

MEMBERSHIP MONDAY: 18 Degrees Inc.

Highlighting 18 Degrees's Impact on the Community

At the Providers' Council, we are proud to highlight the incredible work of our members who are making a difference in the human services sector. This week, for Membership Monday, we are featuring 18 Degrees, a vital organization dedicated to promoting well-being and strengthening families, youth, and communities across Western Massachusetts.

Who is 18 Degrees Inc. and What Do They Do?

Formerly known as Berkshire Children and Families, 18 Degrees has been a critical resource in the region for more than 130 years. Their mission is to promote well-being, strengthen children, youth, and families, and build better communities. Over time, they've adapted to meet the evolving needs of the people they serve – expanding their reach in 2006 beyond Berkshire County and adopting the name 18 Degrees in 2020 to better reflect their vision and impact.

18 Degrees operates across four key service areas: early education and care, foster care and adoption, child and family well-being, and youth and community development. Their client-centered approach begins by asking individuals about their goals and dreams – and then walking alongside them to build the resources, skills, and support needed to reach them. Their services span from prenatal parenting support and early childhood education to youth mentoring, financial literacy, and career development.

Signature programs like Brave Spaces help young people build resilience and social connectedness. Pittsfield Community Connection and West Main Connection offer mentoring, case management, and workforce support to guide young adults toward stability and opportunity. And Kids 4 Harmony, their free classical music program, uses the transformative power of music to develop confidence, discipline, and community among youth.



When Did 18 Degrees Inc. Join The Providers' Council and Why?

18 Degrees has been a longtime member of the Providers' Council, actively engaging with the network to strengthen the human services sector across the Commonwealth. Their journey began with engagement in the Council's education and training opportunities through Relias, which laid the foundation for deeper involvement – including committee participation and board membership. Their team has also been highly active in The Caring Force, with several staff stepping into roles as Captains and Ambassadors.

This year alone, they've participated in five State House visits, raising their voices on behalf of the sector to advocate for essential services and stronger support for frontline staff. Their work with the Council has helped inform their understanding of key legislative issues while reinforcing the power of collective advocacy.

In 2023, President and CEO Stephanie Steed was honored with the Council's Peer Provider Award, a distinction given to executive leaders who demonstrate excellence, compassion, and innovation in their work. The award highlights her commitment to equity, empowerment, and visionary leadership — values that reflect the heart of 18 Degrees.



A Voice from the 18 Degrees Inc. Team

In our new day, opportunities outshine barriers, and all people feel a sense of community and belonging.

Stephanie Steed - President & CEO at 18 Degrees Inc.



Looking Ahead: 18 Degrees' Continued Commitment to Support and Innovation

18 Degrees continues to meet individuals and families where they are, walking alongside them to provide pathways to stability, growth, and opportunity. Their ongoing work to strengthen their internal culture reflects a deep commitment to best practices that foster a supportive and engaging work environment.

As part of their strategic plan, they've launched affinity groups focused on motivational interviewing, supervision and management, and engaging lived experiences at work — all designed to empower staff, enhance collaboration, and promote inclusivity. Now in the third round of their leadership cohort program, 18 Degrees is also investing in emerging leaders through mentorship and hands-on experience, building a strong pipeline for the future of their organization and the sector.

Want to learn more about 18 Degrees Inc., and the Providers' Council? Visit our websites to explore our work, services, and upcoming initiatives!

[Providers' Council](#)

[18 Degrees Inc](#)