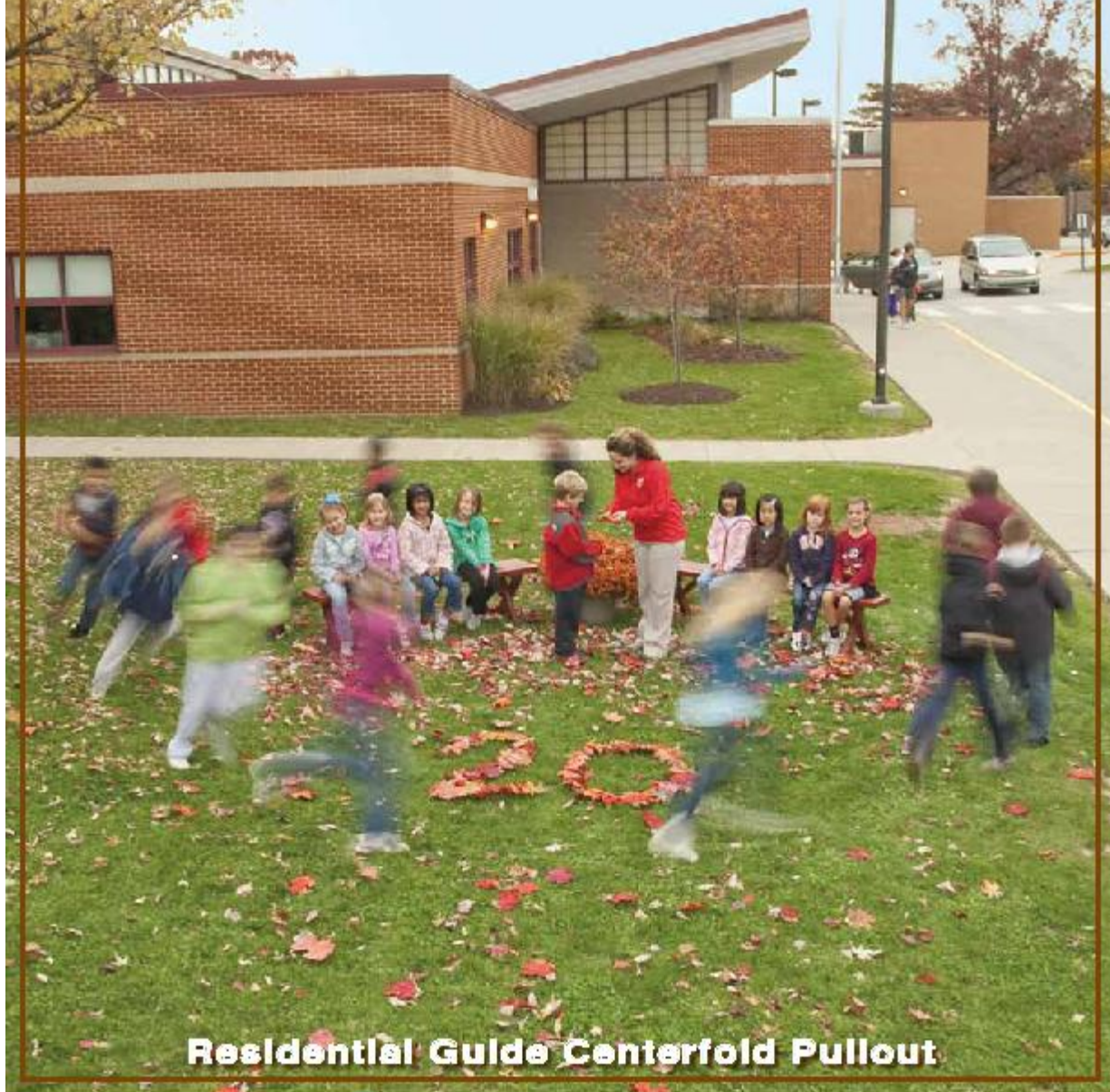


TODAY

UPPER ST. CLAIR
FALL 2010



Residential Guide Centerfold Pullout

www.twpusc.org/magazine

"The official publication of the School District and Township of Upper St. Clair"

Extended Day Services Celebrates 20 Years in Upper St. Clair

"USC Group Pushes for Extended Day Program," was the headline in *The Almanac* almost 20 years ago. Program for Education Enrichment and Recreation (PEER) was a group of working parents trying to establish a before- and after-school program in Upper St. Clair School District's three elementary schools. Extended Day Services (EDS) was the organization born to serve the needs of these Upper St. Clair working families. Twenty years later, EDS is proud to be one of the largest providers of children's services, including before- and after-school programs, kindergarten enrichment programs, and summer camps in Western Pennsylvania.

From Pilot to Program

EDS began as a small pilot program at Streams Elementary School in September 1991. The before- and after-school program started with eight children and two teachers in the library. One of those two teachers, Kelly Chaney, began as the director of the program on its first day; she remains at the helm today. Kelly, an elementary school teacher who taught first and fourth grades, had experience with after-school programs before joining EDS. Within two years, the program grew in popularity to 20 children, and by the third year, children from both Baker and Eisenhower Schools were being transported to Streams to enroll in the after-school program. As the program continued to grow in popularity and size, it expanded and was offered at all three elementary schools in the District. An Eisenhower parent who has two children enrolled in the after-school program comments that her children don't want to leave. "When we come to pick up the kids, they beg to stay longer and ask if we can come back at six o'clock so that they can keep playing!"

Program Details

Rainbow-colored balls fly through the air as two teams of children attempt to get as many balls as possible on the other team's side of the gym. No easy task with active young children



Creating crafts with friends are Morgan Mawltmney and Sarah Potter



On the playground are left to right, back to front, Dillon Yadouga, Ed Stutz, Jeremy Frank, and Michael Gallagher

ready for the gym after a long day of school. Kelly notes that gym is one of the children's favorite activities in the program. "It is so important for children to be as active as possible with so many electronic devices pulling them away from physical exercise." After some good old-fashioned gym time, the children enjoy a snack in the cafeteria and work on their homework. One of the goals of the program is to support children with their homework to make evenings a little easier for working parents. In addition to homework time, the children have the option to participate in a daily craft project, including clay creatures, magic scratch art cards, paper airplanes, sand art, or painting wooden toys. In another attempt to make home-life easier for working parents and to make the program as fun as possible, EDS has offered a variety of special classes over the years, including yoga, computer, drawing, karate, science, and chess to teach the children specific skills relating to their interests.

A Supportive School District

The USC School District is very supportive of the program. EDS works closely with each elementary school to ensure a seamless transition to and from each child's school day classroom. Dr. John Borneyas, Director of Operations, Community Relations and Special Projects for the USC School District, has worked closely with EDS for the past 11 years. "The services offered by Extended Day Services have been a great help to the families of our District. With so many two working-parent families here, having a close operating arrangement between the District and Extended Day Services has allowed our parents to know that their children have outstanding services before and after their children's regular school day."

Then Came Summer

Although parents were thrilled to have a before- and after-school program for their children, they also longed for a year-round option that could provide full-day summer activities, field trips, and swimming. In year four at the request of the parents, EDS began a full-day summer camp complete with sports, crafts, swimming, cooking, science, and field trips. Summer Camp began modestly in 1994, with about 24 children participating in the full-day program. Over the years, EDS campers have attended field trips to Idlewild Amusement Park, Oglebay Park, Gemini Children's Theater, Washington Wild Things baseball games, Wildwood Highlands, Fun Fore All, and many others.

"We try to mix it up each year," says Kelly. "We want the kids to be excited each summer to see what new and exciting events have been planned. An on-site petting zoo, a dunk tank for our teachers, and numerous kids vs. teachers contests are some of our most popular events!" Many of the campers enjoyed camp so much that they have returned as college students interested in studying elementary or special education to work with EDS. Andrew Thompson is one such camper. Andrew, the son of Baker Elementary School teacher Sherry Ellis, attended EDS for five years. "I have fond memories of my own experiences as a child attending EDS and I am excited to have the opportunity to relive these memories as a member of the staff."



Making use of homework time is Veronica Zhang



The best of friends, Tre Ingram and Dillon Yadouga



Enjoying Blokus with friends are, left to right, Nicholas Niecgorski, Domenico Alford-Egizio, Kevin Linn, and Shane Bowman

What About the Kindergarten Children?

EDS parent and Mt. Lebanon teacher Margie DiGorno was instrumental in obtaining District approval for a half-day kindergarten enrichment program offered by EDS. "When my youngest son was in kindergarten, I approached several principals and school board members about Extended Day Services providing half-day services for kindergarten students. As an educator, I trusted EDS with my young child." This half-day enrichment program, called K-Plus, was approved by the District and began in September 2004. K-Plus provides kindergarten children with a full-day kindergarten experience by offering a variety of enrichment activities that correlate with the concepts being taught in kindergarten. Emphasis is placed on simple reading and math concepts while the children enjoy fun games and activities. EDS parent Jamie Spivak feels that her daughter benefited immensely from attending K-Plus. "Shayna attended K-Plus five days a week, and I believe that her additional exposure to reading and math skills is why she is now being pulled out of the regular class in first grade to work with 'challenge' or 'gifted' teachers."

Some Very Special Children

EDS welcomes children of differing abilities and their support providers into all of its programs and has served children with autism, Down Syndrome, and other related disorders. "It is

gratifying to see the patience that typical children have for the children with special needs," says Kelly. "They are happy to change the rules of the game to help another child." During the summer months, EDS Summer Camp is proud to host Camp WISP (Watson Institute Summer Program) at each of its camp locations. Camp WISP is an inclusive therapeutic program for children with special needs that promotes interaction and learning from typical peers.

And... Twenty Years Later

Twenty years later, EDS has expanded to five school districts in the Pittsburgh area. Currently, EDS serves over 900 children a year in the districts of Upper St. Clair, Peters Township, South Fayette, Chartiers Valley, and Beaver Area (beginning September 2010). "EDS would like to further expand its programs to other interested school districts," says Kelly. "We have developed strong programs over the years, and we would like to share them wherever they are needed." ■

To learn more about the programs provided by Extended Day Services, contact Kelly or Patricia at 412-221-1980 or visit www.ExtendedDay.com.