

# *Santa Clara County School Readiness Assessment*



*Santa Clara County  
Partnership for School Readiness*

**An Overview of Findings**  
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# *Background & Methodology*



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## *Project Background*

- The School Readiness Assessment was commissioned by the **Santa Clara County Partnership for School Readiness**.
    - This group is dedicated to advancing school readiness ... and later school success ... for all children through age eight.
  - Basic goal of the project?
    - To gather a valid portrait of children's readiness for school when they enter kindergarten in Santa Clara County.
- 15 – Readiness will be re-assessed in Fall 2005 and 2006.

## *Four Key Research Questions*

1. What is the portrait of children's readiness for school when they enter kindergarten in Santa Clara County?
2. What demographic and family factors are associated with children's readiness?
3. Is there a relationship between children's readiness scores and schools' ranking on the API index?
4. How do teacher expectations relate to children's school readiness, and are there differences between the expectations of K teachers and ECE teachers?

## *A Methodological Overview*

- A random sample of Santa Clara County schools was drawn proportional to district size.
- Information was collected via the:
  - *Kindergarten Observation Form*;
  - *Parent Information Form*; and
  - *Teacher Survey*.
- Enough data were collected to provide a representative snapshot of Santa Clara County.
  - 33 schools (36 classes) participated, representing 16 districts;
  - 700 children were observed;
  - 553 *Parent Information Forms* were collected (79% of parents completed the survey); and
  - 34 K and 31 ECE teachers completed the *Teacher Survey*.

## *Readiness Skills, By NEGP Dimension*

<b>NEGP Dimension</b>	<b>Individual Readiness Skills</b>
<b>Physical Well-Being &amp; Motor Development</b>	Uses small manipulatives; Has general coordination on the playground; Performs self-help/self-care
<b>Social &amp; Emotional Development</b>	Relates appropriately to adults; Appropriately expresses needs; Plays cooperatively; Controls impulses
<b>Approaches Toward Learning</b>	Expresses curiosity for learning; Pays attention; Follows directions; Participates in circle time
<b>Communication &amp; Language Usage</b>	Has expressive abilities; Recognizes all letters of the alphabet; Writes own name; Recognizes and produces rhyming words; Engages with books
<b>Cognition &amp; General Knowledge</b>	Engages in symbolic play; Can count 10 objects; Recognizes primary colors; Recognizes primary shapes

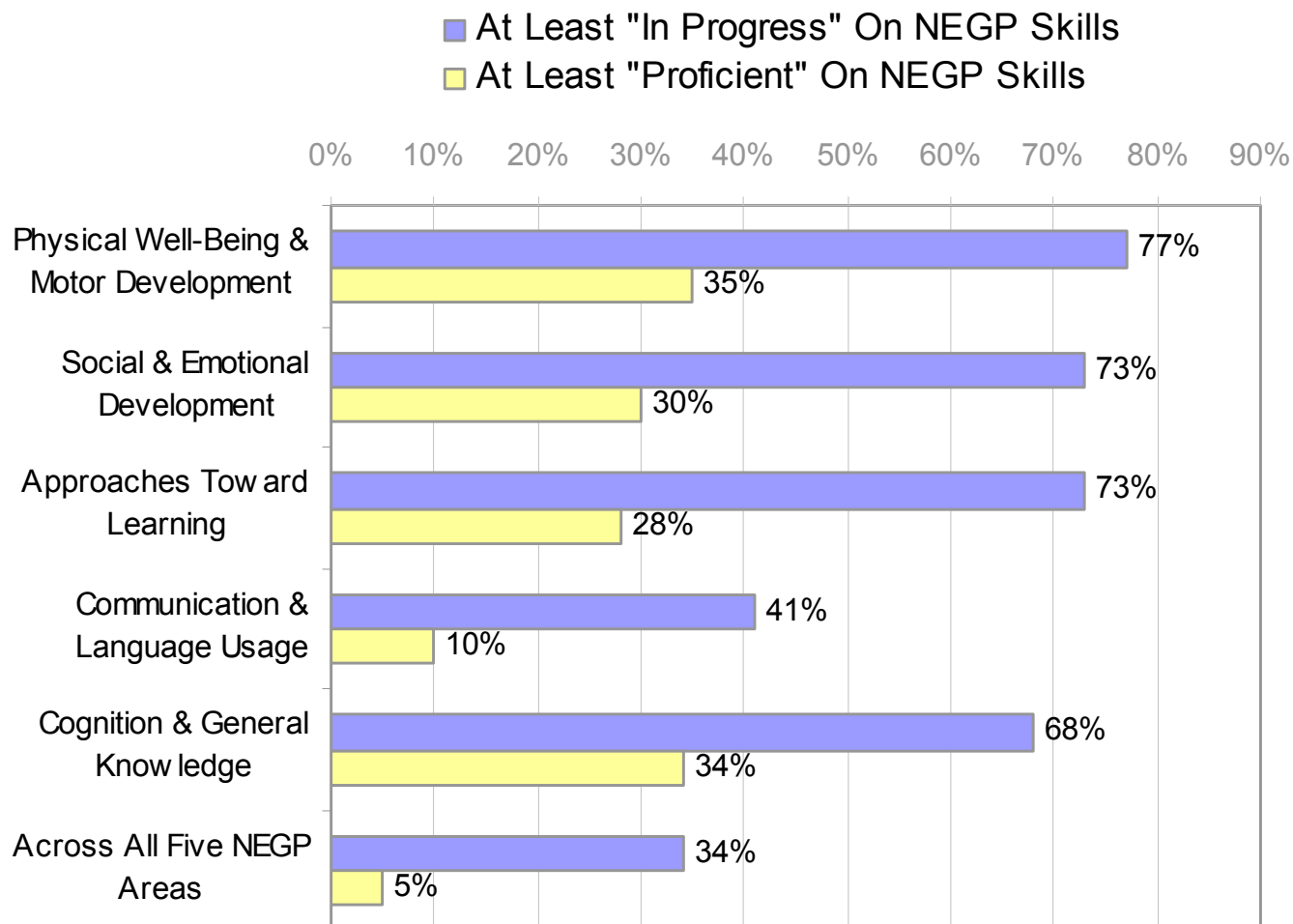
# *Key Findings*



## *Who are the children?*

- **Ethnically diverse** (35% Latino, 24% Caucasian, 21% Asian, 2% African-American, 7% Multi-ethnic, 8% Other)
- 41% are English Language Learners
- Family income levels vary widely
  - In some schools half the children have family incomes of less than \$32K.
  - In other schools, 54% have incomes >\$105K.
- Range in age from 4 years 9 months to 6+ years
- Broad range of school readiness levels and skill combinations

# How many children are in progress and proficient in each NEGP skill area?

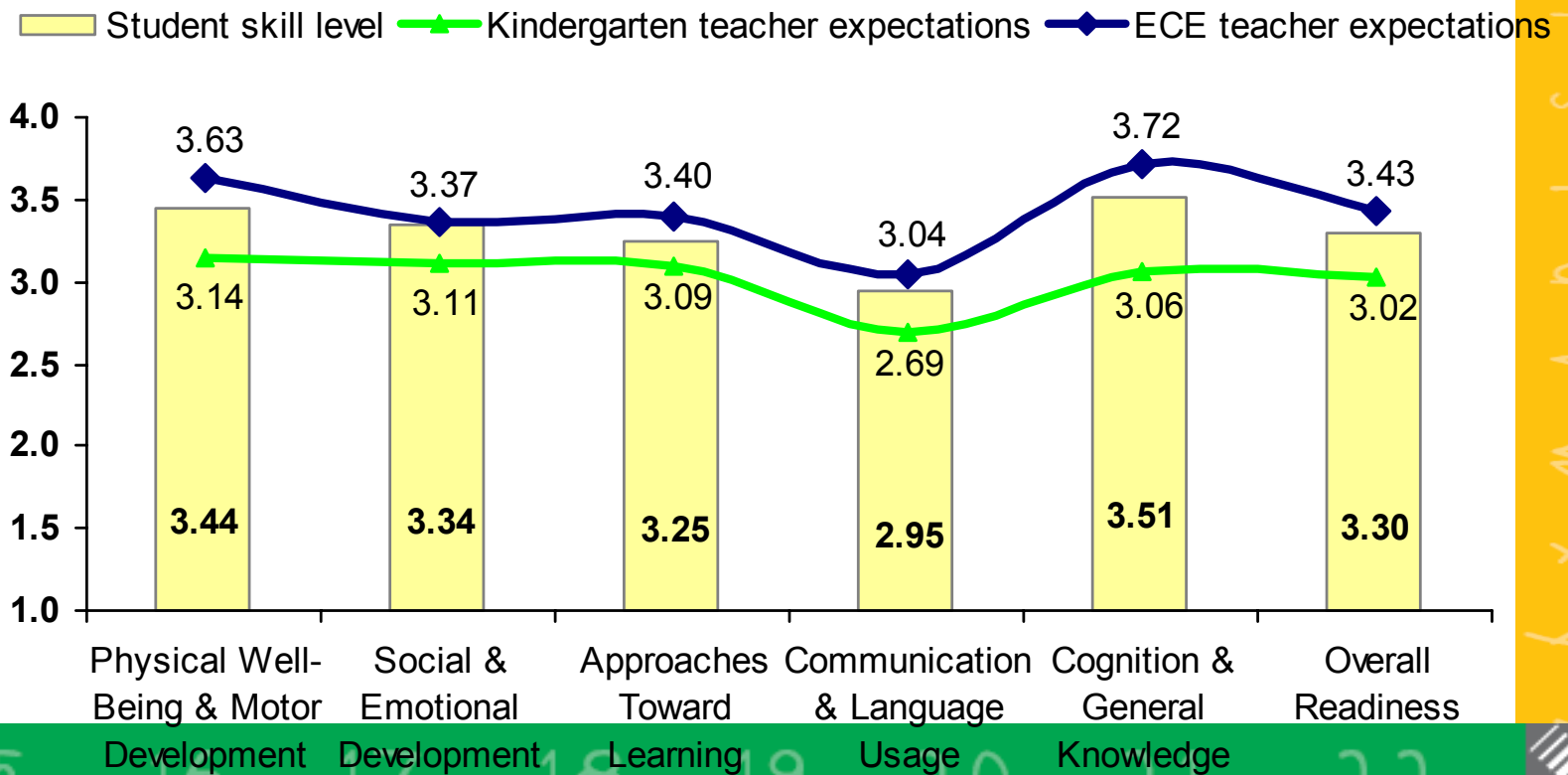


## *Are Santa Clara County children ready for kindergarten?*

- By and large, **YES**
  - A full 73% of children meet or exceed teachers' overall expectations of school readiness.
- There is room for improvement, however.
  - 10% of children fall quite below teacher expectations.
  - Just 1/3 of all students entering kindergarten are in progress or proficient in all 20 kindergarten readiness skills.
  - Children are least ready on the NEGP dimension of Communication & Language Usage.

## What do teachers expect of Santa Clara County kindergartners?

- K teacher expectations are well-matched to students' skills.
- ECE teachers hold higher expectations than do K teachers.



*What skills do teachers view as most important for K readiness?*

- Performs self-help/self-care (69% K, 75% ECE);
- Controls impulses (66% K, 46% ECE);
- Appropriately expresses needs (38% K, 46% ECE);  
and
- Plays cooperatively (34% K, 43% ECE).



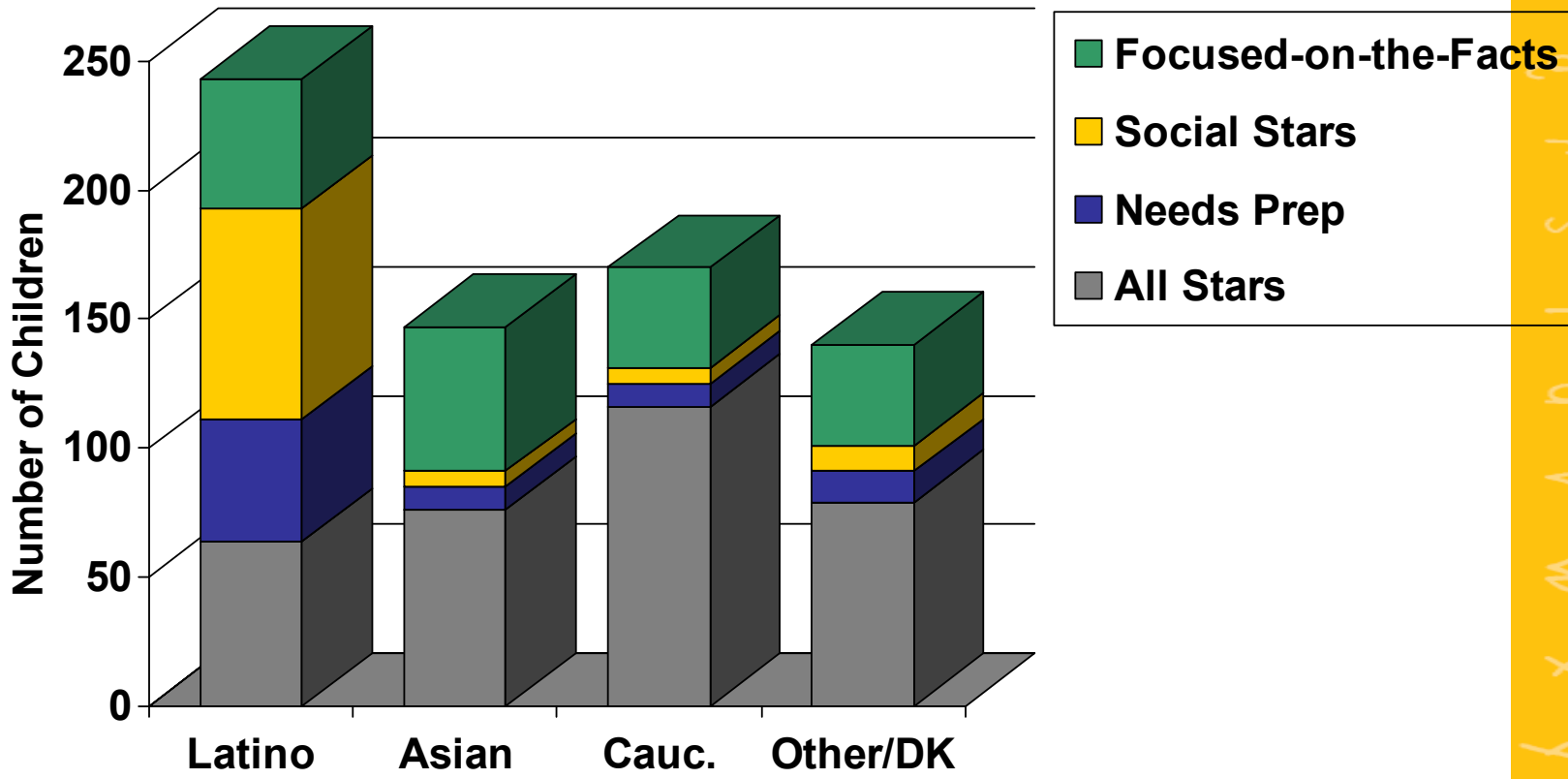
*How does readiness differ among children?*

<p><b>All-Stars (48%)</b></p>	<p><b>Focused-on-the-Facts (26%)</b></p>	<p><b>Social-Stars (15%)</b></p>	<p><b>Needs-Prep (11%)</b></p>
<p>Definitely ready for K.</p> <p>Near-<i>proficient</i> on all NEGP dimensions.</p>	<p>Ready for K “academics.”</p> <p>Need help on soc/emo skills, communication &amp; classroom etiquette.</p>	<p>Socially &amp; emo. ready.</p> <p>Less ready in language &amp; gen’l knowledge areas.</p>	<p>Much catching up needed.</p> <p>Not quite <i>in progress</i> on <u>any</u> dimension.</p>

*What do children in these four readiness groups “look like”?*

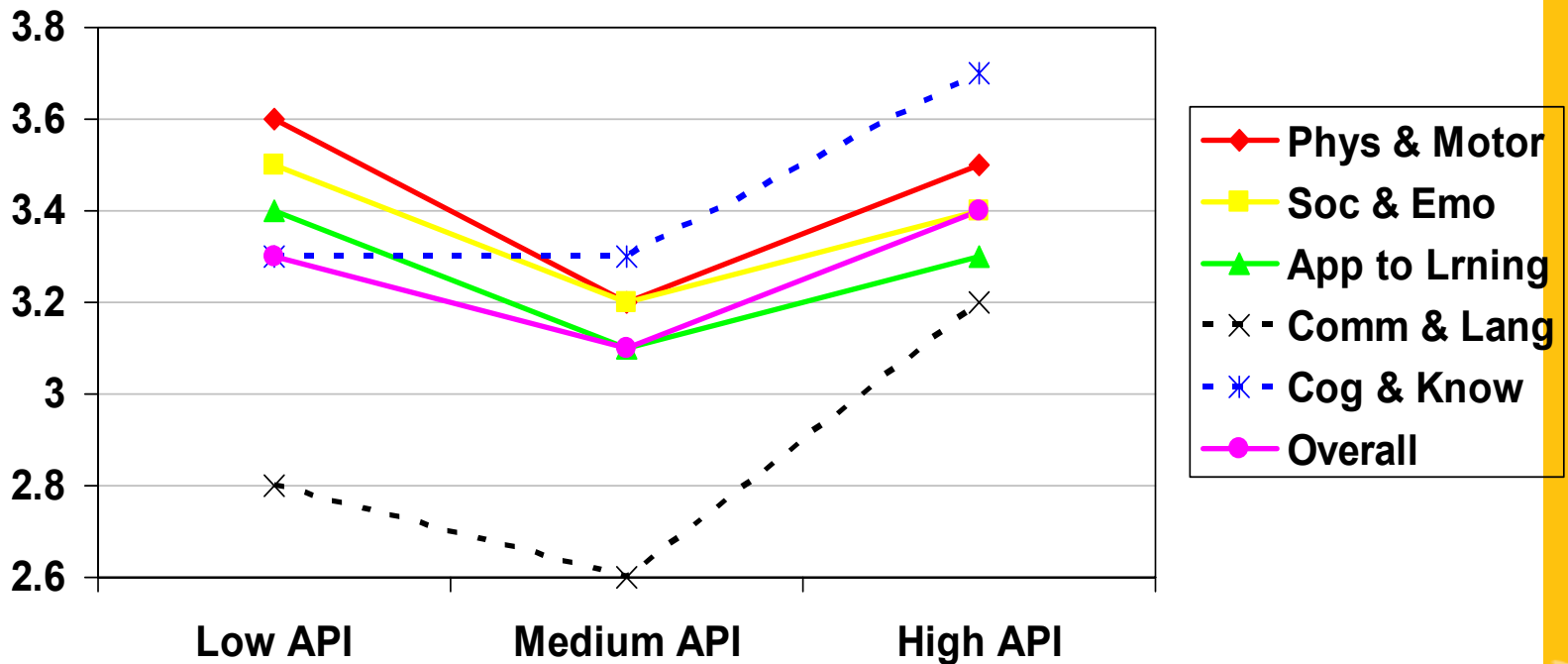
	<b>All-Stars</b>	<b>Focused-on-Facts</b>	<b>Social-Stars</b>	<b>Needs-Prep</b>
<b>Family income</b> (% higher than city median)	62%	36%	8%	8%
<b>At least 5 years old</b>	84%	76%	74%	53%
<b>Girls</b>	57%	37%	49%	41%
<b>English Language Learners</b>	24%	45%	64%	71%
<b>Attended preschool</b>	70%	66%	45%	41%
<b>Has special needs</b>	3%	12%	2%	8%
<b>Latino</b>	19%	27%	77%	64%

# Breakdown of Ethnicity and Skill Readiness Groups



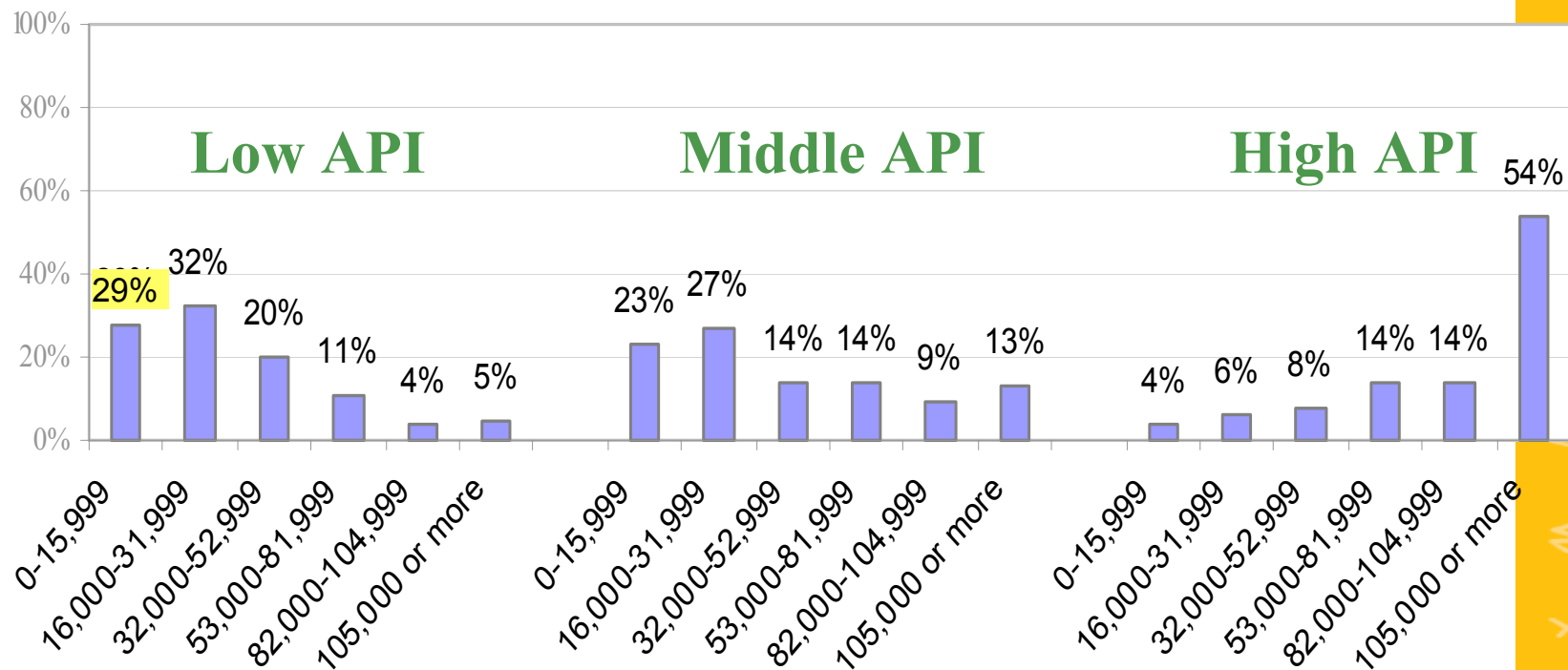
## How does readiness differ between schools?

- Children from middle API-level schools display significantly lower scores on most readiness skills.

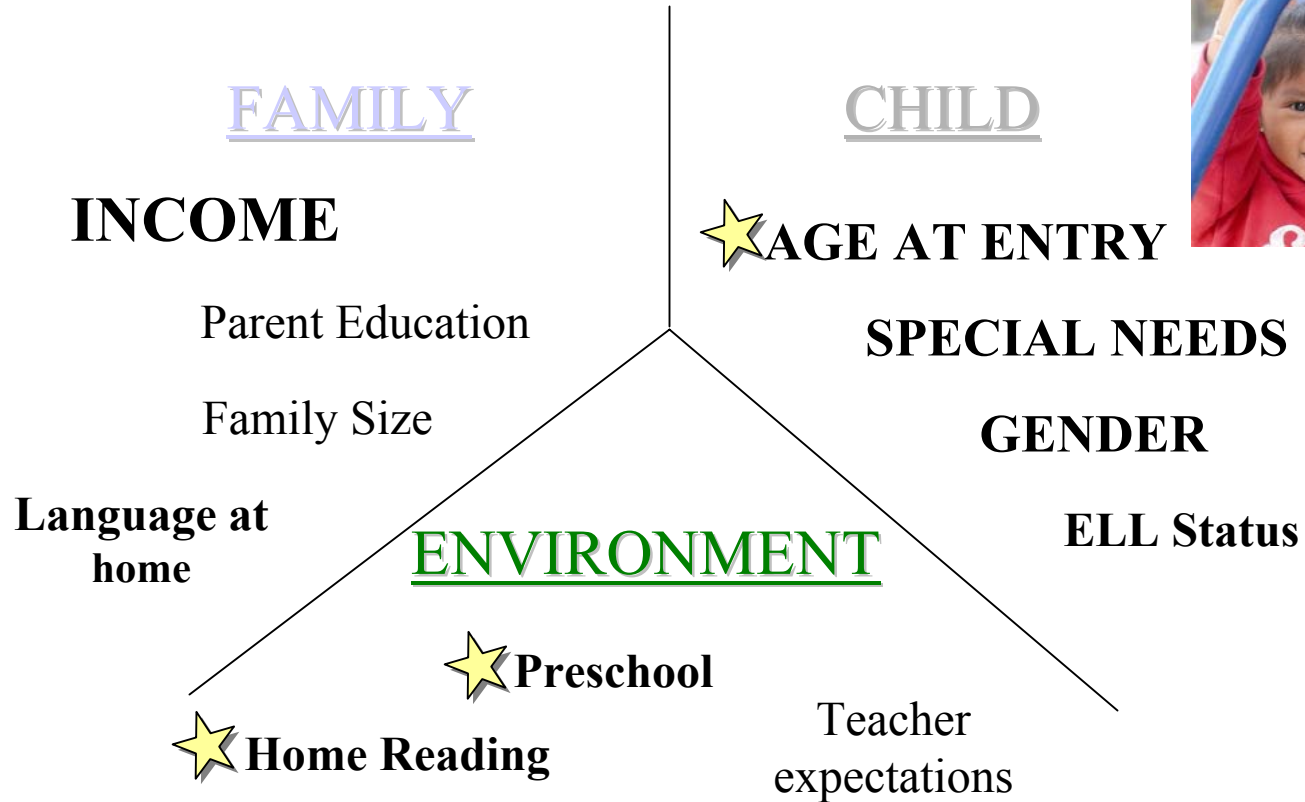


1 = Not yet 2 = Beginning 3 = In progress 4 = Proficient

*Low, Middle and High API Level Schools differ on many dimensions*

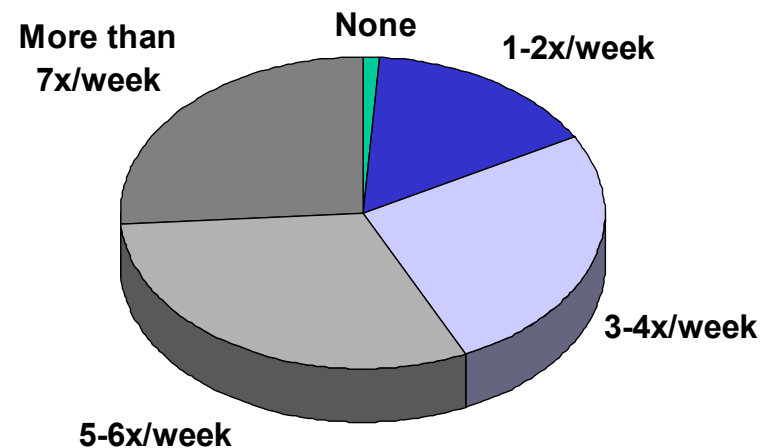


*What factors are associated with readiness?*



Reading practices ... a factor the community may be able to influence

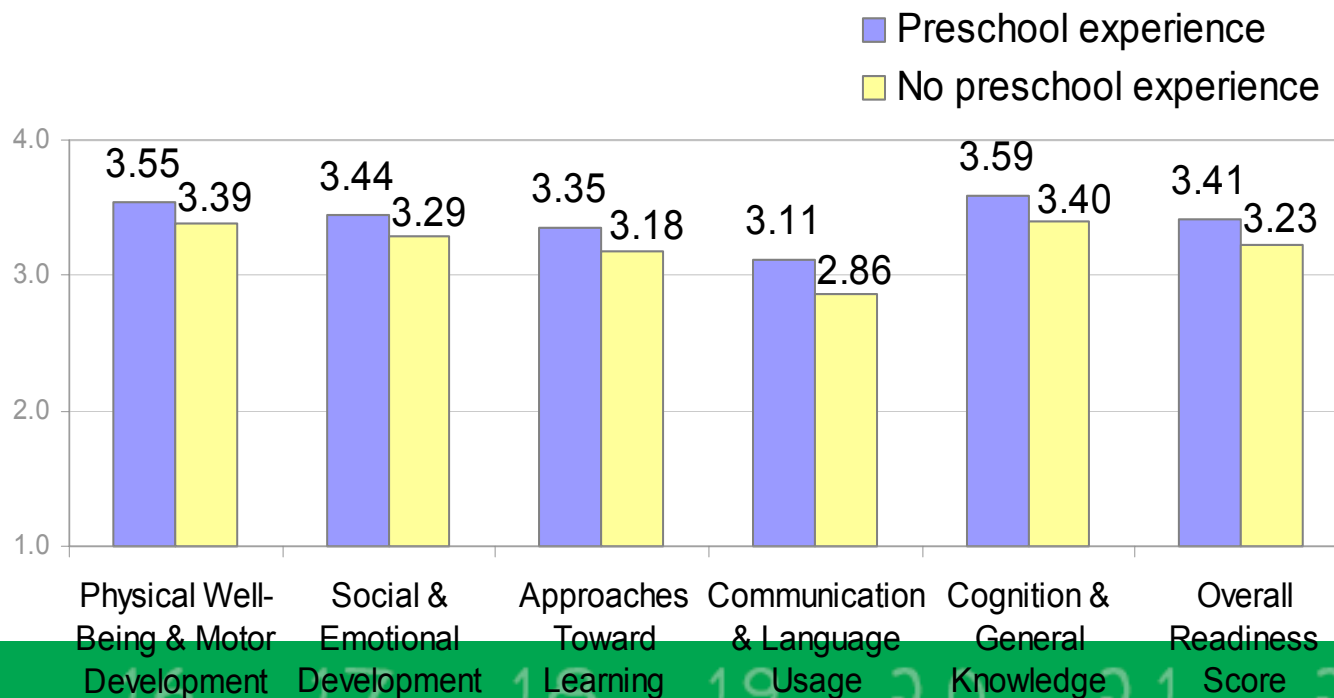
How frequently are children read to in an average week?



(As reported on the *Parent Information Form.*)

*Preschool ... experience the  
community can certainly encourage*

- **62%** of children have attended a formal preschool.
- Preschool is an important precursor to Kindergarten ... and is especially critical to **Communication / Language** and **Cognition / General Knowledge** skill development.



## *Summary of Findings*

- Most Santa Clara County children are in fairly good shape as they enter kindergarten.
- But ... readiness is not black-and-white.
- There are areas where the community can intervene.
- The Partnership is excited to move forward on several fronts in the next two years by:
  - Examining additional family and environmental factors;
  - Following children over time.

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