



WSA Washington State Association of Head Start & ECEAP

*Serving ECEAP, Head Start, Migrant Head Start,
Tribal Head Start and Early Head Start Programs
and Families*



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Will Congress Continue To Play Games with Head Start Children? More Than 1,000 Kids in Washington Could Be Dropped From Program Next Year Unless Congress Acts

Background

In 2009 Congress passed and President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. More than \$2 billion was provided to Head Start and Early Head Start to expand services to 60,000 eligible children throughout the nation. [Over 1,000 children in Washington State are benefitting from these recovery dollars.](#) If Congress does not act and programs do not receive a \$1 billion increase in fiscal year 2011, all the children being served by recovery funds will be dropped by October 2011. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees (of which Senator Patty Murray D-WA is a member) have approved enough funding to maintain service levels, but the full House and Senate have not taken a vote.

Research continues to show that learning begins at birth, but many children never get a chance to master the necessary skills to be successful in kindergarten, resulting in missed opportunities for these little learners and higher costs to tax payers due to school failure. At risk children face an even steeper climb. But programs like Head Start can change the equation, preparing kids for school and helping their parents find employment. Sadly, despite the recent increase in funding as a result of the recovery act Head Start has only been able to serve about 4 out of 10 eligible children, while Early Head Start has been able to serve less than 4 out of every 100 eligible families. [Moreover, the US Census Bureau reported this week that one in five kids live in poverty in the United States—the highest level of reported child poverty in decades.](#) These are families who earn less than \$22,100 for a family of four.

Joel Ryan, Executive Director of the Washington Association of Head Start and ECEAP (WSA) said the following:

"I am disappointed that Congress has not acted swiftly to approve new funding for Head Start. I know that the upcoming elections have a way of playing havoc with reason, but now is not the time for Congress to play games with Head Start children. With new census data showing one of the largest increases in child poverty in decades, Congress should be increasing funding for programs like Head Start that help low income kids get ready for school, not spending their time playing partisan games. We need our elected leaders to act more like adults and put the needs of our country's

kids first. If Congress does not act soon more than 1,000 children in Washington will lose services next year. ”

In Washington 1054 new children and families are now receiving high quality services due to the ARRA Expansion. [Click here for an interactive map of how each congressional district benefitted from the expansion.](#)

District 1, Rep. Jay Inslee -	82 children, 12 jobs created
District 2, Rep. Rick Larsen -	56 children, 13 jobs created
District 3, Rep. Brian Baird -	160 children, 28 jobs created
District 4, Rep. Doc Hastings -	250 children, 45 jobs created
District 5, Rep. Cathy McMorris-Rogers-	112 children, 20 jobs created
District 6, Rep. Norm Dicks -	100 children, 6 jobs created
District 7, Rep. Jim McDermott -	235 children, 35 jobs created
District 8, Rep. Dave Reichert -	32 children, 4 jobs created
District 9, Rep. Adam Smith -	27 children, 5 jobs created.
Total for Washington - 1054 children (202 Head Start, 852 Early Head Start)	

About Head Start

In Washington State Head Start serves more than 16,000 pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Founded in 1965 the program provides a wide array of educational, social, health, nutrition, and parent engagement services to the most at risk children and their families. A recent study in Montgomery County, Maryland found that kindergarteners with special needs that received Head Start services needed 3.7 hours of special education per week on average compared to 9.8 hours for non-Head Start children. This is a huge financial savings. Additional research has found that children that have been through the program are less likely to need special education services, repeat a grade, get into trouble with the law, and end up on welfare. Strong research also exists for Early Head Start as well including the latest results from the impact study. Head Start gets kids ready for kindergarten and provides them opportunities to achieve their fullest potentials.

About WSA

The Washington State Association of Head Start/ECEAP is a statewide organization composed of representatives from ECEAP, Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant/Seasonal Head Start, and Native American Head Start. The association has been in existence since the late 1960's, and was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1986. The organization advocates for Head Start and for ECEAP in Olympia and in Washington DC. You can visit our web site at www.wsaheadstarteceap.com.

CONTACT: If you would like speak with or visit a local Head Start program that received recovery act funds so you can see how these funds are being put to use please call Joel Ryan or Katy Warren, 425.453.1227, cell phone 253.486.9077, or via e-mail at joel@wsaheadstarteceap.com. We would happy to arrange that for you.