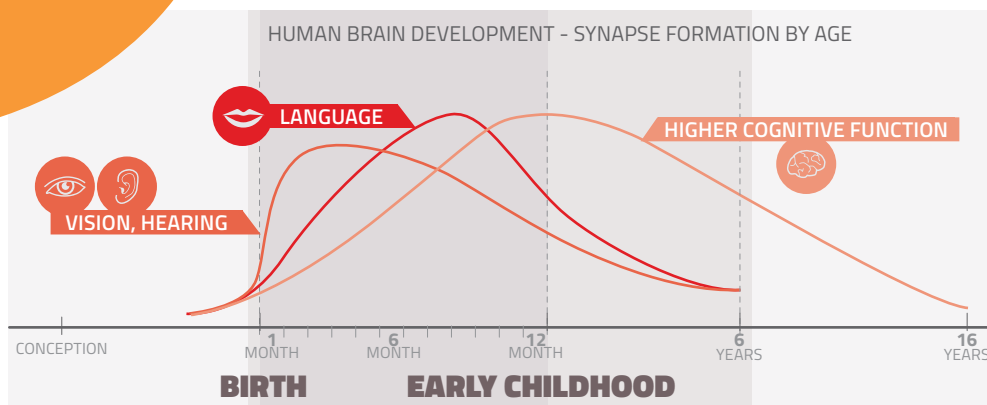


Taking action to make sure all children are
GREAT BY 8



The period of early childhood offers an incredible opportunity to improve outcomes for our children, families and communities.

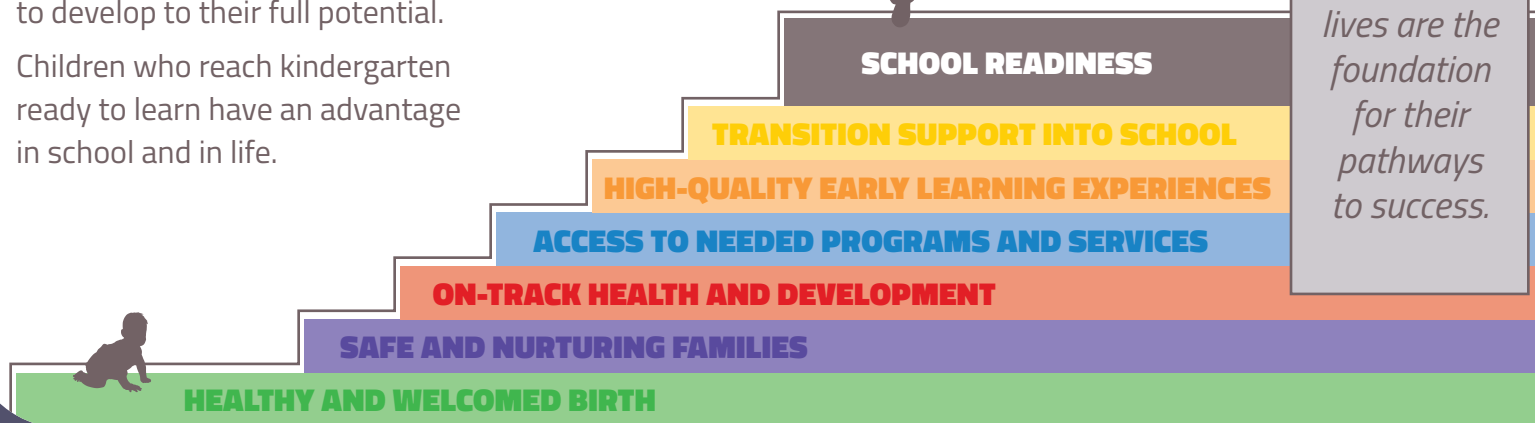


The architecture of the brain begins to take shape before birth and continues to develop at an extraordinary pace through the first years of life.¹ As young children grow, learn, and play, their experiences wire their brains' basic architecture.²

Early experiences – both positive and negative – have a direct and lasting impact on children's development.

Healthy pregnancies, safe and nurturing families, consistent medical care and nutritious food, and access to high-quality early care and learning experiences, help young children to develop to their full potential.

Children who reach kindergarten ready to learn have an advantage in school and in life.

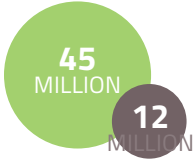


The first years of children's lives are the foundation for their pathways to success.

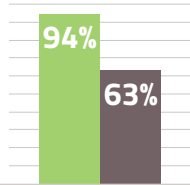




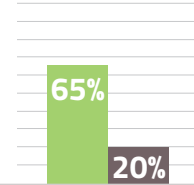
There are meaningful differences in the early experiences of young children.



Children in poverty hear fewer words at home.³



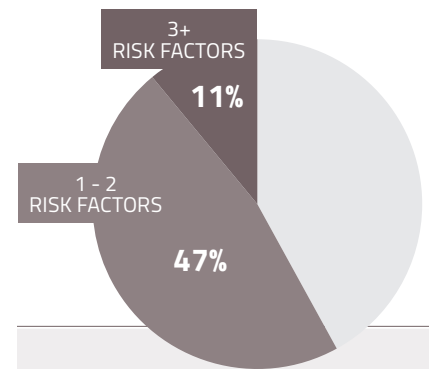
Children in poverty are less likely to be read to frequently.⁴



Children in poverty are less likely to attend high-quality preschools.⁵

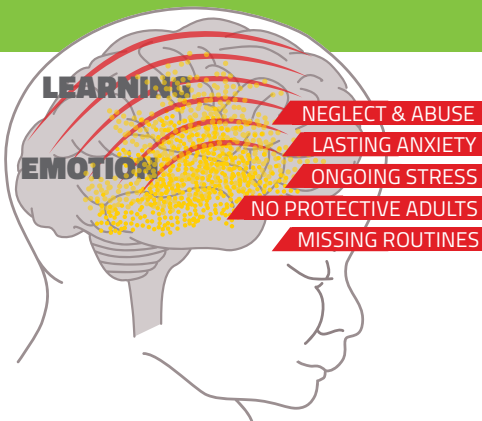
In Hawai'i, too many young children are exposed to adverse childhood conditions that can lead to toxic stress.

More than half (58%) of Hawai'i's youngest children live in families made vulnerable by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).



11% of young children in Hawai'i face three or more risk factors.⁶

Toxic stress can damage the developing brain.



Stress is tolerable when it is short lived, or when it is buffered by supportive relationships, like a strong family.

But when stress lasts longer it can become toxic, especially when children lack the protection of consistent supportive relationships.

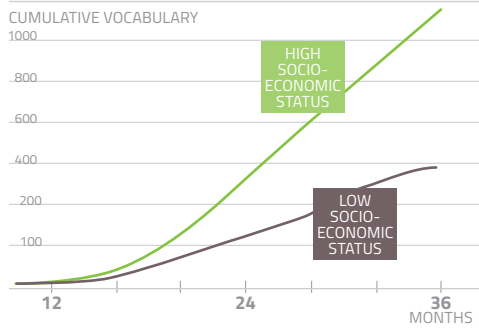


Toxic stress releases chemicals that disrupt critical brain connections and can derail healthy development.⁷

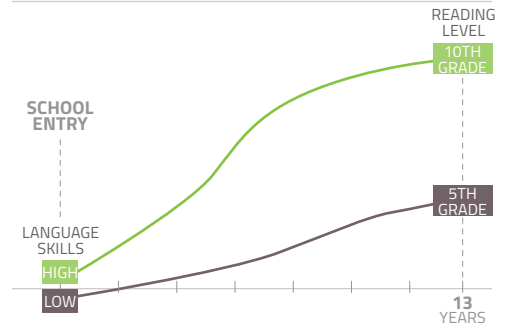
Toxic stress can lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior, and mental and physical health.

Poverty and deprivation in early childhood have lasting implications for children.

Readiness gaps all too often become achievement gaps.

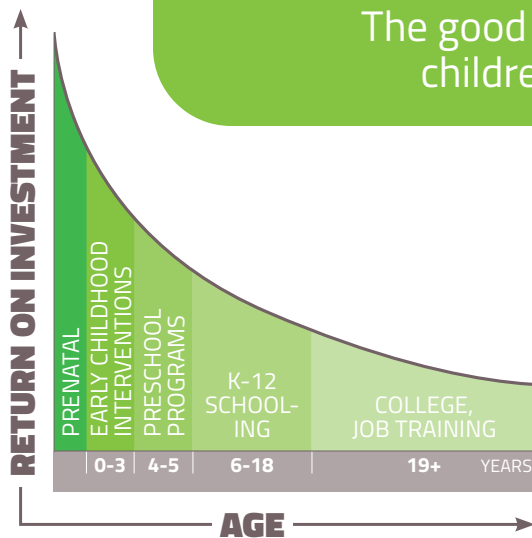


Young children in poverty fall behind in vocabulary development.⁸

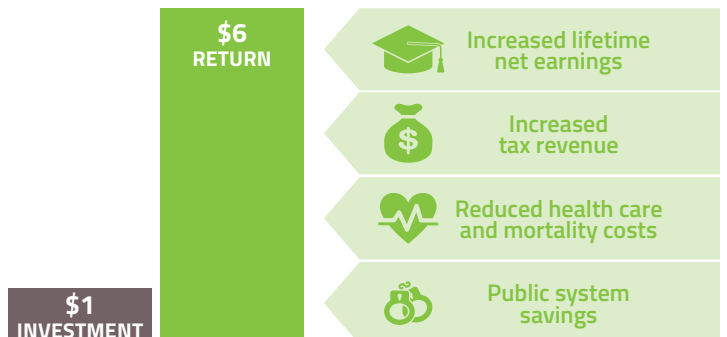


Language skills at kindergarten entry affect reading skills years down the road.⁹

The good news: Investing in young children and families works.



High-quality efforts that target young children are both more effective – and more cost-effective – than remedial efforts later in life.¹⁰



High quality early interventions show a return on investment of 6:1.¹¹

Investments in early childhood programs and strengthening the early childhood workforce are some of the smartest community development strategies.¹²



Young children's health and well being lay the foundation for Hawai'i's community and economic development.



Early Childhood Action Strategy is a statewide, public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families.

TAKING ACTION FOR HAWAII'S CHILDREN

Action Strategy brings together more than 100 professionals from Hawai'i State departments, county agencies, and early childhood organizations.

Both the public and private sector influence young children and their families, but neither sector can address young children's needs alone.

Action Strategy is organized into a set of cross-disciplinary teams. Each of these teams works to identify gaps in the system and collaborate around solutions.



(1) C.A. Nelson. 2000. Center on the Developing Child. Harvard University.

(2) National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. 2006. Perspectives: What Science Is Telling Us. www.developingchild.net

(3) Betty Hart & Todd R. Risley. 1995. Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children. Baltimore MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

(4) Lee and Burkam 2002. Differences in the experiences of young children by socioeconomic status

(5) Lee and Burkam 2002. Differences in the experiences of young children by socioeconomic status

(6) Early Childhood State Profiles. 2017. National Center for Children in Poverty. nccp.org

(7) Jack P Shonkoff, et. al, 2012. The lifelong effects of early childhood adversity and toxic stress. Pediatrics 129(1) e232-e246.

(8) Hart and Risley. 1995. Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.

(9) Hirsch (1996) The Effects of Weaknesses in Oral Language on Reading Comprehension Growth cited in Torgesen, J. (2004). Current issues in assessment and intervention for younger and older students. Paper presented at the NASP Workshop.

(10) James Heckman. 2007. The Heckman Curve. www.heckmanequation.org/resource/the-heckman-curve

(11) Conservative estimates of quantifiable economic returns on investment, not taking into account the opportunity and psychological costs of remedial education, toxic stress, etc. Diaz, Jose Y. 2015. Prospective Return on Investment of the Northside Achievement Zone. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. 15 February 2015.

(12) Heckman, James. 2012. Invest in Early Childhood Development: Reduce Deficits, Strengthen the Economy. www.Heckmanequation.org

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