

Independent studies of the return on investment of early childhood programs reveal that early education investments yield a return that far exceeds the return on most public projects that are considered economic development. The quality of life for a child and the contributions the child makes to society as an adult can be traced back to the first few years of life. From birth until about 5 years old, a child undergoes tremendous growth and change. If this period of life includes support for growth in cognition, language, motor skills, adaptive skills, and social-emotional functioning, the child is more likely to succeed in school and later contribute to society. Without this support during these early years, however, a child is more likely to drop out of school, receive welfare benefits, and/or commit a crime.

Early childhood research demonstrates that the influence of early family and social risk factors on children's later adjustments is mediated through two important indicators of the quality of the child's home environment: (1) the parent-child relationship (specifically the affective relationship between the child and his/her primary caregiver); and (2) the provision of language/literacy stimulation in the home. Warm, responsive, and consistent routines and structure have been shown to be important predictors of children's school readiness skills. Home literacy activities, including shared book reading and early and consistent exposure to print, have been associated with children's emergent literacy skills. These early literacy skills are, in turn, strong predictors of children's language development, success in reading and writing, and overall school adjustment and attainment.

ParentChild+, a national, evidence-based early childhood home visiting program, focuses on:

- Building positive parent-child verbal and non-verbal interaction.
- Promoting positive parenting skills.
- Enhancing the child's conceptual and social-emotional development.
- Developing pre-literacy skills that are essential for school readiness.
- Creating language-rich home environments.

Research on the Program has consistently demonstrated that parents who participate in the Program exhibit more and consistent positive interaction and affect toward their children. The Program has consistently documented from pre- to post-program participation an increase in warm, responsive, and steady routines and interactions. Studies have also reliably shown that children who participate in the Program enter school with the requisite social-emotional skills (e.g. impulse control and attention to tasks).

ParentChild+ research has consistently demonstrated that Program participants outperform at-risk control or comparison groups on cognitive measures and have often closed the achievement gap with middle-class children. Randomized controlled trials demonstrated 2 cognitive benefits for toddlers immediately after Program participation. Follow-up studies at third grade showed long-term gains in intellectual

abilities (e.g. math and reading achievement). More recent quasi-experimental studies have shown higher rates of school readiness among former Program participants than their counterparts in a comparison group; and a subject-randomized controlled trial has demonstrated higher high school graduation rates for Program children than those in their school district and nationally.

ParentChild+'s Return on Investment

- An independent report, produced by the City of New York Office of the Comptroller, calculates savings of \$210,000 per child due to reduced need for special education services resulting from home visiting programs that demonstrate reductions in the number of children entering school with developmental delays and subsequent decreased need for school-age special education services. Research on ParentChild+ demonstrates this pattern of findings.¹
- Participating in home visiting programs yields long-term economic benefits. An independent report produced by the City of New York Office of the Comptroller estimates that participation in ParentChild+ could increase a participant's lifetime earnings potential by between \$600,000 and \$1 million dollars.²
- A study of the job creation and earnings creation effects of ParentChild+ shows that the Program increases state residents' earnings by 5.66%. The study finds that ParentChild+ has such a high ratio of earnings effect to net program costs because the Program achieves a considerable increase in the high school graduation rate at a relatively low two-year program cost per child (\$4500). The study estimates that if ParentChild+ were implemented nationally the long-term effects on the economy would include:
 - 300,000 jobs.
 - \$53 billion in generated earnings.
 - \$42 billion in long-run annual government revenue.³

¹ Hevesi, Alan G. "Building Foundations: Supporting Parental Involvement in a Child's First Years." A Report from the City of New York Office of the Comptroller. 2001.

² Hevesi, Alan G. "Building Foundations: Supporting Parental Involvement in a Child's First Years." A Report from the City of New York Office of the Comptroller. 2001.

³ Bartik, Timothy J., "The Economic Development Effects of Early Childhood Programs." A Report for the Partnership for American's Economic Success. 2008. 23.