



Early Learning Left Out: Building an Early Learning Childhood System to Secure America's Future, 3rd Edition

A report by:

Voices for America's Children

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Foreword

When people talk about the "achievement gap" at-risk children face, they often think in terms that apply to school-age children—but that gap can start much earlier. Gaps in children's development are already apparent when babies are just nine months old, and grow even larger by 24 months. Cost-benefit analyses show that the positive outcomes of investments in early education produce a rate of return to society of about 16 percent each year—higher than returns of traditional economic development projects. Our nation simply can't afford not to significantly increase investments in early childhood development and care, or to keep leaving so many poor babies and toddlers behind.

Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children's Defense Fund

As President, I will expand early childhood education, recruit new teachers and pay them better, but the truth is government can't do it all. As parents, we have to turn off the television, read to our kids, give them that thirst to learn. I approve this message because it's not just about their future ... it's about ours.

Barack Obama, Presidential campaign ad

Invest in the very young.

James Heckman, Nobel Laureate Economist

In 2004 and 2005, Voices for America's Children published two *Early Learning Left Out (ELLO)* reports that described the level of public investments in the education and development of children and youth in twenty-two states and the District of Columbia. The reports contrast investments in the earliest years (birth through 2 and 3 through 5) with those in the school-aged years (6 through 18) and the college-aged years (19 through 23). Despite the importance of the early years to lifelong growth and development, these reports show profound gaps in the public investments made in young children compared with school-aged children and college-aged youth.

This report draws upon nationally available data to expand this analysis for children from birth through 18 across the fifty states and the District of Columbia. The data confirm the call to action presented in the quotes above and outline the parameters of necessary public (federal, state, and local) investments in young children's development. If America is to remain prosperous and continue to be a leader in the international economy, all children must start school healthy and equipped for success.

As President Obama's quote shows, government cannot and should not do it alone. Parents remain their children's first and most important teachers. Safe

and supportive villages are needed to raise a child. Yet part of providing safe and supportive villages must include public investments that ensure services, supports, and opportunities exist. Part of equipping parents to be their children's first and most important teachers is offering them the necessary tools and giving their children access to affordable, high quality, intentional learning environments. Many exemplary programs have shown that supporting parents and communities has a profound impact upon the healthy development of young children. This report was made possible through generous funding to Voices for

America's Children from the A.L. Mailman Foundation, the California Endowment, and the Birth to Five Policy Alliance. All findings and conclusions, however, are the responsibility of the authors of the report and not those who provided financial support.

Charles Bruner and Syed Noor Tirmizi of the Child and Family Policy compiled the data and updated and revised the narrative from the 2nd edition of the *ELLO* series to reflect the new figures, methodological changes, and additional information available for this latest report.

Early Learning Left Out: Building an Early Childhood System to Secure America's Future, 3rd Edition

This report seeks to answer the simple but important question, "Are we investing enough in the learning and development of our youngest children?"

Executive Summary

Early Learning Left Out: Building an Early Childhood System to Secure America's Future, 3rd Edition answers a simple but critically important question: *Are we investing enough in the learning and development of our youngest children?* To answer this question, the report first examines public investment in the education and development of children by child age. Next, it identifies the known gaps between what is currently invested and what could be invested, based upon the research on effective early learning and development programs. The conclusions indicate that the investment in early learning has decreased despite overwhelming evidence that early childhood is the critical time for investment.

First, the level of public investment in early learning, particularly in the critical birth-to-three years, pales in comparison with public investments in school-aged children. Contrasting investments in the education and development of children by child age shows that per child investments are smallest in the critical birth-to-three years—where brain growth is most rapid—and remain small in the pre-school years in comparison with the school-aged years. The composite picture from the states shows that, for every dollar invested in a school-aged

child, only 25.3 cents is invested in a pre-school aged child and 6.4 cents in an infant or toddler. While there are some variations across states, no state invests evenly across the years of child growth and development. President Obama's proposals to increase investments in the 2011 budget represent a start at closing this gap, but this is a small start.

Second, the current level of investment in strategies proven to be effective in improving child growth and development in the early years is small in comparison with the need and opportunity. These include investments in early identification and treatment of developmental delays, quality early care and education programs, enriched pre-school opportunities, and family-oriented programs for infants and toddlers. All together, there is a national public "investment gap" in the tens, if not hundreds, of billions of dollars that needs to be addressed if the nation is to begin to reach the First National Education Goal that "all children start school ready to learn" and if America is to secure its future.

Introduction

Learning begins at birth. Brain development is most rapid in the first years of life, as the child's vital neural connections are formed. The experiences in these earliest years are a foundation for future learning and establish the cognitive, social, and emotional base for healthy growth and development. Brain research has established the critical importance of these earliest years of life, and has demonstrated how a child's environment, and the nurturing the child receives, affects this growth and development.

During these earliest years, children need stimulation, guidance, and interaction as they learn and grow. Young children learn throughout the day and in all types of ways. There is a wealth of knowledge of how young children learn and how to support brain growth and development.¹

There also is an abundance of knowledge showing that children who start school behind, particularly on more than one dimension of school readiness (physical and motor development, language and literacy, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and cognitive development) have difficulty catching up.² As much as half of school failure may be attributable to gaps in early learning and development that exist before school entry.³ The No Child Left Behind Act sets standards for schools to close the achievement gaps that exist across race and class. Fully achieving these goals ultimately will require effective education and development strategies even before children enter school.⁴ In fact, the

gaps in learning and development occur from the earliest ages and large gaps between economic classes can be detected as early as nine and 24 months of age.⁵ The cost of school "unreadiness" to society itself is great, not only in lost education and productivity costs, but also in increased remediation and compensatory services and public safety costs.⁶

Research is clear that there are multiple factors that contribute to a child's healthy development, school readiness, and subsequent success in school. Health, economic security, safe and supportive neighborhoods, and responses to special needs all contribute to a child's readiness for and success in school. Different but complementary frameworks have been developed to emphasize the need for a systemic approach to school readiness that addresses health, family support, and special needs as well as early learning.⁷ Nonetheless, a key component of both school readiness and success in school is a learning environment that provides guidance, direction, and support to children in their learning and equips parents to be essential parts of that learning environment.

The United States has long had a universal public education system that starts around age six and continues through high school. The United States also has developed a university and community college system that makes post-secondary education available for youth and young adults, with substantial public funding support to make it affordable. While every state has an array of programs and

services for pre-school aged children, there is no equivalent overall early learning system.⁸ Although states are exploring how to build such systems and developing new planning and governance structures to do so, investments in early learning largely have been made through individual programs and services that are limited in their scope and size. This report seeks to answer the essential question, "Are we investing enough in the learning and development of our youngest children?"

Organization of Report. First, this report examines the level of public investment (from federal, state, and local school district sources) in children's learning and development by child age, building upon earlier *ELLO* reports.⁹ It further examines what proposed investments in early childhood, under the Obama administration, would do to increase the relative size of investments in early learning and development.

Next, the report summarizes the research literature on what has been proven effective in improving children's learning and early development. The report then estimates what it would mean to make investments in these evidenced-based programs to reach the young children who would benefit from them.

The report concludes with a discussion of the implications for making such investments, utilizing a growing body of economic studies on the cost benefits of such investments.

The Investment Gap: 2007 Public Investments by Child Age

As children grow into adults, they receive support in their education and development from a variety of sources. Parents play the most important role and generally provide the most economic support. They meet children's basic economic needs for nutrition, shelter, clothing, and health care. They also contribute financially to the child's development, from taking their children to cultural and recreational activities, to paying fees for classes, to purchasing toys and books, and to saving for post-secondary education. Family, friends, neighbors, and community institutions provide additional financial support.

Government, however, takes the primary role for financing formal education through the primary and secondary grades. Government also provides some financing during early learning years both for programs that help parents in their educational and support roles, and for programs that provide child care and educational and developmental supports directly to young children. Because children spend a great deal of time with their parents during the earliest years of life, parents are their child's "first and most important teacher." Consequently, government increasingly has supported voluntary programs to provide additional supports to parents in nurturing and educating their children, particularly through home visiting and parenting education programs. This government support occurs through federal, state, and local funding.

Methodology. This study drew from a variety of sources for information regarding federal, state, and school district expenditures on child development and education in order to identify the overall public investments made on a fifty state and District of Columbia level. In some instances, the expenditure data came from federal sources and in other instances it came from compilations made by national organizations gathering data on a state-by-state basis. Using the best available information on how the funding was distributed by child age, the actual expenditures were then broken down into three age ranges:

- Infant and toddler years (0–2)
- Pre-school years (3–5)
- School-aged years (6–18)

The 2007 fiscal year (in some instance a state fiscal year and in some instances a federal fiscal year) was used as the basis for gathering fiscal information. Expenditures were apportioned based upon their service to infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers, or school-aged children (and not always by the specific age of the child). American Community Survey data on child ages were used to create the denominators for calculating per child investments in each area.

For the infant and toddler and pre-school years, fiscal information was included on:

- parenting education, home visiting, and family support programs designed to strengthen and support parenting;
- child care subsidies;
- Head Start expenditures;
- Child and dependent care tax credits;

- state pre-school programs; and
- special education programs and services to provide developmental and educational supports to young children.

For the school-aged years, fiscal information was included on:

- public K–12 education funding, including special education;
- before- and after-school child care subsidies and child and dependent care tax credits; and
- federal youth training programs.

These represent the major sources of funding for activities designed to support a child’s learning and development. Sources for all this information are found in the Appendix, along with state-by-state and national data.

The earlier *ELLO* reports also included college-age expenditures and tax credits and captured some additional state program funding that included other types of education and development programs, including state child and dependent care tax credits and other parenting education and early childhood special education initiatives. While it was not possible to find national sources that were definitive of all possible state and district expenditures, the methodology was designed to capture the most significant investments made in the country. It provides an overall national picture that is consistent with the earlier *ELLO* reports, as well as reasonable, if sometimes incomplete, state pictures, as well.

While 85% of the brain's core structure (size, growth, and much of its hard wiring) is developed by age four, less than 4% of public investments in education and development are made by that time.

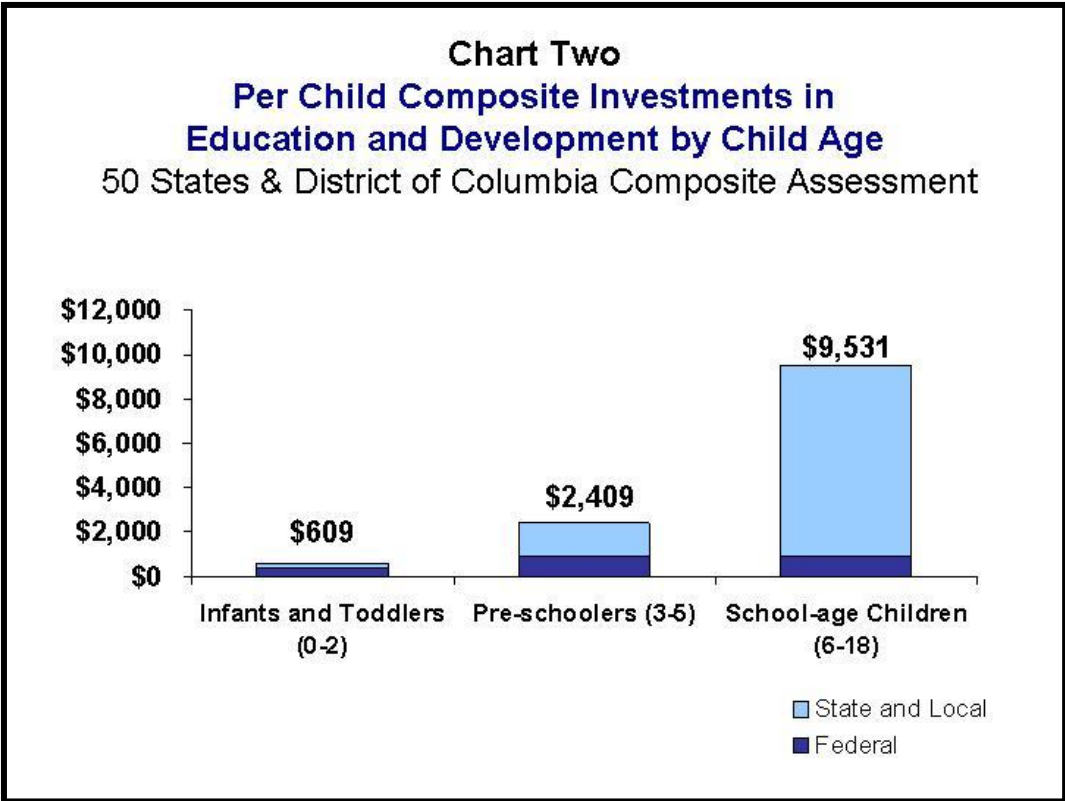
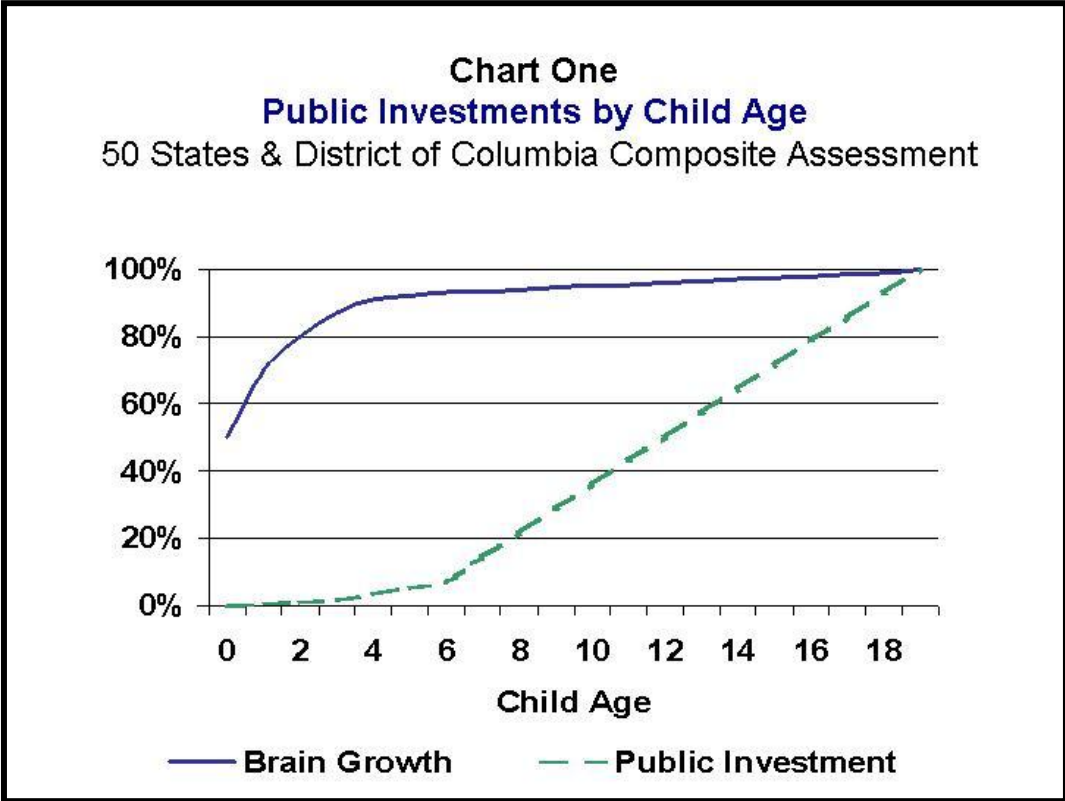
Findings. The composite results for the fifty states and District of Columbia (DC) as a whole are shown in Charts One and Two on the following page. Chart One tracks cumulative public investments in education and development from birth to age 19, contrasting those with cumulative brain growth and development.

As Chart One shows, while 85% of the brain's core structure (size, growth, and much of its hard wiring) is developed by age four,¹⁰ less than 4% of public investments in the country on learning and development are made by that time. Chart Two shows actual per capita investments by child age. As Chart Two shows, the infant and toddler years by far receive the smallest public investment from states.

For both the infant and toddler and pre-school years, the federal government plays the largest role in making financial investments—through Head Start, Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the child and dependent tax credit that supports child care, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). By comparison, state and school district investments provide the primary funding base for the school-aged years, with the bulk of federal investments targeted for special (IDEA) and compensatory (Title I) education.

A more detailed examination of the composite state & DC investments in the early learning years shows that the greatest amount of funding is committed to pre-school programs (Head Start and Part B pre-school at the federal level and state pre-school programs at the state level). Child care, including tax credits, represents the next largest share of funding, with a smaller proportion of funding going to parenting education and family support programs. Of the early learning funding for the 0- to 5-year olds which appears in Chart Two and can be categorized, 49.4% went to pre-school programs, 44.9% went to child care subsidies and tax credits, and 5.8% went to parenting education, home visiting, and family support.

While public financial support for child care is included in this analysis, the primary purpose of most state child care subsidy programs is to make such care affordable to working parents. States have a long way to go in ensuring that such care contributes to children's development. Research is clear that good quality child care improves young children's development, but poor quality care can actually do harm.¹¹ Increasingly, states are seeking to improve the quality of the care they finance, particularly through establishing tiered rating and reimbursement systems.¹² At the same time, studies have shown that, overall, the quality of care in the United States needs to be significantly improved in order to advance children's school readiness.¹³ Because of the inclusion of these childcare subsidies, these early spending figures may actually



overstate the current public investments in young children's learning and development.

In contrast, the composite picture from the states shows that for every dollar invested in a school-aged child:

- 25.3¢ is invested in a pre-school aged child and only
- 6.4¢ is invested in an infant or toddler.

During his campaign, President Obama pledged to dramatically expand investments in the early years, at one point citing a figure of \$10 billion in new investments. Within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), there were significant increases made in many early childhood learning and development programs, as well as in K–12 education. President Obama's 2011 budget request to Congress similarly shows increases in funding for early learning and development, and he has incorporated funding for evidenced-based home visiting within health care reform. Overall, if President Obama's recommendations are enacted, there will be the following approximate increases in funding:

- Child Care Development Block Grant and Early Learning Challenge grants—\$2.2 billion;
- Head Start and Early Head Start—\$1.0 billion;
- Evidenced-based home visiting—\$1.0 billion; and
- K–12 education including Title I and Race to the Top and Innovation funds—\$ 4.5 billion.

While significant new investments, adding them to Chart Two would

increase overall per capita investments only to the following:

- Infant and toddler, \$776 (8.1 cents)
- Preschool child, \$2,541 (26.4 cents)
- School-aged child, \$9,625.

Opportunities for Closing the Investment Gap

Over the last decade, both states and the federal government have focused increasing attention on outcomes or results-based accountability.¹⁴ This has been particularly true in education and human services, with increasing efforts to ensure that new funding is directed toward science-based or research-based programs.¹⁵

While this field is still developing, there is an increasing research base on what programs and practices are needed to improve children's learning and development in the early years. Moreover, there is ample evidence about programs and practices that are essential to improving school readiness and success. The growing research base includes evidence regarding:

- early identification and treatment of developmental delays;
- quality early care and education;
- pre-school program experiences; and
- parenting education and family support.

Public investments in each of these areas remains small in comparison with the current need. Both the research base and some indication of unmet need and opportunity in each of these areas are provided below.

Early identification and treatment of developmental delays. Research is clear that early detection and treatment of disabilities and developmental delays (and other special health care needs impeding children's growth and development) is cost effective. By identifying these needs earlier, we reduce the need for subsequent remediation efforts and improve child growth and development. This includes cognitive, social, and emotional development.¹⁶ An effective early identification and treatment program requires outreach to parents; trained and skilled professionals involved in both assessment and treatment of disabilities and delays; and significant guidance and support to parents.¹⁷

Part C, or the infant and toddler provisions within IDEA, provides for early intervention to both identify and treat learning disabilities at the earliest possible time. Some states supplement federal Part C funding. Federal funding for Part C in 2007 was \$403 million. Part C, with both federal and state funding, served approximately 2.24% of the nation's infants and children in the federal 2007 fiscal year.¹⁸ At the same time, it is estimated that at least three times that number of all infants and toddlers have detectable developmental or emotional concerns that could be effectively treated during this period.¹⁹ Further, not all the infants and toddlers served receive the degree of care and treatment that would best support their development.

Quality early care and education. The majority of working parents must rely upon child care to supervise and

instruct their young children while they work. Many young children are in child care arrangements for a large share of the day.²⁰ Research has shown that the quality of this care matters; good quality care improves children's growth and learning, and poor quality care can do harm.²¹ Program quality and effectiveness is related to the skills and training of the caregivers and caregiver to child ratios,²² which ultimately are related to program cost.

At the same time, there is a mismatch between what parents can afford to pay for child care and the amount needed to ensure that children are in quality early care that facilitates learning. This "gap" between what parents can afford to pay for child care and what quality, developmentally appropriate child care costs has been estimated at \$2,500 per 3- and 4-year-old child in full-time care and \$4,500 or more for an infant or toddler in full-time care.²³

Only a few estimates of the national costs of financing a high quality, developmentally appropriate, early care and education system have been made, but the numbers calculated are in the tens of billions of dollars annually. One recent analysis put the figure at \$50 billion.²⁴

Pre-school experiences. A very well-established literature indicates that high quality, comprehensive pre-school programs for vulnerable pre-school children can reduce the risk of school problems, special education use, delinquency, drop-out, early parenting and welfare involvement, and crime and its consequences to society.²⁵ High quality pre-school

programs can benefit all children, and particularly low-income children. Although high quality pre-school will not completely eliminate the disparities in "what children know and can do" at the time of school entry,²⁶ one estimate is that providing high quality pre-

High quality pre-school programs can benefit all children, but particularly low-income children, although they are not a silver bullet that alone will eliminate the disparities in "what children know and can do" at the time of school entry.

school to all minority children could reduce the current "readiness gap" by between 20% and 37%.²⁷

There now are concerted efforts to establish universal voluntary pre-school within states. These efforts are led by Pew Charitable Trusts, the Joyce Foundation, and Packard Foundation. These build upon the work of pioneering efforts in Georgia and Oklahoma. Yet Head Start and other pre-school program efforts currently serve only three in five of the 3- and 4-year-olds eligible for coverage under current poverty standards,²⁸ indicating there is a substantial investment gap simply in reaching those most in need.²⁹ The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), the research and development arm for the Pew Initiative, estimates that the full cost of providing free, high quality, universal pre-school to all 3- and 4-year-olds in the country would be \$68.6 billion annually.³⁰ An estimate of the additional public cost of solely providing low-income 4-year-olds with

a pre-school experience equivalent is \$6.5 billion. This figure would double if 3 year olds were included as well.³¹

Parenting education and family support. Parents are their child's first and most important teachers. The public, policymakers, and research all point to the quality—or competence and confidence—of parenting as the single most important determinant of healthy growth and development.³² At the same time, there is less agreement on what can be done to strengthen parenting in the early years and what research-based programs and strategies truly help them create a healthier environment for their young children. The research on the effects/benefits of home visiting programs has been mixed, as has the research on family support³³—although both show promise *if* the programs are linked to other supports, truly build relationships with the families they serve, and are staffed by trained, competent and passionate workers.³⁴ Positive findings on the impacts of Early Head Start are cited as evidence that comprehensive programs that work with families can be very successful.³⁵ Although the overall research on home visiting has been mixed, specific home visiting programs such as the Nurse Family Partnership and the Infant Health and Development Program (IHDP) have had impressive research results for the specific populations they serve.³⁶

Different researchers have provided different "take away" messages from the existing findings, but it is clear that effective programs require skilled workers who can establish relationships with families, connect families to sources of support, and

offer modeling and guidance that enables families to strengthen their parenting capacities.³⁷ Effective programs can produce some of the greatest gains for children, but they also require other supports.

While there are often a large number of different parenting education and home visiting programs operating within states, the overall investment is very small. In fact, it is the smallest among any of the cited education and development investment areas discussed here. Early Head Start, for instance, until its recent expansion with ARRA funding, served only 3% of the nation's infants and toddlers living in poverty.³⁸

Comprehensiveness and Scale. The early childhood research base is largely programmatic, based on evaluations of specific programs designed to address a particular child need or learning opportunity. While each may have its own particular impact, children do best when all their environments support their learning and development. Research indicates that individual programs also have stronger and more enduring impacts when other programs and environments support them. In early childhood, in particular, the whole is

Children do best when all their environments support their learning and development. Research indicates that individual programs have stronger and more enduring impacts when other programs and environments support them.

greater than the sum of its parts.

As states examine their investment opportunities and gaps, they need to do so in the context of building and supporting an overall comprehensive early learning system. To achieve optimal results, this requires investments in all the areas discussed above.

A \$50 billion investment would raise the country's per child investments to 23¢ for an infant and toddler and 35¢ for a pre-schooler for every \$1 invested in a school-aged child.

Implications for Investment

On a national scale, the investment opportunity in young children's education and development certainly exceeds \$50 billion annually in new resources. The cost to provide free, universal pre-school for all children could be as much as \$100 billion annually. An additional \$50 billion figure, when applied to new investments at the state level, itself would constitute all state general fund expenditures today. A \$50 billion investment would raise the country's per child investments to 23¢ for an infant and toddler and 35¢ for a pre-schooler for every \$1 invested in a school-aged child, if evenly distributed among infants and toddlers and pre-schoolers,

Clearly these are big numbers. Yet failing to invest also has its consequences. The research from a series of seminal programs points to the importance of making such

investments—not only from the impact on the success of children and families, but also for their positive economic benefits to society as a whole.

Drawing upon this research, Nobel laureate economist James Heckman, compared the potential returns on investment from early learning programs with human capital investments in the later years (particularly education and training programs); Heckman concluded that the opportunity for positive returns are greatest in early learning and that society should “invest in the very young.”³⁹ Arthur Rolnick, senior researcher for the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank, came to a similar conclusion when comparing early learning investments with those made by government for economic development:

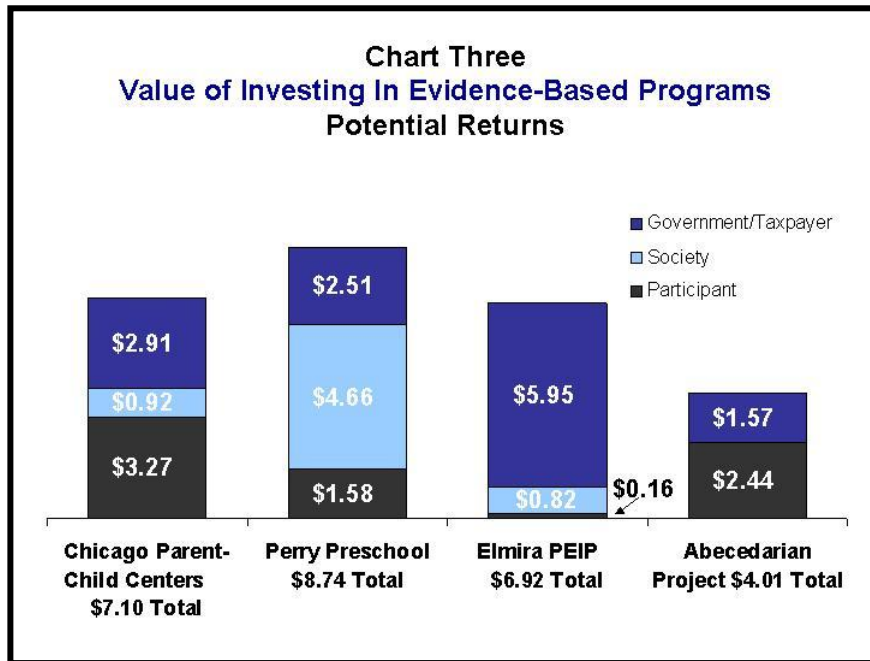
“Early childhood development programs are rarely portrayed as economic development initiatives, and we think that is a mistake. Such programs, if they appear at all, are at the bottom of the economic development lists for state and local governments. They should be at the top.”⁴⁰

The RAND Corporation, known for its business orientation and defense research, similarly has identified high quality early childhood programs as cost effective in averting future social problems and costs, with positive returns to society as well as the individuals served.⁴¹

Conclusions about investing in early learning are based upon

comprehensive high quality early childhood programs that have tracked their participants over time. Chart Three (found on next page) provides the findings in terms of their cost benefits from four of the most studied early childhood programs.⁴² These programs have additional strength in representing diverse strategies (home visits, enriched pre-school programs, programs working with children and families at a very early age, and pre-school programs coupled with transition strategies into school) and operating across several decades.

As Chart Three shows, all four programs have positive returns simply in terms of direct benefits to the taxpayer, e.g. in reduced government costs or increased earnings and an expanded tax base. They also have societal benefits that accrue either to the individuals served through improved earnings, or to others, through reduced victimization costs from averted criminal activity. This Chart should not be used to contrast the different approaches, as each examined different subsets of areas for potential long-term cost savings, and some consider them as conservative estimates of overall potential gain. The chart does show that each has a net positive, long-term impact of at least \$4 for every dollar invested.⁴³



Conclusion

The fiscal analysis in this report was not designed to produce detailed estimates of the overall investment

Public opinion polling suggests that the timing is right for investments in early learning.

need and opportunity in early learning. It clearly shows, however, that public investments have only touched the surface of possible investments in young children’s learning and development.

America prides itself on providing opportunity for everyone, with much of that opportunity reflected in the country’s educational system. Government makes major investments in assuring universal education through elementary and secondary school. Through a combination of government funding and tax expenditures, government provides

substantial support for higher education as well.

At the same time, however, children and their families can truly take advantage of these educational opportunities only if they have been prepared in their earlier years. Increasingly, the economy demands that young adults have skills that begin, but do not end, with a high school diploma. Therefore, it is important not only to look at the impacts of school readiness on successful completion of primary and secondary education, but on preparation for post-secondary education as well. Currently, children from low-income families are much less likely to take advantage of post-secondary educational experiences, although their tax dollars contribute to supporting higher education. Investing in early learning can play a significant role in raising achievement for all and for better realizing the American dream of advancement through

education and hard work, particularly for those starting with the fewest resources.

Public opinion polling suggests that the timing is right for investing in early learning. Polls show that the public has extremely strong support for the most recognized early learning program in the country—Head Start—with over nine in ten people (92%) supporting retaining Head Start’s current structure, and over eight in ten (82%) favoring expansion to reach more children.⁴⁴ A 2001 poll conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates and Market Strategies Incorporated showed that voters believe state government is not doing enough to make pre-school and child care programs available to parents (58% too little; 5% too much; 25% right amount; and 12% not sure).⁴⁵

At a national level, prominent business-led organizations, including the Business Roundtable and Corporate Voices for Working Families, have become strong supporters of quality early childhood services because of the benefits from an economic development perspective.⁴⁶ A group of business leaders supported by the Partnership for America’s Economic Success, has established a set of Telluride Principles that call for investments in young children to be at the top of the federal investment agenda.⁴⁷ The law enforcement community, through Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, has also made early learning a policy priority in terms of crime control and public safety.⁴⁸

This analysis and report on levels of state investments by child age adds

essential, additional data on the status of current investments. These should give rise to discussions and action in establishing much greater public financial commitments to education and development in the earliest years of life, where the investment gap is greatest. In the long term, securing America’s economic future requires an educated and productive population that starts with its children coming to school healthy and equipped for success. America’s continued leadership in the world is dependent upon increasing the readiness of its children for success in school and life.

Appendix

Data Sources and Apportionment

Early Learning Left Out, 3rd Edition, drew upon several different federal and state data sources to complete the analysis. Based upon the earlier *ELLO* reports that involved detailed analyses of individual state budgets, this report may exclude some state expenditures both at all three age levels, but will capture 95% or more of all spending that occurs through federal, state, and school district spending.

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), and the Institute for Educational Services all completed state-by-state analyses of spending that are as complete as anything available on child care spending, state preschool spending, and K–12 educational spending. Although not necessarily as complete (and more subject to state-by-state variations in reporting), the National Conference of State Legislatures has assembled information on home visiting, parenting education, and other early childhood services programs, and to these were added several community-based grant programs (Empowerment in Iowa, First Five in California, and Smart Start in North Carolina) that are recognized as major state early childhood initiatives that did not fall into any of the above categories.

Information on most federal programs for younger children were available through federal sources on a state-by-state basis, but child care and school-aged federal funding were drawn from CLASP and IES data, as those reports showed both state and federal funding.

Apportionments by child age were based upon prior *ELLO* report experience. For instance, child care funding is used to serve child from birth into the early elementary years (for before- and after-school care) and the 30%-40%-30% apportionment was used because it corresponded to the earlier state *ELLO* experiences in assigning amounts. Again, which different states may have different apportionments, at a national level this appeared as the best way to apportion them.

Obviously, neither the data nor the apportionments are precise. At the same time, the results provide the best available overall information and are sufficiently precise to demonstrate the major gaps that do exist in investment, both on a per child basis and in relation to need and opportunity.

The following were the sources for the different data elements. In most instances, the figures covered the 2007 federal fiscal year, but in some instances the figures were for the state fiscal year or for a calendar year.

Child Care

Child Care Assistance: Matthews, H (2009). *Child Care Assistance in 2007: Spending Update*. Washington, D.C: Center for Law & Social Policy (CLASP). This includes federal CCDBG and TANF funds and state maintenance of effort and matching and additional funds. The child care assistance funds are apportioned on a 30%-40%-30% basis, reflecting the experiences of use by child age by states doing prior *ELLO* reports.

Child & Dependent Care Tax Credit: Internal Revenue Service (2006). Table 2: Individual Income and Tax Data, by State and Size of Adjusted Gross Income, Tax year 2006. IRS, Statistics of Income Division, Individual Master File. Washington, DC. It was estimated that 98% of the child and dependent care tax credit goes to child care, and that 2% goes to dependent adult care. The same 30%-40%-30% apportionment was used for the amount that went to child care.

Pre-School

Federal Head Start: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (2007). Administration for Children & Families (http://www.acf.hhs.gov/acf_policy_planning.html#stats). Washington, DC. The federal Head Start program covers both Head Start for 3-5 year-olds and Early Head Start for younger children. The federal figures were apportioned 89.5% for Head Start and 3- to 5-year-olds and 10.5% for Early Head Start and 0- to 2-year-olds. Early Head Start, however, was considered a family support program, while Head Start was considered a pre-school program.

State Pre-School: Barnett, WS et al, (2008). *The State of Preschool 2008: State Preschool Yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute of for Early Education Research (NIEER). The NIEER analysis breaks out funding

by both three and four year-olds and only includes funding for children in those age ranges, so state pre-school funding all goes to the 3- to 5-year-old group.

Special Education Pre-School Grants – Part B of IDEA. U.S. Department of Labor (2006). Funds for State Formula-Allocated & Selected Student Aid Programs by State. Washington, DC. All these grants were apportioned to the 3–5 years.

Home Visiting, Family Support, and Parent Education.

Even Start Grants, Grants for Infant & Families Part C, and Special Education Pre-School Grants Part B. U.S. Department of Labor (2006). Funds for State Formula-Allocated & Selected Student Aid Programs by State. Washington, DC. Even Start grants provide family literacy services and cover children so they were equally apportioned to the 3–5 and 6–18 years.

Grants for Infant & Families—Part C of IDEA. U.S. Department of Labor (2006). Funds for State Formula-Allocated & Selected Student Aid Programs by State. Washington, DC. Part C services are used to provide developmental supports to children and support to families and were apportioned entirely to the 0–2 years.

Home Visiting Family Support State Spending, and Other Developmental Early Childhood State Investments: Clothier, S and Poppe, J (2008). Early Care and Education: State Budget Actions-FY2007-FY2008. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The home visiting and family support programs identified provide support primarily to families with infants and toddlers, but serve some pre-school and, as family-focused programs, even some school-aged children. They were apportioned on a 60%-30%-10% basis. The “other developmental early childhood investments” included some programs that provided communities with funds and provided other funds and were apportioned on a 49%-51% basis between 0–2 and 3–5 populations. These other developmental early childhood investments were not considered as part of any of the three categories—child care, preschool, or home visiting and family support.

K-12 Spending: U.S. Department of Education (2007). Revenue and Expenditure for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2006–07. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Since some school districts may use both federal and state funds to support programs and services to children before they enter school, particularly in supporting parents with children in school, a small amount of this funding was apportioned to earlier years. For federal funding, the apportionment was 1%-3%-96%; for state funding it was 0%-2%-98%.

Youth Development (WIA): U.S. Department of Labor (2006). Employment and Training Administration: WIA Youth Activities Program. Washington, DC. School spending is not the only investment made in children of school age. There were no sources available to accurately describe recreational and after-school educational programs or investment of children in alternative educational settings. Specific youth employment and training program data, however, was available and was included for the 6–18 years.

Child Demographics:

U.S. Bureau of Census, Census (2000). <http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>

US Bureau of Census (2006). American Community Survey (2006). <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

Estimates of the number of 0–2, 3–5, and 6–18 population were drawn from the 2006 Community Survey, as a denominator in order to establish per child spending.

Individual, state-by-state, data also are available that could be used as a basis for states developing their own, state-specific charts.

Table 1: Federal & State Expenditure/Allocations by Age Group for Selected Programs

Category	Total (\$)	Age Group		
		% (0-2)	% (3-5)	% (6-18)
Child Care		% 30	40	30
Child Care Federal	5,677,730,453	1,703,319,136	2,271,092,181	1,703,319,136
		% 30	40	30
Child Care State	7,289,610,014	2,186,883,004	2,915,844,006	2,186,883,004
		% 30	40	30
Child & Dependent Care Credit	3,334,587,200	1,000,376,160	1,333,834,880	1,000,376,160
Pre-School				
Special Education Pre-School Grants Part B Federal	371,022,394		371,022,394	
		%	100	
Head Start (89.5% of Federal Head Start \$) *	5,926,896,030		5,926,896,030	
		%	100	
State Pre-School	4,596,040,309		4,596,040,309	
Home Visiting/Family Support		% 100		
Early Head Start (10.5% of Head Start \$) *	695,334,171	695,334,171		
		%	50	50
Even Start*	63,836,679		31,918,340	31,918,340
Grants for Infant & Families Part C * Federal	427,663,597	427,663,597		
		% 60	30	10
Home Visiting Family Support State Spending	249,831,616	149,898,970	74,949,485	24,983,162
Other				
Other Early Childhood State Investments State	1,023,800,000	505,500,000	518,300,000	
		% 49	51	
Public Education & Youth Development				
K-12 Spending Federal	47,041,418,000	470,414,180	1,411,242,540	45,159,761,280
		% 1	3	96
State	476,825,866,000		9,536,517,320	467,289,348,680
		%	2	98
Youth Development (WIA)	2,266,436,040			2,266,436,040
		%	100	
Total Federal	65,804,924,564	4,297,107,244	11,346,006,365	50,161,810,955
Total State	489,985,147,939	2,842,281,974	17,641,651,119	469,501,214,846
Total Expenditure	555,790,072,503	7,139,389,218	28,987,657,484	519,663,025,801
Child Population	78,281,393	11,723,555	12,031,580	54,526,258
Child Per-Capita Expenditure	7,100	609	2,409	9,531

* Total includes American Indian/Migrant Programs and Administrative/Undistributed expenditure

Table 2: Proposed New Federal Investments and Impact on Spending – President Obama’s 2011 Recommendations

Expenditures from Table 1	0 thru 2	3 thru 5	6 through 18	Total
Total Federal Spending	\$ 4,297,107,244	\$ 11,346,006,365	\$ 50,161,810,955	\$ 65,804,924,564
Total State Spending	\$ 2,842,281,974	\$ 17,641,651,119	\$ 469,501,214,846	\$ 489,985,147,939
Total Expenditures	\$ 7,139,389,218	\$ 28,987,657,484	\$ 519,663,025,801	\$ 555,790,072,503
Child Population	11,723,555	12,031,580	54,526,258	78,281,393
Per Capita Exp.	\$ 609	\$ 2,409	\$ 9,531	\$ 7,100
Per Capita Fed. Exp.	\$ 367	\$ 943	\$ 920	\$ 841
Per Capital State Exp.	\$ 242	\$ 1,466	\$ 8,611	\$ 6,259
Overall % of K-12	6.4%	25.3%		
Overall % of K-12 0-5			15.8%	
Proposed Increased 2011 Investments – President				
CCDBG & Challenge Grants	\$ 660,000,000	\$ 880,000,000	\$ 660,000,000	\$ 2,200,000,000
Head Start/Early Head Start	\$ 500,000,000	\$ 500,000,000	\$	\$ 1,000,000,000
Home Visiting	\$ 800,000,000	\$ 200,000,000	\$	\$ 1,000,000,000
K-12 Title 1/Race/Inn+			\$ 4,500,000,000	\$ 4,500,000,000
	\$ 1,960,000,000	\$ 1,580,000,000	\$ 5,160,000,000	\$ 8,700,000,000
New Total Fed	\$ 6,257,107,244	\$ 12,926,006,365	\$ 55,321,810,955	\$ 74,504,924,564
New Overall Total	\$ 9,099,389,218	\$ 30,567,657,484	\$ 524,823,025,801	\$ 564,490,072,503
Per Capital Exp.	\$ 776	\$ 2,541	\$ 9,625	\$ 7,211
Overall % of K-12	8.1%	26.4%		
Overall % of K-12 0-5			17.4%	

Table 3: Total Federal, State & Local per Child Expenditure by Age Group *

STATE	Total Per Child Exp (0-2)	Total Per Child Exp (3-5)	Total Per Child Exp (6-18)	Per Child (0-2) Exp as % Per Child (6-18) Exp	Per Child (3-5) Exp as % Per Child (6-18) Exp	Per Child (0-5) Exp as % Per Child (6-18) Exp
Alabama	\$462	\$1,840	\$8,292	5.6%	22.2%	13.9%
Alaska	\$748	\$2,535	\$13,607	5.5%	18.6%	12.1%
Arizona	\$426	\$1,496	\$7,591	5.6%	19.7%	12.7%
Arkansas	\$551	\$2,811	\$8,743	6.3%	32.1%	19.2%
California	\$990	\$2,530	\$9,169	10.8%	27.6%	19.2%
Colorado	\$380	\$1,626	\$8,260	4.6%	19.7%	12.1%
Connecticut	\$886	\$2,700	\$13,473	6.6%	20.0%	13.3%
Delaware	\$778	\$2,378	\$10,273	7.6%	23.1%	15.4%
District of Columbia	\$1,718	\$4,303	\$15,406	11.2%	27.9%	19.5%
Florida	\$606	\$2,366	\$8,434	7.2%	28.0%	17.6%
Georgia	\$446	\$2,453	\$9,012	4.9%	27.2%	16.1%
Hawaii	\$594	\$1,999	\$10,219	5.8%	19.6%	12.7%
Idaho	\$330	\$1,337	\$6,732	4.9%	19.9%	12.4%
Illinois	\$637	\$2,549	\$9,350	6.8%	27.3%	17.0%
Indiana	\$375	\$1,567	\$8,805	4.3%	17.8%	11.0%
Iowa	\$753	\$2,333	\$8,510	8.8%	27.4%	18.1%
Kansas	\$507	\$1,995	\$9,180	5.5%	21.7%	13.6%
Kentucky	\$451	\$2,304	\$8,247	5.5%	27.9%	16.7%
Louisiana	\$536	\$2,768	\$8,762	6.1%	31.6%	18.9%
Maine	\$642	\$2,570	\$11,215	5.7%	22.9%	14.3%
Maryland	\$467	\$2,271	\$10,537	4.4%	21.6%	13.0%
Massachusetts	\$889	\$2,787	\$12,174	7.3%	22.9%	15.1%
Michigan	\$640	\$2,360	\$9,983	6.4%	23.6%	15.0%
Minnesota	\$574	\$1,910	\$9,060	6.3%	21.1%	13.7%
Mississippi	\$548	\$2,447	\$7,733	7.1%	31.6%	19.4%
Missouri	\$548	\$1,860	\$8,179	6.7%	22.7%	14.7%
Montana	\$546	\$2,045	\$8,798	6.2%	23.2%	14.7%
Nebraska	\$607	\$2,126	\$9,267	6.6%	22.9%	14.7%
Nevada	\$297	\$1,207	\$7,952	3.7%	15.2%	9.5%
New Hampshire	\$457	\$1,741	\$10,308	4.4%	16.9%	10.7%
New Jersey	\$429	\$3,598	\$15,170	2.8%	23.7%	13.3%
New Mexico	\$557	\$2,178	\$8,740	6.4%	24.9%	15.6%
New York	\$592	\$2,911	\$13,796	4.3%	21.1%	12.7%
North Carolina	\$756	\$2,521	\$7,922	9.5%	31.8%	20.7%
North Dakota	\$548	\$2,066	\$8,558	6.4%	24.1%	15.3%
Ohio	\$613	\$2,391	\$9,565	6.4%	25.0%	15.7%
Oklahoma	\$536	\$2,906	\$8,100	6.6%	35.9%	21.2%
Oregon	\$426	\$1,949	\$8,745	4.9%	22.3%	13.6%
Pennsylvania	\$655	\$2,474	\$10,210	6.4%	24.2%	15.3%
Rhode Island	\$775	\$2,508	\$12,098	6.4%	20.7%	13.6%
South Carolina	\$397	\$1,928	\$8,551	4.6%	22.5%	13.6%
South Dakota	\$477	\$1,817	\$7,760	6.1%	23.4%	14.8%
Tennessee	\$592	\$2,077	\$7,333	8.1%	28.3%	18.2%
Texas	\$360	\$2,192	\$8,537	4.2%	25.7%	14.9%
Utah	\$264	\$1,087	\$5,890	4.5%	18.5%	11.5%
Vermont	\$903	\$3,578	\$12,989	7.0%	27.6%	17.3%

Virginia	\$400	\$1,817	\$9,814	4.1%	18.5%	11.3%
Washington	\$643	\$2,064	\$8,412	7.6%	24.5%	16.1%
West Virginia	\$520	\$3,289	\$10,396	5.0%	31.6%	18.3%
Wisconsin	\$742	\$2,683	\$9,601	7.7%	27.9%	17.8%
Wyoming	\$644	\$2,693	\$13,104	4.9%	20.6%	12.7%
U.S. Total	\$609	\$2,409	\$9,531	6.4%	25.3%	15.8%

* Individual state figures are approximate, as states may have child development, after-school, or family support programs that have not been reported in the data sources used to compile this overall data. Complete state reports would require a detailed analysis of each state's budget. Prior *Early Learning Left Out* reports were conducted by Voices members who worked with state officials to examine their entire state budgets. While this provides a more complete and accurate picture for an individual state, the experience from prior *ELLO* reports is that more than 95% of public expenditures on children's development and education are captured by employing the data sources used in this report.

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