



3rd Grade Reading Success Matters

Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (SCGLR)

July 2019

Three Whooty Whoos! Just for YOU!

On May 4, 2019, SCGLR hosted the Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge Blast Off event. More than 300 individuals from Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties spent the day learning, sharing, and strengthening abilities to combat the summer slide.

Since then, together, we have encouraged 8,000+ kids in 90 summer camps to read 149,681 books and are helping families understand the importance of summer learning.

Three Whooty Whoos! to all the wonderful community members who are participating!

Whooty Whooo!
Whooty Whooo!
Whooty Whooo!

To learn more, visit gradelevelreadingsuncoast.net and follow the local movement on Twitter at @SuncoastCGLR and Instagram.



MIND in the Making



FREE WORKSHOPS

Mind in the Making (MITM)
Currently Registering:

La mente en formación
Equipo Cerebro
Saturday, August 17 & 24

La mente en formación
Equipo Feliz
Friday, August 9
Saturday, August 10
Sunday, August 11

La mente en formación
Equipo León
Tuesday, September 10,
October 8, November 5,
December 3
5:00pm-7:00pm

La mente en formación
Equipo Koala
Tuesday, September 17,
October 22, November
12, December 10
5:00pm-7:00pm

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

There's a new girl in town, and she's already pretty popular. You

may recognize her from the [Five Finger Rule](#). Her name is Rita...Rita Story!

Soon, Rita is going to be making new friends at Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge camps. Rita's



image will serve as a reminder for parents, educators, and students of the importance of reading. She will share reading tips and other special treats.

[Reply to this newsletter](#) if you'd like Rita to stop by your Summer Reading Challenge site or if you'd like SCGLR to tag your org on [SCGLR's Facebook page](#) when she begins her journey!



Friday Fest at the Van Wezel

July 19
5:00p-9:00p

Back to School Bash

July 20
11:00a-1:00p

DeSoto County Back to School Fair

July 27
9:00a-12:00p

FREE Parenting Program Groups at Forty Carrots Family Center

What Can I Do?



Parents, Friends or Foes?



By Wendy Katz

Throughout my professional career as a teacher and administrator, I have listened to colleagues complain about parents.

"Andrew's parents don't care!"

"Several of my parents scrutinize my grades."

"Jeb's Mom won't allow him to accept responsibility for his own actions."

When it comes to parents/guardians, my observation is that SOME educators are rarely happy. They protest when parents aren't involved and grumble when they are

By Beth Duda

Often, when faced with seemingly overwhelming societal challenges, it's difficult to envision how any one person could make a meaningful difference. The scope and scale of the issues before us could make us believe one individual's efforts are too small to matter. This past week, I've had two powerful reminders that nothing could be further from the truth.

While attending the IEL National Family and Community Engagement Conference in Reno, NV, I had the opportunity to hear Veronica Palmer, Co-Founder and CEO of RISE Colorado, speak about the valuable lessons she learned from her grandmother. Veronica's grandmother was a gang member. She got pregnant while in high school, dropped out, went on welfare, and lived in the projects in Denver. However, she understood the way out was education, and she earned her GED, bachelors, and masters degree, and eventually became a social worker for Denver Public Schools. Veronica's grandmother broke the cycle of poverty for her family. Her decision to pursue her education changed the trajectory for her children and their children.

Veronica's story was still resonating for me as I was participating in a Pop Up Neighbor Through Laundry Event in Charlotte County. The Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading took over a laundromat for several hours, offering free laundry services to everyone who walked through the door along with books for the children and information from local partner agencies, including our lead partner, United Way of Charlotte County.

I noticed Tasha, a thin woman who appeared to be in her fifties. When she walked into the laundromat, she didn't have any clothes with her. When we shared we'd be doing all her laundry for free, she expressed the same kind of surprise and joy as the other patrons. She also expressed relief. Later, Tasha shared that she had come into the laundromat without her clothes because she wasn't sure how much money she had on her laundry card. She was pretty sure she wasn't going to be able to wash all her clothes, but she was hoping there would be enough to pay for at least one load. As she loaded all of her clothes into washing machines, she told me she got paid every other week, and this was an in-between week. She and her husband had encountered a couple of unexpected expenses, so money would be tight until her next paycheck.

When Tasha noticed United Way's involvement in our Pop Up Neighbor event, she told me that they had changed her life. Tasha didn't finish high school. An early pregnancy and other circumstances she called "bad decisions" had caused her to drop-out. Over the years, she raised four children while working as a waitress and bartender. When she was fifty, she began to ponder what her eventual retirement years would look like. She knew she wouldn't qualify for much in the way of Social Security because her waitressing and bartender jobs hadn't provided a steady or strong income. That's when she decided she needed to do something that would allow her to pay more into the system. So, at age 50, through a free program funded by the United Way, Tasha went back to school to study for her GED.

Upon completion, she enrolled in a technical college and learned the skills necessary to become a medical coder biller. For more than five years, Tasha has had a good job working in Sarasota County at a doctor's office. She reported that this new job had changed the standard of living for her and her husband with another added benefit. Because she successfully went back to school, two of her children have been inspired to do the same. Now, her grandchildren are growing up in homes where education is valued and pursued, and Tasha returning to school has had a ripple effect that will continue to inspire generations of her family.

Two women who chose to go back to school lifted their own lives and the lives of future generations. So, what can each individual do? Each of us can proudly and purposefully make decisions that will have both an immediate and long-lasting impact. Together, with each of us playing a part, we CAN make a difference.



too involved. What do they really want? *"America's school communities include some 80 million parents. About 40 million are far too involved in their child's education. About 40 million are far too removed. A few dozen have it pretty much right. Families face hard choices."* Dintersmith (2018).

For the most part, I lament that parents are really left out of K-12 public educational experiences. They send their children off to school, entrusting their most prized possessions to school staff. They don't leave their best kids at home! If they asked for input regarding teachers or placement, they are often labeled as "overzealous." Often, school administrators and teachers claim, decisions should be made by the school. I challenge that assumption for several reasons:

- Many parents had negative experiences themselves in school and therefore avoid school events and conferences whenever possible.

- Most teachers and administrators have never had any training in college coursework or from school districts on how to work successfully with parents. It should not be surprising that so many educators struggle and dread parent interactions. Even phone calls often create great trepidation from both sides.

- There is often a language barrier with many of the diverse students' families served. Structures and systems need to be orchestrated with genuine



SNN | Community leaders offer free laundromat service to get kids reading

care to offer ways to communicate in respectful ways.

[CONTINUE READING](#)

We welcome your thoughts. Contact us at info@GradeLevelReadingSuncoast.net.