

The 2014-2015 Texas Children's Budget Doesn't Meet Our Needs

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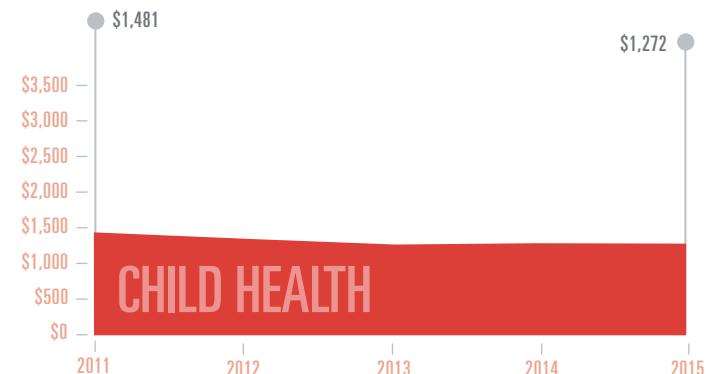
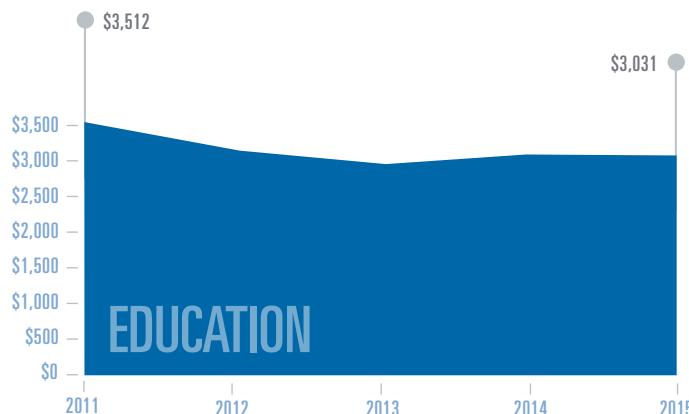
Investing in kids makes a difference—not only for child well-being, but for the future stability and prosperity of our state. Recent research by CPPP (forabettertexas.org/investinkids.html) shows that when Texas invests in children, we see improvements in their overall well-being. When lawmakers are faced with tough decisions of where to invest and where to cut, health and education investments often get pitted against one another, creating the false choice that one area must be cut in order to preserve investments in the other. However, our research shows that investments in health and nutrition have implications for children's education outcomes and investments in children's education have implications for their health outcomes.

Investing in the whole child is important and necessary to promote children's well-being now and Texas' well-being in the future.

2014-15 Investments Don't Undo 2011 Cuts or Meet Future Needs

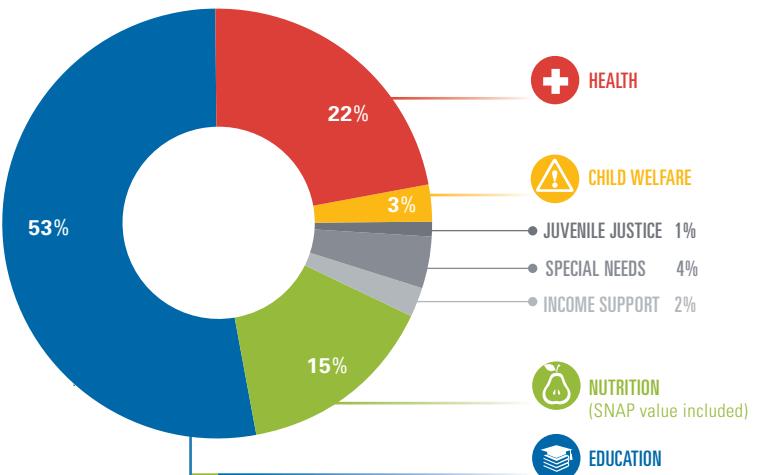
By 2015, state budget spending on Texas children will reach \$40.7 billion, excluding an estimated \$3.2 billion in SNAP (food) benefits that are not appropriated in the budget. In unadjusted dollars, state appropriations for children's services will have recovered to 2011 levels (\$40.6 billion) if SNAP benefits are not included (\$3.4 billion in 2011). But the number of Texans below the age of 18 is estimated to rise by almost 450,000 between 2011 and 2015, and medical and other costs will rise, resulting in the trends seen below. The main reason that children's spending will continue to be below 2011 levels in real terms is the \$500-per-student cuts made by the 2011 Legislature. Preliminary estimates are that only \$100 per student was restored by the 2013 Legislature, on a state average basis.

Per-Child Spending in State Budget



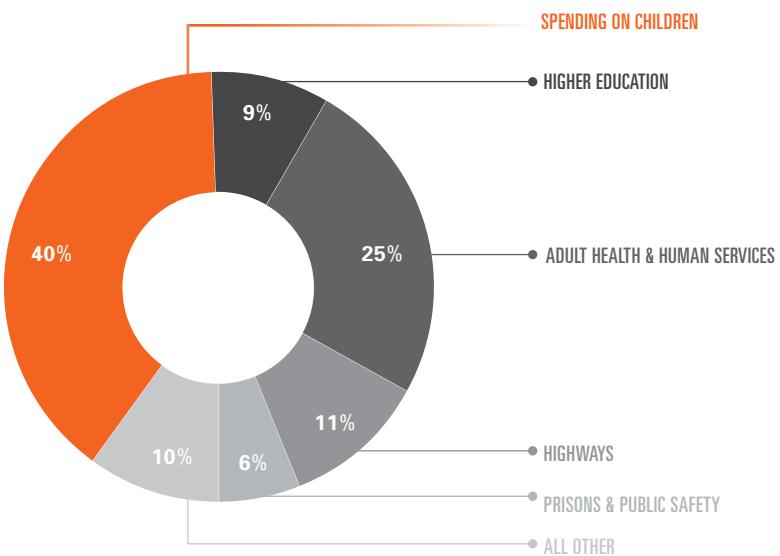
Proposed Biennial Appropriations for Children: \$80.6 Billion in 2014-15*

Legislative appropriations to date for the 2014-15 budget cycle would increase state spending overall by 7.4 percent compared to 2012-13, or 8.0 percent two-year growth for the General Revenue part of the budget. This brief analysis focuses on Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 1025 appropriations for services that primarily benefit children. Although total appropriations for children will have returned to 2011 levels by 2015, most key services will remain below their 2011 levels after adjusting for growth in the child population and inflation.



Spending on Children vs. Other Areas of Proposed State Spending in 2014-15

The figure on the right shows how the \$81 billion in appropriations for children's services in 2014-15 compares to other major areas of state services. Higher education is the share of the state budget supporting public universities, teaching hospitals, and community and junior colleges. Adult health and human services spending is mainly health care (Medicaid) for elderly and disabled Texans and for low-income pregnant women, and community care and other long-term health care services. Highways, prisons/public safety, and other functions (such as environmental protection, state parks, and the judiciary) provide services benefiting children and adults but have not been included in estimates of child spending.



*What's in Each Category:

Education: State aid to local school districts and charter schools; Teacher Quality Grants, Teach for Texas Loan Repayment, Centers for Teacher Education

Child health: Medicaid Children Eligibility Group and estimated prescriptions costs, Texas Health Steps Dental, CHIP and related programs, mental health community services, immunizations, State Health Services women and children's health programs, substance abuse treatment/intervention/prevention, Medically Dependent Children Waiver, Children with Special Health Care Needs, tobacco education/prevention, abstinence education

Meals/Nutrition: School lunch/breakfast programs in preK-12, WIC, and Texas Department of Agriculture nutrition assistance and support for school nutrition programs. SNAP benefits are not appropriated in the state budget, but the estimated value of SNAP benefits for children is shown in the top chart, above.

Special needs: Federal aid to school districts for preK-12 students with a disability; community and institutional services for physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities; Early Childhood Intervention, rehabilitative, and autism services; School for the Deaf; School for the Blind

Income support: Child care subsidies, child support enforcement and disbursement, TANF cash assistance, federal Workforce Investment Act – Youth Program, regulation of child care

Child welfare: Payments for foster care, adoption services, and relative care; child protective services; child abuse/neglect prevention and intervention programs; family violence services; Texas Home Visit and Nurse Family Partnership programs; Communities in Schools

Juvenile justice: Texas Juvenile Justice Department

