



Early Education and Crime Prevention Texas Fast Facts

“High-quality early education programs that give kids the right start in life are among the powerful weapons we have in the fight against crime.”

-- Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

- According to the **Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University** every **\$1.00 invested in high quality pre-k yields at least \$3.50 to Texas communities** through:
 - Savings to the public school system as a result of reduced special education and remedial costs;
 - **Savings to the criminal justice system due to reduced adult crime rates;**
 - Savings to the child welfare system as a result of early intervention and reduced cases of child abuse and neglect.
- Research shows that **at-risk children left out of quality pre-kindergarten are five times more likely to grow up to become criminals** by age 27 than children in pre-kindergarten.ⁱ
- **Children** who participate in **high quality preschool** programs are **less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to be placed in special education, and more likely to graduate from high school.**ⁱⁱ
- **More than 80%** of Texas prison inmates are high school dropouts.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **1 in 3 juveniles** sent to the Texas Youth Commission are school dropouts.^{iv}
- Texas **spends 2.3 times as much per prisoner** as per public school student.^v
- **Each teen prevented from becoming an adult offender could save Texas between \$1.7 and \$2.3 million** per youth.^{vi}
- Although the average age at commitment is 16, **the typical youth** in the Texas Youth Commission **has the reading and math skills of a 5th grade student**, and **40% of the youth** in the Texas Youth Commission **are eligible for special education referrals.**^{vii}
- A national independent survey shows that an overwhelming **71% of the nation’s law enforcement leaders chose providing “more after-school programs and educational child care programs” as the most effective strategy for reducing youth violence and crime.**^{viii}

ⁱ Fight Crime: Invest in Kids website at http://www.fightcrime.org/issue_earlyed.php

ⁱⁱ National Institute for Early Education Research. Debunking the Myths: Benefits of Preschool Fact Sheet. <http://www.nieer.org>

ⁱⁱⁱ Texas Appleseed (2008). School to Prison Pipeline – Consequences of Zero Tolerance Policy in Public School Systems. A Power Point presentation given by Deborah Fowler at the Children’s Defense Fund Texas Summit on March 14, 2008. <http://www.cdf-texas.org/TexasSummit4Rewind.php>

^{iv} Texas Appleseed (2008). School to Prison Pipeline – Consequences of Zero Tolerance Policy in Public School Systems. A Power Point presentation given by Deborah Fowler at the Children’s Defense Fund Texas Summit on March 14, 2008. <http://www.cdf-texas.org/TexasSummit4Rewind.php>

^v Children’s Defense Fund. (2007). Cradle to Prison Pipeline Texas Fact Sheet.

http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=c2pp_factsheets

^{vi} Blue Ribbon Texas Youth Commission Task Force Report. (2007). The State of Texas Children 2007 Texas Kids Count Annual Data Book published by the Center for Public Policy Priorities.

http://www.cppp.org/factbook07/pdf/state_of_texas_children.pdf

^{vii} Texans Care For Children website at <http://www.texanscareforchildren.org/innerpage.php?pageid=103>

^{viii} Fight Crime: Invest in Kids (2006). Preventing Crime with Pre-kindergarten: A Critical Investment in Texas’ Safety.