

Investing in Young Children is Wise Choice

National studies and scientific research have revealed that:

85% of a child's brain development is formed by age 3.

The basis of a child's language is developed by age 2.

A child's foundation for learning, social interaction and emotional health is formed between birth and age 5.

For every \$1 invested in quality child care \$7 is saved in future costs, such as, special education, grade retention, school drop out, incarceration, teen pregnancy and welfare.

For every \$1 paid in child care subsidies parents earn between \$2 and \$18.

Every state dollar invested in child care can be matched by \$3 federal dollars.

The young children of today are the workforce of tomorrow and the future leaders of society.

When you consider these facts, investing in young children is well justified and makes sense. It also generates dollars that go back into the economy. Providing children under five with safe, nurturing and appropriate early care and learning benefits the child and ultimately the community.

Yet federal and state government continue to underfund early care and learning.

A study, released in February by VOICES for America's Children and the Child and Family Policy Center, found that for every dollar the government invests in the education of school aged children, it invests only 13.7 cents for the earliest and most critical learning years from birth to age five.

State funding for Childcare Resources' Child Care Financial Assistance program has decreased substantially in the past year because state funding was inadequate to draw down sufficient federal matching dollars. Currently there are over 4,000 children from low income working families on the waiting list for state subsidized child care.

Everyone interested in young children receiving quality early care and learning can communicate their concerns and opinions to their legislators. Congress is now debating funding for the Child Care and Developmental Block Grant (CDBG) and Head Start. Alabama's state budget is also now being debated and funding for early care and learning programs is a topic of discussion.

For more information on state and federal legislation affecting young children go to these web sites:

www.voicesforamericaschildren.org

www.alavoices.org

www.legislature.state.al.us

www.webslingerz.com/jhoffman/congress-email

www.house.gov

www.senate.gov

85% of a child's core brain structure is formed by age three, but less than 4% of public investments in education and development have occurred by that time.