



# FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

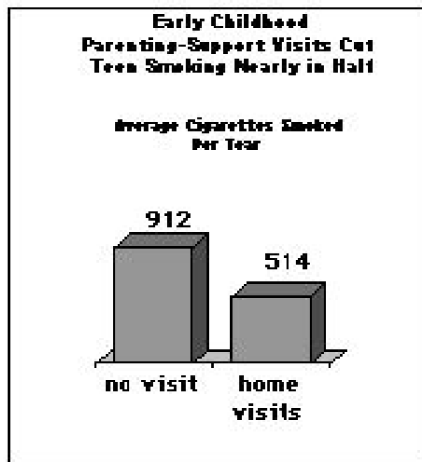
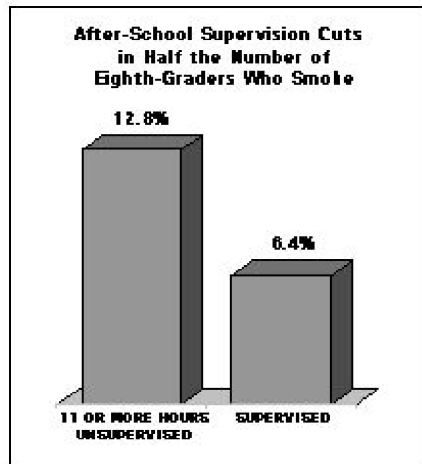
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## Early Childhood and After-School Programs Fight Smoking, Crime, Teen Pregnancy, and Drugs

When we help kids get the right start, the risk that they will become teen delinquents or adult criminals plummets – and so does the risk that they will smoke, use drugs, or become pregnant as teens. What really works to reduce all these risks?



### After-School Programs

Good after-school programs keep kids out of harm's way while teaching the skills and core values they need to succeed. We know that the peak hours of violent juvenile crime are 3 PM to 9 PM<sup>1</sup>, and that good after-school programs in high crime areas can cut by as much as 3/4 the high school student's risk of becoming involved in crime.<sup>2</sup> And being supervised after school **cuts in half** the risk that middle school kids will **smoke, drink, or abuse drugs**,<sup>3</sup> and **reduces teen pregnancy** as well.

### Early Childhood Education

Enrolling kids in the High/Scope Perry Pre-school program cut by **4/5 the risk** they would grow up to be **chronic lawbreakers** — and cut by **1/5 the risk** that they would become smokers.<sup>4</sup>

### Parenting Education

Providing parent-coaching home visits to low-income mothers beginning prenatally up to age two **halved** the risk that their children would be **delinquent** at age 15, and cut **nearly in half** their children's **cigarette smoking**.<sup>5</sup> Equally important, the visits cut mothers' smoking during pregnancy by more than 27%.<sup>6</sup> Such smoking puts babies at risk of miscarriage, learning disabilities and behavior problems.<sup>7</sup> Among women who were smokers when they became pregnant, the visits cut premature births by 3/4.<sup>8</sup>

### Saving Money and Lives

Each day we fail to make proven investments like these, we multiply kids' risk of smoking and every American's risk of crime. The RAND Corporation and others have also shown that these investments actually save tax dollars by cutting crime and other costs.<sup>9</sup> The bottom line: We'll actually have more money to spend in the future — whether on public health or tax cuts — if we invest now in quality educational child care, parenting-support, and after-school programs. These are among our most powerful weapons against crime, smoking, drug use and teen pregnancy.

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**For research on the crime-prevention impact of investments in kids, check out [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)**

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<sup>1</sup> Fox, J.A., Newman, S.A., *After-School Programs or After-School Crime*, Fight Crime: Invest In Kids. September 1997, based on data from Sickmund, M., Snyder, H.N., Poe-Yamagata, E., *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence*, National Center for Juvenile Justice, OJJDP, Wash., D.C. 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Taggart, R., Quantum Opportunities Program, Philadelphia: Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Richardson, J.S., et al., Substance Use Among Eighth-Grade Students Who Take Care of Themselves After School, *Pediatrics*, September 1989, vol. 84, no. 3, pp. 556-565.

<sup>4</sup> Schweinhart, L.J., Barnes, H.V., Weikart, D.P., *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*, The High/Scope Press, Ypsilanti, MI, 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Olds, D., et al., Improving the Delivery of Prenatal Care and Outcomes of Pregnancy: A Randomized Trial of Nurse Home Visitation, *Pediatrics*, January 1986, vol. 77, no. 1, pp. 16-28.

<sup>6</sup> Olds, D., Home Visitation for Pregnant Women and Parents of Young Children, *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, June 1992, vol. 146, pp. 704-708.

<sup>7</sup> Karr-Morse, R., Wiley, M.S., *Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence*, The Atlantic Monthly Press, New York NY, 1997, pp. 69-70.

<sup>8</sup> Olds, D., et al., Long-term Effects of Nurse Home Visitation on Children's Criminal and Antisocial Behavior: 15-Year Follow-up of a Randomized Controlled Trial, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Oct. 14, 1998, vol. 280, no 14, pp. 1238-1244.

<sup>9</sup> Karoly, L.A., et al., *Investing in Our Children*, RAND, 1998, Santa Monica, and Taggart, *ibid*.