



**HORIZONS FOR  
HOMELESS CHILDREN**

# NEWS UPDATE

## INSIDE:

**National Awareness,  
National Impact**  
Page 2

**4th Young Children  
Without Homes National  
Conference**  
Page 2

**Women's Breakfast**  
Page 3

**Marathon Team**  
Page 3

**Tough Times  
Yet Hopeful Futures**  
Page 4

**A New Administration,  
a New Era**  
Page 5

**Unsung Hero Gives Hope  
to Homeless Children**  
Page 6

**Horizons for Homeless  
Children on Facebook**  
Page 7

**20th Anniversary  
Spring Gala**  
Page 8

## Boston Sports Stars Reach Out to Homeless Children

In recent months, Horizons for Homeless Children (HHC) has worked with representatives of the Boston Celtics and Boston Red Sox, in an effort to make a difference in the lives of the children and families served by the agency, and to raise awareness of the ever-worsening crisis of child and family homelessness in our community.

In December, in conjunction with the Boston Celtics and Comcast SportsNet, a new 30-second PSA was produced for HHC. Celtics player **Leon Powe** took the time to speak on behalf of HHC, in an effort to promote statewide volunteer opportunities. Later in January, Powe, along with members of the Celtics Women's Group, visited the Edgerley Family Community Children's Center in Roxbury to read and participate in arts and crafts activities with the children. The event brought much joy to the classrooms and media coverage of the visit helped build awareness of the work of Horizons for Homeless Children.



**Leon Powe** makes a friend during his recent visit to the CCC in Roxbury.



**Theo Epstein** at opening of new Playspace in Somerville.

Also in January, in honor of their son Jack's first birthday, Red Sox GM **Theo Epstein** and his wife Marie Whitney supported the installation of a new HHC Playspace for the children and families living at Just-A-Start House, a program in Somerville. The new Playspace provides homeless children with a fun, safe and stimulating environment to learn, grow and play, and comes equipped with books, play equipment, and art supplies.

Both Theo and Marie have been longstanding contributors to Horizons for Homeless Children's programs; both have been volunteer Playspace Activity Leaders (PALs) and know first-hand the significant difference the Playspace Programs make in the lives of homeless children and their families. Theo and his brother Paul also co-founded The Foundation to be Named Later that benefits a number of charities in the Boston area, including Horizons for Homeless Children. "Horizons for Homeless Children makes such a positive impact on the lives of homeless children, and safe Playspaces are fundamental to the program's success," said Theo Epstein. "We are thrilled that HHC has built such a great Playspace for the kids at Just-A-Start House, and we're thrilled that our son Jack's name is attached to it. We'll never forget the children's joy as they rushed into their new Playspace!"

**GO GREEN**  
(in more ways  
than one!)

*Horizons for Homeless Children cares about the environment and knows that our readers do too. In an effort to ensure that we are a more sustainable organization over the long term, we are printing fewer "News Updates" and sending newsletters via e-mail.*

**HELP US GO GREEN!** Send your name and preferred e-mail address to [development@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](mailto:development@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org) and mark your subject line "E-NEWS." When you e-mail us, your name will be entered into a raffle for a **2008 Celtics basketball, signed by all of our victorious NBA Champs!** Congrats to **Danielle Mulcahy** of Arlington, the Fall 2008 raffle winner of a signed Celtics basketball!

## From the Executive Director

Dear Friend,

The current financial crisis is affecting people in every socio-economic sector across the Commonwealth, especially low-income families. As a result, there has been a 35% increase in the number of families becoming homeless and qualifying for emergency shelter services in Massachusetts since last spring.

The children in these families are experiencing chaos, loss and a total disruption of their lives, making the services of Horizons for Homeless Children even more important.

Having built a financially stable organization, we will continue this crucial mission with an eye towards the future, when hopefully our services will no longer be necessary.

Thank you for your ongoing support.



**Sue Heilman**

*Executive Director*

## National Awareness, National Impact

In an effort to raise awareness of child and family homelessness throughout the nation, Shirley Fan-Chan, Horizons for Homeless Children's Chief of External Programs, has spent the past several months traveling across the country to present at a number of early education and Head Start conferences. She has addressed issues specifically related to child homelessness, such as developmental delays and trauma, and has worked closely with service providers in an effort to improve services within their local communities.

During the fall and winter of 2008, Shirley presented at the National Black Child Development Institute Conference and the National Head Start Association Conference in Atlanta, the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Conference in Washington, DC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children Conference in Dallas, and statewide Head Start Association conferences in California and Wisconsin.

In upcoming months, Horizons for Homeless Children will present at the National Head Start Association's 36th Annual Conference in Orlando and the National Smart Start Conference in Greensboro.



*Save the Date:*

**June 15 - 16, 2009**  
**Boston Marriott**  
**Copley Place Hotel**



Hosted by Horizons for Homeless Children, this 2-day conference will focus on the issue of child and family homelessness and its effect on young children (0-5); cross-systems training; networking and collaboration; strategies and solutions. With more than 40 workshops planned and a strong line-up of plenary speakers, the Conference will bring together service providers, policy makers and many others from across the country, all focused on improving services for young homeless children and their families.

**For more information,**  
**visit [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org),**  
**e-mail [conference@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](mailto:conference@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org)**  
**or call 617.445.1480.**



## 10th Annual Women's Breakfast Raises Needed Funds for Homeless Children and Families; Special Guest Speaker Lily Tomlin

On October 21, 2008, Horizons for Homeless Children hosted its 10th Annual Women's Breakfast. Over 1,400 people attended the event at the Seaport World Trade Center in an effort to raise funds for the organization and the programs and services it provides to Massachusetts homeless children and families. That effort proved fruitful in that over \$700,000 was raised at the event through sponsorship, ticket sales and a most successful raffle. The event featured special guest speaker Lily Tomlin, one of America's foremost comedienne and Emmy Award winning actress and Guest Emcee Natalie Jacobson, formerly of WCVB-TV, one of the most well regarded journalists and news anchors of our time. Massachusetts First Lady Diane Patrick and Senate President Therese Murray also encouraged the audience to advocate on behalf of homeless children and families.



Massachusetts First Lady Diane Patrick gave an impactful address.

Keynote speaker Lily Tomlin's presentation brought many laughs.

October 15, 2009: Save the date for the 11th Annual Women's Breakfast, featuring NPR's Michele Norris!

## 2009 Run for Homeless Children Marathon Team

To learn more about the event, our team of runners, or to support our fundraising efforts, visit [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org)

The best of luck to our runners on the 2009 Run for Homeless Children Boston Marathon Team who will take to the road on Monday, April 20, and run 26.2 miles to raise funds for Horizons for Homeless Children:

Robert Atchinson  
Katherine Atchinson  
Annie Bartlett  
Dave Bordeau  
Freddie Chavda  
Dan Collins  
Ryan Debin

Elizabeth Jennison  
Michael Kettner  
Lisa McNamara  
Christeen Rohwer  
Carlos Sanchez  
Nick Velardo



Employees of Burns and Levinson LLP present Horizons for Homeless Children with coats for children at the Community Children's Centers.

### THANKS TO OUR IN-KIND DONORS

Special thanks to the many corporations, individuals, schools and community groups that donate toys, equipment and supplies to Horizons for Homeless Children. Thanks also to all who played a role in providing the children in our programs with coats, mittens and hats during the cold winter season. Horizons for Homeless Children urges you to continue to keep an eye on our wish list at [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/How\\_To\\_Help\\_Donate\\_Goods\\_Services.asp](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/How_To_Help_Donate_Goods_Services.asp). We are always in need of supplies to keep enhancing our programs! Our high-priority items include:

- Durable child sized art smocks
- Industrial refrigerator
- CD/Tape Players (shock proof if possible)
- Conference room chairs
- Conference room table
- 2 All-in-One fax/scanner/copier/printer (new)
- 4 office chairs
- Digital cameras
- Small laminating machine
- 2 DVD Players

AND MORE! Log on to [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/How\\_To\\_Help\\_Donate\\_Goods\\_Services.asp](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/How_To_Help_Donate_Goods_Services.asp) to see the complete list.

# Tough Times Yet Hopeful Futures for Homeless Mother and Her Children

**D**orchester native Naomi Dunn is a 27-year-old woman who has spent the past several years living at various locations around the city, never having a steady place to call “home.” A victim of domestic abuse, she fled without any financial resources, and for the next few years, she spent months at a time “bouncing,” as she calls it, from place to place.

During this time, Naomi had two children, Nyshia and Deneiya, and struggled to find work and a place to rent that was not too expensive. Eventually, she and her two children entered a shelter.

At the shelter, she was immediately referred to Horizons for Homeless Children’s Community Children’s Center (CCC) and within a few months, her daughters were enrolled. Nyshia was almost 2 years of age and Deneiya was 6 months old.

When Nyshia entered the Toddler classroom, she did not speak at all. She was extremely timid and fearful. She was withdrawn and showed signs of trauma commonly associated with the constant transition of homelessness. Her teachers at the CCC worked closely with her to help her feel safe and cared for and she also received speech therapy. After one year in the program, she was on par with her peers. Nyshia is now in the Preschool classroom and she is independent and confident. She has become talkative and friendly with a wonderful sense of humor.

Nyshia’s younger sister Deneiya was six months old when she was enrolled in the Infant classroom. She made no eye contact and did not engage in play. Deneiya also had sensory issues, refusing to touch water, paint, sand or anything with texture. Her teachers worked one-on-one with her, continuously presenting her with opportunities to touch different textures, and over time, she started to engage a little more.

Today, Deneiya is in the Infant/Toddler room and has her hands in everything. She is painting, creating, building and enjoys it all. Since she has started walking, “she has really taken off,” laughs her mother. She loves to sing and dance and she is much more comfortable around teachers and children.

Naomi feels grateful for the significant impact the CCC program has had on her two children, and also acknowledges the many benefits she has also received as a parent participant. “I am so grateful that they are getting a good education. I am grateful that they are going to school and I can go to work. The program has helped me take a



Naomi spends time reading with her daughters Nyshia and Deneiya at the CCC in Jamaica Plain.

good look at myself and it has helped me realize that I can be anything I want to be.”

Naomi has worked closely with Carrie Yespy, her Family Advocate, who is helping her become self-sufficient. “When I have worries about the children or anxiety around my housing search and other issues, I can call her and she is always there to help me,” Naomi says. “Naomi’s self confidence and parenting skills have improved since she started here,” says Carrie. “She values her children’s education and is learning how to be the best parent that she can be.” Naomi has attended several parent groups and workshops and has taken strides towards a better life for her and her children. “Naomi has learned to take better care of herself,” Carrie says, “so she can in turn take better care of her children.”

Today Naomi is working part time at a food services company and loves her job. Her goal is to get her GED and then to go to college. Her dream is to become a therapist. “I want to give back to others and help people with their problems,” she says. “I learned the hard way and I want to help people avoid that.” Since January 2009, Naomi and her daughters have lived in subsidized housing in Roxbury where she is focused on getting her family back on their feet.



**HORIZONS FOR  
HOMELESS CHILDREN**

**You can help us continue to improve the lives of homeless children across Massachusetts. Please consider a gift to Horizons for Homeless Children.**

Log on to [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org) today. While you’re browsing our website, click on “Donate” and consider making a gift. Or mail your gift in the reply envelope attached.

# A New Administration, A New Era

## Change.org

During January 2009, Horizons for Homeless Children's (HHC's) "idea" to *Give Homeless Children a Chance* was featured on the social action network [www.change.org](http://www.change.org). The network gave individuals throughout the country the opportunity to vote for the top issues that Americans want the Obama Administration to tackle. Thanks to the response of HHC friends, volunteers and supporters, as well as members of the larger public, *Give Homeless Children a Chance* was chosen as the top idea in the "ending homelessness" category, and was a finalist, ranking 47th overall out of 7,875 submissions, generating national awareness about child and family homelessness.

## Day of Service

In recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and President Obama's declared "Day of Service," on January 19, HHC collaborated with the Presidential Inauguration Committee (PIC) to assist in organizing service projects at family shelters throughout Massachusetts. Projects included everything from painting and cleaning, to organizing and administrative work. Additionally, HHC welcomed twenty individuals from the community into the Schoen Family Community Children's Center in Dorchester where the walls in the classrooms received a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to the collaboration between HHC, PIC and shelter directors, Presidential Inauguration Weekend not only ushered in a renewed sense of hope and commitment to service but also brightened the spaces for homeless children and families throughout Massachusetts.

## "Bridging the Gap" for Homeless Children

A recent policy breakthrough in Massachusetts dramatically increased homeless children's participation in early education and care across the state. The new policy and its impact are featured in the 2008 edition of "Bridging the Gap," Horizons for Homeless Children's annual report on homeless children's access to early education and care. The report also includes a wide range of information about child homelessness, as well as research documenting the positive impact of high-quality early education and care on homeless children and their families. To download a copy, visit [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org), and click on "Advocacy."

### Speak Up for Young Homeless Children and Families

You can make a difference for young homeless children and families, by contacting your elected officials. Visit HHC's website [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org), and click on "Advocacy" to add your voice.

For further information, contact Brad Kramer, HHC's Director of Policy and Advocacy, at [bkramer@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](mailto:bkramer@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org) or at (617) 445-1480.

### HORIZONS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN

#### Board of Directors

Susan Whitehead, *Chair*  
Jody Acford, *Treasurer*  
Bob Atchinson, *Secretary*

Susie Allen	Linda Mason, <i>Founder</i>
Kate Barrand	Chris Mitchell
Josh Bekenstein	Tami Nason
Roger Brown, <i>Founder</i>	Kate O'Neil
Sandra Edgerley	Deirdre Phillips
Mark Edwards	Ann Reale
Michael Eisenson, <i>Founder</i>	Laura Rehnert
Matt Epstein	Audrey Epstein Reny
Corinne Ferguson	Mike Roberge
Robert Gallery	Maurice Samuels
Wycliffe Grousbeck	Lucienne Sanchez, M.D.
Chip Hazard	Laurie Schoen
Diane Hessian	Patricia Smith
Kathy Klingler	Janice Sturchio
Jonathan Lavine	Ellie Svenson
James Levitt	

#### Honorary Board

T. Berry Brazelton	Eli Newberger
Robert Coles	Paul O'Brien
Marian Heard	Vincent O'Reilly
Arnold Hiatt	Robert Paglia
Howard Hiatt	Deborah Prothrow-Stith
Loretta LaRoche	Francene Sussner-Rodgers
Pamela G. Mann	Barry Zuckerman

### HORIZONS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN

#### Senior Staff

Sue Heilman  
*Executive Director*

Paula DiMascio  
*Chief Finance & Administrative Officer*

Shirley Fan-Chan  
*Chief of External Programs*

Sarah Fujiwara  
*Chief Programs Officer*

Meryl Sheriden  
*Chief Development Officer*

Tracie Andrew  
*Director of Annual Giving and Special Events*

Rick Coiro  
*Director of Administration*

Clara Garcia  
*Director of Playspace Programs*

Brad Kramer  
*Director of Policy and Advocacy*

Suzanne Reasenber  
*Director of Major Gifts*

Andrea Urbano  
*Director of Center Based Programs*

### NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

<b>Executive Editors:</b>	Sue Heilman, Meryl Sheriden
<b>Managing Editor:</b>	Colette O'Neill
<b>Layout &amp; Design:</b>	ES Design
<b>Printing, Production and Mailing Services:</b>	Fowler Printing and Graphics
<b>Photography:</b>	Colette O'Neill Jacquie Spector

# An Unsung Hero Gives Hope to Homeless Children



Lisa makes a difference in children's lives week after week at the CCC.



"Heroes Among Us" Awardee **Lisa Tucker** on left, with HHC's **Sue Heilman** and **Matt Meyersohn** of the Boston Celtics Shamrock Foundation.

Longtime volunteer Lisa Tucker learned of Horizons for Homeless Children (HHC) when she attended the 1st Annual Women's Breakfast fundraiser ten years ago. But after September 11, 2001, she was inspired to take action at a deeper level and she signed up to become a Playspace Activity Leader (PAL) at HHC. She has been volunteering with us ever since.

Lisa's former career was in investment management, but her dream was always to be a teacher. A busy mother of four, she never quite had the opportunity to pursue that dream, but she realizes today that her volunteer experience at Horizons for Homeless Children has given her the chance to live it out in a far more meaningful way. She is giving back to young homeless children, the nation's most vulnerable victims, and is making a difference in their lives when she spends time with them each week and helps them learn, develop and thrive.

Lisa started her weekly shift at a shelter in Cambridge and later transferred to the Community Children's Center, where she currently volunteers with the infant/toddlers every Thursday morning. She helps facilitate several activities with the children there, from playing and singing to walking and reading. "I love to get on all fours and play with the children," she says. "I love working with them in groups and I'm equally happy trying to connect with that one child who may be having a tough day."

Over the years, Lisa has built strong and caring relationships with the many children and staff she has worked with each week. Her warmth, dedication and contagious sense of humor make her a magnetic force in the classroom. Lisa considers herself fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful children through the years; since she started volunteering, she has kept a notebook with each child's name listed and little notes to remember them by. "It is my way of keeping them in my thoughts," she says. "They may have moved on from the program but I continue to hope that they are making their way through life in good health and that things are working out ok."

Lisa has volunteered at numerous HHC events, and she and her family have been longstanding financial supporters. Lisa has also spoken at PAL trainings. "When I look out at the sea of faces at the trainings, each one different from the next, I am glad for our city," she says. "The commitment of so many to serving their local community gives me hope. Homelessness is a grim, raw and pressing problem right outside our front doors. Witnessing the massive effort that HHC puts forth to alleviate the burdens borne by homeless children and their families makes me think that we're making progress."

In January, Lisa Tucker was presented with a "Heroes Among Us" Award by the Boston Celtics, in recognition of her important work with Horizons for Homeless Children. As honored as she was to accept the award, Lisa insists that "it's more important to focus on the children," that it is her "privilege to witness the natural beauty and brilliance of these kids and to observe their lives turn around because of their immersion in the HHC programs."

Lisa's words of wisdom to potential PALs: "Wear old clothes...and fill your pockets with tissues!"

"It is my privilege to witness the natural beauty and brilliance of these kids and to observe their lives turn around because of their immersion in the HHC programs."

# Horizons for Homeless Children on Facebook

Are you a PAL? Are you on Facebook? Then become our Friend and join the Group, Cause or become a Fan, to share your experiences and stories with other PALs. Find out about events in your area, access new activity ideas, view Playspace photos, and learn more about the issue of child and family homelessness.



Not a PAL? No problem! You can still join the Cause and get updates from Horizons for Homeless Children, see who's fundraising on our behalf, and post photos, video, and more!

- To join the **Group**, search "Horizons for Homeless Children PAL Volunteers;"
- To join the **Cause**, search "Horizons for Homeless Children;"
- To become a Fan of our **Page**, search "Horizons for Homeless Children."

## GET INVOLVED TODAY!

Currently, there are more than **1,400 PALs** who are actively volunteering 2 hours each week with homeless children in family shelters across Massachusetts. That's the highest number of active PALs ever recorded at HHC! However, we are still in need of volunteers. Join one of the largest volunteer corps in the state. You will make a difference and have fun too!

## You can help.

Here are some ways to be involved:

1. **Sign up** to be a PAL. Visit [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org);
2. **Post flyers** in your community (available at all HHC office locations or call 800.560.7702 to request them);
3. **Invite** us to your **place of worship/community organization** to promote the agency/programs/need for PALs;
4. **Invite** us to your **corporation** to promote the agency/programs/need for PALs;
5. **Post** our information and **web link** on your **intranet**;
6. **Call us** for more ideas.

**Thank you so much for all your help!**

## Volunteers Needed

Special thanks to all of our Playspace Activity Leaders (PALs) for their commitment of time and energy! We are recruiting PALs statewide. Join this remarkable group of people who care about giving children the opportunity to play. Please consider becoming a PAL today. Visit our website at [www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org).

*Attend a PAL training session to learn more about what it is like to be a PAL. Our next PAL training dates are:*

### March 2009

#### Greater Boston Region

Monday, March 30 & Tuesday March 31  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
(must attend both evenings)  
*Boston; call 617.445.1480 for details.*

### May 2009

#### Central Region

Saturday, May 2  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
*Worcester; call 508.755.2615 for details.*

#### Western Region

Saturday, May 9  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
*Pittsfield; call 413.532.0467 for details.*

#### Southeast Region

Wednesday, May 20 & Thursday, May 21  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
(must attend both evenings)  
*New Bedford; call 508.999.9454 for details.*

### June 2009

#### Greater Boston Region

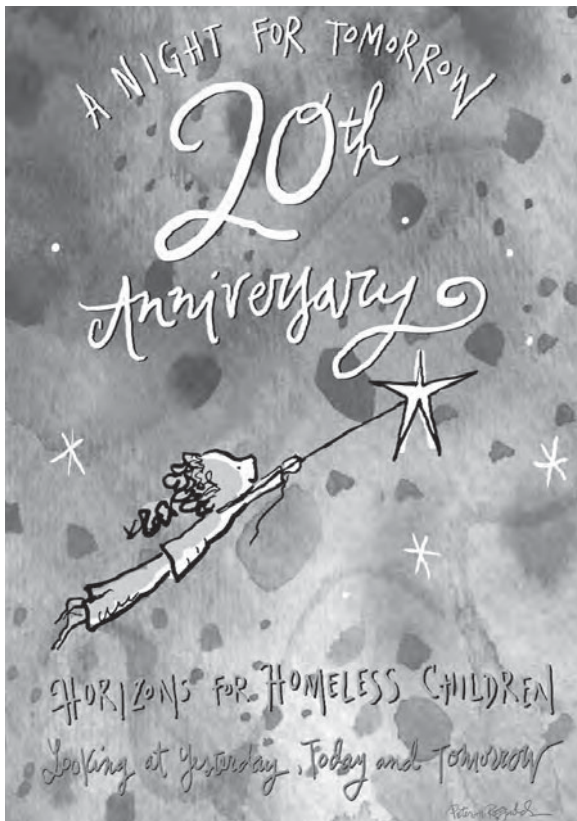
Saturday, June 6  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
*Boston; call 617.445.1480 for details.*

#### Western Region

Monday, June 8 & Tuesday, June 9  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
(must attend both evenings)  
*Holyoke; call 413.532.0467 for details.*

#### Northeast Region

Wednesday, June 10 & Thursday, June 11  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
(must attend both evenings)  
*Lawrence; call 978.557.2182 for details.*



**Save the Date!**

Horizons for Homeless Children invites you to celebrate with us at our **20th Anniversary Spring Gala,**

## *A Night for Tomorrow*

A very special night is in store to commemorate our 20th year! Packed with unique auctions, raffle, cocktails, dinner, dancing and more!

**Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel  
Saturday May 2, 2009**

Join us for a unique "Hands Down" auction this year, beginning online pre-event on **April 8th** at [www.bidsforhomelesskids.cmarket.com](http://www.bidsforhomelesskids.cmarket.com) and closing at a silent auction at the Spring Gala on May 2nd.

Contact Tracie Andrew at [tandrew@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](mailto:tandrew@horizonsforhomelesschildren.org) or call 617.445.1480 for more information. Sponsorship opportunities available!



**HORIZONS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN**

Artwork courtesy of Peter H. Reynolds

*Address Service Requested*

[www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org](http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org)

617/445/1480

Roxbury, Massachusetts 02119

1705 Columbus Avenue

**HORIZONS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN**



BROCKTON, MA

PERMIT # 679

**PAID**

U.S. POSTAGE

NON-PROFIT ORG.