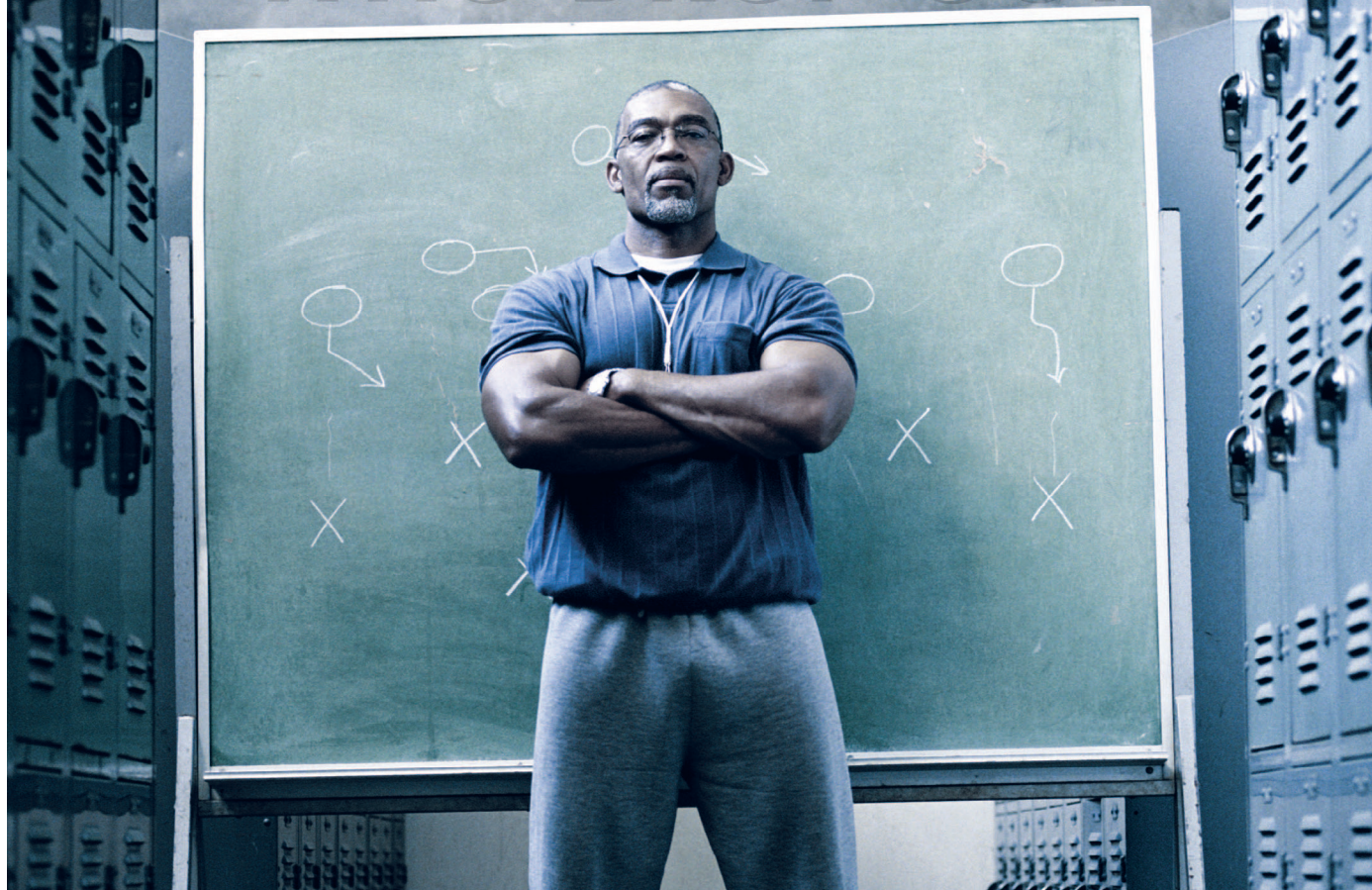


CHAMPIONS

For America's Future

I CAN'T COACH THE KIDS WHO DROP OUT



**High-quality preschool in Michigan is
a game changer**

CHAMPIONS

For America's Future

WHO WE ARE

CHAMPIONS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE is a national, nonprofit, bipartisan, membership organization of athletes and coaches who have come together to make sure every child has the best chance to compete in life. It operates under the umbrella nonprofit Council for a Strong America.

Our members rely on the best research and their own experiences to focus on what will give kids an edge in the future. They educate the public and policymakers at the local, state and national levels that we must invest in proven, cost-effective programs that help children overcome the obstacles that prevent them from competing successfully in the 21st century.

OUR SUPPORT

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I CAN'T COACH THE KIDS WHO DROP OUT



As evidenced by the executive and legislative leadership and bipartisan supporters statewide, Michigan is an undisputed champion of quality preschools that give our kids a running start toward long-term academic achievement. That's great news for CHAMPIONS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE, a team of coaches and athletes gearing up to get even more Michigan kids on track for success in school and life.

We're proud to join an outstanding roster of business people, retired military leaders, law enforcement leaders, educators and everyday families who recognize the power of preschool.

As coaches, we want our teams to be made up of athletes who are truly qualified for higher education – a feat that requires early literacy and math skills that put children on solid academic footing when they enter school.

As athletes, we recognize our success has been driven by the social skills that are developed through quality preschool programs, such as the ability to focus and maintain self-control, to be patient but persistent, and work well with others.

As citizens, we all have a vested interest in a society with a level playing field for all children – a goal not lost on

elected leaders around the nation. In the past two years alone, Republican and Democratic governors of more than two dozen states have proposed or signed into law significant expansions of state preschool programs.

This report spotlights the research that's driving these decisions. It documents quality preschool's proven impact on school readiness, particularly among children from

low-income families. It details how several programs have led to reductions in behavior problems and in the need for special education. And it dispels the myth that early learning benefits "fade-out" by highlighting gains lasting well into elementary school, as well as the established connection between quality preschool participation and high school graduation.

All of which is critically important as Michigan strives to maximize the value of public investments for

better-qualified workers, lower costs of crime and welfare, and more stable families and communities.

With all of this in mind, we're proud to add our voices to the chorus of support for quality preschool programs in Michigan and around the nation. It's a smart game plan for ensuring all kids get a strong start on their journey toward a lifetime of success.

"Star athletes spend countless hours practicing. Teamwork and sticking to a task start in preschool."

Dr. Judi Brown Clarke, 1984 Olympic Silver Medalist and former Head Coach, Women's Track & Field, Michigan State University

I CAN'T COACH THE KIDS WHO DROP OUT

High-quality preschool in Michigan is a game changer

"My experience as an educator and parent tells me we're missing an opportunity to better educate vulnerable children; my experience as a coach tells me that we're losing athletes who are not academically qualified to play. We need a paradigm shift; it starts with high-quality preschool."

Pat O'Keefe, Head Coach, Varsity Baseball, Grand Ledge High School

Coach O'Keefe's perspective is well understood by the coaches and athletes on the Michigan team of CHAMPIONS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE. We're urging the expansion of quality preschool programs in our state for several key reasons:

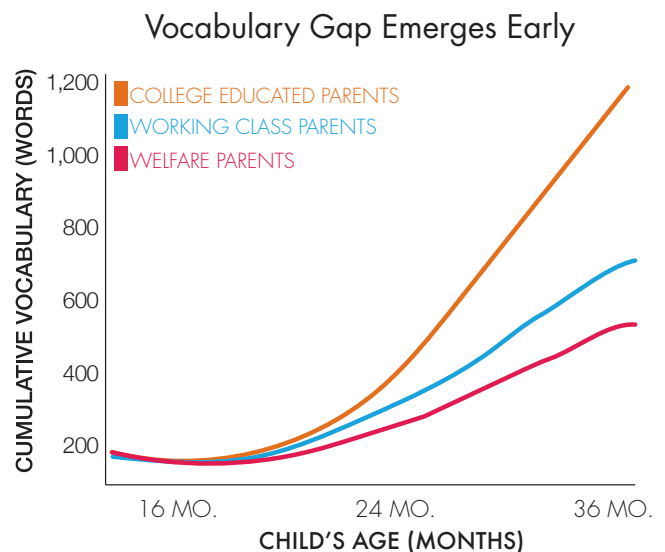
Too many children from lower-income homes start school at a significant disadvantage. Researchers observed children in their homes monthly for over two years until the children were three years old. They found that, on average, the children of professional parents heard 45 million words while the children of working class parents heard 26 million words and the children of parents receiving welfare heard just 13 million words. Not surprisingly, the children with professional parents had mastered twice as many vocabulary words than the children of parents receiving welfare.¹ (See page 6 for what works to support parents as the first and primary teachers of their children.)

Quality preschool drives the development of both academic and social skills. In addition to helping children learn vocabulary and early math skills, preschool can also help children learn social skills such as listening, sharing

and working well with others—skills that are essential for athletic and academic success. Children who do not learn self-control and other behavioral skills early in life often are ostracized by others and end up hanging out with other kids who have behavior problems. What is disruptive behavior in kindergarten can later lead to dropping out of school, trouble holding a job, or even violence and crime.

Without quality preschool, learning problems eventually become earnings problems. Letting kids fall through the cracks in school has long-term consequences. High school dropouts are three times more likely to be unemployed than college graduates and make about \$30,000 less per year.²

Early losses make it very difficult to get back in the game. For many without a high school diploma, trouble with the law is more likely than college or a career. Seven out of ten state prisoners do not have a high school diploma.³ Letting kids fall off track costs both the victims of crime and taxpayers.



"I am a member of Champions for America's Future because I want more children to be able to compete in sports and in life. Champions only supports investments that deliver real results."

Michigan's Olympic Gymnast Jordyn Wieber



Leveling the Playing Field

Research proves quality preschool experiences can level the playing field for disadvantaged children in a number of ways.

1) Fewer behavior problems:

- Pennsylvania's Pre-K Counts program reduced problematic social behaviors (such as taking things from others or lacking self control) from 22 percent to four percent.⁴
- The Chicago Child-Parent Center (CPC) is a preschool program that cut child abuse and neglect in half for the children served compared to children in families not served.⁵ Research has shown that child abuse and neglect can lead to aggression and other problem behaviors.



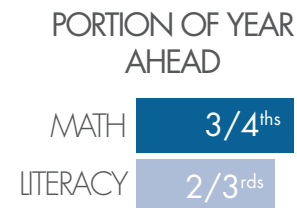
2) More success in school:

- Boston's universal preschool program improved mathematics, literacy and language skills so much that the children served were seven months ahead in school compared to the children who did not attend.⁶ Many state preschool programs are also achieving strong results.⁷
- Counties in North Carolina that invested in "Smart Start" or "More at Four" early education initiatives found that the children in their counties were five months ahead in reading and three to five months ahead in math by third grade compared to the children in counties that invested less in improving their early education.⁸
- Similarly, kids from lower-income school districts who attended New Jersey's state preschool were three-fourths of a year ahead in math and two-thirds of a year ahead in literacy by the fourth

and fifth grades compared to similar kids not served.⁹ These findings are consistent with the early results achieved by Chicago's Child-Parent Center program, which went on to achieve very strong high school graduation and crime reduction outcomes.

3) Less special education and fewer students held back:

- Children served by New Jersey's state preschool were 31 percent less likely to be placed in special education than the children in a control group.¹⁰
- Kids served by Michigan's state preschool, the Great Start Readiness Program, were held back in school 51 percent less often than non-participants.¹¹ Similarly, state preschool programs in Tennessee cut the number of children held back in kindergarten by half, and New Jersey's program cut those held back by 40 percent.¹²



4) More graduates:

- Children who participated in the Chicago CPC preschool program were 29 percent more likely to graduate from high school by age 20 than non-participants.¹³ Similarly, Michigan's Great Start

PRESCHOOL LEADS TO IMPROVED GRADUATION RATES

High/Scope Perry Preschool Program	+44%
Michigan's Great Start Readiness Program	+35%
Chicago Child-Parent Centers	+29%

Reynolds 2001; Michigan Great Start Program Eval 2012; Schweinhart 2005

“As a coach, it’s important to me that kids are focused and committed to practice. Gymnastics is a technically-demanding sport, and our athletes have to be extremely bright to understand the complexities of what the sport involves. That foundation is built during their early years.”

John Geddert

Twistars USA Gymnastics Club
2012 USA Olympic Team Head Coach
2011 USA World Team Head Coach

Readiness program achieved a 35 percent increase in high school graduation rates and the Perry Preschool Program achieved a 44 percent increase.¹⁴

- Participants in the Abecedarian Project, a child care and preschool program in North Carolina, were four times more likely to earn a four-year college degree than those not in the program.¹⁵

5) Better employment:

- By age 28, the individuals served by the Chicago CPC preschool program were already earning seven percent more than those not served.¹⁶ By age 40, those served by the Perry Preschool were earning 36 percent more.¹⁷

6) Less crime:

- Those who were left out of CPC were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18 and children left out of the Perry Preschool Program were five times more likely to be chronic offenders with five or more arrests by age 27.¹⁸

7) Stronger families:

- By age 27, the men not served in the Perry Preschool Program were 63 percent more likely to have fathered children they did not raise than the program participants. Women who had been in the Perry Preschool Program as children were five times more likely to be married and living with their husbands by age 27.¹⁹

A Mason-Dixon poll of kindergarten teachers found that nine out of ten agreed that substantially more children would succeed in school if all families had access to quality pre-kindergarten programs.

SOURCE: Mason-Dixon Polling & Research

No Excuses

A few individuals have questioned whether high-quality state preschool can deliver lasting results. The data from New Jersey, North Carolina, and Michigan should effectively end that discussion.

If a particular preschool program isn’t achieving meaningful and lasting results, administrators need to find out what others are doing right and make changes. Like successful coaches, the administrators of our most successful state preschool programs take nothing for granted and are constantly working to learn from each other’s successes and mistakes.

Saving Money

An independent, well-respected cost-benefit analysis of more than 49 different preschool studies showed preschool for disadvantaged children can produce, on average,

NOT JUST ABCs

While researchers have recognized that growing up in poverty is a risk factor for later crime, a groundbreaking study showed that an even greater risk factor is failing to learn self-control at a young age.²⁰ Kindergarten teachers can teach children entering school how to count to 10 or recite their ABCs, but if children haven’t learned important social skills it is more difficult to teach them and their classmates as well. As coaches and athletes, we have all experienced how much disruption just one individual can cause for our teams.



PARENT COACHING IS ESSENTIAL

While sports coaches and teachers can have a profound impact on a child's development, they are usually in that child's life for just a year or two. That's why it's especially beneficial when preschool and early care programs have voluntary parent coaching components. The Perry Preschool, Chicago Child-Parent Centers and New Jersey's Abbott preschools all help parents learn to reinforce positive behaviors and routinely read and speak to their children.

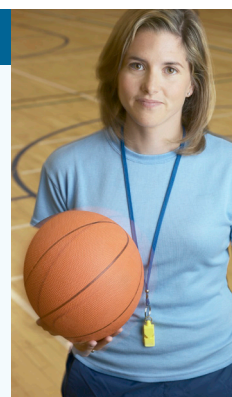
For example, teaching parents relatively simple skills, such as catching their children being good as an opportunity to reinforce positive behavior, and advising them on how to help their children learn to read turn out to be extremely effective.

The Triple P Positive Parenting Program, for example, is used to coach parents and can be delivered in childcare centers, pediatricians' offices and elementary schools. This well-tested approach helps parents learn simple but effective ways to positively reinforce their children's acquisition of self-control and other socio-emotional skills. Parents who find

the initial advice beneficial and want more help can get up to ten weeks of parent coaching.

The results? Counties across South Carolina were randomly assigned to offer the program or not. The counties receiving the program averaged 25 percent fewer cases of abuse and neglect and one-third fewer foster care placements or emergency room visits and hospitalizations.²¹

Many sincere efforts to work with parents, especially disadvantaged parents, fail. But successful programs show that when parents are offered voluntary coaching using proven approaches, they enthusiastically use what they learn to produce real differences in their children's lives. And when children succeed, they are much more likely to become good parents themselves.



net returns (economic benefits minus costs) to society of \$22,000 for every child served because of increases in graduation rates, decreases in special education and crime costs, and many other benefits.²² Other projections of savings are even higher.

In addition, one of the big three credit agencies is basing credit ratings for states in part on how well the state's children are doing in graduating and acquiring needed educational skills. To produce skilled employees and attract new industries, states need to have a top-performing early education system as part of their education plans.²³

Governors and State Legislators are Stepping Forward

In 2013, 25 states – about half with Democratic and half with Republican leadership – proposed and/or signed into law preschool expansions.²⁴ This trend continues in 2014, with preschool funding increases proposed in California, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, among other states.

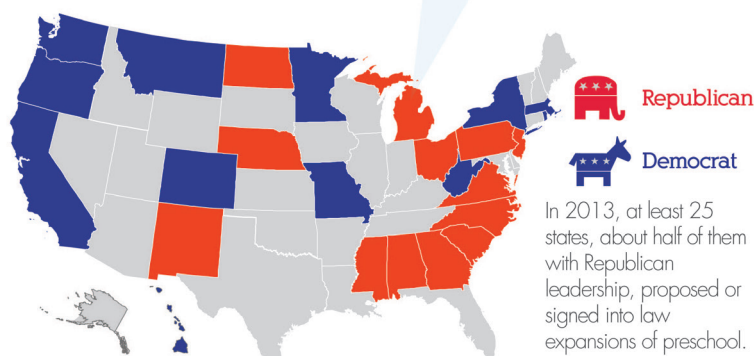
Unfortunately, the cost of high-quality preschool—an average of \$9,076 per year—is higher than many families, particularly low- and moderate-income families, can afford.²⁵ According to a 2012 study, the average cost for an

infant in center-based care was more than the cost of tuition and fees at a four-year public college in 31 states and the District of Columbia.²⁶

STATES THAT EXPANDED PRESCHOOL IN 2013

"We know that children will be much more successful in school – and their life beyond graduation – if they have a solid foundation for learning to build upon. We've made early childhood education a priority in Michigan because we know the value of giving our youngest learners a great start."

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder



“As an athlete and a member of the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports, I know that high-quality preschool is a home run in terms of getting kids on track to success in school and beyond.”

Nolan Moody, Former pitcher MSU Baseball, 2006-09;
Detroit Tiger Minor League system, 2009-10.



An Important Opportunity

We currently have an important opportunity to increase the number of Michigan children who are offered high-quality preschool. The Michigan Legislature is considering a request by Governor Rick Snyder to substantially increase preschool funding for Michigan’s successful Great Start Readiness Program to ensure that Michigan is a “no-wait state” for preschool.²⁷



If our state does not invest wisely now, far too many children will continue to struggle through life, causing themselves and others pain while running up expenses for taxpayers. Expanding access to high-quality preschool will ensure that more children can become successful, productive adults and parents.

Coaches and athletes agree: it’s time to do what works for Michigan’s future.

PERCENT OF MICHIGAN STUDENTS GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL IN FOUR YEARS BY COUNTY

COUNTY	2010 - 11 GRADUATION RATE	COUNTY	2010 - 11 GRADUATION RATE
STATEWIDE	76%	Keweenaw	NA
Alcona	83	Lake	NA
Alger	NA	Lapeer	86
Allegan	81	Leelanau	79
Alpena	70	Lenawee	78
Antrim	87	Livingston	83
Arenac	77	Luce	88
Baraga	80	Mackinac	NA
Barry	80	Macomb	75
Bay	75	Manistee	78
Benzie	79	Marquette	83
Berrien	78	Mason	78
Branch	80	Mecosta	70
Calhoun	74	Menominee	69
Cass	67	Midland	83
Charlevoix	75	Missaukee	82
Cheboygan	82	Monroe	80
Chippewa	72	Montcalm	86
Clare	72	Montmorency	NA
Clinton	92	Muskegon	71
Crawford	73	Newaygo	74
Delta	85	Oakland	78
Dickinson	85	Oceana	69
Eaton	75	Ogemaw	68
Emmet	81	Ontonagon	NA
Genesee	72	Osceola	82
Gladwin	80	Oscoda	NA
Gogebic	79	Otsego	85
Grand Traverse	83	Ottawa	85
Gratiot	82	Presque Isle	NA
Hillsdale	75	Roscommon	64
Houghton	87	Saginaw	75
Huron	84	St. Clair	78
Ingham	71	St. Joseph	78
Ionia	83	Sanilac	88
Iosco	69	Schoolcraft	88
Iron	84	Shiawassee	81
Isabella	78	Tuscola	81
Jackson	76	Van Buren	72
Kalamazoo	74	Washtenaw	80
Kalkaska	76	Wayne	70
Kent	75	Wexford	79

Source: U.S. Department of Education

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