

Why Business Should Invest in Early Childhood Education

MAKING THE CASE

Moving the Needle on Compensation Project
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center
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Why Early Childhood?

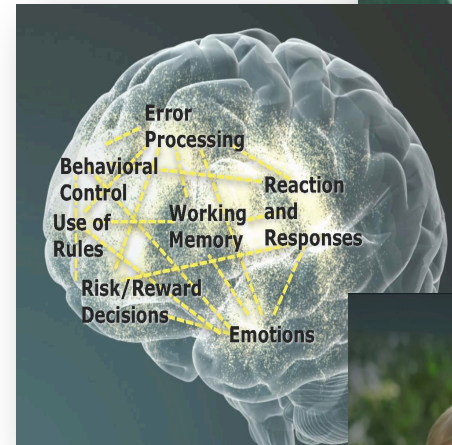
- Strong research base across multiple disciplines
- Sound investment with a proven return
- Moral imperative – we can't ignore what we now know children need and deserve to thrive

3 Key Science Concepts

1 Responsive relationships and positive experiences build strong brain architecture starting at birth.

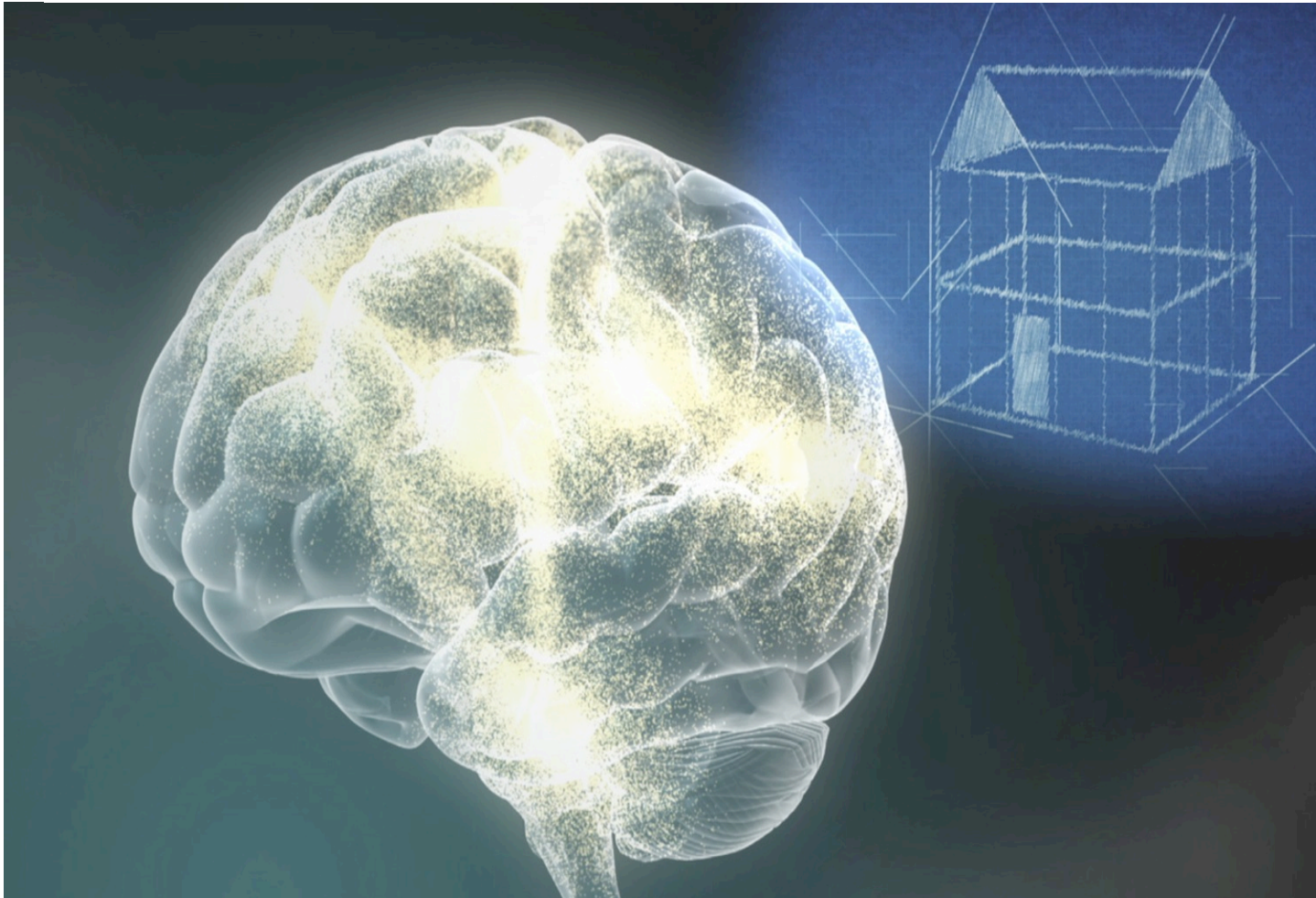
2 The core capabilities we all use to thrive in school, at work, and in the home are built over time through practice and modeling.

3 Serious adversity disrupts the development process and our ability to use these core capabilities.





Experiences Shape Brain Architecture Starting in the Earliest Years of Life



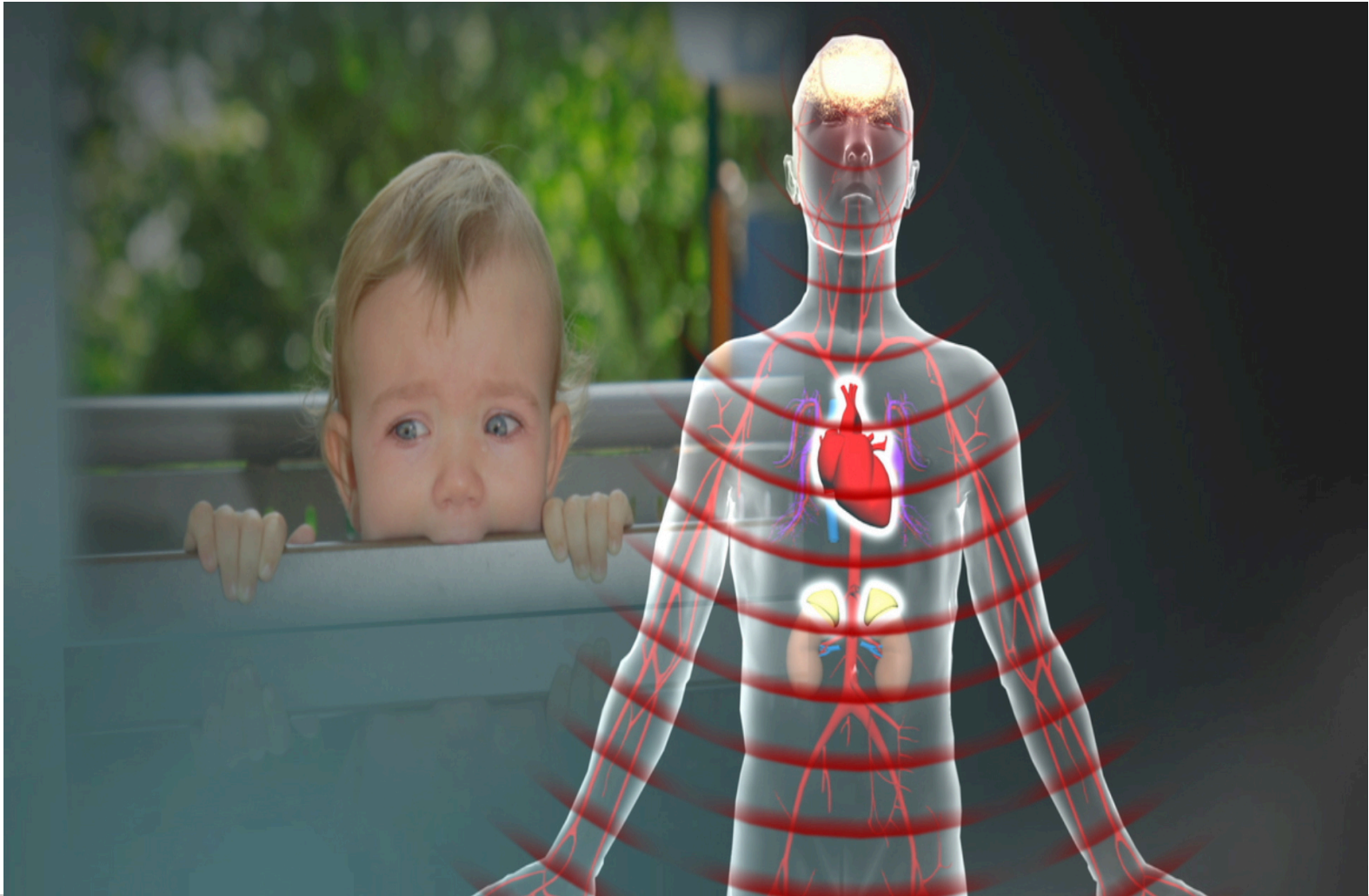


Brains and Skills Are Shaped by “Serve and Return” Interaction



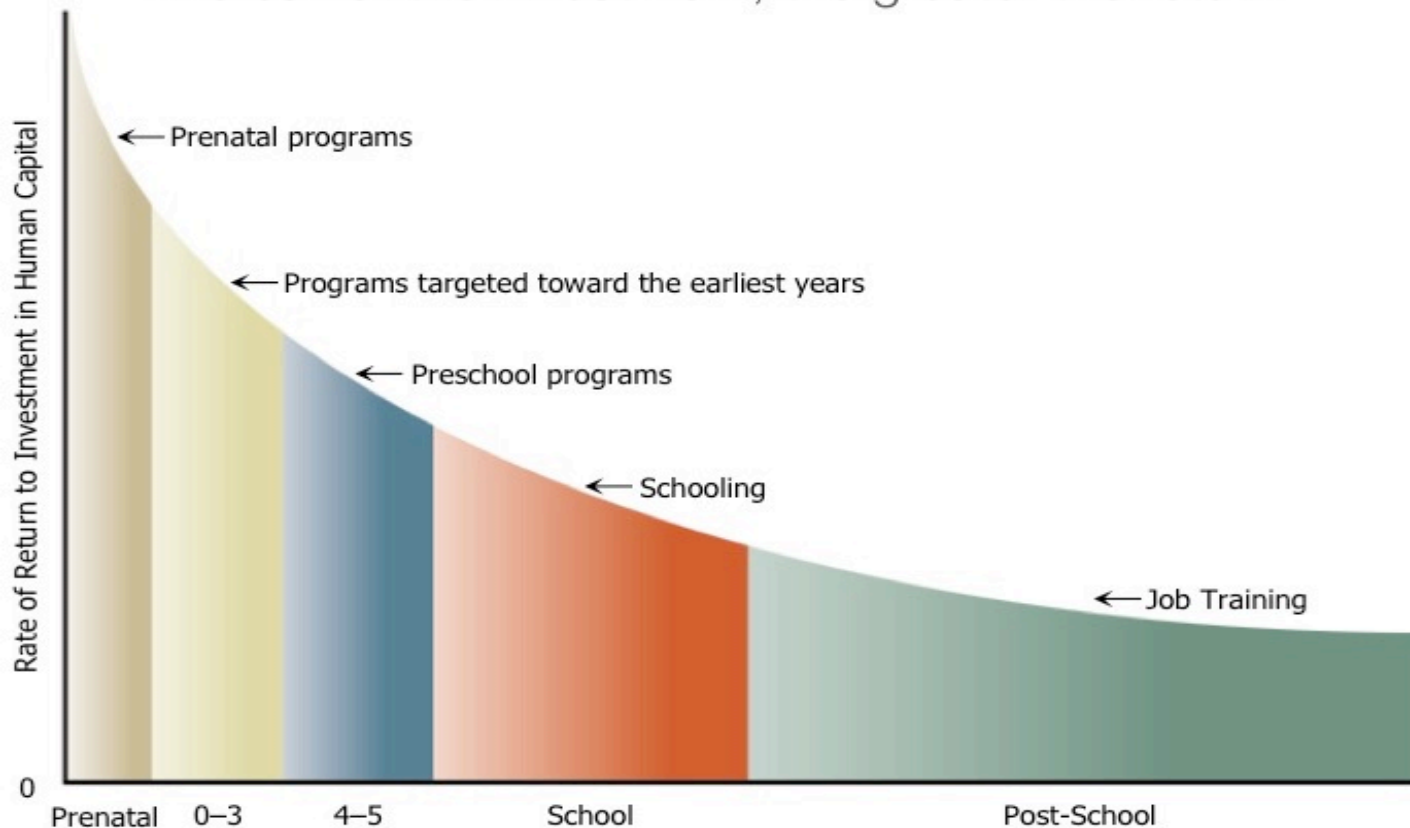


Toxic Stress Disrupts the Development of Brain Architecture and Other Systems



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IS A **SMART INVESTMENT**

The earlier the investment, the greater the return



Source: James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics

Why Should Business Care?

- Future competitiveness of US economy - Business knows the value of a highly-skilled workforce
- Investing early is cost-effective and yields long-term results
- Employees need and want policies that aid their productivity at work
- Corporate citizen role attracts positive community relations and attracts talent to the workforce

How Has Business Been Involved?

Business has a long history in advancing early education

- Committee for Economic Development www.ced.org
- National League of Cities www.nlc.org
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce www.uschamberfoundation.org
- Society for Human Resource Management www.shrm.org
- Ready Nation www.strongnation.org
- American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care www.abcdependentcare.com

What Makes the Difference?

- Access is not sufficient
- High quality programming is requisite to achieving measurable positive child outcomes
- Research provides evidence of key quality components
- Ongoing support at program/agency level and systemically are all necessary
- Public private partnerships can make the difference

Components of Quality

- Highly-trained and well-compensated teachers who hold early childhood degrees.
- Use of evidence-based curriculum
- Environments that are safe and age-appropriate to promote learning
- Good teacher/child ratios and small group sizes
- Accreditation by National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Ongoing coaching and professional development for teaching staff
- Strong communication and support to engage families
- Ongoing assessment and evaluation of the program to promote continuous improvement

Examples of What Works

- American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care – Fortune 500 companies support multi-state T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® expansion
- DRIVE Initiative - Private Equity investors develop data system for Boston citywide early developmental screening
- Eli Lilly Early Learning Indiana- public-private partnership to improve early childhood quality

Making Good Investments

Questions to consider:

- Who will lead the work?
- Are the goals, objectives and outcomes clearly understood and measurable?
- Can the investment be leveraged?
- How will the work be sustained over time?
- Is there a broader benefit to the investment?
- How will communication be managed?

Making Good Investments

- Use data to inform decision-making
- Be clear about your goals and intended outcomes
- Determine what level of investment is necessary to achieve the desired results
- Secure the necessary expertise to enable success
- Identify indicators to monitor progress and measure results
- Plan for sustainability before you invest

Lessons Learned

- Doing your homework pays dividends
- Collaboration leverages investment and human capital
- Have an exit strategy
- Results/impact may take time to be realized
- Take advantage of positive PR

How Business Can Contribute

- Familiarize yourself with key early childhood issues, data points and drivers for change
- Raise awareness and convey your support among key stakeholders – Chamber of Commerce, mayors, state legislators, school districts, media
- Promote early learning policies as part of the economic development agenda
- Educate employees on the value of early education and adopt policies that support working parents

How Business Can Contribute

Invest in the early childhood workforce

- Research indicates secure, supportive relationships are key to healthy development and learning
- Well-educated and well-compensated workforce contributes to community economic development
- Stable workforce supports continuity of care for children
- Positive ripple effect (e.g. career advancement for low-wage workers, higher ed partnerships)

Challenges



Opportunities

Growing awareness of early education but lack of clarity about most effective strategies to support

Insufficient funding and system level support

Unstable work force – high turnover, low compensation

Siloed infrastructure at municipal and state levels

Raise awareness about and support “what works” strategies, evaluate impact

Engage with policy makers and legislators, initiate public-private partnerships

Invest in and support teacher preparation and compensation

Support local collaboration to build partnerships and leverage resources

Final Thoughts

- It is no longer a question of whether early childhood is important – the question now is how to invest wisely in strategies that make a measurable difference
- Business has expertise, experience and influence to contribute
- Focus should be on investments that are data-informed with clearly defined goals, objectives and outcomes
- Provide leadership and encourage innovation