



Promising Results (Abbreviated Summary)

David Hatch, Ph.D., FranklinCovey Education

The Leader in Me (TLIM) is being implemented in over one thousand elementary schools across the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world. Schools that have fully applied the TLIM process are reporting indirect and direct impacts in three general areas: 1) relevant life skills, 2) engaging school cultures, and 3) improved academic outcomes. Some examples include:

LIFE SKILLS

TLIM is founded on Dr. Stephen R. Covey’s The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Embedded in the habits are many highly sought after skills by employers, including personal initiative, goal setting, time management, conflict resolution, communication, teamwork, and health/emotional wellness. As students and staff are taught the habits:



- The top overall benefit of TLIM reported by parents and staff is an increase in student self-confidence.
- At Lighthouse Schools, on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being high, teacher confidence that students are receiving the skills they need to be successful in life jumped from 5.0 prior to TLIM to 9.75 after TLIM implementation.
- A Johns Hopkins University case study of two TLIM schools reported that a “clear impact of TLIM was developing self-confidence and motivation. Practicing the [7] habits provide a sense of direction and responsibility, which are motivating and reinforcing....Students reported feeling better equipped to respond in a positive way to conflicts. Students discussed these effects concretely with reference to using particular habits purposively (primarily win-win, synergize, seek to understand, and synergize) to relate better with other children and adults.
- In Canada, Joseph Welsh Elementary was already a top-performing school before implementing TLIM. Nonetheless, Schollie Research and Consulting, which administers surveys to five hundred of Canada’s schools, found the following responses from staff and parents after the first year of TLIM.

Survey Item	Prior to TLIM	1 Yr. After TLIM
<u>Staff</u> who agree that students are taught the attitudes and behaviors that will make them successful when they finish school.	77.8 %	100 %
<u>Parents</u> who agree that students are taught attitudes and behaviors that will make them successful at work when they finish school.	69.4 %	92.3 %

- In addition to the impact on students, teachers are reporting that the 7 Habits have impacted their professional and personal effectiveness. When asked what impact the habits have had on her school, one recent first-year teacher responded, “More than anything, it has helped me. It has helped me prioritize my time better, and helped me deal with times when I feel like getting angry with the students.” Another teacher reported, “In 30 years of teaching, this is the first time I have been to training that has helped me personally.”
- Parents also report many cases of students bringing the habits home and improving home life.

CULTURE

Schools face numerous challenges related to school culture. Challenges include reducing bullying, managing classroom discipline, and finding creative ways to engage students, staff, and parents. Schools that have implemented all phases of TLIM report promising results that include reduced discipline problems, the establishment of a common language, increased student engagement, more teacher engagement, enhanced parent involvement, and better attendance. Some examples are:

- The previously-mentioned Johns Hopkins University case studies concluded: “Without question, the strongest consensus was that TLIM positively improved school climate. For the teachers and principals, the main contributors to climate changes were improved student behavior and the establishment of a culture, guided by the 7 Habits, supporting respect and acceptance of others....Students translated the climate effects into feelings of increased order and security. Several noted explicitly that bullying was decreased because of classmates’ exposure to the 7 Habits....There was also agreement among students in both schools that teachers, too, were nicer, more apt to listen to and respect students’ perspectives, and more approachable as a result of practicing the habits....Teachers, principals, and parents reported that there were fewer arguments, fights, disciplinary actions, and suspensions than in the past.
- At English Estates Elementary in Fern Park, Florida, discipline referrals dropped from 225 to 74 in just over a year after implementing *The Leader in Me*.
- A First Nation (Native American) school in Nova Scotia, during the first six months of *The Leader in Me* reported zero suspensions, whereas for the same period the previous year they had experienced 20 suspensions.
- At Winchester Elementary, a Title 1 school in West Seneca, New York, the cultural impacts were transferred to the buses where misconduct reports dropped from 108 to 5 over a three-year period.

CORE ACADEMICS

While isolating the impact or causality of TLIM on student achievement is difficult, many schools implementing TLIM are reporting indirect and/or direct impacts on academics. For example:

- **Wards Creek Elementary, St. Johns County, Florida.** During 2011, Wards Creek showed the greatest increase in its district on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in writing, a 21 percent increase. When asked what made the difference, Principal Don Campbell replied that “the number one factor was *The Leader in Me* program that holds kids accountable for their own performance.”
- **Staten Island School of Civic Leadership, Staten Island, New York.** In 2009, the Staten Island School of Civic Leadership opened its doors using TLIM as a foundation for its three-pillar framework of civic leadership, parent involvement, and academics. Two years later, in 2011, the school was named the top performing school of New York City Public Schools.
- **Stanton Elementary, St. Louis, Missouri.** Principal Matt Miller reports that the school’s Reading Intervention program, which services children reading below grade level, transitioned out 28 students the first year they implemented *The Leader in Me*, whereas the previous year they transitioned out only seven students. When asked what made the difference, the assigned teacher noted that “the only practice she changed was that her kids set a goal in their achievement notebook and tracked it on a weekly basis.” The notebooks are an integral part of *The Leader in Me*. Furthermore, the school’s students set goals on number of books read in a quarter and track it in their achievement notebook. The year previous to *The Leader in Me* they read 5,000 books in an entire semester, whereas after implementation they read 5,500 books during 2nd quarter alone. The only change, again, was students setting a goal and tracking it on a weekly basis.

- **Sulphur Springs Elementary, Tampa, Florida.** Dr. Christi Chandler Buell, Principal, reported being absolutely delighted that 99% of the fourth grade students at the school scored four or above on the year's FCAT writing exam. The state average was 80% and the district was 89%. The school is 100% free/reduced lunch (highest % in the district for elementary schools).
- **Pickett's Mill Elementary, Acworth, Georgia.** Shelia Chesser, Principal, documented Georgia CRCT scores over the past three years. (The school has only been open 3 years). The staff was trained in 7 Habits during the first year and they started *The Leader in Me* with students year two. Their achievement outcomes are impressive.
- **Neil Armstrong Elementary, Port Charlotte, Florida.** After implementing *The Leader in Me* for two years, Neil Armstrong Elementary saw a 60% decrease in discipline referrals, along with:
 1. 1st grade SAT 10 Reading scores improved from 60% to 90% in one year.
 2. 3rd grade students scored the highest in the district on both FCAT Reading (with 89% of students scoring proficient) and on FCAT Math (with 91% of students scoring proficient). Students with Disabilities in 3rd grade also demonstrated 81% proficiency on both FCAT Reading and Math that first year, as reported by Principal Angie Taillon.

The 7 Habits

Life Skills Embedded in 7 Habits

Habits 1-3 (Independence)		
Be Proactive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting
Begin with the End in Mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization
Put First Things First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time mgmt.
Habits 4-6 (Interdependence)		
Think Win-Win	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork
Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics/Manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving
Synergize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for diversity 	
Habit 7 (The Whole Person)		
Sharpen the Saw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun
<i>Care for Body, Heart, Mind & Spirit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-long learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful work 	

Figure 1

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Sample Behaviors)

Habit 1: Be Proactive

- Taking responsibility for one's education.
- Showing initiative; acting on life.
- Choosing one's actions, attitudes, and moods.
- Accepting responsibility for mistakes; not blaming others.
- Doing the right thing without being asked.

Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind

- Deciding what is most important.
- Planning ahead.
- Setting meaningful and realistic goals.

Habit 3: Put First Things First

- Spending time on things that are most important.
- Saying *no* to time wasters.
- Making a weekly schedule and sticking to the schedule.
- Not procrastinating.
- Being organized.

Habit 4: Think Win-Win

- Balancing courage for getting what one wants with consideration for what others want.
- When conflicts arise, looking for alternatives that benefit all involved.
- Making deposits in others' Emotional Bank Accounts.

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

- Listening to other's ideas and feelings.
- Trying to see things from others' viewpoints.
- Listening without interrupting.
- Expressing ideas with confidence.

Habit 6: Synergize

- Valuing other people's strengths and learning from them.
- Getting along well with others, even people who think differently.
- Working well in group situations.
- Seeking out other's ideas to solve problems.
- Being humble and open.

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

- Taking care of one's body by eating right, exercising, getting sleep, and avoiding harmful substances.
- Making meaningful time for family and friends.
- Learning in many ways and places, not just at school.
- Contributing positively at school, in class, at home, and in the community.