



MassFamilies

.....
*leadership training for a world
where everyone belongs*

Annual Report FY 20-21

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Lessons Learned

The greatest impacts on MassFamilies during the COVID-19 pandemic have been the disruption of in-person training, our members being isolated from their communities and the interruption of their home-based services. MassFamilies responded to this crisis by distributing PPE, developing more leadership workshops, creating an online community of practice, hosting cultural and linguistic learning forums and more advocacy trainings.

MassFamilies successfully delivered all training and learning forums virtually and was able to use funding that would have been allocated to onsite training to expand outreach to isolated and marginalized communities. Trainings were designed to be shorter and virtual thereby making it more accessible. Our families also shared with us some additional restrictions such as their inability to leave their loved ones due to being immunocompromised, unexpected financial hardship, and being geographically isolated without transportation. Family supports were offered such as respite care, technology, interpretation, and on-going case management.

Commitment to Diversity

MassFamilies is committed to advancing, cultivating, and preserving a culture of 'access, equity, and belonging' within our organization, and with our partners, families, and communities we serve.

We are committed to identifying and advocating for policies, resources, and supports that foster an environment where all individuals have 'access, equity, and belonging' regardless of ability, medical needs, neurodiversity, religion, ethnicity, age, citizenship, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other aspect which makes them unique.

MassFamilies is committed to initiatives that train and empower BIPOC family leaders to design and deliver peer-to-peer training that is culturally and linguistically appropriate for their communities.

Financial Review

Supported 2,589 families statewide with virtual leadership trainings, support groups and community of practice events, collaborated with DDS area regional offices to deliver family leadership trainings and support to families. Delivered statewide training and formed working relationships with cultural and linguistic family support groups. Our accounting method is cash basis and there is 28,925 in accounts receivable at year end. Unaudited numbers.



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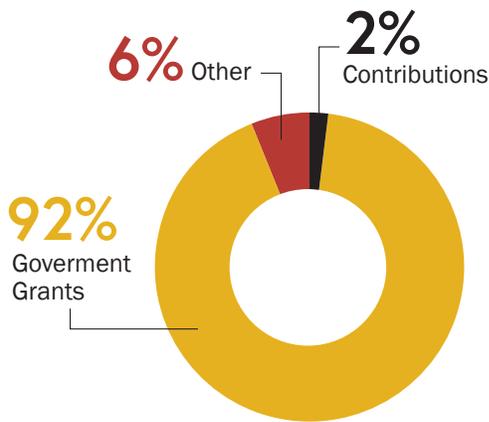
By the Numbers

1,228 Family Leadership & Support

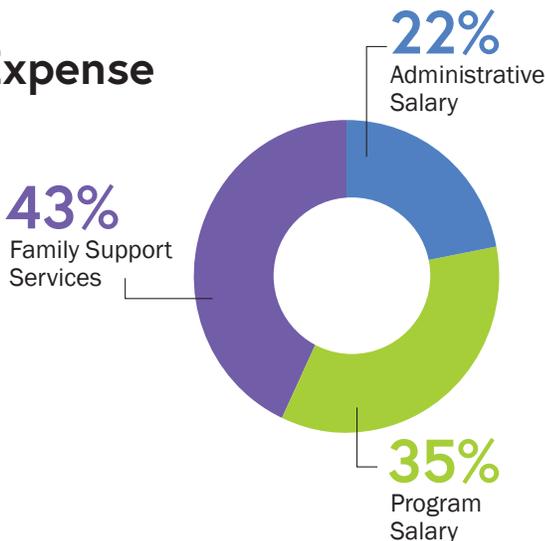
128 Cultural & Linguistic Family Support

1,233 Legislative Advocacy

Revenue



Expense



What our families have said to us this fiscal year...

“I found my people and my passion for advocacy has come alive!”

Family Leadership Series Participant

“The Imagine Better program has empowered our family with tools to become strategic advocates for our loved one. Conversations that typically feel vulnerable and burdensome are handled with care, empathy, and attention to detail. We’re grateful to be working with Imagine Better.”

Imagine Better Participant

“The Bicultural Cohort has been a huge blessing to be part of. It’s great to be around other parents with different cultures. I have learned so much as far as how to be a better parent, resources for my sons and how to be a better advocate for my children.”

Bicultural Cohort Participant

“A powerful demonstration of parents supporting and lifting one another”

Bicultural Cohort Participant

“At the beginning of Covid-19 we all felt left out and alone. Thanks to our cohort we are no longer in the shadows hoping and wishing we can meet other moms. We fit together like missing puzzle pieces. We laugh, talk, cry and support each with resources and genuine human connection.”

Bicultural Cohort Participant

“I can share resources and information as much as I can. I am happy to say that I can help and contribute as much as possible and that my contributions are useful to others one way or the other.”

Bicultural Cohort Participant



MassFamilies

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Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, MassFamilies will continue to prioritize families supporting a loved one with a disability and or chronic illness. We will continue to do so by providing sustained advocacy and leadership training throughout Massachusetts.

As we adjust to the new normal, statewide outreach and in-person community connections for all families remains a focus. MassFamilies believes that the delivery of family leadership and family support will need to be more equitable and comprehensive. It is now more critical than ever before that providers collaborate to leverage their resources with each other to reach more families.

MassFamilies hopes to create more avenues for online listening and learning sessions as well as leadership training. We know that the online platform will never replace in-person training and respite care. Therefore, MassFamilies is working on curriculum enhancements so that families can still feel connected to their communities, still have the desire to learn new strategies, and still feel a sense of belonging. Having access to services through all learning modalities is a must as we move forward.

At MassFamilies, access, equity, and inclusion, equals belonging.

President's Message

It is my pleasure to present the annual report of Mass Families. This Annual Report highlights our “first” year with managing and directing state contracts and with two new co-Executive Directors.

The 2020-21 year has also brought new and exciting opportunities for MassFamilies to become leaders in diversity and equity. Along with other providers, MassFamilies were able to prioritize all families for services. We have developed more ways to reach all families with a child, family member or loved ones with disabilities to enable everyone to be leaders and advocates and have their visions heard.

The Board has veteran and new family members, and we continue to expand our membership with recruiting members that will move our organization forward. Thank you all for your willingness to serve. We will continue to focus on our long-term strategic plans for our organization.

Mass Families has over 30 years history in providing Family Leadership Series in Massachusetts and in the last 2 years have seen our ability to continue our mission and vision through a tremendous amount of change, from being awarded regional family support contracts, to covid shutdown, to welcoming new innovative ways to offer workshops, and to offering family supports to all families here in the Commonwealth. Mass Families’ future will be even brighter than before. If we can succeed through all the changes the pandemic brought, we can succeed through anything. The future is bright, and I am so proud of the work we have done and all the work we will do!

Sandra Heller, Board Chairwoman



Special thank you to the board, leadership team, staff members, family volunteers, and community partners.



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