

Early childhood educational preparation

This fact sheet is one in a series of six that make up Minnesota's Statewide School Readiness Report Card. The report card is developed to monitor the state's progress toward the goal that all children are ready for kindergarten by the year 2020. The report card includes indicators of progress for both systems and child outcomes. Together, the fact sheets provide a comprehensive picture of Minnesota children under age six. Trends are examined in the early childhood population, early care and education, health and development and family support. Data are reported for the most recent year available. Disparities based on race/ethnicity are noted when data are available. This fourth fact sheet provides information on early childhood educational preparation.

Kindergarten readiness

When children start school demonstrating kindergarten readiness, they are less likely to require special education services and more likely to stay on track academically through 3rd grade and, ultimately, to graduate from high school.

Children demonstrating overall kindergarten readiness

Minnesota's definition of school readiness is the skills, knowledge, behaviors and accomplishments that children know and can do as they enter kindergarten, in the following areas of child development: social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and literacy development, creativity and the arts, cognition and general knowledge, and physical well-being and motor development.

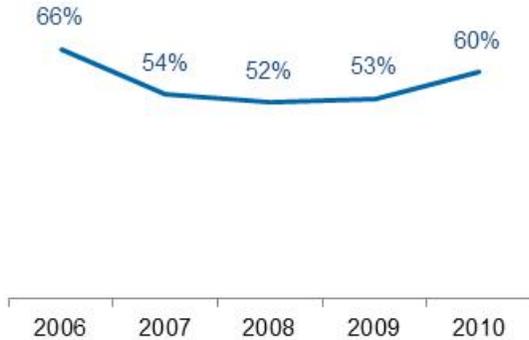
Since 2006, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has assessed kindergarten readiness based on eight weeks of standards-based observation by kindergarten teachers using a modified Work Sampling System tool on a representative sample of students. To determine kindergarten readiness, MDE calculates a composite score for each child, with an overall kindergarten proficiency standard of 75 percent or more of the total points across all the observed indicators.



Sixty percent of Minnesota's kindergartners demonstrate readiness for school.

In 2010, 60 percent of Minnesota's kindergartners reached the overall kindergarten-ready proficiency standard, receiving 75 percent or more of the total possible points across all the observed indicators. That percentage is higher than in the three prior years, when 52 to 54 percent reached overall proficiency.

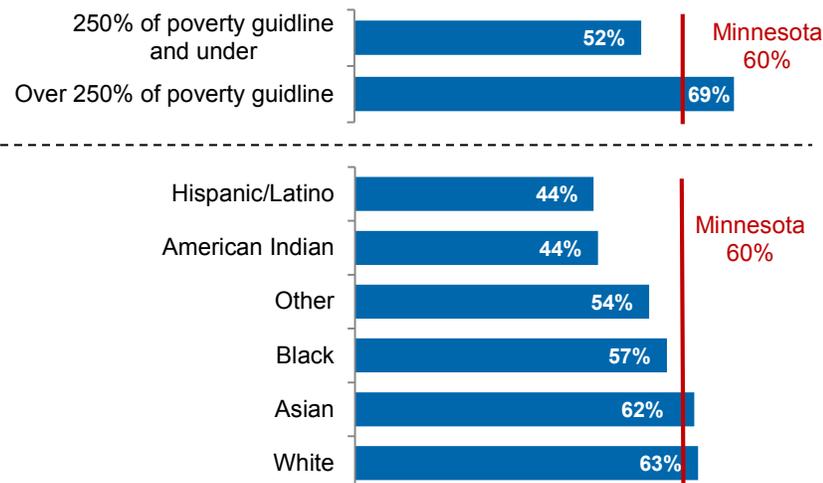
Percentage of kindergartners reaching overall proficiency standard



Children from lower-income families, Latino children, and American Indian children have the lowest rates of kindergarten readiness.

In 2010, about half of children whose family incomes were under 250 percent of the poverty line (\$55,125 for a family of four in 2010) were ready for kindergarten compared with more than two-thirds of those from families with higher incomes. Among children of all income levels, white, Asian, and black students fare best.

Overall kindergarten proficiency rate by household poverty status and race/ethnicity, 2010



Children demonstrating proficiency at kindergarten entry in three domains -- language and literacy, mathematical thinking, and personal and social development

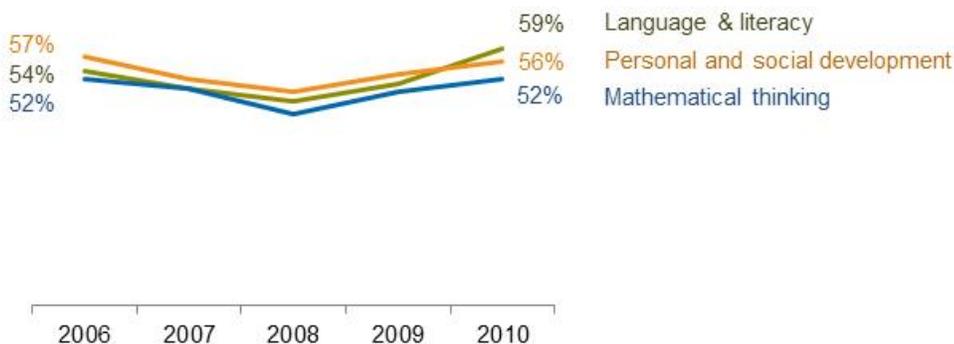
Language and literacy proficiency is critical to children's ability to learn and interact appropriately with teachers and other children and is a key predictor of reading proficiency in 3rd grade. Mathematical thinking, which measures emerging abilities in number, quantity, spatial relations, and geometry, correlates to 3rd grade math proficiency. Personal and social skills help children build relationships with peers and teachers in the classroom. Children lacking personal and social skills will likely struggle to follow directions, interact inappropriately with peers and adults, show little curiosity, and may lack problem-solving skills.

Proficiency within each of these domains is defined as the average percent rated proficient across indicators within each domain.

More kindergarteners are proficient in language and literacy and personal and social development than in mathematical thinking.

As noted in the 2010 *Minnesota School Readiness Study*, while the percentage of children demonstrating proficiency in these domains has been trending up since 2008, the increases are not statistically significant.

Proficiency at kindergarten entry in selected indicators, 2006-2010



Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education outcomes

The next indicators of early childhood educational preparation pertain to outcomes for children birth through age two receiving Early Intervention services (Part C) and children age three to five in Early Childhood Special Education (Part B). The programs are described in Fact Sheet Two.

Children served under Part C typically have a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay or disability, such as hearing impairment, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and vision impairment.

Children served under Part B include children formerly served under Part C but also include children identified after age three with delays in development, including children with delays in speech or other aspects of communication.

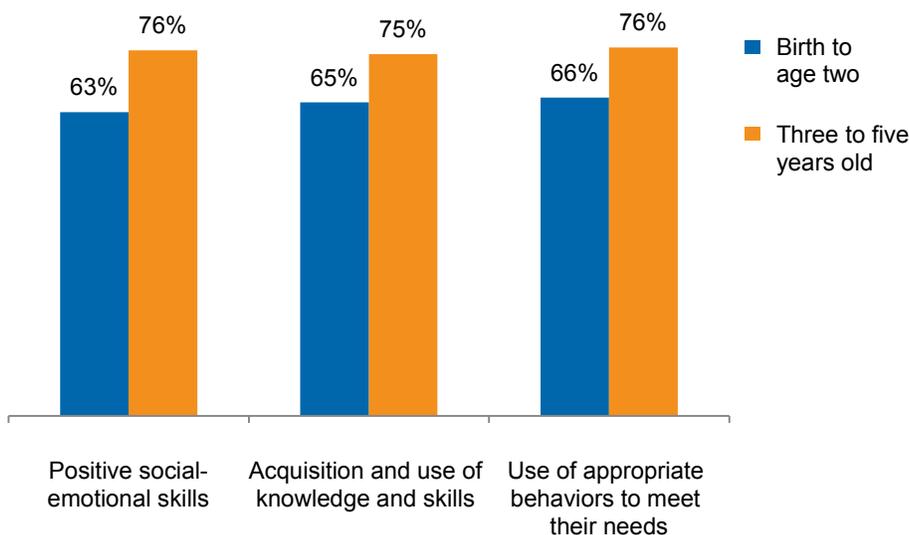
Children in Early Childhood Special Education showing greater than expected growth

Children who have been enrolled in Parts C and B programs for six months or longer are assessed for their progress on three broad outcomes -- social relationships, acquiring and using knowledge and skills, and taking appropriate action to meet needs.

About two-thirds of infants and toddlers and three-quarters of preschoolers show greater than expected development.

Recent data (2010) show that about two-thirds of children age two and younger and about three-quarters of children ages three to five who receive services through special education programs show greater than expected developmental progress.

Percentage of children in early intervention and early childhood special education showing greater than expected growth



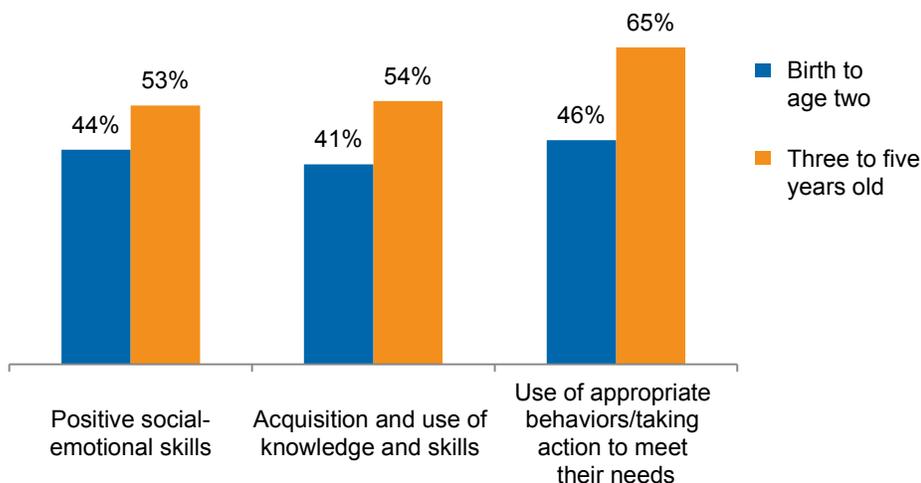
Children who exit early childhood special education functioning within age expectations

Children participate in authentic assessment throughout the period of enrollment in early childhood special education. Each child's developmental status, compared to the status of typically-developing peers, is reported at entrance and exit, in these same outcome areas -- personal and social skills, acquiring knowledge and skills, and using appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

More than four in 10 infants and toddlers and more than five in 10 preschoolers exit programs with their development within age expectations.

Recent data (2010) show that 41 to 46 percent of children age two and younger and 53 to 65 percent of children ages three to five are exiting special education programs functioning within age expectations on reported indicators. The percentages may be higher for exiting preschoolers because they are more likely than exiting infants and toddlers to have speech/language problems as their primary disability (33 percent compared with 13 percent).

Percentage of children exiting early intervention and early childhood special education functioning within age expectations



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