

## ABSTRACT

### PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL READINESS

Head Start programs are government-funded programs that enhance disadvantaged preschool children's physical, social, and academic development. Research shows that Head Start programs increase children's school readiness. This study examined whether a primarily Hispanic sample of children who received Head Start services were more socially prepared for kindergarten than children who did not receive Head Start services, based on parent and teacher report of children's social skills and problem behaviors. Results indicate children who participated in Head Start demonstrate more social skills at home and school, as well as fewer problem behaviors in the school setting, than children who did not participate in Head Start. Gender differences were also found, with results suggesting that Head Start participation is more beneficial for Hispanic boys. Implications of these results, as well as recommendations for future research on school readiness, are discussed.

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