ECLKC will find the latest information on OHS priorities, policies, and programs. The ECLKC also offers tips and promising practices on many early child care topics including child development, education, and health. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>



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## **ERSEA**

Stands for the Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance of children in Head Start/Early Head Start programs. It is part of the Head Start Management Systems and is part of a program's service delivery. ERSEA governs how programs select and enroll children into their program and is one of the most important tasks to be performed in successful Head Start programs. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/eligibility-ersea>

## **Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES)**

Launched in 1997 to provide descriptive, nationally representative information on the characteristics, experiences, and development of Head Start children and families, and the characteristics of the Head Start programs and staff who serve them. Learn more at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/project/head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces-1997-2022>

## **Family Child Care (FCC)**

Child care for children from infancy through school age provided in a professional caregiver's home. A family child care provider must be licensed by the state, tribal, or local entity to provide services in their home or family-like setting. When state, tribal, or local requirements vary from Head Start requirements, the most stringent provision applies. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/head-start-program-performance-standards-showcase/family-child-care-program-option>

## **Family Partnership Agreement (FPA)**

Head Start programs aim to support the entire family and to assist parents in their personal and family development. A strong, meaningful, and authentic relationship between a staff member and family is the cornerstone of an effective Family Partnership Process. Head Start programs offer families an opportunity to participate in a family assessment, discuss family's goals, and develop a family partnership agreement. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/journeys-hope-courage-family-partnership-agreement-family-strengths-needs-assessment>

## **Full-Day/Full-Year**

Schedule of operation for early care and education services that meets the needs of families who are employed or attend job training or educational programs. The Head Start Program Performance Standards define a full-working-day as not less than 10 hours of Head Start or Early Head Start services per day.

## **Grantee**

The local public or private non-profit agency or for-profit agency which has been designated as a Head Start agency under 42 U.S.C. 9836 and which has been granted financial assistance by the responsible HHS official to operate a Head Start program.



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## Head Start Act

A public law passed by Congress and signed by the President that authorizes the appropriation of funds and specifies the intent of the program, priorities, and types of services to be provided. The purpose of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 is to promote the school readiness of low-income children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development in a learning environment that supports growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning; and through the provision to low-income children and their families of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/head-start-act>

## Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five (ELOF)

The ELOF describes the skills, behaviors, and knowledge that programs must foster in all children. It is grounded in a comprehensive body of research about what young children should know and be able to do to succeed in school. The ELOF describes how children progress across key areas of learning and development and specifies learning outcomes in these areas. Programs should use the ELOF to guide their choices in curriculum and learning materials, plan daily activities, and inform intentional teaching practices. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework>

## Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS)

Federal regulations that guide how programs design and deliver comprehensive, high-quality individualized services to support the school readiness of children from low-income families. They encompass requirements to provide education, health, mental health, nutrition, and family and community engagement services, as well as rules for local program governance and aspects of federal administration of the program. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii>

## Head Start Collaboration Office (HSCO) Grants

OHS funds these offices in each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and in Regions XI (American Indian and Alaskan Native) and XII (Migrant and Seasonal Head Start). HSCOs serve as a conduit of information between Regional Offices and their state, territorial, and AIAN and MSHS partners. Collaboration directors can support grantees' work with CCDF Lead Agencies, early childhood education licensing systems, professional development opportunities, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), and other systems. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/head-start-collaboration-offices-working-you>

## Implementation Planners

These consultants may be hired to support partnership startups and ongoing program operations. Grantees are responsible for contacting the planners to arrange consultation services, including terms of work and fees for services. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/local-early-childhood-partnerships/article/ehs-cc-partnership-implementation-planners-fiscal-consultants>





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## **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

A written education plan for a child with a disability (ages 3–21) developed by a team that consists of professionals (e.g., teachers, therapists) and the child’s parents. Among other things, it contains information on the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance; measurable goals; and a statement of the special education, related and supplementary aids, and services to be provided to the child. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/individualized-education-program-iep-basics>

## **Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)**

A written early intervention plan for an infant or toddler (ages 0–3) with a developmental delay or disability developed by a team that consists of professionals (e.g., teachers, therapists) and the child’s family. It contains information on the child’s present level of development in all domains; outcomes for the child and family; and services and supports the child and family will receive to help them achieve the outcomes. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/specialquest-multimedia-training-library/session-8-individualized-family-service-plan-process>

## **Individualized Professional Development (iPD) Portfolio**

The iPD Portfolio is a learning management system, created to support ongoing professional development for staff in Head Start and child care settings. It contains accessible, self-paced modules based on staff roles and interests. The iPD platform also provides Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for several courses. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/professional-development/individualized-professional-development-ipd-portfolio/individualized-professional-development-ipd-portfolio>

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

IDEA ensures that all children with disabilities have a free, appropriate public education available to them that emphasizes participation in the least restrictive environment, provision of services designed to meet their unique needs, and preparation for further education, employment, and independent living. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/services-children-who-do-not-qualify-idea>

## **Information Memorandum (IM)**

A targeted communication tool from OHS which provides policy information to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegate agencies. See IMs posted here <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im>



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## In-Kind

Property or services that benefit a grant-supported project or program and are contributed by non-federal third parties without charge to the grantee. In-kind contributions may consist of the value of real property and equipment and the value of goods and services directly benefiting the grant program and specifically identifiable to it. In-kind match is counted for the period when the services are provided or when the donated goods are received and used. Can be part of meeting the non-federal match requirement. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management/article/documenting-kind-contributions>

## Layered Funding

The EHS-CC Partnership program represents a unique opportunity to leverage and maximize resources utilizing multiple funding sources to enhance the early care and education capacity of child care partners and improve outcomes for infants and toddlers. Grantees use EHS-CC Partnership funds from the Office of Head Start to partner with local child care centers and family child care homes. These funds are layered in addition to child care subsidies and other existing funding to cover the entire cost of quality full-day/full-year comprehensive services. Partnership funds will enhance existing budgets that include the CCDF and other existing child care funding.

Layered funding consists of three levels:

1. Core child care services
2. Program level enhancements (e.g., services that benefit all children in a classroom, such as teacher qualifications)
3. Individual child services (e.g., services to children enrolled in EHS-CC Partnerships)

EHS-CC Partnership funds must supplement, not replace, existing child care funds. The concept of layering funds is used to assure that EHS-CC Partnership funds will enhance service quality without duplication or replacement of existing child care funding. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/local-early-childhood-partnerships/article/layering-early-head-start-services-funds-child-care>

## Local Education Agency (LEA)

A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary or secondary schools. Serves in a city, county, township, school district, or other political sub-division of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a state, as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary schools. In an IEP meeting for a family with a child with special needs, the LEA is the representative of the school district that referred the child to special education services and pays for them.

## Lead Agency

The state, territorial, or tribal entity to which a CCDF grant is awarded, and which is accountable for the funds provided. Lead Agencies establish key policies that facilitate collaboration and system-building and secures successful child care partnerships.



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## Licensing and Regulatory Requirements

Requirements necessary for a provider to legally operate child care services in a state, territory, or locality, including registration requirements established under state, territorial, local, or tribal law. These requirements include standards for health and safety, safe sleep practices, caregiver to child ratios, group size, food preparation and serving, staff training, sanitation, emergency preparedness plans, and background checks for staff.

## Management Systems Wheel (MSW)

A visual representation of the 12 program management, planning, and oversight systems that are critical to high-quality service delivery in a Head Start/Early Head Start program. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/organizational-leadership/article/management-systems-wheel>

## Market Rate

The price charged by providers for child care services offered to privately paying families. Under CCDF, state Lead Agencies are required to conduct a market rate survey every three years to determine the current price of child care throughout the state. In the CCDF plans, Lead Agencies are required to describe how the rates they pay to child care providers serving subsidized children ensure access to child care that is comparable to that of non-CCDF families. This must include a description of how base payment rates are set at least at a level sufficient to cover the costs to providers of the health, safety, quality, and staffing requirements included in the CCDBG Act and the OCC Final Rule. Higher provider payment rates are necessary to ensure that providers receiving CCDF funds have the means to provide high-quality care for our country's low-income children.

## Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

In order to receive their full share of CCDF each year, states are required to maintain the amount of non-federal state funds spent on child care each year to at least equal the amount they spent during the preceding fiscal year.

## Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

A written agreement or statement detailing the preliminary understanding of two or more parties that, though not legally binding, is more formal than a verbal commitment. It states the intent to work together toward a common goal and outlines terms, details, and each party's requirements and responsibilities.

## National Centers (NC)

As part of the Office of Head Start training and technical assistance (TTA) system, the national centers promote excellence through high-quality, practical resources and approaches that build early childhood education program capacity. They also support consistent practices across communities, states, tribes, and territories. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/training-technical-assistance-centers>



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## **Non-federal Match**

That portion of total program costs provided by the non-federal entity in the form of in-kind donations or cash match received from third parties or contributed by the agency. In-kind contributions must be provided, and cash expended during the project period along with federal funds, to satisfy the matching requirements. This term may also be used for other federal grants. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management/article/determining-non-federal-match>

## **Office of Child Care (OCC)**

Division of HHS/ACF that administers the CCDF to states, territories, and federally recognized tribes. OCC supports working families who are low-income through child care financial assistance and promotes children’s learning by improving the quality of early care and education and afterschool programs.

## **Office of Head Start (OHS)**

Division of HHS/ACF that manages grant funding and oversees local agencies providing Head Start services. OHS promotes school readiness of children ages pre-birth to 5 from families with low income through education, health, social and other services. The Head Start Act and HSPPS are intended to strengthen and improve the quality of Head Start programs.

## **Parental Choice**

A foundational tenet of the CCDF program to ensure parents are empowered to make their own decisions regarding the child care that best meets their family’s needs. As outlined in the regulations, Lead Agencies must allow parents to choose from a range of child care provider categories and types. Parents in eligible low-income families receive help paying for child care at a provider of their choice. The parent may select any provider meeting the state’s health and safety requirements that ensure basic protections for children. Parents receive consumer education and information on topics such as what to look for in a quality child care provider.

## **Parent Fees**

Each family’s full or partial contribution to the cost of child care services. The amount a family pays for CCDF-subsidized child care is determined by the Lead Agency’s (e.g., state, territory, or tribe) sliding fee scale that varies based on income, the size of the family, and other eligibility factors identified. This fee must be affordable and not a barrier to families receiving CCDF. Lead Agencies may choose to waive contributions or copayments from families whose incomes are at or below 100 percent of the poverty level. Also called “copayment.”

## **Part B of IDEA**

Part B mandates special education and related services for children with disabilities ages 3 through 21. Before Part B services start, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for children 3 through 21 years of age who qualify for special education services from school districts. An IEP is focused on the child’s goals. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/services-children-who-do-not-qualify-idea-fact-sheet>





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## Part C of IDEA

Part C of IDEA is a federal grant program mandating early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to 3. It assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with, or at-risk for, disabilities. Part C builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance children's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/services-children-who-do-not-qualify-idea-fact-sheet>

## Partnership Agreement

A detailed written document based on a jointly developed plan between partners. It describes the purpose of the agreement, contract period, partners and their roles and responsibilities, planning and decision-making systems, communications, monitoring and oversight, and recordkeeping and documentation. This agreement guides the partnership and serves as a mechanism by which the partners assess the fulfillment of the commitments made. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/local-early-childhood-partnerships/article/early-head-start-child-care-ehs-cc-partnership-implementation>

## Program Information Report (PIR)

Provides comprehensive data on the services, staff, children, and families served by Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide. All grantees and delegates are required to submit PIR for Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/data-ongoing-monitoring/article/program-information-report-pir>

## Program Instruction (PI)

A policy document by which OHS addresses specific requirements that Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegate agencies must implement in their programs. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/pi>

## Policy Council

A governance body required by the HSPPS. Each grantee must establish and maintain a Policy Council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level, and a policy committee at the delegate level. Parents of children currently enrolled in each program option must be proportionately represented on the Policy Council or committee.

## Pre-kindergarten (Pre-K)

Early childhood initiatives or programs providing education-related services to children younger than age 5 in the year before they enter school at the kindergarten level. Many states now offer pre-K services funded through state budget appropriations to a state agency (usually the state education department) to administer a defined program to be operated by school districts directly or by other entities in communities. Also known as preschool.



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## **Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA)**

A central component of welfare reform enabling parents to work. Sections of this bill provide for block grants to states to fund Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and CCDF services.

## **Quality**

NAEYC defines a high-quality early childhood program as one that meets the needs of and promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children and adults involved in the program. See Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP). High-quality early learning leads to many positive outcomes in life, including increased educational attainment, healthier lifestyles, and more successful careers.

## **Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)**

A systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, QRIS awards quality ratings to early and school-age care and education programs that meet a set of defined program standards. By participating in their state's QRIS, early and school-age care providers embark on a path of continuous quality improvement. Learn more at <https://ecquality.acf.hhs.gov/>

## **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

The formal system whereby the federal government or other funders solicit bids from agencies and institutions for specified services.

## **School Readiness Initiatives**

State- or federally-funded initiatives designed to ensure children's readiness for school, families' readiness to support their children's learning, and schools' readiness to receive children. Head Start programs view school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are all essential elements of school readiness.

## **Sliding Fee Scale**

A system of cost sharing and formula for determining the amount of child care fees or copayments to be paid by families, usually based on income and family size. Families eligible for CCDF-subsidized care pay fees according to a sliding fee scale developed by the state, territory, or tribe. Cost sharing must not be a barrier to families receiving child care assistance. It must help families afford child care and enable them to access the full range of child care providers. Lead Agencies may choose to waive copayments from families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the poverty level.

## **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

Aims to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care. Learn more at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/nutrition/article/coordinating-nutrition-health-services-across-head-start-wic-ccdf-cacfp>



# glossary

## **State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (SAC)**

These councils are charged with developing high-quality, comprehensive systems of early childhood development and care, including child care, Head Start, and pre-kindergarten programs and services, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) preschool, infant, and family programs. SACs are required to conduct periodic statewide needs assessments on the quality and availability of programs; identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination; develop recommendations for improvements; assess the capacity and effectiveness of institutions of higher education supporting early childhood educators; facilitate systems of early childhood education and care designed to improve school readiness; support professional development, recruitment, and retention initiatives; and promote other activities consistent with the state's plan and application.

## **State Child Care Administrators**

State administrative staff responsible for overseeing state child care programs for CCDF through the Lead Agency. In some states, the CCDF administrator is responsible for all components of the CCDF program; in others, co-administrators are designated, or interdepartmental agreements are established with other agencies for key components such as licensing administration.

## **State Child Care Plan**

See CCDF Plan.

## **Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)**

The Office of Head Start TTA system improves the knowledge, skills, and practices of grantee staff to implement programs which, in turn, improve the outcomes of children and families. The OHS TTA system has three components that have distinct and complementary functions: national centers, regional TTA network, and grantee funding. The Regional TTA Network provides targeted TTA to individual grantees, clusters of grantees with similar interests or needs, and at state and regional events. There are up to five categories of regional TTA specialists: early childhood specialists, grantee specialists, health specialists, family engagement specialists, and, in some regions, systems specialists. Learn more at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs/assistance>

## **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

This program is designed to help low-income families achieve self-sufficiency. States, territories, and tribes receive block grant funds to provide families with financial assistance and related support services to include child care assistance, job preparation, and work assistance. Each state, territory, or tribe determines eligibility, benefit levels, services, and time limits for low-income families. Federal law stipulates that the time limit for assistance shall not exceed five years.



# glossary

## Title I

Part of the Leave No Child Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), originating from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 legislation of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Part A provides financial assistance to LEAs and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state.

## U.S. Department of Education (ED)

The federal agency responsible for programs dealing with elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education. Its primary function is to foster educational excellence, establish policy for, administer, and coordinate most federal assistance to education, collect data on U.S. schools, and enforce federal educational laws regarding privacy and civil rights.

## Voucher

See Child Care Certificate.

## Welfare Reform

Changes in the 1990s to the federal welfare system. A central objective of the redesign was to move recipients — usually single mothers — off public assistance and into employment. Many of these objectives, and the requirements of people who receive public assistance, are described in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRWORA) (Pub.L. 104–193).

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National Center on  
Program Management and Fiscal Operations

pmfo@ecetta.info • <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/ncpmfo> • Tel: 888-874-5469