

MEMBERSHIP

MONDAY: St. Mary's Center for Women and Children

Highlighting St. Mary's Center for Women and Children'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 St. Mary's Center for Women and Children, a longtime member organization based in Dorchester that provides shelter, supportive housing, and wrap-around services to women, children, and families experiencing homelessness, poverty, and trauma. St. Mary's Center is helping families across Massachusetts achieve stability, opportunity, and long-term success.

Who is St. Mary's Center and What Do They Do?

Founded in 1933, St. Mary's Center for Women and Children (SMC) is a Dorchester-based, multi-service organization that provides life-changing support to some of Boston's most vulnerable populations. Each year, the Center serves more than 500 women, children, and families who are facing deep poverty, housing instability, and the effects of trauma.

What sets St. Mary's Center apart is its holistic, trauma-informed model of care. The organization not only provides emergency shelter and housing but also delivers comprehensive wrap-around services that promote long-term stability and well-being. These services include behavioral health care, education and employment programs, parenting support, and early childhood education.

Their residential programs range from emergency family shelters to transitional and permanent housing, including their Young Parenting Living Program for pregnant and parenting teens and First Home, a transitional housing program that offers continued wrap-around support for up to two years. SMC also partners with local developers to offer permanent, affordable housing for families, ensuring continued access to supportive services.

Beyond housing, St. Mary's Center is committed to helping families break intergenerational cycles of poverty through on-site childcare, job readiness programs, and access to behavioral health and medical services through key partnerships with organizations like Boston Healthcare for the Homeless and UMass Boston.

By meeting families where they are and walking with them on the path to self-sufficiency, St. Mary's Center fosters long-term outcomes for two generations at a time, creating a more equitable and stable future for the communities they serve.



When Did St. Mary's Center Join The Providers' Council and Why?

St. Mary's Center for Women and Children has been a valued member of the Providers' Council for the past eight years. As a mission-driven organization focused on disrupting cycles of poverty, trauma, and homelessness, SMC's work closely aligns with the Council's core values of equity, opportunity, and uplifting the human services workforce.

While they have not yet received an award from the Council, St. Mary's Center remains an active and engaged member — standing alongside fellow providers to advocate for systemic change and improved support for families across the Commonwealth. Their commitment to collaboration, compassion, and impact-driven service delivery is exactly what the Providers' Council strives to amplify and support.

Through ongoing participation in events, trainings, and collective advocacy efforts, SMC continues to advance shared goals that strengthen the human services sector and empower communities throughout Massachusetts.



A Voice from the St. Mary's Center's Team

As a proud member of the Providers' Council, St. Mary's Center for Women and Children (SMC) is honored to be part of a network of mission-driven organizations working to advance equity, opportunity, and dignity across Massachusetts. For over 30 years, SMC has supported families experiencing deep poverty, homelessness, and trauma through residential programs complemented by wraparound services that foster emotional well-being, educational achievement, increased economic mobility, and ultimately, two generations of stable futures. We are grateful to the Providers' Council for amplifying our collective work as family shelter providers across the state and advocating for policies that uplift our communities.

— Alexis Steel, President, St. Mary's Center for Women and Children



Looking Ahead: St. Mary's Center's Continued Commitment to Support and Innovation

As SMC looks to the future, they are deepening their commitment to disrupting cycles of poverty and homelessness by building a comprehensive ecosystem of care across the housing continuum. This bold, transformative next chapter will allow St. Mary's Center to support even more women, children, and families as they work toward building sustainable futures for generations to come. More updates on this exciting expansion will be shared soon.

On Thursday, October 23, 2025, St. Mary's Center will host its 22nd Annual Diamonds of Dorchester at Venezia in Dorchester. This signature event brings together more than 200 local leaders and supporters to celebrate the resilience of the families SMC serves and to look ahead at what's next for the organization. Sponsorship opportunities are currently available, and tickets will go on sale in August.

Want to learn more about St. Mary's Center and the Providers' Council? Visit our websites to explore our work, services, and upcoming initiatives!

[Providers' Council](#)

[St. Mary's Center for Women and Children](#)

[To learn more about this event and support St. Mary's Center's ongoing initiatives, please click here!](#)