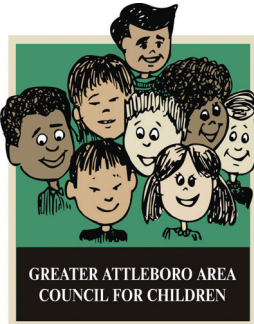


GREATER ATTLEBORO AREA COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN

needs statement



COUNCIL FORCHILDREN.ORG
508.226.2336



NEEDS STATEMENT

MISSION

The Council for Children's mission: *Dedicated to providing year round programs and educational support to enrich the lives of children in need.*

HISTORY

In 1982, the Greater Attleboro Area Council for Children was created when the state of Massachusetts stopped funding the Office for Children across the state. The dedicated Attleboro area employees of the Office for Children became volunteers, incorporated the new non-profit and adjusted the focus to raising awareness of children living in poverty or facing a crisis. Today, children and parents get support in Attleboro, North Attleboro, Norton, Mansfield, Rehoboth, Seekonk and Plainville.

Over the years, the Council for Children's initiatives have been small in magnitude: a toy, a teddy bear, a backpack, a music lesson. But for a child, they are highly impactful. This has always been the focus of the Council: small kindnesses mean a lot to the children and the families we serve.

The first few years' programs included fundraising to help local children who needed medical care; **Bears on Board**, a program to keep teddy bears on emergency vehicles to help comfort children in crisis; **Bus Those Babies**, raising awareness of the need for local children to get to school safely; and **Child Passenger Safety** to raise awareness of proper car seat installation. Over time, the need for these programs diminished, thanks to the work of raising awareness for each issue.

THE WORK TODAY

Day Care Scholarships: A one-week scholarship for parents who are not eligible for any state or federal aid, the aid allowing parents to use the money earmarked for day care that week to catch up on other bills or necessities.

Christmas is for Kids: Since 1983, this gift-giving program has filled wishes for local children, ensuring each child has warm clothes, a favorite book and a special toy. Currently, 1000 children are helped each year.

Backpacks: First created as a birthday party in a backpack, the program now gives school supplies and summer camp supplies in a backpack to children whose family could not provide for the items needed.

The Nicky O Foundation: The Station Nightclub fire and tragedy hit very close to home as one of our own lost a child. This program was created to memorialize the teen who loved music and the arts, and pays for music lessons, youth theater lessons and for students to participate in SMARTS camps during school vacations.



THE NEED

In the 35 years since the Council for Children was incorporated, the organization has positively impacted thousands of children and families, working out of 2 small rooms donated by the city of Attleboro, ironically on the first floor of an elderly housing complex. In particular, **Christmas is for Kids** has been able to continue to fulfill wishes as well as grow in both the number of children being helped and the number of volunteers who join

in the process each year. As the program grew, the need for more space became paramount in order to collect, sort and stage large bags for 1000 children. Through the years, thanks to several business owners, a service group and the city, space has been donated. However, without permanent space (approximately 10,000 square feet is needed to allow for enough room for inventory, sorting and staging gifts and some administrative space for phones and writing thank you notes) the organization has needed to look for space quite often. Magically, they have managed to morph a Masonic hall, a closed restaurant, a closed bank, a closed church, an old Balfour factory, a newly renovated building and most recently an old school building into Santa's workshop.

The lack of permanent space hasn't stopped the Council's board members from reaching out to the community and growing their programs while taking a leadership role in collaborating with several other local organizations and agencies who also serve the same population. This collaboration has led to a community conversation about the need for permanent space, currently called a "Self-Sufficiency Center."

Even with all of the success that the Council can itemize, as the 2017 Strategic Plan was written, looking ahead at what still needs to be done shines a bright light on the limitations of an organization that is essentially nomadic. Having roots will allow the Council to do more toward their mission, such as adding more robust classes for returning Christmas is for Kids parents, additional food drives for children who are in jeopardy of going hungry, and a 1-stop option to learn more about job searches, fuel assistance, food stamps, gently used clothing and so much more to help parents be independent.

THE SOLUTION

The Council Board proposes to build or renovate a facility that will provide a clean, safe, and efficient home to the programs for the children and families we serve. A new permanent location is estimated to cost \$1 million. The Board would like to conduct a community-wide Capital Campaign to raise the needed funds.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

For 35 years, we have expanded our service area to include six communities: Attleboro, Mansfield, North Attleboro, Norton, Rehoboth, and Seekonk. Beginning in 2016, we added Plainville to our service area. In order to continue our mission and provide the essential services we offer, the Greater Attleboro Area Council for Children must build a new facility to accommodate the continually increasing needs of the communities we serve.

The Council still needs to determine if the communities can raise \$1 million to complete this exciting possibility. A fundraising Planning & Feasibility Study is needed at this time to determine the interest and ability of families, individuals, foundations, and businesses in our communities to help the Greater Attleboro Area Council for Children continue its plans to provide the best support services in the region. We have engaged the services of Daniel R. Barry & Associates, a well-respected NE-based national fundraising firm, to perform our Planning & Feasibility Study. This Study will help us assess our financial ability to raise money, gifts and pledges, to fund our proposed new facility. Attached are pictures of our present site.

