



**Ready For School Preschool
Scholarship Program**

October 8, 2020

For good. For ever. For all.

Why is Early Childhood Care and Education Important?

Human Brain Development

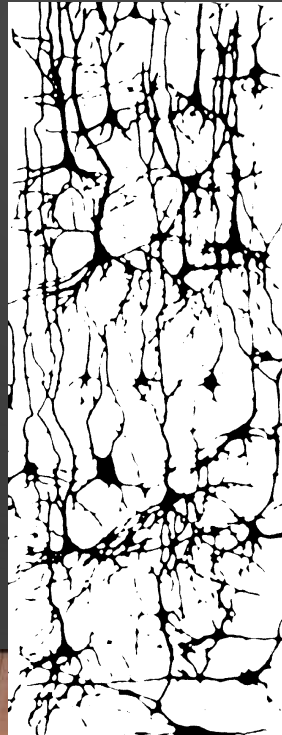
- ~100 billion neurons at birth
- Connect to form synapses
- Facilitated by cognitive stimulation
 - Books, Words, Puzzles, etc.
- Forms “Hard Wiring” of brain
- ~85% completed by age 5-6

Human Brain Development

At Birth



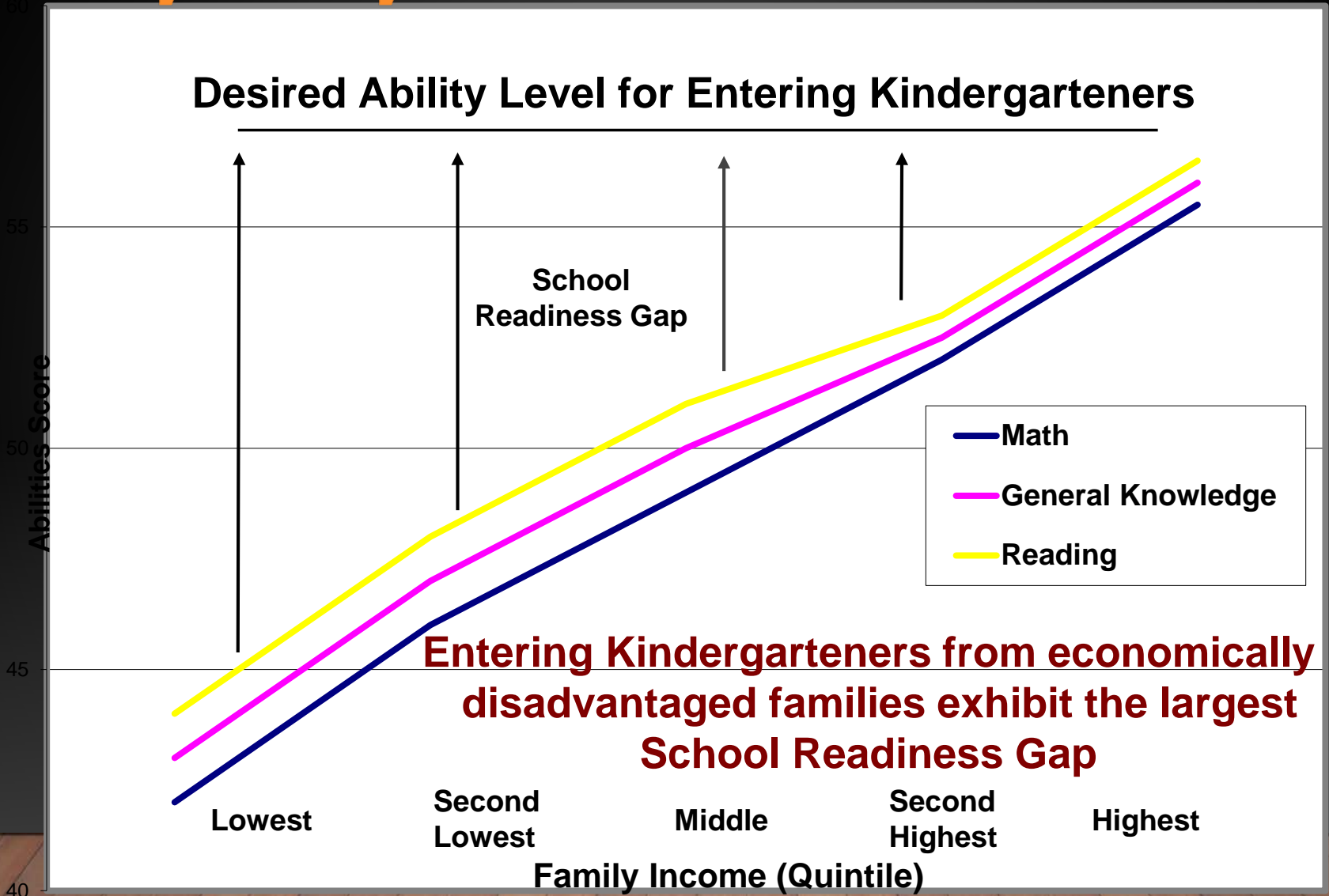
**Poorly
Developed at
Age 6**



**Healthy
Brain at
Age 6**



Why Early Education?



Reported benefits of attending Quality Preschools

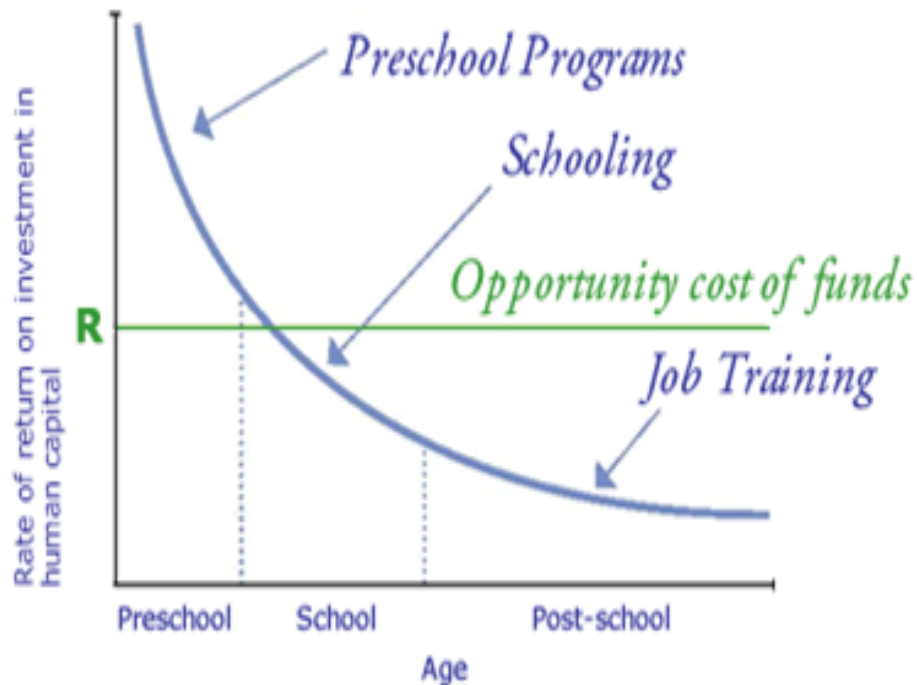
- Facilitates brain development and school readiness
- Many evidence-based outcomes
 - Better math, language, and social skills
 - Require fewer special education services
 - Less likely to be held back a grade
 - More likely to graduate
 - More likely to complete post-secondary education
 - More likely to become employed
 - Less likely to be incarcerated
 - Less likely to receive government economic assistance
 - Less likely to develop mental illness or substance use disorder

But wait; there's more!

Return On Investment (ROI) is Strong in Early Learning

Policymakers should invest in young children, where the return on investment is stronger than in low-skill adults.

- Nobel Laureate James Heckman



Rates of return to human capital investment initially setting investment to be equal across all ages.

Heckman Equation

- Investments in early childhood education provide the highest ROIs
- \$16-18 Benefit/Cost Ratio
- ~18% Annual ROI
 - \$5-6 to participant in increased income
 - \$12 to Investor through social cost avoidance savings and increased tax revenue

James Heckman, 2000
Economics Nobel Prize

Community Needs

- Nearly half of Midland County incoming kindergartners for 2017-2018 had no high quality preschool experience
- Insufficient family income is principal impediment
 - 500 3-year-olds
 - 300 4-year-olds



Challenge to increase enrollments in high quality early care and education

- **“Ready For School” Preschool Scholarship Program developed by Midland Area Community Foundation**
- **Concept arose from Robert D. Putnam address at Council of Michigan Foundations based on his book “Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis”**
 - **Poverty drives inequality of opportunities**
 - **Impact of social capital is production of public good for a common purpose**

READY FOR SCHOOL PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

- Goal is for all children to receive at least one year of high-quality preschool prior to entering kindergarten
- Spendable dollars of RFS endowment fund go to Great Start Collaborative annually for distribution



Quality Early Care and Education

- Midland County Great Start Collaborative provides administrative and quality oversight
- Preschools must meet “3 Star” quality rating to receive funding for students
- Currently 8 preschools qualified to serve RFS scholarship students in Midland County



Expected Outcomes

- Increase in school readiness
- Higher percentage reading at grade level by 3rd grade
- Higher percentage
 - Complete high school
 - Enroll in post-secondary education
 - Complete post-secondary education

“It’s a hard-nosed investment that pays off. The benefit is broadly shared and is something that actually accrues to the whole country.”

....James Heckman

Why Midland Area Community Foundation? (MACF)

- MACF and community foundations in general have a long history of supporting education
- Awarded over \$7.5 million in scholarships
- Formed and leading the career and college access network
- Would allow MACF to impact early education as well

Logistics

- Donors can establish their own named fund within this scholarship fund
- Minimum of \$10,000 to establish a scholarship fund
- A gift of any amount will significantly impact a child's ability to attend quality preschool

Donor Involvement

Opportunities

- Annual tour of 2-3 preschools
- Read to children during national reading month
- Assign community foundation representative to serve on site selection process committee



QUESTIONS?