During the first five years of life, a child’s brain is developing rapidly. Enriching activities and healthy relationships are critical to success in school and later in life. Unfortunately, many families, especially those with limited resources, are faced with a variety of barriers that may negatively impact the development of their young children during the most formative years.

Quality early childhood services can reduce socio-economic and health disparities among children of different backgrounds, while helping to avoid costly interventions later in life. The Community Foundation and its donors are invested in regional system coordination led by Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond, as well as timely assistance and support of families that will promote a child’s healthy development. Working to ensure that every child has a great start in life will not only have a lifelong impact on the child, but also on the child’s family and the community.

High-quality early childhood education has a

13% return on investment

approximately 1,800 days between birth and kindergarten

Regional data reflects the footprint of Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond: Charles City, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan and the City of Richmond.
Studies show that children develop the mental, physical and psychological competencies in their early years that will determine their future potential. Home visiting services, coordinated by providers such as Family Lifeline, can ensure that young children receive consistent preventive and primary care in these formative years by providing intensive parent education and screening for developmental delays and other concerns. Home visiting uses a strengths-based, capacity-building approach, and services are both free and voluntary.

**High-Quality Home Visiting Programs:**

- Reduce incidences of child abuse and neglect
- Improve school readiness for children
- See a $1.75-$5.70 return on investment for every dollar spent

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**Family Lifeline is a true lifeline to my young family.** They came to me not with their plan, but to help me build my plan for my family.

*Family Lifeline came into our lives and gave me support and courage when I felt like I had no one.***  
— Rebecca, parent

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**Home Visiting Caseload Capacity**

- **915** Total number of families served in 2017-2018
- **27,709** Estimated number of families that qualify for home visiting services
- **3%** Of eligible families receive home visiting services

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**GOAL**

Grow the number of families and young children served by home visiting programs to **1,400** by **2020**
High-quality early care and education experiences set the stage for children to learn and grow while their parents are at work. Quality early childhood education programs can provide essential experiences for brain development and consequently have a direct effect on cognitive abilities. In Virginia, child care centers are encouraged to follow best practices in teacher education and qualification, curriculum, learning environment and interactions with students. Unfortunately, all too many families are unable to access affordable, high-quality early care.

"It is incredibly rewarding to watch our students grow and develop self-sufficiency skills. I really enjoy seeing them smile as they realize their own achievements."

— J. David Young, Executive Director of FRIENDS Association for Children

**Average cost of infant care in Virginia:**

$872 per month

(about the same as public college tuition)

**Children who experience high-quality preschool programs are:**

+ More likely to graduate high school
+ More likely to hold a job and have higher earnings
- Less likely to have teenage pregnancies
- Less likely to commit crime

### Public Preschool Capacity

12,102

Average number of kindergartners

4,023

Total number of public preschool slots available for 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds

### GOALS

- Increase participation in Virginia Quality, the state’s voluntary quality rating and improvement system for early childhood centers
- Increase the number of publicly funded preschool slots
- Better understand and support informal friend and family networks of care

### Participation in Virginia Quality

- 2016: 42 organizations
- 2019: 146 organizations
System Coordination

The system of care available to serve families with young children is complex and often fragmented. To foster more intentional coordination, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation at the state level and Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond (SBGR) at the regional level are working to convene public and private sectors to increase efficiencies, encourage innovation and create partnerships that will create optimal environments for children's growth and development.

RVA Basics Campaign

RVA Basics are five fun, simple and powerful ways every family can give every child a great start in life. SBGR is coordinating a regional campaign to share RVA Basics with everyone who interacts with young children.

100+ partner organizations

Shared Service Alliance

Richmond Area Service Alliance launched in 2017 to create efficiencies and savings for partner education centers. They share back-office and professional development services of the "hub" organization.

2018 Savings:
St. James's Children's Center

$97K operating dollars 408 labor hours

2019 Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond Partner Survey

As a result of being a partner, my organization:

SOURCES
5 Data collected by Early Impact Virginia.
9 Data collected by Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond.