

Head Start and Early Head Start Fast Facts

To provide you with the best science and to reduce review time, please find the following science-approved facts for use in your campaigns and materials. After each fact you will also find fast facts based on the science that can be cut and pasted word-for-word without need for additional science review. Please note that any change in wording will result in the need to run your documents through science review before release.

Importance of Head Start Programs

FACT 1

The federal Head Start program promotes school readiness for children in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social, and other services. Since it was established in 1965, Head Start, which includes preschool programs and Early Head Start, has served more than 35 million children, birth to age five, and their families.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Head Start promotes school readiness for children in low-income families.
- ▶ Head Start supports children's development by offering educational, nutritional, health, and social services to children, from birth to age five, and their families.
- ▶ Since it was established in 1965, Head Start has served more than 35 million children and their families.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Head Start Program Facts Fiscal Year 2017. https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/hs-program-fact-sheet-2017_0.pdf. Accessed May 18, 2018.

FACT 2

The Early Head Start (EHS) program serves infants and toddlers up to age three, and their parents. In 2014, EHS served 110,000 children per year in more than 1,000 programs, making it one of the largest programs serving low-income infants and toddlers in the United States.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Early Head Start serves infants and toddlers up to age three, and their parents.
- ▶ Early Head Start is one of the largest programs serving low-income infants and toddlers in the United States.

Source:

Green BL, Ayoub C, Bartlett JD, et al. The effect of Early Head Start on child welfare system involvement: a first look at longitudinal child maltreatment outcomes. *Child Youth Serv Rev.* 2014; 42:127-135.

Participation in Head Start and Early Head Start

FACT 3

In 2017, the Head Start programs cumulatively served 1,056,107 children ages birth to five and 15,290 pregnant women in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, six territories, and tribal nations.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ In 2017, Head Start programs served more than one million children, from newborns to age five.
- ▶ Head Start programs served more than 15,000 pregnant women in 2017.
- ▶ Head Start programs served more than one million children and more than 15,000 pregnant women in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, six territories, and tribal nations in 2017.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. National All Programs Services Snapshot (2016–2017). Published 2017. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/service-snapshot-all-programs-2016-2017.pdf>. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 4

According to a report from the National Institute for Early Education Research, the number of infants and toddlers enrolled in Early Head Start more than doubled between 2007 and 2015. At the same time, the number of children ages three and four years old enrolled in Head Start nationally decreased.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ The number of infants and toddlers enrolled in Early Head Start more than doubled between 2007 and 2015.
- ▶ The number of children ages three and four enrolled in Head Start decreased between 2007 and 2015.

Source:

Barnett WS and Friedman-Krauss AH; National Institute for Early Education Research. State(s) of Head Start. Published December 2016. http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/HS_Full_Reduced.pdf. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 5

In 2017, 82,220 infants and toddlers were enrolled in Early Head Start in center-based settings. Of those, 94.1 percent attended five days per week for more than six hours per day.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ More than 82,000 infants and toddlers were enrolled in Early Head Start programs based in centers in 2017.
- ▶ In 2017, 94 percent of infants and toddlers enrolled in Early Head Start programs based in centers attended five days per week for more than six hours per day.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. National Early Head Start Services Snapshot (2016–2017). Published 2017. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/service-snapshot-ehs-2016-2017.pdf>. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 6

According to a report from the National Institute for Early Education Research, only 18 percent of low-income three-year-olds and 21 percent of low-income four-year-olds receive Head Start services (including American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) and Migrant and Seasonal (MSHS) Head Start programs).

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Only 18 percent of low-income three-year-olds receive Head Start services.
- ▶ Only 21 percent of low-income four-year-olds receive Head Start services.
- ▶ Only 18 percent of low-income three-year-olds and 21 percent of low-income four-year-olds receive Head Start services.
- ▶ The majority of low-income three- and four-year-olds do not receive Head Start services.

Source:

Barnett WS and Friedman-Krauss AH; National Institute for Early Education Research. State(s) of Head Start. Published December 2016. http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/HS_Full_Reduced.pdf. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 7

In 2017, only 31 percent of eligible children ages three to five had access to Head Start and only seven percent of eligible children younger than age three had access to Early Head Start. Those numbers are even worse for some subgroups of children. In 2017, only 17 percent of eligible children younger than age five had access to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, while 44 percent of eligible children ages three to five had access to American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ In 2017, only 31 percent of eligible children ages three to five had access to Head Start and only seven percent of eligible children younger than age three had access to Early Head Start.
- ▶ The majority of children eligible for Head Start and Early Head Start did not have access to the programs in 2017.
- ▶ Only 17 percent of eligible children younger than age five had access to Migrant and Seasonal Head Start in 2017.
- ▶ In 2017, 44 percent of eligible children ages three to five had access to American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs.

Source:

National Head Start Association. 2017 National Head Start Profile. https://www.nhsa.org/files/resources/2017-fact-sheet_national.pdf. Accessed May 24, 2018.

National Head Start Association. 2017 Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Profile. https://www.nhsa.org/files/resources/2017-fact-sheet_migrant-and-seasonal.pdf. Accessed May 24, 2018.

National Head Start Association. 2017 American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Profile. https://www.nhsa.org/files/resources/2017-fact-sheet_ain.pdf. Accessed May 24, 2018.

Short-term Benefits of Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

FACT 8

A national evaluation found that Head Start participation results in positive short-term benefits for children's cognitive development. At the end of the Head Start year, three- and four-year-old children with access to Head Start demonstrated better skills in language and literacy development than children who did not participate in Head Start.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Participation in Head Start has short-term benefits for children's development.
- ▶ After participating in Head Start, kids are better at correctly identifying letters, words, and colors.
- ▶ According to a national evaluation, three- and four-year-old children participating in Head Start showed better vocabulary and letter identification skills at the end of the program year, compared to children who did not participate in the program.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Head Start Impact Study: Final Report. Published January 2010. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/hs_impact_study_final.pdf. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 9

Parents of children that participated in Head Start when they were three years old reported positive impacts on their children's social-emotional development. By the end of third grade, parents reported better social skills and positive approaches to learning, compared to a non-Head Start group.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Participation in Head Start benefits children's social-emotional development.
- ▶ Years after children participated in Head Start as three-year-olds, their parents say they have better social skills, compared to those who did not participate in Head Start.
- ▶ Children who participated in Head Start as three-year-olds were more likely to have a positive attitude for learning and better social skills by the end of third grade, compared to those who did not participate in Head Start.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Third Grade Follow-up to Head Start Impact Study: Final Report. Published December 2012. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/head_start_report.pdf. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 10

A national evaluation of Early Head Start found that at the end of the program, three-year-old children performed significantly better on a range of cognitive, language, and social, and emotional development measures, compared to those who were not in Early Head Start. The benefits on children's social and emotional development persisted two years after the program ended.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ After participating in Early Head Start, three-year-old children have better learning, social, and emotional skills, compared to those who don't participate in the program.
- ▶ The positive impact Early Head Start has on children's social and emotional development remains after their participation in the program ends.
- ▶ Two years after participating in Early Head Start, the benefits of the program on children's social and emotional development continues.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Early Head Start Children in Grade 5: Long-Term Follow-up of the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project Study Sample, Final Report. Published December 2010. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/grade5.pdf>. Accessed May 23, 2018.

FACT 11

In a nationally representative study, Head Start children had better social skills, impulse control, and approaches to learning by the end of the program. Head Start children also decreased their problem behaviors, such as aggression and hyperactivity.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children who participate in Head Start improve their social skills, impulse control, and attitude for learning new things by the end of their participation in the program.
- ▶ Participation in Head Start helps improve children's social skills.
- ▶ Participation in Head Start helps improve children's behavior and their interest in learning new things.
- ▶ Participation in Head Start has been shown to decrease children's aggression and hyperactivity.

Source:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Children's Progress During Head Start. Published June 2013. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/faces_2009_child_outcomes_brief_final.pdf. Accessed May 24, 2018.

FACT 12

A nationally representative study of low-income children found that Head Start participants had more healthy eating habits and were more likely to receive dental checkups, compared to non-participants. Head Start participants also had lower BMI scores and lower probability of being overweight compared to those in other non-parental care settings.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children who participate in Head Start have better healthy eating habits and are more likely to get dental checkups, compared to other low-income children that do not participate in the program.
- ▶ Children who participate in Head Start are less likely to be overweight than low-income children that do not participate in the program.

Source:

Cannon JS, Kilburn MR, Karoly LA. Investing Early: Taking Stock of Outcomes and Economic Returns from Early Childhood Programs. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation; 2017. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1900/RR1993/RAND_RR1993.pdf.

FACT 13

A study published in the journal Pediatrics found that obese, overweight, or underweight children who participate in Head Start had a significantly healthier body mass index (BMI) by kindergarten entry, compared to children in a primary care health system.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ A study published in Pediatrics showed that children who participate in Head Start who are obese, overweight, or underweight entered kindergarten at a healthier BMI than those who did not participate in the program.
- ▶ Children that are obese, overweight, or underweight who participated in Head Start entered kindergarten at a healthier BMI than those who did not participate in the program, according to a study in Pediatrics.

Source:

Lumeng JC, Kaciroti N, Sturza J, et al. Changes in body mass index associated with Head Start participation. Pediatrics. 2015; 135(2):e449-56, doi: 10.1542/peds.2014-1725.

FACT 14

A study in Children and Youth Services Review found that children who attended Early Head Start had significantly fewer child welfare encounters between the ages of five and nine years, compared to children who were not in the program. Early Head Start participation also slowed the rate of subsequent encounters.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children who participate in Early Head Start are less likely to be involved with the child welfare system as they get older.
- ▶ According to a study in Children and Youth Services Review, children who participate in Early Head Start had significantly fewer experiences with the child welfare system when they were between five- and nine-years-old, compared to children who were not in the program.

Source:

Green BL, Ayoub C, Bartlett JD, et al. The effect of Early Head Start on child welfare system involvement: a first look at longitudinal child maltreatment outcomes. Child Youth Serv Rev. 2014; 42:127-135.

Long-term Benefits of Head Start and Early Head Start Programs on Children and Families

FACT 15

An analysis from The Hamilton Project and The Brookings Institute found that participation in Head Start increases the probability that children will graduate from high school, attend college, and receive a post-secondary degree, license, or certification.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Children who participate in Head Start are more likely to graduate from high school, attend college, and receive a post-secondary degree, license, or certification.
- ▶ Participation in Head Start increases children's chances of graduating from high school, attending college, and receiving a post-secondary degree, license, or certification.

Source:

Bauer L and Schanzenbach DW. The Long-Term Impact of the Head Start Program. Published August 2016. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-long-term-impact-of-the-head-start-program/>. Accessed May 22, 2018.

FACT 16

Head Start graduates report investing more in their own children than siblings who did not attend Head Start. Head Start graduates spent more time teaching their own children the alphabet, shapes, numbers or colors; showing physical affection; spending more time doing the child's favorite activity; and reported spanking their children less.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ Adults who participated in Head Start as children report investing more in their own kids than their siblings who did not participate in the program.
- ▶ Adults who participated in Head Start as children spend more time teaching their kids things like the alphabet and shapes and participating in their child's favorite activity.
- ▶ Adults who participated in Head Start as children show physical affection for their kids more often.

Source:

Bauer L and Schanzenbach DW. The Long-Term Impact of the Head Start Program. Published August 2016. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-long-term-impact-of-the-head-start-program/>. Accessed May 23, 2018.

FACT 17

A study published in the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management found that parents of children who entered Head Start when they were three years old were more likely to increase their educational levels during their children's early years, compared to other at-risk parents.

Fast Facts:

- ▶ A study published in the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management found that parents of children who entered Head Start at three years old were more likely to advance their own education while their kids were young, compared to other at-risk parents.
- ▶ Parents of children who began participation in Head Start at three years old were more likely to improve their education while their kids were young, compared to other at-risk parents, according to a study published in the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management.

Source:

Sabol TJ, Chase-Lansdale PL. The influence of low-income children's participation in Head Start on their parents' education and employment. *J Pol Anal Manag.* 2015; 34(1): 136-161, doi: 10.1002/pam.21799.