

# **MOMMAS, INC. ANNUAL REPORT 2006**



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For the past 20 years, MOMMAS House has been offering group residential care to single mothers, pregnant or parenting and their children. All residences are located in Nassau County, New York, but applicants are not limited to that area.

There were 23 mothers and 28 children who shared our home for all or part of 2006. All were offered the opportunity to stay for two years but some did not need that much time and others were unable to adjust to the program requirements. Those who stayed the longest had the highest chance for successful independent living.

There were 221 requests for admission between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006. These referrals were from many various sources: the Department of Social Services, hospitals, adoption agencies, schools, churches, health care facilities, pregnancy counseling services, shelters, domestic violence agencies, friends and relatives.

There are many very unique stories, e.g. One of our girls had a mother who was also a teenage mom in the '80's. *"My mother tried to give me morals and values but I did not listen." She went to a shelter in Manhattan and from there she came to Mommas House. Her son was handicapped which made things more difficult. Her first accomplishment was to obtain her GED. At that point her son had surgery, which enabled him to walk. Then she graduated from Hunter Business School with a 3.6 GPA and now works for Cablevision. She lives in an apartment with her son and is no longer on welfare. She is her own WOMAN!*

Admission is a process of completing an application, having an interview and visiting one of the houses. If placement seems a possibility, releases are forwarded to schools, health care and counseling facilities to obtain further information.

Since many women and girls apply, the next step is deciding who is offered a place. This is very difficult and depends on many factors, including the current make-up of the house, and what problems the girls in residence are already dealing with. The successful applicant signs a contract and agrees to live by a defined set of rules.

The age range of the mothers was from 17 to 24, with the median age of 20, and the children from pre-born to 5 years old. There was one child who attended school. Referrals were made for Early Intervention and Special Education evaluations on all of our children because they demonstrated some developmental delays or learning disabilities or the mother did not receive adequate pre-natal care.

The racial make-up was 50% Black, 15% Caucasian, 33% Hispanic and 2% American Indian or bi-racial. The religious affiliations were very difficult to ascertain as they have little if any connection to church. Of those who identify a religion, there were Christian 80%, Catholic 15%, and 5% other or no affiliation. Thirty percent of the newborn babies were baptized or christened in their mother's faith, which helped the mothers make some connection with that community.

As for goals attained, 5 attend H.S., 6 earned their GED, 3 attended vocational/business schools, and 5 began employment. Day Care was provided on-site to facilitate school attendance. Two mothers have been accepted and begun taking classes at Hunter Business School for Medical Assistant certification while another continues to attend Hunter for Computerized Office Technology.

Once their goals were reached, 9 families moved out into their own apartments or to a different housing situation. Three mothers were able to return to their families in a better position

to support themselves and their children. Continued support services are offered to our “graduates”, so that the initial stage is not so traumatic.

In 2006, our transitional living apartments in an East Massapequa house was fully occupied. Two of our graduates have moved in. We also moved out of the house in Brookville and reopened in Jericho in July.

MOMMAS House has added an Assistant Director this year. She has a New York University MA in Social Work. Otherwise the staff remained the same. Each house has live-in staff and a day care worker. The staff of MOMMAS House is very dedicated to the goals of reducing homelessness, improving pregnancy outcomes and insuring healthier babies. Each of our three homes has supervisory staff and two are managed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The third is the transitional home where there is less intense supervision. Two interns, social work and counselor major helped with our residents this year with our part-time social worker for case management, as needed. There are seven full time employees and three part-time. There are about 130 volunteers, who work in various capacities, and who enhance our program in many ways. Additionally, five colleges sent over 60 students to experience Service-Learning with MOMMAS House. In addition, all the volunteers that adopted rooms at Jericho and turned “This Old House” into “House Beautiful”: Deloitte Touche employees (about 130+) performed a Service Day. Our Lady of Lourdes, Malverne adopted a room as did Julie’s Design Material. Primetime Butchers of Woodbury, The Tranchina Family of Massapequa Park, Mr. & Mrs. Iordanou of Upper Brookville, Keri Carlstrom and siblings (Locust Valley), Kelly’s Kafe, assisted by Puraltor of Jericho, Lauren Hoffman and Cindy Barnet who found us through the Amity Jr. League and Lee Perotta. Shelter Rock Church did yard clean-up and others volunteered too: Notre Dame Alumni, students and parent joined the Marianist Brothers from Kellenberg Memorial H.S., groups from Adelphi University, several groups from St. John’s University, “Feminists for Life” Fran Scarinci, Girl Scout Emma Hood who earned her badge by painting, furnishing and making the room’s bedding! As always, the Boy Scouts completed MOMMAS House projects too. Currently MOMMAS is working collaboratively with Catholic Charities and Nassau County government on several projects.

MOMMAS House is a member of the Pregnancy Services Network, the Residential Service Providers Group, and the Inter-Agency Council of Glen Cove.

There were 40 speaking engagements at organizations (both civic and religious), schools and women’s groups. There were featured spots on radio and television. Our newsletter is published 3-4 times/year and there have been several newspaper articles in the religious and secular press. Our web site ([www.mommashouse.org](http://www.mommashouse.org)) generated much interest and about 20 new volunteers and supporters. This was also the vehicle for referrals from all over the country.

Our 2006 operating costs were \$517,592 (not including funds raised to purchase the house). Because of increased fund raising revenue and grants, there was a net income of \$570,513. This has finally given us an opportunity to do needed improvements, and to have an ability to meet unforeseen expenses. In March 2006 we moved our offices to a better location and more space. A complete report may be obtained from the N.Y.S. Charities Registration Bureau ([www.oag.state.ny.us/charities.hym1](http://www.oag.state.ny.us/charities.hym1)) and Guidestar.com.

A capital funds campaign is about 50% toward raising the money to purchase a new house, to replace the one we lost. It is time that we stop renting and start investing income into property that MOMMAS owns. Our future is more secure and our organization continues to grow in an effort to meet the needs of these most vulnerable members of our society – the homeless mothers and their babies.