

# Homework help available online to city students

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**NORWALK** — Free homework help is just a mouse click away for Norwalk students.

An online tutor service called Live Homework Help is available to kids in grades four through 12 at the Norwalk Public Library's Web site, [www.norwalklib.org](http://www.norwalklib.org).

The free service, which offers help in math, science, social studies and English to any city student with a Norwalk Public Library card, is made possible through funding from the library, the Norwalk Housing Authority, Norwalk Education Foundation the Norwalk Public Schools and The United Way of Norwalk and Wilton, said Lauren Rosato, executive director of the Norwalk Education Foundation.

Students typically have to pay \$50 an hour for a private tutor, she said, a fee that some lower-income parents cannot afford for their kids. Live Homework Help, however, takes the finances out of the equation, enabling any student to find the homework assistance they need, Rosato said.

"We are bringing to Norwalk Public School students a very valuable service," said Rosato, who noted the program is provided by the Manhattan-based international instruction service Tutor.com, Inc. "This is a resource that our children need, especially those who can't pay for a private tutor service."

The online service, which is available weekdays from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m. year round, has been offered since Sept. of 2003, and has saved Norwalk students and their parents an estimated \$191,000 over the past four years, she said.

Tutors are certified teachers, college professors and professionals with college degrees in the subjects they tutor, she said, and the service is available in English or Spanish.

Students using the program have an opportunity after each session to comment on the help they received, and, since day one, the replies have been nothing but positive, Rosato said.

Kids have commented that they would never be able to finish their homework without the online service, Rosato said.

They also say the online tutors explain things in a manner that's easy to understand, said Les Kozzerowitz, the library's director.

"It's tremendously gratifying to see these

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kids say that a light bulb went off," he said. "I think of all the programs I've been involved with, this is one of the most valuable, if not the most valuable."

To use the service, kids can go to the library's Web site and click on the Live Homework Help link. From there, all they need to do is follow the prompts, he said.

Nearly 30 percent of the students attending Norwalk Pub-

lic Schools since 2003 have utilized the service, Rosato said, with more than 12,000 kids signing in during the past four years.

Despite the response to the online program, Rosato said she wishes more students knew about it.

On average, about 250 to 350 students are using the service each month, she said, but she would like to see more than 500 students logging into the program.

"Teachers change, and not all the teachers out there might know about the service," Rosato said.

Jennifer Kohn, vice president of corporate communications at Tutor.com, Inc., said the company has more than 2,200 tutors helping students in 43 states through 1,600 libraries Web sites. Four other Connecticut libraries are offering the service to students, she said, including libraries in Hartford, Ferguson, New Haven and New Britain.

"It's growing," she said. "We're adding customers every year."

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