

Kids Club Literacy Project

At the Loveland Housing Authority (LHA), we believe that every child should have the opportunity to thrive. The Kids Club Literacy Project is an initiative of LHA to transform the clubhouse space at our affordable housing complexes into places of learning and enrichment for the community. The design and use of the space will be informed by resident needs and will be flexible space that can be used by local partners who will provide programs and activities for residents at each complex. The pilot site for this Kids Club Literacy Project is Orchard Place, a 50 unit, multi-family complex located at the north end of Loveland. Through a resident survey and focus group, it was determined that residents at this site would benefit from having increased access to educational enrichment for youth, recreation and community activities for families, and classes and workshops for adults.

Statement of Need

A comprehensive community needs assessment was conducted in 2017 at Orchard Place. Seventy-six percent of respondents were single parent families and 13% were two parent families. All households residing at Orchard Place earn at or below 30% of the Area Median Income, which is \$20,750 for a single parent with two children. **Fifty-two percent** of respondents stated that their children never or occasionally have access to educational opportunities outside of school. **Eighty-two percent** of parents indicated they would be interested in reading programs for their children, **seventy-nine percent** were interested in after school education programs and summer education programs. The extremely low income of these residents, limited access to education programs outside of school, and high interest in reading and education programs for children are the justification for locating this pilot program at Orchard Place.

Description of Project

The Kids Club Literacy Project plans to expand upon the Kids Club model that has been successfully implemented at Maple Terrace, an affordable housing complex in Loveland, for over ten years. Kids Club is an education enrichment program that provides a structured setting for students to work one-on-one with volunteers on reading and math skills. Kids Club is staffed by a Certified Teacher from the Thompson Valley School District who trains and supervises education coaches to work with youth ages 4-12. Classroom space, computers, and furniture are provided by the Loveland Housing Authority and supplies are purchased through grants from the local faith community and service clubs. A local elementary school provides support and structure in the form of assessments, supplies, teacher time, and accountability.

The Kids Club Literacy Project will build out modules for pre-literacy, developmental reading, and grade level reading support while integrating basic math education for ages 0-18. In addition, it will expand upon the current model by implementing a Parent-As-Teachers component. Parents will be engaged in providing support in the classroom, running literacy play groups, and receive training and support in activities and projects they can engage in at home with their children. This will be modeled after the I Have a Dream Program that has been operating in New York and the Bringing School Home Project operated by the Boulder Housing Partners communities for the past 20 years with great success. The Parents-As-Teachers component will effectively expand the learning time for children from 9% of their first 18 years to 91% (according to data from the Bringing School Home Project), creating an environment of education enrichment at home, afterschool, on weekends and during the summer.

Bringing School Home has demonstrated that housing authorities can be the backbone for a comprehensive education model that brings stable housing, early intervention, academic support, and parent engagement together for increased impact on youth.

In addition to a committed team of on-site teachers and education coaches, local program partners will provide pre-literacy screenings, health and wellness screenings, parent support and training and early childhood navigation among other related services and supports. The Kids Club Literacy Project is part of a broader Clubhouse to Classroom Initiative that will also bring adult programming to LHA communities including college readiness counseling, computer classes, financial literacy workshops, and other resident led resources.

Implementation Timeline

The Kids Club Literacy Project will be initiated in April 2018. A part-time consultant will be brought on to work alongside the Resource Development Manager to build the infrastructure for the project.

Activities to be completed by the consultant during Phase I will include: mapping the schools and preschools that children are attending, partnering with the primary schools to identify and train a Lead Teacher for the project, community outreach to identify and train education coaches, conducting education and outreach sessions with families to encourage enrollment, baseline assessments with youth to determine priority areas of need, and the build out of partnerships with local service providers to meet those priority need areas. In addition, the consultant will support the development of a classroom schedule, staffing schedule, and effective communication systems between families, the school district, and partners. It is estimated that Phase I activities will take 12 months and that the consultant position will end at that time. A permanent Loveland Housing Authority staff person will be able to coordinate the daily operations of the project once it has been developed and implemented.

Phase I will also include the development of instructional resources for the families. Most of these resources are one-time upfront costs that will provide a sustainable base for the project. This includes the development of an on-site library that spans all reading levels from age 0 to adult, literacy related games and puzzles, technology that is connected to the school district literacy and learning programs, the creation of learning spaces like “book nooks” to promote group activities and literacy exploration through other senses. In addition to these instructional resources, we are requesting funding to support participation in the program. Experience has taught us that it can be challenging to engage parents in new activities and programs when they often feel overwhelmed with their daily schedule. Particularly in a community where some of the parents have likely experience low academic success themselves. Providing community meals and incentives for participation like passes to the recreation center or a community movie night will encourage families to make time for this critical program and will build a community-accepted expectation of learning and success.

Rotary Involvement

The Loveland Rotary Club is already involved with the Kids Club program through their Kids Pak project. The Rotary Club provides weekend meals and snacks to children involved in Kids Club and throughout local schools. More recently, Kids Pak is filling a gap by donating after school and summertime snacks during Kids Club Education Enrichment sessions. In addition, Rotarians are volunteering through the Literacy Committee to work one-on-one with elementary school students identified as needing extra reading support. Kids Club will be another opportunity for these amazing volunteers to get involved with children in need. The three Loveland Rotary Clubs have all committed to sponsoring this project.

Anticipated Outcomes

The long term goal of the Kids Club Literacy Project is to ensure that every child living in LHA apartment communities has access to opportunities that promote the accomplishment of age/grade level reading.

Outcome 1: Youth who participate in the on-site program 90% of the time for at least six months or longer will demonstrate improved literacy scores on developmentally appropriate assessments. Assessments will be conducted by the school district for school aged children and by the Children's Speech and Reading Center for pre-school aged children.

Outcome 2: The percentage of youth participating in the Kids Club Literacy Project who are assessed to be reading at a 3rd grade level by the end of their 3rd grade year will increase 30% between the baseline measurement and the 12 month measurement.

Outcome 3: 90% of parents who participate in the Parents-As-Teachers trainings and workshops will report that they are able to provide age appropriate literacy activities for their children at home.

Kids Club Literacy Project **Year One Pilot Budget**

Expense Item	Budget
Consultant (\$25/hr, 12-15 hours per week)	\$15,000
Technology Equipment (30 Chromebooks @\$149, 3 computers @ \$600, warranties and hardware \$730)	\$7,000
Instructional materials for workshops and activities (replicable)	\$2500
Book Library (bookcases, books, audiobooks)	\$3000
Literacy Activities and Learning Spaces (games, puzzles, hands-on tools)	\$2500
Community Engagement (food, incentives, community events)	\$5000
TOTAL	\$35,000