

# Connections Matter

## 2023 Annual Report



**MADONNA PLACE**

**Strengthening Families Since 1987**

Serving Eastern Connecticut



## Greetings Friends and Supporters of Madonna Place

Last year was an exciting year for Madonna Place. It was the first full year that all 4 of our programs were completely open to the public since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We were able to connect with more families in Eastern CT that truly needed assistance. The total number of people served at Madonna Place grew from 914 in FY21, to 1,535 in FY22, to 1,704 in FY23. From 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023, a total of 679 families were served, and those families consisted of 965 children and 739 adults.

Families are still trying to rebound financially since the pandemic. Our food distribution has grown

exponentially (in 2021, we were serving about 6 to 8 families per week, and now we are serving over 50 families per week). We've also seen an increase in homeless families in Eastern CT and have supported them with finding employment, and securing housing and other resources.

At Madonna Place we support vulnerable families through our evidence-based programs and teach them skills and ways to become self-sufficient. Families learn the importance of quality time with their children, monitoring their child's development and health, and connecting with other families.

As we've built our partnerships in the community, we've focused on ensuring all families are given the same opportunities to learn parental skills. Services are now offered in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Cape Verdean Creole.

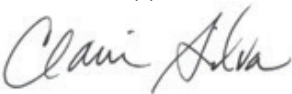
All of this work has been possible because of our supporters: state and federal funders, local foundations,

**85 cents  
of each dollar  
received goes  
directly to supporting  
children and their  
families**

community partners, donors, volunteers, and our Board of Directors. We are grateful for their commitment to strengthen families, promote health and prevent child abuse and neglect.

Our staff work tirelessly to give a hand up for each of our families. We would like to thank our staff members for their passion and commitment to help every family in need. They are truly the heart of our organization.

With true appreciation,



Claire Silva  
Executive Director



Lisa Griffin  
Board President



Claire Silva  
Executive Director

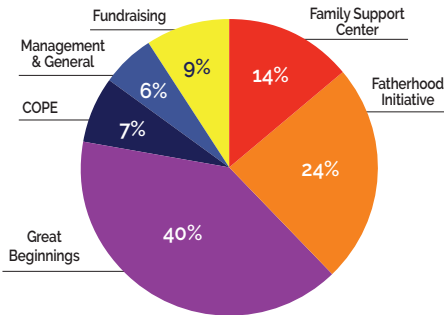


Lisa Griffin  
Board President

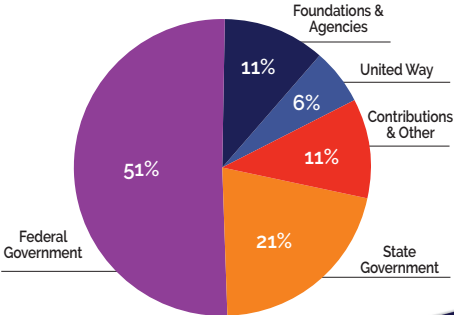
**1704**  
unduplicated  
parents & children  
were served by  
Madonna Place  
last year

36 years of strengthening families

Expense Allocation  
\$1,521,496 (PRE-AUDIT FIGURES)



Support & Income Funding Sources  
\$1,667,934 (PRE-AUDIT FIGURES)





## Great Beginnings

**Great Beginnings (GB)** is a weekly home visiting program for expecting parents and new moms (and dads) that provides parent education in child development utilizing the Parents as Teachers Curriculum and the Healthy Families national model. We help families that have many stressors in their lives to focus on the goal of raising healthy children. GB is a true early intervention based child abuse and neglect prevention program. Weekly home visits are conducted, and learning materials, books, food, diapers, and other support resources are made available to empower families and improve access to care. Services are available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.

### Great Beginnings:

- 187** parents and children were served
- 850** home visits were completed
- 100%** of families enrolled had no new substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect
- 94%** improved on their parent/child interactions
- 100%** of babies born during the program were healthy and full term

## Community Outreach Plus Education:

- 100** parents and children were served
- 50%** of participants exhibited drug/alcohol use disorder
- 55%** were assessed for trauma
- 100%** of participants needing basic needs resources received assistance

## Community Outreach Plus Education

**Community Outreach Plus Education (COPE)** is a community outreach and drop-in service program that includes assessments, case management, and referrals for mental health, substance use disorders, basic needs, educational programs, and other emergency supports. Care is provided with a trauma-informed focus for mental health, substance use, and domestic violence issues. COPE provides a proactive approach of early intervention to help prevent crisis situations from escalating.







## Family Support Center

The **Family Support Center (FSC)** is a unique drop-in center that provides basic needs items such as diapers, baby formula, food, school supplies, toiletries, books, educational toys and resources. We offer informal counseling and parent education including ESL classes, Family-Group Connections events and Summer Connections for students. Services are offered in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Cape Verdean Creole. The FSC helps families to reduce risk factors and build protective factors which can strengthen families, improve outcomes, and prevent child abuse and neglect.

### Family Support Center:

- 1,420** parents and children were served
- 252** families received emergency diapers.
- 38,402** meals were served, which was 27,732 pounds of food
- 87** families received emergency cans of formula
- 36** individuals attended parenting classes
- 46** weeks of ESL classes were held

## Fatherhood Initiative:

- 318** parents and children were served
- 46%** of fathers completed 24/7 Dad classes to improve parenting skills
- 57%** increased time with their children
- 51%** listed improving their financial situations as a goal

## Fatherhood Initiative

The purpose of the **Fatherhood Initiative (FHI)** program is to increase positive involvement and interaction between fathers and their children. Services that we offer include a 12-week 24/7 Dad Fatherhood class, individualized case management, support around court processes, and support for fathers who are involved with DCF. Case managers work with fathers to help them achieve their personal goals of increasing parenting time, modifying or establishing visitation or custody, gaining or increasing employment, and increasing parenting skills. We can also help with child support arrearage adjustment and establishing paternity. Each year we serve about 150 fathers across Eastern CT. Madonna Place's Fatherhood Program is the only state certified fatherhood program in Eastern CT.





## Making Connections and Changing Lives

This past year was a time of true recovery across our state and country as a whole. Families have been emerging from COVID isolation and beginning to interact again in the world in a way that they had not felt safe to do in the past two years. What was made very clear as we emerged is that “connecting matters.” We thrive as individuals, families, and communities when we are able to interact with each other in person, exchange ideas, and support

one another. Connection, specifically physical connection and relationship building, is critical to long term success. It strengthens families. As laughter, learning, singing and even crying all returned to our playrooms and programs, we have been able to provide that in-person connection that our children, parents, and caregivers so desperately need. Whether that be with in-person home visits, 24-7 fatherhood classes and screening, ESL classes,



parenting classes, drop-in emergency COPE support, basic needs resources, open houses and tours, or children returning to our drop-in daily playrooms: families have returned to our community and need our support. Madonna Place welcomed them back in with eager and open arms. This next year has the capacity to be a great one for the families in our region if we all make time to appreciate and help each other thrive.

“

*We are grateful for the partnerships we've built with many supporters that continue to help us strengthen the most vulnerable families in Eastern, CT.*

*~Claire Silva,  
Executive Director*

”

# Thank You to our Contributors

## July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

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**\$100,000 and up**

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Connecticut Office of Early Childhood  
United Way of Southeastern Connecticut

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*All contributions \$50 and above are included. Thank you to all Madonna Place Board Members, staff, and community members for their in-kind donations in 2022-2023 benefiting our clients, programs, and events. We apologize for any errors or omissions.*



## Our Mission

Madonna Place provides services which strengthen families, promote health, and prevent child abuse and neglect. We offer four programs that help parents to build strong support systems in their lives.



**Madonna Place, Inc.**

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