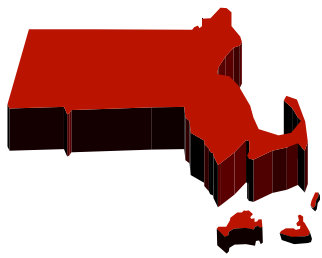


Playspace Programs Across Massachusetts!



Welcome Ellen Levy!

Horizons for Homeless Children welcomes Ellen Levy as the new Director of Playspace Programs. She joined us in October and has spent her first weeks traveling between our offices (Greater Boston, Central, Northeast, Southeast, and West) and visiting many of the programs. She brings a great deal of experience with volunteer programs, a strong background in early childhood development and a great deal of enthusiasm and energy. She looks forward to visiting more programs and meeting PALs, shelter staff, and families.

PALS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

If you attended the Women's Breakfast this year, you heard the powerful and moving words of a parent whose child is enrolled in one of HHC's Community Children's Centers, filmmaker Rory Kennedy, and PAL **Sue Rushford**! Sue has been a dedicated volunteer in the **Greater Boston** Region at the **Putnam Investments CCC** for over four years. Sue makes the children at the Putnam Investments CCC feel at home with her comforting words and gentle way. Sue shares her creative baking talents with the children (and staff!) – from cookies 'planted' in a bed of candy rocks to delicious mini-cupcakes, Sue bakes and shares it all! Sue has been known to make a batch of cookie batter and then come to the center and cook it in the Putnam Investments CCC kitchen, filling the center with the sweet smell of baking cookies for children to later decorate and enjoy! In addition to volunteering in the classroom, she is also a longstanding member of the Greater Boston Events Committee, sharing her creative baking activity ideas with PALs at Activity Workshops and special events. In the early fall, Sue traveled to the Cape to volunteer at our Playspace in Camp Edwards (read more about the Camp Edwards Playspace on page 3). Thanks Sue for all that you contribute and your continued support of our mission!

We would like to thank **Northeast** Region PALs **Kathleen Cronin**, **Laura Coleman** and **Sarah Fader** who volunteered in at Camp Edwards in addition to their regular weekly Playspace time. Ms. Fader deserves a special mention for her tireless commitment to the Playspace Programs. The time she spent at Camp Edwards was in addition to not just one but two PAL shifts per week! She has also single-handedly brought in a number of new PALs with her extensive flyering efforts across the North Shore.

The **Central** Region is very fortunate to have PALs like **Pam Lapoint** and **Judy Lavigne**. These buddies have been traveling an hour each way every week to volunteer at **Youville Cottage F** for almost two years. Pam said that she became a PAL because she wanted to understand society better and give back to the community. "Being an early childhood educator, I felt like this would be something important for me to do". Judy and Pam confer during the week to plan activities for the kids. They like to do a variety of hands on arts and crafts activities such as making homemade dough and putty and even teaching older kids how to sew and make pillows. They also like to incorporate music, dancing, and singing into their shift with the children and, of course, reading as much as possible. Pam and Judy even take turns bringing snacks for the kids and parents, turning the shifts into celebrations. Judy has extended her support to her fellow volunteers by helping plan a social event last winter for Central PALs. Both Pam and Judy realize that their time is valuable and that they make sacrifices to be there for their shift, but they do it because they care and hope that people will care back. They are not only examples of great PALs but are also great role models for the children and families they serve.

Linda Landry-Pires and **Alyzza Callahan** create more than just memories during their shift at **HarbOUR House** in the **Southeast** Region. Music can be heard every Wednesday evening as their shift begins. They incorporate both music and art into their weekly shift. HarbOUR House is the largest family shelter in Bristol County, so there can be anywhere from 15-35 children living with their families at any one time. To accommodate the kids, Linda and Alyzza create shifts within their two hours. To transition the children at the end of the first shift, they have a musical parade into the living room to gather the children for the next shift. To hear tambourines, bells and drums calling the next group, you would think that they are the pied pipers! The sound of youngsters singing is the joy that brings these two PALs back, week after week.

THANK YOU to panelists who spoke at our Late Summer and Fall Trainings!

PAL PANELS

Central

Jen Lotane, *You, Inc Boylston St.*
Cheryl Marc, *Shepherd's Place II*
Ernest Ostro, *Daybreak*
Dianne Starkey, *Sigourney St. House*
Raja Viswanathan, *Friendly House*
Janice McLean, *Daybreak*

Greater Boston

Jaynemie Angbah, *Aswalos House*
Rebecca Barry, *Salvation Army*
Glenn Gleason, *Schoen Family CCC*
Jennifer Hibbard, *Elizabeth Stone House ER*
Jasmine Hughes, *Transition House*
Peter Johansen, *Schoen Family CCC*
Margaret Merfeld, *Re-Vision/Miller House*
Gita Ramakrishnan, *Temporary Home*
Ann Ellen Rutherford, *Putnam Investments CCC*
Amanda Sirignano, *Re-Vision/Miller House*
Esther Turner, *Cambridge YWCA*
Aisha Walcott, *Hildebrand*

Northeast

Sarah Fader, *Bridge House*
Betty Thomsen, *Bridge House*
Alexandra Lewis, *The Inn Between*
Lori Marcotte, *My Father's House*
Cindy Hendrickson, *Oasis*
Justine Bassett, *Inn Between*
Christina Jordan, *Amity House*
Jennifer Stearn, *Women's Resource Center*

Southeast

Jose Ponce, *Salvation Army*
Alyzza Callahan, *HarbOUR House*

West

Emi Fujiwara, *Just a Start House*
Stanley Starkey, *Sigourney Street House*
Dianne Starkey, *Sigourney Street House*

SHELTER STAFF PANELS

Central

Jen Knowles, *You, Inc Boylston St.*
Kim Bowles, *Florence House*
Karin Oliveira, *BWRI*

Greater Boston

Stephanie Flaherty, *DOVE*
Queen Fundeberg, *Renewal*
Kari Lefort, *St. Ambrose*
Yolande Goode, *Schoen Family CCC*
Lea Spellman, *CMV-ATLP*
Maria Martin, *Boston Family Shelter*
Nora Murphy, *Schoen Family CCC*
Joan Tepper, *Second Step*
Radiance Woodruff, *Putnam Investments CCC*
Katrina Pope, *ESH-ER*
Sarah Hayes, *Genesis II*
Cathy Pena, *Putnam Investments CCC*

Northeast

Jen Farmer, *House of Hope*
Ana Reid, *The Inn Between*
Oriana de la Rosa, *Amity Transitional Housing*
Marcy Grossman, *Housing Families Inc.*

Southeast

Evelyn Smith, *Montello House*
Karen Betts-Offley, *Ruth House Teen Living*
Mandi Nicklay, *David Jon Louison House*

West

Karen Giard, *A Family Place*
Betsy Sanchez, *Our Place Shelter*
Robert Phelps, *Main Street Shelter*
Pedro Nieves, *Prospect House*
Erika Matos, *Prospect House*



Dance Away the Winter Blues: Rhythm and Movement Games for Children



On December 5th, PALs gathered at the Lawrence office to learn some rhythm and movement games to play with children who are in doors during the long, cold winter. **And we had so much fun!** Sarah Fader, a PAL of 8 years at Bridge House in Lynn, put together a wonderful workshop of activity ideas that PALs could use without needing many materials. We wanted to share some of the ideas:

I think our group favorite was the Body Alphabet--Movement Poem. This activity has children assigning body movements to different letters of the alphabet and then stringing the movements together to make a word... which in turn is also a dance! For older children, you can "dance a poem" about an object by having each child think of a word describing the object and "dancing that word". I wish I had a video camera to capture the poem we danced to describe a flower- it was quite amazing. Thank you to all the brave PALs that participated in the Poem Dancing- you were all wonderful!

Other activities demonstrated were: Dance Maps, where you give each child a big piece of paper with the outline of the Playspace drawn on it. It should also have a few key landmarks in the room to represent the space. Select 4 or 5 colors and let the children assign a movement to each color. Help them make a "Color Key" in a corner of their map for them to refer to. Ask the children to draw connecting lines across the page using each of the 4 colors. Then ask them each to try to perform the dance they mapped out on their paper. This activity could last a whole shift!

There was also Traveling Through Outer Space which involved placing circular objects (hula hoops, paper plates, playdoh tops- whatever you have!) to represent the 9 planets around the room. Each child claims a "planet" which can be shared if there are more than 9 children. As you travel from planet to planet, the host child teaches us a dance step that is unique to her planet. We then travel around the room together, visiting each child's planet and performing the step they teach us... the trick is to perform the dance step or movement while traveling to the next planet!

A great one to start a PAL shift with is called The Name Dance which begins by sitting in a circle. One by one, each child stands up and says his/her name and does a movement (any kind) to accompany his/her name. We all say their name and perform their movement. Afterwards, to test everyone's memory, see if the children can go around the circle again and say each child's name and perform the matching movement. Then link them together to create a dance! Sarah also gave us a handout on how to make our own maracas and rhythm sticks.

Thanks so much to Sarah Fader for creating an interactive workshop that helped get us all "moving". And thanks to the PALs who participated- it was really lots of fun to have you all together!

Horizons for Homeless Children teams up with the Department of Early Education and Care to help Katrina's Youngest Victims

The devastation along our country's gulf coast has brought our communities together in ways we at Horizons for Homeless Children have always known to be possible. Here in MA, evacuees were brought to Camp Edwards to begin the lengthy process of rebuilding their lives. Over 200 Hurricane Katrina evacuees arrived on the Cape in early September. While staying on the base, various agencies provided programs and services, including a Playspace in the family dorm that Horizons for Homeless Children installed. The Playspace was staffed initially with HHC staff. We later reached out to Playspace Activity Leaders to help provide support for the young children on the Cape.

The response from PALs was overwhelming! Thank you to all of you who offered to donate time, money, and materials. We truly appreciate all of your support. Thank you to those PALs who came from all over the state to volunteer at Camp Edwards in addition to their weekly Playspace shift:



Ron Carroll, Greater Boston, *Margaret's House*
Laura Coleman, Greater Boston, *Just-A-Start House*
Sarah Fader, Northeast, *Bridge House*
Barbara Guenette, Southeast, *Village at Cataumet*
Paula Markson, Central, *Sage House*
Margaret Merfeld, Greater Boston, *Re-Vision House*
Vivian Njuguna, Central, *Patricia Mays House*
Judith Page, Southeast, *Carriage House*
Kristen Rafuse, Greater Boston, *Hildebrand*
Katie Resnick, Southeast, *Cape Cod Center for Women*
Laura Reyor, Greater Boston, *Dennis McLaughlin House*
Sue Rushford, Greater Boston, *Putnam Investments Community Children's Center*
Andrea Wald, Greater Boston, *Just-A-Start House*

Playspace Programs Staff

Director of Playspace Programs

Ellen Levy

Greater Boston Office

Lauren Paap, Greater Boston Region Director
Kelly McCloud, Playspace Programs Manager
Ruth Wilson, Playspace Programs Manager
Tiffany Pinto, Volunteer Recruitment and Training Manager

Central Office

Jamie Pear, Central Region Director
Christopher Willey, AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator

Northeast Office

Carrie Lamont, Northeast Region Director
Christina Laverentz, AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator

Southeast Office

Cora Peirce, Southeast Region Director
Nicole Schwartz, AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator

West Office

Western Region Director, open position
Naomi Gonsalves, AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator

GREATER BOSTON NEWS

The Boston office is delighted to introduce **Tiffany Pinto** and **Ruth Wilson**, both of whom joined the Greater Boston Region in September. Tiffany is our Volunteer Recruitment and Training Manager and Ruth Wilson our new Programs Manager. We are also thrilled to introduce **Matthew Hennessey** who will be joining the team as Boston's first AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America). Please join us in welcoming Tiffany, Ruth and Matthew to the Greater Boston Playspace Programs! We are excited to move into the New Year with a wonderful and growing team!

In other Greater Boston news, we have been busy this fall installing Playspaces! On September 29th, we opened a beautiful Playspace at **Aswalos House**, on November 16th, we re-created a Playspace at **Crittenton** to accommodate their expansion and on December 13th we opened a new Playspace at **REACH**. Our next Playspace is scheduled at **Mary Martha Learning Center** located in Hingham for January 24th!

CENTRAL NEWS

The Central Region continues to expand! We are now working with shelters in Worcester, Framingham, the Leominster/Fitchburg area, the Webster area and Attleboro. In Worcester, staff from Davis Publications and Flagship Bank helped us clean, reorganize, and revitalize the Playspaces at the **Youville** shelter. In Attleboro, the Women's Basketball Team from Dean College spent a day redoing the Playspace at **Family Resource Center**. Many thanks to these wonderful volunteer groups! As we have expanded across the area, we have also increased the number of PALs serving in the Central Region – we now have over 100 active PALs! In late August, some of these PALs joined us for our first local pizza party at Papa Gino's. It was a great chance to meet some fellow PALs and have some fun, laughter and pizza. We hope to have more local events, so keep an eye out for invitations and announcements.

NORTHEAST NEWS

This Fall has definitely been a time of growth and expansion for the Playspace Programs in the Northeast! In September, the Northeast Region staff doubled as Region Director **Carrie Lamont** was joined by a new AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator, **Christina Laverentz**. The NE region trained and placed 51 new PALs during the Fall and now has a total of 115 active PALs. The NE region also installed 2 new Playspaces and received 3 Playspaces formerly overseen by the Greater Boston Region. The addition of these 5 Playspaces gives the Northeast region a total of 20 Playspaces. PALs in the NE region have also been very generous with their time; some going above and beyond their 2 hours a week in a Playspace. A group of 10 PALs gathered to help clean and refurbish a playspace at the **YWCA** shelter in Lawrence, other PALs posted flyers around their towns, and still others participated in PAL trainings. There is no doubt that the growth of the NE region is due to the hard work and dedication of our PALs. Thanks to all of you!

SOUTHEAST NEWS

After the installation of our 16th Playspaces on November 17th, the Southeast Region wished farewell to our VISTA, **Marissa Bennett**. Marissa completed her year of service and has been instrumental in the establishment of the Southeastern Region. Marissa also volunteered as a PAL in one of our Attleboro shelters. Her plans for the future include travel to Venice, Italy, returning to school and climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro. We wish her all the best in the future.

The Southeast Region is pleased to announce that **Nicole Schwartz**, from Lancaster, PA., has joined our program as the AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator and has relocated to New Bedford. Welcome Nicole!

WESTERN NEWS

The Western Region Director, Patricia Moss, left her position at HHC in November. We are actively recruiting a new Director to begin in January. **Naomi Gonsalves**, the AmeriCorps*VISTA/Programs Coordinator, has been working hard with Ellen Levy to coordinate the placement of the first PALS in this region. The fourth Playspace, at **Prospect Street Shelter** in Springfield, was installed in December and will have PALS starting a shift there shortly.



CAN'T GET ENOUGH?

There are now more opportunities for PALs who seek greater involvement with Horizons For Homeless Children. Consider joining one or more committee!

Events Committee

Have you been a PAL for at least 3 months? Do you enjoy planning and attending special events? Do you like speaking at volunteer fairs? Can you spare a few hours a month? Would you like to develop new activities for the Playspaces? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then become a member of the Events Committee!

For more information contact your region's point person:

Central Region Events Committee contact Jamie Pear at 508-755-2615 or jpear@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Northeast Region Events Committee contact Carrie Lamont at 978-557-2182 or clamont@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Southeast Region Events Committee contact Cora Peirce at 508-999-9454 or cpeirce@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Western Region Events Committee contact Ellen Levy at 617-287-1900 or elevy@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Greater Boston Events Committee contact Ruth Wilson 617-287-1900 ext. 307 or rwilson@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org or Kelly McCloud 617-287-1900 ext. 313 or kmcloud@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Thank you Greater Boston Region Events Committee for your contributions in putting on the annual PAL Picnic on September 18th. The location was beautiful and the weather held out long enough for us to play some games and compete in a Sing-Off! The Picnic was a great success and we enjoyed lots of delicious food generously donated by:

BJ's Wholesale, CVS, Costco, Harvest, Lamberts, Middle East Restaurant, Panera Bread, Picantes, and PAL Sue Rushford for the yummy treats!

Save the date! Saturday, January 21st Greater Boston Winter Activity Workshop. Please call or email Kelly McCloud or Ruth Wilson for more information or to RSVP. PALs from all Regions Welcome!

Media Committee

Put up your hand if you're interested in public relations! Put up your other hand if you're interested in helping communicate the important message of Horizons for Homeless Children. If both hands are up in the air, consider joining the Media Committee.

The organization is seeking volunteers to help in spreading the good word about what we are doing and the ways we are making a difference in the lives of homeless children. PALs will help promote and increase awareness of Horizons for Homeless Children and its programs in the local community. Members of the Media Committee will work with and are supported by the Communications Specialist in an effort to generate publicity about the organization. Media workshops will soon be in place to train members and provide them with the necessary tools to do the job.

If you are interested in receiving more information including a job description and application form (yes, because space is limited, we will choose our members through an application process), please contact Colette O'Neill, Communications Specialist, at 617-287-1900 ext.126 or coneill@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org.

Administrative Volunteers

If you want to get added to the Greater Boston list of volunteers who help out with occasional tasks (in the office, from your home or out in the community), let us know and we will add you to our e-mail list! Contact Lauren at lpaap@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org

Greater Boston Internship

The Greater Boston Playspace Programs is seeking an Intern who wishes to learn more about the issues affecting homeless children. The intern will work with the Playspace staff, assisting with all of the daily management tasks associated with the Playspace Programs. This is a non-paying internship. To learn more contact Lauren at 617-287-1900 ext. 302.