



## Universal Preschool - Fact sheet

- ◆ In the US, almost half of children from families with an annual income lower than ten thousand dollars do not attend any form of schooling.
- ◆ The number of affordable and quality childcare centers is limited in the US.
- ◆ For those families which choose preschools, parents are seeking quality education for their kids.
- ◆ Meanwhile, children with disabilities or from disadvantaged households can hardly explore their full potential to learn actively.
- ◆ Government-funded universal preschools aim to help these children who are most in need.
- ◆ Universal Preschool conveys fairness and equal opportunity for children with a disadvantaged background.
- ◆ Universal preschools are different in a variety of ways, with different programs such as Head Start programs, early childhood mental health services, home visiting, special education, and additional family and childcare services.
- ◆ Federal initiated programs such as Preschool Development Grants (PDG) had awarded approximately a billion dollars to support children in low-income families in eighteen states.
- ◆ In a high-quality learning environment, children learn to work cooperatively with peers and respect each other.
- ◆ Critics of universal preschool argue that public school systems have failed to close achievement gaps, and instead the system has turned our kids into test-taking robots.

**It takes village to raise a child**





# Universal Preschool - Talking Point

## ♦ **Achievement gap**

Achievement gaps are evident among American children from different cultures, ethnic groups, or social-economic backgrounds. In recent years, many studies on academic achievement gaps have provided insights when discussing government-funded preschools. Despite the federal effort to address inequality among its citizens since the 1960s, the gaps did not disappear.

## ♦ **Government-funded Preschools**

The term – Universal Preschool should not be used as a political slogan but a genuine attempt to alleviate the pain children experience from adversity in life. The federal government must take responsibility for its citizens' learning and focus on helping those who are in need. Policymakers must continue to reflect on current practices in the public school system to improve education inequality.

## ♦ **Why invest on early childhood?**

Noble Prize-winning economist Jack Hackman at the University of Chicago discovered in his study of the Perry School that for every dollar invested in high-quality child care centers, investors get seven dollars in return. This promising finding has led to an increase in government funding for the development of early childhood education around the world. When we teach our children to be good citizens, we will all be rewarded as they become healthier and happier citizens.

## ♦ **Problems with public preschools**

Some critics argued that expensive public preschools such as the Perry Preschool could not prepare children for their life-long success. Instead, public preschools can turn students into test-taking machines.

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# Let's **work together!**

“Fellowship, community, shared patriotism – these essential values of our civilization do not come from just buying and consuming goods together. They come from a shared sense of individual independence and personal effort. They come from working together to build a country—that is the answer to the welfare crisis”

Robert Kennedy, 1968

**It takes village to raise a child**

