



## Fast Facts: Early Childhood Development and Education in Texas

### Texas' Children: Birth to Five

- In 2004, 29% of Texas children under 18 fell in the 0-4 years old age bracket.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2004, 39% of 3-4 year olds in Texas were enrolled in a nursery school, preschool or kindergarten. Of 3-5 year olds, 53% were enrolled.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2004, over 1 million Texas children under the age of 6 were part of families in which all available parents were members of the labor force.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2004, 23% of children in Texas were part of families with incomes that fell below the national poverty level.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2005, 87% of 3 year olds in Texas were not enrolled in a pre-kindergarten, Head Start or Public Special Education program. Of 4 year olds, 40% were not enrolled (includes children enrolled in "other" programs).<sup>2</sup>
- In 2005, the State of Texas spent \$2,707 per child enrolled in a public pre-kindergarten program.<sup>2</sup>
- The State of Texas received a 4 out of 10 possible on the 2005 rating of state pre-kindergarten program quality.<sup>2</sup>
- While 85% of the brain's core structure (size, growth, and much of its hard wiring) is developed by age 4, less than 9% of public investments in education and development are made by that time. In other words, the period of rapid brain growth that occurs from ages 0-6 is also the period when state and federal governments invest the least in children.<sup>3</sup>
- Over \$5,000 more per child is spent on 6-18 year olds than 0-5 year olds.<sup>3</sup>

### Texans Support Pre-K

- A recent poll conducted by the Impact Texas Communications, LLP and United Ways of Texas demonstrates strong support for a pre-kindergarten system in Texas:<sup>4</sup>
  - **58 percent** of Texas voters have a favorable impression of public education, but **87 percent** think Texas should be doing more to prepare its children to be productive citizens.
  - **81 percent** of Texas voters believe pre-k is important to the overall learning potential of children.
  - **73 percent** of Texas voters believe that Texas should fund high-quality pre-k for all children.
  - **68 percent** of Texas voters believe it is important that pre-k be available in non-school settings, like non-profit or for-profit child care centers or faith-based organizations.
  - **75 percent** of Texas voters would be more likely to support a political candidate that favored pre-k for all children.\*

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\* For more information and the remarks of United Ways of Texas Director Karen R. Johnson, visit <http://www.uwtexas.org/display.php?tid=53> and scroll down for the Press Announcement: Poll Finds Strong Support for Education Funding.

<sup>1</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2003). *Kids Count State Level Data Online- Texas*. Retrieved June 19, 2006, from [http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/profile\\_results.jsp?r=45&d=1&c=s&p=5&x=139&y=8](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/profile_results.jsp?r=45&d=1&c=s&p=5&x=139&y=8).

<sup>2</sup> National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). (2005). *The State of Preschool- 2005 State Preschool Yearbook*. Retrieved June 19, 2006, from [http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf - page=144](http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf-page=144).

<sup>3</sup> Voices for America's Children and the Child and Family Policy Center. (2005). *Early Learning Left Out: Closing the Investment Gap for America's Youngest Children* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: Charles Bruner and Debbie Stein. Access this report online at <http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/Content/ContentGroups/Publications-Voices/ECE1/200515/ELLO2ndEdition.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Impact Texas Communications, LLP and United Ways of Texas. (2005). *Poll Finds Strong Statewide Support for Education Funding: Texans Willing to Pay for High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten for All Children*. Retrieved June 20, 2006, from [http://www.uwtexas.org/data/docs/pkn\\_press\\_release.doc](http://www.uwtexas.org/data/docs/pkn_press_release.doc).