United Way of Lake County: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results

Why do we Measure Kindergarten Readiness?
- Understand the skills and demographics of children to develop programs that meet their needs
- Establish baselines
- Measure progress of initiatives in a given year
- Track overall community improvement against goal

Methodology:
- Two pronged assessment developed by Santa Clara Partnership for School Readiness and Applied Survey Research (a non-profit research firm with several published studies).
  - Teachers and trained volunteers observed each child in his/her class and tested their proficiency in 15 readiness skills. Children were scored Not Yet Started, Beginning, In Progress, or Proficient on each readiness skill. The skills are grouped into four educational focus areas recognized by educators as essential to a comprehensive education (Exhibit 1):
    - Communication and Language Usage
    - Cognition and General Knowledge
    - Physical Well Being and Motor Development
    - Social and Emotional Development
  - Parents complete a survey of family demographics, preschool experience, family education, language proficiency and kindergarten readiness activities.
- We assessed a statistically valid sample of 578 children from 23 classrooms in 7 schools (over 40% of total kindergartners).

Results:
- Overall, children scored higher in 2012 in all key cognitive and early literacy skills than previous years (Exhibit 2).
- More children have attended United Way of Lake County’s Success By 6 Programs than ever before (2009 – 29% of children, 2012 – 39% of children) (Exhibit 3).
- Children who attended UWLC’s Early Learning Clubs and SB6 Home Visiting scored higher in cognitive and early literacy scores than the other children (Exhibit 4).

Success By 6 Kindergarten Readiness Goal: 60% of children will be ready for kindergarten by 2015.
- After talking to many professionals, SB6 defined “ready” as being able to score In Progress or Above in 5 key kindergarten readiness skills – recognizing shapes, letters, colors, being able to write your name and count 10 objects (Exhibit 5).
  - In 2006 only 6 % of the children could do this at the In Progress level or higher.
  - In 2009 29% of the children were ready.
  - In 2012 – 41% of children are ready!
Exhibit 1:

**Overall Kindergarten Readiness Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Not Yet</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>In Progress</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writes own first name correctly</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engages with books</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can recognize rhyming words</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has expressive abilities</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes the letters of the alphabet</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes primary shapes</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can count 10 objects correctly</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes primary colors</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution/problem solving ability</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controls impulses and self-regulates</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works/plays cooperatively with peers</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbally expresses needs and wants</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates appropriately to adults</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performs basic self-help/self-care tasks</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses small manipulatives (crayons, etc)</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exhibit 2:**


- Recognizes rhyming words
- Writes own name
- Recognizes letters of the alphabet
- Recognizes primary shapes
- Recognizes primary colors
- Counts 10 objects
- Engages with books
- Has expressive abilities
- Can count 10 objects correctly
- Recognizes primary shapes
- Recognizes primary colors
- Conflict resolution/problem solving ability
- Controls impulses and self-regulates
- Works/plays cooperatively with peers
- Verbally expresses needs and wants
- Relates appropriately to adults
- Performs basic self-help/self-care tasks
- Uses small manipulatives (crayons, etc)
### Exhibit 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family/Student Characteristic</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family income under $16,000</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary language – English spoken at home</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended some preschool</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two parent home</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average family size</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read to child at home</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>At least 15 minutes/week</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>More than 3 hours a day</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Attended UWLC Early Learning Club/Home Visiting program | 29% | 39% |

### Exhibit 4:

**Children Proficient in Key Kindergarten Readiness Scores - Comparison with Children in Early Learning Clubs and Home Visiting**

- **Recognizes rhyming words**
  - Home Visiting: 21%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 28%
  - Overall 2012: 33%
- **Writes own name**
  - Home Visiting: 54%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 54%
  - Overall 2012: 72%
- **Recognizes letters of the alphabet**
  - Home Visiting: 34%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 42%
  - Overall 2012: 49%
- **Recognizes primary shapes**
  - Home Visiting: 54%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 54%
  - Overall 2012: 62%
- **Recognizes primary colors**
  - Home Visiting: 62%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 62%
  - Overall 2012: 89%
- **Counts 10 objects**
  - Home Visiting: 73%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 73%
  - Overall 2012: 73%
- **Engages with books**
  - Home Visiting: 27%
  - Early Learning Clubs: 27%
  - Overall 2012: 37%
Percent of Waukegan Children Who Are Ready to Start School

Our measurement of “Ready” is to be at least in progress in five key Kindergarten Readiness Skills; Recognizing shapes, letters and colors, writing name and counting 10 objects.