

What's New with Kids – March 2005

NEVADA KIDS COUNT NEWSLETTER

Site of the Month

School readiness has become a hot topic in education. It is the subject of a recently released report which presents findings from the National School Readiness Indicator Initiative. The report, *Getting Ready: The National School Readiness Indicators Initiatives*, was prepared by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.

“The National School Readiness Indicators Initiatives: Making Progress for Young Children was a multi-state initiative that developed sets of indicators at the state level to track results for children from birth through age 8. The goal was for states to use the school readiness indicators to inform public policy decisions and track progress in meeting key goals for young children” (*Getting Ready*, 2005, p. 10).

Teams from 17 states (Nevada was not a participant) worked together to identify school-readiness indicators. Twenty-three indicators emerged from the teams’ joint efforts. The indicators were based on research and the teams’ experiences in working on school readiness. Five criteria guided the selection of a school-readiness indicator: (1) “is something you care enough about to measure and track,” (2) “has policy relevance,” (3) “enables states to assess gaps, with special attention to populations at high risk,” (4) “uses measures that are developmentally appropriate,” and (5) “uses measures that are relevant across all racial, cultural, and language groups.”

Although Nevada was not included in the study, data on many of the school-readiness indicators have been included in our *Nevada KIDS COUNT Data Books*, which can help guide state policy action for young children in Nevada. Specifically, we have provided data on young children in poverty, children in foster care, child abuse and neglect, births to teens, mother’s education level, health insurance, low-birthweight infants, access to prenatal care, immunizations, fourth grade reading scores, and children enrolled in an early education program.

An in-depth discussion of all the indicators and a sampling of policy options are provided in the 88-page report available online at:

<<http://gettingready.org/matriarch/d.asp?PageID=303&PageName2=pdfhold&p=&PageName=Getting+Ready+%2D+Full+Report%281%29%2Epdf>>.

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The following sources on school-readiness were provided by consultants to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which sponsored a brown bag discussion for KIDS COUNT grantees on school readiness.

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