Plummer Youth Promise

2016 Annual Report
VISION

Every young person has a family unconditionally committed to nurture, protect and guide them to successful adulthood.

MISSION

Young people who leave the foster care or juvenile justice system without safe, stable and permanent family connections face grim outcomes, including high rates of homelessness, unemployment, early parenting and lack of education.

Plummer is changing that by deeply and effectively engaging families for each young person we serve while building their skills and community connections, and by sharing our knowledge with others.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Each day we...

✦ Invest in each young person to identify, understand, and support his or her unique strengths and needs
✦ Develop an individualized, trauma-informed treatment plan
✦ Allow youth to guide their own treatment as appropriate
✦ Engage families and other positive adults on a collaborative team to help move the youth toward a permanent family
✦ Support the development of essential skills
✦ Connect youth with the community
✦ Rely on evidence-based and best practices to deliver high quality care
✦ Appreciate the value of diversity, encouraging learning throughout and between all levels of the organization
✦ Foster the development and sharing of expertise among staff and programs
✦ Strive to continually improve outcomes
✦ Share knowledge as a practice leader and advocate for children
Dear Friends,

What does the word promise mean to you? Is it an agreement? A pledge? A forever vow?

Promise is a serious word. Strong. Solemn. Not to be trifled with.

It’s an uplifting word. Hopeful. Full of potential. A sunrise.

In 2016, we spent a lot of time thinking about how best to describe the Plummer Home for Boys of today. We’re not just a group home anymore. In fact, we serve many young people in places other than our flagship facility at 37 Winter Island Road in Salem.

And about half of the young people we serve are female.

Those things alone mean that the name Plummer Home for Boys no longer describes us.

So then, what does?

After hours of talking with people like you, with our young people, with their families and with our staff, we boiled our work down to two very important concepts.

Our work is serious. Not just the day-to-day work of keeping young people sheltered and fed, but the future-oriented work of positioning them for success as adults.

We are determined. We are relentless. We believe life can be better for our young people. We believe in our kids. We promise.

Plummer Youth Promise

And just what is it that we are determined to do? What do we relentlessly pursue? What do we think will give our young people the greatest chance of success throughout their lives?

Family. #FamilyForEveryone

At Plummer Youth Promise we have developed an Intervention Model premised on the belief that young people are more likely to succeed as adults if they have a family that is unconditionally committed to them. We also believe that young people need skills and connections to their community, so we work on those as well.

This Annual Report provides a snapshot of where we’ve been in the past year, and where we’re headed in the future. We wouldn’t be here without your support. The young people we serve would have less of a chance without your support.

As always, I thank you so very much.

James Lister, Executive Director
INTERVENTION MODEL

Every youth has a safe, emotionally secure parenting relationship in a life-long, legal family.

Every youth has a safe place to live, a sense of belonging and a chance to positively contribute to the community.

Every youth has the skills and support to meet his or her physical, emotional, educational, and economic needs.
PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

Plummer has six programs on three sites in Essex County. Each year we serve more than 200 youth, most between the ages of 12 and 20.

GROUP HOME  Located on Winter Island in Salem, the group home is our oldest program and serves young men between the ages of 13 and 18. It is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The young men who live here attend public schools.

SUPPORTED APARTMENT  Located in the same building as our group home, this apartment houses up to six young men between the ages of 16 and 22. The supported apartment is also staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Youth in this apartment must be working and/or in school.

COMMUNITY APARTMENTS  Our community apartment program consists of one-bedroom or studio apartments in various communities. It serves young men or women who turned 18 while in foster care. Youth must be working and/or in school and can stay in this program until they turn 22.

FOSTER CARE  Our foster care program serves girls and boys from birth to 22. Our foster youth live with foster families throughout Essex and Middlesex Counties.

ONPOINT  Operated in collaboration with the Salem Police Community Impact Unit and Essex County Juvenile Probation, the primary goal of the program is to keep youth from entering juvenile detention or foster care. OnPoint serves youth ages 10–18.

INTENSIVE PERMANENCY SERVICES  Plummer provides specialized clinical services to young people who are living in foster care or a group home that is not operated by Plummer. Services in this program focus exclusively on the permanency element of our Intervention Model (see facing page).
IMPACT

Of the 20 young men who discharged from our group home or supported apartment, 70% left having a safe, emotionally secure parenting relationship. The 20 young men discharged to the following locations:

1. to a homeless shelter, with no family relationships he could count on
2. from our group home to our apartment, where they continue to build family relationships
3. to college, an apartment, or a foster home, with a parent to support them
4. with a parent to support them
5. to a higher level of care
6. to home with a parent

Foster Care
From FY 13–16, 70% of the young people who discharged from our foster care program left having a safe, emotionally secure parenting relationship.

OnPoint
Since opening in 2011, 84% of young people who completed the OnPoint structured program remained free from detention 12 months after completing the program.

Service Information
26 young men received services 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week at our group home.

Supported Apartment
10 young men received services 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.

Community Apartments
6 young men and women lived independently, with weekly contact from Plummer staff.

26 young people were served
OnPoint

52 young people from the community on Friday afternoons
Over the course of the year, OnPoint served approximately 77 young people from the community on Friday afternoons.

26 young people lived with foster families who cared for them 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. Plummer staff is in touch with families and kids at least weekly, and often more.

42 young people were ordered by the court into the Structured or Individualized program, and received services up to 12 hours a week for a period of months.

52 young people were ordered by the court to do community service, averaging about 4 hours a week.

26 young people who discharged from our group home or supported apartment, 70% left having a safe, emotionally secure parenting relationship. The 20 young men discharged to the following locations:
TREVOR’S STORY

“It’s okay. You’ll always be my Mom.”

By the time Trevor was 11, his home life was in shambles. So he was removed from his home. Away from the mother who loved him but couldn’t parent him; away from the only home he’d ever known.

For years, Trevor’s mother had struggled with mental illness. This was confusing and scary. And as he grew older, it led to anger and despair.

Trevor spent several years bouncing between foster and group homes. When he reached Plummer at age 14, he was furious. Struggling with the trauma of his childhood and being mildly autistic, Trevor couldn’t regulate his emotions or resolve conflict. He was uncommunicative and would frequently lose his temper. When he did try to communicate, he often used inappropriate language or volume.

Despite his mother’s limitations, Plummer was told that the goal of his treatment would be to reunify with her. Trevor knew this made no sense. It made him angrier and despondent. When she visited, he spoke to her with disrespect and disdain. It was hard to listen to.

At Plummer, we asked about his Dad and discovered that he’d essentially been cut off from Trevor many years ago. Reluctantly, Trevor gave us permission to reach out. Dad called back. Immediately. He started visiting Trevor at Plummer, and Trevor started visiting him at home. We did a lot of work with Trevor and his Dad to help them build their relationship. We also talked a lot about forgiveness.

Two months later, Trevor’s goal changed from reunification with Mom to reunification with Dad. This was excruciating for Mom. Despite her mental illness, she had remained involved in Trevor’s treatment from the moment he arrived.

When it was decided that Trevor would leave Plummer to live with his Dad, Trevor’s mother couldn’t stop crying. Trevor, now 16 and taller than her, hugged his mother and said, “It’s okay. You’ll always be my Mom.”

By moving to a place of safety with his Dad, Trevor was able to return to his mother emotionally, with a tenderness and understanding that was not possible less than a year earlier.

There really was a shift when Trevor’s Dad entered the picture and there seemed to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Trevor’s disruptive behaviors lessened in frequency and intensity. ... We see this with a lot of our kids when they begin to have hope.

~ Plummer staff member

Trevor and I worked on a ‘tone of voice’ meter which he enjoyed. He would yell everything he wanted. We worked on his tone becoming more pleasant when he wanted to be heard. One day, he came up to me and whispered everything he said to me for about 5 minutes. When I asked him if he had lost his voice... he said ‘no Josh, this is just my respectful tone of voice I am working on.’

~ Plummer staff member
HIGHLIGHTS

Practice Leadership

In FY 16, Plummer added a Permanency Practice Leadership Division through which we provide consultation and training to others wishing to learn more about best practices for making sure youth in the foster care / group care system have families they can count on forever. Our services range from training and coaching of direct care workers to consultation with state agencies on systemic challenges.

Current clients include several large child welfare organizations in Massachusetts as well as governmental agencies in 10 states (CT, IN, ME, MA, MI, MD, NH, PA, NC & RI). This division of Plummer Youth Promise will be financially self-sustaining.

“The Permanency Training and Consultation by Plummer has been an invaluable resource as we sharpen our focus on achieving the only discharge outcome that we know leads to long term success for our clients: connection to a permanent family. Staff at all levels of the organization learn the critical role they play in bringing together individuals who care about a child in order to engage in a process that naturally evolves to meet that child’s needs via the consultation process, ‘Every child deserves a family’ has become a mantra in our work.”

-Michael Semel, Ph.D., Senior Director of Residential Services, The Home for Little Wanderers

Awards

In FY 16, the OnPoint program was honored to receive the Promising Practice Award by the Massachusetts Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). JDAI is a national juvenile justice reform initiative through the Annie E. Casey Foundation, working to reduce the number of youth placed in detention facilities nationwide.

Also in FY 16, OnPoint was chosen for a Doing Justice Award at the Massachusetts Judges Conference. The purpose of the Doing Justice Award is to recognize exemplary service rendered by individuals and teams that promote and deliver justice through their unrelenting commitment, perseverance and initiative.
FINANCIALS

FY 2016 Revenue: $2,892,783
Note: Percentages in pie charts do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

FY 2016 Expenses: $3,337,958

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The organizational loss and changes in net assets are primarily due to the timing of recording restricted gifts in prior years and utilization of those gifts (or releases) in subsequent years.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES (Current and FY 2016)

Paul Nightingale, Chair
Kathleen Truscott, Vice-Chair
Kim Meader, Treasurer
Marshall Strauss, Clerk
Darren Ambler

Richard L. Cormier
David Guibbeault
Sarah M. Hayes
Erin Heiskell, MD
Holly Jannell

Kathleen Kenahan (through 3/17)
Stephen G. Manning
Kevin McCarthy
Brendan R. Walsh
Robert Wentworth
Promise means family and friends cuz they stay there.

To be there when you need someone the most.

Promise ‘can bring light into a bad day.’

Willing. Willing to do anything.