



helping children, adults & families thrive!

mission

Driven by the belief that each of us can thrive when life has hope and opportunity, Rising Ground provides caring support and proven paths to positive change, helping children, adults, and families rise above adversity.



50 programs

more than

55

sites across New York City & Westchester

vision

Rising Ground envisions a future for New York where every child has an equal opportunity to succeed; where vulnerable individuals and families have the resources and support they need; where people with disabilities can access opportunity and fully participate in their communities; and where all are supported as they navigate life's challenges and positively direct their lives.



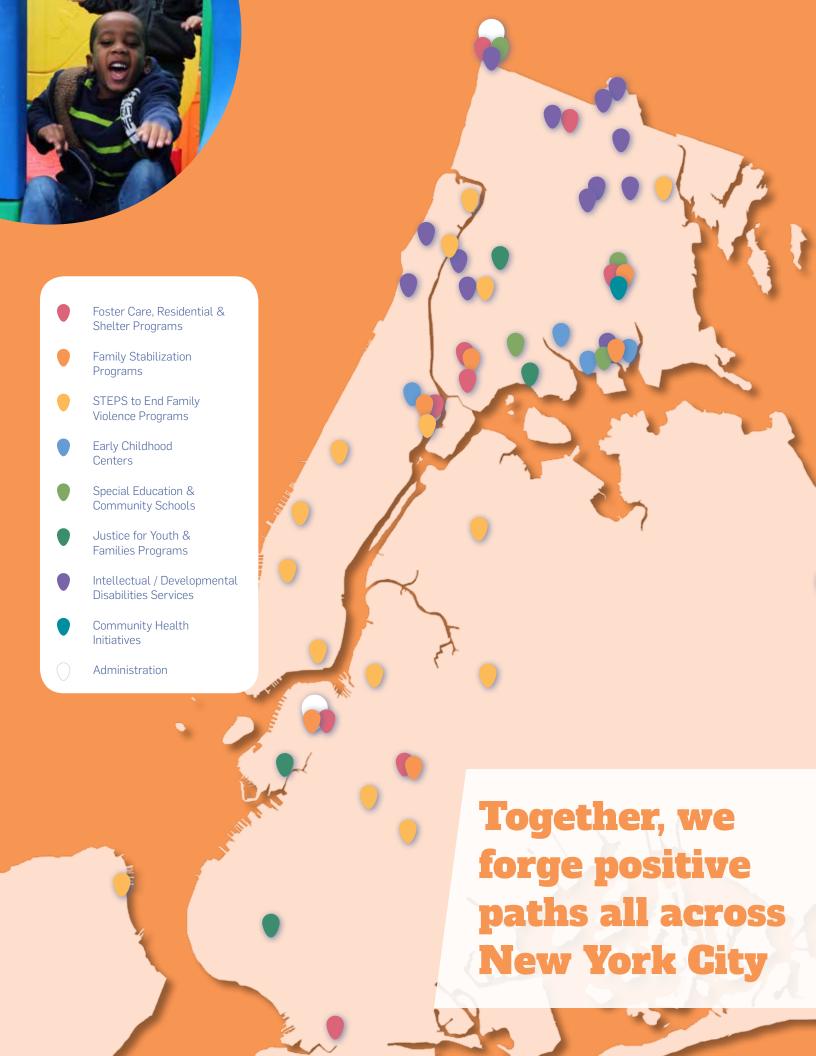
more than 10,000 direct program participants

more than **25,000** family members supported



Rooted in an unshakeable belief in every individual's ability to change and grow, we value accountability, connection, tenacity, and service as we help children, adults, and families pursue their dreams and goals.





Your support was vital in making 2019 another successful year in our 188-year history of helping New Yorkers overcome adversity to find positive paths forward.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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Since 1831, we have continuously evolved to meet the needs of New York City communities. While the city and its challenges have changed considerably during that time, our mission has always remained the same — to make positive change possible for children, adults, and families in need. We help New Yorkers acquire the resources, skills, opportunities and hope they seek to move upward and forward in their lives.

As we ended 2019, the partnership between Rising Ground and Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families which was announced in the prior year has been fully executed. As a result, we are now 50 service programs at more than 55 locations across the city, touching the lives of more than 25.000 children, adults, and family members. Over the last decade, Rising Ground has nearly tripled in size, which means many changes in how much we are able to offer to New York City communities. It has also meant many changes in the way we operate as an organization, bringing many opportunities to improve our work.

While we have grown and enhanced our services this past year, much of 2019 has focused on strengthening the internal infrastructure necessary to succeed as one of New York City's largest and most impactful human service organizations. This life-affirming work would not be possible without our many friends and supporters, as well as our more than 1,800 staff, hundreds of volunteers, and many community partners.

In these pages, we share some of these developments and just a few of the thousands of stories of how we are helping people overcome adversity so that they may thrive. And of course, through this Annual Report, we recognize and thank our donors, funders, and volunteers.

You make this work possible. Thank you.





Alan Mucatel

Chief Executive Officer

Board Member Susan Benedict chats with guest speaker Shaday and Ms. Nelson, her Teaching Assistant at the Biondi High School, at our Gramercy Park Hotel rooftop Spring Benefit in May.



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Executive Vice President Dr. Angela White and Board Members Judith Benitez and Robert Schanz at the Annual Gala in October.



expanding our reach

As we have nearly tripled in size in the past decade, Rising Ground has become a leader in human services in New York City. This means new opportunities to better support the community and those in need. In 2019, we continued to expand our programs and apply our experience and expertise to new populations in need.



68%

In

of children supported in our special education preschools were deemed ready to enter Kindergarten in a less restrictive setting.



first youth in New York City's Close to Home juvenile justice programs to graduate high school.

We opened a new home for homeless and runaway youth

A year after opening our first Transitional Independent Living (TIL) program in the Bronx, Rising Ground opened a second facility in 2019 in the Coney Island neighborhood of Brooklyn. There we provide housing and support for 20 homeless and runaway female-identified youth with a specialty in working with those who identify as LGBTQ+.

Rising Ground expands reach in juvenile justice field

In 2019, our Justice for Youth and Families and STEPS to End Family Violence departments were granted multiple new opportunities to support adjudicated populations. We entered our first partnership with the New York City Department of Probation for a mentoring program to work with up to 16 youth to promote selfadvocacy, skill-building, and increased family engagement. This expands our My Next Move Credible Messengers Mentoring program to a new population. Given our expertise helping court-involved youth find positive paths forward, New York City's Administration for Children's Services engaged Rising Ground to create a new alternative to placement program for young women who have committed crimes or at risk of court involvement. This three-year demonstration project builds on our work with criminalized survivors of intimate partner violence and our juvenile justice work. This innovative approach, to be launched in 2020, could become the model for future programs.

STEPS to End Family Violence launches new ventures

Rising Ground's STEPS to End Family Violence expanded its reach with an expansion of community-based programs for survivors of intimate partner violence and their children. Increased supports include evidence-based trauma therapy, economic empowerment services, holistic and alternative healing practices, and leadership development. Bolstering our leadership and advocacy work for incarcerated survivors, STEPS welcomed a team of advocates. The Survivor-Centered Advocacy Project works to reduce the over-incarceration of women and improve the treatment of women in prison.

Passage of Hope set to provide shelter for more unaccompanied migrant youth

In July, the federal government awarded Rising Ground a significant expansion of our Passage of Hope Unaccompanied Migrant Children Program. We thus began creating space for housing and supportive programming for 100 more children and youth in our care as we work to help reunite them with the family members or other sponsors in the United States.

humberto, india & andrew

"It feels great," Humberto said of his current life living with his children — India, 8, and Andrew, 6. "I love my apartment. My kids love it. I had my own place before, and I know what it means to have a place to call home." It was not long ago, however, that Humberto had neither a home nor his children. Yet with his commitment to his children and guidance from Rising Ground's Family Foster Care team, Humberto has been able to turn his life around and bring his family back together.

Humberto and his former partner, the mother of the two children, had struggled with drug addiction. Their drug use plagued not only their relationship, which has since ended, but also their ability to care for two young children. Early on, India and Andrew were placed in foster care with Rising Ground. We ensured the children's safety and wellbeing while coordinating a temporary placement with foster parents and then in a kinship placement with Humberto's mother.

While his children were in a safe, stable environment, our case planners worked with Humberto to address the challenges in his own life. Beyond a drug treatment program, Humberto worked diligently with Rising Ground staff to address anger issues and pursue parenting classes. "If it was not for this process, I think I would still be into drugs. I do not know if I would be alive right now," he said. "Rising Ground really helped me get focused on my kids, get my priorities in order, just get myself together. It was a long struggle. I have changed my life a whole lot."

Indeed, Humberto made it through an often arduous process. As he overcame many of his own challenges, he committed himself to his role as a father and made it out of the foster care system. As his case was shifted to our team of reunification specialists, Humberto and his children were reunified on trial discharge in June 2019. At first, they were together in a family shelter before getting their own apartment in the Bronx in November. "If you have love for your kids, believe me, that love is going to help you," Humberto said. "It will get you to the end of that journey that you need. I thought it would never end, and look, case over, I got my apartment, my kids are happy. I have nothing else to ask for."

FAMILY FOSTER CARE

- New York City's Administration
- for Children's Services ranked
- Rising Ground as the top foster
- care provider in the city for
- promoting well-being for youth
- in foster care. Of 22 agencies in
- New York City, we ranked fourth
- in safety and sixth in creating
- permanent connections for
- youth. In 2019, our Family Foster
- Care reunified 63 children with
- their families. Additionally,
- 27 children and youth were
- welcomed into new forever
- families through our Adoption

program.



changing with the times

At Rising Ground, we are continually adapting to meet the needs of the communities we support and ensure structures are in place to best serve New Yorkers in need. In 2019, we launched and expanded upon a number of organization-wide initiatives that enable us to expand our impact.



85 Peer

Leaders in
STEPS to End Family Violence
Relationship Abuse Prevention
Program spent the summer
exploring social issues and
exploring healthy relationships.
The high school students made
presentations to peers and city
leaders at the annual Summer
Conference in August.

658

adults received direct support
or access to community
resources at our Soundview
Family Resource Center in this
high-needs Bronx neighborhood,
providing family

stability for 711 children.



Brooklyn is now our headquarters

As Rising Ground grows to be one of the most impactful human services organizations in New York City, we started the process of moving our headquarters closer to the city center where we first opened our orphanage doors in 1831. In the fall, we started renovations to the 30,000-square-foot office space at 151 Lawrence Street in downtown Brooklyn. The space that previously housed Edwin Gould Services for Children and Eamilies will be built out by summer 2020. The

Children and Families will be built out by summer 2020. The office will feature training facilities, 20 meeting rooms, and a medical suite in addition to serving as our administrative hub. The office will be home to about 200 staff members, while more than 50 "drop-in" spaces will be available to staff who travel between our more than 50 sites across the city. While some administrative office space will remain at the 33-acre Leake & Watts Campus in Yonkers, that space is being repurposed to accommodate our growing Passage of Hope program.

Organization-wide initiatives focus on inclusivity and diversity

In 2019, we launched an LGBTQ+ Inclusivity Work Group.
Comprised of staff from across the organization, the group is examining policy and practice to ensure we are creating an affirming environment for all. Also tasked with raising awareness, the group hosted an organization-wide Transgender Awareness Day in November. As part of the ongoing work of our Anti-Racism Committee, a central organizational focus for the past five years, we hosted a half-day seminar in December with Dr. Kenneth Hardy, Director of the Eikenberg Institute for Relationships. More than 150 staff joined in for the presentation, "Racial Trauma and its Impact on the Rising Ground Community: Strategies for Healing and Transformation."

Referral department grows connectivity within community

In its first year, our **Centralized Access and Referral Department** has connected hundreds of children and families with services they need. Our team has worked to create connections between programs and with community resources. Some of these have included free dental screening for children, a day for fathers to bring their children to school, and the participation of youth from multiple programs in the Bruckner Underpass revitalization project in the Bronx.

gabriela & sarah

When Gabriela started our ParentChild+ home-visiting program, her daughter Sarah, now 3, was often acting out and having trouble focusing. Gabriela felt lost as a parent and was struggling to communicate with or understand her daughter.

Gabriela has been in New York for 16 years after moving from her native Mexico. Sharing an apartment with another family in the Bronx, her husband and she want to provide the best life possible for their daughter, but they have felt they didn't have the resources or ability to access all that they have needed or wanted for Sarah.

With Rising Ground's ParentChild+ program, a home visitor comes to their home weekly, bringing not only knowledge of childhood development, parental guidance, and support but also free educational books and toys. Our home visitor Heidy models reading and play that helps with Sarah's early cognitive and social development. "I can see that she has learned lots of things," Gabriela said. "I can tell that she likes to read. With the help of this program, I don't have to buy books and toys and can still provide what my daughter wants. Now she retains information faster, and it stays there. She has a really good memory."

As Sarah continues in the program, she is doing well in school, participating in the city's Universal Pre-Kindergarten for 3 year olds.

Gabriela is more confident in her parenting as a result of the coaching from Heidy. "ParentChild+ has helped me to understand my daughter better. I understand the

developmental stages she is going through and what that means. I see myself as more capable. I'm very happy seeing Sarah grow!"

PARENTCHILD+

- In 2018-2019, 63 families in
- our ParentChild+ program saw
- an average increase of 55%
- in school readiness for their
- children after just one year
- in the program. Another 34
- families saw their children's
- school readiness double on
- average after completing the entire two-year program.

ParentChild+ home visitor Heidy looks on as Gabriela and Sarah complete a puzzle during a home visit.





financial statements

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2019

Rising Ground is funded through several public sources, as well as through the generous support of our Board of Directors, individuals, foundations, and corporations.

Public funding sources include New York City Administration for Children's Services, New York City Department of Education, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, New York City Human Resources Administration, New York City Department of Probation, New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, Center for Court Innovation, New York City Council, Office of the New York District Attorney, New York State Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Education Department, New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, New York State Office of Victim Services, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Head Start and Office of Refugee Resettlement, Medicaid, Westchester County Department of Social Services, Westchester County Department of Health, and local school districts of Nassau, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Orange counties, and the state of Maine's Department of Social Services.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$2,065,615
Investments	\$6,421,891
Accounts Receivable	\$19,465,511
Contributions Receivable	\$642,666
Prepaid Expenses	\$1,154,633
Assets Limited as to Use	\$5,326,992
Other Assets	\$4,690,563
Fixed Assets - Net	\$31,178,666
Total Assets	\$70,946,537

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities	\$57,297,269
Current Liabilities	\$27,670,933
Long-Term Liabilities	\$29,626,336
Net Assets	\$13,649,268
Unrestricted	\$9,047,595
Restricted	\$4,601,673

\$70,946,537

Total Liabilities & Net Assets

Auditors: BKD CPAs & Advisors, LLP

655 Third Avenue • New York, NY 10017

A copy of Rising Ground's most recent audited financials is available upon request.

While a large portion of Rising Ground's funding comes from public contracts, individual and corporate contributions are critical to ensuring we can provide the highest quality of support to help New York City area children, adults, and families overcome adversity.

Thank you for your support!

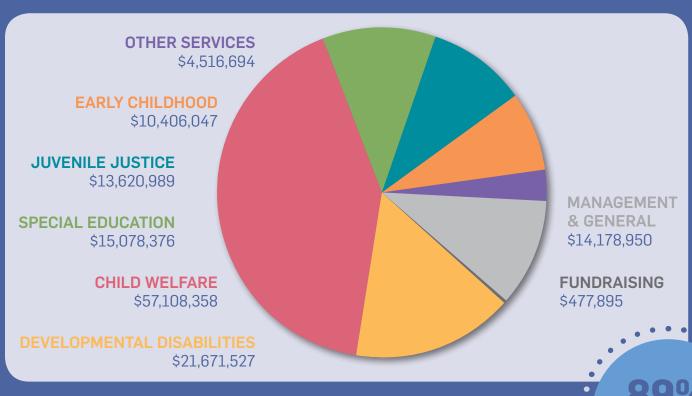
Learn more and give at RisingGround.org/Donate

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Services Supporting Services Management & General Fundraising

\$122,401,991 \$14,656,845 \$14,178,950 \$477,895

\$137,058,836



Government Contracts \$131,861,476 Individual, Foundation & Corporate Contributions \$2,101,976 Special Events \$615,037 Direct Costs of Special Events (\$122,456)Investment Income & Interest \$737,989 Other Operating Income \$ 975,517 In-Kind Contributions \$97,306 \$136,266,845 of funds go to direct service



donors

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2019

Rising Ground is deeply grateful to all our supporters and partners!

We have made every effort to create an accurate Annual Report. If we have inadvertently omitted your name or listed it incorrectly, please bring any errors to our attention at Development@RisingGround.org.

\$100.000+

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We are incredibly grateful for the Associate Board, a group of young professionals who help to expand the capacity and advance the mission of Rising Ground. In 2019, the group hosted two fundraising events and engaged in various volunteer and community activities.

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