

Vermont Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK)
Data, Publications, Reports, and Resources
 Compiled September 2023

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Building Bright Future’s Role in Vermont’s Early Childhood System

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is Vermont’s early childhood public-private partnership charged under Title 33, Chapter 46 and the federal Head Start Act to serve as Vermont’s Early Childhood State Advisory Council, the mechanism used to advise the Governor and legislature on the status of children in the prenatal period through age eight and their families. State statute charges BBF with maintaining and monitoring the vision and strategic plan for Vermont’s Early Childhood System. The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (SAC) does not directly support or oppose any specific proposal or bill. Instead, our role is to convene and elevate the voices of families and early childhood stakeholders; monitor the system by identifying and providing high-quality up-to-date data to inform policy and decision-making.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DATA SNAPSHOT

Enrollment, licensed and desired capacity, outcome data

Document/Link	Source	Description
Enrollment Dashboard	Vermont Agency of Education	Includes preschool enrollment data from school years 2004 to 2022
UPK Enrollment The number of children enrolled in Universal	Vermont’s Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center	Number of children enrolled in UPK over time

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Prekindergarten Education	Vermontkidsdata.org in partnership with AOE and CDD	
Licensed & Desired Capacity for UPK	Vermont’s Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center Vermontkidsdata.org in partnership with AOE and CDD	Licensed and desired capacity of Universal Prekindergarten Education programs by program type
Stalled at the Start Report: February 2022 and 2020	Let’s Grow Kids	Includes desired capacity for preschoolers (3 and 4 year olds) and the number of children likely to need care 72.8%. *Universal Prekindergarten Education capacity is not separated from preschool aged capacity
Ready for Kindergarten! Survey: R4K!S Data	Vermont Agency of Education	School Years 2016-2022: Ready for Kindergarten! Survey (R4K!S) is a readiness assessment of children entering kindergarten and includes disaggregation by attendance in a UPK program
Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan Data Dashboard	Vermont’s Early Childhood Resource, Data, and Policy Center Vermontkidsdata.org	Snapshot of over 50 indicators related to the early childhood system as part of the Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP)

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UPK PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS, & RELATED TESTIMONY

Vermont’s Act 166 of 2014 offers Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK) to all 3- and 4-year-olds, and to 5-year-olds not enrolled in Kindergarten, for up to 10 hours a week of publicly-funded Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK) for 35 weeks of the academic year. Vermont’s mixed-delivery system means that these hours can be used in school-based programs or in prequalified prekindergarten center-based child care and family child care programs.

Vermont Publications

Publication/Testimony Name & Description	Date	Author
<p>Memo submitted to the Senate Committee on Education Potential UPK Study Questions for Consideration</p> <p>Stakeholder comments on S. 56 collected by Building Bright Futures as of Feb. 14, 2023 (<i>Previously submitted to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare</i>)</p>	March 2023	Building Bright Futures, Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center
<p>Vermont Early Care and Education Financing Study (RAND Report)</p> <p><i>This report, required by Act 45 of 2021, includes financial estimates on the cost of restructuring the state’s Child Care Financial Assistance Program and funding options to support an increased state investment in early childhood education</i></p>	January 2023	RAND Corporation
<p>The Vermont Child Care and Early Childhood Education Systems Analysis Final Report</p> <p><i>This report, required by Act 45 of 2021, includes a set of recommendations for how the state might improve its early childhood governance, with specific steps state policymakers should consider taking.</i></p>	July 2022	Foresight Law + Policy and Watershed Advisors
<p>A Researcher-Practitioner Partnership: Vermont’s Universal Prekindergarten System</p>	Sept. 2021	Project Evident

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<p><i>This case study highlights a researcher-practitioner partnership aimed at informing state policy decisions through actionable research evidence based on a collaborative research process. The primary goal of the partnership is to inform Vermont policymakers as they deliberate on Act 166, the state’s universal prekindergarten (preK) legislation.</i></p>		
<p>Testimony to the Task Force on the Implementation of the Pupil Weighting Factors Report (Pupil Weighting Factors Report) <i>Testimony with regard to BBF’s role in supporting the success of children, families and the early childhood service system including a brief overview of BBF's role and infrastructure, and an outline of BBF’s role in providing evidence and data to inform policy specifically around Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK).</i></p>	<p>Aug. 2021</p>	<p>Building Bright Futures</p>
<p>Characteristics of Approved Universal Prekindergarten Programs in Vermont in 2018/19 <i>This study examined the characteristics of approved preK programs overall, public school and private programs separately, and programs in local education agencies with different population sizes and poverty levels.</i></p>	<p>Jan. 2021</p>	<p>Education Development Center</p>
<p>BBF’s Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Webinar <i>The purpose of this information gathering effort was to utilize BBF’s statewide and regional networks to ask those directly impacted by Act 166 to identify perceptions of success, where and why it’s been successful and to share best practices, also outline persistent barriers to successful UPK administration and implementation.</i></p>	<p>Feb 2020</p>	<p>Building Bright Futures</p>
<p>Enrollment rates of children in universal prekindergarten programs in Vermont in 2016/17 <i>This study describes the characteristics of children enrolled in universal preK programs in 2016/17, which was the first year of full implementation of universal preK in Vermont</i></p>	<p>Jan 2020</p>	<p>National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance at IES, supported by the Education Development Center</p>

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<p>Testimony on the findings of Building Bright Futures’ information gathering effort on Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)</p> <p><i>The purpose of this information gathering effort was to utilize BBF’s statewide and regional networks to ask those directly impacted by Act 166 to identify perceptions of success, where and why it’s been successful and to share best practices, also outline persistent barriers to successful UPK administration and implementation.</i></p>	Jan 2020	Building Bright Futures
<p>Pupil Weighting Factors Report: Report to the House and Senate Committees on Education, the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance</p>	Dec 2019	Vermont Agency of Education
<p>Prekindergarten Education Study: Final Report</p> <p><i>The purpose of the PreK study, as dictated by Act 11, section E.500.7, is to provide Vermont with information regarding how to more effectively and efficiently provide PreK education.</i></p>	July 2019	Vermont Agency of Education

National Publications

Publication Name	Date	Author
Including Family Child Care in State and City-funded Pre-K Systems: Opportunities and Challenges	Aug 2021	National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)
Universal Pre-K: 5 FAQs	July 2021	National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)
Guide to Support Pre-K Expansion: Ensuring Adequate Resources for Expanding High Quality Pre-K	Feb 2020	National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM OVERVIEWS & NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Publication Name	Date	Author
<p>2022 Vermont Early Childhood Family Needs Assessment <i>A survey was fielded to better understand the barriers families face when accessing services and supports in order to inform policy and programs in Vermont's early childhood systems (prenatal to age 8). This report provides an in-depth analysis of how well these services are working for families, the challenges they face, and what Vermont is doing well for young families. The Early Childhood Family Needs Assessment was led by the Families and Communities Committee and supported by the Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council Network and the Vermont Integration Prenatal to 3 (VIP-3) grant.</i></p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<p>VECAP Families and Communities Committee, Building Bright Futures, Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center</p>
<p>Data Brief: Exclusionary Discipline in Vermont: Early Childhood <i>The 2021 passage of Act 35, which prohibits exclusionary discipline (broadly defined as suspension and expulsion) for children under age 8, has led to an increase in the attention to the use of exclusionary discipline as well as prevention and mitigation strategies in early childhood settings. Building Bright Futures has produced this exclusionary discipline brief in light of Act 35, in recognition of the importance of high-quality early childhood education settings for children's social emotional development and readiness for learning, and given the increases in acuity and frequency of mental, emotional, and behavioral health related incidents. Using evidence and data to inform policy is critical to ensuring an integrated continuum of comprehensive, high-quality services that is equitable, accessible, and will improve outcomes for each and every Vermont child in the prenatal period through age 8 and their families. To that end, this brief outlines (1) the existing data for children under age 9, (2) limitations and challenges, and (3) policy considerations for Vermont's Early Childhood System.</i></p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>Building Bright Futures, Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center, in partnership with the Vermont Agency of Education</p>

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<p>The State of Vermont’s Children: 2022 Year in Review 2021 Year in Review</p> <p><i>The State of Vermont’s Children provides Vermont’s policy makers, educators, caregivers, health practitioners, business leaders, and community members with an objective, data-driven assessment of the well-being of young children and families in Vermont and highlights the annual recommendations from Vermont’s Early Childhood State Advisory Council Network.</i></p>	<p>January 2022, 2021</p>	<p>Building Bright Futures, Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center</p>
<p>Vermont's 2020 Early Childhood Needs Assessment</p> <p><i>Vermont’s early childhood stakeholders partnered to design the 2020 Needs Assessment, collect data, and thoughtfully analyze the ways in which Vermont’s early childhood programs, professionals, and structures contribute to the Vermont Early Childhood Framework vision to realize the promise of every Vermont child, across all levels of the system.</i></p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Building Bright Futures, Vermont Early Childhood Data and Policy Center</p>

**VERMONT’S EARLY CHILDHOOD STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN
EDUCATION**

Year	Policy Recommendation
<p>2023</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATION: HIGH-QUALITY AND INCLUSIVE EARLY CARE/EDUCATION/AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS (VECAP GOAL 3)</p> <p>Renewed Policy Recommendation (2022): Universal Pre-K Access and Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Universal Pre-K Implementation Committee mandated under Act 76, center the work on equity of access by examining and making recommendations on how best to implement a full school-day, school-year prekindergarten Education program and ensuring that the vision of universal, high-quality, equitable, mixed-delivery, inclusive education for all 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds not yet enrolled in kindergarten is maintained. The committee should specifically address the following related to equity in access:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Determining how best to implement expanded prekindergarten access while ensuring sufficient access to year-round services for children 0-8, including early childhood education, afterschool, and summer care.● Determining appropriate weighting for students.● Examining parity between the quality, workforce qualifications, and compensation available in school-based and private program-based pre-K programs● Ensuring that 3-year-olds are able to access Early Childhood Special Education services. Ensuring that funds for ECSE follow the child, even outside of their home district, to improve access and reduce barriers/burdens on families.● Examining how best to provide a continuity of pre-K and related services for children in rural regions and border regions, many of whom go on to attend Kindergarten in bordering states.
2021	<p>RECOMMENDATION 2 (Levels 3-4) SEIZE THE DAY ON UPK. EXPAND ACCESS TO UPK TOWARD A VISION OF UNIVERSAL, HIGH-QUALITY, EQUITABLE, MIXED-DELIVERY, FREE, AND INCLUSIVE, EDUCATION FOR ALL THREE AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Revise the regulatory framework for quality and equity, including agency roles and ability to provide leadership, support and oversight; defining and monitoring quality standards for governance, facilities, licensing, and regulations; and revising the strategic plan with a shared vision toward integration with the larger early childhood system.● Seek resolution in the appropriate number of hours and weeks per year for UPK education and appropriate weighting of students● Expand Act 35 (An act relating to the Task Force on Equitable and Inclusive School Environments) to cover private UPK programs. <p>RECOMMENDATION 3 (Level 4) Monitor progress and results of the Vermont Child Care and Early Childhood Education Systems Analysis (ECSA) and leverage Federal investment to develop a well-resourced early childhood system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Monitor federal investment in child care and PreKindergarten education and engage in National conversations to inform the development and implementation of the American Families Plan.● Utilize the Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP) and other strategic plans to inform funding allocation. Environments) to cover private UPK programs.