

## Early Education Adds Up To Success

(NAPSA)—The move toward pre-kindergarten schooling for every child is gaining momentum. Universal pre-kindergarten (state-funded education for three- and four-year-olds) is a reality in some states, with others starting programs soon. Georgia and Oklahoma have already implemented universal pre-k and 36 other states have pre-k programs—usually targeted at groups such as low-income families or families where English is a second language.



**Photo credit: KinderCare Learning Centers**

“For years, educators have seen the benefits of quality early education for children at risk of school failure. Universal pre-k opens that door to all three- and four-year-olds,” said Jim Loving, president of the National Child Care Association, which represents nearly 113,000 licensed private care and education providers.

Although cost is a barrier for states considering pre-k programs, states could actually save money, since such programs often reduce a child’s need for special education classes or grade retention after they enter school.

The cost of additional early childhood education can be mitigated by utilizing the existing early childhood education delivery system, much of which is offered in licensed private centers. Private preschools are a great resource to states, offering proven programs, facilities and trained experienced staff.

The Committee for Economic Development stresses that the nation’s economic future increasingly depends on giving children a strong early start. “Early education offers long-term benefits for both children and society, benefits that can substantially offset the costs involved,” said Roy Bostock of CED.

For information on universal pre-k, visit [www.nccanet.org](http://www.nccanet.org).