



State of the WORLD'S MOTHERS 2009
Investing in the Early Years



Save the Children®

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Front cover:

Santoshi (right) and Analji (left) learn to write letters in a preschool class supported by Save the Children in the far-western region of Nepal. Santoshi says she likes coming to school, and when she grows up, she wants to be a teacher.
Photo by Brent Stirton

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EL SALVADOR ►

Investing in the Early Years

IN COMMEMORATION OF MOTHER'S DAY, Save the Children is publishing its tenth annual *State of the World's Mothers* report. Focusing on the critical importance of children's experiences in their early years, this report suggests specific activities mothers and caregivers can do with their young children to help them reach their full potential in school. The report highlights the urgent need to reach 75 million children worldwide who fail to complete primary school as well as the 2.5 million fourth graders in the United States who are not reading at grade level. It shines a spotlight on places where children have the best chance to succeed in school and shows that effective solutions to early education challenges are affordable – even in the poorest communities.



Foreword



▲ KENTUCKY

Take one step into baby McKenzie's chaotic house in Owsley County, Kentucky and you see why community care for the youngest of babies is essential. Without help, this bright-eyed 4-month-old would likely go to school unprepared and fall quickly behind – as two-thirds of our fourth graders do in the United States.

Baby McKenzie lives with her single, teenage mom, a teenage aunt and her grandparents in a county where the median family income just topped \$17,500 in 2005. No one in the household has a job. Working with the local school district, Save the Children is fighting for McKenzie's future – and we're doing this not only for children here at home, but for children around the world.

Seventy-five million children in the world don't get a basic primary school education. We at Save the Children, where I serve as a trustee, are determined to help provide all children – whether in Appalachia or Africa – a positive start in life with loving home care, opportunities to learn and explore, and the chance to grow up to be anything they want to be.

Years of research prove that interventions early in life can help pull people up out of poverty. And they're incredibly cost-effective. In the U.S., \$1.00 spent in the first 60 days of life on nutrition programs alone saves up to \$3.13 in health care costs. Comprehensive early childhood development programs can mean the difference between a taxpaying, enterprising citizen and someone on the public dole or occupying taxpayer-funded prisons.

McKenzie is headed in the right direction. Her mom, Betty Sue, dotes on her and is ready to listen to Vetta Kidd, a friendly young woman who comes to visit the baby regularly as part of Save the Children's early childhood effort. Vetta is from the area, known to the folks who live on the hills and in the hollers of this community. The local health clinic was happy to identify pregnant girls who would need help as new moms, allowing Vetta to start her work before birth.

Once the baby arrives, Vetta keeps the mother on track, promoting breastfeeding, checking on immunizations and providing hints on playing with the newborn. Things that more affluent mothers do almost instinctively – identifying body parts, singing to the baby, reciting rhymes and reading stories – all are new ideas in some poorer households. In her visits, Vetta brings age-appropriate toys and books, books, books to these homes where they are often completely absent.

Betty Sue also goes regularly with other moms to the local school, to meet with teachers who will make sure McKenzie is ready for school when the time comes. When McKenzie is 3, the home visits will be replaced by monthly visits to the by now familiar school where the little girl will go home with a fresh bag of books every month. By the time she starts school, she should be as prepared as children in the most affluent areas of the country.

The research is astounding. Children who participate in Save the Children's *Early Steps to School Success* program as babies and toddlers score better than the national average for language development. And one of the main reasons the children do so well is that their mothers are involved, and will likely stay involved. We've learned that emphasizing the health, education and participation of mothers works both in America and in dozens of poor countries where Save the Children operates.

That's why, every year, though we are an organization dedicated to children, we take a look at the *State of the World's Mothers*. This report shows what a difference it can make if we invest early – making a commitment to mothers and their young children can change a country. It also shows how much more we need to do in so many poor communities. But we can do it. We can ensure a healthy start, and a promising future, for children everywhere. It's a good news story.

Cokie Roberts
Author, News Commentator
and Save the Children Trustee

Introduction



▲ HAITI

Every year, our *State of the World's Mothers* report reminds us of the inextricable link between the well-being of mothers and their children. More than 75 years of experience on the ground have shown us that when mothers have health care, education and economic opportunity, both they and their children have the best chance to survive and thrive.

During the critical period in a child's life from birth to age 5, the role of the mother is especially important. This is when children's bodies and brains are growing rapidly, when they begin to develop language skills, when the foundation for future health or sickness is established, and when lifelong approaches to learning and living with others are shaped.

This year's report looks at how well children around the world are faring during these formative early years. It examines where families and communities are doing a good job of preparing their children to succeed in school and in life, and where they are setting up their children for failure on both fronts. It finds alarming numbers of children at risk of failure in primary school – both overseas and here in the United States. And it shows how costly this failure will be to society as a whole if we allow it to happen.

To address the early childhood development challenge, Save the Children is working on three fronts:

First, Save the Children is increasing awareness of challenges and solutions in early childhood development. This report highlights the challenges that mothers and families face as they juggle work, child-rearing and threats brought on by poverty, AIDS, displacement and more. It

examines those states and countries that are succeeding – and those that are failing – to prepare their children to succeed in school. It calls attention to areas where greater investments are needed and shows that effective strategies are working, even in some of the poorest places on earth.

Second, Save the Children is encouraging action by mobilizing citizens and organizations in the United States and around the world to support early childhood development and to advocate for better policies and increased funding for proven programs.

Finally, we are making a major difference on the ground. Save the Children is working in partnership with government agencies and local organizations to deliver innovative early childhood development programs in the developing world and in poor communities in the United States. We help parents to raise healthier children and to begin preparing them for school success early in life. We show preschool teachers and child care providers how to create welcoming learning environments for young children. All of Save the Children's education programs emphasize the importance of schooling for girls and active participatory learning that strengthens students' capacities to think creatively, solve problems, negotiate and resolve conflicts.

We call on the world's leaders to take stock of how mothers and young children are faring in every country. Investing in this most basic partnership of all – between a mother and her child – is the first and best step in ensuring healthy children, prosperous families and strong communities.

Every one of us has a role to play. Please read the *Take Action* section of this report, and visit www.savethechildren.org on a regular basis to find out what you can do to make a difference.

Charles F. MacCormack
President and CEO
Save the Children



Executive Summary

Some 75 million children worldwide fail to complete primary school, either because they drop out in the early grades or because they never got the chance to attend school at all. In the United States, nearly 2.5 million fourth graders are not reading at grade level – this is 68 percent of all American fourth graders in public schools.

The cost to the world of this lost brain power is staggering.

Early childhood – the period from birth to age 5 – is the most critical period of growth and learning in a person's life. What happens – and what does not happen – during these earliest years influences how the rest of childhood, adolescence and adult life unfold. When children receive good quality care and learning opportunities in their earliest years, they have a better chance to grow up healthy, to do well in school, and to reach their full potential in well-being and productivity.

State of the World's Mothers 2009 looks at early childhood education as a proven investment in economic prosperity, social development and the survival and well-being of children and their families. It presents two first-ever indexes, ranking 100 developing countries and 50 U.S. states based on how well prepared their youngest children are to succeed in school. It examines economic data from around the world showing that investments in early childhood pay off over the long term. It also shows that tools and resources exist to keep all children healthy, safe and learning, but that these resources are not reaching the mothers and children who need them most.

KEY FINDINGS

1) Early childhood care and development is a proven and powerful investment in national well-being and future economic prosperity. Research from around the world consistently shows that investing in quality early learning programs is one of the most effective ways to improve children's success in school, to increase incomes and to reduce costs to society. In fact, the gains tend to be the highest when early childhood investments target the youngest children and the most disadvantaged groups. *(To read more, turn to pages 13-15.)*

2) In the United States, an alarming number of children are at great risk of failure in school because they are not getting the care and support they need in their early years. New Mexico, Nevada, Mississippi, Arizona and Alabama are the bottom five states where young children face the greatest obstacles to success in school. These states scored low on indicators of parental involvement, quality of home life and preschool participation. Parents in these states are clearly struggling to give their

young children a good start in life – and as a result 71 to 81 percent of fourth graders in the public schools in these states are not reading at grade level. Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine are the top five states where, generally speaking, parents and communities are doing a better job of preparing children to succeed in school. *(To read more, turn to pages 25-29.)*

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT: A SNAPSHOT

Worldwide, 75 million children fail to complete primary school, either because they drop out in the early grades or because they never got the chance to attend school at all.

In the United States, nearly 2.5 million fourth graders are not reading at grade level – this is 68 percent of all American fourth graders in public schools.

By age 3, roughly 85 percent of the brain's core structure is formed.

Because of poverty, poor health, insufficient nutrition and deficient care, nearly 40 percent of all children under age 5 in developing countries fail to reach their potential in cognitive development. That's more than 200 million children worldwide.

U.S. economists estimate that a strong investment in children's development at the earliest stages would yield returns as high as 15 to 17 percent per year in better classroom performance, fewer health care costs, higher workforce productivity, lower welfare costs and less crime.

Internationally, economists estimate that each extra year of primary education will increase a person's future productivity by 10 to 30 percent, varying country to country.

Executive Summary

3) Compared to other wealthy countries, the United States is losing ground in educational attainment. The U.S. is falling behind in the resource that matters most in the new global economy: human capital. Four decades ago, America had the best high school graduation rate in the world, but by 2006 it had slipped to 18th out of 24 industrialized countries. As recently as 1995, the U.S. was still tied for first place in the proportion of young adults with a college degree, but by 2000 it had slipped to 9th place, and by 2006 to 14th place. The United States also has one of the highest college dropout rates in the industrialized world – 53 percent of Americans who enter college do not finish. *(To read more, turn to pages 31-33.)*

4) In the developing world, nearly 40 percent of all children under 5 fail to reach their potential in cognitive development because of poverty, poor health and nutrition and deficient care. Chad, Afghanistan, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Mali are the bottom five countries where children are most likely to miss out on primary school. In these countries, dire poverty, lack of public services and conflict stack the odds against the youngest children. Approximately 1 child in 5 in these countries does not even survive to age 5, and those who do often suffer from cognitive and physical impairments that limit their development and productivity. In Burundi, 25 percent of primary school-aged children are not attending school. In Mali, Chad and Guinea-Bissau, 37, 40 and 55 percent are not in school. Cuba, Armenia, Cyprus, Chile and Azerbaijan are the top five developing countries where children are better prepared to succeed in primary school. *(To read more, turn to pages 9-11 and 17-23.)*

5) The future of humankind will be defined by how well mothers today are able to raise the next generation. A mother's influence on her child's cognitive development begins before the child is born. Her education level, health, nutritional and economic status all impact the well-being of her child from the moment it is conceived. It is often said that a mother is her child's first and best teacher. Yet mothering, in many ways, has never been so difficult as it is in today's global world, and possibly never so isolated, unsupported and undervalued. Mothers around the world are solving child care challenges as best they can, but millions of the poorest mothers and caregivers need help to access tools, information and support to give their children the best possible future. *(To read more, turn to pages 9-15 and 43-46.)*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Child development experts – from local teachers to Nobel Prize winners – are telling the world about the critical importance of investing in the first five years of children's lives. But with few exceptions, the political will to take action for mothers and young children is the missing ingredient in this proven recipe for success. To help ensure more children succeed in school and in life, Save the Children has developed the following recommendations:

1) Invest in better health care for mothers and young children. The links between good health and nutrition and healthy brain development have been well documented. Good care for young children must begin with care for pregnant mothers, ensuring that they are adequately nourished, free from infections and exposure to harmful substances, and monitored for complications during pregnancy. Prenatal and postnatal care should include counseling to encourage a safe birth, awareness of danger signs that require immediate attention, a plan for going to a skilled health care provider, counseling on how to care for the newborn, and help to ensure breastfeeding. Health outreach strategies and funding must do a better job of targeting the poorest and most marginalized mothers and children in every country. More funding is needed for wellness, prevention and family planning, as well as for staffing, transport, equipment, medicine, health worker training and the day-to-day costs of operating health systems. Health care for young children should start in the home, where many of the simplest ailments can be successfully prevented or treated by informed parents, supported by community-based health outreach workers. *(To read more, turn to pages 35-39.)*

2) Provide coaching and information to help new mothers and fathers give their young children the best possible chance to succeed. Parents are the most influential people in a young child's life, and when they are equipped with better child-raising tools and techniques they can often do wonders. Many successful programs in developing and industrialized countries have improved outcomes for children by teaching new moms and dads to be better parents. This can be done through home-based coaching, community support groups and classes outside the home. In addition to breastfeeding and basic health care, these programs encourage parents to feed their children more nutritious food, to interact more with their children, to create a learning environment in the home, to reduce stress in the family and to discipline without hitting. Parenting coaches can also serve as a critical first line of defense against child abuse and neglect, intervening on

THE 2009 MOTHERS' INDEX: SWEDEN TOPS LIST, NIGER RANKS LAST, UNITED STATES RANKS 27TH

the child's behalf when necessary and rallying community resources to safeguard the child. (To read more, turn to pages 35-39.)

3) Improve training and support for early child care providers and preschool teachers. Good child care is an extension of good parenting. The quality of early childhood education outside the home depends on the ability of the caregiver to provide a secure, consistent, sensitive, stimulating and rewarding environment. To be successful, early child care and preschool facilities – whether center, community or home based – should have sufficient numbers of staff for the number of children, and the caregivers should be well trained, well supervised and well paid. In addition, every effort should be made to retain caregivers so that they are consistent, familiar and reassuring figures in children's lives. (To read more, turn to pages 35-39.)

4) Expand early learning opportunities for children affected by AIDS, conflict and natural disasters. In communities destabilized by these crises, young children often need special attention. Governments and NGOs can help by creating "safe spaces" and alternative child care arrangements where young children benefit from a secure environment and a return to comforting routines. Through play, games, songs, art and other activities, children can process their emotions under the guidance of sympathetic adults, and begin to turn their lives around. (To read more, turn to pages 38-39.)

5) Increase government support for proven early childhood development solutions in the United States and around the world. Governments everywhere should invest in early childhood development (ECD) programs and create plans of action to expand ECD programs and improve related policies. The United States should demonstrate leadership toward the goal of "Education for All" by providing \$1 billion for basic education in developing countries – including support for early childhood development – and \$900 million for child survival programs to provide critical health care to children under 5. The United States should also do more to help the youngest children in need here at home by considerably increasing funding for Early Head Start in fiscal year 2010, and doubling funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant. (To read more, turn to page 41.)

Save the Children's tenth annual *Mothers' Index* compares the well-being of mothers and children in 158 countries – more than in any previous year. The *Mothers' Index* also provides information on an additional 15 countries, 7 of which report sufficient data to present findings on children's indicators. When these are included, the total comes to 173 countries.

Sweden, Norway and Australia top the rankings this year. The top 10 countries, in general, attain very high scores for mothers' and children's health, educational and economic status. Niger ranks last among the 158 countries surveyed. The 10 bottom-ranked countries – seven from sub-Saharan Africa – are a reverse image of the top 10, performing poorly on all indicators. The United States places 27th again this year.

Conditions for mothers and their children in the bottom countries are grim. On average, 1 in 24 mothers will die from pregnancy-related causes. More than 1 child in 7 dies before his or her fifth birthday, and over 1 child in 3 suffers from malnutrition. Forty percent of the population lacks access to safe water and only 4 girls for every 5 boys are enrolled in primary school.

The gap in availability of maternal and child health services is especially dramatic when comparing Sweden and Niger. Skilled health personnel are present at virtually every birth in Sweden, while only 33 percent of births are attended in Niger. A typical Swedish woman has almost 17 years of formal education and will live to be 83 years old, 65 percent are using some modern method of contraception, and only one in 185 will lose a child before his or her fifth birthday. At the opposite end of the spectrum, in Niger, a typical woman has little more than 3 years of education and will live to be 56. Only 5 percent of women are using modern contraception, and 1 child in 6 dies before his or her fifth birthday. At this rate, every mother in Niger is likely to suffer the loss of a child.

Zeroing in on the children's well-being portion of the *Mothers' Index*, Sweden finishes first and Niger is last out of 165 countries. While nearly every Swedish child – girl and boy alike – enjoys good health and education, children in Niger face a 1 in 6 risk of dying before age 5. Forty-four percent of Niger's children are malnourished and 58 percent lack access to safe water. Only 51 percent of children in Niger are enrolled in primary school, and within that meager enrollment, boys outnumber girls 4 to 3.

These statistics go far beyond mere numbers. The human despair and lost opportunities represented in these numbers demand mothers everywhere be given the basic tools they need to break the cycle of poverty and improve the quality of life for themselves, their children, and for generations to come.

See the Appendix for the Complete *Mothers' Index* and Country Rankings.

School Success Index for Developing Countries

Country or Territory	Primary school-aged children out of school		Gross intake ratio in the last grade of primary school 2007	School Success Rank	Under-5 survival rate (%) 2007	Grade I repetition rate (%) 2007	Female literacy rate (%) 2007	Total fertility rate (%) 2007
	percentage 2007	absolute no. (thousands) 2006						
Cuba	1	27	93	1	99	Ø	100	1.5
Armenia	9	12	91	2	98	Ø	99	1.4
Cyprus	1	0.3	101	3	100	1	97	1.6
Chile	–	–	95	4	99	3	96	1.9
Azerbaijan	14	82	93	5	96	0.3	99	1.8
Brunei Darussalam	3	1	107	6	99	1	93	2.3
China	–	655 [‡]	–	7	98	1	90	1.7
Kazakhstan	1	9	101	8	97	0.1	99	2.3
Sri Lanka	3	51	106	8	98	1	90	1.9
Mongolia	2	7	110	10	96	1	98	1.9
Kuwait	11	24	91	11	99	3	92	2.2
Kyrgyzstan	8	29	95	12	96	0.2	99	2.5
Maldives	2	1	129	13	97	1	97	2.6
United Arab Emirates	2	13	105	13	99	3	89	2.3
Uzbekistan	–	5 [‡]	100	15	96	Ø	96*	2.5
Bahrain	1	0.4	117	16	99	3	86	2.3
Qatar	2	1	104	16	99	1	90	2.7
Vietnam	6*	–	102*	16	99	3	87*	2.2
Colombia	9	367	107	19	98	6	93	2.2
Ecuador	1	11	106	20	98	3	92	2.6
Trinidad and Tobago	11	15	88	21	97	11	98	1.6
Argentina	1	36	97	22	98	10	98	2.3
Jamaica	9	31	82	23	97	4	91	2.5
Jordan	6	53	99	23	98	1	89	3.1
Turkey	9	729	96	23	98	4	81	2.1
Tunisia	3	27	120	26	98	1	69	1.9
Peru	1	33	101	27	98	5	86	2.5
Uruguay	2	0.1	99	27	99	14	98	2.1
Costa Rica	–	41 [‡]	91	29	99	14	96	2.1
Indonesia	2	418	99	29	97	7	88	2.2
Iran, Islamic Republic of	6	391	105	29	97	4	79	2.0
Mexico	1	73	104	29	97	7	91	2.2
Oman	25	82	88	33	99	0.3	77	3.0
Venezuela, Bolivarian Rep. of	6	226	98	33	98	8	93*	2.6
Panama	1	4	99	35	98	9	93	2.6
Tajikistan	2	19	95	36	93	0.0	100	3.4
Philippines	8	953	94	37	97	6	94	3.3
Dominican Republic	15	255	89	38	96	6	90	2.8
Myanmar	1	16	95	39	90	1	86*	2.1
Cape Verde	15	9	86	40	97	2	79	3.4
Paraguay	5	43	95	40	97	10	93	3.1
South Africa	9	469	92	42	94	6	87	2.7
Bolivia	4	52	101	43	94	1	85	3.5
Botswana	16	49	95	44	96	7	83	2.9
Egypt	2	233	98	45	96	Ø	61	2.9
El Salvador	6	39	91	46	98	13	83	2.7
Occupied Palestinian Territory	23	94	83	47	97	0.0	89	5.2
Suriname	6	2	84	47	97	18	88	2.4
Syrian Arab Republic	3*	102 [‡]	114	49	98	12	76	3.1
Brazil	4	597	106	50	98	24	91	2.3

Country or Territory	Primary school-aged children out of school		Gross intake ratio in the last grade of primary school 2007	School Success Rank	Under-5 survival rate (%) 2007	Grade I repetition rate (%) 2007	Female literacy rate (%) 2007	Total fertility rate (%) 2007
	percentage 2007	absolute no. (thousands) 2006						
Honduras	3	33	88	51	98	14	84	3.3
Algeria	4	88	95	52	96	12	66	2.4
Nicaragua	9	72	73	53	97	18	81	2.8
Belize	1	0.4	106	54	98	14	70*	3.0
India	6	7,208	86	55	93	4	54	2.8
Namibia	13	89	77	56	93	20	87	3.2
Bangladesh	8	1,371	72	57	94	7	48	2.9
Iraq	11	508	75	58	96	9	64*	4.3
Bhutan	20	20	73	59	92	8	42	2.2
Morocco	11	429	83	59	97	16	43	2.4
Swaziland	21	45	67	61	91	21	78*	3.5
Lesotho	27	102	78	62	92	28	90*	3.4
Pakistan	34	6,821	62	63	91	6	40	3.5
Sudan	56*	2,798‡	50	63	89	3	52*	4.3
Cambodia	11	213	85	65	91	21	68	3.2
Guatemala	3	83	77	66	96	24	68	4.2
Ghana	28	967	71	67	89	10	58	3.9
Kenya	24	1,371	93	67	88	6	70*	5.0
Tanzania, United Rep. of	2	143	74	69	88	8	66	5.2
Madagascar	1	106	62	70	89	13	65*	4.8
Yemen	25	906	60	70	93	4	40	5.5
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	16	125	75	72	93	33	67	3.2
Mauritania	19	92	59	72	88	9	48	4.4
Nepal	24	702	76	74	95	26	44	3.3
Senegal	27	513	49	75	89	5	32	4.7
Zambia	5	150	88	76	83	6	60*	5.2
Comoros	45*	36‡	50	77	93	33	70	4.4
Congo	42	243	73	77	88	28	82	4.5
Nigeria	35	8,097	72	79	81	4	64	5.4
Benin	17	244	64	80	88	1	28	5.5
Gabon	11*	10‡	75*	81	91	48*	82	3.1
Malawi	12	202	55	82	89	23	65	5.6
Mozambique	24	954	42	83	83	4	33	5.2
Ethiopia	28	3,721	46	84	88	7	23	5.3
Cameroon	–	475‡	55	85	85	26	60*	4.4
Côte d'Ivoire	44*	1,164‡	45	85	87	20	39*	4.5
Uganda	–	1,168‡	54	87	87	18	66	6.5
Togo	21	176	57	88	90	24	38*	4.9
Guinea	25	389	64	89	85	4	18*	5.5
Rwanda	6	303	35	90	82	18	60*	5.9
Congo, Dem. Rep. of the	–	5,203‡	38*	91	84	18*	54*	6.7
Burkina Faso	52	1,215	33	92	81	6	22	6.0
Niger	56	1,245	33	93	82	0.2	16	7.2
Equatorial Guinea	11*	26‡	58	94	79	35	80*	5.4
Central African Republic	46	375	24	95	83	31	33*	4.6
Mali	37	793	49	96	80	10	16	6.5
Guinea-Bissau	55*	132‡	27*	97	80	24*	54	7.1
Burundi	25	324	36	98	82	37	52*	6.8
Afghanistan	–	1,816‡	38	99	74	9	13*	7.1
Chad	40*	1,186‡	31	100	79	23	13*	6.2

For complete methodology, indicator definitions, data sources and discussion of study limitations see *Methodology and Research Notes*.

Note: Data refer to the year specified in the column heading or the most recent year available.

* In the absence of recent data, estimates from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics based on outdated census or survey information from 2003 or earlier were used and should be interpreted with caution.

‡ Data are UNICEF estimates: www.childinfo.org/education_outofschool.php

– No data

⊙ Magnitude nil or negligible

School Success Index for the United States

State	4th grade public school students who scored below the proficient level in reading		School Success Rank	Children aged 0-5 who are read to 3 or more days a week by a family member (%)	Children aged 3-4 enrolled in nursery school, preschool or kindergarten**	Children aged 0-5 in single-parent households (%)***	Children aged 0-5 whose mother's mental and emotional health status is excellent or very good (%)
	percentage 2007	absolute no. 2007		2003*	2007	2007	2003*
Connecticut	59	24,800	1	86	65	27	80
New Hampshire	59	8,900	2	87	47	23	81
Massachusetts	51	36,000	3	85	61	26	78
Vermont	59	3,900	4	89	49	29	81
Maine	64	9,100	5	89	41	27	80
Minnesota	63	37,400	6	87	43	25	80
Iowa	64	21,900	7	87	46	27	79
Maryland	64	39,100	8	84	49	30	81
New Jersey	57	55,900	9	77	64	26	77
Utah	66	26,800	9	82	39	17	78
Wyoming	64	3,900	11	86	44	32	80
Hawaii	74	10,200	12	82	52	27	76
Virginia	62	55,200	13	81	49	28	79
Idaho	65	13,000	14	82	33	20	79
Nebraska	65	13,300	14	84	43	28	79
Pennsylvania	60	77,500	14	86	48	30	77
Colorado	64	36,900	17	82	44	25	77
Washington	64	48,200	18	83	41	27	79
Montana	61	6,300	19	84	35	24	79
Kansas	64	21,200	20	84	45	28	76
Illinois	68	104,100	21	81	54	30	75
Missouri	68	45,200	22	83	43	32	79
New York	64	122,900	22	79	58	31	76
Michigan	68	81,200	24	81	46	31	78
Wisconsin	64	38,200	25	83	43	29	77
Florida	66	131,800	26	76	52	34	80
Kentucky	67	31,900	27	83	43	33	76
West Virginia	72	14,400	27	85	41	31	74
Oregon	72	29,900	29	83	39	26	74
Alaska	71	6,800	30	82	40	29	76
North Dakota	65	4,500	31	80	30	28	80
Delaware	66	5,900	32	84	45	36	75
North Carolina	71	77,100	33	81	45	33	75
South Dakota	66	5,900	34	82	38	33	77
Ohio	64	83,600	35	82	45	33	74
Indiana	67	52,400	36	81	39	31	74
Rhode Island	69	7,700	37	82	44	33	72
Oklahoma	73	33,200	38	81	41	34	74
South Carolina	74	37,800	39	82	49	38	71
Arkansas	71	25,400	40	75	47	35	75
Georgia	72	86,900	41	73	50	34	74
District of Columbia	86	3,900	42	74	68	47	74
Texas	70	239,600	43	75	42	31	72
California	77	362,800	44	76	50	29	66
Louisiana	80	41,100	45	73	52	42	75
Tennessee	73	52,500	46	76	38	36	74
Alabama	71	40,300	47	76	43	37	74
Arizona	76	61,600	48	74	36	32	71
Mississippi	81	30,000	49	73	51	43	71
Nevada	76	24,700	50	75	28	30	69
New Mexico	76	18,500	51	77	38	40	69
U.S. National	68	2,451,300		79	47	31	74

Notes:

* Findings from 2007 were not available for inclusion in this report. For 2007 data see www.nschdata.org

**Includes children enrolled in educational programs sponsored by federal, state or local agencies, e.g. Head Start. Does not include private homes that

primarily provide custodial care.

*** Single-parent families may include cohabiting couples and do not include children living with step-parents or in group quarters (e.g. institutions, dormitories, or group homes).

For complete methodology, indicator definitions, data sources and discussion of study limitations see *Methodology and Research Notes*.

State prekindergarten programs are insufficiently funded to meet The National Institute for Early Education

Research's (NIEER) quality benchmarks. For a review of access to, quality in and resources devoted to state-funded preschool programs see: Barnett, Steven et al. *The State of Preschool 2008: State Preschool Yearbook*. (NIEER).

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT REPORT CARD*

How wealthy countries measure up on suggested minimum standards for ECD

	Number of benchmarks achieved 2008	Parental leave of 1 year at 50% of salary	A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children	Subsidized and regulated child care services for 25% of children under 3	Subsidized and accredited early education services for 80% of 4-year-olds	80% of all child care staff trained	50% of staff in accredited early education services tertiary educated with relevant qualifications	Minimum staff-to-children ratio of 1:15 in preschool education	1% of GDP spent on early childhood services	Child poverty rate less than 10%	Near-universal outreach of essential child health services	Percentage of children aged 3-4 enrolled in preschool [‡] 2006
Best in Class												
Sweden	10	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	84
Iceland	9		★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	94
Denmark	8	★	★	★	★		★	★	★	★		94
Finland	8	★	★	★		★		★	★	★	★	44
France	8	★	★	★	★	★	★		★	★		112
Norway	8	★	★	★	★			★	★	★	★	89
"A" for (Average) Effort												
Belgium (Flanders)	6		★	★	★		★			★	★	125
Hungary	6		★		★	★	★	★		★		82
New Zealand	6		★	★	★	★	★	★				91
Slovenia	6	★	★	★		★	★				★	75
Austria	5		★		★	★		★		★		68
Netherlands	5		★	★		★	★	★				37
United Kingdom**	5		★	★	★	★	★					90
Germany	4		★		★		★	★				97
Italy	4		★		★	★	★					105
Japan	4		★		★	★					★	83
Portugal	4		★		★	★	★					72
Republic of Korea	4		★			★	★				★	24
Falling Behind												
Mexico	3		★			★	★					53
Spain	3				★	★	★					123
Switzerland	3					★		★		★		26
United States	3			★			★	★				48
Australia	2			★			★					42
Canada	1						★					—
Ireland	1						★					24
Total benchmarks met		6	19	13	15	17	20	12	6	10	8	

* Report Card adapted from UNICEF: *The Child Care Transition*, Innocenti Report Card 8. (Innocenti Research Center: Florence: 2008)

** Data for the United Kingdom refer to England only

‡ Source: OECD (2008), *Education at a Glance 2008*, Table C2.1

★ Benchmark met
— Data not available