

The Local Economic Case for Investing in Early Childhood Programs

Dr. Timothy J. Bartik's

Life Long Learning Program

Saturday, February 23, 2019, 10 am - 11:30 am

Unitarian-Universalist Congregation
56 N. Halifax Dr, Ormond Beach, FL



High-quality early childhood programs, such as preschool and child care, can have powerful short-run and long-run benefits for state and local economic development. If adequately funded and managed to ensure quality and broad access, these programs significantly increase the adult skills of the former child participants. About half of these former participants will stay in the local economy, and two-thirds in the state economy, which increases average local job skills. This improvement in local job skills will significantly boost growth in the number and quality of local jobs, which will broadly benefit local residents. Furthermore, providing more extensive high-quality child care also significantly increases the short-run and long-run earnings of parents, providing more immediate local economic benefits.

Dr. Bartik's research focuses on state and local economic development and local labor markets. This includes research on how early childhood programs affect local economies. Bartik's 1991 book, *Who Benefits from State and Local Economic Development Policies?* is widely cited as an important and influential review of the evidence on how local policies affect economic development. Dr. Bartik's 2011 book, *Investing in Kids*, argued that early childhood programs can promote local economic development. According to Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman, "Tim Bartik has written a thoughtful book on the value of a local approach to financing and creating early interventions to foster child development." Bartik's 2014 book, *From Preschool to Prosperity*, provides a summary of research on economic benefits from early childhood programs. Dr. Bartik received his B.A. from Yale, and his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Prior to joining the Upjohn Institute in 1989, he was an assistant professor of economics at Vanderbilt University.