

# Economics of Investing in Children

## Every Day in Virginia...

- 7 babies are born to teen girls ages 15-17
- 84 babies are born to single mothers
- 27 teens, grades 9-12, drop out of school
- 18 children are abused or neglected
- 12% of children are living in extreme poverty
- 30% are living in poverty
- 3 juveniles are arrested for violent crimes

## Children Require More Tax Dollars...

- \$ 79,355 is the cost to hold one child in juvenile detention for a year
- 80% of unwed mothers rely on welfare programs
- \$ 95.7 million is the cost for unpromoted students in grades k-3 in 2002-03

## Our Children Face Incredible Challenges...

- Only 1/3 of teen mothers obtain high school diplomas
- 1 in 3 students receive a free or reduced school lunch
- 22 babies are born that weigh less than 5.5. lbs
- 18 children are found to be abused or neglected
- a child dies every other week from abuse or neglect

## 1,738,262 Children Are Under 18 in Virginia...

- 48% of 3 and 4 year olds are not enrolled in a nursery, pre or pre-k program
- 31% of 4<sup>th</sup> graders are scoring below basic reading levels

## Quality Care Provided to Young Children is Needed Now More Than Ever...

- 75% of parents of preschoolers work outside the home making quality care essential
- Almost 1 in 4 of all Virginia's 4 year olds in 2003-04 were considered at risk
- Nearly 12,000 students in grades k-3 were not promoted in 2002-03

### Employable Tax-paying Citizens are Critical to a Vital Economy...

- Children who enter kindergarten ready to learn are more likely to read at grade level by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- Children who read at grade level by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are more likely to graduate from high school
- Children who graduate from high school are more likely to go on to higher education or enter the job market

By age 5, a child's brain will reach 90% of its adult size, yet public investment lags in these critical years. Early childhood development receives the least public investment...

- Infant and Toddler (Birth-2 yrs) - \$332
- Preschoolers (3 – 5 yrs) - \$ 736
- School-age children (6-18) - \$7,654
- College (19-23) - \$4,483

### The Outcomes From Strong Support of Early Childhood Development Benefits Us All...

- Our children have the opportunity to do well in school and reach their dreams
- When more students enter school ready to learn, Standards of Learning scores increase and remediation expenses decrease
- Our community has a better education workforce that attracts business and creates jobs
- Tax payers benefit because students who succeed are less likely to turn to crime or need public assistance

### Our Community Benefits From Early Childhood Development...

- Student performance increases
- Graduation levels increase
- Employment opportunities increase
- Crime rates decrease

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