

QUALITY AND ACCESS: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



IN TUCSON/PIMA COUNTY...

- There are **25,020** 3 and 4 year olds in Pima County. (U.S. Census, ACS, 1-Year Estimates, 2016) and of the 25,020, **5,387** 3 and 4 year olds **currently attend** a High Quality Early Childhood Education (High-Quality ECE) Program.
- **Arizona is among the most expensive states** for families' relative burden of childcare costs, ranking 39th out of the 50 states and D.C. based on the costs for married families.

Data provided by Strong Start Tucson. For more information visit www.strongstarttucson.org

WHAT IS ACCESS?

 *"Access to early care and education means that parents, with reasonable effort and affordability, can enroll their child in an arrangement that supports the child's development and meets the parents' needs."*

Friese, S., Lin, V., Forry, N. & Tout, K. (2017). Defining and Measuring Access to High Quality Early Care and Education: A Guidebook for Policymakers and Researchers. OPRE Report #2017-08. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

DISPARITIES...

- **Preschool expulsion rates are more than 13 times higher** than rates for K-12, further limiting access to high-QECE.
- Expulsion rates are disproportionately **higher for boys**, and **even higher for boys of color**.
- Expulsion also **disproportionally affects children who have experienced trauma**, such as those involved with DCS.
- **Program quality**, level of **caregiver stress** and **education**, and **access to caregiver supports** such as mental health consultation are all related to expulsion rates.
- AZ has implemented a new expulsion prevention policy for DES contracted childcare providers.

BENEFITS OF HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- All children benefit from high-quality ECE experiences. The benefits are greatest for children from economically disadvantaged families.
- Children who attend high-quality ECE programs gain the **academic** and **social skills** they need to learn and succeed in kindergarten and elementary school.
- high-quality ECE supports children's ability to continuously **engage in learning environments, manage their own behaviors, and get along** well with others. These are in fact the **essential skills** that contribute to kindergarten readiness.
- Children who attend high-quality ECE programs are **less likely** to be placed in special education, **less likely** to be retained in a grade, and **more likely** to graduate from high school.
- As adults, these children are **more likely to attend college and be employed** (McCoy and colleagues, 2017).
- Some new research even shows that intensive **high-quality ECE can have lasting impacts** on the next generation (Heckman, 2019).



PROSOCIAL SKILLS LEARNED IN HIGH-QECE:

- Patience
- Self-Regulation
- Taking Turns
- Friendship Skills
- Sharing
- Helping out others

KEY TAKE AWAY

Investing in expanding access to high-quality ECE for disadvantaged families is a significant economic return on investment that increases opportunities for social mobility and opportunity.

See www.heckmanequation.org for more information.



Frances
McClelland Institute
Children, Youth, and Families