

Ready Set Learn (RSL) is a free one-to-one summer tutoring program that focuses on teaching children how to use strategies that build literacy and social emotional skills. RSL is for children in grades K to 6 who are struggling with reading, writing, or math. Many of these children also experience lack of confidence, frustration, anxiety, lack of self-regulation, and negative self talk. Research shows there is a strong connection between mental well-being and learning.

All elementary schools in PEI have access to this program through our referral process with resource teachers and principals. We offer this program in English, French Immersion and Francophone. Each child receives tutoring for 50 mins per week for eight weeks in a public library, school, or community center.

Our tutors use wise practices for building resilience and core life skills. They are trained by experts in the field of education. They learn about evidence-based approaches that boost literacy and social emotional skills and how to create a fun, safe, and positive environment for each child.

This year, we helped 495 students develop the literacy and social-emotional skills they need to address their learning challenges. We also helped 16 future educators gain knowledge and skills related to literacy and social-emotional learning.



“It’s better to make mistakes and keep trying than to give up.”

RSL Student



“I learned that I am smarter than I think.” - RSL Student

- ◆ **94%** of students enjoyed their tutoring sessions
- ◆ **93%** of students learned strategies to keep trying when learning was challenging
- ◆ **74%** of students learned strategies to work through difficult feelings related to learning challenges
- ◆ **99%** of parents would recommend this program to others
- ◆ **87%** of 324 parents who opted to receive our emails regarding social-emotional learning, felt the information included helped them better understand their child’s growth

The full third-party evaluation report is available at:

www.peiliteracy.ca

2023 Ready Set Learn Evaluation Summary

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1. Evaluation Methodology

1.1 Evaluation Approach:

To help assess the effectiveness of the “Ready Set Learn” summer tutoring program and the social emotional learning approach, a participatory evaluation was conducted that focused on both process and outcomes. The process evaluation looked at how the program unfolded, what worked well, and what could be done to improve it. The outcomes evaluation looked at level of satisfaction with the program and its impact on the target population.

1.2 Evaluation Process:

Three representatives from the PEI Literacy Alliance worked with the evaluation consultant to develop and implement the evaluation process. They worked directly with the consultant to sign-off on the evaluation approach, determine evaluation questions, create a data collection plan, create data collection tools, and support data collection processes.

The data collection methods and sources used to collect evaluation data included the following:

- Tutor surveys: two surveys were conducted with tutors. One was completed at the end of the tutor training and collected feedback on their experience with the training, what they learned, and their readiness to provide tutoring services. The other was completed at the end of the summer tutoring program and collected feedback on their experience providing tutoring services and implementing the social emotional learning model. A total of 16 tutors took part in the program. All 16 completed the post training survey, as well as the final program survey.
- Tutor mentor surveys: two surveys were conducted with tutor mentors. One was completed at the end of the mentor training and collected feedback on their experience, what they learned, and their readiness to act as mentors. The other was completed at the end of the summer tutoring program to collect feedback on their experience as a tutor mentor. All four mentors completed both surveys.
- Student interviews: tutors conducted interviews with students at the end of the summer program to collect feedback on their experience with the program and what they learned. A total of 391 students were interviewed.

- Parent survey: an online survey was conducted with parents upon completion of the program to collect feedback on how the program unfolded, their child’s experience with the program, the email resources sent out weekly, and the social emotional learning approach. A total of 124 parents completed the survey – 119 in English and 5 in French.

1.3 Analysis:

All quantitative data collected was inputted into a database and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies) and all qualitative data was analyzed manually for common themes (frequency and intensity of responses).

2. Evaluation Findings

The evaluation findings are very positive, showing that tutors, mentors, students, and parents had a good experience with the “Ready Set Learn” tutoring program and the social emotional learning approach.

2.1 Mentor Training and Experience:

As part of the tutoring program, four mentors were trained to support tutors throughout the summer. All mentors noted they enjoyed the training, had plenty of chances to ask questions and share comments, and had plenty of chances to practice using what they learned. Three out of four felt the information was presented in a way that was easy to understand and 1/4 felt it somewhat was.

“I really enjoyed both the social emotional and mentorship training! Both offered practical suggestions to improve our relationships with students and mentees. We got enough information to be prepared for our roles but not so much that we felt overwhelmed. I think both of these elements would be helpful for mentors in future years.” (Survey Respondent)

The final mentor survey conducted at the end of the program showed that all mentors enjoyed being a mentor, were clear on their roles and responsibilities, and were given the support and guidance they needed from the PEI Literacy Alliance to carry out their mentor roles. Additionally, all believe they provided their tutors with the support and guidance they needed and noted they would work as a mentor again.

"I really enjoyed getting to be a mentor and getting to help not only the students but other tutors as well." (Survey Respondent)

"I really enjoyed being a mentor and helping my mentees when they had questions. It was helpful for them that I was able to draw on my past experiences as a tutor to advise them. It was also very helpful to be able to consult with other mentors and work as a team to help our mentees. I really appreciated this opportunity to gain leadership experience, which I feel strongly will help me in the next few years." (Survey Respondent)

2.2 Tutor Training and Experience:

Of the 16 tutors who completed the tutor training evaluation, all noted they enjoyed the training, felt it was well organized, felt the information was presented in a way that was easy to understand, and felt they had plenty of chances to ask questions and share comments. Ninety-four percent were comfortable taking part in the training sessions, and 88% felt they had plenty of chances to practice using what they learned.

"The training overall was beneficial. I feel much more prepared to work with children." (Survey Respondent)

"I enjoyed the training sessions and found them very helpful!" (Survey Respondents)

At the end of the program, 81% of the 16 respondents that completed the final survey noted they were clear on their roles and responsibilities as a tutor and felt they were provided with the support they needed to carry out their job. Sixty-nine percent of respondents felt they had the tools and knowledge needed to build their own lesson plans, with 25% feeling they somewhat did and 6% feeling they did not.

"Overall, I found that working on my own was very rewarding. I learned a lot about how to work with children with different needs. I also learned different teaching strategies and resources by talking to the other tutors I worked with. I was initially a little lost in lesson planning, but after watching videos and talking to my mentor and co-workers, I gained some valuable tips. I enjoy the freedom that the Ready Set Learn program provides regarding lesson planning and activities, and I think it has been a wonderful learning experience for me." (Survey Respondent)

"Overall, this summer went very well, and I noticed progress with a lot of my students..." (Survey Respondent)

As part of the program, each tutor was provided with a mentor (four mentors each supporting three tutors). Eighty-three percent of tutors went to their mentor for support throughout the summer and all noted they felt comfortable doing so and were provided with good guidance in an effective, timely, and respectful manner.

*"...My mentor was very helpful and she was very easy to approach and ask for help."
(Survey Respondent)*

*"My mentor was great and very supportive. I felt comfortable asking her anything."
(Survey Respondent)*

2.3 Satisfaction with Tutoring Program and Benefits:

Overall, the evaluation findings show that tutors, students, and parents were satisfied with how the program unfolded and how students benefited. Ninety-four percent of tutors enjoyed being a tutor, all felt their students responded well to the tutoring program, and all noted they were able to build responsive and positive relationships with their students. Additionally, all felt they were able to help their students maintain their literacy through fun and interesting activities and 56% were able to teach their students new math (44% felt they somewhat were).

Of the 220 parents who completed the parent survey, 97% noted their child enjoyed the tutoring sessions, 99% felt the sessions were well organized, and 91% felt the program helped their child practice their reading, writing and math skills over the summer. Ninety-nine percent of parents would recommend this program to others.

These findings were supported by the 391 students who took part in the interviews, with 94% noting they had fun learning with their tutor. When asked what they found out about themselves during the program, 62% of students spoke about what they learned, their strengths, and their increased confidence in their abilities, and 32% spoke about the importance of not giving up, working hard, and having a positive attitude. In addition, 26% of student interviewees commented on improving their reading skills, 19% their math skills, and 6% their writing skills.

"I liked coming to tutoring." (Interview Participant)

"I like to learn new things and tutoring can be fun." (Interview Participant)

"Learning is fun! Tutoring was the best part of my summer!" (Interview Participant)

2.4 Social Emotional Learning Approach:

The evaluation findings also show that tutors, parents, and students were satisfied with the social emotional learning approach taken. All tutors noted they were able to model healthy social emotional, self-regulation and co-regulation strategies with students, as well as focus on effort versus outcomes. The most common social emotional tools tutors used and found most helpful were the Feelings Wheel and “The Magical Yet” book. All tutors felt their students benefited from this social emotional learning approach.

Likewise, student interview findings show that students benefited from this approach, with most of the 391 indicating they learned some social emotional skills, such as how to keep trying when learning gets hard (93%), how to name their feelings (76%), and how to work through their feelings (74%).

“That if I keep trying when something is hard it will start to get easier.” (Interview Participant)

“I like talking about feelings and understanding them, I think.” (Interview Participant)

“That getting things wrong is part of learning.” (Interview Participant)

As for parents, 63% of the 220 signed up to receive weekly emails about the program and social emotional learning. Of those who received the emails, 55% read all of them and 41% some of them. Eighty-seven percent of respondents felt the information in the emails helped them better understand social emotional learning and how it supports their child’s growth, 83% used some of the information/tips from the emails with their child, and 43% downloaded the social emotional learning resources linked to the emails. Overall, 86% would recommend the emails to other parents.