



# ABBOTT HOUSE



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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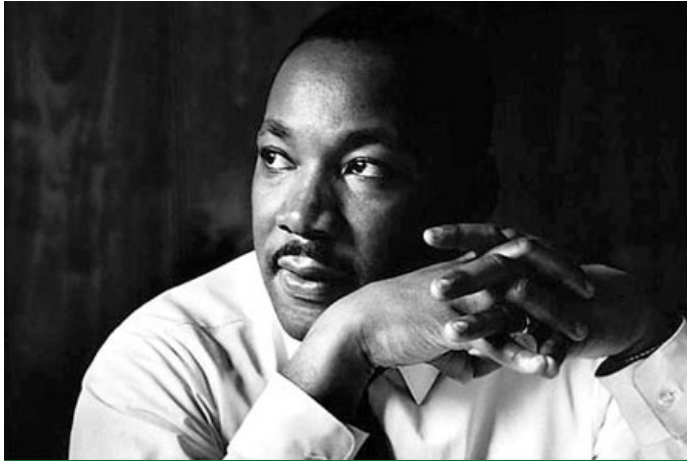


BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES  
AND COMMUNITIES SINCE 1963



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*"...you at Abbott House are great and good because you are the Good Samaritans working to help those who have been abandoned, and who have faced the scars along the Jericho Roads of life."*

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Dear Friends of Abbott House,

It has been another positive year for our organization. In 2015\*, Abbott House continued to improve and enrich thousands of lives throughout the NYC and the Hudson Valley region through our various preventative, in-home, and residential services for youth, families, and individuals with developmental disabilities.

When we wrote to you last year, we had just begun to see the results of our Transitional Resources for Children (TRC) program. As you will see in the upcoming pages, we now have a much clearer picture of how many children were reunited with family members in the United States, and the effect this program had not only on those it helped, but on the local community as well. Recently, one of our former youths in care wrote to us, stating simply "I thank you for the help that we experienced. And thank God I am learning more English." The image of these kids finally at home with loved ones, going to school, and building a new life after overcoming so much adversity, is truly priceless.

As always, Abbott House continues to expand our programs to help some of our most vulnerable populations. In November, we began a partnership with the New York City Department of Education to provide services to three public schools in the Mount Eden community of the Bronx: Dona Pura Belpre PS 64, The Walton Avenue School PS 294, and Lucero PS 311. The "Community Schools Resource Program" seeks to engage parents, families, and other members of the community as part of a school transformation process. It is a collaborative and holistic approach to encourage student success that includes components such as after-school and summer programming, family engagement, social services, and physical and mental health services.

\* 2015 fiscal year runs between 7/1/14 - 6/30/15

More than 200 children and their families are served annually, and we look forward to seeing these students achieve great things, graduate, and become productive members of their communities.

Fiscally, Abbott House continues to improve, and we are proud of where we've come from only a few short years ago. While we are happy 2015 was another productive year, there are always challenges which lie ahead, and we remain focused on continuing to build our organization and provide the highest caliber care possible for all those we serve. In the upcoming pages, you will read more in-depth about the many services we provide.

As you look through the statistics, stories, and photos in the upcoming pages, we want you to know that none of our work would be possible without our friends, benefactors, volunteers, supporters, and advocates. It is all of us working together which allow us to fulfill our mission "...to improve the lives of vulnerable children, adults, and families." Thank you so much, and please continue to remember Abbott House in your generosity.



James L. Kaufman, LCSW-R  
President and CEO



Gregory T. Mooney  
Board Chairman

# Our Story

THE MISSION OF ABBOTT HOUSE IS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF  
VULNERABLE CHILDREN, ADULTS, AND FAMILIES.

*The building atop North Broadway in the Village of Irvington, New York that now serves as the administrative headquarters for all Abbott House operations was initially created as a hospital. "Irvington House" focused on the care of children with chronic disease. Slowly, over time, the hospital began to shift its focus from medical treatment to the cause of child welfare, and in 1963 Abbott House was officially incorporated.*

*In its beginning, Abbott House provided services for foster care children, including group homes and adoption placement. The agency has evolved over the past 50+ years and now provides care for a diverse range of individuals and families throughout the New York metropolitan area and surrounding Hudson Valley counties. Abbott House has administration offices in Irvington, the Bronx, and New Windsor, and care centers in the five boroughs, Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Ulster and Putnam counties. Below is a brief timeline description of how the current Abbott House came to be:*

In 1992 Abbott House expanded its spectrum of services to include assistance to the developmentally disabled population. Through assisted living programs at 15 Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs) and one Intermediate Care Facility (ICF), developmentally disabled individuals are given the opportunity to live their lives with the dignity they deserve. Through employment and volunteer programs, our consumers are able to become positive contributors to society.

As an extension of services to children in foster care, Abbott House initiated the Bridges to Health Program in 2008. This specialized program is designed for children with complex medical, developmental, or mental health issues. Support services begin while a child is still in foster care and continue after the child returns home. The goal is to keep the child in

his/her home and in the community by assisting parents in managing the child's health conditions.

Beginning in June of 2014, a grant from the Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, allowed Abbott House to care for children who come into the United States from other countries without an adult guardian. The program, named "Transitional Resources for Children," provides youth with room and board, case management, individual counseling, medical and educational services, recreation/leisure activities, acculturation, legal services, transportation and access to religious services – all while awaiting reunification with their families. The average length of a child's stay in the program is 30 days.

Abbott House began the Community Schools Resource Program in November 2015. Partnering with the New York City Department of Education, this program provides services to three public schools in the Bronx: Dona Pura Belpre PS 64, The Walton Avenue School PS 294, and Lucero PS 311. A community school is a collaborative and holistic approach to supporting student success that includes components such as after school and summer programming, family engagement, social services, and physical and mental health services. More than 200 children and their families are served annually.

At any given time, Abbott House provides direct care for nearly 1,300 children, young adults and families with a goal of preparing the next generation of society with the knowledge, tools and opportunities they deserve to attain the success we know they're capable of achieving.



# Children, Youth, and Family Services

## FOSTER CARE AND THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE

Abbott House provides social support services as well as medical and mental health care for abused, neglected, and emotionally disturbed children, teenagers, and their families. Children and teens are matched every day with a caring foster family. Therapeutic Foster Care provides a community based alternative to residential placement and/or psychiatric hospitalization for children. The program is designed to provide families with parenting skills and community linkages necessary to assist them in coping with whatever issues led to the child's placement out of the home.

## BRIDGES TO HEALTH (B2H)

Bridges to Health is a hands-on, supportive program for children in foster care with complex medical, developmental, or mental health conditions. We offer in-home, supportive services tailored to the child's health needs and coordinated by our Health Care Integrators. Abbott House is the only social service agency that provides these services to both New York City and the Lower Hudson Valley region.

## PREVENTION SERVICES

Through the Family Assessment and Community Enhancement (FACE) Program, Abbott House works with up to 50 at-risk families in Newburgh and Poughkeepsie to provide crucial early intervention services, helping children avoid the foster care system.

## GROUP HOMES

Abbott House provides a myriad of services tailored to improving the lives of children and families throughout the Hudson Valley and New York City. We work with children from birth through eighteen years of age at placement. Our children and young adults present a wide range of behavioral and emotional issues that are the by-product of abuse and neglect. The objective of our Group Home program is to assist the child in returning to a safe and permanent living situation.

## CLINICAL AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Abbott House's Clinical and Counseling Center is licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health to provide psychotherapy and psychiatric services to children, adolescents, adults, and families living in Westchester County. Clients suffering from a variety of mental health concerns will be assisted in minimizing their symptoms and the adverse effects and consequences of their problems, in maintaining and promoting their integration into the community, and in supporting family integrity.

## CHILDREN AWAITING FAMILY REUNIFICATION

The Transitional Resources for Children (TRC) Program serves up to 51 young people at any given time. These children have entered the United States from other countries without an adult guardian, and Abbott House provides short-term care and treatment while a family member or sponsor is identified. During their stay, children receive room and board, case management, individual counseling, and medical and educational services. The average stay of a child before they are reunited with family or placed with a sponsor is approximately 30 days.



# 2015 OUTCOMES

**971** children and teenagers had a safe and comfortable bed to sleep in

**312** children were reunited with a family member or placed with a sponsor after completing the TRC Program

**285** children and teenagers received B2H services

**125** new children were welcomed into Abbott House's Foster Care Program

**94** foster children were successfully reunited with their biological families

**23** children were successfully adopted

Approximately **40%** of Abbott House foster care youth attend college, compared to the national average of **10%**

# Services for the Developmentally Disabled



Abbott House has 16 residential programs located throughout Westchester, Rockland, and the Bronx for people who are intellectually or developmentally disabled.

Our Day Habilitation Programs focus on teaching every individual to be a meaningful member of their community. Groups often volunteer at local fire departments, animal shelters, and deliver meals on wheels. They also participate in recreational activities with local colleges and sports leagues.

## Additional Support Services:

**Medicaid Service Coordination** - Medicaid Service Coordinators serve as advocates for individuals with disabilities in a one-on-one basis to ensure their needs are met.

**Self-Advocacy** is a program that teaches individuals leadership skills while empowering them to speak about issues they find important.

**Residential Services** - Behavior specialists consult with individuals to create goals that are important to the individual and plans that fit within that person's capability to achieve them.





# 2015 OUTCOMES

- 105 Developmentally Disabled Adults had a safe and supervised home to live and grow in
- 88 Received Medicaid Service Coordination
- 35 Learned new skills and new ways to utilize existing abilities through the Day Habilitation Program
- 30 Participated in Abbott House's own SPDD Kiwanis Club Chapter
- 27 Volunteered in their community
- 26 Learned and exercised their rights as self-advocates
- 15 Participated in the Abbott House Special Olympics Team
- 13 Gained or maintained paid employment



In 2015 Abbott House had  
**240** Foster Families

# Transitional Resources for Children Community Volunteers



*"It was a life-changing experience for me and a privilege as a church to be involved with these kids."*

- Reverend Susan Copley,  
Pastor of Christ Episcopal Church in Tarrytown, NY



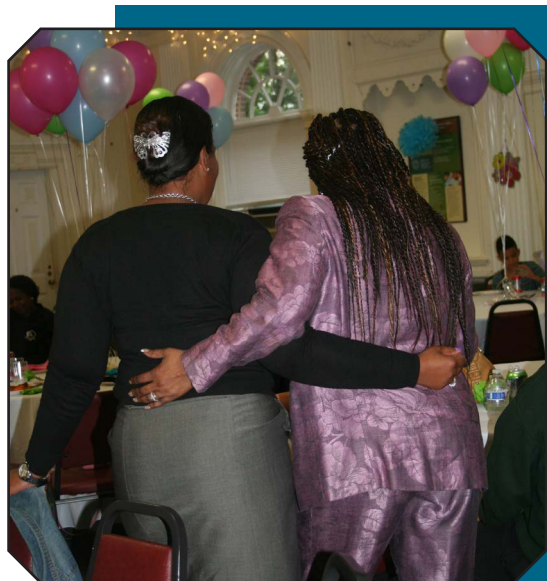
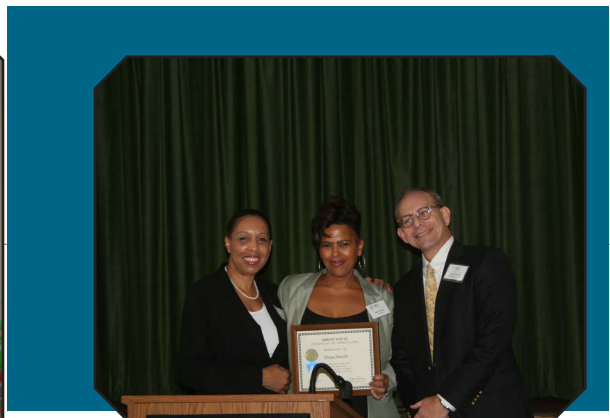
*"These kids were so open, joyful, and amazing even though they were going off into the unknown. The kids gave us so much perspective in terms of what is important in life."*

- Lauren Wendle, founder of TRC weekly art group



*"Hopefully I helped them to feel more comfortable. Now they have moved on. But I know where a lot of them are. I'm Facebook friends with a bunch of them and they are doing great."*

- Harrison Peltz, founder of "Jugamos!", a sports program created for the TRC youth





# Carolina's Story

*As told by Kristen Peralta, B2H Health Care Integration Supervisor,  
and Margaret Keane, B2H Waiver Service Provider*

Statistically, fewer than 10 percent of foster youth attend college, and of that 10% only 26% will complete any kind of degree or certificate. The application process can be a daunting and overwhelming experience for any student, but imagine what it's like for a young person who doesn't feel they have any guidance or support. We want to share Carolina's story to help illustrate the importance of providing a support system for all children, and the positive effect it can have on their future. UPENN Psychologist and author Angela Duckworth defines grit as *"a distinct combination of passion, resilience, determination, and focus that allows a person to maintain their goals even in the face of great challenges."* Carolina, a young lady enrolled in the Bridges to Health Program at Abbott House, has these characteristics in spades, and is living proof that the statistics above can be challenged and changed.

When I first met Carolina, I recall sitting across from her as she stared idly into her lap with her hair covering her face. Though I repeatedly tried to engage her, I was received with mumbled one word responses, seldom given while making eye contact. I remember the anxiety that stemmed from any mention of social situations and the frustration that would follow poorly executed plans she had made for herself. During my two years as her HCI and then as an HCI Supervisor, I watched the shy, timid girl I first met develop into a charismatic, motivated young woman. A girl who feared leaving the comfort of her couch now has ventured on ski trips, attended prom, and plans to attend a university almost 8 hours away.

It's been almost a year since we met with Brian Culligan, the SUNY EOP admissions counselor. During our first trip into the city, it was raining and Carolina was very quiet. We met with Brian for almost 2 hours, going over the steps of the common application and then the supplemental EOP application. We discussed the best SUNY school options for her, focusing on the colleges that had well-developed art programs where she could follow her passion--to become a graphic novelist and share her own anime and manga stories with other young readers. In the end, Carolina decided to apply to SUNY Purchase, New Paltz, Fredonia, and Plattsburgh. At that first meeting, the whole process seemed daunting and overwhelming. Even as her SNCAS worker, I sometimes wondered if it could be done.

There were constant speedbumps along the way that required grit. It seemed like her common app would never be complete-- there was always one piece of information that needed updating, ACT scores that had to be tracked down, a lack of credits that certain schools required, and endless essays and interviews. We breathed a short lived sigh of relief once the common app and all supplementals were completed, but next came more deadlines: FAFSA, Scholarships, and finishing her art portfolio to name a few.

However, after much communication behind the scenes between myself, Carolina, her HCI Daniela Milanez, her foster parent Ms. Walker, her teachers, guidance counselors, SUNY staff, FAFSA workers and everybody in between --Carolina is now an accepted EOP college student on her way to the SUNY Plattsburgh Summer Institute! For four weeks, she will meet other EOP students, take classes, work with a mentor, and explore the Plattsburgh campus and art program. In addition, Carolina applied for and received the Spirit of Hope Scholarship, which is awarded to an individual each year who has "overcome hardships as a child that once lived in a group or foster home, has given back to his or her community, and aspires to obtain a higher education." We could not be more proud of her.

Carolina's story is important because it highlights how support services such as the Bridges to Health Program are essential to the growth of a young person in foster care. It requires constant communication between providers, caretakers, foster parents, and school staff, and most importantly a lot of persistence and strength from the individual, but the successes achieved are well worth it. Carolina has blossomed in her confidence, her abilities, and in her recognition of her own accomplishments. She has learned the power that comes from stepping out of her comfort zone and has flourished with the support of her B2H Team. Carolina allowed us to bring out the strengths she has always possessed, but was scared to let cultivate. It has been an honor to see her come into her own as a young lady and as part of our program.

**Carolina, from all of us at  
Abbott House,  
congratulations and good luck!**

# Abbott House

## Statement of Operating Revenue and Expenses

Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2015

Public Support and Revenue		2015	2014
Government Agencies	\$	46,134,000.00	\$ 43,219,222.00
Contributions	\$	282,934.00	\$ 360,296.00
Rent Income	\$	94,943.00	\$ 139,242.00
Other	\$	151,120.00	\$ 866,604.00

<b>Total Public Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>46,662,997.00</b>	<b>\$</b> 44,585,364.00
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### Expenses

Program Expenses			
Transitional Resources for Children	\$	2,952,859.00	\$ 520,573.00
Family Foster Care	\$	14,966,745.00	\$ 15,644,257.00
Group Homes	\$	2,995,930.00	\$ 3,102,240.00
OMH/OPWDD	\$	14,871,150.00	\$ 14,561,354.00
Bridges to Health	\$	6,153,754.00	\$ 5,889,867.00

<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>41,940,438.00</b>	<b>\$</b> 39,718,291.00
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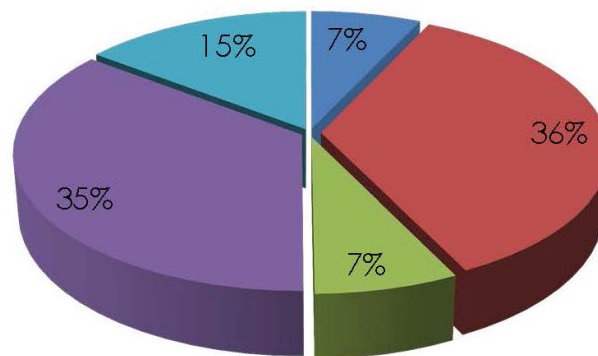
### Other Expenses

Fundraising	\$	339,155.00	\$ 389,898.00
Management and General	\$	3,575,629.00	\$ 3,310,866.00

<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,914,784.00</b>	<b>\$</b> 3,700,764.00
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<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>45,855,222.00</b>	<b>\$</b> 43,419,055.00
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<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>807,775.00</b>	<b>\$</b> 1,166,309.00
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- Transitional Resources for Children
- Family Foster Care
- Group Homes
- OMH/OPWDD
- Bridges to Health

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