



**Great Start Livingston
Kindergarten Readiness Survey December, 2009**

**Results of Livingston County
Kindergarten Teacher Surveys
Regarding Kindergarten Readiness
April 2009-December 2009
February 8,2010**

Great Start Livingston

Kindergarten Readiness Survey December, 2009

56 Respondents / 82% Response Rate

Background Information:

- Great Start Livingston engaged in an “Early Childhood System Assessment” during the 2009 to support strategic planning efforts to build a coordinated system of community resources and supports to ensure every child arrives at kindergarten safe, healthy and eager to succeed in school and in life.
- A key component of this assessment is an improved community understanding of “kindergarten readiness.”
 - What do parents perceive as important indicators of readiness?
 - What do kindergarten teachers perceive as important indicators of readiness?
 - What percent of children do kindergarten teachers feel are “not ready”
 - How do factors such as physical health, social emotional health, parent involvement, safe home environment influence our youths ability to succeed?
 - How can care givers, educators, professionals, parents work together with kindergarten teachers to improve readiness?
 - Should a county wide set of indicators be developed to guide parents, caregivers, preschools, and kindergarten teachers in assessing readiness?
- Two surveys were administered to kindergarten teachers across the county. One in the 2008-2009 school year (54 Respondents -70% Response Rate), and one in the 2009-2010 school year (56 respondents - 82% response rate.)

Great Start Livingston

Kindergarten Readiness Survey December, 2009

56 Respondents / 82% Response Rate

Background Information (continued):

- Parent surveys were also administered to assess their perception of the most important indicators of kindergarten readiness as well as other information.
- A “Kindergarten Readiness Committee” was formed with principal and kindergarten teacher representation from 4 different school districts in the county, as well as GSL members including parents. This group developed a list of indicators based on national research and this list was evaluated by kindergarten teachers in the second kindergarten teacher survey.

Results:

- Kindergarten teachers consistently indicate the top 5 traits of kindergarten readiness relate to social skills more than academic ability.
- The ability to follow directions, not being disruptive and recognizes letters was consistently identified as top three lacking traits by kindergarten teachers.
- The overall assessment across the 5 great start components including physical health, social and emotional health, quality early learning or preschool experiences, parental involvement and safe home environment were favorable, but there are areas worthy of further investigation.

Great Start Livingston

Kindergarten Readiness Survey December, 2009

56 Respondents / 82% Response Rate

Results (continued):

- **The three areas that are more concerning were quality preschool or learning experiences, social and emotional readiness and parent participation in learning experience. Over the two surveys administered:**
 - 40-44% are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree on quality preschool or learning.
 - 35-38% of teachers are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree that the majority of children are socially and emotionally ready.
 - 31%-24% are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree that parents participate in their child's learning experience.
- Many teachers feel a large percentage of children are not kindergarten ready but the figures improved between surveys:
 - In the April survey, 44% of teachers felt that more than 20% of students were not ready.
 - In the December survey, 34% of teachers felt that more than 20% of students were not ready.
- Nearly 90% of teachers believe a common kindergarten readiness assessment tool would be valuable.
- Nearly 80% believe indicators are a comprehensive framework reflecting kindergarten readiness as is.
- Only 4 indicators resulted in more than 20% of teachers who felt the indicator was "less significant or not significant"

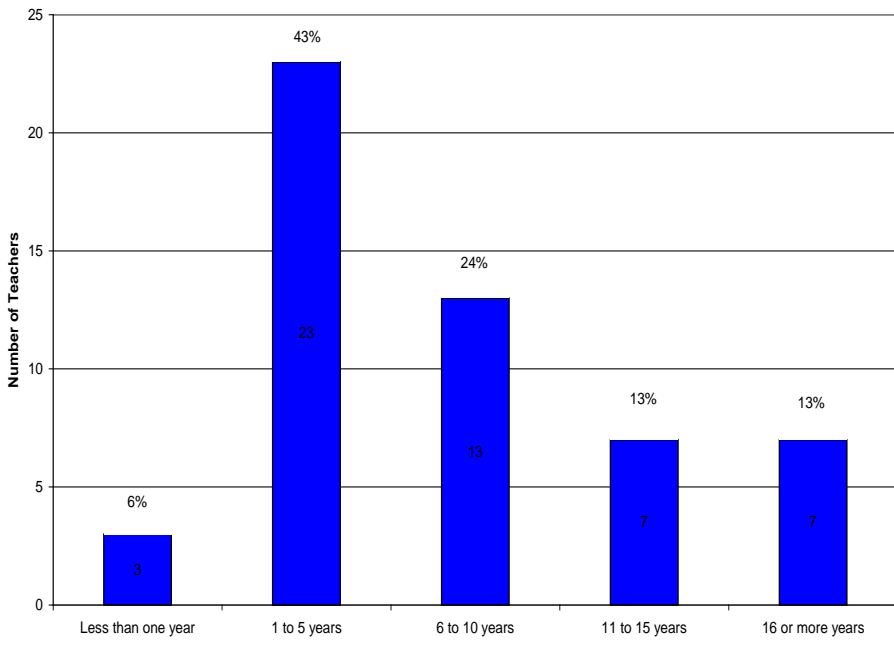
Parent Survey Results:

- 140 parents who participated in a parent survey ranked social and emotional traits as the most important indicators of kindergarten readiness.

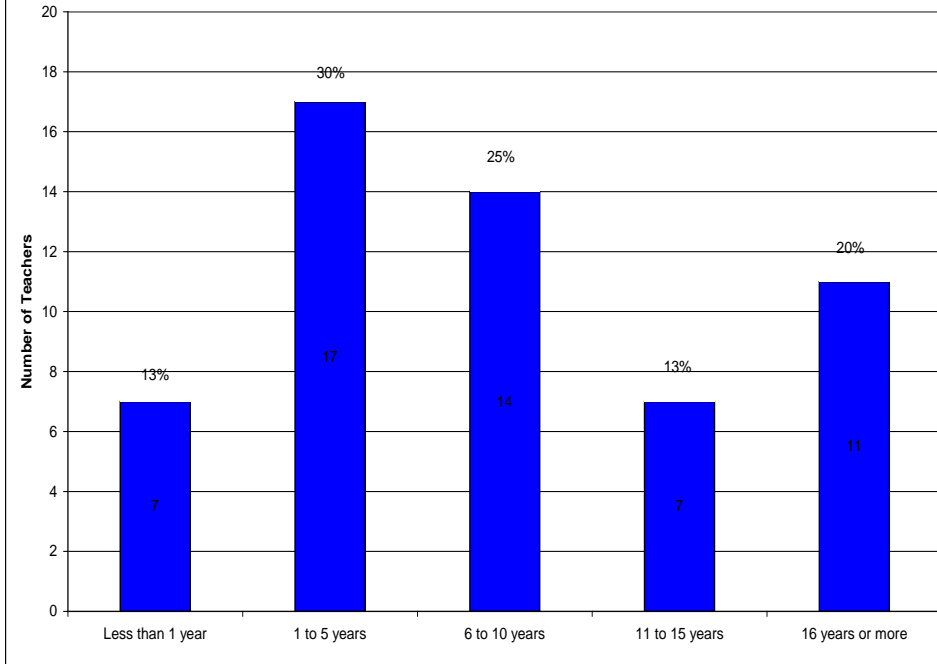
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

How long have you been a kindergarten teacher?

April 2009



December 2009

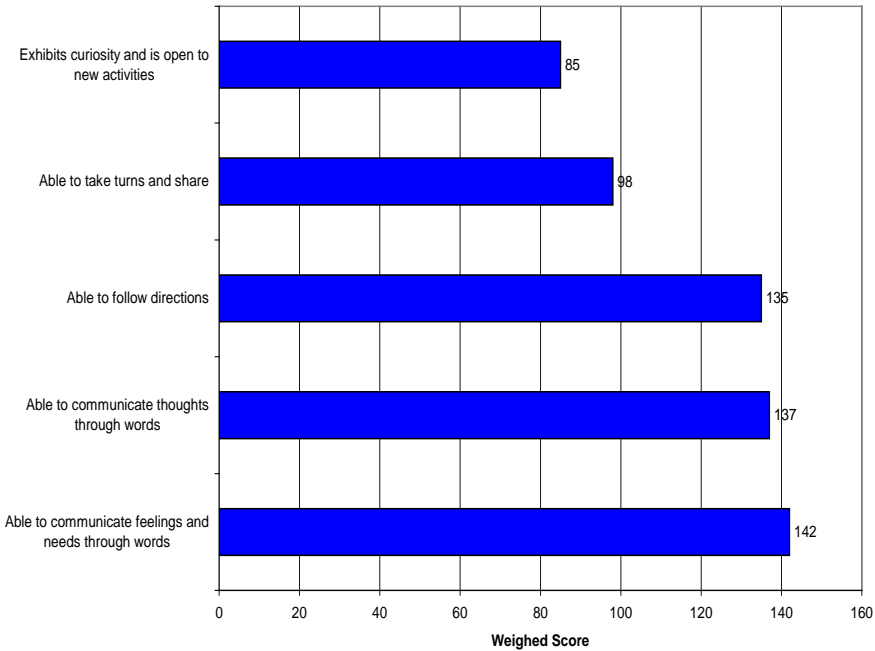


The cross section of teacher participation by years of experience improved slightly between surveys.

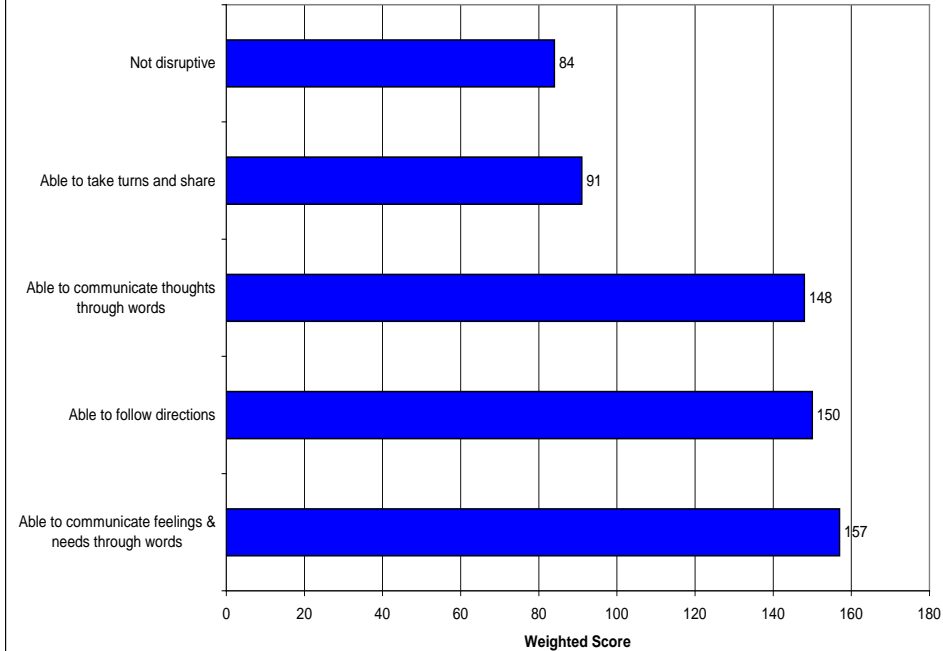
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

What are the top five traits you feel children need before entering kindergarten?

April 2009



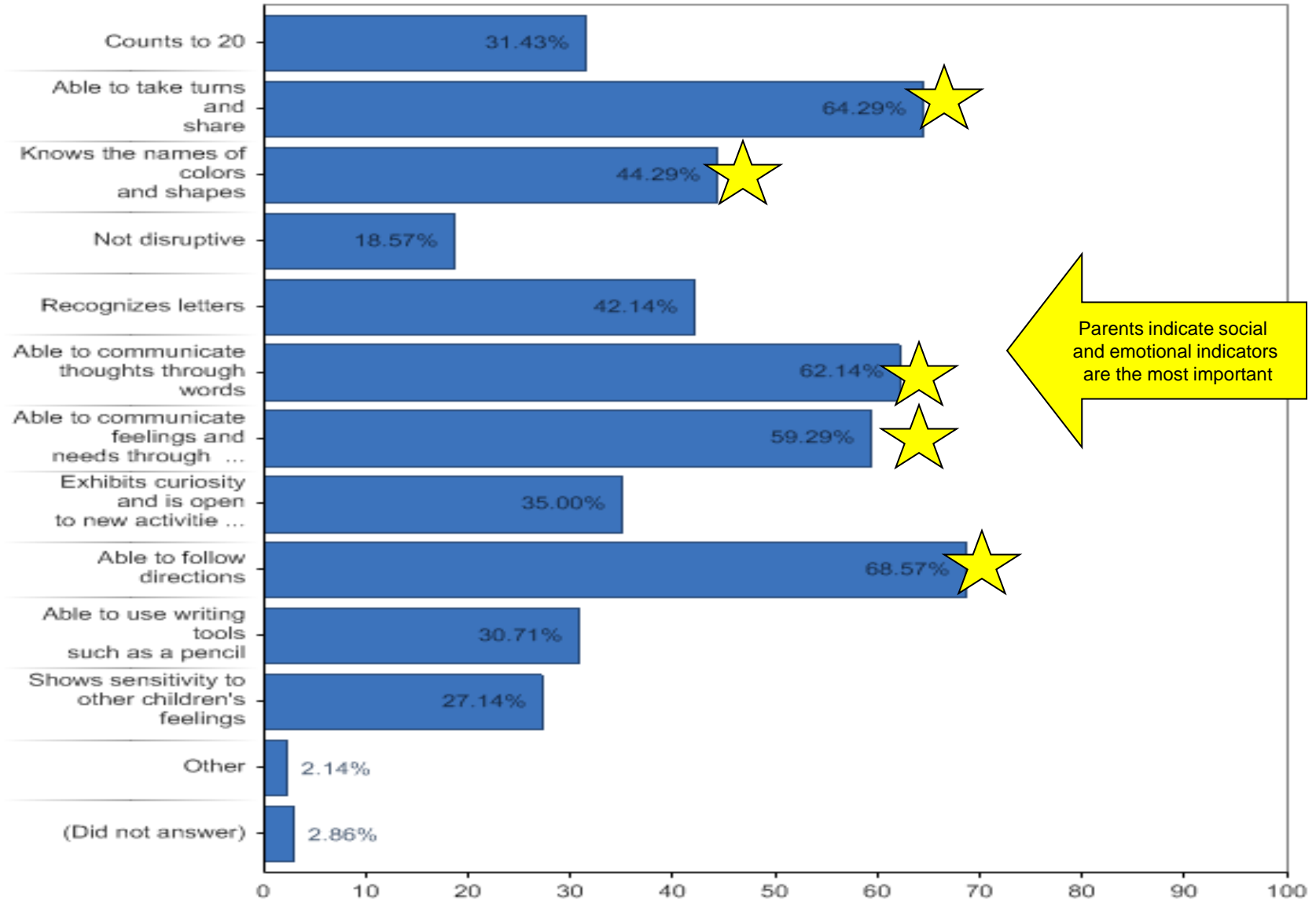
December 2009



The top 5 traits of kindergarten readiness relate to social skills more than academic ability.

Great Start Livingston Parent Survey 2009

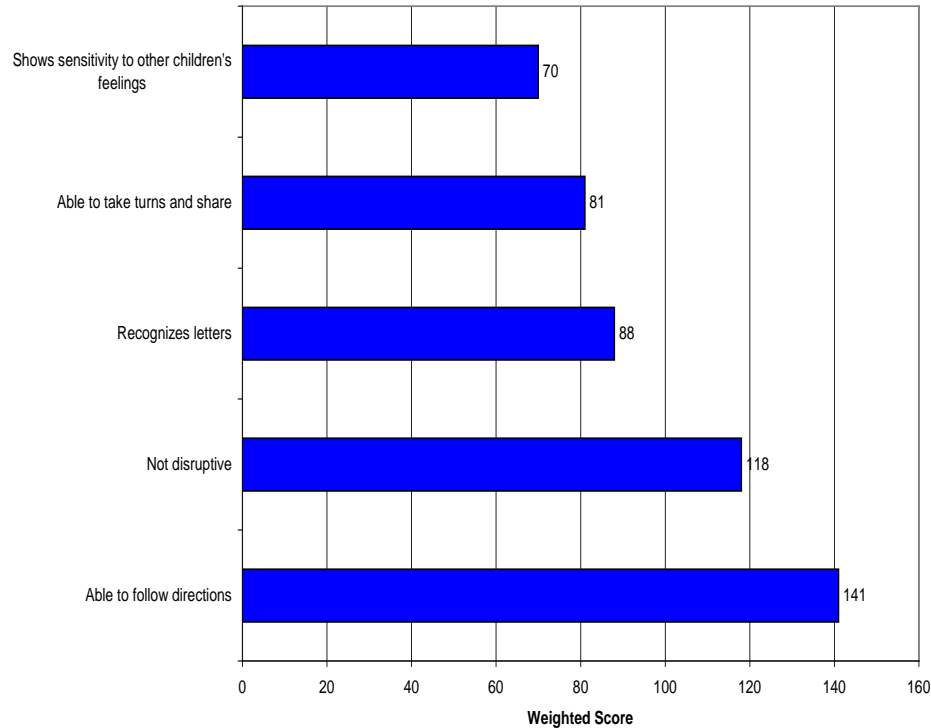
Skills/Characteristics Required for Kindergarten Readiness



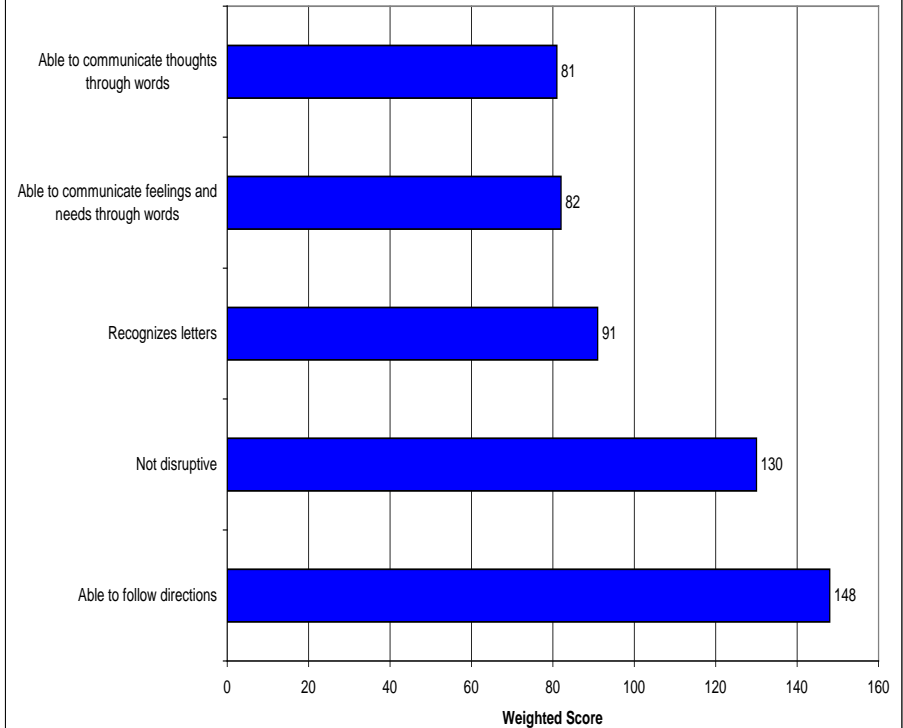
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

What are the top five traits of 'kindergarten readiness' do children lack when entering kindergarten?

April 2009



December 2009

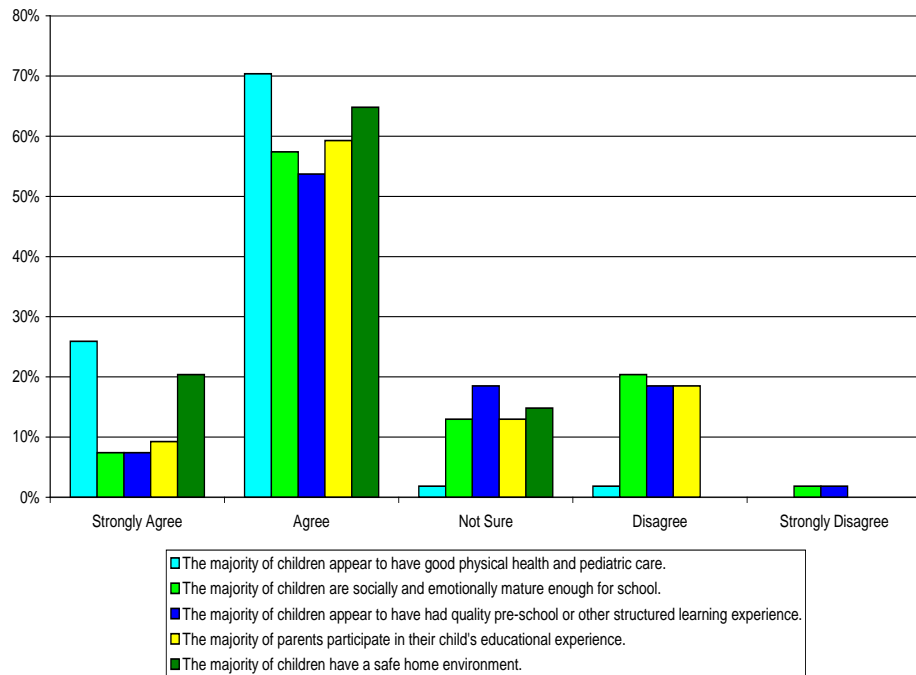


The ability to follow directions, not disruptive, recognizes letters consistently identified as top three lacking traits.

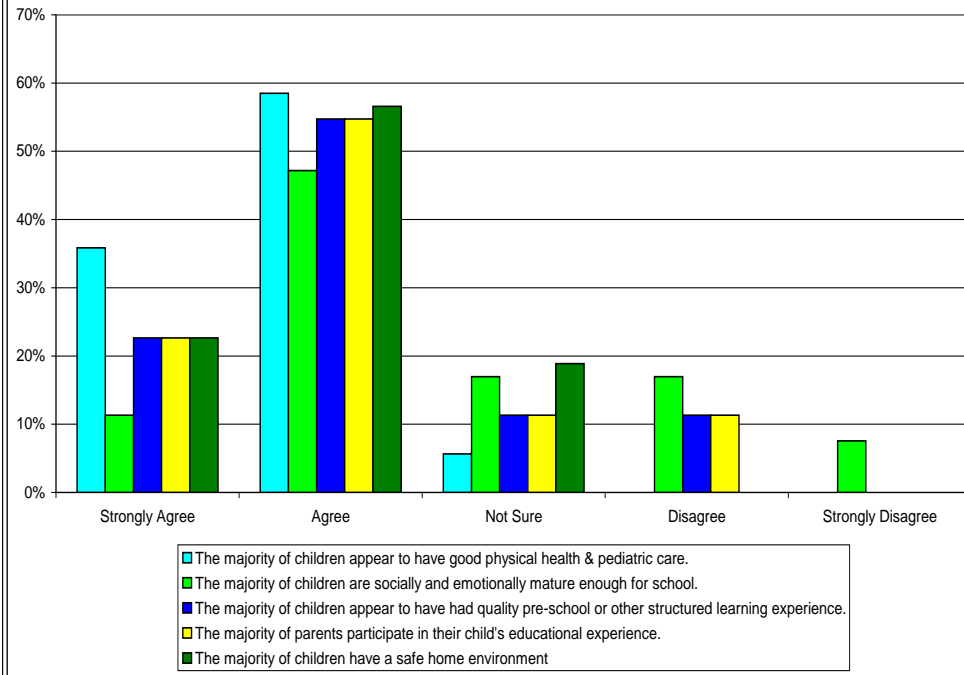
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Kindergarten Teacher Assessment Across 5 Great Start Components

April 2009 - Kindergarten Teacher Assessment
Across 5 Great Start Components



December 2009 - Kindergarten Teacher Assessment
Across 5 Great Start Components

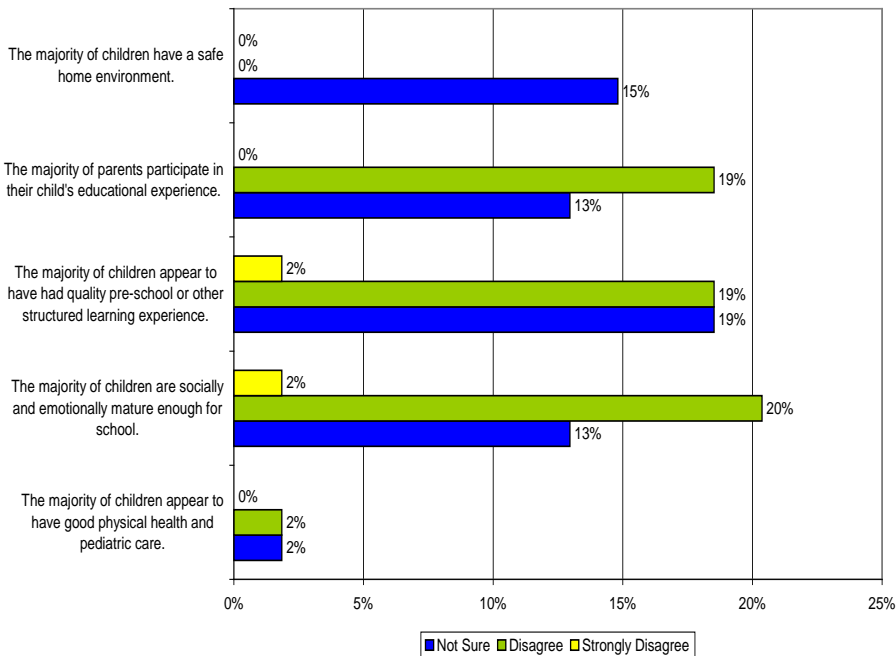


The overall assessment across the 5 components was favorable, but there are areas worthy of further investigation.

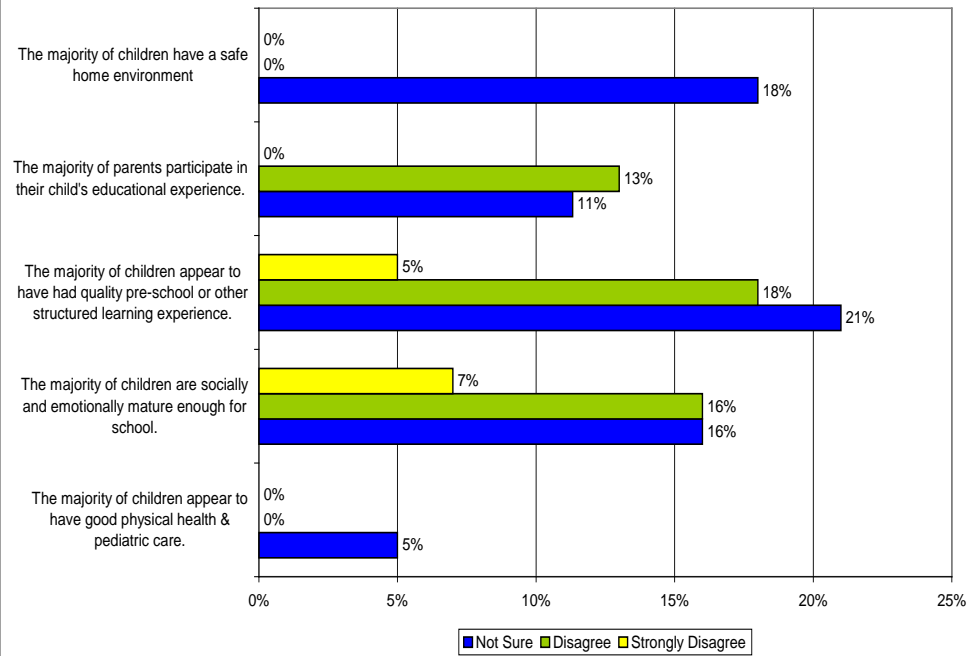
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Kindergarten Teacher Assessment Across 5 Great Components Areas of Concern

April 2009 - Kindergarten Assessment
Across 5 Great Start Components
Areas of Concern



December 2009 - Kindergarten Teacher Assessment
Across 5 Great Start Components
Areas of Concern



Between surveys, the three areas of concern remained constant with the percentages changing slightly.

35-38% of teachers are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree that the majority of children are socially and emotionally ready.

40-44% are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree on quality preschool or learning.

31%-24% are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree on parent participation.

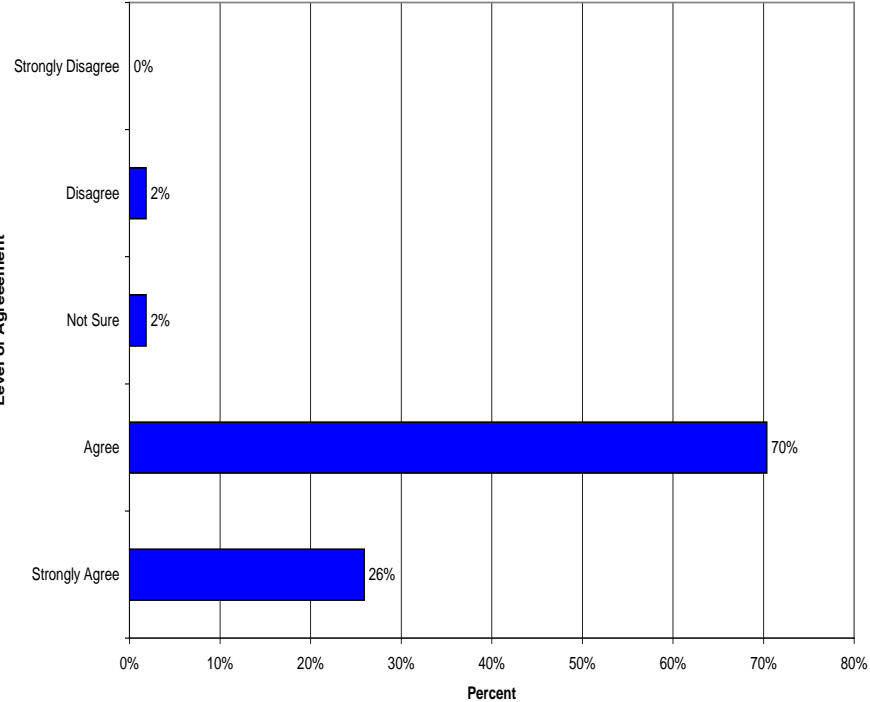
(First percentage referenced is the April survey-second percentage referenced is the December survey.)

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

“The majority of children appear to have good physical health & pediatric care.”

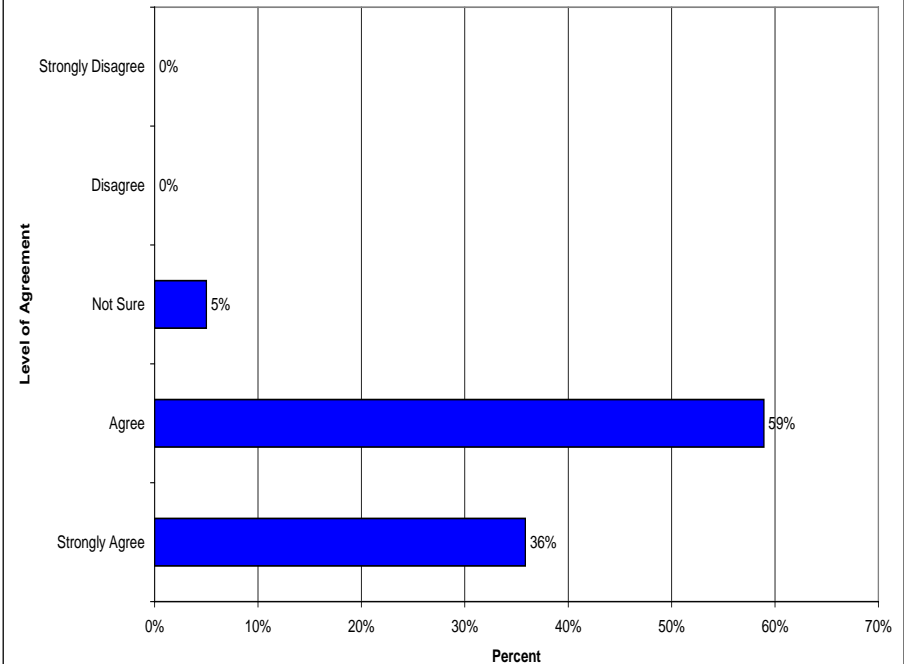
April 2009

The majority of children appear to have good physical health and pediatric care.



December 2009

The majority of children appear to have good physical health & pediatric care.



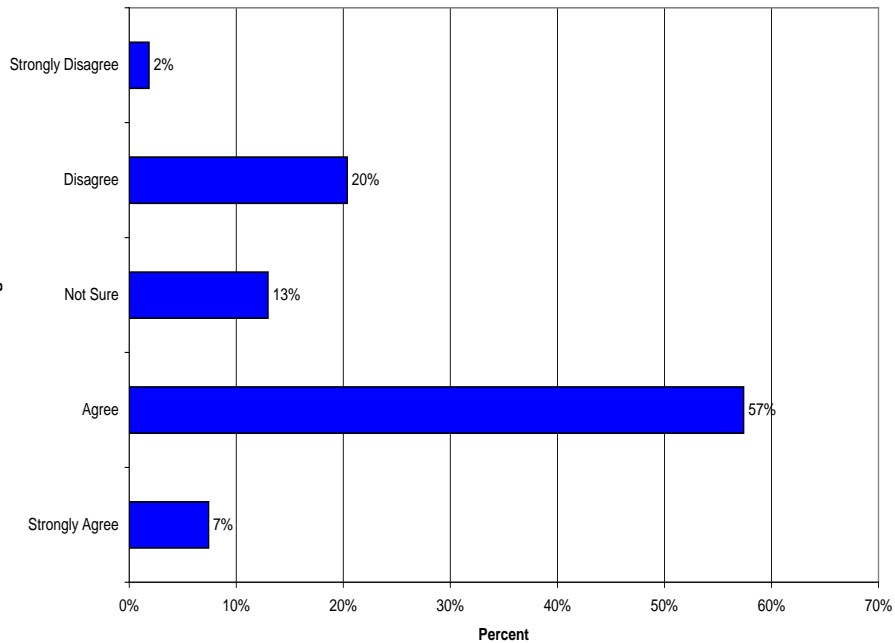
Physical health does not appear to be a concern to the majority of teachers.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

“The majority of children are socially & emotionally mature enough for school.”

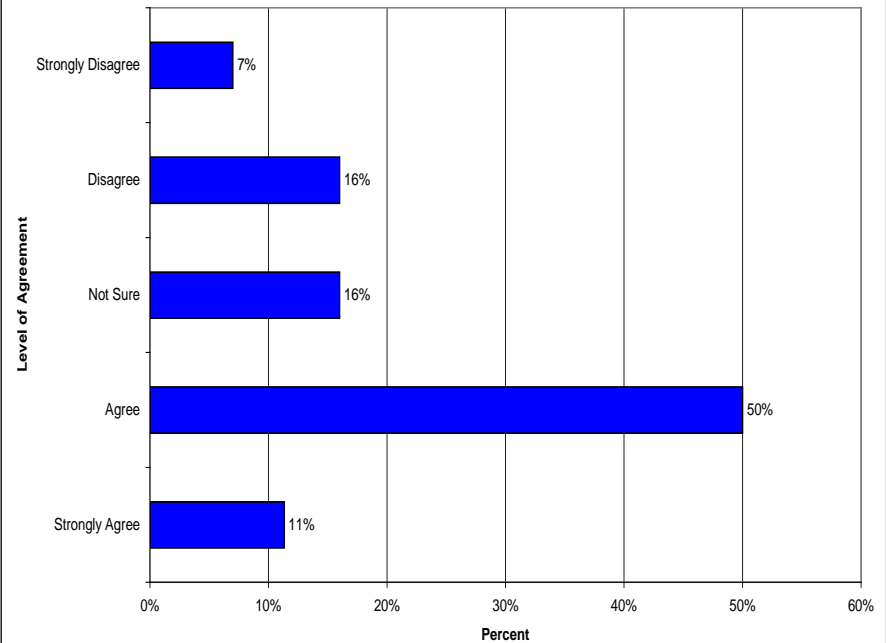
April 2009

The majority of children are socially and emotionally mature enough for school.



December 2009

The majority of children are socially and emotionally mature enough for school.



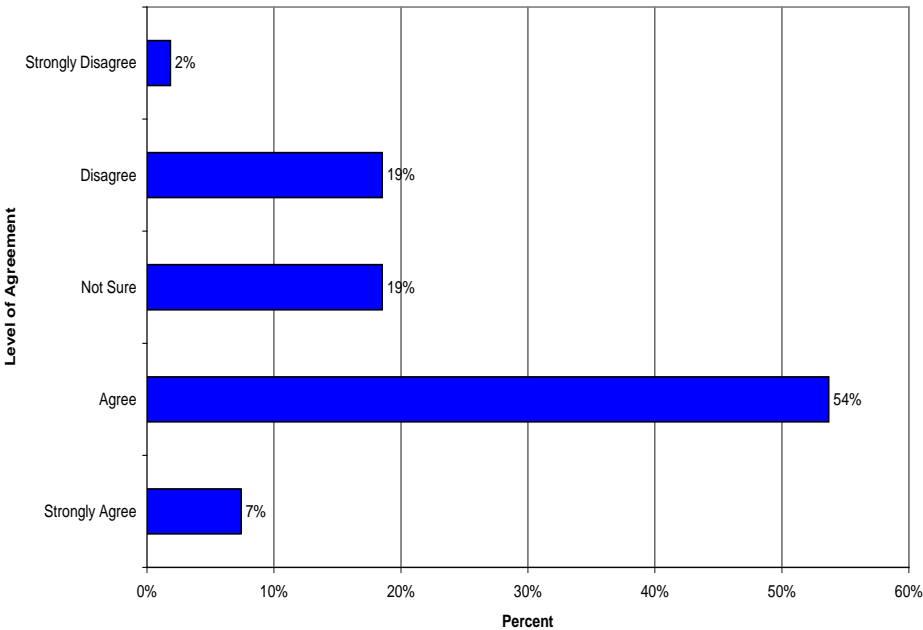
Assessment of social and emotional maturity is less positive.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

“The majority of children appear to have had quality pre-school or other structured learning experience.”

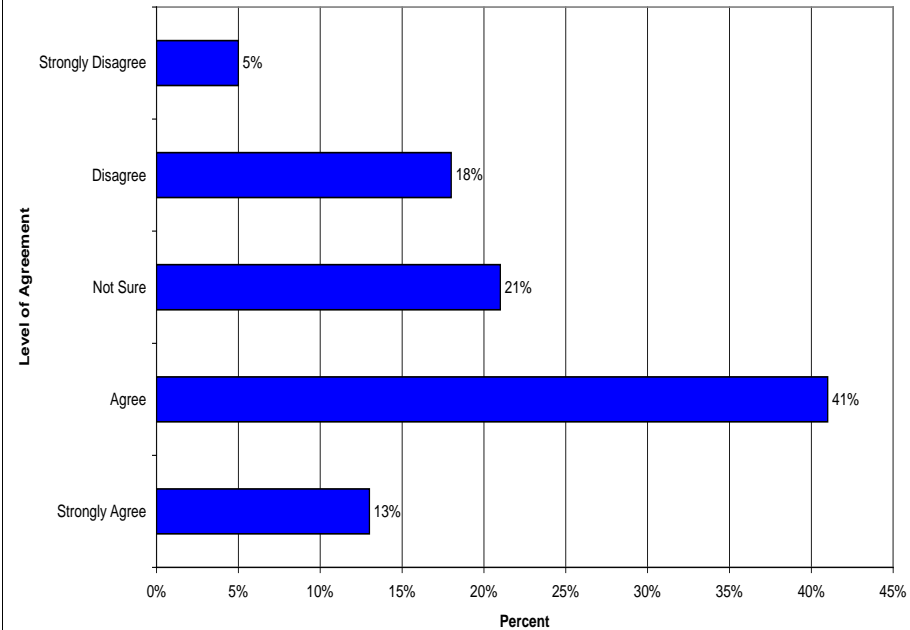
April 2009

The majority of children appear to have had quality pre-school or other structured learning experience.



December 2009

The majority of children appear to have had quality pre-school or other structured learning experience.



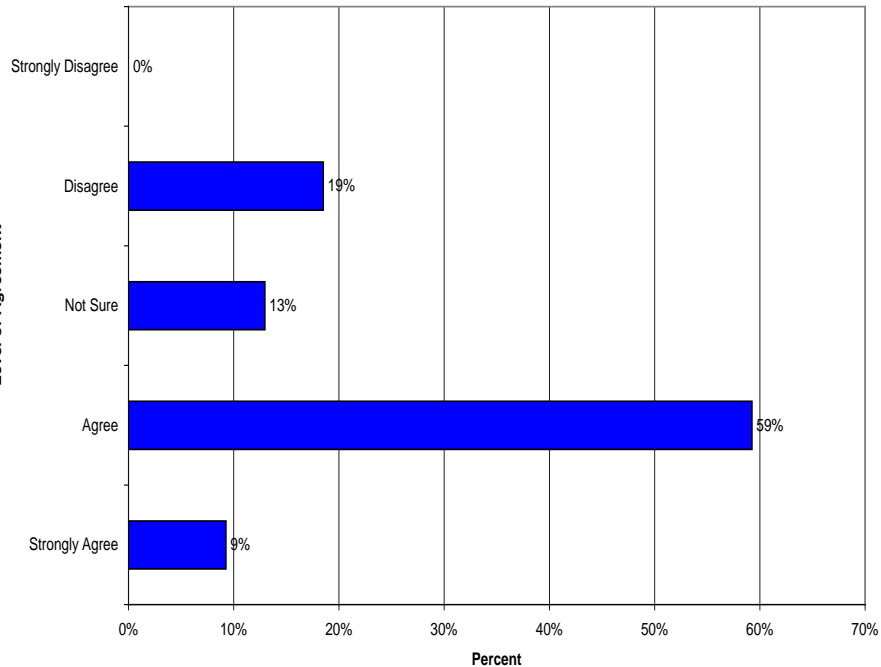
Assessment of quality preschool or structured learning shows considerable room for improvement.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

“The majority of parents participate in their child’s educational experience.”

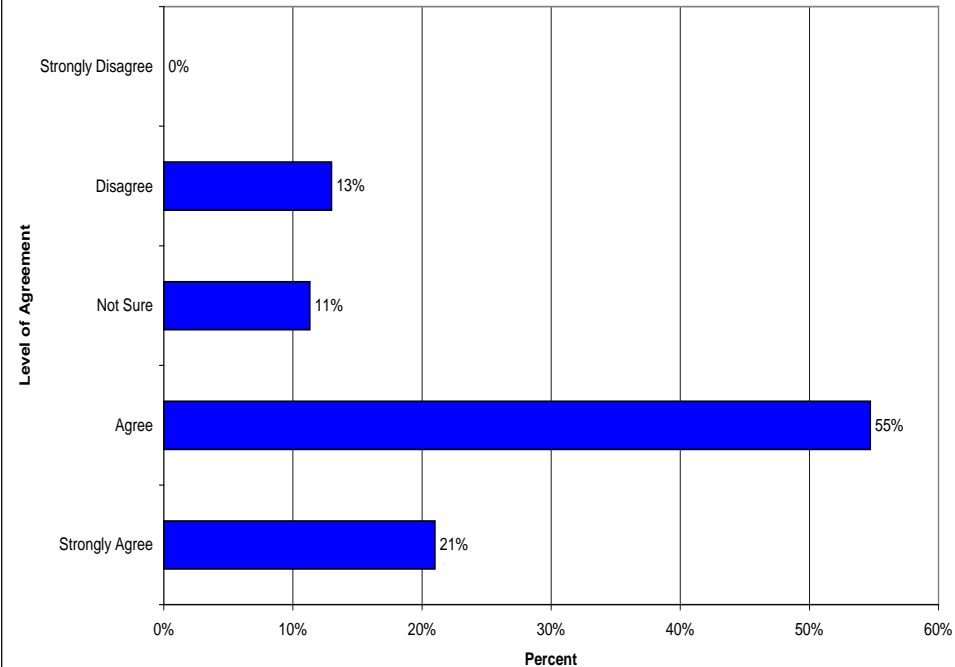
April 2009

The majority of parents participate in their child's educational experience.



December 2009

The majority of parents participate in their child's educational experience.



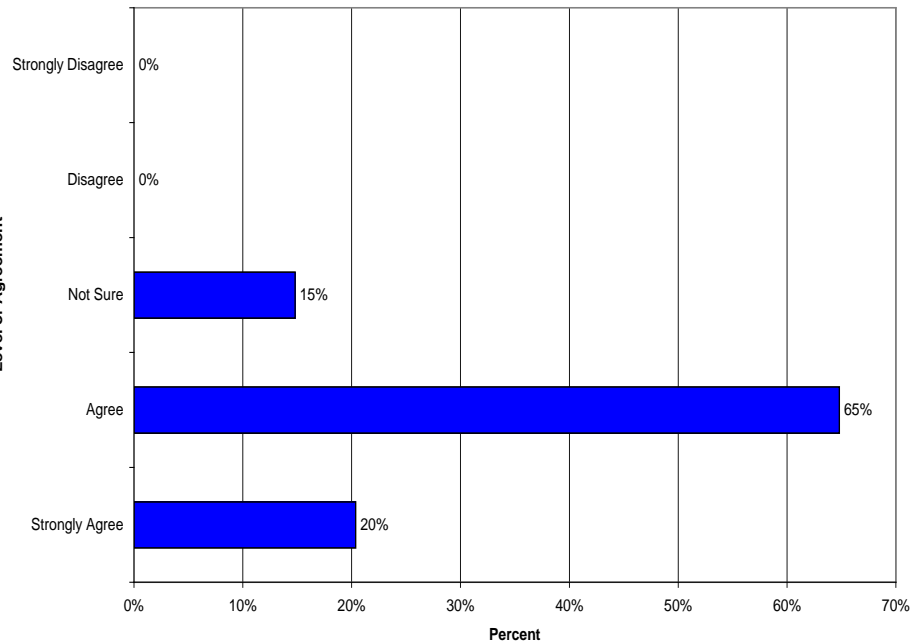
Parent participation in educational experience can be improved.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

“The majority of students have a safe home environment.”

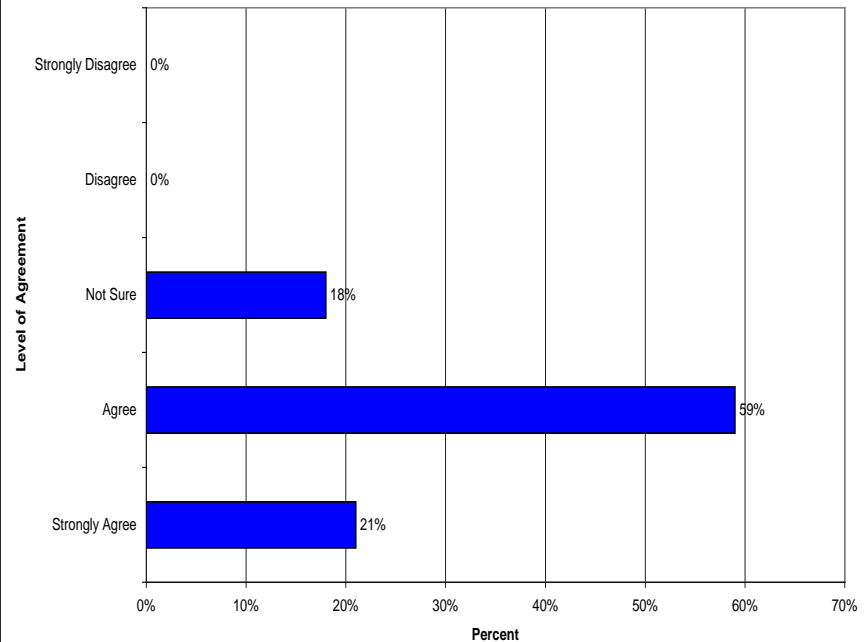
April 2009

The majority of children have a safe home environment.



December 2009

The majority of children have a safe home environment

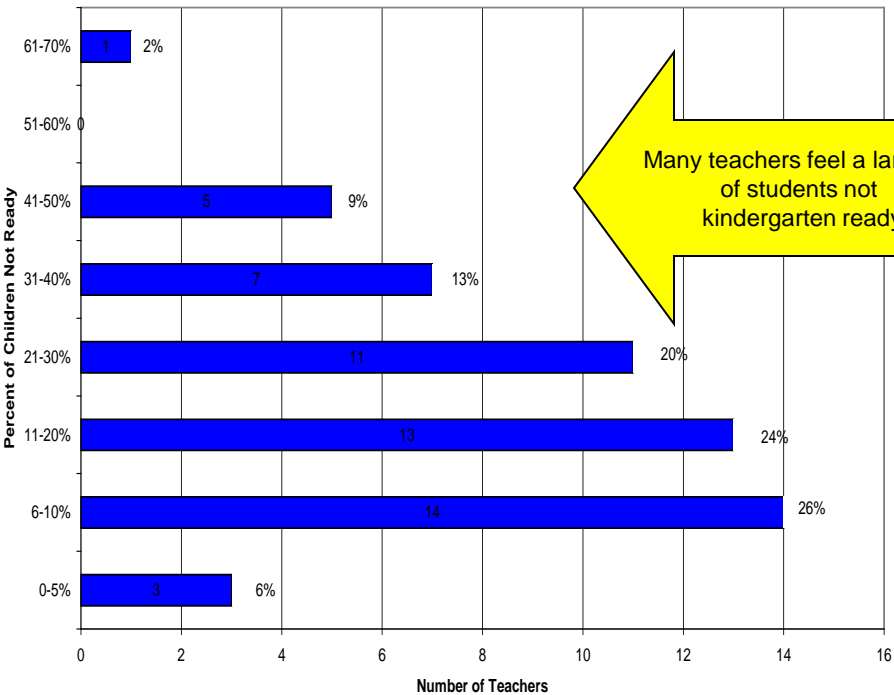


A safe home environment does not appear to be a concern to the majority of teachers.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

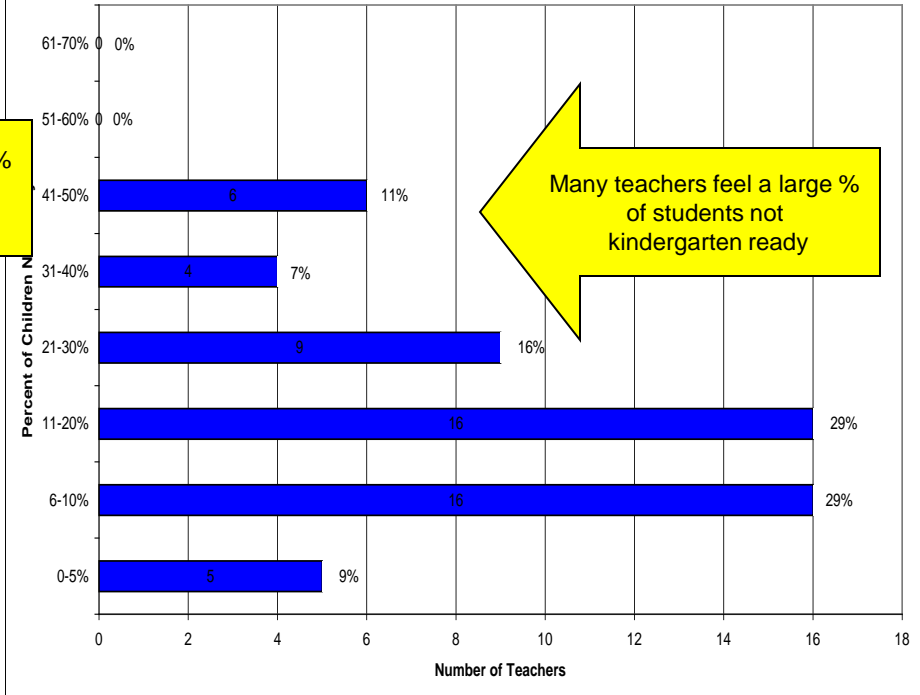
In your opinion, what percent of children are not 'kindergarten ready' when they arrived at school in the fall?

April 2009
Percent of Children Not Ready for Kindergarten



Many teachers feel a large % of students not kindergarten ready

December 2009
Percent of Children Not Ready for Kindergarten



Many teachers feel a large % of students not kindergarten ready

In the April survey, 44% of teachers felt that more than 20% of students were not ready.

In the December survey, 34% of teachers felt that more than 20% of students were not ready.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

What steps could our community take to better align the 0-5 resources/professional efforts with those of the K-12 system to improve outcomes & support success for kids?

Educate Parents

1. Work on parent/child relationships.
2. Parent education/information.
3. Educate parents on what skills children need to have before entering school. Encourage 'Begindergarten'. Encourage children starting later or waiting a year. Encourage parents to read/talk to their kids.
4. Educate parents.
5. Educate parents on kindergarten readiness. Offer accessible and affordable preschool for children (perhaps more offered at work for parents).
6. Offer parenting classes about how to teach your child to follow directions and work with others. Talk to parents about the importance of communicating with their child and recognizing and naming their feelings. Also, allow your child time to practice skills like zipping independently.
7. Help families learn about options for younger 5 year olds.
8. Parenting classes.
9. Parenting classes!
10. Provide parent education to highlight the importance of early childhood education & play, oral language, etc.
11. Early intervention.

Entry Dates/Ages for Kindergarten

1. The entry date for kindergarten should be changed from December 1 to June 1. They should be 5 years old when they arrive to school.
2. Encourage children starting later or waiting a year.
3. Change the birth date for entering kindergarten. Child should be 5 before entering kindergarten.
4. I feel that the cutoff date for starting kindergarten should be September 1. All children must be 5 before school starts.
5. Move the kindergarten entrance deadline to September 1 or earlier.
6. Change the start date to enter school.

More Junior Kindergarten Programs

1. Educate on Junior K programs for young 5's.
2. Encourage 'Begindergarten'/Junior K.
3. Offer more Junior K and ½ day kindergarten.
4. We have Junior K which helps make a difference in readiness for school. Most boys with Oct.-Dec. 1 birth dates are not ready for kindergarten.
5. Offer Junior K in every building.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

What steps could our community take to better align the 0-5 resources/professional efforts with those of the K-12 system to improve outcomes & support success for kids?

More Social & Emotional Focus / Less Academic Focus

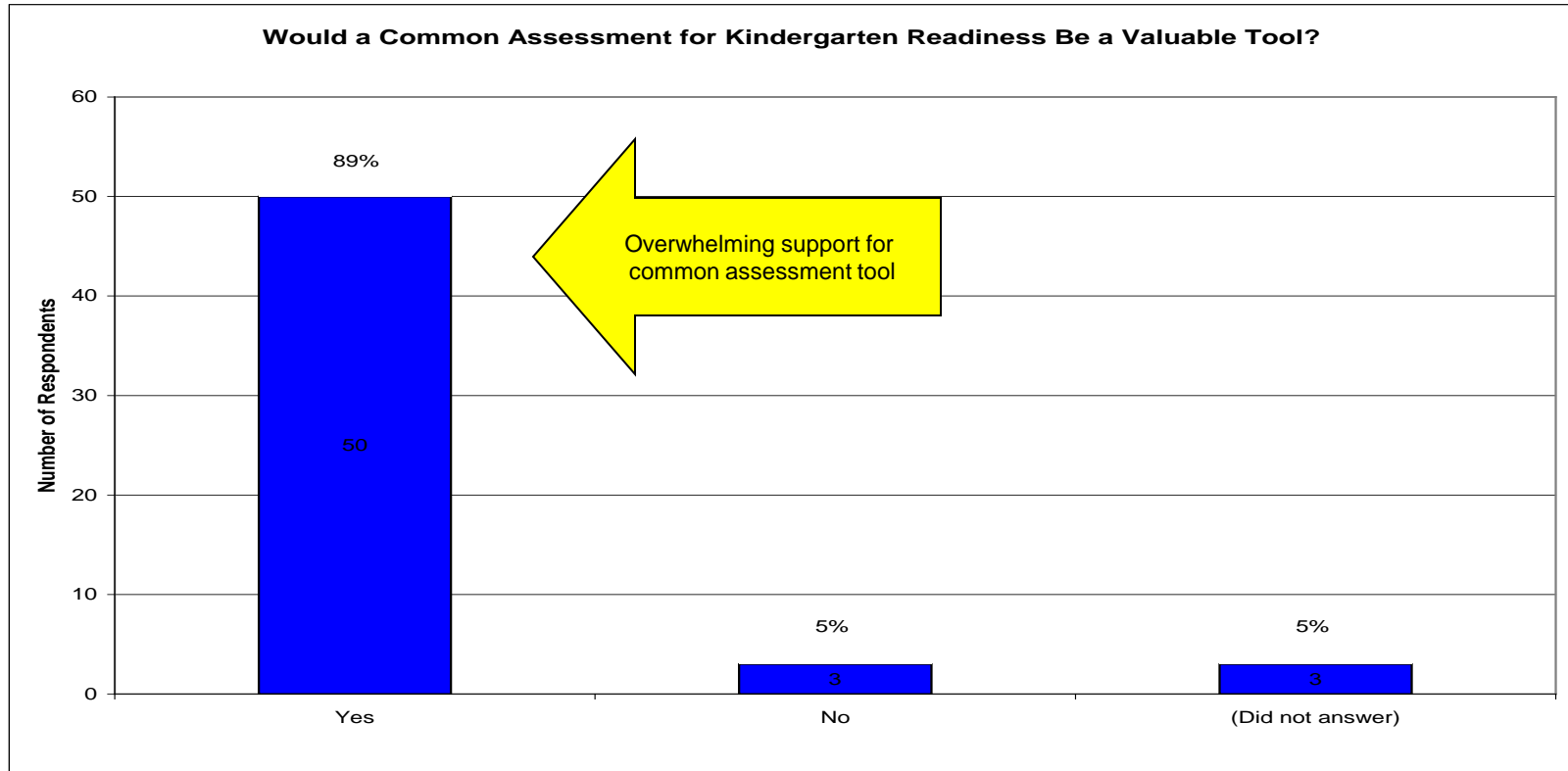
1. There seems to more of a focus in preschools on academics and less time on socialization and play, listening, and following directions. I believe much of this is parent pressure. I have heard they check to be sure preschools are teaching letters, sounds, numbers, etc. It would be perfect if we could coordinate with the preschools. Many preschools have activities kdg. used to do and now do them in preschool. Some have even read the books kdg. is supposed to use for assessment.
2. Observe in classroom throughout the system. Attend workshops and/or read educational materials about social and emotional development. Brainstorm strategies with other educators. Continue to survey teachers. Allow adequate time for students to interact with others. Arrange 'play date' times throughout the community for kids to play with other kids their age in the community.
3. Less academics in preschool and more focus on social and emotional growth. We will teach the academics in kindergarten!
4. Less academics in preschool and more focus on social/emotional growth.
5. Less academics in preschools and focus more on social and emotional growth.
6. Support more time for play in K-2 classrooms.

Better Preschool / K-12 Connection & Communication

1. Better communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers.
2. Better communication between preschools and kindergarten.
3. Kindergarten readiness assessments.
4. Kindergarten readiness testing.
5. I wish there was a way to get all children into preschool. It is so helpful with the social piece of readiness.
6. I think the current system is working well, but not all kids participate in early childhood experiences.
7. Children capable of telling a story. Children with some confidence in drawing.
8. Kindergarten readiness assessments.
9. Kindergarten readiness testing.
10. Put more pressure on the K-12 system to create more appropriate benchmarks for kindergarten and first grade.
11. Use common behavioral methods, not reward/punishment systems. Focus on community building and being a caring member of a team.
12. I think communication will really help us all to get on the same page.
13. Quality programs based on current research and professional staff that is knowledgeable and able to assist. Understanding and reliance on teachers who know children is very important!

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Would a common assessment tool or framework for assessing kindergarten readiness be a valuable tool in Livingston County?

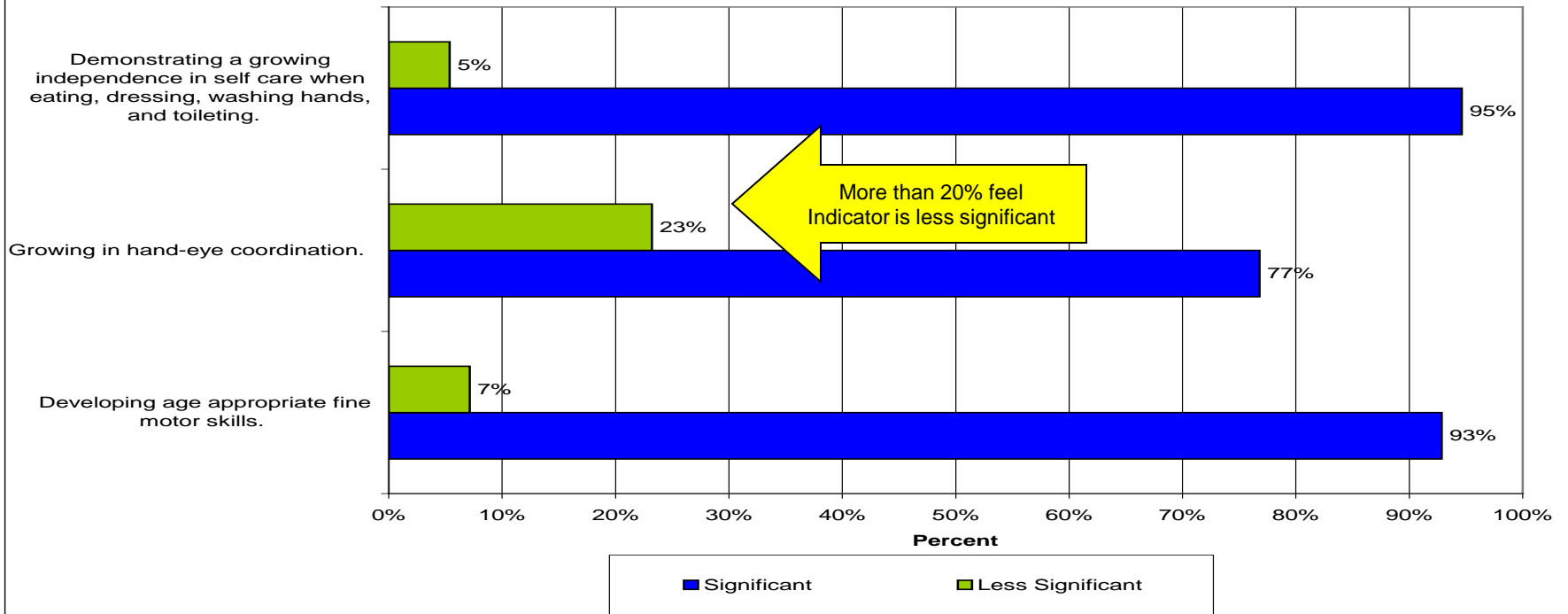


Nearly 90% of teachers believe a common assessment tool would be valuable

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Kindergarten Readiness Indicators: Physical Well Being & Motor Development

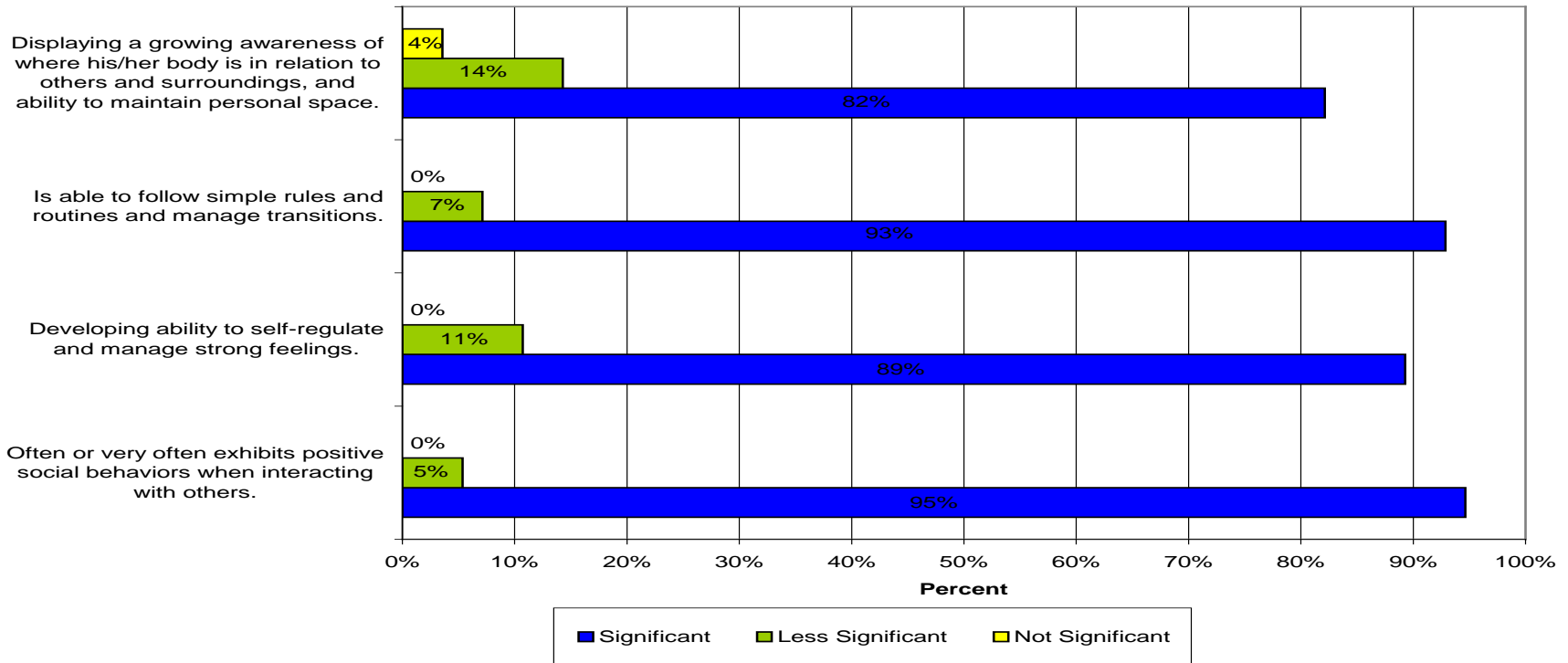
Physical Well Being & Motor Development Indicators



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Kindergarten Readiness Indicators: Social & Emotional Development

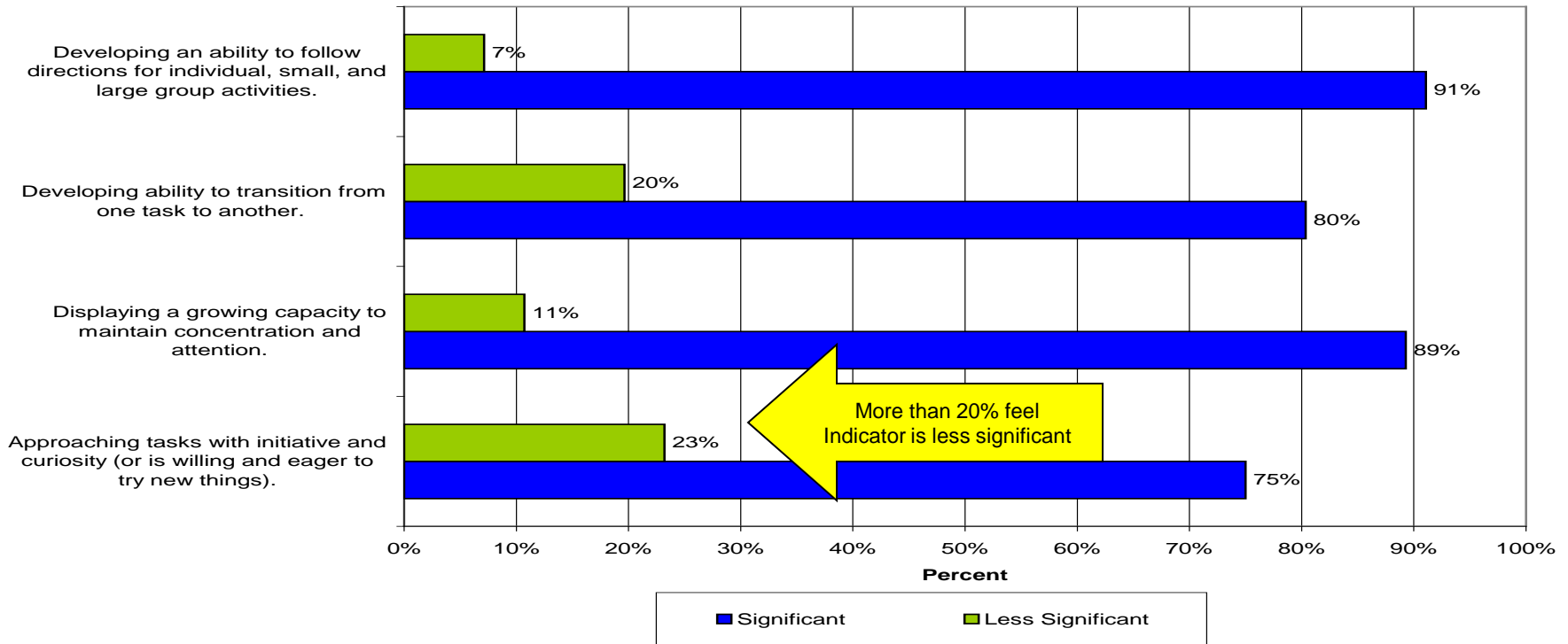
Social & Emotional Development Indicators



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

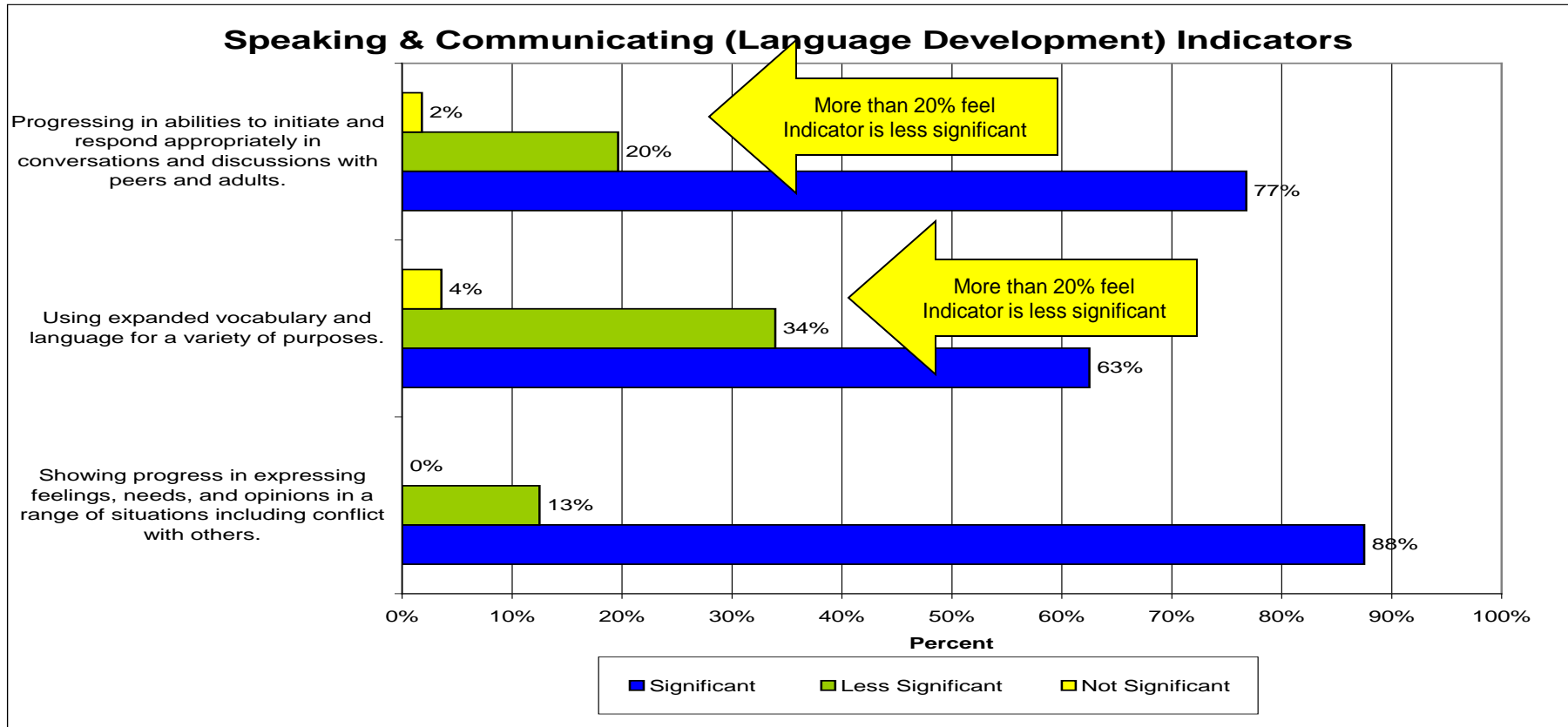
Kindergarten Readiness Indicators: Approaches to Learning

Approaches to Learning Indicators



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

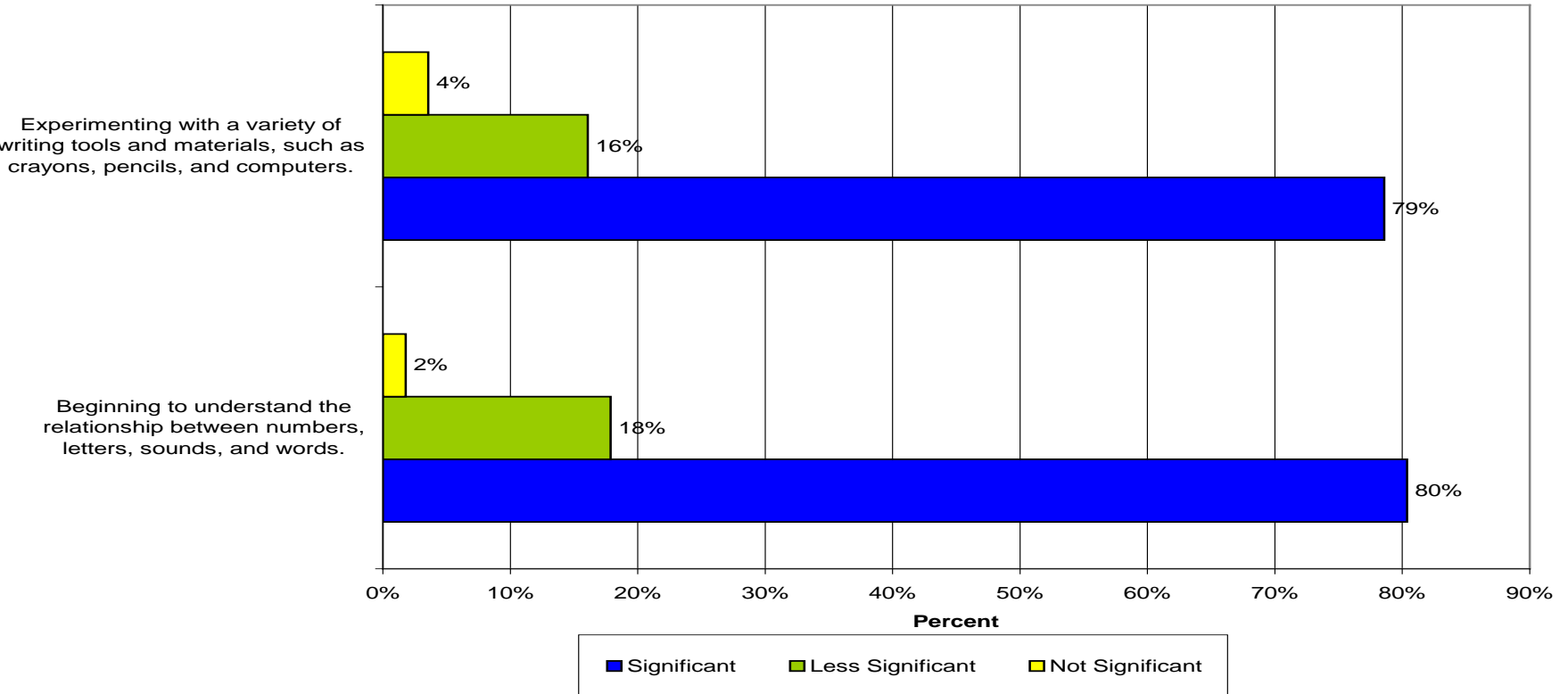
Kindergarten Readiness Indicators: Speaking & Communicating (Language Development)



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

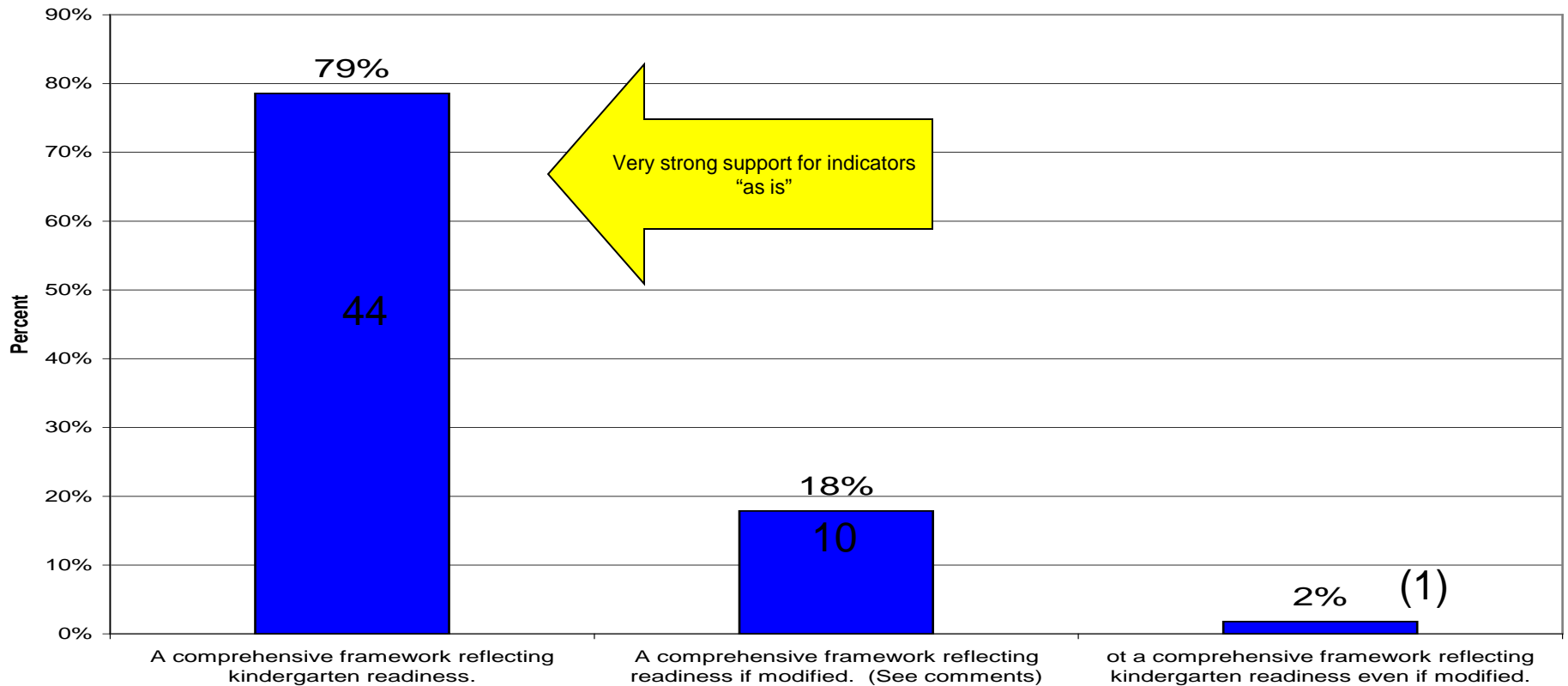
Kindergarten Readiness Indicators: Cognitive & General Knowledge

Cognitive & General Knowledge Indicators



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Are the kindergarten readiness indicators a comprehensive framework reflecting kindergarten readiness?



Nearly 80% believe indicators are a comprehensive framework reflecting kindergarten readiness

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Please share any comments you have (from indicators listed) regarding a common assessment tool or framework.

Social & Emotional

1. We need appropriate screenings to determine if children are mature enough to start kindergarten.
2. We need appropriate screenings to determine whether children are mature enough to start kindergarten.
3. It would depend on what was assessed. I think that social & emotional pieces need to be in place before anything else, followed by oral language and then self help.
4. As long as it is appropriate screenings, rather than academic assessments.
5. For some kids, feeling comfortable with the adults that are giving the assessment is imperative. Observing students in a social environment is best, otherwise the testing can be inaccurate.

Readiness Testing

1. Gesell Test.
2. Gesell.
3. MLPP (Michigan Literacy Progress Profile) and speech language screening.

General Comments

1. I feel it should be developed locally within each school district.
2. Too subjective! Teachers do not have the same goals as pre-schools, daycare, or doctors!
3. In a perfect world yes, but I do not believe you could get everyone to agree.
4. Perhaps this could work.
5. We would need support and time to do the assessments.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Please share any final comments you have.

More Junior Kindergarten Programs / Options

1. How can we get the state to pass a law stating that children cannot begin kindergarten at 4 years old?! All districts need and should have either a Young 5's program or Junior First program for their young students.
2. Many parents' decision to choose Junior K is based on availability where siblings attend or transportation issues. Also, many parents don't choose Junior K because they don't want their child separated from their friends, even if there is almost an entire calendar year difference in ages!

Social & Emotional

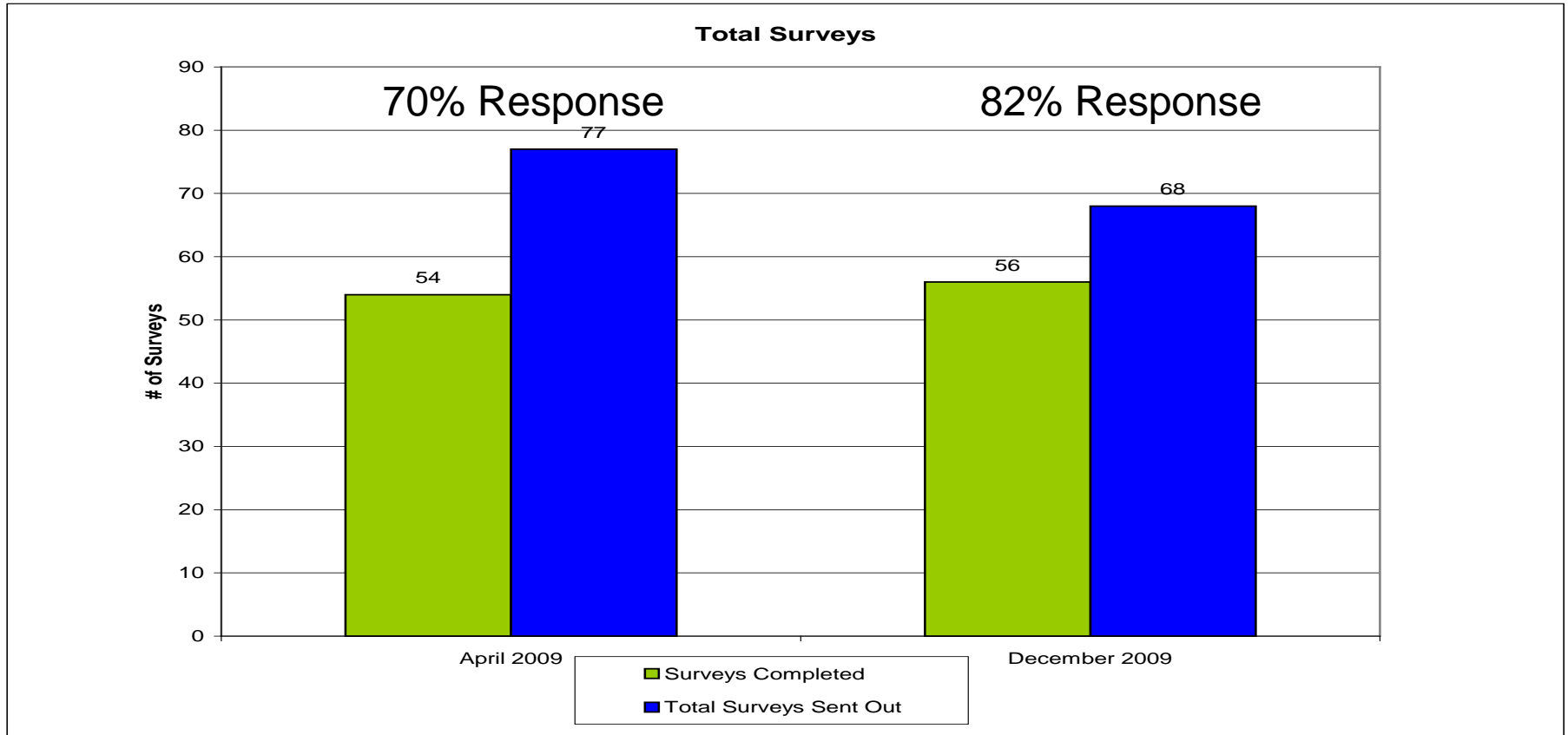
1. I like the framework of this survey. It seems to focus more on social skills and less on academics.
2. I like the suggested framework!
3. The kindergarten readiness indicators noted are all things we work toward in kindergarten.

Parent Education

1. I think the indicators were pretty appropriate. If we could educate parents and give them the tools they need, I believe some would prepare their children better.
2. Include follow up information for parents such as "How to help your child zip independently." etc.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

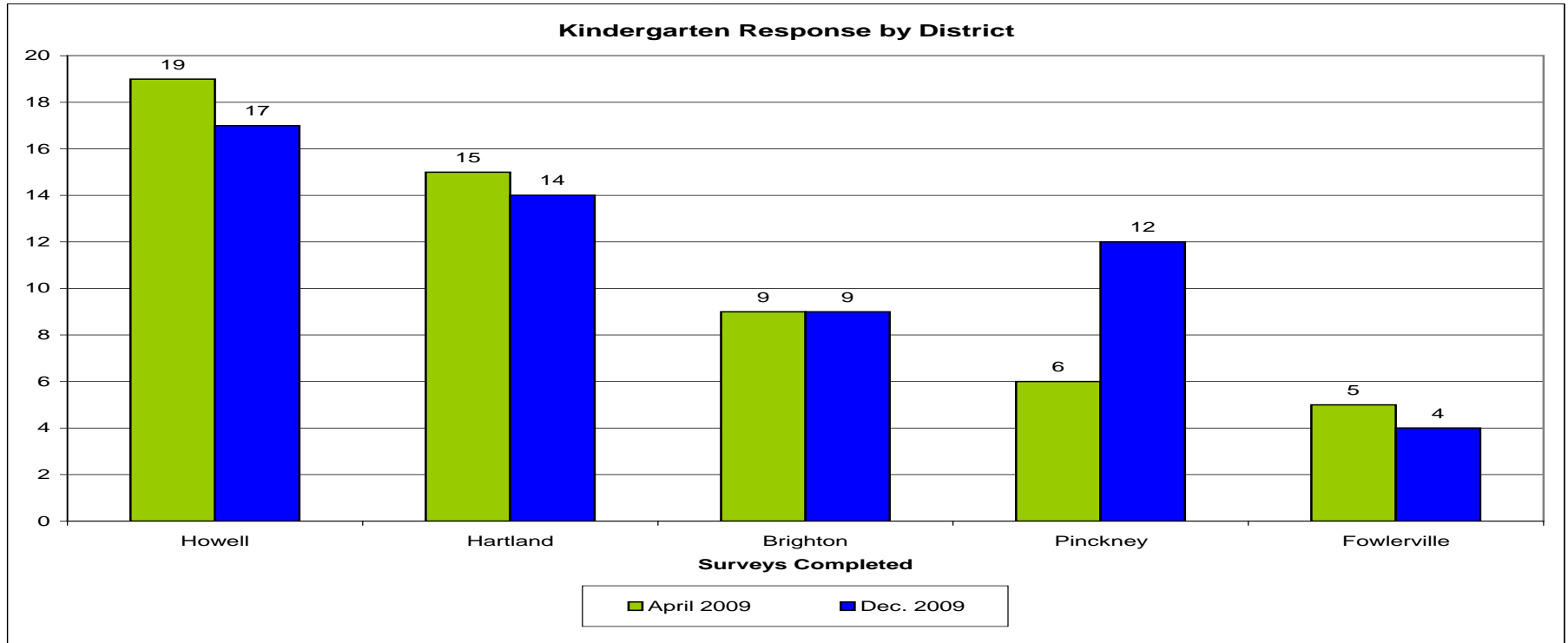
Total surveys sent & received: April 2009 vs. December 2009



Very high survey response rates-Thank you teachers and principals!

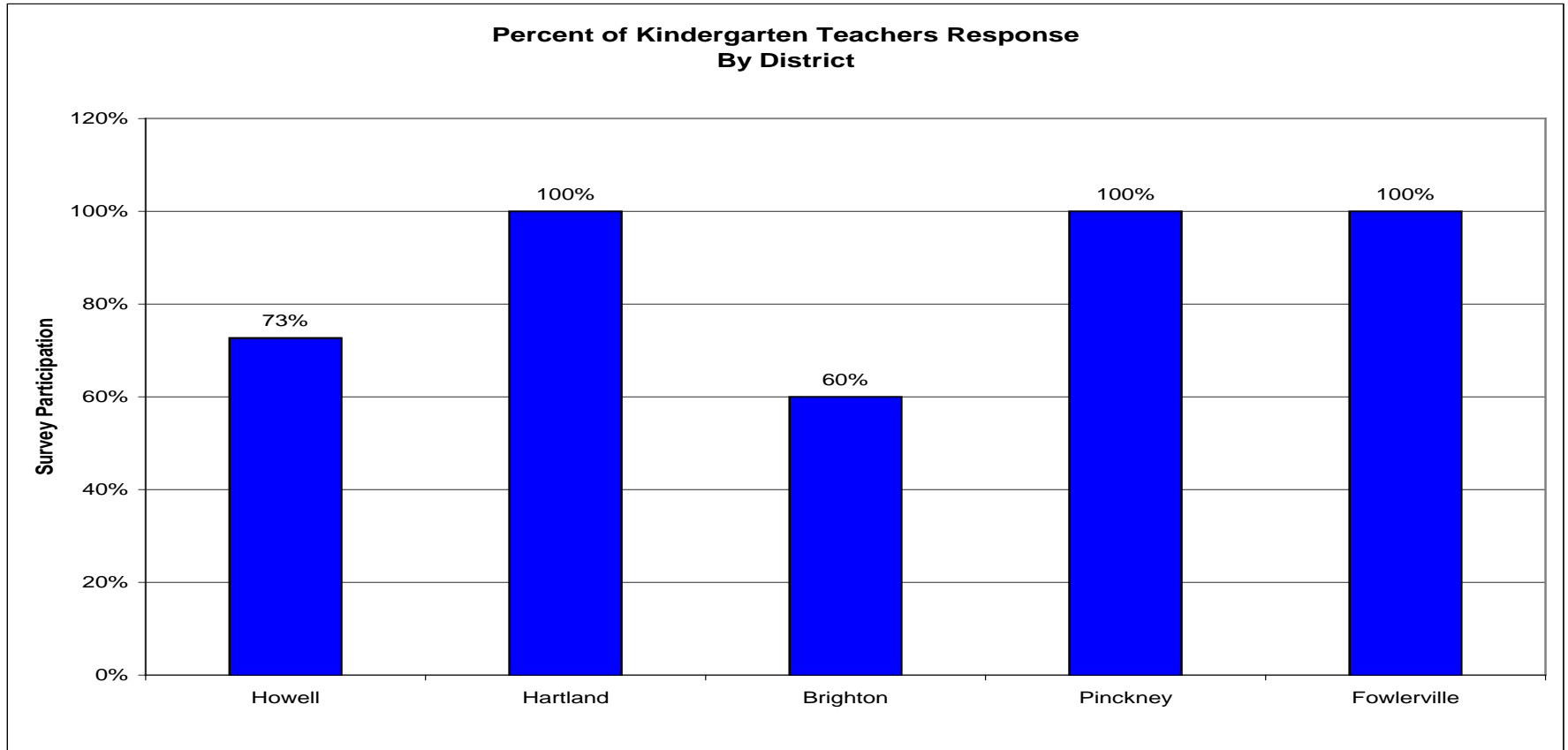
Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Surveys completed by district: April 2009 vs. December 2009



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

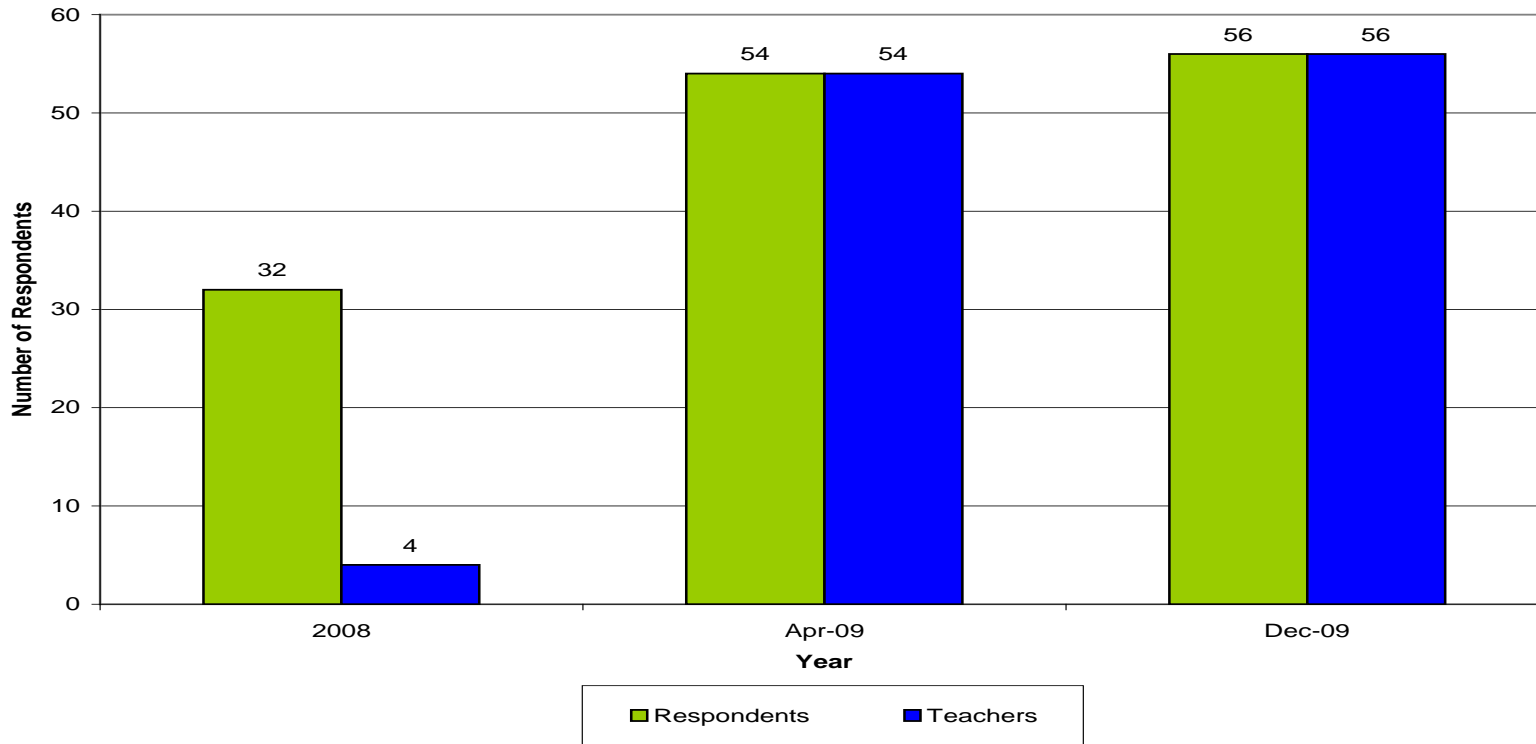
December 2009 Kindergarten Teacher Survey Participation by District



Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment

Respondent/Teacher Participation
2008-2009

2008-2009 Kindergarten Readiness Survey



Kindergarten Assessment

April 2009 & December 2009 Survey Questions

April 2009 Survey

1. District name
2. Building name
3. How long have you been a kindergarten teacher?
4. Identify the top 5 traits of kindergarten readiness.
5. Place these in order of importance-with one being the most important.
6. Check the box that reflects your level of agreement regarding each of these components:
 - The majority of children appear to have good physical health and pediatric care
 - majority of children are socially and emotionally mature enough for school.
 - The majority of children appear to have had quality pre-school or other structured learning experience.
 - The majority of parents participate in their child's educational experience.
 - The majority of children have a safe home environment.
7. Identify the top 5 traits of kindergarten readiness that children currently lack.
8. Place these in order of most commonly lacking skill or trait.
9. In your opinion, what percent of children are not kindergarten ready when they arrived at school in the fall?
10. Describe the service your building offers?
11. Where do you refer families with young children when they require services beyond what your building offers?

December 2009 Survey

1. District Name
2. Building Name
3. How long have you been a kindergarten teacher?
4. What type of kindergarten programs are provided at your school?
5. What type of program do you teach?
6. Identify the top 5 traits of kindergarten readiness.
7. Place these in order of importance with one being the most important.
8. Check the box that reflects your level of agreement regarding each of these components:
 - a. The majority of children appear to have good physical health and pediatric care.
 - b. The majority of children are socially and emotionally mature enough for school.
 - c. The majority of children appear to have had quality pre-school or other structured learning experience.
 - d. The majority of parents participate in their child's educational experience.
 - e. The majority of children have a safe home environment.
9. Identify the top five traits of kindergarten readiness that children currently lack.
10. Place these in order of most commonly lacking trait or skill.
11. In your opinion, what percent of children are not kindergarten ready when they arrived at school in the fall?
12. What steps could our community take to better align the 0-5 resources/professional efforts with those of the K-12 system to improve outcomes and support success for kids in school?
13. Would a common assessment tool or framework for assessing kindergarten readiness be valuable to parents and professionals in Livingston County?
14. Review the indicators below and evaluate their overall significance.
 - a. Developing age appropriate fine motor skills.
 - b. Growing in hand-eye coordination.
 - c. Demonstrating a growing independence in self-care when eating, dressing, washing hand, and toileting.
 - d. Often exhibits positive social behaviors when interacting with others.
 - e. Developing ability to self-regulate and manage strong feelings.
 - f. Is able to follow simple rules and routines and manages transitions.
 - g. Displaying a growing awareness of where his/her body is in relation to others and surroundings and ability to maintain personal space.
 - h. Approaching tasks with initiative and curiosity.
 - i. Displaying ability to transition from one task to another.
 - j. Developing an ability to follow directions.
 - k. Showing progress in expressing feelings, needs and opinions.
 - l. Using expanded vocabulary and language.
 - m. Progressing in abilities to initiate and respond appropriately in conversations and discussions with peers and adults.
 - n. Beginning to understand the relationship between numbers, letters, sounds, and words.
 - o. Experimenting with a variety of writing tools such as crayons, pencils, and computers.
15. Overall, the indicators above are:
 - a. A comprehensive framework reflecting kindergarten readiness.
 - b. A comprehensive framework if modified in the following ways.
 - c. Not a comprehensive framework even if modified.

Traits provided for both surveys: Counts to 20, able to take turns and share, knows the names of colors and shapes, not disruptive, recognizes letters, able to communicate thoughts through words, able to communicate feelings and needs through words, exhibits curiosity and is open to new activities, able to follow directions, able to use writing tools such as a pencil, shows sensitivity to others children's feelings.

Great Start Livingston Kindergarten Assessment 2008 Survey Questions

2008 Survey

1. District name
2. Building name
3. What is the population of children you serve?
4. What is your position?
5. How long have you been in your position?
6. Identify the top three traits of kindergarten readiness.
7. Identify the top three traits of readiness that kindergarteners currently lack.
8. What do you see as the biggest issue with respect to kindergarten readiness in Livingston County?

Traits provided: Counts to 20, able to take turns and share, knows the names of colors and shapes, not disruptive, recognizes letters, able to communicate thoughts through words, exhibits curiosity and enthusiastic approach to new activities, able to follow directions, able to use writing tools such as a pencil, shows sensitivity to others children's feelings.