



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



VISION

All Maine children grow up in safe, stable, nurturing families and communities.

MISSION

Maine Children's Trust works to strengthen families, promote healthy relationships, and support communities to prevent child abuse and neglect.



HISTORY

Maine Children's Trust (The Trust) was established by statute in 1985 as part of state government. In 1994, legislation transformed the organization as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit governed by a Board of Directors and designated it as a Maine income tax check-off recipient. The Trust's guiding principles and responsibilities continue to be defined in state statute.

The Trust provides leadership and coordination of statewide efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs. Through funding, training, technical assistance, and strategic partnerships, the Trust supports prevention programs and leads collaborative initiatives designed to strengthen families and support resilient and resource rich communities across Maine.

AFFILIATIONS

- Office of the Administration for Children & Families
Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention | State Lead
- Prevent Child Abuse America | State Chapter
- Brazelton Touchpoints Site | Maine Touchpoints Project
- Circle of Parents | State Chapter
- National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds | Network Affiliate
- Parents as Teachers | State Office
- National Family Support Network | State Network Lead
- Association of State and Tribal Home Visiting Initiatives | Member
- Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework | State Lead

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

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Ben Gillman, Esq.
Drummond Woodsum



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Ben Gillman, Esq.**

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Administrative Office of the Courts

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Preti Flaherty

Lori Gramlich

Representative, Maine State Legislature

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Director, Office of Child & Family Services

Jeffrey Johnson

Executive Director, Children's Center

Danielle Langley*

Executive Director, Aroostook Council for
Healthy Families

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State Police

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Representative, Maine State Legislature

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Senator, Maine State Legislature

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Division Manager of Family Engagement,
Penquis

Mandie Pepperman*

Senior Director of Community Supports
Services, Sunrise Opportunities

Christopher J. Pezzullo, D.O.

(Executive Committee Member)
Clinical Director, Maine Primary Care
Association

Kim Russell

State Director, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
Maine

Charles Soltan, Esq.

(Executive Committee Member)
Soltan Bass, LLC

Dr. Puthiery Va,

Director of Maine CDC

*Represents a local Maine Prevention Council

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Every child deserves a safe, stable, and nurturing childhood—and every family deserves the support they need to thrive. This past year, because of you, that belief was transformed into action across communities throughout Maine.

At Maine Children's Trust, prevention is at the heart of everything we do. Together with our partners, advocates, donors, and community leaders, we worked to strengthen families, build resilience, and promote child and family well-being. From supporting new initiatives like Family Support Communities, to advancing statewide initiatives like Maine Families and Maine Prevention Councils that promote healthy childhood development, your commitment made meaningful change possible.

What inspires us most is not only what we accomplished, but how we accomplished it—through collaboration, compassion, and a shared vision for Maine's children. Across the state, communities came together to listen, learn, and act. Families were met with dignity and support. Professionals were equipped with tools to assist families and children were given a stronger foundation for a brighter future.

Your generosity fuels this work. Whether through a donation, partnership, advocacy, or simply spreading the word, you are part of a movement that believes prevention works—and that investing early has lifelong impact. Every gift, every hour, every voice contributes to a stronger Maine.

As we look ahead, our resolve remains strong. The challenges facing families are real, but so is our collective ability to meet them. With your continued support, we will deepen our impact, expand access to prevention services, and ensure that more children grow up safe, supported, and hopeful.

Thank you for believing in Maine's children and families. Thank you for standing with us and thank you for helping turn prevention into possibility.

With gratitude and optimism,

Ben Gilman, Esq.

Board Chair

Heidi Aakjer, MPA

Executive Director

2025 PARTNERS IN PREVENTION FOR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Thank you to our thirty 2025 Partners in Prevention for collaborating with Maine Children's Trust in April. The unified message emphasized that supportive communities and strong families prevent child abuse and neglect.

- Adoptive & Foster Families of Maine, Inc & The Kinship Program
- Alfond Scholarship Foundation
- Bethany Christian Services
- Count ME In
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Public Safety
- Educate Maine
- GEAR Parent Network
- Hanley Center for Health Leadership & Education
- Kennebec Savings Bank
- KidsPeace Foster Care and Community Programs
- Maine Association for the Education of Young Children
- Maine Association of Nonprofits
- Maine Bankers Association
- Maine Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Maine Chiefs of Police Association
- Maine Children's Alliance
- Maine Children's Home
- Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
- Maine Council of Churches
- Maine Medical Association
- Maine Osteopathic Association
- Maine Parent Federation
- Maine Primary Care Association
- Maine State Library
- Maine State Parent Ambassadors
- Maine Youth Thriving
- MaineHealth
- Mr. Sean Presents
- The National Association of Social Workers – Maine Chapter

Family Support Communities: Strengthening Families Through Community

Communities have a unique ability to build resilience by offering meaningful opportunities, connections, and supports—especially for parents. Mobilizing local resources and creating strong networks are essential to promoting child and family well-being. Family Support Communities are local initiatives where families can access support before challenges become crises. Family Support Communities ensure families have access to coordinated, high-quality support identified and shaped by the local community. Built on a collective impact model, this approach recognizes that every individual and family experiences challenges—and that early support leads to better outcomes for children, adults, and communities.



2025-2026 Family Support Communities Pilot Sites

- **Community Concepts, Inc.** has opened a Family Resource Center at their Bates Street Lewiston site to provide families with a trusted, stigma-free space for support, connection, play, and leadership development. As the center evolves, this pilot funding will guide future expansion of family services offered to the community.
- **The Franklin County Children's Task Force** is leveraging their long-standing experience in prevention, collective impact, and family support services while strengthening collaboration across existing networks. They are engaging with 8 towns in Franklin County to host free community dinners for providers, parents, and children to learn the strengths and challenges families are facing in Greater Franklin County.
- **Healthy Kids'** Community Kinnects pilot is a mobile "office hours and activities" program that will make direct weekly visits to six identified family communities in Lincoln County. The goal of these visits will be to build relationships, elevate parent voices, and meet family and community needs by offering customized wrap-around support programs and services, sharing information and local resources and providing family-oriented activities or parent support groups.
- **Kennebec Valley Community Action Program** is launching the Stuff Coalition of Kennebec Valley, a collaborative effort of community members, families, and organizations working to strengthen concrete support (basic needs or the stuff we all need to live and thrive) distribution throughout Kennebec and Somerset Counties. The Stuff Coalition will share information about what stuff is available for families currently, develop creative ways to give away more stuff, and more.

Our Call to Action

Maine Children's Trust is dedicated to prioritizing primary prevention and partnerships in our mission to promote child and family well-being. We recognize that our communities are vital in supporting families by offering a network of social connections, practical assistance, emotional support, and a sense of belonging. These elements help families navigate challenges, support nurturing children, and foster resilience during difficult times. This support includes access to essential services, opportunities for social engagement, and a shared sense of values and identity that contribute to overall family well-being. Our areas of action align with these commitments.

Our Action Areas

The Trust's focus areas are supporting families and communities in three areas:

- **Strengthening Communities:** We believe that when communities are supportive, families truly thrive. We fortify local networks through strategic partnerships, direct resources, and the implementation of evidence-based models.
- **Supporting Families:** Our approach is local. By analyzing data, evaluation results, and direct community feedback, programs meet the unique needs of Maine families in collaboration with local parent and community leaders.
- **Leading Primary Prevention:** As a leader in child abuse prevention, we leverage our deep expertise to scale proven initiatives. From local neighborhoods to the state level, we provide the training and guidance necessary to stop maltreatment before it starts.



Strengthening Communities –

- Maine Prevention Councils align programming with local needs, annual assessments, and Advisory Board feedback from over **300** parent and community leaders.
- The new Family Support Communities pilot supports **4** local community-based projects through collective impact efforts in support of parents and caregivers across Maine.
- After attending The Front Porch Project of Maine, **97%** of participants feel equipped and that they have a responsibility for preventing child abuse in their community.
- Collaboration with over **16** local organizations, state/federal agencies, and local providers is essential to reducing child maltreatment. The Trust facilitated **97** trainings for these partner organizations.
- Partners conducted **309** trainings for professionals, **310** parenting education activities, **217** parent support activities, and **340** public awareness activities.

Supporting Families –

- Family (Home) Visiting served **1,721** families through **18,127** visits, with **85%** of children receiving timely developmental screenings.
- Maine Prevention Councils assisted families with everyday parenting challenges through **310** multi-session parenting education groups with **1,522** caregivers.
- Local partners provided supportive environments for social connections resulting in over **3,500** caregivers participating in support groups and playgroups.
- Over **250,500** concrete supports were provided directly to families through our partners to include diapers, formula, breastfeeding supplies, hygiene and safety items, diaper bags, and clothing.

Leading Primary Prevention Efforts –

- The Trust spearheads child abuse prevention in Maine with **26** community grants and research supported training to deliver high-quality services.
- Public awareness campaigns were conducted for February's Parent Leadership Month, National Home Visiting Week, and October's Infant Safe Sleep Awareness Month. In addition, during April's Child Abuse Prevention Month the Trust had **30** Partners in Prevention join us in a unified voice.
- As the state lead, the Trust supports parent leadership and adheres to NFSN's Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support to support quality practice.
- The Trust convenes a statewide Infant Safe Sleep & Abusive Head Trauma Prevention Coalition to share research, best practices, and strategies.



Maine Families Home Visiting

Central Coordination

Maine Children's Trust has supported home visiting in Maine since the 1990s through advocacy, grants and training. In 2010, the Trust assumed responsibility for providing system coordination, quality assurance and technical assistance with all the State contracted home visiting sites. Ten years ago, all home visiting system supports came under the Trust's umbrella – quality assurance, quality improvement, training, technical assistance, staff credentialing, along with data collection and reporting. The Trust became the home of the Parents As Teachers State Office, the national model utilized by Maine's home visiting system. During this time, more in-depth Standards of Practice were created that allowed for even greater consistency in services offered by the local contracted agencies delivering the program.

In 2016, the Maine DHHS consolidated all home visiting contracts and the system supports (infrastructure) into one contract with the Trust. The Trust has managed the direct service contracts with the local agencies since that time for no additional cost to the grant beyond the infrastructure costs. In 2022, Maine Families piloted services to families referred from Child Protective Services with funding from Family First Prevention Services and in 2023 this effort expanded statewide.

Funding for Maine Families is provided through the Department of Human Services: Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Office of Child and Family Services.

Local Contacts

Androscoggin, Oxford, & Northern Cumberland

Community Concepts, Inc.
207-595-8124

Aroostook

Aroostook Council for Healthy Families
207-532-1141

Greater Portland

The Opportunity Alliance
207-800-5937

Franklin

Franklin County Children's Task Force
207-778-6960

Hancock

Maine Family Planning
207-667-5304 Ext. 7225

Kennebec & Somerset

KVCAP
207-859-1577

Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, & Part of Cumberland County

The Parent Program of MidCoast Maine
207-832-0343

Penobscot & Piscataquis

Penquis
207- 973-3674

Waldo

University of Maine Cooperative Extension
207-322-2879

Washington

Down East Community Hospital
207-225-0438

York & Part of Cumberland County

MaineHealth - Maine Medical Center
207-432-2719

Evidence-Based Services to Families

Maine Families Home Visiting is a voluntary program available statewide for pregnant women, expectant couples, and parents of children up to age three. Utilizing the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model, trained specialists provide support to ensure safe home environments and promote healthy development. The program adopts a compassionate, non-judgmental approach, empowering parents with essential skills. Services are tailored to family needs, allowing high-need families to receive more frequent visits. Maine Families consistently delivers positive outcomes for Maine's youngest children and their families in areas such as maternal and child health, child development, safety, and family well-being.

In 2022, all eleven Maine Families Home Visiting Programs underwent a year-long rigorous self-study and review process with the Parents as Teachers (PAT) National Center to demonstrate fidelity to the PAT model. As a result of this review, every Maine Families Program earned a prestigious endorsement from PAT as "Blue-Ribbon Affiliates" and continues to maintain this status in the 2025 performance year. This quality endorsement is an exclusive recognition offered only to top-performing home visiting affiliates within PAT's international network.

Maine Families' Programs Received the National Recognition As Blue-Ribbon Affiliates





Maine Prevention Councils

Central Coordination

Maine Children's Trust has supported the Maine Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Councils (informally known as the Maine Prevention Councils) since the 1990s through grants, awareness, and technical assistance. Since 2008, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has partnered with the Trust to lead and coordinate statewide child abuse prevention efforts. In 2015, Maine DHHS provided funding to establish a formal statewide infrastructure for the Maine Prevention Councils, which statutorily serve as county-level coordinators for prevention programs and supports. The Trust ensures consistent service delivery by providing central leadership, data, evaluation, best practices, and a toolkit, core training, and technical assistance across all counties in Maine.

Funding for the Prevention Councils is provided through the Department of Human Service: Office of Child and Family Services.

Local Contacts

Androscoggin & Oxford

Community Concepts, Inc.
207-795-4065

Aroostook

Aroostook Council for Healthy Families
207-532-1141

Cumberland & York

Kids Free to Grow
207-985-5975

Franklin

Franklin County Children's Task Force
207-778-6960

Hancock & Washington

Sunrise Opportunities
207-255-4701

Kennebec & Somerset

KVCAP
207-859-1577

Sagadahoc

Midcoast Maine Community Action Program
207-442-7963

Lincoln & Knox

Healthy Kids
207-563-1818

Penobscot & Piscataquis

Penquis
207-974-2481

Waldo

Waldo Community Action Partners
207-338-6809



Maine Prevention Councils

Maine Prevention Councils empower families and strengthen local communities through a parent-centered, collaborative approach. By weaving together data-driven strategies and compassionate support, Prevention Councils assist communities so all families and children can thrive. Maine Prevention Councils cultivate lasting change and utilize a comprehensive framework that includes:

- **Promoting Child & Family Well-being:** By promoting well-being, we focus on primary and secondary child abuse prevention efforts to stop maltreatment before it begins.
- **Systemic Impact:** Using the Collective Impact and Social-Ecological models, complex layers of community life are addressed.
- **Protective Factors:** Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework are integrated to support building resilience and social connections, concrete supports in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children.
- **Data-Driven Action:** Work is guided by numerous data resources such as OCFS Child Maltreatment data as well as rigorous countywide Needs Assessments, ensuring unique county needs are addressed with measurable SMART objectives.

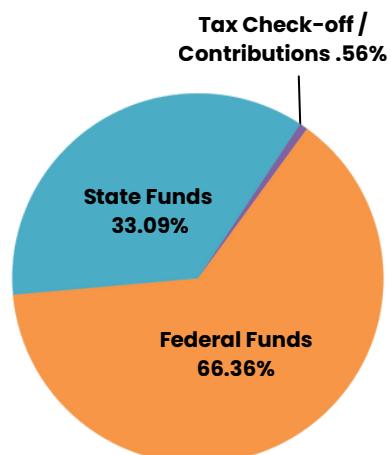
Maine Prevention Councils provide direct services and community leadership to bridge the gap between state resources and local needs by: evidence-based and informed programming, local partnerships, professional training, workshops and specialized support for every family.



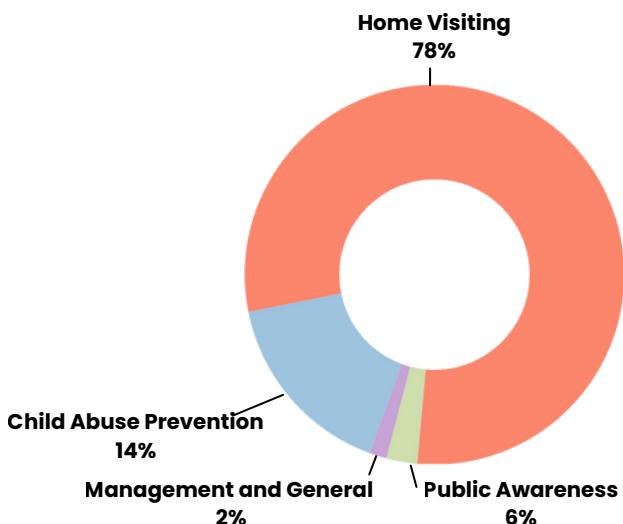
FY25 Financial Overview

Maine Children's Trust receives funding from both the federal and state governments, as well as individual donors, in support of our mission to prevent child abuse and neglect. According to the Trust's last audit, 98% of Maine Children's Trust funding is used to meet its' mission, with just 2% spent on overhead. Below is an overview summary of our agency funding sources and initiatives funded for FY25 beginning on July 1, 2024.

Agency Funding Sources



Agency Funding Disbursed



Total Revenue By Source

Federal Funds	\$9,349,370.22
State Funds	\$4,661,563.68
Tax Check-off/ Contributions	\$78,461.30
Total Revenue	\$14,089,395.19

Total Disbursements By Category

Child Abuse Prevention	\$1,908,298.64
Home Visiting	\$10,931,661.79
Public Awareness	\$910,213.70
Management and General	\$286,356.51
Total Disbursements	\$14,036,530.64

Executive Team

Executive Director
Heidi Aakjer, MPA

Finance & Operations Director
Kara Parks

Your Gift. Their Childhood.



The Maine Tax Check-off Program provides a very quick and easy way for Mainers to contribute to the Maine Children's Trust through the State Income Tax Return. Whether you prepare your taxes yourself, file electronically or receive assistance from an accountant, please consider donating all or a portion of your refund to Maine Children's Trust.

Here's how it works:

1. Choose your charity – Maine Children's Trust.
2. Check the box as directed on the tax form.
3. Indicate your contribution amount.

It's that simple!

You can also donate by mail or online! Consider donating securely one-time or set up monthly giving to Maine Children's Trust through PayPal or by using a Debit or Credit card. You can also make a meaningful gift through an honorarium or memorial donation.

Your generosity today helps ensure every family has the knowledge, resources, and support parents need to best care for their children.

**For more information: Call 207-623-5120 or email us at
info@mechildrenstrust.org**



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