

iQsonics LLC Annual Report - 2023

Our Mission



iQsonics integrates sound and neuroscience for health, education and fun. Our team of researchers, neuroscientists, programmers, musicians, artists, therapists, educators and entrepreneurs design products and services that reach the target population in clinics, schools and families at home.

National Science Foundation VITAL Prize Finalist and \$70K Award



Sing and Speak 4 Kids was selected as a finalist out of 300 companies for the US National Science Foundation VITAL Prize Challenge (Visionary Interdisciplinary Teams Advancing Learning), funded in partnership with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Schmidt Futures** and the **Walton Family Foundation**. Our company received **\$70,000 award funds** for reaching the Finals.

“The VITAL Prize Challenge finalists show the tremendous promise of educational technologies driving progress and inclusive practices in learning across many disciplines and fields,” said Erwin Gianchandani, NSF assistant director for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships. “We are looking forward to seeing the culmination of their hard work and the impacts their projects will have across the education marketplace.”

“VITAL Prize finalists are meeting the moment, developing tools and solutions to enhance teaching and accelerate learning,” said Romy Drucker, director of the Education Program at the Walton Family Foundation. “With NSF’s guidance and support, VITAL entrepreneurs will be poised to unleash the talent and genius of many promising young minds.”

Each of the 18 advancing teams was judged based on whether their solution fulfills a need, has strong potential to impact and improve student learning, and uses participatory and evidence-based design practices. Teams are divided evenly across three technology tracks — Rapid and Continuous Learning Assessment, Mathematical Literacy to Promote a Future STEM Workforce, and Other Innovations in Translational Learning Technologies — to support diverse communities of K-12 students and teachers.

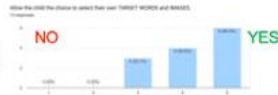
David Sonnenschein, iQsonics CEO, and advisor Shelley Cox, founder of Step-by-Step, participated in the 8-week Discovery Round that included interviewing all SS4Kids stakeholder types (administrators, caseworkers, clinicians, parents, children), mapping flow of Decision, Authorization, Usage and Payment. They indicated the most desirable new feature would be Make Your Own Song, that helps personalize the experience for the diverse user population.

SS4KIDS NEW FEATURES DESIRABILITY SURVEY RESULTS

Score Comparison by proposed New Feature

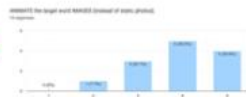
Choose Target Words / Songs

4.2



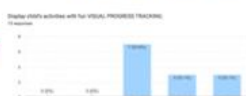
Animate Target Word Images

3.9



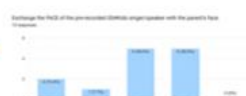
Visual Progress Tracking

3.7



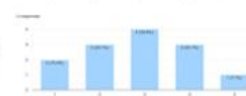
Parent's Face Singing

3.0



Parent's Voice Singing

2.8

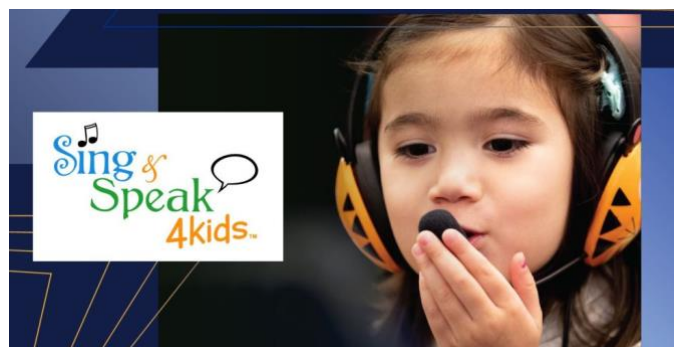


iQsonics

EdGames Expo exhibition of SS4Kids



Institute of Education Sciences



Having received funding from IES for the SBIR Phase 1 Research project, iQsonics was invited to Washington DC, where CEO David Sonnenschein and CMO Annie Goeke attended the 4-day Ed

Games Expo, exhibiting SS4Kids to governmental agencies, funders, other edtech entrepreneurs and local school children. We found many other music-based programs that are having educational impact, as well as focused groups in early childhood education and special needs. We're following up with great connections for marketing SS4Kids nationally and developing our upcoming AI-assisted feature Make Your Own Song.

UNC Internship Program



Sing and Speak for Kids' first ever team of interns come from Speech Language and Music Therapy Departments at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Our intern leads for this team, Esil Empig and Anthony Cerniglia, collaborated with other UNC undergraduates to work on future projects for Sing and Speak 4 Kids.

Esil and Anthony were both coordinators for our first ever Focus Group in March 2022, where they investigated the current and optimal use of our online music-based program. They are hoping to begin working on a second Focus Group and research projects that will help maximize Sing and Speak for Kids game use.

Esil Empig



Anthony Cerniglia



2023 Intern Goals included:

- Analyzing Sing and Speak for Kid's compatibility with nonverbal children
- Ordering and scoring the difficulty of our current songs with symantics and articulation levels
- Game play analysis
- Implementing SS4Kids into the Chapel Hill community.

This is all with help from our new Sing and Speak 4 Kids Interns Carrina Macaluso, Andrea Chavez, Jianing Yang and Danielle Linboom.



Carinna Macaluso, a vocal performance major with a speech and hearing sciences and biology minor, states that she is looking forward to being involved in an organization that combines her interests in music and speech-language pathology. She's excited to work with peers to help create a fun and holistic learning environment to help children enhance their communication skills.



Andrea Chavez is a Linguistics major with a speech and hearing sciences minor and states she is most excited about engaging in research with SS4Kids. She is also looking forward to helping strengthen the connection between SS4Kids and the Hispanic community by providing translations.



Jianing Yang is a music major and is anticipating working with others with music related projects. She is also excited to explore how we use music applications in our program.



Danielle Linboom, a senior at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill majoring in Linguistics with minors in Speech & Hearing Science and African Studies, is a former sign language interpreter and mom of six amazing kids. She is excited to use her personal and professional experience working with children to help families effectively utilize Sing and Speak 4 Kids.

Focus Groups 2023 Final Report



In February of 2023, our internship team participated in our first ever paraprofessional Focus Group. It was an exciting time for us as we were able to learn about our strengths and limitations and how to better our game for our members.

Focus Group Goals



The paraprofessional Focus Group was designed to investigate current and optimal customer journey (engagement, implementation and maintenance) of the online music-based program Sing and Speak 4 Kids from a paraprofessional perspective. We outlined what they enjoyed about the program in an online format, as well as express any challenges or barriers with utilizing the game in different settings and scenarios.

Focus Group Process and Questions

The paraprofessional team met up in-person to create scenarios in which the game could be utilized. Some different scenarios included sibling interaction, using SS4Kids through zoom, group interactions, and one-on-one parent-child interaction. The paraprofessional team came up with a set of questions that focused on these scenarios. The four sets of questions that the focus group aimed to answer consisted of:

- Identify experience, feelings and motivations in using SS4Kids
- What were any barriers (time, program functions, internet, etc.) or program features that facilitated engagement, implementation and maintenance (pros-cons)? What new features or approaches could help them to restart and stay engaged (pop-ups, tips, new songs, support, influencers, etc.)?
- What changes in the program would have resulted in you using it longer? What other online programs have you used for your child's speech development?
- What behavior changes do you observe in your child after playing SS4Kids?

Coordinators of Focus Group

SS4Kids / iQsonics team members and advisors

- David Sonnenschein, CEO
- Annie Goeke, Chief Strategy Officer
- Katelyn Miller, Marketing & Outreach Director
- Shelley Cox, Advisor

Team of interns from University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill)

- Esil Empig – Lead Coordinator
- Anthony Cerniglia – Lead Coordinator
- Carrina Macaluso
- Andrea Chavez

- Danielle Linboom
- Jianing Yang

Brief Summary of our Findings

Member Discoveries:

- The game was simple and easy to navigate for families.
- Tablet usage is convenient due to its portability and ease of use.
- It could be easy for children to integrate the fun and simple song melodies into their everyday life.
- In person interactions through basic gestures can help conceptualize the game for children.
- Since many kids model after their siblings, sibling involvement could be a stronger motivator for Kids to become more involved and engaged.
- Internet connection could be a barrier if SS4Kids is used virtually or through zoom meetings with professionals/parents. (Delays in voice overs and songs when screening sharing through zoom, with average internet speed.)
- Around 10 minutes a day for gameplay usage is a very manageable length of time that could be fit into a daily routine. (Although this does vary)

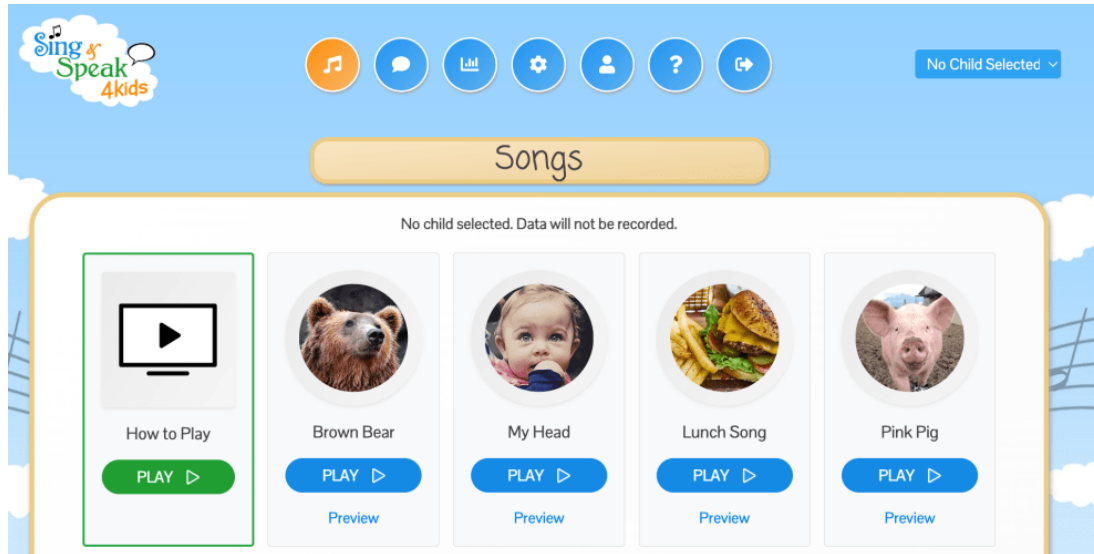
Room for Improvement:

- Some of the pictures for target words should be more clear or consistent.
- Parent or professional users should be able to click on specific parts of a song or game that needs to be replayed.
- More songs and continuous game updates could increase user motivation and participation.
- Holiday songs or songs catered to specific events (Birthdays, Christmas, etc).
- The integration of gifs and more movement and dynamic movement would help with engagement and word reinforcement. (Open to possibilities on music video animations)
- Implementation of pop-up notifications for in-activity. Game usage streaks can allow families and kids to continue playing, especially if there is further incentive through rewards.

End Result

From the brief summary we provided along with the more detailed data we have collected from this Focus Group, we have already come up with various ways to improve and market our game, and make the impact we have been hoping to make with Sing and Speak 4 Kids. We have taken initiative to move forward with these comments and suggestions to make Sing and Speak 4 Kids the best speech delay development tool for parents, caregivers, clinicians, teachers, and all in need.

New SS4Kids Game Features



We have been hard at work creating new game features this summer.

How to Play the Game Video

When you log in to SS4Kids, you'll now notice the Green Play button where you can watch a tutorial on how to play SS4Kids. This makes it easier for new members to learn how to play our game.

Two New Songs

We have two new songs in our game library – **My Head** and **Lunch Song**. Enjoy learning new vocabulary words with your child.

Preview of Songs

You can now listen to and preview songs inside the game before playing them with your child.

Pink Pig Club Inauguration



We formed this fun club with social support for SS4Kids users to stay up-to-date on the latest info, news and resources to best benefit your child in our friendly community of parents and professionals. Pink Pig Club offers connections through text messages, social media and e-newsletters with up-to-date info on our latest happenings, game tips, SS4Kids news and announcements, parent and professional resources, educational activities, events and much more!



SS4Kids Support Group

Private group · 44 members

Join group

New Pricing Plan

\$19.99
Monthly Membership
per child
7 day Free Trial 

[Register Here](#)

Parents and Caregivers 2022 Launch Special 50% off promotional price of \$9.99/month expired on June 30, 2023. The new pricing plan was established at \$19.99/month per child beginning July 1, 2023. The good news included adding new features, new songs, and fun offline activities.

SS4Kids Summer Family Party



On June 11, SS4Kids registered families were invited to join us in West Los Angeles at Step-by-Step Edu Play for a fun day of games, food and getting to know your community, with a playroom for kids, socializing for parents, and hear more about SS4Kids. The parents learned more about how to support your child's development through music and social interaction, while the children got to enjoy playing SS4Kids and many other fun activities. We gathered valuable data from the families about their needs and desires, as well as great photo ops.

[SS4Kids Featured in BeMe Podcast](#)



We were featured in BeMe's podcast exploring a family's journey as they navigate the options for autism. "It could be that you're newly diagnosed or awaiting assessment or maybe you're waiting for funding," said the BeMe founder Sarah Gofcheskie, whose company supports Autism care and advocacy, including parents and caregivers, domain experts and Autistic individuals. She went into explanation that this podcast was to explore one of the options to help with a family's new journey. David Sonnenschein, CEO of Sing and Speak 4 Kids, and Annie Goeke, CMO of Sing and Speak 4 Kids, joined the podcast to introduce Sing and Speak 4 Kids to the podcast's listeners.