

Building Blocks for Wisconsin's Future

Recommendations to the Governor

Early Childhood Education Facts

0-5

age range that presents the greatest opportunity to improve the trajectory of a child's life.

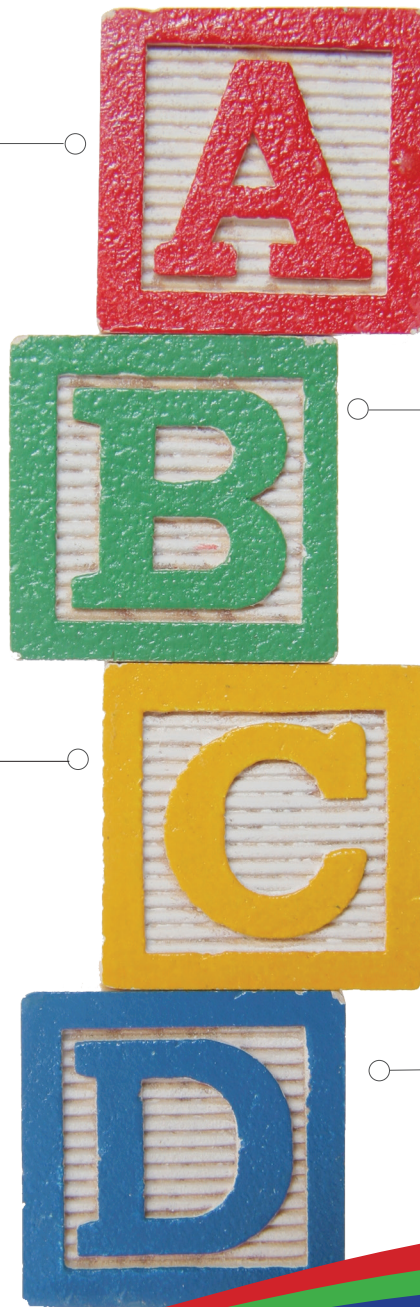
88%

of national voters believe that access to quality early childhood education is a necessity, not a luxury.²

1. Heckman, James, Four Big Benefits of Investing in Early Childhood Development.

2. Joughin, Charles, New Bipartisan Poll Finds Investing in Early Childhood Education is Top National Priority.

3. Shellenback, K. (2004). Child care and parent productivity: Making the business case. Linking Economic Development & Child Care Research Project. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension. Retrieved on February 26, 2010 from <http://government.cce.cornell.edu/doc/pdf/ChildCareParentProductivity.pdf>



\$7-10

return on investment for every dollar spent on quality early learning and development.¹

3 billion

annual cost to U.S. businesses when employees miss work due to child care problems.³

Message from the Co-Chairs

Dear Governor Walker:

On behalf of the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), we are pleased to recommend

three smart investments to build Wisconsin's future. The investments outlined in this report are the culmination of a multi-year, coordinated effort that engaged council members and stakeholders in reviewing community need, research on best practices, and high-impact systems that support families and their young children.

Research on investing in early childhood is clear. The return on investment is between 7 and 10%. Every dollar invested generates returns that will stabilize our current workforce and the workforce that is being developed in our state's children. Studies have shown that these investments also result in narrowing the K-12 achievement gap, decreasing involvement in the juvenile justice system, and increasing earnings later in life.

The ECAC is committed to promoting evidence based, high impact, smart investments, that can improve outcomes for Wisconsin children now and into the future. Working with partners throughout the early childhood system, we will better meet the needs of our children today and ensure a bright future for their tomorrows. Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Eloise Anderson, Secretary, Department of Children and Families

Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



SMART INVESTMENT 1:

YoungStar

Double the number of children in high quality child care programs rated 4 or 5 Star under YoungStar.

YoungStar is Wisconsin's evidenced based child care quality rating and improvement system designed to help young children thrive. High quality culturally responsive programs have well-trained teachers, as well as supportive, safe, and nurturing environments that foster lifelong learning and success.

Evidence Based: YoungStar is based on decades of rigorous studies that defined the best combination of quality indicators and positive child outcomes. A University of Wisconsin study published in 2015 found that YoungStar is a valid measure of quality.

High-Impact:

Decades of research demonstrates consistent short and long-term benefits from high-quality child care and early education:

- Better academic benefits: more likely to graduate from high school, reduced special education placements, and increase in college enrollment.
- YoungStar helps families identify high quality child care in their area.

Smart Investment:

Responding to YoungStar's effectiveness, George Lightbourn, Former President of Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, said: "...moving half of the children attending two-star centers [programs] to five-star centers would have a significant impact. Moving those children would create about \$20 million in new costs, however doing so would generate a \$60 million a year return in future benefits."

1. Committee for Economic Development

"Investing in quality child care today so that children start school ready to learn pre-empts a lifetime of remediation at a far higher cost."¹



SMART INVESTMENT 2:

Home Visiting

Double the number of families served in evidenced-based Family Foundations Home Visiting Programs.

Families are supported through high-quality culturally responsive, evidence-based home visiting programs. Programming is voluntary and helps parents develop good parenting skills to promote their children's healthy development, foster educational achievement and school readiness, and keep children safe.

Evidenced-Based: Wisconsin's Family Foundation Home Visiting Program supports four nationally recognized, evidence-based models that help ensure that vulnerable parents create solid foundations that foster children's healthy growth and development, including the architecture of their brain.

High Impact: Rigorous studies of high quality home visiting programs that support families with challenges have shown promising outcomes, including:

- Reductions in the number of low-birth weight babies
- Reductions in child abuse and neglect rates by 50 percent
- Improvements in school achievement
- Increased graduation rates

Smart investment: Research has shown that high quality programs targeted to highest risk families have a return of up to \$5.70 for every dollar invested in home visiting, due to reduced costs of child welfare, special education, grade retention, and juvenile justice.

The Nurse Family Partnership home visiting program reduced child abuse and neglect by 50 percent



SMART INVESTMENT 3:

CETE

Expand the CETE, a public-private partnership network that supports local communities in their efforts to leverage resources to support early childhood.

One of the foundations of a strong early childhood systems is a state and local commitment to promoting quality. Wisconsin has created a network that provides communities with tools and support to support investing in early childhood programs based on their unique needs.

Evidence Based: Arizona and Iowa implemented a similar model and found that allowing each community to customize resources to meet their needs established more engagement and buy-in from investors and communities are able to leverage local partnerships and resources.

High Impact: Wisconsin has a number of existing public-private partnerships that demonstrate high impact on the community level:

- The Community Early Learning Center of the Fox Valley serves families on-site and in the broader community through collaborative programming. The capital campaign leveraged \$235,000 in public dollars and \$1,616,847 in private dollars.
- The Community Partnership for Children of Brown County, established in 2005, is a prevention-focused early childhood initiative with the vision that all Brown County children will be safe, healthy and ready for kindergarten. In 2014, the initiative raised \$1.9 million dollars in public and private dollars in addition to in-kind supports.

Smart Investment: “Children who are healthy and ready to learn when they enter kindergarten have an extraordinarily better chance for school and life success, the marriage of public leadership and private sector resources is a win-win: public education benefits by having children prepared to learn on day one and the private sector is rewarded later by a better educated and more skilled workforce.”¹



CETE is a public-private partnership network of local early childhood coalitions joined together to increase support, resources, and quality of early childhood care and education. The CETE network consists of a state hub which provides tools and support to the local coalitions in order to build capacity to leverage community resources.

1. National Governor's Association, Partnering with the Private and Philanthropic Sectors
A Governor's Guide to Investing in Early Childhood.

Three Smart Investments to Build Wisconsin's Future

- Double the number of children in high quality child care programs rated 4 or 5 Star under **YoungStar**.
- Double the number of families with young children served in Family Foundations **Home Visiting** Programs.
- Expand the **CETE** public-private partnership network that supports local communities in their efforts to leverage resources to support early childhood.

For more information on the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council and the detailed budget papers that support these recommendations go to this site:
<http://dcf.wi.gov/ecac/default.htm>

