



2020 SUNRISE COMMUNITY REPORT

November 2020

Sunrise is one of Vermont's 15 Parent Child Centers (PCCs) helping families get off to a healthy start. Services include home visits to families with young children, playgroups, early childhood services, parent education, parent support, community development, and information and referral.

COVID-19 SUNRISE NEWS!

We've all seen a "new normal" since mid-March when COVID-19 changed our world. Yes, it did change it, but it did not stop Sunrise! We continued to *strengthen families!* During this trying time, we learned that some of our families did just fine, some needed a little support, and some, who've never reached out for help before, joined us for the first time.

Here's just a few of the ways we supported families over these past 8 months:

- We offered concrete supports including diapers, meals, food, children's activity kits, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, and grocery and gas cards.
- We stayed connected with families using technology. There were phone calls, emails, texts, Zoom cooking classes (ingredients provided!), video chats, Zoom story hours, meetings outside using our new camp chairs (practicing social distancing), Instagram, and Tweets!
- Youth COVID-19 Support: We are particularly proud of the Youth COVID-19 Funds which were implemented through a grant from the Department of Children and Families. We structured this community effort to get direct funds to youth county-wide to offset expenses related to the pandemic. As part of this grant, we formed a wonderful educational committee with youth participants, who worked to develop a slogan, logo, and FAQ poster. We were able to purchase masks bearing the logo to help spread the message to youth to be safe and to keep others safe. Their slogan is "Keep the Green Mountains in the Green Zone". We think it's a perfect message!



*Keep the Green Mountains
in the Green Zone!*

Sunrise thanks you for all you do to support our Parent Child Center.

*With your help, Bennington County's children and their families
received much needed assistance during this trying time.*

A Note from Sunrise Board Chair Laurie Burdick

What a year of contrasts we have seen. But with the strong leadership of our Executive Director, Denise Main, our Board of Directors, and its committees, we have enjoyed numerous conversations about the direction of Sunrise's continued mission in our community. We can wholeheartedly say that Sunrise, as a community organization, is a wise investment for families throughout Bennington County.

Our job as a Board of Directors is to oversee the Sunrise finances, supervise the Executive Director, and ensure that our mission of "Strengthening Families" remains at the center of all that we do.

It certainly has been an unpredictable and upending year for all. COVID-19 was an element that no one planned for and Sunrise had to make strategic decisions to keep our programs alive. While all programming went remote in the spring, we used that time to make it possible for staff to work off-site with laptops and a dedicated server in order to provide home visits and activities for the families that we serve. Zoom and other telehealth devices have changed all of our lives and we have learned to embrace this as an option in working with families. We also know that nothing can replace the face-to-face connections that we all need and deserve, therefore we continue to maneuver with great care and caution with those who are in need, by offering limited direct services. Thanks to the oversight of our fiscal manager, Cyndi Thomayer, we have upgraded our technological infrastructure to support the ever-growing need of good, solid internet connections. After a deep cleaning over Memorial Day weekend, our Early Care and Education (ECE) staff, outreach and administrative staff began returning to on-site work with numerous safety protocols in place.

We are very proud of the four students who received diplomas through Mt. Anthony High School through our Learning Together Program, some who spoke from the heart at the Governor's Budget Hearing in February. Sunrise was able to secure a grant for Youth affected by COVID-19 to help offset costs in the areas of employment, stable housing, substance misuse, and mental health and the breaking of social isolation. Sunrise continues to be a strong community partner and this effort speaks to how we, as a community can have a big impact with little funds when we work together. All of these efforts support area youth as they grow into healthy adults.

This past year also saw nice changes in our ECE classrooms, including the introduction of a gross motor play room and a new play yard. We added a new position, Parent Educator, to help us increase parent/child connections and outreach to families throughout the far corners of the county. We are re-creating the Welcome Baby Service as we write this. In addition to these improvements, our facilities have been upgraded with one-time funding from the State. When you drive by, you will see new porches and a ramp, all freshly painted and a heartier driveway and parking lot at our 244 building. Next, we will have an updated full kitchen at our 226 Union St. building for on-site students and community learning opportunities, which we hope will be complete by the end of the year.

Sunrise is grateful for the support we have received over this past year, some directly related to COVID-19, totaling \$30,000. These include grants from S. Whitney Landon, State of Vermont Building and General Services, The O'Neill Foundation and Stewarts Shops. Sunrise also received additional support from the Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) including one award from their VT COVID-19 Response Fund.

Let's hope that next year life will be one where the revamped Sunrise facilities can provide comfort and support for the many Bennington County families that need that little extra. Thanks to all of our staff and for the community in supporting Sunrise Family Resource Center.

Sincerely,

Laurie Burdick

Sunrise Board Chair

OPPORTUNITIES → NOW LEARNING TOGETHER!

Sunrise's Opportunities program has changed its name. The program will now be known as Learning Together. The program is certified by the Vermont Agency of Education. It is a center-based program which includes life skills, parenting, career readiness and emotional wellness along with the state required high school curriculum.

In June, we had four graduates of the program receive their high school diplomas from Mt. Anthony Union High School (MAUHS). We celebrate their success: ***Brittane Gates, Nakia Hebbard, Tessa Martelle, and Brodie O'Brien!***

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS!

Sunrise has had the opportunity to make some exciting and much needed building and playground improvements over this past year. This has been made possible with support from COVID-19 Operational Relief Grant, One-Time PCC funding, a grant from the Vermont Buildings and General Services, our capitol reserve funds and *with generous support from our donors*. We have new garage doors at 244 Union and a new ADA ramp at 238 Union. There's been painting of all porches and buildings, and our IT network has been updated. The porch at 226 has been replaced and the enclosed upstairs porch at 238 has been repaired and will now be available for use. The Early Childhood Playground at 238 has a new walkway, new cushioning under the climbing equipment, pea stone for water play and finally grass for our little ones to enjoy! The driveway at 244 has been repaired and we've had plumbing updates and repairs all around.

Looking forward, we have begun the installation of a kitchen at 226 Union Street. We have great plans for this space and think our Board member Jonathan Cooper said it best, *"In many homes, the kitchen is the center of family life. It is a place of routines, conversations, meals, and for many children, memories. On account of the supportive milieu at Sunrise, where wrap-around services and child care are provided to the students onsite, this is also true of the kitchen used by the Learning Together Program: the students spend time in this kitchen, building bonds with their children, with each other, and with the Sunrise staff. But this kitchen is also a classroom, a laboratory, and a venue. The nutrition program allows the students to develop healthy lifestyles for themselves and their children, while the Learning Together Café provides students with opportunities to build everyday household management skills around meal planning, organization, and the presentation and entertaining."* This new kitchen will bring all of the Learning Together services into one building!



Early Childhood Playground: New walkway, cushioning & grass!

Dear Sunrise Community,

“We are all in this together.” “Stay healthy.” “Wear a mask and wash your hands.” These phrases have become common place over the past months. Here at Sunrise, we strive to embrace these practices by staying connected to the families, youth, and children that we serve as well as each other. We experience the power of what it means for all of us to struggle with the changes to our everyday lives. We’ve learned new skills, have become more creative in our thinking and continue to expand our capacity to provide families with what they need to do their best. And we find gifts in the beauty that surrounds us in Vermont. How very lucky we are.

All necessary safety practices have been implemented. We have been extremely fortunate to receive donations of handmade masks by good-hearted folks joining our efforts to minimize the spread of the virus. We received close to 300 masks and shields for staff, and for the children, youth and adults that we serve. Our Early Care and Education Program opened back up at the end of June and children have been learning and playing every day. Our home visitors continue with telehealth services or do outside visiting all the while implementing safety guidelines and screenings. We have a new position, a Parent Educator, who has created and led a number of outdoor activities. We’ve even housed homeless families during the pandemic, mostly through virtual means. Our office hours continue to be 8:30 a.m.-4:30p.m. and though we are not open to the general public, we make appointments for pick-ups of supplies or needed services.

Our Learning Together Alternative High School Program now offers hybrid education, offering on-site and remote learning. We continue to strengthen this important program. While we happily report that teen pregnancy rates have dropped, young parents without high school diplomas still need added support to reach this goal. We assist with parenting, nutrition, emotional and social support, and other concrete services. For varied reasons, our pregnant and parenting youth who have dropped out of high school remain committed to earning their diploma. Community members also reach out to us on their behalf. We receive calls from folks interested in helping a student stay on track with their education. Some are interested in helping to prevent pregnancy and some are interested in enrolling a youth that would benefit from a smaller, more secure environment.

The Learning Together Program is currently guided by residency and parenting requirements which limit the catchment area for this student population. We are working on expanding these qualifiers to include students from areas outside of the SVSU area, to young people experiencing various personal roadblocks on their journey of attaining their high school diploma. As such, we are establishing a scholarship fund to receive much needed donations to assist new students with their enrollment plans for this important program. Our hope is to enroll 2 new students annually with these monies. We hope you will consider a contributing to this fund.

Our State Representatives and Senators have been extremely helpful and available with advocating for the needs of children and their families in Bennington County. We must thank them for their successful efforts ensuring that we had access to COVID-19 relief funding to help cover added expenses and in keeping the Child Care Financial Assistance Program at community agencies.

As part of the Parent Child Center Network, we continue on our path to adopt the National Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support.

As you can see, it has been another productive, albeit unpredictable year for Sunrise. With no end to the daily ups and downs imposed by the pandemic, it is even more important to have hope, to stay connected and be kind. Our staff and board members created a video at the beginning of this pandemic to send messages of hope to families and our community. We chose the Beatles title, “Here Comes the Sun” for the music score. Take a moment to watch this on our website at www.sunrisefamilyresourcecenter.com and the next time you hear this song, remember that Sunrise is here for all families in Bennington County. We are a true Family Resource Center – and we care.

With Gratitude,

Denise Main

Denise Main, Executive Director

SUNRISE ANNOUNCES NEW PARENT EDUCATOR!

Jenna Caslin is the new Parent Educator at Sunrise. This position will work as a gap filler in our programming, broadening our reach within our community. Jenna will be working to provide playgroup opportunities, support groups, educational opportunities for parents, and revamping and refreshing the Welcome Baby program.

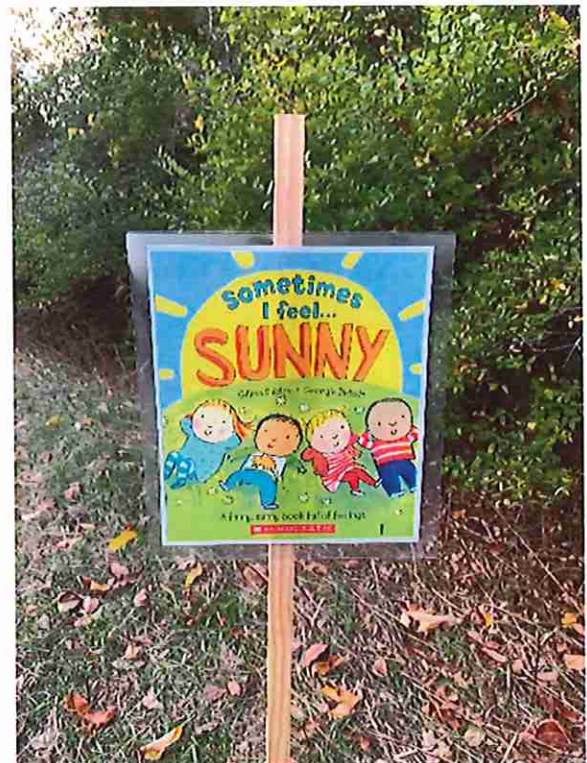
With COVID-19 we have all faced many challenges continuing to provide our services and outreach. Jenna has found creative ways that get families away from the computer screen, while still practicing social distancing. Story Walks were installed at the Greenberg Headwater Park and at the Pinnacle Tower Trail in Dorset. Families were able to enjoy literacy and time outdoors together at both sites. Stories featured were focused on social emotional development. *"The Way I Feel"* by, Janan Cain; *"I am Enough"* by, Grace Byer; and *"Sometimes I Feel Sunny"* by, Gillian Shields were all on display.

Jenna also worked with local businesses on a "Bennington Bear Hunt" event, based on the children's book *"We're Going on a Bear Hunt"* by, Michael Rosen. Families were able to watch the story read on Sunrise's Facebook event page and go to Main Street in Bennington exploring downtown store fronts, in search of the Bear Hunt posters. Those who participated were entered to win a copy of the book.

Walking Groups have been created in Bennington at Willow Park and in Arlington at the Rec Park. Parents, and their children if they wish, can meet and walk together while practicing social distancing for some in person support.

Jenna is working on creating a virtual workshop series of various parent education topics, from development to discipline. As well as support groups for grandparents raising their grandchildren, single parents, and mothers. We are hoping to find a male that would be willing to facilitate a group for fathers as well!

Lastly, she is working on recreating the Welcome Baby bags and Welcome Baby program, compiling helpful information and board books in a tote bag for new mothers who deliver at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center. Sunrise's Parent Educator will offer new parents home visits where they can be referred to other community resources, and screened for postpartum depression, and offered support during those first days of transitioning home with a new baby.



Sometimes I feel SUNNY story walk that was in Greenberg Headwater Park. Stay tuned for more family fun!



In every person there is a sun. Just let them shine. -Socrates



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Mary Gerisch: In her work with the Bennington Housing Authority (BHA), Mary Gerisch is a champion for families. She enthusiastically welcomed Sunrise's Playgroup to their Community Room at the Willowbrook Apartment Complex. She has been a gracious Playgroup host, re-arranging the space, offering to store materials, and even going door-to-door with her staff to share flyers inviting families to join in the fun. Mary is extremely responsive and knowledgeable concerning the Bennington Housing Authority. She keeps families well informed regarding their status on the apartment waiting list, often providing additional information and options that help move families into housing sooner. Families feel she is genuinely interested in helping them. She is an innovative thinker and a true leader in our community, advocating for human rights. Our community is better with her in it. Sunrise is grateful for the collaboration efforts both Mary and the Bennington Housing Authority have offered our staff in supporting families within Bennington County. She is a kind, caring compassionate person and her commitment to strengthening families is remarkable. We are honored to recognize Mary and the staff at BHA for their growth and community involvement.

INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Christine Dickinson: Christine Dickinson is a Reach-Up Case Manager for the State of Vermont where she goes above and beyond with clients, always making sure their individual and family needs are met. As a vital community partner, Christine uses her excellent communication skills to brainstorm solutions to challenging situations, always keeping families at the forefront. She is skilled in Youth At Risk, Coaching, Crisis Intervention, Case Management and Career Assessment. Bennington County families are fortunate to have Christine as a strong community and social services advocate. She's always pleasant and helpful; she's an avid live music fan -joyfully willing to share recommendations!

Alexander Gallagher: As a college student Alexander Gallagher was assigned to us as an intern. He took a very thoughtful approach to this assignment, researching the mission of Sunrise in advance of our initial meeting, and asking pertinent questions about our programs, the vulnerable population we serve, etc. When we first met, he was excited, enthusiastic, and committed to finding the right fit for his term. He entertained our questions and offered up his strengths and weaknesses in response to our inquiry. Since Alex's college experience was in arts and literature we soon landed on a project that would benefit many families from throughout Bennington County. Alex thoughtfully chose to record himself reading children's literature that represented a well-rounded aspect of societal and emotional issues faced by little children today. He gathered from long time classics like *Stellaluna*, *The Serpent Slayer*, and *The Dandelion Seed* along with our suggestions as well. Alex skillfully animated parts of each story to provide an engaging platform. His creativity was so apparent in the age appropriate activities. They are beautiful works of art. These stories are presently being broadcast on CAT TV in Bennington over 180 times per week. Thank you Alex for your thoughtful, beautiful gifts of literature. We're sure these will be enjoyed by many, many children in our community for years to come.



Sliding into autumn fun on our new Early Childhood Program playground!



Learning Together Teacher Jackie Houghton and student Ivy study in our on-site classroom.



In order to have staff return to work, Sunrise accessed COVID-19 Relief Funds to have our own on-site learning classroom for the staff's children. Pictured above is David Flight, one of two remote learning supervisors with Administrative Assistant Tiffany Gaghich's son Sammy.



One's Teacher Rita Yarnal takes her break outside on a beautiful fall day at our purple picnic table. The table was donated by the Bennington Lodge of Elks and hand-made by Exalted Ruler (President) Freddie Gilbar.



Volunteer Stacy Brandmeyer and Family Advocate Carli Scribner package rice and fresh sweet apples donated by *The Apple Barn*. We know families will appreciate these yummy food items!

COMMUNITY PARTNER SERVICE AWARDS

Green Mountain Community Network, Inc.: The Green Mountain Community Network was founded to manage the Green Mtn. Express, which has safely and efficiently provided transportation services for 35 years. With support from a contract with the Child Development Division’s Children’s Integrated Services, transportation to and from early care and education programs is provided for children 6 weeks to kindergarten age when qualified. During the pandemic, they took on the challenge of transporting 6 additional children who were unable to receive support from other local providers. The Network is also offering fare-free rides through the month of December. When transportation is on the agenda, Green Mountain is a consistent community-wide team player offering out-of-the-box ideas.

Second Chance Animal Shelter: The pandemic forced the Second Chance Animal Shelter to decrease hours of operation, reduce personnel and limit services. However, this did not stop Cathi Comar and her dedicated staff from serving families and animals during this trying time. They worked collaboratively with Sunrise and the Bennington Housing Authority to assist a family with their many cats and kittens. While this was not the first time the shelter assisted the family with this challenge, they treated the family with dignity and respect, partnering with them to avoid a recurrence of the situation. Twelve cats and kittens were surrendered to the shelter for adoption. Two additional cats are being returned to the family with services provided at no cost. All cats and kittens will be spayed/neutered, receive vaccinations and flea treatments. Second Chance Animal Shelter is truly a community resource for companion animals -and their families!

Highlighting Sunrise Interns!

Taylor Morgan interned with Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) at Sunrise, joining us from the Community College of Vermont (CCV). Taylor’s ability to build a relationship with families in a short time was a monumental factor in gaining families’ trust. She observed home visits and identified goals with families that were achievable. The families were strengthened by Taylor’s presence. We know she will go far and we are thankful for the time she spent with us.

Chloe Rogers joined The Family Advocacy Program as a Work-Based Learning Program intern, through the Career Development Center at MAUHS. Chloe is a highly motivated young person who aspires to have a career in the social work field. She utilized weekly clinical supervision, attended home visits, researched medical conditions, helped families develop charts/routines, and menu planning. Chloe is currently enrolled at MCLA in North Adams, Mass. We all wish Chloe the best, as she pursues her goals!

Alexander Gallagher interned with Sunrise from Bennington College. Please see “Individual Community Service Award” to learn more about Alex’s work with Sunrise.

2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2020*

ASSETS	LIABILITIES & EQUITY
<u>Current Assets</u>	<u>Current Liabilities</u>
Checking/Savings: \$1,069,614.45	Accounts Payable: \$ 38,316.83
Accounts Receivable: 178,828.06	Other Current Liabilities: 270,411.58
Other Current Assets 28,240.77	Total Liabilities 308,728.41
Fixed Assets: 182,100.23	Equity: <u>1,142,180.10</u>
Other Assets <u>(7,875.00)</u>	Total Liabilities & Equity: \$1,450,908.51
Total Assets \$1,450,908.51	

*Unaudited

"THANK YOU" TO ALL SUNRISE SUPPORTERS!

Annual Giving 2019 – 2020: Sunrise is extremely grateful for your generous support! You've made it possible for staff to provide intensive wrap-around family centered services throughout Bennington County!

David and Charlene Adams
Gloria Alexander
Alliance Fair Trade Gifts
Anytime Fitness
Carol Barbierr
Sam Bashevkin
Al Bashevkin abd Nancy Pearlman
Mary Beth Bennett
Bennington House of Tile
Laura Biddle
Kevin and Sarah Bisaccio
Rebecca Bishop
Mark and Dee Blanchard
Barbara Bluto
Raymond Bolton
William Botzow II
Marilyn Boyle
Bennington Lodge of Elks #567
Douglas and Priscilla Bradshaw
Gary and Debbie Briggs
Griff Briggs
David Brown and Jan Bassmann
C.L. White Glass, Inc.
Colleen Carpenter
Carroll Contruction
Ken and Lila Cestone
Stanley and Mary Cichanowski
Howard and Gail Cohen
Judy Cohen
Charles Copp
James Cormier Jr.
Cassidy Coulter
Edward and Pam Cross
Sarah Dahl
Michael and Janice Day
Susan DeLucia
Mark DeMasi
Cathy Dickie
Richard and Bonita Dundas
Julia Eddington
William Eddington
Janet Fabricius
Elise Fielding
Danielle Fogarty
Margaret Freeman
Matt & Sammy Gaghich
Jane Gardner
Leo and Mona Gauthier
Linda Gauthier
Charlie and Chris Gingo

Green Mountain Pediatrics
Green Mountain Power
Patrick Gross
Hannaford Helps
Carol Harrington
Matthew Harrington
Jean Haynes
John Hearst
Heritage Family Credit Union
Housing Vermont
David and Diane Howard
Robert and Cora May Howe
J&S Donovan Enterprises
Leon and Patricia Johnson
Ellen Jones
K & L Associates
Renel Kennell
Bonnie & Art Kilburn
Michel Kimball
April Knapp
Kerry and David Krawaczyk
Jonathan and Kendra Lamy
Peter and Wendy Lawrence
Janice and George Lerrigo
Alison Levie and Michael Wajda
Aaron Longtin
Fred and Maureen Loy
Deirdre Lynch
Denise Main
Patricia Main
Nathaneil Marcoux
Jacqueline and Anthony Marro
McClintock Law Office PC
Stephen McClure
Joseph McGovern
Stefanie McGowan Confanie
Brian and Jennifer McKenna
Donald and Melanie McKenna
Missionary Alliance Church
Anne and Wesley Mook
Richard Morgenthal
Mounty Anthony Country Club
Susan Mulligan
Erik and Allison Niemi
Denis and Nancy Noel
Sarah Nolan
Mary O'Connell
Mark Onorato
David and Joanne Palmer
Jean and Armand Patnaude

Rose-Marie Pelletier and
Susan Sweeny
Beverly Petrelis
Theodora Petrelis
Robert and Alice Pezzulich
Margaret Pine
Robert Pini
Lori and Greg Pinsonneault
Leo Plante
John and Chris Poggi
Louis and Kristin Propp
Charles Putney
Betsy Rathbun-Gunn
Virginia Ray
Jaqueline Ryan-Thomas
Virginia Sandy
Tim, Ethan and Connor Simonds
Lacy Smith
Jane Sobel and Stanley Rosen
Robert Sperber
Thomas and Nancy Steffen
Stewarts's Foundation
Alison Stromgren
Robert Tarnas
The Bank of Bennington
The Pharmacy Inc.
The Yoga Place
Cynthia Thomayer
Bernadette Thompson
Kathleen Thompson and
Arunas Budnikas
Town North Bennington
Town of Arlington
Town of Bennington
Town of Pownal
Town of Shaftsbury
Turrell Fund
Unitarian Universaist Fellowship
Barth Vander Els
Vermont Community Foundation
VCF VT COVID19 Response Fund
Vermont Container Cooperation
Wassick Tire Service
Michelle and Thomas Weyers
Nola White
Nadine Wisher & Neil Kenyon
David Wohlsen and Marian Lewis
Avery Wood
John Zink

The Bonnie Prentiss Memorial Award



Caitlin Harrington, Youth Development Program (YDP) Coordinator, wins the 2020 Bonnie Prentiss Memorial Award



Beginning in 2008, Sunrise has annually recognized a current employee, selected by their peers, with The Bonnie Prentiss Memorial Award. This year the award is proudly presented to Caitlin Harrington, YDP Coordinator who joined Sunrise in 2015.

This award was created to honor the memory of Bonnie Prentiss, Sunrise's beloved early care and education teacher who died in 2007 following a brave battle with cancer. Staff select a colleague they believe best embodies the qualities that Bonnie possessed.

Caitlin truly exemplifies Bonnie's "loving, compassionate, caring, witty, dedicated, humble, and easy-going" manner. Caitlin is poised and extremely thoughtful. Her calm nature puts those around her at ease and she is a natural at self-reflection. Caitlin always goes above and beyond to help.

When asked what Caitlin enjoys most about working with youth, this was her answer, "What I enjoy most is being there with them as they achieve the goals they have set for themselves; whether it's getting their permit or Driver's license or getting their first job, or their first apartment. These are such big moments for young adults and it's an honor to be a part of it with them." Congratulations Caitlin and thank you for your commitment to our youth and our community!

A Grandmother's Letter

Hello,

I am sending this note to show my appreciation for the programs offered through SUNRISE. My experience working with our family advocate was totally positive.

I was the grandmother who had conditional custody of my dear grandson, the light of my life. I felt like I was supportive and advocating for him, but not able to provide the guidance and motivation to his parents that they received from our family advocate.

I cannot underscore enough, the importance/significance of the Sunrise program for our family. Our family advocate was instrumental in assisting them with finding and securing housing in a timely manner and ensuring it was safe, with a new gate at the top of the entry stairs. She also secured a high chair and assisted with food when my son was between jobs.

Even in the midst of the COVID pandemic, she not only assisted my grandson's parents to complete parenting classes but went above and beyond utilizing social media and the web to keep them motivated. The classes have had a lasting impression and they continue to utilize, almost verbatim, some of the skills they learned.

I am pleased to say my grandson is with his parents and no longer a part of DCF. The family advocate was a great sounding board for me. She helped me, to help my family. I firmly believe the reunification of my grandson with his parents was helped immensely by the support offered our entire family by the advocate and her support through SUNRISE!

Thank you, Michelle! You are my Sunshine!!!

p.s. Donnie says thank you so much!

Respectfully,

Debbie Mone

Debbie Mone

STAFF CELEBRATIONS!

We celebrate the retirement of two valued Sunrise employees this year. Sharon Millette, Early Childhood Program Cook and Assistant, and David Flight, our Job Club Coordinator. We wish them all the best in their next adventure!

We welcome new staff! Lauren Hurst has joined our Family Supported Housing team. Jackolyn Houghton is our new Learning Together (previously known as Opportunities) teacher. Jenna Caslin is our new Parent Educator. Stacy Kilburn and Shelby Haynes have joined our Early Childhood Program.

We would like to recognize the following Sunrise Staff Anniversaries:

- Caitlin Harrington, Youth Development Coordinator; Lori Yunger, Family Advocacy Program Coordinator; Tiffany Gaghich, Administrative Assistant – all celebrating 5 years.
- Michelle Weyers, Family Advocate, is celebrating 20 years.
- Lori Pinsonneault, Parent Child Center Coordinator, is celebrating 30 years.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT!

To Whom it May Concern,

Sunrise Family Resource Center provides much needed services to the children and families of Bennington County.

Whenever we donate, no matter the amount, we receive a personal thank you note detailing the ways the donation will be used. To know that our contributions go directly to things like food, a piece of equipment or diapers makes us feel like we are a small part of the solution to problems our young families face every day.

Denise Main and her dedicated staff are an inspiration to me and my family.

Sincerely,

Mary O'Connell

Mary O'Connell

Special thanks to Ray Bolton for his generous donation made in memory of his loving wife, Ruthie.



With Appreciation!

Sunrise thanks Margaret Pine and all the knitters and crocheters who offer families handmade hats, blankets, mittens and sweaters. You're keeping our children and babies safe and warm.

"Our Family Advocate was amazing. It always felt like we had someone in our corner through our DCF case - and we just got our children back a little over a week ago now and if you ask me, she was a huge part of being able to have our family back together!!" -Parent Quote

Sunrise Services

Learning Together Program (LTP) - A state-approved alternative high school completion program for pregnant or parenting teens and youth up to age 24 in the Bennington area. LTP offers a core curriculum, individualized instruction and parenting/life skills education in a supportive setting.

Early Care & Education Program (ECE) - A NAEYC-accredited 5 STARS child care program for infants and toddlers ages 6 weeks - 3 years. We have 22 infants and toddlers in our Sunrise classrooms, playing and growing inside and outside with our dedicated staff.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) - This program helps eligible families pay for child care services for children 6 weeks up to the age of 13 (or up to the age of 19 if the child has special needs). There are eligibility and service needs guidelines. Sunrise's Child Care Financial Assistance Specialist assists families through the process of eligibility and application.

Child Care Referral - The Child Care Referral Specialist at Sunrise assists families in finding child care in regulated Vermont programs including Registered/Licensed Child Care Homes and Licensed Child Care Centers. Information and data about the availability and need for quality care is shared with parents and the greater Bennington County community.

Children's Integrated Services (CIS) - Sunrise is the fiscal agent for the Children's Integrated Services. We house the CIS Coordinator and Specialized Child Care Coordinator; two staff that provide family support home visiting and Early Childhood Family Mental Health to pregnant women and parents of infants, toddlers, and children up to the age of 6. Home visitors work closely with families to identify their strengths and to support their children's growth and development, and locate community resources.

Parent Educator & Offerings – Parent education and support activities including county wide playgroups, Parent Education Classes, and supportive activities offered throughout the year. Find our current activities on our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/sunrisefamilyresourcecenter>

Youth Development Program (YDP) - Serves teens as they transition from foster care to independent living, ages 14 to 23. The YDP Coordinator works with individuals on life skills such as cooking, budgeting, furnishing an apartment, driving, housing and job searches, applications to post-secondary education, and parenting and community referrals.

Family Advocacy Program (FAP) - An intensive, home based service for families at risk of having a child placed outside of the home. FAP also works with families for whom reunification with a child or children is a goal. The majority of families are referred by The Department for Children and Families (DCF) while community members can also refer for our services.

Family Supportive Housing (FSH) - Reduces the incidence and duration of child and family homelessness in Vermont by supporting homeless families with minor children needing to transition to, and sustain, stable housing through targeted case management, service coordination, and coordinated access to affordable housing. FSH provides intensive, customized case management services to families who present a higher degree of complexity and service need.

Service Coordination for Families - Referrals from Agency of Human Services Field Director for complex cases where families or individuals have multiple needs and/or service providers; commonly served are those at risk of becoming homeless or in need of housing.

Building Bright Futures (BBF) - The Building Bright Futures Coordinator works collaboratively with Sunrise staff and community partners including the BBF- Early Childhood Regional Council, to improve the systems and services for families. Provides support and resources to families to access health care, establish stable housing, succeed in school, develop strengths and assets, and make meaningful connections within their communities.

Youth COVID 19 Fund - Opportunity for youth ages 12 to 23, to request funds related to COVID 19, relating to education, housing, and employment support. Find the application and more details on our website at: <http://www.sunrisefamilyresourcecenter.com/youth-covid-support-application.html>

Brittanees Success Story

I am a former student of the Learning Together Program at Sunrise Family Resource Center. I enrolled in the Learning together program after I dropped out of High School and had my daughter. I enrolled in this program to earn my high school diploma, after dropping out of High School because I missed too many days. I quickly learned that Learning Together was about more than just learning to pass a test, meeting a standard, or making up missed time. The Learning Together program allowed me to have a flexible schedule and regain missed time to make earning my diploma achievable, while also teaching me independence, budgeting, healthy cooking, and parenting tips. Sunrise has helped me overcome many obstacles and fears; such as public speaking.



2020 Sunrise Learning Together / MAUHS Graduate Brittanees Gates with daughter.

Also, Sunrise Family Resource Center has onsite childcare. I didn't have to worry about my daughter while I was in class. I could visit her and trusted the teachers there. I wouldn't have been able to graduate last June without this.

My mom also graduated from Sunrise Opportunities [now LearningTogether]and if it wasn't for Sunrise, I don't know how my life/childhood would have been. Because of Sunrise, my mom has been an LNA for almost 11 years. Sunrise helps teenage mothers graduate from high school and help find housing and support you no matter what.

CONTACT US!

Phone: (802) 442-6936

FAX: (802) 442-1663

244 Union Street, Bennington, Vermont

Web Site: www.sunrisefamilyresourcecenter.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sunrisefamilyresourcecenter/

Email: sfrc@sunrisepcc.com



BLACK LIVES MATTER

Sunrise Family Resource Center stands in solidarity with our community in support of the *Black Lives Matter Movement*. While this is not a new issue, it is one that is finally ripe for change. For generations, these perceptions, attitudes and [mis]understandings have perpetuated themselves. These [mis]beliefs have left traumatized individuals and children in its' wake. It's time for change: for increased acceptance and deeper understanding of each other, for self-examination of our thoughts and beliefs, for kindness and support of each other. We must do more to ensure that inclusion, acceptance and understanding becomes the prevailing standard.

Recent tragic events within our communities nation-wide have served to highlight the systemic and disparaging racial injustice that exists across our country today. The pandemic has brought to light so many inequities: poverty, hunger, inadequate pay for those now considered "essential workers" and lack of affordable health care, just to name a few.

Sunrise Family Resource Center has always been and will continue to be a resource for all families. We will continue to strive for a balance of understanding and support-without prejudice or judgement. We will continue to assess our perceptions and practices to ensure we are meeting the needs of ALL families in our community. We are committed to embracing and celebrating diversity. We are committed to being good community citizens. Collectively we can become a catalyst of change. Please join us in our effort.

Sunrise Family Resource Center and its board of directors

SUNRISE PROVIDES SERVICE GRANT TO LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS!

The following Direct Service Grants were awarded to enhance early childhood experiences in Bennington County

- John G. McCullough Free Library: Board Books for new born baby bags with story-times
- Berkshire Family YMCA/Bennington Rec Center: Free Movement play group for adults and children.
- Catamount Connections: Mother's Perinatal and Postpartum supports
- Bennington Early Childhood Center and Bennington Free Library: Play groups



Sunrise Family Resource Center wishes you and yours' a Happy and *Healthy* Holiday Season!



Antonio Varin, who appeared in Sunrise's Spring Newsletter, earned his high school diploma in June. Since graduation, he has been working full time and just recently accepted a new job as a delivery driver for an auto parts store.

Please join us in celebrating this young man and his many accomplishments!

Special Thanks to Our Mask Makers!

April Knapp

Elise Fielding

Laura Biddle

Mona Gauthier

Mary Beth Bennett and Rob Zink
from Green MT. Mask Makers

We've received 100's of handmade masks for children, youth, parents and staff!

Sunrise assisted families with concrete supports (meals, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, grocery and gas cards, diapers, children's activity kits, & more) during FY2020.

TOTAL CONCRETE SUPPORTS: \$22,622

Zoom Meeting

Total non-video participants: 1

Speaker View

Denise Main

Sharon

Peter's iPhone

Kathy Thompson

Laurie Burdick

Chandler Poling

Zoomed, Left to Right, Top to Bottom:
Executive Director Denise Main,
Board Member Sharon Cave, Board
Vice Chair Peter Lawrence, Board
Secretary Kathy Thompson, Board
Chair Laurie Burdick, and Board
Member Chandler Poling

Missing from the Zoom: Treasurer Al
Bashevkin, and Board Member
Jonathan Cooper

Mute Start Video Participants Chat Share Screen Record Reactions Leave

Who are those masked Sunrise employees?



Top to bottom, left to right: Denise Main, Shelby Haynes, Danielle Bacon, Lauren Hurst, Alyssa Snyder, Casie George, Stacy Kilburn, Anne Simonds, Ashley Paquin, Caitlin Harrington, Carli Scribner, Cynthia Thomayer, Erin Reed, Jackie Houghton, Kathy Cooper, Kelly Belville, Lori Yunger, Michelle Weyers, Robin Stromgren, Michelle Snow, Rick Morse, Lori Pinsonneault, Rita Yarnal, Tiffany Gaghich, Jenna Caslin