

CHILDREN IN THE 2009 BUDGET: US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OMNIBUS

Federal investments in children constitute a small and declining percentage of total government spending. Though children make up one-quarter of our population, they receive only ten cents out of every non-defense dollar spent by the federal government. Out of all federal spending, the children's share is only 8%. Furthermore, a report released last year by First Focus entitled *Children's Budget 2008* details how federal spending on children, as a share of total non-defense spending, has declined by more than 10% over the past 5 years. From 2004 to 2008 federal spending on children rose by only 1.4%, in real terms, while at the same time total federal non-defense spending increased at nearly ten times that rate. In fact, out of every new non-defense dollar spent by the federal government from 2004 to 2008, children received only one penny, pushing kids back ever further.

2009 DISCRETIONARY SPENDING ON CHILDREN

The picture for just discretionary spending on children has been even bleaker. Discretionary spending is that which Congress must reappropriate each year as part of the annual budget process. These discretionary allotments are contained in the twelve appropriations bills that Congress is supposed to pass each year. For fiscal year 2009, however, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution which, for the most part, funded the government at FY 2008 levels until March of this year. In order to provide funding for the remainder of the year, Congress must finish the process and pass its FY 2009 budget. The House of Representatives recently released its version of omnibus legislation that would allocate 2009 funding.

Out of all federal support for children and children's programs, about one-third comes in the form of discretionary appropriations. From 2004 to 2008, the real value of federal discretionary spending on children has declined by 6.7%, in real terms. This decline came during the same period in which other non-defense discretionary spending increased by more than 8%. Fortunately, if passed, the House omnibus would begin to reverse this trend. The omnibus contains more than \$74 billion in discretionary investment in children, an increase of more than \$3.5 billion over last year. While that level of investment would amount to a 4.9% increase over 2008 levels, when adjusted for inflation, it would still be 2.5% below 2005 levels.

The increase in discretionary spending on children in the House bill derives in large measure from increases to a few substantial housing assistance programs, such as Tenant Based Rental Assistance, and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. In addition to increases in housing assistance, this bill would provide a \$1.2 billion boost to education funding, a \$150 million increase in funding for discretionary children's health programs, as well as significant growth, in percentage terms, to discretionary investments in child welfare, safety and youth training.

DISCRETIONARY SPENDING ON CHILDREN, 2009 HOUSE OMNIBUS

	2008 Funding	2009 House Omnibus	Real Change from Last Year	Real Five Year Change
TOTAL FOR KIDS	70.56 billion	74.07 billion	4.9%	-2.5%
EDUCATION	48.63 billion	49.89 billion	2.6%	-7.3%
HOUSING	13.81 billion	15.75 billion	14.0%	20.7%
HEALTH	4.06 billion	4.21 billion	3.7%	-5.8%
CHILD WELFARE	1.06 billion	1.12 billion	4.9%	-7.8%
CHILD SAFETY	756 million	764 million	1.1%	-13.0%
YOUTH TRAINING	1.87 billion	1.92 billion	2.8%	-10.8%

SELECTED KEY DISCRETIONARY PROGRAMS IN THE 2009 HOUSE OMNIBUS

	2008 Funding	House 2009 Omnibus	Real Change from Last Year	Real Five Year Change
KEY EDUCATION PROGRAMS:				
Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies	13.90 billion	14.49 billion	4.3%	3.2%
Special Education Grants to States	11.04 billion	11.50 billion	4.2%	-1.4%
Head Start	6.90 billion	7.11 billion	3.1%	-5.7%
State Grants for Improving Teacher Quality	2.94 billion	2.95 billion	0.4%	-8.3%
21st Century Community Learning Centers	1.08 billion	1.13 billion	4.6%	3.5%
Preschool Grants	374 million	374 million	0.0%	-11.8%
Fund for the Improvement of Education	254 million	250 million	-1.3%	-45.2%

KEY HEALTH PROGRAMS:				
Community Health Centers	2.06 billion	2.19 billion	6.1%	-7.8%
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant	666 million	662 million	-0.6%	-17.0%
Healthy Start	99.7 million	102.4 million	2.6%	-9.4%
Carol M. White Physical Education for Progress	75.7 million	78 million	3.1%	-3.6%
Coordinated School Health Programs	54.4 million	57.6 million	6.1%	-7.9%

KEY CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS:				
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Programs	95.4 million	110 million	15.3%	-2.0%
Child Welfare Services	282 million	282 million	0.0%	-11.8%
Adoption Incentives	4.3 million	36.5 million	744.3%	4.0%

KEY HOUSING PROGRAMS:				
LIHEAP	2.57 billion	5.1 billion	98.4%	112.0%
Public Housing Operating Fund	4.2 billion	4.5 billion	6.1%	65.7%

KEY CHILD SAFETY PROGRAMS:				
Juvenile Justice Programs	384 million	374 million	-2.5%	-10.5%
Violence in Schools Prevention	92.9 million	94.5 million	1.6%	-9.0%

KEY YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAMS:				
Workforce Investment Act Youth Training Programs	924 million	924 million	0%	-15.0%
Youth Build	58.9 million	70 million	18.7%	-0.8%

Both the category totals, as well as the overall total in the above table reflect spending on children, which for some programs is not equal to the full appropriation. Funding for programs within categories will not sum to category totals as they represent only a sample of all programs within that category. Similarly, category totals will not sum to the overall total, as there are scattered children's programs in other categories not presented here.



For more on the children's share, on category definitions, and on children's spending in general, visit childrensbudget.org.