

# PUZZLING IT OUT

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT PRE-K IMPACTS AND WHY BUSINESS SHOULD CARE



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# Puzzling It Out: The Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Pre-Kindergarten Effects





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# Why Important? 2Gen Perspective



- Brain Development
- First step of workforce development
- Return on Investment
- Essential job support
- ECE depends on a workforce

# CED's Longstanding Leadership





# Puzzling It Out

Beyond one study at a time

Beyond one outcome at a time

Beyond one year in a child's life

What do children bring to pre-k?

What do they experience in pre-k?

What happens next in elementary  
school?



# Learning is Continuous and Cumulative

*“Children’s early learning trajectories depend on the quality of their learning experiences not only **before and during** their pre-k year, but also **following the pre-k year**. Classroom experiences early in elementary school can serve as **charging stations** for sustaining and amplifying pre-k learning gains. One good bet for powering up later learning is elementary school classrooms that provide individualization and differential in instructional content and strategies.”*



# Pre-K and School Readiness

*“Convincing evidence shows that children attending a diverse array of state and school district pre-K programs **are more ready for school** at the end of their pre-K year than children who do not attend pre-K.*

*Improvements in academic areas such as literacy and numeracy are most common. The smaller number of studies of social-emotional and self-regulatory development generally show more modest improvements in those areas.”*





# Some Children Benefit More

*“Studies of different groups of preschoolers often find greater improvement in learning at the end of the pre-k year for **economically disadvantaged children and dual language learners** than for more advantaged and English-proficient children.”*



# Effectiveness Factors

*“Pre-k programs are not all equally effective. Several effectiveness factors may be at work in the most successful programs. One such factor supporting early learning is a well implemented, **evidence-based curriculum**. **Coaching** for teachers, as well as efforts to promote **orderly but active classrooms**, may also be helpful.”*



# Enduring Impacts? The Next Frontier

*“Convincing evidence on the longer-term impacts of scaled-up pre-K programs on academic outcomes and school progress is **sparse, precluding broad conclusions**. The evidence that does exist often shows that pre-K induced improvements in learning are detectable during elementary school, but studies also reveal null or negative impacts for some programs.”*



# Partnerships for Continued Improvement

*“States have displayed considerable **ingenuity** in designing and implementing their pre-k programs. **Ongoing innovation and evaluation** are needed during and after pre-k to ensure continued improvement in creating and sustaining children’s learning gains. **Research-practice partnerships** are a promising way to achieving this goal. These kinds of efforts are needed to generate more complete and reliable evidence on effectiveness factors in pre-k and elementary school that generate long-run impacts.”*



# Final Thoughts

- *“We have a **national platform** on which to build next stage, increasingly effective, and longer lasting pre-k programs. The hard work of refining and improving these programs so that they can fully support the intellectual and social skills the nation will need in the future has just begun.”*





## Final Thoughts

- *“Nonetheless, the scientific rationale, the uniformly positive evidence of impact on kindergarten readiness, and the nascent body of ongoing inquiry about long-term impacts lead us to conclude that continued implementation of scaled-up pre-k programs is in order as long as the implementation is accompanied by rigorous evaluation of impact.”*

# Thank you!



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