

The Critical Preschool Years and Preparation for Academic and Career Success



Sara A. Schmitt, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Human Development of Family Studies

Purdue University

Outline

- Introduction to key skills for success
- Development of those skills
- Importance of those skills
- Targeted interventions
- Preschool/prekindergarten programming

What skills contribute to success in employment?

What skills contribute to success in employment?

Motivation
and
persistence

Teamwork

Ability to
get along
with others

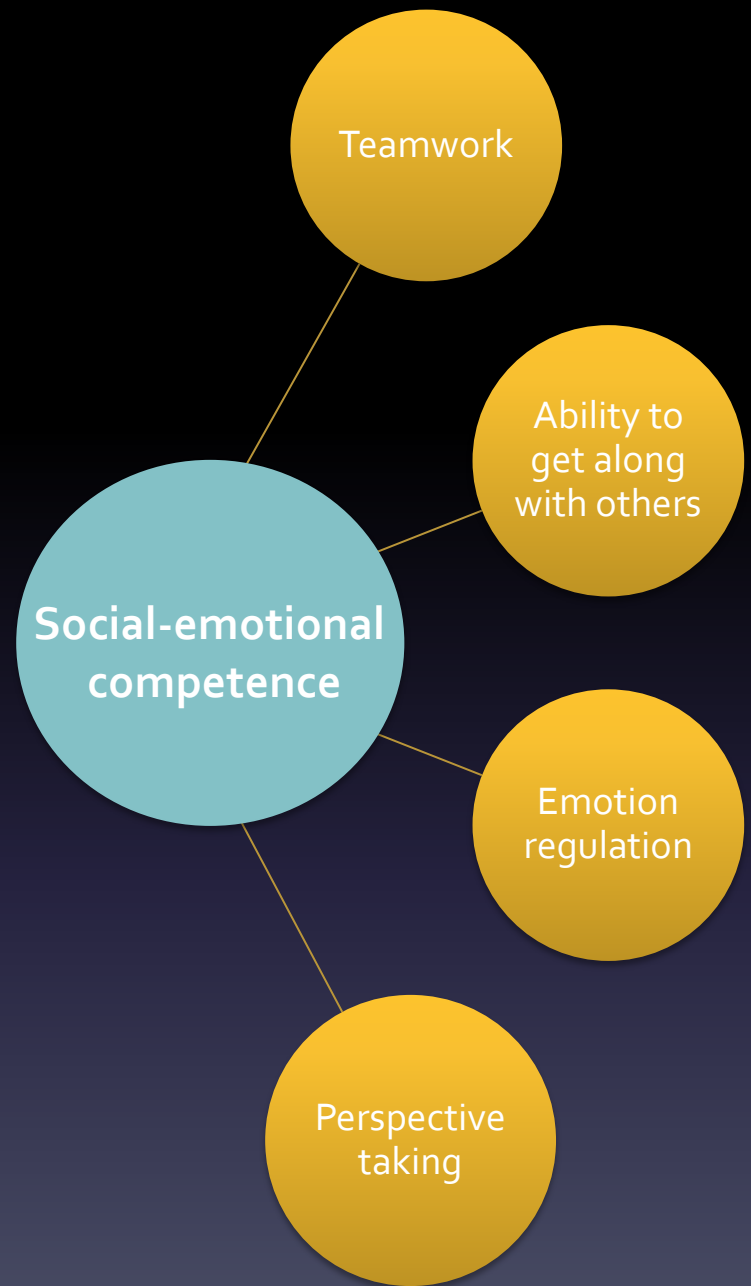
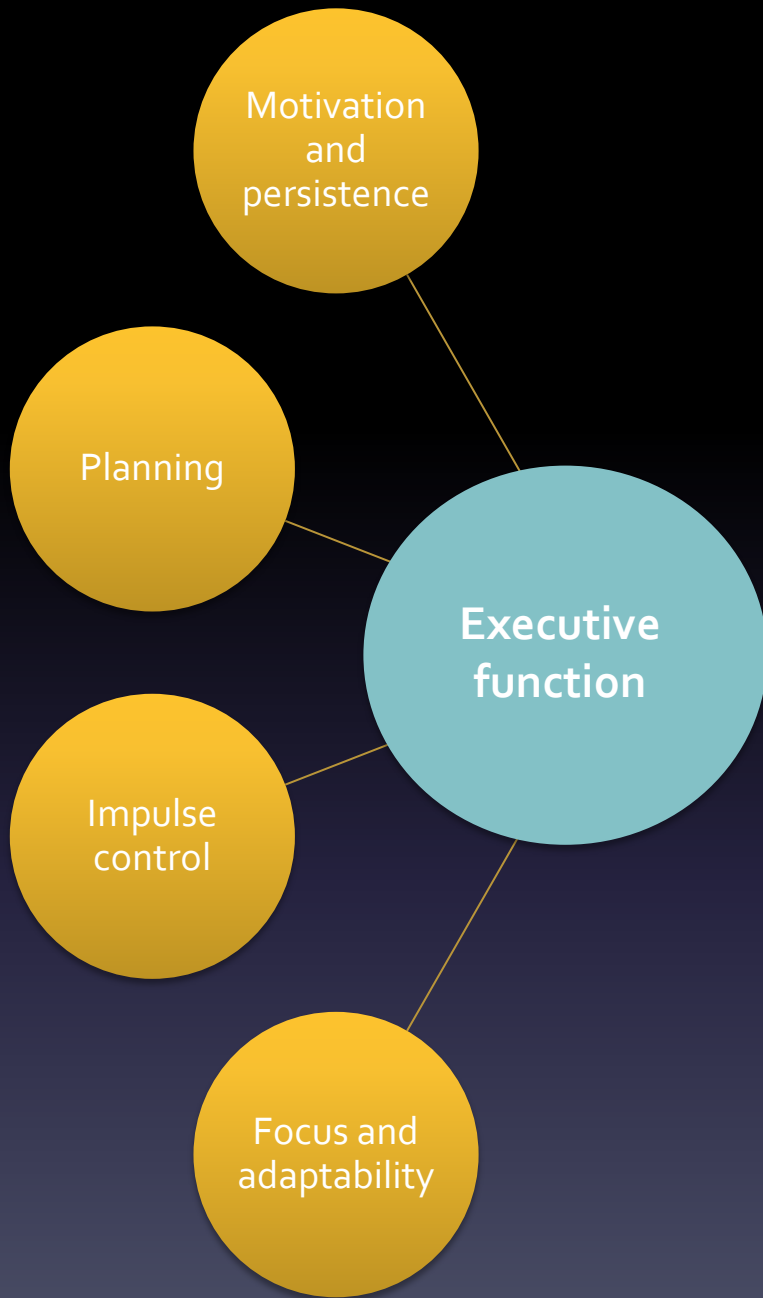
Focus and
adaptability

Perspective
Taking

Impulse
control

Planning

Emotion
regulation



Self-
Regulation

= "SOFT SKILLS"

Executive
function

Social-emotional
competence

Development of Self-Regulation

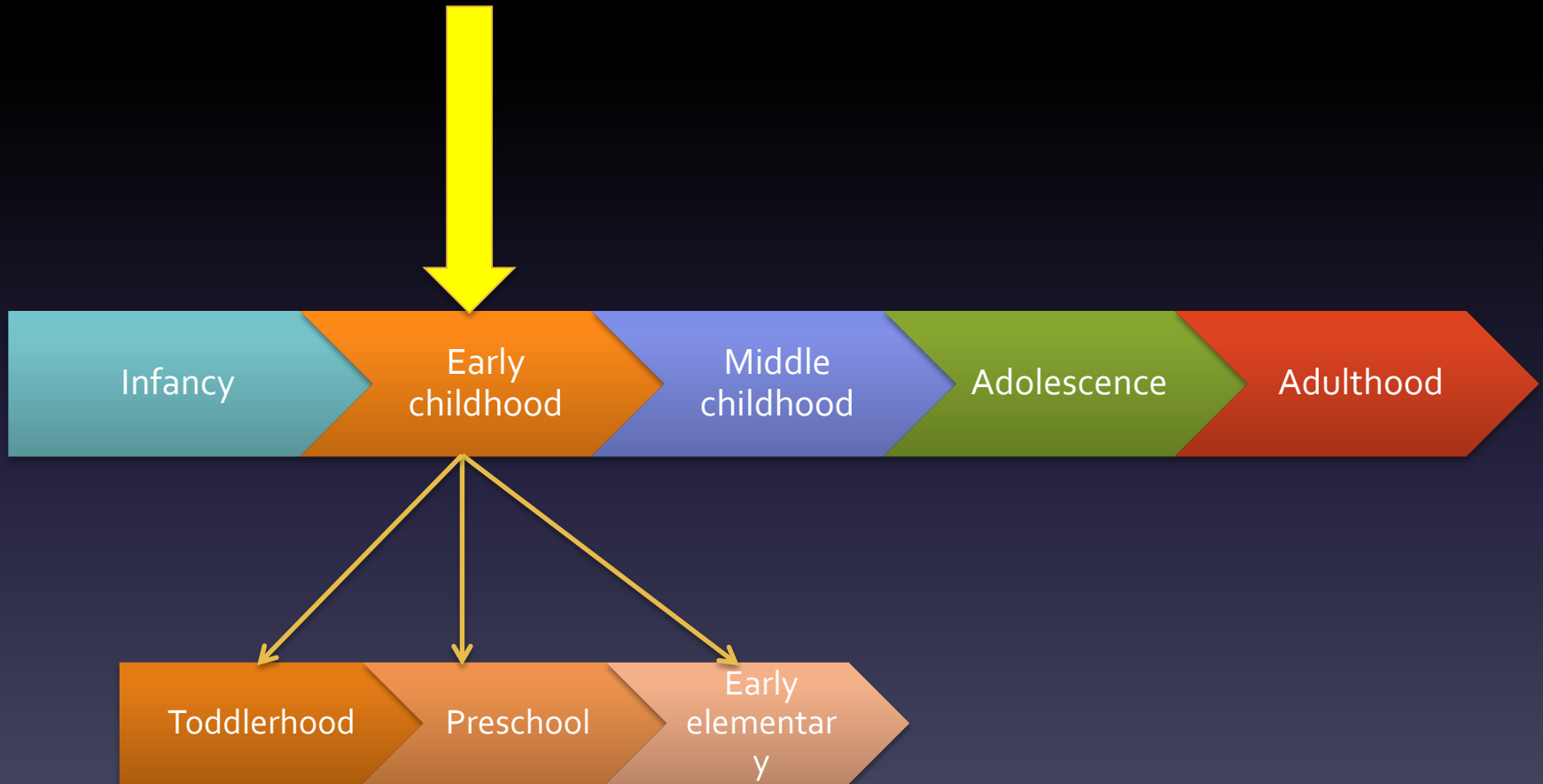


Development of Self-Regulation

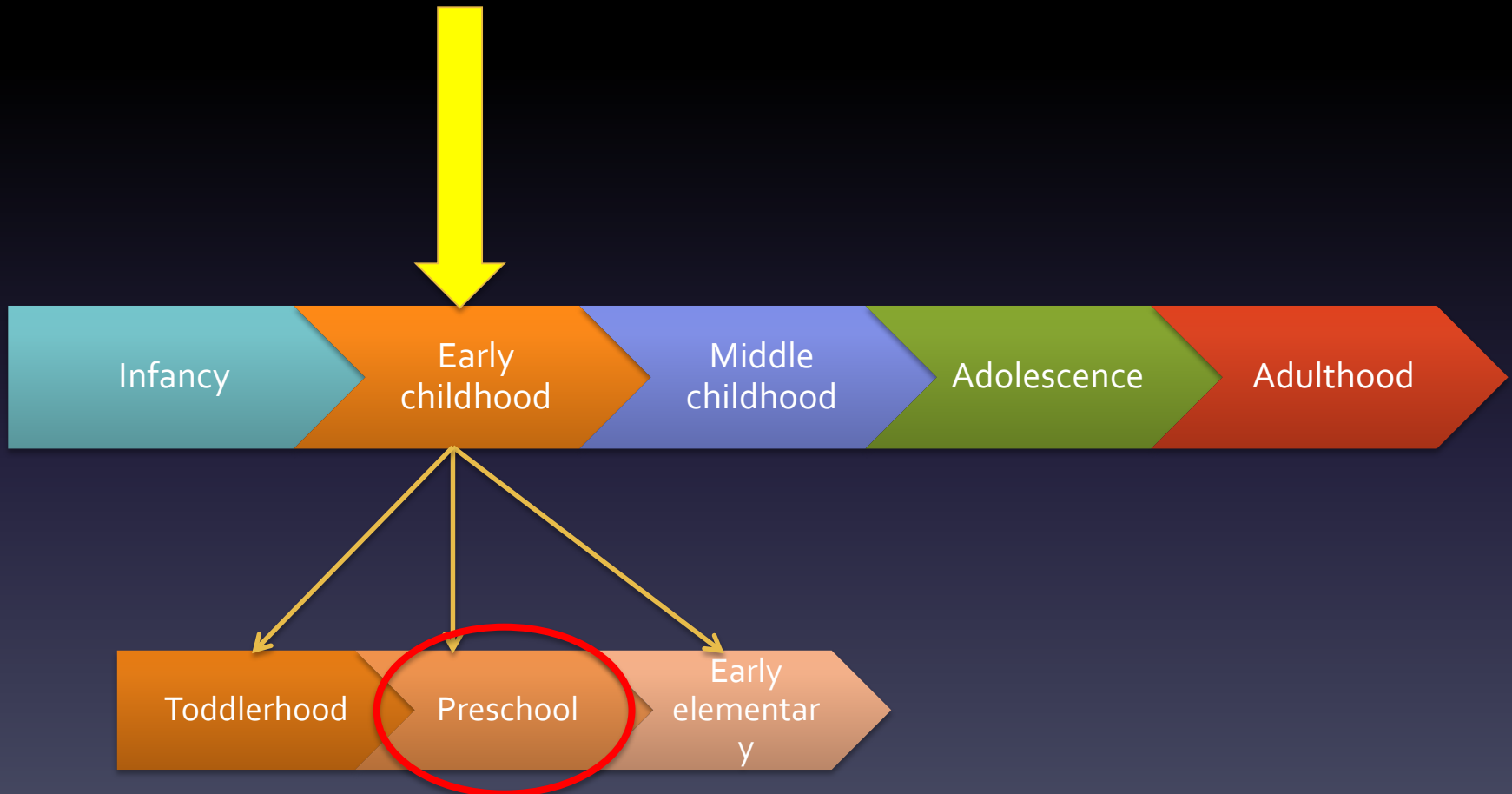


Shonkoff, 2002

Development of Self-Regulation



Development of Self-Regulation



“HARD EVIDENCE

for
Soft Skills”



Importance of Early Self-Regulation

- Short-term outcomes:
 - Health (Schmitt et al., 2017)
 - Relationships (Denham et al., 2014)
 - School readiness (Blair & Razza, 2007; Schmitt et al., 2015; McClelland et al., 2014)

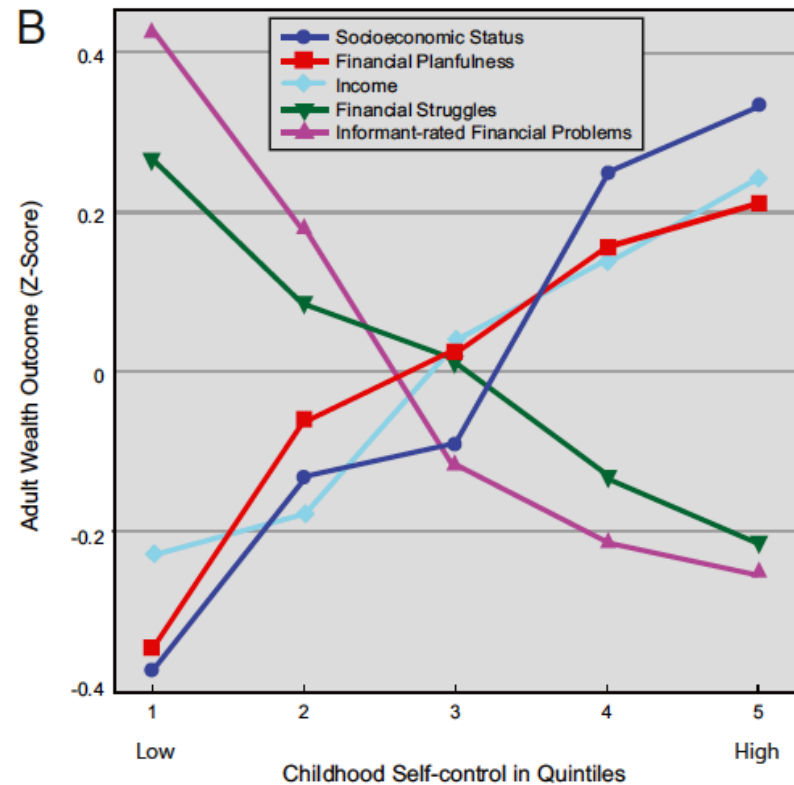
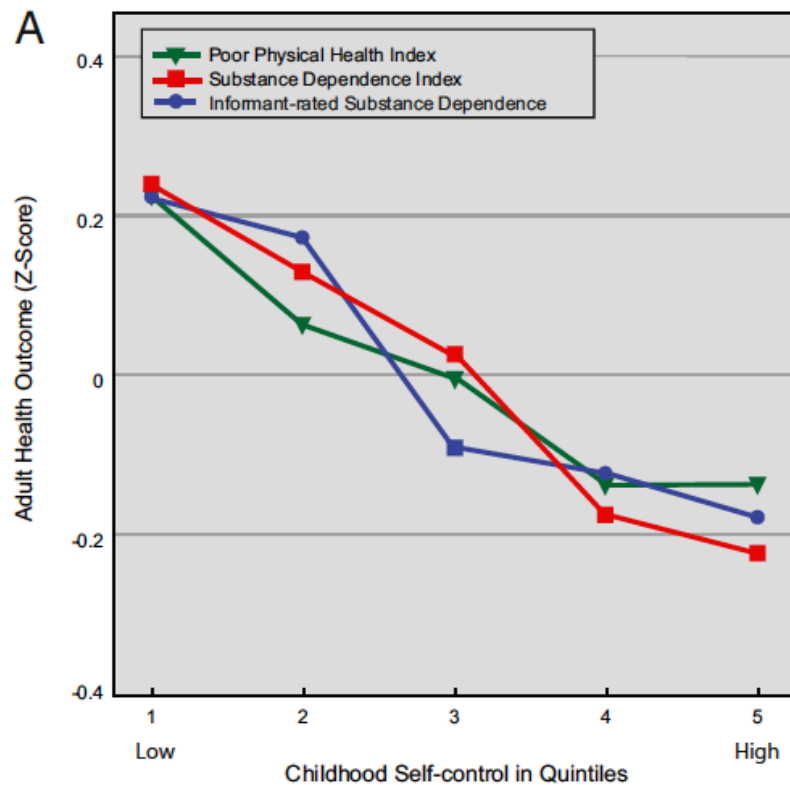


Importance of Early Self-Regulation

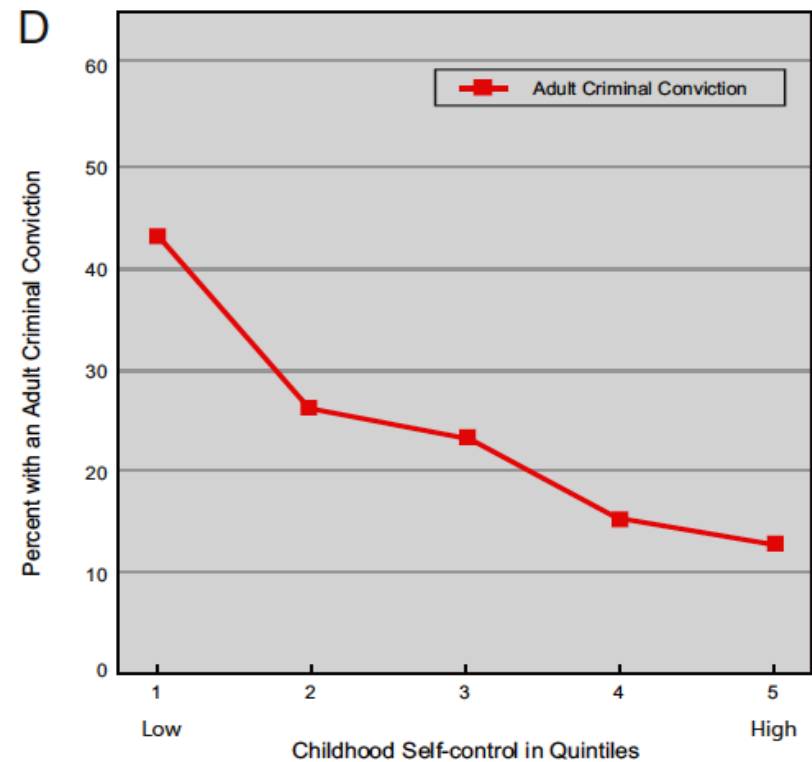
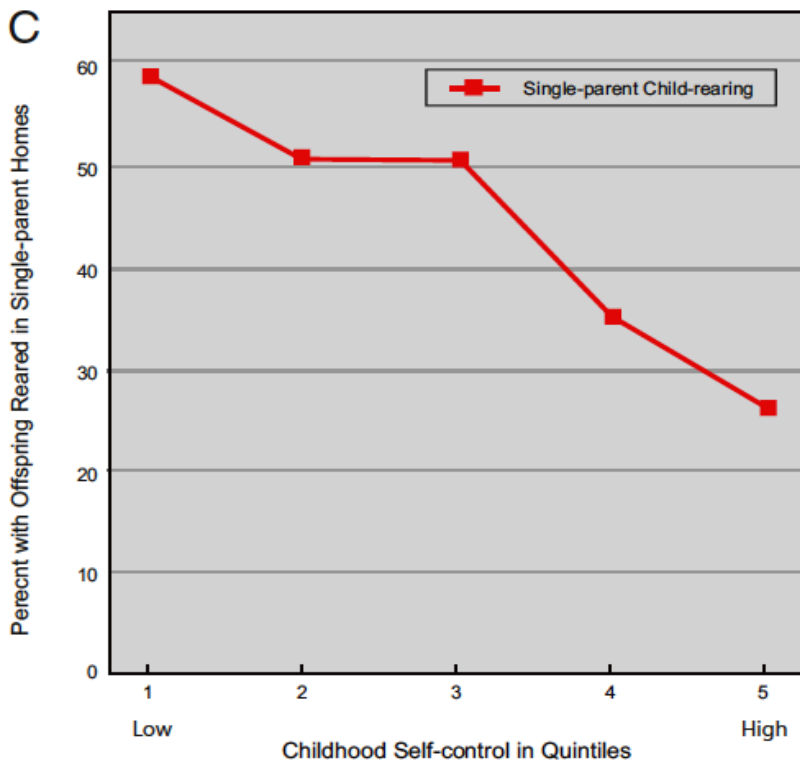
- Long-term outcomes:
 - Academic achievement (McClelland et al., 2013)
 - Health, wealth, employment, and well-being (Heckman et al., 2006; Moffitt et al., 2011)



Importance of Early Self-Regulation



Importance of Early Self-Regulation



Self-Regulation and Risk

Poverty, ethnic minority status, and family instability are risk factors for poor self-regulation

Self-Regulation and Risk

BUT....

Strong self-regulation can serve as a
compensatory factor for children experiencing
risk

Self-Regulation and Risk

and....

Self-regulation is malleable!

Interventions and Programming

Targeted
Interventions

Preschool
Programs
(e.g., PreK)

Interventions and Programming

Targeted
Interventions

Preschool
Programs
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Targeted Interventions



Purdue Interventions

- **Red Light, Purple Light**
 - Music and movement games
 - Example: Freeze game
 - Results: improvements in self-regulation after 8 weeks of participation (Duncan, Schmitt et al., 2017; Schmitt et al., 2015)



Purdue Interventions

- **Block Play**
 - Semi-structured block play activities
 - Example prompt: “Today your job is to work together to build a boat.”
 - Results: improvements in self-regulation after 8 weeks of participation (Schmitt et al., 2017)



Interventions and Programming

Targeted
Interventions

Preschool
Programs
(e.g., PreK)

Preschool Programming

Abecedarian Project



High Scope/Perry
Preschool Project

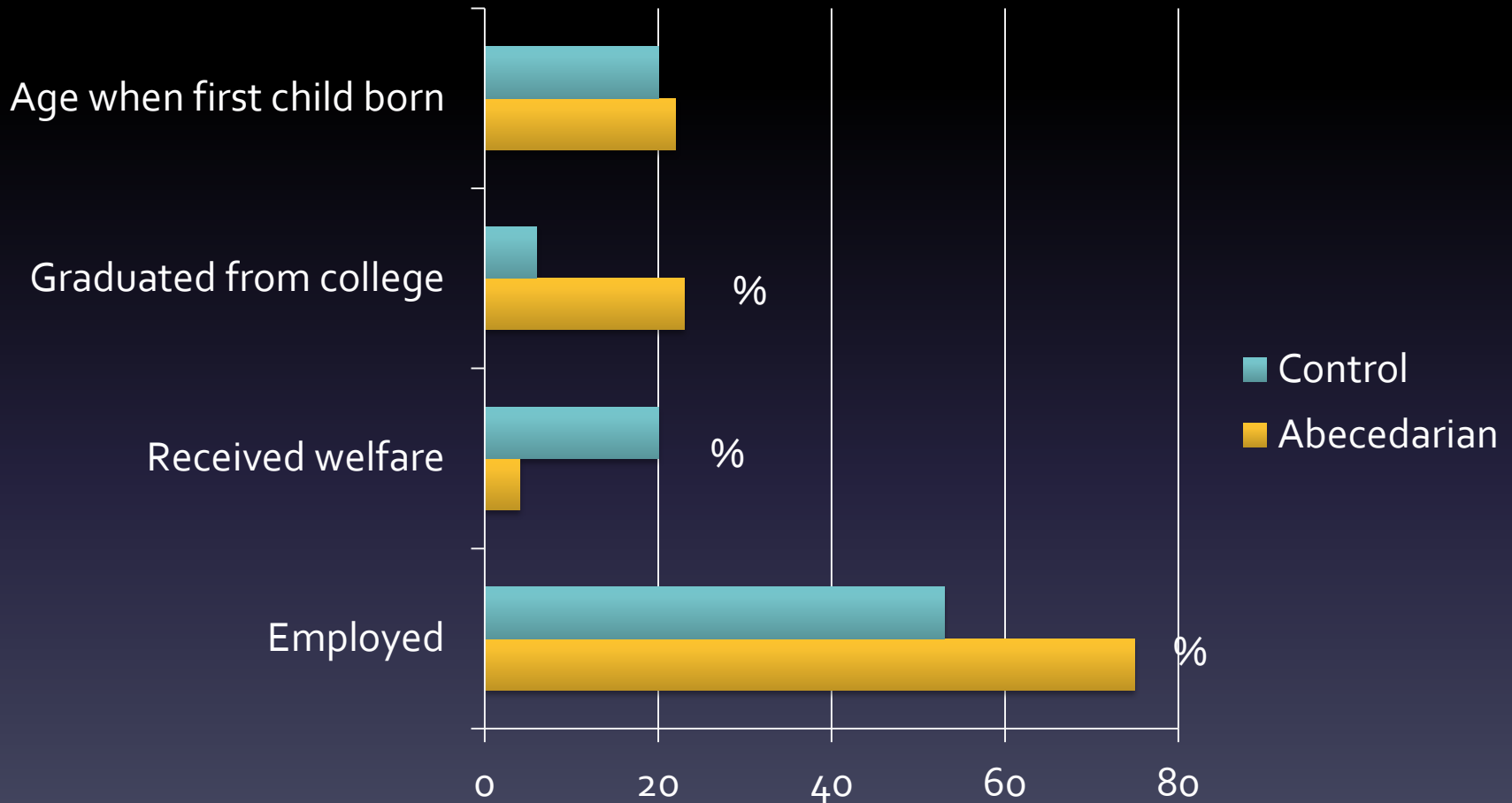




Abecedarian Project

- Randomized controlled trial
- Year round, full day child care from infancy through preschool
- High quality

Abecedarian Project



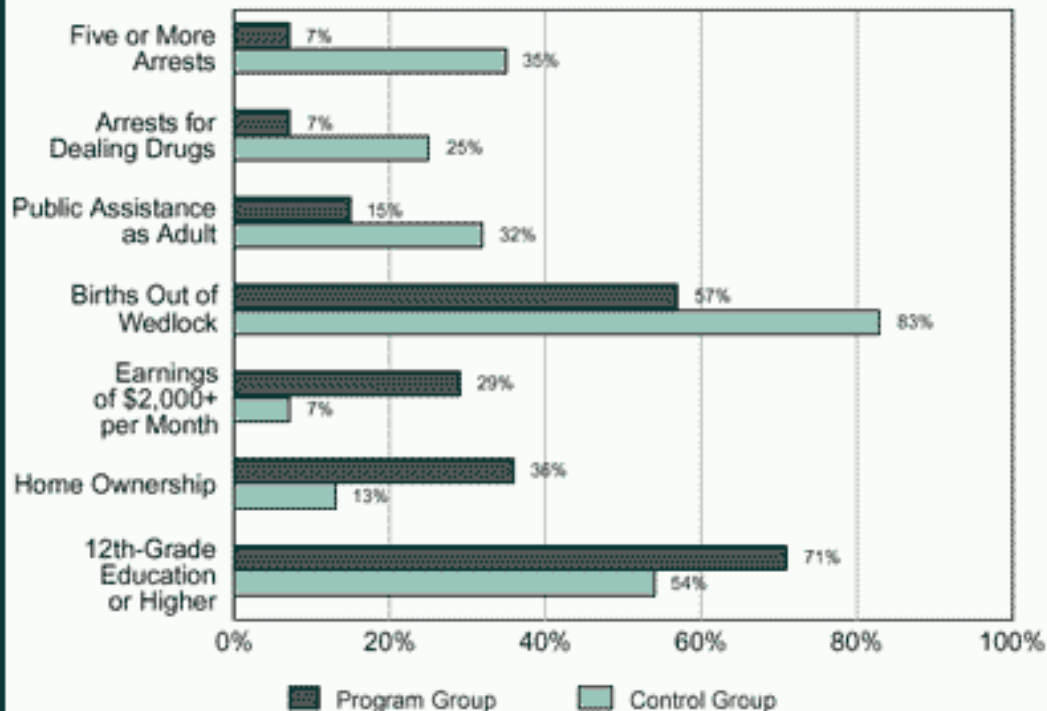
High Scope/Perry Preschool

- Randomized controlled trial
- 8 months (Oct-May), half day preschool and weekly home visits
- High quality



High Scope/Perry Preschool

Figure 1: Major Findings of the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project for Participants Followed Up at Age 27



Source: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. 1999. *High-Quality Preschool Program Found To Improve Adult Status*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. Retrieved March 13, 2000, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.highscope.org/research/Perry%20fact%20sheet.htm>. Reprinted with the permission of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

Both of these studies attributed long-term
effects on.....

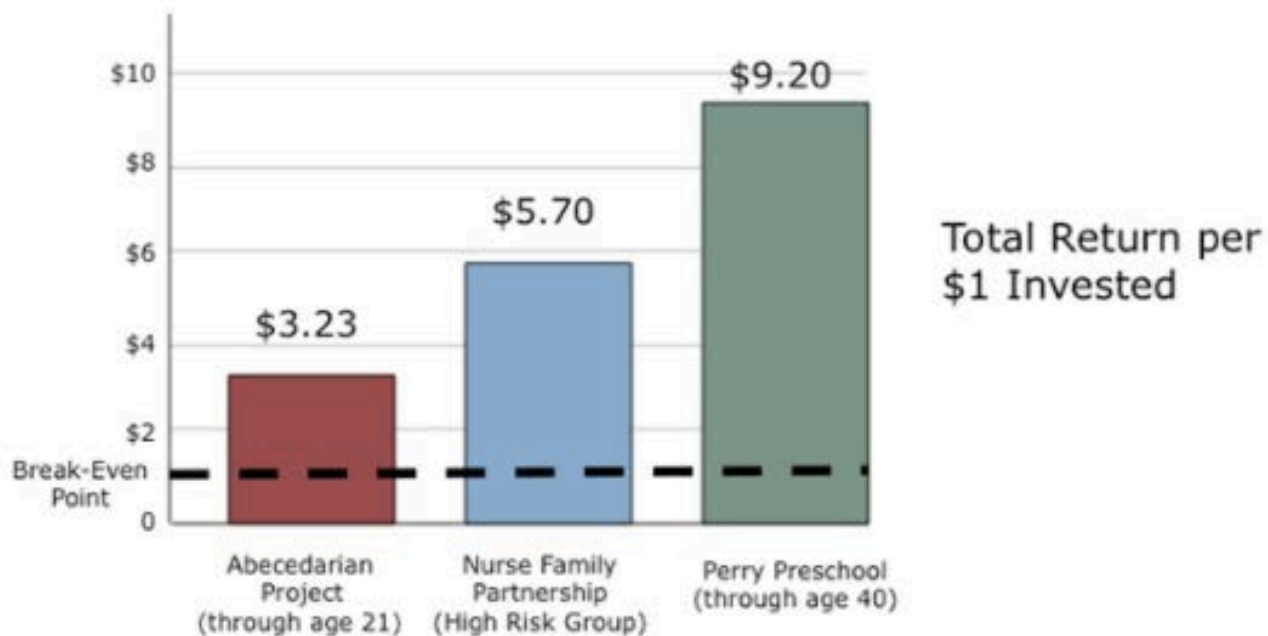
soft skills/self-regulation gained
during the preschool year!!!!!!!

Should we be spending tax dollars on public preschool????

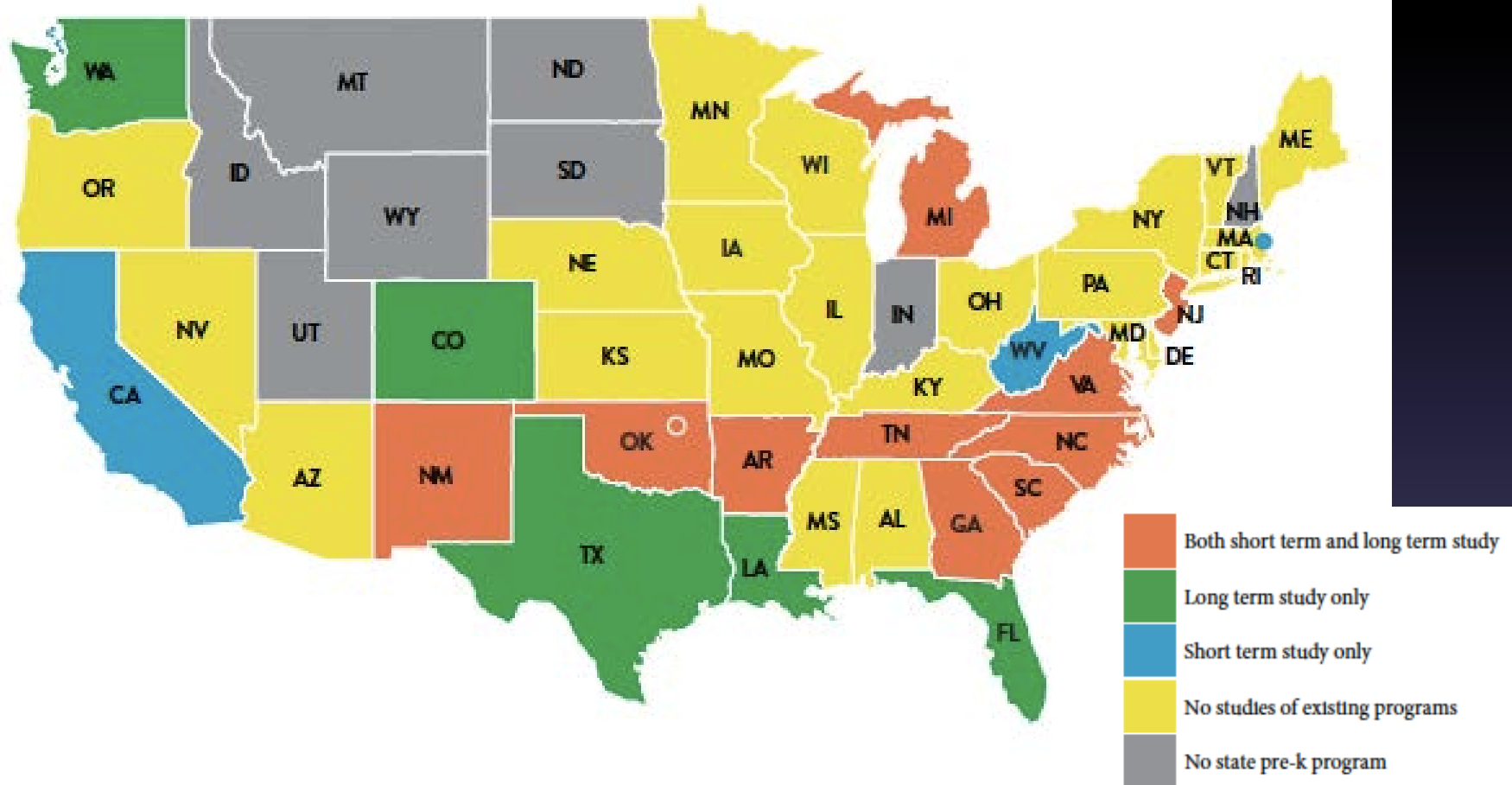


Cost/Benefit Analyses

Cost/Benefit Analyses Show Positive Returns Early Childhood Programs Demonstrating Range of Benefits to Society



National Landscape of PreK and Evaluation Studies



Consensus Statements Across Evaluation Studies

- Convincing evidence for short-term benefits
- Long-term benefits are either unknown or mixed
- PreK programs are not all equally effective
 - Quality matters
 - Curriculum matters
 - Teacher education, preparation, and support matters

Summary

- Preschool as a critical stage for development
- Self-regulation in preschool is key for long-term success
- Targeted interventions can work
- Preschool/prekindergarten may be a sound public investment

Thank you!

Sara Schmitt, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Human Development and Family Studies

saraschmitt@purdue.edu

765-494-4139