

Research Shows: Effective Pre-Kindergarten Helps Children Do Their Best in School

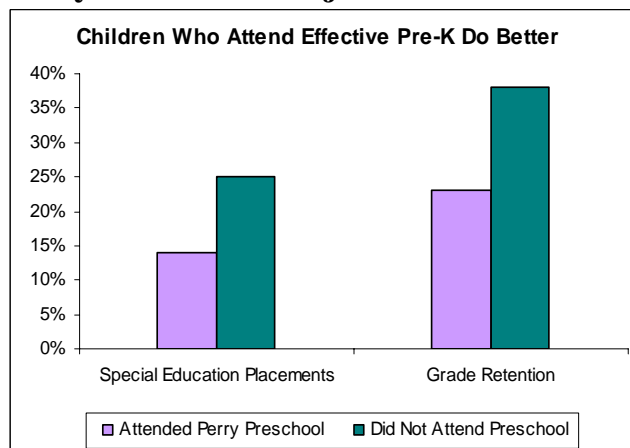
Study after study bears the evidence: When children attend effective pre-kindergarten, they do better in K-12. In carefully designed and respected studies, researchers closely followed children – in some cases far into adulthood – and found that pre-k provides a powerful boost toward success in school and in life. Children who have access to effective programs taught by well-trained preschool teachers are:

- more skilled at reading and math;
- less likely to be placed in special education;
- less likely to be held back a grade; and
- better behaved in class.

The Evidence

The following studies represent some of the most respected and influential research demonstrating that effective pre-k levels the playing field for children who might otherwise start school far behind their peers.

Perry Preschool Project



In 1960, 123 low-income African American children in Michigan were randomly divided into two groups – one that participated in a high-quality preschool program with well-trained and compensated teachers and low child/staff ratios and a second group that received no early childhood program.

Perry preschoolers were:

- less likely to be referred to remedial or special education; and
- higher achievers on tests of language, reading and math.

Chicago Longitudinal Study

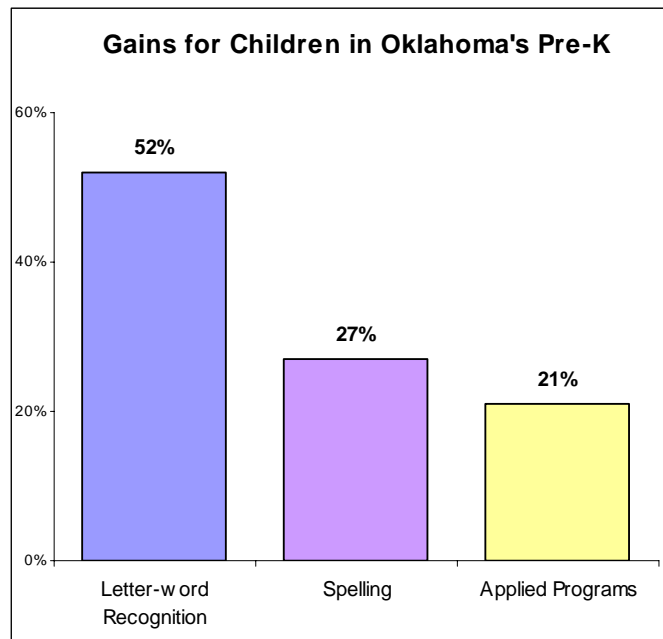
Researchers examined the effects of preschool on 1,000 low-income minority children who attended the Chicago Child-Parent Center (CPC) program in 1985. The researchers kept track of children who participated in CPC preschool and compared them to socio-economically similar children through age 27.

Participating children were:

- less likely to be held back a grade; and
- less likely to be sent to special education.

New Evidence from Oklahoma

Researchers used sophisticated statistical analysis techniques to control for children's age differences and other variables to isolate the impact of the Oklahoma's universal pre-k program. They found that children who participated in the program were months ahead in their cognitive development when compared to similar children who did not. These gains were especially pronounced among Latino pre-k participants.



At kindergarten entry, children who attended preschool showed gains of:

- 7-8 months in letter and word identification;
- 6-7 months in spelling; and
- 4 months in early math skills.

Recent Results from Five States

The National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University examined the effect of quality preschool on the academic skills of children entering kindergarten in Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia.

When assessed, children enrolled in effective public preschool outscored their non-participating peers by:

- 31% on vocabulary tests; and
- 44% on tests of early math skills.