

# Early Childhood Education in Huntingdon County, 2010-2011

## Helping children reach their promise through quality early education

Huntingdon County's children need a solid educational foundation before kindergarten in order to achieve in school and succeed in the workforce. It is imperative that Pennsylvania's children succeed; their success becomes our communities' success as they fill the 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs that drive the economy.

### Children in Huntingdon County are at Moderate-High risk of school failure.<sup>1</sup>

When children experience risk factors such as living in economically stressed families, poor or no pre-natal care for the mother, parents with low educational levels, abuse and neglect, and entering a poorly performing school system, they are more likely to enter school behind, and fail in school. The more risk factors the child experiences, the greater her risk of school failure. **There are 2,497 children under age five living in Huntingdon County.**

#### Percent of children under age five affected by select risk factors

Risk factor for falling in school	County	PA
Living in economically at-risk families, up to 300% of poverty	76.3%	58.4%
Births to mothers with less than a high school education	14.7%	15.8%

In addition, 28.6% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in Huntingdon County scored below proficient on the 2010 PSSA reading test (22.1% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders statewide).

### Quality early education can bridge the achievement gap before it begins.

Research has shown that at-risk children who receive quality early education can catch up to their peers in language, math and social skills before they reach kindergarten, so they are ready to succeed in school and in life. These benefits last a lifetime.

Early Education Program	County	PA
<b>Child Care Works</b> provides low-income working families with access to child care, making them more likely to retain employment and be more productive at work. Families must provide documentation that they meet work and educational requirements to be eligible. In 2010-2011 more than three-quarters (81%) of children receiving Child Care Works were enrolled in regulated child care; more than half (53%) were enrolled in Keystone STARS programs. In June 2011, 135,907 children from birth – school age received Child Care Works subsidy.	<b>No. of children under 5 served (June 2011)</b>	
	138	83,016
	<b>% of children under 5 served (June 2011)</b>	
	5.5%	11.4%
<b>Early Intervention</b> serves children from birth to age five with disabilities/developmental delays and their families. Early Intervention builds upon the natural learning occurring in a child's early years and promotes collaboration among parents, service providers, early childhood educators and others involved in the child's life. Approximately 82,914 children received Early Intervention Services in 2010-2011.	<b>No. of children served</b>	
	259	82,914
	<b>% of children served</b>	
	10.4%	11.4%
<b>Head Start</b> provides comprehensive early learning services to children and families who are most at risk of academic failure. Federal and state funding supports this program in Pennsylvania. In addition to educational programming, Head Start offers health/nutrition services, social service support to families and a strong parent involvement component, supports to children with disabilities. The percentage of students in Head Start Supplemental with age-appropriate language and math skills increased five times from the beginning to end of the 2010-2011 school year; the percentage with age-appropriate social skills tripled. In 2010-2011, 33,563 children received Head Start services through state and federal funding.	<b>No. of children under 5 served</b>	
	274	35,563
	<b>% of children under 5 served</b>	
	11.0%	4.9%

<sup>1</sup> You can find out more about how each county's risk level is determined in the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Program Reach and Risk Report at [www.ocdelresearch.org](http://www.ocdelresearch.org).

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<p><b>Keystone STARS</b> is proven to improve the quality of child care based on an independent study and offers parents a tool to gauge the quality of the programs they choose. Child care and Head Start programs earn a STAR 1 to STAR 4 level by meeting quality standards for teacher qualifications, learning environment and program management.</p> <p>The percentage of preschoolers in Keystone STAR 3 and 4 programs with age-appropriate language, math and social skills doubled from beginning to end of the 2010-2011 program year. In 2010-2011, approximately 168,230 children from birth through school-age were enrolled in Keystone STARS programs.</p>	<b>No. of children under 5 served</b>	
	224	107,465
	<b>% of children under 5 served</b>	
	9.0%	14.7%
	<b>% of children under 5 enrolled in STAR 3 &amp; 4 programs (June 2011)</b>	
	1.7%	3.9%
<b>% of regulated child care centers participating in STARS (June 2011)</b>		
66.7%	66.6%	

<p><b>Nurse-Family Partnership</b> helps low-income, first-time parents experience healthy pregnancies, learn how to take good care of their babies, and make plans for the future. Home visits by registered nurses promote the physical, cognitive and social-emotional development of the children and provide general support as well as instructive parenting skills to the parents. Research shows NFP improves pregnancy outcomes, improves child health and development, and increases economic self-sufficiency. In 2010-2011, Nurse-Family Partnership served 4,635 children in 40 counties.</p>	<b>No. of infants/toddlers served</b>	
	104	4,635
	<b>% of infants/toddlers served</b>	
	7.0%	1.1%

<p><b>Parent-Child Home Program</b> provides a home visitor to help at-risk parents learn how to read to and play with their children in a way that promotes early learning and builds a positive parent-child bond. In 2010-2011, Parent-Child Home Program served 1,297 children in 26 counties.</p>	<b>No. of children under 5 served</b>	
	47	1,297
	<b>% of children under 5 served</b>	
	1.9%	0.2%

<p><b>Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts</b> provides high quality pre-kindergarten education for at-risk 3 and 4 year olds in Pennsylvania. Less than one in four children began the 2010-2011 school year in PA Pre-K Counts classrooms with age-appropriate skills. By the end of the school year, approximately three in four children showed age-appropriate language, math and social skills. School districts also report children from PA Pre-K Counts classrooms continuing school success through third grade. 11,359 children participated in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts.</p>	<b>No. of preschoolers served</b>	
	58	11,359
	<b>% of preschoolers served</b>	
	5.7%	3.8%

The benefits of early education extend throughout communities in better school performance and lower special education and remediation costs. As these children become adults, communities benefit from a higher skilled workforce and lower public costs for public assistance, crime control and lost taxes.

<p><b>Percent of children participating in publicly-funded quality early education programs</b> (Nurse-Family Partnership, Parent-Child Home Program, Head Start, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, PA Pact for Pre-K, School Based Pre-K, Early Intervention, and Keystone STARS)</p>	<b>County</b>	<b>PA</b>
	39.6%	36.0%