Mission

The Federation for Children with Special Needs provides information, support, and assistance to parents of children with disabilities, their professional partners, and their communities. We are committed to listening to and learning from families, and encouraging full participation in community life by all people, especially those with disabilities.

The Federation believes that individual differences in people are a natural part of life, and that disabilities provide children and adults with unique perspectives, insights and abilities which contribute to the overall well-being of society.

The Federation values children as the hope for the evolving improvement of humankind, and places great value on the family as a caring protector of children’s vulnerability, as well as a catalyst for their healthy growth and development.

The Federation places a tremendous value on parents because of the contributions they make as the leaders of families toward supporting the health, education, and development of their children at home and in society.

The Federation promotes the active and informed participation of parents of children with disabilities in shaping, implementing, and evaluating public policy that affects them.

The Federation believes in the power of parents helping parents and has infused a proven model of peer support throughout all its work.

*Most Federation staff members are parents or family members of children with disabilities and people with disabilities.*
Dear Friends ........................................................................................................7

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Dear Friends,

Forty years ago, the Federation for Children with Special Needs was founded by parents of children with disabilities who gathered at a kitchen table to develop successful strategies to ensure the full participation of their children in society. Their efforts along with many others resulted in the first comprehensive special education law in the country, known as Massachusetts Chapter 766, a forerunner to the federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It was the fall of 1974 when the Federation was formally organized out of a coalition of parent advocacy groups representing different disability types.

This year, we celebrate the Federation as a vital resource for the more than 40,000 families and professionals we serve annually. The Federation houses 15 major projects, receives 16,000 phone calls and emails from parents seeking assistance, and conducts 600 workshops for over 9,000 parents and professionals at 100 locations throughout Massachusetts each year. Over 30,000 families and professionals receive the Federation’s newsletter, and the Federation’s annual Conference is attended by over 900 families and professionals. The Federation remains committed to listening to and learning from families, and encouraging full participation in community life by all people, especially those with disabilities.

As we celebrate our 40th anniversary this year, we are proud of our many initiatives, and know that through those initiatives, we continue to change the world and change the lives of children with special needs, one family at a time. As we look to the future, we know that together we must continue to empower families to do great things for their children with special needs, and we must remain vigilant – never taking the rights of our children for granted.

Whether you are a longtime supporter of the Federation, or new to our organization, we extend a special thank you for being a part of our work. Your generous support enables the Federation to continue to make an important difference in the lives of children with special needs. You encourage us to keep on going forward.

Richard J. Robison  
Executive Director

James Whalen  
Board President
Special Education Center

Projects include: the Parent Training and Information Center, which under the Individuals with Disability Education Act, provides free information, support, technical assistance and workshops to Massachusetts families of children with disabilities and the professionals who work with them; the LINK Center/PTIC Transition, which serves individuals with disabilities and their families in meeting the transition needs of individuals with disabilities – including postsecondary education, vocational and independent living and rehabilitation needs. The LINK Center works with the Parent Training and Information Center to bring together state and community partners to provide individuals and their families much needed information about transition, vocational rehabilitation, independent living and other adult services; the Community Outreach and Empowerment Project, which seeks to increase assistance and support to families of children with special needs whose ability to access education and healthcare information and services is complicated by race, class, language, and/or poverty; the Parent Consultant Training Institute, an eight-week intensive training offering an opportunity for Massachusetts parents and professionals to learn more about state and federal Special Education laws and process.

Family Support Center

Projects include: Family TIES of MA, a parent to parent support, information and referral project, funded by the MA Department of Public Health which provides information, referrals, and parent to parent matching to families who have children with special health care needs or disabilities, through six regional Department of Public Health offices; MassCARE, which provides support to women, children, adolescents and young adults infected/affected by HIV/AIDS; Project Launch/ My Child, which provides clinical, diagnostic, prevention and coordination services for children and families living in Boston, with a focus on early childhood mental health issues; Pathways for Parents, which in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides “peer to peer” support and advocacy to parents who have serious mental health challenges and complex DCF cases with child custody concerns.
Health Advocacy Center

Projects include: **Mass Family Voices**, the MA chapter of a national network speaking on behalf of children with special health care needs, which builds capacity for family partnerships and supports partnership activities between managed care organizations and parents around improved access to services and supports for families of children with special health care needs; the **Family-to-Family Health Information Center**, which offers health care information and support to families of children with special needs as they negotiate various systems to enable their children to live in the community and become active participants in the decision making process; Mass Family Voices collaborates with Massachusetts’ Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) Quality Demonstration Grant partners in developing and enhancing authentic family-professional partnerships through participation in the Children’s Health Quality Coalition and the National Initiative for Children’s Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) medical home initiative.

Family and Community Engagement Center

Projects include: the **Family and Community Engagement Team**, which offers education improvement services to districts and schools in Massachusetts, partnering with districts and schools to improve student achievement and school performance through strengthening family and community engagement policies, designing strategies for enhanced family and community engagement and implementing activities directly with families, teachers, administrators, community members and other stakeholders; the **Recruitment Training and Support Center for Special Education Surrogate Parents** ensures that students whose parents are unavailable to participate in educational decision making processes are provided with a “surrogate parent” for educational decision making. The Family and Community Engagement Center also provides training and technical assistance on family engagement to school districts as a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved **Title 1 Support Partner** and **District/School Assistance Provider**.
Parent-Professional Leadership Center

Projects include: the Massachusetts Association of Special Education Parent Advisory Councils, a statewide project which provides information, training, and networking opportunities to special education parent advisory councils; Advancing Parent-Professional Leadership in Education provides a collaborative training model to ensure the participation of parents in systemic efforts to improve educational outcomes for children with disabilities; MASS FOCUS Academy provides professional development, training, technical assistance and knowledge dissemination of evidenced-based practices that improve post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities; The Partnership Project, which is a collaboration with MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other community partners to expand professional development of educators and develop model sites to support the development of tiered systems of supports that will improve outcomes for all students.

The Federation is making a difference in the lives of families! Our impact annually:

- Provides resources to 45,000 families in Massachusetts
- Responds to over 16,000 phone calls and emails
- More than 600 training workshops to 8,000 families and 1,000 professionals at 100 locations
- Provides information to over 7,000 families at resource fairs
- Publishes a quarterly Newsline distributed to more than 30,000 parents and professionals
- Maintains www.fcsn.org, with more than 1,500,000 visitors per year
- Connects with nearly 6,000 families and professionals through social media
Visions of Community 2014

Keynote speakers were Michael Yudin, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) at the Department of Education, and Executive Director of Parent to Parent Virginia, Dana Yarbrough, and her daughter Brooke.

Assistant Secretary Yudin’s address focused on fostering high expectations for students with disabilities. He highlighted the core OSERS values of Inclusion, Equity, and Opportunity.

Using a PowerPoint presentation and assistive iPad technology, Dana and Brooke Yarbrough urged parents to raise their expectations and create a vision for their child.

Visions of Community 2014 Stats

- Over 900 attendees
- Over 70 Exhibitors
- Over 40 workshops including 3 each in Cantonese, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese. Over a dozen more were interpreted in Cantonese, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
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Boston Food Tours
Boston Harbor Hotel
Boston Marriott Hotel Copley Place
Boston Restaurant Associates, Inc.
Brockton Rox
Cafe Mangal
Carle Museum Of Picture Book Art
John Carson and Judith Graves
Celebrities For Charity Foundation, Inc.
Charles River Canoe and Kayak
Children’s Museum & Theatre Of Maine
ChopChop Magazine
Clayroom
Ashley Coates
| Ed and Allyson DeNoble                  | Museum of Science          | The Body Shop              |
| Marian Dioguardi                        | Mystic Seaport              | The Charles Hotel          |
| Doubletree By Hilton                    | MZ Skin Care                | The Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation |
| Eureka! Puzzles                         | Nashoba Valley Winery       | The Fireplace Restaurant   |
| FEI Theatres                            | New England Aquarium        | The Improper Bostonian     |
| Felicia’s Restaurant                    | New England Mobile Book Fair| The Institute Of Contemporary Art |
| Flatbread Company                       | New Repertory Theatre       | The Irving House At Harvard|
| Flour Bakery & Cafe                     | Newport Marriott Resort & Spa| The Land Of Witches & Pirates|
| Jack and Robin Foley                    | North End Fish Market       | The Paint Bar              |
| Formaggio Kitchen                       | North Shore Music Theatre   | The Pear Tree Of Brookline |
| Frito-Lay                               | One 2 One Bodyscapes        | The Preservation Society of Newport County |
| Giant Sports Associates                 | Otterbox                    | The Rattlesnake Bar and Grill |
| Glenn’s Restaurant & Cool Bar           | Palace Playland             | The Sports Museum          |
| Grafton Group                           | Peabody Essex Museum        | Todd English Enterprises   |
| Tom and Jane Hamel                      | Angela Peri                 | Unilever                   |
| Gwen Healey                             | Plimoth Plantation          | Utz                        |
| Highland Kitchen                        | Portland Harbor Hotel       | Wachusett Mountain         |
| Huntington Theatre Company              | Providence Children’s Museum| Westport Rivers, Inc.      |
| Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum         | Puppet Showplace Theatre    | James and Diane Whalen     |
| J.P. Licks                              | Pure Barre Brookline        | Wheelock Family Theater    |
| JessiArts                               | Pure Hockey                 | White Mountain Creamery    |
| Jillian’s Billiard Club                 | Purple Umbrella Jewelry     | Whole Foods                |
| John F. Kennedy Library and Museum      | Rebecca Rizoli              | Wild Goose Chase           |
| Kings- Lanes Lounge & Sports            | Rockport Music              | Chris Wisdo                |
| Labelle Winery                          | Rosa Mexicano               | Zaftig’s Delicatessen      |
| Mahoney’s Garden Center                 | Sadhana Yoga                | Martha Ziegler             |
| Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad             | Salvatore’s                 | Zoo New England            |
| Marathon Sports                         | Sandra Rae Design           |                           |
| Mass Audubon                            | Patricia and Robert Schram  |                           |
| Mass MoCA                               | Shake Shack                 |                           |
| Massachusetts Bay Lines                 | Sheraton Boston Hotel       |                           |
| Metropolis Cafe                         | Sky Zone Indoor Trampoline Park|                           |
| Millennium Nails                        | Sterling Golf Management    |                           |
| MindWings                               | Stevenson, Gordon and Mary  |                           |
| Mint Julep                              | Sunny Delight               |                           |
| Morning Silver Gallery                  | Kelly Tetrault              |                           |
| Moves and Vibes Dance Company           |                            |                           |

We have made every effort to include all donors for FY14 in this report. If any errors have been made, please let us know so that we can correctly acknowledge your gift.
INCOME AND EXPENSE CHARTS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED OCTOBER 31, 2014 AND 2013

State Grants & Contracts ....................... $2,083,867
Federal Direct Grants & Contracts ........... $506,302
Program/Conf. Fees ........................... $193,823
Fundraising (Private) ......................... $387,831
Total Income .................................... $3,171,823
Program Expenses ...................................... $2,435,746
G & A Expenses ...................................... $485,692
Development Expenses ............................ $140,670
Total ..................................................... $3,062,108

This financial information is derived from audited financial statements. Copies of audited financial statements are available upon request.
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Miryam Wiley

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William Henderson, Ed.D. Director

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Associate Executive Director - Programs
John Sullivan
Associate Executive Director - Technology and Operations
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Director of Development

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