

Sunshine 2025 Summer Prevention Program

This year we celebrated our 32nd summer program, our longest running program!

The 6-week program began in July with over 40 children attending each week.

This year we filled to the maximum with a waiting list all weeks.

Our program focuses on improving the well-being of all children, especially our most vulnerable youth. Each year we strive to provide a valuable summer experience for children on Long Island. Sunshine is not just your typical summer camp; the program offers a supportive environment that provides prevention-focused workshops (substance abuse/violence prevention) and creative activities to build on and reinforce positive social skills/social emotional learning.

The daily topics focused on building positive social skills and we reinforced the topics through prevention-focused workshops, creative art activities, team-building/recreation exercises and special guests/workshops.

Dr. Carter ran a support group for parents several weeks and also handed out a daily newsletter that was filled with valuable information and tips on how to reinforce the prevention topics/skills at home.

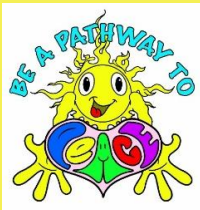


At Sunshine, our commitment has always been to ensure that no child is ever prevented from attending our summer program due to financial hardship. **75% of our campers received scholarships or discounts** and this year we were proud to provide **52 fully sponsored weeks of camp** for 15 children.

We were also grateful to once again partner with **Community Housing Innovations (CHI) – Medford**, making it possible for 10 children residing in their facility to enjoy **several weeks of camp** this summer.

Our success is made possible through strong partnerships with local agencies and school districts who provide both financial support and referrals. These include: **Family Service League, Parent to Parent, WellLife Network, SPOA, Long Island Advocacy Center, Gabriel's Giving Tree, Department of Social Services, Department of Health, Suffolk Intensive Case Management, and CHI–Medford/Ms. Brenda.**

In addition, many families were able to benefit from the **Department of Social Services Campership Program**, which helped open the doors to camp experiences that would not have been possible otherwise. We extend a special thank you to **Jenny Binder** for her invaluable support with registrations and approvals that made this possible.



Be A Pathway to Peace

Each year, we choose a theme that inspires us and reflects the kind of impact we hope to make — and we design our t-shirt around that message. This year, our theme is: “Be a Pathway to Peace.” Our inspiration came from the Prayer of St. Francis, which is often appreciated across many beliefs — not for its religious origin, but for its powerful call to be a force of peace, love, kindness, and understanding in the world. Its message reminds us that no matter our background or beliefs, we can each choose to be a source of compassion and connection to those around us.

Be a pathway to peace...

Where there is conflict, bring **UNDERSTANDING**
Where there is despair, bring **HOPE**
Where there is sadness, bring **JOY**
Where there is darkness, bring **LIGHT**



Thank you to our weekly **WORKSHOP LEADERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS** who worked with us to reinforce the prevention topics/social emotional skills through fun and creative ways. These amazing guests either donated their services or reduced the rate to make it affordable for us.

See pictures below:



Agostino Arts –



Sweetbriar Nature Center



Stony Brook Women's Basketball



Sensi Devin –
Third Eye Insight



Yoga with Think Wellness



Melek from Cornell Cooperative



Ms. Mary Ann and Mr. Nolan
Family Service League



Music with Think Wellness



Puppet shows with the
Friends from Sunshine Center



Art with Think Wellness



Dorian _SC Dept of Health



Cooking with Chef
Keith Owens



Magician Richard Benninghoff



Paul from Rodro



Horizons
Counseling and Education Center.



LI STEAM Group



Suffolk County Police Department

Thank you so much to those who came for a site visit to learn more about Sunshine and visit the campers.

Assemblywoman Rebecca Kassay and Emily Murphy
from Suffolk County's 4th District and
Alison Ritieni and Eileen Conway (Youth Service Specialists)

from the Suffolk County Youth Bureau
for visiting Sunshine and taking the time to see our summer camp in action. We truly appreciate your support!

Pictured below with campers and staff: Assemblywoman Rebecca Kassay



Thank you to all the parents who donated food, clothes, snacks and other items this summer. Thank you to **Serve All, Dollar Tree and Five Below** for the generous donation of new clothes, back packs, school supplies, shoes and other items we were able to share with our families each week.



Thank you also to staff member, **Allison D'Ambrosio** who organized weekly raffle baskets and made all these donations possible



Our last day was a special celebration for all of us. We enjoyed lunch from **Chick-fil-a**, a special visit from their mascot, the COW, guest - Magician Richard Bennighoff, a fun water slide and an amazing talent show!

Thank you to **Richard Benninghoff - Magician** who has come to Sunshine every summer, (driving over 2.5 hours to get here) providing an amazing magic show for us!

Thanks also to **TENT PRO** who provided a nice discount for rental of their wild thing waterslide that all campers and staff enjoyed!



<https://www.tentprollc.com/>



A special thank you to **Ruth Overzat from Chick-fil-A in Port Jeff Station** who visited Sunshine and provided lunch for 40 campers and over 20 staff members!

We also to thank **Ruth** for inviting Sunshine to be part of their Community Cares/Spirit Night Fundraiser in support of our programs. Thanks to this partnership, Sunshine received 20% of all orders placed through the mobile app using our special code.

Thanks to Nick Hanly for organizing this!



A big thank you to **Coach Kiah Gillespie and the Stony Brook Women's Basketball Team** for spending time with our campers — we truly appreciated your visit!



A heartfelt thank you to **Lisa and Brian DeLuca** for their incredibly generous donation of food for our BBQ — everything was absolutely delicious! A special shout-out to Dr. Carter for manning the grill and making it all come together.

Field trips were a hit again this year!

These trips would not be possible without the generous supporters who provided financial support, discounted rates or sponsorships. Below are some pictures from our field trips.



A special thank you to **Heather Ciringione and Suffolk Transportatic** for providing weekly transportation for our trips! We truly appreciate all they did to ensure w traveled safely to and from each destination. [See where the campers went below](#)

Port Jeff Cinemas and Urban Air - Lake Grove



Long Island Aquarium - Thanks to Brian & Lisa DeLuca



Pal-o-mine

Thanks to **Lisa Gatti and CarolAnne Guerriero** for the continued support!



Dave & Busters





Join us in sharing our sincere thanks to
ROANOKE SAND AND GRAVEL
 for their continued support and dedication to our mission of making a positive
 impact in our communities.
 We truly appreciate your ongoing commitment to Sunshine.
 Thank you for being such an important part of our journey!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to **The Knapp/Swezey Foundation!**
 Their generous support has been a driving force behind Sunshine's mission to create
 lasting, positive change in our communities.
 We're deeply grateful for their continued partnership and the meaningful impact they've
 helped us make over the years!



A special thank you to **The New York Community Trust** for their belief in Sunshine
 and providing us with a grant that helped support our **Summer Prevention Program**.

MEET OUR
Staff



While it may be my dream and passion, none of this would be possible without our amazing staff!! Our Directors and Coordinators started in February interviewing for positions and designing a program that is fun and creative and builds on positive prevention strategies. Our Group Leaders and Admin Staff are dedicated staff who have been involved in Sunshine for several years. They are wonderful role models and leaders! Every year we have interns (co-leaders) from local universities who are gaining experience in the field of mental health, substance abuse prevention, social work, psychology and teaching.

This year we were able to hire several Jr. Staff thanks to the **Suffolk County Department of Labor Youth Program**, giving these youth valuable experiences to build leadership and job readiness skills and truly make a difference in the lives of children.

Thank you to EACH of our amazing staff for everything you did this summer to make it special and make this an experience they will NEVER forget for the children and families who attended!

Dr. Carol Carter CEO/Co-founder	Holly Columbo Education Director	Piper Cluff Group Leader Assistant	Gio Sanders Jr Staff/DOL Youth Program
Amber Ayala Program Director	Nancy Forestiero Mental Health Director	Rebecca Alavanza Group Leader Assistant	Fabiya Faisal Jr. Staff/DOL Youth Program
Mary Bartol Administrative Assistant	Donny Forestiero, Program Coordinator	Olivia Smyth Group Leader Assistant	Ashley Hernandez Jr. Staff/DOL Youth Program
Candice Drewisis Workshop Leader	Paul Rodriguez Group Leader	Mace Choo Group Leader Assistant	Lia San Inocencio and Jr Staff
Mia Drewisis Workshop Leader Assistant	Maria Daume Group Leader	Kylah Colomba Jr. Staff	Cameron D'Ambrosio Jr Staff
Sharon Cebulski Program Assistant	Gianna Carbone Group Leader	Jade Drewisis Jr. Staff	
Allison D'Ambrosio Outreach Assistant	Jen San Inocencio Group Leader	Jax Drewisis Jr. Staff	
	Kurt Hall Group Leader	Shaylee Colomba Jr. Staff	

Summer Evaluations

We asked for parents to fill out the weekly evaluations that would let us know why they signed up for Sunshine and what they felt the benefits were.

Some of the reasons included:

- 90% signed up for fun and friendships
- 80% said their child had trouble socializing
- 75% felt their child needed more social skills and handling feelings in a more positive way
 - 50% had school troubles

The parents felt that the social skills component was extremely helpful. They felt the program was well organized and had provided good communication. Several parents loved the parent support group and the weekly newsletter. Many parents felt it provided beneficial support for their child.

PARENT TESTIMONIES

- Thank you for work individually with my son when he was struggling with anxiety. No other camp would take the time you do. Parent of 13 year old
- The program is perfect just the way it is, maybe more weeks next year. Parent of 12 year old
- My daughter really loved all the activities, the trips, she made new friends and learned important topics. Grandparent of a 10 year old
- I feel my Grandson is now more prepared for kindergarten
- Excellent program, wouldn't change a things. Parent of 6 year old
- I am very grateful for Sunshine! Parent of an 11 year old
- Excellent! This program helped in more ways than words can explain. Parent of 9 year old
- Love the topics of dealing with bullying and anger management
- My child will be back next year for sure

Staff Testimonies

This is Olivia Smyth, I just wanted to give you my testimony for what I have learned this summer as well as saying how much I have appreciated and loved having this opportunity. Going into this I did not realize how much I was truly going to get out of it. I learned so many things about myself. I learned that I can handle challenging situations and help redirect children in a positive way during these times. This experience helped me learn that this is truly what I want to go into for my career in the future. Something valuable I got out of this was drawing from the hard experiences that me and my family went through, and seeing these children going through similar things, it was almost like I was able to help my younger self through them.

I got so much more out of this than I could have ever imagined. Each camper is so special and unique in their own way. I truly loved being able to get to know them, their personalities, and do activities with them. I genuinely loved spending time with each of them, they all hold a special place in my heart forever. I loved being able to get to know you and your family, as well as the amazing staff at Sunshine. I really do believe in everything that you all stand for and promote, it aligns with my personal values completely.

I am truly saddened that this summer is over. I wish it could have lasted another six weeks. If ever in the future I am able to be a part of Sunshine again, please keep me in mind. I would love to be a part of this again. Thank you for everything.

Sincerely,

Olivia Smyth, senior majoring in Psychology at Stony Brook

First of all, thank you so much for the opportunity to be at Sunshine. I've loved every moment I've had there, and I'm so grateful to have met everybody (staff and children alike). I've really gained a new perspective from talking with the children as well as the staff, seeing lives that I'll never live, but meeting people that I hope to understand. I've known for the longest time that my life will never run exactly parallel with another's, nor will anyone's, but that's the beauty of life; no two lives are the same. I've enjoyed every moment learning, listening, and understanding those around me. I've also grown to appreciate what I already have. Thank you so much again, I'll be in touch if you ever need anything!

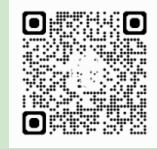
Sincerely,

Mace Choo, Stony Brook University - undergraduate Psychology major pursuing a Bachelor of Sciences.

Registration is NOW OPEN for our Evening Programs!

Like our summer program? You will LOVE our evening groups!

[Click Here](#) for registration form or scan the QR code above



Our engaging, interactive sessions help participants develop the tools they need to build stronger relationships, improve communication, and boost confidence.

Monthly Topics Include:

- Friendship & Teamwork 🗺
- Communication Skills 🗣
- Anger Management & Coping Strategies 🤝
- Dealing with Bullying 🛡
- Self-Esteem & Self-Worth 🌈

What You'll Gain:

- Stronger social skills
- Healthy conflict resolution
- Increased confidence
- Positive peer connections

NEW Parent COMPONENT!

Our parent component has always been one of the successful parts of our program. This year we will build on that success by providing more opportunities for support, skills building and resources.

We are excited to have Mary Ann Dumas from Family Service League as our new facilitator for this program.

She will be presenting the The Triple P Program. The Positive Parenting Program is one of the most effective evidence-based parenting programs in the world, backed up by more than 35 years of ongoing research. Triple P gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships, confidently manage their children's behavior and prevent problems developing. Triple P also incorporates parent discussion, so you will learn from each other and most importantly be reminded that you are not alone!

Programs run Tuesday evenings, divided into appropriate groups for ages 5 - teens.

Cost is \$125 per month per child/parent.

Discounted rates available for a family in need

Sunshine also provides:

Teen and Young Adult Support
Court-approved parenting and anger management
Outreach Services



IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



**Shout out to
Home Depot-Selden
for choosing Sunshine for a
TEAM DEPO Project
We truly appreciate all
your support!**

TEAM DEPO did amazing work on the improvement projects at Sunshine. From revitalizing our basketball court, to building a beautiful entrance gazebo, to installing fans in our outdoor pavilion — your efforts have made a lasting impact. We are truly grateful for your generosity and support!

**A Special Thank You to
The Home Depot Foundation
for the grant to complete this work.**

**A heartfelt thank you to Denise Luck, Store Manager,
Casey Ines, Service Manager, and the incredible team
of volunteers from
Home Depot in Selden**

We are also working on plans to expand again!

As our programs continue to grow and serve an increasing number of youth, families, and community members, the need for additional space and updated infrastructure within our facility has become essential. This new project will include:

1. Program/Classroom Expansion

We propose the addition of a 500-square-foot program area, which will be divided into two smaller classrooms to accommodate various educational and support programs. Each room will include dedicated storage space for books, educational materials, and prevention-related tools, accessible directly from within the classrooms.

2. Food and Donation Pantry

The current storage area adjacent to the office will be repurposed into a ground-floor food and donation pantry. This new space will include approximately 30 linear feet of floor-to-ceiling shelving and will be accessible without interfering with ongoing programs or meetings.

We will be reaching out to new and all our previous improvement project supporters, local businesses, trade unions, organizations and elected officials to help us make this possible. If you would like to support this project in any way, **please contact Dr. Carter.**

Thanks to Frances Campani - Campani & Schwarting Associates for her guidance and support already for this project and helping. To make this dream possible.



We couldn't do any of this without OUR SUPPORTERS!!!

While Sunshine's programs are open to all children, our continued goal is to provide this summer experience for vulnerable children and families in need, specifically families going through Mental health issues, divorce and other losses, substance use/abuse, homelessness and other challenges.

Thanks so much to our supporters who have helped "brighten the summer for many families in need" by providing financial support, donations of services, referrals and agency support, sponsorships and more. (See our supporters below)

Thanks so much to the agencies who provide referrals, financially supported children, provided transportation and worked together with Sunshine to make all this possible.

Thanks so much to all of our Summer Supporters!

Gold Supporters

- Knapp Swezey Foundation
- Roanoke Sand and Gravel
- Ridgewood Savings Bank
- Lois and Sharon Cox
- Patti Kelly/Barker

Agencies

- Town of Brookhaven
- Suffolk County Youth Bureau
- Brookhaven Youth Bureau
- Suffolk County Sherriff's Department
- Port Jefferson Lions Club
- Port Jeff Rotary Club
- Long Island Advocacy Center
- Long Island Cares
- Well life Network
- Aim Services
- Community Housing Innovations - Medford
- Suffolk Intensive Case Management
- Suffolk County Department of Social Services - Campership Program - Jenny Binder, Coordinator and Team
- Department of Labor Summer Youth Program
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Family Service League – Camp Program
- Cornell Cooperative
- Suffolk Transportation
- Diagnostic, Assessment, and Stabilization Hub (DASH)
- Suffolk County Children's SPOA – Single Point of Access
- Parent to Parent
- Child Protective Service

Schools

Comsewogue School District
Boyle Rd Elementary School
Oxhead Elementary School
Middle Country School District
Longwood School District
Three Village School District
Sayville School District
Pat Med School District
William Floyd School District

Personal Donations

- The Tackett and Dalske Families
- Craig Cox
- Frank and Dory Barker
- Linda Sanders & Michael Lockhart
- Keith Brandow
- Carol Davis Wiebelt
- Irene Michalos/AGAPE
- Liz Kotseas-DeLucia
- Bob Cohen
- Joanne Cote
- Jay Hart
- Hunter Pitcoff
- Pamela Kiernan
- Joan Strong-Gleason
- Allison D'Ambrosio

Businesses

- Contino Landscaping/Design
- Mt. Sinai Congregational Church
- Caroline Episcopal Church/Rev. Nickolas Griffith
- It's Time Restoration - John Dima
- Schwabb 2nd Wind
- Consolidated Energy
- TomKat Business Solutions
- Ohara Accounting
- Emma Clark Library
- Scrap Happy Quilters
- Rick Weaver - Web Design
- Diamond Security
- Apollo
- Anderson Fire
- Donoghue Printing
- Janessa/ Port Jefferson Staples
- Usher Plant Care
- Chick-fil-A
- National Waste Services
- Scientific Exterminating
- Serve All - True North Church

Thanks to all the **parents this summer** who made donations of food for our pantry and blessing box, snacks for the campers and donations and clothes and shoes for families in need.



Support Sunshine's Programs

You can help Sunshine Brighten Families lives **ALL YEAR LONG** by making a donation anytime of the year!!

Sunshine is always trying to think of new ways we can be helpful in supporting those going through challenging times. There is always so much support for families throughout the holiday season and we are so grateful for those who contribute to our adopt a family and other Holiday programs.

Unfortunately the need for support doesn't end when the holidays are over.

Here are a few ways your donation can help:

- General program support
- **Send a child in need to camp this summer!**
- Year round assistance by Adopting a Family in need
- Prevention Not Suspension – Increasing academic and social success for high risk youth.

**We are making it easier to donate
and make payments via:**

PayPal, VENMO, Network for Good,
on-line, mail in, and stocks & securities.

Donations/Payments can be made on Venmo, PayPal or Network For Good.

You can also make a donation/payment via our website
at **www.sunshinepreventionctr.org**,
or mail your donation/payment in.

THANK YOU!

Other ways you can help:

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters Clothes Bin – drop off your used clothes**
- **Organize a food drive to support our Blessing Box/Food Pantry**
- **Join our Board of Directors**
- **Assist at one of our Community Events/Property Cleanup**

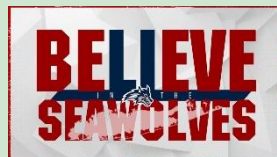
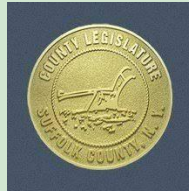
**[Click here to email Dr. Carter](#)
if [you would like more information or have questions about how to help](#)**

Thank you so much for YOUR support!!!



We appreciate all of our Supporters

We'd like to take the opportunity to send a heartfelt thank you to all the families, businesses, agencies, and financial supporters



GOLD Supporters, Financial Supporters, Grants

- Town of Brookhaven Supervisor & Town Councilmembers
- Town of Brookhaven Parks Department - Commissioner Ed Morris
- Suffolk County Youth Bureau
- Brookhaven Youth Bureau
- Senator Mario Mattera
- Councilman Jonathan Kornreich
- Councilwoman Jane Bonner
- Roanoke Sand and Gravel
- Knapp/Swezey Foundation
- Port Jeff Lion's Club
- Ridgewood Savings Bank
- Lois Cox & Sharon Cox
- Frank & Dolores Barker
- Long Island Community Foundation
- Patti Kelly/Barker
- Ronald McDonald House Charities
- Port Jeff Rotary Club
- Linda Sanders and Michael Lockhart
- Plumbers Union # 200
- Long Island Charities Foundation
- Long Island Cares
- Home Depot Selden
- Home Depot Foundation
- Hinck Electrical
 - NY Community Trust

Personal Donations

- Lois & Sharon Cox
- Tackett and Dalske Families
- The Barker Family
- Craig and Chris Cox
- Linda Sanders/Lockhart Family
- Nancy Campo
- Joanne Wilson
- Bob Cohen
- Rich Bylott
- Liz Kotseas DeLucia
- Pliakis Family
- Carol Davis-Wiebelt
- Ken & Elizabeth Combs
- Jay Hart
- Susan Blake
- Keith Brandow
- John Dima
- Jeanne Cox
- Adrian Clarke
- Sharon & Rick Cebulski
- Carol Ann Guerriero
- Joan Strong-Gleason
- Anne Montanez
- Christine Won

SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

Comsewogue, Middle Country, Longwood,
Sachem, Bayshore, William Floyd, Pat/Med, Central Islip, Eastport
South Manor and Three Village

Local Business, Agency, School Supporters

- Donoghue Printing Company
- Consolidated Engergy
- SC Department of Labor
- National Waste Services
- Pat Davis Technical Support
- Ohara & Company and Henry DeBlasi Accountants
- Lamb & Barnosky
- Sterling Business
- LI University/CW Post
- SC Department of Health
- SC Probation Department
- Child Protective Services
- Mt. Sinai Congregational Church
- Stony Brook University
- DASH
- Department of Social Services
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Department of Health
- Family Service League
- WellLife Network
- Suffolk Intensive Case Management (SCIM)
- EAC
- Stop & Shop Community Bag Program
- Bank of America Charitable Foundation
- Boyle Road Elementary School
- KS Mechanical
- O'Brien Insurance
- Comsewogue Public Library
- TomKat Business Solutions
- Staples - Port Jefferson
- Usher Plant Care
- Long Island Cares
- Long Island Advocacy
- Long Island Volunteer Center
- Mike Contino/Contino Landscaping
- Brookhaven Irrigation
- Shyla Silva-Shyla Cares
- Scrap Happy Quilters
- Rick Weaver - Transform
- Suffolk Credit Union
- It's Time Restoration/John Dima
- Geico Foundation
- Buttercup Dairy Store
- Shawn Kean/Olde Towne Gardens
- Chick-fil-A PJS
- DRP Solutions/Dan Jacoby
- Pal-O-Mine Equestrian
- Jeffrey Melgar Scholarship
- Angelas House
- Home Depot - Selden
- Madison Lohrius
- St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Kurtious Konstruction.

