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Heartland Head Start Program Evaluation

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Poster Presentation P55

HEARTLAND HEAD START PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Head Start is a federally funded preschool program for low-income families that nurtures the children academically, socially and nutritionally. In the past couple of years recent literature and the federal government have begun attacking Head Start arguing that the children in Head Start do not make enough progress in academic areas. The local chapter of this program is called Heartland Head Start, and is in charge of 13 preschool classrooms in the area. The federal government mandates that the children are tested three times per year on multiple indicators to view their progress. This data is then sent to the Heartland Head Start office where it is cataloged. In collaboration with Heartland Head Start, this study evaluated their program using the data they received from the Head Start classrooms in 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and the fall of 2004. The data was used to evaluate the academic progress of the children between the different years and within the 2003-2004 year. This study also determined the effect of the children's native language and the children's age on the children's progress in the 2003-2004 year. This study has found academic areas where the children excel and other areas that are still problematic for the children.