

## Executive Summary

A growing body of evidence shows that quality early childhood education and care is associated with positive psychosocial and emotional development, and academic success. These outcomes are associated with success in adult years, which in turn influences community and economic development. This report provides three perspectives on childhood development within the context of early childhood education and care.

In chapter 1, Dr. Arthur Reynolds, a professor at the Institute of Child Development / College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota, discusses the cost-effectiveness of early childhood development programs. Specifically, he reviews evidence on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of early childhood development programs on school readiness, school achievement and performance, and long-term life course development. Three questions are addressed: (1) *What are the effects and economic benefits of preschool programs?*; (2) *What are the effects and economic benefits of kindergarten and school-age programs?*; and (3) *Which elements and principles of effectiveness are key to long-term effects?* Policy recommendations are discussed.

In chapter 2, Dr. Riley – a Child Development Specialist in Wisconsin’s Cooperative Extension Service and Rothermel-Bascom Professor of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison – describes how quality child development programs can have a life-changing impact on children. In complementing information provided in chapter 1, Dr. Riley provides evidence that (1) early childhood programs are effective – highlighting three programs – and (2) early childhood programs are cost-effective. Following his section on how these programs can make such an impact, he offers potential strategies for states to increase the quality of child care.

The Hispanic population is rapidly growing in the United States. Hispanic children (0-8 years) make up 20% of the nation's young. On average, Hispanic students’ achievement is at much lower level than Whites. In New Mexico, among children 0-9 years, 54% are Hispanic. In chapter 3, Dr. Eugene Garcia, Vice President for Education Partnerships at Arizona State University, discusses early education challenges and opportunities regarding Hispanic children. Following a review of achievement gaps, Dr. Garcia discusses factors influencing school readiness and achievement. Within the context of these influencing factors, various educational strategies are provided.