

Sheila's Story

At PEC conversations around educational equity are changing. Some discussions focus on technology and internet access, like the story of Shelia's family (her name has been changed), living in PEC's housing. Shelia has a 13-year-old in eighth grade, a ten-year-old in fourth grade, and eight-year-old in third grade and a five-year-old starting Kindergarten this year. Like many families, they borrowed three Chromebooks from the school district last year when classes became virtual.

When the school offered an additional device, Shelia was hesitant to accept. Chromebooks are fragile, and the children were always carrying them around the house. She reached out to PEC's digital inclusion program for help. "A desktop stays put," Shelia said, "It makes more sense to me use something sturdier, and I'm able to monitor their use of it to keep them away from inappropriate sites." PEC values the voices of our families – and believes they should have choices -- so we provided her with a desktop and assistance with setting it up. This year, when school starts, Shelia feels more confident about keeping her children connected.

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.

