



Accessing the Child Tax Credit: How Head Start Programs Can Help



The American Rescue Plan expanded the Child Tax Credit (CTC). As a result, most families — even those with little to no income — can receive the full amount. The monthly amount is now \$300 per child under age 6 and \$250 for each child aged 6 to 17.

You can now receive half of the total credit amount in advance monthly payments through December 2021. You can claim the other half when you file your 2021 income tax return. Individual Taxpayer Income Number (ITIN) holders with children who have social security numbers are eligible to receive this credit. This means immigrant families are included and eligible.

The following information explains how you can receive the CTC you are entitled to. Your Head Start program can help you at any step in the process.

How to Get the CTC

Automatic Payments for Tax Filers. You will automatically receive advanced monthly Child Tax Credit payments (which began in July 2021) if you usually file taxes, list child dependents on your tax return, and filed a tax return in the past two years.

If you prefer to stop receiving advanced payments and would like to receive a larger sum in your tax return, you can use the [Child Tax Credit Update Portal](#) to unenroll.

Child Tax Credit Eligibility Assistant. You are likely eligible for the full benefit if you are a single parent making less than \$112,500 a year and have children under age 18 who will live with you for more than half of 2021. Married couples are likely eligible for the full benefit if they make less than \$150,000 a year and have children under age 18 who will live with them for more than half of 2021.

In addition, the CTC does not count as income when applying for other federal benefits, such as [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) or cash assistance. Use the [Child Tax Credit Eligibility Assistant](#) to find out if you are eligible for advance payments.

Child Tax Credit Non-filer Sign-up Tool. If you do not usually file taxes, you can still qualify for the Child Tax Credit if you meet eligibility requirements. Use the simple [Child Tax Credit Non-filer Sign-up Tool](#) to enroll quickly through November 15, 2021. After this date, you will have to file taxes to receive the CTC.

Child Tax Credit Update Portal. Don't miss a payment. Use the [Child Tax Credit Update Portal](#) to update your bank account information and mailing address. This feature helps any family who chooses to receive their payment by paper check avoid mailing delays or having a check returned as undeliverable. You can also use the portal to view payments or check if you are enrolled to receive payments.

Our Head Start program can assist you with accessing the CTC and using these tools and portals. We are here to help. Just ask!

