

# 5 Reasons Why Early Childhood Intervention Is Valuable

For years early intervention has helped families learn how to be the best teachers for their children with developmental delays or disabilities. Early intervention's evidence-based practice of helping families incorporate intervention strategies into daily routines increases children's rate of growth in key developmental areas, multiplies the opportunities for and effects of intervention, and increases the return on every dollar spent.

Discover how early intervention can help the children and families in your community and healthcare practice.

"Investing in the continuum of learning from birth to age 5 not only impacts each child, but it also strengthens our country's workforce today and prepares future generations to be competitive in the global economy tomorrow."

*Professor James Heckman  
University of Chicago*

## 1 Reduces Need for Special Education

The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) Special Education and Part C Programs tracked children with a developmental delay and found 46% did not need special education by the time they reached kindergarten as a result of early intervention services.<sup>1</sup>



**36%** had no disability, and were not receiving special education services.

**10%** were reported to have a disability, but were not receiving special education.

## 2 Positive Results for Children

Studies found that children who participate in high-quality early intervention/early childhood development programs tend to have:

- Less need for special education and other remedial work.
- Greater language abilities.
- Improved nutrition and health.
- Experienced less child abuse and neglect.<sup>2,3,4</sup>



## 3 Works with Brain Development

Neural circuits create the foundation for learning, behavior and health. These circuits are most flexible from birth to three.

Early social/emotional development provides the foundation upon which cognitive and language skills develop.

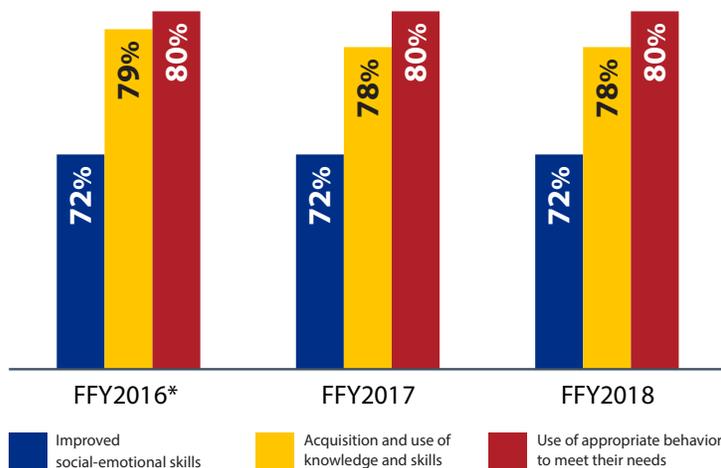
High-quality early intervention services can change a child's developmental trajectory and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Intervention is likely to be more effective and less costly when it is provided earlier in life rather than later.<sup>5</sup>



## 4 Improves Child Outcomes

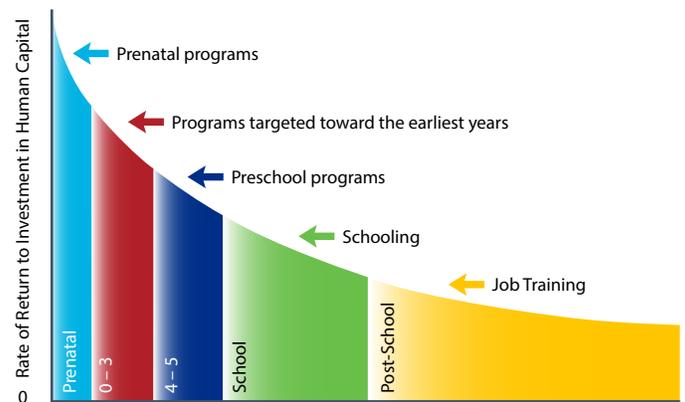
Texas child outcomes in Early Childhood Intervention consistently exceed the national average.



\*FFY = Federal Fiscal Year

## 5 Increases Rate of Return on Investment

The earlier the investment, the greater the return.



As noted by James Heckman: "The highest rate of return in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible, from birth through age 5, in disadvantaged families. Starting at age three or four is too little too late, as it fails to recognize that skills beget skills in a complementary and dynamic way. Efforts should focus on the first years for the greatest efficiency and effectiveness."<sup>6</sup>

### Citations

1 <https://www.sri.com/publication/national-early-intervention-longitudinal-study-neils-final-report/>  
 2 Paying Later – the High Cost of Failing to Invest in Young Children – PEW Center on the States Issue Brief, Jan. 2011  
 3 Early Childhood Interventions: Benefits, Costs and Savings – Rand Corporation Research Brief  
 4 Policy Perspectives: Early Childhood Investment Yields Big Payoff by Robert Lynch, Department of Economics, Washington College

5 Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2010) — <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Foundations-of-Lifelong-Health.pdf>  
 6 *Invest in Early Childhood Development: Reduce Deficits, Strengthen the Economy* — <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/invest-in-early-childhood-development-reduce-deficits-strengthen-the-economy/>