

Global Business Leaders Support Early Childhood Development Creating the workforce of tomorrow through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report



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As business leaders with global interests, we write to stress the vital importance of the early childhood years as creating the foundation for life-long health and productivity in all countries. A well-trained workforce is essential to address any international priority, including economic development, energy, environment, health, gender equity and conflict resolution. Children's experiences before birth and during the first five years of life lay the crucial foundation for a productive citizenry that can contribute to solving the world's pressing challenges.

We applaud the United Nations for including the youngest children in the Synthesis Report of the UN Secretary General on the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, and we ask for continued attention to this critical issue in the final report. During the first five years of life, children not only build their academic abilities but also the key physical, social and emotional skills that profoundly influence life outcomes. Remediation is costly and uncertain to succeed in helping children become the productive employees and customers every business needs and the informed citizenry every country desires.

Therefore, we urge the United Nations to:



In the final report, keep under Goal 4 Education the specific target of Goal 4.2: ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.



In the final report, keep under Goal 3 Health the specific targets of preventing maternal deaths and those of children under five.



In the final report, stress the importance of providing sufficient public and private funds to support effective investments that prepare children for success in school and in life.



Ensure that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals includes the measurement, monitoring and tracking of births and child development through age five through coordinated efforts across health and education.

An overwhelming body of research across the world has shown that high-quality, evidence-based investments in early childhood, such as early education, health, parent supports, nutrition, etc., increase the chances of young children succeeding in school and in life. A recent study by Nobel Laureate James Heckman and others found that early parent and health supports in Jamaica increased adult earnings by 25%. Research in Brazil showed that early education increased second grade literacy, improved math scores in fourth grade, and increased rates of educational completion through college. A meta-analysis by the National Institute for Early Education Research of 56 studies across 23 countries in Africa, Central/South America, Asia and Europe found positive impacts of early childhood programs on health, education, IQ and emotional development.

ReadyNation is a business membership organization of more than 1,100 leaders across the United States and internationally. Members speak to the media and key decision makers in support of increased public and private investments that improve the economy and workforce through research-backed services for young children and their families.

Thank you for recognizing the vital importance of early childhood in achieving global health and prosperity. We applaud your vision and look forward to seeing this crucial issue in the final United Nations report.

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An extensive body of research in education, developmental psychology, neuroscience, medicine and economics shows that quality early childhood education programs produce better education, health, economic and social outcomes for children, families, and the nation.

"Early Childhood Education Consensus Letter" signed by more than 1,200 researchers from 34 countries and every state in the U.S., sponsored by the National Institute for Early Education Research.

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(Company names are listed for identification purposes only and do not imply endorsement)

ReadyNation is a non-profit business membership organization of more than 1,100 executives. We support business leaders to take action at the community, company or policy levels to promote a stronger economy and workforce, through effective investments in children and youth.

ReadyNation's international work is funded in part by the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

On October 1-2, ReadyNation will host the first Global Business Summit on Early Childhood Investments, in New York City.

Add your voice.

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