Because of you
Who We Are: Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps is a leader in child welfare and juvenile justice, operating a number of programs and services for at-risk youth and families. Our work includes community based initiatives, residential treatment and juvenile justice programs, and we partner with national organizations and state agencies to use proven methods and develop new ways to advance practices in the care of those most vulnerable. We help individuals and families overcome difficult challenges and situations by providing the tools and skills they need to heal, grow, and thrive. Everything we do is based on the belief that every child deserves the chance for a brighter tomorrow.
Dear Friends,

This past year marked an exciting milestone as we celebrated 50 years of service in tribute to the vision and actions of our namesake, the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy. We honor his fierce determination to level the playing field for those too often dismissed and discarded by society and, though we often quote his words, it was his willingness to take action that still inspires us today. We were created in 1969 to carry on the hope so many placed in him, to respond to the needs of a nation and a Commonwealth much like we see today – challenged by division, inequity, and hardship. We face this now as we did then with courage, action, and hope.

We are proud of and inspired by our work over the last 50 years. More than 25,000 youth have come through our doors since 1969. By the time they reach our doorstep, they have faced many challenges in their young lives. We welcome them, and all children facing adversity, because they are more than their traumas, more than their struggles. They are resilient survivors who can help us create the world in which we want to live.

We work year-round to help young people tap into their inner strengths and heal from whatever wounds they may have suffered. We do our part to give children experiencing crisis better care and better choices so they can achieve better outcomes. We take action to remove obstacles, amplify voices, and help heal, so that the children we serve are prepared to share their values and shape a better world.

The look back over 50 years is powerful and rewarding, but its true value is in orienting us toward our future. The challenges still exist, the wrongs still must be made right, and the future is still full of opportunity for change. We are committed to that change and all the energy and actions that will bring it about, in partnership with the youth, families, and communities we serve.

Your generosity makes this possible, and for this we are truly grateful. Thank you, from the entire Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps team, for standing with us. Your presence is a reflection of your compassion and love for the children and youth we serve, and your passion and hope for tomorrow. Together, we are fulfilling the promise Robert F. Kennedy set forth many years ago. We couldn’t do it without each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

Leigh Gallivan Mahoney
Chief Operating Officer
When 15-year-old Emilio was first introduced to the Detention Diversion Advocacy Program (DDAP), he was in a tough spot. His mom had recently gotten married, and there was major friction between Emilio and his new stepmother. With this new change had come confusion and frustration for Emilio, and he was struggling to deal with his feelings about all of it.

DDAP Youth Advocate Rafael first met Emilio in juvenile court where he was facing assault and battery charges for taking his frustration out physically on his mother. After listening to the full story, the judge referred Emilio to DDAP rather than sending him to detention – a course that could negatively affect his life for years to come.

Rafael got to know Emilio, and together they created a plan for him to stay with his grandmother until things cooled down at home. After getting him settled, Rafael helped Emilio re-engage in school, and they began work on resolving issues with his mom. Emilio took this process seriously and, slowly but surely, things did get better.

Emilio was still living with his grandmother when he successfully fulfilled his commitment to DDAP and the courts. His Youth Advocate felt he would need support through the transition back to home and recommended that Emilio participate in DDAP’s Mentoring Program, offered to youth who have successfully completed DDAP and would benefit from additional support. Emilio did an incredible amount of work to get himself to a place where he could make the move home, and indeed, he did!

Since reuniting with his mom, Emilio has made the honor roll, has become the manager of his high school basketball team, and works part time at a sneaker store after school – all thanks to his work with his Youth Advocate and Mentor.

"Without the help from DDAP I would have stayed locked up, and would have fallen way behind in my schoolwork – who knows what would have happened."

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Because of you:
our Courageous kids
are healing and growing

Our Kids:
Emilio
DDAP

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Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps
Because of you: our Courageous staff are by their side

Dani has chosen this line of work for a reason: she’s been there. And working at Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps is her chance to pay it forward.

As a young person, Dani witnessed severe domestic violence in her home. School, and especially sports, became her safe place. It was there that Dani made what she credits as life-saving connections with teammates and coaches.

It was her basketball coach who she trusted enough to call when she needed help, and her teammate’s parents who agreed to take Dani in and become her foster parents so she could finish high school. These key people were there for Dani when she had no one else to turn to, and she’s not sure where she would be without them.

Dani has built a remarkable life and career around paying that forward. Today she is a mother of seven, and has fostered 19 youth as a foster parent over the past twenty years.

In 2009 Dani was hired as a per diem staff and quickly moved to Overnight Supervisor. She completed her bachelor’s degree last spring, and was subsequently promoted to Assistant Program Director where she is now using her knowledge and life experience to help support teens on their journey as they heal and grow.

“I didn’t have it easy, but I was lucky to have people in my life at critical times. I do this work now so I can be the adult that I needed in my life.”

Dani’s story inspires us all and we are very proud to have her on the RFK Team!
Hannah attended the EWT School (now RFK Academy) for two-and-a-half years. “Before RFK Children’s Action Corps, life was very hard,” she shared. Previous schools and programs were not helpful or supportive when dealing with Hannah’s mood disorder. Often times, she was placed in “time out” and felt “punished.” She fell behind on her school work and was not on track to graduate.

With the help of our dedicated teachers and staff, Hannah received the support and encouragement she needed to re-engage and attend classes. She particularly enjoyed it when guest speakers would visit the program and share their life experiences. This gave Hannah the hope and reassurance that she could overcome her challenges.

Hannah became much more social and was able to graduate with her best friend in June 2017, accomplishing the goal she had set for herself to graduate on time.

Today, she works as a residential counselor at an enrichment center working with adults with brain injuries. She will begin a new phase of her life this spring, when she starts Army National Guard basic training in Fort Jackson South Carolina. Her goal? To eventually become a State Trooper.

Because of you:
our Courageous alums are accomplishing their goals

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Highlights & Accomplishments

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17 children found their forever families through our Bright Futures Adoption Center and families received Model Approach to Partnership in Parenting training. We helped more than 62 students achieve educational goals. Our Detention Diversion Advocacy Program served 162 children and 94% returned to court for all scheduled court dates. 406 students and community groups develop self-confidence and team-building skills. Our Fly Zone ropes course helped 406 students and community groups develop self-confidence and team-building skills. 88 students and community groups develop self-confidence and team-building skills.

22

Our residential programs helped reunite 58 boys and girls with their families.

Our RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice supported the work of youth-serving systems in jurisdictions across 31 states and the Territory of Guam.

62

Our Detention Diversion Advocacy Program served 162 children and 94% returned to court for all scheduled court dates.

406

Our Fly Zone ropes course helped 406 students and community groups develop self-confidence and team-building skills.

55

Our RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice supported the work of youth-serving systems in jurisdictions across 31 states and the Territory of Guam.

58

Our residential programs helped reunite 58 boys and girls with their families.

88

NYPUM (National Youth Project Using Minibikes) provided 88 of our students with the opportunity to develop self-esteem, values for daily living, and a sense of teamwork.
Mary and John Boyle are long-time agency friends, supporters, ambassadors – and much more.

John joined the RFK Children’s Action Corps Board seven years ago with boundless energy and a booming voice, and championed the need to help because these are children “at the end of the line.” In this time, he has served as a Board member, co-chaired the annual Embracing the Legacy dinner, helped place alumna in real estate jobs, and utilized his real estate expertise to benefit the agency.

Mary is a connector and a fierce advocate for children. She serves on our Embracing the Legacy Event Committee and continues to work side by side with John. “I get to share the work of the agency with our friends, helping people get connected. The Embracing the Legacy dinner is a way for us to bring our friends in to share in what the organization does and to help them give to a good cause.”

Mary and John live by the words “to those whom much is given, much is expected.”

“Today more than ever, it is important that we teach our kids gratitude. We should instill that in our children as much as we can – it is an important role for a parent to play,” John says.

Mary says she and John are a good balance as they model their values to their two young boys. “John teaches and talks about social issues a lot with our boys. I do a lot of the hands-on things – like taking them to the RFK Lancaster Campus to spend time with the children who live there. We have gone to Pine Street Inn and Lovin’ Spoonfuls to serve others. The boys walk away feeling how important it is to help others, and they are more humbled.”

John’s early years and his family helped to form his value system. “Between my mother and father and my uncle, who was a Jesuit Priest, I was always involved in giving back; it was important to me to be involved with kids. I grew up with it. My mother has been involved in helping kids her whole life – especially kids at risk. From an early age, my mother brought us everywhere to help others, from hosting children in the METCO Program, to working with Bay Cove Human Services.” John has continued to extend this commitment to service, getting involved in numerous charities all aimed at helping kids at risk.

And for John, there is always more work to do to help children. He is currently working with two friends to create a group entitled Men and Women for Others. Its goal: convene philanthropic champions for vulnerable kids and leverage these relationships to amplify the collective impact. “Can’t we just make it easier to help children?”

John and Mary are grateful that they can help people find a way to make a difference. “There are a lot of people who want to be more connected, but they just don’t know where to look. People are good. They care. They just don’t know where to go sometimes. Also, they want to trust that their dollars are going to the right places.”

“Robert F. Kennedy’s The Ripple of Hope Speech and theme is so true. If everyone could just provide that Ripple of Hope we would be a much better world. RFK Children’s Action Corps does a good job helping people be that ripple.”

“Between my mother and father and my uncle, who was a Jesuit Priest, I was always involved in giving back; it was important to me to be involved with kids. I grew up with it.”

Our Donors: Mary & John Boyle

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Our board does our best to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you have changes, please let us know.

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Integrity Weightlifting
Jack’s Pact
Job Corps

Bob Johnson
Kim Jones
Journey to Hope
Jubilee Family Institute
Capone Center Networks Cape and Islands
Justice Resource Institute’s Pathways to Permanency Program
Juvenile Probation
KANAP
Katelyne’s Closet
Kearney’s Club
Lake Street Park
Lake Wysia State Park
Lancaster Police & Fire Departments
Leominster Credit Union
LGBT Coalition of Western Massachusetts
Life Is Good Foundation
Lowell General Hospital
Lowell Skinner
Lower Pioneer Valley
Educational Collaborative
Ludlow Public Schools
LUM
Lupin
Lupa Zoo
Madrid’s Mission
Marc Ford
Margaret’s Pantry
Martin Luther King Center
Mary Lyons Pilot High School
Mass Audubon
Massachusetts Alliance for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Massachusetts Addiction Recovery (MOAR)
Massachusetts Adoption
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
Massachusetts Department of Youth Services
Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Secondary Education
Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Massachusetts Society
Mazzocco for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Massachusetts State Police Gang Unit
Massachusetts State Parks
MassHire
Mayflower Place
Meals on Wheels
Merrill Comer
MGH Heathcenter, Leominster
Mission Safe

FY2019 ANNUAL REPORT
Our Donors

We are pleased to acknowledge those who made contributions to RFK Children’s Action Corps in FY2019. We have done our best to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you have changes, please let us know.

Annual Report FY 2019

Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

2019 FISCAL YEAR

Financials

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

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Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps
**Volunteer Leadership**

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(serving through June 30, 2019)

*Deceased*
Creative Expression
at RFK Children’s Action Corps: Youth Artwork

Clockwise from top left:
Break the Shackles by Titi, RFK Respect Forgiveness Kindness by Kennedy School students as a group,
Strength and Joy by James, Sunrise by Anthony, In God We Trust by Danny, Imperfection and Faith by Steaven