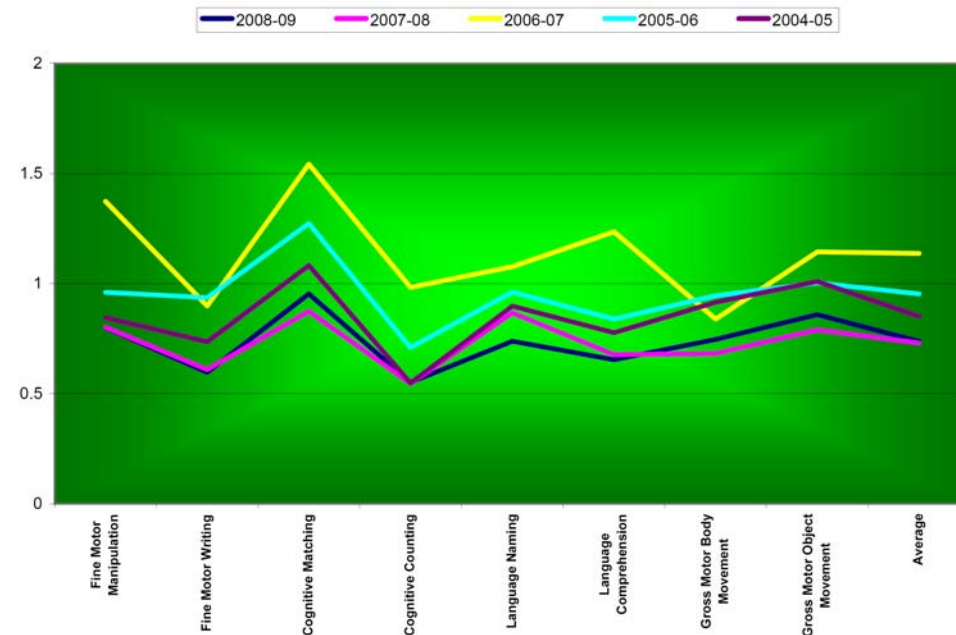


## At Sequatchie Valley Head Start Children Significantly Out-Perform The National Averages

“Typically, children from our five-county region come to us with abilities that, in aggregate, are significantly below the national norms. We have been thrilled, over the course of many years, to see dramatic improvements, well above the national norms. In fact, our outcomes tracking has demonstrated that – for at least five years running – our children have significantly outperformed typical pre-school children from across America. The chart at right documents their extraordinary progress over each of those years, in each of the eight domains that form the fundamental assessment tool we use to track outcomes. The zero line across the bottom of the graph indicates the national norm for improvement — that is, how much progress we would expect a typical American pre-schooler to make over the course of the year. The five graph traces (2004 through 2009) show the improvement made by our children above and beyond the national norms. Remarkably, in every one of the eight domains of learning measured by this instrument, our children (as a group) significantly exceeded the national norms. Of particular interest is the average improvement across all domains (indicated as the “average” at the right-hand side of the graph). Each year, the improvement exceeded the national norms by three-quarters of a standard deviation to more than one standard deviation. In rough terms, our children made more progress than two-thirds of the pre-schoolers in America. This, despite the fact that (again as a group) the children began their year half a standard deviation below the national norms.

“Of further interest are the results of a statistical process control analysis done on the more than 50,000 individual assessments represented by the chart. The analysis demonstrated that — despite the statistically natural variation in results from year to year — the process that produced the results is under control. In layman’s terms, the data indicate that we know enough about what we’re doing to be able to repeat the process reliably, year after year. Such analysis gives us confidence that

Average Progress by Domain - 2004-09  
Measured in Standard Deviations Above the National Norms (Z-Scores)



children in our program will be able to make similar progress in the years to come.

“We have also been gratified (but in a different way) that, in recent years, elementary school teachers report that they look forward to having our Head Start children in their classes because they were (usually) well-behaved, enthusiastic, and able to work attentively.

“While not every child enrolled in our program will enter public school with every skill described in our educational performance measures, our typically developing children will all have the capacity to do well in school. Furthermore, most of those who are not typically developing will be able to continue the work they began at Head Start with a confidence born in an educational environment that nurtures all children in a developmentally appropriate, rich learning environment, an environment staffed with well-trained adults who love young children.”