College: COEPS
Department/Unit/Discipline: Communication Science & Disorders and Special Education
Received in: Spring 2014
Funding status: Funded

The Project "Bridging the Intergenerational Gap" (BIGG) Reading Program is a program in which older adults from Fairhaven Senior Center read to young children at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Children's Center on a regular basis. This program was developed in the Fall of 2012 by Drs. D, W, and R with the help of an Educational Outreach Grant. As part of the grant activities, the older adults received specialized training in which they were taught how to read to young children using appropriate strategies and materials. In the coming academic year, the Project BIGG Reading Program will be implemented and expanded with the assistance of the student researchers who will meet with the readers on a weekly basis and provide them support as needed.

Goals and Objectives
In the following we outlined the goals and objectives for our grant proposal:
Goal I: The undergraduate researchers will sustain the Project B.I.G.G Reading Program by (1) familiarizing themselves with the training manual, and forming relationships with the currently trained readers and (2) providing necessary resources to the trained Project B.I.G.G readers through regular meetings.
Goal II: The undergraduate researchers will expand the program and evaluate outcomes associated with the Project B.I.G.G Reading Program by (1) training a new cohort of older adult readers to participate in the reading program as well as providing support to these newly certified Project B.I.G.G. readers and (2) evaluating outcomes associated with the Project B.I.G.G. Reading program and activities.

Research Method
We will conduct qualitative research to learn how the Project BIGG reading program helps older adults to feel confident in reading to young children and gaining a sense of well-being. Participants will include older adults from Fairhaven Senior Center and staff at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Children's Center. Participants will include six to ten older adults residing at Fairhaven Senior Center and four staff persons who work with older adults. We will gather data through interviews and post-reading surveys. During our one year project, student researchers plan to explore the following research questions:
1. How does the "Reading to Young Children" training influence the quality of individual reading sessions?
2. How does participating in Project B.I.G.G contribute to the overall sense of well-being in the older adults?
To seek approval to conduct our research, we submitted an IRB proposal to the UWW Internal Review Board and received full approval by the board to seek consent from older adults and staff from FSC and UWW-CC who will participate in our research. IRB protocol number: D13405129Q.

Anticipated Significance
We anticipate that, as a result of participating in the program and interacting with each other, the older adults' sense of well-being will improve (as measured by interviews and written questionnaires), and the young children's world knowledge will expand. The mutually beneficial partnership between Fairhaven Senior Center and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater will enhance the relationship between the University and the local community-at-large, in keeping with the University's strategic plan. As a result of participating in the project, the student researchers will learn about the research process, develop intellectual and practical skills by interacting with adults and children and administering the program, and acquire an experience that will support our application for graduate school and will regard this as a capstone experience in their baccalaureate program.

Preparedness
Each undergraduate researcher is a senior majoring in Communication Sciences and Disorders who has completed coursework in human development, cognition, language learning, and disorders and has completed field placements in preschool programs. The students have made room in their academic program for this experience as it will enhance their knowledge.

Schedule/Action Plan

In the following table we outline the dates, goals and objectives and actions of our proposed project and how these actions support the achieved outcomes:

| Dates | Goals and Objectives | Actions and Evidence of How These Support Objectives |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Goal I: The undergraduate researchers will sustain Project B.I.G.G Reading Program by: | | |

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**Annotations (right margin):**

R1: Identity removed by annotators.

R1: It would bolster the proposal if reference/citation is included here.

R1: This section is clearly written and easy to understand.
R3: Well stated goals and objectives

R1: Would be better if the source of the training manual is specified. This would help provide credence to the validity of the training material.

R1: Specify the target cohort size. Does it affect the validity/conclusion of this study if the cohort size change?

R3: How are these activities going to support the goal stated above? For example: how will the "training of older adults" and "provide necessary resources" be achieved by interviews and surveys?

R3: Not sure how these contribute to the goals stated above... I think these should be part of the "Goals" section instead of the "Methods" section.

R1: This is a good piece of detail to include (although the proposal cover page does provide room to indicate this information as well). It is important to note that all research that involves human subjects, even those that only use anonymous surveys, MUST receive IRB approval before any research can commence.

R3: It almost looks like the "Goals" section is taken verbatim from a project initiated by the mentors, but unrelated to the project described here... if the "increase in the sense of well-being" is to be measured as an anticipated result, then that should be the goal.

R1: This timeline should include dissemination activities required of all UR grant recipients.
R2: 1st and 3rd person inconsistency.
R3: IF I knew specifically what the project is hoping to achieve, I could have made some comment on the feasibility of the project, but as it stands, I'm not sure exactly WHAT the objective of this project is... I don't see any tangible outcome. Like a dataset, or an art project... either. Is this project going to be presented at NCUR or UR Day? It is not mentioned on the timeline.
The timeline seems to relate to the original "Goal" of the proposal, but does not mention the activities listed in the "research methods" section. When will the researchers conduct "interviews and surveys"? It almost seems like two completely different people wrote this proposal separately, without reading what the other wrote.

| | One: familiarizing themselves with the training manual, and forming relationships with the currently trained readers | We will read Dr. Kann's reading strategies and meet with mentor X to discuss reading strategies. |
|---|---|---|
| September 2014 | | |
| | Two: providing necessary resources to the trained Project B.I.G.G readers through regular meetings | We will meet with the certified readers and review the previously learned reading strategies as well as determining what other resources they may need. |
| Goal II: The undergraduate researchers will expand and evaluate outcomes associated with the Project B.I.G.G Reading Program by: | | |
| October 2014 | One: training a new cohort of older adult readers to participate in the reading program as well as providing support to these newly certified Project B.I.G.G. readers. | Based on the knowledge that we gained from the manual and meeting with mentor X we will organize training. Part of the training will include exercises and reading activities. |
| Fall 2014 | Two: evaluating outcomes associated with the Project B.I.G.G. Reading program and activities. | By conducting group discussions, questionnaires and interviews. |

**R1:** Identity removed by annotators.

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Evaluation:

1) Are project activities and outcomes connected to the stated goals and objectives? **Strongly agree.**

2) Project feasibility. How realistic and appropriate is the study for this student in the time available? **Very appropriate. But see comment on cohort size and its effect on project results.**

3) Likelihood of project outcomes. Is the project likely to result in a data set, creative performance, art object, or academic project that can be presented and/or published? **Very likely.**