



# HOWARD CENTER

Help is here.



ANNUAL REPORT / FY 2014





A publication of Howard Center  
Martie Majoros, editor  
208 Flynn Avenue #3J, Burlington, VT 05401

## OUR MISSION

Howard Center improves the well-being of children, adults, families, and communities.

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If we've missed you, please call (802) 488-6912 so we can update our records.

United Way of  
Chittenden County  
unitedwaycc.org



## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY



Throughout my time at Howard Center, I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to thank many of you in person for your support and words of wisdom. As I near the end of my 39-year tenure, I want to once again express my gratitude on behalf of the individuals and families we serve each year. It has been a bit selfish on my part: I have gained more than given, learned more than taught.

In the faces I've seen over the years, I've witnessed the strength and courage required to deal with life's challenges. I've watched as people who could easily choose to complain about unfairness strive to make each day a positive one for themselves, their family and friends, and even strangers. And because of your generosity and commitment to our mission, I've seen faces filled with courage, hope, and joy.

You have made possible many services which benefit children, adults, and families. Although highlighting specific programs is a bit like trying to choose a favorite child, we have much to celebrate. We have created two highly acclaimed programs that offer support for individuals with autism; one for pre-school children, the other for college-age students. We established First Call, a 24/7/365 crisis hotline that supports families and schools every day and during community crises. With our community partners, we initiated an award-winning Street Outreach program that helps vulnerable individuals with unmet social service needs access mental health services. When we introduced medication-assisted treatment programs for individuals in recovery from opiate addiction, you remained committed to our mission and stood by us. We supported a full-time military mental health specialist to serve our National Guard members and their families with pre- and post-deployment help. There was little to no financial reimbursement. It was our mission to serve just as it was theirs.

The bottom line is that we provide help. It's what we do. We provide help 24/7 through our crisis services and residential homes. We help individuals who feel like there's no one who can help them. In this year's report, we've highlighted a few of the many programs that help our friends, families, neighbors, colleagues, and community.

Thank you,

Todd M. Centybear  
*Executive Director*

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



As many of you are aware, our Executive Director Todd Centybear will retire after 39 years at Howard Center. One of the agency's longest-serving staff members, Todd started at Howard Center in 1975 and served in various adult mental health and substance abuse program areas before being appointed executive director in 2001. Under his leadership, our organization has developed numerous innovative preventive, education, and treatment programs. Many of these have become crucial to the well-being of our community. I have been inspired by his ability to create community partnerships and to establish new programs in response to emerging needs.

I am equally grateful to the staff who work every day to help the most vulnerable individuals in our community. I am thankful for our Board of Trustees who generously contribute their time and talent in support of our mission. Their commitment was most recently apparent as they contributed their expertise throughout our search for our new executive director, Bob Bick, the current director of our Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank Todd for his work. I know there are thousands of Vermonters who join us in thanking him for his decades of service and effective leadership. I also want to take this opportunity to welcome Bob as he steps in to this new role within the organization. I look forward to working with him in this new capacity to further our mission of providing quality mental health services for all members of our community.

Thank you, Todd. Welcome, Bob.

Sincerely,

Mark Baglini  
President, Board of Trustees

## A RENEWED COMMITMENT

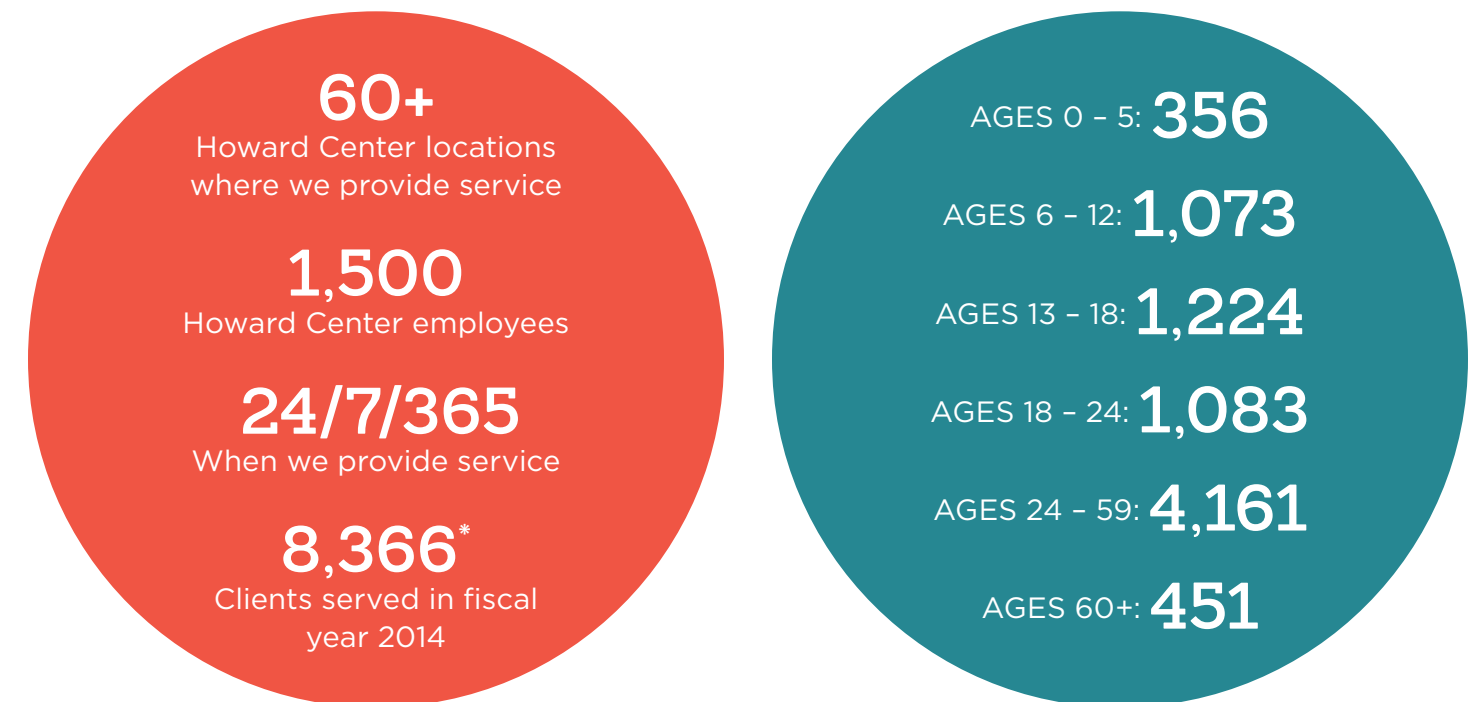
It is customary that annual reports include achievements and highlights from the past year, and this report is no exception. However, even as we look back on the previous year, we also have one eye on the future. As our current executive director Todd Centybear prepares to retire after 39 years with our organization, we celebrate him for the important accomplishments during his 13-year tenure as director. We also look to the future with excitement and hope as the new executive director Bob Bick will take the helm on January 1. We view this transition as a time of promise as we continue to ensure that individuals and families in our community receive quality mental health services.

We are also pleased that we are able to include in this report one of the first public presentations of our new logo. Our new look embodies our renewed commitment to serving our community and speaks to the core spirit of our organization: [Help is here.](#)

So please join us in celebrating our past accomplishments and our goals for the future. In the end, it is you—our supporters, community partners, and staff—who make this celebration possible.

## WHO WE ARE & WHO WE HELP

We offer life-saving professional crisis and counseling services to children and adults of all ages; supportive services to individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities who need help with education, employment, and life maintenance skills; counseling and medical services for those struggling with substance abuse, and intensive interventions for adults with serious and persistent mental health challenges.



*\*Howard Center recently implemented an electronic health records system to track clients who receive services. The client numbers in this report are drawn from that system and reflect only individuals who became Howard Center clients. They do not include thousands of individuals who receive support and services (particularly 24/7 crisis services) without officially enrolling as a client.*



# HOW WE HELP CRISIS AND STABILIZATION SERVICES

**2,429:** INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO RECEIVE SUPPORT THROUGH ALL OF OUR CRISIS AND STABILIZATION PROGRAMS\*

## ASSIST: IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP

Dina McGinnis, ASSIST Program Coordinator, says, “Our program is somewhat unique. We are just one of a few states to have a crisis stabilization program located outside of a hospital.” The clinically-based program, which can accommodate six residents at a time, offers support for any Chittenden County resident who is experiencing a psychiatric crisis. The goal is to help people remain in the community and avoid hospitalization.

For many, ASSIST offers a respite from a stressful situation in their lives. Knowing they are in a safe place with professional support helps clients address the issues in their lives and set goals so they can get their life back on track. One woman who came from an abusive home situation says, “Having a place to stay has allowed me to feel safer than being at home, without giving up a lot of the freedoms that I would have to give up if I went into the hospital.”



“A key aspect of the program is making sure that people know it’s okay to ask for help. We all need help sometimes.”

–Michelle Risley,  
Clinician, ASSIST

ASSIST staff Michelle Risley, Dina McGinnis, and Kelsey Leder

## ASSIST NUMBERS

**299:** INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVED CRISIS SUPPORT THROUGH ASSIST

**4.5 DAYS:** AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY AT ASSIST

## FIRST CALL FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: HELPING FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

Charlotte McCorkel, Director of First Call for Children and Families says, “Regardless of who makes the call—parent, youth, teacher, doctor, neighbor—we will help them or make sure they get the help they need.”

The 24/7/365 crisis program is the only crisis team in the state specifically for children and youth and fully mobile. In Chittenden County, there is help regardless of the time of day or night, and clinicians drive to the farthestmost regions of the county to help a young person and their family. For every face-to-face assessment, First Call follows up with the pediatrician or primary care provider to coordinate the youth’s health and mental health needs.

Although the program is based on the philosophy that the caller defines the crisis, for many parents it may be the first time they have reached out to ask for help. McCorkel says, “We tell them it’s okay to ask for support.”



Several of the 13 First Call full-time staff: Sam Weiss, Heather Yassick, Charlotte McCorkel, and Katie Reynolds

## FIRST CALL NUMBERS

**32:** COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS OR TRAININGS

**1,666:** IN-PERSON ASSESSMENTS

**18,564:** TOTAL CONTACTS, INCLUDING CRISIS PHONE CALLS AND FACE-TO-FACE ASSESSMENTS.

To read more about the specific programs included here, visit our website at [www.howardcenter.org](http://www.howardcenter.org).

\*Please note that the numbers in the main categories included in this report represent a duplicate count as clients may receive more than one type of service.



# HOW WE HELP EDUCATION

1,497: INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AGENCY-WIDE

## BAIRD SCHOOL: HELPING KIDS SUCCEED

When Jennifer Uttecht describes Howard Center’s Baird School, she says, “It’s a school for kids to learn all the things they need to learn to be successful in life. The children at The Baird School just need to learn in different ways with different levels of support.”



Baird School and INCLUSION Director Kristie Reed and Clinical Director Jennifer Uttecht

“Through your nurturing and support, you have helped our son to strengthen and grow. You have instilled self-confidence. You have provided him with a sense of safety which has allowed him to trust in others.”

–Parent of a Baird School student

Uttecht, the Clinical Director of the Baird School and INCLUSION Program, says many of the School’s students are referred from their home school districts because they have emotional or behavioral difficulties which interfere with their learning. At Baird School, they receive additional support, and a clinician, special educator, behavior interventionist, and classroom teacher are assigned to every classroom in the licensed, independent school that serves students in grades K-8.

“We put an emphasis on providing multiple levels of support, especially in the area of literacy. Being able to read is an essential skill necessary for success,” says Uttecht. Students participate in therapeutic group activities to help them learn how to be part of a group. Uttecht adds, “We want them to be able to be successful in social situations with their peers when they return to their public school.”

Uttecht acknowledges that there is sometimes a stigma associated with the students who attend Baird School, and adds, “We would love to change that. It’s a school like any other school, where students are having fun and learning new skills. At the end of the day, they’re just kids.”

### BAIRD SCHOOL NUMBERS

- 52: STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL
- 12: NUMBER OF TEACHERS/STAFF

# HOW WE HELP FAMILY SUPPORT

699: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WHO RECEIVE SUPPORT AGENCY-WIDE

## INTENSIVE FAMILY BASED SERVICES: HELPING THE WHOLE FAMILY

Ruth D’Angelo, Assistant Director of Family and Community Programs, says, “Howard Center’s Intensive Family Based Services (IFBS) serves high-need youth in our county who are struggling at home and in the community. IFBS provides in-home family services to these children and their families. She adds, “Although the child is the client, we go into a home and work with the whole family and identify resources for all family members.” The definition of family is determined by each specific case and may be a nuclear family, foster family, adoptive family, single parent, or relatives raising children.



Ruth D’Angelo, Assistant Director of Family and Community Programs

“We feel empowered as parents. We have better ways of dealing with our children and each other. Every family would benefit from this amazing service.”

–Parent of a child who receives support from IFBS

Once enrolled in the program, IFBS clinicians visit families in their home twice a week for 13 weeks. If needed, families can receive additional support beyond the 13-week period. The home visits help clinicians make appropriate referrals to other services. They are also able to see how the family’s behavior impacts the child.

The goals are as varied as the families. For some families with teenagers, improving communication may be the goal. For others, the goal may be reuniting the child after being in a foster family. Sometimes a parent will say I don’t have a problem, my child does. D’Angelo says, “We often start by helping parents understand that whatever is stressing them is also stressing their children.”

### INTENSIVE FAMILY BASED SERVICES NUMBERS

- 124: FAMILIES WHO RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM IFBS



# HOW WE HELP EMPLOYMENT

446: INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT AGENCY-WIDE

## PROJECT HIRE: HELPING PEOPLE FIND EMPLOYMENT

When one 31-year-old man from Burundi with a developmental disability began exploring his career options through Project Hire, he announced that his dream job was to wash trucks. His determination soon landed him a position at SecurShred. Although he had worked for several years as a volunteer, getting his first paying job was a well-deserved achievement. He now says, “I am hopeful that SecurShred expands and builds a new building and buys more trucks for me to wash.”

Project Hire is a supported employment program offered through Howard Center Developmental Services. Since it began in 1982, the program has continued to grow as more clients desire paid employment and the benefits and satisfaction it brings. The program offers support for both job seekers and employers. Project Hire Senior Manager Karen Hussey says, “Everyone benefits when people with disabilities achieve their goal of gainful employment.” Through partnerships with local employers, job seekers can realize their dreams and gain greater independence, and businesses gain valuable employees.

*If there was another candidate who was a good match, SecurShred would always support using Project Hire.*

*—Mark Trombley, Operations Manager, SecureShred*



*Project Hire staff: Evan Jones, Jessica Snook, and Brenda Johnston*

As a new employee, he quickly impressed his supervisors with his work ethic and gained their trust and confidence. SecurShred has welcomed their new employee with open arms and appreciate his positive attitude. Mark Trombley, Operations Manager at SecurShred says, “Having him here has created greater awareness throughout the company. His positive attitude and hard work make it a pleasure to work with him.”

### PROJECT HIRE NUMBERS

- 42: PEOPLE WHO BECAME EMPLOYED
- 175: PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED ON-GOING EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT TO PREPARE FOR OR MAINTAIN A JOB
- \$780,355: TOTAL EARNINGS OF PROJECT HIRE EMPLOYEES IN FY 14
- 115: NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS INVOLVED THIS YEAR

# HOW WE HELP ADDICTION RECOVERY

1,034: CLIENTS RECEIVING ADDICTION RECOVERY SUPPORT AGENCY-WIDE

## SAFE RECOVERY: HELPING PEOPLE THROUGH THE RECOVERY PROCESS

Safe Recovery Program Coordinator Tom Dalton is quick to point out that recovery is a process that takes place over time. “For many people, we’re a safe place to come to when they hit a relapse, and helping someone stay safe during that time is an important part of their recovery.” He adds, “We engage people who are actively using, and we use that contact as a bridge to treatment.”



*—Tom Dalton, Safe Recovery Program Coordinator*

Specifically, the program offers support for individuals who are in recovery from using opiates or who have injected drugs. Because clients are often at risk of contracting HIV, Hepatitis A/B, and Hepatitis C, the program provides free testing and vaccinations. This past year, Safe Recovery added another option for clients and began distributing Narcan, an overdose reversal kit.

Dalton says, “Sometimes when you are really struggling, it’s hard to function. You need someone to go the extra mile to help you get unstuck. We say to clients, let’s make that call now. Let’s go over this application together. Let’s do it right now. We’ll help you with what you need.”

### SAFE RECOVERY NUMBERS

- 80: ON AVERAGE, NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO COME TO SAFE RECOVERY EACH DAY
- 36: OVERDOSE REVERSALS ATTRIBUTED TO USE OF NARCAN



# HOW WE HELP THERAPEUTIC COUNSELING

4,216: INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO RECEIVE THERAPEUTIC COUNSELING AGENCY-WIDE

## DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY: HELPING PEOPLE FACE CHALLENGES

“Life is challenging and hard, but you have to find a way to work through it every day,” says one 27-year-old client with an autism spectrum disorder. Through her participation in the treatment program known as Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), she says she has learned “how to deal with my emotions and how to manage myself when life changes and things are stressful.”



Staff in our Developmental Services area adapted DBT to specifically meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. Clinical Coordinator Ashley Wight says, “DBT helps clients identify specific things in their life they can change and then teaches them how to make those changes.” The program includes individual sessions and weekly group meetings that help clients gain the skills they need to deal with their emotions, stress, and interpersonal communication. Eight support staff, program managers, and shared living providers are trained in DBT to provide additional support and coach clients in real-time life situations.

Now, this young woman is using her skills to help others. Through her work at a local non-profit, she leads group sessions, puts together training materials to educate others, and regularly participates in a variety of advocacy-related events. Although these are impressive accomplishments, she has other plans for herself: “My goal is to get myself to a place where I am stable and doing the best I can.”

**DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY NUMBERS**  
27: CLIENTS INVOLVED IN DBT

# HOW WE HELP INDEPENDENT LIVING SUPPORT

891: INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVE SUPPORT TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY AGENCY-WIDE

## SAFETY CONNECTION: HELPING INDIVIDUALS TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

For one young mother of three who has a developmental disability and struggles with substance abuse, Safety Connection provides stability for her and her family. She says, “I like it for me and my kids because I feel safe in my apartment at night.” This past year, she left a home environment that included substance abuse. With help from other local agencies, she is now living in her own three-bedroom apartment, in a safe environment for her children. She is able to pursue her goal of independence and is learning to be a parent in control of her surroundings.

Safety Connection, now in its eighth year, provides nightly support to individuals who wish to pursue their goal of living on their own. Kevin Hutt, Safety Connection Coordinator, says that the “program meets people where they’re at by providing unobtrusive support.” Through the use of state-of-the-art technology and highly trained monitors and staff, individuals have the opportunity to move into more independent living situations while receiving enhanced security and safety measures to ease the transition. Nightly check-ins by Safety Connection monitors provide participants with a sense of connection to a larger community, and daily communication with Safety Connection case managers helps participants achieve their goals. Whether someone is just beginning their journey toward independent living or aging in place, Safety Connection helps people realize their dreams.



**SAFETY CONNECTION NUMBERS**  
54: ADULTS AND FAMILIES LIVING INDEPENDENTLY SUPPORTED BY SAFETY CONNECTION



# HOW WE HELP RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

596: INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES SERVED IN RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS AGENCY-WIDE

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS: HELPING PEOPLE LIVE FULLER LIVES

“Give someone the right environment and the right support, and it makes all the difference,” says Patti Bauerle, Team Coordinator for the Community Support Program. Bauerle is one of the supervisors for programs that provide case management and residential, employment, psychiatric, and recovery services for adults with significant mental health challenges and co-occurring substance challenges. Elaine Soto, the Community Support Program Director states, “Our mission is to provide person-centered services so that people recover and lead fulfilling lives.”

“It’s like family here, even though sometimes we get upset with each other.”

—Client in a residential home for adults with mental health challenges



Several staff from the Community Support Program  
Patti Bauerle, Lisa Martiny, Graham Parker,  
Elaine Soto, and Valerie Koropatnick

Valerie Koropatnick, Coordinator of Westview House, a day program for Chittenden County adults who have been diagnosed with a major mental illness, notes that during her nearly 40 years at Howard Center, she has observed that clients are doing more: “Their lives are fuller, and they have a place to live. They are better able to handle the mental health obstacles in their lives, so they are more likely to take on new challenges.”

One man in his 50s says he comes to Westview because the one-dollar meal is “the cheapest lunch in town.” He explains that he has diabetes and the nutritious meals help him stay healthy. He also enjoys catching up with his peers and says, “It’s like family here, even though sometimes we get upset with each other.”

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM NUMBERS

157: INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND SUBSTANCE USE ISSUES WHO WERE HOUSED WITH SUPPORT SERVICES AT 11 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

# HOW ARE WE DOING?

How does our work make a difference in the lives of the individuals and families we serve? Our client satisfaction surveys are one way we assess the quality of our work.

93%

I RECEIVED THE HELP I NEEDED.

93%

THE SERVICES I RECEIVED WERE RIGHT FOR ME.

97%

STAFF TREATED ME WITH RESPECT.

92%

THE SERVICES I RECEIVED MADE A DIFFERENCE.



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With your support clients are able to live more independently and with dignity.

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Greater Burlington YMCA  
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Bruce Lee  
Cindy Lee  
LL Bean Outdoor Discovery Schools  
Lowe's  
Lululemon  
Roberta MacDonald  
Massage Envy  
My Little Cupcake  
Ann Narance  
Needleman's Bride and Formals  
Olive Garden Italian Restaurant  
Outback Steakhouse  
Ricky Patterson  
Pet Food Warehouse  
Marianne Phillips  
Pine Street Deli  
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Rhino Foods, Inc.  
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Claire Robinson-White  
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Sam Mazza's Farm Market  
Select Design  
Seventh Generation  
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Vermont Tent Company  
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Jane M. Vizvarie  
Jill Williams  
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Rachel Berube  
Julie Bier  
Dylan Billado  
Meghan Boucher  
Ken Brown  
Victoria Brown  
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Dennis Grage  
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Alexis Hafner  
Emily Harwood  
Jean Haverstick  
Kristen Hayden-West  
Mark Hengstler  
Rachel (Gillie) Hopkins  
Anne Marie Humbert  
Sarah Jennings  
Brittany Keel  
Brianna Kern  
Megan Kerrigan  
Amanda Kolifrath  
Max Krauss  
Ann Laramee  
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Ashley LaScala  
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Whitney Leighton  
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Nancy Cohen  
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Emma Dixon

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Jessa Morrish  
Tolami Oluitan  
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Lesli and Rick Blount  
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Dana Charlee  
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Beth Tarallo  
Barbara and Ray Trimmer  
Marie Zura

# HOW YOU CAN HELP?

## CONTRIBUTE

Your financial support sustains critical services for more than 8,000 clients a year: children and teens with emotional and behavioral challenges and their families; adults with mental illness and substance abuse issues; and people of all ages with intellectual disabilities.

Support Howard Center's programs and services benefiting the community. Honor a friend or relative with a gift in his/her name; we will tell those you honor of your kindness.

Mail a check, authorize a gift via credit card, or donate online at [www.HowardCenter.org](http://www.HowardCenter.org). Include Howard Center in your will or designate a percentage of your paid-up insurance policy.

## PARTICIPATE

Howard Center hosts several fundraising events throughout the year. In February, put together a team for the Curling Challenge, Vermont's only curling fundraiser, held in March. Run or walk in Zoe's Race in August and help us make homes more accessible for Vermont children and their families. These events are an opportunity for Howard Center to increase program funding, involve the community, and raise awareness about our diverse services. Join us!

## VOLUNTEER

Everyone has a skill, talent, or interest to share, and we invite you to see how you can help Howard Center by checking the volunteer opportunities on our website.

## BE AN AMBASSADOR

Tell your family and friends about how you or someone you care about has been helped by Howard Center. Your story reinforces the life-saving support our clients receive and dignifies those who receive mental health services.

THANK YOU  
FOR HELPING.

WE ARE MOST  
GRATEFUL TO YOU.

*\*Donor for five or more years.*



# EVENTS



**CURLING CHALLENGE**  
This year 32 teams took to the ice for our fifth annual curling fundraiser, Curling for Kids. Thanks to the Green Mountain Curling Club, Cairns Arena, our sponsors, and participants, we raised more than \$42,000 for programs that support the children we serve. It's not too early to begin gathering your friends, family members, and co-workers to form your four-person team for the 2015 Curling Challenge.

SAVE THE DATE: **MARCH 14, 2015**  
CAIRNS ARENA , SOUTH BURLINGTON

**ZOE'S RACE**  
For six years, children and adults have come out to Oakledge Park to take part in Zoe's Race, an annual fun run to raise money for families with children who receive support from Howard Center Developmental Services and need assistance to make their homes accessible. In 2013, over 200 runners, volunteers, and donors raised nearly \$20,000. To date, Zoe's Race has funded 13 home modification projects. We are grateful for the generosity of architect Chris Brown and contractors Rob Peeters and Mark Bosner. Their contributions of time and talent have made these renovations possible.



SAVE THE DATE: **AUGUST 30, 2015**  
OAKLEDGE PARK, BURLINGTON

# FY14 OPERATING BUDGET FINANCIAL SUMMARY



<b>PATIENT FEES AND PRIVATE INSURANCE</b>	
1%	\$180,901
<b>MEDICAID</b>	
73%	\$58,477,788
<b>PRIVATE, NON-MEDICAL INSURANCE (a form of Medicaid)</b>	
6%	\$4,598,327
<b>STATE GRANTS</b>	
7%	\$5,589,946
<b>FEDERAL GRANTS</b>	
1%	\$87,995
<b>LOCAL REVENUE</b>	
2%	\$2,041,899
<b>STATE &amp; OTHER CONTRACTS</b>	
10%	\$8,099,211



<b>CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES</b>	
34%	\$27,038,588
<b>MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE</b>	
26%	\$21,088,859
<b>DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES</b>	
40%	\$32,269,609

## AS OF JUNE 30, 2014

**ASSETS: \$26,633,345**      **LIABILITIES: \$12,543,786**      **EQUITIES: \$14,089,559**  
*This financial summary is unaudited. Howard Center's complete audited FY14 financial statement is available on request.*





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