



THREE STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES BEFORE & AFTER

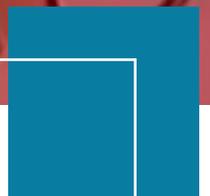
FALL 2020 – SUMMER 2021

ADRIAN BEFORE

Adrian attended his second year of summer camp, and also joined us for after-school this year. He uses an assistive communication device (ACD) to speak in class and participates with the support of his mom. He participated in all activities and found creative ways to use his ACD to respond to open-ended questions. Adrian's confidence increased significantly over the course of the year. In the fall, he was generally passive, requiring prompting from a teacher or his mom to initiate interactions.

ADRIAN AFTER

By winter, Adrian was an active participant and showed increased willingness to try new things. He was especially drawn to art and loved the opportunity to share his work. He became more active in the chat, using it to comment, compliment others and, in some instances, ask questions. He also started raising his hand by using the Zoom features to indicate having something else to share. During spring, with continued consistent attendance and full participation he became increasingly independent. He still used an ACD, and also began to use body language to communicate, like waving and raising his hand to speak. He often asked EKC staff how they were when it was his turn to share, demonstrating his interest to connect personally, beyond the topic of discussion. He also tried to connect with his peers by using emojis to respond to their work. He delighted in sharing his humor, making witty and creative responses to questions, often recalling previous conversations and ideas.



JACOB BEFORE

This fall was Jacob's first time attending after school. He required coaxing to participate in group activities and tasks, and often just watched. Occasionally, he sought emotional connections with facilitators but was resistant to socialize with his peers.

By winter Jacob began observing his peers with interest but remained reluctant to seek meaningful connections. His flat affect made it difficult to determine how connected he felt in the classroom, but he showed a growing comfort with teachers, asking for support when needed and seeking validation by sharing things that were important to him.

JACOB AFTER

By spring, Jacob's connection with his peers blossomed. He always raised his hand, responded with "Thank you" and "Your welcome," and showed elements of being polite, demonstrating that he could be a thoughtful and active participant. In social groups, he offered to gift some of his video game earnings to the other kids. He later reflected that the kids' reactions to his gifts were his favorite part of the day. Jacob expressed what games he likes during Roblox social group, showing increasing capacity for self-advocacy. During an EKC family program, staff observed that he was more expressive and open when among his siblings. While there is still room to grow, Jacob's SEL has progressed well this year.



LAKESHA BEFORE

Lakesha enrolled in after school after participating in the 2020 summer camp. She is an only child and has a lot of anxiety around schoolwork. In the fall, Lakesha was rigid in her focus on rules and routines but did listen and accept feedback from EKC staff. Her rigidity seemed to prevent her from connecting with peers, though she was clearly interested in building friendships. She frequently celebrated the work of others and showed openness to try lots of new, previously non-preferred activities. She communicated her desires (to facilitators and the group) with assurance, and she enthusiastically shared her work. Her confidence was emergent, although she often reverted to timidity in new situations.

By winter Lakesha contributed meaningfully to group activities and discussions much of the time. She was able to show flexible problem-solving and occasionally demonstrated openness to the ideas of others. Sometimes she elected to modify a project either by using different materials or by interpreting the prompt to accommodate the activities she wanted to engage in. These modifications facilitated her ability to stay with the group through non-preferred activities. She was able to celebrate the successes of others; however, her own sharing often appeared to stem from a sense of superiority and a clear enjoyment of being able to give advice. She was less open to hearing feedback from other children but was willing to hear and incorporate feedback from adults.

LAKESHA AFTER

By the spring, Lakesha began having short exchanges with other children that were not based in giving advice. EKC staff worked with her to focus on her own behavior, rather than police other children. She was willing to receive feedback from her teachers but did not yet appear to have the self-reflection skills necessary to make long-term modifications to her behavior. She did make many meaningful contributions to group discussions and was highly engaged in the activities.

Lakesha's mother credits EKC's after school program with significant changes in her daughter's behavior. She shared that Lakesha used to be much more shy and fearful about expressing herself. Her mother recognized Lakesha's new skills and expressed hope that her daughter could incorporate them as she returns to her traditional way of learning.

Additionally, her teacher commented that Lakesha had learned to take turns and to wait to be called on in class.

While still progressing, Lakesha has made considerable SEL strides this year.

