

The findings from *Every Child, Every Promise* should guide our approach to meeting the needs of young people in key ways:

1. Consider the whole child.

Addressing children's multiple needs means more than improving schools alone, or only supporting parents. Children are the products of all of their environments: home, schools, neighborhoods and communities. These influences are mutually reinforcing. We need "whole child reform" involving the whole of childhood.

2. Involve all sectors of society.

The most effective way to ensure that children receive all Five Promises is to engage multiple sectors — businesses, nonprofits, communities, policy-makers, the faith community, educators, parents and young people themselves. These groups should work together so that each "investment" in a child is reinforced and compounded.

3. Invest early and often.

Sustained investments in children over time produce the biggest dividends by compounding the benefits of previous investments. Early investment is more effective and less expensive than remedial efforts in adolescence or adulthood. More effective still are investments across the entire arc of childhood and adolescence.

4. Strengthen our economy through our young people.

Balanced investment in young people yields strong returns in the form of higher rates of U.S. high school graduation and college attendance and lower rates of crime. Those improvements in turn add more dollars and productive citizens to our economy, while reducing costs to taxpayers.

5. View investments as more than programs — without minimizing their role.

Better programs and schools alone will not ensure that every child receives every Promise. At the same time, cost-effective, targeted programs may offer the best strategy for mitigating the risk factors otherwise working against children placed at major disadvantages.

6. Focus attention on the most underserved young people.

Research shows that disadvantaged children who are considered most at risk are precisely those who show the greatest gains when they receive investments that build skills for success. As a result, investments in these children also produce the greatest return for our society, in the form of higher tax contributions and reductions in the costs associated with school dropouts, crime, drug abuse and public assistance programs.