

CUSP Education Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 10, 2020
Idaho Falls Public Library Rm. 2

The meeting was called to order at 6:44pm

Attendees- Shannon Taylor, Catherine Black, Aaron Johnson, Michaelena Hix, Marie Giraud, Pat Tucker, and Tomm Larsen

Presentation on Early Childhood Learning Research by Pat Tucker-

- *Investing in prevention not remediation is so key with teaching young children the skills and education they need to be successful adults
- *Early education is shown to have long term benefits physically, socially, and mentally
- *Children at higher risk have the greatest need for publicly funded Pre-K education
- *Very recently a 3.3 million dollar grant was given in Idaho for early education and it is being governed by the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children. We could potentially reach out to them to work on getting a Pre-K program piloted in our community.

- Discussion-**
- *We should learn what the Head start program does in Idaho Falls.
 - *We should look into the possibility of bolstering the Pre-K program at ISU.
 - *We can look into what San Antonio did in 2012 to fund Pre-K programs.
 - *A standing education committee is recommended.
 - *It would be beneficial to understand what a city's governing body can actually do within the education sphere before finalizing our topics of interest for exploration.

Action items- We created sub committees to research topics of interest:

Early Education- Pat Tucker, Marie Giraud, and Shannon Taylor

Higher Education/Life Long Learning- Catherine Black and Michaelena Hix

Employer/Market Needs- Tomm Larsen and Aaron Johnson

The next meeting scheduled for March 24th was canceled and we will plan to meet April 7th.

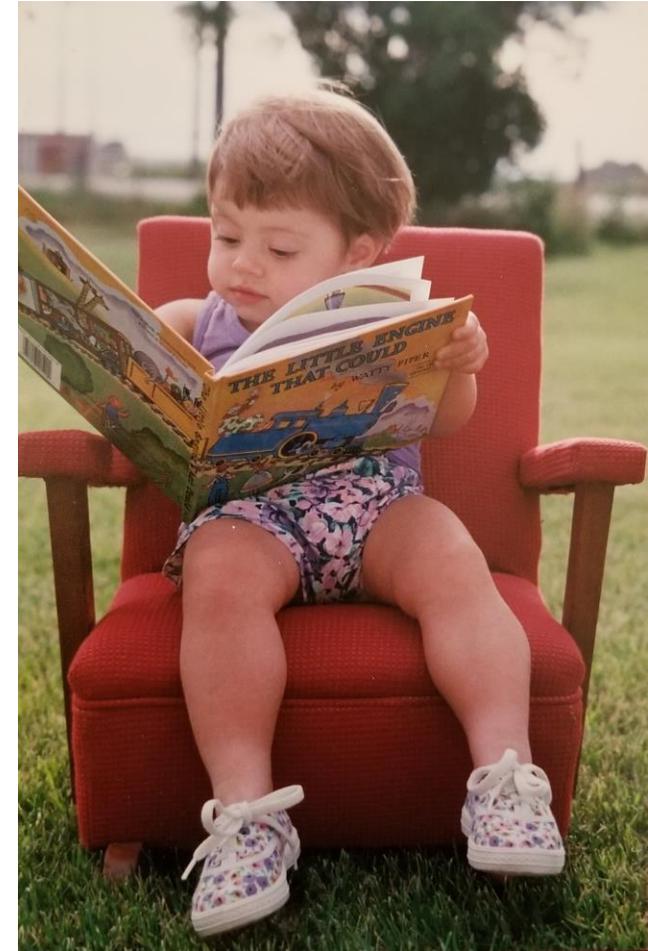
Meeting adjourned at 8:37

Early Childhood Education

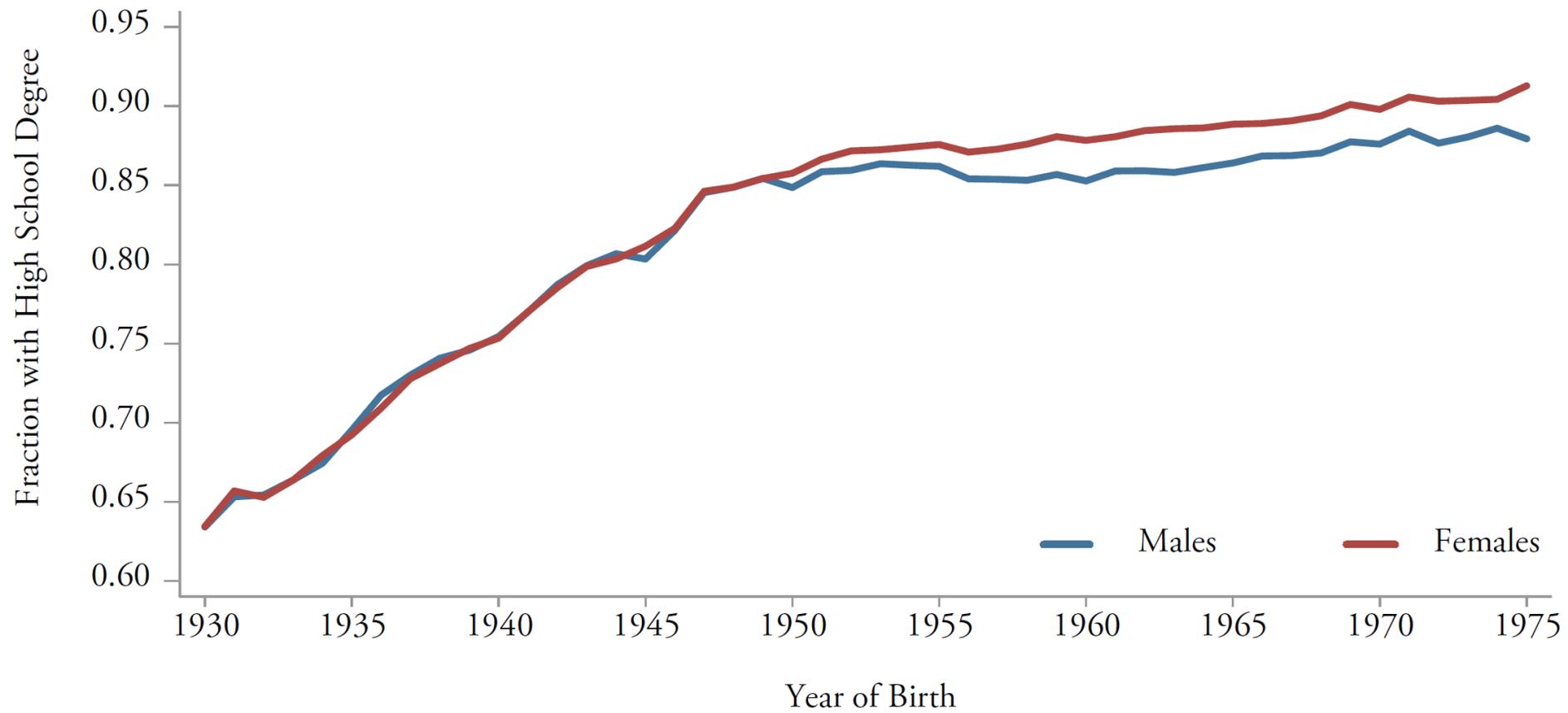
Connecting Us Sustaining Progress (CUSP) Initiative

Education Committee, March 10, 2020

Pat Tucker

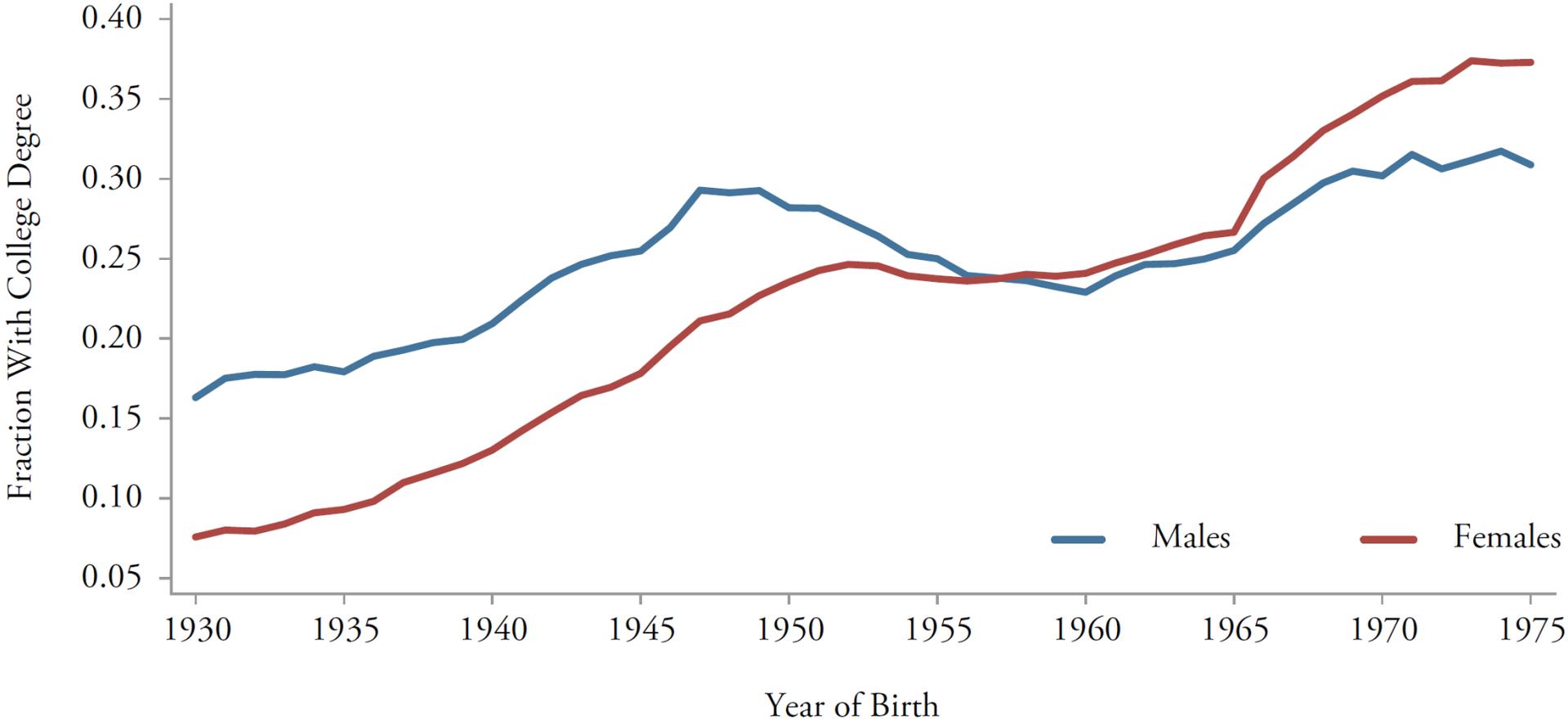


**Figure 1a: High School Graduation Rates at Age 35:
U.S. Males and Females Born 1930-1975²**



Source: Census IPUMS 1 percent samples for years 1960 and 1970, Census IPUMS 5 percent samples for years 1980, 1990, and 2000 and American Community Survey (ACS) 2010.

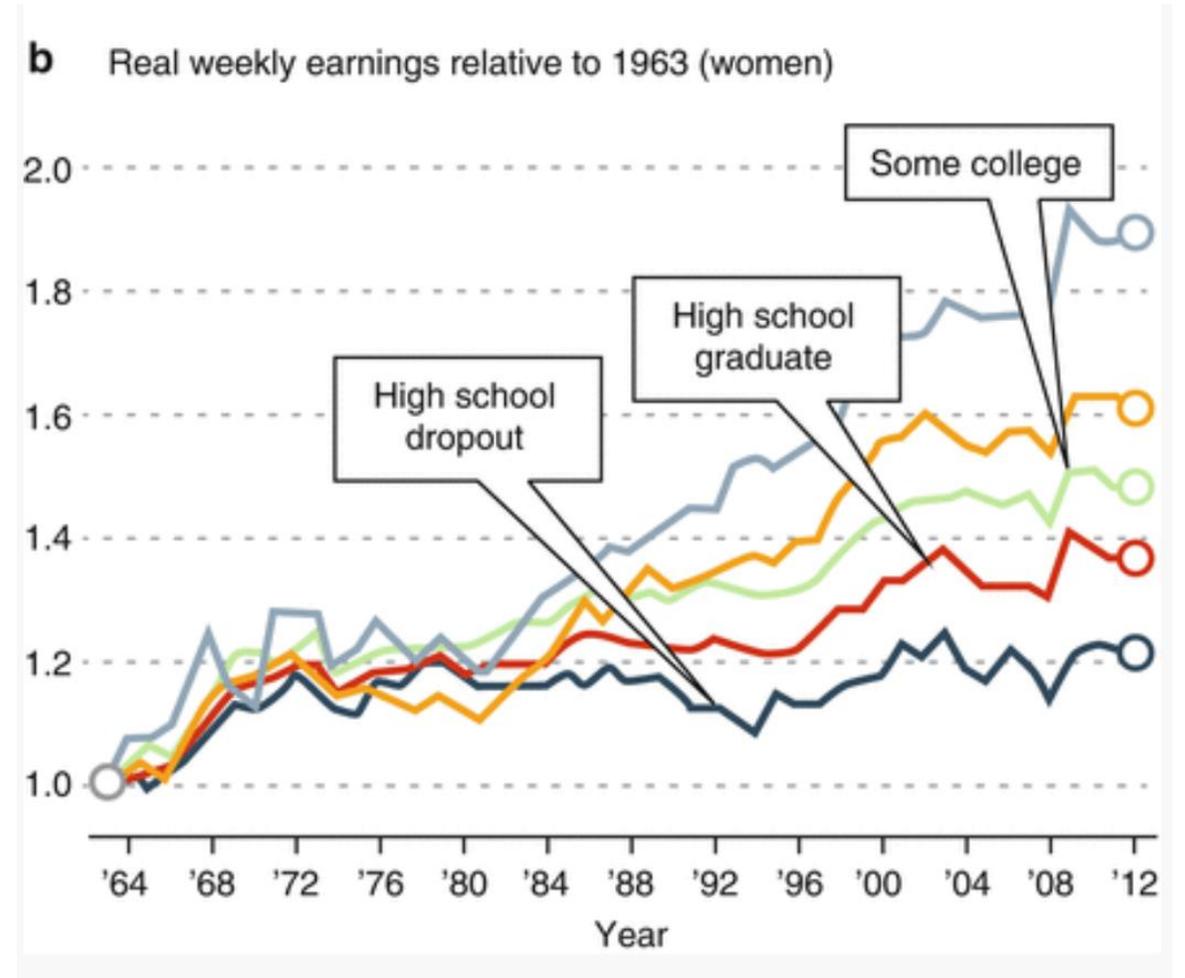
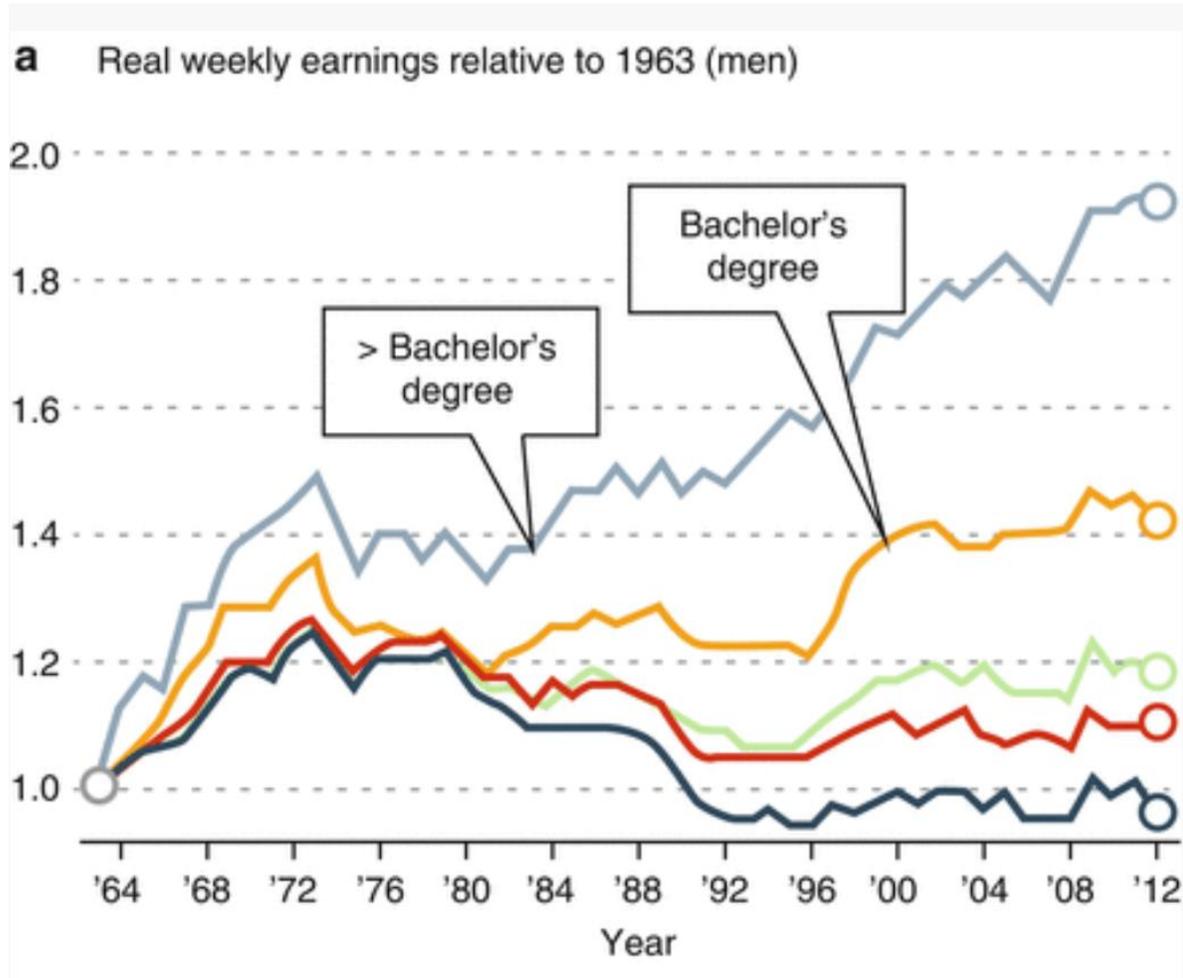
Figure 1c: Percent of Adults with Four-Year College Degree by Age 35⁷



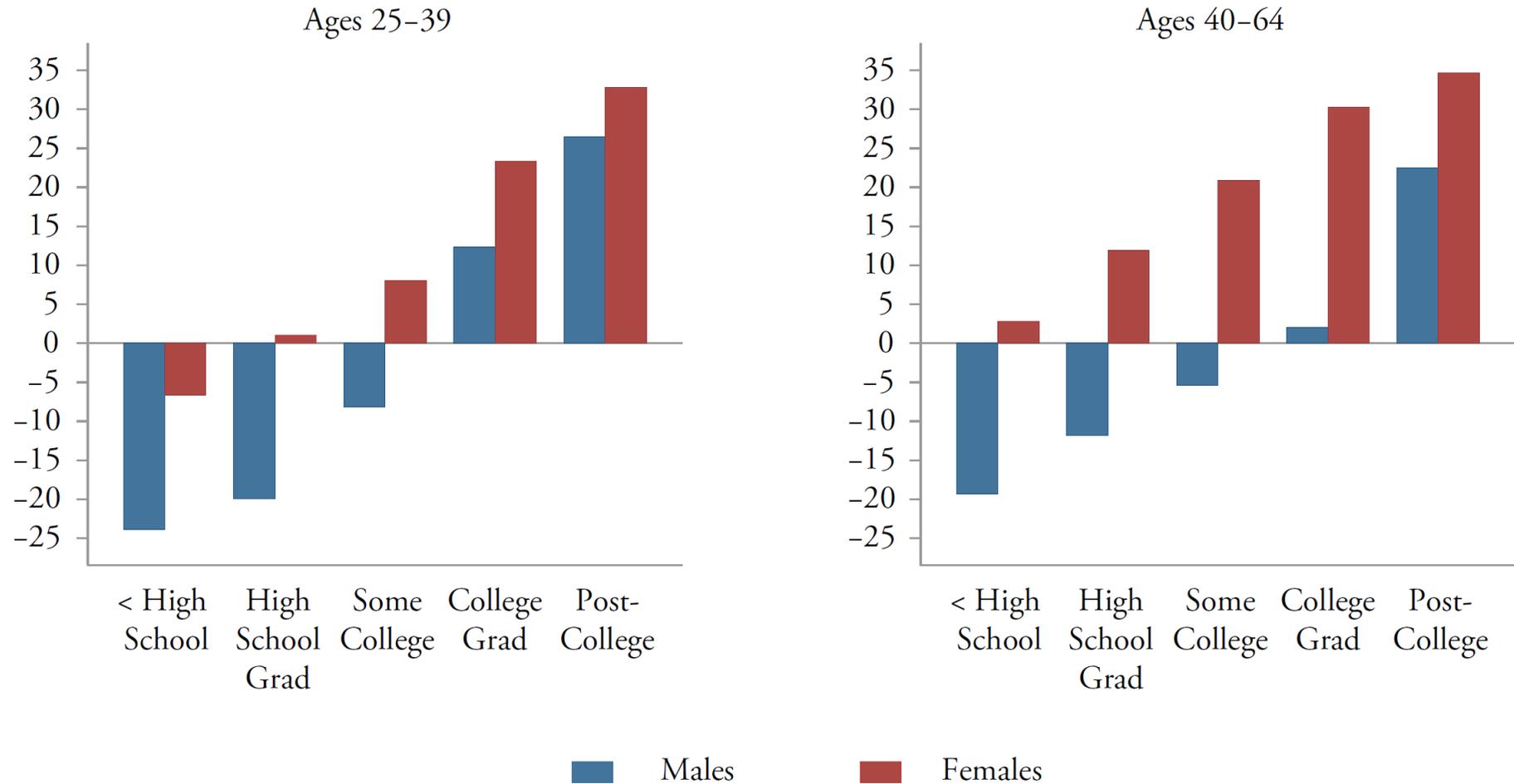
Source: Census IPUMS 1 percent samples for years 1960 and 1970, Census IPUMS 5 percent samples for years 1980, 1990, and 2000 and American Community Survey (ACS) 2010.

We can help uplift all of us by increasing the skills of the most disadvantaged by early intervention.

The more technological, the more important skills become. Often, the more our disadvantaged lag, and are likely to lag in the future.



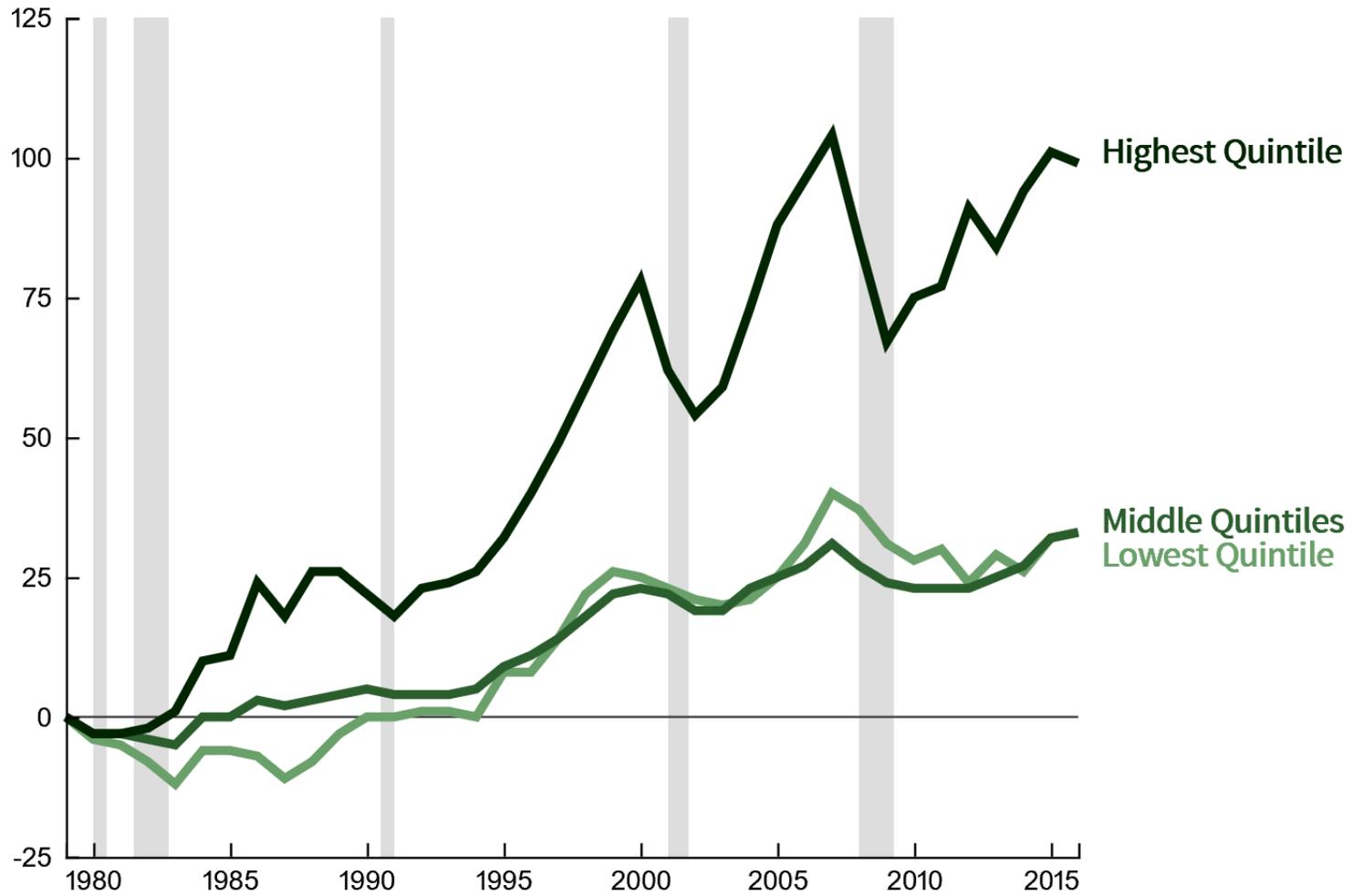
**Figure 2: Percent Changes in Real Hourly Wage Levels 1979-2010
(By Education and Sex)⁹**



Source: May/Outgoing Rotation Groups Current Population Survey data for years 1979-2010.

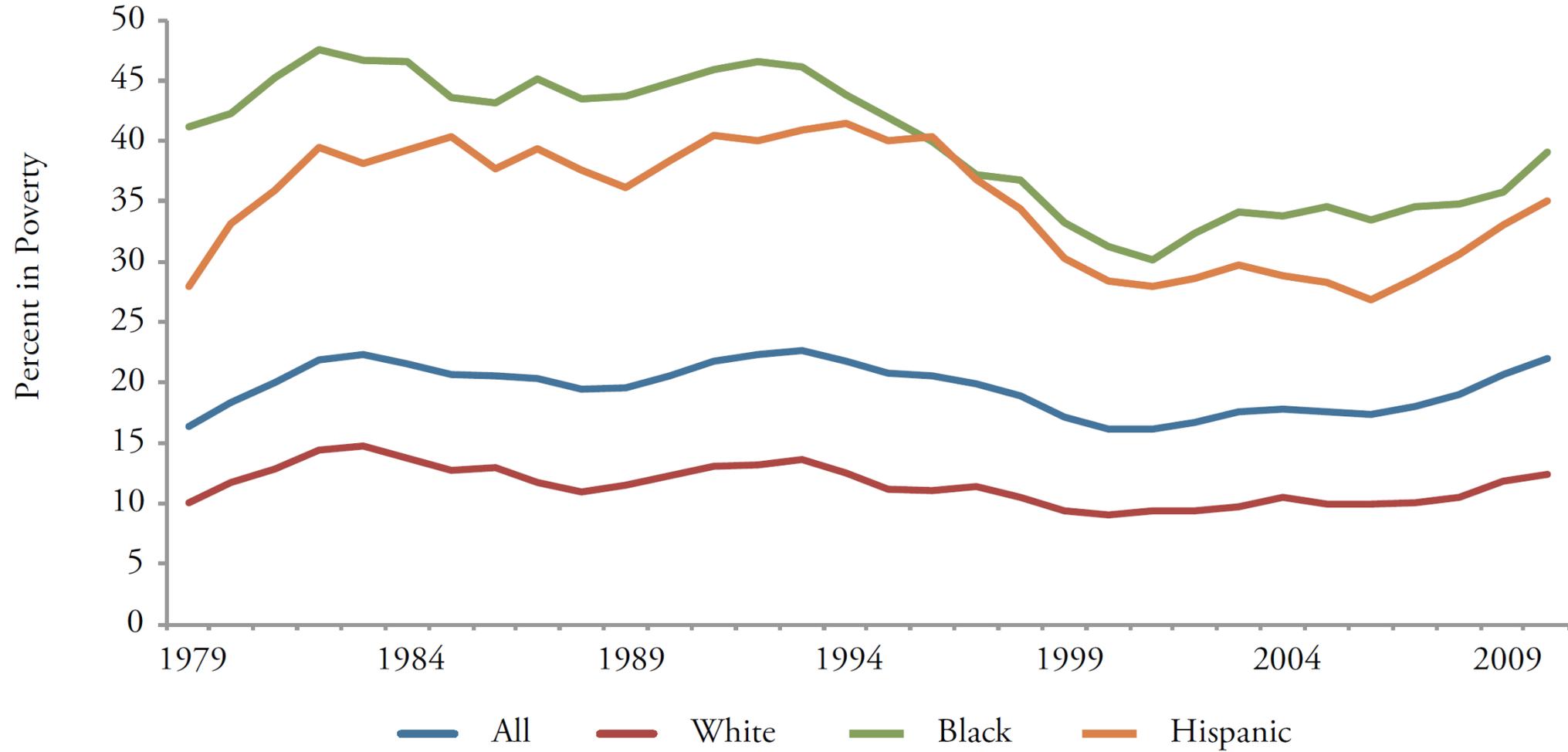
Cumulative Growth in Average Income, by Income Group, 1979 to 2016

Percent



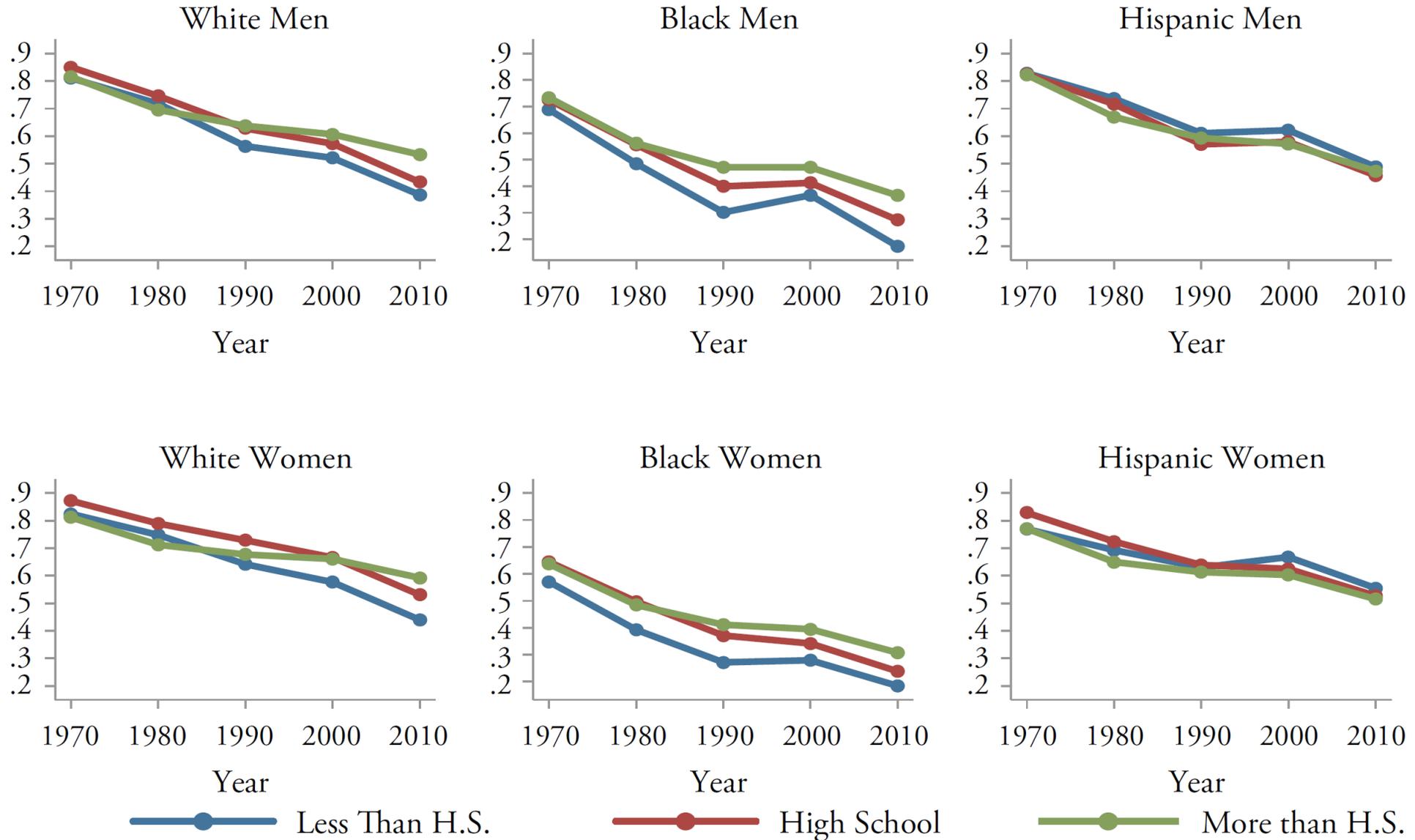
Congressional Budget Office

Figure 17: Childhood Poverty Rates by Race, 1979-2010⁷⁹



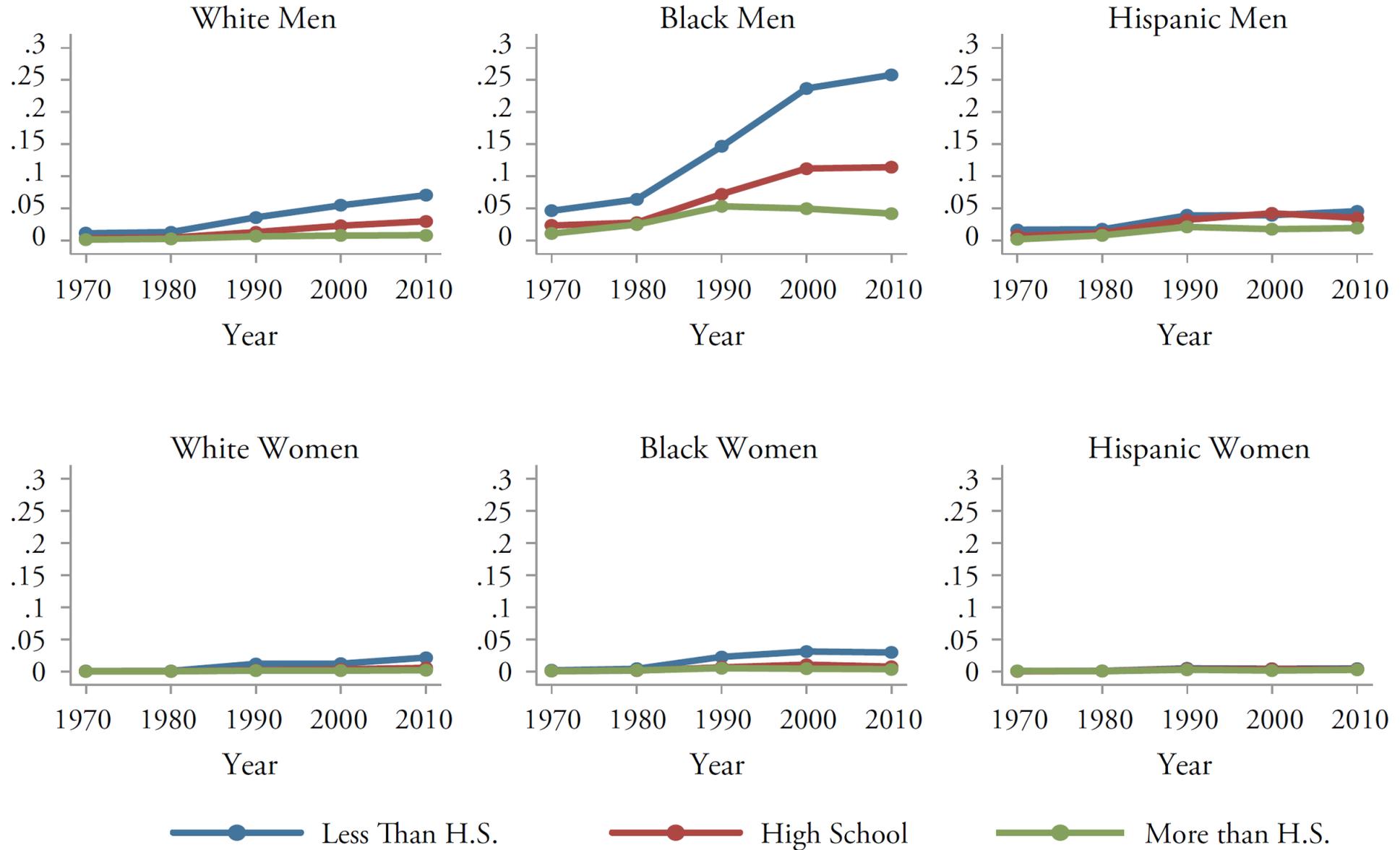
Source: United States, Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, 2010.

Marriage rate of men and women: 1970 to 2010 (Autor and Wasserman, "The Wayward Son: The Emerging Gender Gap in Labor Markets and Education")



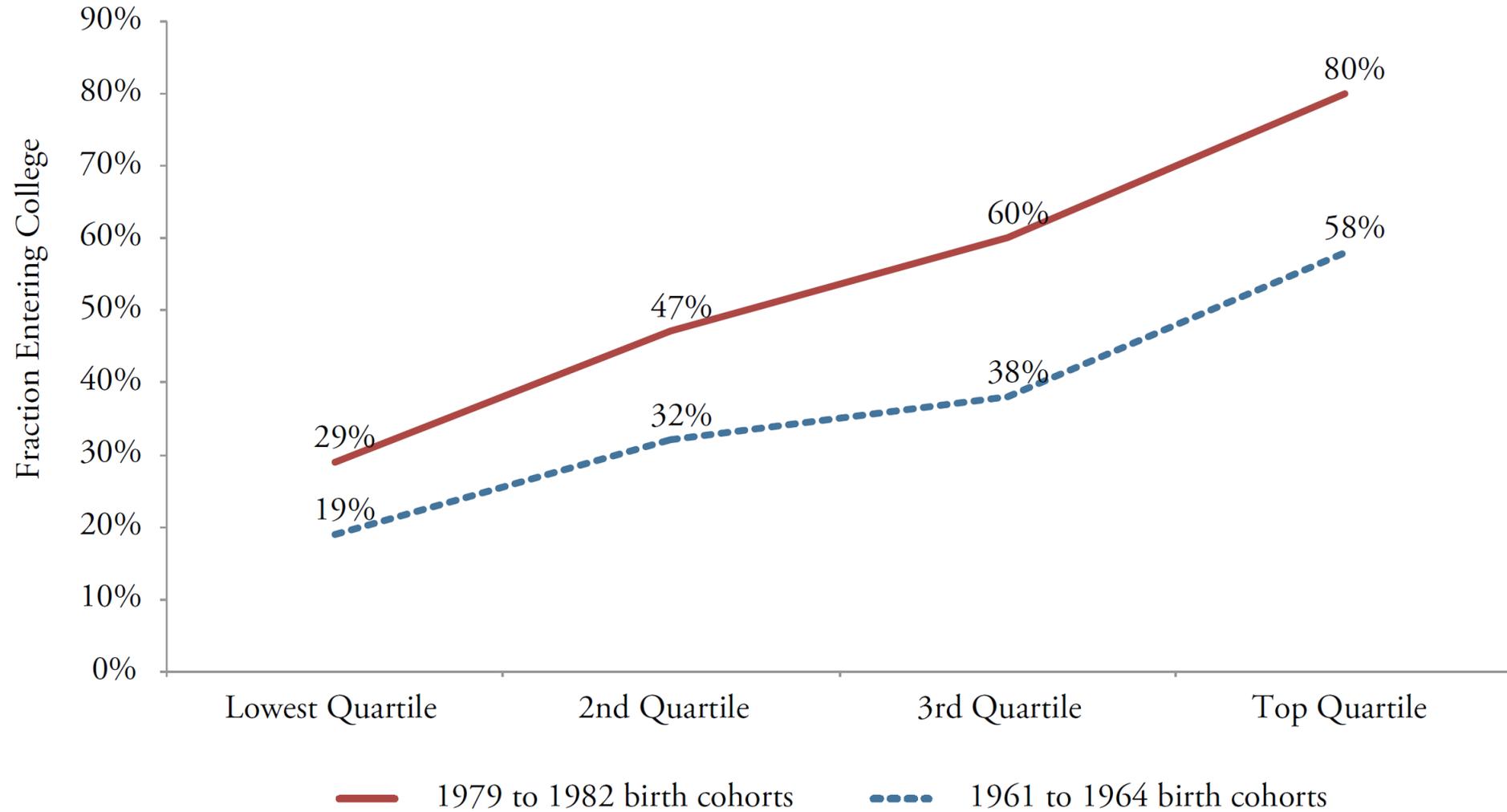
Source: Census IPUMS 5 percent samples for years 1980, 1990, and 2000 and American Community Survey (ACS) 2010.

Incarceration Rate of Men and Women: 1970 to 2010 (Autor and Wasserman)

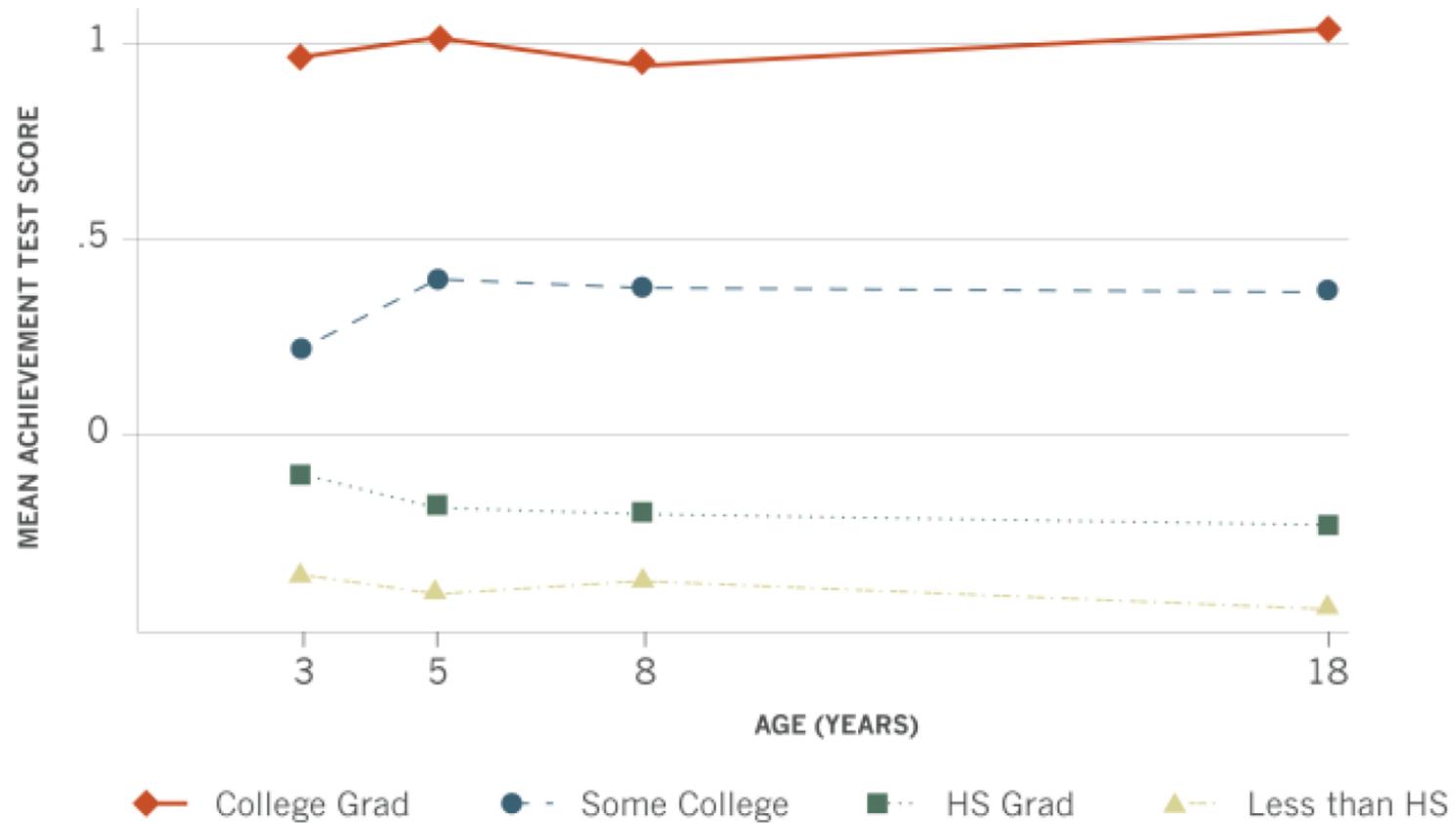


Source: Census IPUMS 1 percent sample for year 1970, and Census IPUMS 5 percent samples for years 1980, 1990, and 2000 and American Community Survey (ACS) 2010.

Figure 19a: Fraction of Students Entering College, by Income Quartile and Birth Year⁸⁶

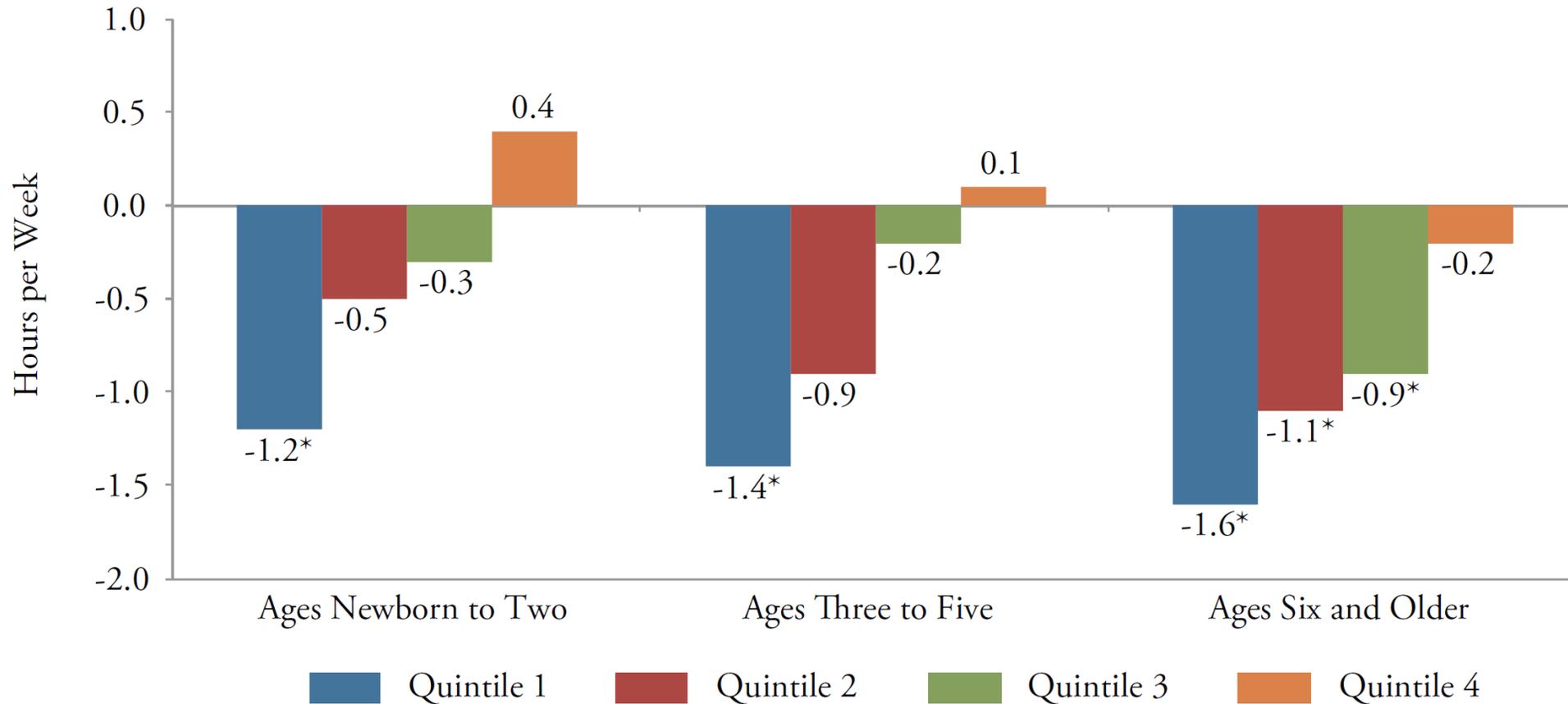


Mean Achievement Test Scores by Age by Maternal Education



Each score standardized within observed sample. Using all observations and assuming data missing at random. Source: Brook-Gunn et al. (2006).

Figure 21: Disparities in Weekly Time Spent in Literacy Activities by Age and Household Income Quintile¹⁰¹



Source: Meredith Phillips, based on Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 2009. Bars show difference relative to children whose family is in the top quintile, adjusted for child's age in month and gender. *Denotes statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Hart & Risley, 1995

Children enter school with “meaningful differences” in vocabulary knowledge.

1. Emergence of the Problem

In a typical hour, the average child hears:

Family Status	Actual Differences in Quantity of Words Heard	Actual Differences in Quality of Words Heard
Welfare	616 Words	5 affirmatives, 11 prohibitions
Working Class	1,251 Words	12 affirmatives, 7 prohibitions
Professional	2,153 Words	32 affirmatives, 5 prohibitions



2. Cumulative Vocabulary at Age 3

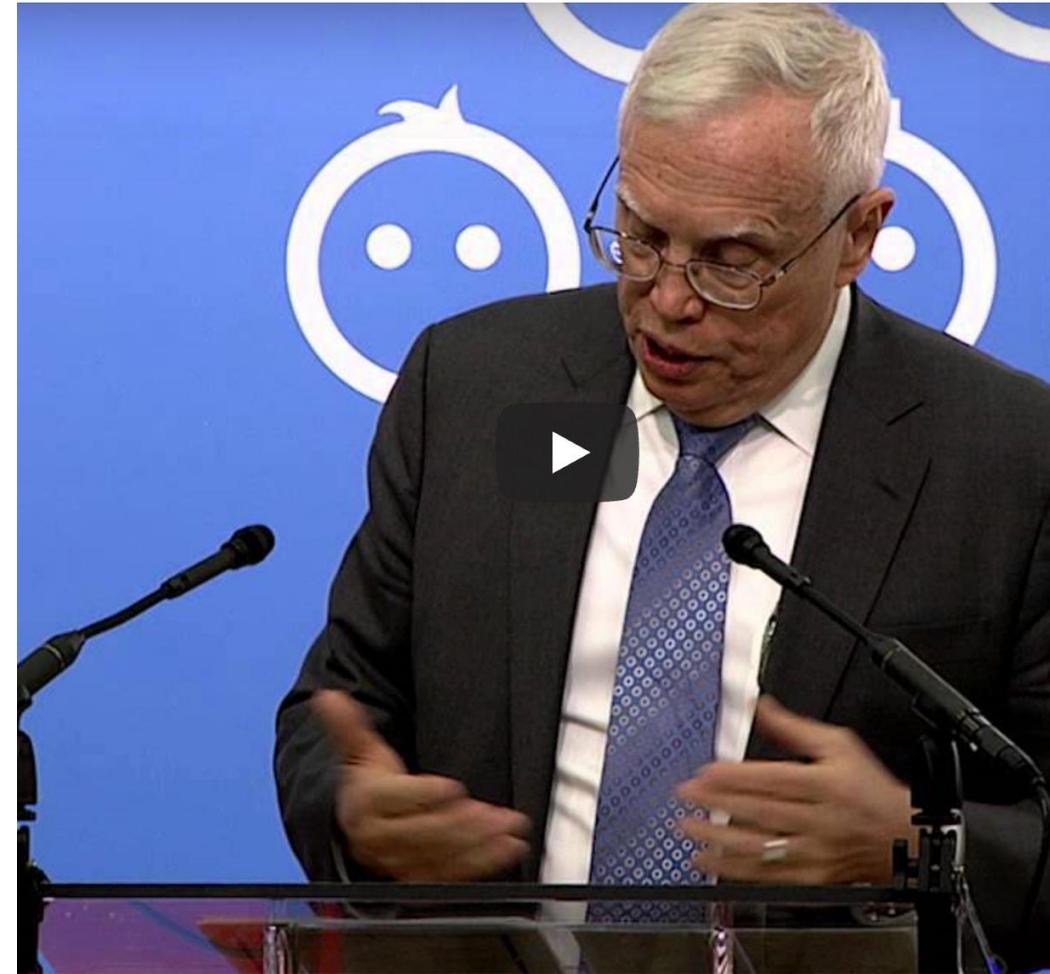
Cumulative Vocabulary at Age 3	
Children from welfare families:	500 words
Children from working class families:	700 words
Children from professional families:	1,100 words

“The highest rate of return in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible, from birth through age five, in disadvantaged families.

“Starting at age three or four is too little too late, as it fails to recognize that skills beget skills in a complementary and dynamic way.

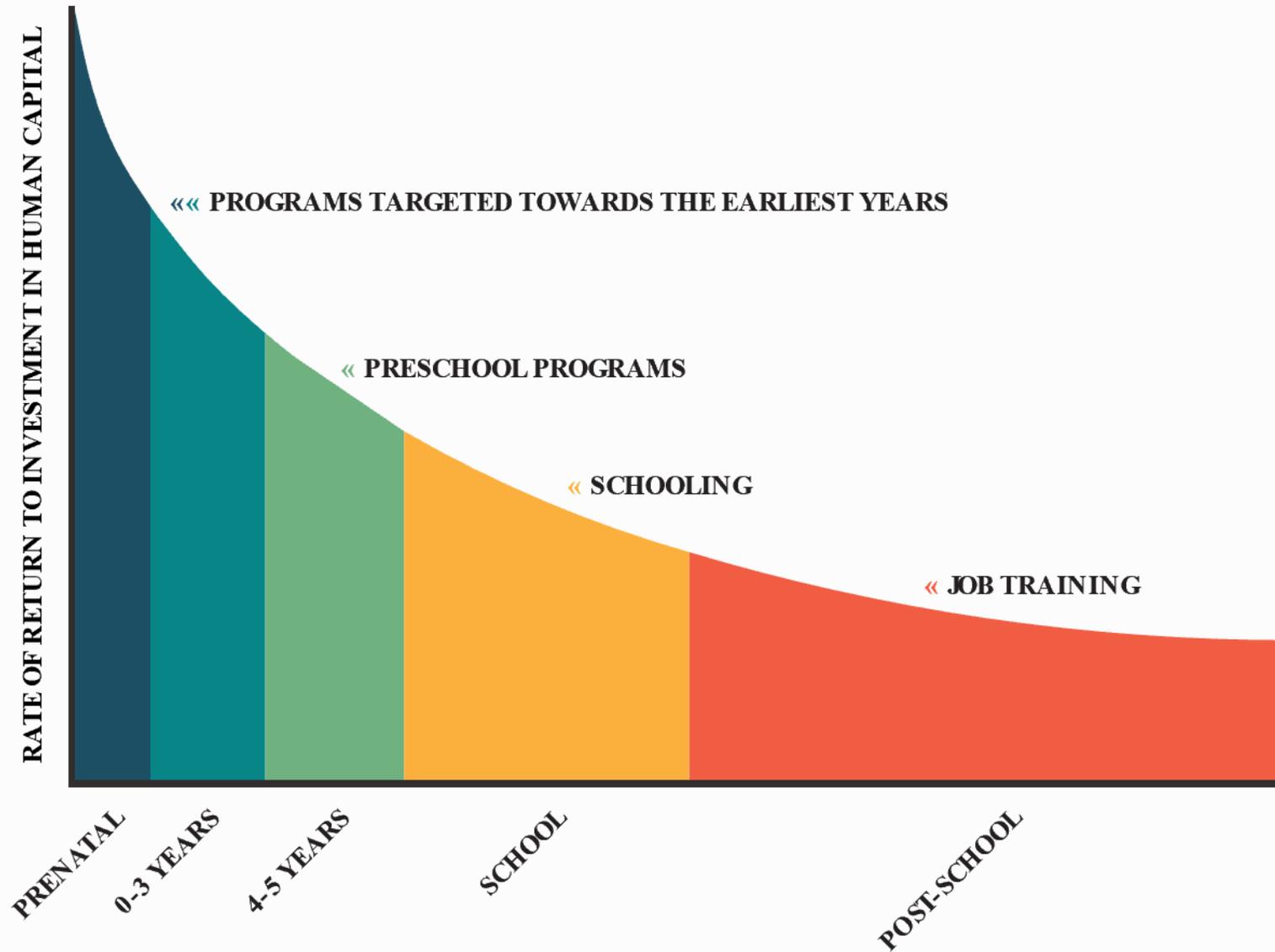
“Efforts should focus on the first years for the greatest efficiency and effectiveness. The best investment is in quality early childhood development from birth to five for disadvantaged children and their families.

“I am interested in the economics of human flourishing.”



Nobel economist James Heckman at the 2014 White House Summit on Early Education

RETURNS TO A UNIT DOLLAR INVESTED



Source: Heckman (2008)

Higher education returns are very high for the most able and motivated students (22% for college education for the most capable).

INVEST IN PREVENTION NOT REMEDIATION

Terrie Moffitt crime study

Two main types of offenders:

- **Adolescence limited offenders**
- **Life course persistent offenders: Age 3 to 4 years of age is the onset of criminality for serious offenders.**

Three Longitudinal Studies of High-Quality Preschool Programs

- Perry School Program
- Carolina Abecedarian Project
- Chicago Child-Parent Center Program

The Perry Preschool Program



The Perry Program: Design and Background

- Targeted African American children with low IQs (85 or lower) and low socioeconomic status.
- Conducted from 1962 to 1967 in the Ypsilanti, Michigan, school district to help children living in poverty avoid school failure and related problems.
- Children began at age 3 and were enrolled for 2 years.
- Parents were disadvantaged by income and education.
- Roughly 47% of the children in the study did not have fathers present in the household at age 3.
- 58 were in the program group, and 65 in a separate group with no preschool.
- Both groups were followed from 3 to 11, 14, 15, 19, 27, and 40.

Perry Preschool Curricula

- Intentional adult-child interactive language
- Montessori tools
- Movement/dancing
- Teachers provided large and small group activities
- Personal initiative
- Social relations
- Resolution of interpersonal conflicts
- Self-control
- Creative representation
- Logic and mathematics
- “Plan, Do, Review”
- *Active participatory learning* with children and adults treated as equal partners in the learning process



Outcomes

Education

- 77% of Perry Preschool graduates graduated from high school vs. 60% of the no-program group
- **88% of program girls graduated from high school vs. only 45% of the no program group**
 - 8% of program girls treated for mental impairment vs. 36% of no-program group.
 - 21% grade repetition vs. 41%.
- Individual IQ scores rose an average of **27 points from 78 to 105 after 1 year of preschool**
- **IQ 90+ at age 5: 67% for participant, 28% no program.**

Economic Performance

- 76% of program graduates were employed at age 40 vs. 62% no-program group.

Crime Prevention

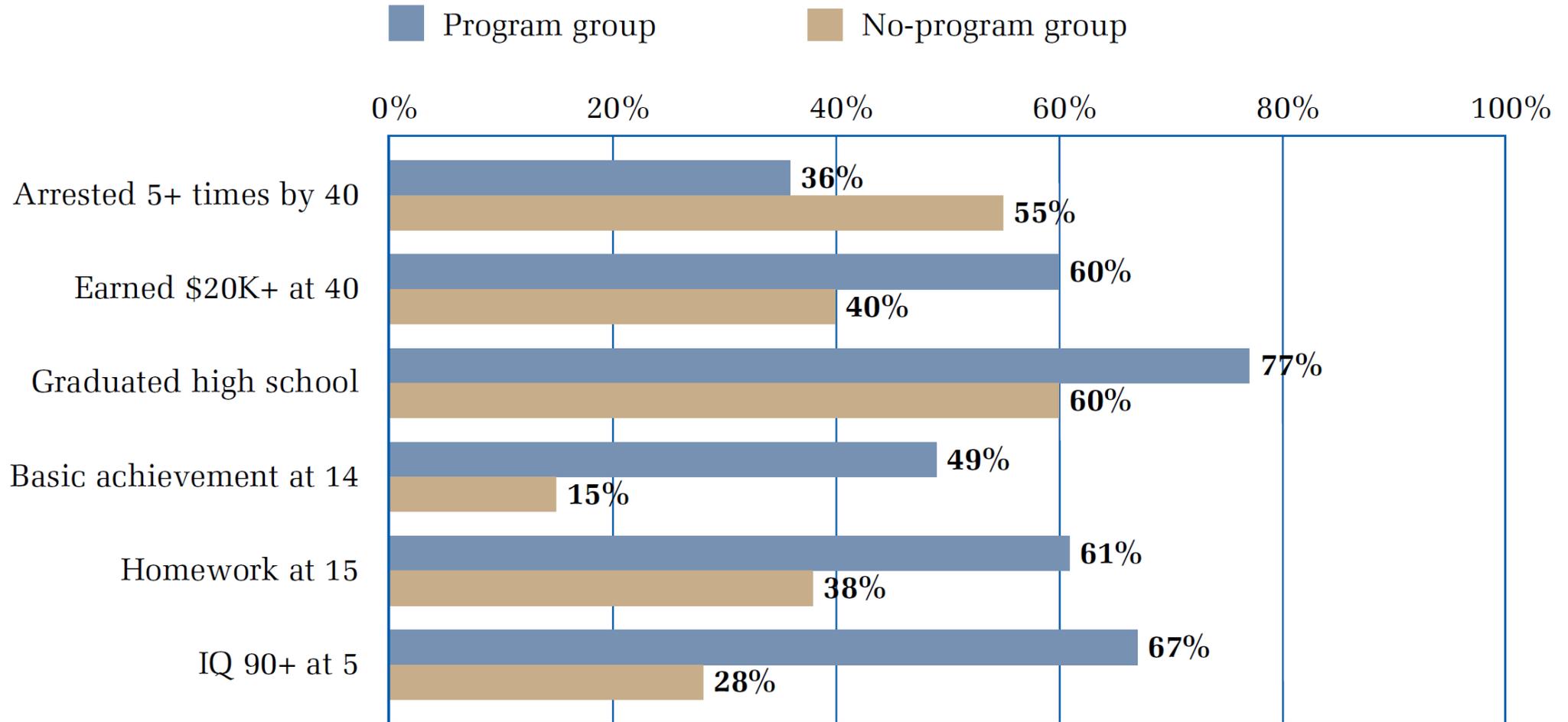
- Significant reduction in arrests, violent crime, property crime, drug crimes, and jail time.
 - Fewer arrests throughout a lifetime (36% vs. 55% arrested five or more times)
 - Drug crimes in adolescence (3% vs. 11%) and early adulthood (9% vs. 25%)
 - Assault and battery (19% vs. 37%) by age 40.
- Fewer months in prison for felonies (7% vs. 25%).

Health, Family, and Children

- **More program males raised their own children (29% vs. 8%).**

Figure 1

Major Findings: High/Scope Perry Preschool Study at 40



Return on Investment

- The return to society on investment per child in the Perry Program was \$366,750
- **\$12.90 for every dollar invested.**
 - 88% from crime savings, 4% education savings, 7% in increased taxed because of higher earnings; 1% in welfare savings.
 - Male participants cost the public 41% less in costs associated with crime.
 - Graduates earned 14% more over their lifetime than the no-program group (\$156,490 more over their lifetime)
- **93% of the cost benefit was based on the improved performance of males attributed to program males committing significantly fewer crimes.**

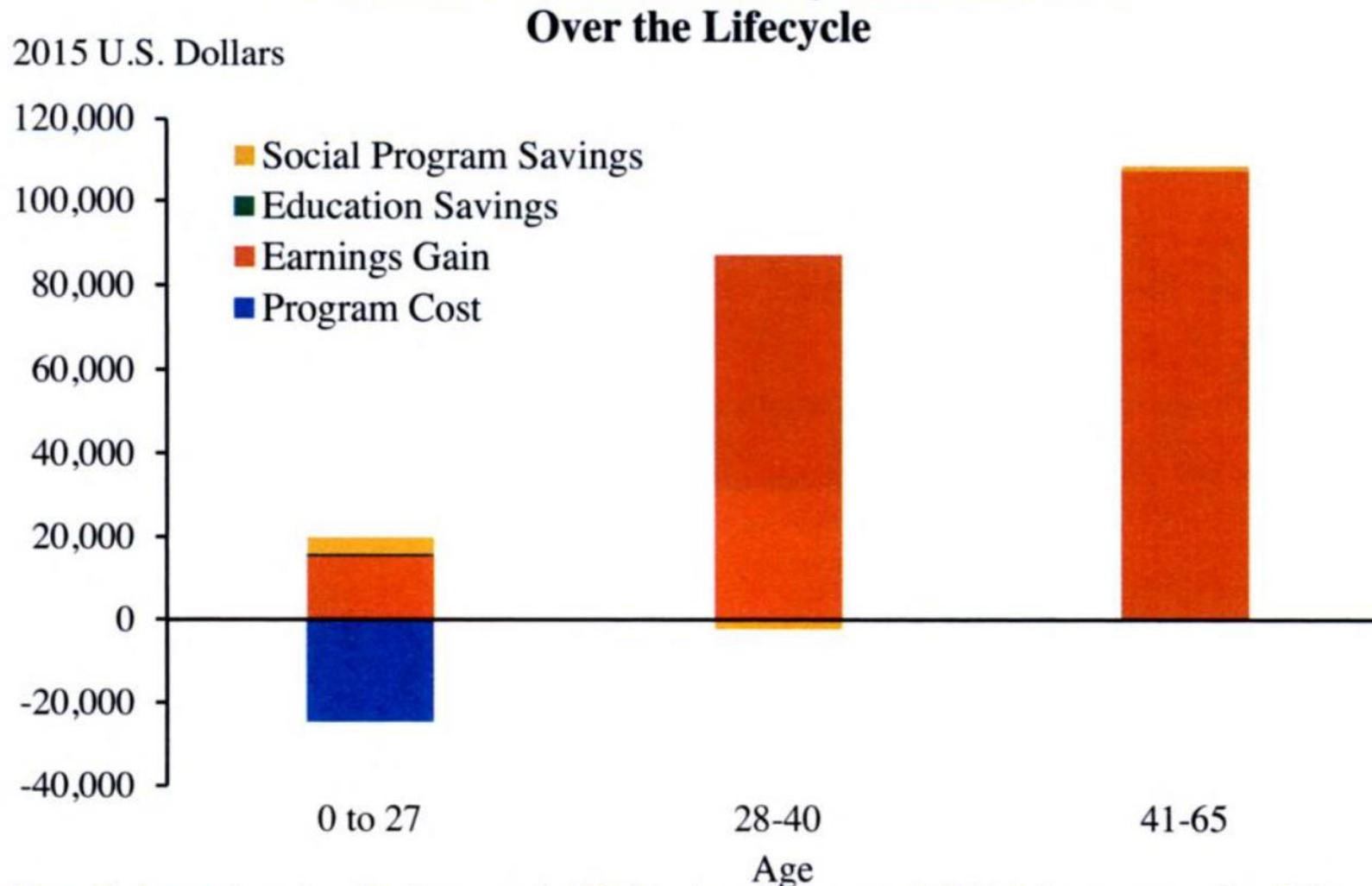


“Preschool must demonstrate ability to affect the development of children in three areas: These are intellectual growth, academic achievement, and social behavior.”

David P. Weikart
Psychologist and Perry School founder



Net Benefit of Perry School Preschool Rises Over the Lifecycle



Note: Estimates based on Heckman et al. (2010) using undiscounted 2006 dollars converted to 2015 dollars using CPI-U-RS. Additional costs and benefits, such as education beyond age 27, vocational training, savings from crime reduction, health benefits, and maternal earnings, have not been quantified in this chart.

Source: Heckman et al. (2010); CEA calculations.

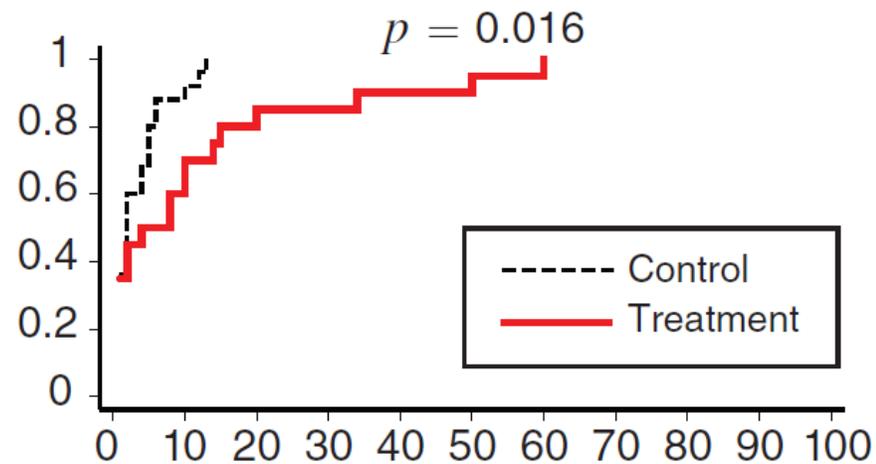
Key Points

- **High-quality preschool program for young children living in poverty**
 - **Teachers had bachelor's degrees (or higher) and certification in education**
 - **Each served five to six children in 2.5-hour classes, and made weekly 1.5-hour home visits to treatment group mothers to increase their involvement in the socio-emotional development of their children**
 - **Teachers studied and received support using the High/Scope participation model**
- **A 2-year program (October through May)**
- **9 hours a day could provide greater benefits for the children and their parents**

While the Perry program did not boost long-term IQ, it did boost long-term achievement test scores.

Achievement tests measure acquired knowledge—enhanced for children with better cognitive and personality skills, which promote learning. Recent evidence shows that 30 to 40% of the gap in achievement test scores across students is due to personality skills and not IQ.

Panel E. CAT total at age 14, male



Panel F. CAT total at age 14, female

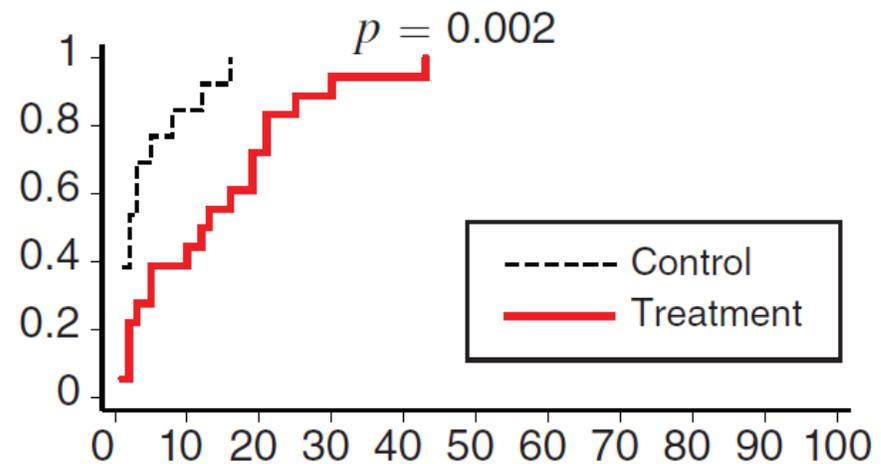


FIGURE 3. CUMULATIVE DISTRIBUTION FUNCTIONS OF INDICES OF PERSONALITY SKILLS AND CAT SCORES BY GENDER

- Personality skills, “soft skills,” physical and mental health, perseverance, attention, motivation, and self–confidence are also important and are often neglected.
- The family lives of young children are the major producers of cognitive and socioemotional skills. These, in turn, predict crime, health, and obesity
- Almost all antisocial adults were antisocial children (Robins 1978)
 - Disobedient and aggressive behaviors measured as early as ages 3 to 5 predict later childhood conduct disorders and adolescent arrests (Moffitt 1993; White et al. 1990)
 - Antisocial behaviors measured between ages 7 and 11 strongly predict criminal behaviors in adulthood (Moffitt 1993; Loeber 1982)

Skill leads to more skill.

Motivation leads to more motivation.

Develop COGNITION AND CHARACTER from birth to school to college to career training.

- **Motivation**
- **Sociability: ability to work with others**
- **Attention**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Self-esteem**
- **Ability to defer gratification**
- **Health and mental health.**

Big Five Factors in personality psychology: Openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

TABLE 2—COGNITIVE AND PERSONALITY FACTORS AND THEIR MEASURES

Cognition		Externalizing behavior		Academic motivation	
Measures ^a	Age	Measures ^a	Age ^b	Measures ^a	Age ^b
Stanford-Binet IQ	7	Disrupts classroom procedures	7–9	Shows initiative	7–9
Stanford-Binet IQ	8	Swears or uses obscene words	7–9	Alert and interested in school work	7–9
Stanford-Binet IQ	9	Steals	7–9	Hesitant to try, or gives up easily	7–9
		Lying or cheating	7–9		
		Influences others toward troublemaking	7–9		
		Aggressive toward peers	7–9		
		Teases or provokes students	7–9		
Cronbach's alpha, ^c males	0.838	Cronbach's alpha, males	0.906	Cronbach's alpha, males	0.901
Cronbach's alpha, females	0.913	Cronbach's alpha, females	0.916	Cronbach's alpha, females	0.896

Externalizing behavior is proxied by measures of behavior related to lying, stealing, and swearing, as well as being aggressive and disruptive. It has been linked to crime and aggressive behavior.

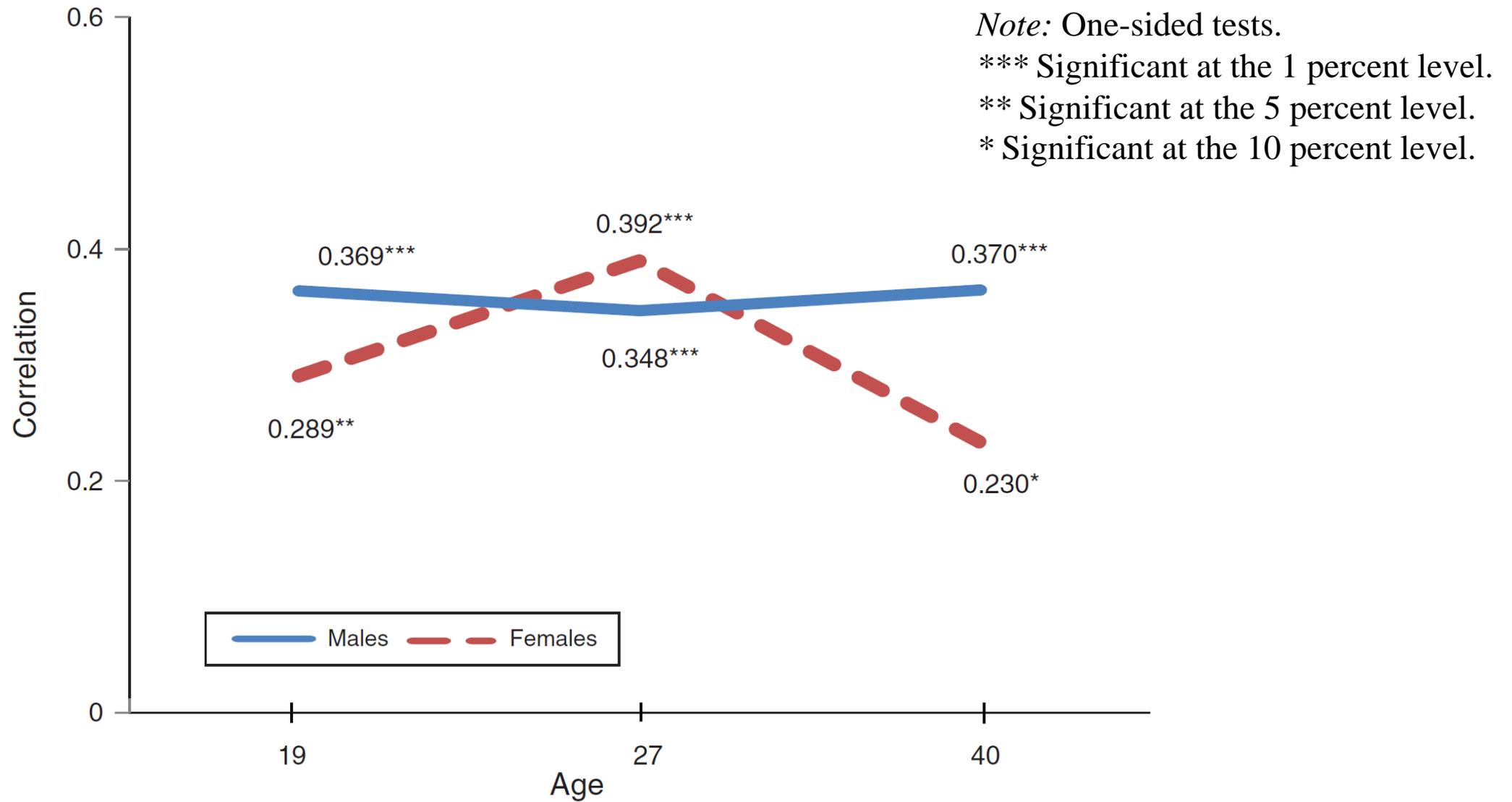


FIGURE 4. SPEARMAN'S RANK CORRELATIONS BETWEEN EXTERNALIZING BEHAVIOR AT AGES 7-9 AND NUMBER OF ARRESTS BY AGES 19, 27, AND 40

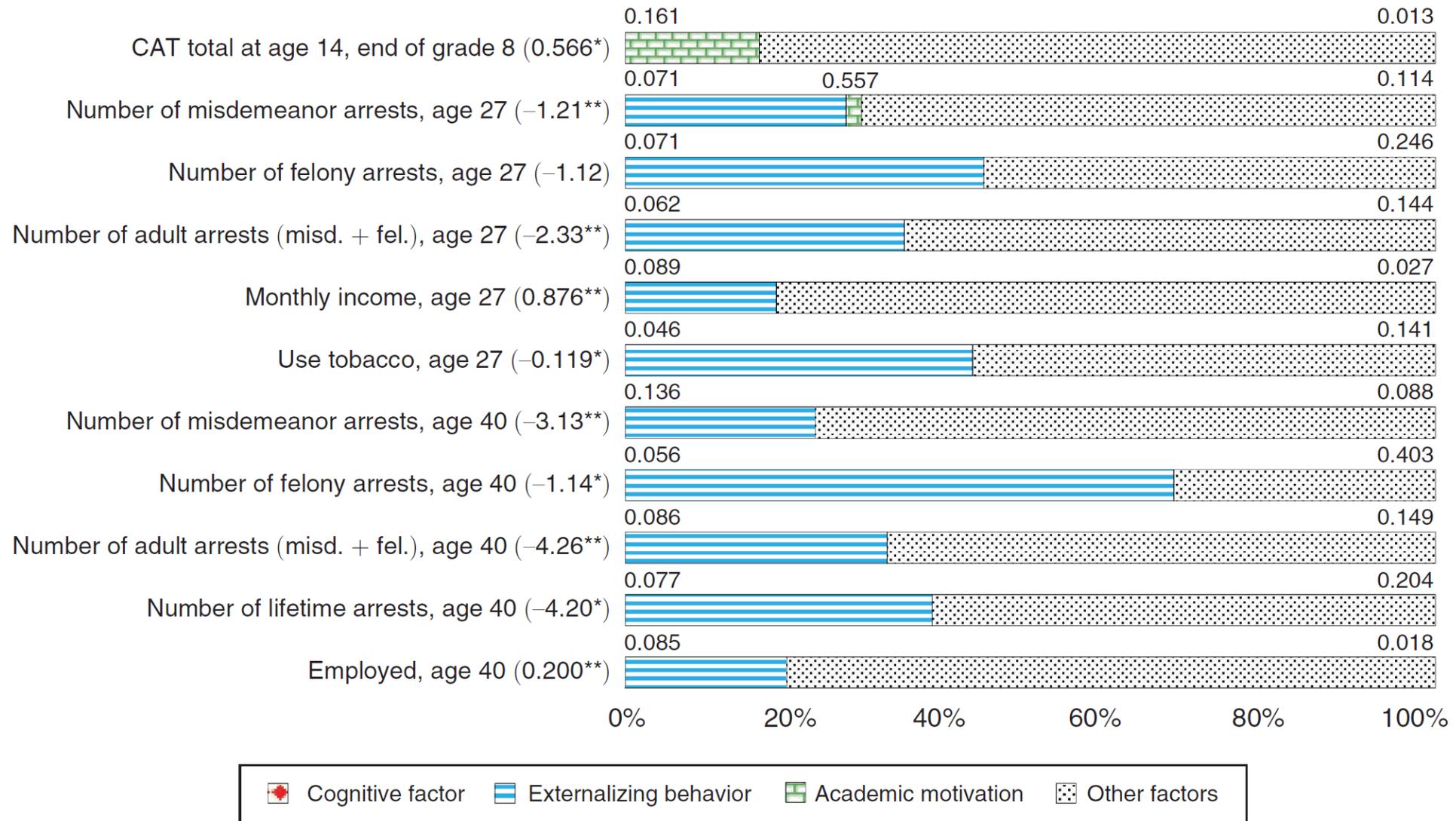
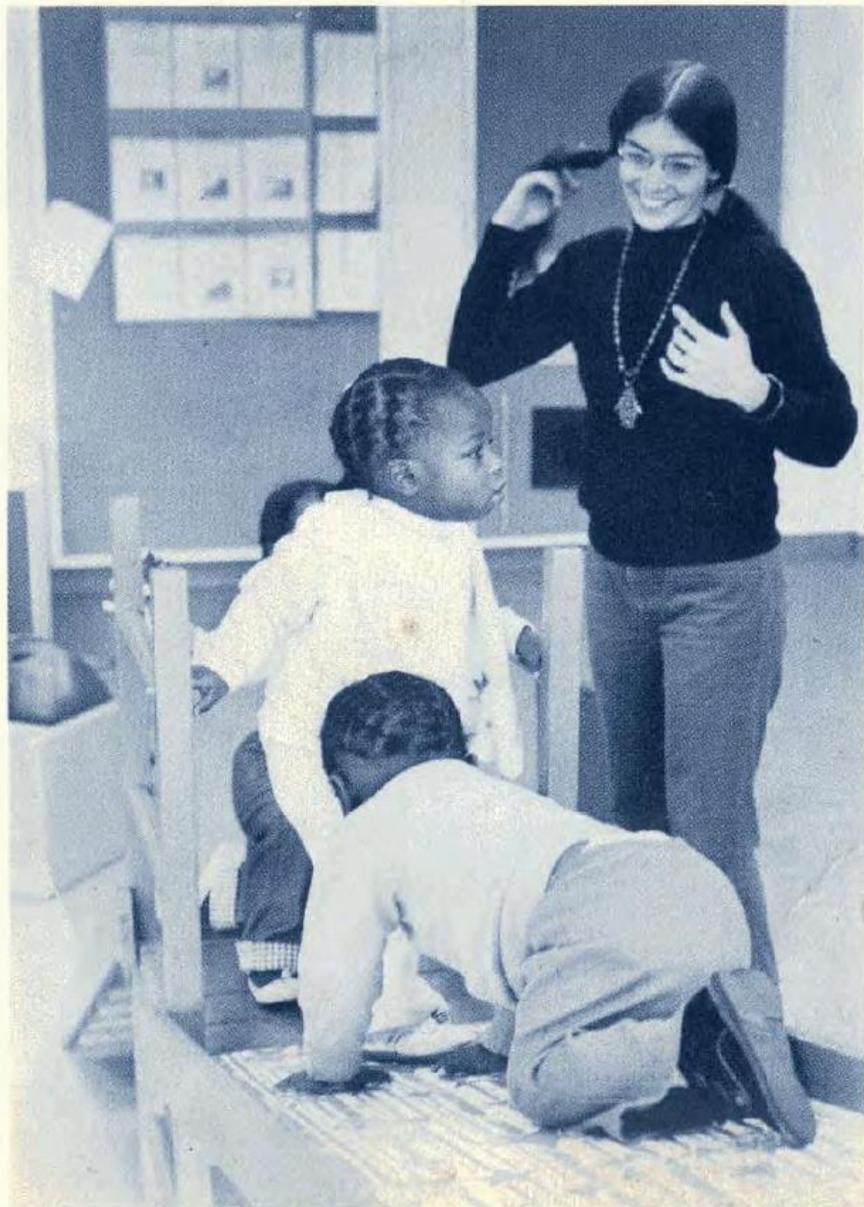


FIGURE 6. DECOMPOSITIONS OF TREATMENT EFFECTS ON OUTCOMES, MALES

Lasting effects, not fadeout

- Data from the Perry Preschool Program showed that increased **academic motivation** creates 30% of the effects on achievement and 40% on employment for females
- **Reduced externalizing behavior** creates a 65% reduction in lifetime violent crime, 40% reduction in lifetime arrests and 20% reduction in unemployment

- Persistent changes in personality skills played a substantial role in the success of the Perry program
- Reduction in externalizing behavior, which explains the bulk of the effects of the Perry program on criminal, labor market, and health behavior outcomes is especially strong
- A few hours per day of preschool at ages 3 and 4 with a curriculum that promotes social competency, planning, and organization can significantly promote positive life outcomes



THE CAROLINA ABECEDARIAN PROJECT

Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center



Carolina Abecedarian Project (ABC)

- Based on at-risk primarily Afro-American youth
- Performed at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute on the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill campus
- Participants were followed through their mid 30s. The programs started early in life (at 8 weeks of life)
- Parents of participants (primarily mothers) received free childcare that facilitated parental employment and adult education.



- Conducted by Dr. Craig Ramey
- Compared students with intervention against students randomly assigned to a control group
- Funded by federal and state grants
- Children were born between 1972 and 1977
- 111 low-income Afro-American children tracked from infancy to age 5 and 12, 15, 21, 30, and 35
- Designed to prevent lack of cognitive development for low-income, multi-risk children
- Most were in single-mother households with less than a high school education with no income
- High-quality educational intervention in a childcare setting from infancy through age 5
- Year-round schooling five days a week
- 6.5 to 10 hours a day
- 1:3 ratio for infants; 1:6 for 5-year-olds
- Each child had an individualized prescription of educational activities
- Educational activities consisted of "games" incorporated into the child's day
- Activities focused on social, emotional, and cognitive areas of development but gave particular emphasis to language
- Programs being adapted in China, Mexico, Canada, and Australia

Program Details

- Two stages 0 to 5, and 6 to 8
- Stable environment during hours of the program
- Onsite pediatric health care: Well and ill child checks, periodic checkups and daily screening—good health has been found to be a bedrock for success in many other areas
- Nutritious meals—two meals and a snack at the care center during first stage (years 0 through 5 is a critical period for preventing obesity)
- Improved adult education
- Objective: Could early development prevent development of mild mental retardation in disadvantaged children?
- Cost annually per child \$19,932 today; total cost per child: \$96,075 today
- Children were transported to the center by Frank Porter Graham Center staff
- Children stayed for up to 9 hours/day 50 weeks/year
- Learning Games for the First Three Years were developed by Joseph Sparling and Isabelle Lewis (shown at right)
- Focus on fun
- Focus on language. Teachers were told, “Every game is a language game,” and to talk to children and elicit responses from them
- Play-based, adult-child activities to minimize at-risk, anti-social behaviors and support language, cognitive, motor, social-emotional skills and task orientation
- Specific program every 2 to 3 weeks.



0 to 5

- Cognitive and social stimulation interspersed with caregiving and supervised play throughout a full 8-hour day for the first 5 years
- “Abecedarian Approach,” comprised four key elements:
 - Language Priority
 - Conversational Reading
 - Enriched Caregiving
 - [LearningGames](#) (200 games with playful back and forth exchanges between the adult and child)



Program Details (cont.)

6 to 8

- Improving early math and reading skills through having “home-school resource teachers” customize learning activities based on materials being covered at school and then deliver these materials to the parents to use at home
- *No evidence of any treatment effect on adult health from the second-stage randomization*
- *Treatment effects are much smaller in magnitude than those estimated for the first-stage treatment and fail to achieve statistical significance at conventional levels*
- *Previous work has shown no health effects from a school-age (as compared with a preschool) educational intervention*



Daycare

ABC provided childcare to the parents of treated children for more than **9 hours a day for 5 years, 50 weeks a year.**

Only 27% of participant mothers of children reported living with a partner at baseline.

The childcare component generates substantial treatment effects on maternal labor force participation and parental labor income. Subsidized childcare induced wage growth through enhanced parental educational attainment and wage growth based on work experience.

Any childcare inducements of the program likely benefit parents who, at baseline, did not have any other children who were not eligible for program participation.

Parental labor income effects induced by the childcare subsidy are an important component of the benefit/cost ratio.

U.S. Lanham Act of 1940 studied providing childcare subsidies through wartime stimulus grants between 1943 and 46. Follow-up studies were done into adulthood.

- Increased educational attainment and earnings capacity
- Children were more likely to graduate from high school, college, and work full-time.
- For every \$100 spend on the program, participants average annual earnings rose 1.8%.
- Benefits were largest for poorest children served.

Health Benefits

Reported in *Science*, March 2014: Blind controls were done with actual biomarkers including blood samples and physician examinations to determine health:

- Lower rates of hypertension (126 systolic vs. 143 for nonparticipants)
- Lower obesity (correlated with increased absenteeism, lower productivity, lower wages) BMI surged for control group at 1 year; above normal BMI at age 5 is trajectory for severe obesity in mid-30s
- Lower diabetes is shown to be associated with higher rates of employment 8 to 11%, less likely to be on social programs (8 to 13%), and higher wages
- No metabolic syndrome for men (waist circumference greater than 40 in., which is highly associated with heart disease, stroke, and diabetes) vs. 25% for nonparticipants
- Women also but less so (waist circumference greater than 35 in.)
- Reduced “total” coronary heart disease (CHD)
- Better “good” cholesterol (HDL)
- Up to 5.5 years longer life expectancy for men and 5.7 for women
- A way to reduce costs of U.S. health care





Dr. Frances Campbell, participant in the Abecedarian study from the beginning

Follow-up Studies

- Through age 15, IQ scores were higher for participants and at age 3 IQs were 94 vs. 79 at Perry Preschool
- Higher scores in math and reading through high school
- Lower level grade retention; lower placement in special education

At age 21

- Better intellectual performance in math and reading
- More years of education and more likely to attend college or a university
- More likely to have a skilled job
- Less likely to be a teen parent
- Increased income of mothers

At age 30

- Four times more likely to hold a bachelor's degree and job, and delay parenthood

At age 35

- Striking health benefits
- Much higher percentage enrolled in school at age 21 (42% vs. 20%)
- Much higher percentage attended, or still attending, a 4-year college (36% vs. 14%)
- Much higher percentage engaged in skilled jobs (47% vs. 27%)



A way to prevent chronic diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and obesity

Noncommunicable diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, and diabetes, are responsible for two-thirds of deaths worldwide

Abecedarian Project, Health Effects at Age 35 (Males)

	Treatment Mean	Control Mean	Treatment p-value
Systolic Blood Pressure	125.79	143.33	0.018
Diastolic Blood Pressure	78.53	92.00	0.024
Pre-Hypertension	0.68	0.78	0.235
Hypertension	0.10	0.44	0.011
HDL Cholesterol	53.21	42.00	0.067
Cholesterol/HDL-C	3.89	4.69	0.057
Abdominal Obesity	0.65	0.87	0.136
Metabolic Syndrome	0.00	0.25	0.009

Source: Campbell, Conti, Heckman, Moon, Pinto, Pungello and Pan (2014).

Chicago Child-Parent Center Program Longitudinal Study

- Study of intervention for low-income children with a strong family engagement component from preschool to 9 years of age (published in JAMA Pediatrics 2016) to address (1) low student attendance, family disengagement, and low student achievement
- Followed 1,398 children through age 35
- Correlation with post-secondary education (48% higher degree completion), which influences
 - Mental health
 - Physical health
 - Economic prosperity
 - Rates of criminal behavior
- Preschool: 51% vs. 44% high school completion; 4 to 6 years: 55% vs. 44%; full program: on-time high school graduation 53% vs. 31%
- Black boys and high school dropouts showed the greatest gains
- High parental involvement
- Low student teacher ratio
- Balance of teacher and student-directed learning
- Teachers with bachelor's or higher
- All preschools are housed in elementary schools where the child will attend kindergarten
- Require 2.5 hours of parental involvement each week (hurdle and a help)
- Parent Resource Teacher provides home visits

Chicago Child-Parent Center Program Longitudinal Study (cont.)

- Success based on staying the same school for 4 to 5 years (shows need for interconnectedness in social services)
- Chicago Public School District was the first to allocate Title 1 funding for preschool
- First federally funded pre-K to 3rd grade program
- Chicago spent \$8,000/child for the first 2 years of preschool, and \$3,000 for kindergarten through 3rd grade for a \$10 return on investment for every \$1 spent
- High-quality educational enrichment through reduced class sizes and a balance of teacher- and child-directed learning
- Family support services that include participation in school activities, support groups and workshops, and home visits
- Comprehensive services that include nutritional and health supports (subsidized meals, health screening, and speech therapy)

Chicago Child-Parent Center Program Philosophy:

“In a success-oriented environment in which young children can see themselves as important, they are ‘turned on’ for learning.”

High School and College Graduation Rates of the Three Studies

Abecedarian: High school completion about the same, but completion of a bachelor's degree was four times higher

Perry Preschool: 66% vs. 45% for the control group

Chicago CPC: 22% higher high school graduation rate

(from the Handbook of Economics of Education; Higher Education Handbook of Theory and Research, Vol. 28;

Develop COGNITIVE AND CHARACTER skills early.

Invest in the “whole child” and family.

Effective early childhood education packages cognitive skills with character skills such as attentiveness, impulse control, persistence and teamwork.

Together, cognition and character drive education, career and life success—with character development often being the most important factor.

Programs work for the disadvantaged.

Heckman finds that effectiveness depends on program quality.

Government programs that provide disadvantaged families with access to high-quality, center-based care are better and more effective alternatives than no formal care.

Affluent families who can afford higher quality center-based and in-home care are more likely to do better with those alternatives, calling into question the economic effectiveness of influencing their choices with government subsidies.

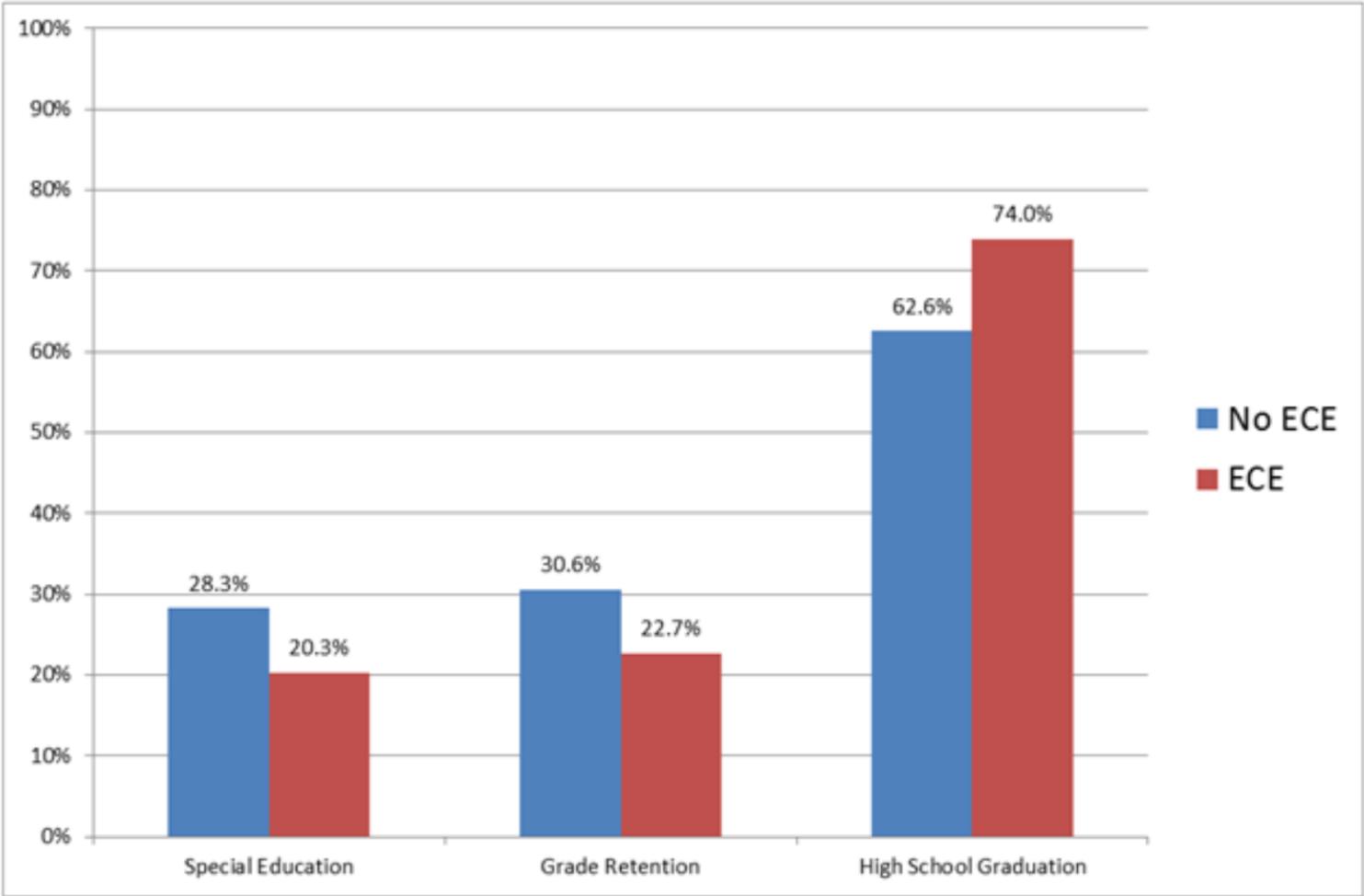
Economic pressures force poor and middle-income parents alike to spend more time away from their children to make ends meet. The need for quality early childhood education is intensifying, and the costs are increasing. Every child needs quality early childhood education.

Those in the greatest need receive the greatest public benefit from public funding.

- Quality, birth-to-five early childhood development programs can be used to prevent adult chronic disease
- High-quality early childhood development should be considered in health care, particularly among families receiving Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Quality early childhood programs start with effective perinatal care for mothers and begin at birth for children
- Integrate early health and nutrition into early childhood development programs
- Early health is critical for later adult health outcomes

High-quality Early Childhood Education Makes a Significant Difference Study, 2018

Figure 1: Average rates of special education placement, grade retention, and high school graduation for ECE participants vs. non-participants



From Educational Researcher (peer-review journal of the American Educational Research Association)

Study done by five universities (Harvard Graduate School of Education, New York University, University of California – Irvine, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin – Madison, and Rand Corporation

- Reduced future special education placement by 8.1 percentage points
- Decreased grade retention by 8.3 percentage points
- Increased high school graduation rates by 11.4 percentage points.
- No FADE-OUT. Sustained benefits through elementary school and beyond
- MORE THAN HALF OF LOW INCOME 3- and 4-year-olds are left out of center-based care
- \$8K to \$12K per pupil for special education
- 373,000 students drop out of high school annually at a cost of \$262,000 lifetime earnings per student

Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress February 2016

- Access to Head Start at 3 and 4, reduced child mortality 50 to 100% in the 300 poorest U.S. counties to close the gap with the national average
 - Increased high school graduation rate
 - Lowered arrest rate

Investing in early childhood education is a cost-effective strategy for promoting economic growth.

Our economic future depends on providing the tools for upward mobility and building a highly educated, skilled workforce.

Early childhood education is the most efficient way to accomplish these goals:

- Heckman's study of the **Perry Preschool program** data showed a 7% to 10% return on investment per year
- Heckman's study of the **North Carolina's Abecedarian (ABC) and Carolina Approach to Responsive Education (CARE)** data showed a 13% return on investment per child per year

Idaho spends \$2.63 billion, or one-third of its \$7.9-billion budget (2016), on education annually

A 13% ROI per year could save \$341 million per year by investing in our people—early

Idaho spends \$7,486 per pupil vs. the \$12,201 national average (2015)

Only Idaho, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Wyoming invest 0 public dollars in pre-K education

Other States

- **Oklahoma** approved funding of universal, voluntary, high-quality pre-K as a grad level in its school funding formula. 75% of the state's 4-year-olds attend pre-K. Benefits found through middle school. (Only 32% of Idaho's 4-year-olds attend pre-K. Only 25% of Idaho's low income and 17% of Latino's attend pre-K.)
- **North Carolina's Smart Start and More at Four** programs show benefits through 8th grade including lower special education enrollment, reduced grade retention, and higher math and reading scores. A spillover effect was found in the scores of students not attending pre-K with those having attended pre-K. The kindergarten and later elementary years classroom environments were more conducive to learning because of less disruption and disciplinary issues.
- **Texas** funds half-day pre-K for low-income students and English language learners. Some school districts offer full day. Majority are for 4-year-olds, but some provide for 3-year-olds. 58% of pre-K grads are kindergarten ready based on indexes versus 42% who don't attend.
- **Arkansas Better Chance** pre-K graduates scored higher on kindergarten measures of vocabulary, math skills, and print concepts.
- **Georgia**'s pre-K graduates had higher kindergarten measures in language and literacy, math, and general knowledge.
- **New Mexico** pre-K graduates had higher kindergarten measures in vocabulary, math, and early literacy compared to nonattendeess.

A big step for early childhood education in Idaho

Great news for Idaho parents and students regarding early childhood education. Thanks to the successful collaboration of a bipartisan committee of stakeholders convened over the summer and the support of Gov. Brad Little, Idaho is the recipient of a \$3.3 million federal Preschool Development Grant. After attending an early education learning summit through Hunt Institute, we were able to form a bipartisan coalition that was focused on researching pre-K in Idaho. The grant is focused on strengthening existing early childhood education. Key components of the grant are research, planning, collaboration and coordination. Idaho is one of six states to be awarded funding for this grant.

The Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children will take the lead in the administration of the grant. The Idaho Legislature, state and local agencies, and partners will be working closely with Idaho AEYC to ensure that our students are prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn, grow and develop. The grant will support a comprehensive approach, which will include the

identification of resources and support for parents, students, educators, and a wide variety of public and private entities. Many of these resources exist today but are not easily accessible to parents and educators.

Idaho families continue to express their desire for early learning options. This grant will provide the funding to investigate the wide variety of resources available, best practices and opportunities for innovation. Our hope is to immediately create a repository that lists all resources and best practices available to new parents. After visiting with hospitals, we are pleased that doctors and nurses have seen the need to have a place we can refer new parents who are looking for early education guidance. The structure of the grant is well defined and the result of extensive research, preparation and rigorous attention to the multiplicity of needs expressed by Idaho educators, families and legislators.

In addition to connecting parents with existing resources, we want to take a comprehensive look at what works, what doesn't work and how programs are funded. It is an opportunity to look at all existing programs, measure effectiveness and find room

for improvement. This grant will also give parents, educators and children more tools to strengthen language and literacy prior to starting kindergarten. The sooner our children are exposed to a rich literacy experience the better chance they have to be proficient by the third grade.

Specific grant activities and comprehensive strategies for the accomplishment of each have been developed. Activities are identified as follows:

- Activity one: Statewide needs assessment plan.
- Activity two: Statewide strategic plan.
- Activity three: Maximizing parental choice and knowledge.
- Activity four: Sharing best practices for early childhood education.
- Activity Five: Improving overall quality of early childhood care and education.

Without doubt, receipt of this grant and the wealth of knowledge gained will provide Idaho with a historical opportunity to make strategic investments in the improvement of early childhood education delivery and the trajectory of our children's education. It is time for Idaho to make an investment in early childhood learning. Our children and grandchildren are counting on us.

Janie Ward-Engelking and Cherie Buckner-Webb are Democratic senators from Boise.



JANIE WARD-ENGELKING

Guest columnist



CHERIE BUCKNER-WEBB

Guest columnist