

Path To Shine®

February 2017

Help Us Share the Love!



During February, Path To Shine will **Share the Love** via daily posts on Facebook and Twitter. Through this effort we hope to increase awareness about the struggles that children living in poverty must brave; inspire more people to get involved with Path To Shine; and raise funds in support of our expanding programs. You can help celebrate February as the “month of love” in 2 simple ways:

- 1) Make a quirky **donation of \$28** (\$1 for each of the days in February).
- 2) **Share with friends and relatives.** Share our Facebook & Twitter posts, send emails, make phone calls, and invite them to join this campaign and donate their own \$28.

Join us! 25% of Georgia’s children live in poverty; children who need our help.

Looking Ahead

With over 160 children and 130 volunteers participating in 13 programs across Middle and North Georgia, Path To Shine® recognizes both our tremendous responsibility and enormous opportunity to impact young lives. We care deeply about children and are committed to mentoring, tutoring and encouraging every child.

Just as Path To Shine’s mission is to inspire hope-filled dreams, we too, have an organizational hope-filled dream—that 100% of children who graduate from Path To Shine continue on a positive path and graduate from high school. We see the educational challenges our Path To Shine children face; some will attend high school with graduation rates under 70%.

There is much work to be done! But every week, our faith and motivation are renewed through our wonderfully dedicated volunteers and amazing children. As the stories in this newsletter illustrate, our dreams are powerful. With your help, we can achieve them!



Outings Inspire New Dreams



A day off from school = an opportunity for fun, enriching activities for many children. But for children living in poverty enrichment is a rare event. At Path To Shine we know outings are a critical part of a child’s educational growth and world view, and we budget funding to help our programs provide these important adventures. After reading the story of Beatrice’s Goat, the Columbus program enjoyed a trip to a local farm and the Marietta program visited the Atlanta Zoo.



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.
- Donate: Send a check, or visit our website to use PayPal for monthly deductions or one-time gifts.

Perry Wins Miriam's Gift

Children living in poverty are prime targets for child sex trafficking due to unsafe neighborhoods, temptations of food and clothing, and the amount of time spent alone. Miriam's gift is given by the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta each year to a program that helps protect children from sexual exploitation. The \$500 gift was used to buy Path To Shine t-shirts for the Perry participants to reinforce their sense of belonging and community.

Last May there were only nine children in this program but this year there are 17! Ms. Patty keeps everyone on their toes with her cardio work-outs and high energy! This past fall, activities included visits to a peach orchard (complete with yummy peach ice-cream) and a pumpkin patch, a Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night, a special visit from a guest artist, and of course stories, crafts, games and books. Each week there are smiles galore, and tons of thanks!



Safe Spaces Foster Courage



Each week, our Roswell program invites the children to share something tried, learned, or accomplished, or a particular matter that is on their mind. A 3rd grader requested to share; it was clear from his expression that this was important. He had written down his through, and when the program leader asked to review the writing and saw it was about his older brother (also in the program). She spoke to the older boy, and explained that what he was about to hear might not be easy to listen to or accept, but it was important that he did listen and that by doing so, he would be demonstrating courage.

The younger brother, a highly sight-impaired child, read with passion and sincerity his plea for the older sibling to stop being mean and scaring the other children. There was no doubt as to the love and caring with which it had been written. And the older brother, though a bit resentful at first, received the message—fully recognizing his brother's love for him.

Creating space where children feel safe enough to share feelings and concerns like this is what Path To Shine is about, and it happens because of the wonderfully caring and faithful adults who volunteer for the program.

United Way Cobb Grant

We were thrilled to win a small grant from United Way of Cobb! The money will be used to start a third program in Cobb County, as well as to fund enrichment activities for our two existing programs in Cobb County. Thanks to St. Benedict's Episcopal Church in Smyrna, Olive Springs Baptist Church in Marietta, and Christ Episcopal Church in Kennesaw for your love and support of children.



Community Partner

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