



SHREWSBURY YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.
COUNSELING, PREVENTION & WELLNESS FOR GREATER SHREWSBURY



ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

The mission of Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services, Inc. (SYFS) is to provide counseling and other supportive services to members of our community.

A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends of SYFS,

Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services, Inc. is built on a bedrock of solid values. These values guide our organization and enhance our ability to make a significant difference in the lives of the individuals and families we serve every day. To achieve our mission – now and in the future – we must remain connected and open to an ever-changing world. We also must embrace change and continue to evolve our knowledge, breadth of services, and empathy for those who need our help. Our commitment to the success of our mission demands that we evaluate long established orthodoxies, traditional assumptions and practices, and our own strategies and aspirations.

We have come a long way; erasing stigma has become a public mantra. Most of us now understand that mental illnesses are brain diseases, and we are more comfortable talking about our panic attacks and social phobias. In addition to erasing stigma, providing treatment and education, we are committed to helping the most vulnerable in our communities access vital resources such as food, fuel, and housing.

The COVID – 19 pandemic has been associated with increased depression, anxiety, distress, and low self-esteem and higher rates of substance use disorder and suicide. Eventually, we will gather at concerts, beaches and work again. But many will have lost their jobs and their homes, as well as their loved ones. They will need us. Children who are adjusting to still being at home, or re-adjusting to school will need us, too. This pandemic has demonstrated that mental health and substance use treatment providers are the unsung heroes of healthcare.

I hope we can continue to count on your help, as we have for the last 37 years. You, too, are unsung heroes. This Annual Report shines a spotlight on the impact of your support during a year filled with milestones that we've reached and challenges we are still fighting to overcome. As we share with you just some of the highlights of this year, I cannot say this enough: it is the people who we are fortunate to have in our employ, from our clinical to our operations staff, that truly make the difference every day in helping the children, families, and adults we serve achieve their resiliency and recovery goals. We thank each of our staff for their service, and we thank you, our community, for your support.

Warmly,

Christine Mowry

Executive Director

*Board of
Directors*

B O A R D M E M B E R S

Noor Ali

Michelle Duke

David Faucher

Michael Gregory

Derek Grillo

Susan Haffty

Neena Mohanka

Jason Palitsch

Sean McNamara

S T U D E N T L I A I S O N S

Ryan Conant

Yaheya Irfan

Caitlin Kane

Preston Karp

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CHAIRPERSON

Kathleen Keohane

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Michael Rooney

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Matt Armenti

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Michelle Duke

SECRETARY

Tom Kennedy

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Jennifer Rifkin
DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL SERVICES

Lynn Lynch, MBA
BUSINESS MANAGER



Alison Eccleston
CLINICAL COORDINATOR

Jennifer Flagg
OFFICE MANAGER



Stephanie Mourad
STAFF CLINICIAN

FEE-FOR-SERVICE CLINICIANS

Rachel Baldino, LCSW & Kathleen DellaPenna, LCSW

INTERNS

*(Graduate
Students)*

Kelsey Finnegan
Joseph Forson
Jaime Gildea
Samanta Golemo
Monique Guillroy-Farrish
Grace Hartwell
Patricia Hennessey
Heather Martin
Danielle Nobitz
Katrina Piangerelli
Nicole Plona
Amanda Russo-Falco
Kelly Tyler

*Assumption College
Boston University
Simmons University
Assumption College
Assumption College
Boston University
Assumption College
Simmons University
Assumption College
Assumption College
Assumption College
Becker College*

"I would like to thank the Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services and acknowledge the staff for going above and beyond. When I found myself in need, I did not encounter shame or embarrassment when I reached out. Even in a pandemic, I was reminded that I wasn't alone. Christine Mowry reached out and made sure all of my immediate needs were met and even personally dropped necessities off at my door. On top of all this, she invited me to write a Christmas list and reached out to various organizations to fulfill dreams for my family during the holidays and dropped everything off at night at my door. What can I say? Thank you. I value her and your organization. This is such a wonderful place to live...where neighbors help neighbors."

-SYFS Client (Anonymous)

"SHREWSBURY YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES IS PROVIDING LIFE-ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES TO OUR COMMUNITY IN A TIME OF TREMENDOUS NEED. RELIANT FOUNDATION IS PROUD TO BE IN A POSITION TO HELP ENABLE THESE CRITICAL OUTREACH EFFORTS, INCLUDING THEIR SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT PROGRAM."

*-Kelsa Zereski, President
Reliant Foundation*

"I had the opportunity to attend a Mental Health First Aid Training and walking out at the end of the sessions I felt well equipped to support in a mental health crisis.

I learned about warning signs, had the opportunity to engage in role plays and practiced what it would be like to support someone in real time. I also appreciated the destigmatization aspects of the training and normalizing mental health challenges. I would highly recommend this training to anyone interested in learning more about mental health, whether they are novice or seasoned in the field."

*-Dayna Altman
Mental Health First Aid Participant*

"Charles River Laboratories is committed to supporting local communities where we work and live - in Massachusetts, North America, and across the globe. Contributing to the mission of SYFS allows us to partner with an incredible organization while supporting families in the Shrewsbury area. We are proud to work with SYFS and look forward to continuing our partnership in the future."

*-Scott Fountain, PhD, General Manager
Charles River Laboratories Shrewsbury*

Webster Five is committed to supporting Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services' programs, activities, and opportunities that engage and support youth mental health. Creating a mental health safety zone in our communities is a priority of the Webster Five Foundation.

*-Monica Thomas-Bonnick, Executive Director
Webster Five Foundation*

"Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union takes great pleasure in supporting the work that SYFS does in Shrewsbury and the surrounding communities. Their efforts help to lessen the stigma associated with seeking help, as well as raise awareness. Our donations help fund Youth & Teen Mental Health First Aid trainings and Vaping Treatment programs to prepare our children for the challenges they face ahead. These curriculums are also built to train adults and teens to participate in mentoring and peer support. SFCU plans to continue funding these valuable initiatives that positively impact our communities."

*-Jim Dupont, President & CEO
Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union*

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR
2019-2020
ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS**

**Al-Hamra Academy
Andrew Abu Realtors
Avidia Bank
Avidia Charitable Foundation
Central One Federal Credit Union
Grossman Development Group/Lakeway Commons
John and Susan Haffty
Hannah Kane Charity Classic
Harbor Law Group
Lamoureux Pagano Associates | Architects
Law Offices of Joseph J. Cariglia
Reliant Foundation
R.H. White Construction
Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union
Spirit of Shrewsbury
UniBank
United Bank Foundation
Waste Management, Inc.
Webster Five Foundation
Wheelabrator Technologies, Inc.
Worcester Department of Public Health**

We couldn't do our work without you!

How We Help

Empower young people and building confidence with after-school and summer programs like "You Go Girl!" to gain social/emotional growth and development

Ensure clients have access to affordable, quality counseling, using evidence-based and research-supported practices

Promote health and well-being through educating high school students and providing opportunities to gain social/emotional growth and development

Train future therapists, counselors, psychologists and social workers through a holistic strength-based and collaborative approach with colleges and universities

Assist with fuel program applications for families in need to ensure winter warmth

Provide opportunities for high school students to learn and practice leadership skills that will guide them in their future

Help disadvantaged families find resources through our free supportive services

Serve as a resource for Shrewsbury town departments, community partners and the students and staff at both the public and private schools

Provide onsite services to residents at the Shrewsbury Housing Authority, improving self-care, increasing support and decreasing isolation

Manage an integrated anti-bullying curriculum in youth and parent programs

SYFS Values

Impact

We create sustainable impact at scale by changing policies, practices and systems.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

We design our partnerships and work in ways that do not reinforce structural oppressions but create new models for shared power and co-creation.

Integrity

We conduct our work with honesty and transparency, addressing all situations with high moral and ethical standard.

Learning

We research and adopt information on evidence-based and culturally competent practices that advance the field of mental health.

Collaboration

We recognize that acting alone, we cannot effectively address the systemic nature of the barriers to mental health and therefore engage in meaningful partnerships with a variety of stakeholders to ensure sustainable change.

Highlights

Our vision is that all members of our community have access to resources to ensure their social and emotional well-being.

250

teens were trained in
Teen Mental Health First Aid

692

adults were trained in
Youth Mental Health First Aid

213

referrals were received
for counseling or
supportive services

773

hours were spent in the
Shrewsbury schools
providing counseling & support

1,133

hours were spent
providing counseling services

64

residents were helped
with fuel assistance



Our Services

Positive Youth Development Programs

- "You Go, Girl!" (Middle School Girls)
- Anti-Bullying Programs (All Programs)
- Youth Board Liaisons (High School)
- Youth Volunteers
- "One Love" (Relationship Abuse Prevention & Education)



Counseling Services

- Psycho-educational Groups
- Individual, Family & Couples Support Groups
- Trauma Informed Care
- Treatment Planning
- School-based Counseling
- Vaping Treatment Program
- Comprehensive Assessments
- Parent Support
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Transition and Discharge Planning



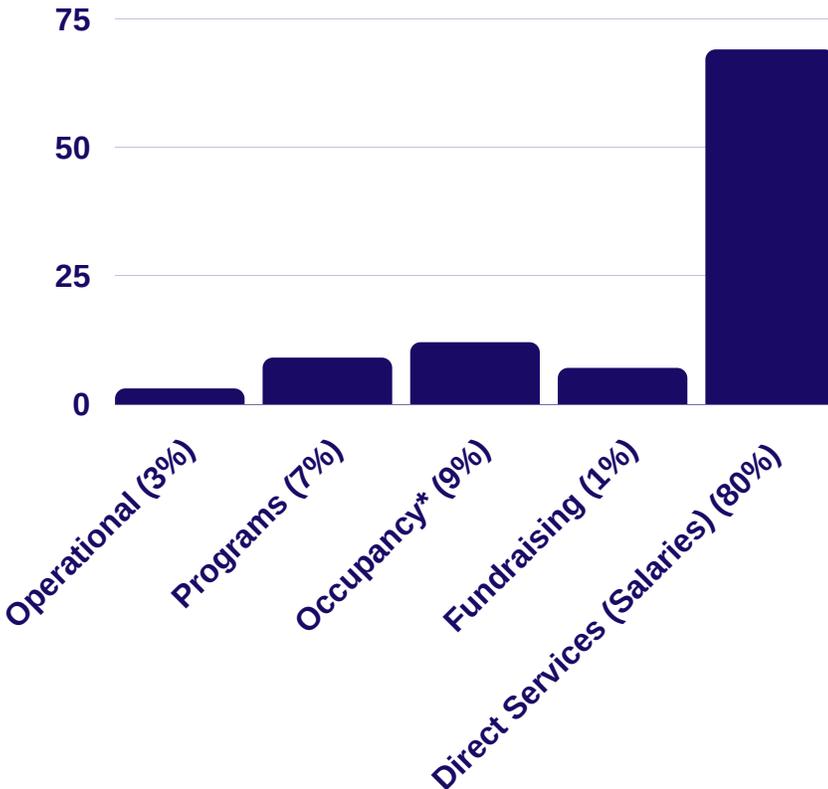
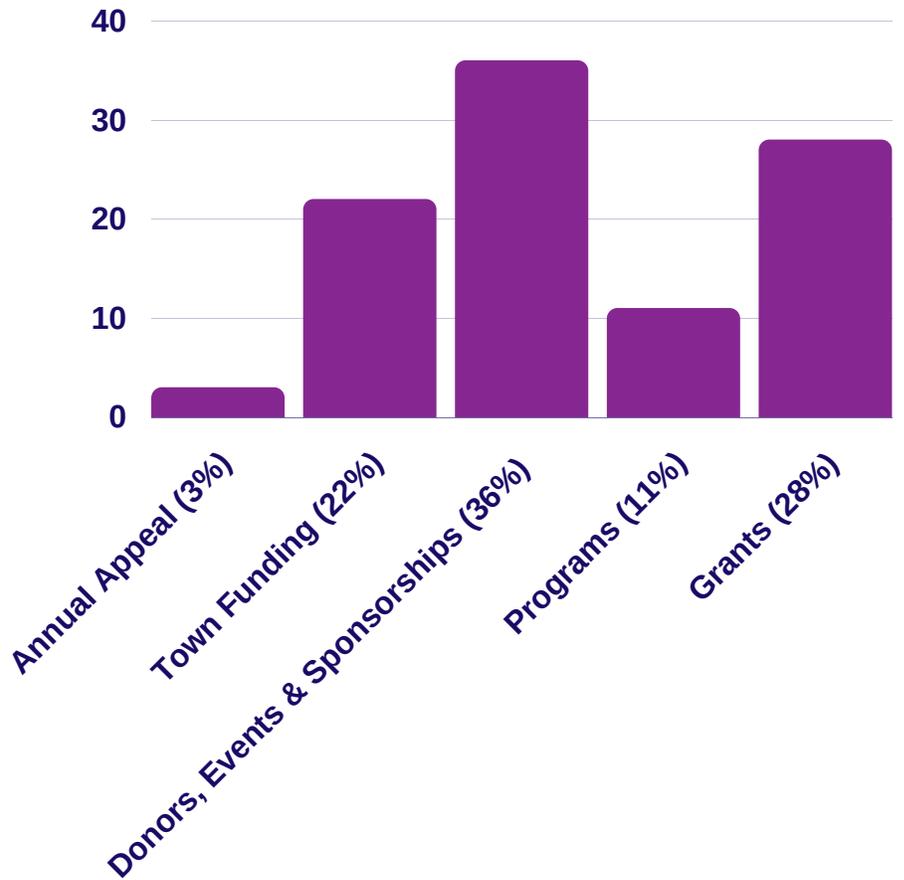
Supportive Services for Shrewsbury

- Community Outreach
- Advocacy
- Fuel & Electric Assistance: SMOC, SOAR, SELCO
- Holiday Gift-Giving Program
- Health Care Linkages
- SCAPE Drug-Free Coalition
- Referrals & Links: Shelter/Housing, Food, State Resources, Financial/Debt, Special Programs & Insurance Applications



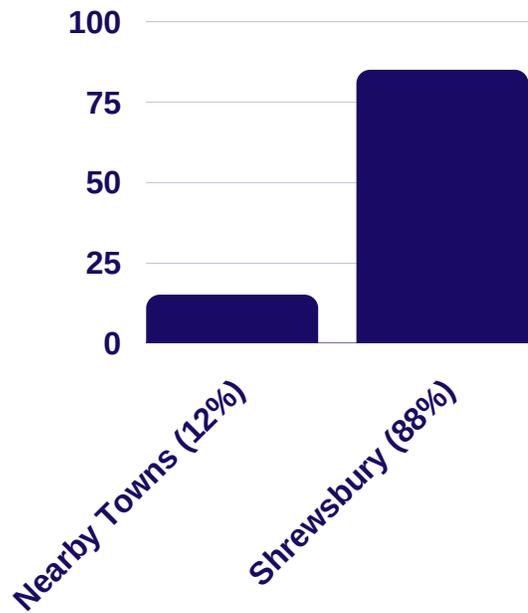
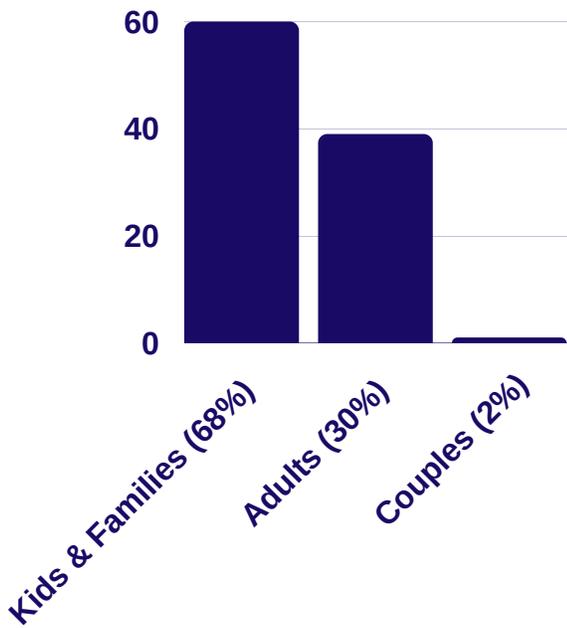
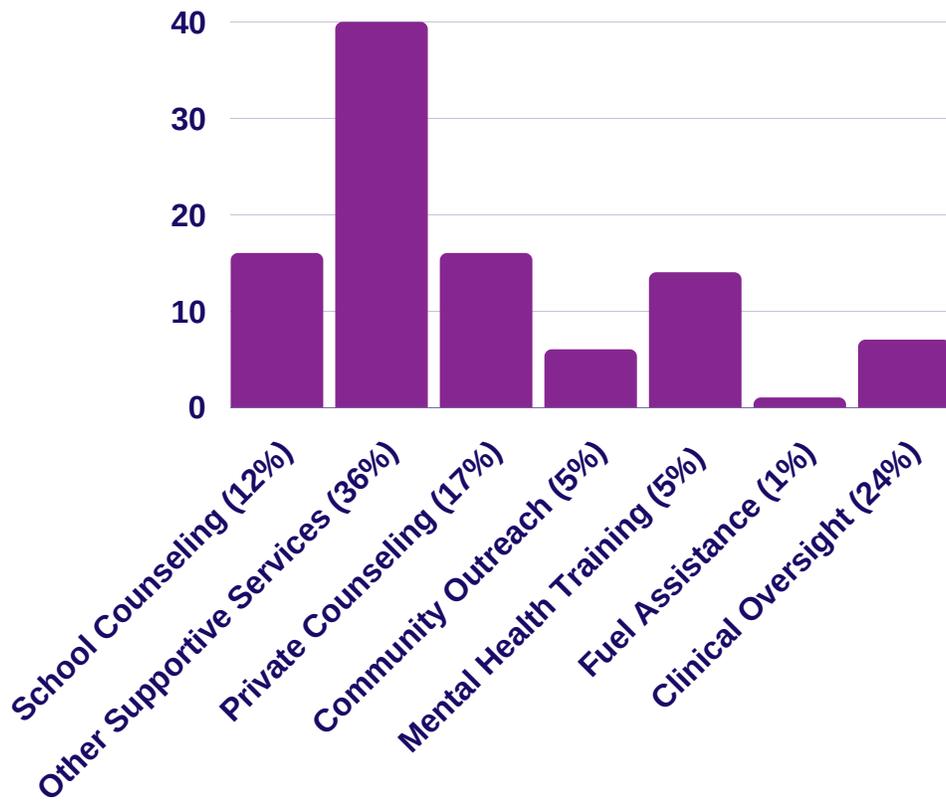
Revenue & Expenses

Revenue

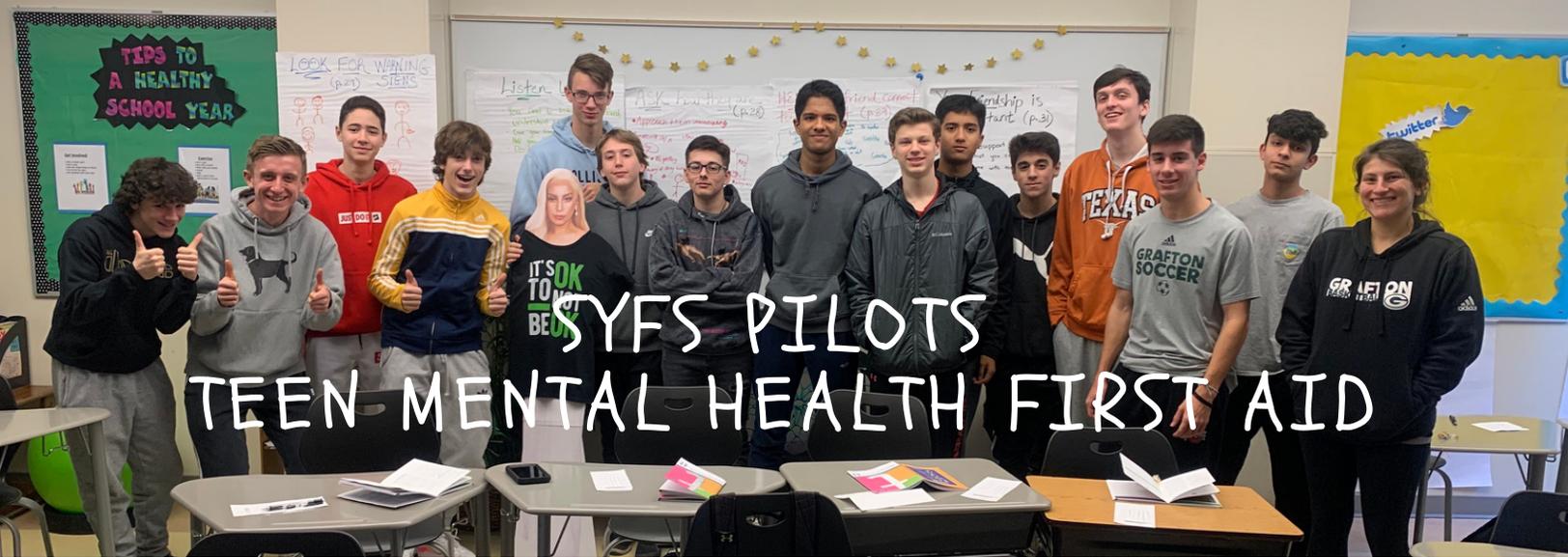


Expenses

*Custodial, IT, Rent, Equipment, Building Repairs & IT



Programs & Services



SYFS, in collaboration with Grafton High School, participated in the teen Mental Health First Aid pilot program run by the National Council for Behavioral Health with support from Lady Gaga's "Born This Way" Foundation.

tMHFA is an in-person training designed for high school students to learn about mental illnesses and addictions and how to identify and respond to a developing mental health or substance use problem among their peers. Similar to CPR, students learn a 5-step action plan to help their friends who may be facing a mental health problem or crisis, such as suicide.

SYFS instructors delivered 40 classes through the health curriculum to 250 sophomore students. The course specifically highlights the important step of involving a responsible and trusted adult. To ensure additional support for students taking the training, SYFS has also trained many of Grafton Public Schools staff in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

SYFS is thrilled to have been selected as a permanent implementation site and is currently working with the National Council for Behavioral Health to transition the program to a virtual platform.



SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES



SYFS has strong partnerships with the communities we serve and works in collaboration with schools to provide services to students and families who need additional supports. This year, SYFS provided these services to the Shrewsbury, Grafton and Millbury Public School Districts.

Services include:

Wraparound Services ~ School-Based Counseling ~ Psycho-Education Workshops
Eight-Hour College Readiness Program ~ Social-Emotional Development Groups
Behavioral Health Consultation Services ~ Vaping Treatment Program

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)

Gives adults who work with youth the skills they need to reach out and provide initial support to adolescents (ages 12-18) who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and helps connect them to the appropriate care

Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA)

Students learn the tMHFA Action Plan, as well as information about different types of mental health problems and mental health crisis situations in young people and how to help their peers



HALLOWEEN MAZE

CREATED BY THE MCNAMARA FAMILY

OCTOBER 2019



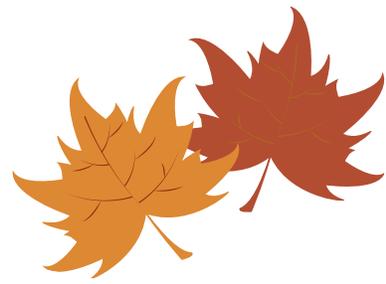
Opened to the public throughout the month of October, the 41 Hillando Drive maze was designed for the all ages throughout the community and included several challengingly-designed "rooms" (scenes) to discover with hints available for little guests.

While there was no admission charged to enter the maze, the McNamara family collected over \$4,500 in donations for SYFS in 2019 and a total of nearly \$7,000 in donations for SYFS between 2018 & 2019's mazes!

Thank you so much, McNamara Family, for your ongoing generosity!

GIVING & THANKS

OCTOBER 24, 2019



This casual evening served to thank sponsors for their generosity, bringing together old and new community friends to support and learn about SYFS. The evening included a delicious fall dinner and live entertainment at Cyprian Keyes Golf Club.

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

DECEMBER 16, 2019



In the spirit of giving,
toys, clothing and gift
cards are donated to
serve the many local
children and families
in need.

2020 HARRY S. CUTTING, JR. AWARD RECIPIENT
Ellen Dolan



**ANNUAL
BREAKFAST**

JANUARY 10, 2020

Sponsored By:

- Central One Federal Credit Union
- District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.
- Tom Fahs & Melissa Pride-Fahs
- Michael & Patricia Gregory
- John & Susan Haffty
- Joseph R. Jenkins, Attorney at Law
- State Representative Hannah Kane
- State Senator Michael Moore
- Saint John's High School
- Shrewsbury Police Patrol Officers NEPBA Local 191
- Struck Catering
- John & Joanne Tyndall

~~EVENING OF GIVING~~ GOFUNDME CAMPAIGN

MAY 2020

Due to the ongoing pandemic, our annual Evening of Giving fundraiser was unable to be held in 2020.

Instead, the Board of Directors and agency created an online GoFundMe campaign to raise the Evening of Giving's critical funds that represent one-third of the annual operating budget for SYFS.

With mental health needs rapidly rising and our funding to be able to provide services in jeopardy, the response we received from the community was overwhelming.

Thanks to nearly 450 generous contributors...



Together...
We did it!
We raised
\$100,000!

**SYFS**
SHREWSBURY YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.
COUNSELING, PREVENTION & WELLNESS FOR GREATER SHREWSBURY

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts
for your support of the agency's critical mission and work!

In six years, this tournament has raised over \$327,000 in critical funding for SYFS, St. Anne's Human Services and Westborough Food Pantry.

The SYFS Staff & Board of Directors would like to thank State Representative Hannah Kane, Tournament Director Beth Casavant, the Host Committee, sponsors & golfers for their tremendous support.



HANNAH KANE CHARITY CLASSIC

AUGUST 17, 2020

Pain is
Real

BUT SO IS **HOPE**

As we continue our critical work to support the mental health of our communities, ***thank you for your ongoing support.***



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www.syfs-ma.org