

# Report: Shorting Investment In Preschool Grows Crime

By [MAUREEN FOERTSCH MCKINNEY](#) · 18 HOURS AGO

[Share](#)[Tweet](#)[Email](#)



*State Sen. Steve Stadelman, State Rep. Maurice West, Rockford Police Chief Daniel O'Shea, Winnebago County State's Attorney Marilyn Hite Ross, and State Rep. John Cabello, read to preschool children at the Summerdale Early Learning Center in Rockford,*

## FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

An anti-crime group released a report today tying involvement in crime to a lack of preschool programs.

Children who don't participate in preschool are 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by the time they turn 18, according to a study cited in the report by the Illinois branch of the group Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

"Research has shown that when children are able to take advantage of early childhood programs they are less likely to commit crimes once they reach the teenage years or adulthood and the reason being is because they've had that positive, educational, social environment in which to nurture them," said Winnebago County State's Attorney Marilyn Hite Ross, who is a member of the group. "I am a big believer in keeping children in the classroom and not the courtroom, and I think by getting involved at the beginning of their life, we can be proactive as opposed to being reactive to when they get into their teens and early adult years and start entering the juvenile justice system through delinquency court."

The group is a collaborative of police chiefs, sheriffs, states' attorneys and crime victims. It estimates Illinois has 95,000 3 and 4-year-olds who do not have access to preschool.