

Can Early Intervention and Family Support Prevent Child Maltreatment

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Centre of Excellence for Early
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Organization of the Presentation

- **Early intervention and family support**
- **The Nurse Home Visitation Program (NHVP) in Elmira, NY**
- **Effects on child maltreatment prevention**
- **Costs/benefits of the NHVP**
- **Challenges of large scale dissemination**

Why invest in young families and early childhood?

- **Early physical, emotional, and social development has a substantial influence in later life.**
- **Early behavior patterns tend to persist over time.**
- **Early interventions have been shown to prevent later problems and these effects are cumulative over time.**
- **Public spending for children has disproportionately focused on school age children or teens.**

Critical Period for Development and Intervention

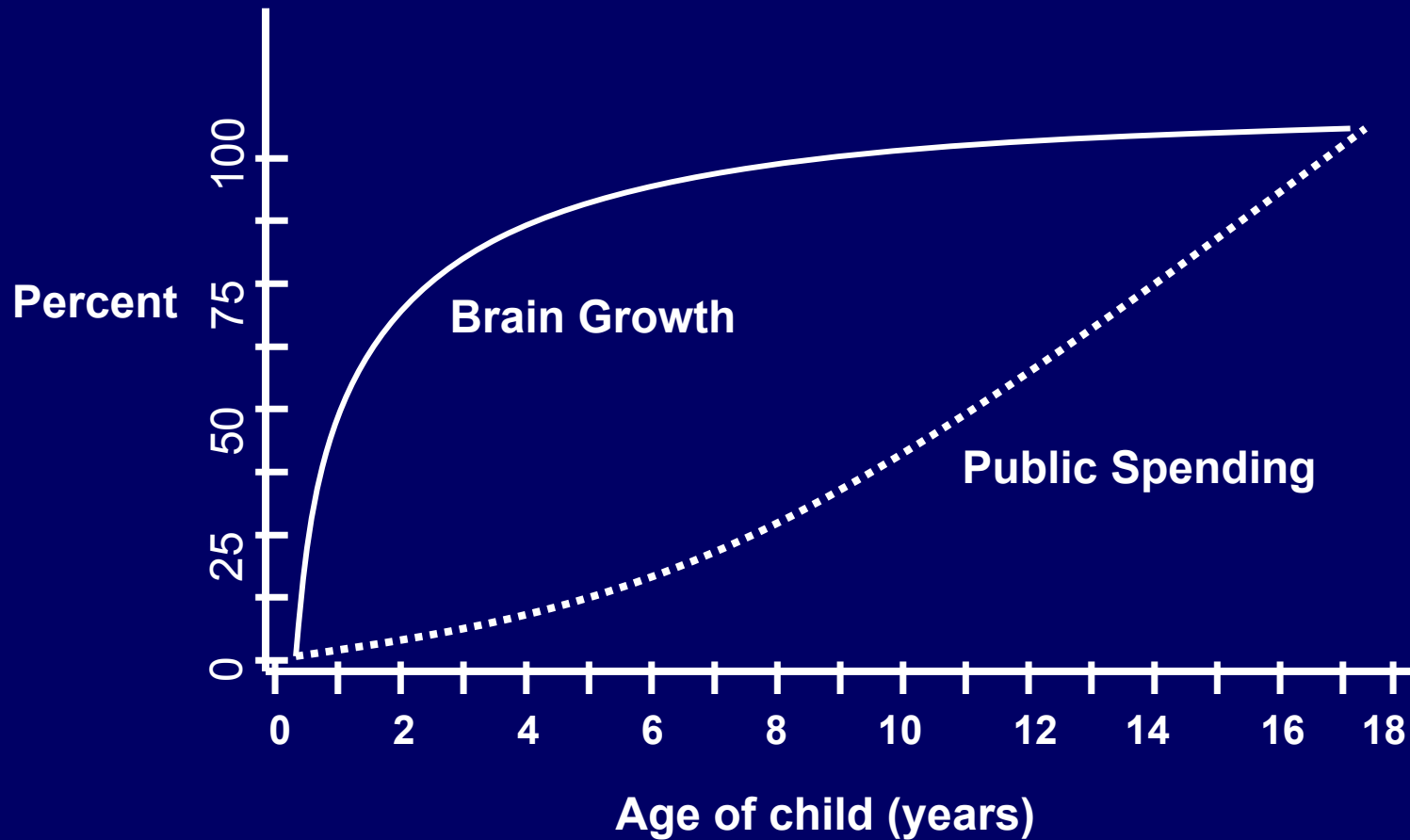
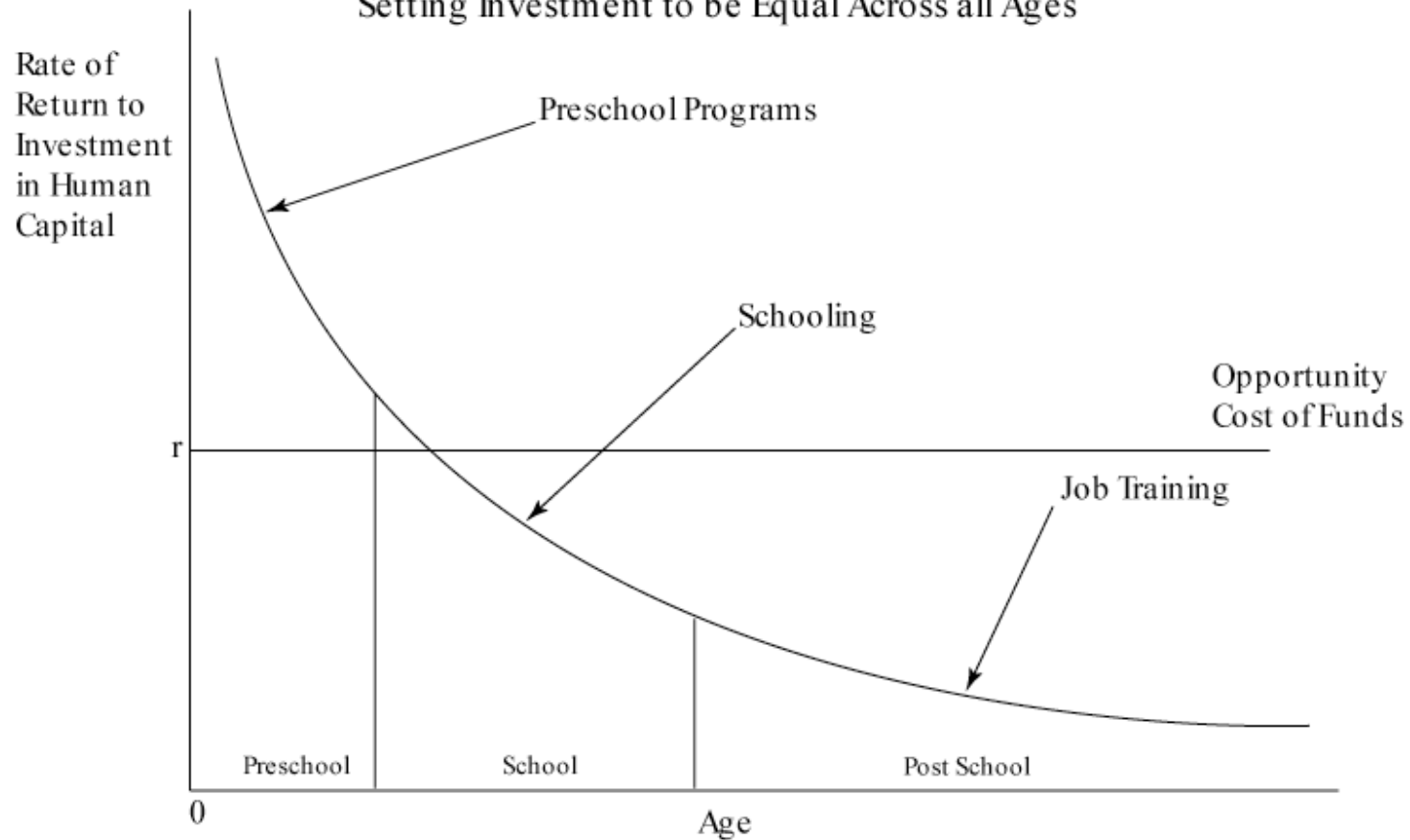


Figure 6-1
Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment Initially
Setting Investment to be Equal Across all Ages



Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment Initially Setting Investment to be Equal Across all Ages

From: Carneiro, P and Heckman, J.J. *Human Capital Policy*. Paper presented at the Alvin Hansen Seminar, Harvard University, April 25, 2002.

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Characteristics of Family Support and Early Intervention Programs

- **Focus on economically disadvantaged families.**
- **Foster child development and in some cases to support the development of parents.**
- **Provide a range of support including information, emotional support, and tangible aid.**
- **Build competence as well as reduce risk.**
- **Base of operation is the most relevant ecological setting for families and children such as home and school.**

Home Visiting Programs Tested in Randomized Trials

Nurse-Family Partnership
Program

Infant Health &
Development Program

Comprehensive Child
Development Program

Home Instruction
Program for
Preschool Youngsters

Healthy Families
America

Parents As Teachers

Status of the Nurse Home Visitation Trials

**Elmira
Nurse Home Visitation
N=400**

- **15-Year Follow-up Done**
- **19-Year Follow-up Done**

**Memphis
Urban Replication
N=1138**

- **Post-Kindergarten Follow up Done**
- **Post-Third-Grade Follow-up Begun**

**Denver
Lay vs Nurse
Home Visitors
N=735**

- **4 Year Follow-up Done**
- **Post-Kindergarten Follow-up Begun**

Families Served

- 400 women
- First live birth
- Demographic risk
(teen, poor, or single)



(Random Assignment)



Comparison Group

Screening & referral
only



Nurse Visited Group

Screening & referral

plus

Nurse visitation through
child's 2nd birthday

Program Goals

- **Pregnancy Outcomes**
- **Child Health and Development**
- **Parental Life Course**

Nurse Activities

- Form a relationship with parents by reinforcing their strengths
- Help women improve their health behaviors
- Promote effective and responsible care of children
- Help parents plan future pregnancies, complete their educations, and find work

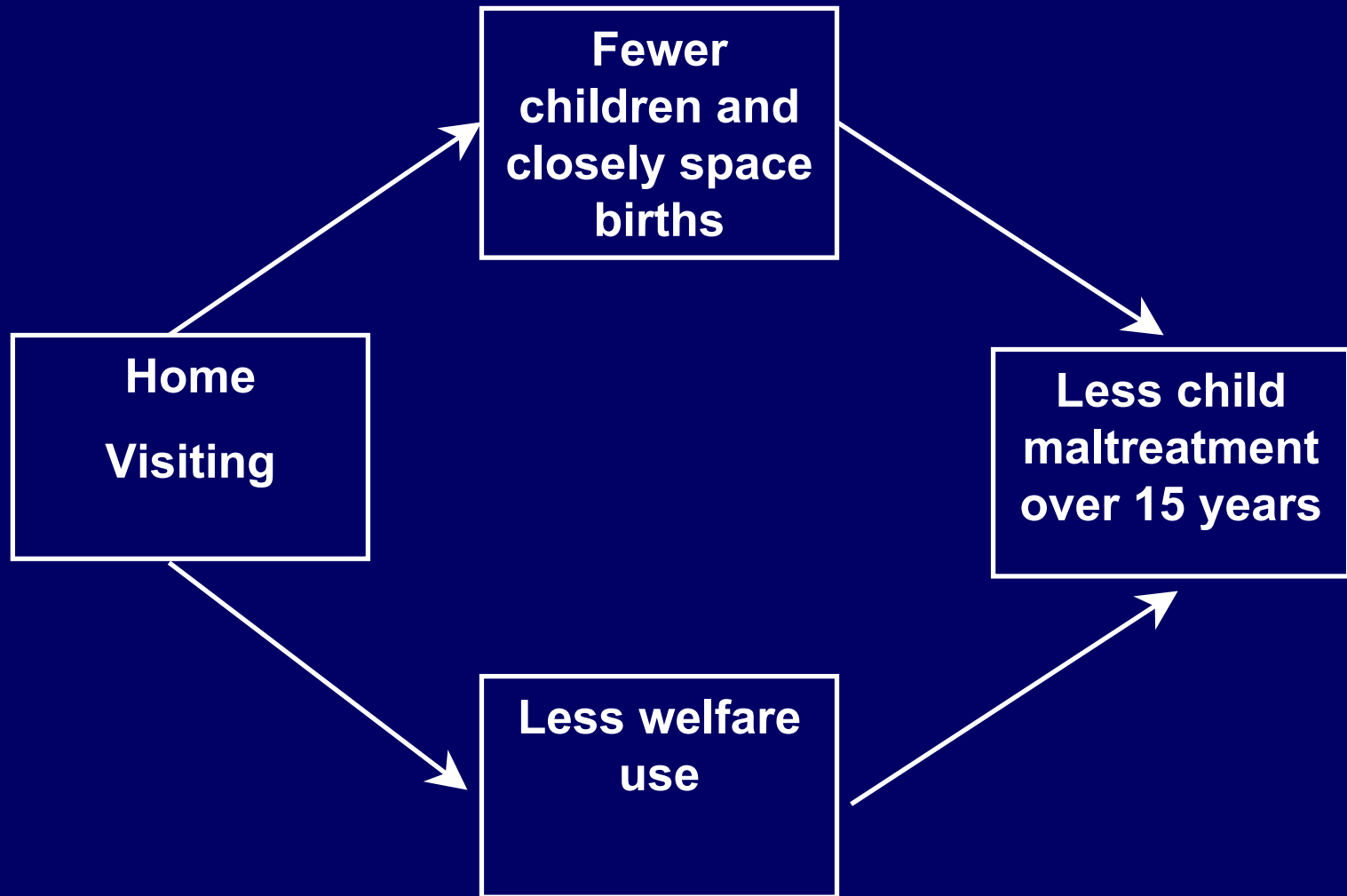
Enduring Effects on Low-Income, Unmarried Mothers' Behavior

Elmira 15-Year Follow-up

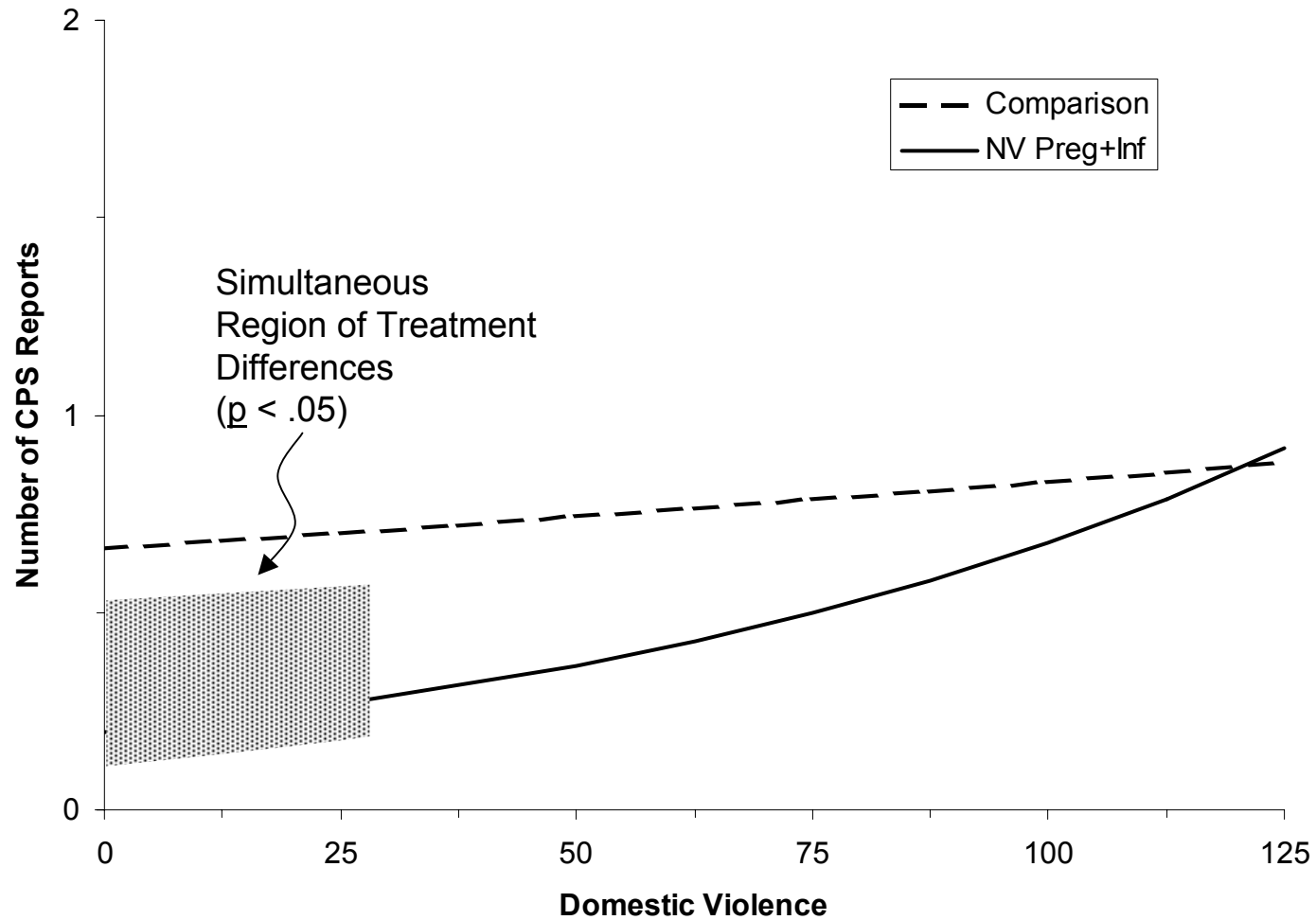
- 79% fewer verified reports of child abuse and neglect
- 32% fewer subsequent births
- 30 fewer months of welfare use
- 44% fewer behavioral problems due to alcohol & drug abuse
- 69% fewer arrests

Olds, D., Eckenrode, J., Henderson, Jr. C., et al. (1997). Long-Term Effects of Home Visitation on Maternal Life Course and Child Abuse and Neglect: 15-Year Follow-Up of a Randomized Trial. *JAMA*, 1997; 278: 637-643.

How does Nurse Home Visitation Prevent Child Maltreatment?



Number of Maltreatment Reports by Treatment Status and Level of Domestic Violence



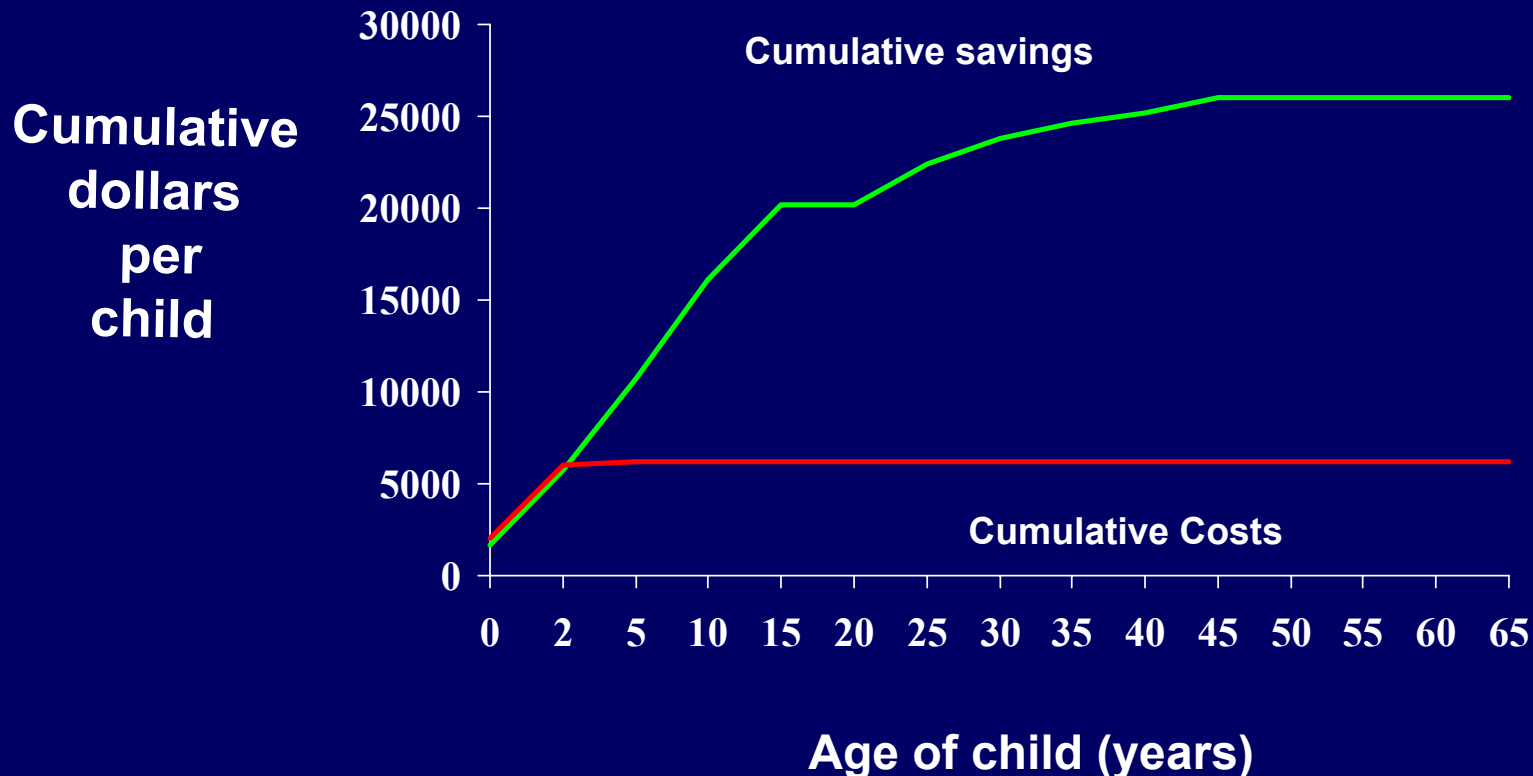
Enduring Effects on High-Risk Adolescents' Behavior

Elmira 15-Year Follow-up

- 54% fewer arrests
- 69% fewer convictions
- 58% fewer sexual partners
- 28% fewer cigarettes smoked
- 51% fewer days consuming alcohol

Olds D., Henderson, C.R. Jr., Cole, R., et al. (1998) Long-term effects of nurse home visitation on children's criminal and antisocial behavior: 15-year follow-up of a randomized trial. *JAMA*, 1998;280:1238-1244.

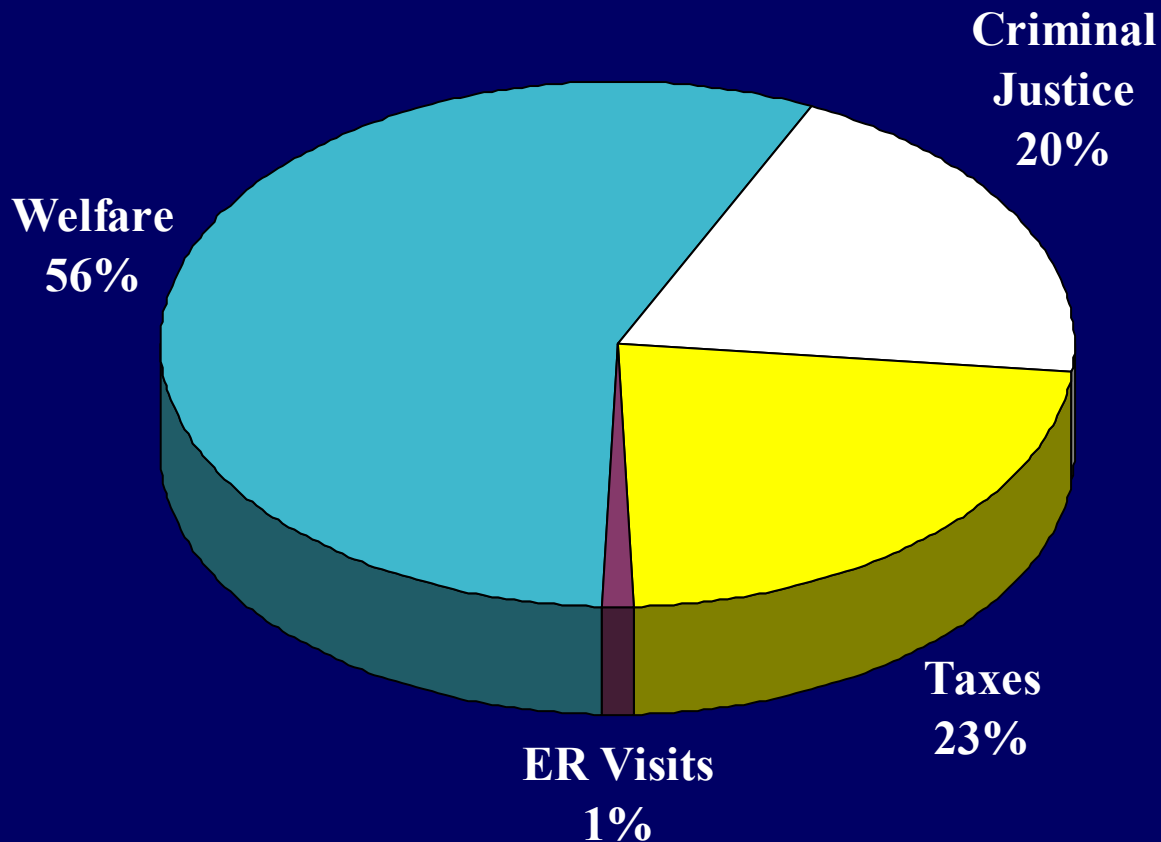
Cumulative Cost Savings: Elmira Home Visits (High-Risk Families)



Karoly LA, Everingham SS, Hoube J, et al. *Benefits and Costs of Early-Childhood Interventions: A Documented Briefing*. Santa Monica, Calif:RAND;1997

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Sources of Savings: Elmira Home Visits (High-Risk Families)



Karoly LA, Everingham SS, Hoube J, et al. *Investing in Our Children: What We Know and Don't Know about the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions*. MR-898 Santa Monica, CA:RAND;1998

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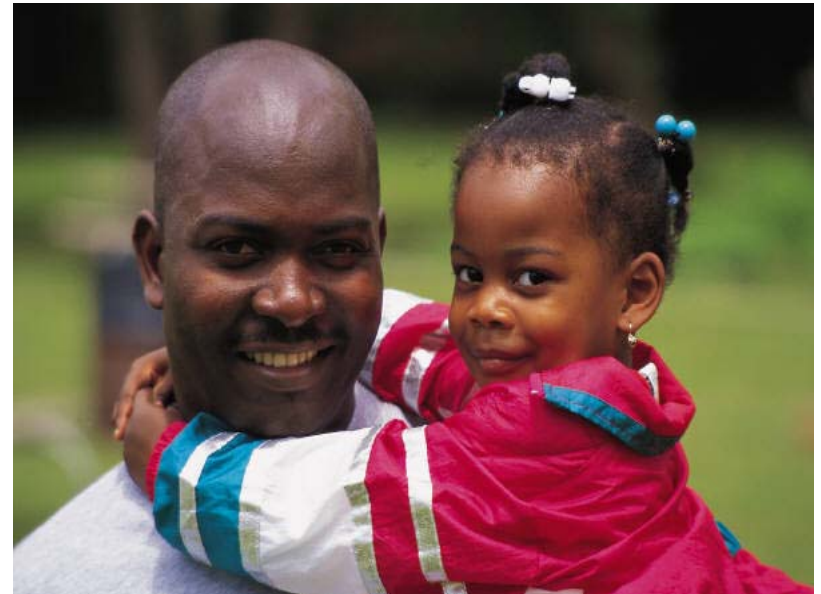
Even if Programs are Based on Evidence, Challenges Emerge in Large Scale Dissemination

- **Require legislative and community support**
- **Programs can become watered down**
- **Need for flexibility, but need to adhere to essential elements**



Nurse-Family Partnership

Helping First-Time Parents Succeed



<http://www.NCCFC.org/NurseFamilyPartnership.cfm>

Nurse-Family Partnership

Communities Served as of April 2003

