



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

How Mississippi Supports Young Children

3RD EDITION • SUMMER 2026



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The data presented in this publication were collected and compiled by faculty and staff at the Systems Change Lab at Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center (SSRC), in collaboration with Mississippi First, with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF). The Systems Change Lab is supported by the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) at Mississippi State University.

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FROM THE DESK OF TODD KLUNK, W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION PROGRAM OFFICER

Welcome to the Third Edition of Investing in Our Future

Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive. Building that future begins with understanding what is working, where progress is being made, and where more work remains. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the third edition of Investing in Our Future, our annual publication highlighting the programs, partnerships, and investments that support Mississippi's youngest children and their families.

This publication reflects our commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous learning. We believe that publicly funded programs are strengthened when data is collected, analyzed, and shared in ways that help practitioners, policymakers, funders, and community members better understand the reach of our work. Building a strong culture of data is about creating opportunities to learn from experience, improve outcomes, and make informed decisions that benefit children and families across Mississippi.

As with previous editions, this report presents key information about our early childhood investments, including funding levels, program reach, and performance metrics. It also reflects our ongoing effort to improve how we collect, analyze, and present information. This year, we have made several enhancements to the publication, including:

- A five-year data series that traces investments and program reach from FY2021 through FY2025, filling in gaps from prior editions to build a more complete picture of how Mississippi's commitments to young children have changed over time.
- A new methods section and reader's guide that explain how data were collected, where gaps exist, and how to use this publication — making the report more accessible and transparent for a wide range of readers.
- A source appendix and glossary documenting the



origin of each data point and defining key terms — supporting accountability and preserving institutional knowledge for future editions.

- A more structured and consistent data collection process — including tailored requests to agency partners, a review step to confirm accuracy before publication, and clearer documentation of where each data point comes from and how it was obtained.

As we considered the future of this publication, we sought feedback from stakeholders representing public agencies, community organizations, advocates, and other partners. We heard a consistent message: this publication provides value. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of maintaining a reliable source of information that brings together funding data, program metrics, and insights about early childhood investments in one place.

We are grateful to the many partners, practitioners, and organizations whose work contributes to the progress reflected in these pages. Together, we continue to build stronger systems, improve services, and expand opportunities for Mississippi's children and families.

Thank you for your work in ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely,

Todd Klunk
Senior Program Officer
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

INTRODUCTION

WHY IS DATA SO IMPORTANT TO THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES?

For Mississippi to reach its potential, our children must reach theirs. The earliest stages of life play a crucial role in one's future ability to thrive. When our children have a strong foundation, the stage is set for Mississippi to reach new possibilities. Today's children are tomorrow's neighbors, leaders, and workforce members.

Knowing whether we are building that foundation well requires good information. A core value of data-driven decision-making is that improvement is always possible; there is no such thing as a perfect organization or process. Continuous efforts to learn and improve are the keys to strong performance and healthy growth. Consistently collected, high-quality data (data that is accurate, complete, reliable, and relevant) is essential to data-driven decision-making and can be used in multiple ways. High-quality data collection and analysis can help determine if an agency is reaching its goals and fulfilling its mission, help distinguish gaps in service or service populations, identify opportunities for collaboration with similarly focused organizations, and point to potential areas of improvement.

In an ideal world, programmatic information for children and families would exist in an integrated system that allows the linkage of individual-level data across multiple state agencies. Such a structure would provide a comprehensive view of the usage of services and allocation of resources. In turn, agencies could access multiple pieces of information (instead of singular agency data) to utilize in their decision-making. That collection and cataloging process currently does not exist in our state. However, this data book presents a convenient, easily accessible compilation of key metrics from various programs that can be used to inform decision-making as it



impacts outcomes in programming and apportionment of capital and resources as organizations search for ways to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

As of 2024, there were 209,256 young children (birth to age five) in Mississippi.¹ The vast majority of these children are affected — directly or indirectly — by policy and funding decisions made by state leaders and carried out through state-level organizations.

Data, such as those presented here, can provide objective information to help inform policy considerations and be used to increase early childhood stakeholders' understanding and application of data in the state's current early childhood system. The following examples illustrate how investments in early childhood programs connect to broader outcomes for Mississippi's children.

- State investment in Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCs) — Mississippi's high-quality, voluntary pre-K program for four-year-olds — has grown substantially in recent years, from \$7.8 million in FY2021 to \$29 million in FY2025. Over the same period, the number

¹ Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT Data Center, "Child Population by Single Age," Mississippi, 2024. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/57687x2c>

of children served more than doubled, from 2,727 to 6,733. For FY2026, the Mississippi Legislature maintained its \$29 million appropriation.² Data on ELC enrollment, funding, and outcomes tracked in this publication can help stakeholders understand the reach of this investment and identify opportunities for continued growth.

- Mississippi has gained national recognition for dramatic improvements in early grade reading achievement — rising from 49th in the nation in 2013 to as high as 9th in 2024 on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Researchers and educators have pointed to the alignment of early childhood programs with K–3 literacy goals as a contributing factor. Programs tracked in this publication, including Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Learning Collaboratives, are part of that pipeline — preparing children from birth through age four for kindergarten and beyond.

Recognizing the inherent dignity of all children and families in Mississippi is vital for everyone to reach their potential. One way to honor this dignity is by prioritizing the health and well-being of every community. Access to essential resources, including mental, emotional, and physical health services, is crucial for families. By supporting the health of each community, we show that we value them all.

We extend gratitude to every agency staff member who contributed to the content of this publication. We know your time is limited and valuable, and we appreciate you providing the data, budget, and program information that highlights your work in the early childhood system. It is our belief that access to this information can serve as a valuable tool in informed decision-making processes to support the well-being of Mississippi's young children and families.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS PUBLICATION?

This data book is the third edition of Investing in Our

² *Mississippi HB 1768, FY2026 Education Appropriations Act, signed by Governor June 17, 2025. Available at <https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2025/html/HB/1700-1799/HB1768PS.htm>*

Future, building on our Spring 2024 inaugural publication and the 2025 second edition. Together, these publications are part of an ongoing initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) to compile, organize, and make publicly available fiscal and programmatic data on programs serving young children (birth to five) and their families in Mississippi. The goal is to build an accessible, consistent record of how the state invests in its youngest children. Programs are organized by administering agency or entity, and include both state-administered programs (e.g., Adoption program, administered by the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services, MDCPS) and Head Start and Early Head Start, which are funded directly by the federal Office of Head Start through grants to local grantees, with state-level coordination supported by the Mississippi Head Start Association and the Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office.

This edition adds FY2025 data, extending the time series presented in prior editions. Where earlier years were not fully captured in previous publications — due to data availability at the time of publication — this edition presents them alongside FY2025 figures, with the goal of moving toward complete five-year tables across all programs. Data are presented across five years in an effort to capture trends, when feasible, rather than single-year snapshots. A multi-year view allows readers to see whether investments are growing, shrinking, or holding steady in relation to the children and families these programs serve. Not all programs have data spanning the full five-year period; where gaps exist, they are noted within each program's section and table.

Each section begins with a general overview of the administering agency or entity, followed by a description of each program, its budget, and corresponding programmatic data. The metrics selected for publication are those that are typically documented by each program. Information is reported based on each program's fiscal year (FY).

One of the goals of this initiative is to build a structure that can be sustained and improved over time. Each edition strengthens the infrastructure: agencies become more familiar with the data request process, reporting definitions become more consistent, and gaps identified in one year can be addressed in the next.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection and agency partnership

The data presented in this publication were collected by staff at the Systems Change Lab at Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center (SSRC) and Mississippi First, with funding provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF). This work builds on the Mississippi Early Childhood System Asset Map Program Profiles, prepared for the Mississippi State Early Childhood Advisory Council in 2022.

State agencies are the primary and essential partners in this work. The data in this report reflect what agencies track and what they are able to share at the time that information becomes available. Our role is to facilitate the collection, organization, and presentation of that data. Where data were not provided, for any reason, that absence is noted within each program section.

Data requests for this third edition were tailored to each agency, building on relationships and contacts established in prior editions. Agencies were provided with pre-filled entries from previous years and asked to verify existing data, supply FY2025 figures, and identify a staff member to review their program section prior to publication.

Data Sources and Documentation

For this third edition, data were collected through three main channels: requests directed to agency staff, publicly available information including federal databases and agency websites, and formal public records requests submitted to agencies. These items are worth noting as new additions to this publication:

- **A source appendix** preserves the institutional memory of this initiative — documenting not just what data exist, but where they came from, how they were obtained, and how that has changed across editions. This record allows future researchers, agencies, and policymakers

to understand the source of each data point and to build on this work with confidence. Readers who wish to trace, verify, or build on the data in this report are encouraged to consult it.

- **A note on sourcing in prior editions:** in the first and second editions, data obtained through personal communications with agency staff was noted individually within each program section. In this edition, that notation has been consolidated here. Unless a source is explicitly cited in the source appendix, data reported for prior fiscal years should be understood to have originated from personal communications with agency staff. This change was made intentionally to reduce repetition across program sections while preserving full transparency about data origins in one centralized place.
- **A glossary appendix** has been included as a reference for definitions that appear across the publication.

Data limitations

Readers should interpret the data in this report with an understanding of its scope and constraints. Data are reported as provided by agencies and have not been independently verified. When agencies did not provide the data, we relied on publicly available sources, or noted absence of data. Figures may reflect differences in agency fiscal years, reporting definitions, or data collection methods that changed over time. In some cases, figures reported in earlier editions have been updated or clarified in this edition; where that occurs, it is noted. And the reader can refer to the previous edition to review previous data points. WKKF, the Systems Change Lab at the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University, and Mississippi First do not make any representation or warranty regarding the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of any information received from third-party sources.

HOW TO USE THIS PUBLICATION

A reader's guide to understanding this report

1. WHAT IS IN THIS PUBLICATION?

This report outlines the landscape of public investments in children and families, illustrating how state and federal dollars flow through Mississippi's programs.

Each color = An agency or funding structure

Head Start &
Early Head
Start

MDCPS

MDE

MDHS

DOM

DMH

MSDH

Color coding carries through all tables, headers, and charts in the report.

2. WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN EACH SECTION

Program Description

What the program does, who it serves, and how it's structured

Budget Information

Federal and state dollars, FY2021–FY2025. Some sections note when data are incomplete.

Performance Indicators

Selected measures of how funds are being used — not a full accountability report



What is an indicator?

An indicator shows how an agency is using funds — e.g., children served, program completions, outcomes tracked. Some years have more complete indicator data than others, and not all spending is reflected in an indicator.

3. WANT TO GO DEEPER?

SEE THE APPENDIX

- Sources for programmatic data
- Notes on data limitations
- Glossary of terms



4. A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU GO OVER THE DATA

SOME DATA ARE INCOMPLETE

A few sections are missing FY2025 figures or have gaps noted in the table.

MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDS

Some programs flow to federal grantees directly. State coordination roles vary.

CROSS-YEAR COMPARISONS

Funding sources may vary across fiscal years. When this occurs, notes below the table or in the appendix explain the difference.

INDICATORS ≠ OUTCOMES

Performance data shows activity, not impact. Use them as a starting point.

HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START



Head Start and Early Head Start are administered by the Office of Head Start within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Head Start directly funds local Head Start grantees. The Mississippi Head Start Association and the Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office both work to coordinate Head Start grantees and their efforts among each other and with other early childhood partners. Mississippi currently has 16 grantees.³

Early Head Start and Head Start programs include both center-based and home-based options. Families are

³ For a full list of Mississippi Head Start grantees, see Mississippi Head Start Association Directory: <https://msheadstart.org/directory/>

eligible to receive Early Head Start and Head Start services based on their income, as well as public assistance status, homelessness, or foster care status, consistent with federal eligibility guidelines.⁴

While funding for Head Start and Early Head Start flows directly from the federal Office of Head Start to grantees in the state, two entities in Mississippi play key roles in supporting coordination and collaboration among programs and partners. The **Mississippi Head Start Association** supports Head Start and Early Head Start

⁴ For eligibility guidelines, see the Office of Head Start, *Poverty Guidelines for Determining Eligibility and Participation in Head Start Programs*: <https://headstart.gov/ersea/article/poverty-guidelines-determining-eligibility-participation-head-start-programs>

programs across the state through training, coordination, and advocacy, helping programs that serve young children—from birth through five years of age—and their families provide services such as education, early childhood development supports, family engagement, and health services (medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition). In addition, the **Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office**, located in the Office of the Governor, works to build partnerships among Head Start programs, state agencies, and local entities to formulate, implement, and improve state and local policies and practices that support young children and families with low incomes. These partnerships are designed to:

- assist in building early childhood systems by collaborating with entities involved in State and local planning processes to better meet the needs of low-income children from birth to school entry and their families;
- provide access to comprehensive services and supports for all children living in families with low incomes;
- encourage widespread collaboration among Head Start programs and other relevant programs, services, and initiatives;
- promote better linkages between Head Start agencies and other child and family agencies that provide

health, mental health, family services, or other child or family supportive services;

- augment Head Start programs' capacity to be a partner in state initiatives on behalf of children and their families; and,
- facilitate the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions affecting families with low incomes.

Priorities of the Head Start Collaboration Office, established by the Office of Head Start include:

- supporting ongoing collaboration efforts between systems and agencies that provide services and supports to children and families while continuously working to develop new relationships with entities at the state level to develop a more comprehensive system at the state and local levels;
- engaging with statewide efforts to share data as well as participate in statewide data-driven conversations and decisions to improve outcomes for children, families, providers, and all entities providing services;
- increasing the number of well-trained staff across all sectors of the early childhood system as a professional continuum approach to building a supported and sustainable workforce; and,
- fostering existing relationships and building new relationships to support the seamless transition of services between programs that serve young children (birth to age five) and those that serve school-age children (kindergarten-3rd grade).

Early Head Start

Early Head Start programs provide family-centered services for low-income families with very young children. These programs promote the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers through safe and developmentally enriching caregiving. Many services can start from the time of pregnancy, and child care can start when infants are six weeks old. Early Head Start provides services until children are three years of age.

On the next page is a map of Early Head Start locations across the state.



Mississippi Early Head Start Grant Recipients - September 2025

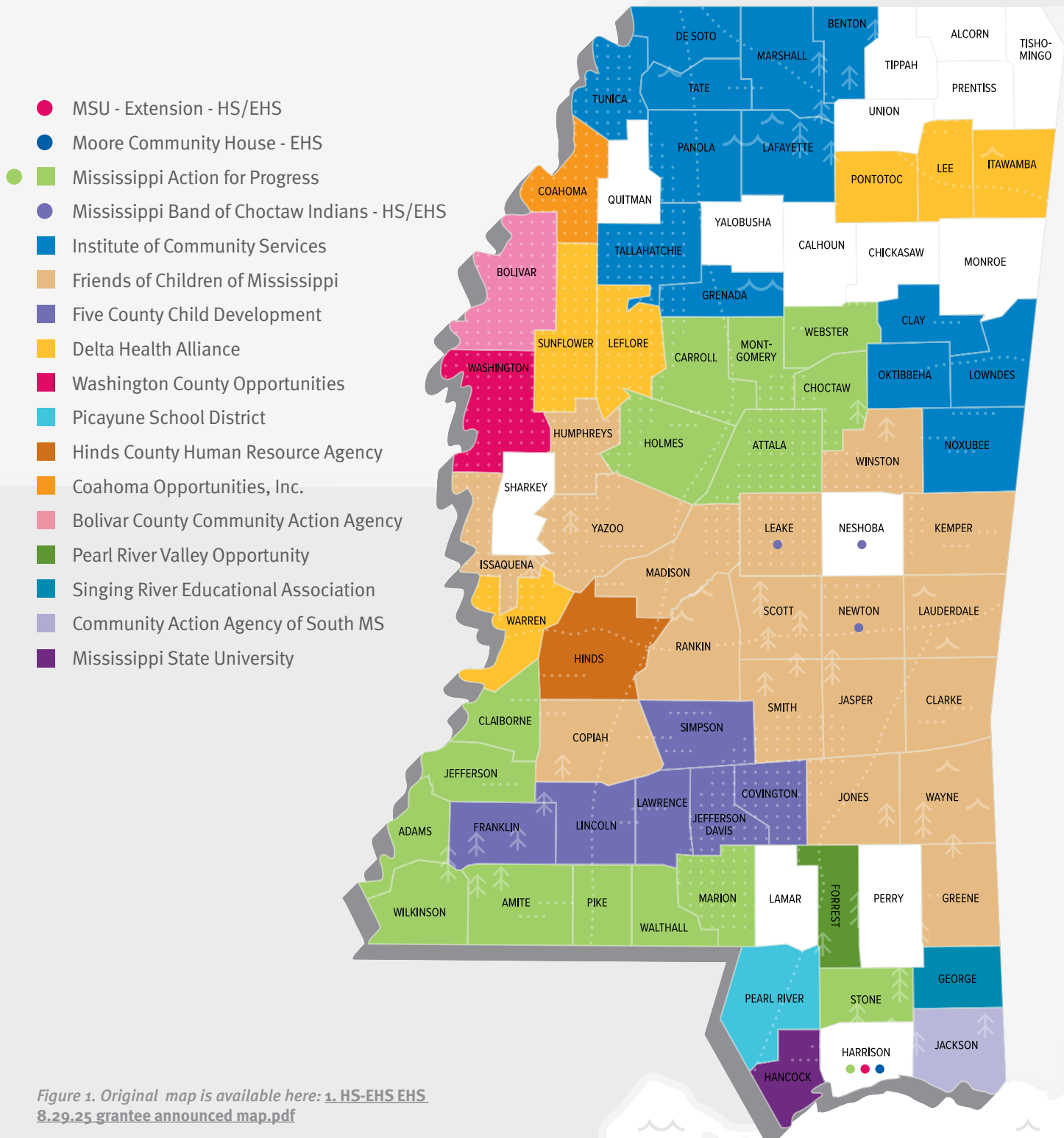


Table 1. Early Head Start Program Budget

Budget	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025
Federal Funds	\$64,432,942	\$69,773,816	\$77,008,192	Data not available
Federal Tribal Funds*	\$734,095	\$808,355	\$823,071	\$838,390 ²
Total Funds	\$65,167,037	\$70,582,171	\$77,831,263	Data not available

* Federal Tribal funds are awarded directly to American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) tribal governments.

Table 2. Early Head Start Program Performance Metrics

Early Head Start Program Metric	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	3,536	3,423	4,039	4,176
Number of Funded Seats²	3,886	3,846	Data not available	Data not available
Number of American Indian and Alaska Native Funded Seats³	60	76	76	Data not available
Number of Counties or Areas Served	70	70	70	70
Number of Classroom Staff	719	733	748	810
Number of Children Who Turned 36 Months Old and Transitioned to Head Start	48	14	212	89
Number of Children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs)[†]	149	195	238	231

Head Start

Head Start offers educational services for children three to five years of age and their families.

On the next page is a map of Head Start locations across the state.



Mississippi Head Start Grant Recipients - September 2025

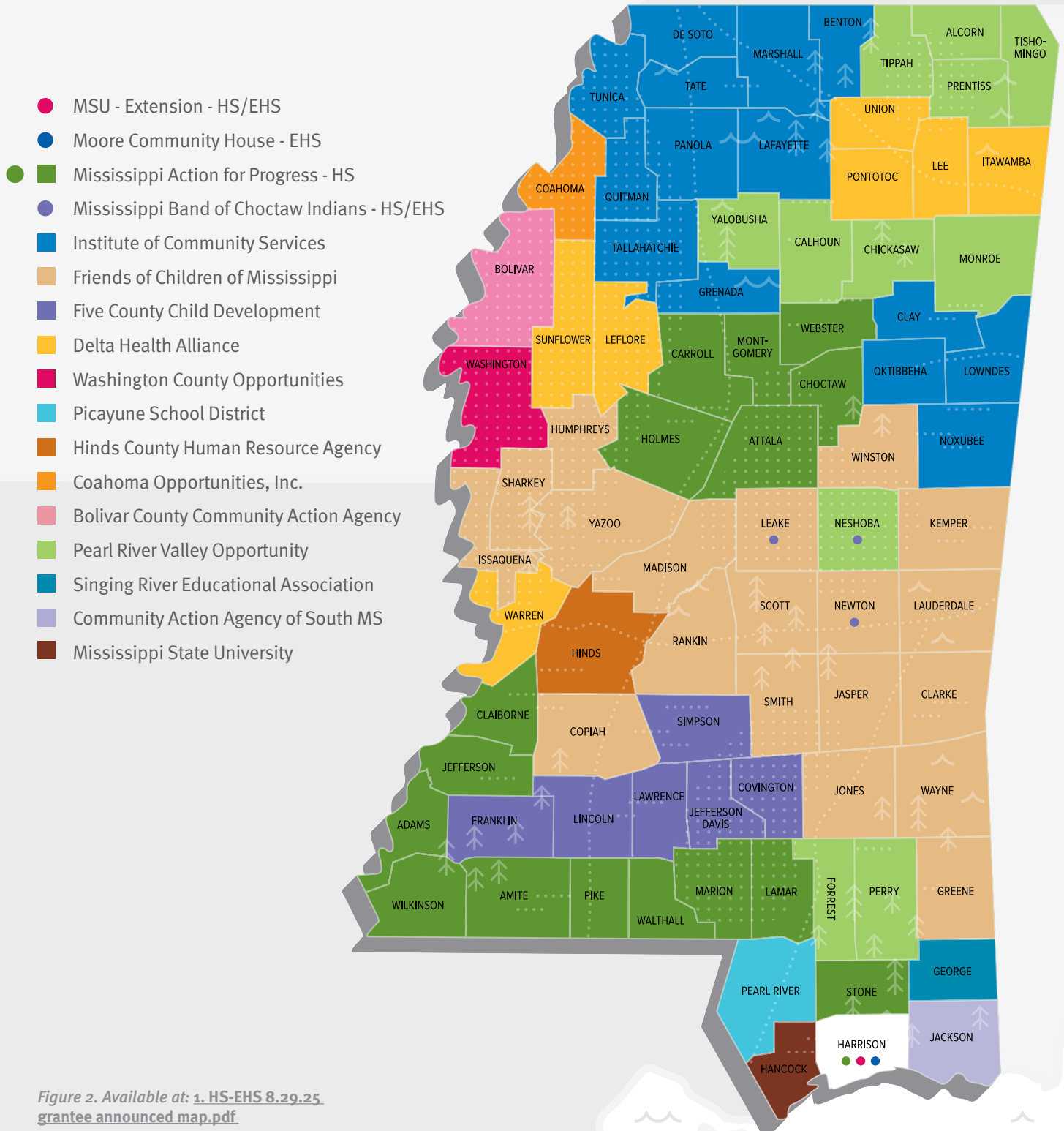


Figure 2. Available at: [1. HS-EHS 8.29.25 grantee announced map.pdf](#)

Table 3. Head Start Program Budget

Budget	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025
Federal Funds	\$167,100,653	\$181,453,404	Data not available	Data not available
Federal Tribal Funds*	\$1,791,160	\$1,947,883	Data not available	Data not available
Total Funds	\$168,891,813	\$183,401,287	Data not available	Data not available

*Federal Tribal funds are awarded directly to American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) tribal governments.

Table 4. Head Start Program Performance Metrics

Head Start Program Metric	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	13,833	13,731	14,421	14,425
Number of Counties or Areas Served	82	82	82	82
Number of Funded Seats²	17,827	16,361	Data not available	Data not available
Number of American Indian and Alaska Native Funded Seats³	208	192	192	Data not available
Number of Classroom Staff	2,175	2,030	1,987	1,951
Number of NIEER Benchmarks Met[†]	8	8	8	8
Number of Children with Individualized Education Programs^{††}	1,008	1,422	1,534	1,455



The following table includes metrics that are total for both the Early Head Start and Head Start programs. As a comprehensive program to support children and families, the program also uses family-based indicators. Families work with family service workers to “establish and implement a family partnership agreement process that is jointly developed and shared with parents in which staff and families review individual progress, revise goals, evaluate and track whether identified needs and goals are met, and adjust strategies on an ongoing basis, as necessary.” This is the number of families enrolled in programs related to their goals to improve their family outcomes.⁵

⁵ Source: Office of Head Start, 45 CFR §1302.52 – Family partnership services. HeadStart.gov. Available at <https://headstart.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-52-family-partnership-services>

Table 5. Early Head Start and Head Start Combined Program Performance Metrics

Early Head Start and Head Start Program Metric	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Families Served	15,922	16,071	17,199	17,151
Number of Families that Received at Least One Program Service to Promote Family Outcomes	11,532	12,576	13,113	13,049
Number of Children Referred by the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services	44	64	486	117



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES (MDCPS)



The Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) works jointly with Mississippi Youth Courts to protect children (from birth to age 18) from abuse or neglect by their parents or custodians.⁶

The agency operates a 24/7 hotline, 1-800-222-8000, to which suspected abuse or neglect may be reported. MDCPS screens referrals to determine the necessary course of action, which may include an immediate investigation of the child's physical and emotional condition and environment, referral to law enforcement, interviews with adults in the child's

⁶ More information can be found at <https://www.mdcps.ms.gov/>

life, a forensic interview with the child, services to support family stabilization, and referrals to other service providers. The Youth Court has sole authority to remove a child from a parent or guardian's custody and makes that determination only when evidence gathered by MDCPS indicates that doing so would be in the child's best interest (when the risk to the child's safety outweighs the inevitable trauma caused by removal). MDCPS serves children statewide.

This section presents data for three MDCPS programs: Adoption, Child Abuse & Neglect, and Foster Care.

ADOPTION

The Mississippi Adoption Program provides permanent homes for children who have been removed from their families due to abuse, neglect, or other unsafe conditions in cases where reunification is not possible. The primary goal is to bring potential adoptive children to families seeking adoption. Adoptive parents in Mississippi receive support through monthly maintenance payments and services.

The agency utilizes various programs to connect children with adoptive families. These include the Mississippi Heart Gallery, which lists all children available for adoption; AdoptUSKids, which provides families with information on recruitment, engagement, and support; and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's Wendy's Wonderful Kids program, which helps match prospective families with children awaiting adoption by supporting recruiters in implementing an intensive, child-focused

model that incorporates thorough case reviews, face-to-face relationship building, and collaboration with internal and external partners.

In state fiscal year 2025, MDCPS continued to work diligently to increase the number of adoptions. Established programs such as Wendy's Wonderful Kids was expanded. Adoptive parents were provided an increase in their monthly adoption subsidy payments. MDCPS continues to build relationships with statewide vendors and is providing post-adoption services to adoptive families in need.

MDCPS also is developing and implementing the Kinship Guardian Assistance Payments. These payments are specifically for relatives or kin caregivers who want legal permanence for children in foster care while going through the adoption process. It offers an alternative permanency path, keeping the child in the family network while providing benefits similar to foster care, making it a bridge between foster care and adoption. This program should help more children find stable homes where familiar support is available.

Table 1. Adoption Program Budget

Budget*	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$24,903,193	\$27,932,779	\$30,413,864	\$32,539,102	\$36,731,668
State General Funds	\$10,200,161	\$13,236,765	\$18,412,192	\$21,862,530	\$23,168,776
Other Funds (i.e., lottery funds, donations)	\$0	\$637,500	\$643,275	\$450,000	\$450,000
Total Funds	\$25,103,354	\$41,807,044	\$49,469,331	\$54,851,632	\$60,350,444

*The amount of federal and state matching funds that MDCPS receives each quarter varies depending on the eligibility statuses of children in state custody.

Table 2. Adoption Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served*	17,690	18,054	19,031	20,012	22,092
Number of Finalized Adoptions	270	312	636	560	571

*Number of children served is based on unique monthly adoption maintenance payments made. This number fluctuates based on finalized adoptions and the age at which children are no longer eligible for payments.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

The Mississippi Child Abuse and Neglect program strives to ensure that vulnerable children receive the care and protection they need. The program offers interventions such as investigations, case management, and referrals to support services.

Any child who is at risk of or has experienced abuse or neglect is eligible for the program's services. Reports can be made by any concerned individual; however, teachers, medical personnel, and law enforcement officials are required to report suspected cases.

Over the last few years, the Mississippi legislature has introduced legislation to focus on protecting children in the state. This includes measures that support legal counsel and provide additional training for child welfare professionals. MDCPS was also authorized to begin implementing Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) to address the psychological and behavioral needs of children when necessary. In 2024, the Mississippi Senate amended the definition of a "neglected child," modifying the criteria used in cases involving families experiencing financial hardship.

During state fiscal year 2025, MDCPS built on these legislative measures, including the implementation of the QRTP program, and expanded preventive services

statewide. By partnering with vendors across the state, MDCPS is providing greater support to children at risk of entering custody and families in need of assistance.

One example of this expanded support is the development of tangible family services — practical assistance that helps families meet basic needs such as food, housing, healthcare, and childcare. These services help prevent child abuse and neglect, stabilize families, keep children safe, and promote well-being through evidence-based, community-centered approaches.

Vendors such as Starkville School District, Health Connect America, Southern Christian Services, and Mississippi Children's Home Society provide a range of support including parent education, community-based programs, medical assistance, and in-home services to help maintain strong family structures. All vendors have received additional funding, an expansion of services, or both.

MDCPS has also continued to expand the LifeSet program through Youth Villages, which supports young adults ages 17 to 22 transitioning out of foster care. The program helps develop life skills, stable housing, education, job training, and support networks — providing vulnerable young adults with the tools they need to successfully transition to adulthood and reducing the risk of future abuse and neglect.

Additionally, MDCPS submitted and received approval for its Family First Prevention Plan.

Table 3. Child Abuse & Neglect Program Budget

Budget*	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$7,214,614	\$7,658,782	\$8,061,876	\$8,474,876	\$10,198,012
State General Funds**	\$1,368,114	\$1,542,800	\$1,362,864	\$2,722,864	\$4,322,618
State Special Funds***	\$0	\$0	\$2,027,994	\$6,903,878	\$10,389,818
Total Funds	\$8,582,728	\$9,201,582	\$11,452,734	\$18,101,618	\$24,910,448

*The amount of federal and state matching funds that MDCPS receives each quarter varies depending on the eligibility statuses of children in state custody. Total budget based on reported expenditures through the legislative budget office and federal reporting.

**General funds are a combination of required state matches for expenses associated with the federal grants.

***State Special Funds are one-time funds provided to the agency through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Table 4. Child Abuse & Neglect Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	14,700	16,500	17,200	21,500	23,600
Number of Families or Households Served	662	841	796	1,124	3,640
Number of Children Removed from Household*	3,600	3,400	4,000	4,100	4,300
Number of Children Reunified with their Families	364	310	443	331	401

**Children come into custody, are reunified with families, and leave custody on an ongoing basis.*



FOSTER CARE

The Mississippi Foster Care Program provides temporary homes for children who have been removed from their families due to abuse, neglect, or other unsafe conditions. The primary goal is to reunite children with their birth families once it's safe. If reunification is not possible, foster parents may have the opportunity to adopt the child. Foster parents in Mississippi receive support such as medical and dental coverage for the children and training to handle different situations, including children who have experienced trauma.

Children in foster care are in state custody, meaning MDCPS has physical and legal custody of the children. MDCPS relies on other state agencies, service providers, and foster families to provide for these children's needs.

Prospective foster parents must be at least 21 years old, financially self-supporting, legal residents of Mississippi, and pass a criminal background check. They can be single or married, and households are limited to six (foster, adopted, or biological) children.

In State Fiscal Year 2025, MDCPS continued to build and expand the foster care system. These steps include providing foster families increased monthly board rates, access to more concrete based services, expanding the number of resources and training available to current and prospective foster families, and strengthening the child welfare workforce.

MDCPS has expanded programs to strengthen the agency's workforce. This includes additional opportunities for training, furthering education, and other resources that both strengthen current child welfare workers and incentives for those interested in becoming child welfare professionals. As described in the Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect section, MDCPS has partnered with several vendors to provide necessary services to foster families in the state. This allows current families a strong support network and encourages prospective foster families.

MDCPS has also continued to work closely with the courts to help children who enter custody. By working with the courts, the agency can access and provide necessary resources and financial assistance to children in custody and foster families. MDCPS has also spent more time and resources with foster families, group homes, and therapeutic homes to ensure all children in foster care are getting necessary care.

MDCPS was successful in increasing the Title IV-E⁷ penetration rate. This rate allows the state to receive more federal funding to help maintain and build the foster care program. These additional resources help save Mississippians money while providing the agency with additional resources to improve foster care outcomes.

Additionally, MDCPS has continued to build and develop a new Comprehensive Child Welfare System. This new system will provide the agency with more capabilities and help streamline case worker job duties. This extra support will reduce stress, help increase retention, and allow the case workers more time to provide assistance to children and families in need.



⁷ Title IV-E refers to the federal foster care and adoption assistance program. Title IV-E foster care. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://acf.gov/cb/grant-funding/title-iv-e-foster-care>

Table 5. Foster Care Program Budget

Budget*	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$20,988,967	\$22,867,263	\$22,916,816	\$27,543,285	\$32,124,115
State General Funds	\$12,271,690	\$12,341,840	\$23,756,729	\$29,200,585	\$33,543,729
Total Funds	\$33,260,657	\$35,209,103	\$46,673,545	\$56,743,870	\$65,667,844

*The amount of federal and state matching funds that MDCPS receives each quarter varies depending on the eligibility statuses of children in state custody.

Table 6. Foster Care Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	11,879	13,022	14,979	15,873	16,502
Number of Children in Temporary Placement*	210	235	250	260	312
Number of Children in Permanent Placement	270	312	636	560	571

*This is the number of children placed in facilities such as group homes, emergency shelters, and therapeutic group homes.



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



The Mississippi Department of Education⁸ (MDE) provides resources and technical support to Mississippi's public school system. MDE also allocates federal funding to school districts and functions as a resource for federal education requirements. The following section includes data for MDE programs that support early childhood education and care: Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Early Childhood Special Education Services – Part B, Section 619, Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCs), State-Invested Pre-K (SIP), and Title I Pre-K.

⁸ More information can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/>.

CHILD & ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program operating throughout the state that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating Head Start programs, child care programs, and adult day care centers. The program funds up to three meal services per day—which may include a combination of breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack, with at least one required to be a snack. Children residing in emergency shelters are also eligible, as well as adults who are over the age of 60 or living with a disability and who are enrolled in day care facilities.

In Mississippi, CACFP is administered by the Mississippi Department of Education's (MDE) Office of Child Nutrition, which provides oversight, training, and technical assistance to participating programs statewide.

CACFP is designed to reduce food insecurity and ensures that children and adults in care receive nutritious meals. In 2024, the program introduced updates on meal pattern guidelines to better align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Effective July 2025, food service payment rates for day care homes were adjusted to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index.⁹

Table 1. CACFP Budget - Federal

Budget	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Federal Funds¹	\$39,278,014	\$43,742,528	\$47,862,116	\$46,485,127	\$47,065,878

Table 2. CACFP Budget – Federal Tribal Funds

Budget	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Tribal Funds*	\$466,440	\$457,188	\$469,865	\$434,752	\$474,028

**These figures are reported separately by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and are included in the federal total in the table above.*



⁹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration. CACFP: Food Service Payment Rate Adjustments, Federal Register (July 2025). Available at <https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-072425>

Table 3. CACFP Performance Metrics

Program Metric ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Children Served	211,340	266,552	287,835	244,869	185,763
Number of Meals Served	21,219,795	22,144,958	21,894,379	20,551,614	20,344,921
Number of Child Care Programs Served	760	738	718	666	627
Number of Applications Received	30	32	32	48	40
Number of Counties Served	78	79	79	79	80
Average Daily Attendance	36,019	37,317	37,683	36,322	33,928

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES (IDEA PART B, SECTION 619)

Children from ages three to five with disabilities or developmental delays are afforded the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Section 619. This program has a duty to locate all children in the state who might be eligible for special education services and to conduct evaluations that determine their eligibility for these services. Eligibility is determined by a school district Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team, who look for criteria in the following categories:

- autism
- deafness/blindness
- hearing impairment
- visual impairment
- emotional disability
- intellectual disability
- language/speech impairment

- orthopedic impairment
- traumatic brain injury
- specific learning disability
- developmental delay¹⁰
- other health impairment
- multiple disabilities

When a child is eligible for program services, Part B, Section 619 staff oversee the creation and delivery of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that defines the supports and services the child will receive, which are tailored to the child's specific strengths and needs. The services are provided through local school districts, known as Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). Services can include speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, and special education support and are often integrated within preschool settings.

The Mississippi Department of Education is focusing on improving program standards and professional development for Part B, Section 619 providers to enhance the quality of services.

¹⁰ Defined as 1.5 standard deviations below the standard mean of an assessment or a developmental age that is 25% below the child's chronological age on an assessment based on age equivalents in two or more areas. See MDE's [A Family Guide to Special Education Services: Developmentally Delayed \(Vol. 3\)](#) for more information.

Table 4. Part B Program Budget

Budget	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025 ²
Federal Funds	\$4,544,778	\$4,544,778	\$4,649,156	\$4,649,156	\$4,649,156

Table 5. Part B Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Children Served	7,211	7,712 ²	Data not available
Number of Referrals Received	9,833	8,344 ²	Data not available
Number of School Districts Served	149	148 ¹	Data not available



EARLY LEARNING COLLABORATIVES

Early Learning Collaboratives (ELCs) are voluntary, state-funded pre-K programs serving four-year-olds in half- or full-day programs in 40 communities across the state. ELCs are composed of two or more partners, including at least one school district and at least one Head Start. ELCs can also include private childcare centers and private or parochial schools.

ELCs are awarded funds by MDE if there are available funds and based on area needs, capacity, and level of commitment. Communities with low academic achievement within the school district and without quality pre-K options are prioritized for ELC funding. MDE provides half of the per-pupil rate, at least \$2,500 for full-day programs and at least \$1,250 for half-day programs.

ELCs' curriculum and assessments are aligned with Mississippi's comprehensive early learning standards. ELCs also provide family engagement opportunities and screenings and/or referrals for vision, hearing, and other areas. Mississippi is one of six states in the country with state-funded pre-K that meets all ten of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) high-quality standards.¹¹ In order to meet the NIEER quality standards, MDE provides coaching to ELC educational staff.

Individuals and businesses can support ELCs by taking advantage of a unique 1:1 tax credit. For every dollar donated, one dollar is removed from their tax liability. Individuals and businesses can donate up to \$1 million each year. The tax credits cannot exceed the appropriation to the ELCs for the year. In recent years, donations to ELCs through this tax credit have exceeded \$4 million annually.¹²



¹¹ The NIEER Benchmarks for High-Quality Pre-K identifies ten research supported standards that create highly effective preschool programs. For additional information see: National Institute for Early Education Research. (2026, April 22). Mississippi praised for top-tier pre-K quality in new national report, work remains to increase access [Press release]. https://nieer.org/sites/default/files/2026-04/p.r.04.22.26_-_nieer_-_ms.pdf. National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). (2025). The State of Preschool Yearbook 2025 - Mississippi. Available at <https://nieer.org/yearbook/2025/state-profiles/mississippi>.

¹² Mississippi First. (2025). Pre-K Tax Credit. Available at <https://www.mississippifirst.org/pre-k-tax-credit/>. NOTE: The link to the full 2025 Yearbook is, The State of Preschool Yearbook 2025. Available at <https://nieer.org/yearbook/2025>.

State Funded Pre-K Programs

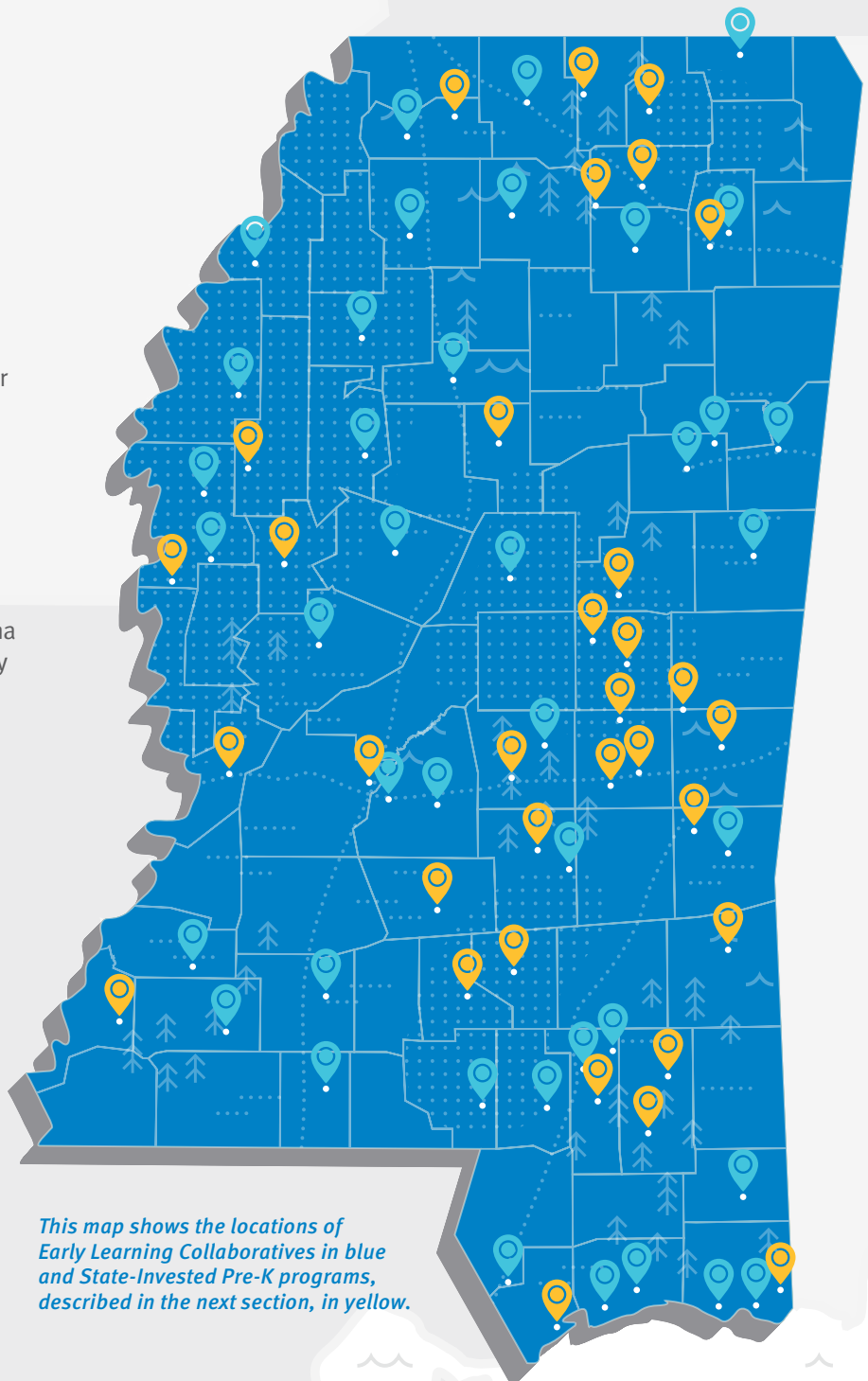
NOTE: This map contains more recent data than the charts in these program sections.

40 Early Learning Collaboratives

Biloxi	Long Beach
Brookhaven	Lowndes County
Clarke County	Marion County
Cleveland	McComb
Coahoma County	Monroe
Corinth-Alcorn-Prentiss	Noxubee County
George County	Pass Christian
Greenwood Leflore	Pascagoula-Gautier
Grenada	Petal
Hattiesburg	Picayune
Hollandale	Pontotoc
Holly Springs	Rankin County
Holmes County	Scott County
Jackson-Hinds	Senatobia
Jefferson County	South Panola
Kosciusko	Starkville Oktibbeha
Lamar County	Tallahatchie County
Lee County	West Jasper
Lafayette-Oxford	West Point
Leland	Yazoo City

33 State Invested Pre-K Programs (SIP)

Bay St. Louis-Waveland	Newton County
Benton County	Newton Municipal
Covington County	Perry County
Enterprise	Philadelphia
Forrest County	Richton
Forest Municipal	Simpson County
Humphreys County	Smith County
Jefferson Davis County	South Tippah
Lauderdale County	Sunflower County
Louisville	Tate County
Meridian Public	Tupelo
Midtown Public	Union City
Charter School (Jackson)	Union County
Moss Point	Vicksburg-Warren
Natchez-Adams	Wayne County
Neshoba County	Western Line
New Albany	Winona-Montgomery



This map shows the locations of Early Learning Collaboratives in blue and State-Invested Pre-K programs, described in the next section, in yellow.

Figure 3 . Early Learning Collaborative locations in Mississippi. Source: Mississippi Department of Education (n.d.). State Funded Pre-K Programs. Available at <https://mdek12.org/earlychildhood/early-learning-collaboratives/>



For FY2026, the Mississippi Legislature maintained its \$29 million appropriation for ELCs, providing a minimum of \$2,500 per student in full-day programs and \$1,250 per student in half-day programs. Each collaborative must match state funds on a 1:1 basis through local tax revenue, federal funding, philanthropic support, or in-kind contributions.¹³

Table 6. ELCs Program Budget

Budget ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ²
State General Funds	\$7,789,474	\$7,789,474	\$7,789,474	\$7,789,474	\$7,789,474
Other Funds (lottery funds from the Education Enhancement Fund)	\$0	\$8,210,526	\$16,210,526	\$16,210,526	\$21,210,526
Total Funds	\$7,789,474	\$16,000,000	\$24,000,000	\$24,000,000	\$29,000,000

¹³ Mississippi HB 1768, FY2026 Education Appropriations Act, signed by Governor June 17, 2025. Available at <https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2025/html/HB/1700-1799/HB1768PS.htm>

Table 7. ELCs Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	2,727	2,807	5,119	6,193	6,733
Number of ELCs	18	30	35 ²	37 ²	40
Number of Counties Served	18	19	30 ²	33 ²	41
Number of Funded Seats	2,931	3,177	9,120	9,120	7,793
Number of Staff	17	17	28	39	39
Number of NIEER Benchmarks Met[†]	10	10	10	10	10
Percent of Children Meeting K Readiness Assessment Target Scores^{††}	N/A	65.12%	64.76%	67.16%	N/A*
Average Program Scale Score^{††}	N/A	554	551	558	N/A*
Average Program Scale Score Growth^{††}	N/A	137	137	143	N/A*

**In the 2024-2025 (FY 2025) school year, the Mississippi Department of Education transitioned from the STAR Reading Assessment^{†††} to the iStation Reading Assessment. This change to the reading assessment changed the metrics used to measure students. As a result, it is not possible to compare metrics across years, and these data are not available. Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, the Mississippi Department of Education transitioned back to the STAR Reading Assessment, though the measurements of student progress have shifted.*





State-Invested Pre-K

Mississippi’s State-Invested Pre-K (SIP) program was created in 2022, via a \$20 million line item in the Mississippi Department of Education’s budget. SIP funds are granted to traditional public-school districts in three-year grants. Districts may partner with local Head Start grantees.

SIP programs provide voluntary half- or full-day preschool programming with curriculum and assessments aligned with comprehensive early learning standards. While SIP programs are not statutorily mandated to meet any specific quality standards, they are currently meeting all ten of the National Institute for Early Education Research’s (NIEER’s) ten quality standards. NIEER’s Benchmarks for High-Quality Pre-K tool is an instrument that identifies ten minimum policy benchmarks needed for

highly effective preschool programs.¹⁴

The program is available to four-year-old children in 33 school districts.

In order to meet the ten NIEER high-quality standards, MDE provides coaching to SIP educational staff. In fiscal year 2024, three coaches provided support in 69 classrooms in 20 school districts.

In 2023, the Mississippi Legislature again allocated funds to the SIP program. In 2024, the SIP allocation was reduced.

Mississippi’s SIP program locations are noted in yellow on the map in the previous section, along with the Early Learning Collaboratives.

¹⁴ National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). *Benchmarks for High-Quality Pre-K*. Available at <https://nieer.org/research-library/download-nieers-benchmarks-high-quality-pre-k>

Table 8. SIP Program Budget*

Budget	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025 ²
State Special Funds	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$13,000,000

*Program was created in 2022 and active in 2024. 2023 was a planning year.

Table 9. SIP Program Performance Metrics*

Program Metric	FY 2023*	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	N/A (planning year)	891	1,835
Number of School Districts Served	Program not active until FY 2024	20	24
Number of Funded Seats	1,000	1,380	2,100
Number of Staff (Contract Workers)	Program not active until FY 2024	11	11
Number of NIEER Benchmarks Met[†]	Program not active until FY 2024	10	10
Percent of Children Meeting K Readiness Assessment Target Scores^{††}	Program not active until FY 2024	64.20%	N/A**
Average Program Scale Score^{††}	Program not active until FY 2024	548	N/A**
Average Program Scale Score Growth^{††}	Program not active until FY 2024	140	N/A**

*Program was created in 2022 and active in 2024. 2023 was a planning year.

**In the 2024-2025 (FY 2025) school year, the Mississippi Department of Education transitioned from the STAR Reading Assessment to the iStation Reading Assessment. This change to the reading assessment changed the metrics used to measure students. As a result, it is not possible to compare metrics across years, and these data are not available. Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, the Mississippi Department of Education transitioned back to the STAR Reading Assessment, though the measurements of student progress have shifted.





TITLE I PRE-K

Title I, Part A is a federal funding stream of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Title I funds are intended to help local education agencies (LEAs) ensure that children in families with low incomes have opportunities to receive equitable, high-quality education and to prepare students to meet academic standards. LEAs may choose to operate district-wide, school-wide, or targeted assistance Title I Pre-K programs that focus on students most at risk of not meeting state academic standards. These programs serve children throughout the state.

Title I funds may be used for a variety of services, including to establish or enhance preschool programs. These preschool programs must follow federal guidance

for Title I, Part A pre-K programs as well as MDE Guidelines for all public school pre-K programs and include comprehensive services for enrolled children such as family engagement services and hearing and vision screenings. While Title I funds can be used to serve children starting from birth until the age that a free public education is available, Mississippi's Title I preschools typically serve four-year-olds, providing early learning experiences that focus on literacy, numeracy, and social skills.

Many programs blend and braid Title I funding with funding from the state, federal, and local level to support Pre-K programs. As a result, school districts using Title I funds are not necessarily separate programs from other types of Pre-K programs included in this publication.

Table 10. Title I Pre-K Program Budget

Budget ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Federal Funds*	\$21,124,224	\$21,124,224	\$22,644,156	\$22,494,500	\$19,745,772

**Title I funds are not exclusively designated for Pre-K services and may be used in conjunction with state and local funds. As a result, some programs may be double-counted across ELC and SIP program totals above.*

Table 11. Title I Pre-K Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023 ²	FY 2024 ²	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	6,658	7,378	7,259	8,553	8,648
Number of MDE Staff	19	19	17	17	13
Number of NIEER Benchmarks Met [†]	8	8	8	8	8



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



The Mississippi Department of Human Services¹⁵ (MDHS) strives to provide support that helps Mississippians to live better lives. Among its many programs, those most directly serving young children and families are housed within two divisions: the Division of Early Childhood Care & Development (DECCD), which oversees the Child Care Payment Program (CCPP) and MS LIFT Resource & Referral Centers (R&R), and the Division of Economic Assistance Eligibility (DEAE), which administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

¹⁵ More information can be found at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/>

program. This section presents data for each of these programs.

Division of Early Child Care & Development

The Mississippi Department of Human Services' (MDHS) Division of Early Childhood Care & Development¹⁶ (DECCD) oversees programs benefiting young children and their families. The DECCD oversees services that

¹⁶ More information is available at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/eccd/>.

support private child care programs and enrolled families, such as the Child Care Payment Program (CCPP), ELEVATE: a Quality Support System for child care providers, and MS LIFT Resource and Referral Centers (R&R)

These services are primarily funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), which is a federal and state partnership that provides child care assistance for families with low incomes, with the purpose of increasing the number of caregivers able to work or attend school. Federal regulations allow no more than 5% of total CCDF dollars to be used for administrative costs. States must use 12% of the funds to invest in child care quality (including support for professional development and technical assistance and the statewide MS LIFT Resource and Referral network), with 3% of these quality dollars spent specifically on infant/toddler child care quality improvement. States also use CCDF dollars to fund child care subsidies and child care licensing.

In addition to the programs described in this section, other ongoing aspects of the DECCD's quality efforts include a family navigator program that provides resource linkage, care coordination, and peer support for families of children with disabilities or significant health challenges and ELEVATE: a Quality Support System that provides professional development and other supports for early educators to improve the quality of their programs.

Information about child care licensing is included in the Mississippi State Department of Health's Child Care Licensure Bureau section of this publication.

CHILD CARE PAYMENT PROGRAM (CCPP)

The goal of the Child Care Payment Program (CCPP) is to provide eligible parents and guardians with child care tuition assistance. Families are eligible to participate in CCPP if they meet work requirements, as well as income requirements that are based on family size. The program uses a sliding fee scale

based on family size and income that determines the amount a parent or caregiver pays toward tuition at a participating child care program of their choice. Families may choose any type of child care while participating in the program, including participating home-based child care programs and child care centers.

MDHS began accepting applications from working families who do not belong to the six currently qualified categories (TANF families and families transitioning away from TANF assistance, MDCPS foster care children, teen parents, families with children that have special needs, deployed military families, and homeless families) on August 1, 2025.

This program is available statewide; it is optional for child care programs to participate in the CCPP.



Table 1. CCPP Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Federal Funds	\$120,764,822	\$129,177,358	\$135,026,565 ¹
Federal Tribal Funds²	\$1,120,964	\$1,396,345	\$1,033,440
State General Funds	\$5,748,680	\$7,418,386	\$20,063,741 ¹
Total Funds	\$127,634,466	\$137,992,089	\$155,090,306 ¹

Table 2. CCPP Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	40,890	47,524	44,494
Number of Participating Programs	1,169	1,194	1,267
Number of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	28,703	33,910	26,949
Number of Families or Households Served	22,931	26,710	25,394
Number of Applications Received*	20,946	21,046	25,130

**Applications are submitted per family rather than per child.*



MISSISSIPPI LEARNING INVESTMENT FOR TOMORROW: MS LIFT RESOURCE & REFERRAL CENTERS (R&R)

Mississippi Learning Investment for Tomorrow¹⁷ (MS LIFT) is part of the MDHS-DECCD child care quality support efforts that were launched in fall 2024. The MS LIFT Resource and Referral (R&R) Network locations are all over the state and are run in partnership with MDHS DECCD, Delta Health Alliance, Mississippi State University Extension Service, Mississippi Early Childhood Inclusion Center, Jackson State University, and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

R&R centers assist families with finding child care, learning about the Child Care Payment Program (which subsidizes child care costs), and more. CC R&R centers support child care providers with resources regarding child care program start-up and improvement processes, low-cost business

¹⁷ Source: Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Early Childhood Care & Development (DECCD). Mississippi Learning Investment for Tomorrow (MS LIFT). Available at www.mslift.org.

development training and other types of professional development, classroom materials, and more. R&R centers also provide information to both families and child care providers about child care licensing requirements, community resources, and specialized services for families of children with developmental delays and/or special needs. Any families and any child care providers in the state are eligible to utilize R&R services.

R&R centers have been focusing on expanding access to technical assistance for early educators and other educational resources for both families and child care providers. This includes onsite coaching and professional development opportunities for child care providers and care coordination for families.

This program is available statewide.¹⁸

¹⁸ A list of MS LIFT R&R center locations is available at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/eccd/rcenters/>. More information about MS LIFT is available at www.mslift.org.

Table 3. CC R&R Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$15,181,620	\$16,391,489	\$16,203,187

Table 4. CC R&R Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Parents or Caregivers Served	4,795	11,852	25,420
Number of Early Educators Served	6,164	10,993	14,952
Number of Visitors	15,683*	34,990	57,207**

*In addition to parents or caregivers and early educators, 4,724 community members visited CC R&Rs in FY 2023.

**In addition to parents or caregivers and early educators, 16,835 community members visited CC R&Rs in FY 2025.

DIVISION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY

The Division of Economic Assistance Eligibility administers programs that help Mississippians with the necessities to improve their lives, such as food and financial assistance.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families¹⁹ (TANF), funded through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, provides monthly cash assistance for up to a period of 60 months for families with low incomes who have children younger than 18. This temporary financial assistance can help pay for food, clothing, housing, and child care. Additionally, TANF provides supportive services such as transportation assistance and counseling.

¹⁹ Source: Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Economic Assistance Eligibility. TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Available at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/help/tanf/>

The program also provides adults with job readiness training, vocational training, and other educational training programs. To receive TANF funding, federal law mandates states to meet work participation rate targets, provide a state dollar match, and require TANF participants to cooperate with child support enforcement as needed. Mississippi requires parents and caregivers participating in TANF to complete a work training program, register with Mississippi Works (an online job-seeking registry), and complete a Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI).

Mississippi's TANF participants must be residents of Mississippi and U.S. citizens or legal immigrants. Eligibility²⁰ for the TANF program is generally based on income requirements, with families needing to have income below a certain threshold based on the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which varies depending on family size.

Mississippi's TANF program is available statewide.

²⁰ For eligibility guidelines, see the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Economic Assistance Eligibility, for eligibility and participation in TANF: <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/help/tanf/applying-for-tanf/>

Table 5. TANF Program Budget

Budget ¹	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Federal Funds	\$86,481,245	\$86,481,245	\$86,295,031	Data Not Available
Federal Tribal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$186,214	Data Not Available
Total Funds*	\$86,481,245	\$86,481,245	\$86,481,245	Data Not Available

*MDHS is appropriated State General Funds in a lump sum, of which part is allocated to each of the divisions within the agency according to their needs. The Division of Economic Assistance Eligibility did not provide the amount of State General Funds they were allocated.



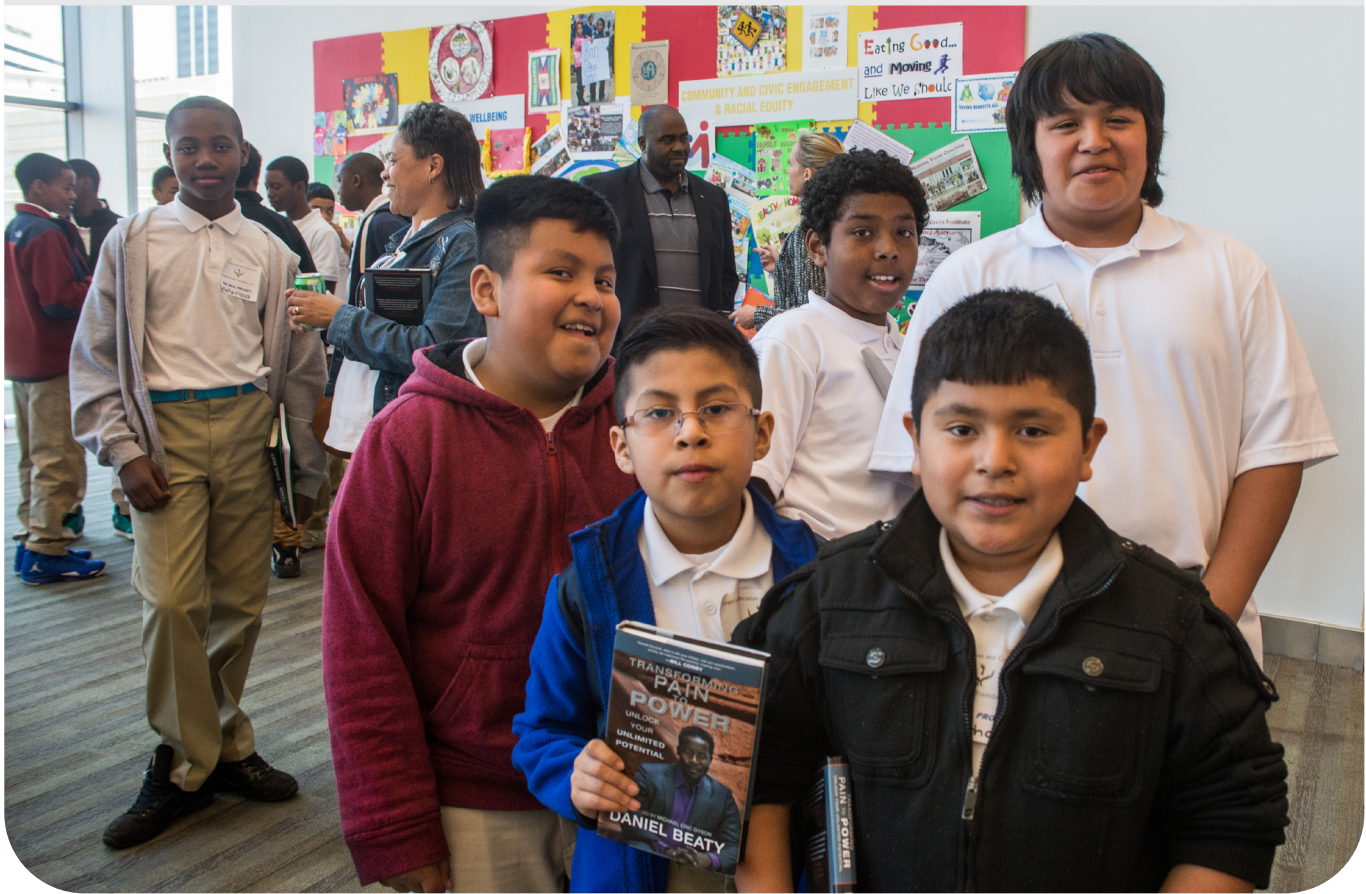


Table 6. TANF Program Metrics

Program Metric ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Individuals Served	3,076	3,038	2,902	2,782	2,419
Number of Families or Households Served	1,827	1,800	1,656	1,538	1,358
\$ per Person (Monthly Average)*	\$88	\$111	\$130	\$122	\$122
\$ per Family or Household (Monthly Average)**	\$148	\$187	\$227	\$220	\$218

*Information calculated by authors, based on the TANF dollar amount allocated for direct services divided by the number of individuals served.

**Information calculated by authors, based on the TANF dollar amount allocated for direct services divided by the number of families or households served.

MISSISSIPPI DIVISION OF MEDICAID



Mississippi's Division of Medicaid²¹ (DOM) provides health coverage for eligible people with low incomes and is both a state and federal program. Mississippi's Medicaid managed care program is called the Mississippi Coordinated Access Network (MississippiCAN) and aims to increase beneficiaries' access to medical services, improve the quality of their health care, and maintain the predictability of health care costs.

The DOM also collaborates with the Mississippi State Department of Health on two statewide initiatives that specifically target young children and mothers. The first supports First Steps, the Part C early intervention

program providing targeted case management for children from birth to age three with developmental delays or disabilities. The second supports the Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies program, which works to reduce infant mortality and low birth weight. Both programs are discussed in the Mississippi State Department of Health section of this publication.

Among the federal/state programs and benefits DOM administers, two are dedicated specifically to children's health and development: the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnostic & Treatment (EPSDT) benefit, both of which aim to ensure children have access to preventive and comprehensive health services.

²¹ More information about DOM and its programs can be found at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/>.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (CHIP)

Mississippi's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides health coverage for children up to age 19 whose families have low incomes, who are ineligible for Medicaid, and who are otherwise uninsured. CHIP offers comprehensive benefits including doctor visits, prescription medications, dental and vision care, and mental health services. CHIP is accepted at all Mississippi State Department of Health clinics and is available statewide.

Annual and lifetime limits on CHIP benefits have been removed, meaning children can receive the full range of covered services without caps on the total amount of care they can receive in a given year or over their lifetime.²²

Table 1. CHIP Budget

Budget ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Federal Funds	\$134,936,983	\$114,320,846	\$108,646,251	\$113,792,627	Data not available
State General Funds	\$24,884,151	\$20,459,684	\$19,929,194	\$20,365,151	Data not available
Total Funds	\$159,821,134	\$134,780,530	\$128,575,445	\$134,157,778	Data not available

Table 2. CHIP Performance Metrics

Program Metric ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Children Served	48,117	42,986	41,813	46,528	Data not available



²² Mississippi Division of Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) State Plan. Available at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/childrens-health-insurance-program-chip-state-plan/>. See also Mississippi Division of Medicaid, April 2025 Provider Bulletin. Available at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/April-2025-Provider-Bulletin.pdf>.

EARLY & PERIODIC SCREENING, DIAGNOSTIC, & TREATMENT

Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, & Treatment (EPSDT) provides preventive and comprehensive care to Medicaid-eligible children up to age 21. Services are provided at no cost to patients and include physical exams and preventive health care, vision and hearing assessments, developmental and behavioral screenings, immunizations, lead and anemia screenings, autism and depression evaluations, dental assessments, newborn screenings, nutritional assessments, adolescent counseling, and health education.

EPSDT-participating providers are located throughout the state at physician offices and clinics, public schools certified by the Mississippi Department of Education, and Mississippi State Department of Health offices.

As of July 2025, three managed care organizations (MCOs) serve beneficiaries enrolled in MississippiCAN

and CHIP: Magnolia Health, Molina Health Care, and TrueCare.

Budget information for EPSDT is not available.²³



²³ Source: Mississippi Division of Medicaid. As of July 1, 2025, three managed care organizations serve beneficiaries enrolled in MississippiCAN and CHIP. Available at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/special-enrollment-period-underway-for-managed-care-members/>. See also Mississippi Division of Medicaid, Administrative Code Change Log (July 2025). Available at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Admin.-Code-Change-Log-as-of-7.1.25.pdf>

Table 3. EPSDT Performance Metrics

Program Metric ¹	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Screenings Administered to Children*	315,480	333,459	305,316	286,982	Data not available
Number of Screenings Administered to Young Children (birth to age five)	231,006	234,175	213,560	198,183	Data not available
Number of Screenings Administered to Children Younger than Age One	84,231	83,756	75,171	71,178	Data not available
Number of Screenings Administered to One-and Two-Year-Olds	101,228	101,433	92,563	85,505	Data not available
Number of Screenings Administered to Three-Five-Year-Olds	45,547	48,986	45,826	41,500	Data not available

¹Some children may have received more than one screening.



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH



The Mississippi Department of Mental Health²⁴ (DMH) certifies, provides, and/or financially supports a network of services for people with mental illness, intellectual/ developmental disabilities, substance use problems, and Alzheimer's disease and/or other dementia-related disorders. Mississippi's public mental health system comprises three components: 1) state-operated programs, 2) regional community mental health centers, and 3) other nonprofit/profit service agencies/organizations.

The Mississippi DMH makes available a comprehensive system of services to increase the likelihood that all Mississippians have access to the least restrictive and most appropriate level of support for optimal mental health. The Department's system is person-centered and is built on the strengths of individuals and families, based on their specific needs.

ALCOHOL & DRUG ADDICTION SERVICES

DMH administers the public system of substance use assessment, referral, prevention, treatment, and

recovery support services in Mississippi. Service providers include state-operated programs, regional Community Mental Health Centers, and other non-profit community-based programs. The overall goal of the state's substance use disorder service system is to provide quality care within a continuum of accessible, community-based services, including prevention, outpatient, withdrawal management, intensive outpatient, high-intensity and low-intensity residential treatment, opioid treatment services, and recovery support.

DMH administers the Pregnant and Parenting Women (PPW) residential treatment program through grants to certified community-based providers. PPW programs offer alcohol and drug addiction treatment and supportive services for pregnant women and parents with dependent children under the age of five. The program is designed for participants to remain in care for six months to one year.

Currently, there are three PPW service providers: Catholic Charities: Born Free/New Beginnings, Region 6 Community Mental Health Center (Fairland Center), and the MS Drug & Alcohol Treatment Center. These are shown on the map to the right.

²⁴ More information about the Mississippi Department of Mental Health can be found at <https://www.dmh.ms.gov/>

A&D Treatment Services for Pregnant & Parenting Women



Pregnant and Parenting Women Providers

Pregnant and Parenting Women providers admit pregnant women and parenting mothers or fathers with dependent children under age five.

Region	Name	Location
Region 6	Region VI Fairland Center	Coahoma County
Region 9	Catholic Charities Born Free/New Beginnings	Hinds County
Region 12	MS Drug & Alcohol Treatment Center	Harrison County



Other DMH Certified Providers

Other DMH Certified Providers prioritize admission for pregnant women and IV drug users. If admission for outpatient treatment or a residential bed is not available within 48 hours, referral for pre-natal care, counseling and education will be provided.

Region	Name	Location
Region 2	Communicare	Lafayette County
Region 3	LifeCore Health Group – Addiction Services	Lee County
Region 4	Region IV Chemical Dependency Complex	Prentiss County
Region 7	Community Counseling Services	Lowndes County
Region 8	Region 8 A&D Services	Rankin County
Region 9	Hinds Behavioral Health Services	Hinds County
Region 10	Weems Community Mental Health Center	Scott County
Region 12	Pine Belt Mental Health Resources	Jones County
Region 12	Gulf Coast Mental Health	Harrison County
Region 14	Singing River Services	George County
Region 15	River Ridge Behavioral Health	Warren County

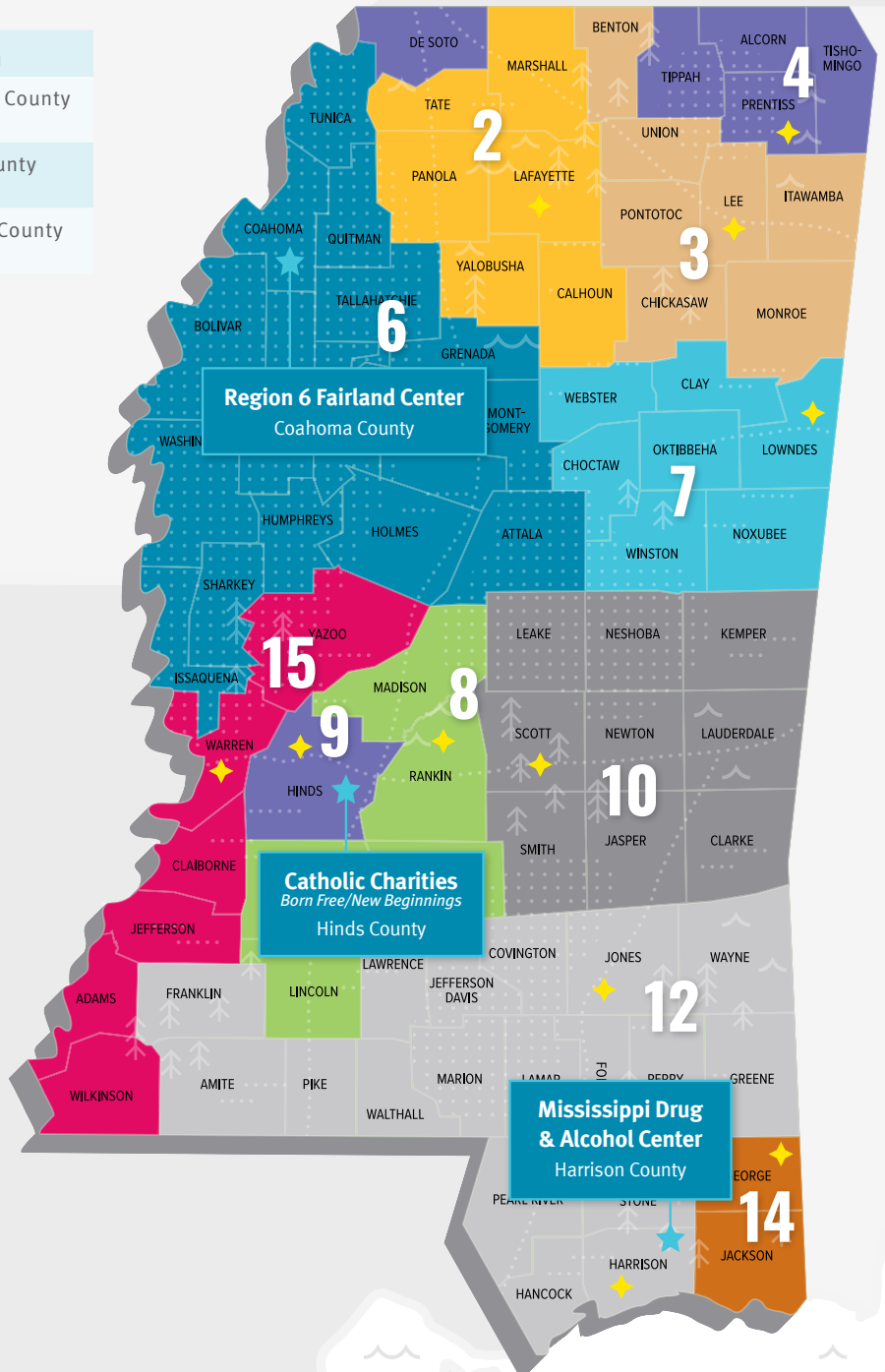


Figure 4. Original map available at: https://www.dmh.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Alcohol-and-Drug-Services-Directory_2024-25.pdf



Table 1. Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000
State Special Funds (3% wine & liquor tax)*	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$400,000
Total Funds	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$1,400,000

**Substance use block grant funds and 3% of wine and liquor state tax funds are awarded to a number of certified providers.*

Table 2. Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Pregnant Women and Parents with Young Children (birth to age five)* Served	194	383	195
Percent of Pregnant Women and Parents Participating for At Least Six Months	Data not available	75%	75%

**All parents participating in the program have children in this age range.*

CERTIFIED PARENT/CAREGIVER PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

The certified parent/caregiver support peer specialist program is currently facilitated by Families as Allies, with administrative support from the Department of Mental Health. Once trained and designated, parents and other caregivers can provide support to others based on their lived experiences. Support can occur either one-on-one or in a group setting.

The goal of the program is to support parents/caregivers in identifying and achieving their goals. This support may include helping professional providers listen to families and understand things from their perspective. Parent peer support taps into the strength that families show in negotiating many challenges and then uses those strengths to help them achieve what they want for their child(ren). It often focuses on dealing with systems, particularly school issues.

The Department of Mental Health certifies parent peer supporters in the mental health system. The training is virtual and is conducted by Families as Allies.

This program is available statewide. The number of counties served at one time can vary based on workforce availability.

Program metric data for the certified parent/caregiver peer support specialist program were not available.

In FY2025, all Mississippi's Certified Parent/Caregiver Peer Support specialists were required to complete continuing education and submit a renewal application by September 30, 2025 to maintain active certification status.²⁵

Table 3. Certified Parent/Caregiver Peer Support Specialists Program Budget

Budget*	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
State General Funds*	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000

*These are funds designated for training of certified parent/caregiver support specialists.



²⁵ Mississippi Department of Mental Health. (2025). Certified Parent/Caregiver Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) Recertification — Renewal Directions and Application (2025). Available at <https://www.dmh.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Recertification.CPSS-Renewal-Directions-and-Application-2025-Draft.pdf>

CHILD ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHIATRY (CHAMP)

The Child Access to Mental Health & Psychiatry (CHAMP) program is administered by the University of Mississippi Medical Center's (UMMC) Center for the Advancement of Youth (CAY) and the Division of Child Psychiatry. CHAMP is a peer-to-peer consultation and educational service through which child psychiatrists and psychologists support primary care providers (doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) concerning mental health care (such as diagnostic clarification, medication adjustment, or treatment planning).

Any pediatrician, family medicine doctor, or nurse practitioner in Mississippi who sees children ages birth to 21 can call the CHAMP line and get an immediate, free phone consultation with a child psychiatrist, child psychologist, counselor, social worker, perinatal peer support specialist, or a referral/resource specialist. Families as Allies partners with CHAMP to provide family support and also to work on system-level approaches to sustain the service.

Published program evaluations have shown reductions in psychotropic prescription costs and claims among providers using CHAMP.²⁶

The most common providers utilizing CHAMP are nurse practitioners, primarily seeking resource and referral access for their patients.

CHAMP for Schools (C4S), also known as CHAMP for Classroom Providers, was established in 2022 and supports school personnel by providing vital mental health resources, including a dedicated psychological consultation phone line and an educational component to support training for school-based mental health providers, known as Project ECHO. With a mission to enhance knowledge, build capacity, and promote holistic

well-being within school communities, C4S strives to address school-based mental health challenges across Mississippi. The most common consultation types are resource and referral and disability advocacy.

In September 2023, the program expanded its services, launching CHAMP for Moms, also known as CHAMP for Perinatal Providers, to support pediatricians, obstetricians, and gynecologists around parents' perinatal and postnatal mental health and substance use challenges. The program also supports any maternity-related providers in the community (doulas, community health workers, etc.). Providers can receive peer-to-peer consultation, utilizing telehealth when preferred. Services include assisting providers with mental health screenings, identification, treatment, and referral to other resources as needed.

Both the pediatric and perinatal CHAMP programs are available statewide. Both programs also offer continuing educational programming for distance-based learning collaboratives.

26 Sarver, D. E., Walker, C. S., Tyrone, R. S., Mabus, K., & Holder, G. (2024). CHAMP for Moms: Enhancing maternal wellness through integrated psychiatry, substance use support, and consultation. *Journal of the Mississippi State Medical Association*, 65(5/6). <https://jmsma.scholasticahq.com/article/117915-champ-for-moms-enhancing-maternal-wellness-through-integrated-psychiatry-substance-use-support-and-consultation>



Table 4. CHAMP Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$530,192	\$1,708,342*	\$877,033
Other Funds**	\$389,176	\$245,000	\$175,406
Total Funds	\$919,368	\$1,953,342	\$1,052,439

*A five-year \$3.75 million grant from the U.S. Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) and a \$300,000 Empowering Health grant from United Healthcare provides funds for the CHAMP for Moms program. The first of these grant funds were received in FY 2024 and are included in this amount. CHAMP for Schools is funded from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health and a HRSA Expansion Grant.

**Local cost-share is a requirement of the federal funder that a proportion of the funds be matched by the grantee. FY 2023: \$300,000 is funding from a United Health Care grant; the remainder is local-cost share. FY 2024: All funds are local-cost share.

Table 5. CHAMP Performance Metrics

CHAMP Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Providers Served	83	94	86
Number of Providers of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	40	27	26
Number of Parents or Caregivers Served	193	222	210
Number of Parents or Caregivers of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	29	40	49
Number of Calls	275	297	227
Number of Counties or Areas Served	9	15	30
Most Common Types of Providers Served	Nurse practitioners	Nurse practitioners	Pediatrician

Table 6. CHAMP for Schools Performance Metrics

CHAMP for Schools Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of School-Based Mental Health Clinicians Served	41	41	Data not available
Number of School-Based Mental Health Clinicians Served Who Work with Young Children (birth to age five)	22	22	Data not available
Number of Consultations	9	13	Data not available
Number of Counties or Areas Served	16	16	Data not available
Number of School Districts Served	21	21	Data not available
Number of Schools Served	102	102	Data not available



GULF COAST CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE (GCCFN)

The Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence is certified by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health to provide 24-hour/7 day per week crisis intervention services, mental health assessments, therapy, and community support services to families and children in the six coastal counties (Jackson, Harrison, Hancock, Pearl River, George, and Stone) who have been exposed to domestic violence. Residents of the domestic violence shelter can be provided with food, clothing, childcare, transportation, personal hygiene items, legal assistance, and employment assistance. Crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, and case management services are provided for residents of the shelter. The center also operates a therapeutic preschool program for young children.

Since the center opened in 1977, more than 20,500 women, children, and men have received services through shelter and non-residential programs. Approximately 12,000 children, adolescents, and adults attend violence prevention sessions annually. The center’s 24-hour crisis line receives over 15,000 calls per year requesting assistance and information.

Services provided include preschool classes, parenting classes, intake assessments, and outreach activities, incorporating evidence-based practices such as Incredible Years, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Trust-Based Relational Intervention.

All services are free and confidential.

Table 7. Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$62,367	\$62,367	\$62,367

Table 8. Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence Program Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Parents Served	Data not available	140	153
Number of Parents of Young Children (birth to age five) served	Data not available	11	19
Number of Children Served	344	310	297
Number of Young Children (birth to age five) served	Data not available	11	19

MAKING A PLAN (MAP) TEAMS

Making a Plan (MAP) teams are local-level teams made up of individuals from child-serving community agencies from within children’s specific communities. The teams review cases concerning children and youth up to age 21 who have serious emotional or behavioral disorder or mental illness diagnoses and who are at risk for inappropriate placements due to the lack of access to or availability of services and supports in the community. Teams meet monthly and identify services and resources that may divert children from inappropriate inpatient care (keeping children in the least restrictive environment).

There are 55 MAP teams across the state. All MAP teams are operated by community mental health centers

except for those in Hinds County, which are operated by Families as Allies.

In fiscal year 2024, only 1% of reviewed cases resulted in the child being referred to a higher level of care.



Table 9. MAP Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
State General Funds	\$686,649	\$686,649	\$686,649

Table 10. MAP Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	764	1,024	970
Number of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	Data not available	145	184
Number of Families or Households Served	764	1,024	970
Number of Applications or Referrals Received	764	1,024	344
Percent of Children Able to Remain in Their Home/Community	Data not available	99%	99%
Percent of Children Referred to Higher Level of Care	Data not available	1%	< 1%

MISSISSIPPI YOUTH PROGRAMS AROUND THE CLOCK (MYPAC)

Mississippi Youth Programs Around the Clock (MYPAC) provides wraparound facilitation and other services (such as therapeutic interventions, 24/7 crisis intervention, case management, family and peer support, and respite care) for children and youth from ages three to 21 who are diagnosed with a serious emotional disturbance and are at risk of out-of-home placement. The goals of MYPAC are to help stabilize youth in their environment, reduce the need for institutionalization within a psychiatric residential treatment facility, and provide families with the necessary tools to support their child.



MYPAC participants must be residents of Mississippi, meet financial criteria to receive Medicaid or MississippiCAN, and meet criteria for admission to a psychiatric residential treatment facility.

MYPAC providers must be certified by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The following agencies provide MYPAC services:

- Canopy
- Catholic Charities
- Center for Children and Families
- Choices Coordinated Care Solutions
- Diamond Grove
- Gateway Behavioral Health Services
- Health Connect America
- Marion Counseling
- Methodist Children's Homes
- Region 12 Community Mental Health Center/Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources
- Youth Villages

According to data from Youth Villages, over 90% of children completing its programs continue to live successfully at home two years later.

MYPAC services are available statewide. Services are reimbursed by Medicaid and do not receive other funding.

Table 11. MYPAC Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	2,035	2,422	2,188
Number of Children Able to Remain in Their Home/Community	Data not available	1,782	1,783
Number of Children Referred to Higher Level of Care	Data not available	640	405

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY (PCIT) & CHILD-ADULT RELATIONSHIP ENHANCEMENT (CARE)

The University of Mississippi Medical Center's (UMMC) Center for the Advancement of Youth (CAY) provides **Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)**, an evidence-based behavioral therapy for children with behavioral difficulties, tantrums, emotional dysregulation, and attachment difficulties. PCIT provides weekly behavioral support for parents and caregivers of children from one to seven years old. PCIT at UMMC also specifically aims to provide services for children with clear risk factors for early socio-emotional health issues such as NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) histories, prematurity/low birth weight, in-utero exposure to substances, or other major environmental risk factors. Children who struggle with attention, have temper issues, maltreatment histories, or engage in frequent fighting or destructive behaviors are typical candidates for PCIT. The program works to improve the parent-child relationship, teaching caregivers strategies to manage disruptive behaviors effectively. A key component of PCIT is real-time coaching, where a therapist guides the caregiver during their interaction with the child, either in-person or via telehealth. PCIT can be effective with a number of populations including children with neurodevelopmental disorders (such as autism and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder), prior experiences of physical maltreatment, developmental delays, and speech-language delays. The most common types of behaviors targeted include noncompliance, aggression, stress, disruption, temper tantrums, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and emotional dysregulation.

Initially started in 2016 through a grant from the Mississippi Department of Health and the Mississippi Council on Developmental Disabilities, Mississippi's PCIT program completed a five-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to build out infant and early childhood mental health services, including PCIT.

Another two-year grant from SAMHSA has allowed the program to continue and has supported training for community mental health agencies. PCIT can be provided in person at UMMC, Hinds Behavioral Health, and Southern Christian Services, and is available via telehealth anywhere in the state through UMMC.

Child-Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE) for the classroom is a type of Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT). CARE and TCIT utilize the same principles as PCIT but are geared toward educators' relationships with their students. CARE services are available through CAY and can be provided to early childhood educators, Head Start staff, and elementary through high school teachers, as well as allied health providers (speech, physical, and occupational therapists). Mississippi's CARE program can also support Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in schools. Both are primarily geared toward prevention efforts.

CARE training is provided across the state at the request of child care programs and schools. Trainees can receive real-time coaching. Evaluation data has shown that participating teachers report significantly fewer behavioral difficulties in their classrooms, more instructional goals being met, and better confidence in managing classroom behavior. The most common types of behaviors targeted by CARE include defiance, disruption, whining, yelling, destructive behavior, and aggressive behavior.



Table 12. PCIT Program Budget & CARE Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$500,000	\$1,399,941	Data not available
Other Funds (local cost-share)*	\$54,653	\$0	Data not available
Total Funds	\$554,653	\$1,399,941	Data not available

*Local cost-share is a requirement of the federal funder that a proportion of the funds be matched by the grantee.

Table 13. PCIT Program Performance Metrics

PCIT Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Parents or Caregivers Served	85	63	Data not available
Number of Parents of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	69	40	Data not available
Number of Families or Households Served	68	50	Data not available
Number of Applications or Referrals Received*	329	278	Data not available
Number of Counties or Areas Served	26	22	Data not available
Average Number of Visits Per Family	7	7	Data not available

*The number of applications or referrals received is greater than the number of parents served due to waiting lists and/or no-shows.

Table 14. CARE Program Performance Metrics

CARE Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Teachers Served	48	30	Data not available
Number of Teachers of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	13	0	Data not available
Number of Classrooms Served	3	1	Data not available
Number of Counties or Areas Served	3	1	Data not available



PRESCHOOL DAY TREATMENT PROGRAM

Mississippi's preschool day treatment program services are provided by two community mental health centers that are certified by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. These programs are for children aged three to five years old with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) who are unable to attend a mainstream child care program due to behavioral and/or emotional challenges.

The preschool day treatment programs use an evidence-based curriculum that includes social skills development, behavior modification, anger management, and creative expression. These services aim to improve emotional regulation, social interaction, and overall functioning in preschool-aged children. Transportation is provided, and services are typically available five days a week. The program serves six counties in Mississippi, Yazoo, Lincoln, Rankin, Madison, Copiah, and Simpson.

Day treatment services are reimbursed through Medicaid and do not receive additional funding.

Table 15. Preschool Day Treatment Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	113	96	62
Number of Families or Households Served	113	96	56
Percent of Children Able to Attend Mainstream Kindergarten After Completing Program	100%	100%	91%

VICKSBURG FAMILY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Vicksburg Family Development Services provides parenting and prenatal education classes as well as child screenings, assessments, therapeutic services, and referrals to other services as needed in Warren County. Classes include information on child health, behavior management, and developmental support.

Vicksburg Family Development Services also offers home visits with a social worker or a registered nurse. The home visit curriculum includes health and nutrition education, physical care, infant stimulation training, the stages of early childhood, behavior management counseling, developmental assessment, safety education, and individual and family counseling.

Services also include child care for children aged two to four years old for three hours per week, with transportation to and from the program provided.

Other supportive services offered are car seats (after a seat safety class and proper installation demonstration); books and literacy assistance (for both parents, caregivers, and children) and access to household essentials for families who attend parenting classes. As the program has grown, some of the parenting classes have been made available online.

The most common types of services provided include parenting classes, multi-family group therapy, mental health assessments, and screenings.

Table 16. Vicksburg Family Development Services Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000

Table 17. Vicksburg Family Development Services Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Parents Served	144	112	200
Number of Young Children (birth to age five) Served	Data not available	126	208
Number of Families or Households Served	144	112	327

WRAPAROUND FACILITATION

Wraparound facilitation is provided by the Mississippi Wraparound Institute at the University of Southern Mississippi's School of Social Work. Wraparound facilitation is an evidence-based care coordination model that supports children and youth up to age 21 who are engaged with multiple systems (such as Child Protective Services and schools), requiring care that exceeds the resources of a single provider. Wraparound facilitation aims to support providers in effectively coordinating families' services.

Providers, in collaboration with the family, develop a single plan of care to address the complex mental and behavioral health needs of the family. The goal is to offer support in the least restrictive environment and avoid unnecessary institutional placements, so children may remain with their families.

Wraparound facilitation is available statewide.

In 2025, the Mississippi Legislature passed Senate Bill 2597, the Mississippi K-12 and Postsecondary Mental Health Act of 2025, which formally established the Mississippi Statewide System of Care — a coordinated network of agencies and providers designed to make a full range of mental health and other necessary services available to children with complex needs and their families. The System of Care explicitly incorporates individualized service planning using a strengths-based wraparound process, with goals to reduce inappropriate out-of-home and out-of-school placements.²⁷

Table 18. Wraparound Facilitation Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
State General Funds	\$382,222	\$382,222	\$382,222

Table 19. Wraparound Facilitation Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Children Served	1,576	1,427	1,554
Number of Families or Households Served	1,576	1,427	1,554
Number of Children Able to Remain in Their Home/Community	Data not available	1,347	1,461
Number of Children Referred to a Higher Level of Care	Data not available	80	101

²⁷ Mississippi SB 2597, Mississippi K-12 and Postsecondary Mental Health Act of 2025. Available at <https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2025/html/SB/2500-2599/SB2597PS.htm>



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



The Mississippi State Department of Health²⁸ (MSDH) focuses on health protection, health promotion, and health planning. This section presents data for four MSDH programs that support the health and well-being of young children and families: the Child Care Licensure Bureau, the First Steps Early Intervention Program (Part C), Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, and the Women, Infants & Children's Nutrition Program (WIC).

CHILD CARE LICENSURE BUREAU

The Child Care Licensure Bureau sets standards for the minimum acceptable health, safety, and program operations for child care programs throughout the state. Mississippi's Child Care Licensure Bureau monitors registered, home-based child care programs and inspects all licensed child care programs, including youth camps and after school programs. Child care

programs are required to be licensed if the facility cares for six or more children who are younger than 13 years old and are not related to the child care provider. Inspections include reviews of program records, policies, program content, and physical safety.

Program staff provide trainings at no cost to child care providers throughout the state; some of these trainings are mandatory, such as Child Care Regulations and Licensing, Playground Safety, and Directors' Orientation, while others can be elected to complete, such as infant and toddler development, appropriate behavior management, physical activity, handwashing and sanitation, nutrition and menu planning, and child abuse and neglect identification and reporting.

To be eligible to obtain a license, child care programs must have a qualified director who is at least 21 years old; has proof of required immunizations; has passed fingerprint, sex offender, and Child Abuse Central Registry background checks; has completed the

²⁸ More information about MSDH can be found at <https://msdh.ms.gov/>.

mandatory trainings listed above; and meets education and/or experience requirements. Programs must also pass a fire safety inspection, have an adequate and safe playground area, and meet building safety standards. Licensed child care programs must have developed policies around daily activities, arrival and departure, emergencies, and discipline and must agree to follow all licensing regulations. Licensing fees are determined by the number of children the facility will be licensed to provide care for. Child care licenses must be renewed annually.

Employees at licensed child care programs are required to pass criminal records, sex offender, and child abuse registry background checks and comply with the immunization requirements of the MSDH. Accredited food manager training and adult, child, and infant CPR and first aid certification are also required.

Information about child care subsidies and quality is included in the Mississippi Department of Human Services’ Division of Early Childhood Care & Development section of this publication.

This program is available statewide.



Table 1. Child Care Licensure Bureau’s Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$4,296,995	\$4,323,150	\$4,323,150
Other Funds (received from child care licensure fees)	\$658,859	\$662,173	\$755,060
Total Funds	\$4,955,854	\$4,985,323	\$5,078,210

Table 2. Child Care Licensure Bureau’s Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Number of Licensed Child Care Programs	1,626	1,505	1,507
Number of Registered Child Care Programs [†]	94	119	Not Applicable*

**Effective May 2025, MSDH no longer issues registrations for home-based child care providers. All providers serving five or fewer unrelated children are now required to obtain a full license. As a result, this category no longer exists as a separate program metric.*

FIRST STEPS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (IDEA PART C)

Mississippi's First Steps program, administered by the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), is the state's Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Part C early intervention program, which provides evidence-based supports and services to children with special needs who are younger than age three, along with their families. The program's family-centered services are designed to enhance children's development through early learning opportunities embedded in their daily routines. All children enrolled in First Steps receive an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) that outlines the specific services their family will receive, based on their needs. The program is designed to assist both the child and family by helping parents and caregivers support children's development at home and in care settings.

While Part C is a federal program, each state sets their own eligibility criteria. First Steps has three eligibility categories:

- developmental delay (a 33% delay in one area of development or a 25% delay in two or more development areas, based on assessment)
 - areas of development: cognitive, physical, communication, social-emotional, and adaptive
- diagnosed physical or mental conditions, such as chromosomal abnormalities, genetic and congenital disorders, congenital infections, sensory impairments, inborn errors of metabolism, disorders reflecting disturbance of the nervous system development, severe attachment disorders, disorders secondary to exposure to toxic substances (such as fetal alcohol syndrome)
- informed clinical opinion, which may be used to establish eligibility if evaluation and assessment results do not meet developmental delay criteria or the child does not have a diagnosed condition

While some states include children at risk of developmental delays in their Part C program eligibility

criteria, an at-risk designation does not currently qualify children for participation in First Steps.

The First Steps program is divided into three regions across the state. Service coordinators, who are employed by MSDH, process program referrals and coordinate with local providers to obtain evaluations and services for each child. Early intervention services include special instruction, speech-language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. These services are provided by contractors of MSDH who are reimbursed after service provision and typically take place in families' homes, children's education settings, and other community settings.

First Steps is working to improve outcomes for enrolled children by enhancing service quality and professional development through the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). This initiative focuses on using evidence-based practices to better support both families and professionals participating in early intervention services.



Table 3. Early Intervention Program Budget

Budget	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$4,739,894	\$4,739,894	Data not available
State General Funds	\$399,774.99	\$390,001.00	Data not available
State Special Funds	\$0	\$2,000,000	Data not available
Other Funds (from the Mississippi Department of Education)	\$700,000	\$700,000	Data not available
Total Funds	\$5,839,669.99	\$7,829,895	Data not available

Table 4. Early Intervention Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025 ²
Number of Children Served (with an IFSP)	3,170	3,801	4,103	4,279	4,353
Number of Applications or Referrals Received	3,814	4,078	4,367	4,633	5,010
Number of Children with a Transition Conference to Part B, Section 619 Special Education Program	878	873	978	1,102	1,116
Number of Children Meeting Goals and Exiting Part C Program (No Longer Needing Early Intervention or Special Education Services before Age 3)	77	68	65	29	56



HEALTHY MOMS, HEALTHY BABIES

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies of Mississippi is a maternal and infant health support program serving Medicaid-eligible families to increase safe birthing experiences and healthy infant development across the state. This program was formerly known as Perinatal High Risk Management/Infant Services System (PHRM/ISS).

The program provides home visits for families with identified health risks and also provides care coordination services, partnering with medical and community providers. Nursing case managers provide comprehensive assessments to identify the medical, dietary, and social needs of parents and infants; develop plans of care; and coordinate services to meet those needs. Program nurses, social workers, and registered dietitians provide health education on topics such as nutrition, hospital preparation, pregnancy and parenting warning signs, depression, anxiety, caring for a new baby, infant safety, and healthy infant development and support with obtaining medical homes (accessible, team-based, patient-centered health care) and identifying family and community supports. They also provide referrals to other services such as the

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program (WIC); family planning, mental health, transportation, housing, medical care, child care, employment services, and breastfeeding support.

In August 2025, MSDH declared a public health emergency in response to Mississippi's infant mortality rate rising to 9.7 deaths per 1,000 live births — the highest in more than a decade.²⁹ In direct response, MSDH identified strengthening the Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies program as a key strategy, alongside expanding prenatal care access, increasing community health worker programs, and promoting safe sleep practices. Recent program updates also include expanded access to telehealth services for both prenatal and postnatal care up to one year after birth.

²⁹ Mississippi State Department of Health. *Mississippi Infant Mortality Report: Annual Report: Review of 2023-2024 Neonatal Infant Deaths and 2022-2023 Post-Neonatal Infant Deaths*. December 2025. Available at <https://msdh.ms.gov/page/resources/21453.pdf>

Table 5. Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Program Budget*

Budget	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025 ²
Federal Funds	\$0	\$81,087	\$41,241	\$94,287
State Special Funds**	\$0	\$0	\$1,926,079	\$2,412,230
Other Funds (third-party earnings from Medicaid reimbursement)	\$2,584,926	\$1,830,942	\$1,311,085	\$3,863,081
Total Funds	\$2,584,926	\$1,912,029	\$3,278,404	\$6,369,598

* Program founded in 2021; formerly named Perinatal High Risk Case Management/Infant Services System (PHRM/ISS).

**These funds are from the Health Care Trust Fund, which receives court-ordered payments due to the State of Mississippi as a result of the lawsuit won against tobacco manufacturers.

Table 6. Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Program Performance Metrics*

Program Metric	FY 2023 ¹	FY 2024 ¹	FY 2025 ²
Number of Infants Served	533	534	427
Number of Maternal Participants Served	700	640	577
Number of Referrals Received**	2,136	2,076	2,003

* Program founded in 2021; formerly named Perinatal High Risk Case Management/Infant Services System (PHRM/ISS).

**For the majority of referrals received, there is no response when HM/HB staff reach out to begin the enrollment process. Some referred families decline enrollment, and some are no-shows.



WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN'S (WIC) NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC) provides nutritious foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support, and health screenings and referrals for eligible participants. WIC participants can purchase healthy foods at participating grocery stores and pharmacies across the state by using an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card.

Participants eligible for WIC services include Mississippi residents who are identified as at risk for poor nutrition and meet income guidelines; participants in Medicaid, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs) are automatically income-eligible for WIC. Categories for WIC eligibility include: women who are pregnant or postpartum (up to six months after pregnancy), breastfeeding women up to 12 months after pregnancy, and children (younger than five years old).

Effective June 2024, USDA announced updates to the WIC food packages to align with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and reflect recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. These changes not only promote nutrition security and equity and consider program administration but also provide WIC participants with a wider variety of nutritious foods to support healthy dietary patterns and

accommodate special dietary needs and personal and cultural food preferences. The revisions provide foods in amounts that are more consistent with the supplemental nature of the program, encourage fruit and vegetable consumption, and strengthen support for breastfeeding. Mississippi's WIC program also temporarily increased its benefit levels for fruit and vegetable purchases using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Mississippi WIC changed from Enfamil to Similac for standard formulas.

In December 2024, Mississippi's WIC program introduced online services for appointment scheduling and virtual consultations. In 2024, WIC celebrated its 50th anniversary as a federal program.

WIC provides services at health departments and clinics in each county across the state.



Table 7. WIC Program Budget

Budget	FY 2021 ¹	FY 2022 ¹	FY 2023 ^{2*}	FY 2024 ^{2*}	FY 2025 ¹
Federal Funds	\$78,954,849	\$93,439,758	\$56,734,095	\$58,104,319	\$68,250,568

^{*} FY2023 and FY2024 figures are derived from USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) monthly state-level program costs data and represent gross food costs and National Security Agency (NSA) costs only. These figures are not directly comparable to FY2021, FY2022, and FY2025, which include additional funding streams. See note ^{**}.

^{**} FY2021, FY2022, and FY2025 figures were obtained through a public records request to MSDH and reflect all federal funding streams, including National Security Agency (NSA) funds, food funds, the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Grant, and for FY2025, ARPA-funded modernization and technology grants totaling \$1,902,647. The FY2022 total reflects temporarily elevated WIC food fund levels due to ARPA-funded fruit and vegetable benefit increases; FY2023 reflects the return to standard benefit levels following the expiration of those enhanced benefits.

Table 8. WIC Program Performance Metrics

Program Metric	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025 ¹
Monthly Average of Women Enrolled*	16,910	15,478			14,795
Monthly Average of Women Actively Receiving Services*	15,254	13,920			13,688
Monthly Average of Pregnant Women Enrolled			5,452	5,201	
Monthly Average of Pregnant Women Actively Receiving Services			4,786	4,616	
Monthly Average of Postpartum Women Enrolled			10,032	9,734	
Monthly Average of Postpartum Women Actively Receiving Services			9,121	8,731	
Monthly Average of Breastfeeding Participants			20,341	20,057	
Monthly Average of Infants Enrolled**	21,624	19,970	18,968	19,295	18,424
Monthly Average of Infants Actively Receiving Services	20,247	18,636	17,715	18,234	17,572
Monthly Average of Children Enrolled***	43,544	38,946	37,782	33,294	33,296
Monthly Average of Children Actively Receiving Services	36,651	33,887			29,679
Number of Referrals Made to Other Programs for Participants	23,016	21,140	17,462 ¹	18,213 ¹	18,214
Number of Active Clinics	202	202	130	125	212
Monthly Average Number of Vendors****	Data not available	Data not available	297	297	299

*Pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding subcategory data not available for FY2021, FY2022, and FY2025; combined women's figures provided.

**Infants defined as children under 12 months.

***Children defined as ages 1–4.

****FY2023 and FY2024 reflect monthly averages; FY2025 reflects total authorized vendors — monthly average not available.

APPENDIX 1. REFERENCES

Head Start & Early Head Start

Table 1. Early Head Start Program Budget

- 1 FY 2024 data source: Office of Head Start. Head Start Program Facts: Fiscal Year 2024. Available at [headstart.gov](https://www.headstart.gov).
- 2 FY 2025 data provided by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians – Department of Early Childhood Education upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2022, FY 2023 and FY 2024 data were obtained through personal communications with Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians staff.

Table 2. Early Head Start Program Metrics

- 1 FY 2025 data source: Office of Head Start, Program Information Report (PIR), 2025 State-Level Summary (Mississippi), provided by the Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office.
- 2 FY 2022 and FY 2023 data source: these data are from the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) Database, Office of Head Start, now available at [headstart.gov](https://www.headstart.gov).
- 3 FY 2025 data provided by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians – Department of Early Childhood Education upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2022, FY 2023 and FY 2024 data were obtained through personal communications with Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians staff.

Table 3. Head Start Budget

- 1 FY 2024 data source: Office of Head Start. Head Start Program Facts: Fiscal Year 2024. Available at [headstart.gov](https://www.headstart.gov).

Table 4. Head Start Program Metrics

- 1 FY 2025 data source: Office of Head Start, Program Information Report (PIR), 2025 State-Level Summary (Mississippi), provided by the Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office.
- 2 FY 2022 and FY 2023 data source: these data are from the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC) Database, Office of Head Start, now available at [headstart.gov](https://www.headstart.gov).
- 3 These data were obtained through personal communications with Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians staff.

Table 5. Early Head Start and Head Start Combined Metrics

- 1 FY 2025 data source: Office of Head Start, Program Information Report (PIR), 2025 State-Level Summary (Mississippi), provided by the Mississippi Head Start Collaboration Office.

Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS)

Table 1. Adoption Program Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 2. Adoption Program Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 3. Child Abuse & Neglect Program Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 4. Child Abuse & Neglect Program Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 5. Foster Care Program Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 6. Foster Care Program Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Mississippi Department of Education

Table 1. CACFP Program Budget - Federal

- 1 Data provided by MDCPS upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 2. CACFP Program Budget – Federal Tribal Funds

- 1 Data provided by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. Figures are part of the total CACFP Program Budget available in Table 1 of this section. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.

Table 3. CACFP Program Performance Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDE in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions. FY 2023 and FY 2024 figures were updated based on revised data.

Table 4. Part B Program Budget

- 1 Data obtained from MSDH via public records request.
- 2 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 5. Part B Program Performance Metrics

- 1 Data obtained from MSDH via public records request.
- 2 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 6. ELCs Program Budget

- 1 Data for Fiscal Years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 obtained from the education appropriations bill.
- 2 Data provided by MDE upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 7. ELCs Program Performance Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDE upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2021 and FY 2022 data were not available in prior editions.
- 2 Data obtained from Mississippi First.

Table 8. SIP Program Budget

- 1 Data obtained from the education appropriations bill (Session 2022 bill: <https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2022/pdf/HB/1600-1699/HB1600SG.pdf> and Session 2023 bill: <https://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2023/pdf/HB/1600-1699/HB1613SG.pdf>)
- 2 Data provided by MDE upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 9. SIP Program Performance Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDE upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 10. Title I Pre-K Program Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDE in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 11. Title I Pre-K Program Performance Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDE in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication. Fiscal years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 figures were updated based on revised data.
- 2 Data for previous publication obtained via public records request.

Mississippi Department of Human Services

Table 1. CCPP Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDHS-DECCD upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.
- 2 FY 2025 data provided by the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians – Department of Early Childhood Education upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication. FY 2023 and FY 2024 data were obtained through personal communications with Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians staff.

Table 2. CCPP Program Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDHS-DECCD upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 3. CC R&R Program Budget

- 1 Data provided by MDHS-DECCD upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 4. CC R&R Program Metrics

- 1 Data provided by MDHS-DECCD upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 5. TANF Program Budget

- 1 For FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024, data obtained via Public Records Requests.

Table 6. TANF Program Budget

- 1 Data obtained from MDHS Annual Reports. For FY25: (1) Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), 2025 Annual Report. Available at <https://www.mdhs.ms.gov/reports/annual/>

Mississippi Department of Medicaid (DOM)

Table 1. CHIP Budget

- 1 Data from <https://medicaid.gov/chip/reports-evaluations/index.html>

Table 2. CHIP Performance Metrics

- 1 Data from the Mississippi Division of Medicaid Annual Report.

Table 3. EPSDT Performance Metrics

- 1 Data obtained from Forms CMS-416: Annual EPSDT Participation Reports.

Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH)

Tables 1-19

1 Data provided by DMH upon request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH)

Table 1. Child Care Licensure Bureau’s Budget

1 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 2. Child Care Licensure Bureau’s Metrics

1 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 3. Early Intervention Program Budget

1 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 4. Early Intervention Program Metrics

1 Data obtained from MSDH via public records request.
2 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 5. Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Program Budget

1 Data obtained from MSDH via public records request.
2 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 6. Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Program Metrics

1 Data obtained from MSDH via public records request.
2 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication.

Table 7. WIC Program Budget

1 Data provided by MSDH in response to a public records request for the 3rd edition of this publication. Entries for FY 2021 and FY 2022 were revised based on data obtained by public records request from MSDH.
2 Entries were updated based on revised publicly available data. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration. (2026). WIC data tables: Monthly data – state level participation by category and program costs [Data set]. <https://www.fna.usda.gov/pd/wic-program>

Table 8. WIC Program Metrics

1 FY2023 and FY2024 referral figures were corrected following communication with the State WIC staff at MSDH. Original figures of 2,770 (FY2023) and 2,502 (FY2024) were obtained via public records request for the previous edition and confirmed to be in error. Corrected figures of 17,462 (FY2023) and 18,213 (FY2024) were provided directly by the State WIC Director on May 6, 2026.

APPENDIX 2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Head Start & Early Head Start

Common Terms & Acronyms

Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC)

The ECLKC has transitioned to HeadStart.gov to better match the language most people use when referring to HeadStart programs. More information about the transition is found in this article: [Transition to HeadStart.gov](#)

HeadStart.gov

The new site location and name of the ECLKC. See link above for more information about the transition.

Table 2. Early Head Start Program Metrics

of children with IFSPs[†]

All children enrolled in First Steps (Mississippi's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C early intervention program) receive an individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that outlines specific services their family will receive, based on their needs.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

The written plan that guides services for a child, who is younger than 3, and their family's stated outcomes. An IFSP is written after the child is evaluated and found eligible for early intervention services. Source: [Headstart.gov ISFPs Tips - Glossary](#)

Table 4. Head Start Program Metrics

of NIEER Benchmarks met[†]

The National Institute for Early Education Research's Benchmarks for High Quality Pre-K tool is an instrument that identifies ten minimum policy benchmarks needed for highly effective preschool programs. Source: <https://nieer.org/research-library/download-nieers-benchmarks-high-quality-pre-k>.

NIEER Benchmarks

1) early learning and development standards, 2) teachers have bachelor's degree, 3) teachers have specialized training in Pre-K, 4) assistant teachers have CDA or equivalent, 5) professional development, coaching for staff, 6) class size of 20 students or lower, 7) Staff-Child ratio 1:10 or better, 8) vision, hearing, and health screenings & referrals, 9) curriculum supports, 10) continuous quality improvement system. Source: <https://nieer.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/benchmarks-check-list-png-410x1024.png>

of children with individualized education programs (IEPs)^{††}

When a child's eligible for program services, Individuals with Disabilities Act Part B staff oversee the creation and delivery of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that defines the supports and services the child will receive, which are tailored to the child's specific strengths and needs.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

The written plan developed to make sure a child who is older than 3 and has a disability identified under the law receives specialized instruction and related services in learning settings. Source: [Headstart.gov ISFPs Tips - Glossary](#)

Mississippi Department of Education

Table 7. ELCs Program Performance Metrics

# of NIEER Benchmarks met[†]	See note (†) from Table 4 - Head Start Program Metrics above
Percent of Children Meeting K Readiness Assessment Target Scores^{††}	The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment provides parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with a common understanding of what children know and are able to do upon entering school. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment is also used to measure how well pre-K programs prepare four-year-old children to be ready for kindergarten based upon the Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children. In administrations of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment prior to FY 2025, scale scores were generated to provide stakeholders with a measurement for understanding student achievement. The minimum baseline scale score for kindergarten readiness at the end of pre-K is 498. Any scale scores at or above 498 suggest that children are on track for Kindergarten. About six in ten Mississippi pre-K students who attend programs that administer the test meet the benchmark of 498. More information is available at MDE - Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
Average Program Scale Score^{††}	
Average Program Scale Score Growth^{††}	
Star Early Literacy K Readiness Assessment^{†††}	Star Early Literacy is a customized reading test for students to take on a computer. The test is designed for students in grades pre-K through 3 (beginning readers who do not yet read independently or need early literacy skills assessed). As a student takes the assessment, the software selects items based on the student's responses. If the student answers the item correctly, the software increases the difficulty level of the next item. If the student answers incorrectly, the software lowers the difficulty level of the next item. By continually adjusting the difficulty of an item to what the student has shown she can or cannot do, the assessment is tailored to accurately measure each student's level of achievement. Star Early Literacy consists of 27 items and generally takes fewer than 15 minutes for the student to complete the assessment. Source: Mississippi K Readiness Assessment Test Administration Manual

Table 9. SIP Program Performance Metrics

# of NIEER Benchmarks met[†]	See note (†) from Table 4 - Head Start Program Metrics above
Percent of Children Meeting K Readiness Assessment Target Scores^{††}	See note (††) from Table 7 - ELCs Program Performance Metrics above.
Average Program Scale Score^{††}	
Average Program Scale Score Growth^{††}	

Table 11. Title I Pre-K Program Performance Metrics

# of NIEER Benchmarks met[†]	See note (†) from Table 4 - Head Start Program Metrics above
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Mississippi Department of Human Services

Common Terms & Acronyms

Division of Early Childhood Care & Development (DECCD)

The Division of Early Childhood Care & Development administers programs that support child care across the state for the benefit of everyone involved: parents, employers, providers, and especially the children themselves. Source: [MDHS Division of Early Childhood Care and Development](#)

Child Care Payment System (CCPS)

The system used by DECCD staff to process parent applications and to determine eligibility. The system is also used by parents to submit applications, updates, and renewals and by providers to submit payment ledgers, updates and renewals. Source: [MDHS Mississippi Child Care Payment Program \(CCPP\) Policy Manual - Chapter 2.22](#)

Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

The primary source of the United States federal funding for child care subsidies for low-income working families and funds to improve child care quality. Source: [MDHS Mississippi Child Care Payment Program \(CCPP\) Policy Manual - Chapter 2.19](#)

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)

A federally funded program designed to improve the affordability and quality of child care and provide access to child care services for eligible low-income families so they can work or attend an education or job training program provided under the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Source: [MDHS Mississippi Child Care Payment Program \(CCPP\) Policy Manual - Chapter 2.17](#)

Child Care Payment Program (CCPP)

Child Care Payment Program is the name Mississippi uses for the CCDF program which is administered by MDHS to provide childcare payment assistance to eligible low-income families through the CCDF. Source: [MDHS Mississippi Child Care Payment Program \(CCPP\) Policy Manual - Chapter 2.21](#)

Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH)

Substance Use Block Grant (SUBG)

The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) oversees the SUBG. This grant is the DMH's primary funding source for administering substance use disorders prevention and treatment services in Mississippi. Funds from Mississippi's 3% alcohol tax are also used to treat alcohol use disorders at DMH operated behavioral health programs and community-based programs. Source: <https://www.dmh.ms.gov/block-grant-state-plan-draft-available-for-review/>

Certified Peer Support Specialist Professional (CPSSP)

CPSSP training is provided through DMH to ground participants in recovery concepts and build skills in creating helpful peer relationships throughout the recovery process, with a focus on ethical practice for peers. Training designations are Adult and Recovery, Parent/Caregiver, Young Adult, Forensic Peer Recovery, and Recovery only - (for participants who trained in the Adult designation prior to 5/2021). Source: <https://www.dmh.ms.gov/service-options/peer-support/>



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