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The Promise of Early Childhood Education:

Preventing Health and Learning Disparities

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Early experiences during critical periods of development build the foundation for later learning and health.



The State of Minority Children's Health

- Low-income children have higher rates of mortality and disability and are more likely to be in fair or poor health.
- Black and Latino children are more likely to be in poor health than White children.
- Children who are poor, of color or uninsured are more likely to lack access to appropriate health care.

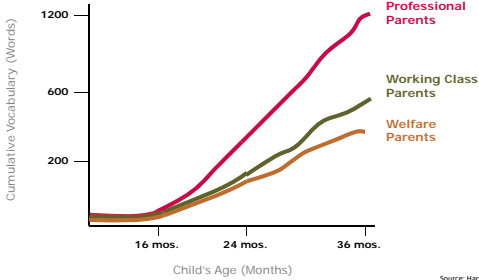
Source: National Institute for Health Care Management, 2007

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The achievement gap starts well before Kindergarten

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Disparities in early vocabulary development



Child's Age (Months)	Professional Parents (Words)	Working Class Parents (Words)	Welfare Parents (Words)
16 mos.	~50	~40	~30
24 mos.	~200	~150	~100
36 mos.	~1100	~500	~300

Source: Hart & Risley (1995)

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Adverse experiences and toxic stress in early childhood increase the likelihood for health risks, stress-related disease and learning disparities throughout a child's life and into adulthood.



Early Childhood Education: Front Line for Preventing Learning & Health Disparities

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- Rich learning environments linked to positive health outcomes throughout life
- Comprehensive supports to families from prenatal to age five
- Engage families in developing healthy behaviors for them and their children
- Reduce stress-related roots of health disparities
- Referrals and linkages to community resources for medical and dental homes, developmental screenings, well-child check ups and immunizations



Educare Learning Network the Ounce Vision Statement

The Educare Learning Network will demonstrate that research-based early childhood education prevents the persistent achievement gap for our nation's most at-risk young children. The Network's evidence, practice expertise, and dynamic partnerships will help ensure that all children and families, especially those at greatest risk, will have access to effective early learning, and that the first five years will be an integral part of the nation's education system.

13 Core Features of the Educare Model the Ounce

- Provide full-day, full-year services
- Use data collection and analysis to drive quality and ensure student success
- Maintain Small Class Size & High Staff/Child Ratios
 - 3:8 for 0-3
 - 3:17 for 3-5
- Maintain High Staff Qualifications & Intensive Staff Development
- Provide Continuity of Care to help children develop secure relationships
- On-site Family Support & Strong Parent Engagement
- Implement Reflective Practice & Supervision
- Interdisciplinary Work
- Language & Literacy
- Social and Emotional Development
- Numeracy & Problem-Solving
- Integrating the Arts
- Start Early: Emphasize Prenatal Services

Operational Schools

- Chicago
- Omaha at Kellom
- Omaha at Indian Hill
- Milwaukee
- Tulsa at Kendall/Whittier
- Tulsa at Hawthorne
- Tulsa at MacArthur
- Denver
- Miami-Dade
- Oklahoma City
- Seattle
- Kansas City, KS
- Central Maine (Waterville)
- Arizona (Phoenix)
- Washington, DC
- West DuPage, IL
- Atlanta
- Lincoln, NE
- New Orleans*
- Winnemago, NE*

Schools Under Development

- Silicon Valley (San Jose)
- Los Angeles
- New York City

* Under construction

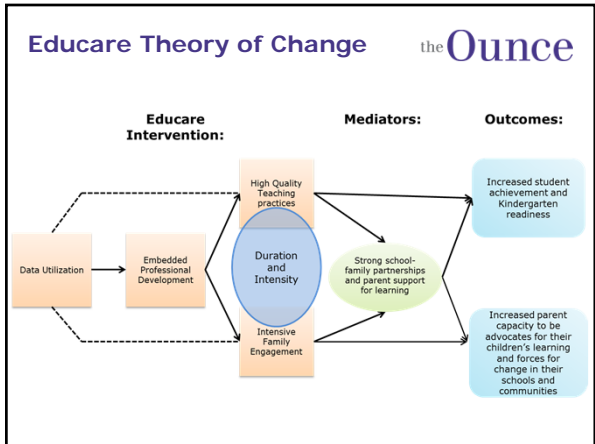
As of March 2013

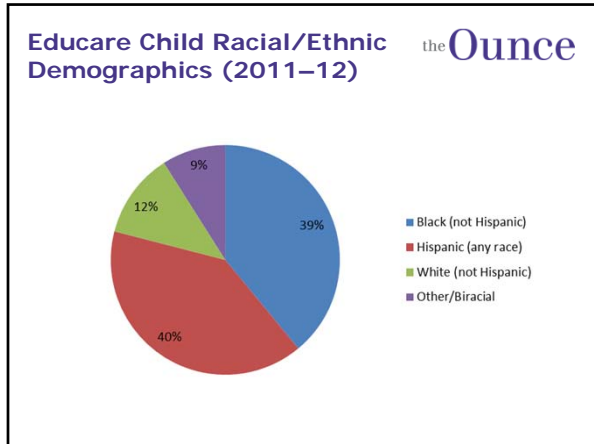
Framework for the Core Features the Ounce

- Data Utilization
- Embedded Professional Development
- High Quality Teaching Practices
- Intensive Family Engagement
- Dosage: Duration and Intensity

Educare is...

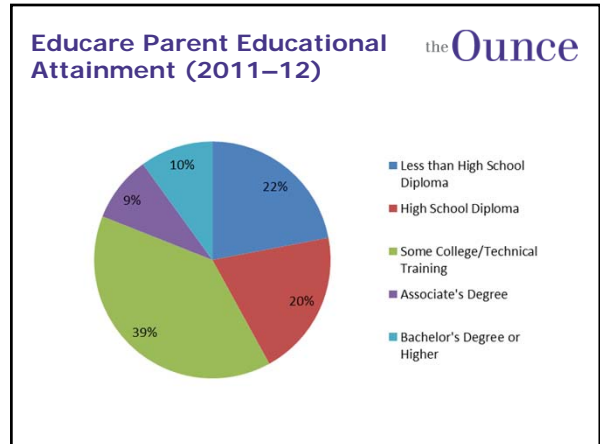
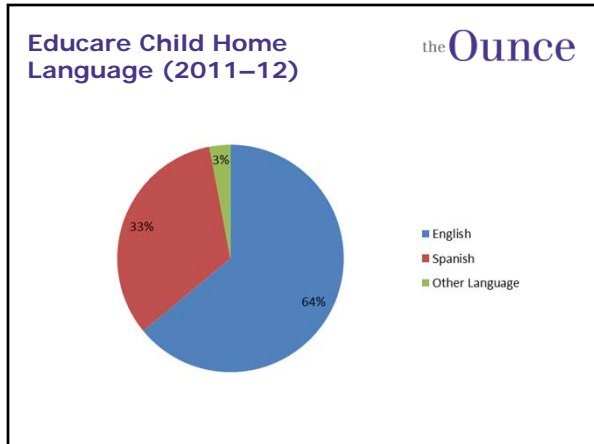
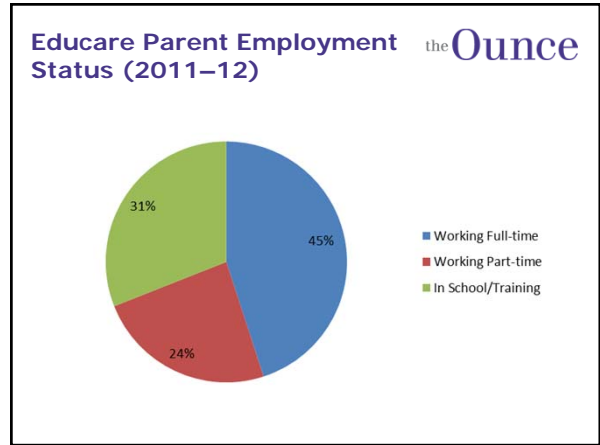
- Partnership
- Place
- Program
- Platform for Change





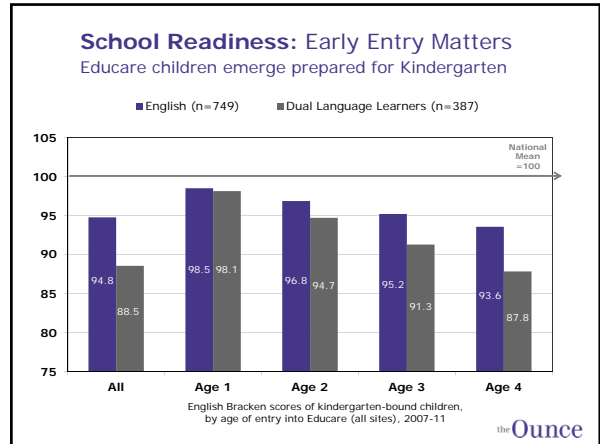
- ### Educare Parent Demographic Characteristics (2011–12) the Ounce
- Similar to Head Start nationally (using FACES data for comparison)
 - Primary caregiver: 92% Mom; 3% Dad; 3% Grandma
 - 20% of moms were teens when child was born
 - 48% are a single parent
 - 66% were born in the U.S.

- ### Educare Child Demographic Characteristics (2011–12) the Ounce
- 47% girls, 53% boys
 - 97% of children were born in US
 - 11% have a special need as identified by an IEP/IFSP
 - 78% reported to have very good or excellent health




Serious Life Events & Risk Factors (2011–12) the Ounce

- Substantial change in income – 38.6%
- Major change in living conditions – 31.9%
- Change in primary caregiver's work – 29.1%
- Separate from partner – 22.5%
- Family member incarcerated – 15.3%
- Death of someone important in child's life – 13.5%
- Family member had serious illness – 12.5%
- Family member victim of violent crime – 6.3%
- Child was witness to domestic violence – 5.1%
- Lived with someone with alcohol/drug problem – 4.9%
- Parent screen positive for depression – 18%
- Sometimes or often worry about food running out – 39%



How Educare Schools Promote Health & Learning the Ounce


- Head Start Standards
 - Partnerships with community health providers
 - Medical home
 - Developmental screenings
 - Immunizations
 - Well-Child check ups
 - Connections to WIC/SNAP supports
 - Access to and provide child & family mental health services
 - Screening, access and referral for disability services
- Health clinics at Educare Schools in Arizona, Kansas City and Milwaukee
- Parent classes on nutrition, healthy cooking and exercise
- Parent-child activities focused on health & nutrition



Long-term Health Outcomes of Early Childhood Intervention the Ounce

Abecedarian Study

- Better health outcomes in adulthood
- Healthier lifestyle behaviors in adulthood




Educare: Demonstrating Results the Ounce

- School Readiness
- Language/Vocabulary
- Social and Emotional Skills
- Classroom Quality



Call to Action the Ounce

- High quality early childhood programs can prevent learning disparities and promote better health outcomes in adulthood
- Start early with prenatal care for mothers and high quality programs for children beginning at birth
- Invest in innovative health and nutrition services for early childhood programs
- Build and maintain community partnerships that support children's health and learning
- Increase coordination between early childhood and health care systems







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www.ounceofprevention.org www.educareschools.org

Data Utilization



- Research-based strategies
- Data driven practices
 - Network level
 - School level
 - Individual children and families

Educare 13 Core Features

Maintain Small Class Size & High Staff/Child Ratios



- Infant-toddler rooms -- 3 adults : 8 children
- Preschool rooms -- 3 adults : 17 children



Full Day, Full Year



- Birth to Five--Start Early
- Dosage/Sustaining Gains
- Meet the needs of families who are working or in school
- Typical hours of operation: 7am-6pm
- Importance of Early Entry



Maintain High Staff Qualifications & Intensive Staff Development



- In each classroom:
 - Teacher
 - Assistant Teacher
 - Teacher Aide
- Family Support Supervisor & Family Support Specialists
- All staff have individual professional development plans & is a priority for the program
- Variety of partnerships to enhance PD offerings



Provide Continuity of Care to Help Children Develop Secure Relationships



Children remain with same teaching team:

- From entry until transition to 3-5 & from 3-5 until kindergarten
- Same Age or Mixed Age
- Primary Caregiving



Interdisciplinary Work



- Seeing the child in the context of family through a collaborative process
- Strategies for staff to understand the importance of multiple perspectives
- An interdisciplinary team conducts Family/Child Reviews (FCRs) regularly in order to discuss & understand each child in context of family & community
- Use of specialized, integrated consultants



On-site Family Support & Strong Parent Engagement



Family support staff have a specific & intentional role in supporting 3 overarching principles:

1. The parent-child relationship
2. The parent's role in their child's development, health, & learning
3. The parent's role in their child's school experiences



Language & Literacy



- Focus on oral language development
- Focus on children as readers and authors
- Print-rich environment
- Intentional use of the focused teaching cycle



Reflective Practice & Supervision



- Reflective Practice as an organizational model
- Program design & management support the integration of reflective practice & supervision throughout Educare
- Supervisors have no more than 6 supervisees
- Regular Individual and Group Reflective Supervision

Social and Emotional Development



- Focus on Relationships
- Social, Emotional and Executive Function skills taught
- Supporting Transitions into, within, and out of Educare
- Proactive and positive child guidance
- Integration of Mental Health Consultation



Foundational Math Skills



- Focus on numeracy & problem-solving
- Hands-on materials to promote the understanding of abstract math concepts
- Intentional use of the focused teaching cycle



Integrate the Arts



- Arts include: drama, dance, music, story-telling & visual arts
- Art experiences included in all curricular areas to strengthen all domains of development & learning
- Intentional use of the focused teaching cycle
- Community artists' performances & in-residence
- Activities for parents, families, & staff



Emphasize Prenatal Services



- Provide supportive, caring and educational experiences and services to pregnant women and newborns
- Provide seamless transitions from prenatal to Educare program
- Referrals through Community Collaborations