



Technology for Rural Enhancement of Communities
2019 – Spring Aggregation Report
Head Start and Early Head Start



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INTRODUCTION

The Head Start School Readiness Act of 2007 requires all Head Start and Early Head Start programs to develop school readiness goals in the areas of language and cognitive development, early reading and mathematics skills, social emotional development, physical development, and approaches to learning. Programs must also create and implement a plan to meet these goals. To ensure progress is being made, programs are further mandated to utilize a comprehensive assessment system that measures these school readiness goals and to aggregate and analyze the data regarding child progress three times per year. The data obtained is further analyzed for patterns of progress in order to develop and implement a plan for program improvement.

In June, 2015, the Office of Head Start released the new Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five (HSELOF). This document replaced the previous child development frameworks created by the Office of Head Start. Programs were given one year in which to adopt the new document into their program. The new HSELOF provides guidance to programs regarding curriculum choices, learning materials, how to plan daily activities and to inform intentional teaching practices. In addition to measuring progress on school readiness goals, the new HSELOF mandates that programs must also assess specific developmental indicators and skills within the larger developmental domain areas. For the TREC-Badlands Head Start Prenatal to Five program, this meant adding 11 new objectives from our assessment tool to our aggregation process.

This document is TREC-Badlands Head Start Prenatal to Five program's year-end school readiness goals and child outcomes aggregation and analysis for the 2018-2019 program year. Additional aggregation information was provided in the fall and winter.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

To ensure our program is meeting the needs of all enrolled children, the TREC-Badlands Head Start Prenatal to Five program conducts ongoing assessments of all children utilizing the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system. Each individual child is assessed throughout the year on 51 objectives in various developmental domain areas including physical, social emotional, language, approaches to learning and cognition as well as the content areas of literacy and mathematics. At various times during the program year, each child's developmental level is assessed by the teaching staff or home visitor to determine if the child is below, meeting or exceeding age level expectations within each objective. This is completed during the fall, winter, and spring.

In addition to utilizing the assessment results for programmatic purposes, the individual child assessment results are also shared with the parent(s). Together, the teaching staff or home visitor works with the parent using information from the assessment, screening results and the parent's knowledge of their child to develop an Individual Child Plan tailored to the child's strengths and

areas of needs. This Individual Child Plan is then used to plan appropriate activities that meet the needs of the individual child.

The assessment results information is also used at the classroom or cluster level to determine overall trends, including common strengths and areas of need for a particular group of children. For example, a classroom teacher, upon reviewing the data, may realize that several of the children in her classroom are not meeting age level expectations in being able to identify sounds that rhyme. As a result of the analysis, she may then add additional activities to her lesson plans that focus on rhyming. Conversely, she may find that many children are exceeding age expectations in the area of identifying letters of the alphabet. With this information, she determines she needs to plan more challenging activities for those children to better meet their needs.

At the program level, the initial fall assessment information is used to obtain a baseline account of where all children are at developmentally. The subsequent checkpoints are then analyzed to determine if children are making adequate developmental progress and are meeting school readiness goals program wide. The information will also be used to target the professional development needs of teaching staff and home visitors, to determine if changes are needed within the curriculum to better meet the needs of children, to provide additional parent education and to make any other program changes as deemed appropriate.

LIMITATIONS OF TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD

Although Teaching Strategies GOLD is a comprehensive assessment system and is based on current research, it is not a perfect tool and does have its limitations. Therefore, as we analyze the results of the assessment and aggregated information, it is important we take these limitations into consideration.

The most challenging aspect of the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool is its sensitivity level in assessing infants and toddlers. Each objective is broken down into what is considered age appropriate for each age group. Age group categories in Teaching Strategies GOLD are divided into yearly increments starting at birth and ending at five years. Children change and grow rapidly from birth to three years of age. For example, a newborn infant and a child who is 11 months of age look very different developmentally; however, the assessment system has both of these children in the same age bracket. Due to the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool age categories being 12 months in length and the significant growth children under the age of three years achieve over that time period, the instrument often times will not designate a child's abilities as being below age expectations from birth to age 36 months even if a child has been diagnosed as having a developmental delay. Furthermore, for some objectives, particularly in the concept areas of Literacy and Mathematics, for children less than two years of age the age expectations level is "Not Yet" as a child of this age is not expected to be able to demonstrate any

of the skills or behaviors associated with the objective. These children are defined as “meeting age expectations” by default. In turn, artificially inflating the percentage of children who are categorized as “meeting age expectations.” Therefore, the assessment results for children birth to 24 months and even up to 36 months has a tendency to skew on the high side. If a child has a suspected or confirmed developmental delay, often that child will go from meeting age expectations to being below age expectations on multiple objectives once the child reaches the age of 24 months or 36 months and moves to the next age level.

In addition to the aforementioned limitations of the assessment tool, children enrolled in the home based program may not be observed across multiple settings. These children are primarily observed in the home with a few observed occasionally during group socializations. Again, this may artificially skew these children’s results as higher, particularly in the areas of social and emotional development as these children are observed primarily in a one on one situation, not in a structured setting with multiple children present. Children who are enrolled in the center based option are placed in a situation which requires them to follow routines, directions and to interact and negotiate with numerous non-related children. On several occasions, children who have switched from the home based option to the center based option, upon reassessment have had several objectives in the social and emotional assessment levels reduced from meeting age level expectations to below age level expectations. This is because of the change in environment which requires children to exhibit a higher skill level in interacting with peers and developing relationships with adults who may be unfamiliar.

Another challenge with the assessment process is ensuring the information entered is an accurate true reflection of the child’s current skill level. All teaching staff and home visitors who assess children are required to undergo interrater reliability training during their first year of utilizing the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment and every three years thereafter. While this training is extremely helpful in ensuring staff fully understands the assessment tool and as a program we will continue to require staff to complete it, there are still opportunities for human error. Although the assessment system is supposed to be based on objective observations from the assessor, because of the high number of individual objectives to be entered in for each child, there may be times when the assessor bases a child’s assessment level on an assumption the child does or does not engage in a particular skill or behavior rather than on an observation. Incidences may also occur when the assessor misinterprets a particular objective causing the item to be assessed incorrectly. Thus, there will be instances when a teacher or home visitor unintentionally assesses a child’s level as being higher or lower than the child’s actual ability or skill level. As a program we do try to control for this by having in depth discussions with each teaching staff member and home visitor regarding the child’s skill levels and abilities during staffing meetings. Also, the assessment results for each home visiting cluster and classroom are reviewed to determine if any possible assessor errors have emerged. When these are found,

these are discussed with the assessor and if changes are needed to be made they are done so immediately.

Although the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool is not perfect, we do believe it is one of the best tools currently available for conducting authentic ongoing assessments of young children. However, it is important to keep these limitations of the tool in mind when reviewing and analyzing the aggregated assessment results which follow below.

SPRING 2019 AGGREGATION INFORMATION

The following pages contain graphs of the spring 2019 GOLD assessment checkpoint results for children enrolled in both the Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Information from all home based and center classroom sites are included. In order for children to be included in the checkpoint, they must have been enrolled at least 4 weeks prior to the finalized checkpoint date of May 10, 2019. This ensures the teaching staff or home visitor have had enough time to gather multiple observations of the child's developmental level needed to conduct an accurate assessment of the child's abilities. A total of 157 children were included in this assessment aggregation.

While the initial fall checkpoint provides important baseline information regarding children's developmental levels, the spring checkpoint allows us to see how children in the program finished the year. The graph below compares the results of the fall 2018, winter 2019 and spring 2019 GOLD assessment checkpoints by dividing out the developmental domain areas of cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, language and social emotional and the content areas of literacy and mathematics. Upon reviewing the results of the fall 2018, winter 2019 and spring 2019 GOLD aggregation, we found that children did make developmental progress in all domain areas.

Although we are seeing growth in all domains, it is imperative we take all factors into consideration when analyzing the results. For example, it is impossible to determine how much growth can be attributed to participation in the program or with natural maturation of the child. In addition, some of the increased scores may be due in part to some children initially being scored artificially low because the teacher or home visitor had not directly observed a child engaging in a skill or behavior in a particular area until after completion of the fall checkpoint. However, even when factoring in these elements, we are pleased with the amount of growth children have made in the program during the first half of the year.

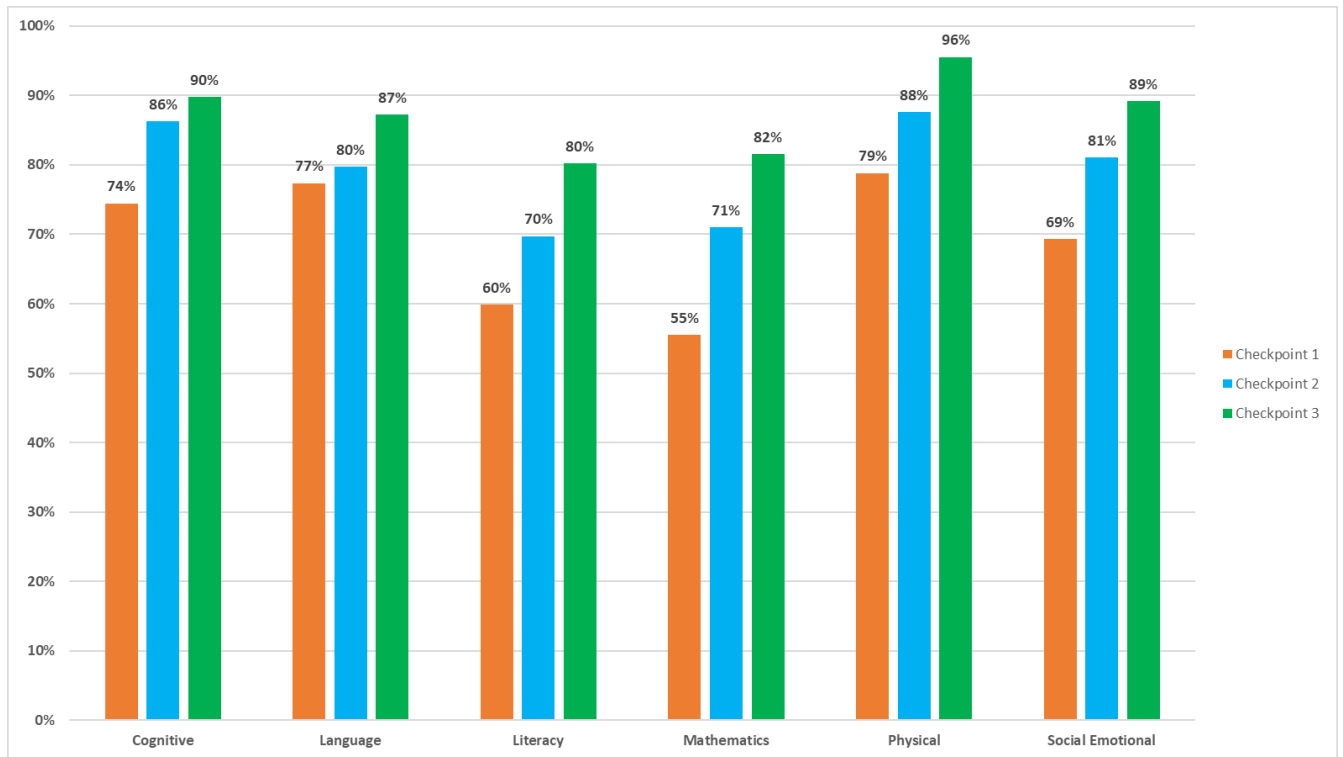
As previously stated, the chart below compares the fall 2018, winter 2019 and spring 2019 GOLD checkpoint aggregation scores. The fall aggregation percentages of children who were determined to be "meeting/exceeding expectations" are in orange, while the winter aggregation percentages of children determined to be "meeting/exceeding expectations" are in blue and the spring percentages are in green. The fall aggregation determined that over 70% of children enrolled in the program had been assessed as "meeting/exceeding expectations" in four of the

five developmental domain areas (cognitive, language, fine motor, and gross motor development). In the domain area of social emotional development, 69% of children were assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations.” In the fall, the content areas of literacy and mathematics were also assessed. At that time, only 60% of children had been assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations” in literacy and only 55% of children had been assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations” in mathematics.

As indicated in the chart on the following page, the percentage of children “meeting/exceeding expectations” increased significantly in each developmental domain and content area. Over 80% of children enrolled in the program at the winter checkpoint were assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations” in all of the five developmental domain areas. By the spring checkpoint, over 80% of children assessed were determined to be “meeting/exceeding expectations” in all five of the developmental domains, with two of the domain areas (*cognitive* and *physical*) at or above 90%. The smallest gains were in the area of language with an increase of 10 percentage points, which is still a substantial increase. The largest area of gain was observed in the developmental domain area of social emotional, which rose from 69% in the fall to 89% in the spring. Because this area was the lowest area in the fall, we were pleased about the dramatic improvement.

We also saw significant growth in the content areas of literacy and mathematics from the fall to winter and spring checkpoint periods. In the content area of literacy, in the fall only 60% of children were assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations.” This increased to 70% by the winter checkpoint and to 80% by spring. In the content area of mathematics, 55% of children were assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations” during the fall. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 71% and to 82% by the spring. We are pleased to see such significant growth over the year.

Although these increases are significant, we continue to view them with caution. In addition to the number of children being assessed at age level in these content areas being lower than the domain areas, these numbers are still actually artificially high. Infants and toddlers being assessed on the objectives items in these content areas are marked as “Not Yet” as these are skills a child in this age range would not be expected to do. These “Not Yet” scores are by default scored as “meeting age expectations;” thus, the percentage of children actually assessed as meeting age level expectations for preschoolers is in reality lower than the percentages provided. These content areas will continue to be strengthened by engaging in meaningful and targeted professional development of teaching staff and home visitors, providing education to parents on how they can support their children’s development in these areas, and through curriculum based activities.



SCHOOL READINESS GOALS:

In addition to the aggregated information being separated out by domain and content areas, we have also divided the results out into our program's school readiness goals. The following pages contain visuals, each representing a particular school readiness goal along with the appropriate GOLD objectives that relate to that particular goal. The school readiness goals are as follows:

- **Physical Development and Health:**
 - Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate control of large muscles for traveling, navigating and balancing in varied activities and across all settings.
 - Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate control of small muscles for eating, playing, painting/drawing and manipulating in varied activities across all settings.
- **Social and Emotional Development:**
 - Children will demonstrate the ability to recognize and regulate their own emotions and behaviors on appropriate age and developmental levels during varied activities and across all settings.
 - Children will demonstrate positive and cooperative play and social relationships with peers and adults on age and developmentally appropriate levels in varied activities and across all settings.

- Literacy and Language:
 - Children will demonstrate emergent skills on an appropriate age and developmental level to communicate through verbal and non-verbal language, written representations using symbols and letters in varied activities and across all settings.
 - Children will learn varied ways to communicate and get meaning from print at an age and developmentally appropriate level in varied activities and across all settings.
 - Children will expand vocabulary and word meaning on an appropriate age and developmental level through a variety of activities and across all settings.
- Approaches to Learning:
 - Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate interest, curiosity and creativity in a variety of activities and across all settings.
 - Children will demonstrate initiative, persistence, focus, problem solving and reflection in a variety of activities and challenges across all settings.
- Cognitive and General Knowledge:
 - Children will use age and developmentally appropriate math concepts of counting, comparing, relating, patterning and problem solving in a variety of activities and across all settings.
 - Children will engage in and explore their environments through age and developmentally appropriate activities of exploration, inquiry, investigation, observation, manipulation, questioning, predicting and developing hypotheses in varied activities and across all settings.
 - Children will use former knowledge, data and new information to form new concepts, solve new problems, develop new vocabulary and express new ideas in a variety of age and developmentally appropriate activities and across all settings.

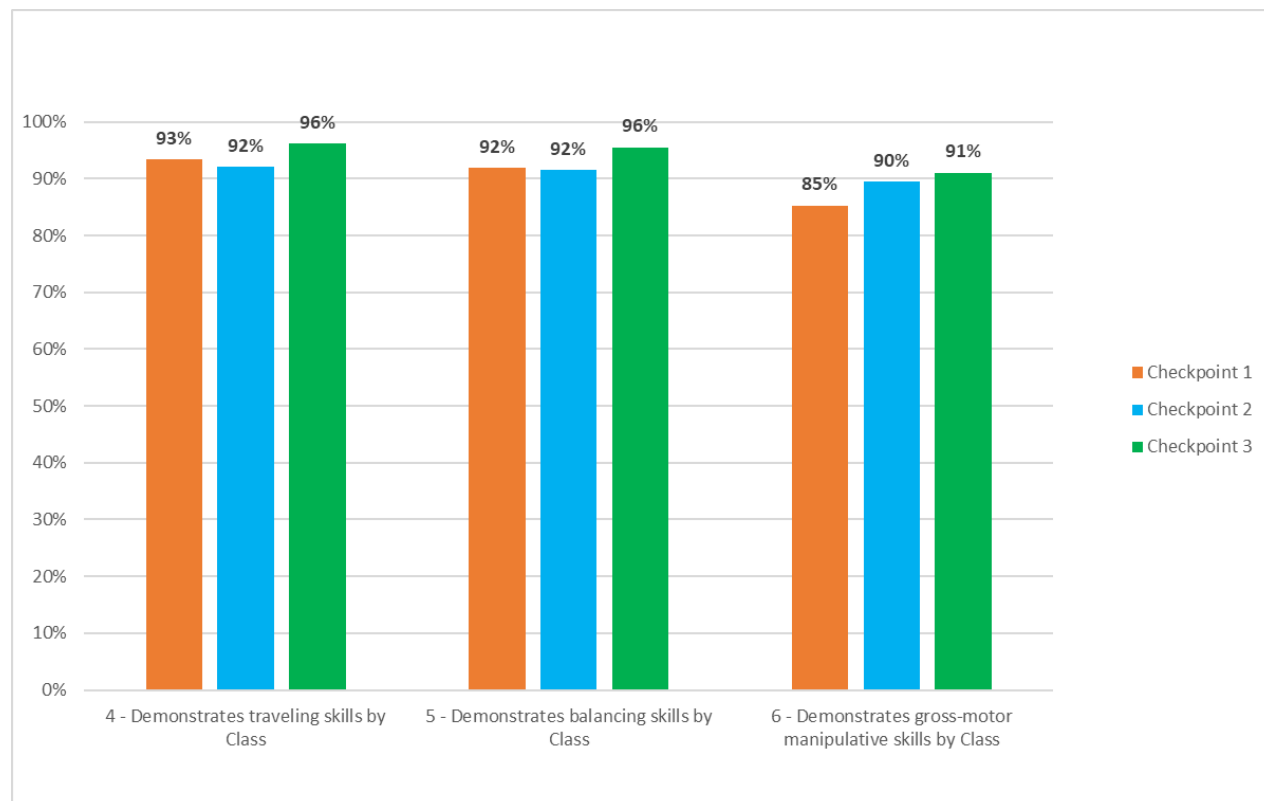
Below is a summary of each of the school readiness goals assessed as well as additional objectives that are required by the new HSELOF. In cases where we believed it was appropriate, we also included additional charts reviewing the results specifically for three and four year olds. This is due to some of the more academic or higher level skills results being skewed on the high side when infants and toddlers were included. This occurs when a child is considered too young to be demonstrating any skills associated with a particular objective. That child would be marked as “Not Yet” on the checkpoint and would fall in to the meeting or exceeding age level expectations category. When we look at the results for just the three and four year old children, who would be expected to be demonstrating some skills on those objectives, we get a more accurate picture of how those children are performing. This provides us with better information that can assist us in determining how to move forward in supporting those children’s needs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH:

The program has two school readiness goals in the area of physical development and health. The first relates to gross motor skills and the second to fine motor development. Overall, children in the program are doing quite well in the area of physical development and health and are continuing to make progress.

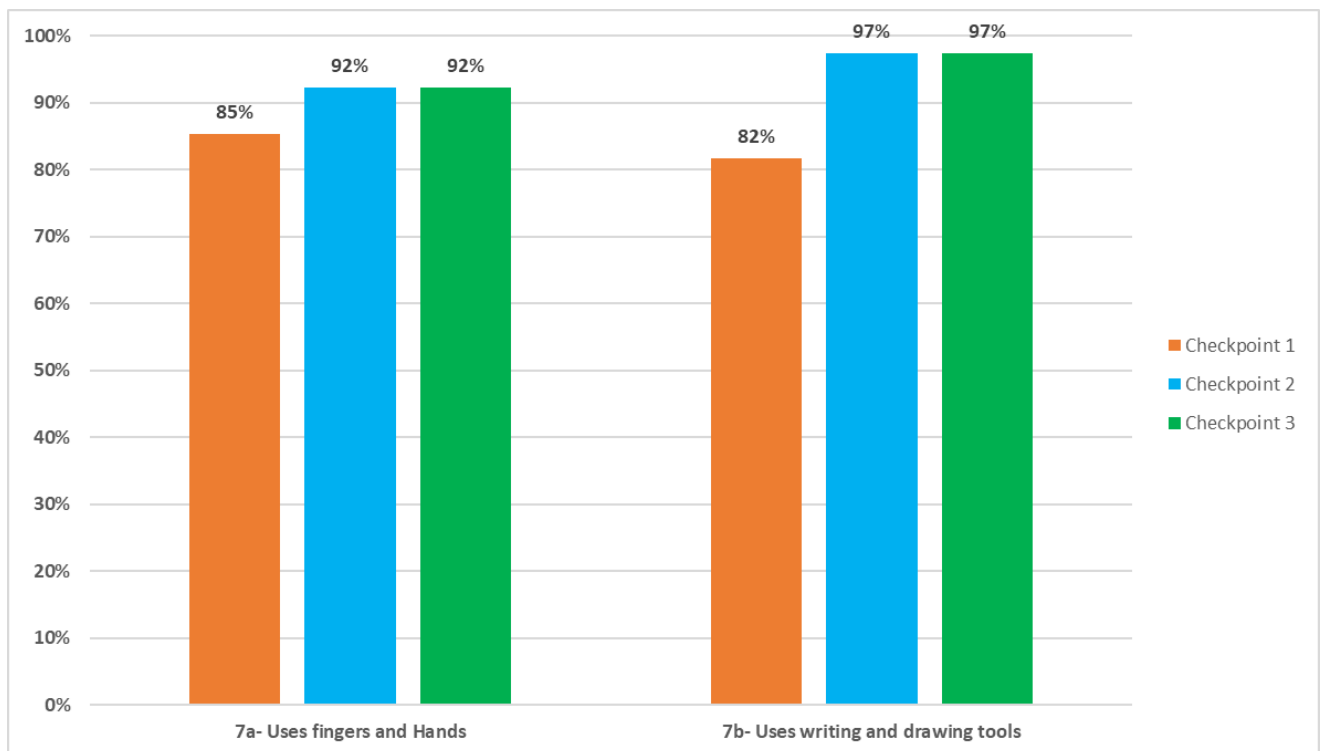
Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate control of large muscles for traveling, navigating and balancing in varied activities and across all settings.

The gross motor domain looks at children's large motor skills such as walking, running, balancing, etc. This area is measured by three Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives. The chart below compares the fall, winter and spring checkpoint results. In the fall, 93% of children were assessed as being at age expected levels for demonstrating traveling skills. During the winter checkpoint this dipped slightly to 92% and then increased to 96% in the spring. For balancing skills, 92% were assessed at age level in the fall. This percentage remained at 92% for the winter checkpoint and increased to 96% by the spring. Finally, in the fall, 85% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations for the objective of demonstrating gross motor manipulative skills. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 90% and to 91% in the spring. These increases indicate that the vast majority of the children we are working with are doing very well in the area of gross motor. Staff will persist in providing developmentally appropriate gross motor activities to ensure children are appropriately challenged in this area and continue to grow.



Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate control of small muscles for eating, playing, painting/drawing and manipulating in varied activities across all settings.

In the area of demonstrating fine motor strength and coordination, two objectives are used to measure this goal. For the first objective of using fingers and hands, 85% of the children assessed were found to be “meeting/exceeding expectations” in the fall. This increased to 92% of children in the winter and remained at 92% for the spring checkpoint. For the second objective of using writing and drawing tools, 82% of children were assessed at “meeting/exceeding expectations” in the fall. This rose to 97% for both the winter and spring checkpoints. Although this is an area where the majority of children are already doing well, for those not yet at age level this will be an area that will need to be focused on so children have the coordination and dexterity in their small motor muscles needed to engage in activities such as writing. We will continue to provide activities that support children’s development in this area both in the home based and center based options.



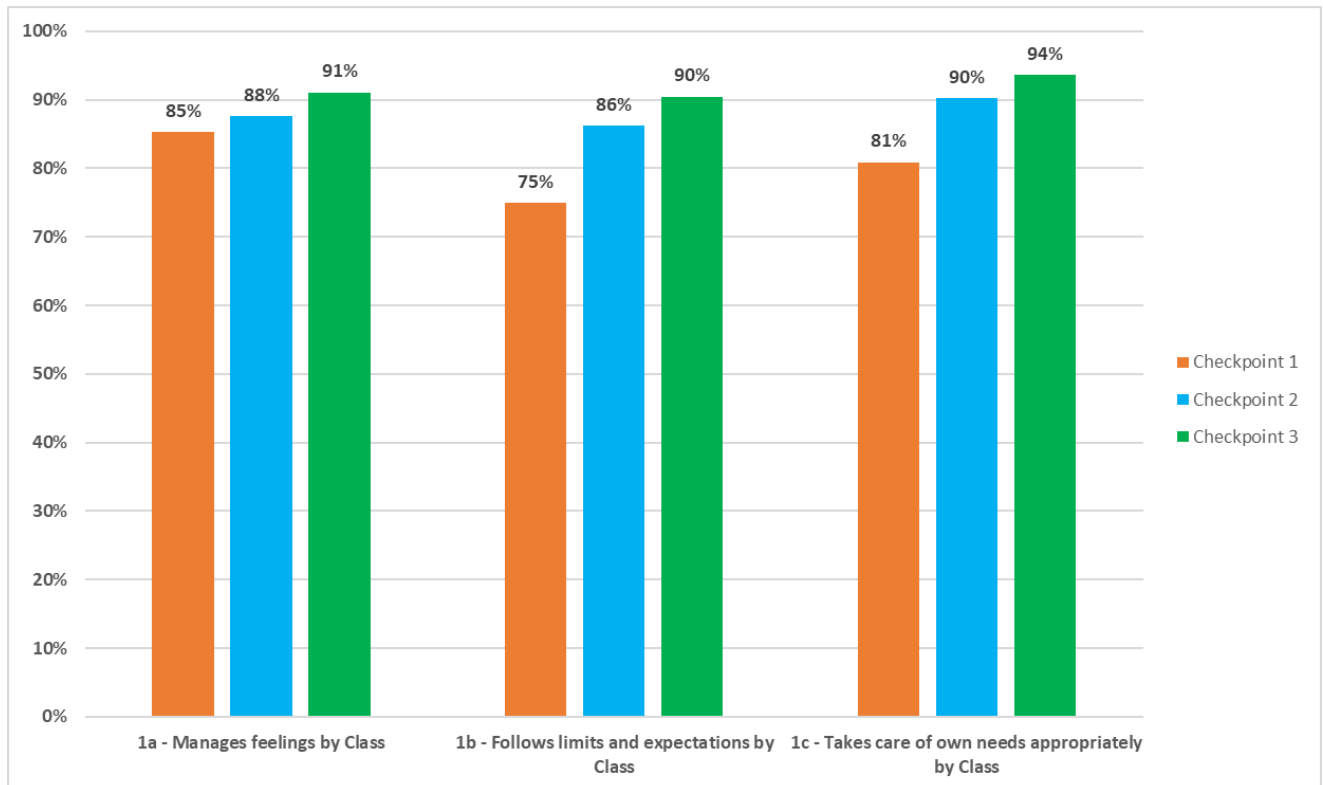
As a program we will continue to plan activities that support the children’s ongoing physical developmental needs in the areas of gross motor and fine motor activities utilizing the current curricula in place. Home visit, group socialization and classroom lesson plans will be monitored to ensure motor activities are being planned and implemented in all settings.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

There are two school readiness goals in the social and emotional domain. The first relates to children's abilities to regulate their own emotions and behaviors. The second is focused on children's relationships with others.

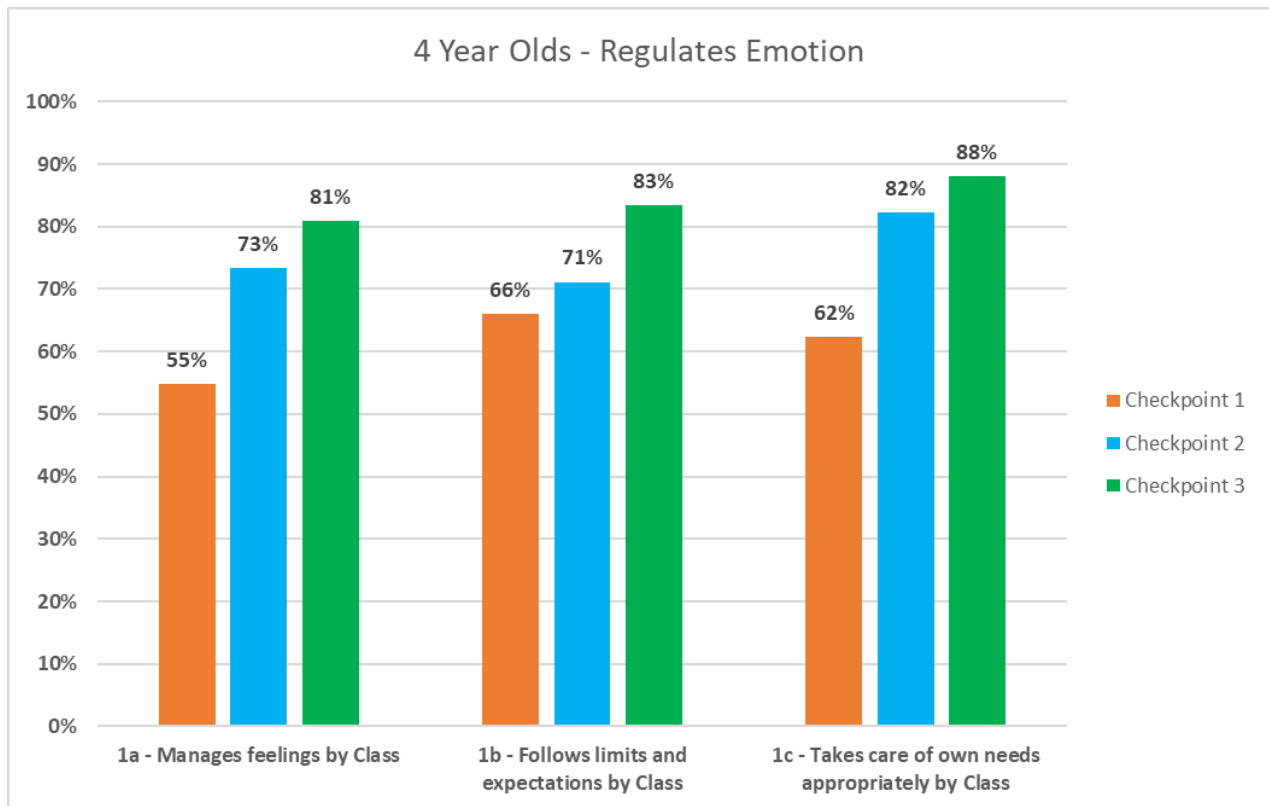
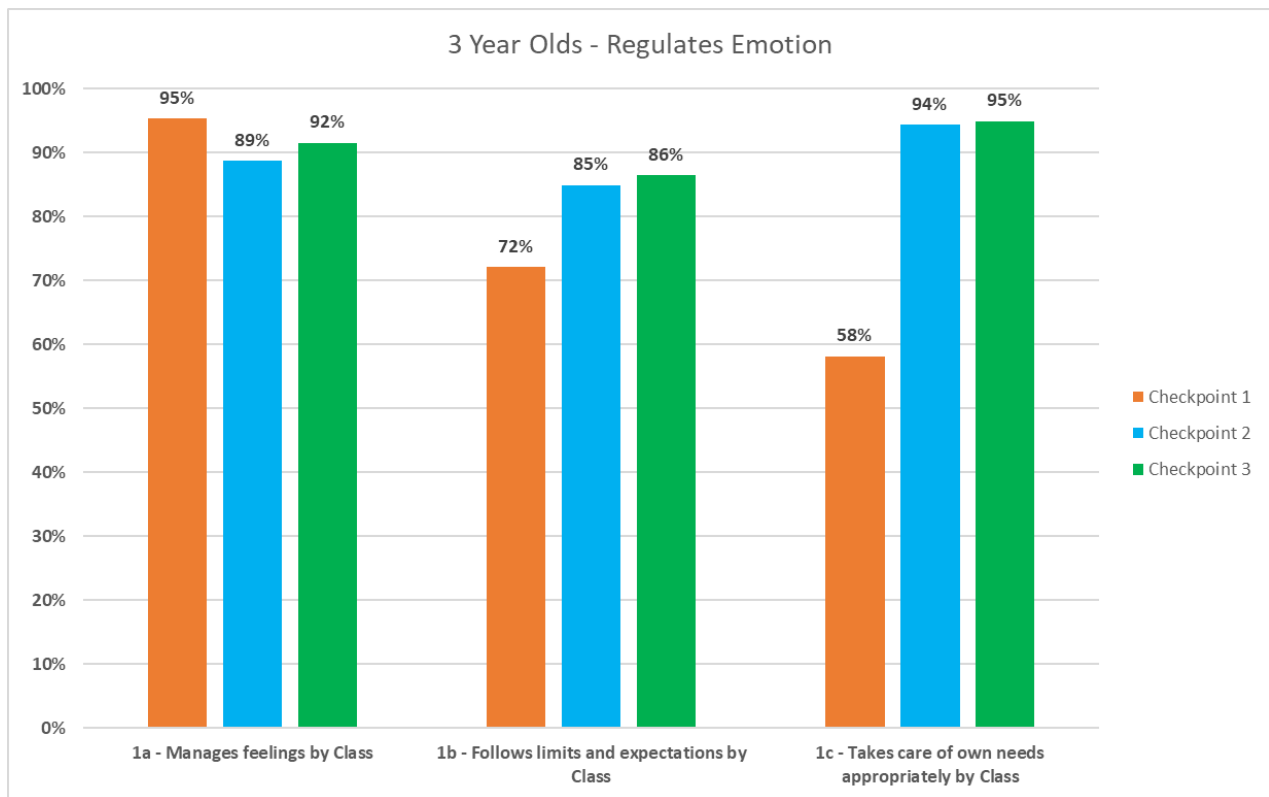
Children will demonstrate the ability to recognize and regulate their own emotions and behaviors on appropriate age and developmental levels during varied activities and across all settings.

There are three objectives utilized to measure the ability to regulate their own emotions and behaviors. In the fall, 85% of children were found to be functioning at age level expectations in managing their feelings. This increased to 88% for the winter checkpoint and to 91% by the spring. For following limits and expectations, in the fall 75% of children were determined to be at age level. This rose to 86% by the winter checkpoint and to 90% by the spring checkpoint. Finally, in the fall, 81% of children were determined to be able to take care of their own needs appropriately. By the winter, this had increased to 90% and then to 94% by the spring. We are pleased with the significant growth on these objectives area. We will continue to support children in developing these skills through implementation of our current curricula in both the center and home based options.



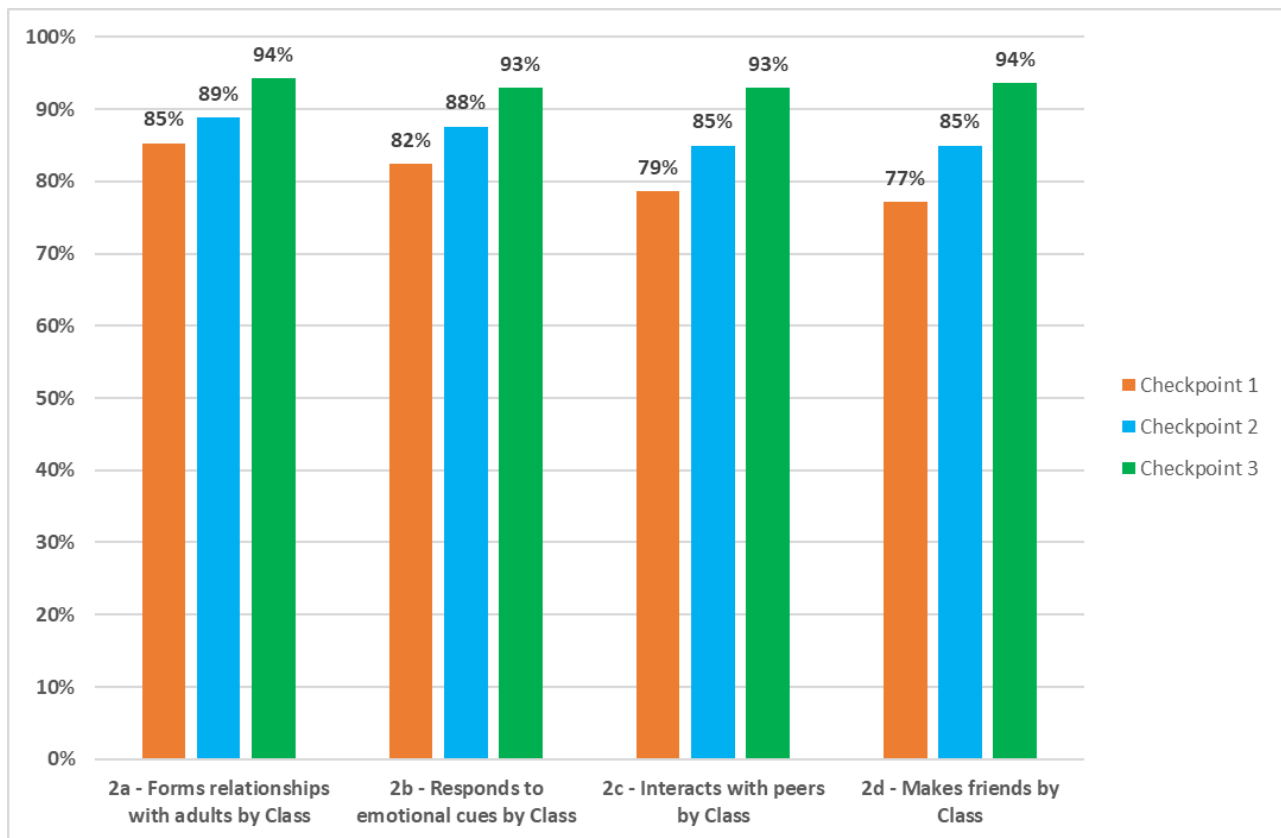
The above chart compiles the results for all children in the program, including infants and toddlers. When the same information regarding these objectives is broken down by three and

four year olds, however, the results are more mixed and give us a more accurate picture of how the preschoolers in our program are doing in regards to these skills. Three year olds scored fairly high on the dimension of managing feelings with 95% scored at age level or above in the fall, however, this decreased to 89% in the winter. This decrease was most likely due to children newly enrolled in the program that had not been assessed in the fall, for those children the winter checkpoint was their baseline. In addition, there was a change in staff assessing some of the children from fall to winter. By the spring checkpoint, this increased to 92%. When we compare the three year olds results to those of the four year olds for managing feelings, we see that only 55% of four year olds were scoring at or above age level expectations in the fall. That percentage did increase, however, to 73% in the winter and then to 81% in the spring. The differences in the percentage of three year olds and four year olds functioning at age level is most likely due to the significant jump in expectations that the assessment tool requires of four year olds. For following limits and expectations, 72% of three year olds scored at age level in the fall. This increased to 85% for the winter checkpoint and to 86% in the spring. In the fall, 66% of four year olds were deemed as meeting or exceeding age expectations for following limits and expectations. This rose to 71% in the winter and then to 83% for the spring. Finally, for takes care of own needs, 58% of three year olds and 62% of four year olds were found to be performing at age level in the fall. These percentages increased to 94% for three year olds and 82% for four year olds, significant increases for both age groups. By the spring, these had increased to 95% of three year olds and 88% of four year olds were at age level. These numbers do better reflect what we are seeing in our preschool children, particularly in our center based classrooms. They also reflect a great deal of growth in a relatively short amount of time.



Children will demonstrate positive and cooperative play and social relationships with peers and adults on age and developmentally appropriate levels in varied activities and across all settings.

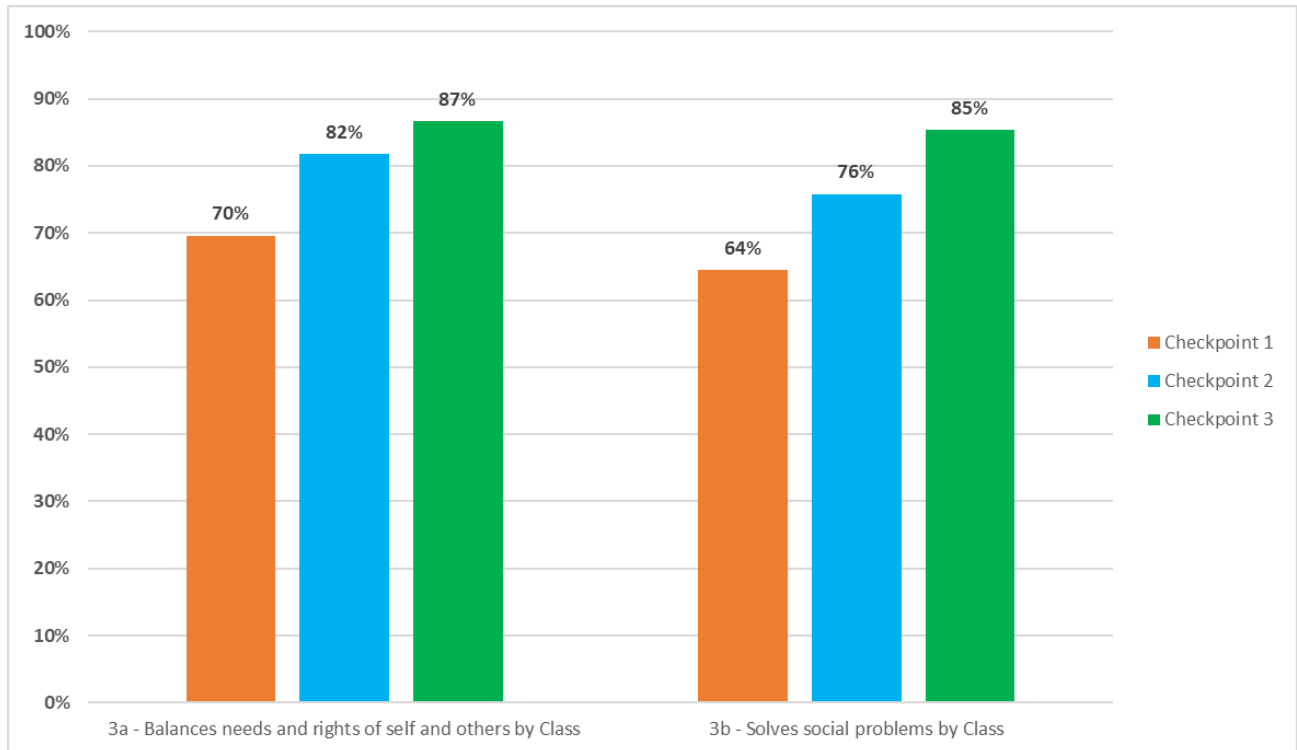
Regarding demonstrating positive and cooperative play and relationships with peers and adults, the results are overall positive. The fall assessment results indicated 85% of children were meeting age level expectations in forming relationships with adults. For the winter checkpoint, this increased to 89% and by spring to 94%. In addition, 82% of children were found to be at age level expectations in responding to emotional cues in the fall. This increased to 88% in the winter and to 93% by the spring. For interacting with peers, 79% were found to be at age level expectations in the fall. This rose to 85% for the winter checkpoint and to 93% for the spring checkpoint. Finally, in the fall, 77% of children were at age level in making friends. This increased to 85% in the winter and to 94% by the spring.



Additional social and emotional development objectives.

In addition to the above school readiness goals, the new HSELOF requires that we also assess how children engage in and maintain positive interactions with other children and how they use basic problem-solving skills to resolve conflicts with peers. We have chosen two additional objectives from our assessment tool to measure these items. For the first item we utilized the objective of balancing the needs and rights of others and determined that in the fall 70% of children were

meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This increased to 82% by the winter checkpoint and to 87% by spring. For the latter, we used the objective of solving social problems of which 64% of children were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations at the fall checkpoint. This rose to 76% at the winter checkpoint and to 85% by the spring.



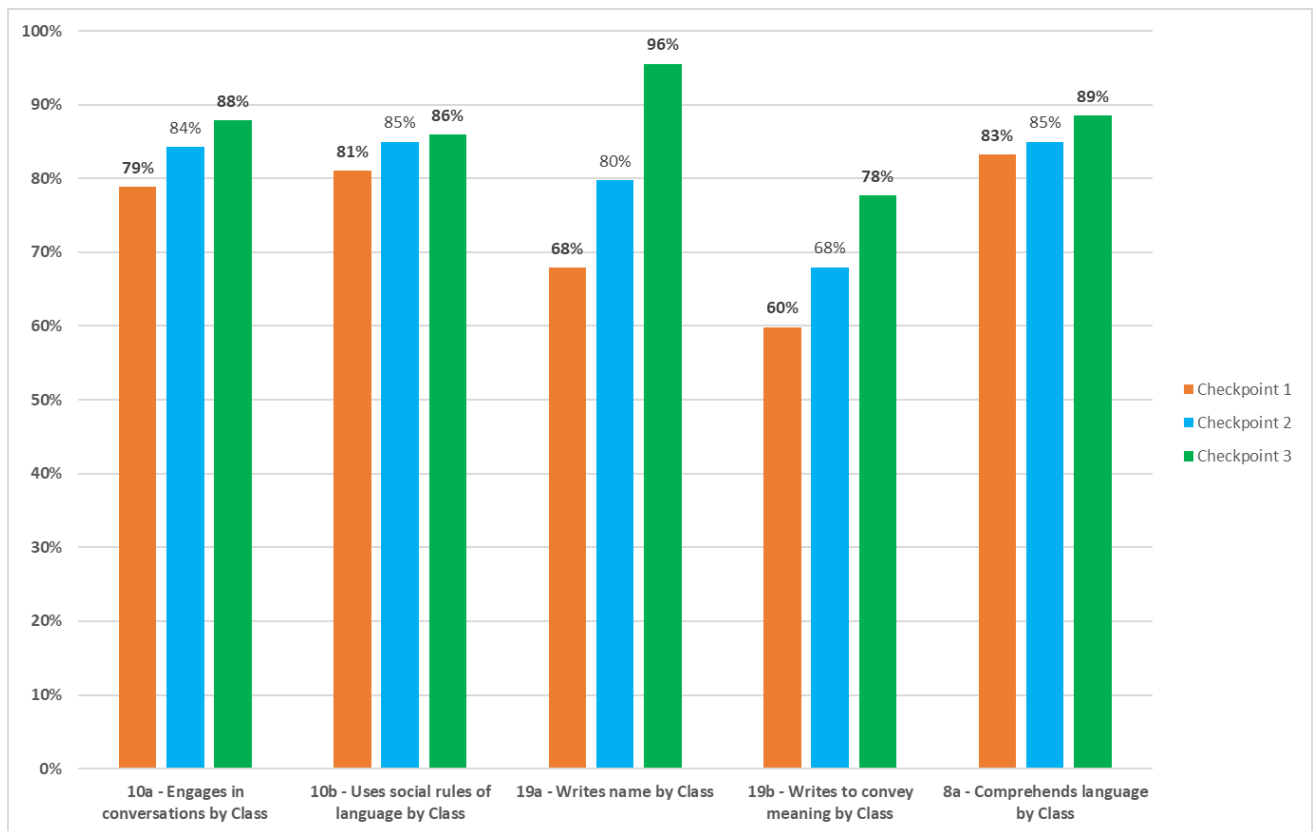
As some of these percentages indicate, we began the program year with a significant portion of children who needed support in the area of social emotional development. Teachers and home visitors have worked diligently to assist children with these skills and we believe that has led to much of the growth we have seen. TREC will continue to focus on helping children learn important social emotional skills. As discussed earlier, the assessment results for children in the home based option may be assessed at artificially higher levels than would be if they were in a classroom setting as a result of the differences in the environments. In the home based option, we will continue to support social emotional development through activities on the home visits as well as during group socializations. In the Head Start classrooms, teaching staff will continue to implement both the Creative Curriculum and the Second Step curriculum which have components focused on learning about emotions and problem solving conflicts. We will also continue to utilize strategies from the Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning's Pyramid Model approach for promoting social and emotional competence in infants and young children.

LITERACY AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

There are three school readiness goals in the areas of literacy and language development. The first goal is centered on communication through verbal and non-verbal language as well as written representations. The second goal is focused on varied ways to communicate and to obtain meaning from print while the third targets children's expanding vocabularies. While the overall assessment results for these three goals indicate a majority of children are meeting age level expectations, as mentioned above, these results may be skewed artificially high. This is because several objectives used to measure these goals are not appropriate to infants and toddlers. All children under the age of 24 months would be marked as "Not Yet" on these items which would then categorize them as "meeting/exceeding expectations." On some objectives, children as old as three years still fall into the "Not Yet" category. If we were to look at the results for only the preschool aged children of three years and older, we would find a lower number of children meeting age level expectations.

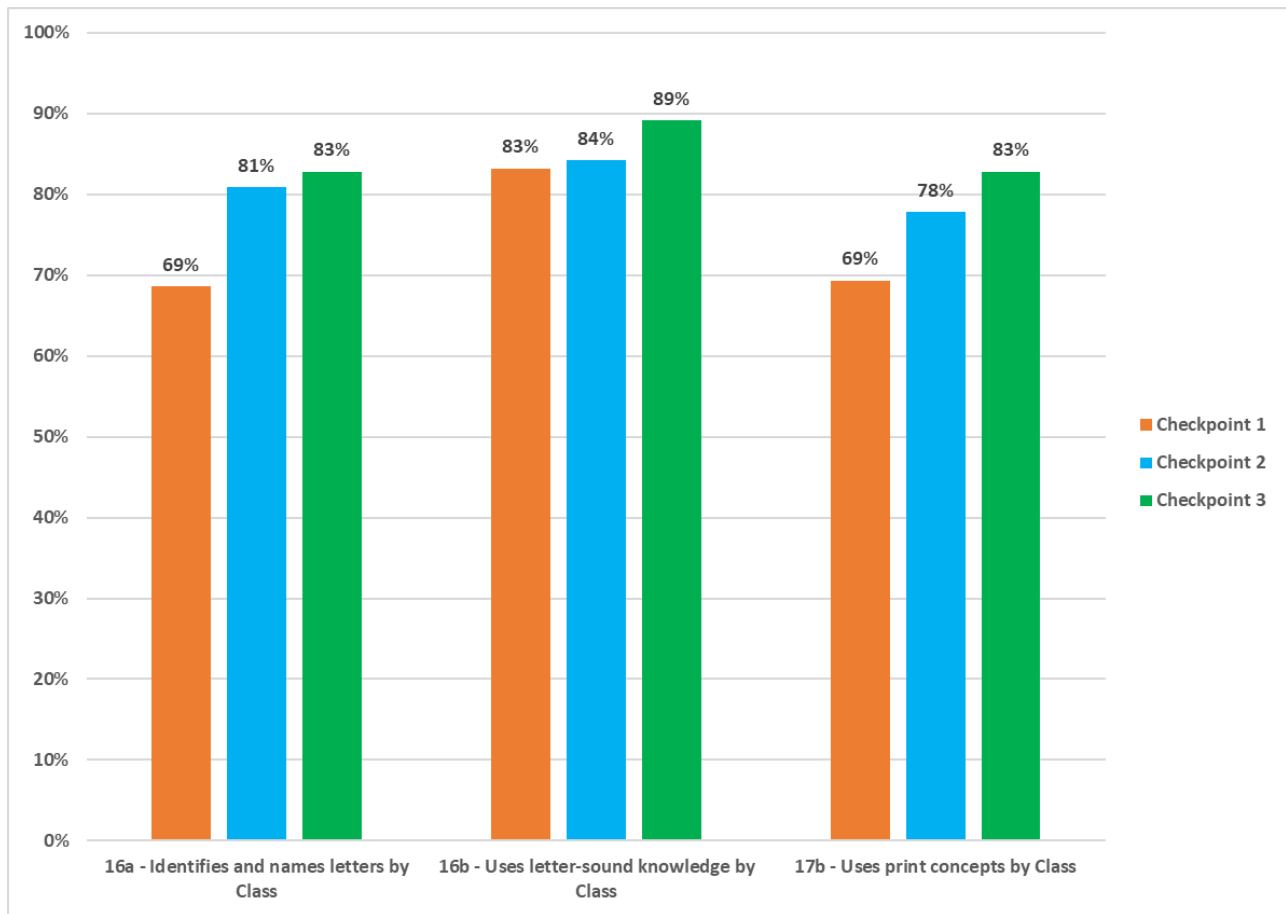
Children will demonstrate emergent skills on an appropriate age and developmental level to communicate through verbal and non-verbal language, written representations using symbols and letters in varied activities and across all settings.

The first school readiness goal, children will demonstrate emergent skills to communicate through verbal and non-verbal language and use written representations, is measured by five objectives. In the first objective of engaging in conversations, 79% of children were found to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations at the fall checkpoint. This increased to 84% for the winter checkpoint and to 88% for spring. In the second objective of using social rules of language, 81% of children assessed were assessed to be at age level expectations in the fall. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 85% of children and by spring to 86%. In the third objective of writing their name, 68% of children assessed in the fall were determined to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations. For the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 80% and by spring, it had jumped to 96%. This was a significant increase and we are very pleased to see such dramatic gains in this area. For the fourth objective, which is writing to convey meaning, only 60% were meeting age level expectations in the fall. By the winter checkpoint, this had increased to 68% and to 78% by spring. For the fifth and final objective of comprehending language, 83% of children assessed in the fall were found to be at or above age level expectations. This increased slightly to 85% for the winter checkpoint and again to 89% in the spring. We are pleased to see gains in all of the objectives. Direct services staff members will continue to use the curriculum provided which give strategies to promote children's communication and writing skills through developmentally appropriate activities. Professional development for center and home based staff targeting these areas will also continue to be provided.



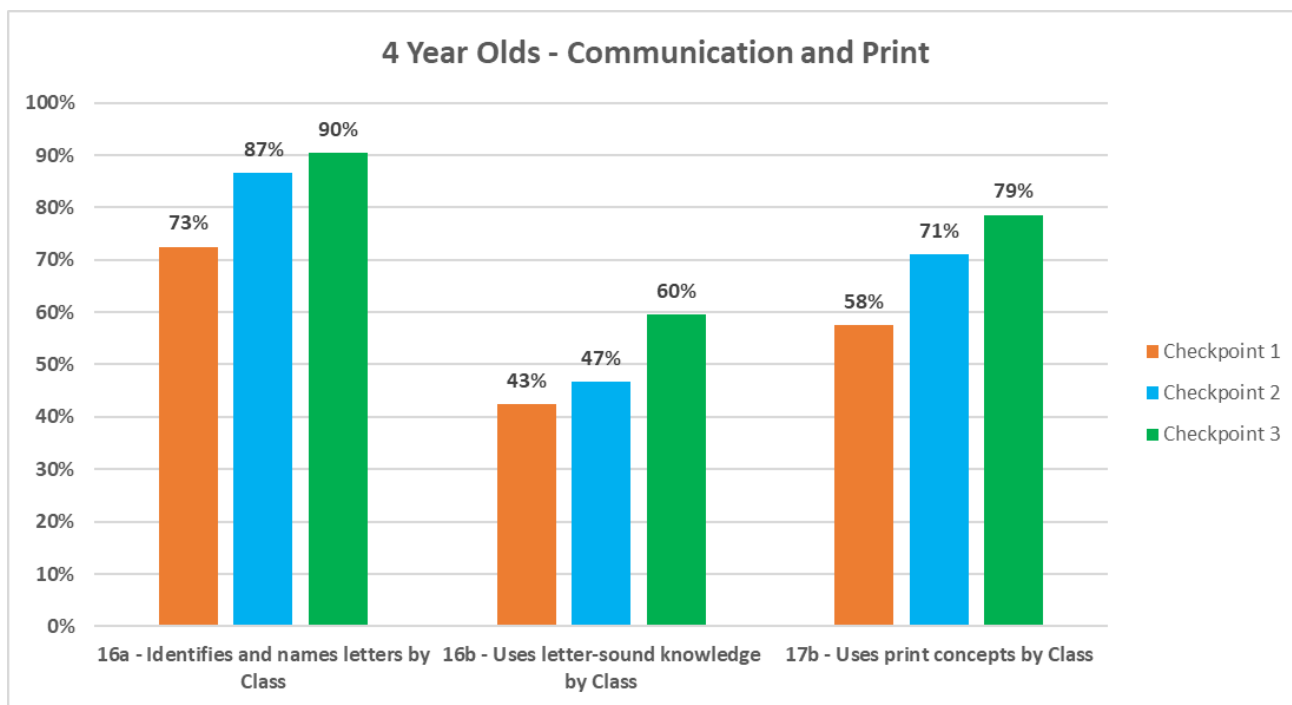
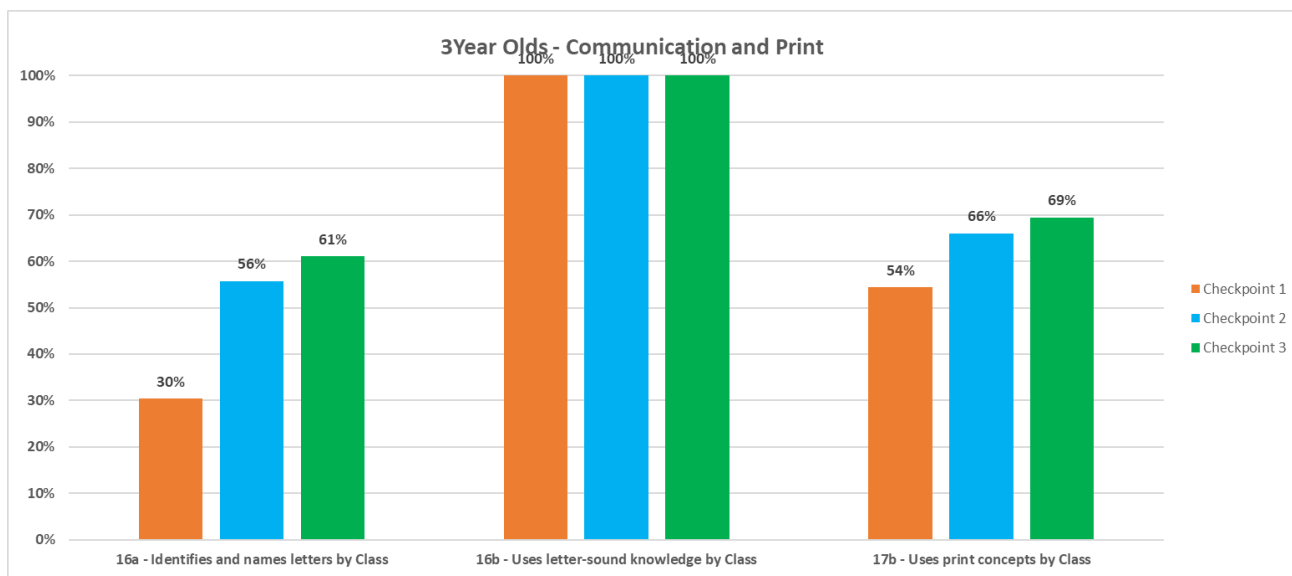
Children will learn varied ways to communicate and get meaning from print at an age and developmentally appropriate level in varied activities and across all settings.

The second school readiness goal in this area, which centers on communicating and obtaining meaning from print, is measured by three objectives. In the first objective of identifying and naming letters, 69% of children in the fall were found to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This increased to 81% at the winter checkpoint and to 83% for the spring. For the second objective of using letter-sound knowledge, in the fall 83% of children were assessed at age level. At the winter checkpoint, 84% of children were found to be functioning at age level. By the spring checkpoint this had increased to 89%. Finally, for the third objective of using print concepts, 69% of children were assessed at age level in the fall. This rose to 78% by the winter checkpoint and to 83% by the spring. We are pleased to see the overall growth that has been made over the course of the year; however, the next few charts break down the information more by looking at the three and four year olds.



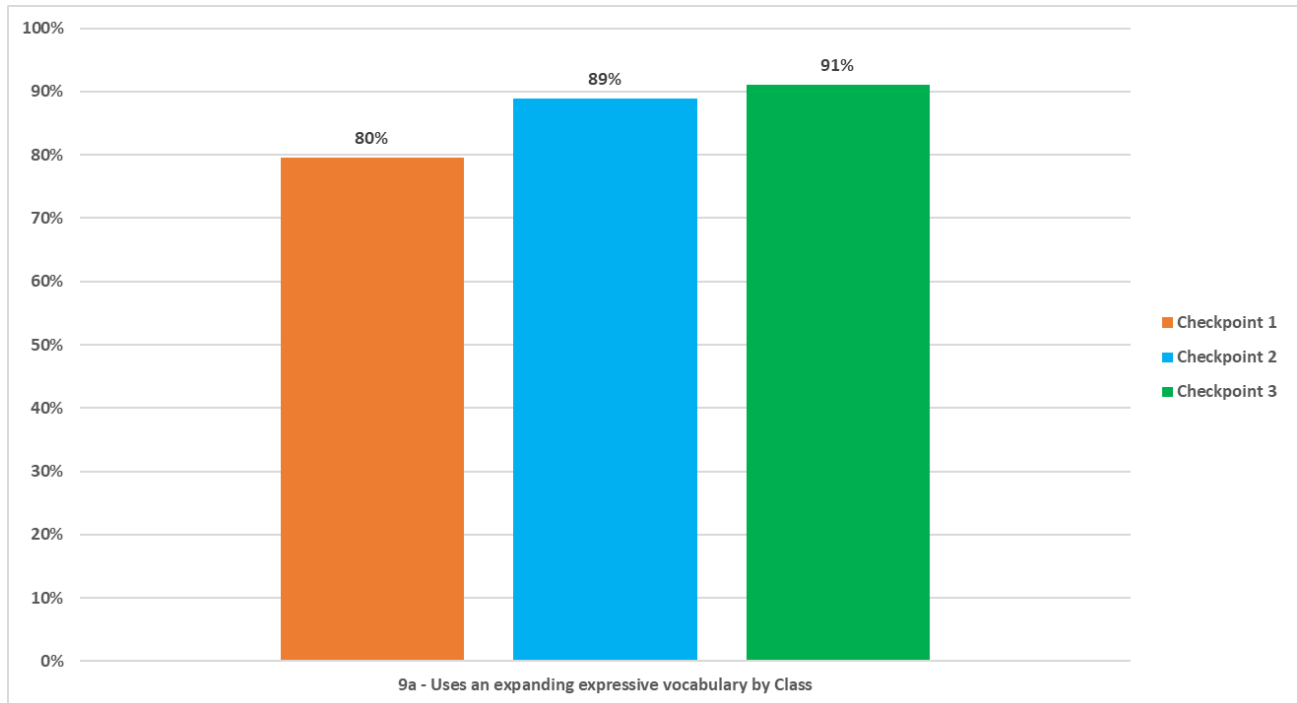
Again, the above chart compiles the results for all children in the program, including infants and toddlers. When the same information regarding these objectives is broken down by three and four year olds the results are more mixed and give us a more accurate picture of how the preschoolers in our program doing in regards to these skills. For identifying and naming letters, in the fall only 30% of three year olds were identified as meeting or exceeding age level expectations while 73% of four year olds were scored at age level. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 56% and 87% respectively. By spring, 61% of three year olds and 90% of four year olds were determined to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations. For using letter sound knowledge, in the fall 100% of three year olds were at age level while only 43% of four year olds were scored as meeting or exceeding age level expectations. For the winter checkpoint, 100% of three year olds were still at age level while the percentage of four year olds rose slightly to 47%. For the spring checkpoint, 100% of three year olds and 60% of four year olds were identified as being at or above age level for this objective. The stark differences in the assessment scores of three year olds versus four year olds can be attributed to the expectation for three year olds falls into the “Not Yet” category on this objective. The expectation for four year olds is much higher. Finally, for using print concepts in the fall 54% of three year olds and 58% of four year olds were scored as meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This rose to 66% for three year olds and to

71% for four year olds. By spring, 69% of three year olds and 79% of four year olds were at age level. The fall results for the last two objectives for four year olds were very low. While we are pleased to see growth on both of these objectives, we will continue to focus on these as we would like to see these percentages be even higher. Additional training will be provided around using letter sound knowledge to Head Start staff next program year.



Children will expand vocabulary and word meaning on an appropriate age and developmental level through a variety of activities and across all settings.

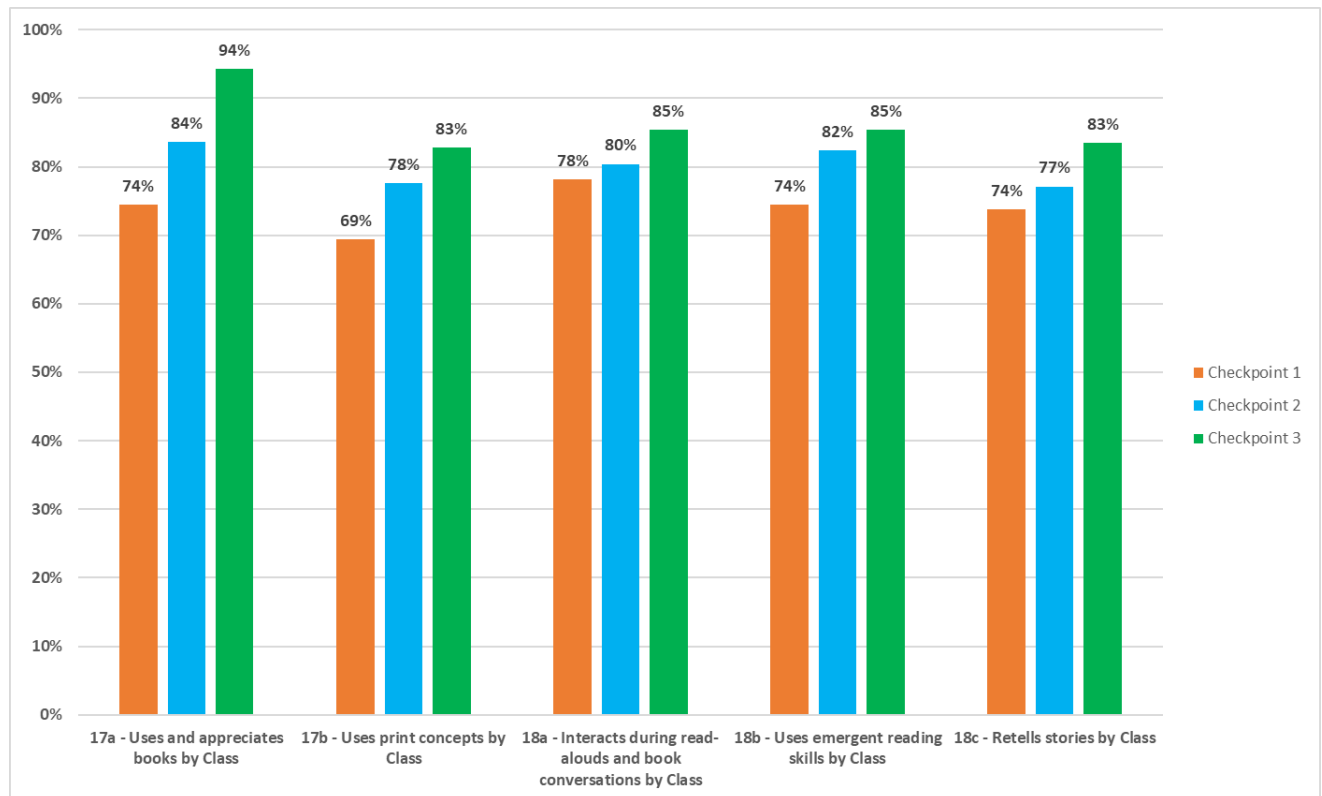
The final school readiness goal in the area of literacy and language development is that of having an expanding vocabulary. This goal is measured by one objective which is using an expanding expressive vocabulary. The assessment results indicated 80% of children were functioning at age level expectations on this objective in the fall. This increased to 89% in the winter and to 91% for the spring.



Additional emergent literacy and literacy objectives.

In addition to these school readiness goals, the HSELOF requires programs to assess children's development in emergent literacy skills for infants and toddlers and literacy in preschoolers. Items that are to be assessed include children handling books appropriately, attending to stories, obtaining meaning from pictures and stories, understanding narrative structures through storytelling/retelling, and their ability to ask and answer questions about a book that was read aloud. TREC has selected five objectives to measure these items. For the first objective of uses and appreciates books, 74% of children were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations in the fall. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 84% and to 94% by the spring. For the second objective of uses print concepts, in the fall 69% of children were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This increased by the winter checkpoint to 78% and to 83% for the spring checkpoint. For the third objective, interacts during read-alouds and book conversations, 78% of children were determined as meeting or exceeding age level expectations at the fall checkpoint. This increased to 80% at the winter assessment and to 85% by the spring.

For the fourth objective of uses emergent reading skills, 74% of children assessed in the fall were found to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations. By the winter this had risen to 82% and to 85% by the spring checkpoint. Finally, for the final objective of retells stories, 74% of children in the fall were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This increased to 77% by the mid-year checkpoint to 83% for the spring checkpoint. We are pleased with the gains we have observed on all of these objectives over the course of the year and will continue with the current strategies in place to ensure growth in these areas endures.



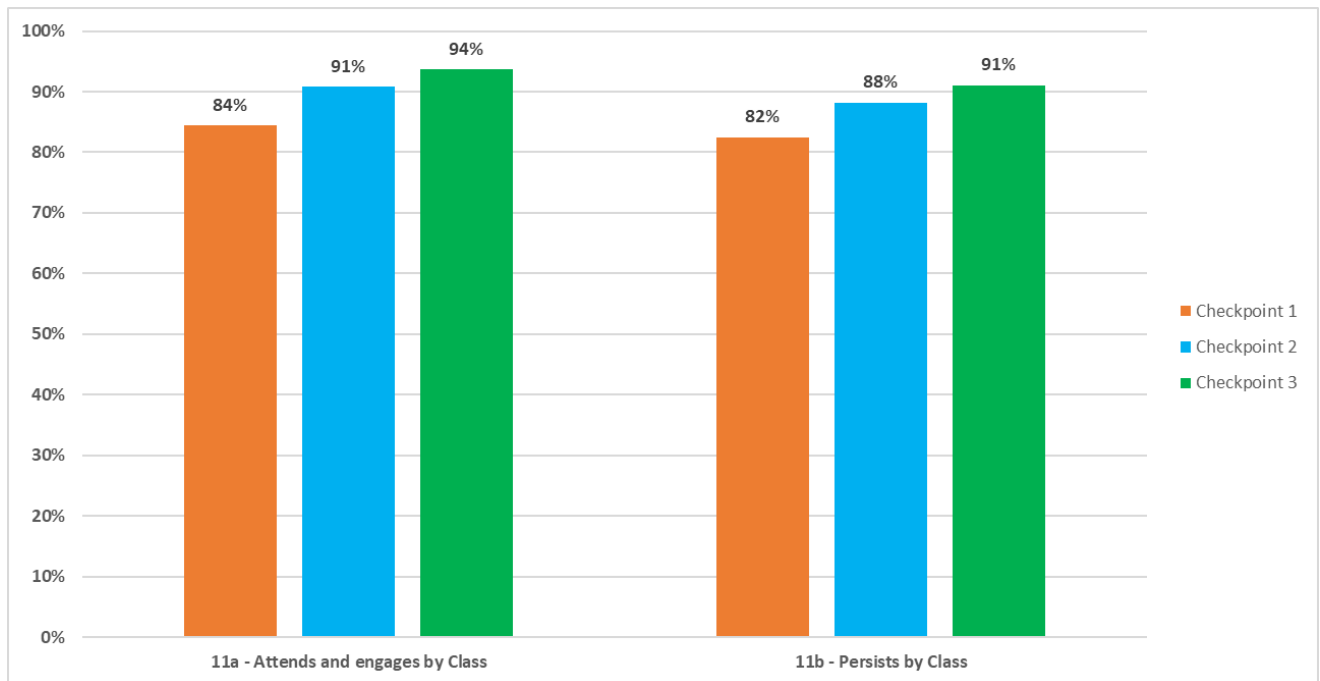
The overall results of the year-end assessment in this domain are positive. We have seen significant growth in several areas. However, we also saw some areas that we did not see as much growth. We will continue to provide training to those staff working in the center classrooms on how to enhance children's school readiness abilities related to these goals, particularly around developmentally appropriate ways to teach letter-sound recognition. In addition, home visitors have been provided with the Parents as Teachers curriculum, which has a strong component on promoting communication and emergent literacy skills in young children. The home visitors are implementing the curriculum to fidelity. We have developed a library of resources for parents with literacy related activities and information that can be used by both home based and center based staff with families to enhance children's experiences in the home. We are in the process of developing a crosswalk for these resources with our In-Kind forms. Staff will be able to utilize the crosswalk to help target resources provided to families around specific activities they can do in the home to enhance their child's skills in these areas.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

The program has two school readiness goals related to approaches to learning. The first is that children will demonstrate interest, curiosity and creativity while the second focuses on children demonstrating initiative, persistence, focus, problem solving and reflection.

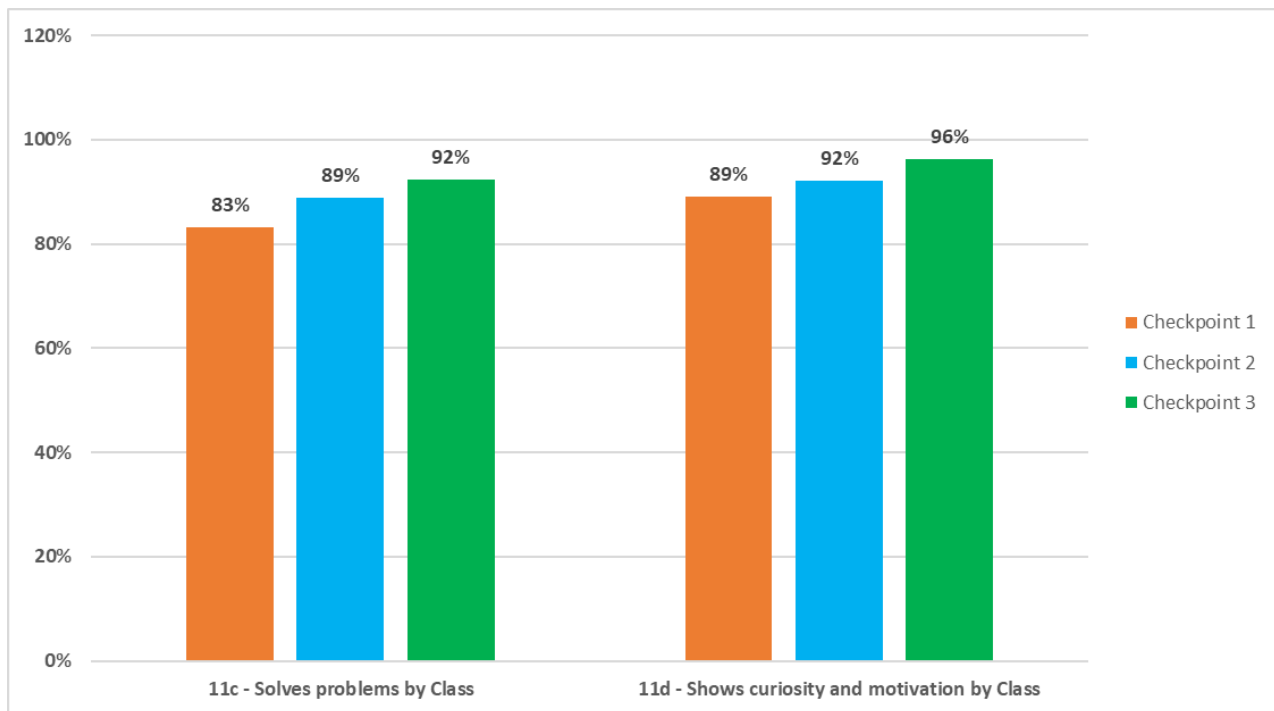
Children will demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate interest, curiosity and creativity in a variety of activities and across all settings.

The first goal is measured by two objectives in Teaching Strategies GOLD. In the first objective of attending and engaging, 84% of children in the fall were assessed as meeting age level expectations. By the winter checkpoint, this had rose to 91% and to 94% for the spring checkpoint. In the second objective of persisting, 82% were found to be functioning at an age appropriate level in the fall. This increased to 88% in the winter and to 91% by the spring.



Children will demonstrate initiative, persistence, focus, problem solving and reflection in a variety of activities and challenges and across all settings.

Two objectives are also used to measure the second goal. For the first objective of solving problems, 83% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations at the fall checkpoint. This rose to 89% by the winter checkpoint and to 92% by the spring. For the second objective of showing curiosity and motivation, in the fall 89% of children were assessed as “meeting/exceeding expectations.” For the winter checkpoint, this increased to 92% of children and to 96% by the spring.



Overall, children in the program are doing well in the area of approaches to learning and we are pleased with the gains we are seeing. Home visiting staff and teaching staff will continue to provide fun, hands on educational opportunities to all children in the program in order to foster children's excitement in learning.

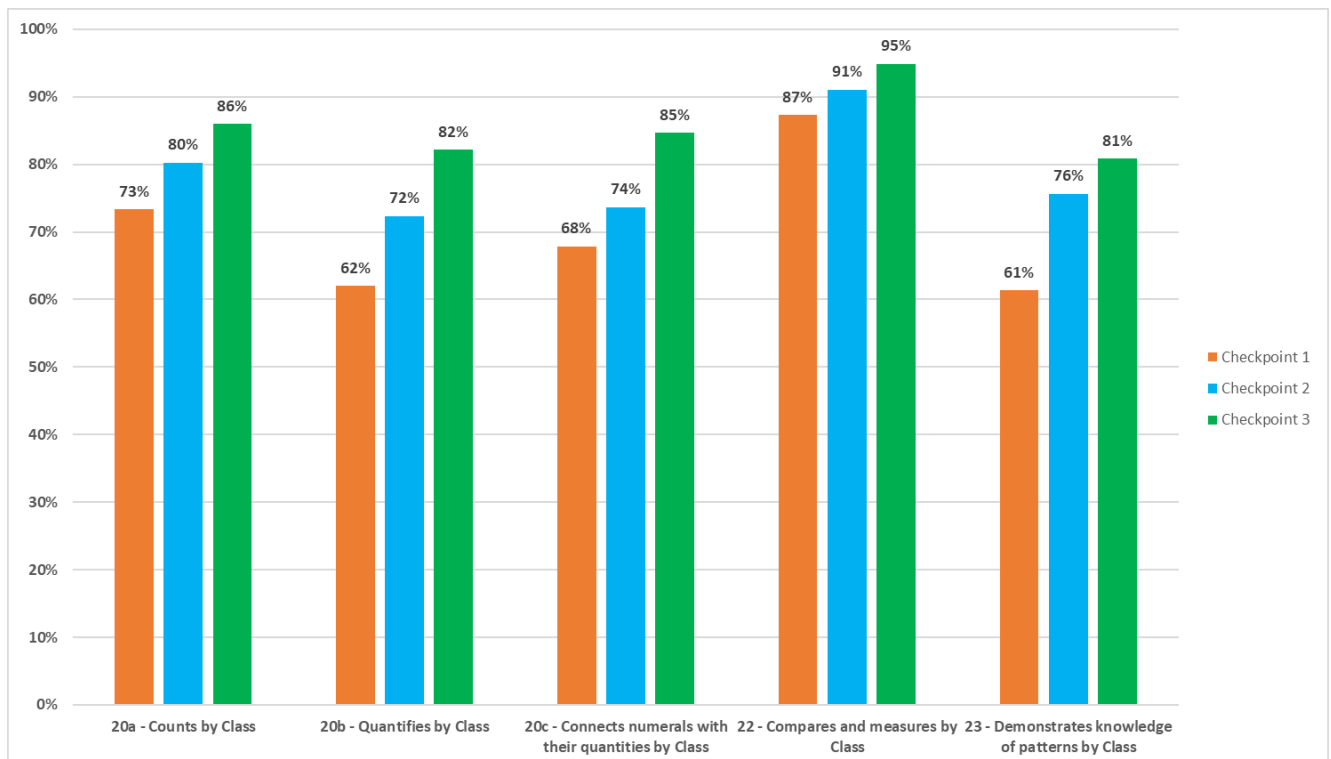
COGNITION AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:

There are three school readiness goals in the area of cognition and general knowledge. The first is children will demonstrate appropriate math concepts of counting, comparing, relating, patterning and problem solving. The second goal in this area is that children will engage and explore their environments through age appropriate activities of exploration, inquiry, investigation, observation, manipulation, questioning, predicting and developing hypotheses. The final goal in this area is children will use former knowledge, data and new information to form new concepts, solve new problems, develop new vocabulary and express new ideas.

Children will use age and developmentally appropriate math concepts of counting, comparing, relating, patterning, and problem solving in a variety of activities and across all settings.

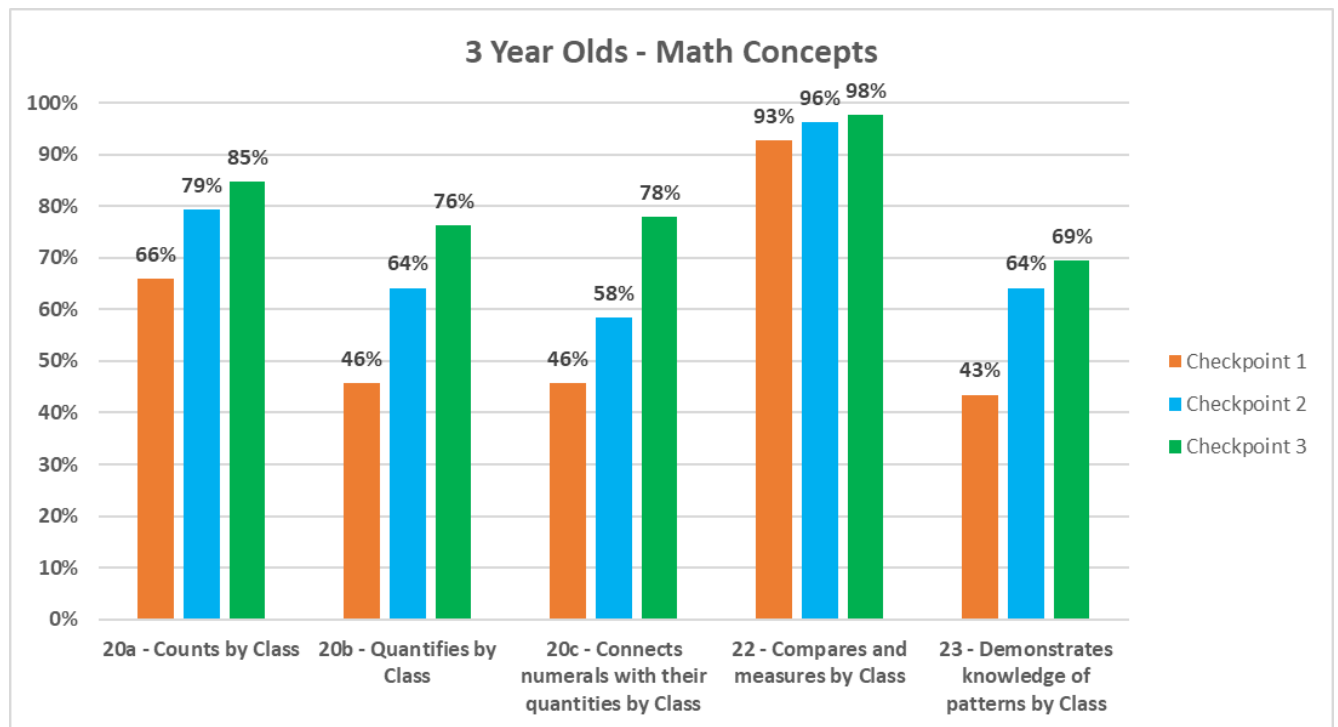
The first school readiness goal in the area of cognition and general knowledge is measured by five GOLD objectives. In the first objective of counting, in the fall 73% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations. At the winter checkpoint, this increased to 80% and by spring had risen to 86%. For the second objective of quantifying, 62% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations in the fall. This percentage rose to 72% for the mid-year checkpoint and to 82% by the year-end. For the third objective of connecting numerals with their

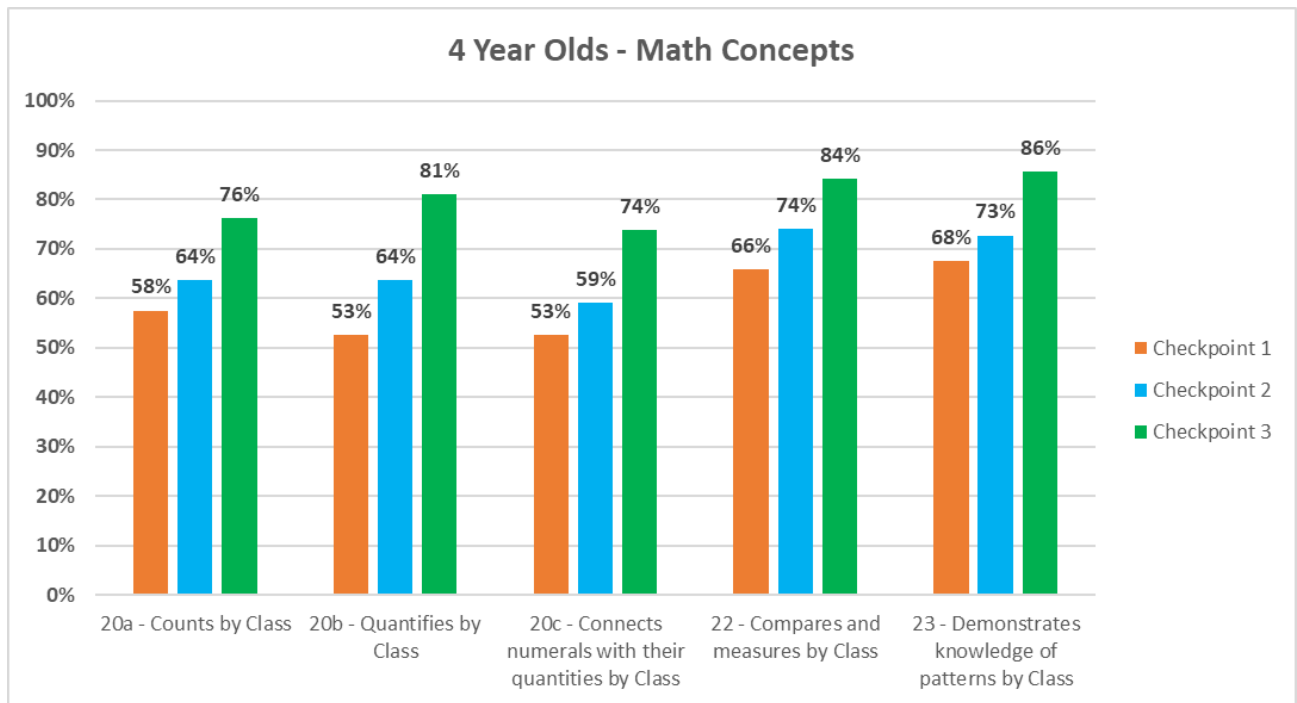
quantities, in the fall 68% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations. This rose to 74% in the winter and then increased to 85% by the spring. These three percentages are artificially high as these are objectives that are not measured in infants and toddlers. The actual percentages of children meeting age level expectations on these three objectives are, in reality, lower as we will see in the additional charts below. For the fourth objective of comparing and measuring, 87% of children were assessed at age level in the fall. In the winter, this rose to 91% and by spring was at 95%. Finally, in the fall, only 61% of children were deemed as meeting age level expectations in demonstrating knowledge of patterns. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen significantly to 76% and to 81% by the spring.



Due to the high number of objectives in this goal that are not measured in infants and toddlers, we have included two charts below that look specifically at how three and four year olds are performing on these. For the first objective of counting, in the fall 66% of three year olds and 58% of four years were deemed to be performing at or above age level. For the winter checkpoint, this increased to 79% of three year olds and to 64% for four year olds. By spring this had risen to 85% for the three year olds and to 76% for the four year olds. For the second objective of quantifying, in the fall only 46% of three year olds were at or above age level while 53% of four year olds were meeting or exceeding age level expectations. By the winter checkpoint, this had risen to 64% for both three and four year olds. For the spring checkpoint, this continued to increase to 76% for three year olds and to 81% for four year olds. For connecting numerals with their quantities, in the fall only 46% of three year olds and 53% of four year olds were at or above

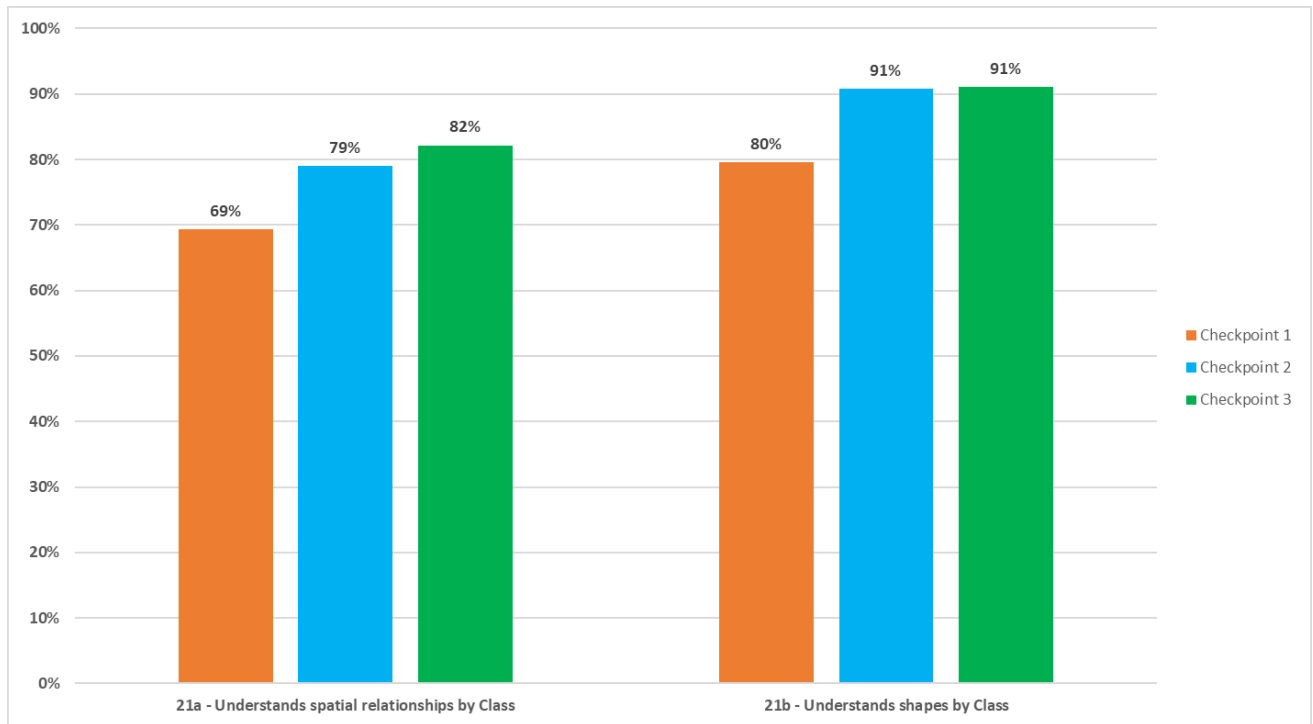
age level. At the winter checkpoint this rose to 58% of three year olds being at age level and to 59% of four year olds performing at age level on this objective. For the spring checkpoint, this rose to 78% of three year olds and to 74% of four year olds. For compares and measures, 93% of three year olds and 66% of four year olds were scored as meeting or exceeding age level expectations in the fall. By the winter checkpoint, 96% of three year olds and 74% of four year olds were at age level. For the spring checkpoint, 98% of three year olds and 84% of four year olds were determined to be meeting or exceeding age level expectations. Finally, for demonstrating knowledge of patterns, in the fall only 43% of three year olds were found to be at age level while 68% of four year olds were meeting or exceeding age expectations. This percentage increased significantly during the winter checkpoint for three year old to 64%. Four year olds increased to 73% at age level at the winter checkpoint. The growth continued into spring with 69% of three year olds and 86% of four year olds assessed at or above age level. Both curricula for the center based and home based programs do include strong math components. We believe our education staff in both options have been working hard to implement the strategies given to them and we will continue to provide support to staff to ensure we make additional progress in the area of mathematics.





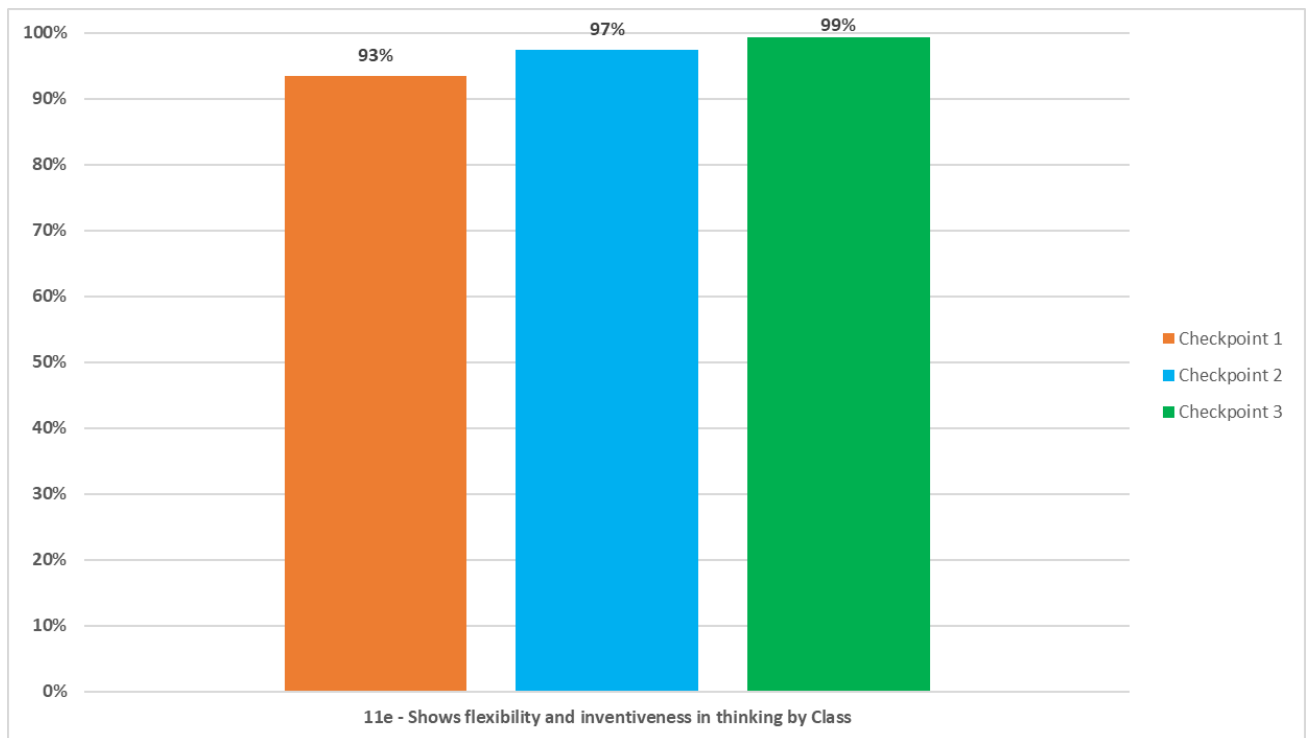
Additional mathematical objectives.

As stated previously, the HSELOF mandates specific items be measured in the area of mathematics development. Additional items programs are now required to assess is a child's ability to identify, describe, compare and compose shapes and a child's spatial sense. TREC selected two objectives to measure these skills. The first objective is understands spatial relationships. In the fall for this objective, 69% of children were assessed at a level that meets or exceeds age expectations. This increased to 79% by the winter checkpoint and to 82% by the spring. The second objective selected is understands shapes. In the fall, 80% of children were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations on this objective. By the mid-year checkpoint, 91% of children were performing at or above age level expectations. The number of children meeting expectations remained at 91% for the spring checkpoint.



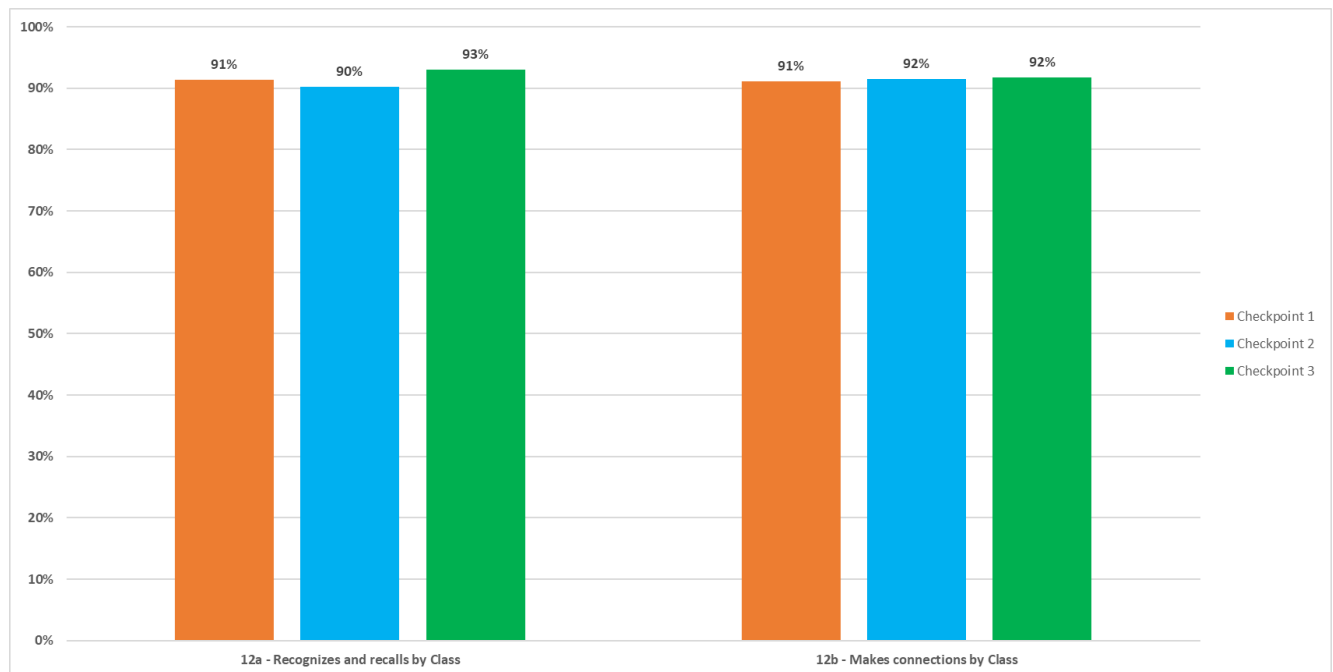
Children will engage in and explore their environments through age and developmentally appropriate activities of exploration, inquiry, investigation, observation, manipulation, questioning, predicting and developing hypotheses in varied activities and across all settings.

The second cognition and general knowledge school readiness goal is measured by one objective which is shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking. Overall, children did very well on this objective as 93% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations in the fall and 97% in the winter. For the spring checkpoint this had increased to 99%.



Children will use former knowledge, data and new information to form new concepts, solve new problems, develop new vocabulary and express new ideas in a variety of age and developmentally appropriate activities and across all settings.

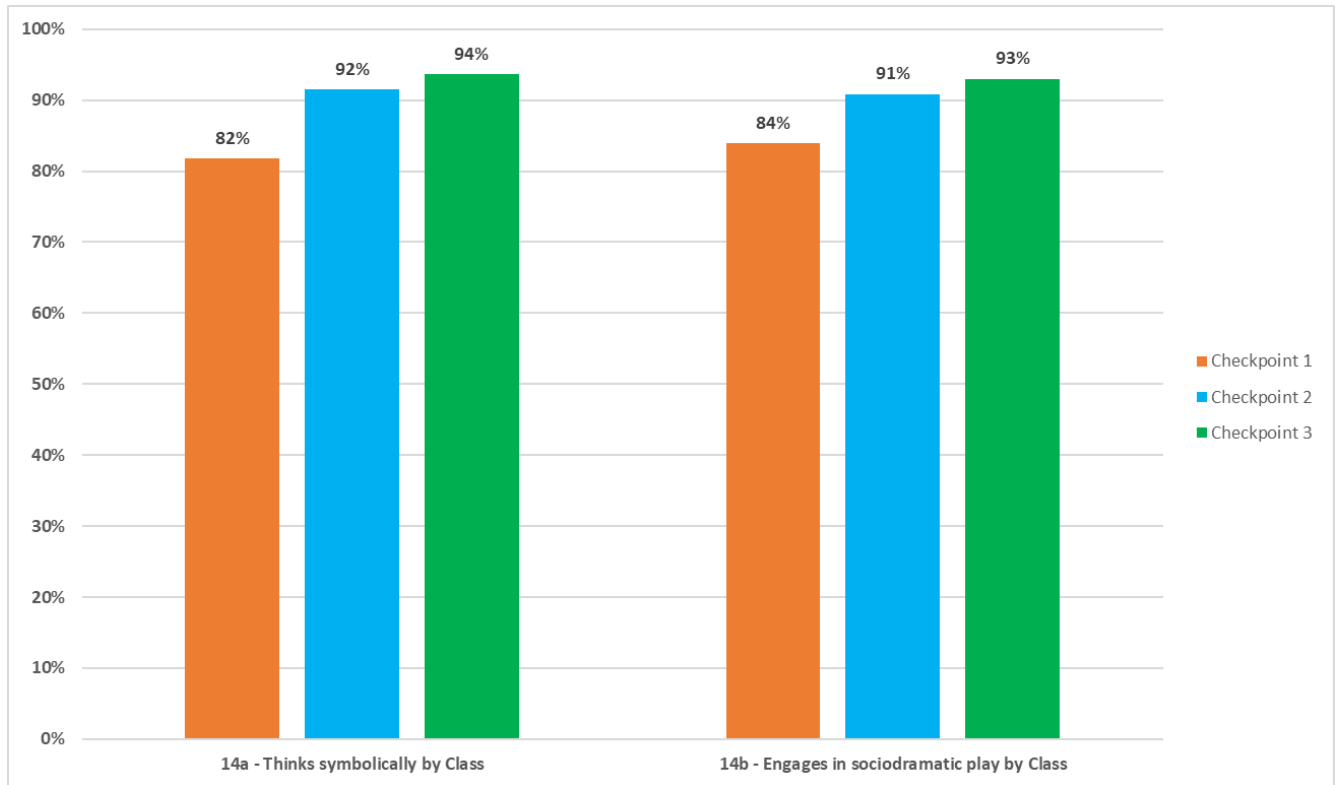
The final school readiness goal in this area is measured by two objectives. The first is recognizing and recalling. In the fall, 91% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations on this objective. By the mid-year checkpoint, this had dipped slightly to 90% of children performing at or above age level on this item. This rose to 93% by the spring checkpoint. The second objective is making connections and in the fall, 91% of children were assessed as meeting age level expectations. This increased to 92% for the winter checkpoint and remained at 92% by the year's end.



The assessment results for these school readiness goals indicate a continued need to focus on mathematical concepts. We will continue to support home visiting and teaching staff to ensure the curriculum is being used to fidelity in this area. Lesson plans and home visit lesson plans will continue to be monitored to ensure these concepts are being addressed on a regular basis. In addition, similar to our focus on literacy resources, we have developed a collection of developmentally appropriate mathematics related resources specifically for parents of young children for our staff to share with families. We are in the process of developing a crosswalk of these resources to our In-Kind form. Staff will be able to utilize the crosswalk to help target resources provided to families around specific activities they can do in the home to enhance their child's skills in these areas. It is our hope to help parents better understand math in the early years and how they can support their children's development in this area.

Additional cognition objectives.

In the area of cognition, the HSELOF includes imitation and symbolic play. This is not an area TREC-Badlands Head Start Prenatal to Five program measured prior to the introduction of the new HSELOF. Two objectives from the assessment system were selected to measure this area. The first objective is thinks symbolically, of which 82% of children were assessed to be at or above age level expectations at the fall checkpoint. This increased to 92% by the winter checkpoint and to 94% by the spring. For the second objective of engages in sociodramatic play, in the fall 84% of children were assessed as meeting or exceeding age level expectations. This percentage increased to 91% by the winter checkpoint. By the spring this was at 93%. These results indicate that the vast majority of children enrolled in the program are already doing well in this area and we will continue to support them in their growth on these objectives.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The child outcomes data aggregation process continues to be extremely informative for the TREC-Badlands Head Start Prenatal to Five program. Through this process, we have gained important insights into the areas of strengths of our children as well as their areas of needs. We will continue to utilize the information obtained in this aggregation process to guide our planning for next program year. We will continue to implement targeted professional development and training for our staff, make adjustments to our curricula, and monitor to ensure these changes are being consistently implemented program wide. By applying these changes, we hope to make a significant and positive impact on the school readiness abilities of the children we serve.