

# The economic case for investing in early years

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The children's curriculum  
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# UNICEF Children Well-being across the OECD

The chart below presents the findings of this *Report Card* in summary form. Countries are listed in order of their average rank for the six dimensions of child well-being that have been assessed.<sup>1</sup> A light blue background indicates a place in the top third of the table; mid-blue denotes the middle third and dark blue the bottom third.

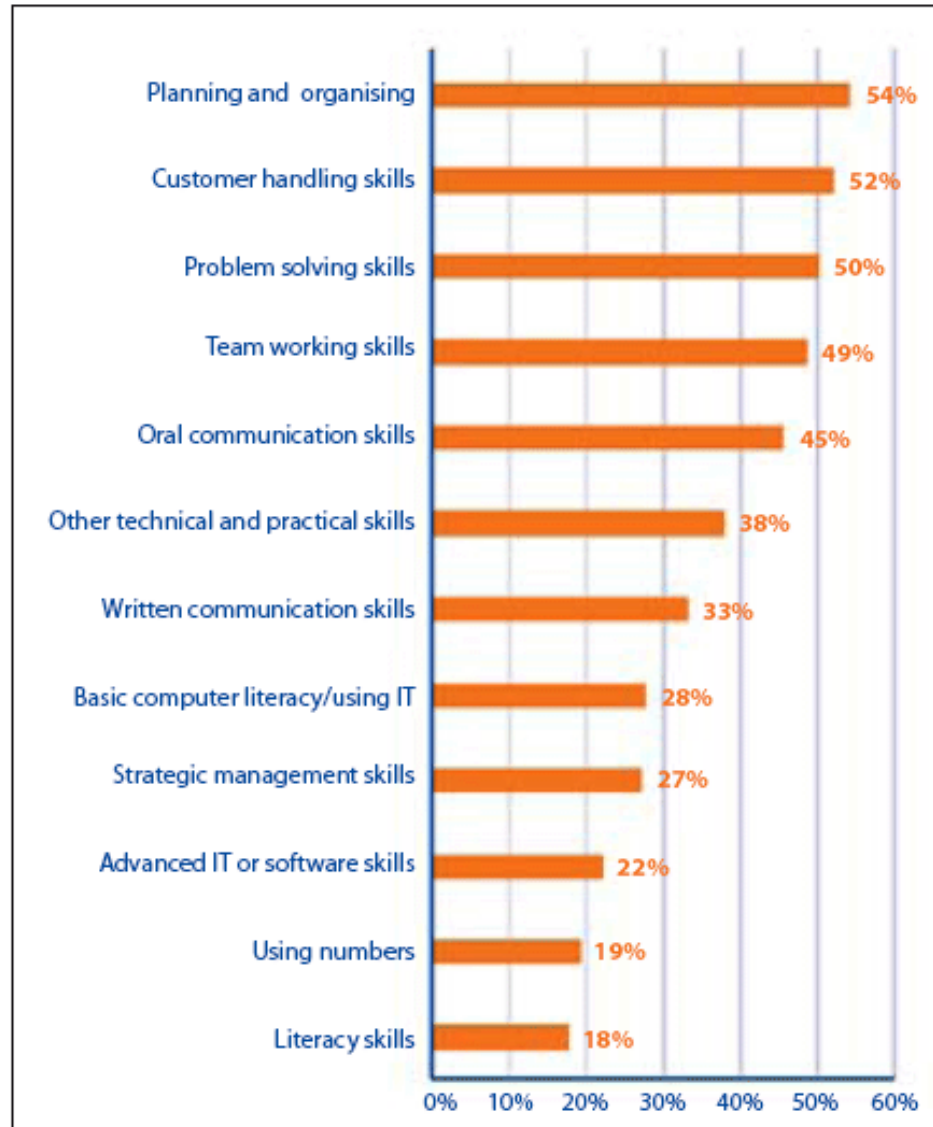
		Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5	Dimension 6
Dimensions of child well-being	Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Educational well-being	Family and peer relationships	Behaviours and risks	Subjective well-being
Netherlands	4.2	10	2	6	3	3	1
Sweden	5.0	1	1	5	15	1	7
Denmark	7.2	4	4	8	9	6	12
Finland	7.5	3	3	4	17	7	11
Spain	8.0	12	6	15	8	5	2
Switzerland	8.3	5	9	14	4	12	6
Norway	8.7	2	8	11	10	13	8
Italy	10.0	14	5	20	1	10	10
Ireland	10.2	19	19	7	7	4	5
Belgium	10.7	7	16	1	5	19	16
Germany	11.2	13	11	10	13	11	9
Canada	11.8	6	13	2	18	17	15
Greece	11.8	15	18	16	11	8	3
Poland	12.3	21	15	3	14	2	19
Czech Republic	12.5	11	10	9	19	9	17
France	13.0	9	7	18	12	14	18
Portugal	13.7	16	14	21	2	15	14
Austria	13.8	8	20	19	16	16	4
Hungary	14.5	20	17	13	6	18	13
United States	18.0	17	21	12	20	20	–
United Kingdom	18.2	18	12	17	21	21	20

OECD countries with insufficient data to be included in the overview: Australia, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, the Slovak Republic, South Korea, Turkey.

# Lessons from Wise Group

- Most people want to work
- A frightening number of people are unemployable
- How much retro fitting of 'skills' required?
- Scottish Enterprise experience and employer skills survey

# What Employers Want

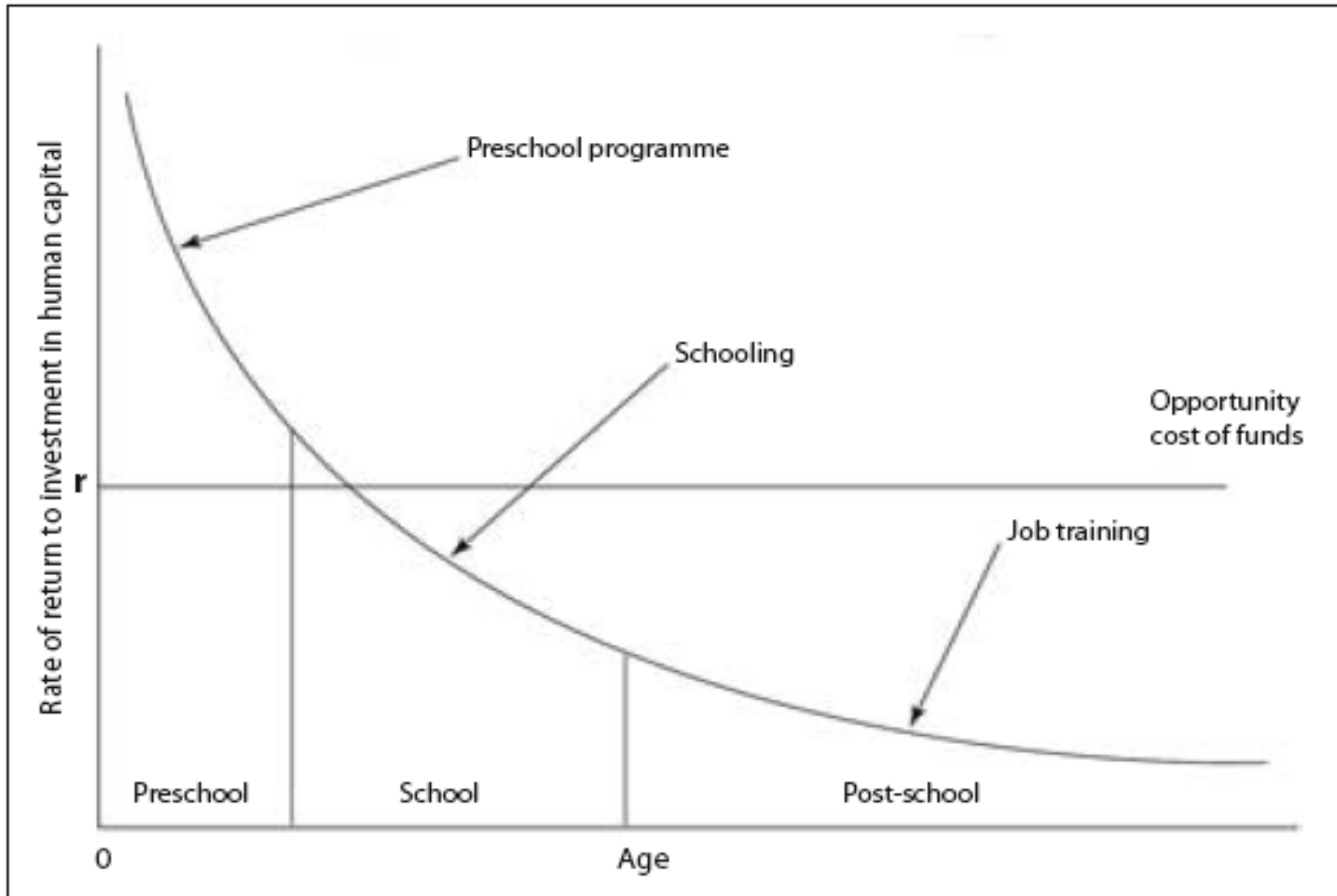


# Systemic Challenge

- Poor attainment in education
- Violence and anti-social behaviour
- Mental health problems
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Young mothers with or without partners
- Increasing prison population
- Cut off from work and unemployable
- An older old population

Are these different problems? Or just the same problem with a different symptom? In each case the underlying problem rests with a poor, pregnancy, poor attachment and inadequate parenting.

# Rate of Return



# The Benefits

Like Stern Report

3:1 to 7:1 by 21 years

12-16% for £1 invested

but gains through life



# Nordic Evidence

- Whole country, not test sites.
- Completing secondary school education:
- Scotland 1 in 5
- Denmark 1 in 2
- Most intergenerational income mobility – Denmark and Sweden; least USA and UK.

# Putting it Right

- Culture, policy and economics: it does not have to be this way
- Right thing to: do-real lives real people
- Hard and soft issue?
- Take money out: stop, simplify, get others to do more, get it right first time
- Have a sense of the forward march

# Forward March

- Win hearts and minds and build consensus
- Support all teenage mothers
- Maternity grants
- Mother and child well-being clinics
- Children and family community centres
- Adoption, fostering, child protection

# Conclusions

1. Focus on the causes not point of impact
2. Market failure, equity and efficiency
3. Short and long term
4. Right thing to do

