

Family Resource Center

Program Overview & Impact



September 2018

The FRCs provide parenting education classes; support groups for youth, parents, and grandparents; information and referral to a range of community services; school supports; cultural, recreational and social events; and other services. This overview provides 2017 highlights from the program.

Launched in 2015, Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are community support programs working to strengthen families so that parents and their children can thrive and succeed. With 22 locations across the Commonwealth, the FRCs are staffed by people from the community who help parents and children connect to needed services. FRCs have served over 43,000 family members since opening.



www.frcma.org

FRCs Fill a Vital Community Need

Many families come to an FRC at a time of crisis or with immediate needs. The FRCs work to quickly understand the specific situation and determine how best to help.

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

Programming offered by the FRCs include:

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



FRCs in Action in 2017

Many families first hear about the FRCs and how they can help 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.

Parents who may be challenged by their child’s behavior may be referred by the courts or probation office. The FRC staff work closely with many agencies and organizations to help educate the community about the services they provide.

“You guys are so good. The guy that helped me was awesome. He was so patient and kind with my son and me. He treated us like we were his family. I am hoping to get more services from you guys in the future.”

– FRC Parent

“... I am very grateful for the FRC. When I didn't have food, they have supported me with food. When I was in need of clothing they supported me with clothing. My husband, myself, and my 4 children are very grateful for this program and the services that they offer.”

– FRC Parent

Who Used FRC Services in 2017

In 2017, the 22 FRCs across the Commonwealth provided services to almost 18,000 families, including over 9,000 new families.

About 60% of those served by FRCs are adults, while 40% are youth and children from ages 0 to 18.

Most adults who use the FRCs are parents

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

A majority of adults and children using the FRCs are enrolled in MassHealth

About 30% of parents and children represent racial minorities and about 40% of parents and children are Latino or Hispanic



Most parents using the FRCs are single mothers under the age of 40

Over 1/3 of children using the FRCs receive schools supports such as an IEP or a 504 plan

Disability is common; about 1/3 of adults and children using the FRCs have some type of disabling condition



Special Initiative: The FRCs Respond to Hurricane Maria

In 2017, the FRCs provided assistance with housing and other needs to 1,580 families from Puerto Rico who were displaced by Hurricane Maria. This is José’s story.

As a result of water damage, José and his family left Puerto Rico in December 2017 and relocated to Holyoke. José, his wife, and two daughters reached out to the Holyoke FRC after friends referred them.

The FRC helped them apply for emergency food stamps, MassHealth, and other benefits. The staff helped José connect with the Social Security Administration to transfer his disability benefits. The FRC also provided the family with food, and gave the kids winter clothes, coats, and toys. The staff is helping them in the search for permanent housing, and have also sourced furnishings for an apartment, such as beds and sofas.

José has become an advocate for the FRC, sharing information on the services available with other evacuees. He said their experience with the staff has been marvelous, particularly the program director, and has no regrets about coming there to get services.

Testimonials

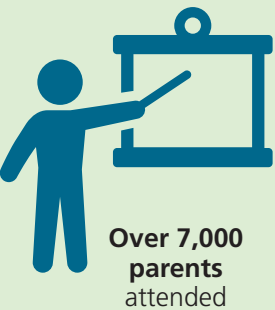
The FRCs “offer very good services to the community and are an advocate for strengthening families.” – FRC Parent

“I have no problem getting to classes, it has been very helpful the fact that they give us bus passes to get to the class.” – FRC Parent

FRC Programming in 2017

Adults, youth and children attended or participated in:

Evidence-based parenting classes



Life skills workshops



Self-help groups

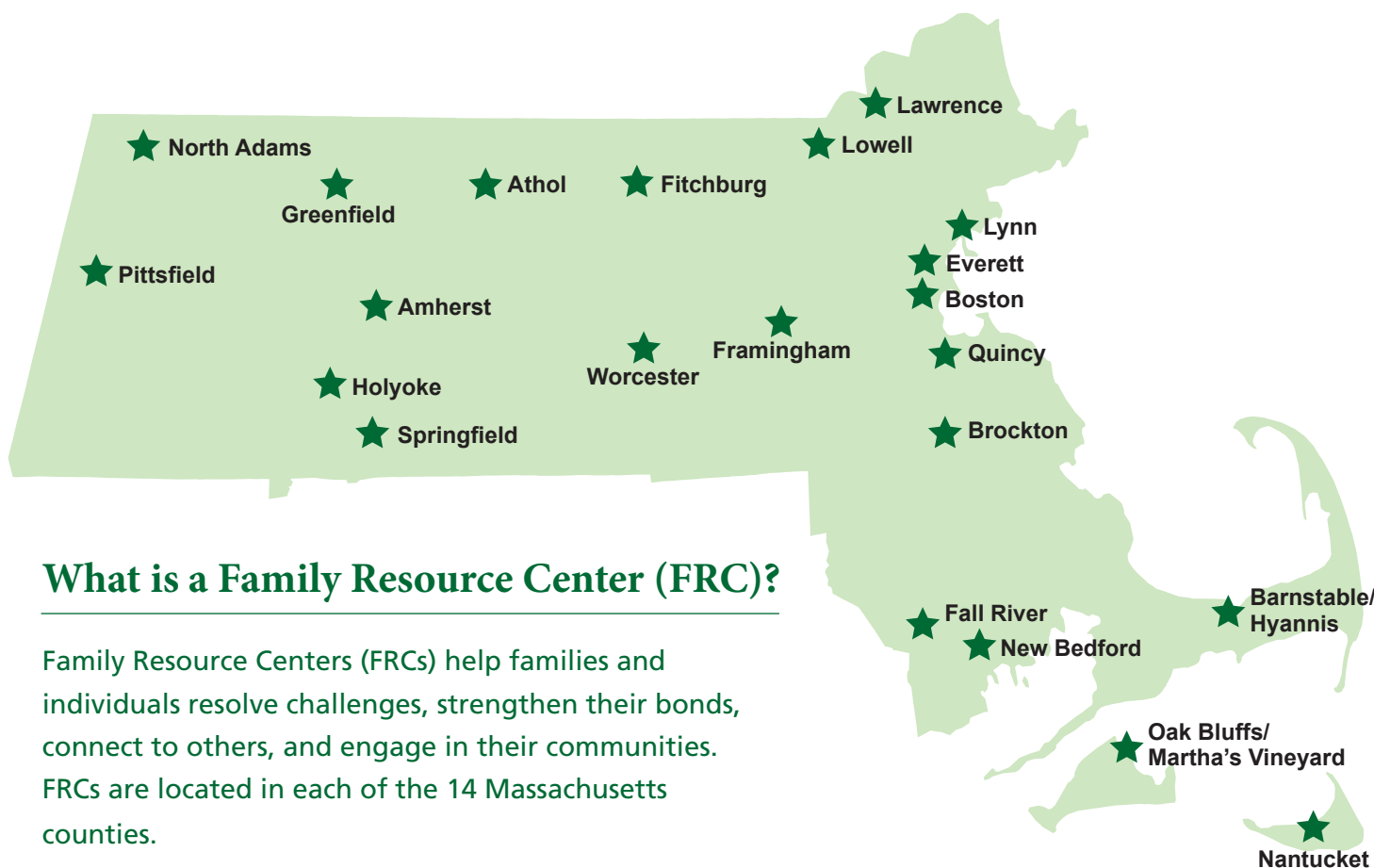


Education groups



Recreational and social events





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. FRCs are located in each of the 14 Massachusetts counties.

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 regarding services available at a particular FRC, please contact the FRC directly. Contact information for FRCs can be found at www.frcma.org