

# 5 Steps to Five



**EXPLORE**

**READ**

**PLAY**

**TALK**

**NURTURE**



# DEAR FRIENDS OF 5 STEPS TO FIVE,

Welcome to our 2023 Annual Report. As always, we hope to show you the profound and lasting impact of your generosity. 2023 was a year of steady growth, and we focused especially on building new community partnerships to address the many different needs of our families.

Of course, we also continued to do what we do best - be a trusted resource for parents seeking to give their child the best possible start to school and to life. Thank you for being along for the journey!



# OVERVIEW

- In 2023, the demand for more, and more varied, programming became evident, and we offered additional special events and weekday classes.
- For expecting or new moms, bonding with other mothers is critical. We started a series of weekday classes for pregnant women and mothers of newborns, and new friendships blossomed as a result.
- While attendance remained strong, we knew many more children (and parents) could benefit from our programming. We hired a bilingual consultant skilled in recruitment and community relations to help us reach more families.
- Together with community partners, we created new and impactful programming to connect our families to resources and services in Port Chester and beyond. Our first community-wide event featuring Port Chester's Universal PreK, Meals on Main Street, and 5 Steps to Five was a big success!



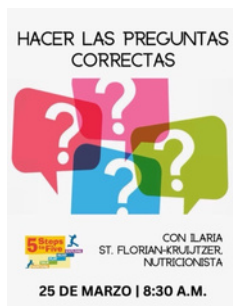
# PROGRAMMING

In 2023, 5 Steps to Five teachers conducted most Saturday morning classes at All Souls Community Center or outdoors at Lyon Park. Zoom remained a good option for inclement weather or special events. We offered two sessions, divided by age of the child: zero to two-year-olds, and two and up. We also introduced more consistent quality programming for older siblings, so parents could focus on their younger child.

In addition, we initiated a series of workshops on Tuesday mornings geared towards pregnant women and mothers with newborns. The pilot series was a great success and continues in 2024.



These posters represent a sampling of the topics that were covered in 2023. Each session had a theme linked to one of the five steps: *Nurture, Talk, Play, Read* and *Explore*. We regularly brought in experts and volunteers to speak with our parents.



# SPECIAL EVENTS & WORKSHOP SERIES FOR NEW MOTHERS

We continued to expand our offerings beyond our Saturday programming by introducing more weekday and evening classes, along with Zoom workshops. These sessions covered a diverse range of topics, such as nutrition and healthy snacking habits, helping older siblings adjust to a newborn in the household, the various factors that influence healthy brain development, and the advantages of reducing screen time.



Our new mom class welcomed a variety of special guests, including **Dr. Mary (Versfelt)** who presented on developmental milestones, and **Ann Magalhaes** who spoke about the importance of positive experiences and interactions to build a healthier brain. Additionally, **Open Door/Family Services of Westchester** conducted a self-care workshop as a part of NY State's COMHPS (Community Mental Health Promotion and Support) initiative.

# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

In September and October, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month. Our families were thrilled to be able to share their traditional food, music, and dance with each other. Thanks to a grant from the Christ's Church Youth Grant-making Board, we were able to invite **Flor Bromley**, a bilingual entertainer, for a special song and dance session. We also hosted a class focused on the many benefits of bilingualism.



# STAFF

Program parent alum, **Lynda de Gomez**, joined our team as a community liaison to help enhance our program by connecting families with more local resources. Lynda has also been instrumental in recruiting families as well as new and expecting mothers for our Tuesday class.

“MY FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING WITH 5 STEPS TO FIVE IS THE TOPICS WE INTRODUCE TO THE FAMILIES, AND SEEING THEM COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY EACH SATURDAY. I ESPECIALLY LOVE PLAYING WITH THE CHILDREN TO BOOST THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS AND IMAGINATIONS.”  
-LESLYE MONTERO

While not on our staff, the amazing **Sarah McGill** frequently lent us her considerable talents to help organize our program space, find community resource materials for the families, and coordinate our annual holiday toy drive.

Early in the year, we held a special Saturday workshop for our teachers to find new and creative ways to support and empower them in their sessions. The workshop featured a dynamic session where staff members were able to share how community and family needs had shifted and changed during the pandemic, and to brainstorm ways to adapt our programming to these needs.

“I ESPECIALLY LIKE THAT IT IS A WARM ENVIRONMENT, A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE FEELS LIKE THEY CAN EXPRESS THEIR EMOTIONS. THIS MAKES IT SO THAT WE CAN REALLY BE HELPFUL TO THE PARENTS, TO TREAT THEM LIKE FAMILY.”  
-IRMA ARELLANO





# CONTRIBUTORS



The **Port Chester Volunteer Fire Department** visited our program and brought along their big red firetruck! Despite the rain, the families enjoyed the opportunity.



Our resident nutritionist, **Ilaría St. Florian-Kruijtzter** joined us so many times! Here she is talking to parents about “go, whoa and slow” food choices.



Mayor **Luis A. Marino** came to see the program and visited with the staff and families, who were so happy to have their photo taken with him.



Pediatrician **Dr. Mary Versfelt** hosted an afternoon workshop focused on how to help families prepare for their doctor visits, and shared tips on how to keep children safe.



Mindfulness meditation teacher **Jackie Frederick-Berner** led a Mother’s Day session on the importance of mindful breathing to manage stressful moments.



Officer **Moises Ochoa** spoke with the families about police resources in Port Chester. The children were thrilled to see his squad car up close!



Another program favorite, parenting professional **Ann Magalhaes**, hosted a class on raising optimistic children.

# CONTRIBUTORS



Occupational Therapist, **Marina Glezer** worked with older siblings on activities strengthening fine motor skills.



**Jane Mickatavage** and her amazing team of extraordinary knitters and crocheters once again donated gorgeously handmade mittens, blankets, and hats for our families.



Orthodontist, **Dr. Kiren Patel** shared critical information on the importance of dental hygiene early childhood with the families.



**Jubilee the Clown, aka Melissa Almonte** (who also happens to be an experienced bilingual kindergarten teacher!) entertained us with story time, balloons, and songs on a sunny morning.

**Bill Belleville** returned as our favorite 'Dancing Santa' to distribute presents to the families. The gifts were provided by **Massiel Estevez** (daughter of teacher **Sunilda**), and her colleagues at the **NY Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital Labor and Delivery unit**, and by **Sarah McGill** with help from **Rye Middle School families**.

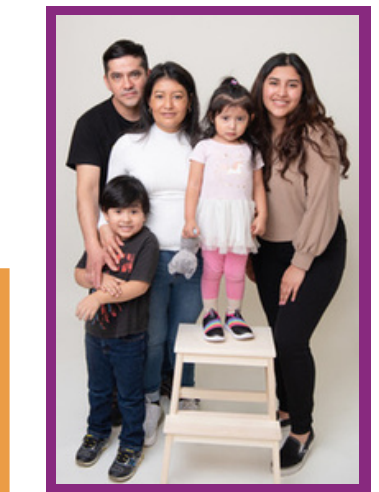
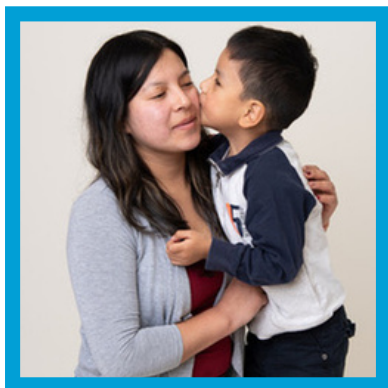


**Karina Bubeck**, financial advisor, hosted a workshop on smart budgeting. A video of the workshop is available for families on the **5 Steps to Five** website.

# PHOTO DAY

JO BRYAN  
photography

A professional family portrait is a lifelong treasure, but for most of our families, the cost is simply prohibitive. Thanks to the incredible generosity of talented Rye photographer **Jo Bryan**, our families were invited to a special 5 Steps to Five photo session in March. With great patience, charm, and professionalism, Jo worked an entire day to capture these stunning images (and many more!)



# INTERNS AND STUDENT VOLUNTEERS



**Colin Lauri**, a student volunteer and budding musician from **Rye Country Day School**, helped to foster a love of music while entertaining families.



Our **Rye High School** senior intern, **Vaibhav Kailash**, was exceptionally helpful in updating our donor and family databases.



Student volunteers from **Brunswick School** had fun working in the sibling room - as did the kids!



# RESOURCES



Our teachers and family workers helped direct our families to community resources such as speech and language referrals and the WIC food program.



Open Door provided 60 backpacks for our families again this year. Thanks to **Emily Borell**'s reorganization of our book supply, we supplemented them with age appropriate workbooks, board books and flashcards.

## The Sharing Shelf

The Sharing Shelf provided new and used clothing for the children of families in our program. In 2023, 82 children received a bundle of clothing which also included an age-appropriate toy or book.



914 Cares' generosity allowed us to distribute around 600 packets of diapers in 2023. In addition, each month they also provided 50 packets of baby wipes and 50 menstrual kits.



As a part of their early literacy program United2Read, which provides reading kits to families, United Way donated 45 bags containing children's books and reading awareness activities for Beginning Readers.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Open Door Medical Center/Family Services of Westchester conducted a self-care workshop with the Tuesday Moms Group.



We received another generous grant from the Rye Presbyterian Church's Women's Association and attended their beautiful grant luncheon!

Rye Presbyterian Church



Carver Center consultant **Otoniel Lopez** visited our program to conduct focus groups related to the Port Chester 'Community Needs Assessment'.



Christ's Church Youth Grantmaking Board provided us with a generous grant for music enrichment.



The Westchester Children's Museum invited our staff to tour the museum and shared information on how to join its discounted family access membership.



A perennial family favorite, the Rye Nature Center, returned with its "Little Naturalist and Me" program.



**Emma Hulse**, a NY Civil Liberties Union Research Fellow, informed parents of their legal rights regarding school enrollment and special education.



Representatives from the Community Resource Center of Mamaroneck shared information on resources they provide to the immigrant community.

# GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER

On March 29th, 5 Steps teamed up with Port Chester's **Universal PreK** and **Meals on Main Street** for a special event for Port Chester families. Entitled 'Growing Stronger Together', the event invited families to learn more about the participating organizations, shop at the Meals on Wheels truck, and learn how to assemble their own yummy parfaits. Pediatric nutritionist **Ilaria St. Florian-Kruijtzter** discussed healthy food choices and the importance of building independence and fine motor skills through "playing" with food.



PORT CHESTER  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



# ATTENDANCE

... kept going up in 2023! The number of so-called “touches”, i.e. times we reached a family with one of our parenting programs, totaled 1485, and we conducted 62 programming sessions. Thanks to our expanded taxi voucher program, more participants were able to join us than ever before, with up to 50 families attending our Saturday sessions.

We found that families were more likely than ever to bring along an older sibling: a testament to the welcoming atmosphere of the program, as well as a renewed desire for community in the post-COVID era. On average, 13 older siblings attended classes any given Saturday. We also continued to see not just one, but both parents attending sessions at a consistent rate, and occasionally grandparents joined in as well.



On May 20th, we celebrated Founders' Day and those families who reached the milestone of attending 100+ sessions. Founder **Kent Warner** presented the families with their certificates and a special gift. And of course, there was cake!





# FINANCIAL RESULTS

From a financial perspective, 2023 was another strong year for 5 Steps to Five. Our second annual 525 Day Campaign on May 25 was very successful, thanks to the generous \$25,525 matching challenge put up by our founders and friends of the organization, and the many supporters who helped us meet it. Although we did not host an in-person event in 2023, the match as well as our end-of-year Annual Appeal ensured our continued financial health.

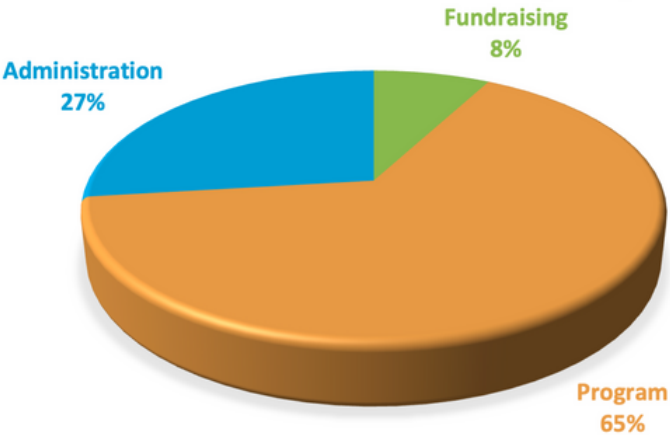
## EXPENSES

2023 expenditures were down slightly compared to 2022, thanks to a reduction in fundraising costs. Labor costs were lower than anticipated, due to some staff absences during the summer.

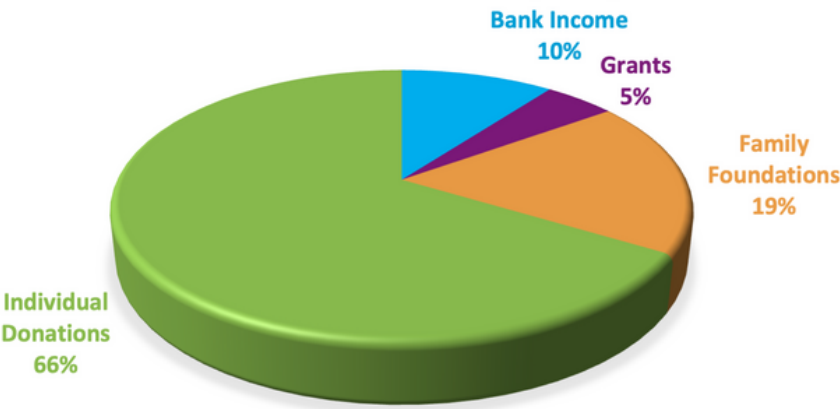
## REVENUE

We continue to be grateful for the generous support of our many donors. We also saw an increase in bank income due to market changes and modifications of our investment strategy.

2023 EXPENDITURES: TOTAL \$141,478



2023 REVENUES: TOTAL \$188,119



# BOARD NEWS

In 2023, the board faithfully continued its work to ensure the financial health of the organization, support the staff, and advance our mission.

We updated our bylaws and voted to shift the timing of the board recruitment process, which meant that while we identified new board members, none were added in 2023 (they officially joined in January 2024). However, we did see a change in leadership in May as Drs. **Kiren Patel** and **Mary Versfelt** agreed to step jointly into the roles of Co-Vice Presidents. We are happy to share that **Ann Magalhaes**, who held that position for many years, graciously agreed to stay on the board.

In lieu of a luncheon, the board decided to initiate another matching challenge on 5 Steps to Five Day, May 25th. The 'Founder's Challenge' was a big success, thanks to a generous matching grant put forward by our founders, **Allen Clark** and **Kent Warner**, and some of their friends. This allowed us to be in an excellent financial position early in the year.



In December, we were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of our board treasurer and dear friend, **Betsy Buttrill White**. Betsy was part of the original board, and the organization would not be what it is today without Betsy's wisdom and leadership. She was exceptionally smart, witty, kind, and generous, and had the biggest heart for the children and families we serve. She will be sorely missed.

As always, the board would like to thank our Executive Director **Lisa Field**, Associate Director **Melissa Belleville**, and the entire staff for their exceptional work. We are also grateful for the continued support of our landlord, **Rye Presbyterian Church**. We look forward to continuing this important work in 2024 and beyond.

A PARENT IS A CHILD'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER. OUR **MISSION** IS TO BE A TRUSTED RESOURCE FOR PARENTS SEEKING TO GIVE THEIR CHILD THE BEST POSSIBLE START TO SCHOOL AND TO LIFE.

## 2023 Board of Directors

**Kristin Jautz, President**  
**Kiren Patel, DDS, Co-Vice President**  
**Mary Versfelt, MD, Co-Vice President**  
**Betsy Buttrill White, Treasurer**  
**Nicole Colwell, Secretary**

**Emily Borell**  
**Carolee Brakewood**  
**Rachel Fleming, OTR/L**  
**Lori Haffey**  
**Ann Magalhaes, CPE**  
**Carolyn Mauritz**  
**Moises Ochoa**  
**Ilaria St. Florian-Kruijtzter, CDN**

**Allen Clark,**  
**Director Emeritus**  
**Kent Warner,**  
**Director Emeritus**

**Community Advisors:**  
**Elsy González**  
**Robin Jovanovich**  
**Molly Ness, PhD**



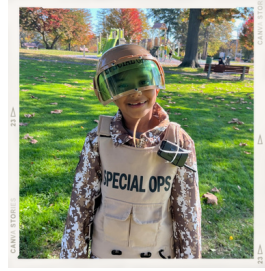
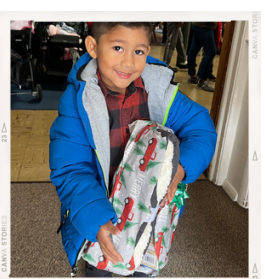


Gracias por  
 5 steps  
 5 to Five  
 por la oportunidad que tiene  
 Padres y niños de aprender.  
 Juntos somos un gran  
 Equipo

# THE YEAR



# IN PHOTOS



# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS 2023 DONORS

## Step 5 \$25,000+

Emily Grant

## Step 4 \$10,000-\$24,999

Anonymous

Kristin & Ken Jautz

Gabby & Don McCree

## Step 3 \$5,000-\$9,999

Emily & Jon Borell

Susan & Frank Brown

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Rye Presbyterian Church

Women's Association

Mary & David Versfelt

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Betsy Buttrill White

## Step 2 \$1,000-\$4,999

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

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# CONTINUED THANKS

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Margaret Arquit & Bill Blake  
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To donate, please use the QR code below, visit our website, or mail a check to  
**5 Steps to Five, Inc.**  
**PO Box 923, Rye, NY 10580**

For more information or to get involved, please email  
**Lisa Field, Executive Director**  
[lpfield@5stepstofive.org](mailto:lpfield@5stepstofive.org)



*On behalf of the children and families we serve, thank you so much for your support!*

