



12 KEY OUTCOMES

THESE 12 OUTCOMES, REPRESENTING AN EVIDENCE-BASED PATH TO SUCCESS, ARE THE GOALS THAT HIS PLACE'S FAMILY SUPPORT, CHILD DEVELOPMENT, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING ARE DESIGNED TO ACCOMPLISH.



BIRTH TO THREE

Children are natural-born learners. On day 1, the same neurological circuitry that processes the sound of music begins to distinguish the sounds of a child's mother from every other noise. This is just one of many critical developments that take place during a child's earliest years.

1

SECURE ATTACHMENT

(TO PRIMARY CAREGIVER)

A stable and loving relationship with at least one attentive caregiver is not only critical for development in general but is, more specifically, **the single greatest protective factor against childhood adversity** (which otherwise stunts neuronal development in the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus, impeding the development of executive functions and working memory).

2

STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT

Environments rich with novel and captivating words, facial expressions, colors, books, pictures, art, music, as well as objects to manipulate, count, and play with **prompt babies' brains to explore and grow.**



**PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHT:
FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER**

Located at His Place, our family support center provides essential unmet needs such as diapers and healthy food—and encourages strong relationships as the foundation for resilience.



PRESCHOOL + KINDERGARTEN

Academic achievement gaps often appear on the very first day of school. Due to their cumulative effect, achievement gaps prior to first-grade are often the strongest predictors of success and advancement.

3

EARLY NUMERACY + NUMBER SENSE

Learning the **basic math skills and concepts** which form developmentally appropriate numeracy and number sense is a crucial milestone.



Grade-level numeracy and number sense are the **STRONGEST** performance-based **PREDICTORS** of academic achievement, from birth all the way through post-secondary enrollment.

4

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

The skillsets that comprise phonological awareness are *foundational* for the complex undertaking of learning to read.



Developmentally appropriate proficiency of phonological awareness is the **SECOND-BEST** performance-based predictor of academic achievement.



PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHT:
BELIEVE & ACHIEVE AFTERSCHOOL ACADEMY

His Place provides high-quality academic supports to struggling students (grades K-8) on a daily basis, free of charge.

Believe & Achieve Afterschool Academy has demonstrated remarkable outcomes, offering students genuine opportunities to learn and succeed.



PRESCHOOL + KINDERGARTEN (CONTINUED)

An increasing demand to evaluate academic abilities at earlier stages of growth and development has created a misguided prioritization in which the development of social-emotional skills, secure attachments, and executive functions—the foundations of later success and academic achievement—are, counter-productively, devastatingly neglected.

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ESTABLISHING INCREASED SECURE ATTACHMENTS

(IN SCHOOL and COMMUNITY)

Resilience is now understood to be “**a set of skills which are slowly developed through repeated positive interactions with caring and attentive adults.**” (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University)

Experts have found that—regardless of whether a child has or has not formed a secure attachment with a primary caregiver—**teachers who build relationships that are caring and trauma-informed can still establish secure attachments at school.**

6

ATTENTION + MEMORY

Executive functions such as working memory and attention are not fixed attributes. They are **skills that can be taught, practiced, and developed.**



Although it doesn't match the predictive power of either phonological awareness or early numeracy and number sense, memory and attention serve as the **3RD-STRONGEST** performance-based indicator of later success and advancement.



PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHT:
THE SUMMER SOAR

Believe & Achieve academic supports are extended at the end of each school-year through His Place's Summer Soar. The Summer Soar has a proven track-record, helping students not only avoid the “summer slide” of learning-loss, but actually build up academic skills during the summer.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Far too many at-risk students will begin first-grade before they are “school-ready” according to the previous benchmarks. However, when these students are given high-quality academic support and enrichment (including positive relationships with adults/peers), they are truly capable of “catching-up” and accomplishing the evidence-based elementary outcomes which prepare them to enter jr. high on an equal playing field with students from more affluent homes.

7

ORAL READING FLUENCY (3rd GRADE)

Students who do not develop proficient reading fluency by the end of 3rd grade are markedly in danger of never mastering this critical skill, which is foundational to reading comprehension. This is because of the shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” that occurs between third-grade and fourth-grade.

For decades, **one out of three at-risk students who did not gain this skill on-time would eventually drop out of high school.** The *timing* of academic achievement gaps has inched slightly (and are now most apparent in the rate of college enrollment, disparities between quality of college acceptance, and wide gaps between percentage of enrolled students *earning a degree*), which may affect the accuracy of this data moving forward. However, it should be evident that a measurement which recently predicted *extremely* diminished odds of graduating high school remains a critical benchmark—if not for high school graduation, then for the important consequences it presumably imposes upon post-secondary attainment.

8

ATTENDANCE

Elementary attendance predicts academic attainment *up through* post-secondary success.

Students who are “chronically absent” (missing 10% of school, or more) are at an increased risk of achievement gaps.



PROGRAM AREA HIGHLIGHT: BE THERE

His Place partners with the United Way's *Be There* campaign to promote regular attendance at a school-wide level.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Affective neuroscience reminds us that all students are motivated by basic human drives. Brain networks associated with emotions develop faster than those that control executive functions, and our brains are hardwired to learn within “tribes” of learning communities—small groups in which we find attachment, joy, and a shared sense of belonging.

9

BELONGING TO A COMMUNITY (or “TRIBE”) OF LEARNERS

Affective neuroscience shows that all children are motivated and make important choices about their education within a social context. Most Western school systems replicate industrial production lines that mold compliant students and resemble teaching practices which are better suited for programming a robot than educating an actual child. (See more above)

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PRE-ALGEBRA SKILLS

On average, at-risk students are 4-years behind their more affluent counterparts by 8th-grade, academically.

This is particularly troubling, because it explains the considerable gap in Algebra 1 participation and proficiency in jr. high, which is a critical benchmark (see next page).

The best indicator of algebra-readiness is proficiency in the following core content areas:

- **AUTOMATICITY (FACT FLUENCY)**
- **WHOLE NUMBER DIVISION**
- **FRACTIONS**



When measured separately, these three content areas all **still** strongly correlate with later success.



JR. HIGH

By 8th-grade, students from the poorest 10% of American households are already **four years behind** students from the wealthiest 10% academically—a disparity that, grows even larger *during* 8th-grade. These achievement gaps make junior high a crucial window of opportunity, in which students urgently need to take control of their own educations and outpace the gains of their on-target peers, particularly in mathematics, in order to graduate high school and be prepared for college.

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MOTIVATION, BEHAVIOR, ATTITUDE

Relative to elementary school, the academic predictors of success throughout junior high are not as prevalent. One opportunity this provides, however, is for at-risk students to master the skills and content they may have missed in elementary school—such as reading fluency, automaticity, mastery of division and fractions, etc.

Another opportunity it affords is for students to become increasingly engaged in their own education. Motivation, behavior, and attitude (when measured objectively) predict later success better than many academic outcomes.

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ALGEBRA 1 GRADE-LEVEL PROFICIENCY

Students who successfully complete Algebra 1 in 8th-grade are then **able to enroll in college-level mathematics later in high school.**



This is critical because at-risk students appear to make gains in closing achievement gaps during high school, but these apparent gains vanish as students complete high school—the exact moment that disparities are most consequential. Hence, the importance of preparing at-risk students to not only earn a high school diploma, but to close the gap in college-readiness by participating in college-level math classes.