



Ready for School
Ready for Life



SMART
BEGINNINGS

South Hampton Roads

www.SmartBeginningsSHR.org



FACTS



1. In South Hampton Roads approximately 20% of children arrive at kindergarten not ready (up to 33% in some Virginia communities--Virginia Department of Education)

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2. A child that enters kindergarten behind all too often
 - remains behind throughout school and into life

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 - remains behind throughout school and into life
 - becomes a financial burden on our society
 - will not be part of the high-skilled workforce we need to compete in the 21st century

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3. Nationally, 49% of children who do not know their alphabet when they enter kindergarten are from middle class or higher (Pre-K Now)

FACTS



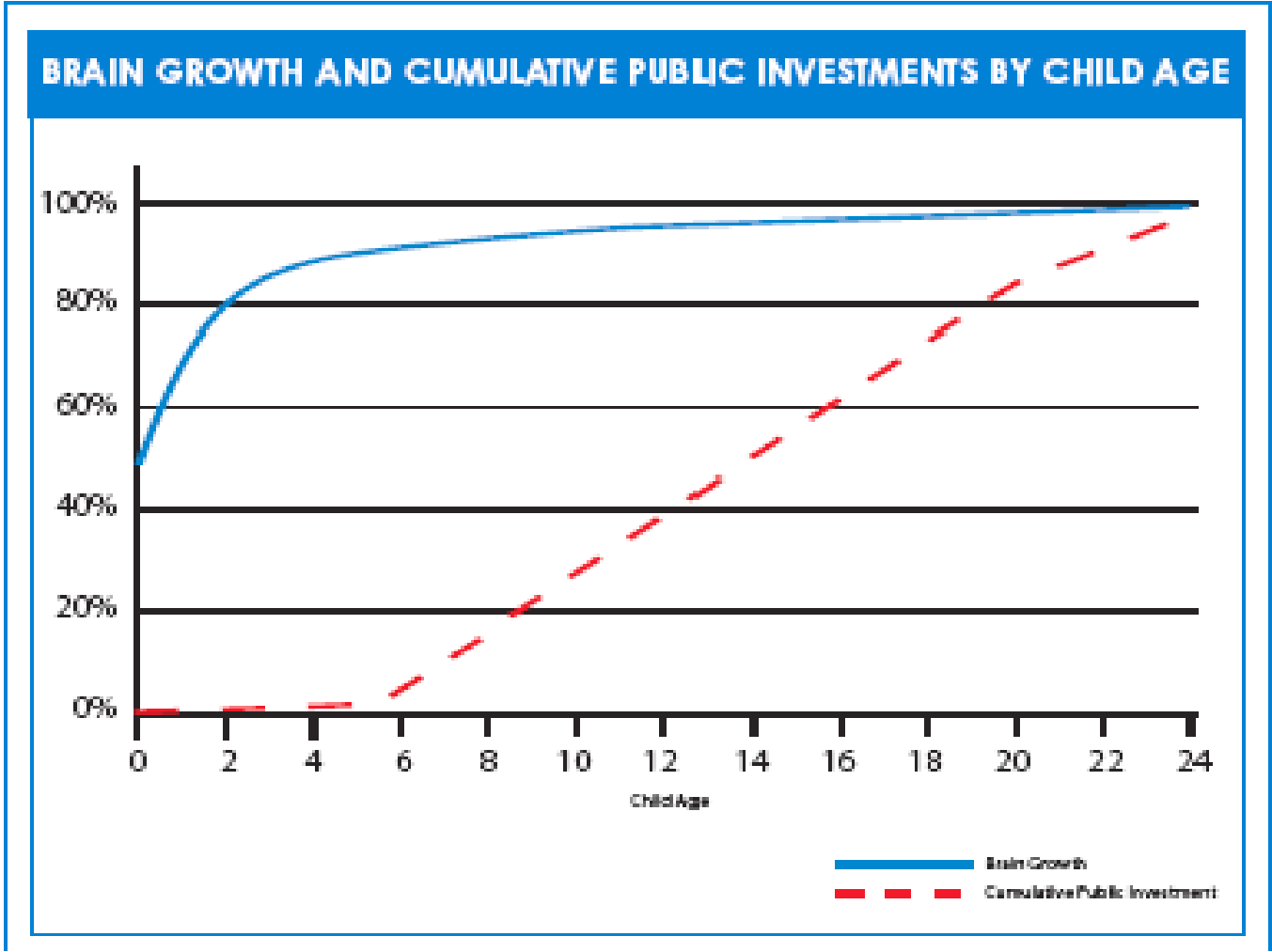
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Brain Growth Versus Investment



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6. Early childhood is a non-partisan issue
7. Maximizing the potential of every child is the right thing to do

SOLUTION



High quality care and education for all of Virginia's youngest citizens, ages birth to 5

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- According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, every \$1 invested in high quality early care and education can yield a 16% rate of return or greater

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High quality care and education for all of Virginia's youngest citizens, ages birth to 5

- 16% rate of return or greater
- “Investing in early childhood is the most cost effective means of investing in the future of the economy of our country.” Dr. James Heckman, 2000 Nobel Laureate in Economics

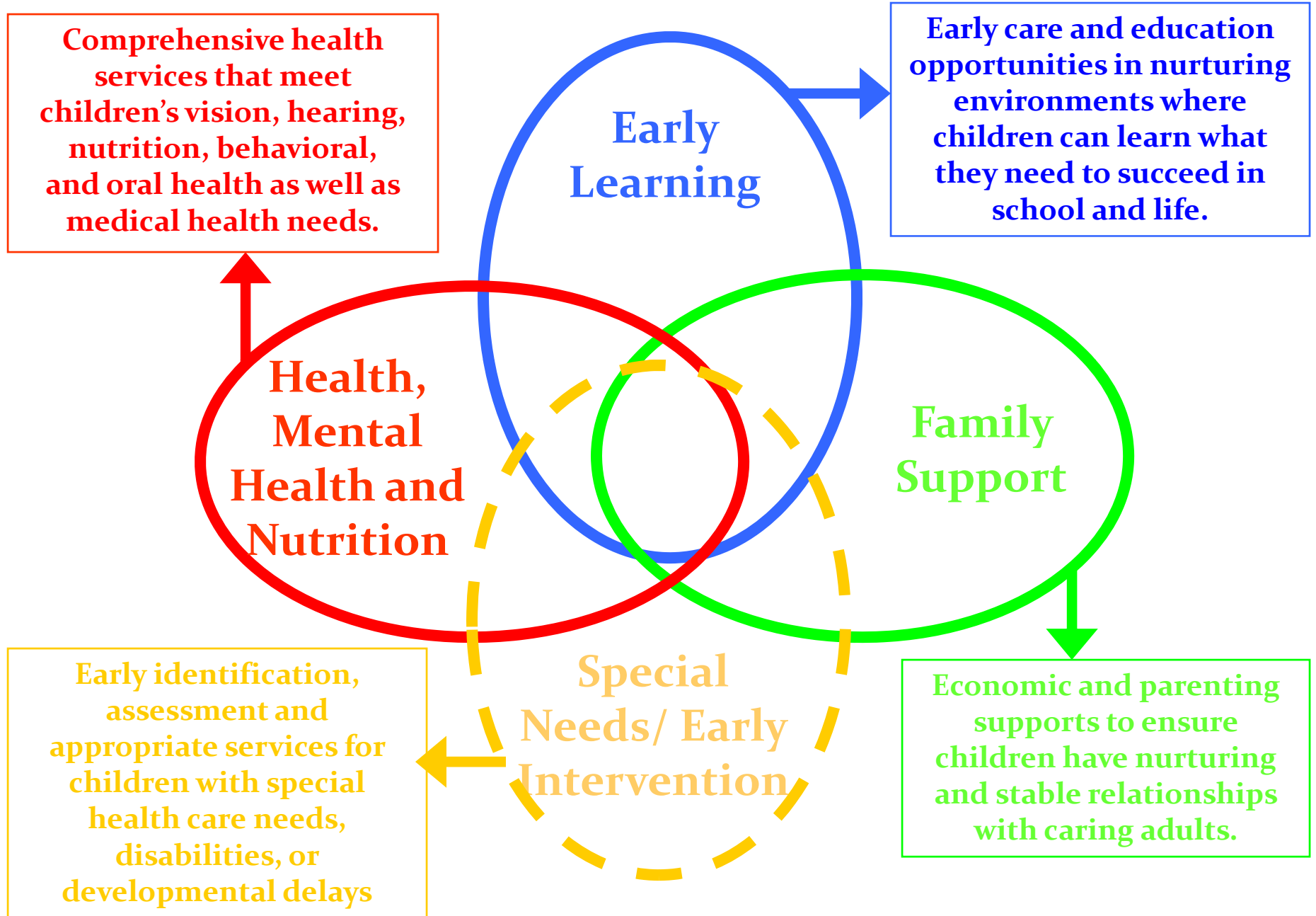
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High quality care and education for all of Virginia's youngest citizens, ages birth to 5

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- Dr. James Heckman, 2000 Nobel Laureate in Economics agrees
- The solution is far from easy

Early Childhood Development System



SOLUTION



High quality care and education for all of Virginia's youngest citizens, ages birth to 5

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- The solution is far from easy
- The solution is far from cheap

HOW IT ALL STARTED...



- A non-profit created by business and community leaders to address the issue of school readiness.
- Awarded \$500k state grant that required \$250k cash match.
- Vision: All children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life.

OUR ROLE:

- Maximize the potential of every child in our region and ensure access to high-quality early education by:
 - Raising Awareness.
 - Advocating for greater public-private investment.
 - Working with the five communities of South Hampton Roads to improve the current system.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:



- Created a career advancement tool adopted by the Commonwealth that helps early childhood teachers to advance in their training and education.
- Commissioned two studies of the early care and education industry.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:



- Linked parents with community resources by distributing our *Community Connections Resource Guide*. Over 84,000 distributed.
- Incubated a mentorship program to improve the quality for 48 child care centers and family home providers.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:



- Led development of action plans to improve early childhood systems in the five communities.
- Launched a two-year regional public awareness campaign in print and media to:
 - Raise awareness on the current state of early childhood and the importance of 0-5.
 - Build groundswell and army of advocates.
 - Position SBSHR as resource for parents.
- Gifted campaign to statewide coalitions.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS:



- Piloted quality rating improvement system (QRIS):
 - Market-driven approach to increase quality and improve consumer awareness.
 - *Consumer Reports* of child care for parents.
 - Creates consistent early learning standards in the state.
 - Measures five areas: teacher qualifications, interactions, structural components, learning environment and

WHAT'S NEXT?

- SBSHR receives \$4.6m in grants that will fund four initiatives to help children arrive at school prepared for success.
- The Batten Educational Achievement Fund of The Norfolk Foundation will provide \$4.1m in grants.
- The Norfolk Foundation's unrestricted funds will provide another \$585k to support the QRIS.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Early Learning Challenge Grants
 - Each of the five communities receive \$500k over 5 years in matching grants to implement action plans with defined benchmarks.
 - Early Learning Council in each community will be formed.
 - \$2.5m invested through The Batten Educational Achievement Fund of The Norfolk Foundation.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Quality Improvement Initiative
 - Implement Virginia's QRIS in 28 centers.
 - Implement quality program evaluation in 10 family child care homes.
 - Participating centers and homes can receive scholarships, mentorship for quality improvement, early learning materials and facility upgrades.
 - Child outcome assessment conducted to link quality with readiness of children.
 - Over \$1m invested over two years.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Launch multi-media public awareness campaign in January 2009 to:
 - Introduce QRIS.
 - Link quality and school readiness.
 - Drive parent demand for QRIS-rated facilities.
 - Spread message through print, television, internet and billboards.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Universal Newborn Screening Tool and Referral Service
 - Reach parents at time of their child's birth.
 - Develop screening/referral service for families.
 - Support the health and development of all young children from the start.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



- Adopt-A-Center to sponsor quality improvements.
- Join forces with Smart Beginnings South Hampton Roads to advocate for public support of a strong early education system.
- Influence public policy and action to increase public investment to ensure a smart beginning for all children.
- Work with your community to implement action plan.
- Examine family-friendly business practices.