

To whom it may concern,

I believe it is in the best interest of the children and families of Oregon that Head Start Pre-Kindergarten and Early Head Start receive full funding as recommended in the Governor's budget. Head start has made a massive impact in our family's lives and we would not have been able to get where we are now without it.

When my daughter first entered the program, I was a single mother and full-time student on the verge of a second occurrence of homelessness. I had done everything I could and acquired enough scholarships to be able to attend school with a small amount for living expenses, but it was simply not enough to live on with a young child. I needed to be able to work a part time job but I would have been working to earn childcare expenses. Head start gave me the opportunity to escape that cycle and create a better, more stable life for my daughter and I.

Thanks to this program I am now almost completely finished with my degree to become a teacher myself and my daughter is well socialized and ready to enter kindergarten. Without head start, I'm unsure where we would be right now, but it wouldn't be here.

Our experience is not unique to us. I've watched this program turn people's lives around for the better no matter what hurdles they were facing. Oregon's children need programs like this to achieve the most that they can regardless of where their starting line.

We are appreciative of your continued support of programs like these.

Best,
Michaela George
A Head start parent