



MISSION: READINESS

MILITARY LEADERS FOR KIDS

Investing Wisely in Washington State's Economy & in Our National Security

High-quality early childhood education and home visiting programs can help solve the education, crime and weight problems that put military service out of reach for most young adults in Washington

Who We Are

MISSION: READINESS is the national security organization of more than 300 retired generals, admirals and other senior military leaders who call for 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:The Washington State Institute for Public Policy has concluded that providing high-quality early education for low-income 3- and 4-year-olds will produce average net benefits to society of almost \$15,000 for each child served; and the Nurse Family Partnership produces over \$13,000 for each child served. That analysis, alone, should be decisive. But retired admirals and generals, who are members of Mission: Readiness in Washington State, are also weighing in to say that: together, these programs can help children succeed academically, reduce their weight, and help keep them free of crime – all necessary to be able to serve in our nation's military.

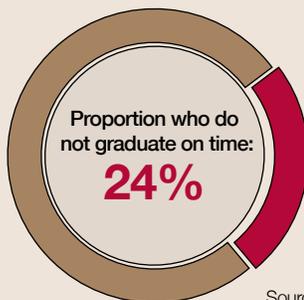
Amazingly, 75 percent of young people nationwide could not serve in the military if they tried to join. In Washington State alone, 24 percent of young people do not graduate from high school on time and 16 percent of those who do and try to enter the Army cannot pass the military's entrance

exam. High-quality early learning and home visiting programs can help change that:

- Kids not receiving the Chicago Child-Parent Center pre-kindergarten program were 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime than those who received high-quality pre-kindergarten.
- Five- and six-year-olds in New York City are seeing declines in obesity of 6 percent for Hispanics, 7 percent for African-Americans, and 24 percent for white children as child care centers across the city are serving healthier food, getting kids more active, and coaching their parents.
- The children who participated in the Perry Preschool program were 44 percent more likely to have graduated from high school.
- Children receiving the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) home visiting program were half as likely to be abused or neglected and had higher reading and math grades at age 12.
- By age 19, the girls in NFP were far less likely to be involved in crime and two-thirds less likely to have given birth.

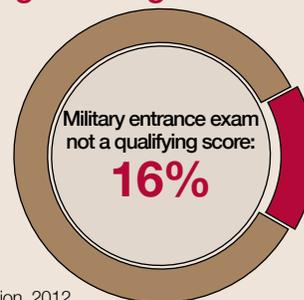
High-quality early learning and home visiting work, save money, and will help protect our national security. We need to prioritize investments in these excellent programs.

High School Graduation and Military Entrance Exam Qualifying Rates Among Young Washingtonians



Almost **one in four** Washington youth does not graduate high school on time.

Source: US Department of Education, 2012



Out of those young **Washingtonians** who do graduate and then try to join the Army, almost **one in six** cannot join because they score too low on the military's entrance exam.

Source: The Education Trust, 2010

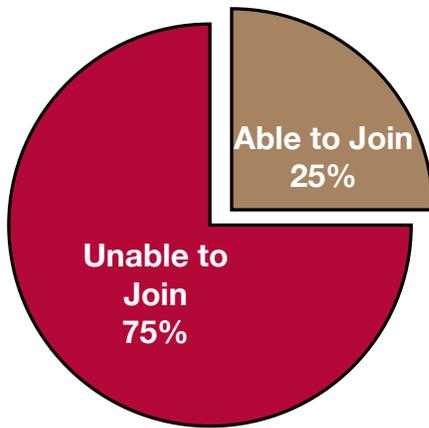


Washington's Young Adults

There are reasons why young adults in Washington State cannot join the military and they are the same reasons those young people are also less likely to do well in civilian jobs: Too many have not graduated from high school on time (24 percent); cannot pass the military's entrance exam even if they have graduated (16 percent); are too overweight – according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's standards which are tougher than the military's – (44 percent); and too many ended up behind bars as adults in 2007 (1 in 30), while many others have been incarcerated.¹

When you add up all the young adults who have not received an adequate education, have too much involvement in crime, are too overweight or have other reasons or even multiple reasons why they cannot serve, it is understandable but still shocking that 75 percent of young Americans cannot join the military.²

75 Percent of Young Americans Cannot Join the Military



17- to 24-year-old Americans

Source: Dr. Curtis Gilroy, Director of Accessions Policy, U.S. Department of Defense

Early Education Delivers Results

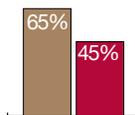
Investing in what works, works.

Education

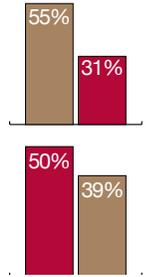
It is well recognized that the long-term studies of high-quality pre-kindergarten programs show that the children served do better in school. For example:



- The children who participated in the Perry Preschool project were **44 percent more likely to graduate from high school.**³

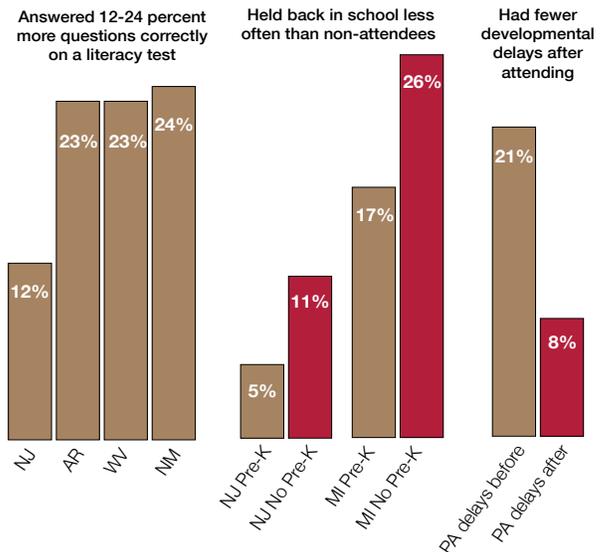


- Children *not* served by the Abecedarian project were **75 percent more likely to be held back in school.**⁴
- Children served by the Chicago Child-Parent Centers were **29 percent more likely to have graduated from high school.**



What is not as well known is that high-quality pre-kindergarten programs in the states are already delivering strong results. For example:

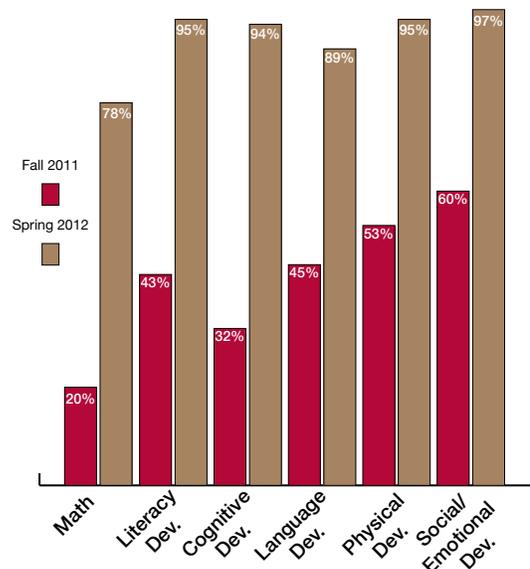
State early education improves educational outcomes



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

Washington is also showing strong before-and-after results:

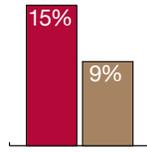
Percent of Children At or Above Age Level Expectations





Crime

We also know that high-quality early education can cut crime. Children left out of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers were **70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime**; and those left out of the Perry Preschool program were five times more likely than participants to have been chronic offenders.⁵



Obesity

Still being discovered is the role that early education can play in preventing childhood obesity. New York City has done many things to encourage healthy eating and better physical fitness. Across the city, early education centers have been encouraged to feed children healthier food and get them more active while nutritionists have been brought in to coach parents interested in changing their children's eating habits. It is not clear how big a role early education is playing in producing these results, but New York is starting to turn the corner. In just four years New York has seen:

- A **six percent drop in childhood obesity** among Hispanic public-school children,
- A **seven percent drop** among black students, and
- A **24 percent drop** among white students.

The important news is that the relentless increases in childhood obesity can be reversed and it now appears early education can play a role. A randomized trial of an effort with Chicago Head Start students showed that children not in the program gained **16 percent more weight** over the next two years than the children receiving the program.⁶

Home Visiting Helps, Especially for Girls

Home visiting for young, low-income pregnant women up until their child is age two has shown it can deliver important results. Children served by the Nurse Family Partnership program were **half as likely to have been abused or neglected**

and at age 12 they had higher reading and math grades. By age 19, the girls served by the program were both far less likely to have been convicted of a crime (4 percent vs. 37 percent) and those of low-income mothers were **a third less likely to have given birth (11 percent vs. 30 percent)**.⁷ Along with high quality early education, home visiting programs can help more children in Washington grow up to be successful and free of serious crime so they are able to join the military if they decide they want to serve their country that way.

Early Education and Home Visiting Produce Great Savings

Turning our backs on disadvantaged children can be very costly. On average, a child who drops out of school, uses drugs and becomes a career criminal costs society \$2.5 million.⁸ That goes a long way in explaining why early education and home visitation can produce such outstanding savings:

Societal Return on Investments for Each Child Served⁹

Early Childhood Education for Low Income 3- and 4-Year Olds	\$14,934
Nurse Family Partnership for Low-Income Families	\$13,181

Conclusion: Not the Time to Turn Our Backs on Our Most Vulnerable Children

The reality is that if we want a strong state economy and a strong national military we will need to be very strategic in what we invest in. At this time, nothing could be more strategic than giving our most at-risk children the right start in life.

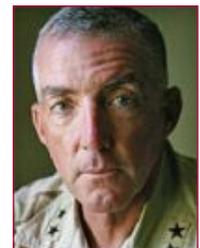
It really is a matter of national security.



Photo Credit: US Department of Defense, 2013

"We need sophisticated military hardware, but if we don't have the well-educated, fit, and morally strong individuals needed to serve in the world's most advanced military those investments will not protect us. Investment in the youth of America helps create strong individuals and is absolutely essential for protecting our national security. Help us build tomorrow's bench."

**– Major General Paul D. Eaton,
US Army (Ret.),
Fox Island, WA**





Endnotes

- 1** 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; 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; 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>; Henrichson, C., & Delany, R. (2012). *The price of prison: What incarceration costs taxpayers*. New York: Vera Institute of Justice. Retrieved on May 8, 2012 from <http://www.pewstates.org/research/reports/the-price-of-prisons-85899383045>
- 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** Schweinhart, L.J., Montie, J., Xiang, Z., Barnett, W.S., Belfield, C.R., & Nores, M. (2005). *Lifetime effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 40*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press
- 4** 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.
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- 6** Fitzgibbon, M.L., Stolley, M.R., Schiffer, L., Van Horn, L., Kaufer 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.
- 7** Eckenrode, J., Campa, M., Luckey, D.W., Henderson, C.R., Cole, R., et al. (2010). Long-term effects of prenatal and infancy nurse home visitation on the life course of youths: 19-year follow-up of a randomized trial. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 164(1), 9-15;
- 8** 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.
- 9** 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.

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