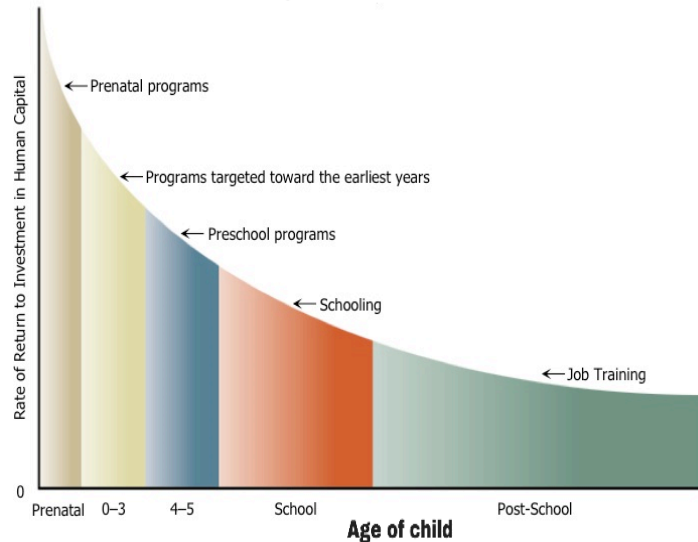


# Investments in Early Childhood Education Yield High Returns



## The Earlier the Investment, the Greater the Return

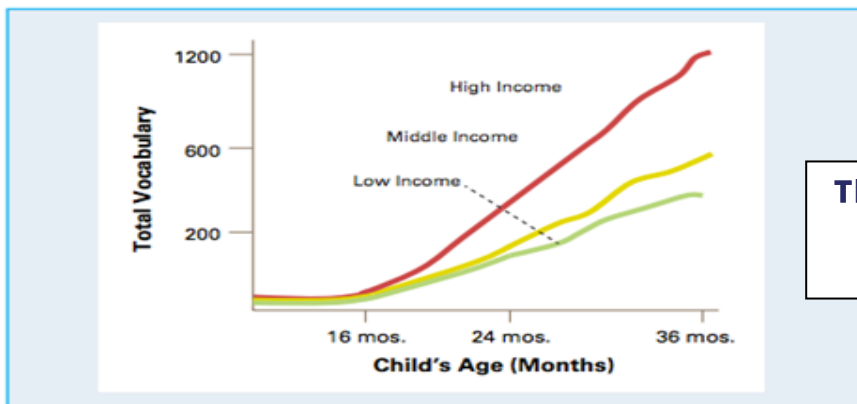


Source: James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics

The evidence is clear: when young children have healthy and enriching experiences they are more likely to be ready for kindergarten, and beyond.<sup>1</sup> This means one on one attention from teachers, parents and caregivers.

These early experiences shape a child's lifelong learning because *human brain development occurs most rapidly and dramatically in the first three years of life.*<sup>2</sup>

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



**The Vocabulary Gap for Low Income Children**

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, ECLS, 2011

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

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

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

When surveyed, 77% of CEOs say that a workforce that does not have appropriate skills is a primary concern.<sup>4</sup>

- The early care and education industry itself is economically important—often much larger in terms of employees and revenues than other industries that receive considerable government attention and investment.<sup>5</sup>
- Failing to invest sufficiently in quality early care and education shortchanges taxpayers because the return on investment is greater than many other economic development options.<sup>5</sup>
- Access to available and affordable quality early childhood learning programs helps working parents fulfill their responsibilities.<sup>5</sup>
- Almost 13 million Americans in their prime working years have children under age 6. Many of these parents need reliable childcare to be able to upgrade their skills through education, enter the workforce, and remain employed.<sup>6</sup>

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

**25%** MORE LIKELY TO **DROP OUT** OF SCHOOL

**40%** MORE LIKELY TO BECOME A **TEEN PARENT**

**50%** MORE LIKELY TO BE PLACED IN **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**60%** MORE LIKELY TO **NEVER ATTEND COLLEGE**

**70%** MORE LIKELY TO BE **ARRESTED FOR A VIOLENT CRIME**

**HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD.**

## Arizonans Agree: Early Childhood Education Counts

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

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

Visit our website at [www.azeca.org](http://www.azeca.org)

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

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

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

<sup>7</sup> *Workforce of Today, Workforce of Tomorrow: The Business Case for High Quality Childcare, US Chamber of Commerce, 2017*