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St. Paul's Senior Services Launches Learning Lab Program for children of Employees During Pandemic

SAN DIEGO, CALIF. (Aug 17, 2020) – St. Paul's Senior Services introduces two new child care programs to help employees during the pandemic.

"Businesses large and small are navigating a 'new normal' and searching for ways to support their employees during the pandemic," said Cheryl Wilson, RN and CEO of St. Paul's Senior Services. "COVID-19 has brought challenges and ultimately, stress to families and employees, including our own and as such, St. Paul's Senior Services has launched many programs to support employees during the pandemic."

Serving elementary school age children, the **Learning Lab** is available for St. Paul's employees. The program, which began August 17, helps children with their distance learning, guided by a child care teacher. Children bring their own learning devices and are supervised in small groups (no more than 10 kids). Mask wearing and social distancing are enforced, while children also have outside play time, as well as activities and games once school work is completed for the day.

Before the Learning Lab and during the height of the pandemic, March through August, St. Paul's offered an **Employee Child Watch Program**. When schools and child care centers were shut down, St. Paul's opened the Child Watch Program for infants through school age children, at no cost to employees. The program created a safe and fun environment for children, offering socialization, and also assistance with online learning. Mask wearing was implemented and groups were kept small to reduce exposure. Each day followed a schedule, giving the children a sense of structure and routine, which included activities, games, reading time, and outside play time.

St. Paul's Senior Services has been providing award-winning senior care and retirement communities in San Diego for more than 60 years. With over 1,400 seniors to care for every day, a strong employee base is needed, with nearly 700 employees throughout the county, including doctors, home caregivers, nursing staff and social workers to chefs, kitchen staff, drivers, maintenance teams, accountants and more.

"As soon as the pandemic hit, we provided staff and residents with masks, implemented screenings, and organized education on safe practices. Our industry is service oriented and we needed to do more for our employees, so our assistance with child care for staff has been a huge help to employees who otherwise would have had to stay at home," explained Wilson. "We also provide employees with meals so they don't have to leave the buildings to purchase food, and for those who need alternative accommodations we have provided hotel rooms.

St. Paul's also provided emotional support, launching several tools to support employees psychologically, physically and spiritually. One is a daily wellness e-mail with meditation and exercise tips, recipes, and encouragement. They also produce a weekly Sunday Service where a St. Paul's Chaplain records a spiritual service, since churches are closed.

"Communication and transparency are super important, so our employees receive a weekly written communication about everything happening here at St. Paul's as it relates to the pandemic – we want staff to know the challenges and what we are doing about it," added Wilson.

St. Paul's also creates a regular video communication, by Wilson or one of the team's medical experts, where they educate about current trends and what to do to remain safe. And, St. Paul's has been hosting virtual social events as well.

For more information on St. Paul's Senior Services, visit www.stpaulseniors.org

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Background on St. Paul's Senior Services

St. Paul's Senior Services is a mission-driven San Diego non-profit and full-service senior care provider, offering Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Skilled Nursing, a Child Care and Senior Day Care Program, and a Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). Since opening its doors in 1960, St. Paul's serves as an innovator in the San Diego community with a reputation for exceptional care. For more information on St. Paul's Senior Services, please visit www.StPaulsSeniors.org or call 1(619) 239-6900.