



# Afghanistan ECCD Study

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## Special thanks

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## Executive Summary

This study provides a cross-sectional summary of young children's skills and development and is the first of its kind in Faryab, Saripol, Kandahar and Kabul provinces. Save the Children's International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) was used to measure children's early development and learning and a caregiver questionnaire was used to interview parents. Across the four provinces, 2927 children between 3 and 6 years old and their families were included in this study, half of whom were enrolled in an ECCD program and half of whom were living in the same villages but not enrolled in an ECCD program.

Including measures of children's family background is an important way to better understand the home learning environments to which they are exposed. This study found that families who had a child enrolled in an ECCD program were more likely to have child-friendly reading materials and toys, and were more likely to engage in learning activities with their children. Other research in this area has found exposure to learning materials and activities to be a key driver of children's early skills even when they are not enrolled in center-based ECCD programming.

Within the group of children attending ECCD programs, a large range in the frequency of attendance in ECCD programs was found. Specifically, parents were asked about how long their children had been attending an ECCD program, how often they attended and for how many hours per day they were at the center. Children ranged from being enrolled in an ECCD program for less than a year to three years, and attending a few times per month to every day. Also, some parents reported that their children attended ECCD programs for one hour per day while others reported as much as 4 hours per day. According to parents, the average child has been enrolled in ECCD for one year, attends 1-2 days per week and two hours per day.

Looking at children's early skills, this study finds that children attending ECCD centers have significantly stronger skills in all areas (motor, literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional, executive functioning and learning approaches) compared to children who are not enrolled in ECCD centers, even after controlling for children's age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father's literacy. This study is cross-sectional so the results cannot be attributed to the ECCD programming these children received but the significantly stronger skills found for children in ECCD centers across all domains do suggest that children are benefitting substantially from attending ECCD programs. Impact evaluations should be pursued in the future to measure how much children are learning from ECCD programming in more detail.

Finally, using the IDELA child and caregiver questionnaires allows for analysis of the relationships between children's development and their home environments. Results of these multivariate analyses find that children with stronger home learning environments (more learning materials and activities) have stronger skills across IDELA domains. Also, families with higher income tend to have stronger earlier development scores compared to their peers with fewer financial resources in all domains except emergent numeracy and motor development. There were no significant differences found between boys' and girls' early skills. Interestingly, there were also no significant relationships between the amount of time parents reported that children were spending in ECCD centers and early learning skills.

This suggests that parents may be misreporting the amount of time their children have been attending early learning programs or there are other mediating factors, like the quality of an ECCD center, that are influencing this relationship.

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## **Overview**

### **Background**

Save the Children has been providing ECCD to children in Faryab, Saripol and Nangarhar since 2008 and has recently added ECCD programming to children and families in Kabul and Kandahar beginning in 2013. Programming in Uruzgan classes started and ran for four years as well. The communities, families, Ministry of Education (MoE), and children have embraced ECCD and have always provided free spaces for the classes and volunteer teachers. In Faryab and Saripol, the community has always been very committed to ECCD and has recently set up five school based classes at the request of the MoE officials, 2015.

Save the Children has used various models to provide ECCD to children, two, three and five days a week, from one to four hours per day, home based and center based attached to formal primary government schools. Most regularly there are two volunteers per class, though depending on local context there may be one. All provinces but for Kandahar have all female teachers. Kandahar has both male and female volunteer teachers. All teachers are trained in a four phased visually based training program that provides both child development theory, modern child centered pedagogy and methodology, as well as activities that support cognitive, physical, social/emotional, early literacy, early math, and communications skills, using local materials, sturdy wooden blocks and games, and local songs and dance.

Save the Children Afghanistan has intentionally folded the Save the Children US Early Literacy and Math (ELM) program in the general training of the ECCD teachers. SC Afghanistan wanted to assure that all ECCD teachers were trained that early literacy and math skills are a part of a solid ECCD program and that the physical, social/emotional and communication portions of early learning were also included. In an effort to assure that students are reading and doing math, often teachers will take a class one program and give it to preschoolers. SC Afghanistan wants to be sure that the whole child is grown and supported in play based ECCD programming.

### **Purpose of study**

The main purpose of this assessment was to assess the current condition of children who are and are not attending an ECCD program and to establish a reference point for our future assessments of child learning and development in Faryab, Saripol, Kandahar and Kabul provinces.

## **Methodology**

### **Study design**

This study provides a cross-sectional summary of young children's skills and development and is the first of its kind in Faryab, Saripol, Kandahar and Kabul provinces. Based on the number of ECCD centers that Save the Children was supporting, a sample size of 106 ECCD centers was randomly selected to be included. The distribution of the sample per province was based on the number of centers in that

province. The sample size was calculated using the standard calculator taking into account the following statistical considerations for both study groups (ECCD and non-ECCD children): 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error.

For the intervention group, ECCD centers supported by Save the Children were randomly sampled. Within those centers, child were randomly sampled and included in the study if they were reported to be between 3.5 and 6.5 years old. The comparison group was comprised of children who were living in villages with ECCD centers that had been chosen for the intervention group but who were not attending the ECCD centers. The primary reason for children not to be enrolled in ECCD centers is lack of availability. The final sample is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Study sample

		Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age unknown	Total
<b>Faryab</b>	Comparison	10	183	282	161	0	0	636
	Intervention	0	137	221	272	1	2	633
<b>Kabul</b>	Comparison	18	50	55	67	0	0	190
	Intervention	9	25	59	103	3	3	202
<b>Kandahar</b>	Comparison	0	11	110	73	2	2	198
	Intervention	0	4	78	106	8	8	204
<b>Sar-e-pol</b>	Comparison	56	92	85	55	0	0	288
	Intervention	32	86	85	85	288	0	576
<b>Total</b>		125	588	975	922	302	15	2927

## Instruments

The International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) tool was used to measure children development and learning, and the IDELA Caregiver questionnaire was used to interview parents/caregivers. The IDELA child assessment contains 22 questions in four domains: motor development, emergent literacy, emergent numeracy and socio-emotional development. It also contains two questions related to executive functioning (short-term memory and inhibitory control), as well as assessor-rated questions related to children’s approaches to learning. The IDELA caregiver questionnaire contains questions about children’s family and household environments.

Table 2. IDELA Domains and Skills

<b>Gross and Fine Motor Development</b>	<b>Emergent Literacy and Language</b>	<b>Emergent Numeracy</b>	<b>Socio-emotional Development</b>	<b>Executive control</b>
Hopping on one foot	Print awareness	Measurement and comparison	Peer relations	Short-term memory
Copying a shape	Expressive vocabulary	Classification/Sorting	Emotional awareness	Inhibitory control
Drawing a human figure	Letter identification	Number identification	Empathy	
Folding Paper	Emergent writing	Shape identification	Conflict resolution	
	Initial sound discrimination	One-to-one correspondence	Self-awareness	
	Listening comprehension	Simple operations		
		Problem solving		
		Learning Approaches		

Table 3. IDELA Caregiver questionnaire

<b>Section</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1. General family information</b>	Sex of child, child age, number of children at home, parental literacy, parental education, languages spoken at home
<b>2. ECCD experience and educational expectations</b>	Child participation in ECCD programs, details of participation, parental expectation and aspirations of child's educational attainment
<b>3. Access to early learning materials and resources at home</b>	Types of reading materials at home, types of toys at home
<b>4. Parenting practices and support for learning and development</b>	Adults in the home engaging with children to promote learning and development
<b>5. Inadequate care</b>	Children left alone or in the care of another young child
<b>6. Caregiver self-efficacy</b>	Attitudes about parent's role in child's development
<b>7. Socioeconomic status</b>	Housing materials, objects/appliances owned, land/animals owned

## **Data collection procedures**

The IDELA items were translated and contextualized by Save the Children's education and MEAL staff and prior during a field test held prior to the actual survey. The field test contributed to not only to strengthen the capacity of the trainers and enumerators but also to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. The data collection process was regularly be monitored by the relevant staff (supervisors) in order to accurate data collection. Enumerators collected data in August and September 2015, and data was entered and cleaned in September and October 2015.

## **Limitations**

Given the cross-sectional nature of the study design, the results of this assessment do not provide causal evidence of the impact of ECCD programming on child development. However, the comparison group contains children living in the same villages as children receiving ECCD services, which is an appropriate available comparison group. Given that there may be bias introduced by the fact that children were already enrolled (or not) into ECCD centers before the study was designed, this report will detail household and family differences between children in the two study groups and all testing of children's skills differences controls for important possible differences between groups (children's age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father's literacy) in order to provide less bias estimates of the skill differences between children with and without access to ECCD services.

## **Study Results**

### **Home environment**

#### **Family characteristics**

Looking at parent and household characteristics between children who are enrolled and not enrolled in ECCD programs, data display a range of household environments in which children are developing. On average, children who are were enrolled in ECCD centers were significantly older than children who were not enrolled. In addition, mothers of children who were enrolled in ECCD were significantly older than mothers of children who were not enrolled in an ECCD program. Interestingly, the only other difference seen between groups was that parents of children enrolled in ECCD programs were significantly more likely to expect their child to complete primary and secondary school compared to parents whose children were not enrolled in ECCD.

Table 4. Family characteristics by intervention

	No ECD	ECD	Significant difference
<b>Child is Female</b>	54%	60%	
<b>Child age</b>	4.9	5.2	*
<b>Mother age</b>	30.9	32.0	*
<b>Mother education</b>	0.4	0.6	
<b>Mother is literate</b>	15%	20%	
<b>Father age</b>	38.0	39.1	
<b>Father education</b>	1.0	1.1	
<b>Father is literate</b>	38%	38%	
<b># children at home</b>	4.6	5.0	
<b>Expects child to complete primary school</b>	89%	100%	**
<b>Expects child to complete secondary school</b>	87%	100%	**
<b># Home possessions (out of 12)</b>	8.0	8.4	

### Home learning environments

Having materials at home to stimulate play and development is an important component of children's early learning environments. Therefore, all parents were asked about the books and toys their children have access to and also the activities they engaged in with their children at home in the past week. Looking at the reading materials and toys that children have access to, analyses find significant differences between children with and without access to ECCD programs. Children enrolled in ECCD centers had significantly more reading materials and toys compared to children not enrolled in ECCD centers. These differences are likely due to the focus SC's ECCD programs have on providing locally sourced play and learning materials in local language for children and families enrolled in their centers.

Table 5. Reading materials and toys available in homes

	No ECD	ECD	Significant difference
Storybook	38%	70%	***
Textbook	57%	79%	**
Magazine	9%	16%	
Religious book	88%	90%	
Coloring book	19%	41%	**
Comic book	7%	22%	*
# type of reading materials	2.2	3.2	***
Homemade	58%	71%	
Store-bought	51%	72%	**
Household objects	69%	76%	
Outside objects	69%	72%	
Drawing	25%	58%	***
Puzzle	8%	25%	*
Hand-eye coordination	13%	34%	**
Shapes	13%	36%	**
Numbers	11%	32%	***
Other	6%	36%	***
# types of toys	3.2	5.1	***

Figure 1. Reading materials in children's homes, by study group

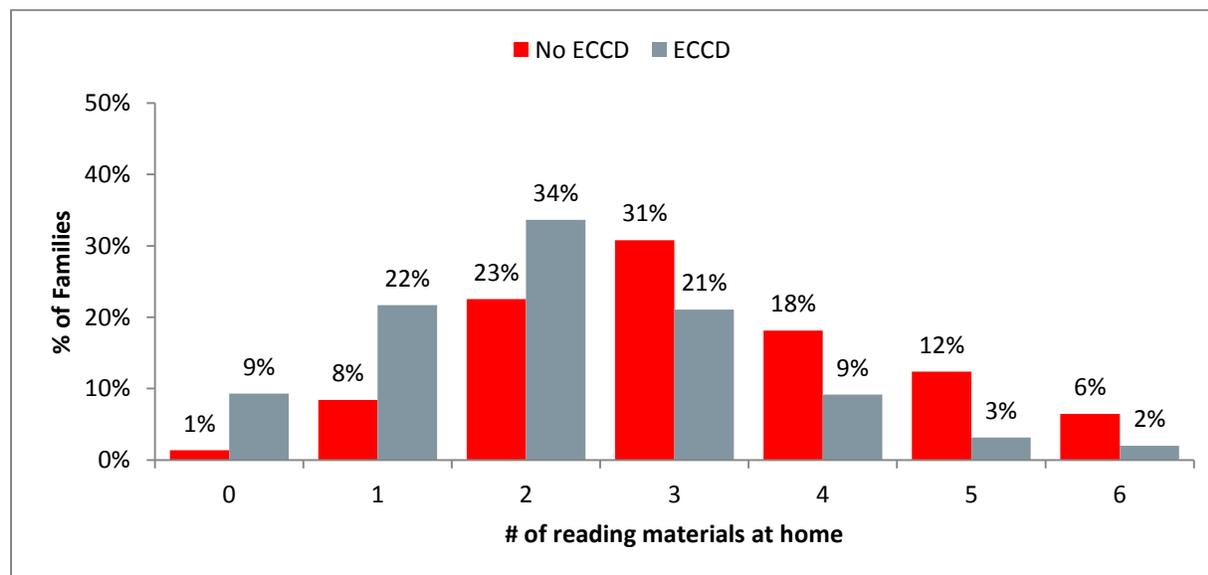
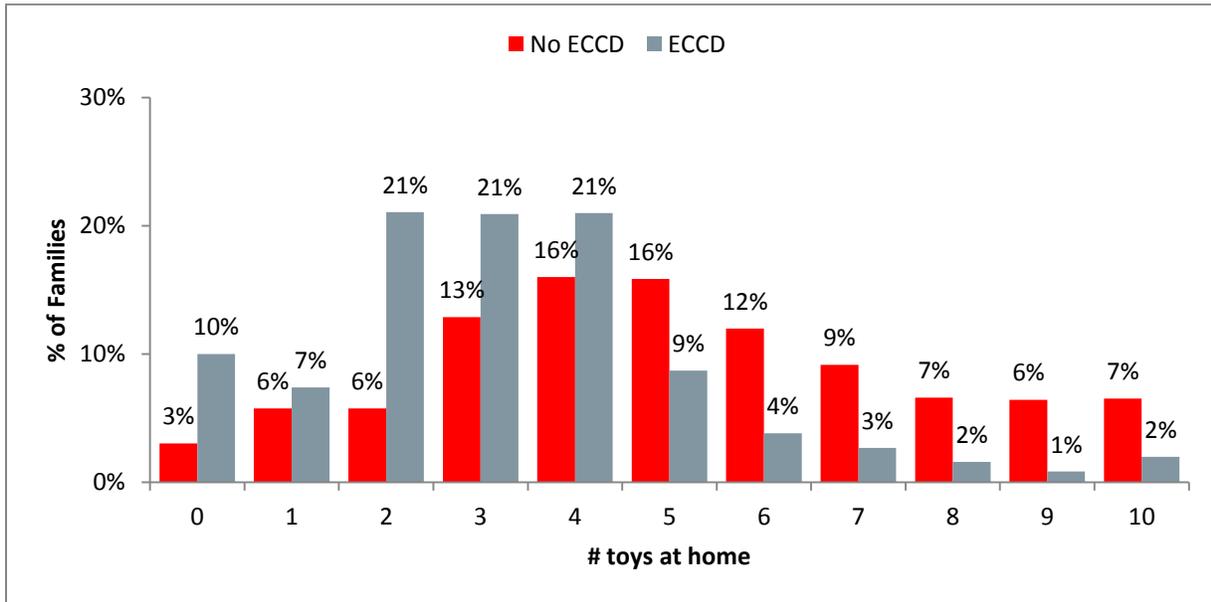


Figure 2. Toys in children’s homes, by study group



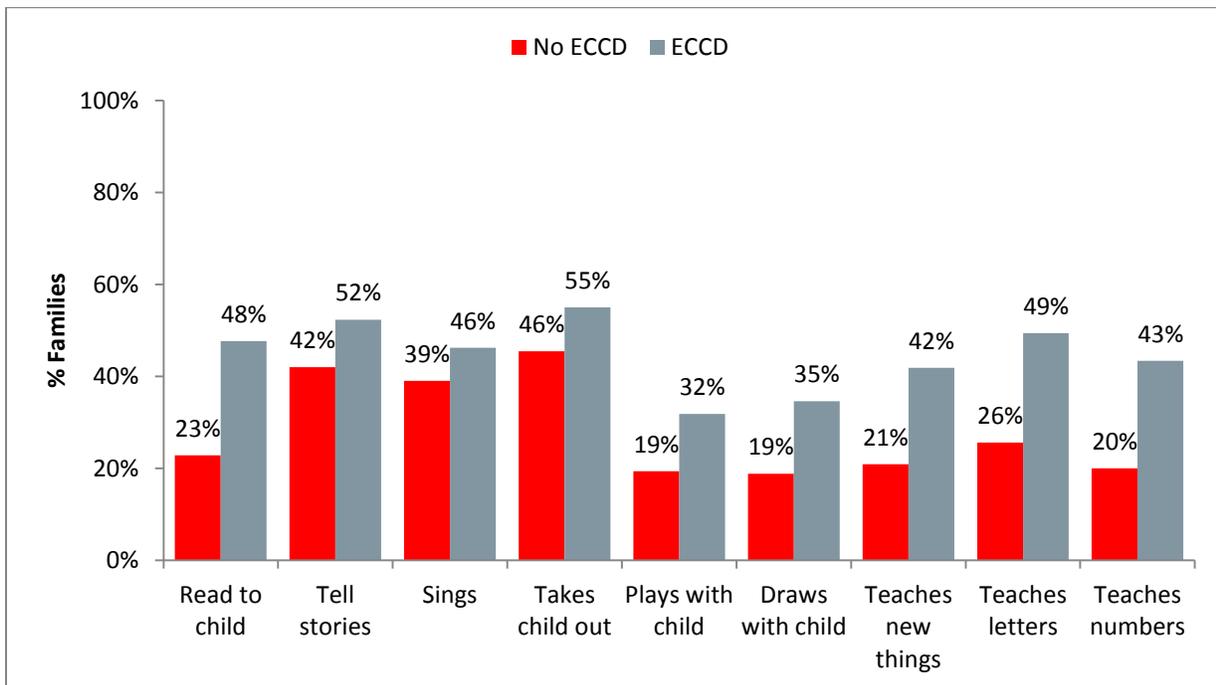
Data collected also find that parents with children in ECCD programs report engaging in significantly more of some learning activities with their children compared to parents whose children are not enrolled in ECCD (reading to children, and teaching new things, letters and numbers). These differences are also likely linked to SC’s parenting education programs that accompany center-based ECCD programs. Parenting sessions typically focus on teaching caregivers about the importance of engaging in learning and play activities with their young children as well as simple techniques for doing so.

When asked who participated in specific activities with children, parents reported that mothers engaged in the most activities with children, followed by other family members and finally fathers. There were also no significant differences between parents in terms the frequency of reported negative discipline behaviors.

Table 6. Home learning activities in the past week, by study group

	No ECD	ECD	Significant difference
Read to child	23%	48%	*
Tell stories	42%	52%	
Sings	39%	46%	
Takes child out	46%	55%	
Plays with child	19%	32%	
Draws with child	19%	35%	
Teaches new things	21%	42%	*
Teaches letters	26%	49%	*
Teaches numbers	20%	43%	*
Total home learning activities (out of 9)	3.1	4.6	
Yells	43%	35%	
Spanks	29%	28%	
Hits	36%	30%	
Total negative discipline (out of 3)	1.08	.93	

Figure 3. Home learning activities, by study group



## Attitudes about parenting

Finally, parents were asked for their attitudes about their roles in their children’s development. The questions were rated on a scale 1-4 (Almost never=1, Almost always=4). In general, parents reported feeling like they were important contributors to their children’s development and there were no differences between the attitudes of parents who were and were not enrolled in an ECCD program.

Table 7. Parenting attitudes by ECCD program type

	No ECCD	ECCD
<b>I play a crucial role in my child’s physical and cognitive development.</b>	2.8	2.9
<b>It is important to take a good care of children at an early age.</b>	2.8	2.9
<b>Even when I am busy with my work, I can make time for my child in order to take care of him/her.</b>	2.7	2.9
<b>Knowing how to read and write is important for my child to have a good/productive life.</b>	2.8	2.9
<b>I will encourage my child to complete at least secondary school</b>	2.7	2.8
<b>I think I can teach my child important school readiness skills at home</b>	2.4	2.6
<b>I think my child can learn a lot of skills by playing games</b>	2.5	2.8
<b>I find ways to talk with or engage my child in games while I am doing my daily work</b>	2.5	2.8
<b>I think praising children whenever he/she tries to do something new is important</b>	2.7	2.9
<b>Total attitudes about parenting (out of 36)</b>	23.8	25.4

## ECCD participation and expectations

Parents of children who were enrolled in ECCD were asked several questions about why and how often they send their children to ECCD centers. On average, a child learning and being prepared for primary school were the two most reported response for why parents send their children to ECCD, and a child being fed was the least common response.

Table 8. Reasons for enrolling in ECCD

	Average
<b>Child gets food</b>	14%
<b>Keeps child busy</b>	54%
<b>Child learns</b>	95%
<b>Child learns to sit and listen</b>	59%
<b>Preparation for primary school</b>	73%
<b>Other children go</b>	28%
<b>Child likes it</b>	30%
<b>Other</b>	6%

Parents were also asked about what they thought their children were learning from ECCD. On average the majority of parents felt that their children were learning language and math skills, as well as hygiene and social skills.

Table 9. Parent report of what children learn in ECCD centers

	<b>Average</b>
<b>Hygiene</b>	70%
<b>Letters</b>	88%
<b>Other literacy skills</b>	74%
<b>Numbers</b>	83%
<b>Other math skills</b>	60%
<b>Social skills</b>	67%
<b>Other</b>	7%
<b>Do not know</b>	2%

Finally, within the group of children attending ECCD, there was a range in the amount of time children had been enrolled and the frequency with which they attended classes. Children ranged from being enrolled in an ECCD program for less than a year to three years, and attending a few times per month to every day. Also, some parents reported that their children attended ECCD programs for one hour per day while others reported as much as 4 hours per day. According to parents, the average child has been enrolled in ECCD for one year, attends 1-2 days per week and two hours per day.

Figure 4. Average years enrolled in an ECCD center

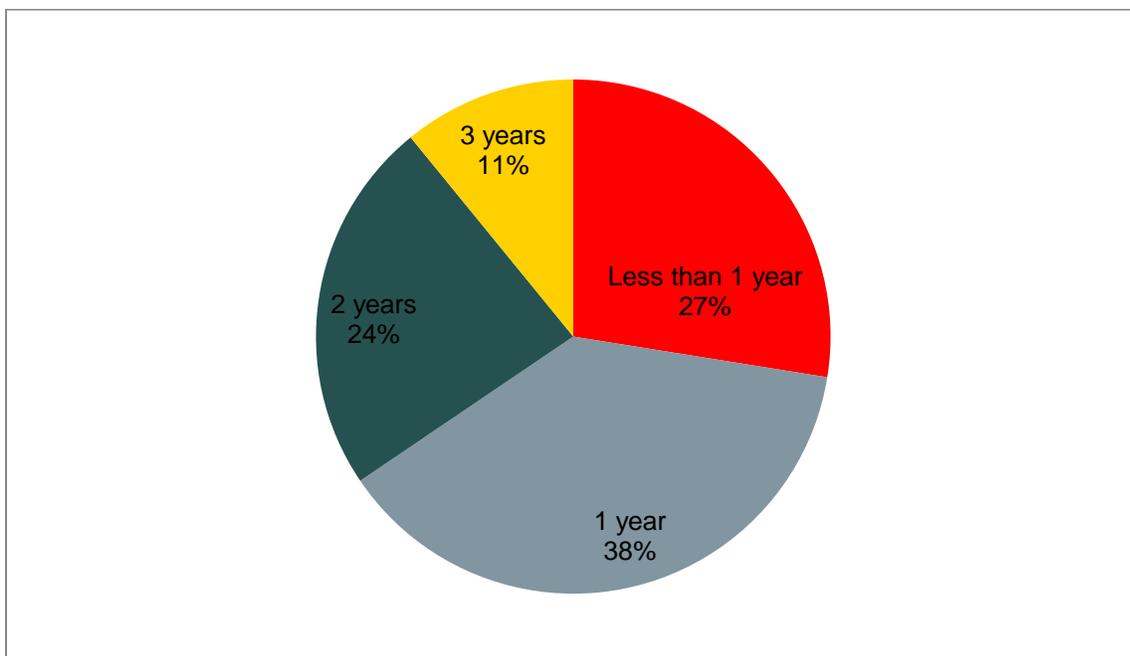


Figure 5. Average attendance at an ECCD center

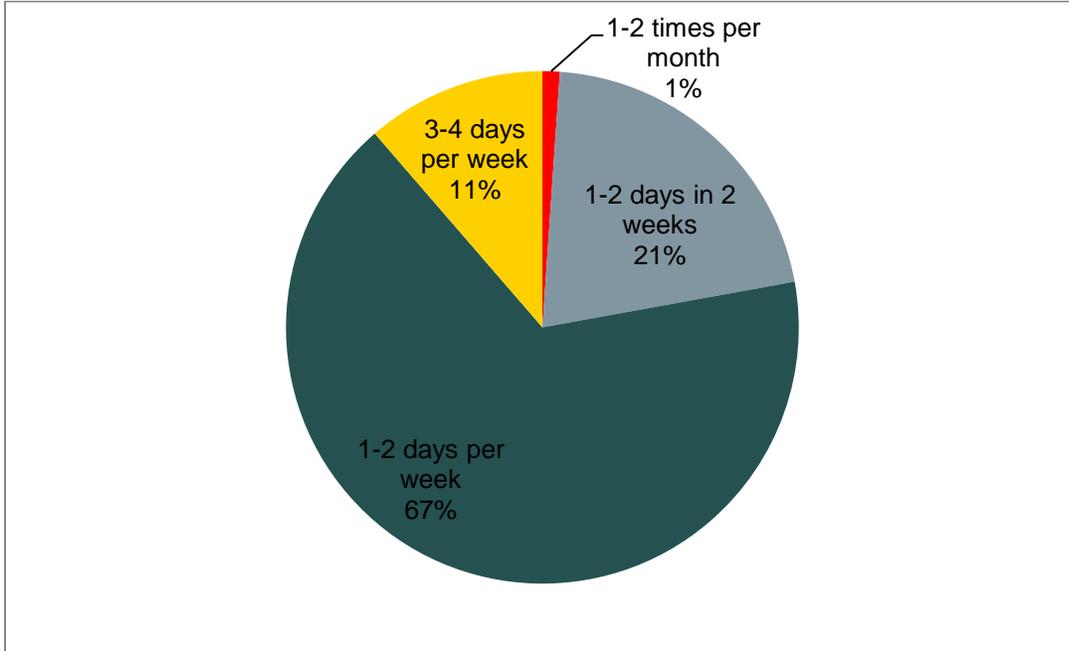
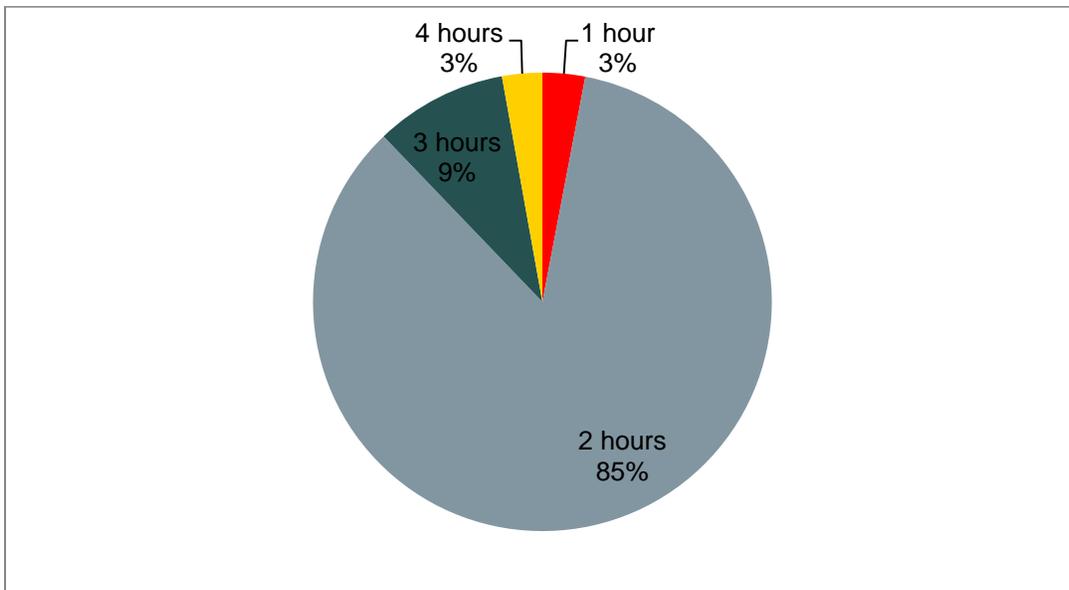


Figure 6. Average hours per day spent at an ECD center



## Child Results

This section describes children’s performance on the direct child assessment, with a focus on differences between the skills of children in the two study groups. Total domain scores are calculated by adding the weighted score of each item in the domain so that all items contribute equally to the domain score. The total IDELA score is calculated by adding the weighted score of each item and dividing by the total number of items so that all items contribute equally to the total score. Due to the difference in administration style between the direct child assessment items and the enumerator reported learning approaches items, the learning approaches items are not included in the total IDELA score. Therefore the analyses presented below display the proportion of IDELA questions answered correctly out of the all possible correct answers. Skill scores presented control for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

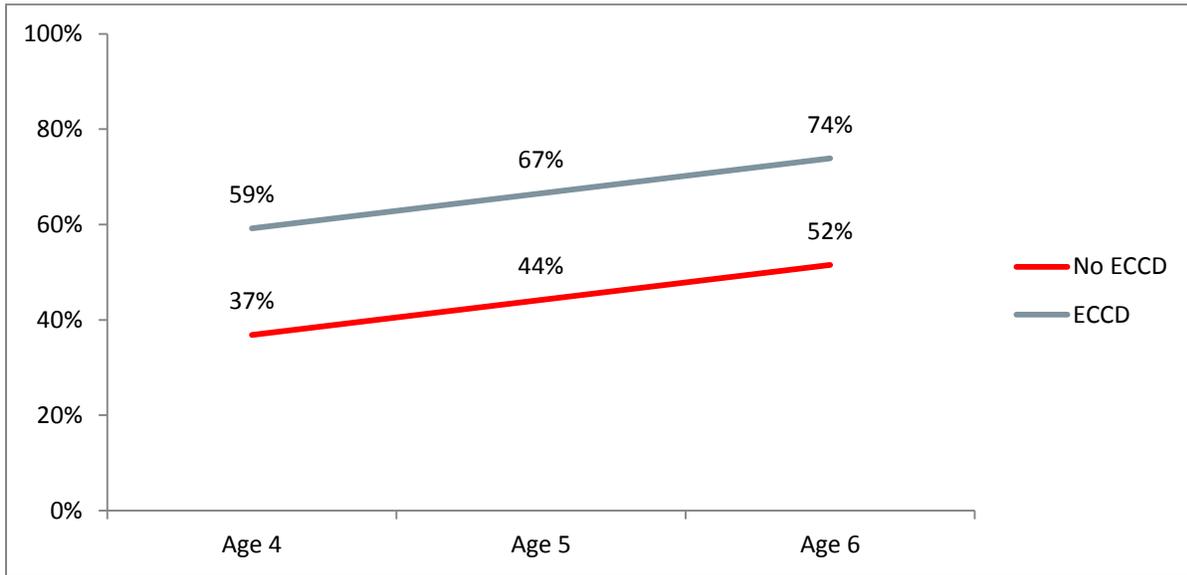
### Motor skills

Looking at children’s motor development skills analyses find that controlling for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy children in ECCD centers have significantly stronger motor development than children who are not in ECD centers. There were no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ motor skills. Overall, children had the strongest scores on the fine motor task of folding paper and the weakest on the fine motor task of copying a shape.

Table 10. IDELA motor skills, by group and gender

	ECD		No ECD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Copy a shape</b>	43%	46%	25%	29%
<b>Draw a person</b>	55%	60%	29%	31%
<b>Fold paper</b>	78%	81%	54%	57%
<b>Hop on 1 foot</b>	70%	72%	50%	53%
<b>Total Motor Score (% Correct)</b>	68%	70%	41%	43%

Figure 7. IDELA motor skills, by study group and age



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

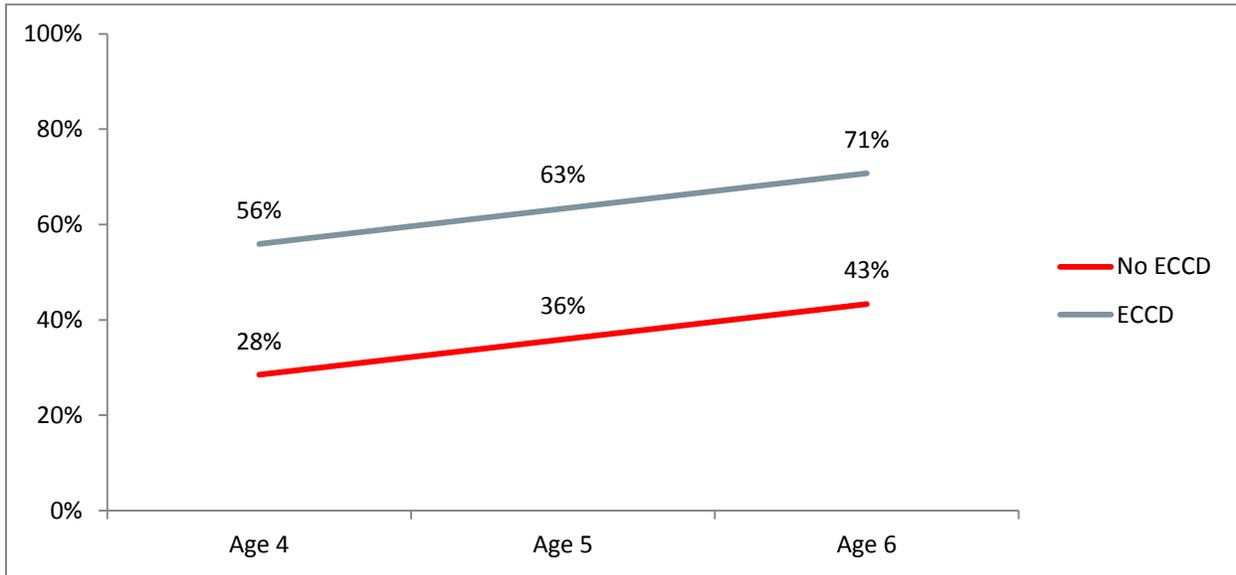
### Emergent Numeracy

Within emergent numeracy skills for children in this study analyses find that on average children in ECCD centers have significantly stronger emergent numeracy skills than children who are not enrolled in ECCD centers. Overall, children had the strongest skills in early measurement and the weakest in number identification. There are no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ skills in this area.

Table 11. IDELA numeracy skills, by study group and gender

	ECCD		No ECCD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Measurement</b>	94%	95%	68%	68%
<b>Sorting</b>	74%	79%	32%	38%
<b>Shape ID</b>	67%	69%	32%	30%
<b>Number ID</b>	29%	36%	8%	10%
<b>One-to-one correspondence</b>	70%	74%	36%	37%
<b>Simple operations</b>	79%	82%	40%	41%
<b>Puzzle completion</b>	34%	40%	14%	15%
<b>Total Emergent Numeracy (% Correct)</b>	64%	68%	41%	43%

Figure 8. IDELA numeracy skills, by study group and age



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

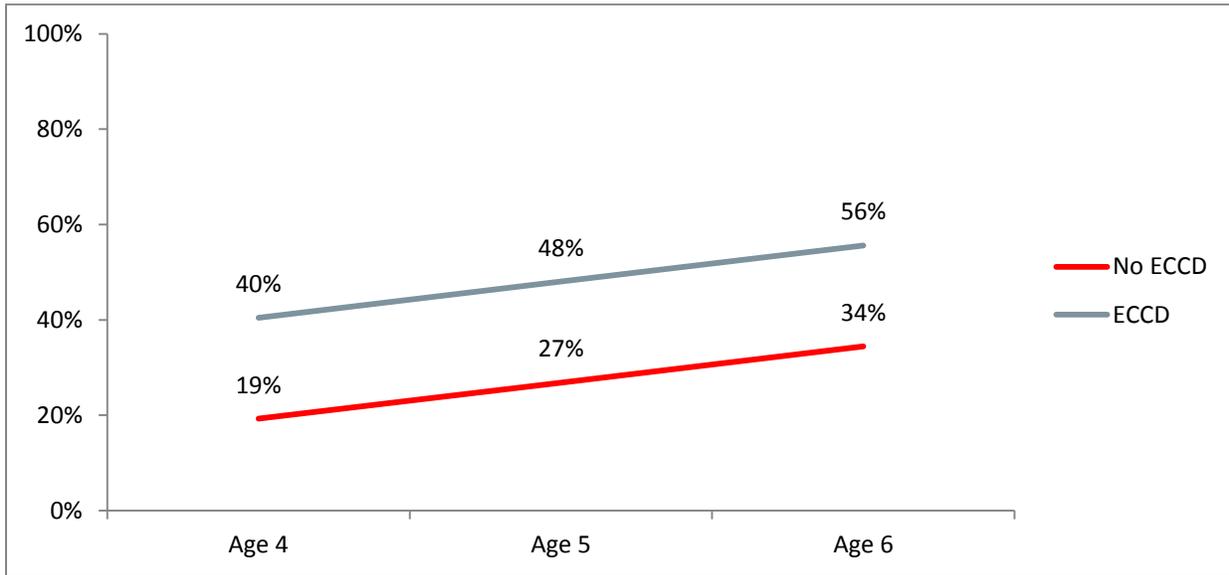
### Emergent Literacy

Within emergent literacy, analyses find that on average children in ECCD centers have significantly stronger emergent literacy skills than children who are not enrolled in ECCD centers. Overall, children had the strongest skills in oral comprehension and the weakest in letter identification. There are no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ skills in this area.

Table 12. IDELA literacy skills, by group and gender

	ECD		No ECD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Expressive vocabulary</b>	44%	43%	30%	29%
<b>Print awareness</b>	69%	71%	34%	32%
<b>Letter ID</b>	32%	38%	9%	11%
<b>Phonemic awareness</b>	40%	42%	11%	10%
<b>Writing</b>	41%	43%	17%	18%
<b>Oral comprehension</b>	74%	76%	44%	45%
<b>Total Emergent Literacy (% Correct)</b>	50%	52%	24%	24%

Figure 9. IDELA literacy skills, by group and age



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

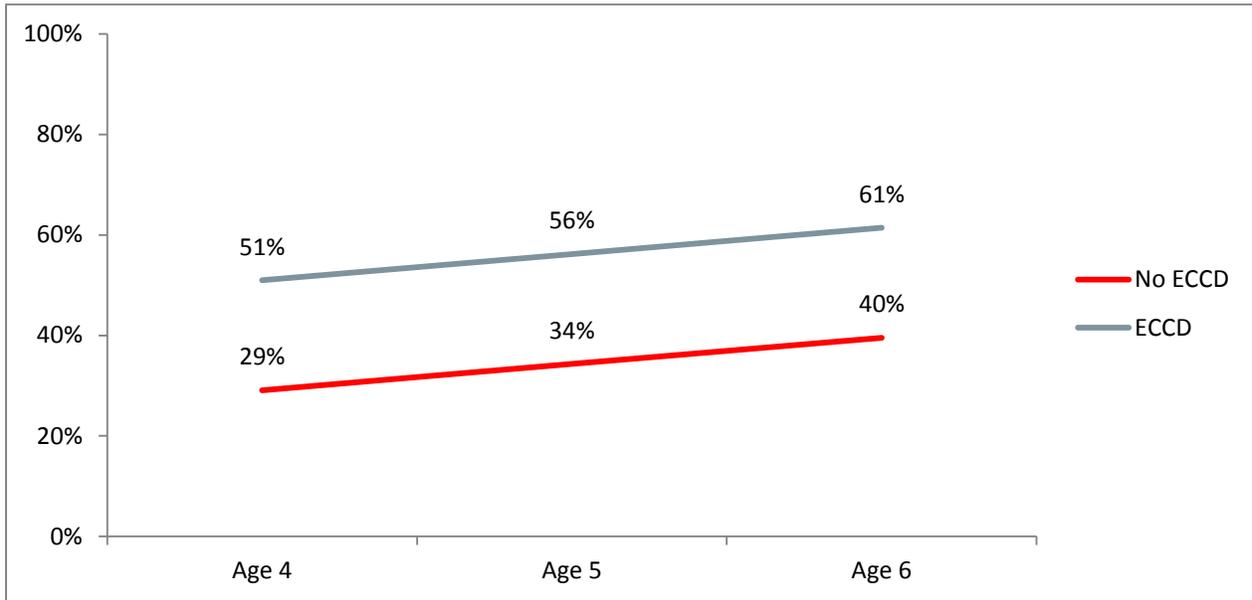
### Socio-emotional development

Looking at socio-emotional development skills for children in this study, analyses find that on average children in ECCD centers have significantly stronger socio-emotional development than children without access to ECCD centers. Overall, children had the strongest skills in self-awareness and the weakest in social connections/peer relationships. There are no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ skills in this area.

Table 13. IDELA socio-emotional skills, by group and gender

	ECCD		No ECCD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Self-awareness</b>	74%	75%	57%	59%
<b>Social connections</b>	38%	38%	27%	26%
<b>Emotional awareness</b>	53%	60%	23%	28%
<b>Empathy</b>	59%	65%	23%	27%
<b>Conflict resolution</b>	61%	61%	23%	28%
<b>Total Socio-emotional (% Correct)</b>	57%	60%	31%	34%

Figure 10. IDELA socio-emotional skills, by group and age



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

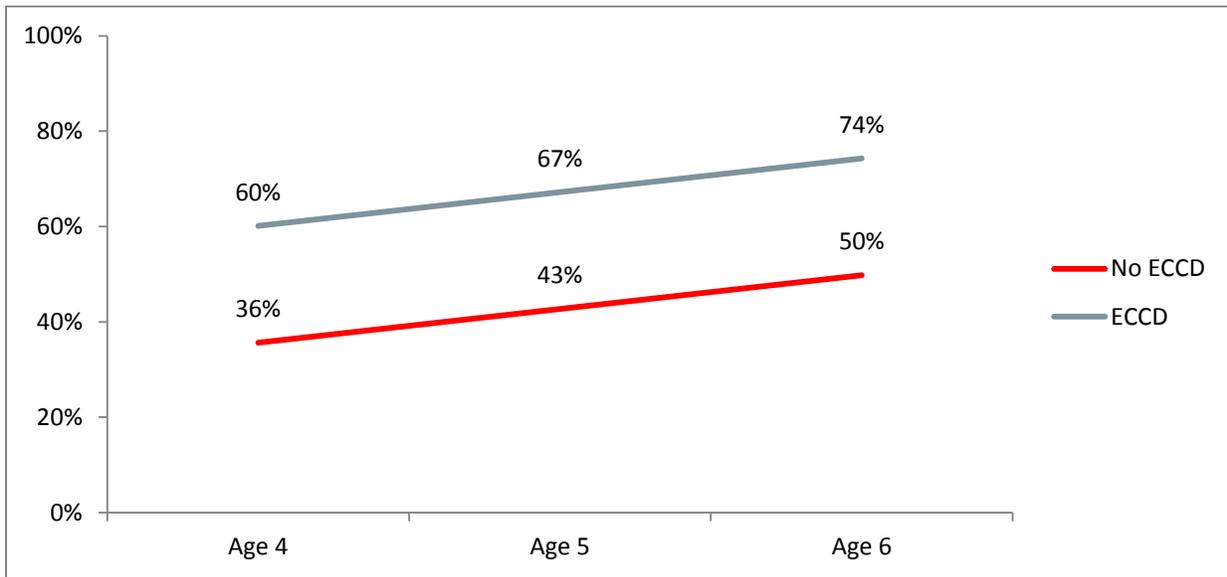
### Executive functioning

In addition to the core domains, the child assessment also included items related to executive functioning. These items focus on how children process information as opposed to learned skills like letter or number identification, and underlie children’s ability to learn new information. Similar to the other domains, children in ECCD centers significantly outperformed children who are not enrolled in ECCD centers and no differences between boys and girls.

Table 14. IDELA executive functioning skills, by group and gender

	ECCD		No ECCD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Short-term memory</b>	64%	66%	42%	42%
<b>Inhibitory Control</b>	72%	74%	37%	43%
<b>Total Executive Function (% Correct)</b>	68%	70%	40%	43%

Figure 11. IDELA executive functioning skills, by group and age



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

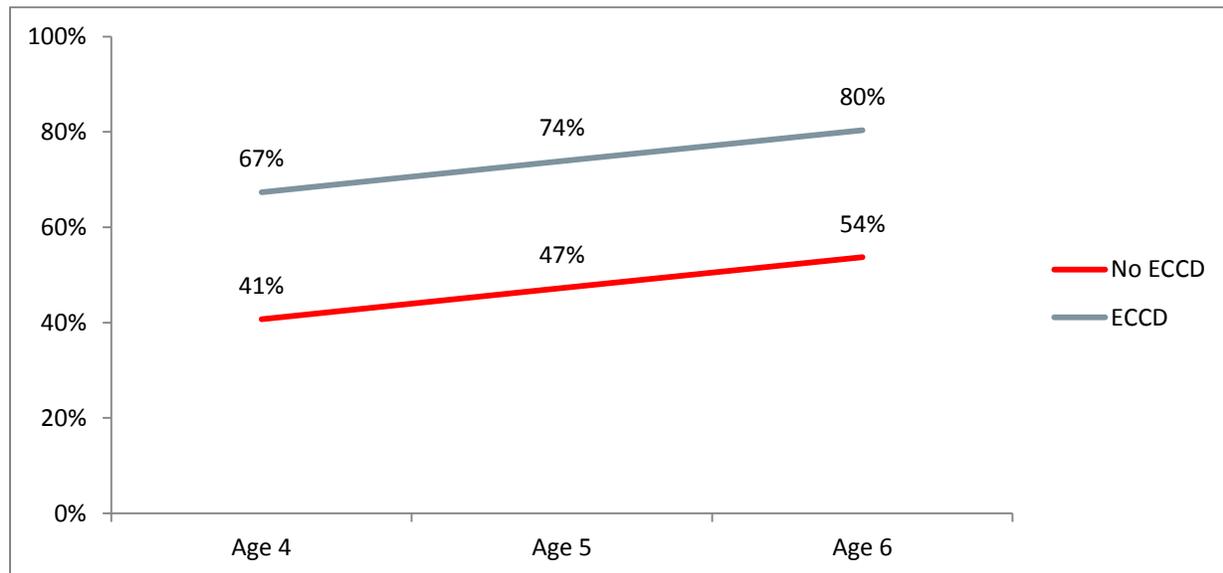
### Approaches to Learning

In order to measure children’s learning approaches (i.e., the way they approach complicated problems) assessors were asked to rate children on a number of dimensions immediately after the assessment was completed (see table x). Children were rated on a scale from 1=Almost never; 4=Almost always. Analyses of children’s learning approaches are in line with findings in other domains with children in ECCD centers have significantly stronger skills than children not in ECCD centers, and there are no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ skills.

Table 15. IDELA Approaches to learning skills, by study group and gender

	ECCD		No ECCD	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
a) Did the child pay attention to the instructions and demonstrations throughout the assessment?	3.3	3.4	2.4	2.5
b) Did child show confidence when completing activities; did not show hesitation.	3.0	3.1	2.2	2.2
c) Did the child stay concentrated and on task during the activities and was not easily distracted?	3.0	3.0	2.1	2.1
d) Was child careful and diligent on tasks? Was child interested in accuracy?	3.2	3.3	2.2	2.2
e) Did child show pleasure in accomplishing specific tasks?	3.2	3.2	2.2	2.3
f) Was child motivated to complete tasks? Did not give up quickly and did not want to stop the task?	2.8	2.9	2.0	2.1
g) Was the child interested and curious about the tasks throughout the assessment?	3.2	3.2	2.2	2.2
<b>Total Approaches to Learning (% Total)</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>

Figure 12. IDELA Approaches to learning skills, by study group and age



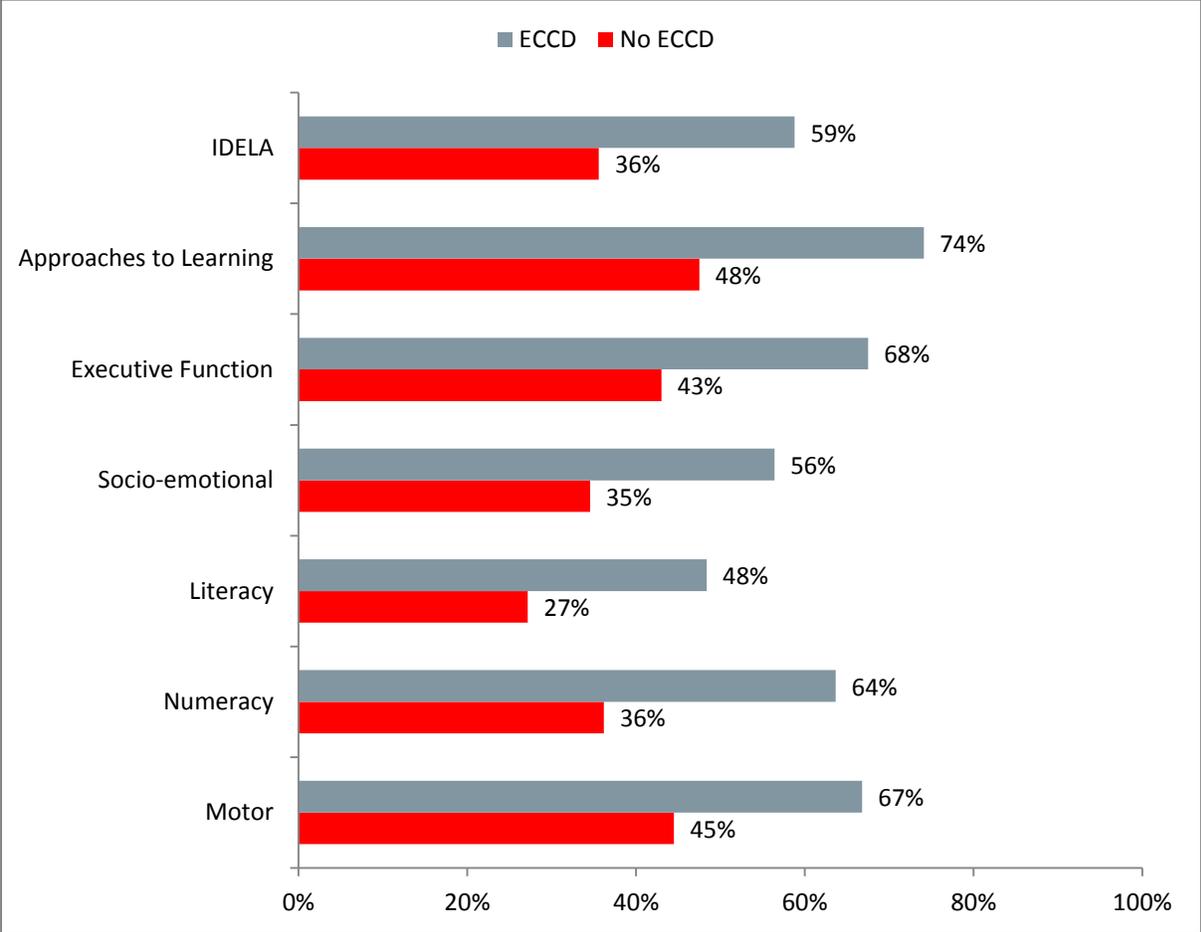
Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

### Total IDELA

To calculate a total IDELA proportion correct for each direct child assessment item was added together and divided by the total number of items. Given that the learning approaches score was obtained

through assessor observation, it is not included in the total IDELA score. As seen in the domain scores, overall, children in ECCD centers had significantly stronger early learning skills compared to children without access to ECCD, controlling for relevant background characteristics. Also, there were no gender differences in children’s baseline skills.

Figure 13. Average total IDELA scores, by study group



Note: Figure controls for children’s age, gender, home learning environment, family possessions, reading materials at home and father’s literacy, and standard errors are clustered by community.

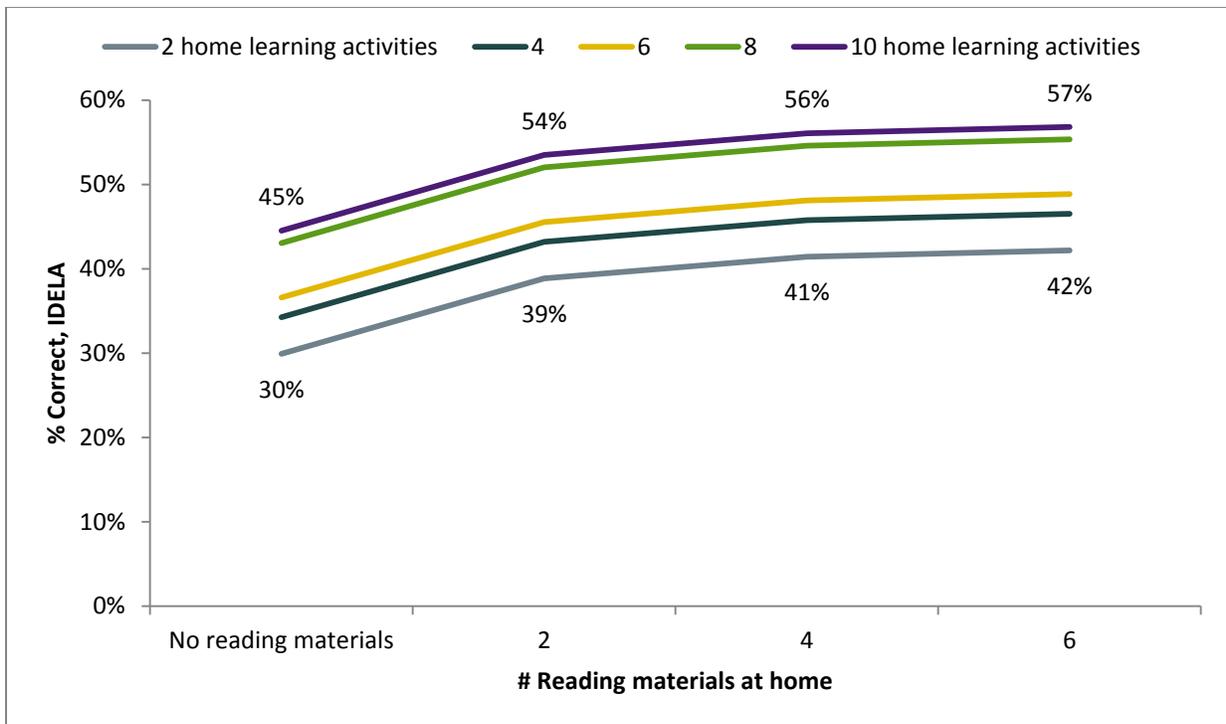
**Connection between home environments and children’s development**

Using both children’s early skills and caregiver questionnaires allows for analysis of the relationships between children’s development and their home environments. When looking at family characteristics that research from the international community has shown to be commonly related to child development, we find similar relationships in communities in Afghanistan. For example, older children and children of parents with more education (especially fathers) tend to have higher IDELA scores.

Similarly, analyses find that children with stronger home learning environments (more learning materials and activities) have stronger skills across IDELA domains (Figure 14).

Also, families with higher income tend to have stronger earlier development scores compared to their peers with fewer financial resources in all domains except emergent numeracy and motor development. Finally, there were no significant differences found between boys' and girls' early skills. Interestingly, there were also no significant relationships between the amount of time parents reported that children were spending in ECCD centers and early learning skills. This suggests that perhaps parents are misreporting the amount of time their children spend attending early learning programs or there are other mediating factors, like the quality of an ECCD center, that are influencing this relationship.

Figure 14. Relationship between home learning environment and children's skills



## Conclusions

ECCD programming clearly makes a difference in the lives of children, showing stronger pre-primary skills. Save the Children Afghanistan team had hoped to understand if programming two days versus five days a week made a difference in skill development for ECCD children, as well as the difference of one, two or three year program. Certainly the next research study will look more deeply into this as a way to suggest to stakeholders interested in expanding ECCD within Afghanistan. While this is the very first research of its type in Afghanistan, it shows that early stimulation experiences in pre-schools that are meant as a preparation for primary school, rather than a primary program for younger children. Next steps would include understanding the current landscape of ECCD programming occurring in Afghanistan (this research is currently underway within Save the Children), researching and understanding the most cost effective model for children such as number of days and numbers of years enrolled in an ECCD program, conducting chronological research to understand the long term effects of ECCD on children in class 2, 4 and 6, and to work with the Ministry of Education to assist operationalize the ECCD/preschool policy, sharing and reviewing the ECCD training manual, and researching more fully the effects of parenting classes as part of the Save the Children ECCD programming package.

## Appendix A

Table A1. Multivariate regression with equity factors, all children

VARIABLES	(1) Motor	(2) Literacy	(3) Numeracy	(4) Socio- emotional	(5) Total IDELA	(6) Executive Function	(7) Learning approach
Child attends ECCD	0.223*** (0.0297)	0.212*** (0.0250)	0.274*** (0.0277)	0.218*** (0.0236)	0.232*** (0.0243)	0.245*** (0.0254)	0.266*** (0.0268)
Child age	0.0734*** (0.00794)	0.0758*** (0.00723)	0.0743*** (0.00635)	0.0522*** (0.00720)	0.0689*** (0.00588)	0.0708*** (0.0115)	0.0649*** (0.00747)
Child is female	0.0165 (0.0103)	0.00115 (0.0124)	0.0217 (0.0126)	0.0227 (0.0178)	0.0155 (0.0122)	0.0225 (0.0198)	0.0164 (0.0197)
# home learning activities	0.00230 (0.00311)	0.00939*** (0.00233)	0.00710* (0.00315)	0.00773* (0.00332)	0.00663* (0.00267)	0.00322 (0.00364)	0.00923** (0.00339)
# home possessions	0.00684 (0.00402)	0.0100* (0.00401)	0.00528 (0.00365)	0.0104* (0.00423)	0.00813* (0.00329)	0.0124* (0.00527)	0.00840* (0.00373)
# reading materials at home	0.0214** (0.00654)	0.0190*** (0.00529)	0.0166** (0.00620)	0.0127* (0.00503)	0.0174** (0.00548)	0.00726 (0.00463)	0.0162* (0.00628)
Father is literate	0.0417*** (0.0116)	0.0324** (0.0109)	0.0436*** (0.0106)	0.0242* (0.0106)	0.0355*** (0.00937)	0.0221 (0.0117)	0.0304* (0.0123)
Constant	-0.0726 (0.0561)	-0.293*** (0.0660)	-0.156** (0.0572)	-0.0889 (0.0697)	-0.153** (0.0547)	-0.0814 (0.0875)	-0.0208 (0.0687)
Observations	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612	2,612
R-squared	0.346	0.415	0.465	0.319	0.467	0.303	0.409
Adjusted R-squared	0.344	0.414	0.464	0.318	0.466	0.301	0.408

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05

## Appendix B

Table B1. Internal consistency of IDELA in Afghanistan

Internal consistency	Alpha
Motor	0.91
Numeracy	0.92
Literacy	0.90
Socio-emotional	0.89
Executive function	0.87
Learning Approach	0.92
IDELA	0.97