

Children's Friend and Family holds grand opening

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SALEM — Thursday night's rain didn't deter a large crowd from attending the official opening of the new headquarters of Children's Friend and Family Services, a counseling agency whose roots in the city go back more than 150 years.

"We're thrilled that Children's Friend can not only stay in Salem, but can thrive and prosper in a terrific space," Mayor Kim Driscoll said.

The agency, which had been on Bridge Street for the past half-century, bought the former Endicott School on Boston Street last year for \$350,000.

Following a \$1.7 million renovation, it doubled its space, adding more counseling rooms, a new education training center and its first art therapy room.

"Given the history of children in this neighborhood and building, it was just a really good fit," Driscoll said of the city's decision to sell the property to a social service agency rather than a developer. "It's not only a good fit, it's an amazing transformation."

Children's Friend and Family Services saw 4,500 children and family members last year from Essex County. It has offices in area schools and in several North Shore communities.



LINSEY TAIT/Staff photo

People tour the Children's Friend and Family Services facility at 110 Boston St. during the grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday.