



Where New Beginnings Come to Light



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The Path Forward

As we stepped into our new roles at 18 Degrees last year, we each were inspired by our agency's four core values — or, as we call them, our Compass Points. These Compass Points guide how we work together across all levels of the agency — from frontline staff to board members — and how we serve our program participants and communities.

Our Compass Points strengthen our effectiveness individually and collectively through a shared understanding of how we work in our individual roles and as part of a larger team. Each value is important on its own, and they build on one another so that, taken together, they serve as our guiding star.

It is the support from our community that enables us to act according to our Compass Points. Thanks to the generosity and passion of our donors, funders, community partners, and volunteers, we reached over 5,000 children, youth, and family members throughout Western Massachusetts last year. In the pages of this report, we share with you just a sampling of the stories you make possible each day.

Who better to tell the stories of how our Compass Points guide us than our very own 18 Degrees staff members? Dolores, Nick, Jaclyn, Jason, and Beth are immersed in the communities we serve, creating positive outcomes in our early education & care, foster care & adoption, child & family well-being, and youth development programs.

In addition to these individual stories, please join us in celebrating highlights from Kids 4 Harmony and YouthLaunch. Both are programs rooted in prevention and early intervention and were born from the vision and generosity of our donors, who understand the impact our services can have when we reach people before a crisis hits.



As you read through the pages ahead, we hope you know that each of these successes and achievements are made possible by you, our friends and partners in finding direction and illuminating the path to new beginnings.

On behalf of all of us at 18 Degrees, and the children, youth, and families we serve: Thank you.



BUFFY D. LORD
Chair, Board Chair



SARAH COOK
President and CEO

Our mission: Every child in a family, every family in a community.



Kids 4 Harmony

The concept of Kids 4 Harmony was born eleven years ago with the pledge that 18 Degrees (then Berkshire Children and Families) would make “no small plans.” This past June, we celebrated a decade of creating access to opportunities with a concert at Ozawa Hall in Tanglewood, recognizing our ongoing commitment to Kids 4 Harmony’s three pillars: musical excellence, student well-being, and family support.

At the start of our second decade, we’ve expanded our work in Pittsfield and North Adams: we’ve hired additional staff; added hours of instruction each week in both cities; and are developing an evaluation program to measure and more fully describe everything that our students and families accomplish.



“If I hadn’t joined Kids 4 Harmony, I wouldn’t be going to college for what I am going for. I wouldn’t be playing the violin. I always think about this, but I don’t know where I’d be.”

—Leila, Kids 4 Harmony Teaching Assistant
and violin student for 10 years

Leila graduated from high school in June and is currently attending UMass, Amherst for Music Performance.



“Kids 4 Harmony has given me this path of what I want to do and what I want to give back to the community.”

—Johan, Kids 4 Harmony Class of 2019

Johan is a senior at MCLA and continues to be inspired by his experiences with Kids 4 Harmony. As part of his studies, he has created a series of three workshops integrating music with science, math, and history to bring out the creativity and imagination in children in the classroom. He attributes his experiences with Kids 4 Harmony as the foundation for his work today.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

300+

hours of ensemble-based instruction

444

hours of virtual private lessons

7

students traveled to participate in the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles with Music and Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel

93%

of students report an increase in their collaborative problem-solving skills

96%

of students report an increase in their leadership skills



Compass Point: ACCOUNTABILITY

Own and accept responsibility for all you do; take initiative with self, co-workers, and participants; follow through on promises, deadlines, and communications.

Dolores Moore

Site Director at Conte Kids Club

Ms. Dolores, as the kids call her, has been with 18 Degrees for over 18 years. During this time, she has worked with hundreds of children and families through our out-of-school programs. Creating a classroom atmosphere where students feel safe, welcome, and heard remains a constant priority for Ms. Dolores. As she reminds us, “When our children feel safe they can learn and grow.”

Her approach may seem simple. She talks to the children, asks them questions, and, most importantly, listens. When one of her students continually acted out, she sensed he was feeling overwhelmed and so she created a safe space in the classroom he could go to when he felt anxious, giving him the tools to calm down and reset. Another student struggling with confidence received special tasks allowing her to see her capabilities and start to believe in herself.

About her approach, Ms. Dolores says: “Part of that means I need to be willing to walk the walk. I am not afraid to apologize in my classroom. I employ the same techniques I share with them, and that builds trust.”

Ms. Dolores works with children before and after school and during summer and school breaks. She takes the initiative to create a bridge between her program and the community. Her efforts instill a sense of belonging, pride, and connection with the place her students call home.



**“When our
children feel safe,
they can learn
and grow.”**

—Dolores Moore



The Conte Kids Club students collaborated to create a mural that weaves their diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences into community art that all can enjoy. The mural is located at Durant Park in Pittsfield.

159 children are enrolled in our early education and out-of-school programs across five sites.

21 of our childcare staff furthered their education with classes and certifications related to growing their careers in early education with support from 18 Degrees.



Compass Point: COURAGE

Learn and move forward from mistakes. Professionally and compassionately handle adversity — do things that are difficult.

Nick Garrett, LCSW Clinical Supervisor for Adoption

Nick Garrett joined the adoption team at 18 Degree six months ago. Through his previous work as an in-home therapist for children and their families, he had encountered 18 Degrees' Healing Homes Foster Care staff and was witness to their professionalism, enthusiasm, and commitment to the best outcomes for children and families. As a clinician, Nick knows that healthy bonds between children and their adult caregivers are critical to the child's development and well-being as an adult.



“During this time of transition is where I need to be my best self.”

—Nick Garrett

“Adoption through foster care can simultaneously create feelings of happiness and sadness for everyone involved.” Nick says, “During this time of transition is where I need to be my best self. I have to support all sides — the children, adoptive, and birth families — knowing while one family is rejoicing, another is grieving, and a child or children are in the middle. They all need me to be on their side, to reassure them they will be okay.”

The first child Nick was assigned when he joined 18 Degrees was in the same foster home for five years, and the case recently moved to the adoption team. The young boy is now one step closer to having a permanent place he calls home with his foster family through adoption. What's even better is that he has maintained and will continue to maintain a relationship with his biological mother, creating a team of champions for this young man. A child can never have too much love!



Being a foster parent takes courage.

We are grateful for the **39** foster families with Healing Homes that cheer our young people on from the sidelines, help them get ready for their first days, take time to have some good old-fashioned fun, and always remember that every child deserves to feel loved and safe.



Compass Point: INTEGRITY

*Uphold the highest standards of honesty and ethics; be consistent and reliable,
and always do the right thing.*

Jaclyn Carnevale

**Peer Recovery Specialist and newly appointed
Program Director for Parents as Teachers**

Eight years ago, Jaclyn only dreamed of where she is today. Four years ago, she joined 18 Degrees as a peer recovery coach in our Parents as Teachers (PAT) program, and today she is the newly appointed Program Director. “I found where I am supposed to be and what I am meant to be doing. I am not judged; I am accepted for who I am today, and my past is a strength for the work that I am doing now.”

Through her lived experience, Jaclyn connects with the families she works with in a profound way. In the spring of 2020, Jaclyn met Mary. Mary was struggling, working with various service providers as she navigated being a mom to her 18-month-old daughter. It didn’t take long for Jaclyn to see that Mary was just going through the motions, telling the providers what they wanted to hear, and not engaging on a deeper level. Jaclyn continued to show up, listening to Mary and offering her support. As the months passed, Mary began to open up. When Mary relapsed in 2021, it led to a horrific string of events that left her in the hospital for seven weeks, separating her from her toddler and newborn baby. Jaclyn was an advocate, an empathetic ear, and a thoughtful partner in Mary’s return to recovery. She connected Mary with The Alternative Living Center, where she was able to achieve sobriety while rebuilding her family. This past summer, Mary took her family on their first vacation.

Life in recovery can be lonely — especially for parents struggling with the shame and guilt of losing custody of their children. Once they are reunified, the transition can be difficult without adequate support in place. The fear of losing custody of their children again may keep parents from asking for help. Having a peer recovery coach like Jaclyn gives them a trusted partner they can turn to with questions, someone to help them navigate their own goals, and inspiration that they too can achieve great things in sobriety.

“It’s the everyday wins,” Jaclyn said when asked why she loves her job. “Recovery is a lifestyle, and every day is a new beginning. It could be as simple as navigating a difficult situation with their kiddo or as exciting as purchasing a car, watching their growth, and seeing them reach new heights.”



**“Recovery is
a lifestyle, and
every day is a
new beginning.”**

—Jaclyn Carnevale



Parents as Teachers worked with **54** families and provided over **600** personal visits. PAT is one of the many programs at 18 Degrees that utilizes home visits to strengthen the lives of parents, caregivers, and children.



Compass Point: BETTER TOGETHER

*Share and use our individual and collective strength; support and respect each other.
Give each others the chance to shine; celebrate our accomplishments and each other.*

Jason Frazier and Beth Gilbert Case Workers at Pittsfield Community Connection (PCC)

Beth and Jason are caseworkers for our program Pittsfield Community Connection (PCC). They work in neighborhoods, schools, parks — anywhere kids may be, reaching out to engage them in the activities and support PCC can offer. Participation in this program is not mandated; young people work with us at their will. They make a choice to receive support, guidance, and connections that can illuminate their path to a new beginning.

“We believe in them before they believe in themselves,” said Beth as she reflected on her work with young people.

When Jason and Beth met Becky, she was often on the run — running from school, her foster family, and her life. The devastating experiences this young person had faced left her untrusting and wary of everyone she encountered. Knowing that Becky would need a lot of support, Jason and Beth decided to work with her together so they could meet her needs. They collaborated on how best to support her and invited her to hang out during drop-in times at the PCC office. Soon, it became her favorite place — she even chose to celebrate her birthday there with the team and other participants! As she built a trusting relationship with Beth and Jason, her life began to change for the better. She stayed in school, improving her grades, and was able to gain stability at home, no longer running away.

The work that Beth and Jason do keeps our young people moving forward, feeling safe and valued. They can see and realize the opportunities they didn't think possible. Coming from a program that worked with kids already in trouble, Jason said, “When I worked with a young person at my previous job, they would often say, ‘If I met you sooner, I don't think I would be here right now.’ Being a case manager at PCC has allowed me to do exactly that: prevent kids from getting too far down that path.”



**“We believe
in them before
they believe in
themselves.”**

—Beth Gilbert

YouthLaunch

YouthLaunch was a three-year pilot that focused on early engagement for families with newborn children to ten years old. Thanks to the generosity and vision of a dedicated group of supporters and advocates, we were able to use the evidence-informed, science-based Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) model to coach families toward self-sufficiency. The program allowed us to work “upstream” in our efforts, reaching families before they are in a crisis and working with them to reach their goals and dreams.



PROGRAM STATS

25

Families Served

47

Children Served

717

Home Visits

50%

utilized
parenting courses

offered through the
18 Degrees Family
Resource Center

100%

of surveyed
participants
strongly agreed with
the statement, “as a
participant of the EMPath
program, my life is
changing for the better”



Participant Highlight

Isla entered YouthLaunch in July 2021, pregnant with her fourth child and without stable housing. Working with our program specialist, she secured an apartment with enough room for her whole family. With a safe living situation, Isla was able to focus on overcoming the barriers that kept her from moving forward.

After her baby was born, Isla initially struggled to return to work as she did not have reliable family support to help with the baby. She overcame this challenge by enrolling her child in childcare at 18 Degrees. With the support of our program specialist, she prioritized obtaining the needed documents to receive the child tax credit. Once she received these funds, she achieved her goal of reinstating her driver's license after paying off past tickets and started saving for a vehicle, which she has since purchased.

Currently, Isla is attending Berkshire Community College to receive her associate's degree in culinary arts. She is now employed at two different restaurants to obtain the hours needed to sustain her family's income. Her goal is to remain in the restaurant industry and become a restaurant manager. She has also found a supportive community through a local church.

Isla is now enrolled in a savings match program to help her work toward her goal of saving for a house. Her children are all enrolled in daycare or school and are thriving.

Future of YouthLaunch

Following our three-year pilot period, YouthLaunch will be incorporated into our operations in our Early Education and Care classrooms. We will continue to support positive and adaptive development and behaviors for children and families. In its new iteration, YouthLaunch will be partially supported by an American Rescue Plan Act grant from the City of Pittsfield.

Volunteers

We are thankful for those who give the gift of their time to serve as volunteers, interns, and advisors.

Mary Lou Accetta
Valerie Andersen
Mariah Auman
Isadora Auqui
Linda Baxter
John Balint
Brian Berkel
William Bodine
Sandra Bonilla
Janis Bowersox
Syrah Bradley
Pamela Breslin
Nancy Bullock
Emily Burke
Kevin Carlin
Claudia Vance Cass
Jeanne Chivers
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Nancy Cohen
Benjamin Colon
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Paris Wilkey
Charles Yanikoski
Linda Yanikoski
Elaine Yanow
Evan Young
Nicole Zhou
Rosie Ziarnik

Our **145**
volunteers provided
4,500 hours to the
children, youth, and
families we serve.



“Serving as a mentor to a young adolescent has not only been a very rewarding experience but has also brought a tremendous amount of joy into both of our lives.”

—Colleen, Pittsfield Community Connection Mentor

KIDS 4 HARMONY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Dorothy Weber, Co-Chair
Ed Bride
Sheila Heffernon
Susan Lombard
Jane Mayer
Philip McKnight
Dr. Carolyn Newberger
Dr. Eli Newberger
Penny Pincus
Elizabeth Selkowitz
Carole Siegel
Carol Smokler
Ken Stark



Donors

Thank you to each of our generous supporters for illuminating the path to new beginnings.

The donor list reflects gifts between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022, allocated to the 2022 fiscal year. For our full list of donors, please visit 18degreesma.org.

\$50,000 +

Jim Chervenak
Josephine & Louise Crane Foundation
Westside Children's Enrichment Center
Dr. Sharyn Zunz

\$20,000 - \$49,999

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Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation
Berkshire United Way
Boston Alliance for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual
and Transgender Youth
Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire
Northern Berkshire United Way
Pittsfield Cultural Council
UMass Amherst Community Campaign
United Way of Franklin & Hampshire Region
Williamstown Community Chest

Public Funding

Berkshire County Juvenile Court
City of North Adams
City of Pittsfield
MA Children's Trust Fund
Massachusetts Cultural Council
MA Department of Children and Families
MA Department of Early Education
and Care
MA Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education
MA Department of Public Health
MA Executive Office of Health and
Human Services
North Adams Public School District

Financial Snapshot

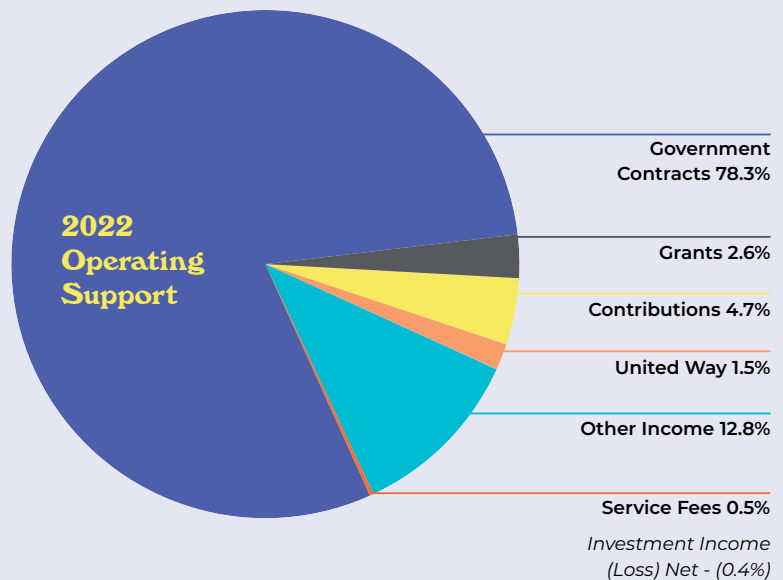
Income and Expenses for the Years Ended June 30, 2022 and 2021

Income	FY22	FY21*
United Way	\$152,464	\$195,464
Contributions	\$469,919	\$386,947
Grants	\$261,215	\$1,171,826
Government contracts	\$7,869,665	\$8,297,695
Service fees	\$47,097	\$15,639
Investment income (loss), net	\$(45,004)	\$284,762
Other income	\$1,299,270	\$112,112
Total Income	\$10,054,626	\$10,464,445
Operating Expenses		
Program expenses	\$8,387,602	\$7,710,615
Core mission support	\$1,385,755	\$1,113,075
Fundraising	\$120,127	\$115,829
Total Operating Expenses	\$9,893,484	\$8,939,519
Subtotal Excess (Deficit)	\$161,142	\$1,524,926
Extraordinary items **	\$367,312	—
Total Excess (Deficit)	\$(206,170)	\$1,524,926

The above is an excerpt from 18 Degrees' financial statements for the years ending June 30, 2022, and 2021. A complete audit report is available upon request.

*The fiscal year 2021 revenue reflects income received through the Paycheck Protection Program.

**One-time payments for professional services related to the calculation of the Employee Retention Tax Credit which we anticipate receiving by Q2 of Fiscal 2023.



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FOLLOW US
on social media to
learn more about the
new beginnings that
come to light every
day at 18 Degrees.

What We Do:

18 Degrees promotes the well-being and strengths of children, youth, adults, and families to build better communities throughout Western Massachusetts in four core areas:

- EARLY EDUCATION & CARE
- FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION
- CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING
- YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Our work transcends the four walls of any building — we remain mobile, meeting people where they are, in their homes and their communities, and walking with them to their new beginnings.



18 DEGREES

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