



# STEP UP PARENTS

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2021**

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## Dear Friends of Step Up Parents,

This past year marked our third year of operation, and it solidified the need for our mission and made clear how we are touching lives. In 2021, as the pandemic persisted, we saw both an increase in applications and the amounts of assistance requested. We can proudly say that we have now assisted over 200 kinship families raising a combined total of 421 kids.

We also successfully partnered with more family resource centers and other referring partners, our validators, who act as our initial interface with families. These collaborations helped us expand our geographic outreach to all ten counties in the state of New Hampshire.

Our organization grew in 2021 with the addition of a new board member, Mark Lefebvre, who brings years of experience in the Recovery Community. We also progressed from being a strictly volunteer-run organization to a more professional model by hiring a digital marketing specialist who is helping us engage with more families and donors across different media platforms. Our goal is to be a leading resource for kinship families who have been impacted by parental addiction.

Moving into 2022, I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity and the confidence of the board to be Step Up Parents' first Executive Director. Jennifer DuChene, who has been instrumental in helping run the organization, is our new President. We are also kicking off the year with our second sizable grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation made possible by gifts from the New Hampshire Tomorrow Substance Use Disorders Fund.

We hope you will continue to support Step Up Parents and tell others about our organization. Please be a hero for our kinship families. With your support, you honor the efforts of these selfless caregivers and help them maintain their dignity and stability while responding to their family's immediate financial needs.

With gratitude,



Denyse Richter  
Executive Director

2022 Step Up Parents Board of Directors  
Jennifer DuChene, President  
Katie Fontana, Vice President and  
Secretary  
Paul Taylor, Treasurer  
Stephen Morrissey  
Mark Lefebvre

Special thanks to our Mission Ambassadors

# Our Kinship Families

Step Up Parents expanded its outreach in 2021, helping kinship families in each of New Hampshire's 10 counties, including 60 different towns and cities. We saw an uptick in both the number of applications and amount requested.

Substance use disorder is the number one causal factor in kinship families. There are estimated to be over 12,000 grandparents raising "opioid orphans" in New Hampshire, many of whom live on fixed incomes and whose savings have been depleted by years of caring for family members with substance use disorder. No one plans on raising a second, sometimes third, family, and doing it later in life presents unique challenges - emotionally, physically, and financially.

Step Up Parents helps de-stigmatize substance misuse and provides a safe forum in which caregivers can ask for help.

## WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

- We helped an aunt and uncle with four children take in two nephews when their mom died suddenly due to substance misuse. Dealing with a family crisis, they needed everything for the boys, who had nothing.
- We helped with the utility bills of a grandmother who, having already stepped up and adopted two young cousins, took in two young granddaughters.
- We helped a grandmother raising four young grandkids purchase computers for remote learning.
- We helped a 70-year-old great aunt purchase baby supplies after the emergency placement of her 27-month-old niece, found naked on the streets.



106

Number of New Hampshire kinship families assisted



\$52K

Amount of assistance given



188

Number of kinship children helped



78%

Percentage of families headed by a grandparent

Even Heroes Need a Hand

# The Faces of Kinship Families



# Highlights

**2021 was a very exciting year. Here are a few highlights:**

- We were selected as the Seacoast Board of Realtors 2021 Charity of Choice
- We awarded our first annual scholarship to Nevaeh Petruzzi from Exeter High School
- We held our first ice cream truck social at Pease Tradeport
- We participated in the 10th Annual Spinning Generosity fundraising event



# Our Partners

We can't do our work without our network of partners. Our families may apply for assistance directly, but three quarters of our families are referred to us by our network of validators from family resource centers, DCYF, schools and other agencies who interface with kinship caregivers. We also work with other community partners to fulfill requests. These relationships are key to our ability to help deserving kinship families in New Hampshire.

## VALIDATORS

- Family Resource Center – Gorham
- Children Unlimited
- TLC Family Resource Center
- The River Center
- Strength to Succeed
- Waypoint
- Families First
- DCYF
- Grapevine
- CASA
- Merrimack County ServiceLink
- Granite Pathways
- Seacoast Mental Health Center
- NFI North
- Pediatric Resource Specialist  
Dartmouth Hitchcock
- United Way
- ServiceLink of Rockingham County
- Kinship Navigator Program
- NAMI New Hampshire
- Office of Jeanne Shaheen
- Stafford County Community Action
- Lakes Region Community Service
- Southern New Hampshire Services
- Center for Life Management
- The Upper Room
- NH School Districts
- Municipal Welfare/Human Services  
Departments

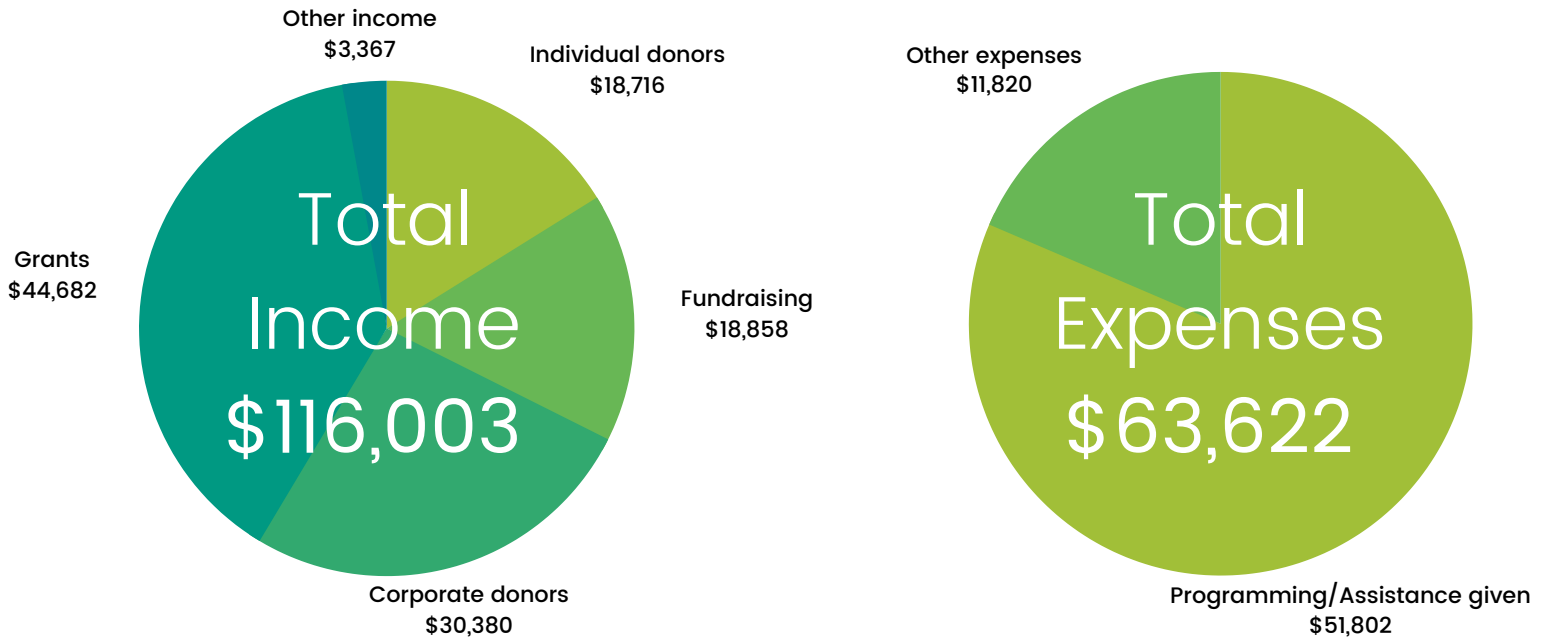
## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- GATHER
- SHARE Fund
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace
- Pass Along Project
- St. Vincent De Paul – Hampton
- St. Vincent De Paul – Exeter
- Annie's Angels
- KEY/Collective
- Womenaid of Greater Portsmouth
- Womenade of Concord
- Womenade of Greater Squamscott
- Raymond Coalition for Youth



In 2021, we were thrilled to collaborate with Room for Love, an organization whose mission is to lovingly create rooms for children in need, giving them a positive emotional boost. Room for Love selected one of our kinship children and surprised her with an incredible room makeover.

# Finances



Thank you to all who supported our mission in 2021. Special thanks to the Seacoast Board of Realtors for their year of giving, the Fabulous Find, and to Liz Forkel and her team at Spinning Generosity.



Welcome all new donors who joined our team in 2021!

Thank you to our:

- Corporate sponsors/donors
- Individual donors
- Community organizations
- Grants
  - Greater Lakes Region Children Auction
  - Walmart Community Grants
  - Bishop's Charitable Assistance Fund
  - HOPE Foundation
  - Meredith Village Savings Bank Fund
  - Oleonda Jameson Trust

