



PRE-K SUMMER INSTITUTE

Ensuring all children enter school ready to learn



PARTNERS

- Santa Barbara School District
- First 5 Santa Barbara County
- Goleta Union School District
- Healthy Start
- Isla Vista Youth Projects
- Carpinteria Unified School District
- Community Action Commission
- Main Family Resource Center of Carpinteria
- United Way of Santa Barbara County

Pre-Kindergarten programs offer a good start in life by developing children’s intellectual and social capacities. They help children socialize with adults and other children and develop important language, physical, and cognitive skills. There is growing recognition that children who attend these programs have a greater chance of school success and later success in life.

Unfortunately, children from Santa Barbara’s low-income families, often lack the resources to attend private preschools. Totally unprepared for kindergarten, these children begin their scholastic career with an alarming deficit, struggling from the very start with the structured classes and instruction in English. These children do not know basic numbers, color names, or how to spell their name, use scissors, sit still in a circle, share, or cope with frustration.

According to the Healthy Start Director, approximately half of the Santa Barbara Elementary School District’s incoming kindergartners are under-prepared for the school experience that awaits them. For many of these children, they will never catch up with their middle class peers.



To combat this on-going problem, United Way of Santa Barbara, in collaboration with the school districts and other agencies, launched the Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institute project; a three week intensive program that prepares low-income, underserved children for a successful transition to kindergarten.

Delivered on elementary school campuses where the children will become kindergartners, the program familiarizes 4½ year old children with classroom activities and the school setting and helps them to overcome the gap in readiness they already face in comparison to their middle income peers. The institutes help them overcome their fear of being away from home and starting school, build important skills needed for kindergarten, improve their English skills, and engage the families early in the child’s education.

To achieve these objectives, the project has credentialed teachers and trained staff, an established curriculum, successful outreach strategies, and a solid public/private partnership. The project has systems in place to outreach, recruit, enroll, teach and assess children and to help parents participate more directly in their children’s learning.

Over 90% of the children served by the program are from low-income Latino families.



Our Goals:

- Familiarize children with classroom activities and school setting
- Help overcome fear of being away from home
- Build skills needed before entering kindergarten
- Improve English skills
- Engage families in child’s education
- Family Support– offer parenting & reading classes
- Connect families to community resources



Success by 6



**United Way
of Santa Barbara County**

Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes 2009 Summary Report

Pre-Kindergarten Summer Institutes were developed in response to the growing need of local families for an early childhood education experience that would prepare their children for a successful transition to kindergarten. The program targets low-income children and families who lack access to or awareness of early childhood education opportunities. The classes run for three weeks just prior to the beginning of Kindergarten.

For summer 2008 the Pre-Kindergarten Institutes were able to serve a total of 130 children. Thirty of the children (two classes) participated in an extended program lasting five weeks.

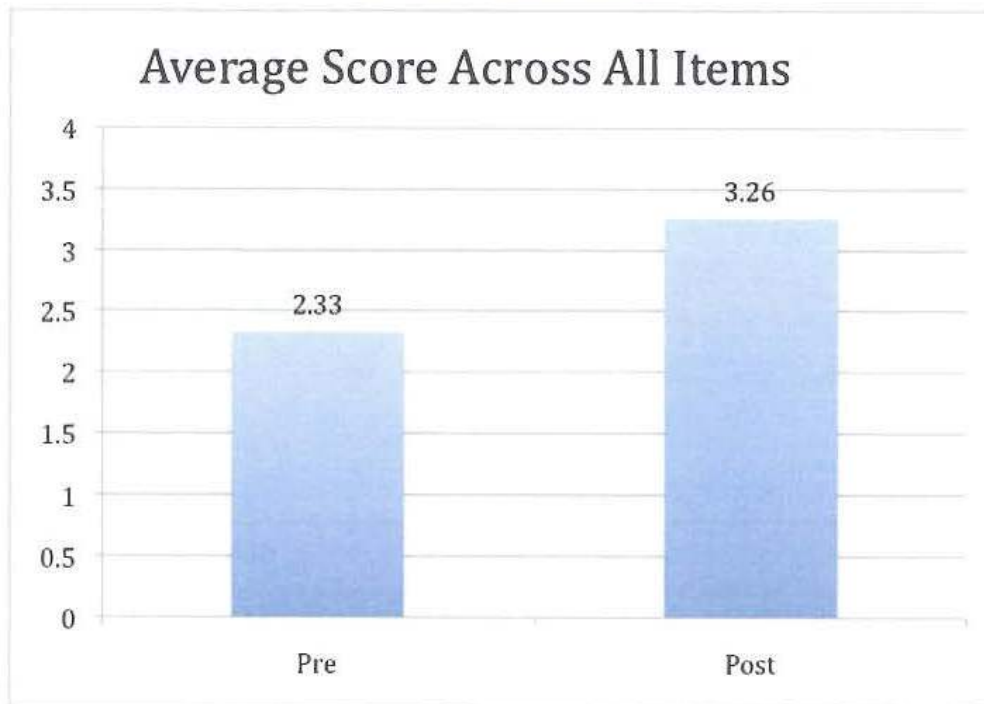
School sites included: Franklin, Harding, Aliso, Canalino, Main School, Isla Vista Children’s Center and Isla Vista Elementary School

Participants were rated by their teacher at the beginning of the supplemental instruction program and at the end of the 3-week program. Those in the extended program were also rated at the end of four weeks. Children were rated on 12 items, which represent 4 skill categories:

- Social Emotional Skills
- Language Skills
- Approach to Learning Skills
- Motor Skills

Summary of results:

Overall Growth



- 130 Pre-K participants showed a 40% improvement at the end of the program!

Evaluation performed by a researcher from the UCSB Gevirtz School of Education.

The statistics indicate that participating children were more ready for kindergarten at the end of the program than at the beginning.