**5 MIN GUIDE TO:** Investing in the Early Years

**QUESTION:** How many children under age 6 live in families where all parents are in the workforce?

**ANSWER:** 69% = 53,556 kids

Today’s workforce with young children need affordable, high-quality, reliable care and education settings in order to be productive. This would also be one of the best investments we can make in our future workforce. HERE'S WHY:

Brains are built from the bottom up, just like a house

Experiences early in life set either a strong or fragile foundation for all of the learning and development that follows

**New Hampshire's challenge:**

- Public funding for early childhood programs in New Hampshire is largely from Federal sources
- Program reach is limited, especially for low- and moderate-income families
- Most funding supports children one or two years before Kindergarten, not earlier
- Participation in pre-school programs is largely tied to family income:

![Bar chart showing participation in pre-school programs by income level]

- % of Children
- Income as % of Poverty Level
  - <100%
  - 100-199%
  - 200-299%
  - >300%

- 3 year olds
- 4 year olds
New Hampshire's solution:

- Well-designed home visiting programs from before birth through the first years of life
- High quality pre-school programs

Nurse Family Partnership Home Visiting returns $4-6 for every $1 invested

High-quality preschool returns at least $2 for every $1 invested

IN OTHER WORDS:
The expected returns for New Hampshire in expanding early childhood investments are SIGNIFICANT

The long-term benefits of early childhood investments accrue in concrete ways to government, as well as to participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Affected</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved school readiness</td>
<td>Link to later education success and adult earnings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced child abuse and neglect</td>
<td>Lower cost for child welfare system and health care system; lower victim costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced use of special education, grade retention</td>
<td>Lower costs for special education, regular education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased high school graduation rate</td>
<td>Income gain for participants; tax revenue for government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced public assistance use</td>
<td>Reduced transfer payments (but offset by lower participant income)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Reduced crime and contact with criminal justice system)</td>
<td>Lower costs for criminal justice systems and lower crime victim costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read the full report, "Investing in the Early Years," at: http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9952.html