Your Support at Work:  
Parenting Journey Expands to Portsmouth

This past winter we sent Patrice Baker, Parent Education Coordinator, and JoAnn Clement, Family Center Administrator to be trained in a new parenting program that has proven to transform families. “Parenting Journey” is a 12-week evidence-based, trauma-informed parent education curriculum designed to help parents and caregivers understand how past experiences and present realities shape their attitudes and beliefs and influence how they engage with their children.

Parents are supported and encouraged to care for themselves and each other while participating in a series of reflective exercises and guided discussions. Participants have the chance to identify their strengths, set goals for themselves and their families, and discover resources to help support their children.

“The format of Parenting Journey makes it a special experience,” says Patrice. “They come back each week to learn and to support each other — sharing experiences, and realizing that they’re not alone as they face the challenges of parenting. They have time to reflect and dig deep into some personal experiences, and use this to make changes in their lives. The transformation process just keeps building over the entire 12 weeks.”

Your gifts allow us to offer Parenting Journey and many other family support programs that are reshaping families in our community. Thank you for ensuring that everyone has access to these life-changing support services.
Meet Dr. Colella, our new pediatrician

“Practicing pediatrics is gratifying in that, as providers, we have a wonderful opportunity to convey anticipatory guidance to caregivers to promote healthy lifestyles for kids from birth to young adulthood. I feel privileged to work with such a dedicated group of people.”

*Dr. Danette Colella*

Pediatrician Danette Colella joined us in late July, and sees patients at both Families First in Portsmouth and Lilac City Pediatrics in Rochester.

A pediatrician for the past 20 years, Dr. Colella has extensive experience in general pediatrics and adolescent medicine. Her interests include preventive medicine and continuity of care from birth to young adulthood.

After graduating from the University of Vermont College of Medicine, Dr. Colella completed her pediatric residency through Harvard Medical School at Boston Children’s Hospital and Boston Medical Center. She served as Chief of Pediatrics at South Shore Medical Center in Norwell, Mass., and most recently worked at a pediatric practice in Wisconsin before moving back to New England. She is board certified by the American Board of Pediatrics.

Dr. Colella is welcoming patients ages birth through 21 at Families First and Lilac City Pediatrics.

Acupuncture Available to Patients in Recovery

Acupuncturist Elizabeth Nelson has joined our team to provide ear acupuncture to patients receiving Medication Assisted Recovery services. As part of an integrated approach to recovery, acupuncture complements our primary care and behavioral health services to make treatment for substance use disorders more effective. Acupuncture has been shown to help some people improve physical and emotional stability, focus better, reduce cravings, feel relaxed from the inside, and help the body heal itself, as part of a comprehensive health care plan.

“Acupuncture releases endorphins, the body’s feel-good chemicals,” says Nelson. “Drugs are chemicals released into the body. When a person stops using, they can feel sluggish and tired. Acupuncture gives them a euphoric feeling and has been around since the 1970s as a treatment for addiction. It is used in some states in drug courts, and in prisons. I am happy to have the opportunity to bring this here. I truly believe in the success of the treatments. I have seen it in my patients.”

Liz does her work in groups. Her patients sit together for 45 minutes, with five needles in each ear. They can talk and listen to relaxing music.

The acupuncture service is currently available for patients who come to Goodwin Community Health or Families First for primary care and/or recovery services.

Liz is certified through the National Acupuncture Detox Association as an Acupuncture Detox Specialist. She has volunteered her acupuncture skills to help victims of natural disasters and shootings to cope and heal.

Greater Seacoast Community Health delivers innovative, compassionate, integrated health services and support that are accessible to all in our community, regardless of ability to pay.
Caring for the Whole Family

For Kassie and her son Spencer, checking in at Families First means more than just showing up for appointments. It means connecting with each person on Spencer’s care team helping to manage his diabetes.

Ever since Spencer’s diagnosis at 13 years old, Family Support Coordinators like Gina Apgar have been referring Spencer and Kassie to programs, events, and support communities that they never knew existed. “Working with Families First allowed Spencer to attend diabetes camp, which was great for his confidence when heading into his teenage years,” says Kassie. “It really helped him to meet people with the same condition as his.”

Spencer saw that he wasn’t alone at camp, and Kassie knows she is not alone. “As a mother, it is rare that someone asks me how I’m doing. Families First has been helpful to me just by checking in and asking questions.”

Delivering integrated health services and support includes helping families trying to navigate the often confusing world of health care. The medical teams at all three of our locations address the questions and concerns parents have about caring for their children living with chronic conditions like diabetes.

We are not just a doctor’s office; we are a medical home to so many.

How You Can Help

*Your gifts help make these stories possible.*

Your support makes our work a reality! Please help us reach our goals this upcoming giving season so that more people get the health care and support they deserve. Visit GetCommunityHelp.org to learn more.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available

*Calling all business owners:* Let the thousands of people who attend our fundraising events and visit our health centers know that your business is community minded. Become an event sponsor today!

View details at familiesfirstseacoast.org/how-to-help/businesses or contact Paula Place at (603) 422-8208, ext. 3132.

Volunteers of the Year

Each year, we recognize one or two individuals who go above and beyond in helping to fulfill our mission.

Join us in congratulating Gene and Tracey, our 2019 Volunteers of the Year.

Gene Grossi

Gene is best known for his volunteer service on the Safety Committee. However his volunteer experience includes assisting in the Goodwin pharmacy, school-based flu clinics, and public health school survey. Gene gave more than 300 hours last year and is frequently seen conducting routine safety checks in Somersworth and Portsmouth.

Tracey Lyras

Parents and children alike agree that Tracey is great! Tracey has given more than 550 hours of volunteer time in our Families First children’s room playing with children and providing structure and security during their visit. Thank you, Tracey, for your time and commitment to our kids.
Father’s Day 5K a Success!

Record-breaking $62,000 raised to support Seacoast health services

560 runners and walkers proudly participated in the 10th Annual Father’s Day 5K on June 16th.

See You Soon! Upcoming Events to Support Our Programs

Charitable Gaming

September 25 - October 1 @ The Poker Room, Hampton Falls
Proceeds from games played on any of these days will benefit our community health centers. For the schedule and more info, visit HamptonFallsPoker.com.

Lago’s Free Ice Cream Day

September 29 from 12 pm until the ice cream is gone!
It’s that time of year again when Lago’s Ice Cream at 71 Lafayette Road, Rye, NH hosts their “Free Ice Cream Day,” with all donations benefiting our Seacoast pediatric health care programs.

Artists of the Seacoast Calendar Launch

October 4 from 5-8 pm @ G.Willikers! Books & Toys, Portsmouth
Join us as we reveal the 2020 Artists of the Seacoast calendar! Meet the artists, sponsors and calendar committee as we launch next year’s calendar.