Jessica's Story

Jessica grew up in Rhode Island in a supportive home, never imagining she would face housing and financial challenges. Her family moved to Florida and then Wellesley, where her mom rented an apartment to give them a fresh start. In 2004, Jessica, her then-husband, and young family moved into low-income housing in Needham after her mom relocated to New Hampshire. She has lived in Needham ever since, raising four children: two in college, one in high school, and one in sixth grade.



graduation!

In 2013, after sudden job loss and health crises, Jessica took restaurant jobs to support her family while managing tight budgets and caring for her children.



family

"I didn't want my kids to feel the stigma that sometimes comes with financial struggles," she shares. "I wanted them to look clean, have good manners, and feel like they belonged."



family celebration

In those early years, Jessica relied on the food pantry and vividly remembers the joy of giving her son his first bike for Christmas through the food pantry's Holiday program—a simple gift that brought hope and normalcy. As circumstances improved, she turned to Council programs mindfully: Thanksgiving meals, wardrobe support, school supplies, and extracurricular activities scholarships—helping her children start the school year with confidence.

Determined to set an example, Jessica returned to school, proudly earning her BA and then master's degree in Industrial Organizational Psychology in 2024. "You've put ease on my mind," Jessica says, grateful for support that allowed her family to move forward with dignity and hope.

"The Council has helped me achieve my personal goals... and it's helped my kids understand volunteering, giving back, and being able to help people in need. And even though I have been in need, I also have been able to give by donating back."

Jessica, Council Customer