

# Federal and State Efforts to Improve Coordination and Collaboration

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## Florida State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care

**Description:** The State Advisory Council will lead the development of a high quality, comprehensive system of early childhood education and care that ensures statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide array of early childhood programs and services in the State, including Head Start, child care and prekindergarten programs and services. The State Advisory Council serves as an advisory council to the established Florida Children and Youth Cabinet.

**Funding:** \$4.9 million (3-year American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding)

**Goals:** Through partnership across agencies and organizations that work on behalf of young children and their families, the goal of the Advisory Council is that at the end of three years, Florida will have a stronger, more responsive, and more integrated early childhood system. Children and families will receive more coordinated, responsive services and funding will support these priorities.

## Florida Head Start Collaboration Office

**Description:** Head Start is the nation's leading investment in early care and education. Head Start provides a range of comprehensive education, health, nutrition, parent involvement, and family support services and has primarily served at-risk children and their families since 1965.

**Funding:** \$89.9 million

**Goals:** The Head Start Act of 2007 identifies the following ten priority areas for Head Start State Collaboration Offices:

- **Child Care:** Coordination with state CCR&R agencies to make full working day and full calendar year services available to children.
- **Health:** Promotion of access to health care including general health, oral health, mental health, and nutrition services.
- **Child Welfare:** Coordination with child welfare services including children in foster care and child protective services; promotion of parent engagement goals towards self-sufficiency; implementing strengthening families initiative and facilitating linkages with home visiting programs.
- **Disabilities:** Increase opportunities for the inclusion of children with disabilities in Head Start.
- **Community Services:** Promotion of partnerships between Head Start agencies, schools, law enforcement, community-based organizations, and substance abuse and mental health treatment agencies to enable effective outreach efforts to Head Start.
- **Homelessness:** Support access to services for children and families experiencing homelessness.
- **Family Literacy:** Promotion of state and local literacy services including, Even Start Family Literacy Project.
- **Education:** Promotion of expanded partnerships with local education agencies and state pre-kindergarten programs including the facilitation of the alignment of curricula and assessments used by Head Start agencies with the state early learning standards and kindergarten curricula; appropriate curricula for limited English proficient children and transitions to kindergarten.
- **Welfare:** Collaboration with welfare systems including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and other public assistance services.
- **Professional Development:** Support for Head Start grantees in accessing professional development opportunities for staff to meet the Head Start degree requirements.

## Military Child Care Liaison Initiative

**Description:** This initiative is a two-year U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) funded pilot program to expand the availability of quality, affordable community-based child care for military families in 13 states.

**Funding:**

**Goals:** Improve the awareness and availability of quality child care that improves child outcomes by utilizing existing local, state and federal resources.

- Link state efforts for community-based child care programs with DoD quality standards. Through collaboration and coordination, the project anticipates: Improved child care options for military families and improved child care options for all families.
- A number of DoD standards and planned Florida improvements are already in alignment.