



Approaches to State Pre-K Eligibility Policy: Considerations for Policy Makers in Revising Policy to Increase Access for High Needs Children

CEELO POLICY REPORT

Megan E. Carolan, MPP
Lori Connors-Tadros, PhD
May 2015

Abstract. As states seek to expand access to early childhood programs and services for children and families most in need, they are revising eligibility policy and practice with multiple goals in mind. A state's eligibility policy must balance accountability for public funds with the need to provide efficient and flexible processes for program staff in documenting risk factors. Most important, the policy should prevent unintended burdens on families to access services they or their children are eligible to receive. This report provides policy makers with information on state-funded pre-K programs' eligibility policies and the common risk factors used to prioritize enrollment. The report on the risk factors with the strongest impact on children's school readiness is summarized. The report concludes with considerations for policy makers as they review or revise eligibility to serve more children, effectively and efficiently, in high quality early education programs.

Contents

Introduction	4
State Pre-K Eligibility Policy.....	5
Approaches to Establishing Eligibility Policy.....	8
Individual Family Risk Factors	8
Geographic Risk Factors.....	9
Research Evidence for the Most Common Risk Factors	10
Considerations for Developing State Eligibility Policy	14
Conclusion.....	15
Additional Resources	16
Data Sources	16
State Geomapping Websites	16
Outreach Strategies	16
Appendix A: State Eligibility Policies, 2012-2013 School Year	18
Appendix B: Summary of Research on Eight Common Risk Factors for Pre-K Eligibility Policy.....	32
ENDNOTES.....	38

ABOUT CEELO:

One of 22 Comprehensive Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) will strengthen the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. CEELO will work in partnership with SEAs, state and local early childhood leaders, and other federal and national technical assistance (TA) providers to promote innovation and accountability.

For other *CEELO Policy Reports*, *Policy Briefs*, and *FastFacts*, go to <http://ceelo.org/ceelo-products>.

Permission is granted to reprint this material if you acknowledge CEELO and the authors of the item. For more information, call the Communications contact at (732) 993-8051, or visit CEELO at CEELO.org.

Suggested citation: Carolan, M. & Connors-Tadros, L. (2015). *Eligibility policy for state pre-K programs: Research on risk factors and approaches to developing state policy* (CEELO Policy Report). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.

This policy report was produced by the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under cooperative agreement number S283B120054. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the federal government.

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) is a partnership of the following organizations:



Introduction

About half of all 4-year-olds in poverty are enrolled in a public pre-K program, generally of low quality.ⁱ Even among states with a stated goal of providing universal access to state-funded pre-K programs, targeted or prioritized enrollment is a common strategy when programs cannot accommodate all children. Programs often aim to first enroll the most “at-risk” children; that is, children who are more likely to begin kindergarten lagging behind their peers and to benefit from the intervention of high quality pre-K. Most pre-K programs in the United States, including the federally funded Head Start program, and many state-funded pre-K programs restrict enrollment only to children below a certain income threshold. This is the goal of recently revised eligibility guidance for Head Start programs, so that the neediest children are served first.ⁱⁱ

While universal programs have the potential to produce positive benefits for all children, many states and localities do not have the financial resources or the capacity to provide access to all children, and therefore may need to ramp up enrollment over time. Agencies often prioritize or target enrollment to those children living in families in poverty, deemed most at risk. Research indicates that there is a difference in kindergarten readiness based on income. Indeed, middle-income children are as far behind high-income children as low-income children are behind those in middle-income families.ⁱⁱⁱ Achievement gaps at kindergarten are also associated with parent’s level of education as well as ethnicity and family’s home language.^{iv} Children at greatest risk often experience multiple risk factors related to family income level, parental education, and factors related to unstable family circumstances (e.g. homelessness, foster care). Compounding these threats to healthy development, often children most likely to start kindergarten furthest behind are least likely to have access to a high quality pre-K program.^v

Purpose and Organization of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide policy makers with information to:

- identify the risk factors which have the strongest research evidence on implications for children’s school readiness,
- share examples of state pre-K program eligibility policy, and
- offer considerations for policy makers as they review or revise eligibility to serve more children, more effectively and efficiently, in high quality programs.

This brief is organized into three parts. The first looks at the current trends in how eligibility is determined for state-funded pre-K programs, and highlights the eligibility policy approaches used by several individual states. The second presents a review of the evidence on risk factors that are commonly used by states to prioritize enrollment. These risk factors, individually or in combination, can have a strong negative impact on children’s readiness for kindergarten, as well as longer-term positive outcomes. The final section provides policymakers with key issues to consider in developing eligibility policy that prioritizes enrollment based on risk factors. For further information on income eligibility determination and verification see the CEELO Fast Fact, [Examples of State Guidance to Determine and Verify Income Eligibility for Preschool](#).

State Pre-K Eligibility Policy

The 2013 *State of Preschool Yearbook* from the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) reported on the policies of 53 state-funded pre-K programs,¹ which are offered in 40 states and the District of Columbia. Secondary analysis of data from the 2012-2013 school years provides an overview of the specific risk factors state programs use to determine eligibility and prioritize enrollment. Of the 53 programs profiled, 17 (32%) have no eligibility requirements beyond age, though the program may not be universally available, due to limited funding. Of the remaining programs:

- Low-income status is the most commonly used criteria in determining eligibility. About 28 programs (58%) reported using a state-specified income requirement as an eligibility criterion for the program, either on its own or in concert with other factors, including age.
- Eligibility is determined most often by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age. This is the case in 32 of the programs (60%).
- 21 programs (40 %) report that age is the only enrollment factor for children in districts (or the entire state) where the program is offered.
- Five (9%) programs reported that income was the only risk factor used for eligibility.

Income Eligibility

Most states calculate eligibility based on a multiple of the federal poverty level (FPL). FPL is calculated annually and takes into account income and family size. In 2015, families of three making less than \$20,090 were considered to be living in poverty.

The most commonly used eligibility criteria for state pre-K programs is 185% of the federal poverty level (or less than \$37,167 for a family of three). This is also the cut-off for reduced-price lunch that is administered through the United State Department of Agriculture, and is a common definition of low income employed by public schools.

Another income measure often used is a multiple of State Median Income (SMI). Because SMI is based on state-level income figures, it may be a better metric in high cost-of-living states.

¹ Throughout the Yearbook, reference is made to “program” rather than state, as some states have more than one pre-K program.

Table 1 displays the income thresholds set by those programs that use income as an eligibility factor; the most commonly used cutoff is 185% of the federal poverty level. (See **Appendix A** for a full listing of eligibility policies by program.)

Table 1: State-specified income requirements

Income Limit	Frequency
100% FPL	5
130% FPL	3
185% FPL	11
Other percentage of FPL	8
Percentage State median income	4
Total	31

Table 2 presents the risks, in addition to or in place of income thresholds, reported by 35 programs to determine eligibility and/or prioritize enrollment. Of the 12 risk factors NIEER gives programs² to choose from (including “locally determined” and “other”) we found:

- The average program considers five risk factors beyond income in considering eligibility for the program.
- In nine programs, children must meet a designated number of risk factors *in addition* to meeting the income requirement.
- In 19 programs, the income cutoff can count as one of the set number of risk factors.
- Three risk factors were used by more than half of the programs: homelessness or unstable housing; disability or developmental delay of the child; and non-English speaking family.

² NIEER’s *State of Preschool* report collects information through a survey of state pre-K administrators regarding their eligibility policies. The survey allows programs to select as many or as few of several common eligibility risk factors as apply.

Table 2: Risk factors for eligibility, beyond income

Risk Factor	Frequency	Percent
Homelessness or unstable housing	19	54%
Disability or developmental delay of the child	18	51%
Non-English speaking family	18	51%
Child is or was in foster care	16	46%
Low parental education level	14	40%
History of abuse, neglect, or family violence	14	40%
Teen parent	14	40%
Other risk factors	13	37%
Parental substance abuse	11	31%
Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten	11	31%
Low birth weight or other child health risk	11	31%
Parent is on active military duty	11	31%
Locally determined risk factors	8	23%

Programs are asked to provide details on additional risk factors if they indicate “other.” Many are similar to choices provided in the survey, but may have a more specific definition at the state level. These are:

- Incarcerated parent
- Parent is activated for overseas military duty, combat zone; injured or killed in action
- Recipient of public services (welfare, Medicaid, etc.)
- Early childhood referral from another program
- Child is in need of language development
- Frequent relocation by the child’s family
- Social service referral
- Poor social skills
- Single parent
- Expulsion due to behavior
- Chronic health condition and/or child has as IEP
- Migrant status
- Limited health care access
- In kinship care
- Geographic isolation
- Transferring from Head Start or Early Head Start

Approaches to Establishing Eligibility Policy

States can take several approaches to setting eligibility policy for state-funded pre-K programs. Some states offer “universal pre-K” with the philosophy that all children should have access to pre-K. Since funds are limited, not all districts offer pre-K and districts with the highest percentage of low-income children are given priority for grant funds. Nonetheless, this “universal” model in which eligibility is not restricted based on risk factors is one approach that takes into account research that demonstrates the benefits of low-income children participating in educational experiences alongside their more affluent peers.

For states that do establish some criteria for prioritizing or restricting eligibility, two approaches are most common. The **Individual Family Risk Factors** approach determines each family’s eligibility for the program based on individual characteristics of the family or child. The **Geographic Risk Factors** approach determines where the program is offered, based on specific risk factors of residents in that jurisdiction; the program is then open to all or some of the families in that area.

Some states mix aspects of these models. For example, Connecticut reports eligibility as “All families regardless of income levels can apply for School Readiness spaces in competitive and priority municipalities; however, 60 percent of children enrolled in each town must meet the income guideline of at or below 75 percent SMI.” Similarly, Iowa Shared Visions reports, “A child who meets age and income criteria is considered eligible. If a child does not meet income eligibility criteria, he/she may be eligible by meeting age and one or more secondary risk factors. However, only 20 percent of the children may qualify based on meeting secondary risk factors.”

Individual Family Risk Factors

Tennessee reports that income eligibility is always first priority for enrollment. The other locally determined risk factors are considered when space is available after serving income-eligible students. The program’s website classifies eligibility in three tiers:

- Tier 1: Economically disadvantaged, as based on income levels set annually by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Tier 2: “Students with disabilities, students identified as English Language Learners (ELL), students in state custody, or those identified as educationally at-risk due to abuse or neglect.”
- Tier 3: If space is still available after serving children in Tiers 1 and 2, children who meet age and eligibility requirements set by the respective Community Pre-K Advisory Council (C-PAC) may be enrolled.^{vi}

Michigan requires that 75 percent of children served by each grantee must meet the state-set income requirement. There are eight additional risk factors that can contribute to eligibility:

- Extremely low family income (below 200 percent of FPL)
- Primary language other than English

- Low family income (200-300 percent of FPL)
- Parent(s) with low educational attainment
- Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay
- Abuse/neglect of child or parent
- Severe and challenging behavior
- Other environmental risk as defined by the state

Families below 200 percent FPL are automatically qualified. Priority is then given to “low-income” families with two risk factors; then to “low-income” families with one risk factor, then families above 300 percent of FPL with two risk factors. Documents explaining the risk factors in greater detail are provided on the state’s website.^{vii}

Geographic Risk Factors

Several states take a different approach to eligibility, providing enrollment to children based on age-eligibility only, but limiting the program’s enrollment only to certain geographic areas.

New Jersey’s Former Abbott Preschool Program, so named for the court case that created it, is offered in 35 districts where at least 40 percent of children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Thirty-one districts were required to offer the program by the Court decision; another four districts applied to expand their existing program starting in the 2008-2009 school year. Since the program is only offered in low-income districts, there are no eligibility criteria, beyond being the appropriate age, for enrolling students. Similarly, the state’s Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) is required in 94 districts where 20 to 40 percent of children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Texas requires its pre-K programs be provided in a district if 15 or more eligible children are identified who are at least four years of age by September 1 of the current school year. The eligibility criteria are:

- 185% FPL
- Non-English speaking family members
- Experiencing homelessness or unstable housing
- Child history of foster care
- Parental active military duty
- Parent was injured or killed on active military duty

Texas is a slightly different model from New Jersey, in that child eligibility determines whether a program is offered, but also determines individual child enrollment. The state provides detailed information on demonstrating eligibility.^{viii}

South Carolina’s Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP), resulting from the lawsuit *Abbeville County School District vs. South Carolina*, requires pre-K to be offered in counties that have high rates of free or reduced-price eligibility or are rural.^{ix} Similar to New Jersey, a court order ensures the program’s locations; unlike New Jersey, eligibility requirements do still apply to enroll within these. Income eligibility for Medicaid and/or free or reduced-price lunch are the primary criteria for eligibility. If classes are not full, developmental delay can be considered. Otherwise criteria are: child disability or developmental delay; homelessness or unstable housing; and child receiving Medicaid services; or 185% FPL.

Research Evidence for the Most Common Risk Factors

State approaches to determining eligibility that prioritize specific individual or geographic risks are based on the research that certain factors independently put children at risk for adverse outcomes in school and life. The presence of multiple risk factors in a family and/or child, places the child at significantly greater risk for negative impacts on the child's health and development. As states review or revise eligibility policy, it is important to identify the risk factors that have the strongest evidence of impact on child outcomes.

This section provides an overview to some of the most common risk factors used to prioritize enrollment in state funded pre-K programs, and the strength of the impact based on the research evidence.³ The eight factors reviewed below include: children of teen parents, living in families in poverty or deep poverty, having mothers with low maternal education, experiencing homelessness or housing instability, involvement with state child welfare agency, child with disabilities, living in limited-English-speaking households, and in migrant or seasonal families. In addition, CEELO briefly summarizes the research on children experiencing multiple risk factors. (See **Appendix B** for a summary table of the review of the research described below.)

Highest Risk: Strongest Predictors of Negative Impact on Child Development and School Success.

There is a robust body of research documenting the impact of these factors on child development and success which indicates a high risk of negative outcomes: child of teen parents, living in a low-income family, or having a mother with low educational attainment.

Child of teen parents is defined as having a mother who was age 19 or younger at time of the child's birth. A small study of teen parents and their infants found that about 20 percent of infants demonstrated developmental delays, and that teen mothers may have difficulty in assessing the development of their children.^x Children of teen mothers are more likely to perform poorly on cognitive ability tests, as well as be retained in a grade, than are children of older others.^{xi} They also have lower reading, math, and PPVT scores.^{xii} Teen childbearing is highly correlated with lower economic wellbeing, particularly during the early childhood years of the child; this economic connection may be linked to increased risks for children of teen parents.^{xiii} In the long term, children of teen mothers have higher rates of dropping out of high school, being incarcerated during adolescence, and becoming teen parents themselves.^{xiv} Several studies noted that the difficulties for teen parents are often linked to their low income status as well as their low levels of educational attainment.

Children in families in poverty or deep poverty, is defined where "poverty" is as at or below 100 percent FPL, and "deep" or "extreme" poverty is 50 percent FPL. Experiencing poverty in early life can predict the extent of reduced cognitive scores for children and is likely associated with experiencing a multitude of risk factors, which is significantly detrimental to healthy development.^{xv} Data from the

³ Strength of evidence was judged based on the frequency of studies finding impacts and the strength of the association found. Particular attention was paid to effects on child development and school success in early childhood and early elementary years.

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth cohort (ECLS-B) indicate that infants and toddlers from low-income (at or below 200 percent FPL) families have lower scores on a cognitive assessment than do same-age children from higher-income families.^{xvi} There is a strong relationship between poverty and the risk of “adverse child outcomes,” which includes low academic skills at the start of kindergarten.^{xvii} Data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten of 1998-1999 indicate that poverty is negatively related to literacy development in Kindergarten and first grade, as well as academic abilities more generally.^{xviii} Just 19 percent of 8-year-olds in families with incomes below 200 percent FPL have age-appropriate cognitive skills, indicating that the impacts of low income extend beyond the federal poverty level.^{xix}

Children of mothers with low maternal education level, as noted earlier, are less likely to be enrolled in pre-K; the quality of pre-K program is also linked to parent’s level of educational attainment. In 2012, 3- and 4-year-olds whose mothers had not graduated from high school were 1.75 times more likely than children whose mothers held a Bachelors degree (BA) not to be enrolled in pre-K. Even children whose mothers had completed some college were unlikely to be enrolled in pre-K.^{xx} Research indicates that children of mothers with low educational attainment could benefit from early intervention. Lower scores on cognitive assessments can be seen in infants and toddlers whose mothers have less than a high school degree, compared to children whose mothers have Bachelor’s degrees or higher.^{xxi} Children of mothers with limited education experience lower levels of cognitive and socio-emotional functioning, as well as lower academic achievement.^{xxii} By the eighth grade, children whose parents did not graduate from high school were significantly less likely than children whose parents had Bachelors degrees to be rated as “proficient” on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams in reading and math.^{xxiii} It is difficult to separate the impact of education level compared to the impact of income, as the two are inherently linked. Among children whose mothers had not graduated from high school, families were 13 times more likely to be poor than those families where mothers had a Bachelors degree. Half of children whose mothers had not graduated from high school were poor.^{xxiv}

High risk for negative impact on child development and school success; greater risk when multiple risk factors present. There is a robust body of research documenting the impact of these factors on child development and success. This research indicates a high risk for negative impacts but also indicates that these risk factors are often compounded by additional risk factors.

Children in homeless families or experiencing housing instability/mobility. “Homelessness” is defined as homeless on the street, in shelter, or living in “doubled up” housing with other families, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Act. Research shows that homelessness contributes to low cognitive development, problems in classroom behavior, and poor reading and language skills.^{xxv} Homeless children are more likely to be retained in a grade when compared to never-homeless children. They are also more likely to have high rates of absenteeism, often due to mobility. Homeless children’s spelling, reading, and math scores are more frequently below grade level, across ages.^{xxvi} When compared to housed families, the negative effects of homelessness were compounded by parental mental illness. In turn, parental mental illness often results in children experiencing less optimal adult-child interactions, a strong predictor of healthy language and cognitive development.^{xxvii}

Housing instability and frequent mobility is slightly different from homelessness. Families move frequently for many reasons: changing jobs, seasonal work, or (for military families) moving due to base changes. While these children grow up in a different environment than does a child in shelter, there are still negative impacts from the lack of stability. Frequent moves and school changes can negatively impact school readiness for other reasons. Children may experience discontinuity in care arrangements and school enrollment, with little time to feel connected to their environment and caregiver. This can also lead to unstable access to health care and other social services a family needs. Children who move frequently also experience higher levels of stress.^{xxviii} The situation of military families may be compounded by the stresses of deployment, when “[p]reschoolers may display regressive behavior, irritation, sadness, and aggressiveness and may have somatic complaints.”^{xxix}

Children and families served by state child welfare agencies. Families who have, or have had, involvement with their state’s respective Department of Children and Families tend to fall into two categories: children who are in, or have been in foster care, or are living in adoptive families; and children from families with active or past reports/investigations for Children in both categories may display negative consequences of early life experience. In 1991, between an estimated one-half to two-thirds of children in the foster care system demonstrated significant enough emotional or behavioral problems to warrant mental health care.^{xxx} Foster children frequently have severe academic delays when compared to same-age peers.^{xxxi} Research has indicated a strong link between poor academic outcomes and foster care placement.^{xxxii} Brain development can be impaired by emotional and cognitive disruptions in early childhood.^{xxxiii} Maltreatment can have physical, psychological, and cognitive impacts.^{xxxiv} Abuse and neglect can expose children to chronic stress, which is a risk factor for poor school readiness and slowed brain development. The risks can continue into adulthood, include poor memory, shorter attention spans, and higher rates of dropping out of school than children who were not neglected or abused.^{xxxv} Studies have found children exposed to chronic stress can benefit from programs to reduce environmental stressors during out-of-home care, addressing developmental delays, and improve skills such as executive functioning and attention capacities.^{xxxvi}

Children with disabilities. The Preschool Early Education Longitudinal Study (PEELS) found that children with disabilities generally perform less well on measures of school readiness than typically developing peers, but within-group variance is less significant for children with developmental delays or speech and language impairments.^{xxxvii} Children with special needs can greatly benefit from early intervention. According to the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS), almost half of children who had received Early Intervention services and were at risk of needing special education services ultimately did not need these services in kindergarten, and performed as well in reading and math as their peers.^{xxxviii} Early childhood education is one of the first opportunities many families have for a disability or developmental delay to be identified in a child. While some presenting disabilities are likely to be identified and addressed before school, many others are not as obvious or may not emerge in the years before a child starts school.^{xxxix} Early identification and intervention can help lessen the impact of communication delays and other disorders.^{xl}

Limited English speaking household. “Limited English Speaking Household” refers to a situation where no household member 14 years old or over speaks only English, or speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well.” Research has found that children for whom English is not the home language have small cognitive disparities at 9 months, and moderate-to-large effects at 24 months, compared to those who live in English-speaking households.^{xli} While being exposed to a language beyond English can be greatly beneficial for children, a lack of English proficiency by kindergarten is linked to lower school success later.^{xlii}

Children of migrant or seasonal workers. Frequent moves, poverty, and language barriers each pose a challenge to education and early childhood development, and these risk factors compound the educational challenges faced by the children of migrant or seasonal farm workers.^{xliii} In addition to poverty and language barriers, migrant children often lack continuity in their education and are often significantly behind other children in academic development.^{xliiv} Residential mobility leads to discontinuity in schooling and care, and prevents children and families from developing relationships with those in their communities. It also leads to inconsistent access to health care and other social services.^{xliv} Because of a constellation of risk factors (linguistic isolation, mobility, low parent education level, low family income) children of migrant and seasonal workers experience many of the same risks detailed in the categories above. So notable are the risks to children of migrant workers that Head Start has a particular focus on migrant infants and toddlers: “Migrant Head Start programs attempt to respond to the migration patterns of the families by operating during the peak season of the local crop harvest. This system of service simultaneously creates multiple challenges, such as staffing, extended program hours, facility location and program management. Additionally, Migrant Head Start programs may be in operation anywhere from three to 10 months at a time.”^{xlvi}

Multiple risk factors. Many risk factors are highly correlated with other risk factors. This is particularly true regarding living in poverty or a low-income household. Data in 2000 indicated that children who lived in poverty were three times more likely than those not in poverty to have been born to an unmarried teenage mother and almost twice as likely to have a low birth weight, a risk factor for long-term developmental consequences. Children in poverty were nearly seven times as likely as those not in poverty to experience neglect or abuse during childhood. There were also academic implications; children in poverty were 1.4 times as likely to have a learning disability and twice as likely to be retained in a grade.^{xlvii}

Research has indicated that while having one risk factor in addition to low income does not decrease the chance of positive outcomes, having two or three additional risk factors does, significantly.^{xlviii} One study examined the interplay of four common risk factors for children: living in a single-parent household; mother having less than a high school diploma; a household income below the federal poverty level; and living in a household where English is not the primary language. It found that for first-time kindergarteners, direct assessment scores on reading, math, memory, and “cognitive flexibility” were lower when children had more risk factors.^{xlix} Multiple risk factors clearly place children at greater risk for falling behind in school as well as a host of other negative academic and social outcomes. Children who have multiple risk factors could significantly benefit from early childhood intervention to help mitigate these risks.

Considerations for Developing State Eligibility Policy

High quality pre-K programs benefit children at all income levels, and children living in low-income families the most.ⁱ Each state determines eligibility for pre-K program enrollment based on a variety of factors, including legislative requirements, funding, program capacity and family need. Universal programs can help increase access to the program, improve program quality, and reduce administrative burdens. However, in a situation where a state cannot launch a universal program or would like to gradually expand by first prioritizing the most at-risk children, several issues must be considered in developing state policy on eligibility. In developing new or revised eligibility criteria for a state's early childhood programs, policy makers can consider the following:

What individual factors have the strongest research evidence for placing children at risk? Typically the preschool program legislation provides some requirements around eligibility for program services. In addition, policy makers can consider using the risk factors noted above that have the strongest research base and use state-specific research or data on risk factors that are most prevalent in the state or communities to be served. Head Start programs, for example, are required to develop their eligibility policies based on a community needs assessment.

What are the options for weighting or ranking certain risk factors that are of most interest to the state or represent the greatest needs of children and families? The research indicates that children often experience multiple risk factors associated with poverty, including low parental education, developmental delays, and/or homelessness or housing instability. Multiple risk factors have the most deleterious impact on children's readiness for school, so an eligibility policy that weights certain risk factors or groups into tiers those that are most prevalent for its young children would allow the state to serve children most in need and minimize some burden on programs or families of documenting individual risk factors. (See Tennessee and Michigan examples described earlier).

What is the optimal "number" or combination of risk factors that would result in the greatest likelihood of serving the most vulnerable children? Program eligibility policies vary in the number of risk factors that are identified to prioritize enrollment. Of the 12 risk factors that are included in the NIEER State of Preschool survey, most programs identify five risk factors beyond income in determining eligibility for the program. However, some programs identify more than 30 risk factors that could be used to identify eligible children. This could present an administrative burden to both families and program staff; therefore it is reasonable to identify a targeted number (e.g. fewer than 10) of risk factors that are most likely to result in serving children most in need of services.

Which approaches to eligibility balances the goals of serving the most vulnerable children while considering the peer effect on children in classrooms? Serving children from heterogeneous backgrounds in the same classroom can provide positive peer models and improve overall quality of program.ⁱⁱ Children who experience a rich array of developmental, familial and cultural perspectives of their peers and teachers that can draw on these experiences to enrich instruction are more likely to benefit from a high quality pre-K experience. Families, and children, despite poverty or other factors that might hinder development, also have many assets or strengths that could be considered in developing an eligibility policy that supports the development of protective factors.ⁱⁱⁱ

What capacity is needed to implement a “new” eligibility policy effectively? Any planning for a new program or a change in eligibility should begin with a review of what the existing range of early care and education programs currently do, what burdens exist in terms of enrollment and program administration, what changes can be made at the state level, and what is needed to manage a revision to eligibility criteria. The review process should address these questions while engaging state and local partners “on the ground” to help avoid unintended consequences such as increases or decreases in numbers of children enrolled which in turn can impact budgets. The eligibility review process should also consider how to minimize the burden on programs and families at intake, the impact of changes in eligibility policy on pre-K provider budgets, and ultimately how these changes will impact the quality of early care and education children and families access. (Details regarding how states are implementing income eligibility policy can be found in the [CEELO FastFact](#)).

How can states balance statewide eligibility priorities with local flexibility? States may identify a set of statewide eligibility criteria and allow local communities/districts options for assessing community needs and prioritizing enrollment (or developing a waiting list) based on the most prevalent local needs. This allows the state to support local flexibility and responsiveness to geographic factors, while providing the state with the opportunity to target enrollment to the state’s greatest priority and collect some common data on children enrolled statewide. (The [CEELO FastFact](#) on implementing aligned eligibility policies referenced above also includes examples of how states are offering local flexibility.)

Conclusion

As states seek to expand access to early childhood programs and services for children and families most in need, they are revising eligibility policy and practice with multiple goals in mind. State eligibility policies must balance accountability for public funds with the need to provide efficient and flexible processes for program staff in documenting risk factors. Most importantly, the policy should prevent unintended burdens on the communities, pre-K providers, as well as the children and families that are accessing services.

Additional Resources

Data Sources

U.S. Census Bureau's Fact Finder: Find popular facts (population, income, etc.) and frequently requested data about a community, by state, county, city, town, or zip code.

<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

The National Center for Children in Poverty Young Child Risk Calculator. The risk factors used in this tool are known to increase the chance of poor health, school, and developmental outcomes for young children. Filter results by state, as well as age range, income level, and a selection of other risk factors.

<http://www.nccp.org/tools/risk/>

Center for Law and Social Policy's DataFinder. The DataFinder provides select demographic information as well as administrative data on programs that affect low-income people and families. Filter results by state, year, and a selection of variables. The DataFinder includes state and national data on: child care assistance spending and participation; Head Start and Early Head Start participation; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) expenditures; young child demographics; and poverty. The tool also provides community-level statistics on education, demographics and youth violence.

<http://www.clasp.org/data>

State Geomapping Websites

Several states have made progress into mapping the risk factors of families as well as demographics and sharing that information publicly. These include the [Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map](#) and [Vermont School District Demographic-Economic Ranking Tables](#);

Outreach Strategies

Illinois Hard to Reach Families Project Evaluation. Using ARRA funds in 2012, Illinois worked to develop effective strategies to recruit young children from families considered “hard to reach” and enroll them in early childhood programs. The report includes recommendations for overcoming common challenges, such as transportation and working with other agencies. <http://ecap.crc.illinois.edu/pubs/htr/htr-final-report.pdf>

Supporting Immigrant Families' Access to Prekindergarten. This report from Urban Institute explores the particular barriers to enrolling children of immigrant families in pre-K programs and provides recommendations. <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/413026-Supporting-Immigrant-Families-Access-to-Prekindergarten.pdf>

Prekindergarten Prepares. This website from the Texas Education Agency provides an easy-to-navigate website for parents to learn about pre-K benefits and eligibility (in both English and Spanish). It also includes a “toolkit” for providers and educators to raise awareness of the program through premade TV and radio spots; web banners to add to websites; and print materials such as flyers and press releases.
<http://www.prekindergartenprepares.com/>

Helping Low-Wage Workers Access Work Supports. While not education-specific, this brief from MDRC provides insight into strategies to make it easier to connect low-wage workers with available support opportunities. It also introduces the “Single Stop” model which may provide an opportunity for raising awareness of early childhood programs: “Working with community organizations and community colleges, SingleStop uses a custom-designed “benefits calculator” to help clients find out whether they are eligible for benefits and how claiming benefits and services would affect their income and, when accessed in combination, would ultimately lead to self-sufficiency.”
http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/policybrief_23.pdf

Appendix A

State Eligibility Policies, 2012-2013 School Year

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
Alabama	First Class: Alabama's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, are eligible.	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	
Alaska	Alaska Pilot Prekindergarten Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	130% FPL	All children	Child disability or developmental delay; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Child history of foster care; Locally determined risk factors	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Mirroring federal Head Start guidelines, up to 35 percent of enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at or below 100 percent FPL. In addition, some communities meet poverty of access criteria per federal Head Start regulations. School districts partnering with Head Start programs must follow federal Head Start requirements. All programs must follow state pre-elementary statutes and regulations.
Arizona	First Things First Pre-Kindergarten and Quality First Scholarships	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	200% FPL	All children	Not applicable	NA	Not Applicable	
Arkansas	Arkansas	Eligibility is	200%	90% of the	Child disability or developmental	1	Not	Children eligible to participate in an ABC program shall

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
	Better Chance/Arkansas Better Chance for School Success	determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	FPL	children served	delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Incarcerated parent; parent is activated for overseas military duty		Applicable	have at least one of the following characteristics: family with gross income not exceeding 200 percent FPL; a parent without a high school diploma or GED; low birth weight (below 5 pounds, 9 ounces); parent who was under 18 years of age at child's birth; immediate family member with a history of substance abuse; a demonstrable developmental delay identified through screening; eligible for services under IDEA; income eligible for Title I programs; limited English proficiency; or a parent who has a history of abuse or neglect or is a victim of abuse or neglect. To be eligible to participate in the ABCSS program, the family must have a gross income not exceeding 200 percent FPL and be age-eligible. Both programs may also serve children who meet the following criteria: meet the state's homeless criteria; are in foster care; with an incarcerated parent; with a parent activated for overseas military duty; or with an immediate family member arrested for or convicted of drug related offenses. In addition, a sliding fee scale is in place to serve children up to 250% of FPL. Active military duty alone is not a risk factor. The only time that active military duty is counted as a risk factor for pre-K/ABC is when the parent is serving overseas and out of the household.
California	California State Preschool Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	70% FPL	All families, except those children receiving protective services; are at risk for abuse, neglect, exploitation; or families homeless or receiving CalWORKs cash aid (TANF)	History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; recipient of CalWORKs cash aid	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	
Colorado	Colorado Preschool Program	Eligibility is determined by individual	185% FPL	Income is the most frequently used risk factor for	Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or	1	Meeting the income cutoff can	Income eligibility may be the sole factor or may be one of several eligibility factors. In some areas of the state where the cost of living is extremely high, district

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
		child or family characteristics in addition to age		eligibility	unstable housing; Parental substance abuse; Teen parent; Child history of foster care; Locally determined risk factors; Other state-specified risk factors include: child is in need of language development, parent or guardian has not successfully completed a high school education, frequent relocation by the child's family, and poor social skills		count as one of the risk factors	advisory councils have increased the eligibility to 200 or 225 percent FPL. Locally determined risk factors that have been selected by the district advisory councils include: parent is incarcerated; parent is on active military duty, and developmental delay that raises concerns for school readiness but does not require special education services. Four-year-olds can qualify with one risk factor. Three-year-olds must have three or more risk factors.
Connecticut	Connecticut School Readiness	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	75% SMI	60% of children	Not applicable	NA	Not Applicable	All families regardless of income levels can apply for School Readiness spaces in competitive and priority municipalities; however, 60 percent of children enrolled in each town must meet the income guideline of at or below 75 percent SMI.
Delaware	Delaware Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP)	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	100% FPL	90% of children	Not applicable	NA	Income is the only state-specified risk factor	State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Ten percent of available slots must be provided for children with disabilities. Effective as of 2007, 35 percent of enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at or below 100 percent FPL. Income is the only state-specified risk factor. After meeting the income eligibility criteria, programs can determine other risk factors through community assessments.
District of Columbia	D.C. Public Pre-Kindergarten (DCPS, PCS & CBOs)	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	
Florida	Florida Voluntary Prekindergar	All age-eligible children in the entire state	No income require	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
	ten Program	may enroll	ment					
Georgia	Georgia's Pre-K Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	
Illinois	Illinois Preschool for All	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	No income requirement	No income requirement	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty; Low income	Multiple risk factors	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Although there is not a state-specified income requirement, low income is one of the risk factors included in the weighted eligibility criteria. There is not a predetermined risk factor cut-off, but children are eligible based on multiple risk factors, and priority is given to children with the greatest risk as indicated by the number and severity of factors.
Iowa	Iowa Shared Visions	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	130% FPL	80% of children	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	A child who meets age and income criteria is considered eligible. If a child does not meet income eligibility criteria, he/she may be eligible by meeting age and one or more secondary risk factors. However, only 20 percent of the children may qualify based on meeting secondary risk factors.
Iowa	Iowa Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
		state, may enroll						
Kansas	Kansas At-Risk Four-Year-Old Children Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	130% FPL	Every child must have at least one risk factor	Low parental education level; Non-English speaking family members; Teen parent; Other state-specified risk factors, Single parent; Department for Children and Families referral; migrant status, developmentally or academically delayed	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Eligibility for free lunch (130 percent FPL) is one of eight eligibility criteria. Children must meet at least one of the eight factors.
Kansas	Kansas Pre-K Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	At least 50% of children must have at least one risk factor.	Low parental education level; Non-English speaking family members; Teen parent; Parental active military duty; Department for Children and Families referral; Developmentally or academically delayed based upon valid assessment; Early childhood referral from another program	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Fifty percent of children must meet one of the risk factors, which include eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch. Priority for enrollment includes low parent education, non-English speaking family, teen parent, parent on active military duty, single parent families, referrals of at-risk 4-year-olds from early childhood programs, developmentally or academically delayed based on assessments, and social rehabilitation services referral. Eligibility for the other 50 percent of children is based on the local program's discretion.
Kentucky	Kentucky Preschool Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	150% FPL	At-risk children (approximately 54% of children)	Child disability or developmental delay; Homelessness or unstable housing; Child history of foster care	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Homelessness is a criteria for 4 year-old children only. The children must be in foster care at time of enrollment, not based on past history of foster care. Districts have some discretion in admitting non-eligible 3- and 4-year-olds if space is available. Districts may not use state funds to serve these non-eligible children. Four-year-old children whose family income is up to 150 percent of FPL are eligible to attend the preschool program. Also, children who have an identified disability may enroll on their third birthday or whenever they are identified.
Louisiana	Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program may enroll	185% FPL	All children	Not applicable	NA	Not Applicable	There is no state-specified income requirement for eligibility as all meeting age requirement may participate. Children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch attend free of charge, and enrollment priority is given to these children. Others may pay tuition or school districts cover costs. Preference is given to children qualifying for free or reduced price meals. All children in the district are eligible to attend.

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
								Charter schools allow participation using a lottery if more students apply than the school has allocated slots with which to serve them.
Louisiana	Louisiana 8(g) Student Enhancement Block Grant Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	No income requirement	No income requirement	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty; Locally determined risk factors	Determined locally	No income requirement	There is no state-specified income requirement for eligibility but stipulates that priority be given to children from low-income families. Districts that do not provide universal access are expected to use screening in the selection process. Beyond that, eligibility is determined by individual child and family characteristics.
Louisiana	Louisiana Non-Public Schools Early Childhood Development Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	200% FPL	All children	Not applicable	NA	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	
Maine	Maine Public Preschool Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	Some districts without universal capacity have a first come/first serve, lottery, or targeted program. In addition, districts in partnership with Head Start programs may have eligibility requirements for a certain ratio of enrolled children.
Maryland	Maryland Prekindergarten Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	All children	Child disability or developmental delay; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Child history of foster care	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	All children must first meet the income, homelessness, or foster care requirement to qualify for enrollment. Remaining vacancies may be filled by enrolling 4-year-old applicants who are not from low-income families but who exhibit a lack of readiness for school. Eligibility can be determined as noted above or by other criteria chosen by the local school system.
Massachusetts	Massachusetts	All age-eligible	85% SMI	All children	Not applicable	NA	Not	Any child may enroll in any program, but programs are

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
	ts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) and Grant 391	children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	(UPK); No income requirement (Grant 391)	receiving subsidy money (UPK); None (Grant 391)			Applicable	selected to receive UPK and 391 funding based on program characteristics and on the characteristics of the children in the program. The income requirement applies to all children in UPK receiving subsidy money, but not tuition-paying families. There is no income requirement for Grant 391. Although not used to determine eligibility at the state level, 391 programs may use some of the reported risk factors at the local level to prioritize the selection of eligible children without IEPs due to the high demand.
Michigan	Michigan Great Start Readiness Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	300% FPL	At least 75% in each grantee/agency	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty; Other state-specified risk factors	1 to 3	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	At least 75 percent of the children in each grantee's enrollment must meet the income requirement. There are eight factors that determine eligibility: extremely low family income (below 200 percent of FPL), low family income (between 200 and 300 percent of FPL), diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay, severe and challenging behavior, primary language other than English, parent(s) with low educational attainment, abuse/neglect of child or parent, and environmental risk. A state-determined prioritization process allows extremely low family income to automatically qualify a child, then low family income plus two risk factors, then low family income plus one risk factor, then family income above 300 percent of FPL plus two risk factors, with a cap of 25 percent of the total slots that can fall under this level.
Minnesota	Minnesota Head Start	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	100% FPL	At least 90% must meet income requirements, be receiving TANF, or be categorically eligible (homeless or in foster care)	Homelessness or unstable housing; Child history of foster care	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Effective as of 2007, 35 percent of enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at or below 100 percent FPL. Other criteria for eligibility include homeless families and foster children. Also, families may be income eligible if they qualify for child care services as a participant in Minnesota's TANF program. Reported risk factors may be considered in prioritizing applicants for enrollment in a limited number of enrollment slots.
Missouri	Missouri Preschool Project	All age-eligible children in districts	No income require	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	Eligibility is determined by age, with all other eligibility requirements, including income, determined locally. Programs are funded through a competitive process

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
		offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	ment					and receive extra points for serving children with special needs or from low-income families. If a district decides to enroll children who do not meet the income requirements, tuition may be charged using a sliding payment scale.
Nebraska	Nebraska Early Childhood Education Programs - Ages 3 to 5	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	70% of each program's grant funding must be used to serve children having at least one risk factor, only one of which is family income.	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; Non-English speaking family members; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	While all prekindergarten age-eligible children may be served in a school district early childhood program, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or the social, linguistic, or economic diversity of the children's families, funds are targeted to children with at least one risk factor. Some districts enroll all age-eligible children while others may use locally determined risk factors in addition to those specified by the state.
Nevada	Nevada State Pre-Kindergarten Education Program (PEP)	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	Districts receive extra points for serving children with special needs or from low-income families. Specific priorities for enrollment may be determined locally. Other eligibility requirements may include low-income status, English Language Learner, and homelessness.
New Jersey	New Jersey Former Abbott Preschool Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	The program is offered in the poor urban districts initially identified by the NJ Supreme Court in 1990 as having at least 40 percent of children who qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch and 5 additional districts designated by the Legislature. All 3- and 4-year-old children within those districts are eligible to participate. Kindergarten age-eligible children with an IEP that requires enrollment in a preschool program may enroll in the program but are funded through special education.
New Jersey	New Jersey Former Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	There are 94 districts required to offer the program. Only districts where 20 to 40 percent of children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch receive funding through this initiative. All 3- and 4-year old children within those districts are eligible to participate. However, the program is only open to 3-year-olds once the district has offered full day K to all age eligible children and either half- or full-day preschool

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
								to all 4-year-olds.
New Jersey	New Jersey Former Early Launch to Learning Initiative	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	All children, unless an exception is granted.	Locally determined risk factors	NA	Other	A district may make a case for establishing eligibility based on extenuating circumstances when submitting its annual plan. In addition to children needing to qualify for free- and reduced-price lunch and being a resident of the district, districts may allow for other students in unusual circumstances to be eligible for the program.
New Mexico	New Mexico PreK	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	All age-eligible children in locations offering the program are eligible. Funding priority is given to all age-eligible children who will attend Title I schools. At least 66 percent of children attending the program must live within an attendance zone of a Title I elementary school.
New York	New York Universal Prekindergarten	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	
North Carolina	NC Pre-Kindergarten Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	75% SMI	At least 80% of children	Child disability or developmental delay; Non-English speaking family members; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Parental active military duty; Chronic health condition and/or child has as IEP	1	80% must meet income requirement ; 20% may meet another risk factor	Twenty percent of a county's NC Pre-K slots allocation may be used to serve children above 75 percent of SMI if they have another designated risk factor.
Ohio	Ohio Early Childhood Education	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	200% FPL	All children except those with IEPs	Not applicable	NA	Not Applicable	Family income is the determining factor for this program. The program is free for families up to 100 percent FPL. Families between 101 and 200 percent FPL may pay a fee based on the district's sliding fee scale. Districts may offer services to children over 200 percent FPL, but those families pay full tuition.

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
Oklahoma	Oklahoma Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	
Oregon	Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	100% FPL	80% to 90% of children	Child disability or developmental delay; Locally determined risk factors	Locally determined risk factors determine priority for services	80-90% of children must meet income requirements	State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. After priority is given to families whose income is at 100 percent FPL or below, then up to 35 percent of children can be enrolled whose family income is between 100 percent FPL and 130 percent FPL. If grantee has both state pre-K and federal Head Start funds, 90 percent must meet the income requirements. If grantee has only state pre-K funding, 80 percent must meeting the income requirement. A minimum of 10 percent of total enrollment must include children with disabilities. Locally determined risk factors determine priority for services.
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Education Accountability Block Grant	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	No income requirement	No income requirement	Locally determined risk factors	Determined locally	No income requirement	Districts determine their own prioritization for services and eligibility requirements.
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	100% FPL	At least 90% of children	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty	Determined locally	Children must have the specified number of risk factors in addition to meeting the income cutoff	State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Effective as of December 2007, 35 percent of the enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at or below 100 percent FPL. In addition to income requirements, individual Head Start agencies determine eligibility requirements based on their community assessments and give priority based on multiple risk factors. Eligibility is based on federal Head Start income guidelines.

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds and School Based Pre-K	All children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll (K4); Eligibility may be determined by individual or family characteristics (SBPK)	No income requirement	None (K4); Determined locally (SBPK)	None (K4); Determined locally (SBPK)	None (K4); Determined locally (SBPK)	None (K4); Determined locally (SBPK)	
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	300% FPL	All children	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty	Determined locally	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Families must demonstrate income eligibility. The recommended priority is at or below 250 percent FPL, though families can enroll at or below 300 percent FPL.
Rhode Island	Rhode Island Pre-Kindergarten Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program may enroll. Children must reside in the district, town, or community in which the program is offered.
South Carolina	South Carolina Half-Day Child Development Program	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to	185% FPL	All children	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental	1 or more	Children must have the above number of risk factors in addition	

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
	(4K)	age			substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty		to meeting the income cutoff	
South Carolina	South Carolina Child Development Pilot Program (CDEPP)	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	All children	Child disability or developmental delay; Homelessness or unstable housing; Child receiving Medicaid services	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Income eligibility for Medicaid and/or free or reduced-price lunch is the primary criteria for eligibility. If classes are not full, developmental delay can be considered.
Tennessee	Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	All children as first priority for enrollment.	Locally determined risk factors (underserved or unserved children with no access to early childhood programs)	1 or more determined locally	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Income eligibility is always first priority for enrollment. The other locally determined risk factors are considered when space is available after serving income-eligible students. Tennessee has a three-tier eligibility system. Tier 1 includes children whose income would qualify them for free or reduced-price lunch as well as children who are homeless or in foster care. The second tier includes students with an IEP, a history of abuse or neglect, or who are English Language Learners. The third tier includes locally determined factors, which include (among other possibilities) parents with low education levels, parental substance abuse, risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten, teen parent, low birth weight or other health risk, or a parent on active military duty.
Texas	Texas Public School Prekindergarten	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	All children	Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty; Parent was injured or killed on active military duty	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	
Vermont	Vermont Prekindergarten	All age-eligible children in districts	No income require	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	Vermont's Act 62 PreK program is universal. School districts have the option to offer pre-K to only 4-year-olds. Approximately a half dozen supervisory unions

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
	Education - Act 62	offering the program, or the entire state, may enroll	ment					(LEAs) limit pre-K to 4-year-olds and do not serve 3-year-olds.
Vermont	Vermont Early Education Initiative	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	185% FPL	Low-income status is one possible eligibility criterion	Child disability or developmental delay; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Other state-specified risk factors, Geographic isolation	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	EEl is for "at-risk" children. At-risk is defined as low income (185% poverty), has developmental delays, is an English language learner, victim of abuse or neglect. At least one criterion is required, but not all must be low income.
Virginia	Virginia Preschool Initiative	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	No income requirement	No income requirement	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Parental active military duty	1	No income requirement	While allocations to local school divisions are made based on free lunch eligibility, enrollment criteria are based on locally determined risk factors. At least one risk factor is required. Additional risk factors may be determined locally.
Washington	Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	110% FPL	At least 90% of children.	Child disability or developmental delay; Low parental education level; History of abuse, neglect, or family violence; Homelessness or unstable housing; Non-English speaking family members; Parental substance abuse; Risk that child will not be ready for kindergarten; Teen parent; Low birth weight or other child health risk; Child history of foster care; Other: expulsion due to behavior; in kinship care; single parent; transferring from Head Start or Early Head Start; parent deployed to combat zone in last year; parent	1	Meeting the income cutoff can count as one of the risk factors	Income and other risk factors are weighted via a priority point system. Children with the highest points are enrolled into available slots. 4-year-olds have higher priority than 3-year-olds. 4-year-old children who are homeless, in foster care, or from families with very low FPL have the highest priority.

State	Program Name	Aside from age, how is eligibility determined for individual children for this state prekindergarten initiative?	What was the state-specified income requirement?	To whom does the income requirement apply?	Risk factors besides income that can be used to determine eligibility	How many of the specified risk factors must be present for eligibility?	How do these risk factors relate to the income cutoff for the state pre-K program?	If you have additional detail, please enter it in this textbox:
					incarcerated, mental illness; health care access; migrant			
West Virginia	West Virginia Universal Pre-K	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	All districts must offer universal pre-k for all 4-year-olds and 3-year-olds with disabilities.
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Program	All age-eligible children in districts offering the program, or in the entire state, may enroll	No income requirement	No income requirement	Not applicable	NA	No income requirement	Districts offering the 4K program must enroll all-age eligible children whose families wish them to attend.
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement	Eligibility is determined by individual child or family characteristics in addition to age	100% FPL	90% of children	Locally determined risk factors; Federal Head Start eligibility	Per federal Head Start requirements	Income is the first consideration	Children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Effective as of 2007, 35 percent of enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at or below 100 percent FPL. Income is the primary determinant of eligibility. However, children in foster care as well as those who are experiencing homelessness are also eligible. With a federal waiver, children eligible for free lunch are also eligible. Regulations also allow 10 percent of the children to be over-income and 10 percent with disabilities. Each Head Start grantee can prioritize risk in their selection process. Children with more risk factors have greater priority for enrollment.

Appendix B: Summary of Research on Eight Common Risk Factors for Pre-K Eligibility Policy

Risk Factor & Definition	Relevant Research
Highest Risk: Strongest Predictors of Negative Impact on Child Development and School Success	
<p>(1) Children of teen parents Mother was age 19 or younger at time of child's birth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small study of teen parents and their infants found that about 20 percent of the infants demonstrated developmental delays.⁴ • Finding also indicated that teen mothers may have difficulty in assessing the development of their children.⁵ • Children of teen mothers are more likely to both perform poorly on cognitive ability tests as well as be retained in a grade than are children of older mothers.⁶ • They also have lower reading, math, and PPVT scores.⁷ • Teen childbearing is highly correlated with lower economic well-being, particularly during the early childhood years of the child; this economic connection may be linked to increase risks for children of teen parents.⁸ • In the long term, children of teen mothers have higher rates of dropping out of high school, being incarcerated during adolescence, and becoming teen parents.⁹
<p>(2) Children in families in poverty or deep poverty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiencing poverty in early life can predict the extent of reduced cognitive scores for children.¹⁰

⁴ Ryan-Krause, P., Meadows-Oliver, M, Sadler, L., & Swartz, M.K. (2009). Developmental status of children of teen mothers: contrasting objective assessments with maternal reports. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 23(5), 303-309. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19720265>

⁵ Ryan-Krause, Meadows-Oliver, Sadler, & Swartz, 2009.

⁶ Daily, S., Welti, K., Forry, N., & Rothenberg, L. (2012). *Maryland early childhood risk and reach assessment*. Child Trends. from <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Maryland-Early-Childhood-Risk-and-Reach-Assessment.pdf>.

⁷ Levine, J.A., Pollack, H., & Comfort, M.E. (2001). Academic and behavioral outcomes among the children of young mothers. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63, 355-69.

⁸ Levine, Pollack, & Comfort, 2001

⁹ LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center. (2012). *Early childhood risk and reach in Louisiana*. LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center. Retrieved from: http://www.brightstartla.org/assets/files/TUL-15405_2012_Risk_Report_online_08162013.pdf

¹⁰ Najman, J.M., Hayatbakhsh, M.R., Heron, M.A., Bor, W., O'Callaghan, M.J., Williams, G.M. (2008). The impact of episodic and chronic poverty on child cognitive development. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 154(2), 284-9.

<p>“Poverty” defined as at or below 100% FPL “Deep” or “extreme” 50% FPL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from ECLS-B indicate that infants and toddlers from low-income families have lower scores on a cognitive assessment than do same age children from higher-income families.¹¹ • There is a strong relationship between poverty and the risk of “adverse child outcomes,” which includes low academic skills at the start of kindergarten.¹² • Data from ECLS-K of 1998-1999 indicate that poverty is negatively related to literacy development in Kindergarten and first grade as well as academic abilities more generally.¹³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just 19 percent of 8-year-olds in families with incomes become 200 percent FPL have age-appropriate cognitive skills; indicate that the impacts of low income extend beyond the federal poverty level.¹⁴
<p>(3) Children of mothers with low maternal education level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2012, 3- and 4-year-olds whose mothers had not graduated from high school were 1.75 times more likely than children whose mothers held a BA not to be enrolled in pre-K. Even children whose mothers had completed some college were unlikely to be enrolled in pre-K.¹⁵ • Research indicates that children of mothers with limited education experience lower levels of cognitive and socio-emotional functioning as well as lower academic achievement.¹⁶ • Mother’s education level and poverty are inherently intertwined. Among children whose mothers had not graduated from high school, families were 13 times more likely to be poor than those families where mothers had a bachelors degree. Half of children whose mothers had not graduated from high school were poor.¹⁷

¹¹ Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). *Disparities in early learning and development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Washington, DC: Child Trends

¹² Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

¹³ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

¹⁴ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *The first eight years: Giving kids a foundation for lifetime success*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-TheFirstEightYearsKCpolicyreport-2013.pdf>

¹⁵ Hernandez, D. J. & Napierala, J.S. (2014). Mother’s education and children’s outcomes: How dual-generation programs offer increased opportunities for American’s Families. *Disparities Among America’s Child*, 2. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

¹⁶ Hernandez & Napierala, 2014.

¹⁷ Hernandez & Napierala, 2014.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Infants and toddlers whose mothers have less than a high school degree score lower on the cognitive assessment than infants and toddlers whose mothers have a Bachelor’s degree or higher....The largest achievement gap exists between toddlers whose mothers have less than a high school education and those whose mothers have a Bachelor’s degree or higher.”¹⁸ • By the eighth grade, children whose parents did not graduate from high school were significantly less like than children whose parents had bachelors’ degrees to be rated as “proficient” on the NAEP exams in reading and math.¹⁹
High Risk for Negative Impact on Child Development and School Success; Greater Risk When Multiple Risk Factors Present	
<p>(4) Children in homeless families or experiencing housing instability/mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness: Families who are homeless, in shelter, or living in “doubled up” housing, as defined in McKinney-Vento and families. • Housing Instability/Mobility: Housing instability and frequent mobility can prove a particular challenge for families. Families can have frequent mobility for many reasons: frequently changing jobs, working seasonal jobs, or military families moving due to base changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies have indicated that homelessness can contribute to low cognitive development (Shinn et al., 2008), problems in classroom behavior, and poor reading and language skills.²⁰ • Homeless children are more likely to report having been retained in a grade when compared to never-homeless children. They are also more like to have high rates of absenteeism, often due to mobility. Homeless children’s spelling, reading, and math scores are often below grade level, across ages.²¹ • When compared to housed families, the negative effects of homelessness for families was compounded by parental mental illness, reflected in low levels of caregiver-child interactions as well as supports to caregivers.²² • Frequent moves and school changes can also negatively impact school readiness for children in other scenarios. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Residential mobility results in discontinuity in care and schooling, limited time to develop and frequent severing of relationships, increased

¹⁸ Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel, & Vick, 2009, 10

¹⁹ Hernandez & Napierala, 2014

²⁰ Alacla, N.L., Salehezadeh, Z., & Schumacher, K. (2013). *Oklahoma school readiness risk report 2013: Predictors in school readiness*. Oklahoma Department of Human Services Office of Planning, Research and Statistics. http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/CCBFBF37-317E-4313-854B-6D3C88532262/0/S13046_OklahomaSchoolReadinessRiskReport_oprs_04012013.pdf

²¹ Aratani, Y. (2009). *Homeless children and youth: Causes and consequences*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty. Retrieved from http://nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_888.pdf

²² Howard, K.S., Cartwright, S., & Barajas, R.G. (2009) Examining the impact of parental risk on family functioning among homeless and housed families. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 79(3), 326-335.

	<p>stress, reduction in feelings of ownership and property, disruptions in educational experiences, and inconsistent access to health care and social services.”²³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military families can face several difficulties in terms of child development, whether they move frequently around bases or have a family member deployed. When a parent is deployed, “[p]reschoolers may display regressive behavior, irritation, sadness, and aggressiveness and may have somatic complaints.”²⁴
<p>(5) Children/families with Department of Children and Family Services involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster/adoption: Children who are in, or have been in foster care, or are living in adoptive families. • Child abuse, etc.: Children from families which have active or past DCFS reports/investigations for abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1991, an estimated one-half to two-thirds of children in the foster care system demonstrated significant enough emotional or behavioral problems to warrant mental health care.²⁵ • Foster children are frequently seen to have severe academic delays when compared to same-age peers.²⁶ • Research indicates that foster children can meaningfully benefit from programs to reduce environmental stressors during out-of-home care, respond to developmental delays, and improve skills such as executive functioning and attention capacities.²⁷ • Research has indicated a strong link between poor academic outcomes and foster care placement.²⁸ • Brain development can be impaired by emotional and cognitive disruptions in early childhood.²⁹ Maltreatment can have physical, psychological, and cognitive impacts.³⁰ • Abuse and neglect can expose children to chronic stress, which is a risk factor for poor school

²³ American Psychological Association. (2010). *Moving repeatedly in childhood associated with poorer quality of life years later* [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2010/06/moving-well-being.aspx>

²⁴ Chanda, A., Burns, R.M., Tanielian, T., Jaycox, L.H., & Scott, M.M. (2008) *Understanding the impact of deployment on children and families: Findings from a pilot study of Operation Purple Camp participants*. RAND Corporation. Retrieved from http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR566.pdf

²⁵ Healey, C.V, & Fisher, P.A.. (2011) Young children in foster care and the development of favorable outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(10), 1822–1830.

²⁶ Cynthia, Healey, Philip, 2011

²⁷ Cynthia, Healey, Philip, 2011

²⁸ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

²⁹ Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption and Dependent Care. (2000). Developmental issues for young children in foster care. *Pediatrics* 106. Retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/106/5/1145.full.pdf+html>

³⁰ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

	<p>readiness and slowed brain development. The risks can continue into adulthood, include poor memory, shorter attention spans, and higher rates of dropping out of school than children who were not neglected or abused.³¹</p>
<p>(6) Children with disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those transitioning from Early Intervention (birth to three) to preschool or Early Childhood Special Education (three to five): Children with an IFSP or IEP; children with a vision or hearing disability • Children with disabilities not currently served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood education is one of the first opportunities many families have for a disability or developmental delay to be identified in a child. While some obvious disabilities are likely to be identified and addressed before school, many others are not as obvious or may not emerge in the years before a child starts school.³² • Early identification and intervention can help lessen the impact of communication and other disorders.³³ • Children with special needs can greatly benefit from early intervention. According to the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS), almost half of children who had received Early Intervention services and were at risk of needing special education services for kindergarten ultimately did not need these services in kindergarten and performed as well in reading and math as their peers.³⁴
<p>(7) Limited English Speaking Household and other families that experience significant barriers based on language No household member 14 years old and over speaks only English or speaks a non-English language and speaks English "very well."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research has found that children for whom English is not the home language have small cognitive effects at 9 months, and moderate to large effects at 24 months.³⁵ • While being exposed to a language beyond English can be greatly beneficial for children, a lack of English proficiency by kindergarten is linked to lower school success later.³⁶
<p>(8) Children of migrant or seasonal workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant: parent is a low-income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent moves, poverty, and language barriers each pose a challenge to education and early childhood envelopment. These characteristics can

³¹ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

³² Aron, L. & Loprest, P. (2012). Disability and the education system. *Children with Disabilities*, 22(1). Retrieved from http://www.futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/22_01_05.pdf

³³ Goode, S., Diefendorf, M. & Colgan, S. (2011). *The outcomes of early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families*. The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/pubs/outcomesofearlyintervention.pdf>

³⁴ Goode, Diefendorf, Colgan, 2011

³⁵ Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel, & Vick, 2009

³⁶ Figueras-Daniel, A., & Barnett, W.S. (2013). *Preparing young Hispanic dual language learners for a knowledge economy*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved from <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/Dual%20Language%20Learners.pdf>

migrant or seasonal farm worker	<p>compound the educational challenges faced by the children of migrant workers.³⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant families face a number of compounding challenges; “of all major groups in the nation, migrant workers are recognized as the most poorly educated.” In addition to poverty and language barriers, migrant children often lack continuity in their education and are often significantly behind other children in academic development.³⁸ • Residential mobility leads to discontinuity in schooling and care, and prevents children and families from developing relationships with those in their communities. It also leads to inconsistent access to health care and other social services.³⁹ • Because of a constellation of risk factors - linguistic isolation, mobility, low parent education level, low family income - children of migrant and seasonal workers experience many of the same risks detailed in the categories above.⁴⁰
---------------------------------	--

³⁷ Green, PE. (2010). The undocumented: Educating the children of migrant workers in America. *Bilingual Research Journal: The Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, 21(1), 51-71. http://ks-idr.org/resources/ems/educating_children_migrant.pdf

³⁸ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

³⁹ Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

⁴⁰ American Psychological Association. (2010). *Moving repeatedly in childhood associated with poorer quality of life years later* [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2010/06/moving-well-being.aspx>

ENDNOTES

- ⁱ Barnett, W. S. (2010). Universal and targeted approaches to preschool education in the United States. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*, 4(1), 1-12.
- ⁱⁱ Office of the Administration for Children and Families. (2015). *Age of children and family income § 1305.4 eligibility*. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/hspss/1305/1305.4%20Age%20of%20children%20and%20family%20income.htm>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Nores, M., & Barnett, W.S. (2014). *Access to high quality early care and education: Readiness and opportunity gaps in America* (CEELO Policy Report). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes.
- ^{iv} Nores & Barnett, 2014
- ^v Nores & Barnett, 2014
- ^{vi} Tennessee Department of Education. (n.d.). (2014). *Information for parents*. Retrieved from http://www.tn.gov/education/early_learning/pre-k_parents.shtml
- ^{vii} State of Michigan. (2010). *Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)*. Retrieved from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Risk_Factors_230731_7.pdf
- ^{viii} Texas Education Agency. (n.d.). *Eligibility for prekindergarten*. Retrieved from <http://tea.texas.gov/ece/eligibility.aspx>
- ^{ix} South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. (2010). *2009-10 Implementation & expansion of the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP): Evaluation report*. Columbia, SC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/archives/EducationOversightComm/CDEPPReport1-12-10.pdf>
- ^x Ryan-Krause, P., Meadows-Oliver, M, Sadler, L., & Swartz, M.K. (2009). Developmental status of children of teen mothers: Contrasting objective assessments with maternal reports. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 23(5):303-9. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19720265>
- ^{xi} Daily, S., Welti, K., Forry, N., & Rothenberg, L. (2012). *Maryland early childhood risk and reach assessment*. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Maryland-Early-Childhood-Risk-and-Reach-Assessment.pdf>
- ^{xii} Levine, J.A., Pollack, H., & Comfort, M.E. (2001). Academic and behavioral outcomes among the children of young mothers. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63: 355-69.
- ^{xiii} Levine, Pollack, & Comfort, 2001.

- ^{xiv} LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center. (2012). *Early childhood risk and reach in Louisiana*. LSU/Tulane Early Childhood Policy and Data Center. Retrieved from http://www.brightstartla.org/assets/files/TUL-15405_2012_Risk_Report_online_08162013.pdf.
- ^{xv} Najman, J.M., Hayatbakhsh, M.R., Heron, M.A., Bor, W., O'Callaghan, M.J., Williams, G.M. (2008). The impact of episodic and chronic poverty on child cognitive development. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 154(2), 284-9.
- ^{xvi} Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). *Disparities in early learning and development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.
- ^{xvii} Lazarte-Alacla, N., Salehezadeh, Z., & Schumacher, K. (2013). *Oklahoma school readiness risk report 2013: Predictors in school readiness*. Oklahoma Department of Human Services Office of Planning, Research and Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/CCBFBF37-317E-4313-854B-6D3C88532262/0/S13046_OklahomaSchoolReadinessRiskReport_oprs_04012013.pdf
- ^{xviii} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013.
- ^{xix} Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2013). *The first eight years: Giving kids a foundation for lifetime success*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-TheFirstEightYearsKCpolicyreport-2013.pdf>
- ^{xx} Hernandez, D. J. & Napierala, J.S. (2014). Mother's education and children's outcomes: *How dual-generation programs offer increased opportunities for American's families*. (Disparities Among Americas Child, Issue 2). New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.
- ^{xxi} Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel, & Vick, 2009, p. 10
- ^{xxii} Hernandez & Napierala, 2014.
- ^{xxiii} Hernandez & Napierala, 2014.
- ^{xxiv} Hernandez & Napierala, 2014.
- ^{xxv} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013
- ^{xxvi} Aratani, Y. (2009). *Homeless children and youth: Causes and consequences*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty. Retrieved from http://nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_888.pdf
- ^{xxvii} Howard, K.S., Cartwright, S., & Barajas, R.G. (2009). Examining the impact of parental risk on family functioning among homeless and housed families. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 79(3), 326-35.
- ^{xxviii} American Psychological Association. (2010). *Moving repeatedly in childhood associated with poorer quality of life years later* [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2010/06/moving-well-being.aspx>

^{xxix} Chanda, A., Burns, R.M., Tanielian, T., Jaycox, L.H., & Scott, M.M. (2008). *Understanding the impact of deployment on children and families: Findings from a pilot study of Operation Purple Camp participants*. RAND Corporation. Retrieved from:

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR566.pdf

^{xxx} Healey, C.V. & Fisher, P.A. (2011) Young children in foster care and the development of favorable outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(10), 1822–30.

^{xxxi} Healey & Fisher, 2011.

^{xxxii} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

^{xxxiii} Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption and Dependent Care. (2000). Developmental Issues for Young Children in Foster Care. *Pediatrics*, 106.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/106/5/1145.full.pdf+html>

^{xxxiv} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

^{xxxv} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013

^{xxxvi} Thompson, R.A., & Haskins, R. (2014). Early stress gets under the skin: Promising initiatives to help children facing chronic adversity. *The Future of Children*, 24(1), 1-8. Retrieved from

http://futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/24_01_Policy_Brief.pdf

^{xxxvii} Carta, J. (2014.). *What do we know about school readiness for young children with disabilities?* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from

http://ies.ed.gov/director/conferences/09ies_conference/ppt/carta.ppt

^{xxxviii} Goode, Diefendorf, Colgan, 2011

^{xxxix} Aron, L. & Loprest, P. (2012). Disability and the Education System. *Children with Disabilities*, 22(1).

Retrieved from http://www.futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/22_01_05.pdf

^{xl} Goode, S., Diefendorf, M. & Colgan, S. (2011). *The outcomes of early intervention for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families*. The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center.

Retrieved from <http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/pubs/outcomesofearlyintervention.pdf>

^{xli} Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel, & Vick, 2009

^{xlii} Figueras-Daniel, A., & Barnett, W.S. (2013). *Preparing young hispanic dual language learners for a knowledge economy*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Retrieved from

<http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/Dual%20Language%20Learners.pdf>

-
- ^{xliii} Green, PE. (2010). The undocumented: Educating the children of migrant workers in America. *Bilingual Research Journal: The Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, 21(1), 51-71. Retrieved from http://ks-idr.org/resources/ems/educating_children_migrant.pdf
- ^{xliiv} Lazarte-Alacla, Salehezadeh, & Schumacher, 2013
- ^{xlv} American Psychological Association, 2010
- ^{xlvi} Boss, J. (2014). *Migrant Head Start services for infants and toddlers*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/families-parent%20involvement/support%20for%20home%20culture%20and%20diversity/edudev_art_00213_072505.html
- ^{xlvii} National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- ^{xlviii} Halle, Forry, Hair, Perper, Wandner, Wessel, & Vick, 2009, 14
- ^{xlix} Bernstein, S., West, J., Newsham, R., & Reid, M. (2014). *Kindergartners' skills at school entry: An analysis of the ECLS-K*. New York, NY: Mathematica Policy Research. Retrieved from http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/earlychildhood/kindergarten_skills_school_entry.pdf
- ^l Barnett, W.S. & Carolan, M.E. (2014). *Facts about fadeout: The research base on long-term impacts of high quality pre-K* (CEELO FastFact). New Brunswick, NJ: Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes. Retrieved from http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/ceelo_fast_fact_fadeout.pdf
- ^{li} Reid, J. (2011). Socio-economic diversity and early learning: The missing link in policy for high quality preschools. In R.D. Kahlenberg (Ed.), *The future of school integration: Socioeconomic diversity as an education reform strategy*. Retrieved from <http://tcf.org/assets/downloads/tcf-earlylearning.pdf>
- ^{lii} Horton, C. (2003). *Protective factors literature review: Early care and education programs and the prevention of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources/body/LiteratureReview.pdf>; Anderson Moore, K., Chalk, R., Scarpa, J., & Vandivere, S. (2002). *Family strengths: Often overlooked, but real*. Washington, DC: Child Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2002/08/Overlooked-Family-Strengths.pdf>