



ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

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Letter to Governor, President Pro Tempore and House Speaker

Dear Governor Stitt, President Pro Tempore Treat, and Speaker McCall,

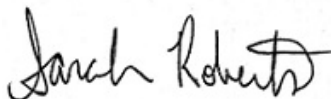
On behalf of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Partnership Board, we are excited to present the 2024 Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) Annual Report. This publication highlights the work done by OPSR staff and valuable partners across Oklahoma to strengthen families and help ensure that children across the state have the best opportunity to thrive.

At OPSR, we recognize that the future of Oklahoma starts with our children. Since 2003, we have worked to coordinate the state's mixed-delivery early childhood system. Our efforts impact early care and learning, health, and family support systems by braiding public and private funding. We build upon past successes while leveraging resources and research to implement the best-emerging practices for a better tomorrow.

While we are proud of past accomplishments and the scope of our current work, we are aware of a pending crisis within the state's early childhood care and education system that threatens both our state's short-term and long-term economic viability. Oklahoma's child care system is facing significant obstacles: a lack of resources, a declining workforce, and rising costs for providing care. As a result, families in need of care are finding it harder to locate and, in many cases, too expensive to afford. This forces many parents to make a difficult decision—to maintain a job or stay home to care for their children. This dilemma costs the state \$1.2 billion in lost earnings each year, a hit not just to the state's economy but also to families increasingly in need of multiple income streams to make ends meet.

The child care crisis also impacts Oklahoma's future economy. Research over the past 60 years clearly indicates that children receiving high-quality child care are better equipped not just for school success but for life success. They have better employment histories, better health outcomes, and more stable family lives.

The crisis can be mitigated, but it will take both public and private sector leadership, and dedicated support to solve. We welcome your continued partnership, dedication, and willingness to work together as we build a stronger Oklahoma that better serves the needs of families and children.



Sarah Roberts
OPSR Chair
Vice President of Programs, Inasmuch Foundation

Letter to Early Childhood Community

Dear Partners, Advocates, and Stakeholders,

As executive director of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR), it is my privilege to present our annual report. This year has been marked by both great progress and significant challenges for the child care sector in our state. Oklahoma's families rely on child care to support their livelihoods and ensure their children's healthy development. However, the ongoing funding challenges that our child care industry faces threaten the stability of this essential service, and these challenges must be addressed with urgency and collaboration.

First and foremost, Oklahoma's child care providers are under immense financial strain. Despite the critical nature of their work, many providers struggle to stay afloat, operating on razor-thin margins. Rising operational costs—such as wages, facility maintenance, food and educational resources—are making it increasingly difficult for centers to provide high-quality care while remaining affordable for families.

At the heart of this issue is the inadequate and inconsistent funding available to child care providers. The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) has been a lifeline for many, yet the funds are insufficient to meet our state's rising child care needs. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services reported a 20% increase (7,000 additional applications) for their child care subsidy program over the past two years. Additionally, federal relief dollars, which helped stabilize the Oklahoma child care industry, were only temporary solutions. As these one-time funds dwindle, many providers are left wondering how they will continue to meet demand without sufficient long-term financial support.

Equally concerning is the workforce crisis facing the child care industry. Child care workers, who are the backbone of this field, are often paid wages that do not reflect the value of their work. The average child care worker in Oklahoma makes about \$11.67 per hour, typically with no benefits, which has made it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff, further straining an already fragile system. Many centers have been forced to close classrooms or reduce enrollment because they simply do not have enough staff. This shortage affects families directly, limiting their access to reliable care and impacting the overall quality of services provided.

Another key funding challenge is the geographical disparity in access to child care, particularly in rural Oklahoma. Approximately 55% of the state's population lives in a defined child care desert; that number expands to 68% in rural Oklahoma. Many rural areas have been disproportionately affected by child care closures and lack of funding, leaving parents with limited or no options for care. Not surprisingly, this child care desert crisis is most severe for low-income families, who face significant barriers to finding affordable and accessible care.

At OPSR, we remain committed to finding sustainable solutions to these challenges. We are advocating for increased public investment in early childhood education and care, as well as exploring new public-private partnerships to support providers. We must work together to ensure that child care is not only accessible but also high quality, fostering the healthy development of Oklahoma's youngest citizens while supporting parents and caregivers so that they can stay an active part of the state's economic workforce.

We must prioritize long-term, strategic funding solutions that provide stability for providers, support the child care workforce, and ensure access for all families. Our children, families, and economy depend on it. We are grateful for your continued partnership in these efforts, and together, we can build a brighter future for Oklahoma's children.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Carrie Williams
Executive Director
Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR)

About OPSR

In 2003, the Oklahoma legislature signed House Bill 1094, which created our organization, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR). OPSR leads public and private partnerships so that children arrive at school with knowledge, skills, and physical and emotional health to achieve success. OPSR provides early childhood policy recommendations to the Governor and Oklahoma Legislature by utilizing data, research, and best practices to engage parents, nonprofits, community partners, and business leaders. OPSR is designated as Oklahoma's Early Childhood State Advisory Council and works to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of programs and services for children from birth to age 5.

OPSR is a Public-Private Partnership with Two Branches

The OPSR Board was created under the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act (Title 10 O.S. § 640) and is the designated body that serves as Oklahoma's State Early Childhood Advisory Council as authorized under the federal Head Start Act of 2007 (PL 110-134, Section 642B).

The OPSR Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit created under Oklahoma law (Title 10 O.S. § 640.3) to serve as a fiduciary partner with the OPSR Board and accepts both public and private funds to support early childhood initiatives. Our Foundation board includes passionate and dedicated advocates, many of whom have worked to improve school readiness before the formation of OPSR. We are thankful to all officers who generously share their time serving the Foundation and its committees to spread OPSR's mission.

Mission

Our mission is to lead Oklahoma in coordinating an early childhood system that strengthens families and ensures all children are ready for school.

Vision

Our vision is that all Oklahoma children are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time they enter school.



Legislative Duties

Under the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act, duties include:

- Conduct an assessment of existing public and private programs to determine their effectiveness and efficient use of state dollars.
- Implement a public engagement campaign and establish a structure to facilitate communication to develop and improve school readiness opportunities at the local level.
- Encourage public and private programs, services, and initiatives be brought together to provide coordinated, community-based, effective and cost-efficient programs.
- Maximize the extent to which private-sector funding is leveraged and federal, state and local funds are coordinated with private funds.
- Establish standards of accountability in school readiness programs and policies and recognize and promote best practices.
- Submit an annual report to the legislature and governor.



Legislative Mandates of the Annual Report

As part of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness submits an annual report to the governor and legislature that shall include, but not be limited to the following information:

- Preparedness level of children entering kindergarten.
- Status and results of the efforts of the board to engage the public regarding the care and education of children under age 5 and of the efforts of the board to develop and promote private-sector programs and voluntary parental involvement.
- Detailed summary of community initiatives and programs funded in whole, or in part, by the board.
- Availability and cost of quality child care for children under age 5 needing care outside their home.
- Number, location, and status of quality pre-kindergarten programs in the state.
- Percentage of third-grade students reading at or above grade level.

OPSR Partnership Board Members

Public Sector Representatives or their Designees

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Ryan Walters

Designees: Mary Mazariegos & Sharon Morgan

State Commissioner of Health

Commissioner, Keith Reed

Designees: Joyce Marshall & Lorri Essary

Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Commissioner, Carrie Slatton-Hodges

Designee: Audra Haney

Oklahoma Department of Commerce

Brent Kislring, Director

Designee: Marshall Vogts & Shellie Schlegel

Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Natalie Curry, Director

Designee: Trisha Hutcherson

Department of Human Services

Dr. Deborah Shropshire, Director

Designees: Jennifer King & Brittany Lee

Oklahoma Health Care Authority Administrator

Ellen Buettner

Designee: Kasie McCarty

Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

Annette Wisk Jacobi, Director

Designees: Danielle Dill & Caitlin Merritt

State Department of Rehabilitation Services

Melinda Freundt, Director

Designees: Tonya Garman

Oklahoma Educational Television Authority

Polly Anderson, Executive Director

Designee: Darrell Strong

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education

Brent Hanken, Director

Designee: Joann Carter

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

Allison Garrett, Chancellor

Designee: Gina McPherson

Cabinet Secretary with Responsibility for Education Agencies

Dr. Katherine Curry

Dean of the College of Human Environmental

Sciences, Oklahoma State University

Dr. Jon Pedersen

Designee: Jennifer Stepp

State Director of Head Start Collaboration

Paula Brown

Designee: Zoe Campbell & Curtis Mays

Private Sector Representatives Appointed by the Governor

Representative of Licensed Child Care Providers

Rachel Proper, Vice President, Child Care, Inc.

Representative of the Licensed Child Care Industry Appointed
by the Governor from a List Submitted by an Association
Representing the Licensed Child Care Industry

Angie Clayton, Kids R Us of Tecumseh

Two Parents of Children Age 8 or Younger

Brett Vanderzee, Music & Preaching Minister,

The Spring Church of Christ

Dr. Jennifer Pham,

Director of Pharmacy, Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

Representative of a State Association of Federally Funded Early
Childhood Programs

Christin Bollinger

Program Director, Green Country Behavioral Health Services

Head Start and Early Head Start

Governor Appointees

Marianne "Marny" Dunlap, MD

Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Oklahoma HSC

Dr. Hokehe Effiong

Pediatric Specialist, Jackson County Memorial Hospital

Jacqueline Evans, Thrive Network FCCH Ambassador

Tina Floyd

Co-Owner, Floyd's RV

Kelly Kay

President & CEO, YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City

Dr. Sada Knowles

Dean of New College, Oklahoma Christian University

Melissa Larimore

Community Programs Director, Youth & Family Services, Inc.

Dr. Amanda McCabe

Adjunct Professor for the Educational Psychology Department
at Oklahoma State University

Vicki Weaver Payne

Mental Health Counselor, Hope Community Services

Sarah Roberts

Vice President of Programs, Inasmuch Foundation

Anthony Stafford

Senior Program Director, Sunbeam Family Services

Annie Koppel Van Hanken

Senior Program Officer, George Kaiser Family Foundation

OPSR Foundation

In conjunction with the establishment of OPSR, the OPSR Foundation (OPSRF) was created to solicit and receive public and private funds. The foundation supports OPSR's mission and vision by expanding the breadth in which our organization can financially support early childhood research, programs and initiatives. In this capacity, the OPSR Foundation operates as a 501(c)3 organization.

Our Foundation board includes passionate and dedicated advocates, many of whom worked to improve school readiness prior to the formation of OPSR. Our Foundation is proud of how far early childhood systems have come in Oklahoma, but they know there is much more to be gained if Oklahoma continues to invest in children from birth to the time they enter school. We are thankful to all officers who generously share their time serving the Foundation to further OPSR's mission.

OPSRF Board Members

Ginny Bass Carl, OPSRF Board President
CEO, Giving Well, LLC

Lucie Doll, OPSRF Board Director
Program Director, Parenting in Jail

Annie K. Van Hanken, OPSRF Board Director
Chief Program Director, George Kaiser Family Foundation

Pam Campbell, OPSRF Board Director
Tenth District Outreach Director, Federal Reserve Bank Kansas City

AJ Griffin, OPSRF Board Director
Executive Director, Potts Family Foundation

Marsha Schmidt, OPSRF Board Treasurer
Business Manager, The McIntosh Group; Business Manager, Site Solutions

Suzanne Thompson, OPSRF Board Secretary
Former ED of CART and El Reno Public School Foundation

Dr. Amy Emerson, OPSRF Board Director
Pediatrician, Director of Hope-Driven Parenting

Mike Gibson, OPSRF Board Director
Retired CPA

Collette Shepard, OPSRF Director
Lakeshore Learning



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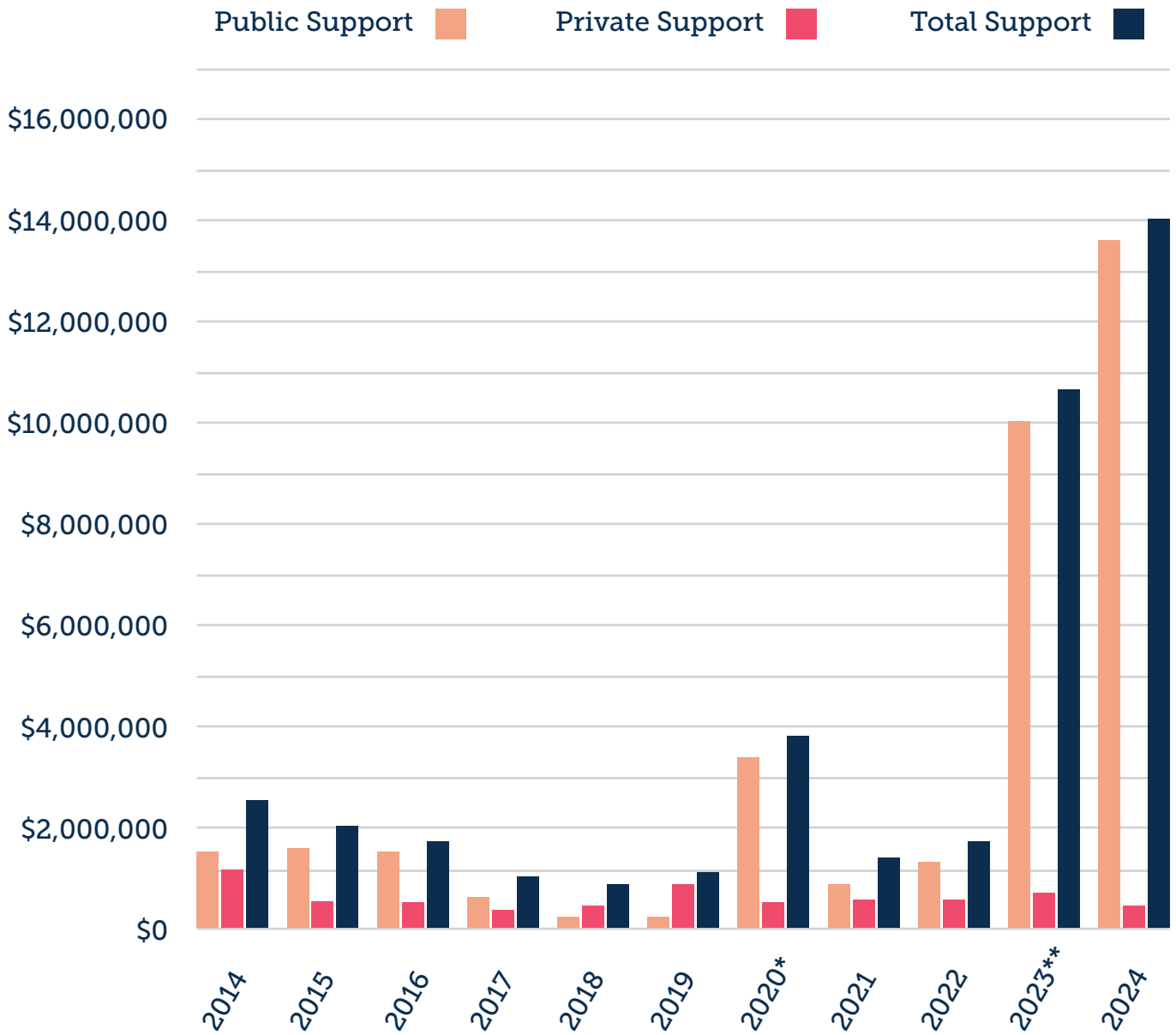
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Financial Information for Fiscal Year 2024



*FY20 OPSR received from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families the PDG B-5 Planning Grant for \$3,000,000, distributed through OPSRF.

**FY23 OPSR and the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRA) merged resulting in an expanded budget for OPSR in FY2023. In addition, OPSR received funding through OKDHS from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families for the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant in the amount of \$1,807,436.

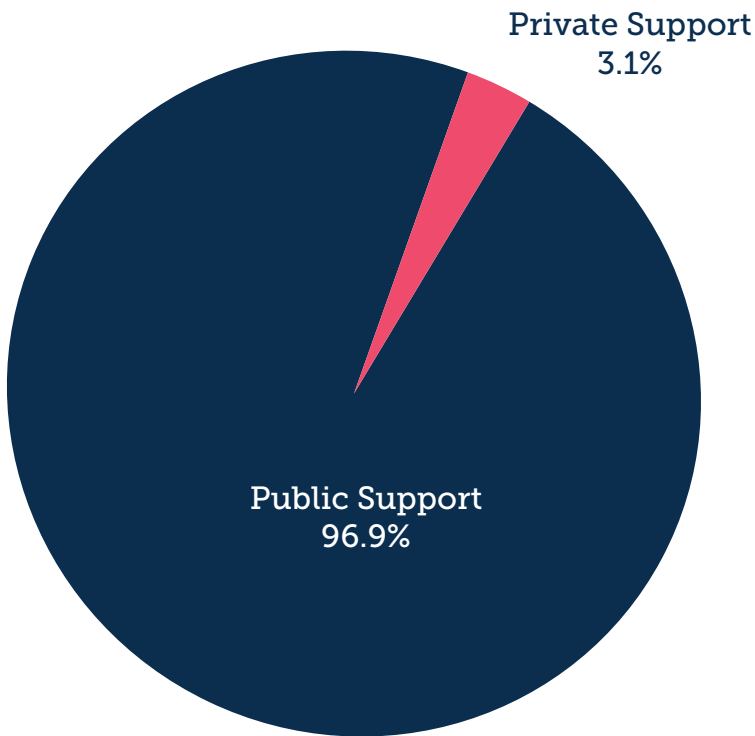
Financial Information for Fiscal Year 2024

Public Support - \$13,624,908.36

- Oklahoma Department of Human Services
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families

Private Support - \$436,724.38

- Alliance for Early Success
- George Kaiser Family Foundation
- Inasmuch Foundation
- Greater OKC Chamber of Commerce
- Potts Family Foundation (Restricted)
- Save the Children (Restricted)
- Lloyd & Peggy Stephens Foundation (Restricted)



Programs and Accomplishments

The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) was established by state statute in 2003 to support Oklahoma families in accessing essential early care and education, family support, and health services for children from birth to age 5. OPSR promotes collaborative planning and decision-making to enhance program coordination, optimize the use of public and private funding, and advocate for policies that improve learning opportunities and environments for young children in Oklahoma.

To achieve this coordination, OPSR convenes a Partnership Board composed of leaders from 15 state agencies and 17 private citizens appointed by Oklahoma's Governor. Together, they work to inform and influence the state's early care and learning system.

At the state level, OPSR engages and informs policymakers and the public on improving children's health and development. By fostering public and private partnerships, we ensure that children start school equipped with the knowledge, skills, and physical and emotional health needed for success. We leverage data, research, and best practices to engage parents, nonprofit leaders, community partners, and business leaders, providing recommendations to the governor and the Oklahoma Legislature. Our ultimate goal is a coordinated, aligned, and adequately funded early childhood system in Oklahoma.

Each year, OPSR works to engage lawmakers at the state capitol with the best data and information to advance policy ideas benefiting Oklahoma children and families. This year, OPSR focused on informing the legislature about the imminent child care crisis and its potential impact on the economy and workforce. Leading into the second session of the 59th Legislature, OPSR was a key presenter at two interim studies on the status of women in the workforce and the rising costs of child care. Additionally, OPSR presented data and information at events hosted by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, The Hunt Institute's Oklahoma Legislative Retreat, and the annual conference of the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women.



Ink Day

OPSR hosted its annual Invest In Kids Day at the state capitol on April 15, 2024. This event brought together more than 125 early childhood advocates to use their collective voice to educate legislators on the importance of early childhood care and education in our state.

Programs and Accomplishments

Parents, providers, and members of child-focused organizations met with legislators and attended meetings. Through this grassroots advocacy effort, legislators gained insights into the challenges facing Oklahoma's child care delivery system and the significant impact child care has on the state's economy.



OPSR also scored a legislative victory in 2024 with the passage of HB1229. This bill granted a five-year extension to the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board through the state's Sunset Review Law. By passing this review, OPSR can continue its crucial role in coordinating early childhood programs essential for young children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. This extension underscores the state's commitment to investing in early childhood development as a strategy for long-term economic growth and social well-being.

Research Symposium

OPSR's policy and advocacy work is informed through data and research. Through exploring emerging trends and best practices in early childhood care and development, OPSR is committed to evidence-based practices and programs. Each year, OPSR highlights the latest research through our annual Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium. The 2023 Research Symposium brought together more than 100 researchers, clinicians, early childhood educators, and child welfare professionals to share and learn from one another.

Child Care Portfolio

OPSR collects extensive data on the status of child care in Oklahoma and presents a county-by-county snapshot of those findings through our Early Care and Education Portfolio. The Portfolio (which can be accessed through the OPSR website) is a compilation of data and information that is used to analyze and report how the state is caring for its youngest residents.

Programs and Accomplishments

Child Care Resource and Referral

The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program, overseen by OPSR, serves as a central resource for families, child care professionals, and communities. Managed on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the program strives to ensure that all families in Oklahoma have access to affordable, high-quality care and education for their children, achieved through community-based resource and referral services. CCR&R supports stakeholders through eight regional contracts, ensuring assistance is available across all 77 counties.



1,418

Licensed Child Cares
Received Services



4,460

Types of Consulting Services
were Supplied to Providers



1,047

Hours of Professional
Development Reached

7,698
participants



4,194

Families Received Child Care
Referral Information

(2,552 via the statewide CCR&R
online search portal and 1,642 via
phone consultation)

This year, in addition to traditional services, OPSR conducted a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to invite public, non-profit, or private entities to provide comprehensive child care resources, and referral services for the next four years. Through the RFP, OPSR successfully identified eight regional providers for child care resource and referral services across the state and one provider that will provide the state's CCR&R phone referral service.

Programs and Accomplishments

Pyramid Model Implementation

Addressing challenging behaviors in young children and workforce retention are important topics in the early care and education field. OPSR's CCR&R management team, along with early childhood education partners across the state, have coordinated efforts to support child care professionals, families, and communities through the statewide, cross-sector implementation of the Pyramid Model.

The Pyramid Model is an evidence-based framework for high-quality care designed to promote young children's social and emotional development. By fostering a shared language among child care administrators, teachers, and families, it has been shown to reduce staff turnover and enhance classroom support. Implementing the Pyramid Model improves social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for children from birth to age 5, addresses discipline disparities, encourages family engagement, uses data for decision-making, and promotes the inclusion of children with developmental delays and disabilities.

Since January 2024, OPSR's CCR&R management team has partnered with more than 70 child care programs across the state that have committed to the comprehensive implementation of the Pyramid Model.



Thrive Network

Annually in Oklahoma, Family Child Care Home (FCCH) providers offer more than 14,000 slots for high-quality child care. Home-based child care is a critical component of the Oklahoma early care and education delivery system, with FCCH providers operating across the state. The Thrive Network - A Home Child Care Collective, is an innovative initiative designed and delivered by OPSR's CCR&R statewide management team. The Thrive Network offers Oklahoma's FCCH providers a range of quality improvement services and supports, including technical assistance and professional development, provided in each of CCR&R's eight regions by paid staff members at no cost to participants.

Each region holds a monthly Thrive Network meeting, providing local FCCH providers with ongoing professional development and opportunities to build relationships with their peers. In addition to these eight regional Thrive Network resources, a ninth Thrive Network cohort comprises Hispanic FCCH providers in the OKC metro area.

Programs and Accomplishments

Additional benefits available to Thrive Network members at no cost include:

- National Accreditation for Family Child Care (NAFCC) - Executive Membership NAFCC Self Study Kit & mentorship through the process
- A three-year license to Brightwheel Child Care Management System
- Oklahoma Shared Services Membership
- Free telemedicine and teletherapy benefits for providers, their assistants & dependents in the household
- Pyramid Model Peer Learning Community exclusively for Thrive Members

In just one year, the Thrive Network has grown to more than 590 active members and has provided 100 networking and professional development events for FCCH providers across Oklahoma.

"I just want to say thank you to everyone involved with providing us with these networking classes this year. It has been a great benefit to me and my daycare! I have learned so much at each and every session that I have attended, and I have gotten to meet and become acquainted with so many other people working in the daycare profession just like me. I am always so excited about coming, and I always leave with so much more knowledge and ideas that I can actually use in my daycare. It also helps me hearing other people talking about going through similar struggles and accomplishments that come and go with caring for children of different ages. I no longer feel alone and on my own in my profession."

- Gina Johnson,
Thrive Member and Operator of Gina's Daycare



Programs and Accomplishments

The Clearinghouse by the Numbers

 FY24 Awarded Amount

 FY23 Rollover



\$32,060

\$217,596

Pyramid Model



\$113,443

\$9,204

Developmental Monitoring



\$673,833*

\$87,199

Conscious Discipline



\$96,539

\$30,436

Early Learning Works



\$429,107

\$186,353

Early Birds



\$62,500

\$48,857

IECMH Consultation



\$9,500

Growing Like
a Read



\$453,625*

Air Quality in
Child Care



\$149,794*

TBRI Training for Child Care
(Lilyfield)



\$349,704*

Supporting Children
with Autism



\$292,118*

\$123,706

Quality Enhancement Initiative



\$303,000*

\$73,230 expansion

Al's Pals



\$213,048

\$21,146

Early Learning Matters



\$2,652,000*

(\$902,000 expansion)

Outdoor Learning
Environments

Note: Clearinghouse project implementation timelines typically span across more than one fiscal year, so not all funds awarded will be expensed within FY 24.

* Program was approved for implementation and funding in FY24.

The breakdown of total new implementation funding for FY24 of \$4,874,074.00 is as follows:

- 95% DHS funded (public) for \$4,651,866.60
- 5% Private funded for \$222,207.40

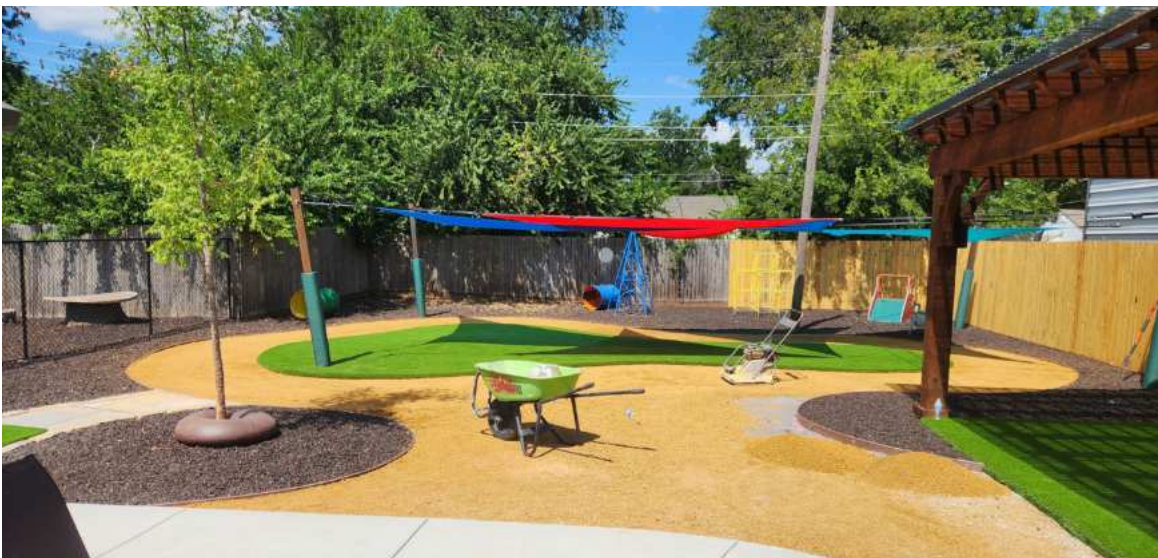
To learn about these programs, visit: www.okclearinghouse.org

Programs and Accomplishments

The Oklahoma Clearinghouse for Early Childhood Success

The Oklahoma Clearinghouse for Early Childhood Success (the Clearinghouse), a program of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR), enhances the well-being of Oklahoma children and their families by continuously redefining quality, accelerating innovation, and implementing both research-informed practices and practice-informed research. These efforts aim to support and improve early childhood systems while maximizing public-private partnerships. Initially established in 2020 by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Clearinghouse was conveyed to OPSR in 2021.

This year, the Clearinghouse conducted three rounds of submissions. The first two rounds focused on the social and emotional well-being of children and child development. From these rounds, the Clearinghouse received a total of 11 proposals, of which two were approved for implementation: \$349,704 was awarded to the Autism Foundation of Oklahoma to provide training for child care providers to better identify and support children with autism, and \$149,794 was awarded to Lilyfield of Oklahoma to support the needs of foster children in early childhood settings through their Trust-Based Relational Intervention program.



The final submission window for the year focused on developing 20 outdoor learning environments in licensed child care programs across Oklahoma. During this period, the Clearinghouse received 190 applications from 55 of the state's 77 counties. Due to the high demand for this grant opportunity, OPSR increased the project's original budget by combining public and private funds. As a result, the Clearinghouse built 29 outdoor learning environments at a total cost of more than \$2.6 million.

Programs and Accomplishments

Grant awards will go to the following child care providers for outdoor learning environments:



Tulsa Metro Region:

- Early Stages Childcare (Tulsa, OK)
- Homespun Early Learning Center LLC (Claremore, OK)
- Jennifer's Family Childcare (Glenpool, OK)
- Jewel's Place Enrichment Childcare (Tulsa, OK)



Oklahoma City Metro Region:

- Acorn Children's Center (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Alma's Little Clubhouse Daycare (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Britton Nursery School (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Kids USA (Moore, OK)
- Kinder Castle, Inc. (Midwest City, OK)
- NuNu Bear's Daycare, LLC (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Special Care, Inc. (Oklahoma City, OK)
- St. Luke's Children's Center (Oklahoma City, OK)



North Central Region:

- ABC's & 123's Learning Academy (Ponca City, OK)
- Mack's Final Frontier (Guthrie, OK)
- Stephanie Goen's Family Child Care LLC (Stillwater, OK)



Northeast Region:

- Bear's Cub House (Sallisaw, OK)
- Jean Parker Family Child Care Home (Tahlequah, OK)
- Whiteley Round-Up Daycare (Westville, OK)



Northwest Region:

- Debra Hansel Active Learners Daycare Home (Alva, OK)
- Step into Learning LLC (Yukon, OK)



South Central Region:

- Kids R Us of Tecumseh (Tecumseh, OK)
- Thrive Early Learning Center (Purcell, OK)
- Tina Robertson Family Child Care Home (Newcastle, OK)



Southeast Region:

- Kids Ranch Childcare (Broken Bow, OK)
- Lil Tykes Learning Center (Hugo, OK)
- See/Saw Learning Center (Durant, OK)



Southwest Region:

- Lil' Angels Daycare of Elk City (Elk City, OK)
- Little Explorers (Duncan, OK)

Programs and Accomplishments



Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Renewal Grant:

In December 2022, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services was notified that it would be awarded a \$12 million Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Renewal Grant (PDG B-5) each year for three years, totaling \$36 million, through December 2025. This funding is provided by the Administration for Children and Families, with OPSR serving as the lead implementation agency.

OPSR's PDG B-5 projects address the most urgent needs of Oklahoma's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) workforce, children, families and communities. The primary goal of the project is to create a coordinated, collaborative and equitable ECCE system that strengthens the ability of families, communities, and public and private organizations to ensure that children from birth to age 5 have seamless access to the support they need to thrive.



B-5 Needs Assessment

Revise and enhance the 2019 Needs Assessment with updated data and visuals that reveal opportunities for investment and improvement.



Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan

Revise and enhance the 2019 Strategic Plan that communicates opportunities for alignment and collaboration across the early childhood care and education system.



Parent and Family Engagement

Ensure families are informed about and connected to early childhood resources, services, and supports.



Workforce Support

Invest in resources and supports across the early childhood system that attracts, prepares, and retains a professional and effective early childhood workforce.



Program Quality Improvement

Implement strategic and innovative approaches to improve and enhance early childhood services and supports across the early childhood care and education system.



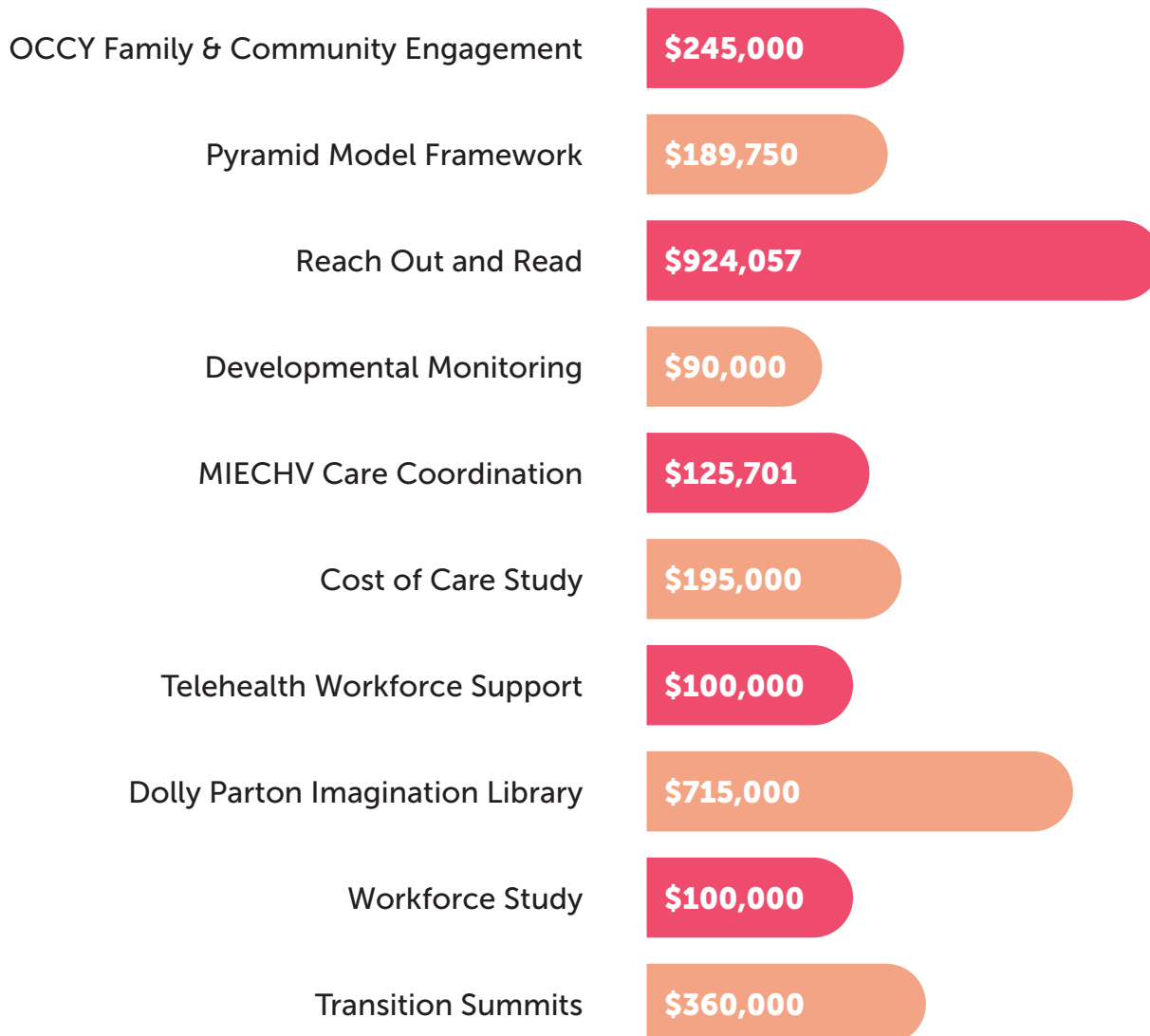
Enhance Quality and Expand Access through Subgrants

Design and execute subgrant opportunities that increase quality and accessibility of early childhood services and supports across the early childhood care and education system.



Programs and Accomplishments

PDG Project Investment (2024 PDG project funding amounts*)



*PDG runs on a calendar budget period.

PDG Project Descriptions

OCCY Family & Community Engagement

Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY) support PDG efforts and strategies in the area of family and community engagement across all PDG grant activities.

Reach Out and Read

PDG funds are used to expand Oklahoma's Reach Out and Read (ROR) program in medical clinics through partnerships with Head Start/Early Head Start sites. The project targets areas of Oklahoma County, Tulsa County, and the rural communities of Stillwater, Enid, and Blanchard.

Developmental Monitoring

Using the CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early. (LTSAE) model, OUHSC provides research-informed, high-quality materials to assist families and early care and education professionals in developmental monitoring. The project trains providers to use practices that incorporate regular and frequent developmental monitoring to ensure that children who need intervention services can access those services early in a child's development. The overarching goal is to facilitate timely early identification of delays and disabilities that present in early childhood, such as autism spectrum disorder. The LTSAE project focuses heavily on family engagement and parent-professional partnership.

Cost of Care Study

OPSR contract with RAND Corporation to update the 2020 cost of child care study. The study provides updated estimates of the cost of child care in Oklahoma by using data from child care providers that generated model-based estimates of the cost of care. The study was used to meet the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) requirement for a current narrow cost analysis for subsidy rate setting. The foremost recommendation from the study was to use the information gleaned in order to reconsider the current child care subsidy program reimbursement schedule. The report can be viewed online here: www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA280-2.html.

PDG Project Descriptions

Telehealth Workforce Support

With PDG funding, Optima Benefits and Payroll provides telemedicine and teletherapy benefits through the Oklahoma Shared Services platform to members of the Thrive Network. This project addresses the health and mental health needs of the ECCE workforce, particularly child care providers in rural Oklahoma.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to age 5, no matter their family's income level. Each month, DPIL mails a high-quality, age-appropriate book to all registered children, addressed to them, at no cost to the child's family. OPSR collaborates with Oklahoma State Department of Education to expand DPIL across the state, with a program participation goal to serve all 77 counties.



PDG Project Descriptions

Workforce Study

The University of Oklahoma's Happy Teacher Projects will conduct a comprehensive study on Oklahoma's ECCE workforce with a goal to inform communities, state and local government, businesses, and institutes of higher education about strategies that will improve ECCE workforce recruitment, retention, and compensation.



MIECHV Care Coordination

PDG funding provides staff support for OUHSC's and OSDH's care coordination project that aims to strengthen referrals between home visiting services and community resources using the social care platform Unite Us.

PDG Project Descriptions

Transition Summit

Oklahoma's Head Start Collaborative Office, in partnership with OSDE, hosted early childhood transition summits in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The summits provided professional development to ECCE professionals in order to implement best practices and inclusive strategies that support families and their children as they transition between early childhood programs and services.



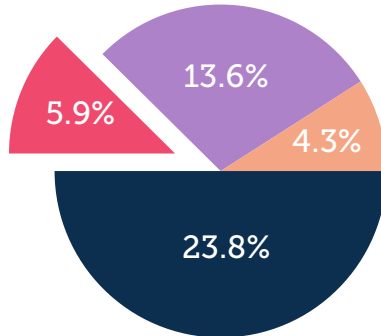
Pyramid Model Framework

OPSR contracts with Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC) to support CCR&R's implementation of the Pyramid Model Framework in more than 70 child care sites across Oklahoma.

Oklahoma's Children: Demographics¹

Population by Age in Oklahoma:

- Under 5 years old
- 5-14 years old
- 15-17 years old
- Under 18 years old



Age by Gender in Oklahoma:



Under 5 years:
120,941 males
118,670 females

Sex by Race/Ethnicity under 5 years:



Black or African American (alone)

7,623

9,164

American Indian
and Alaska Native (alone)

9,891

9,401

Asian (alone)

2,299

2,128

Native Hawaiian and
Other Pacific Islander (alone)

370

945

Some other Race (alone)

6,378

6,498

Two or More Races

31,970

30,701

White (alone)

56,315

53,827

Hispanic

25,323

26,068

Oklahoma's Children: Demographics²

Poverty by Age in Oklahoma:



Poverty, All people

15.9%
± 0.4%



Poverty, All people in U.S.

12.5%
± 0.1%



Poverty, 5 and under in OK

23.4%
± 1.5%

Poverty, Rural Oklahoma

17.5%

Poverty, Urban Oklahoma

14.5%



Oklahoma's Children: Demographics¹

Poverty Status of Families in the Past 12 Months

Families	All Families - US	All Families - OK	Married Couple Families - US	Married Couple Families - OK	Female Householder, No spouse present - US	Female Householder, No spouse present - OK
	Percent Below Poverty Level					
Families with related children of householder under 5 years	11.9%	17.3%	4.0%	5.8%	36.2%	45.8%
Families with a householder who is White alone	6.2%	9.2%	3.6%	5.0%	19.3%	26.9%
Families with a householder who is Black or African American alone	17.0%	20.3%	6.6%	8.6%	28.4%	31.1%
Families with a householder who is American Indian and Alaska Native alone	17.0%	16.7%	8.9%	9.5%	31.6%	32.6%
Families with a householder who is Asian alone	7.2%	10.7%	5.9%	6.9%	14.6%	23.2%
Families with a householder who is Some Other Race alone	15.4%	17.6%	10.3%	13.2%	28.6%	37.0%
Families with a householder who is Two or More races	11.9%	15.7%	7.0%	9.6%	25.7%	32.4%
Families with a householder who is Hispanic or Latino Origin (of any race) or African American alone	14.1%	16.9%	8.9%	11.8%	27.6%	34.2%
Families with a householder who is White alone, not Hispanic or Latino American alone	5.9%	8.9%	3.4%	4.9%	18.4%	26.3%

Selected Characteristics of People at Specified Levels of Poverty in the Past 12 Months

Population for whom poverty status is determined	Less than 50% of the poverty level - US	Less than 50% of the poverty level - OK	Less than 100% of the poverty level - US	Less than 100% of the poverty level - OK	Less than 125% of the poverty level - US	Less than 125% of the poverty level - OK
Family households	4.7%	6.0%	10.1%	13.5%	13.5%	17.8%
Married-couple family	2.1%	2.8%	5.5%	7.6%	7.9%	10.7%
Female householder, no spouse present households	13.2%	16.7%	25.3%	33.2%	31.8%	40.8%
Other living arrangements	12.1%	14.1%	22.8%	26.8%	27.1%	32.8%

THE PATHWAY

Children & Families Have Access to Health Services

Research shows that healthy children are better able to engage in experiences crucial to the learning process. Fundamental needs are:

- Babies are born on time and healthy.
- Children have access to health care.
- Children are physically and emotionally healthy.
- Children are on a positive development trajectory.

Children Engaged in High Quality Care & Learning

Children in high-quality early care and learning are more likely to succeed in school and throughout their lifetime. Objectives here are:

- Children have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs with professionals.
- Children attend early learning programs and schools consistently.
- Children learn in safe environments with positive climates that support social-emotional development.

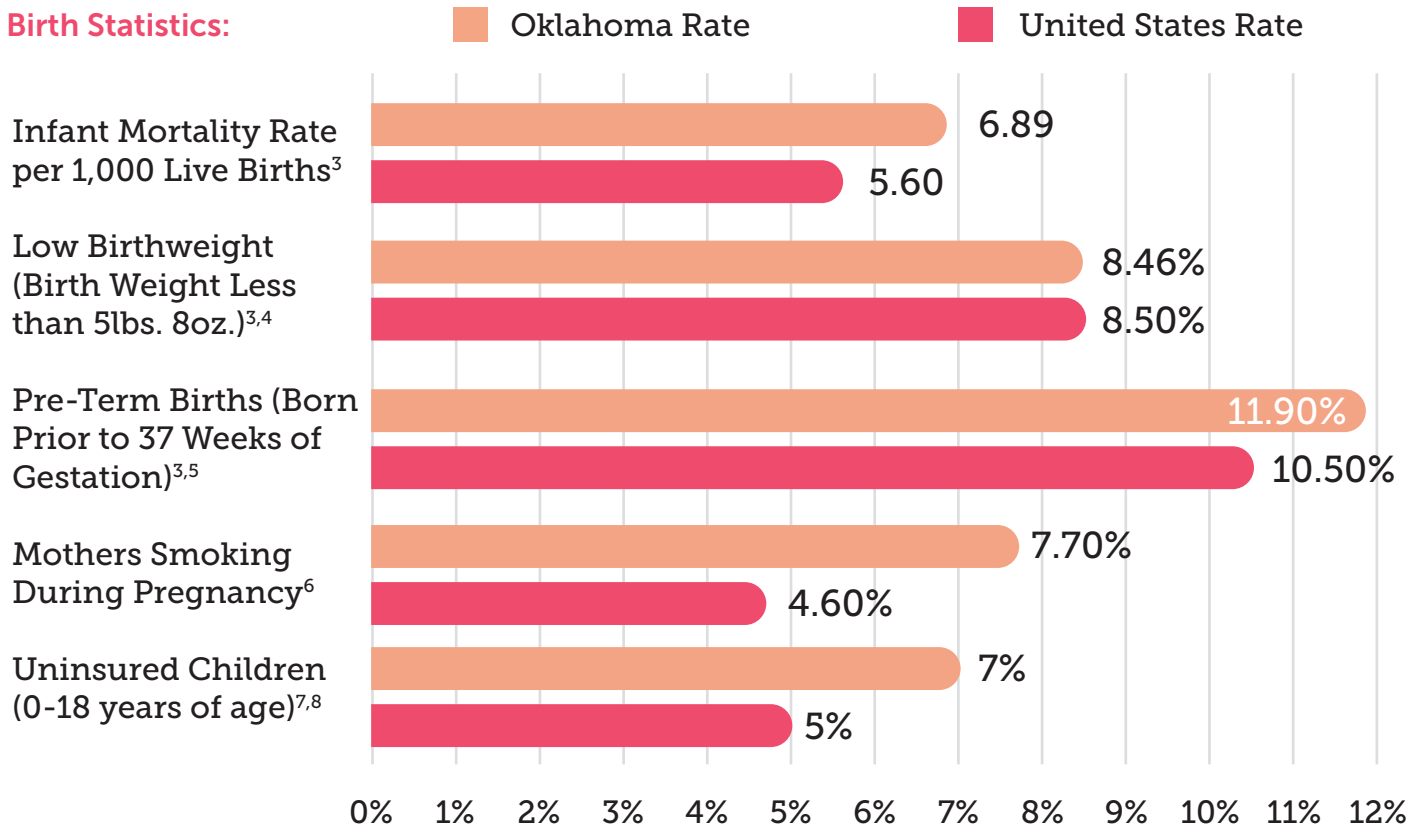
All Parents Have Access to Education & Support Services

Educated, skilled and supported family members and caregivers are better equipped to expose children to educational opportunities. This means:

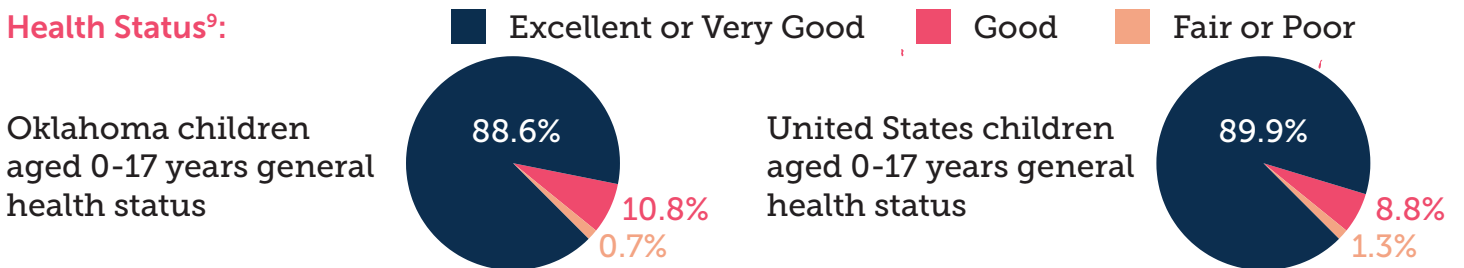
- Children have safe, stable and nurturing relationships with caregivers.
- Families have the knowledge, skills and social support for their children's optimal development.
- Children live in economically secure families.
- Communities are safe, toxic-free and economically viable in support of children and their families.

Health Statistics

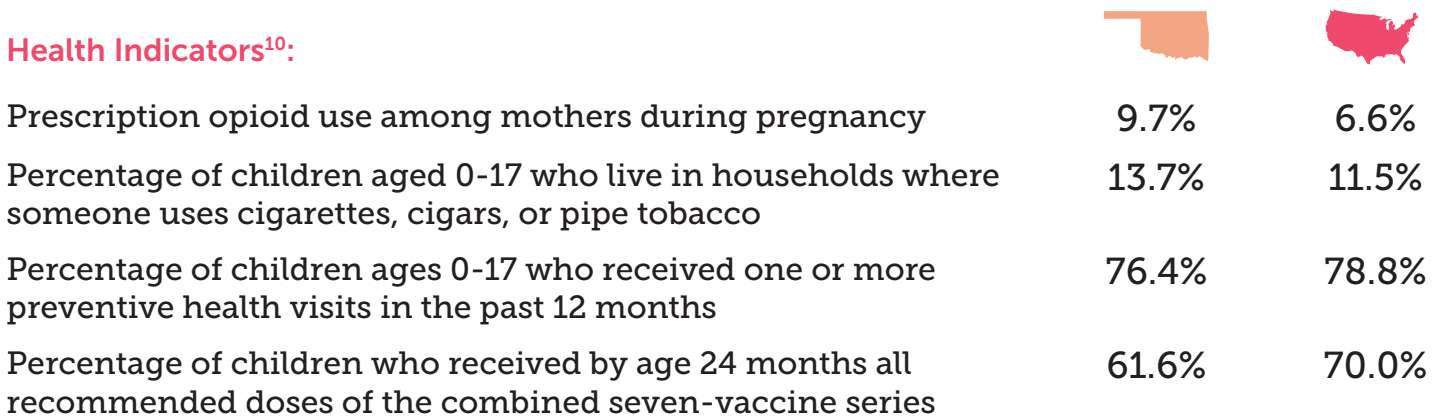
Birth Statistics:



Health Status⁹:



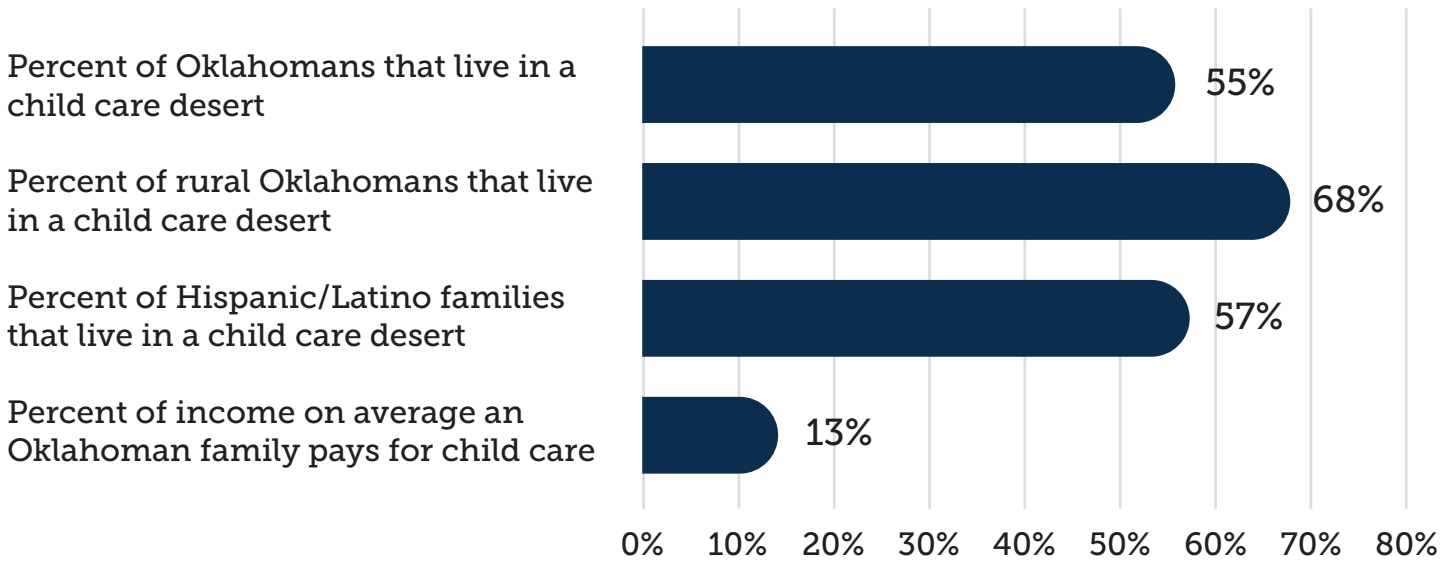
Health Indicators¹⁰:



Firearm Deaths per 100,000 children in Oklahoma increased 42% from 5.2 to 7.4 deaths (comparative timeline 2014-2016 versus 2020-2022)

Early Care & Education

Accessibility and Affordability of Quality Child Care¹¹



Early Care & Education

Licensed Child Care

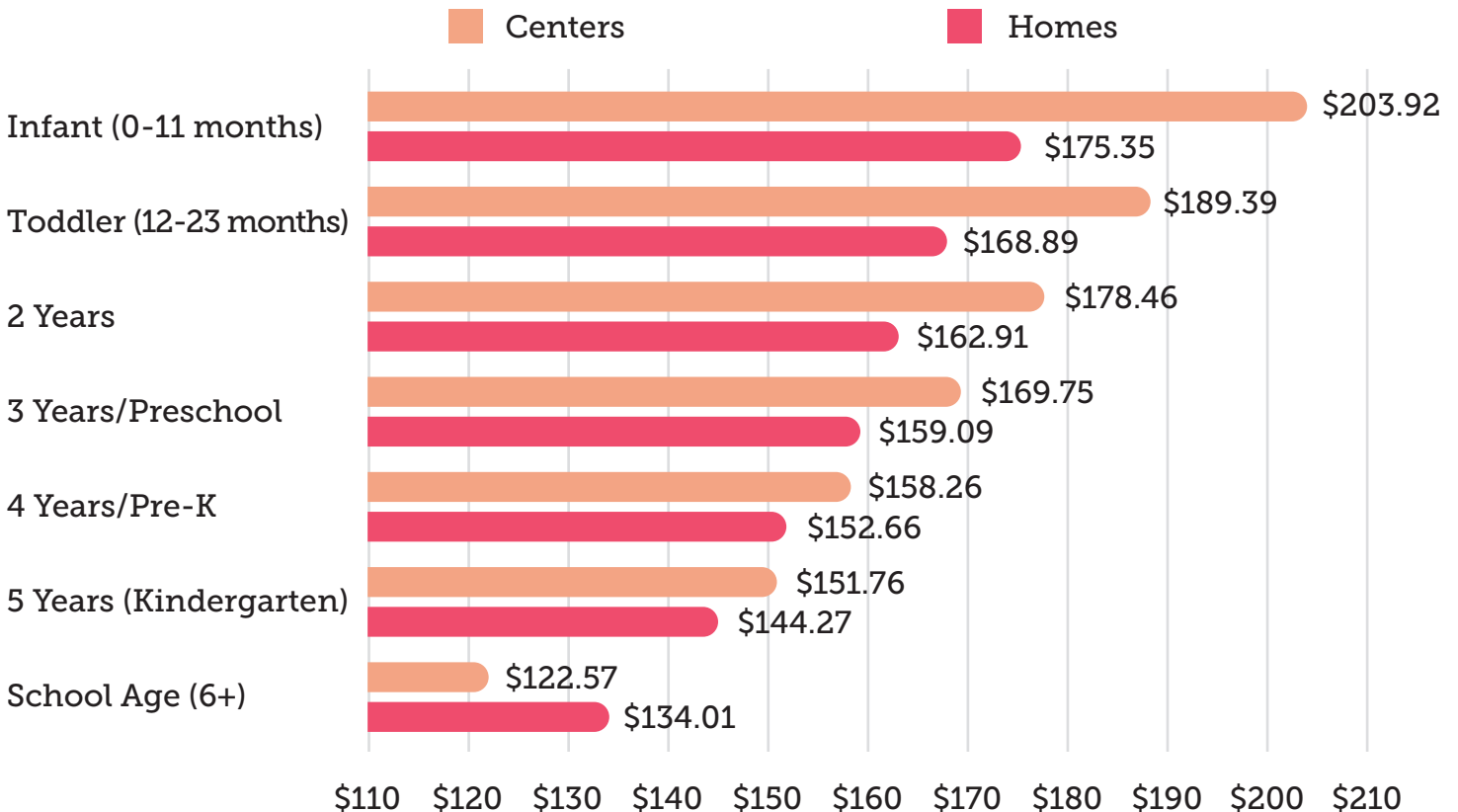
Children Needing Care While Parents Work¹²

Age	Child Population (number)	Children with all working parents (number)	Percent of Children Needing Care
0-5 Years	294,104	181,059	62%
6-12 Years	380,683	266,090	70%
0-12 Years	674,787	447,149	66%

Availability of Licensed Child Care¹³

Facility	Number of Facilities	Total Capacity	Percent Accepting Subsidy
State Total	3,108	127,108	71%
Centers	1,525	112,270	73%
Homes	1,583	14,838	68%

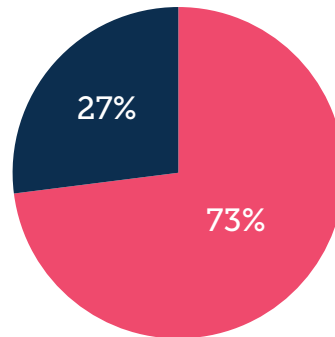
Cost of Licensed Child Care¹²



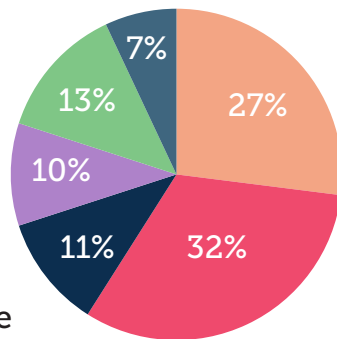
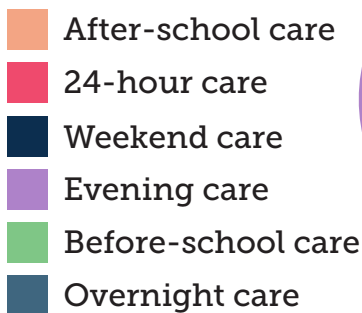
Early Care & Education

Family Requests to Child Care Resource & Referral¹²

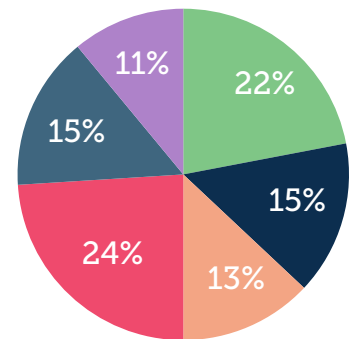
Traditional Care Requests



Non-traditional Care Requests



Ages for Whom Care is Requested



Availability of Pre-K and Kindergarten¹⁴

Early Education		
Age	Number of sites	Number enrolled
Pre-K, 4 years old (1/2 day)	37	2,392
Pre-K, 4 years old (full day)	511	32,927
Kindergarten (1/2 day)	5	531
Kindergarten (full day)	45	48,463

Early Care & Education

Head Start & Early Start¹⁵

Oklahoma Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is a federal initiative aimed at fostering the school readiness of children aged birth to 5, particularly those from low-income backgrounds. The program is designed to enrich their emotional, cognitive and social development. Eligibility extends to children in low-income families, as well as children in foster care, those experiencing homelessness, or from families receiving public assistance. These programs actively encourage parental engagement through routine home visits and volunteer opportunities.

- **Head Start:** Serves families with children between ages 3 and 5.
- **Early Head Start:** Served pregnant women and families with children under age 3.

14,952

Children Served

by **61** Head Start or
Early Head Start Programs

44 Programs funded under Region VI

20 Head Start programs

24 Early Head Start programs

17 Tribal programs funded under
Region XI

12 Tribal Head Start programs

5 Tribal Early Head Start programs

936 Families experiencing
homelessness, encompassing
1,006 children

- **213** of these families acquired housing

728 are children in foster care

- **228** children were referred to Early Head Start/Head Start by foster care agencies

4,775 children and **145** pregnant
women were enrolled in Early
Head Start programs

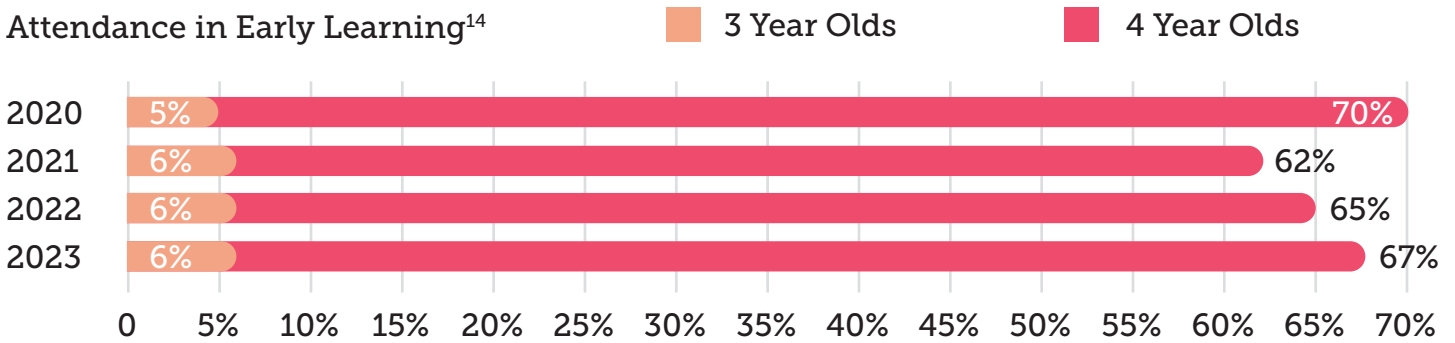
1,239 are children with disabilities

- **1,231** children in Head Start identified by a local education agency as eligible to receive special education services
 - Only **8** did not receive service
- **422** children in Early Head Start identified by SoonerStart as eligible for Part C services
 - Only **13** did not receive service

Early Care & Education

Universal Pre-K

Attendance in Early Learning¹⁴



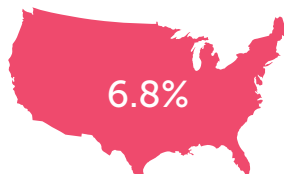
Quality Standard Benchmarks ¹⁴	SFY24
Preschool Access for 4-year-olds – ranked nationally	#3
Preschool access for 3-year-olds – ranked nationally	#21
Percent of children enrolled in state prekindergarten (2022-2023)	67%
Oklahoma School Districts offering State-Funded Pre-K Programs	100%
NIEER’s Quality Standards Met	9/10
Total state Pre-K enrollment	38,982

Early Intervention¹⁶

Percentage of infants/toddlers receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C



(Up from the previous year's mark of 3.0%)



(Down from the previous year's mark of 7.2%)

Timeliness of PART C Services

Timeliness of Part C services refers to the 45-day timeline for completing initial evaluations, assessments, and IFSP meetings for infants and toddlers with disabilities.



(Down from the previous year's mark of 99.8%)

Family Support

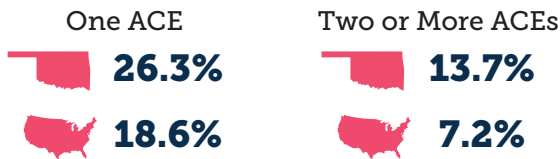
Family Support Services

No. of Families Served by Home-Based Family Support Programs ¹⁷	2022	2023
Home Visits Completed	38,552	30,593
Families Served	2,796	2,924
Children Served	2,331	2,226
Counties Served	58	62

*Note. Data from the 2024 Oklahoma Home Visiting Annual Outcomes Report (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024) will be available December 2024 here: www.okschoolreadiness.org/data-research.

Child and Family Well-Being in Oklahoma¹⁶

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Percent of eligible infants, one-year-olds and two-year-olds that participated in WIC



Percent of SNAP participants that are families with children



Infant/Toddler Maltreatment Rate (Per 1,000

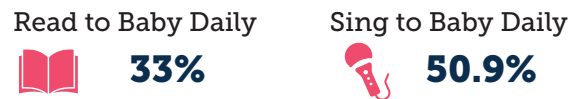
Children Ages 0-2)



Percent of infants/toddlers whose mothers rate their mental health as worse than "excellent" or "very good"



(2023) Percentage of Oklahoma Parents Who:



- **20%** of children in Oklahoma live in poverty, which for a family of two adults and two children was below **\$29,678** in 2022 (**43rd** in U.S.)⁷
- **39th** in economic well-being⁷
- **40th** in family and community context⁷
- **45th** in health⁷
- **49th** in education (ahead of only New Mexico)⁷
- **27%** of children in Oklahoma have parents that lack secure employment⁷
- **27%** of children in Oklahoma live in households with a high housing cost burden⁷
- Oklahoma does **not** have paid family leave¹⁶
- Oklahoma does **not** have paid sick time that covers care for a child¹⁶

Estimated total population birth through age 3 experiencing homelessness is **6,409, or 3.32%** of all infants and toddlers. Of these, **1 out of 11** are receiving early childhood services through SoonerStart, Head Start, or Home Visiting.¹⁸

Third Grade Reading¹⁹

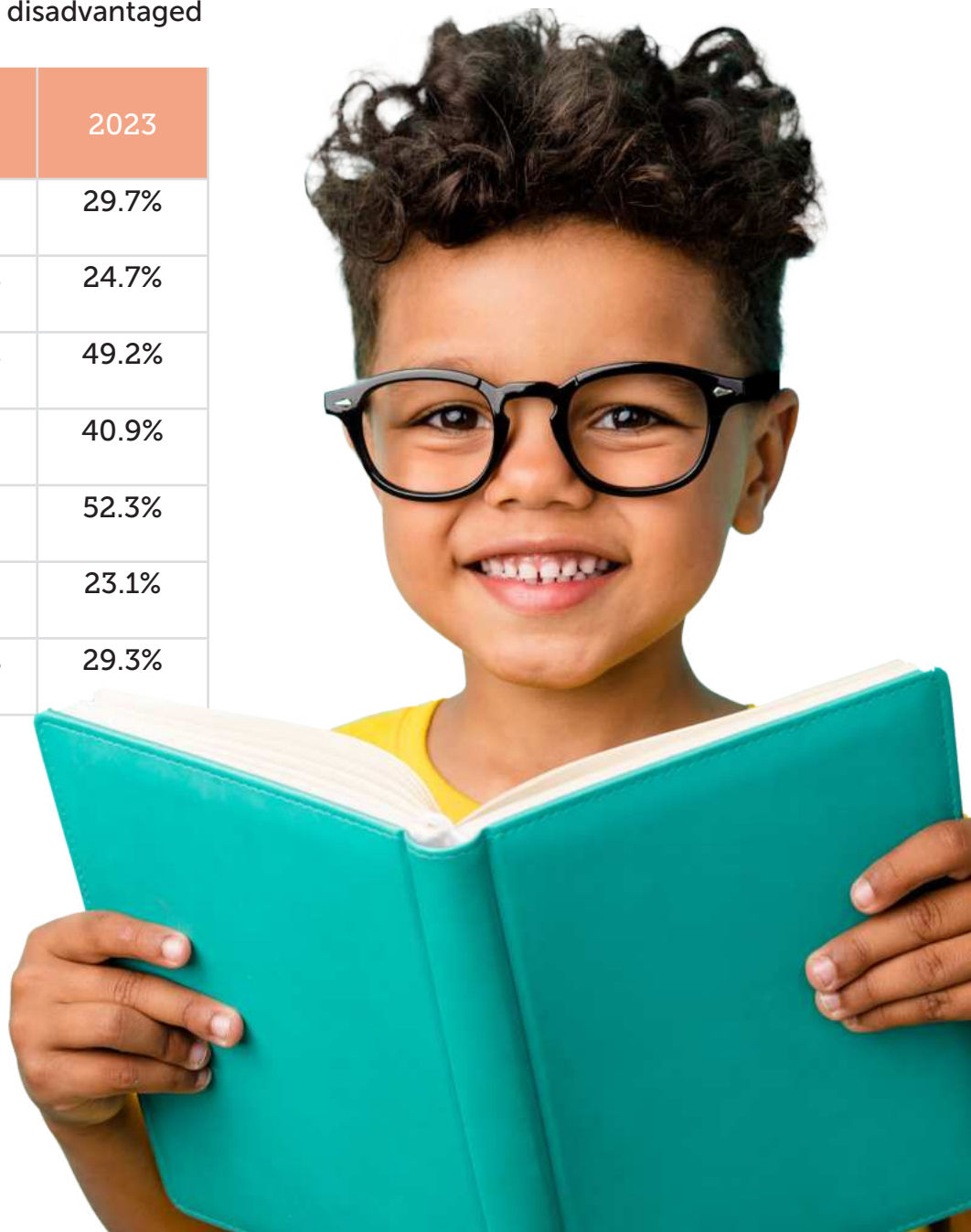
Reading Sufficiency Act Levels

Oklahoma third-grade reader average (by year)	Met RSA levels
2023	69.6%*
2022	67.7%
2020	78.7%

* 30.4% of Oklahoma third graders did not meet RSA levels in 2023, of those:

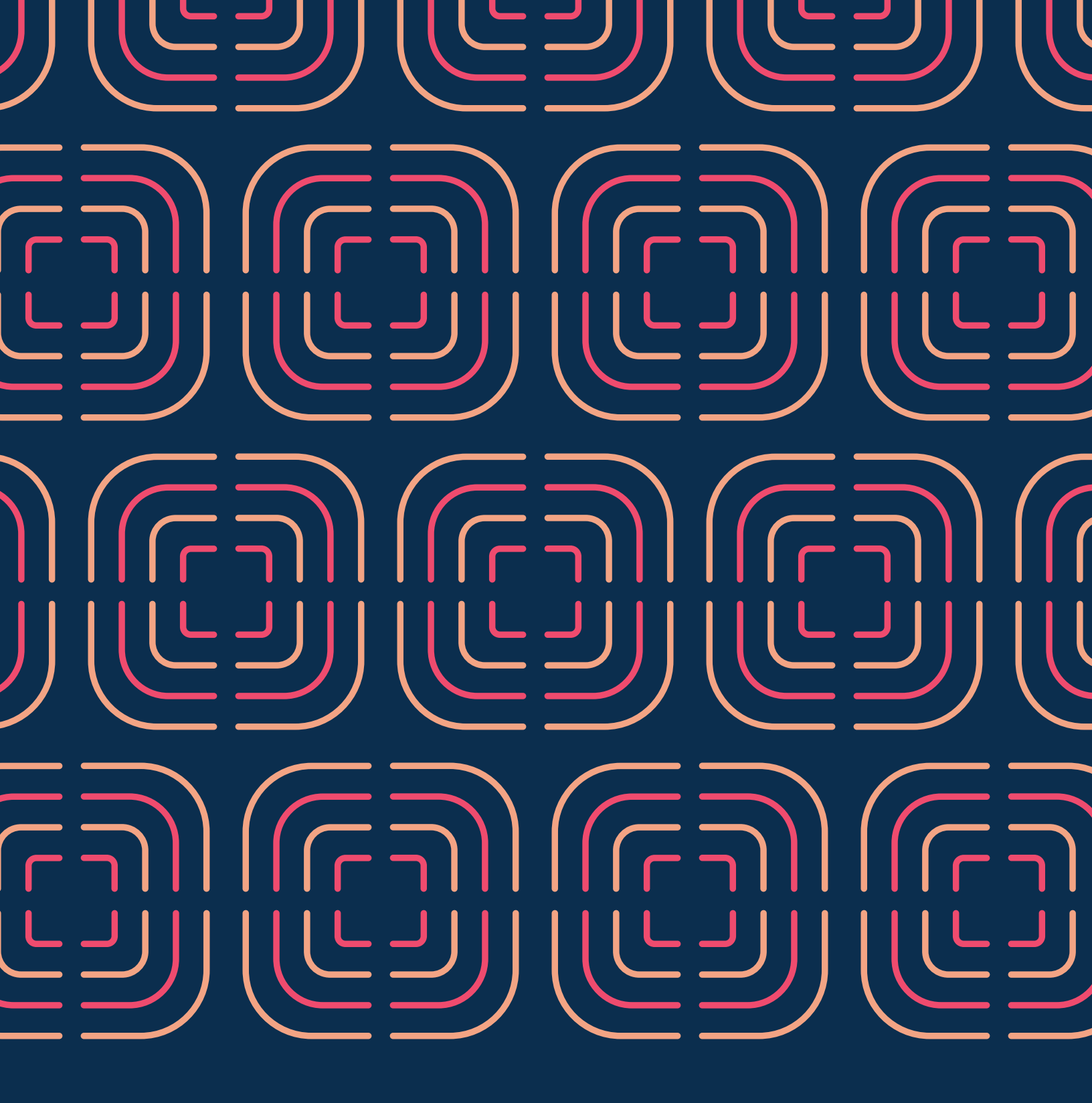
- 60.1% were on an IEP
- 48.5% were English language learners
- 61.3% were economically disadvantaged

Did Not Meet Reading Sufficiency Act Level	2022	2023
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	31%	29.7%
Asian	23.4%	24.7%
Black	50.3%	49.2%
Hispanic	55.9%	40.9%
Pacific Islander	55.3%	52.3%
White	25.1%	23.1%
2+ Ethnicities	30.3%	29.3%



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