

LHS-9

Live online homework help

Children who live in Glendale, Arizona (219,000), can get live, online help with their homework. The Glendale public library contracts with a private company that provides tutors who are typically certified teachers or others with subject matter expertise. Children in grades 4-12 must enter their library card numbers to enter the site from the Glendale library Web site. They indicate their grade and the subject matter (math, English, social studies, or science). They then "chat" with a tutor by typing in their questions, and the tutor helps the children understand the problem without providing the solution. The site also allows children and tutors to illustrate math or science problems using a drawing tool. Sessions typically last 20 minutes, and children may use the service for free for as many sessions as they want. About 100 children per month were using the service by the end of the 2002-2003 school year; Glendale expects this number to increase as more home-schooling families become aware of it. The library spends \$17,000 a year for the service, which is supported by a literacy grant.

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