

The Nexus of Early Childhood Policy, Research, and Practice: Implications for Educational Equality and Diversity

La'Tara O. Lampkin, Ph.D.

What matters most for children: Influencing inequality at the start of life



“Reducing early childhood inequality requires both promoting existing knowledge and generating new knowledge.” (Ebony C. Howard, 2015).

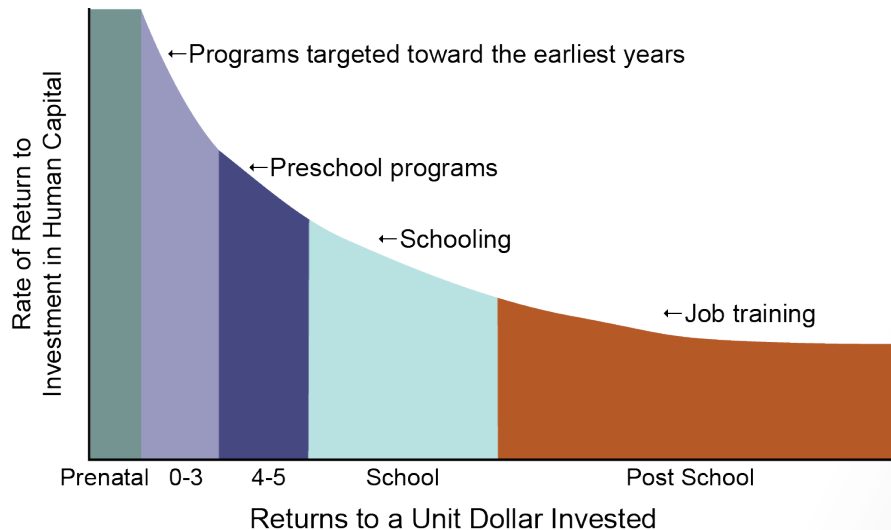
Why we can't wait.

Without high-quality early childhood education and care services from the start of human life, children experiencing poverty or other negative circumstances early in life are more likely to drop out high school, experience chronic and long-term unemployment and become involved in the criminal justice system (Wagmiller & Adelman, 2009).

Early childhood investments: A critical issue for all

- Investments made during the first five years of life are
 - critical to children's development
 - yield greater educational and economic returns

Early investments in early childhood education produce greater returns.



Heckman, James J. (2008). "Schools, Skills and Synapses," *Economic Enquiry*, 46(3): 289-324

What is available and what works?

- Which U.S. policies and programs aimed at helping the least privileged infants and toddlers thrive are available?
- Which works best for whom and when?

Categories of U.S. programs, services, and policies

- Home Visitation and Parent Support Programs
- Pediatric Screeners, Child Abuse Prevention and Early Intervention Services
- A Global Perspective
- Early childhood Education and Care Programs

WHAT TO PROMOTE, GENERATE, DEVELOP OR EVALUATE

Evidence-Based Solutions

RESEARCH TO INFORM POLICY AND PRACTICE

Promote the
Knowledge We Have

Early Childhood Education Policies & Initiatives

- Economic Opportunity Act of 1964
 - Headstart Program (1965)
- Voluntary Pre-K Act (VPK)
 - Developmental Screenings
 - Professional Development
 - Early Learning and Developmental Standards
 - School Readiness Curriculum Approval
 - Voluntary Pre and Post Child Assessments

Research contributions

- Early childhood classroom environments and general educational practices
- Educational practices designed to impact children's academic and social outcomes
- Professional development for early childhood educators

Early childhood classroom environments and general instructional practices

- Critical associations with positive outcomes for your children
 - features of pre-kindergarten classrooms, such as the quality of teacher-child interactions and the nature of teachers' feedback to children
 - parents' and teachers' support for children's learning
- Participation in higher-quality classroom environments is associated with improved learning outcomes for young children

Early childhood classroom environments and general instructional practices

- Need to improve characteristics of the classroom language environment
- Content of early childhood education may be relatively constrained with respect to provision of math- and science-oriented instruction
- Composition of preschool classrooms may influence children's learning

Educational practices designed to impact children's academic and social outcomes

- Use of specialized activities to improve children's abstract reasoning skills
- Differentiate more- and less-effective curricula that support children's early reading.
- Use read-alouds to support children's early reading skills
- Supplement literacy instruction for children who are at risk for reading difficulty

Educational practices designed to impact children's academic and social outcomes

- Young children who are deaf or hard of hearing require specialized supports to develop language and literacy skills.

Professional development for early childhood educators

- Professional development to be effective for improving teacher-related outcomes:
 - is learner centered, building on the individual teachers' strengths and needs;
 - addresses important content knowledge;
 - provides individuals with opportunities to test their understanding by trying things out and receiving feedback; and
 - occurs within a collaborative environment.

Generate New
Knowledge

Areas of further exploration

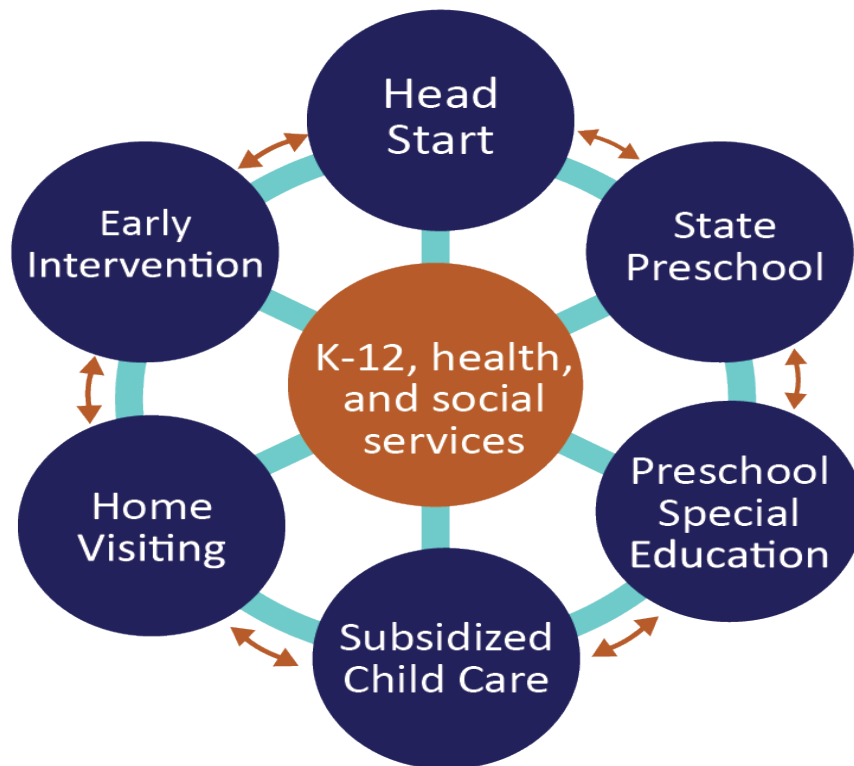
- The quality of early childhood education and intervention for all children
- Key characteristics of effective instruction
- Intensive instruction for children with significant learning needs
- Improved teaching practices

Areas of further exploration

- Coordinated systems
- Researcher-practitioner-community partnerships
- Continuum of evidence-based practices and policies

Effective coordination and integration across early care and education programs

Securely Linking Data Across Programs: Providing access to consistent child, family, program and workforce information.



Source: The Early Childhood Data Collaborative (2016)

Effective research partnerships

- Creation of research alliances & coalitions
- Research driven by
 - community-needs
 - practice
 - policy



Implementation of what works: What is the WCC?

WHAT IS THE WWC?

A TRUSTED SOURCE ABOUT WHAT WORKS IN EDUCATION

WHY

The work of the WWC helps teachers, administrators, and policymakers make evidence-based decisions.



WHAT

The WWC reviews **evidence** of effectiveness of programs, policies, or practices by using a consistent and transparent set of standards. The WWC doesn't rank, evaluate, or endorse interventions.

EFFECTIVENESS STUDIES



WHO

Hundreds of trained and certified **reviewers** rate whether studies meet **standards** and then **summarize** results that do meet standards.



HOW

The WWC creates products that present findings on what works in education, including:



INTERVENTION REPORTS



SINGLE STUDY REVIEWS



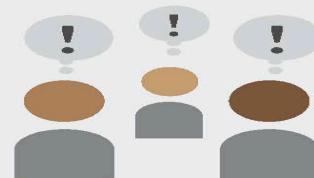
QUICK REVIEWS



PRACTICE GUIDES

WHERE

Summaries of the available research interventions are available at whatworks.ed.gov



INFORMING THE FIELD: Evidence-Based Solutions

DISCUSSION

References

- Diamond, K.E., Justice, L.M., Siegler, R.S., & Snyder, P.A. (2013). Synthesis of IES Research on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education. (NCSE 2013-3001). Washington, DC: National Center for Special Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. This report is available on the IES website at <http://ies.ed.gov/>.
- Early Childhood Data Collaborative (2016). Using Coordinated Data Systems to Guide Early Childhood Education Policies. <http://ecedata.org>.
- Howard, E. C. (2015). What matters most for children: Influencing inequality at the start of life. American Institutes for Research.
- Institute of Educational Sciences. What Works Clearinghouse. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>.
- Wagmiller, R. L., & Adelman, R. M. (2009). Childhood and intergenerational poverty: The longterm consequences of growing up poor. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University.