

About the Developmental Studies Center

Our Mission

Developmental Studies Center (DSC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to children's academic, ethical, and social development. Since 1980, DSC has developed school-based and after-school programs that help children develop capacities to think deeply and critically so they will continue learning throughout their lives and strengthen their commitment to such values as kindness, helpfulness, personal responsibility, and respect for others.

DSC's Programs Develop Skills and Community

Programs for use in classrooms

Caring School Community™ • Grades K–6

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program that builds community—in the classroom, across grades, schoolwide, and with families.

Making Meaning® • Grades K–8

The Making Meaning program is a reading comprehension curriculum that teaches comprehension strategies through read-alouds, collaborative structures, and reflective partner work.

SIPPS® (Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) • Grades K–12

The SIPPS program teaches decoding systematically. It is designed specifically for intervention and covers single-syllable decoding, short vowels, simple consonants, complex vowels, consonant digraphs, polysyllabic strategies, and high-frequency sight words.

Being a Writer™ • Grades K–5

The Being a Writer program is a yearlong writing curriculum—the first program of its kind to bring together the latest research in teaching writing with support for students' social and ethical development. (Available August 2007)

Programs for out-of-school time

AfterSchool KidzLit® • Grades K–8

The AfterSchool KidzLit program is a literacy enrichment program consisting of terrific read-aloud books, and discussions and activities that help kids make connections between the stories, their own lives, and the world.

AfterSchool KidzMath™ • Grades K–6

The AfterSchool KidzMath program provides academic enrichment using cooperative math games and literature-based activities. Kids deepen their understanding and practice important math skills—and have fun.

Science Explorer • Grades K–6

Science Explorer is an inquiry-based, interactive program of experiments using ordinary materials that inspire students to explore scientific principles.

Math Explorer • Grades 6–8

Math Explorer invites children to fly planes, launch rockets, learn card tricks, and make cool stuff to take home—all while practicing the important math skills middle-school students need extra help with.

For more information, please visit www.devstu.org or contact us by phone at 800.666.7270.



**DEVELOPMENTAL
STUDIES CENTER™**

Nonprofit. Research Based. Mission Driven. Since 1980.

Summary of *AfterSchool KidzLit*[™] Evaluation

January 2003

Researchers from the Developmental Studies Center (DSC) in Oakland, CA conducted an evaluation study during the 2001–02 school year of DSC's *AfterSchool KidzLit*[™] program. *AfterSchool KidzLit* is an academic enrichment program for grades K–8 designed to develop a young people's reading motivation, capacity to read, thinking skills, and prosocial development. The approaches used in the program are based on the latest research on reading skills development.

The evaluation study took place in eight after-school sites operated by LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow), a highly regarded after-school program in Los Angeles. Using a pre-post design, the study assessed changes over eight months among second- and fourth-graders. Reading-related attitudes and behaviors, vocabulary development, and social attitudes and behaviors were measured. Findings of this evaluation included the following:

- Both second and fourth graders showed significant increases in the amount of reading overall.
- Both second and fourth graders showed significant increases in reading efficacy (their feelings about their reading ability).
- Fourth graders showed positive effects related to social/ethical attitudes and behaviors, including:
 - significant increases in concern for others, and
 - significant increases in altruistic behavior.(These variables were not assessed at second grade.)
- Both second and fourth graders showed no significantly measurable increases in vocabulary development relative to what would be expected over a comparable time period. There were, however, significant vocabulary gains at one site that had high-quality implementation of the program and where participating youth were exposed to twice as many books as the average site.
- Among Spanish-speaking youth there were significant increases from pre- to post-test in the proportion of correct words that were answered in English.
- Benefits for participating youth reported by youth workers at program sites, included:
 - greater ability to think critically and express ideas verbally, and
 - greater understanding of self and others.

The positive effects of the *AfterSchool KidzLit* program stand in contrast to findings recently reported by the U. S. Department of Education in its report "When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st-Century Community Learning Centers Program," which was conducted at 34 after-school sites receiving 21st Century grants. This evaluation found no significant gains in reading scores for participating youth and no impacts on developmental outcomes.