

Spring
1991

In September, 1987, the physical plant known as Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care Center opened its doors to area residents and their children. It began with three children and two staff members in October 1987. Days of operation followed the City School District's calendar year. Childcare was unavailable for those who worked throughout the summer. Services were offered to only three to five year olds, with no Department of Social Service Contracts or United Way funding.

Many things have changed since our first days. The physical plant essentially remains the same, assuming the unmistakable character of a place much used - and loved by its children. We have filled both classrooms to capacity and utilize the Conference Room for special projects and naps. Speech Therapy is provided by the City School District, on site, in a second floor office. Thirty (30) children are currently enrolled in year round programming, with 25 fulltime children, 2 part time equivalents and 3 School Age (Latchkey) children. Our License has been amended to include children from ages three to eight years of age, although before and after to school care is only offered to those siblings of children enrolled in Day Care. Child care is offered daily from 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., with lunch and two snacks being served (with a special thanks to St. Peter's Kitchen). Remedial services and testing (including Lead Testing) are offered on site with advocacy provided by this Center. A Parent Group is in the process of being organized, with plans to place a parent on the Day Care Advisory Board. Parent participation averages 90-100% per event. EPIC provides child care, parenting, life skills, and teacher training to parents, friends, and staff of Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care Center.

Many organizations are affiliated with the Day Care Center. Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care Center is a designated work site for GROW and Urban League. Training is provided to disadvantaged youths and older populations in exchange for job experience. A representative from ESCOR maintains our financial records as well as providing (ESCOR) advisors to our Board. The City School District as well as Parochial Schools and Suburban schools place students at this Center as Student Teachers, interns, and / or to fulfill service project requirements. The Rochester A. M. Rotary Club has sponsored Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care Center as their project for the past two years, donating time, money, and equipment (IBM computer). This Center has collaborated with Children of the King Center and Community Child Care in developing a "sub" list. The Director of Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care has been appointed as consultant by the Wilmot Foundation to the Volunteers of America Children's Center, as well as serving on the Day Care Training Advisory Board for EPIC and the City Center Board for Accreditation (WNYCCC). This Director has also been named as ^{an} Honorary Rotarian. The Rochester Area Foundation awarded this Center its Early Childhood Initiative Grant which allowed the Center to offer summer programming since 1989. WNYCCC, in conjunction with NAEYC have awarded Ss. Peter & Paul Day Care Center a grant for National Accreditation, a process insuring quality of program based on National guidelines. This Day Care Center has been designated as a United Way Donor Option Agency. It receives tithes, ranging from \$100 - \$30000 per year from 3 local parishes. Contracts have been secured with the Monroe County Department of Social Services, enabling us to better serve the residents of this area, i.e. the Southwest sector of Rochester. Staff includes 4 fulltime members with 2 GROW workers serving in the Kitchen and Maintenance.

Where do we go from herethe possibilities are exciting - endless. Grant proposals have been submitted to New York State for expansion funds to be used to establish School Age Programming (Latchkey). This Center and the Monroe YMCA are collaborating in a proposal to the Legislature (Monroe County) for a Gym & Swim program for Day Care children. Working alliances have been established with the City School District. Accreditation will be awarded within one year, hopefully. We are touching lives! And that is our purpose in our daily lives and our work. Thank you, people of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish for making this possible!

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Ruffo