Students at P.S. 1, The Alfred E. Smith School on the Lower East Side in NYC, recently held their annual Penny Harvest Check Presentation Ceremony. The Children’s Aid Society was one of nine lucky organizations chosen by the Penny Harvest Roundtable Philanthropy Service group at P.S. 1 to receive a Penny Harvest check from Common Cents. The 2nd and 3rd graders at P.S. 1 were able to raise $1,000 over the course of the year, a portion of which was donated to Children’s Aid.

The funds were raised through the efforts of the students, staff and parents. In the fall the students held a festival where the monies raised from the purchase of food, pumpkins, games, books, toys, plants, pottery; and a raffle all went towards their Penny Harvest Initiative. Additionally, over the course of the year, the students continued to pass their class collection containers to add to the total monies raised.

How did these 2nd and 3rd graders narrow down the competition, you may be wondering? The students chose the organizations after exploring community needs. They explored different organizations by asking for suggestions, computer research, and phone interviews, as well as hosting on-site speakers at P.S. 1. The students then matched organizations with needs and voted on which needs to address and which organizations to contribute to.
Along with Children’s Aid there were many worthy causes in attendance to receive their checks, including The American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, The Fresh Air Fund and New Yorkers for Parks. Along with the students, teachers, parent aides and staff in attendance, Time for Kids magazine, a representative from Common Cents, creators of the Penny Harvest, as well as a representative from NYC Service of the Mayor’s Office were all in attendance. The afternoon included brief statements on the importance of giving and philanthropy, check presentations, Penny Harvest Roundtable Student Award Presentations and a pizza party.

It is so encouraging and inspiring to see NYC children finding ways to truly make a difference to those we provide services for. As cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead said so wonderfully, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Thank you P.S. 1!

Patty Landry
Manager, Annual Giving
The Children’s Aid Society