



Alliance for childhood education

“The Education Challenge in Kansas.
How Rotary and Business can get more involved”

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What is The Alliance?

The Alliance is a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of business leaders committed to improving Kansas and Missouri's education systems.

It was founded on the premise that the business community has the obligation, opportunity and capacity to increase the college and workforce readiness of all students through an ambitious, aggressive and comprehensive reform agenda.

The Alliance? – Rotary? – Education



5 CORE PRINCIPLES

- Student Focused
- Transparency
- Accountability
- ROI
- Innovation/ Choice



Avenues of Services

- Promoting peace
- Fighting disease
- Providing clean water
- Saving mothers and children
- Supporting education
- Growing local economies

The Global Crisis

In a globally competitive workplace, children must enter school prepared and ready to learn and succeed.

The National Crisis

By 2020, it is estimated that there will be 123M high wage, high-skilled jobs in the US; only 50M U.S. citizens will be trained to fill those jobs.

National Security

PENTAGON: 75% of 17 to 24-year-olds are unable to join the military.

CRIMINALITY: 1 / 10 American youth can't join because of one prior conviction for a felony or serious misdemeanor.

LOW EDUCATION: $\sim \frac{1}{4}$ young Americans lacks a high school diploma; many who do graduate lack academic skills necessary for the military.

OBESITY: 27% of young Americans are too overweight to join the military.

The Crisis in Kansas

724,000 Under age 18 / 205,000 under age 5

- 110K with no formal pre-k
- 134K live in poverty (\$22.8K or less for family of four)
- 53K live in extreme poverty (\$11.4K or less for family of four)
- 31% live in a household with only one parent
- 68% have one or both parents in workforce

School Readiness:

- Math - 52% of 4th graders and 59% of 8th graders below grade level
- Reading - 64% of 4th graders & 65% of 8th Graders read below grade level

Graduation:

- 17% of high school students don't graduate on time with a diploma
- 28% of African American's & Latinos do not graduate on time.

The Solution: Invest at Birth



Between ages 1-3 children learn to:

- ... Identify and regulate emotions
- ... Speak and understand language
- ... Make social connections

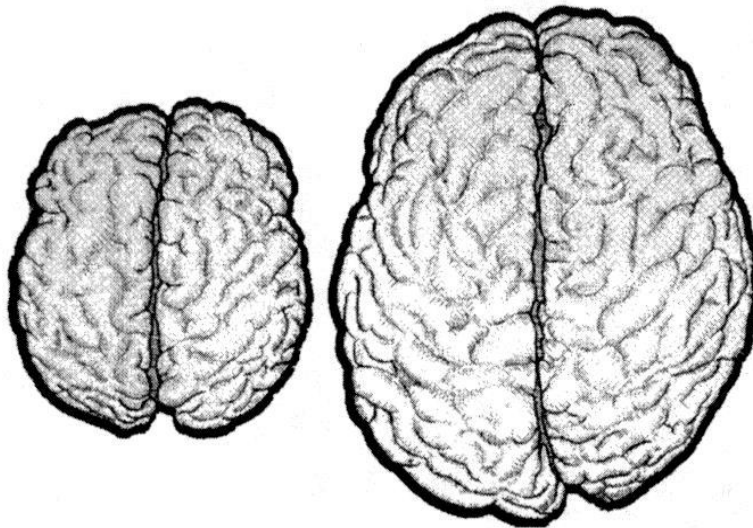
Between ages 3 - 5 years children learn:

- Complex social behaviors
- Problem solving abilities
- Pre-academic skills

[Invest Early Video](#)

Children are eager and capable learners...

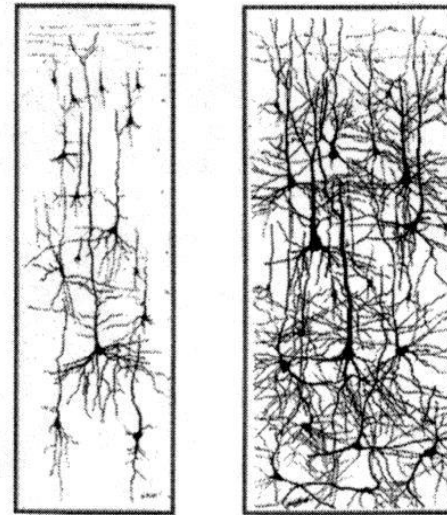
90% of brain growth occurs before kindergarten



Newborn

6 Year old

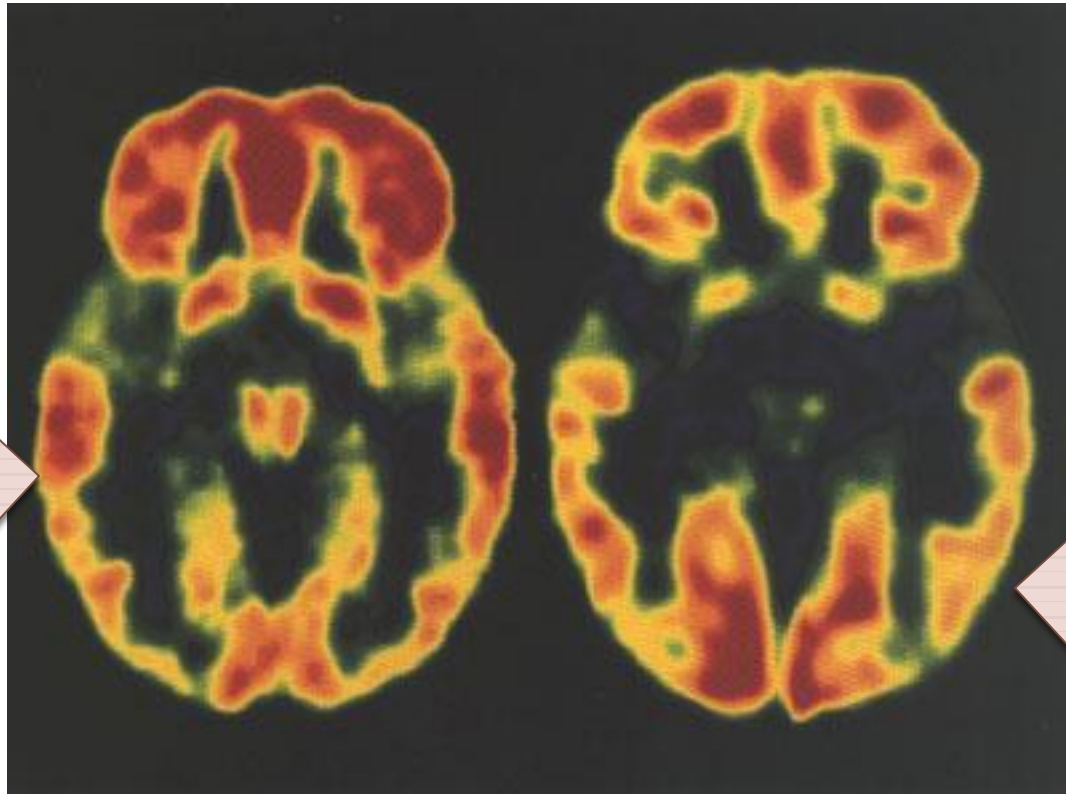
Newborn brain size proportionate
to 6 year old brain.



Newborn

6 Year old

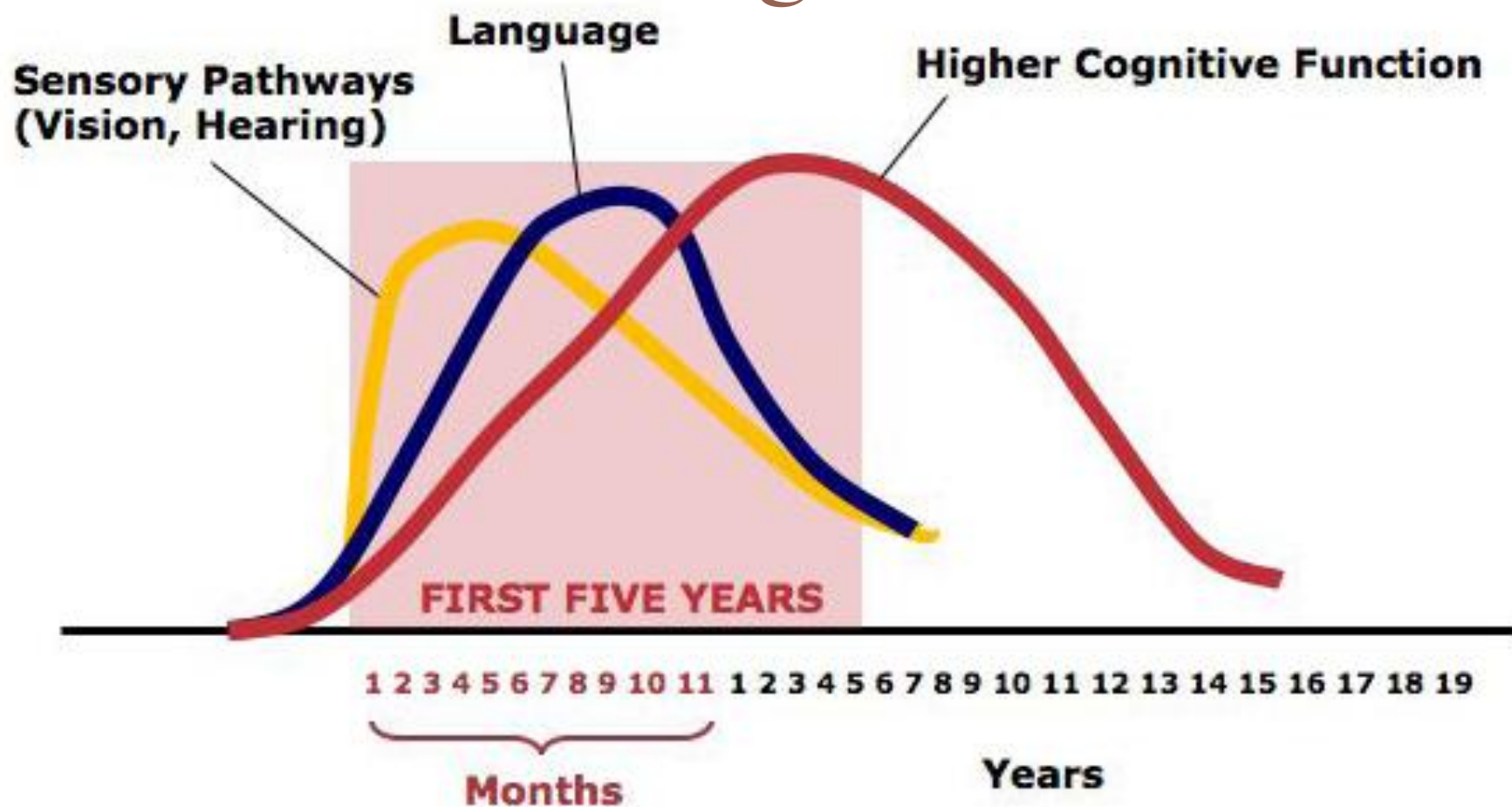
Newborn neural networks compared
to networks of a 6 year old.



Brain activity of a normal 5-year-old child

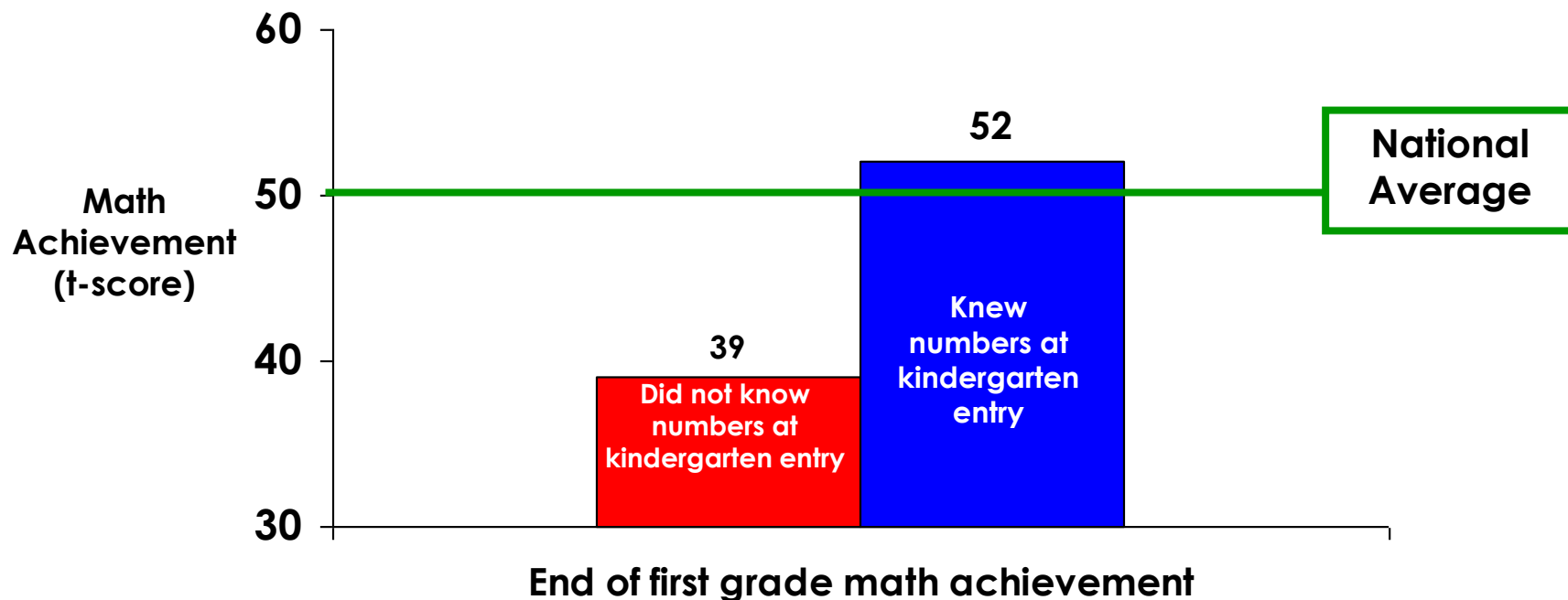
A 5-year-old institutionalized Romanian orphan who was neglected in infancy.

Skills Beget Skills



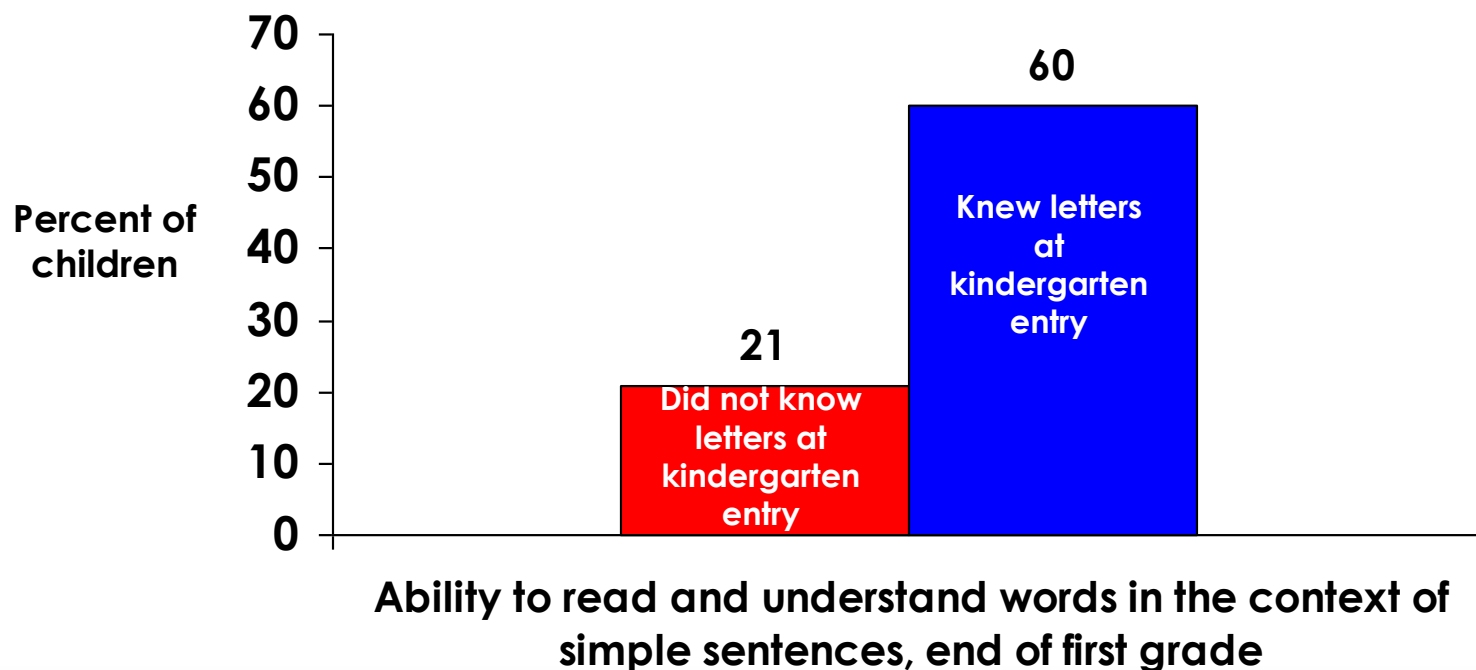
Children who start behind, too often stay behind...

Children who do not know their numbers when they enter kindergarten are behind in math at the end of first grade



Children who start behind, too often stay behind...

Children who know the alphabet when they enter kindergarten are 3 times as likely to be able to read and understand words in the context of simple sentences by the end of first grade

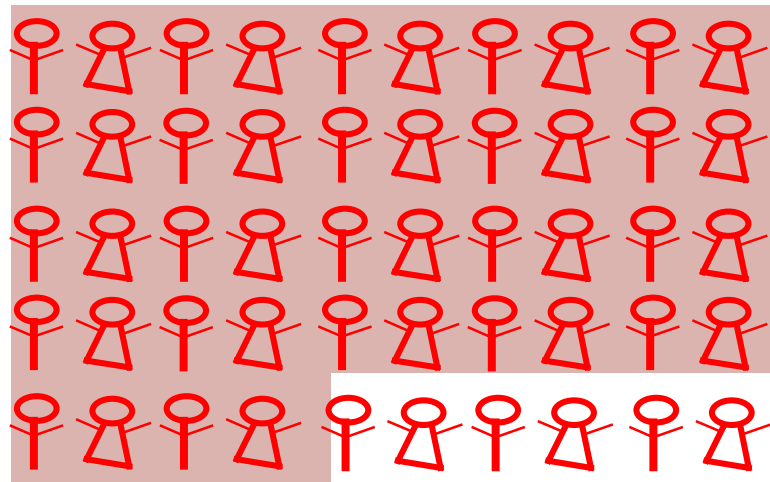


Children who start behind, too often stay behind...

If 50 first graders have problems reading, then 44 of them still have problems reading in fourth grade.



First Graders



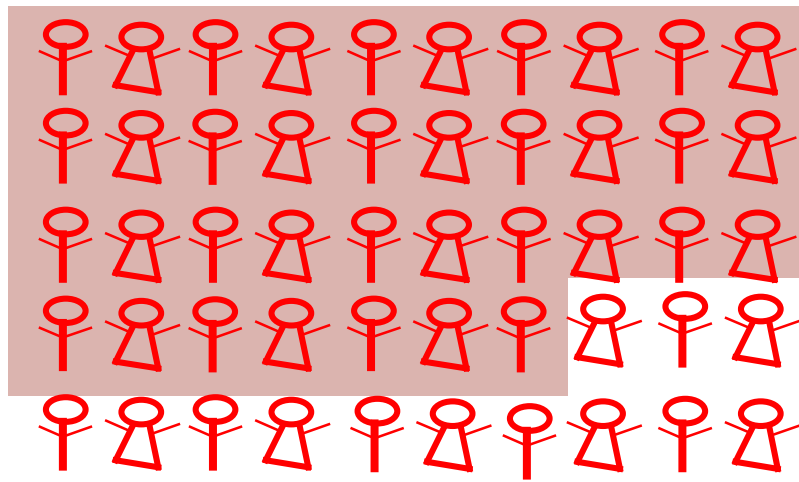
Fourth Graders

Children who start behind, too often stay behind...

If 50 third graders are poor readers, then 37 of them are still poor readers in ninth grade.

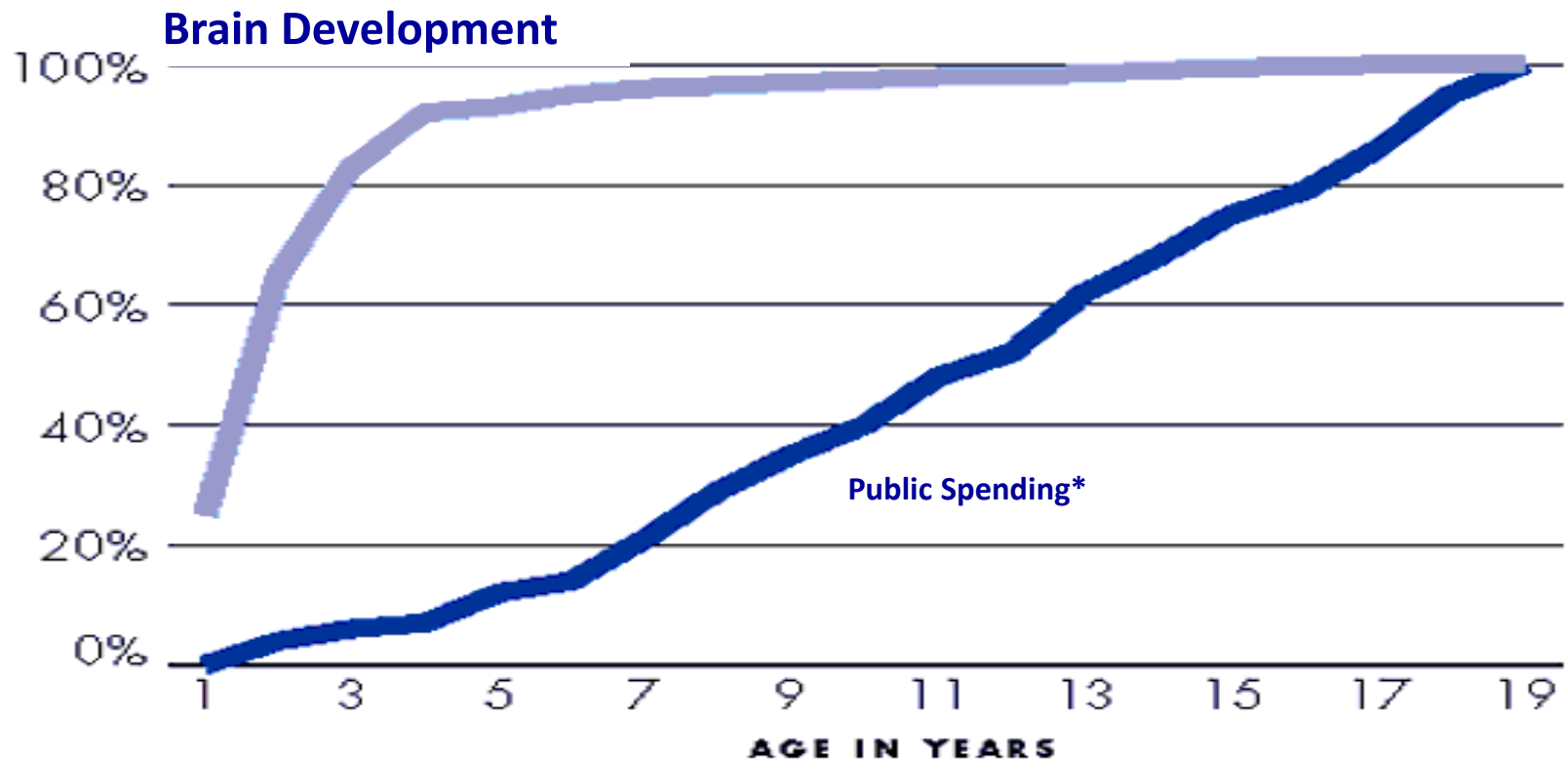


**Third Graders who
are poor readers**



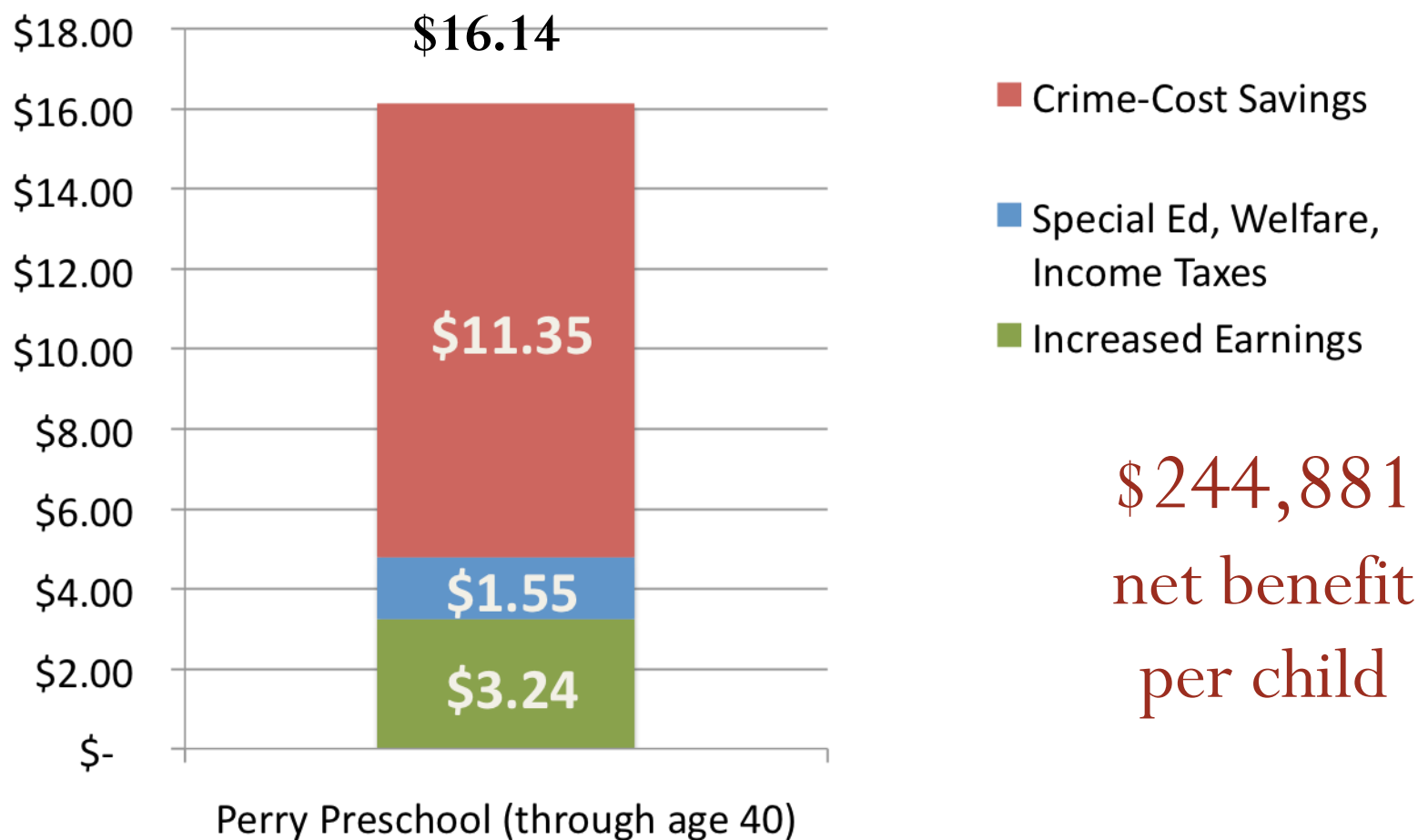
**Ninth Graders who
are poor readers**

A Disconnect: Spending & Research



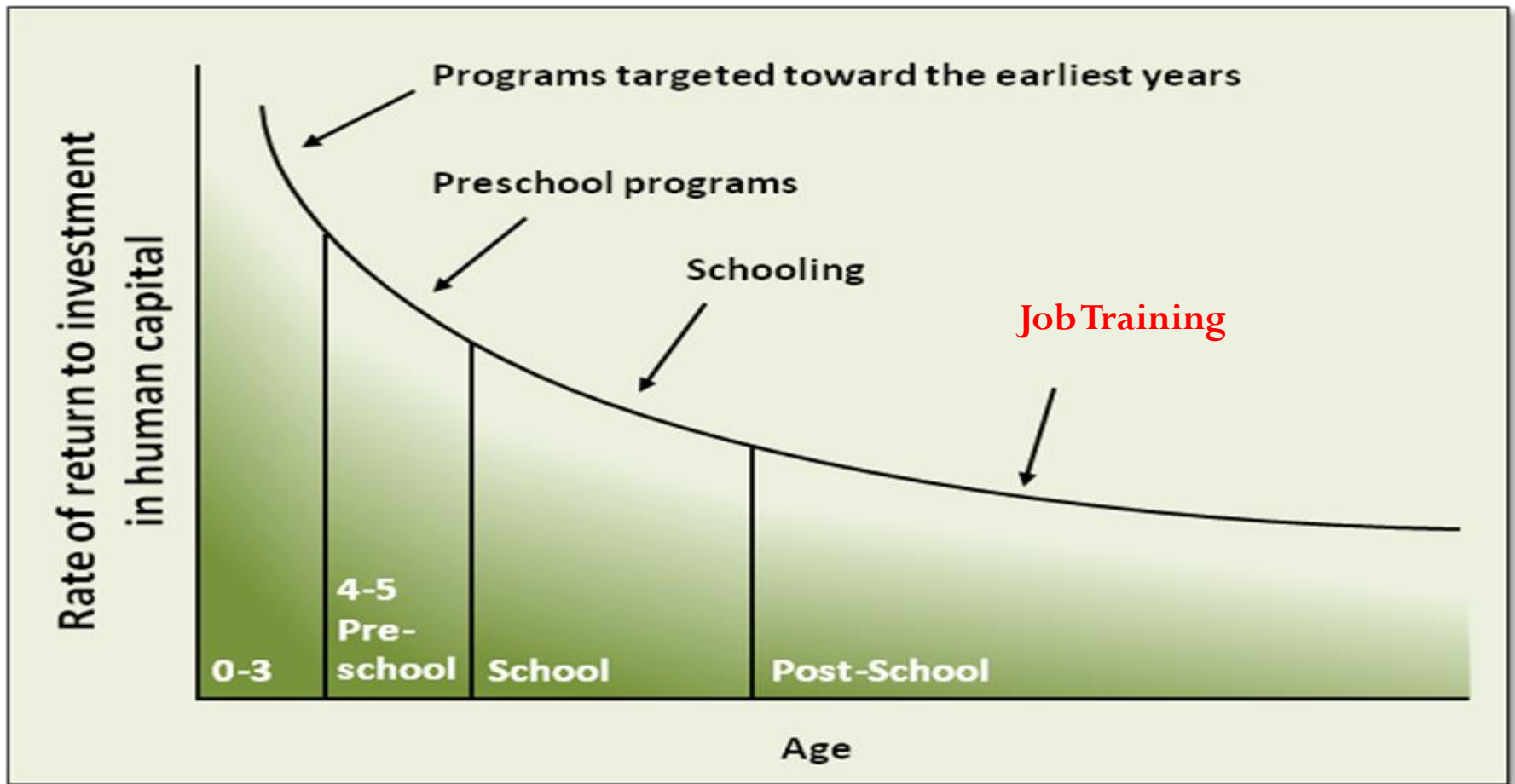
* Portion of total public investment in children being spent during indicated year in children's lives.

Cost/Benefit of Early Education



Source: Schweinhart, Montie, Xiang, et al. (2005)

ROI



A Workforce Productivity Issue

Gaps in reliable, quality childcare services undercut the efficiency and output of the current workforce:

- The average employee misses 8-9 days/year due to child-related absences costing employers \$3 billion/year
- Breakdowns in child care are associated with parent-employee absenteeism, tardiness, reduced concentration, higher employee turnover

A Workforce Development Issue

The future workforce is being undercut by its inability to meet the skill demands of the modern job market

- Employers report deficiencies among high school graduates in terms of the written, verbal, critical thinking and applied problem solving skills for entry level jobs
- ~93 million adult Americans operate at - or below - the basic levels of functional literacy
- The gap is growing: the U.S. economy will add fewer educated workers in the next 20 years, compared to the last 20 years

Obvious Benefits to early learning

- Prepares today's children for tomorrow's competitive workforce
- Promotes positive brain development
- Strengthens families
- Promotes school readiness
- Saves tax dollars
- Contributes to long-term economic growth

Early Childhood Education in Kansas

- It's a workforce productivity issue
- It's an workforce development issue
- It's a fiscally-sound public and private investment with a proven rate of return



www.aceinvests.org



What Can Rotarians as Business Leaders Do ?

- Learn more about how early childhood investments are a nationally-recognized strategy for economic growth and workforce productivity
- Make early childhood an ongoing part of the Rotary and public conversation in Kansas's business community
- Encourage state legislators to prioritize early childhood investments as a key component of sound fiscal policy
- Contact the superintendent and school board of your local district to discuss the outlook for young children in your community