

GO: An Evaluation of a One-to-One Tutoring Program
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Many communities offer tutoring programs to help academically struggling students succeed in school. Previous research indicates positive impacts of one-to-one tutoring in academic and non-academic ways for struggling students, and that children can benefit from having a long-term committed individual in their life as is it found to create an important and meaningful connection in their life. However, research findings on the effect of tutoring on academic performance varies and comparative analyses are uncommon.

Our research group conducted a program evaluation of Golden Opportunity (GO), a tutoring program offered to students in grades 2-8 in the Ithaca City School District (ICSD). This program provides a one-to-one tutoring to students that qualify for and are willing to participate in the program. Tutors are retired teachers who volunteer their time. Data included NYS Math and English Language Arts (ELA) test scores for grades 2-5 for GO students and a comparison group, math and reading assessment scores and qualitative data gathered through surveys from teachers, parents and tutors.

Results show that although there was no statistically significant difference in academic improvement between GO students and the comparison group, GO students gained more points or maintained their scores over time than the comparison group. Qualitative analyses revealed that teachers and parents of GO students felt these students have become more confident, independent, focused, and motivated over the course of the year. Parents and tutors also reported socioemotional growth as well.