

## WAYPOINT FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER of Nashua

Cindy Blanchard, Family resource center coordinator/Family support supervisor

And staff, including: Carolyn George, intake coordinator; Barbara Walden, family support specialist; and Alicia Angrove Family Support Classes and Kinship Navigator Program.

Waypoint used to be known as “Child and Family Services” — we have been serving families in NH since 1850. We serve all types of families. Today’s meeting will focus on our family resource center in Nashua and the resources available to Milford/Greater Nashua families with young children.

Waypoint currently offers a full range of parenting classes and support groups -- which are all offered virtually at this time. Waypoint also launched a family support warm line last year (when COVID hit) to serve as a resource for parents — allowing families to call in with any of their questions. We were especially concerned about families feeling isolated as well as having remote learning problems. It’s developed into a really nice warm line where families can call and get assistance, connections to resources, ask a professional some parenting advice, etc.

Waypoint offers a warm line/phone in service for parents that can be access Monday through Friday 8:30 - 4:30: 800-640-6486. Parents can also call after hours and leave a message; and then someone will follow up with them the next day.

Looking specifically at Milford families, we have had 21 Milford families enroll in our programs over the past two years. We are here and ready to serve your population (One of the Collaborative’s goals is to work with Waypoint to serve *more* Milford families)

Overview of Waypoint programs/offerings >>

### **Healthy Families America Home Visiting**

Healthy Families America is a home visiting service that's available to **pregnant moms or moms that have just had a newborn.** We prefer to get the family enrolled during the pregnancy so we can help the family prepare for a healthy delivery, and help them get their home prepared. One of the wonderful parts of the program is how long it lasts/how long it’s

available. It's a voluntary program and can be utilized up until the child turns three years old. So parents and families can work with Waypoint's Family Support Specialist and get the support they're looking for during the baby's first three years.

Our family support staff use the "parents as teachers" curriculum which is recognized nationally. This extensive training program helps the family with bonding and attachment, as well as learn about protective factors and healthy child development. Waypoint Family Support Staff are trained and have a knowledge of a parenting and child development. Each time they have a home visit or meet with the family, they talk about the baby's development at their particular age/stage, what parents/caregivers can do to support that developmental stage. There's also a good social emotional component and the ASQ/Ages and Stages Questionnaires/developmental screening tools are used to help parents/caregivers track their baby's development and social emotional needs. This helps us identify areas that may need support; and also help the family find potential additional supports, like early supports and services. The home visitor also assesses the mother for postpartum depression which which is common and can help connect her to support.

There is also a Nurse that can be available to address any health concerns with parents.

There is a list of certain risk factors for Healthy Families America eligibility and families need to have at least five of those risk factors to qualify. However, these risk factors include anything from being a smoker to an unplanned pregnancy to lower levels of education ... there are many ways they can qualify for this type of Home Visiting.

And, if they don't qualify for "Healthy Families America" home visiting, there are other types of home visiting available; Waypoint can connect families with the supports they're looking for.

Home visitors provide a one-on-one connection and other concrete supports, including community referrals to other available child and family services/resources (like child care, counseling, parent support groups, education opportunities, playgroups and opportunities for social interaction for both the parent and the child).

For each home visit, the Home Visit/Family Support Specialist usually provides the family with additional information on a specific topic along with fun activities and supporting materials (i.e., potty training, breast-feeding, bonding and attachment, supportive activities for child development).

Question about how long...

In the beginning, the visits often happen weekly and they work with the family's schedule and needs and desires. Over the course of time, those interactions can decrease, depending on the family.

it may say OK I'm ready for a visit to have an every other week and then monthly email so the connection is still there but the frequency can decline and then on the other family's needs and we also have a nurse but I didn't mention it's part of that program and so that component Emily's really like the nurse comes out and helps with breast-feeding education helps coordinate between the family and their doctor say there's a formula change that needs to happen and I'm getting that prescription to wicked wing your child and end in the nursing component is i would say that many people do graduate from his program and other folks take it vantage of it for what they need which which may be just getting over the new parent jitters in preparing for the baby to come home and then after they get their routine you're good so we don't look at it as a failure when they start mid mid way through we've given the family what they needed and then and then leave when they're in minerals app and it's far is referring on with you referring to early sports your services when there is a developmental delay and we also referred to start early Headstart chat about the hours for one line what are the hours then he said Monday through Friday 830 to 430 OK we're gonna turn it over to

The other home visiting program offered is **"Parenting Plus."** **HOME VISITING**

Barbara Walden, one of Waypoint's Family Support Specialists, provided an overview of what this program includes...

In the initial visit with families, we develop goals that they're interested in. These usually involve some parent education, connection to community resources they're looking for, potential connections to doctors and/or other resources. Together, we often help set up routines for the families and help develop schedules. There are many different aspects of what we can do to help the family out. We really focus on empowering them so that

they feel more confident in their parenting skills and can become their own advocates.

Some of our referrals come in from DCYF, schools, and other agencies. Families can also inquire/self-refer. Most commonly, families work with us they stay with us for 6 to 9 months. In the beginning, we may work with them on a weekly basis and as things start to get rolling we might extend those visits to every other week to maybe once a month.

We don't complete the program unless the families have reached their goals but sometimes they work with us longer and want additional goals. Our objective is to empower them and help them be independent.

Like Healthy Families American, we help families track their child's development and do screenings for children under five. We can help with sensory resources for children, early supports and services referrals, speech therapy, OT/PT, child care, etc. We can help families forward screening information to their pediatricians. We also work with families to provide oral health screenings. Dental care is very important and often overlooked for young children. WE can also bridge parents/families to needed assistance (food/rental/utilities/employment/lead paint remediation) as well as with goals like smoking cessation.

We also try to partner with other service providers to make sure we're streamlining things for the family, For example, sometimes you have ABA therapist coming into the home and they might try doing something that I've already been doing ...so we try to streamline who does what so that we can make our appointments more effective and that we're not duplicating or providing conflicting advice.

Of of the areas that has been a big barrier for families is remote learning so we've been helping families get hooked up to their schools and/or helping them get the technology they need for their child. So many have been using their phones to do remote learning ..which is very difficult! Also, if a child needs a desk or help connecting with the teacher/school to get a desk, we can help. We're just trying to make things a little bit more normalized for the child while they're at home.

Q: If I'm a parent or if I'm one of us in the collaborative and we think wow this family could benefit from home visiting, we don't need to know which home visiting they qualify for, right? We can just connect the family to Waypoint?

Yes, parents can call us directly: And reach out to Carolyn.  
You/providers can also refer families — please indicate that the family would like us to call them (either family can sign...or you can indicate they gave permission). The Home Visiting referral form is posted on the Collaborative member website: [www.milfordthrives.org/members](http://www.milfordthrives.org/members).

What an incredible supportive service!! How do we refer more Milford families?

One thing we're doing is including information on Home Visiting in the Welcome Baby bags...as well as highlighting home visiting programs on our FB page and website. Now we all as Collaborative members have an easy way to refer families.

Q: Are there restrictions on which families can participate in "Parenting Plus" or "home visiting"?

A: just that the child has to be in the home. This program is designed to support parents/caregivers in their home... the newness of being a parent can be daunting and this is just one way to connect with them/support them.

Like a "parenting coach"

Discussion about what we're working on as a collaborative... one goal is really hearing directly from the parents not only but what they're looking for but also how they want information/how they want to see information/find out about resources. We're currently conducting a parent survey right now and then we'll do some follow up focus groups as well.

Then based on parent input, we will work as a collaborative to develop the appropriate resources for families in a more user-friendly way

Thank you for all the work you guys are doing — we really appreciate it.

## **Additional WAYPOINT Parent/Caregiver Education & Support Programs**

Alicia Angove, also a Family Support Specialist. She often supports families with trauma and/or behavioral issues.

Alicia also leads their Kinship Navigator Program

Which serves any kind of “non-parent” guardian (grandparent/other family member/other caregivers)

We help support the caregiver in whatever way we can. I have a separate “Kincare” certification.

I do home visits as well as other meetings; I can attend IEP meetings to support the family and/or speak with providers that the caretaker is working with (if they give me permission). I can help advocate for them/ their child.

When families are dealing with trauma the child(ren) may have encountered, I work with them to help them create an environment that supports them, and bridge them to services aiming to help minimize trauma. This is also helpful if placement is temporary and there are plans for reunification with a parent. We focus on the child’s well-being long-term.

Some families have DCYF involvement so we support them with that, too. I can help the guardians navigate this process and understand the rights of the parents. We can still help the family and the parents with transitions, too. I often support families with life skills — whether it involves grandparents and great grandparents that need to figure out technology and Zoom...or how to do create an email ..those types of things so that they are able to communicate with the school system or the therapists/ providers...whoever is involved in the child's life.

We also try to help with barriers and education if they need it, including helping them bridge to supports to help build a financially stable situation long-term.

I also teach the Parent/caregiver Positive solutions class. (See the Parent Education/Support flyer on the Collaborative member page for dates/ details). It's a great evidence-based educational program that helps parents. There are also specialty classes via Zoom that focus on autism

basics, challenging behaviors... as well as supporting children impacted by trauma.

I really want to have a lot of my families come out with strong resiliency so this is another thing that we do — I do teach a child development basics class as well as answer questions. It's an interactive course where we talk about all of the early stages of development, how that can affect your child throughout the lifespan (we use the protective factors in every class we do).

Please keep us posted on any new class offerings >> we'd be happy to share them via our FB page and with Collaborative members for families.

## **Milford DISCOVERY REPORT**

Mary Devlin and Alison Gray  
See pdf of report on Member website.

Update on **COLLABORATIVE Member website** which is now live  
>>

\*\* Also includes PDFs that are downloadable and printable for parents/families.

\*\*Site is searchable if you'd rather search by type of service/resource.

\*\*Any questions/updates/additions >> please send to Joelle  
>> This is a central spot to serve as a resource to help us stay connected between meetings and better serve families  
>> ultimately help us in our goal to become better "*EC Ambassadors*"

+ I will add additional Waypoint resources — from our conversation today, including the Kinship Navigator Program brochure.

[www.MilfordThrives.org/members](http://www.MilfordThrives.org/members)

**PLEASE BOOKMARK THE PAGE:** [www.MilfordThrives.org/members](http://www.MilfordThrives.org/members)

I'll also send out emails between our monthly meetings when key new resources/Info are available on it.

+ Member WEB will also include Meeting Minutes/presentations (like today's DISCOVERY REPORT), contact info/member profiles...upcoming event info ... the resources we need. It is also searchable

### **Update on PARENT/CAREGIVER SURVEY...**

The parent survey launched (already 58 responses); Focus groups will follow in March.

These results/parent input will us as a Collaborative better understand what families with young children in Milford are looking for.

PLUS >> The Collaborative will be able to develop more family-friendly/ user-friendly informational tools — whether online or in print or both.

Meanwhile, the Milford Thrives Facebook page is updated daily and aims to provide families with the latest on:

- Family fun activities and community events
- Child development information
- Parenting resources/tips
- News from you/Collab members and EC providers on services/programs available...

Follow the page...feel free to post and/or email me info to post — THANK YOU

### **OUR NEXT MEETING**

**= March 18 Cassie Yackley and Valerie Robinson, GNMH**

**>> ACEs and Child Parent Psychotherapy**