

Good Beginnings Alliance Legislative Policy Brief

“Quality Preschool helps parents work and children learn”

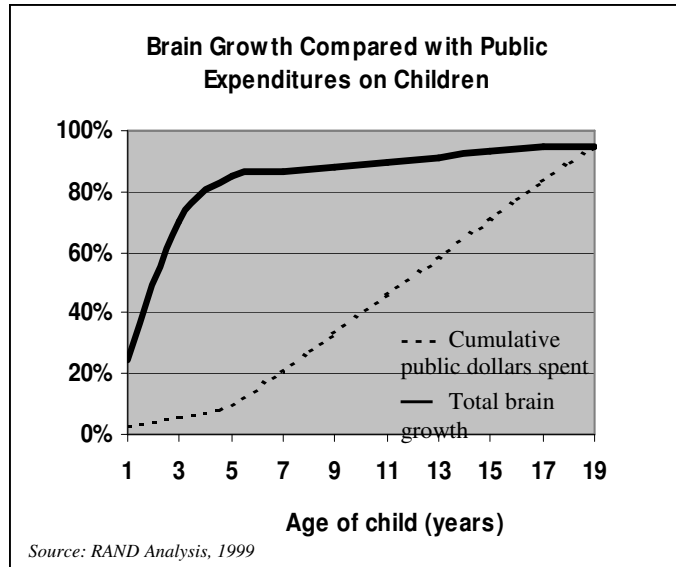
Over a decade of scientific research conclusively demonstrates that the human brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other subsequent period. High quality preschool programs play a critical role in this development.

Vision

Provide every preschool-aged child in Hawaii with access to a high quality preschool program that meets professionally accepted standards and is delivered by a well-trained early educator in a variety of public and private settings.

Our Core Values:

- Incremental phase-in, by greatest need
- Resources must support quality settings, practices and professionals
- New resources must not take away from existing programs in human services
- Ensure accountability through outcomes evaluation



The Estimated Need

Currently, public and private funding sources such as Head Start, Department of Human Services, Department of Education and Kamehameha Schools provide financial assistance enabling some low-income children to attend a variety of early childhood programs. Yet, kindergarten teachers tell us *over half of all children still enter school up to two years behind.*

	Low-income w/ Preschool Subsidy	Total Low-income Population	Percent w/ Preschool Subsidy	Note: DHS releases subsidies which parents choose for informal child care of variable quality. Approximately 2,500 more children receive this assistance.
SY 2002				
4 year olds	4,935	7,260	68%	
3 & 4 year olds	7,980	14,601	54.7%	

Cost Estimates

Research from the National Institute of Early Education Research shows that a high quality preschool program costs approximately \$8700/child. An additional \$300/child is needed for program administration and suitable incentives for centers to implement quality measures, such as hiring teachers with degrees and implementing content standards.

To cover remaining 4s: (\$9000/child) * (1,274 uncovered 4s) = **\$11,466,000**
 To cover remaining 3s/4s: (\$9000/child) * (3,680 uncovered 3s/4s) = **\$33,120,000**

Return on Investment: quality preschool generates a \$7 return on every \$1 spent

Research demonstrates that participation in quality preschool results in higher academic achievement, improved college attendance, reduced welfare usage and lower crime rates.

“The real question is how to use the available funds wisely. The best evidence supports the policy prescription: Invest in the very young”

- Dr. James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences, 2000