Peace of the City Ministries
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History and Goals
Peace of the City Ministries was founded in 1992 by Diann Takens. The goal of this program is to provide young people around the neighborhood with support that will help them succeed in both school and life. A central focus of this program is meeting the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of all of the staff and children. The staff at Peace of the City make the environment feel as comfortable and homey as possible.

Statistics for the West Side
- Population is roughly 30,000 people.
- Around 30% of the people residing here are U.S. citizens that were not born in the U.S. and people that are not yet citizens.
- Average household income is about $40,000.
- Majority of the population have only had “some high school” as the extent of education.
- 35% of households are in poverty.
- 10% of people are unemployed.
- 50% of the population is white, 21% is Hispanic/Latino, 18% is African American, and 7% is Asian.

How the Physical Environment Affects Child Development
- Chronic noise exposure in early childhood has been known to interfere with reading acquisition and other cognitive abilities.
- Household crowding impacts school achievement, IQ, and reading comprehension.
- Children who are constantly in overcrowded environments have shown developmental delays and have been known to be more off-task when it comes to schoolwork.
- Children that grow up in chaotic homes have been linked to behavioral problems, internalization symptoms, decreased academic achievement, and poor socioemotional development.
- Cognitive development has been affected by the availability of learning materials and other resources.
- Educational setting quality plays a large role in academic achievement in children.
- Physical quality of the neighborhood can cause psychological distress in both children and adults.
- Outdoor nature experiences have shown positive psychological wellbeing in children and adolescents.
- Children’s executive functioning and physical exercise have been enhanced through outdoor play and nature experiences.
- Children in low-income and/or poor-quality physical environments have furthered their cognitive and socioemotional development through outdoor natural play spaces.
- It has been proven that aromatherapy has had beneficial effects on mood, behavior, and overall wellness.

POTC Environment
- Homework club is offered for the younger children. It allows them to have a library quiet environment where they can get their schoolwork done with the help of volunteers.
- Literacy tutors are available that help children further develop their skills in a comfortable environment.
- Game time in the gym or at the playground is included so that the children can release some energy with their friends in the program.
- Teen empowerment program allows older children to attend things such as job readiness programs and theatre classes daily along with a teen room where they can relax and do their homework.
- The use of candles and twinkle lights in the classrooms and offices give a comfortable and welcoming feel to the whole building.
- There are rugs and beanbag chairs in the rooms and hallways that make the children feel more at home.
- A recent Peace Club field trip brought us to Tifft Nature Preserve where we took the kids on a hike and got to look at all kinds of wildlife.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
- https://peaceofthecity.org/about/
- https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/NY/Buffalo/West-Side-Buffalo-Demographics.html