

Racial/Ethnic Inequities in Neighborhood Availability of Head Start

Does neighborhood availability of Head Start vary for children of different race/ethnicities?

A diversitydatakids.org Data-For-Action Fact Sheet | MAY 2017

Early childhood experiences have lasting impacts on child health and wellbeing, making Head Start—the largest federally funded early childhood program—a crucial support for poor and low-income children.

Large shares of children in poverty are not served by the program, and participation rates of poor children differ by race/ethnicity.

Neighborhood availability matters: Research finds that having a Head Start center in their immediate neighborhood promotes participation for some groups of children (e.g. Hispanic and immigrant children).

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Visit diversitydatakids.org to explore data on neighborhood availability of Head Start by race/ethnicity and parent nativity across states.

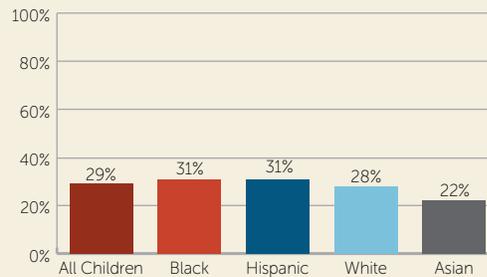
Sources: diversitydatakids.org Head Start locations calculated from Office of Head Start data obtained on April 1, 2014. Number of poor 3- and 4-year olds calculated from U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community, and the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.

New data show that less than one-third of preschool aged children living in poverty have an available Head Start center in their neighborhood...

New diversitydatakids.org indicators measure availability of Head Start at the neighborhood level by race/ethnicity.

Poor children of all race/ethnicities experience similarly limited availability of Head Start centers in their neighborhoods.

Share of Poor Preschool Aged Children with a Head Start Preschool in Their Neighborhood, by Race/Ethnicity

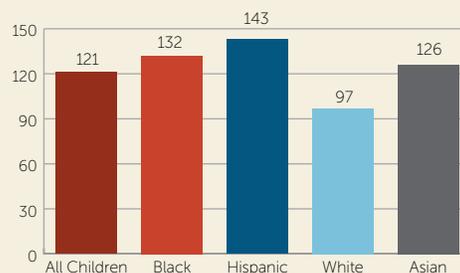


...and adjusting for the number of poor children in a neighborhood (potential demand for Head Start), we see significant racial/ethnic inequities in availability.

Hispanic, Black, and Asian children are located in neighborhoods with significantly higher potential demand for Head Start services.

Hispanic children experience the worst neighborhood availability, as they live in neighborhoods with the highest number of poor preschool aged children per Head Start center. Poor preschool aged children are eligible for Head Start and could potentially be served by Head Start centers.*

Average Number of Poor Preschool Aged Children in a Neighborhood Per Head Start Center, by Race/Ethnicity



Hispanic children live in neighborhoods with 143 poor preschool aged children per center.

White children live in neighborhoods with only 97 children per center.

*While it varies, Head Start centers, on average, serve between 30-50 children (author's calculations of Office of Head Start data).

Notes: All reported racial/ethnic groups represent children of the named race group alone and exclude children of Hispanic ethnicity. Asian includes Pacific Islander. Hispanic children can be of any race. Poor children live in families earning under 100% of the Federal Poverty Line. Neighborhood is defined as a census tract; analysis was conducted on all neighborhoods (census tracts) in the US.