Youth Learning in Summer Programs
How Summer Programs Can Advance Student Learning

ITEST Webcast
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Build IT: Girls Building
Information Technology
Fluency Through Design

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Youth Learning in Summer Programs

The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement

• Report commissioned by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation
• Published June 2007
• “…researchers have arrived at a similar set of conclusions…children in all socioeconomic groups are learning at nearly the same rate…during the school year…”
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The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement, cont’d

• “...the differences in achievement between poor and middle-class children are rooted in the inequities that young people experience outside the schoolhouse door.”
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The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement, cont’d

• Include strategies that focus on where children are and what they are doing outside the classroom.

• **More nuanced understanding of social conditions.**

• Understanding that cognitive, emotional, and social competence provide a strong foundation for cognitive abilities.
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The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement, cont’d

![Graph showing Verbal Scores, California Achievement Tests, by SES and Season (Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson, 2001)]
“Over the last decade, a new model of summer programs has developed... These programs have the goal of boosting children’s academic performance, but unlike traditional summer schools, they take an accelerated, rather than remedial approach..."
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The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement, cont’d

“...They combine the qualities of typical youth development programs—building self-confidence, sense of mastery, sense of belonging...with high-quality curricula that increase engagement in learning and specific skills in reading, math, and other subjects.”
Youth Learning in Summer Programs

Key Components of Effective Summer Programs:

• skilled, caring staff
• an appropriate, engaging curriculum
• cultural relevance
• parent involvement
• an appropriate, engaging curriculum
• what have you seen in your program??
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Key Components of Summer Programs:

What have you seen in your program?

• Concentrated time (2 weeks, 5 hours per day) may have an impact*:
  - Summer participants more likely than their school year peers to be interested in IT careers.
• Field trips may be more influential than IT professional visits
  - Field trips generally last longer than IT professional visits
  - Girls see many careers in one field trip
  - Field trips more frequent and possible during the summer

• *Note: All summer participants also attended Build IT during the school year
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Key Components of Effective Summer Programs:

Skilled, caring staff

• Partnership with Girls Inc. is critical to the success of Build IT

• Successfully building staff capacity
  - Staff not always comfortable with IT content.
  - Girls are achieving technology fluency.
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Key Components of Effective Summer Programs:

Cultural relevance

• Staff and as frequently as possible, IT professionals, reflect girls’ ethnic backgrounds (African American and Latina)
• Girls created web sites in Spanish and English
• Girls developed web sites for a community organization (Girls Incorporated of Alameda County)
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Key Components of Effective Summer Programs:

An appropriate, engaging curriculum

- Girls apply their design skills to creating their own website that includes (and needs!) a chat feature
- Girls create a website for a client
- Girls attend fieldtrips to IT companies that create interactive online sites (Google, LeapFrog, SRI)
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SUCCEED Apprenticeship Project
Shodor, Durham NC

The SUCCEED Apprenticeship Program provides an opportunity for students excited about science, technology, mathematics, and engineering (STEM) to gain the experience they will need to become experts and pursue a career in one or more of the Information Technology (IT) areas.
Youth Learning in Summer Programs

Key Components of Effective Summer Programs:

What have you seen in your program?

• skilled, caring staff
• an appropriate, engaging curriculum
• cultural relevance
• parent involvement
• an appropriate structure