

# FactSheet



## Early Education

Seventy-five percent of brain growth and eight-five percent of intellect, personality, and social skills develop before age five – before a child ever steps foot in Kindergarten<sup>1</sup>. Those first 2,000 days of a child’s life – from birth to Kindergarten entry – are critically important and impact their success in school and in life.

All children and youth need a comprehensive system that serves them from the prenatal period through college or into careers. Policy and funding decisions should be coordinated to support such a system.

Both neuroscience and economics have shown the critical importance of the earliest years to lifelong learning and success. Investments in high-quality early learning programs have demonstrated high rates of return. Research shows that as many as 40 percent of America’s children start school well behind what is expected for their age and, even with high quality K-12 education, have difficulty catching up<sup>2</sup>.



### Key Facts

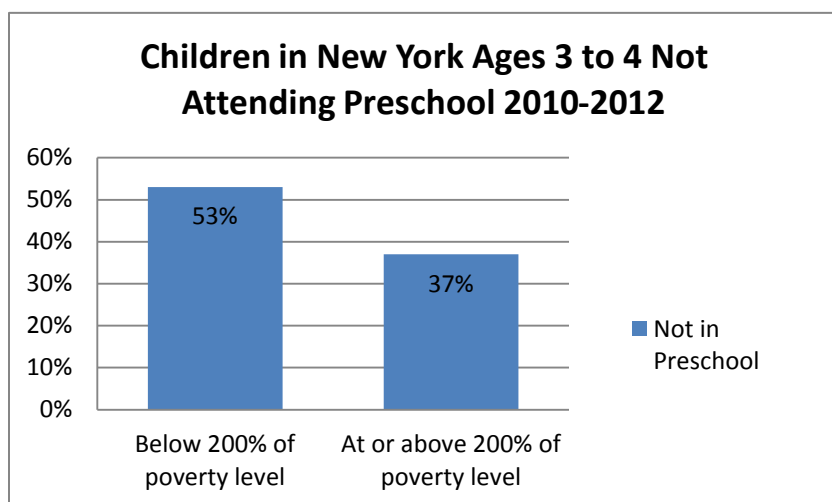
- According to the American Community Survey, there are over 57,000 children under the age of 5 living in Westchester<sup>3</sup>.
- As of 2011-2012, roughly half of all four-year-olds in New York State were enrolled in public Pre-K programs<sup>4</sup>.
- In the 2012-2013 program year, 156 children were enrolled in Early Head Start and 1,827 children were enrolled in Head Start in Westchester County.
- Twelve public school districts in Westchester County offered Pre-K serving 2,609 children in the 2012-2013 school year<sup>5</sup>.
- Research in brain development has shown that young children are constantly learning.
- Long-term effects of quality early education include gains in achievement and in social-emotional development, less grade repetition and special education, and increased high school graduation<sup>6</sup>.
- Universal Pre-K programs have been shown to provide long-term costs savings of seven dollars for every dollar invested<sup>7</sup>.



## We Can Do Better

- The investment of \$40 million for universal Pre-K programs outside of New York City in the 2014 New York State budget was a good first step towards ensuring all children receive quality education, but additional funding is still needed to make Pre-K truly universal. Several Westchester public and parochial districts received a portion of this funding to either start or expand existing Pre-K programs for the 2014-2015 school year.

- The State should invest in the expansion of programs proven to decrease child maltreatment, increase school readiness and improve family self-sufficiency.
- QUALITYstarsNY, a quality rating and improvement system, should be implemented to ensure accountability for public investments in early education and that children are enrolled in quality early childhood programs.



Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation. *Kids Count Data Center-Children Ages 3 and 4 Not Attending Preschool, By Poverty Status*. Retrieved September 3, 2014.  
<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7876-children-ages-3-and-4-not-attending-preschool-by-poverty-status?loc=34&loct=2#detailed/2/34/false/1049,995,116/4172,4173/15190,15189>

### Sources:

- <sup>1</sup> Schulyer Center for Analysis and Advocacy. Policy Brief: Quality: What It Is and Why It Matters for Early Childhood Education (September 2012). [http://www.scaany.org/documents/quality\\_earlyved\\_scaapolicybrief\\_sept2012.pdf](http://www.scaany.org/documents/quality_earlyved_scaapolicybrief_sept2012.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> Child and Family Policy Center. *Securing America's Future: Children and the 2014 Elections* (July 2014). <http://itsaboutourkidsiowa.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/children-and-the-2014-election-opt.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> US Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table B09001, <http://factfinder2.census.gov>
- <sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Ken Slentz to P-12 Educ. Comm. 3 (Oct 1, 2012) [www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/October2012/1012pl2d5.pdf](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/October2012/1012pl2d5.pdf).
- <sup>5</sup> BEDS Day Enrollment (2013), New York State Education Department, <http://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php>
- <sup>6</sup> Barnett, W. S. (2008). *Preschool education and its lasting effects: Research and policy implications*. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit. Retrieved August 12, 2014 from <http://epicpolicy.org/publication/preschooleducation>
- <sup>7</sup> Center for Public Education. *The Research on Pre-K* (2008) <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Pre-kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten>

### PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS OFFERING PRE-K IN WESTCHESTER DURING 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

**Bedford  
Elmsford  
Greenburgh  
Lakeland  
Mamaroneck  
Mt. Vernon**

**New Rochelle  
Ossining  
Peekskill  
Pocantico Hills  
Tarrytown  
Yonkers**

### PUBLIC SCHOOL PRE-K PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY PARTNERS DURING 2012-2013

**White Plains  
Irvington (Easter Seals integrated program)  
Tuckahoe**

For more information:

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