

# Healing & Hope News

"The work will continue..."  
- Father Edward J. Flanagan,  
Founder of Boys Town

## Your 2023 IMPACT

At Boys Town, we provide an array of life-changing youth care and healthcare services that meet each child and family exactly where they are, so they get the **right kind** of **care**, at the **right time**, in the **right way**.

*Together, we served and impacted nearly  
21,000 children in New England.*

### In-Home Family Services

**66 children and 31 families** learned how to handle issues and **prevent them** from becoming more disruptive in the home.

### Care Coordination Services

**3,321 children and 185 families** who are suffering from **mental health issues** were provided a lifeline by connecting them with programs and resources that provide the best care.

### Boys Town National Hotline®

**1,299 calls** from Rhode Island and Massachusetts were answered and **1 suicide in progress was prevented** by our Hotline Crisis Counselors.

### Family Home Program

**39 boys and girls** lived in family-style residential homes, learning social and independent-living skills to help them on a **path to success**.

### Foster Family Services

Foster parents, trained and supported by Boys Town, opened their homes to **79 children** who needed a safe place to live.

### Boys Town Common Sense Parenting®

**124 families** and caregivers **learned new skills by building on their parenting strengths** and developing **healthy relationships** with their children.

### Lift with Boys Town

Our School Support Specialists have worked with **726 students** in their classrooms to develop their social skills to promote learning. In addition, **19,853 students** were also impacted.

*Let's do even more together in 2024!*



# Right Place. Right Time. Right Person.

## KYRA LYONS PROVES TO BE RIGHT PERSON FOR BOYS TOWN NEW ENGLAND'S LIFT WITH BOYS TOWN PROGRAM

Many people have heard the adage about being in the right place at the right time. Boys Town New England School Support Specialist Kyra Lyons was the **right person**, in the **right place**, at the **right time**.

One morning, Kyra was walking down the hall of a local high school when she spotted a very upset young woman.

"I was walking down the hall and I spotted Brielle crying, sitting on the floor next to her locker," Kyra said. "I stopped to check if she was okay. She didn't want to talk, but knowing how visibly upset she was, I couldn't leave her, so I just sat and waited with her."

*"It's not enough to be in the right place at the right time. You have to be the right person in the right place at the right time."* – T. Harv Eker

After some time, Brielle regained her composure and opened up to Kyra, who grew concerned when she read her journal.

"Brielle's entries contained some alarming passages, including a suicidal journal prompt," Kyra said. "After we talked a little more, she was agreeable to going to the social worker with me."

Following their hallway encounter, Brielle was added to Kyra's caseload, where the two met regularly for about six weeks in both one-on-one and group sessions. Brielle worked hard toward her goals of improving her grades, enhancing her socialization skills and making new friends.

"Brielle made great strides as she was dedicated to the process of achieving her goals," Kyra said. "She successfully completed the Lift program in about nine weeks, which is the typical program length. It's a great feeling now to see her smiling in the hallways with her friends."

Although Brielle has successfully completed the Lift with Boys Town program, Kyra remains a positive presence. Recently, Brielle was feeling guilty for skipping a particular class a couple of times. She found Kyra, shared the situation and the two discussed a strategy.

"Brielle was upset and disappointed in her behavior," Kyra said.

"We discussed the situation and, on her own, Brielle shared that she wanted to apologize to her teacher for her behavior. Together, we went to the teacher, and she apologized. I was there for moral support while Brielle took ownership of and rectified her actions."

While meeting Brielle in the hallway was by chance, Kyra was the right person, in the right place, at the right time thanks to Boys Town New England's partnership with the Pawtucket School District and the Lift with Boys Town program. The goal of this community-based, multi-tiered, multi-component, prevention-intervention system is to intervene before problems reach an unsafe level.

A 2023 Framingham State University grad, Kyra works with students one-on-one and in social skills groups during the advisory periods and sometimes before and after school to help students hone skills for both in and out of school. Brielle is one of approximately 25 students Kyra has worked with since joining Boys Town in December of 2023.

"In my role, I provide kids who are often struggling, with an outlet to talk to about the difficulties they encounter and allow them to process their emotions throughout the day," Kyra said. "It's a tough job at times because there's not instant gratification. But, seeing kids like Brielle become successful, it's very rewarding."

Brielle's grades have all improved and she is doing well emotionally and socially.



Kyra Lyons

## THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN OUR WORK!

For the third straight year, Boys Town New England had an impressive and record-setting show of support during Rhode Island's 401 Gives Day. Boys Town supporters came through in a big way as donations increased by an impressive 52 percent from last year's previous record-setting year.

When the final numbers were counted, Boys Town New England raised **\$61,936 from 269 generous donors**.

"As was the case for the past three years, I continue to be amazed and humbled by all the support people showed for Boys Town during our 401 Gives campaign," Director of Development Glenn Hofmann said. "I want to thank

and acknowledge our Peer-to-Peer Fundraisers who reached out to people near and far on behalf of Boys Town. The support we received from individuals who have given to Boys Town in the past and first-time donors helps us continue to provide life-saving programs and enriching experiences to the boys, girls and families we serve."

Of the 597 non-profit organizations in the state of Rhode Island, Boys Town New England received the 10th highest cash donation total.

THANK  
YOU.



# Boys Town Common Sense Parenting® Helps Transition Mom From Participant to Instructor

It's often been said that kids don't come with instruction booklets and there's no manual for being a parent.

Thanks to Boys Town, parents and caregivers have an excellent resource to help navigate the wild world of parenthood. Common Sense Parenting (CSP) is an interactive program that helps caregivers learn new skills, build upon parenting strengths and develop healthy relationships with their children. Numerous families from

New England and throughout the country benefit from the in-person and virtual classes that are offered by Boys Town New England.

When Jenna Magnuski, a mother of two with a master's degree focused on developmental education, found herself struggling with

her own parenting techniques, she turned to Boys Town New England.

"Knowing the common sense solution doesn't mean you're using it in your life," Magnuski said. "Even adding in my degree and professional experience, I had a hard time putting it into action. I can't say enough good things about CSP. It taught me how to separate my emotions, make better choices and take more joy in raising little humans."

Magnuski said her situation was even more complex.

"What makes my situation more challenging is that both of my kids are on the Autism spectrum with ADHD," she continued. "It's hard to tell if a parenting program will work well for children that are 'wired differently' due to developmental, learning or mental health diagnoses. I want people to know that CSP is an invaluable resource and a safe place for all families."

CSP helped Magnuski further develop and build upon her existing parenting skills. It also gave her a full-time job facilitating CSP. In that role, she also uses her experience as a first-generation college student who was raised in a diverse, working-class neighborhood. Magnuski goes out of her way to make sure people from all backgrounds can feel comfortable participating.

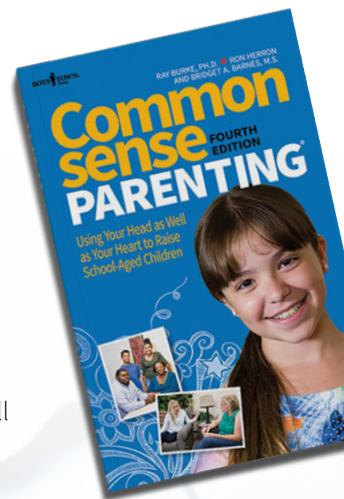
"CSP has really changed my life," she said. "I'm so fortunate to have this opportunity to help other families. Not only do I draw upon my own experiences, but each participant contributes to each other because I learn from them, too."

CSP offers real-life solutions with easy-to-learn techniques for common struggles — communication, decision making, relationships, self-control and school success. This program was developed and refined based on decades of implementation and observation by Boys Town Family-Teachers, who nurture, mentor and educate groups of teens in a Boys Town Family Home.

"If any caregiver is struggling, we encourage you to join CSP — either in-person or virtually," Magnuski said. "You can help children with common issues. You can also help those who are showing high-risk behaviors before more in-depth intervention is needed. The materials use practical and relatable language and examples, which really helps drive the points home."

Boys Town recently built upon the book and workbook that all CSP participants receive. There is a private Facebook group for parents who have completed the CSP program, as a way for them to be connected to one another after CSP ends and allows them to keep learning.

"Parenting is always evolving," Magnuski said. "We can all be better. Fortunately, Boys Town provides the tools, resources and community to help us achieve our full potential as parents."



Other  
parents  
tion

# Boys Town New England's Family Visitation Program Helps Reunite Parents with Their Kids

Boys Town New England has many successful programs that focus on assisting children and families. They include the Family Home Program in Portsmouth, Foster Care in Rhode Island and Massachusetts and Lift with Boys Town in the Pawtucket School District.

Boys Town's Family Visitation program is also growing in success. This program helps parents learn new skills, build on their parenting strengths and develop healthy relationships with their children. One of the biggest components of Family Visitation is to link families to whatever resources they may need to help get their children back and provide long-term stability of the family. Numerous families and children benefit each year from these classes and guidance, which are offered to parents throughout New England.



One of the program's most recent success stories involves Ryan and his twins, Ryan, Jr. and Suzanna. Roughly two years ago, Ryan's children were placed in foster care at birth due to their mom's substance abuse. At the same time, Ryan was caring for his aging mother who was in and out of hospice. Shortly thereafter, Ryan's mom passed away.

"I had lost my kids and after my mom died, I wasn't sure I could ever be happy," Ryan said. "I had really managed everything in her life during COVID. I got up every day and did what I had to do. After she passed, I started drinking, but then I realized I had to save my own life and I wanted to fight to get my kids back and save their lives."

With no home or job, Ryan's life took a turn for the better as he entered rehabilitation at the Amos House, a non-profit organization in Providence that helps homeless individuals struggling with addiction.

"The hardest part was just knowing I had to do so many necessary things that I didn't want to do," Ryan said. "I was put in uncomfortable situations. But in the end, I was doing it for me and my kids."

The rehabilitation went so well that Ryan was eventually hired by the Amos House. It was also at that time, Boys Town got involved.

"We set Ryan up in our Family Visitation Program," said Myrsha Frejuste, a Boys Town Care Coordination Services Consultant. "The visits start weekly for one hour between the parent(s) and kids. We gradually build up to six-hour visits."

Not surprisingly, the visits went extremely well and recently Ryan was reunited with his kids.

"Boys Town is so wonderful," Ryan said. "Boys Town taught me that people do care. They were so on-point and played such a big role in helping me get my children back. Life is like an ocean tide; it comes in and goes out. There are good points and bad points. I am motivated by love, the love of my kids and the love of life."

Frejuste said Boys Town was able to provide Ryan with the extra assistance he needed.

"When people are faced with tough situations, it is the positive support of those around them that helps get them to the other side," she said. "While working on Ryan's case it was truly great to see all the providers — Boys Town, Amos House and Child & Friends — work together to help lift this family up and set them up for success."



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## For more great stories, visit **BOYSTOWN.ORG/new-england**

Since opening in 1991, Boys Town New England has brought life-changing care to tens of thousands of children and families in Rhode Island and surrounding states.

Boys Town New England has five Family Homes that serve adolescents and young children at our Bazarsky Portsmouth Campus. We also offer Foster Family Services, In-Home Family Services, the Lift with Boys Town program in Pawtucket schools and other Community Support Services. For children who have completed Boys Town New England out-of-home programs, Reunification Services are available to help them make a smooth transition back to their families and maintain and improve their treatment gains.



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**our mission**  
Changing the way America cares  
for children and families.