Pregnancy & parenting education program celebrates 35th anniversary

Kristen Labore wasn’t expecting Karen Munsell to visit her in the hospital shortly after she gave birth to her son, Kayden. But she wasn’t surprised when the OUR PLACE supervisor showed up.

“They care so much over there,” Kristen says. “They treat you like family.” Kristen came to OUR PLACE during the lowest point in her life. She was 18, pregnant and living in her car when a friend referred her to the Catholic Charities pregnancy and parenting education program.

The guidance and support she received at OUR PLACE moved her life forward. She reconnected with her family, goes to college, and lovingly cares for Kayden.

“They helped me be totally prepared for all of this,” Kristen says.
OUR PLACE celebrates 35 years of teaching new mothers to nurture their babies from pregnancy through age three. Because of you, they succeed.

With its staff of social workers and nurse educators, Munsell says OUR PLACE not only connects expectant mothers and their families with needed supplies and resources, but also shows them “what is possible.”

“We certainly do more than parenting education,” Munsell adds, noting Life Plans teach clients to set smart goals. In addition, research proves good parenting prevents child abuse.

OUR PLACE started on Manchester’s West Side in November 1982 as a joint effort with Catholic Medical Center. Most clients were pregnant teens. Helping young mothers and fathers to be good parents was the primary challenge.

OUR PLACE’s mission is to teach new families how to care for their children, reducing child abuse. Thankfully, the rate of teen pregnancies has dropped and new clients from other countries now need these services. Many of these clients face language and cultural challenges and may lack an understanding of current medical and nutritional practices.

Your support allowed OUR PLACE to expand to Nashua and Rochester and serve more than 12,000 clients since its founding. Many also benefit from Catholic Charities’ other programs that are unrelated to pregnancy and parenting, including Counseling Services, Immigration & Refugee Services and Parish & Community Services.

Kristen was 18, pregnant and living in her car when a friend referred her to OUR PLACE. Because of your gifts, she reconnected with family, attends college, and lovingly cares for her son.

“They helped me be totally prepared for all of this.”

Kristen and Kayden Labore

Another OUR PLACE client, also named Kristen, was seven months pregnant with no idea where to go once her baby was born. A friend referred her to OUR PLACE.

“I just broke down and said, ‘I just don’t know what I’m going to do’, Kristen explains. Munsell connected her with a family that was looking for a live-in caretaker for their adult daughter who is developmentally disabled. It was an ideal match.

Kristen continues to go to OUR PLACE for support and guidance in raising her son, Carson, who is now 18 months old. Kristen wants a better future for her son. OUR PLACE plays a key role in realizing that dream.

“That is the hope of every parent. I want to do a little better than what my parents did,” she says. “My mom was always screaming. I don’t want to be that mom. I don’t want to be the screamer. They always say, ‘Happy mom. Happy baby’,” she says.

Because of you, OUR PLACE helps a second generation of children get a healthy start in life. See cc-nh.org/ourplace for more information.

How OUR PLACE Moves Lives Forward:

94% of clients improved their knowledge of childbirth preparation.

97% of clients improved their knowledge of postpartum care.

66% of clients demonstrated moderate to significant improvement in parenting skills.

Build a Legacy that Impacts Lives

Consider leaving a gift in your will or insurance to move lives forward. For more information, contact Lisa Merrill-Burzak at (603) 669-3030.