

## The knowledge, skills, and support you gave Eileen have made her a more confident parent!



PHOTO: KARA DELAHUNT

Pictured here at the Families First Break-fast with her Parenting Educator, Michelle Padden Dragone, Eileen told the crowd of her participation, “We learned so much from [the other parents], including that it’s completely normal for any one of us to run to her bedroom... and scream into a pillow.”

and disappointed when they weren’t met...I was setting her up for failure. Now I am more relaxed with my requests and have learned to meet her half way; we are both more productive this way.”

In parenting, moments of frustration are inevitable. Eileen also needed skills for handling those moments, and she got them from Families First: “I have learned to take a minute before reacting to the situation, evaluate and move from there.”

Before, Eileen didn’t know many people in her development. Through participation in Families First’s workshops, she built a community she can turn to for support—even now that the workshops have ended. “We learned so much from each other. Sharing our stories helped us realize that we are not alone in this journey. After this experience, I am more confident as a parent and an individual.” ■

Eileen is a single mom who balances caring for her 6-year-old daughter, Aryana, with working almost 50 hours a week. Through a collaboration among several organizations, she had the opportunity to attend 20 weeks of Families First parenting workshops in her Urban Edge housing development.

At Families First, we know all parents need knowledge, skills, and support. Eileen gained all three from the program.

She learned about how children grow, which helped her to set age-appropriate expectations. In retrospect she says, “My expectations were unrealistic...we were both frustrated

## Your Generosity is Giving More Families the Power of Parenting

At Families First, we know parents have the power to shape children’s futures. When parents are able to build strong, nurturing relationships with their children, their children become more resilient. With the new *Power of Parenting* program for parents of younger children,



PHOTO: KARA DELAHUNT

Parents participate in the *Power of Parenting* so that they can set their children up for success.

you are making it possible for Families First to reach and engage more vulnerable parents than ever before, empowering them to set their children up for success in school and in life.

In collaboration with organizations that serve large

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FY16  
Impact

## Together, We're Transforming the Lives of Parents and Children!



1,082 Parents served



2,085 Children benefited

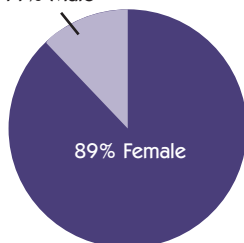


19 Communities touched

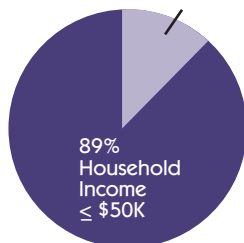


48 Partners

11% Male



11% > \$50K



Parents report a “moderate” or “great deal”  
of improvement in:

**90% Confidence in taking care of their child**  
**89% Understanding how to set age-based  
expectations**

*Continued, Power of Parenting*

numbers of parents, such as housing developments and early childcare providers, the first-of-its-kind program:

- Uses technology to engage parents throughout a multi-week program—and beyond
- Builds support networks within communities through parent leadership development
- Follows parents over time and uses evaluation for continuous improvement

With your support through the Families First Breakfast and other fundraising, *Power of Parenting* launched in November at two Urban Edge housing developments in Roxbury. Thank you! Rigorous evaluation is integral to the program. We look forward to sharing how your generosity empowers parents to shape children's lives for the better! ■

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### Meet Ariel Cudkowicz



**Families First:** Please tell us about yourself.

**AC:** I'm a husband and father first, but that's a difficult balance because I'm also an attorney and a managing partner at Seyfarth Shaw. The

biggest challenge of my life is balancing my work with being an engaged husband and father.

**FF:** How did you get involved with Families First?

**AC:** My son, Daniel, is 12 now, but when he was younger, my wife, Joanne, battled breast cancer—twice. Thankfully, she won, but during that crisis, I had to step up and do more. I was introduced to Families First through a Father's Breakfast event. Hearing parents who were helped by Families First speak about their challenges made me say, “Wow look at all that this parent has overcome.” It was inspirational at a time when I needed inspiration. I'm involved with other charities and, with the exception of a breast cancer charity, no other organization has touched me in the same way.

**FF:** What would you say to folks thinking about getting more involved with Families First?

**AC:** I would encourage people to experience for themselves either a Gathering or a workshop or a speaker. Parenting support transcends socio-economic differences. Once you see how it applies to you, it's easy to throw your hat in—it's natural to support making this kind of support available for parents with fewer resources. ■

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