



Early Learning Council December 2022

An update regarding Head Start at the local and national level.

Head Start: Overview



Head Start is a federally funded program that improves the school readiness of children from low-income families. Services are free and provided in a variety of settings. Head Start programs engage families in positive relationships, with a focus on family wellbeing. Families participate in leadership roles, including having a say in program operations. Head Start programs support children's growth in a positive learning environment through a variety of services, including early learning and development, health and family well-being.

Federal Head Start Eligibility

- At or below FPL
- Receiving Public Assistance
 - RI Works
 - SNAP
 - SSI
- Foster Care
- Experiencing Homelessness

RI Head Start: At-A-Glance

Source	Funding	Slots
State	\$1.4 M	130
Federal	\$35.3 M	2,462

RI Head Start: An Overview

Grant Recipient	Federal Funding	Federal Slots	State Funding	State Slots
Child, Inc.	\$5 M	370	\$100 K	9
Children's Friend	\$15.6 M	1,020	\$866 K	81
Comprehensive Community Action Program (CCAP)	\$2.6 M	194	\$86 K	8
East Bay Community Action (EBCAP)	\$5.1 M	340	\$110 K	10
Meeting Street	\$1 M	72	-	-
Tri-County Community Action Agency	\$4 M	284	\$141 K	14
Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc.	\$2.1 M	182	\$86 K	8



Office of Head Start National Priorities



In response to the current hiring and operational landscape of Head Start, the Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start is prioritizing the following:



The Region 1 Office of Head Start is breaking this down further to prioritize:

- Healthy and Safe Environments for Children, Families and Staff
- Workforce Development
- Full Enrollment Initiative
- Mental Health/Disabilities



Information Memorandums

The Office of Head Start issues Information Memorandums to communicate with grantees. Several recent IM's have focused on workforce wellbeing and health and safety of children.

Enrollment Reductions and Conversion of Head Start Slots to Early Head Start Slots: ACF-IM-HS-22-09	Strategies to Stabilize the Head Start Workforce: ACF-IM-HS-22-06	Reporting Child Health and Safety Incidents: ACF-IM-HS-22-07
<p>A request to reduce funded enrollment or convert Head Start slots to Early Head Start slots is considered a change in scope request and requires OHS prior approval. This Information Memorandum (IM) provides additional guidance for the development and submission of these requests.</p>	<p>Acknowledges high credential requirements and stagnant wages and lack of comprehensive benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permanently Increase Compensation• Offer Bonuses, Short-term Pay Increases or Other Financial Incentives• Compensate Staff During Closures and Transitions• Public Student Loan Forgiveness	<p>Clarifies reporting requirements for incidents related to child safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child injuries that require medical attention• Inappropriate discipline• Potential child abuse and maltreatment• Lack of supervision• Unauthorized release

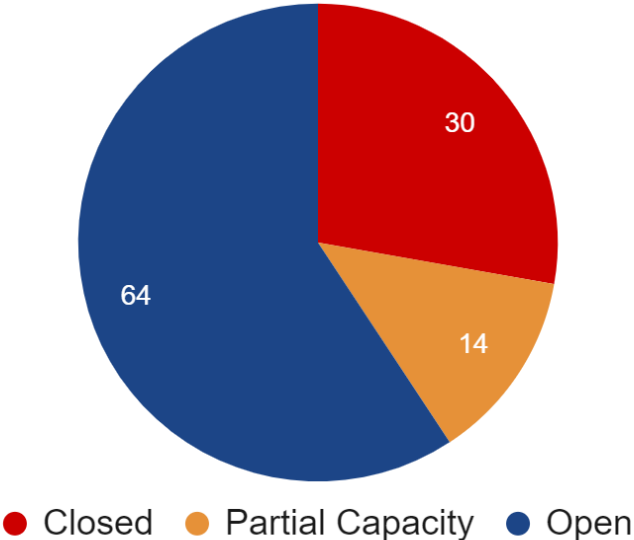


Rhode Island Head Start Classrooms

In October 2022, approximately 28 percent of 108 Head Start classrooms were closed due to lack of qualified staffing. An additional 13 percent were operating at partial capacity to support children's best interests.

Rhode Island Head Start Classrooms

October 2022



What is the impact?

- An estimated 540 preschool-aged children are not being served due to closed classrooms.
- Programs operating at partial capacity are reporting a need to serve less children in a classroom setting. This is to meet the needs of children in their care due to the rise in children experiencing mental health and social emotional challenges or developmental delays.

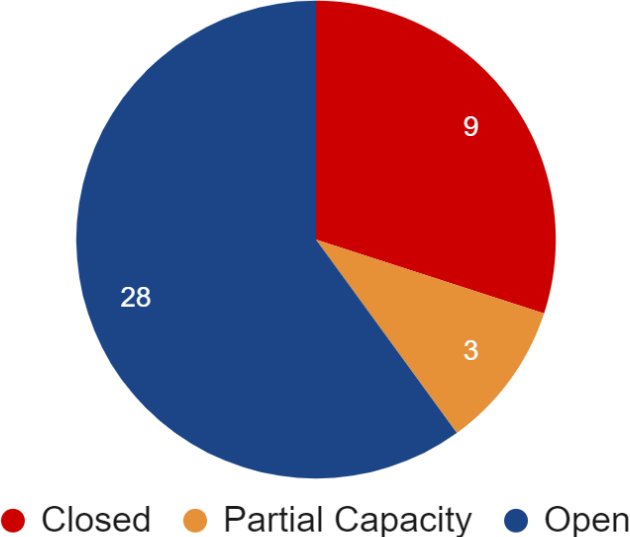


Rhode Island Early Head Start Classrooms

In October 2022, approximately 23 percent of 40 Early Head Start (EHS) classrooms were closed due to lack of qualified staffing. An additional 8 percent were operating at partial capacity to support children's best interests.

Rhode Island Early Head Start Classrooms

October 2022



What is the impact?

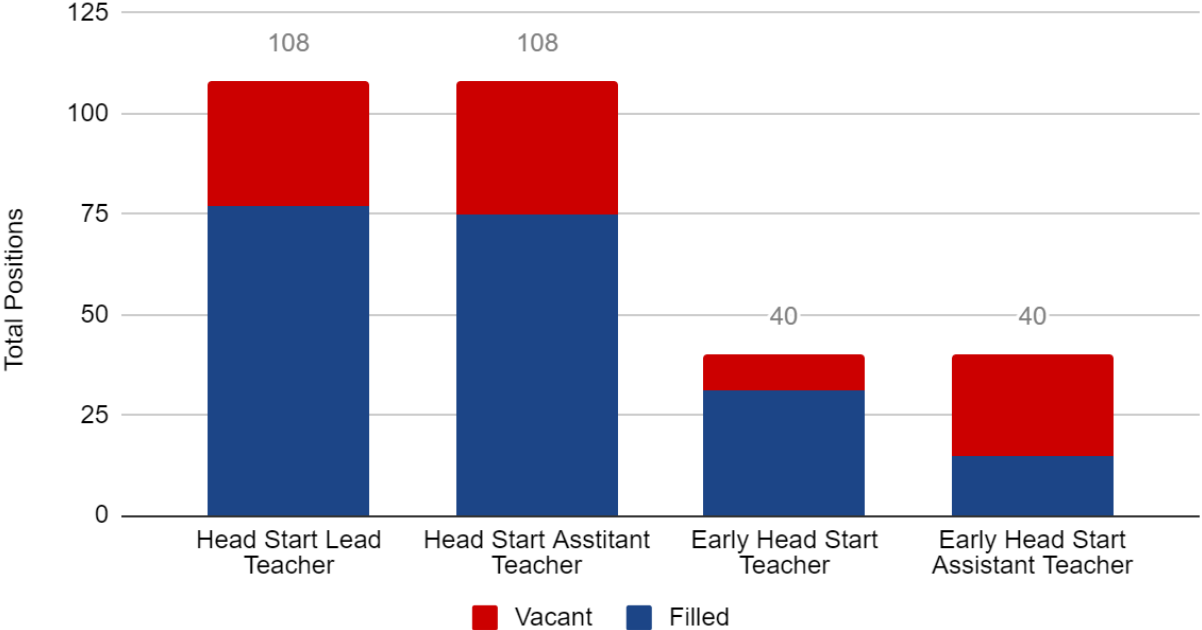
- An estimated 72 infant and toddler children are not being served due to closed EHS classrooms.
- Programs operating at partial capacity are reporting a need to serve less children in a classroom setting to help meet the needs of children in their care due to the rise in children experiencing mental health and social emotional challenges or developmental delays.



Rhode Island HS/EHS Educator Employment

Mirroring the hiring challenges being seen in other industries, Rhode Island Head Start programs are also experiencing unusually high levels of employment vacancies.

Head Start & Early Head Start Educator Positions



Employment Vacancies Overview*

- 31 Head Start Lead Teacher Vacancies | 77 filled
- 33 Head Start Assistant Teacher Vacancies | 75 filled
- 15 Early Head Start Lead Teacher Vacancies | 35 filled
- 9 Early Head Start Assistant Teacher Vacancies | 31 filled
- 28 Additional vacancies (including but not limited to: Nurse, Nutritionist, Ed Coordinator, Mental Health & Disabilities Staff, Family Engagement Coordinator, Director, auxiliary staff etc)

**All data is preliminary and subject to change. Staffing levels fluctuate on a day-to-day basis.*





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<https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/child-care/head-start/head-start-collaboration-office>

