



**“ Early childhood services are critical to growing the skilled workforce our nation needs to thrive.”**

**– Ron Pointer, National Association of Workforce Boards**

**“ Early childhood education has a tremendous impact on the national economic security and the viability of the American dream.”**

**– U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Institute for a Competitive Workforce**

**“ America needs employees who are well prepared—but we’re not getting them. ... The failing workforce pipeline can be repaired—but we have to start early.”**

**– ReadyNation<sup>1</sup>**

### **Workforce Pipeline Failing**

Despite a high unemployment rate, jobs remain unfilled.<sup>2</sup>

80 to 90 million American adults, about half of the workforce, do not have the basic education and communication skills required to acquire and advance in jobs.<sup>3</sup>

Effective early childhood programs enable children to become more creative, adaptable, team-ready employees by developing “soft skills.”

### **We Can Fix it By Starting Early**

There are only 2,000 days between the time a baby is born and when that child will begin kindergarten.

During that time, 90% of critical brain development takes place. The brain is the only organ not fully developed at birth. The wiring that forms the brain’s architecture happens in infancy and early childhood.

And how that wiring is formed, either as a strong or weak foundation, depends on a child’s earliest experiences.

### **A Good Investment**

A child’s quality of life and the contributions he or she will make to society can be directly traced to the first few years of life.

High quality early education yields higher graduation rates, reduced crime, higher earnings, and better jobs. As a result, economists estimate that every dollar invested in early education produces a 7-10% return on investment through increased personal achievement and social productivity.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Business Case for Early Childhood Investments*, ReadyNation, [http://www.readynation.org/uploads/20120409\\_ReadyNationBusinessCaseLowRes.pdf](http://www.readynation.org/uploads/20120409_ReadyNationBusinessCaseLowRes.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *Starting Smart & Finishing Strong*, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Institute for a Competitive Workforce, [http://www.readynation.org/uploads/20101005\\_ICWBrief10052010.pdf](http://www.readynation.org/uploads/20101005_ICWBrief10052010.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> *Return on Investments: Costs vs Benefits*, James J. Heckman, University of Chicago

# How can you and your business help?

Whether you define success for North Carolina as a stronger economy, reduced crime, successful students, or thriving communities, early education is key. As a business leader, your voice is vital to encourage early childhood investments.

Together, with your help, we can increase awareness that quality childhood experiences are directly related to North Carolina's economic future.

**Educate employees on the value of early childhood education.**

Children birth to five need the social, emotional, mental and physical preparation that will help them be ready for kindergarten.

**Visit a high-quality early learning site.**

Develop an understanding of what high quality learning means for a child's smart start in life.

**Convey to policymakers your support for public investment in early education.**

Business leaders can be powerful and impartial messengers in support of public/private investment in effective programs in a variety of forums: public meetings, personal communications and through the media.

**Share the importance of early child development with your customers.**

Include the First 2,000 Web Badge on your website. It's easy.  
Go to [www.first2000days.org/web-badges](http://www.first2000days.org/web-badges) for instructions.

**Make your voice heard.**

As a business leader, your voice can be a powerful one in advocating for sound investments in your community.

- » Encourage your business peers to get involved.
- » Make others aware of the First 2000 Days website: [www.first2000days.org](http://www.first2000days.org).
- » Write an Op-Ed or letter to the editor—we can help!
- » Host or co-host with us a forum to share research on the benefits of early childhood investments.

**For more information on how to get involved,  
email [info@first2000days.org](mailto:info@first2000days.org).**

