



Pay Now or Pay Much More Later:

Law enforcement leaders support high-quality early education to cut crime and save money in Illinois

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS ILLINOIS is a bi-partisan anti-crime organization of more than 300 police chiefs, sheriffs, state's attorneys, leaders of law enforcement organizations, and crime survivors who promote greater investment in effective programs proven to reduce crime and help kids get the right start in life.

Summary

Law enforcement leaders in Illinois and across the country are urging policymakers to support high-quality voluntary preschool. There is strong evidence that these programs can help at-risk children succeed, reduce the likelihood that they will commit crimes and save taxpayer dollars by lowering prison costs.

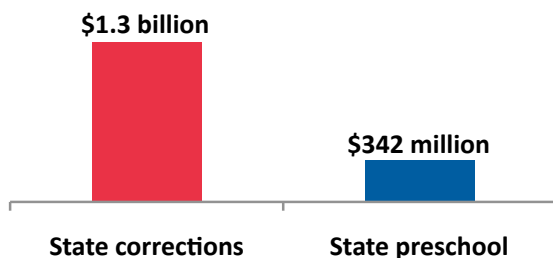
While law enforcement has been working hard to reduce crime, the state was still spending \$1.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2010 on corrections with over 45,000 Illinois adults locked up in either state or federal prisons on the first day of 2010. High-quality preschool can keep children from ever starting down the expensive path leading to prison. Research shows:

- By age 27, those left out of the high-quality Perry Preschool Project in Michigan were five times more likely to be chronic offenders than those who participated, and by age 40 those left out were 86 percent more likely to have been sentenced to jail or prison.



- By age 18, those left out of the Chicago Child-Parent Center pre-kindergarten program were already 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime.
- While high-quality state pre-kindergarten programs do not yet have crime results, they are already helping kids succeed. For example: by second grade, the children left out of New Jersey's pre-kindergarten program were twice as likely to be held back in school.

Illinois state spending in 2010



For FY 2010. Preschool amount includes 11% birth-3 set-aside.
Sources: State of Illinois & IL State Board of Education

For every child who drops out of school, uses drugs and becomes a career criminal, he or she costs society, on average, \$2.5 million over a lifetime. To prevent such costs, Nobel Economist James Heckman and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke agree that high-quality early education is essential for our economic future. Law enforcement leaders are telling policymakers that high-quality early education can play a critical role in building strong and safe communities.

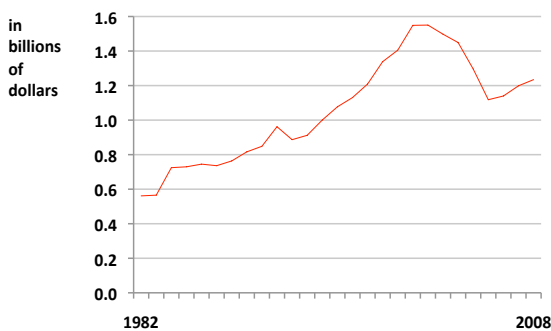
A New Direction: Preventing Crime Through Early Interventions

The United States Department of Justice and the Census Bureau report that spending on corrections in Illinois doubled between 1982 and 2008.¹

Illinois spent \$1.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2010 to supervise and incarcerate criminals. On the first day of 2010, over 45,000 adults were behind bars.²

IL corrections spending 1982 - 2008

2008 spending was double spending in 1982



1982-2004 inflation adjusted to 2005. Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics & Census State and Local Govt Finance Survey

What Works

Neuroscience has shown that the architecture of the brain is rapidly developing from birth to five years of age, so those are critical years for children’s development. High-quality early learning programs during these early years have shown they can have a positive impact and produce strong and lasting results. Recent rigorous evaluations of state pre-kindergarten programs are also showing strong results, offering further support for the long-term study findings. If early education is of high enough quality, it can make an important difference in children’s lives.

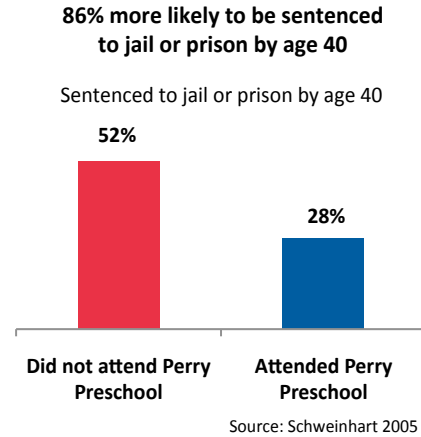
Results from the Longer-Term Studies

The Perry Preschool Project served disadvantaged kids in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and assessed outcomes through age 40 for the children who attended and a randomized control group. The Chicago Child-Parent Centers have now followed program graduates and a control group up to age 26. These are just a few of the impressive results the researchers have uncovered.

Perry Preschool

- At age 27, those who had *not* been in the project were already five times more likely to be chronic lawbreakers with five or more arrests (35 percent vs. 7 percent).
- By age 40, the *nonparticipants* were 86 percent more likely to have been sentenced to jail or prison (52 percent vs. 28 percent).

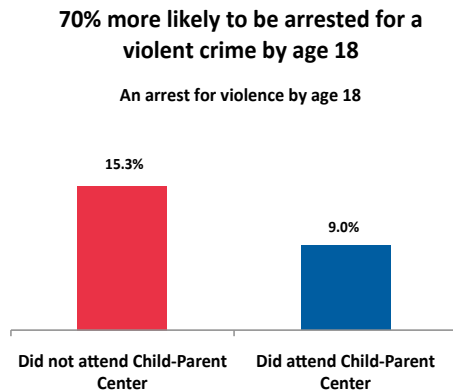
- Those who attended the preschool were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school (65 percent vs. 45 percent).³



Source: Schweinhart 2005

Chicago Child-Parent Centers

- By age 18, those *not* in the program were already 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime (15.3 percent vs. 9 percent).
- From ages 18 to 24, those *not* in the program were already 24 percent more likely to be incarcerated (26 percent vs. 21 percent).⁴



Source: Reynolds 2001

Recent Results from Studies of State Programs

Emerging studies with strong research designs are showing that state pre-kindergarten programs can make a significant difference by setting children on a better path:

- Kids *left out* of New Jersey’s two-year pre-kindergarten program were held back in school twice as much by second grade. In Michigan’s state program, those left out were held back 51 percent more often by eighth grade.⁵

“They’re only 4 years old once. The preschool years are a singular opportunity. If children have access to quality early learning during that time, the benefits will follow kids far into their adult lives.”

—John B. Roe,
Ogle County State’s Attorney

- In Tennessee’s pre-kindergarten program, kids gained an average of 82 percent more on early literacy and math skills than those not in the program.⁶
- In Pennsylvania, the percentage of pre-kindergarten kids with developmental delays dropped from 21 percent at the time of entry to 8 percent by the time the kids completed the program. The percentage of 3-year-old children with conduct or self-control problems dropped from 22 percent to 4 percent. Those reductions can dramatically cut the number of children needing expensive special education in Pennsylvania.⁷

What is Happening in Illinois

Illinois had spaces for approximately 85,000 children in state-funded preschool in Fiscal Year 2010 for \$342 million.⁸ Preliminary evaluation results show that participating children demonstrate significant improvements in school readiness areas such as language skills and social skills. Initial results also suggest reduced problem behaviors and increased attention among participating students.⁹ Final evaluation results are needed to determine whether the program is of the highest

quality and providing children the full developmental and educational benefits possible, but initial results are encouraging.

Illinois preschool funding has been cut in recent years and many programs have closed due to delayed payments from the state. State policymakers and the governor will need to offer strong support for these programs to ensure more children can benefit.

Savings

The average societal savings resulting from high-quality early education are astounding — the Perry Preschool Project saved over \$200,000 per child and the Chicago Child-Parent Centers saved over \$80,000 per child.¹⁰ For Perry, every dollar invested yielded \$16 in total savings.¹¹ That is, in large part, because the average cost of a young child who grows up to drop out, use drugs and become a career criminal is \$2.5 million dollars.¹²

Quality Matters

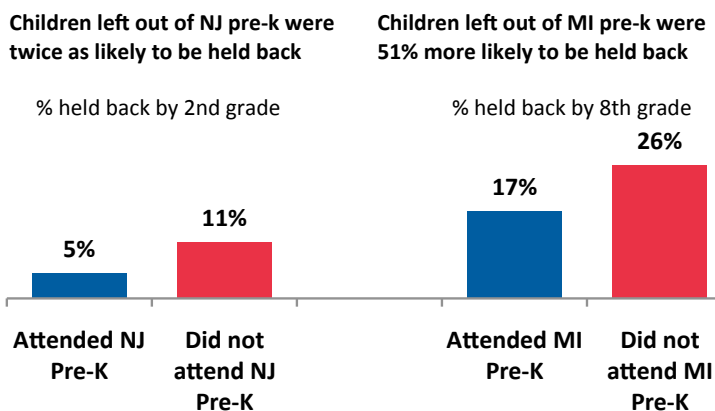
The early care and education programs that produce such strong results are all high quality. Improving the quality of programs is vital since poor-quality early care and education can actually result in poorer outcomes among at-risk children. Research shows that good teachers, effective curricula, involvement by parents and coaching of parents, small classes, good teacher-student ratios and access to diagnosis and referrals for problems can make a difference in improving the likelihood that children will succeed.

Time to Act: Stop Cutting Early Care and Education, Focus on Improving Quality

With lost revenue and tight budgets, state governments and Congress face difficult choices. As a top priority, the law enforcement leaders of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS ILLINOIS call on policymakers to protect and strengthen early care and education programs like preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start and child care. Congress also has the opportunity to improve these programs through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and other education initiatives that will help states to improve and increase access to high-quality early education. The Illinois General Assembly and Governor Quinn have the opportunity to bolster the shaken confidence of preschool providers by restoring the budget for preschool to the Fiscal Year 2009 level.

As law enforcement leaders in Illinois and across the nation, we are adding our voices to the many others who believe high-quality early education is essential for growing strong, safe communities. Simply put: high-quality preschool works, improves public safety and saves far more than it costs.

Pre-kindergarten helps reduce grade retention



Sources: Frede 2009; Maloffeva 2007

Endnotes

- 1 Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Justice expenditures and employment data query tool, state expenditure, corrections spending*, 1982-2005 data. Department of Justice. Retrieved on March 14, 2011 from http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/dataonline/Search/EandE/state_exp_next.cfm; U.S. Census Bureau. *State and Local Government Finance Survey*. 2005-2008 data. Retrieved on March 14, 2011 from <http://www.census.gov/govs/estimate/index.html>
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- 7 Bagnato, S.J., Salaway, J., & Suen, H. (2009). *Pre-K counts in Pennsylvania for youngsters' early school success: Authentic outcomes for an innovative prevention and promotion initiative*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, Early Childhood Partnerships.
- 8 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Education, Early Childhood and Parenting Collaborative. *Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map, ISBE Prek/PFA*. Retrieved on April 12, 2011 from <http://iecam.crc.uiuc.edu/cgi-bin/iecam/search.asp>. FY10 funded enrollment. Includes the Preschool for All program and the older Prekindergarten Program for Children at Risk of Academic Failure; Koch, C. (November 1, 2009). 2010 Preschool for All

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