

the link



Dear Friends,

As we march through this spring season, I am reminded of what the season represents – a time of growth and renewal that is everywhere around us. It seems fitting that this issue also represents those same themes happening here at Familylinks. You will find information about new and returning programs, milestone celebrations, fresh new spaces, and a few new team members to support our remarkable work, all highlighted in this issue. These few pages are ill-equipped to capture the dedication and talent of our team members, but I do hope this publication gives you a glimpse of the caring and collaborative team we have built and continue to hone. If these stories make you curious about our work, we would love the opportunity to tell you more about what we do across our 24 programs and services serving children through aging adults. Please visit our website www.familylinks.org or find us on our social media pages. Whether you want to learn more about our services or are interested in volunteering or working here, there's a place for you at Familylinks.



Stacey Vaccaro
President & CEO

Thank you for your continued support.

Responding to Community Needs – New Programs

Familylinks has established two programs in response to significant needs we recognized in the community. First, we have implemented the **Autism-Applied Behavioral Analysis (Autism-ABA)** program, bringing expertise and support to individuals ages 2-21 with autism. The goal of Autism-ABA is to help those with autism lead productive and independent lives in a world where they are valued, accepted, included, and safe. The Autism-ABA program provides both 1:1 and group interventions in the school, home, and community, as well as at our ABA clinic. The program is focused on reducing challenging behaviors and helping participants develop new skills. For more information, please call 412-924-0246 or email autismservices@familylinks.org.



Our second program builds upon Familylinks' long-standing commitment to supporting individuals experiencing substance use disorders. Our **Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)** is now available at both our Shady Avenue and Banksville Road locations, offering intensive services for individuals age 18 and older with a diagnosed substance use disorder. IOP can provide the additional support necessary for individuals who may be stepping down from an inpatient hospitalization or partial hospitalization program, or who have been participating in outpatient services. For more information, please call 866-583-6003 or email openaccess@familylinks.org.

Happy 50th Anniversary Vintage!

The Vintage Center for Active Adults began on May 30, 1973 in a church on the corner of North Highland and Alder Streets in East Liberty through the collaborative efforts of East End Christian Church, East End Cooperative Ministries, and the Junior League of Pittsburgh. In 1993, Vintage purchased and renovated its current location at 421 North Highland Avenue. Now in its 50th year, Vintage continues to hold a special place in the lives of adults ages 60 and older who gather for fitness, fellowship, and fun. Vintage serves an average of 120 older adults daily, 300-400 different seniors weekly, and holds a membership of close to 700 participants! Since its inception, Vintage has served tens of thousands of individuals across Allegheny County.

Vintage has a reputation for the high quality of its programs and is one of only two senior centers in Allegheny County to be accredited by the National Council on Aging. Vintage is also accredited by the National Institute of Senior Centers, an award achieved by only 2% of senior centers nationally.

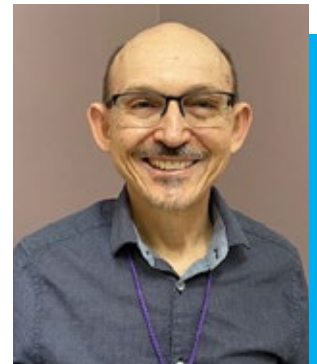
In 2015, Vintage became part of Familylinks, while retaining its name, brand, and own 501(c)(3) status. The mission of Vintage has also remained the same: to improve and influence the experience of aging in our community. With over 1,000 persons served in the last year, their focus is on promoting health of body and mind, as well as access to resources. Vintage members report that attending Vintage helps them to socialize, have something to look forward to, be more physically active, try new things, learn about services and benefits, take better care of their health, feel less lonely, and stay independent.



To celebrate this golden anniversary, Vintage will be hosting a Wine and Tapas event to honor and celebrate the participants, funders, and supporters who have made it all possible. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us at Vintage on September 28 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. The evening will include food, refreshments, entertainment, and a cheers to the next 50 years. For more information, please visit familylinks.org/get-involved/events.

Staff Spotlight

Tom Sturgill has been the Senior Program Manager at the Vintage Center for Active Adults for 32 years. When asked to describe his role, Tom said, "I have the great joy and privilege of overseeing the day-to-day programming of Vintage. Popular fitness activities such as Soul Line Dancing, Yoga, Tai Chi, SilverSneakers, and our Fitness Studio help keep the participants active and able to live at home and in their communities. Social connections are also very important for maintaining independence. Along with wellness classes, our educational/recreational activities and services such as senior technology support, arts classes, trips, billiards, bingo, and cards help achieve this goal. Being there for both seniors and their adult children with information and referral resources related to aging is another very important part of what we do."



Tom Sturgill

Tom loves to hear the hallways at Vintage filled with laughter and joy as participants show up to socialize and better their health. **"Helping to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable parts of what I do,"** said Tom. "I love working with our kind, creative, and experienced staff to make it all happen."

Tom is passionate about interior design, thrifting, exercise, and social justice, and is one of the facilitator trainees in Familylinks' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative. When he is not working you can find Tom spending time with family and friends or volunteering at East Liberty Presbyterian Church.

Our Mission – To positively impact lives through integrated community, behavioral, and social services.

Our Vision – Thriving communities of healthy and strong people.

Our Impact – Familylinks serves more than 8,000 individuals annually through programs and services that assist the most vulnerable members of our community.

Visit www.familylinks.org or call 866-583-6003 to learn more.

Familylinks Expands Emergency Shelter by 50%

Familylinks' Downtown Outreach Center and Shelter (DOCS) has expanded the facility's capacity by 50%, as part of a \$1.5 million renovation project that concluded in March. DOCS will now be able to accommodate 26 residents overnight, up from 18. **The upgraded facility offers residents a more welcoming atmosphere, greater privacy, additional computer access for housing and job searches, and a larger kitchen where residents can prepare and enjoy meals together.**

County Executive Rich Fitzgerald was present for the official celebration of the DOCS expansion. He noted that Familylinks has been providing emergency shelter for young adults, ages 18-25, at DOCS for nearly 40 years. He also spoke of the critical role DOCS plays in the county's broader efforts to address the current homelessness crisis. Erin Dalton, Director of the County's Department of Human Services, and Melvin Hubbard El, Community Advisor to Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey, also attended the event and addressed the guests. Familylinks President and CEO Stacey Vaccaro thanked everyone for their support of DOCS throughout the years, especially Allegheny County and several private foundations that provided the funding necessary for the expansion.

We're proud to have kept the doors open throughout the entire 3-year renovation process, which coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. With the project finally complete, more young adults are now able to access the many resources DOCS has to offer.

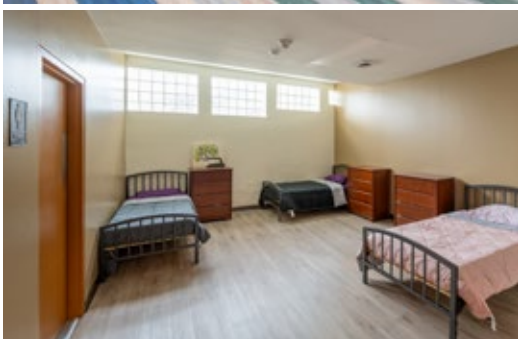
Our Growth Needs Your Help

The DOCS expansion project ... the new Autism-ABA program ... the Intensive Outpatient Program. These are exciting developments at Familylinks, made possible by generous support from Allegheny County, private foundations, and individual donors. As the needs of our community continue to grow and expand, we look to our supporters to help us continue to make our community Strong. For Life.

Every day we hear success stories from our trusted staff: Ashlee was hired by a local bakery and has begun saving money to get her own apartment; Jay started opening up during his therapy sessions and has begun setting goals for family reunification; Margaret was connected with the appropriate resources to remain safe in her home.

With your help, Familylinks can continue to serve more than 8,000 individuals annually through our 24 family-centered programs and services in the areas of mental health, substance use, prevention, service coordination, emergency shelter, supportive housing, senior care, and more.

Please consider making a gift to support Familylinks' essential mission. Now more than ever, your contribution will make a real difference in the lives of those we serve. The enclosed envelope is a convenient opportunity to support a specific program or contribute to our most urgent need. You may also make a donation by visiting our website at www.familylinks.org/donate.



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401 N Highland Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
www.familylinks.org
866-583-6003

New Leadership Team Members

In January, Carly Campbell joined Familylinks as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Carly brings 20 years of financial and operational experience to Familylinks' executive team. As CFO, Carly will provide strategic leadership to maximize the reach and impact of services while maintaining long-term financial sustainability as Familylinks continues to expand our services throughout Pennsylvania.

In April, Dennis Robinson joined Familylinks as the Director of Youth and Family Services (YFS). Dennis brings 25+ years of management and operational experience to Familylinks' leadership team. In this role, Dennis will provide strategic development, leadership, and oversight to Familylinks ten YFS residential and housing programs.



Carly Campbell

Dennis Robinson

Save the Date for the Lanny Frattare Golf Classic



Familylinks' 37th Annual Lanny Frattare Golf Classic will be held at Chartiers Country Club on **September 11, 2023**, and we hope you will join us. The outing includes 18 holes of golf, lunch, dinner, drinks, contests, prizes and more! **Sponsorship opportunities are available.** For more information, contact Lauren Galletta at LGalletta@familylinks.org or 412-942-0549.

We're Here to Help!

We accept Medicare, Medicaid and Commercial Insurance Plans

Familylinks accepts Medicare and Medicaid insurance for many of our services, in addition to commercial insurance plans. If you don't have insurance, our staff can help you apply for assistance if you are eligible. In some cases, our services are also covered by government programs which we can identify for you. If you need help, don't hesitate. Call us at 866-583-6003. We are here for you.