

FEAR, RUMOR & TRUTH

FEAR / RUMOR: This is a Homeless Shelter that will house criminals, sex offenders and drug addicts.

TRUTH: The Jericho Family Support Center is strictly for families with children. It is not a half-way house for criminals transitioning into society, it is not a methadone clinic for recovering drug addicts. Sex offenders will NEVER be placed in the Jericho Family Support Center because children will reside there. The purpose is to provide a safe, secure, stable environment for families. The agency operating it has 29 such facilities in Nassau and Suffolk County, including a larger motel with 100 families in Suffolk County since 2013.

FEAR / RUMOR: Crime will go up and criminals will be roaming the streets of our neighborhood and bring drugs into our schools.

TRUTH: In addition to a safe secure stable environment for families in need, one of the goals of CHI is to create value in the community. Creating this type of facility to serve families will ultimately eliminate the other “welfare” motels in the Jericho area that do not provide services and are unregulated and unsupervised.

To ensure the safety of these families and our community, the Jericho Family Support Center will have 24/7 staff coverage, 100 CCT security cameras installed throughout the facility, a 9pm weekday curfew, an 11pm weekend curfew, and bag checks for everyone entering the facility.

FEAR / RUMOR: These families will be living there indefinitely for years.

TRUTH: CHI has an innovative system to deal with homelessness which sets a “blue ribbon” standard for homeless families designed to get them back on their feet and into permanent homes in a documented average of six to nine months. In addition to providing a safe, secure, stable environment for these families in need, CHI is a HUD-approved housing counseling agency, and their educators and counselors are experts in the field. They provide services to help families transition more quickly into permanent housing, including assistance with housing applications, phone calls to landlords and realtors and education services to help sustain permanent housing.

FEAR / RUMOR: Hundreds of children will enter our schools and stay indefinitely.

TRUTH: Of the 80 families that have been interviewed for placement in this facility, parents of only 19 children have expressed interest in registering their children in the Jericho schools.

Most opt to stay in their original home school districts because once families are placed into permanent housing, they must go to school in their home district at the completion of the school year.

FEAR / RUMOR: Jericho's #1 ranking will drop because of new homeless students.

TRUTH: We are #1 because of outstanding teachers, support staff, principals, our Superintendent and our Board of Education members, who work tirelessly in their commitment to excellence and success for EVERY student to realize the potential for each child. They have all created a nurturing, learning environment rooted in kindness and respect for everyone. We have had children who are homeless attending our schools for many years, up to 45 students at one point, and our ranking has never changed because their commitment has remained steadfast and unwavering. Neither race, religion, creed, sexual orientation, heritage, economic status nor the ability of the parents to speak English has been a factor in the district's commitment to our children. To indicate anything other than that is not only an insult but a lie.

FEAR / RUMOR: The school district knew about this the whole time and kept the community in the dark.

TRUTH: There were preliminary discussions with the school district several months ago; however, there was nothing for the school district to communicate with the community. The Hampton Inn was only acquired in July, and was in review by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. The state inspects and certifies such facilities and typically does not consult the local community.

FEAR / RUMOR: It is unsuitable because there is no grocery store within walking distance and no crosswalks.

TRUTH: Three meals a day will be provided to these families. They do not have stoves in their rooms for cooking, so trips to the grocery stores would be unnecessary. Crosswalks are close by on Jericho Turnpike at safe crossing areas like by the Dunkin Donuts and The Home Depot. In addition, there will be a van and bus service providing trips to jobs and appointments for the families.

FEAR / RUMOR: This will destroy our community and tear us apart.

TRUTH: Only actions of hate based on fear can do that. Examples of this would be 1) illegally protesting at our community grocery store (Whole Foods is on private property) with a petition to stop the “homeless shelter” under the guise of looking out for the rights of the homeless 2) putting up signs of hate throughout our peaceful community under the guise of need for “transparency” with the hateful message of “say NO to homeless shelter” or 3) sending hate filled, sometimes racist emails to our Board of Education, Superintendent and our elected officials. These actions run in direct opposition to the welcoming, caring community we know Jericho to be, and is a misrepresentation of the values at the core of our community. We are kind, inclusive and treat our neighbors with dignity and respect. So, in facing our fears we put this website together to keep our community informed with TRUTHS based in reality, rather than rumors based on fear. Our community can UNITE under the umbrella of KINDNESS. Visit <https://supportjerichofamilies.org/> or <https://communityhousing.org/> for more information.

**"A single act of kindness
can cause ripples of healing"**

Anonymous