

Tierra's Story

Tierra (here name has been changed to protect her privacy) was a 24-year-old single mother of three boys; 10 years old, eight years old and four years old, when her family arrived at PEC. Tierra had a ninth-grade education; she dropped out of school when she became pregnant with her oldest son. No one ever made her go to school and if she did not feel like going, she just stayed home.

There were no consequences for her missing school. With limited education and no work experience, it has been very difficult for Tierra to obtain employment, which increases the difficulty in obtaining and securing housing. Determined that her children would have a better education, she worked with PEC's staff to enroll them in school and out of school activities offered onsite.

Tierra was delighted when her case manager presented each child with their own school supplies and bookbags. She made sure her children were at school on time and ready to learn every day. When the pandemic closed the schools, she was worried about having to suddenly become a teacher, too! PEC staff helped her keep her children organized and on task. "I was anxious about homeschooling," Tierra said, "but at PEC they show you how find the help you need. All you have to do is ask!"

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.

