

Study shows Every Child Succeeds has 'huge' economic impact

BY: *Rory Glynn, WCPO Contributor*

POSTED: 10:43 AM, Sep 8, 2015

CINCINNATI - Since its inception 16 years ago, Every Child Succeeds has provided invaluable support to underprivileged mothers and their babies.

But the Cincinnati-based, nationally recognized nonprofit wanted to see a different facet of that invaluable support: a value. So ECS asked a local firm to perform a comprehensive economic impact and cost-benefit analysis.

The findings: ECS' economic impact last year exceeded \$20 million, and for every \$1 invested in ECS, \$1.65 in benefits was returned within two years. The study was conducted by Cincinnati-based CTI Clinical Trial and Consulting Services.



"We are proud of those numbers. They show that ECS is something that really does make a difference in the community," ECS president Judy Van Ginkel said. "With a study like this, you take a chance that what we think is true might not be true. It's still important to do."

ECS was established by three founding partners: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, the Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency and the United Way of Greater Cincinnati. It sprung from a notion of John Pepper, the former Procter & Gamble chairman and CEO: that at-risk children could benefit greatly from more being done on their behalf in their first three years of life.

Building upon that idea, ECS initially focused on brain development in infants, but grew over time into a program centered on in-home visits with expectant and new mothers that would focus on early childhood development and parenting skills and continue through those crucial early development years.

Page 1 of 3

Study shows Every Child Succeeds has 'huge' economic... <http://www.wcpo.com//news/insider/study-shows-every...>
Working through community-based agencies in seven counties throughout Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, ECS now contracts with about 125 in-home visitors, works with more than 24,000 families annually and has conducted more than a half-million home visits since its inception.

Peter Mallow, CTI associate director of health economics, spent almost nine months studying ECS using Implan software, an economic impact modeling program. The economic impact component assumed ECS' budget at \$8 million and considered both direct and indirect benefits to arrive at an estimated impact of \$20,007,313 for 2014.

The cost-benefit study -- \$1.65 to mothers, babies and the community for every dollar invested -- showed ECS' impact in terms of what expenses might be incurred if ECS did not exist. Factors weighed included reductions in emergency-room visits and costs of abusive parenting for children; for mothers, greater employment opportunities, reduction in substance abuse and spacing of pregnancies; for the community, less strain on government assistance programs as a result of ECS education.

The study found about 3 of 4 mothers who enter the program will realize benefits greater than what was invested in them, Mallow said. About 20 percent see a return of greater than \$2 for every dollar invested.

"That's a huge return for that subset, and I think that's pretty amazing," Mallow said.

Mallow said the study was conducted conservatively, focusing on the first two years after birth. Down-the-line outcomes such as school performance weren't considered because "beyond two years we don't have a way to absolutely quantify results and attribute them to the program itself."



Mallow credited Van Ginkel and Robert Ammerman, scientific director for ECS, for the study's findings of success.

"I get to come in and be the icing on the cake, to be able to explain it in dollar terms," Mallow said. "That's important because different aspects resonate with different audiences in different ways."

ECS has a budget of \$9 million this year, roughly split between public and private money, Van Ginkel said. That was part of the impetus for the study.

Study shows Every Child Succeeds has 'huge' economic... <http://www.wcpo.com//news/insider/study-shows-every...>
“We’re competing in the public arena with lots of good programs, and there’s no end of need,” she said. “If we’re going to say to a funder that we’re worthy of your consideration, we need to be able to document what we’ve been able to do.

“It’s a return on investment not only in terms of dollars, but in all the families that are doing better.”

Copyright 2015 Scripps Media, Inc. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.