



Marin Quality Counts is a collaborative initiative promoting excellence in early care and education for programs, providers and families. Our work includes the Marin County Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), which provides supports to the early care and education workforce for achievement of this goal. Marin Quality Counts is funded through California Department of Education and CA First 5. Partners include: Marin County Office of Education, Marin Child Care Council, First 5 Marin, Marin County Child Care Commission and the College of Marin.

## High Quality Early Learning Improves Student Outcomes

Research shows that high quality early learning improves school readiness, raises performance on academic achievement tests and closes the achievement gap. Although all children benefit from high quality early learning, children at-risk have the most to gain because they start off school behind their more advantaged peers.

**The long-term benefits of high quality early learning, such as preschool, are significant and include:**

- Reduced special education costs
- Increased high school graduation and college attendance rates
- Reduced grade retention
- Reduced crime rates over time
- Increased employment, income and tax contribution levels
- Decreased public health care, welfare and child care expenses

## The Need for High Quality Early Learning in Marin County

Marin County ranks high among other California counties on measures of child wellbeing, however up to 60% fewer children who are economically disadvantaged or racially diverse meet the state targets in math and English. Thirty-four percent of 3rd graders are not reading at grade level and only 25% of ELLs scored as proficient or higher on the 2013 CST. Research supports that high quality early childhood education is critical to kindergarten preparedness, progress in school and success in life. Having more children participate in quality early care programs will lead to improved student outcomes.

Approximately 35% of Marin three and four year olds do not attend preschool (Children Now, 2015) due to insufficient funds and limited access to subsidized care. Currently there are approximately 900 children on the waitlist for subsidized child care. We must change this statistic and create opportunities for all Marin's children to succeed in school and beyond.

