

JOINT STATEMENT: Groups Call on Congress to Protect Head Start, End the Shutdown

October 29, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- Families with young children are feeling the pain of the federal shutdown, and without immediate Congressional action, tens of thousands of children could lose access to Head Start along with the care, education, nutrition, and stability it provides. The following **[51]** organizations issued a joint statement urging Congress to take action to protect Head Start by ending the federal shutdown now.

"If the federal shutdown persists, tens of thousands of children are at risk of losing access to Head Start and the care, education, nutrition, and stability it provides. We are strongly urging Congress to protect Head Start by ending the federal shutdown immediately.

Families need action. If the shutdown continues past **November 1**, an estimated **140 Head Start programs** across **41 states** plus Puerto Rico will not have received their operational funding. These programs serve **more than 65,000 young children**, providing valuable early learning, nutrition, child care, health screenings, and other important services. Without funding, many of these programs will be forced to close their doors, leaving children without care, teachers without pay, and parents without the ability to work.

For thousands of families, Head Start is essential. This program has 60 years of bipartisan support and works in every Congressional district to keep families strong, children learning, and communities thriving. Employers rely on it for a stable workforce, and children rely on it to build the skills that set the foundation for lifelong success.

The longer this shutdown lasts, the worse the consequences will be. We cannot allow political gridlock to take away opportunities from our youngest learners and their families. It's time for lawmakers to re-open the government and fund these programs through the Appropriations process. **Our message to Congress is simple: Protect Head Start. End the shutdown today.**"

Organizations included in this statement:

A Place 2 Grow
BridgeCare
California Afterschool Advocacy
California Child Care Resources and Referral Network
Child Care Aware of America
Civic Leaders for Illinois Children
Common Good Iowa
Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance
Children Now
Early Care and Education Consortium
Educare Network
Encompass Community Services
Every Child California

First Five Years Fund
Groundwork Ohio
Head Start California
Head Start WEST
Institute for Child Success
Kansas Head Start Association
Kids Win MO
Louisiana Policy Institute for Children
Low Income Investment Fund
Luminosa Research
Marin County Child Care Council
Massachusetts Head Start Association
Mendocino County Local Child Care and Development Planning Council
Moms First
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Child Care Association
National Head Start Association
New Orleans Youth and Planning Board
Nollie Jenkins Family Center Inc.
Ohio Head Start Association
Oregon Head Start Association
Parents as Teachers National Center
Partnership for Children and Youth
Peninsula Family Service
Region VII Head Start Association
ResourcesFull Consulting
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
Save the Children
Shine Early Learning
Start Early
St. Anne's Family Services
Tootris
Trust for Learning
United Way of Southeast Louisiana
Virginia Head Start Association
Voices for Utah Children
Western New York Child Care Action Team