

When we talk about  
Maine's youngest  
children...

we are talking  
about Maine's  
economy.



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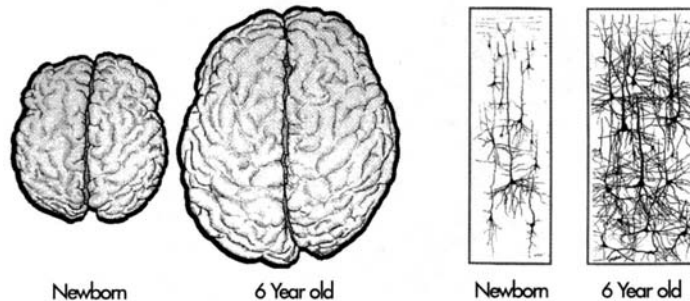
## Healthy Brain Development is Key to Maximizing our Children's Potential

- The human brain controls all human behavior.
- 85% of brain development occurs by age three.
- During this time, neurological connections are laying the foundation for intellectual, emotional, social, moral and physical development.

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## Important Connections are Made Prior to School-Entry

90% of brain growth occurs before kindergarten



Newborn  
6 Year old  
Newborn brain size compared  
to that of a 6-year-old brain

Newborn  
6 Year old  
Newborn neural networks  
compared to networks of a  
6-year-old

Source: Paul Lombroso, "Development of the cerebral cortex. VI. Growth Factors I." *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 37(6): 674-675, 1998. *Invest Early in Maine's Future*

### Healthy brain development results from:

- Nurturing, stable and consistent relationships with supportive and responsive adults
- Positive stimulation (visual, auditory, emotional)
- Sense of safety and security
- Absence of stress (no family violence or substance abuse)

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## Negative Impacts on Brain Development

- Unstable and inconsistent adult relationships
- Lack of adult emotional support
- Lack of stimulation
- Exposure to family violence and substance abuse
- Stress, anxiety and fear

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## “Making the Connection”

Quality Parent Strengthening Programs  
and Early Care and Education are Key to  
Healthy Brain Development

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## Quality Parent-strengthening programs such as home visiting:

- Help parents learn how to provide safe, nurturing and stimulating environments that children need, as well as local and state resources such as early screenings and referrals to needed child development supports.
- Link parents with services to help deal with problems in home (e.g., substance abuse, domestic abuse, mental health issues)

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## High-Quality Early Care and Education is...

- Appropriate staff/child interactions and curriculum
- Well-prepared providers
- Well-compensated providers
- Low staff/child ratios and group size
- Low staff turnover
- A safe, welcoming and healthy environment
- High levels of parental involvement

(Adapted from Campbell, et al, *Lessons From The Military For Improving Our Nation's Child Care System*, National Women's Law Center, 2000).

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## High-Quality Early Care and Education Benefits Children ...

- Improved mental, emotional and physical health
- Higher self-esteem
- Ready to learn in school at appropriate cognitive and social levels
- Greater speech and language abilities
- Stronger math and reading skills
- Reduced need for special education or other remedial services

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## Children Who Experience High-Quality Early Care and Education Are:

### **MORE** likely to

- Have good physical, emotional and mental health
- Succeed academically and go to college
- Have better jobs and higher earnings as adults
- Own their own homes
- Contribute to tax base

### **LESS** likely to

- Become teen parents
- Engage in criminal behavior as teens and adults/become incarcerated
- Abuse drugs
- Be dependent on welfare

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## Failure to Invest in Quality Early Care and Education Results in:

Increased Child Abuse and Neglect

Maine **spent** - \$115 million in 2003

- Increased Juvenile Delinquency

Keeping one teen out of prison **saves** \$1.7--\$2.3 million over a lifetime

- Increased Substance Abuse

\$600 million annually: \$18+ million in medical **costs**: \$52+ million in lost productivity annually

- Increased Domestic Violence

- \$1.2 billion in preventable **costs** annually

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## High-Quality Early Care and Education is Good for Business



- Higher employee morale
- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased productivity
- Lower employee turnover
- Lower recruiting and training costs

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## Workforce Needs

A recent survey of Maine manufacturing employers found 52% of the employees required child care.



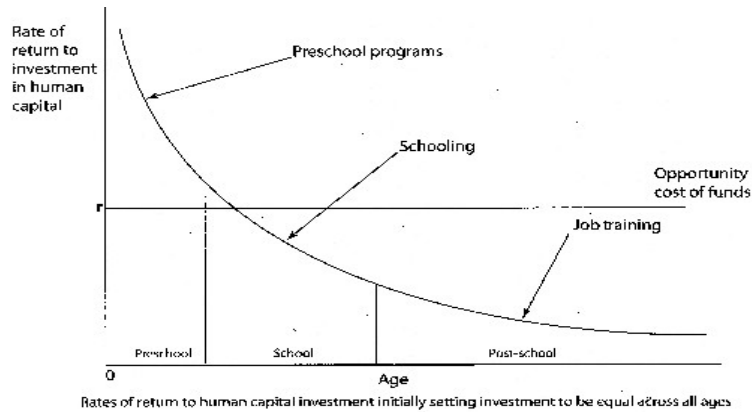
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High-quality early care and education is one of the best economic investments we can make

Investing in high-quality early care and education yields an extraordinary return, (Up to \$16 for every dollar invested – with average rate of return at \$7), far exceeding the return on most investments, private and public.

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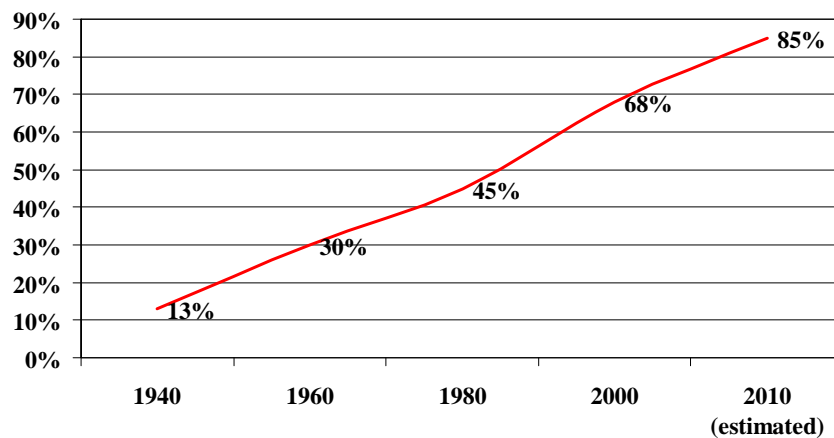
## Rate of Return



• Source: Heckman and Masterov, *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children*, October 2004.

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## Working Parents Make up an Increasingly Large Part of the Total Workforce

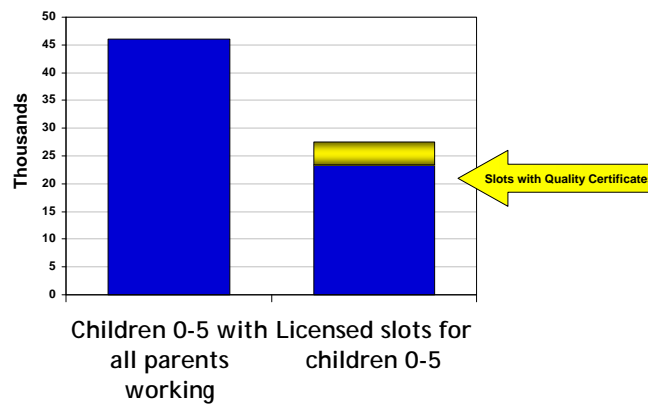


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# So how are we doing?

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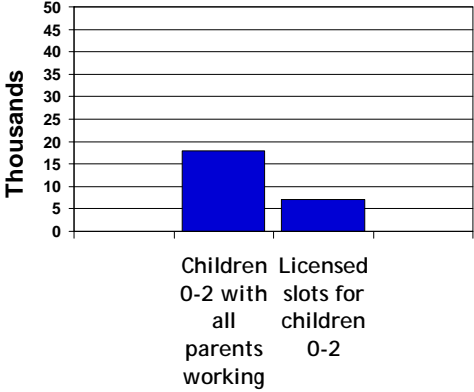
## Shortage of Quality Care for Children 0-5 in Maine



Source: Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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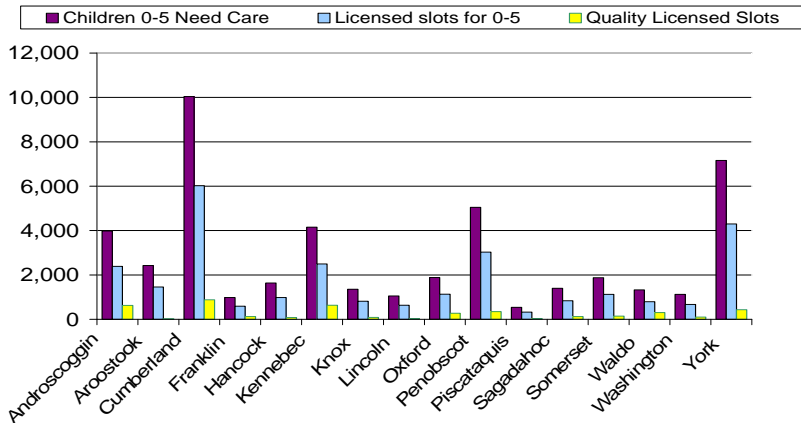
## Shortage of Licensed Care is Most Acute for Children 0-2



Source: Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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## Shortage of Quality Care Exists Throughout Maine

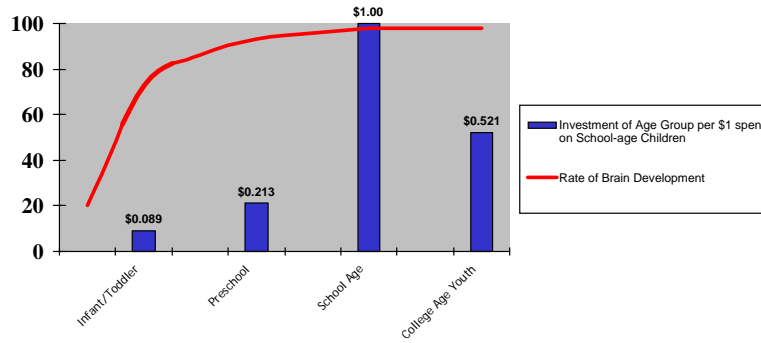


Source: Maine Department of Health and Human Services

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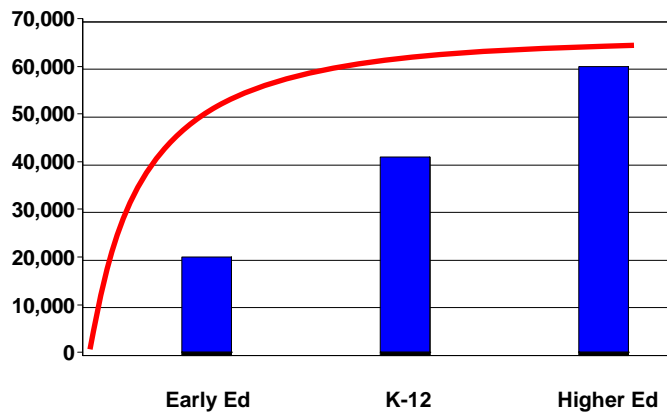
# We Must Invest Early or Pay Later

The Values of Our Investments Do Not Reflect the Research



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We Invest the Least at the Time of Greatest Impact  
(Brain Growth Curve and Educator Salaries)



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## The Child Care Industry is a Critical Component of Maine's Economy

- Licensed child care facilities in Maine represent a total annual contribution to the economy of \$253 million and 12,000 jobs.
- Licensed child care allows parents to work and these working families contribute \$854 million to Maine's economy annually.

Source: Hildebrand, Alex. The Economic Impact of the Child Care Industry in Maine, Peoples Regional Opportunity Program publication, 2003.

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## What You Can Do

*Lead by example* as an employer. Increase employee access to high-quality early care and education (Contact your local Resource Development Center).

Support efforts to *generate public support* for high-quality early care and education. Let policymakers know that this is a priority for you.

*Take the message home*. To your trade association, to your local chamber. Explain why high-quality early care and education is important.

*Create family-friendly business practices*.

Partner with other businesses and organizations to *increase quality early care capacity* locally.

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