

THE FAMILY PLACE ANNUAL REPORT

2012









STORIES TO REMEMBER

Dear Friends.

The story of The Family Place is one that continues to grow. It is shaped by the people who connect with us, as clients, employees, donors, and community partners, and by the resources we have to devote to them. We look different now than we did a year ago. With the successful completion of our Capital Campaign we were able to complete much needed renovations to our campus and fund our family programs. This year, we celebrated Elaine's 19th and final year of service as Executive Director and prepared for her retirement. Since then, we have been excited to welcome Mary Smit as the new Executive Director. We have more employees now, we serve more families now, and every day we find more needs to meet; in an economic slowdown, it's always the most vulnerable families who first feel its effects.



Mary Brown on a recent trip to Nepal

Recently I had the chance to travel to Nepal and meet families there who are also struggling against challenges that can seem insurmountable. Environmental and economic distress, chronic illness, the starkest of poverty's living conditions: these are the backdrops against which families - here and abroad - are struggling to survive. One family's story stood out. The father was addicted to alcohol and inflicting domestic abuse. The women of the village banded together and demanded that he stop, drink only away from their home, and hand any money he earned over to his wife. It worked. The abuse stopped and his consumption, if at all, is now outside the home. Together these women showed strength, determination and a sense of empowerment, and succeeded in improving the lives of his wife and children and set a tone throughout the village.

To me, that story speaks volumes about what we as a community can achieve, no matter where in the world we live. Over the past year at The Family Place we've seen young mothers receive their high school diplomas, some of them the first in their extended families to do so; we have helped children develop to age-appropriate levels; and we've provided counseling for childhood victims of sexual abuse. We have identified and met the ever-growing needs of families in the Upper Valley, a couple of which you'll read about in these pages. And we did this with the help of all of you, our friends and neighbors.

On behalf of our staff and our families, I offer my sincere thanks for your continuing commitment of support.

Most gratefully,

Mary Brown
Chair of the Board of Directors



Childrens' smiles are the same the world over, whether in Nepal or the Upper Valley."

THE FAMILY PLACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Brown, Chair Posie Taylor, Vice Chair John Ruth, Treasurer Elizabeth Chabot, Secretary Elizabeth Adams Bill Boyle, M.D.

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STORIES OF ACHIEVEMENTS

- In early 2012 we reached our goal of \$1.3 million to complete our Capital Campaign!
 Three years of dedicated effort on the part of board members and staff came to a wonderfully satisfying end. A heartfelt thank you to all who participated.
- In 2012, The Family Place became the lead agency for Children's Integrated Services (CIS) in our region. The Family Place now works with the VT DCF, Early Childhood Mental Health providers, and the Orange County Parent Child Center to ensure each family has one person to act as an "anchor" for them, and to help with all aspects of case management and communication with other team members to create a coordinated, comprehensive response to need.
- The Family Place hired a nurse and began our CIS Nursing Family Support program to better serve area families with infants and toddlers with complex medical needs through home visiting and case management.
- The State of Vermont approved a pilot of the Forensic Interview Model at The Family Place - Child Advocacy Center (CAC) / Special Investigation Unit (SIU) in Hartford. A trained Forensic Interviewer has been hired to perform thorough, compassionate interviews of alleged victims which are recorded and used in the ensuing investigation.
- The Family Place, in partnership with the Vermont Parent Child Center Network, cohosted the first annual Learning Together Conference in March where professionals gathered to attend lectures and workshops focused on the issues that effect young families coping with poverty. Joan Lombardi, Ph.D. who served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development for the Obama Administration in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was the keynote speaker.



The Family Place makes high school graduation a reality for young parents

- The Family Place began collaborating with our local Blueprint Community Health Team to strengthen ties and collaboration between Children's Integrated Services (CIS) and the medical community.
- We were thrilled to have Governor Peter Shumlin as our keynote speaker for our 2nd annual "Force for the Future" policy event, cohosted by Vermont Business Roundtable. His inspiring speech about the importance of early childhood sparked an enthusiastic urge towards advocacy among the 100 attendees.
- Two Fellows from the Albert Schweitzer
 Fellowship embarked on a nine month program
 with participants in Families Learning Together.
 These medical students from the Geisel School
 of Medicine at Dartmouth College taught
 participants the importance of nutritious eating,
 helped them develop fitness routines and gave
 lots of practical instruction in the commercial
 kitchen here at The Family Place.
- We celebrated the finished renovations of our Norwich campus with an Open House. Community members gathered to view our improved facilities and listened to King Arthur Flour CEO, Steve Voigt, speak about the importance of making early education available to every child in our community.
- Through the dedication and passion of 25 runners, The Family Place earned over \$10,000 in donations during the Covered Bridges Half Marathon! This event was also an important opportunity to educate the greater community about the services available for families.

"I've got a lot of motivation here, to better my life, that I didn't have before." ~A 26-year-old parent in the Families Learning Together program.

BY THE NUMBERS:

Number of children served by:

Early Intervention - 170

Families Learning Together - 23

Family Educators - 67

Playgroups - 128

Children's Integrated Services - 168

Child Advocacy Center - 46

Child Care Center - 31

Childcare Financial Assistance - 674

Reach Up - 80

Parenting Education - 52 families

Special Investigative Unit (children) - 148

Special Investigative Unit (adults) - 32

In 2012, **1497** young lives were transformed by The Family Place.

From **2000 - 2012**:

- Over **2800** area parents have received parenting education from The Family Place
- Over 1300 area families received education and intervention/support for their child's developmental needs from The Family Place
- Nearly **600** area parents on Reach Up received case management and support from The Family Place to achieve their educational and employment goals.



Here at The Family Place, play is an essential ingredient of learning!

Income	
State & Federal Funds	1,237,429.00
Program Revenue	69,074.00
Foundation Support	190,935.00
Capital Campaign	48,455.00
Fundraising	89,275.00
United Way	12,000.00
Town Appropriations	9,700.00
In Kind Donations	83,003.00
Miscellaneous	8,383.00
Total Income:	1.748.254.00

Total Expenses:	1,732,038.00
Capital Reserve	120,000.00
Community Based Services	746,113.00
On Site Services	726,194.00
Fundraising	53,732.00
Gen'l & Admin	85,999.00
Expense	

"The Family Place pulled everybody together, and we got every kind of service we needed. People would come to us, they would set up their equipment, and they would do what our son needed. They coordinated everyone and made it seamless." A parent whose son was diagnosed with developmental delays as an infant.

YOUR SUPPORT ENABLED US TO OFFER THESE PROGRAMS IN 2012

Families Learning Together provides on-site education and training 4 days a week, year-round, for young parents to address barriers to self-sufficiency so that they are better able to care for themselves and their children.



Child Care Financial Assistance

helps nearly 700 families a year access quality early care and education. The program is for Vermont parents who meet income guidelines and have a need for care.



Parent Education: Parenting classes, lectures and workshops meet the needs of all parents raising their children in the Upper Valley.



Children's Integrated Services

provides nursing, home-based family support, and early intervention services for children with developmental delays, to help ensure a healthy start in the early years of a child's life.



Our high quality infant-toddler **Child Care Program** serves up to 16 children ages 6 weeks to 3 years. We also function as a learning lab where parents can practice creating healthy, nurturing environments for themselves and their babies.



Playgroups are FREE and open to all parents and caregivers with children ages birth to five (unless otherwise noted). Playgroups give parents and children a chance to play together, make new friends and share parenting ideas.



supports a multi-disciplinary team that proactively investigates allegations of child abuse, child sexual abuse, and sexual offenses against adults. The SIU provides access to **Advocacy Centers at The Family Place** and the Springfield

Area Parent Child Center where

Investigative Unit develops and

Windsor County Special

children and adults find a safe environment in which to be interviewed. The SIU also provides case coordination including advocacy and referrals for medical and/or mental health services. Emphasis is placed on prevention through education and training.



Reach Up provides case management for young adults ages 14-24 who are pregnant or parenting. Supports include cash benefits, health insurance, and assistance with education and job skills.



Give a gift to support these programs at www.familyplacevt.org

A STORY OF TRANSFORMATION: SASHA'S JOURNEY

When 21-year-old Sasha first heard about The Family Place, she didn't want to come for a visit. She was living at The Haven at the time, with her then one-year-old daughter, and was dealing with life by reading a lot and keeping to herself. Sasha struggled with substance abuse, and avoiding interaction was her way of trying to quit.

"I had decided to get clean, but I was living with my friends and my boyfriend, and they were still using," she says. The Haven gave Sasha and her daughter a place to live and helped Sasha stay free of alcohol and drugs. Eventually they convinced her to join the Families Learning Together program



Melia's life was transformed when her mother took steps to become a healthier parent.

[FLT] at The Family Place. The FLT program teaches young parents the skills they need to improve their parenting skills, finish school, find sustainable employment, and eventually achieve independence. FLT also satisfies requirements of Reach Up, Vermont's cash assistance program for families. While Sasha took classes on parenting, health, cooking and other survival skills, her daughter attended The Family Place Child Care Center.

"I've definitely learned how to interact better with my kid," says Sasha, when asked how The Family Place has helped her. "I used to just watch her when I spent time with her, but now we do things together. She's learning her shapes, and she knows how to count to ten."

Transportation is a vital component of independence; a family who can't transport themselves is a family who struggles to function. Sasha didn't have a car, and relied on her bike or friends to get her and her daughter to the grocery store, to the doctor's office, to The Family Place – wherever they needed to go.

"Helene [the FLT Coordinator] would drive me so I could make a deposit in my savings account," Sasha says. "That was a huge help." After saving for a year, Sasha had enough money to purchase a car through Good News Garage, a local nonprofit that sells safe used cars at prices families living in poverty can afford. The Family Place connected Sasha to the Good News Garage and helped her complete the application; she was finally able to purchase her own car.

A new car is cause for celebration, but that same week hosted an even bigger milestone: Sasha's one year of sobriety. "The Family Place made it possible for me to go to meetings every day," she says. Those meetings played an essential role in Sasha's success.

Two years ago, Sasha was living with friends, drinking, doing drugs, and struggling to raise her daughter. Now she's clean, she has an apartment and a car, and she's thinking about applying to college. Her daughter is thriving, both at The Family Place Child Care Center and at home with her mother.

"When I first came to The Family Place, I tried it for a week, and it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be," she laughs. "Now I don't want to leave."

Sasha and Melia are featured in Growing Hope: The Story of 3 Families, a video produced by The Family Place and available at www.familyplacevt.org/growinghope

A STORY OF COURAGE: ANNA'S JOURNEY

When she was 15 years old, Anna told her best friend a secret. "Since I was a kid, my older brother had been abusing me sexually, physically, and mentally," she says. "I told my best friend, she told her sister, and her sister told her mother." Anna got the help she needed when a guidance counselor at her school heard of the abuse and contacted the Department of Children and Families.

Revealing that secret changed Anna's life. Her brother was arrested and later sentenced for the abuse he inflicted on his sister, and though the abuse ended, Anna continued to suffer repercussions. "I had nightmares and I'd wake up screaming. I really wasn't eating, and I got very thin. I was depressed. I tried suicide multiple times until I finally decided that's not the answer."



At The Family Place, families can learn how to mitigate the psychological and behavioral effects of sexual abuse.

Anna first came to The Family Place Child Advocacy Center (CAC) as a result of the partnership The Family Place has with the Windsor County Special Investigative Unit (SIU). The SIU is staffed with 3 Family Place employees and includes a multi-disciplinary team of police agencies, prosecutors, Department of Children and Families, mental health and medical services, corrections and victim advocacy and support groups. The work of the SIU was to investigate the claims of abuse when Anna first began to talk about it and it was their critical work, during what is clearly a delicate and sensitive process for all victims and their families, which led to the discovery of crucial evidence. Since then, Anna has been consistently coming to The Family Place for mental health counseling with Tonya McMurray for the past two years and has made significant progress.

During and after the investigation, Anna tried to create a normal life by returning to high school, but she felt as though everyone knew her story and was talking about it behind her back. She felt anxious, depressed, and unhappy. Eventually she tried home schooling, with better results. Getting a job helped, too. But even there, conversations among her co-workers could turn toward subjects she didn't want to hear about. Anna has had to learn that it's okay for her to speak up when she feels uncomfortable, to ask when she needs something, to go to the people she trusts for help.

"Anna's come a long way," Tonya says. "She's worked hard at staying present and learning to identify what she needs from her friends and family to feel safe and supported. She has been able to clarify her feelings about her abuser and is able to recognize that his arrest and the resulting impact on her family is not her fault."

"I'm getting to a point where I can understand him and forgive him," says Anna.

Victims of childhood sexual abuse need a safe place to reveal the facts about their experience and get the help they need. The Family Place is the fiscal agent for the Windsor County SIU and the CAC, provides staff and administrative support for their programming, and is proud to be able to provide that level of help for people at their most vulnerable.

According to the National Children's Alliance:

- Child victims of sexual abuse who receive services at CACs are four times more likely to receive forensic medical exams and increased referrals for mental health treatment than children served by non-CAC communities.
- Research demonstrates caregivers in CAC cases are more satisfied with the investigation than those from non-CAC comparison sites. 97% of parents would tell others to seek help at the CAC.

"The Family Place was the bright light at the end of that dark tunnel. They came into our lives and I knew there was hope." A parent of a child who was sexually abused and received case management, counseling, and support.

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Greetings!

As the new Executive Director of The Family Place, I couldn't be more excited to represent such an outstanding agency dedicated to helping young children and families in the Upper Valley. For many in our community, The Family Place is THE symbol of hope, a place of change, and a space for healing to begin. Our dedicated team of professionals meet with families in their homes and in the community, offering outreach, advocacy, and home visits to families struggling with poverty, as well as parents with children who have been abused or have specialized medical or developmental needs. When parents are in need, our community relies on The Family Place for parenting education, support, and counseling. As this region's designated Parent Child Center, we are committed to providing a continuum of services that focus on physical and emotional health, strengthening parent-child bonds, increasing social supports, and increasing the work and academic



Mary Smit joined The Family Place in March, 2013

skills of young parents. Our efforts are focused on helping more parents provide effectively for their child's needs, because we know that this results in healthy children more likely to succeed.

The stories in this Annual Report offer a compelling look into the lives of 2 of the more than 1400 individuals and families your support enabled us to serve in the last year. As no families are ever charged for our services, we are increasingly dependent upon our community's generosity to provide these services. Thanks to your continued support last year, our programs can and do provide critical support – practical, clinical, preventative and advocacy-focused – at the earliest opportunity for people like Sasha and Anna.

The Board, staff, and I are committed to assuring that The Family Place continues to be a leader in the Upper Valley and the state in providing quality early childhood, prevention, and family-focused education and support programs. As an organization, we operate with the highest standard of fiscal responsibility and stewardship, with a goal of obtaining positive outcomes for the children and families we work with.

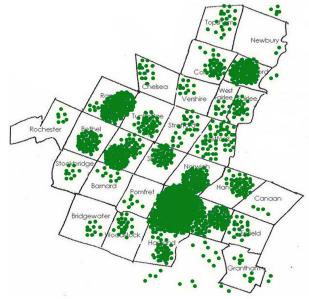
We are deeply thankful for your continued support – and for including The Family Place in your philanthropic giving. Your gifts enable children in the Upper Valley community to be stronger, healthier, and more successful.

I am inspired by the work of our staff and moved by the transformation that takes place when communities like ours rally to support young children and families in need.

With deep appreciation for your ongoing support,

Mary L. Smit, MSW, LICSW Executive Director

"I don't want my boys to go through half of the stuff that I went through. They have dreams. I don't ever want them to lose theirs. I want them to go for it. I kind of let my dreams go. Now I've started to get them back." a 21-year-old mother in our Families Learning Together program



Every green dot represents a family helped by The Family Place

Young Children and Families in the Upper Valley Need our Advocacy

- Start or participate in a public or community dialogue about improving child well-being in our community.
- Support public and business leaders in keeping the care of our young children a priority.
- Financially support organizations like The Family Place that provide vital direct services to young children and their families.
- Educate yourself about the issues which affect young Upper Valley families who are living in poverty lack of good quality childcare, transportation, access to healthcare, and affordable housing.
- Send us your story of how you or a loved one was helped by The Family Place so we can share it with legislators and media.
- If you live in Vermont, support Town allocations for Parent Child Centers in your region.
- Raise awareness through social media by "liking" The Family Place Facebook page and subscribing to our Twitter feed.

FACTS TO KNOW

- 8,101 infants and toddlers live in Vermont.*
- 35% of Vermont infants and toddlers live in lowincome families.*
- **53%** of Vermont infants and toddlers and 44% of New Hampshire infants and toddlers have at least one risk factor that increases chance of poor outcomes.*
- In Vermont, the cost of child care for an infant is 36% of a single mother's median income and 12% of a two-parent family's median income.
 In New Hampshire, the cost is 37% and 12% respectively.+
- *National Center for Children in Poverty, "Young Child Risk Calculator." National Center for Children in Poverty, 2011, www.nccp.org.
- +National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Child Care in America: 2011 State Fact Sheets. National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 2011, www.naccrra.org.



James Heckmann, Nobel Prize winning economist, says "Every dollar invested in quality early childhood development for disadvantaged children produces a 7 percent to 10 percent return, per child, per year."

"The Family Place is very good at giving you the resources you need." ~ A Families Learning Together participant



"In Their Own Words" Upper Valley Families Thrive With Your Support!



"Haylee is my reason for laughing, my reason for crying, my reason for living and my reason for smiling each and every day. She is my heartbeat, my soul, my nerves. And Isabella is the second half of my heart. When I had her, I realized that a baby with Down syndrome has a lot more needs than

most babies, but she is still her own person. She grows her

own way, she learns her own way, and she sees things her own way. Just like anyone else. We all need the Family Place in different ways."



"Finally after a few hard pushes, Hunter was out and the doctor had laid him on my chest. Right then his eyes opened just a little bit and I remember saying, "Hi, Hunter. I am your mommy."

But an awful thing happened with Autumn: she was born dead. The cord was tightly wrapped around her throat. As she was being pushed out by my body, it just got tighter and tighter. Autumn was completely black from her chest up and lifeless. I didn't know what was going on. I just remember

how everybody got silent, and Kaleb had gone into the bathroom. My sister was at the end of my bed just staring at me. **My mother,**

on purpose, stood between me and the baby station where they were working on getting Autumn's heart going. They had to use this strip on her chest to get her heart started. It was almost like how they do on adults with the paddles, but with a baby they use this tiny little strip that goes down her chest. It took the doctors ten long minutes to get her back to normal and crying. All I remember is that I was so happy to hear her cry because that told me she was fine."





"I felt like I was stuck at a dead end road with no way to turn around, and then I got accepted into The Families Learning Together program. I am working on getting my high school diploma, I am on a list to get a car, and I have a house of my own. I also have great friends who are also mothers and whom I can trust and rely on. Most important of all, I am over a year clean and sober from drugs and alcohol and can now be a great role model for my son. **Thanks to the FLT program, I know I**

am making the right effort to change my life and be successful in everything I do. I am finally going to set a good example for my son, and that is truly the best gift a mother could ask for."

"I see the tears in your blue eyes, so I pick you up to see what is wrong and then you just smile. My heart drops and my eyes begin to water, because I am happy that all you wanted was to be held by Mommy."



"Trinity is half black and half white and has the most gorgeous skin color, curly black hair and dark brown eyes.

She is the happiest baby ever. And she talks a lot! She loves to coo and screech and her new favorite



sound is aba aba. When she gets older, she is going to be one of those kids who doesn't care if you're listening or not, she's going to talk to you anyways."





"Elijah and Alyssa took me out of a bad spot in my life and brought light into my darkness. I don't know where I would be if I didn't have them and the responsibility for them. I love them more than life itself and would do anything to keep them safe in this crazy world we live in."



Check our website for more family stories at www.familyplacevt.org

MAKING LIFE BETTER, IN THE STUDIO AND BEYOND: THE JEWELRYOS® COLLECTION



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"An effective parent is responsible and accountable, and provides for his or her child's needs..."

Know Your Child

Protect Your Child

Maintain Health

Be Financially Stable

Be Responsible and Accountable

Provide for Your Child

Acquire Job Skills

Complete Your Education

Make Positive Choices

Become Self Sufficient

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Families Learning Together
Nursing Support
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