



A Commitment to North Carolina's Young Children and Families: Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Age Five

Why Invest in Early Childhood?

Children's earliest experiences are built into their bodies – shaping the brain's architecture and creating the foundation for future health and learning. Everything a child experiences in his or her earliest years impacts that child's opportunity to fulfill his or her potential. When we provide young children with a sturdy foundation, we create a healthier and stronger North Carolina for generations to come.



What is the Preschool Development Grant?

The Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) is a competitive federal grant designed to support the healthy development of young children through three major activities:

- Maximizing family engagement in their children's early learning;
- Improving transitions for children and families across child care and elementary schools; and
- Improving the overall quality of early learning that young children experience.

The PDG B-5 grant award is \$40.2 million (\$13.4 million per calendar year) to the NC Department of Health and Human Services, beginning January 2020 and ending December 2022.

How Was the Preschool Development Grant Developed?

North Carolina's winning proposal is the second Preschool Development Grant awarded to the state. The first planning grant was awarded in 2018 to conduct a needs assessment and develop a comprehensive early learning plan with a broad array of stakeholders, which drove the creation of the second PDG grant application.

The PDG early learning plan was built using the framework of the state's Early Childhood Action Plan which lays out a bold vision and measurable 2025 targets for young children to be healthy, safe and nurtured, and learning and ready to succeed. Learn more about North Carolina's Early Childhood Action Plan at www.ncdhhs.gov/early-childhood.

What Do We Want to Achieve for Young Children Through the Preschool Development Grant?

- Babies will have fewer emergency room visits during their first year of life.
- Young children will live in families with the knowledge, tools and resources necessary to support their healthy development.
- Infants, toddlers and preschoolers will be healthier and better prepared for school with early childhood teachers skilled to support their healthy development.
- Preschoolers will have better, more individualized transition support for success entering kindergarten.

How Will the Preschool Development Grant Help to Accomplish These Outcomes?

FOR FAMILIES

- 9,900 families with newborns will be served through a partnership with Smart Start and Duke University that will expand the evidence-based *Family Connects* nurse home visiting program. Participating parents will receive a visit from a registered nurse who addresses newborn and maternal health concerns, responds to immediate needs for support and guidance such as breastfeeding and home safety, links families to community services, and helps new parents learn to better connect with their infant.
- 10,000 families will have plans to support their children's success as they transition from their four-year-old classrooms to kindergarten. Families and pre-kindergarten teachers will share information about children's strengths and needs with kindergarten teachers through an electronic information-sharing platform, *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*.
- 25,000+ parents will be able to use their phones to get texts and videos with child development information and age-appropriate activities they can do with their children to promote early learning (*Ready Rosie* and *Bright by Text*).
- 20,000+ families in urban and rural communities will participate in PBS-sponsored family events that share information about child development, parenting practices and child care resources.
- 18,000 families of children with disabilities will be able to access new materials, webinars and trainings that help them with their children's transition into preschool. Family-friendly fact sheets will cover topics such as questions for parents to ask to build relationships with new providers.
- 200 children with developmental disabilities in western North Carolina whose families live far from providers will receive services through teletherapy, such as occupational therapy, treatment for infant feeding disorders, and speech therapy for Spanish-speaking children.
- 1,250 families will receive training and participate in peer support networks to gain knowledge, confidence and tools that help them find and better advocate for resources to best meet their children's needs.

FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

- 4,200 preschool and kindergarten teachers will have dedicated time to learn, plan and work together to support successful transitions for four-year old children and their parents from pre-K classrooms to kindergarten. Professional development will focus on formative assessment, family engagement and developmentally-appropriate practices for young children.
- 750 early childhood teachers will receive training in social and emotional development and build increased knowledge of and confidence in addressing early childhood mental health issues.
- 400 early childhood teachers will participate in PBS KIDS Early Education Summits where they will make connections, access new resources, and learn strategies for developmentally-appropriate practices for young children.
- 300 infant, toddler and preschool teachers will receive intensive, job-embedded coaching to help them improve their teaching practices and improve child outcomes.

FOR IMPROVING ACCESS, QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

- A feasibility study will be completed with recommended actions and next steps on creating and financing a large-scale, high-quality early learning program for infants and toddlers, modeled on NC Pre-K and recognizing that 80 percent of the physical brain develops by age three and high-quality infant toddler care is the hardest to afford.
- New models and cost estimates for helping families afford child care will be developed with recommended actions and next steps – recognizing that low-income families spend as much as [35 percent](#) of their household income on child care. This will at the same time acknowledge that early childhood teachers earn less than [\\$10 per hour](#), often without health insurance and other benefits.
- Improved statewide early childhood data systems and public dashboards will increase the capacity to publicly demonstrate early childhood outcomes and progress.