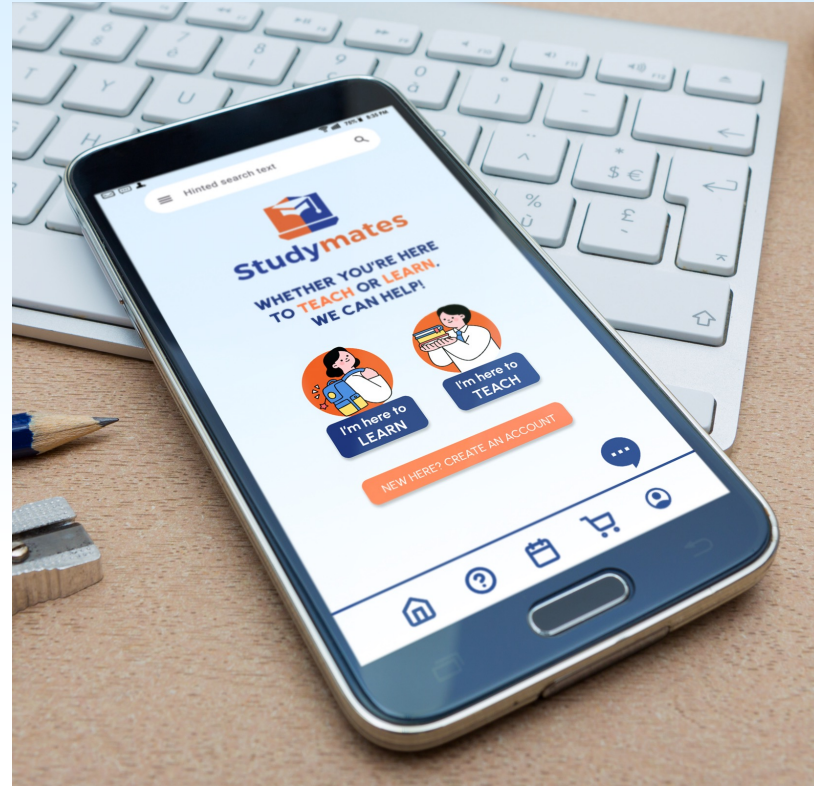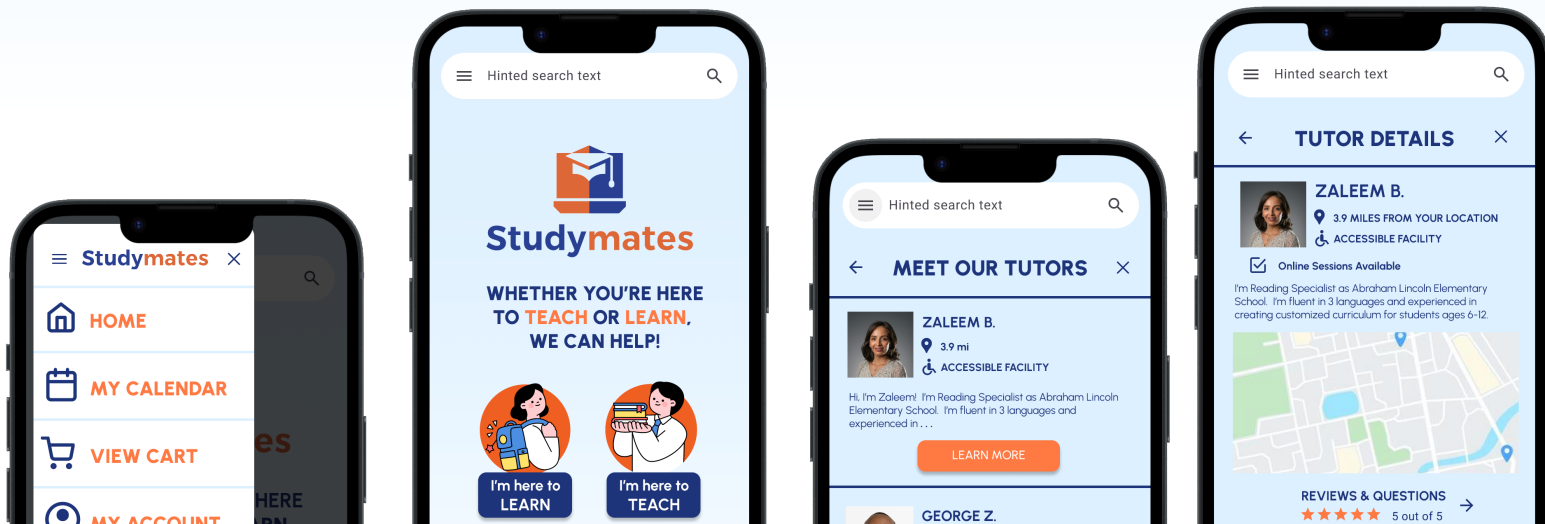# Studymates

Catherine Shalaway

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Product:
An app that enables tutors to list their services and parents to search for and book time with tutors

Project duration:
3 months
June 2024-August 2024

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Problem:

Parents need an easy way to search for, book time with, and pay tutors. Tutors also need an easy way to offer their services and collect payment.

The Goal:

To give both tutors & parents a simple, intuitive, customizable tool to exchange payments, communicate and coordinate schedules.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

My Role:

This is an individual project that allowed me to plan and direct each step of the design thinking process as a UX design student with mobile and web UI design experience.

Responsibilities:

- Conduct user research
- Define the problem and provided insights to inform the ideation phase
- Define personas, user journeys, empathy maps and user flows
- Visual design of low-fi and high-fi wireframes, prototypes, and user testing

UNDERSTANDING THE USER

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

USER RESEARCH: SUMMARY

I conducted user interviews and secondary research on parents and their experiences
seeking academic assistance for their children. I assumed their pain points
would be lack of resources to find available tutors in their area, the ability to compare services at
different price points, read past client reviews and book services based on
each tutors areas of expertise.

USER RESEARCH: PAIN POINTS

1

FINANCE

Users are frustrated because every time they find an online resource with tutoring session scheduling capabilities, they hit a paywall.

2

PRODUCT

Users find that after booking a tutoring session from a flyer or local bulletin board, many times the tutor is not a good match for their child, in expertise or compatibility.

3

PROCESS

Users find a tutoring service who advertises at their elementary school, but does not provide a user-friendly website or an app for finding details about booking

4

SUPPORT

When User tried to chat with customer service about an item, the system was offline.

PERSONA: **REENA**

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Reena is a busy Mom who needs an easy way to book tutoring sessions for her teenage daughter, who struggles with Algebra due to a learning disability.

Reena is a 37-year-old paramedic who lives alone but shares custody of her daughter with her ex-partner.

Reena works both day and night shifts, and her schedule changes week to week. She is a rock climber who goes to the climbing gym a few mornings a week and also drives her daughter to soccer practice any nights she's not working.

Reena has dyslexia, which makes it difficult to read text quickly and process information in fast-paced settings.

Reena is health-conscious as well as budget-conscious.

GOALS

• Wants to book weekly Algebra tutoring sessions for her teenage daughter

• Hoping to find affordable options since she is budget conscious

FRUSTRATIONS

• Reena's daughter has a learning disability, which makes it difficult to her to read text quickly and process information in fast-paced environments

• Needs reviews or recommendations since she has never booked a tutor before

AGE
37

EDUCATION
University graduate

HOMETOWN
Lakewood, Colorado

FAMILY
Lives mostly alone, has a teenage daughter

OCCUPATION
Paramedic

"My daughter's education is my #1 priority"

USER JOURNEY MAP

By creating user journey maps,

I wanted to illustrate the process

of how Reena behaves, feels,

and thinks while accomplishing

her goals to address pain points

or provide moments of delight.

PERSONA: **REENA**

GOALS:

Easily book and pay for tutoring sessions for her teenage daughter.
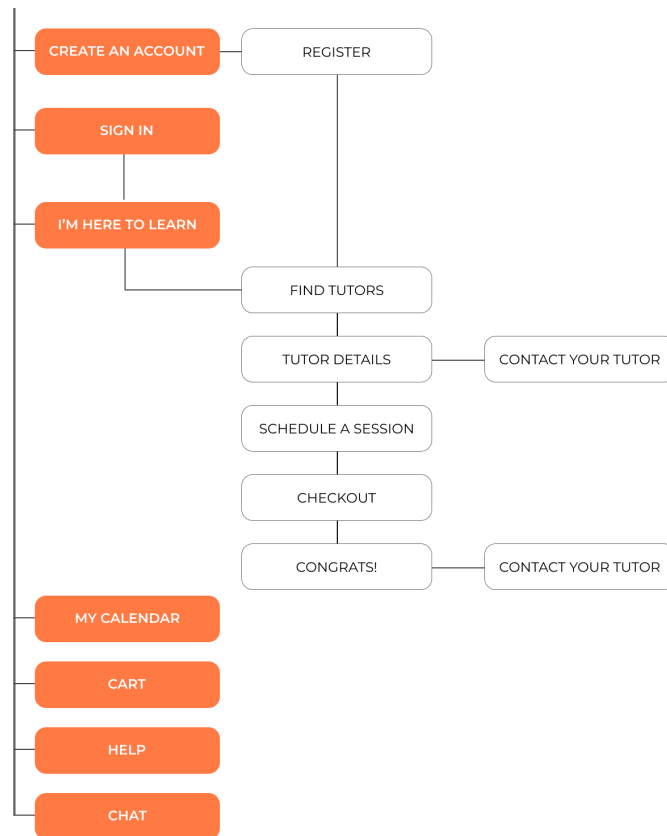
ACTION	Download Studymates App	Choose tutors based on age and specialty	Begin comparing and reading reviews	Choose a tutor and enter sessions days and times	Add selected sessions to cart & check out
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Download App B. Create an account C. Choose "I'm a parent" or "I'm a tutor"	Tasks A. Choose "find a tutor" B. Select age range C. Select area of study (or general) D. Select any special requests (wheelchair accessible, online only, experience with learning disabilities, etc.)	Tasks A. Read reviews on tutors who fit the criteria B. determine which tutor is the best match C. select "check availability"	Tasks A. View calendar and highlight desired days B. Enter desired time frame	Tasks A. Add session to cart B. Review details and confirm C. Congrats!
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Overwhelmed because the task seems daunting, but reassured by the welcoming tone of the homepage	Having the journey broken down into micro tasks feel manageable and Reena is starting to feel calmer, seeing options to check off considerations like and "learning disabilities" is refreshing!	Relieved that reviews of the tutors who fit her criteria are easy to find	Calendar feature makes it easy to plan the week	Confirmations screen is reassuring and validates that I completed the steps correctly
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Auto fill features for creating an account or "use google to log in"	Allow users to browse in the app without setting up an account. Make sure app uses alt text for screen readers	Make sure chat is available while browsing, make reviews readable as a drop down (like a quick view) and has a live text option for nonverbal users	add a comparison feature which show tutors available in those time slots and ranks them by price range	Auto fill features Face recognition instead of password for app, remember payment info for next time

STARTING THE DESIGN

- Sitemap
- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

SITEMAP

I built user-focused flows to ensure that my personas could successfully complete their key objectives while reducing any existing pain points.

Studymates

```
CREATE AN ACCOUNT ───── REGISTER
                          │
SIGN IN                   │
   │                      │
I'M HERE TO LEARN         │
   │                      │
   └──────── FIND TUTORS
                │
             TUTOR DETAILS ───── CONTACT YOUR TUTOR
                │
             SCHEDULE A SESSION
                │
             CHECKOUT
                │
             CONGRATS! ───── CONTACT YOUR TUTOR

MY CALENDAR

CART

HELP

CHAT
```
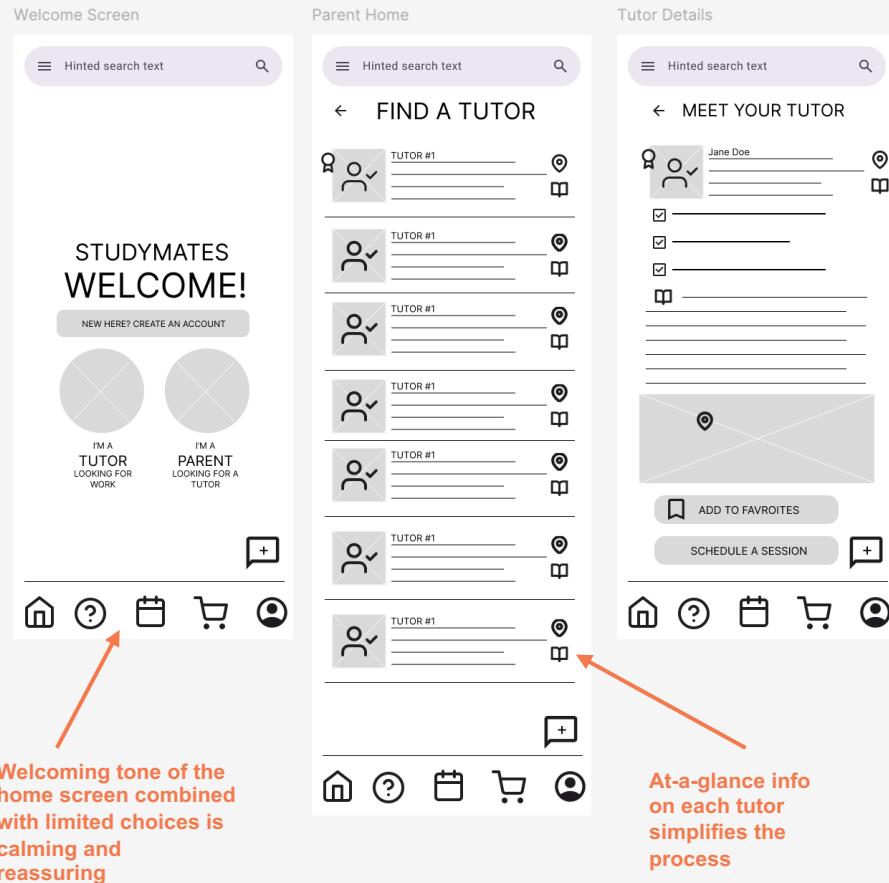
PAPER WIREFRAMES

Focusing on the core features identified during user research, I sketched the first wireframes using pen and paper and *many* iterations!

DIGITAL WIREFRAMES

To make the digital wireframes,
I started by putting my ideas
on paper. Then I began to work
on the high-fidelity wireframes
in Figma. After several iterations,
I came up with these wireframes.

Welcome Screen

Parent Home

Tutor Details

STUDYMATES
WELCOME!

NEW HERE? CREATE AN ACCOUNT

I'M A
TUTOR
LOOKING FOR
WORK

I'M A
PARENT
LOOKING FOR A
TUTOR

FIND A TUTOR

TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1
TUTOR #1

MEET YOUR TUTOR

Jane Doe

ADD TO FAVROITES

SCHEDULE A SESSION

Welcoming tone of the
home screen combined
with limited choices is
calming and
reassuring

At-a-glance info
on each tutor
simplifies the
process

LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

I created a low-fidelity prototype from the user flow diagram and wireframes to test functionality before incorporating it into the final design and to ensure accessibility for end-users.
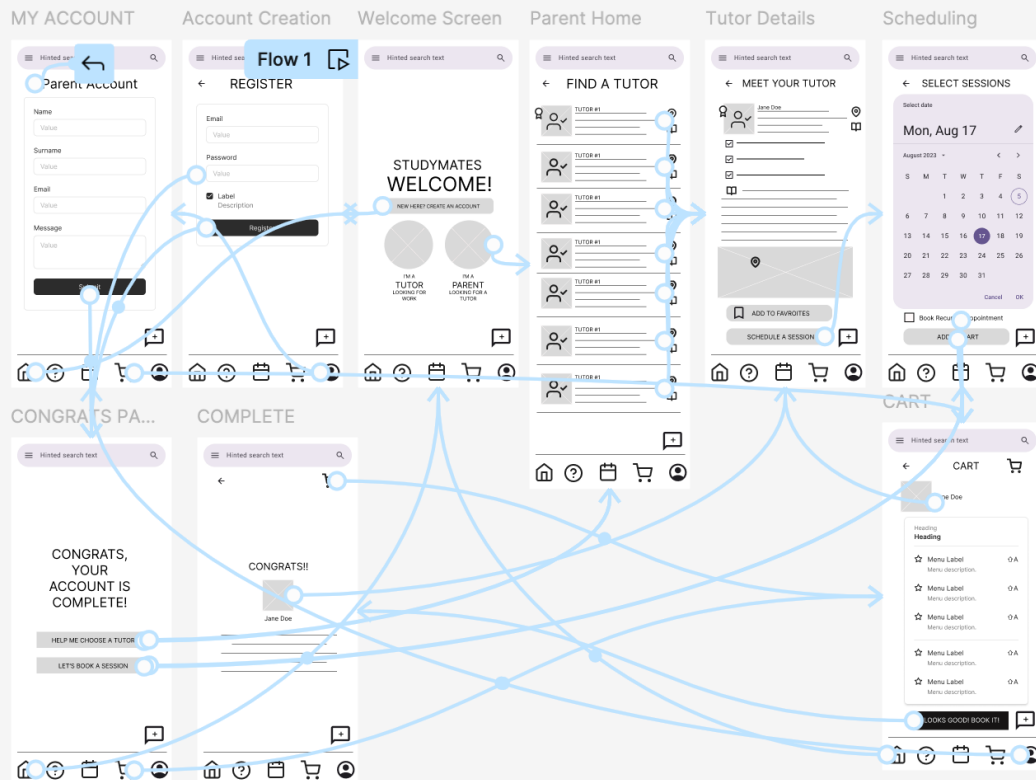
USABILITY STUDY: PARAMETERS

Study type:

Unmoderated usability study

Location:

United States, remote

Participants:

4 participants

Length:

10-15 minutes

USABILITY STUDY: FINDINGS

Now that I have the key insights from the usability study, I can analyze the findings and define the actual problems that a designer can solve.

1	2	3
Finding	**Finding**	**Finding**
Tutor Booking Page: Users want to book multiple sessions at once (i.e., every Monday afternoon)	Users requested a confirmation page after creating an account to verify they've followed the step correctly	Tutor Booking Page: Users want to select details about the session (i.e., online, at school, at home) and screen to confirm all these details are correct

REFINING THE DESIGN

- Mockups
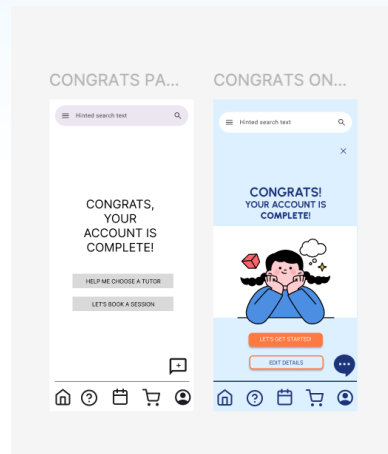- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

MOCKUPS

Based on insights from the usability studies, I applied design changes. These include adding more information on the practitioner profile and patient reviews.
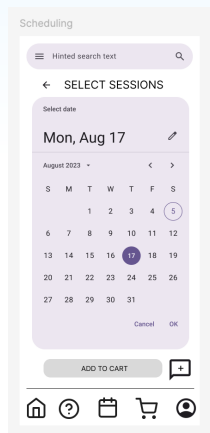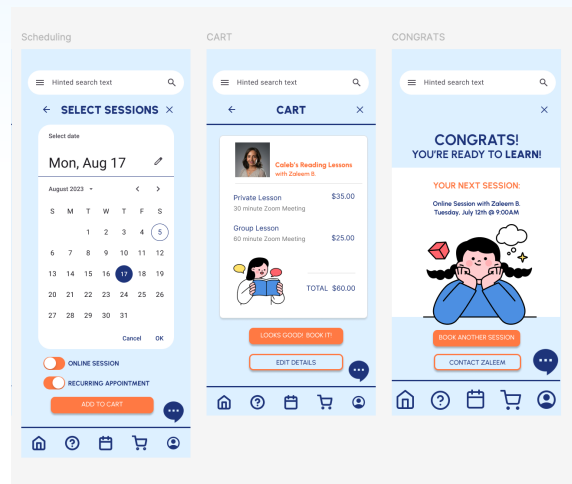

BEFORE USABILITY STUDY
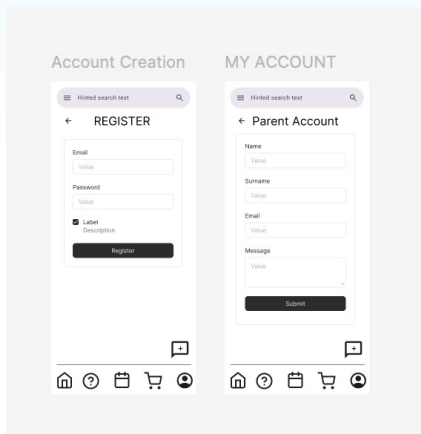
AFTER USABILITY STUDY

MOCKUPS

Based on insights from the usability studies, I applied design changes. These include adding more information on the practitioner profile and patient reviews.

HIGH-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

After finalizing the low-fidelity wireframes and mockups, I worked on creating the final designs with the goal of making them simple and intuitive. The main color theme I used was blue to evoke a sense of trust in the users.
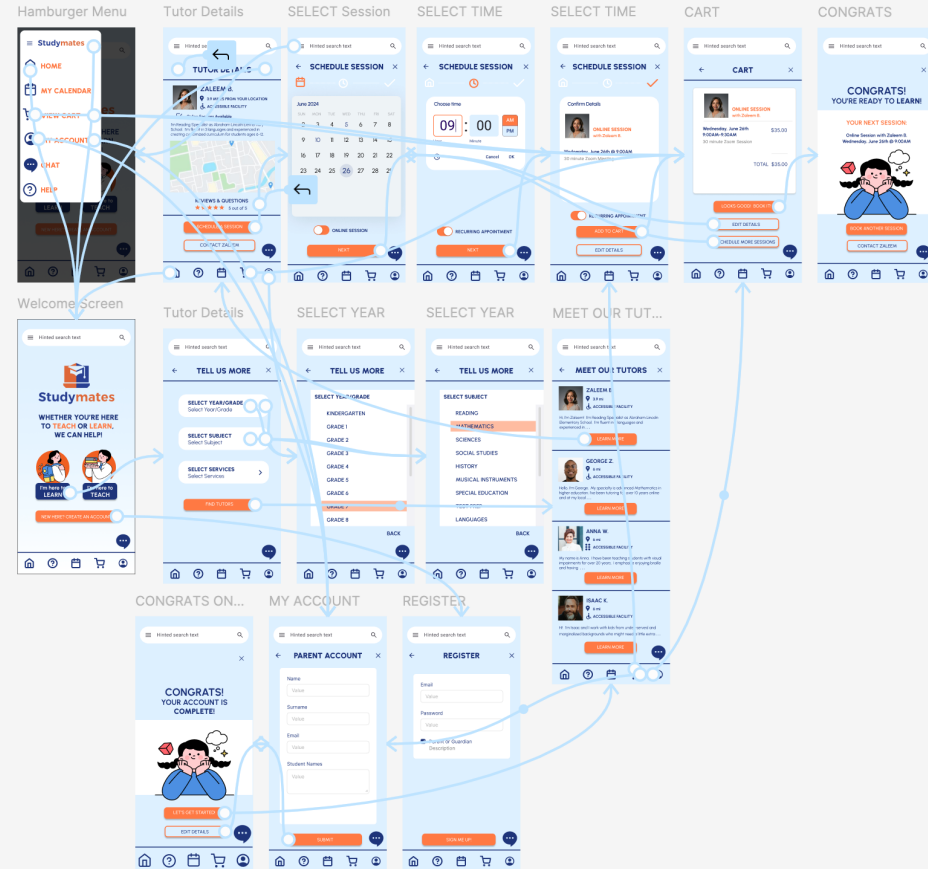
ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

1

When choosing a color palette, I made sure my primary colors met WCAG AA Compliance before building out the UI for each screen.

2

I am using only two typefaces: Urbanist for headlines and Archivo for body copy.
Both are sans serif fonts so they are easy to read. Mixing too many different typefaces can make your app seem fragmented. It also makes it difficult for the user to know where to look.

3

I implemented a text hierarchy throughout the app. This helps users to distinguish the different sections and information on screen. This is also included in the StudyMates Design System.

GOING FORWARD

- Takeaways
- Next steps

TAKEAWAYS

Impact:

Parents are still overwhelmed when using devices and technology as a crucial aspect of providing the best opportunities for their children. To address this issue, I created a platform that offers simplified features. The design of this platform presents a challenge because the target audience is broad; i.e. college students can also use the app. To ensure the best possible user experience, it is important to consider the problems faced by users with existing apps and design an app that has a user-friendly interface.

What I learned:

As a UX designer working on an educational platform, I have gained valuable insights and knowledge through the design process. Some of the key things I have learned include:

- Understanding user needs
- Importance of simplicity
- Accessibility considerations
- User feedback

NEXT STEPS

1

Obtain UX/UI feedback from designers with more experience in the field to improve design.

2

When I have documented all feedback that was provided, I will make the necessary design updates in order to improve the app's overall experience.

3

Create a cross-platform responsive design.
The goal is to build the same experience for all users,
regardless of what type of device they are using.

LET'S CONNECT!

I would appreciate your thoughts and insights on this topic, as feedback is crucial to further enhancing the findings of this study.

Provide your contact information here. This might include your email address, phone number, and website or link to other professional platforms.