



Center on the Developing Child  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

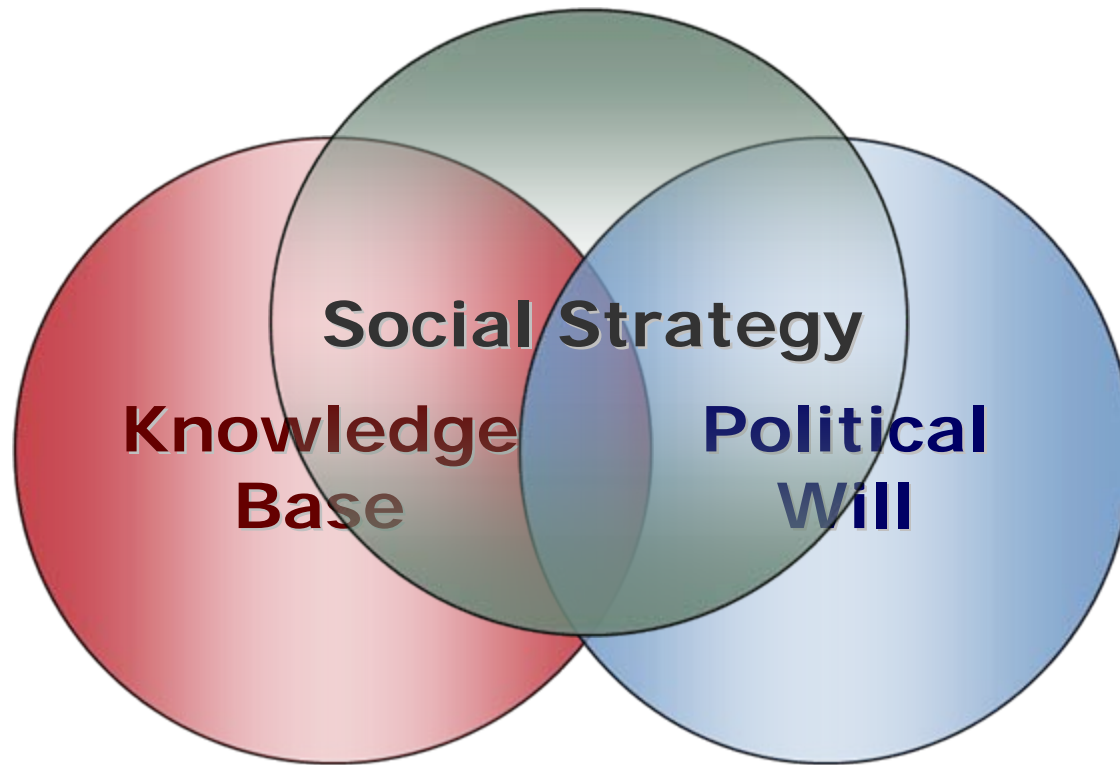
# Creating the Future of Early Childhood Policy and Practice

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From Neurons to Neighborhoods: Ten Years Later  
Board on Children, Youth, and Families | National Academy of Sciences  
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# Applying the Richmond Model for Social Change

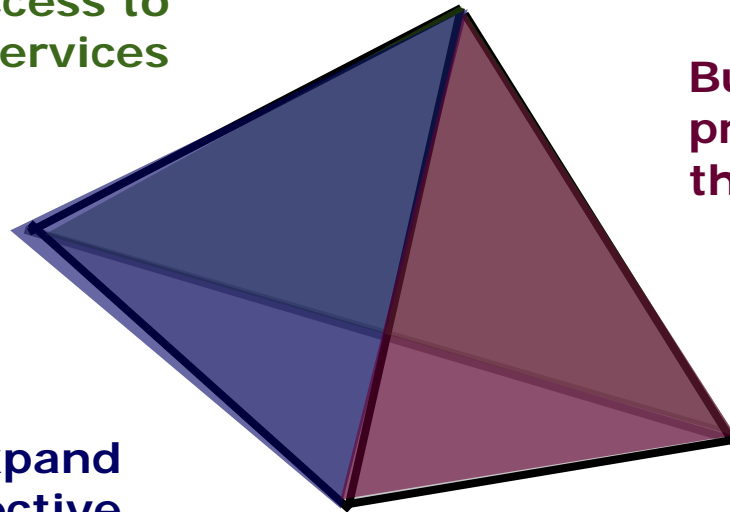


# Advancing the Early Childhood Field Requires Attention to Three Strategies

Enhance  
quality and  
access to  
services

Build, test, and  
promote new  
theories of change

Expand  
effective  
models



# The Biology of Adversity Suggests a Compelling New Theory of Change to Enhance Both Learning and Health

Because excessive activation of the body's stress response systems can lead to long-term disruptions in brain architecture, immune status, metabolic regulation, and cardiovascular function ...

...better life outcomes could be achieved by decreasing the number and severity of adverse early experiences and by strengthening the relationships that protect young children from the harmful effects of toxic stress.

# Three Promising Domains for Innovation

Reduce developmental barriers to learning.

Enhance the healthy development of children by transforming the lives of their parents.

Re-conceptualize the health dimension of early childhood policy and practice.

# Exploring Priorities for New Thinking

## *CLIMATE*

**Transform the Policy Environment**

Increase understanding of the impact of behavior, emotion, and executive functioning on learning.

Re-conceptualize the health dimension of early childhood policy.

## *SOIL*

**Cultivate Creativity and Catalyze Impact**

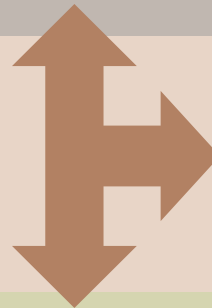
Convene communities of practice and communities of purpose.

## *SEEDS*

**Incubate Breakthrough Ideas**

Improve child outcomes by transforming the lives of their parents.

Explore biomarkers for new ways to assess relative resilience and vulnerability, individualize services, and measure intervention effects.



# Benefits of Proposed Domains of Focus

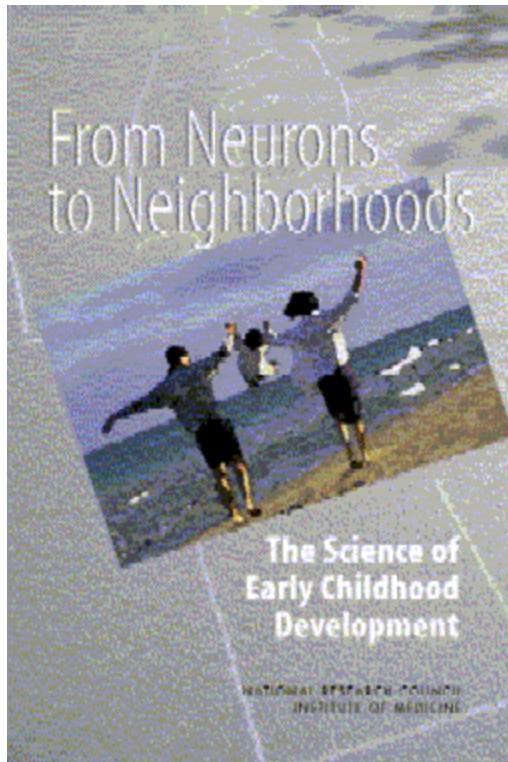
Address issues that matter to policy makers.

Confront problems that overwhelm many early childhood programs on a daily basis.

Leverage the science of early childhood development across a wide range of outcomes in learning, behavior, and health.

Introduce new measurement capability in a field that struggles with assessment challenges.

# From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development



**Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development**

**Board on Children, Youth, and Families  
Institute of Medicine  
National Research Council  
October, 2000**



# Two Overarching Themes That Have Held Up Well Over the Past 10 Years

All children are born wired for feelings and ready to learn.

Early environments matter and nurturing relationships are essential.

# Two Overarching Themes That Have Held Become Increasingly Urgent

Society is changing and the needs of young children are not being addressed.

Interactions among early childhood science, policy, and practice are problematic and demand rethinking.