



House of Possibilities

Fall 2016 Newsletter

Helping families find peace and hope!

Family First No Matter What

"The best feeling of happiness is when you're happy because you've made somebody else happy."

Autumn is my favorite time of year. It brings forth new beginnings as we watch the leaves fall and winter join us. I look forward to the holidays and the time we spend together at family gatherings. Nothing makes me happier than seeing my imperfect family all under one roof.

The quote on our family room wall says it all to me: "Family first—no matter what." I cherish the time we grow stronger as a family even if it means we do so through our trials.

Our family of HOPE is becoming stronger as well. This year we have seen many faces of struggling families who are enduring great challenges and have entrusted us with their children. We have lightened the load for hundreds of families with our new paradigm of support that ensures families have an opportunity to heal and thrive.

One family needed respite in order to have time to move a daughter into college. The father in another family passed on and the now single mother needed emergency care for her son. Another family had to "Section 12" a son—an

involuntary transportation order to a hospital. These are just a glimpse of the great challenges endured by our families.

Raising a child with cognitive, physical, and/or emotional challenges can be both our greatest challenge and our biggest reward in life. For many, it is extreme parenting.

We try hard to prepare for the next hurdle but sometimes we aren't prepared mentally or physically to face what life has in store and we fall face first to the ground. These are the days when despair creeps in and we feel hopeless—just a glimpse of the enormous challenges that our families have endured.

We work to put the oxygen mask back on families so they don't fall to the ground.

This Thanksgiving, I wish everyone the joys of a slower pace, the blessing of a grateful heart and above all the knowledge that we are never alone.

For His special kids,

Paula Kavolius



This summer, we realized one of our HOPE dreams by providing a week of respite for a family who desperately needed our help.

A single mom was scheduled to have a C-section and had no one to care for her oldest son who has special needs. She asked for a few hours of assistance but we knew she would need additional time to transition from the hospital and adjust

to home life with a new baby. We emailed all staff that knew the child well and asked if they would chip in and help this Mom. Thanks to staff response, we were able to provide a full week of respite, including overnight and weekend activities. As busy as this new Mom is, here is her note of gratitude:

"Thank you so much for helping me when I had my baby. It was so helpful. It was amazing because it all worked out. And, he was so well behaved."

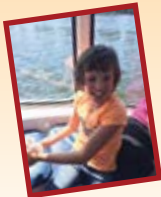
Gratefully, Mom

Imagine what life would be like if you are a single parent who is planning to deliver a second child with no one to care for your 14 year old son while you are in the hospital. This 14-year-old boy has asked to spend his 15th birthday at a HOPE overnight stay. For us, there is no greater honor than knowing a child wants to spend his birthday with his family and friends at HOPE.



ADVENTURE CLUB

"We didn't realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun."



Nothing is as heartwarming as watching a child make a new friend or express love in a heartfelt way. The smiles, awe and inspiration kindles the soul and helps us appreciate the beauty and spirit within our children.



This summer our children flourished with every sense. Our staff is committed to bringing the most enriching experiences to our children by seeking out great adventures that they may otherwise not experience. Each trip, our youngsters celebrate life and foster friendships. . Our



journeys entailed trips to the Ecotarium, Nantasket Beach, Southwick Zoo, Boston Duck Tours, Newport Cliff Walks, a Charles River Cruise and more...

These adventurous, safe, social experiences give HOPE families the greatest pleasure knowing what a magnificent afternoon their child is having. Our funny and outstanding moments are endless, but here is a glimpse:



Mary O'Toole shared one such moment when celebrating our "Friendship Award Weekend" at the Yardhouse restaurant. "The waiter asked one of the boys how he would like his burger cooked, and with a

great big smile he replied "Large, please!"

Linda Palaza shared - "after a long day during an Adventure Club outing, I was sitting in the back of the van, trying to relax a bit from a very active afternoon when I felt one of my angel buddies who was sitting beside me put his hand on top of mine, in the most beautiful and gentle way. No sounds were made from either of us. Our hands stayed that way for the rest of the ride. A priceless, beautiful gift from a child who cannot speak, but, didn't need words to say thank you or show his love."

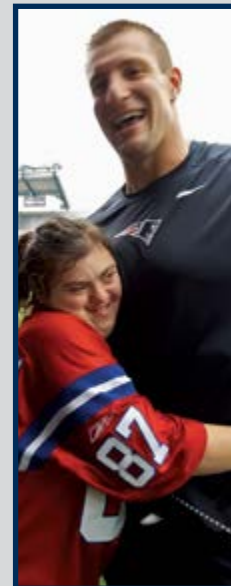
Our children form new friendships inside our House that resonate into lasting friendships. We recently had two boys so excited to meet they swapped information so they could set playdates off site and left our home with hugs and high fives.

These moments capture the heart of what House of Possibilities is about, providing respite care not just by providing our special guests a place to visit, but providing a safe, social, memorable, and loving experience for all.



Patriots Make Dreams Come True

Without a doubt, one of the most memorable events hosted by HOPE was a visit to Gillette Stadium as special guests of the New England Patriots during training camp. Hosted by the Patriots Charitable Foundation, we were welcomed with open arms. Our HOPE children were honored with sideline seats, ice cream, drinks, and even goody bags filled with memorabilia to commemorate the occasion. To top off, Gronkowski, Roberts, and Biggers personally visited with our children, posed for photos, and signed autographs! The players demonstrated their sincere dedication to our children and the mission of HOPE. Our kids showed their gratitude by giving the players endearing notes and special pictures which were graciously accepted. This was truly a once in a lifetime experience. To witness a child meet his hero and then hand him a personal note and homemade picture was simply awesome!



Cheer, Cheer for Fall is Here!

The HOPE Squad Cheer Team

The HOPE Squad Cheer Team is excited to welcome all the signs and activities of Fall! They are jumping for joy and having so much fun motivating the Stonehill College Skyhawk's football team! Every time there is a home game at the W. B. Mason Stadium, the HOPE Squad Cheer Team suits up in their purple and white uniforms to join the Stonehill College Cheer team in pumping up the audience. This team has a whole lot of spirit and makes everyone happy when they start cheering. Whether the Skyhawks win or lose, you can count on having a smile on your face after seeing this team perform!



Stonehill College Service Corps

Every year, we partner with the Stonehill College Service Corps to welcome a corps member to our staff. The Stonehill Service Corps are a group of recent graduates who are participating in a year-long post-graduate service experience, working at various organizations that advocate for social justice. This year, Chanel Mazzone '16 will be joining us as a Client Services Assistant. She graduated from Stonehill College with a double major in Neuroscience and Interdisciplinary studies, so working at HOPE is the perfect opportunity to put to use all she studied. Ever since a service trip she went on during her Freshman year, Chanel knew she wanted to partake in a year of service. After visiting HOPE, she knew this was the place she was meant to spend her year! With this position, she will both work with the clients in the Day Habilitation Program and support administrative tasks, such as developing this newsletter! She is especially excited to use her passion for art here at HOPE. Already, she has spent a lot of time in the art room with clients and received the high honor of repainting the HOPE sign out front with the clients! She is greatly excited for this upcoming year and all she will learn from both the amazing clients and her very talented coworkers.



A Wonderful Partnership

"When are they coming?" "Will they be here today?" "Is it Friday yet?"

All this excitement is caused by weekly celebration that occurs when the Stonehill College Best Buddies visit on Friday afternoons. Because of the HOPE House's unique location on Stonehill College's campus, our adults get to form strong and meaningful connections with the students at Stonehill. These students plan monthly parties, etc. and most of all, spend quality time getting to know all of the clients. The Buddies do amazing things for their friends here at HOPE. The clients are so excited about this friendship that they will often make cards or drawings for their buddy. This partnership doesn't end once the students leave Stonehill, however, as graduates will often come back to visit their friends at HOPE. This speaks to the magic that is a part of the HOPE program. The kids and adults that attend our programs are amazing, as they each have the unique ability to see and bring out the very best part of everyone. As one student said to her buddy, "you put the 'best' in best buddy." With this partnership with Stonehill, we truly are blessed to have the best, both in our clients and the students at Stonehill!



"It was definitely the highlight of my week last week. Personally, I had such a wonderful time. I know the Stonehill students that worked with me in the garden had a blast. We had so much fun laughing and working with the kids from the HOPE House...Your staff was so welcoming and the kids at the house were a treat to be around."

-Zach Brown, Assistant Director of Academic Services & Advising at Stonehill College



"My friendship with Joey is a classic example of how best buddies in a mutual friendship and not just me 'helping' Joey. Joey gives me life advice, and helps bring positivity even on my worst days, and I hope he would say I do the same for him"

- Matt Farrenkopf, '16

The Great Teams Find A Way

We serve children with all kinds of physical, cognitive and, on occasion, emotional disabilities. This is not always an easy task. Fortunately, we have an amazingly dedicated team committed to improving the lives of others. Our staff works tirelessly to provide support, laughter and individualized attention to every client that comes through our doors – and they do so with joy and enthusiasm.

Our team is often seen going the extra mile for those we serve. Whether it be a special Dunkin' Donuts trip on the way to Meals on Wheels or purchasing a lunch for someone who doesn't have one, staff go out of their way to make every client feel unique and treated with respect and

dignity. Often, the last people to eat lunch are the staff members, as they are always making sure that all of the clients have eaten first. However, when you comment to any of the staff members about their work, they simply tell you that they are just doing their job.

William James, who many thought to be “the father of psychology” once said, “A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and life is after all a chain.” In honor of the terrific links in our strong chain, we present here some photos of our staff working together with clients to create the magic that is HOPE.



Did You Know...?

HOPE staffers are not only amazing caregivers, but they also have a lot of super amazing talents!



Courtney Coan does Revolutionary War reenactments with her father up and down the East Coast, from Delaware to New York! She is known for playing Deborah Sampson, one of the first female soldiers in America who disguised herself as a male to fight.



Christopher Crider-Plonka won a Dorry, a prestigious Rhode Island Arts award, for Performance of the Year (lead) as David Frost in the play Frost/Nixon.



Shawanna Dearborn rode 25 miles to support our HOPE kids on September 26th and a year ago, she didn't even own a bicycle.



Lisa Giusti is more than a registered nurse. She is an animal lover and takes great pride in caring for 8 rabbits, 5 rats, 2 gerbils, 3 dogs, 5 birds, and a 29 gallon fish tank with goldfish.



Lauren Wencus is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, a graduate level certification in Behavior Analysis.

“A smile is the light in your window that tells others there is a caring, person inside.”

– Denis Waitley

HOPE Announcement



The House of Possibilities was founded by Paula Kavolius, the mother of a child with severe special needs. The mission is simple:

“Making difference for children, adults and families living with developmental challenges by providing high quality programs and much needed relief and hope.”

While the mission statement is simple, sustaining HOPE is a more complex necessity. When we opened our doors in 2009, we underestimated the magnitude of the challenge, yet with your help, we managed to find innovative ways to help more children every year.

Our growth has been significant in all metrics, including increases in number of children served, overall hours of service logged, number of cities and towns represented, and enhanced overall service quality. The most remarkable aspect of HOPE's programs is the substantial impact on the family's sense of well-being. We set out to “put the oxygen mask” back on families, and this is what we are most proud of.

Having made an initial positive change for our special families, we now realize the tremendous responsibility we have in making sure that this service remains an option for those we serve as well as the many families that are currently without the necessary assistance. Since we opened our doors, we have become

synonymous with hope, love, care, commitment, and unwavering loyalty to those we serve.

As a result of management deliberation and a continued commitment to struggling families, HOPE embraced the idea of forming a board-advised sustainability fund.

What does this mean?

We plan to establish a “rainy day” fund with the goal of long-term sustainability in mind. This board directed fund will not be used unless the board agrees it is necessary.

It's benefits include:

- Preservation of funds for immediate or urgent needs that arise; such as, facility maintenance and/or equipment.
- A reliable source of income in perpetuity by providing self-sustaining revenue streams.
- Gives donors who prefer to fund infrastructure versus operational or programmatic support an option.
- Allows donors a vehicle for family legacy gifts or a bequest option that can serve as a permanent tribute and extend the donor's values to our critically needed mission for future generations.

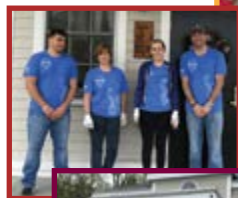
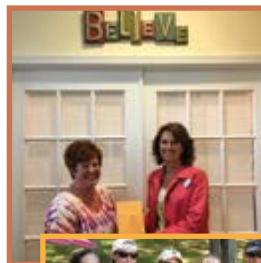
We are proud of what we have accomplished together. Over 1,000 children, siblings and families breathe easier because of your collective efforts. We embrace the responsibility of ensuring this mission continues in perpetuity.



“Give of your hands to Serve, and your hearts to Love” -St. Theresa

We are so very blessed for all the amazing volunteers who come and serve at HOPE. Just as the quote from St. Theresa says, these volunteers offer up their various talents, wonderful abilities, and most of all, give entirely and serve us wholeheartedly. Here are three stories of some truly incredible volunteers:

This May, thirty volunteers from Liberty Mutual's “Serve with Liberty” team came and gave our House a thorough cleaning. This hard working group did an incredible amount of work for the house in a short amount of time – from painting both exterior and interior spaces to doing all of the yard work that was needed. These volunteers didn't just come to plant flowers and leave, but rather, took the time to understand the mission of the HOPE House. Some were so moved that they were crying after learning about the work we do.



On July 24th, Team “Believe in HOPE,” lead by Kim Oliveira of Walpole, participated in the Hockomock Area YMCA Triathlon. Kim and her dedicated team of eight athletes battled record temperatures during the dog days of summer, all in support of HOPE. Their generosity and dedication is exactly what it takes to support our mission in changing the paradigm of quality respite care for our children and families. Kim and her dedicated team raised enough money to provide overnight respite to 20 children!

On August 20th, an amazing group of twenty-somethings organized their first “Music Festival of HOPE” to benefit our families. This was an extraordinary night where seven bands came and played. A special thank you to Dave Thibault, Matt Ryan, Mike Gallagher, Pete Burke, and Tom Donnellon and all the wonderful musicians for helping out in such a big way!

Flatley Foundation

The House of Possibilities would like to express sincere gratitude to the Yawkey, Flatley, and Salah Foundations for their generous contributions to our organization. Dedicated to continuing the legacy of Tom and Jean Yawkey, the Yawkey Foundations strive to make a positive difference in the lives of underserved children throughout the New England area. The Flatley Foundation, established by the late Thomas Flatley, compassionately supports organizations that serve communities in Massachusetts.

**“Let gratitude be the pillow to which
you kneel to say your nightly prayer”
– Maya Angelou**

The Salah Foundation is a private foundation that supports non-profits in the US that strengthen families and communities. The generosity of these foundations not only sends a resounding message to struggling families that their health matters, but also allows us to accommodate the growth of our programs with the purchase of our new 15-passenger van. We are exceedingly grateful for their kind support in helping us change the paradigm of what support looks like for families!



House of Possibilities

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www.houseofpossibilities.org
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350 Washington Street
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Please consider a donation of any kind to ensure that our precious mission of HOPE is sustainable for families who benefit enormously from our services.

FIRST NAME	LAST	
STREET		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
PHONE	FAX	
E-MAIL		

Please make **checks** payable to: House of Possibilities, 350 Washington St., N. Easton, MA 02356
To donate by debit or **credit card**, please complete the following:

CARD NO.	EXP. DATE	SECURITY CODE
SIGNATURE		AMOUNT \$

I would like to earmark my donation towards the following category:

- ☐ Annual Fund Campaign
- ☐ Overnight Respite
- ☐ Children's Weekend Programs
- ☐ As Needed
- ☐ In Honor of:
- ☐ Emergency Support
- ☐ Board Directed Sustainability Fund

Thank you!