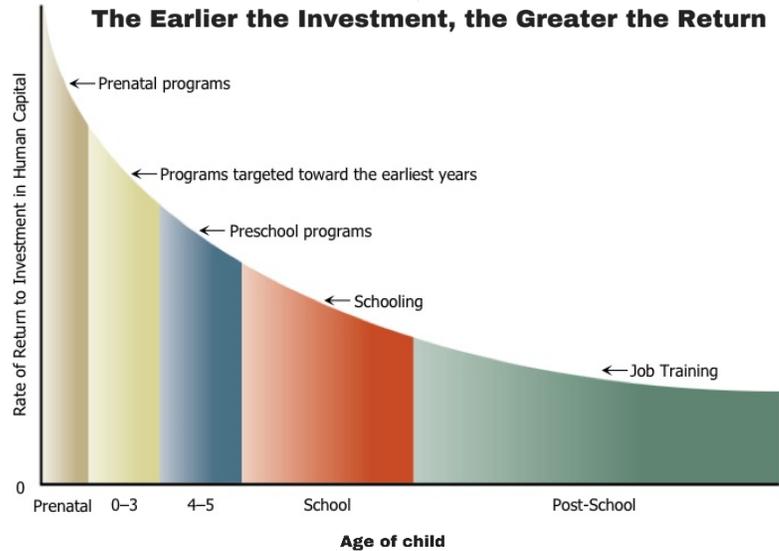


Investments in Early Childhood Education Yield High Returns



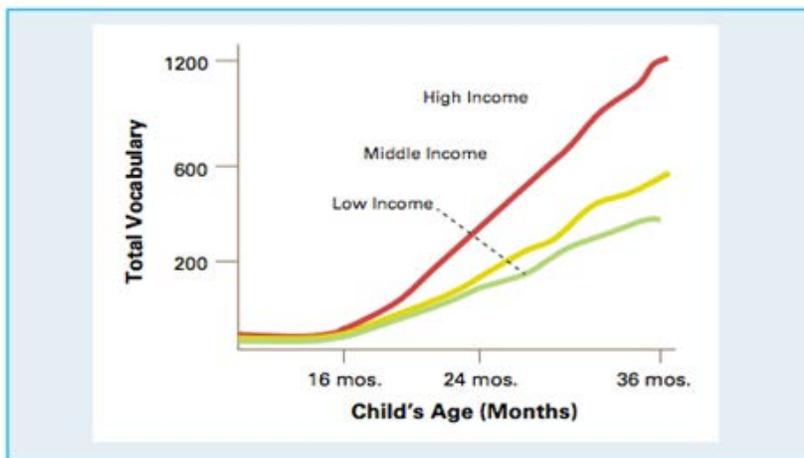
The evidence is clear: when young children have healthy and enriching experiences, with one on one attention from teachers, parents and caregivers, they are more likely to be ready for school and to transition successfully into kindergarten and beyond.¹

Because human brain development occurs most rapidly and dramatically in the first three years of life, a child's earliest experiences shape his or her lifelong learning.²



James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics

By the age of 5, children from low income families will have heard 30 million *fewer* words than their wealthier peers. This means lower-income children often enter school with substantially smaller vocabularies. This gap largely continues throughout life. Most of the high school achievement gap between poor, middle-income and wealthy students is already visible by kindergarten.³



The Vocabulary Gap for Low Income Children

¹ National Center for Education Statistics, ECLS, 2011

² In Brief, *The Science of Early Childhood Development*, Center on the Developing Child, 2007

³ *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*, Hart and Risley, 1995

Why is quality early childhood education, including preschool, so important for businesses?

- When surveyed, 77% of CEOs say that a workforce that does not have appropriate skills is a primary concern.⁴
- The early care and education industry itself is economically important—often much larger in terms of employees and revenues than other industries that receive considerable government attention and investment.⁵
- Failing to invest sufficiently in quality early care and education shortchanges taxpayers because the return on investment is greater than many other economic development options.⁵
- Access to available and affordable quality early childhood learning programs helps working parents fulfill their responsibilities.⁵
- Almost 13 million Americans in their prime working years have children under age 6. Many of these parents need reliable childcare to be able to upgrade their skills through education, enter the workforce, and remain employed.⁶

WITHOUT A HIGH-QUALITY EARLY EDUCATION, AT-RISK CHILDREN ARE

25% MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

40% MORE LIKELY TO BECOME A TEEN PARENT

50% MORE LIKELY TO BE PLACED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

60% MORE LIKELY TO NEVER ATTEND COLLEGE

70% MORE LIKELY TO BE ARRESTED FOR A VIOLENT CRIME

HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD.

Ounce of Prevention, 2017

Early Education is Important to the Business Community

“By laying the crucial groundwork for tomorrow’s workforce and supporting a strong workforce today, high-quality childcare builds our nation’s human capital two generations at a time.” – U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2017



⁴ *20 Years Inside the Mind of a CEO, 20th CEO Survey, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2017*

⁵ *Ready, Set Go, Why Business Should Support Early Childhood Education, Institute for a Competitive Workplace, 2010*

⁶ *Workforce of Today, Workforce of Tomorrow: The Business Case for High Quality Childcare, US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2017*

Strong Foundations/Large Gaps In Quality Early Education for Arizona Children

Early Education	Strong Foundations	Large Gaps	How AZ Compares
Child Care Assistance	With \$120 million in federal funds, the Department of Economic Security provides child care assistance to 20,000 children each month. Families count on this assistance when they are homeless, moving from welfare to work, involved with the Department of Child Safety, or earning low wages at work.	Many families who need affordable child care can't get assistance because of state funding cuts during the recession. The Arizona Legislature cut nearly \$80 million dollars from the program and it hasn't been restored. Many child care providers charge participating parents high rates because the amount the state reimburses is far below the cost of care.	Arizona's reimbursement rates to child care providers are 42% below the real cost – making Arizona's rates the worst in the nation. <i>(National Women's Law Center, 2016)</i>
Preschool	In 2016, 22,596 children in Arizona got high quality education through federal funding for Head Start and Early Head Start. Federal preschool development grants connected another 2,000 children to high quality preschool.	Many Arizona families who want preschool through Head Start can't get it and sites across the state have waiting lists. According to the Arizona Progress Meter (2016), only 21% of 3 and 4-year old children were enrolled in quality preschool in 2016; the goal is 45% by 2030.	Arizona ranks 37 th out of 44 states reviewed in the percentage of four-year old children with access to state-funded preschool. <i>(National Institute for Early Education Research, 2016)</i>
Quality Improvement	First Things First invests \$120 million of dedicated tobacco tax funds each year in support for parents, scholarships, and quality improvements for child care providers. Quality First, the states' Quality Improvement and Rating system reaches 51,069 Arizona children.	This funding is only approximately \$230 per child aged birth to five and there is almost no other state funding to supplement this. The quality coaching for child care providers is available to only one third of child care providers.	25% of Arizona's children live in poverty, higher than the national rate of 21% <i>(Annie E. Casey, KIDS COUNT Data Book, 2017)</i>
Early Literacy	The Arizona legislature has allocated \$20 million over the next two years in early literacy grants to school districts with very high poverty rates. All school districts and charters must develop literacy plans and support for children struggling to read.	n school year 2016-2017, only 44% of third grade students were proficient in 3 rd grade ELA. Arizona is striving towards a 72% goal by 2030.	Only 30 % of Arizona 4 th graders score at or above national reading proficiency standards. In 2015, Arizona ranked 44 out of 50 states in the percentage of students who scored below a basic reading level. <i>(National Assessment of Educational Progress)</i>



Arizonans Agree: Early Childhood Education Counts

In 2016, Expect More Arizona recognized the importance of quality early childhood education and included the “percent of three and four-year olds attending preschool in quality early learning setting” as one of its leading indicators of educational progress in Arizona.

- The impact of child care and preschool policy decisions falls most directly on families who want to work so that they can climb out of poverty.
- There is strong evidence that child care assistance increases employment and earnings for low income families. Research has shown that single mothers who receive assistance work more hours, have more standard work schedules, stay in jobs longer and earn more than mothers who do not receive assistance.⁷
- Families sometimes must choose between not working or having to put their children in unsafe situations including sometimes leaving them at home alone or with inappropriate caregivers.

Quality Child Care Matters

Maritza was born in Arizona in 1986 to immigrant parents who had little formal education. She spoke virtually no English and was at risk of doing poorly in school. Her parents enrolled Maritza in a quality preschool, while her mom volunteered in the classroom. Teachers visited the family each month to help them practice their language skills. By the time she started kindergarten, Maritza not only knew how to speak and understand English, she developed a love for books and learning. As she grew, she continued to succeed, getting excellent grades and eventually enrolling in college. She graduated from Arizona State University and went on to work for the U.S. Department of Justice in Phoenix. Today, she is married and has a family of her own.



⁷ Workforce of Today, Workforce of Tomorrow: The Business Case for High Quality Childcare, US Chamber of Commerce, 2017