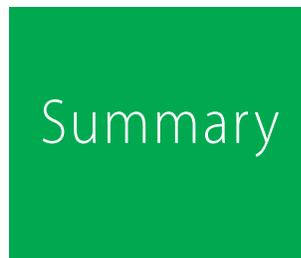




Analysis of the developmental functioning of early intervention and early childhood special education populations in Oregon



Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education



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Summary

August 2009

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Issues & Answers is an ongoing series of reports from short-term Fast Response Projects conducted by the regional educational laboratories on current education issues of importance at local, state, and regional levels. Fast Response Project topics change to reflect new issues, as identified through lab outreach and requests for assistance from policymakers and educators at state and local levels and from communities, businesses, parents, families, and youth. All Issues & Answers reports meet Institute of Education Sciences standards for scientifically valid research.

August 2009

This report was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) under Contract ED-06-CO-0016 by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Northwest administered by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. The content of the publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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Nave, G., Nishioka, V., and Burke, A. (2009). *Analysis of the developmental functioning of early intervention and early childhood special education populations in Oregon* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2009—No. 078). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. Retrieved from www.ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs.

This report is available on the regional educational laboratory web site at www.ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs.

Analysis of the developmental functioning of early intervention and early childhood special education populations in Oregon

This study reports on the developmental functioning levels of children from birth through age 2 in early intervention services and children ages 3–5 in early childhood special education services at the time of entry into services, using data from the Oregon Early Childhood Assessment System.

This report informs Oregon education policymakers about the developmental functioning levels of children from birth through age 2 in early intervention services and children ages 3–5 in early childhood special education services at the time of entry into services, using data from the Oregon Early Childhood Assessment System. The assessment system contains data on the assessed developmental functioning levels of children based on the 16 Oregon early childhood foundation areas and the three U.S. Office of Special Education Programs federal reporting child outcome areas.

The Oregon Department of Education sponsored the development of *Oregon Early Childhood Foundations* (Oregon Department of Education 2008a) to identify key developmental foundation areas or skills necessary for children to succeed in school. Aligned with the Oregon K–12 standards, these 16 early

childhood foundation areas identify developmental indicators critical for school readiness and academic success.

The study's findings will help the Oregon Department of Education understand the functioning levels of children from birth through age 5 with developmental needs and assist service providers in developing materials, training, and technical assistance for children enrolled in early intervention and early childhood special education services.

The study analyzes developmental functioning data and key demographic variables (primary disability, gender, race/ethnicity, and primary home language) for the entire population of children in early intervention and early childhood special education services who received services over a 13-month period during 2006/07. The study results show the percentage of children in early intervention and early childhood special education services assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels on skills assessments using age-related criteria embedded in the Oregon Early Childhood Assessment System database.

With few exceptions, the developmental skills that were most often assessed as functioning

below age-expected skill levels among children across all demographic subgroups were those important to school readiness in literacy and mathematics. Additional findings include:

- Two primary disabilities—developmental delay and communication disorder—accounted for approximately 90 percent of disabilities in both early intervention and early childhood special education populations. Among children receiving early intervention services, higher percentages of children with developmental delays than of children with communication disorders were assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels on 13 of the 16 foundation areas. Among children receiving early childhood special education services, this pattern was more pronounced, with higher percentages of children with developmental delays than of children with communication disorders assessed as functioning below age expected skill levels on all 16 foundation areas.
- For both age groups a higher percentage of boys than of girls were assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels across all foundation areas except gross motor skills.
- The percentages of children in early intervention and early childhood special education services who were assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels in each early childhood foundation area were generally consistent across race/ethnicity. The most problematic foundation areas for both age groups were phonological awareness and numbers and operations, followed closely by print awareness.
- For the early intervention group the percentage of children assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels was similar for White and Hispanic children across all 16 foundation areas. Among the early childhood special education children, Hispanic children were more likely than White children to be assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels on 14 of the 16 foundation areas.
- For Hispanic children enrolled in early intervention services the two foundation areas with the largest differences in the percentage of children assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels between children from Spanish-speaking homes and children from English-speaking homes were patterns and measurement and speaking and communicating.
- For Hispanic children enrolled in early childhood special education services the percentage of children from Spanish-speaking homes who were assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels was 1.10–1.31 times higher than that for Hispanic children from English-speaking homes across 9 of the 16 foundation areas. The two foundation areas with the largest discrepancies between Spanish- and English-speaking Hispanic children were speaking and communicating and listening and understanding.
- For early intervention services higher percentages of children were assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels on the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs child outcome area of acquisition of

knowledge and skills than on the outcome areas of positive social-emotional skills or use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. For children in both early intervention services and early childhood special education services the appropriate

behaviors outcome area consistently had the lowest percentage of children assessed as functioning below age-expected skill levels.

August 2009