

Stepping Stones
One agency...two locations

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Stepping Stones

Annual Report
2011



We're growing by leaps and bounds....

2010 Foundation Support

Stepping Stones gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and trusts for their generous support of services for individuals with disabilities in our community.

Anonymous Family Foundation	Ronald McDonald House Foundation - Cincinnati
Anonymous Fund - GCF*	
Helen T. Andrews Foundation	Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project
Polly Bassett Fund - GCF*	Newman's Own Foundation
Adele Bogart Fitzpatrick Fund	Louis and Louise Nippert Trust
CVS Caremark	Ohio National Foundation
Charles H. Dater Foundation	Kay & Kroger Pettengill Trust - GCF*
Chemed Corporation Foundation	Daniel & Susan Pfau Foundation
Cincinnati International Wine Festival	Robert H. Reakirt Foundation
Elizabeth Hardin & Wallace. L. Jones Foundation - GCF*	Reuban B. Robertson Foundation
Duke Energy Foundation	Rotary Foundation of Cincinnati
Farmer Family Foundation	Robert & Adele Schiff Foundation
Finish Line Foundation	Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trust
Robert Gould Foundation	Scripps Howard Foundation
Greater Cincinnati Foundation	Louise Taft Semple Foundation
Hayfields Foundation	Smale Family Foundation
Julifs Foundation	Toyota Foundation
Kennedy Charitable Trust	Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation - GCF*
HB,EW,FR Luther Charitable Foundation	YOT Full Circle Foundation
Macy's Foundation	

* Greater Cincinnati Foundation

Stepping Stones.....

where the exceptional happens!

Founded in 1963

The mission of Stepping Stones is to increase independence, improve lives and promote inclusion for children and adults with disabilities.

A message from the Executive Director and Board President

...we're moving ahead by leaps and bounds

Stepping Stones spent much of 2010 like an athlete in training, building strength, endurance and getting in shape to be our best.

We took a hard look at individual and agency needs and talents. We made adjustments in staffing and now have a vibrant new organizational structure based on programs and services rather than location. We upgraded our computer technology, bridged internal communication gaps with new email capabilities, and this spring we launched social networking including Facebook and Twitter. We made a goal of developing user friendly paperwork and this summer's camp families will find streamlined application processes that are easy for families as well as time saving for staff.

In all of our efforts, the goal for the agency has been the same as our longstanding goal for every child and adult we serve – to make the best use possible of every ounce of our abilities and resources.

Because of the steps we took in 2010, we're making leaps in 2011

Our preschool achieved its 3-star rating in the Ohio Step Up to Quality initiative a whole year ahead of schedule. Our Adult Services program expanded community involvement activities for adults with disabilities with art, music and quilting opportunities as well as an active health and fitness program. Our Step-Up alternative education program for students with autism made a huge expansion leap with the opening of the Step-Up Cottage – providing stellar new classroom and programming capabilities. Day and Overnight camps are building bigger and stronger programs that meet more needs.

2010 Special Events provided heartfelt support

The third annual "Open Your Heart " event was held on February 8th. A capacity crowd of two hundred fifty guests enjoyed a wonderful dinner and drinks from Eddie Merlots with a total of \$30,000 raised for Stepping Stones. *Thanks to our generous sponsors:*

The Kroger Company – Eddie Merlot's -- Fifth Third Capital Markets – Graydon Head -- Convalescent Hospital for Children – Gail and Fred Fischer – Vallie and Rodney Geier – R.G. McGraw Insurance Agency -- Ohio National Financial Services -- Cincinnati Enquirer – Kenzie's Closet – Debbie and Rich Oliver

Team SteppingStones

Since 2002, more than 250 individuals have been part of Team Stepping Stones. As such, they have taken on an event in the Cincinnati Flying Pig Marathon weekend, and raised funds for Stepping Stones. To date, more than an amazing \$388,000 has been raised. A group of our adults will again be part of the 2011 Hope & Possibilities 5K on Saturday, April 30th. Thanks to everyone for "stepping up" to be part of our Team.

Bloom 2010

Bloom is our annual major fundraiser. The tented garden party features live music, food from an array of fine restaurants, live and silent auction items. 2010 Honorary chair, Kay Pettengill was honored for her long-time support of Stepping Stones.

2010 Bloom Corporate sponsors included: Towne Properties, The Farmer Family Foundation, Cardinal Solutions, Fifth Third Bank, Duke Energy, Landor Associates, Arnold Printing, PNC Bank, American Financial Group, Bartlett & Co., Legg Mason, Graydon Head, Xerox, Blue Chip Venture Co., Fischer Special Mfg., Cincinnati Dermatology Center, Wells Fargo Bank, Bahl & Gaynor, Petermann Ltd. and Oliver & Jane Birckhead. Our sincere appreciation to everyone in attendance!

In 2011, the seventh Annual Bloom event will be held on Saturday, September 10th at the Indian Hill home of Susie and Neil Bortz. The event will honor long time friend and supporter Fred Fischer for over 25 years of service to the agency. **Visit www.steppingstonescenter.org for info!**

Adult Services.... enhancing and enriching lives



The goal of Stepping Stones' Adult Services program is simple – take charge of as much of your life as possible and live it vibrantly. During 2010 our adult programs increased their focus on health and wellness and on community engagement, creating an active program that is transforming lives.

As part of our health and nutrition activities, adults choose a healthy recipe, go shopping for ingredients, prepare recipes and hold taste tests. Several of these newly confident cooks entered items in the Clermont County Fair. They brought home four ribbons! (see photo above)

A man who used to spend much of his day in a chair with a blanket over his head now participates in activities that include mall walking, a book club at a local bookstore, visits to restaurants and coffee houses and joining in community events. One of his favorite excursions is to the Xavier University campus where adult participants interact with college students.

A man with Down syndrome and diabetes leads fellow adults in regular exercise routines with a goal of weight loss and decreasing Body Mass index points.

A 48 year old woman who used to be frightened of large crowds, recently completed her entry form for the Cincinnati Flying Pig – Hope and Possibilities event.

Another participant with limited communication skills who appeared afraid to leave the comfort of the program area, now traverses the grounds pulling a wagon filled with his friend's lunch boxes. He is proud to know that his friends count on him to get their lunches from one program location to another.

There are more leaps ahead

Plans for the future include exploring ways to extend our services to new locations through collaborations with other organizations. One goal is to offer some services on the west side of town. We're looking at more organic growth within the agency as participants expand their horizons through multiple programs, meeting family and individual needs more efficiently. The groundwork we laid with improved technology and process changes will increase staff efficiency. We will continue to focus on assuring all personnel have that winning combination of professionalism, heart for our mission and a position that fits their own set of skills and talents. During 2010 we launched a rebranding initiative that will give us a fresh image and renewed focus on our goals to educate, equip and enrich the people we serve. Funding will be a major challenge as we feel the results of budget constrictions from Washington to the family checkbook. Traditional funding sources will not be enough. We must expand and diversify our resources and find new supporters and new champions.

As we approach our 50th anniversary in 2013, we are feeling the years in our aging infrastructure. Major repairs and upgrades are needed in Hillside Hall and the warm-water pool area at the Given site. Cincinnati Rotary again is a key partner in needed renovations and upgrades at the Allyn site.

Stepping Stones is making huge leaps into the future on many fronts. They are leaps of faith, underpinned with preparation. That's what we do at Stepping Stones.

Chris Adams
Executive Director

John Borchers
Board President

Recreation/Leisure Activities Enrich Lives

Philip and a group of friends prepared a huge thanksgiving dinner and invited their parents. He went to Nashville and cut a record that won't hit the charts, but had everybody at home applauding. He's been to the St. Louis Zoo and has the T-shirt to prove it. He swims and fishes and dances. He's soared in a hot air balloon.

He knows incredible things are possible with a little help and the Stepping Stones recreation and leisure programs. Phillip is a 25 year-old adult living with major physical challenges. He has difficulty with fine motor control. He communicates with gestures and needs help dressing and with daily hygiene.

"The things that worked when he was a little boy don't work now, said his mother, Jane. "He has more independence and confidence. When you are 25, you want to be with people your own age. You want something that is your own." Through Stepping Stones' summer camps, vacation adventures and respite weekends, Philip has his own friends and his own adventures. Philip's life is now more than that of a family shadow. He's casting his own shadow as an adult with a disability who is widening his experiences and his independence.

And because of those Stepping Stone programs, his family is a stronger family. "When you have a child with a disability, you can't sit back, you have to be 'on' at all times," his mother said. "We don't have the energy we had when he was younger. The Respite weekends and summer camps provide respite time for us to relax and take care of our own needs."

Eventually, Phillip will move to a supervised living situation, but respites and camps make it possible to stay together longer as a family, They make sure he will be ready to succeed when that next transition is needed.



Step-Up grows and educates for the future

The red cottage at the entrance to Stepping Stones' Given site signals the completion of a multi-year expansion of our Step-Up alternate autism education program. This \$300,000 capital project added classrooms and education space, allowing our program to serve up to 22 students. Two years ago we served 12 students from eight school districts. We now have 19 students enrolled from 12 districts and more on the way.



Matt and Tommy are examples of incredible strides. As part of their goal of interacting and developing daily living skills, these two young men with autism have created a salad deli for fellow students. Together the two students washed, chopped, sliced, spilled and started over again until they developed a preparation routine that works. They prep one day and package and deliver the next. Skills developed include measuring, counting, planning, fine motor control, communication and interaction. These two young men are experiencing success, taking pride in their accomplishments and stretching their comfort zones, knowing they can learn from mistakes and find success.



The Step Up program is helping students with severe autism and extreme behaviors to learn, grow and build their abilities to function well in their families and communities. The expanded site provides separate areas for new students with severe behaviors and students in different age groups. The expanded Step-Up program also includes a strong interactive component, monthly group meals with high-level student participation, and growing success for students and families. In 2010, several students graduated from Step-Up and moved on to supported living situations. Without the innovation and uniqueness of our Step-Up program, parents might not have dared to dream of such a successful transition as a possibility.

...educating for success

Owen enrolled at our Allyn Preschool in 2010 at age 2 ½. Like a growing number of our preschoolers, he has autism. He spoke only a few words, had no apparent interest in stories, songs or language activities and had not learned any signs. He climbed everything, had no concept of safety and destroyed or threw anything he could reach. The pool was particularly dangerous because he would jump in with reckless abandon and shove other children to get to the water.

A little more than a year later, Owen has met numerous individual goals. He will follow other children's lead and participates in play. His mother reports he is even making friends in the community. In the classroom, Owen can choose an activity, get it out, complete it and put it away with occasional verbal prompts from staff. His vocabulary has exploded and he is repeating words and phrases, using some signs, singing songs and even looking at books with teachers and peers. He is a number enthusiast, loves guessing letters and their sounds, works on age appropriate puzzles, and is beginning to write on a dry erase board.

Owen recently began rock climbing with his family and his preschool teacher to encourage his motor development, as well as to give him an appropriate outlet for his love of scaling walls. He was so proud of himself that his mother cried to see his success. His climbing in the classroom has greatly decreased. In the pool, he stays close to the lifeguard, waits his turn in line and is even learning basic strokes to become a swimmer.

We can't wait to see what the next year will hold for Owen. Our hope is that he will be ready for the transition to Kindergarten!

Our preschool received its third star in the Ohio Step Up to Quality initiative in 2010, a year ahead of schedule. Only 168 preschools in the state have achieved this rating. The designation identifies programs with top quality staff, training levels, programming, site and management.



Leaps in Recreational and Leisure Activities Enrich Children/Adults and Families' Lives

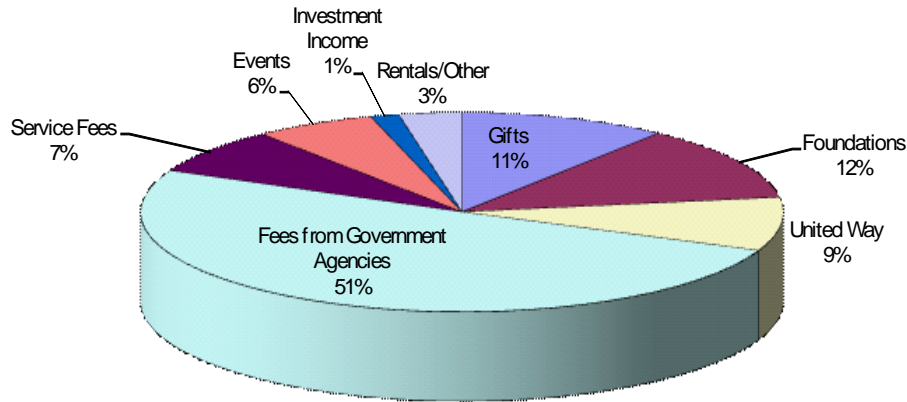


Facility Improvements: Cincinnati Rotary built a large fishing dock at Camp Allyn, opening a new recreation venue with accessibility and safety features to meet every camper's needs. Rotarians are planning a spring Volunteer day. Other improvements at the Allyn site include enhancing the laundry and converting the Fisk program building to sleeping quarters, raising our overnight capacity at Allyn from 110 to 134 beds.

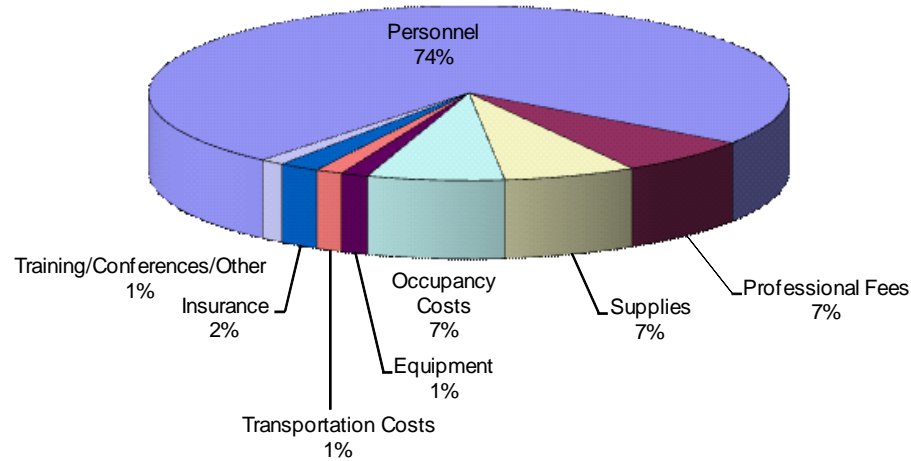
Overnight Services: Overnight programs expand in 2011, adding weekend respites during the summer camping season. Respite programs traditionally close down for the summer months, but many individual find it difficult to succeed in a week-long camp. Now those families can receive the services they need all year round.

Day Camp: We added a 15th unit at our Given site, raising our camper capacity from 138 to 150 children per day. The new unit is our second for campers with autism, meeting that growing need. Allyn Day Camp capacity went from 35 to 40 campers per day. Additional staff and substantial support from our core of teen volunteers will meet the growing numbers, assuring more children with disabilities get to stretch and discover their abilities.

2010 Revenue



2010 Expenses



Revenue

Gifts	332,630	10%
Foundations	385,981	12%
United Way	275,000	9%
Fees from Government Agencies	1,601,773	50%
Service Fees	236,976	7%
Events	193,618	6%
Investment Income	45,444	1%
Rentals/Other	100,455	3%
Total	3,171,877	

Expenses

Personnel	2,104,216	74%
Professional Fees	195,490	7%
Supplies	191,308	7%
Occupancy Costs	197,356	7%
Equipment	39,590	1%
Transportation Costs	38,897	1%
Insurance	58,116	2%
Training/Conferences/Other	34,831	1%
Total	2,859,804	

Net Result

312,073

Breakdown of 2010 Expenses by Program

