

May 17, 2023

The State of Early Childhood Education in North Carolina

NC Child

The Voice for North Carolina's Children

Snapshot of Early Education in North Carolina

- 715,000 children ages birth to 5
 - Represents 31.6% of all children under 18
- 245,638 children enrolled in child care programs in April 2020
 - *As of March 2023, 223,504 children were enrolled*
- 5,757 child care programs, including centers and family child care homes, in April 2020
 - *5,488 child care programs in March 2023*
- 65% of children ages birth to five live in households where all parents work

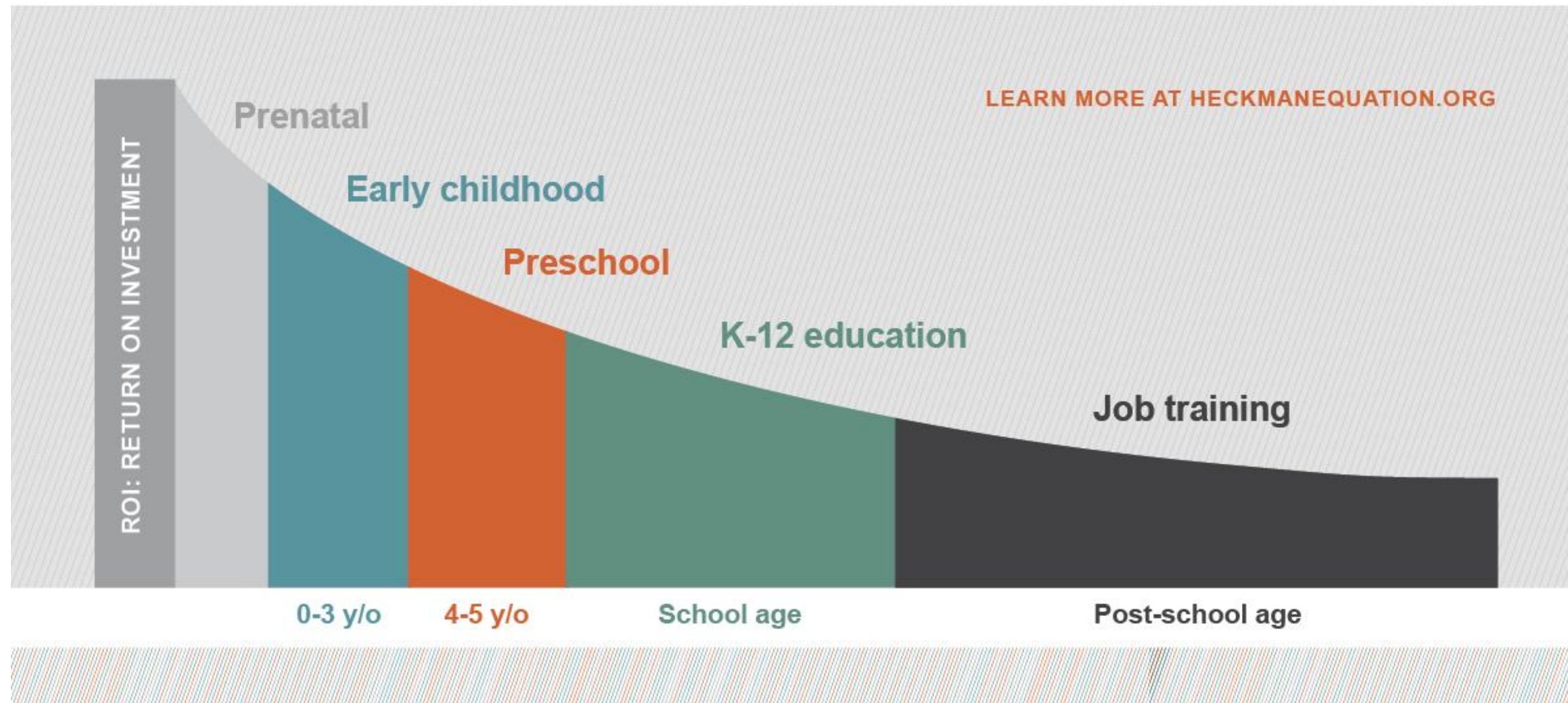
- More than school readiness – Children who receive high-quality child care go on to graduate high school on time, earn higher wages, live healthier lives, avoid incarceration, and raise stronger families.
- Parents earn higher wages – Consistent access to early learning opportunities not only increases the likelihood of employment but also total lifetime wages.
- Lack of affordable and accessible child care hurts the economy – The current child care crisis costs the US \$122 billion in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue annually, up from \$57 billion lost in 2018.

Why Does Investing Early Matter?



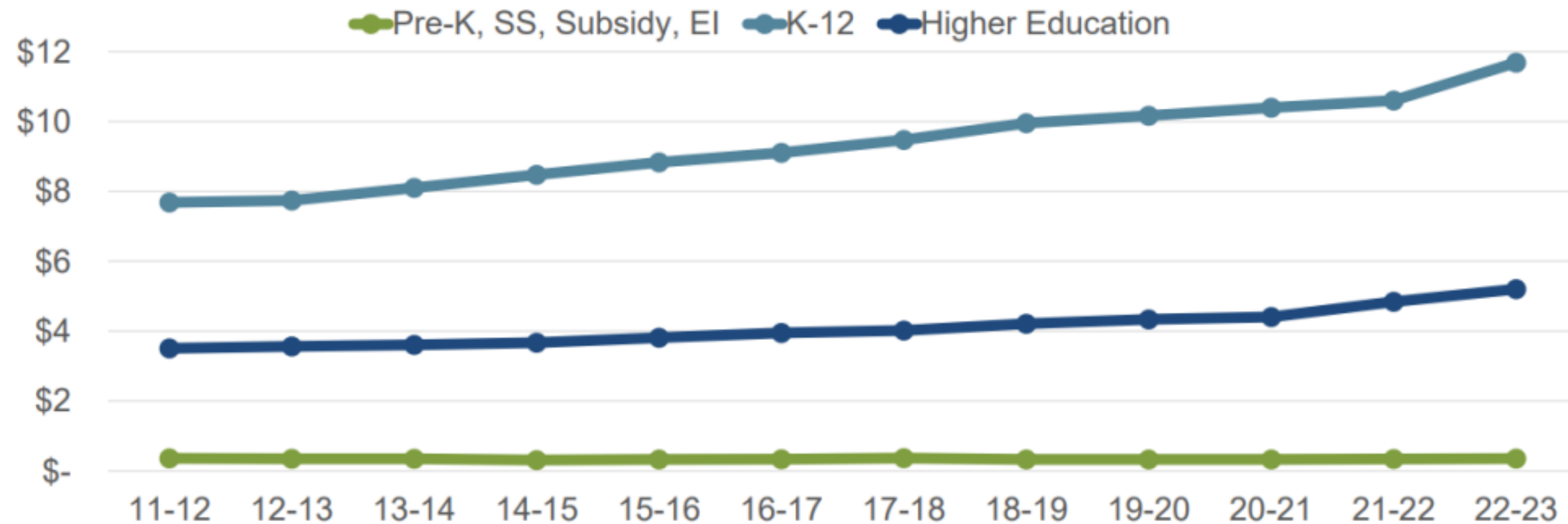
Return on Investment

Economic impact of investing in early childhood learning.



How is NC investing in child care and early education?

CERTIFIED BUDGETS SFY 2011-2012 THRU SFY 2022- 2023
APPROPRIATION AND LOTTERY RECEIPTS
(ALL \$ IN BILLIONS)



How much do parents pay for child care in NC?

Child Care Cost More Than College Tuition

Price Comparisons



Center-based
infant care
\$9,254



Public four-year
university tuition
\$7,220



Average annual
mortgage payments
\$15,132

