

Administration of Barack Obama, 2015

Statement on the 50th Anniversary of Head Start

May 18, 2015

For millions of families, Head Start has been a lifeline. And for millions of kids, it's been the start of a better life. Over the past half century, 32 million children have benefited from its early learning and development programs. They've recited their numbers and ABCs, raced around playgrounds, and learned thousands of new words. On this 50th anniversary, our challenge is to make Head Start even stronger and to help more children and family benefit from its good work. My administration has increased access to Head Start programs, and we've launched a new partnership with childcare centers to reach tens of thousands more infants and toddlers. Plus, a growing number of States and cities are taking steps to boost access to quality preschool. Now we need Congress to give Head Start the resources to reach more eligible kids. And we need leaders at every level, including in our States and communities, to support Head Start, because early childhood education is one of the smartest investments we can make to keep America strong and competitive in the 21st century.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of Head Start over the past 50 years. Now, let's make sure we keep serving families for the next 50 years and beyond. Because here in America, every child—no matter what they look like, where they come from, or who they are—deserves to get a head start in life.

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