



The Vision

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026



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Scan the QR code to access SBS Connect. Step By Step's employee portal.

Step By Step Receives Grant from Moses Taylor Foundation



Behavior Support Services gratefully receives iPads funded through a Moses Taylor grant. left to right: **Sheila Ressler, Amanda Gallagher, Brittany Diehl, Becki Pavlick, and Joseph Linderman.**

the **Moses Taylor Foundation** to support an important technology initiative for our **Behavioral Support Services** team.

This funding will enable Step By Step to equip staff with iPads, giving them the ability to complete documentation in real time while working in homes and community settings. By improving access to our electronic health record system in the field, we can strengthen accuracy, streamline workflows, and better support both our staff and the individuals we serve.

Sheila Ressler, Vice President of Behavioral Support shared: "This investment represents a meaningful step forward in enhancing the quali-

ty and efficiency of our services, while also helping us meet increasing documentation and compliance expectations. We're incredibly grateful to the Moses Taylor Foundation for their support and partnership. Their investment in this work helps ensure our team has the tools they need to continue delivering high-quality care every day."

The Moses Taylor Foundation was started in 2012 and approved its first grant in November 2015. The Foundation's mission is to improve the health of people in Northeastern Pennsylvania, focusing on Health Care Access and Quality, Older Adult Health, School-Based Health and Nonprofit Effectiveness.

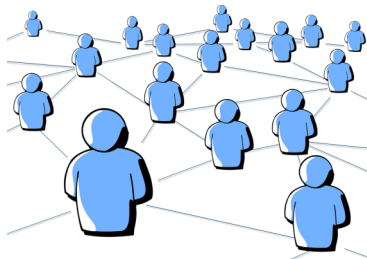
We're excited to share that Step By Step has received grant funding from

investment represents a meaningful step forward in enhancing the quali-

Introducing SBS Connect for Employee Communications

Have you checked out **SBS Connect** yet?

SBS Connect is Step By Step's new employee communication system replacing the employee HUB. It is accessible directly through the Step By Step agency website, or you can visit sbs-connect.com. You can also scan the QR code above.



SBS Connect serves as the central location for all employee communications, announcements, and important information—everything you formerly accessed on the Employee HUB.

Your log in credentials for the SBS Connect should be the same username and password for your Microsoft email, or you may continue with Microsoft if that option is given.

If you haven't already done so, please log in to the new SBS Connect and check out the Welcome post to get some quick tips on how the SBS Connect works. For instructions on adding SBS Connect as an app on your cellular device, see the attachment included with the 4/2/2026 "All Agency" email introducing SBS Connect.

Any questions can be directed to helpdesk@stepbystepusa.com.

Open House Celebrates New Madison Street Home



A moment of pride and connection as our staff and community gather to celebrate the opening of our new Madison Street location.



The beautiful courtyard offers a peaceful outdoor space for relaxation, connection, and reflection.

Step By Step's **Mental Health Program** in the **Northeast Region** recently welcomed staff, partners, and community members to an **Open House** at our new **Madison Street** location—marking an exciting new chapter for the individuals we serve.

The individuals currently residing at our 737 Hazle St. home are eagerly anticipating the transition to the new Madison St. location, where they will have the opportunity to enjoy thoughtfully designed therapeutic spaces that promote comfort, independence, and overall wellness. The spacious recreation room will provide opportunities for socialization, skill building, and meaningful community interaction, while the sensory room offers a calming environment

for emotional regulation and coping during more difficult moments.

Brittany Lombardi, Program Manager, has dedicated countless hours to bringing this vision to life by organizing spaces, building shelving and adding personal touches throughout the home to ensure it feels both supportive and dignified for the individuals we serve.

Each individual will have the privacy and comfort of their own bedroom and bathroom, helping to foster independence, personal responsibility, and a sense of ownership within their living environment. In addition, the beautiful courtyard will create another therapeutic space where residents can relax, connect with peers, and enjoy the benefits of out-

door recreation and reflection.

This new home truly reflects Psych Rehabilitation principles by emphasizing recovery, empowerment, community integration, and creating an environment where individuals can thrive while building meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Laurie Kivler, Service Director, shared: "Our Mental Health team

poured an incredible amount of care, compassion, and dedication into creating a warm and welcoming home that will support individuals throughout their recovery journey. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

We have several partners to thank: **Spirk Brothers, Spillman Farmer, Blockhouse, Willetts Technology, Ashley Furniture, Skiro's Garden Center, Northeastern Security, NEPA Cleaning Pros** and **Ace Handyman Service**.

Together, this collaboration has created more than just a new residence—it has built a place where individuals can truly feel at home while continuing their journey toward resiliency, recovery, and success.

Safety Fairs Make a Big Impact Across the Regions

The **Property & Risk Department** recently hosted a series of engaging, hands-on Safety Fairs across the Northeast, Southeast, and Lehigh regions. These events provided valuable learning opportunities for both staff and consumers, combining education with interactive experiences.

Each fair created opportunities to connect directly with representatives from our property and worker's compensation insurance carriers, safety vendors, and local partners, including police, fire departments, and

emergency management agencies.

Event Highlights Included:

Southeast: Attendees benefited from an engaging presentation by **Michael Weaverling**, VP of Safety and Risk Management at **JKJ Insurance**, the Agency's insurance broker. His session focused on defensive driving and vehicle safety, along with demonstrations of innovative tools provided by **Philadelphia Insurance**, including the Philly Sense Meshify water detection system and Ting electrical monitoring units.

Lehigh Valley: Detective **Luiz Garcia** from the **Allentown Police Department's Community Outreach Unit** shared insights on community safety and awareness. He provided crime statistics and contact information for a variety of issues that could affect our staff and consumers. **Ethan Goss** of **Philadelphia Insurance** also spoke about available risk management products and emphasized the importance of maintaining safety in the home.

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Understanding Servant Leadership (A Quiz)



Step, By Step has spent the last 18 months sharing information with all of our team members on the **Servant Leadership** model through newsletter articles and “poster” placements at each service and office location.

Having presented various thoughts about Servant Leadership practices and support, we thought it would be a fun activity to see how much you may recall or have introduced into your daily activities regarding Servant Leadership.

Please take a few moments to review the following “quiz” about Servant Leadership ([see page -4- for correct answers](#)). Good luck!

1. Servant Leadership is generally comprised of several core values that speak to honoring and placing others before yourself, while performing your work or volunteer activities. True or False?
2. True or False? The following values are reflected in Servant Leadership practices: Being ethical, helping others feel empowered, honoring others before self, and demonstrating appreciation.
3. Through the Servant Leadership model, your team, group, department or service set the tone for approach to activities and support. True or False
4. Inspiring others, practicing leadership through example and demonstrating empathy can be additional core values within the Servant Leadership model. True or False

Questions 5, 6 and 7 are Multiple Choice (pick 1)

5. What would not be considered an overarching theme to Servant Leadership?
 - A. Empowering others
 - B. Being ethical
 - C. Tasks always come before people
 - D. Demonstrating appreciation
6. Being ethical is a significant core value associated with Servant Leadership. Demonstrating ethics and ethical considerations promotes all but?
 - A. Integrity within an organization
 - B. Enhances long term risks within an organization
 - C. Promotes long-term success and stability
 - D. Promotes character over profits
7. Empowering others through Servant Leadership practices permits all but?
 - A. Permits employees to grow in a safe and supportive environment
 - B. Encourages ownership of work responsibilities and initiatives
 - C. Supports leadership to step away from day-to-day activities and interactions
 - D. Creates opportunities for shared goals

As we have previously recognized in our discussions, “Servant Leadership rallies around the opportunities of leadership being reflected as leaders working to serve the people and not the people serving the leader.” In some aspect or another, all team members are leaders within their service, department or team.

Thank you for your dedication to the individuals supported, your team and for being a valued Servant Leader.

(See page -4- for answers to above quiz.)

MOVE YOUR WAY TO MEET THE EASTER BUNNY



Daniel K. enjoying the festive charm and fun with the Easter Bunny (Matt Laube).

Hopping into the spirit of spring, the Lehigh IDA Management Team hosted a fun-filled "Move Your Way to Meet the Easter Bunny" event on April 2, 2026. This energetic celebration combined the joy of the Easter season with the healthy message of the Move Your Way Campaign, cre-

ating an afternoon full of movement, laughter, and smiles.

The **Move Your Way Campaign**, led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, encourages people of all ages to stay active in ways that fit their daily lives. Whether it's gardening, dancing, playing games, or simply staying on your feet, the campaign reinforces that **every bit of movement counts** toward better health—and our bodies are made to move!

Participants embraced the message by staying active through playful games like *Pin the Tail on the Bunny* and *Bunny Ear Ring Toss*. The excitement peaked with photo opportunities alongside the Easter Bunny, capturing memories that were as sweet as the season itself. To top it off, guests headed home with egg-shaped stress balls and candy prizes, adding to the festive fun.



Bunny magic brings smiles to the group (l. to r.): Bottom Row: Jessica Farkas and Megan Fegley. Standing: Gabe Tone, Amanda Nadeau, Chris Fisher, Fred S., Easter Bunny (Matt Laube), Emily Goldring, Brittany Kleppinger, and Amanda Blackman.

The event was a joyful reminder that staying active doesn't have to feel like work - it can be a celebration!

A Day of Recognition, Learning, and Celebration for DSPs Across Western PA



Step By Step employees (l.) **Brittany Schrecengost** (Receptionist) and (r.) **Cheryl Spooner** (Office Manager) engaging with the DSP community while hosting an information and giveaway table.

Step By Step once again took the lead in hosting the 2nd Annual Cele-

bration of **Direct Support Professionals Conference** held at the Community Charter Academy in Homestead, PA.

This year's event hosted over 300 DSPs from all over Western PA. Over 30 provider agencies supported the event and sent staff for recognition. The day was all about celebrating the professional, life-enhancing work that these amazing folks do day in and day out.

Attendees were greeted by banjo playing and a hearty breakfast. **Brenda Bulkowski**, Director of Allegheny County's Office of

Intellectual Disabilities, welcomed the group and thanked them for their essential and tireless efforts. The day was filled with keynote speakers, and breakout sessions focused on helping attendees take something away, both professionally and personally. Over 30 providers set up vendor tables (including **Step By Step**), and giveaways were distributed throughout the day. The day ended with a jazz and wine and cheese reception which was enjoyed by everyone.

Step By Step had the largest contingent of staff of any provider organization presented, and many management staff volunteered throughout the day!

Answers to Understanding Servant Leadership Quiz (see page 3): 1. True 2. True 3. False 4. True 5. C 6. B 7. C

Staff Members Avert a Home Fire



We would like to recognize and thank the outstanding staff at our **713 Center Street location** in the

Lehigh/Northampton region for their recent quick thinking and decisive actions in preventing what could have become a major disaster.

On April 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., **James Mahan**, Psych Rehabilitation Counselor, detected the smell of

smoke inside the home. Upon investigating, he discovered smoke beginning to fill one of the bathrooms. Acting swiftly, James immediately pulled the fire alarm. With the assistance of fellow staff members **Genesys Salazar**, Psych Rehabilitation Supervisor, and **Roceni Rodriguez**, Program Manager, they quickly and safely evacuated all seven consumers from the building and contacted 911.

When the fire department arrived, they determined that a malfunctioning heater had overloaded the wiring, causing a fire to begin. Thankfully, due to the team's rapid response,

the fire department was able to contain the situation quickly, preventing significant damage to the home.

James, Genesys, and Roceni's actions were truly heroic. Their vigilance and teamwork not only protected the residence but also ensured the safety and well-being of the individuals in their care.

We extend to them our sincere gratitude for their professionalism, dedication, and commitment to safety. Their actions exemplify the very best of our organization.

Safety Fairs Make a Big Impact Across the Regions (continued from page 2)

Northeast: The Northeast fair saw many staff getting hands on practice at correctly using fire extinguishers at the Cintas display, while claiming prizes for the fastest times to put out the virtual fires. The fire extinguisher exercise and competition proved to be a big hit at all three regional fairs and provided valuable in-person experience on how to quickly and safely put out a fire.

A Safety Fair is also scheduled for the Western region later this summer.

Additional contributions across the events included:

- **Josh Long** from Eastern Alliance Insurance, who introduced the N3L3 safety philosophy: "The next three seconds protect your life, your loved ones, and your livelihood."
- Agency nurses, who provided blood pressure screenings.
- The **MH Department**, which shared Mental Health First Aid information and hosted raffle giveaways.

The department was encouraged by the positive and enthusiastic feedback received from attendees, and plans are already underway to expand the program further in 2027.

The Property & Risk Department extends its sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of these events—from organizers and presenters to all who attended. Your participation made these Safety Fairs meaningful and impactful, and we look forward to even greater engagement in the future!

Leave a Legacy

By Making a Contribution to the Step By Step Foundation

Your contribution to Step By Step will be used to wisely enhance our education, training, health and rehabilitation services for those in need. Please consider making a gift to the Step By Step Foundation. Opportunities to leave a legacy and commit resources to help the agency continue to serve those in need are plentiful. And, they can be an important component of tax planning.



**Step By Step
FOUNDATION**



Call us at (570) 570-7909 or scan the QR to learn more about charitable giving through the Step By Step Foundation.

(The Step By Step Foundation is registered with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations.)

Effective Emailing

Phil Fritchey, Step By Step, Inc. Quality & Compliance Associate, shares the following **Tips on Effective Emailing**:

When communication becomes confusing or breaks down, trouble follows. These tips can help improve email communication.

- Compose your email before adding addresses. Sending an unfinished email confuses the recipient and embarrasses the sender.
 - Assure attachments are correct/included. Do this BEFORE sending.
 - Use standard formatting for your email. Avoid using emojis and difficult-to-read fonts. Check all spelling.
 - Be concise and relevant. Get to the point.
 - Proofread your email twice. Don't
- send an email before reading it carefully. Identify areas that can be clarified and remove/rewrite any lines that are unnecessary or could be perceived as angry or accusatory in tone.
 - Use a clear and professional subject line. Recipients prioritize their emails. Compose a subject line that is precise, short, professional, and attention-grabbing.
 - Confirm correct email addresses. Some people have similar names and email addresses. Using autofill for addresses can also increase the likelihood of this mistake, so always check before you send.
 - Maintain confidentiality. There are times when confidential information must be exchanged and this requires encryption.
 - Read emails carefully before reply-
- ing. The answer to a question that springs to mind while reading the email may already be in the email.
 - Decide if a response to an email is required and pick the best method of responding. Each time someone uses "reply all" on an informational email, the content of the original email is pushed further down the email chain and is less visible to other recipients. The non-stop dinging of email alerts may also affect workplace concentration.
 - Sometimes a telephone call works best. If your email becomes too complicated or lengthy for the recipient to understand, a telephone call might be your best bet.



Step By Step, Inc.®

Supporting Wellness, Inclusion & Opportunities

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