



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron, BP Adams Unveil Report Showcasing Evidence For Greater Investment In Early Childhood, w/ Toddlers & Teachers

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BROOKLYN, NY, February 6, 2017: On Thursday, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams and State Senator Daniel Squadron unveiled a report authored by their Early Childhood Development Task Force that showcases statistical evidence for a greater financial investment in early childhood development, in particular on growth between ages birth and three years. According to the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), it was

estimated that there were 161,571 children ages birth to three years in Brooklyn as of 2010. Standing with toddlers and teachers at Magical Years Early Childhood Development Center in Sunset Park, a nationally-accredited child care facility providing full-day, year-round support for families, they detailed the importance of early life intervention on school readiness, emotional and social development, family health, economic growth, and public safety.

“To end the tale of two cities, we need to start at the very beginning,” said **Borough President Adams**. “The critical first moments of life are where the lasting rifts between the haves and the have nots already begin. New York City has made great strides in enrolling children in pre-k, but to ensure the success of that program, we need to engage mothers before they give birth and through the formative years. Our report highlights the importance of early childhood services, and the positive impact in children’s lives, as a way to ensure that we are supporting our families from cradle to college and career.”

“Investing in the early childhood years is the best possible investment for our future — for families and the whole state,” said **State Senator Squadron**. “We know evidence-based programs like maternal home-visiting, including Nurse-Family Partnership, work, and I’m proud to stand with Borough President Adams, advocates, and organizations across the city to urge more investment in and support for these critical programs.”

Borough President Adams and State Senator Squadron’s report, which can be accessed online at brooklyn-usa.org, emphasizes the importance of a child’s earliest days in their brain development, which can have direct impacts on their life through adulthood. Social and emotional interactions are also critical, with negative exposure creating a greater risk for cognitive impairment as well as adult conditions such as cardiovascular disease, depression, and obesity. Early childhood development programs such as center-based quality child care, Head Start, and early intervention have shown positive outcomes for children and their

families. In addition, maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting also provide expectant and new parents with the tools they need to care for and educate them. The task force's report reviewed the effectiveness of four research-based home visiting programs operating in New York State, including Healthy Families New York (HFNY), Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), Parents-as-Teachers (PAT), and The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP). Overall, findings concluded that children engaged in early childhood development services show a reduction in language delays, increased readiness for pre-k and kindergarten, and increased test scores in grade school; conversely, at-risk youth without high-quality early childhood experiences are more likely to drop out of school and become teenage parents, while also less likely to attend college. Early childhood development programs were also linked to a decreased involvement in the criminal justice system and to significant increases in a mother's employment rate and income.

"PCHP is proud to be part of the Early Childhood Development Task Force, and we're grateful to Borough President Adams and State Senator Squadron for their leadership and advocacy on this important issue," said Cesar Zuniga, research director for PCHP. "Now more than ever, it is inspiring to collaborate with Magical Years and all of the stakeholders in this work. We must not lose sight of all that there is left to be done to continue and expand the work we do with families with young children. PCHP is committed to working with policy makers, practitioners, and advocates to bring awareness to the field of 0-3 and the need for more dollars and resources to support the expansion of existing programs and the development of new ones."

The Early Childhood Development Task Force, co-chaired by Borough President Adams and State Senator Squadron, made up of evidence-based practitioners as well as advocates, community stakeholders, and local hospitals, was formed in September 2015 with a focus on policies that address family risk factors for adversity that can impair early childhood

development, such as illiteracy, mental illness, and poverty. In addition to NFP and PCHP, task force members include Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration; Council for a Strong America; New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS); New York Center for Child Development; New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH); New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development; NYU Lutheran; The Brooklyn Hospital Center; SCO Family of Services, and University Settlement.

"At Restoration, we know the health and well-being of our little ones is crucial to the health of our community," said Verna DuBerry Ademu-John, MS, program manager at Partnership for a Healthier Brooklyn at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration. "We aim to ensure that families have access to what they need to thrive and be productive contributors; in the process we are boosting collective community outcomes, from cradle to career."

"Congratulations to the Early Childhood Development Task Force, and to Borough President Adams and Senator Squadron, for bringing attention to the importance of the earliest years and for advocating for more high quality services for infants, toddlers and their parents and caregivers," said Susan Chinitz, PsyD, infant mental health and early childhood consultant at the New York Center for Child Development. "The report of the task force underscores the promise of strong support for very young children during this most critical and formative stage of development."

"The Health Department is happy to stand with the Early Childhood Development Task Force to call for increased funding of evidence-based programming in childhood development," said Dr. George L. Askew, deputy commissioner of family and child health for DOHMH. "Evidence-based early childhood programs have been shown to increase school readiness and college acceptance, lower rates of incarceration, and bolster career success. High quality childhood education and development programs like Nurse-Family Partnership and Universal Pre-K are critical investments in our littlest New Yorkers' cognitive, social and

emotional development; it is essential to ensure these programs are adequately funded and expanded.”

“As one of the largest safety net health care providers in Brooklyn, NYU Lutheran Family Health Centers recognizes that high quality early childhood services have a lasting impact upon children’s cognitive and social development as well as on health and educational outcomes both for the child and for the community as a whole,” said Norma Villanueva, MD, MPH, network chief of child and adolescent health and regional director of medical education for NYU Lutheran Family Health Centers. “Over 20 years ago, NYU Lutheran Family Health Centers made a commitment to provide safe and supportive early childhood programs by launching affordable daycare and family literacy home-visiting services that ensure children’s school-readiness and support caregivers in building stable, caring relationships with their children. We now serve over 350 children through seven programs in South Brooklyn.”

“An investment in early childhood is an investment in the future of our communities,” said Douglas O’Dell, executive director of SCO Family of Services. “Early efforts can help to ensure children grow up in safe environments with the developmental and educational support they need to fulfill their potential. These programs empower mothers and fathers to become confident parents and help them build a stronger foundation for the future. We applaud the task force’s efforts and look forward to ongoing collaboration with our partners in Brooklyn.”

Borough President Adams and State Senator Squadron’s task force released a series of recommendations as a result of their work. They called for increased support for evidence-based early childhood development programs, including funding increases recommended by the New York State Senate Democratic Policy Group as well as strategic partnerships with the New York City Children’s Cabinet to coordinate and integrate services in order to provide

a continuum of care. Their report recommended expanding access to evidence-based early childhood development programs by empowering communities through increased information. To achieve this, the task force has committed to create and disseminate a resource guide of early childhood services available in Brooklyn; additionally, they suggested the City and State create online maps providing data on early childhood programs, including seat availability. Finally, the Early Childhood Development Task Force advocated for partnerships with community-based organizations and networks to increase awareness about the importance of early childhood programs and services. Borough President Adams and State Senator Squadron will convene a workshop specifically for Brooklyn clergy members to engage and educate leaders so they may circulate information throughout their congregations. Additionally, they encouraged the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) to create lending institutions for books, educational materials, puzzles, and toys for early childhood development programs.