

Social Competence Crucial

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Exert your talents, and distinguish yourself, and don't think of retiring from the world, until the world will be sorry that you retire.

-Samuel Johnson

A 20-year retrospective study, funded by the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**, suggests that kindergarten students who are more inclined to exhibit "social competence" traits—such sharing, cooperating, or helping other kids—may be more likely to attain higher education and well-paying jobs. In contrast, students who exhibit weaker social competency skills may be more likely to drop out of high school, abuse drugs and alcohol, and need government assistance. Key findings:

For every one-point increase on the 5-point scale in a child's social competence score in kindergarten, he/she was:

- * Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood;
- * 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma; and
- * 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25.

For every one-point decrease in a child's social competence score in kindergarten, he/she had:

- * 67% higher chance of having been arrested by early adulthood;
- * 82% higher rate of recent marijuana usage; and
- * 82% higher chance of being in or on a waiting list for public housing.

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