

Wisest investment

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Investments in quality early-learning programs help our economy now and in the future ("If Illinois is to thrive, kids need support now," Your View, Nov. 21).

According to business leaders organization America's Edge, these investments have a big impact on local businesses while laying the foundation for a skilled workforce to compete in a global economy. There is no quick fix to failing to provide early learning; the social cost is real and long-lasting.

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In Illinois, every \$1 invested in early care and education generates \$2.17 in sales of local goods and services, outperforming other sectors like transportation, manufacturing and construction, and every \$1 cut from early-learning programs causes Illinois businesses to lose \$2.17 in sales.

Children who participate in these programs earn up to 36% more as adults, are as much as 74% more likely to hold a skilled job at age 21 and are up to 44% more likely to graduate from high school compared with children who do not participate.