From: alan.mcgowen@det.nsw.edu.au
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2009 12:51 AM
To: info@whatworks.ed.gov
Subject: IES Website: Contact Us: Evidence Standards, Reference ID Number:
655908530

info@whatworks.ed.gov, this email was automatically sent through the Contact
link on the WWC website.

From: alan.mcgowen@det.nsw.edu.au

Message: Could you please explain why Reading Recovery program has such a high
improvement index, the majority of research I have read on this program indicates 1.a high "wash out effect" i.e. after 2 years little disernable differnce between outcomes of the intervention group and control
group 2. falsification of data in the majority of studies due to Reading Recovery excluding students who are "unsuitable" (that is not making
progress) from their data sets zand 3. That the program is uneconmical due to
the 1-1 basis of interventions. I must admit that I am surprised that programs that have a much cleaner a powerful research validiation seem to be
performing far more poorly on your improvement index. Have you considered
that your index itself may need some revision?

From: WhatWorks
Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2009 1:21 PM
To: 'alan.mcgowen@det.nsw.edu.au'
Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (WWCPC 1489)
Dear Mr. McGowen,

Thank you for contacting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). We have received your email about the WWC improvement index. WWC staff are reviewing your email and will prepare a response.

What Works Clearinghouse

The What Works Clearinghouse was established by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. For more information, please visit http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/.

-----Original Message-----
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December 1, 2009

Mr. Alan McGowen
New South Wales Department of Education and Training

Reference: QR2009007

Dear Mr. McGowen:

In response to your September 10, 2009, email concerning the high improvement index for Reading Recovery, we conducted a review of the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention report (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/reading_recovery/).

The WWC considered 106 studies that investigated the effects of Reading Recovery. Of those, only four studies (Baenen, Bernhole, Dulaney, & Banks, 1997; Pinnell, DeFord, & Lyons, 1988; Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk, & Seltzer, 1994; and Schwartz, 2005) are randomized controlled trials that meet WWC evidence standards. One study (Iverson & Tunmer, 1993) is a quasi-experimental design that meets WWC evidence standards with reservations. The remaining 101 studies do not meet either WWC evidence standards or eligibility screens. Regarding your second concern, related to the quality of some of the research, studies that exclude students not making progress would not meet WWC evidence standards.

Reading Recovery received a high improvement index based on the magnitude of the estimated impacts for the five studies of Reading Recovery that met WWC evidence standards (with and without reservations). The improvement index represents the expected change in percentile rank for an average comparison group student if the student had received the intervention. More specifically, it is the difference between the percentile rank corresponding to the intervention group mean and the percentile rank corresponding to the comparison group mean (that is, 50th percentile) in the comparison group distribution. Regarding your first concern, the "wash out effect," following the protocol for the Beginning Reading topic area, only first grade scores were used for WWC rating purposes. Impacts for later grades were reported in an appendix (Table A4.4), but not included for rating purposes.

Finally, with respect to your third concern, the WWC intervention report does describe the cost of the intervention. However, costs are not included in the calculation of the improvement index.

I hope that this letter has addressed your concerns.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Deborah Reed
WWC Quality Review Team

From: What Works
Sent: Tuesday, December 01, 2009 11:52 AM
To: 'alan.mcgowen@det.nsw.edu.au'
Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (QR2009007)
Attachments: 2009007.pdf

Dear Mr. McGowen,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your September 10 message to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Thank you,

What Works Clearinghouse

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[mailto:alan.mcgowen@det.nsw.edu.au]
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