

Aspire Developmental Services, Inc.  
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## Help Aspire to greatness

New name, new home, same mission.

Aspire Developmental Services, Inc. – formerly known as Cerebral Palsy Association of Eastern Massachusetts (CPEM) – is on the move as it seeks to increase its capacity to serve North Shore children with developmental needs and their families. The organization, which has been serving children and families on the North Shore for almost 65 years, has purchased a building at 176 Franklin St. in Lynn.

Aspire's new facility will give it triple the amount of space – 15,000 square feet – it currently has on Johnson Street, allowing it to double the play group opportunities for children receiving Early Intervention services. This new facility provides a more centralized location for successfully connecting families to related community services.

Parents will also benefit from the new building, with space for parent training, the No. 1 request by parents. More centrally located, the new site will include approximately 18 parking spaces.

The cost for the building project is expected to be \$4.3 million, about half of which will come from a state grant, bank financing and the sale of the existing property. Aspire has embarked on a \$2 million capital campaign to cover the rest.

### What's in a name?

Founded in 1951 as the Cerebral Palsy Council of the North Shore, the agency has undergone three name changes and a significant shift in the scope of the services it provides. To better reflect the nature of its longstanding expertise in Early Intervention services and its ability to serve individuals with a wide variety of physical and developmental needs, the organization recently changed its name to Aspire Developmental Services, Inc.

Since 1974, the primary mission has been to provide Early Intervention services to children up to the age of 3. Children who are served are considered at risk for a variety of issues, including Down syndrome, autism, hearing and vision loss, speech and motor delays, mental health and socio-economic risk.

The hallmark of Early Intervention is that therapists deliver the services in the home or a community setting. "We go to homes, playgrounds, wherever the child will benefit the most," says Lori Russell, acting executive director. "We provide services that are embedded in the child's daily routine. We also help parents access community services that benefit their family."

Aspire also has an Early Intervention Partnership Program (EIPP), one of only eight in the state. The goal of that program is to reduce infant mortality by identifying risks to parents and babies, often before the babies are born. In 2014-15, approximately 11% of children served by Aspire (as compared to 2.4% statewide) came through this program. The agency also runs Little Explorers pre-school, which is open to typically developing children and those with mild developmental delays.

### **The need is great**

In 2014-15, Aspire provided services to 1,856 children. Two-thirds of the families served were minority, and 78% were below 200% of the poverty level.

Other significant environmental factors impacting these children include: 41.4% where maternal education is less than 11 years (17.5% statewide); 30% lacking social support (22.2% statewide); 28.1% inadequate food, clothing, shelter (18.6% statewide) and 3.5% living in shelters.

Aspire has a multi-disciplinary team that includes Early Intervention specialists, occupational, physical and speech therapists, and social workers. Translators speak more than a dozen languages.

There is no income component to receive services, which are covered by private insurance, Mass Health or the Department of Public Health. There is no direct out-of-pocket cost to families.

“We have more than 700 active clients at all times,” Russell said. “The new building will allow us to serve more families in more modern and suitable space.”

### **Building for the future**

The cost for the building project breaks down as follows:

\$750,000 – acquisition of new building  
\$2.625 million – construction  
\$200,000 – furniture and equipment  
\$675,000 – development costs (architecture, legal, etc.)  
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**Total: \$4.25 million**

Funding sources include:

\$1 million – State Childcare Bond Fund Grant  
\$250,000 – sale of Johnson Street property  
\$1 million – mortgage  
**\$2 million – capital campaign**  
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**Total: \$4.25 million**

Please help us reach our goal. A gift to Aspire is an investment in the future of the children we serve and it will have a lasting impact. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.  
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