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Volunteers as Tutors and Trainers of Tutors: a Qualitative Study

Mark B. Thogmartin
Andrews University

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Andrews University
School of Education

VOLUNTEERS AS TUTORS AND TRAINERS OF TUTORS

A QUALITATIVE STUDY

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Mark B. Thogmartin

July 1998

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Mark B. Thogmartin

APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

Chair: Shirley A. Freed, Ph. D.

Member: Douglas Jones, Ph. D.

Member: James Tucker, Ph. D.

Director of Graduate Programs
Jerome D. Thayer, Ph. D.

Dean, School of Education
Karen Graham, Ph. D.

Date approved

July 1998

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ABSTRACT

VOLUNTEERS AS TUTORS AND TRAINERS OF TUTORS
A QUALITATIVE STUDY

by

Mark B. Thogmartin

Chair: Shirley Freed
ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

School of Education

Title: VOLUNTEERS AS TUTORS AND TRAINERS OF TUTORS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Name of researcher: Mark B. Thogmartin

Name and degree of faculty chair: Shirley A. Freed, Ph.D.

Date completed: July 1998

Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist church/North American Division initiated a Tutoring and Mentoring project in response to President Clinton's America Reads literacy campaign. This study documents the efforts of the church and the first cohort of trainees as they sought to establish tutoring projects in their home locales.

Method

The author of this study was involved as a co-trainer and a participant-observer during the initial 1-week training session held at the North American Division Headquarters. This training was intended to equip the participants to become tutors of children and trainers of tutors in a primary-level tutoring project. During the school year
immediately following the training, two of the original participants were successful in establishing tutoring projects. Their successes were examined in-depth by observations and interviews and reported through case studies. The other initial trainees did not establish projects during the first year. The author maintained contact with a majority of the trainees by telephone, and reported their frustrations by telling fictional composite stories based on their accounts.

Results

A framework of critical components was developed as a result of a literature review which examined characteristics of successful programs. The two successful projects which were established were analyzed using this framework. Most characteristics of successful programs were evident and documented in these fledgling projects. Other themes related to their successes were elucidated and added to the framework. The lack of successful implementation by the other trainees was primarily due to critical components that were neglected or not accessible.

Conclusions

The two trainees who were able to immediately implement tutoring projects had many of the necessary skills and resources already available to them. The training they received acted as a catalyst which enabled them to establish projects. The other trainees expressed concerns related to the lack of personal confidence immediately following the initial training session, and these concerns were never sufficiently addressed. Their primary concerns regarding the need for more training and the lack of resources need be considered if the initiative is to realize its ambitious goals.
To my mother who believes I can do anything,  
To my father who has taught me how to do anything, and  
To my wife, Donna, who has stuck with me  
through everything
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spent many, many hours listening to and transcribing poor-quality tape recordings. She and my boys deserve my undivided attention, which I hope to give them upon the completion of this degree.

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I’m also grateful to the many people at school, at church, and in the community where I live who simply asked how things were going, helped with chores, or prayed for us. It’s great to live in a place where people care for one another.

And, finally, I want to thank my Heavenly Father for seeing my family and me through this sometimes glorious, but many times painful, process. He reminded me frequently, through the Scripture I placed on the screen-saver of my computer, that “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me!”
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

School Children, Literacy, and Government Proposals

In an international comparison of reading achievement in 32 countries, students from the United States placed second in reading (Elley, 1992). After analyzing three studies which compare the reading achievement of U.S. children today with achievement scores from the past, the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association, in a recent publication, state, “Thus, evidence suggests that students today read better and write better than at any other time in the history of our country” (cited in Routman, 1996, p. 5). But in spite of these positive reports, many citizens remain concerned about the state of literacy among American school children. The most prominent concerned citizen is President Bill Clinton who, in the summer of 1996 while on the campaign trail for re-election, expressed concern about the dismal performance by fourth grade students on the 1994 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a testing program that has become known as “the nation’s report card” (Diegmueller, 1996). On these congressionally mandated tests, 40% of fourth-graders scored below the basic level (Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1994). In his final radio address of 1996, Clinton highlighted his national
literacy campaign he called "America Reads" with a stated clear national goal: Every American child should be able to read on his or her own by the end of third grade. In this address and elsewhere, he calls upon "30,000 reading specialists and volunteer coordinators to mobilize a million volunteer reading tutors all across America." Stating that "we know that individualized tutoring works," he goes on to name several successful tutoring programs (Clinton, 1996, p. 2537-2538).

Reactions to the president's proposal have been mixed. On the positive side, Robert E. Slavin, a creator of the Success for All reading program and a leading researcher at Johns Hopkins University, said that Clinton's plan is "analogous to President Kennedy's pledge to put a man on the moon" (cited in Manzo & Sack, 1997, [p. 1]). He believes that, as Kennedy's mandate excited the nation to attain the unattainable, so Clinton's plan has the potential to help large numbers of students in unprecedented ways. On the America Reads World Wide Web home page, the potential of Clinton's proposal to help struggling readers is emphasized by citing 10 successful tutoring programs, all which have promoted literacy in a variety of settings by enlisting the help of non-professionals (America Reads Challenge, 1996).

Predictably, Clinton's proposal is getting a cool reception among some legislators on Capitol Hill who, citing existing programs both private and federal, claim that it is a duplication of effort. Others, including both legislators and educators, feel that more funds should be directed toward the schools where the foremost mission is to teach children to read (Manzo & Sack, 1997). Edward Fry, emeritus professor of education at Rutgers University, in an open letter to President Clinton (Fry, 1997), lists several concerns that he
has with the proposal. The first is with definitions. What does it mean to “be able to read?” This involves setting standards, and standards are an elusive thing when talking about skill in reading. He points out that, when the NAEP (cited above) finds that 40% of the nation’s fourth graders read below a basic level, this “basic level” is merely “the subjective opinion of some unnamed group of ‘experts.’ It is sort of a ‘Wouldn’t it be nice if they could’ basic level of achievement” ([p. 2]). Fry also discusses the normal distribution curve and the fact that, even if we substantially raise the reading levels of the lowest group of students, there will still be those who are above and below the norm. There always will be reason for being “alarmed.”

Fry’s final concern has to do with problems associated with the use of volunteers. It will be hard to find quality people who will commit to a year or two of work for no pay. A tutoring relationship is bound to be beneficial to both the tutor and the child. But Fry suspects that only professional educators, not volunteers, will be able to substantially help the students most in need of remediation.

The concern over the use of volunteers to increase literacy is not Fry’s alone. Diane E. DeFord, a professor at Ohio State University who helps to direct Reading Recovery, a successful early intervention reading program for at-risk first-graders, also works with the AmeriCorps volunteer project at the university. If given the choice of where to spend money to bolster literacy, DeFord says she would “put it into teachers. I do not think you can run a program for your greatest at-risk children with volunteer or uncertified teachers” (cited in Diegmueller, 1996, [p. 3]). Similarly, in a letter to the editor of Reading Today, doctoral student Cynthia Smith suggests that tutors be used in other
ways to free up teachers so they can work with struggling students (Smith, 1997). In
retort to the letter the following month, Keith Topping, Director of the Centre for Paired
Learning at the University of Dundee in Scotland, agrees that tutoring does not always
help “in every case in real life.” But he believes that this is due in part to poor organization
by inexperienced tutoring project coordinators. He says, “Large-scale meta-analyses
indicated many years ago that in the vast majority of controlled studies, tutored students
outperformed control students, that low-ability students tended to make the largest gains,
and that training in structured methods improved the effectiveness of tutoring” (Topping,

Work-study coordinators, while happy that the Department of Education
announced late in 1996 that it would waive the 25% of student wages that they previously
had to pay for those working as reading tutors, are wondering if Clinton’s plan is too
optimistic in hoping to place 100,000 students in tutoring jobs (Hoff, 1996).

The Summit on America’s Future

In April 1997, President Clinton, with the cooperation of all living former
presidents of the United States and numerous nationally known leaders and celebrities,
including General Colin Powell, held the Summit on America’s Future in Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania. The focus of the summit was to “boost volunteering substantially within
three years with an emphasis on helping youth” (Roberts & Roberts, 1997, p. 4).

Americans were called upon to “give their time to improve the lives of at least two million
of the nation’s 15 million poor children by the end of the year 2000” (Barnes & Gerson,
Many organizations made pledges of service at this gathering, including the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Adventist Commitment

The Adventist pledge was sponsored jointly by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA, also called Adventist Community Services in the U.S.) in conjunction with YouthNet—the Adventist Youth Services Network—which acts as the volunteerism clearinghouse for the church. At the summit, a commitment was made by Adventist Community Services (ACS), in collaboration with YouthNet, to strive toward these goals (Sahlin, 1997):

1. Activate 100 community-based tutoring projects
2. Mobilize 3,000 volunteers
3. Reach 10,000 at-risk children and youth

According to Dr. Jose Rojas, director of the Adventist Youth Service Network, the Adventist commitment was “given to President Clinton three months before there was any announcement for the Summit in Philadelphia,” adding that “we were among the most aggressive of the churches who have stepped forward” (Rojas, 1997, p. 30). The church has been involved in community service efforts since 1934.

In August of 1997, Rojas and Sandra Brown of Adventist Community Services took part in a planning meeting for the Alliance for Youth Project headed by former Joint Chief of Staff Colin Powell. A number of national service organizations met with Powell and representatives from government agencies involved in volunteer efforts in the United
States. The Seventh-day Adventist Church was the only denominational organization represented at this 2-day event. Powell expressed deep appreciation to Rojas and the church, encouraging them to “keep up the good work” (North American Division Youth Ministries Department, 1997).

A reading tutoring curriculum titled *Making SMILIES: Helping Children Read* (Freed et al., 1997) was immediately developed by a number of educators at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in response to the commitment. *SMILIES* is an acronym that suggests the seven original intelligences as proposed by Howard Gardner (1983): spatial, musical, intrapersonal, linguistic, interpersonal, exercise (bodily/kinesthetic), and solving problems (mathematical). Use of the intelligences would be encouraged during the tutoring lessons through a menu of activities classified under each intelligence. Many of the specific techniques in the manual are patterned after those used in other successful reading programs.

The first training session in the effort was held in late August 1997 at ADRA’s North American Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. Twenty-five volunteers from around the country attended these sessions to learn more about the basics of setting up a tutoring and mentoring project in general and the *SMILIES* curriculum in particular. These original trainees were not only trained to be reading tutors, but they were also given the mandate to become trainers of tutors themselves.
Statement of the Problem

Whether there is a real crisis in literacy instruction in the United States, or whether it is simply "manufactured" as Berliner and Biddle (1985) suggest, does not change the fact that President Clinton has announced a national literacy campaign, "America Reads," to deal with the illiteracy that does exist (Clinton, 1996). A tremendous effort is underway to "mobilize and train a citizen army of one million reading tutors" to deal with this "complicated problem" (Clinton, 1997, [p. 1]). Although there are questions about the scope and magnitude of the effort and especially about where money should be spent, there is a good deal of evidence that literacy tutoring programs can make a difference (Topping, 1997).

The America Reads agenda was part of the focus of the Volunteerism Summit held in Philadelphia in April 1997. Many organizations, corporations, and institutions of higher learning made commitments to help in the tutoring effort (Member's List, 1998), including the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Sahlin, 1997). Believing that they can make a difference, now their focus of these organizations has shifted to questions of how the tutoring they offer should be accomplished, and who will benefit from their efforts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to document the training and resulting efforts of the initial trainees in the Seventh-day Adventist North American Division (NAD) Tutoring and Mentoring effort during this first year of implementation. It is a descriptive, qualitative
study that utilizes the tools of observation, interviews, video and audio recording, and written correspondence to collect pertinent data. The successes and struggles of the trainees are recorded in the form of individual and composite case studies using qualitative inquiry as the primary research methodology.

Chapter 2, the review of the literature, focuses on the phenomenon of volunteerism, why people volunteer, and the benefits of volunteering. The training of teachers in general, and more specifically the training of volunteer literacy instructors, was also investigated. Finally, several successful literacy tutoring projects were highlighted, and the recommendations of a number of experts in the area of literacy tutoring were compiled to create a framework of critical components of tutoring programs.

Given this background, case study analyses of trainees involved in the initial thrust of the NAD Tutoring and Mentoring effort were conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. How were these volunteers recruited and trained for this project?

2. What was their initial training experience like? What initial concerns did they have about their abilities to fulfill their commitment to tutor children and to train other volunteers?

3. What happened after they left the training session?

4. What adaptations did they make in the implementation of the tutoring program?
Importance of the Study

The initial importance of this study was to provide helpful information to the organizers of the Seventh-day Adventist North American Division Tutoring and Mentoring Project as they begin the first full implementation year of the program in 1998-1999. The NAD initiative is certainly aggressive, and the project coordinators are making every effort to insure its success. It is hoped, this study will make a contribution to the existing literature on the training of volunteer literacy tutors, and the effective organization and administration of local tutoring projects.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the volunteers who were trained at the initial NAD Tutoring and Mentoring training session held in Washington, D.C., on August 27 and 28, 1997. The primary focus of the study was these volunteers and their experiences associated with this tutoring program—their training experience and their subsequent efforts to establish tutoring sites in their respective locales. My experiences as a trainer and support person are documented solely as to how they relate to the trainees. Effects on children who receive tutoring at their sites, including pre-posttest gains, attitudinal changes, teacher attitudes, parent attitudes, etc., are not the focus of this study. Any information that is reported relating to these areas is incidental only, and is included to provide information in order to fully document the experience of the trainees.
Definition of Terms

**America Reads:** An initiative introduced by President William J. Clinton in late 1996 with the national goal that every third-grader in America should be able to read on his or her own by the end of third grade. As a part of this proposal, Clinton advocated mobilizing 1 million volunteer reading tutors to help work with children.

**Alliance for Youth:** A national organization initiated at the Philadelphia Summit on Volunteerism in April 1997. The mission of the Alliance, headed by former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, is to reach 15 million at-risk children and youth through mentoring relationships. The goals of the Alliance are larger than the more specific goals of the Adventist Alliance for Youth Tutoring and Mentoring project, sponsored jointly by YouthNet and ADRA (both defined below).

**North American Division (NAD):** The organizational unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which includes all Adventists and their organizations on the North American continent. In this paper, NAD may stand more specifically for the leadership of the division directly responsible for the Tutoring and Mentoring project.

**Unions:** Smaller units of the NAD that are made of churches in a specific region. A union, such as the Pacific Union, may be composed of several states. Each union has its own leadership that is responsible to the leadership of the NAD.

**Conferences:** Smaller units of the Unions, regionally organized. Local churches are organized at the conference level.

**SMILIES:** The literacy tutoring curriculum written specifically for the Adventist Alliance for Youth Tutoring and Mentoring project.
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)/Adventist Community Services (ACS): Traditionally, the humanitarian agency for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ACS is the U.S. domestic branch of ADRA International. ACS centers are strategically located throughout the U.S. and have supplied disaster relief, food, clothing, health screening services, inner city, and other community action programs to those in need.

YouthNet: The Adventist Youth Services Network, the official volunteer agency of the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Tutoring: An effort by a more experienced person to impart academic skills or knowledge to a less experienced person. In this study, literacy tutoring is offered by older youth and adults to children in Grade 3 and below.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation has eight chapters, arranged in the following manner:

In chapter 1 I introduce the problem that is examined. It contains a description of President Clinton's America Reads challenge and the response to it. I explain the Tutoring and Mentoring program initiated by the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist church in response to Clinton's challenge.

Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature in three main areas: the phenomenon of volunteerism and volunteers, effective training of professional instructors generally and volunteer instructors specifically, and characteristics of successful tutoring programs,
especially those staffed by volunteers. I also propose a matrix of critical components of tutoring programs which is used as a framework for analysis.

In chapter 3 I explain the research methodology used in the study. I examine features specific to qualitative studies generally and to this study in particular. An explanation of the study's timetable, data collection techniques, and verification processes is given.

Chapter 4 describes the initial training session attended by the participants. Their written statements about their intentions and concerns are analyzed and summarized.

Chapters 5 and 6 offer case study observations of two participants who were successful in establishing tutoring projects in their home areas. After visiting their tutoring sites and interviewing their volunteers, I describe the components that contributed to their successful implementation.

Chapter 7 contains composite narrative stories of those participants who attended the initial training session, but who were unable, for various reasons, to implement a tutoring project during the 1997-1998 school year. In these composite stories, I summarize the reasons they gave for the frustrations they experienced in establishing tutoring programs.

In chapter 8 I provide a summary of the study by responding to the original research questions. I discuss other findings, and offer suggestions, based on my research, to the organizers of the North American Division Tutoring and Mentoring project specifically, and to those who are considering implementation of tutoring projects generally. I close the study by making recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature speaks to three related areas that are pertinent to this study: the phenomenon of volunteerism and volunteers, effective training of professional instructors generally and volunteer instructors specifically, and characteristics of successful tutorial programs, especially those staffed by volunteers. In this review, I distill information that should be helpful to those who intend to establish volunteer tutorial programs, most specifically those aimed at younger children who are struggling in reading.

Volunteerism and Volunteers

The recent push toward volunteer work spearheaded by the White House (Clinton, 1997) is helping to draw many citizens toward helping in their communities. While millions of Americans are stepping up to work in ways that include baking cookies or singing in the church choir, it has been estimated by Independent Sector, a group that studies non-profit organizations, that only 8.4% of volunteers work in human services. Of this group, less than four percent serve as tutors (Gerson, 1997).

To gain some perspective on the numbers of volunteers in schools, a report by the National Center for Education Statistics (1989) estimated that approximately 1.3 million people volunteered to work in the nation’s public and private schools during the 1987-
1988 school year. This was up from the 1.1 million estimate made in 1985 (Center for Education Statistics, 1986), with the increase registered mainly in private schools. The same report estimated that approximately 75% of the nation’s elementary schools utilize volunteers with just under 50% of the volunteers being used for services to support instruction including tutoring. One can assume that a great number of these volunteers assisted with literacy acquisition.

**The Effectiveness of Volunteers**

With so much attention being focused on using volunteers as literacy tutors, the assumption is being made that tutoring by paraprofessionals has academic benefits. Several studies have pointed to the effectiveness of volunteer tutoring. In a meta-analysis of findings from 65 independent evaluations of school tutoring programs that use a variety of staffing patterns, Cohen, Kulik, and Kulik (1982) found that most of the programs had positive effects on academic performance and attitudes of the tutees. They also had positive effects on the tutors themselves. Michael (1990) reports that, after reviewing a number of studies dealing specifically with tutoring by volunteers, in no instance did researchers report negative effects on academic performance. Almost all reported academic gains for tutored students greater than those for students who were not tutored or greater than would otherwise have been expected for the tutored students.

When considering literacy tutoring programs only, Plantec, Paramore, and Hospodar (1972) evaluated the effects of “Project Upswing,” a volunteer reading tutoring program supported by the Office of Education. The research study, which looked at
Project Upswing programs in several large cities in the United States, compared the achievement of first-grade students who worked with trained tutors, untrained tutors, and no tutors at all. Plantec et al. (1972) reported that tutored children made greater gains in reading than those who were untutored whether the tutors had been trained or not.

Eberwein, Hirst, and Magendanz (1976) reviewed 34 studies on the effects of volunteer tutoring programs in reading. They noted that experimental students generally showed greater academic progress with tutors than the control students who were not tutored. The tutors, who were parents, other adult volunteers, and cross-age volunteers, helped the tutored students make greater gains than non-tutored students in various measures such as word knowledge, composite reading, and reading comprehension. In a more recent review of reading tutoring programs that have been shown through data analysis to be effective, Wasik (1997) reviewed two programs that compared tutored students to those in a control group using an experimental design. In the Chicago-based Howard Street Tutoring Program, struggling second- and third-grade students were tutored by people who vary from undergraduate college students to suburban mothers to retirees. Morris, Shaw, and Penney (1990), in a 2-year study of the Howard Street program, reported that the tutored students made substantially higher gains on measures that included word recognition, oral reading, and spelling than their non-tutored counterparts. Another project reviewed by Wasik that used an experimental design was the School Volunteer Development Project developed in Dade County, Florida. Second- through sixth-grade students who were tutored by a variety of community volunteers were pre- and posttested using the Metropolitan Achievement Test. After 1 year of tutoring, students who received tutoring
gained .50 standard deviations more in reading than the untutored group. The other 15 programs that Wasik examines in her report, although not substantiated through experimental design, did demonstrate the effectiveness of tutoring programs through pre- and posttest comparisons, correlational data, or some similar measures.

*Read to Succeed* (Bader, 1998b), a tutoring program that has been “repackaged” for the America Reads effort, is based on the SUCCEED program, which has been in existence at Michigan State University since 1984. University students, community volunteers, and AmeriCorps volunteers who work as tutors receive between 6 and 12 hours of training as they are working with children. The program authors state that “the average reading level gain of the children is two grade levels over a one year period. Many students gain two years or more in one semester” (Bader, 1998b, p. 1).

To summarize, millions of Americans choose to volunteer their services in numerous ways, many of which are related to education. Volunteer programs in a variety of subject areas have been shown to be effective in most cases and detrimental in no cases that I reviewed. Perhaps the satisfaction gained by these positive results is what causes so many citizens to freely offer their assistance.

**Why Do People Volunteer?**

In Gerson’s (1997) hard-hitting article in *U.S. News & World Report* titled “Do Do-gooders Do Much Good?” he makes a point pertinent to a discussion of volunteerism. He clarifies a distinction between “recreational volunteerism” and “human services volunteerism.” Recreational volunteers can be found serving in museums, theaters, and
parks, positions that are low-risk emotionally. Human service volunteers—those helping out in long-term, one-on-one situations such as becoming a Big Brother/Big Sister, or in tutoring a child or adult non-reader—are much harder to recruit and maintain. He comments:

There is a wide gap between the emotional investment required for a day of cleaning a park and years of working with another human being. Yet the latter is the form of volunteering most likely to get at society's core problems. These approaches have not been tried and found wanting; they have been tried and found difficult. (p. 34)

If human service volunteering is indeed difficult, then why do people volunteer? What are the perceived benefits in offering one's time and energy to a cause or to another human being? A sizeable amount of research relating to these questions has been done in the area of college student service learning. Some college students “volunteer” for service because it is a requirement of a particular course, such as classes in reading methods where students gain experience by working in community schools. Their participation is an expected and/or graded part of the course. Many policy makers and educational theorists believe that community service offers a way to counteract self-centeredness and supplement conventional forms of civic and moral education (Serow, 1991). As a result, community service opportunities are being built into the course offerings at many colleges and universities. But other college students join the volunteer ranks for reasons other than having to do with requirements.

There seems to be a surge in recent years in community service among young people (Boyer, 1987), possibly because of an increase of public awareness campaigns in the media. Two primary concepts, altruism and egoism, have been offered as motivations
for volunteer activities (Winniford, Carpenter, & Grider, 1995). This can be expressed simply as a desire to help others, balanced with a hope to benefit personally from volunteer activities. Fitch (1987) has suggested a third reason that students volunteer, that being a sense of social obligation expressed in the statement “I owe it to society.” Many students who have a history of offering their services willingly had parents who were themselves volunteers.

In attempting to answer the question of, which of the above motivations is primary, the research literature is divided. Most studies that I have reviewed attribute students’ motives primarily to egoistic ones (Serow, 1991; Serow, Ciechalski, & Daye, 1990). According to these researchers, students are volunteering for a number of reasons, but those having to do with meeting personal needs and desires come first. They acknowledge that motivations are not pure or inseparable from each other; rather, they are “complex and variable, potentially encompassing a mixture of self-regarding and other-regarding forces” (Serow, 1991, p. 546). Serow et al. (1990) embedded the complex discussion of motivations in the concept of personal competence which they define as one’s ability to master one’s environment. Students who are predisposed to offer their services as volunteers generally “have their act together” in most other areas of their lives. Their service is another way to gain a measure of control over various aspects of their personal spheres.

Winniford et al. (1995) found that altruistic motives drove the students they studied, followed by egoistic ones. They acknowledge the fact that their findings run counter to most of the research literature, and they attribute this to the unique cultural
environment of the campus at Texas A & M where their research took place. The researchers claim that, at this university, there is a strong "Aggie culture" that conveys a sense of unity and a desire to help others. More altruistic students may be attracted to this institution because of its atypical atmosphere.

The part that religion plays in motivating students to serve, a question that may be of particular interest in this study, is only casually mentioned in the reports I reviewed. Serow et al. (1990) observes that "community service is closely related to religious involvement." But in Serow's 1991 study, only 28% of students surveyed mention religious beliefs as a decision factor supporting their participation in community service. Other items such as a sense of satisfaction from helping others, affiliation with an organization that promoted service, societal duty, and opportunities to acquire skills were mentioned much more often. It is possible that a person's religious orientation is a key factor in the sense of satisfaction he or she gains from serving. Fitch (1987) found that altruistic motivations were more important to the students who were more religious.

No matter what may cause college students to volunteer, the positive outcomes of their service appear to be fairly universal. In one survey of student volunteers, 90% of them reported that their service experience was as valuable or more valuable to them than classroom work (Boyer, 1987). Giles and Eyler (1994) listed significant increases in beliefs that people can make a difference, their sense of obligation to perform service, and their commitment to do so. Their experiences led to more positive perceptions of the people they served and a decrease in the tendency to blame people for their misfortunes. Wade and Anderson (1996) summarize the benefits to college students as having strong effects.
on students' personal development, career awareness, choice of a service-oriented career, and more confidence in the ability to solve the problems of society. In answering the self-imposed question, "Why does service-learning have such transformative effects on students?" they hypothesize, "Perhaps because experience is the best teacher" (p. 62).

Although the studies cited above focused primarily on younger citizens, it appears that motivations for service and the benefits of service are similar for people of all ages. On the opposite end of the age spectrum, senior citizens, through volunteer activities, can utilize skills and talents gained through a lifetime of experience to benefit others. The opportunities afforded by working in schools can help to fill the personal gap left by the decline in recent years of the extended family. According to Armengol (1992), the American family is less diversified and enriched because grandparents are not as likely to be members of a child's household. Matters (1990) contends that intergenerational programs can help minimize the stereotypes that youth and older adults may have about each other.

Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) suggest that community service offers people of all ages a type of "interconnectedness" that provides a balance between one's personal and public lives. The personal benefits of service and the public good it engenders exist in a tension that is difficult to dissect when discussing motivations.

To sum, the research reveals several reasons why people tend to volunteer. Many college campuses are making service learning a requirement of particular courses. But for those from whom service is not required, researchers suggest that a desire to help others balanced with a hope to personally benefit from volunteer activities drives most
volunteers. A sense of social obligation may also play a role in the motivational aspects of volunteerism. Helping others offers many people a feeling of connectedness or simply a way to acquire or improve needed skills.

The Training of Instructors

Professional Staff Development

Although not the focus of this study, the literature related to the training of professional educators does offer some insight into principles that are helpful in designing effective training programs. Certainly, there is a difference in providing ongoing inservice to experienced teachers compared to training volunteer instructors. But people are people, and one area of practice can inform the other in issues relating to training.

The Joyce-Showers Model for Staff Development

In a recent synthesis of research about school renewal as it relates to staff development, Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers (1995) confirm the findings from their earlier meta-analysis (Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1988). Effective training programs for educators must have the following four components if what is learned during training sessions is to be transferred to the classroom: the presentation of theory, demonstrations of new strategies, initial practice in the workshop setting, and prompt feedback about the initial efforts by the trainees. Joyce and Showers (1995) add that teachers are more likely to keep and use these new strategies if they receive expert or peer coaching while they are trying them in the classroom.
In an earlier work by Joyce, Hersch, and McKibben (1983), they attach percentage of retention figures to the above components. With the presentation of theory, there is a maximum of 10% retention; adding demonstration yields another 10% retention; adding practice and feedback results in an additional maximum of 20% retention; only when coaching for application is added does this figure rise to a maximum of 75%.

Joyce and Showers (1995) use the concept of "effect size" (Glass, 1982) when describing the magnitude of gains from any change in practice or any training program designed to impact not only teacher skill enhancement but the learning of students. An effect size of 1.0 would increase the demonstrated achievement of teachers or students by one standard deviation. Modestly effective practices increase learning by up to one-half of a standard deviation. Substantially effective practices increase student learning from between one-half and one full standard deviation. Very effective practices increase student learning by over one standard deviation. It should be noted that, even though different staff development practices may induce substantially or very effective changes in the knowledge or skill levels of teachers, this may not transfer into the classroom and thus positively affect students. When analyzing the transfer effect sizes of the above training components both alone and in combination, Joyce and Showers concluded that any one of the components produced some effectiveness when measuring the knowledge or skill of the trainees. Only when theory, practice, feedback, and demonstration were combined in the training experience was there any transfer into the classroom. The effect size was .39, a modest effect. When coaching was added to the above four components, the effect size blossomed to 1.68, classified as very effective.
If the content is new and unfamiliar to the trainees, the training elements above will need to be more extensive. And, finally, collaborative relationships must be facilitated and structured if the trainees are to press through problems associated with implementation (Joyce & Showers, 1995).

The above recommendations are echoed in another list of professional development strategies suggested by Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995). They, too, stress the need for collaboration among educators involved in improvement efforts. Mutual assistance, coupled with self-evaluation in the light of theory and research evaluation, helps to ensure that the new information learned in workshop settings will carry through to practice in the classroom.

The Reading Recovery Model

Perhaps the single most intensive and effective (if not most well-known) training program for professional educators that has to do with tutoring at-risk children in reading is Reading Recovery. Developed by New Zealand child psychologist Marie Clay (1993), Reading Recovery is an early-intervention reading program designed to help at-risk first-graders become proficient at reading before they fall hopelessly behind their classmates. Because “accelerated learning for at-risk children is impossible without experienced, highly-skilled teachers who are expert at observing children and making the moment-to-moment decisions necessary to support independent learning” training at this level “requires substantially more than traditional professional development models can deliver” (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 1996, p. 11).
Teachers who receive training to become Reading Recovery instructors are engaged in a year-long, master's level program that combines “academic course work, intensive interaction with colleagues, and ongoing work with children” (Pinnell & McCarrier, 1993, p. 7). Along with the presentation of theory, teachers take turns teaching behind a one-way mirror while their peers observe and critique the lesson. They continue to work each day with four students at their home schools. After the initial training year, teachers maintain their skills through continuing contact sessions, observations by trained teacher-leaders, observation visits by and to fellow teachers, and attendance at Reading Recovery conferences.

This training model incorporates every element of the Joyce-Showers model described above. Weekly training sessions contain plenty of theory, with demonstrations constantly being presented through videotape and live lessons. Trainees gain valuable and concentrated practice in their “behind-the-glass” lessons observed by their classmates. After the lesson, feedback is provided by their teacher-leader and peers as they critique how the session went. On-site visits by the teacher-leader and classmates provide the coaching deemed so important in carrying the new learning into day-to-day practice. It is no wonder that Douglas Kammerer, director of compensatory services for the Marion, Ohio, city schools, calls Reading Recovery “the single most powerful teacher training program I’ve ever seen— and I’ve been involved in educational innovation since the late nineteen-sixties” (cited in Wilson & Daviss, 1994, p. 67).
The Training of Volunteer Instructors

Volunteers come to the instructional task with a different set of background experiences than classroom teachers who have had the benefit of working with children as a vocation. And yet one would expect that the key elements of successful, professional staff-development models would remain somewhat consistent for paraprofessionals who intend to do similar tasks as their counterparts.

The research literature having to do with the training of volunteer reading tutors is fairly sparse, especially when studying programs for school-age children. In fact, the articles I located simply report the training scenarios provided by a variety of tutorial programs without providing any comparative or experimental data. Several of these are discussed in the next section having to do with the characteristics of successful programs.

A document titled "Key Elements of Adult Education Teacher and Volunteer Training Programs" (Sherman, Kutner, Webb, & Herman, 1991) outlines effective staff-development practices identified through a review of much of the same professional staff-development literature discussed above. Visits to nine staff-development programs identified as providing effective training for adult education teachers and volunteer instructors provided experiential data from which several recommendations were formulated. Although the programs reviewed were concerned with adult literacy tutoring, an assumption is made that the recommendations will apply to elementary-age volunteer tutoring programs as well.
Sherman et al. (1991) reports these recommendations in two dimensions—those associated with the delivery of training services and those dealing with training content. Four elements are associated with the delivery of training services:

1. Experienced and dedicated training administrator and staff—Staff members who were familiar with the needs of the trainees were key to the program's success. Those who were practitioners themselves brought a valued sensitivity and knowledge to the training.

2. Decentralized training services—Trainees feel that localized training by local practitioners is more accessible and cost-effective. Also, local trainers can meet the specific needs at a site better than those at a centralized location who are focusing their attention on more general needs.

3. Systematic follow-up—Opportunities to provide regular feedback and coaching are essential if trainees are to internalize what is learned in training sessions. Follow-up is best provided through observation and coaching sessions at the local level. Also, offering multiple workshop sessions extended over a period of time allows participants to test and hone their skills.

4. Evaluation of training services—Ongoing and systematic evaluation which assesses the impact of training and the current needs of trainees is essential to an effective program. This evaluation aids in designing follow-up sessions that truly meet the needs of tutors and their students.

Sherman et al. (1991) associated five elements with the content of effective training services:
1. Training in response to teachers' and volunteer instructors' needs—Even though it seem obvious to suggest that training ought to meet the specific needs of those being trained, too often the training is offered in a packaged format that may not address the unique concerns of the trainees.

2. Involving the participant in the learning process—The literature discussed above regarding the importance of practice and feedback in the training scenario is important in this respect (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Showers et al., 1987).

3. Modeling appropriate instruction—Another element associated with the previously cited literature is the necessity of providing demonstrations through video presentations, role playing, or actual tutoring sessions.

4. Placing learning within a theoretical framework—The importance of sound theoretical background substantiated by applied research findings has already been established.

5. Providing training in appropriate content areas—Tutors require a combination of skills to make them effective. Their training needs to address all appropriate areas related to the task they are undertaking.

Tibbetts (1991) conducted a similar survey to assess effective training practices for adult education teachers and volunteer instructors. In addition to the elements above, he cites the importance of maintaining a positive climate in training programs. He also noted that, even though the majority of programs use "one-shot" staff development experiences, these experiences were not as effective as longer-term, multiple-session approaches.
Characteristics of Effective Reading Tutoring Programs

Recommendations by Experts

The America Reads Challenge has begun to evoke a number of recommendations from those experienced in the field of literacy instruction and/or volunteer service programs. As mentioned in chapter 1, not everyone is overly optimistic that volunteer reading tutors can make a lasting impact when used as reading instructors for struggling students. Others, however, take a different view, and have offered sage advice in tutor training and general program operations.

The Committee on the Use of Volunteers in Schools headed by Bernard (1990) surveyed research on school volunteer programs and found that, indeed, tutored students do make academic gains greater than their comparable non-tutored peers. He defined the characteristics of successful volunteer programs, stating that they all featured sound organization and management, support from the administrative level, close cooperation between volunteers and people in the school, and clear expectations of volunteers.

Shortly after President Clinton unveiled the America Reads Challenge, Bader and Kenney (1997) began surveying literacy professors on America Reads issues related to their campuses. Generally speaking, the professors expressed enthusiasm about the plan, but expressed some concerns, the primary one centering on the need for tutors to be professionally trained and supervised. When asked what the America Reads program needed in order to succeed, the professors mentioned the following most often: a sound, simple training guide, committed tutors, cooperative schools, qualified faculty to provide
support, training on recruitment and retention of volunteers, and ongoing training and supervision.

Morrow and Walker (1997a) offer more specific advice in getting an America Reads program started. They suggest that tutors be supervised by a reading specialist or experienced teacher who is getting paid for his/her work. They comment, "Volunteering is wonderful; however, those who undertake this supervisory job should be paid appropriately" (p. 30). Tutors, who may be work study students, student volunteers, or volunteers from the community, should be selected by the program supervisors while reviewing applications that volunteers complete after responding to a questionnaire. Tutors ideally should have about 10 to 12 hours of training spread over three to five sessions within a 2-week period. After training, the tutors should have continuing contact with the supervisor through bi-weekly observations and monthly group meetings. Students chosen to be tutored are not to have severe learning difficulties; rather, they should be of average intelligence but struggling with reading more than their peers. Morrow and Walker (1997a) recommend that tutoring not take place during school if it will interrupt other instruction the child might be receiving. Ideally, the child and the tutor should meet three to five times per week for 30-minute sessions. Tutoring materials and books can be chosen by the program supervisor and the child’s teacher. A simple, well-written tutoring handbook should be provided to each tutor as well for personal reference.

Pinnell and Fountas (1997a) offer their own suggestions for implementing a successful tutorial program. Several of their recommendations reflect those already stated: the need for expert help, ongoing training that includes demonstrations, observations, and
coaching, and a regular, frequent tutoring schedule. They also suggest that the coordinator or tutor trainer encourage volunteer tutors to reflect on their work so that they can make decisions in tutoring a child that are “based on understanding rather than following scripts or sets of directions” (p. 2). Tutoring sessions should include many opportunities for reading and writing, but few “meaningless drills.” Finally, the progress that children make should be monitored and documented in simple ways such as listing books read or words learned.

In summary, the characteristics of effective volunteer literacy programs can be organized under five topics: vision, skills, incentives, resources, and action plans. These topics were suggested by D. Ambrose (1987) in an unpublished chart showing the results when any one element is missing. (See Table 1.)

While somewhat simplistic in its portrayal of change, I find it a useful tool to begin thinking about what is involved in volunteer literacy programs. Each one of the elements identified by Bernard (1990), Bader and Kenney (1997), Morrow and Walker (1997a), and Pinnell and Fountas (1997a) can be organized using the topics suggested by Ambrose. (See Table 2.)
### TABLE 1

**MANAGING COMPLEX CHANGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Components</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision -&gt; Skills -&gt; Incentives -&gt; Resources -&gt; Action Plan -&gt;</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills -&gt; Incentives -&gt; Resources -&gt; Action Plan -&gt;</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision -&gt; Incentives -&gt; Resources -&gt; Action Plan -&gt;</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision -&gt; Skills -&gt; Resources -&gt; Action Plan -&gt;</td>
<td>Gradual Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision -&gt; Skills -&gt; Incentives -&gt; Action Plan -&gt;</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision -&gt; Skills -&gt; Incentives -&gt; Resources -&gt;</td>
<td>False Starts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the next section, I examine a number of literacy programs in the light of the characteristics identified in Table 2. Included in this examination, for the purpose of making comparisons and for setting it within the context of literacy tutoring initiatives, are the basic elements of the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring initiative.
### TABLE 2

**CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TUTORING PROGRAMS CLASSIFIED BY COMPONENTS NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH CHANGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A clear mission and goals expressed for everyone involved</td>
<td>• Ongoing training and supervision of volunteers</td>
<td>• Support from the administrative level</td>
<td>• Committed tutors</td>
<td>• Sound organization and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear expectations of volunteers</td>
<td>• Training for leaders on recruitment and retention of volunteers</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualified faculty to provide support</td>
<td>• Close cooperation between volunteers and people in the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A sound, simple training guide</td>
<td>• Careful selection of students to be tutored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Quality materials</td>
<td>• A regular, frequent tutoring schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parents are informed and involved</td>
<td>• Monitoring of student progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Community support</td>
<td>• Lessons include plenty of reading and writing; few &quot;meaningless drills&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Analysis of Effective Programs Including the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring Initiative

Vision

Vision, the need for organizational clarity about purpose and direction (Wheatley, 1992), is an important element of any program. Without it, confusion may reign, as indicated by Figure 1, frustrating the most well-meaning of efforts. Volunteers in a tutoring program most likely have a vision of what their efforts can accomplish or they never would have “signed on” in the first place. But it remains the task of program organizers and supervisors to maintain and extend the vision of all involved if the desired goals are to be realized.

Clear Mission and Goals Expressed

In my review, two characteristics of successful programs could be classified under the Vision category. First, an overriding mission must be shared with clear goals set for everyone in the effort. The organizers of the Alliance for Youth, the volunteerism “clearinghouse” under which the Adventist effort received its mandate, set five fundamental goals that they hope will be achieved in the lives of at least 2 million at-risk young people (Sahlin, 1997). These goals are

1. An ongoing relationship with a caring adult
2. Safe places and structured activity during non-school hours
3. A marketable skill through effective education
4. A healthy start through adequate health care
5. An opportunity to give back through community service.
President Clinton initiated the more specific America Reads mission by setting the national goal that every American child should be able to read on his or her own by the end of third grade (Clinton, 1996). He calls upon 30,000 reading specialists and volunteer coordinators to mobilize a million volunteer reading tutors all across America. And, as indicated in chapter 1, the goals set by the Adventist Youth Services Network (YouthNet) in its Tutoring and Mentoring project are to:

1. Activate 100 community-based tutoring projects
2. Mobilize 3,000 volunteers
3. Reach 10,000 at-risk children and youth.

The above mission/goal statements are the ones driving this reading tutoring effort at a national level. It is up to the leadership at each local project to specify mission and goal statements that will guide their own individual efforts.

"We sell a product at our school, and that product is reading," states Principal John Monfredo at Belmont Community School in Worcester, Massachusetts (America Reads Challenge, 1996, [p.2]). The school-wide initiative, called "Books and Beyond," is intended to "build the skills and desire of every child to read." Numerous activities and volunteers combine to make sure this happens in a festive atmosphere that is enjoyable for all. In the Student Literacy Corps sponsored by the University of South Carolina in Columbia (Herrmann, 1990), clear, measurable objectives are set for tutored children, for parents, for undergraduate students, for graduate students, and for inservice teachers. The success of the program would be beyond question even if only half of the goals were met for each group.
Clear Expectations of Volunteers

In addition to setting goals, the other characteristic of successful programs connected with vision is the setting of clear expectations of volunteers. This helps to personalize the mission and goals of the project for each individual volunteer tutor. The *Handbook for Community-based Tutoring & Mentoring Projects* (Sahlin, 1997) given to each participant at the Adventist Youth Services Network training session in August 1997, recommends the following "job description" for tutors:

1. Serve as a positive role model.
2. Be sensitive to the perspective of the at-risk child.
3. Accept the child on an equal basis as a fellow human being.
4. Be a dependable individual who can combine friendship with the business of learning.
5. When asking questions, be willing to accept and respond to the answers.
6. Find ways to show sincere interest in the child. Try not to do more than 1/3 of the talking.
7. Remember that reading skills are the major focus of tutoring.
8. Plan wisely for the time spent with the child. Plan so that the child can succeed.

Certainly, more basic goals and expectations will also need to be set relating to schedules, record keeping, and other details.
Ongoing Training and Supervision of Volunteers

"A general principle is that the more training volunteers have (provided the training is of high-quality), the more effective they will be. Ongoing training is essential" (Pinnell & Fountas, 1997a, p. 16). According to the Handbook for Tutoring & Mentoring Projects (Sahlin, 1997), "The single most important key to the success of a community-based volunteer tutoring project is the quality of training provided to volunteers" (p. 61). Most other reviews of successful programs I examined echoed these sentiments.

Training for tutors is mentioned in most programs I reviewed, but not all were specific about how the training took place. Obviously, training needs to provide the skills and theory necessary for the tutors to meet expectations. Rekrut (1994) suggests three areas in which training should focus: (1) interpersonal skills: helping without telling, offering encouragement, using positive statements about the attitudes and work of the tutee; (2) management skills: materials needed for the lessons, finding an appropriate place to work, how to sit with the tutee; and (3) content skills: preparing for lessons in advance, reading books prior to introducing them to the tutee, pondering questions beforehand, and creating follow-up activities for the next session (p. 359). All successful programs provide initial and continuing training for volunteers in these areas. Earlier in this chapter, the key elements of successful training programs were discussed in two dimensions—those associated with the delivery of training services and those dealing with training content (Sherman et al., 1991). Effective training programs are taught locally by experienced practitioners. Systematic follow-up is provided, and evaluation of the program is ongoing.
and covers several dimensions. Training that is responsive to the unique needs of those being trained is important. Training sessions provide opportunities to learn theory, see demonstrations, and practice skills needed in all appropriate areas related to the tutoring task.

Training for Leaders on Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

A second characteristic of successful programs that I classified under the *Skills* heading is related to the above. The supervisors in a program must be prepared for the task they are undertaking. In addition to being very knowledgeable about the tutoring task, they need to know how to successfully recruit and retain volunteers. Sahlin (1997, pp. 55-60) devotes a chapter in the *Tutoring & Mentoring* handbook to recruiting volunteers. He estimates that, in order to provide basic tutoring for 15 to 20 children, 30 or more volunteers “of one kind or another” need to be secured. Recommendations for promoting the project to prospective workers, conducting an interview, and completing necessary paperwork are detailed in the chapter.

Incentives

Presumably, volunteers offer their services because they perceive that their efforts will “pay off” in one way or another. As discussed earlier, the research is divided as to whether egoistic or altruistic motives primarily drive volunteers. Whatever the case, the motives for volunteering are partly driven by reasons known only to the individual.
Support from the Administrative Level

Some programs offer financial or college credit remuneration to volunteers. In late 1996, the Department of Education announced that it would “waive a requirement in the federal Work-Study program that would require schools to pay a portion of the wages of students working as reading tutors for young children” (Hoff, 1996). The coordinators of the Adventist YouthNet/ACS project have actively sought student volunteers to work in establishing tutoring sites in major cities across the United States. In March 1998, they announced that they had been successful in securing a major grant from AmeriCorps to fund 18 coordinator positions (M. Sahlin, e-mail communication, March 7, 1998, Data File, pp. 29-30). AmeriCorps is a federal program that offers young people college tuition aid or a small stipend in return for community service. The Ohio State University’s Reading Recovery pilot tutoring project has also funded student volunteer tutors through AmeriCorps grants (Wasik, 1997). Other projects, such as the Reading One-One program developed at the University of Dallas (Farkas, 1996), fund tutors at the rate of $7.00 per hour by using the host elementary school’s Title 1 federal grant money.

Resources

Committed Tutors

The most obvious resources needed in a volunteer program are people–committed tutors and qualified supervisory personnel. Pinnell and Fountas (1997a) list some desired personal characteristics of literacy tutors for young children. Excellent tutors have high energy and commitment, are flexible, love children, are willing to learn new skills and
ways of working with children, like to read and write, like to work with other people, enjoy new experiences, and are dependable (p. 8). Program coordinators need to interview prospective volunteers in order to evaluate their suitability for the task.

The purpose of an interview with a prospective volunteer is to determine the suitability of the applicant for volunteering in your program and to select an assignment in which the needs of both the program and the individual are satisfied. Such an interview is essential, since the success of your entire volunteer program depends, to a large degree, on finding the right person for the right position.

Consequently, every applicant should have an interview, no matter how well s/he may be known to you. In many instances the interview serves another purpose: It becomes the first step towards orienting and training the volunteer who accepts and is acceptable to our program. (MacBride, 1990, p. 91)

**Qualified Faculty to Provide Support**

Most successful tutoring projects place a certified teacher or reading specialist in a key position as coordinator or advisor to the program. Current or former graduate students in reading education act as coordinators in the Charlottesville Volunteer Tutorial project (Invernizzi, Juel, & Rosemary, 1996). The same is true in the Howard Street Tutoring Program (Morris et al., 1990). Wasik (1998) believes that this is possibly the single most important factor in establishing a successful program. She says that programs which do not employ the use of a specialist because of budgetary or other reasons deprive volunteers of the guidance or skills they need to tutor effectively.
A Sound, Simple Training Guide

Volunteer tutors need a sound, simple training guide to which they can repeatedly return for guidance and inspiration (Bader & Kenney, 1997; Morrow & Walker, 1997a). The SMILIES: Helping Children Read (Freed et al., 1997) manual was written to guide those who would be working with the YouthNet/ACS tutoring project. As a contributor to the SMILIES manual, I recall that one oft-repeated encouragement we constantly gave to each other was “Keep it simple!” The manuals that I have reviewed to date written specifically for the America Reads effort (Bader, 1998a, 1997b; Morrow & Walker, 1998b; Pinnell & Fountas, 1997a, 1997b) are written in an easy-to-follow and implement format with helpful checklists, assessment tools, forms, lists of suggested books and resources, and sources for other materials.

Quality Materials

Among the other materials recommended by these programs are books, used both for children’s readers and for reading aloud by adults, writing materials including pencils, markers, crayons, paper, glue, staplers, and scissors, writing surfaces like chalkboards and dry erase boards, magnetic letters, word games, and other written material such as telephone books, comic books, and newspapers. These items may be supplied by the program sponsors, by public libraries, by the participating schools, by the tutors themselves, and/or even by the children.
Informed, Involved Parents

I have also included informed, involved parents under the resources needed to implement an effective program. The now classic report, *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), declared strongly that parents are a child’s first and most important teacher. When examining five of the nation’s most effective school-based programs for preventing reading failure, Pikulski (1994) noted that all five programs had a strong home-school connection component. He states, “Effective early intervention programs encourage communication between home and school” (p. 38). The assumption can be made that this is true for effective volunteer tutoring programs as well.

One program that is exemplary in this dimension is the AmeriCorps SLICE program in Simpson County, Kentucky, which is featured on the America Reads web site (*America Reads Challenge*, 1996, [p. 1]). Tutors, who are called “coaches” in the program, have four 30-minute tutoring sessions weekly with their students. They also visit the students’ homes every other week to find out more about the families and to include the parents as “full partners” in the program. In the 1995-1996 school year, SLICE students improved their reading comprehension scores by an average of 2.7 reading levels.

Community Support

Successful programs are driven by organizations that have a vested interest in student performance. Universities, local school districts, local government, community
organizations, and churches combine their efforts in various ways to work with families to promote literacy. Sahlin (1997) states that

collaboration is vital to the creation and operation of your tutoring project. Without collaboration you will not get children in the community to come to your project, you will not likely have a location to work in or any of the supplies, materials, and funding that you need. Without collaboration you will find it difficult to provide the training your volunteers need and the additional services that your children will require as you discover health, emotional, and other needs in their lives. And without collaboration your project will certainly not gain the visibility and credibility in the community that your sponsors in the church want it to have. (p. 35)

An exemplary program in this respect is the Urban Curriculum Partnership (Austin, 1990). The partnership was initiated by those in the Black community who were concerned about the disproportionate numbers of non-Blacks on the faculties of both the local school district and the nearby university. A dinner meeting of community organizations, parents, and education professionals from the local school district and university was held to begin the process of collaboration. In spite of initial differences, every party at the meeting expressed the same concerns, and a partnership emerged.

Action Plan

Sound Organization and Management

The Handbook for Community-based Tutoring and Mentoring Projects (Sahlin, 1997) very adequately clarifies an action plan for local project organizers to follow. The handbook is packed with organizational helps, forms, handouts, and advice on setting up a quality tutoring program.

For programs to maintain a high degree of success, clear supervisory roles must be established. Literacy programs cannot maintain a consistent impact without direct
supervision from those with organizational skills and current knowledge about literacy. In
the Charlottesville Volunteer Tutorial program in Charlottesville, Virginia (Invernizzi et
al., 1996), tutors are trained and overseen locally by reading professionals who act as
coordinators. The coordinators are supported by the McGuffey Reading Center at the
University of Virginia. Similarly, trained parent volunteer leaders oversee tutors and
provide training themselves in the Reading Together program in Philadelphia (Neuman,
1995). These leaders are overseen by a reading professional at the local university.

Close Cooperation between Volunteers and
People in the School

Many programs are based in the child’s school. This helps to facilitate close
cooperation between reading tutors and their teachers, a characteristic of highly effective
programs. In the Charlottesville Volunteer Tutorial program (Invernizzi et al., 1996),
children to be tutored are recommended by their classroom teachers. A reading
coordinator, who is a current or former graduate student in reading education, coordinates
the tutoring a child receives with the classroom teacher and the child’s Title 1 reading
teacher. Children in the Reading Together program (Neuman, 1995), based at five schools
in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, are also recommended for the tutoring program by
classroom teachers. The program is encouraged and supported by the principals, teachers,
and parents at each school. The schools provide the space and many of the materials for
the program workers and their students. VISTA leaders coordinate the details between the
school, the tutors (most of whom are parents of students), and the home. Care is taken to
ensure that the children receive tutoring during non-academic times in the school day.
The volunteers in the Jackson, Tennessee, Tutoring Program (*America Reads Challenge*, 1996, [p. 5]), a program that is not school based, check in with teachers by calling the local school district's "Lesson Line" to listen to daily recordings of the assignments given by teachers to their students. Tutors also coordinate lesson strategies by calling parents, teachers, and other tutors. The program is sponsored by 10 area churches and 11 public housing projects.

**Careful Selection of Students to Be Tutored**

Morrow and Walker (1997a), discussing students who are chosen to be tutored, assert that "classroom teachers and reading specialists select students for the reading program. Typically, students to be tutored are of average intelligence, but are struggling more than other students. Children with severe difficulties should be taught directly by trained personnel" (p. 31). This is the case in the Reading Recovery/AmeriCorps pilot tutoring project based in three Ohio schools (Wasik, 1997). The AmeriCorps volunteers do not work with the lowest achieving first-grade students in these schools. Instead, they tutor children who are reading better than the lowest 20% (those typically targeted for instruction by trained Reading Recovery teachers) but are still reading below the average expected for first grade.
A Regular, Frequent Tutoring Schedule

The tutoring schedules varied greatly for the programs I reviewed. Some children are tutored as few as twice per week while others work with their tutors up to five sessions each week. Tutoring in some programs takes place after school or evenings, on weekends, or during the summer, but most programs function within the typical school day schedule. Wasik (1997) and Bader (1998b) both recommend that children should work with their tutors for a minimum of 1½ to 2 hours per week. Morrow and Walker (1997a) believe that it is preferable for tutoring to occur three to five times per week in 30-minute sessions. Sahlin (1997) recommends that at least two tutoring sessions of no longer than an hour in length are necessary for significant impact on a child's academic achievement. Whatever the frequency, all experts say that children should see the same tutor (if possible) on as regular a schedule as possible.

Monitoring of Student Progress

All effective programs provide ways for tutors or coordinators to monitor the progress that students are making. But the methods used to evaluate the students vary widely between programs. Minimally, tutors should keep simple records on student attendance, titles of books read, and lists of new words introduced and mastered. Tutors should also plan for lessons using a standardized form provided by program coordinators.

The Read to Succeed program (Bader, 1998a, 1988b) represents one where this type of record keeping is prolific. The tutor's manual has the appropriate materials for administering a graded word test and an unfinished sentence test, both designed to help
the tutor and coordinator assess the initial strengths and weaknesses of the child and to administer as a posttest. Planning guides (lesson plans) are provided for students in various grade levels. The tutor completes an "End-of-Term Evaluation" form at the end of each grading period that is a narrative-based assessment of the child's progress. Other provided forms include a home reading record, a supervisor observation evaluation, a parent evaluation form, and a master pre- and posttest/attendance form.

Lesson Content—Reading and Writing

Although no empirical evidence exists to suggest that a book-oriented approach is more effective than a drill-oriented approach in tutoring by volunteers (Wasik, 1997), most programs center around the sharing of children's literature and writing extended text such as sentences and stories. Perhaps this is because some feel that volunteers are not equipped to deal with the technicalities of phonics rules and a scope-and-sequenced skills curriculum (Fry, 1997; Smith, 1997). But Pinnell and Fountas (1997a) believe that a print-rich approach is simply the best way to teach reading, whether by professionals or volunteers. They state, "We do not advocate meaningless drills. We use a wide range of quality books and meaningful writing experiences because we believe that children learn to read by reading and to write by writing" (p. 3).

Wasik (1998), based on her research of effective tutoring programs, suggests that each lesson should have several basic components that include the rereading of familiar stories or text, word analysis work that causes the child to focus on the orthographic structure of a word, writing of sentences and stories, and the introduction of new stories.
Summary

In this review I have demonstrated that, according to the experiences of those who have gone before, volunteer tutors can and do make a difference in the lives of the people with whom they work. No published report that I reviewed indicated that volunteers in academic programs had a negative effect on their students; rather, most indicated positive outcomes that were well worth the investments made.

The literature also indicates that tutors themselves benefit by a tutoring arrangement. Whether the motives for volunteer service are primarily egoistic or altruistic is secondary to the mutual benefits reported by volunteers and those whom they serve.

When considering training options for volunteers, those who are knowledgeable on the subject point to the preponderance of literature on professional staff development when making recommendations. The key elements of theory presentation, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching were consistently mentioned by most reviewers. Other more practical recommendations were also given by those who have implemented reading tutorial programs similar to what the President has proposed in his America Reads initiative.

Several characteristics of effective tutoring programs were examined and elucidated. Quality programs clarify a vision of what can be accomplished, extend the skill level of participants through training, provide incentives, utilize numerous resources, and implement an action plan through effective management.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The methodology used in any study is necessarily dependent on the purpose of the study. Patton (1990) states: “Purpose is the controlling force in research. Decisions about design, measurement, analysis, and reporting all flow from purpose. Therefore, the first step in a research process is getting clear about purpose” (p. 150).

In discussing the marriage of purpose and process (methodology), Wolcott (1992) comments that

research purpose is the only basis on which decisions about process can be made; the clearer the purpose, the clearer the ways to achieve it. . . . Stripped of eloquence that can be added later, this key feature of qualitative (and any other) research begins with the phrase, “The purpose of this study is . . .” The fewer the words needed, the better; wordiness is a dead giveaway to an ill-formed, or at least not-yet-formed idea. (p. 7)

Therefore, the type of research used in a study is primarily dependent on the purpose of the study or what the researcher hopes to achieve. Patton discusses five basic types of research. These are+

1. basic research to contribute to fundamental knowledge and theory
2. applied research to illumine a societal concern
3. summative evaluation to determine program effectiveness
4. formative evaluation to improve a program
5. action research to solve a problem. (Patton, 1990, p. 150)
The purpose of this study is to provide feedback to those responsible for the coordination of the Seventh-day Adventist North American Division Tutoring and Mentoring effort that is a response to President Clinton's America Reads initiative. Through this formative evaluation, specific recommendations are given which, I hope, will help in the ongoing development of this and similar programs. More generally, the compilation of references from the existing literature about subjects related to the effort will be valuable to those interested in providing literacy tutoring help to young readers.

Because formative studies aim to improve a specific program, the findings or recommendations may or may not be applicable to other situations. "The purpose is to improve human intervention within a specific set of activities at a specific time for a specific group of people" (Patton, 1990, p. 156). Qualitative methods are particularly suited for this kind of study since the focus is limited. Subject numbers are usually small, with case studies being a preferred mode of investigation.

Features of Qualitative Research Generally and in This Study

Eisner’s Characteristics of Qualitative Studies

In defining the features of qualitative modes of inquiry, I use a six-point description offered by Eisner (1991). As I offer his descriptions, I apply them to this study specifically and explain why they are appropriate given the purpose offered above.
Field Focused

First, qualitative studies are field focused. By this term, Eisner implies that the researcher goes to the people and places where the events of interest to the researcher are happening. This also implies that qualitative studies are nonmanipulative, that is, objects and situations are studied intact instead of in an artificial, experimental environment.

In this study, I was in the field in two different capacities. The initial Tutoring and Mentoring training event was held in late August 1997 at the North American Division Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. I attended this conference in a dual-role capacity as both a co-presenter and as a participant observer with a research goal in mind.

Participant observation is an important tool for the qualitative researcher. The challenge for the participant observer is "to seek the essence of the life of the observed, to sum up, to find a central unifying principle" (Bruyn, 1966, p. 316). My participation, as mentioned before, was in a role different from those being trained since I was also acting as a trainer. But I was still able to fulfill the purpose of participant observation, which is "to describe the setting that was observed, the activities that took place in that setting, the people who participated in those activities, and the meanings of what was observed from the perspective of those observed" (Patton, 1990, p. 202). These observations were documented with field notes, which were added to after I reviewed the entire training event by videotape (provided to me by one of the trainees). My time with the trainees was brief, as was their training experience. Therefore, the "depth" of the encounter was limited because of time factors, but it did parallel the experience of the participants. This is the essence of participant observation.
Another field-based qualitative method used to gather data is by performing case studies of participants who are of particular interest to the researcher. My choices of follow-up subjects were based on a number of factors including their level of implementation of the program, scheduling concerns, and their particular backgrounds. Merriam (1988) identifies four essential characteristics of case study research which may help to define it in this context:

*Particularistic.* Case studies focus on a particular phenomenon, situation, event, or program.

*Descriptive.* The end product of a case study is a rich “thick” description of the phenomenon under study.

*Heuristic.* Case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study.

*Inductive.* Case studies rely on inductive reasoning in that the generalizations made as a result of studying the phenomenon emerge from the examination of the data collected in context. (pp. 11-12)

Like Merriam, I view these characteristics not as “types” of case study research, but as threads that weaving in and out of each case that I investigated. I discuss why I chose to study the particular individuals that I did later in this chapter.

Interviews with the case study participants were tape recorded. I used an interview schedule not as a script, but as a general guide (Appendix A). Knapp (1997) makes a case for this type of open-ended interviewing, stating that having a “shared agenda” is not only the most ethical way to interview people, but also the most effective since it allows for serendipitous responses to questions not thought of by the interviewer. The interview guide I used was based on the framework of critical components described in chapter 2.
took some field notes during my on-site visits, but interviews provided the bulk of information gleaned from case study participants.

The Self as Instrument

A second characteristic of qualitative inquiry as defined by Eisner (1991) relates to the self as instrument. Eisner states that the important features in any study do not simply announce themselves. "Researchers must see what is to be seen, given some frame of reference and some set of intentions. The self is the instrument that engages the situation and makes sense of it" (pp. 33-34). He cautions that this "appreciation for personal insight as a source of meaning does not provide a license for freedom" (p. 35). Evidence and reasons for interpreting things the way they do must be provided by researchers. Peshkin (1988) comments that subjectivity is inevitable in any study, whether qualitative or quantitative, and that researchers should consciously seek it out during their entire study. Ideally they should let readers know of their own biases while they seek to control it. This will help to keep their work from becoming "autobiographical."

Whenever possible in this study, I let the participants speak for themselves. Yet my interpretation of their comments was based in the framework of critical components of effective tutoring programs that I assembled from the literature. Borman, LeCompte, and Goetz (1986) suggest that this combination of description with established frameworks derived from the literature can prevent qualitative studies from producing conclusions that some might call "trivial." They state:

In our opinion, simple, flat description that does not create linkages with substantial conceptual and theoretical literature is not good ethnography; neither is research that
does not examine sociohistorical context for explanations of what is going on. The recursive nature of analysis in qualitative and ethnographic research is designed to help the investigator build constructs and integrate them with existing results from the research literature, to create linkages among the classes of phenomena observed in the research site, to build constructs and integrate them with the existing research literature, and to generate explanations for what has been found. (p. 49)

I had the liberty to act as an editor of the comments made by participants, choosing what to include or not include. How can the reader be assured that my renderings of their worlds are accurate? I accomplished this in two important ways. The first is that I solicited feedback from the primary case study informants. Miles and Huberman (1984a) contend that “a good explanation deserves attention from the people whose behavior it is about. Getting feedback from the informants . . . has particular confirmatory power” (p. 28). After completing my analysis of their tutoring programs, I sent an explanation of my critical components matrix to my primary case study informants along with the material I had written based on my interviews and visits with them. Their feedback was critical in shaping the final draft of my report.

Another way that my conclusions were verified was through the use of multiple data sources. This data triangulation (Denzin, 1978) helps to strengthen the analysis presented at the end of the study. My data were collected through interviews, observation, surveys, and journals from a number of participants over a 9-month period. The findings that I present in this study were not considered unless they could be confirmed by at least two different sources.

I used two open-ended surveys during the study. The first was simply a large, blank index card where the subjects were asked to give written responses to several
different questions. The data from these cards are analyzed and reported in chapter 4. The second instrument was somewhat more formal. Obviously, the participants had/have backgrounds that vary markedly from each other. Many have had little or no experience as instructors in any kind of teaching-learning situation, so they came to this situation with various levels of concern about what they have volunteered to do. Fuller (1969) hypothesized that the concerns teachers have progress through several stages as they are learning new innovations. Initially, their concerns are with “self” issues: “How will this affect me?” The next level is concerned with the “task,” or “What is this innovation all about?” The final level of concern has to do with “impact,” or “How is this affecting my pupils?” A team from the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education (Hall, George, & Rutherford, 1977) expanded upon Fuller’s work by breaking down the concerns into seven different stages: awareness, informational, personal, management, consequence, collaboration, and refocusing. They developed the Stages of Concern (SoC) Questionnaire to measure the continuum of attitudes toward an innovation that evolve in a fairly natural sequence. With this tool, I analyzed the concerns of these volunteers as they were completing their initial training session (Appendix A). This instrument is described more fully in chapter 4.

As a final source of data I kept a journal of my telephone and E-mail conversations that I had with the participants. Because of the difficulty in recording phone conversations, I took notes during my talks and I wrote as much as I could recall immediately as we were finished. I also wrote my own thoughts about my continuing work in this journal. This helped me to formulate my ideas as the study progressed.
Interpretive Character

The interpretive character of qualitative research is the third feature mentioned by Eisner (1991). The term interpretive has two meanings in the context of qualitative inquiry. The first pertains to questions of why. Why do people respond the ways they do in given situations? Why does an approach work in one location and not in another? To answer these questions the researcher either has to use constructs from the social sciences or he/she must create new theory for consideration.

Interpretation also has to do with matters of meaning. This is related to the why questions discussed above, but it goes deeper into areas of motive and experience. Rather than simply giving an account of the more obvious reasons for peoples' actions, interpretation in this context "penetrates the surface. Qualitative inquirers . . . aim beneath manifest behavior to the meaning events have for those who experience them" (Eisner, 1991, p. 35).

Perhaps Eisner's two questions above are a slightly more poetic way of describing what other qualitative theorists might call hypothesis development (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) or conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1984a). Experimental studies begin with a hypothesis which is either verified or not, while nonexperimental studies may generate hypotheses from data that have been systematically gathered.

Most often in this study, I let the participants speak for themselves while offering just enough interpretation to set their comments within a context. But, especially when discussing my findings in the final chapters, I delve into the shared experiences and the
meanings behind the actions (or absence of action) of the participants. I explain the reasons, based on their own accounts and my own observations, for their eventual ability or inability to begin tutoring projects, citing evidence from my records.

The Use of Expressive Language

The use of expressive language is the fourth characteristic of qualitative research discussed by Eisner (1991). The detached, mechanistic voice found in many journals is not usually a feature of qualitative studies. Eisner calls the use of first-person singular and the utilization of metaphor and descriptive, even poetic, language the “signature” of the qualitative researcher. He asks, “Why take the heart out of the situations we are trying to help readers understand?” (p. 37)

Miles and Huberman (1984a) suggest that making metaphors has the capability of pulling great quantities of fragmented data together into a one single descriptive image. Yet they confess that their general style of reporting does lean toward the “realist/positivist side” describing themselves as “right-wing qualitative researchers” (p. 23). This illustrates that there are wide variations even among qualitative theorists as to the personal poetic flair they give their work. Tesch (1990) presents a continuum of qualitative research interests with science-like methods on one end of the spectrum and art-like methods on the other.

I appreciate and take the liberty to use descriptive language and first-person singular voice. I agree with Eisner when he asserts that the detached voice used in many reports can be a deceptive way to imply detachment and objectivity. Yet my style does
tend to be less metaphoric than others. I try to tell it like it is, and I use poetic language when it seems useful.

Attention to Particulars

A fifth feature of qualitative studies, according to Eisner (1991), is their attention to particulars. The “flavor” of the particular situation is valued at least as much as aggregated data from multiple subjects. This flavor is maintained “by sensitivity to what might be called the aesthetic features of the case” and an “awareness of its distinctiveness” (p. 38).

Case study research, which I use in this study, allows for discovery of these distinctive and aesthetic features. Through interviewing and observation the unique characteristics of each case can be discovered and mined, uncovering a wealth of information valuable to the researcher and reader. Merriam (1988) agrees:

Investigators use a case study design in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and its meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than a confirmation. (p. xii)

The cases I investigate are drawn from a larger group of people who were the first trainees in a particular tutoring and mentoring program. More people have and will become involved in the effort, but I decided to limit my focus to this initial cohort, choosing to tell their stories in an in-depth fashion rather than extending to the larger group.
Coherence, Insight, and Instrumental Utility

Eisner’s sixth and final characteristic of qualitative studies “pertains to the criteria for judging their success. Qualitative research becomes believable because of its ‘coherence, insight, and instrumental utility’” (1991, p. 39). By these terms, Eisner means that qualitative studies use persuasion rather than statistical “proofs” of cause and effect or association. He points to the field of law as a model for such work. Lawyers utilize the theaters of courtrooms to convince juries of the plausibility of their case. So it is with qualitative work. It is the “weight” of the evidence, the coherence of the facts presented, and the cogency of the interpretation that convinces the reader of the explanations given.

The purpose of this study is primarily descriptive as opposed to experimental. “The aim of descriptive research is to examine events or phenomena” (Merriam, 1988, p. 7). This report is intended to enlighten those who are intricately involved in the program under study. It is my goal to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the approach undertaken by the organizers of the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring initiative. My need to convince, to be plausible in my explanations, and to provide insight is for the purpose of providing some amount of guidance to the decision-makers in this effort.

Perhaps a comment should be made regarding what Eisner called instrumental utility. I see this as a measure of the study’s usefulness to not only the target group, but also to those outside of the study’s immediate context. Eisner (1991), in defining instrumental utility as a study’s usefulness, says that it can be useful in two primary ways. It can help us to comprehend a situation that would otherwise be confusing—the usefulness of comprehension. A study can also help in anticipating the future—the usefulness of...
anticipation. This anticipation can be provided by studies that figuratively act as predictors, maps, or guides.

Design of the Study

Data Collection

Phases of Data Collection

The data for this study were collected in four general phases. I began collecting data during the first training session held in Silver Spring, Maryland, during the final week of August 1997. The SMILIES portion of the training took place during the last 2 days of the session. During this time Dr. Shirley Freed led the training and I assisted her. We solicited several written responses from the participants that were open-ended answers to questions having to do with specific parts of the training. I administered the open-ended Stages of Concern (SoC) survey (Hall et al., 1977) during the final hour of the training (Appendix A). I also took observation field notes during the training event, and I spent some time informally getting to know the participants. Chapter 4 is an analysis of this SMILIES training session.

In the second phase of data collection from September to December 1997, I took notes as I talked with many of the participants by telephone to assess their progress in establishing tutoring sites in their respective locations. It became obvious during this time that most were experiencing some degree of frustration or hesitancy, even though they still maintained a general enthusiasm for the initiative. It was also during this time that I learned of the successful establishment of projects in Boston and the Los Angeles area by
two of the participants. I became interested in their stories and determined to make on-site visits to them in the future.

The third phase of data collection from January through March 1998 involved my visits, observations, and interviews with these two participants—Arnold in Los Angeles and Nydia in Boston—and with some of their trainees. These visits took place in February and March, 1998. In each location I tape-recorded my interviews and collected documents related to their efforts. Also, at the end of January, project coordinator Sandra Brown held a teleconference with several of the trainees from the August 1997 training session. I took part in this conference and took notes as it progressed.

In the final phase of data collection I contacted as many of the initial trainees by telephone as possible for a final interview, during which I took notes. We discussed what progress, if any, had been made in their implementation efforts, and I gave them an opportunity to express whatever frustrations or hopes that they had related to the initiative.

The schedule of data collection (see Table 3) will help the reader to develop a sense of the timing and nature of the contact between the participants and me. I did attempt to contact each of the participants at least four or five times, and I had difficulty connecting with a few. There were three “couples” at the training—two husband and wife teams and one mother and daughter team. In each couple, the wife or mother acted as the spokesperson for the pair. All names of participants on the schedule and in this report, with the exceptions of my two case study subjects, are pseudonyms.
TABLE 3
SCHEDULE OF DATA COLLECTION

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</table>

*Note.*

C = Teleconference; E = E-mail; O = Observation; Q = Questionnaire; V = Site Visit; T = Telephone Conversation.
Selection of Cases

As mentioned above, two participants, Arnold Trujillo and Nydia Mendez (they requested that I use their actual names), were immediately successful in initiating tutoring projects. Their cases represent very different scenarios—Arnold is a full-time church leader working with volunteers of college age or younger. The tutoring projects under his supervision are operating from churches. Tutoring takes place outside of the school day. Nydia, on the other hand, is a principal at a public elementary school in Boston. Her volunteers are mothers who tutor at the school during the regular school day in full cooperation with the children's teachers. I decided that these two cases warranted special attention because of the immediate success of the overseers and because of their unique settings and operating parameters. No other projects initiated by the August trainees were in operation during the 1997-1998 school year.

Chapter 7 contains a discussion of the other participants and their situations synthesized from data I collected in all four phases. Certainly, each trainee has a unique story to tell as to why he or she experienced frustration or paralysis in trying to establish a program. Rather than simply categorizing their frustrations, I have chosen to use the more "art-like" (Tesch, 1990) form of depiction known as the collective story (Richardson, 1990). "The collective story displays an individual's story by narrativizing the experiences of the social category to which the individual belongs, rather than by telling the particular individual's story" (p. 25). The social category, in this case, is composed of the trainees who, for various reasons, were unable or unwilling to establish a tutoring site in their
home locations. Thus, this chapter tells composite stories that are based on telephone interviews I had with these people.

Denzin (1994) boldly asserts that "in the social sciences, there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself" (p. 500). He classifies research writing as either "productive" or "expressive" (pp. 504-505). My writing previous to chapter 7 is more "productive" in that I seek to present the objective realities experienced by the participants. Using the classic qualitative tools of observation and interview, my findings are categorized and classified, usually according to preexisting schemes. But in chapter 7, I choose to use the "expressive" narrative research tool of telling collective stories because, in Denison's (1996) words,

stories show instead of tell; they are less author-centered; they allow the reader to interpret and make meaning, thus recognizing that the text has no universal or general claim to authority; and, they effectively communicate what has been learned. (p. 352)

Rinehart (1998) uses different terms to describe types of qualitative/ethnographic writing. He defines "academic ethnography" as the now traditional sort of qualitative work that attempts to "capture the experience so that readers may more nearly approach the primary experience" (p. 203). This parallels my "productive" writing explained above. Collective stories fit under Rinehart's "fictional ethnography" where "the fundamental thrust . . . is to get at both the affective feel of the experience and the cognitive truth of it" (p. 204).

My goal, in doing this case study research, it to communicate the lived experiences of the participants to the reader as effectively as possible. It is hoped that the successes and frustrations of the first trainees may prove to be instructive and enlightening to the
project organizers and to all those interested in the successful implementation of tutoring programs.

The Data File

I built a data file containing all pertinent information gathered during all four phases of data collection. This file includes observation field notes, completed questionnaires, interview transcriptions, notes taken during telephone conversations, E-mail correspondences, and journal reflections. It also includes some printed material supplied to me by the case study informants and by the project coordinator—vision statements, resumes, flyers, and other correspondence. After I compiled all the data into the file, I organized it into four parts:

1. Questionnaires and other material from the August, 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring training session, including information supplied to me by the project coordinators.

2. Transcriptions, notes, and other material relating to Arnold's case study.

3. Transcriptions, notes, and other material relating to Nydia's case study.

4. Telephone conversation notes taken while talking with the other participants, including matrices and other classification tools that I developed to aid me in my analysis of the data.

Organizing the data in this way not only makes sense categorically, it also results in a somewhat chronologically sequenced file. When referencing data file information, I make the citation (Data File, p. #) in parentheses.
Data Analysis

The case study data were interpreted using a conceptual framework (Miles & Huberman, 1984a) suggested by the literature (Borman et al., 1986) pertaining to successful literacy tutoring programs. As I read and reread the transcriptions from interviews, I coded the data according to the framework I developed, which is explained in chapter 2. Glaser and Strauss (1967) warned that using borrowed classification schemes may hinder the generation of new categories. Keeping this in mind, I also allowed new categories to emerge as I read. As I carried the framework into the next case, I again coded the data, continuing to watch for the emergence of potential new categories. This "speculation," according to Merriam (1988), is "the key to developing theory in a qualitative study" (p. 141). Merriam cites Goetz and LeCompte (1984), who say that speculation involves

playing with ideas probabilistically. It permits the investigator to go beyond the data and make guesses about what will happen in the future, based on what has been learned in the past about constructs and linkages among them and on comparisons between that knowledge and what is presently known about the same phenomena. These guesses are projections about how confidently the relationships found or explanations developed can be expected to obtain in the future. (p. 173)

This is exactly the process I used in making "speculations" about the factors that combine to promote or frustrate the development of literacy tutoring programs. I also evaluate the status of the existing tutoring projects using a similar set of factors.

Yet, if this study is to have any measure of instrumental utility (Eisner, 1991), I must present my "speculations" in a manner that is cohesive and understandable. My evaluations of existing programs are made in the light of the framework of critical
components I developed as I compiled information from the literature. This framework is straightforward and almost speaks for itself. When telling the collective stories of those who experienced frustration in establishing tutoring sites, I chose to organize these experiences according to themes and types that emerged as I studied the data and people involved. Eisner (1991) defines themes as “recurring messages construed from the events observed” (p. 189). The utilization of themes in qualitative data analysis is a classic strategy described by Miles and Huberman (1984b) as one that is somewhat instinctive to humans. “The human mind finds patterns so quickly and easily that it needs no how-to advice. Patterns just ‘happen,’ almost too quickly” (p. 216).

Summary

The method used in this study is a qualitative case study approach utilizing the classic tools of observation, questionnaires, and interviews, and the narrative tool of collective storytelling. Participants in a tutoring and mentoring initiative were followed for a school year as they experienced varying degrees of success in establishing tutoring projects. The findings in this study were verified through triangulation and member checks. The end result is a description of what factors contributed to implementation or non-implementation of tutoring projects by the trainees.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE TRAINING EXPERIENCE

SMILIES Curriculum Development

After the initial commitment was made by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, an ambitious effort to develop suitable curriculum materials was launched by the organizers of the commitment. Dr. Shirley Freed at Andrews University, a small Midwestern Adventist university, was commissioned to write the reading/tutoring training materials. Dr. Freed is the director of the University's reading center where both undergraduate and graduate-level reading courses are offered. The center also houses a diagnostic and tutoring program for local school-age and adult students who are struggling with reading.

Dr. Freed invited another faculty member and a number of graduate students to become part of the curriculum development team. Because of my interest in this type of instruction, and because of my having authored a book for those desiring to tutor children in reading (Thogmartin, 1997), I was asked to participate in writing the training manual. Dr. Freed suggested that the instruction techniques used in the manual be classified under each of Howard Gardner's original seven intelligences as suggested in his book, Frames of Mind (Gardner, 1983). The title of the manual became SMILIES: Helping Children Read (Freed et al., 1997), with each letter in SMILIES suggesting one of the intelligences: spatial/visual, musical, intrapersonal, linguistic/language, interpersonal,
exercise/movement, and solving problems. The reasoning behind this approach is explained in the introduction of the manual:

People possess every intelligence in varying strengths. If we try to teach a concept or skill in only one way, we will likely make it difficult for people who are not smart in that one way. By structuring lessons using each intelligence/pathway each day, we will reach/teach more children. . . . Our task as tutors is to find the pathway that will unlock a child’s understanding into the many nuances of what it means to be literate. Using multiple pathways we will have a greater chance for success. (p. 1)

Methods adapted from other successful one-on-one approaches such as Reading Recovery (Clay, 1993) were used. The team worked together through the summer to write, gather, and organize materials for the manual and for the accompanying training videotape. The target date for completion was set for the last week of August where the SMILIES manual would be used to train the first round of volunteers.

A concern from the beginning of this project had to do with time frames—How can quality materials be developed in this short of a time period, and how can reading tutors/trainers of tutors be trained effectively in just 2 days? An E-mail to me from Dr. Freed as she introduced the challenge reflected these concerns:

Today, I got a call from the North American Division of SDA’s wondering if I would help with the training and materials for the tutors—they’re planning to train tutor trainers and send them out to ten cities this fall—the timing is really short but I’m thinking about it—I brought home your book tonight—actually if this flies there would be some good chances for following the tutors—what is frustrating me is the sense that there is no real concept of what it takes to teach someone to learn to read! But I am drawn by the challenge! More talk next week when you get here. (Data File, p. i)

This concern about the shortness of time has been a recurring theme through the whole project, as is discussed more fully later. But, since the time frame was beyond our
control, a decision was made to continue with the development of the manual and to do the best we could with training in the time given to us.

**Volunteer Recruitment and Orientation**

Following the commitment at the Philadelphia summit in April 1997, a call for volunteers was sent out to Seventh-day Adventist community services offices throughout the United States. The Church does have a systematic way of disseminating this type of information through newsletters, faxes, and various periodicals, especially when issues of community service are involved. As a result of this initial call, 25 people from all parts of the country volunteered for the 5-day training session to be held at the Adventist Church General Conference headquarters near Washington, D.C., at the end of August.

Volunteers represented a wide range in ages. One teenaged girl came with her mother, and several of the participants were in their 60s. Educators, pastors, community service directors, and housewives were some of the occupations represented by this diverse group of people. They, or the organizations they represented, were responsible for the $100 registration fee and expenses they incurred during the training week.

The first several days of training oriented the participants to the needs of at-risk children and the necessity for volunteers to help with their problems. The details of how to set up a community-based tutoring site were presented by the project organizers. Each participant was given a handbook consisting of helpful information and forms (Sahlin, 1997).
John Gavin, Deputy Director for ADRA/ACS North America, and Sandra Brown, the National Coordinator for the YouthNet/Alliance for Youth Project, did most of the presenting during the first few days of the training. Their sessions were well-organized, concise, and informative, and they offered frequent opportunities for the participants to ask questions. The topics covered during this time were

1. The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the needs of disadvantaged communities
2. Understanding the lives of children at risk
3. An overview of how to build an effective program
4. An introduction to the process of community organizing and project development
5. How to identify leaders, partners, and allies
6. The power of information and how to use it
7. An overview of group dynamics and community change
8. Developing and empowering leaders
9. An introduction to basic public relations
10. How to raise money for local programs.

A news release published on the third day of the training quoted Gavin as saying, "The event is going wonderfully. We have a great group of excited and dedicated regional volunteers who are eager to implement the objectives of [the Church] with its commitment to the Presidential Summit" (DelaCruz, 1997, p. 1).
For several of the trainees, the information presented was not all that new. The Adventist church has been involved in service and disaster relief efforts for many years. Those participants who were there representing Adventist Community Service (ASC) affiliated organizations had probably received some training before in the intricacies of setting up a new operation such as a tutoring project. Many of the participants, however, were there because of their own personal interest in the project and not because of any direct responsibilities with ACS. Lindsey and her daughter June came on their own from New Mexico where they are hoping to start a tutoring project on a nearby Indian reservation. One of the trainees, Tasha, is not affiliated with the Adventist church. A Catholic sister for 17 years, she is now the community service director for a housing development in what she called a "rough neighborhood" in nearby Capital Heights, Maryland.

The SMILIES Training Sessions

Dr. Freed and I began the training in the use of the SMILIES manual on the fourth day of the seminar. The participants appeared cheerful and lively as we entered the room where the training was taking place. With us was my 9-year-old son, Philip, who was to act as our model student. He and I had rehearsed how he might role-play as a young, struggling first-grader. I had warned him that we might give him some text to read that was beyond his own comfort level just to demonstrate how a student might actually react to unfamiliar text. Philip was undaunted in his enthusiasm about being there, and he appeared to settle right in as things got started. It seemed that the participants were
pleased with his being there as well because it offered a nice diversion to what had been
several days of lecturing for them.

Arriving with Dr. Freed and me was a fellow university graduate student who is
also a principal at a public school in Boston. Nydia wanted to come to learn more about
the SMILIES curriculum. She had been thinking about the possibility of starting a tutoring
project in her own school. She, like us, began introducing herself to the people there,
including the organizers of the Tutoring and Mentoring project.

We were in a large conference room that had several rows of tables facing the
front. At the front were a podium, a table, a screen with an overhead projector, a white
board, and a television/VCR setup. The room was much wider than it was deep due to the
fact that it was really two rooms with an open divider between them. At the far end of the
room was a table where drinks and snacks were provided by our division hosts. A cordless
microphone was available but, due to the give-and-take nature of our presentation, it was,
at times, as much of a hindrance as it was a help. Philip often acted as a “microphone
caddy” when he was not up front as part of the presentation or exploring the nearby
facility.

The sessions began that morning as they had all week with a devotional thought by
Dr. Jose Rojas. He spoke of how “the greatest things in history are the simplest. When
God acts, it is usually in a simple, very clear manner.” Those who can accept the
“simplicity of the call” are the ones who will end up “making history together.” The
people there have an obvious respect and admiration for Rojas. His disarming, casual, but
convincing manner may turn out to be one of the important factors in the eventual success of this endeavor.

After Dr. Freed, Nydia, Philip, and I were introduced to the group, Dr. Freed distributed the *SMILIES* manual and gave an overview of the *SMILIES* reading project, how it came together, and how the manual is organized. She showed an introductory piece from the instructional video and asked the participants to answer two questions on an index card she provided:

1. Have you ever taught a child to read? and
2. What do you plan to do with this training?

Dr. Freed presented a two-part agenda for the *SMILIES* portion of the training. Not only would the participants learn techniques associated with reading instruction, but they would also be discovering "who am I?" as the training progressed. She encouraged them to consider their own biases, inclinations, and gifts, and how these things might affect their ability to tutor and to train others. Because of the intensely personal nature of one-on-one tutoring, they will have a tremendous effect on the children with whom they work.

Then the participants were asked to work together in small groups for the first time during their training. They were to discuss with each other what they planned to do with this training. Following this, they were instructed by Dr. Freed to "share a pen" and make a diagram that illustrated the characteristics of a tutor. As I circulated around the room, I noticed that the participants seemed to be somewhat reserved in getting started. Dr. Freed noticed the same thing so she shifted into what could be described as a
“cheerleading” mode as she shouted encouragements to the groups. I walked to one group in the back of the room and asked a gentleman named Arnold if this was the first time he had worked in groups. He said that it was. He said he had told Dr. Rojas the night before that “lecturing is extremely inefficient” and that he was surprised the organizers had spent so much time in a lecturing mode during the previous days.

This activity did help the trainees to become more actively involved during the remaining sessions. They appeared to become more lively and talkative as they worked together on various tasks and as opportunities for discussion presented themselves. Question and answer times almost always had to be cut short by Dr. Freed in order to press on into new material. She encouraged the participants to carry their feelings of comraderie home with them so that they might use each other for support as they established their programs.

This theme of needing support after the training was one that was mentioned several times that week. Sandra Brown and John Gavin both had assured the participants that they would be contacted within a month or two after the training to offer support and to check up on how things are going. I had a toll-free telephone number installed in my home to facilitate support to the participants. Our telephone numbers and addresses were made available with many encouragements to contact us at any time.

Dr. Freed involved Philip and me in several demonstrations when presenting material on text reading and strategy development. The participants appeared to appreciate our modeling of the techniques we were recommending. Dr. Freed also used portions of the SMILIES videotape in her instruction, as well as read-aloud selections of
children's books. I was at liberty to interject comments or suggestions at any time during the training when I felt it was appropriate and helpful.

By the end of the 2-day training, all the major topics had been discussed, although not as in-depth as we would have liked. The manuals the participants had received did contain the core material in print form; and a copy of the *SMILIES* training videotape, which contained demonstrations of many of the techniques that had been presented, was given to each person as he or she left.

**Analysis of the Training**

**The Joyce-Showers Model**

A helpful analysis of the *SMILIES* training session can be made by using the training model proposed by Joyce and Showers (1988, 1995). In this model, high levels of implementation of new innovations can be expected when five components are in place: theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching.

**Theory**

The participants did receive some light instruction in the theory behind the kind of instructional techniques that were presented. Prior to each new activity or demonstration, a brief introduction was given either live or from the training video. To introduce the theory behind the use of multiple intelligence pathways in reading instruction, Dr. Freed gave each participant a simple inventory where they discovered their own intelligence preferences (Armstrong, 1993). A lively discussion followed as several of the trainees expressed surprise or agreement with the findings. Often, the participants asked questions
about the theory behind the approach. The training manual given to each trainee contained mini-discussions about theory with references cited for further reading.

**Demonstration**

The trainees did observe a number of tutor-child sessions both on videotape and in live sessions with Philip and me as he played the part of a struggling first-grade student. For example, we demonstrated the differences in children reading at the independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels and how to determine the difficulty level at which a student is reading. We also showed how to introduce new reading material to a child. Often, the participants commented to me about how helpful these demonstrations were, and that it would be very difficult to conceptualize the methods without seeing them used firsthand. Only a small sampling of methods were demonstrated, however, due to time restraints.

**Practice, Feedback, and Coaching**

Very little actual practice with feedback or coaching occurred during the training sessions. Once again, time limitations prevented opportunities for us to provide practice time with any meaningful feedback to the participants.

They did practice making eight-page folded books, and the basics behind writing simple, repetitive stories with children. All of the participants created a book with some group members, and they shared it with the rest of the trainees. This provided some good opportunities for helpful feedback. They also practiced determining reading levels as Philip read some selections aloud.
We recommended that they find a child with whom they could work soon after going home, and we invited them to call the toll-free number for support as they did so. Dr. Freed stressed the absolute need for the trainees to practice tutoring a child before trying to teach these methods to others.

Written Feedback

During the SMILIES training, Dr. Freed and I had asked the participants to give us written feedback in several forms. We specifically requested that this information be completed before they left since collection after the training sessions would probably be much more difficult. In addition to a consent form required by the University, the trainees responded in writing to the following questions:

1. Have you ever taught a child to read?
2. What do you hope/plan to do with this training?
3. What are your concerns as you think about the SMILIES tutoring project?

Have You Ever Taught a Child to Read?

The participants were asked to indicate whether they had ever taught a child to read on an index card soon after the initial introductions were made. Of the 25 trainees in attendance, 21 did answer the question, and all but 3 made no extra comments (Data File, pp. 31-51). Sixty-two percent of those responding indicated that they had taught at least one child to read. Those who went beyond a simple negative or affirmative response made comments about teaching their own children. Ruth, who answered affirmatively, said “I home school” (Data File, p. 45). The other two people who commented, Arnold and
Sherry, said that they had not taught a child to read, but they had helped their own children to learn (Data File, pp. 43, 48). These respondents evidently assume that only a person who is the primary reading teacher for a child can claim that s/he taught the child to read.

What Do You Hope/Plan to Do With This Training?

Trainees were asked to reply on an index card what they planned to do with this training, with the same 21 participants choosing to answer this question (Data File, pp. 31-51). Using simple content-analysis techniques, the responses to the above question were tallied into categories. Content analysis, according to Merriam (1988), is "a systematic procedure for describing the content of communication. . . . The process involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and constructing categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document’s content" (pp. 116-117). As I read the responses, 10 categories emerged that described what the participants planned to do as a result of receiving this training. Table 4 details these responses. The percentages are overlapping; that is, I tallied each response given. Many participants gave multiple responses.

Not surprisingly, the participants planned to do exactly what the training was preparing them to do: tutor children, train others to tutor children, and set up tutoring projects. Most of the responses were very brief and to the point with little or no
### TABLE 4

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "WHAT DO YOU HOPE/PLAN TO DO WITH THIS TRAINING ?" (n=21)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutor children in reading</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train others to tutor</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote spiritual growth in children</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/help create a tutoring project</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve children's quality of life</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support/promote tutors &amp; tutoring projects</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow God's leading</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach out to the community</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add reading instruction to an existing program</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be supportive to parents of tutored children</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
elaboration. Amy said she plans to “help others to help children with reading problems
and learn for myself how to teach children so I can work with the program” (Data File, p. 41).

Irene plans to “educate and help the clients’ children who cannot help their
children.” She also adds a spiritual dimension to her vision for the program by stating that
she wants to “teach them how to know Jesus by being able to read for themselves
including the parents” (Data File, p. 41). More than one-fourth of the participants stated
similar spiritual ambitions revealing motivations that were rooted in their Christian faith.

Two of the respondents wrote extended responses to the question, “What do you
plan to do with this training?” Ruth states passionately:

Our church, or at least a few or a core group feels God’s calling to reach out beyond
the church walls to our community. We feel the need to share God’s love and grace as
Jesus Himself did. When we look at Jesus’ ministry we see more often than not He
met the NEED at the time! I’d even venture to say there were times, many times
possibly when Jesus only met the physical need and quite possibly that’s ALL HE
DID. This is a wonderful opportunity to open a whole new world to a child and/or
adult including but not limited to the GOOD NEWS. First we want to meet the
immediate need, love them, and allow the Spirit to lead us in wisdom to share His gifts
of salvation with them through reading, social, activities, events, etc. I’m excited about
reaching out to other non-SDA organizations. (Data File, p. 45)

Lindsey, after stating that she plans to “teach other kids to read so they can
experience the joy I get from reading and digesting God’s precious Word!” also talks
about reaching out to the wider community.

I’m also looking forward to involving the other Christian denominations and other
service organizations. What a great way to learn from each other! I hope it’ll help our
church know that there are sincere Christians in other denominations. I also hope that
other denominations will find out about “Adventist love” and concern (And maybe in
time "doctrine") and realize we are not Mormons or Jehovah’s Witnesses, or another cult. My children attend a Church of Christ youth group. (Data File, p. 51)

The desire to reach out and extend Christian love in order to help others spiritually and to extend the influence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is one that is shared by the leadership of the Tutoring and Mentoring project. In chapter 3 of the training manual, titled, “Why Should Adventists Get Involved?” Monte Sahlin (1997), executive director of Adventist Community Services, states:

The compassion of Jesus Christ demands that we get involved. There are millions of hurting children and, if we are authentic followers of Christ, we will want to help...

It is an opportunity to represent the character of God. The Adventist Church needs to give a clear answer to the New Testament question, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) Random surveys of the general public reveal that the vast majority of Americans have never heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or, if they’ve heard the label, have no idea what the church stands for or is all about. We are almost invisible, and visibility comes to a church only when it is viewed by civic leaders and the media as stepping outside its religious role and making a contribution to the human and economic needs of the community. (p. 11)

What Are Your Concerns as You Think About the SMILIES Tutoring Project?

To assess the concerns of the participants at the end of the training, I administered Newlove and Hall’s Open-Ended Statement of Concern About an Innovation assessment (Newlove & Hall, 1976). Although the authors caution about using the assessment as a rigorous research tool, they say it is extremely helpful in planning and evaluating programs and workshops.

As discussed in chapter 3, Fuller (1969) hypothesized that teachers’ concerns progress through several levels as they are learning a new innovation—from “self”
concerns, to "task" concerns, and finally to concerns about the "impact" they are having on their students. Hall et al. (1977) break these concerns into seven stages that are on the same continuum as Fuller's. The "awareness," "informational," and "personal" concerns correspond roughly to Fuller's "self" level, the "management" and "consequence" stages correspond to Fuller's "task" level, and the "collaboration" and "refocusing" stages are contained in Fuller's "impact" level. Hall (1976) states that educators would like to think that they always function at the impact concern level. However, it is a basic finding of [our] research that almost everyone, when first confronted with a "new" innovation, will have relatively intense personal and informational concerns. It is important to recognize that self concerns are a fully legitimate part of change. (p. 22)

To administer the open-ended questionnaire, the participants simply respond to the question, "When you think about (the innovation), what are you concerned about?" They are given a sheet of paper with the question at the top and space to record three concerns (Appendix A). The researcher, using the guidelines and examples given by Newlove and Hall, reads the responses and codes them with the numbers 0 through 6 corresponding to the stages discussed above. The coding is not a "cut-and-dried" process; rather, the evaluator must use his/her best judgment when making determinations about under which stage a concern should be classified.

I administered the open-ended questionnaire on the second day during the last hour of the SMILIES training session. The participants were tired but willing to complete the form (Data File, pp. 52-75). As I coded and evaluated their responses, I made a frequency distribution table to get a general idea under which stages the expressed

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TABLE 5
RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE SMILIES READING TUTORING PROJECT, WHAT ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Concern</th>
<th>Number of Concerns Expressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequence</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refocusing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated to SMILIES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
concerns fell. (See Table 5.) Every concern conveyed by each participant was coded as a separate item, with most participants sharing more than one concern.

As expected, almost half of the concerns conveyed were personal in nature. Most of these comments were very similar, with the participants expressing concerns about their ability to teach the children, train tutors, or simply remembering all they need to remember:

What if I get a child who can’t even identify a letter, will I be able to refer to the book and “learn how to teach this child?” (I am not an educator).

– Carla (Data File, p. 60)

At this point, my greatest concern is my ability to digest, transfer, and apply this information to the tutors and students for maximum benefit. My mind is too overloaded at this moment to decipher anything more.

– Ella (Data File, p. 73)

I am honestly concerned that I will not remember all the information. I feel “taking the course” another time would be helpful. I feel so inadequate to be a trainer.

– Sherry (Data File, p. 63)

I am concerned that I will not be able to get this whole program flying for a while allowing me to forget and maybe I will lose inspiration.

– Rose (Data File, p. 69)

I am concerned about the “shortness” of the training. Will I have the confidence necessary to be a good tutor and trainer especially to train others? (Practice makes perfect, though).

– Nydia (Data File, p. 65)

Many of the participants expressed concerns related to Fuller’s “task” level.

Concerns about securing and maintaining volunteers, funds, or facilities were common:

My greatest concern is finding volunteer tutors who will commit to an ongoing program every week for a year or more.

– Susan (Data File, p. 53)
I am not sure that volunteers will be able to reach a level of competence that will enable them to utilize this program effectively.

- Arnold (Data File, p. 72)

My concern is that I may not be able to find a suitable situation to set up a tutorial program.

- Edward (Data File, p. 71)

The lack of caring for the community in (our region’s) SDA churches will be a major hurdle to cross. We want to reach out—but in “our own way and our own time” is the thought of a high percentage of the numbers.

- Howard (Data File, p. 64)

I am concerned about getting funds to feed them after school (nutrition) so their brain cells will be fed and they will concentrate better. I am concerned about funds because I know the tutors will ask for a stipend or at least car fare and funds for supplies.

- Irene (Data File, p. 52)

My present concern is about training volunteers to accept new tutoring skills. Some people don’t like changes. The level of dedication and a time limit that I can get volunteers to commit to.

- Dawn (Data File, p. 57)

Only a few comments were related to the “impact” level as described by Fuller.

Several participants, due to a lively discussion around ebonics and regional languages, expressed concerns about dealing with these issues in a tutoring situation. Others related compassionate concern for the well-being of children:

The children (are) my greatest concern—the welfare of the children. That their needs and well-being don’t get lost in the idea of helping them learn to read and become an answer and not a problem. . . . If we as a church group that is supposed to be leading the way don’t push our values on the family as was to my family.

- Paula (Data File, p. 56)

I am concerned for the many children in my immediate church neighborhood who come from low income households and may be needing this very program.

- Margie (Data File, p. 53)
I was not at all surprised by the concerns of the participants. Many of their concerns were/are mine as well. A few days after the training sessions, I made some notes in my journal where I relayed my biggest concern:

Like many of the participants have expressed, I'm concerned that their good intentions may simply melt away as they return to their busy lives. . . . Shirley has commented several times that she hopes I won't be studying a "non-event." Time will tell if this is what is going to happen. (Data File, pp. 279, 282)

Summary

The leadership of the entities involved in the Tutoring and Mentoring project are enthusiastic and hopeful that their efforts will enhance the lives of thousands of underprivileged children around the country. Certainly, the foundational framework is in place for good things to happen. Yet, the limitations in resources that need to be overcome if the project was to be successful are sobering.

As we all departed from the SMILIES training session, we were enthusiastic but full of concerns. Given the allotted time, the opportunities to introduce theory, to demonstrate effective techniques, and to initiate practice sessions were very limited. Almost no feedback or coaching was offered to the trainees. Only a few of the participants came with the educational background that would be helpful in a project of this nature. The personal and management concerns expressed by the group were certainly understandable. As Hall (1976) exhorted, "The role of the adoption agents and policy/decision-makers should be to aid in the resolution of self-concerns and to facilitate movement toward task- and impact-related concerns" (pp. 22-23). The responsibilities to
initiate tutoring projects in the home regions of the participants did not rest with them alone, but with the entire leadership structure of the Adventist Church.
CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDY OBSERVATIONS: ARNOLD, THE VISIONARY

Analyzing Effective and Frustrated Program Implementation

Of the initial trainees at the August 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring session in Silver Spring, Maryland, several seemed to be particularly “empowered” to go home and immediately begin tutoring projects. The majority, however, were stalled in their attempts. In the next two chapters, I look at two participants who initiated tutoring projects before the end of the year. What aspects combined to cause their effectiveness? In a third chapter, I also paint a composite picture of the frustrations encountered by those who were not as successful in making things happen. Obviously, the reasons for eventual success or frustration in an endeavor such as setting up a tutoring project are as varied as the people and their circumstances. But, trying to dissect the various components of implementation against a common backdrop may prove to be helpful to everyone interested and/or involved.

In chapter 2, I reviewed the literature about tutoring projects in general and literacy tutoring projects in particular. Based on my readings, I isolated the characteristics of successful programs and organized these characteristics in a matrix based on a graphic by Ambrose (1987) titled, “Managing Complex Change” where five major components crucial to implementing change in a program are identified. In this framework, all five
components—vision, skills, incentives, resources, and action plans—must be present if change is to occur. Since implementing a new tutoring project can mean a great amount of change to those involved, I felt that this organizer would be appropriate and helpful in analyzing the experiences of the participants at the August 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring seminar in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Using a conceptual framework as described above is useful according to Miles and Huberman (1984a) who rhetorically ask:

What orienting ideas does the researcher—even one with a strongly inductive or hermeneutical bent—bring to the inquiry? We have found that making such initial frames explicit, usually in the form of a simple graphic structure of major variables with arrows showing relationships between them, substantially aids focus. (p. 25)

Arnold, the Visionary

Background

As I have pondered the reasons why only a few of the trainees have found success in setting up tutoring projects, I realize that those who were immediately effective already had key elements in place prior to attending the training. Through previous training or experience, because of current job status, and/or due to personal strengths and gifts, these effective leaders took what they already had and utilized it to design effective programs. Arnold’s story is a particularly potent example of this “coming together” of complementary factors.

An extremely talented and gifted pastor and educator, Arnold Trujillo (Arnold requested that I use his actual name) came to the August training with somewhat of an agenda already in place. He is the “father” of L.E.A.R.N., an organization whose acronym
stands for *Latino Educational Advancement and Research Now* Resource Center and Foundation. *L.E.A.R.N.* is a network of Latino professionals which seeks to improve the educational attainment of Latino youth. Arnold has enlisted the help and commitment of dozens of professionals in numerous fields, all who have a common interest in the advancement of the Latino community. One of the original goals of the strategic plan set forth in early 1996 was to “establish church-school collaboratives to support a tutoring/mentoring program based at the local church for students K-12” (Data File, p. 151).

Arnold’s background is Hispanic. His family has lived in the American Southwest for hundreds of years. He has served the Hispanic community as a pastor in several different churches since the early 1980s. He is very familiar with the needs of this cultural group. Arnold’s deep concern for his people and his own personal experience prompted him to organize *L.E.A.R.N.* In an electronic mail memo sent to key leaders connected with the Latino community around the country, Arnold passionately spelled out his vision for the organization he proposed to start:

> I believe that what is needed now and will be more acutely needed in the future is compassionate, educated, courageous, committed and visionary leaders who will be mentors. We need leaders who are winsome but not wimps. We need leaders who are bridges and bridge-builders who can span the racial and linguistic diversity of modern America and forge a unity grounded not on sameness but on respect for America’s multicultural reality. . . . Where can we find such leaders? They are already among us. They are our children. They are in our Sabbath Schools, Pathfinder clubs, and Sociedad de Jovenes youth organizations. They are also in the community, as yet undiscovered. Admittedly these leaders-to-be are immature and lacking in education and training. That is our challenge. We must immediately begin to develop the human resources we have among us. (Data File, p. 142)
It was with this passionate vision that Arnold attended the August 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring workshop. He had been personally invited and encouraged to attend the workshop by Jose Rojas, who also has a Hispanic background. During the workshop, Arnold realized that L.E.A.R.N. could effectively adopt the America Reads/SMILIES agenda as its primary vehicle for delivering tutoring and mentoring services to Hispanic churches. He admits that, at first, the goals of the training and the initiative were somewhat unclear and lacked integration. But as the training week proceeded, Arnold began to catch a vision for what could be done. On Thursday afternoon of that week, Arnold voiced his enthusiasm about the project to the entire group of trainees:

This curriculum, I think, that is being provided for us is far superior to anything that is out there. We have absolutely nothing to be concerned about. I believe that by us hitting the street first, by us doing serious research evaluative criteria first, we are going to be leading the rest of the public agencies. They are going to be coming to us and saying, “What are you doing? How is it going? What are you learning? How are you training your volunteers for tutoring? What kind of results are you getting there?” I think that those of us who are taking this training at this stage of the game—we are way ahead of the game from many other agencies who won’t be establishing sites for another year or so. We are responding to this national initiative within 90 days. That’s unheard of! That’s totally unheard of! And if there are some glitches that we have because the presentations this week have not been totally integrated it is only because we are trying to hit the ground running first. I think the next time that this is offered it will be far more integrated. (Data File, p. 123)

Arnold took this enthusiasm, his desire to “hit the street first,” home with him. Immediately following the Tutoring and Mentoring seminar in Silver Spring, Jose Rojas came to the southern California area to speak at a youth camp only 2 hours from Arnold’s home. Because Arnold had some other minor business to take care of with Rojas, he drove to the camp to meet him. When Arnold saw the approximately 600 young people there, he challenged Rojas saying, “Jose, here are all the kids. Make a call for volunteers. I just came
in from training. You know that. I’ll train them. I’ll be responsible for training—you call them” (Data File, p. 88). And Rojas did, resulting in approximately 200 young people from 40 different churches making commitments to offer their services as volunteers.

Now, according to Arnold, “the ball was in my court” (Data File, p. 89). He immediately contacted a friend of his, Suzanne, who is a teacher in an Adventist school in the area. She and Arnold together invited several other people, some of whom were teachers, to gather the next weekend and begin making plans for training sessions. They made abbreviated training guides condensed from various parts of the SMILIES manual. Each person there was assigned a pathway (the SMILIES jargon for one of the seven intelligences as defined by Gardner, 1983) to present at the first training session for volunteers, held at the Spanish-American Church on September 28, 1997.

About 100 volunteers came to the first training session. In a phone conversation I had with him the next day, Arnold stated that he was deeply impressed with the commitment and enthusiasm of the volunteers in attendance (Data File, pp. 125-126). Two weeks later, on October 11, 1997, Arnold sponsored a rally where Special Advisor to President Clinton, Flo McAffee, spoke to most of the 200 original volunteers, challenging them to continue giving themselves in service to their community (Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1997). He offered a verbal message to be relayed through McAffee to President Clinton, stating a local commitment to “tutoring/mentoring—on a one-to-one basis—at least one child, twice every week” (p. 6). Later Arnold had the opportunity to share with her details about the project he had initiated, remarking to me later that McAffee was “totally overwhelmed” (Data File, p. 90).
In the late fall of 1997, Arnold was offered the position of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty associate director in the Pacific Union Conference. He accepted the position, but it necessitated that he move his base of operations to Sacramento, California, several hours to the north. His new office is giving him a unique platform to promote the America Reads effort throughout the Union. But his ability to coordinate the tutoring efforts in southern California has been severely hampered since he returns to the area only once every 2 weeks for the weekend. Arnold is placing the supervision responsibilities in the hands of Suzanne, L.E.A.R.N. vice president for training and curriculum.

At the time of this writing, two other tutoring sites in the Los Angeles area are also functioning, one at Norwalk Adventist Bilingual Church and the other at Baldwin Park Bilingual Adventist Church. The coordinators at each site were trained by Arnold, and he checks on their progress occasionally. I interviewed the key people at each of the three sites in mid-February 1998 to examine critical components of successful literacy tutoring programs as delineated by the conceptual framework described earlier.

**Critical Components of Tutoring Programs**

**Vision**

It can hardly be said that Arnold is a man without a vision. When he decides to do something, little stands in his way as he presses forward. Arnold still holds the “record” for being the person responsible for moving the single largest structure from one location to another in the city of Los Angeles. As pastor of a large bilingual church who was considering building on another location they had acquired, Arnold suggested that they
move their existing structure instead. He coordinated thousands of man-hours of work as
the building was cut in three pieces, moved, and reassembled on their new location. Arnold
has calculated that they saved well over $1 million as a result.

Arnold spoke often of his vision for tutoring projects in our conversations.

Whatever denomination that carries the name of Jesus, who works in the way that he
did ministering to the needs of the people, should be doing these kinds of things,
especially for the little ones, especially for that time in their lives when their whole life
is being shaped by the success or failure in these most important of skills: reading, and
writing, and English. Most important for their whole life, future life. So, I think that this
is, I believe in what is a being done through America Reads, I believe it with all my
heart and I believe that it really should be a part of every church’s array of services. It
doesn’t have to be the exclusive service, but it should be a part of the array of services
that is provided to the community, to the families of the school, to the children of the
school. (Data File, pp. 90-91)

The passion expressed above was a part of Arnold’s thinking long before America
Reads was initiated by President Clinton. As he became familiar with the details of the
Adventist commitment at the August 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring seminar, the vision
began to solidify:

Once I understood America Reads, and once I saw the excellent curriculum, an
excellent game plan, I saw that there would be great benefits for L.E.A.R.N. to adopt
America Reads as its primary vehicle for delivering tutoring and mentoring services to
churches, in the churches. (Data File, p. 84)

Clear Mission and Goals Expressed

The Tutoring and Mentoring Handbook (Sahlin, 1997) clearly defines the
overarching mission and goals of the North American Division-sponsored project.

Commenting about his formal introduction to these guiding principles Arnold states:

I went to Silver Spring, took the training end of August, and was introduced to that
manual and to the excellent work and video that had been done to help us. And I was
very, very grateful for that because that provided the content, that provided the game plan, that provided a curriculum and the how to's—what do you do when you have the children in front of you? (Data File, p. 83)

Jose Rojas, speaking about “Service With an Attitude” (Data File, pp. 123-124), was the first to challenge the large group of young people in the Los Angeles area to service at the Cedar Falls youth camp in late August 1997. Arnold’s purpose in sponsoring Flo McAffee’s visit to the tutors-in-training several weeks later was to impart a vision for service in general and for the America Reads initiative in particular. The sheer numbers of volunteers they recruited point to the effectiveness of this vision planting. At each of the gatherings, the specific goals of the YouthNet project were explained in detail.

Arnold began by working with a core group of about eight people, most of whom were teachers. His plan was to “replicate himself” in these key leaders (Data File, p. 123). At their initial meeting on September 21, 1997, he “explain[ed] the program and the vision” (Data File, p. 124). Together, they set goals and made specific plans for the next phases of the training.

Juan, the coordinator at the Spanish-American site, discussed the need for setting specific goals in their program:

We have to define our goals, we have to define a very specific goal, let’s say, let’s have 50 kids by the end of the summer. . . . The main question they ask, tutors ask, ok, when are we going to stop this? If we, let’s say it would take a kid from first level to fourth level, and he is ready, we have to stop somewhere. Those things are not very clear, and we need to work on that. (Data File, p. 117)
Clear Expectations of Volunteers

It is true that some things "are not very clear" as Juan confesses. The programs at these three sites had been operating only a short while at the time of my interview. Details about some aspects of their programs were being clarified as they continued to offer services. Evidently, there was clarity enough for volunteers to commit to the programs.

Marcos, the coordinator at the Norwalk site, had 25 tutors who had received training (Data File, p. 93), Sylvia at Baldwin Park had 12 (Data File, p. 104), and Juan at Spanish-American has 11 active tutors, but over 20 are on the rolls (Data File, p. 117). The coordinators all expressed various general expectations of their volunteers that were mostly a part of their action plans, things having to do with schedules, lesson content, and student load.

Skills

My first interaction with Arnold was at the Tutoring and Mentoring seminar in Silver Spring. During the first morning of our presentation about the SMILIES reading materials, we asked the participants to work in groups on a task. I noted that they seemed a little shy about working together, even though this was the fourth day of the seminar. As I circulated, I asked Arnold if this was the first time the participants had been asked to work in groups. As I recall, Arnold said, "Yes, brother. I asked Jose just last night if he realized that lecturing is the most inefficient form of instruction, because all we've had for three days is lecturing." Immediately, I began to form an opinion that this man had a unique
grasp of things associated with education and what it takes to implement successful projects.

And I was correct in my assessment. In my conversations with Arnold, he is usually overflowing with enthusiasm, but not the kind of enthusiasm that is unrealistic. As the seminar in Silver Spring was coming to a close, I asked the participants to share in writing what concerns they had about implementing a literacy tutoring project such as what we had proposed with the SMILIES program. Arnold candidly stated, “I am not sure that volunteers will be able to reach a level of competence that will enable them to utilize this program effectively” (Data File, p. 72). But this did not thwart him from pressing ahead. Within a few days of making that statement, Arnold had committed to training the 200 volunteers who stepped forward at the Cedar Falls Youth Camp just outside of Los Angeles.

**Ongoing Training and Supervision of Volunteers**

I indicated above that successful tutoring projects provide quality initial and ongoing training for volunteer tutors. A few weekends after making the commitment to train the 200 volunteers, Arnold met with a core group of eight volunteers, mostly educators, planning training sessions for the larger group. The initial plan was to provide regular, possibly monthly, inservice events for the volunteers. In my notes from a telephone conversation I had with Arnold on September 19, 1997, I wrote, “He sees the key element in the training as the continuing technical support by key teachers he has trained as opposed
to the training event itself’ (Data File, p. 125). This is evident in Arnold’s organizational strategy.

I also noted the content of the training the group proposed:

Their strategy is to have the tutors leave each monthly session with 2 lesson plans that they can go out and implement immediately. Their inservice will cover two “methods” to use with each pathway. They plan to purchase a training manual and Keep Books™ for every sight. . . . During the sessions, he plans on doing two things–tutor trainees will observe those who are already trained as they work with children, and they will work with the tutor trainees in the use of the manual. (Data File, p. 124)

As noted above, Arnold took a new position in the conference that necessitated his being away from the Southern California area for most of the time. But this did not mean that tutoring sites were not established. Even with the few training sessions that were held, three sites were in operation at the time of my visit, with several more in various stages of planning. At these sites, the coordinators provided their own training based on the model that Arnold and his core group had proposed.

At the Norwalk site, Marcos, the coordinator, provided initial training for his tutors with plans to continue regular training sessions on a biweekly basis. Speaking of his training, Marcos said:

We intend to have every other Sunday training which, what we use basically is the kit that we received. And so, we set our site at our church—a little room with a VCR. We just watched the video for about two hours. And right after that we just go ahead and just start. I guess it’s like learn as you go. At the same time we have a teacher, Alex. He goes ahead and he helps us in any places we get stuck—we are able to call him. But there are other times when he is there and he goes ahead and helps. (Data File, p. 92)

In addition to Alex, the wife of the local pastor, who is also a kindergarten teacher, acts as a consultant for individual tutors who have questions. She was one of Arnold’s original
group of eight teachers who worked with him to develop the abbreviated manual and the first large-group training sessions.

At the Baldwin Park site, the coordinators attended the two initial training sessions which Arnold organized at the Spanish-American Church. Then they organized a local training session for tutors in one of their homes (Data File, p. 105).

All coordinators mentioned the importance of local “experts” on whom they depend for insight and advice. They are a vital part of the ongoing training scenario that Arnold has envisioned:

I think that involvement of a teacher in the ongoing program has enabled them to get immediate feedback, and support and training for the tutors. It’s my guess that’s going to be an element of an ongoing successful program. . . . We are learning, and even though everything is not cut and dry, we are developing the body of experience that we are going to share with one another and then we will be stronger. We’re going to be working on ongoing training for the tutors, because that is an arena where you just have to keep on including, keep on strengthening, and keep on sharing. And the newsletter as well as the on-site supervision by Suzanne or other teachers, ‘cause we’re going to recruit other teachers, to help us in this, hopefully, will give us a quality program and the support that the young people who are actually doing the tutoring need and want. (Data File, pp. 118-119)

On-site observations and videotaping sessions are also part of the ongoing training plan, as Arnold explained to Juan at the Spanish-American site:

We’re hoping to come around and videotape you one of these times. Hopefully we’re coming back in a month or so, so we can capture on tape what you are actually doing because that will be a real encouragement to others as well. . . . We’ll have some of their tutors come over and help get over this fear of “what am I going to do?” Come over and observe and then go back and do it. And maybe from . . . other churches, so we’ll have these models where people can come and see, and get over their fear, and then go back and implement and jump in and do it. (Data File, p. 120)
Training for Leaders on Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

At the original seminar held in Silver Spring, Arnold and the rest of the participants received the *Handbook for Community-Based Tutoring & Mentoring Projects* (Sahlin, 1997). Chapter 8 in the *Handbook* is titled "Recruit Volunteers." This chapter was discussed by Sandra Brown, project coordinator, during one session at the training seminar.

None of the site coordinators working under Arnold in the Los Angeles area mentioned whether this had been part of the original training they received. I suspect that it was not, although the problem of volunteer recruitment/retention came up several times in my interviews with them. Marcos at Norwalk, who uses primarily high school students, needs more tutors partly because of the sheer numbers of children they have been getting.

Some of the tutors went back to school, and we lost some tutors, but we haven’t lost any students, so that’s our main objective right now, to get more tutors. Ok, so we’re working on that right now. We were thinking about involving other churches . . . (Data File, p. 94)

Incentives

The coordinators at each site frequently referred to the underlying reasons why they chose to volunteer in a program such as this. As to whether these reasons are primarily egoistic or altruistic, it is hard to decipher. Desiring to help a struggling child is a selfless act, but the tutors frequently talked about the positive feelings it evoked in them. Marcos at Norwalk talked about how working with children affects him.

*It gives an extra push through the week, because a lot of times we’re so overwhelmed about where our own personal problems are, that when we go and study with a child it just gives us a new look at life, you know.* (Data File, p. 100)
He also spoke of how it affects the high-school students who are the tutors at his site:

“They keep on coming because of the satisfaction they get in learning with the child” (Data File, p. 92). Lauren, one of the assistant coordinators at Baldwin Park, said that she enjoys helping her mother, who is a teacher, in her classroom. “I thought maybe there’s something that I can do to make a difference in a child’s life. And that’s what motivated me” (Data File, p. 111). Sylvia, another assistant at Baldwin Park, explains her motivations this way:

I really came on because I enjoy working with kids. Some people ask me “Why do you do it after work, when you’re with them all day?” But I still enjoy it I want to help children, um, who need one on one . . . Another reason that I wanted to come on is to become active and involved in the church again. I have kinda’ neglected the church, I have gotten burned out, burned out with my responsibilities, so I stepped down. I just had to get to the perfect work to come back. And so I come back, and now I am very happy. (Data File, p. 111)

Juan, the coordinator at Spanish-American, had many mixed motivations that he wanted to explain:

Well I think, um, there are so many reasons, but I think the main reason is that I believe as Christians we just need to serve our community or wherever is available or needed. In this I think we may have reached it. After God, I can mention so many others like personal satisfaction, because that is what it produces in your person after you helped someone. And last, um, I don’t know, there are so many reasons, that I can’t think of one. As a Christian, I believe this is the right thing to do. (Data File, p. 114)

Juan’s assistant, Sheila, is motivated by the young people who come:

I enjoy working with kids, but I also enjoy working, I mean being supported by the church. I think it’s a good idea. I think that I have a lot of motivation by seeing the kids, that they would come. At first, I was like, “No—the kids aren’t gonna come,” but when they started coming, I felt, “Ok, this is going to work!” So, that has been a motivation for me. I enjoy it. (Data File, p. 114)
Support From the Administrative Level

Arnold is working to establish a network of support through the L.E.A.R.N. organization through which support in the form of training, expertise, organization, and materials would flow to the tutoring projects. He sees it as his role to promote these projects to the various components of the Pacific Union, which include Adventist universities, departments of the Union, and individual churches. In my notes from a conversation I had with Arnold I state that

Arnold sees this as a "grass roots" effort. He is not interested in a top-down model. . . . He is going to work with the pastors of the volunteers. He'll ask them to provide a tutoring site, miscellaneous materials, and a $50 donation to pay for the administration of the program. Arnold rhetorically asks, "What pastor wouldn't see this as a wonderful opportunity?" (Data File, p. 125)

In my interview with Arnold, he talked again about L.E.A.R.N.'s responsibility to provide support of various kinds to the site coordinators:

We'll provide the material, we'll provide the training, and then you guys [the various sites] can start networking so you can learn from one another. . . . Suzanne who is the Vice President for L.E.A.R.N. for Training and Curriculum . . . is going to be the one who will be doing the ongoing training for the kids [tutors] here. (Data File, p. 87)

Marcos at Norwalk called the support from Arnold and L.E.A.R.N. "our backbone, to hold us together" (Data File, p. 96). This support provided by Arnold goes beyond the provision of materials and training for skills. He works to provide a substantial amount of encouragement and emotional support as well. I will expand upon this idea below.
Committed Tutors

Obviously, tutors are the primary resource in a literacy tutoring project. If children’s lives are to be changed, impacted for the better, it will happen because of the workers on the “front lines.” Arnold, being aware of this, encouraged Jose Rojas to “make a call for volunteers” at the appropriate time during the youth camp at Cedar Falls on Labor Day weekend (Data File, p. 88). This is where the majority of tutors working in the projects under Arnold’s supervision first made a commitment to the America Reads initiative. Several others were recruited in different ways. Marcos put out a call for volunteers at his church and at a Bible study group (Data File, p. 92). Lauren, an assistant at Baldwin Park, volunteered because she saw a flyer about the project posted at the church and she wanted to help (Data File, p. 106). Sheila, who is Juan’s assistant at the Spanish-American project, was drafted by Juan to help with the registration at the first training session. When she saw what was going on, and when Juan asked her directly if she wanted to tutor, she was eager to join (Data File, p. 113).

But what is it that causes tutors to remain committed? This question finds a partial answer in an interesting exchange I had with Arnold immediately after our interview with Marcos at the Norwalk project. In talking with him about Marcos and his brother-in-law, Ricardo (who is Marcos’ assistant in the tutoring project), Arnold revealed his fatherly care for these young men:

I’m so pleased that they are into business and real estate, and I would encourage them to get more education and, uh, hopefully, in the foreseeable future, our church will have things education-wise, educational programs and services that they can access at an
affordable price—I mean in terms of college degrees and other kinds of professional certification kinds of programs. Um, because this is target group right here, this is the group that I am trying—and the younger ones, the high schoolers. Because they are committed. There's something, you can tell, their hearts are soft or sensitive. They’re responsive and they just don’t want to—Marcos is a classic example—he not only wants to respond to the work of the Holy Spirit thus far, but he wants to do something with that. He wants to serve. That's why we gotta’ equip them so that they can do that. And then, what better way than in their service? They are equipping others so they are duplicating themselves, they are replicating themselves with what is being shared with others. And the need is so great, the need is so great. [Marcos] is a very motivated young man, I mean he, and he’s very intelligent; he’s very bright. And he wants to, you know, he has ambition. . . . I love these young people. I'll tell you. I love them because they are so, so responsive. They really want to do something. (Data File, p. 102)

Possibly those who volunteer in these projects under Arnold's supervision sense his concern for not only the children, but also for them, the tutors and coordinators. Arnold is very generous with the approbation that he offers to these volunteers. This emotional support, which goes beyond basic kinds of support that one would expect in a program such as this, could be a major factor that causes these young people to volunteer and stay committed to the project.

Arnold frequently comments about the enthusiasm among his volunteer teachers and tutors. In my notes from telephone conversations with Arnold in the last few months of 1997 and the first part of 1998, I have made these comments:

Arnold says that he is excited, and that there is much excitement among his people. (Data File, p. 124)

Talked with Arnold Trujillo again. As always, he was very enthusiastic about how things are going with his program. . . . The people they are recruiting are really “pumped up.” (Data File, pp. 124-125)

He is amazed at the motivation of the volunteer trainers he has recruited from the ranks of elementary school teachers who teach in Adventist schools in the area. They have made an ongoing commitment to be a resource to this tutoring project. Arnold asks himself why they are so enthusiastic, and then answers his question by suggesting that,
for the first time, they are feeling very valued and that this project is worthwhile. They see it as a call from the President to serve in an effort that is national in its scope. They have an opportunity to use their training in a high-profile way. (Data File, p. 125)

Arnold's suspicions about the enthusiasm of the volunteers may be true but, in my assessment, his own excitement for the project and his validating of the efforts of the volunteers are possibly the key reasons for their positive feelings.

Qualified Faculty to Provide Support

In chapter 2 I indicated that most successful programs use support personnel that are, at best, educators who have special certification and training in reading instruction. Some projects utilize graduate reading-education students as coordinators, while others use trained volunteer coordinators who are overseen and supported by certified educators.

Arnold is, himself, a richly experienced educator:

My background is education. I have a master's degree in education, I've taught, I've been a vice principal, I've been a superintendent of schools, and I have doctoral work with studies in educational administration. (Data File, p. 85)

As a doctoral candidate at the University of California, his emphasis was in policy planning, organization theory, and research design. Even so, Arnold's first move after securing the 200 volunteers on Labor Day weekend at Cedar Falls was to gather around him eight other educators who expressed a willingness to help in the tutoring project. He placed one teacher, Suzanne, in charge of the continued training efforts that will be provided by L.E.A.R.N. With his recent reassignment to the Sacramento area, Arnold will rely heavily on her expertise in providing local educational support for the tutoring projects.
Not all of the project coordinators are educators. Marcos at the Norwalk site is presently working in real estate. Juan, the coordinator at the Spanish-American site, is a graduate student in engineering. But they have educators, beside Suzanne, who provide consultation and training opportunities for them when possible. Sylvia at the Baldwin Park site is a teacher who has certification in early childhood education.

Arnold realizes that a key to the success of the projects will be ongoing professional input and training by fellow educators. The coordinators who are not educators have indicated that they need help from professionals. This is why he is in the process of setting up formal means of support.

In L.A. what we have is Suzanne who is the Vice President for L.E.A.R.N. for Training and Curriculum. So she is going to be the one who will be doing the ongoing training for the kids [tutors] here. The trainers we have are not only Hispanic—all of the trainers right now are elementary teachers. (Data File, p. 87)

Earlier I noted Arnold’s thoughts about the need for ongoing support: “He sees the key element in the training as the continuing technical support by key teachers he has trained as opposed to the training event itself.” (Data File, p. 125)

Quality Materials/A Sound, Simple Training Guide

Arnold, from his first introduction to the Tutoring and Mentoring program in August 1997, saw the SMILIES curriculum as “far superior to anything that is out there” (Data File, p. 123). His plan was to use the framework, ideas, forms, and recommended supplementary material contained in the SMILIES tutoring handbook and the SMILIES video as the core curriculum for training and program implementation.
The group of educators who met with Arnold to develop a training plan decided to create an abbreviated manual using selected portions of the *SMILIES* handbook. They also plan to provide a full handbook to each tutoring site along with the other recommended materials—magnetic letters and *Keep Books™* (inexpensive leveled readers available from Ohio State University).

Marcos at the Norwalk site uses the *SMILIES* videotape as the first training introduction to his new tutors. They also use children's books loaned to them through a program at the public library.

At the Spanish-American site they use the *SMILIES* materials to train new tutors and to implement the program. Juan and Sheila also showed me a collection of various readers, worksheets, markers, and other materials they had gathered. Their tutors are striving to hold to the basic *SMILIES* philosophy of, as Juan explained it, "learning to look for the best way for the kid that you are helping. They are looking for resources like this, so that they can implement the best way to help a kid" (Data File, p. 116). In order to have a greater selection of resources, they are planning to sponsor fund-raisers and to request financial assistance from the church.

The tutors at the Baldwin Park site have chosen to supplement the *SMILIES* curriculum with another phonics-based resource. It is the same curriculum that Sylvia, the site coordinator, uses in her kindergarten class at the school where she teaches. She believes that this curriculum maintains "the same concept" as the multi-modal *SMILIES* approach, incorporating "sound, vocal, action, and dance to the music" activities (Data
Sylvia also talked of coloring materials that were donated by the Health Department, and craft items that were paid for by money given to them by the church.

Parents Are Informed and Involved

Obviously, parents of children who attend tutoring sessions are supportive of the program or they would not allow their children to participate. But it does not follow that these parents are automatically informed or involved in their children's extracurricular schooling. A conscious effort must be made by project organizers for this to occur.

In discussing his original plan for how his LE.A.R.N. organization would support academic achievement among young people, Arnold envisioned award ceremonies where parental involvement might be fostered:

We also have youth meetings where at the youth meeting or youth Sabbath School the child would be invited to come forward and we would provide a little certificate of recognition and the child would be given this. Now, the purpose of that is so that the parents would see their child receiving this recognition and would be more supportive of his academic achievements. (Data File, p. 81)

Arnold did not mention to me exactly where the mechanics or importance of parental involvement might have been discussed in his training sessions or in his conversations with project coordinators. Nor did the coordinators talk much about their parental involvement plans. But they did give some indications that parents were supportive of the program. The parents at the Norwalk site, according to Marcos, do help with cleanup after each session, they bring cookies and other snacks, and they transport their own children and their relatives to and from the weekly sessions.
Sylvia, at the Baldwin Park site, told a touching story of how the tutoring project there was the answer to one mother’s passionate prayers:

I have another story about this lady. She’s this little mom raising her son. She’s Spanish and has very little English. The father, he left—the whole story—but she was telling me when I called her that she had prayed that morning and that she had anointed him asking, for a prayer, to please send someone to help him with his studies. He is in second grade but he’s very behind. He has many learning problems. So when I talked with her that day, she was just like “Oh praise the Lord! This is an answer to my prayers!” She drives him in the car then takes him on the bus all the way to the church and all the way home. That was a blessing. She was so thankful. She had just prayed that morning! (Data File, p. 108)

Sylvia also told about a mother whose son will not even take his nap on tutoring days because he is so excited about coming. The mother drops him off and waits out in the car while he is being tutored. Sylvia and her assistants were very pleased with the grateful enthusiasm among the families whom they are helping.

Community Support

Arnold has envisioned a broad base of support for the tutoring projects in the Southern California region. Of course, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the umbrella under which these programs function, with coordination and supervision coming through the Adventist Community Services (ACS)/YouthNet alliance. The L.E.A.R.N. organization, under Arnold’s guidance, gains its public credentials from its incorporation by the State of California as a non-profit organization. ACS/YouthNet is also looking to L.E.A.R.N as the key organization which will foster the America Reads tutoring thrust by local Adventist churches (as opposed to Adventist educational institutions or community service branches) across the United States.
ACS/YouthNet has also received AmeriCorp grants which will enable them to hire regional coordinators. In the Los Angeles area, Juan, coordinator at the Spanish-American Church site, may be tapped to be the regional coordinator. And Arnold has mentioned that La Sierra University, the Adventist school nearest Los Angeles, may also provide financial help through work study programs. Surely there is no shortage of organizations that may enter into a formal alliance to support the tutoring efforts in the area.

Each local site is hosted by a church, which represents the most foundational level of support. They provide facilities, volunteers, some materials, and funds to ensure that the volunteers are successful in their efforts. The coordinators also credited their local libraries for willingly providing books and advice when needed. Marcos, in speaking about his local public library, said:

They gave us pamphlets about different things they can do with their parents. They went ahead and allowed us to check out 50 books. And, you know, any questions I have I can go over there and talk to the consultant. They do have a person who is in charge of tutoring programs. We did have questions before and were able to talk to them and they have helped. It’s happened quite a lot. (Data File, pp. 94-95)

Action Plan

Sound Organization and Management

Arnold’s three-page resume records an impressive number of accomplishments that testify to his organizational capabilities. This tutoring program is another in a long list of successful projects he has initiated, which includes developing various church-related youth, evangelism, and education programs, starting several businesses, running for a seat in congress, and managing a television station. He has pastored four churches, he is the
founder and president of *L.E.A.R.N.*, and he is currently the Associate Director for Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Pacific Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Arnold has repeatedly demonstrated his organizational and managerial capabilities, and I became even more convinced of these as I listened to his vision regarding the America Reads initiative. For several hours as we traveled in the car to each of the Los Angeles area tutoring sites, Arnold enthusiastically told me of what had transpired in the past several months under his close supervision.

Our visits to the three existing tutoring sites confirmed to me that the coordinators who are heading up the projects have benefitted and will continue to benefit from Arnold’s organizational efforts. Actually, this entire chapter is evidence of the quality of management that has gone into each of these projects. Lining up tutors, organizing training sessions, setting schedules, gathering materials, communicating with the public—these all take a great amount of organizational effort on the part of the coordinators. Marcos, at Norwalk, commented about how well things have gone in spite of the size of the task: “It was overwhelming. I didn’t think it was going to work out this good. In my mind, even if it was planned to the second, I don’t think it would have worked out so good” (Data File, p. 98).

Arnold assured each of the coordinators that he would continue to support, through *L.E.A.R.N.*, their tutoring projects:

I took a new position as of December 1, and have been totally out of this arena for the last eight weeks or so, and I’m finally getting back into it. So we’ve asked Suzanne to be vice president for curriculum and training for *L.E.A.R.N.*, so she, of course, has the other teachers there at [her school], and so they are going to start to do some more training and follow up. Debbie is going to give me a list of tutors, with names, address, and phone numbers, and we’re going to try to establish a newsletter so we can
communicate with them and have much better networking between everybody. (Data File, p. 119)

Close Cooperation between Volunteers and People in the School

All of these projects are operating from churches instead of schools. Therefore, any communication between the tutors and personnel in the schools where the children attend occurs because of a purposeful effort on the part of the tutors. The exception to this is at the Baldwin Park site where two of the coordinators also teach in an Adventist school where some of the tutored children attend. They are able to facilitate any coordination that occurs between the children's tutors and their teachers at school.

Marcos told me about one student who had made exceptional progress since he started the tutoring program at Norwalk:

He's gone so far in his school. For example, his teacher called me thanking us because he would always flunk his spelling test. . . . So it shows to them. The tutoring is showing directly to the school, and some of our tutors have gone the extra mile and talk with the teachers and see what they need. (Data File, p. 99)

When I asked Juan, at Spanish-American, if they had contacted any teachers, he said:

No, not yet, but we're planning. On the registration form it asks for the name of the teachers, and which schools . . . because eventually we want to contact the teacher of the individual to see how he or she is performing. (Data File, p. 117)

Careful Selection of Students to Be Tutored

In the chapter 2 discussion of this characteristic, the clear recommendation is that tutored students should be of average intelligence but struggling more than other students
None of the coordinators whom I interviewed indicated that this type of careful selection process occurred. My impression is that they have generously opened the doors to whomever comes. I asked Marcos at Norwalk how they recruit their children. He replied:

With the Seventh-day Adventist . . . school [we] hand out a flyer, then we talk to the principal. We sent out a letter to each teacher, and they went ahead and put it into the bulletin, and then the parents just called us . . . We have parents bring other nephews, and we never like to say no even though we don’t have enough tutors. But we’ve been able to work with them. We’re challenged—there has been really good days where we have one tutor per student, but there’s been other days where we have five students per tutor. (Data File, pp. 92, 97)

But he did indicate that they were selective when it came to family members tutoring family:

Now one thing they told us is that family shouldn’t tutor family, because there is some kind of . . . it loses the main objective. So if you’re a cousin, an aunt, you have to look over to another tutor. (Data File, p. 94)

Lynda, one of the assistants at Baldwin Park, talked about how they go about recruiting students into their program:

We asked, “What children are not at third grade level, up to third grade level or behind?” Those were our target population. Then we looked here in the church, because of this bilingual program that now exists. We have a lot of kids that do not know how to speak English, because they’re in a bilingual program speaking Spanish. (Data File, pp. 107-108)

At the Spanish-American site, Juan also indicated that they have opened the doors to whomever might come. No student is turned away. Since these programs are operating with sponsorship from churches instead of educational institutions, and since they function during non-school hours, there is not a screening process that takes place. Neither would
these churches screen children who came to their Vacation Bible School programs or to Sabbath School classes. They are offering their help to all needy children.

A Regular, Frequent Tutoring Schedule

Most experts recommend that, to be effective, children should work with their tutors for a minimum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week. All three of these programs do meet these "minimums," but they vary substantially on their weekly schedules and how the actual tutoring times are spent.

At Norwalk, they meet each Sunday morning from 10:00 until 12:00. Some of the session is spent as a large group, but the majority of the time the tutors are working with the children. As indicated earlier, there are occasions where several children are with each tutor, depending on the number of children who attend. This is why Marcos said, "That's our main objective right now, to get more tutors" (Data File, p. 94).

The tutoring program at Baldwin Park is open on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00. Half the children attend on Monday evenings and the other half attend on Wednesday evenings. All children attend on Tuesday evenings. Each night they gather first as a large group where they open with prayer, a phonics song or two, and a read-aloud story. Then they break up into one-on-one tutoring pairs.

Juan at Spanish-American indicated that, for now, they meet each Tuesday evening from 5:00 until 8:00, but their goal is to expand to 2 nights per week. This 3-hour time period is broken into $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour sessions with a new group of children coming in half-way.
through the evening. Some tutors can stay the entire time and work with two children, thereby doubling their effectiveness.

**Monitoring of Student Progress**

As indicated above, these programs are not directly connected with any schools; rather, they act as a resource to the parents and children of the community. Therefore, the monitoring of student progress is somewhat casual at this point. Coordinators at all three sites indicated that they strive to match students with the same tutor each week in an effort to better know where the child is academically, and to provide consistency in the relationship.

At Norwalk, Marcos indicated no formal efforts to determine reading levels. When I asked about the leveled *Keep Books™* that are recommended for use with the *SMILIES* curriculum, Marcos said that they were not using them, nor were they trying to use library books that were leveled according to difficulty. Monitoring student progress is difficult because of the high numbers of students who were attending. Matching students permanently to one tutor will be much easier and will facilitate close monitoring once they recruit more tutors.

The tutors at Baldwin Park are also striving toward consistency in their program so that students can be more closely monitored. Lynda commented that they have requested *SMILIES* materials including “the booklets for the testing” because “we really don’t know where they [the students] are at” (Data File, p. 109). The phonics program they use does
include record-keeping forms, however, and they use this material to do some monitoring of student progress.

They do plan to use the leveled books to determine reading levels at the Spanish-American site, and to continually monitor how the students are progressing. Juan explained that

the plan is, after the tutor thinks that the kid is ready, we evaluate the kid, and then if it’s ok to go to the next level, he’s gonna’ go. If not, he’s gonna’ go back and work on those issues, the facts that he needs. (Data File, p. 115)

As this program and the others become established, and as their tutoring base becomes stabilized, accurate and meaningful record keeping will be much more feasible.

Lessons Include Plenty of Reading and Writing

Wasik (1998) recommended that tutoring lessons contain four basic elements: the rereading of familiar text, word analysis, writing, and new story introductions. Pinnell and Fountas (1997a) simply state that lessons should contain plenty of reading and writing with few “meaningless” drills. Part of their concern is that tutors be used for more than limited drill work with flash cards and similar disjointed exercises.

In his comments at the August training session, and in my conversations with Arnold on the telephone during the fall, he indicated that he felt the SMILIES curriculum was “far superior to anything that is out there” (Data File, p. 123), that the manual was “excellent” (Data File, p. 124), and that his core team of teachers “like what they see in the manual” (Data File, p. 124). Therefore, the training that Arnold has provided for the tutors...
so far has centered around the techniques recommended in the *SMILIES* curriculum which
do center around literature, writing, and word analysis.

The site coordinators indicated that they believe in the basic tenants of the *SMILIES*
curriculum, and they strive to make lessons meaningful for the children. Marcos explains:

First step is to get to know the child. From there you know, they trained us to make
stories, sentences, the ABC’s. We do the things that they know. OK, so that’s why it’s
very simple. (Data File, p. 92)

. . . starting out with the alphabet, writing, & reading. You know like they taught us
the different ways, you know, touching, draw, coloring, reading, making the sentence,
all that together. (Data File, p. 96)

At the Baldwin Park site they start each evening with a read-aloud story and with
“songs with vowels” that are a part of the phonics curriculum introduced by Sylvia. Lynda
explained to me that this curriculum uses action, dance, and vocal cues to help the children
“really get those sounds” (Data File, p. 106). When I asked about the *SMILIES* curriculum,
she said that they use “little portions of it, because we have not been trained in the whole
thing” and that the program they use is “the same concept” (Data File, p. 106).

As the tutors and coordinators acquire experience and training, they expect to
become more confident and well-rounded in the lessons they present to the students. The
key people at all three sites expressed a real need for more training, which Arnold is
making arrangements to provide through *L.E.A.R.N.*

In the sections above, I have analyzed the tutoring programs organized by Arnold
according to critical components of effective tutoring programs as suggested by those with
experience in this area. These sites have been at the business of tutoring for a very short
time, and all coordinators as well as Arnold indicate that they have much to learn. But their willingness to immerse themselves in their projects in spite of obstacles is admirable, and their efforts (if the research on the historical effectiveness of tutoring is indeed accurate) will bear fruit in the lives of the students and tutors.

I have shown that many of the characteristics of effective programs are evident in these fledgling projects. Arnold and the coordinators are committed to working to minimize or eliminate the weaknesses that exist.

**Other Observations**

I chose to organize my analysis of Arnold's work around a framework with the major topics of vision, skills, incentives, resources, and action plan (Ambrose, 1987). Each characteristic I analyzed above was classified under one of these major topics. However, I do not want to limit my analysis to these “orienting ideas” and “initial frames” (Miles & Huberman, 1984a) alone. The danger in this is that merely selecting data for a category that has been established by another theory tends to hinder the generation of new categories, because the major effect is not generation, but data selection. Also, emergent categories usually prove to be the most relevant and the best fitted to the data. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 37)

One or two other themes seemed to emerge as I read, reread, and coded the transcripts of my conversations with Arnold and his coordinators. Eisner (1991), in discussing these “recurring messages construed from the events observed” clarifies the mechanics of this “formulation of themes”:

The identification of themes requires researchers to distill the material they have put together. The notes and transcripts of interviews and index cards on which ideas and
comments have been written can be used more or less inductively to generate thematic categories. (p. 189)

My analysis of Arnold’s tutoring programs above explored themes that have been demonstrated to be effective in other tutoring programs. The themes I discuss in the next section emerged from the data I collected and have not previously been identified as critical characteristics in successful programs. However, in Arnold’s case, these themes can be isolated: relational and emotional support and marketing/public relations.

Relational/Emotional Support

Relational/Emotional Support Offered by Program Administrator

Under the characteristic titled “Committed Tutors” above, I touched on the “fatherly care” that Arnold seemed to have for his trainees. I believe it is important to highlight this phenomenon again. As the initiator and overseer of this project, Arnold expressed his motivations frequently—seemingly genuine and compassionate expressions of heartfelt concern for the tutors and tutees alike. In talking about how he and Jose Rojas became partners in these endeavors, Arnold said that he and Rojas “came to realize that we shared some common vision—our commitment to young people and trying to help young people” (Data File, p. 82). He clarified this concern as he encouraged Marcos:

The time that you are taking with the child is, is the greatest benefit, for that child and for his or her education. Far more important, even, than the content because your caring for him or her helps her and will enable her, will propel her to academic success in her life. So . . . this mentoring aspect of it is every bit as important as the transfer of information or the development of skills. As a matter of fact, it may even be more important. Because when a person comes to believe it, “Oh, I do matter, I really care, I’m somebody, I’m really important, somebody really does care for me that I admire,” that really frees them to become successful. It’s like Jesus worked. That’s exactly how Jesus worked. (Data File, p. 99)
Neither the coordinators nor the tutors in these projects are paid for their work. Their incentives for continuing come from the personal satisfaction they derive from volunteering and from the encouragement and support that their sponsors, the parents, the students, and Arnold extend to them. After each interview, Arnold offered words of appreciation and support like those he gave to Juan:

I appreciate very much what you are doing. You're a part of the pioneers in this program, not only in the Adventist church but in the nation, and you have watched, you have stepped forward, and you have learned an awful lot as you have done that. (Data File, p. 118)

Certainly, it is difficult to ascertain just what effect this emotional support provided by Arnold has on each individual involved in these tutoring projects or on the projects' eventual success. But, Arnold's concerns do seem to be mirrored in the relational concerns expressed by the tutors for the children whom they are tutoring.

Relational/Emotional Support Offered by Tutors to the Children

"The main thing we say is that you need to get to know the child" (Data File, p. 92). This is the advice that Marcos gives to his tutors as they begin working with the children that come to them. He goes on to explain the dynamics of this relationship:

The kids look up to you, and when you're there to listen to what they talk about, what they mean and what they say, it makes them feel special. I guess that's what they like the most: The one-on-one conversation they have with the tutor. (Data File, p. 22)

All of the coordinators whom I interviewed had this same attitude about working with children. The relationship that is established is of primary importance, eclipsing the academic help that the tutors offer to the students. When asked about why they volunteer
in the first place, their motivations to help children through the relationships that develop were always mentioned early in their responses. Lauren at Baldwin Park said, "I thought 'maybe there's something I can do to make a difference in a child's life.' That's what motivated me" (Data File, p. 111). Sylvia put it this way:

I really came on because I enjoy working with kids. Some people ask me, "Why do you do it after work, when you're with them all day?" But I still enjoy it. I want to help children who need one-on-one. (Data File, p. 111)

I suspect that any tutor in any program might give this same response when asked why he or she tutors. But none of the experts whom I cited in Chapter Two isolated the importance of building relationships as one of the key factors in establishing a successful tutoring program. This is a curious omission, especially in the light of Princeton’s Professor John DiIulio’s comment:

When you boil down the last 50 years of empirical research on what works to improve the lives of children, there is one conclusion: No program, public or private, that fails to build meaningful relationships between responsible adults and young people works. (Cited in Gerson, 1997, pp. 33-34)

Marketing and Public Relations

One final theme that seemed to emerge from the data had to do with community relations and the marketing of the projects. This theme is possibly related to the framework components of *community support* or *action plans*, but I believe that it is unique enough to warrant a separate treatment.

The Adventist response to Clinton's proposal is one that is tied up in the evangelistic mission of the church. This focus may not separate it from other church-based commitments to help in the tutoring effort (of which the Seventh-day Adventist response is
among the most aggressive), but it certainly does set them apart from more secular offers of service. Sahlin (1997) gives this rationale for the evangelistic thrust:

There is clear evidence that a strong community service program positions the denomination’s evangelism ministries for greater success. A random sample of hundreds of Adventist local churches from across the nation, followed over a multi-year period, demonstrates that those congregations which sponsor viable community services consistently have greater growth than those who do not. Of course a church which preaches the gospel but does not invest its time and money in helping the less fortunate cannot appear to have a message of integrity in the eyes of unbelievers. (p. 12)

These churches have an overriding mission to reach out evangelistically to the community through their tutoring programs. The coordinators in these projects obviously have heeded the call in this area because they all talked of their efforts to market their programs beyond the walls of their churches and church-sponsored schools.

The Norwalk project under Marcos’s care is exemplary in this respect. They handed out flyers in the local Adventist school, they talked to the principal, they sent out letters, and they put information about the program in the church bulletin. Then they advertised the program in the local Penny Saver classified newspaper, and they encouraged word-of-mouth recruitment. Marcos has also designed attractive “identification cards” for the tutors to carry and distribute that have information about the tutoring program on the back (Data File, p. 165). His promotional efforts have been very aggressive, even with the difficulty of not having enough tutors!

Arnold explained to me that the encouragement to market to the community-at-large was part of the initial training:

But in our presentation and in our training we said that we wanted them to go to the public schools, to the community to distribute flyers and let the community know. And
also friends of church members. So, to the natural networks in a community. That was our target as far as our tutees. (Data File, p. 87)

In this section I have identified two additional themes—relational/emotional support and marketing/public relations—that emerged from the interview data I collected. In chapter 8, I blend these themes into a revised framework of critical components of tutoring programs.

Summary

This case study analysis examined Arnold's early efforts to implement the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring/SMILIES initiative in the Los Angeles area. Arnold and the coordinators at three tutoring sites were interviewed to determine the status of their programs as compared to a framework of critical components derived from the literature. No doubt the programs will mature, possibly representing more fully the ideal as time passes. But this chapter has striven to accurately represent the status of these programs at a point in time early in their implementation.
Nydia, the Nurturing Leader

Background

I mentioned in the introduction to the previous case that a few of the individuals who attended the August training session seemed particularly empowered to begin tutoring projects immediately. This is the case with Nydia. Nydia Mendez (Nydia requested that I use her actual name) arrived at the August training session at the same time as Dr. Shirley Freed and myself, during the last 2 days where the focus was the SMILIES reading curriculum. She had first heard about the Adventist initiative from Dr. Freed earlier in the summer. Because of a reform effort she was spearheading at the Boston public elementary school where she is principal, Nydia was particularly interested.

Nydia has been with the Boston public schools for 25 years, 6 in her current assignment as principal of the Paul A. Dever Elementary School, which is located in the Dorchester area of Boston. "The Dever" has a racially diverse enrollment of 590 students in Grades Kindergarten through 5. Ninety-two percent of the children at the school are on free or reduced lunch. As is often the case in a low-income school such as this, student achievement is low compared to many of the schools in more affluent areas of the city.
Two years ago, under Nydia's leadership, the staff at the Dever school applied to become a 21st Century School, a reform effort under the more encompassing Boston Plan for Excellence. In order to become one of the 21st Century schools, the staff at the school must define an instructional focus, one that will substantially change the way the school functions with an ultimate goal of improving student achievement. Nydia, during a 6-month long detailed look at every aspect of the way the school functions, challenged her staff to ponder the following question:

“What is it that stands in our way, that we believe contributes to the fact that our children do not appear to be achieving at their highest potential?” And the question was deliberately posed towards “not what stands in our way over which we do not have any control?” No, no. It’s “what stands in our way, over which we have control, of making sure the children are learning to their highest potential?” (Data File, p. 169)

As Nydia explained, suddenly the entire staff was being required to examine every aspect of their individual and corporate teaching methodology, with a willingness to dispose of whatever might not be bearing good fruit. After this 6-month period of intense introspection, the staff chose literacy improvement as their target reform effort. They drafted a statement which declared their instructional focus as “a coordinated whole school effort to have all Dever students show growth in their ability to read as measured by both the Stanford Nine and the students' ability to meet the BPS Learning Standards for reading comprehension” (Data File, p. 236).

The statement goes on to describe specific goals and means by which the goals would be met. One key element of the plan is to work to provide “individual student support in helping all students show growth in their ability to read” (Data File, p. 236). Several changes were made to facilitate this support. The entire schedule was revamped in
order to create an uninterrupted 90-minute "literacy block" where every support person in
the school was paired up with a classroom teacher to work on literacy-related instruction.
Nydia explained that "having adults working with children was one of our broad goals"
(Data File, p. 172). This is where she saw the potential benefit in using volunteer literacy
tutors as was being proposed generally by President Clinton in his America Reads plan and
more specifically by the Adventist initiative. So she secured the approval and the funds
from her school district to attend the August 1997 training in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Nydia had a dedicated core group of parents who assisted with many of the routine
support duties in the school—lunch monitoring, playground monitoring, helping with art
projects, and similar tasks. She stated, "I had parent mothers in the school who had become
kind of like an intricate part of the school, but I did not really have a solidly defined
program for them that would give them the boundaries or the concepts for their
involvement in a way that it contributed to our instructional goals" (Data File, p. 172). As
Nydia took part in the training sessions and as she pondered her school's new instructional
focus, she began to consider how these parent volunteers could be used in ways to more
specifically further the goals of the school. "[M]y mind was going many miles per hour,
conceptualizing how this could be put into operation at the school . . . The mothers were
there . . . and I had a feeling of potential in them" (Data File, p. 175).

Within a few months, Nydia did indeed draft and train a core group of 7 mothers
who began tutoring children in reading. When I visited the school in March, 1998, their
program had been in operation for almost 4 months. During my visit I talked with Nydia,
then I met separately with and interviewed her volunteers, and I observed two of them.
working with children. One of my goals was to examine key characteristics of successful tutoring programs as delineated by the conceptual framework which I have described above. I was also looking for other themes that might emerge as I spent some time at the school.

Critical Components of Tutoring Programs

Vision

Nydia certainly exudes passion for her work. As we walked into the school on a Monday morning, it seemed obvious to me that her “fingerprints” were all over every cog and gear that turns in the Paul A. Dever elementary school. Teachers and other adults greeted her by name as they gave quick updates or offered reminders of events to come. Children waved to and hugged “Ms. Mendez” as we walked the hallways. And in those hallways, I could not help but notice intentionally placed reminders of the sense of mission that Nydia is helping to foster in the school. An abbreviated version of the Dever School Comprehensive Plan (Data File, pp. 237-238) was blown up to poster size and placed in conspicuous places around the building. A white board with current goals and positive reports hung near the office for all to see. The mission that Nydia has clarified for this school is a very public thing.

Clear Mission and Goals Expressed

The mission and goals for a tutoring project at the Dever school are essentially the mission and goals for the entire building discussed above. All of the volunteers are aware of the instructional focus of the school, that “all Dever students will show growth in their
ability to read” (Data File, p. 236). Nydia also explained that the school has expectations of them as parents (most of her volunteers are parents of children in the building) because “parents are the children’s first teachers” (Data File, p. 177). One of the parent volunteers, Nadene, described their specific mission as one that is a part of the district-wide mission that engulfs the local effort:

There’s a new learning standard that children must meet in the Boston Public Schools. Now, by the year 2000, high school students have to pass the standardized test in order to receive their diploma. What we’re trying to do is reach the children at the younger age now that need help so when they are old enough to attend high school and participate in graduation we can help them before there are any learning problems. (Data File, p. 197)

It was obvious to me as I talked with this group (five were present at school that day) that they were driven by the same passion for excellence that Nydia has nurtured in her entire staff.

Clear Expectations of Volunteers

Most of the parent tutors also have other responsibilities in the school. Pam is the school librarian, a position for which she receives a paycheck. The other women have regular, volunteer duties in the building such as monitoring the playground or taking lunch money. The children and the staff depend on their regular attendance in order for things to function normally, and the volunteers are aware of this. So there is a type of “built-in” expectation package that is a part of the volunteering mandate at the Dever. Nydia’s ability to foster this level of responsibility and loyalty in her volunteer parents is a positive testimony to her leadership capabilities.
The Dever Comprehensive School Plan states, “We believe that developing a close partnership with parents will produce graduates that are hard working and responsible citizens” (Data File, p. 242). The partnership that Nydia has developed with these particular parents has resulted in their willingness to volunteer extra time to the school. There is no extra statement of expectations that has been placed on them as volunteer reading tutors beyond the general expectations already in place.

Skills

When Nydia first told me about these parent mothers, she remarked that they had become “an intricate part of the school,” but that she “did not really have a solidly defined program for them that would give them the boundaries or the context for their involvement in a way that contributed to our instructional goals” (Data File, p. 172). Dr. Shirley Freed, who is also Nydia’s doctoral advisor, told her of the Adventist initiative and about the training which would be taking place in August, 1997. As Nydia took part in that training, “there is where the idea of training them [the parent volunteers] properly came into my mind” (Data File, p. 173).

Ongoing Training and Supervision of Volunteers

When school started, Nydia did not begin training her volunteers right away. “We had just begun more struggles of re-organizing our school and the schedule so I needed to give my attention to that” (Data File, p. 175). But before Thanksgiving, when Nydia felt ready to start, she put out a notice to the entire school community announcing the opportunity to receive training in this tutoring project, and that a $100 stipend would be
offered to anyone who attended the entire training and who committed to working with children for 1 hour a day. The training would take place over a 2-week period for 2 hours each day—a total of 20 hours of training. Ten mothers started the training process.

The training consisted of going over the *SMILIES* manual, watching the accompanying videotape in segments, and discussing key theory and concepts related to the *SMILIES* philosophy. Both Nydia and the volunteers commented on the richness of the experience. The discussions around multiple pathways to learning were particularly potent.

Nydia said:

> We spent a lot of time explaining things and the philosophy behind it, particularly, and this is fascinating—when we talked and learned a little bit about the notion that you can be smarter than anyone else that you know, they were like “wow!” It was just amazing the quality, the richness of conversation and the anecdotes. You know, “My kid is so good in this,” and the music thing, and it was just fabulous. So we were able to latch on to things that, for them, became points of comfort, because they had experiences themselves as learners. (Data File, p. 178)

The volunteer trainees also had positive comments about the training. Nadene enjoyed the training experience, saying:

> I liked it. I thought it was fun, because we got to relate to the principal other than just a boss. We saw her as an individual, a person like us, who wants to make things better. And it was, basically, it was fun. We learned from her and she learned from us as a parent. She saw what we’d like to see, and we saw what she wants us to see through her eyes as a principal. We connected. (Data File, p. 197)

Pam also said that she “connected” with Nydia, and that she developed a somewhat playful relationship with her:

> Yea, Nydia always picked on me. She’d ask me questions. I just gave her direct questions, answers I mean, and she was just asking me even more about what I felt and then said she didn’t know. I was giving her answers to it, and it really helped quite a bit. (Data File, p. 198)
I asked the volunteers if the training had given them confidence for the task. They all agreed with Angie who said, "I felt confidence about it, I mean, I think I'm making progress as I see the student that I'm preparing with... I'm happy about it" (Data File, p. 199).

Nydia expressed concern that she has not been able to offer much in the way of continuing training, even saying she had "done somewhat of a sloppy job in terms of providing that continuing support that is so highly recommended" (Data File, p. 176). But she compensated in other ways, most notably by changing the supervision structure of the tutors. After Christmas, each tutor began reporting to a particular classroom teacher who took responsibility for the tutor and her student. Also, Nydia arranged for Dr. Freed and me to work with the tutors for a short time during our respective visits. So the continuing training has been more informal than formal, but it certainly has not been "sloppy."

Training for Leaders on Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

I mentioned earlier that Nydia did not attend the entire 5-day Tutoring and Mentoring seminar in Silver Spring. She did receive a copy of the manual, in which Sahlin (1997) talks about the recruitment of volunteers. Nydia and I did not talk about whether she studied the manual, or about what she may know about volunteer retention. But it is obvious, at least to me, that Nydia knows enough to have recruited and retained the volunteers who so faithfully come to school each day. Nydia did comment that she would like to expand the program, and that she is "figuring out a way of having someone on staff"
paid to be the on-site coordinator” (Data File, p. 175), a move that would, most likely, ensure the continuing success of the tutoring program.

Incentives

Support From the Administrative Level

The volunteer tutors were offered more support than just the $100 stipend they received for their training and tutoring commitment. They received a certificate verifying that they had completed the 2-week training session which was given to them during a small-group “graduation” ceremony at the end. They also received their own SMILIES manual, a bundle of simple readers packaged in a little box, a set of magnetic letters, and their own budget for future purchases. “They were made to feel like professionals” commented Nydia (Data File, p. 181) as she reflected on what she had done to offer support.

But “this was not the first time” that they were made to feel like professionals, according to Nydia. “There had already been a kinda’ ‘pat on’ behavior deal so they knew we valued what they did” (Data File, p. 181). This trust, the same trust that Nydia extends to her staff, is very affirming to the volunteers. I noted this during my visit in March 1998, and in my journal I observed that

the women who work for Nydia have their own office—a converted janitor’s closet that has shelves, a refrigerator, a microwave, and a coffee pot. It is also used for a storage area for their instructional “tools.” This is clearly their domain, and the fact that Nydia provided it to them lets them know that she values their work. (Data File, p. 299)
Resources

Committed Tutors

When you consider the above, it is no wonder that Nydia is so successful in retaining her volunteer work force. They extend to her the same respect that she offers to them. When I asked Nydia why she feels like these parents volunteered in the first place, she said:

I think they volunteered because they came into a building where they found, in the way they were greeted, that it was contrary to any perceptions they had had about what was inside those doors. . . . They felt drawn to something, and a lot of times it had to do with personality. You know, you can’t deny that. (Data File, p. 179)

As we discussed whether the motives of the volunteers were primarily egoistic or altruistic, Nydia pointed to comments they had made about their own personal fulfillment:

The first thing that I recall coming out of their mouths when Shirley [Dr. Freed] was there, which I had not heard from them before, was how good they are feeling and how much what they are learning is helping them. (Data File, p. 179)

I asked the tutors why they volunteered to be a part of this project. Their responses varied, but they all indicated that they wanted to help others. Nadene said:

I volunteered basically to help children who don’t have the help they need at home, whether it’d be the parents be too busy, or there are students in the best of school systems who need help during the school day, and that’s why I’d like to help. (Data File, p. 196)

Francine’s motives were similar:

I volunteered because I have three children at this school and an older son who’s on his way to college who went to this school. I’m a student of the school and I volunteered so that I can not only help my children, but help other children that’s in this community, to see that you don’t have to leave the community to make your life a success. And through reading they can make their life successful. Also I would like more parents to be involved, um, because when your children know you care enough to come, they spend the time to do this, they try better. (Data File, p. 197)
Pam had mixed reasons for helping:

I volunteer because I have a son at this school and he has problems with reading and it’s helping me to help him to read the way they read. It’s hard to explain, but it helped my son a lot. . . . I’m getting a lot from it. It’s just making me learn more too, and, I can’t explain it. It’s natural when I’m reading it to my son, or to the kids I tutor. It just helps me learn a lot more. (Data File, p. 197)

Whatever their reasons for helping, these women appear to be passionate for this program and committed to its success. They know that they are valued by Nydia, the teachers, the students, and the parents of the school. One of their own, Francine, commended her colleagues for their dedication to the program:

I cannot be here every day, I’m going through an adoption and I have a small child which has to be out of her class by 11:00. So I commend these women in their commitments. To my knowledge Angie doesn’t have any children at this school, yet she’s committed to the students. Nadene and Pam are newest to the community and they are very committed. Julia is very committed. She’s always saying her English isn’t good, but I understand everything she’s saying. And she has the commitment. So I commend them—Pam, Veronica, all of them in their commitment. Next year I’ll be able to commit more, but for me the timing, the scheduling is not too good. (Data File, p. 202)

Qualified Faculty to Provide Support

Nydia’s qualifications and her support have already been made clear. But she expressed her limitations in being able to provide consistent support to the tutors. This became clear to her right at the beginning of the tutoring program, therefore, right after the Christmas break, she made a change.

What I did this time, through the second cycle, is that they are working more closely with a teacher or teachers from whose classroom they’re drawing kids. I had to realize that I could not give them that ongoing guidance which is what they really needed. I will see them working with their child and there were, you know, there were certain things that I was concerned about in terms of the techniques. (Data File, p. 181)
Thus, as of the beginning of the calendar year, the tutors now work with and support children from specific teachers’ classrooms. The classroom teachers are more knowledgeable about the specific needs of each child.

Nydia is also thinking about placing the tutoring project in the hands of a paid coordinator. There are two possibilities here. A local college holds educational methods classes for graduate students right in her building, and the graduate students are assigned each quarter to specific classrooms. Nydia is thinking about tapping into this rich resource of expertise by offering the college the chance to work with the tutoring program. There is also a local professional who has successfully worked with the Dever School in another capacity whom Nydia would like to possibly hire for the position of coordinator.

Quality Materials/A Sound, Simple Training Guide

Nydia ordered a copy of the SMILIES manual for each of the tutors-in-training. They used it as is, without abbreviating the length, but they did punch holes in the pages so that each manual could be placed in a binder to simplify handling. Nydia also utilized the entire SMILIES training video, but she showed only a section at a time as appropriate.

The tutors are definitely “sold” on the SMILIES philosophy, and they do strive to use the methods that Nydia has taught them. They make books with the children by cutting out magazine pictures or drawing, they spend much time reading leveled books together, and they use magnetic letters to work on simple phonics principles.

As mentioned above, Nydia was able to provide the volunteers with a small budget so they could purchase more materials when necessary. Some money was previously
available through the existing volunteer program for purchases of this nature as well.

Nadene talked about how these funds were being used: "We had a small amount of money
left so we took the money and bought some books, and some the magnetic letters, in
English and Spanish, so she can work with the Spanish children" (Data File, p. 207).

Pam, who is also the school librarian, was concerned about the need for books in
their building library. She had been able to purchase newer books for students in Grade 3
and above, but there were very few books for the younger readers whom they help in the
tutoring program. She is hoping that the 21st Century Schools grant money may allow them
to purchase more easy readers for the younger children.

Now that the tutors are working directly with classroom teachers, they can use the
existing classroom materials in their instruction as well as their own materials. Nydia talked
about this aspect of the arrangement:

They [the tutors] say, "Well, Mrs. Mendez, this is the book that he's been working on,
struggling with. I don't think I want to use that book for this 30-minute period and I
say, "Oh, more power to you. Go make your books. Use all that, extract all that natural
language, use that as you are generating words--give them a positive experience." I am
seeing them do that, but there are always days when what the teacher wants for that
child, which is valid, is "here are the words that are important for him to learn," and I
am saying, "Ok, that is fine," and I am seeing what the mothers are doing, which is
fabulous, because they're giving the child chances to use all the things that the teacher,
by virtue of the fact that she has so many other kids, cannot really make available for
these kids. . . . The parents, they went out and purchased little magnetic boards and
they let the kids form words out of that classes' spelling list. (Data File, p. 182)
Parents Are Informed and Involved

“All my volunteers are family members or parents of the kids in school,” Nydia explained as we were talking about parental involvement (Data File, p. 177). She had been very concerned about strained relationships in the past between parents and the staff. Nydia had made it a goal to eliminate the negative “energy” being directed toward the school and to “channel” it in positive ways (Data File, p. 172). This is where the idea of nurturing parents by giving them a chance to work in the building came into her thinking. “Boston [Public Schools] has a history of organized actions toward engaging parents, so when I did not go that way, I really wanted to step out of Boston” (Data File, p. 17). Then she heard about the SMILIES opportunity and believed that this was the answer for her building. I believe that this was a wise move. These parent volunteers, with their energy, enthusiasm, and with their relationships with other parents in the community, are the best “public relations” tool Nydia could have implemented!

Nydia explained to me that there is not much parental contact that is specific to the tutoring program. Once again, this is all absorbed into the larger mission and focus that has been adopted at the Dever. Parents at the school have numerous opportunities to become involved by actions as simple as reading the school newsletters and attending conferences, or more fully by volunteering to work in the school like the SMILIES tutors.
Community Support

Community support, too, is an area where the larger operations of the school “absorb” any specific action that might be directed toward the tutoring program. The children served by the program do benefit from the community involvement relationships that have been established. Nydia explained: “We have a local health center where the employees benefit, and the people do come twice a week and do read aloud with our grades” (Data File, p. 177).

The owners of the newly renovated housing community across the street from the school took notice of all the positive changes taking place at the Dever. They approached Nydia: “They talked to me, and they have invested in the school . . . and it’s just about to begin, what you just mentioned, where an actual business will have employees released to come into the school and work with children” (Data File, p. 177).

Another area of community involvement has been discussed above, but is worthy of mention again. A local college has a graduate education program centered in the Dever. Actual university-level instruction takes place in one room that has been set aside for the college. These student teachers do work in the building with the teachers. But Nydia is not satisfied that her building is reaping all of the potential benefits from this relationship.

Nydia has a plan:

What I’m finding is that I am not, myself, I am not deriving as much benefit as we should from the presence of the college professors in the building. The student teachers are okay because they’re in classrooms, helping us reduce class sizes for literacy and so on and so forth. But from the actual resources of the university we are not drawing a whole lot. So what I’m trying to get is a professional educator who’s real into
curriculum, who believes that we need to be able to support teachers in their classrooms and do away with this one-shot inservice training. I'd like to think that this individual, if I succeed in getting him there, will work with parents, will provide the training for literacy, will work with the staff, will work with me, will work with the university side of this equation so we can properly become a full, duly constituted, professional development school learning organization that involves the parents, the community, and all the other folks who are out there.

Action Plan

Sound Organization and Management

The above statement is typical of Nydia's forward thinking—of the way she is constantly planning for the success of her staff and students. The current reform effort in the building is a result of Nydia's efforts, and it is also the reason that the SMILIES project has been implemented.

Nydia's strength as a principal, beyond her ability to organize and manage the personnel and schedule of the school, is her focus on instruction. She is very involved in the instructional aspects of the school. We were discussing how Nydia could take the time out of her schedule to train the volunteer tutors:

I also was able to do this in the middle of being a principal because of a block schedule so that everybody . . . you see most of time the principle spends walking around has nothing to do with instruction, but it has to do with keeping people in place . . . making sure our teachers are not out walking the corridors or copying stuff, you see what I'm saying. So with that structure it speaks to . . . organizational management . . . I mean that had to be in place. I don't ever think that we could have done this or that I could free myself to do that had we not had structures in place for this school in general. (Data File, p. 180)
Close Cooperation Between Volunteers and People in the School

The way the school day has been organized into 90-minute literacy blocks (Data File, p. 247) has facilitated cooperation between the classroom teachers, the volunteer tutors, and every other teaching and support person in the building. The literacy blocks were instituted at the beginning of the 1997-98 school year in order to facilitate the new instructional focus on reading improvement.

The teachers worked with Nydia and the tutors to decide who should receive the extra individual attention. The tutors now report to their assigned teachers, and they get their "marching orders" for each child's work that day. Julia is working with a first-grade boy who is bilingual, but his primary language is Spanish, as is Julia's. The reasons for the student-teacher match are obvious. Julia explained to me (in her delightful Spanish accent) how she and the teacher work together.

I tell the teacher, "He know all this so now he gotta learn all the name for the animals" and she say, "Oh that's good Julia. That's helping a lot." And I helped him out a lot too. He can pick all his animals. So he understand what I'm going to teach him. So he, this year he keeps back [he'll be held back in first grade]. That's another reason I want to stay with him. His teacher ask me to stay with him because I don't want him to give up on this year. The help devoted to him is going to be help to him from this year so when he study this year he learn study habits. The teacher filled out kindergarten all his learnings at length, then when I get the books I started out writing his name and he learn all the letter his name in the morning. So when the teacher gets him back in the classroom, the teachers to have all but two books to read, so when he gets into the classroom with different stuff he can get it. (Data File, p. 201)

Another example of the cooperation that exists between the teachers and the tutors is the way the tutors cover for each other when one of them has to be away. Nydia explained:
If someone is out . . . it's important that there is consistency to it. There's nothing that a teacher dislikes more than if one day a person is ill, and you know how that goes. So they have a little system where there is sort of a backup for each other. If Monica has an appointment, then Laura takes Johnny and Peter. (Data File, p. 183)

Careful Selection of Students to Be Tutored

I talked with Nydia about how students were selected to receive tutoring. She explained:

We went the route of, let's go to one classroom, let's ask [the teacher] if there are six, seven, eight, nine, or ten of your kids that you think would benefit from being worked with one-on-one with one of these mothers during the literacy block. (Data File, pp. 181-182)

Nadene, one of the tutors, indicated that she helped the kindergarten teacher identify which children needed help:

I would pull one child out in the morning for a half hour or so, read to that child, try to get a sense of where that child's at, and poll the teacher so she can find out how many children will fit into this category of, you know, where they are at as a kindergarten child. Now I found that some of the children don't even recognize the alphabet, but they sing it, but when you look at it on a piece of paper they can't recognize any of the letters. They can look at a word and see the word cat because they saw that cue card over and over again through their memory. So basically what I do is I just help the teacher find out where each child is at. (Data File, p. 205)

Of course, the annual achievement tests given to every child in the school represent a more formal way of identifying difficulties the students are having, and which children would be good candidates to receive extra help.

Even though she is thrilled with the assistance that the tutors offer and with the fact that struggling students are receiving individual attention, Nydia is realistic about the tutors' limited training and the needs of children who have severe learning problems:
I suspect that we’ll still be very pragmatic about this whole thing, and you just can’t
take any chances. I mean, we are liable if a parent came and a child ended up being
referred for special education, and I would have to say, “Well, his literacy block was in
the hands of a person who had ten training sessions.” (Data File, p. 184)

Therefore, student selection is a negotiated thing between the teacher, the tutor,
and the principal. It is based on teacher referrals, testing results, the relationship that the
tutor has with the child, other services that are available, and the schedule.

A Regular, Frequent Tutoring Schedule

The Dever School Comprehensive Plan states that, in order to reach the goal of
growth in literacy for every child, an “uninterrupted block schedule . . . for reading and
language arts” would be instituted “utilizing all specialists and support personnel to support
the instructional focus” (Data File, p. 244). This has been accomplished by using, among
other people, the volunteer reading tutors who were trained by Nydia.

Prior to the Christmas break, some of the tutors worked with small groups, but this
was found to be unsatisfactory. Now most of the tutors work with one or two children for
a total of an hour each day. Nadene told me, “I found it a lot better working with one child,
working one-on-one for a 5 or 6 week period” (Data File, p. 205). The tutors help each
other out in the event that someone has to be absent. Their tutoring takes place during the
literacy block for the classroom to which they are assigned. This arrangement is exemplary
in its regularity and frequency, elements that are so important in successful tutoring
projects (Bader, 1998b; Morrow & Walker, 1997a; Sahlin, 1997; Wasik, 1997).
Monitoring of Student Progress

As explained above, the school’s annual testing program is one formal way that student progress is monitored. Since the tutors are working closely with classroom teachers, the teacher helps each tutor keep track of the child’s current level. Sometimes, the help is reciprocal as in Nadene’s case above.

Informally, the tutors keep a daily log, a personal journal, of the work they do with the students. Angie explained:

I keep a file on what I do and how far he’s improved. . . . I use my own little folder and loose paper in there, I mark it down, what we’re going to work on, what we did for that half hour and what I did while I was in there. It’s not just about him, it’s about me too. . . . I don’t think I’d show the teacher. I think I’d show Mrs. Mendez ‘cause she, I’m sure she’d see the improvement. (Data File, pp. 209-210)

I found no evidence, either through observation or interviews, that the tutors use a leveled test or any other criterion-based tool to monitor improvement. Nydia, the teachers, and the tutors are satisfied that the existing testing program, coupled with their informal assessments, is an adequate indicators of student progress.

Lesson Content—Reading and Writing

The school’s instructional goal of literacy improvement for all facilitates the work that the tutors do. The training they received in the SMILIES program was oriented around techniques that are focused on authentic reading and writing while working in ways that honor each child’s individual strengths. “We all learn in different ways. Our task as tutors is to find the pathway that will unlock a child’s understanding into the many nuances of what
it means to be literate" (Freed, et al., 1997, p. 1). These tutors are convinced of these premises, and they strive, in their lessons, to go beyond drill and repetition. Nadene said:

The way I see it, there are no two children that are the same, whether they be your own children or children in the school. Now the pathways, you can find a different category to sit that child under to help them. So there is basically something for every child in it. There's not just one set, you know, child. You can help any child through the seven pathways. (Data File, p. 204)

I watched as tutors read simple, leveled books with their children. I saw the books that the students and their tutors had made together—books illustrated with hand-drawn pictures and photographs cut from magazines. The volunteers told me about how they were using magnetic letters, word games, music, and movement to help the students learn. They also helped the children with spelling and vocabulary words. Nydia explained that “there are days when what the teacher wants for that child, which is valid, is ‘Here are the words that are important for him to learn’ and I am saying ‘OK, that is fine’” (Data File, p. 182). Even with this simple task the tutors are striving to use different approaches, different pathways. When Angie was given a spelling list to work on with her child, she used her magnetic board and letters. “We put the word down for the child, have him spell it, mix the word up, and see if he can put it back how it should be spelled” (Data File, p. 200).

The tutors and the teaching staff are working as partners in the common goal of literacy for all. Nydia would like to train more parents, and she would like to provide more training for the parents who are tutoring now.

Nydia’s tutoring program at the Paul A. Dever Elementary School has been operating for only a few months. Already it appears to have become an integral part of the new schedule and focus that has been implemented at the Dever just this year. I have
analyzed this tutoring program using the framework of critical components that I proposed in chapter two. I have shown that many of the characteristics of effective programs are evident in this program, yet no one believes that it is operating at peak efficiency. Nydia, the tutors, and the entire teaching staff are committed to "a coordinated whole school effort to have all Dever students show growth in their ability to read" (Data File, p. 236).

Other Observations

In the previous chapter I explained the process I used to identify other themes that emerged as I read and reread the transcription of my interviews with Arnold and his tutors. I did the same as I worked through the transcriptions of my conversations with Nydia and her volunteer tutors. One alternative theme did emerge that I describe below, one that has to do with the personal benefits derived from volunteering to work with children in a literacy project.

Personal Benefits Derived From Tutoring

In chapter two, I discussed the research that has been done on the motivations that people have for offering themselves as volunteers. Most studies have indicated that students and older people alike volunteer for reasons that are, at first, egoistic. That is, they volunteer because there is personal benefit in it for them (Serow, 1991; Serow et al., 1990). This is not to say that there is an absence among volunteers of the desire to help others; certainly altruistic motives factor into the phenomenon (Fitch, 1987; Winniford et al., 1995). It appears obvious that an individual must be convinced that volunteering, no matter
how worthy the cause, will be beneficial to him or her before committing to the task or in order to continue once he or she has started.

This group of volunteers, when I asked about their reasons for volunteering, began by talking about how much they genuinely wanted to help the children. Dr. Freed, after her visit to Nydia’s school, mentioned their noticeable commitment to me in an E-mail communication:

When they talked to me they were clear that what they thought they did well, that teachers didn’t have time to do, was really show the children that they loved them, with hugs and smiles and lots of warmth. It’s not that teachers can’t/don’t/won’t do these things—it’s just that when you have 30 kids you get spread pretty thin! (Data File, p. 312)

But as we continued to talk, they also indicated that their training with Nydia and their subsequent engagement as tutors were extremely encouraging to them personally. Angie’s words verify this:

I have a lot of satisfaction about this. I’m beaming about it. I mean, I see him (the child she tutors) in the morning. He’s excited. I get excited. If my work wasn’t a payback, if I didn’t see improvement, I wouldn’t know how to work. (Data File, p. 209)

Pam commented that tutoring is “just making me learn more. . . . It’s just natural when I’m reading it to my son or to the kids I tutor, it just helps me to learn a lot more” (Data File, p. 197). Francine said that she tutors to show the children of the school that “you don’t have to leave the community to make your life a success” (Data File, p. 197), revealing her belief that a person who tutors is as successful as anyone else.

The SMILIES focus on learning pathways—the idea that people can be smart in ways other than traditional academics alone—was especially affirming to these parents. Pam and Nadene both commented on the “connectedness” they felt during the training process.
When Nydia and I were discussing the motives of the volunteers, Nydia agreed that egoistic motives were definitely present. Nydia’s assessment of why this might be true had to do with the feelings of self-worth they derived from the discussions around the seven pathways and personal gifts.

We were able to latch on to things that, for them, became points of comfort, because they had experiences themselves as learners. . . . A lot of it had to do with the fact that nobody recognized they were smart in other ways. (Data File, p. 178)

Nydia adds to these positive feelings of self-worth by making the volunteer tutors feel like professionals. They are a vital part of the school’s academic mission and schedule. Nydia depends on these people in many ways that even go beyond tutoring.

One of the two other themes that emerged in the previous chapter also had to do with emotional needs and support. Perhaps an emotional component should be added to the framework that I proposed after completing the review of the existing literature. If people do volunteer partially because of some felt needs they may have, those who operate tutoring projects would be wise to recognize these needs and contribute toward meeting them. I expand more upon this idea in chapter eight where I offer concluding observations and recommendations.
CHAPTER SEVEN

STORIES OF FRUSTRATION

Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I have described the successful implementation of tutoring projects by two of the August 1997 Tutoring and Mentoring seminar trainees. Both Arnold and Nydia were able to establish tutoring sites relatively soon after the training because many of the necessary components under the vision and resources categories of my matrix (based on Ambrose, 1987) were already in place. The other trainees came to the seminar with much interest and enthusiasm, but it would appear that they were not as equipped to implement immediately as were Arnold and Nydia.

I contacted most of the other trainees by telephone at least twice (see the data collection chart in chapter three), inviting them to talk about their thoughts, accomplishments, and frustrations associated with the establishment of a tutoring project in their home locations. I used no interview schedule, rather, I encouraged them to tell me their stories while prompting them in several areas:

1. What have you done? What were your original intentions?
2. How equipped did you feel both before and after the Tutoring and Mentoring seminar to train children and adults in this tutoring project?
3. What else, if anything, could the project coordinators have done to assist or enable you in establishing a site?

I took notes as I conversed with the participants (Data File, pp. 279-313). I began to watch for commonalities, or themes, that emerged among the “types” of respondents, and I created a loose matrix to assist me in processing the information (Data File, pp. 314-321). This helped me to paint a composite picture of the various groupings of respondents and the elements that were common within each group.

Then the question arose of how best to represent these elements, how to most effectively capture the “feel” of the experiences these trainees were having. Verma (1991) suggests that the phenomenon has its own “say so” in how it is represented:

The choice of forms cannot be arbitrary; it is inherent in the nature of the experience itself. It is not that the writer first has a certain experience and then embodies it in a particular art form, rather it is the experience which chooses its own form to make its presence felt. (p. 6)

The above statement illustrates a central theme in postmodern thought: a challenge “to the claims to a singular, correct style for doing and presenting research” (Richardson, 1990, p. 11). Another theme is suggested in Denzin’s (1994) assertion that “in the social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself” (p. 500). So it is left up to me, the writer, after the “experience . . . chooses its own form” to use that form to best interpret the stories of these trainees.

The form that the experience “chose,” after no small amount of resistance on my part, was that of the collective story. The collective story is a tool of narrative writing where the common experiences of a number of individuals are compiled into one piece of
fictional writing, fictional, but based in the true accounts of those being studied. The collective, or composite, story "describe[s] findings that apply to a group of people rather than to any one unique individual" (Ely & Anzul, 1991, p. 173). Rinehart (1998) classifies this kind of qualitative reporting as "fictional ethnography" which he defines as a type of ethnographic writing that combines the realist goals of academic ethnography and fiction but with an eye to both instruction and feeling. In fictional ethnography, writers may attempt to relate the chaos of the world to the reader. . . . In fictional ethnography, most authors attempt to replicate the sense of the experience. If something did not necessarily happen the way it was reported, recollection made it feel as if it did. . . . The feel of the experience--verisimilitude--is what the writer is after. (p. 204)

My resistance in using this tool of narrative research was partly due to the fact that this kind of interpretive writing was new to me. I did find some comfort in Denzin's (1994) encouragement that "interpretation is an art; it is not formulaic or mechanical. It can be learned, like any form of storytelling, only through doing" (p. 502).

In judging the validity of these stories, a key question to ask, according to Denison (1996), is:

Do they contain "truthlike statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described?" (Denzin, 1989, p. 83). If so, then these stories should be working to bring a previously hidden or submerged reality to light. So conceived, the text then establishes its own verisimilitude and tells the truth. (p. 358)

Thus I became convinced that the best way to represent the full experiences of those who struggled in establishing tutoring programs was to write narrative accounts that highlighted the most common themes inherent in their difficulties. What follows are two collective stories that represent two different "types" of people who attended the Tutoring
and Mentoring training in August 1997: Connie, the conscientious church member, and Edward, the busy educator. These names and any proper names related to them are pseudonyms, but are based on the stories of real people who attended the training.

The Stories

Connie, the Conscientious Church Member

Introduction

Connie came on her own to the August training seminar with the full blessings and sponsorship of her home church, Thurston Park SDA on the near-east side of Chicago. She heard about the initiative after attending a Conference-level community service seminar where Pastor Rojas spoke about volunteerism, America Reads, and the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring project. Connie put her name on a list indicating her desire to know more, and a few weeks later she received a mailing with registration information (Data File, pp. 1, 4-6). Since she is active in the community service efforts of her church, and since she has had a burden for helping the children in the local neighborhood, Connie decided to attend.

Connie is a retired nurse who is busy with many other church programs and activities. She sings in the choir and works in the food pantry several days a week. Her husband died 5 years ago. She decided to ward off loneliness by becoming involved.

Connie has kept a journal for many years. Her style of writing is episodic rather than chronological, with each entry focusing on a particular theme or event that is current in her life. Connie likes to title her entries for easier reference later on. Several of her journal entries related to the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative are below.
Entries From Connie's Journal

August 31, 1997 - Home Again

I'm thrilled to be back in my own bed after almost a week away from home! The Tutoring and Mentoring Seminar was very exciting, but also very draining. It was so kind of my old college friend, Melissa, to invite me to stay with her during the week, but I did not know she lived almost one and a half hours from the North American Division Headquarters! What I saved in expenses, I lost in sleep. Even so, it was good to see Melissa again, if only for short times in the mornings and evenings.

My head is spinning from what I learned at the seminar. Many of the topics shared by John Gavin, Sandra Brown, and the others earlier in the week were somewhat familiar to me since I have some background in community service organizations and how they function. Their presentations were easy to digest and well-covered in the manual and other handouts given to us.

The SMILIES presentations by Shirley and Mark during the last two days of the training were excellent but overwhelming! I have never worked one-on-one with a child in a formal program like this before. I must admit, I was a little uncomfortable when Shirley asked us to work in groups to define what a tutor is and does. First of all, I've never thought about that question before, and second, even though we had been together for the previous few days, I hadn't really spoken much with the others who were there at the seminar. But we did seem to warm up to each other, and Shirley had a way of making us all feel more comfortable.

The live tutoring demonstrations by Mark and his son, Philip, were very helpful. These presentations did enable me to put a more "human" face on what is involved in working with a small child. I just wish we would have had some time to role-play with each other to get a feel for tutoring in this way before leaving. I wanted to ask Shirley if we could do that, but it was obvious that she had a lot of
information to share with us before the time was up. The SMILIES tape and the manual will be helpful in the weeks to come as I review what we covered.

Shirley strongly recommended that we find a child to tutor for practice before we do anything else. I immediately thought of Justine, my niece's daughter, who struggled in her first-grade classroom this past year. Julie, my niece, has been concerned about Justine since her teacher talked with Julie about the possibility of holding Justine back in first grade. I'll ask Julie about working with Justine when we get together this next weekend. I just don't know how much time I can commit to tutoring with all of my other responsibilities at church.

I discovered that there are three other people from the Chicago area who attended the training. Monica is a public school teacher who has organized a one-night-a-week homework tutoring session in her church. Edward is also a teacher who works in a Seventh-day Adventist day school about ten blocks from here! And Ella attends the same church as Edward. She is a woman who, like me, earnestly wants to help the children in her neighborhood. We had dinner together Thursday evening of the seminar and decided to meet and talk at the end of September about how we might work on establishing a project. I don't know why we didn't find out about each other before coming. I guess it just shows how our churches need to communicate more regularly to stay informed about our local events and projects.

September 28, 1997 – Organizing a Project

This morning Monica, Edward, Ella, and I met at the church where Edward and Ella attend, Baker Street SDA, to discuss trying to establish a tutoring project. We have formed a committee that we have called the Baker Street Literacy Group. We are looking toward implementation after the beginning of the new year. Edward and Ella believe that the pastor of their church may be willing to allow us to use their facility two evenings a week for tutoring. There seems to be a good deal of enthusiasm in our little group. Monica, who has her own homework tutoring program, has some definite ideas about how to spread the word, how to organize the
schedule, and how to arrange for snacks and transportation. Edward, who is very comfortable with the SMILIES teaching approach, seems to have a grip on the actual academic end of things. Ella and I didn’t say much during the meeting, but we are both very willing to do whatever is necessary to make this thing work.

Pastor Dorsett at the Baker Street church recommended that we go to Dr. Morrow, the head of ACS at the Conference level, to inform him of what we are trying to do and to get his official approval and support. I volunteered to contact his office and set up a time for all of us to meet with him some time in October. Pastor Dorsett would like for there to be a good bit of communication between us and all the churches in the area, thinking that we might eventually be able to help them establish programs in their communities as well. I’m concerned that we not try to tell others how to do this until we are up and running successfully ourselves. We do seem to be building some momentum, but I wonder who is going to actually head this thing up once we get started.

I have been working with Justine now for two weeks. At first she didn’t seem interested, but when I showed her how she could read the simple “little books” that we were given at the seminar, she just lit up! And she really enjoys making letters with her body, and writing stories together. We illustrate them using pictures cut out from some of her old children’s magazines that had been set aside for recycling. She is reading level 2 books fairly easily. Her mom says she just can’t keep her away from the little books, and they play with the magnetic letters I bought for her all the time. The transformation that I see in Justine’s attitude has given me more reason to be encouraged. I understand why Shirley and Mark suggested that we find a child to tutor. I’ve thought about going to the day care center in our apartment complex to see if I could volunteer to work with one or two children while we are in the process of setting up our own program.
October 19, 1997 – Meeting With Dr. Morrow

This morning the Baker Street Literacy Group met with Dr. Morrow, the ACS director for the Conference. He was very congenial and supportive of our efforts, but I'm very surprised that he did not know more about the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring initiative. We explained more about the program to him, and we told him about our desire to set up a program at the Baker Street church. Like Pastor Dorsett, he would also like us to spread the word about the program to other churches, and he'd like us to consider offering training sessions at strategic places around the Chicago area, but he wants us to get established first. We assured him that we weren't eager to train others until we felt confident in what we were doing ourselves.

Edward did much of the talking this morning, and Monica offered some specific information about tutoring projects based in her own experience. To my surprise, Ella spoke up quite a bit as well. Evidently she is part of a federation of churches, and she shared about the program at a federation meeting the other day. She told Dr. Morrow that there seemed to be a lot of interest among many of the representatives in what she had to say. Like always, I just sat there most of the time nodding my head. But I did tell Dr. Morrow about my work with Justine and how well that is going. I told him that it's hard to maintain a consistent schedule, but even with the hit-or-miss tutoring I've been doing, Justine is making some progress and loves the multiple pathways approach that is a part of the program. Dr. Morrow asked me to explain more about multiple pathways, which I did. He seemed very interested. We made tentative plans to meet again with Dr. Morrow some time in mid-November.

After our session with Dr. Morrow, the Literacy Group decided to meet in two weeks for a planning session. At that time, we will lay out some more specific assignments and responsibilities.

November 9, 1998 – Organizing, or Not?

The Literacy Group met today after a one-week delay due to schedule conflicts. Edward didn't realize when we planned the last meeting that he had a
school function on the 2nd of November that he needed to attend. And I was invited to a wedding on the same day. When we met today, Monica couldn’t be here because of a prior commitment. She insisted that we go ahead so as not to lose the momentum we seemed to be building.

The three of us took stock of where we were. We realized that if we were to get anything going we needed to spread the word to the other churches in the area, get some volunteers, and make plans to start training. I think reality is hitting hard. Both Edward and Monica have full-time jobs with many responsibilities in the evenings. Ella is willing to do whatever but, like me, she does not have a background in education. Increasingly people are looking to me to head up the major organizational and training efforts in this project, but I certainly do not feel like I am the person for the job. Yes, I have been trained (as if two days makes me qualified), and I have been tutoring a child on and off using these methods. But I am not ready for this responsibility!

Pastor Dorsett stopped in to offer us the use of two rooms at the church which he showed to us. I didn’t pay as close attention as I should. My mind was spinning as I was thinking about how much of a mistake my getting involved in this whole thing was turning out to be.

November 10, 1998 – Refocusing

It is amazing how much a good night’s sleep changes one’s attitude. I have been thinking and praying about the Literacy project all morning, and I told the Lord that I would do whatever He wanted me to do if He would lead the way. Not long after that the phone rang—it was the director of the child care center in our apartment complex. A mother had asked her where she might find a tutor for her 6-year-old son who has been having trouble in reading at school. The director remembered that I had offered my help and wondered if I wanted to work with the boy. I told her that I would work with him on Tuesday evenings after school for one hour.
I'm excited but still apprehensive. I have seen notable progress in Justine's case, even though I work with her only a few times a month. I think this is an opportunity for me to gain more confidence in the tutoring end of things. Maybe I could train others in this if I had more experience. And even if I am unsure, we do have the tape that we can use to provide some demonstrations of the techniques to trainees.

I called Dr. Morrow's office to set up our second appointment with him. I was told that he would not be able to meet with us until after the first of the year! Oh well, we still have a lot to do in our own situation before we talk with him about going out to other churches.

One other development today—I mentioned the tutoring project to some ladies at the food pantry. Two of them want to know more about times and places for training sessions when we get them scheduled. Thank you Lord!

December 16, 1998 – Logistical Difficulties

I have been on the phone all evening trying to organize another meeting of the Literacy Group. Everyone seems so busy with so many other things! I'm worried that we simply may not have the time and personnel to pull this project off. We will not be able to meet until January 18th. I asked Edward if he has talked to any potential volunteers about the project. He said that he hadn't. Monica has been talking to a few people and she says there is some interest. Ella, who reported earlier that several women in her federation group wanted to know more, now says she's getting a lot of questions about the whole educational mission of the initiative. There seems to be a mind-set that the traditional focus in community service circles has been around supplying food and clothing to needy people, or disaster relief during crisis events. Many of her cohorts are saying that the responsibility for offering tutoring services should be placed in the laps of the educators of the church. Tutoring children is a different sort of focus with which they are uncomfortable.
I had my third tutoring session with Brian, the little boy at the child care center. He is responding well, but his progress is not as rapid or as marked as Justine's. It's obvious that, to make a difference, I may have to spend more time with him—something that I've got less of these days. Maybe I can stretch my commitment to twice a week.

January 18, 1998 – Organizing for Training

In anticipation of our Literacy Group meeting today, I tried Friday morning to set another appointment with Dr. Morrow. His secretary and I discussed many dates and finally settled on February 13. I reported this to the group. Edward said that he couldn't be there, as did Monica. They both have Valentine's Day parties that they need to facilitate at school. Ella said she'd be glad to go with me, but once again the responsibility seems to be shifting my way. OK, Lord! What's going on?

We are aiming to start training volunteers in mid-March. At this point, there are five people who have expressed an interest in being trained. Edward seemed willing to take on organization of the training sessions, but I am not comfortable that things were fully settled before we broke up. He just asked that I be prepared to demonstrate some of the SMILIES techniques that I've been using with my children. Monica is going to work on organizing schedules and sign-up sheets, and Ella is going to order the materials from the sources in the back of the SMILIES manual. Pastor Dorsett offered us $250 to get started from a benevolence fund he's been saving for the right occasion.

I also talked with the group about the teleconference that Sandra Brown had scheduled for January 29th (Data File, p. 16). They asked that I call and represent our Literacy Group in the teleconference. No one else seemed interested in taking part. I will report back to them when we meet again on February 8th.
February 4, 1998  More Frustrations

I just heard from Monica that Ella was involved in a car accident. She is going to be OK but she will be bedridden for some time. This will effectively remove her from our Literacy Group efforts until summer. I will need to send her a card.

Edward asked that we change the date for our next meeting until the week before training is to start in March. He still believes that we will be able to organize enough to offer some quality sessions to our volunteers. So we are going to meet on March 15th and start training on March 22nd. We have agreed to call all of our volunteer recruits to let them know.

Dr. Morrow’s office called yesterday and canceled our meeting scheduled for the 13th of February. He had to leave the country on some Conference business and his return date is up in the air. What is happening???

If it weren’t for the success that I’ve been having with Justine, I’d be totally frustrated. Justine’s teacher is thrilled with how well she has been doing in school, and the teacher told her mother to tell me that I am a miracle worker! The teacher wants to take a look at the curriculum sometime. Brian has been doing a little better since we’ve been working together more often. I meet with him on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4:00 until 4:45 or 5:00. He is reading level 2 books now—not bad considering that he couldn’t even write his name when we first started! But I am concerned that he’s not making the kind of progress that Justine has made. I really do need more training if I am going to make a significant impact with children like him. It seems like I am falling into a rut, just doing the same few things over and over again with both Justine and Brian.

Brian’s mother keeps offering to pay me, but I know she really can’t afford it. She works for a hotel chain as a maid and is raising Brian and his little sister on her own. She has offered to clean my entire apartment sometime since I won’t accept any money from her. I’ll probably take her up on that one!
March 15, 1998 – A Short but Productive Meeting

The remaining Literacy Group members, Edward, Monica, and I, met to go over our training agenda for next week. Ella was able to order the manuals, books, and magnetic letters we need in spite of her accident. After sorting the training materials, we talked about the training schedule, which Edward does seem to have in hand. He said that he would open the meeting with a devotional thought, and that he would give a brief introduction to the SMILIES curriculum. After that, I will talk about the Seven Pathways and show the introductory parts of the tape. Then Edward will talk about expectations for tutors and goals for the project. To close the first session, Monica will lead us as we try to settle on a tutoring schedule that might work for all of us. This first meeting will serve as a basic introduction. We will get into details on each pathway, making lesson plans, and how to determine reading levels in the following weeks.

Our planning session lasted for only an hour because Edward had an emergency meeting with some parents about an incident at his school. Monica and I talked for a few minutes. I told her that I was feeling apprehensive about everything, but I want to press through because I know that tutoring works. I believe we are doing the right thing. She agreed, and said that her tutoring session is the high point of each week for her. I know what she is talking about!

March 23, 1998 – Our First Session, and Possibly Our Last!

I got so frustrated with Edward. He came to our training session yesterday morning ten minutes late, his “devotional thought” was a brief prayer, and then he handed the whole meeting over to me. I was shocked and I just froze from embarrassment! I reminded him that he was supposed to introduce the SMILIES curriculum, and he just said, “You go ahead. You know what you are doing.” I fumbled around for a bit and finally managed to talk about the America Reads Challenge by the President, the Adventist initiative, and the SMILIES manual. Then I turned on the tape and excused myself to the bathroom where I had a good cry for a
few minutes. When I came back, Monica was talking about schedules. Nothing was
getting settled at all. Every evening that was suggested for tutoring was a problem for
someone. After working fruitlessly on that for 20 minutes, the meeting was adjourned
until next Sunday and we left. I didn’t say a word to anyone!

Edward did call yesterday evening to apologize, explaining that he had been
so busy with school-related responsibilities that he just didn’t have time to prepare.
He knew that he put me on the spot, but he thought I could handle it. Edward
admitted that he simply didn’t have enough time to devote to the tutoring project and
he might have to back out.

I understand how busy he must be at school. I forgave him, and said that I
don’t think I have what it takes to lead this effort. I’m frustrated with trying to recruit
and organize volunteers, with trying to meet with people at the Conference level, and
with my own abilities to really tutor a child well, let alone trying to train someone
else how to do it.

Edward called me again today during his lunch break. He just got off the
phone with Monica, who is also feeling a time crunch. But she is willing to try again.
Edward suggested that we call off any more training efforts for now, finish the school
year, and meet again over the summer to reorganize. I told him OK, but he or
someone else would need to be in charge.

I still believe in the tutoring project, but I need more training. I don’t have the
confidence to lead an effort like this. The people with the skills like Edward and
Monica do not have the time to devote in getting it organized. We need someone who
has the knowledge and the time to really do the job right!

Edward, the Busy Educator

Introduction

Edward (the same Edward as in Connie’s journal) teaches Grades 5 and 6 at an
Adventist school near the Baker Street SDA church. He is also an elder in his church
whose main responsibilities center around the Sabbath School program. He has been married for 2 years, and his wife is pregnant with their first child. Edward maintains a very busy schedule, struggling to maintain his multiple roles as husband, teacher, elder, and soon-to-be-father without seriously neglecting any of them.

Edward heard about the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative through his position at the church. The YOUthNEWS newsletters (Data File, pp. 8-9) cross his desk regularly, and the information about the August session caught his eye. Edward understands the need for tutoring. Many of his students could have used extra help long ago, but now they are extremely behind in their schoolwork because their reading skills are so inadequate. He bypassed the opportunity to attend a paid inservice session at his own school in order to find out more about establishing a tutoring project.

His original plan was to start his own project. After the August training session he felt equipped and ready. But when Edward met Monica, Ella, and Connie at the training session and discovered they were from the same area of Chicago, he felt it would be inappropriate to ignore them and the NAD organizers by going out on his own. Besides, he was very busy and including them would help distribute the responsibility. Thus, the Baker Street Literacy Group was formed.

The Literacy Group had a difficult implementation experience during the school year following the first training session in August 1997 (Connie’s perspective is described in her journal above). After deciding to postpone any further efforts until the summer of 1998, Edward believed it would be appropriate to write Dr. Morrow, the Conference ACS director, to explain their frustrations. After all, Dr. Morrow had given his approval and
blessing for their initial establishment of a program, and he wanted to be kept apprised of their progress. The text of Edward’s letter to Dr. Morrow is below.

Edward’s Letter to Dr. Morrow

March 27, 1998

Dear Dr. Morrow,

I trust that this letter finds you well and prospering in the Lord. You had asked that I update you on the progress of the Baker Street Literacy Group in establishing a tutoring project in our area of Chicago. We did get to the point of actually holding a training session for five volunteers on March 22, 1998, but this did not go well. We have decided to postpone any further efforts in organizing the project until some time this summer at the earliest. Please allow me to explain, but first I want to appeal to the Star Trek fan in you!

You may recall that, when we met last fall, you and I discovered our mutual fondness for the series Star Trek: The Next Generation. I’d like for you to picture the infrequent occasions where a member of Captain Piccard’s crew makes a request, during a one-on-one conference, for “permission to speak freely, sir?” This is what I am asking of you. I would like to share my heart with you about our project and the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative in general without feeling a need to hold back in fear of offending someone. I trust your judgment completely, knowing that you will share my opinions in an appropriate manner with the appropriate people.

I had desired to start a project on my own, but felt this would be inappropriate given all the advance work done by the North American Division. It did feel good to become a part of the larger effort, and when I discovered that there were several of us from the same area of Chicago in attendance at the training, it made sense to join forces with them. In retrospect, I was in the dark as to the amount of work organizing a project like this would demand! I must admit that our project fell through primarily because I, the person most capable of leading our group and
providing training to our volunteers, could not invest the necessary amount of time and energy in order to make it successful.

As an educator, I found the SMILIES curriculum to be logical, precise, and academically sound. I felt that I could implement it easily. But I did not sense the same self-assurance with the others in our group. Even though they had gone through the training, evidently they did not feel prepared. Connie had taken the ambitious step of actually tutoring two children in order to gain some degree of confidence. She frequently asked for advice which I tried to give. It appears that she has made a real difference in the lives of these two children, but she still lacks this assurance. You may be aware that another woman in our group, Ella, was involved in a rather serious car accident from which she is recovering. She has expressed a desire to join with us again in the summer. Ella frequently spoke of her need for more training and her concern that she was not prepared to train anyone how to be a tutor.

Monica is a full-time teacher like me who has a tutoring program of her own. She meets with her students one night a week for homework help. I think she has the tutoring know-how, but her time is as limited as mine. Time seems to be a huge concern for most of us, especially when it comes to the nuts and bolts of scheduling.

In addition to concerns about skills and time, we were also having great difficulty finding a substantial number of willing volunteers. Younger adults, and especially parents, struggle with committing a regular block of time for tutoring because of their busy schedules. So often both parents work, or single parents need to work more than one job just to make ends meet. So, trying to settle on even one night each week that we could hold tutoring sessions proved to be an insurmountable problem.

The elderly people in our church who are active in community service work do not see tutoring as the “typical” ACS activity. Many of them feel that we educators should take on this responsibility. I do agree that those of us who work in the schools are better prepared to tutor students. But we are already pouring out our lives day in and out to help these children. We have been calling for more help for a long time!
This is why I believe in the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative. I’m very pleased that the Seventh-day Adventist church has taken the lead nationally among church denominations in this effort. I’d like to make a few specific recommendations “from the trenches” so to speak:

1. We need help from beyond the local level to recruit volunteers. The initiative needs more publicity throughout the church so that the potential volunteers who may not even know about the opportunity will know where to go to offer their help. We, as a church, have an incredible capability to dispense information like this. Let’s use it!

2. Related to the above, communication needs to be fostered between all the various entities in our Conference (I suspect this is true in the other Conferences as well). We should have discovered before we got to the training at the Division Headquarters last August that there were four of us from Chicago in attendance! And with all due respect, you were not that aware of the effort or of our desire to participate in it. The churches in urban locations, with support from the Conference level, should work together in establishing projects.

3. I understand that the project coordinators are recruiting regional coordinators and supporting them with AmeriCorp Vista grant money. This seems like a good plan to me! We could use a coordinator in this area! These people could be adequately trained, and they would have the time to give toward organizing local projects.

4. This final concern is more directed toward the North American Division ADRA/YouthNet project coordinators. If local people are to be utilized in establishing and maintain tutoring projects, they need far more training than we received last August. This training must include actual practice in the SMILIES methodology, preferably with “real” children. I’ve heard that Dr. Shirley Freed, the primary author of the SMILIES tutoring manual, is offering just this type of extended course at Andrews University this summer. In addition to a more thorough initial
training, follow-up support and training must be offered at regular intervals. The Division should make more of an effort to stay in touch with trainees.

Dr. Morrow, I realize that my recommendations are very weighty and would require a massive amount of organization on the part of the church. But I believe, with the crisis in education we face in this country, that our commitment to this type of work ought to go well beyond the scope of the America Reads initiative. Establishing a well-organized network of tutoring sites around the country would be a highly visible and effective way to spread the love of Jesus Christ to a needy world, one which our denomination is uniquely qualified to offer.

Thank you, Dr. Morrow, for taking the time to read my letter. I am feeling badly that our project got off to such a rocky start, but it is possible that our experiences could work to help others avoid the same pitfalls. And, thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to "speak freely!"

Respectfully,
Edward

Summary

I chose the above forms of narrative representation, Connie’s journal and Edward’s letter to Dr. Morrow, because they were very personal in nature. As I talked with the participants on the telephone, many of them expressed strong feelings—feelings of frustration, remorse, irritation, and sometimes gladness. Simply reporting these in list form or discussing them systematically would not have captured the lived experience that was and is so important to relate.

"The study of narrative . . . is the study of the ways humans experience the world" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). After writing these fictional accounts, I returned to my notes taken while interviewing the participants. As I read them through again, I was
satisfied that I had, indeed, captured not only the major "themes" they related to me, but the affective "feel" of their experiences as well.
CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to document the training and resulting efforts of the initial cohort of trainees in the Seventh-day Adventist North American Division Tutoring and Mentoring initiative during the first year of implementation. It is a descriptive, qualitative study that also serves as a formative evaluation instrument for project coordinators. I used tools typical of qualitative research work to gather pertinent data, tools such as observation, interviews, questionnaires, audio and video recording, and written correspondence. Results were presented in various forms which included descriptive writing, tables, case study reports, and narrative stories.

A Discussion of the Findings and Conclusions of the Study Based on the Original Research Questions

In this final chapter, I summarize initial findings that have already been reported in the previous chapters. Returning to the original research questions provides a framework for this summary.
Question 1

Question 1 asked: *How were these volunteers recruited and trained for this project?* The volunteers in this study heard about the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative through several related ways. Those participants who work as full-time or volunteer community service personnel and/or educators were informed about the initiative through mailings send out by the North American Division (NAD) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or by others (such as their pastors) who had received these mailings (Data File, pp. 1-8). Others heard about it directly from individuals close to the initiative. This is true with both Arnold and Nydia whose stories appear in chapters 5 and 6. Arnold said that Pastor Jose Rojas, one of the project coordinators, “twisted my arm” and convinced him to attend the training (Data File, p. 83). Nydia was told about the opportunity by Dr. Shirley Freed, the primary author of the *SMILIES* curriculum, who is also her doctoral advisor (Data File, p. 172).

As I reported in chapter four, the volunteers received their training at one session held at the NAD Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, during the week of August 24 through 28, 1997. The first 3 days of training were facilitated by NAD personnel. Covered topics included the scope of the initiative, understanding at-risk children, community organizing, project development, public relations, leadership development, and fundraising. Information was delivered primarily through lecture and question/answer sessions.

Dr. Shirley Freed from Andrews University and I provided 2 day’s training in the *SMILIES* tutoring curriculum developed specifically for this project. We covered topics having to do with the Seven Pathways to learning, the nature of the tutoring relationship,
reading-level diagnosis, making books and using related materials, and lesson planning. We used lecture, demonstrations, small-group work, and discussions to deliver the information.

For reference during and following the August session, the trainees received the *Handbook for Community-based Tutoring & Mentoring Projects* (Sahlin, 1997) and numerous related handouts from the NAD facilitators. We provided them with the *SMILIES: Helping Children Read* (Freed et al., 1997) tutoring manual, the related videotape which provided demonstrations of techniques, one complete set of little readers, magnetic letters, scissors, and markers. Even though most trainees said the initial training was too short to fully equip them to become trainers themselves, these materials were adequate to provide ample opportunity for home reference and study.

**Question 2**

Question 2 asked: *What initial concerns did they have about their abilities to fulfill their commitment to tutor children and to train other volunteers?* The trainees responded to this question by completing the *Open-Ended Statement of Concern About an Innovation* assessment (Newlove & Hall, 1976) at the end of the training session (see Appendix A). Fuller (1969) suggested that teachers are initially concerned about “self” issues, then concerns arise about the “task,” and finally issues relating to the “impact” they are having on their students take precedence. Hall et al., (1977) further dissected these concerns of teachers into seven stages as they are learning about an innovation: from “awareness,” “informational,” and “personal” concerns, to issues around
The trainees responded to the question, "When you think about the SMILIES Reading Tutoring project, what are you concerned about?" I coded and evaluated their responses, and discovered that half of their concerns had to do with self/personal issues, reflected in statements such as "I feel so inadequate to be a trainer," and "Is this book (program) practical for someone who is not an educator?" The other half of the concerns expressed were around task/management issues borne out by comments such as "I am concerned about finding enough people, if any at all, willing to be tutors," and "Money for transportation is one of my biggest concerns—to and from the program." These responses indicate that the trainees were lacking in confidence as they left the seminar—confidence that they had the skills personally to implement the program, and confidence that the details of management could be adequately addressed. The fact that only 2 of the original 25 trainees were able to initiate projects by the end of the first school year indicates that these concerns were valid. Hall (1976), after stating that "self concerns are a fully legitimate part of change," has recommendations for project coordinators:

Rather than indicting people for having self concerns, the role of the adoption agents and policy/decision-makers should be to aid in the resolution of self concerns and to facilitate movement toward task- and impact-related concerns. When planning for innovation implementation, managers of change need to anticipate self concerns and initiate actions to accommodate and resolve them at the outset of the innovative effort. The crime is not in having self concerns, but in others not accepting their legitimacy and constructively addressing their resolution. (pp. 22-23)

I was able to reach 18 of the first cohort trainees (21, if couples are accounted for) to solicit further comment during the months following the August session. Even though
they believed that the training offered to them was of high quality, 16 of these participants said that they needed more training in order to feel competent in the innovation. Many of them wondered why there was so little follow-up from the project organizers.

Hall et al., (1977) do not lay total responsibility for a lack of change (or innovation/project implementation) at the feet of the coordinators. They state that “personalized interventions can facilitate change, but, in the end, each individual determines for herself or himself whether or not change will occur” (p. 17). A toll-free telephone line was installed in my home to facilitate contact with me in case any trainees needed advice or support. The telephone did not ring one time through the school year with any requests for help. Several people did mention that they thought about calling me, but for one reason or another they never did.

Even so, the NAD project organizers must take into account and actively address the self and task concerns of the trainees if they expect for project implementation to take place, as Hall (1976) makes clear above. According to the statements of the trainees, their obvious lack of implementation, and my observations, their concerns still exist and have even intensified over the months since their training.

Question 3

Question 3 asked: What happened after they left the training session? Two of the participants, Arnold and Nydia, were almost immediately successful in establishing tutoring programs in two very different situations. Their stories are told in chapters 5 and 6. It became obvious to me as I visited them, worked on their transcripts, coded their data,
and wrote their stories that both of these dynamic individuals were already well-prepared for the challenge of setting up programs prior to attending the Tutoring and Mentoring seminar. Key characteristics in the vision, skills, and resources categories of the matrix of critical components (Table 2, Chapter Two) were already established because of their diligent and thorough work beforehand. Arnold and Nydia both had functional vision statements that were guiding their individual efforts before adopting the Adventist initiative. They each are successful educators who have proven their competence in countless ways. Because of their current responsibilities in their spheres of operation, the necessary resources were available to them without having to expend large amounts of time, effort, or finances.

Both Arnold and Nydia were and are well-respected by all who work with and for them. They were prepared to offer the appropriate tangible and emotional support to their volunteers. And their volunteers are responding in ways that reveal the respect and loyalty that they feel for their leaders.

The research on school effectiveness, although not directly related to tutoring programs, does shed some light on the success or lack of success in establishing a project. Even though the factors leading to school effectiveness vary slightly from report to report, several components are consistent across the studies. The key factors of strong instructional leadership by the principal coupled with a clear instructional focus seem to be present in every effective school (Steller, 1988). Arnold and Nydia demonstrated these components in establishing their projects, which apparently contributed to their initial success.
As I conversed with the other trainees on the telephone and listened to their stories of frustration, I realized that key components were not as accessible to them as they were to Arnold and Nydia. The most important of these were in the skills category of the matrix. Most of the trainees indicated that they needed more training in order to feel competent to tutor a child and especially to train others to tutor. Several trainees inquired about the availability of Dr. Freed or myself to come to their area and train prospective tutor volunteers. I indicated that we could arrange, one way or another, to work with them, but I never got a return call.

Table 1 (Chapter Two titled, “Managing Complex Change”) by Ambrose (cited in Tucker, 1993), warrants another examination in this context. Ambrose indicates that when the “skills” component is missing from a change scenario, anxiety is the result. I believe “anxiety” is a good term to describe what most trainees were feeling as they thought about or made the first attempts in establishing a tutoring project. The trainees indicated their anxiety on the Stages of Concern questionnaire I administered at the end of their training session (Appendix A), and their anxiety was obvious as I talked with them later on in statements such as “I need for someone to do this for me” (Terry, Data File, p. 297), and “How do you just dive in and start a tutoring project?” (Carla, Data File, p. 307).

The other component that was missing for many of the trainees had to do with resources. Lee said that “work and time” (Data File, p. 307) were the reasons why he has not been able to get a program going. Many other trainees also indicated that lack of time was the biggest obstacle they have not been able to overcome. Ambrose (cited in Tucker, 1993) indicates that when resources are lacking, frustration is the result. Frustration is the
key word that I have used to describe the feelings of these trainees. Because of this frustration, “interest is leaving. Things are kind of fizziling out” (Dawn, Data File, p. 306), or in Ella’s words, “Not much is happening with me. We all want it, but we didn’t realize the magnitude” (Data File, pp. 305-306).

An interesting observation can be made regarding the anxiety and frustration these trainees were feeling because of the lack of skills or resources. These possibly are the very same feelings that the children whom they are supposed to be helping are experiencing. These children lack the skills and possibly the resources necessary in order to become proficient readers. They may feel inadequate or paralyzed when approaching the reading task. If children in this predicament need more intense, directed help in the form of tutoring, so these frustrated trainees need more direct help in becoming confident tutors and trainers of tutors.

Question 4

Question 4: What adaptations did they make in the implementation of the tutoring program? Since most participants were unsuccessful in establishing projects, the adaptations that I discuss below are those made in Nydia’s and Arnold’s projects exclusively. My original reason for including this question was because I anticipated that many more people would be successful as project organizers. The compilation of adaptations that they might have made would have helped the NAD coordinators to confirm or modify their training and support model accordingly.
At the time of my visit, both Arnold's and Nydia's projects were just getting started. They had held training sessions only weeks or a few months before. In the training they provided, the \textit{SMILIES} curriculum was the exclusive source of instruction in techniques. Arnold and his teaching assistants did adapt the manual for their trainees, cutting and pasting various portions of the manual to make it more manageable. Their trainees received a substantially smaller version of the manual. In Nydia's case, the only adaptation they made in the manual was to remove the plastic binding off of each trainee's copy, punch holes in the pages, and place it in a three-ring binder. They felt this made the rather massive volume easier to manage.

Arnold had established three projects in the Los Angeles area at the time of my visit. The coordinators at each project were using other curriculum materials in addition to the \textit{SMILIES} manual. Another curriculum was being used as the primary course of study at one of the projects. In Nydia's case, the volunteers were striving to follow what Nydia had taught them, but the classroom teachers with whom they worked asked the tutors to use other materials as well. The tutors, the teachers, and Nydia were all very comfortable with this arrangement.

No doubt the coordinators at each project will continue to adapt their operating parameters to each of their unique situations. Scheduling, curriculum modifications, training options, and recruiting policies are areas that each project coordinator will continue to adjust to make their programs the best they can be.
Other Findings

Several other themes emerged as I reviewed transcriptions and notes from my interviews. I review these below, then I adapt them to the critical components framework that I developed as a result of the literature review in chapter 2.

Marketing/Public Relations

Arnold's projects are housed and sponsored by local churches in the Los Angeles area. Because their projects are designed to serve children outside of the school day setting, the volunteers need to make the public aware of the opportunity to enroll their children in a local tutoring program. This was accomplished in several ways—by word-of-mouth, church newsletters, advertising in local papers, announcements at church meetings, and by the distribution of door-to-door flyers.

This characteristic was not mentioned in any of the literature I reviewed, probably because most tutoring programs in these reviews were operated from public schools. Including a public awareness thrust may not be seen as a necessity in these situations because the children are selected for service by the educators in the school. But with the Adventist initiative, one of the major reasons for establishing a local project is to extend the message of Christianity to a needy world. Sahlin (1997), in discussing the question "Why should Adventists get involved?" explains:

As we get involved in meeting the needs of at-risk children in our communities, we will meet people we would otherwise never touch. This includes not just children and their families, but also administrators and teachers in the public schools, staff workers in community organizations, civic leaders in the neighborhoods and downtown at city hall, and news media employees. Not only are each of these contacts a witness to the grace and power of Christ in our lives, but we will make friends with some of these
individuals. In the context of those friendships opportunities will arise for you to share your faith... (pp. 11-12)

An active marketing and public relations thrust is important, therefore, to enable this mission to occur. Because of the central place it has in the Adventist initiative, I believe “an active marketing/public relations strategy” characteristic needs to be added to the matrix of critical components under the “Action Plan” heading.

Emotional Needs

Both Arnold and Nydia offered much encouragement to their volunteers, the kind of encouragement intended to move these people to a deeper level of self-esteem and leadership capability. Many of the volunteers indicated that this is the reason why they maintain their commitment and expend so much time and energy to the tutoring project. To repeat Angie’s words, who works in Nydia’s project, “I have a lot of satisfaction out of this. I’m beaming about it... If my work wasn’t a payback, if I didn’t see improvement, I wouldn’t know how to work” (Data File, p. 209). As a result of this “payback,” the tutors themselves had an increased capacity to extend friendship and
### TABLE 6

REVISED CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TUTORING PROGRAMS CLASSIFIED BY COMPONENTS NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH CHANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A clear mission and goals expressed for everyone involved</td>
<td>• Ongoing training and supervision of volunteers</td>
<td>• Practical support from the administrative level</td>
<td>• Committed tutors</td>
<td>• Sound organization and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear expectations of volunteers</td>
<td>• Training for leaders on recruitment and retention of volunteers</td>
<td>• Offering emotional support to tutors and children</td>
<td>• Qualified faculty to provide support</td>
<td>• In active marketing/public relations strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note. Items in italics added as a result of this study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A sound, simple training guide</td>
<td>• Close cooperation between volunteers and people in the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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emotional support to the children whom they serve. All of this combines to add to the
success of the project.

Included in the matrix, under the “Incentives” component, is a characteristic called
“support from the administrative level.” (See Table 6.) In order to emphasize that this
means support in practical things such as providing a place for tutoring, awarding
certificates or other verification that training was completed, offering a stipend, and
providing the necessary tutoring materials, I wish to rename this characteristic “practical
support from the administrative level.” Then I suggest adding another characteristic under
this category titled “offering emotional support to volunteers and children.” I believe the
importance of this new characteristic should not be underestimated.

**Recommendations**

**Recommendations for the North American Division Tutoring and Mentoring Project**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, I offer several recommendations for those involved in the implementation of this initiative.

1. *Provide more time for training.* A majority of the trainees said that 5 days of
   training was not enough for them to develop competence and confidence in the demands
   of the project. Several recommended at least 2 days more, and others suggested and
   extended initial training session of up to 2 weeks.

2. *Include opportunities for practice with feedback.* Many of the trainees said that
   role-playing as a tutor and a student would have helped to prepare them better. Others
   suggested that work with “real” children would be an even better way to gain the
necessary skills. Feedback and coaching from trainers would be an expected and valuable part of this practice. These suggestions do reflect the recommendations of the Joyce-Showers Model for Staff Development (1995; Showers et al., 1987; Joyce & Showers, 1988).

3. Provide regular opportunities for further training and support. One participant suggested that follow-up within 3 months after the initial training session would enable him to stay in touch with the demands of the project. Many trainees were surprised that there was not more follow-up contact from the NAD coordinators. They expected updates in the form of newsletters, and more teleconference opportunities like the one held by NAD project coordinator Sandra Brown in January, 1998. Others expressed interest in extended training opportunities which could be offered at an Adventist university or at other easily accessed locations.

4. Address directly the “self” concerns expressed by trainees, and work to help their concerns evolve into “task” concerns, as determined by measures such as the Stages of Concern (SoC) evaluation instrument (Fuller, 1969; Hall et al., 1977; Newlove & Hall, 1976). Those who have studied the concerns of teachers as they are learning a new innovation have discussed the need for “managers of change” to “anticipate self concerns and initiate actions to accommodate and resolve them at the outset of the innovative effort” (Hall, 1976, pp. 22-23). These “self” concerns are probably magnified for those who do not have a background in education or experience in working with young children.

5. Press forward with plans to hire and extensively train regional coordinators for the Tutoring and Mentoring effort. Those knowledgeable in the field of volunteer
tutoring programs have discussed the value of having highly trained coordinators and of reimbursing them financially for their efforts (Morrow & Walker, 1997a; Pinnell & Fountas, 1997a; Wasik, 1997, 1998). Most people who are otherwise full-time employed will struggle with trying to balance the demands of a tutoring project with their other responsibilities. In order for more localized training to continue, the coordinators should be experienced educators or at least highly trained people who have the skills to provide ongoing training.

6. Consider shifting the responsibility for implementation of the Tutoring and Mentoring initiative away from an Adventist Community Service sphere toward more of a local church sphere or even toward another Adventist agency such as the *Latino Educational Advancement and Research Now* (L.E.A.R.N.) organization organized by Arnold Trujillo. I agree with Arnold’s assessment that “community service centers (ACS) are not perceived by the rank-and-file of Seventh-day Adventists as either being a youth-oriented program or a deliverer of educational services” (Data File, p. 84). Many times in my interviewing of people associated with the initiative, this bias was discussed as a debilitating factor in trying to garner resources or volunteer support. Perhaps shifting the responsibility toward another agency would give the initiative a fresh infusion of understanding, enthusiasm, and support.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. Follow the thrust of this study through the 1998-1999 school year in order to investigate how the program adapts and evolves. 1998-1999 is viewed by project
organizers at the first full implementation year. This current study is a report of the intermediate status of the Adventist Tutoring and Mentoring initiative.

This study was a formative evaluation of a recently established tutoring and mentoring initiative by a major church denomination. Its focus was thereby limited and not intended to necessarily verify the value or potential success of volunteer literacy tutoring programs in general. Yet, most of the findings I discussed above are applicable to any similar program. If the focus of a related study is expanded, the following recommendations would be worth considering.

2. Expand the study to include evaluations of several programs using a variety of tutoring curricula. This would not necessarily be to determine the effectiveness of a given program, but rather to explore common and unique approaches to the task.

3. Investigate several other projects launched by other organizations in response to the America Reads Initiative. Once again, the focus would not necessarily be to compare the success of these programs, but rather to determine whether nationwide initiatives such as this one do have the desired effects within organizations that choose to become involved.

4. Investigate the adaptability of various personality types to the task of tutoring young children or of actually becoming tutor trainers in a volunteer setting. A tool such as the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Kiersey & Bates, 1984) could be administered to volunteers as they begin their work in a literacy tutoring project. Their eventual adaptability/success as judged by a variety of measures would be compared to their
temperament type. This might prove to be useful when recruiting personnel for their work in a tutoring project.

**Reflections**

The Tutoring and Mentoring initiative of the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist church is an extraordinary effort by a major church denomination to make a difference in the lives of thousands of children across the United States. False starts and struggles are to be expected along with stories of success and of the positive differences made in families in this country. I am impressed by the willingness of so many people in the Seventh-day Adventist church to put their own time and financial resources on the line in order to become involved in this endeavor. However, unless the training and support offered to volunteer leaders are greatly expanded upon, the organizers of the effort will encounter only isolated incidences of success.

Trainees from the August 1997 seminar were expected to establish sites on their own as a result of this single training event. The only 2 people of the 25 who were successful were already equipped and already had the foundations in place to establish projects. The August seminar acted as a catalyst to get them moving, but it alone did not prepare them to implement tutoring programs.

It is my belief that the church will be successful and will achieve the goals outlined at the Philadelphia Summit in April 1997, but only if the needs of the trainees are more adequately addressed. I hope that this study contributes toward the achievement of all these goals.
APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS
Open-Ended Statement of Concern

Name (optional): ________________________________

It is very important for continuity in processing this data that we have a unique number that you can remember. Please use:

the last 4 digits of your Social Security number: ___ ___ ___ ___

The purpose of the open-ended question on the next page is to determine what people who are using or thinking about using innovations are concerned about at various times during the innovation adoption process.

Please respond in terms of your present concerns, or how you feel about your involvement or potential involvement with the SMILIES Reading Tutoring innovation. We want you to think of it in terms of your own perceptions of what this innovation involves. Remember to respond in terms of your present concerns about your involvement or potential involvement with the SMILIES Reading Tutoring innovation.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this task.

Adapted from:

Response Sheet

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE SMILIES READING TUTORING PROJECT, WHAT ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT? (Do not say what you think others are concerned about, but only what concerns you now.) Please write in complete sentences, and please be frank.

(1) ___________

(2) ___________

(3) ___________

Please place a check by the statement that reflects your greatest concern.
Interview Questions

Vision

• What is your understanding of the mission of this program?
• What are your personal goals? Program goals?
• Describe the expectations of the volunteers involved with this program.
• Who carries the main vision for the program?
• What inspired you to become involved?

Skills

• Describe the training you received or that you offered to volunteers.
• How comfortable do you feel with your skill level?
• What type of training did leaders/supervisors receive?
• What is the plan for continued training of volunteers?

Incentives

• How does the administration of the program offer support to the tutors?
• What type of recognition do volunteers and program personnel receive?

Resources

• Describe the manual and its usability/clarity.
• What other materials did you receive? What materials do you use and where did they come from?
• Who provides materials or funds for materials?
• How are parents informed/involved?
• Tell me about your overseers in this program.

Action Plan

• How is the program organized? Who reports to whom?
• Tell me about how you are received and treated by teachers and other persons in the school (if the program is in a school).
• How are students selected?
• How often does tutoring take place, and for how long?
• Do you monitor student progress?
• Show me/describe a typical lesson.

Is there anything else you’d like to tell me or that you wished I would have asked?
November 3, 1977

Mark Thomassen
P.O. Box 211
Ithaca, New York 14890

Dear Mark:

[Application Number: H07.019-238]

Subject Category: Consent
Object Title: Approval

The Human Subiects Review Board (HSRB) is pleased to inform you that your proposal has been reviewed and approved. You have been given clearance to proceed with your research plan.

All changes made to the study design or consent form after initiation of the study require prior approval from the HSRB before such changes are implemented. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

The duration of the present approval is for one year. If your research is going to take more than one year, you must apply for an extension of your approval in order to continue with this project.

Some proposals and research designs may be of such a nature that participation in the project may involve certain risks to human subjects. If your project is in any respect a study or the implementation of your project is in any way to result in a research-related adverse reaction and/or physical injury, such an occurrence must be reported immediately in writing to the Human Subjects Review Board. Any project-related physical injury must also be reported immediately to the University Physician, Dr. Loren Hamen, by calling (614) 473-3222.

We wish you success as you prepare the required reports as outlined in the support protocol.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Human Subjects Review Board

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Tutor Consent Form

As a part of a research effort in the School of Education at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, a study is being conducted involving persons being trained as tutors in the SMILIES reading program. At various times through the 1997-98 school year, you may be observed and/or asked to give your reactions to various aspects of your experiences.

These observations and reactions will be collected in several ways, including field notes taken by an observer, surveys, questionnaires, records of e-mail or telephone communications, and journal entries completed by you. The purpose in gathering this information is to better understand and describe the experiences of volunteer reading tutors as they are trained, and as they work with students and eventually train other tutors. Of course, your cooperation in any part of this study is purely voluntary.

While there may be no direct benefit to you at this time for participating in this project, we are hopeful that we will gain some insights into the experience of volunteering as a reading tutor. Hopefully, this information may help future volunteers as they consider working with struggling readers.

All information collected will be held in the strictest confidence. While this information may be published, at no time will your name be used. In addition, you are free to terminate this consent at any time and withdraw from the study without prejudice. If you have any questions concerning the study or this consent, please call Mark Thogmartin at 614-467-2562 or Dr. Shirley Freed at 616-471-6163.

I, ____________________________, hereby consent to participate in the project described above. I have read and understand this statement and I have had all my immediate questions answered.

Date: _______________ Signature: _________________________________

Witness: ________________________________
REFERENCES


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Newlove, B. W., & Hall, G. E. (1976). *A manual for assessing open-ended statements of concern about an innovation.* Austin, TX: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education.


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MARK BRUCE THOGMARTIN
PO Box 215
Millersport, OH 43046

EDUCATION

Andrews University
Ph. D. - Leadership, Focus on Literacy
July, 1998

Ohio State University
M.A. - Education/Reading
September, 1992

University of Kentucky
B.A. - Elementary Education
December 1981

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Walnut Township Local School District
Lead Teacher, Technology Coordinator, Title 1 Coordinator/Math Teacher,
Reading Recovery Teacher, Classroom Teacher Grades 2 & 6
August 1990 - Present

West Muskingum Local School District
Chapter 1 Reading Teacher/Reading Recovery Teacher
July 1988 - August 1990

Covenant Christian School
Headmaster, Home Education Coordinator, Classroom Teacher Grades 3 - 8
August 1984 - July 1988

New Covenant Academy
Assistant Headmaster, Teacher/Supervisor Grades 2 - 12
August 1980 - June 1984

CERTIFICATION

Ohio Eight Year Professional, Grades 1-8
Ohio Reading Certification, Grades K-12
Ohio Elementary Principal, Temporary, 1996-1998
PUBLICATIONS


HONORS

American Legion "District Teacher of the Year," 1996-1997
Martha Holden Jennings Foundation Jennings Scholar Award Recipient, 1994-1995

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Association of American Educators
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
International Reading Association