



Saint Joseph Parenting Center

Educate the Parent. Protect the Child.

2026 MIDYEAR NEWSLETTER



Strengthening families through
parenting education
& resource support in Stamford,
Danbury & Bridgeport

Equipping families since 2009



sjpcenter.org
(203) 588-1934

245 Selleck Street- Stamford, CT 06902

46 Stone Street - Danbury, CT 06810

299 Washington Avenue - Bridgeport, CT 06604



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FROM THE DESK OF Rian Drenzek

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | SAINT JOSEPH PARENTING CENTER

As we reach the midpoint of the year, I am incredibly grateful for the community that continues to stand beside Saint Joseph Parenting Center. Because of our donors, partners, volunteers, and advocates, we have continued to strengthen families and move forward despite the significant loss of federal funding we experienced last fall.

One of our proudest milestones this year was reopening our Danbury center to new referrals in March. After months of focusing our limited resources on families already enrolled, we were once again able to welcome new parents into our programs. Your support made that possible.

We also celebrated the first anniversary of our Bridgeport center's General Parenting Program. In just one year, Bridgeport has grown to offer all three of SJPC's core programs, expanding access to parenting education, support, and resources for even more families in our community.

This summer also brought a leadership transition in Stamford. We are deeply grateful to Maribel Sandalo for her years of dedicated service and are pleased to welcome Antonia Better-Wirz as our new Stamford Center Director. We look forward to the passion, leadership, and new ideas she brings as we continue serving families throughout Fairfield County.

As we look toward the second half of the year, our commitment remains stronger than ever: to give parents the education, tools, and support they need to create safe, healthy, and nurturing homes for their children.

Because of you, parents have the support they need to build stronger families, safer homes, and brighter futures for their children.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for continuing to stand with the families we serve.

With gratitude,
Rian

Your Generosity, Their Transformation

Breaking the Cycle

Growing up, David believed fear was how children learned respect. Abuse was discipline. Neglect was normal. Love was rarely shown, and positive parenting was something he had never experienced.

As an adult, those same patterns followed him. He became an absent father, argued constantly with the mothers of his children, and often relied on yelling, intimidation, and threats to gain obedience. He didn't realize he was repeating the only parenting he had ever known.

Everything changed when a protective order required David to attend SJPC's D.A.D. – Dads Are the Difference program.

At first, he came because he had to. But week after week, something unexpected happened. For the first time, he found a safe place to talk about his own childhood, learn practical parenting skills, and discover that being a strong father had nothing to do with fear—it had everything to do with consistency, patience, and love.

With the support of his facilitator and other fathers in the program, David began rebuilding relationships with his children. He learned to listen before reacting, communicate instead of yelling, and show up consistently in their lives. Co-parenting conversations became calmer, and his children slowly began to trust him again.

Today, David says the greatest gift he received wasn't a parenting certificate—it was the chance to give his children something he never had: a father who is present, patient, and committed to breaking the cycle for the next generation.

"I thought I was teaching my kids to respect me. What I was really teaching them was fear. SJPC showed me that love, consistency, and showing up every day are what make a real father."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS



BY THE NUMBERS

JANUARY – JUNE 2026

Your support is strengthening families
and changing futures.



246

FAMILIES SERVED



111

FAMILIES CURRENTLY
RECEIVING ONGOING
SERVICES

ACROSS OUR THREE CENTERS



STAMFORD

146

FAMILIES SERVED



DANBURY

47

FAMILIES SERVED



BRIDGEPORT

39

FAMILIES SERVED



Every number represents
a parent choosing a different path—
and a child growing up in a *safer, stronger*



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS



Educate the Parent. Protect the Child.

BY THE NUMBERS

JANUARY – JUNE 2026



Because of you, families are stronger and futures are brighter.



FUNDS RAISED

\$616,949

TOTAL RAISED

JANUARY – JUNE 2026



Your generosity provides parents with the education, support, and resources they need to build stronger families.



VOLUNTEER HOURS

143

HOURS DONATED

JANUARY – JUNE 2026



From lending a helping hand to sharing expertise, our volunteers strengthen our mission every day.



IN-KIND DONATIONS

\$52,000

VALUE RECEIVED

JANUARY – JUNE 2026



In-kind gifts of goods and services help us maximize every dollar and support the families we serve.



Every dollar raised, every hour volunteered, and every in-kind gift makes a lasting impact.

Thank you for changing lives together.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS

When Our Community Was Needed Most... You Showed Up.

Last fall, Saint Joseph Parenting Center faced one of the greatest challenges in our organization's history. The loss of significant federal funding threatened programs that hundreds of local families depend on every year.

We had a choice.

Reduce services to parents who needed us most—or ask our community to stand beside us.

You answered that call.

Because of the extraordinary generosity of donors, foundations, corporate partners, and volunteers, we didn't just keep our doors open—we continued helping parents build safer, stronger families.

Together, we reopened our Danbury Center to new families, celebrated the first anniversary of our Bridgeport General Parenting Program, and continued providing parenting education, case management, and critical resources across Fairfield County.

Your support proved something powerful:

Hope grows stronger when a community comes together.

With Deepest Gratitude.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the individuals and organizations whose generosity helped bridge the gap during one of the most challenging seasons in our history.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS

Bauer, George & Carol
Bave, Anne
Bernstein, Jeffrey
Bigelow, Cindi
Bob Petit
Bossidy, Carry
Bronzo, Paul
Buckley, Sheila
Chapman, Laura
City Of Danbury
City Of Stamford
Clark, Kathie
Collazo, Jacqueline
Congregation De Notre Dame
Connolly, Michael
DeCristo, Phil & Lisa
Della Pietra, TJ
Department of Children and Families
Diocese of Bridgeport
Donnelly, William
Edmonson, Lisa
Erica Shillingford
Ernest Newborn
Fairfield County Bank
Falvey, Rosaril
Fernandez, Antonio
First County Bank Foundation Inc.
Foster, William
Frierson, Cindy
Frierson, Greg & Cathy
Galanski, Stanley & Susanne
George, Andrew and Amy
Gorka, Joanne Blaney
Guzman, Clara
Hanley, Greg & Sarita
Hannigan, Joan & John
Hecht, Bill & Barbara
Hecht, Patricia
Hecht, Sara
Houlihan, Daniel & Marie
Houlihan, Joseph
Houlihan, Rita L
Hutchison, Kimberly

Jacullo, Jean
Jacullo, Katherine
Jing Ge
Joseph Zalis
Kappa Delta
Karchinta, Bob
Linde
Linnon, Patricia
Loane Pine Foundation
Loncto, Denis & Mary Ellen
Londrigan, Marie
Lones Pines
Looney, Tom
Lorfino, Joe
Magano, Julie
Mallozzi, Michelle
Martinez, Alex
McCarthy, Margaret
McDermott, Carmen and Michael
McGill, Gaetana
McGrath, James and Bethann
Miller, Joseph
Moore, Stephen and Pam
Murray, Joseph and Lucille
Near and Far Aid
New Canaan Community Foundation
Nothing Bundt Cakes
O'Byrne, Mary
O'Halloran, Christine
O'Rourke, Jamie & Measi
Odea, P Thomas
Olive Garden
Parachute Social Media
Patty Linnon
Petit, Bob
Phillip & Lisa DeCristo
Quartey, Simone
Rao, Kishore & Allison
Rao, Shambu
Rather Family Foundation
Rather, Jonathan & Mary
Reilly, Barbara
Renaissance Charitable
Foundation

Rosen, Joan & Seth
Rosenstein, Richard & Jodi
Saint John's Community Foundation
Saint Stephens Church
Scarfi, Frank
Small, Barry
Smedley, Brian
Smyth, Art & Dianne
Smyth, Christopher
Stadler, Sarah & Christopher
State Of Connecticut
Staudinger, David
Steven and Alexandra Cohen Foundation
Sweeney, Gerald
The Herbert & Nell Singer Foundation, Inc
The Rock Foundation
The Rotary Club Of Stamford
Thompson, Wayne
Tidgwell, Lynn
Tonkinson, Tracy
Tennessean, Edward & Theresa
Town Fair Tire Foundation
Union Savings Bank Foundation
United Way of Greenwich Inc.
United Way of Southeast Louisiana
United Way of Western Connecticut
United Way of Western CT
Williams, Quentin
Womens Fellowship First Congregational
Young, Rob & Cara

**Because of your generosity, parents
never lost access to the support that
changes the course of a child's life.**



HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS

Community Heroes

While financial support kept our programs strong, something equally powerful happened in Danbury.

When funding became uncertain, volunteers stepped forward.

Because of their commitment, the Danbury Center continued serving parents, strengthening families, and providing hope during an incredibly difficult time.

We are especially grateful to:

Maria Abril
Fabian Arevalo
Ximena Bravo
Burt Brazill
Ken and Jane Breen
Milton Capon
Elizabeth Durkin
Bill and Barbara Hecht
Geraldine Macaisa
Rodrigo Martins
Lisa Miraglia
Steve Mitchell
Jamie and Measi O'Rourke
Helmut Osario
Arantxa Perez
Gabriela Ramon
Juliana Restrepo Marin
Lisa Rivas
Tom and Cathy Savoca
The Columbiettes
The Center for Empowerment & Education



Your generosity of time reminds us that changing lives isn't only measured in dollars—it's measured in people willing to serve.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR HUBS

Celebrating Those Who Give Back

Bridgeport Center

This spring, we gathered at Stamford Yacht Club for our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to celebrate the incredible individuals who make our mission possible.

We were especially honored to recognize Joanne Gorka as our 2026 Volunteer of the Year for her exceptional dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to strengthening families throughout our community.

Joanne represents the very best of what volunteerism looks like—leading with kindness, generosity, and a belief that every family deserves the opportunity to thrive.

Because of You...

Every family served.

Every parent encouraged.

Every child protected.

Every success story.

It all begins with people who choose to care.

To every donor, volunteer, advocate, corporate partner, and friend of Saint Joseph Parenting Center—thank you.

You didn't simply help us overcome a funding challenge. You ensured that hope never stopped reaching the families who needed it most.



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WAYS TO SUPPORT

SAINT JOSEPH PARENTING CENTER



Financial Support



Volunteering



In-Kind Donations



Advocacy and Awareness



Corporate Partnerships



Participating in Events



Providing Expertise



Community Engagement



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Scan to Volunteer



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