

**We start at the
beginning with the
youngest of lives.**

**We continue to
support as children
grow into youth.**

**We strengthen
the bond to create
strong families.**

FAMILY SERVICE OF GREATER BOSTON

HELPING FAMILIES BE FAMILIES SINCE 1835

Each of us has a common connection of being part of a family. Family Service of Greater Boston has seen significant changes in the make-up of families and has helped families adapt to multiple political, economic, legal and social cycles.

We are honored to support the innate promise, potential and productivity of thousands of children, youth and families who seek out Family Service each year.

Strength. Energy. Connections.

These are among the greatest benefits to the civic welfare of Greater Boston when families are healthy and build productive communities.

Randal Rucker *Chief Executive Officer*

We're making a difference.

**Change doesn't come about overnight.
And it's not something that just happens.
It takes optimism and a willingness
to transform the status quo.**

It takes someone with a voice to say, "It doesn't have to be like this." It starts with a vision and a plan—and people willing to take a stand. Change doesn't just happen — but it is possible.

**At Family Service of Greater Boston,
we're in the change business.**

We see it all around us. We see it in the way families are determined to stay together in the face of adversity. We hear about it from teens learning to make positive life decisions. We recognize it when hopelessness gives way to dreams. That's how we know our efforts are producing a positive, meaningful return on investment.

Family Service operates in some of urban Boston's most challenged neighborhoods—areas that experience the city's highest levels of poverty, crime, gang activity and family dysfunction. It is not an environment that typically encourages healthy, stable family life. Despite all, there are many resilient residents seeking to rise above the cultural, economic and social realities they face. They are parents who seek better lives for their children. People willing to learn the skills needed for successful parenting and for productive work that will bring economic stability. Children and teens who want a chance for better opportunities. We see them daily. They are determined to overcome the low expectations assigned to them by society.

At Family Service we work with children, youth and parents.

By treating the whole family with targeted individual services, we can effectively change the unproductive dynamic of families at-risk. In doing so, we create alternate futures for families caught in an environment of despair, helping them become more confident, contributing members of the community.

**We're not naïve. We know from long experience
this process takes time.**

Indeed, the time needed to break cycles of family dysfunction often is generational. It takes time to make a difference and, of course, significant resources. Substantial rebuilding is needed in families and communities in disarray from decades of socio-economic disruption and neglect. We're in it for the long-term. Our history serving Boston families gives testament to our commitment. For 175 years, Family Service has been dedicated to making the continuing investment needed to cope with the impact of social change on the most vulnerable of our neighbors and to enhancing the quality of their lives.

STRONG START



YouthAim!



HELPING FATHERS BE FATHERS



We are innovative, pro-active, strategic and disciplined. And we're making an impact.

Since 1835, Family Service of Greater Boston has focused on improving the lives of children, youth and their families.

We stay true to our mission of sustaining and enhancing the lives of those most in need by providing prevention and intervention services shown to be key to addressing immediate crises and long-term life success.

Families experience different stages of development as individuals form a family unit, journey through transitions as the family matures, or become fragile and fragmented due to extreme circumstances.

FSGB supports healthy overall family wellness in three critical stages of family evolution.



Family Formation

We ensure healthy cognitive, physical and social-emotional development in children by supporting strong families and teaching parents how to be effectively engaged.

Family Wellness

We enhance wholesome relationships by equipping families with the skills to resolve conflicts and improve communication.

Family Coping Skills

We help decrease violence, abuse or destructive behaviors in families by addressing the pressures that lead to such actions.

To this end, we focus on healthy child development, youth risk reduction and leadership development, successful parenting skills and effective behavioral health management. These programmatic themes are reflected by leading Family Service initiatives that, taken together, promote overall family well-being and healthier, thriving communities.

Principle among these:

Strong Start is an early intervention/prevention program that promotes healthy social-emotional development in at-risk, disadvantaged children who bring the effects of emotional, psychological and physical trauma into early education settings.

YouthAim! focuses on vulnerable teens at a critical, formative life stage by providing them skills necessary to make good decisions and protect themselves from harmful behavior.

Helping Fathers be Fathers is a life and parenting skills development program promoting responsible fatherhood among multi-challenged, urban males.

*"My once
troubled daughter*

*is the loving,
beautiful child I knew
she could be
because of
Strong Start.*



*She is able to learn,
has playmates that like her
and our family is happier."*

EARLY INTERVENTION = HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

STRONG START

Many of the children we work with have seen and dealt with more challenges to their health and personal safety than many adults face in their entire lives.

But, we've seen how resilient these kids can be and how many rise above their circumstances and ultimately make positive changes in both their lives and their community. That's why we take a strong stand in offering support as soon as possible with focused early intervention initiatives like Strong Start.

Strong Start is a healthy child development program that focuses on strengthening the emotional resiliency and competency of young children. We believe that, when given the right tools, children are better prepared to effectively use cognitive, social-emotional and physical skills to position themselves for future academic and life success.

Strong Start allows us to leverage our highly skilled staff to support under-resourced organizations. Among our services, we work with early education centers to assist teachers in addressing the social-emotional needs of their children by:

- Out-posting a Family Service early childhood mental health specialist to engage directly with teachers and children
- Providing classroom/student management consultations for teachers
- Conducting social-emotional development assessments
- Training parents with important skills, including intervention modeling and behavior techniques
- Offering specialized services, including home visits and child and family therapy, as needed

Such inter-agency collaboration—matching Family Service's professional service capacity with an early education center's requirements—significantly upgrades the center's ability to effectively address the mental health needs of children they serve and makes possible:

- A more compatible environment for children's cognitive development, including enhanced literacy and language skills
- Better access to and availability of child or child/parent therapy
- A greater likelihood that therapeutic benefits will carry over from school to family homes
- More insightful and self-aware parenting

THINK ABOUT THIS!

With early intervention, young children are able to rise above the damaging emotional effects of exposure to urban violence and develop the emotional resilience required for healthy development.

STRONG START

Maralinda with her daughter Kira

YouthAim!

*I hear a sister crying out for my help
I see birds flying, but youngsters
steady dying
I am a dreamer
I am hopeful
I think this world will change
for the better
I feel free
I am an achiever
I am kind
I care for many people
I wish money didn't rule the world
I am single
I am a believer
I hope we can start making
change in our community
I know that out of many teens in
the world, I will make a difference
I am Strong.*

Poem by a YouthAim! teen member

THINK ABOUT THIS!

Educating teens about the consequences of harmful behavior and engaging them in healthy out-of-school developmental activities broadens their horizons and expands their world of possibilities.

Peer pressure is strong in the best of circumstances.

When you couple it with a lack of mentorship or healthy outlets, it can put good teens at risk. YouthAim! seeks to educate participants at a formative age about individual, community and societal factors that potentially place them in harm's way. By educating participating teens on the underlying causes of the challenges they face and giving them the tools to cope, teens are empowered to make safe and healthy decisions.

Our program parallels the school year and engages youth in a diverse curriculum that encourages greater self-awareness, positive risk-taking and development of new skills and relationships. Using a media-based approach with audio, visual, kinesthetic (learning by doing) and synesthetic (learning through an association of senses), YouthAim! teaches a variety of learning styles. The curriculum is real and relevant in the lives of participants and includes:

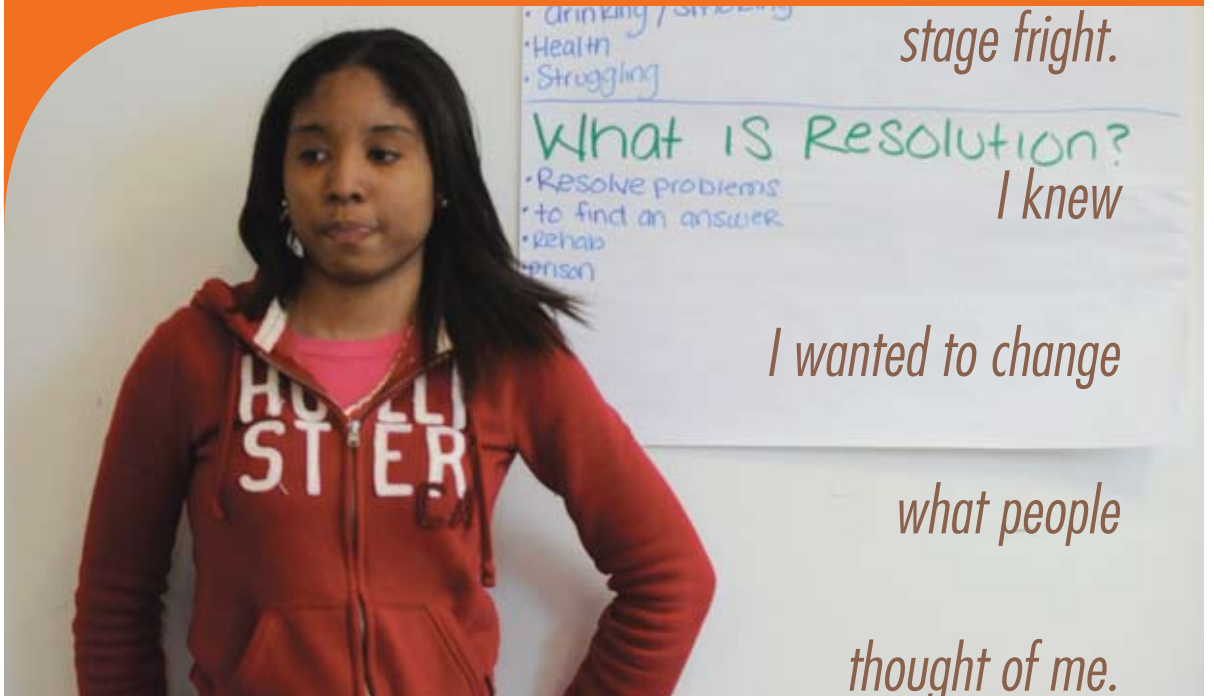
- Critical thinking
- Conflict resolution skills
- Personal health care and nutrition
- Health education
- Media literacy
- Racial issues
- Substance abuse
- Creative skills development

To be involved, teens must demonstrate an interest in leadership and a desire to improve their lives and their communities. Each year, group leaders are selected to take what they have learned into their community to teach other at-risk teens. Those demonstrating particular success in embracing the program are rewarded through designation as group leaders and receive stipends for continued leadership service to the program. YouthAim! teens also become change agents at home, at school and in the streets. Their presence creates a positive ripple effect felt throughout all of urban Boston.

YouthAim!

Teens participating in active problem solving discussion

*"I used to be
very shy
and had bad
stage fright.*



I knew

I wanted to change

what people

thought of me.

*YouthAim! gives me
confidence in myself."*

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT = SUCCESSFUL ADULTS

*"I had to change
my whole lifestyle*

*to accept my
child into
my home.*

*This helped smooth
my transition*

*from being a single
man living alone to
being a good father."*

RESPONSIBLE FATHERS = CHILDREN THAT THRIVE



HELPING FATHERS BE FATHERS

Fathers have a powerful, positive impact on the lives of their children.

And when absent from their children's lives, the void can leave a powerful impact with a very negative effect.

That's why Family Service initiated Helping Father be Fathers, a parenting education initiative that teaches multi-challenged men, aged 16 to 45, to take proper responsibility for guiding their children.

Helping Fathers incorporates a range of activities focused on achieving and sustaining engagement in their children's lives, reflecting not only responsible fatherhood, but also healthy child development and overall family wellness. The program uses Family Service's leading edge service delivery system, which offers a one-stop, flexible and individualized continuum of care to meet each family's unique situation. In addition, Family Service is able to leverage government agencies, corporations and community and faith-based organizations to assist willing fathers.

Helping Fathers provides:

- Multi-dimensional needs assessment and strengths identification
- Individual counseling
- Sensitivity training
- Skill building
- Recreational services
- Job readiness training
- Targeted referrals for specialized services
- Weekly progress reviews

THINK ABOUT THIS!

Even from birth, children with an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they develop, have better social connections with peers.

Helping Fathers is a vital service intervention that elevates the chance for success by participants and their families. Indeed, substantial research shows that:

- Children with strong father relationships are less likely to be depressed and exhibit poor social behavior.
- Boys with involved fathers have fewer school behavior problems.
- Girls with involved fathers have stronger self-esteem.
- Children who live with their fathers are more likely to have good physical and emotional health, to achieve academically, and to avoid high-risk behavior.

In short, healthy fathers influence and allow children to thrive. And healthy families give rise to sustainable, productive communities.

FATHERS

Lloyd with his son Jeremy

Children



Youth



Parents and Families



FAMILY CONNECTIONS: Integrated Services System

Participants in Strong Start, YouthAim! and Helping Fathers, as well as other FSGB programs, benefit from a comprehensive continuum of services for children, youth and their families. For example: a child may come to Family Service through Strong Start and an assessment will show that her father is a good candidate for Helping Fathers. In addition, other parenting education and family support programs may be identified as helpful to the family's well being. Through one child's initial involvement with Family Service, an at-risk family is now working towards future success


Our Family Connections service system is flexible, client-centered and strength-based. Components range from prevention/life skill education to specialized clinical intervention.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN



- **Strong Start** is a collaboration model that places a FSGB clinician on-site at individual, under-resourced urban early childhood development centers to significantly upgrade the centers' capacity to address the mental health needs of low-income children through clinical assessments, child and family therapy, teacher training and consultation, and parenting skill building.
- **Family Independence Program (FIP)** provides group home living for teen mothers (and their children) receiving public assistance and unable to live with their families or the fathers of their children due to abuse, neglect, substance abuse or other extenuating circumstance. They have low educational attainment and few job skills. FIP helps them move toward independence and economic self-sufficiency, graduate high school (or pass the GED), practice good parenting and life management skills, avoid child abuse, and raise healthy, emotionally stable, and school-ready children.
- **Supported Teen Parent Employment Program (STEP)** offers structured residential living to FIP graduates, who have achieved their service plan goals and can benefit from additional job training, transitional housing, and access to existing community-based services, assisting them to become economically self-sufficient over the long-term.
- **The Family Focused Strengthening Team** offers in-home behavioral therapy and mentoring; and guides parents and other family members to discover and develop strengths, skills and resources while coping with behavioral and emotional challenges they face. Clinicians help families reduce safety risks, enrich child-family relationships, improve child behavioral health, expand coping skills, and reduce the need for out-of-home placements for children/youth with significant behavioral issues.
- **The Center for Behavioral Health** focuses on stabilizing at-risk children and pre-adolescents who have experienced traumatic stress and dysfunction due to family violence, sexual assault, emotional or physical abuse, chronic neglect, traumatic loss, or school and community violence. Clinicians work with clients individually and in a family context to help them identify their own strengths; understand choices available to them; and assist in discovering inner resources that will help them to understand and cope with the traumatic feelings they experience. The Center also counsels parents how to restore children and families to optimal functioning at home, at school, or at work; to reduce risk of hospitalization or out-of-family placement for children; and to help parents support children who are trauma survivors, coping with learning disabilities, or attention deficit disorder. The Center also offers psycho-pharmacology services, and FSGB clinicians provide mental health services to children and pre-adolescents enrolled in the Boston Public Schools.
- **Family Service is a key participant in the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative**, a statewide, interagency initiative that seeks to assure a community-based system of care that will enable families and their children facing significant behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs to access the services required to achieve family stability. CBHI seeks increased timely access to services; reduce health disparities, and ensure an integrated behavioral health system across state agencies. FSGB clinicians will provide in-home therapy, in-home behavioral health and therapeutic mentoring services to such children and their families.



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 - **Men in the Making** seeks to strengthen adult-youth relationships by working with parents, after-school staff, and community members as mentors to support positive development in at-risk boys. Mentors help boys overcome social barriers by providing after-school programs in a gender-sensitive environment that encourages healthy social-emotional development. The goal is for more boys to graduate from high school with options for the future and as responsible, involved community members.
 - **YouthAim!** is a year-long leadership development program that educates high school-age youth about individual, community, and societal factors placing them at risk for harm, while training them to use their knowledge to bring about personal and community change. Recruitment is by word-of-mouth in the community and by referrals from Boston area schools and organizations. Stipends are offered to select youth who demonstrate leadership and a desire to improve their lives and communities. They develop and practice leadership skills, e.g., facilitating workshops, public speaking, collaborating and community outreach. All graduate as community youth leaders prepared to conduct advocacy/education campaigns in their schools and neighborhoods.
 - **The Family Focused Strengthening Team** offers in-home behavioral therapy and mentoring; and guides parents and other family members to discover and develop strengths, skills and resources while coping with behavioral and emotional challenges they face. Clinicians help families reduce safety risks, enrich child-family relationships, improve child behavioral health, expand coping skills, and reduce the need for out-of-home placements for children/youth with significant behavioral issues.
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PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES



- **Helping Fathers Be Fathers** promotes responsible fatherhood among urban men by encouraging greater self-awareness and behavioral changes. HFBF recognizes † fathers can have a powerful, positive impact upon children’s healthy development—and, when absent, the void too often has just as powerful negative results.
- **The Parenting Journey** focuses on supporting parents whose own upbringing undermines their ability to provide emotional support to their children. They learn more about themselves as parents, their relationships, strengths, and the skills they need to be effective parents.
- **Effective Black Parenting** addresses the special challenges faced by African American parents and their children due to the history of discrimination, and is particularly respectful of African American culture and communication patterns.
- **Los Niños Bien Educados** respects the special traditions/customs of Latino families and focuses on the value of parents or caregivers raising children to be “bien educados,” i.e., well-behaved in a social and personal sense and educated in an academic sense.
- **The Parent Mentor/Family Advocate** service is a home-based visiting program that assists parents/caretakers/family members to enhance their range of effective parenting skills—focusing on healthy family routines, effective child management skills, and parent-child interaction that is nurturing and responsive to the needs of family members.
- **The Family Focused Strengthening Team** offers in-home behavioral therapy and mentoring; and guides parents and other family members to discover and develop strengths, skills and resources while coping with behavioral and emotional challenges they face. Clinicians assist families to reduce safety risks, enrich child-family relationships, improve child behavioral health, and expand coping skills.
- **The Center for Behavioral Health** focuses on stabilizing at-risk adults—individuals and couples—who have experienced traumatic stress and dysfunction due to family violence, sexual assault, emotional or physical abuse, chronic neglect, traumatic loss, or school and community violence. Clinicians work with clients individually and in a family context to help them identify their own strengths; understand choices available to them; and assist in discovering inner resources that will help them to understand and cope with the traumatic feelings they experience. The Center also counsels parents how to restore children and families to optimal functioning at home, at school, or at work; to reduce risk of hospitalization or out-of-family placement for children; and to help parents support children who are trauma survivors, coping with learning disabilities, or attention deficit disorder. The Center also offers psychopharmacology services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION visit www.fsgb.org
or call 617.523.6400

2010 CELEBRATING 175 YEARS

A Rich History of Service to Boston

Few American social service organizations claim as rich a history as Family Service of Greater Boston, which traces its roots to 1835—during Andrew Jackson’s presidency and only 13 years after Boston’s incorporation as a city. **We have served children, youth and families** through the wide sweep of the American experience—**during the Civil War, two World Wars, Great Depression, civil rights and women’s movements, and the technology revolution.**

The early charities that evolved into Family Service introduced ideas and methods of “self-help” that underlie the modern concepts of community service and philanthropy. Family Service has carried on the traditions of social innovation which characterized its predecessors. Adapting to changing needs, we continue to meet the requirements of new generations of residents struggling to overcome the most damaging effects of poverty, discrimination, violence and isolation. **Today, as throughout our history, we promote self-sufficiency and well-being as essential to building healthy families and communities.**



= The Power of Family

Family Formation Family Wellness Family Coping Skills



HELPING FAMILIES BE FAMILIES SINCE 1835

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