



## Strengthening Families

For more than 140 years, MSPCC has been protecting and promoting the rights and well-being of children and families. Its commitment to the prevention of child abuse and neglect is why I and many others joined the agency. As adults, we have no greater responsibility than to ensure the safety of our children. **MSPCC's work is driven by the belief that every child deserves to grow up in a loving family and to be healthy and well cared for.**

I also believe that no parent wakes up in the morning with the intent to harm their child.

Child abuse and neglect are complex problems. Poverty, housing instability, mental illness and substance use take their toll on families and kids too often pay the price. And now COVID-19 has added stressors to the lives of parents and caregivers.

Research shows that exposure to these adverse experiences, including abuse and neglect, puts a child at risk for serious developmental delays and a range of serious lifelong physical and behavioral health consequences.

Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and mitigating their impact are the heart of MSPCC's work. Research points to programs, strategies and policies that provide critical supports to help families address their needs, and better care for their children.

Positively engaged parents are how a child learns to trust others, regulate their emotions, and understand the world around them. Because these family relationships are so essential, MSPCC works with all parents-- young moms and dads, birth parents, foster parents, grandparents and adoptive parents-- to strengthen families. Through prevention services and effective advocacy, parents are able to build resilience and understand and meet their child's emotional, physical and developmental needs.

Why am I so certain it can be done? Because MSPCC knows what to do. **With your support, MSPCC does it every single day.**

Thank you.

Mary McGeown  
Executive Director

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

MSPCC NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2022





# Join Us!

## TURNING POINTS

AN EVENING TO BENEFIT MSPCC

THURSDAY, MARCH 31  
6:00 PM RECEPTION  
7:00 PM DINNER

FAIRMONT COPLEY PLAZA  
138 ST. JAMES AVENUE  
BOSTON, MA 02116

For more information, contact  
Julie Sheflin, at [jsheflin@mspcc.org](mailto:jsheflin@mspcc.org)  
or visit [mspcc.org/turningpoints](https://mspcc.org/turningpoints)

Proof of  
COVID vaccination  
required.



# Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

## DC:0-5™: Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood (DC:0-5)

was designed to aid in providing developmentally appropriate diagnoses for children from birth through five years old. Adopting the DC:0-5 as standard practice can improve access to infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) services.

*IECMH is the developing capacity from birth to 5 to experience, regulate, and express emotions; to form close relationships; and to explore the environment and learn, all in the context of family, community, and cultural expectations for young children.*

As part of MSPCC's work to strengthen the IECMH workforce and ensure that all children in the Commonwealth have equitable access to IECMH services, we have joined together with several state agencies and private organizations to advance DC:0-5 training and professional development throughout Massachusetts.

The national organization Zero to Three (ZTT) released the December issue of their journal. The whole issue is dedicated to the 5th anniversary of the Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood DC:0-5.

One of the articles in this issue is titled "Integrating DC: 0-5 into State Policy and Systems: 5 Years of Progress" and highlights Massachusetts due to all of the collective efforts in implementing and diffusing the training and use of the DC: 0-5. This is an amazing reflection of all the efforts that the state has been putting towards IECMH for the last decade and a testament to the power of public-private collaboration towards better outcomes and relational well-being of our youngest children and families in the Commonwealth. Learn more about our IECMH work at: [mspcc.org/massaimh-endorsement/](https://mspcc.org/massaimh-endorsement/)

## A New Resource to Accomplish Your Goals

As the New Year begins, MSPCC is reflecting on how we want our entire community to have the tools they need to protect all the people in their own lives—just as we protect the rights and well-being of children and families. That's why we're so excited to announce our partnership with FreeWill: [a free estate planning resource that guides you through the process of making a legally valid will in 20 minutes or less](https://www.freewill.com/). FreeWill can also be used to create other important estate planning documents critical to your future. No matter your age, status, or wealth, writing a will is imperative to securing the future for yourself and all that you love. In your will, you can even make an optional gift to MSPCC, and build a legacy keeping children safe and healthy for generations to come. Visit [FreeWill.com/MSPCC](https://www.freewill.com/MSPCC) or scan the QR code below to get started today:

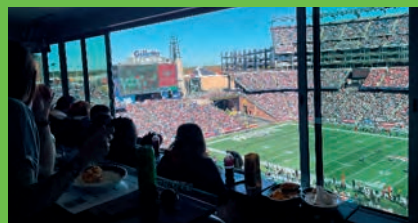


In October, three foster families gathered at Gillette Stadium to enjoy the Patriots vs. Jets game from a suite generously donated by Hill Holliday. After watching an incredible win by the Pats, they were able to go onto the field, thanks to Gillette Stadium and the Patriots, where they ran around, pretending to be Patriots players and imitating plays from the game.

**We can't thank Hill Holliday, Gillette Stadium, and the Patriots enough for providing these families with a once-in-a-lifetime experience they will never forget and bringing immense joy to 13 kids in foster care.**

**"While their situation might not be the best, Sunday really let them forget about their troubles and just smile. These kids are total sports fans and their dream was to attend pro sports events. Thank you for making this happen."**

-a foster mom



# Encompass:

## Community and Collaboration for Foster Families

At MSPCC, we believe that foster and kinship parents are invaluable partners in the child welfare system, and that our job is to provide the support they need to keep the children of Massachusetts safe. In 2021, MSPCC and a Leadership Team of professionals and child welfare organizations launched the pilot year of Encompass: Community and Collaboration for Foster Families with funding from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts' Synergy Initiative grant program and funding from the C.F. Adams Charitable Trust.

Encompass provides foster, kinship, and pre-adoptive caregivers in Central Massachusetts with one-on-one trauma coaching, a peer support program, and the ability to connect with community volunteers. Encompass trains foster and kinship caregivers to recognize trauma in children and attend to foster children's behavioral health needs in order to improve child outcomes. Peer Trauma Coaches, who are current or former foster parents, are the cornerstone of Encompass and deliver the trauma coaching and peer groups. Encompass also harnesses the generosity and skills of the community, engaging individual volunteers and local businesses and organizations to give foster families extra support, such as virtual enrichment activities, meal preparation and delivery, and care boxes.

Results from the 2021 Pilot Year indicate that Encompass has a positive impact on foster and kinship caregivers as well as the children in their care. Caregivers increased their knowledge about the impact of traumatic events on children and confidence in their ability to provide trauma-informed care. **They were 8.4 times more likely to report having engaged with external supports after Encompass than before the pilot began.** Feedback emphasized that caregivers enjoyed the program and wished it was longer. As one participant shared, "I just think it should be longer...the only downfall is that it's ending." Caregivers reported appreciation for care boxes and meal delivery from volunteers, in particular the partnership with Lasagna Love: "I really liked the help they gave us with the school supplies. That was of great help because sometimes money is tight. And the thing that I liked the most, honestly, was the [Lasagna Love] program. Because sometimes everyday life, stress, and the situations you have to face with the children, having one day off cooking is fantastic."

Encompass received funding to launch its full implementation in 2022, with caregiver and volunteer recruitment currently underway! The program seeks to recruit 70 foster and kinship families from four DCF Area Offices in Central Massachusetts. MSPCC has made a number of updates to the program, including increasing the number of coaching sessions, offering a series of support groups throughout the year, and continuing to expand our partnerships with a variety of community groups to grow the capacity of the volunteer component of the program. **Learn more about Encompass or sign up to volunteer at: [mspcc.org/encompass](https://mspcc.org/encompass)**

### Did you know?

In 2020, there were

**8,464**

children in foster care placements in Massachusetts, of which

**1,464**

were in Central Massachusetts.

**50%**

of foster parents surveyed by MSPCC say they only receive support from family, friends, and neighbors during emergencies.

**17%**

say they never receive regular support.

Throughout the pilot year, Encompass staff, volunteers, and community partners delivered:



**115**  
CARE BOXES



**158**  
TRAUMA COACHING  
SESSIONS



**35**  
GIFT CARDS



**126**  
MEALS

# Volunteer Day

On December 8th, The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts hosted 24 volunteers from Mass Advantage, Shields Capital, and The Jack & Kathy Shields Foundation to create winter themed no-sew fleece blankets for children in foster care. Throughout December, these blankets were distributed to children and families served by MSPCC's Encompass program.

Foundation President and CEO Jan Yost added, "While Mass Advantage is serving an important role in providing high quality healthcare for seniors in the Worcester area, it is especially heartwarming that its employees are also volunteering to make quilts for foster families, who open their homes year round as safe haven for children. These dedicated foster parents are participating in the Encompass program, which is offered by MSPCC and funded by the Foundation."

**Thank you to The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Mass Advantage, Shields Capital, and The Jack & Kathy Shields Foundation for bringing comfort to our Encompass families!**



# inspire

The holidays can be an especially difficult time for families facing financial insecurity, housing instability, loss, or mental health challenges. Each holiday season MSPCC staff works tirelessly to fulfill holiday wish lists for hundreds of eager children to ensure that every child can have a joyful holiday season regardless of their circumstances. Although the pandemic has posed additional challenges for our annual holiday drive, we were able to fulfill the holiday wishes of more than 315 children this year. **Thank you to all of our generous individual and corporate supporters for making the holidays bright for hundreds of children.**



The Prudential Tower lit purple on December 12th in support of MSPCC during its annual 31 Nights of Light initiative.



An MBTA bus filled with more than 2,000 toys for MSPCC and other local charities for their 21st annual Fill-A-Bus.





## Locations

### Main Office

125 Hartwell Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02421  
781.861.0890

### Boston

2010 Columbus Ave, 2nd Floor  
Boston, MA 02119  
617.983.5800

### 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

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## Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

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## Join MSPCC's Young Professionals Board

MSPCC's Young Professional Board is an association 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, philanthropy, the nonprofit sector, community leadership, and activism.

The Board plans annual volunteer events, networking opportunities, and fundraisers by working alongside MSPCC's development team to raise awareness of MSPCC. Learn more at: [mspcc.org/ypb](https://mspcc.org/ypb)

## 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)