

INTRODUCTION

The mission of Project Self-Sufficiency is to assist low-income, single parents in their efforts to achieve economic independence and become free from community and government assistance while building and maintaining strong, healthy families.

Each parent accepted into the program is assigned an advisor who assists in setting career and personal goals, developing a self-sufficiency action plan, identifying resources, resolving problems, and providing emotional support.

Project Self-Sufficiency takes a holistic approach, emphasizing areas such as self-esteem, parenting and recovery from domestic violence along with specific career and educational goals. Families are provided with services in the following areas:

- **Education & Career Development**
- **Guidance, Encouragement & Advocacy**
- **Practical Resources**
- **Children’s Program**

Applicants come to the program requesting career and personal development, resources necessary to allow them to succeed with their goals, and the encouragement that is critical to maintaining momentum during challenging times. The support provided by PS-S is an investment in our families that enables them to reach their career and personal goals. In the end, it is all about preparing for and securing living wage employment. Without the assistance of these services and funds, it would be difficult for our families to absorb the initial costs and maintain the momentum needed to succeed.

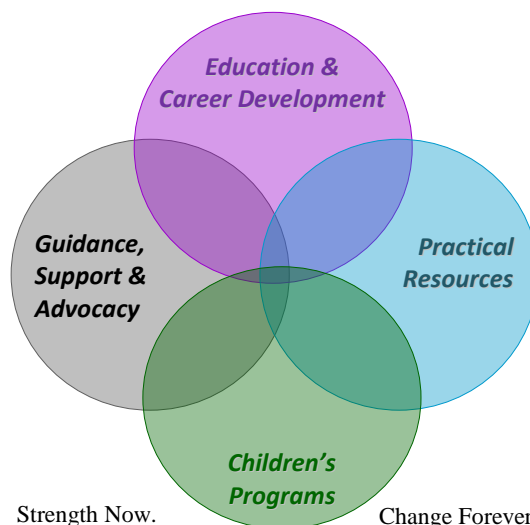
At Project Self-Sufficiency, single parent families are wrapped in meaningful services that help them to overcome the obstacles that brought them into our program. We encourage “strength now” so that our families can experience “change forever.”

Education & Career Development

- Career Planning >
- Scholarship Fund >
- Child Care Grants >
- Job Search Assistance >
- Math and Science Tutors >

Guidance, Support & Advocacy

- Balanced Guidance >
- Emotional Support >
- Supportive Classes >
- Advocacy >
- Mental Health Fund >



Practical Resources

- < “Cars for Families” Program
- < Volunteer Car Repair
- < Donated Computers
- < Participant Assistance Fund
- < Housing Opportunities

Children’s Programs

- < Holiday Assistance
- < Boundless Children's Fund
- < “Cool Kids” Back-to-School Clothing Program

Strength Now.

Change Forever.

SERVICES PROVIDED TO PS-S FAMILIES IN 2012

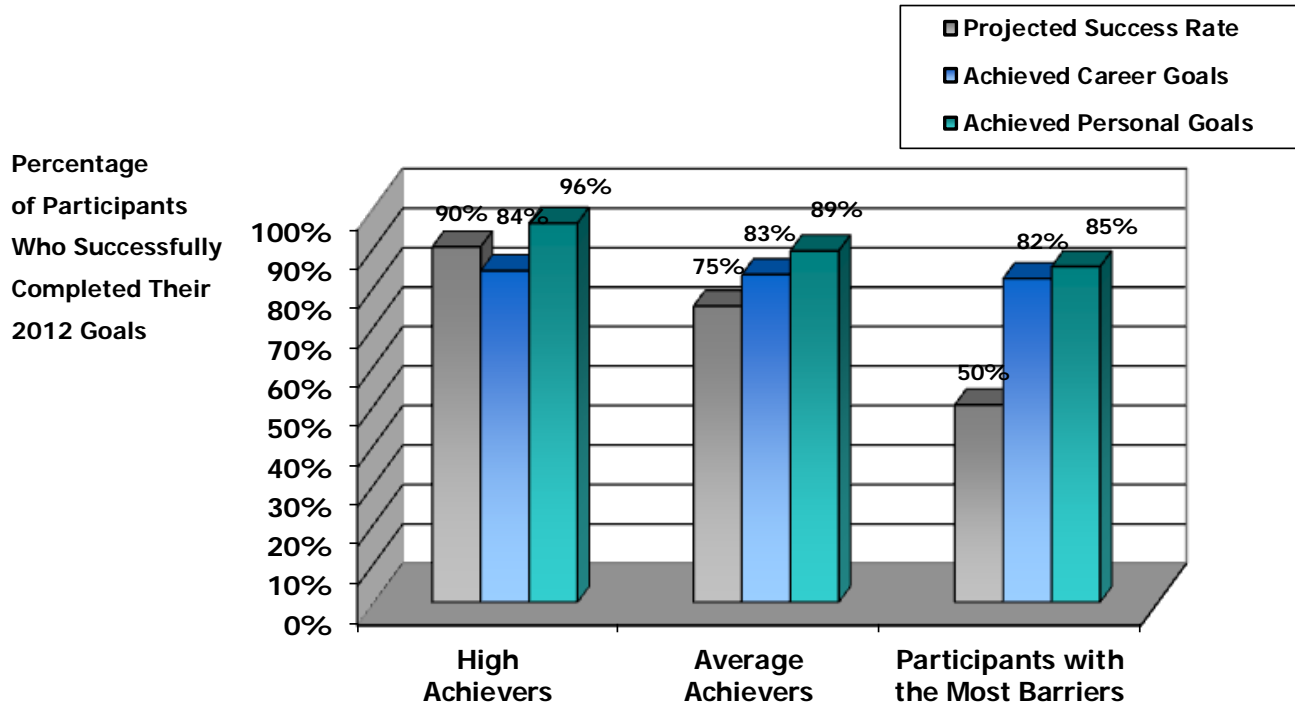
Project Self-Sufficiency provided services to 171 single parent families who were enrolled during all, or a portion of the calendar year. Many participants also received these services in a previous year.

Assistance in Developing or Updating a Self-Sufficiency Action Plan	165 Parents
Career Planning Guidance	138 Parents
Access to Higher Education and Financial Aid	132 Parents
Counseling and Guidance for Personal and Family Matters	123 Parents
Job Search Assistance	59 Parents
Information and Referral Services	162 Families
Advocacy with Systems	123 Families
Participant Financial Assistance	141 Families
Willow Place and Matuka Court Housing	34 Families
Scholarship Funds from PS-S	67 Parents
Scholarship Funds from PS-S Partners	58 Parents
PS-S Child Care Scholarships	36 Families
Donated Cars Provided to Families	22 Families
Car Repair Assistance – Volunteer and Commercial	32 Families
Donated Computers or Printers	25 Families
Volunteer Computer Repair	15 Families
“Cool Kids” Back to School Clothing for Children	127 Children
Holiday Assistance – Under-the-Tree Gift Sponsorship	95 Families with 176 Children
Holiday Party – Gifts and Children’s Activities	77 Families with 150 Children
Boundless Children’s Fund	63 Children
Parenting Class – attended one or more sessions	14 Parents
Self-Esteem Building Classes	12 Parents
Mental Health Fund – evaluation and treatment	13 Parents
Volunteer Tutoring	18 Parents

2012 GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR PS-S PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Project Self-Sufficiency works with participants to set their own Career and Personal Goals. For measurement purposes only, participants are listed as either:

- 1) “High Achievers”
- 2) “Average Achievers” or
- 3) “Participants with the Most Barriers” to Self-Sufficiency



The above chart reflects the performance of 152 program participants enrolled in PS-S during 2012 and in the program long enough to set and reach goals. Another 23 participants were not active in the program long enough during 2012 to have worked on setting and reaching goals.

- There were 25 “high achievers”. 21 completed their career goals (84%). 24 of the 25 completed their personal goals (96%). 21 of the 25 completed both career and personal goals (84%)
- There were 99 “average achievers”. 78 of these 99 participants (83%) reached their career goals and 88 of the 99 (89%) completed their personal goals. 73 of the 99 reached both goals (74%).
- Of the 28 participants who faced the “most barriers” to success, 23 individuals (82%) completed their career goals and 24 participants (85%) completed their personal goals. 21 participants in this group reached both career and personal goals (75%).
- When all 152 participants across all three groups are considered, 122 (80%) reached their career goals for 2012. 136 of 152 (89%) accomplished their personal goals. A total of 115 of all 152 participants (75%) passed both their career and personal goals.

ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

Education is a key element as PS-S participants move forward with their career goals. During 2012 participants accomplished the following academic goals:

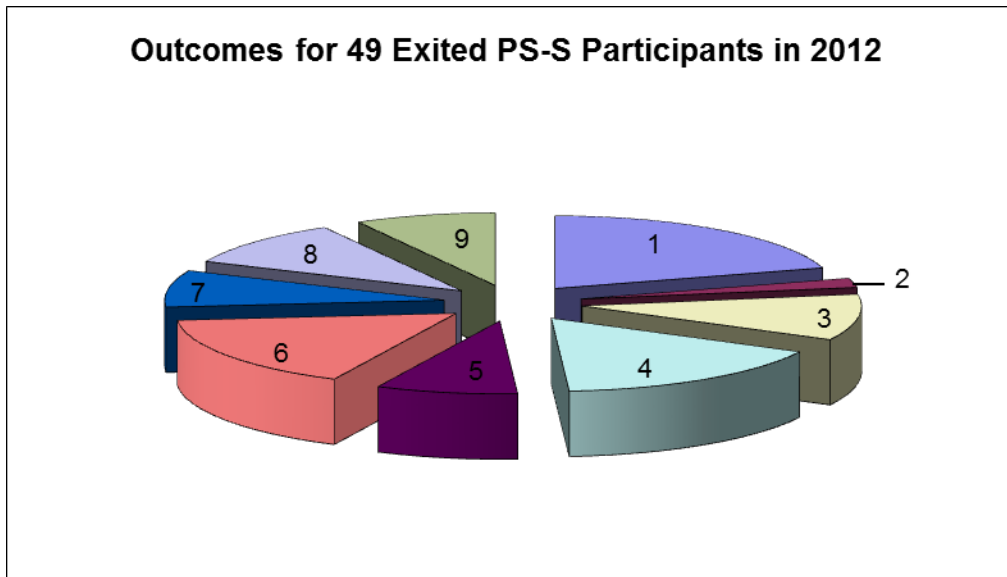
- 91 participants completed 1,716 credit hours for an average of 18.86 credits per person.
- 16 of these participants completed academic and certificate programs:

- Seven earned Bachelor’s degrees.
 - Seven earned Associate degrees – one of them is also a Registered Nurse and another a Certified Radiology Tech.
 - Two completed certificate programs.
- Three others earned a GED and are continuing their education.

EXIT REPORT

Each year PS-S completes an Exit Report for all participants leaving the program during that calendar year. All participants enrolled four months or longer are included. Some participants stayed in the program until they reached their career goals and had been employed for a time. Other participants work with PS-S to launch their self-sufficiency plan, accomplish some of their goals, and then decide to finish independently. It can be difficult to track the ultimate level of success in these situations unless former participants either contact PS-S or respond to follow-up surveys.

Prior to leaving the PS-S program, most participants have successfully accomplished one or more of the following: career planning, removal of barriers to self-sufficiency, all or a portion of an academic program, and securing employment. There are a few participants who do not accomplish any of the above goals prior to leaving the program. Participants exit PS-S for a number of reasons including: completion of career goals, marriage, a move out of the area, lack of time or interest to meet with their advisor, the desire to continue independently without enrollment in PS-S, or failure to follow through.



Category 1: There are **ten** participants in this category. All are successfully employed 30 hours or more per week in their career of choice and moving toward self-sufficiency. At least three were totally self-sufficient. Two others were able to cover all their expenses but were still eligible for a housing subsidy. Five others were still eligible for two or more forms of public assistance but have substantially improved their financial status. All of the participants in this category completed an academic or training program except for one. Academic /career areas: Microbiology / laboratory (2), Social Work (2), Accounting, Education / Teaching, Certified Nursing Assistant (2), Optical Tech, and Medical Assisting.

Category 2: Only **one** participant exited with a part-time job in her career. She also increased her education.

Category 3: **Five** participants were gainfully employed 40 hours a week but did not complete the academic

program they had intended or secure employment in their career area. All four decided that employment took precedence over education at this time in their lives. Two accepted jobs at banks, one is a receptionist for a government agency, one opened a home day care center, and the fifth just began a manufacturing job. They are not totally self-sufficient but have made great progress by increasing their earned income significantly and removing barriers to self-sufficiency. One completed her GED while enrolled in PS-S plus 7 credits. Two were in their final semester for an Associate's degree. Another earned 57 credits while enrolled in PS-S.

Category 4: Eight participants were employed part-time but not in their chosen careers. All completed post-secondary credits while enrolled in PS-S except one who had almost finished career planning. Four had earned Associate's degrees (two of these have plans to continue with a Bachelor's degree), one completed 40 credits toward a science degree, another completed a Medical Assisting program, and the seventh completed 3 semesters toward a Dental Assisting Certificate and is now taking nursing pre-requisites. None were working in their intended careers at the time of exit.

Category 5: Four participants finished an academic or training program but were not working or in school at the time of exit. Most were job searching. One earned a Bachelor's degree, one was trained to be a Paralegal, one finished a Licensed Practical Nursing Program, and the fourth completed Medical Coding and Billing Certification.

Category 6: Eight participants were continuing their education as they left PS-S. Some had part-time or temporary summer employment in addition to attending school. Of these seven, three completed Associate degrees while enrolled in PS-S and were continuing toward a Bachelor's degree. The remaining five participants had completed between 9 and 27 post-secondary credits. Some left PS-S because they had difficulty keeping up with program requirements. Others decide they could finish school on their own.

Category 7: There are **four** participants who completed some education while enrolled in PS-S but are not currently enrolled in school or employed to the best of our knowledge. They completed between 14 and 34 credits while enrolled in PS-S.

Category 8: Five participants completed career planning while in the PS-S program. One also earned her GED but then decided to continue with a hair styling job she had when she first enrolled with PS-S. She solved many problems and secured a Habitat House while with PS-S. Another participant had hip surgery and left the program after receiving many services and applying for disability benefits. A third participant had severe personal problems and no longer had her children in the home. Two did not follow through with PS-S appointments.

Category 9: Four participants did not accomplish any career goals but did make some progress while in the program. One started GED and language classes but found them too difficult. Others resolved housing and child care problems with the help of PS-S. Two of these participants were no longer eligible for PS-S when they left.

Major Barriers Removed: Of the 49 participants who exited in 2012, 23 resolved challenging housing issues while enrolled in Project Self-Sufficiency. 22 were able to secure child care and/or transportation resources to solve problems in those areas. 23 addressed physical and/or mental health issues that were interfering with progress towards self-sufficiency. Three completed applications for disability benefits. Nine resolved legal issues. Three corrected debt problems. Five were able to secure private health insurance.

COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS SURVEYED IN 2012

The following comments were provided by PS-S participants, former participants, and recent graduates who were enrolled in the program during 2012. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on participant satisfaction, on unmet needs, and on progress made in the program as viewed by the participant.

Some were relatively new to the program while others had been with PS-S for some time. A portion of the survey is provided here and a copy of the entire document can be provided upon request.

PS-S has helped me make significant life improvements:

5 Strongly Agree-29 respondents

4 Agree-10 respondents

3 Not Applicable-1 respondent

2 Disagree-0 respondents

1 Strongly Disagree-0 respondents

- Because of PS-S, I have established my own residence, I have a stronger foundation to build off of, I receive help with becoming a better me through therapy and meds, for me and my child, and overall feel more stable and happy to have support.
- There is so much that you help with, helping me secure housing was a big one.
- PS-S has helped me in many ways. One is they have helped with bills, such as the Back to School gift cards. But the most important way they have helped is when I needed someone to talk to, to vent about school and to be there when I did well.
- PS-S has guided me through tough choices. Also they provide me with resources I wouldn't have had otherwise.
- I have been able to go to college and get a degree while getting support with childcare and emotional support and encouragement.
- My children and I have begun to start our lives over. We finally have something that we have needed for a long time, HOPE.
- I was aware of some ways I could make changes, but felt like I was flailing around and not getting anywhere. Working with my adviser gave me specific steps and helpful information and encouragement that got me pushing forward more.
- I am well on my way to getting my degree and I wouldn't have been able to do it without PS-S.
- Project Self Sufficiency has helped me overcome obstacles in my life. I have been supported financially and emotionally that has helped me pursue my career. Without Project Self - Sufficiency I would have not been able to continue on with my education.
- Right now we are doing career exploration and it has been helping me learn what I want to go to school for and getting my life back on track.
- PS-S has given me the strength to know that it is possible to succeed.
- PS-S gave me many opportunities that helped me through being a mother and going to school. They gave me support and encouragement through all me ups and downs.
- Before PS-S I was unsure about the direction I had chosen. After lots of career exploration I am convinced that I have chosen the right path.
- I am learning the skills I need to be self-sufficient with the help of my guidance counselor. Fran and I come up with a weekly plan that allows me to move forward in my education and yet not feel so crazy having my plate full.
- PS-S has helped me change my life by going to school, without them I would not have been able to do so. I also live at Willow Place which has been a huge help with money. Before PS-S school was nothing more but a dream, today I am living my dream.

- PS-S has enabled me to envision a better future for myself and my family. It has also helped provide the direction and the supports to attain my goals.
- Made me realize it's not too late to make my life a better life.
- Stephanie is "exceptional", there is "no other" like her! Re-locating to Willow Place, Education & donated vehicle. The Loveland/FC community is so very loving!
- Knowing I have PS-S and Bethany Hicks in my corner provides me with so much comfort and eases my mind about many financial issues so that I can focus on the more important things.
- With the support of PS-S I have flourished. I have been provided with opportunities that with a little bit of hard work and determination have helped me to not only become self-sufficient but feel better about myself and my life.
- I have been able to make and adhere to lifetime goals, and improve my family dynamic thanks to the support of PS-S
- I love PS-S they have helped me with a donated car, finding out what career path was right for me and they have helped with emotional support for everything in my life.
- PS-S has given me direction, support and hope for my future.
- All the help and guidance I have received from the program has greatly helped me in so many ways. I finally don't feel like I am completely alone to handle all life throws at me.
- I have received an unbiased outside opinion to really help put ideas, thought and future plans into perspective.
- I have no idea where I would be without this program from, gas certificates, to scholarship opportunities and incredible support. This program is by far one of the biggest reasons I will obtain a long awaited dream.
- I can't say I had any hope. I felt, actually I knew, my ex-husband had complete control of my life. PS-S gave me a needed hand up. My child was able to have presents at holidays and the moral support was the best.
- Those car repairs keep me on budget and my kids safe in the car. I've completed some counseling and I'm excited to be working towards bettering my parenting skills and boundary issues.
- I feel like I was on a pretty good path as I entered the program, however, it has helped me to realize my goals and I have begun to pursue them.
- They have put me on a path to my future. I have been given many tools and opportunities.
- I have been trying to decide on a career since I was 18, and I am now 29 without figuring it out yet. PS-S has helped me decide on what I want to choose as a career and it feels amazing!
- Fran has been amazing. I have been able to see things in a different light, and think outside the box. I have more confidence than I ever have.
- I am a pretty self-motivated person but when my car broke down your donated car program helped me so I did not have to go get a car and end up with a car payment. Also I have been moved into subsidized housing which definitely cuts down on costs.
- They have been an encouragement to me in the steps I am taking to move forward to self-sufficiency for me and my family.
- I have had emotional, financial and educational support. I feel very fortunate to be a participant in PS-S.