



Virginia's Story

Parent Child Centers are the Answer

VIRGINIA'S STORY

Virginia M. is a 29-year-old single mother of five boys, ages 11, 10, 8, 4 and 2. She has moved 22 times since her ten-year-old was born, and lived in Bennington North Bennington, Rutland and Hoosick Falls, NY. The older boys say they can't remember all the apartments they've lived in, only those during the last two years.

Right now the family is living at a motel south of Bennington-- two adults and four kids in one room-- with just a microwave for cooking and a bathroom sink for washing dishes. Virginia's eight-year-old is staying with his father in another motel across town until she can find adequate housing.

This intrepid young mom has had more than her share of struggles: developmental disability that prevented her from completing school and securing work, domestic violence, evictions, homelessness, discrimination, lack of transportation, inconsistent medical attention, to name a few. We have known her since her first son was born and have had the opportunity to observe her as she has developed into a strong, devoted mother and advocate for her children. Her five sons have done well in school despite the many moves, and appear attached and intact. They are cordial, curious and respectful children, and it is apparent that they are their mother's first priority.

A Sunrise Family Advocate (Intensive Family Based Services provider), Carli Scribner, received a referral from DCF and started working with Virginia and her family in May of this year. Virginia and Carli set some short term goals, four of which have been achieved already:

1. Childcare for the two youngest boys: starting Head Start next week
2. Finding a primary care doctor for Virginia
3. Referral to therapy for the oldest boy
4. Meet with Family advocate more than once a week (they meet three or four times)
5. Therapist for Virginia - Carli has referred her to United Counseling Services to start when the boys start school.
6. Secure housing.



The more intransigent goal--to find permanent, affordable housing--- has eluded Virginia so far, but with the teamwork of Carli, and Rick Morse, Sunrise's Family Supportive Housing Coordinator, housing for the entire family may be in sight in the not too distant future. Currently Carli and Rick are advocating with local landlords to find a larger unit for Virginia and her family to move into. A long history of evictions due to domestic disturbances and failure to pay rent when she was with her children's father, has made it especially difficult for Virginia to find an apartment in Bennington. Looking to the future, Virginia said she has learned a few important lessons: never to reunite with her children's father who abused her and prevented her from paying rent; to always pay her rent on time; to avoid fights and conflict with neighbors; and to focus on cooking dinner, being home and helping the boys with homework and exploring outdoor activities.

About her work with Carli, Virginia said "She does everything with me. Like Melissa (her previous advocate) Carli is always there to help. She takes me grocery shopping; she comes to school meetings with me; she helped me get the kids into the dentist and pediatrician; she even plays with the kids. The kids really like her. I appreciate everything she's doing and feel blessed to have her help. I love Sunrise and would really like to work there someday and help people like me since you have all helped me so much."



PARENT CHILD CENTERS = RESULTS

The mission of the Vermont Parent Child Center Network is to provide children, youth and families with strength based, holistic and collaborative services across Vermont with a focus on early childhood education and prevention services. The Network provides leadership, support and advocacy on behalf of its membership and in collaboration with key partners to achieve the best outcomes for families.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The services Virginia received relate directly to outcomes that drive our decision making as a state under Act 186. *Virginia's story shows how supporting Vermont's Parent Child Centers moves us closer to achieving at least four of the eight quality of life outcomes we have identified as essential to our state and local communities.*

Sunrise Family Center provided high quality childcare for Virginia's two youngest children

Vermont's communities are safe and supportive
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported
Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including:
Children are ready for school

Sunrise Family Center helped Virginia and her children find a primary care doctor

Vermonters are healthy
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported
Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including:
Children are ready for school, Youths choose healthy behaviors

Sunrise Family Center provided a family advocate for Virginia

Vermonters are healthy
Vermont's communities are safe and supportive
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported

Sunrise Family Center helped Virginia stay out of an abusive relationship

Vermonters are healthy
Vermont's communities are safe and supportive
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported

Sunrise Family Center helped Virginia find a therapist

Vermonters are healthy
Vermont's communities are safe and supportive
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported

Sunrise Family Center is helping Virginia find housing

Vermonters are healthy
Vermont's communities are safe and supportive
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported
Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential, including: Pregnant women and young people thrive, Children are ready for school, Children succeed in school

The support Virginia received positively impacts at least 11 indicators tracked by the State of Vermont to measure positive population outcomes.

1. Number of adults who are homeless
2. Percent of adults with health insurance
3. Percent of children age 17 and younger with health insurance
4. Rate of petitions granted for relief from domestic abuse per 1,000 residents
5. Number and rate per 1,000 children of substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect
6. Number of children who are homeless
7. Number of families that are homeless
8. Number and rate per 1,000 children and youth of children and youth in out-of-home care
9. Percent of kindergarteners fully immunized with all five vaccines required for school
10. Percent of children ready for school in all five domains of healthy development
11. Percent of children receiving State subsidy enrolled in high quality early childhood programs that receive at least four out of five stars under State standards

ROI Statistics

Children in family foster care = \$8,130 (DCF – Family Services)

- The annual average cost per case is: \$8,130.
- The average across the entire custody population it is: \$26,402.

High Quality Child Care= 7 to 1 ROI:

- Child Care Financial Assistance payment of \$10,164 year results in a potential savings to the state of \$31,850 annually = \$7 "return to society" which is connected to lower special education costs, lower crime rate, higher earnings, better health behaviors, higher rates of employment

Homeless vs. Housing - \$20,250 (AHS – Housing Director)

- Providing an individual that is homeless shelter for a year costs \$27,594 vs \$7,344 for permanent housing. ROI=\$20,250
- Costs \$6,351 to house a family for 84 days through Economic Services

Related language from the PCC Master Grant: (Outcomes)

- C. iii. Parent Child Centers provide eight core services which contribute to Vermont population-level quality of life indicators identified in 3 V.S.A. § 2311
- (b) (5) Vermont families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported.
- (6) Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential.
- (A) Pregnant women and young people thrive.
- (B) Children are ready for school.
- (C) Children succeed in school.