

FACT SHEET

AN ASSAULT ON CHILDREN: THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS ON AMERICA'S KIDS



House Leadership's Budget Proposal Harms Children

Children represent approximately **23% of the U.S. population**, yet they received just 8.87% of the federal budget in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.¹ This lack of investment in children has already contributed to a dramatic rise in child poverty — from 5.2% in 2021 to 13.7% in 2023.² The House leadership's proposed budget would slash funding for essential programs, worsening child poverty, food insecurity, and access to health care while undermining child protection services.

Key Programs at Risk

The proposed budget disproportionately harms children by targeting **four major safety net programs** that provide health care, nutrition, cash assistance, child care, and child welfare services to millions of low-income families.

- **Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)**
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**
- **Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)**

How These Cuts Would Harm Kids

1. Medicaid and CHIP Cuts: Threatening Health Care for Over 37 Million Children

- Medicaid and CHIP provide health coverage for over **37 million children and 41% of all births** in our nation.³
- Proposed cuts would restrict eligibility, impose bureaucratic hurdles, and reduce benefits, putting millions of children at risk of losing coverage.
- **Impact on Kids:**
 - More children without routine and preventive care, leading to higher infant mortality and preventable illnesses
 - Fewer mental health services at a time when youth suicide and depression rates are rising
 - Delayed diagnoses for chronic conditions, worsening long-term health outcomes

2. SNAP Cuts: Worsening Child Hunger and Food Insecurity

- Nearly **15 million children** rely on SNAP benefits to access adequate nutrition, making up **nearly 40% of all program participants**.^{4,5}
- The proposed budget slashes SNAP funding, likely leading to fewer benefits and stricter eligibility requirements.
- **Impact on Kids:**
 - Increased child hunger—SNAP reduces food insecurity by 30%, and cuts will reverse these gains⁶
 - Lower academic performance—hungry children struggle to focus in school, leading to lower test scores and graduation rates

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- Long-term health problems—food insecurity is linked to higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and developmental delays

3. TANF Cuts: Stripping Assistance from Children Who Need It Most

- **70% of TANF beneficiaries are children**, yet the proposed budget slashes funding for the program, leaving fewer families able to access temporary cash assistance, job training, and child care support.⁷
- **Impact on Kids:**
 - More children living in extreme poverty—TANF is one of the few federal programs providing direct financial aid to families in crisis
 - Increased homelessness and family instability, as parents lose access to basic support
 - Long-term economic disadvantages — poverty is linked to poorer outcomes in every aspect of the lives of children, including lower lifetime earnings, poorer educational attainment, poorer health care outcomes, and increased rates of hunger, homelessness, and incidences of child abuse
 - Fewer families able to access child care, which is already difficult to find and pay for, and without which parents cannot work

4. SSBG Cuts: Weakening Child Welfare and Protection Services

- The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds essential child welfare programs, including child protective services, foster care, and support for struggling families, as well as child care in some states.
- The proposed House budget would potentially eliminate SSBG entirely, gutting programs that prevent child abuse and neglect and help families afford care for their children.
- **Impact on Kids:**
 - Fewer child protective services workers, increasing the risk of child abuse going undetected
 - Weakened foster care support, forcing states to cut services for children in need
 - More families facing crises without resources, increasing homelessness and instability
 - Cuts to child care slots and assistance to families, further limiting their ability to afford care

The Bottom Line: Congress Should Protect, Not Punish, Kids

- These proposed **budget cuts are not just numbers—they represent real harm** to children's health, nutrition, and economic security.
- Child poverty doubled in a single year (2022-2023), and these cuts will only make the crisis worse.⁸
- Research shows that investments in children yield immense returns.⁹
- Investing in children reduces poverty, improves health outcomes, and strengthens the future workforce.
- Congress must reject these devastating cuts and instead prioritize child well-being in federal funding decisions.

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ENDNOTES

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