

The Effects of the SOAR Program on Small Urban Community Students

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**Abstract**

This paper aims to evaluate the effectiveness of SOAR, an after-school program serving primarily Latino and African American students in a small urban community; the purpose of this research is to evaluate students’ academic and behavioral progress as a result of program participation. Creation and evaluation of tutor notes serve as the basis of our inquiry; as a result, researchers have developed an effective means of measuring student progress in the form of daily tutor notes. Researchers tracked ten students for five weeks, documenting various aspects of their progress, including homework completion and time spent reading. Findings suggest that program participation yields progress in many areas, although future research should collect data over a longer period of time with the intent of gaining a beneficial longitudinal perspective.

**Introduction**

***Benefits of After-School Programs***

Many previous researchers have studied the effects of after-school programs on subsequent academic and social outcomes. In one study, engagement during after-school hours partially mediated the relationship between participation in after-school programs and social competence. In addition, relative perceptions of engagement, challenge, and importance when in after-school programs compared to elsewhere after school predicted higher English and math grades; results of this study suggest that the quality of experiences in after-school programs may be a more important factor than quantity of experiences in predicting positive academic outcomes (Shernoff 2010). Another study, which examined community-based after-school programs for Latino youth, found that greater intensity of after-school participation and perceptions of program quality were associated with higher levels of self worth; in addition, students who regularly attended the after-school program demonstrated significantly better concentration and regulation skills than those who did not attend (Riggs, Bohnert, Guzman, & Davidson 2010).

Research has also been conducted regarding the impact of adult-youth relationships on student progress. One study found that there is an emerging consensus on the importance of staff-youth interactions as a determinant of program effectiveness (Granger, 2010). The mentorship component of after-school programs cannot be ignored as a significant primary or secondary benefit to students involved.

Increased feelings of biculturalism and empowerment have significant effects on students’ academic success. One study found that with encouraging discussion of cultural differences between adults and students, Grade Point Average as well as students’ desire and belief about their potential to succeed in school increased, in addition to feeling less hopeless about their education in general, as a result of after-school program participation (Diversi & Mecham 2005). Furthermore, the cultural differences sometimes present within after-school settings have been thought to be stimulating and engaging, serving as acculturation into different worldviews, rather than sources of tension: “Even across cultural differences, adults and youth reported trust and satisfaction in their relationship. We feel this dialogue helped further the goal of developing a more bicultural identity, both for students and mentors.” (Diversi & Mecham 2005).

***Goals of After-School Programs***

The goals of after-school programs are varied, and have changed to suit society’s needs over time (the history of after-school programs goes back to the 19th century); however those centered around academics are often two-fold. Clearly, the main goal is to improve students’ academics in terms of evaluation scores and interest; however, a secondary goal includes a mentorship aspect as well. According to Halpern (2002), after-school programs in general have defined themselves in terms of protection, care, opportunity for enrichment, and play while simultaneously defining themselves in terms of socialization, acculturation, training, and problem remediation. After-school programs originated as a way to protect children from the dangers of the streets and families’ need for both parents to work, but also to foster creativity and self-expression while creating a greater opportunity for play (Halpern 2002).

Bilingual after-school programs have additional goals on top of traditional academic or non-academic after-school programs. Because English is the dominant language in the United States, many programs focus on ensuring students learn to use English, demonstrating a widespread English-only ideology present in many of today’s schools; however, it is also important that the students learn their original language. One study examined the nature of language choice in an after-school program for preschoolers in Southern California, and their findings suggest the complexity of the relationship between Latino children’s languages, ideologies, and socialization practices. Its authors state that “educators who want to empower Latino children by creating culturally meaningful learning environments must start by acknowledging this complexity” (Pastor, 2008.) According to Trueba (1999), a transformative pedagogy cannot occur in a setting where “hegemonic discourse silences culturally and linguistically diverse children” (143) or their choices of language as significant learning resources.

***SOAR Program History and Objectives***

The SOAR program at Booker T. Washington Elementary School began in February 2006. The school is located near the Shadowwood Mobile Home Community, where most of the families were recent Spanish-speaking immigrants who faced hardships due to low incomes, cultural differences, and language barriers. Because of the lack of affordable academic support, the families were concerned for their children’s success in school; they shared their concerns with University of Illinois Professor Ann Bishop, who helped to partner with the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the Latino Partnership, and Booker T. Washington Elementary School. The result was an after-school program specifically for at-risk children in the north Champaign area. Over the years the program has grown immensely, including many partners from the university and local community, including the Center for Education in Small Urban Communities, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Public Engagement, the Department of Psychology, and the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club.

The program aims to build connections between marginalized families and the school, to help children develop a positive identity, and to improve in-school learning based on Luis Moll’s community funds of knowledge theory. It aims to supplement the efforts of Booker T. Washington Elementary School to improve educational and social outcomes for children in Kindergarten through 5th grade. The program currently serves approximately 45 children, mainly Latino and African American; it operates three days per week through the school year. The primary purpose is to assist with homework and reading, but the program also provides enrichment activities, such as visits from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and visitors from the university.

Teachers recommend students to the SOAR program because he or she feels the program will help to meet the individual needs of each child. Teachers have reported that their students are successfully completing their homework and gaining self-confidence, among other positive outcomes which we will further explore in this paper.

**Purpose**

Most evaluation processes look at overall student academic and social improvement and attitude toward school and learning when making conclusions about whether or not a program has been effective. We are taking into consideration the factors presented above, but are also evaluating students’ work with their respective tutor on a weekly/ daily basis. We expect to see the same results as other noted OST programs at the end of a semester, year, and/or the child’s stay in the program (1st grade through 5th grade). However, we are experimentally implementing the process of student evaluation by the tutor. We believe that if we can track a student’s progress (more often than other evaluations tend to monitor), we can use this information to better help the student achieve his/her program goal. Evaluating from the tutor’s perspective will be very beneficial as these are the people who are spending the one-on-one time with the student on a weekly basis. The tutor sees things that a random observer cannot. In turn, we can use the qualitative data collected to see specific trouble areas and do something about them.

We are not only tracking student progress for the evaluation of success of SOAR, but we are guiding tutors with program goals and improving the program’s effectiveness along the way. More information will be discussed about specific SOAR goals, and why we chose to evaluate in this manner. Some of these reasons include the benefits and drawbacks of a smaller program or a “fleet” (help students more effectively with one-on-one time with tutors, lack of ‘expertise’ as far as program evaluation is concerned), guidelines for *principles of effectiveness* according to the 21st CCLC (objective data, established set of performance measures, scientifically based research where appropriate), and accountability and sustainability (Little, et al. 2002). Most of the research concentrates on evaluation via student, parent, teacher, or principal feedback, but we feel that the tutors are such an integral part of the program staff that their observations and input will be most beneficial to improvement and sustainability of the SOAR program.

**Methods**

***Survey Form and Purpose in the SOAR Program***

The SOAR program has been keeping track of student progress as well as facilitating tutor-tutor and tutor-teacher communication with a simple form of daily journaling since its inception in 2006. At the end of each tutoring session, the tutors have been responsible for filling out “Tutor Notes” where he or she would describe what they worked on with the student and comment on homework completion, reading habits, behavior, problems, successes, etc. The tutor also has the opportunity in these notes to pose questions for the teacher or ask for advice in working with a particular student. Further, for example, the Wednesday tutor can read about progress the student made with his or her Tuesday tutor or tell the Thursday tutor that the student needed a great deal of encouragement to focus. Tutors and teachers can therefore discuss habits and changing behaviors. This communication provides tutors with vital information about their student so they can be sensitive if he or she has had a bad day or seems to need extra help in certain areas, either academic or social. The notes are only available to the student’s tutors, room leaders, and teachers with the intention of maintaining discretion. With five weeks left of the spring semester, we implemented a new version of the tutor notes sheets and asked teachers for feedback on the new form. Our intention was to make the notes more specific in order to facilitate the interactions of tutors and teachers as well as help tutors in knowing what to look for during sessions with their student. The following segment will cover the content and purpose of the new form of tutor notes, as well as feedback from tutors and teachers.

The object of the tutoring sessions is to have a daily and overall goal for the semester. The student and his or her tutor(s) should discuss a goal at the beginning of the program each day, but the teacher may choose to prescribe the ‘overall goal’ based on reasons for recommending the student to the program. Ideally, the student would display his or her ‘overall goal’ in or on his or her binder so the student and tutors can reflect on the object of the time spent in the SOAR program and remain on track during the valuable out of school time. Directly below the statement of the goal, we have provided space for tutors to rate the student’s progress toward the daily objective. Tutors fill in the goal at the beginning of the program and may choose to keep the notes visible so they can continually see and remind the student of the purpose of the day. While we expect to see achievement of the daily goal, we do not anticipate the overall goal to be marked as complete (4-rating). Rather, we want the tutor to be looking for progress toward the student’s overall goal for the semester in SOAR.[[1]](#footnote-1)+− These goals often include improvement in a specific skill, such as reading in English or turning homework in on time, whereas reading for a certain amount of time and assignment completion are popular daily goals.

The next section of the notes rates the student’s behavior according to the Likert Scale with scores ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (very often). We ask the tutor to monitor the extent to which the student was focused, eager to learn, independently learning, collaborative[[2]](#footnote-2)\*, flexible, engaged and/or interactive with the tutor, and respectful of authority. The third section of the notes concerns academic performance and the scale ranges from 1 (none) to 4 (all). The tutors record homework completion, comprehension and engagement of math and writing, and task persistence. The fourth section of the notes reports information about reading time, language, comprehension, and engagement. Teachers require that students read for a minimum of twenty minutes out of school. Bilingual students can usually choose to read in English, Spanish, or both, and the tutors must write down the amount of time and in what language(s) the student read aloud. Each scaled question in the homework and reading sections also has an optional rating of “not applicable” in the case that the student does not have assignments in certain subjects or does not have adequate time to read or finish assignments.

To ensure tutor understanding of qualities to look for in student behavior, work habits, etc., short descriptions are included in parentheses next to most questions (see copy of tutor notes in appendix). At the end of each of the last three sections, the tutors have the option of writing why they rated their students in such a manner. Perhaps a scheduled activity prevented the student from finishing journaling or an incident at home produced an uncharacteristic attitude. Finally, the tutors can each write questions or comments to the student’s teacher and a member of the SOAR staff (namely his or her room leader). This sector of the survey creates and maintains communication between tutors and teachers, the room leaders, and other tutors. Often these comments and questions refer to unusual behaviors and tutors seem to find it easier or more accommodating to ask advice in writing.

Creating a new version of these daily tutor surveys of student productivity and behavior has been a goal of the SOAR interns for some time. The notes were originally a free write where we asked tutors to write two or three sentences about what they had done with their students each day and their reactions. We would give the papers to the teachers, but they rarely found them beneficial or successful in monitoring progress. Tutors often brushed off this responsibility and continually wrote generalized statements each week such as, “Today was a good day- he finished his homework.” The SOAR program wants to facilitate communication between tutors and teachers in the easiest way possible for both. Therefore, we wanted a form of tutor notes that maintains communication lines, provides physical data of student activity and/or progress, and guides the volunteers as they tutor. We desired that the notes be a bit longer and more detailed without asking too much of the tutors. Since they are mostly university students as well as volunteers, we did not want to overwhelm tutors with too many questions or force them to stay after the program to finish writing tedious responses. Hence, tutor feedback was important to us. I ran this form of the notes in my second grade room one week before introducing them to the rest of the grades to see how long it would take tutors to fill out the survey, and to hear some reactions. The majority of the tutors commented positively, saying that it was still not a difficult or lengthy task and that the direction provided by the notes was helpful. In addition, this form of journaling will continue to facilitate tutor-tutor communication throughout the week. Tutors can write what worked for them on a particular day or ask other tutors during the week if they have any advice to convey. We received no negative feedback, but some tutors continued to be indifferent to putting in the extra time at the end of the day journaling.

Though we did not interview teachers beforehand, their feedback was important to us as well, as we wanted to include questions and points for evaluation important to teachers following their students’ progress in the program. The second and third grade bilingual teachers responded positively to the new format of the notes and the information that they were receiving from tutors. We received no negative commentary, but other teachers merely appreciated being able to communicate with tutors through the notes. Since it is hectic for teachers at the end of the day, tutors do not always get a chance to speak to their student’s teacher face to face. Questions can therefore be asked and answered through the notes as long as they are returned to the students’ binders at the beginning of the next week. Though we did not return notes to binders during the pilot study, most tutors did have the opportunity to read teacher’s answers to questions concerning student behavior, and obtain advice for teaching a problematic subject.

Our tutor notes in the past functioned as a way for tutors to communicate with one another, SOAR staff, and teachers. The intention of the new surveys is to maintain this valuable communication. However, in addition, these surveys will also collect quantitative and qualitative data in order for us to analyze it and provide an extensive description for a very well rounded perspective of SOAR. We cannot stress enough the importance of SOAR evaluation through the student’s progress, but we also aim to use the tutor surveys to benefit the students and inform teachers about students’ habits, improvements, and troubled areas. In order to do all of this, we developed our questionnaire with ideas from the Harvard Family Research Project and the Social Skills Rating System as well as from personal experience working with the objectives of the SOAR program and interacting with tutors and teachers.

***Experimental Group***

We tracked the progress of ten students during the final five weeks of the spring 2010 semester of the SOAR program (March 30 to April 29). The program runs Tuesday through Thursday, so each week contains of three sets of data. The students range in age from five to eleven years (grades first through fifth) and come from lower-middle and lower class families. The students in the study are Latino (8) or African American (2). The school community that SOAR serves educates students of at most a middle class background; therefore, note that we did not choose lower class students specifically for this study. We selected two students from each of the five grades based on program attendance and rate of progress[[3]](#footnote-3)+. We labeled the students by grade number and a letter to maintain anonymity and decipher between the students in each grade level. Identification tags range from *1A* and*1B*to*5A*and*5B[[4]](#footnote-4)α*.

**Results**

Our analysis covered quantitative data collected as two averaged scores for each day the student attended the SOAR program. The tutor scored his or her student according to a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 for both the “socio-emotional” and “homework completion” sections of the questionnaire. The tutor could mark “N/A” if a certain question was not applicable for whatever reason on that day. Marking “N/A” does not take any points away from the student; rather, the question was null and removed from any averaging. We felt this was best since ‘not applicable’ could signify that the student did not have homework or, in the case that he or she did not have sufficient time to read, ‘reading comprehension’ would not be assessable. We transferred this data into a statistical program (SPSS) with a variable for each question on the survey, as well as one for *Socio-emotional Sum* and *Homework Completion Sum*.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | Date | Focus | Eager to Learn | Ind. Learn | Collaborate | Flexible | Interact/  Engaged | Respect Authority | Socio-Emotion Sum |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | Date | HW Compl | Math Compr | Math Engage | Write  Compr | Write Engage | Task Persist | Read Comp | Read Engage | HW Compl Sum |

The two “sums” for each day were averaged for each student and placed in the following tables for analysis.[[5]](#footnote-5)χχ

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | 3/30 | 3/31 | 4/1 | 4/6 | 4/7 | 4/8 | 4/13 | 4/14 | 4/15 | 4/20 | 4/21 | 4/22 | 4/27 | 4/28 | 4/29 |
| 1A | 3 | 4 | 2 |  | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |  | 4 | 3 | 3 |  | 4 | 4 |
| 1B | 2 | 2 | 1 |  |  | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 |  | 3 |
| 2A | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 2B | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |  | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| 3A | 3 |  |  | 3 |  |  | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 3B |  | 2 |  |  |  | 2 |  | 4 | 4 |  | 3 | 4 |  |  |  |
| 4A | 3 | 4 | 3 |  |  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 4 |  | 4 |
| 4B |  | 4 | 3 |  | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |  | 4 |  |  |  | 4 |
| 5A | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 |  |  |
| 5B |  | 4 | 4 |  | 4 | 3 |  | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |  | 3 |  |  |

**SOCIO-EMOTIONAL AVERAGES**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | 3/30 | 3/31 | 4/1 | 4/6 | 4/7 | 4/8 | 4/13 | 4/14 | 4/15 | 4/20 | 4/21 | 4/22 | 4/27 | 4/28 | 4/29 |
| 1A | 4 | 3 | 2 |  | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |  | 4 | 4 | 3 |  | 4 | 4 |
| 1B | 3 | 2 | 2 |  |  | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |  | 3 |
| 2A | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 2B | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 3A | 3 |  |  | 2 |  |  | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 3B |  | 2 | 3 |  |  | 3 |  | 3 | 4 |  | 4 | 4 |  |  |  |
| 4A | 4 | 3 | 3 |  |  | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 |  | 3 |
| 4B |  | 4 | 4 |  | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 |  | 4 |  |  |  | 3 |
| 5A | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 |  |  |
| 5B |  | 3 | 4 |  | 3 | 3 |  | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |  | 3 |  |  |

**HOMEWORK COMPLETION AVERAGES**

With this table, we were able to look at several different aspects of the program’s impact on behavior and homework completion. First, we wanted to see if there are improvements in both areas from the first half of the study to the second half. We decided to ignore ‘April 14’, in order that we have seven days of data for each half of the study. This date is marked in red in the table above. We grouped the all of the 1s and 2s a student averaged into the category of “poor,” as this would signify that the student exhibited positive behavior *never/* *occasionally* or his work completion was *none/ some*. We grouped the 3s and 4s as “good,” since the student displayed positive behavior *often/ very often* or his work completion was *most*/ *all*. (“Poor” scores are highlighted in blue.) We hoped to see that the number of “poor” averages decreased in the second half of the five weeks in the program.

For the SOCIO-EMOTIONAL section, almost every student’s averages contained less “poor” scores in the second half of the study. Some students broke even with the amount of “poor” scores in the first half, but no student managed more “poor” behavior during the second seven days. Overall, the students averaged poorly seventeen times (34%) during the first seven days, but only averaged poorly six times (11.3%) during the second half of the study. Therefore, we see a twenty-three percent (22.7%) decrease in “poor” socio-emotional behavior from the first half to the second half of the five-week study. For the HOMEWORK COMPLETION section, we found a four percent (4.4%) decrease in “poor” averages of homework completion/comprehension/engagement. Though this is not significant, we may be able to see a greater degree of improvement from the beginning of the semester to the end. However, during the first half of the study 19.6% of students’ averages were 4s, while during the second half, the amount of ‘4’ averages for the day increased 35.1% to a total of 54.7%. This indicates that students completed homework, understood assignments, and were more engaged with the work they were doing during the second half of the five weeks (to a significant extent).

In addition, we looked at the frequencies of high homework completion ratings as well as high socio-emotional ratings for each individual student. To explain, these frequencies refer to the student’s valid percentages (created through SPSS) of ratings of either 3 or 4 (the same concept of “good” versus “poor” as above). This data illustrates that all of the students completed, engaged in, and comprehended homework (with tutor assistance of course) greater than or equal to approximately seventy percent (69.2%) of the time spent in the program. Further, all but one of the ten students demonstrated “good” behavior more than half of their time in the program.

Literature on out of school time (OST) emphasizes that after-school programs should foster a desire to learn, engagement in assignments and educational activities, and an environment for the creation and maintenance of adult-youth relationships. According to Hannah Borhart’s study of teacher expectations of the SOAR program (unpublished paper 2010), teachers look for increased homework completion, attendance, and reading engagement, among other characteristics of improved student behavior and habit. With this in mind, we also focused our attention on data concerning the students’ individual scores in the following aspects of both sections of the survey: eagerness to learn, interaction with tutors and other students, task persistence, reading engagement, as well as homework completion (discussed above). All ten students scored “good” (3s and 4s) more than fifty percent of the time in the program in interaction, reading engagement, and homework completion. Eight students did so in eagerness to learn, while seven did so in task persistence. This indicates that all of the students have developed vital academic and social skills, as well as maintained a relationship with a college student. The students also seem to have learned the valuable skill of task persistence and the importance of having a desire to learn for the successful comprehension and completion of homework.

**Discussion**

A point of interest lies in the fact that student 4A possesses the only instance of completing no homework on April 20. As student 4B seems to have been absent on this day, we cannot infer that there was not a classroom activity that prevented student 4A from completing homework. However, in these instances, at least some homework completion is always possible. However, student 4A also received an average of 1 for socio-emotional behavior on that same day. This implies a correlation between that individual’s very “poor” behavior and/or attitude and the fact that the lack of homework completion. For example, the student may have had a particularly difficult day and lacked focus or acted out to avoid homework altogether. Though we cannot assume such behavior, we can use this information to work with students who have particular problems or need extra help in certain areas of social development. We would not diagnose children ourselves, rather forward such information to the student’s teacher(s) and allow them to decide whether action needs to be taken to improve the child’s well-being and success. SOAR’s objectives are to assist the children in the community wherever and whenever possible, so we would be happy to pass helpful information onto teachers and school administration if necessary.

The manner of frequency analysis proves beneficial to the evaluation of the SOAR program, as interns who see this data can understand each student’s personal experience in the program. We can also use this information as a tutor guide. The tutor may need to change his or her habits depending on the needs of the student. If this is not the case, the tutors should be knowledgeable that their practices and/or interactions are working very well for the student.

One final note in discussing the study lies in its limitations. Missing data is the most problematic part of program evaluation. The cause of missing data varies, but some of the most common reasons are student absence and issues involving tutor completion of the questionnaires. Student absence is self-explanatory. However, tutor issues comprise an array of reasons for missing data. Some tutors do not consider reading a homework assignment, while others as well as all teachers do. Therefore, this may be the cause of an excessive amount of “N/A” responses to the *Homework Completion* section of the tutor notes. In addition, tutors have been known to forget to fill out the reverse side of the survey sheet. Once again, the data is null for the student on that day. Finally, if the tutor is assigned to work with a new student or the student is assigned a different tutor on account of either one’s absence, often the tutor neglects to write notes for that student. In cases such as these, it is vital that the room leader remind tutors that notes must be filled out for each student every day of the program. Perhaps we should also explain in greater detail what sort of behavior tutors should be looking for, as well as clarifying what constitutes ‘homework’ and assignment comprehension and engagement.

**Conclusion**

Though we may not have direct and sufficient evidence to support the SOAR program’s benefit to the students of the community, further analysis of the program using these methods (in the next semester or year) cannot yet be discounted. We have put together a study using simple methods and a form of survey that has multiple purposes. If future SOAR interns use this form of evaluation, we are certain that sufficient data will represent SOAR’s positive influence on students’ behavior, academic performance, and overall well-being.

Tutor communication, especially through the *Comments* sections of the notes, is of vital importance in itself to the proper mentoring and tutoring of the students. The volunteers can ask and receive advice from other tutors, room leaders, and teachers. What may at first glance seem unimportant observations, once taken together in daily records, may form a pattern of behavior or diagnose a student’s learning habits or troubles. This evaluation aspect of SOAR, whether the data alone proves its importance, demonstrates how the program cares for the students in the community. Tutors and teachers take the time to fill out this information, read it, reflect on it, and respond to it, all in the hopes that we can collectively assist in the betterment of our future (the students of today).

**Appendix**

***Student Identification Reference Table***

*\*For the benefit of future research purposes only*

ID Student

1A Simon

1B Temo

2A Andrea

2B Jovany

3A Marco

3B Ri’Chard

4A Juan

4B Ri’Chiya

5A Jeankarlo

5B Pedro

***Tutor Notes (Questionnaire used in this study)***

**S.O.A.R. Tutor Notes Student\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Grade\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Week of:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| Tutor |  |  |  |
| Student’s Daily Goal |  |  |  |
| To what extent did the student make progress toward his/her daily goal? | 1(None) 2 3 4 (Did it!) | 1(None) 2 3 4 (Did it!) | 1(None) 2 3 4 (Did it!) |

SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| ...focused? (prepared, organized, attentive) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| …eager to learn? (asking questions, enthusiastic/ engaged in novel topic) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| …independently learning? (seeks challenges, connects material with his/her interests) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| …collaborative? (group and/or pair activities) | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| …flexible? (compromises, able to switch to new subject/task easily) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| …engaged/interactive with you? (as tutor, mentor, friend) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| …respective of authority? (follows directions, abides by rules/goals of SOAR, listens to you) | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 | 1 2 3 4 |
| Comments |  |  |  |

**To what extent was the student... (1-Never, 2-Occasionally, 3-Often, 4-Very Often)**

HOMEWORK COMPLETION

**(1-None, 2-Some, 3-Most, 4-All)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| How much homework did the student complete? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |

**(1-None, 2-Occasionally, 3-Often, 4-Very Often)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| To what extent did the student comprehend his/her  math homework or activity? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| …writing homework or activity? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| To what extent was the student engaged in math-  based games/ activities? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| …writing-based games/ activities? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| To what extent did the student demonstrate task  persistence? (multiple attempts, asking questions) | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| Comments |  |  |  |

READING

**(1-Not at all, 4-Almost fully)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| How long did the student read? |  |  |  |
| In what language did the student read? | Eng Span  Both N/A | Eng Span  Both N/A | Eng Span  Both N/A |
| To what extent was the student engaged in the book(s) read? | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| To what extent did the student comprehend the story/-ies? (relay events back to you, etc.) | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A | 1 2 3 4 N/A |
| Comments |  |  |  |

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
| For the student’s teacher |  |  |  |
| For SOAR staff (room leader, Cindy, Lila) |  |  |  |

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1. +− We removed the ‘overall goal’ section since we implemented the use of the new notes several weeks into the spring semester of the SOAR program. As a note to future PSYC 290 and 494 interns working with the SOAR program, room leaders should encourage discussion between the student and tutors of a semester objective based on reasons for the teacher’s recommendation for the student’s participation. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. \*The tutor also has the option of rating this aspect “not applicable.” If the tutor records this instead of a numeric rating, the question is simply ignored in analysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. + We asked room leaders (since they have the most contact with each child in their group) to choose one student who had already demonstrated some amount of progress and one who needs heavy improvement in at least one of the areas presented above (socio-emotional or academic). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. α A student identification table is located in the appendix. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. χχ We rounded the averages to the next whole number (3.4🡪3, and 3.5🡪4), giving the student the benefit of the doubt as well as making analysis as clear and simple as possible without worrying about decimal places. The averages were taken of only those scores of value-a zero or ‘not applicable’ was never included in analysis of any kind. Also note that April 14 marks the middle of the time period of the study, so to simplify, we will also ignore this date for the purposes of evaluating behavior and academic averages. Reasons for this will be clear in the following discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)