

Data-for-Equity Research Brief

Unequal Availability of Head Start: How Neighborhood Matters

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INEQUITIES IN NEIGHBORHOOD AVAILABILITY OF HEAD START PERSIST OVER FIVE YEAR PERIOD

Research shows that over half of the children in the United States who are eligible for Head Start are not served by the program. There are important differences in Head Start participation by race/ethnicity: nationally, only 54% of eligible black children and only 38% of Hispanic/Latino eligible children are served by Head Start preschool.¹ This brief explores how residential segregation may translate into inequitable access to Head Start programs at the neighborhood level for two time periods. National and state level patterns are discussed.

EQUITY HIGHLIGHTS

- Nationally, we estimate that only roughly one-quarter of Head Start eligible children have a Head Start center in their immediate neighborhood; based on this measure, race/ethnicity and nativity-based differences are modest.
- Once we account for potential neighborhood demand for Head Start in our measures, large disparities emerge.
 - The average white Head Start eligible child lives in a neighborhood with 60 eligible children per center, compared with black and Hispanic children, who live in neighborhoods with nearly 90 and 100 eligible children per center, respectively.
 - In real terms, these gaps equate to a more than “one Head Start Center Gap” in neighborhood availability of Head Start.
- Both absolute levels and disparities in neighborhood availability are essentially the same in the two time periods examined.
- Results vary substantially by state.
- Policymakers and stakeholders considering policies to support early childhood education and racial equity can get more information on Head Start access by clicking the link below.
 - [Unequal neighborhood availability of Head Start: Exploring patterns in the data](#)

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood experiences can have lasting effects on a child's future health and wellbeing,² thus, early childhood is a time when access to high quality care and learning opportunities is particularly crucial. Head Start, the largest public early childhood care and education program in the U.S., plays a key role in providing high-quality early care and education service to low-income children. However, past research has shown that large shares of children nationally (over 50%) that are eligible for Head Start are not served by the program,¹ and that there are important differences in access to Head Start by race/ethnicity. Nationally, only 54% of eligible black children are served by Head Start preschool and only 38% of Hispanic/Latino eligible children are served.

Despite the knowledge of large service gaps and racial/ethnic disparities in access, little is known about the causes. Past research has shown that for certain groups of children, e.g. Hispanic immigrant children, having a Head Start center in your immediate neighborhood increases participation,³ and that low-income parents across race/ethnicities have strong preferences for early care and education services close to home.^{4, 5} This research also suggests that proximity to services may be most important for vulnerable families facing multiple barriers to access (e.g. information, language, and transportation). Motivated by this research, we examine neighborhood-level availability of Head Start and differences by race/ethnicity and nativity.

Given persistent patterns of residential segregation across the U.S.,⁶ we know that children of different racial/ethnic groups mostly live in separate neighborhoods. Patterns of racial residential segregation hold true even for children with similar family income levels (e.g. poor children who are eligible for Head Start). This analysis explores how that separation may translate into differential access to Head Start programs at the neighborhood level. We examine two measures of neighborhood availability of Head Start: the share of eligible children with a Head Start center in their neighborhood, and the neighborhood average number of Head Start eligible children per center. We look at both national and state patterns and also examine how neighborhood availability of Head Start compares in two different time periods (2014 and 2019).

DATA

Head Start preschool center locations were obtained from the Office of Head Start (downloaded in April 2019 and April 2014). Census tracts were used to represent neighborhoods because census tracts are the smallest unit for which robust population and subgroup population estimates are available. Census tract-level estimates of the 2014 population eligible for Head Start utilize data from the American Community Survey (ACS) five-year published tables (2008-2012). Census tract-level estimates of the 2019 population eligible for Head Start utilize data from the American Community Survey (ACS) five-year published tables (2013-2017).

ANALYSIS

We created two neighborhood-level indicators of availability of Head Start:

1. The share of eligible children with a Head Start center in their neighborhood
2. The number of Head Start eligible children per center (i.e. the "child-to-center ratio" or "neighborhood ratio")

Head Start eligible children are defined as 3- and 4-year-olds with family income below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL). To estimate the number of Head Start income-eligible 3- and 4-year-olds in a given racial/ethnic group for a particular year, we use counts of 3- and 4-year-olds from ACS, and first apply the racial composition of children under age five to get estimated counts of 3- and 4-year-olds in each racial/ethnic group. Next, we apply the group-specific poverty rate for children under age five (from ACS) for each racial/ethnic group to generate an estimate of the number of 3- and 4-year-olds in the specified group with family income below 100% FPL, and therefore income-eligible for Head Start. To estimate the number of Head Start eligible 3- and 4-year-olds living with foreign-born parents, we apply the percent of all poor children under 18 that live with foreign-born parents from ACS to the count of Head Start eligible 3- and 4-year-olds (estimated using the method described above).

Please note that we use the term “Head Start eligible children” throughout this brief to refer to children estimated to be eligible for Head Start on the basis of income. Children can also be categorically eligible for Head Start if they meet categorical eligible criteria, e.g. if a child is experiencing homelessness, in foster-care or living in a family receiving public assistance. A vast majority of children enrolled in Head Start (over 70%) are income-eligible¹, and children who are categorically eligible may also be income-eligible.

The estimation requires use of multiple ACS variables because the number of children in poverty by single year of age is not available from ACS in its published tables. Public Use Microdata Series (PUMS) data cannot be used for this analysis since the geographic level of analysis (census tract) is not a published PUMS geography. Our estimated count of Head Start-eligible children in 2014 is 1,969,931 and in 2019 is 1,830,997.

All reported racial/ethnic groups represent children of the named race group alone and include children of Hispanic ethnicity (except for white children, which represent non-Hispanic white children). Asian includes Pacific Islander. American Indian includes Alaska Native children. Hispanic children can be of any race. “Children of foreign-born parents” or “immigrant children” are defined as children with one or more foreign-born parents, which includes children with two foreign-born parents, and children with one foreign-born parent in single-parent families. Children with native-born parents are defined as children with two native-born parents, or one native-born parent in single-parent families.

Note that this analysis includes Head Start Preschool only and excludes other Head Start programs, such as Early Head Start and other Head Start programs that serve additional (predominantly) Hispanic children (e.g. Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, which serves an additional 30,000+ Hispanic children).

Two main research questions guide our analysis:

1. What share of estimated eligible Head Start preschool age children have a Head Start Center in their immediate neighborhood, and how does this vary by child race/ethnicity and nativity?
2. What is the average (potential) neighborhood-level demand for Head Start programs (measured as the number of Head Start eligible children per center in the neighborhood), and how does this vary by child race/ethnicity and nativity?

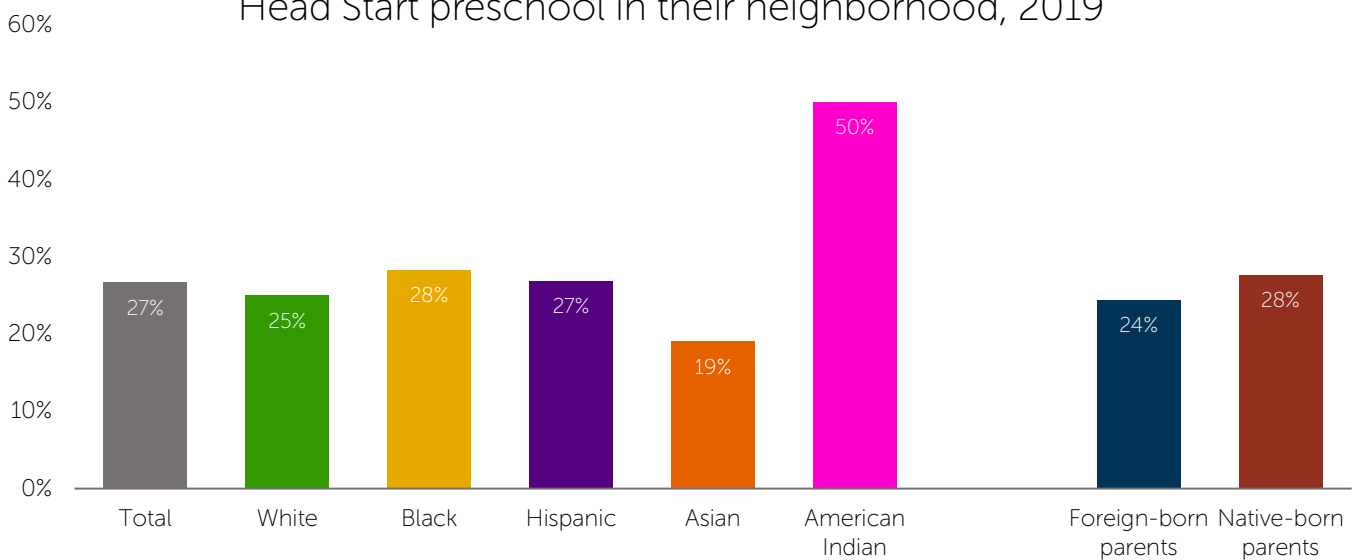
We use two neighborhood level measures to examine the questions above. We examine both national and state patterns and compare results for two time periods: 2014 and 2019.

FINDINGS

Nationally, roughly one-quarter of Head Start eligible children have a Head Start center in their immediate neighborhood; results vary widely by state.

In 2019, we estimate that 27% of Head Start eligible children had a Head Start center in their immediate neighborhood (Figure 1). White, black and Hispanic children have similar shares (roughly one-quarter); Asian children have a lower share (less than one-fifth); and American Indian children have a substantially higher share (half). Immigrant children also have similar shares (roughly one-quarter).

Figure 1. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2019



At the state level, the share of all children with a Head Start center in their neighborhood ranges from 9% in Nevada to 62% in West Virginia. Top 10 and bottom 10 states for each racial/ethnic and nativity group are shown in Tables 1a and 1b below.

Please note that while some states provide supplemental Head Start funding and programming, Head Start is a federally administered program with grants made directly to Head Start programs. Results are summarized by state to provide a sense of differences across places in the U.S., and are not intended to point to differences in state-level policies.

See and explore results for all states using related chart tools on diversitydatakids.org.¹

**Table 1a. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2019
By race/ethnicity**

Top 10 States					
Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
West Virginia (62%)	West Virginia (64%)	West Virginia (47%)	D.C. (58%)	D.C. (96%)	South Dakota (58%)
Montana (45%)	Hawaii (45%)	Rhode Island (42%)	West Virginia (57%)	Hawaii (46%)	Nebraska (59%)
South Dakota (43%)	Maine (42%)	D.C. (41%)	Maine (46%)	Nebraska (39%)	Minnesota (59%)
D.C. (42%)	Kentucky (39%)	Mississippi (40%)	Wyoming (44%)	Alaska (38%)	Arizona (62%)
Maine (42%)	Oklahoma (36%)	Illinois (40%)	Montana (43%)	Pennsylvania (32%)	Oregon (62%)
Alaska (40%)	Vermont (35%)	Oregon (40%)	Hawaii (42%)	Utah (31%)	North Dakota (65%)
Hawaii (40%)	Wyoming (33%)	Pennsylvania (38%)	Pennsylvania (39%)	Wisconsin (30%)	Montana (71%)
Wyoming (39%)	Montana (33%)	Colorado (35%)	Oregon (38%)	Kentucky (28%)	Maine (73%)
New Mexico (38%)	Oregon (32%)	Ohio (35%)	New Mexico (38%)	Virginia (27%)	Wyoming (85%)
Mississippi (37%)	South Dakota (32%)	Tennessee (35%)	New Hampshire (37%)	Iowa (26%)	Mississippi (87%)
Bottom 10 States					
Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
Nevada (9%)	Connecticut (9%)	Nevada (10%)	Nevada (6%)	Texas (8%)	Florida (11%)
Massachusetts (13%)	Massachusetts (10%)	Minnesota (14%)	Massachusetts (14%)	New Jersey (9%)	Iowa (18%)
New Jersey (16%)	Nevada (11%)	Indiana (16%)	Georgia (15%)	North Carolina (9%)	Kansas (24%)
Connecticut (16%)	New Jersey (14%)	Connecticut (17%)	New Jersey (16%)	Indiana (11%)	Texas (27%)
Indiana (18%)	Delaware (15%)	Kentucky (18%)	South Carolina (17%)	Illinois (11%)	North Carolina (29%)
Georgia (19%)	South Carolina (16%)	Massachusetts (19%)	North Carolina (17%)	Oklahoma (11%)	Pennsylvania (34%)
South Carolina (20%)	Georgia (17%)	New Jersey (19%)	Louisiana (17%)	Arizona (12%)	Idaho (36%)
Kansas (21%)	Rhode Island (17%)	Nebraska (19%)	Delaware (19%)	Minnesota (12%)	California (38%)
Delaware (22%)	Maryland (17%)	Texas (20%)	Indiana (19%)	New York (13%)	New York (38%)
North Carolina (22%)	Florida (18%)	Iowa (22%)	Kansas (19%)	Michigan (14%)	Wisconsin (41%)

**Table 1b. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2019
By nativity**

Top 10 States		
Total	Foreign-Born Parents	Native-Born Parents
West Virginia (62%)	Wyoming (46%)	West Virginia (63%)
Montana (45%)	Montana (44%)	Montana (45%)
South Dakota (43%)	Hawaii (39%)	South Dakota (45%)
D.C. (42%)	West Virginia (38%)	D.C. (45%)
Maine (42%)	New Mexico (36%)	Maine (43%)
Alaska (40%)	Arizona (36%)	Alaska (41%)
Hawaii (40%)	Arkansas (34%)	Hawaii (41%)
Wyoming (39%)	Alaska (34%)	New Mexico (39%)
New Mexico (38%)	Iowa (33%)	Wyoming (38%)
Mississippi (37%)	Oregon (33%)	North Dakota (37%)
Bottom 10 States		
Total	Foreign-Born Parents	Native-Born Parents
Nevada (9%)	Nevada (8%)	Nevada (9%)
Massachusetts (13%)	Georgia (13%)	Massachusetts (12%)
New Jersey (16%)	New Jersey (14%)	Connecticut (15%)
Connecticut (16%)	Massachusetts (15%)	New Jersey (17%)
Indiana (18%)	Indiana (16%)	Indiana (19%)
Georgia (19%)	Louisiana (16%)	South Carolina (20%)
South Carolina (20%)	North Carolina (17%)	Delaware (21%)
Kansas (21%)	South Carolina (17%)	Georgia (22%)
Delaware (22%)	Kansas (18%)	Kansas (22%)
North Carolina (22%)	Minnesota (18%)	Alabama (22%)

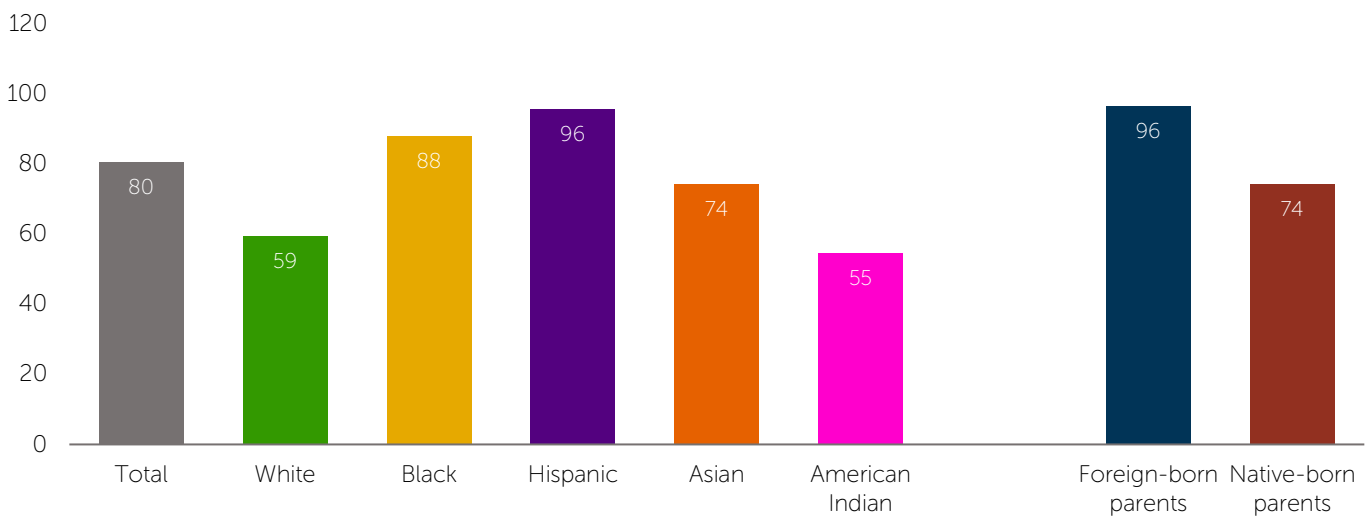
Based on this first measure of neighborhood availability (share of eligible children with a center in their immediate neighborhood), we would conclude that nationally, there are modest differences in neighborhood availability of Head Start amongst white, black and Hispanic children (with larger differences between Asian and American Indian children), and that black and Hispanic children may even have slightly better neighborhood availability than white children. We would also conclude that there are modest, but observable, disparities on the basis of parent nativity, with children of native-born parents having better neighborhood availability. However, this measure does not consider potential demand for Head Start centers in the neighborhoods where children of different race/ethnicities and nativities live.

Once we consider potential neighborhood demand, there are substantial race-, ethnicity- and nativity-based disparities in neighborhood availability of Head Start.

Above, we examined the share of Head Start eligible children with at least one center in their neighborhood. Now, we examine the number of eligible children per Head Start center in children’s neighborhoods. This second measure tells us not only whether a Head Start center is found in the neighborhood, but it also provides an indication of whether there are enough centers to serve the number of children in need within the neighborhood. Figure 2 illustrates how neighborhood availability of Head Start varies for children of different race/ethnicities and nativities once we consider potential neighborhood demand for Head Start.

Nationally, we find that Head Start eligible children live in neighborhoods where, on average, there are 80 Head Start eligible children per center.

Figure 2. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2019



Despite similar shares of black and Hispanic children with a Head Start center in their immediate neighborhood (from Figure 1), the neighborhood ratio of children-to-centers is highest (worst) for Hispanic and black children (see Figure 2). On average, Hispanic children live in neighborhoods with 96 Head Start eligible children per center, and black children live in neighborhoods with 88 Head Start eligible children per center. The ratio is noticeably lower for white children, with a child-to-center ratio of 59. We also find a large disparity (a difference of 22 children per center) between children of

immigrant parents (96) and children with native-born parents (74).

While enrollment varies, the typical Head Start center serves between 30-50 children (author's calculations of Office of Head Start data), so a difference of 30 or more children between white and Hispanic or black children can be thought of as roughly a "one Head Start center gap" at the neighborhood level. Neighborhood ratios vary by state, as do gaps in these ratios between racial/ethnic and nativity groups.

See selected state results in Tables 2a, 2b, and 3 below, and explore full state results on diversitydatakids.org.

**Table 2a. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in Neighborhood, 2019
By race/ethnicity**

Top 10 States					
Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
Alaska (33)	North Dakota (24)	D.C. (38)	D.C. (22)	Iowa (37)	Nebraska (21)
D.C. (36)	South Dakota (28)	West Virginia (43)	Alaska (30)	New Jersey (39)	Alaska (22)
Iowa (38)	Minnesota (31)	Nebraska (48)	West Virginia (41)	Washington (40)	Wyoming (26)
Vermont (39)	Connecticut (32)	Maine (52)	Iowa (44)	Utah (47)	Nevada (28)
South Dakota (39)	Iowa (33)	South Dakota (52)	Minnesota (50)	Michigan (55)	Maine (33)
Maine (40)	Nebraska (35)	Iowa (53)	New Hampshire (52)	Illinois (60)	Wisconsin (36)
New Hampshire (42)	Wisconsin (38)	Washington (56)	Nebraska (53)	Wisconsin (60)	Michigan (36)
Nebraska (43)	Maine (38)	Connecticut (56)	Oklahoma (55)	Hawaii (62)	Oklahoma (40)
North Dakota (46)	New Hampshire (40)	Oregon (60)	South Dakota (56)	Texas (67)	Louisiana (42)
Oklahoma (46)	Oklahoma (40)	Arkansas (62)	Wyoming (56)		South Dakota (43)
Bottom 10 States					
Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian
Texas (110)	New Jersey (146)	Tennessee (127)	Alabama (177)	Pennsylvania (143)	Delaware (143)
California (98)	California (99)	Arizona (109)	Texas (120)	Colorado (101)	Minnesota (86)
New York (96)	New York (96)	California (105)	Tennessee (105)	Georgia (96)	California (80)
Alabama (93)	Delaware (81)	Florida (100)	South Carolina (104)	Missouri (95)	New Mexico (69)
Tennessee (93)	Alabama (78)	Maryland (100)	Indiana (103)	New York (89)	New York (69)
Maryland (90)	Florida (77)	Kansas (100)	Nevada (101)	Florida (89)	Oregon (65)
New Jersey (89)	Louisiana (75)	New York (99)	Arizona (99)	Ohio (88)	North Carolina (63)
Arizona (88)	Georgia (70)	Texas (96)	California (99)	Nebraska (82)	Arizona (61)
Florida (88)	Arizona (68)	Ohio (95)	New York (98)	Minnesota (80)	Texas (56)
New Mexico (87)	South Carolina (67)	Louisiana (90)	North Carolina (98)	California (75)	Mississippi (56)

**Table 2b. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2019
By nativity**

Top 10 States		
Total	Foreign-Born Parents	Native-Born Parents
Alaska (33)	West Virginia (39)	Alaska (33)
D.C. (36)	South Dakota (40)	Nebraska (36)
Iowa (38)	Iowa (46)	Iowa (36)
Vermont (39)	New Hampshire (48)	D.C. (37)
South Dakota (39)	Maine (49)	Maine (39)
Maine (40)	Virginia (58)	South Dakota (39)
New Hampshire (42)	Minnesota (60)	Vermont (40)
Nebraska (43)	Oklahoma (61)	New Hampshire (41)
North Dakota (46)	Nebraska (61)	North Dakota (43)
Oklahoma (46)	Oregon (62)	Minnesota (43)
Bottom 10 States		
Total	Foreign-Born Parents	Native-Born Parents
Texas (110)	Alabama (161)	California (100)
California (98)	Texas (133)	New Jersey (96)
New York (96)	Indiana (119)	New York (95)
Alabama (93)	Nevada (105)	Texas (94)
Tennessee (93)	Tennessee (105)	Tennessee (91)
Maryland (90)	Arizona (104)	Florida (89)
New Jersey (89)	Arkansas (103)	Maryland (89)
Arizona (88)	North Carolina (102)	New Mexico (85)
Florida (88)	South Carolina (102)	Louisiana (85)
New Mexico (87)	Georgia (101)	Georgia (84)

Table 3. Gaps in the average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2019

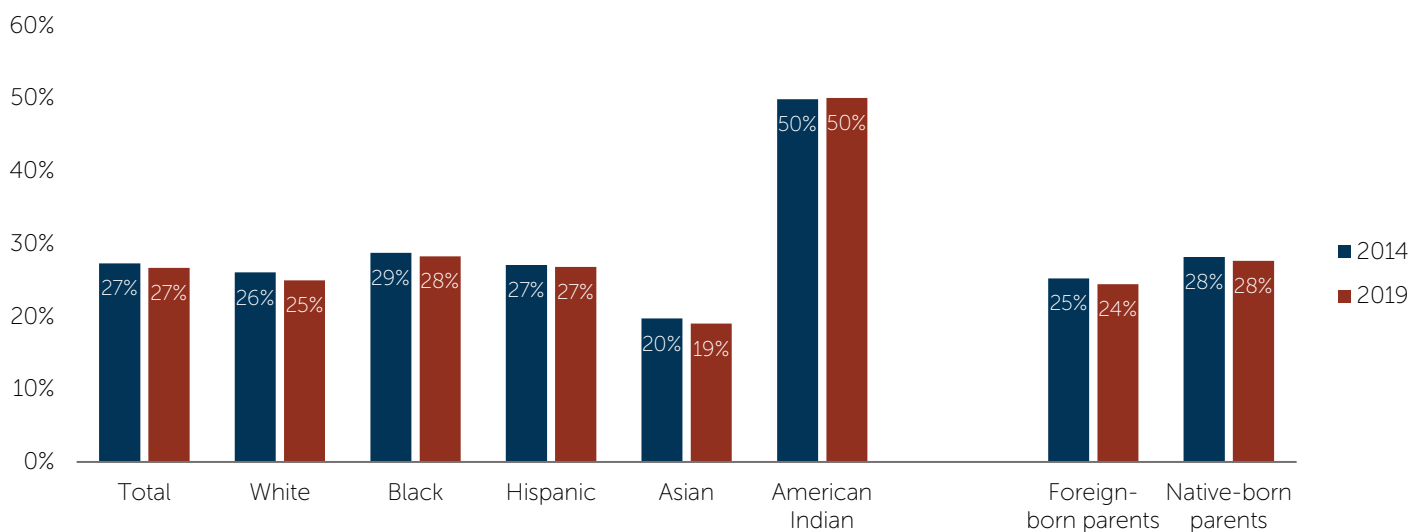
Top 5 States		
Black minus white	Hispanic minus white	Foreign-born minus native-born
New Jersey (-81)	New Jersey (-61)	New Jersey (-18)
West Virginia (-4)	Alaska (-16)	Virginia (-9)
Delaware (0)	Wyoming (-7)	West Virginia (-9)
New York (2)	West Virginia (-6)	Florida (-3)
Oregon (3)	Delaware (-2)	California (-2)
Bottom 5 States		
Black minus white	Hispanic minus white	Foreign-born minus native-born
Tennessee (67)	Alabama (99)	Alabama (79)
Kansas (58)	Texas (55)	Indiana (54)
Maryland (42)	Pennsylvania (51)	Arkansas (48)
Wisconsin (41)	Indiana (49)	Texas (39)
Arizona (41)	Tennessee (45)	Nevada (33)

These findings suggest that, once we consider potential neighborhood demand, neighborhood availability of Head Start is constrained for Head Start eligible children overall and that black, Hispanic and Asian children have worse neighborhood availability than white children. Likewise, children of immigrant parents have worse neighborhood availability of Head Start than children of native-born parents.

Disparities in neighborhood availability of Head Start persist between 2014 and 2019.

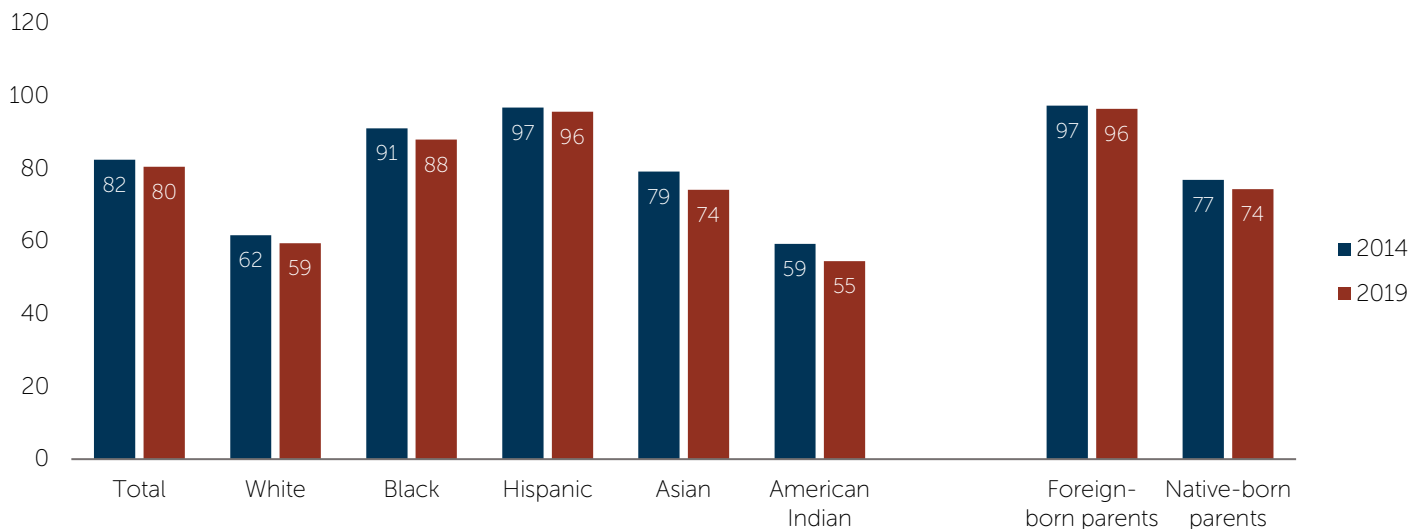
Figure 3 shows that the percent of Head Start eligible children with a center in their neighborhood remained essentially unchanged for all groups between 2014 and 2019 (all changes were statistically significant, but small in magnitude). See Table 4a in the appendix for detailed results by state between the two time periods.

Figure 3. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2014 and 2019



Looking at our second measure of neighborhood availability of Head Start (Figure 4), we find no statistically significant changes in the neighborhood ratio of Head Start eligible children, both overall and for each subgroup of children studied.

Figure 4. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2014 and 2019



Unequal availability of Head Start: How neighborhood matters

The inequities that were present in 2014 between Hispanic and white children (a roughly 35 child-per-center gap), between black and white children (a nearly 30 child-per-center gap), and between Asian and white children (a roughly 15 child gap) persisted in 2019. Likewise, the roughly 20 child-per-center gap between immigrant children and children in native families was also present in the two time periods.

Following the national pattern, only six states had statistically significant changes in total neighborhood ratios between 2014 and 2019. Five of the six states experienced declines (i.e. improvement) in average neighborhood ratio (Arkansas, D.C., Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska), and improvement (decrease) was substantial, with the change ranging from 16 to 34 less children per center. Alabama was the one state that experienced a statistically significant increase (worsening) in neighborhood ratio (from 72 children per center to 94 children per center, a change of over 20 children per center). See Table 5a in the appendix for detailed results by state between the two time periods. Comprehensive state-level analysis of disparities and change over time will be the focus of forthcoming analyses.

DISCUSSION

In sum, we found that neighborhood availability of Head Start is constrained overall for Head Start eligible children nationally. Only roughly one-quarter of Head Start eligible children have a center in their immediate neighborhood, and on average, children are living in neighborhoods with 80 eligible children per center, which is substantially higher than the 30 to 50 children served by the typical Head Start center nationally. We also found large disparities when we consider potential neighborhood demand for Head Start, where black and Hispanic children have the worst neighborhood availability, and face the equivalent of a “one Head Start Center Gap” with white children. Likewise, large disparities in neighborhood availability exist between children of immigrant parents and children of native-born parents. Finally, when we looked over time and across states, we found that national patterns have remained essentially unchanged between 2014 and 2019, and that both absolute levels of neighborhood availability and disparities vary widely by state.

The findings of constrained neighborhood availability overall and the presence of disparities are both relevant for Head Start policy for a number of reasons. First, with only 50% of Head Start eligible children being served by the program, constrained neighborhood availability could be creating a barrier to access for children who are eligible, but not participating in the program. Second, the finding that neighborhood availability is the most constrained for the groups of children most affected by proximity—Hispanic children and immigrant children—suggests that inequities in neighborhood availability could be contributing to inequities in participation/service rates. This finding is of heightened importance given that in many U.S. communities, Hispanic and immigrant family populations are growing the most rapidly.

Moreover, the analysis suggests the importance of accounting for patterns of neighborhood demand for Head Start services when measuring neighborhood availability, as patterns of neighborhood demand are expected to vary by race/ethnicity given the context of high levels of racial residential segregation, even within the policy target service population.

Finally, the finding of little to no change over time also has important implications for policy. Between 2014 and 2019, we estimate that overall need for Head Start nationally has declined by roughly 7%.² Tracking with the decline in need, the overall supply of centers nationally also declined, but to a lesser

² Our estimated count of Head Start-eligible children in 2014 is 1,969,931 and in 2019 is 1,830,997, reflecting a decrease of 138,934 children (a 7% decline).

extent (a 2% decline). Because centers did not decline as quickly as potential need, some communities may have experienced a surplus of centers, which could have been redirected to more constrained neighborhoods, resulting in more equitable access for children of different race/ethnicities and nativities. Instead, a potential opportunity to improve equity may have been missed, as neighborhood availability remained constrained overall and disparities persisted. This result could be, at least in part, a reflection of a lack of systematic information (and use of information) about neighborhood availability and neighborhood participation for directing Head Start policy and programming at the local level.

USING EQUITY DATA IN YOUR COMMUNITY

State and federal policymakers, government officials, advocates, care providers, the press and others can use the data in this brief in a variety of ways:

To inform federal locational and expansion strategies to effectively support vulnerable families

Given Head Start's successful track record of targeting vulnerable families, Office of Head Start and other state early childhood care and education system administrators and policymakers could consider the use of locational strategies in expansion efforts to improve the reach of Head Start and other early education programs to specific vulnerable groups, e.g. immigrant families, Hispanic families and families of all racial/ethnic groups that face higher and/or multiple barriers to access (e.g. transportation, language and information barriers).

To develop data-informed strategies to strengthen access to existing Head Start locations and identify barriers providers face in underserved neighborhoods

To inform locational strategies, Office of Head Start and other state-level early education policymakers could analyze administrative data, and/or the data used to perform this analysis (available through diversitydatakids.org) to identify locations where children of different groups are underserved. From there, further analyses can determine what barriers may prevent new Head Start providers from locating in these areas and what location-specific barriers parents may be facing. The national availability of these data and the observed variation across place can help policymakers learn from places where access is better for Hispanic and immigrant families, for example.

To guide data collection tactics to better capture the needs of underserved families

A major limitation to more detailed analyses that compare neighborhood Head Start need and neighborhood usage is the collection and reporting of center-level data. Head Start Program Information Report data currently aggregates data to the Head Start Program level. Programs can contain many centers, e.g. Boston's largest Head Start program aggregates data from over 20 centers that span the entire city of Boston and serve children of diverse family backgrounds, in terms of race/ethnicity and nativity.

To collaborate with neighborhood direct service organizations that can help families in urgent need

Sustainable solutions to effectively reduce disparities in neighborhood access to Head Start (and other types of early care and education) need to go beyond federal Head Start and early care and education policies, by connecting with the broader efforts of Hispanic and immigrant-facing organizations that are working to advance economic, housing, health and educational opportunities for Hispanic families.

APPENDIX

Table 4a. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2014 and 2019

State	Total		White		Black		Hispanic	
	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019
United States	27%	27%	26%	25%	29%	28%	27%	27%
Alabama	28%	23%	26%	21%	29%	23%	30%	25%
Alaska	43%	40%	30%	31%	S	S	36%	36%
Arizona	32%	34%	21%	20%	25%	34%	31%	35%
Arkansas	39%	30%	38%	30%	45%	32%	33%	30%
California	31%	29%	26%	22%	29%	27%	32%	31%
Colorado	27%	26%	21%	18%	26%	35%	30%	29%
Connecticut	20%	16%	16%	9%	26%	17%	20%	20%
Delaware	19%	22%	18%	15%	21%	26%	22%	19%
D.C.	47%	42%	S	S	49%	41%	35%	58%
Florida	25%	25%	18%	18%	35%	34%	23%	22%
Georgia	21%	19%	17%	17%	25%	24%	15%	15%
Hawaii	39%	40%	21%	45%	S	S	34%	42%
Idaho	23%	25%	22%	21%	S	S	22%	33%
Illinois	27%	28%	19%	18%	36%	40%	25%	25%
Indiana	17%	18%	20%	19%	13%	16%	17%	19%
Iowa	32%	29%	31%	30%	27%	22%	39%	34%
Kansas	25%	21%	30%	23%	18%	22%	22%	19%
Kentucky	41%	35%	42%	39%	43%	18%	32%	33%
Louisiana	27%	30%	24%	30%	29%	32%	18%	17%
Maine	39%	41%	38%	42%	45%	33%	26%	46%
Maryland	25%	23%	17%	17%	29%	28%	26%	20%
Massachusetts	17%	13%	14%	10%	20%	19%	19%	14%
Michigan	22%	26%	27%	27%	16%	24%	19%	28%
Minnesota	27%	23%	30%	28%	21%	14%	26%	23%
Mississippi	41%	37%	31%	30%	46%	40%	28%	25%
Missouri	30%	26%	33%	28%	28%	24%	23%	24%
Montana	34%	45%	27%	33%	S	S	24%	43%
Nebraska	38%	25%	35%	26%	56%	19%	30%	22%
Nevada	9%	9%	5%	11%	11%	10%	10%	6%
New Hampshire	22%	24%	23%	21%	S	S	24%	37%
New Jersey	17%	16%	13%	14%	23%	19%	18%	16%
New Mexico	38%	38%	28%	31%	33%	S	35%	38%
New York	25%	25%	30%	27%	24%	27%	24%	25%
North Carolina	22%	22%	19%	20%	26%	26%	20%	17%
North Dakota	42%	36%	30%	24%	S	26%	58%	37%
Ohio	25%	28%	23%	25%	31%	35%	24%	22%
Oklahoma	35%	35%	38%	36%	25%	25%	32%	31%
Oregon	30%	34%	28%	32%	40%	40%	30%	38%
Pennsylvania	31%	34%	28%	29%	32%	38%	37%	39%
Rhode Island	23%	28%	19%	17%	23%	42%	23%	34%
South Carolina	22%	20%	15%	16%	27%	23%	18%	17%
South Dakota	55%	43%	43%	32%	53%	27%	42%	36%
Tennessee	33%	31%	33%	28%	33%	35%	33%	32%
Texas	24%	24%	20%	20%	21%	20%	26%	26%
Utah	27%	25%	22%	21%	28%	S	32%	30%
Vermont	36%	34%	36%	35%	S	S	S	S
Virginia	30%	28%	30%	26%	31%	33%	29%	25%
Washington	26%	25%	22%	22%	28%	24%	30%	30%
West Virginia	63%	62%	64%	64%	62%	47%	53%	57%
Wisconsin	23%	25%	20%	20%	28%	30%	22%	26%
Wyoming	33%	39%	33%	33%	S	S	29%	44%

Note: S=Suppressed due to data reliability.

Table 4a. Percent of Head Start eligible children with a Head Start preschool in their neighborhood, 2014 and 2019

State	Asian		American Indian		Foreign-born parents		Native-born parents	
	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019
United States	20%	19%	50%	50%	25%	24%	28%	28%
Alabama	S	S	S	S	31%	8%	28%	9%
Alaska	23%	38%	66%	49%	27%	13%	45%	12%
Arizona	24%	12%	67%	62%	32%	14%	32%	15%
Arkansas	22%	21%	35%	S	35%	15%	40%	17%
California	26%	25%	36%	38%	32%	16%	29%	19%
Colorado	S	26%	36%	42%	27%	16%	26%	20%
Connecticut	S	S	S	S	17%	17%	21%	21%
Delaware	S	S	S	S	24%	17%	18%	22%
D.C.	S	96%	S	S	40%	18%	48%	22%
Florida	13%	19%	14%	11%	23%	18%	26%	22%
Georgia	9%	15%	S	S	14%	18%	23%	23%
Hawaii	46%	46%	S	NA	39%	19%	39%	23%
Idaho	S	S	43%	36%	26%	21%	22%	23%
Illinois	14%	11%	S	S	23%	22%	29%	24%
Indiana	16%	11%	S	S	16%	22%	18%	24%
Iowa	S	26%	69%	18%	36%	22%	31%	24%
Kansas	24%	S	27%	24%	18%	22%	27%	25%
Kentucky	33%	28%	S	S	37%	23%	41%	25%
Louisiana	S	14%	22%	46%	16%	23%	28%	26%
Maine	62%	S	29%	73%	42%	23%	39%	26%
Maryland	S	15%	S	S	21%	24%	26%	26%
Massachusetts	13%	S	S	S	18%	24%	17%	26%
Michigan	25%	14%	52%	57%	15%	24%	23%	27%
Minnesota	19%	12%	57%	59%	23%	25%	28%	27%
Mississippi	S	S	80%	87%	32%	26%	42%	28%
Missouri	S	19%	S	S	22%	26%	30%	28%
Montana	S	S	59%	71%	34%	27%	34%	28%
Nebraska	51%	39%	66%	59%	32%	27%	40%	28%
Nevada	S	S	35%	42%	7%	28%	11%	29%
New Hampshire	S	S	S	NA	24%	28%	22%	29%
New Jersey	S	9%	S	S	17%	29%	18%	30%
New Mexico	S	S	60%	56%	37%	29%	38%	30%
New York	16%	13%	30%	38%	22%	30%	27%	31%
North Carolina	12%	9%	24%	29%	19%	30%	23%	31%
North Dakota	S	S	73%	65%	15%	31%	44%	33%
Ohio	20%	24%	33%	S	23%	31%	25%	34%
Oklahoma	S	11%	50%	52%	28%	32%	37%	35%
Oregon	25%	18%	21%	62%	31%	32%	29%	35%
Pennsylvania	26%	32%	50%	34%	29%	32%	31%	36%
Rhode Island	S	S	89%	S	27%	33%	21%	37%
South Carolina	S	S	43%	S	16%	33%	23%	37%
South Dakota	S	S	77%	58%	33%	34%	57%	37%
Tennessee	S	S	S	S	26%	34%	34%	38%
Texas	13%	8%	32%	27%	23%	36%	26%	39%
Utah	23%	31%	48%	49%	29%	36%	26%	41%
Vermont	S	S	94%	S	29%	38%	36%	41%
Virginia	7%	27%	S	S	25%	39%	31%	43%
Washington	16%	16%	33%	44%	27%	44%	25%	45%
West Virginia	80%	S	S	NA	57%	46%	64%	45%
Wisconsin	27%	30%	47%	41%	24%	S	23%	45%
Wyoming	S	S	56%	85%	18%	S	34%	63%

Note: S=Suppressed due to data reliability.

Table 5a. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2014 and 2019

State	Total		White		Black		Hispanic	
	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019
United States	82	80	62	59	91	88	97	96
Alabama	72	93	63	78	78	82	73	177
Alaska	24	33	25	46	S	S	36	30
Arizona	89	88	77	68	102	109	97	99
Arkansas	82	63	65	51	90	62	100	96
California	99	98	89	99	102	105	102	99
Colorado	78	73	59	47	55	75	89	78
Connecticut	68	57	52	32	67	56	72	64
Delaware	66	80	S	81	70	81	56	79
D.C.	70	36	S	S	73	38	37	22
Florida	88	88	69	77	97	100	89	78
Georgia	92	87	78	70	96	90	96	92
Hawaii	50	59	49	41	S	S	45	66
Idaho	71	66	75	52	S	S	70	87
Illinois	79	70	49	48	89	78	86	70
Indiana	63	72	56	55	75	90	76	103
Iowa	42	38	38	33	54	53	47	44
Kansas	60	57	48	42	100	100	69	61
Kentucky	68	58	59	55	97	77	79	72
Louisiana	79	85	69	75	80	90	68	77
Maine	49	40	50	38	54	52	46	S
Maryland	81	90	48	58	99	100	52	97
Massachusetts	70	65	51	58	84	89	75	62
Michigan	58	63	52	50	73	82	57	71
Minnesota	64	48	34	31	128	69	80	50
Mississippi	93	75	67	63	99	78	81	85
Missouri	66	62	61	54	80	79	75	64
Montana	40	52	42	51	S	S	40	S
Nebraska	67	43	51	35	97	48	71	53
Nevada	101	85	83	67	127	89	99	101
New Hampshire	53	42	47	40	S	S	S	52
New Jersey	89	89	132	146	59	65	97	85
New Mexico	69	87	65	65	110	S	72	97
New York	93	96	96	96	93	99	95	98
North Carolina	83	79	63	64	90	79	93	98
North Dakota	38	46	30	24	S	S	38	S
Ohio	84	73	67	55	105	95	84	58
Oklahoma	51	46	43	40	72	62	60	55
Oregon	65	61	61	57	58	60	74	68
Pennsylvania	80	71	46	44	95	79	117	95
Rhode Island	59	64	49	52	59	76	64	67
South Carolina	89	81	77	67	92	83	87	104
South Dakota	52	39	36	28	S	52	101	56
Tennessee	85	93	67	60	103	127	102	105
Texas	108	110	73	65	97	96	115	120
Utah	76	56	57	49	70	S	94	67
Vermont	34	39	34	41	S	S	S	S
Virginia	69	65	51	46	80	80	77	67
Washington	71	65	55	44	58	56	90	87
West Virginia	42	47	41	47	50	43	32	41
Wisconsin	62	57	39	38	83	79	78	63
Wyoming	41	54	40	63	S	S	47	56

Note: S=Suppressed due to data reliability.

Table 5a. Average number of Head Start eligible children per center in neighborhood, 2014 and 2019

State	Asian		American Indian		Foreign-born parents		Native-born parents	
	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019	2014	2019
United States	79	74	59	55	97	96	77	74
Alabama	S	S	S	S	74	161	72	83
Alaska	41	S	16	22	43	S	22	33
Arizona	133	S	72	61	99	104	82	77
Arkansas	244	S	S	S	127	103	76	55
California	74	75	89	80	99	97	99	100
Colorado	S	101	S	S	94	79	69	68
Connecticut	S	S	S	S	63	62	70	55
Delaware	S	S	72	80	S	80	68	80
D.C.	S	S	S	S	32	S	74	37
Florida	S	89	S	S	94	86	85	89
Georgia	80	96	S	S	88	101	93	84
Hawaii	60	62	S	S	50	63	50	58
Idaho	S	S	S	S	71	82	71	60
Illinois	47	60	S	S	84	77	78	68
Indiana	S	S	S	S	78	119	61	65
Iowa	S	37	S	S	51	46	40	36
Kansas	68	S	38	S	69	71	58	53
Kentucky	S	S	S	S	85	77	67	56
Louisiana	S	S	40	42	79	88	79	85
Maine	S	S	24	33	48	49	49	39
Maryland	S	S	S	S	55	95	87	89
Massachusetts	S	S	S	S	68	65	71	65
Michigan	105	55	43	36	76	74	56	62
Minnesota	158	80	40	86	109	60	49	43
Mississippi	S	S	105	56	76	79	94	75
Missouri	S	95	S	S	84	71	65	61
Montana	S	S	36	55	39	S	40	51
Nebraska	64	82	45	21	90	61	60	36
Nevada	146	S	25	28	101	105	102	72
New Hampshire	S	S	S	S	61	48	51	41
New Jersey	S	39	S	S	96	78	85	96
New Mexico	S	S	62	69	76	93	66	85
New York	84	89	72	69	102	97	89	95
North Carolina	S	S	61	63	95	102	80	72
North Dakota	S	S	44	53	S	S	38	43
Ohio	76	88	S	S	86	78	84	73
Oklahoma	S	S	47	40	60	61	49	44
Oregon	75	S	S	65	73	62	61	61
Pennsylvania	72	143	S	S	83	96	79	67
Rhode Island	S	S	114	S	58	65	60	63
South Carolina	S	S	S	S	89	102	89	78
South Dakota	S	S	62	43	43	40	52	39
Tennessee	S	S	S	S	104	105	83	91
Texas	94	67	75	56	124	133	95	94
Utah	S	47	47	48	92	68	66	49
Vermont	S	S	S	S	S	S	34	40
Virginia	S	S	S	S	75	58	68	67
Washington	45	40	41	44	84	83	61	53
West Virginia	S	S	S	S	42	39	42	48
Wisconsin	61	60	34	36	76	64	59	55
Wyoming	S	S	39	26	33	72	42	49

Note: S=Suppressed due to data reliability.

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