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ABSTRACT

The first in a series of papers by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation on policy issues in early childhood care and education, this report describes the status of early childhood care and education in the United States in the 1980s, with emphasis on publicly funded programs. First presented are data from the October 1980 Current Population Survey, considered the best available data source for obtaining a national picture of early childhood care and education in the U.S. Discussion focuses on the number of young children in the U.S., preprimary enrollment of 3- to 5-year-olds, growth in preprimary enrollment, child care and maternal employment, hours of early childhood program operation, preprimary enrollment and socioeconomic status, and preprimary enrollment and geography. Federal and state programs for young children are reviewed. Discussion of federal programs centers on the national Head Start program, federal funding for child care, tax credits for child care, compensatory education, and educational programs for handicapped children. Discussion of state programs concerns kindergarten and prekindergarten programs. (RH)

Early Childhood Development Programs in the Eighties:

THE NATIONAL PICTURE

LAWRENCE J. SCHWEINHART

HIGH/SCOPE EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICY PAPERS
Lawrence J. Schweinhart and David P. Weikart, Series Editors
No. 1

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EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE EIGHTIES: THE NATIONAL PICTURE

by Lawrence J. Schweinhart
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
313/485-2000

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Foreword

This is the first in a series of papers by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation on policy issues in early childhood care and education. We plan to bring you timely information on quality, cost, and other important issues in the delivery of early childhood programs.

This first paper answers two basic questions about early childhood care and education in this country: How many children are involved? How much does the public spend? The paper focuses on public spending because data on private spending are not available and also because public spending is the more pressing policy issue.

Surprisingly, there is little precedent for this effort. Sandra Robinson of the University of South Carolina made a similar attempt over a decade ago, but with the focus on kindergarten. During the past few years, Helen Blank of the Children's Defense Fund has collected data on child care subsidized by the Social Services Block Grant. Various federal agencies keep data on their own programs, but on no others. The Bureau of the Census has made some reasonable efforts but still has fallen short of a comprehensive data collection approach. This paper, then, is a first attempt to present comprehensive data on early childhood care and education. As such, it suffers from the limitations of the existing data.

In conjunction with this effort, the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation is planning and raising funds for a national Preprimary Study to be conducted under the aegis of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. This national study of young children is to be coordinated with similar studies of young children in 21 nations around the world. The International Coordinating Center will be located at the High/Scope Foundation's headquarters in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Our goal for the national Preprimary Study is to achieve a comprehensive view of early childhood experience in the U.S., and in so doing, to set the standard for future data collection and reporting efforts.

David P. Weikart, President
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
1985

Executive Summary

This report describes the status of early childhood care and education in the U.S. in the 1980s, with emphasis on publicly funded programs. First we present the national picture as it emerges from the October 1980 Current Population Survey (the most recent published data). Next, we review federal and state programs for young children.

Better than half of the nation's 9 million 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds are enrolled in some type of preprimary program that provides educational experiences, according to the 1980 Current Population Survey. The enrollment figures by age are 93 percent of 5-year-olds, 46 percent of 4-year-olds, and 27 percent of 3-year-olds. According to parent reports, one out of three 3- to 5-year-olds attends a public program, and one out of five attends a private program.

In 13 years, the preprimary enrollment rate for 3- and 4-year-olds almost doubled, from 21 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 1983. The estimated enrollment rate for 5-year-olds also increased, from 78 percent in 1970 to 93 percent in 1983.

The continuing growth of early childhood programs is often attributed to the post-war growth in the number of mothers employed outside the home--now 52 percent of mothers of children under 6. Yet, only 43 percent of the 3- and 4-year-olds of mothers in the labor force are enrolled in programs that provide educational experiences; the remaining 57 percent of these children presumably receive child care that has no educational component. At the same time, the enrollment rate for 3- and 4-year-olds of mothers who are not in the labor force is a substantial 32 percent: one out of three young children is enrolled in a preprimary program, even though the mother is available to take care of the child.

Mothers employed outside the home use a variety of child care arrangements. Seven out of ten children are cared for in their own homes or in the homes of others. Two out of five children are cared for by relatives. Nearly one out of ten accompanies the mother to work, and 15 percent are in child care centers.

The more income and education parents have, the more likely are their children to be in preprimary programs at ages 3, 4, and 5. For families with incomes below $20,000, the preprimary enrollment rate is 46 percent, while it is 64 percent for families with higher incomes. The preprimary enrollment rate for children of elementary school dropouts is 42 percent, while it is 68 percent for children of college graduates. For 4-year-olds alone, the differences in enrollment rates are even more striking--37 percent versus 63 percent with regard to family income and 32 percent versus 68 percent with regard to parents' education.

The major source of public funds for prekindergarten programs in the U.S. is the federal government. Funding is provided to families, to states, and to local organizations and through federal income tax credits for families and businesses using such services. The government also provides tax deductions for charitable contributions that support early childhood programs.

Programs with annual federal funding of over $100 million for 3- and 4-year-olds are Head Start, the Social Services Block Grant, the Child Care Food Program, and the dependent care tax credit. Other federal programs provide work-related child care services, compensatory preschool education, and preschool education for handicapped children. Two large programs, the dependent care tax credit and the Child Care Food Program, are available to all children, but most of the other programs are for low-income families. An estimated 63 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds, some 4.4 million children, receive some federal assistance to participate in an early childhood program. Excluding the tax credit program, 25 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds, some 1.75 million children, are in early childhood education or care programs funded by federal grants.

Historically, state funding for early childhood programs has been funneled to local education agencies to help pay for public school kindergarten programs and to support federal funding initiatives in programs like Head Start and early childhood programs for handicapped children. State-level funding is now also being channeled to prekindergarten programs that are independent of federal funding.

Kindergarten attendance is nearly universal, but it is seldom compulsory. Only three states do not provide state-level financial assistance for kindergarten programs: New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Mississippi. Compulsory kindergarten attendance (or demonstration of first grade readiness) is the law in only five states, and in these the law has been passed only recently: Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Virginia. Legislation for compulsory kindergarten attendance is now pending in Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Public schools in over two thirds of the states now offer some prekindergarten programs, and state funding for prekindergarten programs, independent of federal funding, is a growing phenomenon. A dozen states are providing funding for such programs during 1984-85, and two other states have plans to fund such programs in 1985-86. In 1984-85, state-funded early childhood programs are serving about 172,000 preschool-aged children, with total funds of $227 million. Fifteen states have pending legislative proposals or recently formed study commissions for early childhood programs.

California has for some time spent substantially more than other states on child care programs. With state funding of $277 million for child care programs, California's funding level is almost double New York's block grant expenditure of $141 million; no other state spends more than $60 million. New York has maintained a commitment to early childhood programs since 1966 with the introduction of its Experimental Prekindergarten Program. This program went from a budget of $9 million in 1983-84 to one of $14 million in 1984-85, an increase of over 50 percent. New York also spent $2.4 million in 1984-85 in state funding for child care programs.

South Carolina has funded early childhood programs since 1971. Funding for its part-day child development centers for children at risk of school failure nearly doubled in 1984-85 with the passage of Governor Richard Riley's Education Improvement Act. Texas also has vaulted to a leadership position in its financial commitment to early childhood programs, with funding slated to begin in 1985 that may reach $50 million. Any Texas school district may offer these programs; a school district is required to offer them, however, if it has a certain number of 4-year-olds who either are not fluent in English or are from poor families.

New legislation in Missouri authorizes funding to school districts to conduct developmental screening, parent education programs, and early childhood programs for developmentally delayed children. Longstanding support for prekindergarten programs has also been demonstrated in Minnesota, New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and in Florida for migrant children. Pilot education programs now exist in Louisiana, Maine, Oklahoma, and West Virginia.

Nationwide, political support for early childhood programs has never been stronger. In addition to the commitments noted here, new legislation for prekindergarten programs is being considered in at least 12 states: Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia, and Washington. Legislative bodies throughout the nation--Congress, statehouses, and local decision makers--are beginning to recognize the favorable long-term outcomes of investing in high quality early childhood programs. As these groups proceed in examining the issues, it is imperative that they receive guidance from a unified early childhood community. This paper was written to further this cause.

We report on the growth and current status of the national Head Start program, publicly and privately funded child care programs, compensatory education programs, early childhood special education programs, and state-funded kindergarten and prekindergarten programs. The greatest impediment to the growth of early childhood programs is "turfguarding." We believe that the comprehensive approach we have adopted for this report clearly shows that early childhood care and education are mutually dependent enterprises that need widespread and united support both within and across states to meet children's needs.

CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY DATA

The best available data source for obtaining a national picture of early childhood care and education in the U.S. is the Current Population Survey that is conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. This monthly survey samples over 60,000 households over 600 locations across the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Sample results are weighted and generalized to the U.S. civilian, noninstitutional population. The Current Population Survey is limited to regional estimates at best, while the decennial Census permits state and local estimates, but the early childhood care and education field is changing rapidly and decennial tabulation is too infrequent to record the emerging patterns.

Historically, the Current Population Survey has viewed early childhood care and education in one of two ways: from the perspective of child care as a service for mothers employed outside the home or from the perspective of education, i.e., "preprimary enrollment." Neither of these orientations has been wholly satisfactory in producing comprehensive data.

The service-to-employed-mothers perspective was most recently adopted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1983) in its report, Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers: June 1982, by Martin O'Connell and Carolyn C. Rogers. A major limitation of these data is that they exclude the early childhood program arrangements made by mothers who are not employed outside the home--that is, about half of all mothers of preschool-aged children. Since these tabulations cannot be generalized to all children, we have made minimal use of them in this report. A second problem is that the data were collected in June, when child care arrangements often change. To overcome these limitations, the Census Bureau collected child care information in December 1984 that focused on before-school, after-school, and night-time care for children from 3 to 14 years of age. These data will be available for analysis during 1985.

The educational perspective has been adopted by both the Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics. Each October, the Current Population Survey focuses on education, asking several questions about preprimary enrollment, that is, nursery school or kindergarten defined as "a group or class that is organized to provide educational experiences for children" and that "includes instruction as an important and integral phase of its program of child care" (Chorvinsky, 1982, p. 18). Head Start fits this definition, but child care in centers or in homes would not, unless parents answering the survey see it as providing educational experiences. This is an unfortunate situation, since parents may not be able to distinguish between educational and custodial care.

Preprimary enrollment statistics were last published in 1982 by the National Center for Education Statistics in the document Preprimary Enrollment 1980 by Milton Chorvinsky, based on the October 1980 Current Population Survey. Although the Census Bureau continues to send data on preprimary enrollment from the annual October Current Population Survey to the National Center for Education Statistics, the Center has not yet published more recent tabulations.

Number of Young Children in the U.S.

Before presenting preprimary enrollment statistics, we will present data on the number of young children living in the U.S. Table 1 presents the most recent decennial Census head count by state of 3- and 4-year-olds as well as the number and percent of children this age who are classified as poor. Table 2 presents the most recent estimates by state of resident 3- and 4-year-olds and the percent and number of poor children in this age range. Table 2 shows that the national percent of poor children increased from 18 percent in 1979 to 21 percent in 1983. The best estimate of numbers of 5-year-olds is half the number of 3- and 4-year-olds, since adjacent age cohorts do not vary that much in size.

Table 1

CENSUS COUNT OF CHILDREN, 3-4, TOTAL AND POOR, BY STATE

State	Total Number	Number Poor	% Poor	State	Total Number	Number Poor	% Poor
US	6,235,942	1,124,350	18.0				
				MO	133,721	22,079	16.5
AL	114,183	27,825	24.4	MT	24,296	3,939	16.2
AK	14,052	2,004	14.3	NE	47,025	6,376	13.6
AZ	79,965	14,744	18.4	NV	20,775	2,129	10.3
AR	67,984	16,343	24.0	NH	23,608	2,498	10.6
CA	640,948	114,734	17.9	NJ	180,078	29,974	16.7
CO	81,770	11,267	13.8	NM	43,433	9,950	22.9
CT	71,876	10,319	14.4	NY	438,266	98,314	22.4
DE	15,388	2,769	18.0	NC	158,298	30,488	19.3
DC	12,964	3,824	29.5	ND	20,318	3,190	15.7
FL	216,071	45,387	21.0	OH	301,406	47,519	15.8
GA	158,870	35,166	22.1	OK	90,260	15,280	16.9
HI	28,981	4,543	15.7	OR	74,535	11,176	15.0
ID	35,186	5,642	16.0	PA	287,692	46,006	16.0
IL	321,830	55,385	17.2	RI	21,815	3,728	17.1
IN	161,359	23,160	14.4	SC	92,582	19,401	21.0
IA	82,970	11,265	13.6	SD	21,910	4,758	21.7
KS	67,744	8,727	12.9	TN	125,417	27,173	21.7
KY	109,966	24,817	22.6	TX	447,927	87,404	19.5
LA	137,334	32,905	24.0	UT	69,529	8,620	12.4
ME	29,956	5,571	18.6	VT	13,908	2,307	16.6
MD	102,376	14,571	14.2	VA	138,581	22,106	16.0
MA	130,432	20,911	16.0	WA	114,512	16,466	14.4
MI	261,702	42,756	16.3	WV	57,488	11,303	19.7
MN	114,629	14,302	12.5	WI	130,758	17,007	13.0
MS	82,808	24,911	30.1	WY	16,460	1,311	8.0

Note. From 1980 Census by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, unpublished data collected in October 1979 for related (i.e., noninstitutionalized) children.

The ranking of states on populations of 3- and 4-year-olds, total and poor, is similar to their ranking in general populations. The three most populous states--California, Texas, and New York--account for one fourth of the nation's 3- and 4-year-olds. California alone has more 3- and 4-year-olds than the 19 least populous states. Most of the states with high percentages of poor 3- and 4-year-olds are in the south, with Mississippi the highest at 35 percent. Wyoming, with a mere 9 percent, clearly has the lowest poverty rate among 3- and 4-year-olds.

Table 2

SURVEY ESTIMATES OF CHILDREN, 3-4, TOTAL AND POOR, BY STATE

State	Total Number	Number Poor	% Poor	State	Total Number	Number Poor	% Poor
US	6,933,000	1,463,000	21.1				
				MO	149,000	29,000	19.3
AL	121,000	34,000	28.5	MT	28,000	5,000	19.0
AK	19,000	3,000	16.7	NE	52,000	8,000	15.9
AZ	95,000	20,000	21.6	NV	26,000	3,000	12.0
AR	73,000	21,000	28.1	NH	26,000	3,000	12.4
CA	748,000	157,000	20.9	NJ	193,000	38,000	19.5
CO	97,000	16,000	16.1	NM	51,000	14,000	26.8
CT	77,000	13,000	16.8	NY	464,000	122,000	26.3
DE	17,000	4,000	21.1	NC	168,000	38,000	22.5
DC	14,000	5,000	34.5	ND	23,000	4,000	18.4
FL	257,000	63,000	24.6	OH	322,000	59,000	18.5
GA	177,000	46,000	25.9	OK	105,000	21,000	19.8
HI	33,000	6,000	18.3	OR	84,000	15,000	17.5
ID	40,000	8,000	18.8	PA	309,000	58,000	18.7
IL	350,000	70,000	20.1	RI	23,000	5,000	20.0
IN	170,000	29,000	16.8	SC	101,000	25,000	24.5
IA	91,000	14,000	15.9	SD	25,000	6,000	25.4
KS	77,000	12,000	15.1	TN	136,000	34,000	25.4
KY	116,000	31,000	26.4	TX	529,000	121,000	22.8
LA	157,000	44,000	28.0	UT	84,000	12,000	14.5
ME	33,000	7,000	21.8	VT	15,000	3,000	19.4
MD	114,000	19,000	16.7	VA	151,000	28,000	18.7
MA	139,000	26,000	18.8	WA	133,000	22,000	16.8
MI	275,000	53,000	19.1	WV	59,000	14,000	23.0
MN	131,000	19,000	14.6	WI	145,000	22,000	15.2
MS	90,000	32,000	35.2	WY	21,000	2,000	9.3

Note. From U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey of July 1983, unpublished data; resident population for states by age.

Preprimary Enrollment of 3- to 5-Year-Olds

The following pages present tabulations of data from the October 1980 Current Population Survey on preprimary enrollment. That survey asked the following enrollment questions: Is [each child] attending or enrolled in school? Is it a public or private school [including parochial schools and private agencies]? What grade or year is [each child] attending? If the response to this last question was nursery or kindergarten, the respondent was asked whether the program was full- or part-day.

Table 3 presents estimates of preprimary enrollment in the U.S. for children, 3 to 5, in both public and private programs. The average size of an age cohort is 3,094,000, with variation of only 74,000. According to their parents, better than half of the children were enrolled in preprimary programs that provided educational experiences. Three out of ten of the children attended kindergarten, while two out of ten were in nursery schools. Of 5-year-olds, over 93 percent were enrolled in early childhood education programs; most of them (four out of five) were enrolled in kindergartens. About half as many 4-year-olds, 46 percent, were enrolled in preprimary programs, with over a third attending nursery schools, and one out of nine attending kindergartens. (Only half of the states expect kindergarteners to be 5 prior to the beginning of October, thus accounting for the number of 4-year-olds reported.) Of 3-year-olds, 27 percent were enrolled in preprimary programs, of which almost all were nursery schools.

Table 3

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY AGE AND PROGRAM TYPE

	Enrolled 3-Year-Olds		Enrolled 4-Year-Olds		Enrolled 5-Year-Olds		Enrolled Total, 3-5	
Program	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Nursery school	825,000	26.2	1,064,000	34.6	93,000	3.0	1,981,000	21.3
Kinder-garten	32,000	1.0	359,000	11.7	2,505,000	81.6	2,897,000	31.2
Total enrolled	857,000	27.3	1,423,000	46.3	2,860,000[a]	93.2	5,140,000[a]	55.4
Popu-lation	3,143,000	100.0	3,072,000	100.0	3,069,000	100.0	9,284,000	100.0

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (pp. 3-4) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[a]Includes 262,000 5-year-olds (8.5% of the age 5 population) in grade 1.

The enrollment rates shown in Table 4 show that in 1980 one out of three 3- to 5-year-olds was enrolled in a preprimary program in a public school, according to parent reports, while one out of five was enrolled in a private program. The vast majority of kindergartens are public: 84 percent of kindergarten children attend public schools, while only 16 percent attend private programs. The majority of nursery schools, however, are private: 68 percent of nursery school children attend private nursery schools, only 32 percent are enrolled in public school programs. A public school is defined as "any educational institution operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials and supported by public funds" (Chorvinsky, 1982, p. 19). Private schools are defined as educational institutions under private control, including those operated by religious groups.

According to a survey of state records by the U.S. Department of Education for the 1982-83 school year, the country's public school kindergartens had enrolled 2,734,079 children, ages 3 to 5, while public school nursery school programs had enrolled 105,319, a total public school preprimary enrollment of 2,839,398 children. Comparing this number to the 1983 Current Population Survey report of a total population of 10,399,500 children ages 3 to 5 in the U.S., we would conclude that 27 percent of this age group were attending public school preprimary programs, as compared to the 33 percent reported in the October 1980 Current Population Survey. The state record survey is probably not complete or accurate: not only are the enrollment figures lower than those of the Current Population Survey, but also zero enrollment is wrongly reported for several states that definitely have public school prekindergarten programs.

Table 4

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY PROGRAM TYPE AND AUSPICES

	% of 3- to 5-Year-Olds Enrolled		
Program Type	Public	Private	Total
Nursery school	6.8	14.6	21.3
Kindergarten	26.3	4.9	31.2
Total preprimary	33.0	19.5	52.5

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (p. 4) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Growth in Preprimary Enrollment

Enrollment rates in preprimary programs have risen substantially since 1970. As shown in Table 5, the enrollment rates for 3- and 4-year-olds increased from 21 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 1983, a growth rate of 181 percent. The preprimary enrollment rate for 5-year-olds also increased, from 78 percent in 1970 to 93 percent in 1983.

Table 5

ENROLLMENT RATES OF 3- TO 5-YEAR-OLDS, 1970-1983

Year	% of 3- and 4-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 5-Year-Olds Enrolled[a]	% of 3-5 Total Enrolled
1970	20.5	77.8	39.6
1972	24.4	84.6	44.5
1974	28.8	87.1	48.2
1976	31.3	89.9	50.8
1978	34.2	90.6	53.0
1980	36.7	93.2	55.5
1982	36.4	91.9	54.9
1983	37.6	93.1	56.1

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (p. 15) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics; and the U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Surveys for October, 1982 and 1983, unpublished information.

[a]The enrollment rates for 5-year-olds in this table, and the totals they affect, include an assumed 8.5 percent per year enrolled above the kindergarten level.

Child Care and Maternal Employment

The record growth in early childhood programs is often attributed to post-war growth in the number of mothers employed outside the home. In 1947, only 19 percent of ever-married women with children were in the labor force; in 1980, the figure was 57 percent (Children's Defense Fund, 1982). However, survey findings presented in Table 6 suggest that maternal employment is merely one contributing factor in this unprecedented growth rate. Perhaps the best argument to support this conclusion comes from comparing the enrollments of children of mothers employed full-time with those of mothers "keeping house" (the term used in the survey). The combined enrollment rate for children, 3 and 4, of mothers employed full-time was 44 percent, while for children of mothers keeping house the rate was 31 percent, only 13 percentage points lower. These statistics do not suggest that we disregard the pressing needs for early childhood programs by mothers who are employed outside the home. Rather, they indicate that a substantial number of mothers who "keep house" also enroll their young children in early childhood programs and that preprimary enrollment rates cannot be viewed solely as a function of mothers' outside employment.

Table 6

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY LABOR FORCE STATUS OF MOTHER

Labor Force Status[a]	% of 3-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 4-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 5-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 3-5 Total Enrolled
Mother in labor force	34.4	51.9	85.2	57.1
Mother not in labor force	21.5	41.5	84.5	48.9
Mother in labor force				
Employed full-time	35.4	52.5	84.6	57.4
Employed part-time	37.2	53.7	86.5	59.6
Unemployed	22.8	41.1	85.1	48.5
Mother not in labor force				
In school	37.2	56.1	95.1	63.0
Keeping house	20.9	40.2	83.9	48.5

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (p. 14) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[a]The incidence of categories of maternal labor force participation were not reported by Chorvinsky, so could not be included here. Some low-incidence categories are also not reported here.

The June 1982 Supplemental Questionnaire of the Current Population Survey asked employed mothers about the principal and secondary types of child care they had arranged for their youngest child. The survey probed for types of child care arrangements used in the four preceding weeks: child care provider, location, time span, and financial arrangements. This tabulation was limited to the approximately 52 percent of mothers--18 to 44 years old, with children under 5--who were employed outside the home ("More than half," 1984). Basic findings are presented in Table 7. Based on these data, we can report that better than four out of ten young children of working mothers were cared for by relatives (either in their own home or in another home), including 14 percent who were cared for by fathers. Out of every ten young children, a total of three were cared for in their own homes, four in other people's homes. Only 15 percent of the children attended child care centers, and about one out of ten accompanied his or her mother to work. In this survey, fewer than one out of 500 children under 5 were reported as "latchkey" children who stayed home alone. Mothers working full time obtained child care at home in only 26 percent of cases, as compared to 39 percent of mothers working part time. As a result, mothers working full time relied more on out-of-home options, with 19 percent of them, for example, using child care centers, as compared to only 8 percent of mothers working part time.

Table 7

CHILD CARE ENROLLMENT RATES FOR CHILDREN OF EMPLOYED MOTHERS[a]

Type of Child Care	% of Children Enrolled of Mothers Working:		
	Full-time or Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Care in child's home	30.6	25.7	39.3
by father	13.9	10.3	20.3
by other relative	11.2	10.3	12.7
by nonrelative	5.5	5.1	6.3
Care in another home	40.2	43.8	34.0
by relative	18.2	19.7	15.6
by nonrelative	22.0	24.1	18.4
Group care center	14.8	18.8	7.5
Child with mother at work	9.1	6.2	14.4
Other (including "latchkey")	0.2	0.3	0.1
Don't know/no answer	5.1	5.3	4.7

Note. From Child care arrangements of working mothers: June 1982, p. 4, by U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983, (Current Population Reports, Series P-23). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

[a]Data are restricted to the 5,086,000 employed mothers (18 to 44) of children under 5: 3,263,000 full-time and 1,824,000 part-time.

Hours of Program Operation

Part-day enrollment has always been closely associated with early childhood programs because of the widespread belief that a full school day of 5 or 6 hours would be too taxing for young children. Table 8 shows the extent of part-day and full-day enrollment in preprimary programs in 1980. According to the Current Population Survey, "part-day" means a child attends either morning or afternoon sessions of at least two hours a day for at least two days a week, while "full-day" means attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions. Kindergarten children are considered part-day if they attend full-day programs fewer than five days a week (Chorvinsky, 1982, p. 18).

Over two thirds of children enrolled in preprimary programs attended part-day; one third, full-day. In these proportions, 5-year-olds differed little from 3- and 4-year-olds, and nursery schools differed little from kindergartens.

If we assume that half of 3- to 5-year-olds have mothers who are employed outside the home and that these families prefer early childhood programs for their children that span the parents' work schedules, we can see why there is such a pressing need for full-day programs: only 17 percent of all 3- to 5-year-olds are now enrolled in them. Further, a "full-day" public school program is still at least two hours shorter than the typical adult work day, thereby generating a need for after-school care for elementary school children, as well as for young children in preprimary programs that do not operate for the full adult work day.

Table 8

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY AGE OR PROGRAM TYPE AND HOURS OF PROGRAM OPERATION

Age or Program Type	% Enrolled in Part-Day Programs	% Enrolled in Full-Day Programs
Age		
3-year-olds	17.1	10.2
4-year-olds	31.1	15.2
5-year-olds	59.8	24.9
3-5 total	35.8	16.7
Program Type		
Nursery school	14.0	7.3
Kindergarten	21.8	9.4

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (p. 6) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Preprimary Enrollment and Socioeconomic Status

Table 9 shows that the more income and education parents have, the more likely are their children to be enrolled in preprimary programs at ages 3, 4, and 5. The annual income breakpoint is $20,000. For families with an income lower than $20,000, the preprimary enrollment rate averaged 46 percent, while it was 64 percent for families with higher incomes--an 18 percent difference. For 4-year-olds the difference (63 percent versus 37 percent) was an even more striking 26 percent. A similar pattern is found with regard to the educational attainment of the household head: as educational level rises, so do preprimary enrollment rates. The preprimary enrollment rate for children of elementary school dropouts was 42 percent, while it was 68 percent for children of college graduates, a difference of 26 percent; for 4-year-olds the difference was a striking 36 percent.

To summarize, families with low earnings and the prospect of continued low earnings (due to their relative lack of education) cannot afford this expensive educational service for their children and are forced to rely upon scarce public funding to obtain it. Ironically, the benefits of good early childhood programs have been demonstrated most convincingly for the children least likely to be enrolled (e.g., Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, Epstein, & Weikart, 1984).

Table 9

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY FAMILY INCOME AND SCHOOLING

Category[a]	% of Children 3-5 in the Category	% of 3-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 4-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 5-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 3-5 Total Enrolled
Family income					
Under $10,000	26.7	19.2	38.5	81.1	45.4
$10,000-$19,999	35.3	20.9	36.6	84.2	46.8
$20,000 and over	33.9	40.7	62.8	88.0	64.2
Schooling of head of household					
1-3 yrs high school	14.1	17.9	36.9	80.2	45.3
4 yrs high school	36.5	21.0	39.2	86.8	48.3
1-3 yrs college	16.2	32.2	54.2	83.3	57.0
4- yrs college	20.2	48.1	67.7	88.7	67.9

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (pp. 10-12) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[a]No head of household was reported by respondents representing 2.9% of children; income was not reported by 4.1%.

Race plays an interesting role with respect to preprimary enrollment rates. Table 10 indicates that the overall rates for white children and children of other races (taken together) were nearly identical. But, when compared to white children, more children of other races were enrolled in public programs, while fewer were in private programs. White children were more frequently in part-day than in full-day programs, while the reverse was true for children of other races. The full-day enrollment rate for children of other races was more than double the rate for white children.

The data presented by Chorvinsky (1982, p. 10) show that white families and families of other races with incomes above $15,000 report about the same preprimary enrollment rates. But the enrollment rate for black 3- and 4-year-olds from families with incomes below $15,000 was 37 percent--12 percentage points higher than that for low-income whites. To some extent this difference can be explained by demographic factors associated with race: low-income black families more often live in large cities, which have more Head Start and other free or low-cost prekindergarten programs. Also, a disproportionately high percentage of low-income black families have no male present--57 percent as compared to 23 percent for low-income white families (see Kahn, 1982, p. 5)--making the need for child care greater.

Table 10

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY RACE[a]

Program Type	% of White Children Enrolled	% of Children of Other Races Enrolled
Total	52.7	51.9
Auspices		
Public	31.6	39.6
Private	21.1	12.3
Duration of day		
Part-day	39.0	21.6
Full-day	13.7	30.3

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (pp. 4 and 6) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[a]White children constitute 81.7% of all 3- to 5-year-olds; children of other races, 18.3% (black, 15.6%; Spanish origin, not broken out).

Preprimary Enrollment and Geography

Table 11 shows that preprimary enrollment rates are substantially lower outside metropolitan areas. The rates are roughly equivalent in central metropolitan areas and in other metropolitan areas, but the rates for 3- and 4-year-olds in nonmetropolitan areas are at least 15 percentage points lower. The rate for 3-year-olds in nonmetropolitan areas is only half of what it is in metropolitan areas.

Regionally, preprimary enrollment rates varied nonsystematically by no more than 6 percentage points, except for the enrollment rate for 4-year-olds in the Northeast, which topped other regions of the country by 12 percentage points.

Table 11

PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT RATES BY AGE, METROPOLITAN STATUS, AND REGION

Status/Region	% of 3-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 4-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 5-Year-Olds Enrolled	% of 3-5 Total Enrolled
Metropolitan status				
Central metropolitan	30.4	52.4	84.0	54.9
Other metropolitan	34.4	51.0	85.0	57.0
Nonmetropolitan	16.8	36.0	84.7	45.7
Region of the country[a]				
Northeast	29.1	56.1	85.3	56.6
North Central	25.7	42.6	86.3	51.3
South	25.1	42.4	84.0	50.3
West	31.2	47.6	82.8	53.7

Note. From Preprimary enrollment 1980 (p. 7) by M. Chorvinsky, 1982, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[a]Northeast states: CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT. North Central states: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NB, ND, OH, SD, WI. Southern states: AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV. Western states: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY (Chorvinsky, 1982, p. 18).

FEDERALLY FUNDED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The federal government is the major source of public funding of preprimary programs for 3- and 4-year-olds in the U.S. This section focuses on these federally funded care and education programs for young children. Funding is provided in three ways: (1) to families directly, (2) to states or local organizations, and (3) through federal tax credits for families paying for such services. The government also allows individual and corporate taxpayers to deduct charitable contributions to non-profit early childhood programs. The program descriptions are based on information taken from a recent report prepared for the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families (Congressional Research Service, 1983).

Table 12

FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLDS:
FUNDING AND PARTICIPATION

Program Program	Annual Funding Funding	% of Children Subsidized	3- and 4-Year-Olds % of Children Subsidized	 Number
Head Start	$968 million	442,000	82	362,440
Social Services Block Grant funds used for child care	681 million	578,000	65	376,700
Child Care Food Program	329 million	901,000	65	585,650
Work Incentive (WIN)	50 million	25,000	65	16,250
Appalachian	2 million	1,000	65	650
Chapter 1	3.1 billion	4,866,108	3	166,178
Handicapped	1.1 billion	4,094,000	6	243,000
Dependent care tax credit	1.5 billion	4,231,000	-	-
Employer-provided child care tax credit	10 million	4,000	-	-
All programs	6.9 billion	15,142,108[a]	-	1,750,868[a]

Note. Data presented are for most recent year available, between FY 1983 and FY 1985, as indicated in the text. Percents of 3- and 4-year-olds in child care programs are based on the most recent (1981) federal state-by-state analysis of Title XX-funded child care.

[a]Ignores the fact that some children are served by more than one program.

Table 12 presents the most recent data available on participation of young children in federal programs. If we ignore the fact that some children are in more than one program, a total of 15,142,108 children of all ages have been served by these programs, with total funding of nearly $7 billion. Excluding tax credits (for which child participation data are not available), about 1.75 million 3- and 4-year-olds--25 percent of the total population that age--participate in early childhood education or care programs that are funded by federal grants. Including federal tax credits, we estimate that at least 60 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds, some 4 million children, receive some form of federal child care assistance.

Two large programs, the dependent care tax credit and the Child Care Food Program, are available to all children, but most of the other large programs are designed for low-income families. Programs for handicapped preschool children constitute another major category of young children served by federally funded programs.

The National Head Start Program

The federal Office of Human Development Services in the Department of Health and Human Services administers the Head Start program as well as child care programs funded by the Social Services Block Grant, the Work Incentive program, and several smaller programs. Head Start is administered through regional offices and local Head Start delegate agencies. Although funds are allocated by state, they are distributed as competitive grants to local Head Start agencies. Grantees must provide 20 percent of program costs in cash or in kind, although this requirement can be waived.

The goal of the Head Start program is to help economically disadvantaged children begin formal schooling with preparation that more nearly resembles that of their more advantaged peers. Local Head Start agencies provide educational, social, medical, and nutritional services to low-income children, usually between the ages of 3 and 5; 97 percent of Head Start enrollees were between the ages of 3 and 5 in March 1984 (26 percent were 3, 56 percent were 4, and 15 percent were 5).

To participate in Head Start, children must live in families that meet poverty guidelines established by the Office of Management and Budget, although up to 10 percent of enrollees need not be poor. The poverty guidelines are adjusted each year to reflect family size and the current rate of inflation; in 1983, the poverty threshold for a nonfarm family of four in the contiguous 48 states was $9,900. At least 10 percent of Head Start's enrollees must be handicapped; during the 1982-83 school year, handicapped children accounted for 54,904 (11.9 percent) of all children enrolled in full-year Head Start programs.

There are approximately 1,200 regular Head Start centers across the country, approximately 25 migrant programs, and 95 Indian programs. There are also about 30 parent-child centers that serve children from infancy to age 3, their parents, and their older siblings. Funding for these programs was $819 million in FY 1981, $912 million in FY 1982 and again in FY 1983, $968 million in FY 1984, and $1.075 billion in FY 1985. The Head Start Act of 1984 reauthorized Head Start for two more years of operation.

Combining federal expenditures for FY 1984 with delegate agency matches of approximately $242 million shows a total FY 1984 expenditure of $1.2 billion. These funds served 442,080 children (95 percent in the states and 5 percent in the territories), at a program cost of $2,737 per child. Since an estimated 82 percent of Head Start enrollees are 3 and 4 years old, the program served an estimated 344,216 children of these ages in the states. This figure constitutes 24 percent of the poor children in the states in this age range.

In March 1984 42 percent of Head Start children were black; 33 percent were white; 20 percent were Hispanic-American; 4 percent, American Indian; 1 percent, Asian-American. One third of the programs were urban, one third were rural, and one third served both urban and rural children. These figures all come from the Project Head Start Statistical Fact Sheet (U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families, 1984).

Tables 13 and 14 present information on the 1984-85 Head Start program. Table 13 presents federal funding for FY 1985 (prior to the disbursement of expansion funds), estimated matching dollars from delegate agencies, numbers of children served, and per-child costs calculated by dividing the program dollars listed in the table by the number of children served. While the national average per-child cost is $2,737, the state with the highest per-child cost is Alaska, which contributes a 41 percent match, at $3,783 (DC is even higher, at $3,810). Next come New Jersey, at $3,740 and New York at $3,656. New Mexico has the lowest per-child cost, $1,905, followed by several of the southern states, all of which fall in the low $2,000s. In presenting these figures by state, we imply no common norm. To calculate such a norm, one would have to take into account the cost of living in each state.

Table 14 presents Head Start enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds as a percent of the population of poor children this age in each state. The highest percent of enrollees is in Alaska (53 percent), where state matching funds are high and are spent exclusively on 3- and 4-year-olds. The lowest percents, 18 percent and under, are in New York, Virginia, Utah, Texas, and Hawaii.

Federal Funding for Child Care

State social service agencies administer child care funds from the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). The permanent legislative authority for the Social Services Block Grant is Title XX of the Social Security Act. The Work Incentive Program (WIN) is jointly administered at the federal level by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor, and at the state level by the social services agency and the employment service. Some funding for employer-related child care is available through a job and private investment program of the Appalachian Regional Commission, transferred there from the federal Administration for Children, Youth and Families. Funding is authorized by the Appalachian Regional Act of 1965, as amended. Several other federal programs provide limited funding for child care. Each of these programs will be reviewed in this section.

Table 13

FY 1985 HEAD START FUNDING BY STATE, TERRITORY, AND SPECIAL POPULATION

State	Federal Funding	Local Funding[a]	Children Served	Cost per Child
US	$967,750,000[b]	$242,262,613	442,080	$2,737
AL	$19,953,752	$4,988,438	10,634	$2,346
AK	2,088,571	847,256	776	3,783
AZ	8,193,491	2,048,373	3,276	3,126
AR	10,102,868	2,525,717	5,855	2,157
CA	90,813,614	22,703,404	32,729	3,468
CO	8,979,046	2,244,762	4,868	2,306
CT	9,364,720	2,341,180	4,227	2,769
DE	2,037,920	509,480	900	2,830
DC	5,895,276	1,473,819	1,934	3,810
FL	26,333,383	6,583,346	12,545	2,624
GA	22,787,532	5,696,883	10,622	2,682
HI	3,609,596	902,399	1,331	3,390
ID	2,656,908	664,227	1,183	2,807
IL	48,473,533	12,118,383	21,244	2,852
IN	13,354,686	3,338,672	6,630	2,518
IA	7,077,059	1,769,265	3,575	2,474
KS	6,060,394	1,515,099	3,198	2,369
KY	19,129,699	4,782,425	10,453	2,288
LA	20,232,236	5,058,059	10,331	2,448
ME	4,092,387	1,023,097	1,675	3,054
MD	12,968,705	3,242,176	5,660	2,864
MA	21,909,383	5,477,346	7,843	3,492
MI	39,730,963	9,932,741	19,448	2,554
MN	10,184,149	2,546,037	4,850	2,625
MS	50,981,929	12,745,482	28,139	2,265
MO	16,870,194	4,217,549	8,637	2,442
MT	2,426,514	606,629	1,145	2,649
NE	3,882,475	970,619	1,975	2,457
NV	1,350,431	337,608	544	3,103
NH	1,846,030	461,508	754	3,060
NJ	28,896,596	7,224,149	9,659	3,740
NM	5,690,393	1,422,598	3,734	1,905
NY	70,631,034	17,657,759	24,147	3,656
NC	20,875,075	5,218,769	10,780	2,421

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)

FY 1985 HEAD START FUNDING BY STATE, TERRITORY, AND SPECIAL POPULATION

State	Federal Funding	Local Funding[a]	Children Served	Cost per Child
ND	$1,378,244	$344,561	666	$2,587
OH	38,995,813	9,748,953	20,613	2,365
OK	11,781,259	2,945,315	7,191	2,048
OR	7,752,418	1,938,105	2,956	3,278
PA	41,250,752	10,312,688	16,797	3,070
RI	3,175,537	793,884	1,382	2,872
SC	12,555,244	3,138,811	6,548	2,397
SD	2,219,976	554,994	1,054	2,633
TN	17,196,481	4,299,120	8,718	2,466
TX	43,458,821	10,864,705	21,672	2,507
UT	3,966,448	991,612	1,967	2,521
VT	1,918,055	479,514	907	2,643
VA	13,735,641	3,433,910	5,652	3,038
WA	10,948,504	2,737,126	4,326	3,164
WV	8,351,968	2,087,992	4,064	2,569
WI	13,911,269	3,477,817	6,444	2,698
WY	1,263,045	315,761	668	2,363
Territories				
Puerto Rico	$39,002,114	$9,750,529	17,829	$2,734
Virgin Islands	2,052,510	513,128	1,069	2,400
Pacific Islands	2,716,875	679,219	4,179	813
Special Populations				
Indian	$35,239,858	$8,809,965	13,936	$3,161
Migrant	35,398,626	8,849,657	18,141	2,439

Note. From "Estimated FY 1985 Head Start Funding" by the U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

[a]Matching dollars were calculated as 20% of each state's total (that is, 25% of federal dollars), except for Alaska, which reported to us that the state received $3,633,830 in federal funds and contributed $2,480,263--41% of the state total--to serve 1,576 children; Alaska figures reported above, which do not include migrant and Indian programs, are scaled back to match ACYF-reported federal dollars.

[b]FY 1985 base allotments before the addition of expansion funds.

Table 14

POOR 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLDS SERVED BY HEAD START IN FY 1985, BY STATE[a]

State	Number Poor	Number in Head Start	% Served	State	Number Poor	Number in Head Start	% Served
US	1,463,000	344,216	23.5				
				MO	29,000	7,082	24.6
AL	34,000	8,839	25.6	MT	5,000	1,817	34.2
AK	3,000	1,576[b]	52.5	NE	8,000	1,749	21.2
AZ	20,000	7,360	35.9	NV	3,000	603	19.4
AR	21,000	5,027	24.5	NH	3,000	618	19.2
CA	157,000	29,288	18.7	NJ	38,000	8,023	21.3
CO	16,000	4,455	28.5	NM	14,000	4,548	33.3
CT	13,000	3,466	26.8	NY	122,000	20,249	16.6
DE	4,000	820	22.9	NC	38,000	9,345	24.7
DC	5,000	1,586	32.8	ND	4,000	1,106	26.2
FL	63,000	11,782	18.7	OH	59,000	17,355	29.2
GA	46,000	8,792	19.2	OK	21,000	6,780	32.6
HI	6,000	1,091	18.0	OR	15,000	2,930	19.9
ID	8,000	1,452	19.4	PA	58,000	13,806	23.9
IL	70,000	17,862	25.3	RI	5,000	1,133	24.6
IN	29,000	6,050	21.2	SC	25,000	5,439	22.0
IA	14,000	2,932	20.3	SD	6,000	1,397	22.0
KS	12,000	2,622	22.6	TN	34,000	7,394	21.4
KY	31,000	8,571	28.0	TX	121,000	21,529	17.8
LA	44,000	8,471	19.2	UT	12,000	2,136	17.5
ME	7,000	1,374	19.1	VT	3,000	744	25.5
MD	19,000	4,786	25.2	VA	28,000	4,770	16.9
MA	26,000	6,555	25.1	WA	22,000	4,769	21.3
MI	53,000	16,535	31.5	WV	14,000	3,807	28.1
MN	19,000	4,651	24.3	WI	22,000	5,284	23.9
MS	32,000	- [c]	-	WY	2,000	653	33.4

Note. The data in column 2 are from the Current Population Survey of July 1983, by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, unpublished data on resident population for states by age; the data in column 3 are from the U.S. Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

[a]Indian and migrant children were added into state totals, then the 82 percent of children in Head Start who were 3 and 4 was calculated. These numbers are slight overestimates, however, because up to 10 percent of Head Start program enrollments may be children from non-poor families.

[b]Alaska enrollment reported by Alaska Department of Education.

[c]Since Mississippi does not yet have public school kindergarten, Head Start serves a larger-than-average proportion of 5-year-olds; hence the national percent of enrollment for 3- and 4-year-olds (82% of the total) does not apply.

The Social Services Block Grant. Through this grant, states receive federal funds to provide various social services to their citizens. Funds are distributed to states according to their populations, and states design their own programs within broad federal guidelines. Prior to FY 1982, states had to furnish matching funds and observe federal criteria for the population served and program quality, but these regulations were eliminated by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. Table 15 lists total program funding for the past five years, along with estimates of the portion of these funds that states allocate for child care. The latter figures come from state-by-state tabulations by the Children's Defense Fund (Blank, 1984). According to the same survey, the states expended an estimated $686 million of the Social Services Block Grant of FY 1984 for child care services that served 577,830 children.

Table 16 presents statistics on the child care portion of the Social Services Block Grant, data mostly collected by the Children's Defense Fund. Because of parental payments and sliding fee schedules, per-child expenditures represent subsidies, not full-program costs. The national average per-child expenditure was $1,186, ranging from $3,062 in Oregon to $91 in Minnesota. While California expended no SSBG funds for child care, it expended state funds on child care that were nearly double the SSBG expenditure of any other state.

In addition to the federally funded Block Grant program, child care funds are available through three federal employment programs or practices for recipients of Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC). Title IV of the Social Security Act permanently authorizes child care funding under the Work Incentive Program, under the Community Work Experience Program, and during the process of employment search by AFDC recipients.

Table 15

HISTORY OF SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT
CHILD CARE FUNDING

Year	Social Services Block Grant: Total Funding	Estimated Child Care Allocation	% of Total Spent on Child Care
FY 1981[a]	$2.9 billion	$707 million	24.4
FY 1982	2.4 billion	645 million	26.9
FY 1983	2.7 billion	623 million	23.3
FY 1984	2.7 billion	686 million	25.0
FY 1985	2.8 billion	-	-

[a]Title XX funding of the same services is reported for FY 1981.

Table 16

FY 1984 SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT CHILD CARE FUNDING BY STATE

State	Total Child Care Funding	Number of Children	Cost per Child	State	Total Child Care Funding	Number of Children	Cost per Child
US	$686,178,921	578,459	$1,186				
				MO	$10,471,642	6,429	$1,629
AL	$11,200,000	8,950	$1,251	MT	191,766	500	384
AK	0	0	0	NE	3,439,000	8,738	394
AZ	20,607,000	14,300	1,441	NV	240,435	800	301
AR	2,781,653	2,100	1,325	NH	3,202,800	3,890	823
CA	277,000,000	150,000	1,847[a]	NJ	30,110,000	11,893	2,532
CO	9,688,508	9,392	1,032	NM	3,487,383	3,751	930
CT	16,000,000	9,747	1,642	NY	141,000,000	76,000	1,855
DE	2,283,491	1,400	1,631	NC	21,459,252	12,481	1,719
DC	13,652,600	6,650	2,053	ND	84,527	75	1,127
FL	31,233,901	118,666	263[b]	OH	22,900,000	26,000	881[c]
GA	18,373,870	8,200	2,241	OK	17,639,732	11,500	1,534
HI	1,800,000	2,250	800	OR	1,240,293	405	3,062[b]
ID	56,000	250	224[b]	PA	59,419,000	22,800	2,606
IL	33,696,500	16,762	2,010	RI	1,600,000	700	2,286
IN	9,891,000	14,000	707	SC	10,897,178	4,950	2,201
IA	1,661,635	1,197	1,388	SD	98,347	751	131
KS	2,900,462	2,438	1,190	TN	13,518,900	14,179	953
KY	5,924,333	7,243	818	TX	36,000,000	15,000	2,400
LA	15,237,055	9,510	1,602	UT	7,762,129	6,577	1,180
ME	3,802,200	2,950	1,289	VT	1,800,000	930	1,935
MD	14,200,000	15,000	947	VA	6,343,829	9,803	647
MA	42,800,000	19,125	2,238	WA	4,101,619	3,700	1,109
MI	4,500,000	2,500	1,800	WV	5,800,000	4,600	1,261
MN	3,822,810	42,000	91	WI	9,428,778	11,000	857
MS	6,166,581	5,074	1,215	WY	1,662,712	1,303	1,276

Note. From Child care: The states' response--A survey of state child care policies 1983-1984 (pp. 40-48) by H. Blank, 1984, Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund. Copyright 1984 by Children's Defense Fund. Adapted by permission. See source for details.

[a]California state funds, although listed, are not included in national Block Grant totals.

[b]Figures obtained directly from state government.

[c]FY 1983 estimates from Children's Defense Fund (1984, pp. 40-41).

The Work Incentive Program. This program oversees the AFDC work registration requirement and provides other services (including child care) to help AFDC recipients find jobs. Program funds may also be used to train AFDC recipients as child care workers. States must provide 10 percent of program costs, in cash or in kind. Statistics on participation in the program by AFDC recipients are not collected, but WIN funding for child care in FY 1981 was $50 million.

The Community Work Experience Program (CWEP, workfare). States may require participation by AFDC recipients in this program. The program is designed to improve the employability of participants through actual work experience and training and to enable individuals to move into regular employment. Workers can be employed and trained at child care facilities. Another federal regulation provides funding for services to help AFDC recipients find employment. Both of these programs require that states provide 50 percent of program costs. Statistics on participation or funding are not collected for these programs.

The Appalachian Regional Commission. This Commission distributes some funding for employer-related child care through a job and private investment program. Nonprofit organizations can receive start-up funding to establish or expand a child care program that operates in conjunction with a business; 50 percent of costs must come from other sources. This program, which provided its first eight grants in 1983, is all that is left of the Commission's extensive child development program that ran from 1971 to 1982. FY 1983 funding was $2 million.

The Child Care Food Program. While not an education or child care program itself, this program clearly increases the resources available for such programs for young children. It is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through 10 regional offices, 41 state education agencies (and 5 alternate agencies), and local child care sponsoring agencies. The program is permanently authorized by the National School Lunch Act of 1946, as amended, and helps states provide nutritious meals to children in child care centers, family and group child care homes, and Head Start centers. Funds are provided for up to two meals and a snack each day. During FY 1982, a maximum monthly total of 901,000 children were served. Between 60 percent and 70 percent of these funds go to centers, with the remaining funds going to child day care homes. Program funding was $282.7 million in FY 1981, $271.5 million in FY 1982, and an estimated $328.8 million in FY 1983.

Other programs. Two other federal programs use some of their funding for child care provision. The Job Training Partnership Act focuses on job training to help economically disadvantaged people enter the labor force; it permits up to 15 percent of available funds to be used for such supportive services as child care. The Community Development Block Grant provides funds for decent housing and living environments for the poor; it can allocate up to 10 percent of available funds for such public services as child care.

Tax Credits for Child Care

Through federal tax credits, taxpayers pay less income taxes if they spend money on child care. Since taxpayers have income other than government transfer payments, these programs benefit parents who are employed. Tax programs are permanently authorized by the Internal Revenue Code and administered by the Internal Revenue Service of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The dependent care tax credit. Taxpayers can claim a credit against their income tax for a portion of expenses incurred for qualified child and other dependent care that enables the taxpayer to be gainfully employed. The tax credit is authorized by Section 44A of the Internal Revenue Code. The percent of expenses that can be charged varies from 30 percent for taxpayers with incomes under $10,000 to 20 percent for taxpayers with incomes over $28,000. There are also caps limiting the credits to a maximum of $720 for one qualifying dependent and a maximum of $1,440 for two or more qualifying dependents. The tax credit decreases as income increases; it replaces a previous tax deduction for child care that increased with income. The 1980 federal tax returns included 4,230,757 claims for the credit. The total estimated cost for this program was $1.2 billion in FY 1981, $1.5 billion in FY 1982, and $1.5 billion in FY 1983.

Employer-related child care tax credits. Employers may also save money on taxes by supporting child care for children of their employees. Child care may be considered a tax-free fringe benefit under the provisions of dependent care assistance programs (DCAPS); for FY 1985 the cost of this program is estimated at $70 million. Employers may also deduct the expenses of providing child care as an ordinary and necessary business expense when the service benefits the business by reducing staff absenteeism and turnover.

There are also tax provisions for employer-provided child care. Payments by an employer for dependent care assistance, provided under a plan that meets certain conditions, are explicitly excluded from an employee's gross income by amendments to the Internal Revenue Code by the Economic Recovery Act of 1981. The estimated tax expenditures from this program were less than $2.5 million in FY 1982, but $10 million in FY 1983.

Compensatory Education

Compensatory education programs for young children are administered by the U.S. Department of Education, state education agencies, and local education agencies. Some programs are locally administered through colleges or universities as well as non-profit institutions. Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981, which funds compensatory education programs, is administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and expires at the end of FY 1987.

Through Chapter 1 of the 1981 Act, both state and local education agencies receive funds to provide compensatory education for educationally disadvantaged children living in poverty areas. Prekindergarten children can participate in these programs, although priority is given to children enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12.

Local education agencies receive funds primarily on the basis of the number of poor children living within their jurisdiction, but within schools, eligibility is based on educational disadvantage, not income. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 75 percent of local education agency funds go to remedial education in reading and mathematics. State education agency funds are targeted for handicapped, neglected, or delinquent children, and children from migrant families. During the 1981-82 school year, 4,866,108 students were served by either local education agency or state education agency programs. Funding of the total program was $3.1 billion in FY 1981, $3 billion in FY 1982, and $3.2 billion in FY 1983. During the 1981-82 school year, 332,355 children were served by Chapter 1-funded kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs--only 6.8 percent of the total served. In the absence of more detailed information, we have assumed (see Table 12) that half this number are 3 and 4 years old--an estimated 166,178 or 3.4 percent of the total. If funds were distributed at the average per-child level for Chapter 1 programs, programs for 3- and 4-year-olds received an estimated $100 million.

Education Programs for Handicapped Children

The Education of the Handicapped Act. This Act, as amended, is administered by the federal Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The Preschool Incentive Grant for handicapped children is permanently authorized, but other programs for the handicapped authorized by this Act expire at end of FY 1986.

According to the 1984 child count by the U.S. Department of Education ("Data File," 1984), 243,087 handicapped children aged 3 to 5 were enrolled in educational programs in states and territories that received approximately $96 million in federal funds, averaging about $395 per child. These federal funds served 241,053 handicapped children aged 3 to 5 in the 50 states and DC, which is about 2.3 percent of the total U.S. population in this age range. We estimate that 6.8 percent[a] of the 6 to 21 age group are served in programs for the handicapped, a rate that is nearly three times as high as that for younger children. This difference may be explained by the fact that the majority of handicapped children are not identified and treated until they reach school age.

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[a]Based on the 1984 Department of Education count, we estimate that 3,812,000 persons aged 6 to 21 receive federally funded special education. The 1984 population estimate for persons in this age range was 56,468,000 (Frankel & Gerald, 1982, p. 14).

According to a Rand study (Kakalik, Furry, Thomas, & Carney, 1981, p. vii), the cost of preschool special education during the 1977-78 school year averaged $3,526 per child. This suggests that the total annual public investment in these early childhood programs is at least $857 million and that the federal government covers only about 11 percent of the total cost.

Table 17 presents Department of Education counts of handicapped young children in each state as a percent of the state's population of children this age. The highest rates, over 4 percent, are in Maine, Virginia, and South Dakota; the lowest rates, a flat 1 percent, are in Hawaii, Idaho, and Oregon. Local education agencies are among the major direct service providers for early childhood special education for young children in all but three states: Arkansas, Oregon, and Wyoming. In addition to federal funds, these programs are supported in part by state and/or local public funds in all but six states: Arizona, Indiana, Maine, New York, Oregon, and Pennsylvania (SEA Early Childhood Special Education Consortium, 1984).

Table 18 presents the distribution of these children (as well as children outside the U.S. receiving federal dollars) by category of disability. More than two out of three children aged 3 to 5 who receive special education are considered speech impaired, which is by far the largest category. Only about 8 percent of the children served are considered learning disabled; another 8 percent are considered mentally retarded; 5 percent are classified as multiply handicapped; 3 percent as orthopedically handicapped; and 2 percent each as emotionally disturbed or having other health impairments. The remaining categories constitute about 3 percent of the total, and all involve some type of hearing or vision impairment.

Preschool Incentive Grants. These grants provide funds to state and local education agencies to expand educational services for handicapped children aged 3 to 5. Funds are allotted on the basis of the number of children already served. In FY 1983, an estimated 228,000 children were served. Funding was $25 million in FY 1981, $24 million in FY 1982, and $25 million in FY 1983. The Early Education for Handicapped Children program (HCEEP) funds demonstration projects for comprehensive services for handicapped children from birth to age 8. In FY 1982, an estimated 89 projects were funded. Funding was $17.5 million in FY 1981, $16.8 million in FY 1982, and $16.8 million in FY 1983.

Table 17

HANDICAPPED 3- TO 5-YEAR-OLDS BY STATE AND % OF POPULATION

State	Number of All Children	Number of Handicapped	% of Population	State	Number of All Children	Number of Handicapped	% of Population
US	10,332,444	241,196	2.3				
				MO	223,500	6,409	2.9
AL	181,500	2,344	1.3	MT	42,000	1,490	3.5
AK	21,444	704	3.3[a]	NE	78,000	2,589	3.3
AZ	142,500	1,667	1.2	NV	39,000	786	2.0
AR	109,500	2,377	2.2	NH	39,000	870	2.2
CA	1,122,000	19,130	1.7	NJ	289,500	8,280	2.9
CO	145,500	1,563	1.1	NM	76,500	1,139	1.5
CT	115,500	3,566	3.1	NY	696,000	7,565	1.1
DE	25,500	642	2.5	NC	252,000	6,058	2.4
DC	21,000	484	2.3	ND	34,500	895	2.6
FL	385,500	6,575	1.7	OH	483,000	7,018	1.5
GA	265,500	5,264	2.0	OK	157,500	5,351	3.4
HI	49,500	494	1.0	OR	126,000	1,277	1.0
ID	60,000	582	1.0	PA	463,500	8,164	1.8
IL	525,000	20,434	3.9	RI	34,500	1,136	3.3
IN	255,000	4,693	1.8	SC	151,500	4,497	3.0
IA	136,500	5,027	3.7	SD	37,500	1,700	4.5
KS	115,500	2,666	2.3	TN	204,000	7,577	3.7
KY	174,000	3,837	2.2	TX	793,500	18,974	2.4
LA	235,500	4,967	2.1	UT	126,000	2,129	1.7
ME	49,500	2,260	4.6	VT	22,500	533	2.4
MD	171,000	5,688	3.3	VA	226,500	9,265	4.1
MA	208,500	6,276	3.0	WA	199,500	4,864	2.4
MI	412,500	11,676	2.8	WV	88,500	2,113	2.4
MN	196,500	7,868	4.0	WI	217,500	7,823	3.6
MS	135,000	1,461	1.1	WY	31,500	449	1.4

Note. The data in column 2 are from the Current Population Survey of July 1983, unpublished data. The data in column 3 are from "Data File: ED Gets Handicapped Child Counts, Grants," 1984, July 24, Report on Preschool Programs, 16, 15, Washington, DC: Capitol Publications.

[a]Figures supplied by Alaska Department of Education.

Table 18

HANDICAPPED 3- TO 5-YEAR-OLDS SERVED BY DISABILITY

Disability	Number of Children	% of Total	Disability	Number of Children	% of Total
Total	243,087	100.0			
Speech impaired	168,176	69.2	Emotionally disturbed	5,860	2.4
Learning disabled	19,204	7.9	Other health impaired	4,015	1.7
Mentally retarded	19,052	7.8	Hard of hearing	3,634	1.5
Multi-handicapped	12,500	5.1	Deaf	1,740	.7
Orthopedically handicapped	7,031	2.9	Visually handicapped	1,736	.7
			Deaf-blind	139	.05

Note. From "Data File: ED Sets Handicapped Child Counts, Grants," 1984, July 24, Report on Preschool Programs, 16, 15, Washington, DC: Capitol Publications.

The State Grant Program. This program is designed to assure that every handicapped child aged 3 to 21 years, within participating states, receives a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive educational setting. Funds are allotted to states on the basis of number of handicapped children in this age range receiving a free appropriate education, then distributed to local education agencies. The program pays for up to 40 percent of excess costs of educating a handicapped child as compared to a non-handicapped child. The federal share of excess costs peaked at 12.5 percent in FY 1979 and fell to about 8 percent in FY 1984. Every state participates in this program. In FY 1983, an estimated 4,042,000 children of all ages were in the program, with an estimated 5.6 percent of them between the ages of 3 and 5--about 226,000. Total program funding was $874.5 million in FY 1981, $931 million in FY 1982, and $970 million in FY 1983. If young children received a proportionate share of state grant funding, in FY 1983 they would have received $54 million, making it the largest program for handicapped preschoolers.

In addition, two other programs may serve small numbers of preschool-aged handicapped children. They are centers and services for deaf-blind children (3,000 children served in FY 1982; FY 1983 funding of $15.4 million) and projects for the severely handicapped (3,000 children served in FY 1981; FY 1983 funding of $2.9 million).

STATE-FUNDED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Historically, state funding for early childhood programs has had two foci: (1) assisting local education agencies in funding public school kindergarten programs and (2) following federal leads in funding programs for the disadvantaged, like Head Start and special programs for handicapped children. Recently, a third focus has emerged: funding prekindergarten programs that are independent of federal funding.

Table 19 presents public school preprimary enrollment by state, as reported by state departments of education to the U.S. Department of Education. According to this survey, the public schools offered nursery school programs in 33 states. The survey erroneously included California, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina among the 17 states that did not offer such programs, perhaps because the relevant data were not received from the state education agencies.

The table presents preprimary enrollment as a percentage of all children in the age range of 3 to 5 years: the national average is 27 percent, with a high of 44 percent in the District of Columbia and lows of 4 percent in Mississippi, 11 percent in New Hampshire, and 18 percent in Oregon. Only three states do not augment local funding with some type of state financial assistance for kindergarten programs--New Hampshire, New Mexico (26% enrollment), and Mississippi. In Mississippi, public school kindergarten has been authorized, but funding has not yet been appropriated, making it the only state in the country without a publicly funded kindergarten system. New Hampshire also has relatively few children in public school kindergartens; the New Hampshire Board of Education wants to require local districts to offer kindergarten.

Except for these extremes, states varied by only 12 percentage points in public school preprimary enrollment--falling between 20 and 32 percent. Table 19 also presents preprimary enrollment as a percentage of public school first-grade enrollment, a figure that is frequently reported but of less utility than simple enrollment figures, particularly as the enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds becomes more prevalent. These figures generally duplicate the simple enrollment distribution, but at a higher range, with the curious exception of Wisconsin, with a rate of 131 percent. A check with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction produced the suggested explanation that the unusually high rate is due to a large number of children attending Wisconsin private schools that begin at first grade after they have attended public school kindergartens.

Table 19

FALL 1982 PUBLIC SCHOOL PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT BY STATE AND PROGRAM

State	Public School Enrollment			3-5 Population		Public Grade 1	
	Kinder-garten	Nursery School	Total Enrolled	Number	% Enrolled	Number	Preprimary as % of Grade 1
US	2,733,933	105,317	2,839,398	10,399,500	27	2,936,182	97
AL	36,736	0	36,736	181,500	20	58,351	63
AK	6,785	474	7,407	28,500	26	7,321	101
AZ	37,869	0	37,869	142,500	27	38,757	98
AR	30,235	0	30,235	109,500	28	34,293	88
CA	313,584	0	313,584	1122,000	28	308,359	102
CO	39,874	1,526	41,400	145,500	28	40,801	101
CT	33,245	3,827	37,072	115,500	32	34,070	109
DE	6,169	0	6,169	25,500	24	6,361	97
DC	6,215	2,930	9,145	21,000	44	7,445	123
FL	96,966	2,629	99,595	385,500	26	107,420	93
GA	69,332	0	69,332	265,500	26	82,690	84
HI	12,493	297	12,790	49,500	26	12,311	104
ID	16,115	0	16,115	60,000	27	17,581	92
IL	134,864	19,683	154,547	525,000	29	137,108	113
IN	69,949	474	70,423	255,000	28	73,966	95
IA	39,424	429	39,853	136,500	29	35,881	111
KS	32,629	-	32,629	115,500	28	30,782	106
KY	44,857	0	44,857	174,000	26	52,376	86
LA	56,648	2,921	59,569	235,500	25	68,785	87
ME	15,208	85	15,293	49,500	31	15,051	102
MD	44,529	7,306	51,835	171,000	30	45,892	113
MA	57,404	2,108	59,512	208,500	29	60,075	99
MI	120,826	4,327	125,153	412,500	30	113,917	110
MN	52,528	3,507	56,035	196,500	29	48,728	115
MS	5,704	129	5,833	135,000	4	42,216	14

(continued)

Table 19 (continued)

FALL 1982 PUBLIC SCHOOL PREPRIMARY ENROLLMENT BY STATE AND PROGRAM

State	Public School Enrollment			3-5 Population		Public Grade 1	
	Kinder-garten	Nursery School	Total Enrolled	Number	% Enrolled	Number	Preprimary a % of Grade 1
MO	59,394	-	59,394	223,500	27	57,839	103
MT	11,332	135	11,467	42,000	27	12,340	93
NE	21,761	1,049	22,810	78,000	29	20,077	114
NV	10,552	0	10,552	39,000	27	11,178	94
NH	4,192	0	4,192	39,000	11	12,997	32
NJ	75,097	5,243	80,340	289,500	28	76,482	105
NM	19,955	0	19,955	76,500	26	21,072	95
NY	166,266	13,265	179,531	696,000	26	186,950	96
NC	76,767	0	76,767	252,000	30	78,641	98
ND	8,795	467	9,262	34,500	27	9,405	98
OH	134,685	3,756	138,441	483,000	29	132,241	105
OK	46,530	1,981	48,511	157,500	31	48,008	101
OR	21,374	1,587	22,961	126,000	18	36,070	64
PA	117,879	0	117,879	463,500	25	118,775	99
RI	8,911	279	9,190	34,500	27	9,462	97
SC	37,730	0	37,730	151,500	25	47,362	80
SD	10,101	272	10,373	37,500	28	9,779	106
TN	57,509	742	58,251	204,000	29	64,013	91
TX	206,980	12,443	219,423	793,500	28	250,427	88
UT	36,429	845	37,274	126,000	30	34,654	108
VT	5,078	136	5,214	22,500	23	7,098	73
VA	67,033	1,432	68,465	226,500	30	69,066	99
WA	55,295	1,373	56,668	199,500	28	54,620	104
WV	27,820	377	28,197	88,500	32	29,433	96
WI	57,348	7,283	64,631	217,500	30	49,304	131
WY	8,932	0	8,932	31,500	28	8,588	104

Note. From Public school enrollment, Fall 1982 by the National Center for Education Statistics, 1984, July, Washington, DC: Author. The data in column 5 are from the Current Population Survey of October 1983 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, unpublished data.

Kindergarten Programs

State legislation that calls for kindergarten programs falls into three categories: (1) compulsory attendance--children are required to attend; (2) mandatory provision--school districts are required to provide kindergarten, but children are not required to attend (this may also be considered universal opportunity for kindergarten); and (3) permissive provision--school districts are permitted to provide kindergarten. While most kindergarten programs are part-day, another option that is growing in popularity is the full-school-day kindergarten program.

Compulsory kindergarten attendance or demonstrated first grade readiness is now the law in only five states, all in the southeastern part of the country. As of either 1983 or 1984, attendance at kindergarten is required in Delaware, South Carolina, and Virginia. In Florida and Kentucky, an alternative is permitted: to be admitted to first grade, a child must either successfully complete kindergarten or pass a test indicating first grade readiness. Legislation for compulsory kindergarten attendance is now pending in seven other states: Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Texas. Such legislation failed recently in Hawaii and Indiana.

Mandatory provision of kindergartens by school districts is now in effect in 17 states: Arizona, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In the remaining 33 states, state legislation permits, but does not require, school districts to offer kindergarten programs ("States would fund," 1983).

Programs that operate for the full school day are growing in popularity. A survey of state education agencies (Humphrey, 1984) indicates that there are full-school-day kindergarten programs in 32 states, with over half of a state's school districts providing such programs in eight states, all but one in the south: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, New York, North Carolina, and Virginia. Funding for full-school-day kindergarten programs is pending in Connecticut, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, again following the regional pattern.

Prekindergarten Programs

State funding for prekindergarten early childhood development programs, independent of federal funding, is a growing phenomenon: nearly half of the states either have or are considering legislation to provide these programs. As shown in Table 20, a dozen states are providing funding for such programs during 1984-85, serving about 172,000 children with funds of $227 million. Two other states plan to offer them during 1985-86. Twelve additional states have pending legislative proposals for prekindergarten programs or have appointed commissions to consider such proposals, and three of the states with programs are considering program expansion. The review that follows is based on a telephone survey conducted in November and December of 1984 and on a review of "State News" (1983-1984) in the newsletter Report on Preschool Programs.

Table 20

STATE-FUNDED PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS[a]

State	1984-85 Funding	Preschool-Aged Children Served	Notes
CA	$194,000,000	105,000	
FL	$2,000,000	-	migrant children
LA	$300,000	300	
ME	$138,000	91	state and local funds
MD	$2,174,825	2,213	
MN	$4,039,000	50,000	children and parents
MO	-	-	to begin in 1985
NJ	$4,321,682	1,000	state and local funds
NY	$14,000,000	7,000	
OK	$599,750	720	
PA	-	-	state reimbursement in second program year
SC	$5,279,168	5,900	
TX	-	-	planned funding up to $50 million to begin in 1985
WV	$400,000	300	
Total	$227,252,425	172,524	

Note. Phone survey of state education agencies conducted during November and December of 1984 by Goranka Vukelich and Lawrence Schweinhart of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

[a]Other than early childhood special education for handicapped children.

California's longstanding commitment to large-scale funding for child development programs for children from birth to age 14 sets it far apart from other states. California legislators decided several years ago to spend the state's allocation of federal social services money on other things and to support its child care and preschool programs solely with state funds. The programs are now administered by the Office of Child Development in the California Department of Education and are funded at a level of $277 million. New York spends $141 million from the federal Social Services Block Grant for child care programs. No other state spends more than $60 million.

California's child development programs serve 150,000 youngsters. Twelve percent of them are under age 2; 70 percent are 3 to 5; and 18 percent are 6 to 17. Most of the funds, $189 million, go to general child care programs. The state's part-day preschool program is serving 19,325 of the state's 3- and 4-year-olds with funding of $32.7 million. Other funded services include migrant programs, resource and referral programs, programs for severely handicapped children, programs under the Job Training Partnership Act, child care for the children of college and high school students, child day care homes, payments to parents for child care, and respite care (to provide a break for parents of handicapped children, for example).

Texas has vaulted to a position of leadership in its financial commitment to statewide early childhood programs, with funding to begin in 1985 that may reach $50 million. The program is the brainchild of a state education commission headed by businessman Ross Perot. Beginning in 1985-86, the legislation reads, "Any school district may offer prekindergarten classes, but a district shall offer prekindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children." The bill defines as eligible those 4-year-olds who are either "unable to speak and comprehend the English language" or are "from a family whose income...is at or below subsistence level" (Texas House Bill 72, Section 1). Subsistence level is defined by the same criteria as eligibility for the free or reduced price lunch program. Districts may receive temporary waivers while they make facilities available. Each program is to have a well-balanced curriculum.

New York has maintained a commitment to early childhood programs since 1966 when its Experimental Prekindergarten Program was initiated. This program went from a budget of $9 million in 1983-84 to $14 million in 1984-85, an increase of over 50 percent. Also in 1984, the state invested $1.9 million in child care services to promote adult employment and training and $1.5 million for child care services at the State University of New York and the City University of New York. A $10 million bill that would have provided child care for working parents was defeated in the state.

South Carolina has maintained a tradition of funding for early childhood programs since 1971. Funding for its part-day child development centers for children at risk of school failure nearly doubled in 1984-85 with the passage of Governor Richard Riley's Education Improvement Act. By 1988-89 the program will serve 10,000 children with a budget of $11 million.

In Missouri, persistent advocacy has paid off with the passage of early childhood legislation in 1984. Funding has been authorized for school districts statewide to conduct developmental screening, parent education programs, and early childhood programs for developmentally delayed children. Funds for this program will be allocated in June 1985.

Several other states provide funding for prekindergarten programs. For some years Minnesota has served children from birth to kindergarten and their parents through its Early Childhood and Family Education Program; legislation for this was advanced by State Senator Jerome Hughes. New Jersey has maintained a strong tradition of providing early childhood programs for handicapped children and others at risk of school failure. In Maryland, the Extended Elementary Education Program includes a prekindergarten program. Pennsylvania has helped integrate preschool programs into its public schools by providing second-year reimbursements to districts that shoulder the first-year start-up costs. Florida provides child care funding for programs for its migrant children.

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Across the U.S., political support for early childhood programs has never been stronger. This strength is reflected in the maintenance and growth of longstanding programs in California, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. It is reflected in the newfound support for early childhood programs in Missouri and Texas. It is reflected in the pilot programs in Louisiana, Maine, Oklahoma, and West Virginia.

This year, legislators and top state government officials are considering new prekindergarten program funding in at least 12 states: Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Virginia, and Washington. Expansion of existing programs is being considered in Maine, Maryland, and New York. State education task forces in Michigan, Oregon and Washington have recommended new spending for early childhood programs. Connecticut, Maine, New York, and Virginia have set up commissions or otherwise decided to study child care.

Legislative bodies throughout the nation--Congress, statehouses, and local policymakers--are more willing to consider investing in high quality early childhood programs. A growing constituency considers public investments in good early childhood development programs worthwhile. As local, state, and federal policymakers recognize this constituency and the knowledge that motivates it, public funding will give an increasing number of young children the opportunity to participate in high quality early childhood programs. For this investment, the nation will be better off.

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