



**HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
PROVIDES CLEAR LONG-TERM ECONOMIC BENEFITS**
“What Makes the Difference?” – Question of *quality* early childhood examined
in CED paper focused on economic boost from early education

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 14, 2006 – High-quality early childhood education programs provide measurable economic benefits, on-going research by the Committee for Economic Development (CED), a business-led public policy group, has found.

CED's latest paper, *The Benefits of High-Quality Early Childhood Education Programs: What Makes the Difference?*, by Ellen Galinsky, President of the Families and Work Institute, a New York City based research organization, examines the factors associated with high-quality early education programs. Ms. Galinsky examined three well-known, high-quality early education programs – the High/Scope Perry Preschool project, the Carolina Abecedarian Project and Chicago's Child-Parent Centers (CPC) – and for one of the first times, has examined what those programs did to have such lasting impact decades later, relying, in part, on interviews with the principal investigators of those programs.

“The Galinsky paper reinforces that *high-quality* programs are a prerequisite if we expect early childhood education programs to generate future economic returns,” said Charles E.M. Kolb, President of CED. “Determining key characteristics of quality Pre-Kindergarten education is an important piece of the argument for investments in early education programs in this country, and this research does just that. Other studies show public benefits of around seven dollars and more for every dollar invested in early childhood education and the Galinsky research shows what common factors can be found in these quality programs.”

Findings of *The Benefits of High-Quality Early Childhood Education Programs: What Makes the Difference?* include: **All three programs studied had common factors that contributed to remarkable and enduring effects and return on investment.** Some of those basic factors are known:

- They began early (one began in infancy; the other two at age 3).
- They had well-educated, well-trained and well-compensated teachers – with resulting low-turnover.
- They maintained small class sizes and high teacher-child ratios.
- They had intensive contact hours with the children.
- Two of the programs extended into the early elementary years.
- Parents were strongly involved in the programs.

Where this paper makes its greatest contribution is that it goes beyond the basics to explain the programs' long-term success:

- The programs had clear goals that were responsive to the children and families they served, and built support for these goals.
- They focused on the whole child – the child's intellectual, social and emotional learning, physical growth and well-being –not just on the child's intellectual development.
- The relationship between the teacher and the child was seen as central to the child's learning.

- The children in these programs were viewed as active and experiential learners.
- There was a mixture between responsive teaching that extended and elaborated on what the children were already learning and direct teaching in all three programs. The direct teaching was also designed to be engaging and to extend children's learning.
- There was a focus on the teachers' ongoing learning.

This paper follows the January 10, 2006 New York City conference, *Building the Economic Case for Investments in Preschool*, a comprehensive forum attended by over 200 business leaders and education experts to discuss progress in local, state and national efforts to establish universal, quality pre-kindergarten for all American children.

The Benefits of High-Quality Early Childhood Education Programs: What makes the Difference?, as well as materials on CED's early childhood education project, including the groundbreaking 2002 report, *Preschool for All: Investing in a Productive and Just Society*, can be found at www.ced.org.

###

CED is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of more than 200 business leaders and university presidents. Since 1942, its research and policy programs have addressed many of the nation's most pressing economic and social issues, including education reform, workforce competitiveness, campaign finance, health care, and global trade and finance. CED promotes policies to produce increased productivity and living standards, greater and more equal opportunity for every citizen, and an improved quality of life for all.