

Perry Preschool's Intergenerational Impact

By Madeline Hero

Provider Relationships Coordinator

Children's Council of San Francisco

My mother recently sent me [an article about the well-known Perry Preschool Project](#). The project and its accompanying research began in 1962 and really demonstrates the profound impact of quality early education. My grandmother, I am proud to say, was actually one of the founding teachers at Perry Preschool!

The goal of the Perry Preschool Project was to provide poor and underserved children with quality preschool to improve their academic scores in high school. When researchers reviewed the cohort of children's academic performance 15 years later, however, they found no statistically significant difference.



Perry Preschool Project, circa 1962

It's important to remember: the study was working with the understanding that higher grades would lead to a higher quality of life. Although the first results undermined the original premise of the study, their findings 30 years after the project were incredible.

Children who had attended Perry Preschool were more likely to finish high school, maintain a stable job, own a home. And they were less likely to be arrested, to experience teen pregnancy, to be divorced or single parents, or to be on some form of government assistance. In essence, they found that the project participant children had a higher quality of life compared to the control group.

Furthermore, they reviewed the Perry Children yet another 20 years down the road and found that the participants' own children had higher grades and IQ scores, were more likely to graduate high school and go to college, and less likely to be truant, arrested as teens or experience teen pregnancy.

Besides tracking the positive benefits for the participants, researchers also calculated the



social impact on their community and have found a major return on investment per the cost of each participant, with an estimate of \$175,000 saved.

I find it amazing how a quality early education program made such an incredible impact not only to the participants, but to their children as well.

I'm proud to be a part of the team here at Children's Council, where, everyday we work with San Francisco's early educators to make multi-generational waves of change and break cycles of poverty.

[Read the full article on NPR here.](#)

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