



RESEARCH SUMMARY

Summary of Findings on LAUP Outcomes 2005-2016

December 2016

In 2005, LAUP was instituted to support early care and education centers and family child care homes in high-need areas throughout Los Angeles County. Foremost among our goals has been to ensure that young children are supported, so they can enter school prepared cognitively, socially, and emotionally for long-term success. Following the development of a Master Plan by close to 200 members of an advisory committee, LAUP has:

- recruited and built sites;
- funded preschool spaces;
- provided training and coaching to early educators;
- provided resources and training to parents;
- developed and implemented a quality rating system and tiered payment system;
- advocated for the importance of early education;
- and developed and implemented various programs to improve the ECE workforce.

This summary brings together highlights from several studies conducted by LAUP and independent research agencies Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and Applied Survey Research (ASR). These highlights focus on outcomes for the children LAUP has served. In general, the findings point to a pattern of positive outcomes for 1) children’s cognitive development within their preschool year, 2) children’s social and emotional development in preschool, 3) children’s health, 4) children’s longitudinal academic and social progress, and 5) family engagement.

Over the 10 years following its inception, LAUP has contributed to the education of over 130,000 children. LAUP has prepared these children to enter school ready to succeed, and has strengthened providers’ and families’ ability to support them.

130,787 children served

731 providers served

523 center-based providers

208 family child care home providers

LAUP children consistently demonstrated their readiness to succeed in school.

MPR was hired by First 5 LA to measure the progress from fall to spring of several cohorts of LAUP children. Targets for children’s growth in cognitive and social-emotional domains were established, and children met all but three targets over the course of the three years studied.^{1, 2, 3}

Over three years, children met 12 out of 15 targets for cognitive and social-emotional development.

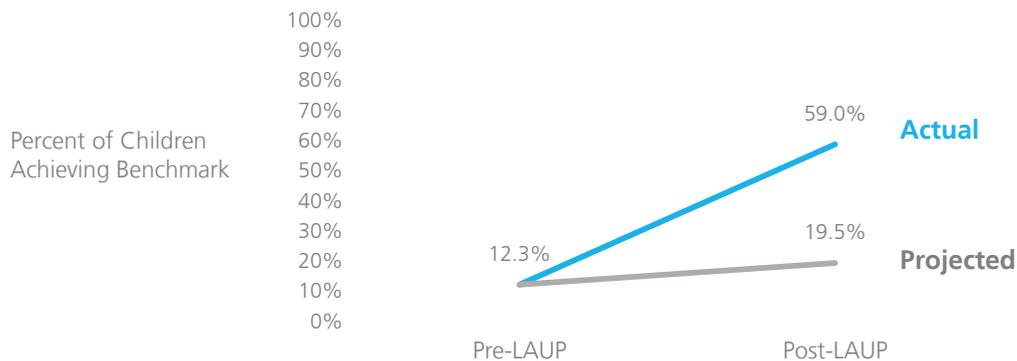
LAUP Child Outcomes Targets			
Domain	Were targets met in...?		
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Vocabulary Development	✓	✓	✓
Letter Naming	No	No	✓
Mathematics Development	No	✓	✓
Fine Motor and Literacy Development	✓	✓	✓
Social-Emotional Development	✓	✓	✓

Preschool cohorts made good academic progress within their preschool years.

Studies of LAUP children that focused on their progress within the preschool year have consistently found that children are ready to enter kindergarten in terms of their cognitive and social-emotional development. Below are key findings from the Universal Preschool Child Outcomes Studies (UPCOS), Successful Kids in Pre-K Project studies (SKIPP), and LAUP's studies.

- Across four years, LAUP children who were assessed in English made significant progress in literacy from fall to spring, relative to peers nationally.^{4, 5, 6, 7}
- English-language learners (ELLs) made significant progress in language and mathematics, relative to their Spanish-speaking peers across the nation.^{8, 9}
- Multiple studies showed that in mathematics, children made significant progress from fall to spring, although Spanish-speaking children tended to score below the national mean.^{10, 11, 12}
- At the end of their preschool year, 93% of LAUP children demonstrated proficiency in the basic building blocks of school readiness.¹³
- There was a strong positive effect of preschool on kindergarten readiness. LAUP children, as well as those with other preschools, outperformed their peers who had no preschool.¹⁴
- A significantly greater proportion of LAUP graduates met or exceeded their kindergarten teachers' expectation for school readiness, compared to kindergarteners who had not experienced preschool.¹⁵
- On average, learning of letters during the pre-K year was more than twice what it would have been without pre-K. The ability to recognize and name letters is a critical component of early reading skills.¹⁶

Former LAUP students demonstrated an ability to recognize and name letters at the beginning of kindergarten that was more than two times the effect of typical development alone during the pre-K year.



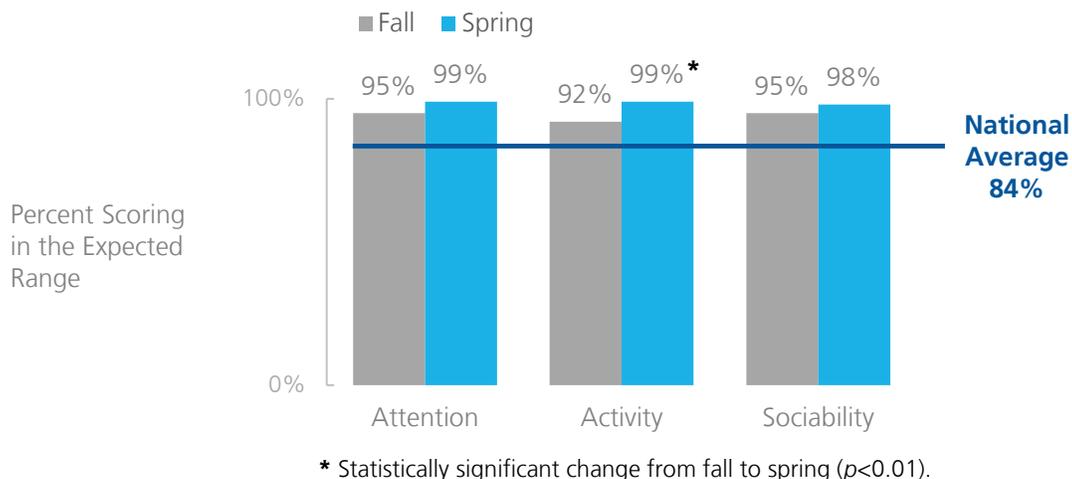
- Former LAUP students demonstrated an enhanced ability to break words into sounds, representing more than five times the effect of typical development during the pre-K year. In other words, one year of pre-K meant that children gained five times as much phonological awareness (understanding of how sounds combine to make words) as they would have gained without pre-K.¹⁷
- Former LAUP students scored 25% higher than the national average in recognizing and naming letters. LAUP students scored an average of 15 on the letter naming measure, and the national average is 12, based on a DIBELS report.¹⁸

Social-emotional development, which has been connected to later success in a child's life, was consistently a strength among LAUP children.

Skills such as confidence, self-control, cooperation, and active engagement help children learn from their teachers, peers, and caregivers. Readiness in these areas has been shown to predict later outcomes in life.^{19, 20} The annual studies conducted by MPR included a focus on this critical set of skills.

- Over three years, between 88% and 100% of children were in the expected range of performance in positive social skills, higher than the national average of 84%.^{21, 22, 23}
- Year after year, the percentage of children scoring in the expected range far exceeded the national average for attention, activity level, and sociability.^{24, 25, 26, 27}

Results from a study by MPR found that in 2012-13, the percentage of children scoring in the expected range for the Leiter-R subscales of Attention, Activity Level, and Sociability exceeded the national average. Other cohorts showed similar results.²⁸

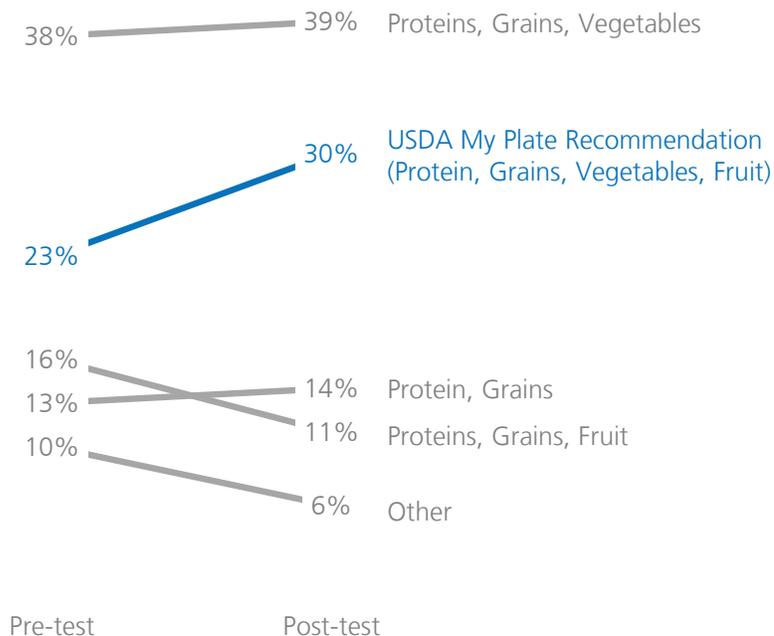


Caregivers reported positive health outcomes for LAUP children.

Through the Health and Wellness project funded by Kaiser Permanente and the RENEW project funded by the LA County Department of Public Health, LAUP Health and Wellness Specialists worked with providers to help them improve policies and practices supporting children’s nutritional and physical activity habits. LAUP’s evaluations found the following key results:

- Preschool providers implemented new policies and increased practices to promote healthy eating and increase physical activity among children.²⁹
- Teachers and parents reported increased confidence in their knowledge of nutrition and physical activity.³⁰
- According to their parents, children made healthier food and beverage choices by the end of their participation. More children were reported to have eaten dinners that conformed to the USDA My Plate guidelines.³¹

The percentage of children eating a dinner matching USDA recommendations rose. Other plates either increased by a very small percent or decreased.



- More children participated in organized activities and looked to their parents as role models for physical activity.³²
- Preschool providers were very knowledgeable about nutrition and physical activity guidelines; parents were not as knowledgeable as providers.³³
- Parents reported an increase in the level of physical activity among children after the program.³⁴
- MPR found that most LAUP children they studied engaged in the CDC-recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.³⁵

Several years after participating in LAUP, early elementary school students showed signs of academic success.

LAUP, Mathematica Policy Research, and Applied Survey Research conducted studies of LAUP children's progress when they had reached second and third grades. Because there were different students included in each study, the findings were mostly comparable but also differed in some ways. The following are key highlights of these studies' findings.

- LAUP found that students in half of the districts in its study outperformed non-LAUP participants on English or math CSTs in the third grade.³⁶
- This pattern held true for the majority of comparisons across all school districts, and was most noticeable in comparisons of CST scores and DIBELS results.³⁷
- This pattern existed despite disparities in family income; in fact, children in the largest district in our sample who were enrolled in the free or reduced-price lunch program benefitted greatly from attending LAUP, and received significantly higher scores than their peers on 3 out of 4 CSTs.³⁸
- In a different sample of students, MPR found that LAUP children who were Hispanic or low income scored higher than non-LAUP children on English and math CSTs in second grade.³⁹
- LAUP and non-LAUP children performed similarly on English and math CSTs in third grade.⁴⁰
- LAUP students, compared to non-LAUP students, attended and were enrolled in school for two more days on average and had fewer reported suspensions.⁴¹
- Second graders who had participated in LAUP were 1.7 times more likely to score at proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) compared to their non-preschooled counterparts.⁴²

LAUP participation benefited families in more ways than preparing their children for kindergarten.

The following are key findings from a series of studies conducted by LAUP on the impact of LAUP on children and their families.

- Almost 10 years after their graduation from preschool, LAUP students reported academic success; strong, long-lasting friendships; positive school attitudes; and good memories of their preschool experiences.⁴³
- Nearly all students planned to complete high school and pursue a higher education.⁴⁴

- Parents reported benefits from LAUP to their families such as children’s increased emotional regulation, increased family unity, useful discipline models, a smooth transition to kindergarten, and improved connections to their communities.⁴⁵

Theme	Outcome for Families	Importance
School Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kids played and did hands-on activities ▪ Language, literacy, and math ▪ Smooth transition to kindergarten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Play improves motor development ▪ Early language skills improve educational outcomes
Social-Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social awareness ▪ Emotional regulation ▪ Positive social skills ▪ Articulation of needs and wants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learning happens in social interaction ▪ Decreases risk of behavior problems ▪ Communication is central in relationship-building
Home-to-School Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased family togetherness ▪ Newly developed structure and routine ▪ Parents gained free time to pursue personal, educational, or career goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improves communication ▪ Routines build consistency and behavioral organization ▪ Goal attainment may lead to higher salaries, happiness, or satisfaction
Parent Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents felt respected by teachers ▪ Parents learned discipline models and teaching strategies through modeling ▪ Cultural connections, community togetherness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents become empowered agents of their children’s education ▪ Family engagement is linked to empathy, warmth, and respect in children

- LAUP preschools consistently offered transition plans and activities, and had relationships with at least one elementary school. Kindergarten teachers identified parent involvement as the greatest need among the families they served.⁴⁶

Endnotes

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¹⁸ Ibid.

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²² Xue, Y., Atkins-Burnett, S., & Moiduddin, E. (2012).

²³ Atkins-Burnett, S., Xue, Y., Moiduddin, E., Aikens, N., & Cannon, J. (2013).

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