



CultureLink Settlement and Community services Student Education Attainment Program: Final Evaluation Results

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Background and Context.....	1
Methods.....	2
Student Education Attainment Program (SEAP).....	3
Original Goals and Activities	3
Program Implementation: Challenges and Changes.....	4
Program Delivery in Year 2 (2017-2018 school year)	6
Brief Profile of Program Participants	7
Program Outcomes	7
Youth Perspective	8
Survey Results	8
Interview Results.....	11
Parent Perspective	12
Survey Results	12
Interview Results.....	15
Mentor Perspective	16
Survey Results	16
Interview Results.....	16
Stakeholder Perspective	19
Staff Perspective	20
Learnings from the Case Studies.....	21
Program Development and Process	22
Student, Parent and Mentor Experiences with SEAP	22
Youth Feedback.....	22
Parent Feedback	24
Mentor Feedback.....	26
Program Intensity.....	30
Critical Program Components.....	31
Program Strengths	33

Program Limitations and Suggestions for Improvement 34

Learnings from the Case Studies..... 37

Conclusion..... 38

 Evaluation Outcomes 38

 Process Development and Implementation Results..... 39

 Final Comments 40

Appendix A: Staff Interview Guide (Year 2) 41

Appendix B: Interview Guide – Telephone Interviews with Mentors (Year 2) 43

Appendix C: Surveys with Parents 45

Appendix D: Pre and Post Surveys for Students 54

Appendix E: Interview Guide for Parents..... 64

Appendix F: Interview Guide for SEAP Students..... 66

Appendix G: Case Study Interview Guides..... 68

Appendix H: Program Logic Model 74

Introduction

CultureLink Settlement and Community Services' Student Education Attainment Program (SEAP) was initiated in the summer of 2016. The program was designed to improve school engagement and reduce the drop-out rate for students of Somali descent. In the 2016-2017 school year, CultureLink enrolled students and their families into the program, and recruited and trained mentors. The program continued to grow in the 2017-2018 school year. This report describes the results of the final evaluation of SEAP.

Background and Context

A five year study conducted by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) showed that the high school completion rate for students of Somali descent in the TDSB was 75% - compared to 86% for the general population in the TDSB.¹ Education attainment plays a large role in breaking the perpetual cycle of poverty; both education and income are two important social determinants of health. SEAP was based on a well-researched and successful wrap-around program, Check & Connect, to increase school engagement and decrease school dropout among vulnerable students of Somali descent.

Since the 1990s, the Check & Connect program was implemented in over 27 states in the US, as well as internationally. Outcomes demonstrated by the program included improvements in attendance, credit accumulation, and school completion, as well as decreases in truancy, tardiness, and behaviour-related referrals.² It is because of the considerable evidence that the Check & Connect program has accumulated, that CultureLink chose it to be the basis of their intervention with students of Somali descent. By providing supports, SEAP hoped to increase the number of students of Somali descent who performed well in school, finished high school, and sought out postsecondary opportunities. The ultimate goals of the program are to increase participation in the labour market, lower poverty rates, and be less dependent on social services and the health care system.

¹ ETT. (2014 10-April). TDSB Task Force on Success of Students of Somali Descent. Retrieved 2015 28- March from Elementary Teachers of Toronto Website: <https://www.ett.ca/stf/>

² Sinclair, M. F., Christenson, S. L., Evelo, D. L., & Hurley, C. M. (1998). Dropout prevention for youth with disabilities: Efficacy of a sustained school engagement procedure. *Exceptional Children*, 65(1), 7–21.
Sinclair, M. F., Christenson, S. L., & Thurlow, M. L. (2005). Promoting school completion of urban secondary youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 71(4), 465–482.

Lehr, C. A., Sinclair, M. F., & Christenson, S. L. (2004). Addressing student engagement and truancy prevention during the elementary years: A replication study of the Check & Connect model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 9(3), 279–301.

Maynard, B. R., Kjellstrand, E. K., & Thompson, A. M. (2014). Effects of Check and Connect on attendance, behavior, and academics: A randomized effectiveness trial. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 24(3), 296-309.

Methods

Information for the SEAP Evaluation came from a number of sources, including:

1. Interviews with staff
 - Interviews were conducted with the Program Coordinators and Program Manager in October 2018
 - Please see Appendix A for the interview guide
2. Interviews with mentors
 - Telephone interviews conducted with nine mentors June-July 2018
 - Please see Appendix B for interview guide used
3. Survey with mentors
 - Online survey with 14 mentors in August-September 2018 (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SEAPMentorsYr2>)
4. Survey with parents
 - Survey with 16 parents in November 2018
 - Please see Appendix C for surveys used in both years
5. Pre and post survey with SEAP students
 - Pretest surveys were conducted with students when they joined the program and when they exited the program, or in October 2018
 - The survey was based upon the Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) used in the Check & Connect program
 - The SEI contained 6 subscales, including:
 - Family Support for Learning (4 items)
 - Peer Support at School (6 items)
 - Teacher-Student Relationships (9 items)
 - Control and Relevance of Schoolwork (9 items)
 - Future Aspirations and goals (5 items)
 - Intrinsic Motivation (items)
 - In Year 2 it was decided that the post-survey would change because some of the subscales from the C & C scale were not applicable.
 - The scales that were excluded in Year 2 included: PSS & TSR
 - As well, 3 items from CRSW were eliminated
 - The survey also included items constructed by the evaluation team
 - Please see Appendix D for the surveys

6. Pre and post survey with comparison group students
 - Pretest surveys were conducted with students when the SEAP program began (fall 2016) and again in September-October 2018
 - The survey was the same used by SEAP students, however, it did not include the items constructed by the evaluation team
 - Please see Appendix D for the surveys
7. Interviews with Parents
 - Interviews were conducted with 7 parents in August 2018
 - Please see Appendix E for interview guide used
8. Interviews with SEAP students
 - Interviews were conducted with students in August 2018 (6 female students and 3 male students)
 - Please see Appendix F for interview guide used
9. Case Studies
 - In depth interviews conducted with 6 SEAP students, their parents and mentors
 - Please see Appendix G for interview guides used³

Student Education Attainment Program (SEAP)

Original Goals and Activities⁴

When SEAP was originally conceived the goals included:

1. Lower high school dropout rate among youth of Somali descent participating in the program
2. Increase the number of youth of Somali descent who seek out post-secondary opportunities
3. Increase participation in the labour market
4. Reduce dependence on social services and the health care system

The program hoped to attain these goals through the achievement of shorter and medium-term outcomes including:

1. Increased school attendance
2. Improved punctuality in arriving to school
3. Improved attitude towards school
4. Improved grades
5. Increased connection to schools
6. Increased connection to their parents with respect to their education.

³ There were also data collected for an interim report submitted to the Program Manager in December 2017 (including interviews with parents, youth and mentors, mid-term surveys, a mentor survey and two staff interviews). Please see that report for details on data collected by the evaluation team.

⁴ Please see Appendix H for the Program Logic Model.

To achieve the shorter and medium-term outcomes, and ultimately the long-term goals, mentors were to develop an individualized plan for success with the students and meet year round with them to monitor the students' attendance, behaviour, and academic performance. Mentors were to meet or check in with students, and teachers, weekly to ensure that students were on track with their individualized plan for success and that they had the support they needed.

In addition, parents were also to be engaged in the program so that the longer-term goals could be attained. The shorter and medium-term outcomes for parents included:

1. Increased knowledge of school curriculum and other information related to their child's school
2. Increased discussions at home related to their child's school
3. Increased understanding of Canadian school system in general
4. Increased engagement in children's education/school
5. Improved ability to navigate the school system

To help achieve the parental outcomes, the Project Coordinator was to meet regularly with mentors, and also to meet regularly with parents. Parents were also to receive information to help them understand and reinforce classroom learning within the home.

Program Implementation: Challenges and Changes

SEAP faced a number of challenges at the start-up of the program. These challenges, as well as learnings from meetings and discussions with the Somali community during recruitment, altered the shape and implementation of SEAP during the first and second year.

1. Lack of partnership agreement with the TDSB

As described above, SEAP was based on the school-based Check & Connect program. The original intent was that SEAP would roll out in two selected schools with whom CultureLink had worked in the past and with whom they had good working relationships. However, the school board denied Culture Link's application to work in those two schools; no partnership agreement with the TDSB was granted. Therefore, one challenge faced by staff was how to deliver an academic-based program with no access to the schools in which they had expected to work.

According to staff:

"So we had to move away from being a more academic-based [program]... The goal is still school completion but we really had to focus on the mentorship piece.... That is what we're driving now." (March, 2017)

As a result of the change from a school-based to community-based program, the SEAP mentors had to arrange visits with the students out in the community or in their homes and there was more social time and field trips built into the program – Canada's Wonderland, Raptors game, ziplining etc. School was still, however, a primary focus: mentors discussed school with the students, what issues they may be facing that may negatively impact school performance, and then tried to address those issues as well as broader issues that may impact their schooling (e.g., social or family issues).

2. Recruitment

The lack of a partnership agreement not only affected the program model, as it had to shift away from being more academically focused, but it also affected recruitment. Since the program had hoped to be primarily in the two schools, they expected recruitment to take place with the help of those schools. They expected referrals for the program would come from the teachers and guidance counsellors in those schools. However, as discussed above, the program was unable to obtain a partnership agreement with the school board and there was no direct access granted to those schools. As well, the schools in which CultureLink had hoped to run the program did not have as many Somali students as they originally thought. To address this challenge, staff opened up the catchment area to the entire west end of the city and conducted much more outreach into communities and neighbourhoods where Somali students live. They went to community centres, advertised on radio and in community papers, and they distributed brochures that had been translated into Somali.

Once they were out in those communities and neighbourhoods, staff found that it was not all that challenging to reach young people and to get them interested; however, getting the parents to sign on was difficult. Recruitment of the parents was challenging because of some confusion about the program and resistance due to experiences with other programs offered in the community. Because the program was recruiting students “of Somali descent” parents confused SEAP with a task force that used that same language; that particular task force did not have a good reputation in the Somali community. To help resolve that challenge, SEAP staff began to use the term “Somali students” to help clear up the confusion.

Nonetheless, staff still reported that getting the Somali community to understand what the program was all about was a slow process. This may have been compounded by the fact that there are other mentorship programs and parents were confused about the differences between the programs available. Staff tried to address this confusion by continually presenting a clear message in their outreach efforts and in their discussions with parents. The outreach was also slowed due to an injury faced by the Program Coordinator who had to take a leave from work to recover. The staff did establish a positive and trusting relationship with parents in the Somali community and once a few parents were on-board, they spread the word. By the spring of 2017 many families were coming forward to register for the program.

3. Engaging high school students

The program also faced the challenge of engaging high school students. In the early months of the program, some high school students were enrolled, but they were very difficult to engage. Mentors found it very challenging to reach the students and the program simply lacked the resources to track high school students down when they were not at home and they did not have cell phones. If the program had been delivered in-school, as originally intended, then mentors would have had direct access to the students. Given the lack of direct access, and the difficulty in reaching high school students outside of school hours, the program decided to also focus on the recruitment of younger students. The program was initially recruiting youth from grades 7 – 11; however, they began to focus more attention on recruiting students in middle school and expanded the grades to include grades 5 and 6. They found that younger students were more likely to be reached at home and through the parents.

As well, the younger students were much more likely to be interested in the different activities offered and more likely to engage with the mentors. The added benefit of expanding the age-range is that in focusing more on the younger grades the program will have an opportunity to be with the students over a longer period of time and have a real impact for those youth.

Program Delivery in Year 2 (2017-2018 school year)

By the second year of SEAP, the program was making greater progress in recruiting students/parents and in engaging those students. By the fall of 2017, 60 students were enrolled in the program, although not all students had been matched to a mentor. They did have access to SEAP staff, and they could become involved in any activities run by the program. The opening of the Youth Centre in October 2017 helped enormously. The students now had a place that they could hang out. There were computers available, as well as space to do homework, and staff were there for guidance if needed. In addition, in March of 2018 the program began to offer tutoring, at the Centre, two days per week.

In the second year different activities and trips were provided to students including:

- A 9-week “Tech Club” that ran with 8 students
- Workshops delivered from September 2017 to June 2018 on the following topics:
 - Resumes/cover letters
 - Identity
 - Stress Management
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Financial literacy
 - The economics of staying in school
 - Transferable skills
- In June 2018 - Academic Immersion, University of Toronto (U of T): all day program; post-secondary planning and engagement, and meeting with the Somali Students Association at U of T/Hart House
- Networking event with Tridel and Bolt Foundation (October 2018)
- Workshops delivered in the fall of 2018:
 - Branding 101 (social media) and online safety
 - LinkedIn workshop with Civic Action
 - Mental Health for Somali Youth
 - Spoken Word Workshop
- Vocational Orientation Trip to U of T (December 2018)
- Field trips throughout the two years to:
 - Raptors games
 - Rinx Entertainment Centre
 - Canada’s Wonderland
 - Long Point Eco Adventures
 - Screamers at Exhibition Place

Brief Profile of Program Participants

Only a few demographic questions were asked of students in the survey: age, gender, and if they were born in Canada:⁵

- 62.8% of the students were male and 37.2% were female
- As of December 2018, the age ranged from 9.8 to 20.6; the average age was 15.4
- The majority (79.5%) were born in Canada; 20.5% were not

Program Outcomes

Results across the stakeholder groups (parents, youth, mentors and staff), while not conclusive, suggest that SEAP is benefiting youth of Somali descent and their families. Although the pre/post quantitative results did not yield significant results, approximately 53% did improve significantly in the post-survey ratings. Further, other post survey ratings provided by students and parents were positive, as were the qualitative findings from the surveys and interviews conducted. In the qualitative results, both in the survey and interviews, the SEAP participants did describe numerous outcomes. The most common included improved academic engagement, social engagement, communication skills and gaining more support/making new connections.

The parent ratings on the surveys indicated they had observed changes in their children as a result of the program. The parents also reported that they had experienced positive outcomes: they were more engaged in how they related to or were involved with their children and their schooling. The parent interview results indicated an improvement in school performance for SEAP students as well as numerous psychosocial outcomes such as more social engagement, better sense of connectedness, increase circle of support and increased confidence. The parents also reported how their children's involvement in SEAP had benefited their families and had also helped them as parents.

The mentors also rated the mentees on the same outcomes outlined in the youth survey. They provided fairly high ratings, at least 4.86 on a 5-point scale (between somewhat agree and agree). The highest ratings were given to thinking more about their future (5.31), increased self-confidence (5.29) and more hopeful about their future (5.14). Further, in the interviews the mentors described how they had observed a change in their mentees since they joined the SEAP Program. Several mentors commented on how their mentees had improved academically, but most of the outcomes described were related to psychosocial changes in their mentees, such as improved confidence, communication skills, self-discipline and an enhanced circle of support.

The following sections outline in more detail the results related to program outcomes from the youth, parent, mentor, stakeholder, and staff perspectives.

⁵ Information on age was available for 42 participants; "born in Canada" for 44 participants; and gender was available for 43 participants.

Youth Perspective

Survey Results

The SEI section of the post-test survey, included four domains:

1. Family support for learning
2. Control and relevance of schoolwork
3. Future aspirations and goals
4. Intrinsic motivation

Students rated items in each of the domains/sub-scales on a 6-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree. An average rating on each domain was calculated, as was an average rating for the scale as a whole.⁶ One-way ANOVAs were run on each sub-scale and on the scale as a whole for both the SEAP students and the comparison group students. No statistically significant differences were found for either group.⁷ There were also no differences by gender, school type, and length in the program. There was no such decline for the male comparison group students.

Just over one-half of the SEAP students (53%) did show some improvement at post-test (post-test scale score was higher than pretest scale score). For those students, the difference between the pre and post for the total scale and for three of the four the sub-scales was significant (Intrinsic Motivation was not significant). For the comparison group, 45% of the students improved at post-test; however, when those students were examined for pre/post differences there were no statistically significant changes.

The SEAP students who did improve at post-test students were examined to see if there were any noticeable differences between them and the other students. There were no differences in terms of gender and school type. There was some indication that those who improved at post-test were in the program longer, but this finding was not statistically significant.

The SEAP students were also asked to rate themselves on a 10-point scale from 1=terrible to 10=great for 5 different items (shown below). There were no significant changes in these ratings from pre to post.

- Attitude towards completing homework and assignments
- Relationship with your parents/guardians
- Parents'/guardians' attitude toward school
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities in their school
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities outside of school

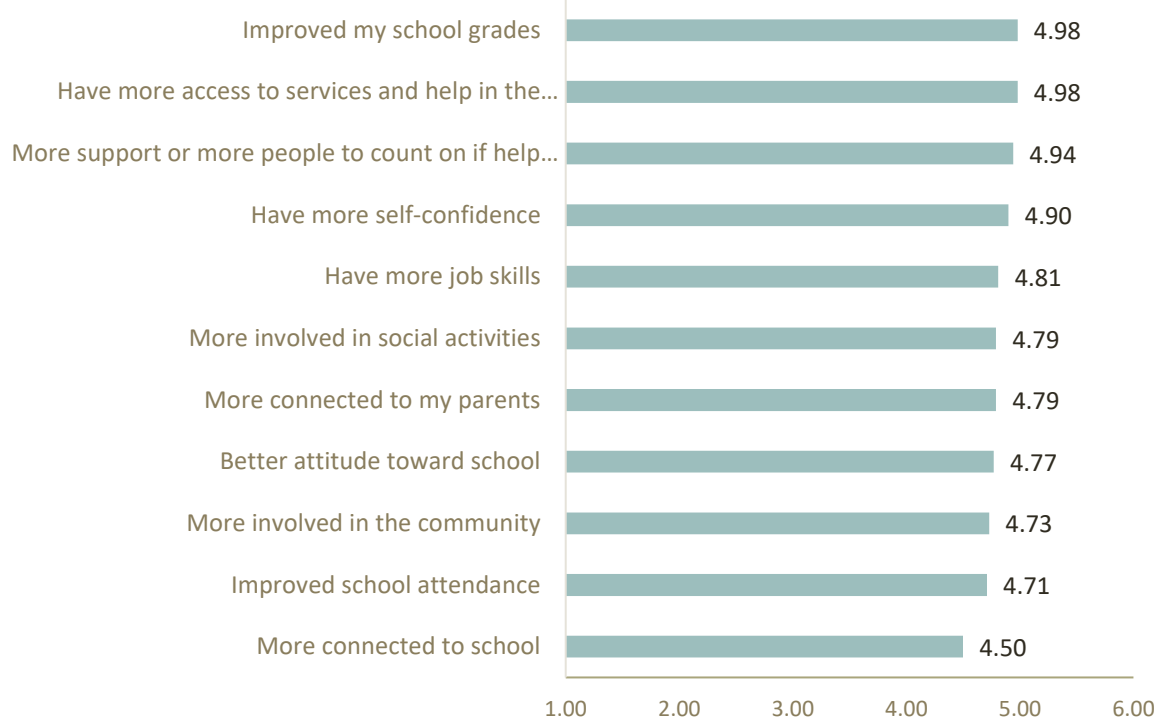
⁶ Cronbach's alpha, a measure used to assess reliability or internal consistency of a set of scale items, was run for each sub-scale and for the scale as a total. The alphas ranged from .75 to .88 demonstrating good internal consistency; the generally accepted level is anything above .70.

⁷ A result is considered "statistically significant" when the probability ("p") of finding that result by chance alone is less than 5% ($p \leq .05$). This lack of statistical significance might be due to the short program time as well as small sample sizes.

The SEAP post-test survey also included 11 items about how the students felt they might have benefited from being involved with SEAP:

Figure 1: SEAP Student Survey Results - Program Outcomes

As shown, the students reported benefits from the program. All 11 items received a rating of at least 4.5 on the 6-point scale. Students gave the highest ratings to improved school grades, having more access to services and help, and having more support or more people to count on if help was needed.



As shown above, these items were all rated highly by the students. Two-thirds or more of the students either “agreed” (5) or “strongly agreed” (6) with the following items:

- More support and people to count on (77.6%)
- More access to services and help in the community (76.4%)
- Better attitude toward school (73.1%)
- More self-confidence (73.1%)
- More involved in social activities (69.2%)
- Improved school grades (69.2%)
- More connected with my parents (67.3%)

Student-Reported Benefits (from Survey)

Academic Improvements

“I benefited from participating in SEAP because I went to [a] tutor and my grades went up.”

“There are many benefits in SEAP like tutoring twice a week which improved my marks significantly.”

“I benefited because the tutor helped me improve my grades.”

“In CultureLink they helped me because I would do my homework and get help with it and my grades went up drastically.”

The survey also asked student respondents to report on how they believed they had benefitted from the program. All 53 students provided at least one response. **The most common response, provided by close to one-half of the respondents, was that the program had helped them academically.** Some specifically mentioned the tutoring program and how that had helped them improve their grades. Others' comments were more general and did not specify if it was their mentor or the tutoring that had helped them – or perhaps both.

The next most common response was that the program had helped with their personal growth – self-confidence, leadership, communication skills, and understanding the value of hard work. Approximately one-quarter of the youth reported on those benefits. Approximately 6 of the 53 commented that they had benefited by meeting others and being more connected to other people. Approximately five of the students reported that the program had helped them feel more hopeful about the future, or more prepared to be successful in the future.

Other benefits reported by the students in the open-ended question in the post-test survey included:

- Help in finding jobs
- Support in general
- Opportunities
- More involvement in activities/community
- Development of skills
- Volunteering opportunities

When asked for any final comments on the student survey, 11 left the item blank, said they did not have any comments, or their comments were neutral. Some of those comments – approximately 10 – specifically mentioned outcomes.

Student-Reported Benefits (from Survey)

Personal Growth

“They taught me the meaning of perseverance and hard work. They also taught me how to become a good leader.”

“It made me more confident to speak up in front my class.”

“I feel more confident and I work harder.”

Other Benefits

“It has helped me by building very strong connections with the mentors and the participants of the SEAP program. These connections have extended past all of the SEAP programs and events.”

“SEAP has helped ... strengthen connections I have with people in the community.”

“I feel as though CultureLink’s SEAP program has opened up many opportunities for my future as they’ve blessed me with jobs and many community related activities and have prepared me for my future accordingly.”

Final Comments Made by SEAP Students (from Survey)

“The SEAP program, especially the mentorship program, has proven to be extremely beneficial. [They]... have helped establish and build upon relationships and have connected me with programs to help me build a better future for myself ...”

“CultureLink helped me become who I am. When I first joined I would hardly speak, now I never stop. [The Program Coordinator] has been the most helpful, I feel I could talk or ask him anything I need.”

“This program helped me a lot. I learned new things that were beneficial. I’ve accomplished many things with my mentor.”

Interview Results

In the interviews, the 11 youth participants talked about the outcomes they had experienced from their participation in SEAP (mentoring and other activities provided by SEAP). Some of the outcomes they reported on related to school and academic outcomes and included:

- More engaged in school
- Improved grades because of the tutoring or Tech Spark
- Improved study habits
- Better homework completion

Most of the SEAP students' comments about outcomes related to psychosocial changes they had experienced as a result of their participation in SEAP. Their varied comments included the following:

- Started trusting more adults
- Enhanced their circle of support through mentors, staff, and other participants
- Increased access to other services through CultureLink
- More socially engaged and made friends with SEAP participants
- Reduced shyness and more communicative
- Learned to step out of comfort zone through field trips
- Access to extracurricular volunteering
- Access to jobs and staff/mentor support in getting jobs
- Joined more school extracurricular activities

For the most part, the youth we interviewed reported that their parents were already involved in their education, but several did see some outcomes in terms of their parent's involvement, including:

- Their mom had decreased her protectiveness in relation to school
- Their mom was encouraging even more with school and encouraged outside participation in programs offered by SEAP
- Their mom asked more about school

Program Outcomes: SEAP Student Comments (from Interviews)

"The tutoring improved my grades. The trips took me places that I would never have gone to in my life."

"I'm studying differently now... I'm getting my work done sooner than before. I used to do my homework at the last minute or the last hour. I like that I'm more on top of stuff at school...."

"I got to meet a lot of kids my age and because of that I got a lot more links to other people and from there my circle has expanded because now I know more people and...I'm in more contact with people that can support me."

"For the activities it was stuff that would take you out of your comfort zone and interacting with others."

"I think the main thing I gained from being involved in SEAP was more interaction with others."

"If you're not social it kind of helps with that because you're with a lot of people and you talk a lot. You do group work."

"I think overall ... the program has made us more rounded individuals because we got homework club and we participate in these programs like CPR and resume building. And the trips help to have fun experiences and they're very rewarding. So, overall, after being in this program I feel like more knowledgeable. I feel more experienced and prepared for after high school."

Parent Perspective

Survey Results

As reported previously, there were 16 parent surveys (for 34 students) completed for the evaluation. Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP, parents were asked to indicate how much they agreed, on a 6-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree, with 7 different statements about possible program outcomes and benefits for their children. As shown in Figure 2 below, parents reported quite positively on the benefits for their children from being involved with the program; all items received a rating of at least 5 on the 6-point scale. They reported that their children had more support or people to count on, more self-confidence, more job-related skills, more involvement in social activities, and more involvement and access to services and help in the community.

Figure 2: Parent Survey Results - Program Outcomes for the Students

As shown, parents are clearly seeing benefits for their children of being involved with CultureLink and SEAP. All 6 items received a rating of at least 5 on the 6-point scale. Parents gave the highest rating to having more support or more people to count on if help is needed.

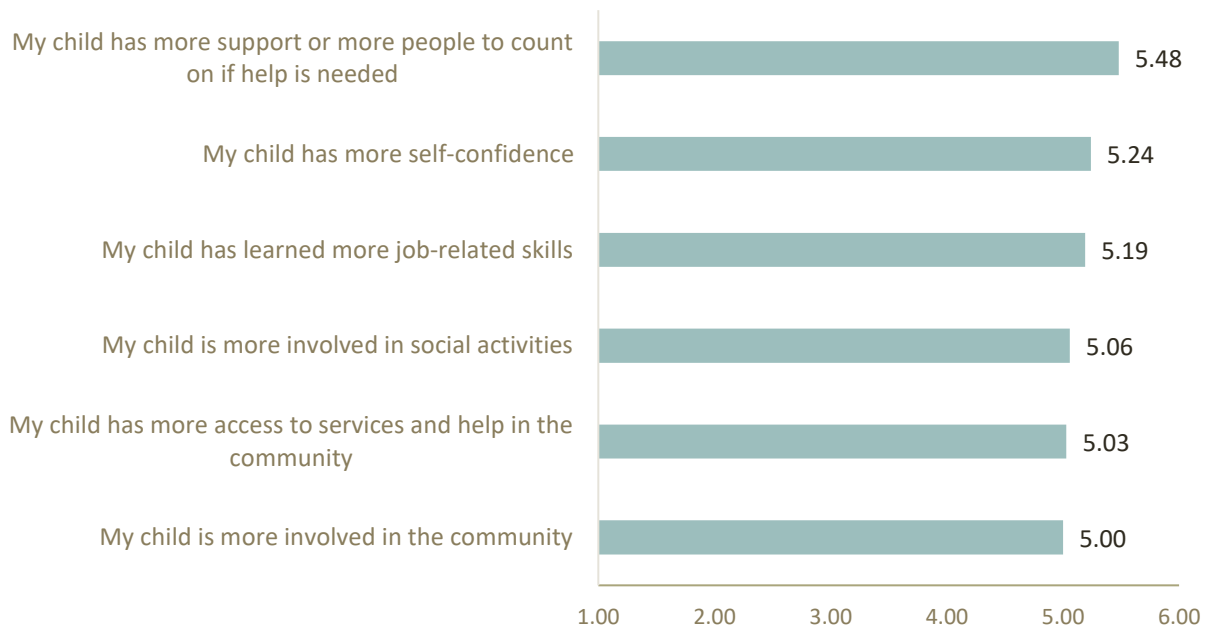
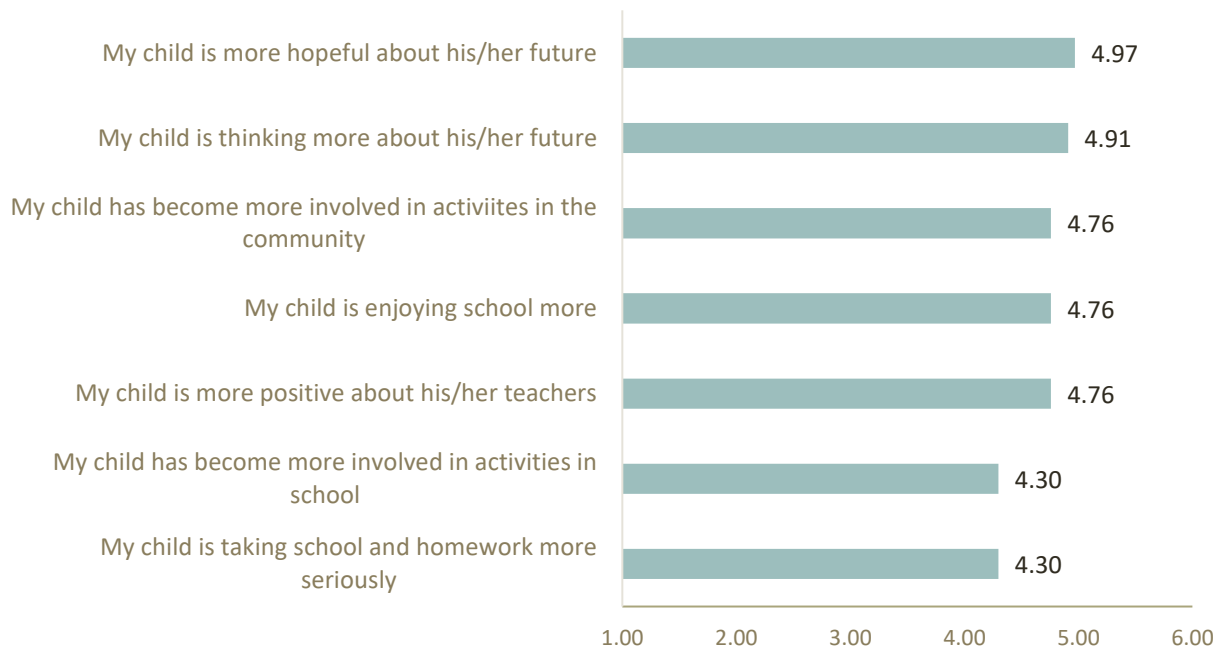


Figure 3 below reports on parent ratings of outcomes their children experienced because of their involvement with a mentor, specifically. That is, the figure above reports on results for the children’s involvement with CultureLink and SEAP as a whole. The figure below reports on parent ratings of results from their children’s involvement with a mentor. The results are positive, but the ratings are not as high as shown in Figure 2 above.

Figure 3: Parent Survey Results - Mentor-Related Outcomes for the Students

Parent ratings for the mentor-related outcomes were positive but lower than outcomes reported for the program as a whole (Figure 2). Parents gave the highest ratings to the two items related to future goals and aspirations.



Parents reported on their own personal outcomes from being involved with SEAP. Parents were asked, since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP, the extent to which they agreed (on the same 6-point scale) with a number of personal outcome statements. Parents reported positively on these items: all received a rating of at least 5 on the 6-point scale (see Figure 4). As with their children’s outcomes, the survey also explored outcomes for parents related specifically to the mentor’s involvement. The self-reported outcomes resulting from mentor involvement are shown in Figure 5. As with the child outcomes, these outcomes were positive but most were not rated as highly as the outcomes reported for the program as a whole (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Parent Survey Results - Self-reported Outcomes

Parents also recognized outcomes for themselves and their families from being involved with CultureLink and SEAP: all items received a rating of at least 5 on the 6-point scale. Their highest rating was given to having a better understanding of youth opportunities and development in Canada.

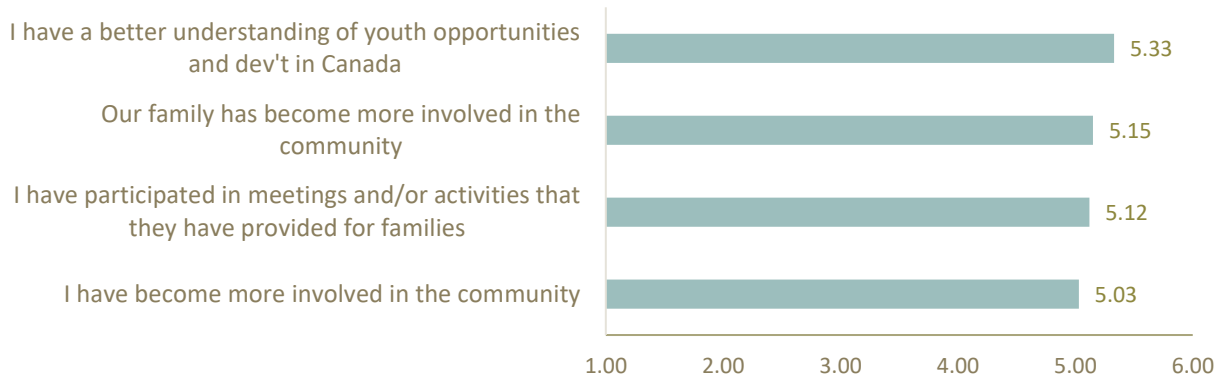
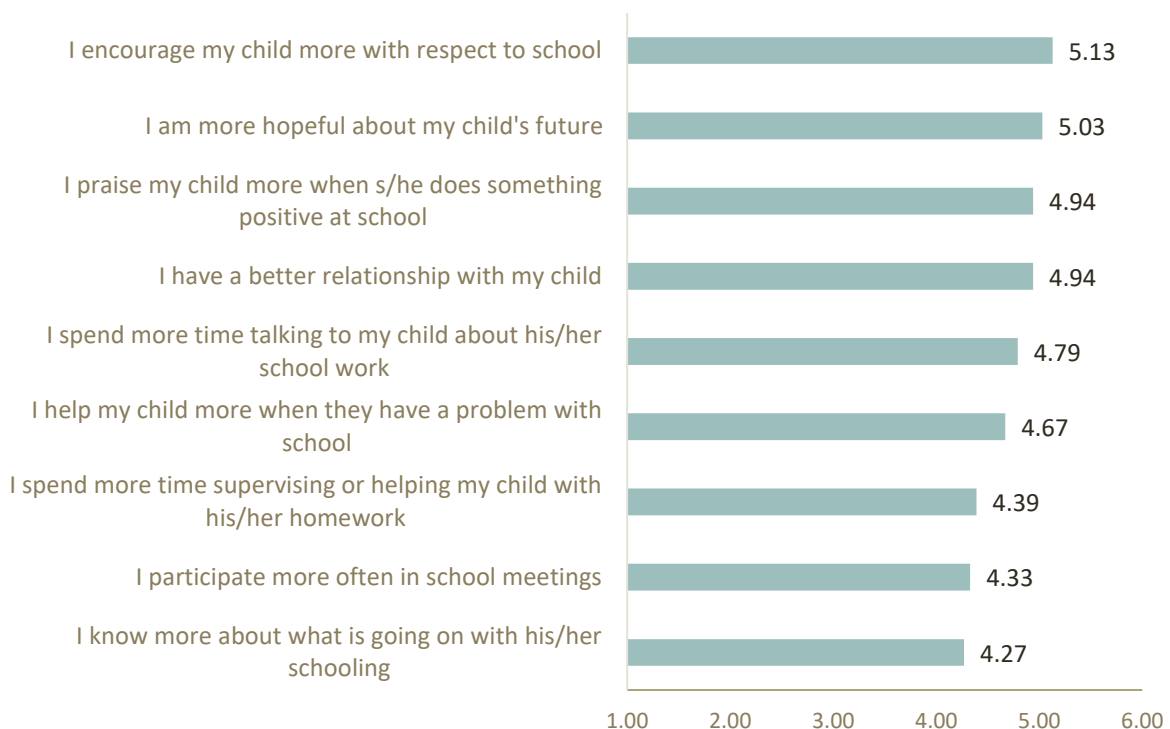


Figure 5: Parent Survey Results - Self-reported Outcomes from Mentor Involvement

Parents reported positively on self-reported outcomes from their children's involvement with a SEAP mentor. They reported most positively on encouraging their children more with respect to school and being more hopeful about their children's future.



Interview Results

In the interviews, parents reported on school and academic related outcomes they had observed in their children since joining the SEAP Program.

- At least four of the seven parents who participated in the interviews reported that their children had better grades since joining SEAP.
- At least three parents reported that their children's study skills and habits had improved.

The parents reported observing numerous psychosocial and personal growth outcomes in their children since joining SEAP, including the following:

- More social engagement because they meet new people that are not from their school
- Better sense of connectedness
- Increased circle of support
- Increased confidence
- More friends
- More communicative and open (less shy)
- More independence from their parents
- Found work through the program

The parents also reported how their children's involvement in SEAP had benefited their families and had also helped them as parents. They reported on the following:

- Their children are more open and communicative with their parents.
- The parents and other members of the family also received support from SEAP staff.
- The program provided parents a sense of security knowing their children were in a safe space after school.
- The program provided needed tutoring for struggling students that parents cannot always afford.
- SEAP mentors and staff helped parents navigate the school system.
- Mentors and staff reinforced positive messages about education and focus that the youth received from their parents.

Youth Outcomes: Parents' Perspective (from Interviews)

"He has a role model now that is involved with his school. There is no father figure in our family. He's involved with his school and he's involved in here (youth centre) and he's involved outside of the school."

"They gained confidence. That's important to me, just like the homework."

"Not to feel excluded – feel always that you are in a group and that you belong to."

"Because other children and young people here [they] are mingling with them and they create that social circle of support that they need. They have their peers and also their English has improved. They're math skills have improved. At school, they give them homework and they cannot manage by themselves they come here and they get help."

"I think it just gives them more independence away from just the two parents. It gives them other resources that they could ask questions – not just the homework but also just socializing with another adult or someone that could mentor them and not just the parents all the time."

"As soon as they started, my children and I are talking a lot about school and what they did, marks they got here. As soon as they start program, we're talking to each other more."

"Before they are not that much open to tell me things, but since they start here, it's different. They communicate and are more open with me."

Mentor Perspective

Survey Results

Mentors were asked to rate to what extent they had observed outcomes in their mentees. The rating scale matched that used in the student and parent surveys (from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree). The average ratings were all high - at least 4.86 (between somewhat agree and agree). The highest ratings were given to thinking more about their future (5.31), increased self-confidence (5.29) and more hopeful about their future (5.14). Mentors gave the lowest ratings to improvement in relationships with their parents (4.85) and feeling connected to their schools (4.86). There were several items where all mentors reported at least some improvement:

- Taking school and homework more seriously
- Thinking more about their future
- A better attitude towards school
- More hopeful about their future
- More involved in extracurricular activities in school
- More involved in extracurricular activities in the community
- Self-confidence has improved

Interview Results

The nine mentors that participated in the final interviews had many observations about outcomes in their mentees since they joined the SEAP Program. Several mentors commented on how their mentees had improved academically – they were more proactive with regards to their academics, had a more positive attitude towards school, were more focused and had improved grades.

Most of the comments on outcomes, however, were in regards to psychosocial changes and personal growth in their mentees, which included:

Youth Outcomes: Mentors' Perspective (from Interviews)

“Improvement in their focus and what they want to achieve. They want to achieve good results with their grades. When there are challenges, I encouraged them. I tell them they can be whatever they want to be and they have to stay focused.”

“They are able to communicate now without thinking they are going to be laughed at.”

“Higher expectations of themselves and bigger dreams. That’s what I feel that they have. They expect more from themselves. I think they are better communicators. Another thing, their confidence overall is a little bit better than when they started the program.”

“One of my mentees, when I first met him, he had just started high school. His expectation was ‘I’m just going to get through and finish high school’, but once we started meeting and talking about stuff, I could see his expectations got better. He’s a better student now. He’s improved his grades... Doing the things that he would like to do, his aspirations got bigger and then he actually got a job as a youth worker. That was something he would never think about before but he was able to achieve that because of himself and thinking bigger ...”

“The Youth program space ... has really helped them understand that there is more to life than just going to school, watching fights and dealing with gossip. They really changed. My mentees that have had the hardest time just getting schoolwork done – they’ve gotten better. It’s really impressive.”

- Have formed a social group with other SEAP participants
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased communication skills
- Higher expectations of themselves and bigger dreams
- Increased circle of support
- Increased self-discipline
- Supports in obtaining summer and part-time work
- Sharing more of their thoughts and personal experiences with their mentor

In the interviews, the mentors were also asked if they had observed any changes in the parents and their relationships with the SEAP participants and/or their children's education. Most of the mentors reported that their mentees' parents were quite involved in their children's education before they enrolled their children in SEAP. One mentor observed that parents pick up their children from the CultureLink Youth Centre and make an effort to meet the mentor. The mentor felt that involvement in the program pushed the parents to take time from their busy schedules to do this and thus be more involved. Another mentor discussed how the mentor provided a conduit for the parent to check in on how their child is doing and how to assess and measure their child's progress in their academics. A couple of mentors reported that the parents were more involved with SEAP now than at the beginning and were more trusting of the program, dropping in, connecting with mentors and even attending some field trips and meetings.

Parental Involvement Outcomes: Mentors' Comments (from Interviews)

"She was so proud of her son so she would always keep a check on how well he is doing and she would discuss these things with me.... I would tell her about how he should start reading and building that habit and about chasing the things that he likes; the importance of education and general knowledge and perspective and all of these things. It is good for the mothers too, to have a sense of direction. Just to sometimes be reminded of the things that they already know and to better keep a check on these things and what measures maybe you could use."

"They have been strong advocates and on top of their kids being a mentee. There hasn't been a shift. It's always been very positive from the very beginning."

Mentor Outcomes

In the online survey, the mentors were asked to rate outcomes that they themselves might have experienced as a result of their participation as a mentor in SEAP (from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree). The table below outlines the results of the mentors' ratings. **Most mentors reported gaining at least a little in each of these areas.** The highest ratings were given to “learning about youth and the challenges they face” and “leadership/organizational skills (average of 5.43 and 5.36 respectively), followed by “feeling connected to others” (average of 5.21).

Table 1: Mentor Survey Results – Mentor Outcomes

Outcome	Average (out of 6)	% Agree (rating of 4, 5 or 6)	% Disagree, (rating of 1, 2, or 3)
Extent to which participation as a SEAP mentor has had a positive impact on:			
Learned about working with youth and the challenges they may face	5.43	93%	7%
Leadership and organizational skills	5.36	100%	0
Feeling more connected to others	5.21	100%	0
Interpersonal skills (e.g. communication, listening, patience)	5.14	100%	0
Feeling more connected to community	5.14	93%	7%
Feeling better about self	5.14	93%	7%
Appreciation of culture and other differences among people	5.07	93%	7%
Problem solving and decision-making skills (e.g. asking for help, deciding what to do)	4.93	93%	7%
Feeling more accepted and respected	4.93	93%	7%

In the interviews, described what they had gained through their participation as a SEAP mentor. Several mentors mentioned that they had gained knowledge about young people and the issues they face. Numerous mentors reported gaining a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment from their work with the mentees. They were happy knowing they had been able to help the mentees and their families. Mentors also reported gaining a sense of fulfillment, learning from their students, and gaining a sense of community as a result of their participation in SEAP.

Stakeholder Perspective

The two stakeholders we interviewed had some general comments on the program outcomes and benefits. They had a few parents tell them that they liked SEAP because it provided a safe space for students. The stakeholders also commented on how students had become engaged in volunteer work and had secured jobs through the support of SEAP staff and mentors. One stakeholder talked about how a couple of older students at their school were now mentoring or supporting younger students with some academic challenges.

One stakeholder talked about how she had seen attitudinal shift in some of the SEAP students she came into contact with:

“I think generally speaking it’s an attitudinal shift. I can’t speak to exactly if there has been a huge academic shift – but that though academic and attitude are quite linked. When the student is coming to school and they just seem more positive in their disposition, they are more engaged then naturally they are going to do better academically. For these particular students I’m thinking of, their attitude changed, but I don’t know if that was because they now felt a greater connection to somebody.”

Mentors’ Outcomes (from Mentor Interviews)

“For me personally, those are the small satisfactions that I get, knowing that you helped the community that you came from. Sometimes there are struggles - struggles in school and the job market. So yeah, personal satisfaction I guess.”

“There’s highs and lows. You see them get As on their assignments that you’ve helped them with. You see them get excited about volleyball try outs and things like that. It’s really great. You see them get their self-confidence back.”

“Really fulfillment and a sense of community for sure. Being able to give back and help the younger generations to make better decisions and choices. I really feel that the work that we’re doing we’ll see better grades and better outcomes and better decision-making skills”.

Staff Perspective

In the staff interviews, SEAP staff who were in contact with participants reported on many outcomes and changes they had observed in some of the participants, including:

- Stronger relationships with their peers
- More communication and openness
- Improved social skills
- Jobs and volunteer opportunities for some youth were facilitated by mentors and program staff
- Increased number of friends
- Positive changes in student engagement, attendance and academic motivation
- An increased understanding of the importance of school and planning for their future
- An increased sense of community among Somali students

Staff also observed some changes in the parents and their relationships/attitudes towards their children's extracurricular activities and school, including:

- More openness to their children participating in extracurricular activities
- Increased support from the school in dealing with challenges their children faced because staff and/or mentors accompanied the parent and child to school meetings
- Increased engagement in attending SEAP activities and communicating with mentors and staff about their children's challenges and academic achievement

Youth Outcomes: Staff Comments

“Extracurriculars were never a good thing in our communities because if you’re spending time away from your studies, then you’re not paying attention, you’re going to fail and your life will be hard. That’s the thought process. Now they balance the fact that their child does an extracurricular and is also in tutoring. Or maybe they could have a job one day a week if they balance out their education. Now they see all the opportunities and avenues that already existed, but they’re open to trying.”

“This child did not talk. He did not talk! And now he comes in, drops in says hey. He banter and jokes, he actually asks for what he needs. He requests. He talks about what his challenges are. It’s a whole 360 communication-wise. He actually interacts with the other youth. He developed friends. We always wondered why he was so quiet. Why is he so bottled up? I think it was just confidence.”

“...You can see the academic engagement by assessing or monitoring their participation in the after-school activities that we provide. If you come to our tutoring sessions, we have all the kids here, and all the parents are fully engaged, and they have the motivation to do better in school.”

Learnings from the Case Studies

The six case studies show that the SEAP program does result in clear outcomes for participants, but the outcomes vary for each participant and linked to the participants' needs when entering the program and as they progress through the program. In three of the case studies the SEAP program appeared to be critical to ensuring the participants were on a clear path for academic success and to positive psychosocial outcomes that would have been much more uncertain without the SEAP program. For example, TJ⁸ was experiencing many challenges, academically and socially. He was failing his classes and was hanging out with other youth that were not positive influences. His parents were divorced and he did not have a strong father figure. His mentor and the SEAP staff helped TJ's mom in dealing with the school and advocating for the support TJ needed. While TJ was still struggling at the time of the interview, he reported that he was less lost and that with the support he now had through SEAP, he believed things would be a little easier.

Aliyah was a good student and doing well until she started acting out. By Grade 12 she was in trouble with the law and suspended from school. Her mom was a single parent and her older siblings were not around; it was up to Aliyah to take care of younger siblings and maintain good school grades. It was a lot of pressure and this led to the issues she experienced. She did eventually go back into high school for a fifth year, while dealing with the legal charges she faced. Her mother urged her to join SEAP. Aliyah was reluctant at first and did not want to connect with a mentor; however, she started to see how the program had helped her siblings. She started having some contact with staff and opened up to the program. While it was difficult to get Aliyah to open up to a mentor, the staff worked intensely with her and helped her get back on track. At the time of the interview, she had just started a college program.

Program Success: Case Studies

"I changed a lot. I grew. Now I know what I want to do instead of before that I was confused and lost. With people helping me by my side, it will be easier... Before I was failing and now I am passing. I am a little more into my school." (TJ)

"The program helped me with my charges. It was the only one [program] I wasn't forced to go to. I still feel like [staff name] genuinely cares about me. He also helped me with my schooling. I had no motivation to go back or to study. He helped me, and he motivated me, and look where I am now. I'm in my first year of college. He also helped me with my family, my mom." (Aliyah)

"I need a push to do stuff, not school stuff, I can do that if I need to, but social things, talking to people. I didn't even want to meet family members, I would just stay home. They helped me. I feel like I would be invisible. I would be Jasmine in a different dimension. I would be the opposite of myself. I wouldn't be happy. SEAP helped me see who I really am." (Jasmine)

"In the news today if you hear Somali youth it's usually just bad news, never any accomplishments or good news... I think the SEAP program shows that the Somali youth can accomplish amazing things, they encourage kids my age, they give kids like me many life changing opportunities, they give us hope that we can become anything we put our minds to." (Jasmine)

⁸ All case study names used are pseudonyms to protect the participants' anonymity.

Jasmine was a shy Grade 9 student when she joined SEAP. She was not doing well in school and did not go out much. With the support of her mentor and by attending tutoring and SEAP social activities, she started attending school more regularly and her grades started going up. She told us that her mentor helped her with her school work, but also provided support on many different levels by helping her in her relationship with her mother and by helping her to be more positive.

The other three participants in the case studies also experienced very positive outcomes as a result of their participation in SEAP, but these students were not struggling academically. SEAP gave them confidence, helped them connect with other youth and adults, increased their network of support and gave them opportunities they would not otherwise have had. These three cases demonstrate that while the academic support is not critical for all of the SEAP students, some of these students had little social activity in their lives, they were reserved, and did not have great confidence. The case examples show that through the program students start communicating, increase their social network, gain confidence and become involved in opportunities open to them. They have found jobs, volunteer opportunities, and attended fun and exciting events (e.g., Raptors games, ziplining, Canada's Wonderland).

Program Development and Process

In this section we explore satisfaction with the program from the perspective of the parents, youth, and mentors, details about the ways in which mentors and mentees connected, and learnings from program implementation and delivery.

Student, Parent and Mentor Experiences with SEAP

Youth Feedback

Results from the surveys and interviews with youth showed a great deal of satisfaction with the SEAP Program. The final survey included an overall rating of the students' experience with SEAP.

- **Students' overall rating of their experience in SEAP was 9.2 on a 10-point scale**
- **60% of the students gave a rating of 10 on the 10-point scale**

Students also providing ratings on a number of items related to the relationship they had with their mentors. Participants reported favourably about various aspects of their relationship with their mentors. The average ratings on these aspects are shown in Figure 6 below. Over 80% of the students agreed or strongly agreed to all but one item (*"My mentor and I met together often enough for him/her to be able to support me"*). The highest rating was given to *"My mentor listened to me"*: it had an average rating of 5.4 and over 90% of mentees agreed (37.7%) or strongly agreed (54.7%) with this item.

Figure 6: Student Survey Results - Mentor Ratings

Students rated their mentors positively - all but one item receiving a rating of at least 5 on the 6-point scale. Mentees rated their mentor listening to them and being helpful to them most highly. The lowest rating was given to the frequency with which they met with their mentors.



In the interviews, the youth talked about their relationships with their mentors and what activities they did with their mentors. Three participants reported not having much contact with their mentors, but the other eight reported having a good relationship with their mentors. The participants reported on positive attributes of the mentor and their relationship with the mentor, including:

- Mentor is flexible and available
- Mentor understands them
- Mentor checks in on them
- Mentor puts time and effort into building the relationship
- Mentor takes an interest and helps their family
- Mentor tells them about other programs and activities they can connect with
- Mentor is kind
- Mentor helps with school work
- Mentor takes them places

Relationship with Mentors: Youth Comments (from Interviews)

“She always talks with us about school. She asks us about our teachers and our marks. She asks if we need some help improving our grades. She asks us a lot of stuff like that. And I like the library meet-ups. Those are nice because I show her my work. She kind of helps me. She asks about my family and how they’re doing. She asks about problems with them – my siblings and my parents.”

“The first time that he came, I already got comfortable with him. The way he was talking to me and stuff, I was just comfortable.”

The participants reported doing a variety of activities with their mentors including going to movies, bowling, playing basketball, going to the museum, working on their resume, talking about school and other things going on in their lives, and discussing important decisions. A couple of participants reported that they see their mentor along with other SEAP mentees. For example, one participant's mentor had other mentees living in the same building and therefore the mentor would meet with all of them at once. The frequency that mentees see their mentors varied from once a week to once a month, but some participants said they talked to their mentor on the phone even when they did not see them.

The youth also reported on what their mentor did that was helpful to them, including:

- Helped clarify what they wanted to pursue in university
- Helped with school work
- Supported decisions they made
- Helped them feel more confident about their abilities
- Encourage them with their school
- Took them to tutoring
- Helped with course selection

Parent Feedback

In the parent survey, parents were asked to rate a number of items on a scale from 1=poor to 5=excellent. As seen in Table 1 the overall satisfaction with the program was very good, with an average rating of 4.65 – between “good” and “excellent”. Parents gave the highest ratings to items related to CultureLink and the SEAP Program Coordinator – how well the program was explained to them, how well the Program Coordinator responded to questions or family concerns, how often the coordinator met with them, and how well CultureLink provided them with information to help support their children in school. All of those items received a rating of greater than 4 (“good” on the 5-point scale).

For the mentor-related items, the ratings were a little lower. One-half of those items received a rating of at least 3.5 on the 5-point scale – those items that focused more on the relationship between the mentor and the child, the mentor's efforts to encourage or motivate the child, and the mentor's commitment to the child. The items that received a rating of less than 3.5 (but still greater than 3) focused more on the frequency with which the mentor met with their child, their reliability, and their communication.

Relationship with Mentors: Youth Comments (from Interviews)

“She makes me feel like I can do better in things... I didn't make the basketball team but then she'd be like “there's a lot of different sports you could try out, like volleyball.” And she'd support me on it. She made me feel like I can do a lot better.”

“Whenever I have a problem, she's willing to talk about it. I have her number and sometimes we just text each other. And, whenever I want to meet up, she's always willing to meet up and talk.”

See results in the table below:

Table 2: Parent Survey Results – Program Satisfaction

Item Asked	Average (out of 5)	% rated good or excellent	% rated average	% rated fair or poor
Your overall satisfaction with the program	4.65	90%	10%	0%
How well CultureLink explained the program and its purpose and objectives	4.61	94%	3%	3%
How well the CultureLink Program Coordinator responded to your questions or family’s concerns	4.48	94%	3%	3%
How often the Program Coordinator at CultureLink met with you	4.19	77%	10%	13%
How well CultureLink provided you with information that helped you support your child in doing well at school	4.15	82%	12%	6%
The mentor’s efforts to encourage/motivate your child	4.00	73%	9%	18%
The relationship the mentor developed with your child	3.82	76%	9%	15%
How helpful the mentor was in meeting your child’s needs	3.78	69%	9%	22%
How well matched the mentor was to your child	3.71	68%	13%	19%
The mentor’s commitment to your child	3.63	66%	9%	25%
How often the mentor met with your child	3.39	61%	15%	24%
The mentor’s reliability in being there for your child	3.30	60%	3%	34%
How helpful the mentor was to the parents and helping you with your child’s education	3.27	61%	9%	30%
How well the mentor communicated with the parents	3.24	49%	30%	21%
How often the mentor communicated with the parents	3.15	46%	30%	24%

In the interviews the parents also talked about their children’s relationship with their mentors and how the mentors had helped them. One parent did not have mentor matches for her children, but the other six really valued the relationship with the mentors. They described the same activities and support the youth did in their interviews, but added a few more insights. Some parents described the mentor as a role model who helped in the following ways:

- They were somebody the parent could call when they were having issues with their child.
- They helped youth navigate the university system – decisions and what they needed to do.
- They were somebody their children open up to.
- Their child could talk to about their future and how they can achieve better grades.
- The mentor helped parent when she does understand school system or what is expected of her.
- The mentor helps daughter with organizational skills.
- The mentor helps calm her son and helps him understand things.

In SEAP, the parents also receive support from staff and depend on them for communication about the program. The parents we interviewed were all quite satisfied with the communication from staff and their relationship with the SEAP staff. Parents reported that the staff were available, let them know about activities that were going on, allowed them to use computers at the office to access information, and were generally very helpful with whatever the parents needed. About half of the parents suggested that while communication was good, it would be helpful to further enhance the communication between staff and parents, including holding more meetings for parents and staff to come together.

Mentor Feedback

The results of the mentor interviews and survey show a fairly high level of mentor satisfaction with their involvement with SEAP. The table below outlines the results of the mentors’ ratings on various items related to their experience and satisfaction as mentor; items were rated on a 6-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree. The results demonstrate a fairly high level of satisfaction among

Relationship with Mentors: Parent Comments (from Interviews)

“Even though we have a very close family... you always need that one person that is not in the situation that you can talk to and talk to each other. It’s a whole new concept to me and it’s extremely beneficial for my family.”

“She helps me when I don’t understand what’s expected from me or if I need to know more from the school. She also helps me understand the report cards.”

“I have somebody that’s helping me and my son. I can talk to [him] about my issues. He is open too because my son is really shy. I can talk to the mentor and he can easily talk to my son. Even though I did not really have an issue, it helps because he is a teenage boy and I’m not with him all the time.”

“So, seeing them staying away from trouble is so important. Having that person and having that person to look up to. Education will come if they are on the right path.”

the mentors that responded to the survey, especially with regards to liking being a mentor and finding it fulfilling, where 100% of the 14 mentors who responded agreed to some extent.

Table 3: Mentor Survey Results – Satisfaction with Mentoring

Item asked	Average (out of 6)	% Agree (rating of 4, 5 or 6)	% Disagree, (rating of 1, 2, or 3)
I enjoy being a mentor in the SEAP program	5.50	100%	0
Being a mentor has been personally fulfilling	5.43	100%	0
I am playing an important role in my mentee’s life	5.07	93%	7%
My role as a mentor is clear	5.07	93%	7%
I am satisfied with my involvement as a mentor in SEAP	5.00	86%	14%
The expectations I had when I joined as a mentor have been met	4.57	86%	14%

Other items on the mentor survey related to how staff implemented the program and explored mentors’ satisfaction with staff support, communication, and ongoing meetings. These items were rated on the same 6-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree. As seen in the Table below, the results from the 14 mentors who responded to this question were very positive and indicated quite a high degree of satisfaction with staff support, communication, and ongoing meetings. The lowest average ratings were related to the training they received or how prepared the mentors felt when they started mentoring SEAP participants.

Table 4: Mentor Survey Results – Training and Support

Item asked	Average (out of 6)	% Agree (rating of 4, 5 or 6)	% Disagree, (rating of 1, 2, or 3)
I am satisfied with...			
How prepared I am to be a mentor now	5.07	93%	7%
The opportunities to discuss with staff any issues and challenges experienced in my role as mentor	5.07	93%	7%
The support I receive from staff	4.93	93%	7%
The opportunities to provide ongoing feedback to staff about the program	4.93	93%	7%
The number of team meetings held by SEAP staff	4.79	93%	7%

Item asked	Average (out of 6)	% Agree (rating of 4, 5 or 6)	% Disagree, (rating of 1, 2, or 3)
I am satisfied with...			
The opportunities to meet other mentors and share ideas, successes and challenges	4.79	86%	14%
The communication from staff	4.86	86%	14%
The content of the training I have received	4.71	93%	7%
How prepared I was to work with my mentees and their families when I started mentoring	4.69	77%	23%
The amount of training I have received	4.64	86%	14%

In the interviews, mentors were asked about the training they had received throughout the two years of their involvement in SEAP. In general mentors were satisfied with the training they received, but would have liked more. The first group training that mentors received was the two -day Check and Connect training. Most of the mentors interviewed stated that some of that training was limited and not specific enough to the context of the Somalian community in Toronto. Mentors also reported that they received informal training through staff and participated in some meetings for mentors that were helpful. They felt the meetings were a good way for mentors to be heard and to collectively work on issues they were experiencing with their mentees.

Numerous mentors did express in the interviews that they would have liked more training and that there was less training available in the second year than the first year of the program. They suggested a few things that would have been helpful to further their skills and preparedness to work with the mentees:

- Hold more frequent gathering and discussions among mentors to discuss specific scenarios they might be facing with their mentees or their families.
- Hold meetings with mentors and mentees to reflect on the program and how it can be improved .
- Provide more opportunities between mentors for resource sharing, information sharing, and sharing of different strategies that are working or effective.

Mentor Training & Support: Mentors' Comments (from Interviews)

“At this current time, we’re helping Somali youth so I felt like it should have been geared more towards that. Like how do deal with, for example, a mother who wears a hijab and who may not be comfortable associating with, speaking and communicating with male mentors form our program. How to deal with more issues like that - cultural norms, religious norms. I’m familiar with these things but some other mentors may not have been. So that’s why I kind of feel the training was good but we needed something more specific to the mark.”

“They (staff) supported me a lot. Any questions I have they them answer promptly. I feel like they’re always making themselves available and giving us resources and different spaces that we can use with our mentees and ideas. I think they do a really good job.”

In general, the mentors who participated in the interviews also reported and described being satisfied with the support they had received from the SEAP staff. They reported that the two staff members were always available to provide support and advice with any issues they were facing. Staff were supportive in helping bridge communication challenges with the mentees and their parents. They also organized meetings for mentors to meet so that they could support each other.

There were a couple of mentors who felt that support could have been improved. One expressed that they did not feel they got enough support or that staff was responsive to their calls or needs. The other mentors felt that staff were slow in approving funds for activities they wanted to do with their mentees and this caused some lost opportunities.

In the interviews, the mentors were also asked about the relationship with their mentees and how that had changed over time. A few key themes emerged from these discussions:

- Many relationships developed over time.
- Most of the mentees felt they had a good relationship with their mentors.
- Most mentees used various strategies and activities to gain trust and bond with their mentors.
- Relationships developed by listening to their mentees and communicating with them.
- Being there for mentees in a consistent way is important to building trust.
- Most mentors used a variety of methods to keep contact with mentees – e.g. text, phone and seeing them in person (both fun outings and more formal time at library or home).
- Building on mutual interests helps build relationships.

During the interviews, mentors were also asked about their relationship with the mentees' families and how those developed over time. Most of the mentors reported having a good relationship with their mentees' families. They described how they built trust with the mentees' families, for example by dropping by before going out with their mentees and showing the parents that they are connecting positively with their child, and by keeping them in the loop about their activities with the mentees and the mentee's progress. A few of the mentors reported how they connected with the mentor's family about the mentor's progress. One mentor who is not Somali described how it was important to gain an understanding of the culture and respect the boundaries of the participants – both mentees and parents.

The mentors also talked about some of the challenges they experienced in their work with the mentees and their families. They described numerous challenges:

- Some parents did not trust the program at first until the mentor showed them that they did want to make a difference in their child's life.
- Some parents did not understand the purpose of the program at first and thought it was a tutoring program and that the mentor was a tutor.
- Some of the mentees did not take the program and mentoring relationship seriously at first.
- Some mentees and their families cancel meetings which is disheartening to some of the mentors.
- It is challenging at times to work with students who are not very interested in school or their education.

- Some mentees and/or their families were difficult to reach to set up appointments or meeting times.
- Non-Somali mentors reported experiencing some challenges connecting with the parents because of cultural or language barriers. One mentor suggested that if connecting with families and supporting parents was part of the program mandate then they needed to provide more support to non-Somali parents.

Program Intensity

Mentors were asked to complete monthly “monitoring forms” for the students in the program. The original forms, used in the 2016-2017 school year, did not work well for the mentors and they had difficulty completing them. The forms were revised in the 2017-2018 school year to try to make it easier for the mentors, and to ensure that information on intensity of contact was collected. Given the lack of consistency in completing the Year 1 forms, they were not entered into the dataset. For the 2017-2018 school year, there were monitoring forms collected for 49 students. Forms were entered starting with September 2017 and ending in October 2018; therefore, up to 14 months of data.

The average number of months for which monitoring forms were collected during that time period was 8.2; the median was 8. According to the information reported:

- The average amount of total time spent with mentees – combined face-to-face and phone time was 15.2 hours.
- The average amount of time spent per month with mentees was 103.5 minutes or approximately 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours.
- The average number of times per month spent with mentees face-to-face was 1.

When only those students who were included in the pre/post analyses were examined – that is, those who had completed both a pretest and post-test – the amount of time spent was slightly higher:

- The average amount of total time spent with those mentees was 18.6 hours.
- The average amount of time spent per month with those mentees was 141 minutes or about 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ hours.
- The average number of times spent per month with mentees face-to-face was 1.

If this data is accurate, the amount of contact with the mentees was less than hoped for. According to the program logic model mentors were to have weekly contact with the mentees; however, that level of intensity did not seem to occur. We cannot be sure how much contact there was between mentors and mentees, as staff reported that the forms were not always completed well. But, based upon the data we did receive, the amount of contact may not have been enough to show a real impact.

Critical Program Components

The evaluation explored the critical components of SEAP; that is, those components that lead to the positive program outcomes. In the youth interviews close to 75% of those interviewed stated that they felt the mentoring component of the program was as important as the activities provided by the program (e.g., tutoring, workshops, field trips, and staff support). Some of the youth described the mentoring and other services and activities provided by SEAP as providing different perspectives and serving two purposes – the mentor who supports and provides an outside perspective and the activities which enhance what is learned in school. The staff support was also considered to be very critical because it provides further supports and connects students to jobs and other external supports.

The balance of the three - the mentorship, staff support and activities provided by SEAP were described as interrelated and all critical to the program. SEAP participants described the mentors as links to the program activities. The mentors encourage further participation and the activities provide opportunities and links for the students to participate socially and in their communities. The activities provide opportunities and the mentors help open their mentee's eyes to opportunities and guide them by answering questions they might have.

Most of the parents that were interviewed also stated that they think both the mentorship and other parts of the program are equally important in leading to positive outcomes. The mentors are critical because they are like a big sister to big brother, provide support, and take the youth out to activities. The other activities provide a safe and comfortable environment for youth after school, keeping them busy. It also provides some time away from parents and builds independence.

The mentors also saw value in the other program activities. As with the youth comments, one mentor described the mentor as a link to the program activities – without the mentor, the student would not access the activities. The activities provide a time for the youth to see other mentees and their mentors,

Program Critical Components: Youth Comments (from Interviews)

“They’re both equally important [activities and mentor] because the workshops tell you ‘it’s okay to not know things, it’s okay to still learn outside of school.’ And then your mentor is there to support you if you don’t have support at home or if you have things you cannot tell your parents but you want an outsider’s perspective... A mentor is sort of like a stranger looking into like a fish tank bowl. The fish bowl is your world and then your mentor is outside and they’re looking in. They can maturely tell you stuff that your parents could never tell you or friends could never tell you.”

“I think they’re both equally important because my mentor will tell me stuff that I’m not getting to know from here. And here they’re helping me with stuff that my mentor wouldn’t be able to help me with.”

“The mentor serves as like a link to the program. If I didn’t have my mentor, I would feel lost and confused. She helps me to understand more about it. She helps me become more aware of other opportunities. She helps me get out of the program experiences, like going to the movies. I wouldn’t have gone there without her.”

connect with staff, and provide an opportunity have fun and “let loose” with other young people. One mentor also discussed the importance of the staff in bridging gaps as they appear in the program (e.g., training for mentors). Another mentor talked about how the program’s response to the parents was also critical. Recently SEAP was offering English language classes as well as computer skills for parents knowing that they need these skills in order to support their children with their education.

One mentor commented on how the opening of the Youth Centre had been a critical piece to SEAP – offering SEAP participants a safe space for their activities, and to connect with mentors, staff and other SEAP participants. The mentors also described specific activities and interventions that they did with their mentees that they considered to be critical components of the mentor-mentee relationship. Their comments were varied and included the following:

- Provide mentees with resources and give them ideas.
- Communicate regularly with their mentees’ parents and working with the parents as a team to support the young person.
- Be consistent and reliable.
- Communicate effectively and openly.
- Build trust.
- Become involved in their schooling – example finding out what course they are taking, checking in before and after a test and/or assignment.

The staff discussed how they see both the mentoring and other program activities as important but also commented on how front line staff often plays the role of mentor; that is, when a student does not have a committed mentor, the staff check in and connect with the participant in some of the supportive ways a mentor would connect. The mentoring component of the

Program Critical Components: Mentor Comments (from Interviews)

“I think it is everything. If the mentor is not keeping informed of everything, they are not able to participate or to make the time. It is a combination of the mentor, the wrap around programs- all the different components, including management adjusting when they need to adjust or changing things when they need to change things.”

“Sometimes just showing up for the job makes all the difference. Just being that reliable person.”

“That’s kind of a hard question because I feel like everything together plays a major role. I don’t think one element or aspect of it is better than another. I feel like everything just works well and is why this program is as good as it is.”

“A lot of communication and they must have their trust in you. They believe what you tell them because of your experiences and what you went through. The whole relationship is key and it’s what shapes them through the program.”

“I really like the activities. I think they are helpful for everyone involved. I think mentors get to connect at the activity and mentees get to connect. And families get to be involved... I think it’s nice to just kind of have everyone in one room... You see kids with their families which makes a big difference. See how they interact with their siblings. It’s quite informative. [It] made me see the responsibilities that I think some of my students have that perhaps are pretty stressful, so nice to give them a break outside of that.”

program is critical but only works after trust and open communication has been established between mentors and mentees.

Program Strengths

The youth survey did not include a question about program strengths; this was addressed in the interviews. The parent survey did include a question about what aspects of the program they found most helpful. The most common response given by parents was the tutoring (approximately 9 of the 16 parents) and the homework assistance provided (approximately 5 of the 16 parents). Another common response was the field trips (approximately 8 parents) and the activities provided (4). Some parents (approximately 4) reported that the socializing aspect of the program was also helpful. Approximately three parents reported that the mentors were the most helpful. Other responses included the job or volunteer opportunities, positive school outcomes, hope for the future, and the welcoming nature of the program.

In the interviews conducted, the mentors, stakeholders and staff were asked about the strengths of the SEAP model. The mentors outlined numerous strengths:

- Providing an opportunity with the wrap around programs and offered a channel for children/youth to obtain tutoring
- The combination of programs and mentorship confidence in Mentees' abilities to be
- The staff and mentor team and their commitment and skills they bring to the program
- The tracking and connecting part of the program (check and connect)
- The program's responsiveness to connecting participants to other services and programs that they might need or benefit from
- The mentorship component focusing on academic success
- The clarity of the goals and objectives and what the program is trying to accomplish
- The outreach and commitment to reaching and recruiting youth for the program

Parent Feedback: Most Helpful Aspects of Program (from Surveys)

"CultureLink did a good job making us feel wanted and they truly wanted the absolute best for us. The tutoring and also the trips helped a lot."

"I think the most helpful to my child is she got a job because of the mentor. Also, all of my children have good help for the future. They go [on] fun trips that we all enjoy as a family."

"The program helped my child gain confidence in school. Her learning skills have improved and she made many friends in her first three months in middle school."

"It helped my child attain two jobs and a tutor for my family."

"Tutoring was helpful for my daughter. It helped improve her marks."

The two stakeholders also reported on what they identified as the main program strengths, including:

- The tutoring that any student can benefit from
- The fun environment where youth are also encouraged and expected to complete homework
- The field trips that many of the youth would not have an opportunity to attend otherwise (example: basketball games)
- The mentoring that provided access to youth to a caring adult who will spend the time with them and build a relationship
- Its responsiveness to a community need

The staff also reported on the program strengths and the major accomplishments of the program:

- Despite the challenges faced at the beginning of the program they were able to recruit students and offer to the program to at least 75 students.
- They were responsive to community needs – for example, the parents and youth participants felt they needed tutoring to succeed academically and the program set up tutoring in the second year.
- Out of the 75 students, about 40 accessed all SEAP components (events, tutoring, etc.), about 20 accessed other CultureLink events, and 10 got employment through the support and connections of staff and mentors.
- By the second year there was a lot of interest in the program both within and outside Toronto.
- The program was financially accessible and financially beneficial to all by providing financial incentives for evaluation surveys, bus tokens, snacks, free tutoring, and free field trips

“The fact that other parents have talked and said that their kid goes to a student program at SEAP... They go to mosques, they go to community centres, they go to weddings, and then they come by here. We’ve had a lot of calls back after January this year. For me that was amazing.”

Program Limitations and Suggestions for Improvement

The student survey also included an open-ended item asking the participants if there were other things that CultureLink, SEAP, and/or their mentor could do to help them be more successful in school.

Approximately one-quarter of the participants (14) did not have recommendations or said only positive things about CultureLink or SEAP. Recommendations that were made by students included:

- The most common responses (15) were that they wanted improvements to tutoring (e.g., more time or more subjects), help with specific subjects, more time or help with homework, more help to get better grades or to be more successful in school.
- Some (approximately 6) wanted more contact with mentors: more time and more focus on them.
- A few (approximately 4) wanted more program involvement in general, more workshops or more structured activities from the program.

- Approximately 4 students wanted help in planning for their futures; for example, university tours; hosting events for other groups to come and pitch their job opportunities, services or volunteering opportunities; or sitting down with all graduating students to prepare them for what they want to do after high schools – or holding a workshop on this topic.
- Several students (approximately 3) wanted help to be more connected or involved in the community, including volunteer opportunities.
- One student recommended that the program could improve their communication; this student felt that there was sometimes a “disconnect between parties.”
- One student recommended giving “the promised amount of money to the students within the program at the decided time.”

In the interviews conducted, the students did not have much to say with regards to program limitations – they were quite pleased overall. A few students did suggest some things that they thought would improve the program, including: displaying the activity schedule so that all participants are aware of what is going on and increasing the number of activities such as field trips.

The parent survey included an open-ended question about if there were any aspects they were not pleased with. About one half of the parents did not have any concerns or did not report on anything they were not pleased with. If the parents did report on something they were not pleased with, the most common response was that they wished for more mentor involvement (approximately 6 parents). Several parents mentioned a more quiet and/or organized learning environment.

When asked an open-ended question about whether there was anything else the mentor could do to help, most of the parents (13 of 16) provided a response. The most common responses were more time or more contact with the mentors (approximately 5) or more help from the mentor – e.g., with homework, encouragement, talking about school/future, or with jobs/volunteer opportunities (approximately 8).

Most of the parents interviewed made a few recommendations of what they would like to see enhanced in the program, including:

Parent Feedback: Program Aspects not Pleased with/What Else Mentors Could do to Help (from Surveys)

“Organizing when the kids are learning. More involvement of mentors.”

“I was not pleased with the mentoring because my daughter has only seen her twice and I have never spoken with her.”

“I think the mentor or the program could help my child succeed more at school by getting them involved in their learning and talk about where their weaknesses are.”

“More tutor hours and trips to universities and government locations.”

- More tutoring sessions and lower tutor to student ratio
- More field trips related to career and post-secondary education planning (e.g. universities, different types of employment)
- More information and connections made for parents to learn about the school system
- An increase in the number of activities held
- A more centralized communication system where parents and youth can check about upcoming activities

In the interviews, the mentors also suggested changes to the program in general as well as changes to training and mentor support, including:

- Hold more mentor meetings and more open discussions on what works, what does not work, and ideas for working with youth.
- Hold more outings for youth, both as a SEAP group and individually with mentors.
- More open communication from staff about changes that are made to the program and about available activities and programs through SEAP and Culture Link.
- There should be more time spent between mentors and mentees.
- There should be higher expectations of mentees to show up to events and mentor meetings.
- Develop a more centralized communication system such as using social media to communicate about events and program activities.
- Incorporate better communication for mentors on program parameters and budget for outings with mentees.
- Develop more structure for the Youth Centre drop-in nights.
- Improve training on cultural competency for working with mentees and their families.
- Increase supports for some of the participants' families that are struggling (e.g. support with employment, mental health support).

The front-line SEAP program staff discussed how implementing and coordinating the program was challenging with the 1.4 FTE staffing. Many of the challenges they discussed were related to how the program was perceived at first by the Somali community and the lack of approval from the Toronto District School Board to run this as a program within the schools. For example when reaching out to Somali families, staff experienced challenges at first in describing and marketing the program to the Somali community and had to reframe it completely as a mentorship program and not an intervention. Also, since the program was not run in the schools, participants were more dispersed and from different schools, which made it more challenging to coordinate and also more challenging to connect the program to academics and what the participants might be struggling with.

Staff also commented on how the training for mentors should have been more rigorous and more ongoing. Further, they commented on how mentors who are not Somali should have been trained to work with the Somali community.

Learnings from the Case Studies

More in-depth analysis of the SEAP process through the six case studies echo some of the key findings from the other data sources in the SEAP evaluation. One of the very clear findings is that the mentoring component is very inconsistent. Some students have mentors that are consistent and that they connect with, but for some getting a mentor that is consistent is a challenge. However, another clear finding is that when the participants do not have a mentor that is consistent or have not been able to be matched up to a mentor, the staff step in and play a mentorship role for the participants.

The cases studies also show the critical role that mentors can play when they are consistent and there for the mentee. TJ's mentor described how he worked with TJ by supporting him on day-to-day issues he experienced and engaging TJ in things he was interested in. Carlota described how her mentor was a really good match and they had similar interests. Her mentor, who was still pursuing post graduate work, was instrumental in helping Carlota figure out what she wanted to do after high school and what she needed to do to get there.

The case studies also point to the important role the other SEAP components play in SEAP, specifically the tutoring and the social activities. The tutoring was implemented based on the need of the SEAP students and the case studies show clearly how at least three of the six students increased their grades as a result of the tutoring. The social activities and Youth Centre have also become a safe space for SEAP students and their families'. The participants connect with other students and gained support not just from staff but also from the other SEAP participants and other youth that frequent the Centre. The Youth Centre was

Program Process: Learnings from the Case Studies

"(Staff 1) is literally the best person. I can count on him for everything. I tell you he's like a big brother to me. I could trust him with anything. He's like a friend and a mentor. And [Staff 2] too. (Jasmine)

"It really goes to relationships that we were able to build with mentee. Spend time with them in the community. The circumstances they're in, scenarios they face day in and day out. [We] work through those issues. See things from a different perspective and lens. This allowed growth to happen in our working relationship. Dedicating a lot of sessions to youth engagement, to things he enjoys - that certainly has allowed relationship to grow and work through problems that he is facing day to day." (TJ's mentor)

"Relationship with mentor has changed my attitude towards post-secondary. She encouraged me to the leave the doors open." (Carlota)

"I'm always at Culture Link, because it feels like a second home to me." (Jasmine)

"My youngest sibling is exactly like me when I was younger. I am always watching her to make sure she doesn't follow the same path as me. I feel like this program is preventing her from getting involved with people like I did. The people here are all good influences. They're all good kids. It's a healthy environment for people to grow, change and become good people." (Alliyah)

"As soon as I got to know Sena, I realized she didn't need the academic support as much as she needed someone to chat to, someone focus on social things, someone to help plan a future and build confidence. And help find work and expand her cultural horizons, and try different things. I appreciated that SEAP gave us freedom to go where we needed with our mentees." (Sena's mentor)

described as a second family, a hub and/or home, a safe haven and a place to let out one's frustrations. This safe haven also supports parents. They know their child is safe, they drop in to talk to staff and some of them even socialize or volunteer at the Youth Centre. The socializing through this space and other social events organized by the SEAP program gave the SEAP participants opportunities they might not have had otherwise and provided a large circle of support to help students gain positive psychosocial and academic outcomes.

A final theme related to the program process that was very obvious in the case studies relates to the program's flexibility. The program is geared to each student's individual needs. For example when Aliyah was having trouble trusting a mentor, the staff provided support. Jasmine needed both academic and social support and therefore was able to participate in tutoring and in other activities at the Youth Centre after school, as well as benefit from the one-to-one support from her mentor. Ali's mentor felt that he would benefit from the responsibility of a job and with the support of the SEAP staff they were able to get him a summer internship position, which helped spear head many positive outcomes for him.

Conclusion

The results of the evaluation of SEAP indicate that participation in SEAP has had a positive effect on many students of Somali descent and their parents. While the program experienced some challenges in being accepted and trusted by the Somali community, by the end of the second year it had been well accepted and embraced by a growing number of Somali families and their children.

The program met many obstacles in its first year, leaving staff working hard to overcome these challenges. They had success in adapting and making changes to the program model, without compromising the original program goals and objectives, to meet the needs of the students of Somali descent in the west end of Toronto. These changes and challenges meant, however, that the program became more community based instead of school based. Further, staff had to work hard to gain the trust of Somali parents who were initially skeptical of SEAP and did not think it would help their children. As a result, the program was only fully implemented with most of its 75 participants for a year or less. By the end of the year, 75 students were fully involved and parents, youth participants, and mentors reported many outcomes and wanted the program to continue so the youth could continue to benefit.

Evaluation Outcomes

The results of the evaluation are somewhat mixed and it is difficult to draw solid conclusions. For the SEAP sample as a whole, there were no significant increases at post-test on the Check and Connect instrument; nor were there improvements for the comparison group. There were no significant changes by school type (high school versus elementary) nor for gender. Approximately 53% of the SEAP sample did show at least some improvement at post-test (post-test score was greater than their pre-test score). When that subset of the students was examined, there were significant improvements on the overall instrument, as well as for three of the four sub-scales. There were no such changes for the comparison group. It is unclear, however, how the SEAP students who reported improvements at post-test differed from those who did not show an improvement. There was some indication that students who showed

positive change were in the program longer – but this result was not statistically significant. There was no correlation between amount of time spent with mentors and showing positive change at post-test.

Other quantitative findings on the surveys were positive. In the post survey, students rated their overall experience in SEAP quite positively – 9.16 on a 10 point scale. Students also rated changes such as being more involved in their communities, self-confidence, more support, and improved grades positively as well - close to 5 on a 6-point scale. The parents also rated many outcomes at least a 5 on the 6 and reported outcomes for themselves – for example, a better understanding of youth opportunities and development in Canada, a better relationship with their child, and encouraging their child more with respect to school. The mentors also rated most student outcomes at least 4.9 on the 6-point scale. The qualitative data from staff, mentors, parents and youth participants were overall quite solid in indicating positive program outcomes. The open ended comments indicated that youth and their families gained a circle of support that helped them deal with many challenging issues, and that confidence, communication skills and social skills improved. Many students are more focused, some secure jobs or volunteer work through SEAP, and some improve their grades.

Process Development and Implementation Results

The overall results of the final evaluation indicate that SEAP is a promising program, but there are some limitations in both its implementation and in the evaluation. One of the main limitations is that since the program experienced some challenges in getting started, at the time of the final data collection it had only been implemented fully for a year and many students were enrolled and matched to a mentor for less than a year. More time is needed to show mid to longer term impacts in the students and their families.

Another limitation in measuring outcomes is that SEAP is a pilot program and went through many changes throughout the two years. Even in the last few months staff were improving and adjusting the program. New components such as tutoring and the Youth Centre, solidified the program and were discussed quite positively in the interviews and open-ended survey responses, but were perhaps not in place long enough to influence a pre and post difference in scores.

There were also limitations in the data and what we can conclude from them. The mentoring forms were not completed consistently and we did not receive information on the number of hours that students were involved in each of the components, thus making it impossible to measure the impacts of the program's intensity on outcomes. In addition, students rated themselves quite highly when entering the program in many areas and thus the scale might not have been extensive enough to measure outcomes. The lack of data also does not provide enough information to draw conclusions on why just over one-half of the students experienced positive changes in the pre and post scale and the others did not or why some students' scores went down. It is also difficult to draw conclusions on whether the critical pieces of SEAP are the activities and social time at the Youth Centre, the staff support, the mentoring component, or whether it is all these pieces combined that lead to positive outcomes.

The results to the evaluation also suggest that the mentorship component, one of the critical pieces of SEAP, if not the main one, was inconsistent across students. The mentor monitoring forms, as well as

the comments from parents, youth and staff, indicate that some mentors were quite involved and consistent in working with their mentees but some were not. In fact, some students had very little mentor contact. Staff reported experiencing challenges in working with some mentors, and were continuously making changes to improve on this component.

Final Comments

The SEAP Program was intended to be a pilot project that would explore the viability of implementing such a program long-term in the Somali community in Toronto or in other communities that could benefit from additional support. While the pre and post results are not conclusive, the rest of the evaluation results do indicate clearly that the program has many strengths and is a viable option to help improve educational and psychosocial impacts for some students.

The implementation of the SEAP pilot project and its evaluation has not only demonstrated the viability of the program, it has also helped us understand the strengths and weaknesses of the program model and the project logistics. For example, the results indicate that the cultural component is critical to the success of a program. That is, mentors need to have adequate training and the program needs to tailor itself and adapt to the specific needs of the community. Another lesson learned is that mentoring programs are time intensive and challenging to implement; much time needs to be dedicated to mentor screening, recruitment, training and support. However, the results when a positive mentor-mentee relationship develops are valuable - as seen in the many comments made in interviews and several case studies.

Increased engagement, improved psychosocial impacts, and academic improvements require a long-term commitment and a multifaceted approach, and necessitates working together with students, communities, schools and parents. SEAP adapted to meet the needs of the community. Things do not always go as planned, but challenges create opportunities and SEAP and the program staff made the most of those opportunities by adapting the program in a way that would better meet the needs of the community. As SEAP progressed over the two years it became more multifaceted to respond to youth and parents who asked for tutoring, more social activities and a chance to meet with other students in similar circumstances. There were also some students that needed interventions beyond what a mentor could provide and thus the staff helped parents and youth deal with many challenges. They created a comprehensive circle of support which is what we heard over and over again from parents, youth and mentors had really helped students become more positive, confident, focused and socially engaged. Furthermore, this pilot project has also demonstrated a need for programs of this nature that are focused on improving the quality of life and development of youth of Somali descent. The positive response of the Somali community is a clear indicator of their commitment and the need to overcome the cycle of poverty and provide better opportunities to current and future generations.

If a second phase of SEAP is implemented, we recommend carrying out a developmental evaluation which will help assess the different layers of implementation and discern what the important program components are and how to make the program more effective for all students.

Appendix A: Staff Interview Guide (Year 2)

- 1) In general, how do you think the last two years have gone?
 - What have been the major accomplishments?
 - What changes have been made to the original project model over the past two years? Why were these changes made?
- 2) How would you describe the program and all its components to somebody who wanted to know what the project was about?
- 3) What have been the major challenges the project faced?
 - What is your understanding of the causes of these challenges and barriers to implementing the project as you expected?
 - How have you been able to mitigate these challenges?
- 4) What do you think are the strengths of the current program model for SEAP?
 - What is working well?
 - What are the critical components of the model?
- 5) Can you tell me generally about any changes you have seen in the SEAP students since they started in the program? That is, what are they gaining from being in the program?
 - Can you provide some concrete examples of these changes or outcomes?
- 6) What changes, if any, have you observed in the relationships the students have with their parents?
 - How about in their parents' engagement in their academics?
 - In their support of extra-curricular activities?
- 7) How do think that the mentors contribute to the benefits/outcomes the mentees experience?
- 8) What other aspects of the program help the students change or gain the benefits they gain? How do they do that?
 - How has having the Youth Centre contributed to the students' outcomes?
 - How has the tutoring contributed to the students' outcomes?
 - How have the additional skills' building workshops contributed to the students' outcomes?
 - How have the field trips contributed to the students' outcomes?
 - How have the staff and their relationships with the students' contributed to the outcomes?
 - How important are these other aspects of the program compared to the mentoring component?
 - Are there any other aspects of the mentees themselves that help contribute to success? (e.g., what school they attend, their family situation, their willingness to participate in different things, their age, etc.)
- 9) Do you think that the project has also benefitted mentors? If yes, how?

10) What have been your main learnings in the project process?

- Based on these learnings, if you had to do it again, what would you do differently?
- What recommendations, if any, do you have for improving the SEAP model or process?

11) In what ways does the project have the potential to contribute to poverty reduction? How long do you think it will take to see these impacts in the Somali community in Toronto?

12) Those are all the questions we had, do you have any other comments about SEAP?

Appendix B: Interview Guide – Telephone Interviews with Mentors (Year 2)

1. Let's start by talking about why you became a mentor in the SEAP Program? What were you hoping to gain from your experience?
2. Tell me about the training you received to become a mentor in the first year of the program?
 - Do you think you had sufficient and appropriate training when you started?
3. What training did you receive in the second year (include formal, online and meetings)?
 - How was this training different from the first year? How did it build on the first year?
 - What else could have been done to improve on the training?
4. Tell me a little about the support you receive as a mentor.
 - What specific things does staff do to support you as a mentor?
 - Are there opportunities for mentors to share with one another? That is, about things that worked well, or challenges you're facing?
 - Has the support changed over the two years of the program? If yes, how?
 - What further support do you need/what can be done to improve on support provided?
5. Have the program changed over the two years? If yes, how?
6. What do you believe are the major strengths of the SEAP program?
7. What have you learned about being a mentor to the SEAP participants? What is the most important components of being a good mentor?
8. What have you gained from volunteering as a mentor in the SEAP Program?
9. Tell me a little bit about the relationship you have with your mentees.
 - How has that developed over time?
 - What do you do to develop the relationship? (explore how they keep in touch)
 - What were the challenges and strengths in establishing a relationship with them?
10. Have you been able to establish a relationship with your mentees' families? Tell me a little bit about that.
 - What are the challenges and strengths in establishing a relationship with them?

11. Can you tell me about any changes you have seen in your mentee(s) since they started the program? That is, what are they gaining from being in the program?

- Can you give me an example of these changes or outcomes?
- Probe:
 - participant social and community engagement
 - enhanced circle of support

12. What changes if any have there been in their relationships with their parents?

- How about in their parents' engagement in their academics?
- In their support of extra-curricular activities?

13. How do think that the mentors contribute to the benefits/outcomes the mentees experience?

- Tell me about specific interventions you did or things you did with or for your mentees that helped.

14. What other aspects of the program help the mentees change or gain the benefits they gain? How do they do that?

- Do you think that the wrap-around services including other CultureLink programs, group activities and staff interventions contribute to the outcomes? If yes, how?
- How important are these other aspects of the program compared to the mentoring component?
- Are there any other aspects of the mentees themselves that help contribute to success? (e.g., what school they attend, their family situation, their willingness to participate in different things, their age, etc.)
- Do you think the program works best with certain age groups? If yes what age group, why?

15. What recommendations, if any, do you have for improving the SEAP program?

Is there anything you would like to add or say about the SEAP program, your experience, or the mentees' experiences?

Appendix C: Surveys with Parents

Year 1

1. For each of the following items, **please circle** the statement that best represents how much you agree with the statement by selecting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is taking school and homework more seriously.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is thinking more about his/her future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is enjoying school more.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is more positive about his/her teachers.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is more hopeful about his/her future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child has been more involved in extracurricular activities at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since becoming involved with a mentor my child has become more involved in extracurricular activities in the community.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since my child has become involved with a mentor I praise my child more when they do something positive at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Since my child has become involved with a mentor I am more hopeful about my child's future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Since my child has become involved with a mentor I spend more time talking to my child about his/her school work.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I spend more time supervising or helping my child with his/her homework.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I have a better relationship with my child.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I help my child more when they have a problem with school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I encourage my child more with respect to school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I participate more often in school meetings	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Since my child has become involved with a mentor I know more about what is going on with his/her schooling	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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2. How would you rate the following aspect of the Students Education Attainment Program (SEAP)? Please circle the statement that best represents your rating for each item.

How often the mentor met with your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
--	------	------	---------	------	-----------

How often the mentor met with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
---	------	------	---------	------	-----------

How helpful the mentor was in meeting your child's needs	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
--	------	------	---------	------	-----------

How helpful the mentor was to the parents and helping you with your child's education	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
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How often the mentor communicated with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
How well the mentor communicated with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
How well matched the mentor was to your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
The relationship the mentor developed with your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
The mentor's commitment to your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
The mentor's efforts to encourage/motivate your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
The mentor's reliability in being there for your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
How well CultureLink explained the program and its purpose and objectives	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
How well the CultureLink Program Coordinator responded to your questions or family's concerns	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Your overall satisfaction with the program	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent

3. Please describe what aspects or parts of the program you think were the most helpful to your child and your family?

4. Are there any aspects of the program that you were not pleased with? If yes, please describe.

5. Please describe anything else you think the mentor or the program could do to help your child succeed more at school.

6. Please provide any other comments you would like to make about the program, the mentor, or your child's progress since starting SEAP.

Year 2:

1. For each of the following items, **please circle** the statement that best represents how much you agree with the statement by selecting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

a) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child is more involved in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
b) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child is more involved in social activities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
c) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child has more support or more people to count on if help is needed	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
d) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child has learned more job-related skills	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
e) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child has more access to services and help in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
f) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my child has more self-confidence	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
g) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have become more involved in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
h) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP our family has become more involved in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
i) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have participated in meetings and/or activities that they have provided for families	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
j) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have a better understanding of youth opportunities and development in Canada	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. For each of the following items, **please circle** the statement that best represents how much you agree with the statement by selecting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

a) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is taking school and homework more seriously	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
b) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is thinking more about his/her future	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
c) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is enjoying school more	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
d) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is more positive about his/her teachers	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
e) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child is more hopeful about his/her future	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
f) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child has been more involved in activities at school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
g) Since becoming involved with a mentor my child has become more involved in activities in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
h) Since my child has become involved with a mentor I praise my child more when they do something positive at school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
i) Since my child has become involved with a mentor I am more hopeful about my child’s future	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

j)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I spend more time talking to my child about his/her school work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
k)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I spend more time supervising or helping my child with his/her homework	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
l)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I have a better relationship with my child	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
m)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I help my child more when they have a problem with school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
n)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I encourage my child more with respect to school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
o)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I participate more often in school meetings	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
p)	Since my child has become involved with a mentor I know more about what is going on with his/her schooling	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. How would you rate the following aspect of the Students Education Attainment Program (SEAP)? Please circle the statement that best represents your rating for each item.

a) How often the mentor met with your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
b) How often the mentor met with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
c) How helpful the mentor was in meeting your child’s needs	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
d) How helpful the mentor was to the parents and helping you with your child’s education	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
e) How often the mentor communicated with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
f) How well the mentor communicated with the parents	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
g) How well matched the mentor was to your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
h) The relationship the mentor developed with your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
i) The mentor’s commitment to your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
j) The mentor’s efforts to encourage/motivate your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
k) The mentor’s reliability in being there for your child	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
l) How well CultureLink explained the program and its purpose and objectives	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
m) How well the CultureLink Program Coordinator responded to your questions or family’s concerns	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
n) How well CultureLink provided you with information that helped you support your child in doing well at school	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
o) How often the program’s coordinator at CultureLink met with you	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
p) Your overall satisfaction with the program	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent

4. Please describe what aspects or parts of the program you think were the most helpful to your child and your family?

5. Are there any aspects of the program that you were not pleased with? If yes, please describe.

6. Please describe anything else you think the mentor or the program could do to help your child succeed more at school.

7. Please provide any other comments you would like to make about the program, the mentor, or your child's progress since starting SEAP.

Appendix D: Pre and Post Surveys for Students

Year 1:

Section 1 – Student Engagement Instrument

For each of the following items, **please circle** the statement that best represents how much you agree with the statement by selecting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

1.	My family/guardian(s) are there for me when I need them.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.	After finishing my schoolwork, I check it over to see if it's correct.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.	My teachers are there for me when I need them.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.	Other students here like me the way I am.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5.	Adults at my school listen to the students.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.	Other students at school care about me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7.	Students at my school are there for me when I need them.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.	My education will create many future opportunities for me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9.	Most of what is important to know you learn in school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10.	The school rules are fair.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11.	Going to school after high school is important.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12.	When something good happens at school, my family/guardian(s) want to know about it.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13.	Most teachers at my school are interested in me as a person, not just as a student.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. Students here respect what I have to say.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. When I do schoolwork I check to see whether I understand what I'm doing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. Overall, my teachers are open and honest with me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. I plan to continue my education following high school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. I'll learn, but only if the teacher gives me a reward.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. School is important for achieving my future goals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20. When I have problems at school my family/guardian(s) are willing to help me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. Overall, adults at my school treat students fairly.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. I enjoy talking to the people here.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23. I enjoy talking to the students here.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24. I have some friends at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. When I do well in school it's because I work hard.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
26. The tests in my classes do a good of measuring what I'm able to do.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
27. I feel safe at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. I feel like I have a say about what happens in school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29. My family/guardian(s) want me to keep trying when things are tough at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30. I am hopeful about my future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. Please describe in 2-3 sentences what you are hoping to gain from participation in the SEAP Program. [***NOT INCLUDED IN COMPARISON GROUP ***]

11. Please list 3 things that you think have a negative influence on your success in school.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Section 3

The next few questions will provide some background questions about yourself and your family. This information is intended to tell us a little bit about the students participating in the research on the SEAP program.

1. When were you born? ____//____//____
 day month year

2. Were you born in Canada?

Yes

No → What year did you move to Canada? _____ OR Don't know/not sure

3. What is your gender: M F Other

l) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have more access to services and help in the community	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
m) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have more self-confidence	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
n) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my attendance at school has improved	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
o) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my grades at school have improved	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
p) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I have a better attitude toward school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
q) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP I feel more connected to my school	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
r) Since becoming involved with CultureLink and SEAP my parents and I are more connected	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Section 2 (Revised Student Engagement Instrument)

For each of the following items, **please circle** the statement that best represents how much you agree with the statement by selecting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

9. My family/guardian(s) are there for me when I need them.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. After finishing my schoolwork, I check it over to see if it’s correct.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. My education will create many future opportunities for me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. Going to school after high school is important.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. When something good happens at school, my family/guardian(s) want to know about it.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. When I do schoolwork I check to see whether I understand what I'm doing.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15. I plan to continue my education following high school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16. I'll learn, but only if the teacher gives me a reward.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. School is important for achieving my future goals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. When I have problems at school my family/guardian(s) are willing to help me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. When I do well in school it's because I work hard.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20. I feel like I have a say about what happens in school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. My family/guardian(s) want me to keep trying when things are tough at school.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
22. I am hopeful about my future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23. I'll learn, but only if my family/guardian(s) give me a reward.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24. Learning is fun because I get better at something.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
25. What I'm learning in my classes will be important in my future.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Section 3 (NOT INCLUDED FOR COMPARISON GROUP**)**

26. Please describe how you think you may have benefitted from participation in SEAP or your involvement with CultureLink?

27. What other things do you believe that CultureLink, SEAP and/or your mentor could do to help you be more successful in school?

28. Please provide any other comments you have on the SEAP Program.

Appendix E: Interview Guide for Parents

1. Before we get started I would like to ask you a few questions about your family's involvement in the SEAP Program.
 - How many children do you have enrolled in the program?
 - What are their ages?
 - When did they start?
2. Let's start by talking a little bit about why you registered your child in this program? What were your hopes or expectations for the program?
3. Let's talk a little bit about the mentors and their relationship with your children.
 - What does the mentor do to help your child? Please describe the activities you know take place in the program.
 - How often do they meet?
 - What is their relationship like?
4. Tell me about other activities your child (and perhaps your family) have attended or supports you have received through the SEAP Program?
 - How do these activities compare to the support you get from your mentor? Are they as important? More or less important?
5. Are the activities that the mentors and the program do with your children to improve their school success enough? If no, what else could be done to help your child?
6. What do you believe have been the main things your child/ren has/have gained from participating in the SEAP Program?
7. Please describe how the program has or has not helped your child/ren (or your family) in each of the following ways:
 - Performance (are they doing better?)
 - Study or work habits and skills
 - General engagement in extracurricular activities— in-school and outside of schools
 - Circle of support
 - Benefits to other family members
 - Increased access to other services
 - Financial benefits
8. Has the program benefitted you as a parent or your relationship with your child? Please explain why or why not and provide examples of any changes or benefits.

9. What are your experiences with the program staff that coordinate SEAP at CultureLink like?
 - Please describe your experiences with communications from the program.
 - Please describe any way they have helped you understand the program or make it successful for you.
 - Is there anything CultureLink can do to improve on their communication and interaction with parents in the program?

10. Other than what you might have already said, is there anything else that CultureLink can do to improve on SEAP?

11. Is there anything else you would like to say about SEAP, your children's' experiences with it or your experiences with it?

Appendix F: Interview Guide for SEAP Students

1. Before we get started I would like to ask you a few questions about yourself and your participation in the SEAP Program.
 - What is your age?
 - What school do you attend?
 - What grade are you in?
 - When did you start the SEAP program?
 - How many siblings do you have in the SEAP program?
2. Let's start by talking a little bit about what you were hoping to gain from the program? What were your hopes and what did you expect?
3. Let's talk a little bit about your mentor.
 - Is it a good match?
 - What types of things do you do with your mentor?
 - How does he/she make you feel?
 - In what ways (if any) is he/she helpful?
 - In what ways (if any) is he/she supportive?
 - Do you like meeting with him/her? Why or why not?
4. What else could your mentor could do to help you to be more successful at school?
5. Tell me about other activities you have attended or supports you have received through the SEAP Program?
 - Have you participated in the tutoring? For what subjects?
 - Have you participated in any of the skills building workshops? Which ones?
 - How do these activities help you?
 - How do these activities compare to the support you get from your mentor? Are they as important? More or less important?
6. What do you believe have been the main things you have gained from participating in the SEAP Program?
7. Please describe how the program has or has not helped you in each of the following ways:
 - Student engagement (details related to interest, more involved)
 - Performance (are they doing better?)
 - Study or work habits and skills
 - General engagement in extracurricular activities– school and outside
 - Circle of support
 - Benefits to other family members

- Increased access to other services
 - Financial benefits
8. Since starting the program, have there been any changes in how your parents support you in your schooling? Please give me some specific examples.
 9. Other than what you might have already said, is there anything else that CultureLink can do to make SEAP better?
 10. Is there anything else you would like to say about SEAP or your experiences with it?

Appendix G: Case Study Interview Guides

Interview Guide for Students

Preamble

- Go through Information Letter and Consent.
- Do you have any questions before I start the recording?

Background

- 1) Let's start the interview with you telling me a little bit about yourself and your family.
 1. How old are you and what grade are you in?
 2. Tell me a little bit about your family. Who is in your family? Where do you fall in the birth order? Are you close to your family? What things does your family like to do together?
 3. How long has your family been in Canada?

- 2) Before you started SEAP, what was life like for you both in school and outside of school?
 1. What did you do with your spare time?
 2. What were your grades like? What were your strengths and challenges in school?
 3. What were your personal strengths and challenges outside of school? (e.g. family, friends, community)
 4. Tell me about the support your family provided for your schooling and how connected / interested they were in your schooling.

- 3) Now let's talk a bit about how you became involved in SEAP.
 1. How did you hear about it?
 2. Why did you join? What were you hoping to get out of it?
 3. Did other siblings join? If yes, whom?
 4. How did you feel about joining?

Time in SEAP

- 4) Now I would like to hear a little bit about your time in SEAP and what you have done with your mentor.
 1. When did you start?
 2. How long before you were matched to a mentor?
 3. What was the matching process like? Do you feel that it was a good match with you and your mentor? Why or why not?
 4. Have you changed mentors or had the same one since the beginning?
 5. Who is your mentor? (get names of all mentors)

6. What do you do with your mentor? How often do you do things with your mentor?
Please describe a typical meeting with your mentor.
 7. What is a favourite thing you have done with your mentor?
- 5) I would like to ask you a few questions about other activities that you participate in with SEAP.
1. What other activities have you participated in through SEAP? Please describe these activities. How often have you participated in these?
 2. What are your favourite activities or parts of SEAP?
 3. What are your least favourite activities or parts of SEAP?
 4. Do you meet with staff or have any interactions with them? If yes, describe what you do with them.
- 6) In order for us to understand your time in SEAP and what you have gained from it, it is helpful to know what is happening in your personal life that might be affecting you.
1. Is there anything going on in your life that is important for us to know (e.g. struggles at home, illness, issues with kids, parents' struggles, issues in the community they live in).
 2. If yes, how have these things affected you?

Benefits and Outcomes

- 7) Now I would like to talk about what you feel you have gained from being involved in SEAP.
1. What do you believe have been the most important things you have gained from being involved in SEAP?
- 8) I am going to ask a few questions about what you have learned and gained specifically from mentors and staff.
1. What have you gained from being involved with your mentor?
 2. Describe your relationship with your mentor.
 3. How does your mentor make you feel?
 4. What have you gained from participating in other activities? Which activities had the most benefit for you? Why?
 5. What have you gained from your relationship or interactions with staff?
- 9) Related to how you have benefitted, I want to talk about how you might have changed as a result of your participation in SEAP.
1. What changes have you observed in yourself since starting with SEAP? [If they are stuck provide examples and ensure to get details if relevant on the following:]
 - Any examples or stories of academic success, social and community engagement, future goals and aspirations, focus, confidence
 2. When did these changes start?
 3. In what ways did SEAP bring about these changes? How did your participation in SEAP influence these changes?
 4. What other aspects of your life or other events contributed to positive changes?

5. Are there any things going on in your life that have a negative effect or prevent you from fully benefitting from SEAP? If yes, please describe.
6. Can you share a story related to the changes you have experienced – an example of how because of the change you were able to do something or achieve something you would not have achieved before joining the program.
7. Earlier in our conversation, you described yourself before SEAP (summarize some of what they said). How would you describe yourself now?
8. In what ways has SEAP met or not met the expectations you had when you first joined (refer back to what they said earlier in the interview).

Reflections

- 10) Before we end the interview, I want to give you an opportunity to reflect a little more on how SEAP has had an influence in your life.
 1. What do you think things would be like for you now without SEAP?
 2. What are your final reflections on SEAP and your participation in SEAP?

Interview Guide for Parents

Preamble

- Review key points from the information letter and consent:
 - This brief interview is part of “case example” we are developing about [insert child’s name] participation in SEAP.
 - As explained in the information letter and consent, the case example is where we are looking in more detail at how a few of the participants experience SEAP – what they did or did not do in the program, how or their families were helped, and how the program has affected them
 - We will be recording the interview and will type up the notes from that recording, and then delete the recording.
 - You will have a chance to review the case example that we write up to make sure you are comfortable with it.

- Do you have any questions before we get started?

- =====
- 1) I would like to start by asking what you think are the most important things [child’s name] has gained from being involved with SEAP?
 - a) What opportunities has [child’s name] had because of [his/her] involvement with SEAP and CultureLink?
 - b) What do you think [child’s name] has gained from [his/her] mentor?
 - c) What do you think [child’s name] has gained from participating in the other activities at CultureLink?

 - 2) What changes have you observed in [child’s name] since [he/she] started in SEAP?
 - a) How would you describe [child’s name] when [he/she] first began in the program as compared to now?

 - 3) Please describe the process of how these changes developed throughout [child’s name] participation in SEAP.

 - 4) Can you give me any examples or stories of how your child has changed in any of the following ways: school success, social and community engagement, future goals and hopes, focus, or confidence?

 - 5) In what ways (if any) has being involved with SEAP and CultureLink helped your family? Please provide examples and any stories if possible.
 - a) How has SEAP affected your relationship with [child’s name] or how you are able to help or support your child?

- 6) Before we end the interview, I want to give you an opportunity to reflect a little more on how SEAP has had an influence on your family and in [child's name] life.
 - a) What do you think things would be like for [child's name] now without SEAP?
 - b) What do you think are the most important parts of SEAP – the things that helped [child's name] and your family the most?
 - c) What are your final reflections on SEAP and [child's name] participation in SEAP?

Mentor Interview Guide

Preamble

- Read information letter and consent
- Do you have any questions before we get started?

=====

- 1) I would like to start by asking what you think are the most important things [mentee's name] has gained from being involved with SEAP?
 - a) What opportunities has [mentee's name] had because of [his/her] involvement with SEAP and CultureLink?
 - b) What do you think [mentee's name] has gained from having you as [his/her] mentor?
 - c) What do you think [mentee's name] has gained from participating in the other activities at CultureLink?
- 2) What changes have you observed in [mentee's name] since [he/she] started in SEAP?
 - a) How would you describe your mentee when you first met [him/her] as compared to now?
- 3) Please describe the process of how these changes developed throughout [mentee's name] participation in SEAP.
- 4) Can you give me any examples or stories of how your mentee has changed in any of the following ways: school success, social and community engagement, future goals and hopes, focus, or confidence?
- 5) In what ways (if any) has being involved with SEAP and CultureLink helped [mentee's name] family? Please provide examples and any stories if possible.
 - a) Has SEAP helped the family be more supportive of [mentee's name] schooling or more connected to the school?
- 6) Before we end the interview, I want to give you an opportunity to reflect a little more on how SEAP has had an influence on your mentee and [his/her] family.
 - b) What do you think things would be like for [mentee's name] now without SEAP?
 - c) What do you think are the most important parts of SEAP – the things that helped [mentee's name] and [his/her] family the most?
 - d) What are your final reflections on SEAP and [mentee's name] participation in SEAP?

Appendix H: Program Logic Model

Please see the program logic model, updated in January 2018, on the following page

POVERTY REDUCTION INDICATOR(S) TO BE ADDRESSED SCHOOL SUCCESS, GRADUATION RATE

TARGET GROUP(S) SERVED: (AS IDENTIFIED IN THE PRS) YOUTH OF SOMALI DESCENT IN GRADES 5 TO 12 WHO ARE AT RISK FOR SCHOOL DROP OUT

PROGRAM GOAL(S): TO REDUCE THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE OF STUDENTS OF SOMALI DESCENT PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM

IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES: 1) PROVIDE WRAP-AROUND SUPPORTS FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS 2) BE LOCAL AND ACCESSIBLE 3) PROVIDE PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORTS

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Mentorship Program for Program Participants

Parental Engagement

ACTIVITIES

1. Ongoing recruitment, screen and train mentors (1 mentor to 3 students)
2. Mentors work year-round with students to set an individualized plan for success and monitor the students' school attendance, attitude & behaviour towards school, and academic performance
3. Mentors set up check-in intervals with students and parents to ensure they are on track with their individualized plan and provide additional support as needed
4. Ongoing training and support for mentee skills building
5. Staff check in with mentees that have higher needs and respond to requests from mentees

1. Hire Somali speaking Project Coordinator
2. Coordinator liaises with project mentors and parents to engage parents in their child's academic life.
3. Coordinator provides parents with information to help them understand support and reinforce classroom learning within the home.

OUTPUTS

1. Approximately 18 mentors trained
2. 45 mentees participate in skills development training
3. Students and mentors complete individualized plans for success
4. Students and mentors meet weekly
5. Mentees received support from mentors and staff
6. Monitoring forms are in place and completed by mentors
7. 3 specialized mentors provide additional academic group support to mentees in Mathematics

1. Project Coordinator meets regularly with mentors
2. Project Coordinator and parents meet regularly
3. Parents receive information to help them understand and reinforce classroom learning within the home
4. Parents participate in SEAP activities and meetings

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

1. Increased school attendance
2. Improved punctuality in arriving to school
3. Improved attitude towards school
4. Increased participation in group activities and extracurricular activities

1. Increased knowledge of school curriculum and other information related to their child's school
2. Increase in discussions at home related to their child's school
3. Increased understanding of Canadian school system in general.
4. Increased understanding of youth opportunities and development in a Canadian context

MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

1. Improved grades
2. Increased connection to schools
3. Increased connection to their parents
4. Increased connection to their community
5. Decreased expulsions and suspensions

1. Increased engagement in children's education/school.
2. Improved ability to navigate the school system

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

1. Lower high school dropout rate among youth of Somali descent participating in the program
2. Increased number of youth of Somali descent seek out postsecondary opportunities

3. Increased participation in the labour market
4. Reduced dependence on social services and the health care system

ASSUMPTIONS: RESEARCH SHOWS THAT EDUCATION IS AN INDICATOR OF BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND THAT WRAP AROUND SUPPORT THROUGH A MENTOR WILL LEAD TO SCHOOL SUCCESS AND REDUCED DROP-OUT RATES .