

Head Start is a federally-funded, locally-run early childhood development program that provides comprehensive services for America's most vulnerable children and their families.

# 2017 National Head Start Profile



## Access to Head Start in the United States

**732,711**

Funded Head Start (HS) Slots



**31%** of eligible children ages 3 - 5 had access to HS\*

**154,352**

Funded Early Head Start (EHS) Slots



**7%** of eligible children under 3 had access to EHS\*

These slots filled **57,083 classrooms** in the United States.

## By the numbers:

**\$9,574,923,948**

FY17 Estimated Funding for HS, EHS, and EHS-Child Care Partnerships

**1,608** Head Start programs

**1,398** Early Head Start programs



"Head Start was my chance for success. My family included a single mom and six siblings. Only the two youngest, my sister and I, attended Head Start. The four oldest have either been incarcerated, struggled with drug addiction, had trouble maintaining a job, or passed away. My sister is a successful court reporter. I have served as a military officer, state agency head, and speaker for the State Department. What was the discriminating factor? I contend it was Head Start."

**Chuck Mills**  
Head Start Alum

## The Head Start Advantage

Head Start children **reduce their vocabulary deficit by 38%** during the program year.

Head Start children are **31% less likely to have been held back** a grade.

Head Start children are **19% less likely to smoke** as adults.

High quality birth-to-five programs, like the combination of EHS and HS, **pay off 13% per year.**

## The National Head Start Workforce



**239,567**

HS and EHS jobs in the United States

The average Head Start teacher with a bachelor's degree makes only **\$33,373** per year.

## In the United States...



**22,263**

slots were funded to serve American Indian / Alaska Native children



**30,580**

slots were funded to serve Migrant / Seasonal children



**26,109**

children in foster care were served by Head Start



**14,798**

children with veteran / active military parents were served by Head Start



**47,714**

children experiencing homelessness were served by Head Start



**404,950**

families participated in health education



**1,021,102**

children had continuously accessible health care



**944,808**

children had continuous access to dental care



**132,869**

children with disabilities were served by Head Start



**128,804**

parents advanced their education level



**67,348**

families received job training



**15,290**

pregnant women were served by Early Head Start

## About NHSA

The National Head Start Association is a nonprofit organization committed to the belief that every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to succeed in life. NHSA is the voice for more than 1 million children, 200,000 staff and 1,600 Head Start grantees in the United States.

For more information, please contact us: [go.nhsa.org/Contact](https://www.nhsa.org/Contact).

\*Eligible is defined as children from birth to age five who are from families with incomes below the poverty level, are homeless, and/or receive public assistance. Foster children are eligible regardless of their foster family's income.

For citations and other state fact sheets, please visit [www.nhsa.org/Fact-Sheets](https://www.nhsa.org/Fact-Sheets)



NATIONAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Our mission is to coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education.