



TUTORS FOR KIDS, INC

Celebrating 12 years of Tutoring Children

Excited children eager to learn

January 2021 NEWSLETTER

Tutors for Kids, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit community-based organization of volunteers who support the local educational process. Our Mission: Meeting student educational needs as defined by the teacher through suitable and trained volunteer tutors in the local, Tri-county Title 1 public schools as determined by the Board of Directors.

LET ME INTRODUCE

Hello, my name is **Judy O'Neill**, and I am the new editor for Tutors For Kids newsletter. I have been a tutor at Wildwood Elementary for 6 years and feel strongly about this group. TFK is a wonderful idea to help students. It is my passion that all children learn to read, and TFK is contributing to this goal. Since the teachers have so much on their plates, tutors can be a great asset to all. In the following months, we are going to have articles to help new and returning tutors be ready to return to school. Also, I would like to have a question-and-answer section in the newsletter. Details for submitting articles, questions, and answers, and deadlines will be coming soon. Also, I would encourage tutors to submit articles to the newsletter. It could be success stories with students or ways you have solved problems with students and or teachers. TFK is a positive and caring group of people that only want the best for each student.

Board of Directors Jan Meeting – The Board of Directors for Tutors for Kids met via Zoom on January 11th at 3 PM The main topics discussed and voted on were

1. Due to Covid-19 **the schools have not allowed any volunteers into the classrooms and will not for the rest of this school year.** The Board voted to postpone any more attempts to have tutors officially in school. A few tutors are helping via 'distance learning'. But Tutors for Kids will not pursue any additional involvement at this time.
2. We have a large supply of books in the Tutors for Kids storage areas at the schools. We do not have access to these rooms, so we cannot do an inventory or set up any way to distribute books which usually takes place in May just before the summer break. The Board of Directors voted to not have a distribution this year. The Board also reaffirmed their earlier decision to not purchase any more books until the counties inform us of their plans for the new school year starting in August of 2021.
3. Other topics discussed were: New Tutor Recruitment, and Orientation, School Tutors Coordinators (STCs), School Book Coordinators (SBCs), Communications, Technology, and Finances.
4. The **Annual Strategic Planning Meeting** was announced for Monday January 25, 2021 via Zoom. This annual session deals with decisions which will help Tutors for Kids to remain effective now and for future years.

FEATURED ARTICLE by Debra Wile

Lena was the "Mistake Queen." In first grade, despite being bright and capable, she was immobilized by her fear of making mistakes, so she was reticent to speak. This created self-doubt and ultimately a downward spiral in her learning.

Sound familiar? How many people do we know like this? Grandchildren? Tutees? Ourselves?? The fear of making mistakes can prove disastrous.

We as tutors often inadvertently reinforce this fear of mistakes when we think of answers as either right or wrong and then respond to correct answers with some version of "good," or "right," or "yes" and to incorrect answers with "not good" or "wrong" or "no." It's simple Pavlovian positive or negative reinforcement.

Instead, we need to positively reinforce the learning that happens as a result of mistakes. We could say something like, "**Not quite; try again.**" **This reinforces the admirable idea that we expect the child to keep trying.** But if the child keeps trying and never quite gets it, then we're stuck.

Another option is to ask the child HOW s/he came to that answer. Ask the child to "**think aloud,**" or "share how s/he thought." Children are not used to doing this, so it may be difficult. If the response is "I don't know?" then you might have to help by providing a set of words such as, "**Did you think...?**" or "**When I tried it, I thought....** Is that what you thought?" This technique takes time so we have to be comfortable with not finishing assignments. With practice, however, kids get better at articulating their thinking.

When you listen carefully to how a child thinks, then you can identify their breakdown in understanding and provide instruction in exactly what is needed. **The child also starts to see learning as a process instead of a magical "pick the right answer" event.** The results are often monumental, rewarding for both student and instructor.

What happened to Lena? She donned a cut-out construction paper crown and was coronated as the "Mistake Queen." Her class job was to intentionally make mistakes! Yes, make mistakes **on purpose!** It was her **job** to show the class that nobody would laugh at her when she made a mistake (note the inside out version of setting expectations?), and to provide opportunities for the class, including herself, to LEARN from her mistakes. Despite her trepidation at the notion of making mistakes in public, her excitement about the honor of the job prevailed and she tried it. The class applauded her first mistake... and laughed a bit because she hammed it up and made it a doozy. And then we went on to learn from her mistake, which was the real gift.

CORRECTION: Last month, in the December newsletter, we misspelled Janet's name. The correct spelling is **Janet Weinraub**. Sorry Janet.

No Tutoring through May 2021 – The following letter is from the Tutors for Kids Board of Directors regarding tutoring:

The Tutors for Kids Board of Directors met recently and agreed that unfortunately, we would not be able to place any volunteers into classrooms for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. The pandemic has continued to impact our communities and our ability to go about “business as usual.” We know from communication with school personnel that they and their students have missed our volunteers and our positive impact. We anticipate a return to our volunteer services in the fall of 2021-22 school year. To that end, Board members will be working behind the scenes in anticipation of a re-start of our active organization.

We recognize that individuals may feel differently regarding their health risks and that some of the communities we serve have not been as impacted as others. Based upon this, if a school is accepting volunteers earlier than August 2021 and the tutor remains an approved volunteer, the tutor may wish to contact their teacher and arrange their own schedule to return to the school. The understanding is that the volunteer is at the school as a private citizen during that time, not as a volunteer with Tutors for Kids. We look forward to the time when our school campuses are buzzing with activity from our volunteers .

We look forward to the time when our school campuses are buzzing with activity from our volunteers coming and going, books being distributed and students getting the extra help they need.

Thank you for continued dedication to our students and Tutors for Kids. We will remain in touch with you over the coming months as we make plans for what we hope is our return to schools in the fall of 2021. Until then, we hope that you remain in good health. If you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to contact the Chairperson of our Board, Rhonda Casey at rhonda.casey@tutorsforkidsinc.org.

Mailing Address for Tutors for Kids - If you need to reach us by mail, our new address is:

Tutors for Kids Inc.
2518 Burnsed Blvd.
Suite 339
The Villages, FL 32163
If you need to call, our central number is **352-568-5843**

Donations: *The Rotary Club at Noon in the Villages* continues their generous support of Tutors for Kids by presenting a check for \$1000 in support of our program. We are again most thankful.



The Knights of Columbus Council # 14222 are again this year supporting the Grade K classes at Stanton Weirsdale Special Doctor Seuss reading day by donating \$500 to buy Doctor Seuss books for the whole class to encourage them to read early in their life. We thank the Knights for this ongoing support effort.



Amazon Smile Contributes to Tutors for Kids

Do you find yourself turning to on-line shopping more than ever due to Covid-19 Did you realize that when you shop on-line at Amazon Smile, Amazon gives to Tutors for Kids? This only happens if you and your family sign in using:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-4815598>

Then name Tutors for Kids as your charity.

Shop as you usually do.

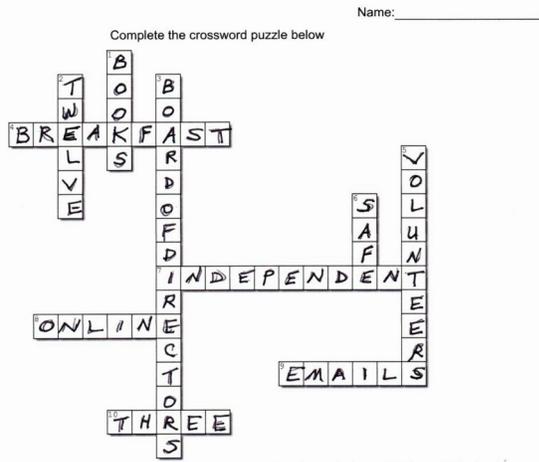
A portion of your purchase will go to Tutors for Kids

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 1/2% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. **There is NO cost to charitable organizations or to AmazonSmile customers.** Customers will have access to the same products, features, services, and great low prices as on Amazon.com., but must use the Amazon Smile link above.

The amount of money given to Tutor for Kids from Amazon Smile during 2020 is \$288.57 With that money we were able to buy 300 books. AND, we'd like to increase that amount for 2021!! **EVERY LITTLE BIT COUNTS.**



Answers to November newsletter crossword puzzle



- Across**
- Title 1 schools provide _____ free of charge
 - Goal for tutors-instill _____ learners
 - Lake and Sumter counties accept _____ applications approval
 - most of our communications to other tutors is done by _____
 - How many counties do Tutors for Kids serve
- Down**
- Role of tutor - tutor and give out _____
 - Number of years Tutors for Kids has been in existence
 - Who determined tutors would not go into school until 2021?
 - Tutors for Kids is made up entirely of _____
 - tutors will go back in schools when it is _____
- Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Answers:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN: |
| 4. breakfast | 1. books |
| 7. independent | 2. Twelve |
| 8. Online | 3. Board of directors |
| 9. emails | 5. volunteers |
| | 6. safe |



Trivia questions– Answers in February newsletter

- How many amendments does the Constitution have?
- What is the economic system in the U.S.?
- The *Federalist Papers* supported the passage of the Constitution. Name ONE of the writers.
- What is ONE thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?
- Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?
- What did Susan B. Anthony do?

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2020 Book Grant for Lake and Sumter Counties from:

2019-2020 Book Grants for Tutors for Kids from:

Rotary Club of The Villages-
The Villages-Noon

Amazon Smile: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/45-4815598>