

# 2014 Early Childhood Profile

## Amherst County

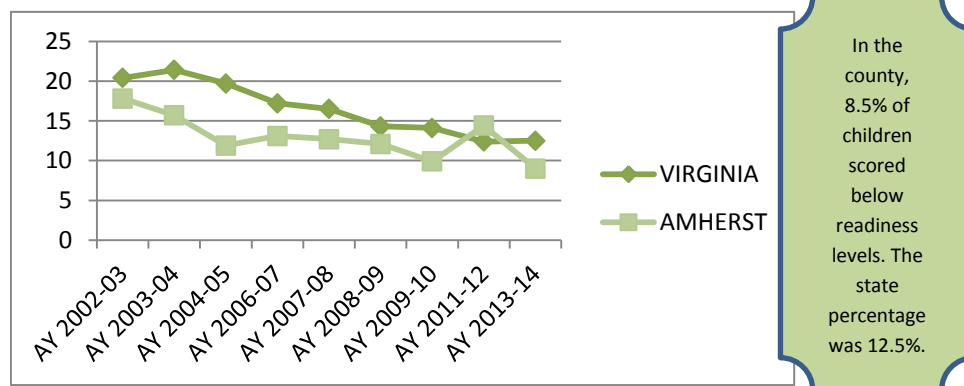


Smart Beginnings Central Virginia

### Kindergarten Readiness

Smart Beginnings Central Virginia is part of a statewide network of coalitions that focus on early childhood development and education, with the vision that every child will enter school ready to learn. Kindergarten Readiness, in addition to referring to the skills children have mastered, describes the system of care that children experience prior to beginning kindergarten. This may include the family, community, and any early care and education settings a child attended prior to formal schooling. In Virginia, most schools assess the skills of Kindergarten students using PALS-K, a measure of children's knowledge of literacy fundamentals, phonological awareness, alphabet recognition, concept of word and knowledge of letter sounds. PALS-K helps to identify children who are relatively behind in their acquisition of these fundamental skills.

### Kindergarteners Whose PALS-K Scores were Below Readiness Levels



	VIRGINIA	AMHERST	APPOMATTOX	BEDFORD	CAMPBELL	LYNCHBURG
AY 2002-03	20.4	17.8	10.6	18.1	18.8	21.7
AY 2003-04	21.4	15.7	12.1	13.9	16.8	19.9
AY 2004-05	19.7	11.9	11.9	13.9	17.5	24.5
AY 2005-06	17.9	n/a	9.1	14.1	14.9	13.8
AY 2006-07	17.2	13.1	13.3	11.1	13.7	18.1
AY 2007-08	16.5	12.7	10.1	12.8	13.2	14.9
AY 2008-09	14.3	12.1	7.5	9.9	12.8	14.2
AY 2009-10	14.1	9.7	9.6	10.4	11.8	21.0
AY 2010-11	13.3	14.4	n/a	10.2	12.4	18.2
AY 2011-12	12.4	9.0	7.7	12.3	10.5	18.5
AY 2012-13	13.0	12.4	n/a	11.7	12.8	14.0
AY 2013-14	12.5	8.5	6.0	12.1	4.7	12.8

### What Influences School Readiness?

Many things have been shown to affect student readiness for school:

- Health issues such as lack of prenatal care and low birth weight;
- Poverty
- Abuse and Neglect
- Mother's Educational level
- High Quality Preschool / Childcare Programs: children who attend high quality preschool / childcare programs are better prepared when they enter kindergarten, are less likely to repeat a grade, and more likely to graduate.

In order to succeed in kindergarten, and fully benefit from the kindergarten experience, children need to arrive at school with many skills in place that involve:

- Physical well-being and motor development
- Social and Emotional development
- Language development
- Cognition and general knowledge

An effective Early Childhood Education and Development System includes: families that support their children's development; schools that do everything necessary to assure the success of every child; and communities that invest time and resources in the well-being of children.

### Highlights

Total Population (2012 estimate, U.S. Census)	32,384
Population under 5 years old (2012 estimate, U.S. Census)	1,684
Number of children receiving Child Care Subsidies (2009)	209
Percent of children Living in Poverty (ages 0-17) (2012)	20.3%
Percent of children eligible for free/reduced price lunch AY 13-14	51.2%
Number children in TANF (2009)	225
SNAP Participation Among Individuals 2011	5,979
Unemployment Rate 2011	7.2%
Total 2013 – 2014 Public Preschool Enrollment	122
Four-year olds Served by Virginia Preschool Initiative FY 2012 (funded)	78
2013-2014 Public Kindergarten Enrollment	348
On-Time 4 year Graduation Rate	88.2
Dropout Rate	5.3
Number of Students Retained K-12 (AY11-12)	77
Number of Students Retained K-3	12

### Third Grade Assessments

Below are the percentages of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who demonstrated proficiency on SOL tests for the school year 2013-2014.

Third Grade	State	County
English: Reading	69	69
Mathematics	67	61
Science	83	88
History & Social Science	86	88

### Fourth Grade Assessments

Below are the percentages of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students who demonstrated proficiency on SOL tests for the school year 2013-2014.

Fourth Grade	State	County
English: Reading	70	62
Mathematics	80	76

### Eighth Grade Assessments

Below are the percentages of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who demonstrated proficiency on SOL tests for the school year 2013-2014.

Eighth Grade	State	County
English: Reading	70	72
English: Writing	70	71
Mathematics	67	75
Science	74	75

## Early Care and Education Programs

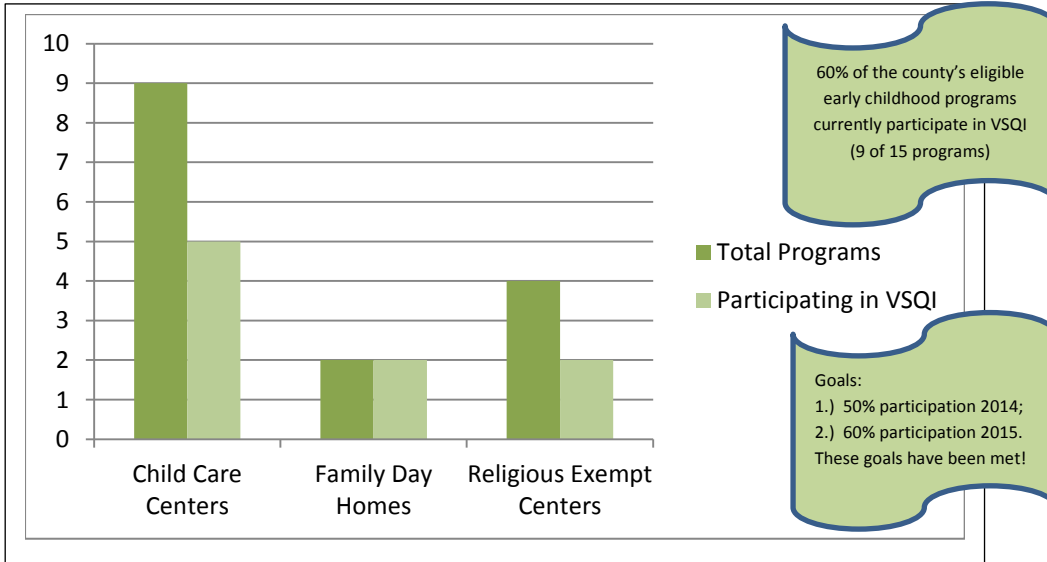
### Virginia Star Quality Initiative (VSQI)

Preschools and Child Care programs can voluntarily participate in the VSQI initiative, and engage in a process of continuous quality improvement. VSQI programs are evaluated and receive a star rating (between 1-5 stars). The higher star rating indicates that a program has met requirements related to child-to-caregiver ratios, curriculum, staff training, compliance with local governing authority and other quality indicators.

#### Early Care and Education Workforce Support

Smart Beginnings supports the early care and education workforce with training, program incentives and through collaboration with other professional development programs.

#### Amherst County Early Childhood Care and Education Programs



#### Professional Development

Educational programs are available to all early childhood care and education providers. A list of upcoming programs can be found at: [www.smartbeginningscva.org](http://www.smartbeginningscva.org)

Smart Beginnings Central Virginia has active task forces in each county/city in its region. The Amherst County Task Force includes representatives from Social Services, Public Schools, Public Library, Va. Cooperative Extension, Head Start, Parks & Recreation, and early education programs. Membership is free and open to anyone interested in improving services to children and helping every child to succeed in school, and in life.

VSQI Participation 2014: Amelon Early Learning Center \* Amherst Early Learning Center \* Anointed Minds \* Head Start Elon \* Head Start Mad. Heights \* Head Start Northern Amherst \* New Life Preschool \* Parrish Family Day Home \* Teaching Little Christians

## Families, Health and County Facts

- There are a total of 18 child care / early education programs registered through the Department of Social Services in Amherst County; 15 are VSQI eligible; 9 are VSQI participants.
- The U.S. Census Bureau estimates 1,684 children under the age of five live in Amherst County.
- Total public school enrollment was 4291 in 2013-2014.
- Total Pre-K – Grade 3 enrollment was 1,424.
- The cost of 77 children repeating a grade is estimated at more than \$830,000.
- In 2008, 11.6% of children received Special Education Services.
- There were 20 weapons offenses in schools (AY 2013-2014) and 59 offenses involving Alcohol, tobacco and other Drugs. There were 454 reports of Disorderly or Disruptive Behavior.
- 27% of inmates in the County Detention Center (Dec. 2013) have High School diplomas or GEDs. 73% do not.
- 40% of the County's Public School teachers have earned a Master's Degree (Academic Year 2012-2013).

#### Select Indicators:

	State	County
<b>Infant Mortality Rate 2012</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Births to Mothers with Less than 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Education 2012</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>
<b>Non-marital Births (women ages 15-44) 2012</b>	<b>35.3%</b>	<b>46.6</b>
<b>Low Birth weight Babies 2012</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
<b>% of Children Under Age 19 without Health Insurance 2012</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>7.4%</b>
<b>Low-income Children Under 19 without Health Insurance 2012</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>
<b>Rate of Child Abuse &amp; Neglect (Founded Number Per 1,000 Children) 2013</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Teen Pregnancy Rate Per 1,000 15-17 year olds, 2012</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>26.9</b>
<b>Teen Pregnancy Rate Per 1,000 18-19 year olds, 2012</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>46.7</b>