

# THE FAMILY ADVOCATE

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAMILY SERVICE LEAGUE

## FSL IS THE HEART OF YOUR COMMUNITY



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**Celebrating 2022 together!**

**Summer Cocktail Party**

Bourne Mansion

Thursday, June 16th at 6pm

Corporate Leadership Honoree - Gallagher

Kick-off the summer season at this fabulous waterfront estate while enjoying great food, entertainment, and auction for a very worthy cause - helping your neighbors in need!

**4th Annual Walk for Wellness**

Belmont Lake State Park

Saturday, September 10th at 9:30am

**Great Chefs of Long Island**

Crest Hollow Country Club

Monday, November 14th at 6pm

Your support of FSL events helps provide funding for the 60+ vital programs that thousands of Long Island children and adults depend on every day.

Scan the code for event details!  
jchenkin@fsl-li.org  
631-470-6770



WWW.FSL-LI.ORG

# Message From Our President & CEO



Living through this pandemic has been a challenging time for everyone. Thousands of people continue to struggle emotionally and financially, in desperate need of both quality care and compassion. As a leading non-profit human service organization, I'm proud that Family Service League (FSL), has not wavered in our mission. We consistently answer the needs of those most vulnerable by our ability to adapt and evolve.

FSL's services, counseling, and group therapy, as well as our DASH 24/7 crisis center & hotline are true lifelines for children and adults. In this issue, you will learn about new partnerships, expanded programs, advocacy work, and initiatives we've created. All of which are designed to empower individuals and strengthen us as a community.

I'm pleased to share that plans are underway for three special events. The first, a Summer Cocktail Celebration on Thursday, June 16th at the picturesque Bourne Mansion. This will be followed by our 4th Annual Walk for Wellness, and we will be rounding out the year with the much anticipated return of the Great Chefs of Long Island tasting event. I hope you consider joining old friends and new, as we raise funds for the vital programming people depend on every day. Your support enables us to help thousands of Long Island families.

Together, with your help, we are Restoring Hope and Rebuilding Lives in communities across Long Island. We welcome individuals, businesses, and civic organizations to become involved in our mission. Reach out and learn more by contacting me at [restorehope@fsl-li.org](mailto:restorehope@fsl-li.org) or 631-470-6770.

As always, my deepest appreciation to all who have given of themselves to support our neighbors in need. Please take a moment to follow us on social media and read our weekly eNews for the latest happenings. Be well!

Sincerely,

Karen Boorshtein, LCSW  
President & CEO

Family Service League's Board of Directors, a distinguished group of volunteers, share our mission to help our neighbors who need it most.

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## **Recognitions of Note**

- **Candid's GuideStar Platinum Rating**
- **Charity Navigator**
- **Empire Whole Health Hero's Award from  
Crain's New York Business**
- **Long Island Business News Top 50 Women in Business  
(awarded to Karen Boorshtein)**
- **Top Workplace Long Island Press & Dan's Paper**
- **Top Workplace USA Award - Energage**

These recognitions are even more meaningful this year as the pandemic has brought new challenges and difficulties to all organizations. In response to the health emergency and outcry for help, FSL's dedicated staff of 600+ worked together to adapt and develop various new models for providing care and support activities while vigilantly following suggested public health guidelines and protocols. The FSL team, regardless of the situation or circumstances, remains committed to providing vital programs that children and adults depend on every day. This type of professionalism, peer respect, and commitment can only thrive in a positive work environment, and we are honored to be recognized with these awards.

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## **Continue Your Education and Enhance Your Skills**

FSL is one of Long Island's largest accredited human services agencies and our Continuing Education Courses offer quality curriculum that focus on issues impacting our communities today. These courses are facilitated by professionals with experience in highly specialized areas. FSL is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work (0360) and Mental Health Counselors (MHC-0030). For information and the 2022 schedule of classes contact Robyn Berger-Gaston at [rberger-gaston@fsl-li.org](mailto:rberger-gaston@fsl-li.org) or 631-591-7580.

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## **Are you 50+ years old and looking to build your knowledge of today's technology? SeniorNet's courses are designed for YOU!**

All courses are designed for beginner through advanced students. Topics include Introduction to Streaming Video, Smartphone Photography, Microsoft Outlook, Google Docs, and so much more. For information visit [fslseniornet@fsl-li.org](mailto:fslseniornet@fsl-li.org) or call 631-470-6757.



# FSL's Unique Pilot Project is Having a Positive Impact on Long Island Residents



*"This project is a four-way winner. It frees up police resources for other emergencies, provides prompt professional assistance for people in crisis, reduces an unnecessary load on emergency rooms, and responds to cries from the community for mental health/police collaboration. The feedback has been extremely positive."*

**Chief Steven Skrynecki**  
*Southampton Police Department*

Family Service League is collaborating with the Suffolk County Police, Southampton Police, and other village law enforcement departments as part of the important broader national movement of Police Reform.

Our three faceted project exemplifies a model of cooperation between a community behavioral health organization and law enforcement that previously did not exist in Suffolk County. This initiative aligns our efforts with an unmet need and seeks to ensure that those suffering from a mental health or substance use issue receive the right intervention, by the right professional at the right time.

The first facet is the 911 Diversion pilot where 911 calls received from individuals who have a behavioral health crisis are successfully transferred to and handled by FSL's 24/7 crisis center hotline. The second facet is working with individuals who have a disproportionately larger number of interactions with law enforcement over a time period that may appear to be related to behavioral health. Our goal is to reduce the amount of contact these individuals have with the police and instead attempt to meet their needs with our crisis intervention staff. The third facet involves utilizing Telehealth in the field. When police respond to a mental health or substance

use call, and the officer requests our assistance, FSL's highly trained crisis staff will triage and assess each individual virtually, then determine best course of action for that individual.

Our hope is to have this model become the norm for communities across the country. The interventions and interactions that officers and the FSL team encounter

have both immediate and long term positive effects for the individuals and their loved ones. Working together with law enforcement, we are answering the needs of our community.



There are many underserved communities across Long Island and our role as a safety-net human service agency is a critical resource for children, families, and seniors. FSL's work in the community has given us the insight into the challenges of mental health crises and addiction disorders. Both are issues that know no socio-economic barrier and these epidemics are destroying lives. Our nimbleness and commitment as an agency, combined with the passion and vision of our staff, allow us to achieve remarkable things.

While it's not easy to find new paths, the positive outcomes of innovative programs and care models are leading the way for people to find treatment and begin their journey to a healthier life.

**If you or a loved one  
are struggling to cope,  
contact the 24-hour DASH  
Crisis Center & Hotline  
at 631-952-3333**

FSL's Diagnostic, Assessment, and Stabilization Hub (DASH) is a 24 hour crisis care center which provides vital and immediate care to Suffolk County residents. The DASH team works with individuals fraught with suicidal thoughts, severe depression, anxiety, overwhelming stress, drug or alcohol abuse, erratic behavior, extreme family or interpersonal conflicts, and workplace or school trauma. Some of life's struggles cannot be faced alone – DASH provides immediate help.

From the opening in March 2019 until January 2022, there has been a quantifiable impact:

- **11,800** children and adults have been assessed, treated, or provided with support.
- The DASH hotline has received over **41,000** calls from those in distress.
- The Mobile Crisis Team component of DASH delivers much needed crisis care and has assessed over **2,800** individuals by responding to locations throughout the community such as schools, businesses, and private residences.

FSL has worked with the New York State Office of Mental Health and Suffolk County Division of Community Mental Hygiene in conjunction with grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration on this plan.

## Suicide Prevention Active Response

We are pleased to share news of a timely and much needed resource for Suffolk County's most vulnerable community members. The primary purpose of Suicide Prevention Active Response (SPAR) is to provide emergency support for people 25+ years old who are at increased risk of suicide and who recently received treatment by participating hospital emergency departments and psychiatric units. Essentially, FSL social workers are a safety-net and bridge the gap during susceptible transition periods in a patient's care, while also lowering the risk of suicide by adding another layer of support for those in crisis.

One of the unique aspects of this program is having FSL's DASH Mobile Crisis Teams (MCT) contact clients within 24-hours of discharge to help assess, monitor, and support them during this vulnerable period between leaving the hospital and beginning treatment at FSL's Mental Health Clinics in Bay Shore, Central Islip, or Huntington. The other important aspect is the enhanced assessment of Domestic Violence issues with expedited linkage to partnering agencies. The goal is to help people and their families, obtain the support, counseling, and ongoing care they need to make a positive impact on their lives. FSL is also increasing access to clinical training and continuing education for the staff of our partnering community care providers.

Over the years, FSL has developed well-established working relationships with hospital clinicians so strong referral pathways are in place to ensure the success of this important project. SPAR is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as part of the Emergency Grants to Address Mental and Substance Use Disorders During COVID-19. The \$800,000 grant runs 18 months through December 2022. For information contact Michelle Tighe at [michelle.tighe@fsl-li.org](mailto:michelle.tighe@fsl-li.org) or 631-924-3741.



*"It's important for people to know there is help and hope and we offer that through the SPAR program. The Social workers and Mental health counselors working on this program are amazing as they engage these clients early on through warm handoffs between hospitals and the clinics, home visits and outreach calls. It's really inspiring to be a part of that and I'm hoping this is the first of many programs that can help our communities as we all begin to recover from the effects of the pandemic."*

**Michelle Tighe, LCSW**  
Director of SPAR



# Combating the Negative Impact the Pandemic Has Had on Children

Childhood should be fun and care-free, but for many children this isn't the case. Homelessness, food insecurity, and anxiety, as well as coping with loved ones battling addiction or mental illness takes a toll. While COVID has made life more complicated for all of us, it has had an overwhelming impact on children.

The multi-service care facilities, FSL's Family Centers, are located in Bay Shore, Huntington Station, Mastic Beach, and Riverhead. Each center has a Community Advocacy Information and Referral (CAIR) team which together provide support to nearly 10,000 individuals and families. Many of the staff are bi-lingual and additional translation services are available as needed.

## CAIR services include:

- **Advocacy:** Assistance with applications for life-altering services such as Social Services.
- **Information and Referral:** Linkages to resources such as health insurance, diaper programs, dental emergencies, and local food pantries.
- **Youth Services:** Children and teens are provided with opportunities that are both recreational and educational. Book giveaways, family fun nights, arts & crafts, police precinct tours, reading activities, nutrition classes, bowling, as well as educational outreach with local school districts are among the activities available. Every year, the staff take on the monumental task of organizing and soliciting for two annual drives - Backpack Program and Project TOY.
- **Workplus:** Assists people, currently in low income wage jobs, develop new skills through computer training, ESL classes, job assistance, assistance with applying for unemployment benefits, and resume writing.
- **Counseling & Crisis Intervention.** Social workers offer short-term counseling for individuals, couples, and families.



*"Wow! What a grand benefit to the Huntington township. At the new location we are able to expand our offer of available resources to better meet the needs of a diverse and changing community."*

**Penny-Ann Antonio, LMSW**  
Program Director  
Huntington Family Center

## Pleased to announce a change of location...

To better serve the needs of the children, families, and seniors living in the Greater Huntington community we've moved to 1264 New York Avenue, Huntington Station. The Huntington Family Center, formerly Manor Field, is a critical resource for the 3,500 children and adults who utilize these services. For information contact Penny Antonio at [PAntonio@fsl-li.org](mailto:PAntonio@fsl-li.org) or 631-425-9694.

Our thanks to Susan and Chris Lockwood, Health and Welfare Council, Huntington Youth Bureau, Town of Huntington Community Development Agency, Suffolk County Department of Labor, Suffolk County Department of Social Services, and Suffolk County Youth Bureau for their support of this initiative.

## Thousands of Backpacks and Toys for Children

We are able to provide thousands of children with backpacks, gifts, and summer camp experiences because of the generosity of our community friends. Our thanks to those who have committed their assistance to brightening a child's life. Learn how you, your company, civic organization can lend a helping hand anytime throughout the year by contacting Jonathan Chenkin at [jchenkin@fsl-li.org](mailto:jchenkin@fsl-li.org) or 631-470-6770.

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# FSL's Network of Family Shelters and HIHI Program Offers Hope



*"Our volunteers and donors are amazing. They have joined in FSL's commitment to rebuilding the lives of those among us who struggle with housing and finding safety, both emotionally and physically. Together, we are providing a critical community resource."*

**Peggy Boyd**

*Vice President of Community Services Advocacy*

The importance of safety and stability for children facing homelessness cannot be overstated. The negative impact this type of trauma has on their social, physical, and educational growth has been compounded by the difficulties of COVID. **FSL's Network of Family Shelters** houses children ranging in age from infancy to 18 years old and we are dedicated to working to support families facing this stigma and trauma. FSL case managers and housing workers form teams which are committed to working with each family to ensure that they have access to counseling, healthcare, education, and most critically, the availability of food. Additional services such as homework help, education, and recreational opportunities, foster a caring environment. This model helps facilitate the family's well-being and the ultimate goal of transition into affordable permanent housing.

**The Huntington Interfaith Homeless Initiative (HIHI)** is a unique partnership between 28 congregations and FSL. Everyone working together to provide a much needed basic human service for those in our community who are suffering with chronic homelessness. Under the supervision of Peggy Boyd, HIHI has been able to ensure that those most vulnerable have a warm, safe place to stay during the coldest winter nights. The trained volunteers come from various faiths, share efforts toward the common goal of providing food, shelter, clothing, and some medical needs, to those who are otherwise overlooked and often shunned by our society.

If you would like to lend your support to fight homelessness with a gift of funding or in-kind donations, please contact Peggy Boyd at [pboyd@fsl-li.org](mailto:pboyd@fsl-li.org).

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## Volunteers Lending a Helping Hand to Neighbors in Need

**The Starbuck's Team** from 12 Suffolk County stores provided volunteer hours, collected gifts for the children residing in the shelters, and donated a \$5,000 Neighborhood Grant. The award will be utilized to help children and adults who are struggling with homelessness.





# FSL Reach Our Goals!

Our heartfelt thanks to the sponsors, co-chairs, and committee members for their time, talents, and commitment to making the 95th Anniversary virtual events and 3rd Annual WALK for Wellness exciting experiences. Despite the many negative financial impacts that were compounded by 24 months of living with a pandemic, the 2021 events and appeals were very successful!



“As longtime admirers of FSL, we are deeply appreciative both of this recognition, and for the opportunity to share our thoughts about this organization. Our relationship with FSL began shortly after our twins finished pre-school, when we became eager to learn about community supports that would enable all children to start their educational journey with a solid foundation. We were honored with a tour of one of FSL’s beautiful pre-K programs and it is hard to know what awed us more: the immense joy and capabilities of the young students, or the vast breath of FSL’s programs that we learned about along the way.

Now, as a Board member, I have had the sincere privilege of gaining a deeper understanding of many of these programs – programs that not only help young children but also infants, adolescents, adults, and seniors. We have been lifted by the numerous success stories, and humbled by FSL’s outstanding staff and leadership, whose tireless work creates a warm blanket of support for our community. It is simply magical to be part of an organization that truly restores hopes and rebuilds lives. So, whether it is donating backpacks for school, sharing toys for the holidays, volunteering your time, or offering financial resources - we hope you will consider sharing in that magic, as well.”



## **Laura Granelli Gerde & Eric Gerde**

*95th Anniversary Community Leadership Honoree*

Find out how you, your company, or organization can help by participating in one of our fundraising events through sponsorship and committee opportunities by contacting Tricia O’Hare, Dir. of Dev. & Communications at [tohare@fsl-li.org](mailto:tohare@fsl-li.org) or 631-205-8944.

## **Create Your Legacy through a Planned Gift**

Since 1926, FSL has helped Long Islanders through sorrows, triumphs, and the challenges faced by those lacking the most basic of life’s necessities. As much as things have changed, one thing remains consistent – the need for quality human services is critical for our communities to thrive. Just as you support FSL today, your planned gift to the Legacy Circle will ensure services are available for future generations.

You can join us in this effort by including FSL in your estate planning:

- Giving through your will or living trust
- Naming FSL as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement plan, mutual fund, or bank account
- Giving stocks, bonds, real estate, currency, or property

With a planned gift, you can combine your passion for giving with your overall financial and estate planning goals. We encourage you to speak with your financial advisor or attorney for full explanation of the tax benefits of charitable giving and reducing the tax burden on your heirs. We are here to answer questions, schedule a tour, and share more information. Please contact Jonathan Chenkin at [jchenkin@fsl-li.org](mailto:jchenkin@fsl-li.org) or 631-470-6770.

**FSL services and programs are a life-line for thousands of children and adults. The funding provided by generous community members bridges the gap and makes the difference between hardship and hope. Throughout this health emergency, the kindness and compassion of our Long Island corporate friends and individual neighbors have been truly remarkable.**

## **A \$1.25M Bezos Day 1 Families Fund Grant**



Launched in 2018 by Amazon founder and Executive Chair Jeff Bezos, the Day 1 Families Fund annually awards organizations and civic groups doing compassionate, needle-moving work to provide shelter and hunger support. This year, FSL was one of 32 nonprofits, the only in New York State, to be recognized for the impactful work it does for families facing critical housing issues. This grant will help reduce the need for emergency housing stays by streamlining access to housing relocation assistance, affordable housing, case management, and an array of support services.



In the spirit of service and charity, PSEG and the PSEG Foundation donated \$115,000. This funding addresses the needs that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, such as food insecurity, unemployment, mental and physical health, and poverty. The gifts also provided support for ongoing issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, and child neglect.



**AvalonBay Communities, Inc.**, has a long-track record of supporting FSL programs that focus on critical issues of housing and homelessness. This year they encouraged employee donations through a virtual campaign to fund memorable holiday celebrations. Their efforts resulted in feeding more than 80 families this Thanksgiving and throughout the December holiday week as well as using additional funds to purchase hundreds of toys this season.



**BANK OF AMERICA**

Longtime supporters, **Bank of America**, provided a \$40,000 grant to our William Floyd Family Center in support of the CAIR program. In addition, a truck load of much needed PPE - cases of masks, sanitizers, and gloves - were donated to be distributed to the FSL staff and clients at our 20 locations across Suffolk County.



In December 2021, **Newsday Charities** awarded a \$50,000 grant in support of the Brentwood Community School. Newsday Charities is committed to improving the lives of disadvantaged Long Islanders and focused on the areas of hunger, housing, youth education, and child abuse prevention/treatment.





Thousands of children and adults are struggling to cope. Long Islanders turn to Family Service League for help with life's most pressing issues - mental illness counseling, housing concerns, food insecurity, and addiction recovery. The need for our programs continues to increase and we need your assistance to provide critical care.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

My donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ may be charged to this credit card or my check is enclosed.

Mail to: FSL 790 Park Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743

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### **Ways you can make a difference...**

Go to [www.FSL-LI.org](http://www.FSL-LI.org) to donate or review event sponsorship opportunities.

Text "FSL22" to 91999 or scan the QR code to send your gift today!

Ask your employer if they offer Matching Gift opportunities.

Please consider an automatic monthly donation.



**Thank you for your compassion.**

**Together, we can work toward a brighter future for all.**

For information call 631-470-6770, visit [www.FSL-LI.org](http://www.FSL-LI.org), and follow us on Facebook.

Family Service League is a 501(c)3 corporation. Your gift is tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Family Service League helps individuals, children, and families throughout Long Island to mobilize their strengths and improve the quality of their lives at home, in the workplace, and in the community.

FSL has been **Restoring Hope and Rebuilding Lives** for 95 years with the help of the caring people in our Long Island community. For every dollar donated, 87¢ goes directly to programs and services, an average well above industry standards. Please support this work. Our text to give option is easier than ever –

**Text “FSL22” to 91999**

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The unique walkway at our Fay J. Lindner Health & Wellness Center features inscribed bricks purchased by valued friends of FSL. These can be created in honor of, in memory of, or just to show your support. To learn more contact us at [restorehope@fsl-li.org](mailto:restorehope@fsl-li.org) or 631-470-6771.

