



THE BENEFITS OF EARLY LEARNING



As we look for ways to keep New Hampshire prosperous, we need to think of the connection between child development and economic development. Child development is the foundation for community and economic development because capable children are the bedrock of a prosperous and sustainable Granite State.

The early years of life matter because early experiences affect the architecture of the maturing brain. Children begin learning as soon as they are born, and their brains are built from the bottom up. Scientists now know that the interactive influences of genes and experience shape the developing brain. Children's hearts and minds are molded by the relationships and environments they experience. The active ingredient is the "serve and return" relationships with their parents and other caregivers in their family or community. When we give our youngest citizens a stimulating environment with plenty of opportunities to explore and discover and interact positively with others, we lay a strong foundation for their future learning. Good quality child care, Head Start and preschool programs provide this strong foundation and give children the tools they need to succeed in school and in life. We all benefit when we give children the right start.

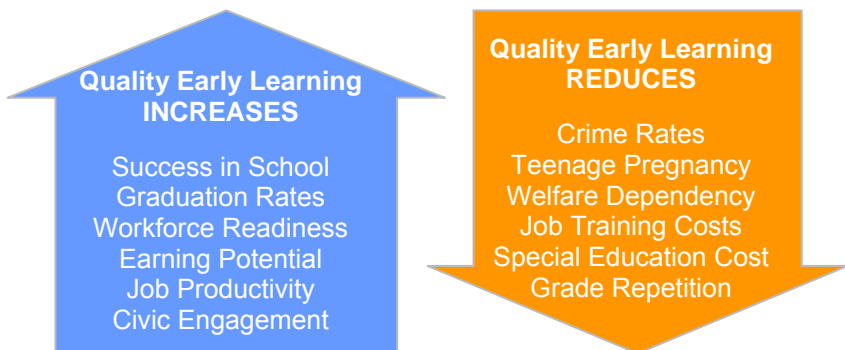
Benefits to the New Hampshire Economy and to Society

A study by the NH Department of Employment Security, *Child Care in New Hampshire: An Economic Impact Study*, found that 8.5% of the total projected employment for New Hampshire in 2009 is due to the availability of child care and the industry itself. When workers have stable, affordable child care, their employers realize lower absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover and increased morale, productivity and retention.

The 2009 report also concluded that the child care industry contributes nearly \$4.4 billion to the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and that quality child care contributes not only to the state's economic well-being but also to the future quality of life for all.

Return on Investment is Strong

Current research indicates that for every dollar spent, quality early learning yields a total benefit of up to \$17, with annual internal rates of return of 18% (1% participant gain and 17% public benefit). Public benefits include higher tax revenues and lower costs for special education, welfare support, and crime.



“ INVESTING IN THE EARLY YEARS IS THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK. ”

Senator Warren Rudman
USA Child Care Conference in Nashua, NH

From the 2009 Final Report of the Governor's Task Force for the Recruitment and Retention of a Young Workforce for the State of New Hampshire

“ ...THE TASK FORCE BELIEVES IT MUST RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS IF IT IS TO HONESTLY RESPOND TO THE CHARGE GIVEN IT BY THE GOVERNOR. ”

Why the Early Years?

The window of opportunity for development remains open for many years, but as brain circuits stabilize with age, they become increasingly difficult to alter.

It is more efficient, both biologically and economically, to get things right the first time than to try to fix them later.

Visit www.earlylearningnh.org to learn more about solutions.

(Sources: National Conference of State Legislatures; Bureau of Labor Statistics; National Scientific Council; Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University; The FrameWorks Institute; NH Dept. of Employment Security; Early Learning NH)