



Childwatch

Speaking out for the region's children.

A Publication of Public Citizens for Children and Youth • November 2012

A Lasting Legacy

Shelly Yanoff Starting A New Chapter After 26 Years At PCCY



So as we edge up to the end of 2012, I edge up to the end of being Executive Director of PCCY – and I circle that end with pride and sadness. The pride comes from the many steps forward that we together have taken in making our world safer and better for children and families.

Marion Wright Edelman used to remind us that children needed special protection because, “the sea is soooo large and their boat so small.” Well, 26 years ago we worked together to bring the plight of homeless children to the attention of the city and the school district.

And while YES we needed to do what we could to eradicate homelessness, we also needed to change what kids in shelter got for breakfast before school, what hoops they had to jump through to be admitted to school, what schools they could go to, what protections they had while in shelter, what supports they had and what they needed as they grew.

Well, we – with all of you – did change lots of stuff: no more ‘three hots and a cot’ in family shelters; no more schools requiring birth certificates before kids could enter school; no more requiring kids to transfer when their shelters changed; no more making it harder to get health care or child care – NO MORE!

With the support of so many of you we changed alot!

Today, many Philadelphia children in shelter are immunized, have health care and child care, their schools are more stable and they are doing better – but they still are homeless. We still have much to do before we can say no more homeless children – but the boat is holding on.

Thanks to many but especially Jane Malone, Sister Mary Scullion, Gloria Guard, Joe Willard, and YOU.

Twenty six years ago, a system of quality child care was a dream with little reality, but today families can look to Keystone Stars to know, understand and secure quality child care in the city, region and state. There are waiting lists – there are still too few children able to benefit but there is progress and there is a real system – and tens of thousands of Pennsylvania’s children are benefitting.

Special thanks to Harriet Dichter, Sharon Ward, Sharon Easterling, Chris James Brown, Joan Benso and YOU!

Twenty six years ago, the child welfare system was starved for dollars, the crack epidemic was growing, families got little support, needs kept growing and state support was flagging. Today, there are still too many kids in care – but there is more support. There is a much more fair federal, state county funding system; there is understanding about parenting needs and support for families.



Thanks to Estelle Richman, W. Wilson Goode, Sr., Alba Martinez, Anne Marie Ambrose, Frank Cervone and YOU!

Twenty six years ago, when juveniles were arrested, they spent long waits for hearings in the old Youth Study Center and then were often placed or let go – with few options and supports for them. Today there are options – there is more support to respond to child and family needs.

Thanks to Bob Schwartz, Bob Listenbee, Bill Madeira, Pat Russell, George Mosee and a host of citizens who won't give up on kids who get in trouble.

Twenty six years ago, health care for low-income kids or pregnant women was hard to come by – but today the tide has turned. The law has been strengthened and expanded; virtually all children in the Commonwealth should be covered.

Thanks to Ed Rendell, Don Schwarz, Joanne Fischer, Rich Weissaupt, Anne Bachrach, Tom Gilhool, Allyson Schwartz and YOU!

Twenty six years ago, there was no full-day public school kindergarten, class size was too large and our hopes were too small and arts were fading. Today, there is full-day kindergarten, smaller class size, there is more accountability and the arts are being saved. Now, we are on a rocky road in education – too many of us have abandoned the promise of public education and we are at risk of privatizing our hopes.



Thanks to Michael Churchill, Len Reiser, Deb Weiner, Evelyn Eskin, Helen Gym, Dennis Barnebey and Paul Socolar who help remind us to keep the faith and to keep the promise.

And during these years, we fought for more and better recreation centers, parks, pools and libraries, for after-school programs, for getting the lead out of our homes and children's lives.

Thanks to Jon Stein and Blondell Reynolds Brown and George Gould for their work on getting the lead out of children's lives. And to Marcienne Mattleman for her work on after school programs and so much more.

PCCY's staff is amazing – each and all of them. And to John Riggan, Don Schwarz, Pat West, Jose Rivera-Urrita, Allener Rogers, Fasaha T aylor, Jim Martin and Carolyn Adams for being great presidents and good friends to kids and me!

On our watch, programs have gotten so much better but our kids and families are so much poorer. Children and families need all of us. Together we can - and will do - better.

Thank you to our many funders – special thanks to The William Penn Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, The Philadelphia Foundation, The Fels Fund, First Hospital Foundation and soooo many others. And mostly thank YOU for supporting and letting me be your voice, your hopes and sometimes your surrogate.

The Celebration for Shelly Yanoff

Shelly Yanoff is leaving PCCY after an astonishing 26 years of working on behalf of children, youth and families in our region. Please join us in thanking Shelly for her tireless commitment to kids and in building and sustaining PCCY for the future!

The Celebration for Shelly Yanoff
The Moore College of Art and Design
Friday, November 30, 2012
5:30pm to 7:30pm

Tickets to the cocktail reception/celebration may be purchased at
www.pccy.org/celebratesshelly



Make Kids Matter Campaign

Candidates Silent On Many Children's Issues

Big Bird notwithstanding and despite the fact that 16 million children across the country are living in poverty (nearly one out of five kids in Pennsylvania) children's issues have been largely absent during the fall political campaign season. But it's not too late to give children a voice before you go to the polls!

PCCY's 'Make Kids Matter' campaign reminds voters and candidates to pay attention to the needs of children and families, including education, poverty, health care, nutrition and child care.

"We need candidates and leaders who can talk about how they are going to direct resources and create public policy that helps our kids to grow and prepare for the future," says Kathy Fisher, PCCY's Family Economic Security Director. "We all must insist on ending the shameful sound of silence on these critical issues and raise them to the forefront in the minds of those who represent all of us – including children."

PCCY's 'toolkit' of MKM flyers, palm cards and posters encourages the public to connect with candidates, ask where they stand on children's issues, and vote for those who will make kids a priority. A petition is included to be circulated (or signed online) and returned to PCCY where it will be delivered to all regional candidates running for office.

Nearly 10,000 pieces of MKM materials have been distributed in toolkits to over 100 child care agencies, pre-school centers, YMCAs and community organizations in the five-county region.



PCCY intern Stacy Kirk prepares MKM materials for mailing to local organizations.

Since August, PCCY has been exploring topics of concern and posting related information on its website to draw attention to the status of America's children. According to Voices for America, although children represent 25 percent of country's population and 100 percent of its future, they received less than two percent of the attention in the first 20 presidential primary candidate debates, not to mention the recent presidential and vice presidential debates.

American Community Survey (ACS) figures released in September by the U.S. Census Bureau note that 12 of the commonwealth's 19 Congressional Districts have child poverty rates close to or above 20 percent. The districts of Congressmen Bob Brady (1st) and Chaka Fattah (2nd) have the highest rates at 47 percent and 36 percent respectively, followed by Doyle (14th) 31 percent, Thompson (5th) 22 percent, Barletta (11th) 24 percent, Critz (12th) 23 percent and Kelly (3rd) 20 percent.

"Platitudes of 'children are our future' abound, but there is virtually no discussion, specific plans and proposals from candidates on how to improve life for children who are struggling today," Fisher says. "Our region's economy won't have the potential to grow and thrive as it should – especially in Philadelphia where child poverty is almost 40 percent – if we don't invest in children."

Stand up for children! Share this link, download the 'Make Kids Matter' toolkit: www.pccy.org/makekidsmatter



We want you to help us
MAKE KIDS MATTER
in the fall elections!

Five steps to take:

- 1) **Make Sure You Are Registered to Vote** and have the right photo ID to bring to your polling place.
- 2) **Tell** candidates and elected officials about the needs of children and families.
- 3) **Ask** candidates where they stand on children's issues.
- 4) **Vote** for candidates who will make children a priority.
- 5) **Ask anyone** who cares about children and families to do this too! The more adults standing up for kids the better.

Voting is the first step. Holding officials accountable after the election is just as important! Stay informed and take action:

Sign-up for e-alerts at: www.pccy.org/signup
Like Us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/pccyteam
Follow Us on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/pccyteam

Did You Know?

Presidential candidates are now requiring voters to show photo ID! To find out what ID you need to bring to your polling place:

Call: 1-866-OUR VOTE
Online: www.seven.org
Polling Place: <http://guide.seven.org>

Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, visit www.pccy.org or call 215-541-4444.

Are You Ready To



Make Kids Matter?



We want you to help us
MAKE KIDS MATTER!
Be informed. Speak up for children.

Sign up for PCCY e-alerts
www.pccy.org/signup

Facebook
facebook.com/pccyteam

Twitter
twitter.com/pccyteam

Find out who your elected officials are
www.capwiz.com/pccy/home



Sequestration

Bad News for Pennsylvania and Our Kids

While the nation concentrated on political conventions and events leading up Election Day, Congress allowed the budget clock to keep ticking towards the January deadline when sequestration – massive across-the-board cuts to programs – is scheduled to go into effect.

Congress inserted this worst-case-scenario provision to force a budget compromise among a bipartisan “super committee” appointed last summer. But their failure to agree on a balanced plan means that Americans could see significant cuts to a broad array of services.

The consequences would be painful to Pennsylvania families, already reeling from budget cuts.

If Congress does not pass a budget agreement between November 6th and the start of the new year, 1,400 infants with developmental delays would no longer receive therapy to help them catch up to their peers. The parents of 3,300 children will be told there’s no room for their kids in Head Start next year – in a state where only one in five eligible children attends the program because of already limited funds.

An estimated 4,500 children from low-income working families would lose subsidized child care that enables children to prepare for school success.



Once they begin school, 46,000 fewer children would benefit from the Title I funds that provide a variety of critical student supports, mainly in Pennsylvania’s rural and urban areas.

Almost 3,000 kids would no longer be able to attend afterschool programs.

In a state where employers desperately need qualified employees, 5,500 youth would forgo the career and technical education readying them for work. Another 3,500 would forfeit federal work study grants, forcing them to accept higher

student debt or sacrifice college. These cuts would occur over the next eight years. Deep reductions in defense spending are also part of the equation.

Compromise remains elusive despite potentially devastating cuts to health, education and social services. Under the leadership of Budget Committee Chair Paul Ryan, the House this spring passed a budget abandoning across-the-board cuts to restore defense spending. This results in even deeper cuts to funding for early learning, K-12 schools and other supports that children need to become successful adults.

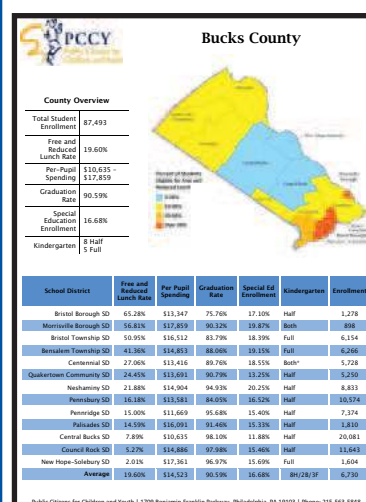
We can and must do better. The fairest and most effective way for Congress to reach an agreement is by ending the Bush-era tax cuts for the wealthiest individuals. Originally intended to expire in 2010, Congress extended them through the end of this year.

All parents want the best for their kids. These cuts give them reason to worry that they cannot provide their children with the same quality of life they came to expect a generation ago.

It’s time for Congress to get to work and avoid sequestration!

To learn more about the state and federal budgets go to www.pccy.org > **Issues > Budget Advocacy**

County Fact Sheets



How are the region’s children doing in the areas of Education, Health, Early Care and Education, Public Education and Economic Security?

Learn more about PCCY’s new County Fact Sheets (next page).



Lead Bill Ordinance

Going Into Effect December 2012

After an uphill struggle lasting nearly three years, Philadelphia finally has passed a law protecting children against the dangers of lead-based paint.

Introduced by Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown, and passed by Council late last year, the 'Lead Paint Disclosure' requires landlords to present a certificate to prospective tenants declaring that their rental units are lead free or lead safe.

The ordinance goes into effect in mid-December and does not apply to PHA housing, rental properties occupied exclusively by college students, units where no children under six will be living for the duration of the lease, and housing built after March 1978 (when lead-based paint was outlawed by the federal government). Landlords not in compliance are subject to penalties, including fines up to \$2,000.

A coalition of organizations including PCCY, Community Legal Services, Tenant Union Representative

Network, National Nursing Centers Consortium, Einstein Medical Center and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health pushed for the ordinance, which is based on a similar measure passed in Washington, DC.

"Enactment of this law will help protect many babies and toddlers from being poisoned by lead in their homes," says PCCY's Health Policy Director Colleen McCauley. "We have been working with a variety of organizations to raise awareness among tenants and landlords."

The health department has been conducting Lead Dust Sampling Technician (LDST) trainings to certify individuals who can test for lead hazards. For more information and a link to the Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and the training schedule, go to www.pccy.org/lead

Get the lead out!

County Fact Sheets: Education

Comparing School Districts In The Region

PCCY will be issuing fact sheets for every quarter revealing how kids are doing in the five-county area. As we regularly monitor and report on how the region's children are doing in healthcare, early care and education programs, public education, and economic security – we will take the big steps together to make a difference for them and all of us.

Our first set of fact sheets focuses on education.

Want to know how your school district's student spending and graduation rates compare to others in South-eastern Pennsylvania? These fact sheets provide an overview of the region's public school districts using the most up-to-date statistical information.

Arranged in columns and including spending per-pupil, newly-released cohort graduation rates, student enrollment and kindergarten availability figures, the sheets allow for easy comparisons of the data, which can vary greatly even

among neighboring districts. For example, 7.98 percent of Lower Merion students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, while 79.24 percent of Philadelphia students qualify for the benefit.

"Over 400,000 school-aged children live in our region and just as no two children are the same, neither are any two schools districts," explains Shanee Garner, PCCY's Co-director of Education Policy. "This underscores the reality that there are no quick fixes for improving public education. "But there is a role that we can all play. Change happens when we as a community make informed decisions that put children first by acting in their best interest."

The County Fact Sheets can be downloaded at: www.pccy.org > **Issues > Education > The Bulletin Board**

Watch for the next series of fact sheets from PCCY at the end of the year! Check us out!

Dr. Hite Visits The Roundtable

PCCY's Monthly Program Features New Superintendent

Be sure to watch PCCY's Education Roundtable as the monthly discussion program opens its seventh season with special guest, Dr. William Hite, the School District of Philadelphia's new superintendent.

Hite, the former superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland, joined regular panelists, host, Shelly Yanoff; Philadelphia Inquirer education reporter, Kristen Graham; Education Notebook editor, Dale Mez-zacappa; and retired Daily News columnist Elmer Smith.

Referring to the current budget shortfall and the academic challenges facing the public schools, Hite listed "stabilization of the current environment inside this district," as one of his top priorities. "We don't need another silver bullet," he said, noting that initial improvements should be based on better utilization of existing resources.

Hite was apprehensive about the recommendation of the Boston Consulting Group (hired by the District to devise strategies to stabilize finances and improve the quality of

education) to create independent, decentralized "achievement networks" to improve student education. Calling the strategy "disruptive" and "not proven," Hite said he was "not so sure that's what we need right now."

"We look forward to having Dr. Hite on again as well as other key decision makers in the future," Yanoff said.

'Educational Roundtable' airs on PSTV (Comcast Channel 52), the District's own cable channel and on Philly-CAM (Comcast 66/966 & Verizon 29/30).

To see the broadcast with Dr. Hite go to www.pccy.org/EducationRoundtable



Follow PCCY's Education Team on Twitter @ PCCY_EdTeam



New Publication

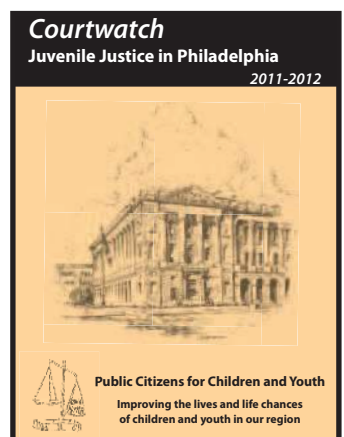
Courtwatch: Juvenile Justice in Philadelphia

Two decades ago, PCCY launched its Courtwatch project using trained volunteers to observe, record and monitor what happens in a Philadelphia courtroom when a young person is up for trial. In response to the Luzerne County juvenile court "kids-for-cash" scandal, PCCY decided that it was time to take a fresh look at the city's juvenile delinquency court.

The Honorable Kevin Dougherty, Administrative Judge of the Family Court Division of Philadelphia's Common Pleas Court, welcomed our effort, facilitating access to the courtrooms and conferring with our 20 volunteers. The resulting report, 'Courtwatch Juvenile Justice in Philadelphia 2011 - 2012,' is the culmination of hundreds of hours of

their work sitting in on court proceedings during the fall of 2011. Thanks to our volunteers and Joanne Hyle and Bill Madeira for this Courtwatch. Let's keep it up!

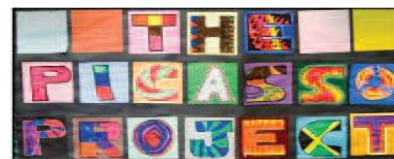
For your copy of 'Courtwatch Juvenile Justice in Philadelphia 2011-2012', call PCCY at 215-563-5848 x11, or at www.pccy.org > Publications



Follow PCCY on Twitter @ PCCYTEAM

The Picasso Project

2013 Grant Cycle Underway



PCCY's Picasso Project enters its second decade with a call for new applications and extensions for six of last year's projects. Based on their 2012 success, Bregy (pictured), Cassidy, Jackson and Mifflin elementary schools, along with Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School and the Youth Study Center, were awarded an additional \$3,500 each to help towards building a sustainable art practice within their curriculum.

Last year, the Picasso Project granted nearly \$60,000 to a record 15 Philadelphia public schools, enabling them to collaborate with local artists to bring theater, drumming, poetry performances, visual art exhibitions, mural design, art books, quilting, collage, arts entrepreneurship, audio recording, Middle-Eastern and West African dance and filmmaking to their students.

Applications for the class of 2013 can be submitted by teachers or principals. Eligible schools may have no more

than two fulltime arts teachers in the visual and performing arts. Itinerant teachers do not count towards this total.

"We've redesigned our entire application process to help teachers and artists find funding for the arts," says Gretchen Elise Walker, PCCY's Director of Arts Education. "Everyone wins – even those that don't get chosen as Picasso grantees. So please apply!"



An information workshop is scheduled for early November; **applications are due on November 12, 2012.** "Anyone who comes to the workshop leaves inspired by fellow colleagues, artists and community members who are trying to boost arts in their schools," Walker promises.

For the workshop time and location, plus additional information – including FAQs, review of past project descriptions, list of arts providers for partnerships and application – go to the Picasso Project homepage: www.pccy.org/picassoproject

Well, Hello There Interns

We Couldn't Do It Without Them!

Tara Breitsprecher is pursuing her Master's in Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice. She graduated from Messiah College in 2012 with a Bachelor's in Social Work and has been involved in advocacy and policy analysis with NASW-PA.

University of Washington graduate **Cameron Chase** has a background in education as a high school and middle school teacher. This spring he will finish his Master's in Public Health at Drexel University, with a concentration in community health. He is working on his thesis while at PCCY, assessing the barriers to vision care that many children face and advocating for ways to improve service utilization.

Philadelphia born and raised, **Shanya Eskridge** is a Temple University senior majoring in Public Health who will graduate in December. She plans to pursue a Master's degree in Health, Law and Policy.

After graduating from Temple University with a Bachelor of Social Work in the spring, **Stacy Kirk** enrolled in the Temple's advanced standing MSW program, with a concentration in communities and policies and specializing in children and families. She will graduate next May.

Currently in the final year of her Master's of Public Health at Temple University, **Allison Routman** is working at PCCY on school based behavioral health initiatives and parent engagement research as part of her capstone project.

Dominique Wardell is a Master of Public Policy student, with a concentration in education, at Drexel University. Upon graduation next spring, she plans to teach in her home state of Virginia before beginning a career as an education policy analyst.



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PCCY Roundtable



Join PCCY's *Education Roundtable*, a monthly discussion with local reporters of topical issues affecting the School District of Philadelphia and its students. Hosted by Shelly Yanoff, the half-hour program airs on PSTV, Comcast Channel 52, the District's own cable channel, and PhillyCAM on Comcast 66/966 and Verizon 29/30.

Check local listings for time.

Mission Statement

PCCY - Public Citizens for Children and Youth is the region's leading child advocacy organization, dedicated to improving the lives and life chances of children in our region through thoughtful and informed advocacy. Founded in 1980, PCCY is an independent, non-profit organization.

About The Newsletter

Writers and Editors: Kathy Fisher, Steven Fynes, Sid Holmes, Louise Pangborn, Gretchen Elise Walker and Shelly D. Yanoff, Executive Director, Sid Holmes, Communications Director. Design & Layout, Steven E. Fynes.

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