



THE EFFECTS OF HB1519 FUNDING ON EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

New findings from a three-year study indicate significant benefits to children who participated in early childhood programs receiving HB1519 funding.

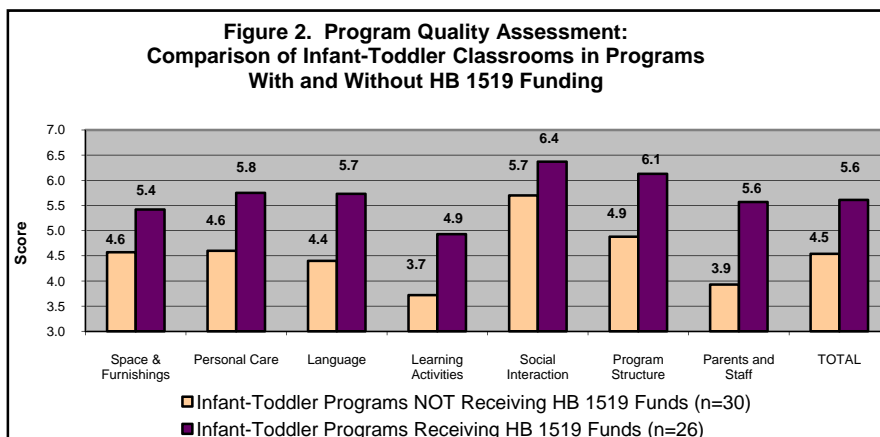
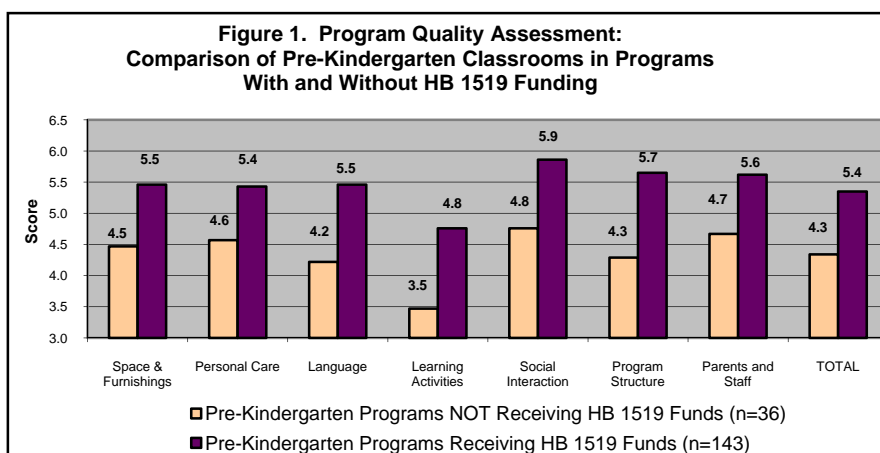
In 1998, the Missouri Legislature created the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund (HB1519). The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Social Services funded a three-year study that evaluated the development and care of children participating in programs across the state that were supported by HB1519 funds

compared to children participating in programs that did not receive funding. Program quality was evaluated using the Infant-Toddler Environmental Rating Scale, the Family Daycare Environmental Rating Scale and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised. Furthermore, the intellectual abilities of children who attended high quality programs were compared to the abilities of children who attended programs of lower quality using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities.

Effects of HB1519 on Program Quality

House Bill 1519 is raising the quality of preschool and infant-toddler programs in Missouri. When compared to a random sample of Missouri preschools and infant-toddler programs, HB1519 preschools and infant-toddler programs scored higher on every scale related to quality. Figure 1 shows the difference between preschool classrooms that did or did not receive HB1519 funding. Figure 2 shows the difference between infant/toddler classrooms that did or did not receive HB1519 funding. (Scale for Figure 1 and Figure 2: 1-3 = Poor to Minimal; 3-5 = Minimal to Good; 5-7 = Good to Excellent)

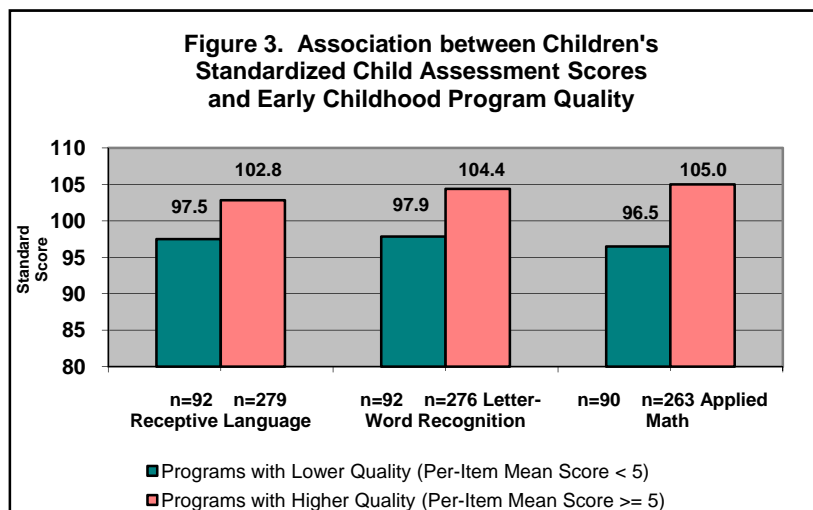
policy brief



Program Quality and Children's Outcomes

Missouri's children from high quality programs perform better on key child outcomes.

Consistent with previous research¹ that has demonstrated a relationship between higher quality early childhood education and child outcomes, children from higher quality programs (those scoring ≥ 5.0 on quality) scored significantly higher on standardized measures of receptive language skills (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test), letter-word recognition (Woodcock-Johnson), and applied math skills (Woodcock-Johnson) than children in poor or mediocre programs.



Policy Recommendations

To support the development of young children in Missouri, efforts to improve the quality of their early education programs need to be supported. Missouri needs to:

- Continue to support current funding levels for services that enhance the quality of early childhood programs.
- Provide more funding to allow additional support services so more children can benefit from higher quality early childhood experiences.

A full report regarding the impact of House Bill 1519 funds on early childhood programs will be available June 2003.

¹ For a summary, see Brookes, S. (2002). *Early childhood education: Improving children's early experiences*. Center for Family Policy & Research: Columbia, MO.

(Compiled by Kathy Fuger, Michelle Mathews, Kathy Thornburg, & Wayne Mayfield, April 2003)

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For more information about this topic, please contact the Center for Family Policy & Research

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