

# Ohio's Children

Preparing them today to secure a successful and productive tomorrow

**A skilled, productive workforce is essential for a strong Ohio economy. High-quality early childhood education (ECE) supports this workforce now and into the future.**

## Children in Ohio<sup>1</sup>

- 2,568,641 children (under the age of 18) live in the state;
- 466,000 children (18 percent) live in poverty (about \$26,000 or less for a family of four);
- 37 percent of children live in a household with only one parent.

## Early Childhood

- 69 percent of Ohio children under the age of 6 have both or their only parent in the workforce;<sup>2</sup>
- Only 14 percent of 3-year-olds and 26 percent of 4-year-olds are enrolled in state-funded pre-kindergarten, Head Start or a special education preschool program;<sup>3</sup>
- 39 percent of Ohio's population lives in a child care desert where there are more than three children under age 5 for every licensed child care slot.<sup>4</sup> The lack of affordable, quality child care for just infants and toddlers costs Ohio an estimated \$1.7 billion annually.<sup>5</sup>



## School Age

- More than half of Ohio fourth and eighth graders score below proficient in both math and reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).<sup>6</sup>

**18 percent of Ohio students do not graduate on time with a high school diploma**

## College & Career Readiness

- 18 percent of Ohio students do not graduate on time with a high school diploma;<sup>7</sup>
- Graduation rates are worse for youth of color:<sup>8</sup>
  - 31 percent of African American students do not graduate on time;
  - 27 percent of Hispanic students do not graduate on time.
- Of 2019 high school graduates in Ohio, only 23 percent met ACT College

Readiness Benchmarks in all core areas: English, reading, mathematics and science.<sup>9</sup>

High-quality ECE benefits the current workforce by allowing parents to remain employed, confident that their children are in nurturing environments that support brain development and early learning. Research demonstrates that high quality ECE also bolsters academic outcomes that help develop the future workforce.<sup>10</sup>

Policymakers must continue to invest in quality ECE for Ohio's children.

<sup>1</sup> KIDS COUNT data center. (2021). <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

<sup>2</sup> KIDS COUNT data center. (2021). <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Garver, K. A., Hodges, K. S., Weisenfeld, G. G., & Gardiner, B. A. (2021). The state of preschool 2020. [https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Ohio\\_YB2020.pdf](https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Ohio_YB2020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Center for American Progress (2018). Child care deserts. <https://childcaredeserts.org/2018/index.html?state=OH>

<sup>5</sup> ReadyNation (2020) Want to Strengthen Ohio's Economy? Fix the Child Care Crisis. <https://www.strongnation.org/articles/1163-want-to-strengthen-ohio-s-economy-fix-the-child-care-crisis>

<sup>6</sup> National Center on Education Statistics (2019). The nation's report card. <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/profiles/stateprofile?chart=1&sub=MAT&sj=&sfj=NP&st=MN&year=2019R3>

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Education (2021). Public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), by race/ethnicity and selected demographic characteristics for the United States, the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: School year 2018–19. [https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR\\_RE\\_and\\_characteristics\\_2018-19.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_RE_and_characteristics_2018-19.asp)

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> ACT Inc. (2019). The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2019 Ohio key findings. <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/cccr-2019/Ohio-CCCR-2019.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> For example: Barnett, W. S., Jung, K., Youn, M., & Frede, E. C. (2013, March 20). Abbott Pre-K Program longitudinal effects study: Fifth grade follow-up. <http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/APPLES205th20Grade.pdf> ; Michigan Great Start Readiness Program evaluation 2012: High school graduation and grade retention findings. <http://bridgemi.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/GSRP-evaluation-may-21-12.pdf>

### ReadyNation | Business. Kids. Workforce.

Business executives building a skilled workforce by promoting solutions that prepare children to succeed in education, work, and life.

**Council for a Strong America** is a national, bipartisan nonprofit that unites membership organizations, including law enforcement leaders, retired admirals and generals, and business executives, that promote solutions that ensure our next generation of Americans will be successful, productive members of society.

253 Murhpy's Green / Powell, Ohio 43065 / 614.264.6662

