

Question

Is one-to-one volunteer tutoring effective in increasing reading and math literacy of elementary-school children?

Application

Interim report to policy analysts on articles that best met criteria for good research methods.

Literature Search

ERIC, PsychInfo, Linguistics & Language Behavior Abstracts, Social Services Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography; Web of Science, PAIS International (January 1980 - June 2004)

393 articles identified and imported to RefWorks™
57 met inclusion criteria by abstract and/or full text review; 22 articles included comparison or control groups

Spotlights on articles with best methods = 10

SUMMARY OF SPOTLIGHTS

Independently of whether parents or volunteers serve as tutors, tutors are trained, tutoring follows a defined procedure, the school grade level or SES background of the children, **tutoring improves reading skills.**

Studies report tutoring sessions in which
tutor reads to child as a "warm up"
tutor and child read in unison
child reads to tutor
tutor and child discuss material read

Studies include procedures in which
child masters skill before advancing to next task
child is encouraged, praised, and rewarded

#9 Searls, E., Lewis, M. & Morrow, Y. (1983). Parents as tutors-It works! *Reading Psychology*, 3(2), 17-29.

Abstract To determine the effects of regular daily parental tutoring on pupil achievement in reading/language arts and math, pupil attitudes toward reading, pupil self-concept and motivation, and parent attitudes toward school, 2 classroom teachers (1st and 2nd grade) developed and implemented a program whereby parents tutored their own children in reading/language arts and math skills at home for 20-30 min/day on a regular basis during 20 wks of the school year. 25 pupils at each grade level were matched with controls as to age, sex, race, SES, and achievement in reading/language arts and math. A battery of assessments (including the Metropolitan Readiness Test--Level II, Form Q; the Metropolitan Achievement Test; and the Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory) was administered as pre- and posttests. Data indicate that, at the 1st-grade level, parental tutoring appeared to result in a significant increase in pupil achievement in both subject areas and in parental attitudes toward school. In the 2nd grade, there were no significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on the posttest measures; however, both groups made highly significant gains over their own pretest scores. It is concluded that the program enhanced parent-child relationships and parental involvement in their children's education. Implications concerning resource allocation for and the usefulness of such programs are presented.

Relevance Summary

To participate in the program, parents were asked to attend a workshop in which they read a manual to help them understand the tasks children face when learning to read. Parents were also given a handbook helping them prepare for the program. To monitor tutoring compliance, parents were given a weekly calendar to complete and return on which they indicated the program activities they had completed with their children.

Key Quotes

"Students were helped to establish the home study habit on a consistent, regular basis, and they enjoyed the undivided attention for 20-30 minutes each day of busy parents." (p. 127)

"These studies have demonstrated that a parents-as-tutors program is within the means and ability of classroom teachers." (p. 127)



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