



# National Tutoring Association

## Peer Tutoring Factsheet

**The research is clear that Peer Tutoring is academically effective and costs significantly less to oversee than private practice or other professionally driven tutoring programs.**

### **What the research says . . .**

- A list of proven instructional and administrative practices suggests some of the actions teachers and schools can take to enhance student learning and other outcomes. Peer tutoring, with its focus on monitoring, support, and corrective feedback, represents specific means of implementing these practices. (Cotton 2002)
- Students at all grade levels participating in tutorial programs, improved their reading performance more than the expected gain for the typical student at that grade level. (AmeriCorps 2001)
- Peer tutoring usually resulted in significant cognitive gains for both the tutor and the tutee. (Britz, Dixon, and McLaughlin 1989)
- In a study of middle school students, peer tutoring was identified as a successful and appropriate educational intervention for readers. (Fisher 2001)
- When children teach children, the result is marked improvement in student learning which increases the productivity of the school. In peer tutoring, students are "prosumers" - they are both producers and consumers of education. (Peer Research Laboratory 2002)
- Peer tutoring is the most cost effective way to improve both math and reading performance. (Peer Research Laboratory 2002)
- Effects on both tutors and students were positive in the areas of learning, attitude toward subject matter, and self-concept. (Cohen and Kulik 1981)
- Peer tutoring is well worth the cost and effort when compared with the costs of many alternatives that are teacher or computer mediated. (Greenwood, Carta, and Kamps 1990)
- Seventy-one percent of the students in six remedial middle school teachers' classes achieved 70% accuracy on criterion measures for four out of five days, while 19% of the control students did, when tutored by four of the best students in each class. (Palincsar and Brown 1986)
- Peer tutors are more effective for reading programs because parents may not always be available or appropriate tutors; peer tutors are plentiful, or available for training and can be readily monitored and organized; low-progress readers respond readily to peer tutors; and tutoring is beneficial to tutors and increases their caring for others. (Wheldall and Colmar 1990)
- Peer tutoring is cost effective, has a sound theoretical basis and is effective has demonstrated a positive impact on student learning. (Bartz and Miller 1991)
- Peer tutoring contributes to a child's social and cognitive development. (Benard 1990)

- Peer tutoring is effective, particularly for at-risk students.(Gaustad 1992)
- After six weeks of tutoring, 16 truant and tardy junior high school students all made significant gains in locus of control and most showed decreased truancy and tardiness. (Lazerson, Foster, Brown, and Hummel 1988)
- Peer tutoring also has benefit for the tutor. High school students raised their own reading scores almost three years, during a five month period, as a result of tutoring fourth graders in reading. (Peer Research Laboratory 2002)
- The evaluations of five programs were unanimously positive. Evidence was found for lasting effects, especially if the students continued to receive low-cost follow up. The study also found less attrition in grade and fewer referrals to special education for students in these programs. The findings on achievement are compared to the findings of other interventions -- reduction in class size, use of teacher aides, and the use of an extended school year. One-to-one tutoring is seen as a less costly and more effective alternative to these practices. (Center for Research on the Education of Disadvantaged Students)
- The research supplies strong evidence that tutoring is an effective strategy for addressing the needs of low-performing students. The research also suggests that: Tutoring programs should have a strong guiding purpose in order to direct the program tutors in their decision making. This guiding purpose should emphasize the diagnostic and prescriptive interaction that is a natural product of tutoring; Individuals of various ages and levels of education can be effective tutors once provided with appropriate training; Given their individualized nature, tutoring sessions need to be evaluated on a continual basis to ensure the day-to-day integrity of the intervention; L. . . logistical concerns such as availability of materials, instructional space, and session scheduling can have a significant effect on the success of a tutoring program. In keeping with this notion, finding quality tutors also should be a primary concern. (Snow)

## **What are the benefits of peer tutoring?**

### ***Benefits to students:***

- Improves self confidence
- Improves self-esteem, as they become more successful students
- Improves academic achievement
- Improves attitude towards the subject matter and school in general
- Encourages greater persistence in completing tasks and courses
- Encourages the use of appropriate and efficient learning and study strategies
- Provides an opportunity for individualized instruction
- Provides opportunities for questions and clarification of difficult concepts
- Provides additional review and practice of difficult material

Kalkowski (1995) reported the following additional benefits to students:

- The learning of academic skills
- The development of social behaviors and overall discipline
- Enhancement of peer relations
- Improved internal locus of control
- Students who acquire skills transferable to employment or business
- Students who acquire skills transferable to parenting
- Improved vocabulary skills
- Improved reading skills

***Benefits to tutors:***

- Frequent review of previously learned material helps with learning new material in more advanced courses.
- Encourages higher level thinking
- Improves subject specific knowledge and facilitates deeper understanding of subject matter
- Improves general knowledge
- Develops confidence in learning ability
- Improves motivation for studying
- Improves knowledge of learning, studying and test-taking techniques
- Builds self-esteem and creates a sense of pride in helping others
- Develops communication skills
- Provides experiences that may help with later employment or career goals
- Develops empathy for others
- Improves attitudes towards subject area
- Increases general knowledge
- Develops a sense of responsibility

***Benefits to educational institutions and programs:***

- Promotes deeper learning of material which in turn enables coordinators to set higher goals for student learning
- Improves student retention of material
- Reduces drop out and failure rates among students
- Provides a cost effective means of providing individualized instruction to students who need it

For more information regarding peer tutoring, “**TutorPalooza**” and the year-round Peer Tutoring Initiative, please contact the National Tutoring Association, at [ntatutor@aol.com](mailto:ntatutor@aol.com), 863.529.5206 or visit our website at [www.ntatutor.org](http://www.ntatutor.org).