FACT SHEET

ARKANSAS
HEAD START ASSOCIATION

AHSA

Leading. Supporting. Advocating.

Building Brighter Futures.



WHO WE ARE

The Arkansas Head Start Association (AHSA) is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to promoting excellence in early childhood education by supporting Head Start and Early Head Start programs across Arkansas.

MISSION

The Arkansas Head Start Association's (AHSA) mission is to promote structured leadership and collaboration on the state and local levels by delivering equitable, innovative and quality services and training, technical assistance, and on-going support to the Head Start community in Arkansas.

VISION

The vision of the Arkansas Head Start Association is to demonstrate quality leadership by exhibiting compliance in providing high-quality educational services to children birth to five and their families, while maintaining a strong commitment to building competent and dependable staff.

WHAT WE DO

AHSA partners with local programs and stakeholders to strengthen communities and ensure children are ready for school and for life.

AHSA

Supporting Arkansas Head Start & Early Head Start Programs

CHILDREN
- School Readiness
- Health & Development
- Early Learning

FAMILIES
- Family Engagement
- Parent Leadership
- Community Resources

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- Annual Institute
- School Readiness Summit
- Training Opportunities

ADVOCACY
- State & Federal Partnerships
- Legislative Awareness
- Policy Support

LOCAL PROGRAMS
- Collaboration
- Technical Assistance
- Best Practice Sharing

LEADERSHIP
- Board of Directors
- Networking
- Recognition & Awards

OUR IMPACT

- Strengthens quality and accountability in early childhood programs.
- Supports the professional growth of educators and leaders.
- Advocates for policies and resources that benefit children and families.
- Builds strong communities where children can learn, grow and thrive.

UNITED FOR ARKANSAS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



TOGETHER, WE...

PROMOTE SCHOOL READINESS
Ensuring children enter school ready to learn.

SUPPORT FAMILIES
Empowering families as their child's first and most important teacher.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES
Working together for a brighter future for all children.

BY THE NUMBERS*

HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS	SERVING CHILDREN ACROSS ARKANSAS	SERVING COUNTIES ACROSS ARKANSAS	PROGRAMS PARTICIPATING IN BETTER BEGINNINGS
18	6,203	75	100%

*Numbers updated annually.

Together We Lead. ★ Together We Advocate. ★ Together We Inspire.



ARKANSAS Head Start Programs

FUNDED SLOTS

HEAD START
3,428

EARLY HEAD START
2,322

EARLY HEAD START CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS
352

MIGRANT SEASONAL HEAD START
101



Head Start	3,428	55.3%
Early Head Start	2,322	37.4%
Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships	352	5.7%
Migrant Seasonal Head Start	101	1.6%

INVESTING IN ARKANSAS CHILDREN.
Strengthening Our Communities.

ARKANSAS HEAD START ASSOCIATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (2025)
543

TOTAL NUMBER OF FOSTER CHILDREN (2025)
156

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN WITH AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) OR ANINDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP), (2025)
1.282

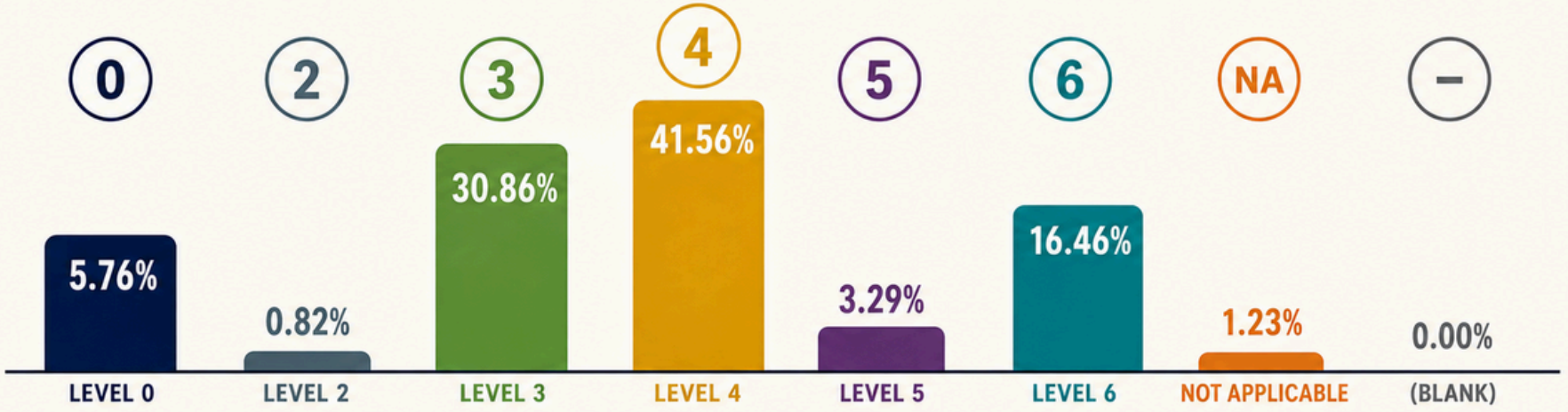
Data from the Head Start Enterprise System Program Information Report-2024-2025

Arkansas Head Start Association

BETTER BEGINNINGS LEVELS

for Arkansas Head Start Programs

Based on the Grand Total distribution of Better Beginnings Levels across Arkansas Head Start programs.



100% OF ARKANSAS HEAD START PROGRAMS

Most programs are achieving **Level 4 (41.56%)**, followed by **Level 3 (30.86%)** and **Level 6 (16.46%).**

Statistics obtained by crossreferncing data from Office of Head Start, Arkansas Department of Education/ Division of Elementary and Secondary Education/Office of Early Childhood, and local programs (2026).

ARKANSAS HEAD START ASSOCIATION

HEALTH SERVICES

Services to All Children at Beginning of Enrollment Year Compared to End of Enrollment Year

(based on Cumulative Enrollment)

HEALTH INDICATOR	AT BEGINNING OF ENROLLMENT YEAR		AT END OF ENROLLMENT YEAR	
	#	%	#	%
Children with health insurance	8,385	95.2%	8,432	95.8%
Children with accessible health care	8,225	93.4%	8,359	94.9%
Children with up-to-date immunizations or all possible immunizations to date, or exempt	8,162	92.7%	8,364	95.0%
Children with accessible dental care	7,131	81.0%	7,612	86.5%

Healthy children. Strong futures.

Arkansas Head Start programs are committed to supporting the health and well-being of every child and family.

Data from the Head Start Enterprise System Program Information Report-2024-2025

FAMILY SERVICES

Specific Family Services Provided to Families in Arkansas Head Start Programs

SPECIFIC FAMILY SERVICES	# OF FAMILIES	% OF FAMILIES
Emergency/crisis Intervention	1,793	22.9%
Housing assistance	437	5.6%
Asset building services	904	11.5%
Mental health services	1,253	16.0%
Substance misuse prevention	181	2.3%
Substance misuse treatment	117	1.5%
English as a Second Language (ESL) training	339	4.3%
Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	675	8.6%

SPECIFIC FAMILY SERVICES	# OF FAMILIES	% OF FAMILIES
Research-based parenting curriculum	3,972	50.7%
Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	6,175	78.9%
Supporting transitions between programs	2,850	36.4%
Education on preventive medical and oral health	5,276	67.4%
Education on health and developmental consequences of tobacco product use	1,543	19.7%
Education on nutrition	5,672	72.5%
Education on postpartum care	394	5.0%
Education on relationship/marriage	335	4.3%
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	115	1.5%

Arkansas Head Start programs provide a wide range of services that strengthen families and support children's success.

TOTAL FAMILIES SERVED

7,826
(100%)

Stronger families. Brighter futures.
Together, we build a foundation for lifelong success.

Data from the Head Start Enterprise System Program Information Report-2024-2025