After School Tutoring: Evaluating the Effectiveness of the K-12 Tutoring Program of Friendly Center, Inc.

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Advanced Field Study Program, 2014-2015

The research conducted is on children in the after-school tutoring program of the Friendly Center, Inc. The organization is a comprehensive family and community resource center that is dedicated to improving the lives of children, adults, and seniors by helping them move toward self-sufficiency through immediate aid and a variety of educational and life skill programs. The study focused on children’s academic performance of K-6th in reading and comprehension. Students were given two different reading and comprehension assessments throughout their academic school year. The goal of the research is to assess the effectiveness of the tutoring program and to make suggestions for future program improvements.

Methods and Procedures

Research Objectives:
- Assess the children in the tutoring program on their reading and comprehension
- Track whether they improve throughout the school year with tutoring services
- Identify which students improve and which students struggle
- Assess factors associated with differences

Research Components:
1. Observation Component:
The goal of the observations is to determine the children’s engagement with tutors and their schoolwork. Using an observation guide, notes were taken during tutoring sessions at the Friendly Center, Inc.
2. Assessment Component
The assessment is based on reading and comprehension from each participant’s grade level (K-6). The assessment is automatically given to students who are in the program. Two assessments were taken during the children’s academic school year.
3. Survey Component
The purpose of the survey is to obtain background demographic information on the child as well as parental or guardian involvement. Questions were based on Bronfenbrenner’s Bio-Ecological Model of Development.

Results

Observation Component
Students who are less attentive during tutoring (not focusing, not wanting to do homework, and get easily distracted during their homework) are the students who are not performing as well.

Assessment Component
As expected, there is approximately an equal disbursement of children ranging from below grade level, at grade level, and above grade level.

Survey Component
Children who do not perform as well on assessments have less parental involvement in homework, come from families that either speak little to no English, come from low socioeconomic household, and have little to no access of technology outside of school and tutoring.

Policy Recommendations

Lower Tutor-to-Student Ratio
Having high student-to-tutor ratio takes time and focus away from each student. Being able to give students the individual attention they need will enhance their learning and understanding of the material.

More Reading and Comprehension Practice
Some students come with little to no homework. Rather than having them do activity sheets the program should have them reading more and being tested on their understanding of the material.

More Parental Involvement in Programs
More parents should be recruited and encouraged into using the Friendly Center resources such as ESL courses. This will in turn will help their children.