

# getting ready

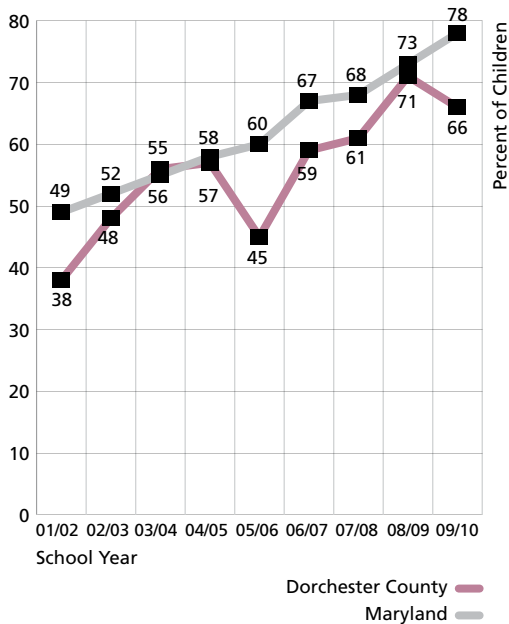


what the 2009-2010 school readiness data mean for Maryland's children

March 2010

## Dorchester County

Dorchester County and Statewide Results



In Dorchester County, 66% of kindergartners are fully ready for school.

### quick take on statewide school readiness

- 78% of kindergartners are school-ready.
- Kindergartners made significant gains in the cognitive Domains of Learning (a 31-point increase from 2001-2002 in Language and Literacy, a 32-point improvement in Mathematical Thinking, and a 39-point jump in Scientific Thinking). Full school readiness in these domains is essential to successfully engaging in kindergarten, and suggests long-term academic gains. According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), as the state's school readiness results improve, the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) scores in third-grade reading and math rise correspondingly.
- The data reveal four key skills that closely correlate with children's school readiness: 1) the ability to attentively listen, 2) the ability to comprehend and respond, 3) the ability to solve problems, and 4) the ability to identify, describe, and compare different objects.
- Quality interventions matter. 78% of kindergartners who had been enrolled in PreK programs were fully ready for school, compared with 68% of those who were at home or in informal care. Interventions, such as PreK, Judy Centers, and Head Start Centers, help to address the achievement gaps affecting English Language Learners, children with special needs, and children from low-income households before they start their formal school careers.
- Eighteen of 24 jurisdictions in Maryland made one-year gains. Twelve jurisdictions have full school readiness levels above 82%. Of these jurisdictions with the highest school readiness results, 8 also have MSA scores greater than the statewide average in third-grade reading and math.

### about the data

Each school year, kindergarten teachers use the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR—a body of standards and an assessment tool) to observe what each child knows and is able to do in the seven areas or “Domains of Learning:” Social & Personal Development, Language & Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, the Arts, and Physical Development. This enables the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to compile the school readiness data it releases every March, providing essential information for schools' and communities' continuing improvement of school readiness.

## Dorchester County

### Census Data (U.S. Census 2000)

Estimated Children Age 4	313
Children <5 (age 0-4)	1,563

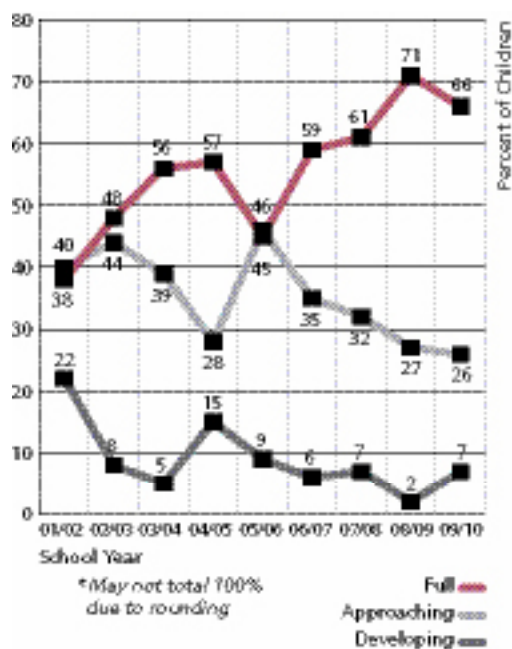
### Prior Care Enrollment (School Year 2008/09)

Child Care Center	18.2%
Family Child Care	9.9%
Head Start	19.6%
Home/Informal	17.1%
Non-Public Nursery	0.0%
Pre-Kindergarten (PreK)	35.0%
• Full-Day Program	0.0%
• Half-Day Program	100.0%

### School Enrollment (School Year 2009/10)

Kindergarten Students	368
Kindergartners Receiving Services	
• English Language Learners	1.7%
• Free/Reduced Priced Meals	3.0%
• Special Education	10.5%
PreK Students	212
• Full-Day Program	0.0%
• Half-Day Program	100.0%

## Dorchester County School Readiness Data



Sources: Maryland State Department of Education, US Census Bureau

## what the MMSR data mean for Dorchester County's children

Dorchester County's 2009-2010 school readiness data reveal:

- **Significantly more children are entering school fully prepared for kindergarten work.**
  - 66% of entering kindergartners are fully ready for school, up from 38% in 2001-2002.
  - Kindergartners made tremendous progress in key Domains of Learning: 53% of children are fully school-ready in Language & Literacy, a 25-point increase from 2001-2002; 63% in Mathematical Thinking, a 32-point jump; and 55 in Scientific Thinking, a 43-point gain.
  - 55% of children from low-income households (as indicated by Free and Reduced Price Meal status) are fully ready for school in 2009-2010, a 16-point increase from 2002-2003.
- **Children of most ethnicities showed improved school readiness.**
  - 62% of African-American kindergartners are fully school-ready, up from 24% 2001-2002. These gains narrowed the disparity between African-American and white children from 27 points in 2001-2002 to 12 points in 2009-2010.
  - 45% of Hispanic kindergartners are fully ready for school, up from 0% in 2001-2002.
- **Early learning environments promote school readiness.**
  - 71% of kindergartners who had been enrolled in PreK programs were fully ready for school, compared with 60% of those who were at home or in informal care the year prior to kindergarten.
  - The greatest progress occurred among children enrolled in family child care (78% fully ready) the year prior to kindergarten, a 7-point, one-year gain in readiness.

This year's data confirm that Dorchester County's school readiness efforts are boosting long-term academic and life success for students. Now is the time to redouble our investment in what the data show us: school readiness is the best investment for families, schools, communities, businesses, and above all, for children.

Visit [www.readyatfive.org](http://www.readyatfive.org) for additional data, more information on what makes a difference, PowerPoint presentations, and *Getting Ready: Parents Can Help.*

For more information on improving school readiness in Maryland, contact:

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