

CHILDREN'S BUDGET 2019

September 10, 2019



First Focus on Children is proud to introduce the 13th annual release of its signature Children's Budget publication, a comprehensive analysis of how kids and families have been faring in the federal budget over the past five years. Our treatment of children today will decide the nation's future—which is why the alarming data in this report should spur immediate action. Unless policymakers take proactive steps to invest in children, they will continue to lag behind.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM CHILDREN'S BUDGET 2019

Child Poverty Remains High, but Children's Share of the Budget

Continues to Shrink: At a time when the poverty rate is 54.4% higher for children than it is for adults, we should be dedicating more, not fewer, of our federal resources to closing that gap. Yet the share of spending on children has declined to an **all-time low of just 7.21 percent—a near 10 percent decline since FY 2015**. Under the Trump Administration's proposed FY 2020 budget, the share of spending on children would drop even further to just 6.45 percent due to the elimination of 44 programs serving children and families and deep cuts across multiple other accounts.

Spending on Children is Not Keeping Up with Rising Costs and

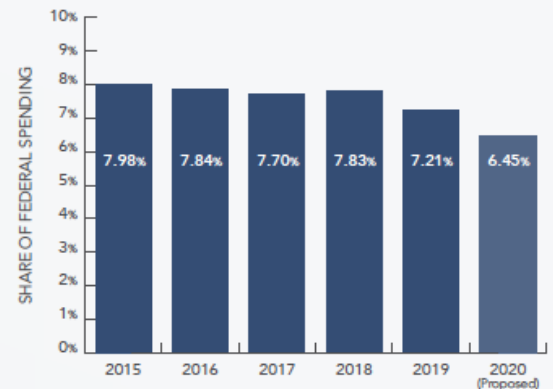
Growing Need: Spending on children is not keeping pace with inflation, which means that between FY 2018 and FY 2019, total spending on children experienced an inflation adjusted cut of nearly 1 percent. Without significant increases, funding for critical children's services and programs will continue to lose ground, and we will struggle to address the pressing challenges facing children and families.

If Congress Fails to Act, Children Will Fall Further Behind: Our analysis shows a long-term decline in the share of spending on children, and the Urban Institute projects children will receive only 1 percent of all new federal spending between now and 2028. As of FY 2018, we are also spending a larger share of the federal budget on interest on the national debt than on children's programs. **Kids cannot afford the status quo:**

- Almost **80 percent** of eligible 3-5 year old children lack access to Head Start programs
- The Federal Government is not fulfilling **55 percent** of its funding commitment for Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) grants
- Of the households on the waiting list for housing assistance, **60 percent** are families with children
- **75 percent** of poor families in the US who are eligible for cash assistance do not receive it
- Nearly **83 percent** of children who receive free or reduced price lunch during the school year do not have access to the summer meals program

Congress must take concerted, proactive steps to reverse these trends and ensure that our nation's children have the resources they need to thrive.

Children's Share of Total Federal Spending Declined between FY 2015 and FY 2019



1 Julia B. Isaacs, Cary Lou, Heather Hahn, Joycelyn Ovalle, and C. Eugene Steuerle. "Kids' Share 2018: Report on Federal Expenditures on Children through 2017 and Future Expenditures," The Urban Institute, Oct. 2018.

