Every Story Matters
Horizons for Homeless Children's Virtual Gala
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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TONIGHT!

Welcome to our 31st Annual Spring Gala, which also happens to be our first Virtual Gala. While we miss being together in person, we are glad you can join us from the comfort of your home.

The past few months have been a challenge, but as friends of Horizons, you know better than most that our families, our staff, and our volunteers have never shied from a challenge. As we navigate the changes and hardships the COVID-19 crisis has brought, we have faced it as we have always faced challenges; as a community and with hope.

Our teachers have turned shelter rooms into classrooms. Our Playspace team has proven that play can happen anywhere, with anything. Our Family Advocates have remained pillars of stability and consistency in an uncertain time.

Tonight, you’ll hear from our partners who collaborate with us each day and the families who inspire us each day with their courage. We, now more than ever, need your help. I hope this evening will encourage you to stay connected with us, and to spread the word within your networks so we can continue this important work.

Thank you again for showing your support by spending your evening with us. We couldn’t do it without you.

We look forward to when we can be together again.

Stay well,

Kate Barrand
President & CEO
A MESSAGE FROM OUR GALA CO-CHAIRS

Thank you for joining us for the annual Horizons for Homeless Children Gala! When we agreed to chair this year’s event, we had no idea that the Gala would turn into a virtual event – something we and the committee knew nothing about! But working closely with the committee and the team at Horizons, we are excited to launch Horizons’ first-ever Virtual Gala and to share the mission of Horizons with a broader online audience.

When the virus first hit our region, we were disappointed that the Horizons’ gala might not happen as planned. The outpouring of support from the Horizons community of volunteers, donors and corporate partners who offered help when the Horizons learning centers were closed in mid-March convinced us to forge ahead with the Gala...in a virtual format. We realized that the children and families served by Horizons need our support more than ever.

For us personally, staying at home for weeks on end is challenging, but we can’t imagine the stress of quarantining in a tiny room in an emergency shelter....with little children! If we ever needed a reminder of why a place like Horizons is so deserving of our support, the current situation brings the challenges of family homelessness into clear focus.

We are enormously grateful to all those who helped us stage our virtual Gala, including the amazing Gala Committee and the dedicated sponsors, both new to Horizons and longstanding supporters. We are grateful to them and all of you who are stepping up during this challenging time to ensure that Horizons’ programs – a lifeline to many living in shelter – remain strong.

Warm regards,

Jessica Gifford Nigrelli
Spring Gala Co-Chair

Andrew Nigrelli
Spring Gala Co-Chair
DID YOU EVER ASK, “WHY?”

I’m not talking about a “why” that comes and goes, like “Why does the garbage truck have to come so early?” or, as my child asks, “Why can’t broccoli taste like pie?”

Both valid questions, to be sure, but not the heart of my question.

No, here I’m talking about the “whys” many of us have carried for a long time now—deep, burdensome “whys” that shadow every step and steal the joy from life. Mine were: Why has my life been endlessly turbulent, as far back as I can remember, when all I’ve ever wanted is peace? Why am I even here — is there some purpose to all of this pain and turmoil? Perhaps you have “whys” like this, too.

Or perhaps you have been labeled or called by the name of your circumstances, in your neighborhood, at your school, in your family, even in the depths of your own heart.

“Failure” because you struggled more than once to achieve a goal.

“Troublemaker” because your thoughts were outside of the box where others thought you should stay.

“Poor” because for a season in your life finances were challenging.

“Homeless” because you found no refuge for your body or “Worthless” because you found no refuge for your soul.

Together in spirit we stand to face the elusive enemies who try to steal our joys and question who we truly are. Through laughter, through connection, through helping one another we prevail. Kindness is powerful, compassion gives us strength, and community carries our breaking and our broken. Family, and friendship, and generosity of spirit speaks louder than our fear. When the weight of the world pulls us down - arm in arm, smile to smile, we are lifted – all rising on the wings of hope and the promise of a better tomorrow.

From the memoir, Golden Scars
Written by Fania, mother of Horizons’ student, Najma
**SPRING EVENT SPONSORS** (as of 4.23.20)

*Horizons for Homeless Children is incredibly grateful for the support of the many individuals and corporations who enable us to provide critical services to homeless children and their families.*

* Denotes Horizons Board Member

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**Table Captains - $3,000**
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Special thanks to tonight’s program participants:
Trenni Kusnierek, NBCSports Boston
Congressman Joe Kennedy
Boston City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George
George Foreman, EverybodyFights

And our deepest thanks to the parents who shared their stories this evening
Alyscia, Portia and Fania

We would like to thank the following additional corporate donor to this event
BorrowLenses
MISSION
The mission of Horizons for Homeless Children is to improve the lives of young homeless children in Massachusetts and help their families succeed by providing high-quality early education, opportunities for play, and comprehensive family support services.

VISION
Every homeless child will have the opportunity to learn, play, and thrive.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS:
One in every 21 children in Massachusetts is impacted by homelessness. For more than thirty years Horizons has been a leader in providing early education and opportunities for play to homeless children and their families.

Early Education Centers: We operate one of the state’s top-ranked early education programs. Our trauma-informed approach focuses on mitigating the impact of homelessness on children during a critical phase in their cognitive and emotional development.

Playspace Program: We give children in shelters play experiences that let them be kids for a few hours each week.

Family Partnerships Program: Our highly-trained staff work with each family to help them develop goals and a plan to achieve those goals, and assist them in accessing resources, including education, job training, other services.
HOW YOU CAN HELP!

We are so grateful to each of you for joining us this evening, and we hope you will consider making a gift to support Horizons’ work to transform the lives of homeless children and families.

During tonight’s program, we invite you to make a contribution to support our critical programs.

$1,000 helps to cover the cost of replenishing over 90 Playspaces each week so children living in shelters will have a safe space to play while in seclusion.

$500 puts a backpack into the hands of one of our graduating preschoolers. Inside are all of the supplies they need to start school. Your $500 gift also supports our staff who help find the right next school for all of our kids!

$250 supports families enrolled in our programs with secure gift cards they can use to buy food and basic necessities for their family.

$100 helps provide diapers, an expensive commodity for families with young children.

Any amount helps sustain Horizons programs by helping offset the fundraising implications of this crisis.
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Congratulations Horizons for Homeless Children and your amazing staff for transforming the lives of homeless children and their families. We are grateful for your extraordinary work!

Sandy and Paul Edgerley
Thank you to the teachers and staff of Horizons for making the lives of so many children and families immeasurably better every day.

The Mazzella Family Charitable Trust
Lauren, Joseph, Rachael
and Jason Mazzella
We are proud to support Horizons and applaud its work to create a brighter future for children and their families.

Anne & Chad Gifford
Jessica Gifford Nigrelli & Andrew Nigrelli
We are proud supporters of Horizons for Homeless Children. Thank you to the teachers and staff for all you do for the homeless children and families you serve.

Mickey & Bob Atchinson
We are proud to support the Horizons for Homeless Children’s Spring Gala, and we appreciate all of Horizons’ important work in the Boston community.

Berkshire Partners
Every homeless child deserves the opportunity to learn, play and thrive. Now, more than ever, Bain Capital and its employees are proud to support *Horizons for Homeless Children* as they continue their important work, improving the lives of young homeless children in Massachusetts.
With gratitude to those who endeavor every day at Horizons and give their hearts, talents and skills to imprint love and worth on these children.

The Colella/Deninger Family
Many thanks to the dedicated team at Horizons for their extraordinary work helping disadvantaged children get the best possible start.

The Eisenson Family
“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.” -John F. Kennedy

Tim & Susie Estella
Thank you to the entire team at Horizons for making a difference every day.

Donna and Chip Hazard
To the Horizons for Homeless Children family—We appreciate the important work you do.

Linda Mason and Roger Brown
Thank you to Horizons for all you do for the children and families you serve.

We are proud to be part of your wonderful mission!

Tracy and Michael Roberge
Thank you Horizons' teachers and staff for all that you do to help our children and families in need.

_Luly and Maurice Samuels_
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We are happy to be involved in supporting the growth and lives of future leaders in our community and their families.
We salute **Horizons for Homeless Children** for its tireless efforts helping young children mitigate the trauma and stress associated with homelessness.

Congratulations to our partner and friend **Matt Epstein** on 26 years of dedication to the organization.
With absolute appreciation for all of the incredible staff and volunteers at Horizons for Homeless Children - Thank you for all you do. AND - Thank you to all of the children and families of Horizons who bring smiles and rainbows to us!!

Kate Lubin & Glendon Sutton
Thank you Horizons for the brighter future you give to children and their families.

Diane Margolis
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in its efforts to open
a world of opportunities for homeless children.

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A heartfelt thank you to the dedicated Horizons staff and volunteers who greatly impact the lives of families who are experiencing homelessness.

Pamela Mann,
David Baron and family
Proud to invest in the lives of homeless children and families in Massachusetts

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We would like to thank our Horizons CEO, Kate Barrand, and her capable team for their exceptional leadership and tireless dedication. Thanks to their vision, Horizons has the potential to change the trajectory of more children and families than ever before!

-Kate and Ford O’Neil and family-
The Meadowbrook School thanks Horizons for Homeless Children for their continued dedication to improving the lives of children in the Boston area.

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-Fred Rogers

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Thank you for improving the lives of Children and Families

Our heartfelt thanks to the incredible educators and team at Horizons that dedicate their expertise, care and love for the children and families served by Horizons.

Elizabeth (Crowley) and Ben Sprayregen
We are proud to support the impactful efforts made by Horizons for Homeless Children.

With utmost respect and admiration for the teachers and staff of Horizons for bringing smiles to kids’ faces every day.

The Epstein/Hiatt Family

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Thank you to the inspiring and dedicated staff of Horizons. The extraordinary work you do for homeless children and their families is appreciated by all.

Susan Whitehead, Scott Sayare and Patricia Neves
Thank you so much to the wonderful teachers, staff and volunteers at Horizons for Homeless Children! We deeply appreciate your dedication to helping the amazing children and families who are our future.

The Willett Family

Join EveryBodyFights for a special event on 5/6. For more information visit:

https://ebf.live/horizons/
Progress continues on the Edgerley Family Horizons Center, a 140,000-square-foot social services center in Roxbury built in partnership with WaterMark Development, Inc.

The center will be a transformative place for early education and care for homeless children and families of Boston, providing greater capacity, accessibility, and an enriched learning environment, while also co-locating with other human service organizations benefiting Horizons’ families and members of the community.

Progress has slowed during the pandemic, but our resolve to move forward in a space that is conducive to learning and growth has never been stronger. Completion and move-in to the new building is slated for Spring 2021.

To find out more, contact Tara Spalding at TSpalding@horizonschildren.org
The new preschool playground will provide children with healthy physical activity that will support development and encourage creative play through a natural layout and structures such as a climbing wall, ramps and steps.

State-of-the-art preschool classrooms that will provide children with high quality tools, materials, and instruction that will prepare them well for school.