



# OmniTrak Group Inc.

*The Research-Based Marketing Professionals in the Pacific Rim*

## A STUDY ON PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD HAWAI'I PRE-SCHOOL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### I. OBJECTIVES

The Good Beginnings Alliance, a non-profit, non-governmental organization whose members include groups involved with early childhood education, contracted OmniTrak Group Inc. to conduct a study among Oahu residents:

- To gauge public awareness and understanding of a universal pre-school education.
- To benchmark attitudes toward the issue.
- To gain other insights to facilitate development of a strategic communications program.

### II. METHODOLOGY

OmniTrak Group Inc. conducted a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) using random digit dialing (RDD). The sample size is 400, with a sampling error of +/-5.0 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. The data was collected between May 5 and May 14, 2004.

Respondents were screened to ensure they were:

- Adult resident of O'ahu for at least six months.
- No one in the household employed by a market research company, advertising, or public relations agency.

### III. FINDING HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Current penetration rate** of pre-school among Hawai'i households with children in grades K-12 is 61%. *High expense* is identified as the main reason that prevents parents sending their children to formal pre-school.
2. A majority of residents understand that Hawai'i has a **limited supply** of preschools:
  - More than half (52%) think pre-schools in Hawai'i are *insufficient* to serve the need.
  - Nearly 3 in 5 (59%) agree pre-schools are *unaffordable* to most Hawai'i families.
3. **Awareness of pre-school benefits** is high among residents:
  - Top of mind main benefits are social benefits, and academic benefits.
  - On an aided basis, an overwhelming majority agree that pre-school has positive academic and workforce impacts:
    - 83% think pre-school increases academic achievement.
    - 79% agree employees sometimes experience absences due to difficulty in locating reliable child care.
    - 60% disagree that pre-schools are mostly a form of baby-sitting.
4. The public's **strong commitment** to universal pre-school education is demonstrated as:
  - A majority (60%) *support making a universal pre-school education a priority* on the government's agenda now.
  - An overwhelming majority (78%) *favor a State subsidized pre-school* based on income levels.
  - A majority (60%) *favor tax increases* to fund a universal pre-school education.
  - A dominant majority (76%) perceive it extremely important for the State to increase funding for pre-school.
  - More than half (53%) agree lower income families can get financial help for their children to attend pre-schools.