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**MATHEMATICA**  
Policy Research, Inc.

**Design Options for  
the Assessment of  
Head Start Quality  
Enhancements**

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highest percentage of children eligible by the public assistance criterion were from programs in the Northeast and North Central regional groups and from American Indian/Alaska Native programs; in general, however, the regional groups differed little in enrollment by eligibility status. Migrant/Seasonal programs served the highest number of children who met the federal poverty income guidelines.

The majority of children in Head Start were four-year-olds (56 percent during the 2002-2003 program year), and more than one-third (36 percent) were three-year-olds (see Table II.6). This age distribution was similar in all regions except Migrant/Seasonal programs, which serve a somewhat more even distribution of children across the age range from birth to six years.

Seventy percent of the children enrolled in Head Start programs were in their first year of Head Start, and 28 percent were enrolled for a second year (see Table II.6). The composition of children according to the number of years in Head Start was fairly consistent across the geographic regions, but the Migrant/Seasonal programs, which traditionally serve infants, toddlers and preschool-age children, served a substantial percentage of children (14 percent) for a third year or longer.

**Table II.6. Percentage of Children Enrolled in Head Start, by Age and Years of Enrollment, 2002-2003 Program Year**

Characteristic	All	Northeast (Regions 1, 2, and 3)	South (Regions 4 and 6)	North Central (Region 5)	Mountain and Plains (Regions 7 and 8)	West (Regions 9 and 10)	Migrant and Seasonal Programs	American Indian and Alaska Native Programs
<b>Age</b>								
Younger than one year	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
One year	1	0	0	0	0	0	15	0
Two years	1	1	0	2	1	1	18	1
Three years	36	36	39	38	38	32	23	37
Four years	56	58	57	53	58	64	21	49
Five years	5	5	4	7	3	4	11	14
<b>Years in Head Start</b>								
One	70	70	70	68	72	75	58	62
Two	28	28	30	30	27	24	28	34
Three or more	2	2	1	2	2	2	14	4

Source: Calculations based on 2002-2003 Head Start PIR data submitted by 1,969 Head Start programs and processed by Xtria, LLC, on February 12, 2004. Early Head Start programs were excluded from these calculations.









































































































































































































































































































































































































































































































