

Giving Back

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Press Release: Brain Gym Intergenerational Mentoring Program Improves Academic Self-Esteem, Reading Ability, and Attention

An evaluation released this week reports that for the second consecutive year the Brain Gym Intergenerational Mentoring Program (IMP) has been empirically demonstrated to improve reading ability and decrease symptoms of ADHD among Maui school children who participated in the program. The evaluation, conducted by an independent researcher, also documents significant improvements in academic self-esteem in boys and girls who participated, and improvements in attention among boys who participated.

The Brain Gym IMP involves pairing senior citizens trained in educational kinesiology with school children in need of special help with school work. The pairs work together on Brain Gym exercises during weekly sessions over the course of the school year.

The most notable findings were:

- Significant increases in self-esteem in the area of school/academic skills.
- Participation in the program enhanced reading gains made in school by an average of one half year.
- Improvements in attention/cognition among boys who participated.
- Girls made significantly greater improvements in reading than boys, while boys improved behaviorally more than girls.

The Brain Gym IMP was implemented by Giving Back, a non-profit organization on Maui that aims to unite the strengths of senior citizens and children for improving each other's self-esteem, self-efficacy, and emotional well-being. The Brain Gym IMP was designed to improve school performance among children, improve well-being and cognitive functioning among senior citizens, and increase the self-sufficiency of the Maui community by enlisting senior citizens to mentor Maui school children.

For more information about the Brain Gym IMP, please visit the Giving Back website at: www.givingbackmentoring.org