



Fremont County DECA Outcomes 2005-06

Written by Leslie Meyer, Program Evaluator*

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 376 children had measurable outcomes, with both a fall 2004 and a spring 2005 DECA assessment.
- Children in all three groups made significant increases in Total Protective Factors, with the Colorado Preschool Program (CPKP) moving from 10% to 36%, the children with special needs and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) moving from 10% to 27% and typical children (not in CPKP or with an IEP) moving from 18% to 35%.
- Children in the CPKP program have made the biggest gain (23-26%) in Total Protective Factors for the last two years.
- The group of children with an IEP made the most progress in Behavioral Concerns, with 26% of the children having concerns in fall 2005 decreasing to 19% having concerns by spring 2006.

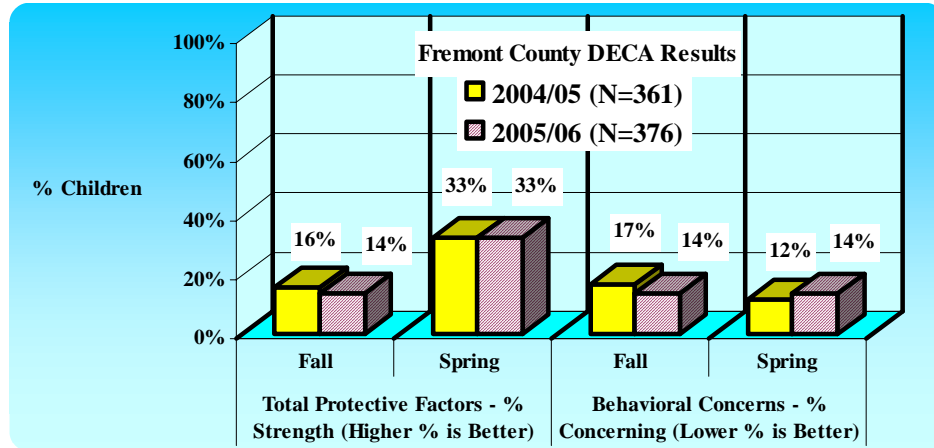
SUPPORTING DATA

TABLE 1 below shows the number of children who had both a pre and a post *Devereux Early Childhood Assessment* (DECA) and represented in annual outcome reports. The increase from 265 children in 2003/04 to 361 children the following year 2004/05 reflects the addition of Head Start children in 2004/05.

	# Children represented in Pre Post Report	# of Child Care Providers represented in Pre Post report	# of Classrooms represented in Pre Post report
2003/04	265	6	Not Tracked
2004/05	361	11	34
2005/06	376	9	31

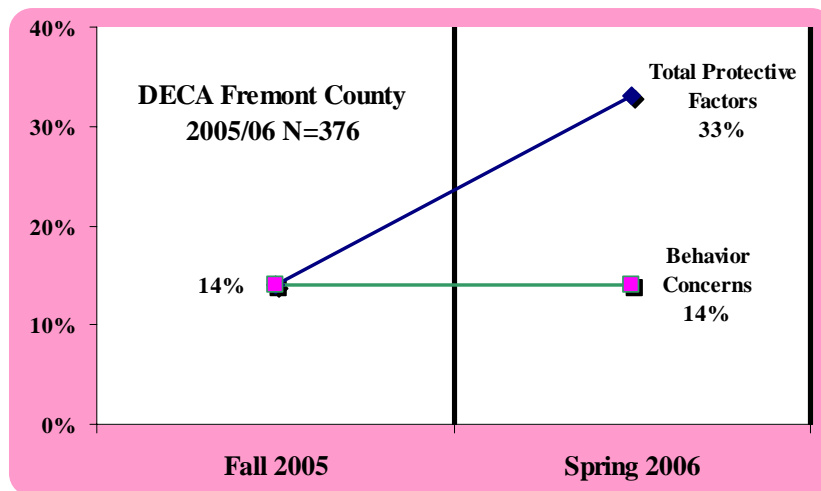
TABLE 1

GRAPH 1 below reflects that DECA results in 2005/06 are similar to results in 2004/05. That is, the percent of children with a “strength” rating increased about 15 points in both years, i.e., from 14% to 33% in 2005/06 and from 16% to 33% in 2004/05. The graph shows there was a decrease from 17% to 12% in children rated as having “behavioral concerns” in 2004/05 but the percent remained at 14% in both the fall 2005 and spring 2006 assessments. Comparison to a third year will be helpful in identifying a baseline and the beginning of a trend.



GRAPH 1

Another way of looking at 2005/06 DECA results is reflected in **GRAPH 2**.

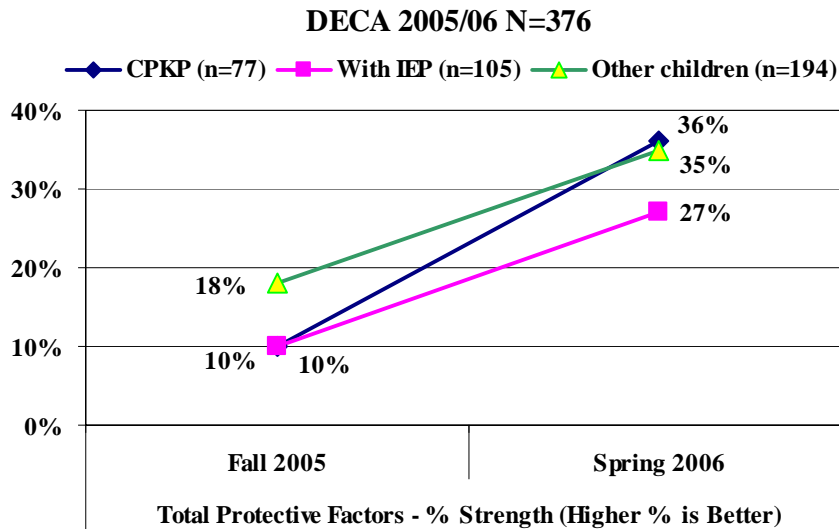


GRAPH 2

Next, assessment will be broken out into three groups, i.e., children enrolled in the Colorado Preschool Program (CPKP), children with special needs who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and what will be referred as “typical” or “other” children who are not enrolled in either CPKP and do not have an IEP.

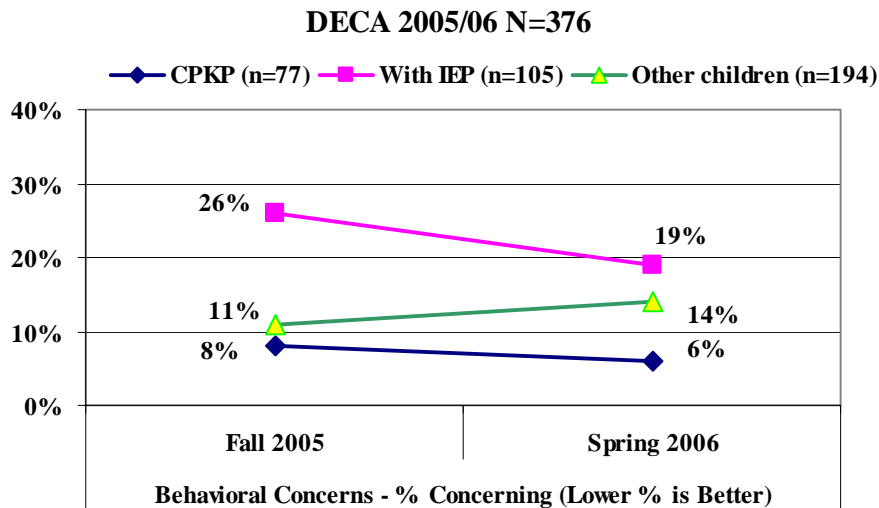
GRAPH 3 below reflects that all three groups made significant improvements from fall 2005 to spring 2006. The percent of children who are rated as having a “strength” in Total Protective Factors increases by 18% for “other” children, 25% of children in CPKP and 17% for children with an IEP from fall 2005 to spring 2006. Furthermore, the children in the Colorado Preschool Program start out at the same level, 10%, as children with an IEP and lower than “other” children by 8 percentage points in fall 2005. The percent of children in CPKP rated as having strengths in Total Protective Factors then increases to match the “other” children by spring at 35% to 36%.

Although children in the CPKP program started at a higher percentage, 25%, in the strengths area of Total Protective Factors in 2004/05, they made approximately the same gain of 23%-26% in both years.



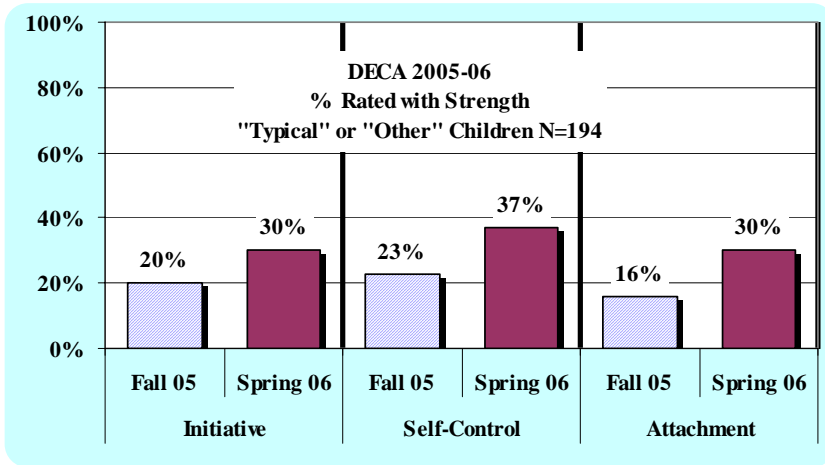
GRAPH 3

GRAPH 4 below reflects that children with an IEP made the most progress in Behavioral Concerns, with 26% of the children having concerns in fall 2005 decreasing to 19% having concerns by spring 2006.

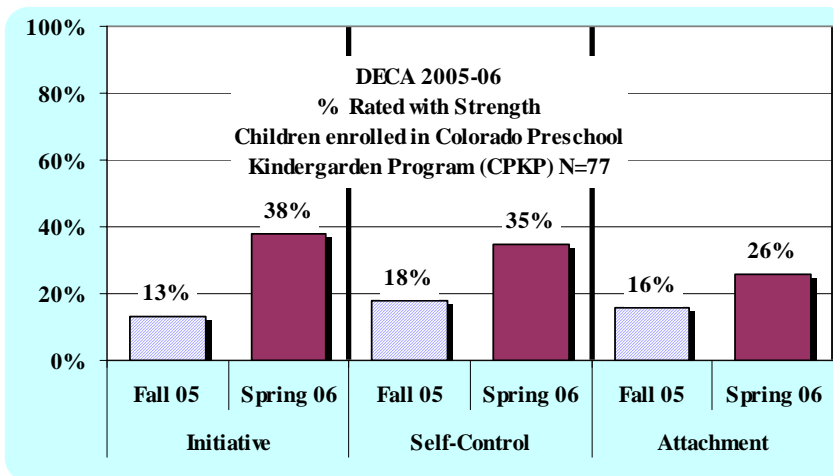


GRAPH 4

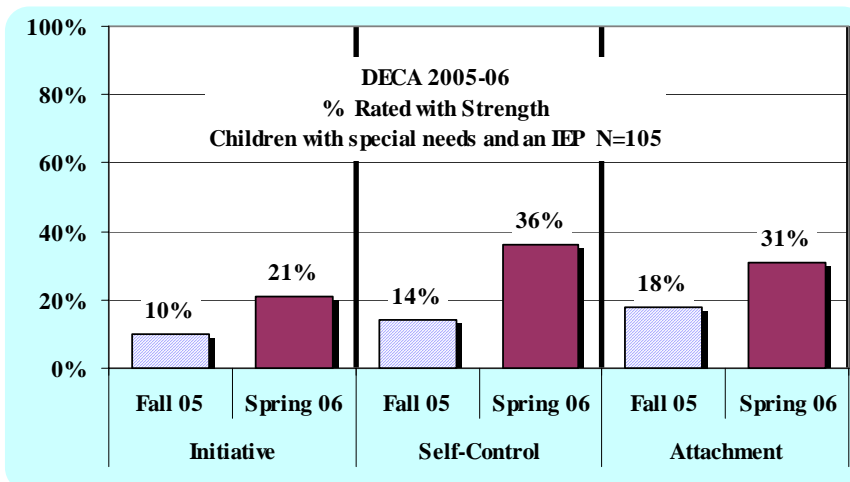
Next, the three subcategories that make up total Protective Factors will be looked at. The following three graphs include the percent of children scoring in the strength area for the three subscales *Initiative*, *Self-Control* and *Attachment*. **Reminder:** Positive movement is reflected as an increase in the percents in the three subscales and in *Total Protective Factors*.



GRAPH 5
"Other" or "Typical" Children
Three subcategories that make up Total Protective Factors



GRAPH 6
Children enrolled in Colorado Preschool Program (CPKP)
Three subcategories that make up Total Protective Factors



GRAPH 7
Children with special needs and an IEP
Three subcategories that make up Total Protective Factors

Finally, it is helpful to look at the number of children who individually moved from a concerning rating to a typical or strength rating in *Total Protective Factors* and in *Behavioral Concerns*.

**# of Children
Who Moved from Concerning to
Typical or Strength Rating**

	2004/05	2005/06
<i>Total Protective Factors</i>	29	26
<i>Behavioral Concerns</i>	29	21

SUMMARY:

The positive changes in children as reflected through assessment tools such as Work Sampling, Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) and *The Ounce* help document the value of investing in our young children and those who care for them. This report has looked at two years of outcomes using the DECA assessment. Addition of child outcome results in the 2006/07 year will be of assistance in identifying a baseline and beginning to establish a trend for analysis.

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Attachment 1

Information Concerning the DECA Instrument:

Developed in 1996-98, the *Devereux Early Childhood Assessment* (DECA) provides a **well-developed, standardized and norm-referenced** measure of protective factors through **scores** that can be **compared over time** for an **individual child, an entire class and/or participating child care partners** and can be used to **evaluate the effectiveness of primary prevention or early intervention efforts**. Teachers alone or, ideally, in partnership with parents complete the assessment.

DECA is based on the Resilience Theory which states that the stronger the protective factors children possess, the more likely they can experience positive outcomes despite stress (Masten & Garmezy, 1985). Implementation of individual and group results is intended to result in a strength-based, primary prevention program that fosters healthy social and emotional development in preschoolers age 2 through 5 years. Individual results are used to identify strategies to strength protective factors in specific areas, and classroom planning and management is accomplished through group analysis.

Children's strengths (i.e., protective factors that help offset or balance the effects of risk and adversity) are rated using three scales and a total scale. The three scales are *Initiative*, *Self-control and Attachment*. The *Total Protective Factors* scale is an overall result using the results of the 3 subscales.

A 10-item *Behavioral Concerns Scale* measures a wide variety of challenging and problem behaviors seen in this age of children.

The **higher the rating the better** for the three scales *Initiative*, *Self-control and Attachment*, as well as *Total Protective Factors*, as they reflect **strength in resiliency**. The *Behavioral Concerns Scale* is just the opposite, with a **low rating rather than a high rating reflecting strength, or less concern**.

Fremont County child care providers administer the DECA in the fall of each year as a pre-test and in the spring of the following year as a post-test for program evaluation purposes as well as individual and classroom planning and intervention. A mid-year DECA is completed on children who have scored in the "concerning" area in either protective factors or behavioral concerns so that additional environment and/or instruction modifications can be made before the end of the year if concerns continue to be present. Parents are also asked to complete a DECA for their child. Parent results are not currently part of program evaluation but are helpful as discussion points in parent-teacher conferences.

There are specific criteria in order for DECA pre and post assessments to be used in program evaluation. These criteria are as follows:

- Teacher must have completed all DECA training requirements (14 hours)
- For individual children, applications of DECA are completed by the same teacher or aide for both fall and spring
- Scores for each of the 5 sections of DECA are marked
- Application of fall DECA is completed during October/November and spring DECA is completed March-May.