Maya first came to People Serving People’s emergency shelter about a year ago. She arrived in the care of her grandmother, who enrolled Maya into preschool with the Early Childhood Development Program. Maya immediately took to her teachers and classroom, but she faced challenges.

Maya was born with medical issues that have impacted her physical development, including hearing and speech. When she started preschool in shelter, Maya’s teachers noticed she attempted to speak small words, but grew frustrated when she was unable to communicate clearly.

Teachers worked towards Maya’s development and saw the first big breakthrough during a classroom session with MacPhail Music. MacPhail Music Teachers visit People Serving People classrooms every week to provide interactive, fun music classes for students in the Early Childhood Development Program. During Maya’s first music class, the music teacher brought out bells for each of the children. That’s when Maya’s teachers noticed something special happening.

“When she began to play, a huge smile stretched across Maya’s face.” Maya’s teacher recalled. “It was the most joyful we have ever seen her. We could tell that she was opening up to new experiences, and using music to participate with, and relate to, the other children in school.”

Maya is now seeing a speech therapist and learning sign language to communicate. Maya is also showing that she is recognizing shapes, numbers, and colors. Maya’s grandmother said she is glad her granddaughter has trustworthy teachers who care deeply about her well-being and development. Maya’s teachers are proud of her progress.

“I know we made a difference in Maya’s life, and know this positive school experience will follow her for years to come.”
198,226 meals were served
62% of guests were children
939 families received shelter

2,656 total people served
335 guests on average each day
46 days average length of stay for a family
163 parents found a job during their brief stay
905 guests enjoyed Family Friday Fun Nights

112 parents grew their parenting skills and learned about child development in parenting groups
100 guests improved their financial literacy through financial fitness classes
167 children were provided educational services in our Early Childhood Development Program
220 community members learned about Trauma Informed Care in People Serving People led trainings

79 children received education and care
85% of students improved in every area of learning
93% of families served had low income
100% of families took advantage of parent engagement opportunities

From the Center of Excellence

6,261 volunteers contributed 32,707 hours of service
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programs and services

advocacy
Family Advocates use a strengths-based, client-centered approach, working one-on-one with families to address their barriers. They build relationships, provide support, and connect families to community resources for financial assistance, legal, medical, dental, and other services to empower them as they move toward stability. Advocates also lead weekly health & wellness, mental health, and addiction groups.

center of excellence preschool & learning center
Our licensed, four-star Parent Aware rated program in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis features five classrooms, serving children ages six weeks to 12 years old. The Center is also a Hennepin County Strong Beginnings site. We incorporate nature-based learning into our curriculum, as well as trauma informed elements to meet children where they are at and help them succeed.

culinary arts training
This 13-week program combines classroom and hands-on training, preparing graduates to obtain stable jobs in the high-demand food services industry. Classes are taught by our professional chefs with more than 50 years of combined experience, and hands-on training occurs in our full-scale industrial kitchen, which serves an average of 537 meals daily.

eyearly childhood development
Our licensed, nationally accredited, four-star Parent Aware rated program serves our youngest guests (ages 6 weeks-4 years) in three classrooms, providing developmentally appropriate curriculum and related assessments, focusing on areas of social and emotional growth and kindergarten readiness that may be adversely affected by homelessness.

employment services
Employment Advocates work with guests to assess their skills and job history, create resumes and cover letters, search for jobs, prepare for interviews, complete job applications, and connect them to job training resources.

family activities
Family Fridays bring families together to enjoy activities such as movies, board games, bingo, monthly birthday parties, or other special events.

financial fitness
Classes such as “Money in the Bank” teach adults basic financial skills including budgeting, savings, and professional communication skills.

k-12 programs
After school and evening programs for youth (ages 5-17) include one-on-one tutoring, homework assistance, and enrichment activities that promote social, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth. Our K-12 Program seeks to reduce the academic achievement gap, stimulate learning, and alleviate the stress children may experience as a result of their family’s living situation.
parent engagement
Our Parent Engagement program offers facilitated parenting groups and one-on-one coaching to help parents understand child development and empower them in their role as their child’s first and foremost teacher and advocate.

supportive housing
Ten two-bedroom apartments provide affordable housing to families with multi-level barriers to self-sufficiency. Families can take advantage of our on-site programs and services.

systems change
We engage in issue advocacy and public policy discussions that advance People Serving People’s mission. We also work to improve the field of trauma informed care and family resilience through increasing the trauma informed capacity of the community at large by convening peers, hosting trainings, and partnering with others.

technology resource center
The Technology Resource Center fosters computer literacy and provides computer access for job, housing, and childcare searches and personal communication activities, such as email and social media.
Thanks to you, People Serving People served nearly a thousand families and close to 2,000 children last year. Our work goes beyond providing the basic necessities of a safe place to stay and healthy food to eat. We provide multigenerational programs that help families overcome the barriers that brought them into homelessness, such as finding housing, accessing education, securing employment, and addressing health issues.

People Serving People’s theory of change revolves around the youngest members of our community and their relationships with their caregivers. We passionately believe that in order to break the cycles of poverty and homelessness, we need to reduce the amount of trauma that children experiencing homelessness face. Our largest programmatic investments are in high quality, trauma informed, early education and parental engagement programs—both to families currently in crisis and those at risk of instability.

Our Center of Excellence in the Philips neighborhood of Minneapolis is providing highly successful early education, parental engagement, and systems change initiatives. This work amplifies the impact of our organization’s homelessness prevention programs and services, a key component of our new 2019-2023 strategic plan.

Further, we understand that the tools needed to prevent family homelessness start at a systems level. Often, these systems create and perpetuate the economic, educational and other disparities that cause family homelessness. With this in mind, we engage with policy makers, agencies, partners, and the community to prevent family homelessness as far up stream as possible.

Every gift of money, items, volunteer time, and support makes a difference to a family in our community. Thank you for joining us in this life changing work.

a note from
Daniel Gumnit,
our Chief Executive Officer
Our community donated 5,080 times, equaling over $1,700,000 in support. Thank you!

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