



Spring 2015 Newsletter

Helping families find peace and hope!

Crazy Love

"I can hear his heart beat for a thousand miles. And the heavens open every time that he smiles. When I come home to him, that's where I belong. When I run to him, like a river song." — Van Morrison

Mother's Day is a day to celebrate all that you have accomplished, all that you have endured, and all that you have and will experience by being a Mother. The days that my three sons were born were undeniably the three best days of my life.

There is a saying; "A Mother holds their child's hand for a moment and their heart for a lifetime." I'd like to revise that quote to; "A 'Special' Mother holds their child's hand for a lifetime and their heart for eternity."

What would you think if I told you...every night I call my son, Timmy, who is now living at his school and has only one spoken word, "mama"? Do you think that is crazy?

What would you think if I told you I tell Tim how proud of him I am every day? I tell him that he is in college just like his brothers and he will be home soon. I talk about the weather and usually I can get him laughing by talking to him about how messy his room is and how I had to clean it up that day. He communicates to me by blowing raspberries or making sounds that let me know if he is happy or sad. I end our conversation by telling him when he will be home next so he knows that we love him and are thinking about him.

While this may seem crazy to some, for any Mother of a child with special needs this is quite typical. We do whatever our children need us to do to make them happy and feel loved. There is no handbook on how to be the perfect mother, yet there are a million ways to be a good one, and for those of us with a child with special needs, the things you will need to do for your child are beyond anything you ever imagined possible, but you do them every day because that is what your child needs.

Mother's Day is more than flowers, candy, and lovely cards. It is appreciating and giving thanks for the most remarkable and everlasting gift, a mother's love for her child, and her

*"When love is not madness, it is not love"
— Calderon de la Barca*

unconditional acceptance and perseverance through life's everyday challenges—no matter what!

At HOPE, I am blessed to see many types of love – love from the children for their mothers, love for the staff who care for them while their mothers get some much needed rest, love from the children for one another, love for the underdog in the group, love for the weary, love for all who enter our doors.

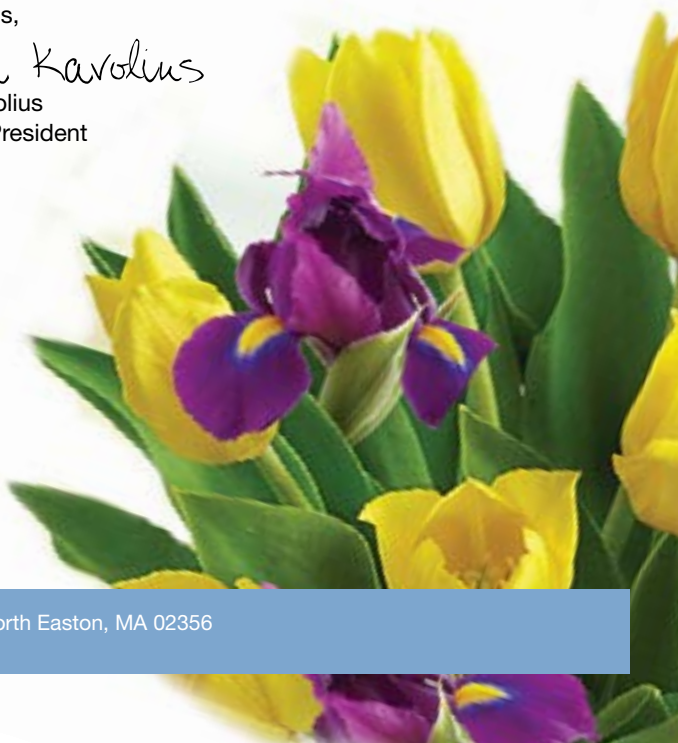
My son has brought me to the brink of exhaustion, but there has never been a day that I haven't thanked God for having him in our lives. There is no one that makes me feel more complete than my non-verbal son. He has taught me that my capacity for giving is beyond what I thought I was capable of and that what I have received in return is meaningful and sustaining happiness. These children are our teachers here on earth and they are here to help us grow to be better people than we believe we can be.

You can call me crazy, but always call me the thing I am most proud of, being a Mother. It is the most important and rewarding job on earth!

For the kids,

Paula Kavolius

Paula Kavolius
Founder, President



Exciting New Developments!

The new website is here! Visit and discover fresh design, text, and photos.



A visit to www.houseofpossibilities.org looks a bit different these days! After months of analysis, planning and hard work developing content and refining design, HOPE's updated website launched at the end of April. User-friendly and rich with content about our programs, services, news and events, we hope that you'll bookmark HOPE

and check in frequently, and also share the link with any friends and family who may be in need of our services or might be interested in learning ways to support our mission.

Meet Emily Smalley, HOPE's new Development Director!



Bringing with her 15 years of experience in non-profit fundraising, we are thrilled to introduce Emily Smalley as HOPE's first Development Director! Prior to joining our team in April, Emily worked in several youth-serving organizations in Boston, and is looking forward to getting to know all of the wonderful families

and supporters that make HOPE thrive and grow each year. Emily lives in Brockton with her six-year-old daughter and five-year-old son.

HOPE's Run for Respite 5K



On Sunday, April 19th, more than 275 runners joined HOPE's friends and family in our first-ever Run for Respite 5K to benefit HOPE's respite services and the Student Opportunity Fund at Stonehill College. Many thanks to the tireless volunteers and families who came together to cheer on our runners, and a world of gratitude to our corporate sponsors who supported us.

Bridgewater Pediatrics
BJ's Wholesale Club
Columbia Gas of Massachusetts
discoYo!
Easton Chamber of Commerce
Easton Lions Club
Easton Police Association, Inc.
Elite Fitness
Fed Corp.

FRS Capital Management
Gold's Gym Norton
Good Samaritan Medical Center
Hackwell-Boone Insurance Agency, Inc.
Hometowne Auto Shoppe
Jane Dunlap Real Estate Center
JK Holmgren Engineering
Kane Funeral Home and Cremation Services

RBC Wealth Management
KoKo Fit Club
KPM
Mansfield Bank
Milton Chiropractic
Modell's
My Brother's Keeper
New Balance
North Easton Savings Bank
Old Colony YMCA - Easton Branch

Sean Flynn Landscape Services
Sodexo & The Roche Dining Commons
Target
Ultimate Pizza
Yasso
8th Avenue Benefit Advisors, Inc.

Save The Date!



Please mark your calendars to join us on Thursday, June 18th at the Putnam Club at Gillette Stadium for HOPE's fifth annual Endless Possibilities Gala! The Gala is our signature fundraising event that raises the life-line funds to ensure our services reach more families in need each year. The event brings together more than 500 business leaders, advocates and thought leaders, all of whom are helping to change the paradigm of what support looks like for families and caregivers of special needs children. This year, we are pleased to grant the first-ever "Champion of Special Children" Award to

Dr. Rafael Castro, the Founder and Executive Director of the Integrated Center for Child Development. In this role, Dr. Castro has created an innovative, multi-disciplinary model for supporting children with special needs. We are honored to have the opportunity to recognize his passion, talent and commitment to the young people like those served at HOPE.

For more information about the Gala, please visit: www.houseofpossibilities.org

We are thrilled to announce that our keynote speaker for the evening will be James T. Brett. A Dorchester native, Jim is President and Chief Executive Officer of The New England Council and the current Chairman of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Intellectual Disability. Jim is also a former Chairman and a current member of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities.



Testimonials

HOPE is wonderful! For the first time, our son feels like a solid member of something other than our household. He is learning skills and participating in activities that both he and society value. In turn, he has friends and feels valued and important. You are a God send!

HOPE offers my child an opportunity to be with her peers and enjoy community outings and activities with other children that are otherwise not available to her. We know that when she goes to HOPE, she is having fun and being cared for by the incredible nurturing staff who welcome her and meet her every need.

Our son gets to interact (or not) with his peers with in beautiful, safe, nurturing environment, and we, his parents, get to re-tool and rest--and even go out on a date! We are most grateful.



Adult Program Spotlights

Karate Day

On February 6th we enjoyed a day of cheers and smiles inspired by their beloved volunteer karate teacher, Stu! As an avid volunteer at the HOPE House, Stu's efforts made waves in HOPE's dedication to bringing to life the full potential of children and adults with developmental disabilities. We celebrated the Patriot's Super Bowl win this year, with Pats gear and an afternoon of karate and laughter. The Stonehill College

chapter of Best Buddies volunteer students also took part in the joys of the day. Stonehill College Alumni Magazine featured our karate day and the collaboration with Stonehill's Best Buddies Chapter to highlight how important it is to celebrate every moment. Here's to noticing the small ways to make big changes in the lives of those around us.



Sports Day at Stonehill College



On March 20th the adults of the House of Possibilities made the journey to Stonehill College to sample every sport that the campus has to offer. From dance to football and baseball to gymnastics, our clients were able to try out every sport supported by Stonehill's Athletics department while receiving the experienced guidance of students enrolled at the college. It was a day full of thrills and excitement where the learning process was reciprocal. The HOPE House adults and Stonehill students came together to enjoy the activities of the day and were left to ponder the gift of having seen life through another's perspective.

Children's Program Spotlights

Since the beginning of the New Year we have already provided more than 20 days of services for our "Adventure Club" and school Vacation weeks (February and April). Children have been participating in exciting opportunities and activities at the Museum of Science, Legoland, Davis Farmland, Animal Adventures, Southwick Zoo, the Boston Marathon, and much more. Each trip has afforded 10-20 children a day with their peers to participate in community outings, while simultaneously giving their parents some much-needed respite. HOPE covers the cost of all of these activities, which are supported and facilitated by our highly motivated and qualified staff. Additionally, HOPE has provided four Saturday nights a month of FREE "Overnight Respite" for up to 10 children a night, which affords parents an evening



off for some rare adult time to indulge in activities they enjoy. "Snack and Chat" has been providing up to 15 children each Saturday with the occasion to cook while engaging with their peers socially during the preparation process and sharing their delicious snack together. "HOPE Club" offers young adults ages 18 and up with Friday Night outings twice a month to hang out with their peers and choose their own adventure for the evening. "Saturday Night Live" ("SNL") is our once a month themed party that is designed and facilitated by St. Gerard's in Canton. SNL just had its annual Spring Fling with music and dancing and this followed a Super Bowl Party in January, a Valentine's Day party in February and a St. Patrick's Day Celebration in March. 2015 is off to a great start with more than sixteen new families joining our HOPE family since January.

Changing Lives One Family At A Time



Each quarter we provide HOPE families with a formal opportunity to give us feedback on our services – how HOPE has impacted their lives and what we can do to better serve their needs. Not only is this feedback critical to our program development and refinement, but it also has the power to inspire and motivate all of us who come to read their stories. Read about Caitlin and her family below:

Q: How has HOPE impacted your family's life?

HOPE provides a wonderful setting for Caitlin to participate in activities and interact with her peers in a safe and caring setting. When she comes home from activities and/or overnight respite, it's so obvious to us that she has had a wonderful time; her mood and attitude are always happy and positive. She is so much more social and vocal when she comes home, like she wants to share her experiences with her family.

Q: Are you able to do things with your other children/siblings that would not have been easy or possible if your child was not attending HOPE?

It can be tough to be the sibling of a child with special needs; sometimes it feels like we as parents are constantly in crisis management mode dealing with medical, school, and care issues and our "typical" daughter is along for a very rough ride. HOPE gives us the opportunity to spend real focused time with our older daughter, doing things that most families take for granted. We've had opportunities to take our older daughter to the movies, out to a quiet dinner, even a spur of the moment trip to the beach. Opportunities to do even regular errands become chances to re-connect and catch up with what is going on in her life.

Q: As parents of children with special needs we are on duty 24/7 to meet our child's needs, how has access to respite helped your adult personal life?

It's great to be able to have a "date night" once in awhile and spend time together. When we're home caring for Caitlin, it's often a tag-team effort; one parent works, does errands, household chores, while the other cares for Caitlin. HOPE provides that opportunity to have time alone with my spouse without the stresses and demands that come with having a child with special needs.

Q: When your child attends Saturday Adventure Club what are some of the things that you are able to do with that time off?

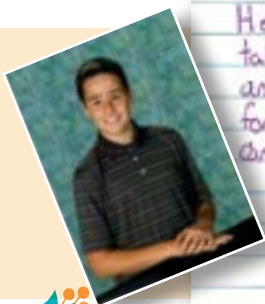
While we inevitably spend some of our Saturday time on errands, we try to find some special outings that we wouldn't ordinarily be able to do. It might be a hike in the woods, a bike ride or special trip to the mall with our other daughter. Sometimes it's catching up work if we had a week with a lot of doctors appointments and time out of the office. Where our typical days are planned around g-tube feedings every 3 hours, Saturday respite allows for spontaneity.

Q: When your child attends Overnight respite, what activities and opportunities have you been able to enjoy while your child is away? How has this benefitted your life, stress level, overall well-being?

Overnight respite nights are some of the few opportunities we have for a full night's sleep. Since Caitlin is on overnight g-tube feeds, she often sets off the feeding pump alarm which wakes us up. The pump may alarm for something as minor as Caitlin turning over in her sleep and causing a kink in the tube. We typically sleep (lightly) with a baby monitor by the bed to make sure we hear the alarms or if she happens to wake up during the night. These are generally not restful nights (and we always wake around 5 AM every day to finish her feedings). We love that we can catch up on some sleep on overnight respite nights...it makes a huge difference.

Q: What information would you like other parents who are looking for respite services to know about HOPE?

It has meant so much to our family to have the support of HOPE in caring for Caitlin. The staff and volunteers at HOPE are amazing! As challenging as it can be to care for Caitlin, we quickly realized she was in great hands. HOPE has improved the quality of life for our entire family and we truly feel blessed to have such wonderful people caring for our daughter.



Hello Ms. Paula I know how hard it can be to take care of someone with autism or any other disorder and I admire the amazing work and help that you do for the children. I hope the money I was able to raise can help.

I wish you the best in the future!

-Sincerely Zan

Zan's Donation

Our donations come in all sizes, and we appreciate each and every one. This one in particular came to HOPE from an amazing 8th Grader named Zan Collins, who was raising awareness for Autism as a school project by selling jewelry and t-shirts. Goes to show you're never too young to learn about compassion, kindness and finding hope for the future. Way to go, Zan!!

Thank you for helping us bring peace and hope to hundreds of families! We could not do this without you!



Win a 2014 FIAT Lounge Cabrio!



Central Auto Team and The Christopher Catanese Foundation are offering one lucky winner a brand new convertible through a raffle fundraiser, with all proceeds benefitting House of Possibilities. Tickets are \$100 each, with only 500 tickets to be sold. Drawing will be held June 18th at the Annual HOPE Gala at Gillette Stadium.

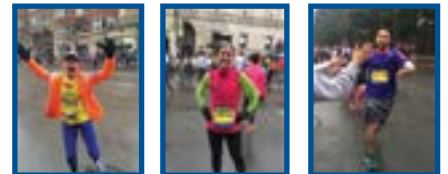
Tickets may be purchased by visiting:
www.houseofpossibilities.org
All entries must be received by June 18th



350 Washington Street
North Easton, MA 02356

2015 Boston Marathon: Runners for HOPE!

Nine runners braved the rain and cold on Monday, April 20th to run the Boston Marathon for TeamHOPE, raising an estimated \$50,000 on behalf of the thousands of children and adults with disabilities that HOPE serves each year. Since its inaugural run in 2009, TeamHOPE has helped to raise more than \$400,000 for the organization, and inspired countless others with their compassion and commitment. Thank you TeamHOPE: Susan Tamasi, Kelley Schmidt, Julia McGovern, Rosa Simpson, Chris Cardoza, Marty Weiner, Keith Weiner, Ronnie Gleason and Steven Smargon.



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