

Sun Journal

A more stable work force

By Charles Morrison

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As someone who has spent his career helping Maine build a high-quality workforce and improve local and statewide economies, I would like to add my perspective to the recent guest column by Auburn Chief of Police Phil Crowell.

Raising graduation rates and reducing child abuse and neglect not only help prevent juvenile crime, they also help develop a more stable and competitive future workforce.

My experience with private industry and workforce development is that investing in human capital at an early age helps youngsters build a solid foundation that remains with them throughout their lives.

Research shows that voluntary home visiting programs and high-quality early education programs are two excellent investments to ensure that more of Maine's children start school ready to learn. Kids who enter kindergarten well-prepared are more likely to complete high school and move on to a solid career. These approaches also save money in reduced remedial education and corrections costs.

I echo Chief Crowell's request that state policymakers act upon the Juvenile Justice Task Forces' recommendations to focus on proven prevention programs such as home visiting and high quality early education that help give children the right start in life.

Making smart investments in young children will ensure that today's youngest children are more likely to succeed in school and join the work force as productive young adults. It's also good business for Maine.

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