



A comprehensive, after-school homework program for elementary students and their parents:

- *Students and parents can access teachers by phone for assistance while doing their homework at home.*
- *Parent workshops are available in several languages and content-specific materials offer guidance.*

Results



- *Since 1985, more than one million NYC students and their parents have used DAT, at a cost of approximately \$1.00 per student.*
- *A vast majority of parents indicated that the DAT-offered workshops were beneficial and subsequently enhanced their involvement in their children's academic achievements.*

The Program

Dial-A-Teacher (DAT) is an after-school homework help service for elementary school students and parents. DAT serves the students and parents of the NYC school system by providing teachers who give parents and students help with homework over the telephone from 4-7 pm Monday through Thursday.

DAT is designed to be available to those students who may have no one to ask for help when they encounter a problem with their homework and for parents who may have a problem understanding their child's homework. Additionally, DAT helps parents with other problems relative to the school system.

The program is extremely user friendly. Students or parents simply place a local call to DAT where they give some basic information (name, school, borough and grade) to a phone specialist who then either helps the caller or transfers the caller based on language or specialty requirements. DAT staff speak 10 languages and during the 2000-2001 school year had over 79,000 calls.

There is also a parent outreach component. A series of parent workshops are offered at local schools or at DAT headquarters. These workshops are chosen by parents from a list of topics they receive in DAT parent mailings.

DAT has been replicated in several cities, the most recent being the New Orleans, Louisiana schools.

Professional Development

DAT staff are available to assist any district in setting up their own program. Printed materials are available and DAT staff visit districts throughout the State. The three session training program includes: an overview of DAT, staff selection, and staff training.

Costs & Funding Options

DAT is an expensive program. Office space must be secured. This space must be large enough to house teachers and books. A phone system must be purchased which is sophisticated enough to transfer calls from one teacher to another and also distribute the calls among the teachers equally. Experienced teachers must be hired. Teacher editions of textbooks, especially math and science, must be on hand. Reference materials must also be readily available. Access to the Internet would also be recommended to handle those questions not dealt with using standard reference materials. Grant money is available. In fact, the DAT program was originally funded with a federal grant. It is currently funded by the NYC Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers.

Learning Standards

English Language Arts: 1) read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.
Mathematics, Science and Technology: 3) understand mathematics and become mathematically confident by communicating and reasoning mathematically, by applying mathematics in real-world settings, and by solving problems through the integrated study of number systems, geometry, algebra, data analysis, probability, and trigonometry.

Contact

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