



### Integrated Early Learning Models

Our integrated early learning models involve a combination of program areas. Cohesive, coordinated approaches that bring family engagement, early childhood education quality improvement, and our advocacy and public policy initiatives together aim to transform early education and care across a community. Our College Bound from Birth program is one of our notable integrated early learning models, which we will replicate across Houston neighborhoods.

### Advocacy & Public Policy

In our policy work, we advocate for birth-to-five policies that narrow the early achievement gap. Together with partners in early childhood development and education, we make the case for early investments contributing to children's lifelong success, informing lawmakers and community leaders of what has been proven to work in early education. In collaboration with other entities invested in the future of our region, we work to strengthen the quality standards for early learning in the state of Texas.

## The Early Years

Research has shown that high-quality learning between birth and age five has a lasting impact on a child's life and actually stimulates brain growth.

By age five, the human brain is 90% developed, which means the learning that takes place in these early years can set a child on a path for future success.

Quality early learning leads to school readiness, which in turn can lead to the important benchmark of reading at grade level in third grade. Students who do not

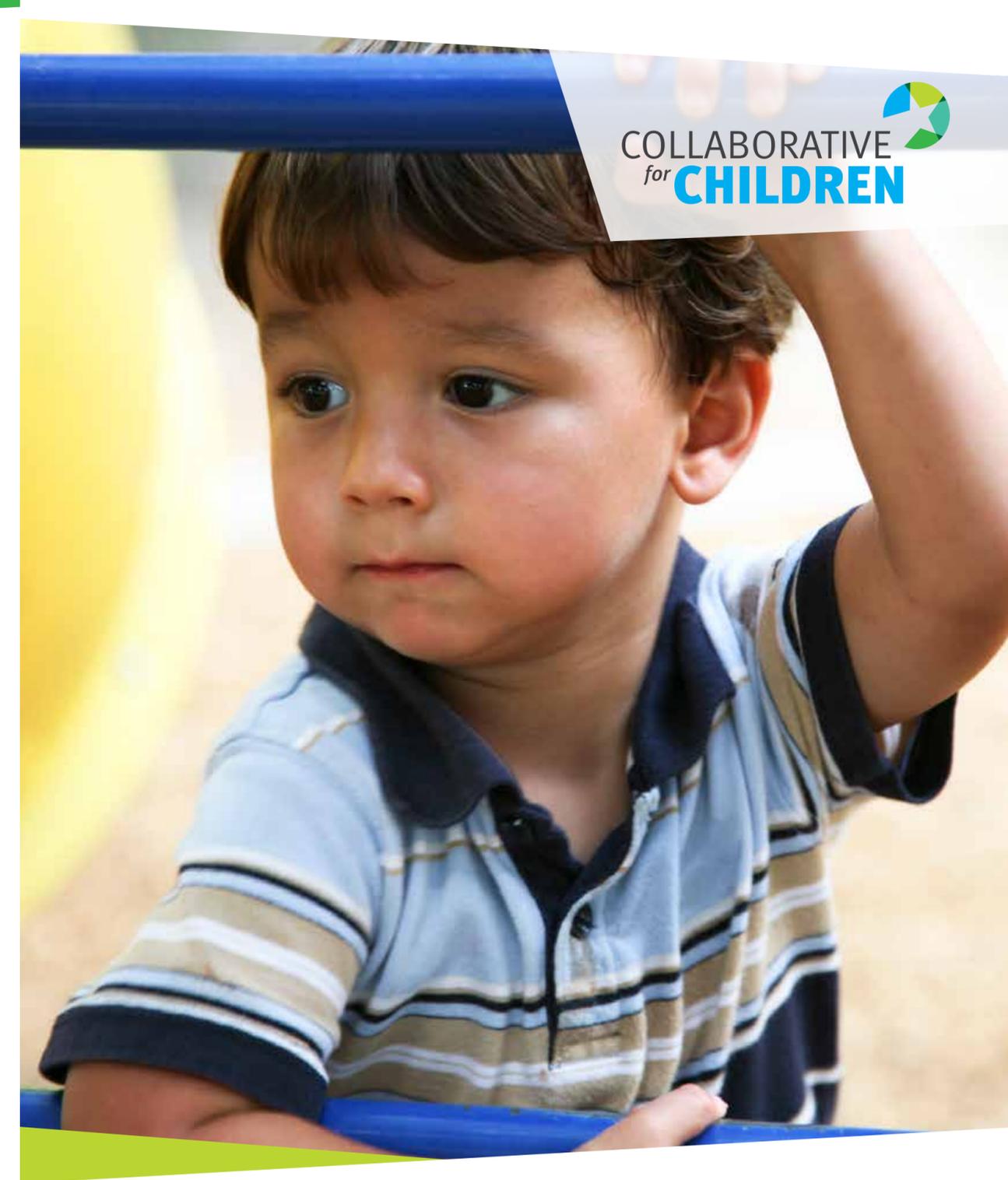
read at grade level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. And in our society, high school dropouts are more likely to commit crimes, become a teen parent or require special education. Keeping students in school is of critical importance to a community, and the effort begins in a child's earliest years.

Economists agree: investment in early childhood education yields a greater return on investment than later intervention, and is an effective investment for economic and workforce development. The time for critical intervention is in the early years, when quality interactions between a child and his or her parents or a teacher or a caregiver can fundamentally improve that child's chances for success in school and in life.

At Collaborative for Children, we're dedicated to making sure the children of our community have the right start, right from the start.



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### Our approach is simple.

We improve the quality of early learning where children are, in places they already go, through trusted caregivers, leaders and networks already in place.

#### Family Engagement

Recognizing that parents are their child's first teachers, we empower families to positively shape their young children's futures by helping them foster quality learning environments at home right from the start. We connect families to early learning opportunities by sharing appropriate parenting practices, delivering parenting classes, and coaching parents through personal home visits. We help parents understand the importance of quality early learning, what quality is, and we help them find quality care for their children.

#### Early Childhood Education Quality Improvement

In Greater Houston, 60% of children ages zero to five are cared for by someone other than a parent or primary caregiver. The quality of the child care and early education system in our region is critical to these children's future success in school and in life. Our programs build highly-skilled early childhood professionals in center and home-based care to improve outcomes for children, including professional development for child care directors and teachers in the form of training, coaching and mentoring.

# Strategy Map 2016 - 2020

## Vision

All children in Greater Houston have the high-quality early learning opportunities they need to achieve their full potential.

## Mission

We meaningfully improve the quality of early childhood education and care for Greater Houston's children through those who are most influential in their lives.

