WHY ECD IS IMPORTANT:
FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

Mary Eming Young, MD, DrPH
Director, Center for Child Development, China Development Research Foundation

16th International Meeting on Early and Preschool Education: Comprehensive Early Childhood Development, Inclusion, and Attention to Diversity
Monterrey, Mexico | October 12 – 15, 2016
“There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

Nelson Mandela
Why does business care about early childhood?

“Because the first step in the process of producing globally competitive adults is to produce school ready five year olds. After about 15 years of effort, the Business Roundtables and Chambers of Commerce in every state now supports early childhood investment”

Rob Dugger, Ready Nation 2016
Reasons for investing in early child development

• Dry economic logic – high returns to investing in children

• More so, beyond pure economic reasons, it relates to social linkages- abilities to live with others, to participate in social activities and avoid social disasters (A. Sen), i.e development that improves people’s lives by improving peoples’ capabilities.
FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

700

700 NEW NEURAL CONNECTIONS PER SECOND

NEWBORN

6 MONTHS

2 YEARS
18 MONTHS: AGE AT WHICH DISPARITIES IN VOCABULARY BEGIN TO APPEAR
90-100% CHANCE OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAYS WHEN CHILDREN EXPERIENCE 6-7 RISK FACTORS
3:1

3:1 ODDS OF ADULT HEART DISEASE AFTER 7-8 ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES
FIVE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

$4 - $9 IN RETURNS FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

TOTAL RETURN PER $1 INVESTED
To Individuals
Increased earnings
To The Public
Crime-cost, special education and welfare savings, increased income taxes
Countries with a national multi-sectoral early childhood development policy instrument in 2014

Source: Lancet 2016
Risk varies significantly by low, middle and upper-middle income countries:

- **Latin America and Caribbean:**
  - 15% stunted
  - 18% at risk of extreme poverty

- **Sub-Saharan Africa:**
  - 39% stunted
  - 66% at risk of extreme poverty

- **South Asia:**
  - 40% stunted
  - 53% at risk of extreme poverty

- **Europe & Central Asia:**
  - 17% stunted
  - 19% at risk of extreme poverty

Source: Lancet 2016
Free pre-primary education

Source: Lancet 2016
Multi-sectoral intervention packages to improve child development

**Family Support & Strengthening Package**
- Access to quality services, skills building, support

**Multigenerational Nurturing Care Package**
- Care and protection of mothers’ and fathers’ physical and mental health and wellbeing, and their capacity to provide nurturing care

**Early Learning & Protection Package**
- Integrates support for young children with parental and caregivers’ support to create a nurturing learning environment

Source: Lancet 2016
Every young child deserves to thrive
A child’s brain develops fastest in the first 2-3 years

Nurturing Care:

Nutrition
Safety and security
Health
Responsive care
Early learning

The Foundation for Children’s Development

Cost of Inaction
About 250 million children under 5 are at risk of not reaching their full potential
About 25% reduction in average adult earning potential
Countries may lose up to 2 or 3 fold what they now invest in health or education

Early childhood development pays off
Better health and learning capacity
Increased adult earning
Poverty reduction
Fewer inequalities
More peaceful societies

Nurturing care means supporting parents and caregivers to:
Breastfeed and provide nutritious food
Maintain good health during conception, pregnancy and in the postnatal period
Provide a nurturing and safe environment
Give their children opportunities to explore and learn
• Source of the above slides:
  – CDC, Harvard University
  – Lancet 2016