



MB&TPI FACT SHEET

A THREAT TO HEAD START & CHILD CARE

MARCH 23, 2009

- **A threat to early childhood education = A threat to school readiness.**
If the General Assembly eliminates Head Start/Early Head Start State Supplemental Grants and reduces the Child Care Subsidy, this will surely set MSDE's goal back.

MB&TPI's Budget Fact sheet on Early Childhood Development, points out that one-third of Maryland's children are not entering to school ready to learn, although, MSDE set the bar for *all* Maryland's children entering school *fully* ready to learn by this school year. The House Appropriations Committee has reduced the Child Care Subsidy by \$1.9 million in General Funds and eliminate General Funds for the Head Start programs (-\$3 million) due to the availability of federal stimulus dollars via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Maryland could be eligible for more than \$50 million for Head Start/Early Head Start, Child Care Development Block Grants, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 619-Preschool grants and the IDEA Part C-Infants and Toddlers program. Bear in mind that Board of Public Works (BPW) actions on the current year budget already cut the Child Care Subsidy Program by \$5.3 million.

Because the stimulus money for Head Start/Early Head Start flows from the federal government to the grantees and not to the state, the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee should rescind the House Appropriations Committee actions and restore General Funds to the Head Start program, as well as fully fund the Child Care Subsidy Program. Moreover, the state only funds programs and services that the federal money does not. Therefore, state-funded summer and extended day programs that help keep parents in the workplace are essentially at-risk.

Maryland in 2007:

- 10,347 children benefitted from Head Start.
- 24,859 of children benefitted from the Child Care Subsidy program.
- 80.3% of families received subsidies because of employment.

- **The importance of early childhood education and its role in cognitive development.**

The Head Start program provides grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a special focus on helping preschoolers develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. Moreover, the Head Start program promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

The Child Care Subsidy Program assists low-income families with paying for child care. Child care subsidies are funded by federal and state general funds through the MSDE and are administered by local Departments of Social Services (DSS). While child care clearly plays a role in early childhood development, it is also important for caretakers in their efforts to seek, gain and retain employment.

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About the Maryland Budget & Tax Policy Institute

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