



MISSION: READINESS

MILITARY LEADERS FOR KIDS

Michigan Youth: Ready, Willing but Unable to Serve

Michigan's high-quality early childhood education program can help solve the education, crime and weight problems that put military service out of reach for most young adults in the state

MISSION: READINESS is the national security organization of more than 300 retired generals, admirals and other senior military leaders who support policies and investments that will help young Americans succeed in school and later in life, thus enabling more young adults to join the military if they choose to do so.

Summary: A 2009 U.S. Army report, *Strong Students, Strong Futures, Strong Nation*, documented that, in the coming decade, "the United States will face a significant workforce shortfall and both the civilian and military sectors may not have the skilled labor required to meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy."¹

One indication of this grim assessment is that **75 percent of young Americans are now unable to join the military**, primarily because of their poor education, excess weight, or criminal records.² **In Michigan, a quarter of young people do not graduate on time from high school** and, of those who do,

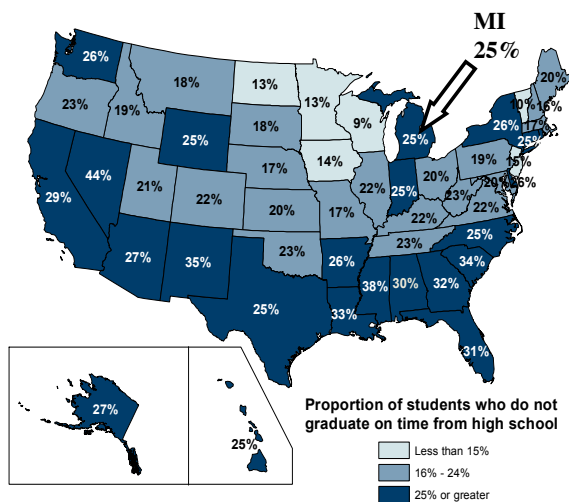
another **one in five cannot do well enough on the military's test of math and literacy skills to be allowed to serve.**³ Others have serious criminal records, are too overweight or obese, or have other medical reasons why they cannot join. A limited recruitment pool jeopardizes our military readiness and threatens future national security.

High-quality early childhood education is the foundation for effective public education – it can help prepare children to succeed in school, stay on the right side of the law, and even reduce their risk of becoming obese. The latest figures show that **of 4-year-olds in Michigan who are eligible for the state's preschool program (the Great Start Readiness Program), preschool special education, or Head Start, 39 percent were not yet receiving services.** That equals almost **30,000 children.**

Michigan policymakers must expand the reach of early education programs to ensure that more of our youth are prepared in mind, body and character to succeed.

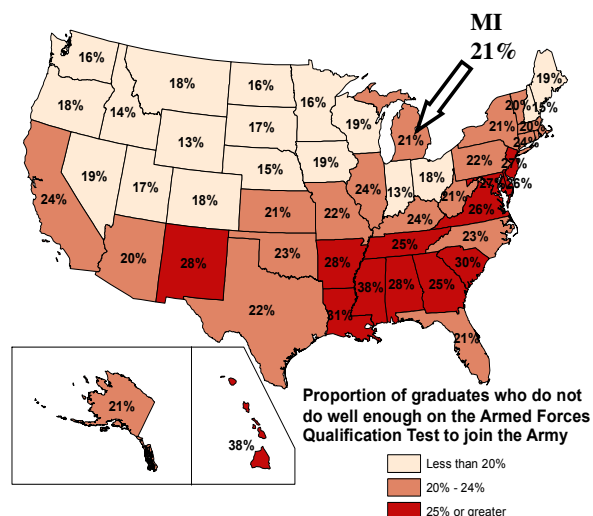
Inadequate Education Prevents Young Americans From Serving

PROPORTION WHO DO NOT GRADUATE: Nationwide, one in four young Americans does not graduate high school on time. In some states it is even worse:



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2011

PROPORTION WHO SCORE TOO LOW: Out of those who do graduate and then try to join the Army, nearly one in four cannot join because they score too low on the military's entrance exam:



Source: The Education Trust, 2010



The Problem

The latest available data show that most young adults lack the basic skills and qualifications to serve in today's military.

Michigan:

- 25 percent of young people in Michigan do not graduate from high school on time, according to a common way of measuring graduation used by the U.S. Department of Education;⁴
- 21 percent of those statewide in Michigan who do graduate and try to join the military do not do well enough on the military entrance exam to be allowed to serve;⁵
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's criteria, which are broader than the military's, 41 percent of young adults in Michigan are overweight or obese, up from 38 percent thirteen years ago;⁶ and
- One in every 27 adults in Michigan was in jail, in prison, on probation or on parole in 2007.⁷ Even more have a criminal record that would keep them from serving.

Nationwide:

When you add up all young adults who have not received an adequate education, have too much involvement in crime, are too overweight or have other reasons why they cannot serve, 75 percent of young Americans cannot join the military.⁸ Because Michigan's problems with weight are similar to the national average and the state's problems with education are worse than the national average, it is likely that at least three out of four young adults from Michigan cannot join the military.

Early Childhood Education: a Solid Foundation for Reform

Whether it is improving young people's education, keeping them on the right side of the law, or keeping them physically fit, early education has shown it can provide the foundation on which to build real success.

1. Improving Education

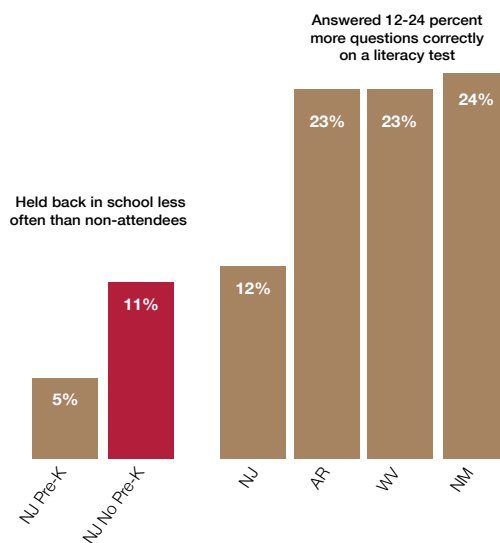
Three long-term studies of early education programs show impressive education outcomes:

- The children who participated in the **Perry Preschool** project in Ypsilanti, Michigan, were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school.⁹
- Children *not* served by the **Abecedarian** project were 75 percent more likely to be held back in school.¹⁰

- By age 30, **Abecedarian** project participants were four times more likely to have earned a 4-year college degree than those not in the program.¹¹
- The participants in the **Chicago Child-Parent Centers** were 29 percent more likely to have graduated from high school.¹²

While high-quality state pre-kindergarten programs have not been around long enough to follow the children served into adulthood, the programs that have invested in high quality can already demonstrate strong results as seen in this graph:

State early education improves reduces the percent of children held back in school and improves literacy scores



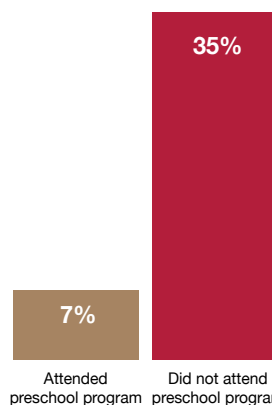
Sources: Frede 2009; Lamy 2005; Hustedt 2007; Hustedt 2009

2. Reducing Crime

Two long-term studies on early education have strong results on preventing crime:

High-quality early education cuts future crime

Chronic law breakers by age 27



Source: Schweinhart et al., 1993



“Our modern military needs highly qualified, physically fit, and morally upright young adults. Michigan’s high-quality preschool has helped more young people be able to serve their country in whatever way they so choose.”

– Major General Thomas G. Cutler,
U.S. Air Force (Ret.)



- By age 27, those who did not attend the **Perry Preschool** were five times more likely to have been chronic offenders than the children who participated.¹³
- By age 18, children left out of the **Chicago Child-Parent Centers** program were 70 percent more likely than participants to have been arrested for a violent crime.¹⁴

3. Reducing Obesity

There is even new evidence showing how early learning programs can help reduce America’s rising rates of childhood obesity. In New York City, child care centers improved the nutritional quality of the food served to children and increased their physical activity. Additionally, experts coached the children, teachers and parents on how to adopt healthy eating and exercising habits.¹⁵ These efforts, along with other reforms citywide, helped reverse the rise in childhood obesity.

In just four years, obesity rates for 5- to 6-year-old children citywide were down:

- 6 percent for Hispanic public school children,
- 7 percent for black school children, and
- 24 percent for white school children.¹⁶

An intervention with Head Start programs in Chicago used a randomized controlled trial to show that working with both children and their parents can reduce weight gain. The children not in the program gained 16 percent more weight over the next two years than those receiving the program.¹⁷

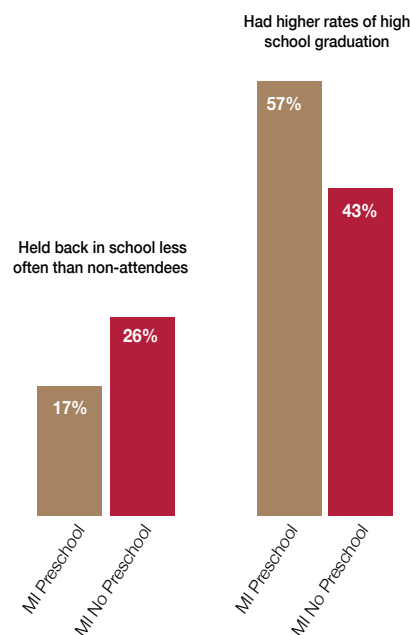
The dramatic drop in obesity rates experienced in New York and the success in a more controlled trial in Chicago indicate that, if the lessons can be adapted successfully elsewhere, early education programs may become an excellent opportunity to help children develop healthy, lifelong eating and exercising habits.

Success in Michigan

Michigan launched its preschool program, Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), in 1985.¹⁸ GSRP has already

been operating long enough to see longer-term strong results. Children who attended the program were a third less likely than similar children to be held back in school and a quarter less likely to not graduate on time from high school.¹⁹

Michigan’s preschool reduces the percent of children held back in school and increases graduation rates



Sources: Schweinhart 2012; Maloffeva 2007

Early Education Pays for Itself and More

The cost of failure is staggering. On average, a child who drops out of school, uses drugs and becomes a career criminal costs society \$2.5 million.²⁰ That goes a long way in explaining why early education can produce such outstanding savings:

Net savings per student over their lifetime from early education investments

High/Scope Perry Preschool	\$244,812 ²¹
Chicago Child-Parent Centers	\$92,220 ²²



Of the over 75,000 4-year-olds from Michigan families with incomes below 300 percent of poverty who were eligible for the Great Start Readiness Program, preschool special education or Head Start, 39 percent of those children – or almost 30,000 children – were not yet receiving services.

– Peter Pratt, President,
Public Sector Consultants

Michigan Needs to Keep Improving and Expanding Services

There were 22,067 at-risk 4-year-olds served in 2011 by Michigan's state GSRP program.²³ Head Start, the federally funded program, served 31,822 of Michigan's 3- and 4-year-olds.²⁴ The federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) provides child care subsidies for 52,600 0- to 13-year-old children with poor working parents in the state (the older children receive support for after-school and summer care).²⁵

The key point is that, of the over 75,000 4-year-olds from Michigan families with incomes within 300 percent of the poverty line who are eligible for GSRP, preschool special education, or Head Start, 39 percent of those 4-year-olds are not receiving services. That equals almost 30,000 children who are left out.²⁶

Michigan's state legislature cut GSRP funding in fiscal year 2011, restored the funding the next year, and even added funding for 1,470 additional slots for fiscal year 2013. So, during these tough times, the governor and Michigan's legislators have tried to protect and even expand children's access to preschool.

Conclusion: Preserve and Expand Early Education, Focus on Improving Quality

High-quality early education builds a solid foundation and helps more young people develop in mind, body, and character so they can succeed at whatever career path they choose, including military service. In short, it is an investment in America's future economic prosperity and national security.

Michigan's local, state and national policymakers need to continue acting boldly and decisively to protect, expand, and keep improving the quality of early education.

Endnotes

- 1 US Army.(2009). *Strong students, strong futures, strong nations*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on May 8, 2012 from <http://www.guidanceconsortium.com/pdf-files-military/ConferenceDocs/US-Army-EducationWhitePaper.pdf>
- 2 Gilroy, C. (March 3, 2009). *Prepared statement of Dr. Curtis Gilroy, Director of Accession Policy in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness. Before the House Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee. "Recruiting, Retention and End of Strength Overview."*
- 3 Theokas, C. (2010). *Shut out of the military: Today's high school education doesn't mean you're ready for today's Army*. Washington, DC: Education Trust. Retrieved on April 12, 2012 from http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/ASVAB_4.pdf
- 4 Chapman, C., Laird, J., Ifill, N., & KewalRamani, A. (2011). *Trends in high school dropout and completion rates in the United States: 1972-2009 compendium report*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.
- 5 Theokas, C. (2010). *Shut out of the military: Today's high school education doesn't mean you're ready for today's Army*. Washington, DC: Education Trust. Retrieved on April 12, 2012 from http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/publications/files/ASVAB_4.pdf
- 6 Data from the Center for Disease Control's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) was used to estimate three-year weighted averages of the proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds who are overweight and obese according to the standard Body Mass Index cutoffs of 25.0 for overweight and 30.0 for obesity. We used three-year weighted averages to obtain an acceptable sample size. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System – Prevalence trends and data*. Atlanta, GA: Author. Retrieved on February 10, 2012 from <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/page.asp?cat=OB&yr=2010&state=All#OB>
- 7 The Pew Charitable Trusts. (2009). *One in 31: The long reach of American corrections*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on August 27, 2012 from http://www.pewtrusts.org/news_room_detail.aspx?id=49696
- 8 Gilroy, C. (March 3, 2009). *Prepared statement of Dr. Curtis Gilroy, Director of Accession Policy in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel & Readiness. Before the House Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee. "Recruiting, Retention and End of Strength Overview."*
- 9 Schweinhart, L.J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W.S., Belfield, C.R., & Nores, M. (2005). *Lifetime effects: The HighScope Perry Preschool study through age 40*. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press
- 10 Campbell, F.A., Pungello, E. P., Burchinal, M., Kainz, K., Pan, Y., Wasik, B., Barbarin, O. A., Sparling, J. J. & Ramey, C. T. (2012, January 16). Adult outcomes as a function of an early childhood educational program: An Abecedarian Project follow-up. *Developmental Psychology*. Advance online publication.
- 11 Campbell, F.A., Pungello, E. P., Burchinal, M., Kainz, K., Pan, Y., Wasik, B., Barbarin, O. A., Sparling, J. J. & Ramey, C. T. (2012, January 16). Adult outcomes as a function of an early childhood educational program: An Abecedarian Project follow-up. *Developmental Psychology*. Advance online publication.
- 12 Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., Ou, S.R., Robertson, D.L. Mersky, J.P., Topitzes, J.W., et al. (2007). Effects of a school-based, early childhood intervention on adult health and well-being: A 19-year follow-up of low-income families. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 161(8), 730-739.
- 13 Schweinhart, L. J., Barnes, H. V., & Weikart, D. P. (1993). *Significant benefits: The HighScope Perry Pre-kindergarten study through age 27*. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press
- 14 Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., Robertson, D. L., & Mann, E. A. (2001). Long-term effects of an early childhood intervention on educational achievement and juvenile arrest. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 285(12), 2339-2380.
- 15 New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2012). *Physical activity and nutrition*. New York: Author. Retrieved on April 12, 2012 from http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cdp/cdp_pan_staff-home.shtml
- 16 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). Obesity in K-8 students – New York City, 2006-07 to 2010-11 school years. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 60(49), 1673-1678.
- 17 Fitzgibbon, M.L., Stolley, M.R., Schiffer, L., Van Horn, L., Kauter Christoffel, K., & Dyer, A. (2005). Two year follow-up for Hip-Hop to Health JR.: A randomized controlled trial for overweight prevention in preschool minority children. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 146(6), 618-625.
- 18 Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011 – State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research.
- 19 Schweinhart, L.J., Xiang, Z., Daniel-Echols, M., Browning, K., & Wakabayashi, T. (2012, March). Michigan Great Start Readiness Program evaluation 2012: High school graduation and grade retention findings. Retrieved on August 14, 2012 from <http://bridgemi.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/GSRP-evaluation-may-21-12.pdf>
- 20 Cohen, M.A., & Piquero, A.R. (2008). New evidence on the monetary value of saving a high risk youth. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 25, 25-49. The Cohen economic analysis started from the point when the child was born.
- 21 Schweinhart, L.J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W.S., Belfield, C.R., & Nores, M. (2005). *Lifetime effects: The HighScope Perry Preschool study through age 40*. Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.
- 22 Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., White, B.A.B., Ou, S.R., & Robertson, D.L. (2011). Age 26 cost-benefit analysis of the Child-Parent Center early education program. *Child Development*, 82(1), 379-404.
- 23 Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011 – State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research.
- 24 Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011 – State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research.
- 25 Administration for Children and Families. (2011) *FFY 2010 CCDF Data Tables, Table 1*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved on August 27, 2012 from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccdf/data/ccdf_data/10acfi800_preliminary/table1.htm
- 26 Data and analysis provided in a personal communication on August 29, 2012 from Peter Pratt, President of Public Sector Consultants.

Acknowledgments

MISSION: READINESS is supported by tax-deductible contributions from foundations, individuals and corporations. MISSION: READINESS accepts no funds from federal, state or local governments.

Major funding for MISSION: READINESS is provided by: Birth to Five Policy Alliance • The Boeing Company • The California Education Policy Fund • The Annie E. Casey Foundation • The California Endowment • Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative of The Washington Area Women's Foundation • The Grable Foundation • The Heinz Endowments • The Pew Charitable Trusts • The J.B. & M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation • Robert Wood Johnson Foundation • W.K. Kellogg Foundation • The David & Lucile Packard Foundation • William Penn Foundation. The opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Pew Charitable Trusts or other funders.

MISSION: READINESS operates under the umbrella nonprofit Council for a Strong America.

MISSION: READINESS

1212 New York Ave NW - Suite 300 - Washington, DC - (202) 464-5224 - www.MissionReadiness.org