

Leveraging Advances in the Science of Early Childhood Development to Create Prosperity for Families, Employers, and Communities

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Priorities for the Nebraska Economic Developers Association

- Nebraska's workforce shortage is the leading source of concern for employers, economic developers, and economists (50-60,000 unfilled jobs)
- Availability of child care and affordable housing are two of the most frequently cited obstacles to community development across the state
- Quality of life and educational, social, and economic opportunity are essential for marketing Nebraska communities to workers, young families, and employers

Brains and Skills are Shaped by "Serve & Return" Interactions that Begin in the Home and Extend to Other Members of the Community



Rapidly Moving Advances in the Biology of Adversity and Resilience are deepening our understanding of the early foundations of learning, behavior, and health



Recognizing the Benefits and Harms of the Stress Response

requires understanding how acute stressors are managed and how chronic, excessive adversity gets into the body and can affect current and future well-being



Increasing Resilience in the Face of Adversity by strengthening buffers and building adaptive capacities



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Science-Based Early Childhood Policy and Practice begins

with an understanding of why early experiences are so important for the developing brain



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The time is ripe for a mindset shift in science-informed policy and practice

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Leveraging ECD 2.0 to Re-Envision a Bold Early Childhood Agenda in a World of Striking Inequality and Uncertainty



ECD 2.0

AND IT'S ALSO ABOUT Communities, business, government, and philanthropy working together to assure a supportive and healthy environment for **all** families raising young children

Where children live presents assets and threats

that affect their health and development

Child Opportunity Index [100 Largest U.S. Metro Areas; 72,000 census tracts; 29 indicators]

- High quality child care Air pollution
- Education resources
- Access to healthy food Economic opportunities
- Green space

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- Housing vacancy rate
 - Toxic waste proximity Commuting time

Source: Acevedo-Garcia et. al. (2014)

Health services

Home ownership

Median income

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Extreme heat

Residential Segregation Leads to Wide Disparities in Exposure to Opportunities and Adversities that affect child development and lifelong health



diversitydatakids.org

Cost-Benefit Analyses of Iconic Early Childhood Programs Have Documented Substantial Financial Returns on

education costs, economic productivity, and decreased incarceration.



Investments that Protect Developing Biological Systems from Excessive Stress Activation Will Generate Even Higher ROI as

3 of the 5 most costly adult diseases are associated with early adversity



Take-Home Message:

Science-informed policies and programs that reduce hardships, trauma, and toxic exposures **during pregnancy and the first 2-3 years after birth** offer a promising pathway to enormous savings in health care costs and increased economic productivity

Sources: Waters, Graf (Milken Institute, 2018); Greenberg et al. (2015)

40 Years of Progress Treating Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia

suggest promising strategies for achieving breakthrough outcomes in early childhood education programs



3 Science-Based Principles to Drive Greater Impacts Across Sectors

by reducing adversity, building resilience, and assuring high quality implementation of services through recruitment and retention of well-trained personnel whose skills match the challenges they are expected to address.





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