

## Why Stepping Stones?

## Stepping Stones Contact Info

# Stepping Stones

adult day program

a service of UCP Central PA



*We're closing the gap between the skills you have and the potential you possess. And we're having fun doing it.*



*Could you or someone you know benefit from participating in Stepping Stones?*

Contact:

**Angie Monteleone**  
**Assistant Director of Adult Services**  
4305 N. Sixth Street, Suite A  
Harrisburg, PA 17103

Voice: 717-230-9380, x400 Fax: 717-238-0869

Email: [amonteleone@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:amonteleone@ucpcentralpa.org)

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*Because life without limits means **embracing change** in order to enhance independence.*

## The Background

Over the years, school programs throughout Pennsylvania have evolved to better prepare students for life after school. At the same time, PA's Employment First initiative has made employment a priority for adults with intellectual disabilities.

As a result, there are many Pennsylvanians with intellectual disabilities who have both the desire **and** the ability to become more involved in the community around them. There is also a growing need for structured and supportive skills training for these adults as they look to further develop their skills and pursue a fuller, more independent lifestyle. It has become clear that changes needed to be made to adult day programming to reflect this new environment.



*With the support and assistance of Dauphin County MH/IDD, UCP developed an Outcome/Employment driven adult day program that represents a significant step toward independence for individuals with IDD in Dauphin County. This innovative new approach is fittingly called Stepping Stones.*

## The Program

The dictionary defines stepping stone as “an undertaking or event that helps one to make progress toward a specified goal.” The Stepping Stones program is designed to empower each individual to focus on, and make progress in, three particular skill sets:

- **Communication and Socialization**

*We provide opportunities for each person to build confidence while also building friendships.* We encourage them to enhance their communication and socialization skills, with an eye to developing and growing relationships with others both in and out of the program.

- **Giving Back through Volunteerism**

*We identify and nurture opportunities for program participants to be involved in service projects of interest to them,* both on an individual or group basis.

These volunteer opportunities enable them to establish meaningful connections with others in the community who share a similar interest. The opportunities may include working at an animal shelter or nursing home, delivering Meals-on-Wheels, collecting toys for the Toys-for-Tots program, shelving library books, or boxing packaged food at the food bank.



- **Vocational Training**

*We work with each individual to develop both the skills and the confidence needed to begin the process of seeking—and securing—meaningful employment.* We also ensure that the appropriate job coaching and supports are in place.

## The Curriculum

The curriculum-based program encourages skill development in these targeted core areas:

- Health and safety
- Nutrition
- Community awareness and civic responsibility
- Digital awareness
- Relationships
- Independent volunteerism
- Exploring career interests
- Vocational training

Self-determination skills such as self-advocacy and self-awareness increase the likelihood that participants will experience successful outcomes. Stepping Stones fosters a setting where these concepts are fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

While the Stepping Stones program is not time limited, the goal is for each person to sufficiently develop his or her skills to be able to move onto the next level: UCP's Pathways Adult Day program. Pathways is an innovative two-year program for people 18 or older with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are capable of living independently and being competitively employed.



Additional supports are available through these UCP programs, as needed:

- *Community Career Connections* supported employment program
- *Links to Independence* habilitation aide services