

Path To Shine®

Spring 2016

Perry's Persistence



St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Perry started the newest Path To Shine program, our 11th, at the end of February. They invested several weeks to find a group of children who would most benefit from the program, and since then they have been hard at work under the watchful eye of Ms. Patty, a retired children's librarian. We are thankful for the partnership with Reading On My Mind, an organization that provides a bag of free books each week to share with the children. Great comments are already being heard: "Mom, I need to be here next week!" "I like coming to Path To Shine!" "I told my (school) class about Path To Shine and my teacher wants permission slips to send more students." You can read more, and see photos of the good work in Perry on our website; click on the locations tab.

Water for Dinner

A pb&j sandwich was inhaled by a child at one of our programs that runs in the evening. Then a second sandwich, and then a third in rapid succession. Without judgment or reproach, the adult volunteer casually commented, "I guess you didn't eat dinner." *"My parents don't have much money"* came the reply, *"And we only had water to drink (for dinner)."* This is an example of why our programs are intentionally small, with volunteers who are willing to make a commitment so that trusting relationships develop, and the children feel safe speaking up.



Roswell Smiles

From our Roswell program leader: A year ago we were just getting started with a myriad of questions on our mind, not least of which was, "Can we do this?" But here we are a year later, feeling more comfortable, "steadier" on our feet, and with positive comments from the school staff. While there have been some transitions, we are gladdened by the commitment of so many, and thankful to be a part of this growing program. And a smile like this says it all!



Teaching Social Skills Improves Grades and Lives



In the early 1990s, a study of 753 Kindergarten students was conducted to try to understand how children develop healthy social skills, and to better understand the connection social skills play in leading successful lives. One major finding from the study was that children who scored high on social skills were 4 times as likely to graduate from college than those who scored low. The study also found that the ability to get along with others is one of the keys to making

other kids like you, and making teachers like you, too. When kids feel liked, they are more apt to settle down in class and pay attention..... and keep out of the principal's office. Research confirms that positive social skills, independent of a child's IQ, lead children to be less at risk for behavioral and academic problems. Faithful mentors at our small-group programs, specific lesson plans with corresponding activities, and a variety of interesting guest speakers are just a few of the ways we work on social skills in Path To Shine.



Canton is Delight-filled

Ameraucana chickens lay blue eggs, and the children at our Canton program delighted in seeing such a fancy bird when it visited a few weeks ago. And delighted children make for delighted adults, who freely admit that they have as much fun as the children when they come to Path To Shine. Mr. Mike and his guitar continue to bring more delight, especially when everyone sings, "Do the Right Thing!"



Columbus Helps Plant Trees

Nature is an important part of our lives but it is sadly lacking from the lives of many children who live in poverty. In Columbus recently, some of our Path To Shine children were able to participate at an event with Trees Columbus at Dinglewood Park. The children had to dig a very large hole in which a tree would be planted. They worked hard but they clearly enjoyed their time. Each child received a t-shirt and the Trees Columbus organizers let the children keep their gardening gloves - which they thought was great! More news and photos on our website at the locations tab.



F.A.R.M. Farmers' Market Supports Path To Shine



The vendor fees from the farmers' market at St. Benedict's Episcopal Church help to support Path To Shine, so in addition to buying healthy food, and supporting local small businesses, when you shop at FARM Farmers' Atlanta Road Market you are supporting our programs. Stop by Tuesday afternoons from 4:30 - 7PM, April

through October. We have bread and tamales, fruit and

veggies, honey, cookies, smoothies and more. If you have not been to FARM before, print this out and we'll give you some FARM bucks to use in the month of May. Check out our website at www.farmsmyrna.com for a complete list of vendors, and follow FARM on Facebook to get up-to-date information weekly at www.facebook.com/FARMSmyrna

Thank You, K2 Firm!

A high school student has been one of our faithful volunteers for over 18 months. Her father is the Managing Principal and Founder of K2 Firm, and in support of our work K2 Firm recently surprised us with a corporate donation for which we are immensely grateful.



You Can Help

- Volunteer: Be a weekly tutor. Previous teaching experience is *not* necessary.
- Be a Guest Speaker: Share the story of the challenges you overcame as a child.
- Fund the Gap: Help a promising Path To Shine student attend an independent school for 6th-8th grade
- Donate through our website using PayPal or send a check (details below)

For more information about Path To Shine® and about the articles in this newsletter, please visit our website at www.pathtoshine.org or contact us: Lesley-Ann Drake, Executive Director, Path To Shine, 2160 Cooper Lake Road SE, Smyrna, GA 30080. 678-279-4308 lesleyann@pathtoshine.org facebook.com/pathtoshine