



Welcome: Our First Newsletter

We are excited to present our first Homewood-Brushton Family Support Center newsletter.

Moving forward, we will publish a new edition every month to celebrate our successful events and programs, share upcoming dates and events, and highlight the unique perspectives of our parents and staff members.

Thanks for reading!

Tracy Bulls, Director of Family Support
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Successful Event: Celebrating Thanksgiving

This year, we made and delivered home-cooked holiday meals in the Homewood and Wilkinsburg communities.

The effort was inspired, initiated, and funded by Mr. Rayner Jones. Having had the idea since the beginning of the year, he originally intended to do it alone, but the project grew into a collaboration. Many of us have experienced worry about where our next meal will come from. Rayner, a small business owner and parent leader for the Fathers Trying Together support group, remembers the feeling well from his past financial struggles.

Having been blessed in his own life, he committed himself to easing the burdens of others this holiday season.

View more photos on the Trying Together Facebook page.

Community Resource: The Homewood Early Learning Hub

The Homewood Early Learning Hub at 7219 Kelly Street connects parents and child care providers through engaging, developmentally appropriate, and fun programs to support healthy development and learning for children birth to age nine.

The Raising Readers Together Club and Buzzword Pittsburgh are held regularly throughout the year and promote language development, early literacy, and love for reading. In addition, Homewood Early Learning Hub also offers special events, such as last month's Balancing Your Holiday Plate series in collaboration with Let's Move Pittsburgh and Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Garden.

With three distinct playrooms (each centered on a different type of learning), The Homewood Early Learning Hub is an open space for you and your child to visit between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. There, your child can learn through play while you learn more about family programming and resources. Becoming engaged with the Hub is just one more step you can take to having an active role in your child's education and development.

To learn more about the Homewood Early Learning Hub, contact Rachelle Duffy, Director of Learning and Development at rachelle@tryingtogether.org or 412.421.3889.



Parent Perspective: Teach Me, My Child by Starr Mitchell

Being a strict mother with high expectations is the way to go! How else can your child learn effectively?

This school year my seven-year-old began her first year at a public school, where she was going to use all the skills that I spent hours teaching her for preparation for second grade. I just knew my baby was ready, or so I thought. I expected my daughter to be ten steps ahead of the other children because we had practiced for months, and I knew that all of our or “MY” hard work would finally pay off.

Well, needless to say, reality hit. My daughter was not only far behind in her schoolwork but was struggling to keep up because the work was very challenging for her. As her mother I did what I thought any parent should do: I took away toys, spent hours going over homework, sent her to tutoring, and gave her an earlier bedtime, thinking that these were the steps that needed to be taken. Two weeks later she was now completely failing her classes, and I couldn’t understand why. When I was a child this method worked for me, as it was enforced by my mother, so what was I doing wrong?

I spoke to my FDS, and she suggested that I have a parent/teacher conference, so I immediately did what any concerned parent would do and set up the meeting with her teachers. I took a look at her classwork and saw that she’d erased her paper so much that it had holes, and it broke my heart. At that moment, I realized that I had become the focus and not her school work.

Let me explain.

Because my child had been so stressed about doing her work to please me, she no longer cared about anything but winning my approval, and I believe she lost control. I knew that I had to change my strategies and ways of thinking in order to help my child. Sometimes, as parents, we want things so badly for our children that we lose sight of the child themselves. I can understand where the disconnect comes from and why our children may say ten years from now “Mom, I was never good enough for you.” I took my daughter home, talked to her, and cuddled her until it was time for her to go to bed. I asked her to forgive me for making her feel like her best wasn’t good enough because she needed a mom and not a dictator.

We’ve continued to practice her homework and the things that she’s been struggling with, and this week I can proudly say she brought home a 91%.

At Family Support, we want to celebrate our parents’ growth and achievements in education, employment, community, and interacting with their child.

Reach out to your Family Development Specialist to learn how you can share your thoughts and accomplishments surrounding your and your child’s development.



Staff Spotlight: Toni Beasley

*“Have a belief in yourself that is bigger than anyone’s disbelief.”
August Wilson*

Growing up within a family environment that was less than satisfactory, I witnessed many families being torn apart, whether it was through internal or external factors, and my family was no exception. I found myself being on my own at an early age, and I knew I was going to have to be brave, confident, and have a belief in myself that was bigger than anyone’s disbelief. Life brought many trials and tribulations, and it was scary being in a big world with little support, direction, and guidance...but through some odd reason (now I know that it was God), I was able to push through, and survival mode kicked in.

Today I’m not just a survivor of a dysfunctional family, I am living life. Through my own experience, I am able to recognize some of those same survival skills in my families, and because of that experience, I am able to meet the needs of the family, provide a safe environment, and support them through their many endeavors. Family Support is not just another program, service, or resource center.... we are a family!

Upcoming Events

Homewood-Brushton Family Support Center: 579 Rosedale Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

- Community Check-Up - Mondays | 1:00 - 4:00 pm | Ages 21 and under
- Probation Outreach - Tuesdays
- Father’s Trying Together* - Fridays | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- Women’s Rap - Third Fridays | 1/25 | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

* Parent-Child Interactions - Third Fridays | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Homewood Early Learning Hub: 7219 Kelly Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15208

- Toddler Life - Tuesdays | 5:30 - 7:30 pm | January 22 - March 5
- Come Play - Tuesdays and Thursdays | 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
- Raising Readers Together - Thursdays | 5:45 - 7:30 p.m. | Ages 6 and under

To view the full newsletter visit www.tryingtogether.org/community-resources/family-support-center
