

including care by other relatives (24 percent), non-relatives (17 percent), or center-based programs (34 percent), including Head Start (6 percent). Children between the ages of 3 and 5 are more likely than children younger than 3 to be cared for in a center-based program, such as child care and Head Start. Children under the age of 3 are more likely to be in the care of a parent than are children older than 3.

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. It is significant that nearly 40 percent of young children are cared for primarily by a parent. The Bush Administration believes it is important to support parents and families in their most important task in life – raising their children – through several means, including providing them information about early childhood development.

## **Funding for Early Childhood Care and Education**

Because a significant number of young children are cared for outside the home and by people other than their parents, Federal and State governments provide resources for families, particularly low-income families, to purchase non-parental care. Combined Federal and State funding provides more than \$18 billion to support care for young children, ranging from home-based care to care in center-based programs such as public pre-kindergarten (pre-k) programs and Head Start. The Federal government alone spends more than \$14 billion on these services in addition to programs that provide for the health and well-being of children and families. Major programs include:

### ***Programs administered through the Department of Health and Human Services***

#### **Head Start**

Head Start provides grants to local public and private agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to children and families. Intended primarily for preschoolers from low-income families, Head Start promotes school readiness for approximately 915,000 children. Head Start children also receive comprehensive health services, including immunizations, physical and dental exams and treatment, and nutritional services. The average Head Start program provides part-day services for eight or nine months out of the year at an average cost of \$6,800 per child. An estimated 225,000 children, however, are being served in full-day, full-year programs to help meet the child care needs of parents who are either working or in job training. In FY 2002, Head Start is funded at \$6.5 billion.

#### **Early Head Start**

Early Head Start's mission is to promote healthy prenatal care for pregnant women, enhance the development of very young children, and promote healthy families. Since its inception in 1994, it has grown to a nationwide effort of 635 community-based programs serving 62,000 children. In FY2002, Early Head Start is funded at \$621 million out of the Head Start budget.

#### **Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)**

CCDF provides funding to States for child care, the majority of which is spent on care for children age of 5 or younger. At least 4 percent of these funds must be spent on improving the quality of care. About 75 percent of CCDF funds are distributed through certificates or vouchers

which parents can use to obtain child care services in a variety of settings. In 2000, for example, 56 percent of children being served under CCDF were cared for in a child care center, 31 percent were in family child care homes, 4 percent were in group homes, and 9 percent were cared for in the child's own home. In FY 2002, CCDF is funded at \$4.8 billion.

### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

In 2000, States spent nearly \$4 billion of TANF funds on child care. Under the President's welfare reform proposal, States would continue to have flexibility to transfer up to 30 percent of TANF funds to CCDF and to spend additional TANF dollars directly for child care.

### **Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)**

SSBG funds a broad range of social services and is another significant Federal funding source for child care. In 2000, 43 States reported spending \$165 million in SSBG funds for child care, accounting for 9 percent of the total \$1.77 billion in SSBG expenditures that year.

### ***Programs administered through the Department of Education***

#### **Title I-supported Preschool Programs**

Many school districts support preschool programs with their Title I (Education for the Disadvantaged) funds. In FY 2002, the Department of Education estimates that about 2-3 percent of Title I funds, or approximately \$200 million, is used for this purpose. Title I preschool programs help more than 300,000 children in high-poverty communities enter kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed in school.

#### **Early Reading First**

This program, established in the *No Child Left Behind Act*, provides competitive grants to school districts and pre-school programs, such as Head Start centers. The grants fund the development of model programs to support the school readiness of preschool-aged children, particularly those from low-income families. Program activities will prepare teachers to provide high-quality language, literacy, and pre-reading activities, using scientifically based research to support children's understanding of letters, letter sounds and the blending of sounds and words. Through the use of an increasingly complex and rich spoken vocabulary, developed in part through teacher-read stories, children will begin to build a strong foundation for learning to read. In FY 2002, Early Reading First is funded at \$75 million.

#### **Even Start**

This program supports projects that provide educational services to low-income families, including parents eligible for services under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and their children from birth through age 7. The program improves the educational opportunities of children and their parents in low-income areas by integrating early childhood education, adult education, parenting education, and interactive literacy activities between parents and their children into "family literacy" programs. Even Start serves approximately 27,000 children under 5 years old. In FY 2002, Even Start is funded at \$250 million.

### **Special Education Preschool Grants and State Grants**

The Special Education Preschool program, along with 6 percent of Special Education State grants, provides formula grants to States to make available special education and related services for 3- to 5-year-old children with disabilities. It supports early childhood programs that provide services needed to prepare young children with disabilities to enter and succeed in school. The Preschool Grants program provides a developmental bridge between early intervention services and elementary school. In FY 2002, Special Education Preschool Grants and State Grants provide approximately \$500 million for early childhood services.

### **Special Education Grants for Infants and Families**

This formula grant program assists States in implementing a coordinated statewide system of early intervention services to all children with disabilities, from birth through 2 years old, and their families. In FY 2002, Special Education Grants for Infants and Toddlers are funded at \$51 million.

### **The Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program**

This competitive grant program enables early childhood educators and caregivers working in high-poverty communities to participate in professional development activities that improve their knowledge and skills. The professional development activities focus on furthering children's language and literacy skills to help set them on the road to reading proficiency once they enter kindergarten. In FY 2002, the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program is funded at \$15 million.

### ***Research Programs***

#### **The National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education**

This Institute supports work to identify, develop, evaluate, and assist others in replicating methods and approaches that improve children's early development and education. It supports research regarding the social and educational development of infants, toddlers, and preschool children, and the preparation of personnel for early childhood programs.

#### **Early Childhood Longitudinal Study**

This interagency study, spearheaded by the Department of Education, has two components: it chronicles the physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development of a large sample of children from birth to age 6 and will follow another sample of children from kindergarten through fifth grade. These studies will provide researchers, policy makers, and parents with information on child development policies and practices.

### **Meeting Early Childhood Needs**

Between Federal and State funding for early childhood care, most families are able to provide care for their young children before they start school. Over the past decade, Federal funds specifically appropriated for child care have tripled. Funding from the CCDF, TANF, and SSBG alone will provide child care assistance to an estimated 2.7 million children per month, the majority of whom are under the age of 6. This funding is expected to provide care for 72 percent