

Leading the Way for 70 Years!

We are proud to announce that this year, North Shore Child & Family Guidance Center is celebrating 70 years of service to the Long Island community! The Guidance Center leads the way in diagnosis, treatment, prevention, training, parent education, research, and advocacy throughout Nassau County.

The Guidance Center has been a place of hope and healing, providing innovative and compassionate treatment to all who enter our doors, regardless of their ability to pay. Throughout our proud history, our committed staff has helped the Guidance Center achieve countless milestones and provide critical mental health and supportive services to thousands. Here are just a few of those notable accomplishments since our founding.

- **In 1953**, North Shore Child Guidance Association was officially incorporated as the result of a grassroots movement of parents seeking to fill the gap in mental health services for children.



- **From 1968-1970**, the Guidance Center opened clinics in Port Washington, Roslyn, and Westbury.



Mary Tyler Moore joined the Board of Directors, bringing more awareness and support to the Guidance Center's mission

- **In 1989**, the Guidance Center was the first in New York State to be awarded an Outpatient Chemical Dependency license specifically for outpatient services for youth.

- **In 1998**, The Marks Family Right from the Start 0-3+ Center opened in Manhasset.

- **In 2001**, after the September 11, 2001 tragedy, the Guidance Center was selected as a FEMA-funded agency to provide mental health care for traumatized and bereaved children and families.

- **In 2003**, The Lucille and Martin E. Kantor Bereavement & Trauma Center opened in Roslyn Heights, housing the Schnurmacher Family Bereavement and Trauma Program.

- **In 2012**, after Hurricane Sandy, the Guidance Center was selected as a FEMA-funded agency, to provide crisis counseling for devastated families throughout Nassau County. Also, that year, the Latina Girls

Project was created in response to the high suicide rates of young Hispanic girls, ages 12-18.

- **In 2013**, the Guidance Center opened the Fay J. Lindner Foundation Triage and Emergency Services outpatient program.

- **In 2020**, the Douglass S. Feldman Suicide Prevention Program was launched.

- **From 2021 through the present**, the new Executive Director & CEO, Kathy Rivera, was appointed

and together with the Board of Directors, established the agency's first strategic plan.

Over the years, the Guidance Center has remained rooted in a shared humanity to treat everyone with compassion and respect. Our primary method of doing so is by adapting our treatment strategies and programs to meet the unique needs of the families we serve.

We are grateful to have been serving Long Island families for the past 70 years thanks to our generous supporters and dedicated staff.



2007 The Leeds Place renaming, with Staff and Board

We look forward to the next 70 years of developing ways to destigmatize mental health challenges, building caring, safe, and supportive environments, and including family voices to guide our work. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to everyone who believes in and supports our mission. Your commitment will be a part of the Guidance Center's history and will pave the way toward the next 70 years!

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Program Highlights

Mutt-i-Grees: Building Confident and Caring Kids

Pets bring us together, and the Mutt-i-Grees® Health Curriculum did just that for children of the Guidance Center! We partnered with the North Shore Animal League to help kids explore their natural affinity for pets and discover the world of emotions they share.

This year on a bi-weekly basis, children ages 7 to 10 from **The Marks Family Right from the Start 0-3 + Center** (RFTS) were able to interact with lovable shelter pets during visits from Mutt-i-Grees®. Developed in partnership with Yale University, the Mutt-i-Grees® Curriculum is the educational mission of North Shore Animal League America. The program is an innovative Pre-K-Grade 12 social-emotional program designed to develop empathy, resiliency, and an awareness of oneself and others, creating a more humane future.

Emotions are crucial to learning and living. The curriculum provides tools that help children identify, manage, and communicate their emotions. They learn to use verbal and non-verbal cues to recognize feelings in themselves and others — including pets — and to find the words to express those feelings, to ask for help, to be understood, and to have their needs met.

Research and experience show that pets can reach special-needs students when other means fail. Understanding feelings leads to the ability to handle stress, control impulses, and solve problems. **By providing practical group exercises and activities, stressing the value of diverse perspectives and ideas, and teaching communication skills — including the art of listening —** the Mutt-i-Grees® Curriculum provides fundamentals that advance both developmental and academic success.

When asked about the impact of Mutt-i-Grees® at RFTS, Christiane Franzese, Mental Health Counseling Intern, shared, “The Pet Therapy Program will help children to grow and build social and communication skills resulting in the cultivation of healthy friendships and peer relations. The great benefit to the bonds that the group members form with the puppies is reciprocal, the children help them learn how to socialize amongst humans and the puppies set the framework for the children to



work outside of their comfort zone, interact with one another, and build strong interpersonal skills.”

“The puppy was really shy at first. I think he got more comfortable when we played together. That made me happy.” - Madison, 9.

The Guidance Center understands that the social and emotional well-being of children is more important than ever. **As living, loving examples of resilience and hope**, the pets brought to the RFTS groups are models of transformation. Children learn how relationships with pets thrive when there is respect, affection, and teamwork. They also learn about the traits that make pets individuals, thereby fostering self-acceptance and empathy for others. These are coping skills our clinicians help to cultivate on an ongoing basis as part of the Guidance Center’s therapeutic and support services.

Planting Hope



Sue Cohen, Kathy Rivera, Rober Keller

Our vegetable garden at **The Marks Family Right from the Start 0-3 + Center** is a serene place for our youngest clients to work through their emotions. On May 15th, our clinicians, their clients, and the clients’ parents, along with Executive Director, Kathy Rivera, and supporter, Robert Kelly, from the Community Chest of Port Washington, sowed seeds for the summer.



Kids work on the organic garden