

Community Profile: Bowdoin-Geneva

Family Nurturing Center of Massachusetts trains family support professionals across the Commonwealth. We also provide direct programming throughout Boston primarily in Dorchester, Allston-Brighton, and Roslindale. With Changing Children's Chances: A Campaign to Build a Family and Training Center, we will deepen our presence in and impact on the Bowdoin-Geneva neighborhood of Dorchester, the location of our new building.

Bowdoin-Geneva, a 68-block section of Dorchester, is a richly diverse community. Nearly half of its 13,000 residents are African-American (48%); about 20% are Latino; another 20% include a large Cape Verdean cohort; 6.7% are White. Almost one-third of its residents are children under 18; half of all households are led by single mothers. English, Spanish, Portuguese/Cape Verdean Creole, French/Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese are the languages of this neighborhood.

The neighborhood is challenged by a 16.2% unemployment rate (compared to Boston's 5.2% rate), nearly one in four residents living below the poverty level, and the same ratio living just above it. Though Bowdoin-Geneva has less than 2% of Boston's population, it accounts for 12% of nonfatal shootings and 28% of aggravated assaults.

High rates of foreclosure contribute to neighborhood instability. The neighborhood's 1,900 schoolchildren attend 102 different schools, impeding families' ability to build community cohesion through school connection. Neighbors do not know neighbors, contributing to isolation and depression. Parents fear letting children play outdoors.

Caring community residents and providers, along with Boston's focus on growing the economic infrastructure of the neighborhood, are beginning to have a positive impact. Family Nurturing Center is an active participant in the Bowdoin-Geneva Alliance, formed in 2011 to improve quality of life in Bowdoin-Geneva by focusing on strengthening families, youth enrichment, and economic development. In 2014, volunteer leaders of Bowdoin-Geneva's street and civic organizations formed the Bowdoin-Geneva Residents Association to expand resident engagement and speak with a common voice on education, public safety, zoning, permitting, and development. Family Nurturing Center's revitalized building, located in the heart of Bowdoin-Geneva, will leverage these community and city efforts.

The need for Family Nurturing Center's programming in the Bowdoin-Geneva neighborhood is clear; the expanded building will allow Family Nurturing Center to more effectively serve our neighbors and fulfill our statewide mission.

For information on how you can help, contact:

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