Autism Housing Pathways, Inc.
2016 Annual Report

Autism Housing Pathways completed several major initiatives this year that have improved the ability of families to create housing options, and educated a broad swath of policy makers and stakeholders about autism housing needs and models.

Outreach to families and individuals

In December, we premiered an educational video, "18? Section 8!", and a companion website, https://www.18section8.org/. The video explains the importance of signing up for housing vouchers as soon as an individual with a disability reaches 18, while the companion site walks families through the process of applying to both the Centralized Waiting List and the DHCD regional non-profit list. Illustrations of each step enable families to get past the difficulties that often stymie them in trying to understand how the process applies to their family member. The video has been viewed almost 300 times. For those who still need additional assistance, we have continued our Section 8 sign-up clinics. Clinics in Danvers and Framingham got over 20 individuals onto waiting lists.

We delivered our standard two hour introductory presentation, "Thinking about housing" to ten groups, including twice in other languages, working with translators. A webinar of the presentation in May capped an unusual April, in which we conveyed basic instruction about housing in daily Tweets, to mark Autism Month. The Tweets were later combined into a blog on our website. Another innovative foray was the development of an infographic of housing models used in Massachusetts. We also delivered presentations on other topics, including turning 18 (for the Federation for Children with Special Needs) and Section 8 (for Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change). AHP President Catherine Boyle spoke on "Autism and the built environment – using design to improve outcomes" at "Conquering the cliff", Bridgewell's conference on autism and adulthood.

Thanks to our Pathway to Innovative Housing grant from the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council, we were able to take 18 individuals and their families through a process comprising a daylong housing workshop for the families, housing workbooks for the individuals, and an intensive three session person-centered planning process. By the end of the process, more than 80% of participants had applied for a mobile Section 8 voucher through one or more waiting lists; 25% had applied for project-based Section 8, 25% had applied for other public housing; and more than 18% had applied for state elderly/disabled housing. Two individuals had obtained housing outside the family home. In addition to grant families, non-grant families also participated in three daylong housing workshops we hosted in Framingham, Sturbridge, and Danvers.

To better serve families, AHP President Catherine Boyle completed 30 hours of training in HUD's housing counselor curriculum, through the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, and three hours of training through the Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative.

Training of direct support staff

Funding from the Winchester Rotary Club enabled AHP to complete a set of basic visual supports for use by direct support staff. The supports cover more than a dozen self-care and household chores; examples include showering, shaving, and loading a dishwasher. They are available for download from the AHP website, with different price points for agency-wide site licenses, single group home licenses, and family use.

AHP continues to provide input to meetings of the Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers working group on autism training. We provided information about an online program out of Ohio, which is now being piloted by several agencies with funding from DDS.

Awareness

As part of the "Pathway to Innovative Housing" grant, we worked to educate families, other stakeholders, and the general public about the necessity and practicalities of creating alternative housing, and the elements necessary to facilitate such creation. Last year, in collaboration with AFAM and the Arc of Massachusetts, we developed a model zoning bylaw, which would make a two-bedroom accessory apartment for people with disabilities a by-right use in municipalities where it is adopted. We continued to present information about the bylaw this year, meeting or speaking with planning boards and planners in Winchester, Wellesley, Melrose, Needham, and Weston. An article highlighting these efforts, "Keeping Our Special Needs Children and Elderly Close", appeared in the Fall 2016 issue of Wellesley Weston Magazine. Coverage also appeared in the Wellesley Townsman.

Other media outreach about the situation facing adults with autism resulted in coverage in Greater Boston, Headlines for the Hopeful, and (on background) in the Boston Globe.

Development of new housing models

AHP continued to raise awareness of a bill filed by Sen. Barbara L'Italien that would allow owner-occupiers of single family properties to borrow funds from the state to partially fund accessory apartments of up to two bedrooms to create housing for the elderly and disabled. Loans would potentially be at 0% and deferrable for as long as property remained occupied by elderly or disabled residents. While the bill was approved by the Joint Committee on Housing, it died in the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. A new version of the bill is likely to be filed in the coming session.

AHP President Catherine Boyle's submission to the Autism Speaks House to Home competition garnered mention in the competition's executive summary as illustrating the theme of construction to meet unique needs. Her proposal, "Configurable Housing", described a dwelling comprised of a main unit, an au pair suite, and an accessory unit. The au pair suite could be inexpensively reconfigured to connect to either the main unit or the accessory unit.

Possibly the most exciting development at AHP this year was the organization of the MA Autism Housing Think Tank. This initiative was spearheaded by AHP, with assistance from The Arc of Massachusetts and Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts. Additional funding came from the Pathway to Innovative Housing grant, and from two leading service providers, Advocates and HMEA. The purpose of the think tank was to bring together stakeholders and change agents to brainstorm housing models. Participants included individuals, families, state service and housing agencies, service providers, developers, lenders, and architects. In preparation, AHP developed a dedicated website, https://www.mahousingthinktank.org/, to provide background information to think-tank participants and to the general public. Consensus housing principles were developed via a think tank Facebook page, and housing models were also crowd sourced via the page. The planning committee vetted models for consistency with the principles, and those that passed muster were provided to participants for assessment during the think tank. AHP, together with TechACCESS of Rhode Island also hosted a webinar on the use of technology to increase independence in the run-up to the think tank, inviting think tank participants, and archiving the webinar on the think tank website. On September 10th, over 50 participants assessed models for appropriateness for each of 12 hypothetical resident profiles. They also brainstormed ways to quantify the number of homeless individuals with autism in the Commonwealth, and to improve

access to the shelter system. Two breakout groups also discussed possible mechanisms for gaining approval of out-of-the-box housing models. A white paper summarizing the results of the think tank will be submitted to the housing committee of the Massachusetts Autism Commission.

Our goals for the coming year include:

- Producing a new training video for direct support staff on sensory regulation.
- Developing an online course for individuals on being a tenant.
- Creating a manual for a program (working title "SkillsGuides") that will focus on children and adults learning daily living skills. A recent study showed these skills are the key determinant of employment and happiness for adults with autism. Funding for this project has been provided by the Winchester Rotary Club.
- Conducting 4 day-long housing workshops, and 8-12 introductory presentations.
- Hosting a webinar for transition professionals on assisting youth with applying for housing vouchers and subsidized housing.
- Launching fee-for-service consulting to families.

Board of Directors

Teresa Anderson	Burlington
Gyasi Burks-Abbott	Bedford
Alicia Hintlian	Winchester
Charlotte Nunez	Arlington

Officers

President:	Catherine Boyle Winchester
Vice-President	Cheryl Ryan Chan Auburn
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Secretary	Kevin Boyle Winchester

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Financial Reporting

September 30, 2016

Balance Sheet

		09/30/15		09/30/16
Assets				
Cash Assets				
Bank Accounts	$ 47,624		$ 31,960	
Paypal	1,018		582	
		48,642		32,542
Accounts Receivable		4,182		-
Total Assets		$ 52,824		$ 32,542
Liabilitities				
Account Payable		$ 3,278		$ 791
Total Liabilities		3,278		791
Beginning Equity	35,094		49,547	
Net Revenue/(Expenses)	14,452		(17,795)	
Equity		$ 49,547		$ 31,751
Total Liabilities & Equity		$ 52,824		$ 32,542
		-		-

Financial Reporting

September 30, 2016

Revenues and Expenses

	09/30/15		09/30/16	
Revenue				
Donations & Matching Gifts	$ 7,354		$ 11,471	
In-Kind Donations	750		-	
Grants	26,182		20,818	
Interest Income	15		12	
Membership	3,741		3,241	
Misc	241		390	
Other Fundraising	17,525		9,115	
Total Revenue		**$ 55,807**		**$ 45,047**
Expenses				
Programs:				
Advocacy	$ 2,391		$ 3,245	
Family Training	25,898		45,696	
Direct Care Professional Development	3,507		2,797	
Outreach	2,889		2,945	
Research	203		356	
Total Programs:		34,889		55,039
Fundraising		2,093		3,081
Administrative				
Accounting	-		-	
Grant Administration	1,776		-	
Gov't Filing Fees	-		19	
Insurance			1,230	
Professional Services	19		395	
Lobbying	710		258	
Mailing	28		2	
Salary & Related	-		1,781	
Supplies & Copies	160		158	
Training	2,147		729	
Travel	77		166	
Miscellaneous	1,231		(15)	
Total Administrative		4,373		4,721
Total Expenses		**$ 41,355**		**$ 62,842**
Net Revenue / (Expenses)		**$ 14,452**		**$ (17,795)**