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Preschool Intervention Programs
Addressing the School Readiness Gap for Poor-to-Low- income
Children Entering Kindergarten

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Abstract

Over the last several decades, studies using quantitative and qualitative research methods have produced positive effects on children's learning and behavioral development. These effects vary in size and lasting effect depending on the type of program implemented. Current public policies for child care, Head Start, and state pre-K do not ensure that most American children will attend a highly effective preschool program. In actuality, a striking amount of children attend weak programs and many others attend no program at all. These fall backs in attendance are mainly associated with children in poverty-to-low-income households, (Barnett, 2008). Data supports that early childhood programs, like preschool, have a positive life-long impact that accounts for \$8 to \$14 return on every \$1 investment made towards early education. The returns in this investment would show up in lowered crime rates and greater economic productivity. Research has proven the positive effects of tailored early education programs on a community. The objective is to provide policy-makers with the information that shows that reallocating funds and implementing it into quality tailored preschool programs improves school readiness, especially in poor-to-low income students.

Introduction

According to Education journalist Lauren Camera (p.#1 2015), children in poverty are more likely to experience trauma and toxic stress, have less access to early learning experiences, and hear 30 million fewer words by age 3 than affluent children. Disadvantages begin as early as 9 months of age. The lack of an early childhood development education exhibits a large gap of achievement between them and kids who do receive early education. Lack of a preschool program sets the stage for kindergarten under-achievement, Camera (p. #1). Contributing to the setbacks that a child without an early education faces are the statistics of declining two parent households. The decline of two parent households is closely correlated with economic instability. Economic instability creates a negative effect on the child readiness as they enter kindergarten because of the limited resources at hand. These various disadvantages accumulate and create a ripple effect on children's educational foundation causing them to face many barriers like not being ready to perform entering kinder. As a result these children are behind from the very beginning creating a life time of negative effects and barriers to overcome.

The education pipeline effect was acknowledged and the establishment of federal early childhood education programs was developed and set in place to help alleviate this chronic problem. An early program for intervention was the federal Head Start program which began in 1965. It is the largest and best known preschool program in the nation and by 2000-2001 Head Start had served more than 20 million at-risk children. Head Start has never had the funding to serve more than approximately half of the eligible children, and the quality of each individual Head Start program varies by location. However, multiple evaluations have shown that organized Head Start programs can improve children's readiness for school significantly. (SREB, p.5)

Head Start caters to families living in poverty because statistics show they are the most disadvantaged. In 1999-2000 two thirds of all Head Start participants were African-American, Hispanic, or American Indian correlating with the fact that poor and minority communities have historically had the nation's lowest-quality schools. (SREB, p. 13). It is estimated that Forty percent of children living in poverty do not have the readiness skills to enter primary school. In 2000 the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test results, showed that 68% of low-income 4th grade students could not read at their proficiency level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000). The report also noted that there is a 90% chance that a child who is a poor reader at the end of 1st grade would be a poor reader at the end of their 4th grade. In nearly every state the reading gap between lower-and-higher-income students has grown wider over the last decade. According to a study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 83% of black students, 81% of Latino students, 78% of American Indian students, 55% of white students and 49% of Asian are not reading at a proficient level in the 4th grade. (The Council of State Government, March 2014). Practitioners concluded that most reading problems are preventable if acted upon in preschool and other early grades.

The development of a performance gap in mathematics for students who come from economically disadvantaged homes begins in early childhood. Students with fewer resources at home begin school with significantly less mathematical knowledge. This gap can be addressed by the preschool experience as a mechanism to level the playing field for children coming from low to poverty level income homes. Preschool would fully prepare all students to succeed in kindergarten. Another study done to investigate language exposure of children who come from high professional families, working-class families, and children in welfare families shows that children from professional families heard nearly eleven million words, Children from working class families heard six million words, and children from welfare families heard three million words over one year. This data means that over a four year time period the children from professional families heard almost five times as many words as a child in poverty. (Slaby, Loucks, & Stelwagon). Slaby's report concluded that the performance gap between minority students low-income students and high-income students could be lessened with regular attendance to a high quality preschool program. When the Santa Clara county Office of Education in San Jose, California reviewed their preschool program they found that 75% of the preschool students met kindergarten teachers' expectations. At the same time only 10% of the promoted preschool students were considered far below expectations and 41% were considered proficient in language arts (R. Slaby, S.Loucks & P. Stelwagon). The Santa Clara county statistics showed a drastic shift in percentages that are not seen without a preschool program being implemented.

The investigation in early childhood development and education is done in plenty case studies resulting in research evidence that concludes favorable outcomes for not only the children, but for all of the nation as a whole. David R. Denton, SREB director of school

readiness and reading, reports that since 1962 careful evaluations of many programs nationwide including state programs in Florida, Georgia, Maryland, South Carolina, and Texas have shown that high-quality prekindergarten education can:

- Help children be more ready for school;
- Improve students' scores on standardized tests;
- Reduce students' chances of repeating a grade;
- Reduce referrals of students to special education; and
- Improve students' chances of completing school.

Nevertheless, we continue to fall short of meeting the needs of those who are the most vulnerable and defenseless in our society-- the children. The young children in schools today will soon become the nation's workforce and leaders of tomorrow. If children go without early childhood education in a preschool program, they will lack the foundation for greater achievement and economic opportunity. Without solid academic achievement optimal employment opportunities are not attainable. Methods of empirical data structural analysis manifest the cycles of growth or decline in organizations and institutions as a collective consequence of individual choices in public education. The institution of public education it's not working for the diverse cultural student population of today because it does not cater to their needs so they could receive the full advantages of their education. There are many factors as to why students cannot demonstrate a basic understanding of reading, writing, and math skills by the time they finish with sixth grade all tying back to a lack of exposure. The challenges range from struggling to become fluent in the English language to having a broken family structure that doesn't support or aid children's education. This project's objective is to further explore and present an overview of the findings

that support the reallocation of funds to provide highly effective early education solutions for youth's educational struggles.

Objectives:

1. This project explores the various early intervention programs developed from 1962 to present time to help all children be ready for school.
2. The purpose of this project is to identify programs that have been evaluated carefully and that provide results that policy-makers can use in deciding how best to improve the school readiness of children in their states.
3. This project also examine the potential impact of early intervention programs in the overall success and academic achievement of poor-to-low-income students.

In order to further explore the topic at hand the next section presents an overview of recent and current literature involving the topic of early childhood education programs.

Literature Review:

In order to understand the extent to which funding is a critical component of educational success, the literature revised in this section reviews existing research on government assistance to Preschool Programs as well as data on achievement results for poverty level children who attended a preschool program. Three central questions have driven this initial research on the literature. First the extent to which Preschool Education is essential to school readiness? Second what are the Lasting Consequences in education for children who live in Poverty? Third what are the possible outcomes with Preschool Early Intervention programs for under privilege children?

Topic/Them I. Why is Preschool Essential?

A project study from the Miami School Readiness examined the kindergarten readiness of five cohorts (2002-2007) addressing the kindergarten readiness for low-income, ethnically and linguistically diverse children (n=16,176) in Miami Florida who experienced three types of publicly funded preschool programs the year before kindergarten: public school-based pre-K, center-based care or family childcare, Black and Latino children in public school-based pre-K programs consistently demonstrated greater kindergarten readiness when compared with their classmates in center-based and family childcare, controlling for demographic variables and cognitive skills at preschool entry. In most cases, low-income children enrolled in center-based care also exhibited greater kindergarten skills than their classmates who had attended family childcare. Results were the same across ethnic and language groups. Consequently all groups of children, those who attended public school-based pre-K began kindergarten with a stronger start than their classmates who attended center-based care and family childcare, and they continued to do better at the end of the kindergarten year (A. Ansari 2016). The Miami study reinforces the importance of preschool intervention programs by providing statistics that show clear academic and social development of school readiness for kids involved in the program.

A study by Lefebvre Pascal proves shared storybook reading with low-income preschoolers enhances vocabulary, print awareness, and phonological awareness. The experimental intervention results indicate that the experimental group (n=10) outperformed the control group (n=13) on phonological awareness scores, but not on vocabulary and print awareness scores. The study also compared the outcomes of the experimental intervention for the low-income participants with the skills of higher-income preschoolers who did not receive intervention. The low-income children in the experimental condition outperformed their higher-income peers (n=12) on all three measure. The experimental intervention offers promising

techniques for SSR activities in childcare centers (Pascal 2011:1). The Share Storybook Reading (SSR) experimental intervention study techniques fortifies that low-income preschool participants proof to outperform their higher-income peers when applied promising techniques like SSR activities in preschool centers.

Allocating funds for the public educational system in-doughtily carries many challenges from expenditure of categorical funds, and ever changing staffing needs. However, if the cycle of poverty and its effects on our youth is ever to be broken, it needs to start with a child's formative years. To bring academic equity to children at the beginning of their schooling is the first step in closing the achievement gap. These children will be able to take advantage of a school's wonderful staff and academic programs and perform on a more equitable academic playing field (Slaby 2005: 56). The most recent and comprehensive meta-analysis published in the peer-reviewed literature summarized the results of 123 studies conducted in the United States since 1960 (Camilli, Vargas, Ryan, & Barnett, 2010: 1). The studies report included the examined effects of large-scale public programs as well as small-scale programs. The researchers found that although there was some decline in effects after children entered school, on average the positive effects did not disappear and remained substantial throughout the school years.

Topic/Them II. What are the lasting education consequences for children who live in Poverty?

According to Ratcliffe and Mckernan, early childhood poverty is related to lower educational achievement. Children who are poor early in life are 30 percent less likely to complete high school than their counterparts who are first poor later in childhood, even after controlling for poverty duration and other factors. Duration of childhood poverty is also important. Compared with people never poor as a child, those poor for half their childhoods are nearly 90 percent more likely to enter their 20s without completing high school and are four times more likely to have a

teen premarital birth, (Ratchliffe:14). Ratcliffe concludes that while at one time formal educations was not a prerequisite for obtaining a good-paying job in this country, times have changed. Under the status quo, the United States is producing succeeding generations of children who face challenges right out of the starting gate and are less likely to achieve economic success for themselves and the next generation.

Topic/ Theme III. What are the possible outcomes with Preschool Early Intervention programs for under privilege children?

In a National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE 2014-3000) reports Connor, Compton, & O'Connor contend that reading difficulties and disabilities present serious and potentially lifelong lasting challenges. Children who do not read well are more likely to be retained a grade in school, drop out of high school, become a teen parent, or enter the juvenile justice system. The outcome report findings in the Child Development research report by (Weiland and Yoshikawa, 2013) supports the High-quality early childhood education prepares children with the cognitive skills required for success in elementary school and beyond. Studies show that preschool intervention techniques can be highly cost effective and have positive impacts into adulthood. From a developmental science perspective, this makes much sense; children's cognitive skills are malleable at a young age, and this supporting their early development builds a strong foundation for later educational and intellectual success. Children with higher levels of early vocabulary, reading, mathematics, and executive functioning consistently have greater levels of academic success in elementary and middle school. While the evidence is more mixed for emotional outcomes, both developmental theory and some empirical evidence suggest similar links to later academic outcome for that domain which is social and emotional development.

For this project I chose theorist Anthony Giddens and his structuration theory because for example as Giddens explains social structure cannot be conceptualized adequately without some recognition of actual or potential change of inequality.

Structuration Theory:

Giddens' theory of structuration argues that in order to understand society, one cannot look only at the actions of individuals or the social forces that maintain society. Instead, it is both that shape our social reality. He contends that although people are not entirely free to choose their own actions, and their knowledge is limited, they nonetheless are the agency that reproduces the social structure and leads to social change.

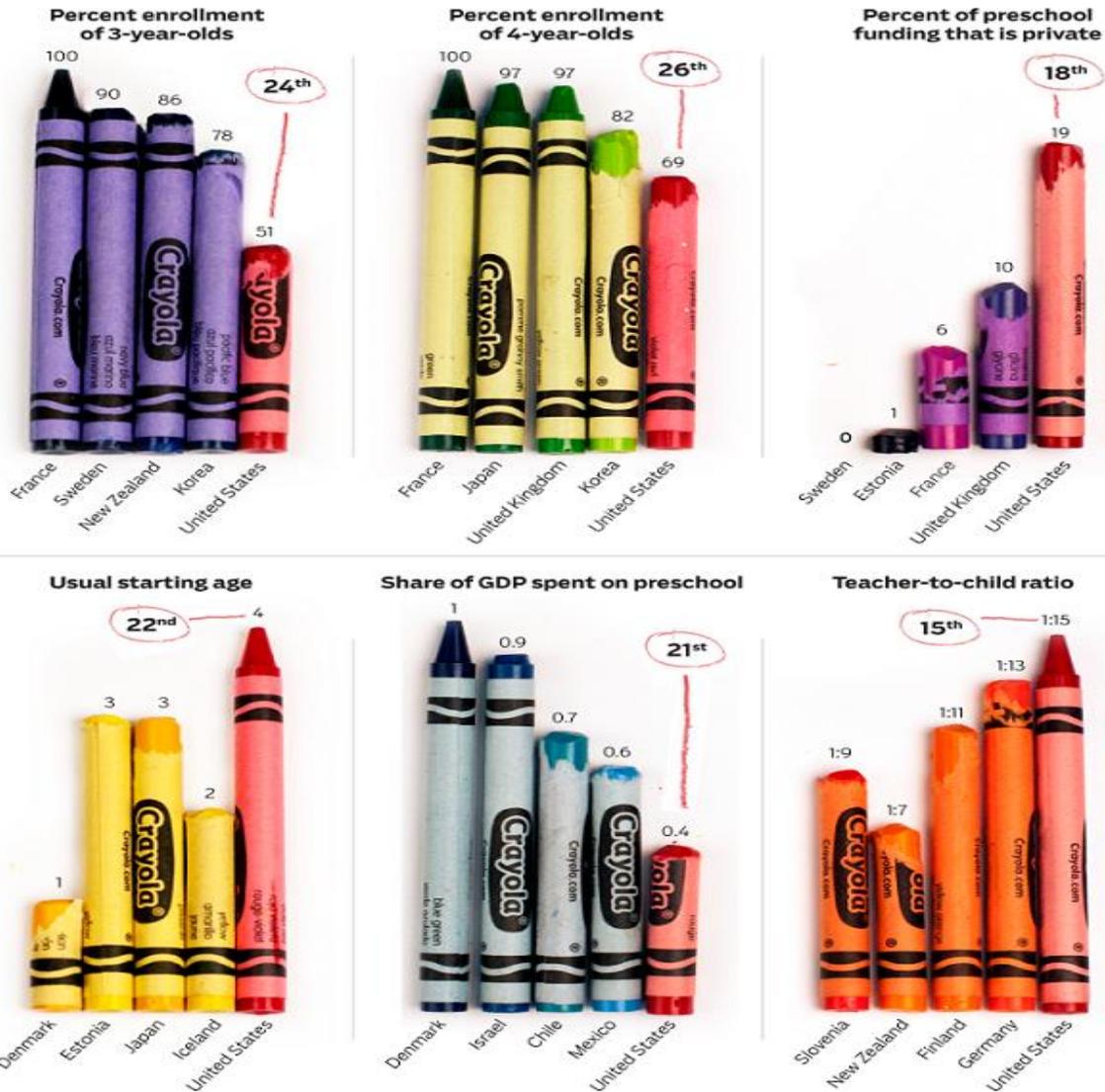
Through the scholarly material found for my social issue I found that the best theory to apply would be Structuration theory by theorist Anthony Giddens. As Giddens claiming position in his book, *The Constitution of Society*, published in 1984. Giddens assertion that structure creates social practices arranged over time and space; however, such practices are a product of both preexisting structural rules and individual agency. The idea that social systems and structure are always changing according to Giddens and his interpretation that a dialectical interplay between the two that moves society forward, giving it life. Structure and agency cannot be thought of in opposition to one another, but are vitally intertwined. In the Book, *BEYOND THE ENLIGHTENMENT Lives and Thoughts of Social Theorists*, Roger Salerno (2004). I have applied the interpretation by Giddens that structure is both a medium and an outcome of social action and I intend to apply Giddens in my efforts to promote the need for academic, social and behavioral intervention programs at preschool grade level. Giddens, all social interaction is interaction situated in time and space and is best understood through the routinized occurrence of encounters. These routinized encounters represent institutionalized features of the social system.

Structuration, therefore, is the process in which the duality of structure evolves and is reproduced over time and space. The conclusion for this issue using Giddens theory is that structuration, time, and space will correlate through the process of routinizing all social interaction. By utilizing the interpretation of Giddens in Structuration theory I hope to achieve that in order to advance and stay competitive in this global economy, education is key in preparing students for the jobs of the future. The ever changing world of technology is unstoppable and what seemed impossible twenty years back, global connection is almost at every ones reach in the developed nations. Change is inedible in the structuration of the traditional public school system in the U.S., It is shameful to see evidence that clearly states how far behind we rank compared to other

developed nations when it comes to investing in education.

Coloring outside the lines

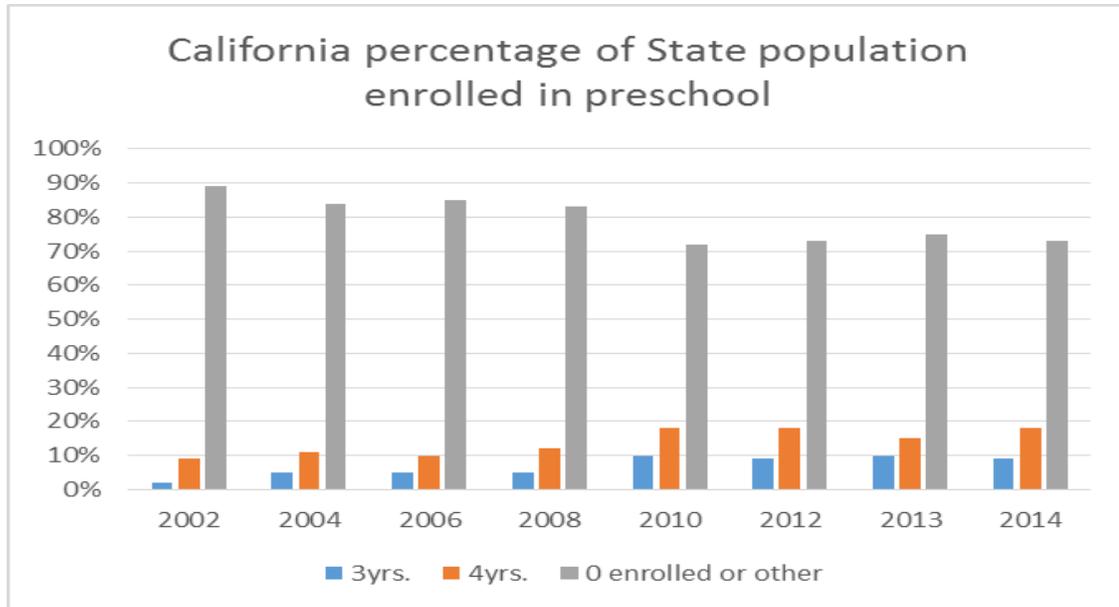
When it comes to early childhood education, we are anything but leaders. Among OECD countries, the United States is behind in every category.



Thinking progress.org, TRAVIS WALDRON.

California, one of the eight most populated states follows way short, when it comes to high state preschool programs. The following table states the percentage of children attending a state preschool program from 2002-2014.

Table. 1



To speak the truth about the public education system one must come forth and state based on the current evidence shown we fall far below standards when compared to other develop countries. Our school system is far from being good or effective, yet the outcome of some specialized scholars shine some light of hope when they continue to agree that early preschool intervention programs can set a solid foundation for education success. The urgency for correcting or improving the direction of the many existing problems today in our school system can be improve if we collaborate in support for allocating funding at the Federal and State level. The conversation of the effectiveness of these programs have been on the table for the past four decades. Many positive outcomes derive from improvement of school readiness, improved and advanced standard scores, and the continuation of education beyond high school. Other facts are

the ripple effect on the overall healthier lives that can be possible because of better equipped labor force that can compete for the higher paying jobs. Another positive outcome by preschool early intervention programs result in lowering the chances of entering the juvenile criminal system. Prior studies support the cost effectiveness and over-all benefits of preschool early intervention programs like “The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study” reported findings tracked for the duration of 40 year life indicate overwhelmingly the positive outcomes when investing in preschool intervention programs that support in preventing a problem, rather than trying to correct inter-generational problems.

Methodology:

This project research is supported with quantitative and qualitative empirical methods. The data was collected mainly by online databases of scholarly secondary sources research and reported outcomes. Before any changes can take place, further understanding of the components of the studied community and their needs. Once I have read my data, I than can customize to the needs of those students and their families. Without data, the objective to make positive changes can be nearly impossible. Understanding the needs and tailor quality preventative programs is my conclusion based on comparison data methods as well as the relationship between the cause and effect obtain from the data.

Education is key to a brighter future for everyone. Having researched and learning through my work as an after school elementary teacher and having worked at different positions at three different schools in my community for the past 13 years I believe to have a good understanding about some of the actual challenges that our youth struggles with in our local communities in today’s society. Advocating awareness is key to changing the structuration of our society. The alarming disservice we are doing to our students who are at a disadvantage from

the very beginning of their educational process experience is what has brought me back to school to further my education and acquire the necessary skills to bring back to my community and spread awareness and make a positive difference in the lives of our students and our community.

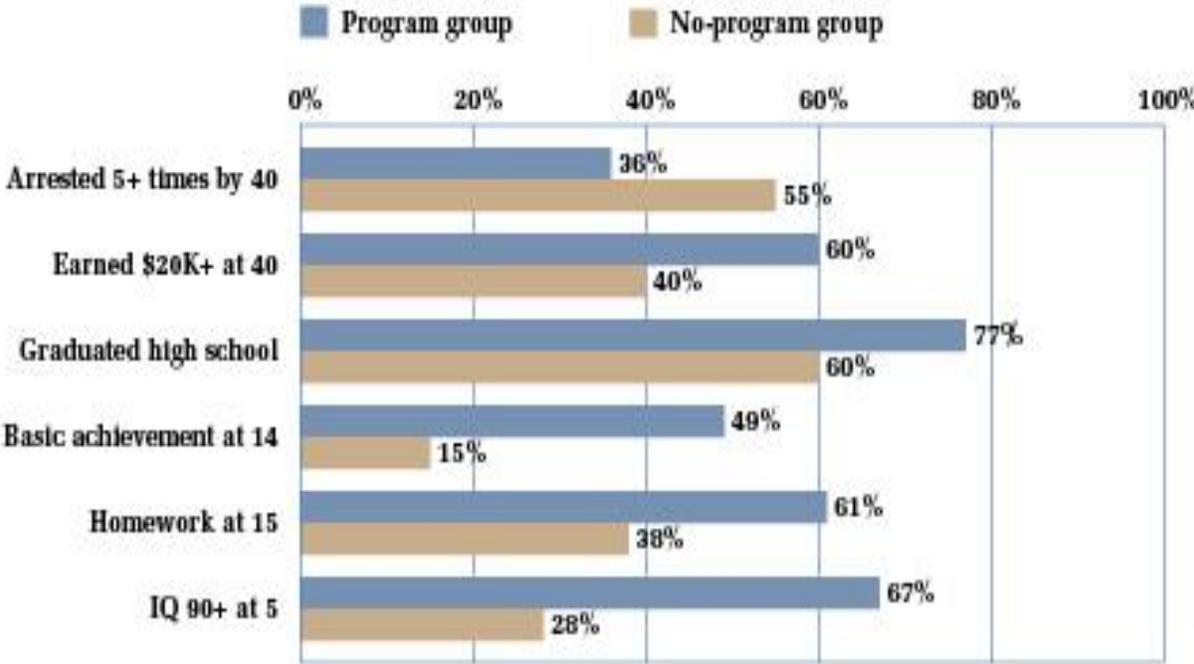
Results/Findings:

The numbers favor these early programs because they contribute to healthier family units and productive lives as adults. When prepared with a solid learning foundation than the opportunities as adults to serve in higher positions and excel in our society workforce making our nation stronger. It is our moral duty to help facilitate and as responsible adults to ensure that our most precious and youngest little people are in a high quality program setting to ensure successful outcomes that will benefit all including those who may not have children.

In this research for child development Weiland, and Yoshikawa conclude that publicly funded prekindergarten program have achieve small to large impacts on children's cognitive outcomes. The methods of coaching in literacy, language, and mathematics indicate that the program findings have some moderate- to-large impact on children's language and literacy as well as in numeracy and mathematics skills. Scholars further state that High-quality early childhood education equips children with the cognitive skills required for success in elementary school and beyond. Studies show that intensive preschool interventions can be highly cost effective and have positive impacts into adulthood. From the developmental science perspective, this makes much sense; children's cognitive skills at a young age can set a strong foundation for later educational and intellectual success. Furthermore children with higher levels of early vocabulary, reading, mathematics, and executive functioning consistently have greater levels of academic success in elementary and middle school, (2013: 2112).

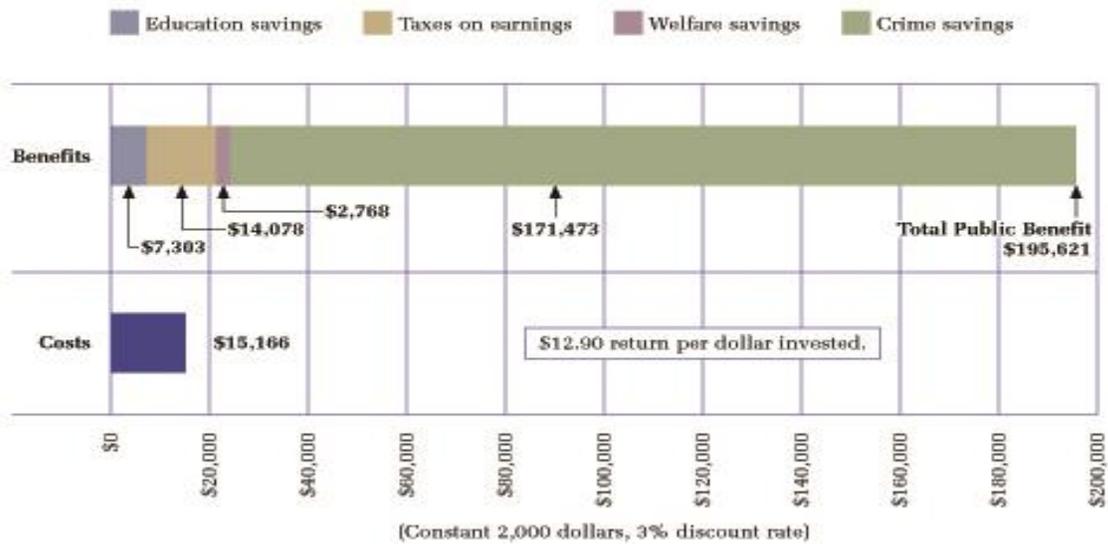
The High/Scope Perry Preschool Program study with 123 subjects shows the strong correlation that having an early exposure to a quality Preschool experience can have many life time lasting benefits throughout a life time. See Figure 1.

Figure 1
Major Findings: High/Scope Perry Preschool Study at 40



The evidence supports the positive benefits not only in a system like education, but also in family relationships, crime prevention and economic stability. The study found that adults at age 40 who had the preschool program had higher earnings, were more likely to hold a job, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from high school than adults who did not have preschool. For more information, see Figures. 2

Figure 2
High/Scope Perry Preschool Program Public Costs and Benefits

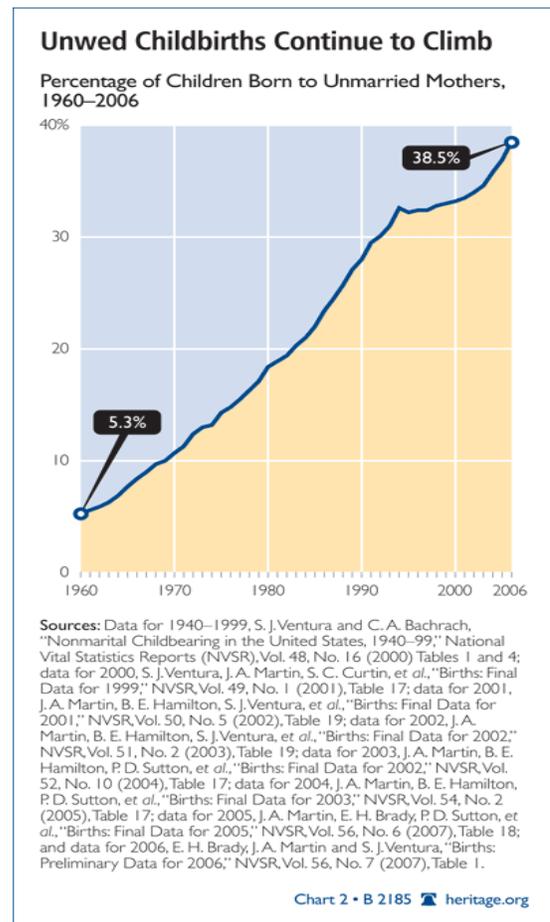
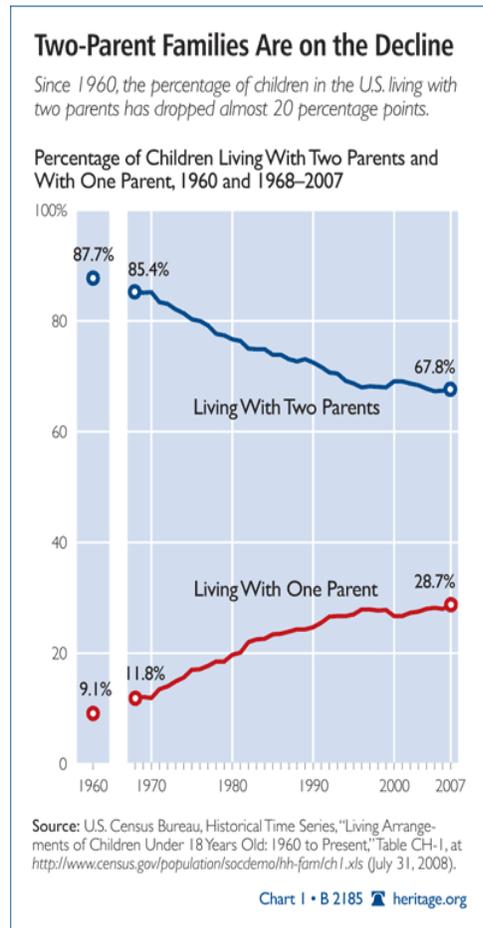


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The major conclusion of this midlife phase of the Perry Preschool research study is that high quality preschool programs for young children living in poverty contribute to their intellectual and social development in childhood and their school success, economic performance, and reduced commission of crime in adulthood.

The inherent problem within our current school system continues on the rise making the poorest age group in America “Children” to suffer greatest disparity in education. In 1960, nearly 90 percent of children lived in two-parent families, compared to below 70 percent on 2007. Similarly, unwed child bearing has increased from 5 percent in 1960 to nearly 40 percent in 2006

(The Heritage Foundation, September 22, 2008).



Studies show that children raised in intact families, i.e., with two continuously married parents, tend to fare better on a number of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes than children living in other family forms. Not surprisingly, the changes in family structure over the last 40 years have affected child and adolescent well-being. In 2002, nearly 7 million children between the ages of 12 and 18 repeated a grade. Based on this figure, Professor Amato estimates that if the share of two-parent families had remained unchanged between 1980 and 2002, some 300,000 fewer teens would have repeated a grade. Some 750,000 fewer students in 2002 would have repeated a grade if the share of two-parent families remained at the level it was in 1960.

(See Table 1.)

The Benefits of Two-Parent Families

Two-parent households offer greater family stability for children and reduce the number of behavior problems. The table below shows estimates of how many fewer instances of behavioral problems children would have faced in 2002 had the proportion of families with two parents been the same as the proportions in 1980, 1970, and 1960.

Problem	Estimated Instances in 2002	Estimated Change from 2002 Figure, Based on Share of Two-Parent Families in 1980, 1970, and 1960		
		1980	1970	1960
Repeated grade	6,948,530	-299,968	-643,264	-746,587
Suspended from school	8,570,096	-485,164	-1,040,410	-1,207,523
Delinquency	11,632,086	-216,498	-464,269	-538,841
Violence	11,490,072	-211,282	-453,083	-525,857
Therapy	3,412,678	-247,799	-531,392	-616,745
Smoked in last month	5,083,513	-239,974	-514,611	-597,269
Thought of suicide	3,692,358	-83,469	-178,995	-207,746
Attempted suicide	636,164	-28,693	-61,530	-71,413

Source: Paul R. Amato, "The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation," *The Future of Children*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Fall 2005), Table 2; estimates were based on the National Study of Adolescent Health, 1995.

Table 1 • B 2185  heritage.org

Policy Implications

Social science research over the last few decades indicates a strong relationship between family structure, parental involvement and children's educational outcomes, with enduring influences from early childhood to young adulthood. The empirical evidence points to several policy implications:

- Family policy intersects critically with education policy. Fortifying the intact family structure may lead to improvements in individual student outcomes as well as the American education system as a whole.

- Policies that strengthen healthy marriage and stable family formation may bolster child well-being, including school outcomes, both at the individual and aggregate levels.
- Conversely, policies and laws that facilitate further family breakdown may have adverse impacts on children's educational outcomes and provide additional stress on the education system.
- In education reform efforts, greater emphasis on parental involvement and parental choice could yield significant gains in student achievement and attainment. Importantly, the research shows consistent benefits of high parental involvement for minority and low-income students, which deserves serious consideration in light of the achievement gap.

On the other hand, education initiatives that disregard the importance of families and parental involvement, instead focusing on strategies such as increased expenditures, are likely to continue to prove less effective or ineffective altogether.

Christine C. Kim is Policy Analyst in the Domestic Policy Studies Department at The Heritage Foundation.

Economical state and underperformance in schools shows a high correlation.

Living in poverty at early age years (birth to age 2) is associated with lower educational performance. Children of families who come from poor living conditions in these first few years of life are 4.5 percent. Which means roughly 30 percent are less likely to complete high school than their counterparts who are first poor later in childhood (Ratcliffe & Mckernan, p.11).

The low high quality preschool services is also due to low compensation for the preschool teachers, making it a severe problem to attract and retain qualified education professionals. (NAEYC April 1999).



Long Beach preschool teacher Anabel Lopez leads children in a round of singing and dancing. Lopez has a bachelor's degree and receives \$11.75 an hour where she teaches at Comprehensive Child Development Center.

DEEPA FERNANDES / KPCC (October 14, 2014).

Although a college degree is required for many teaching in early education, it's not unusual for a teacher to get about \$11.75 an hour or \$24,440 for the year. That salary puts a family of three or more below the federal poverty line (D. Fernandes).

“The most promising strategy” for supporting readiness “is to increase access to high-quality center-based early childhood education for all low-income three- and four year olds.”

The Solvency to this escalating problem is to allocate greater fund and utilize more efficiently what we already have. Many studies indicate the life lasting benefits that come from assisting young children in preschool programs. These programs will alleviate some of the many challenges children have when it comes to being prepare as they enter kindergarten. Studies show that having the experience of a high quality preschool program can not only impact their early school readiness experience, but also show a ripple effect on the quality of their interrelationships, better living conditions and drastically cut down on criminal behavior. After all the research and studies done on early childhood education, it clearly makes sense to put all our resources and efforts to better prepare future workforce generations for our nation. High quality preschool programs are achievable expectations and these programs will benefit all of us in a direct or indirect way. Prevention and effective high quality preschool programs for two to three years for our young and most vulnerable make sense when studies show that by providing these programs it raises the chances to better the lives of these young human beings in every way with life long lasting result effects that will continue to benefit them their families and all as a nation.

Research indicates that is to reach more children in need and to increase the quality of early childhood education professionals, raising the standards in curriculum and performance the preschool teachers need to be strengthen by ongoing professional development programs that holds them to higher qualifications and should be compensated at the same level as K-12 teachers in the public school system.

The findings indicate the need to invest in high quality Preschool programs to help achieve readiness entering kindergarten is a wise decision for our future nation leaders and work

force of tomorrow. High quality early childhood education programs have evidence of cost effective educational interventions and are highly profitable investments for society as a whole. The implementation of rich curriculum has proven effectiveness on language, literacy, and mathematic. It would also cover the socio-emotional development with a component to target specific externalizing behavior. The plan would also cross over to health making an impact on children's increase on immunizations as part of the requirements for entering the program. Head Start program is a base model to support my approach on the effectiveness for health and immunizations issue. The action for required high quality professionals with schooling on early childhood development courses (ECE). Educators would also benefit from an ongoing on-site quality support and interaction with modeling teaching and constructive feedback to increase greater positive outcomes the incentive for professional educators will be to obtain appropriate compensation proven their teaching has produced higher numbers of children's readiness right from the start. (Hirokazu Yoshikawa, etc. all).

Plank II: The department of education will regulate the plan. The implementation of financial support from federal, state, and local funding.

Plank III: The plan will be regulated and enforced by accreditation status to ongoing funding opportunities as incentives to promote continuous high quality preschool programs.

Plank IV: These programs will be available through a proposed increase of \$75 billion in tobacco taxes, federal government in collaboration with state, philanthropists, and business leaders.

The solvency is to reach higher numbers and enroll students from poor- to-Low-income families in order to reach under-privilege children achieve education readiness by the time they

enter kindergarten. My plan would be utilizing existing program models that work effectively. Since 1962, careful evaluation of many nationwide, including state programs in Florida, Maryland, South Carolina and Texas have shown that high quality prekindergarten program participation can:

- Help children be more ready for school;
- Improve students' scores on standardized tests;
- Reduce students' chances of repeating a grade;
- Reduce referrals of students to special education; and
- Improve students' chance of completing high school.

Conclusion:

Education is key to a brighter future for everyone. as an after school elementary teacher and having worked at three different schools in my community for the past 13 years I believe to have a good understanding about some of the challenges our youth struggles with when it comes to academic and social development learning in our local communities in today's fast pace technology and competitive society. Advocating awareness is key to changing the structuration of our society. The alarming disservice we are doing to our students who are at a disadvantage from the very beginning of their educational process experience is what has brought me back to school to further my education and acquire the necessary skills to bring back to my community and spread awareness and make a positive difference in the lives of our students and our community. This social issue is a worldwide major issue, it's a U.S. national issue and it's in my community where I would like to work towards making a difference and start the conversation about what needs to happen to better the opportunities of our students.

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