SHEPHERDING THE NEXT GENERATION
COUNCIL FOR A STRONG AMERICA

FACTSHEET

High-Quality Early Care and Education Strengthens Children and Families

God created the family to be the primary place for educating a child on how he or she is to live. Values are taught and nurtured within the context of the family (Dt. 6:4-9; Ps. 78:5-8; Pro. 1; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 1:5). However, some parents experience more difficulty with child rearing than others, lacking resources or the support of a spouse to raise their children on a path towards lives of health, opportunity and values. That's why services that strengthen families have the power to transform the lives of disadvantaged children, such as high-quality early care and education programs.

High-Quality Early Care and Education Can Strengthen Families

Research shows that high-quality early learning programs can help children get a good start in life, engage parents in their education, and help them grow up to have strong families of their own:

- Children who participated in New Jersey's preschool program were three-fourths of a year ahead in math and two-thirds of a year ahead in literacy when they reached the 4th and 5th grades.[1]
- Participants in the Tulsa, Oklahoma Head Start program had higher state achievement

"Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding."
(Jeremiah 3:15)

scores in math in 7th grade and were 31 percent less likely to be held back by 8th grade compared to non-participants.[2]

- Children in the Abecedarian Project received child care in infancy, followed by preschool. Participants were 42 percent less likely to have babies before the age of 20.[3] They were also four times more likely to earn a college degree, 42 percent more likely to have been consistently employed by age 30, and 80 percent less likely to have used public assistance for extended periods of time.[4]
- Women who had attended the Perry Preschool program as children were five times more likely to be married and living with their husbands by age 27, and had one-third fewer births out of wedlock than women who did not attend.[5] Men left out of this preschool program as children were 63 percent more likely to later father children they did not raise.[6]

Conclusion

Pastors and ministry leaders are already working in many ways to strengthen families and help children in their own communities. But they need help from policymakers to ensure vulnerable children have access to quality early learning programs. Maintaining investments in these programs is necessary to help disadvantaged children live up to their God-given potential; make positive contributions to society; and someday raise strong, healthy families of their own. Congress must continue to prioritize investments in Head Start, the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Preschool Development Grants.

1 http://nieer.org/sites/nieer/files/APPLES%20 5th%20Grade.pdf

2 http://captulsa.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CROCUSPolicyBriefAugust2016.pdf

3 http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/early-childhood-education-young-adult-outcomes-abecedarian-project

4 http://fpg.unc.edu/node/4083

5 http://www.aypf.org/publications/rmaa/pdfs/HighScopePerry.pdf

6 https://highscope.org/perrypreschoolstudy

Shepherding the Next Generation
Evangelical pastors and ministry leaders calling for biblically-based and effective approaches to strengthen families and communities.

Council for a Strong America is a national, bipartisan nonprofit that unites five organizations comprised of law enforcement leaders, retired admirals and generals, business executives, pastors, and prominent coaches and athletes who promote solutions that ensure our next generation of Americans will be citizen-ready.

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