



2015-2016
Annual Report

Welcome!

A Letter from the Executive Director and Board Chair

Greetings!

All who engage in the work of The Family Place are connected through a shared aspiration: that every child in our community has the opportunity for a promising future. We are so proud to shine a spotlight on the tremendous contributions and efforts made every day by parents, staff, donors and volunteers from every corner of the Upper Valley to invest in that outcome.

Through these pages we express our gratitude, first and foremost, and describe the impact that our collective investment is having for so many children and families!

This year, community support enabled us to continue delivering our core services as well as to engage in two new partnerships responding to emerging needs: the **Safe Babies Court** project, which supports infants and toddlers in state's custody, and **Parents Together**, a skill-building and support group for parents in recovery from substance use.



This year, generous house makers, sponsors, silent auction donors and volunteers made our annual **Gingerbread Festival** the most successful one yet! (Mark your calendars and join us on December 3rd, when we will create the gingerbread magic once again).

Your generosity enables us to be truly family-centered, to offer families services that are so well-integrated and coordinated that the families themselves never know the number of different funding streams and programs that have been woven together behind the scenes for their benefit. What families know is that they can count on us to be there for them whenever they need us, to meet



"What families know is that they can count on us to be there for them whenever they need us..."

them in their homes, to welcome them to our center and to extend sincere and professional support to help them achieve their goals.

"It's also an honor to be trusted by this community to engage with families at critical times..."

As our staff will tell you, it's an honor to be welcomed into a family's life. It's also an honor to be trusted by this community to engage with families at critical times and be good stewards of the resources we have been given.

As you can tell in every word and picture of this 2015-16 Annual Report, when parents, professionals and community generosity comes together, families and children thrive!

For all of us at The Family Place, our deepest gratitude!

Nancy *Posie*

Nancy Bloomfield

Executive Director

Posie Taylor

Chair, Board of Trustees

Our Mission

The Family Place delivers comprehensive programs designed to strengthen positive relationships, teach essential skills and promote enduring healthy growth for families with young children in the Upper Valley and surrounding communities.

The Family Place operates a variety of programs designed to promote strong, stable families; safe, healthy children; and active learning for children and parents alike. Our goal is to promote positive outcomes for all young people, regardless of circumstances.

As a Parent Child Center, we play a vital role in our community's social safety net. Our work involves a whole-family approach to helping children thrive. We work with children and caregivers together, promoting positive parenting strategies and ensuring that children have the kinds of experiences that support their physical development, their social functioning, their ability to learn, and their long-term health.

Through on-site and home-based services, The Family Place partners with families to increase the presence of "protective factors", things that all families need to be strong and thrive.

The Family Place is committed to making sensible investments today that produce healthy, happy, self-sufficient citizens who strengthen our community in the future.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our Mission	1
Programs	2
Community Partnerships	3
A Year in Review	4
Quality Early Experiences	6
Safe Babies	8
Family Strength and Stability	9
Parents Together	10
Financials	11
With Gratitude	13

Programs

Our programs are designed to ensure that all parents have the skills and resources they need to raise healthy children, and that all children—regardless of their economic or educational background—are raised to become healthy, successful adults.

Families Learning Together (FLT): This intensive parenting, life-skills and education program, which includes an accredited high school, promotes self-sufficiency for young adults, so that they are better able to care for themselves and their children.

Child Care: The Family Place operates a licensed, 5 STAR-accredited early childhood education program for infants and toddlers.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program: Income-eligible parents who are working, seeking employment, or furthering their education can access financial assistance to help with child care.



Playgroups: Three times a week, children and caregivers come together to meet each other and enjoy play in a safe, nurturing environment.

"We love [the playgroup], it's a wonderful opportunity for my 14 month old to have social time." — Playgroup Parent

Reach Up: Case managers help young families by providing access to education and work experiences while addressing barriers to employment.

Parent Education and Support: Parenting classes, workshops, and other events explore topics such as communication, development, and early literacy.



Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) and Special Investigative Unit: A multidisciplinary approach promotes the best possible outcomes when there are allegations of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse of a child, or sexual abuse of an adult. Our CACs are located in Norwich and in Springfield, Vermont.

"I wouldn't be as far as I've gotten with the children without The Family Place. The Family Place has been there since day one." — Parent of Therapy Client

Therapy: The Family Place offers onsite therapy services to parents and children referred through our own programs or by social workers from the Department for Children and Families.

Children's Integrated Services (CIS) - Early Intervention: Our team of home visitors, including developmental educators, service coordinators, a speech and language therapist and a physical therapist support children from birth to 3 who have developmental delays or medical conditions that may lead to delay.

CIS - Family Support: Support services, offered through home visits, help families cope with extreme stress such as unemployment, extended illness, or homelessness.

CIS - Nursing Services: Our nurse works with pregnant women and families with young children. She offers guidance on immunizations, breast feeding, sleep, colic, home safety, and other topics for young families.

CIS - Specialized Child Care: We work with families, child care providers and Family Services Social Workers to ensure that the families with young children who are particularly vulnerable have access to high quality child development programs and supports.

Community Partnerships

Collaborations with both publicly-funded and private organizations allow us to expand our reach and deepen our impact. A few partnerships are highlighted below:

Creative Lives

In April, we hosted a 12-week series for parents in collaboration with Creative Lives, an organization based in Thetford, Vermont. The program, **Adventures in Parenting: Addressing Root Causes of ADD and ADHD**, engaged parents in helping their children learn strategies to support focus, concentration, good decision making, and success at school.

"This course taught me about being more relaxed, focused and present so I can be the best version of myself for my son." — Parent Education Program Participant

Second Growth

Second Growth works to reduce substance abuse and violence for adolescents through training, counseling, group support and prevention education. This year, our organizations collaborated to offer a curriculum based parenting group for parents in recovery. Participants of the group include parents, partners of parenting adults with substance abuse dependence or addiction including those in treatment and recovery. (See story on page 9.)



Throughout the school year, Families Learning Together participants and staff benefited from the availability and expertise of a Second Growth counselor who came to our campus each week. Thanks to our deepening partnership with Second Growth, participants have been able to access help in an environment where they are already comfortable.

Vermont Humanities Council

"Parents were shown techniques for interactive reading, which helped participants understand the power of reading for language development." — Families Learning Together Teacher

The **Read with Me** program, offered by the Vermont Humanities Council to parents at The Family Place this year, was a great success. Through engaging workshops, facilitators introduced books and methods of interactive reading to children. Participants left with new skills on how to read with their children and a stack of age-appropriate books. Each parent also received nine books to encourage daily reading with their child.



"I read to my daughter while she eats, in the bathtub, when she wakes up, and when she's going to bed. I just have to tell her to grab a book and she brings me one she wants me to read. But sometimes, she won't let me read. Instead, she reads the book to me and makes me listen!" — Families Learning Together Program Participant

Willing Hands

Willing Hands recovers and distributes food to human services organizations in our community. The nutritious food—often produce culled from stores or gleaned from farms—would otherwise go to waste. Weekly deliveries from Willing Hands help young parents in our Families Learning Together program and their children have a healthier and balanced diet. Through wellness classes, parents are supported to develop patterns of healthy eating and behavior for themselves and their families.

2015-2016 Year in Review

JULY



Katie Malik joined our team as the **Parent Education Coordinator**.

Beverly Austin joined our team as the **Finance Director**.

5

Families served through the **Safe Babies Program** in 2015-2016

AUGUST

We welcomed 3 new board members:



Jenn Argenti



Ted Reeves



Amy Robb

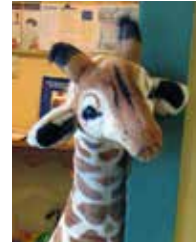
SEPTEMBER

A Peer Review was held with our colleagues from the **Vermont Parent Child Center Network**, community and state partners, client families, friends, board members and staff. We celebrated our achievements and discussed key goals and opportunities for growth.

39

Welcome **Baby Bags** delivered to local families in 2015-2016

OCTOBER



Ginger the Giraffe arrived!

Hali Issente joined our team as the **Communications and Development Associate**.

17

Participants in the **Families Learning Together Program** in 2015-2016

NOVEMBER

The Families Learning Together (FLT) Program participants sold handmade items from the JewelryOs® Collection at the **Christmas Market with a Difference**. Shop a selection of items online: etsy.com/shop/FamilyPlace

580+

Children benefitted from **Child Care Financial Assistance** in 2015-2016

DECEMBER

Book Angels - 130 books were delivered courtesy of the **Norwich Bookstore** in Norwich, VT.



For many years, **Our Lady of the Snows Church** in Woodstock has graciously sponsored our families for the Christmas Holiday. Last year, 31 of our families received food baskets, turkeys and gifts for their children.

JANUARY

Cookies for a cause! For the first quarter of the year, all proceeds from **King Arthur Flour's Bake for Good** cookies (packaged and singles) benefited The Family Place - and raised over \$5,000!



The Family Place and **Green Mountain Children's Center** hosted Nancy Linkroum Pennell for a spirited talk and discussion, **Be The Parent You Want To Be: For Parents and Caregivers of Children 0-10**.

178

Families served through **CIS Early Intervention** in 2015-2016

FEBRUARY

The JewelryOs Collection sold jewelry at the **Go Red for Women Luncheon on National Wear Red Day**. Proceeds from the sales of these red necklaces benefitted The Family Place and the American Heart Association.



Restaurant Day was an opportunity for participants in the **Families Learning Together program** to showcase their skills, gain experience and job-readiness for careers.

20

Children served through **CIS Family Support** in 2015-2016

MARCH



We were honored to have **Hartford Area Career and Technology Center (HACTC)** students be a part of caring for the children who attend our **Child Care Center**.

136

Children and adult victims served by the **Child Advocacy Centers and the Windsor County Special Investigative Unit (SIU)** in 2015-2016

46

Children received **therapy services** in 2015-2016

APRIL

At our **6th Annual Force for the Future Luncheon** we were thrilled to have **Charles Wheelan**, Board Member at The Family Place and Senior Lecturer and Policy Fellow at Dartmouth College, as our keynote speaker.

The **13th Annual Shield Our Children from Harm Conference** was held at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. The conference is a collaboration of the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth-Hitchcock, the Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) of Grafton and Sullivan Counties at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, and The Family Place.

71

Individuals served by **Reach Up** in 2015-2016

MAY

The Family Place was honored to be one of the five non-profit organizations competing for an **AMP NH Award**, which was sponsored by the **Entrepreneurs' Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation**.



Trained fire educators from the **Norwich Fire Department and FAST Squad** visited our child care and playgroup to promote fire safety education.

220+

Children and caregivers joined the **playgroups** in 2015-2016

JUNE

Despite rainy weather, our team of **Covered Bridges Half Marathon** runners and their generous sponsors raised a **record high of over \$20,000 for The Family Place!** We are so grateful to our dedicated runners; the organizers of the race, Mike Silverman and Bill Blaiklock; and our team coordinator, Mary Brown.

167

Children served through **Specialized Child Care** in 2015-2016

29

Children from 25 families served through **CIS Nursing** in 2015-2016



Our 13th Annual Gingerbread Festival was a fantastic success!

Thank you to our major sponsor - **The Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation** - our corporate sponsors, volunteers, house makers, Silent Auction donors, Board, Staff, and our friends and neighbors who supported the event. The Gingerbread Festival is a fun-filled, family-friendly event offering:

- Display of over 80 Gingerbread Houses
- Silent Auction of the Gingerbread Houses and Other Auction Items
- Gingerbread Store of handcrafts, gift items and the JewelryOs® Collection
- Gingerbread Café
- Gingerbread House Making Demonstration
- Cookie Decorating and Children Activities

Save the Date! **14th Annual Gingerbread Festival**
Saturday, December 3, 2016 from 10 am - 3 pm
at Tracy Hall in Norwich, VT

Quality Early Experiences



Early Experiences

The Family Place is committed to providing the best possible service to families who need extra support while their children are young. We engage with families onsite, in early education settings, and through home-based programs. Our home-based programs serve over 400 families a year. Two-thirds of these families have children under the age of three. Services include therapeutic support, parent education, and early intervention.

The goals are to stimulate children's learning and development at an early age, to help children get ready for school, to encourage parents in their role as first teachers, and to support families' efforts to connect with their schools and communities and make the best use of available resources. We offer developmental screenings and assessments, classroom support, developmental play activities, and parent support to promote quality early experiences for children across settings.

SUMMER AND BENTLEE'S STORY

"One day our teacher, Jody, told us that a guest speaker from **Let's Grow Kids** would come and teach us about the brain and how important it is to know how the brain develops and works, especially from birth to the age five. The workshop helped me understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy childhood experiences and how they affect childhood development.

This was very relevant for me, because I was adopted at age five. My younger sister, only sixteen months old when we were adopted, had a tough beginning. Before that, we were severely neglected, so I know our early development was interrupted.

Now that I have my son Bentlee, I want him to grow and learn and have a chance at a better start than I received as a child. I want to take what happened to me as a child and turn it around so that my son can have a brighter future. Unlike my life before I was adopted, Bentlee has me there when he needs my comfort, my support, my healthy discipline, and my unconditional love. I will always make sure that Bentlee has me while he grows, continues to read, and play. **Together we will let his curious mind grow."**

Summer entered the Families Learning Together program with her 18-month-old son, Bentlee, and recently earned her high school diploma.

80%
of a child's brain
is developed in
the first three
years of life

A baby builds 700-1000 new brain connections every second! Positive stimulation and bonding during this time enables children to develop strong thinking and social skills that will help them succeed in relationships, school, and later in life.

Safe Babies

IMPROVING OUTCOMES AND STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

The Family Place helps families be strong and stable, and helps children be safe, healthy and ready to learn. Infants and toddlers who have experienced abuse or neglect, trauma and disrupted attachment to a caregiver are at great risk for falling behind in their development. This is why we are passionate about our work with the **Safe Babies Court** model.

In the last 2 years, the number of children in Vermont state custody increased from 995 to 1,353. For the first time, the number of newborns, toddlers and preschoolers surpassed teens in custody. **A 2014 survey by the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) found that opiates were a factor in 80% of custody cases involving children under age 3.** Recognizing the need for a different approach to infant and toddler cases, our local DCF office and partner agency **Easter Seals** asked The Family Place to collaborate in implementing the Safe Babies Court model, an approach that has been supported by national evaluation findings.

Developed by national organization **Zero to Three**, Safe Babies aims to improve child outcomes and prevent future court involvement for infants and toddlers in state custody. This requires the coordination of intensive supports for the infants, toddlers and parents involved. More frequent team meetings and court appearances encourage parent progress and ensure that a child's developmental needs are a central focus. The Family Place provides a key component: **Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)**. Each child is also referred to The Family Place for **Early Intervention** (initially a developmental screening) and receives services as needed to monitor and support healthy development.

Baby Emma

Baby "Emma" (her name has been changed for privacy) was born with drugs in her system. Because it was determined that she was not safe, she came into state's custody and was placed in a foster home. Emma's parents were able to acknowledge the merits of state intervention and agreed to engage in the program.

Through Safe Babies, Emma's health and development have been monitored and supported by our Children's Integrated Services nurse, Kelly French, who meets regularly with both her foster parents and her parents so that everyone can work together to support Emma. Emma and her parents meet together every few weeks with Family Place Clinical Director Tonya McMurray, for Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP). CPP helps repair Emma's sense of safety and promotes healthy attachment, two critical building blocks for healthy development and learning.



"Safe Babies aims to improve child outcomes and prevent future court involvement for infants and toddlers in state custody."

Emma's parents, Kelly, Tonya and other team members meet as a team before each court hearing, every 6 weeks, to discuss how things are going. When Emma's parents struggled in their recovery early on, the structure of the Safe Babies program ensured timely interventions that helped them get back on track.

While the outcome of Emma's custody case is not yet clear, her parents have made significant progress in their health and stability. **Most importantly, Emma is a strong and healthy baby.**

Family Strength and Stability

The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) has identified five research-based factors that help protect children from toxic stress, increase family strength, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. Promoting the **Strengthening Families™** protective factors is at the heart of our work:



Parental Resilience

Resilience is being a strong, flexible parent and able to cope with the pressures and challenges of life.

"Before [my daughter], I just couldn't find the motivation to get my life together, but the moment I saw that little jellybean on my first ultrasound, I knew I had to pull it together for her. Everyone told me I couldn't do it, but I felt I could. And I did, I made it through until today. My little girl wasn't the end like most people thought: she was my savior and my beginning." — Families Learning Together Program Participant

Social Connections

Making social connections is important for parents - parents need friends too! Playgroups are one way we support parents to make connections and share parenting ideas.

"I met all of my current 'mom friends' in the playgroup." — Playgroup Parent

For support, call 802.649.3268,
or visit us at FamilyPlaceVT.org
& [Facebook.com/FamilyPlaceVT](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyPlaceVT)

Concrete Support in Times of Need

At The Family Place, we offer support services that help families cope with extreme stress such as unemployment, extended illness, or homelessness. A family that receives support before a situation becomes a crisis has the best chance at maintaining a positive outlook and strong family core.

"When my car broke down [The Family Place] was a phone call away to help me problem solve, budget, and help financially when I really needed it. I can't express how that impacted my life. Keeping my car allowed me to keep what I felt was left of my independence.." — Reach Up Client

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

When a child can effectively communicate their feelings, self-regulate behavior and interact well with others, it has a positive impact on their relationships with their family, peers and adults.

"Early Intervention and our speech therapist have greatly improved my son's ability to communicate and overall be a much happier child!" — Early Intervention Parent



Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Being a parent means you are constantly learning - it may be the hardest job you'll ever have and we are here to help! For parents and parents-to-be, The Family Place offers helpful resources, referrals, and a variety of supports both on-site and in the home.

Parents Together

PARENTING AND SUPPORT OVER ADDICTION

With core funding from **Boyle Community Pediatrics** and additional support from **The Mascoma Savings Bank Foundation**, The Family Place is partnering with **Second Growth** and **Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center's Perinatal Addiction Treatment Program** to offer a new resource for parents in treatment or recovery for substance abuse: **Parents Together**. This eighteen-week program, which utilizes **The Nurturing Program for Families in Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery**, focuses on supporting parents in their recovery while strengthening their skill and confidence as parents. This program is offered at no charge to the participants.

Onsite at The Family Place, Parents Together is co-facilitated by a Second Growth substance abuse counselor, a Recovery Coach and The Family Place's Parent Education Coordinator, Katie Malik. Parents have access to onsite child care and transportation assistance to support their participation. At the Dartmouth-Hitchcock site, Katie and the Recovery Coach team up with a DHMC Behavioral Health Clinician to offer the program to pregnant women and new mothers who are in treatment for opioid addiction.

Young people in recovery have often set aside their parenting responsibilities while chasing their addiction. These young parents need to build their parenting skills as well as renew their confidence in their ability to keep their children safe while meeting the children's basic needs. Parents in recovery have additional challenges, as stressful situations with young children can often be triggers for their addiction. Establishing healthy new ways to respond to these triggers is essential to a parent's successful journey.

Communication is a central focus in the curriculum. One parent reported that Parents Together helped her and her husband become, "**better at co-parenting.**" Parent survey responses also reflected the value of participating in a group with other parents experiencing similar challenges: "**Group always gives me encouragement just in knowing I am not alone, and I always learn from others going through similar struggles.**"



"We are responding to the need in our community to support parents in recovery who also have the responsibility of parenting. These two paths on their own demand a great deal of time and courage. When you are challenged with both, the challenges can be overwhelming." — Barbara Farnsworth, Former Executive Director for Second Growth

ONE MOTHER'S JOURNEY

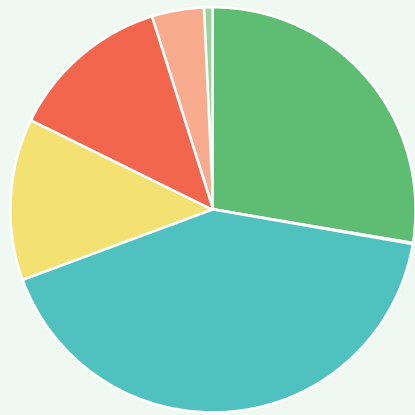
For one mother, everything changed when she discovered she was pregnant while abusing substances. After a relapse, she immediately signed up for the recovery program at **Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center**.

Since starting the Parents Together program, her parenting and relationship with her partner and children have grown stronger: "**We now have dinner together as a family every night and this has helped us to have better communication as a family. I've noticed that the kids are a lot more open during meal time and share a lot more than they do at other parts of the day.**"

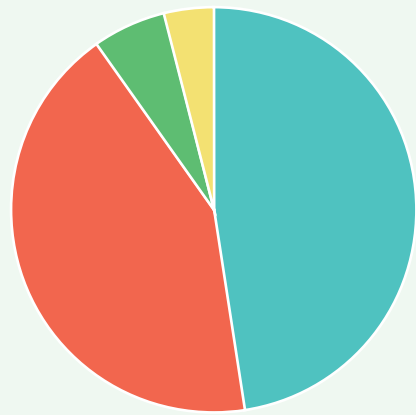
Many parents who are recovering from substance abuse are not able to engage with parenting on this level. Not only is this parent recovering but she is building stronger relationships within her family.

Financials

Figures for fiscal year 2015-2016



- State & Federal
- United Way
- Medicaid Billing
- Earned Program Income
- Fundraising
- Foundations
- Town Appropriations



- On-Site Services
- In Home Services
- Management & Operating
- Fundraising

INCOME \$2,042,028

State & Federal	\$563,041
United Way	\$3,000
Medicaid Billing	\$850,980
Earned Program Income	\$263,724
Fundraising	\$261,793
Foundations	\$84,590
Town Appropriations	\$14,900

EXPENSES \$2,051,956

On-Site Services	\$975,921
In Home Services	\$875,431
Management & Operating	\$120,100
Fundraising	\$80,505

Over 1,200 people attended the Gingerbread Festival last year!



With Gratitude

We could not do our work without you, our community of volunteers and donors who have given so generously over the past year! Every week, kind neighbors walk through our doors with donations of children's clothing, books, strollers, school supplies and other items that we are able to pass along to families in need. Each year, children, families and other artists spend hundreds of hours creating gingerbread houses for our annual **Gingerbread Festival**, an event that is carried by the generosity of volunteers, silent auction item donors and sponsors. Intrepid runners come from near and far to run for The Family Place team in the **Covered Bridges Half Marathon**. Our programs are enriched by volunteers who assist in our Families Learning Together and child care classrooms and support our evening parent education offerings. All of these gifts sustain us in our work, provide hope and help to our client families, and remind us of the power of community to create change, one family at a time.



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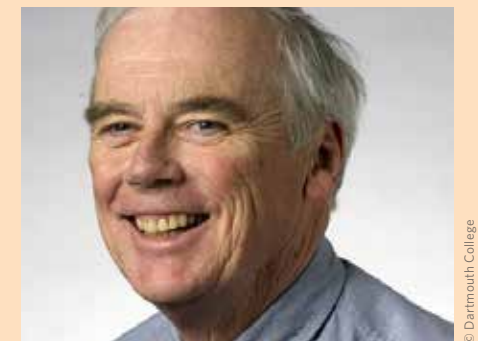
We are so grateful they remain as strategic advisors.



KATHLEEN O. SNYDER
AUGUST 1997 (18 YEARS)



MARY BROWN
OCTOBER 1997 (18 YEARS)



BILL BOYLE, M.D.
AUGUST 2009 (7 YEARS)

With Gratitude

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