

A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends of SYFS,

HOPE. It is the foundation of the human spirit...and it still exists.

Welcome to the 2021-22 annual report, and what a year it has been. The pandemic continued; funders supported us more than ever; our staff continued to deliver important services both in-person and via telehealth. All of us are grateful to everyone who helped our clients throughout the year — thank you.

This annual report is a reflection of the hope we hold for all of our clients, especially when they can't yet hold it for themselves. When hope is missing for a length of time, an individual not only loses interest in his/her surroundings but eventually loses the will to live. Our clinicians are uniquely educated experts that help people process feelings of hopelessness. It is what they do every day so they can remove barriers to a spirit that can utilize its talents and eventually feel joy about oneself and about life.

During Fiscal Year 2021-22, hundreds of our clients' lives were improved because of their connection to the right service at the right time. They came to us through our school partners, through direct referrals, and through our outreach efforts. These adults, children, and families received the guidance they needed and continue to rely on us for ongoing behavioral health services.

Throughout this report, you will see how SYFS impacted the lives of the people we serve. A special shout-out to all of our individual donors, local businesses, and foundations that provided support, a few of which are: The Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Reliant Foundation, Webster Five Foundation, Avidia Foundation, John and Susan Haffty, Howard Grossman, Lakeway Commons, Charles River Laboratories, and GFI Partners. Thank you for the many ways you provide hope to our clients.

Since joining the agency in 2015, I've envisioned an embracing community where children and families have access to all the healthcare, social, emotional, and mental health services they need to overcome life's challenges. I'm proud to be a part of the team at SYFS that continues to play a leadership role in making this vision a reality. Looking forward, I maintain the promise of doing our absolute best every single day of every single year, as we have over these last 40 years.

Warmly,

Christine Mowry

Christine Mowry, Executive Director

*Board of
Directors*

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

Scott Fountain

Melissa Pride-Fahs

Scott Wyman

Erin Canzano

Susan Haffty

Jena Bauman Adams

Danielle Wolfus

Michael Rooney

Michelle Conlin

Carrick O'Brien

Altaf Ahmed

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

Francesca Beyer

Alina Oetson

Carson Domey

Thanvi Sheri

Shivangi Sirsiwal

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INTERIM CHAIR

Jason Palitsch
VICE CHAIRPERSON

Karen Mills
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Sean McNamara
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Alison Eccleston
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Christine Mowry
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Lynn Lynch, MBA
DIRECTOR OF
BUSINESS
OPERATIONS



Abby Robinson
OFFICE MANAGER



Jaime Gildea
STAFF CLINICIAN



FEE-FOR-SERVICE CLINICIANS

Rachel Baldino, LCSW, Kathleen DellaPenna, LCSW,
Marienelly Vazquez, LCSW

INTERNS

*(Graduate
Students)*

Bridgitte Manseau
Mindy Sherbet
Abby Robinson
Tayler Weathers
Alisa Feldman
Alexa Berry
Elizabeth Baker
Liz Ruiz
Anna Lindgren
Abby Westerlind
Amie Santos

Assumption University
Simmons University
Assumption University
Assumption University
Framingham State
Assumption University
Assumption University
Simmons University
Assumption University
Bay Path University
Simmons University



A word from our Board Chair...

Dear SYFS Friends,

On behalf of our board of directors, counselors, interns, office staff, community partners, donors, and volunteers I am pleased to comment on our 2022 Shrewsbury Youth & Family Services Annual Report.

Despite the myriad of challenges presented by COVID-19, SYFS continues to be focused on serving our local citizenry for the betterment of the lives of families and individuals and in turn, the quality of life in Shrewsbury. Both the business community and the residents of Shrewsbury continued to support SYFS through various fund-raising activities, including our fund-raising gala, which returned after a two-year pandemic-related absence, and the Hannah Kane Charity Classic (HKCC). You are champions of our community and we thank you for your continued support. These funds when coupled with the various town appropriations, client co-pays, grants, third-party reimbursements, and individual and corporate donations allow SYFS to continue to deliver a wide range of mental health counseling and social services in a most cost-efficient manner.

During the 2021-2022 year we welcomed five new board members: Altaf Ahmed, Michelle Conlin, Scott Fountain, Danielle Wolfus, and Scott Wyman. With gratitude and appreciation, we acknowledge 2 board members who stepped down during this year. Carrick O'Brien stepped down from the board after serving as a director, and most recently, as chair. Melissa Pride-Fahs served as Board Chair for several years and was instrumental in planning and organizing the Annual Gala for many years, as well as producing the Annual Report.

A huge thank-you to the SYFS staff. Executive Director Christine Mowry and her skilled and motivated staff of clinicians, interns, and the office staff are the main reason why SYFS has become the significant resource that it is today in Shrewsbury. We are grateful for the ongoing community support and we look forward to working together as we continue to ensure successful outcomes for those in our community who seek our help.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas M. Kennedy

Thomas M. Kennedy, Interim Chair, Board of Directors

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR
2021-2022
ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS**

**AnJen Finishing
Avidia Bank
Avidia Charitable Foundation
Central One Federal Credit Union
Charles River Laboratories
GFI Partners
Greater Worcester Community Foundation
Lakeway Commons
Howard Grossman
John and Susan Haffty
Hannah Kane Charity Classic
Massachusetts Pirates
Reliant Foundation
Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation
Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union
Skin Dermatology
TJX Foundation
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Waste Management, Inc.
Webster Five Foundation
Wegmans
WIN Waste Innovations**

We couldn't do our work without you!

How We Help

Empowering young people and building confidence with after-school and summer programs like "LeadHERship" and "Harry Potter SEL Program" to gain social/emotional growth and development

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

Support public and private school districts through our School-Based Support Services

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

Assist with fuel assistance 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 as Student Board Liaisons

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 public and private schools

Provide skills and support groups for all ages

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 standards.

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.

245

adults were trained in
Mental Health First Aid

223

referrals were received
for counseling or
supportive services

578

hours were spent in the
Shrewsbury, Grafton, and Millbury
schools
providing counseling & support

3418

hours were spent
providing outpatient
counseling services

26

residents were helped
with fuel assistance



Our Services



Positive Youth Development Programs

"LeadHERship (Middle School Girls)

Harry Potter Social-Emotional Learning (Middle School)

Youth Board Liaisons (High School)

"One Love" (Relationship Abuse Prevention & Education)



Counseling Services

School-Based Services

Mental Health First Aid

Psycho-educational Groups

Individual, Family & Couples Therapy

Trauma Informed Care

Treatment Planning

Vaping Treatment Program

Comprehensive Assessments

Parent Support

Crisis Management

Transition and Discharge Planning

Supportive Services for Shrewsbury

Community Outreach

Advocacy

Fuel & Electric Assistance: SMOC, SOAR, SELCO

Holiday Gift-Giving Program

Health Care Linkages

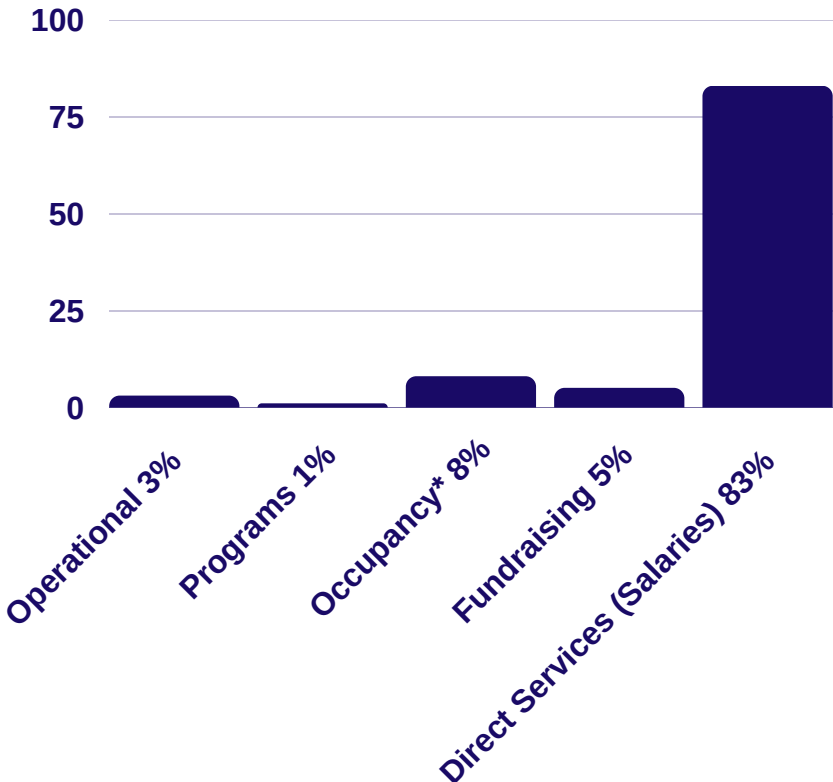
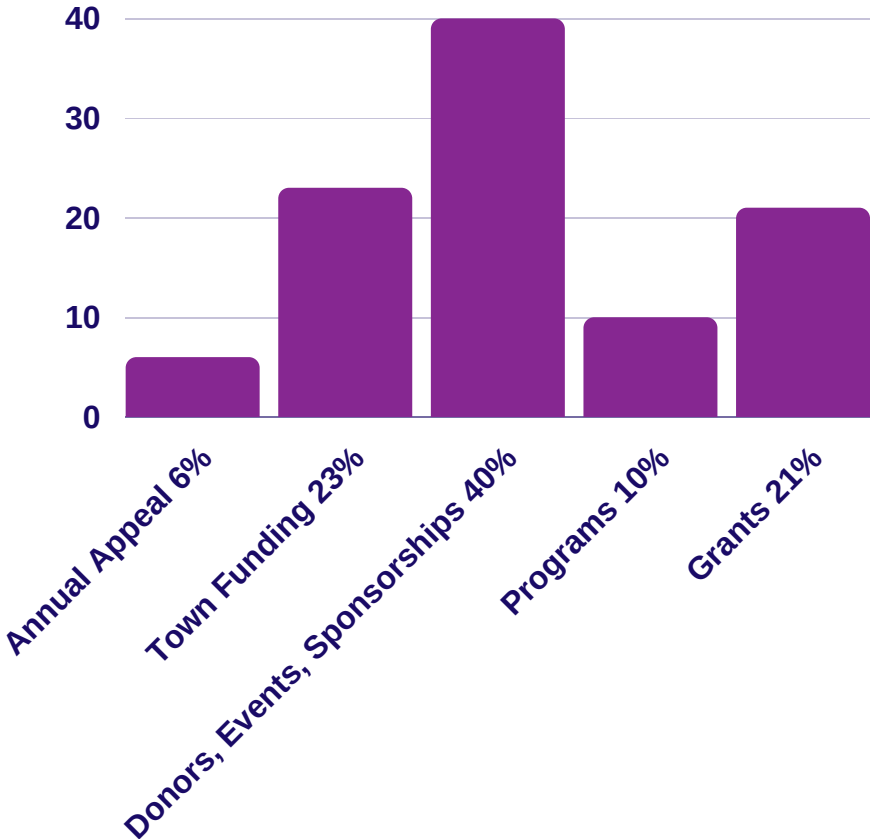
Referrals & Links: Shelter/Housing, Food, State

Resources, Financial/Debt, Special Programs & Insurance Applications



Revenue & Expenses

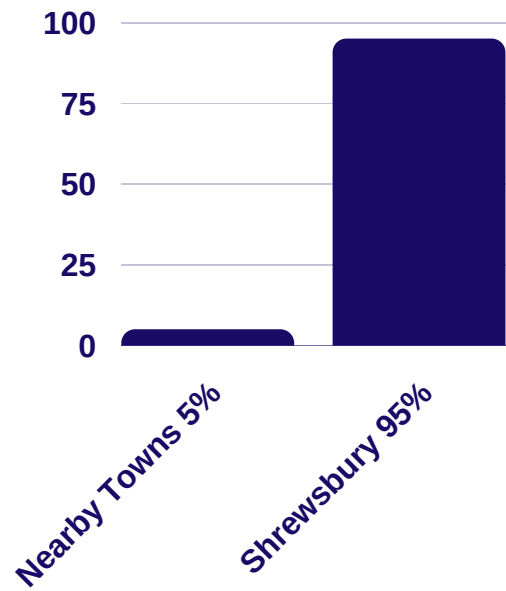
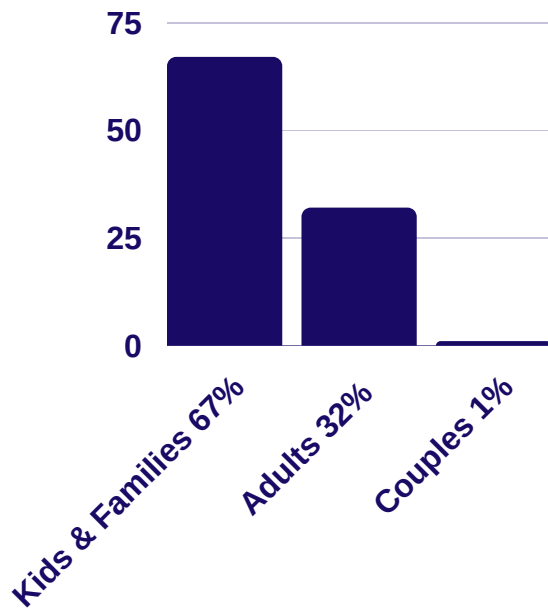
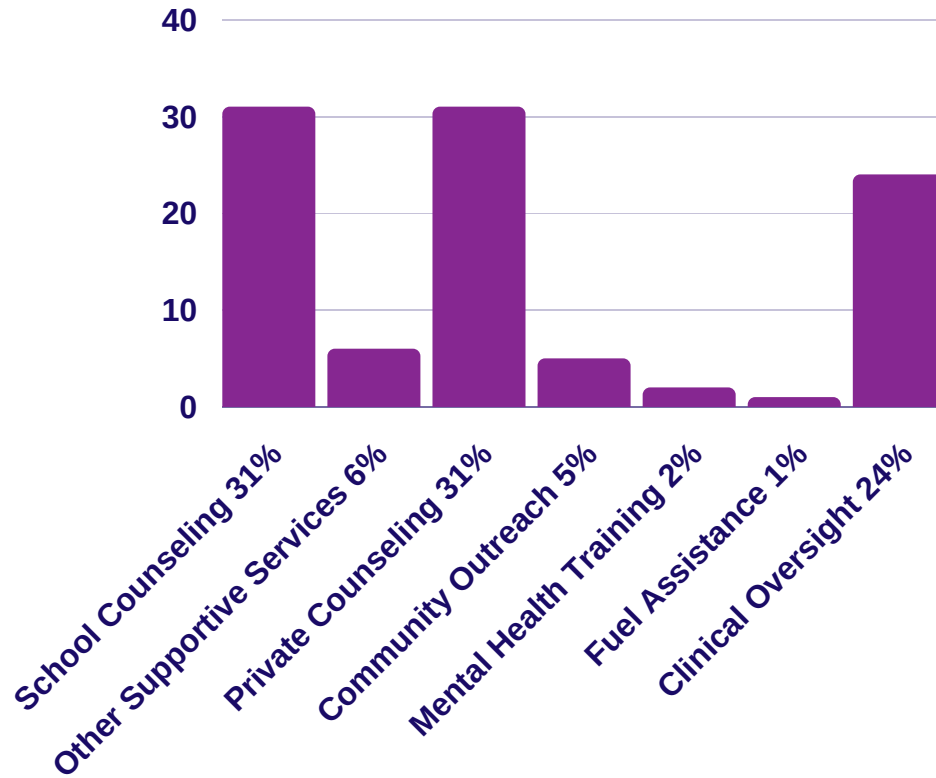
Revenue



Expenses

*Custodial, Rent, Equipment, Building Repairs & IT





Programs & Services

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, and St. John's High School.

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

ABES
Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences
During the COVID-19 Pandemic, 2021

Mental Health & Suicidality

1 out of every **3** students had poor mental health during the pandemic

1 out of every **10** students attempted suicide during the past year

2 out of every **5** students felt emotional distress during the past year

Poor mental health and suicide attempts were **less common** among students who **felt close to people at school**

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth>

The infographic features a student sitting at a desk with a backpack, a world map, and the CDC logo.

New Program

Despite the fact that the number of people with mental health issues is growing and the acuity of presenting mental health needs is now higher, it has become increasingly challenging to find appropriate treatment when it is most needed. SYFS aims to offer not just high level services, but timely support as well.

We frequently receive calls from desperate parents worried about their children who are struggling with daily suicidal ideation, frequent urges to self-harm, panic attacks, and school refusal. Often, these parents have had their children evaluated by mental health crisis teams, only to hear they should simply wait for outpatient services.

Currently the wait for SYFS outpatient treatment is approximately one year. Urgently needed medical services would not require a year long wait, yet children, youth, and adults who are feeling suicidal are simply put on waitlists while their mental health continues to decline and those around them continue to worry.

In response to this deeply disturbing data and these unfathomable wait times, SYFS has developed a program to provide immediate support to clients who are in crisis, and waiting for outpatient services at our agency. This is SYFS' Waitlist Crisis Support Services program. Through this program, we offer time-limited intensive clinical support to individuals and families who are on our waitlist for outpatient counseling services. These services are offered to clients who are struggling with issues that may pose a safety risk or whose lives are being significantly affected by their mental health issues. The Clinical Director identifies eligible clients and families. Eligibility criteria includes but is not limited to:

- Current or recent self-harm
- Current or recent suicidal or homicidal ideation
- School refusal
- Bullying
- Frequent Panic Attacks
- Use of alcohol or other drugs
- Trauma
- Unsafe behaviors (fighting, running away, arrests, etc.) in the home, school, or community



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 generous donation of \$20,000! We are proud to be a beneficiary alongside such amazing organizations as Westborough Food Pantry and St. Anne's Human Services.

AUGUST 16, 2021



HALLOWEEN MAZE

CREATED BY THE MCNAMARA FAMILY

OCTOBER 2021



Opened to the public throughout the month of October, the Haunted Hillando Maze was designed for the all ages and COVID wasn't about to stop Sean McNamara from building this amazing and popular attraction!

While there was no admission charged to enter the maze, the McNamara family collected over \$10,000 in donations for SYFS in 2021!

Thank you so much, McNamara Family, for your tremendous support and generosity!

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE

DECEMBER 21, 2021



We supported 28 local families and over 100 children in the custody of The Department of Children and Families! Thank you for the support!

SYFS ANNUAL GALA

MAY 21, 2022

We couldn't have been more thrilled to host our annual gala in person this year! It was a poignant evening of connection that we had all been missing. Our generous guests donated over \$138,000 that will directly benefit those struggling with mental health challenges.



THANK YOU!

H O P E

*There is HOPE...even
when your brain tells
you there isn't.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



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

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