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# Child Outcomes in an Urban Early Reading First Program: Results of a 3-Year Program Evaluation

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# Abstract

The goal of Early Reading First is to foster early language and literacy skills that are the foundation for learning to read. This presentation describes our 3-year evaluation of an urban ERF project and offers evidence of children's progress.

Among results, the percentage of children with language delays decreased substantially in all three years of implementation. Despite risks associated with poverty, a majority of children showed gains greater than one would expect on age-referenced assessments

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# Participant Characteristics

- 303 preschool children – 49% girls, 51% boys
  - Ethnicity
    - 76% African American
    - 13% Hispanic/Latino
    - 5% European American
    - 6% Multiple or other ethnicities
  - Home language
    - 83% English only
    - 4% Spanish only
    - 13% Bilingual English/Spanish
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# Participant Characteristics

## ■ Parent education

- 10% No diploma or GED
- 34% High school diploma or GED
- 46% Some education after high school
- 11% College degree

## ■ How often someone read to the child at home during the preceding week (based on parent report at pre-test)

- 5% Not at all
  - 32% Once or twice
  - 36% 3 or more times, but not every day
  - 26% Every day
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# Measures

## ■ Early literacy environment

- ELLCO: Early Literacy Environment Checklist

## ■ Children's early literacy skills

- DIBELS: Letter naming fluency
- Get It, Got It, Go (GGG): Fluency in picture naming, alliteration, and rhyming

## ■ Children's language

- PPVT-III: Receptive language
  - EVT: Expressive language
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# Measurement Timeline

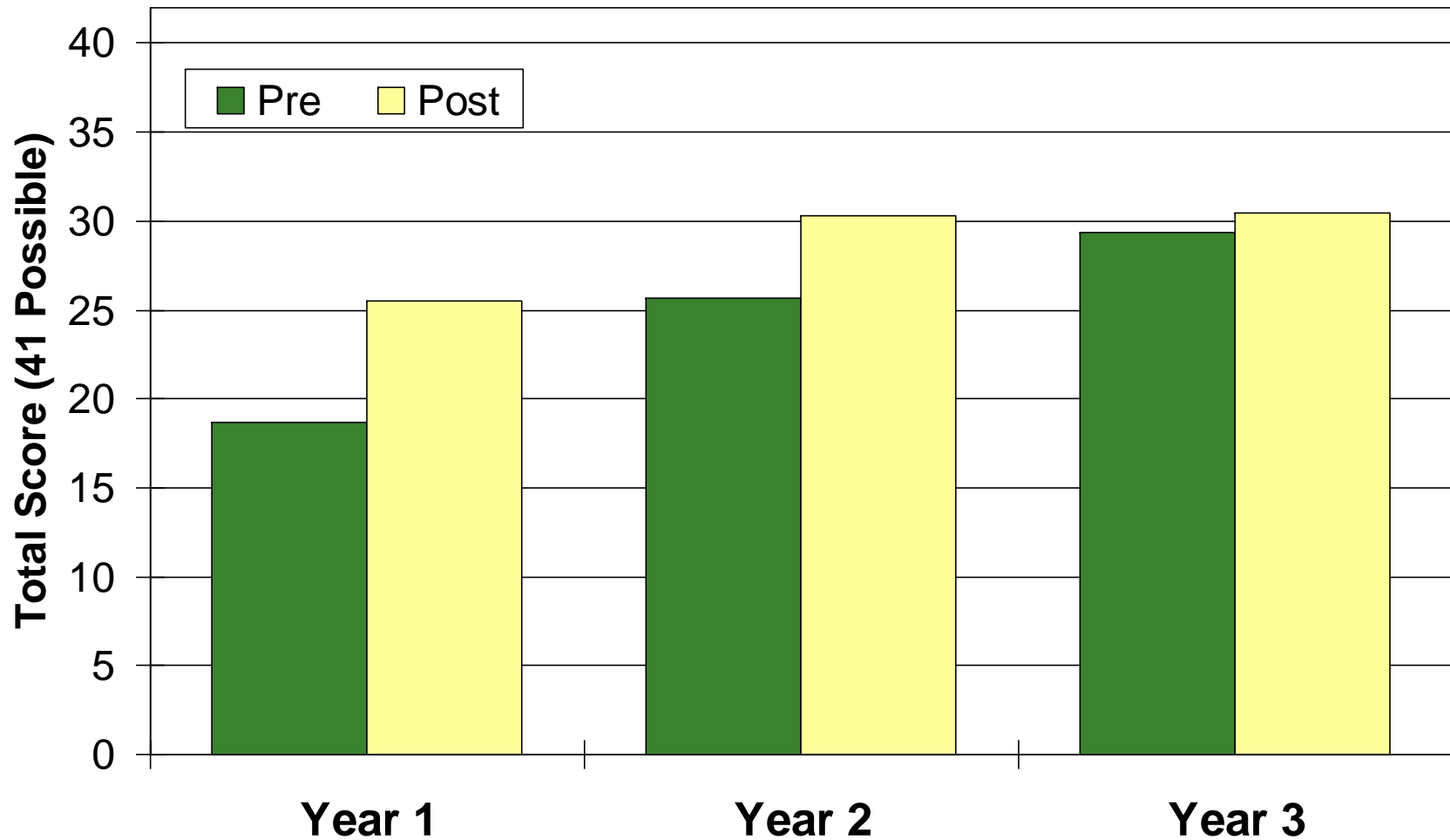
	Fall	Winter	Spring
<b>Year 1</b> 90 Children 6 Classrooms		<u>Pre</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy	<u>Post</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy
<b>Year 2</b> 129 Children 9 Classrooms	<u>Pre</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy	<u>Interim</u> Child Early Literacy	<u>Post</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy
<b>Year 3</b> 137 Children 9 Classrooms	<u>Pre</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy	<u>Interim</u> Child Early Literacy	<u>Post</u> Literacy Env Child Language & Early Literacy

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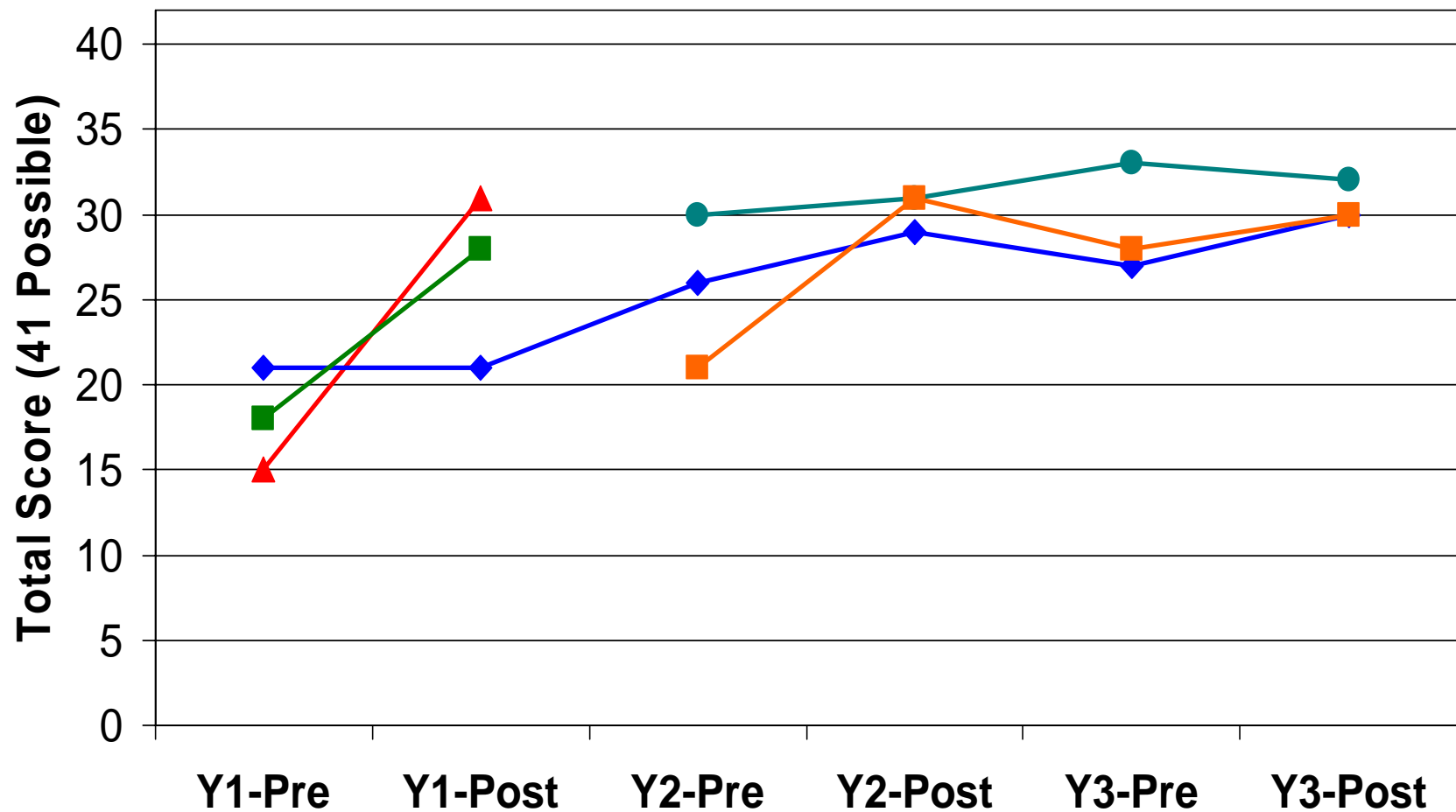
# Improvements in Classroom Literacy Environments

- ELLCO assessments showed pre/post improvements during Years 1 and 2.
  - In Year 3, classrooms maintained the improvements they had made the previous year.
  - Trends overtime showed that all participating centers improved or maintained a relatively high level of quality in the literacy environment.
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# ELLCO: Early Literacy Environment Checklist



# ELLCO Trends in Specific Centers

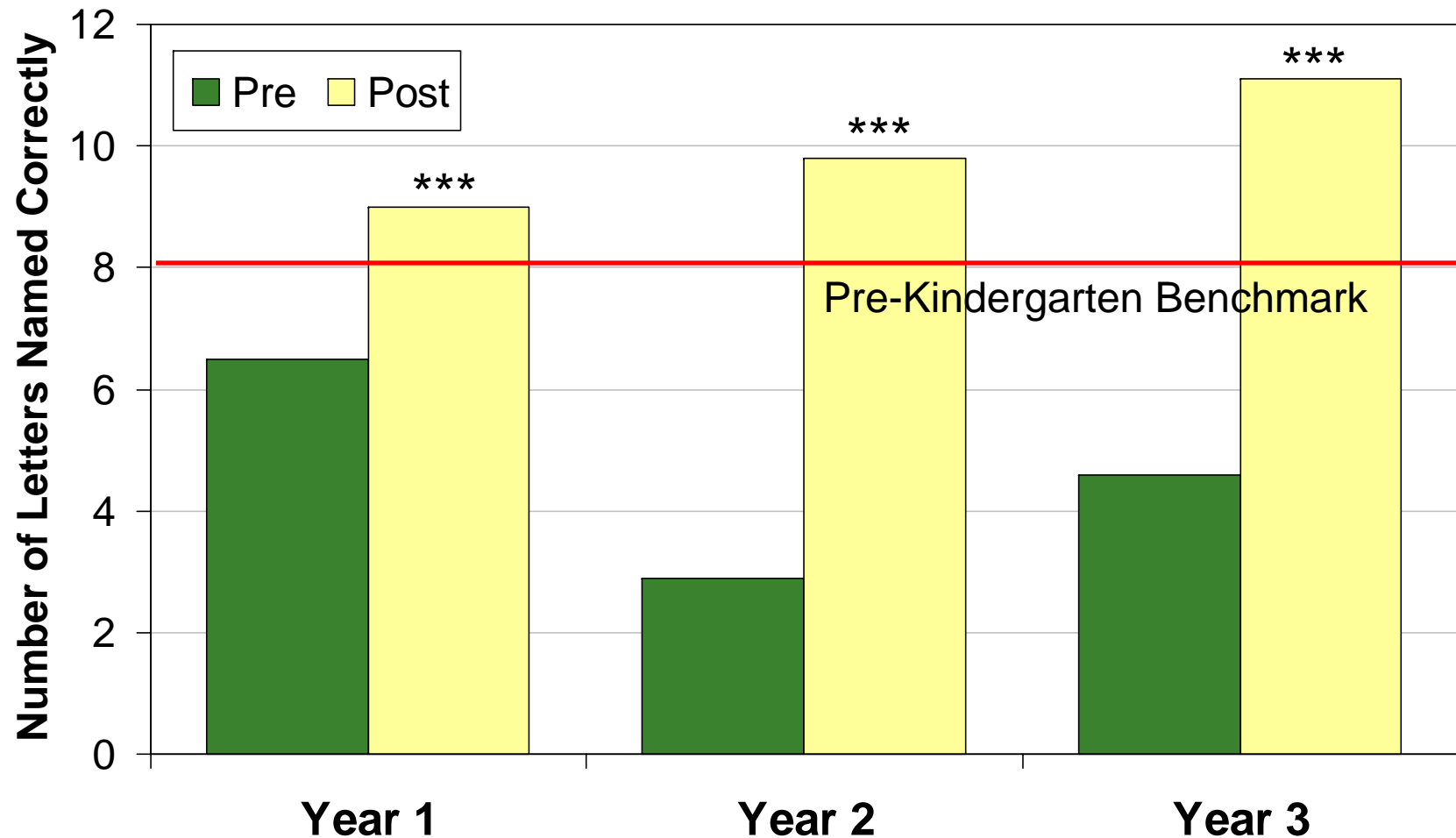


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# Improvements in Children's Early Literacy Skills

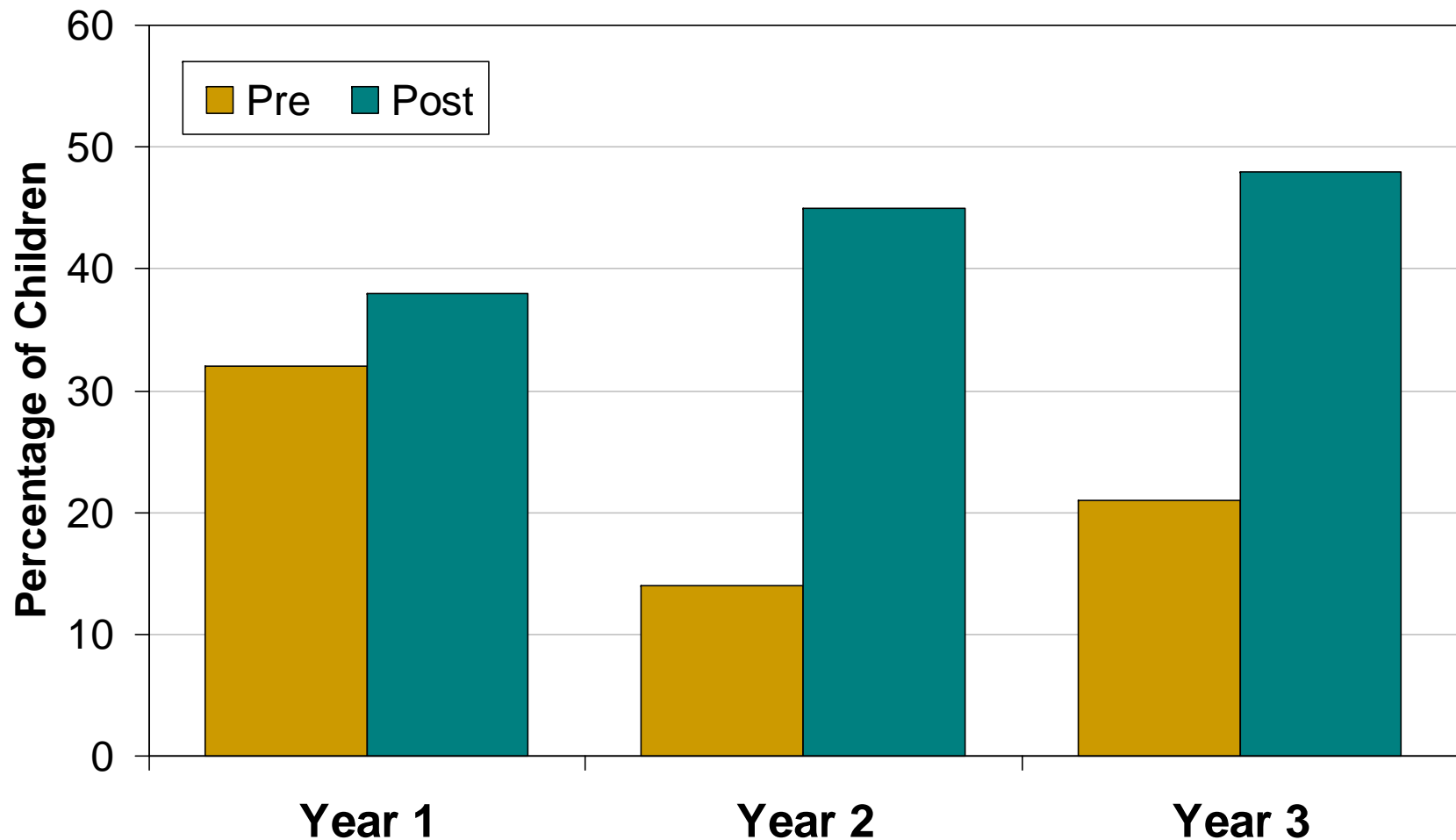
- Every year, children had statistically significant increases in all 4 indicators of early literacy skill.
  - The percentage of children meeting the DIBELS benchmark more than doubled in Years 2 and 3.
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# DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency

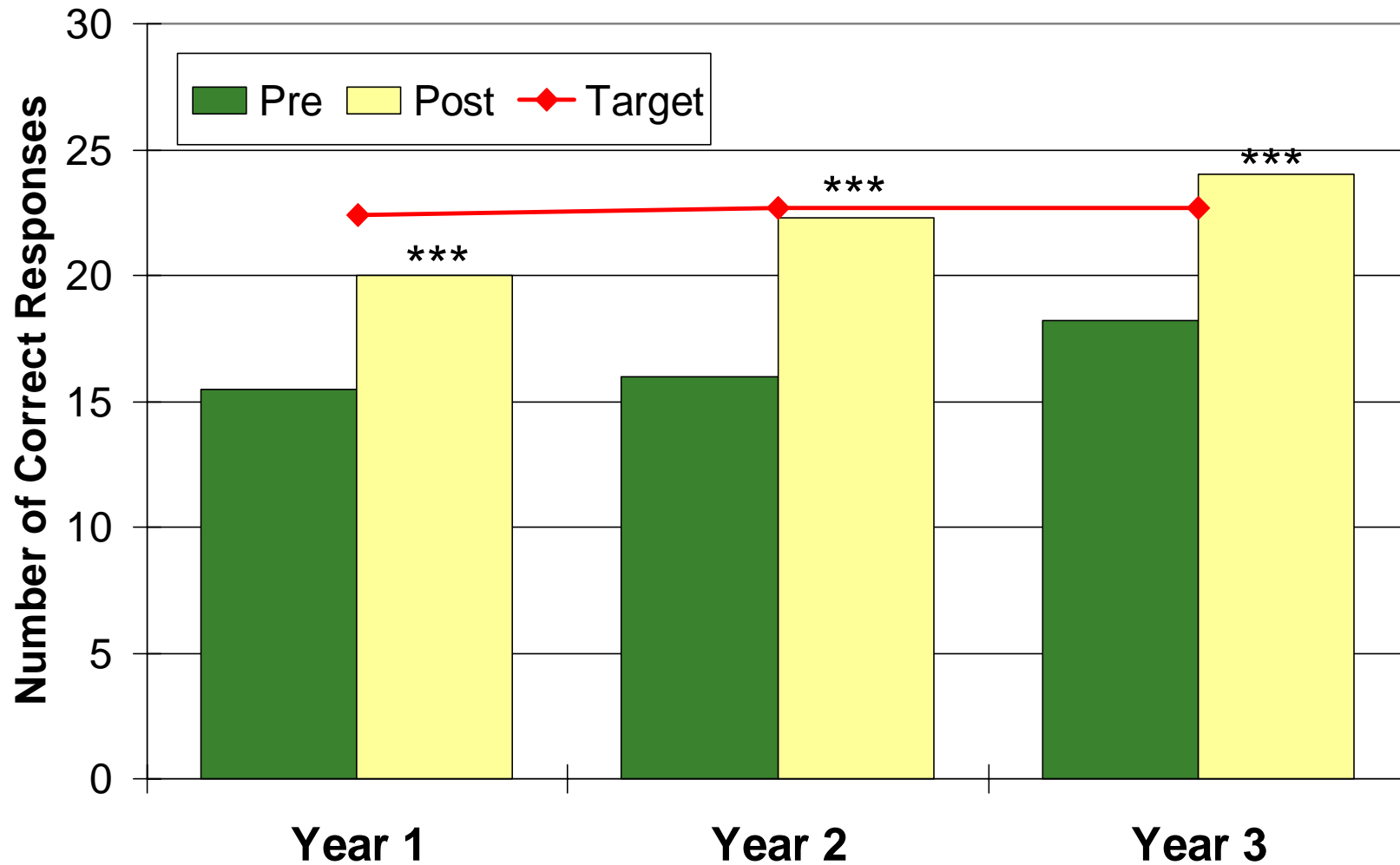


\*\*\*  $p < .001$

# Percentage Meeting DIBELS Benchmark

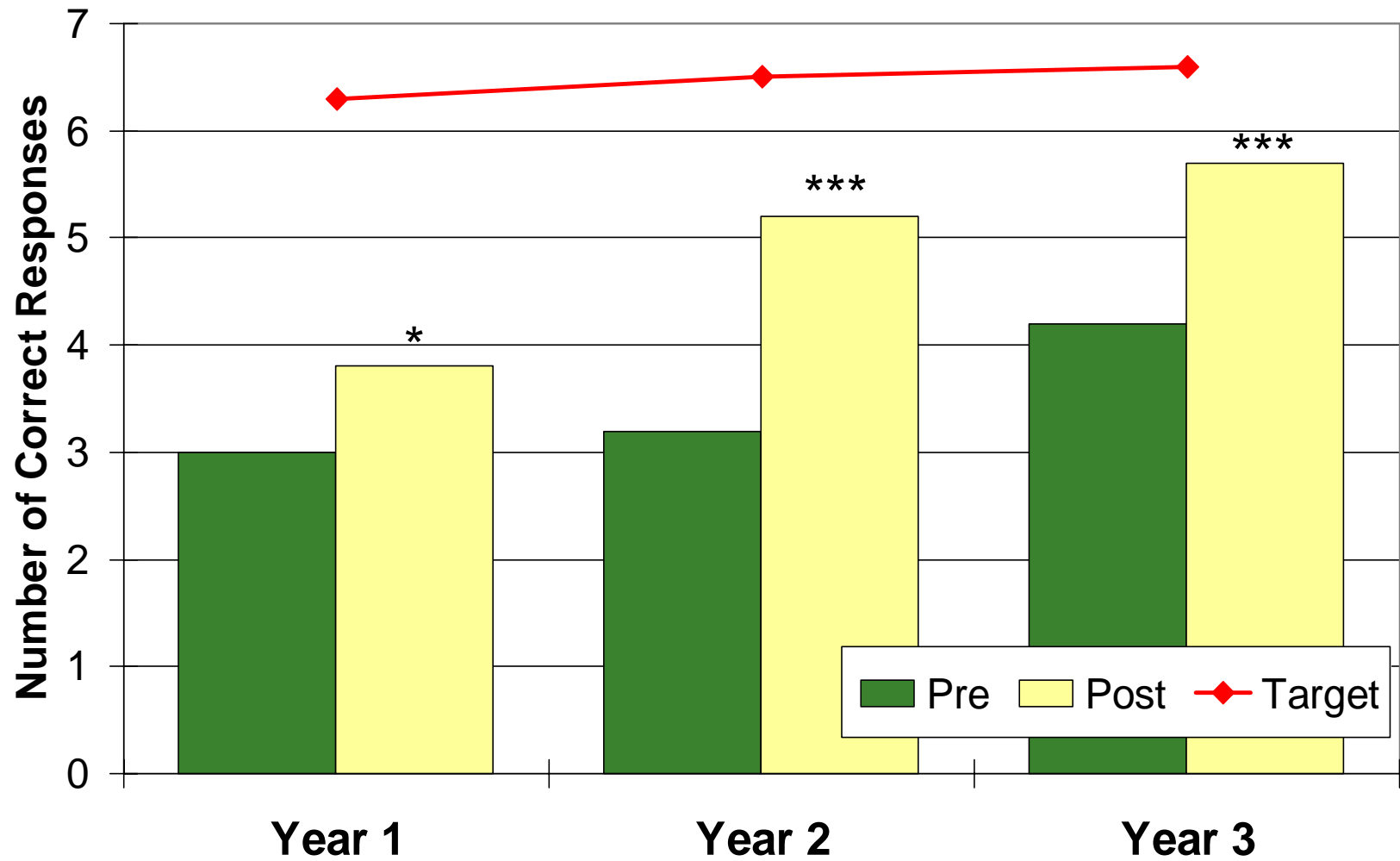


# GGG Picture Naming Fluency



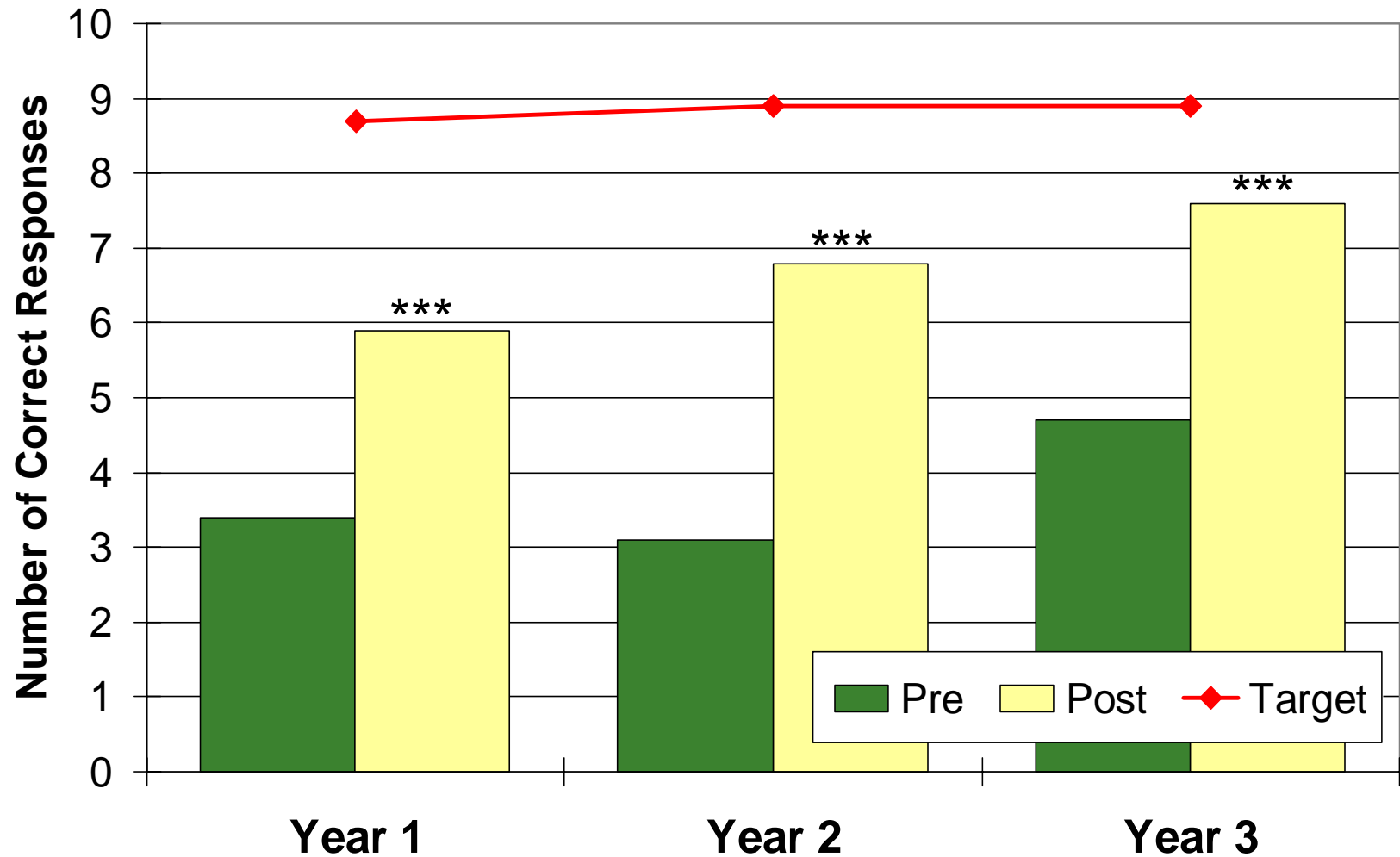
\*\*\*  $p < .001$

# GGG Alliteration Fluency



\*  $p < .05$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

# GGG Alliteration Fluency



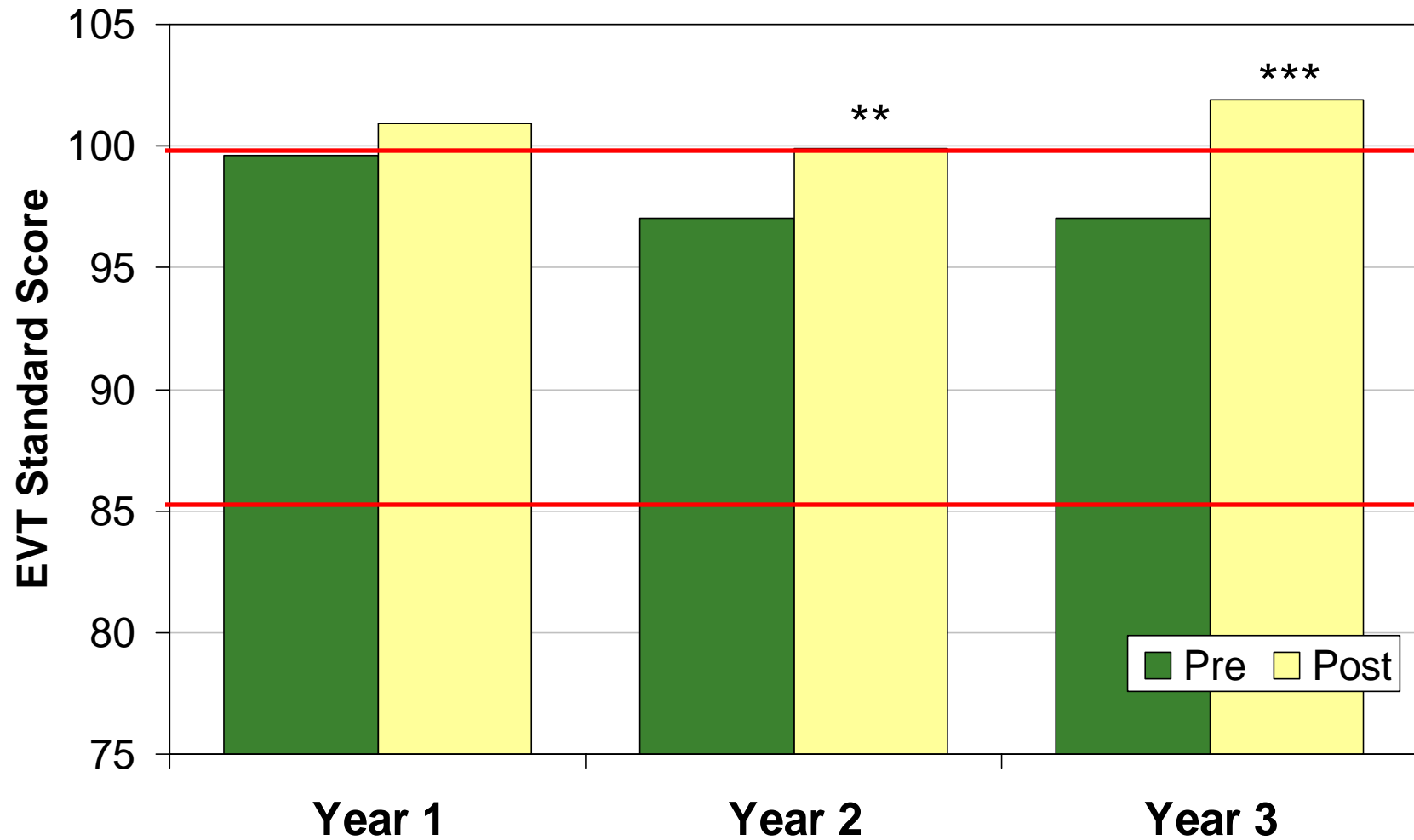
\*\*\*  $p < .001$

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# Improvements in Children's Language Development

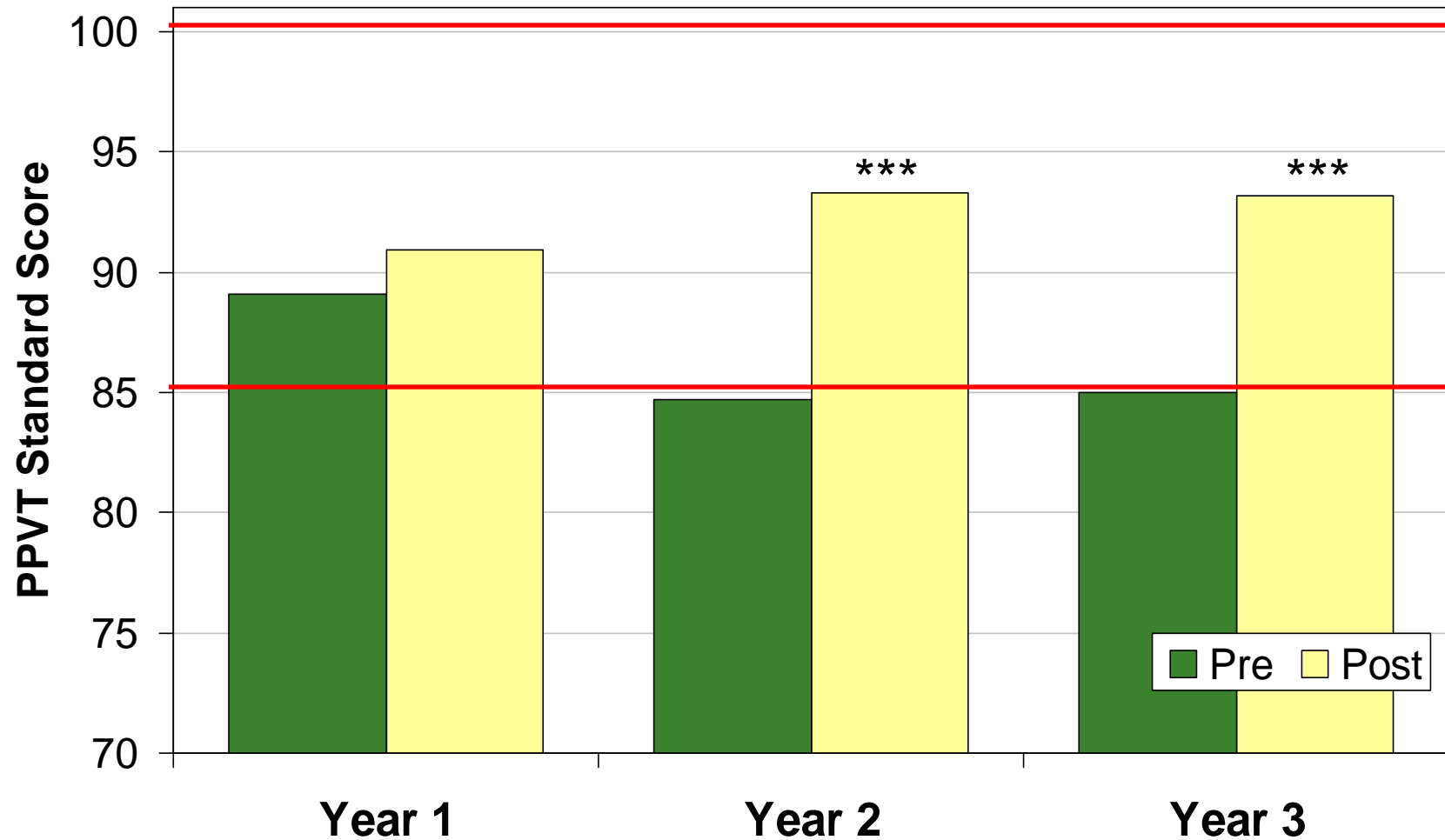
- In Years 2 and 3, EVT and PPVT scores improved significantly.
  - For the PPVT, the average moved from a level indicative of delay to well within the typical range, and the average gain (8 points) was twice the goal set by the US Dept of Education.
  - In all 3 years, we found a substantial fall-to-spring reduction in the percentage of children whose scores indicated risk for early reading failure.
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# Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT)



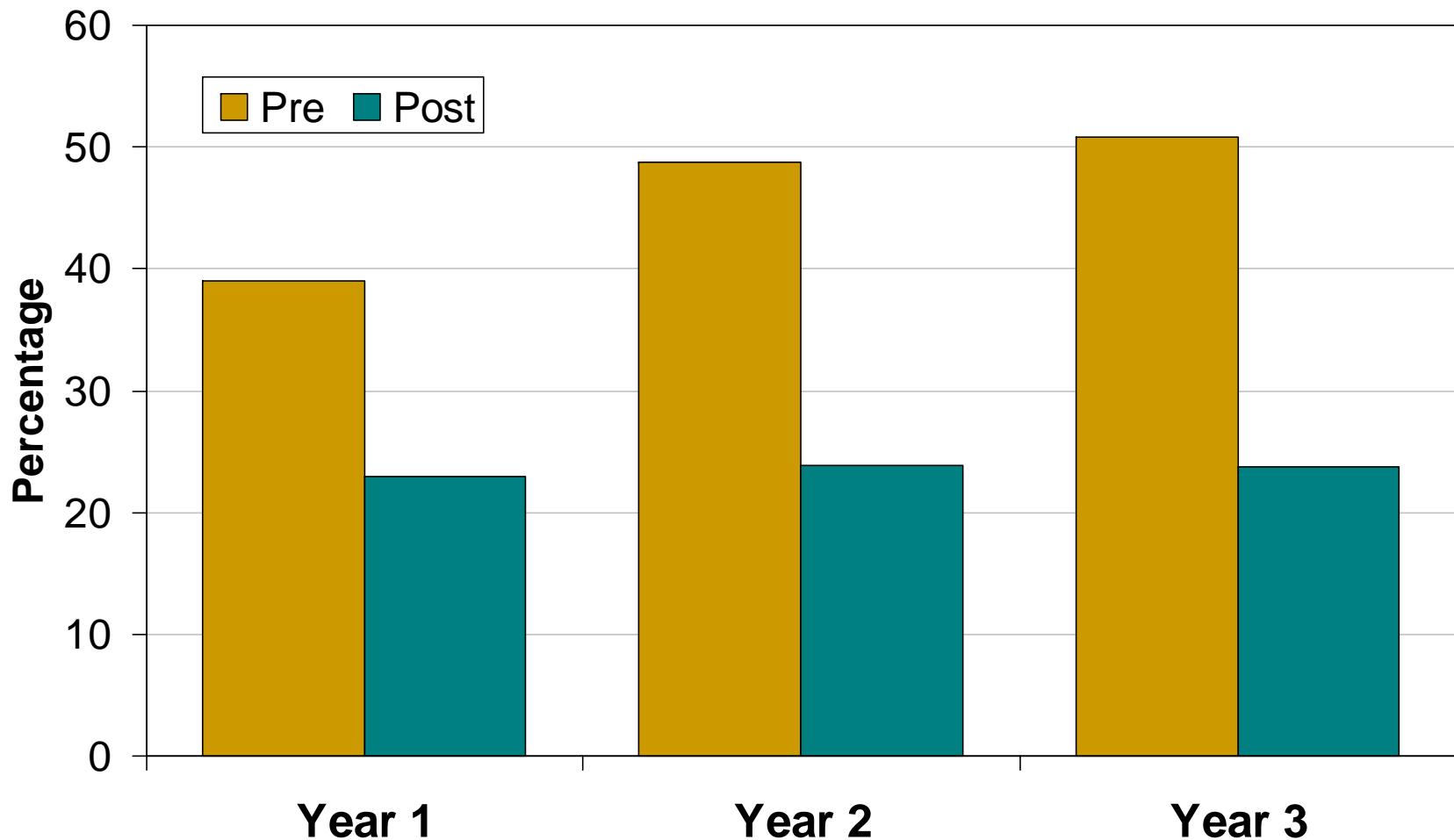
\*\*  $p < .005$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

# Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III)



\*\*\*  $p < .001$

# Percentage of Children with Delay on PPVT



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# Conclusion

The results of our 3-year evaluation document children's progress in the early language and pre-literacy skills that are the foundation for learning to read. Despite risks associated with poverty, a majority of the Early Reading First children showed gains greater than one would expect on age-referenced assessments.

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