



St. Gianna's Place, Inc.
A Safe Harbor For Mother and Child

Christmas 2024

The Seasons of Life: Change *and* Blessings

Dear Readers,

On this chilly fall morning, the feast day of Our Lady of the Rosary, I am thoughtful about how all life follows seasons. At St. Gianna's Place, we are also in a season of change. With much love and fondness, we say goodbye to two board members and founders of the program, who are moving on. To Monica Rahilly and Maria Szemplinski, we offer our heartfelt thanks for responding to God's call and for giving so much of themselves to this ministry over the past 8 years. They will always be an intricate piece of the fabric that is St. Gianna's Place. We are also saying goodbye to our Resident Services Manager and former board president, Kathy Mahoney, who will be retiring the end of this month. Kathy has given tirelessly of herself to the workings of this home. She will be greatly missed. I will be moving into her role as the Director of Resident Services, while our former board member, Celeste Horan, will be moving into the newly created role of Director of Operations. We are hoping to streamline our efforts to better manage the needs of the ministry.

We have been so blessed to see many of the families who have spent over a year with us move on from the home, procure vehicles, enter career training programs, secure jobs and childcare, and move forward with their lives. We are grateful for their continued connection with us as we have developed strong relationships with them and remain invested in their success. To you, our supporters, prayer warriors, volunteers, staff and board, know that what you do makes a difference. Together we are the tapestry that is St. Gianna's Place. Our Blessed Mother takes our small efforts and multiplies them for God's greater glory. What could be more beautiful?

Wishing you and your loved ones a fruitful Advent and a joyous Christmas season.

-Donna



Monica Rahilly, Co-founder, retired Board President



Maria Szemplinski, Co-founder, retired Board member



Kathy Mahoney, retired Resident Services Manager and former Board President

New Scholarships Offered!

We're pleased to announce two new scholarship programs aimed at helping our residents continue to move forward in their lives. The first assists with the purchase of vehicles, and several residents have already received donated cars or have been able to purchase one with the help of funds specifically earmarked for this purpose. The second is for career-based continuing education for either college degrees or certificate programs at local institutions. We are excited to see how both these programs bless our residents!



▲ Nashua Community College staff and workforce training alumni from BAE Systems recently visited St. Gianna's Place to share adult learning programs, specifically training that leads to job opportunities.

Resident Spotlight: *Meet Erika*

Hello, My name is Erika! I have been a resident here at St. Gianna's since December of 2023. I have two beautiful daughters, Ellyanna and Ember. Before God brought me to St. Gianna's, I was residing in a residential substance abuse treatment center for women with Ellyanna, my oldest. I had hit my rock bottom, and finally surrendered myself to God after struggling in active addiction for roughly 2 ½ years. In that time Elly was born severely premature weighing under 2 pounds, and I was in and out of rehab trying to get it right and do it all on my own. However, God had a better plan for us! While she was still in the NICU, I lost my job, my apartment, and once notified that I did not have anywhere to bring her safely home, I lost her to the state. Looking back now I believe God decided that I needed a reset, to lose everything that I was investing my time and energy into, which was all dead and fruitless. This was the wake-up call that I needed to get serious about getting help and fight to keep my daughter in my life. I stumbled upon the women's treatment center and my daughter came home to me a few weeks later. This was the beginning of our new life together. She has become one of the smartest toddlers I have ever met, defied all the odds, and has excelled above and beyond what the doctors all predicted! I learned how to be a mother in early sobriety and also understood what true love is. I finally understood what God feels in His heart when it comes to us, His children. Knowing of my faith, one of the staff members who was helping us seek and apply for housing as we grew close to my graduation day, remembered a past resident there who had moved on to St. Gianna's after her stay with them. (Fun fact: the same woman still resides here and has become one of the best of friends to me as well as our children!) As soon as I met the director and other staff here, I knew that this is where I was meant to be. Surprisingly enough, a little over a month after I had moved in, I unexpectedly got news that I was pregnant again with my second daughter, Ember. She was born on August 22nd. Every single person here has held my hand and walked through this new transition with me, stepping up and going above and beyond to help me throughout the pregnancy. A staff member joined me in the delivery room as my birthing partner, and staff even came to stay in the hospital after the delivery to help me. My recovery was an absolute breeze thanks to all of them!



There will never be enough words to say just how blessed I feel to be here. Nor are there enough thanks I could give or words I could say to show just how much I truly appreciate and absolutely love every single resident, every staff member, along with every volunteer here. St. Gianna's has provided a safe and loving home for my daughter and me at a time I was my most vulnerable. I was a first-time mother, with less than a year of sobriety, caring for a medically fragile infant, without a job, having absolutely no support system in the entire state of New Hampshire, 1,300 miles away from my entire family in Florida. God brought me to this place. To this sanctuary. To this home. To this FAMILY that I desperately needed. For the first time in years, I feel safe. I feel secure and I can be vulnerable. I can be myself while still learning who that is, as an individual and as a mother. I have never experienced so much love and strength in one place.

Whoever you are, however you are involved in this incredible place, your thoughts, your prayers, donations, your time invested into St Gianna's, from the bottom of my heart, I would just like to say thank you. God has used this home and everyone involved to literally save lives, to restore mothers, and to ensure the safety of the children that come into these doors. Whether it be to stay or just passing through, there is not a single family that could ever come into this home and leave without being blessed. They will know that they are loved and they matter.

God Bless every single one of you, and thank you for blessing me.

Erika

Wish List

To be directed to our wish list use the QR code or link: <https://stgiannasplace.org/wish-list/>

You may also call us at (603) 521-8440 for more information.

Gift cards are a wonderful way to donate. They sustain us for the year and support our operating budget: Amazon, Market Basket, Hannaford, Wal-Mart, TJ Maxx, CVS, Walgreens.



Generosity at Work

The incredible generosity of you, our donors, continues to allow St. Gianna's Place to better serve homeless pregnant women and their children. In short, your donations are saving and bettering lives every day. Below is a list of how we have most recently put your generosity to work:

- We have completely renovated our dining room which is the heart of our home. This important space has a fresh coat of paint, new wainscoting, a refinished hardwood floor, and we've added a beautiful image of the Last Supper.
- Our faithful handyman, Paul Roy, has replaced lamps throughout the home with overhead lighting as a safety precaution for busy toddlers.
- Key staff and board members attended two maternity conferences—the Heartbeat International Annual Conference in Salt Lake City, UT and the National Christian Housing Conference in Shreveport, LA. The information presented at these conferences, along with the networking that happens at these events, increases our ability to better serve our residents and their children.
- Lastly, St. Gianna's Place is in negotiations with our landlord, the Diocese of Manchester, to purchase the beautiful property St. Gianna's Place has called home for the past five years. Stay tuned for more information!



▲ Joe Palfini painstakingly removes old wallpaper, in preparation for a fresh coat of paint.

Finished dining room renovation ▼



We Love our Volunteers!



◀ Holy Family Academy Prolife group in Manchester, and Mrs. Jennings fourth grade class at St. Francis of Assisi School in Litchfield help assemble hundreds of baby bottles for fundraisers.

▼ Ann Vermette has been a consistent and enthusiastic face around St. Gianna's Place as a committed babysitter and resident driver.



What's New?



Meet the newest resident at St. Gianna's Place:
Ember Lee



A new shed! We're so grateful to Reed's Ferry Sheds for donating a second shed for the storage of strollers and outdoor toys. Their generosity to St. Gianna's Place over the years has been nothing short of amazing. As our home has grown, they have stepped up twice to provide us with beautiful sheds within days of our requests. Additionally, with robot in tow, they installed our newest quickly and efficiently. Thank you again, Reeds Ferry!

“She will bear a Son and you are to name him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.”

- Mt. 1:21

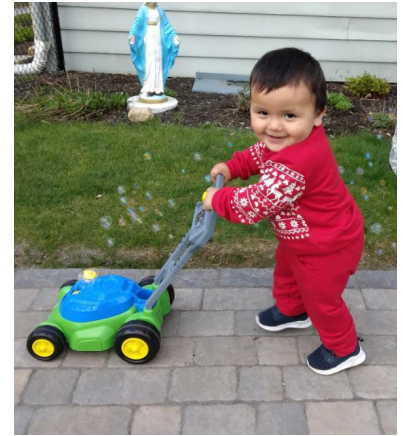


Graduation!

Licrese, one of our first residents to live at St. Gianna's, recently graduated from college with an associates degree in Business Administration. She has secured a full time position in human resources with Amazon. Her daughter, Jaelyn, is now a happy and healthy 4 year old. We couldn't be more proud of Licrese's accomplishments!



▲ Books are fun!

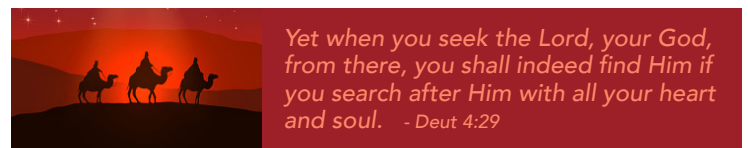


▲ It's hard work, but someone's got to do it!

Thank you!
 St. Gianna's Place is grateful to God for giving us the means in the form of dedicated staff and financial support to serve those most vulnerable—mothers and their babies. Thank you to all of our supporters. We simply cannot operate this ministry without you!

- Mothers we housed – 10
- Children we housed – 11
- Families graduated from our program – 5
- Former residents that stayed connected – 10
- Calls received for support/housing – 70+

2024 Snapshot



Yet when you seek the Lord, your God, from there, you shall indeed find Him if you search after Him with all your heart and soul. - Deut 4:29

For it is in giving that we receive ▼

Deep friendships are formed ▼



Save The Date

St. Gianna's Place annual Spring Gala will take place on May 22, 2025 at the Event Center in Nashua, NH. Keynote speaker will be Jack Beers, The Catholic Mentor. Please check our website in the new year for more information.



▲ Donna, St. Gianna's director, enjoys a captive audience.

Our Board of Directors

Liz Neville • Interim President & Co-Founder
 Tara Bishop • Secretary
 Michael Redding • Treasurer

Kevin Cronin • Board Member
 Melissa Kalpakgian • Board Member
 Celeste Horan • Director of Operations
 Donna Meade • Director of Residential Services

Elizabeth Breuder • Co-Founder
 Monica Rahilly • Co-Founder
 Maria Szemplinski • Co-Founder
 Rev. Volney DeRosia • Spiritual Director

