

This summary focuses on student achievement and behavioral outcomes associated with participation in Reading Together tutoring programs. All studies included carefully matched control groups for comparison to Reading Together tutees.

Program Effects on Student Achievement

- Statewide Reading Tests (Montgomery County, Maryland Study, 2000-01)

This study examined the effects of Reading Together on Grade Two student performance on the end-of-year state reading test (CTBS). RT tutees (N=80) and control group peers (N=73) in each of 22 schools were matched on pre-intervention reading scores. All students (RT and control) were scoring below grade level in fall. In spring, following RT intervention, the percentage of RT tutees who met the district's performance standard (scoring at the 60th percentile or above on the CTBS reading test) exceeded that of control group students by 23 percent; 41 percent of RT tutees scored at the 60th percentile or above, compared to 18 percent of control group students.

These favorable results were replicated when the groups were further disaggregated by race/ethnicity (African-American, Asian, Hispanic and White) and by poverty status (receipt of free and reduced-price meal services). Comparisons across all subgroups indicated that RT tutees significantly outperformed their control group peers with respect to meeting the Grade Two performance standard (60th percentile or above) on the CTBS reading test.

- District-wide Reading Assessments of Fluency and Comprehension

A study of Reading Together conducted in 13 schools across several North Carolina school districts (Hattie and Haines, 1998) used the Sunshine Assessment Kit to compare post-intervention achievement of Grade Two RT tutees (N=53) and control group peers (N=43) who were matched on pre-intervention reading fluency scores. Results indicated statistically significant differences in favor of the RT tutees at the end of the program. Analysis of the magnitude of student-level gains indicated that 42 percent of RT participants, as compared to 23 percent of the control group students, increased their fluency by 10 or more levels by the end of the program.

In Montgomery County, Maryland, studies of Reading Together were conducted in 2000-01 with Grade Two RT students from 22 schools and in 2001-02 with Grade Two students from 43 schools. In both years, RT students were matched to control group peers from the same school on both demographic and pre-intervention reading scores. Using district-administered assessments of reading fluency, end-of-Grade Two (post-intervention) scores of 133 RT tutees were compared to those of their control group peers. Overall, and for student groups disaggregated by race/ethnicity, poverty status and English proficiency, greater percentages of RT tutees, as compared to control group students, achieved or exceeded the benchmark level of reading

fluency for Grade Two (reading fluent level text, level M, with 90 percent accuracy or above).

Although all RT tutees began the tutoring program in fall with scores marginally at or below grade level, 80 percent or more met or exceeded the end-of –Grade Two benchmark for reading fluency at completion of the program. This favorable result was replicated when the groups were further disaggregated by race/ethnicity (African-American, Asian, Hispanic and White) and by poverty status (receipt of free and reduced-price meal services).

In both school years, student achievement also was examined under the more rigorous Grade Two benchmark incorporating measures of fluency and comprehension was examined. Findings for both years indicated significant differences in favor of RT tutees in achievement of fluency and comprehension performance benchmarks. For students who began the program marginally at or moderately below grade level, greater percentages of RT tutees (an average of 18 percent more), as compared to control group students, achieved the end-of-grade fluency and comprehension performance benchmarks.

Program Effects on Behavioral Outcomes for Tutors

During the 1998-99 school year, end-of-year surveys were developed and distributed to principals, teachers and parents across eight school sites to supplement measures of student achievement with other indicators of growth among program participants (SERVE, Inc. 1999). When asked whether they saw improvement in the fifth-grade tutors' skills and attitudes that they would attribute to Reading Together, school staff and parents were most impressed with the extent to which tutors had developed leadership skills as a result of their participation. All three groups surveyed were consistent as well in their positive evaluations of tutors' improvement in interpersonal skills and self-confidence about school.