

High Quality Early Learning

We continue to believe that these human investments (in the early years of childhood) are among the most important that our nation can make, and that the business community should take the lead in making this case to both policymakers and the public at large.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Continued Investment in Child Care and Early Education is Critical to Business and America's Future, The Committee for Economic Development.

High-quality pre-kindergarten education, especially for disadvantaged children, has been shown to:

- Decrease special education placement by **49%**
- Reduce grade retention by **50%**
- Decrease child abuse and neglect by **51%**
- Decrease juvenile arrests by **33%**
- Increase high school graduation by **31%**
- Increase college attendance by more than **80%**
- Increase employment by **23%**.

Florida Early Education Numbers to Know:

\$7:\$1

The return on investment in high-quality early learning for children in poverty.

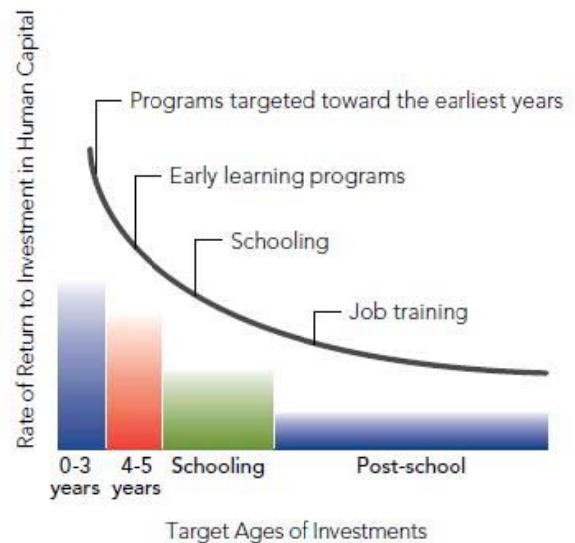
1200 vs. 40

The number of hours of training required to become a barber in Florida versus the number of hours of training required to supervise children in early learning environments in Florida.

3 out of 10

The number of quality indicators met by Florida's state-funded early learning programs, according to The National Institute for Early Education Research.

Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment at Different Ages



SOURCE: J.J. Heckman, "Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing Disadvantaged Children." *Science*, 312 (5782):1900-2, (June 2006).

Effective early childhood programs generate benefits to society that far exceed program costs. Extensive analysis by economists has shown that education and development investments in the earliest years of life produce the greatest return.

INBRIEF: Early Childhood Program Effectiveness, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University

2016 Early Learning Coalition Legislative Priorities

Improve Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program

Florida ranks #3 in access but only 36 in state funding; meets only 3 of 10 quality indicators.

- Restore the base student allocation for the VPK Program to the 2005 funding levels to support program quality. Increase BSA by at least \$63 per student.
- Establish a rate differential based upon the teacher credential or degree.

Improve School Readiness Program

There are nearly 3,000 children on a waitlist for child care assistance in Pinellas County and 57,000 statewide. Approximately \$1.5 million would allow the ELC of Pinellas to serve all eligible children ages 0-5 years on our wait list.

- Comply with requirements of the reauthorized Child Care and Development Trust Fund to ensure continued draw down of \$283 million in federal funds to support Florida families
- Adopt the language of 2015 HB7017; require comprehensive background screenings for child care center employees; establish group size maximums; require pre-service training for school readiness instructors
- Fund School Readiness scholarships based upon FTE enrollment rather than attendance
- Require School Readiness providers demonstrate compliance with program requirements prior to contracting
- Restore recurring general revenue funding for School Readiness to meet the community needs

Support Early Learning Workforce Development

less than 40% of VPK instructors have a college degree.

- Increase educational requirements for early educators
- Support continued funding for T.E.A.C.H. scholarships
- Support incentives to retain high quality early educators

Establish a Statewide Quality Improvement Recognition System

Investments in high quality early learning yield a \$7: \$1 return on investment.

- Utilize Child Care and Development Trust Funds earmarked for Florida to establish a Statewide Quality Improvement Recognition System
- Establish a statewide professional development registry for early educators
- Implement a tiered reimbursement system for School Readiness providers based upon quality benchmarks beginning 2017-2018



www.elcpinellas.net

Questions should be directed to Lindsay Carson, CEO
Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County
lcarson@elcpinellas.net | 727.239.5412