

Ohio's Early Childhood Strengths & Challenges

The data below provides a summary of Ohio's early childhood strengths and challenges based on recent trends.

State Rank

	Ohio's rank out of 50 states and D.C.
Early Head Start Access. Percent of Children without access to Early Head Start.	42nd ¹
Child Care Subsidy Eligibility. Household income cap for initial eligibility for child care subsidy.	51st ²
Infant maltreatment. Number of infants who were subject of a substantiated, indicated, or "alternative response" on maltreatment report.	30th ³
Poverty, young child. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who live in poverty	40th ⁴
Food Insecurity. Percent of households reporting child food insecurity.*	44th ⁵
Infant Mortality. Number of Infant Deaths per 1,000 births.	43rd ⁶

*Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center reports Ohio ranking 44th out of 48 states and D.C., with Maine and New Hampshire not included in the data set.

Strengths

While there is still room for improvement, Ohio is moving in the right direction in the following areas:

Ohio's performance	Trend
Early learning access. Percent of children, ages 0-5, with family incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level who were enrolled in early childhood education	Improved
Early Intervention service access. Percent of children, ages 0-2, receiving IDEA Part C Early intervention services	Greatly Improved
Maltreatment, infants. Number of children who experienced maltreatment (child abuse and/or neglect), per 1,000 infants under age 1	Improved
Domestic violence. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who witnessed domestic violence	Greatly Improved
Parental incarceration. Percent of children, ages 0-5, with a parent or guardian who served time in jail	Greatly Improved
Mental illness or substance use in the household. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived with someone with a mental illness or substance use disorder	Improved
Poverty. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level	Improved
Extreme Poverty. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level	Improved
Housing cost burden. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived in households where 30% or more of monthly income was spent on rent	Improved
Prenatal Smoking, cigarettes. Percent of women with a live birth who smoked cigarettes during the last 3 months of pregnancy	Greatly Improved

Challenges

These are key areas where Ohio's performance is moving in the wrong direction or there has been no change.

Ohio's performance	Trend
Early Head Start access, income eligible children. Percent of income-eligible children, ages 0-36 months, who were enrolled in Early Head Start	No Change
Not enrolled in preschool. Percent of children, ages 3-4, with family incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, who are not enrolled in school	No Change
Child care cost burden. Child care costs for a household with two children as a percent of median household income	No Change
Early Intervention accessibility. Percent of children, ages 0-2, who received a referral for Early Intervention and received Early Intervention services.	No Change
Met Early Intervention need. Percent of children, ages 0-2, who were eligible for IDEA Part C Early Intervention and received services	No Change
Language and communication, Early Intervention. Percent of preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who were functioning within age expectations for acquisition and use of early language, communication, and literacy knowledge and skills by the time they turn 6 years old or exit the program	No Change
Language and communication, Special Needs Preschool. Percent of preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who were functioning within age expectations for acquisition and use of early language, communication, and literacy knowledge and skills by the time they turn 6 years old or exit the program	No Change
Timely prenatal care. Percent of women who began prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy	No Change
Postpartum care. Percent of women with a live birth who had a postpartum visit	No Change
Postpartum depression screening. Percent of women with a live birth and a postpartum visit, who had a provider ask if they were feeling down or depressed	No Change
Developmental screenings. Percent of Medicaid enrollees, ages 0-5, who received a developmental screening	No Change
Immunizations, toddlers. Percent of children, ages 19-35 months, who received all recommended doses of seven key vaccines	No Change
Removal from home for maltreatment. Number of children removed from the home due to abuse and neglect, per 1,000 population, ages 0-5	No Change
Protective custody. Number of children, ages 0-5, who were in Public Children Service Agency (PCSA) custody.	No Change
Eligible for and receiving WIC, Overall. Percent of women, infants, and children, who were eligible for WIC and received WIC benefits	Worsened

Eligible for and receiving WIC, Young Children. Percent of children, ages 1-4, who were eligible for WIC and received WIC benefits	Greatly Worsened
Household broadband access. Percent of households with children, ages 0-5, that had a broadband internet subscription	No Change
Low birth weight. Percent of live births where the infant weighed less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds)	No Change
Infant mortality. Number of infant deaths, under age 1, per 1,000 live births	No Change
Preterm birth. Percent of infants born preterm, before 37 completed weeks of gestation	No Change
Neonatal abstinence syndrome. Number of neonatal abstinence syndrome cases among newborn hospitalizations, per 1,000 newborn hospitalizations	No Change
Maternal mortality. Number of deaths related to or aggravated by pregnancy, per 100,000 live births	Worsened
Severe maternal morbidity. Number of significant life-threatening maternal complications during delivery, per 10,000 delivery hospitalizations	No Change
Postpartum depression. Percent of women, ages 18 and older, with a live birth who experienced postpartum depression	No Change
Prenatal Smoking, e-cigarettes. Percent of women with a live birth who used e-cigarettes during the last 3 months of pregnancy	Greatly Worsened
Blood lead test. Percent of Medicaid enrollees, ages 0-5, who received a blood lead level test	No Change
Elevated blood lead levels. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who received a blood lead test and had elevated blood lead levels	No Change
Kindergarten readiness. Percent of students who demonstrated kindergarten readiness based on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Revised (KRA-R)	Worsened
On track for literacy. Percent of students who were "on-track" for language and literacy based on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Revised (KRA-R)	Worsened
Fourth grade reading proficiency. Percent of fourth grade students who were proficient in reading based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress	No Change
Eighth grade math proficiency. Percent of eighth grade students who were proficient in math based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress	Greatly Worsened
Chronic absenteeism. Percent of students in grades K-3 missing at least 10% of school attendance time in a year	Worsened

Disparities

Examining disparities among young children and their families is important in understanding inequities faced by marginalized groups. Using disparity ratios to compare their outcomes against the broader state population identifies gaps in access, opportunities, and resources.

Disparity ratios were calculated by dividing the outcome of each comparison group by the outcome of the rest of the state (i.e., the Ohio population of children ages 0-5 except those who belong to the comparison group). The prevalence estimates for the rest of the state were calculated for each comparison group.

Little or no disparity	Disparity ratio less than 1.1
Moderate Disparity	Disparity ratio between 1.1 and 1.9
Large disparity	Disparity ratio greater than or equal to 2

Ohio's performance	Trend
Removal from home for maltreatment. Number of children removed from the home due to abuse and neglect, per 1,000 population, ages 0-5	
Black, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Multiracial, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Percent of children, ages 0-5, who experienced two or more ACEs	
	Moderate Disparity
	Little to No Disparity
	Moderate Disparity
	Large disparity
	Little to No Disparity
Timely prenatal care. Percent of women who began prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy	
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Asian, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
More than One Race, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity

Postpartum care. Percent of women with a live birth who had a postpartum visit

Black, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Non-Hispanic Other	Little to No Disparity
Metro	Little to No Disparity
Rural Appalachia	Little to No Disparity
Rural, non-Appalachia	Little to No Disparity
Suburban	Little to No Disparity
Private/Employer insurance	Little to No Disparity
Other Insurance	Moderate Disparity
Medicaid	Moderate Disparity

Experiences of racism. Percent of women, ages 18-49, who reported that they were treated worse when seeking health care due to their race or ethnicity

Black, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Other, Including Hispanic	Moderate Disparity

Poverty. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level

Appalachian	Moderate Disparity
Rural non-Appalachian	Little to No Disparity
Suburban	Little to No Disparity
Urban	Moderate Disparity

Extreme Poverty. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level

Appalachian	Moderate Disparity
Rural non-Appalachian	Little to No Disparity
Suburban	Little to No Disparity
Urban	Moderate Disparity

Job change due to child care, family members. Percent of children, ages 0-5, with a family member who had to change their job due to problems with child care in the past 12 months

Black, non-Hispanic*	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic*	Moderate Disparity

Food insecurity. Percent of children, ages 0-5, whose household could not always afford to eat good nutritious meals in the past 12 months

Black, non-Hispanic*	Moderate Disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic*	Moderate Disparity

Housing cost burden. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who lived in households where 30% or more of monthly income was spent on rent

Black, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Asian, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Hispanic	Moderate Disparity

Employment insecurity, parents. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who live in families where no caregiver was employed full-time

0-199% FPL	Large disparity
200%+ FPL	Little to No Disparity

Family structure. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who did not live in a household with two parents

0-199% FPL	Large disparity
200%+ FPL	Little to No Disparity

Low birthweight. Percent of live births where the infant weighed less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds)

Black, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
Asian, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity

Infant mortality. Number of infant deaths, under age 1, per 1,000 live births

Black/African American, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity
More than one race, non-Hispanic	Moderate Disparity
Hispanic	Little to No Disparity

Asthma. Percent of children, ages 0-5, who currently have asthma

Black, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No Disparity

Kindergarten readiness. Percent of students who demonstrated kindergarten readiness based on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Revised (KRA-R)

Black, non-Hispanic	Large disparity
White, non-Hispanic	Little to No disparity
Hispanic	Large disparity
Multiracial	Moderate Disparity
American Indian or Alaskan Native	Moderate Disparity
Asian or Pacific Islander	Little to No disparity
Students with disabilities	Large Disparity
Students without disabilities	Little to No disparity
Students with economic disadvantage	Large Disparity
Students without economic disadvantage	Little to No disparity

* Small sample size, interpret with caution

Citations & Sources

1. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2024). [PN-3 state policy roadmap 2024: Outcomes.](#)
2. National Women's Law Center. (2024). [State child care assistance policies 2023.](#) National Women's Law Center.
3. Ohio data, from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2024). [Child Maltreatment 2022.](#)
4. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022
5. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2024). [PN-3 state policy roadmap 2024: Outcomes.](#)
6. Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center. (2024). [PN-3 state policy roadmap 2024: Outcomes.](#)

Early Childhood Data Dashboard 2025