

# The effects of state prekindergarten programs on young children's school readiness in five states <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

## Abstract:

This NIEER study of high-quality prekindergarten programs in five states reveals significant improvement in children's early language, literacy and mathematical development, improvement far greater than found in a recent national study of the federal Head Start program.

The study finds that children attending state-funded pre-k programs in the five states (Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia) gained significantly regardless of ethnic background or economic circumstances. Their key findings were:

- Children who attended state-funded preschool showed gains in vocabulary scores that were about 31 percent greater than gains of children without the program. This translates into an additional three months of progress in vocabulary growth due to the preschool program at age 4. This outcome is particularly important because the measure is strongly predictive of general cognitive abilities and later reading success, the researchers said.

- State-funded preschool increased children's gains in math skills by 44 percent compared to children's growth without the program. Skills tested included basic number concepts, simple addition and subtraction, telling time and counting money.

- State-funded preschool produced an 85 percent increase in growth in print awareness among children enrolled compared to growth of children without the program. Children who attended a state-funded preschool program before entering kindergarten knew more letters, more letter-sound associations and were more familiar with words and book concepts.

**Region:** United States <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** quality <sup>[4]</sup>

child development <sup>[5]</sup>

pre-school <sup>[6]</sup>

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