



PKZ is leveling the playing field for Parramore's children, providing them opportunities that all children deserve, and equipping them with the resources they need to become successful, healthy, well-educated adults.

November 2007

FIRST ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

PKZ's Year One Evaluation Report is available online! Prepared by the Health Council of East Central Florida, Inc., under the research oversight of Dr. Karen van Caulil, the report includes the results of a household survey conducted in Parramore in early 2007. Click here to view the entire report.



RAISING BABIES IN THE PKZ



"Raising Babies in the PKZ" aims to ensure that all Parramore infants, toddlers and preschoolers have the benefit of an enriched early learning environment. As part of Raising Babies, an early learning partnership has been established with the Orange County Public Library and the Orlando Housing Authority. Once a month, Orange County Library staff bring "Story Time" to Griffin Park, a public housing complex in Parramore. To get children to the program, PKZ outreach staff go door-to-door in Griffin Park, organizing a "Soul Train" of children that walks to the Griffin Park Community Center, where the children listen to interactive stories, and sing and play games with Library staff.

PROGRAMS THAT ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Homework Roomz in the PKZ have flourished, and we set out to find out why. Our first stop was Hurst Chapel, where we met with Pastor Charles R. Jackson.

Why does your church operate a Homework Room?

Pastor Jackson: After arriving in the community six years ago, we saw a need to bring a sense of family as well as community back to this area

How many children attend the Homework Room at Hurst Chapel?

Pastor Jackson: We have a daily attendance of 12 to 16 children.

How do you make a difference?

Pastor Jackson: For many youth, just to have or hear a caring male voice makes a world of difference.

Tell us about a child you helped.

Pastor Jackson: Last year, one of our 2nd graders was very introverted and lacked confidence in completing his school work. We began to foster love and encouragement, and to let him know that it was alright to make mistakes and not be perfect. This year, he has made a 180-degree change.

How else do you encourage children academically?

Pastor Jackson: Our program participates in Congresswoman Corrine Brown's reading initiative, where students who successfully read 25 books earn a re-built computer.

Do you have any final words for us?

Yes. We have a special calling in our lives to share in the growth and development of the community of Parramore. To us, this is not a job. It's a calling.



Rodneyce M. and Irene J. practice their math skills during a homework room session at Hurst Chapel.

Stay tuned for the next edition of PKZ Newz, when we interview Shanta Barton, Director of the New Image Youth Center.

MORE NEWZ AND LINKZ



PURPLE, *Powerful Urban Really Passionate Ladies Excelling*, promotes the well-being of young women ages 11-21 in the Parramore area.

Twenty-five PURPLE members attended the Sister to Sister conference, dedicated to educating and empowering today's woman, in Atlanta, Georgia, thanks to the financial support of JCB Construction and Middleton Pest Control. PURPLE Members pictured: Amber, Tornika, LaToya, Jessica, Jasmine, Cierra, Brandy, Sh'Tara, Shadricka, Cierra, Shanell, Ashley, DeShonda, LaQuinta, Chasity, Lakeitha, Vivian, Danechia, Shaquanda, Takevia, Leveonna, and Tobia .



Click here to listen to the WMFE Arts Connection segment that aired last month, featuring Parramore Kidz Zone and P.L.A.Y.—Parramore League of Artistic Youth.

Parramore Kidz Zone welcomes Y'Isiah Lopes as the new manager of the Downtown Recreation Center in Parramore. Y'Isiah wants the Rec Center to become a safe haven and learning environment for neighborhood youth. In his first month on the job, Y'Isiah moved his office to the downstairs reception area so kids can easily find him. He also expanded Open Gym until 9:00 p.m. so neighborhood youth have a safe, supervised place to hang out with their friends at night.



If you would like to help, PKZ needs holiday toys for children! Please deliver new unwrapped toys to Community Concepts Services, Inc. at the Downtown Recreation Center, located at 649 West Livingston Street, no later than December 14.

RE-ENGAGING DISCONNECTED YOUTH

On Friday, August 24, three Directors from the National League of Cities visited Parramore Kidz Zone to announce that Orlando has been selected to participate in a national initiative to re-engage disconnected youth ages 16 to 24. Through this initiative, our City's leaders will have unprecedented access to national experts and information sharing to bring fresh ideas to Parramore. For more information on the national initiative, [click here](#).



Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, District 3 Commissioner Robert F. Stuart, NLC Youth Development Program Director Leon Andrews with children from Orange County Headstart at the Dr. J. B. Calhoun Neighborhood Center.



If you would like more information, or wish to get involved with PKZ, please contact Cheryl Rainsberger, at the City of Orlando's Families, Parks and Recreation Department, 407-246-4320 or cheryl.rainsberger@cityoforlando.net.

<http://www.cityoforlando.net/executive/children/pkz.htm>