Turning Small Steps into Great Strides

Little Sisters of the Assumption
Family Health Service
“Before we found the Little Sisters, we were treated like less than nothing when we went to get help. But at Little Sisters, we felt respect and warmth. It took time, but we are stronger and healthier now, and we no longer feel alone. And that’s what gave us the courage and spirit to push forward on our own.”

— Merce, East Harlem mother

We are

LSA Family Health Service —

“The Little Sisters”

At Little Sisters, our mission for over 50 years has been to bring out the strength in families affected by poverty, hardship or illness by bringing skilled care and services right to them at home and supporting them at our warm and welcoming East Harlem center.

Our door is always open to anyone who needs our help. We provide the interventions and care that vulnerable, at-risk families need over the short term. But we also look beyond their immediate needs and how they can achieve lasting stability and growth. We do that by building caring, respectful relationships and offering multiple services, which over time will improve their health, strength and resilience.

We keep families together and moving forward.

www.littlesistersfamily.org
Turning small steps into great strides

takes time, skill and patience. But in a 21st-century reality defined by budget cuts, understaffed public agencies and a dwindling concern for the less fortunate living in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods, too many families get only enough piecemeal help to survive from day to day—and rarely get enough support to thrive from year to year.

That’s where LSA Family Health Service differs. We focus on the future.

Step by step, over time, at Little Sisters we support parents and their young children with a potent combination of caring relationships and skilled services that help them progress toward their full potential.
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Dear Friends,

As we enter our 55th year as part of the East Harlem community, we remain steadfast and true to the original mission of the Little Sisters—helping families living in poverty or undermined by crisis. Much has been learned over the years about the root causes of poverty and how they can be addressed. Toxic stress, caused by poverty itself, has a damaging effect on the development of children in their early years. Our outcomes show that we can help prevent and mitigate the negative effects poverty has on the health of an infant, toddler or young child—from asthma and poor nutrition to the serious neurological, hormonal, cognitive and physical affects and delays which afflict thousands of children in East Harlem.

A core element of the Little Sisters’ mission is to open doors to multi-dimensional wellness and growth through skilled care and proven interventions. Through such measures, we believe we can help assure that a child’s future will neither be defined nor blunted by the extreme poverty or crises afflicting a child’s early, innocent years. That’s what we call turning small steps into great strides toward markedly improved lives.

We are deeply grateful to all of the individuals and institutions who have supported our mission.

Sincerely,

Gary S. Carter, LCSW
Executive Director

Ralph Siciliano, Esq.
Chair, Board of Directors
Despite modest gentrification in NYC neighborhoods that has displaced some low-income families, many of whom live well below the federal poverty threshold, neighborhoods like East Harlem and the South Bronx remain the poorest in NYC. In fact, more children and families lived in poverty in 2012 than the previous year. The New York Times reported in 2012 that one in five NYC residents lives in poverty.

In short, the numbers don’t always tell the full story of the health impact poverty and adversity have on struggling families: As we see luxury condos built alongside public housing and substandard low-rise housing filled with working poor families, various public health statistics and rates—infant mortality, hunger, asthma, to name but a few—seem to have dropped slightly, potentially giving a false signal that the health crisis in these neighborhoods has begun to retreat.

But, at LSA, we actually see increasing numbers of families in need of our food pantry, WIC, health care and family support for mental health issues and crises. The strain of poverty on families remains harsh and multifaceted, and so our response involves a multi-service, holistic model that can address the many dimensions of family health and well-being of our urban neighbors in need.

Poverty rates continue to rise, with the rates among children and minorities showing even greater increases. In 2011, the NYC poverty rate for children rose 2% to 29.8%, while 39% of Hispanic children lived in poverty.* El Barrio remains a neighborhood with a high number of minority and low-income residents, chiefly Hispanic and Black, as well as a broadly diverse range of new immigrant and new professional residents.

Overall, Harlem/El Barrio (Community District 11) and Central Harlem have among the worst or highest rates in NYC for risk factors to the well-being of children. These risk factors include poor economic conditions, preventable illness, substandard housing, abuse or neglect, quality of education and environmental impacts on health.*

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Numbers That Tell the Story of Disadvantaged Families in Harlem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Poverty Rate: 40 to 55%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded Rental Housing: 15 to 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children receiving Cash Assistance: 16 to 19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Rate: 7.6 per 1000 births (4.8% Hispanics, 8.6% for Blacks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Pregnancy: 57% of all NYC teen births (54.9 per 1000 births) (43.2% per 1000 Hispanic Teens &lt; age 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Employment for Hispanics: 44.7% (Blacks 56%, NYC 31.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Living in Fair to Poor Housing Conditions: 47.8 to 58.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Sources of Air Pollution: 3 bus depots and 1 wastewater treatment plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma Hospitalizations for Children &lt; age 15 ranging from 9.9 to 12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children without Health Insurance: 8 to 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect: Ranked 3rd, 45.7% (NYC 38.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obesity among Elementary and Middle Schoolers: 18.2 to 21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children qualifying for Free School Lunch: 83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistics from Citizens’ Committee for Children of NYC, Inc.
Our holistic model and core programs have been developed to address the needs of families whose health and well-being are undermined and compromised on so many different fronts. We are true to our core programs and mission, yet we evolve as nimbly as possible to meet spikes or changes in needs or community demographics. At LSA, we believe addressing just one aspect of health—with just one static solution—is simply not enough to improve lives in a lasting and measurable way.

LSA’S HOLISTIC MODEL IMPROVES LIVES

LSA’S CORE PROGRAMS:
ADVOCACY with FOOD PANTRY
EARLY INTERVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND FAMILY ASTHMA
FAMILY SUPPORT PREVENTIVE SERVICES
PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (HBS) NURSING
THE SHARING PLACE THRIFT STORE
YOUTH AND EDUCATION

*For full program descriptions, see Pages 12-13.
Young Children photos: Chai Annexy
In recent years, we’ve witnessed the increasing vulnerability of young children in neighborhoods like East Harlem. Living in poverty or substandard housing conditions, or growing up chronically stressed by hardship, crisis or abuse—increasingly known as toxic stress—has been shown to have a direct and negative impact on the healthy development of infants and toddlers in particular. It can be difficult to reverse the damage done in later years. Intervening early is key.

In response, we’re paying even closer attention to the youngest and most vulnerable in our community. We’ve honed all of our programs so we can better intervene early and help prevent the littlest from suffering from delays, illness and even death. Better yet, we are helping to redefine the future of children in our community by nurturing their health and well-being.

We maintain a focus, across all of our programs, on nurturing healthy relationships, because the quality of the relationship between family members, particularly between mother and infant/child in the early years, can help nurture a child’s healthy emotional, physical and cognitive development.

Our programs, and our holistic model of delivering them, offer support and care options for the whole family. Because the wellness of the family impacts the youngest members most dramatically.

22% of LSA’s clients are under the age of 6.

936 hungry families came to LSA’s Food Pantry in 2012.
More than half of East Harlem children are born into poverty,* making it one of the poorest neighborhoods for children in the entire city. Not coincidentally, infants born in El Barrio/ East Harlem bear 8 times the risk of dying than do infants born in the Upper East Side, just blocks away. Approximately 11% of newborns suffer from low birth weight in East Harlem, and 8.2% of women get late or no pre-natal care. East Harlem has the highest rate of teen pregnancy in Manhattan, pregnancies that generally carry a higher risk.

LSA Family Health Service’s home-visiting nurses have been bringing skilled pre-natal, post-natal and newborn care to El Barrio families for over 50 years, regardless of their ability to pay. With regular care and monitoring, serious and life-threatening conditions like pre-eclampsia, thyroid dysfunction, low birth weight, poor nutrition, and gestational diabetes can be caught and treated in time—avoiding needless suffering, delays, chronic health issues, or even loss of life. Last year LSA nurses made 471 post-partum home visits and 247 Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative visits.

*Mothers and newborns in neighborhoods like the South Bronx and the Lower East Side also suffer dramatically in comparison to those residing in more affluent NYC neighborhoods.

LSA’s skilled nurses made **2,572** home visits in 2012, of which **1,128 (44%)** were for maternal and infant care (pre-natal, neonatal, post-partum, Infant Mortality Reduction Initiative).
“Moms and newborns should not suffer from preventable illness—or lose their lives—simply because poverty or crisis prevents them from getting proper care.”

— Sr. Suzanne Deliee
LSA Home Visiting Nurse
When a new family comes to LSA Family Health Service for the first time, many uncertainties lie ahead. The path to wellness and strength will need to be identified and evolved over time so that real and lasting improvement and progress can be made.

In the beginning, much is uncertain.

Yet, at Little Sisters, we remain unwaveringly certain about the value of offering care and services at home. That’s why the vast majority of our programs offer a home visiting component from skilled nurses (the heart of our services), community health workers, social workers, clinicians, therapists, case managers and more.

Indeed, years of experience have made us quite convinced that skilled care offered at home is especially effective, because people respond well to therapy, health care and interventions made where they feel most at ease—in their own living room or kitchen. Each home visit allows us to learn about our clients’ lives, their circumstances, their joys, or even any additional sources of adversity that may be affecting their health and well-being, whether it be asthma-exacerbating mold, a neglected child, domestic abuse or an at-risk pregnancy. We can then address those issues, too.

Focus: Combining Home Visits with On-Site Support
Home care is personal.

It allows us to build trusting, mutual relationships with clients that help them heal, draw them out from the shadows of isolation and build a support community with Little Sisters as their cornerstone.

Combined with support from our on-site advocates and program components that strengthen and augment the work done during home visits, including early childhood socialization classes, academic tutoring programs, breastfeeding support groups, and therapies for developmental delays, our home-based holistic model is virtually unmatched in NYC.

Parenting and Early Childhood (HBS) served 8% more children under 3 and 9% more parents than in 2011. Over 76% of children enrolled showed improvement or stayed on track to achieve their individualized goals.

Over 99% of the 257 children in LSA’s Family Support Preventive Services in 2012 were kept with their family and out of foster care.

LSA Home Visits in 2012

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>2,572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>416</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parenting and Child</td>
<td>1,318</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development (HBS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Intervention</td>
<td>216</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,522</strong></td>
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Visits
LSA Family Health Service Core
Human Service Programs
A Holistic Approach to Family Health

**ADVOCACY with FOOD PANTRY** helps families meet their immediate need for food and the longer-term issues of living in poverty or crisis. Our advocates educate families about their rights and empower them to access needed services or resources. We assist with benefits applications, refer to LSA and non-LSA programs, offer immigration advice and help tenants avoid eviction and get needed repairs. Visitors to our client-choice food pantry receive fresh and healthy food choices and meet with an advocate to evaluate the fuller extent of their needs.

**EARLY INTERVENTION** (EI) each year treats 275 infants and toddlers (to age 3) with diagnosed developmental delays or disabilities, helping them achieve their full potential and maximize daily living skills. A specialized team of certified clinicians makes each child’s evaluation: a developmental specialist, social worker, speech pathologist, nurse and/or physical and occupational therapists. Treatment combines home and on-site therapies. We offer special expertise in serving indigenous Mexican families with distinct cultural family dynamics and languages.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** was established in 1997 in response to the high rate of asthma among children in East Harlem. Our community health workers help families modify housing conditions and household living habits in order to improve indoor air quality, asthma symptoms and overall health and well being. We assess the home environment, teach safe and effective ways to address unhealthy conditions, and advocate for tenant repairs that impact health.

**FAMILY SUPPORT PREVENTIVE SERVICES** works to strengthen fragile or crisis-impacted families and keep them safe and together through caring, hands-on interventions by our skilled staff. With an overall focus on building strong, trusting relationships, we offer these key program components: in-home family treatment, case management advocacy, referrals for specialized treatment, parenting support and improvement of daily life management skills. Contracted by NYC ACS, we strive to help our families meet their treatment goals through services tailored to each family’s specific needs.
**NURSING**, our Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA), provides direct nursing care to up to 100 patients at a time, making over 2,500 home visits a year. Care is provided to acute and chronically ill patients of all ages in their own homes. In addition, LSA nurses offer a special expertise in Maternity Outreach, including pre-natal and post-partum care to mothers and follow-up care to newborns, as well as parenting classes and support groups to promote wellness and build nurturing relationships.

**PARENTING and CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT** (Home-based with Socialization) works with East Harlem families whose young children (to age three) are at risk for developmental delays. Through home visits and on-site socialization groups, we offer support to parents facing the challenges of raising their children, with an emphasis on improving parent and child interactions and helping parents understand their child’s behaviors and development. We track each child’s progress against specific goals, and refer children with suspected delays to other services.

**THE SHARING PLACE THRIFT SHOP** is East Harlem’s popular destination for those in need of good quality, bargain-priced clothes and housewares. It’s where anyone with a tight budget can shop with dignity, meet their neighbors, build community and learn about LSA’s programs.

**YOUTH and EDUCATION** provides services to youth at risk of underperforming or failing in school, giving them opportunities to improve their grades performance through after school Homework Help and Tutoring in English and Math. For girls entering grades 7-9, we offer a Girls’ Mentoring Program, which includes exposure to the arts and cultural activities. Together with parents, we support each student, and offer counseling about educational and community programs, assistance navigating the education system, and guidance in mentoring their own children. We encourage at-risk youth to explore their creativity through Arts Workshops.
2012 Management Report

In 2012, LSA served more clients (2,769) and families (2,159) than at any time over the past five years, a nearly 10% increase since 2008—which in turn resulted in the highest number of program enrollments over the same time period (3,687).

These numbers illustrate the great need for the agency’s services on the part of disadvantaged families in East Harlem and other NYC neighborhoods. We remain an exception among health and human service agencies in NYC due to our ability to offer home visits across all of our core programs.

At the year’s outset, LSA’s leadership identified, as a top organizational priority, the need to create a plan to improve the agency’s alignment of revenue and expenses. The executed plan achieved the following components and played a key role in progressing LSA forward in reducing expenses while encouraging financial growth and stability:

- A successful campaign to replenish LSA’s Sustaining Fund elicited 100% Board participation, a $2 to $1 challenge match—and ultimately met our goal of raising $1.6M;
- The defining and implementation of an agency restructure by LSA’s board and key staff, guided by a specialized consulting firm, to reduce our deficit;
- The hiring of an experienced Development Director in Fall 2012, who immediately began collaborating with the Board and agency leadership to set new goals and strategies for increasing individual giving and grant support;
- Establishing a professional co-employment arrangement with a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) to strengthen our HR compliance and leverage better health benefits and rates for all eligible staff.

While carefully strengthening our financial foundation, LSA once again placed a high value on improving our program outcomes and maximizing the impact we can make in helping to improve our clients’ lives.

- In 2012, we initiated a comprehensive program evaluation process, funded by Robin Hood Foundation, of our early childhood programming working in close collaboration with researchers from New York University’s Center for Research on Culture Development and Education. The results of the evaluation will help us refine and strengthen our Parenting and Early Childhood programs beginning in 2013.
- We continued our previously established research partnership with St. John’s University to test the impact of LSA’s holistic model of service delivery.
- We more carefully aligned our services to target families with young children, in particular, because our unique strengths, core competencies and reputation so clearly indicate the strong and measurable impact LSA can make on the present and future of these families, especially the youngest babies and children, through better health and stabilized lives.

We look forward to seeing increased strength for LSA and even greater impact on the families of our community in 2013.
**OPERATING REVENUE**

**ANNUAL MANAGEMENT STATISTICS**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tr>
<td>FEE FOR SERVICE &amp; OTHER INCOME</td>
<td>$804,172</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOUNDATIONS</td>
<td>$1,394,531</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<td>GOVERNMENT</td>
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<td>DONATIONS</td>
<td>$792,281</td>
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<td>THRIFT STORE</td>
<td>$397,121</td>
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<td>SPECIAL EVENTS</td>
<td>$331,165</td>
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<tr>
<td>INVESTMENT INCOME</td>
<td>$167,060</td>
<td>3%</td>
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2012 TOTAL $4,890,993

**FEE FOR SERVICE & OTHER INCOME** $804,172
**FOUNDATIONS** $1,394,531
**GOVERNMENT** $1,004,663
**DONATIONS** $792,281
**THRIFT STORE** $397,121
**SPECIAL EVENTS** $331,165
**INVESTMENT INCOME** $167,060

**OPERATING EXPENSES**

**ANNUAL MANAGEMENT STATISTICS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
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<td>PROGRAMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT &amp; GENERAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>FUNDRAISING</td>
<td>$340,456</td>
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</table>

2012 TOTAL $4,796,046

**PROGRAMS** $4,063,840
**MANAGEMENT & GENERAL** $391,750
**FUNDRAISING** $340,456
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Martha Land
Ann Lasusa
Let Lee
Euny Lee
Wendy D. Lee & Easton Ragsdale
Andrew Lehrer
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Alex & Liz Carey
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Phyllis Kossos
Bette Kerr
Lorraine Buckley
Margaret L. Zwiren
Marge Duffy
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IN-KIND

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St. Augustine Church
St. Francis de Sales Church
St. John’s University
St. John’s Bread and Life
St. Monica’s Church
St. Thomas More Church
Stroock & Stroock
The Brookdale Foundation
The Legal Aid Society / Robin Hood Legal Services Initiative
The Linen Shop
The Pajama Program
The Walt Disney Company
TJ Maxx
Today Show
Toys for Tots
WIC Program
Derek Wile
Gabrielle & Robert Wile
The Wile Family
Geoffrey Zacharian

New York City Administration for Children’s Services
New York City Council
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
NYC Dept of Health/EIP
TEFAP - The Emergency Food Assistance Program (Food Bank of New York)
The Manhattan Borough President
United Way of New York City
*Deceased

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the individuals, families, businesses and community organizations who have generously donated items to The Sharing Place, our thrift store.

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Help struggling East Harlem families live healthier, stable and economically promising lives by supporting LSA Family Health Service’s programs:

www.littlesistersfamily.org/donate
Contact Tosha Connors, Director of Development, tconnors@lsafhs.org or 646.672.5279

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Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service, Inc.
333 E. 115th St., New York, New York 10029

LSA is a CHARITY NAVIGATOR 4-STAR CHARITY
Our Mission

The Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service, Inc., founded in 1958, is a non-profit, community-based organization working with the families of East Harlem to address the physical, emotional, educational and spiritual dimensions of family health.

Our programs, offered at our center in East Harlem and in the homes of the families we serve, are designed to empower those who have the least access to the basic necessities of life in the conviction that the entire community grows when individuals and families are affirmed in their own dignity.


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