

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families is roughly **30 TO 40 PERCENT LARGER** among children born in 2001 than among those born twenty-five years earlier.¹



“...EDUCATION IS A WAY OUT OF POVERTY — BUT POVERTY IS ALSO A HINDRANCE TO EDUCATION.”²



Parents with the means invest more time and money than ever before in their children while lower-income families, which are now more likely to be headed by a single parent, are increasingly stretched for time and resources.³

LOW-INCOME YOUTH LACK OPTIONS IN THE SUMMER, and sometimes come to the library because it's air conditioned.⁴



FOR EVERY ONE LINE OF PRINT READ BY LOW-INCOME CHILDREN, MIDDLE-INCOME CHILDREN READ THREE.⁵

What Happens to Children DURING THE SUMMER?



During the summer months, disadvantaged children tread water at best or even fall behind. It's what we call

“SUMMER SLIDE”

while better off children build their skills steadily over the summer months.



SUMMER LEARNING LOSS

accounts for about two-thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading.⁷

How Summer Learning Can Help CLOSE the Achievement Gap.

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS TARGETED TO LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

can help close the achievement gap that has been attributed, at least in part, to cumulative learning loss during the summers and that has been shown to be steeper for low-income students than for others.



Longitudinal studies indicate that **the effects of summer learning programs endure for at least two years after participation.**⁶

^{1,3} New York Times, Feb 9, 2012, Education Gap Grows Between Rich and Poor, Studies Say. Sean F. Reardon, Stanford University, Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality and the Uncertain Life Chances of Low-Income Children. ² Peter Edelman, Professor of Law, Georgetown Law Center, Huffington Post, *Reinvigorating the American Dream: A Broader Bold Approach to Tackling the Achievement Gap*. ^{4,5} Gains and Gaps: Changing Inequality in U.S. College Entry and Completion, Martha J. Bailey, Susan M. Dynarski. ⁶ *Making Summer Count: How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning*, RAND Corporation 2011. ⁷ *Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap*, Karl L. Alexander, Doris R. Entwisle, and Linda Steffel Olson, American Sociological Review 2007. Additional Sources: The Achievement Gap, Education Week, Aug 3, 2004. Annie E. Casey Foundation 2011.

GLR FRAMEWORK ON SUPPORTING PARENT SUCCESS

School Readiness

Engage in nurturing and affirming “back and forth” interactions

Enrich their children’s vocabulary and promote a love for reading

School Attendance

Recognize and address health needs and environmental hazards in the home

Monitor absences and seek support at the earliest signs of attendance issues

Summer Learning

Engage children in enriching summer activities at home or in the community



Los Angeles Times

Why Third Grade Matters

The end of third grade marks the shift toward reading to learn, and a child's future hinges on being able to meet this milestone.

Communities across the country are mobilizing around a key predictor of school success and high-school graduation: students reading at grade level by the end of third grade. Successive reports have confirmed that the majority of the nation's school children miss this critical milestone.

That is why civic leaders, public officials and engaged citizens in over 150 communities have joined the movement led by the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. With LAUSD, the Chamber of Commerce, First Five L.A. and Families in Schools leading the way, Los Angeles is among them. So are 17 other communities in California.

In California, as elsewhere, the tough insistence of accountability does not change the fact that schools will not succeed in turning the tide without an "all hands" commitment from the whole community.

This is especially true in addressing three reasons why so many children miss the mark of third-grade reading: Too many children start school so far behind that it is difficult to catch up. Too many children miss so many days of school that they fall further behind during the school year. And too many children lose ground over the summer. Finding solutions to these challenges is a top priority.

Parents are the secret sauce. An engaged parent is a child's first teacher, best coach, most important role model and most effective advocate. Research confirms that, especially in the critical early years, parents have an additional role: brain builders. This important insight is leading many communities to explore a plethora of high tech efforts to deliver the information, tools and support parents and caregivers need to help their children succeed in school, to attend school regularly and to avoid the "summer slide."

As it turns out, the communities focusing on third-grade reading already may be seeing a payoff. They are closing the gap between what we know and what we do. And what we know is that parents matter — a lot.

L.A. Success Stories

The Little by Little program makes early literacy a core part of WIC services, which serve low-income women and children under age 5.

www.first5la.org/One-Step-Ahead-Little-by-Little

LAUSD's Attendance Improvement Plan has helped boost school attendance by more than 20 percent in kindergarten.

www.achieve.lausd.net/pupilservices

Passport to Success is tackling the "summer slide" with a free reading and learning program for 20,000 LAUSD families.

www.familiesinschools.org

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a collaborative effort by nonprofits, businesses and federal, state and community groups across the U.S. to ensure that children succeed in school — and are reading at grade-level by the end of third grade. For more information, visit gradelevelreading.net.

Reading Success by the End of Third Grade

More children
LEARNING
in the summer

Summer food programs keep kids **healthy** when school is out

Physical activity helps children pay attention and learn



More children
ATTENDING
school regularly

Managing children's asthma helps them **reduce absences**

Breakfast in the classroom improves attendance and learning

Regular **oral health care** prevents lost learning time



More children
READY for
kindergarten

Screenings catch developmental, hearing, vision and lead problems before they interfere with learning

Social and emotional **development** builds curiosity and supports learning

Prenatal care supports early brain development



The Health Determinants of Early School Success