

School Success Starts in the Early Learning Years

Children who enter Kindergarten with higher skills demonstrate higher scores on third and fourth grade reading assessments. These children:

- Have parents who reported reading to their children on a daily basis in the years before Kindergarten.
- Have parents who talk to them about their daily activities.
- Attended an all-day Kindergarten with a teacher who used a high number of best teaching practices on a daily basis.

The ability of young children to be successful in Kindergarten and in later years depends in large part upon their experiences during the first five years of life. Through the Kansas School Readiness Project, KSDE has collected data on more than 5,000 Kindergarten children and has followed them into 3rd and 4th grades.

Overall results indicate that early learning programs that use best teaching practices promote growth in literacy, numeracy, and social skills for Kindergarten children who attend these programs.

Early Learning Programs make a Difference:

- Children who attend early learning programs such as *Four Year Old At-Risk* programs, *Head Start*, and other community preschools have higher literacy and numeracy skills when they enter Kindergarten.
- Children who receive special education in preschool have a higher skill level than those who begin receiving special education in their Kindergarten year
- Children who are at-risk enter Kindergarten with lower overall skill levels. However, these children do improve their skill levels by participating in a formal preschool experience.
- Children who enter Kindergarten with higher math skills have higher scores in both third and fourth grade reading and math assessments.

Parents and Families make a difference: Children entering Kindergarten whose Parents:

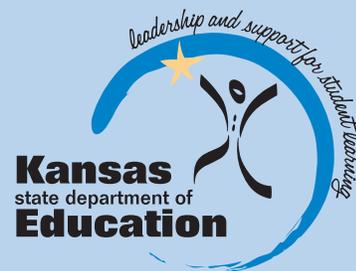
- participated in a parent education program such as Parents as Teachers (PAT) for at least two years have a higher academic skill level;
- talked with their child daily performed better on the third and fourth grade reading and math assessments.

Kindergarten makes a difference:

- All children improve during their Kindergarten year, but the achievement gap between those who come in with lower skills and those who start with higher skills, while narrowing, does not disappear.
- Teachers in full-day Kindergarten classrooms who use a high number of best teaching practices on a daily basis provide children with a strong foundation for later learning and success in school.

For more about the Kansas School Readiness Initiative, contact Dr. Gayle Stuber, Early Childhood Coordinator, KSDE, gstuber@ksde.org or (785) 296-5352

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