



# ANNUAL REPORT





The Family Center is so much more than a safe, friendly space. Staff have built a community around my family. Family Center staff have become like family to us. The Family Center has shared such profound wisdom and knowledge with me, my partner and our children. The Family Center covers all those needs that we, as parents, can't cover because we tend to neglect our physical, mental –even spiritual health.

**CAROLYNNE**

*Family Center Client*

*Consumer Advisory Committee Member*



**THE FAMILY CENTER** has always been a safe and welcoming place for vulnerable families in New York City. We have tirelessly worked to foster an environment where our clients, their children, and their families are able to share feelings, express frustrations and work through the process of healing from whatever illness, crisis or loss brought them to our doors.

Recently, we embarked on an initiative to improve our trauma-informed practice. We undertook a thorough agency-wide self-assessment, which included implementing new programs using evidence-based models, extensive staff trainings and more. All agency staff, as well as scores of supporters, Board members and Leadership Council members, have received trainings and briefings on what it means for The Family Center to be trauma-informed. Across our programs, clinical staff are trained to identify signs and symptoms of trauma, and to treat and educate young people, their parents, and caregivers to reduce the impact of trauma, grief and loss on day-to-day functioning.

In this Annual Report, you will learn more about our trauma-informed work, discover how it informs our group programming, and meet a local Brooklyn family that has experienced trauma but is healing and thriving with the help of The Family Center. We thank you for taking the time to read these stories and be a part of our trauma-informed community. Only with investment of time, energy and resources from supporters like you, can The Family Center continue to keep families stronger, longer.

*Joel M. Field III*

**Joel M. Field III,**  
Board Chair

*Ivy Gamble Cobb*

**Ivy Gamble Cobb,**  
Executive Director



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# OUR MISSION

The Family Center’s mission is to strengthen vulnerable families affected by crisis, illness or loss to create a secure present and future for their children and all family members.

We are currently in the midst of fulfilling a multi-layered strategy to build capacity so we can offer the most effective services for children and families, with a focus on ensuring that all of our procedures, protocols and services are trauma-informed; and that our services are evidence-based, or have been shown in research studies to be highly effective for the populations we serve.

Based on input and feedback from various Family Center constituent groups including staff and clients, we developed a vision statement to guide this strategic work:

**We strive to create a community of trust and safety, honoring each individual’s experience, strengths and choice on their journey to wellness.**

In addition to serving as a community, The Family Center designs services to wrap around vulnerable New York City families and provide a variety of outcome-driven interventions and supports. The average client family accesses at least two of the following services offered:

SOCIAL SERVICES	LEGAL WELLNESS INSTITUTE
Family Support Services Benefits Assistance Parenting & Child Development Child Welfare Services	Housing Income Maintenance Family Law Lifetime Planning
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES	IRENE LEEKONG HEALTH & WELLNESS INSTITUTE
Health Management Medical Adherence Healthy Lifestyles Activities	Mental Health Assessments and Counseling for Minors and their Families

All Family Center services are grounded in research, in addition to creating a supportive community for clients who access our services. Notable outcomes of our work include:

- After 6 months of receiving our medical case management and treatment adherence support services, HIV-positive clients experience lower viral loads and stronger immune systems, indicated by higher CD4 counts. After 18 months of service, hospitalization rate also drops.
- Family Center attorneys annually close more than 90% of cases with verdicts and settlements in clients’ favor; they also secure millions of dollars each year in savings to taxpayers, e.g., when clients successfully avoid eviction and the costly city shelter system.
- The Family Center’s family-based interventions show a statistically significant, positive impact on parental depression and a child’s home environment. After receiving services through our child development and parenting program, parents and caregivers are less depressed and the home environment is more intellectually stimulating.
- Our child welfare programs regularly achieve 100% avoidance of out-of-home placements for children in the families served.



## COME TOGETHER: GROUP PROGRAMMING



**THE FAMILY CENTER** has a robust offering of groups that bolster our community-building, provide clients with a sense of connection and reinforce individual family members' treatment goals. As we expand our group programming, we strive to ensure that all groups underscore our trauma-informed approach to care.

Two groups that demonstrate The Family Center's growing sensitivity to multiple traumas experienced by our clients include SPARCS and RPC. SPARCS, or Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress, is an evidence-based, group psychotherapy program that focuses on building skills and resiliency. Over the course of four months, teens meet weekly for two hours to share and talk through emotional challenges, including methods of coping.

RPC, or Resource Parenting Curriculum, offers similar evidence-based, trauma-informed support to caregivers, who are raising minor children not their own, and have experienced trauma. The Family Center has long had a commitment to working with caregiver families that are typically headed by a grandmother or aunt. RPC demonstrates our commitment to including this population in our community.

The Family Center deeply values the inclusive nature of our community: every client should feel welcomed for who they are and safe and comfortable enough to express themselves. This was the idea behind the creation of the LGBTQ Dinner Series, which is a welcoming, non-judgmental space created for members of our community, who identify as LGBTQ, to come together for a monthly "family dinner." The group gathers to discuss topics that range from intimacy to depression, watch LGBTQ-oriented films, and enjoy the occasional outing.

Throughout the year, The Family Center also offers one-time group workshops. #Goals was hosted by Harvest Ball 2018 Honoree Aren LeeKong and his wife Aliya for our teens to come together and plan for their future. Many teens in SPARCS, and those receiving services at the Irene LeeKong Health & Wellness Institute, attended #Goals. Aren and Aliya have invested significantly in the future of children and youth at The Family Center when they helped found the Institute in 2013, naming it after Aren's grandmother who was a caregiver in Brooklyn, not too far from where our office is located today.

In many ways, The Family Center builds community –a trauma-informed community that secures positive, sustainable outcomes for New Yorkers and their families, thanks to evidence-based models and supporters like Aren, Aliya and you.

**“The Family Center deeply values the inclusive nature of our community: every client should feel welcomed for who they are and safe and comfortable enough to express themselves.”**

# B-WEL TRULY EMPOWERS FAMILY CENTER WOMEN TO BE WELL

**SINCE 2013**, The Family Center has been funded by the federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration to operate Brooklyn-Women Enjoy Life program. Also known as B-WEL, this program provides services aimed at improving the physical and emotional health of women struggling with, or in recovery from, drug or alcohol abuse.

Through B-WEL, we partner with in-patient and out-patient treatment providers to help women address barriers to staying in treatment, including domestic violence, family issues, court involvement, and unmanaged symptoms of depression, trauma or mental illness. B-WEL services include counseling, case management, support groups and other services individually tailored to each client's unique needs.

The Family Center remains committed to evaluating every program for efficacy, and B-WEL is no exception. B-WEL program evaluators recently examined both client-level and program-level data, and came across profound metrics indicating success empowering Family Center clients:

**After six months of receiving B-WEL services, women increase their chances of returning to work or school by 240%.**

**Also after six months, the percentage of B-WEL women experiencing serious depression had decreased by over 25%; and the percentage experiencing serious anxiety had decreased by nearly 10%.**

One B-WEL graduate regained custody of her children and another returned to nursing school. Data now underscore these anecdotes: B-WEL aids women in their healing and recovery so that they can reclaim their health and their lives.

The Family Center is proud of the women of B-WEL and honored that we can support them in their wellness journeys.





## A PROMISE MADE, A PROMISE KEPT

Tina knew she had arrived too late when she finally got down to Florida in July 2014 to support her brother, Tommy, a veteran who was struggling with stage 4 cancer and raising two young sons, 9 year-old Santino and 7 year-old Gianni. He had missed his last two chemo appointments and his sons were bravely helping him take care of everything around the house from cooking to cleaning. Tina managed to bring him back to New York: he went straight into the hospital. He died seven days later.

Since Santino and Gianni's mother could not care for the boys, their father left them in Tina's care. Tina and her husband, Harold, are raising the boys now with the help of The Family Center's program for caregiver families, or families in which children are being raised by someone other than a biological parent. Family Center Executive Director Ivy Gamble Cobb fondly calls our caregivers the "unsung heroes" of vulnerable NYC children and their families who are often struggling with trauma.

Understandably devastated by the loss of their father and confused about why they had to live in NY, the boys began acting out. Santino began running away and acting out in school. With the help of his clinician in The Irene LeeKong Institute, The Family Center's licensed mental health clinic, he is getting help and now in a gifted and talented program at school. His younger brother Gianni struggled more with his anger over the death of his father and began making threats to harm himself and others. Gianni is currently in a residential setting to help him manage this anger, and Tina readily admits it's difficult on their entire family to be separated right now. The Family Center is committed to serving Tina, her husband and her nephews for as long as it takes the boys to heal from the traumatic loss of their father and adjust to life with Tina and Harold in New York.

Tina knows that it's a struggle to raise her nephews but she insists with love, "I made my brother a promise." She is thriving in her own right: in May, she graduated with her Master's degree in Theological Studies. The Family Center is proud to serve Tina and Harold and their nephews Santino and Gianni.







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THE FAMILY CENTER

## Key Financial Metrics

Statement of Activities for the Fiscal Years  
Ending June 30, 2017 & June 30, 2018

REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	2017	2018
Government Grants	\$4,007,235	\$4,324,728
Contributions	\$622,228	\$667,312
Interest and other income	\$6,181	\$789
Special events	\$0	\$120,505
<b>Total Revenue and Other Support</b>	<b>\$4,635,644</b>	<b>\$5,113,334</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<b>PROGRAM SERVICES</b>		
Social Services	\$1,710,935	\$1,817,480
Legal Services	\$900,665	\$748,353
Child Welfare	\$593,419	\$737,340
Health & Wellness Institute	\$540,751	\$678,899
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$3,745,770</b>	<b>\$3,982,072</b>
<b>SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>		
General and Administrative	\$835,040	\$854,480
Fundraising	\$251,352	\$269,249
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$1,086,392</b>	<b>\$1,123,729</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,832,162</b>	<b>\$5,105,801</b>
Change in Net Assets	-\$196,518	\$7,533
Net Assets Beginning	\$1,963,799	\$1,767,281
<b>Net Assets Ending</b>	<b>\$1,767,281</b>	<b>\$1,774,814</b>

## Donors

The Family Center is grateful to the following donors and institutions who gave more than \$100 between **July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018**. We regret that we do not have space to list those who gave under \$100.

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