



The Power of Connecting

Annual Highlights Report 2023





The Power of Connecting

Isolation is a killer. The medical world has long understood this, and it came into renewed focus in 2023, gathering momentum when the U.S. Surgeon General officially declared it a national emergency.

At PSS, we work day-in and day-out to thwart isolation. We help New Yorkers and beyond thrive through our programs for the homebound, centers and residences, caregiver support, and Life University for managing the many transitions that life brings. We've been doing this important work for more than 60 years and we remain committed to making a difference.

Whether it's a warm nutritious meal with friends, a listening ear, or help in court fighting an eviction, we make a difference through small touches and grand gestures.

We understand the power of connecting.

PSS Circle of Care

PSS Circle of Care continues to deliver the gift of support, guidance and relief to family caregivers, especially those who are new to the process looking for information and ways to cope.

In FY23 we helped nearly 700 new caregivers with counseling, information, assistance, referral, educational training, support groups, and supplemental services.

Caregivers also accessed more than 10,000 hours of individual respite services — giving them temporary “time off” for a desperately needed break from their caregiving role.

In honor of National Family Caregiver month, [PSS Circle of Care](#) hosted caregivers in person at the Seashore Restaurant in City Island, Bronx, NY. Caregivers enjoyed a special lunch, mingled, and enjoyed music performed by Berko Music Therapist Ariel Weissberger.

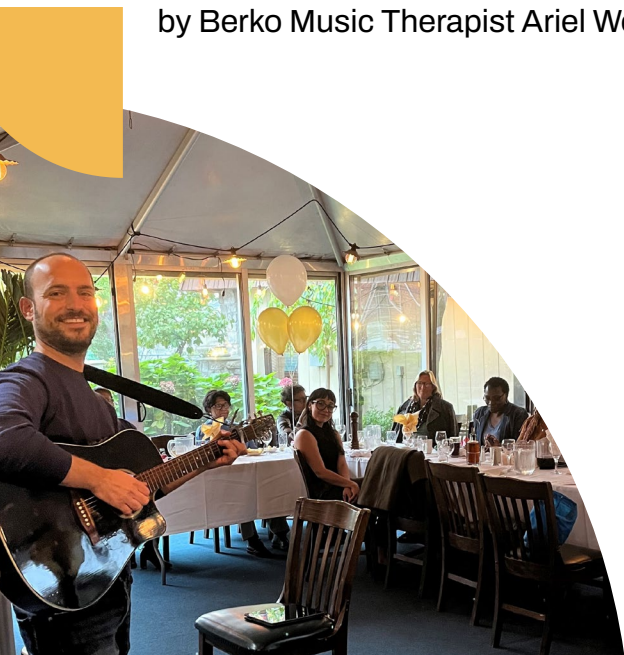


Professional development continued for the PSS Circle of Care staff, who received training to deliver the Savvy Caregiver training, becoming the only NYC program certified to deliver this evidence-based family caregiving program.

Dementia Friends NY took off in 2023.

In January, **DFNY Champion Training** was delivered by Dona Giannotti and Medge Adam to more than 60 professionals at LiveOn NY’s 33rd Annual Conference. Since then, nearly 400 people in the state of New York have become Dementia Friends by attending one of our DFNY Information Sessions.

PSS is proud to be the lead agency for the state on this international program and is grateful to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation for its \$125,000 grant in support of this important initiative.





PSS Social Services

It was a year of rapid growth for the PSS Social Services department, culminating in a \$1.5 million contract with NYC Aging’s NY Connects program that expands social work on demand services into Brooklyn.



A fully-staffed social work department began introducing classes, support groups and therapeutic activities for Older Adult Center members. These range from painting and jewelry-making to a brain game highlighting the differences between the left and right brain.

Social workers also fulfilled on a partnership with Healthfirst by providing targeted member outreach. PSS social workers engaged older adults who had not had a medical appointment in the last year, as well as those with unique health concerns or needing special screenings.

In addition to assisting them with appointment scheduling, PSS social workers helped community members stay engaged with referrals to other community resources.





PSS Older Adult Centers

It was a year of reconnecting and creativity as members flowed back into the 10 Older Adult Centers to enjoy innovative new programming.

These are just a few of the many daily activities that blossomed:

PSS Harlem's Quilting Divas mounted exhibitions of their quilts for Black History Month, Women's History Month and Juneteenth. Their work caught the eye of the Art at Fifth committee at the First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich Village, sparking a partnership and plans for a new show downtown in February 2024.

Discretionary funding allowed **PSS Parkside's** members to participate in a multi-week program of formal tea and table customs where they shared their personal stories. One center artist, who also volunteers, sketched lifelike portraits of the regulars which now hang in the centers.

Intergenerational activity flourished.

PSS Manhattanville partnered with Graham, which runs the afterschool program in the

building they share, on a "grandparent-for-a-day" event.

In August, an **All-Center Gathering** brought together members from all 10 centers to celebrate [PSS's 60th Anniversary!](#) Coordinating members from all 10 centers is a massive undertaking – but it allowed our members to enjoy this special reunion with DJs, dancing, food and fun.

An in-person **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon** was also a hit. More than three dozen of our VIP volunteers came out for a delicious catered lunch, walked down the red carpet, and received their certificates of appreciation.

Many centers were able to use their city council member's discretionary funds to make needed infrastructure improvements, such as upgraded bathrooms and new furniture purchases.

PSS Life! University



PSS Life! University continues to expand and evolve—providing in-person, virtual and hybrid classes and programming to assist older adults through every transition they might face.

The **PSS Retirement Readiness Basecamp** expanded Life! U programming with an unbiased expert-led curriculum covering the basics for anyone getting ready to retire.

PSS lifted the computer literacy of more than 500 older adults in the city’s most underserved neighborhoods—including personalized training and one-on-one support.

A luncheon series revitalized the elder community at First Presbyterian Church with programming on artificial intelligence and caregiving, healthcare technology, healthy summer foods, and more.

Our capacity to provide programs for Spanish-speakers expanded as well with the hiring of a second full-time bilingual technology trainer, especially helpful in Older Adult Centers where Spanish is the dominant language. A schedule of hybrid classes in Spanish also kicked off with chair yoga, meditation and cooking.

The **Coming of Age** program held a full year of in-person and virtual sessions for the Explore Your Future program, training 7 new facilitators to lead these sessions. It also started an alumni community for continued support and connection.

[Coming of Age](#) partnered with a major national corporation on a pilot program to deliver Explore Your Future virtually. Another partnership with the Greenwich House Workforce & Lifelong Opportunities Center introduced Explore Your Future to a whole new audience at that location.





Celebrations and Milestones

In November 2022, PSS celebrated its **60th anniversary** with a gathering in the Great Hall of the First Presbyterian Church. It was attended by PSS founders, the past executive director, elected officials, current and past staff, and family members. Art created by center members adorned the walls.

PSS Honors 2023 was held in May and covered by NY1. The Maggie Kuhn Award went to Christina Curry, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Musician Ariel Weissberger, founder of Berko Music Therapy, received the PSS Circle of Care Award. GetSetUp, a PSS digital literacy partner, received the Coming of Age Impact Award.





Building capacity. Creating community.

Special thanks to Rutgers Presbyterian Church for its generous support and donating valuable space for the PSS administrative offices.

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