First Steps to Success

For many parents it’s a challenge to prepare a child for Kindergarten. There are a lot of questions and concerns that arise as families prepare a child for their educational journey.

For families in Third Street Alliance’s Pre-K Counts program, Fresia Mayoria, Family Engagement Specialist, is there to provide guidance.

Fresia joined Third Street Alliance’s team in 2017 as a liaison between the parents and the classroom, providing families with resources either one-on-one or during monthly family meetings.

“Families can ask Fresia for assistance, resources or ways to problem solve,” said Nancy Frederick, director of The Learning Center.

Sometimes Fresia is providing assistance to fill out kindergarten registration forms or tracking required vaccines to attend school. Other times she is finding solutions to a child’s behavioral or developmental delays.

Fresia enjoys working with and providing assistance to parents for issues that may not be focused on their child. She For example, families often ask her how they can obtain internet access at home or cell phones for reduced costs and Fresia directs families to service providers that have plans for low income families.

Late in 2018, with support from Fresia, The Learning Center launched a new initiative called “Parent Cafés.” The cafes are open to parents in both The Learning Center and Homeless Services. The sessions, held twice a week, center around the highs and lows of raising children. Parents are encouraged to share their personal stories, struggles and successes for their families.

A facilitator keeps the conversation on track and focuses the sessions on increasing family strength, preventing child abuse and neglect and learning about child development.

A second round of Parent Cafes will begin in April.

Although the program is very new, it has been beneficial.

“It’s a great opportunity for parents to talk, share, learn, and de-stress,” Fresia said.
A Note From the Executive Director’s Desk

Electrifying Our Mission for the New Year

Strong gusts of wind are whipping through Easton on a sunny blustery Monday. It feels like spring is just around the corner and the winds are clearing out the lethargy left behind by this year’s icy slick winter.

Children from our Learning Center are parading across the gym in celebration of Crazy Hat Day as part of “Read Across America with Dr. Seuss” Week.

We’ll be meeting with our electricians later in the day to begin a new project upgrading electrical panels throughout the building. And, we launched our strategic planning process, developing our vision for the future and aligning our work to achieve that vision.

Two major initiatives we’ll carry forward this year: helping individuals and families experiencing the crisis of homelessness achieve safe and stable housing, and preparing young children to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

We are committed to doing this work with joy and compassion and invite you to join us on our journey.

Follow the progress of our planning process on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/thirdstreetalliance or reach out to Kim Rose, Director of Development, for more information on how you can get involved.

Become more than a neighbor

The benefits of having a good neighbor are endless, and you know when there is a need, they can be depended upon to help.

Now you can have the chance to be a friend to the women, children and families that turn to Third Street Alliance in their time of need. We welcome you to join our new Good Neighbor Society by enrolling in our recurring donation program.

As part of the program you can easily make a gift that best fits your budget and makes an impact. There are several ways to participate: (1) You can enroll online through www.thirdstreetalliance.org/donate by selecting the amount you wish to give and the frequency of your gift, (2) if your employer has a program that allows you to have donations automatically deducted from your paycheck, or (3) by participating through the United Way payroll deduction program.

Together we can do more to provide opportunities for our families to be successful.
If You Were Given A Magic Wand

What would you do with a magic wand? When the School Aged Child Care students were asked what they would do if they found a magic wand, their answers were magical.

After discussing various issues affecting the community and the world, the students illustrated how they would find solutions to those problems if they had a magic wand.

The solutions, filled with kindness, stretched the imagination, ranging from ensuring all families could take a vacation at no cost to ensuring that all children had homes and families. Some answers focused on cleaning the environment, such as picking up all the trash in the world or making people fly so there wouldn’t be polluted air to breathe.

A few students focused on helping those that were homeless. One student wants stores for just homeless people to use, and another wants to build instant houses for the homeless.

The weekly activity is an opportunity for the students to flex their creative muscles, according to SACC Teacher Tina Eckhart. The questions are based on the topics the students are learning in school or a topic of conversation in the SACC classroom.

You can find more artwork from the students by following Third Street Alliance on Facebook and Instagram @ThirdStreetAlliance.

Historic Mansion Tours

Join us on May 4, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to tour and learn more about the historic Simon Mansion, home to Third Street Alliance for Women & Children.

41 N. Third Street, Easton
Tours are free; donations accepted
Thinking Outside the Tee Box
Donor Spotlight

There’s a lot of work that goes into making any event successful, and sometimes there’s a lot of heart invested in the event, too.

For the Hackett Park Disc Golf group, the hard work began in 2012, when it formed to raise funds for upgrading the disc golf course at the park. Four years later as the group prepared to host its first disc golf tournament, they wanted to make it special by raising funds for a local nonprofit.

With an interest in supporting Third Street Alliance, Tim Riley visited the mansion and spoke with staff about using the disc golf tournament as a fundraiser. Hoping to bring in a few hundred dollars, the first tournament in September 2016 raised more than a $1,000. In total, the disc golf group has donated more than $7,000 to the agency through the annual tournament.

“This event is special for us because of all the people in the disc golf community who get involved to make the event a success,” said organizers Tim Riley and Gabe Monck. “The generosity of the disc golf community is amazing. We would not be able to do this without the love and support from everyone involved.”

Each year the event continues to grow through the efforts of Tim and Gabe. In 2017 the event faced an unexpected change in leadership, but the pair was determined to make the event successful despite the mild set back, and they did.

When Tim and Gabe came to Third Street Alliance to present the check from the 2018 event, they shared that they were surprised with the turnout, despite autumn’s coldest, wettest and windiest weather. Players from as far as Philadelphia and upstate New York were motivated to make the trip to Easton to play the sport and support the agency.

“When I first heard about the Disc Golf Tournament I was impressed, but had no idea of the scale of involvement and dedication of the participants,” said Kim Rose, Director of Development. “From working to get community businesses involved to showing up to play in incredibly bad weather, the disc golf players show extraordinary heart. What they do for our families provides opportunities for so many to work toward a better life.”

If your group wants to host a fundraiser for Third Street Alliance, contact Kim Rose, Director of Development, at 610-258-6271, ext. 301 or by email at KRose@thirdstreetalliance.org.

*Disc golf is a game that is played like traditional golf, but with a flying disc instead of balls and clubs. Local leagues promote playing during the spring and summer months.
The 23rd Annual Bistro: East Meets West
March 30, 2019
6:00-10:00 p.m.
50/50 Raffle, Silent, Live & Fund-A-Need Auctions

For tickets and more information: www.thirdstreetalliance.org/bistro
When Robin came to Third Street Alliance in September, she had no other choice. She always held out hope for something to save her and her family from the dire situation they were facing. “I really did not know what we were going to do,” Robin said.

As the sole provider for herself and her four kids, after living two years without heat and unable to keep up with monthly bills, Robin was out of options. She needed a safe place for her and her family to live when they were evicted from their apartment. After calling 211 and Family Connections at the Easton Area School District, Robin, her adolescent daughter and teenage son were given the opportunity to move into Third Street Alliance.

Within the first 48 hours, Robin began adjusting, finding her way through the building and learning to live within one room. “It’s a whirlwind and a lot to take in,” Robin said of the first few hours in the homeless services program. “I’m so overwhelmed with gratefulness for a safe space to land during my crisis.”

Orientation to the homeless services program begins with a meeting with caseworker January Sleiman. During this initial meeting, January completes necessary paperwork while taking notes to formulate an individual plan for each resident.

With Third Street Alliance taking a housing-first approach, the focus is finding permanent housing for residents quickly and then focus on other necessities, such as access to food, medical care, mental health or substance abuse treatment, as well as ensuring children receive transportation to and from school.

For Robin, transitioning into the Bridge Program at Third Street Alliance is part of her housing plan. Her next step will be to find permanent housing. “My priority is stabilizing a family once they enter our shelter,” January said. “Then we tackle all the other priorities. I do my best to connect residents with community resources that will assist them in their journey towards self-sufficiency.”

Support of new residents goes far beyond meeting and setting plans. “I’ve even hopped on the bus with some of the ladies to show them how to use public transportation,” January said.

While finding employment may be part of a plan, if a new resident is employed like Robin was, the ability to maintain the employment while residing at Third Street Alliance is discussed, including looking at transportation needs and helping to plan bus routes, if needed. Robin takes the bus as far as it will go and then walks the remaining distance, more than 2 miles, to and from work each day.

After these preliminary steps are taken, residents meet weekly with January to stay on track in accordance with their individual plans. For Robin, the sessions are helpful in finding her path to success. “I’m finding out a lot about myself that I haven’t had the opportunity to do before,” she said about working with January. “It’s so comfortable and it’s a safe environment. When we have our meetings it gives me insight.”

After a month of living at Third Street Alliance, Robin found out that her 19-year old daughter, Rachel, was living on the streets. The homeless services staff was able to help Rachel, and she is now in the homeless services program, too. Robin said Rachel is thriving on her own, attending counseling and encouraging her brother to do the same.