



First
2000TM
Early Investment **DAYS**
A LIFETIME OF RESULTS

WHY BIRTH TO EIGHT?

The most rapid period of development in human life happens from birth to age eight.

End of third grade outcomes predict:

- academic achievement
- career success



THE STAKES ARE HIGH

- National Security
- Global Competitiveness
- Economic Well-Being
- Crime Reduction
- Thriving Communities

If you care about these issues, you care about child development.



A CALL TO ACTION

Military leaders, business executives, and law enforcement officers are calling for greater investments to ensure our **national security**, **reduce crime** and to keep us **globally competitive**.

IT'S ESSENTIAL TO NATIONAL SECURITY

Generals and senior military officials say our national security depends on early childhood investments.

www.missionreadiness.org



77% of Americans aged 17 to 24 cannot meet military eligibility requirements.

IN NORTH CAROLINA IT'S 72%

Nearly half of disqualifications are for multiple reasons.

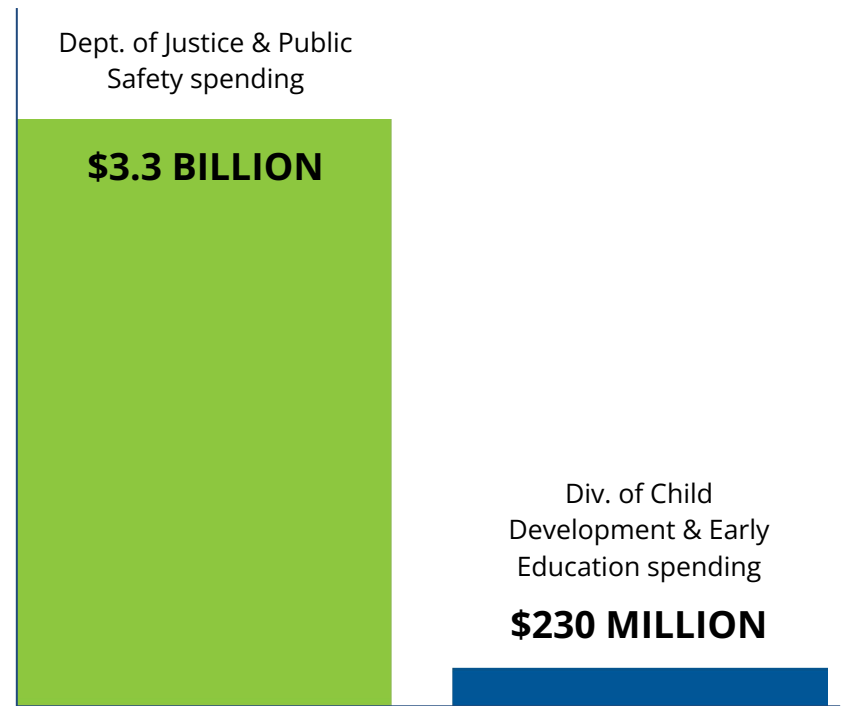
Poor health, lack of a high school diploma or GED and involvement in crime contribute to ineligibility

IT'S ESSENTIAL TO CRIME REDUCTION

Law enforcement officials
say the best strategy to
reduce crime is to invest
in early childhood.
www.fightcrime.org



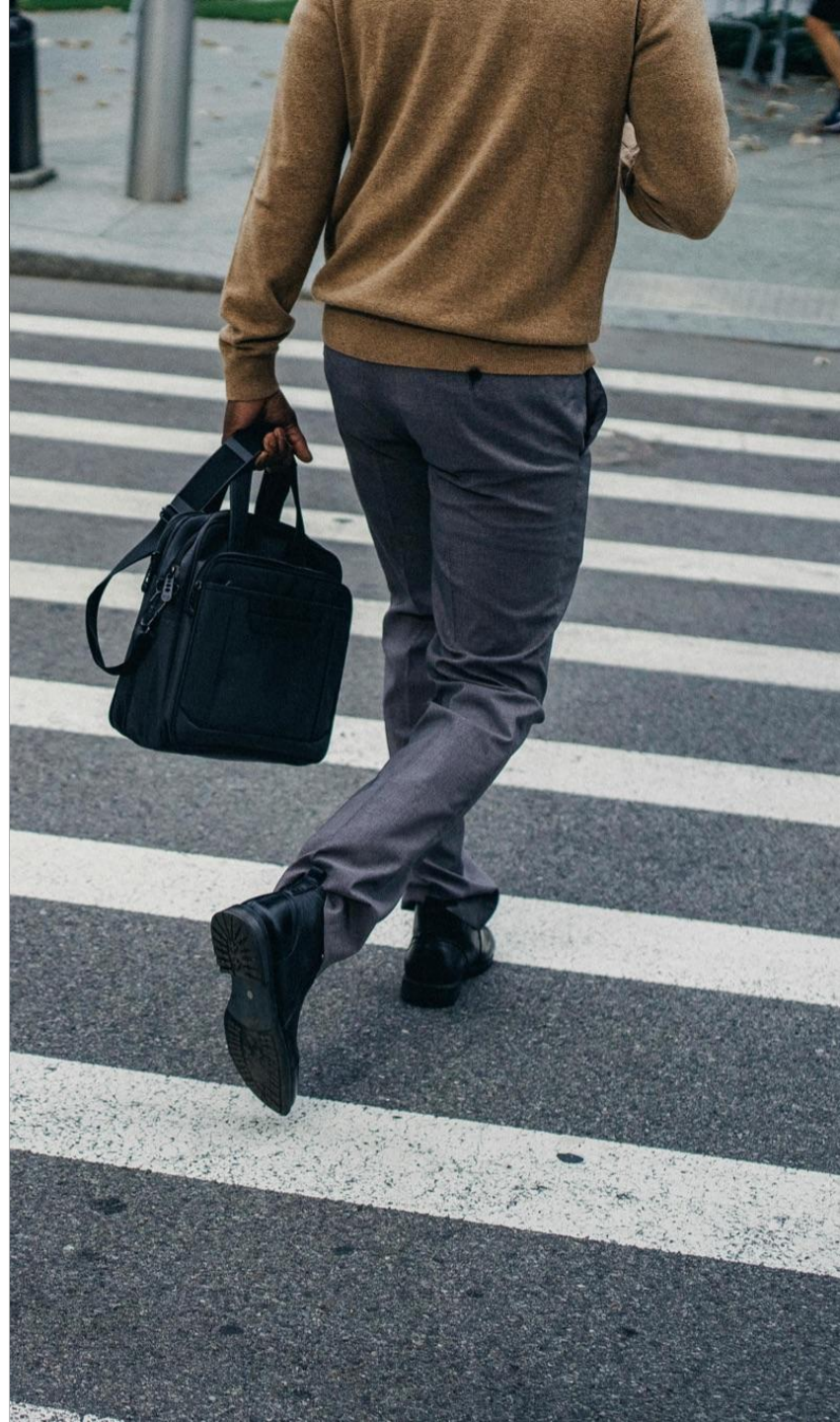
In 2022 North Carolina spent **\$3.3 BILLION** on the Department of Justice & Public Safety and only **\$230 MILLION** on the Division of Child Development and Early Education



At-risk children who didn't receive a high-quality early childhood education were 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18.

IT'S ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC HEALTH

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce says our economic future depends on early childhood investments.



Insufficient affordable, high quality child care is costing NC at least \$2.9 billion annually in lost revenue for parents, employers, and the state.

37% of students with children in the U.S. say child care challenges has caused them to consider dropping out of college.

FAITH LEADERS AGREE

National faith-based organizations such as Shepherding the Next Generation and the Global Network of Religions for Children are advocating for greater investments in early care and learning.



*“My faith calls me to ensure that
each child in every community has
the opportunity to become
the very best person God has created
him or her to be.”*

Reverend Tommy James, First Baptist Church—Burnsville, NC

THIS WORK IS CRITICAL

To understand why these leaders care so much about birth to eight, we need to understand how brains and children develop.



THIS WORK IS DYNAMIC

The foundation for all future learning is built during early childhood.

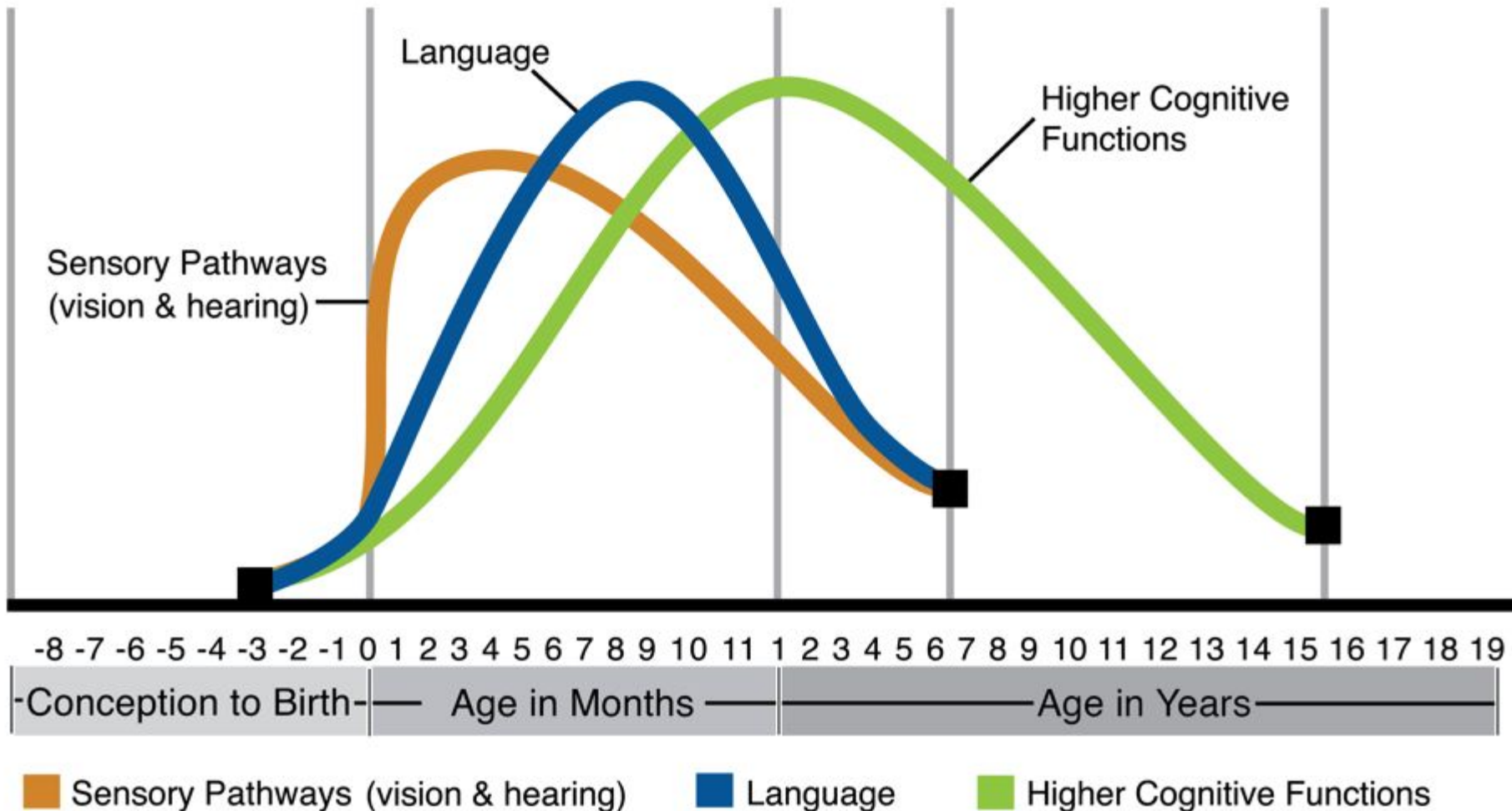
Child development is a **dynamic, interactive** process that is **not predetermined**.



**The brain is one
of the only organs not fully
developed at birth.**

***Brain architecture is forming
during a child's early years.***

EARLY EXPERIENCES FORM BRAIN ARCHITECTURE





THERE ARE ONLY 2000 DAYS TO GET IT RIGHT.


EARLY EXPERIENCES FORM BRAIN ARCHITECTURE

Three Core Concepts in Early Development



Experiences Build Brain Architecture

NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

EARLY EXPERIENCES BUILD BRAIN ARCHITECTURE

- Brains are built, not born.
- There is rapid growth, then the brain prunes.
- Connections that are used a lot are strengthened; those that are not, pruned.
- This process shapes how brains are wired.

IT'S MORE THAN ACADEMICS

As essential as they are, we aren't born with the skills that enable us to control impulses, make plans, and stay focused. We are born with the *potential* to develop these capacities.



**Learning to play
with others**



**Language skills and
improved teamwork**

**Making up
games and rules**



Negotiation skills

**Learning to
follow rules**



Sound ethics

Early exploration



**Creative thinking and
problem solving**



WE KNOW WHAT WORKS!

There are decades of research and numerous studies, including longitudinal randomized trials with more than 40 years of data.

BUILD A STRONG FOUNDATION

- Children's Health and Development,
Beginning at Birth
- Supported and Supportive Families
and Communities
- High-Quality Birth-through-Age-Eight Learning
Environments, with Regular Attendance

GOOD HEALTH

Children that participated in a high quality early learning program that included health screenings and nutrition components had better adult health and less chronic disease, including lower levels of hypertension, metabolic and syndrome obesity in their mid-30s.



STRONG FAMILIES

Voluntary home visiting programs provided by qualified professionals to parents, prenatally and/or with young children reduce health care costs, improve school readiness and success, reduce need for remedial education and increase family self-sufficiency.



HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

NC 3rd graders have higher standardized reading and math scores and lower special education placement rates in counties that received more funding for Smart Start and More at Four (NC PreK) when those children were younger.



HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

- High quality early childhood programs increase high school graduation rates by as much as 44%.
- A 5% increase in male high school graduation rates is estimated to save North Carolina \$153 million per year in incarceration rates.
- Participants in high quality early childhood programs have higher earnings, pay more taxes and are less likely to rely on government assistance.

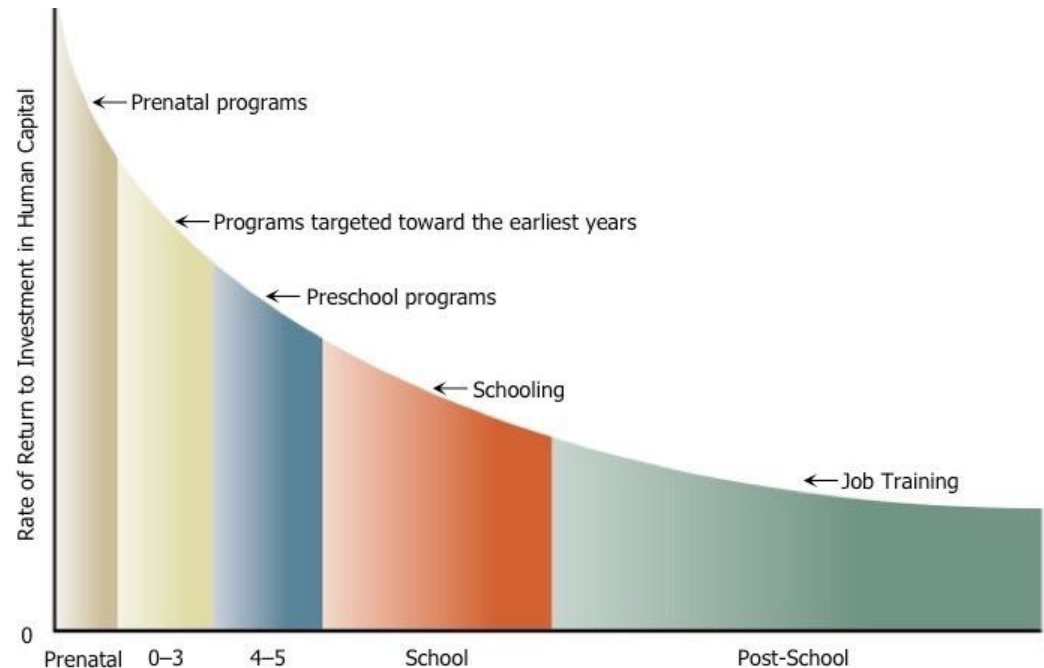
HUMAN CAPITAL CREATES ECONOMIC CAPITAL

"The foundation for school, career and life success is largely determined through the development of cognitive and character skills beginning in children's earliest years."



Nobel Laureate
Professor James Heckman

13% RETURN ON INVESTMENT



- Brains are built, not born.
- Birth to 8 is a critical developmental period.
- Children's earliest experiences shape how their brains are wired creating either a strong or weak foundation for all future learning.
- End of third grade outcomes predict academic and career success.
- We know what works.

ACT NOW. IT'S EASY!

- ✓ Sign the commitment to young children and encourage others to do the same
- ✓ Host a presentation at your workplace, a professional or civic organization or congregation
- ✓ Become a First 2000 Days Champion

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE FIRST 2000 DAYS

NC Early Childhood Foundation
ncecf@buildthefoundation.org
buildthefoundation.org

