

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



The Head Start Advantage

Success in School Readiness

Key Takeaways

1. Head Start children have enhanced physical health, improved social skills, and increased math, language, and literacy skills that better prepare them for kindergarten and school.
2. Head Start parents are more engaged in supporting their children's learning and success at home and in school.

Measurable Impact

Better engagement

Head Start children are able to pay better attention in school and engage in learning, as well as have more positive relationships with their parents, teachers, and peers.

Life-long skills

Head Start children perform better in cognitive and language development and have better executive function skills.

Literacy

Head Start children have better pre-reading, pre-writing and vocabulary skills.

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

The Head Start Advantage: Success in School Readiness

What is school readiness and why is it important?

School readiness describes the level at which children possess the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and life.

The *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF)* outlines and describes the skills, behaviors, and concepts that are essential for school and long-term success. The framework consists of five domains: approaches to learning; social and emotional development; language and literacy; cognition; and perception, motor, and physical development.

Development in these five areas lays the foundation for a child's future educational, social, and economic success. Sadly, academic achievement gaps between higher- and lower-income students have increased in the past three decades, and these disparities are present when children enter kindergarten and persist as children progress throughout school.

Research has shown that early learning habits and outcomes largely predict later academic performance. For instance, self-regulation skills promote or limit a child's capacity to follow classroom rules, sit still, and learn.

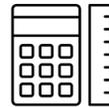
How does Head Start promote children's school readiness?

The Head Start model recognizes that a child's family, school, and community interact and influence his or her development.

Head Start embeds school readiness in its Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework and adopts a multigenerational approach to its services, focusing on creating opportunities for and addressing the needs of both children and their parents.

Head Start's goals for school readiness are threefold: children are ready for school; families are ready to support their children's learning; and schools are ready for children.

For citations, please visit go.nhsa.org/HSA



Head Start children make progress towards norms in math and have significantly enhanced cognitive abilities.



Dual language learners in Head Start have higher scores on receptive vocabulary, letter-word identification, and spelling.



Head Start children are more likely to have hearing and vision screening, health insurance, to have received dental checkups, and to be immunized.



Head Start children are less hyperactive, withdrawn, and aggressive, and participation in Head Start increases their self-control and self-esteem.



Longitudinal studies demonstrate Head Start's long-term impact on children's educational attainment and life chances, including increased high school graduation rates, increased likelihood of pursuing and completing higher education, and decreased criminal behavior among African-Americans.

What is Head Start?

Head Start (HS) is a comprehensive early education program for children from at-risk backgrounds from birth to age 5. From early math and reading skills to confidence and resilience, Head Start helps children build the abilities they need to be successful in school and life. Head Start recognizes the role of parents as their child's first and lifelong educators and engages parents as equal partners.