

How To Launch a Faith-Based Mentoring Program



Building Blocks to Be Safe, Effective, and Sustainable

Masie Bross, Whiz Kids Director

3 Attributes of a Great Program

- **Safe:**
Children, their parents and volunteers feel secure in the environment.
- **Effective:**
All partners in the endeavor can see the impact of it.
- **Sustainable**
It is set up to continue, and not become another disappointment in a child's life.

What Are the Building Blocks?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple format • Serve a specific group • Identify the need • Church based • Partnership with a community agency • One-on-one mentoring • Club Time (character development) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site leadership • Volunteer training • Outcomes measurement • Healthy snacks
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Simple Format

Two-hour-a-week commitment from a volunteer, divided this way:

- 1 hour for mentoring
- 15 minutes for snacks
- 15 minutes for character development
- 30 for transportation (volunteer provided).

✓ Sustainable

Serve a Specific Group

Whiz Kids referral criteria:

- Attend a school with at least 85% of its students eligible for free or reduced lunch
- Referred by a teacher or principal
- Needing academic help
- Not severely learning disabled
- Need a positive relationship with a caring adult

In OKCPS alone this is 20,000 children!

✓ Effective

Identify the Need

Whiz Kids Identified Literacy

- 74% of Oklahoma's fourth graders are not reading at proficiency.
- Fourth grade reading failure rates are used to predict the number of prison beds needed ten years in the future.
- HALF of students not reading on grade level by the end of third grade will drop out.
- Learning in ALL subjects requires on level reading. Even math!

*✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable*

Identify the Need, cont'd

Why is reading so important?

- It greatly impacts high school graduation rates!
- Look at the difference between urban and suburban graduation rates in Oklahoma City: 80% of suburban students graduate while only 53% of urban students do.

*✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable*

Identify the Need, cont'd

How?

- Defined purpose and individual goals for each child (based on academic and life skills needs).
- Wide range of learning materials and activities available for use every week.
- Reward system in place.

*✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable*

Super Kid Sticker Pad 38

Name: _____

Book Comprehension Check List:

- Title - Name of the story
- Author - Who wrote the story
- Illustrator - Who created the pictures
- Setting - Time, place, and/or environment in which the story takes place
- Characters - Key to people, animals, or things
- Plot - Series of events that usually centers on a problem and how the characters solve that problem.

Books: *Please note: Books read below reading level do not count toward Super Kid Sticker Pad!*

2 nd Level (20-30 Page Books)	3 rd Level (20 Page Books)	4 th Level (20 Page Chapters)
Front Column Only	Front & Second Column	Front, Second, & Third Column

Worksheets:

2 nd Level	3 rd Level	4 th Level
Front Column Only	Front & Second Column	Front, Second, & Third Column

*When Book and Worksheet Column(s) complete, turn the Super Kid Sticker Pad in to your Coordinator for a trip to the prize box.

Church Based

Partnership between urban church close to the school and suburban church with resources:

- Allows for optimal recruiting of volunteers
- Provides students and their families a safe, familiar resource point in their community
- Sustainable (churches agree to recruit yearly for new mentors)

*✓ safe
✓ Sustainable*

Church Based, cont'd

How to Recruit?

- Yearly in the churches (must have buy-in from church leadership)
- Convey the need—Tell the Story! (Statistics, Pictures, Stories)
- Get a small commitment first (attend an informational meeting)
- Then ask for commitment to one child for one school year

Informed, committed volunteers are your greatest resource!

*✓ safe
✓ Sustainable*

Partnership with a Community Agency

For Whiz Kids, communication with and buy-in from local school/district provides the following benefits:

- Avenue of referral for students into the program
- A Teacher Liaison at the tutoring site to help train and support mentors
- Logistical help with getting kids to the mentoring site
- Pre- and post- academic scores.

*✓ safe
✓ Effective*

WHIZ KIDS

2011-2012 Whiz Kids Program Permission Slip

Whiz Kid Name: _____, DOB: _____ Please circle one: M or F
 Tutoring Site: _____ (Station Use Only) Start Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian, _____ has joined with _____ (School) _____ to offer services in a weekly tutoring and mentoring program called Whiz Kids. Every _____ from _____ p.m. to _____ p.m., starting on _____ volunteer tutors provide reading instruction for your child. Each child will have his/her own personal tutor for the entire school year. A teacher liaison will occasionally not be available on the during each tutoring session. Your teacher liaison is _____ Your school's calendar and active days will be followed. If your child misses three sessions, he/she will be dropped from the program for the year. Whiz Kids operates on the "Three Strikes" rule. If because of your child's behavior, he/she receives three warnings, he/she will not be permitted to attend the program the following week. We will not tolerate inappropriate behavior that is non-productive, disruptive, bullying, disrespectful, or/and disturbing to other children and adults. You will be notified. You are welcome to attend a session. Please fill out the following information about your child:

Home Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____
 Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____
 Emergency Contact Info: _____ Name/Relation to Child: _____ Phone Numbers: _____
 Yes, my child has my permission to be a Whiz Kid. Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Your child will be picked up and brought back home by their tutor and tutor partner. If your child should be dropped off somewhere other than your home address, please fill out the information below.
 Name: _____ Address: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 If not home to greet my child, the following responsible person (at least 12 years old preferably older) will be:
 Name/Relation to Child: _____ Name/Relation to Child: _____ Name/Relation to Child: _____

Partnership with the Local School District, cont'd

How is a faith-based program able to partner with a school?

- Special permission slip
- No proselytizing

✓ Safe
 ✓ Effective

WHIZ KIDS

2011-2012 Whiz Kids Program Permission Slip

Whiz Kid Name: _____, DOB: _____ Please circle one: M or F
 Tutoring Site: _____ (Station Use Only) Start Date: _____

2011-2012 Club Time Permission

I give my child permission to participate in additional activities at the Whiz Kids tutoring session at _____ CHURCH. These activities include games, singing, and a brief Bible message. I understand this to be optional. If you would like more information regarding these activities, we welcome and encourage you to join us.
 Yes, my child may participate in Club Time. No, my child may not participate in Club Time.
 Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

2011-2012 Photo Release Permission

Whiz Kids requests your permission to use your child's image, photographs or video, in its publications, promotional information, advertisement. Thank you for your cooperation.
 Yes, you may use my child's image. No, you may not use my child's image.
 Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

2011-2012 Access to Test Scores Permission

Whiz Kids is not related to your child's school, but is designed to help your child succeed in school. To help our tutors be effective, we would like permission to access your child's reading test scores. Please be assured that your child's scores will be used only to help our tutors identify areas needing improvement.
 Yes, you may access my child's scores. No, you may not access my child's scores.
 Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

One-on-One Mentoring

Requires more volunteers, but essential for:

- Organized environment (few behavioral disruptions)
- Relationship building
- Best results in shortest time-frame
- Volunteer retention

For many at-risk students, the time with their mentor each week may be the only time they have with an adult's undivided attention!

✓ Safe
 ✓ Effective
 ✓ Sustainable

Club Time

The faith-based portion of the weekly program:

- Short, interactive group teaching
- Character based curriculum
- Trained club time leader (Novo Ministries training)
- 15 minutes (be brief, be brilliant, be gone!)
- No proselytizing, just teaching

✓ Effective
 ✓ Sustainable

On Site Leadership

Each church involved in a mentoring site provides a volunteer coordinator (who is not a mentor or on staff):

- Trained yearly prior to beginning of school year
- Supported by Whiz Kids staff member assigned to the site
- Needs to be an organized people person
- Continues recruitment process year to year

✓ Safe
 ✓ Effective
 ✓ Sustainable

Mentor Training

Investment in your mentors is the BEST investment for your program:

- Job description for each participant (Principal, Teacher, Coordinators, Parent, Mentor, Student)
- Yearly application/background check
- Bi-weekly training
- Support from agency liaison and trained staff to help set goals for child.

✓ safe
✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable

Return to Tutor Manual Section 1.6

Whiz Kids
Whiz Kid & Parent/Guardian Roles and Responsibilities

(Please sign and return.)

Whiz Kid

1. Come to tutoring session openminded and ready to learn.
2. Communicate needs and accomplishments.
3. Complete program survey at the end of the year.
4. Is mindful of the following Whiz Kids rules:
Come Prepared To Work.
Stay Seated and Listen When Someone Else is Speaking.
Respect the Rights Of Others.
Keep Your Hands and Objects To Yourself.
If It Isn't Kind, Don't Say It.

Parent/Guardian

1. Fill out and signs all necessary permission slips.
2. Make sure child is ready for tutoring session and on time each week.
3. Be home or have responsible person there when child is brought home.
4. May attend a Whiz Kids session.
5. Exchange information with volunteer tutor in child's progress periodically.
6. Complete program survey at the end of the year.
7. Accept liability for all extra-curricular activities with tutor (on weekends, holidays, etc.).
8. Inform Teacher Liaison of any concerns.
9. May attend events held at the site in conjunction with the program.

My child and I are aware of (and will abide by) the above mentioned items.
Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____
Whiz Kid's Signature _____ Date _____

Tutor Manual Section 4.5

Tutor and Whiz Kid Agreement

I, _____ (Whiz Kid) agree to follow the Whiz Kids rules:

1. I will come prepared to work.
2. I will stay seated and listen when someone else is speaking.
3. I will respect the rights of others.
4. I will keep my hands and objects to myself.
5. If it isn't kind, I won't say it.

★ Whiz Kid's Signature _____ Date _____

and I, _____ (Tutor) agree to the following:

1. I will commit to tutor you the entire school year.
2. Each week, I will make sure that transportation is available to you.
3. I will do my best to help you be a better student in school.
4. I will work with the teacher liaison and coordinators to help you set goals to be your best.
5. If I am not able to come to Whiz Kids, I will let you know.

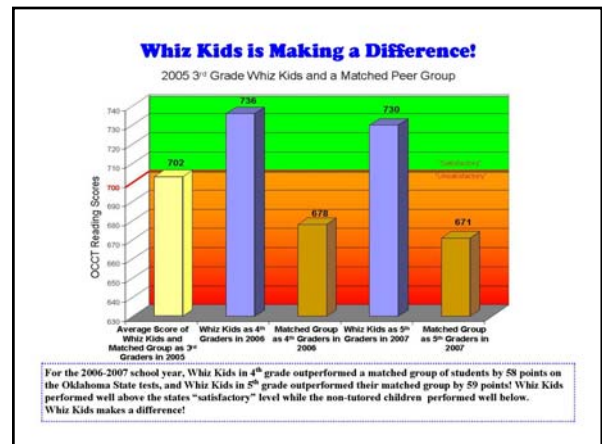
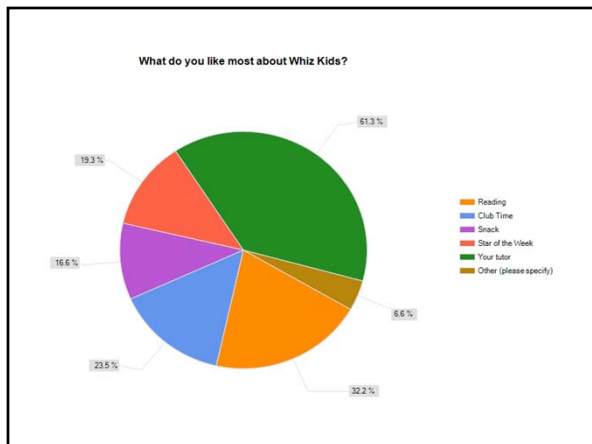
★ Tutor's Signature _____ Date _____

Outcomes Measurement

A MUST for sustainability!

- Pre- and post-program academic scores for each child, every year
- Annual surveys of each student, mentor, parent, teacher and coordinator
- Independent evaluation from an outside source every four years

✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable



Healthy Snacks

Many students come from families that have trouble keeping food on the table. Snacks at the site should be:

- Healthy and filling
- Cost effective (consider partnership with Food Bank)
- A chance for bonding between mentor and child

Many sites also send food packets home weekly or for holidays.

✓ safe
✓ Effective
✓ Sustainable

Ready to start building your own program? Have more questions?

Don't hesitate to contact Whiz Kids:

(405) 602-2815

masie@whizkidsok.org

www.whizkidsok.org



✓ safe
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