



The Benefits of High Quality Preschool for All Children

Brenda Kofahl, PreK Program Specialist/Data Coordinator,
PED

Terri Tapia, Education & Development Manager,
UNM CDD

Impact of North Carolina's Early Childhood Initiatives on Special Education Placements in Third Grade



- 41% of students identified with a disability in prekindergarten transition out of special education by grade 3 compared to only 26% of students with a disability in grade 3 declassified by age 19
- It is optimal to invest relatively more in the early stages of childhood than in later stages
- Early childhood intervention provides the best opportunity to reduce early cognitive and social disabilities
- Early intervention and high-quality experiences might help children at risk for mild disabilities avoid special education diagnosis and placement altogether



Impact

- Children who attend school-based preschool programs are more likely to receive support for the transition to kindergarten, and effective transition strategies significantly improve the school success of high-risk children



Impact

- Teachers in high-quality early care and education programs are trained to identify children performing below normative expectations, thereby increasing the likelihood of effective remediation at an early age



Impact

- Children identified as having speech and language impairments and specific learning disabilities are the most likely to “graduate” from special education back into regular education during early elementary grades if their disability is identified early

Program Funding Impact



- SS (Smart Start Initiative) and MAF (North Carolina PreK)
 - At the 2009 funding levels, the SS reduces placements by 10% and MAF program by 32%. Together, at these funding levels, the two programs reduce the odds of special education placement by 39%

Impact



- In 2005 to 2006, North Carolina spent approximately \$8000 per third grader who received special education services, on top of the cost of regular education. A reduction of 10%(SS) in special education placements for 1 year only (1508 third graders) would represent a saving for the year of \$112 for every third-grade student in NC
- MAF-per-student savings: \$448

What does this mean for New Mexico's young children?

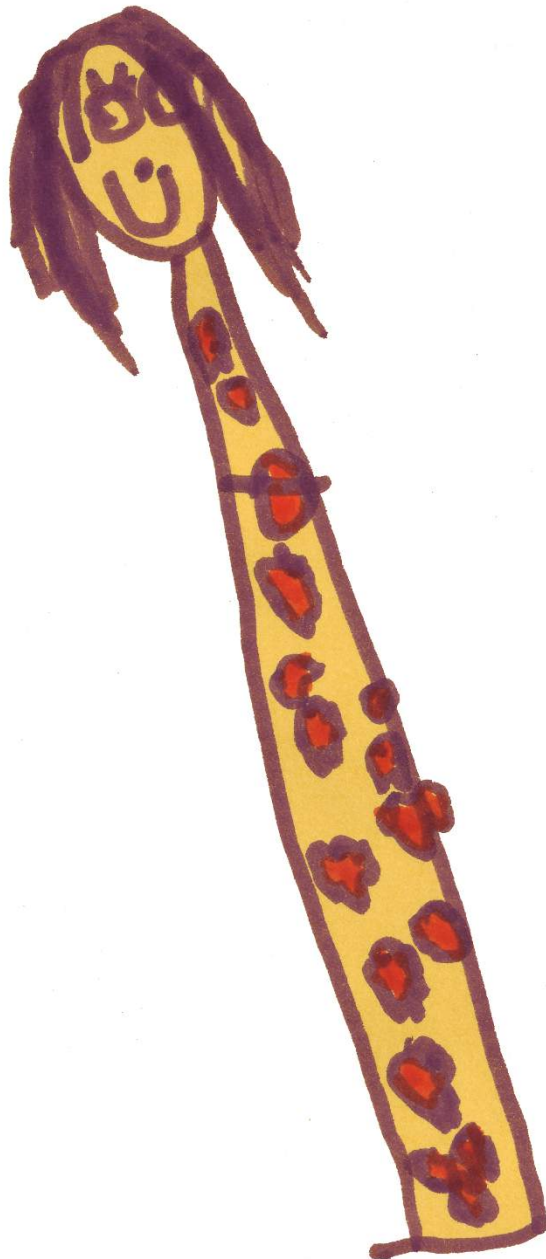


- High quality preschools in New Mexico's public school settings can have the same impact:
 - Earlier diagnosis and special education services
 - Decreased need for special education services in grade 3
 - Student savings that can be re-allocated

Impact



- Investments in PreK have resulted in measurable, significant effects on third-grade reading proficiency
- These programs generally serve more challenging populations and are improving reading skills for those participating



Impact

US Department of Education
Office of Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services

“The purpose of this letter(2/29/12)is to reiterate that the least restrictive environment (LRE) requirements in section 612(a)(5) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) apply to the placement of preschool children with disabilities...



Impact

“These requirements state the IDEA’s strong preference for educating students with disabilities in regular classes with appropriate aids and supports...to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, must be educated with children who are not disabled...”



Impact

“Further, special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactory.”



How will “FOCUS on Young Children’s Learning” support quality preschools for all children?



- All public school preschools (PreK, Special Education, and Title I) will participate in FOCUS
- Criteria that promotes the full participation of each child in an inclusive setting
- Opportunity to participate in FOCUS training and professional development
- On site support including consultation, coaching, mentoring, and modeling

Based on the Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Young Children in New Mexico's Early Learning System



FOUNDATIONS OF QUALITY

A. Full Participation of Each Child

2. Inclusive Practices for Children with Developmental Delays and Disabilities

Definition: Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society (DEC/NAEYC, 2009).
Rationale: Children with disabilities should have access to and experience the same quality preschool classroom program (presumably high quality) as typically developing children (Bailey et al., 1998); become members of the classroom community through full participation in class activities (Schwartz, 1996); and develop positive social relationships with classroom peers and teachers (Guralnick, 1999; Storey, 1993).

QUALITY	HIGH QUALITY	EXEMPLARY
Preschool program personnel understand and commit to inclusive practices that build on each child's culture, language, experiences, and abilities.		
Preschool programs will comply with special education policies, procedures, and requirements regarding inclusive settings and the least restrictive environment.		
MUST MEET PROGRAM PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS PLUS:	MUST MEET QUALITY PLUS:	MUST MEET HIGH QUALITY PLUS:
For PreK programs: Administrators must ensure the completion of the Special Education Policies and Procedures Plan by the date specified in the calendar of due dates.	Preschool program personnel respect and provide classroom supports for each family's experiences, languages, values, and patterns of interaction.	Preschool program personnel serve as advocates for the student and family to access school and community services and resources.
The program will engage in a self-assessment of the program's support of the least restrictive environment (LRE).	Based on the self-assessment data, the program will develop a continuous quality improvement (CQI) plan to ensure that children with developmental delays and disabilities attend class with same age peers without disabilities with supports and services provided in the classroom setting.	Programs will demonstrate progress toward meeting the identified CQI goals that children with developmental delays and disabilities attend and fully participate in class with same age peers without disabilities with supports and services provided in the classroom setting.



Next steps:

- January 1, 2015: Pilot Phase I cohort inclusive of PreK, Special Education, and Title I classrooms
- September 2015: Remaining PreK and Title I classrooms will participate
- Special Education 619 classrooms will be phased in beginning September 2015-volunteers are welcome!
- Ongoing feedback loop including stakeholder meetings and input



Back to School
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***"All we ask is that you Dare
Greatly with us..."***



***...because anything is
possible!"***



Contact Information

Brenda Kofahl
brenda.kofahl@state.nm.us
505-827-6627

Terri Tapia
tbtapia@salud.unm.edu
505-249-1133

- For a copy of the *draft* FOCUS criteria, or other resources cited, please contact Terri Tapia