MISSION: READINESS
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA
WASHINGTON

FACTSHEET

Investing in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Can Improve Military Readiness

As of 2017, 70 percent of young people between the ages of 17 and 24 in Washington were unable to serve their country in uniform. As of 2020, the national rate of youth ineligible to serve increased to 77 percent, from 71 percent in 2017.[1] This shrinking pool of eligible recruits poses a threat to our military preparedness, national security, and the security of our state. Fortunately, high-quality early childhood education programs, like ECEAP, can help reduce the factors that lead to military ineligibility, by helping children become healthy and fit adults, do well in school, avoid criminal behavior, and pursue an abundance of postsecondary opportunities, including a career in the military, if they choose.

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children in ECEAP (2021-22) have a parent in the military

ECEAP can help children succeed

Research shows that high-quality preschool can help children:

- Do well in school
- Achieve a healthy weight
- Stay on the right side of the law

Do well in school: Children who attend high-quality preschool are more likely to arrive at kindergarten ready to learn, with enhanced early math, language, and literacy skills.[2] They are also less likely to be held back in school or to need special education,[3] and more likely to be proficient in reading and math.[4] Preschool participants also have an increased probability of graduating from high school.[5]

Achieve a healthy weight: Early learning providers can help children develop healthy habits at a young age by serving nutritious meals and ensuring children get adequate exercise throughout the day.[6] Pre-K programs that emphasize healthy eating, physical activity and parent engagement can help lower child obesity rates by five to 24 percent.[7]

Stay on the right side of the law: An MIT study of the Boston preschool program found that enrollees were less likely to have been incarcerated in a juvenile facility during high school, compared to non-enrollees.[8] Children *not* served by the Chicago Child-Parent Centers (CPC) early education program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18.[9] By age 24, the

people served by the CPC were 20 percent less likely to have served time in jail or prison.[10]

2023 Priorities for ECEAP

We seek continued legislative support for increasing access to ECEAP by ensuring the per child rate covers the cost of quality, expanding slots so the program can serve more children across the state, and enough learning space to meet the demand.

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1 https://dacowits.defense.gov/Portals/48/Documents/General%20Documents/RFI%20Docs/Sept2016/JAMRS%20RFI%2014.pdf?ver=2016-09-09-164855-510; U.S. Department of Defense, Office of People Analytics (2022). 2020 Qualified Military Available (QMA) study.

2 https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001115 ; https://ed.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PAPKC-Impact-Study-ExSum_Final.pdf ; https://nhsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/HSA-School-Readiness.pdf ; https://srcd.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/cdev.12099

3 https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0885200621000478 ; http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Arkansas20Longitudinal20Report20May2013n.pdf ; https://captulsa.org/uploaded_assets/pdf/Phillips-Gormley-Anderson-2016.pdf

4 https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10566-020-09595-w ; https://captulsa.org/uploaded_assets/pdf/Phillips-Gormley-Anderson-2016.pdf ; .https://ijccep.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40723-020-00073-3

5 http://www.hamiltonproject.org/papers/the_long_term_impacts_of_head_start ;. https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/193816

6 https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/childcareece.html7 DCYF Early Learning Management System (ELMS), December 5, 2018

7 https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2012/12_0118.htm

8 https://blueprintcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Blueprint-Labs-Discussion-Paper-2021.4-Gray-Lobe-Pathak-and-Walters.pdf

9 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11343481

10 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3793348/

Mission: Readiness
Retired admirals and generals strengthening national security by ensuring kids stay in school, stay fit, and stay out of trouble.

Council for a Strong America is a national, bipartisan nonprofit that unites membership organizations, including law enforcement leaders, retired admirals and generals, and business executives, that promote solutions ensuring that our next generation of Americans will be successful, productive members of society.

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