



## MSPCC's Response to COVID-19

Since 1878, MSPCC has been on the forefront of innovative services to protect the well-being of children and families. Our organization has withstood the test of time and, often in the face of adversity, has become stronger.

In 2020, along with the rest of the country, MSPCC once again faced difficult circumstances, this time due to COVID-19.

Our work is community-based, designed to serve families in their homes where we can best engage with kids and their parents. Our home visitors, therapeutic mentors and clinicians witness firsthand the day-to-day struggles, identify potential concerns, and just as important, leverage the unique strengths of each family and their environment.

March 2020 quickly forced MSPCC to rethink how to provide support, guidance, assistance and clinical interventions to children and families in need. Those first few days and weeks revealed that the impact of COVID -19 would be far greater for some. While many of us had the good fortune to retreat to our home offices, countless of the families we work with had no internet access, limited minutes on their phones, and no computers to support remote schooling. Parents who rely on public transportation confronted significant challenges just to get to the grocery store.

Formula, diapers and baby wipes were in short supply. For those grandparents raising their grandchildren, simply leaving their home posed a significant health risk.

Thanks to the generosity of MSPCC supporters and friends and the ingenuity of our staff, emergency assistance arrived -- groceries delivered, baby supplies shipped, Chromebooks provided, and technology secured.

Out of necessity, we learned that telehealth and virtual visits are more tools for our toolbox. Our service system relies on seeing and connecting with people, and during the pandemic, we were open for business. Becoming masters of Zoom, our teams continued to reach out and connect with children and parents during this difficult time. Virtually, clinicians helped kids make sense of the disruption in their lives, Home Visitors coached young parents to calm a fussy baby, and a child in foster care drifted to sleep listening to his mom read a bedtime story over Zoom.

As the summer progressed, we capitalized on the warm weather and developed policies and protocols to support community visits while protecting the health and safety of the families we serve and our exceptional staff. Front stoops, playgrounds, or a walk around the block on a summer day

provided the opportunity to put on a mask, social distance and connect in person.

For the foreseeable future, we must remain vigilant and nimble as we continue to confront the devastating impact of COVID -19. In the late spring, reports of abuse and neglect plummeted when kids stopped going to school. Yet, we know that unemployment, financial stress and substance use are stressors for parents and often contribute to abuse and neglect. As kids return to school, either in person or remotely, we are reaching out to key stakeholders to support and equip schools to address the range of social and emotional issues our children have experienced.

Of course, we couldn't do it without your support. For that, I thank you. I wish you and your family health and safety during this time. If you'd like to hear more about MSPCC's efforts, please feel free to connect with me at [mmcgeown@mspcc.org](mailto:mmcgeown@mspcc.org).

Sincerely,

Mary McGeown  
Executive Director



**Massachusetts Society  
for the Prevention  
of Cruelty to Children**

in  
s  
p  
i  
r  
e



# HELP US PUT A FEAST ON EVERY TABLE!

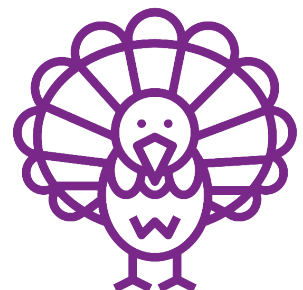
**This year, we want to bring a Thanksgiving feast into the homes of more than 200 families in need.**

MSPCC is collecting donations of cash and gift cards to purchase and safely distribute holiday fixings to our clients in this time of COVID-19.

If you want to give the gift of Thanksgiving to a family in need this year, you can fund:

- A turkey for a family for \$25
- A full meal for a family of four for \$75
- A full meal for a family of six for \$100

Visit [mspcc.org/thanksgiving](https://mspcc.org/thanksgiving) to donate.





# MSPCC's Young Professional Board

Early last year, MSPCC formed a Young Professional Board of individuals in the beginning stages of their careers with a strong dedication to the work of MSPCC. These young professionals bring an array of areas of expertise to the group including business, government, the nonprofit sector, community leadership, and higher education.

The Young Professional Board has stayed connected through the COVID-19 crisis and has shown incredible support for MSPCC, hosting two virtual meetings to connect with each other and keep updated on MSPCC's work. Most recently, they generously worked together to ensure that more than 30 children have the school supplies they need for the uncertain year ahead.



In the future, the Young Professional Board plans on holding volunteer events, networking opportunities, and fundraisers by working alongside MSPCC's Development Team to raise awareness of MSPCC.

Young Professional Board members are asked to:

- 1) **Attend a majority of the Young Professional Board's meetings and events.**
- 2) **Join MSPCC's Brighter Future Fund, a monthly giving program. Visit [www.mspcc.org/monthlygiving](http://www.mspcc.org/monthlygiving) to learn more.**
- 3) **Bring new people to meetings and events to help increase membership.**

If you are interested in learning more about our Young Professional Board, please contact **Julie Sheflin** at [jsheflin@mspcc.org](mailto:jsheflin@mspcc.org) or visit [mspcc.org/ypb](http://mspcc.org/ypb).

# Healthy Families™ Participant Spotlight

Julia, a first-time young mom with a 9 month old baby boy, is new to the U.S. MSPCC's Healthy Families™ programs often connect young parents to the broader community and help to reduce isolation, but this has been an even more pressing issue since COVID.

The Healthy Families™ program in Lawrence identified Julia as high-risk for isolation during this time because she does not speak English and due to her immigration status she does not qualify for or is afraid to access many services and supports. Her Home Visitor, Amy, had built trust and a close relationship with her pre-COVID, which was helpful in continuing remote contact. Amy partnered closely with Claudia, a Healthy Families staff member from MSPCC's Boston program, for Haitian Creole translation. Together, Amy and Claudia have stayed closely connected to Julia so that she doesn't feel like she and her baby are alone during this challenging and uncertain time.

MSPCC Healthy Families™ was able to provide her with a chromebook and Amy helped her access various benefits resources and to find English classes. The chromebook gave her a sense of independence; as she told Amy, she is able to do research on available resources on her own. They also provided her with a Walmart gift card to purchase clothes for the baby as well as a supply of diapers.

A recent message from Julia demonstrates just how much of an impact these resources and Amy and Claudia's support means to Julia and her son:

**"I am very happy to have you as my Home Visitor and grateful to be part of the program...I'm so happy to have you and Claudia both in my life. My thank you's are not enough but I can only say it over and over: thank you, I love you guys."**



For more information about Healthy Families™, visit [mspcc.org/pregnancy-parenting-support/](http://mspcc.org/pregnancy-parenting-support/)

# Because of you, this year...

---



1,819 families learned new skills to support their children's needs with our Family Counseling Services, through therapeutic mentors, family supports training, and many more clinical programs.

667 young, first-time parents learned to create stable, nurturing environments for their children through MSPCC's Healthy Families™, a program of the Children's Trust.



9,655 foster, kinship, and adoptive parents participated in trainings, support groups, or coaching to better understand and respond to the needs of children in their care, who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

## “More Kid”

“Cuddling my little foster son before bed:

Him: “I wish you had 13 and 100 arms, and then everyone could feel your love.”

Me: “Oh yeah? Hmmm. If I had 13 and 100 arms, you’re right, I’d probably just get 13 and 100 more kids, so I could share it with all the kids who need it.”

Him: “Just like me? I’m a More Kid! I’m YOUR More Kid, right mama?”

And that is how, on August 26, 2020 at 7:55pm, the term Foster Kid was officially retired, and affectionately and forever replaced with the term More Kid.”

**-Deb Sweet, Foster and Adoptive Parent**

Check out Deb's blog “Because I Stay” on Facebook for honest and inspiring content about foster care and adoption.



inspire

## Welcome to the Board: Dr. Jennifer G. Green



Dr. Jennifer Greif Green is an Associate Professor in the Wheelock College of Education & Human Development at Boston University and a child clinical psychologist. She completed her doctorate at the University of California, Santa Barbara and trained at Yale School of Medicine and in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School. Her research focuses on supporting student social/emotional well-being in schools, and bullying prevention. In particular, Dr. Green studies teacher identification of students with mental health needs, racial/ethnic disparities in mental health service access, and youth bullying involvement. She has developed surveys to assess bullying in schools and has evaluated school-based bullying prevention and mental health promotion programs. She collaborates with a number of local schools and districts to support student social-emotional well-being and reduce bullying.

When asked why she chooses to support MSPCC, Dr. Green responded: **“MSPCC has a clear and well-articulated commitment to partnering with children and families in Massachusetts. In addition to providing direct services to youth and families, the organization has been a key player in advocacy for policies designed to improve children's well-being and mental health services access. In other words, MSPCC is not only concerned with promoting the well-being of individuals, but also improving the effectiveness and equity of the larger systems that shape the worlds of children. I am excited to have the opportunity to support the work of MSPCC!”**

Meet the rest of MSPCC's Board of Advisors at [mspcc.org/board-of-advisors](https://mspcc.org/board-of-advisors)





## Locations

### Main Office

125 Hartwell Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02421  
781.861.0890

### Holyoke

9 Sullivan Road  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
413.532.9446

### Lawrence

15 Union Street  
Building E, Suite 115  
Lawrence, MA 01840  
978.682.9222

### Lowell

151 Warren Street  
Lowell, MA 01852  
978.937.3087

### Worcester

108 Belmont Street  
Worcester, MA 01602  
508.753.2967

## MSPCC Board of Advisors

### Chairperson

*Charles V. Senatore*  
Jeffrey J. Coté  
Kevin Cronin  
Ann Duffy  
Kristin Francisco  
Greg Gordon  
Dr. Jennifer G. Green  
Rev. Dr. Gregory G. Groover, Sr.  
Lawrence S. Hamelsky  
Susan Levine  
Jennifer Miller  
Gabriel Paci  
Michael F. Quinlan  
Stuart Rose  
R. Newcomb Stillwell  
Reetika Vijay

### Board Emeritus

*Stephen G. Pagliuca*

### Executive Director

*Mary A. McGeown*

### Eliot CEO/President

*Kate Markarian*



Like us  
@mspccboston



Follow us  
@mspccboston



Follow us  
@mspcc1878



Visit us  
mspcc.org

## Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

No. Reading, MA

Permit #7500



## Invest in MSPCC Through the Mary Ellen Society

The Mary Ellen Society honors supporters whose generosity via bequests or life income gifts ensures MSPCC's work will continue for years to come.

If you have included MSPCC in your estate plans, or would like to learn more, please contact Melanie Lima, Director of Development, at 617-587-1587, or via email at [mlima@mspcc.org](mailto:mlima@mspcc.org).

## ARE YOU UP-TO-DATE ON THE STATE OF THE CHILD?

Sign up for MSPCC's e-newsletter to hear the latest news. Stay informed on advocacy efforts affecting children and ways you can help, learn how your support can change the lives of our clients in various programs, and stay updated on what is happening with children in Massachusetts with news and coverage from MSPCC. Sign up at: [mspcc.org/news](https://mspcc.org/news)

## BECOME OUR BFF!

Since 1878, MSPCC has been protecting and promoting the rights and well-being of children in Massachusetts through the help of our supporters. By giving monthly to the **Brighter Future Fund**, you ensure that our work will continue for decades to come. Want to give to the Brighter Future Fund? Sign up for monthly gifts at: [mspcc.org/monthlygiving](https://mspcc.org/monthlygiving)