Preschool Learning Activities: Fall 2023
Findings from a National Survey

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Support for this survey was provided by PNC Foundation as part of its Grow Up Great initiative.
PLA Survey Methodology Description

• Online survey of parents, internet access provided
• Weighted for response rates based on national population
• About 1000 parents of children ages 3-5 not yet in kindergarten in each survey
• 6 Surveys conducted from Spring 2020 to Fall (December) 2023
• Pre-pandemic comparison data from the National Household Education Survey (NHES) 2019
Preschool Participation Before and During the Pandemic

Pre-Pandemic: 61%
During Pandemic: 8%, 48%, 55%, 61%, 61%
Including Remote/Hybrid: 30%, 47%, 54%, 56%, 61%, 61%
Child’s Activity Fall 2023: Frequency in the Last Week
49% Played Outdoors Less Than Once a Day

- Read: 46%
- Watch TV: 25%
- Watch videos on TV: 32%
- Watch videos on computer or mobile: 28%
- Play video games: 20%
- Listen or play music: 20%
- Make artwork or crafts: 21%
- Play indoors: 27%
- Play outdoors: 14%

Frequency categories:
- Several times a day
- Once a day
- Several times week
- 1-2 times during week
- Never
**Parent Activities for Early Learning: Pre-Pandemic 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021-2023**

- **Read to the child**
  - Pre-pandemic: 85%
  - Spring 2020: 71%
  - Fall 2020: 71%
  - Spring 2021: 73%
  - Fall 2021: 73%
  - Spring 2022: 67%
  - Fall 2022: 66%
  - Fall 2023: 37%

- **Told a story**
  - Pre-pandemic: 80%
  - Spring 2020: 47%
  - Fall 2020: 52%
  - Spring 2021: 56%
  - Fall 2021: 53%
  - Spring 2022: 63%
  - Fall 2022: 61%
  - Fall 2023: 46%

- **Sang songs**
  - Pre-pandemic: 73%
  - Spring 2020: 73%
  - Fall 2020: 71%
  - Spring 2021: 74%
  - Fall 2021: 67%
  - Spring 2022: 66%
  - Fall 2022: 69%
  - Fall 2023: 70%

- **Taught letters, words, numbers**
  - Pre-pandemic: 62%
  - Spring 2020: 65%
  - Fall 2020: 61%
  - Spring 2021: 59%
  - Fall 2021: 60%
  - Spring 2022: 69%
  - Fall 2022: 68%
  - Fall 2023: 45%

- **Worked on arts and crafts**
  - Pre-pandemic: 66%
  - Spring 2020: 54%
  - Fall 2020: 52%
  - Spring 2021: 53%
  - Fall 2021: 71%
  - Spring 2022: 56%
  - Fall 2022: 52%
  - Fall 2023: 41%
**Parent Activities for Early Learning:** Pre-Pandemic 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021-2023; Weighted

- **Read to the child**
  - Pre-pandemic: 85%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2020: 82%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2020: 72%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2021: 74%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2021: 73%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2022: 71%
  - Fall 2023: 73%

- **Told a story**
  - Pre-pandemic: 72%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2020: 65%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2020: 52%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2021: 56%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2021: 54%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2022: 54%
  - Fall 2023: 52%

- **Sang songs**
  - Pre-pandemic: 73%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2020: 73%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2020: 67%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2021: 71%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2021: 75%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2022: 66%
  - Fall 2023: 67%

- **Taught letters, words, numbers**
  - Pre-pandemic: 67%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2020: 66%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2020: 62%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2021: 66%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2021: 61%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2022: 68%
  - Fall 2023: 69%

- **Worked on arts and crafts**
  - Pre-pandemic: 46%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2020: 45%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2020: 37%
  - During pandemic, Spring 2021: 35%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2021: 40%
  - During pandemic, Fall 2022: 42%
  - Fall 2023: 39%
Read to the Child: Pre-Pandemic 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021-2023 by Race/Ethnicity
How Satisfied Are You With:

- The number and types of books you have to read with the child
- The amount of time you or another adult in the household are able to read with the child
In the last year, to what extent has it become easier or more difficult for you to buy or borrow books to read with the child?
Challenges to Reading for Pleasure with Children

- Child prefers screen time: 33%
- Can’t find time in the day: 29%
- Child too tired: 11%
- Child won’t sit long enough: 36%
- High cost of children’s books: 8%
- I am too tired: 39%
- I don’t enjoy reading: 8%
Walking Distance Between Your Home and Outdoor Play Spaces, Fall 2023

Have a yard or outdoor play area immediately outside of your home (91%: Yes)

- Personal/Community garden
- Courtyard/a quiet street
- Playground w/equipment
- Park
- Ocean/shore, lake, stream, or river
- Forest
- Open field
- Walking, Hiking, or Biking Trails

Within 5 min  | Between 5-10 min  | Between 10-30min  | More than 30 min  | Don't know
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Symptoms</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Problem</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Difficulties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosocial Behavior</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reasons contributed to the household decision against sending the child to some type of program (2022 N = 394; 2023 N = 401)

- Worried about possible coronavirus exposure: 40% (2022 Fall), 82% (2023 Fall)
- Costs, absence of affordable childcare: 51% (2022 Fall), 43% (2023 Fall)
- Parent at home: 18% (2022 Fall), 12% (2023 Fall)
- Relative care preferred: 40% (2022 Fall), 82% (2023 Fall)
Reasons contributed to the household decision against sending the child to Kindergarten (N = 79)

- Program was not offered in person: 3% (2022), 5% (2023)
- Program was not offered remotely: 5% (2022), 7% (2023)
- Worried about possible coronavirus exposure: 6% (2022), 20% (2023)
- Child attending a preschool instead of kindergarten: 29% (2022), 44% (2023)
- Wanted to give the child more time to grow and develop before kindergarten: 37% (2022), 54% (2023)
- Preferred to have the child home with a parent: 56% (2022), 62% (2023)
The Importance of Providing the Following Activities in the Child's Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>A little Important</th>
<th>Not Important at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading and literacy activities</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing activities</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics activities</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science activities</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative arts activities</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor and outdoor physical activity</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health activities</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Screen Time Per Day: Fall 2023

- Passive screen time:
  - Less than 1 hour: 36%
  - 1-2 hours: 52%
  - 2.1-3 hours: 6%
  - More than 3 hours: 6%

- Total screen time:
  - Less than 1 hour: 28%
  - 1-2 hours: 44%
  - 2.1-3 hours: 16%
  - More than 3 hours: 11%
Screen Time Per Day by Income: Fall 2023

- Under 25K
  - Total screen time: 128
  - Passive screen time: 86

- 25K and above
  - Total screen time: 104
  - Passive screen time: 80
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
<th>Fall 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent with IEP</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Services to Children with Special Needs, Spring and Fall 2020, Spring and Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spring 2020, N = 87</th>
<th>Fall 2020, N = 69</th>
<th>Spring 2021, N = 94</th>
<th>Fall 2021, N = 75</th>
<th>Fall 2022, N = 92</th>
<th>Fall 2023, N = 99</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partial support</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No support</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Full support: 79% Spring 2020, 67% Fall 2020, 69% Spring 2021, 57% Fall 2021, 69% Spring 2022, 67% Fall 2022, 79% Fall 2023
- Partial support: 34% Spring 2020, 37% Fall 2020, 34% Spring 2021, 15% Fall 2021, 15% Spring 2022, 16% Fall 2022, 16% Fall 2023
- No support: 7% Spring 2020, 7% Fall 2020, 11% Spring 2021, 18% Fall 2021, 16% Spring 2022, 16% Fall 2022, 5% Fall 2023