

High-quality pre-kindergarten: The key to crime prevention and school success in Florida ^[1]

Author: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids

Source: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids ^[2]

Format: Report

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AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

News release in html ^[2]

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from news release:

A bipartisan organization of law enforcement officials and crime victims today released a new report showing that high quality pre-kindergarten is proven to cut crime, and called on the legislature to ensure that the universal pre-kindergarten program voters approved in 2002 contains the quality standards proven to reduce crime as children grow up.

In the coming weeks, the Florida state legislature will decide what quality standards will apply to the universal pre-kindergarten program approved by voters in 2002. The law enforcement and victim of violence members of Fight crime: Invest in kids are urging lawmakers to ensure the pre-kindergarten program, set to begin in 2005, is of the highest possible quality.

The report highlights a number of studies showing the crime-prevention impact of high quality pre-kindergarten. A 35-year study of the High/Scope Perry Preschool in Ypsilanti, Michigan compared at-risk three- and four-year-olds in that high quality program to similar kids who were left out. Those not enrolled were five times more likely to become chronic lawbreakers as adults. That same program was also shown to save \$7 dollars for every \$1 invested, largely due to the reduction in crime.

The report also highlights the Florida Quality Improvement Study, which shows the positive impact well-trained teachers have on their students. Researchers looked at 150 preschool centers across Florida and found that teachers with Bachelor's degrees were the most engaged, creative and sensitive with their students. Studies show that when kids get that kind of attention, they are much more likely to succeed in school and later in life. Quality standards for pre-k teachers have been one of the more contested issues in the current legislative debate.

In addition to teacher quality, the report highlights other standards needed to produce the crime-prevention benefits of pre-kindergarten programs. They include strong parent involvement; a ratio of no more than ten children per staff member; class sizes of 20 children or less; and screening for hearing, vision and other possible impediments to learning.

Support for investments in high quality pre-kindergarten to fight crime is nearly universal among law enforcement. Dozens of state and national law enforcement organizations have called for greater investments in high quality pre-kindergarten as a means to fight crime, including the Florida Police Chiefs Association, the Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association and the Florida Sheriffs Association.

Related link: Op-Ed: High-quality pre-K programs best deterrent of crime ^[2]

Region: United States ^[3]

Tags: quality ^[4]

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Links

^[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/04/05/high-quality-pre-kindergarten-key-crime-prevention-and> ^[2]

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