Federal Budget and Entitlements

A summary of the scientific literature on how the federal budget impacts children's policy.



How This Impacts Children's Development

By investing in education, nutrition, housing, early education, health, and other supports, policymakers will build the foundation of children’s well-being. If children grow up without an adequate foundation, they

won’t be able to support themselves and contribute to economic growth.

READ THE BRIEF: Federal Expenditures on Children: What Budget Policy Means for Children's Policy, 2015

Talking Points from the SRCD Brief

- Federal spending on children peaked at $499 billion in 2010 (as of 2015).
- The United States federal government provides 76% of public investment in infants and toddlers, mostly through healthcare.
- The largest portion of government investments in children at the state and local level is primarily through public education for children six years and older.
- Discretionary spending on children was projected to decline by 31%, tax provisions by 19%, and mandatory spending by 9%, between the years 2013 to 2024.

Policy Considerations in the Brief

1. Policymakers should balance their commitment to support elderly citizens and investments in children.
2. Education, early education, early care, social services, and housing are the most vulnerable areas of public spending on children.

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