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## The Case for Investing in Early Childhood

*letter from Executive Director*

Friends of ICS:

In December, the Institute released its first issue brief, [Investing in Early Childhood: The Path to a More Prosperous South Carolina](#). Throughout the brief, research is presented that demonstrates the inextricable link between smart investments in fostering early childhood wellbeing and our state's economic prosperity.

Working with local partners, in 2012, ICS facilitated eight business leader forums across South Carolina. At each of these gatherings, corporate and civic executives came together to hear from experts and learn from one another.

In all of the gatherings, the consensus among attendees was supportive of the premise summarized in the issue brief:

*"When we fully attend to the domains of healthy childhood development, we can expect to see children that grow up to be productive workers, responsible citizens and parents, and fully participating members of our society. However, when we fail to attend to the developmental domains of our children, all South Carolinians pay an excessive price: a diminished, insecure, and less prosperous society."*

On February 6th, business leaders and policy makers will again come together at the Columbia Convention Center for the South Carolina Economic Forum on Early Childhood Investment. During the event, participants will learn from speakers including Dr. John Weinberg of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, former Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, Charleston Mayor Joseph Riley, retired Michelin CEO Dick Wilkerson, President of AT&T

South Carolina Pamela Lackey, CEO for the InterTech group Anita Zucker, and Michael Brennan, Chair of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce.

If you are a business leader or policy maker we urge you to attend the Economic Forum on February 6<sup>th</sup>. You can [click here to register](#). In addition to exploring the early childhood-economic development connection, the forum will also focus on the specific actions corporate executives can take -- within their communities and statewide - to promote smart early childhood investments and policies.

Thank you for your ongoing support of ICS and for your commitment to the health, education, and safety of young children in our state.

Sincerely,

Jamie Moon  
Executive Director

## ICS and Help Me Grow Host a Luncheon with Dr. Paul Dworkin

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, ICS and Help Me Grow South Carolina co-hosted a luncheon in Charleston featuring Dr. Paul Dworkin. Dr. Dworkin, Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and Executive Vice-President with the Office for Community Child Health, Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Dr. Dworkin is the founder and visionary behind the establishment of the Help Me Grow system. The Help Me Grow network includes 17 affiliate states, including South Carolina.

During the forum, Dr. Dworkin was interviewed by Dr. Desmond Kelly, ICS board member and Medical Director of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of the Greenville Hospital System. Dr. Dworkin discussed systemic change in the early childhood context, drawing from his extensive experience in launching the Help Me Grow system. The luncheon was attended by early childhood leaders representing the business, civic, and government sectors.

## ICS Convenes SC Social Impact Finance Working Group

ICS has convened a working group to explore new ways to scale and sustain high-quality, evidence-based interventions that meet the needs of South Carolina's youngest children through social impact financing.

This working group will develop a knowledge-base around financing arrangements for programs that produce social benefits and cost savings, and will consider social impact financing's potential to help South Carolina improve outcomes for children on a large scale. This group will focus, in part, on exploring the feasibility of using one form of social impact financing--Social Impact Bonds--to scale and sustain high-quality early childhood interventions. These explorations will have broad implications for both the private and public sectors in South Carolina well beyond the early childhood sector.

This invitation-only working group consists of members drawn from government, the philanthropic community, early childhood interventions, and elected officials.

The first meeting of the working group, scheduled for February 7th in Columbia, will be facilitated by Megan Golden of New York University's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service with the assistance of Nirav Shah, a director with Social Finance US.

Golden is also serving the principal investigator on an ICS analysis to determine the feasibility of using Social Impact Bonds to scale and sustain evidence based home visiting programs for at-risk young children and their parents in South Carolina.

For more information about this working group please contact ICS Associate Director [Joe Waters](#).

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There is still time to register for the  
SC Economic Forum for Early  
Childhood Investment. [Click here to  
register now!](#)

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### Featured Partner: Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow- South Carolina is led by Children's Hospital, Greenville Hospital System in cooperation with the United Way Association of South Carolina and the Institute for Child Success.

The Help Me Grow system aims to build collaboration across sectors, including child health care, early care and education, and family support. The system promotes early detection and connection to services for children with developmental or behavioral challenges. Through physician and community outreach and centralized information and referral centers, families are linked with existing programs and services. Ongoing data collection and analysis helps identify gaps in and barriers to the system.

The Help Me Grow- South Carolina centralized telephone access point for connecting families to services and care coordination became operational in September 2012 and is initially supporting families in Greenville and Pickens Counties. For more information about Help Me Grow, please visit [www.helpmegrownational.org](http://www.helpmegrownational.org), or contact Program Manager Jane Witowski at [jwitowski@ghs.org](mailto:jwitowski@ghs.org).

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