

# Why Quality Matters



March 3, 2011

# Key Points

- The early childhood years are critical to future success in school and life
- More children than ever are in child care programs at a very early age
- Research has defined the dimensions of quality child care
- Quality child care can make a difference in a child's ability to succeed in school and in life

# Our Statewide Needs

- Nearly 1.5 Million children birth to age 6 live in NYS.
- 50% of infants have their moms back in the workforce by 6 months
- Young children are more likely to live in poverty than any other age group.
  - 39% of children live in low-income families (below 200% of federal poverty level)
  - 21 % of NY children live in poverty
  - In NYS, 16,000 children are at risk of losing slots (CCDBG & Head Start combined). Data from CLASP
- Nearly two-thirds of children under 6 are in households where parents or single parent is in the workforce.
- 40% of NY's working families are headed by a single parent.

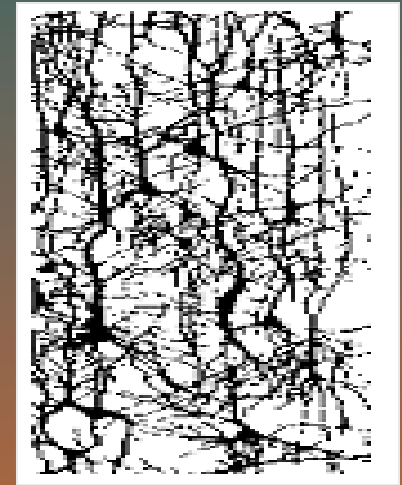
# Brain Development in Early Childhood

- Today we know more than ever how a the first five years shapes a child's life.
- The greatest achievement gap exists when a child first enters kindergarten.
- One out of three children arrive at kindergarten *lacking* the skills they need to thrive in school.

Birth



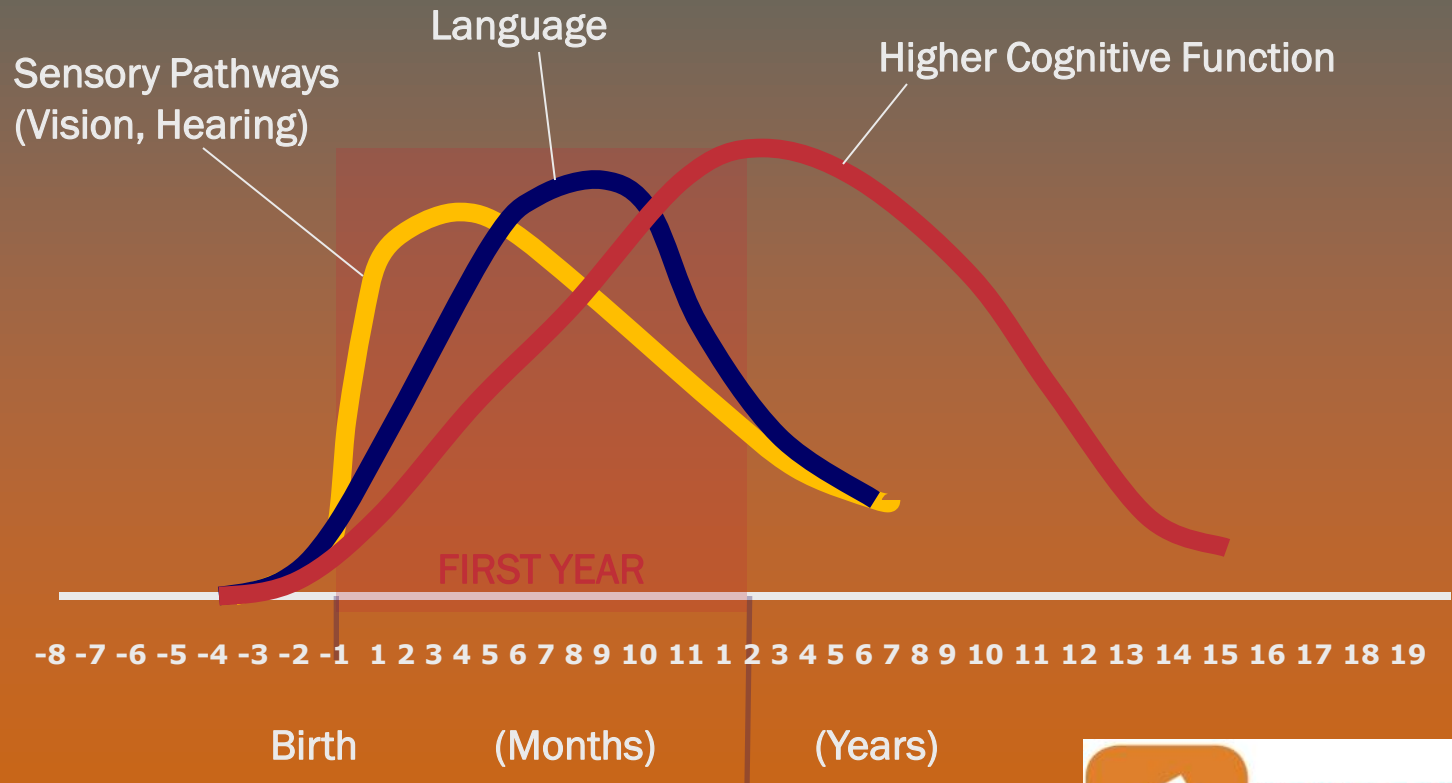
3 years old



By age 3, an infant's brain will have developed billions of connections between the neurons. Repeated experiences cause some connections to become well worn pathways permanently etched into the brain, while unused pathways literally decay.

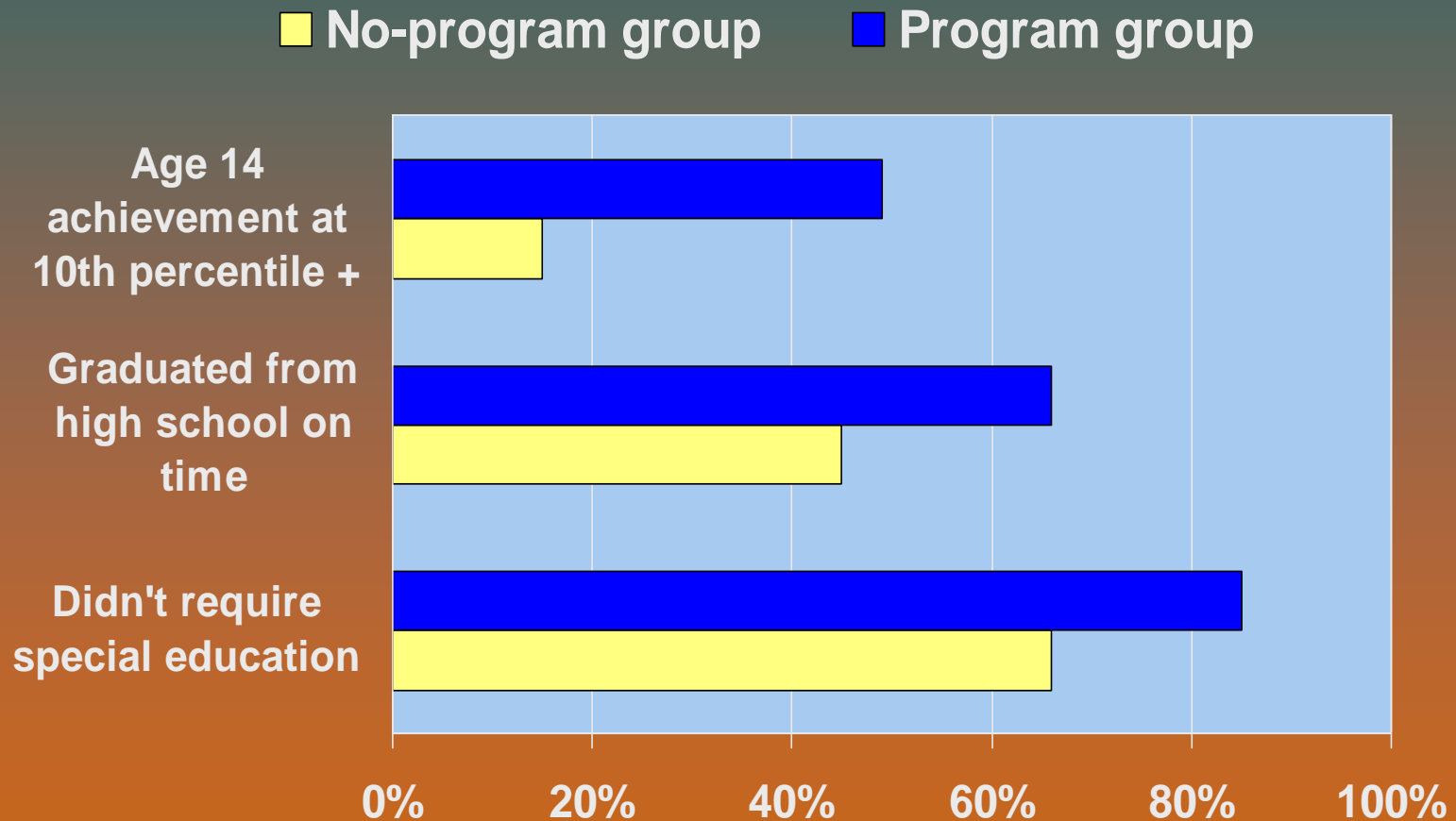
# Neural Circuits are Wired in a Bottom-Up Sequence

- (700 synapses formed per second in the early years)



Source: C. Nelson (2000)

# Quality Child Care Helps Improve School Outcomes



Source: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

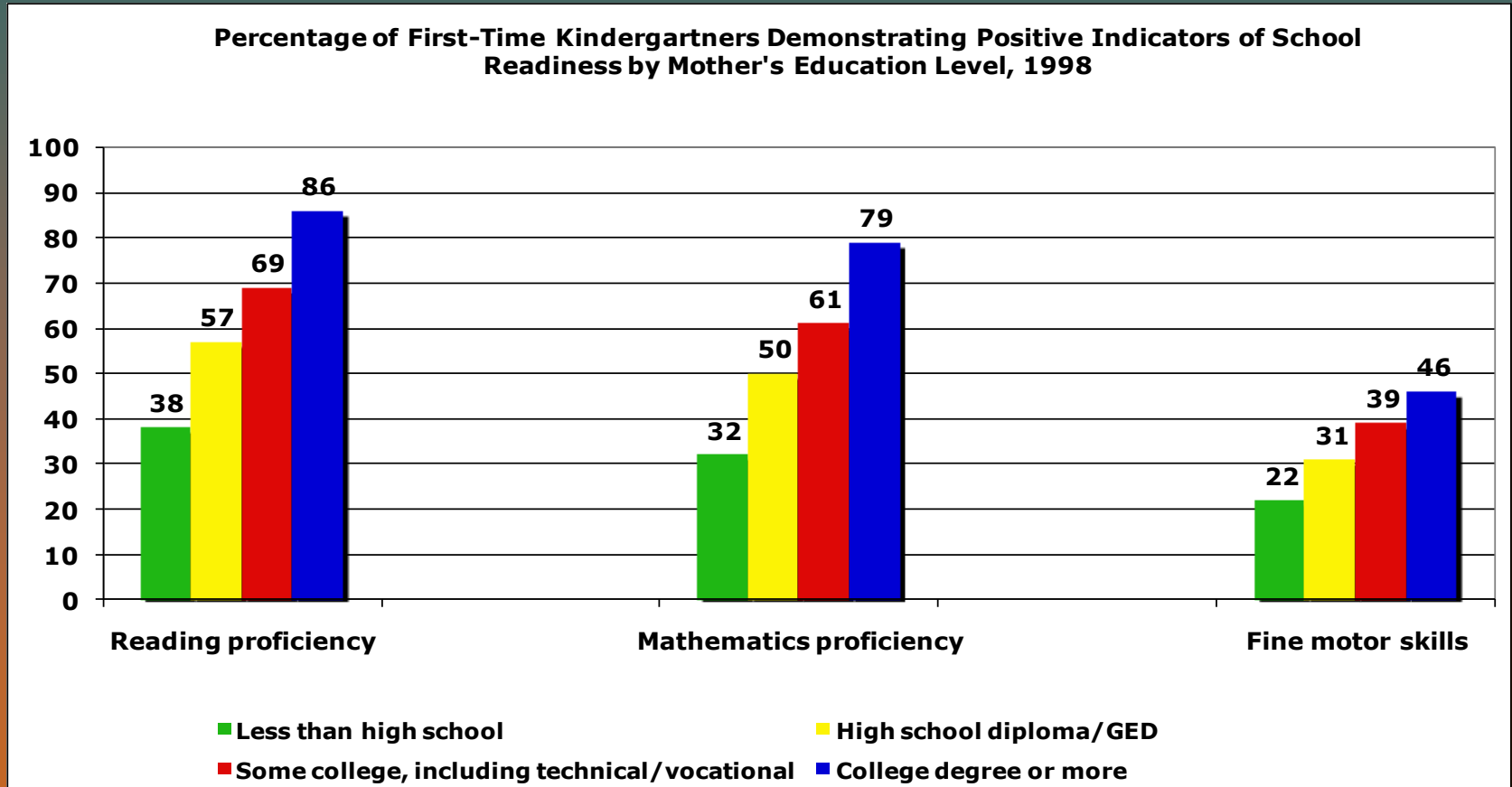


early care &  
Learning COUNCIL  
*New York's child care resource network*

# Dimensions of Quality

- Teachers with degrees and specialized training in early childhood education
- Adequately compensated teachers
- Low staff turnover
- Low staff-child ratios and small group sizes
- Developmentally appropriate, stimulating and language-rich environments
- Screening, assessment and referrals
- Family involvement

# School Readiness by Mother's Education Level



# All Systems Must Work Together

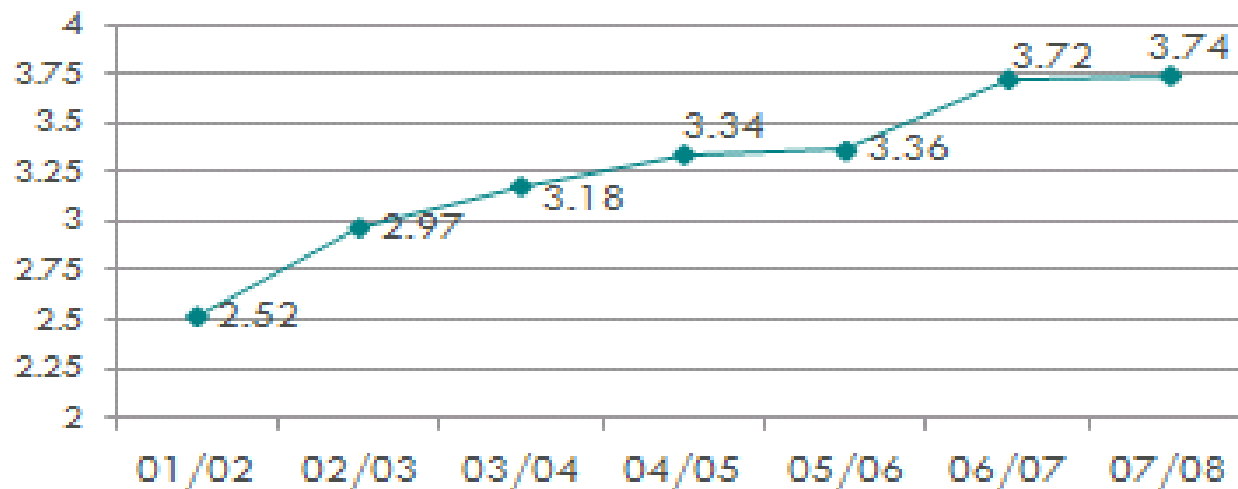
- Communications & Outreach
  - All messages focus on high quality child care and ratings
- Licensing
  - Quality Rating aligns with licensing
- Subsidy
  - Higher subsidy payments to higher star ratings
- Quality Improvement Funds
  - Quality Improvement funding
  - Quality Maintenance funding

# All Systems Must Work Together

- Teacher Education
  - TEACH educational supplements
- Salary Supplements
  - WAGE\$ - funds for teacher retention & education
- Substitute Program for Child Care
  - For sick & vacation
  - For training and visiting best practice programs
- Higher Education
  - Work with community colleges and 4 year institutions

# Quality Child Care in Durham

## Average Star Rating of Child Care Placements in Durham



# Our CCR&R Network Investment

## Early Care and Education

Assist families with finding and affording quality child care

## Healthy Kids

Address the health needs of young children in care



## Family Support

Help families and children prepare to succeed in school and in life

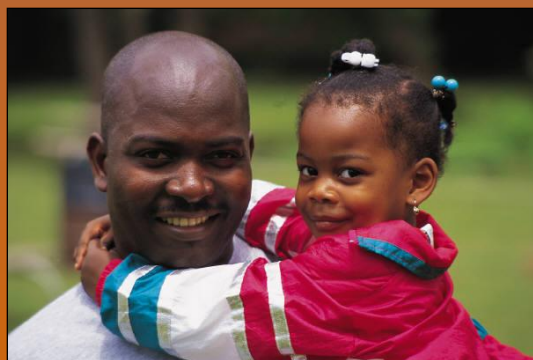
## Economic Development

Assist NYS working families to be productive employees and contribute to the economic development of their communities

# Quality Early Education

- Policy Choices affect
  - What kind of supports are available to parents
  - Funding levels for quality
  - What gets funded
  - How many children are served
  - How well early child care teachers are paid
  - How much access teachers have to higher education and specialized training
  - The quality of care for our children

# What Can You Do for Our Future?



# Thank you!

Please feel free to contact us with any questions:

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