

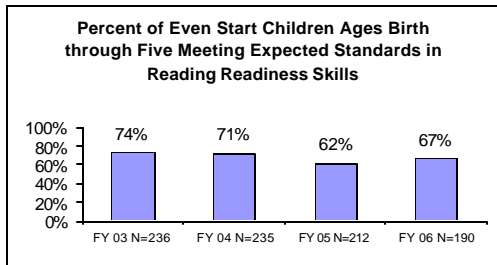
Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template

Part II, Program Accountability Summary

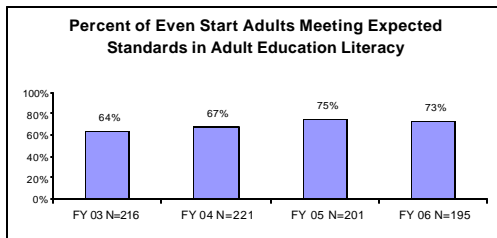
Program Purpose To increase literacy and reading/ reading readiness skills in families most in need and hardest to serve through integrated programs in early childhood education, adult education, and parenting education.

Program Connecticut Even Start Family Literacy Program, Title 1, Part II, Subpart 3 federal initiative; CT State Department of Education.

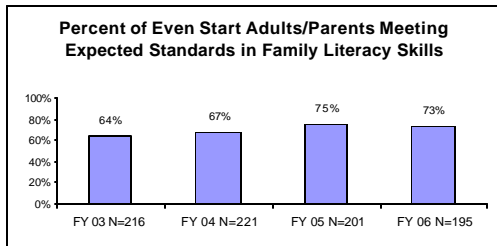
Performance Measure 1: 62% to 74% of the birth to 5 children met standards in reading readiness for their age group.



Performance Measure 2: 64% - 75% Even Start Family Literacy Program adults met adult education standards in reading.



Performance Measure 3: 64% to 75% of the parents are observed to learn and apply parenting skills in family literacy



Key Budget Information	
Total Current Program Year Funding	\$657,606
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Population Result	
Program Funding As Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	\$657,606
Total State Funds	\$0
Capital Projects Subtotal	\$0
Other Funding	\$0
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	

Story Behind the Baselines: Even Start Family Literacy is a 12 month, 5 component program that integrates early childhood education, adult education, parenting education, interactive literacy activities, and home visits to help prepare children for school and parents become partners in the child's education. The program serves the 'most in need, hardest to serve' families with children ages Birth thru 7 years. Eighty percent of the families are at poverty level; 93 percent of the children have never had any preschool. A statewide accountability system measures outcomes in all components. Each program is required to complete an annual local evaluation and meet state performance indicator standards of success. The program partners with local school districts, adult education, Head Start/ School Readiness, and mental health agencies in the community. Even Start requires parent participation in adult education and parenting education, thus ensuring family literacy outcomes and early childhood school readiness/ success in school. Intensity of participation has led to high success.

Turning The Curves:

- 1) Work toward a 75 percent-85 percent of children and adults meeting performance indicator standards. **Rationale:** ES staff would like to exceed the current percent of adults and children exiting the program successfully.
- 2) Expand the early childhood data set to include more information on individual skills in other areas of development. **Rationale:** To better monitor children's progress in individual skills.
- 3) Follow up on children and adults who have left the program – where are they now? How are the children doing in school? Are families taking care of themselves, in good jobs, etc.? **Rationale:** Determine outcome sustainability

Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program Accountability

Program Purpose To increase literacy and reading/ reading readiness skills in families most in need and hardest to serve through integrated programs in early childhood education, adult education, and parenting education.

Program State Department of Education/ Connecticut Even Start Family Literacy Program. The Connecticut Even Start Program is a Title 1, Part II, Subpart 3 federal initiative.

Contribution to Population Result Children, ages birth through seven years, who are from homes with low literacy skills and at poverty level will enter kindergarten with 'ready to read' skills, while their parents will increase their own reading/ literacy skills as well as learn how to help their child prepare for and successfully enter kindergarten and later grades.

Key Budget Information (<i>Dollars reported in millions</i>)	
Total Current Program Year Budget	\$657,606
Funding as Percent of All Funding for Quality of Life Result	
Program Funding as Percent of Total Agency Budget	
Budget Distribution:	
Federal	\$657,606
State	\$0
General Fund	
Capital Project Funds	
Other State Funding	\$0
Other Funds (Not Federal or State)	\$0
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third parties	

Basic Program Facts

Program Design: Even Start (ES) is a 12 month/5 component programs in which all participants enrolled must attend. These components are: Early Childhood, Adult Education, Parenting education, Interactive Literacy Activities, Home Visits. Parents and children must enroll together and children are from birth through 7 years of age. Average age of ES children is 3 years.

Program Population: In FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006), about 200 families were served in 8 programs and over 800 in the past six years in 10 programs. Eighty percent of the families are at the federal poverty level, 60 percent working minimum pay jobs and only source of income, 15 percent were in shelters, 20 percent of adults had less than 8th grade education, 49 percent some high school and the remaining have a high school or college degree from another country, 64 percent come from other countries and 93 percent of the children are attending a preschool setting for the first time. Families must be 'most in need, hardest to serve' to enroll. Individual programs identify the population they will serve through the needs of their community.

Accountability Reviews of Services: ES is required to contract for local program evaluation. All programs must report on quality, attendance and outcomes as well as meet state standards or performance indicators of success in early childhood, adult education and parenting education. Outcomes, attendance and quality assurance standards are reviewed on an annual basis at the local and state level. Programs must also develop local objectives that are measurable and demonstrate the quality of their program and outcomes, monthly attendance of each child and adults. Local evaluation requires a visit 3-5 times per year to review early childhood records, lesson plans and observation of instruction, focus groups with staff and adults, etc.

Quality of Staff and Professional Development: Staff is qualified and participate in professional development activities an average of 30 hours per year, both in area of primary responsibility and other ES components.

Parent Access to Services and Interagency Coordination of Early Intervention Services:

Parents are expected to participate in their child's education through interactions with classroom teachers. They review progress, assessment results, and set goals. Follow-up is done through home visiting. Referrals to collaborating agencies and services are made when identified. ES collaborates with Head Start, Adult Education, Birth to Three, Local Health Community and Mental Health Agencies, etc. All programs have partnered with universities, community colleges, local hospitals, Rotary Club, etc.

Program Status: ES program federal budget was cut significantly. The original budget supported 10 programs, all of which were successful in meeting performance indicator standards. At the opening of FY 2007, only 6 programs remain and their budgets have been cut 51 percent from 2006, thereby cutting services and classes offered by the program. The communities that have/had an ES program and their status are: Bridgeport (closed), Windham (open), Danbury (open), Middletown (open), Norwich (closed), New London (open), Stamford (open), Ansonia (open), Families Together in Windham (closed), and Greater Hartford (closed).

Program Performance: The ES program is effective. Measured results show that:

- Preschool children are getting the experience they need and are prepared for school when they enter kindergarten; children in grades K thru 2 are promoted and reading at grade level.
- Adults are learning to read or read better and/or learning English. They complete the program, meet their goals, attain a high school diploma, and are entering college, training schools, and are getting better paying jobs. Many of the adult graduates have been selected as adult learner of the year and speaker at the Adult Education Graduation ceremonies.
- Adults as parents are learning how to teach their young children and prepare them for school. Parents understand the home-school connection, work with their child in the home, work with classroom teachers in understanding their child's progress and support their child's learning.
- Parents become active partners with schools participating as a parent advocate on school councils, members of advisory boards, and PTO's.

Summary of Story Behind the Baselines:

The Even Start Family Literacy program has been driven by federal guidelines and regulations but it also fulfills Connecticut's mission in serving young children. In responding to federal requirements it has also aligned itself with state goals such as those described in Ready by 5 & Fine by 9.

Even Start Family Literacy has an accountability system in place that includes performance indicator standards in early childhood for children ages birth through 8 years, adult education, and parenting education. These standards are specific in measures of reading and reading readiness skills in children based on age groups, and reading, writing and mathematic skills for adults.

Programs are held accountable for program attendance, a unique standard that is not seen in other similar state programs. The attendance standard for children and adults encourages intensity of learning and immersion in literacy skills. Because of attendance standards, the programs and their participants have met or exceeded the performance indicators for reading, reading readiness, diploma attainment, learning English, etc. and have gone on to increase family learning, stabilize the family, and become economically independent. The program has a high graduation and success rate (over 60 percent of the high school diploma and GED enrollees left their program with a diploma in FY 2006). Children are ready for school, entering kindergarten with knowledge of the alphabet, better vocabularies, increased language skills, and increased skills in reading/ reading readiness. Children who have developmental delays are identified early and intervention programs are in place through the collaborations with Birth to Three.

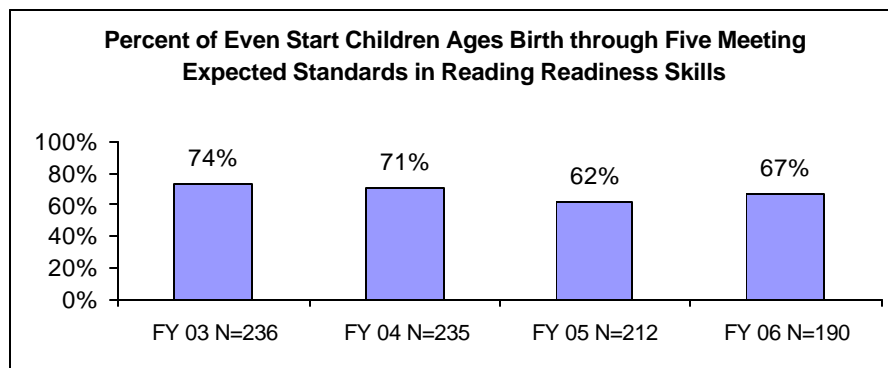
The integration of adult learning and early childhood education serves to promote life long learning, school readiness and success, and economic stability.

Many of the adults that have exited the program continue on to community college, continuing education and trade schools, have gotten better jobs and opened businesses.

This program is effective as seen in measures 1-3 and already addresses and demonstrates success in the state challenges outlined in Ready by 5 & Fine by 9.

Measure 1

It is expected that 50% to 65% of the Even Start children birth through age five will meet the reading readiness standards for their age group.



Story Behind Measure 1

Over the past four years, the range for children ages birth to 5 in Even Start show that 62 percent to 74 percent of the children met or exceeded the expectations/standards in reading readiness for their age group. (Declines and increases in performance are due to the rotation of population served from year to year.) Federal funding requires that standards for reading/readiness be developed for each age group served by the Even Start Family Literacy program. These standards are aligned with the expectations outlined in the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework.

SDE: Even Start Family Literacy Program

State Department of Education data also reveals that:

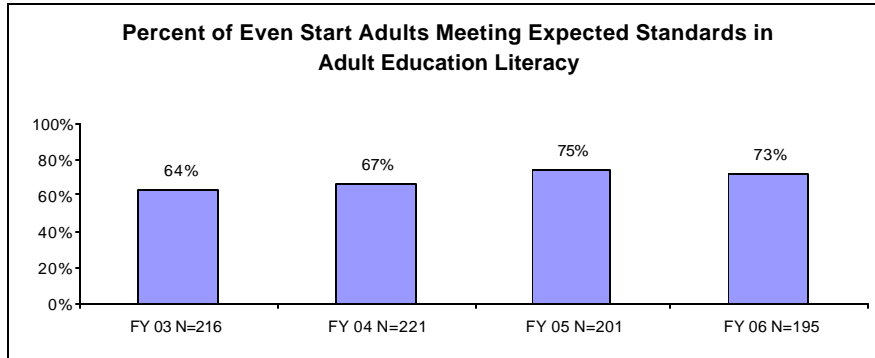
- 65 percent of the children recognized more than 10 letters and average 13 letters
- 80 percent of the pre-kindergarten children met the national standard of increasing their score on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) 4 or more points
- Preschool children, including infants and toddlers, average between 68 and 75 hours a month in the early childhood classrooms and literacy activities.
- Children are also observed and assessed in other areas as well such as motor skills, problem-solving, and social-emotional growth.
- Over the past several years, each program has identified young children with developmental delays and referred parents to appropriate services such as the Connecticut Birth to Three early intervention program.

Agenda for Early Childhood includes:

- See action steps and research

Measure 2

It is expected that 40% or more of the adults will meet adult literacy goals in ABE or ESL reading and 60% of the adults in a high school diploma or GED program will make progress toward attaining a diploma.



Story Behind Measure 2

Results show that in the past 4 years, Even Start Family Literacy Program adults all make progress and that two-thirds to three-quarters of the adults meet adult education standards in reading. (Declines and increases in performance are due to the rotation of population served from year to year.)

Over the past four years, adults have made consistently significant gains; during FY 2006:

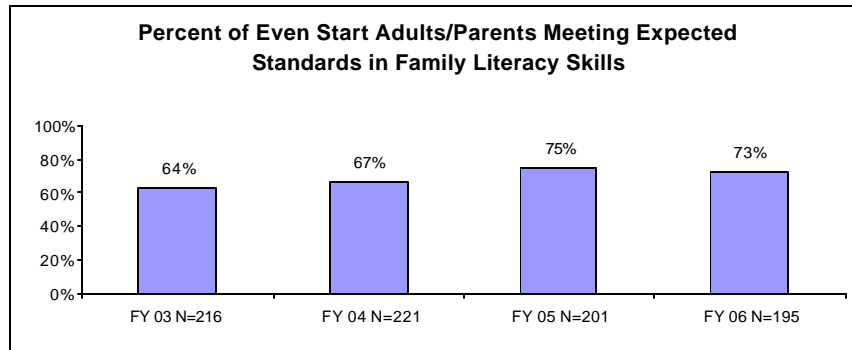
- 60 percent of the adults in Adult Basic Education (ABE) made a 4 point gain in reading
- 68 percent of the English Second Language (ESL) adults made a 4 point gain in reading
- Adults average 36 hours per month in the adult education classroom
- Each year the program exits about 60 percent of the adults with their high school diplomas.
- 103 diplomas have been awarded to Even Start Family Literacy Adults in the past 4 years. Other adults have left the program because they have learned enough English or more skills to obtain a better job.
- 119 adults have reached this goal.

Agenda for Adult Education includes:

- See action steps and research agenda

Measure 3

It is expected that 40% to 60% of the parents will meet standards for skill development in family literacy such as reading to child, borrowing books from the library or other sources, encouraging children to read with them at home, etc.



Story Behind Measure 3

Results show that in the past 4 years, two-thirds to three-quarters of the parents were observed to learn and apply parenting skills in family literacy such as reading to child, borrowing books from the library or other sources, encouraging children to read with them at home, etc. (Declines and increases in performance are due to the rotation of population served from year to year.)

Federal funding recommended that parenting standards be developed and reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) each year. This also supports the Connecticut goal that families be a central part of any early childhood program. In FY 2001, the Even Start Family Literacy program developed standards for parenting using the observation tool, Connecticut Even Start Parenting toward Family Literacy Rating Scale. An observation is completed every 4 months on each parent/adult. It is expected that 40 percent who score low will make substantial progress and those that score high will maintain that progress.

In 2006, 73 percent of the families met all standard areas of effective family literacy skills: meeting child's development needs, applying principles of family literacy at home and at school.

Agenda for Parenting Education includes:

- See action steps and research agenda

Partners and Their Roles

The Even Start Family Literacy Program requires that the local program partner with various state and local agencies for specific services. All programs partner with one or more of the following agencies:

- Adult Education Services of the region for teachers, classrooms, and/ or student slots.
- Early Childhood Services such as Head Start and/or School Readiness to provide teachers, classrooms, and/ or student slots.
- Social Service agency to provide classroom space, mental health services, referrals.

What do you propose to do to improve performance in the next 3-5 years and why?

Low cost action steps:

1. Continue to increase the percentage of Even Start children and adults meeting performance indicator standards. The Even Start Family Literacy program anticipates that 75 percent-85 percent of children, adults/ parents will meet performance indicator standards on an annual basis. This objective will be accomplished through: continued monitoring (compliance reviews, local evaluations, state performance indicator monitoring, etc.), professional development in the integration of early childhood education and parenting education, integrate early childhood with adult learning, expand the early childhood education and parenting education performance indicators in early education to capture developmental progress for infants/ toddlers, more school readiness skills for three and four year olds, reading at grade level for compulsory school children in grades K through 2, to align both with state and federal goals for school readiness and literacy both for children and adults.
2. Complete a guide for accountability in Connecticut Even Start Family Literacy programs that collates all information regarding the Even Start Family Literacy program including the performance indicators, quality performance indicators, data collection tools, satisfactory progress expectations, etc. The alignment of all accountability tools and performance standards with state and federal goals will support and meet the action items in Ready by 5 and Fine by 9.

With appropriate funding and staffing, we propose to do the following:

3. Seek state funding to continue, re-instate programs that have closed because of funding, and expand to new locations across the state. Federal program funding cut the state ES program 51 percent last year. The Department of Education would like to substantially increase the funding level to include more families of the 'most in need, hardest to serve' population. The program will develop stronger collaborations with other state agencies and local organizations to support families in health, mental health, economic development, housing, etc. so that families can stabilize their lives in order to achieve their educational goals. The increase of funding level will restore several programs and provide support to promote quality in the current programs.
4. Age anchor the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework (PAF) and use it to measure children's progress and determine outcomes that can be reported.

Appendix A, Data Development Agenda

The plan is to continue, reinstate, and expand the Even Start program as a model in family literacy for the state and the country. The program has demonstrated its effectiveness in serving families that are the most in need and the hardest to serve.

With appropriate funding and staffing, we propose to do the following:

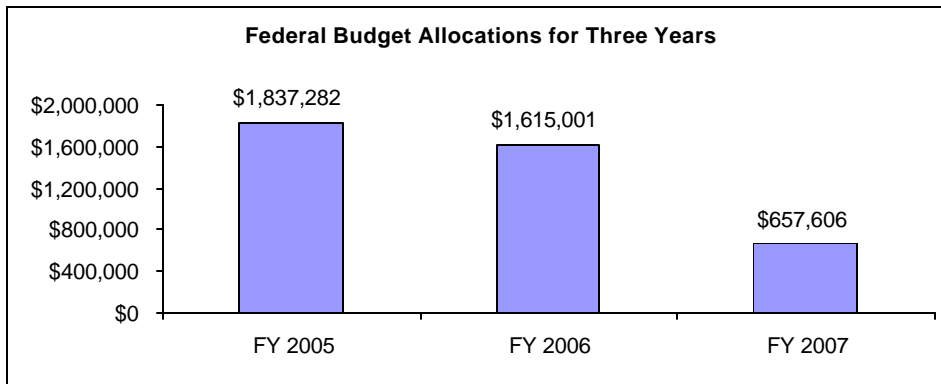
1. Refine measurement tool for parenting education and examine the national tool, Even Start Family Literacy Parent Education Profile for usage. A strong measure of parenting education will provide insight into the quality of the parenting education component, the outcomes of parenting education and how these outcomes are related to or predict family literacy gains and early childhood preparedness for kindergarten and success in school.
2. Age anchor the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework (PAF) so that it can be used to measure children's progress and determine outcomes that can be reported.

Appendix B, Link to Budget

Budget in FY 2005: \$1,837,282

Budget in FY 2006: \$1,615,001

Budget in FY 2007: \$ 657,606



Federal budget cuts in the past several years have affected the following for Even Start Family Literacy Programs:

- Reduction in programs from ten in FY 2005 to six in FY 2007
- Number of days per week/hours per day offered in each component.
- Transportation in getting families to the sites for participation.
- Staffing hours.
- Evaluation costs for monitoring program performance.
- Purchase of materials.

Appendix C, Information and Research Agenda

Several questions come from the Even Start Family Literacy data and results from these research questions would help identify the important and best strategies that lead to closing the achievement gap with more children ready to learn. These questions include:

Research Question: What are the effects of the Even Start Family Literacy Program on children who participate one to three years prior to entering kindergarten? How do these children compare to children who have participated in preschool/infant and toddler programs 1-3 years without parent participation in an integrated family literacy program? How do these children do in comparison to children in School Readiness programs; and on kindergarten assessments? How do these children compare later on when they reach grade 3?

Research Question: Do parents and children both make substantial gains on the PPVT (an assessment that tests from ages 2.8 years through 90 years)? How do these results inform us in planning for programs serving non-English speaking families? How do these results inform us in planning for programs that serve English speaking but low literacy families?

Research Question: How are collaborators used to support families? What are the differences in program operation design and the effects on the participants? Is one type of design better than another or do program designs need to have basic requirements but allowed to configure according to the program population served?

Research Question: What has happened to the families that have left the Even Start Family Literacy Program? How are the children faring in classrooms? Did the parents continue on with education, participation in school advocacy programs, etc.? How do the families who left the program prematurely do in comparison to families who reached their individual goals?

Appendix D, Expansion of Basic Facts

The Even Start Family Literacy Program has been building a successful and exemplary structure in serving families most in need and hardest to serve. By investing in the education of both the adult and the child, Even Start Family Literacy participants have made progress in their own educational achievements and contribute positively to the community.

- Even Start Family Literacy program has contributed substantially to the readiness of children for academic work.
- Children who have developmental delays are identified earlier and intervention services are in place before the child enrolls in kindergarten, thereby giving these children more of an opportunity to be ready for school and relieving the burden to the schools/ classroom teacher to identify, refer, evaluate, and develop an educational plan.
- Adults become true partners in their child's education, by learning to work with classroom teachers, initiate progress report discussions, developing an awareness of school readiness skills and reinforcing these skills, volunteering in classrooms and participating on advisory and review boards. Ninety-five percent of all the Even Start Family Literacy families whose children will attend kindergarten in the fall attend all orientation activities.
- Adults become life long learners, enjoying their new status of holding a high school diploma and moving forward on other goals such as opening businesses, buying homes, attending college, etc. The ESL adults take steps to become U.S. citizens and many have done so while in the program.
- Even Start Family Literacy program coordinators and staff are dedicated to the programs and are active in the educational and mental health community. All sit on one or more committees such as School Readiness Councils, Mental Health Collaboratives, Head Start Advisory Boards, etc.
- Even Start Family Literacy program staff attend training in their own primary areas of teaching (early childhood, adult education, etc.) as well as the other areas to better integrate and coordinate instruction.
- In the document, Ready by 5 & Fine by 9 (October 2006), Even Start Family Literacy programs already address the service challenges (page 21) specifically in the areas of Interagency Coordination and Early Intervention (through collaboration); Parental Access to Services (through coordination of Interactive Literacy, Home Visits and Parenting Education); Accountability of Reviews of Services (through extensive standards, local evaluation activities, and research based evidence of success); Implementation of Successful Programs (through demonstration of annual reports of outcomes, attendance, and quality assurance); and, Integration of Data Collection (through an integrated data collection and management system that links all assessments and results).