



**FORMING RELATIONSHIPS TO
BENEFIT SCHOOLING: HOW
STUDENTS AND MENTORS PERCEIVE
BENEFITS OF AFTERSCHOOL
MENTORING**

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do student mentees and their mentors perceive the mentoring program?
- How does participating in a mentoring program influence how students perceive relationships between what they accomplish during the mentoring program and formal schooling?



CONTEXT

- Students meet for 75 minutes once a week
- All students attend Summit Elementary School and are in 2nd, 4th or 5th grade
- 94.6% of students are minority and more than 95% eligible for free or reduced lunch
- 18% of Trinity students are minority and 40% receive financial aid
- Goal is to connect children in Hartford to their full potential; they do this by providing students from several schools with role models in the Hartford area. According to the mission, these role models are tutors who help to use a holistic approach to link enrichment directly to the school curricula (Helping Hands, 2011).
- Lesson plans complement the work done in school



SIGNIFICANCE

- Mentoring: “a relationship between an older individual and a young person that lasts over a period of time and focuses on the younger person’s developmental needs” (Ryan, Whittaker and Pinckney 2002)
- Important to acknowledge education that takes place outside of the classroom
- Understand how these youth feel relationships with college students who live in their neighborhood affect their academic achievement.



LITERATURE REVIEW

- Goldner and Mayseless (2009)—study done that found an association between the quality of the relationship and improvement in the students' academic and social functioning
- Ryan, Whittaker and Pinckney (2002)—found that there were improvements in the kids and they felt like their mentors were helping them learn



METHODS

- Individual Interviews
 - 3 second graders
 - 3 fourth
 - 5 fifth graders
 - 2 mentors
 - Asked questions about their experiences in Helping Hands and the relationships formed
- Participant-observer over 3 months for 3 hours a week
- Used pseudonyms
- Recorded and transcribed all interviews



THESIS

- I found that through the strong relationships that are formed, the students feel comfortable talking about both academic and personal issues with their tutors which they feel impacts their formal schooling.



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: *SMART AND VERY KIND AND LOVING*

- “fun, sweet, and helpful”, “pretty, fun and talented” and “nice, kind and compassionate” (Male and female mentees).
- Mentors start sessions by asking about week, school and family, and then have made sure that she fully grasps all of the concepts from her homework.
- “Like if my friend is doing something or I didn’t like my teacher that day, sometimes my tutor can help me think what to do” (5th grade female mentee—4th year in program).
 - Confides in tutor about personal issues



SMART AND VERY KIND AND LOVING

- “I think they think we’re adults who have all the answers to everything. I’ve definitely never had a kid who just wants to do homework. They always want to have more of a relationship than that and talk about their lives.” (Female mentor—4th year in program)
- “They were both kind of interested in big topics they were just starting to hear about. So they would ask me about drugs and violence and one time they asked about sex. So I think both of them had heard it for the first time in school and didn’t know what to make of it.” (Female mentor—4th year in program)
- The students love to share their excitement about what they’re accomplishing in schools



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: *HELP ME WITH MATH, READING AND VOCABULARY HOMEWORK*

- “My mentor may be able to help me with math, reading, vocabulary word homework and so far I just got my first hard math problems so she’s helping me with that” (4th grade male mentee—2 years in program).
- “Sometimes teaches me how to do stuff and then we do it at school which helps me.” (2nd grade female mentee—first time in program)
- Observed tutor teaching student multiplication tables by using manipulatives and then slowly transitioning to having mentee do the problems in her head or on paper



CONCLUSION

- The relationships formed in mentoring programs positively affect how children perceive their academics
- Based on my conversations and observations, I was able to see how these relationships between college students and children from the college's neighborhood can raise students' self esteem and their perceived academic achievements
- In future research it would be interesting to see students' grades to know if there actually was a true academic benefit to having strong mentoring relationships

