

Increasing learning opportunities and supporting young children’s development in early childhood education is important to ensure that all children can enter kindergarten prepared to learn and succeed in elementary and secondary schools.

Key Research Findings	Citation
<p>New evidence of the vital importance of early childhood education recently has come from the field of neuroscience – providing new insight into the opportunities and risks of the early years.</p> <p>Experience has a direct influence on the connective pathways that are established in the brain during the early years. If some pathways are not formed during the first few years of life, learning new things later in life can be more difficult.</p> <p>The quality of children’s early experiences affects their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comfort and sense of security - Brain development - Later ability to learn and reason 	<p>Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development (2000) <i>From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development</i>. Washington DC: National Academy Press</p>
<p>High quality preschool experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boosts later achievement and social adjustment - Reduces the likelihood of retention or placement in special education - Increases the chances of graduation from high school. 	<p>W. Steven Barnett, “Long-Term Effects of Early Childhood Programs on Cognitive and School Outcomes,” in Richard E. Behrman, ed., <i>The Future of Children: Long-Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs</i>, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1995) 25-50; and Doris R. Entwisle, “The Role of Schools in Sustaining Early Childhood Program Benefits,” in the same volume, 133-160.</p>
<p>Research over time shows that the negative effects of poverty can be reduced by participation in high quality early childhood programs.</p>	<p>L.J. Schweinhart, H.V. Barnes, and D.P. Weikart, with W.S. Barnett and A.S. Epstein, <i>Significant Benefits: the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27</i> (Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1993).</p>
<p>Research consistently demonstrates that the more children know about language and literacy before they arrive at kindergarten the better equipped they are to succeed in reading.</p> <p>Children who are exposed to sophisticated vocabulary in the course of interesting conversations learn the words that will later need for comprehension in reading.</p> <p>Extending vocabulary, building children’s world knowledge, supporting children’s language development, and helping them become sensitive to the sounds and form of our language prepare them for a world of reading.</p>	<p>National Research Council: <i>Starting Out Right</i> (Washington, DC, National Academy Press, 1999) 5-60</p> <p>Ludwig, Jens and Sawhill, Isabel <i>Success by Ten – Intervening Early, Often and Effectively in the Education of Young Children</i>, The Brookings Institute, February 2007</p>

<p>Routines and schedules learned before kindergarten in organized preschools and at home promote security and school readiness.</p>	<p>Ramey, Sharon L. and Ramey, Craig T. (1999) <i>Going to School – How to Help your Child Succeed</i>. New York, NY: Guilford Press</p>
<p>With increasing numbers of children in early childhood education programs effective curriculum tied to standards and strong instructional content is crucial.</p>	<p>Kagan, S.L., Kauerz, K. (2006) PreSchool Programs: Effective Curricula Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development. (http://www.excellence-earlychildhood.ca/documents/Kagan-KauerzANGxp.pdf)</p>
<p>Studies indicate that a bachelor’s degree and specialized early education training affected the teachers’ behavior and the quality of their early childhood program. Teachers with a bachelor’s degree were more responsive to children and provided more activities that promoted language development and emergent literacy than teachers without one. Those teachers with both a bachelor’s degree and specialized training were considered the most competent teachers. A teacher’s level of education is a critical factor in the quality of their program.</p>	<p>Saracho, O.N. and Spodek, B. (2007) Early Childhood Teacher’s Preparation and the Quality of Program Outcomes. <i>Early Childhood Development and Care</i> Vol. 177, No. 1, pp 71-91</p>
<p>Spending government money on early childhood programs will not just benefit children but taxpayers and society as well.</p>	<p>Lynch, Robert (2004) Exceptional Returns: Economic, fiscal and social benefits of investment in early childhood development. Washington D.C. Economic Policy Development Institute http://epinet.org/books/exceptional/exceptional_returns_(full).pdf</p>
<p>PreK benefits offset 41% to 62% of total spending on early childhood education in New York State.</p>	<p>Belfield, Clive R. (2004) Early Education: How Important Are the Cost Savings to the School System Research Briefing. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University</p>
<p>Students who attend high quality universal preschool increase their chances of succeeding for the remainder of their academic career. Studies show that students across the income scale experience improved academic and social skills.</p>	<p>The Case for Universal Pre-K Kristen J. Oshyn, The Century Foundation, 10/3/2006 http://www.equaleducation.org/commentary.asp?opedid=1408</p>
<p>Total enrollment in state-funded Pre-K rose to 942,766 children in 2005-2006, including 805,807 4 year olds. This represents a 40 percent increase in the number of 4-year-old children enrolled in state Pre-K programs over the past five years. Thus, state preschool education served 20 percent of the 4-year-old population in the U.S. in the 2005-2006 school year.</p> <p>About two-thirds of these children were served in public schools, and one-third were in other settings such as private child care and Head Start.</p>	<p><i>The State of Preschool 2006: State Preschool Yearbook</i> is the fourth in the series of NIEER’s annual reference volumes tracking state-funded preschool education programs. Its purpose is to provide a compendium of data on state efforts to offer preschool education as well as analyses of key measures of program progress: access, quality standards and resources. This volume encompasses the 2005-2006 school year and describes trends of the five years from 2001-2002, the year covered by NIEER’s first <i>Yearbook</i>.</p>

<p>Children in high quality preschool programs are less likely to repeat grades, need special education, or get into future trouble with the law. High quality programs have produced short-term gains in cognitive functioning and longer-term gains in school achievement and social adjustment.</p> <p>Universal preschools facilitate <i>early</i> detection of children’s learning disabilities.</p> <p>Providing Universal Preschool programs broadens the opportunities and possibilities for learning disabled students to learn in the least restrictive environment. More resources help schools educate learning disabled students who may be unable to learn at the remedial preschool level.</p>	<p>Universal Preschool: A Costly But Worthy Goal by Wilson Greene Journal of Law & Education 35 no4 555-63 0 2006</p>
<p>Pre Kindergarten through the primary grades are the cornerstone of any P-16 system. They provide a storing foundation for children’s lifelong learning, educational excellence, and eventual competitiveness in the marketplace.</p> <p>From the perspective of P-16 systems, the learning experiences children have during the early childhood years (birth-age 5) should be better integrated and aligned with those they have during the kindergarten and elementary school years.</p>	<p>PK Inclusion: Getting Serious about a P-16 Education System By Ruby Takanishi and Kristie Kauerz Foundation for Child Development http://www.fcd-us.org/ Phi Delta Kappa, Vol. 89, No. 07, March 2008, pp. 480-487</p>
<p>As a group, ELL students have struggled to become fluent in English, lagged well behind in terms of academic achievement, and had school dropout rates almost twice those of native English speakers.</p> <p>Research shows that a consistent, coherent approach to education that provides continuous, enhanced learning opportunities from Prekindergarten through Third Grade (PK-3) offers the best chance for improved academic performance.</p>	<p>Challenging Common Myths About Young English Language Learners Foundation for Child Development http://www.fcdus.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=669789 Policy Brief Advancing PK-3 No.8 January, 2008</p>