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Jumpstart at UMass Boston

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Summary/Abstract

Jumpstart is the *only* national supplemental preschool program of its kind, leveraging adult-child relationships to deliver a carefully designed curriculum that builds the key language and literacy skills children need to succeed. Jumpstart's program works with preschool children because we know that intervening early is critical and will result in the best long-term benefits for our nation's children. Jumpstart's program prepares children for kindergarten to ensure greater success in elementary school and in life.

In fact, the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child at Harvard University states that *"Addressing significant inequalities in opportunity, beginning in the earliest years of life, is both a fundamental moral responsibility and a critical investment in our nation's social and economic future."*

Approaches and Methods

Jumpstart intervenes early to close the achievement gap before it's too late. Our research-based curriculum helps children build the skills they will need to succeed in kindergarten, elementary school, and beyond. Our commitment to results means that we implement a **high-quality curriculum**, train **expert Corps members**, and measure our results to ensure **the children we serve are ready for school and ready for life**.

Apply Early Education Best Practices. Jumpstart's Education and Research department incorporates new knowledge and advances in the field into Jumpstart's curriculum and pedagogy.

Observe Classrooms and Give Feedback. Jumpstart's highly trained staff members observe classroom teaching throughout the year to ensure that the curriculum and program model are implemented effectively.

Focus on Results. The most important factor in our annual program evaluation is significant and consistent school readiness gains among the children we serve.

Goals and Objectives

Our Issue: America's Achievement Gap

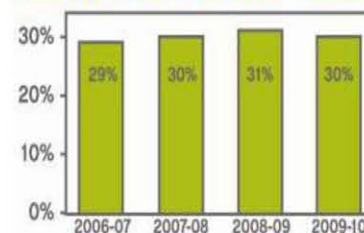
When children start school behind, they are more likely to stay behind for the rest of their lives, and this gap only widens over time. Consequently, our nation sees an increase in high school drop out rates, unemployment, incarceration, public assistance, and countless other remediation programs.

At Jumpstart, we know we can close this gap before it's too late. A quality early education is the key to preventing America's achievement gap. Longitudinal studies show that children who complete quality early childhood education programs do better in school and are less likely to dropout, be arrested, repeat grades or require special education.

Results/Impact

Jumpstart uses a research-based *School Success Checklist* to assess children in the program. The checklist measures key language and literacy skills that are important for future school success. Children are measured at the beginning and end of the program year. **On average, children show gains of more than a full developmental level—25% in overall school readiness.**

Consistent Gains in Language & Literacy Skills for Jumpstart Children



Conclusion/Next Steps

"Children only get one chance at education."

—U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan

Why Jumpstart is needed?

- 35 percent of American kindergarten children arrive at school unprepared to learn (roughly one in three).
- Poverty is the single best predictor of a child's failure to achieve in school, and about half of children from low-income communities start first grade up to two years behind their peers.
- By age four, the average child in a professional family hears about 20 million more words than the average child in a working-class family, and about 35 million more words than children in welfare families.
- 5 year-olds from low-income communities have one-fourth the vocabulary of their mid-income peers.
- By the fourth grade, more than half of white and Asian American children cannot read at grade level. More than 80 percent of Latino, Black and American Indian children cannot read at grade level by fourth grade.