

# Is child care a good public investment? Summary <sup>[1]</sup>

BRIEFing Note

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## AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order and online for download.

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This BRIEFing NOTE summarizes The benefits and costs of good child care: The economic rationale for public investment in young children by Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky, Economics, Division of Management, University of Toronto at Scarborough.

## EXCERPTS

This economic study concludes that for every dollar invested in high quality child care, there is a two dollar benefit to children, parents and society. The study calculates the costs and benefits of providing publicly funded early childhood care and education for all children 2-5 years of age-those whose mothers are in the paid workforce, as well as those whose mothers are not.

This traditional economic cost-benefit analysis concludes that:

- public spending for high quality child care is a good investment for Canada;
- high quality early childhood care and education has long-lasting effects on all children's social, intellectual and emotional development, regardless of socio-economic background or mothers' workforce participation;
- high quality child care provides not only private benefits for children and parents, but public benefits for society at large;
- the public benefit comes from the future effects of enhanced child development (higher school performance, high school completion and income) and mothers' workforce participation;
- development is enhanced only if child care is good quality;
- high quality child care is not likely to be produced through the free market approach to child care currently employed in Canada.

**Tags:** [economics](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

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[child development](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

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