



growing

HOPE

for the future

Small Steps Nurturing Center

EXPANDING TO SERVE MORE STUDENTS

“We are giving our students the tools that they need in order to use their gifts to the fullest. We are showing them how to be successful and how to be leaders. I am sure that many of them will be teachers, leaders, and problem solvers.”

– Shawna Honeycutt, Small Steps Pre-K Teacher



JESSICA
age 6

*Jessica and her mom, Isabel,
have both grown through
the Small Steps' program.*

BREAKING THE CYCLE

When Jessica came to Small Steps Nurturing Center as a two-year-old, her behavior was out of control. She would bolt from the classroom and her teachers even had to put up "stop signs" around the classroom to help her slow her body down.

The issues that Jessica faced at home were complex: Jessica's mom, Isabel, was raising Jessica as a single mom and living with Jessica's grandmother. Isabel and Jessica went back and forth between living with Jessica's grandmother and Jessica's dad's house. On top of this, Isabel had only completed her education through tenth grade, and struggled to provide for the family.

Our teachers talked to Isabel about creating a predictable schedule for Jessica, which would make her environment less chaotic and in turn might resolve some of her behavioral troubles. Jessica started in a play therapy group with SSNC's social-emotional therapists and teachers began to see progress. Still, our staff saw that Jessica needed to be evaluated further in order to address some of her developmental delays. Jessica then was able to receive outside services from HISD and MHMRA through referrals from SSNC.

Jessica is now making great strides. By her last year, not only was Jessica receiving all of that additional support, but one of our volunteers met with Jessica weekly to work on homework, reading, and other classroom activities. Jessica has graduated from Kindergarten at SSNC and will be entering a technology magnet elementary school program in fall 2011.

Isabel was hired by the YMCA program as an after-school care worker here at SSNC, and is already learning skills to work with her younger son as he enters SSNC this fall. She has also participated in SSNC's Parent Education program and our Thursday night parent Bible study and support group.

Through Small Steps' early intervention in Jessica's life, the cycles of lack of opportunity are being broken in her life and in the lives of her family members.

"I think that Small Steps is the future for the families."

– Isabel, Small Steps parent

WHO WE ARE

Small Steps serves families like Jessica's every day. In fact, we serve 84 families and their 118 children through our early childhood education program.

Small Steps is a non-profit organization that operates two preschools for economically at-risk students, ages 2-6, living in the First, Second, Fourth, and Fifth Wards of Houston, Texas.

Small Steps Nurturing Center's program provides the following to its students:

- A high-quality education in small classes
- Nutritional meals
- A nurturing Christian environment
- Social and emotional therapy (SET for Life® program)
- Transportation

Small Steps invests in the lives of its students through meeting their needs, intervening early, and setting them on a trajectory filled with greater opportunities. Small Steps' program operates five days a week, ten months each year, at no financial cost to the families it serves. Parents engage in the program through required volunteer hours, parent education opportunities, and home visits.

Three facts support the need for Small Steps and more generally, the need for quality early childhood programs for economically at-risk children.

- *The early years in a child's life are crucial to establishing a base for later success in school and in life:* Research shows that children who enter first grade behind are unlikely to catch up.
- *Children in poverty face especially challenging developmental circumstances.* These include environments where economic and social stresses are high and exposure to language is limited.
- *The effects of early education for children in poverty are impactful and long-lasting.* High-quality preschool programs for young children living in poverty contribute to their intellectual and social development in childhood as well as their school success, economic performance, and reduced commission of crime in adulthood.

ISRAEL

age 4

Israel is one of four children in his family to attend Small Steps. His parents saw what an impact Small Steps had on his older brother, and sent Israel. Two younger siblings will be joining in the fall.



GROW



THE NEED

We face a high demand for additional student capacity

There are 10,400 children under the age of five in the 32 census tracts Small Steps serves, with 4,785 of these children living below the poverty line. In the seven census tracts which surround the Jensen campus, there are 1,942 children under the age of five, 1,330 of whom live in poverty. The median household income in these seven census tracts is \$17,370.

Small Steps serves 118 students and demand continues to grow each year. Small Steps receives approximately three applications for each space available. Over the last three years, we have averaged 113 applications during our open application period from mid January to the end of February. After the application period ends, we receive many inquiries about enrollment in our program, including a significant burst of activity each August.

THE SOLUTION

Build four more classrooms to serve more students

The Board of Directors has developed a long-term strategic plan to help address the needs of the community and to fulfill Small Steps' mission.

Because of the high demand we face, Small Steps will build an additional four classrooms at the Jensen Drive campus, bringing the total number of children served to 180 by 2015.

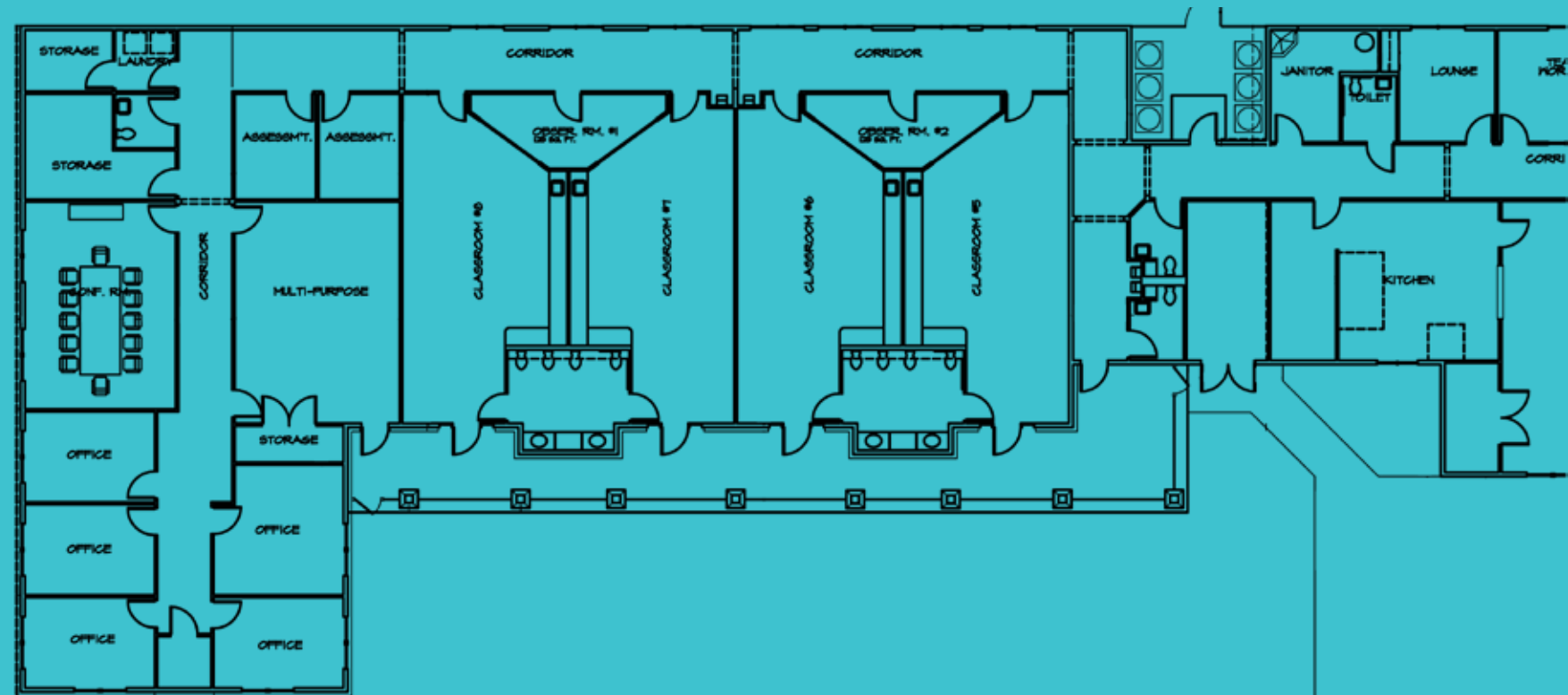
Small Steps' Fifth Ward campus on Jensen Drive (pictured left) currently serves 60 children. Its kitchen and library were built to serve a campus of 120, with the eventual expansion in mind. The First Ward campus on DePelchin Street will continue to serve 60 children.

"Small Steps has laid a foundation of hope in a time of difficulty. I'll forever be grateful for the impact they have made in our children's lives."

– Jessica, Small Steps parent



Front Elevation



Floor Plan

THE NEED

Our collaborative services have outgrown our meeting spaces

A large part of Small Steps' success is due to the dedication to serving the unique needs of its students through collaborations with many Houston area organizations. We would like to continue to offer services to our students and their families, and need more space to do so.

We recognize that poverty is a complex issue with many related causes and factors, and that breaking a cycle of poverty requires investment in the life of a child and its family on many levels. That is why a large component of our program and mission includes parent involvement. We also provide additional services for parents and some services for former Small Steps students and hope to expand those services through the capital expansion.

Some of our collaborative partners that we share space with include:

- His Father's Heart Bible Study
- Partners in Educational Advocacy
- YMCA: The YMCA puts on an after-school care program for twenty children at each campus.
- Rice University Kinder Institute
- Interface Samaritan Counseling

We would like to grow our space in order to grow our services to include:

- Buddy Program: Our Buddy (volunteer) program has grown to include a Buddy for almost every child, but we are running out of space for Buddies to meet.
- After School Tutoring: For current and former students
- ESL / Adult Literacy: For parents of our students
- Early Childhood Training: Collaborative opportunities exist when space becomes available

THE SOLUTION

Build in additional meeting and service space for collaborative partners

As a part of the expansion, we will build in additional meeting and service space for our current collaborative partners and potential future collaborative partners. We will also build in a multipurpose indoor activity room, a conference room, and offices.

Part of this addition will include two student evaluation and therapy rooms, where cognitive testing, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy will take place.

THE NEED

Raising all operational support on an annual basis

Small Steps depends exclusively on private donations from individuals, corporations and foundations, receiving no funding from the government. Small Steps raises its entire budget of \$1.9 million on an annual basis, and the operating budget will grow to \$2.9 million by 2015 with the addition of four more classrooms. While we have a robust and committed funding base of supporters, as well as a professional development staff. Like many other non-profit organizations, Small Steps can be vulnerable to difficult economic conditions. A continuity fund would help ensure the stability of continuing to provide our growing program to children and families in poverty.

THE SOLUTION

Grow the Small Steps Continuity Fund

One major way that we can offset the ups and downs of our economic climate is through the Small Steps Continuity Fund, a fund that the Small Steps Nurturing Center Board of Directors has established in order to support the ongoing operation of its program.

Funds given to the Small Steps Continuity Fund are used at the direction of the Small Steps Board of Directors, in the case of a difficult economic climate that could temporarily make raising funds to support our ongoing operations more difficult. The Small Steps Board of Directors can use up to 20% of the funds per year.

HOPE



ASHLEY & OMAR
age 4

Both Ashley and Omar's families have sent older siblings to Small Steps, and recruited other families. Our families trust Small Steps to invest in their children's lives.

SUPPORT OUR GROWTH

Small Steps Nurturing Center's expansion of its Jensen Drive (Fifth Ward) facility is critical in order for Small Steps to provide an exemplary early childhood education program to more children. Please consider an investment in the lives of Houston's children and families in poverty. Through helping us build classroom space for 60 more children, you are changing the trajectory of these students' lives, and the lives of many more children for years to come.

Please help us **Grow Hope for the Future.**

TIMELINE

Fall 2011: Break ground on expansion.

Fall 2012: Open (2) two- and three-year-old classrooms (28 students) as the beginning of a phased expansion opening. Open additional meeting space for collaborative partners and rooms for student evaluation and therapy.

Fall 2013: Open 1 additional classroom (16 students) in new expansion.

Fall 2014: Open the last classroom (16 students) in new expansion. Small Steps will now be serving 180 children.

SMALL STEPS NURTURING CENTER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN BUDGET

Direct Construction Costs	\$950,000
Professional Fees	\$100,000
Furnishings and Equipment	\$150,000
Administrative Costs	\$95,000
Two new vans	\$70,000
Total Construction Costs	\$1,365,000

Naming opportunities are available upon request. If you would like to make a donation to our capital campaign, please call our development office at 713-236-0330.

Construction Costs	\$1,365,000
Expansion Operating Costs to 12/13	\$700,000
Increase in Continuity Fund	\$535,000
Total Capital Campaign	\$2,600,000

Growing Hope for the Future

The mission of Small Steps Nurturing Center is to provide an exemplary early childhood program to instill and foster the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth of economically at-risk children and their families.



Small Steps Nurturing Center

Small Steps Nurturing Center is a §501(c)(3) non-profit organization.