

Success for All/Exito para Todos

A Summary of:

Success for All/Exito Para Todos: Effects on the Reading Achievement of Students Acquiring English, February 1998, Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR), Johns Hopkins University, by Robert E. Slavin and Nancy A. Madden

Overview

Success for All is a comprehensive program for elementary school students that focuses on prevention of and early, intensive intervention in potential learning problems. Success for All addresses learning problems through a three-pronged approach: high-quality instruction from kindergarten onward; improved school-family links; and one-to-one tutoring of primary-grade students who are having difficulties with reading. Although Success for All was originally designed for English-speaking at-risk children, it was adapted to Spanish Bilingual programs and English as a Second Language programs. The name “Success for All” refers to the original program for English-speaking children or to the adapted programs for non-English speaking children. “Exito Para Todos” refers specifically to the bilingual program adapted for Spanish-speaking students.

POPULATION

Success for All is offered in elementary schools that serve a high population of at-risk children, including particularly those learning English as a second language. The program is adapted for grades K to 6. In Philadelphia’s Francis Scott Key School, where the first application of Success for All began, more than 60 percent of its 622 students entered the school speaking Cambodian or other Southeast Asian languages. Ninety-six percent of the students qualified for free lunch. Philadelphia’s Fairhill Elementary School, where the bilingual Exito Para Todos program was first implemented, served a student body of 694 students. Seventy-eight percent were Hispanic and 22 percent were African American. Ninety-three percent qualified for free lunch. El Vista Elementary School in Modesto, CA, which also used Exito Para Todos, served a student body speaking 17 languages.

Evidence of Effectiveness

Evaluators compared Success for All/Exito Para Todos students to comparison groups and found that, after a year:

- ◆ Asian fifth-graders retained a level 2.8 years higher
- ◆ for non-Asian students, reading levels were at least a full grade equivalent higher
- ◆ Asian fourth-graders completing Success for All/Exito Para Todos had a reading level 2.9 years higher
- ◆ reading grade levels for Spanish-speaking first graders were 1.4 grade levels higher

Key Components

Success for All/Exito Para Todos includes the following components:

- ◆ one-on-one reading tutors (may be bilingual tutors)
- ◆ a “regrouped” reading program in which students who are regularly assigned to heterogeneous, age-grouped classes are regrouped for a 90-minute period according to reading performance levels
- ◆ eight-week reading assignments after which teachers assess students and make program adjustments
- ◆ ESL instruction offered either in a group setting or individually
- ◆ Family Support Teams which provide opportunities for parenting education and involvement
- ◆ a program facilitator who works at each school full-time to oversee operations

Contributing Factors

Coordination of Classroom Activities

Tutors, reading teachers, ESL teachers and others successfully coordinate classroom subjects and activities. Teachers regularly meet to coordinate their approaches for individual children.

Engaging Activities for Students

Reading and academic basics are taught by traditional means and through engaging activities that encourage the development and use of language. The program offers a balance of academic readiness and non-academic music, art and movement activities.

Links Community Service Agencies

Students who are not receiving adequate sleep or nutrition, need glasses, are not attending school regularly, or are exhibiting serious behavior problems are referred to appropriate community service agencies.

Parental Support

Through Family Support Teams, parents have an open forum to discuss with teachers the progress their child is making.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The report evaluates the results of Success for All/ Exito Para Todos in two elementary schools in Philadelphia, three in California and two in Arizona. It also cites the study of Exito Para Todos currently underway in Houston. Evaluators based their reports on grade levels and academic achievements. They compared Success for All/ Exito Para Todos participants to similar groups of students attending other language development programs. Some evaluations were based on three scales found in the Woodcock Proficiency Battery: Word Identification, Word Attack and Passage Comprehension.

EVALUATION FUNDING

Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

The evaluation focused on sites in: Philadelphia, PA (Francis Scott Key School and Fairhill Elementary School); Southern California (Fremont, Wright and El Vista elementary schools); Arizona; and Houston, Texas.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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