



Along Research Overview

Along is an interactive video journal that helps teachers make each student feel seen and heard – whether they’re learning in the classroom or remotely.

We know from decades of research that having at least one supportive and caring adult relationship is one of the strongest predictors of resilience to adverse life experiences for children ([National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2015](#)).

Research also shows that strong relationships between students and teachers are associated with stronger academic engagement and achievement, higher attendance, fewer disruptive behaviors and suspensions, and lower school dropout rates ([Review of Educational Research, 2016](#)).

Along invites students to share and reflect through short videos and text. Teachers have instant access to classroom-ready prompts, activities, and tips on topics like staying motivated, managing stress, and getting organized.

Along integrates modern communication tools to capitalize on expressive writing and journaling practices, which have been shown to help adolescents cope with and thrive after stressful life events and day to day stresses ([Travagin, Margola, & Revenson, 2015](#)). With students and teachers specifically, the longstanding educator practice of [dialogue journals](#) — in which students and teachers share written communications back and forth — can help educators build stronger connections with their students and help students develop key life skills.

The prompts and activities available in Along stem from interventions and practices informed by strong research on improving students’ life skills. For example, teachers can use guided prompts asking students to reflect on their core values ([Cohen & Sherman, 2014](#)), to find similarities that they share with their teachers ([Gelbach et al., 2016](#)), to explore focusing their attention mindfully ([Mak et al., 2018](#)), to execute effective goal setting and planning ([Oettenger et al., 2015](#)), or to express what they are grateful for ([Davis et al., 2016](#)). Each of these practices has been shown to build particular life skills and improve academic learning.

We used core principles informed by research on how to build adaptive relationships and develop useful life skills to design Along.

These included expressing care (e.g., being dependable, listening), challenging student growth (e.g., holding high expectations, encouraging learning from failures), providing support (e.g., building students’ agency, helping students find meaning and purpose), sharing power (e.g., including students in decisions and taking their opinions and problem solving seriously), and expanding possibilities (e.g., exposing new ideas and inspiring students to see new possibilities for the future) ([Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2018](#); Search Institute [Developmental Relationships Framework](#)).

