



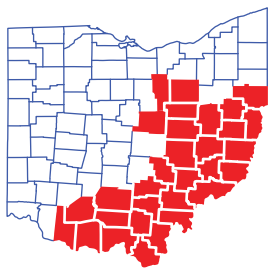
Head Start: 50 Years of Learning & Growing!

Head Start is helping families, building communities and changing lives in Appalachian Ohio

You've heard of Head Start, but do you know about the broad range of services it provides? Or the tremendous impact Head Start has on the lives of children, families, early childhood professionals and local economies?

Head Start impacts children, families and communities every day:

- Getting children ready for success in kindergarten.
- Engaging parents as partners in the child's education.
- Building a highly trained and degreed professional workforce.
- Aligning curriculum to state standards.
- Working with others in the community to provide speech, mental health, nutrition, and special education services to children and their families.



In Appalachian Ohio, Head Start programs operate **335 classrooms across 90 sites.**

6000 children participated in 2013. Over 5000 of them from families with income below the federal poverty level.

1400 people are in the workforce thanks to jobs with Head Start.

Head Start is improving lives

Quality preschool education increases every child's potential to succeed in life. That's what Head Start provides: a head start on a brighter future. Children in Ohio's Appalachian region face additional challenges, not the least of which is poverty.

99,815 children in Appalachian Ohio live in single parent homes
49% of those homes have an annual income under \$15,730

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Full time quality preschool costs as much as college tuition: \$6108 per year in Appalachian Ohio. For Ohio's poorest families, this equals a huge part of their annual income. Almost 49,000 children in this region have very little access to opportunities and services that can help them develop to their fullest potential.

Considering that quality preschool experiences are proven to increase a child's chances for success, Head Start is one of the most important programs to combat the effects of poverty.

Head Start is for 3 and 4 year olds. Early Head Start is for infants and toddlers. Together they coordinate access to health, dental and family support services.



In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson began the War on Poverty. Soon after, in 1971 a progressive group of Community Action Agencies representing the region collaborated to become the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development. Together they continued that battle by introducing Head Start services into the region. The War on Poverty put Head Start on the front lines, serving Ohio's poorest families and offering young children a better future.

Replacing poverty with promise

"I was a single mom with no support or guidance. Thanks to Head Start, I'm on my way to home ownership and I advocate for my kids and others.

"I have a new outlook on life now, and look forward to a brighter future for myself and for my children."

Rebecca, Head Start parent

Historically, poverty has been extreme in this region. In Appalachian Ohio, 80,238 children live below the Federal Poverty Level – \$19,780 for a family of 3. In addition, poverty hinders quality of life by causing high unemployment rates and few available jobs, fewer people with college degrees due to the cost, and poor physical, dental, and emotional health. Services for these struggles are not just expensive; they are inaccessible in many communities.

Compared to the rest of the state, Appalachian Ohio has a 24% lower per capita income (\$22,294 vs. \$29,344 statewide) and higher rates of poverty (20% vs. 36%).

Baby Jacob was in danger; now he's thriving

Even before birth, Head Start and Early Head Start staff members work tirelessly promoting infant wellness and improving the quality of life for children and their expectant mothers. Baby Jacob is an example:

Born to a teenage mother, newborn Jacob failed to thrive. He struggled to gain weight. Community Action Early Head Start staff members vigorously supported Jacob's mom. They worked closely with the pediatrician, monitoring Jacob's intake, output and weight every day. These staff members made many extra visits, and drove Jacob and his mom to appointments. They even stopped by on weekends to be sure the baby's weight was checked every day.



They coached the teenage mom on infant care and feeding schedules, encouraging and helping her. Baby Jacob's condition improved, and he was transferred to the Early Head Start center-based program where mom and staff could monitor his daily progress together.

Today, Jacob is at the proper weight. All his developmental screenings show that he's achieving long-hoped-for progress. He's thriving. Jacob's mom has graduated from high school and has a job. Both Jacob and his mother will continue to receive services such as child care so that mom can work and continue her education.

Head Start is designed to keep children in the program until kindergarten so that families like Jacob's have uninterrupted access to essential supportive services.

Head Start provides hope!

Head Start provides services directly, or links families to other community organizations. During 2013 alone:

- 574 families** were linked to housing assistance.
- 355 families** were linked to mental health services.
- 2795 families** participated in Head Start parenting classes.
- 3000+ families** received health education services.
- 4270 families** were helped with transportation.
- 5673 children** received a dental exam.
- 1011 children** received follow up dental services based on needs identified during initial examinations.



Thanks to high Federal Head Start standards and willingness to invest, child development staff has far exceeded the regional averages for degrees, **with over 65% of the staff in the 335 Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms attaining a some type of college degree.**

When you compare this to college achievement data from the region (21%) and even the state (32%), the benefits of Head Start are impressive.

Job training and adult education

Head Start has a dramatic impact on local economies. In Appalachian Ohio, Head Start is a major employer; over 1400 individuals provide services at 90 sites throughout the region. Head Start does more than create jobs; as an employer, Head Start helps staff with education and training. This prepares them for a range of jobs including new challenges and future opportunities—in teaching, child wellness and healthy development, special needs, family support, food service, bus driving and building maintenance.

Administrator training

Last year our state introduced the Ohio Administrators Credential—a new designation for early childhood program directors who achieve expertise in program management. This credential is recognized in Ohio's Step Up to Quality standards for highly rated programs. Of the eleven Ohio Administrator Credentials that were issued by the end of 2013, ten credentials were awarded to scholars from Ohio's Appalachian Region, with several being from Head Start programs. Ultimately, Head Start strengthens communities by giving their staff, as well as children and their parents, access to opportunities for growth, leadership, and success.

One third of Head Start employees are current or former Head Start parents

Raquel started out as a child living in a project home where drugs and violence were the norm and adults were not to be trusted. It was when Raquel started preschool in the Head Start program that her life changed for the better. Preschool became her favorite place. Raquel has many fond memories of her days in the preschool room. One day during circle time when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, Raquel told the lead teacher, "I want your job Ms. Diane, I want to be a teacher". What began in that classroom turned into lifelong learning as Raquel was ready to read by the age of 5 and went on to excel in school even tutoring others, including after she graduated. In 2005 Raquel returned to the program that changed her life—this time as an employee. Several years later, she became a lead teacher and was able to share this with the person that had impacted her so much as a child. "I was so proud to hug Ms. Diane and tell her 'I finally got it.' She smiled and said, 'I knew you would do it!'"





This level of quality is exceptional in the field, but the Head Start Programs in Ohio's Appalachian Region consider high quality to be the norm. Of the 88 star-rated Head Start programs in the region, **92% fall in the high quality rating category (3 to 5 stars).**



Head Start sets the bar for quality

Head Start in Ohio's Appalachian Region has long been on the forefront of upholding standards for early childhood education. Head Start holds high standards for programs and staff, requiring degrees, as well as lower staff to child ratios and a lasting commitment to parent engagement. Head Start in this region has pushed the envelope on quality services to children by participation in Ohio's Quality Rating and Improvement System, Step Up to Quality. This system recognizes learning and development programs that go above and beyond basic licensing health and safety standards.

Currently 176 programs have achieved Ohio star ratings; that's more than 44% of eligible programs in the region vs. 39% statewide. Head Start programs in Appalachian Ohio led the way in this quest for quality, currently accounting for 49% of the total number of rated programs in the region.

Head Start in Appalachian Ohio also broke new ground within Step Up to Quality, Ohio's version of the national movement of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems for early learning. With a revised rating system introduced in 2014, and 5 stars being the maximum achievement possible, programs in the region are stepping up to the quality challenge. Of the 90 potential sites to be rated,

- 14 centers earned a 5-Star rating** (53% of Head Start Programs in the region)
- 48 centers earned a 4-Star rating** (21% of Head Start Programs in the region)
- 19 centers earned a 3-Star rating** (53% of Head Start Programs in the region)
- 3 centers earned a 2-Star rating** (3% of Head Start Programs in the region)
- 4 centers earned a 1-Star rating** (4% of Head Start Programs in the region)

Working together for a better tomorrow

Community Action and those other agencies that provide Head Start services make Appalachian Ohio a better place for children, and give families and early childhood staff the support and opportunities they need to succeed.

Contributing agencies:

CAC of Pike County Early Childhood Program
 Adams Brown Head Start/Early Head Start, a division
 of Adams Brown Community Action Partnership
 Community Action Agency of Columbiana County
 Inc. Head Start Program
 Community Action of Wayne/Medina Early
 Head Start /Preschool Head Start
 Heart of the Valley Head Start (Athens-Meigs)
 Hocking Athens Perry Community Action
 Head Start/Early Head Start
 Kno-Ho-Co-Ashland CAC Head Start
 Jackson-Vinton Community Action Head Start
 Child Care Resources/Muskingum County Head Start

Ross County Community Action Head Start
 Scioto County CAO Head Start and Early Head Start
 Washington-Morgan Counties Community Action
 Head Start/Early Head Start
 GMN Tri-County CAC, Inc.
 Coshocton County Head Start
 Ironton-Lawrence County CAO Head Start
 Highland County Community Action Organization, Inc.
 Early Childhood Programs
 HARCATUS Tri-County CAO Head Start
 Knox County Head Start, Inc.
 Community Action Commission of Belmont County