

Club Z In-Home Tutoring helps students succeed in school

BY LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD

For the past four years, Vanessa Rodriguez and business partner Zamira Pereira have been helping children succeed in school with their Club Z In-Home Tutoring Service.

Rodriguez's franchise covers Coral Gables, South Miami, Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay and Homestead. The partners originally planned to go out on their own, but when they learned about the Club Z franchise they decided that was the way to go since the company already had a successful system in place.

"My associates and I have been in education for a combined 20-plus years," Rodriguez says. "We are social workers by trade. We worked in the school system for some time and we saw a need for tutoring for children who were deficient or below grade level. And also children who are lacking proper student skills, organizational skills."

Even though there was a great need, Rodriguez says they didn't see that there was a great availability for tutors that go to the home.

"We saw a lot of tutoring centers," she says. "We thought in-home tutoring might be more convenient."

When a parent decides they might need help, they call Club Z and one of the company representatives will go through a 20-30 minute conversation to see if an enrollment visit is warranted. If both sides decide to go forward, an in-home enrollment visit is scheduled.

"We see exactly what is going on," Rodriguez says. "We really work around the parent's schedule. We go on the days and times convenient for them. If they say 7 p.m. twice a week, we find someone for 7 p.m. twice a week."

The tutors that go to the homes are certified teachers or degreed professionals. There are teachers who are psychologists, engineers and graduate students. In all, Club Z has 50-65 tutors. "They have a lot of knowledge and they have done a lot of tutoring," Rodriguez says.

Club Z also helps with SAT preparation as well as individual subject tutoring. Along with students who need help to pass subjects, Club Z also gets high achieving students.

"These are students who want to keep ahead of the game, who have goals," Rodriguez says. "That just proves to me once again that tutoring is going away from the negative to the positive."

PBA SPOTLIGHT



Club Z owners Zamira Pereira (left) and Vanessa Rodriguez want to help children do well in school.

Club Z is also a No Child Left Behind provider and does tutoring for Miami-Dade Schools that have received Ds or Fs. Children who are eligible for free lunches are eligible for the tutoring services through the federally-funded program.

"The same services that our parents in the regular program pay for, the students in No Child Left Behind get for free," she says.

Rodriguez says Club Z has started a pilot program at Westminster Christian's high school called Homework Helper. Students can go to Homework Helper if they have questions about how to properly complete their homework. The service is \$15 per session. They can sign up in advance or they can do it that day. If the program is successful, she expects to expand it to the elementary and middle schools.

Club Z is a member of the Pinecrest Business Association. For more information, call 786-249-6700.