



m.s.p.c.c



MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION  
OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN • 2013 ANNUAL REPORT



# MSPCC

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Photos throughout by  
**Allan E. Dines.**

Artwork by children from  
MSPCC's Kid's Day After  
School Program.



Children from MSPCC's Kid's Day After School Program

Dear Friends of MSPCC,

This last year saw our capitol city and region traumatized by terrorism and uplifted by the generous response of friends near and far. The instinct to respond in this



way—to surround victims with support, solidarity, and with love—is the very instinct that prompts the people who work at MSPCC to be there for children and families when life turns upside down. Whether the challenges are physical or emotional, complicated by poverty or violence, families experiencing serious trauma need the help of professionals trained to help them regain resiliency and find the road to recovery.

In my first year as president of MSPCC, we celebrated 135 years



of service to Massachusetts children and families and continued to be pioneers in the treatment of children who have been victimized by physical and sexual abuse. As part of MSPCC's advocacy work this year we supported legislation to create a coordinated statewide sexual abuse prevention program. Despite widespread publicity about many cases of sexual abuse in recent years, it remains a fact that we have not yet made the structural and procedural changes in child-serving organizations that would truly safeguard children, identify and report suspected abuse, and screen out anyone who should not be around children. It is high time we put in place such safeguards.

In this year too, we continued our work with families whose children have been affected by a caregiver's military service: by a parent's deployment, prolonged absence, and return, with post-traumatic stress and/or traumatic injury. Often isolated from other families going through similar experiences, these families need timely, specialized support and it has been our privilege to offer these services.

In times like the year just ended in Boston, we carry one another through by sharing resources and lending strength, making the commitment to do our part by finding reserves of courage and dedication. To our wonderful Board of Directors, for their steadfast support and leadership, we extend our thanks. To our staff, who remain focused on the needs of children and families and give of themselves beyond measure, we offer our gratitude and admiration. And to our generous donors, whose kindness is the first circle of support for families in need, our deepest thanks for your faithful friendship.

Happy 2014!  
Sincerely,

Mary McGeown  
President and CEO

Stephen Pagliuca  
Chairman of the Board





EVEN AS MEDICAL SCIENCE HAS STEADILY IMPROVED PATIENT CARE OUTCOMES ACROSS MANY AREAS OF HUMAN PHYSICAL HEALTH IN THE LAST HALF CENTURY, SINCE THE PASSAGE OF THE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH ACT OF 1963, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES HAVE EVOLVED AND OPTIONS FOR SERVICES HAVE MULTIPLIED AS WELL. WITH EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE OF BRAIN SCIENCE, A GROWING BODY OF THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS, AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT, PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY, WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF A NEW ERA IN THE TREATMENT OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES. AT EACH MSPCC FAMILY COUNSELING CENTER, EXCITING AND NEW APPROACHES ARE IN USE.

MSPCC works with children, adolescents and young adults who have been physically and sexually abused; neglected; traumatized by violence or witnessing violence; and who have experienced serious disruptions and reactions as a result of adverse family circumstances. Poverty, parental mental health issues, substance abuse, and domestic violence may be at the roots of troubled home environments, and they surely complicate the course of assessing a child's behavior, identifying the issues, and treating the child.

Not long ago, a preschool boy became deeply upset when his mother left him after drop-off. He seemed fearful and very fragile, but he was also very hard to console, and angry at times, and his behavior threatened to get him expelled from school. The MSPCC clinician who came into the school to work with the child and mother soon learned the boy had witnessed several incidents of domestic violence at home, and he went to school every day terrified for his mother's safety. He had internalized those visions of violence and they haunted him every day.

Mental health clinicians with trauma expertise have learned that it is possible to treat emotional and behavioral difficulties in very young children, who were at one time thought too young to have mental health issues or even to be able to describe what troubled them. New intervention programs specifically developed for young children can help them get through

traumatic or stressful events and teach parents and day care providers skills to support the social and emotional needs of these children. Interventions with toddlers place a key emphasis on helping children feel secure in their bonds with caretakers. Children as young as five or six years of age can learn to identify safe places, visualize comforting "happy experiences" and identify caring adults who are part of their "circle of safety."

Clinicians guide caretakers and children in the use of strategies that bring comfort and contain anxiety or fear. Learning to understand the ways thoughts and feelings are connected helps children manage reactions by drawing on coping strategies to stop bad thoughts, and find calming activities. These approaches give caregivers and children the means to soothe and de-escalate scary thoughts and memories. Together, they are building resilience.

Once they have attained some of these coping skills, children are encouraged to tell the story of what happened to them: how were they hurt, what made them afraid? How they do this depends upon the age and expressive resources of the individual child. Young children may draw pictures to illustrate what happened and how they felt; at this point, they may also

## The Future of Mental Health Services

Continued on Page 6 ...

**ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF MSPCC'S MISSION SINCE IT BEGAN SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE 19TH CENTURY. OUR COMMITMENT TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REMAINS THE CORE OF WHAT WE DO. RECOGNIZING THAT ALL CHILDREN DESERVE A SAFE AND LOVING HOME, MSPCC HELPED MORE THAN 11,000 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN 2013, THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR BOTH FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILIES.**

The Department of Children and Families estimates that each year more than 75,000 cases of child abuse or neglect are reported in Massachusetts. In such cases where abuse and neglect are identified and the safety of a child is in question, children are removed from their biological home and placed in the care of a foster family. Whether it is for one night or several months, foster parents deliver a valuable and important service by providing a safe and loving home for children who have nowhere else to go. While most children are eventually reunited with their biological parents, foster parents give children time to heal from the emotional wounds associated with the experiences surrounding leaving their biological families.

There are more than 5,800 foster families in Massachusetts. It is a job that requires commitment, dedication, patience and hard work.

While it can be extremely rewarding, it can also be emotionally demanding. Caregivers must deal with children who exhibit anger, fear and behavioral issues as well as their own personal emotions. They must undergo intensive screening, routine supervision, frequent home visits and many hours of training. Their focus becomes helping a child build new relationships and learn to trust.

MSPCC's Kids Net was created to provide the support these unique families need. Through education, a 24-hour helpline staffed by trained social workers, and peer mentors who share similar experiences, these families learn how to guide children toward a healthy future. Like many families, foster families struggle to make ends meet. A small daily stipend from the state is not enough to cover expenses to care for a child. MSPCC's Kids Net provides assistance in locating licensed child-care providers for both short-term and over-night care and through additional funds from the state, helps families cover these costs.

"The Kid's Net program is unique," says Michele Benkis, Director of MSPCC's Kid's Net Program. "Nationally, there is no other program that is as comprehensive in providing foster and kinship families with the support they need to succeed."

For some children who are unable to return to their homes, foster care can lead to adoption. But with the joy that adoption can bring, also come unique challenges. The journey for both parent and child can be long and complicated. Matching children with new families can be an arduous process creating significant stress. The loss of a biological family can make it difficult for a child to bond with a new family. It can create questions about background and birth parents. For these families, MSPCC's Adoption Services and Adoptive Families Together programs are there to help. By preparing families to deal with these issues through education, parent groups and online support, we are able

Continued on Page 6 ...

## Focus on Foster Care and Adoption



be ready to picture how they feel now that they can find happier thoughts and feelings. Teens may create more sophisticated and elaborate representations of their pain in prose or poetry:

is it okay to feel like a ghost?  
when the person who abandoned you  
was supposed to be the one to love  
you the most?

In the context of specialized therapy, older children and adolescents can express and reflect upon deeper issues, such as the betrayal that abuse and neglect represent, family circumstances and adult failings that contributed to their trauma. The process of telling the story, shaping the narrative, can give children greater command over the facts and impact of their experience. Being able to express it, to say it all out loud in one's own voice, can issue in a sense of resolution:

I can tell you this:  
don't hide the pain  
tell someone, anyone,

parents are supposed to protect you, not hurt you  
not give you drugs or booze  
or try to throw you off a bridge because they feel  
like dying  
tell someone\*

Support and openness make way for honest engagement in finding the right path for each child. MSPCC clinicians listen to families and look to each child's special strengths in the plan of treatment. Experience with serious mental health issues has given MSPCC the expertise, together with compassionate support, to help children and families heal and achieve their best outcomes.

Telling someone is the beginning. Talking about it is a longer journey. Recovery may be lifelong. Some children may need medication to attain calm and focus in school and at home. The way is not easy, but more is being learned every day about the workings of the brain and the care of the psyche. And as mental health care begins finally to assume its rightful place in our health care system, MSPCC is ready as an experienced and powerful resource for children and families in need of care.

\*from a poem by an MSPCC patient

## The Future of Mental Health Services *continued*

### Focus on Foster Care and Adoption *continued*

to help build strong, loving families. Our post-adoptive service is also available to assist and support both children and families in their quest to find answers. Occasionally we are able to reunite children with their birth families, but throughout the search we maintain an understanding and respect of the family relationships.

As essential to preparing these families for their new role is the need to advocate for appropriate financial support. In 2013, MSPCC, in association with the Massachusetts Alliance for Families (MAFF), an advocacy group dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for children who cannot live with their families, secured important benefits for foster children. Through an advocacy campaign, we helped to increase the daily rate of support for foster children, fund the state college tuition and fee waiver programs for foster children, while averting a proposed reduction in clothing allowance.

As the designated statewide provider of supports to foster parents, MSPCC has shared its public policy resources and expertise with the Massachusetts foster parent association, helping them advance their annual budget priorities and legislative agenda. In addition, through the recent appointment of a legal fellow we are training and preparing foster families for court hearings, giving them the opportunity to successfully advocate for their foster child.

Whether it is through our Kid's Net Program, Adoption Services, Adoptive Families Together or advocating for the rights of children and families, our commitment is strong and our mission clear. We are there to help all families be successful from the moment a child is placed in foster care to long after they return home or find their new forever family.





# Our Deepest Thanks

## MSPCC Honor Roll

MSPCC strives to improve the lives of children and families in Massachusetts, a task that would not be possible without the generous support of individuals, corporations, foundations, gift funds, public service agencies and the United Ways. We are truly grateful to all who gave to MSPCC this year, and we honor their commitment to keeping children safe, healthy, and happy.

■ Indicates Mary Ellen Planned Giving Society

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## Summary Balance Sheet

As of 6/30/13

### Assets

Total Current Assets	\$3,429,109
Net Property and Equipment	1,315,291
Investments	20,301,697
Irrevocable Trusts	3,188,347
Other Long Term Assets	18,338

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<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$28,252,782</b>
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### Liabilities and Net Assets

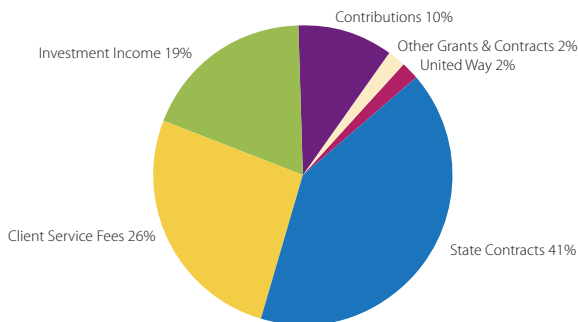
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,317,127
Long Term Debt and Obligations	2,707,513
Net Assets	23,228,142

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<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$28,252,782</b>
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### Revenues

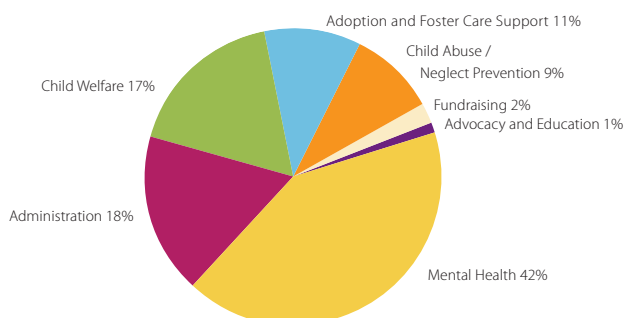
Total: \$20,371,438



### Expenses

Total: \$19,517,699

Net Surplus (Deficit) = \$853,739



## MSPCC Management Team

### President and CEO

Mary McGeown  
617.587.1511  
mmcgeown@mspcc.org

### Director of Prevention Services

Michelle Fagnano, MSW, LICSW  
617.587.1593  
mfagnano@mspcc.org

### Director of MIS

Larry Hookey  
617.587.1567  
lhookey@mspcc.org

### Director of Human Resources

Karen Litchfield  
508.767.3011  
klitchfield@mspcc.org

### Director of Development & External Affairs

Anne Malone  
617.587.1587  
amalone@mspcc.org

### Director of Finance

Darcie Plourde  
508.767.3045  
dplourde@mspcc.org

### Director of Clinical Services

Monica Roizner, Ed.D  
617.587.1507  
mroizner@mspcc.org

### Director of Policy and Planning

Nancy Scannell  
617.587.1510  
nscannell@mspcc.org

### Medical Director

Dr. Andrea Stern  
617.587.1584  
astern@mspcc.org



# Organizations Putting Kid's First



## Breckinridge Capital Advisors

Breckinridge Capital Advisors has long been a dedicated partner of MSPCC, intent on improving the lives of children through the agency's mental health services and support for families in need. In addition to generous financial gifts, the volunteer efforts of the men and women at Breckinridge Capital Advisors have had a meaningful impact on the children and families served by MSPCC. Their charitable work on behalf of MSPCC includes organizing a gift drive which brightened the holiday season for hundreds of children in need.

## The Boston Celtics Shamrock Foundation

The Boston Celtics Shamrock Foundation is a leader in the fight to prevent child abuse. For many years, the foundation has supported MSPCC's mission to stop child abuse and neglect before it happens. The Shamrock Foundation builds on its financial support by providing many wonderful experiences and activities for children served by MSPCC. With gifts both financial and through volunteer work from Celtics players and staff, the foundation has solidified a commitment to keeping children safe, healthy, and happy.



Boston Celtics point guard Rajon Rondo with children from MSPCC's Kid's Day After School Program.



Volunteers from Glad Rags Thrift Shop in Westwood.

## Glad Rags Thrift Shop

The volunteers at Westwood's Glad Rags Thrift Shop care deeply about protecting children and supporting families. They work tirelessly to help kids, one sale at a time. Founded in 1977, the shop is run by dozens of women who offer their time to sort through donated clothing, price items, and decorate the shop in order to sell quality items to those looking to find a bargain and help children at the same time. Because of these volunteers, 100 percent of the store's proceeds go to MSPCC. Over the years, they have raised more than \$800,000 for the agency, helping to provide vital services to many children in need.

## Give a Gift That Lasts Forever

### *The Mary Ellen Planned Giving Society*

Childhood lasts a lifetime. When a child experiences abuse or neglect, the effects resonate for the rest of his life, even when he receives proper counseling and support. But a happy childhood also lasts a lifetime. A loving and safe start is the foundation of trust, confidence and success later in life.

Each one of us has the power to transform childhood for kids in Massachusetts. A planned gift is a creative way to make provision for children without drawing down resources now. It allows you to plan for your security and your family's future, while also making a commitment to MSPCC. Planned giving is a gift that lives on forever in the children whose lives are changed by your generosity and in the positive ripple effects that expand from generation to generation.

To find out more about the Mary Ellen Planned Giving Society, please contact Anne Malone, Director of Development and External Affairs, at (617) 587-1587 or [amalone@mspcc.org](mailto:amalone@mspcc.org).

MSPCC

3815 Washington Street  
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130  
617.587.1500  
www.mspcc.org



In Fiscal Year 2013,  
MSPCC served 22,683  
children and families  
across Massachusetts.



## MSPCC Board of Directors

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