

Increase Availability of Full-Day Kindergarten for Utah Children

Published: Monday, 19 December 2016 10:06

Written by: Moe Hickey



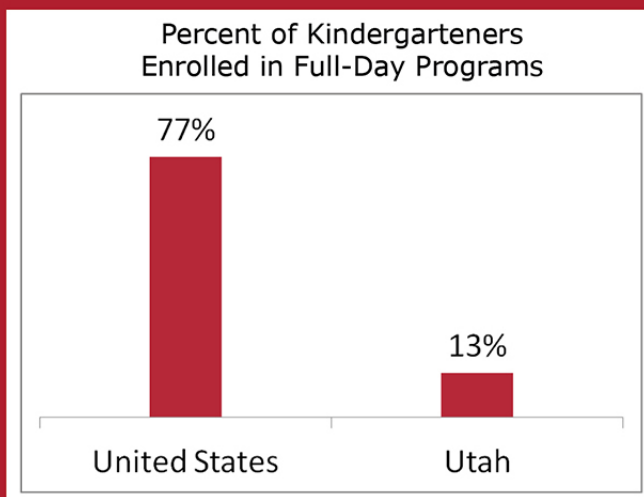
Published: Monday, 19 December 2016 10:06

Written by: Moe Hickey

Children attending **Full-Day Kindergarten** tend to do better in school than children attending half-day programs.



**But fewer Utah children
have that opportunity
than their peers nationwide.**



Source:
Current
Population
Survey,
U.S.
Census Bureau,
2013.
Analyzed by
Child Trends

The percentage of

Increase Availability of Full-Day Kindergarten for Utah Children

Published: Monday, 19 December 2016 10:06

Written by: Moe Hickey

kindergarteners enrolled in full-day programs has nearly tripled since the late 1970s, jumping from 28 percent to 77 percent nationwide between 1977 and 2013. Although full-day kindergarten enrollment in the West is the lowest in the country, Utah still falls well below the regional average. In Utah, kindergarten is not mandatory; of those 5-year-olds who do attend, only 13 percent were enrolled in full-day programs as of 2013 (down from 18 percent in 2010).

Increasing the availability of full-day kindergarten programs is one of the ways Utah can help ensure that all its students have the skills and resources they need to succeed academically.

It's Beneficial for Kids

Overall, children who spend time in full-day kindergarten programs are more likely to devote time every day to core academic skills like reading and math than children who spend time in half-day kindergarten programs. Full-day kindergarten:

- Allows teachers more time to promote formal and informal learning;
- Reduces the number of disruptive transitions in a child's day; and
- Helps children get used to a schedule similar to that which they will have in first grade.

In the short-term, children attending full-day kindergarten programs tend to do better in school than do children attending half-day programs, and show stronger overall academic gains in kindergarten. Particularly for children who have had limited learning and social experiences — or who are at risk due to developmental problems, family stress, or other factors — a high quality, full-day kindergarten program may offer the best opportunity to reduce the impact of these risks from the very beginning.

It's Preferred by Parents

The vast majority of parents prefer full-day kindergarten for their children. In a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, 100 percent of full-day parents and 72 percent of half-day parents noted that they would have chosen full-day kindergarten for their child if given the opportunity again. In Utah, school districts offering full-day kindergarten have reported that fewer than 5 percent of parents who are offered the full-day option turn down the opportunity.

Increase Availability of Full-Day Kindergarten for Utah Children

Published: Monday, 19 December 2016 10:06

Written by: Moe Hickey

To help all Utah children achieve academic success, it is critical that we maximize early learning opportunities, particularly for low-income children and others who may need additional supports to reach the school readiness threshold.

Like high-quality Pre-K, full-day kindergarten programs offer solid academic, social-emotional, and other benefits for the children and families who participate.

Printer-Friendly Version:

 [Full-Day Kindergarten](#)

Image Credits Robert Kneschke | Dreamstime.com - [Nursery teacher reading book to group of kids](#), Petro | Dreamstime.com - [Reading to children at kindergarten](#).

For 30 years now, Voices for Utah Children has called on our state, federal and local leaders to put children's needs first. But the work is not done. The children of 30 years ago now have children of their own. Too many of these children are growing up in poverty, without access to healthcare or quality educational opportunities.

How can you be involved?

[Make a tax-deductible donation](#) to Voices for Utah Children—or [join our Network](#) with a monthly donation of \$20 or more. Network membership includes complimentary admission to Network events with food, socializing, and opportunity to meet child advocacy experts. And don't forget to [join our listserv](#) to stay informed!

We look forward to the future of Voices for Utah Children and we hope you will be a part of our next 30 years.

Special thanks to American Express, our "Making a Difference All Year Long"



sponsor. ®

Increase Availability of Full-Day Kindergarten for Utah Children

Published: Monday, 19 December 2016 10:06

Written by: Moe Hickey
