

CHILD CARE GAP MAP FACT SHEET

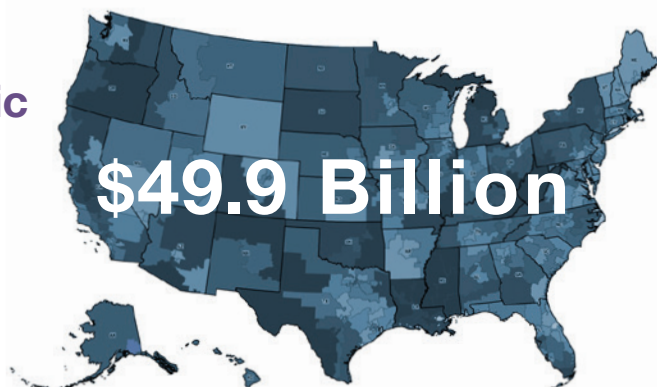
The Impact of Head Start on Child Care Access

Head Start services for children ages birth to age five, including early learning, health, and family well-being, are a critical component of the early care and education systems in each state. In 2023-24 there were **774,832** funded Head Start slots nationwide. Without Head Start, **654,506** children would not have access to child care within a reasonable driving distance of their homes. Defunding Head Start would increase the child care gap by 15.6%. The impact is even greater in rural areas (with a gap increase of 17.9%), where fewer child care options exist beyond Head Start.

The loss of Head Start services would cost the U.S. economy billions

The resulting disruption for working families who rely on Head Start would lead to an estimated additional economic loss of **\$49.9 billion** nationwide as a result of reduced workforce participation, lower productivity, decreased household earnings, business earnings impact, and tax loss.

10-Year Economic Loss



AT A GLANCE

774,832 children served through Head Start slots in 2023–24

654,506 children would not have access to child care without Head Start

15.6% increase in the national child care gap without Head Start

- **17.9% gap increase** in rural areas
- **14.7% gap increase** in urban areas



Visit childcaregap.org to map the gap and view the impact by state, county, congressional districts, and more.



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