

Mission Statement

The Second Mile challenges young people to achieve their potential as individuals and community members by providing opportunities for them to develop positive life skills and self-esteem as well as by providing education and support for parents and professionals addressing the needs of youth.



Providing Children
with Help and Hope

Spring 2007
Milestones
www.thesecondmile.org

Supporting Foster Parents: A Critical Task

When the Pennsylvania State Foster Parents Association had its thirtieth birthday recently, the Association gave us a present—honoring The Second Mile with its Community Partner Award for our efforts to help recruit, recognize, retain, and sustain Pennsylvania's foster parents via our Foster Family Support Program. Why does the Association see Second Mile efforts as critical? Because, annually, more than 20,000 Pennsylvania children need foster care, but in one recent national study, the median length of foster parent service ranged from only 8 to 14 months. In fact, when the Department of Health and Human Services surveyed foster parents across five states, all shared that they had "considered leaving the foster care system." That means that, since many children who have experienced physical or sexual abuse or neglect are in need of a caring family to provide safety and support, experienced foster parents are a precious and rare resource.

While the reasons that individual foster parents choose to leave the system are as diverse as the parents themselves, the foster children in their homes, and the agencies with whom they work, every parent knows that, while rewarding, parenting is a full-time, tough, and demanding job. And that's when you've had the advantage of raising your child from birth and of protecting that child, as much as you're able, from traumatic events. Imagine welcoming a little "stranger" at age 2, or 4, or 10, or 13 (and maybe his or her siblings, too!) after that



Scenes from just two of the many foster family activities that give children a time for fun and parents a time to share the challenges and joys of foster parenting.

young person has experienced a traumatic event or events and then fulfilling all the key needs that parents must—attending to healthcare, communicating with teachers, providing parental guidance, etc.—while dealing, perhaps, with challenging emotions or behaviors that are an outgrowth of foster children's very difficult life experiences and of their separation from the only home they've ever known. While foster parents receive training and support from the Children and Youth Agency and the children may be receiving supportive services, like therapy, parenting under such circumstances is a particularly daunting task.

How does The Second Mile make a difference for the foster parents who undertake this *Supporting Foster Parents continued on next page*

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The official registration and financial information of The Second Mile™ may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



Reflections from the Founder

As Penn State capped another solid season with a win against Tennessee in the Outback Bowl, I got to thinking about the similarities between the components needed to create positive outcomes for a football program and those needed for children and teens. Both require a solid base—role models, preparation, and values. Players with families who are supportive and principled and past coaches who emphasized a positive work ethic and great fundamentals always emerge as key leaders and the team’s backbone. When any of those ingredients are missing, for players or for children, others need to step in to fill those gaps. At the college level, that role falls to coaches and player-leaders, and at The Second Mile, staff and volunteers offer that foundation.

Your contributions have helped us provide a powerful team of coaches for kids across the Commonwealth—one of the keys needed for underdogs to become champions. But you can’t sustain a team if you don’t know where you’ll be playing from day to day or whether you’ll have a facility in which to train. How can you train a great team of coaches and assistants if you don’t have a dedicated space to meet? How can you plan programs if you never know when or if you’ll have access to fields, gyms, or housing? Imagine trying to maintain a team and promote excellence under these circumstances.

For 25 years, The Second Mile has been turning underdogs into champions under these conditions. But if we want to continue to be a champion of children, we must work together to build a facility, a home for Second Mile kids, and to create an endowment dedicated to maintaining our commitment to them. Your dedication to children has made The Second Mile of today possible, so I look forward to sharing with you, in coming months and Milestones, our vision for The Second Mile’s facility and endowment. Together, we can create a future filled with help and hope for the children you care so much about.

Jerry Sandusky

Supporting Foster Parents continued from cover

complex role? First, we begin by assisting County Children and Youth Agencies with the recruitment of foster parents. We ask celebrity friends and television and radio station partners of The Second Mile to join with us to produce public service announcements for use by Children and Youth Agencies. In the past, these announcements, which are provided at no cost to the agencies, have featured such celebrities as Penn State and NFL greats Lenny Moore, Lydell Mitchell, Kerry Collins, and Kyle Brady and have been produced by WPMT-TV FOX43.

While recruiting new foster parents is key, preventing the attrition of qualified foster parents is just as, or even *more*, critical to the welfare of children in foster care. That’s why The Second Mile provides foster parents with opportunities to network with each other about the special joys and challenges of foster parenting and to enjoy special times with *all* the children in their families at foster family activities throughout the year. The Second Mile Foster Family Events include educational activities, holiday parties and picnics, and amusement park, sporting event, and theater outings. In many cases, these activities represent the *first* time that the foster child has experienced the wonder of such an event, and the activity may also provide siblings, now living in different foster homes, time together they would not have otherwise. None of these activities would be possible without the venues that so generously offer admissions; the vendors, volunteers, and religious organizations that donate product or transport; or the volunteers who connect us with these benefactors and/or who host the events (see **Reaching Out to Foster Families** box).

As one Lancaster County Children and Youth Foster Care Developer shared about such events, “Our foster families have a great time and very much appreciate your generosity

in including them. The Second Mile is truly a very important partner in our efforts to enhance the lives of children while in foster care. As you know, foster parenting sometimes feels like a thankless job, so it is very reinforcing to have an organization send the very powerful message that the foster parents’ hard work and commitment have, in fact, been noticed and appreciated.” And that appreciation comes in one additional form: to promote the importance of experience, The Second Mile honors foster parents reaching five-year service milestones (5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years of service) with certificates and celebratory “dinners for two” in most locations in which we have an active Chapter. Just as with our slate of Foster Family events, we are always looking for additional venues to provide such opportunities. If you know of a Pennsylvania business—recreational facility, restaurant, etc.—interested in supporting The Second Mile’s Foster Family Support Program, we would welcome that partnership.

Reaching Out to Foster Families: a roster of our recent partners

- Albright Football
- Allenberry Playhouse
- American Music Theatre
- Bryce Jordan Center
- Cherry-Crest Farm
- The Coad Group
- Colonial Theatre
- Heritage Hills
- Hersheypark
- Hoss’s Steak and Sea House
- Knoebels Amusement Resort
- Krapf Bus Company
- Lakemont Park
- Our Children’s Centre
- Penn State Student Athletes
- Penn State Blue & White Society
- Penn State MBA Society
- Pittsburgh Penguins
- Reading Phillies
- Sovereign Center
- Spring Valley Pool
- Villanova Football
- Water World
- York Little Theatre

And generous individuals and religious organizations too numerous to list here

Checking the Mileage

Leadership Institute 2006: Summary of Initial Youth Surveys and of Youth Responses to Post-Conference Evaluation's Open-Ended Questions

By Dr. Daniel F. Perkins, Department of Agricultural and Extension Education; and Dr. Dana L. Mitra and Marcela A. Movit, Department of Education Policy Studies, The Pennsylvania State University

The Sovereign Bank Second Mile Leadership Institute took place from April 8 to 11, 2006, in State College, PA. Students from 45 schools across Pennsylvania attended and were accompanied by adult “mentors.” The purpose of the Institute is to promote youth leadership and community service skills, and to that end, the Institute brings together teams of high school students to develop strategies for working cooperatively toward a common goal and making improvements in their schools and communities. [This article provides a summary of students' reported experiences and competencies pre-Institute and a summary of their responses to an open-ended question about their conference experience collected on the final day of the Institute.](#) A total of 166 youth surveys were completed, with a majority of participants being female (64%). The vast majority of the participants (68%) were ages 16-17, with 30% being ages 14-15, and 2% age 18 or older.

In the responses to the pre-conference survey, 40% of participants reported no previous experience working within a youth-adult partnership, followed by 27% reporting a little experience, 25% reporting some experience, and 4% reporting a lot of experience working within youth-adult partnerships. With regard to their experience with planning committees or decision-making boards, 22% of participants

reported no experience, followed by 34% reporting a little, 35% reporting some, and 9% reporting a lot of experience. Thus, [the theme of the conference was aligned with the needs of the youth attending.](#)

In that same initial survey, students reported the following perceptions of life skills competencies:

Communication – 43% of participants measured low on communication skills, 52% scored medium on communication skill development, and only three people (2%) rated high.

Critical Thinking – One participant's critical thinking was extremely low, while 61% of participants measured low, 35% received a medium score, and one participant rated high.

Decision-Making – 40% of participants measured low, 52% were medium, and 5% high.

Goal Setting – 53% of participants measured low, 40% medium, and 5% high.

Problem Solving – 50% measured low, 44% medium, and 2% measured high.

At the close of the Institute, the open-ended section of students' evaluation forms asked students to respond to the question, “In what ways have you personally benefited from the Leadership Institute?” and provide any additional comments they may have had about the Institute. While a few students left the spaces for answers blank for both of these questions, [the vast majority \(approximately 90%\) of students provided thoughtful responses to each question. Four general themes](#)

[emerged from the students' responses on how they personally benefited from the Institute: communication skills, friendships, leadership abilities, and recognition of diversity.](#)

The most common benefit students expressed was an increase in their communication skills. These skills consisted of both an increased willingness to meet and work with new people and a greater ability to express ideas effectively within their group. The greater ability to communicate, in turn, allowed them to form new friendships and strengthen the bonds that existed within those they already had. In addition to increased communication skills and new and stronger friendships, students felt they were better prepared to take on a leadership role within their school after participating in the Institute. The students' ability to lead may have been further enhanced by their exposure to diverse students through the Institute. [This immediate post-Institute feedback is positive, and we look forward to tracking these students' progress as they work to put skills into action in their schools and communities.](#)

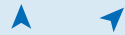
Miles of Smiles

First Semester Scenes from
The Second Mile's Friend Programs

Centre Region
Friend



Blair County Friend



Clinton
County
Friend



Southeast
Region
Friend



Lancaster
County
Friend



Lehigh Valley
Friend



College Friends
hail from
Cedar Crest,
Lock Haven,
Millersville,
Muhlenberg,
Penn State Altoona,
Penn State Univ. Park,
Villanova

Miles Ahead

Past Second Milers: Where Are They Now?



Nancy Ayllon's senior class picture exudes the amiability and confidence that underpin her leadership skills.



Derek Lopes accepts congratulations for one of the proudest of high school moments—graduation.

Nancy Ayllon

Then

A scholarship recipient through The Second Mile's Children's Fund, Nancy was a participant in The Sovereign Bank Second Mile Leadership Institute 2003.

Fondest Memory

My fondest memory of The Second Mile is being able to initiate a program at my high school that is now making such a big difference in our students. Our idea was to break barriers between the cultures in our school, and we began an after-school language class where Spanish- and English-speaking or bilingual students helped each other with their assignments and got to know each other better.

The Second Mile's Impact

I led Intercambio for 2 years, then mentored underclassmen student leaders who are continuing it today. The Second Mile allowed me to experience the way groups work together to accomplish what they have in common, and most importantly, I learned that I can make a difference.

Now

I am a Bloomsburg University sophomore with a double major in Sociology and Spanish and double minors in Latin American and Ethnic Studies.

Derek Lopes

Then

A past participant in the Summer Challenge Program, Derek was awarded a scholarship through The Second Mile's Children's Scholarship Fund for his college studies.

Fondest Memory

I have many great memories from the three years in which I participated in The Second Mile's summer camps, but I think my favorite memory is playing "capture the flag" with the entire camp on the last day of camp each summer.

The Second Mile's Impact

The Second Mile helped me create good habits for life, such as setting goals and sticking to them. Setting goals each summer with our camp counselors and then having The Second Mile support me in reaching those goals year-round taught me a skill I use today.

Now

I am attending Millersville University and am in my sophomore year. I'm majoring in computer science, and I plan to have a career as a computer programmer or game programmer.

Thoughts from the President



In 2006, The Second Mile reached more children than ever before. We provided our Tips and PEAK programs to hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania children in their schools and served another 6000 children and family members directly through our seven other programs. And based upon requests for services so far this year, we anticipate that we will reach more youngsters than ever before in 2007.

Our past impact has been possible only through a network of dedicated volunteers interested in making a difference in children's lives. To respond to the increasing demand, we will need to expand that network in 2007. There are many ways to help. Some volunteers seek an ongoing relationship with a child or a program—mentoring a teen in Friend Fitness on a weekly basis or serving as an adult chaperone for our Friend Programs a few times each year. Other volunteers find that helping out on a one-time basis is more compatible with their schedules: they may choose to assist with Summer Challenge camp session or Foster Family event registrations or to provide transportation for children whose families cannot. Still others like to involve themselves with the prep work for programs: they may volunteer to help with reminder phone calls to campers or Young Friends or counselors; with mailings to children, parents, or school counselors; with creative projects like newsletter construction or Tips design; or with coordination of Children's Fund grants or service award winners.

And, of course, many volunteers choose to serve Second Mile children without interacting with them directly at all. They lend their time and expertise to our many fundraising events or to committee work related to finance and facilities, communications and public relations, or development and program, and/or they lead our Boards and Chapters.

Everyone who receives this *Milestones* is instrumental in making The Second Mile happen, but if you aren't currently engaged as a volunteer, we would welcome your further involvement because 2007 will be our busiest year yet. Please give me a call if you'd like to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Miles To Go

The Second Mile's Southcentral Region

A College and
Young Friend from
The Second Mile
Lancaster County
Friend Program
join in a game of
"Simon Says."



The Southcentral Region Office in Camp Hill, PA, serves children and families in a nine-county region and has been the base of The Second Mile's operations in Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York Counties since 1989. In 2006, a dynamic Regional Board, along with the committed Berks, Lancaster, and York Chapters, worked alongside staff members and other volunteers to ensure that prevention programming was available in the region's schools to tens of thousands and provided direct programming for more than 2,500 children and family members.

The role these area leaders and volunteers fill in direct programming is crucial to The Second Mile. For example, the Regional Board and the three Chapter Boards each assume responsibility for providing volunteer support for Summer Challenge camp registrations, during which time they assist in helping almost 300 campers and hundreds of their family members prepare for the camp experience. These same leaders seek out motivational speakers and event chaperones for the Summer Challenge Program, the Leadership Institute, and The Second Mile Friend Program of Lancaster County, which holds monthly activities for nearly 100 children throughout the academic year at Millersville University. They not only chaperone events but also ask regional businesses to provide admissions, snack food, or supplies for events, including an array of popular Foster Family events at York Little Theater, Reading Phillies, Knoebels Amusement Resort, Hersheypark, Heritage Hills, American Music Theatre, Allenberry Playhouse and other venues. Our programs would be impossible without their active engagement!

Of course, these programs can't happen without funding, another critical task assumed by the Boards and volunteers, as they work to connect us to donors and to oversee special events. Last September's annual Celebrity Golf Classic, with

Tournament Sponsor, Universal Media, Inc.; Founding Sponsor, The Hall Foundation; and Charter Sponsor, Highmark Blue Shield; raised more than \$56,000. Other annual events include the Celebration of Excellence, which boasts a tradition of paying tribute to excellence and of long-time corporate sponsorship by KPMG. "A Salute to Linebacker U," Friday, March 23, 2007, at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA, features that excellence as Penn State greats—Paul Posluszny, Dan Conner, Mac Morrison, Greg Buttle, Lance Mehl, Chet Parlavecchio, John Skorupan, and Jerry Sandusky—headline a fun-filled evening. And both football and golf are part of the fundraising efforts led by the Region's three Chapters this Spring. On March 15th, the Berks County Chapter's Kick-Off for Kids Banquet and Silent Auction features Larry Johnson, Sr., PSU Defensive Head Coach, and Larry Johnson, Jr., the Kansas City Chiefs' superb running back, while the Lancaster County Chapter's Spring Celebration has headliner Jon Ritchie, former NFL fullback with the Philadelphia Eagles and Oakland Raiders, on its May 17th menu at the Netherlands Inn, Strasburg. And for those of you who prefer golf to football spikes, The York County Chapter holds its annual Sandy Kranich Golf Benefit at the Heritage Hills Golf Resort on May 4, 2007.

If you haven't yet experienced the fun of these events, we would love to have you join us as a guest or sponsor as an additional way to support Second Mile children. Or consider joining the Region's extensive network of dedicated volunteers by contacting our Southcentral Region Office (717) 763-4614 or southcentral@thesecondmile.org. Volunteers are the lifeblood of The Second Mile; the Region's Board, Chapters and staff would welcome your expanded involvement on behalf of children who need our help.

Special Events 2007 Calendar

March 15

The Berks County Kick-off For Kids
Reading, PA

March 23

The KPMG Celebration of Excellence
Hershey, PA

April 13

The 5th Annual Second Mile
Reverse Drawing
Altoona, PA

April 20

The 17th Annual Second Mile Art Auction
State College, PA

May 4

The 13th Annual Sandy Kranich
Penn State Celebrity Golf Benefit
York, PA

May 7

The 8th Annual CAI Lehigh Valley
Second Mile Celebrity Banquet
Allentown, PA

May 11

Clinton County Sports Night &
Silent Auction
Lock Haven, PA

May 17

Lancaster Chapter Spring Celebration
Lancaster, PA

May 19

Clearfield Chapter Monte Carlo Night
Clearfield, PA

June 5

The 2nd Annual Second Mile Pitt vs.
Penn State Golf Challenge
Pittsburgh, PA

June 11

The 15th Annual Chester County
Second Mile Golf Classic
Downingtown, PA

June 21-23

The Second Mile Golf Classic
State College, PA

September 17

The Universal Media Second Mile
Celebrity Golf Classic
Hershey, PA

October 25

Southeast PA Celebration of Excellence
King of Prussia, PA

November 2

The Second Mile Mercedes-Benz
Reverse Drawing
State College, PA