



Quality early care and education is a UNIVERSAL issue that affects EVERYONE...

Families need access to quality, affordable care

High quality childcare has long-term, positive impacts for children:

- Higher monthly earnings;
- Significantly higher home ownership;
- Significantly fewer arrests;
- Significantly higher levels of schooling;
- Significantly fewer social services received in the last 10 years.¹

The average annual cost of center-based childcare for children ages 0 to 5 in Texas is more than the cost of Public College tuition.²

Texas has one of the longest waiting lists in the country for child care subsidies.³

Caregivers need a living wage, higher professional standards

- Good quality child care is hard to find in a marketplace where child care workers earn an average of \$14,340 in Texas, and typically receive no benefits or paid leave.⁴
- The State only requires 8 hours of pre-service training for child care workers, but 1,500 hours for a hairdresser.
- Positive caregiver-child interactions are one of the best indicators of a quality childcare program.⁵

Schools need students who are able and ready to learn

Children who were enrolled in high-quality 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.⁶

Businesses need a dependable, productive workforce

- 25% of employees with children less than 12 years old have problems with childcare availability 3-5 times in a 3 month period.⁷
- Employers pay \$3 billion a year due to absenteeism directly related to childcare.⁸
- Employees with work-family conflicts are three times as likely to consider quitting.⁹

Communities need to invest public funds wisely

Children who were enrolled in high-quality programs are:

- Less likely to participate in at-risk behaviors as teens such as breaking the law and teen pregnancy;
- Less dependent on government programs as primary source of income;
- Have a lower rate of unemployment;
- Show potential for higher lifetime earnings.¹⁰

Every \$1 invested in quality early childhood care and education 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.¹¹

Notes

¹ High/Scope Perry Preschool Project (Schweinhart, Barnes, & Weikart, 1993, as described in Shore, 1997)

² Community Action Network: www.caction.org; FAQ's about Early Education and Care

³ Texas has approximately 37,000 children on the waiting list for child care subsidies. Calculations by the Children's Defense Fund based on data in Karen Schulman, Helen Blank, and Danielle Ewen, A Fragile Foundation: State Child Care Assistance Policies (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, 2001) and Danielle Ewen, Helen Blank, Katherine Hart, and Karen Schulman, State Developments in Child Care, Early Education, and School-Age Care 2001 (Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund, April 2002).

⁴ US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates (2001), at <http://www.bls.gov/oes/2000/oesrcst.htm> The national average is \$16,350.

⁵ Childcare Resource and Research Unit, The *Great Child Care Debate: The Long-Term Effects of Non-Parental Child Care*. Online. Available: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/resources/CRRUpubs/op7/7op7.html#top> . Accessed: November 9, 2002

⁶ National Association for the Education for Young Children "What are the benefits of high-quality early childhood programs?" 2001.

⁷ Johnson, A. (1995) The Business Case for Work-Family Programs, Journal of Accountancy (JOA)

⁸ Adams, G. and Schulman K. (May 1998) Texas: Child Care Challenges Children's Defense Fund

⁹ Johnson, A. (1995) The Business Case for Work-Family Programs, Journal of Accountancy

¹⁰ National Association for the Education for Young Children "What are the benefits of high-quality early childhood programs?" 2001.

¹¹ 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/PerryProject/perryfact.htm>