

Kelly's Story

Back-to-school preparations are not always about uniforms and supplies, especially in 2020. Sometimes it's about knowing you have a place to live. National research suggests that having a stable place to live increases education outcomes. Anecdotally, we know this to be true; we see it every day when families come to our temporary housing. Preventing families in our West Philadelphia neighborhoods from having to enter shelter is also one of PEC's priorities.

Kelly (her name has been changed) is a mom who was worried about whether she would be evicted before school started again for her eight-year-old daughter. This year, she supplemented her food budget by coming to the Mantua Family Grab 'n' Go Meal distribution on Saturdays. "It's a good place to get a meal, and they give out books for the children."

Kelly was stretching her food budget in part because she was struggling to meet her rent each month. She was being threatened with eviction by her landlord. At one visit to the meal distribution, PEC's Action for Early Learning staff told her about a new rental assistance program that PEC was offering. Kelly connected that Monday with the person handling requests. Together they were successful in stopping the eviction, giving Kelly peace of mind that she would continue to provide a stable home for her child. When asked for her feedback on the program, she tearfully responded, "Grateful – for everything."

Now Kelly can focus on getting her daughter set up for whatever back to school looks like in the next few weeks! #ReadytoLearn!

About Us

PEC uplifts the community by providing housing and services that empower our community of 18,000 residents to overcome trauma and navigate life's obstacles to achieve successful and healthy lives. Throughout the pandemic's challenges, PEC nimbly adapted to continue service to residents living in our shelter and our community, without disruption. We have distributed 30,000 boxes of food relief to help replace the loss of school-time meals for families. We have offered digital resources, access, support, and counseling to keep kids engaged in school.

YSI offers unique programs and niche services throughout the city, including Philadelphia's only Crisis Nursery program, the first emergency shelter solely for runaway and homeless teens, city-wide family based services, and a truancy intervention program. In March, YSI's pandemic response included best health practices, additional educational assistance, and online programs. During the 2019-20 academic year, YSI served 3,600 school age children and youth.

