

SUNRISE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

In 2009, Sunrise Family Resource Center celebrated its 40th year of providing education and support services to the families and caretakers of young children. For many of those years the residents of the town of Shaftsbury have helped support this work through an annual appropriation for which we are deeply grateful.

Last year many of our services to Shaftsbury were focused on supporting the provision of quality childcare. The eight registered and licensed childcare programs located within Shaftsbury received ongoing technical assistance and professional development from Sunrise staff, including enrichment courses, access to an annual childcare conference, and our bi-monthly newsletter. Throughout the course of the year Shaftsbury childcare professionals participated in over 80 training opportunities. Sunrise staff also were available to provide parents with childcare referral assistance; and in two instances, outreach to connect families under particular stress with additional services. Sunrise administers the State of Vermont's childcare subsidy program which in 2009 assisted close to 600 families throughout Bennington County of which 24 families involving 42 children were from Shaftsbury. Childcare subsidies help families afford the necessary, but higher cost of quality childcare helping provide parents with peace of mind while they are working.

One of Sunrise's areas of expertise is working with young parents and pregnant teens. We offer an alternative high school setting, support groups, and outreach services to this population with the goal of enhancing their ability to provide for their children. Last year two Shaftsbury families were enrolled in this service. Additional services available to area residents include onsite childcare, a weekly playgroup, parenting classes, and outreach services to support families with young children. An additional five Shaftsbury families participated in these services for a total of 33 families--51 individuals--over the course of the year. In all, Sunrise worked to strengthen over 1000 Bennington County families building strong, healthy communities in the process. When money is tight, it is important to remember that investing in prevention now helps save many more dollars in the future. Thanks to the residents of Shaftsbury for helping to make this possible through your contributions.

Respectfully submitted

Linda Dean-Farrar, Executive Director