Early Learning as a Workforce Development Strategy
Changing workforce demands...

Meeting the workforce needs of the future means meeting the educational needs of children today.
The Society for Human Resource Management says “America’s workforce is not ready for today’s increasingly competitive global economy.” We have a looming talent shortage.

By 2018, all but the youngest baby boomers will be of retirement age. In short, about 76 million boomers will soon retire and only about 51 million people are in line to replace them – a 25-million-worker gap.
Human Brain Development: Simpler Circuits First

Sensory Pathways (Vision, Hearing)
Language
Higher Cognitive Function

FIRST FIVE YEARS

More illiteracy, more prison beds
What are executive function skills?

**Working memory**—being able to remember information in order to use it;

**Mental flexibility**—being able to adjust when rules change; and

**Self-control**—being able to avoid rash responses and do what is needed to achieve goals.

Source: Harvard University Center of the Developing Child
More important than your major

93% of over 300 employers agreed that a candidate’s demonstrated soft skills are more important than their undergraduate major.

Source: Hart Research Associates
When do Executive Function skills develop?

Source: Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child
Early learning and STEM

The early years are the best and most critical time to foster an interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) approaches to learning.
In the next 10 years, STEM jobs will grow by 17%, compared to 9.8% for all other occupations.

Across the US, in all occupations, there are 3.6 people for every 1 job. In STEM, there is 1 person for every 1.9 jobs.

(Source: Massachusetts Business Roundtable)
Bathrooms and broccoli: preferable to math?

Nearly 1/3 of Americans would rather clean their bathroom than do a math problem.

56% of 1000 middle schoolers would rather eat broccoli than do math homework.
Early learning can lead to interest in STEM

Providing children with opportunities to have quality early learning experiences in STEM enhances later interest in STEM careers.
PUBLIC SPENDING & BRAIN DEVELOPMENT: THE DISCONNECT
Source: The RAND Corporation

* Portion of total public investment in children being spent during indicated year in children’s lives.
What can you do?

Kiwanis International,
Young Children: Priority One
Young Children: Priority One

The 4th Object of Kiwanis
To develop, by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive, and serviceable citizenship.

The 6th Object of Kiwanis
To cooperate in creating and maintaining that sound public opinion and high idealism which makes possible the increase of righteousness, justice, patriotism, and goodwill.
Where Kiwanis has been

-- 30,000,000 words by age six
-- Reading to children
-- Book collection and distribution
-- Partnerships with child care centers, child care providers, agency with a child focus
-- Partner with PA Early Learning Investment Commission
-- Beginning of advocacy
Where Kiwanis Needs to Go Move Education → Advocacy

-- Kiwanis clubs need to be become advocates for early childhood programs.
-- Contact your legislators & governor.
-- Write, talk & question candidates for office.
-- Continue to support the community through local projects that benefit children.
-- Participate in the Learning Is Everywhere Calendar Project.
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