

CREATE A Learning Zone HOME

As parents, you can greatly help your kids succeed in school by creating the proper environment for them to do their homework. By having a Learning Zone Home, your home becomes the "school away from school."

It doesn't have to mean, "All school and no play," but "No play if it gets in the way of school."

The biggest factor in creating a successful Learning Zone Home is consistency. Following are questions that can help you rate your home as a learning zone.



- | Yes | No | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My children have a regular at-home study time afterschool. |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My childrens' at-home study area has plenty of light. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There are no distractions or interruptions such as TV, loud music, or social telephone calls during study. |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I set a good example for my children by reading, playing educational games, inquiring about their day, and talking with them about what I am reading. |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There are plenty of supplies and resources available to assist my children during their study time, such as a dictionary, pens, pencils, paper, erasers, writing paper, etc. |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I evaluate my children's outside activities to ensure they are not overloaded, and there is enough time to study. |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My children study a minimum of one hour per day or 30 minutes per subject (this does not include homework time). |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I show interest in my children's work by taking them to the library, talking about school and learning activities, asking about what they learned in school, and attending school activities. |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I check my children's school planner everyday. |
| 10. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I help my children become and stay organized by purchasing subject dividers for notebooks, making certain papers are organized and behind applicable dividers, and their backpacks are neat and orderly. |
| 12. <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I stay in contact with my children's teacher(s) to check on his or her progress. |

If you answered "no" to any of the questions above, re-examine your current home learning setup. Take your "no" and turn it into a "yes" by making that action part of your daily routine. A consistent academic program in the home will help your children focus, concentrate, and realize that education is priority.

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PAZZAZ



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SUCCESS THROUGH ACHIEVEMENT

Winter 2004

Dear Friends,

Many exciting new opportunities lie ahead for PAZZAZ in 2004, and this newsletter is just one way for you, our partners, parents, and friends, to share in this wonderful story. Now, through this newsletter, you'll have a bi-annual view into PAZZAZ and the lives that are changing here.

PAZZAZ began in 1995 as an after-school enrichment program for high school students, helping children with tutoring and homework assistance. We quickly realized that many of our students needed help with reading, so we began "Reading with PAZZAZ" using the very effective Lindamood-Bell literacy program. To date, we've helped more than 700 children each year with these core programs, and touched the lives of thousands more through our other programs -- like our cable-access TV show *All Eyez on Teens*, the Oratorical Contest, and the annual AIDS and Back to School conferences.



In November, we launched "Team Support" -- a six-month family group interaction program funded by a grant from The California Endowment. Team Support offers real answers from a licensed psychotherapist to 25 at-risk families struggling with poor communication and interaction between the parents and children, anger management, and other negative elements.

Our initial desire was simply to help children struggling in school. What we found is that when children discover they can learn and succeed, it has a tremendous impact on changing the way they view themselves in the world. They move from a downward cycle of underachieving to an upward direction that sets them on the path to pursuing a college education and success in life.

In this newsletter, you will meet some of our rising stars. You'll meet our very motivated *All Eyez on Teens* cast and production crew. And you'll get a new perspective on creating a "Learning Zone" home.

We want you to share in our struggles, our stories and our successes. That's why we've just launched our "Tutor-for-a-Day" program, in which representatives of corporations and foundations get an up-close look at our work by tutoring a group of four kids side-by-side with another tutor and discover first hand the value in building up these kids.

There is no greater asset to us personally, as a community, and as a country as our children. When they find success, we all do. Thank you for joining us in this quest.

Paul and Zoneice Jones, Co-founders of PAZZAZ

Important dates to remember

(Call us to learn more.)

- March 20**
 - Parent Meeting
- April 10**
 - 2nd Round Competition Oratorical Contest
- May 1**
 - Finals — Oratorical Contest
- May 22**
 - PAZZAZ Achievement Awards Dinner

For more information about these events, please call (619) 264-6870.



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Jr. High Rising Star

BRANDON FOUNTAIN

Three years ago, Brandon was an average student. His parents knew his grades could be better, but they couldn't put their finger on the cause.

Even Brandon knew something wasn't right. He was struggling a bit, especially in math. "I could have done better, but I didn't know why I wasn't. I just kept making the same mistakes over and over again."

Bruce, Brandon's father said, "He's a very shy boy. He hesitates to ask questions. I think he was afraid to ask for help."

His parents learned about PAZZAZ from a friend whose son was going there. They visited PAZZAZ, talked with the Joneses,



and were impressed by what they saw. They enrolled Brandon in the program and, within a few months, his grades improved.

"The tutors helped me see the mistakes I was making," said Brandon. They explained graphing,

scientific notation, and standard notation in a way that made sense. My favorite thing about PAZZAZ is that when I'm having problems with my homework, they help me understand what I need to do."

By the first quarter of seventh grade, Brandon made the honor roll for the first time. The next two quarters, his grades were A's and B's. He's holding a 3.5 G.P.A.

"There's been a big change in Brandon," said Bruce. "He's more comfortable communicating with adults. There's a big difference in his study habits – instead of working in front of the TV, now he does his homework at the desk in his room. We're so impressed with PAZZAZ and its programs that we enrolled our fourth grade daughter in the program, too."

"Before, I wasn't doing my best," Brandon said. "Now, I'm succeeding!"

Elementary Rising Star

ELI SHIFFER

Last year, second-grader Eli Shiffer had a homework problem. He just didn't want to do his homework.

"It was hard for us to get him to come home and concentrate on his homework. He wanted to do homework on his terms, his way. No matter what we tried, he just wasn't doing it," said Fred Shiffer, Eli's father.

Eli's grades reflected a lack of commitment to his work. His grades were mostly "incomplete" and "needs improvement." Then, a friend of the family shared the success her daughter was having in the after-school homework assistance program offered by PAZZAZ.

When tutorial assistance fails to change a student's performance, PAZZAZ's staff considers two options: the School Buddy program or the Learning Zone Home. In the School Buddy program, a staff member or tutor shadows a student at school, observing the student to get a better idea of why the student is failing and what needs to be done to make improvement. The Learning Zone Home assesses the student's home environment to make it more conducive to doing homework and studying.

In Eli's case, Program Coordinator Darrell Williams spent one Saturday setting up a Learning Zone Home. The two worked on homework all day.



"Darrell sat him down, and they got serious about his attitude," Fred said. After that, Eli developed a new outlook on homework.

Today, Eli is a third grader. Twice a week, he still comes to PAZZAZ to work through his homework with the tutors. His grades now range from good to excellent.

"The tutors are so nice. They help me a lot with my homework, especially math," Eli explained. "It was hard for me before, but now it's better."

All Eyez on Teens

All Eyez on Teens is a "must-see" TV show for teenagers. This 30-minute, cable-access television show, sponsored by PAZZAZ, inspires teenagers to continually apply learning skills and increase self-confidence.

Planned, produced, and hosted entirely by a volunteer group of 10 to 15 teens, the show addresses issues that shape their lives and those of their peers – like drugs, alcohol, community issues, and family and peer relationships. It also gives the teens an opportunity to overcome stereotypical images that define the age group, and often times, their race.

All Eyez on Teens has been on the air since 1996, broadcasting more than 125 weekly shows since its debut. Working as a team, the young men and women ranging in age from 13 to 19 chose a topic for

each show. With separate assignments, they conduct in-depth research on various aspects, as well as identify and schedule guest speakers to be interviewed on the show.

Each team member has a role in show production, from running cables and operating the camera to directing. All take turns as on-air hosts. Shows are non-scripted, unrehearsed, and usually unedited, calling for a high level of excellence and teamwork from all members.

"We're like a family," said B.J. Penick, a two-year All Eyez on Teens

Watch All Eyez on Teens every Sunday at noon on COX cable channel 23, and Fridays at 8:30 p.m. on Time Warner cable channel 16.

member who was recently named Volunteer of the Year by the PAZZAZ staff. "At first, I got involved as a way to do some volunteer work, coming in every day for a couple of months. But when my volunteer assignment was complete, I just kept coming."

Zoneice Jones, co-founder and president of PAZZAZ, said All Eyez on Teens plays an important role in shaping the worldviews of the teens who become involved.

"All Eyez on Teens expands students' horizons beyond themselves and their immediate family. They develop speaking, researching, and organizing skills and learn all aspects of television show production. At the same time, they meet key business, political, and community leaders and gain a better understanding of the forces that shape our community," she said.

Built into this program is a mentorship component. Former All Eyez on Teens participants who've gone on to college continue to work with the volunteers as well as mentor students in PAZZAZ's other programs.

Students who participate in the show also commit to performing 20 hours of community service annually. They feed the homeless, organize school clean-ups, conduct voter registration drives, and more.

"We want our students to realize the positive impact they can have on our community and not be afraid to get involved – even if it means getting their hands dirty," Jones said.



The students have recently taken on a new role – fundraising. The group is approaching local businesses for funds to purchase an All Eyez on Teens van to transport the staff and equipment to tapings and teen-focused activities. To support the students in reaching their goal, please contact PAZZAZ at (619) 264-6870.

