Do Children Have a Seat at America’s Fiscal Table?

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Overview

1. Recent Trends in Expenditures on Children
2. Broad Trends, 1960–2029
3. Assuming No Changes to Current Law
Recent Trends in Expenditures on Children
Federal Expenditures on Children Totaled $6,200 per Child in 2018, down from 2017*

* All figures adjusted for inflation
Spending on Children Is Concentrated in Tax and Health Programs

*Billions of 2018 dollars*

- **Tax provisions**: CTC, EITC, ESI - 178
  - **Health**: Medicaid, CHIP - 116
    - **Nutrition**: SNAP
    - **Income security**: TANF, SSI - 55
    - **Education**: Title I
    - **Early care and education**: Special education - 41
    - **Social services**: 12
    - **Housing**: 9
    - **Training**: 1

Source: Authors’ estimates based primarily on Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2020 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2019) and past years. For more source information, see the appendix.

Notes: Programs spending less than $10 billion are not shown separately but are included in the totals by category. CHIP = Children’s Health Insurance Program; CTC = child tax credit; EITC = earned income tax credit; ESI = employer-sponsored health insurance; SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; SSI = Supplemental Security Income; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
State and Local Governments Spend More on Public Education

Billions of dollars

- Federal
- State and local

Source: Authors’ estimates based on Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2018 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2017) and past years as well as various other sources. For more source information, see the appendix.

Note: These estimates do not include tax reductions.
Broad Spending Trends, 1960–2029
Only About 9 Percent of the Federal Budget is Spent on Children

- Children: 9%
- Adult portions of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid: 45%
- Defense: 15%
- Interest on the debt: 8%
- All other spending: 22%

Source: Authors’ estimates based primarily on Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2020 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2019) and past years. For more source information, see the appendix.

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals because of rounding.
# Children's Spending is Projected to Fall from 9 percent in 2018 to 7 percent in 2029

## Total Spending (trillions of 2018 dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2029</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$4.10</td>
<td>$5.60</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Children

- 2018: 9 percent
- 2029: 7 percent

- 2018: $0.99 trillion
- 2029: $4.10 trillion

## All outlays not categorized below

- Interest on the debt
- Defense

## Adult portions of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid

- 2018: $2.20 trillion
- 2029: $4.50 trillion

## Source:
Authors' estimates based primarily on Congressional Budget Office, Updated Budget Projections: 2019 to 2029 (Washington, DC: Congressional Budget Office, 2019) and Office of Management and Budget, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2020 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2019) and past years. For more source information, see the appendix.

## Note:
Numbers may not sum to totals because of rounding.
Federal Outlays Growing While Children’s Spending Declining

[Graph showing the trend of children's outlays and total outlays over time, with a clear indication of declining children's spending compared to growing overall outlays.]
Revenues Are Projected to Fall Short of Outlays into the Future
Interest Payments Projected to Exceed Spending on Children by 2020
Assuming No Changes to Current Law...
Spending Projections Based on CBO May 2019 Baseline
Proposed Labor-HHS-Education Funding Levels for 2020, Relative to 2019

Percent change after adjusting for inflation

President's budget | House-passed appropriations bill
--- | ---
Children's funding | -11.8% | 8.0% | 5.7% | 6.0% | -0.5%
Other funding | 1.3% | 6.0% | Total Labor-HHS-Ed funding

Sources: Authors' analysis as described in the table "Funding Levels in Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill" at https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/fundinglevelstable.pdf

Notes: This analysis excludes Title IV, which funds related agencies, and also excludes Medicaid, a large mandatory program with spending driven not by appropriations actions, but by programmatic and demographic factors. HHS = Health and Human Services.
Proposed Labor-HHS-Education Funding Levels for 2020, Relative to 2019

Percent change after adjusting for inflation

- Children’s funding: -11.8%
- Other funding: 1.3%
- Total Labor-HHS-Ed funding: -0.5%

- President’s budget: 8.0%
- House-passed appropriations bill: 5.7%
- Other: 6.0%

Sources: Authors’ analysis as described in the table “Funding Levels in Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill” at https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/fundinglevelstable.pdf
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