

TERMINOLOGY

RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE PRE-K PANEL¹

Accredited Centers and Homes: Accredited programs meet recognized standards for high quality as established by the sponsoring organization and typically exceed the program standards associated with state licensing criteria. Accreditation systems may be organized at either the state or national level and vary in the requirements they set for achieving accreditation status.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agency: The state network, in conjunction with its local child care resource and referral partners (CCR&R), helps families, child care providers, and communities find and offer affordable, quality child care. CCR&Rs manage a variety of projects and activities such as statewide consumer education and referrals for families, efforts to build child care supply and quality, and the collection and analysis of data related to the State's child care. The Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network (MOCCRRN) provides child care resource and referral services in Missouri.

Child Care Subsidy: Publicly funded financial reimbursement provided by the Department of Social Services to parents or as a payment paid directly to eligible child care providers with the purpose of assisting low income families with child care expenses so parents can work, attend school or training programs. These funds are provided through the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

An "eligible child" must be under 13 years of age (the age range is extended to 19 if the child has a special need) with a parent who is working, in school, or in job training. The family's income eligibility cannot exceed 127% of the federal poverty level (for a 3-person household, this is currently \$1836 per month). Current legislation passed by the Missouri House and Senate, pending the Governor's signature, establishes a program to transition eligible families off of child care subsidy by providing up to a 75% benefit, up to 139% of the federal poverty guideline.

An "eligible child care provider" can be anyone legally providing child care based on current child care licensing regulations. This includes licensed child care centers, group homes, and family homes; license-exempt school-based child care programs; providers caring for related children and/or up to four unrelated children (see Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care); and providers coming into the child's home to provide care.

Early Care and Education: An all encompassing term used for programs providing out-of-home care and/or education to young children, including child care, Head Start, and preschool, regardless of the program's sponsor (e.g., public school, for profit, not-for-profit, center- or family-based, and faith-based).

Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care: This form of child care is not licensed by the State and is defined by the State as any person who is caring for four or fewer children. Children who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption to such person within the third degree are not considered when determining the total number of children being cared for. To be a recipient of child care subsidy funds, the provider must be registered with the Department of Social Services. Registration requires the provider to self-certify that he/she is at least 18 years of age, meets minimal health and safety requirements, has passed a TB test and fingerprint background checks, and has access to a working phone for emergencies. Additionally, registration requires anyone aged 17 or older in the provider's home to complete a Family Child Care Safety Registry background screening. Children in the care of a family, friend, or neighbor who is caring for fewer than four unrelated children are not "tracked" by the State.

Head Start/Early Head Start: Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded, national child development programs. These are federal to local (vs. state) programs and funded by the United States Congress and administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. The Office of Head Start provides grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families. It focuses on supporting the child development of income eligible children from birth to age 5. Head Start provides program services to three- and four- year olds to promote their academic, social, and emotional development, including social, health, and nutrition services. Early Head Start was created in 1994 to target the needs of income eligible pregnant women, infants, and toddlers to foster positive child development ever earlier in life. To expand the number of children and families served, the Missouri Department of Social Services has been investing state funding in these programs through Head Start agencies since 1999. (State funded Early Head Start programs, of which there presently are ten in Missouri, are monitored by the Department of Social Services.)

Eligibility

- > Head Start grantees must serve at least 55% of their slot allocation with children at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines.
- > Grantees may serve up to 35% of their enrollment with children whose incomes are between 100-130% of poverty (if the agency has implemented policies to ensure that needs of the first category, above, are being met; and selection priority is given to above children, who will be served prior to serving others).
- > In addition, 10% of a grantee's enrollment may be with children over income (i.e., no income restrictions).
- > Programs must assure that at least 10% of a program's enrollment must be children with disabilities.

Kindergarten Entry Age: Any child whose fifth birthday occurs before the first day of August in the calendar year of the start of the new academic year.

The law authorizes an exception to the cut-off date for students in the St. Louis and Kansas City School Districts. These districts are authorized to establish a different cut-off date. Children attending these districts and transferring to an out-state district would be enrolled, even if they did not meet the August 1 cut-off date.

Participation in kindergarten is voluntary. Mandatory schooling does not begin until the age of seven in Missouri.

Licensed Programs: Most, but not all, child care programs are required by state law to be licensed by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Section for Child Care Regulation. Public school pre-kindergarten programs are not required to be licensed and are considered exempt from licensing by the Department of Health and Senior Services. Schools participating in the Missouri Preschool Project (see below) are an exception to this law; Missouri Preschool Project classrooms must be licensed.

A licensed program is inspected several times per year and is monitored for compliance with health and safety standards, staff/child ratios, group sizes, equipment, staff qualifications, and specialized training regarding the care of groups of children.

Licensed Child Care Center: A child care facility for 21+ children operated in a location separate from the provider's living quarters.

Licensed Family Child Care Home: A program for up to ten children, typically in the provider's home.

Licensed Group Child Care Home: A program for 11-20 children not related to the provider. The child care space can be adjacent to, but separate from, the provider's living quarters. Group homes meet the same licensing rules as a licensed center.

License-Exempt Child Care Center: According to state law, center-based programs operated by religious organizations or as a part-day nursery school are required to follow health and safety requirements, but are exempt from following other licensing requirements such as staff/child ratios, discipline practices, and staff training. Programs run by public schools such as Title I and some after-school programs are also not required to be licensed and often fall into the License exempt category. Facilities may voluntarily become licensed.

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP): During the spring of 1997, Missouri began implementing a public school-based performance-based assessment system, as required by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993. This assessment system measures student progress on the Show-Me Standards at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. All districts have participated in the mandatory administration of the math

assessments since 1998 and the communication arts assessments since 1999. Missouri Preschool Project programs and Title I preschools participate in the Preschool Exit Observational Assessment, which is not part of the Missouri Assessment Program. This information is used for planning purposes at the building level (for Title I preschools) and aggregated to inform the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's strategic planning. (Note: Title I is a federal funding source for low income children.)

Missouri Coordinating Board: The Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood was established by statute in August 2004. The Coordinating Board's purpose is to serve as the public/private entity for coordinating a cohesive system of early childhood programs and services that will result in the healthy development of, and high quality education for, all Missouri children from birth through age five.

The Coordinating Board is charged with the responsibility to:

- Develop a comprehensive statewide long-range strategic plan for a cohesive early childhood system.
- Confer with public and private entities for the purpose of promoting and improving the development of children from birth through age five.
- Identify and recommend statutory and appropriation initiatives to improve services for children from birth through age five.
- Promote coordination of existing services and programs across public and private entities.
- Promote research-based approaches to services and ongoing program evaluation.
- Identify service gaps and advise public and private entities of methods to close such gaps.

Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office: The Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office has as its overall purpose to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies) and other entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low-income children (as defined by federal guidelines) from birth to school entry, and their families. The Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office is housed within the Center for Family Policy and Research at the University of Missouri-Columbia and operates through a contract with the MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is granted these funds by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start.

Missouri Preschool Project: The Missouri Preschool Project (Missouri's existing publicly funded pre-k program) began in 1998 through the Early Childhood Development Education and Care Fund with funding from gaming revenues. The program, which is operated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, serves three-, four-year, and five- year olds. (Note: The Missouri Preschool Projects funds children who are one and two years out from kindergarten. So three-year-olds whose date of birth means that they will not meet the kindergarten entry date within two years are not eligible. Similarly, five-year-olds whose birth date excludes them from kindergarten entry in their fifth year may be eligible.) A competitive grant process is used to award funds. MPP

programs may charge a fee but if they do there must be a sliding fee scale. Funded programs must be licensed and meet established program standards and operate in public schools, private child care centers, and non-profit agencies.

Missouri Oversight for Programs Serving Three- and Four-Year Olds:

- > The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides oversight of school-based programs for three- and four-year olds, the programs they fund, and children with special needs starting from birth.
- > The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHHS) licenses child care programs serving three- and four year olds.
- > The Department of Social Services (DSS) provides child care subsidies for licensed and license-exempt programs, not funded by DESE, that serve three- and four-year olds.
- > No state agency is authorized with the oversight of Head Start since its funding goes directly from the federal Office of Head Start to local programs. In light of this governance structure, Head Start State Collaboration Offices were created to foster collaboration and coordination between Head Start and other preschool programs serving low income children.

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