



Cut Now, Pay Later

The true costs of the Administration's proposed cuts to early childhood education and after-school programs

A Report by:



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INTRODUCTION

Since 2009 there has been a steady divestment in New York City's early childhood education system and after-school programs. The latest round of cuts—slated to eliminate services for 47,000 children—holds dire consequences for future generations and future Administrations. Diminished school performance, poorer health, increased crime and spiraling costs will be the net result of these shortsighted—and preventable—cuts.

Over the past three years, the number of low income working parents served by the city's early childhood education system shrunk by 18.3 percent (9,497). In that same period the number of children served by Out-of-School Time (New York City's largest after-school initiative) has decreased by 39.1 percent (33,513).¹



This year is unfortunately no different, as these essential programs are threatened by short-sighted funding challenges which would eliminate 15,375 subsidized childcare slots and 32,333 after-school slots.² The Mayor's 2013 executive budget cuts and the budgetary shift to the City's new early childhood education system (EarlyLearn NYC) will affect thousands of working families who may lose much-needed subsidized childcare and education resources.

New York City's short-term focus will place over 47,000 children at risk of losing child care and after-school services³ at a cost of approximately \$175 million.⁴

The City cannot afford to divest in these essential programs, which are proven to be cost efficient and effective. This brief draws from research and illustrates that experts across diverse fields agree: investing in early childhood education and after-school programs is one of the most important investments our City can make. Research shows:

- Every \$1 invested into quality early education and care saves taxpayers up to \$13 in future costs – such as remedial education, public safety, and health care – and generates \$1.86 in additional spending statewide, creating local jobs and revenues for local businesses.⁵
- A New York City study found that 60 percent of parents with children participating in after-school programs reported missing less work hours and 54 percent stated that the programs allowed them to put in more hours on the job.⁶

¹ Impact Brief: New York City's Diminishing Investment in NYC Children and Working Families (March 2012), Retrieved From: <http://www.campaignforchildreennyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Impact-Brief-NYC-Diminishing-Investment-in-Children-and-Working-Families.pdf>

² Unpublished draft data from Campaign for Children: A partnership of The Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care and the NYC Youth Alliance

³ Ibid.

⁴ Approximately \$65 million cut from contracted child care slots. This cost calculated using EarlyLearn NYC Rates: \$8,000-\$22,000 a year per child depending on age group. Administration for Children's Services (2011), EarlyLearn NYC: New York City's Early Care and Education Services Request for Proposals. Retrieved From: https://a068-aProdapp15.nyc.gov/pls/APRODDB-APPPROD2-RFPONLINE_RFPUPLOAD/rfp_manager.download?p_file=F2662/EarlyLearn%20RFP.pdf

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Afterschool Alliance (2003), Afterschool Alert Issue Brief No. 16. "After School Programs Help Working Families," Retrieved From: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_work_family_16.pdf

- Participating in early childhood education leads to improvements in nine out of the ten leading health indicators for young children.⁷
- Studies show that after-school programs keep children off the streets between the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., the window most closely associated with juvenile crime and victimization.⁸

Public Advocate Bill de Blasio believes the Mayor must maintain and increase funding for early childhood education and after school programs. These cuts will negatively impact low income working parents who find that these services critical to their family's survival.

BACKGROUND ON WHAT'S AT STAKE

This year's budgetary challenge also comes as New York City shifts to its new EarlyLearn NYC program. This shift in policy attempts to enhance quality, but consequently reduces capacity by cutting approximately 6,500 slots from current capacity (49,971) at a cost of approximately \$65 million.⁹

New York City simply cannot afford to continue reducing the capacity of our early education. The declining number of working parents being served by the city's early childhood education system is partially the result of the city's shrinking budgetary commitment to early childcare funding over the past five years. However this year, the added overhaul has the potential to further drastically reduce the number of available resources.

The City's after-school system may face a similar fate with over 32,000 slots at risk.¹⁰ Initiatives such as Out-of-School Time, Beacon and Cornerstone programs primarily provide children and youth with quality activities designed to encourage learning and development outside of the typical school day.¹¹

Impact on New York City Families

Early Childhood Education

- New York City now has nearly 518,000 children under five, about 6% of the population.*
- Overall, more than 207,000 (about 40%) children under 6 were enrolled in regulated care that was partially or fully supported by public funds.*
- More than two-thirds of the children in subsidized care—69% — are paid for with vouchers.*

After-School Programs

- Over 1 million children are enrolled in the New York City public school system. **
- Out of school time currently serves 52,000 children and youth - 33,000 less than the program served in 2009.**
- New York City operates 80 Beacon programs, serving over 64,000 children and adults. **

* *Center for Children's Initiatives. "CCI Primer 2011: Key Facts About Early Care and Education in New York City."* http://www.centerforchildrensinitiatives.org/ccinyc/Website_PDF_s/CCI-Primer-2011-FINAL.pdf (2011)

** *Impact Brief: New York City's Diminishing Investment in NYC Children and Working Families (March 2012), Retrieved From: <http://bit.ly/KUtxce>*

⁷ Docs for Tots (2008), "Investing in Early Care and Education is a Powerful Public Health Initiative for New York's Children." Retrieved From: <http://www.docsfortots.org/documents/DFT-summary-NY-FINAL2.pdf>. Health indicators as defined by Healthy People 2010: physical activity, substance abuse injury and violence, overweight and obesity, responsible sexual behavior, immunization, tobacco use, mental health, and access to health care.

⁸ Newman, S. A., Fox, J. A., Flynn, E. A., & Christeson, W. (2000). "America's Afterschool Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime, or Youth Enrichment and Achievement." Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

⁹Cost calculated using EarlyLearn NYC Rates: \$8,000-\$22,000 a year per child depending on age group. Administration for Children's Services (2011), EarlyLearn NYC: New York City's Early Care and Education Services Request for Proposals. Retrieved From: https://a068-aprodapp15.nyc.gov/pls/APRODDDB-APPPROD2-RFPONLINE RFPUPLOAD/rfp_manager.download?p_file=F2662/EarlyLearn%20RFP.pdf

¹⁰ Unpublished draft data from Campaign for Children: A partnership of The Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care and the NYC Youth Alliance

Developmental Risks

15% of children (165,000) ages 2 to 12 had a hearing, vision or speech problem, and 78,000 children (8%) ages 3 to 12 had a learning disability. ***

New York City children in poorer households (i.e. with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level) were more likely than children in households with higher incomes to have a hearing, vision or speech problem (17% vs. 11%) or a learning disability (9% vs. 5%). ***

A substantial proportion of children with a hearing or a vision problem had parents who reported rarely or never having someone to turn to for day-to-day help with raising children (43% and 22%, respectively). In 2009, 16,783 New York City children received CPSE (Committee on Preschool Special Education) services. ***

*** *New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Epi Data Brief: Developmental Conditions and Delays in New York City Children (July 2011)*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/epi/databrief8.pdf>

** *Impact Brief: New York City's Diminishing Investment in NYC Children and Working Families (March 2012)*, Retrieved From: <http://www.campaignforchildreennyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Impact-Brief-NYC-Diminishing-Investment-in-Children-and-Working-Families.pdf>

Benefits of Early Education and Afterschool Programs

A child's education begins at birth. There is a wide body of evidence from medical and social science fields indicating that early education and after-school programs have wide-ranging, cost-cutting, positive impacts on children and society. Such supportive structures can ensure healthy child development and are crucial throughout early life and into young adulthood. Unfortunately, the Mayor's budget cuts will take away valuable resources for children across the city and negatively impact working families.

Education

The science of early brain development alone can guide policy makers.¹² The underlying structure of a child's brain is profoundly shaped by experiences before and soon after birth, so much of the foundation is laid before the child enters school at age six.¹³ Early experience impacts everything from sensory function to complex problem solving ability, well into adulthood.¹⁴

Early education studies illustrate that children benefitting from a quality early education have a greater chance of thriving in their academic environment. More specifically, children participating in these programs demonstrate better math and language skills, and acquire better social skills and interpersonal relationships than children without access to quality early education. This relationship is especially strong among at-risk children.¹⁵

After-school programs are linked to some very similar advantages. Studies show that students who consistently participate in such programs make positive gains in their academic environment, including improved standardized test scores and

¹¹ Little, Priscilla M.D., Christopher Wimer & Heather B. Weiss (2007). After School Programs in the 21st Century: Their Potential and What It Takes to Achieve It. Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved From:

¹² National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004). Children's Emotional Development Is Built into the Architecture of Their Brains: Working Paper No. 2. Retrieved From www.developingchild.harvard.edu

¹³ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2007). The Timing and Quality of Early Experiences Combine to Shape Brain Architecture: Working Paper No. 5. Retrieved From www.developingchild.harvard.edu

¹⁴ *Promoting the Mental Health and Healthy Development of New York's Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers* (June 2011). White Paper by the New York City Early Childhood Mental Health Strategic Work Group, an advisory group to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Retrieved From:

http://www.nyccd.org/pdfs/pdf_promotingHealth_june2011.pdf

¹⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Early Childhood. (2005) "Quality Early Education and Child Care from Birth to Kindergarten." *Pediatrics*. 115(1): 187-191. Retrieved From: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/115/1/187.full.html>

school attendance as well as reduced high school dropout rates.¹⁶ These advancements are also accompanied by social benefits. Students who take part in after-school programs experience improved communications skills with adults and fellow students and a decline in behavioral problems.¹⁷

Economic

Early education and after school programs may receive better returns than any other government program used as an initiative to spur economic development.¹⁸ These programs are as essential for a productive modern society as technology or infrastructure: investing in them spurs short and long term economic growth on multiple levels. It helps children succeed in school and later in life as they become better prepared for the job market, earn higher wages and contribute more to tax revenue.¹⁹

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Every \$1 invested into quality early education and care saves taxpayers up to \$13 in future costs – such as remedial education, public safety, and health care – and generates \$1.86 in additional spending statewide, creating local jobs and revenues for local businesses.¹⁶ The Perry Preschool Project, a model program study into early education, found a 16 percent return on investment and 80 percent of that amount going to the public. The study yielded eight dollars for every one dollar invested.²⁰

By the same token, every \$1 invested in after-school programs returns up to \$12 in reductions in social and public services.²¹ These programs can help reduce high school dropout rates, increase student engagement, and improve student achievement.

Early education and after-school programs also provide a tremendous amount of help to working families. A New York City study found that 60 percent of parents with children participating in after-school programs missed fewer work hours and 54 percent stated that the programs allowed them to put in more hours on the job.²²

In addition, studies show that employees stressed about their children's arrangements are less productive at their job,²³ so the support working parents receive through these programs is a benefit to employers as well.

In short, early education and after-school programs both represent undeniably sound investments in human capital.

¹⁶ Harvard Graduate School of Education (2009). "Secrets of Successful After School Programs: What Research Reveals." Retrieved From: <http://www.uknow.gse.harvard.edu/learning/LD314-608.html>

¹⁷ Priscilla M.D. Little, Christopher Wimer, & Heather B. Weiss (November 2007) "After School Programs in the 21st Century: Their Potential and What It Takes to Achieve It" http://njafter3.com/edu/docs/Reports_Harvard-Fam-Research-Proj-issue-10-SAN08.pdf

¹⁸ Arthur J. Rolnick and Rob Grunewald, (Fall 2007) "The Economics of Early Childhood Development," Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Retrieved from: http://www.frbsf.org/publications/community/investments/0709/economics_early_childhood.pdf

¹⁹ Massachusetts Institute of Technology Workplace Center (2005). "Early Childhood Education for All: A Wise Investment" Retrieved From: <http://web.mit.edu/workplacecenter/docs/Full%20Report.pdf>

²⁰ The Heckman Equation (2008) , "The Case for Investigating in Disadvantaged Young Children" Retrieved From: http://mfi.uchicago.edu/humcap/case_investing_whitehouse_2011.12.14.pdf

²¹ Afterschool Alliance (2005). Afterschool Alert Issue Brief No. 22. "After School Programs: A Wise Public Investment," Retrieved From: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_costs_22.pdf

²² Afterschool Alliance (2003), Afterschool Alert Issue Brief No. 16. "After School Programs Help Working Families," Retrieved From: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_work_family_16.pdf

²³ Catalyst (2006). Afterschool Worries: Tough on Parents, Bad for Business. Retrieved From: <http://www.catalyst.org/files/full/PCAST%20report.pdf>

Mental & Physical Health

Children who start school behind often stay behind. Inadequate early childhood care increases the risk for vision and health problems, learning disabilities, developmental delays, and behavioral, social and emotional struggles.²⁴ Quality early care leads to improvements in nine out of the ten leading health indicators for young children. Participating children are more likely to develop better behavioral self-regulation, including lower obesity and teen pregnancy rates, while also discouraging health-threatening behavior later in life such as substance abuse or smoking, as well as depression and anxiety disorders.²⁵ This is also true of participants in after-school programs, where children develop important skills to improve their confidence, leadership ability and sense of positive community engagement.²⁶

Medical research demonstrates the adverse and long-lasting impact of toxic stress (often linked to poverty) on brain development, as well as the positive role of effective early childhood investments. In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics has recently called for vocal advocacy in the public policy sphere relating to early childhood investment.²⁷

Crime Prevention

Early education is also a proven crime-prevention strategy. Children who receive early care and education go on to have lower juvenile crime rates, fewer felony arrests and lower rates of incarceration. This leads to both lower criminal justice and prison costs, which over time will enable police and corrections departments to save money.²⁸

For instance, Chicago's Child-Parent Center program served 100,000 Chicago children from 1986 to 2001, an investment that prevented an estimated 13,000 violent juvenile crimes. For every \$1 invested, taxpayers, victims, and participants saved over \$7, not to mention pain and suffering associated with the crimes.²⁹

According to High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, early education can have lifelong effects in terms of reducing the likelihood of criminal activity later in life. Researchers spent four decades monitoring 123 African American children born into poverty. Half of the children participated in Michigan's Perry Preschool Program while the other half did not. They found that by age 27, children who did not participate in the program were at least five times more likely to be repeat criminal offenders. By the age of 40, the likelihood that they will be arrested for violent crimes is 50 percent, and they are also 50 percent more likely to be repeat offenders.³⁰

In addition, studies demonstrate that the hours from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. present several potential hazards to a young person's development. These after-school hours are associated with the peak time for juvenile crime and juvenile

²⁴ Jack P. Shonkoff, Linda Richter, Jacques van der Gaag and Zulfiqar A. Bhutta.. "An Integrated Scientific Framework for Child Survival and Early Childhood Development." *Pediatrics*. 2012; Retrieved From: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/01/02/peds.2011-366>

²⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Early Childhood. (2005) "Quality Early Education and Child Care from Birth to Kindergarten." *Pediatrics*. 115(1): 187-191. Retrieved From: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/115/1/187.full.html>

²⁶ NYSAN Policy Brief. From Birth through Young Adulthood: A Blueprint for Collaboration between the Early Care and Education and Afterschool Systems in New York State (2009). Retrieved From: <http://www.nysan.org/content/document/detail/2797/>

²⁷ Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption, and Dependent Care, and Section on Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Andrew S. Garner, Jack P. Shonkoff, Benjamin S. Siegel, Mary I. Dobbins, Marian F. Earls, Andrew S. Garner, Laura McGuinn, John Pascoe and David L. Wood (2012). "Early Childhood Adversity, Toxic Stress, and the role of the Pediatrician: Translating Developmental Science Into Lifelong Health." *Pediatrics*. 129; e224. Retrieved From: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/1/e224.full.pdf>

²⁸ Economic Opportunity Institute (2002). "The Link Between Early Childhood Education and Crime and Violence Reduction". Retrieved From: http://www.eoionline.org/early_learning/fact_sheets/ELCLinkCrimeReduction-Jul02.pdf

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Fight Crime: Invest in Kids (2011), Retrieved From: <http://www.fightcrime.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/default/files/reports/NY%20ECE%20quality%20report.pdf>

victimization. At a minimum, participation in an after-school program puts youth under supervision and can potentially prevent some risky behaviors.³¹

Such findings indicate that investments in early education and after school programs can go a long way in keeping communities safe and decreasing the potential for negative experiences that place individuals on a long and dangerous path from a very early age.

IMPROVING QUALITY AND ACCESS

Through strong partnerships, both public and private, other cities and states around the country are finding different ways to fund and improve the quality of their services to children and working families.

San Jose, California's Early Learning Master Plan has been commended for focusing on improving quality as well as access. In terms of funding, the city focuses its efforts on tapping government and philanthropic investment to continue its operations as well as explore creative approaches to providing services. This is made possible through its network of partners. In particular, the San Jose 2020 (SJ2020) initiative exhibits a spirit of collaboration through partnerships with Santa Clara County Office of Education, school districts, businesses, nonprofit organizations, parents, philanthropies, and the higher education community. San Jose's initiatives are already paying off, with early results showing that the achievement gap between 2007 and 2011 for third graders in both English and mathematics has decreased (6 percent and 9 percent, respectively).³²



North Carolina is another state with a focus on access and quality. The state's Smart Start early childhood initiative has been nationally recognized with the state recently receiving a grant for \$69.9 million from the U.S. Department of Education in the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge.³³

Smart Start is a public-private initiative that funds early education in all of its 100 counties by distributing funds through 82 local nonprofit organizations. The North Carolina Partnership for Children, a state-wide nonprofit organization, then handles oversight supports the nonprofit partners through technical assistance. Funding is used to improve child care by focusing on three areas: affordability, accessibility, quality, and family support.³⁴

³¹ Newman, S. A., Fox, J. A., Flynn, E. A., & Christeson, W. (2000). "America's Afterschool Choice: The Prime Time for Juvenile Crime, or Youth Enrichment and Achievement." Washington, DC: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

³² National League of Cities: Institute for Youth, Education and Families (2012), "Educational Alignment for Young Children" Retrieved From: <http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/iyef/early-childhood/educational-alignment-for-young-children>

³³New America Foundation (2011), "Surprises in 9 Winners of the Early Learning Challenge." Retrieved From: http://earlyed.newamerica.net/blogposts/2011/surprises_in_9_winners_of_the_early_learning_challenge-61620

³⁴Caldwell County Smart Start: A Partnership for Young Children, "About Smart Start of Caldwell County." Retrieved From: <http://www.caldwellsmartstart.org/about.php>

Such initiatives demonstrate these cities clearly understand that investments in early childhood education are inextricably linked to key issues like economic advancement, equal opportunity, and public safety. It also shows that advancing early childhood education does not require us to leave some children behind.

In terms of after-school systems, New York's program has been commended as a comprehensive and well-rounded example for other states, despite the fact that it only serves a fraction of those in need.³⁵ However if the cuts to after-school programs take effect, thousands of children will lose that quality after-school programming, with a significant impact on young, at-risk children.

CONCLUSION

Few if any other interventions have shown such wide-ranging positive impacts as early education and afterschool programs. Additionally, none are as cost-effective at improving cognitive and behavioral health.³⁶

The comparable gains that students make by participating in early education and after-school programs demonstrate that the two are interconnected. A safe and engaging learning environment beginning with early care and education and continuing with after-school programs can be essential to furthering their development and success later in life.

Improving the quality of New York's early childhood education system would help ensure that children fully benefit from these essential programs, and the EarlyLearn NYC program demonstrates that we are moving in the right direction in terms of insisting on quality. However, the proposed budgetary cuts to early childcare and after-school programs combined with the overhaul of our early childhood education system would mean thousands of children and entire communities will completely miss out on these benefits. Experts across a wide spectrum agree: these cuts are unacceptable, and we cannot afford to lose these critical resources.

³⁵ Afterschool Alliance (2011), "Afterschool Progress Report and Consumer Guide: New York" Retrieved From: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/ProgressReports.cfm?state_abbr=NY&level=1

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁶ Jack P. Shonkoff, Linda Richter, Jacques van der Gaag and Zulfiqar A. Bhutta. (2012) "An Integrated Scientific Framework for Child Survival and Early Childhood Development." *Pediatrics*. Retrieved From: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/01/02/peds.2011-366>