

Foundations of lifelong health are built in early childhood^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report^[2]

Executive summary^[3]

Description:

A vital and productive society with a prosperous and sustainable future is built on a foundation of healthy child development. Health in the earliest years -- beginning with the future mother's well-being before she becomes pregnant -- lays the groundwork for a lifetime of vitality. When developing biological systems are strengthened by positive early experiences, children are more likely to thrive and grow up to be healthy adults. Sound health also provides a foundation for the construction of sturdy brain architecture and the achievement of a broad range of skills and learning capacities.

Key recommendations:

- High-quality early care and education programs can promote health and prevent disease, not just prepare children to succeed in school.
- Child welfare agencies can help prevent long-term adult impairment, not just provide immediate child protection.
- Zoning laws and land development policies can facilitate healthy lifestyles, not just generate commercial profit.
- Alternative child care arrangements for young children whose mothers are mandated to work as a condition of receiving public assistance provide an opportunity to build foundations for healthy development, not just support maternal employment.

Related link: Ordering information^[4]

Region: United States^[5]

Tags: health^[6]

child development^[7]

outcomes^[8]

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