

Abbott House

Annual Report - FY2019

Weathering The Storm Together





Dear Good Neighbor,

Yes, you are indeed a good neighbor! Last year, through the magic of cinema, Mr. Fred Rogers awakened in our hearts a renewed sense of what being a good neighbor means - and how much is possible when we all come together. 2019 was a year of tremendous community spirit at Abbott House. Whether you volunteered or donated funds to support our mission, each and every one of you stepped forward to spread kindness and compassion to traumatized children, struggling families and adults with developmental disabilities. They needed your love, and you didn't hesitate to share it with them.



We are deeply grateful to you for believing everyone deserves a chance to overcome their challenges.

As we celebrate all we have accomplished together, we also want to take a moment of pause as we now face a world that has changed in unimaginable ways due to Covid-19. Our commitment to providing safety, healing, and hope to those we serve remains the top priority. Our dedicated staff are on the front lines every day facing insurmountable challenges and as we brace ourselves for what lies ahead, we confidently move forward knowing that we have a community of neighbors like you in our corner.

Fred Rogers once said, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."

You are the helpers, and with your help, those in our care continue to have opportunities to transform their tomorrows and build promising futures. You will read more about your impact in the pages of this report.

You may know that the majority of our funding comes from government contracts, which are important partnerships; ones that are essential to the operation of our many programs and services. However, these contracts do not cover all the costs necessary to take care of running the agency and providing the kind of extra support and specialized care that we all know is needed by so many.

In the last few years we have embarked on a journey to engage the community in our lifesaving work; to help provide the vital resources that are not provided through government contracts. 2019 was our best year yet together, and with your continued compassionate support, we hope that 2020 will be even better.

One final thought. With so much sadness and anxiety in our world right now, we invite you to be inspired by the amazing things we have accomplished together. These pages bring hope and highlight the impact that your generosity of time, passion and funds had on those who most needed your help.

Thank you for being you. Thank you for your compassionate heart. It is only together that we can truly help people feel safe, heal from trauma and find hope. And that makes our community stronger for all of us.

James L. Kaufman, LCSW-R
President and CEO

Walter Montgomery, Ph.D
Board Chairman

“All of us, at some time or another, need help. Whether we’re giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That’s one of the things that connects us as neighbors--in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver.”

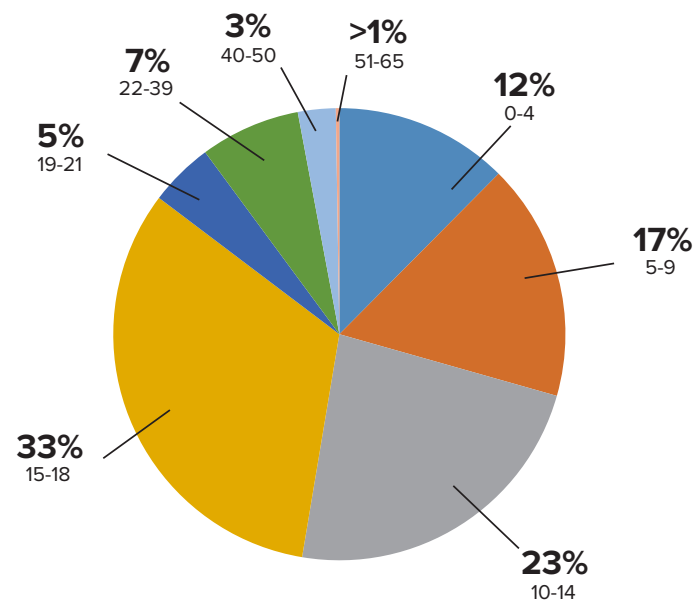
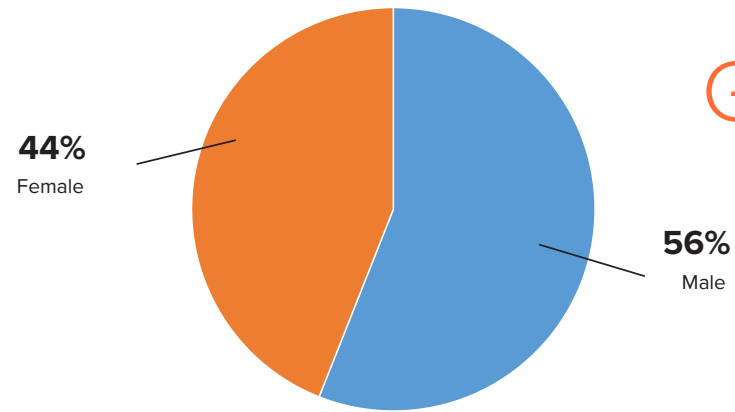
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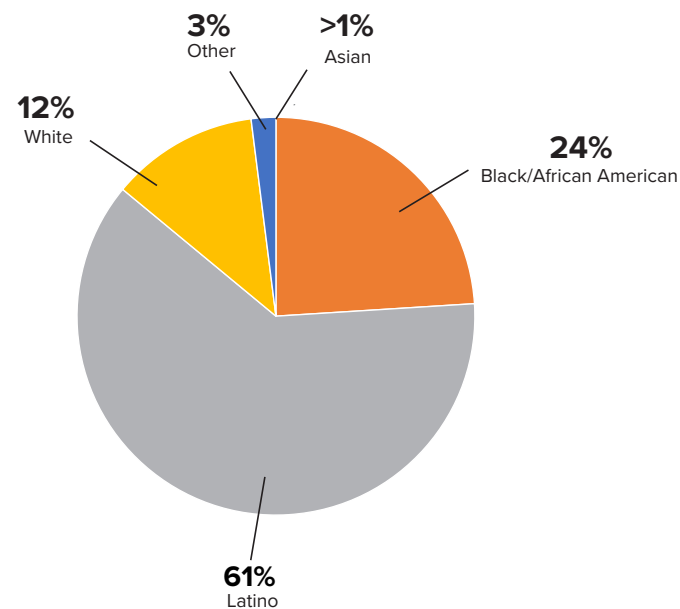


Who We Serve

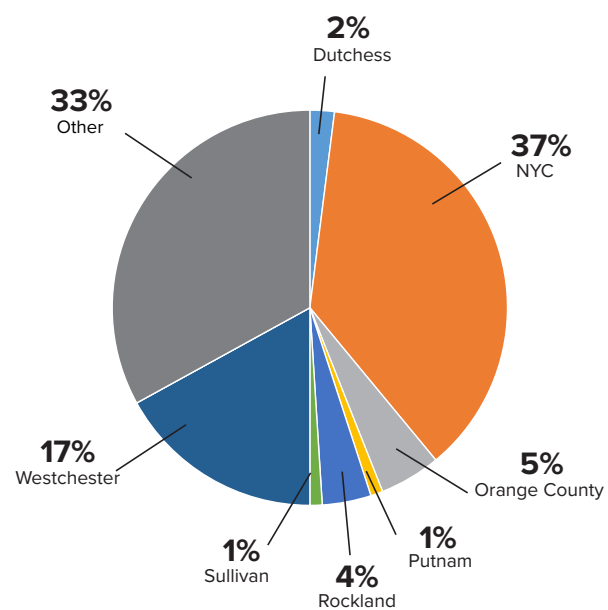
Gender



Age



Ethnicity



Areas Served

ABOUT ABBOTT HOUSE

Abbott House is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that builds lasting foundations under children, families and adults with complex needs.

We support nearly 2,800 children in foster care, unaccompanied immigrant minors, adults with developmental disabilities and struggling families in the New York Metropolitan area and the Hudson Valley by providing safety, promoting healing and restoring hope.

The heart of our work is dedicated to helping human beings recover from deep trauma or intervening to prevent trauma in the first place.

We know that each child, family and individual has unique needs. Our approach is to partner with each person we serve to create a plan and tap into the right resources that best meets their needs. For families with children with more complex needs, we offer Care Management and Care Coordination through our Health Homes services.

Thanks to you, children in foster care, unaccompanied immigrant children, struggling families and adults with developmental disabilities get the support they need to feel safe, heal, and find hope.

They will always remember and be grateful to you.



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FINANCIALS

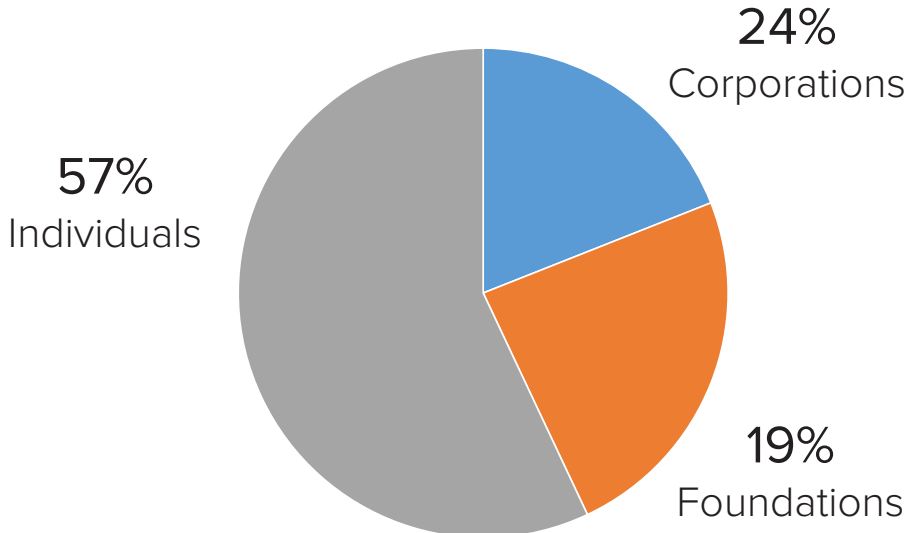
Revenue (7/1/2018 - 6/30/2019)

Government Contracts and Grants	\$47,318,341
Contributions	\$439,753
Rent Income	\$48,000
Other	\$829,288
	\$48,635,382

Expenses

Program Services	\$43,910,388
Management and General/Fund Raising	\$4,654,568
	\$48,564,956

OUR DONORS



We distributed
\$131,208
worth of in-kind
donations you
gave us to children,
families and adults
with developmental
disabilities.

\$82,000
Awarded through
grants to provide skill
building, education,
cultural enrichment,
recreation activities
and support for a
new Pride model
to recruit and train
foster parents.





Our clinical team analyzed behavior data and strategically faded restrictions to increase self-determined living for our Services for People with Developmental Disabilities population by

40%

HANNAH’S STORY

Abbott House is a beacon of hope; a welcoming environment where individuals receive the kind of foundational support they need to become the best versions of themselves. For many of our adults with developmental disabilities, Abbott House truly is a home in every sense of the word, and in many cases our staff extensions of their family.

This is especially true for Hannah, who became eligible for services through OPWDD (Office for People With Developmental Disabilities) after having spent her life in and out of her mother’s home and various foster placements. Hannah struggled with her developmental disabilities throughout her youth and tried unsuccessfully to keep up with her peers on their life milestones whether employment, boyfriends or other growth opportunities.

Without the consistency of a stable home environment or caregiver, and without a proper care plan to help Hannah with her disabilities, she constantly found herself feeling abandoned, alone and frustrated. However, this all changed when she joined our family at Abbott House.

From the moment Hannah moved into one of our group homes, we were able to provide her with a tremendous amount of behavioral, nursing and direct-support services that were previously not available to her. The staff was trained and informed about Hannah’s disability diagnosis and past trauma, and were then able to create a Life Plan to help her thrive in her new environment.

Eventually, thanks to her loving and dedicated staff, Hannah began to feel safe and secure in her new home. In turn, her caregivers gained a better understanding of her emotions and the best ways to support her during difficult times. Hannah’s hospitalizations decreased, and she began to tolerate difficult situations with fewer emotional outbursts.

Hannah has had a truly transformational experience in our care. As a result of her positive behavioral achievements, her supervision level in the community has been modified to allow her more independence. She also has been able to have more frequent and unsupervised visits with her mother and siblings.

These are more than milestone moments – they are transformational moments!

HOPE AT THE HOLIDAYS

During the holidays, a team of big-hearted employees at People’s United Bank wanted to make the season extra special for adults with developmental disabilities in care at Abbott House. Thanks to their generous hearts, more than 30 adults in our SPDD Program were granted their most wished-for items, including brand new coats, makeup kits and even gift cards to Starbucks. Each present was beautifully wrapped, labeled and delivered just in time to spread lots of smiles on Christmas morning.

“There is no normal life that is free of pain. It’s the very wrestling with our problems that can be the impetus for our growth.”



Helping Kids Heal Through the Power of Play

The 2,088 hours of work put in by our Playground Volunteers represents \$63,015.84 worth of time! Thank you!

*NYS "pay" rate for volunteers is currently \$30.18/hour

Playgrounds are magical places where kids embark on adventures, make new friends, learn to share, and interact with other children. Playtime is also a proven way to foster creativity and encourage emotional and physical health- all while having fun!

Up until last June, many of the children at Abbott House did not have access to a purposeful, innovative play space, because our existing playground structure was quite old and in need of repair. Having such a space is an important tool for all children suffering from deep trauma and can significantly aid in their healing process. In fact, playtime can help kids respond positively to stress and strengthen their ability to grow and thrive.

In June of 2019, thanks to a grant by KaBOOM! and funding partner Morgan Stanley, Abbott House was given an incredible opportunity to bring together our entire community and build a brand new, state-of-the-art, kid-designed (and kid-approved!) playground on our Irvington campus!

After two labor-intensive months of planning and prepping the site, an amazing transformation was set to begin. The campus was buzzing with excitement as Abbott House welcomed more than 250 volunteers including employees of Morgan Stanley, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, USI, and The Workmen's Circle along with so many donors, friends, neighbors and local businesses with one goal in mind – give the kids at Abbott House a safe place where they can just be kids, free of worry and anxiety.

Together, you rolled up your sleeves and got to work. Some of you shoveled mulch and mixed concrete, while others unloaded and assembled playground equipment. There were also groups in charge of food, snacks and water to keep everyone nourished and hydrated during record-high temperatures. There was no shortage of snacks, smiles or community spirit that day – and in just six hours, the new playground was completed.

The children of Abbott House love their new space, especially the "little, little ones," as described by Deborah Garrigo, Assistant Director of the Transitional Resources for Children (TRC) Program. "Many of the immigrant children in our program have never experienced a playground until their arrival at Abbott House, and so, for them, the concept has been very interesting and well received," said Garrigo. Since the playground's official opening last summer, many of the children can be seen running down the grassy hill during their lunch break. Some of the younger children jump onto the see saw, while others simply find a comfortable spot on the grass and watch their friends slide and climb and explore their imaginations. There is never a shortage of smiles on the playground.

For one 11 year-old child from Honduras, with Down Syndrome, the playground was a transformational experience. At the time she came to the TRC Program, Juanita struggled with her behavior, leaving her caregivers with a challenge to find ways to redirect her emotions and instill in her a sense of calmness. The playground was not only a safe space where she was able to relax, it also was a place she was able to become the best version of herself – and she began to look forward to it every day.

Juanita's transformation, reminds us of the incredible resilience of children, and that even in the face of tremendous challenge, there is tremendous hope. Her story is a testament to the power of play and how kids can heal and find hope while having fun.

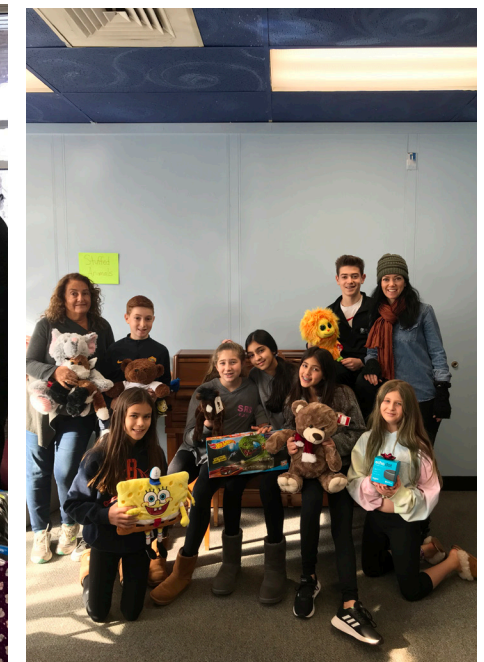
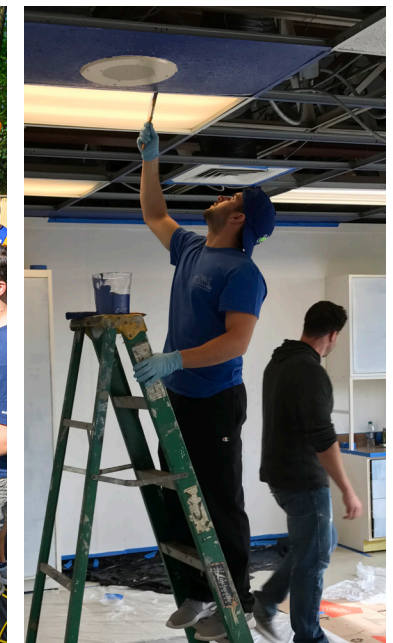
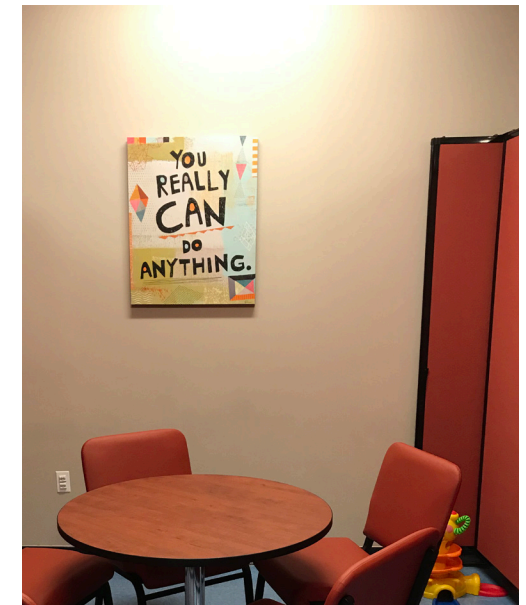
Thank you for understanding the value of play and what it can mean to a child recovering from trauma. **You are a community full of heart!**

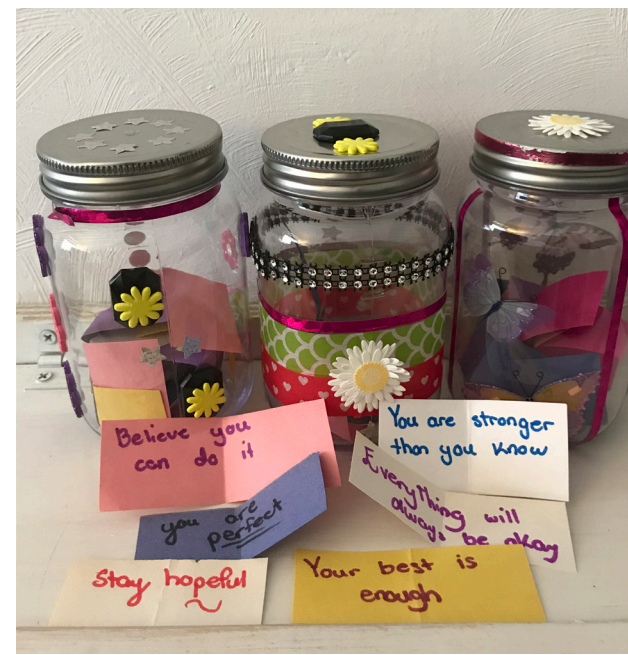


You believed that the most vulnerable among us deserved an opportunity to be safe, heal and discover hope.

Here are just a few of the amazing things YOU helped make possible!

- **YOU** built a playground, a safe and fun place for foster and immigrant children who come to Abbott House to heal from trauma and just be kids.
- **YOU** renovated the family visiting spaces in the Bronx, to reduce the anxiety of biological parents during supervised visits with children.
- **YOU** created and designed a music/reading room for our immigrant children - a cheerful and calming space where kids can de-stress and discover the healing power of creativity and the magic of imagination.
- **YOU** made sure that kids were prepared to take on the school year by collecting and distributing hundreds of backpacks and school supplies.
- **YOU** drastically reduced the burden on foster families throughout our programs by collecting and distributing hundreds of items such as diapers, clothing, books and other essential supplies.
- **YOU** provided more than 300 cultural and educational enrichments, life skills and recreation activities for children who do not get the same opportunities that we provide for our own children.
- **YOU** collected Spanish/English dictionaries so every child in our TRC Program leaves with their very own and is prepared to become part of their community.
- **YOU** showed children that they are not alone during the holidays by collecting and distributing more than 2,500 gifts and toys.





“If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person.”

- **YOU** spread smiles to children in our care through our Kindness Jar Project - hand-decorated mason jars filled with slips of paper bearing positive motivational messages of hope.
- **YOU** brought health and wellness opportunities to children in our TRC Program including visiting local farms and learning about the origins of food, health and nutrition and sustainable living practices.
- **YOU** built a garden at our Irvington campus where children and adults helped plant and continue to care for and harvest beans, squash, corn, tomatoes, cilantro, and other herbs and edible flowers, while experiencing the healing power of gardening and growing.
- **YOU** arranged learning enrichment evenings at neighboring schools where children participate in STEM Projects that tie in to the classroom lessons.
- **YOU** created an art therapy extension of the classroom curriculum that exposes the children to poems, improvisation and expressive art, designed to help them get in touch with their own feelings and journeys.

THANK YOU!

OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

For Children and Families

Together, we help children and adolescents with complex problems made worse by their stressful environments. Often, they have lost their sense of place in the world and have a view of their future that is trapped in the present.

Our goal is to support and strengthen families to keep them together. We work with struggling families and newly formed ones to help them thrive.

When children enter foster care they are often traumatized for a variety of reasons. The need to enter foster care causes added trauma which can trigger additional emotional distress in these youth. Often, these circumstances will present as problematic behavior when placed with another family.

Our goal is to help these children and adolescents create a lasting sense of family, home and community, and prepare them for a promising future. We help them build a truly durable foundation of skills and experiences that allow them to thrive and become contributors to their communities as they come of age.

At Abbott House, our philosophy and mission are geared to providing children and adolescents with the foundational development of healing, safety and opportunity they need to thrive in these preferred family settings. Through counseling, health care, life skills, academic support, employment training and the like, we help them find their place in the world.

[Click here to learn more about our specific programs and services for children and families.](#)

For Adults with Developmental Disabilities

The thrust of our work with adults with complex needs is to help create enduring foundations of home, community and future in their lives. They often have capacities, strengths and goals that are overlooked by environments where 'management' overshadows growth. They're often hindered, unwittingly, by caregivers, from becoming their own person and developing their own notion of what their life will come to be.

Regardless of their history or circumstance, our aim is to provide these individuals with an environment of healing, safety and opportunity to create their future.

Adults with complex needs will not "bootstrap" themselves out of their plight and into prospering futures. They critically depend on our professional intervention and partnership.

Through counseling, health care, life skills, employment training and the like, we help them find their place in the world. Additionally, **Keon Programs of Abbott House** operates multiple community based programs, volunteering, pre-vocational training, and job placement services.

[Click here to learn more about our specific programs and services for adults with developmental disabilities.](#)



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*is also a volunteer

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