

Bridgewell Receives Grant for Autism, Intellectual and Developmental Services from Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation

Grant Will Fund the New “Bridges to Family Success” Program

By [Christine Williamson \(Patch Poster\)](#) – March 7, 2017



[Bridgewell](#), a Lynnfield based nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and helping individuals with intellectual, developmental and psychiatric disabilities and other life challenges, has received a three-year, \$189,728 grant from The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation to expand services. This is the largest private grant Bridgewell has ever received.

The new “Bridges to Family Success” program will be in partnership with JRI’s Children’s Friend and Family Services to address the needs of families raising a child or young adult with autism or another intellectual or developmental disability. This program will focus its aid particularly on families in Lynn and surrounding communities who face additional barriers, such as cultural and linguistic diversity or complex behavioral health challenges, which hinder their access to appropriate services and community resources for their child.

The new program will help families develop an individualized family plan which, with support from trained care coordinators, will address their child’s behavioral health needs and establish long-term care goals. Families will receive quality training and support on how to navigate the behavioral health system and access necessary services, as well as how to foster stronger familial bonds. “Bridges to Family Success” will also host numerous community social events for families to establish a continued network of peer support.

“We are so grateful to The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation for its generous support of the ‘Bridges to Family Success’ program,” said Kelly J. Martin, Chief Operations Officer of Bridgewell. “Raising a child with autism can be highly stressful on its own, and more daunting when combined with life circumstances such as linguistic or cultural diversity, poverty and behavioral health challenges. This new partnership will help meet the unique needs of these families in need of support.”

“Children’s Friend is excited to partner with Bridgewell on ‘Bridges to Family Success,’” said Stephanie Sladen, Executive Director of Children’s Friend and Family Services. “Too often services for families are locked into silos, which create barriers to access. This project breaks down those silos and opens up opportunities for families. It also lays the foundation for new partnerships and knowledge to better support those families who have a child with complex needs.”

Although children with intellectual or developmental disabilities are at increased risk of developing behavioral problems, many of their parents are not receiving needed support and there is limited research and guidance on intervention techniques and behavioral health management. “Bridges to Family Success,” with support of this three-year grant, will provide this unique parenting program to aid families in achieving lifetime goals for their children and young adults.

“The Tower Foundation is incredibly honored to support this program,” said Tracy A. Sawicki, Executive Director of The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation. “We have long been dedicated to serving the various societal and community needs of children, adolescents and young adults affected by learning and intellectual disabilities. The extensive experiences that Bridgewell and Children’s Friend and Family bring to this new program will help numerous local families receive the care and support their children need, and we are so proud to contribute to their success.”

For more information, visit <http://www.bridgewell.org>.

ABOUT BRIDGEWELL:

Bridgewell is a Lynnfield based nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and helping individuals with intellectual, developmental and psychiatric disabilities and other life challenges to direct their own lives, achieve personal and professional success, and remain active participants in their communities. Bridgewell services more than 6,250 individuals and their families in Massachusetts, providing residential and day services, affordable housing and homeless services, clinical services, substance use disorder treatment, recreational services, as well as employment training and educational services. For more information visit www.bridgewell.org.

ABOUT THE PETER AND ELIZABETH C. TOWER FOUNDATION:

The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation supports community programming that results in children, adolescents, and young adults affected by substance use disorders, learning disabilities, mental illness, and intellectual disabilities achieving their full potential. The Foundation is dedicated to societal impact through healthy communities and capacity building and works diligently to foster a sense of empowerment and an environment of collaboration. Visit www.thetowerfoundation.org/ to learn more.