



*Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement
Leaders, and Violence Survivors
Preventing Crime and Violence*

March 13, 2015

Oregon Joint Ways & Means
Education Sub Committee
Salem, OR

Dear Co- Chair Monroe, Co-Chair Komp,
Sen. Roblan, Sen. Thomsen, Rep. Huffman, Rep. Smith Warner, Rep. Sprenger, Rep. Taylor:

As law enforcement leaders, we understand that early childhood programs both help children get on the right track and keep our communities safer. That's why we're writing to support increased funding for Healthy Families Oregon (home visiting), pre-kindergarten, improved kindergarten and early interventions that is in the Early Learning Division's budget. Making sure our children thrive is important to the entire state and should be a priority in the legislature this session.

These programs all have a research base that shows their numerous crime prevention outcomes and benefits for children and families. Voluntary home visiting programs like Healthy Families Oregon have been shown to cut child abuse and neglect by up to 50 percent while teaching mothers valuable child-raising skills. Data collected in Cincinnati showed that the mortality rate for infants receiving either Healthy Families America (HFA) or Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), another home visiting model, was 60 percent lower than for the comparison group. In randomized trials, NFP cut child abuse in half among families in Elmira, New York, and families who participated in the Child FIRST home visiting program were one-third less likely to be involved with child protective services after three years than families who did not participate.

Home visiting also makes economic sense. An Early Head Start program with a strong home visiting component showed that it improved the education and training of the mothers and also increased their incomes by \$300 per month on average. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy ran the numbers on home visiting's costs and known savings. They found that the home visiting program produced savings in improved children's health, reduced abuse and neglect, increased readiness for school and reduced future crime that added up to average net savings (after subtracting costs) of \$17,000 per family served.

High-quality pre-kindergarten and other early education programs have enormous benefit for society as well. An independent analysis of over 20 preschool programs demonstrated that quality preschool returned an average "profit" (economic benefits minus costs) to society of \$15,000 for every child served, by cutting crime and the cost of incarceration, and reducing other costs such as special education and welfare. By age 24, the people served by the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, a high-quality early education program, were 20 percent less likely to have served time in a jail or prison. By age 40, the children served by the high-quality Perry Preschool program in Michigan were 46 percent less likely to have been sentenced to prison or jail.

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Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a membership organization of law enforcement leaders and crime victims
under the umbrella non-profit Council for a Strong America

All of these programs promote reading proficiency by third grade, a major state initiative.

In terms of specific funding levels, we are supporting \$10 million increase for Healthy Families Oregon, \$30 million in new pre-K investments, \$5 million increase for the Kindergarten partnership and innovation fund and \$15 million increase for early intervention and childhood services. Early childhood investments help us do our jobs better. They make sure that more kids grow up happy and healthy and don't turn to crime. We hope the legislature will consider these outcomes when deciding budget levels.

Sincerely,

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Chief of Police, Tualatin

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Martha Brooks
*State Director, Fight Crime:
Invest in Kids*

Cc: Co-Chair Richard Devlin and Co-Chair Peter Buckley, OR Joint Ways & Means Committee
Governor Kate Brown, State of Oregon
Chief Education Officer Nancy Golden, Oregon Education Investment Board
Deputy State Superintendent Rob Saxton, Department of Education
Acting Director Megan Irwin, Early Learning Division