

# Ready Set Read Sarasota

*This committee was charged with developing the framework for a literacy project that the Siesta Key Kiwanis Club can embrace and support. This is our initial proposal for that project.*

**Background:** Research shows that for children to succeed in school, it is crucial that they are reading ready when they enter kindergarten or first grade.

- Nearly half of all children under 6 in Sarasota and DeSoto Counties live in poverty.
- Children who live in poverty are less ready to read for a number of reasons, including less access to books, and less access to the vocabulary and discussions books bring.
- 46% of children in Sarasota and surrounding counties are not ready to read when they enter school

**Project objectives:** Collaborating with other organizations in order to work effectively and efficiently, we will work to get books to the children who need them most, children from 0-5 years old, living in poverty in Sarasota and DeSoto counties.

**Planned actions: We will:**

- Identify the appropriate children and programs with help from Early Learning Coalitions and other groups.
- Provide age and language-appropriate books for their preschool classrooms, day care facilities and homes, as is appropriate.
- Provide reading extension materials to engage teachers, parents, care givers, and families in the learning process, both with the book as it is delivered, and afterwards with a dedicated website.
- Apply for grants that provide books or funds to purchase affordable books
- Encourage Kiwanis club members and SLP members to engage in the project - raising funds, collecting books, reading to children, and participating in book distributions.
- Evaluate success by tracking the number of books we distribute, to whom they are distributed, whether they are for classroom use or for children to enjoy at home.

**How it's different:** This program differs from some traditional programs in several powerful ways, including:

- the valuable extension materials and website that will engage multiple contacts and generations in the learning process
- evaluation that will provide feedback to our club, our funders and our client groups on the program's progress, enabling us to make focused improvements.

*We ask the Board to adopt "Ready Set Read Sarasota" as a project of the Siesta Key Kiwanis Club and Foundation.*

**Respectfully submitted, "Ready Set Read – Sarasota" Design Committee, April 2021**