

Promising Practices:

Tutor Recruitment, Training, Support & Retention

Tutor Recruitment

- **What Have You Tried?**
- **What Do You Plan to Try?**



Tutor Recruitment: What Others Do

- Use *Penny Saver* free ad space
- Use the local newspaper “volunteer” column if applicable



- Use the media: newspapers (press releases, local columnists), newsletters, television stations, radio
- Use current tutors to post flyers in their neighborhoods



- Recruit via churches

- Put flyers in local coffee shops, grocery stores, and public library



Tutor Recruitment: What Others Do

College Students / Early Graduates

- Work study
- Social Work and Education Departments
- Americorps VISTA



Tutor Recruitment: What Others Do

Senior Corps Volunteers

Find the RSVP in Your County!

Tutor Recruitment: Tips

- Give yourself plenty of lead time
- Use a clear job description that includes position title, work location, schedule, volunteer impact (how the volunteer's aid will impact the program's mission, responsibilities and duties, qualifications (education, age, skills, experience, personal characteristics), info on the training that will be provided, date, contact info
- Require a volunteer application, references, and perhaps do a criminal background check
- While college students can make excellent volunteer tutors, do not rely on them exclusively – also recruit adults of varying ages (college students' schedules do not also sync perfectly with the after-school tutoring program schedule)
- Recruit substitutes also (with college students, may suggest that freshman first try it out as a sub – may underestimate their college coursework
- Use a floater if possible – not assigned a particular kid, just a particular day. Great as a last-minute sub and a general helper

Tutor Recruitment: What to Look For



- Age limits – high school tutors are okay but only for littlest kids, and ensure you have mature students with experience in babysitting, helping younger siblings, etc.
- Dependability is the #1 characteristic!
- If possible, recruit professional educators or tutors as “super tutors” or “tutor coaches.” Use such people to help compose student assessments, review tutor comments and give feedback/advice, do pre-service training, write lesson plans

Tutor Recruitment: Tutor/Student Matching

- Generally the same gender matches are best, though you can use women with small boys
- Tutor/Student Ratio – generally one-on-one is best! For older students, a small group of 3 with a tutor can be OK



- Use prayer!
- Determine if child needs an adult (rather than a high school or college student)
- Have siblings come on the same day

THE TUTORS

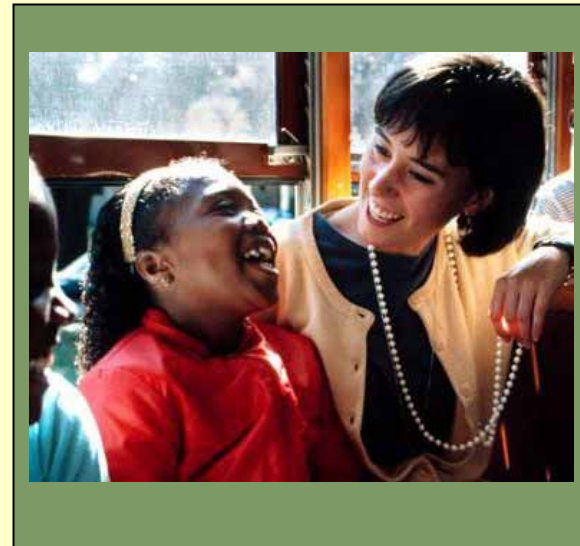
Tutor Training & Retention

Tutor Retention: General Principles

1. Well-trained and well-supported tutors last
2. Affirmed tutors last
 - Your gratitude
 - The child's progress
 - Their sense of ownership
3. Discouraged tutors quit

Best Practices in Tutor Training

1. *Tutors are equipped to vary their teaching style and method of presentation to incorporate learner's preferred learning styles.*
 - Auditory Learners
 - Visual Learners
 - Kinesthetic Learners



Best Practices in Tutor Training

- Tutors are guided in their work by the program's reading specialist/volunteer/staff director who provides training and ongoing feedback to the tutors.*



Best Practices in Tutor Training

A Great Resource: The Afterschool Training Toolkit



<http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/index.html>

Best Practices in Tutor Training

3. *Tutors receive a Tutor Handbook with an outline of the tutoring program mission and policies and procedures for reference.*

Best Practices in Tutor Training

4. *Tutors are taught what they should be able to expect in terms of a “normal” child’s reading and math ability level for his/her grade level and the typical instructional goals for that grade level.*



Best Practices in Tutor Training

5. *Tutors are trained in the four basics of reading: rereading, word work, writing, and reading a new text.*

- Rereading familiar text – do it aloud or shared aloud with student, then dialogue
- Decoding – learning letters and sounds, looking for patterns



Best Practices in Tutor Training

6. *Tutors are given practical suggestions and training on how to assist students with homework and how to incorporate fun activities into the learning process (this assumes availability of good learning games, activities, and tools)*



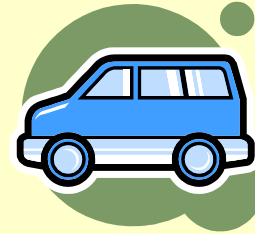
Best Practices in Tutor Training



7. *Tutors are given role-play opportunities and other hands-on forms of learning*

Supporting Your Tutors

1. **Provide transportation to those who need it**
2. **Provide frequent communication between the program site supervisor and tutors**
3. **Strong on-site program supervision is important – need clear guidelines for what tutors are to be doing each session**
4. **Ideally: Provide tutors with written lesson plans to follow with their tutee**
5. **Offer your tutors ongoing opportunities to consult with teachers or reading specialists or seasoned tutuors**
6. **Provide your tutors with “cheat sheets” of tutoring techniques for them to consult during tutoring sessions with students (Don’t assume tutors remember strategies, methods, or techniques after training.)**



Supporting Your Tutors



7. **Make sure you affirm and appreciate your tutors regularly.**
8. **Ask your tutors for their feedback, input, and opinions on how to make the program better.**
9. **Provide some in-service training. (Remember that most tutors won't know what questions they have/might have at the pre-service training. A later training after they have some sessions under their belt gives them a chance to ask pressing questions.)**
10. **Recruit substitute tutors and floaters.**
11. **Have tutors gather BEFORE students arrive for a brief time of prayer.**
12. **Provide tutors with a student folder for their tutee.**

Supporting Your Tutors

13. **Be sure tutors are empowered for disciplining their tutees by having your program's discipline system crystal clear and consistently followed; be sure there is a "principal" figure for tutors to turn to if needed**
14. **Empower tutors by providing a clear program schedule, with the session broken down into segments to enhance learning and keep things interesting for the child. Start and end the program day on time!**
15. **Don't ask tutors to do OTHER jobs – recruit other volunteers for other things you need like IT help or a person to get the crafts ready or prepare the snacks.**
16. **Create community among your tutors – hold occasional (non-mandatory) fellowship events, encourage tutors to share their phone numbers and emails, invite tutors into discussions on how to address problems/challenges one tutor may be experiencing**

