



## Fostering the Future

Foster parents are absolutely critical to our child welfare system and yet, too often, find themselves and their families misunderstood. Like all parents, they provide a safe and loving home for a child to grow but with the added responsibility of caring for children who come to them with trauma, emotional scars and in need of healing and nurturing. At MSPCC, we believe that communities share a responsibility for the safety and well-being of these children, as well as a commitment to stand with those individuals who care for them.

In a recent survey conducted by MSPCC,

**50% of foster parents said that they only receive support from family, friends and neighbors during emergencies, with 17% saying they never receive regular support.**

This lack of dependable support can impact foster parent retention and satisfaction, leaving children with fewer placement options.

With funding support from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts and other sources, MSPCC has brought together a diverse group of professionals and child welfare organizations to develop and pilot a foster parent support model, **Encompass: Community and Collaboration for Foster Families**, for parents and families in the Greater Worcester Area.

Encompass builds upon the strengths of a community and equips foster parents with knowledge, skills, and resources to support the needs of the children in their care—including behavioral health support, which has become even more acute during the pandemic.

The program has engaged a number of foster parents and kinship caregivers from the Worcester DCF Offices to participate in a “peer-coach-component” model that includes individualized trauma-focused information, skill building, and confidence. Following the coaching, Skill Enhancement Peer Support Program sessions will be held over a 16-week period. Over the course of the program, families are connected with Community Support Volunteers, who provide tangible support and create meaningful connections between foster parents and their surrounding communities.

Encompass will bring much needed support to foster families in the Greater Worcester area, both now and in the future. To learn more about Encompass and how you can support foster families in the Greater Worcester area, visit: [mspcc.org/encompass](https://mspcc.org/encompass).

# inspire



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



From the Desk of  
**Mary McGeown**

Dear Friends,

MSPCC has a proud and long history of defining and shaping child welfare policy. Our direct service work informs our agenda, exposing trends in the needs and challenges of the children and families we serve.

We use our voice to engage in public policy advocacy on issues related to child and family well-being including child abuse prevention, foster care, mental health reform, and adolescent substance abuse prevention. MSPCC advocates with state leaders to ensure that the Commonwealth supports critical funding and policies to meet the needs of at-risk children and families.

But, MSPCC can't do it alone and key to successfully influencing meaningful system change is our well-earned reputation of convening a range of stakeholders to develop and implement thoughtful and compelling policy initiatives.

**MSPCC has unique connections to foster families. Since 1997, MSPCC has offered the Kid's Net program, which provides a menu of supports and resources to foster families, including a calendar of more than 400 trainings each year, arrangement of respite care, a statewide network of Family Resource Liaisons to provide on-the-ground support, and an after-hours helpline. In addition, through Kid's Net, MSPCC facilitates regular surveys of foster parents.**

This newsletter showcases an exciting and innovative pilot program that demonstrates the powerful impact these collaborations can have in improving the outcomes for children. With funding from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, *Encompass: Community and Collaboration for Foster Families* builds upon the skills and expertise of leaders in health care, state government, community-based organizations, elected officials and of course, foster parents to support foster families to better understand trauma and its effects on children in their care.

Not everyone can be a foster parent, but we all can offer support to a foster family. I hope after reading about this new initiative, you will agree that by partnering together, we make a difference in the lives of children in foster care.

Mary A. McGeown  
Executive Director



## Welcome to the Board: Gary Prado, Esq.

MSPCC is proud to announce the newest member of its Board of Advisors, Gary Prado. Gary is Senior Legal Counsel at Fidelity Investments, where he serves as the primary legal support to Fidelity's



private equity/venture capital business, Devonshire Investors, and FinTech incubator, Fidelity Labs, and other internal business units. Prior to Fidelity Investments, Gary was an associate at Ropes & Gray, practicing in its private equity transactions group, where he represented private equity firms and public and private companies in leveraged buyouts, direct investments, and other strategic transactions. Before that, Gary clerked for Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island and Judge Joseph A. Greenaway, Jr., of the Third Circuit Court of Federal Appeals. He is an active supporter of many Boston-area civic and charitable organizations that provide opportunities for underprivileged children. Gary earned his BS and MBA from UMass Dartmouth and his JD from Suffolk University Law School.

When asked why he supports MSPCC, Gary replied: **"MSPCC is a leader in helping families and children across the Commonwealth. Given the disproportionate impact on minority and under-resourced families, MSPCC's work on mental health, policy, and overall wellness is timely more than ever. I look forward to working with MSPCC to help find solutions to complex problems and bring renewed hope to children and families in this difficult time."**

**Welcome to the board, Gary!**

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

# Lace Up for Kids!



MSPCC's Foundation Relations Manager and resident marathoner, Megan Hempstead, is running the 2021 Boston Marathon on October 11<sup>th</sup> in support of MSPCC!

"While I've always been proud to work at MSPCC because of the agency's leadership in the field of child welfare, my respect and admiration for MSPCC's work with children and families has grown so much as we've navigated this pandemic. Our staff stepped up and did whatever was necessary to make sure that families – including young first-time parents, grandparents raising their grandchildren, youth who have experienced trauma and need behavioral health services, and foster families – could still access MSPCC's vital prevention and clinical services. They also went back to basics and delivered groceries, diapers, and cleaning supplies to make sure kids and families stayed safe and healthy," said Megan, on why she chooses to run on MSPCC's behalf.

We are looking forward to cheering Megan on as she laces up and races to the finish line this October and hope you will consider supporting her journey by donating to her fundraising campaign.

To donate in support of Megan, visit [mspcc.org/boston2021](https://mspcc.org/boston2021)

inspired

## Turning Points: An Evening to Benefit MSPCC

Each April, during Child Abuse Prevention Month, friends and supporters of MSPCC join together to celebrate Turning Points: An Evening to Benefit MSPCC to rededicate ourselves to the important work of protecting the well-being of children throughout Massachusetts. While this year's event could not be held in person, our first ever virtual event on April 14<sup>th</sup> was a success, with more than 200 individuals joining us from their homes to raise more than \$400,000 to support MSPCC's work with children and families throughout Massachusetts.

The event was hosted by Billy Costa of Kiss108 and NESN's Dining Playbook and featured stories from two inspiring foster families as well as an interview with Marylou Sudders, Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, about her experiences navigating the earliest stages of the pandemic. Turning Points also served as the exciting launch for Encompass, our pilot program for foster families in the Greater Worcester area.

Thank you to everyone who made Turning Points a success!

You can view the full recording of the event at [mspcc.org/tp2021](https://mspcc.org/tp2021)







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## 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. Mary Ellen Society members receive invitations to all MSPCC events and donor appreciation gatherings.

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 has changed 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, you give to the **Brighter Futures Fund** and ensure that our work can continue for centuries to come. Want to give to the Brighter Futures Fund? Sign up for monthly gifts here: [mspcc.org/monthlygiving](https://mspcc.org/monthlygiving)