

GiftsToGive sends books to Lincoln School

By KIM LEDOUX

August 04, 2009 12:00 AM

NEW BEDFORD — Youngsters in a remedial summer program at the Lincoln School now have some books to call their very own.

After reading about the program in The Standard-Times, "(we) decided to do something to help these children with their reading," said Cheryl Ritchotte, program manager for GiftsToGive Inc. That "something" was a donation of 180 books.

The nonprofit GiftsToGive Inc., located in a mill on 21 Cove St., provides books, clothes, school supplies and other items to children from low income homes in the New Bedford and Fall River area.

"The kids were so excited. They each received packs of six books and were trading them back and forth right away," said Lincoln teacher Deb Perry. "One little girl loves horses, so she was looking for horse books, while other kids were into different things. It's sad to say, but a lot don't have books at home or no one takes them to the library."

According to Richotte, studies have found that the average number of children's books in poor, urban households is four, whereas in more affluent homes children tend to have 200.

Teenagers from New Directions, a local summer work program, put the books together for each child.

Children in the Lincoln School program, called Project Soar, have spent the summer receiving extra reading instruction. Most of them come from families who do not speak English as a first language; school staff found through testing that these students needed a little more help to succeed with English in an academic environment.

Highlights of the program included weekly trips to New Bedford landmarks to broaden the children's horizons with new experiences and vocabulary.

For more information on GiftsToGive, go to www.giftstogive.org.

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