

CAPITOL FACTS & FIGURES

● ● ● EDUCATION

Investment in High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs Pays Off

The effects of high-quality prekindergarten programs are well documented.

- High-quality pre-K has been shown to produce substantial gains in school readiness, achievement and educational attainment, higher productivity in the labor force, and decreases in social problems like crime and delinquency.¹
- In 2012, more than 1.3 million 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in 52 state-run pre-K programs in 40 states.¹
- The 2005 follow-up of the Perry Preschool Project found that every dollar spent on high-quality pre-kindergarten programs returned \$12.90 through age 40, which includes taxes on additional earnings and savings in education, welfare and crime. The Perry Preschool Project was originally studied in the 1960s, by HighScope Educational Research Foundation, an independent nonprofit research, development, training, and public outreach organization.²
- The Minneapolis Federal Reserve backs up the quality returns to pre-K education, estimating the real return of the Perry School Project to society to be more than 12 percent, with less disruptive students and fewer crimes committed.³
- The University of Minnesota conducted the Chicago Longitudinal Study, beginning in 1986, to investigate the effects of government-funded kindergarten programs for 1,539 children in the Chicago Public Schools. A 2002 report on the success of the Child-Parent Center Program noted a \$7.14-to-1 benefit-cost ratio,⁴ with a 2011 follow-up showing about 11-to-1 return on the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, a program similar to current pre-K program designs.⁵

The current funding and availability of early education varies widely.

- Only 10 states—Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming—did not offer pre-K education in 2012.⁶
- The average state pre-K funding per child decreased by \$442, from \$4,283 in 2011 to \$3,841 in 2012.⁶
- The 2011-12 school year was the worst in a decade for progress in access to high-quality pre-K for America's children. State funding for pre-K for that timeframe fell by more than half a billion dollars, the largest one-year drop ever.⁶



- State funding per child for pre-K declined in 27 of 40 states with programs during the 2011-12 school year. In 13 states, per-child spending fell by 10 percent or more from the previous year. Only 12 states increased funding per child in 2011-12.⁶
- Florida leads the nation in the number of 4-year-olds served, with 79.4 percent enrolled in pre-K. Rhode Island is at the bottom of the list, serving less than 1 percent of its 4-year-olds.⁶

The National Institute for Early Education Research has created a checklist that rates the quality of state pre-K programs. Elements of high-quality early education include:

- Well-educated teachers, preferably with a bachelor's degree and specialized training in early childhood education;
- Low child-teacher ratios in classes, with no more than 20 children;
- A research-based curriculum aligned to K-12 standards;
- Engaged families that are involved in the program; and
- A focus on the whole child and family. Pre-K programs should include children's health needs, social services, information about nutrition, and access to breakfast and lunch.

Pre-K Programs: Enrollment and Funding

	Percent of State Children Enrolled in State Pre-k (2011-12) ^(a)		State Pre-K Funding in Millions ^(b)	
	3-year-olds	4-year-olds	FY 2011-12	FY 2012-13
Alabama	6.3	0.0	17.8	19.1
Alaska	2.0	0.0	9.6	12.1
Arizona*	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Arkansas	37.4	11.2	103.5	103.5
California	18.1	9.3	376.6	481
Colorado	21.0	6.2	67.1	67.1
Connecticut	12.9	7.5	81.5	82.1
Delaware	7.4	0.0	5.7	5.7
Florida	79.4	0.0	384.6	413.1
Georgia	58.7	0.0	301.2	298.6
Hawaii	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Idaho	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Illinois	27.7	20.0	325.1	300.2
Indiana	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Iowa	52.5	2.6	58.3	67.6
Kansas	20.9	0.0	33.4	41.3
Kentucky	30.4	6.4	71.8	71.8
Louisiana	31.6	0.0	106.6	108.3
Maine	31.6	0.0	14.4	14.5
Maryland	34.5	3.9	113.9	119
Massachusetts	14.3	3.3	33	33.5
Michigan	19.4	0.0	104.3	109.3
Minnesota	1.4	1.0	30.2	30.2
Mississippi	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Missouri	3.9	1.3	11.8	8.3
Montana	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Nebraska	22.2	13.4	15.5	16.2
Nevada	2.7	0.6	3.3	3.3
New Hampshire	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
New Jersey	28.2	18.6	613.3	632.8
New Mexico	15.5	0.0	14.5	19.2
New York	44.2	0.1	384.3	385
North Carolina	19.2	0.0	130.3	148.1
North Dakota	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Ohio	2.4	1.1	23.2	23.3
Oklahoma	74.1	0.0	167.2	166.2
Oregon	9.7	5.0	56.4	52.5
Pennsylvania	14.0	5.3	120.1	120.1
Rhode Island	0.9	0.0	0.8	2.5
South Carolina	42.6	4.1	35.6	34.6
South Dakota	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Tennessee	21.6	0.7	86.5	87.7
Texas	51.4	5.5	724.5	702.3
Utah	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	
Vermont	65.2	16.1	23	23.5
Virginia	16.0	0.0	65.1	68.2
Washington	8.2	1.1	57.2	57.2
West Virginia	60.9	8.9	82	81.8
Wisconsin	61.0	1.0	147.7	168.7
Wyoming	NO PROGRAM		NO PROGRAM	



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- ⁶Barnett, W. Steven, Megan E. Carolan, Jen Fitzgerald and James H. Squires. "The State of Preschool 2012." National Institute for Early Education Research (2012). Accessed at <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf> on September 13, 2013.

Table Source:

- (a) The National Institute for Early Education Research. "The State of Preschool 2012" Accessed at <http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/yearbook2012.pdf>
- (b) Education Commission of the States. "State Pre-k Funding: 2012-2013 School Year" Accessed at <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/06/90/10690.pdf>

*= Arizona's First Things First program is included in NIEER's report, but not ECS's state funded pre-k programs.