



Importance of Early Childhood Education Federal Role in Education Study

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) creates standards and guidance for early childhood providers across the nation.

"Programs must be comprehensive in nature and developmentally appropriate for children so that both age specific and individual characteristics are addressed and designed to meet the needs of children and families served."

Research shows:

- * Poverty is the key issue that differentiates children coming to kindergarten
- * Unemployment has risen, so has the rate of child poverty. Currently more than one in five children in the USA lives in a family whose income falls below the federal poverty line
- * The achievement gap surfaces as early as at age 18 months and widens throughout early childhood
- * High quality prekindergarten has proven to alleviate grade repetition, dropouts and special education placement. It also increases the likelihood of healthier lifestyles, lowers the crime rate and lowers the overall social costs
- * Findings suggest that improving the quality of early childhood schools with disadvantaged students reduces poverty, raises earnings and increases tax revenue in the long run
- * Every dollar invested in early childhood education returns 10 cents on the dollar annually for the life of a child

Head Start, Even Start, IDEA grants for infants and Families and the Child Care and Development fund include participation of parents/families in their programs.

Case for All Children to have Quality Preschool Experiences

- * Only 40 states and Washington DC offer state-funded prekindergarten. Federally funded Head Start benefits only the poorest children.
- * Children from families who can afford to pay for private preschool score much higher in assessments than do children without preschool, thus widening the education standards gap.
- * A parent's educational background does not necessarily mean that his/her child is prepared to learn when entering kindergarten.
- * Inequality in the development of human capabilities can be prevented by the proper investment in people during the earliest and most crucial years of life

** Data documentation in LWV Education Study materials*



Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children Who Are Disadvantaged

Guiding principle behind federal legislation in public education – to educate for the common good and to “level the playing field” for disadvantaged students by providing them with the opportunity to succeed.

Studies consistently confirm that the root cause of low academic achievement is poverty. The most consistent predictor of test scores is family income.

Key federal legislation designed to help disadvantaged children:

1965 - ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) – a huge move towards educational equity, an umbrella law to fight Lyndon’s Johnson’s War on Poverty by providing funds for students identified as “disadvantaged”

1990 – EAHCA (Education for All Handicapped Children’s Act) amended and called IDEA (Individuals with Education Disabilities Act)

2001 – ESEA reauthorized as NCLB (No Child Left Behind)

Who is considered “disadvantaged” for federal funding under NCLB?

Title VII - Native Indians, Native Alaskans, and Native Hawaiians

Title 111 – English Language Learners
About 5 million students

Title VI, Part B – Rural Schools
Rural schools -50% of all districts

Title 1, Part D – Children Who Are Neglected or Delinquent
Majority of the students covered by this funding are incarcerated and are entitled to a public education

Title X, Part C – Children Who Are Homeless, Youth 6 – 17 Years of Age
Estimated population - 168,000 (considered a low number)

Title 1, Part C – Children Who Are Migrants

Children Who Are Disabled
13 disabilities provided for by IDEA
Covers around 6.6 million students