

In the News: Illinois Head Start Providers Worry About the Future of the Program

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CHALKBEAT CHICAGO

What will happen to Illinois kids and families if the Head Start program is cut?



Three preschool students play during school. | (Cassie Walker Burke/Chalkbeat)

A recent Chalkbeat Chicago piece discusses the potential impacts of federal funding cuts to Head Start for the children and families served by the program.

“That’s what keeps me up at night, what will happen to those children and those families if we’re not there?”

— Amy Blythe

In a newly published Chalkbeat Chicago article, Amy Blythe, Assistant Vice President of Early Learning Services at Easterseals Serving Chicagoland and Greater Rockford, along with other Illinois Head Start providers, speaks about the future of the federally funded Head Start program, which offers holistic early childhood education, health, and support services to low-income families with children from birth to age 5.

The federal funding freezes that began in January—combined with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' closure of the Chicago-based Head Start regional office, which offers technical support and funding to child care providers in Illinois and other Midwest states—have raised concerns, particularly among those who provide early education support and services.

Read more insights from experts and advocates on the Head Start program from a local perspective in Chalkbeat Chicago: <https://www.chalkbeat.org/chicago/2025/04/15/illinois-head-start-providers-funding-cuts/>

Learn more about Head Start & Early Head Start: <https://nhsa.org/>