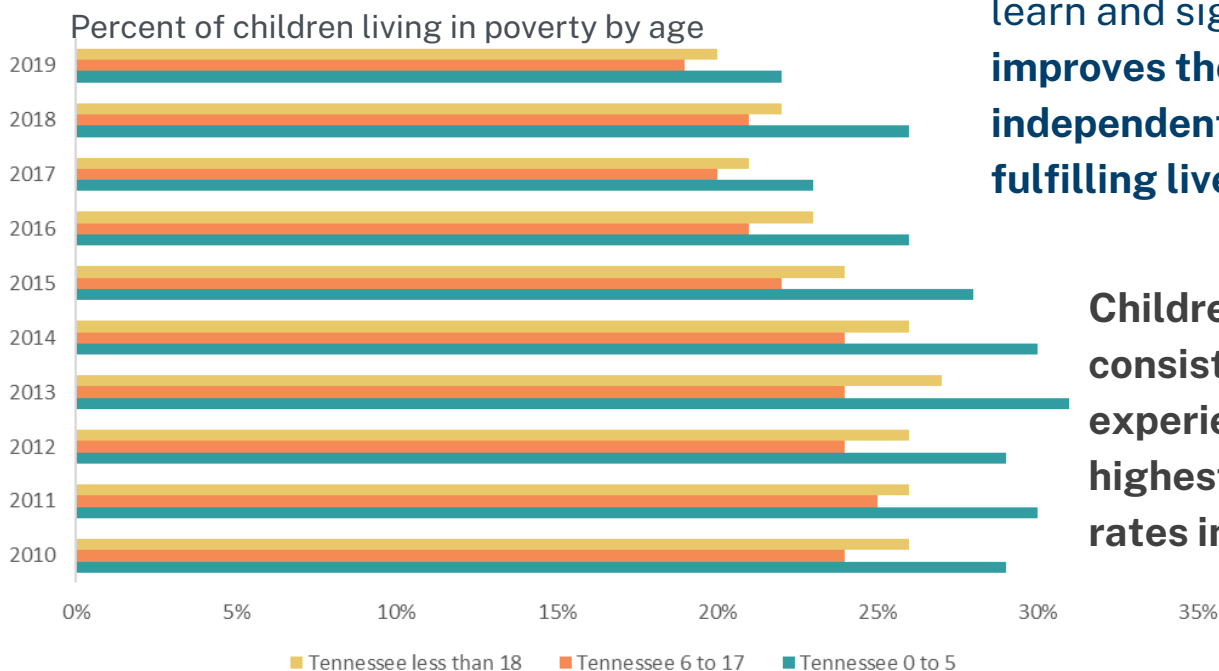


Expand early investment to support Tennessee's youngest children.

Recommendation

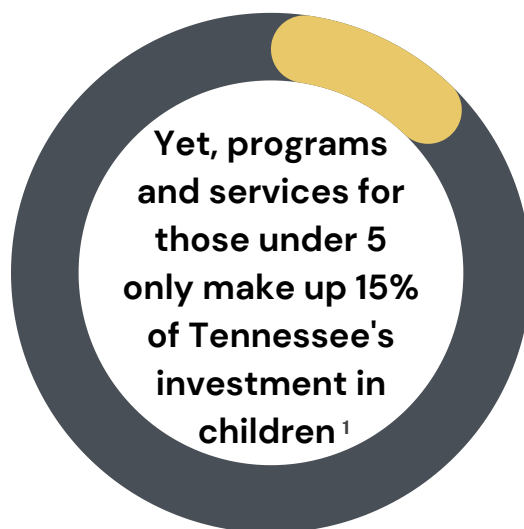
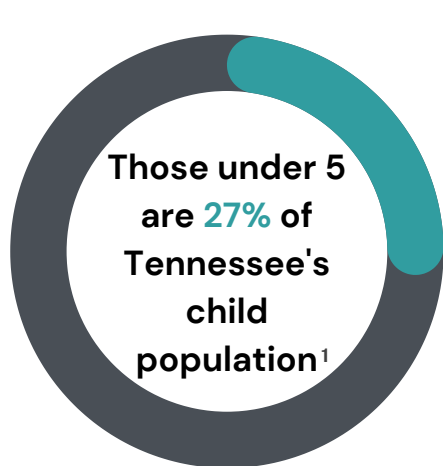
Increase investment in young children to an amount equal to or greater than their share of the child population

"Investing in our youngest children allows many more of them to enter kindergarten prepared to learn and significantly **improves their chances for independent, productive and fulfilling lives.**"¹



Children under 5 consistently experience the highest poverty rates in Tennessee²

Early investment offers the greatest return, while preventing future challenges and supporting healthy brain development.



Increasing investment in young children to an amount equal to or greater than their share of the child population would produce significant cost savings for Tennessee.

Early intervention is much less expensive than the moderate or intensive intervention often required when physical, mental or emotional health needs are left unaddressed

↑ Tennessee's investment in our youngest citizens increased by 5% between FY2019-20 and FY 2020-21¹

High-quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a 13% return on investment.³