



Why It Matters To Businesses

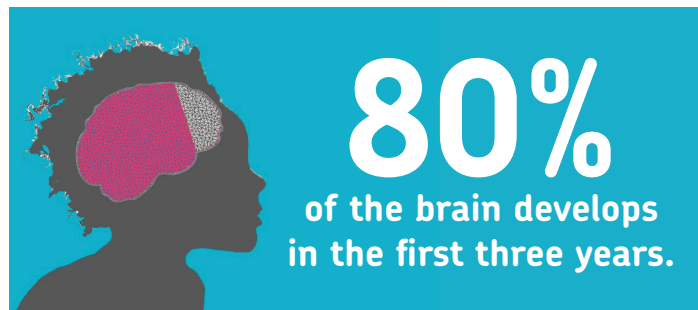
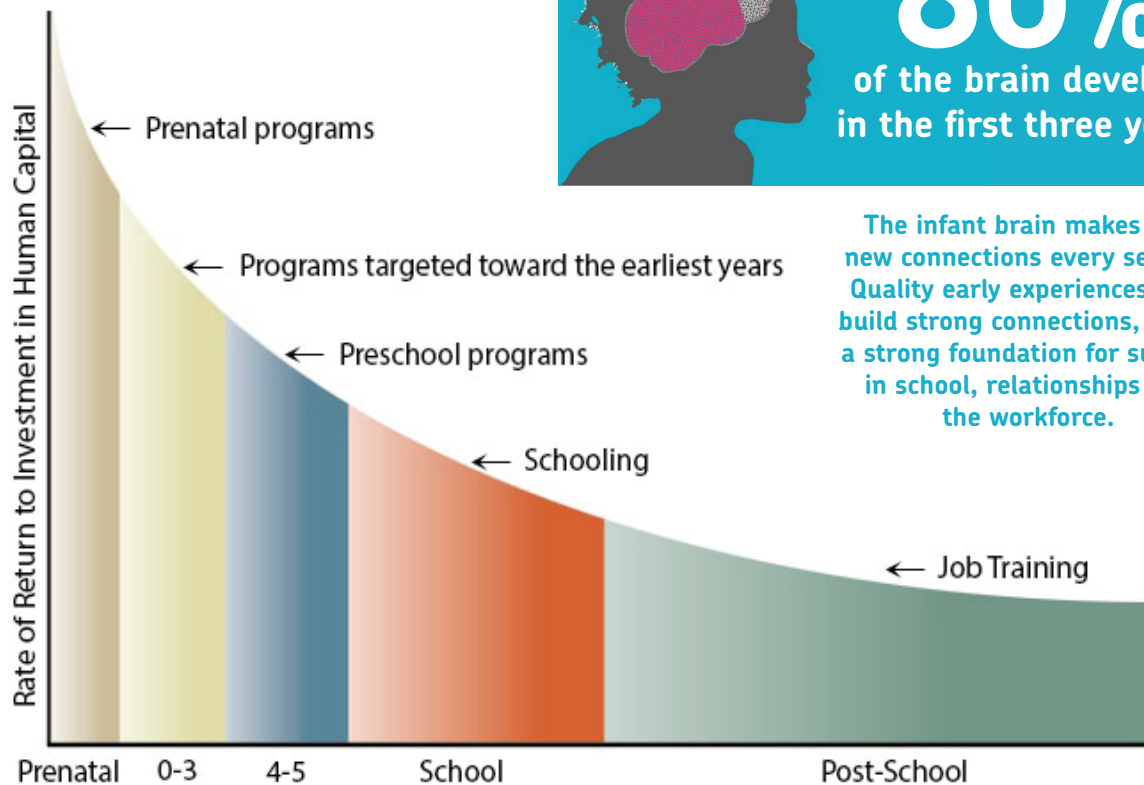
Quality Early Experiences Build a Strong Economy Now and in the Future

High quality early childhood experiences lay a foundation for lasting economic security. Increasingly, in Vermont and around the country, business leaders are drawing connections between early childhood, workforce development, and strong local economies. When we help our children grow to become productive adults, we support our current workforce of parents, strengthen our community, and invest in our state's prosperity now and in the future.

Building a Strong Future Workforce

Vermonters agree that every child should get the support he or she needs to live a happy, successful life. But the U.S. is falling behind its competitor nations in producing a capable and effective workforce. Not one U.S. state can claim that half of its children are proficient in both reading and math, as measured in fourth and eighth grades¹. In Vermont, 40-50% of children arrive at kindergarten unprepared, and 32% of third-graders are reading below grade level². Getting kids ready for school means more than helping them with their ABCs, packing their lunches, filling their backpacks, and getting them to the bus on time. The job of preparing our kids for success begins the day they're born.

Investing in What Works



The infant brain makes 700 new connections every second. Quality early experiences help build strong connections, laying a strong foundation for success in school, relationships and the workforce.

Source: Heckman (2008)

Economic Development Now and Later

Vermonters agree that every child deserves to thrive. But taxpayers cannot afford the growing expenditures associated with negative outcomes, such as dependence on social services, substance abuse, and crime. Tax money spent addressing these problems drains resources from both businesses and their clients and customers. Studies show that children exposed to high-quality early care and education have better language and math skills, better social skills, and better relationships with classmates. These students:

- Score higher on school-readiness tests
- Are 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade
- Are 70% less likely to commit a violent crime by age 18

We all benefit if we do it right early, or we pay more if we do it later³.

Workforce Recruitment, Development, and Retention

Providing high quality early experiences for young children helps attract and retain skilled workers and increases productivity today. We know that 72% of Vermont children under the age of 6 have all parents in the workforce. These parents rely on care outside of the home for their children for up to 40 hours a week⁴. We face a growing need to attract highly trained professionals to move, work, live and raise their families here. Making sure every child has a high-quality early experience paired with Vermont's quality of life is a winning combination as we compete in today's market.

Early Childhood Facts	Vermont Statistics
The infant brain forms 700 new connections every second, building a foundation for future success. A child's early experiences affect the strength of this foundation⁵.	72% of Vermont children under the age of 6 have all parents in the workforce. These parents rely on care outside of the home for their children for up to 40 hours a week.
Children exposed to high-quality early experiences score higher in school readiness tests, have better social-emotional skills, and are 40% less likely to need special education.	40-50% of Vermont's children enter kindergarten unprepared.
Children who are not reading well by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school⁶.	32% of Vermont's third graders are reading below grade level.

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1. National Center for Education Statistics, *National Assessment of Educational Progress*, 2009.

2. *Building Bright Futures*, "How Are Vermont's Young Children?", 2014.

Vermont Agency of Education, *Kindergarten Readiness Statewide Report*, 2013-2014.

3. Watson, Sara. "The Costs of Disinvestment." *Partnership for America's Economic Success*, 2010.

4. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 2008-2012, Percent of Children under 6 years old with all parents in the labor force*.

5. Harvard Center on the Developing Child, "The Science of Early Childhood Development," *National Scientific Council on the Developing Child*, 2007.

6. Hernandez, Donald J. "Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation." *The Annie E. Casey Foundation*, 2010.