

Family Resource Center

Program Overview & Impact



2019 in Review

The Family Resource Centers (FRCs), local support programs staffed by people from the community, strengthen and empower families by connecting them with needed services – services that help parents/caregivers and their children thrive and flourish. Established in 2015 in 18 locations across the state, the network has since expanded to 27 sites in 2020.

This executive summary provides a snapshot of the services and supports provided to families by the FRCs in 2019. In March 2020, as this executive summary was being written, a worldwide pandemic was unfolding. The FRCs became a vital lifeline for families during this crisis. Future FRC reports will address the critical role that they played during this time.



www.frcma.org

FRCs Fill a Vital Community Need

Many families come to an FRC during a crisis or needing help urgently. The FRCs work swiftly to evaluate the specific situation and figure out how best to help.

The FRCs help families access a wide range of resources, such as housing and employment supports as well as health and mental health services. They also provide school supports, assistance with childcare and transportation, and equipment, clothing, food, and other material supports to families.

FRC Programming and Supports include:

- Parenting skills workshops
- Self-help groups
- Grandparents groups
- Financial workshops
- Stress management workshops
- Education programs
- Family events and activities
- Playgroups and youth groups
- Arts, cultural, and sports events
- Help with accessing other services

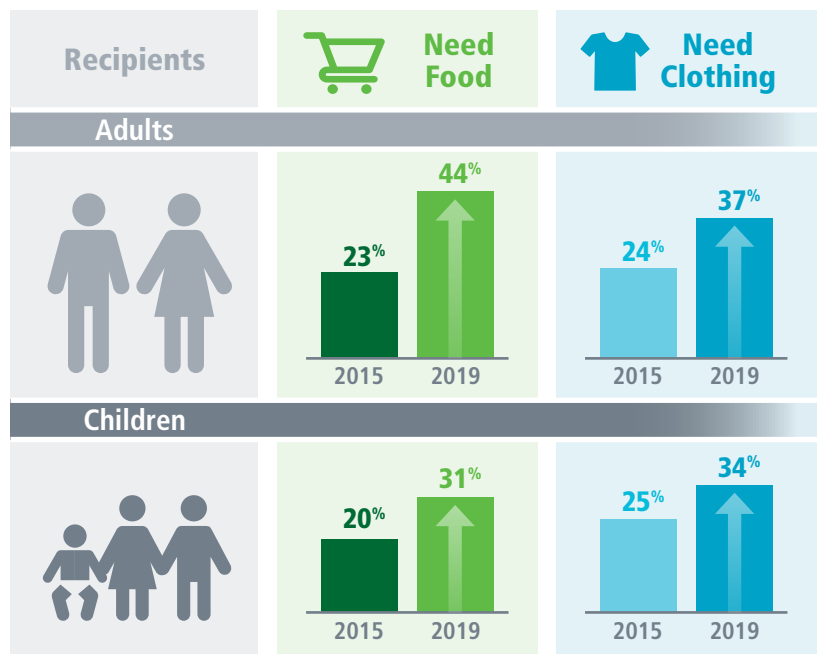


FRCs in Action in 2019

Many parents, caregivers, and families first hear about the FRCs and the help they offer from friends, neighbors, or other family members. Schools, health or mental health care providers, state agencies such as the Department of Children and Families, or human service organizations also provide referrals to FRCs.

The courts or probation office may also refer parents or caregivers who are experiencing challenges with their child's behavior. The FRC staff work closely with agencies and organizations at the state and local level to help educate the community about the services they provide.

Since 2015, the FRCs have witnessed a growing trend of adults and children experiencing homelessness and needing assistance with basic needs such as food and/or clothing.



For new families coming to the FRCs in 2019, 23% said they were seeking assistance with housing or rent, and 14% needed help with family hardship or financial concerns.

Testimonials

"(My daughter) is doing so well that I don't know what to do to reward her."
- A mother

"Our family has been in a long and painful journey, but it would be so much harder and painful without you."
- A parent

"Every person I have met with here has been great. No one judges. Everyone listens."
- A family

"Your feedback and expertise have been so important in understanding our son's needs and how we should change our parenting skills and support him."
- A parent

Who Used FRC Services in 2019

In 2019,* the 22 FRCs across the Commonwealth provided services to nearly 11,000 families, including over 8,000 new families.

About 63% of those served by FRCs are adults, while 37% are youth and children from ages 0 to 17.

Almost 70% of families were single-parent households; three-quarters of the adults using FRC services in 2019 were women and 65% were age 40 and under

Most adults who use the FRCs are parents

47% of the adults identified as Latinx, and nearly 25% said Spanish was their primary language

More than a third of the children using the FRCs receive school supports such as an IEP or a 504 plan

Many families struggle with basic needs for housing, food, transportation, and income

More than half of the adults and children using the FRCs are enrolled in MassHealth

More than a third of all adults and children experienced a disabling condition



**This data does not include information from two FRCs that came on board in late 2019. Their data will be included in the 2020 report.*



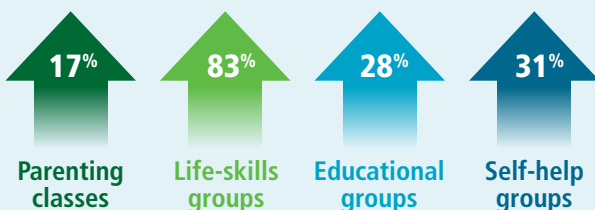
Outcomes

In 2019, pilot surveys were conducted to gather information on outcomes for parents and children receiving FRC services. Nearly 200 family members responded to the surveys.

- **70%** said the FRC helped with mental health counseling, and **87%** said their **mental health improved**
- **97%** said the FRC helped with parenting classes/support, and **95%** said their **parenting skills improved**
- **91%** said the FRC helped them with their child's behavior, and **83%** saw **improvement in child behavior**
- **91%** said they FRC helped when the child needed help with school, and **76%** saw **improvement on how the child is doing at school**

FRC Programming in 2019

Compared to 2018, 2019 saw an increase in family member attendance to parenting classes and life-skills, educational, and mutual self-help groups:



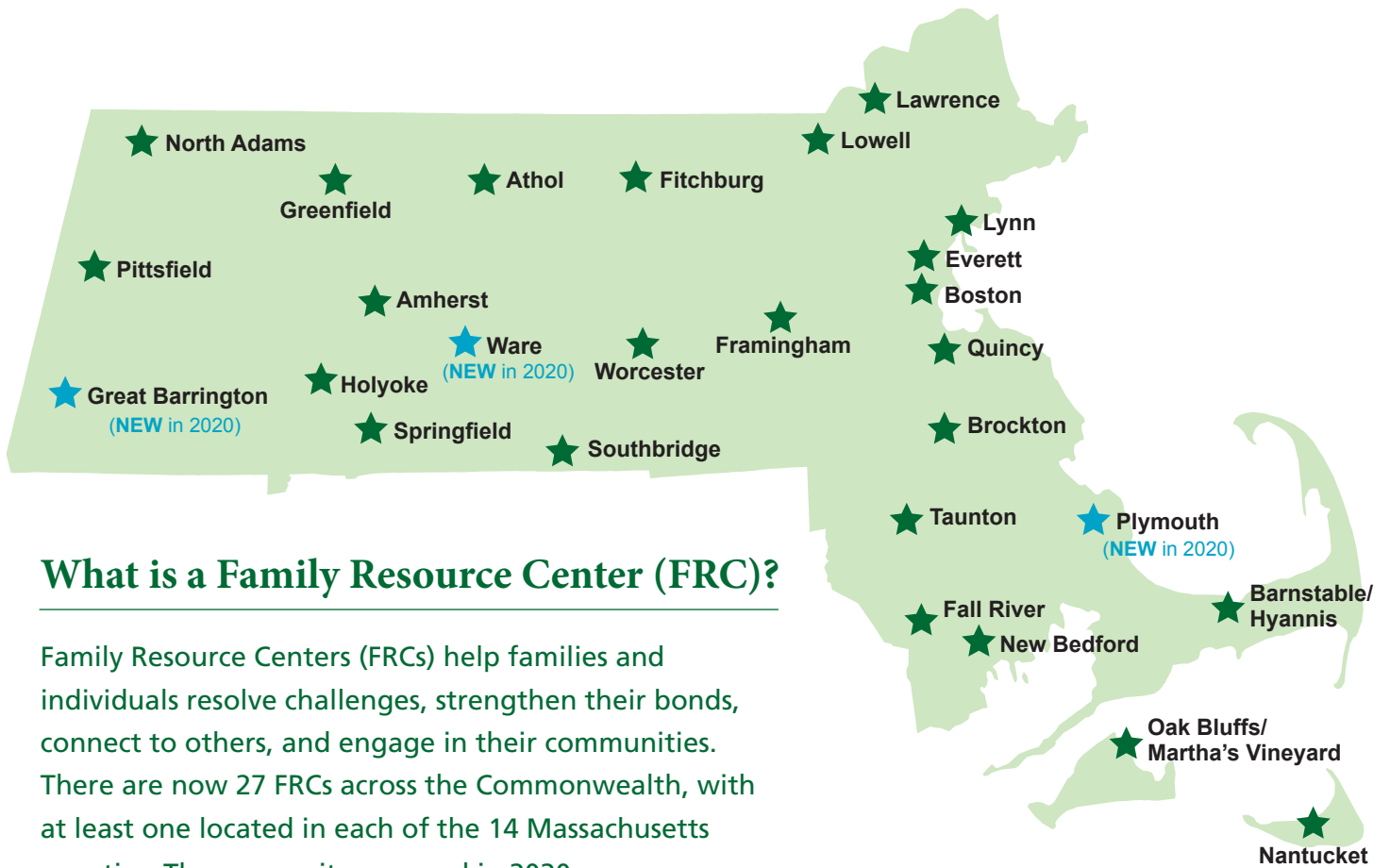
21,000+ adults and youth attended recreational activities and events



More than 10,000 adults and youth participated in clothing, food, and holiday drives



19% of adults were referred to the FRCs by family members and friends



What is a Family Resource Center (FRC)?

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) help families and individuals resolve challenges, strengthen their bonds, connect to others, and engage in their communities. There are now 27 FRCs across the Commonwealth, with at least one located in each of the 14 Massachusetts counties. Three new sites opened in 2020.

FRCs offer parenting programs, support groups, information and referral resources, assessment services, early childhood services and education programs for families whose children range in age from birth to 18 years old.

FRCs also have specific services for families with children who may be frequently absent or have serious problems at school, have serious problems at home, have run away from home, or are being exploited.

FRCs work with parents, children, teens, grandparents, guardians, caregivers, or any other family member or member of the community who may be involved with the family.

For more information on a particular FRC, including address, hours of operation, and services available, please visit www.frcma.org.



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