Early Head Start-child care partnerships provide coordinated, high quality, comprehensive services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families.
**Inputs**

- **Child Care Partners**
  - Child care partner type (family child care or center), size, and regulatory status
  - Hours of operation
  - Age range of children served; ability to care for sibling groups
  - Child care partner experience and staff credentials
  - Motivation to partner and readiness to change
  - Attitudes toward experience with collaboration
  - Openness to complying with the HSPPS
  - Participation in QRIS or other QI initiatives

- **Families**
  - Socioeconomic and demographic characteristics
  - Child care needs and preferences (family configuration, work schedules, transportation, culture, language)
  - Motivation to participate in partnership programs
  - Eligibility for EHS and CCDF subsidies

- **Systems Partners**
  - Policies, regulations, and standards (HSPPS, child care licensing, QRIS, other state initiatives)
  - Funding (EHS grant funds, CCDF subsidies, other sources)
  - QI supports (Head Start and OCC T/TA, QRIS, CCDF quality set aside, accreditation, other initiatives)
  - Professional development (community colleges and other institutions of higher education)

**Activities**

- **Child Care Partners**
  - Partnership grantees actively recruit partners and child care providers express interest in partnering
  - Partners jointly:
    - Discuss and clarify partnership expectations
    - Develop partnership agreements (contract, MOU), including funding arrangements

- **Families**
  - Enroll in EHS and child care subsidy program
  - Communicate child care needs and preferences and select child care arrangements
  - Develop and implement family partnership agreements
  - Maintain communication with partnership programs for continuity of care and smooth transitions for children

- **Systems Partners**
  - Identify rule misalignment challenges and consider rule accommodations to support partnerships
  - Coordinate with partners to provide QI and professional development

---

**Abbreviations**

- CCDF = Child Care & Development Fund
- EHS = Early Head Start
- HSPPS = Head Start Program Performance Standards
- MOU = Memorandum of Understanding
- OCC = Office of Child Care
- QI = Quality Improvement
- QRIS = Quality Rating & Improvement System
- T/TA = Training & Technical Assistance
### Short-Term Outcomes (within two years)

- Enhanced capacity to offer high quality service options that meet families’ needs
- Organizational leadership that values and supports EHS-child care partnerships
- Staff attitudes that value each partner’s contribution to the partnership
- Improved staff competencies to develop mutually respectful and collaborative partnerships, provide effective QI support, and provide developmentally appropriate infant-toddler care
- Improved quality of infant-toddler care and compliance with HSPPS
- Reduced isolation; increased membership in professional networks of infant-toddler service providers
- Increased professionalism and staff credentials
- Increased financial stability for partners

### Families

- Stable access to high quality care and comprehensive services that meet families’ needs
- Continuity of caregiving across settings where children receive care
- Parents more likely to be employed or in school
- Parents more involved in children’s early learning

### Systems Partners (National, State, Local)

- Rule accommodations are implemented as needed to align requirements and stabilize funding
- QI and professional development supports are aligned to address needs of the partnerships

### Long-Term Outcomes (two years or longer)

- Sustained, mutually respectful, and collaborative EHS-child care partnerships in place
- Increased community supply of high-quality infant-toddler care
- Improved family well-being
- Improved child well-being and school readiness
- Well-aligned infant-toddler policies, regulations, and QI supports at the national, state, and local levels

### Organizational Factors (partnership programs)

- Years of operation and staff stability
- Organizational culture and leadership promoting the partnerships
- Shared goals, relationship quality, and mutual respect between partners
- Systems to support continuous QI

### Contextual Factors

- Local: Type and supply of infant-toddler child care for low-income families
- State: Supports for QI (QRIS, CCDF quality dollars, etc.); policy environment
- National: Initiatives such as Head Start Designation Renewal System, President’s Early Learning Initiative, Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge