{audio}files/preroll.mp3;files/Shows/2011/092611_SGR_Exclusive_Ponder.mp3{/audio}

Karen Ponder, one of the state's pioneers in the Smart Start early education program tells host Barlow Herget that we know much more about the development of children's brains than 30 years ago. Such tools as brain scans document the importance of brain growth in children's first five years, and Ponder says that of the 636,000 pre-K children in the state, 350,000 live in poverty and are high risk, the very type of child who benefits greatly from programs such as Smart Start, Head Start and More at Four. She says study after study shows that these pre-K programs work.