

**Kansas Head Start Association**  
832 Pennsylvania St., Suite 1007  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
Phone: 785.856.3132  
Fax: 785.856.3134  
<http://www.ksheadstart.org>



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

**Volunteer:** Contact your local Head Start program for volunteer opportunities.

**Be an Advocate:** Call your state and federal representatives and let them know how important investment in early childhood education is to you.

**Donate:** Consider donating to Dollar Per Child, your local Head Start and Early Head Start programs, or the Kansas Head Start Association.



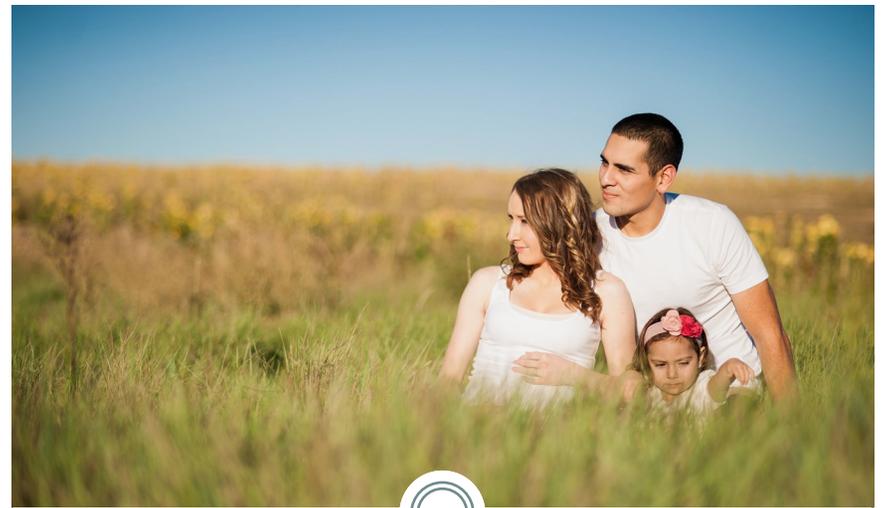
## Our Vision for the Future



Together we will deliver on our nation's promise that all our young children have the opportunity to succeed.



**Kansas Head Start Association**  
*Supporting and strengthening Kansas early learning programs through advocacy, professional development and leadership*

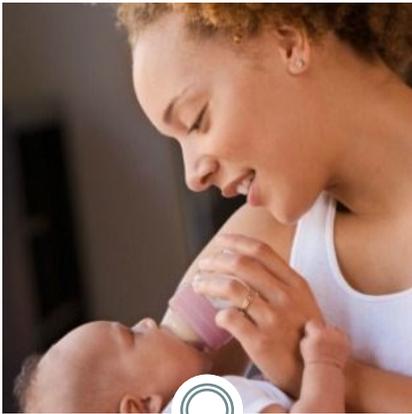


## Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start

Head Start is the premier provider of developmental and educational services to preschoolers and their families, who live in poverty and struggle to meet the basic needs of life. The founders of Head Start understood that learning is not purely a cognitive exercise--children cannot learn when they are hungry, or sick, or too worried about their home situation to concentrate in school. Thus, the program emphasizes not only children's cognitive development but also their social, emotional and physical development and has a very strong parent involvement component.

Early Head Start serves pregnant women, infants and toddlers. Research clearly demonstrates that to have a positive impact on the lives of children, we must start early; that the first three years of life are critical in children's brain development; and that their brain development is far more susceptible to adverse influences and responsive to positive experiences than has been realized.

Head Start and Early Head Start provide a scope of services and level of passion that is unparalleled. We are committed to the success of the families we serve.



**In 2018, Kansas Head Start and Early Head Start served 7,464 children. Of those children, 1,004 were homeless and 586 were in foster care.**

## The Work We Do

### HEAD START WORKS WITH FAMILIES

Parents are their child's first and most influential teachers. Head Start's success is based upon the creation of compassionate partnerships between Head Start staff and parents on behalf of their children. We work with families to remove barriers to their success and to deepen their ability to support their children.

### HEAD START IS A NATIONAL LABORATORY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS

Head Start performance standards define quality consistently across classrooms, programs and states. These standards represent the *highest expectations* for services to young children in Kansas and in our nation.

### HEAD START FACES CHALLENGES

Studies show that toxic stress alters brain development resulting in children who are less prepared to enter school ready to learn. High quality early education services have been demonstrated to mitigate the negative impact of toxic stress and adverse experiences. It is impossible to produce long-lasting positive outcomes by treating a child in isolation. By engaging the entire family and providing quality programming, Head Start has helped children and their families get a better start.

### HEAD START ENGAGES IN MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Head Start connects and partners with local schools, local providers of child care, state and local preschool initiatives and other community service providers for families on behalf of those most in need.

### HEAD START PRACTICES CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Head Start providers maintain our commitment to continuous quality improvement, constantly seeking more effective approaches to meeting the needs of the children and families we serve. Using evidence-based methods and field-driven research, we continue to improve our practices and the quality of our programs to fit current challenges.



## The Needs We Face

Nearly 35,000 children five and under are living in poverty in Kansas. As financial inequality increases, more families are unable to overcome the risk factors that perpetuate multi-generational poverty.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs are supported by federal-to-local funding. Historically, funding has limited enrollment to less than half of all eligible children nationwide. During the 2015-2016 school year in Kansas, only 26% of eligible three and four year olds had access to Head Start; and only 7% of eligible children under three had access to Early Head Start.

