



The Kid Angle

Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children

Senate risks being the Grinch on BBB

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And other tales of stinginess toward children

It's been 20 days since the House passed the Build Back Better Act and still the Senate dithers. While much is at stake — [more stable health insurance for children, affordable high-quality child care, greater access to food](#) — the clock is ticking fastest on what may be its most transformative provision: **The expanded child tax credit.**

The monthly payments of up to \$300 per child, which began going to 90% of the country's children in July, will stop cold if the Senate does not pass the bill — [pushing an estimated 10 million children back into poverty](#) basically overnight. To prevent any disruption to payments, [lawmakers must act by Dec. 28.](#)

Here's what's at stake:

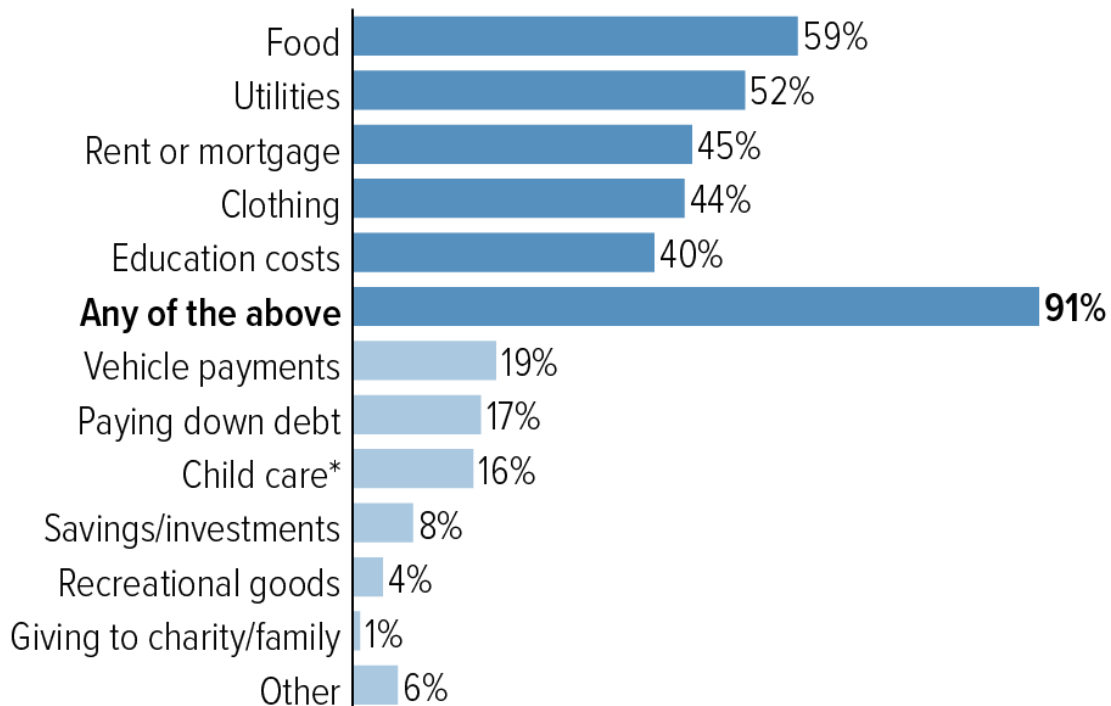
- The **purchasing power of [39 million families](#)**
- The food, clothing, housing and other **necessities of up to [65 million children](#)**
- A return to giving the least assistance — or [no assistance — to the neediest children](#)
- [Increased inequities](#) through reduced payments to roughly half of all Black and Hispanic children
- **Exclusion of 17-year-olds** from needed aid

- Forfeit of a projected [40% annual reduction in child poverty](#).

[Find more impact data on our website.](#)

Families With Low Incomes Spend Expanded Child Tax Credit on Most Basic Needs, Education

Percent of households with incomes below \$35,000 who spent their credit payments on:



*Percent of households with child(ren) under age 5.

Note: Education costs include school books and supplies, school tuition, tutoring services, after-school programs, and transportation for school. Household income is in 2020. Figures are for households who reported receiving a Child Tax Credit payment in the last 30 days in data collected July 21–September 27, 2021.

Source: CBPP analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey public use files for survey weeks 34-38.

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Critics' tantrum over child care disputed

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell this week disparaged efforts to create affordable, high-quality child care as a [“toddler takeover.”](#)

Critics initially tried to scare the public by calling the plan “communism,” but recently moved on to alleging that it will spike prices and put child care out of reach for many families. [Proponents say that's nonsense.](#)



It's also worth noting, [as HuffPo points out](#), that the nearly “\$400 billion in new federal spending would represent **the largest investment in the early childhood years in American history**” and that “regardless of whether the (opponents') claim is true, the new Democratic initiative could **transform the lives of millions of Americans, with thousands of dollars in savings on average for low-income and middle-class families.**”

Parents want a forward-looking agenda for kids — not book bans

This week [Bloomberg reported](#) that Republican candidates hope to win back suburban independents by capitalizing on parental angst over educational issues such as CRT and mask mandates. Far more deserving of parental wrath, argues First Focus on Children President Bruce Lesley, is the **lack of a comprehensive agenda to improve the lives and well-being of the next generation.**

“What most parents want is a real, thoughtful, and forward-looking agenda for their children,” [he writes in a recent post](#). “Parents want what is best for their kids. Censorship, book bans, book burnings, the whitewashing of history, the denial of science, and a retreat into the distant past is not that agenda.”

Find our real, thoughtful, forward-looking [Children's Agenda for the 117th Congress at this link](#).



*Loudoun County School Board meeting in Ashburn, Virginia, on June 22, 2021.
REUTERS/Evelyn Hockstein*

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First Focus on Children
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