

Data Trends

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From the Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health, Tampa, Florida...

This Data Trends News brief alerts you to the following report: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2007). *A science-based framework for early childhood policy: Using evidence to improve outcomes in learning, behavior, and health for vulnerable children.* <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/>

This report combines scientific knowledge about early childhood and early brain development with findings from four decades of program evaluation research into a unified framework to guide policy decisions on behalf of young children and their families. The report builds on a process of systematic analysis that began with the publication in 2000 of a landmark report by the National Academy of Sciences titled *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, followed by the ongoing work of the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child and the National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation. The authors describe the process by which brain architecture is formed in very young children and integrate this scientific knowledge with the identification of factors from the program-evaluation literature that appear to offer the best course toward positive outcomes for children. Factors identified include the following: strengthening the family environment, serving children in out-of-home environments, combining support for vulnerable families with direct services for children, family economics and maternal employment, and the vulnerability of the young brain. An executive summary, references, and selected background readings are included. The report is available at

http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/downloads/Policy_Framework.pdf

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