

Stepping Stones



Learning Center

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THE MURPHY FAMILY

When we found out our three year old son Danny was a child with autism, my husband and I scrambled to find a school that could meet his needs. This process was extremely overwhelming. At the school Danny was enrolled in at the time, it was very difficult for him to find his place and thrive in a standard learning environment. We would often lose sleep worrying about what may happen the next day at school. There were no strategies or programs available to help him. Danny would struggle each day to find a sense of balance and calm. As we look back now, we realize the outbursts and tantrums were our son's way of crying out for help. We had to take action and get Danny the help he needed. Thankfully, we found Stepping Stones Learning Center.

From day one at Stepping Stones, the difference was night and day. Thanks to the unique learning environment and acceptance of diversity, our son fit in immediately. We were finally able to breathe a sigh of relief. Because of the integrated classroom Danny was able to be a kid and have fun in a preschool environment, while having all of his needs met at the same time.

Every teacher and staff member is highly skilled and prepared for any level of ability among students. At Stepping Stones, there is a high level of respect and acceptance for everyone that walks through the door. It truly is like one big family, that we are proud to be a part of.



After just eight months at Stepping Stones, Danny went from a shy, awkward kid with fleeting eye contact to what we now playfully call the "ambassador" of the Guppy class. We were amazed at how our son would say hello to almost everyone in the hallway by their names. His progress has been phenomenal, absolutely life changing for him and our family. We struggle less and less with every passing day. Not only have they given our son hope for a great life rich in

quality, but they have given us more confidence as parents and helped us develop additional strategies at home.

We are excited for our daughter to turn two next fall so she can become a part of the Stepping Stones family as well. My husband and I are looking forward to the next few years working together with the people at Stepping Stones that we have come to love and cherish. We are eternally grateful for the work they do and will forever consider them a part of our family. We know in our hearts that Danny has been given an amazing opportunity to succeed in life because of Stepping Stones and we know he will.

- The Murphys



*Happy Holidays
from
Stepping Stones
Learning Center!*

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO/FOUNDER

Dear Families and Friends, The Holiday season is already upon us and the children are all excited about the season. Hope to see everyone at our "Nutcracker Ballet" on 12/21 at 10:00 am in the school hall!



We have had a very exciting fall with the addition of new programs and the expansion of others. Our vision of the inclusion of children regardless of their learning abilities is truly going strong. The states recognition of our quality programming is a reason for us all to be extremely pleased. This has also helped us to secure funding for our much needed school building. We have raised the funds for Phase 1 including real estate contingencies, down payment and closing costs and are now moving into Phase 2 to secure funding for "build out" of the space. The process is slow but the benefits are great! Everyone's help is still needed as we forge ahead.

Happy Holiday to you and your family!

~ Mariellen

MASQUERADE BALL APRIL 20TH 2013

Join us on **April 20th 2013** for our Masquerade Ball at the Rochester Plaza Hotel. This annual event is our largest fundraising effort and helps to ensure that our mission of serving the children and families of our community continues well into the future.



This year's event hosted by our good friend

Dino Kay of **Fickle 93.3**, will include a sit down dinner, live and silent auctions, gaming tables and live music from Up 2 Somethin'. All guests will receive a "Masquerade Mask" with their admission, costumes not required. Anyone interested in helping to organize the event, gather raffle prizes, etc. can contact Don Sinton at 467-4567 or dsinton@steppingstoneslearning.com.

ROC THE DAY – DEC 12

Once again this year, Stepping Stones Learning Center will participate in the United Way of Greater Rochester's ROC The Day event. For a 24 hour period beginning at midnight **December 12, 2012** (12/12/12), you can log onto www.roctheday.org, locate Stepping Stones Learning Center and make any level of donation you wish. The proceeds will benefit our unique inclusive program for individuals with and without special needs. The United Way designed this one day a year event to make giving to local charities an incredibly easy task. Please spread the work and help Stepping Stones Learning Center ROC The Day!



CYCLE FOR CHARITY JAN 6

Cycle for Charity is an organization that sponsors "Spinning" (stationary bikes) events to benefit local charities. We are so thrilled to announce that they will be hosting a spinning event on **Sunday January 6th** at Studio Move in Mendon. The event begins at 9:00 AM at a cost of \$20 per bike per hour, with 100% of the proceeds going to Stepping Stones Learning Center. Spin for as long as you wish (or can!) and start those New Year's Resolution's off right. Our good friend Marti Meyers (**Marti in the Morning** on **Fickle 93.3**) is the host and she guarantees a good time. Registration can be made through Stepping Stones Learning Center or by logging onto <http://www.active.com/cycling/mendon-ny/stepping-stones-learning-center-2013>.



Join us on January 6th and start the New Year off right!

THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF THE ROCHESTER CITY BALLET

On December 21 at 10:00am, the Rochester City Ballet will make their triumphant return to Stepping Stones Learning Center! Each year our friends at the ballet, come and perform a "Pre School Nutcracker", a delightful interactive child focused presentation of this classic piece. This event has been the highlight of our school year for nearly ten years. Jamie Leverett, the Artistic Director of the Rochester City Ballet is an alumni parent of our program and originally brought one dancer as a "show and tell". This eventually grew to a perfor-

mance of more than 12 dancers in full costume and makeup; truly a sight to see, and a performance exclusively for the children, families and staff of Stepping Stones Learning Center! As always this event is tied to our Holiday Celebration, complete with activities, snacks, and of course Santa. There will be ample time for the children to



mingle and have pictures taken with the dancers.

TWO SSLC BOARD MEMBERS SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE ROCHESTER BUSINESS JOURNAL'S 40 UNDER 40 AWARD!

Stepping Stones Learning Center is proud to announce that Spencer Read and Fina Santiago, two members of our Board of Directors were selected by the Rochester Business Journal as two of Rochester's top 40 under 40 citizens. This prestigious award is given to individuals who despite their young age have made a tremendous impact on the greater Rochester Community. Spencer originally became associated



with SSLC through his position at Mitchell Architecture, a firm that did some work here at our school, while Fina's association started as an SSLC parent. We are so proud to have such wonderful people partner with us in support our mission; their guidance and most importantly their friendship has meant a great deal to us over the years. Congratulations Spencer and Fina!

HARVEST WINE TASTING

On November 3rd, our friends at Irondequoit Liquor hosted a harvest wine tasting at the Rochester Yacht Club to benefit Stepping Stones Learning Center. The event brought a standing room only crowd that enjoyed raffles, music from the Windsor Folk Family Trio, and samplings from more than 150 different wines. Our friends at Irondequoit Liquor chose to partner with us in support of our mission; for that we cannot thank them enough! Look for this to become an annual event!



TEDDY BEAR TREE

It seems that traditions and the holiday season go hand in hand, and that is just as true here at SSLC as it is in our own homes with our own families. One such special tradition is our annual "Teddy Bear Tree"; our attempt to assure that all the children and families in our program enjoy a wonderful holiday season. Over the past few weeks, our teachers, therapists and social work team have identified several SSLC children and families that need our help during the holidays. Will you please consider choosing a bear and help make the holidays that much brighter for some of our own? What a wonderful opportunity this is to model



what this season is truly about. Here are the details for the "Teddy Bear Tree". Each bear represents an SSLC child or family member; you may choose as many bears as you like. On each bear are ages, sizes and gift suggestions (of course, you may choose your own as well). **Please wrap any gifts and securely fasten the bear to the outside of the package.** We will have a drop box outside the office.

Thank you in advance for your support, together we can make this holiday season so much brighter for so many of our SSLC families. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

GENRICH'S GARDEN CENTER "GROWS THE GIFT OF LITERACY"

Our friends at Genrich's Garden Center in Irondequoit recently held their annual holiday open house, a social gathering of the entire Irondequoit community. The evening, held in their beautiful greenhouse and gift shop, included food, wine, music and more. Each personal invitation included a suggestion that each guest bring a book to donate to Stepping Stones Learning Center. We are so happy to announce that last week our friends at Genrich's

delivered more than 300 books to Stepping Stones Learning Center. Please take a moment during this season to stop by their shop on Cooper Road and give a great big SSLC Thank You!!!



WISH LIST

- Paper
- Locked filing cabinets
- Large window air conditioners
- Someone interested in refinishing furniture – please call Mariellen Cupini at 467-4567.
- Bubbles, Velcro, laminating sheets, page protectors, tabs, tissues, bowls, cups, plastic knives, can opener, microwave safe bowls/plates, foil, plastic storage bags, paper plates, adult scissors, snack food, juice boxes, nonperishable lunch foods, bottled water, hand sanitizer, wipes, lotion, spiral notebooks, batteries (all kinds), toy bins.

Stepping Stones Learning Center



MISSION STATEMENT

Stepping Stones Learning Center is committed to serving children, their families, and the community, through collaborative ventures for the provision of quality programs and services to achieve the highest level of success for all participants.

VISION STATEMENT

SSLC strives to be the advocate and leader in the development and implementation of inclusionary services for children of all ages and backgrounds through the design of programs that meet the child's ever changing needs. This is achieved in part by holding of prime importance the matching of values and goals held by the family and our high quality staff.

STEPPING STONES LEARNING CENTER'S CULTURE IS CREATIVE

- C**ustomer satisfaction
- R**ecognition for employees
- E**fficient practices
- A**ccountability is key
- T**enacity of employees
- I**nformed stakeholders
- V**isionary attitude
- E**xcellence overall

VALUES ACHIEVED EVERYDAY AT STEPPING STONES LEARNING CENTER

Dignity ~ Equity ~ Honesty
Integrity ~ Initiative ~ Respect