



Virginia's Preschool Programs

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Virginia Preschool Programs

- **The Virginia Preschool Initiative** uses state funds to serve four-year-olds who are at-risk for school failure and not presently receiving services from Head Start.
- **Title I Preschool Programs** use federal funds to improve the teaching and learning of children in high poverty schools and enable children to meet challenging academic content and performance standards.



Virginia Preschool Programs

- **Early Childhood Special Education** uses federal funds to provide special education services for children ages three to five.
- **Head Start** uses federal funds for comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to age five. The overall goal is to increase social competence of young children in low-income families.



Virginia Preschool Initiative for At-Risk Four-Year-Olds



Purpose of the Initiative

- Reduce disparities among young children upon formal school entry
- Reduce or eliminate risk factors that lead to early academic failure



Purpose of the Initiative

- Provide programs for at-risk four-year-old children that include:
 - Quality preschool education
 - Health services
 - Social services
 - Parental involvement
 - Transportation



Virginia Preschool Initiative Background

- **1993 - Acts of Assembly required a study of early childhood programs for at-risk children in Virginia that was presented to the Senate Finance Committee and House Appropriations Committee**
- **1994 - Legislative Commission on Equity in Public Education recommended the establishment of state funded, quality preschool programs for unserved at-risk four-year-olds**



Virginia Preschool Initiative Background

- **1995 - The Education Act (HB2542) and the Appropriation Act reinforced all components of the 1994 package, and determined a need for programs to support at-risk four-year-olds.**



The following table outlines the appropriate and actual expenditure histories of the Virginia Preschool Initiative since its implementation.

YEAR	APPROPRIATED	ADJUSTED (based on actual enrollment)	PERCENTAGE OF UNSERVED CHILDREN SERVED
1995 – 1996	\$10.3 million	\$8 million / 78%	30%
1996 – 1997	\$15.2 million	\$14.8 million / 97%	60%
1997 – 1998	\$16.9 million	\$16.9 million / 100%	60%
1998 – 1999	\$18.9 million	\$18.9 million / 100%	60%
1999 – 2000	\$19.1 million	\$19.1 million / 100%	60%
2000 – 2001	\$21.5 million	\$18.5 million / 86%	60%
2001 – 2002	\$23.5 million	\$18.7 million / 80%	60%
2002 – 2003	\$19.3 million	\$18.1 million / 93%	60%
2003 – 2004	\$18.9 million	\$18.3 million / 97%	60%
2004 – 2005	\$47.4 million	\$34.9 million / 74%	90%
2005 – 2006	\$46.6 million	\$38.5 million / 83%	100%



Virginia Preschool Initiative Program Requirements

- Address the learning needs of young children
- Limit the group size to 18
- Require a child/staff ratio of 9:1
- Hire qualified staff
- Require a minimum of half day services
- Provide for staff development
- Plan for home-school communication
- Address assessment procedures



Operation of the Virginia Preschool Initiative

- Must coordinate resources and funding
- Must coordinate comprehensive services
- Must work with the chief administrator and division superintendent to identify a lead agency
- Must incorporate Virginia's Preschool Standards
- May have programs operated by public schools or community-based organizations



Participation Levels in Virginia

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Number of localities:	136	136	136	136	136
Number of localities eligible for funding:	100	97	97	115	117
Number of participating localities:	75	75	75	90	92
Number of eligible, but not participating localities:	25	22	22	25	25
Number of localities not eligible:	36	39	39	21	19
Number of eligible children:	7,938	7,311	7,337	15,185	17,042
Number of participating children:	5,966	5,823	5,858	10,318	11,237



Reasons for Non-participation

- Some localities cannot or will not pay the required local match.
- Some localities could serve more students, but have insufficient space to house additional preschool classrooms.
- Some localities have a minimum number of students eligible for the program.



Technical Assistance for the Virginia Preschool Initiative

The University of Virginia, through the office of Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) at the Curry School of Education:

- provides the PALS instrument for Virginia Preschool Initiative Programs
- maintains a Web site to assist all preschool teachers in Virginia with instructional activities

<http://pals.edschool.virginia.edu/activities/index.cfm>



Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning (Academic Standards)

- 2003 - The Virginia Board of Education approved Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Literacy and Mathematics.
- 2005 - The Virginia Foundation Blocks for Early Learning were expanded to include science and history and social science.
- The standards establish a measurable range of skills and knowledge essential for at-risk four-year-olds to be successful in kindergarten.



Title I Preschool Programs

▪Purpose

- Title I preschool programs provide young children with high quality learning experiences that will enable them to meet high academic standards throughout elementary and secondary school.

▪Eligibility

- To be eligible, a preschool age child must meet the Title I eligibility requirements and be at-risk of failing to meet the state's student academic achievement standards.



Title I Preschool Programs 2004-2005

Participating School Divisions	39
Participating Schools	153
Participating Students	2,375



Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004)

▪Purpose

- Early Childhood Special Education preschool programs provide young children with disabilities special education services needed to attain skills that are comparable to their typically developing peers. All school systems in Virginia have ECSE programs as part of their Special Education programs.

▪Eligibility

- To be eligible, a preschool age child must have a disability that requires special education to attain age-appropriate skills. These are our most at-risk children.



Early Childhood Special Education

Ages 2 through 5

Early Childhood Setting (Not Special Education)	2,935	17%
Early Childhood Setting (Special Education)	7,843	45%
Home	982	5%
Part Early Childhood Setting (Not Sp Educ) and Part Early Childhood Setting (Sp Educ)	911	5%
Residential Facility (Public or Private)	4	<1%
Separate School (Public or Private)	99	<1%
Itinerant Service (mostly speech services)	4,619	26%
Reverse Mainstream (50/50 ratio – ECSE and ECE)	36	<1%
TOTAL	17,429	

Source: Dec 1, 2004 Child Count Service Setting Options



Technical Assistance for Early Childhood Special Education

- VDOE Training and Technical Assistance Centers (TTACs)
 - James Madison University
 - George Mason University
 - Old Dominion University
 - Virginia Commonwealth University
 - Virginia Tech
- TTAC Online www.ttaonline.org
- Early Childhood Special Education webpage
www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/sped/earlychildhood.html



Head Start Programs

Administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services

▪Purpose

- Head Start and Early Head Start Programs are comprehensive child development programs that serve children from birth to age five, pregnant women, and their families.

▪Eligibility

- Head Start eligible means a child that meets the requirements for age as established in the Head Start regulations, or if applicable, as established by grantees that meet the requirements of the Head Start Act.



Head Start Programs

Number

In 2004-2005, there were 54 Virginia Head Start Programs, serving 13,696 children.



For More Information

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