

Success For All Foundation

Around the Corner

DOES THE AROUND THE CORNER MODEL IMPROVE YOUNG STUDENTS' EARLY READING SKILLS?

Project Overview

THE PROBLEM: What Challenge Did the Program Try to Address?

The Around the Corner (ATC) intervention aims to address the challenges of disadvantaged and minority children with less exposure to pre-reading and vocabulary who enter school academically behind middle-class students. It is also designed to work with English language learners (ELL) because of its emphasis on videos and pictures to build vocabulary.

THE APPROACH: What Strategies Did the Program Employ?

From 2012–2016, the Success For All (SFA) Foundation received an i3 development grant¹ to implement the ATC program, a technology-enhanced approach to early literacy that builds off earlier SFA models such as Curiosity Corner and KinderCorner.² This approach is based on research that shows video content can enhance children's learning, especially to demonstrate concepts that are not possible to illustrate with actual objects. The ATC program was evaluated with a randomized controlled trial in 12 elementary schools with preschool and kindergarten students. Schools that were not assigned to the ATC group received a different SFA program.

¹ Success for All Foundation received an i3 development grant supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program through Grant Number U411C110042. Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of novel or substantially more practices that address widely shared education challenges. All i3 grantees are required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their projects. The quality of evidence required to demonstrate a project's effectiveness depends on a project's level of scale or grant type.

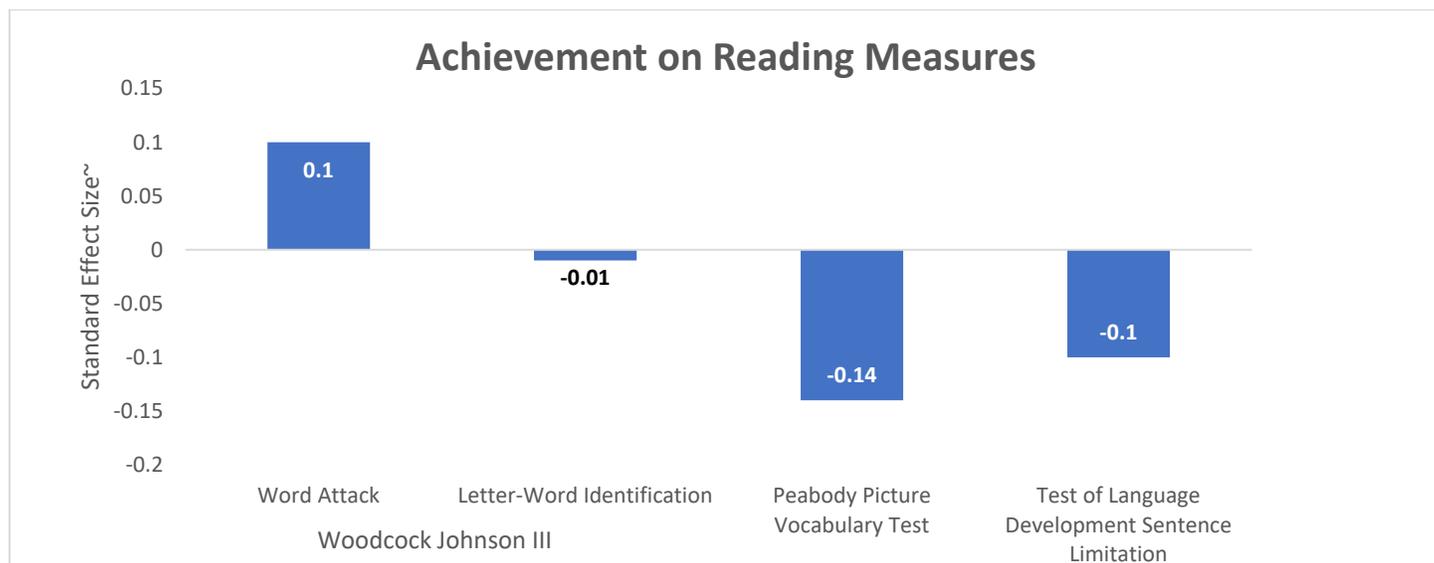
² Curiosity Corner, an SFA program for preschool students, and KinderCorner, an SFA program for kindergarten students, focus on language development, cooperative learning, and an emphasis whole-child development.

THE AROUND THE CORNER CORE MODEL

- **Computer Activities and Videos.** The program uses embedded multimedia to enable teachers to demonstrate how the world works when using actual objects in the classroom would not be possible. These activities might include videos, pictures, and audio.
- **Video-Based PD.** Teachers in the program receive interactive, video-based professional development (PD).
- **Home Links.** Home Links provide the opportunity for students to watch videos again at home with or without parents and family members. These repeat experiences are helpful with language concepts and vocabulary and help parents understand and reinforce what their children are learning.

Summary of Results

DID THE AROUND THE CORNER PROGRAM IMPROVE STUDENT READING SKILLS?



~Education researchers generally interpret effect sizes as follows: 0.2 = small, 0.5 = medium, and 0.8 = large. If the impact does not have an effect size of 0.2 or greater, it is not meaningful, even if it is statistically significant.³

- **READING SKILLS.** There were no statistically significant differences between the program and non-program groups in early reading skills.

Please see Appendices B and C for information about the evaluation's design and the quality of the evidence, respectively

³ Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 155-159.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

ATC noted a variety of positive qualitative findings and other key takeaways. Some are shared below.

- **HOME-TO-SCHOOL INTERACTIONS.** The qualitative study, which included teacher questionnaires, parent surveys, and school visit reports, revealed that both teachers and parents had positive attitudes toward the program and its impact on student engagement and improving school-to-home connections. Home Links was a tool used to reinforce school learning at home and extend knowledge and understanding of curriculum to parents and families at home. Additionally, according to the survey results, parents felt more connected to what was happening at school and could reinforce learned vocabulary.
- **COMPARISON TO OTHER SFA PROGRAMS.** The comparison schools in this study were implementing other SFA programs, such as Curiosity Corner and KinderCorner. As these programs are already research-supported programs for early literacy, it is promising that the ATC program produced similar results to the comparison groups. This could mean that ATC has the potential to increase student engagement and parental involvement.
- **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS.** Ninety-three percent of teachers believed that the ATC program improved students' language and literacy skills. They believed the most valuable components of the program on these language development skills were the songs, music, and dancing that were included.

For More Information

Evaluation Reports

Additional Reports

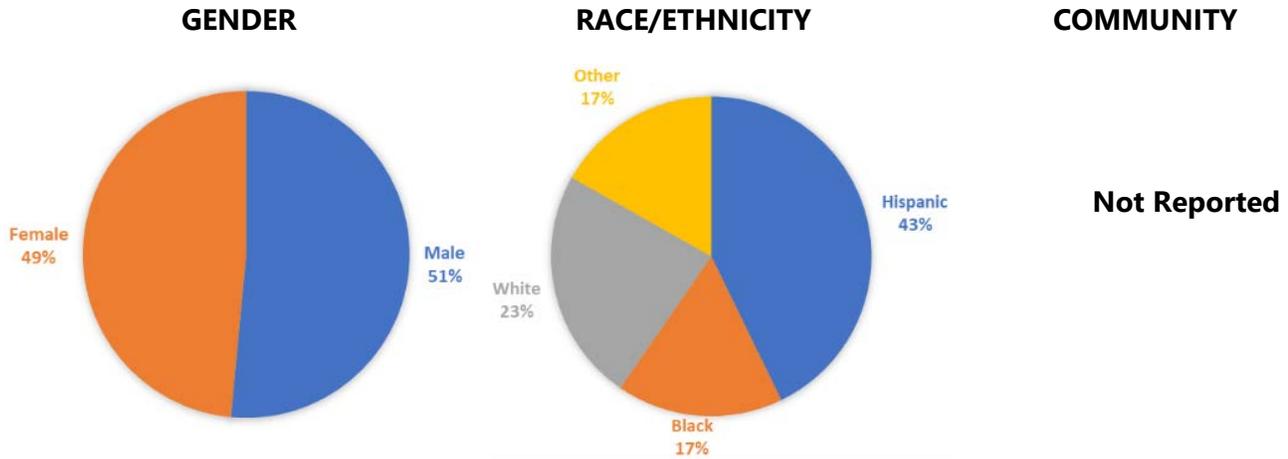
[Final Evaluation Report \(PDF\)](#) (Center for Research and Reform in Education, Johns Hopkins University, 2016)⁴

[Success for All Foundation website](#)

⁴ The information and data for this report was collected from the most recent report as of 01/23/2020: [Evaluation of Around the Corner: Funded by the Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\) Grant #112209](#) from CRRE, Johns Hopkins University, 2016.

Appendix A: Students Served by the Project⁵

GRADE(S)													
PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



HIGH-NEED STUDENTSⁱ

Economically Disadvantaged	English Learners	Students with Disabilities
99.5%	30.2%	7.5%

⁵These data reflect the entire student population served by the intervention, not just the evaluation sample used in the impact study.

Appendix B: Impact Evaluation Methodology⁶

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Design:	Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial
Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve elementary schools were randomized to either the ATC condition or another, business-as-usual Pre-K and Kindergarten program from SFA. All Pre-K and K teachers participated in the intervention over the two years. Multiple linear regression was used to estimate the impact of ATC on students' early reading skills. The model included the treatment indicator, baseline-pre-test score, ELL status, baseline performance level, and interaction terms.
Study Length:	Two years –2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Study Setting	12 elementary schools nationally
Final Sample Sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Intervention:</i> 276 preschool and kindergarten students <i>Comparison:</i> 272 preschool and kindergarten students
Intervention Group Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent Black: 26.4%, Latino: 38%, White: 17.4%, Other Race/Ethnicity: 18.1%, ELL: 33.8%, Female: 48.4%, FARMS: 100%, Special Education: 7.9%
Comparison Group Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent Black: 7%, Latino: 47.6%, White: 29.9%, Other Race/Ethnicity: 15.5%, ELL: 26.7%, Female: 48.7%, FARMS: 98.9%, Special Education: 7%
Data Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodcock-Johnson III Word Attack subtest (confirmatory) Woodcock-Johnson III Letter Word Identification subtest Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) Test of Language Development (TOLD-4) Sentence Imitation subtest
Key Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reading and vocabulary skills on the confirmatory measure

⁶ These data reflect only the evaluation sample in the impact study, not the entire population served.

Appendix C: Quality of the Evidence

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW⁷

STUDY	RATING
Summary of 67 Evaluations, Abt Associates, 2018	N/A No Evidence of at least one positive, statistically significant impact on student outcomes

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA REVIEW⁸

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/23/2020	N/A

NATIONAL CENTER ON INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS REVIEW⁹

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/23/2020	N/A

⁷ <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>

⁸ <https://www.evidenceforessa.org/>

⁹ <https://intensiveintervention.org/>

Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantee Results Summary

Development, 2012-2016

The [*Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\)*](#), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is a Federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education within the Office of Innovation and Improvement. i3 grants help schools and local education agencies work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community to develop and expand innovative practices that improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, and/or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students.

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ⁱ "High-need student" refers to a student at risk of academic failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, attend high-minority schools, are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, in foster care, have been incarcerated, have disabilities, or who are English learners. For more information see: [*Applications for New Awards; Investing in Innovation Fund-Development Grants, 81 FR 24070 \(April 25, 2016\)*](#).