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Cummings commits to F&CS for another 3 years

We were awarded a Cummings Grant!

Family & Children's Service is one of 100 local nonprofits to receive a grant of \$100,000 through the highly competitive Cummings Foundation's \$25 Million Grant Program! This multi-year grant will be used to enhance F&CS Parenting Education and Family Support programs over the next three years.

The Cummings Foundation, part of the commercial real estate firm Cummings Properties, invests in nonprofits in the communities surrounding their commercial buildings across 43 different cities and towns.

"The award will allow us to impact and support more families in the Greater Lynn Community."

Selvin Chambers

Due to the currently uncertainty in philanthropy, the Cummings Grant came just at the right time for Family and Children's Service.

We have experienced delays in foundation awards, loss of contracts, and other financial challenges. Therefore, we were incredibly grateful to have received this



Executive Director Selvin Chambers, III., Grant Writer Mike Ring, FRC Program Director Mariana Marquez, and Associate Director Ruben Montano-Lopez are a little excited.

funding when we did. "This award will allow us to impact and support more families in the Greater Lynn Community", said new F&CS Executive Director, Selvin Chambers.

With a small monthly gift, you can make a really BIG difference

It's not too late to become a Monthly Sustainer



Last month F&CS launched a campaign to acquire 20 new Sustainers. We are off to a great start, but we need more folks **JUST LIKE YOU** to sign up for this convenient, consistent, and secure way to ensure that we stand by families who need us most in the months ahead.

Please consider joining your fellow neighbors as a Monthly Sustainer at any level that suits your current reality. You can do so by scanning this code:



Your support is stabilizing families

You are giving families a fighting chance

The Family Alliance program at F&CS is actually a team of clinicians and case managers who work closely with families referred by the Mass. Department of Children and Families. Working with up to eighteen families, the 90-day Family Stabilization Team receives referrals from the Cape Ann, Harbor, and Lynn DCF offices.



Jackie Trahan, Family Alliance Director

Family Alliance works with individuals and their families in their homes and communities to stabilize, strengthen, and build relationships. The team conducts home visits up to three times a week and assists with community resource building, goal setting, in-home counseling, and psycho-social assessments.

The program uses Solution Focused Brief Therapy as a model of service, which is designed to help families work towards finding a solution to the presenting problem rather than getting stuck in “why” they have the problem or “what” caused it. Within this model, the team works with the family to recognize and identify their inner strengths and makes referrals to available resources that will enable them to find a solution to the presenting problem.

Family Alliance began in 2012, and is one of four Family & Children’s Service home visiting programs. The program employs a clinical consultant, two clinicians, one case manager, and a Program Director, Jackie Trahan. All program services are designed with the 6 Child Welfare Core Practice Values in mind: child-driven, family-centered, community-focused, strength-based, committed to diversity and cultural competence, and committed to continuous learning.

One of many success stories

One family was referred to Family Alliance because of the great work that the team did with another pre-adoptive case. The referral was made to support the successful transition into the home and to address some behavioral concerns. When the team began working with the family, there were feelings of anticipation, confusion, excitement, fear, and frustration. The family and child were feeling overwhelmed and as a result, DCF felt that the family could use some clinical support. The parents were never in a place where they were reconsidering their decision to adopt the child, however they were struggling with how to respond to some of the behaviors that were surfacing. There were also some cultural and racial factors that were important to address. As the case progressed, the child engaged in the therapeutic process and the family started to look at her behaviors through a different lens. The family also worked together as a unit to ensure that the cultural and racial pieces were not just addressed but openly discussed and understood.

What clients are saying:

“___ and I wanted to send you a long overdue email to tell you we and our family appreciated Bobby's work with ____. He came highly recommended, and he lived up to the billing.

I was amazed by how quickly and deftly Bobby was able to develop a rapport with _____. He is really gifted in making everyone relax and feel comfortable and safe. _____ looked forward to talking to Bobby each week, and he was able to get her to begin to address some key issues on her terms.

Bobby also ensured a smooth transition to _____ long-term care provider. _____ has sadly had many people come and go in her life, and Bobby was able to make this departure a positive one (a graduation).

We are truly grateful for Bobby's support of _____. Thank you.”

In her own words

Everyday heroes, like you

Name: Sarah Keenan

Sarah is a licensed independent social worker, special education advocate, and clinical social worker doing outpatient and emergency psychiatry. She is also an Adjunct Faculty at Boston University in teaching clinical practice.

Part of the family since 2020:

"I wanted to see how I could help, especially with COVID. Now that we are coming to the other side of it, I want to see how I can continue to help and stay invested in an organization that I think does excellent work.

I am all about helping and supporting youth and families, professionally and personally, it is my North Star in that way, so I am happy to be part of it."



If I had a magic wand: "I would love it if instead of fighting the uphill battle, to do something that is a must for children, like to invest in educational resources, supports, healthcare, environmental justice, other equities, that it was just the priorities. The place from which we started. I want to shift the dynamic and make these our priorities right off the bat. I can't think of a better place for us to do the right thing than with our youth regarding their mental health, health-care, and education. In the emergency room, I feel like I am meeting someone for the first time; however, it does not feel that way when there is so much reiteration about the same historical experience of adverse childhood experience in underfunded schools. If I had my magic wand, I would inverse so many of our priorities. I think that would be so good."

Superpower: "My superpower is doing a good job navigating difficult situations. I do that often where, you know, I deal with families with one point of view and schools with another. We have a student who can get lost in the shuffle of these arguments, and we have to navigate these conversations so we can center that student and make everyone happy enough and do the right thing. It is a skill too in emergencies. I have worked in emergency service for almost a decade, and you are telling hard truths in a moment where someone can act out. I can deliver that. For example, I often tell them, 'you have to come into the hospital even if you don't want to.' That is a message I have to deliver that never wants to be heard. You have to respect the rejection but also do your job and have them do that. When stakes get high, and tensions rise, I can have a moderating effect on that. I think that is good because, in high-stakes conversations, emotions run high, but I can stay calm. My feelings can run hot, but I can remain cool as a cucumber. I can also bring people closer together, and most of the time, it works."

Unshakable belief:

" You do not have to be the richest person in the room, you do not have to have all of the credentials, you just have to be decent and good and show up. I am going to show up and listen and participate in a way that I can." Sarah Keenan

You are part of the solution

Shannon Legislative Awareness Virtual Breakfast 2021



Maybe now more than ever, collaboration is vital to addressing the problems that we all confront. A virtual Legislative Awareness Breakfast was held in April to highlight the impact of the Shannon Safety Initiative. For the past 13 years, Family & Children’s Service has been the city-wide collaboration’s lead agency. Community partners include Catholic Charities, Lynn Parks and Recreation, Lynn Police Department, LYSOA, Mass Hire, and North Shore Community College.

The collaborative seeks to enhance community safety and decrease gang involvement by providing opportunities, guidance, support, and mentoring to Lynn youth, particularly those who...

- Reside in high-risk areas
- Are at risk for dropping out of school
- Associate with gang-involved youth, or
- Are court involved

During the hour-long Zoom call, Lieutenant Tim Donovan of the Lynn Police Dept. reported on Lynn crime data and current trends. F&CS, Associate Director, Ruben Montano-Lopez, delivered a presentation featuring the collaborative’s work during COVID-19 with testimonials from youth a slide show. The morning culminated with a keynote address from Prof. Troy Smith, tenured Professor of Sociology at North Shore Community College.

Despite the COVID pandemic, the summer employment program exceeded expectations by employing 16 youth, who split into two work crews. Youth engaged in urban agricultural projects including overseeing community garden plots, and were also involved in projects with other community partners, like the Truth be Told project headed by Beyond Walls.

“We’re not going to look at the obstacles, we’re not going to look at the problem, but we’re going to look at the solution, and we’re going to take action. That is civic engagement at the highest level.”

*Troy Smith,
Prof. of Sociology, NSCC*