

FIRST FOCUS: THE FEDERAL BUDGET

CHILDREN IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET

First Focus is a bipartisan advocacy organization that is committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions. Children's health, education, family economics, child welfare, and child safety are the five core issue areas around which First Focus is working to promote bipartisan policy solutions.

A SMALL SHARE

Spending on children in the federal budget makes up a tiny and shrinking percentage of total spending. Though children make up a quarter of our population, **out of every non-defense dollar spent by the federal government, only ten cents goes to children.** Out of all federal spending, the children's share is only 8%.

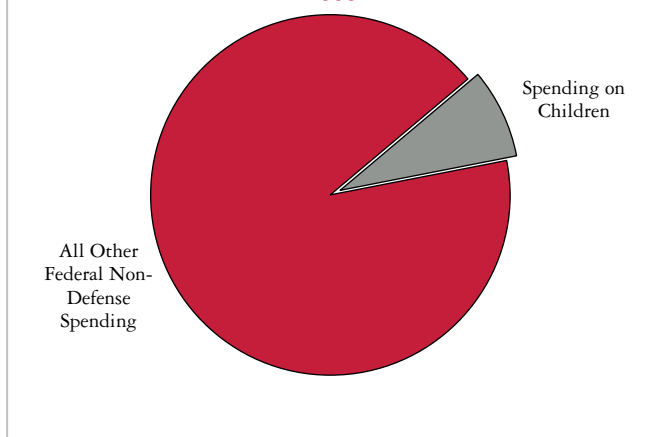
A LONG-TERM DECLINE

First Focus recently commissioned a report by the Urban Institute to detail how federal spending on children has changed over the past 45 years. The results were startling. In 1960, the children's share of federal domestic spending, tax policies included, was 20.1%. In 2006, that share had declined to 15.4%, a 23.3% overall decline.

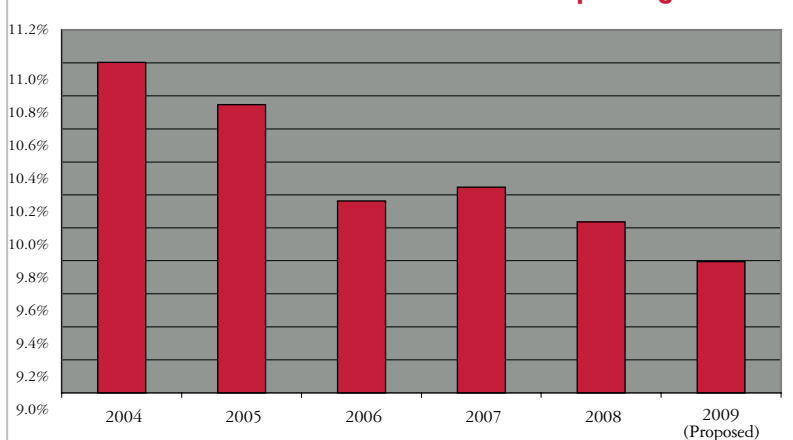
KIDS HAVE NOT FAIRED WELL THESE PAST FIVE YEARS

From 2004 to 2008 federal spending on children rose by only 1.4%, in real terms. At the same time that spending on children was growing by a meager 1%, total federal spending was increasing at nearly ten times that rate, pushing children back even further. The picture for just discretionary spending has been even bleaker. **From 2004 to 2008, the real value of federal discretionary spending on children has actually declined 6.7%**

Spending on Children in the Federal Non-Defense Budget 2008



Total Federal Spending on Children as a Percent of All Federal Non-Defense Spending



SHORTCHANGING OUR CHILDREN

From health and education, to safety and nutrition, federal programs that help kids are being underfunded. Over the past five years, total federal investment in children's education is down nearly 10% in real terms. The same five years have seen a 17% divestment from school health programs, a 15% decline in support for youth training, and a 7% drop in funding for child abuse prevention. **What does it say about our national priorities that these cuts came at the same time that the federal non-defense budget increased 11%?**



FIRST FOCUS

MAKING CHILDREN & FAMILIES THE PRIORITY