



ST. LOUIS PARK EMERGENCY PROGRAM

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STEP accepts donations

M, W, Th 8 AM-4 PM; Tues. 12 PM-8 PM; Fri. 8 AM-12 PM

HIGHLIGHTS

STEP would like to thank the following foundations and organizations for their generous support:

- ◆ General Mills
- ◆ Roundy's
- ◆ St. Louis Park Rotary
- ◆ Open Your Heart
- ◆ Park Nicollet Foundation
- ◆ Citizens Ind. Bank Community
- ◆ Colby Family Foundation, Ron and Kathy
- ◆ Fiterman Foundation, Mike and Linda
- ◆ American Legion Post 282
- ◆ Wayzata Community Church (Rummage Sale Ministries)
- ◆ Hunger Solutions Minnesota
- ◆ Thrivent Financial For Lutherans—SW Hennepin County Chapter
- ◆ Clear Channel

FIND STEP ONLINE!



FOLLOW STEP ON FACEBOOK

Get updates on needs, events and volunteer options!

www.facebook.com/STEPSip



DONATE ONLINE

Support STEP through a one-time or monthly donation at www.giveMN.org. Any amount helps!

SAVE THE DATE

Bridge and 500 Benefit Party for STEP
Friday, September 27

Westwood Lutheran Church
9001 Cedar Lake Road, St. Louis Park
Registration Deadline: Sept. 20

Sign up with your partner. \$37 per person.

Contact LaDonna Reynolds at 952-929-1402 or send an email to ladonna@comcast.net for registration information

What Does it Take to be "Cool" in School?

Julie Lapointe, Program Manager

In Bill Harley's "Tales From the 6th Grade" he sings about silly school experiences. The chorus from Cool in School goes like this:

- Is it the way you tie your shoes
- The way you comb your hair
- The superheroes hiding
- On your underwear
- What is cool
- Cool in school
- What is cool
- Cool in school

Harley has some funny tales to sing about. But for

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Last year STEP provided school supplies to 458 students in St. Louis Park. Each bag was packed specifically for each child according to their school supply list.

Summer 2013

In This Issue:

Notes from the Director

Program Update:

Annual Client Survey Results are in!

Spotlight:

STEP Receives Best of St. Louis Park Award

Back to School Shopping List

Save the Date

Find STEP Online

Parktoberfest!



Parktoberfest!

Join us at a fundraiser for two great organizations:
STEP &
the St. Louis Park Public Schools Foundation

Saturday, October 5, 2013
6-10 P.M.

at The Warehouse Winery
6415 Cambridge Street, St. Louis Park, MN

The evening's highlights include:

- ◆ A gourmet meal by SLP professional chefs Joe and Dotty Zahner
 - ◆ Music by TreVeld
 - ◆ A Silent Auction
 - ◆ Beer and wine included in event price
- ~ The cost is \$100 per person ~

Tickets at <http://www.stepsip.org> or call board member Curt Rahman 612-207-5411 with questions. Or you can volunteer at the event—a commitment to work and none of the cost!

Notes from STEP's Director

Jackie Olafson, Executive Director

What are we going to have for dinner?
Where are we going to eat for dinner?
Where will my next meal come from?

Most of us can readily identify with the top two questions. The last question is the one raised by people who turn to STEP in time of need.

During the past several months, I have had many hours to reflect on my life. Where I end up each time is with a feeling of overwhelming gratitude. I have had such a good life. I grew up with a single mom and an older sister.

Looking back and really not evident to me at the time, it had to have been often that my mom asked herself from where would come our next meal. We were blessed to have had a caring family, though. I remember my Uncle Manny bringing bags of groceries every Sunday evening.

My aunt would pack up the food and send him some 30 miles each week to bring her sister and 2 daughters food. They were our food shelf.

Today there are so many more people who struggle to provide food for themselves and their families. They are ordinary people facing difficult times. If given the choice, they would prefer to purchase their food and be independent of STEP.

Your contributions allow STEP to be available to them, just as my Uncle Manny was for our family.

Please take time and reflect on all that you have had in your life. We are so blessed to be where we are today. Given what our lives could be, I simply cannot escape the feeling of overwhelming gratitude. Gratitude moves us naturally to generosity for others who live with so much less.

Consider an increase in your contribution. Please be generous.



Following are some of the comments that clients wanted to share:

"A big thank you for your services and helping me. I do feel like you are my angels in time of need."

"I enjoy coming to STEP. It meets my needs and stretches my food intake and the people at STEP treat me like I am somebody."

"I am very appreciative of the staff and the resources that are available."

"STEP has made this difficult time a little more manageable and helps me hold my head high."

"We wouldn't be eating so healthy without it!"

The Annual Client Survey Is In

Karen Clara, Social Worker

In an attempt to provide our clients with the best service possible, STEP prepares a client satisfaction survey offering our clients the opportunity to provide us with information regarding their needs and if they are being met here at STEP. In February of 2013 STEP served 483 households in the food shelf and had the highest response in recent years with 52% of these families responding to the survey. Here are some of the highlights of this year's survey.

- 90% of households find volunteers treat them with respect.
- 86% of households like having access to a social worker.
- 77% of households consistently find food items that meet their cultural needs.
- 83% of households reported milk was available to them at most visits.
- 81% of households reported eggs and fresh produce were available to them at most visits.

STEP Named Best Nonprofit

The St. Louis Park Magazine named STEP as their reader's choice of Best Nonprofit for 2013. Thank you to all of our neighbors for letting us know that you value the work we do!



We work hard to make STEP a welcoming place for all who come through the door. The volunteers and staff are committed to the mission of helping our neighbors in need during difficult times. This honor lets us know that you value what we do, and we are grateful for your support.



Paul's Pancake Patio Pajama Party!



St. Louis Park neighbors threw a party to enjoy some pancakes and raise money and food for STEP. Together this mighty band of neighbors raised \$176.00 and 125 pounds of food for the STEP food shelf. We are told that all stuffed animals (cloth and human alike) made it home safely!

Cool in School (continued from page 1)

some children, going to school is not a lighthearted experience. Many children from low income households do not have access to the things that might make their day "cool". Simple things like going to school on the first day with a back pack full of required school supplies make a difference to a child's school experience.

STEP serves 28% of the school age children attending St. Louis Park schools with food, school supplies, and other necessities throughout the year. Many of those children receive assistance with school supplies year after year. In the last five years STEP helped a total of 1578 children with school supplies. Of that number, 648 (or 41%) of those children were helped more than once with school supplies in that period of time. One mother shared, "STEP supplied the school supplies to my daughter all the way through school. I'm a single mother, and that really helped a lot. I really appreciated it!" Her daughter is now in college, so she no longer needs STEP's help. But there are more children like her who need this help to be successful in school.

Please consider making a donation of supplies or money to help us with the items needed. For \$40.00, STEP can provide supplies for one student. You may also volunteer to pack individual bags or assist at the Back to School Distribution. To learn more about volunteering opportunities, please contact Julie Jergens at 952-925-4899 ext. 14 or email her at jjergens@stepslp.org.

SCHOOL SUPPLY SHOPPING LIST

- STEP NEEDS:** () indicates # needed
- 3-ring zippered binders (49)
 - 3-ring binders: 2" (36), 3" (88)
 - Composition notebooks (430)
 - Fabric book covers (139)
 - 24 count Crayola crayons (50)
 - Blue ERASABLE pens (34)
 - 2-pocket folders w/o prongs: Green (167), Yellow (151), Purple (74)
 - Ticonderoga pencils (3,132)
 - Wide ruled spiral notebooks: Red (74), Yellow (13)
 - 8 count Crayola WASHABLE markers (115)
 - 8 count Crayola WASHABLE pan paints (14)
 - Highlighters (139)
 - Dry erase markers (641)
 - Tape (16 rolls)
 - Plastic rulers (133)
 - Large backpacks for Jr. and Sr. High students
- STEP DOES NOT NEED:**
- 2-pocket portfolios without prongs
 - Wide ruled spiral notebooks (blue, purple or black)
 - Multi-subject notebooks
 - Loose leaf refill paper
 - Erasers

Backpacks are distributed during registration and should be donated to STEP by August 12th. All other school supply donations should be donated to STEP by August 16th.