



HEAD START POLLING HIGHLIGHTS

2025-2026

September 2026

OVERVIEW

The Head Start program is deeply popular with the American electorate, who recognize the essential role it plays in the lives of families with young children.

First Five Years Fund has a long track record of polling which consistently shows that Early Head Start and Head Start have strong support among Republican, Democratic, and Independent voters across the country.

Specifically:

- Head Start has strong bipartisan support: Across FFYF polling from January 2025–January 2026, voters of all parties consistently support Head Start.
- Head Start support spans demographics and geography: Head Start receives strong support across gender, parental status, age groups, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and geographic regions including urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- Voters value the comprehensive services and quality programming that Head Start provides: Voters strongly support the educational, health, and developmental services Head Start offers to children and families, particularly in rural communities.

An overview of polling from today through April 2025 follows.

National: Support for Head Start

Key Takeaway: In recent polling, the Head Start program had strong support across party lines, including:

- **87%** of all voters
- **84%** of Republicans
- **84%** of Independents
- **94%** of Democrats

Fielded: December 2025 among national voters.

Rural: Voters on Child Care and Head Start

Key Takeaway: There is strong support for Head Start in Rural America. This support focuses on the comprehensive services Head Start provides to children from families with very low incomes.

Four out of five (78%) Rural Americans say they support Head Start, including:

- **71%** of Rural Republicans
- **73%** of Rural Independents
- **92%** of Rural Democrats

This support is in large part due to services Head Start provides, including:

- **89%** support specialized services for children with developmental delays or disabilities
- **86%** support healthy meals and snacks for children
- **83%** support health screenings and other medical care for children
- **83%** support early learning programs that better prepare children for success in school

Fielded: September 8–13, 2025 among registered voters in rural areas.

National: Support Across Demographic Groups

Key Takeaway: **Four out of five (79%)** voters say they support Head Start, including:

79% of men

79% of women

80% of parents

80% of nonparents

Head Start also has wide support across geographic, age, and racial and ethnic demographics, including

80% of urban Americans

80% of suburban Americans

76% of rural Americans

79% of White voters

83% of Black voters

78% of Hispanic voters

Fielded: April 21–22, 2025 among national registered voters.

GOP Snapshot: Republican Voters and Head Start

Overview: Polling consistently shows strong support for Head Start among Republican voters.

- Nationally, **84%** of Republicans and **74%** of Trump voters say they support the program.

Dem Snapshot: Democratic Voters and Head Start

Overview: Support among Democratic voters is especially strong.

- Nationally, **94%** of Democrats support Head Start, with support at **92%** among rural Democrats.

Learn More

- This [overview](#) has the basic facts and data around Head Start and Early Head Start.
- National and state organizations from around the country agreed these make up the [Core Elements of Head Start](#), including its comprehensive, development-focused strategy, its approach to parent engagement, and its innovative local design.
- View statements of support for Head Start from [Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) lawmakers, highlighting the program's longstanding bipartisan backing in Congress.

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