



# Great Start. Great Future.

## Texas Children are Worth the Early Investment!

Quality preschool programs including Child Care, Head Start and Pre-kindergarten play an essential role in ensuring that children develop to their full potential, enter school ready to succeed, and stay safe while their parents are at work.

To secure the future social quality and economic vitality of this state, it will be critical for Texas to increase investments in early childhood education and development programs.

### Access to Quality, Affordable Early Childhood Education and Development Programs

- Children, birth to five years of age, who are in a full-time early childhood program will spend **12,000 hours** in that setting, more time than they spend in school, **kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade**<sup>i</sup>
- More than half (**56.5%**) of Texas children under age six have all parents in the labor force<sup>ii</sup>

### Educational Attainment and Success

- Children of upper income families begin school with a vocabulary of **20,000 words**, children of lower income families know only **4,000 words**<sup>iii</sup>
- Children who participated in high-quality early education and development programs are less frequently assigned to special education classes or retained in grade in later years; have better school attendance rates and lower school dropout rates; show greater motivation for learning and commitment to schooling; excel in mastery of pre-reading, reading and math skills, and are **better prepared for school**<sup>iv</sup>

### Dependable Workforce Now and in the Future

- Of the **10 least literate cities in the US, Texas has 5**: Arlington, Garland, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and El Paso<sup>v</sup>
- It is estimated by 2040 **30% of the labor force** in Texas will **not have a high school diploma**<sup>vi</sup>

### Securing the Social and Economic Future of Texas

- **Eighty-five percent** of a child's core brain structure is formed by age three, but less than **four percent** of public investments on education and development have occurred by that time<sup>vii</sup>
- Every **\$1** invested in quality early childhood education and development saves as much as **\$7** by increasing the likelihood that children will be literate, employed and enrolled in postsecondary education and less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare, or arrested for criminal activity<sup>viii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> "What should state government's role be in helping working parents make more informed choices about childcare programs and options?" IssuesPA, <http://www.issuespa.net/viewpoints/1493>

<sup>ii</sup> US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2002, Tables PO62 and PO63, downloaded from American Fact Finder at <http://www.census.gov> Calculations by Children's Defense Fund

<sup>iii</sup> Talking Points: Brian Gallagher, Moderator and Panelist, Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Foundation Panel- "Failing Our Future: An Urgent Call to Action on Early Childhood Development" Friday, September 10, 2004. Panelists included Craig Ramey, Andrea Young, Libby Doggett, Reverend Tony Lee, Tom Dawson.

<sup>iv</sup> National Association for the Education of Young Children "What are the benefits of high-quality early childhood programs?" 2001.

<sup>v</sup> America's Most Literate Cities, Study by Jack Miller, Ph.D., Chancellor and Professor of Education University of Wisconsin, Whitewater <http://www.uww.edu/npa/cities/>

<sup>vi</sup> The Population of Texas: Historical Patterns and Future Trends Affecting Education by Steve H. Murdock, Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research College of Business, The University of Texas at San Antonio, <http://txsdc.tamu.edu/>

<sup>vii</sup> Source: "Early Learning Left Out" study conducted by the Child and Family Policy Center and Voices for America's Children February 2004 <http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org>

<sup>viii</sup> W.S. Barnett, "Cost Benefit Analysis," in L.J. Schweinhart, H.V. Barnes, and D.P. Weikart, Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27 (Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1993); summary at <http://www.highscope.org/Research/PerryPProject/perryfact.htm>