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**Study Shows Early Childhood Education Program Enables Children to Expand Key School Readiness Skills at Accelerated Rate**  
*Program participants strongly positioned for long-term academic success*

**DENVER – April 6, 2009** – Independent testing results released today reveal that a unique early education program called FasTracKids enables preschool-aged children to significantly increase their vocabulary and social skills **100 to 150 percent faster** than their peer group with **only two hours of instruction a week**. Furthermore, the test showed that kindergarten-aged children improved **more than one grade level**, and for some children, the improvement was **as much as two grade levels**.

Also significant within the study findings is that FasTracKids' curriculum enabled all students – those who started at below-average, average and above-average levels – to demonstrate significant improvement in only six months. This includes children for whom English is a second language.

“Educators have known for decades that critical language and literacy development occurs during the formative years even prior to first grade, and research shows a strong correlation between the learning skills with which children enter school and their academic success throughout life,” said Dr. Georgia Hall, study director of Wellesley College’s National Institute on Out-of-School Time, the organization that conducted the study. “Findings of this study illustrate the important link between FasTracKids’ curriculum and children’s performances in vocabulary and social skills, and the results suggest that the program’s innovative approach works.”

The in-depth, independent National Institute on Out-of-School Time study assessed 110 children at seven FasTracKids sites in the U.S. These sites represented a mix of demographics as well as socio-economic factors, including family incomes ranging from \$20,000 to more than \$200,000. The study was also conducted at five of FasTracKids’ international sites in Russia, China, Egypt, Venezuela and Mexico. 300 children were assessed, with findings similar to the U.S.

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Testing participants ranging in ages of 3 to 6 years old were given the tests in the fall of 2007 and then re-tested in the spring of 2008. Each of the tests is designed to measure the change within a child, taking into account the natural growth and development that occurs during a six-month timeframe. Receptive and expressive vocabulary skills were tested, and results are based on standardized U.S. test assessments. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test was administered to children at the U.S. and international sites. The Expressive Vocabulary Test was administered to U.S. children only. The results were age-normed.

In its report, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time states: “Studying the impacts of participation in (FasTracKids) program sites related to (vocabulary and social) skills contributes to a deeper and fuller understanding of how enrichment activities such as (FasTracKids) can promote positive development of learning and social skills outcomes for children.” Notable is that the FasTracKids curriculum is an effective approach to learning for children of all education levels and backgrounds.

“The primary goal of this research project was to conduct an outcomes-based study that measured the improvement in children’s vocabulary scores and social skills scores through their participation in FasTracKids,” says Nancy Faunce, CEO of FasTracKids International. “These areas were chosen because research shows that basic skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication are prerequisites to learning success for young children.”

Social skills also were measured via parent and teacher assessment with results of improvement among children in their levels of cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. Students responded positively to the FasTracKids program, with some children going from a below-average level to average, or from an average level to above average.

FasTracKids classrooms feature interactive whiteboards and CD-ROM-based lessons in 12 subject areas that include astronomy, economics, mathematics and natural sciences. Creative components enhance the curriculum while helping children develop self-confidence, problem-solving skills and concentration.

“This study backs up what parents and teachers around the world have been telling us for years: FasTracKids changes kids’ lives dramatically in ways that other programs have not,” says Faunce. “We continually hear how children participating in the program learn to creatively solve problems, master challenges and demonstrate leadership behaviors within the classroom, at home and on the playground. All of these skills are invaluable throughout one’s life.”

FasTracKids, named by *Entrepreneur* magazine as a Top 500 franchise, has more than 200 locations in over 50 countries.

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#### About FasTracKids International

For more information, visit [fastrackids.com](http://fastrackids.com).

#### The Home-School Study of Language and Literacy

Begun in 1987, children ages 3 to 5 (preschool to kindergarten) were evaluated with follow-up home visits conducted at ages 7, 9 and 12 years, and school visits up to the sophomore level. The study concluded that the early years are critical to achieve learning success through life. A reciprocal relationship between language development and early literacy was established; children acquired important early literacy skills beginning at birth, and success in school (starting with first grade) is largely dependent on how much children have learned by the time they begin formal studies. Also, it was noted that language and literacy development occurred over time and was the result of many cumulative experiences in and outside the home.