

AHIP's National Conference on
Medicare, Medicaid & Duals in
Washington, D.C.

Saving Millions of Children from Prison, Poor Health, and Financial Failure.

By George C. Halvorson; Chair And CEO Of The
Institute For Intergroup Understanding, And
Chair Of The First Five Commission For Children
And Families.

You Can Change The Future For Millions Of
Children — Beginning Almost Immediately.

The Number One Predictor For Who Will Be In Prison At Age 18 Is The Number Of Words In Their Vocabulary At Kindergarten.

We Have More People In Prison Than Any
Country In The World By A Wide Margin.

We Have Seven Times More People In Jail Per
Capita Than Canada.

We Disproportionately Imprison Minority Americans.

We Have More African American Males In Prison Today Than The Total Number Of African American Males Who Were Enslaved At The Beginning Of The Civil War.

Roughly 30 Percent Of The African American
Males In This Country Will Spend Time In Jail.

There Are Major Differences In Imprisonment Rates For People Of Every Race, Ethnicity, And Culture Based On Whether Or Not The Person Graduated From High School.

For African American Males In Their 30s Who Dropped Out Of High School — 80 Percent Will End Up In Jail And More Than 60 Percent Are Actually In Jail Today.

That Compares To Only 5 Percent Of The African American Males Who Graduated From High School Who Are Currently In Jail.

Dropouts Are 12 Times More Likely To Go To Jail
— And We Know With More Than 80 Percent
Accuracy By Age Three Which Path Each Person
Will Be On.

Basic Biological Science For Brain Development
Is The Same For People From Every Ethnic,
Racial, Cultural, And Economic Group.

We Have Wonderful New Neurological Science
To Guide Us Today.

We Now Know The First Three Years Of Life Are
The Years When Biological Neuron Connectivity
Happens In Each And Every Child's Brain.

The Children Who Have Had Their Brains Exercised In Those First Months And Years Have More Neuron Connections For Life — And They Have Stronger Brains.

Exercising Muscles Builds Strong Muscles — And Exercising Brains Builds Strong Brains — But The Brain Exercise Only Has Its Optimal, Positive Biological Impact In The First Months And Years Of Life For Each Child.

After Age Four, The Brains Actually Biologically Prune Themselves And Get Rid Of Neuron Capabilities That Were Not Exercised In Those First Three Years.

The Children Who Have Fallen Far Behind By
Age Four Simply Never Catch Up.

Kindergarten Is Too Late.

Learning Does Not Begin At Kindergarten.

It Begins At Birth.

Wonderful And Extensive Research Done At Harvard, Stanford, Ucla, Columbia, The University Of Washington, And A Number Of Other Great Programs Is Now Showing Us How Those Processes Work, And Those Researchers Are Explaining Why The Children Who Have Fallen Behind By Age Three Tend To Stay Behind For Their Entire Lives.

WE SHOULD NOT EVER GIVE UP ON ANY CHILD
— AND ALL CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM GOOD
EDUCATION RESOURCES — BUT THE VERY BEST
TIME TO HELP EACH CHILD IS IN THE FIRST
MONTHS AND YEARS OF LIFE.

The National Testing Programs Show That The Children Who Have Fallen Behind By Age Three Have Lower Learning Levels In Fourth And Eighth Grade For Both Reading And Mathematics.

We Need To Make Sure That No Children Fall Behind.

That Goal Requires Us To Begin Helping Children
At Birth.

To Begin Helping At Birth, We Need All Parents
To Know What Can Be Done To Exercise The
Brain Of Their Child.

The Exercise That Works To Improve The Strength Of A Child's Brain Is Easy To Understand And It Can Be Done In Almost Any Setting.

Neurons Connect In The Brain Of A Child When Adults Talk, Read, Sing, And Interact Directly With Each Child.

Talking Is A Very Powerful Brain Building Tool.

Talking Directly To A Child Has A Huge Impact
On Building Strong Brains.

Having A Mother, Father, Family Member, Or Any Other Trusted Adult Talking Directly And Constantly To A Child Creates Billions Of Neuron Connections In The Child's Brain.

Too Many Children Have No One Talking Directly
And Often To Them — Because We Have Not
Taught The New Science Of Brain Strengthening
To All Parents.

Children Who Have Adults Interacting Directly With The Child And Talking Directly To Them From The Very First Days, Weeks, And Months Of Life Have Stronger Brains — And Are More Emotionally Secure.

The Children Who Are Talked To Are Also Healthier. The Children Who Have Not Fallen Behind By Age Three Have Significantly Lower Rates Of Asthma — More Than 60 Percent Lower.

They Have Significantly Lower Rates Of All Major Diseases — Including Diabetes.

Look At The Health Status Differences For High School Dropouts — Including Pregnancy And Drug Abuse — And You Can See Differences In Those Highly Expense Problem Areas That Are Equivalent To The Incarceration Rates.

Toxic Stress Syndrome Causes Multiple Problems And Creates Major Health Care Expenses — And Toxic Stress Syndrome Can Be Cut In Half By Interacting Directly For 30 Minutes Each Day With Each Child.

Reading To A Child Creates Those Needed Buffer Times — And Reading Also Strengthens Brains.

Reading Builds Learning Skills, Teaches Cognitive
And Representational Thinking, And Buffers
Directly Against The Negative Neurochemicals
Of Toxic Stress.

Working Mothers Read, On Average, Roughly
1,500 Hours Between Birth And Kindergarten.

Medicaid Mothers Read, On Average, Less Than
30 Hours.

More Than Half Of The Medicaid Homes Do Not Have A Single Book.

Nearly 30 Percent Of Medicaid Mothers Do Read
Almost Daily To Their Children.

We Need To Double That 30 Percent That Reads Regularly To 60 Percent — And We Can Reduce The Number Of Children On The Path To Prison By HALF.

We Know What To Do For Children To Make
Major Improvements In Both Ability And Health.

Talk. Read. Interact. Count. Sing

Five Magical Interactions That Build Brains And Improve Emotional And Physical Health.

Mothers Want Their Children To Thrive.

More Than 70 Percent Of Medicaid Mothers Who Are Given Information About Building Those Stronger Abilities In Their Children, Change Parenting Behavior And Practices In Positive Ways To Make That Happen.

The People In This Room Today Can Make That
Whole Array Of Benefits For Medicaid Children
Happen.

You Can Change Lives.

The People In This Room Can Make A Huge Positive Difference In The Life Trajectories Of Children — And You Can Do It At Extremely Low Levels Of Expense And Resource Use.

You Can Also Build A Competitive Edge For Your Plan By *Being* The Plan That Not Only Has Healthier Kids — You Can Also Have Happier And Smarter Kids.

All Moms Want Their Kids To Be Healthy, Happy,
And Smart.

Talking To Kids And Reading To Kids Makes Kids
Both Happier And Smarter.

Start By Having Every Obstetrician In Your Plan Or Network Teach That Basic Brain Development Science To Every Expectant Mother. It Can Be Done In Minutes — And That Teaching Can Be Supported With Either Simple Materials Or No Materials At All.

Also — Teach That Science To Each And All Of
Your Pediatricians, Family Doctors, Nurses, And
Social Workers.

When Members Of The Care Team Know The Science, They Can Easily Teach It And Encourage Parenting Behaviors That Create Major Benefits For Each Child.

In Order For Your Care Network And Team To Know That Science, You Need To Teach It To Them.

The Institute Of Medicine And The Academy Of Pediatrics Both Know That New Science.

But Far Too Many Caregivers Have High Levels Of Ignorance And Non-awareness On Those Issues And That Science.

Helping The Children Doesn't Involve
Assessments Or Screens Or Even Processes.

It Is A Teaching Strategy — A Public Health
Campaign — And That Public Health Message
Just Needs To Be Delivered By A Trusted
Messenger To Every Parent.

Children whose brains are exercised in the first Three Key Years of life have larger vocabularies, learn to read more easily, and are much less likely to drop out of school.

You can exercise your baby's brain by talking to your baby, reading to your baby, singing to your baby, and even counting with your baby, beginning in the very first days, weeks and months after your baby is born.



The Internet Is A Rich Source Of Information For Both Caregivers And Patients.

For The Caregivers, Steer Them To The Magnificent And Free Teaching Materials Available At The Website For The Harvard Center For The Developing Child — Or The Great Website Of The Center For Infant Brain Science At The University Of WashinGTON.

For Parents, There Are A Number Of Free Web Teaching Sites And Tools That Convey And Model That Information.

Links To Free Supportive Websites Are Available
At The Institute For Intergroup Understanding.

You Can Link To More In Your Markets.

One Simple Low-cost Texting Process Reminded Mothers By Texting Them To Talk To Their Children — And The Mothers Who Got Those Free Texts Had Children Who Were Four Months Ahead Of Their Peers In Learning Levels By Two Years Old.

You Can Change Lives.

You Can Use Your Program To Change Lives — In Ways That Will Close The Learning Gaps In Our Schools, And Improve The Health And The Well Being Of The Children You Serve.

It Will Significantly Reduce The Likelihood That The People You Serve Will End Up In Jail.

By Teaching This Information To Each Mother,
You Will Reduce Health Care Costs By Reducing
Asthma Levels, Toxic Stress Levels, And Helping
Mothers Better Understand Basic Parenting
Roles And Functions.

That's Not A Bad Use Of Your Life, Your Talent,
And Your Opportunity.

Once We Understand Those Key Issues, We Have A Personal Opportunity And An Ethical Obligation To Put The Information To Good Use And Save Kids.