**Using Peer Assistance to Teach Academics**

**What is the evidence base?**

A *strong* level of evidence based on one high quality meta-analysis of 10 intervention studies including 8 single subject and 2 group studies.

**With whom was it implemented?**

- A total of 165 participants
- Students with
  - Learning Disabilities (3 studies)
  - Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (3 studies)
  - Moderate/severe Disabilities including mental retardation, Down syndrome, and hearing impairments (4 studies)
- Ages ranged from 13 – 17 years old (14 studies)
- Males: 10 studies included samples that were predominately male, Females: while 4 studies had samples that were predominately female
- Ethnicity/race information
  - None reported

**What is the practice?**

Teaching using peer assistance may include the following:

- Peer tutoring as the delivery of instruction by another student, either older or the same age as the tutee (Scruggs et al., 1985).
- Cooperative learning when groups of students of different ability, sex, or ethnicity work together to achieve mutual goals (Tateyama-Sniezek, 1990).
- Peer instruction when students are given specific roles to assist other students in completing an activity or teaching of a lesson (Hughes, Carter, Hughes, Bradford, & Copeland, 2002).

**How has the practice been implemented?**

- Students with disabilities worked together to complete computer-assisted mathematics lessons and recorded their scores (Bahr & Reith, 1991).
- A classwide peer tutoring approach used teacher assigned tutor/learner dyads based on prior performance rankings (Bell & Young, 1990).
- Student-directed instructional procedures were provided during pauses in teacher-delivered lectures (Hawkins, 1988; Hawkins & Brady, 1994).
- An instructional role intervention included conversational partners who were asked to assist each other in classroom assignments (Hughes, Carter, Hughes, Bradford, & Copeland, 2002).
• An individual peer tutoring approach consisted of students without disabilities trained to assist students with disabilities in academic tasks (Martella, Marchand-Martella, Young, & MacFarlane, 1995; Schloss, Kobza, & Alper, 1997; Staub, Spaulding, Peck, Gallucci, & Schwartz, 1996).
• A cooperative learning strategy was used to investigated conversational interactions between deaf/hard-of-hearing students and hearing teachers/classroom peers (Miller, 1995).
• Students completed, graded, and made corrections to homework assignments in heterogeneous groups during class time using the Cooperative Homework Team approach (O’Melia & Rosenberg, 1994).
• Students with learning disabilities were taught to recruit peer assistance during cooperative learning activities in general education classrooms (Wolford, Heward, & Alber, 2001).
• Peers served as instructional supports within a cooperative learning approach that used interactive dialogues to teach a specific writing strategy (Wong, Butler, Ficzere, & Kuperis, 1997).

Where has it been implemented?
• Public school
• Community settings
• Self-contained classroom

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

• For using non-instructional activities to increase social interactions (Hughes, Carter, Hughes, Bradford, & Copeland, 2002)
  http://www.nsttac.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdf/HughesEtAl2002PA.pdf
• For using peer tutoring to teach the Next Dollar Strategy (Schloss, Kobza, & Alper, 1997)

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?
• Number and Quantity (High School)
  o Reason quantitatively and use units to solve problems.
• Comprehension and Collaboration (Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening, Grades 6 – 12)
  o Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
How does this practice relate to the State’s Career Cluster Initiative: Essential Knowledge and Skills?

- Demonstrate mathematics knowledge and skills required to pursue the full range of post-secondary education and career opportunities (Academic Foundations)
  - Identify whole numbers, decimals, and fractions
  - Demonstrate knowledge of basic arithmetic operations such as: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division

References used to establish this evidence base:


Additional references:


