

ECRC

Human Capital Series
on Early Childhood Development

**Critical Issues in Cost-
Effectiveness for
Children's First Decade**

Early Childhood Research

Collaborative

Sponsored by the
Center for Early Education and Development
at the University of Minnesota
and The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis



Fostering multidisciplinary research
on early childhood development

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News Release

[New Collaborative to Promote Research and Policy Analysis on Early Childhood Development](#)

[Inaugural Conference of the Early Childhood Research Collaborative](#), Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, Friday, October 13, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

[Discussion Papers](#)

Mission

The ECRC conducts and promotes multidisciplinary research for young children and their families.

1. Evaluation and policy analysis
2. Research on children's health & well-being
3. Disseminating research findings

ECRC Steering Committee

Arthur Reynolds, Co-Director & ICD

Art Rolnick, Co-Director & Minneapolis FED

Richard Weinberg, CEED Director & ICD

Scott McConnell CEED & Ed Psych

Judy Temple, Humphrey & Applied Econ.

Rob Grunewald, Minneapolis FED

Karen Cadigan, CEED

Michelle Englund, CEED and ICD

Conference Themes

Stage of Development and Context

Content and Focus of Services

Cost-Effectiveness

Scale

Stage of Development & Context

Prenatal	WIC, NFP
Birth to 3	Early Head Start, Abecedarian
Preschool	State PreK, Head Start, CPC
Kindergarten	Full-Day vs Half-Day
Early Grades	PK-3, Small classes, Teaching

“Do we really believe that a year of preschool can ultimately shape the course of human life?

To do so is to ignore the many, many factors ranging from the quality of schooling to socialization influences from the family and community. Development is a continuous process...”

(Zigler et al., 1993, p. 21-22)

Content and Focus

Parenting Skills and Health Behaviors

Early Child Health and Well-being

Cognitive and Socio-emotional Skills

School Readiness

School Competence and Performance

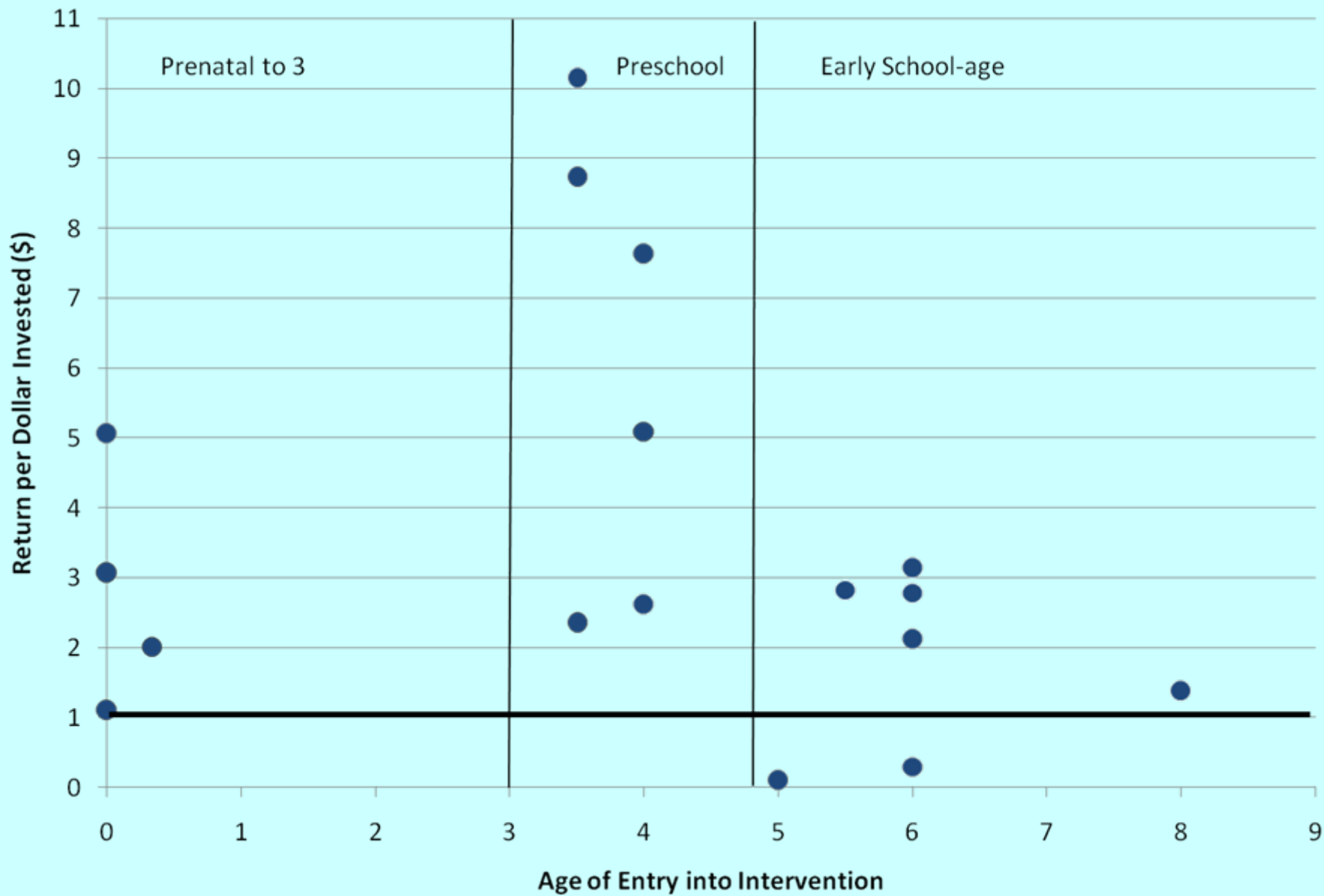
Cost-Effectiveness

A Critical Mass of Evidence is Now Available

Strong Evidence Requires Strong Programs

Ecological and Human Capital Perspectives

Return per Dollar Invested by Age of Entry into Intervention



Common Elements of Programs Showing High Economic Returns

1. More than 1 Year of Participation.
2. Well-trained and Compensated Staff.
3. Low Ratios of Children to Staff.
4. Services and Instruction that are intensive.
5. Comprehensive Family Services.
6. Average Cost per Child > \$5,000.

“In an era of tight government budgets, it is impractical to consider active investment programs for all persons. The real question is how to use the available funds wisely.

The best evidence supports the policy prescription: invest in the very young and improve basic learning and socialization skills.” (Heckman, 2000, p. 8).

Scale

Model Programs

Nurse Family Partnership, Perry Preschool, Abecedarian Project

Large Scale Public Programs

Early Head Start, State PreK, Small Classes, PK-3

Sustained Programs & Practices

WIC, Head Start, Child-Parent Centers

Goal

Ecological Perspective

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Human Capital Perspective

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Strong Learning Contexts for Cost-Effective
Investments