

Annual Report 2015-16

Celebrating 50 Years of Service

Leading the Way



HEAD START

50 YEARS



Our mission...

Providing resources for the evolving needs of community children and families, in support of efforts to achieve their goals.

Serving Monroe County since 1965

From Our Executive Director, Tim Lee...

What a milestone year it has been!

Celebrating five amazing decades of service to our community has been a focal point of the last 12 months. A big part of our program year was remembering and saluting the past 50 years with recognition and special events. These included a festive children's parade at our Family Fun Day, with participants dressing up to the theme of "What I want to be when I grow up." For the local Saint Patrick's Day Parade, our float had a great



big anniversary cake and contrasted classrooms from 1965 and 2015. We had our second successful golf tournament with the Optimist Club at Shawnee Inn and participated in community events/outreach that highlighted our golden celebration.

Our 50th Anniversary Gala at Stroudsmoor's Terraview featured live music, a silent auction, lots of old photos, VIP guests and important awards. Blair Hyatt, executive director of the PA Head Start Association, was our keynote speaker. Special memories were shared by Johanna Weaver, our executive director from 1972 to 2002. And a new honor, our "Gold Star Award" was presented to Sanofi Pasteur for their outstanding commitment, support, and partnership for more than 30 years.

Sanofi Pasteur and Pocono Medical Center were the two major sponsors of our Gala and we thank them for their ongoing generosity. I also want to recognize the other businesses and individuals who helped sponsor this event. These partners have made so many of our achievements possible, as well:

ESSA Bank and Trust PNC Bank
State Senator Mario M. Scavello (our Master of Ceremonies)
Strunk-Albert Engineering The Mattioli Foundation
Weiler Corporation Riley and Company
AmeriHealth Caritas Northeast

I also want to send out a big shout-out to the PSFC staff members who make a difference in the lives of our children and families every day. Without their tireless dedication, our accomplishments would not be possible. Our parents and guardians need to be recognized and applauded, too, for their role as our preschoolers' first and most important teacher. Our agency is what it is today because of the children and families we have served... since our *beginnings* at East Stroudsburg College to our *present service* at West 4th Street to our *future* at the former Coolbaugh Elementary Center in Tobyhanna.

I always like to reference a quote in my remarks, so I will end with one from President Lyndon B. Johnson, the founder of Head Start, made during a speech in the Rose Garden on May 18, 1965:
"I believe that this is one of the most constructive, and one of the most sensible, and also one of the most exciting programs that this Nation has ever undertaken."

As we embark on the next 50 years, everyone at PSFC shares this excitement, too!



State Senator Mario Scavello, along with State Representatives Rosemary Brown and David Parker, presented honorary citations at our Gala recognizing Monroe County Head Start's 50 years of service to the community.

Educational Achievements & Child Outcomes

...from Program Director Sandy Shay

Children were assessed using the Teaching Strategies GOLD during the period from October 15, 2015 to May 5, 2016. The data reflects the growth of 185 children — 56 three-year-olds and 129 four-year-olds. The six areas of development (and three sub-areas) are grounded in 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, the PA Early Learning Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

Significant growth was noted in all areas of development for both ages. The most growth was in the areas of math, literacy, cognitive and social emotional. Least amount of growth was in the areas of physical and language, but they still exceeded expectations for age level.

Area of Development	3 Year Olds	4 Year Olds	Program
Social/Emotional/Social Studies	82%	92%	87%
Physical/Fine Motor/Gross Motor	93%	97%	95%
Language	84%	90%	87%
Cognitive/Science/Technology/The Arts	84%	94%	89%
Literacy	84%	85%	85%
Mathematics	84%	84%	84%

Although the results show growth, our program needs to pay attention to whether children are meeting the developmental expectations for their age level. This is especially important for four-year-olds who need to acquire the school readiness skills to be successful in kindergarten.

These strong outcomes can be attributed in part to the support of the East Stroudsburg Area School District's KTO Grant. This initiative provided a literacy coach, professional development opportunities for teachers, the purchase of resources/classroom materials and new computer systems/integrating technology into the curriculum. The growth and development of our Child Well Being System continued to have a positive impact. Other contributing factors were: staff training, feedback on CLASS instructional support strategies, providing more quality materials in the weaker domain areas, and individual support/guidance. Another program strength is a partnership with Cornerstones, an agency assisting children with autism.

Family/Health/Nutrition Highlights

- *Family Engagement efforts increased, through initiatives like Job Club, Money Club, Citizen CPR, a pancake breakfasts and T-ball lessons.*
- *New staff were added to the family advocate team.*
- *Health Literacy Training, funded by Pocono Health Foundation, was offered to all parents.*
- *Mobile Dentist days were held twice a year and Dental Day was held in autumn.*
- *All teachers/classroom assistants took part in required CPR/first aid training and fire safety training.*
- *Our Wellness Day/Health Fair offered more services/activities and was moved to August (from October). AmeriHealth Northeast again sponsored this event, with mandatory attendance by all families.*
- *The annual Family Fun Day was again held at Dansbury Park in October. New attractions, such as karate, cupcake decorating, a children's parade, and contests were added and helpful info was shared.*
- *An additional cook was added to our kitchen staff.*
- *A dietician from Kinsley's Shop-Rite provided training to parents/kids.*
- *Pocono Mt. West High School again sponsored a Day of Literacy for our Coolbaugh Center children.*

An overview of our agency and its services/programs

PSFC provides the highest-quality nationally and state-accredited Pre-Kindergarten readiness classrooms, as well as comprehensive family support services, for more than 300 children from economically-challenged households. We offer instruction to children ages 3 to 5 years-old at 9 classroom sites throughout Monroe County. Our vision is to be recognized as our county's foremost educator/provider of child-focused services.

Some major achievements during 2015-16:

- *The purchase of the former Coolbaugh Elementary Center, a 90,000 square foot building, was finalized with the Pocono Mt. School District during the summer. An educational and community services center will open there in the beginning of program year 2016-17.*
- *Two Head Start classrooms were added at Smithfield Elementary Center*
- *A Head Start classroom opened at Tobyhanna Elementary Center*
- *Pre-K Counts classrooms were added in both the East Stroudsburg Area and Pocono Mountain School Districts*
- *Family engagement, communication and community outreach efforts have increased.*
- *Two education coordinators were added to the staff, with additional staff hired in the fiscal department, classrooms, and behavioral health department.*

Ensuring the best quality **Preschool/Kindergarten Readiness Educational Program** is a major priority. Our classrooms are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We also have earned the designation of a Keystone STAR4 rating, the top level of state achievement. PSFC is the only local agency that maintains this status at multiple sites in our community.

The federal and state funded **Head Start** program has been administered in Monroe County by our agency since 1965. We provide an extensive array of family support services and school readiness programming for our community's most vulnerable children and families, to ensure the accomplishment of goals and educational success.

Healthy Start Screenings are an integral part of the classroom, with each child receiving physical, vision, dental, hearing, speech, and developmental screenings.

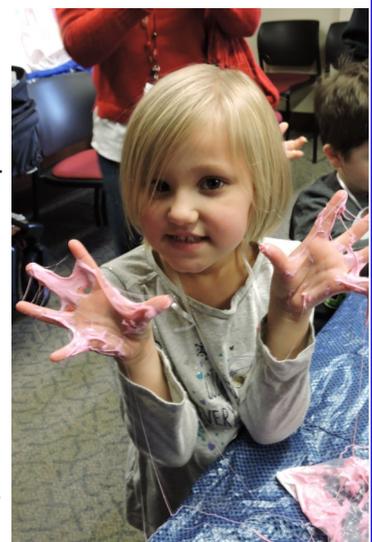
Full-Day Child Care Classrooms provide a safe high-quality nurturing and learning environment for children of working parents. These classes are available to the public on a non-discriminatory basis via subsidized care or self-pay.

Our **Child Well-Being System** has greatly enhanced the social/emotional quality of our classrooms. This system was developed during the past several years in response to the increased enrollment of children with challenging behaviors and families in crisis. Key components are: the expertise and guidance of highly-trained behavioral health personnel, an enhancement of curriculum to include a stronger social/emotional component, greater emphasis on teacher training in this field, and higher level of family involvement. PSFC classrooms have become model environments for demonstrating this successful approach.

Coordination of the **Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN)** in Monroe County has been PSFC's responsibility since 2012. This role involves providing information and coordinating efforts with all childcare providers in our community to work toward raising the quality of early childhood education.



State Rep. Jack Rader reads to the Head Start preschoolers at TEC.



Our **Youth Mentoring Program** provides the opportunity for high school students interested in a career in early childhood education to spend time in our classrooms. These students receive hands-on guidance and support from ECE degreed teachers.

The **Health Literacy Program**, funded through the Pocono Health Foundation/Pocono Medical Center, provides first-response training for parents. It features an easy-to-follow guide, a first-aid kit and instruction in the use of all tools. This training empowers parents to take control of their families' healthcare needs, and greatly reduces the need for emergency room or doctor visits, leading to fewer missed school and work days.

PSFC's **Emergency Assistance Program** provides vital food, clothing and fuel assistance to families in crisis. The goal is to offer some stability to families who are facing difficult financial choices due to unexpected loss or expense. The emergency help that PSFC offers can mean the ability to purchase medicine, groceries, gas for the work vehicle, or heating fuel/electricity for the home. This provides the support that a family needs.

Our **"Adopt a Family"** program ensures that many of our most vulnerable families are provided with a complete holiday celebration of food, clothing, toys and gifts for the holiday season. The employees of Sanofi Pasteur and Weiler Corporation — along with many other businesses, area churches, and individuals — provide all the holiday essentials and extras for about 70 families each year.

PSFC is a state approved **Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship** agency, which allows participation in the educational improvement tax credit (EITC) program. Corporations in PA are eligible to apply for these tax credits and pass them on to approved agencies. PSFC is fortunate to be a recipient of these funds, which provide Pre-K scholarships for children of low-income working families to enroll in our high-quality classrooms. Vigon International, Strunk-Albert Engineering, ESSA Bank and Trust, First Keystone Bank, First National Bank, Pennstar, Penn Security, PNC and PPL have participated with contributions.



Volunteers have many ways to give their time and talents to our agency. Help is always needed in our classrooms, kitchens, outdoor areas or administrative offices. Assisting with special events and community outreach are other opportunities. Volunteers range in age from students to seniors, and include parents. The experience is very rewarding for all.

Business, Professional and Civic Partnerships are key to PSFC's success. Our agency is affiliated with various organizations and stakeholders, nationally, statewide and locally. These include: Kiwanis, AFP, MCAEYC, PA Head Start, Greater Pocono Chamber of Commerce and United Way of Monroe County.

Achievements in Early Childhood Quality Assurance, Accommodating Disabilities, and Transition to Kindergarten

Quality Assurance:

PA Department of Public Welfare licenses have been granted to the following centers—
East Stroudsburg and Coolbaugh

NAEYC Accreditation has been awarded to:

East Stroudsburg (expires 12/1/17)
Coolbaugh (expires 1/1/18)

Keystone STARS –

The following classrooms and centers have again earned STAR 4 status, the highest ranking awarded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

East Stroudsburg, Coolbaugh, Middle Smithfield and Resica

Head Start Self Assessment — All service areas are in compliance

Community Assessment — Continued to conclude that the greatest areas of need in Monroe County are the East Stroudsburg and Coolbaugh/Tobyhanna areas. PSFC's services are focused in those vicinities to meet the underserved population/residents that reside there.

Disabilities:

35 PSFC children received IU 20 services for special needs as follows:
9 – developmental delays, 17 – speech, 5 – autism and 4 – social emotional

Healthy Start developmental screenings were conducted for child care centers in Monroe County through partnership with Pocono Alliance.

Through collaboration with IU 20, PSFC arranged for staff from IU 20 to assist with screenings and referrals for our agency's annual Wellness Day/Health Fair in October.

Kindergarten Transition:

A total of 151 children were transitioned into neighboring school districts:

East Stroudsburg – 59
Stroudsburg – 34
Pocono Mountain – 53
Pleasant Valley – 5

- The partnership with Pocono Mountain and East Stroudsburg Area School Districts resulted in the opening of Head Start classrooms at Tobyhanna Elementary Center and Smithfield Elementary Center. During the program year,



PSFC Board of Directors 2015-16

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Carol Owens, Riley and Company, Inc.

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Community Partners/Stakeholders

The following businesses, organizations and individuals have played a key role in our achievements during the past year. Their generosity and contributions — whether time, talent, enthusiasm, resources/facilities, and/or treasures — are very much appreciated!

All our volunteers All sponsors, prize donors and participants in our Golf Tournament
 AmeriHealth Caritas Northeast Angel's Closet Anthony's Coats Becker's School Supplies
 CareerLink CCIS Children's Team of Monroe & Pike Counties
 Citizens Bank Colonial IU 20 Coolbaugh Township Library
 Community Church Cornerstones David W. Coulter Photography
 Eastern Monroe Public Library East Stroudsburg Area School District
 ESSA Bank & Trust East Stroudsburg University Everyone who supports our mission
 Everyone who helped with special events/fundraisers
 First Keystone Bank First National Community Bank Girl Scouts in the Heart of PA
 Greater Pocono Chamber of Commerce Great Wolf Lodge
 Interagency Council Key Club at East Stroudsburg High School South
 Keystone Propane Kiwanis Club of the Poconos—Daybreak Kinsley's Shop-Rite
 Maternal & Family Health Services/WIC Mattioli Foundation MCAEYC
 Monroe County Commissioners Monroe County Children & Youth
 Monroe County Highway Safety Program Monroe County Public Safety Building
 Monroe Realty Mother Nature's Way Landscaping/Excavating (Tim Schnaitman)
 Northampton Community College Old Navy Pennstar Bank Penn Security
 Pleasant Valley School District PNC Bank Pocono Alliance
 Pocono Dental Associates Pocono Family YMCA Pocono Medical Center
 Pocono Mountain School District Pocono 96.7 Pocono Raceway
 Pocono Record/Toys for Joy Pocono Tranquil Gardens PPL
 Quilts for Kids RestoreCore Riley & Co., Inc. Rotary Club of the Smithfields
 RSVP of Monroe County Sanofi Pasteur Shop-Rite of Stroudsburg
 SAAC Committee at ESU State Reps. Rosemary Brown, David Parker & Jack Rader
 State Senator Mario Scavello Strunk-Albert Engineering
 The Hughes Foundation Vigon International
 United Way of Monroe County Waste Management Weiler Corporation
 Women's Resources of Monroe County 93.5 WSBG Zion United Church of Christ



"Growing Daises," a local Girl Scouts council program, introduced some of our 5-year-old girls to scouting..



Over 100 volunteers from Community Church helped us with tasks at our new building in Tobyhanna in August..

