

At Monadnock Developmental Services, our mission is to work toward inclusion, participation, and mutual relationships for all people who are at risk of isolation from community.

MDS welcomes any contributions you wish to make to help us provide quality services to individuals with disabilities and their families in southwestern NH.

If you would like to make a pre-planned legacy gift or give in memory of someone whose life has been touched by MDS, call Karen Peterson at 603-352-1304. We thank you for your generosity.

Monadnock Developmental Services
121 Railroad Street, Keene, NH 03431
603-352-1304 ♦ www.mds-nh.org



121 Railroad Street
Keene, NH 03431

Return Service Requested

Yes, I would like to help with a contribution to MDS for:

- Unmet Critical Needs
- MDS Dental Fund
- Other _____

Please contact me about how I can leave a legacy for those served by MDS.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

\$50 gift \$75 gift \$100 gift \$250 gift \$500 gift Other _____

Please make checks payable to Monadnock Developmental Services.

**You can also make a secure online donation at www.mds-nh.org.
100% of your contribution goes to fill unmet needs.**

2021

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Summer 2021

Helping people with developmental disabilities live and work in their community

Writing Music Together Provides Hope and Joy During the Pandemic

We wanted to share author Terry Farish's recent story from InDepthNH.org that shines a light on how two people at a shared-living residence turned to music during the pandemic. Catherine FitzPatrick and Michael Furlong have worked together for many decades since Michael left the Laconia State School, where he had lived for 10 years. Recent years have brought two big changes. First, Michael's elderly adoptive mother died. Then life shut down with COVID-19. Grief and isolation set in.

Catherine works for Psalm 33, Inc., a home care residential program in Greenfield, NH that serves people as one of Monadnock Developmental Services' providers. Catherine's sister, Mary FitzPatrick, is the director of Psalm 33, Inc. Michael moved there a few days before his nineteenth birthday, when he came out of the Laconia State School. He is now 56.

Catherine and Michael couldn't talk through the losses of the pandemic. Michael, who experiences disabilities including severe autism, doesn't have verbal language. He loves music — his favorites include Chick Corea, Mozart, bird calls, and 99.5 WCRB on the radio. Catherine is a composer who studied composition at the New England Conservatory and the Berklee College of Music. So, in imagining what they could share to express the grief and solace, it was natural for them both to turn to music.

Michael has always loved to listen to Catherine play the piano. During the pandemic, Catherine demonstrated to him how a composer makes choices in a chord progression. She invited him to make choices between two chords. Would he like a melody to go up or go down? Blinking meant yes. A blank face meant no. *(continued on next page)*



Catherine and Michael work together on a song to help express grief and create solace in a nonverbal way. Photo by Terry Farish

Inside Monadnock Views

- **Writing Music with Michael Provides Hope and Joy**
When Catherine and Michael couldn't speak the words to share grief and solace, it was natural for them both to turn to music.
- **A Trial for the MDS Mission: Inclusion & Participation vs. Isolation**
Keeping safe during the pandemic turned things upside-down, forcing MDS to back away from our commitment to inclusion, participation and relationships.
- **Run~Walk~Smile 5K/10K/1-Mile Race Set for October 30, 2021**
We're going live again with our 7th annual Keene road race, raising funds for dental care for adults with developmental disabilities.
- **Putting Your Contributions to Work – Right Here, Right Now**
Some specific examples of how your support makes a difference in the lives of people living here in the Monadnock Region.



Run~Walk~Smile 5K/10K Set for October 30, 2021



Beth Provost & Beth Staudt, Race Co-Captains

Run~Walk~Smile returns to Keene this fall with a safe, live event and lots of fun activities for families. We're raising funds for adult dental care for those with developmental disabilities.

How can you help? Join the fun and register for the race — you can run or walk the 5K or 1-Mile race, or step up to the 10K Chapman Challenge for runners only. Free T-shirts for the first 100 entrants, and this year we have added a Family Rate, allowing 25% discount for four or more family member entries.

Want to become a sponsor? We are signing up sponsors through mid-August. Join us as a Partner (\$250) or Co-Sponsor (\$500).

For more information, visit mds-nh.org or contact Karen Peterson at karenp@mds-nh.org or 603-352-1304. Put October 30 and RWS on your calendar. We hope to see you there!

Monadnock Developmental Services

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www.mds-nh.org

MDS Crisis Funds By the Numbers Over the Past 5 Years

\$99,000+ in crisis requests for children and adults with developmental disabilities over the past five years.

\$100,000+ in dental funding

1,000+ individuals served

Thank you for your support of MDS!



Monadnock Developmental Services provides supports and services to people with developmental and related disabilities so that they can live and work in their community.

MDS serves those with...

- Intellectual disabilities
- Cerebral palsy
- Autism
- Epilepsy
- Severe learning disabilities
- Acquired brain disorders
- Children with chronic health conditions

How MDS can help...

- Family support
- Housing and transportation
- Respite
- Employment support
- Planning for life transitions
- Information about benefits
- Early supports & services (0-3)
- Information and referral service

How YOU can help...

- Explore employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Volunteer as a tutor, friend or mentor
- Teach a craft, cooking or computer class
- Join us in October 2021 for Run~Walk~Smile 5K/10K/1-Mi
- Donate to the MDS fund for critical unmet needs

To find out more, call 603-352-1304 or email development@mds-nh.org.

Writing Music Provides Hope and Joy (continued from page 1)

They added “Creating Music” to Michael’s goals for his yearly plan with his care team that includes his MDS Service Coordinator, Ryann LaBombard. Catherine hoped inviting Michael to write a song could help him make his feelings known in a new way.

A black music notebook became key to their work. That’s where Catherine jotted their ideas, like character sketches. Michael had a planning board on which he selected the day’s activities. He often selected “Music, Breakfast, Write New Music” on his planning board. “Write new music” meant, get the black notebook.

Catherine played a chord, then wrote notations for the chords that Michael had chosen. They experimented. “What if we put the end of the song at the beginning? What if we repeat at the beginning? At the end? What is the music trying to say? Where does the song end?”

During the pandemic, in and out of quarantine,

Catherine and Michael composed eight songs, including one inspired by the memory of Michael’s mother called “Mothers and Sons.”

They are working on their ninth song. Catherine says, “Right now it’s called, “That Song That Makes You Go and Get the Black Notebook.”

Catherine talked about their journey with Michael. “We really feel he is brilliant,” she said. “We work on ways for him to learn how to ask for what he needs so that we can connect with his reality.”

Older sister Mary muses:

“Catherine has a gift. Her creativity, perseverance, determination and vision are second to none, particularly for people who do not use words to communicate.” That’s high praise coming from someone who herself has worked diligently with remarkable results on behalf of people with disabilities.

We’re grateful to author Terry Farish and InDepthNH.org for allowing MDS to share this story with our readers.



The FitzPatrick sisters (from 2015), Catherine (left) and Mary, continue to create innovative communication paths for nonverbal people with disabilities.

Local Community Provides Much-Needed Help

We’re grateful to local businesses and organizations who have stepped up to help MDS support individuals and their families:

Antioch University NE, Hilltop Golf Course, Ocean State Job Lot, the Peterborough Kiwanis Cub, C&S Wholesale Grocers, MMG Insurance and Clark-Mortenson.



Left, the Clark-Mortenson team presents a check on behalf of MMG Insurance to Joel Fitzpatrick, Finance Director, for MDS crisis funds.

Right, Alan Greene, MDS Executive Director, receives gift cards from Ocean State Job Lot to help MDS families and individuals affected by COVID-19.



MDS Mission vs. COVID19: Inclusion vs. Isolation

When the pandemic gate slammed down in March 2020, Monadnock Developmental Services was in the midst of doing what it does each and every day – providing community-based services so that those with developmental and related disabilities can live, work and participate in their community. When COVID hit, making sure that each individual and every staff member stayed safe became top priority.

Inclusion, participation, and mutual relationships for those people at risk of isolation from community — this is the mission of MDS. In 2020, COVID-19 restrictions and protocols tested every sense of that mission.

“As an organization that works hard to meet the struggles of isolation for those with disabilities, the pandemic turned everything upside-down for us. Suddenly going out into the community was no longer safe and we were all being told to stay home,” says Mary-Anne Wisell, MDS Director of Operations.

MDS needed to continue caring for the community’s children and adults with disabilities, many of whom have underlying health conditions that place them at higher risk and thus more vulnerable to the virus. With so many unknowns, providing services safely was of utmost concern.

MDS jumped into action immediately to organize remote communications via Zoom, FaceTime and telephone to maintain contact and service flow. Although offices were closed, services continued in as full force as possible. Staff members who provide direct, hands-on care were brought up to speed quickly on safety protocols and provided with PPE (much of it donated from generous local companies – thank you!), so that they could continue to care safely for people.

“It was a lonely world for families, staff and

everybody,” says Mary-Anne. “We had to be creative. Our inclusion and participation mission had to fall to the wayside for a while. We were successful with some virtual activities, but the rate of employment of the individuals we serve dropped substantially. Many jobs were

“As an organization that works hard to combat struggles of isolation for those with disabilities, the pandemic turned everything upside-down for us. The mission of inclusion and participation had to fall to the wayside for a bit.”

suspended or lost completely. Many won’t go back to those jobs.”

Fifteen months later, MDS is slowly finding its new normal. In late February and March, vaccination clinics were held in Keene for MDS individuals, staff, and families. The majority of our stakeholders are now

fully immunized. Direct care, which has never stopped, now feels safer, but constant vigilance is still the watchword. Offices are opening up slowly. Face-to-face meetings with individuals and families can be held outside under tents when weather permits, and CDC precautions are always followed whether inside or out.

Last year’s annual Run~Walk~Smile 5K/10K fundraiser had to go virtual in June, but thanks to community support, we were still able to replenish our Dental Fund. This year we will have a live race in Keene on Saturday, October 30, 2021 with safety protocols in place and chipped timing with staggered starts to keep everyone safe.

The stress on everyone – MDS staff, individuals and families – has been enormous. Services did not stop, COVID restrictions were an ever-changing challenge, but everyone’s resiliency, compassion and dedication has been amazing. On a positive note, we’ll continue to use the newly-implemented technologies to become even more effective and efficient in our work

We commend everyone in our community for their hard work and diligence in keeping people safe. We’re so glad to be making our way back to ensuring that people with disabilities can participate and be included in their community.

How MDS Puts Your Donations To Work for Unmet Needs

♦ Van Modification

A teenager with a congenital spinal disorder uses a wheelchair. To get her to and from appointments, school and for family outings, the parents needed to buy a larger van and have it modified to fit her wheelchair. The modifications cost as much as the van, but will serve the family for a long time.

♦ Access Ramp

A young man’s grandmother serves as caregiver. He needed a wheelchair ramp so she wouldn’t have to lift him and his chair into their van when they go out for appointments.

♦ Warm Winter Clothing

Over the past several years, we have been able to provide warm winter coats, boots, and other items for more than a dozen individuals who would otherwise go without. Medicaid doesn’t cover clothing expenses, so when winter comes, we want to be sure these vulnerable people don’t suffer from the cold.

♦ Adaptive Device

A middle-aged man with severe cerebral palsy uses a positioning wedge to help keep his respiratory system clear. This wedge also prevents bruising, scraping and general discomfort for him. After many years, this wedge became very worn and needed to be replaced. Because it is considered an alternative device, it is not covered by Medicaid.

♦ Lift System

A woman with a degenerative brain disease lives with her family, who is committed to keeping her with them as the disease progresses. The aging mother became unable to lift her daughter to accomplish daily living tasks, including transferring her to the shower and for transportation. A lift system helps with these transfers so that this family can continue to fulfill their vision of having their loved one remain at home.

Thank you for your support!