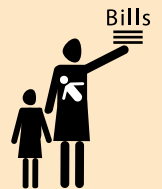


# One Step Forward Means Two Steps Back as Families Struggle to Economic Independence

Too many families are unable to make ends meet as they try to move off of assistance benefits and toward economic independence. Benefits help buffer the impacts of poverty and hardship on children's health and development. Yet when family income increases and benefits are reduced or cut-off, the new, higher income may not be enough to offset the loss or reduction of benefits. As a result, children are at increased risk of experiencing hunger and poor health.

**Economic Independence**

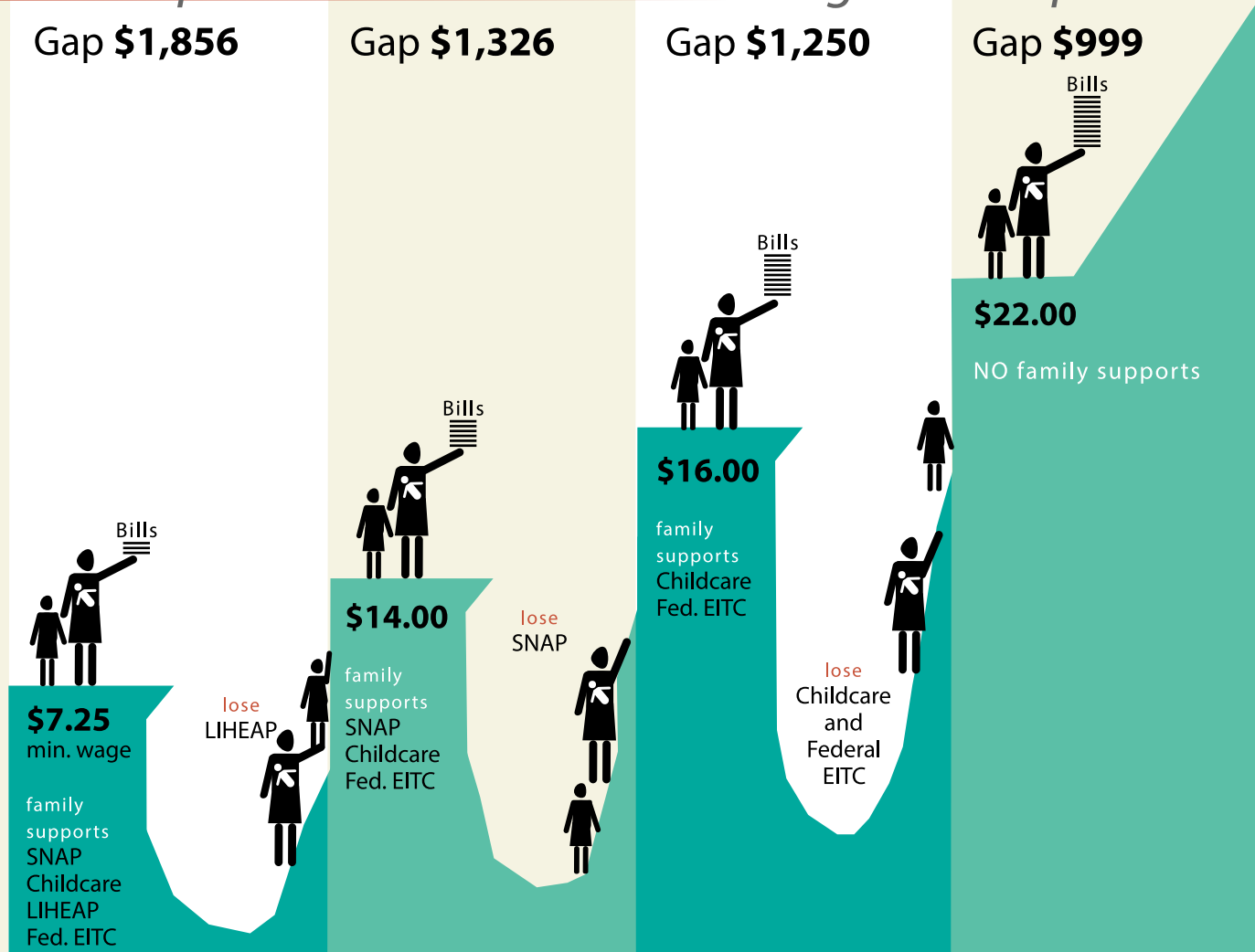


*economic independence or breaking even point*



full-time wages  
+ family supports  
-----  
total resources

total resources  
- basic living expenses  
-----  
monthly gap



**\$27.34/hr**  
Gap \$0

\*Calculations are based on self-sufficiency standards produced by the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington. Available from: <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org>.