

Sample Survey Letter Sent to Residents



TOWN OF MANSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
FOUR SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
MANSFIELD, CT 06268-2599
Tel: (860) 429-3315
Fax: (860) 429-7785
E-Mail: SocServ@mansfieldct.org

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Dear Resident:

The Social Services Office in the Town of Mansfield is conducting a survey of Mansfield residents on Kindergarten programs in the public schools. Your household has been randomly selected to participate in this survey.

This is an important survey that the town will use in planning for Kindergarten programs, and we need you to help out and complete the survey.

A few important points that you should know:

- This survey should be filled out by someone in the household who is at least 21 years old and is one of the heads of the household.
- The household does NOT need to have children to be eligible – we ask that every Mansfield home that receives this survey complete it and return it.
- The responses to the survey will be anonymous. There will be no way to identify how any individual responded to the questions.

Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions. Place your completed survey in the enclosed envelope. Postage on the return envelope is already paid.

We value the opinions Mansfield residents, and thank you in advance for your participation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at 429-3314.

Sincerely,

Kevin Grunwald, MSW
Director of Social Services, Town of Mansfield

Survey Results

For each question, please circle the number to the left of the category that best represents your answer.

1. Overall, how familiar would you say that you are with the kindergarten program in the Mansfield public school system?

1.	Very familiar	21%
2.	Somewhat familiar	24%
3.	Not too familiar	15%
4.	Not at all familiar	39%

2. Currently, the Mansfield schools has a half day kindergarten program, where children attend school on weekdays for two hours and 45 minutes per day (either in the morning or in the afternoon).

A proposal is being considered to change Mansfield's half day kindergarten program to a full day program, where children would attend a full six-hour school day, similar to the length of the day for grades 1 through 4.

Would you support or oppose changing the kindergarten program in the Mansfield public schools from half day to full day?

		All	Kids	NoKids
1.	Support strongly	34%	44%	26%
2.	Support somewhat	19%	16%	21%
3.	Oppose somewhat	12%	12%	12%
4.	Oppose strongly	23%	19%	27%
5.	I'm not sure	12%	9%	14%

3. The following are some arguments that have been made in support of extending the kindergarten program from half day to full day. For each, please indicate whether you agree or disagree.

- a. Kindergarten should be extended because it will improve the child's preparedness for first grade.

1.	Agree	46%
2.	Disagree	33%
3.	I'm not sure	21%

- b. Kindergarten should be extended because it will provide more time during the day for children to learn at a more relaxed pace.

1.	Agree	48%
2.	Disagree	34%
3.	I'm not sure	17%

c. Kindergarten should be extended because it will give teachers more time to get to know and work with students.

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 53% |
| 2. | Disagree | 32% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 15% |

d. Kindergarten should be extended because it will be more supportive of parents who work during the day.

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 57% |
| 2. | Disagree | 32% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 11% |

e. Kindergarten should be extended because many children now are shuffled from day care to Kindergarten and a full day program will reduce these transitions.

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|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 59% |
| 2. | Disagree | 26% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 15% |

4. The following are some arguments that have been made to keep the Mansfield kindergarten program as a half day program. For each, please indicate whether you agree or disagree.

a. Kindergarten should not be extended because it will increase the costs of maintaining the public schools and cause property taxes to rise.

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|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 36% |
| 2. | Disagree | 41% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 23% |

b. Kindergarten should not be extended because it will require 5 year old children to be away from home for too long a period of time.

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 39% |
| 2. | Disagree | 41% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 14% |

c. Kindergarten should not be extended because it will reduce the amount of time that children have to spend with their family.

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 34% |
| 2. | Disagree | 52% |
| 3. | I'm Not sure | 14% |

d. Kindergarten should not be extended because it will place too much stress on children.

- | | | |
|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 33% |
| 2. | Disagree | 48% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 19% |

e. Kindergarten should not be extended because this change is more aimed at providing daycare for kindergarteners than at enhancing the quality of education.

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|----|--------------|-----|
| 1. | Agree | 40% |
| 2. | Disagree | 43% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 17% |

5. If the kindergarten program is changed from half day to full day, do you think that:

- | | | |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | The curriculum should include additional material to make use of the added time | (51%) |
| 2. | The curriculum should include the same amount of material, but be taught at a slower, more relaxed pace. | (49%) |

6. If a full day kindergarten program is offered, do you think that parents/guardians should or should not have the option of placing their children in a half day program?

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 1. | Should have the option of half day | 67% |
| 2. | Should not have the option of half day | 18% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 14% |

7. If you had to choose between Mansfield public schools offering a half day kindergarten program or a full day kindergarten program, which would you choose?

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----|
| 1. | Half Day kindergarten program | 36% |
| 2. | Full Day kindergarten program | 46% |
| 3. | I'm not sure | 18% |

8. Moving from a half day to a full day kindergarten program will require increased financial support for the public schools. It is estimated that local property taxes will need to increase by about 1.5% to fund a full day program. Would you support or oppose adopting the full day kindergarten program if that meant a 1.5% increase in your property taxes?

	All	Kids	No Kids
1. Support strongly	23%	33%	22%
2. Support somewhat	23%	24%	22%
3. Oppose somewhat	13%	12%	14%
4. Oppose strongly	32%	27%	36%
5. I'm not sure	6%	6%	6%

Now just a few more questions so we can classify your answers.

1. Do you currently have any children living in your household? If so, indicate the grade(s) the children are in:

1. Pre-school	7%
2. Elementary school (grades K-4)	8%
3. Middle school (grades 5 through 8)	5%
4. High school (grades 9 through 12)	11%
5. post-High school	12%
6. None	57%

2. Including children, how many people live in your household?

- 1. 16%
- 2. 39%
- 3. 18%
- 4. 18%
- 5. 5%
- 6. 4%

4. Do you own or rent your home?

- 1. own 98%
- 2. Rent 2%

5. In what year were you born?

Under 45 years old	23%
45 to 64 years old	36%
65 or older	31%

5. For how many years have you lived in Mansfield?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 1. less than 1 year | 1% |
| 2. 1 to 3 years | 8% |
| 3. 3 to 5 years | 6% |
| 4. 5 to 10 years | 13% |
| 5. 10 to 20 years | 19% |
| 6. more than 20 years | 53% |

6. How many children living in your household are currently in a full-day (6 hours or more) pre-school day care program? 3% have at least 1

7. How many children living in your household are currently in a partial day (less than 6 hours) pre-school day care program? 3% have 1

If you have any additional comments, please feel free to record them in the space below:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME. PLEASE PLACE THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE AND DROP IT IN THE MAIL.