

WE ♥ HEAD START!



Families & children across the country have experienced the power of Head Start & Early Head Start. These are some of their stories.





Dear Lawmaker,

Our child care system has been in crisis for decades, continuing to be unaffordable and unattainable for too many families. It is critical to fund, support and protect child care access, especially in the face of looming cuts and threats to child care programs. This is why it is so important to support the Head Start and Early Head Start Program. The importance of Head Start and Early Head Start cannot be understated. It has been the most important social and educational investment in children, families, and communities the United States has ever undertaken.

The Head Start program, which turned 60 this past May, was launched in 1965 as a comprehensive child development program. Over the last six decades it has provided opportunity and care to more than 38 million children and their families.

Research tells us that Early Head Start and Head Start work. Early Head Start children show significantly better social-emotional, language, and cognitive development. Children who attend Early Head Start and transition to Head Start are more ready for kindergarten than children who do not attend Head Start. Children that participate in Head Start programs receive innumerable benefits. These advantages appear immediately, last a lifetime, and even have a positive, long-term effect on future generations.

Not only does this program provide children with the opportunities to thrive in school and in life, it is an economic boon to all of us when families have access to affordable child care—and parents can get to school and work, as well as contribute to their communities. We already know the challenges a lack of child care has had on the ability of parents, especially moms, to work.

It's important for our elected leaders to make investments in and safeguard Head Start and Early Head Start so all kids can continue to have access to high-quality, affordable early learning experiences. Please support our littlest learners, their families, and our economy by protecting this vital program!

Sincerely,

S. Nadia Hussain

Senior Campaign Director

MomsRising | MamásConPoder

STORIES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

ALABAMA

Head Start works!! Hands off the babies. As a former Head Start parent, why hurt the families who already are struggling. Moms need to work, children need quality services, and the people who work there need their livelihood!! Why destroy what is working!!

– Diane, Birmingham, AL

My daughter is a Head Start teacher and I have volunteered in her classroom. These children are fed, loved and nurtured in addition to being prepared for Kindergarten.

– Cathy, Hayden, AL

ALASKA

I began as a parent in 1973, when my first child was in Head Start and I became a University of Washington graduate. My life as a parent was on an Island in Alaska.

My second child, born 1980, was when my tribal community was looking for a new director for their Head Start program. I applied and the doors opened for me as a Head Start Director. Was trained along with others under NIHSDA region XI and became a true believer that Head Start has success with not only children but families!

My youngest graduated from Oregon, started as a teacher for Head Start and continued her education in Early childhood now is and still continues the Cultural manager for Region XI program in our state of Alaska.

Many of the graduates from my tribe in Head Start are now successful future leaders in the fields they chose with the guidance of their parents! That is success and now my grandchildren who went to Head Start are as successful as their parents and grandparents.

My story can go on forever with successful families and



how Head Start works. Why lose or change successful federal programs when the outcomes are positive success stories! Keep our Head Start doors open and continue working with children and families.

– Theodora, Anchorage, AK

Almost one year ago, our great-niece came into our home after the heartbreaking loss of her grandmother—the woman who had been her safe place and protector. In those first few months, we focused on giving her love, stability, and a sense of home. Then, a few months later, she was accepted into Head Start.

Now, nine months have passed, and we've seen such incredible growth in her. Thanks to Head Start, she's blossomed—especially in her social and emotional development. She's more confident, expressive, and connected. She has friends, routines, and a safe,

nurturing environment that supports her every day.

One of the things we love most is how Head Start incorporates culture into everything they do. They honor our traditions, values, and identity in a way that makes our niece feel proud of who she is. And it's not just a few people—it's every single staff member. They all give their best, showing up each day with kindness, patience, and heart.

Head Start has been a blessing not just for our niece, but for our whole family. It's more than a program—it's a place of healing, growth, and connection. We're so thankful.

– Vicky, Fairbanks, AK

ARIZONA

My 2-year-old granddaughter just started Head Start. She is thriving. She will learn faster to help develop her to be a model citizen. Please fight for Head Start funding.

– Joe, Phoenix, AZ

There was a time in my life when I didn't think I had a future, when addiction had taken over and hope felt far away. But when my son started Head Start, everything began to change. The teachers and staff didn't judge me, they encouraged me. They saw potential in me that I couldn't yet see in myself.

Head Start wasn't just a place for my son to learn—it was a place where I started to heal. I was inspired to volunteer, to show up for him, and to believe I could do better. Their support helped me take the first steps toward becoming the mother he deserved.

Now, years later, I'm proud to say that I'm a proud Head Start teacher, working toward my degree, doing what I love every day—helping children grow and believe in themselves the same way someone once believed in me. And my son? He's thriving in high school, chasing his dreams, and is an amazing person and basketball player. I will always be grateful to Head Start. They didn't just change my son's life. They helped save mine.

– Elizabeth, Sierra Vista, AZ

"Almost one year ago, our great-niece came into our home after the heartbreaking loss of her grandmother—the woman who had been her safe place and protector... a few months later, she was accepted into Head Start... Thanks to Head Start, she's blossomed—especially in her social and emotional development."

– Vicky, Fairbanks, AK

My grandson, a 5 year old COVID baby born in 2020, just started at Head Start. His learning deficits, as a result of not being able to participate in local childhood community based programs during COVID, qualified him now in a special education program focused on bringing his academic skills up to kindergarten. This, combined with Head Start, is helping him both socially and academically. Please don't give up on this sweet boy. Do not take away his opportunities.

– Regina, Tucson AZ

ARKANSAS

I provided speech/language therapy services for many years. It's a wonderful, well run program. It would be devastating to so many preschoolers!

– Jana, Bismarck, AR



**Launched in 1965,
Head Start is the most
important social and
educational program for
kids, families, and
communities the U.S.
has ever had!**

The earlier you work with a child in their youth you will get results. I have adopted a Head Start class, reading, snacks, etc. Head Start is a prevention also some parents work and cannot help the children with their educational and development needs.

I have one case where a child was not talking. The teacher at Head Start picked up on it and the parent had the child's ears checked. The baby could not hear 85% blockage now the child is taking speech therapy, thank God the year old is talking. Head Start teaches social skills; this is a well needed program.

– Sheila, Blytheville, AR

Myself, along with my older and younger siblings were taught how to read and write and socialize with our peers in Head Start. This gave us the opportunity to learn how to speak the letters we wrote on lined paper and how to put those letters together to make into sentences and to

articulate those sentences to ourselves and others.

This gave us the insight and knowledge to comprehend and show others, especially our parents, that we could go out into the world, especially the sand box, with confidence. Giving us the determination to not depend on one another with every day tasks and situations that may come about from our everyday living.

More importantly, I believe most people still remember their Head Start teacher's name and hold them at a higher standard because of the way they show patience and compassion to us at a young age. Giving us high fives, whenever possible, so early in the mornings or afternoons as we go into their classrooms and cross their fingers when we leave the school grounds. God bless all Head Start teachers!

– Corina, Sherwood, AR

CALIFORNIA

I am a past parent of Head Start. I have been a Head Start Educator for 23 years. When my own children were in Head Start I had just left my abusive relationship. I had not worked in 15 years. I had to seek government assistance. If not for Head Start I would not have been able to earn a degree in early childhood education. As a Head Start Educator for the past 23 years I have seen the impact that Head Start has made on so many families. We not only give children a Head Start on their education, we educate parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and caregivers about the importance of preparing children to enter into the public school system. We educate them on the importance of health care, dental care, and proper nutrition!! Our children and families need Head Start!!

– Roselene, Le Grand, CA

I started my Head Start journey with my two older children. They both attended Head Start and that was the best thing that happened to them. I then began working with Head Start as a homebase educator and worked with homebase Head Start for 30 years. I now serve low income, children and migrant workers because one of my long-term goals was to open a daycare.

– Dianna, Lemoore, CA

I worked for an Early Head Start program for 11 years. Any funding that goes to strengthen and support families with young children is the best possible investment in our country's future.

– Ivy, Los Angeles, CA

My Chinese adopted daughter is autistic, and when she was little, we had the Head Start program. It was great and made a big difference.

– Cory, Newhall, CA

Without an amazing team my son that attends Head Start wouldn't have gotten early intervention services and started his IEP.

– Anonymous, Oakland, CA

COLORADO

We LOVE Head Start. It has positively impacted my niece's family directly, and we are incredibly grateful. My nephew is learning so much, socially, emotionally, and academically, and he absolutely loves going to school.

My niece is learning how to be a partner in her son's education, and has been empowered to advocate for him. Head Start makes a difference in the lives of children and families. Head Start is critical if we are to break patterns of trauma and poverty – it opens doors for a brighter future. KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF HEAD START!

– Lisa, Castle Pines, CO

My granddaughter attends a Head Start program in Durango, CO. She is learning so much! The discounted rate made it possible for her to attend and enabled my daughter in law to go back to work.

– Anonymous, Montrose, CO

My family joined the Head Start family in 1984, when my son started Preschool. When we moved to Grand Junction, CO, I began volunteering in the classroom. I was offered a part time sub job. I began CDA classes with Head Start and became a teacher aid upon completing my CDA.

"Without an amazing team my son that attends Head Start wouldn't have gotten early intervention services and started his IEP."

– Anonymous, Oakland, CA

I moved up to Lead Teacher and still work in Head Start. My children went to Head Start classes and today are successful members of the community.

Pharmaceutical nurse, research nurse, medical office manager, Housing manager, and Children and Family coach. Head Start did change our lives for the better, 1984 to present!

– Karen, Grand Junction, CO

CONNECTICUT

I was a Head Start school nurse for several years. I was very impressed with the program, and I could see what a difference it made for both children and parents!

– Sarah, Hamden, CT

As a mother of a child who will be attending Head Start this fall while I complete an internship as part of the requirements for my graduate program, I value the opportunity for my daughter to attend a NAEYC program where she will continue to build on skills vital for her success in the school setting.

Many families rely on Head Start to be able to afford a safe place for their child to learn and grow. Budget cuts to Head Start would be detrimental to low income families like myself who heavily rely on this resource to get themselves ahead.

– **Amanda, Norwich, CT**

DELAWARE

My great granddaughter is in Head Start. She has learning disabilities and she could barely speak. She started using whole sentences because of Head Start.

– **Anonymous, Millsboro, DE**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

I have been privileged to observe, advise and train Head Start staff across the country through ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Their Families. I have consulted with Head Start for homeless children and families.

Head Start is so important to children, from birth to school age. To cut funding on a program with such proven success with the neediest of families will take us back to the days of “pull yourself up by your bootstraps.” Families need communities and Head Start provides that.

– **Annie, Washington DC**

FLORIDA

I’m a proud alum of Head Start and College Graduate of Florida A&M University. I currently work for Head Start in my community as an Early Learning Specialist. Head Start is connected to so many local community agencies and it works. We do so much good for our families nationwide and locally.

– **Meredith, Bradenton, FL**

I am a Head Start Teacher with a BS degree in early childhood education. I have been involved in this

“I have been involved in this program for forty-nine years, as a parent, policy council member, center chairperson and employee. I know Head Start works because I have several parents come back to tell me how I made a difference in their lives. ”

– Cheryl, Jacksonville, FL

program for forty-nine years, as a parent, policy council member, center chairperson and employee. I know Head Start works because I have several parents come back to tell me how I made a difference in their lives. Teachers at various schools we visited tell how well they are doing and can tell they were in a Head Start program.

When I follow them from kindergarten through high-school and college. When I now teach their children, when they find out that I am still teaching and want their children or grandkids in my class. I know we as educators in Head Start makes a difference. We need Head Start to continue for years to come. The pay is not where it should be but we still give our best to our children daily.

– **Cheryl, Jacksonville, FL**

I am a disabilities specialist in Head Start in Florida. My job is to identify children who are developmentally delayed so that we can get early intervention started. It makes a huge difference to start when they are young rather than wait until they are older.

It requires more resources to keep them afloat, and they end up farther behind. I have 350 children on my caseload and almost 50 of them now have an IEP and

I still have more in the process. Head Start is so very important to our littles, don't let them fall through the cracks.

– Amy, Mount Dora, FL

My great-granddaughter attends Head Start to assist her in learning fundamental skills that are essential to her starting primary school as a kindergarten student. This is heartbreaking news that eliminating Head Start would benefit your billionaire friends. These little children aren't voters. Please don't strip our future leaders on your desires to enrich the billionaires.

– Susan, Palm Harbor, FL

My grandkids go to Head Start. They learn a lot and where we live there is a day care shortage and it makes it possible for my daughter and son-in-law to have affordable child care. I don't know what we would do without it.

– Kristi, Panama City, FL

I was enrolled in a Head Start program in a small town in Maine around 1994. The Head Start program allowed me to set the foundation for my education at a young age. My experience in the center I attended has left me with lasting memories and the education I received went beyond academics – I was able to make new friends with people of different races and gain valuable life experience in the process.

Head Start allowed my young, single mother to work and provide for her family while knowing that her daughter was in safe hands and able to thrive in an early education setting to prepare for her future. It truly gave me a Head Start.

As an adult, I now work for my local Head Start in Florida as a family and community advocate. I am able to help parents who were in the same position as my mother - low income families who need child care they can trust while also wanting a high quality education. Head Start provides my community with an invaluable resource that would not otherwise be available.

Our program actively seeks to help its parents find other resources as well that will help to set them up for success – adult education, careers, housing, transportation, medical care, mental health, and more. Our country

"My great-granddaughter attends Head Start to assist her in learning fundamental skills that are essential to her starting primary school as a kindergarten student..."

– Susan, Palm Harbor, FL

needs Head Start to set our future generations up for success.

– Anonymous, Pinellas Park, FL

Head Start has been a huge part of my life. I moved to Florida to be closer to my parents and started to sub at Head Start. I have since been a support teacher and an Early Head Start Caregiver for our youngest children. I have been working for Head Start in Panama City for 20 years.

I've seen first hand how Head Start can not only give our children a brighter beginning to help them throughout school as well as life but also their families. It enables the parents of these children to have free child care from 8 till 2:30 with an option for a few more hours at a low rate. This allows them to be able to go to college, trade school or work while they are confident that their precious child is in a safe loving environment.

This program has benefited thousands of families in countless ways and would be life changing for our current families and future families if shut down. The parents of our students would not be able to find childcare even if they could afford it because we don't have enough available in our community.

They would have to quit their schooling and jobs to stay home with their child or children or they would have to rely on friends, neighbors, or family to watch their

"My grandson, born three weeks early, greatly benefited from Head Start programs that addressed his slow mobility and speech concerns!"

– Katherine, Kahului, HI

children. Some of these situations may not be the best or safest environment for the child to be in.

I would hate to see Head Start shut down, leaving 800,000 children without proper care. Also thousands of Caregivers and Teachers like myself would be out of work and have to look for a different job with different hours that would cause strain on our families due to potentially having no one to watch our own children while we work nights or weekends.

My own children were enrolled in our Head Start program 20 years ago and are now very successful adults. My son has his Master Degree in Accounting and my daughter is currently in school to receive her Masters degree as well. I am so very thankful as a Head Start parent that my children had a bright start to their education and their lives in our Head Start program and would love Head Start to be able to continue giving thousands of children a brighter future!

– Christina, Youngstown, FL

GEORGIA

As a single mom I was fortunate, my girls were able to attend Head Start here in North Georgia two years ago when they were little.

My girls learned so much more than the basics and they also learned empathy. My youngest had the hardest time with separation anxiety. But the teachers there were fantastic at getting on her level and talking her through her emotions so she could go on about the day.

As a single mother I could not afford to pay a lot for pre-k at all and this was our only option. It turned out to be the best option for us! To cut Head Start is like a crime against children and their working parents or parent!

And should never be cut for funding or closed down by the government at all! The current administration is doing a lot of major damage to America right now and it makes me angry and sad!

– Casey, Ringgold, GA

I am a Head Start employee and strongly know how important this program is to the communities we serve. I have been with my program for 23 years and know the need for the program, how it supports the needs of the families and children we serve. The 10 regions were put in place to give us the support we need to continue to serve families within the US and territories.

– Naida, Columbus, GA

HAWAII

My grandson, born three weeks early, greatly benefited from Head Start programs that addressed his slow mobility and speech concerns!

– Katherine, Kahului, HI

IDAHO

My niece was in this program because she was early diagnosed with autism, it was so great educationally and gave her additional assistance dealing with autism. Please keep this program for all the kids that need help academic, knowledge and mental support and development skills.

– Cora, Athol, ID

My son was in Head Start and it really helped his speech problem. He was all ready for school. I didn't have to worry anymore; he could speak clearly and much better. So grateful for Head Start. It really does good for kids.

– **Anonymous, Blanchard, ID**

My oldest son went to Head Start for 2 years in 2001. He had fine motor and speech delays. They helped him a great deal to be ready for school. Also had great resources for extra therapy if needed.

– **Anonymous, Garden City, ID**

ILLINOIS

I used to work as a family worker. I liked the dynamic of Head Start because it was not your typical daycare, it's an actual preschool where children come to learn and enjoy their preschool experience.

I love the title as a family worker due to the fact that I was there to help out families and educate the parents who needed a little more education on their children's needs. I'm currently enrolling a 2.5 year old child for the 2025-2026 school year. I would love for him to experience his preschool years at a place where I know and learn a lot from.

– **Natalie, Aurora, IL**

My son is currently enrolled in the Head Start program in my community. My son has flourished in this program. He has gained a lot of new skills and he is better prepared for Kindergarten because of it. I am grateful that he had the opportunity to participate in the program this year. Head Start is an essential program for students. I implore you to fight for this program and to fight for our students.

– **Idalia, Bourbonnais, IL**

I am a personal development coach for Head Start and this program has helped several of the families I work with be able to have job also affordable education for their children many of them would not be able to have their children in preschool without this program or be able to work.

– **Danelle, Lincoln, IL**

"My son is currently enrolled in the Head Start program in my community. My son has flourished in this program. He has gained a lot of new skills and he is better prepared for Kindergarten because of it."

– **Idalia, Bourbonnais, IL**

INDIANA

My grandchildren go to Head Start. Two of them are autistic. They were not diagnosed until they went to Head Start. Now they and their parents get the support they need.

– **Diane, Auburn, IN**

I have been employed with Head Start for 7 years now as an assistant teacher. From the first year I knew this was my calling. This is where God wanted me. We do so many amazing things for our children and families. This will hurt so many people in so many ways. Please protect Head Start.

– **Anonymous, Bedford, IN**

I'm a licensed school psychologist and I have done many individual evaluations for preschool students at Head Start who were identified as students requiring special

"My grandchildren go to Head Start. Two of them are autistic. They were not diagnosed until they went to Head Start. Now they and their parents get the support they need."

– Diane, Auburn, IN

education services. These students were able to receive speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy services.

I observed the many ways all students in these programs grew intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Now my great grandchildren are participating in Head Start programs and they love school and developing friendships. It would be devastating to the young children in this country if this program was eliminated.

– Patricia, Dunkirk, IN

As an Early Head Start Teacher, there are not enough words to express how important this program is for children and families. Early Head Start and Head Start are schools, not just daycare.

We teach the kids so much and not only play with the kids. We teach routines, build structure and relationships, we develop kid's social skills, help the kids reach milestones and learn new skills, we teach art, science, literature, music, mathematics, and so much more.

We help families by building relationships with their children, we communicate with our families and talk about their child's progress each day, we give families

resources when needed, and so much more. Keep this program going and make it stronger than it already is.

– Anonymous, Gas City, IN

My grandchildren attended Head Start and I volunteered a lot there it showed me how to interact with kids my grandkids loved and now my great grandkids go there and they love it. Please don't shut Head Start down.

– Debbie, Heltonville, IN

IOWA

I used to work at an Early Head Start, and saw firsthand the difference that the program made in the lives of the children and their parents. Early Head Start and Head Start are amazing programs, in part because the staff is trained on evidence-based approaches that improve the development of the child who uses the program.

For example, we had to write lesson plans to account for the entire time we were with our children, from the infants all the way up to when they aged out, to ensure they were getting as much as possible out of the program. This was a requirement because of the funding we received from the federal government. To remove funding for a program that does so much to support the youngest and most vulnerable children is absolutely absurd.

– Amy, New London, IA

KANSAS

I have worked with Early Head Start for almost 20 years. This is a remarkable quality program for poverty level children. All children deserve quality educational care.

– Corinne, Concordia, KS

My granddaughter went to Head Start. It was great, she had lots of fun and had great socialization that she wouldn't have gotten otherwise! I think the program is wonderful. My daughter was 15 when she had my granddaughter. I supported her and her decisions but they were all her decisions.

– Anonymous, Mission, KS

"I went to Head Start in the 80s when I was little...Today, my toddler receives services at the preschool. He receives his speech therapy in that environment and also gets to socialize and interact with peers his age."

– Amanda, Murray, KY

I remember when I had my first child, I was a little lost and confused. A misunderstanding caused a family member to call CPS out of concern, which they sent someone to my house to assess the situation.

Of course there was nothing out of the ordinary, but while there they offered Head Start services, where EVERYTHING was FREE, so I accepted. They began visiting me and my child at my house on a weekly basis and helped my child develop and grow, and also helped with free hearing and sight assessments. They got my child into their pre-K program.

My memories of the Head Start program are nothing but good, because this program was more than helpful, they became part of my family. Now I am a grandmother and I am sad and scared of my grandbabies not having access to such a necessary program and will end up being behind in their development and social skills. We NEED this program! Please save it, for the sake of humanity's future.

– Elizabeth, Topeka, KS

KENTUCKY

I was a head start parent 25 years ago. Now, I have been a Head Start teacher for 10 years. Every time I think about it I wish I had become an employee 25 years ago! I tell all my parents that they may be trying to find a job to go on and apply with BGCAP! They offer great benefits along with having summer & school breaks off so that you can enjoy being a parent as well!

– Tracy, Harrodsburg, KY

I went to Head Start in the 80s when I was little. I lived in eastern Kentucky and was happy the program was there. Today, my toddler receives services at the preschool. He aged out of First Steps and needed continued speech therapy for a speech impairment. He receives his speech therapy in that environment and also gets to socialize and interact with peers his age.

This program is vital for his socialization skills and development. I also interned for a local Head Start during my bachelor's program and saw how the program benefits children and families. This is especially true for children with disabilities who need intervention services. Head Start is a wonderful program children and families need.

– Amanda, Murray, KY

My story began in 1993, when I attended Head Start as a child, then flash forward to 2009 when I was a teen mom and was reintroduced to the program for my son. I enrolled my son and began volunteering for the program. I quickly fell in love with the program and the support of the staff.

They all encouraged me to go back to school and when my son was in his second year that's just what I did. I graduated with my first degree in 2015 and was quickly hired on by the same program my son attended. I started as an assistant teacher. In 2018, I was offered a position as a lead teacher within the program and that same year I started back to school with Head Starts help and financial assistance. By the end of 2018 I was offered a position as a site supervisor at that same program I attended as well as my son.

I graduated in late 2019 with my Bachelors degree in

child and family studies. I am currently an education coach for this same program and have made a career out of doing what I love with the help and encouragement of this program and staff. Before this program I was looked at as just a teen mom who ruined her life.

This program taught me I could be anything I wanted to be and I was someone. I was a mom and now I am a college graduate with a career.

– Heather, Lancaster, KY

LOUISIANA

I was a Head Start baby and now a teacher at Head Start. I have been a teacher for 34 years at Head Start. We service poverty families and their children and without Head Start these kids could not get a fair chance at excelling. We lay the foundation and build from it as our kids journey on to public school.

We give them their first start to transition into public school and be able to continue their education and graduate and not be drop outs. As a Head Start baby of the 60's I must say I am living proof that Head Start does work.

Please stand up for these kids and their families to give them the chance to make a change for themselves and their children. We are losing our children to gun violence and with proper education I know we can make a difference and have made a difference in many kids' lives.

Please stand up for our kids and their families. So many families will have to quit their jobs to stay home and care for their kids if this program is taken away. We are begging for your help to speak on our belt and the kids and families behalf. Head Start Strong!

– Angienette, Abbeville, LA

MAINE

I taught Head Start for years and now I am enrolling my grandson! It is the best experience for children who may be from impoverished families and miss out on important developmental milestones.

– Donna, South Portland, ME

"I saw children at the beginning of the school year come to Head Start and wouldn't even begin to talk and within months they were talking, smiling and had bloomed into socializing and learned so much to help them get ready for elementary school."

– Julie, Morrill, ME

I once worked for Head Start and I cannot express the need for this program and the families that this program serves. The children benefit so much from this program. If they stop this program there will be so many children left behind in education. It would be so astronomical for the children and families to lose this wonderful program. I saw children at the beginning of the school year come to Head Start and wouldn't even begin to talk and within months they were talking, smiling and had bloomed into socializing and learned so much to help them get ready for elementary school. This would hurt so many children if they lost this program.

– Julie, Morrill, ME

I was a divorced single mother with my first child and Head Start made a huge difference in our lives. It gave my daughter the start she needed in life and she is now an excellent primary school teacher giving back to her

IN 2025, HEAD START:



**Made over 3 million
home visits**



**Served over 13,000
pregnant women**



**Made it possible for
over half a million
parents to work, go to
school, or get job
training**

community. Please don't cut funding for Head Start. So many vulnerable children need the support to start off on the right foot in life and learning.

– **MaryBeth, Portland, ME**

MARYLAND

I found myself as a refugee from a rebel war. I am a single mother with a nine months old son who started attending Head Start by age three so I could attend school and go to work. Great service.

– **Abibatu, Clarksburg, MD**

I am a retired Head Start teacher who worked with three and four-year old children AND their families. This program is critically important for the families served. Children have the opportunity to be in a nurturing, caring, and safe environment where they learn social skills, early literacy and math skills, reinforcement of fine and gross motor skills, and healthy habits (nutrition, toothbrushing, exercising, resting).

It is important for children to learn through play – and they do! Children look forward to coming to school to see their friends and teachers, play and learn, sing, move, and be creative. A Head Start experience is an important precursor to going to kindergarten.

The children learn daily routines and expectations; parents state learning goals for their children and inform teachers of areas of need. Head Start is a team approach –and it works! Head Start is a positive and worthwhile program for children, their families, and the community.

When a child gets a “Head Start,” they are successful in school and they graduate. Many go on to college where they study nursing, forensic science, education, to name a few. This early childhood education program MUST be saved!

– **Donna, Silver Spring, MD**

MASSACHUSETTS

My daughter is 4. She has been in Head Start since she was 9 months old and I love it. She has learned so much from Head Start.

– **Anonymous, Springfield, MA**

MICHIGAN

Head Start has been wonderful for my son. He may have started behind other kids if not for this amazing program. Please don't deny our kids this wonderful program.

My son is a Head Start graduate. While he was only in the program for a year due to the pandemic and other family circumstances, he absolutely thrived while he was in the program. He loved going to school every day and it helped the transition to kindergarten be much easier. He is now excelling in kindergarten and I owe it all to the Head Start program.

– **Brittney, Newport, MI**

My family, and many families I know were positively impacted by Head Start. My mother taught school for Head Start for 22 years. She very positively changed the lives of many children and families. I still have people tell

"My children both went to Head Start. It helped get them ready for kindergarten. My kids learned how to share and play well with others, how to care for their teeth and other good hygiene, and they learned basic concepts like colors, counting, letters and words."

– Courtney, Donnelly, MN

me this today, many years later.

My children went to Head Start and without that program they both would have struggled with starting public school at kindergarten age. We lived in a rural area in Michigan with no neighbors close by and no opportunities for socialization when the girls were very young.

Head Start helped them learn basics in education, life skills and socialization so they were better prepared for kindergarten and for academic and social success. My youngest grandson is 3 and has recently started in an Early On program under the Head Start program as he has speech and language delays. Without this program I fear for his development and his chance to live a full, happy and productive life! Many children and families will suffer if the Head Start program is eliminated.

– Diana, Norway, MI

MINNESOTA

I first became a Head Start Parent who volunteered some 500 hours while my daughter attended some 35 + years ago. Later I was hired as a Teachers Associate in Head Start when my youngest child attended. Later I became the President of the Head Starts Parents Association. Now many years later I'm back as the classroom Head Start Grandparent. This program helps the children, parents and their communities. Save us all.

– Darla, Austin, MN

I came to Head Start as a parent 11 years ago. I am now a teacher for a center. Going from a parent, to aide, to assistant teacher and teacher. I've made many connections along the way and am absolutely grateful for Head Start!

– Anonymous, Delavan, MN

My children both went to Head Start. It helped get them ready for kindergarten. My kids learned how to share and play well with others, how to care for their teeth and other good hygiene, and they learned basic concepts like colors, counting, letters and words. It helped me as a parent connect with my kids by sharing information about activities and encouraging me to read to my kids more. The transition to kindergarten was easier too.

– Courtney, Donnelly, MN

MISSISSIPPI

I was the product of Heart Start. I'm 65 years old ! My kids and grandkids attended Head Start and learned a lot! It makes me sick to my heart to know how many children and families this will affect in the future! It's sad people choose power over what's best for children and families!

– Anonymous, Clarksdale, MS

I am 45 years old. I have five children and I've sent four of the five to Head Start. I think it's a lovely program. I think it's helpful, especially in rural communities where children don't get to see very many people that don't

look exactly like them, so I sent my children to Head Start so that they would be socialized when they went to school. I think it's important for Americans to learn to love each other when they're young and quit teaching this hate. I think we need more educational programs. Definitely the lack of education in this country is what's caused the trouble that we're having now.

– **Anonymous, Purvis, MS**

MISSOURI

My son was in Head Start. He needed it, he was far behind in social situations with kids his age and had been diagnosed with severe developmental delays. It helped him learn to talk. It helped him in so many ways, we were so thankful.

– **Angela, Columbia, MO**

I work for Head Start and it is an excellent program for our parents and children.

– **Onita, Kansas City, MO**

My child was born 2 months early at just under three and a half pounds. Head Start was amazing at coming to my house and helping me learn how to help my child and they helped both of us so very very much. I can't recommend it enough! It was literally a lifesaver to get my child caught up where they needed to be before school started. An important program that our Country needs badly!

– **Suzanne, Kansas City, MO**

I was a Head Start student and so was my son. In both cases Head Start prepared us for entering kindergarten. I have many fond memories of my time in Head Start and my son's time.

– **Tamela, Springfield, MO**

MONTANA

I am currently teaching at a Head Start in Montana. Seeing the growth that these kids have in our program

"Head Start has not just been a place where I have been able to see kids strive and grow and gain so much traction in their lives but also see parents start to grow and become better for their kids."

– **MacKenzie, Butte, MT**

has been amazing. Watching children who have lacked the resources and been kicked out of other programs only to thrive in our program has been wonderful. To see children eat and slowly learn they don't have to pile food onto their plate but rather take small amounts at a time until they are full. To see them slowly open up showing us that they are feeling safe over time.

This program has also allowed for parents to help find the resources to help them thrive. To find the resources they need to step up and get on their feet. When they're needing help with kids, food, parenting, and many other things.

Head Start has not just been a place where I have been able to see kids strive and grow and gain so much traction in their lives but also see parents start to grow and become better for their kids. Head Start has also been such an amazing place for some of our autistic, ADHD, and disabled children to thrive.

Where we as teachers are throwing mini parties when we



KIDS THRIVE IN HEAD START!

**Children who attend
Early Head Start and
transition to Head Start are
more kindergarten-ready.**

hear a non-verbal child say a word for the first time. Or when children start to make gains. Where we're working as teams to create a plan when a child struggles. Head Start has been an incredible resource for communities and helping children and families of many walks of life.

– **MacKenzie, Butte, MT**

NEBRASKA

All my children and grandchildren have all benefited from attending Head Start and it's a great introduction to life outside the home. Kids at 3 years of age are developing and at that age it gives parents a bit of a break. Ending Head Start is detrimental to kids and lives.

– **Victoria, Lincoln, NE**

I worked at numerous head start programs for years. People think the benefits are just for the kids. The benefits extend to the families, the economy and the entire community. Kids that simply aren't ready for a classroom setting get time to learn how to act in that setting and they are assessed for things that could hinder their ability to be successful in a school setting.

People in the community that don't qualify for Head Start think their tax dollars are going towards other kids and it doesn't affect them. Like it or not, once kindergarten hits these kids will all be sitting right next to each other. If some of these kids had no preschool they will struggle in a classroom setting requiring teachers to monopolize their time and slowing the education progress for everyone.

Most people don't understand that every Head Start child gets a family service worker so the family as well as the child is assessed to identify and eliminate any barriers they have to being good student parents. Family staff help parents obtain needed services including further education or job placement.

Most school sponsored preschools only go 2 or 3 days a week. Head Start is 5 days a week and most classes are year round. This allows Head Start parents to work during those hours while their kids are in school.

Between the money spent by Head Start staff as well as Head Start parents is an economic boost to the community. Without Head Start you will have those unemployed staff going elsewhere to find work and no longer spending money in the community. Head Start parents will have to work less or not at all requiring them to go on more government assistance.

If you watch the difference in a child from his or her first day to the day they go to kindergarten it's like night and day. Many kids, their first day or two, are hoarding food and stuffing it in their pockets so they won't be hungry. The look on their face when they realize they will be fed all day makes even a grown man like me cry.

Cutting Head Start will create long term educational problems. School districts can't afford to provide early childhood education to all children.

– **Mike, Omaha, NE**

I taught in a Head Start classroom for 3 years. We gave low income students the education needed to be on grade level when entering elementary school. Reaching students in need at a young age increases their chance of success which benefits all of society. Low income students deserve the chance to be successful.

– **Rebecca, Omaha, NE**

NEVADA

My brother was a Head Start kid 30 years ago and I work for a non-profit that supports one of the EHS programs in Nevada. Not only does this program help children get ready for school but it supports parents so they have safe and consistent child care while they are working or going to school.

– **Ca, Las Vegas, NV**

I was a single mom of 5 trying to work and make something for myself and my children. Head Start helped me and my children grow and learn to be a better family. I worked hard everyday not having to worry if my children were safe.

They were educated at the hands of wonderful people who really knew about early childhood. Yes I chose to be single but my children did not. I chose a safe environment that allowed me to get a good paying job and make something of myself and my children.

– **Kelly, Las Vegas, NV**

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Working in Early Intervention, I have the opportunity to work directly with Head Start classrooms. I have witnessed professional, caring advocates for families in severe need of support. These teachers save lives, provide meals, clothes, diapers, guidance to parents, assess, provide curriculum, but most importantly love. They are the person to let the child know, they matter, they're safe here. They are valued and important. When a child gets that message their future is limitless.

– **Nancy, Spofford, NH**

I have worked for Head Start for 29 years thus far. This program and many like it are essential for children and families. Head Start is a quality program that enriches the lives of children and families. DO NOT CUT FUNDING!

– **Joyce, Thornton, NH**



Children who have positive and engaging interactions in their earliest years, like they do in Head Start & Early Head Start, are better able to experience, regulate & manage emotions – key skills they need for school.

NEW JERSEY

I KNOW what Head Start does for children first hand! While getting my Master's in Education, my first two children attended Head Start. They told me, you should work for us! I said, "You can't teach 4 year olds? Forward to today, it is my sixth year in Paterson, and

I'm TEACHING 4 year olds! It's mind boggling how much they learn from September to June! I can't imagine this program being eliminated from the children who need it sooo badly. It's not only having the best teachers. It's the food program, the family assistance, the healthcare, the socialization, the "safe place" to learn, and they are ready for kindergarten! Please help to keep this program going!

– **Ellen, Bergenfield, NJ**

Head Start helps kids learn and moms work, supporting the financial sustainability of families and our economy.



Head Start was one of the many social programs I survived on as a child growing up in a low-income family and then in foster care. Head Start was a CRITICAL component to my early years. School was the ONE safe haven I had throughout my entire childhood; most especially in early childhood when my home was often a war zone. When you have dysfunctional parents or do not have parents at all, decent teachers at school fill that role, whether they intend to or not.

I was lucky to have had some of the most empathetic educators I had going through multiple school systems in Sussex County, NJ growing up. I truly owe some of the only semblance of normalcy and safety I knew in my early life to schools and teachers.

When you don't know where your next meal might come from, free lunch programs and access to Head Start programs mean survival. It's a travesty that these programs would be defunded, dismantled, and falsely portrayed as wasteful. It is because of programs like Head Start that I was able to grow up and become a Social Worker, able to help children in foster care and from low-income families just like I had been.

It is because of programs like Head Start that I grew up and out of poverty. It is because of programs like Head Start that I became a hard-working, tax-paying adult with a college degree who is PROUD that my tax dollars can help children survive and flourish through the same opportunities I was once given.

This is why I rise up and say #HANDSOFF Head Start.

– **Chase, Hapotcong, NJ**

I work for Head Start! It's a wonderful program that provides necessary services for people living 100% on the poverty line. I love my job and the children I teach. They are absolutely deserving of the finest teachers and curriculum! We really love them and their families!

– **Pam, Phillipsburg, NJ**

NEW MEXICO

I went to Head Start as a young child many years ago. I still have special memories from that time. My daughter also attended Head Start and her 3 children attended since they were babies in Early Head Start and Head Start. My grandson and nieces nephews and great nieces and nephews have been in Head start, some even being in my class. I have worked for YDI Head Start in Albuquerque, New Mexico for 27 years. I've seen and experienced all the good they do for our children, their families and communities. Our children DESERVE this program. Please keep the program funded.

– **Lisa, Albuquerque, NM**

My child and grandchildren have learned a lot from this program. My grandson is still enrolled. Please pray for this program to continue and let's do all we can to help.

– **Sheri, Los Lunas, NM**

I worked as a program coordinator for Head Start in rural Alaska during the early 1970's. The Indigenous villages for which I provided training and resources found Head Start to be a vital part of their communities. This educational program helped to prepare Indigenous children for public school, while encouraging their own cultural enrichment through community involvement in planning and volunteering in the classroom.

It also provided the children with medical, dental, and social resources that otherwise would not have been available in remote areas. It breaks my heart that such a valuable program will be discontinued.

– **Sandra, Rio Rancho, NM**

NEW YORK

My daughter was enrolled in Head Start at age 3. I enrolled her because I was concerned about her social development and her sensory processing. This program is so wonderful! The director of the program and the teachers were so knowledgeable and helpful for my daughter and our family. They helped my daughter learn how to cope with some of the anxiety she faces on a day to day basis. She taught my daughter how to make friends with other students, how to share, how to write her first name, number recognition and social skills.

This program provided family style meals where the children learned how to serve themselves and use utensils correctly. They learned proper hygiene, teeth hygiene, nutrition, and so much more!

The program director worked with me on getting my daughter evaluated for special education, then helped me make sure the school district my daughter would be attending for pre-k was given all the proper documentation to get her the services she would need.

This program needs to stay in every community as the work they do for children and their families is remarkable!

– **Jennifer, Binghamton, NY**

I have been a Head Start teacher for 16 1/2 years, an educator for 22. As a teacher, the thought of Head Start being eliminated is baffling. Where will the children go? How will parents work if there is nowhere affordable to send their children? Programs that are for profit will never give the same quality of care that Head Start does.

We care about having a routine, setting up expectations, teaching children social skills. Without our program where will kids learn these skills before kindergarten? At home learning can only go so far. Parents will be stressed, unable to work and continue to live in poverty; the very thing Head Start was formed for.

I have seen so many incredible things happen for our children and families at Head Start. It would be a shame for it to be taken away because of one person's views on people less than him.

– **Rebecca, Clyde, NY**

54,768
HOMELESS FAMILIES
HAVE BEEN SERVED
BY HEAD START
IN 2025

Source: National Head Start Association



I am an 81 year old who doesn't want to retire from teaching, so I am volunteering at two Head Start programs. It is such a wonderful learning experience for the kids.

Last month they were studying buildings, this month wheels, and next month plants. They learn language and cooperation from talented and dedicated teachers (who don't get paid enough). These children are our future. How can we not support them?

– **Judith, New York, NY**

I have been a bus driver for Head Start for 20 years and all five of my children went to Head Start, it's a great program for low income families. They help with parents who can't afford child care and get kids ready for elementary school. I have 5 children in which 3 of them are triplets so they went to Early Head Start right on up to 5 years of age.

It helped my wife and I so much. They supplied everything from diapers to formula and breakfast, lunch and snacks. They also provided bussing to and from school so we didn't have to worry about anything and they also offer other great programs as well so to cut it would be a shame.

– **Raymond, Syracuse, NY**

NORTH CAROLINA

At 4 years old, I began an educational journey that I didn't quite understand would mold me into the person I am today. From my experience as a student of the Head Start program I learned the value of loving myself as well as others through diversity and inclusion. My teachers helped build a firm foundation for me that fueled my passion to become a teacher. But as we all know life isn't predictable. On my journey life has had its ups and downs; I found myself a single mom with only a high school diploma and a fast food job.

However, when my son was 1 years old I became reacquainted with Head Start when I was given the opportunity to work in the kitchen as an assistant. After having my second child I wanted more for my family. However I had become complacent. I believed Head Start had been more than gracious not only had they helped educate me, but my boys as well, not to mention the job opportunity.

Fast forward about 20 years, a local community college professor visited the Head Start center I was working in and saw my passion not only for my job but the families and children. She encouraged me to return to school and obtain my Early Childhood degree; which I did. Now I am a lead teacher in the Early Head Start Childhood program. I can never express the gratitude I have for the Head Start program.

– **Regina, Lumberton, NC**

Allenton Head Start has been amazing with my 2 year old. It's fun, it's learning, it's interactive!! He has learned so much in just a short time. He literally runs into the building each morning waiting to meet his teachers and classmates. Not to mention this has helped me as a parent still be able to have a working income all while feeling good that my child is in a safe, fun, and loving environment.

– **Shronda, Evergreen, NC**

I have been in the Head start program for over 25 years. I have personally witnessed the outcome of what this program has done to help our children become successful, confident, and prepared for their future

"Allenton Head Start has been amazing with my 2 year old... He literally runs into the building each morning waiting to meet his teachers and classmates. Not to mention this has helped me as a parent still be able to have a working income all while feeling good that my child is in a safe, fun, and loving environment."

– **Shronda, Evergreen, NC**

school success, and career choices after graduating high school and college. DON'T LET THE FUTURE OF OUR LITTLE CHILDREN BE JEOPARDIZED AND HARMED. THEY NEED A FAIR Head Start IN LIFE.

– **Maria, Sylva, NC**

I am a Head Start worker and a parent of Head Start and I vouch that Head Start is an awesome program to help families get started with the education of their students. I love what I do with helping my children and families progress.

– **LaTerria, Orrum, NC**

NORTH DAKOTA

I am a former Head Start parent and current employee. I am a speech language pathologist providing speech/ language services for children with special needs. Head Start allows children with special needs to participate in a classroom with their peers while receiving their special education services in their least restrictive environment, which is an important part of IDEA.

This program is crucial for these children. Early intervention is so very important and can help reduce the need for services when the child is older. The program offers so many benefits to families. I urge you to vote AGAINST the elimination of this fabulous program.

– Roxana, Grand Forks, ND

OHIO

I have worked for Head Start for 28 years. Before Head Start I did not graduate from High School. I started my family at 17. At 42 years old my daughter passed away and left a two month old baby. At three years old my doctor encouraged me to put her in Head Start. The best decision of my life.

The director of Coshocton County Head Start saw something in me that I didn't. She encouraged me to get my GED. She took me to every training she could. She encouraged me to further my education. I went on to graduate in the top 15 percent of my class. Every time I was on the Dean's list, she made sure everyone knew. I went on to become a lead teacher with a pre-k associates degree and Early Intervention Certification. I love this program so much and believe that our children need this program to have an early start in life.

– Brenda, Coshocton, OH

I am an Early Head Start Teacher and have seen how the Head Start program has made a difference in the lives of the children I have taught. Without this program I know these children would not have a good foundation to start school. Head Start is a valuable program that needs to be protected!

– Denise, Graytown, OH

**"I myself taught
and am now an
administrator at Head
Start... I could give
story after story after
story of successes
I personally have
witnessed for children
attending Head Start."**

– Alicia, Huron, OH

My brother, over 40 years ago, attended Head Start. Head Start gave him the foundation he needed to be successful in kindergarten. I myself taught and am now an administrator at Head Start. Our children are much more socially and emotionally prepared for kindergarten because they attend HS. I could give story after story after story of successes I personally have witnessed for children attending Head Start. For parents of kids attending Head Start, they have been allowed the time to work, attend school or even keep life on course because of the Head Start Program. Head Start is second to none!

– Alicia, Huron, OH

Head Start has done wonders for my child since he had been going. These teachers love these kids like their own. These babies need Head Start. Families need Head Start. Head Start is a wonderful program.

– Jennifer, Urbana, OH

I have been a teacher for twenty nine years at Warren County Head Start. It's been my calling and my joy to teach my preschoolers. I have worked with families to create goals for school and home. It would be a great loss for families to lose this support and resource.

– **Barbara, Waynesville, OH**

OKLAHOMA

As a former Head Start parent and current Center Director of a Head Start I have seen first hand the impact our program has on children, their families and our communities. From pregnancy to age 5 we are there to help, teach, care and support people. Cutting funding and discontinuing the program would not only hurt the most vulnerable but also the communities we are in. I could tell stories of how our screenings have helped children and families and some have even saved lives.

– **Anonymous, Maysville, OK**

I have had 2 kids in Head Start and worked for the program for 5 years. We need Head Start.

– **Anonymous, Foss, OK**

OREGON

My family depends on the Head Start program for my Granddaughter. She is learning and growing in this program and we are so blessed to have it.

– **Dawn, Auburn, OR**

I have been a Head Start teacher for over 30 years, and I am a grandparent of Head Start students. This program is essential in helping families move from poverty toward self sufficiency. It is a safety net for so many that cannot be ripped away by this administration!

– **Anonymous, Oregon City, OR**

My grandson has been unable to find employment for almost 2 years. I have been supporting him and his now 5 year old daughter since she was 1. This school year

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– **Anonymous, Maysville, OK**

we enrolled her in a Head Start class because he has no income. She loves her class and especially her teacher. There are so many services that are offered to the families. She is in a bilingual classroom and loves it and has made many friends.

It would be foolish to defund any of this outstanding program. I am on the policy council for her school and I help make decisions that will help all children thrive. It's time all lawmakers supported this especially if they want competent people supporting their Medicare and other programs for seniors.

– **Anonymous, Salem OR**

PENNSYLVANIA

This is my fifth year working for Head Start as a teacher. I'm in it and living it RIGHT NOW. I bear witness to how wonderful the program is, the progress made with the children, and the positive impact that it has on the families. EVERY single child that is in this program needs to be there.

I have found myself saying time and time again that I can't imagine some of the children that have come through the doors not having had the opportunity to come there first before going to kindergarten. I firmly believe that every single family in the United States should be given the opportunity for free child care.

We need to be adding more spots, not taking them away. There is absolutely nothing negative that I can say about this program. The skills that the children learn here are vital to their development in every way. Anybody saying otherwise should volunteer to go help out in a classroom for a week.

– **Kristy, Brackenridge, PA**

I am a Head Start teacher. I see the positive impact this program has on every student that is in my classroom and whole center. At times, this program is a child's home away from home. Our community is made up of many low income families. Head Start not only provides these families with a stepping stone towards a child's education, but also social and personal resources to help the WHOLE family grow and learn.

Head Start provides each family with services and education they might not otherwise receive or know about if they did not attend the program. Early childhood education is a fundamental part of society as we are preparing the future for what is to come.

– **Brandi, Indiana, PA**

I have been a Head Start teacher for 15 years! Over the years I have seen the amazing things that it does for our children and families! I have made a huge difference in the lives of many children and families!

Children and families that I have had in the past still remember me and the difference I have made in their lives. I love coming to work everyday and seeing the difference that I am making. The children and families need us!

– **Jen, Lock Haven, PA**

As a teacher for Capital Area Head Start in Pennsylvania, I have seen so much success for children and families of low socioeconomic situations. One story I have is a boy who started with us and was non-verbal. He also didn't

"Our community is made up of many low income families. Head Start not only provides these families with a stepping stone towards a child's education, but also social and personal resources to help the WHOLE family grow and learn."

– **Brandi, Indiana, PA**

eat. I used visuals with him every day. He would point to where he wanted to go to play, or for what he needed. I took small steps to encourage him to communicate with 1-2 words. In meeting him where he was, he was speaking short phrases by the end of his first year.

When he returned to start his second year, I had the visuals ready, but to my surprise he no longer needed them. His parents were so appreciative of the resources we provided for their son over the summer months and throughout his first year.

They worked with him in the summer and he returned that first day, talking my ear off! Eating was still difficult, but I began focusing on that, using strategies to teach him the most simple motivators for him to try the textures of the food.

He took slow steady steps to begin eating/trying various textured foods. I would reward him each time and he progressed to eating alongside the other children. He

KIDS WHO ATTEND HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START ARE:



**More likely to
graduate high
school**



**Less likely to
experience poor
health**



**More likely to enroll
in and complete
college**



**Less likely to enter
the foster care
system**

also began enjoying conversations at the tables and serving food with our family style meals. This little boy went on to elementary school in the least restrictive environment for a child under the autism umbrella and even went on to join the football team!

I have many more stories like this one. Head Start meets each child and family where they are and builds their success through genuine partnership like I've never seen in any other environment in my nearly 20 years as a preschool educator! This is why Head Start has my heart!

– **Stacey, Newville, PA**

I am a Head Start teacher. I believe that this program is so important to 1000s of families across the country. We,

as teachers, put our heart and soul into what we do each and every day for the children and their families.

Some of these families may not have any support other than the support they are getting from our program alone. To be included in Head Start is without a doubt a God for most if not all of the families we come in contact with.

– **Rachael, Wind Gap, PA**

RHODE ISLAND

For many years, I was a preschool teacher and then a coach to Head Start teachers. I have had the pleasure of having many of my elementary students who are Head Start alumni. They and their families are so much better having had the opportunities that Head Start provides.

– **Lynn, North Scituate, RI**

I started my career in Head Start as an educator. I was able to see first hand how this program benefitted families and more directly, children. I had children in my classroom who relied on the meals provided, knowing it may be their only consistent meals for the day. They were able to expect calm, consistent adult support as they navigated some of the most unimaginable challenges thrust upon them.

I had students that experienced some of the most traumatic experiences, seeing their parents taken into custody for various reasons, witnessing drug use of parents or caregivers, and in the hardest cases, finding that children were sexually abused by someone they trusted in their home. I know unequivocally this was not just my classroom but a representation of what was present in each classroom in Head Start.

Taking away programming in Head Start does not take away these circumstances that children are thrust into with no choice. It is taking away the support they need to be advocated for and giving the most essential needs like care, intervention services for development and food so that they can have a supportive way to grow, learn and be successful in spite of these circumstances.

Additionally, this gives children access to high quality learning experiences and relationships they otherwise may not have if this program is gone. I urge you to fight

and consider all the risks of taking this program away from some of the most vulnerable children and families in our society.

– Sarah, Bristol, RI

SOUTH CAROLINA

I am a retired Special Education Teacher. I worked for 11 yrs with students at Head Start Centers in 3 counties in NY state. I saw the students I worked with individually and in their classrooms as well as their homes. I cannot say enough about this great program.

Seeing the dedication and skill of the classroom teachers and teacher aides and how they worked to help impoverished students to be able to transition into kindergarten was truly amazing. I am devastated to think that our President and his unqualified cabinet members will wipe out this invaluable program. It is utterly devastating. But mostly, the children and their families will suffer from this senseless decision on the part of our President to cut Head Start.

– Eileen, Hilton Head Island, SC

SOUTH DAKOTA

We've had all 4 kids in the SD Head Start program. Our third child didn't speak until she received services from Head Start! Now she is 26 and doing great! Our fourth child was born with hypotonia (low muscle tone) he could not hold his head up, sit up or walk until he received PT thru Head Start! He is 18 and runs track! Please don't cut these essential programs.

– Patsy, Burbank, SD

In 1987, I had concerns about my son's speech and enrolled him in the Head Start program. What a great program! In 1990 I saw an ad in the paper that Head Start was looking for an assistant teacher. I thought what a great opportunity and decided to apply and luckily got the job.

In 2010, I was given the opportunity to advance my education and became a Head Start teacher. I just retired

"My grandson is autistic. He went through the Head Start program. He is in kindergarten and reading very well. I don't think this would have happened without the Head Start program."

– Trish, Kingsport, TN

this past year after 33 years. During this time I had the privilege of working with many wonderful families and seeing them grow through the program. It would be such a great injustice for Head Start to close. I hope it goes on forever.

– Cathy, Watertown, SD

I am a product of Head Start. I was raised by my grandparents and Head Start was my first school experience. It provided a valuable foundation for my lifelong love of learning. We would not have been able to afford preschool. I graduated co-valedictorian of my small high school and college with honors. Thank you for providing stability, socialization, and learning.

– Michele, Sioux Falls, SD

TENNESSEE

My grandson is autistic. He went through the Head Start program. He is in kindergarten and reading very well. I don't think this would have happened without the Head Start program. Leave Head Start alone.

– Trish, Kingsport, TN

"I am a single mom and without Head Start I wouldn't be able to find anyone or afford for anyone to watch him and I wouldn't be able to work and provide like I currently do. I beg you to not stop this program."

**– Brittany,
Winchester, TN**

My son loves going to school everyday. It gives him friends to play with. They have taught him so much and he just loves it there. I am a single mom and without Head Start I wouldn't be able to find anyone or afford for anyone to watch him and I wouldn't be able to work and provide like I currently do. I beg you to not stop this program.

– Brittany, Winchester, TN

TEXAS

I was once a Head Start mom. Being able to send my children to Head Start gave me the opportunity to work while they were in school and have my children in a safe place while learning and being able to be around other kids their age.

Now, today I work for Head Start, preparing delicious well balanced meals for the kids, and I absolutely love it! The kids are a joy to watch as they play, or sitting at the table eating and talking to their new friends. The communities need this. So many children need this

experience. It gives them a chance to get a head start in life, to develop the skills needed when they get to the big schools.

– Sabra, Huntsville, TX

I work for an Early Head Start and see the positive impact daily with our families and children, all thanks to the Head Start program. It would be such a tragedy if there was no longer this beautiful program that truly does help out our communities and families.

– Rose, Kingsland, TX

I am a Head Start parent as well as an employee. My daughter and hundreds of others in our community have benefitted from Head Start. Giving them the tools they needed to have a solid foundation on school and life.

– Anonymous, New Waverly, TX

UTAH

I was 1 of 8 kids in a single parent household. Food was limited and we were very poor. We had Medicaid, actual food stamps, WIC, housing, and Head Start. We didn't always have a car and lived in rural Utah. The Head Start bus picked me up and dropped me off home. I remember my pink Head Start building. I remember playing dress up and with blocks.

When I went to Head Start we had a graduation ceremony, a Halloween party (my mom bought me an outfit and painted a strawberry on my cheek), and one time my oldest brother (14 at the time) ate breakfast with me. This year I had in Head Start is in my heart as a good experience that gave my mom time to go to school and prepared me for kindergarten. I have nothing but good memories of Head Start, my teachers, friends, songs, toys, and classroom.

When I was a single mother I sent my daughter to Head Start. She was in the full day class at my work. I made 7.00 an hour, lived in housing, and didn't have a car. I was able to volunteer in her class on my break and after work. My Daughter went to an urban Head Start where she was the only one with an American Mother. She was taught many things, and I have good memories of going on their

field trip to the zoo. I relied on quality education for my daughter as I worked. I knew she would get breakfast, lunch, and a snack at school.

I went to work for Early Head Start when my daughter was 15 and stayed for 9 years. My grandsons would have gone to Early Head Start, but the pandemic made us virtual for a while. I left early Head Start to help take care of my grandsons, but I love the program and have seen children flourish. This is an attack on the poor and society. Head Start is so many things to so many people. I'm grateful to have gone as a child, the opportunity to take my daughter too, and to have given back by working for them and helping kids and Families.

– **Sommer, Layton, UT**

My daughter had severe sensory processing disorder that accompanied her severe ADHD. We were doing all we could to help, but the costs of therapy for her were already maxing out our small budget. Head Start/pre-k was extremely helpful for her.

The program helped her to learn better social norms, gave her something to learn and concentrate on, and set her up for kindergarten success. She even had appointments with school psychologists that helped manage her progress. It made a huge difference in her behavior and ability to focus. I'll always be grateful.

– **Nicole, South Jordan, UT**

VERMONT

My great grandson is autistic/ADHD and is ready to be enrolled in Early Head Start. With the outrageous cuts of funding to Medicaid and Head Start he will flounder in the darkness of his disability. My heart and mind scream in pain and true hate at what is happening. Vermont's representatives in Washington are fighting for us, but my hopelessness prevails!

– **Catherine, Bellows Falls, VT**

As a child I was in Head Start! It gave me a young love for learning, a community of caring people and family supports. I still have contact with my Head Start teacher. My very first teacher.

My aunt is a retired Head Start teacher from a different chapter. During an internship with her I could see the diversity in her classroom and community. She helped support so many different families. Today, I am a Head Start teacher and see the importance of it first hand. These kids and families need this support and sense of community. The children we serve daily need Head Start. They have a sense of home away from home and support. It helps them grow in all developing areas. It serves the whole child's needs and gives the families tools to carry over at home. We need Head Start!

– **Amy, Bennington, VT**

I have two children who have been attending Head Start since they were mere weeks old. One is now 1 year old, and the other is nearly 2. The learning and bonding experiences they've gained from this program are invaluable, and I treasure the moments captured in photos throughout the playrooms. Programs like Head Start are essential and should not be diminished by government decisions that overlook their true value. Let's focus on addressing the real issues at hand.

– **James, Burlington, VT**

VIRGINIA

Head Start has improved my grandson 90 percent. He was almost nonverbal when he started and can now express himself most of the time. He loves school and we live seeing the progress he has made. Please continue this service for the many children that need this help.

– **Mavis, Marion, VA**

I went to Head Start as a child and loved it. My child was in Head Start and he loved it. So, as a parent of a Head Start child it was very educational. I was a Policy Council Member. Head Start does help the kids in learning, social, emotional, in all areas of the program. Also, I have worked in Head Start for 31 years. I was a Secretary, Family Service Worker, & Financial Assistant now Billing Clerk & Purchasing Agent. I had two grandchildren that went to Head Start and they loved it too. Please don't eliminate Head Start.

– **Susan, Grundy, VA**

Head Start gave me the foundation for my education. My children and grandchildren have attended Head Start. Without the childcare mothers would not be able to work and support their families.

– Anonymous, Wise, VA

WASHINGTON

I am a single mother of two special needs children who benefited greatly from the Head Start/ECEAP program. My children are currently in kindergarten and 5th grade, and thanks to the program my children are thriving well in school. Yes they are both on IEPs due to disabilities and learning problems but without the Head Start/ECAP program they would be further behind than the average child their age.

I feel that getting rid of this program is an extremely bad idea due to the fact that it is beneficial for all children to experience learning whether it be in ECAP or Head Start so that they are prepped and ready for kindergarten and beyond.

– Stephanie, Airway Heights, WA

My kid was in Head Start from as early as possible. She definitely got less of a fair chance in life with her mother (me) being an IV drug addict while she was in-utero. Head Start evened out some of the unfair disadvantages. Now she is thriving and if it wasn't for Head Start, especially during the pandemic, I don't know where she would be.

Head Start and state-funded child care has and still does make it possible for me as a single mom to go to work and continue in my five-and-a-half year plus recovery journey. And that makes it so I can be present to set her up for the best possible future and break generational addiction and trauma cycles.

Today I work as a Certified Peer Counselor, supporting others through their mental health and recovery journeys. Head Start and childcare funding doesn't hurt us - it sets us all up for a better future. The education of our citizens and supporting working parents is ALWAYS worth investing in!

– Tristin, Bellingham, WA

"Head Start and state-funded child care has and still does make it possible for me as a single mom to go to work and continue in my five-and-a-half year plus recovery journey."

– Tristin, Bellingham, WA

My daughter was born at 23 weeks 5 days gestation. Her twin sister unfortunately died at only 3 days old. We had a fairly uneventful 120 day NICU stay. Once home we started birth-3 services where my daughter received therapy for her vision, language and motor skills. These services have continued on with Head Start and I hope it can be a seamless transition into Kindergarten.

With Head Start and birth-3 services my daughter has made strides in her language as well as gross and fine motor skills. These services are where our tax dollars belong. Our communities benefit when our children get the services they need to thrive.

I am disheartened by the current attempts to cut funding to such a crucial program. I hope that Head Start can continue to provide quality preschool to our children for generations to come.

– Gabriella, Everett, WA

My son is a Head Start graduate, my daughter starts this fall with Head Start, and I myself am a former Head Start educator. With nearly 5 years as a teaching assistant with Head start/ECEAP I can tell you what this program needs

is MORE funding. We should be paying teachers a living wage, funding these classrooms with taxpayer dollars and not teachers salaries.

This program works with underprivileged, special needs children to help them have a successful transition to kindergarten and beyond. With the Washington kindergarten learning standards increasing every year, without key programs like Head Start you will only see our global failure in academia increase.

– **Cori, Manson, WA**

I am an Early Childhood educator that works at a Head Start. I have seen so much progress in the children who have been in my classroom the past 3 years I've been with Head Start.

The resources Head Start provides is irreplaceable. Not only do parents have a place for their children to go during the day when at work, but children learn so much while in Head Start. They learn life long skills such as social emotional skills, how to regulate themselves and how to solve problems.

The work I do is very important and all children deserve access to preschool regardless of their background, their family's financial situation or where they live. Please fight for Head Start, all the children and families we serve and all the educators who chose to be in the field and work for Head Start. Thank you.

– **Kayla, Ocean Park, WA**

WEST VIRGINIA

As a current manager in a Head Start/Early Head Start program I have been amazed at the difference our organization makes in the lives of our children and families. I have been with Head Start for 10 years and within those years I have seen families overcome obstacles and make strides in becoming better families and better advocates for their families.

Head Start and Early Head Start offers valuable services beyond the education piece. Families are encouraged to set goals and take action to improve their circumstances. I know of several parents who have set the goal of getting their GED and have been able to do this with the help of the Family Service Worker. I also have had parents get

"Head Start offered wonderful resources such as free eye and hearing exams. If they had not, I may not have known for a long time that my son was practically blind in one of his eyes..."

**– Melissa,
Waukesha, WI**

their driver's licenses and find employment.

We have been fortunate enough with our organization to offer employment opportunities to parents that have had or have children in the program.

Head Start is more than a simple "school" model, it is a program that empowers children and families to make better lives for themselves, in turn making our communities, counties and state better! Keep Head Start!

– **Dianna, Oak Hill, WV**

I found out I was having my 3rd baby pretty late in life. He was born premature. At 29 weeks 3 days. 2lb 11oz. Early Head Start helped me through my emotional rollercoaster, they helped me get the right paperwork filled out. They taught and played with my child like he was their own. This program has helped SOOOO many in our small WV community.

– **Sabrina, Pine Grove, WV**

I have worked for Head Start for 36 years. It has been a great program and needs to continue to exist for low income families. Please don't cut our funds for a well deserving program that has existed for over 60 years. We are the best program for early education for our families. Head Start stands for what is a head start in life for these children. I love this program!

– **Cindy, Pennsboro, WV**

WISCONSIN

All three of my children were students of Head Start. I was a single mother and this program offered me so much support and so many tools to help me offer my children a solid foundation and readiness for their school years. For the duration of having my three children enrolled, I served on the Policy Council and was also the President of the Policy Council for a year.

On occasions I did drop ins, where I would spend the day with my child in their classroom, helping out and observing. What I saw was so amazing. The lunches provided were truly wonderful and healthy. I witnessed all three of my children taking “no thank you” bites of foods that they otherwise would shut down at home. I took that tool with me and made that a rule of the home.

Head Start offered wonderful resources such as free eye and hearing exams. If they had not, I may not have known for a long time that my son was practically blind in one of his eyes, as he did not present like he had an issue, due to being born with vision as he has. My grandson is now a student. I feel safety and comfort in him being enrolled, and I look forward to watching my granddaughter hop on that little yellow bus in a couple years. When you see these little ones hop on that bus, you see such huge confidence forming in a little person. It is so very special. This program was put together with such care by Dr. Timothy Nolan Ph.D. He truly cares and

has placed such hard work into creating such an amazing program that offers families that struggle with some foundational building blocks for success.

I will forever be grateful for the opportunities that were offered to my family through this program, as my now adult children all have cherished and fond memories of attendance. Moreso, some of the bonds they formed there still have to this very day.

I would like to add that I believe these foundations and my compassionate parenting is exactly why I raised three strong, independent and amazing kids who are kind and compassionate and incredibly intelligent adults. Please preserve this treasured program.

– **Melissa, Waukesha, WI**

I work at Head Start and the kids I serve are amazing! Our services make a difference in their lives and their education! Please save our program!

– **Tammy, Waupaca, WI**

At age 73, I volunteer weekly for the Head Start program in my small town of 55,000 people. I see how dedicated and well-trained the teachers are, and what a difference it makes to the children over the years. I learn a little about their families and the difficulties they may be having economically or otherwise.

Head Start creates a wonderful, safe place for these children and helps their families to be able to care for their children as they want them to be cared for. The children get a wonderful education, so that they can move ahead in the public schools when they are old enough. Please keep this incredibly valuable program alive. I see every week what a difference it makes to the children in my community.

– **Anne, Casper, WY**

MomsRising.org is an on-the-ground and online grassroots organization of more than a million people who are working to increase family economic security, stop discrimination against women and moms, and build a nation where businesses and families can thrive.

Established in 2006, MomsRising and its members are organizing and speaking out to improve public policy and to change the national dialogue on issues that are critically important to America's families, including criminal justice reform, immigration policy reform, and gun safety. MomsRising is working for paid family and medical leave, affordable, high quality childcare and early learning, and for an end to the wage and hiring discrimination which penalizes women — particularly moms and women of color — and so many others.

MomsRising advocates for access to healthy food for all kids, health care for all, earned sick days, and breastfeeding rights so that all children can have a healthy start.

MomsRising maintains a Spanish language website: www.MamásConPoder.org. Sign up online at www.MomsRising.org — and follow us on our blog, and on Twitter and Facebook.