



NEWS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES
NAPA VALLEY

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



“The pandemic has magnified just how critical we are as a safety valve for those who are suffering, most often women and children.”

“Stay Home and Stay Safe” was the theme for most of us this year, but for some, staying home has been anything but safe. Around the world, as communities have been on “lockdown,” intimate partner violence has been on the rise. Staying at home with someone who is controlling and abusive is something that is not openly talked about, and the options for relief, like leaving home or filing a police report, can feel overwhelming and impossible, particularly in times of disaster, in a pandemic, or in our case, both.

This has been one of the most important times in NEWS’ 39-year history, to be sure. The pandemic has magnified just how critical we are as a safety valve for those who are suffering, most often women and children. We knew we needed to provide options that made sense in this time, and that has been the laser focus of our efforts since March of 2020.

It has been our intention to keep our front line staff safe and healthy, while shifting and adding resources for shelter, housing, and crisis response. We also “zoomed” in on connecting with children, who no longer had school and sports as an outlet, who were living in volatile homes. We never stopped answering calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, because sometimes, just knowing you are not alone, can get you through the day.

We are grateful for funding from the City and County of Napa, the State, the foundations, and the other funders and individuals who responded and helped us to expand and shift our resources for desperately needed housing, shelter, and emergency aid. We are forever grateful to you.

I have a sense of hope that there will be brighter days ahead. I also have a sense of pride in the way our team continues to rise to the task, even as their own lives are challenged.

Please know, we are here if you need us. You can count on it.

Thank you.

Tracy Lamb
NEWS Executive Director

MISSION: NEWS is dedicated to providing safety, hope, healing and empowerment for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. Equally, NEWS is committed to promoting safe communities and social change through prevention, intervention, education, and advocacy.



*“They Tried to Bury Us
but They Didn’t Know
We Were Seeds”* ~Mexican Proverb*

Despite the pandemic,
we continued to grow.

Can you imagine the effort it takes to leave a violent and abusive home and start a new life? Can you imagine how scary it would be to think you might lose it once you were safe? COVID-19 and the fires threw survivors into joblessness and created panic and fear. This year we worked tirelessly to acquire 15 additional funding sources for housing and homeless prevention. Thank you to our city, county, foundations and individual donors who made this possible.

JUST A FEW HIGHLIGHTS AND THANK YOUS

When COVID-19 hit, our “safe house” suddenly became “unsafe” from the virus. In this moment of need, several local hotels became our unsung heroes. They donated hundreds of room nights, at no cost, to those who needed safety. This is community at its finest. **To the hotels, which unfortunately we can’t name publicly, because we are still using them today, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.**

The pandemic created an urgent and immediate need for food. Survivors began calling to ask their advocates for help. The Napa Valley Community Foundation is always there in times of disaster. They immediately provided NEWS with food cards that we were able to disperse to families that were in fear of going hungry. **Thank you Napa Valley Community Foundation!**

Sometimes, in crisis there is opportunity. During the closure we expanded and improved the safety features of our administrative office and shelter space. We can’t wait to welcome survivors back to our new and improved spaces! **Thank you Napa Valley Vintner’s for your support of our beautiful remodel.**

There are so many more to thank. To everyone who thought of NEWS during this time, **we appreciate you!!**

*based on a poem by Dinos Christianopoulos

Nowhere will you find a more inspiring group of people than the NEWS staff. Under the guidance of our fearless Executive Director, Tracy Lamb, and backed by our dedicated Board of Directors, NEWS has continued to step up despite adversity and serve those who need them the most.



Not floods nor fire nor fear of a deadly virus has kept us from helping our beloved community. Throughout the year, we have volunteered for other non-profits when the need arose. In addition to encouraging our community to support our cause, we also continue to encourage our community to support the causes of our partner organizations. We do all of this and more because we believe that we are all stronger together.

This past year, we didn't just survive, we thrived. We showed our resiliency. We nurtured and empowered those around us. We recognized each other's worth. We kept each other safe.

Being a part of NEWS is personal to me.

Some years ago, my co-worker was in a very abusive relationship. I made a call to NEWS to ask for guidance. Within ten minutes, a member of the NEWS team was at my office providing information, support, and, yes, love.

On another occasion, I was at the NEWS office when a member of the staff came in looking defeated. When I asked her if she was okay, she shared, "I did what my client needed and that makes me feel good. I'll be fine now." She had spent the day in court listening to horrific audiotapes of a man abusing his daughter. That act saved the mother from having to listen to the tapes.

During the 4th of July Parade a few years back, several of us from NEWS participated. As we walked by waving at the happy, clapping audience, one woman looked at me with tears in her eyes and mouthed, "Thank you." I'll never forget that moment.

The NEWS staff works so hard like this every day. They are truly incredible humans.

I have been part of NEWS for over twelve years. I am constantly inspired by our amazing staff, volunteers, and Board. We are a strong, united organization, and we are always looking for others to join us.

If you would like to volunteer, donate, or support NEWS in any way, please visit our website, NapaNews.org to see how you can help. You may also call NEWS at (800) 799-7233 and let them know you would like to talk to me. I WILL call you back. I am never happier than when I can brag about NEWS!

Here's to better times ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Sims". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sandra Sims
NEWS Board President

“This past year, we didn't just survive, we thrived. We showed our resiliency. We nurtured and empowered those around us. We recognized each other's worth. We kept each other safe.”

Directors:

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Secretary: Danielle Schmitz
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Doug Ernst, in memoriam
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Rick Jones, Jones Family Vineyards
Allison Haley, District Attorney
Barbara Nemko, Napa County
Superintendent of Schools
Andrea Phelps
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of Supervisors

Staff:

Executive Team

Tracy Lamb, Executive Director
Shea E. Hunter, Program Director
Mandy DeBord, Finance Director
Andi Grote, Development Director
Karen Calhoun, Marketing & Communications Director

Management Team

Nicole Solorio, Administrative Office Manager
Sarah Engle, Shelter Manager
Coach Bailie, SAVS Program Manager
Carla Andrade-Maston*, Outreach & Education Program Manager
Alejandra Mendieta-Bedolla*, Crisis Intervention Services
Program Manager
Helen Rodriguez*, Self Sufficiency & Housing Program Manager

Advocates

Elizabeth Alfaro*, KEDS Administrative Advocate
Erika Cazares*, Court Advocate
Liliana Estrada*, KEDS Shelter Advocate
Selina Farmer, Shelter Advocate
Christina Gomez*, SAVS Program Advocate
Nancy Gonzalez*, Court Advocate
Mariela Perez*, Self Sufficiency & Housing Advocate
Maria Hernandez*, Shelter Advocate
Yunuel Perez*, Support Services Advocate
Michelle Sanchez, Self Sufficiency & Housing Advocate
Ana Soto*, NPD LESU Advocate
Maria Hurtado*, Intake Advocate
Araceli Vargas*, SAVS Program Advocate
Dallas Vasquez*, Shelter Advocate

*Bilingual

About NEWS

NEWS is honored to provide domestic violence and sexual abuse advocacy services throughout Napa County. Recognized as a distinguished and well respected nonprofit organization, NEWS believes that the pathways out of violence can be as individual as the people we serve. Our innovative programs and services reflect that belief. The agency was formed in 1981 to provide immediate safety assistance to people escaping violence. Over its 39 years, NEWS has grown and expanded its services to include resources to address the whole person and offers the resources they need to sustain lives free from violence.

Our team is grounded in the values of dignity and respect, both for those we serve and for ourselves. We are committed to continually working toward reducing domestic violence and sexual abuse, promoting healthy relationships and to building a violence free community for all.

www.NapaNEWS.org



CRISIS INTERVENTION



Alejandra Mendieta-Bedolla, Program Manager

The Crisis Intervention Services Department is often the first point of contact that victims have with NEWS. The primary focus of this team is to assist clients in re-gaining stability and safety by providing crisis counseling, safety planning and a variety of services that address critical needs. 2020 was challenging for both individuals suffering from violence and for our staff. However, our team of professional and compassionate advocates rose to the occasion and quickly adapted to new ways of providing services remotely. We were pleased to learn that our clients embraced the changes in our service delivery, and have many success stories to reflect on.

Secured the safety of 54 families through court-issued protective orders

Helped 163 clients navigate the court system

Responded to 391 law enforcement referrals



PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Carla A. Maston, Program Manager



The Centers for Disease Control states that COVID-19 can cause emotional distress, anxiety, depression and feelings of powerlessness, especially in youth. Now, more than ever, NEWS understands that having access to trained and caring counselors is critical for youth's mental wellbeing. This year, NEWS worked diligently to create new ways of connecting with children exposed to domestic violence and sexual abuse. These efforts included increased social media platforms, strengthening partnerships with NVUSD Wellness Centers, and reformatting the KEDS Support Groups to be provided online. In 2020 we formed partnerships with with five new academic institutions across the county for a total of 13!

Supported 42 teens with one-on-one crisis counseling

Provided 161 children with mental health and advocacy support

Engaged 848 students on healthy relationships during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month



HOUSING & SELF-SUSTAINABILITY



Helen Rodriguez, Program Manager

Throughout 2020, the NEWS housing department worked tirelessly to provide support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Finding safe, violence-free, sustainable housing is a challenge during the best of times, however, during a global pandemic it can be grueling. NEWS clients are already some of the most vulnerably housed families in Napa, and the pandemic and fires created an even more difficult year, both physically and emotionally. Thanks to the passion and tenacity of the NEW housing team, hundreds of families were able to have a safe place called “home.”

Provided 360 clients with rental assistance to reduce risk of homelessness

Guaranteed safe housing for 500+ children

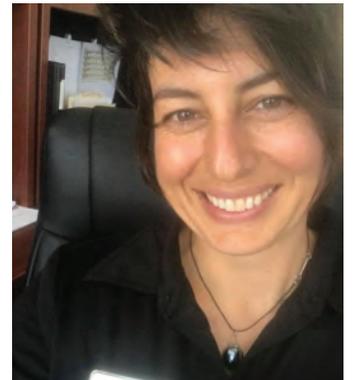
Distributed nearly triple the annual amount of rental subsidies due to COVID-19



SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIM SERVICES

Coach Bailie, Program Manager

The mission of Sexual Assault Victim Services is to provide confidential care, support, and advocacy for victims of sexual assault and their families, while also promoting awareness and prevention programs in our community. SAVS provides 24 hour access to professionals trained to help victims of sexual assault and trauma. As with many programs, COVID-19 created the unprecedented need for SAVS to implement tele-advocacy. Fortunately, there was little to no impact to our crisis intervention services. The SAVS team continues to assist in the personal healing of each survivor by providing information, accompaniment and referrals in the new virtual reality.



Provided 96 minors with emergency, mental health, and advocacy support

Served as emotional champions and advocacy experts during 89 sexual assault exams

Helped 246 clients navigate the court system



SHELTER SERVICES



Sarah Engle, Program Manager

Although 2020 brought new challenges due to the global pandemic, the NEWS Shelter Program didn't miss a beat. N-SAFE (NEWS-Shelter Adaptations For Emergencies) was immediately implemented which made it possible for NEWS to continue providing emergency shelter to individuals and families escaping domestic violence and sexual assault. The N-SAFE program provided critically needed shelter, while also keeping clients and staff safe from COVID-19. Through the use of hotels and our modular unit, we were able to shelter more than 37 households this year. The shelter team's dedication and empathy made it possible to seamlessly and instantly provide safety, support and advocacy to our clients during this difficult time.

Provided safe and confidential shelter
to 37 adults and 41 children

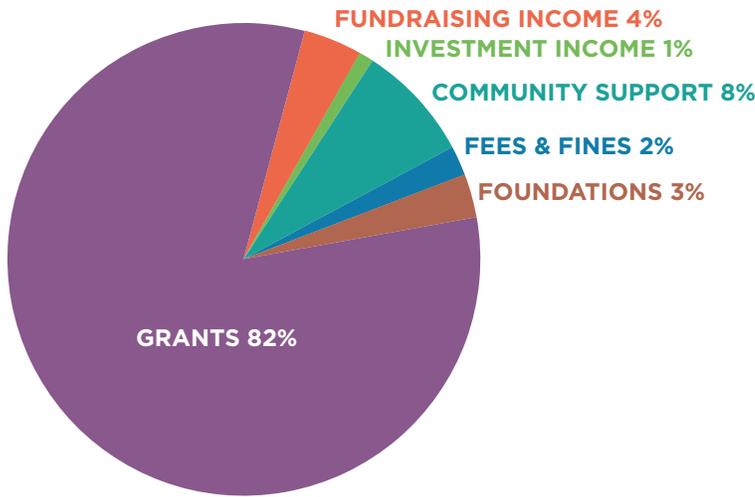
Gave counseling, referrals, and emergency support during 2,000 Help Line calls

As a result of shelter-stays and case management support, 74% exited shelter to a safe home

FINANCIALS

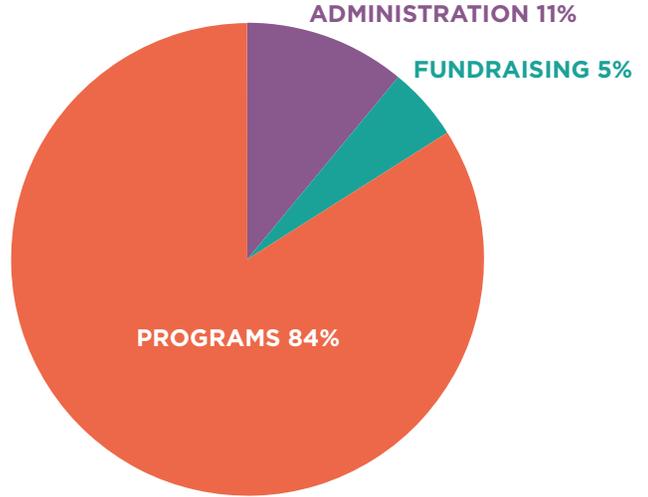
84¢ of every dollar goes directly to programs and clients. This last year, we saw needs for basic services increase to where our Crisis Intervention team was spending 19¢ of every dollar to provide food, shelter and supplies to clients in need. Our largest program continues to be our shelter program that provides safety to clients and their children as they work towards a sustainable and safe future.

INCOME



TOTAL \$2,515,064

EXPENSES

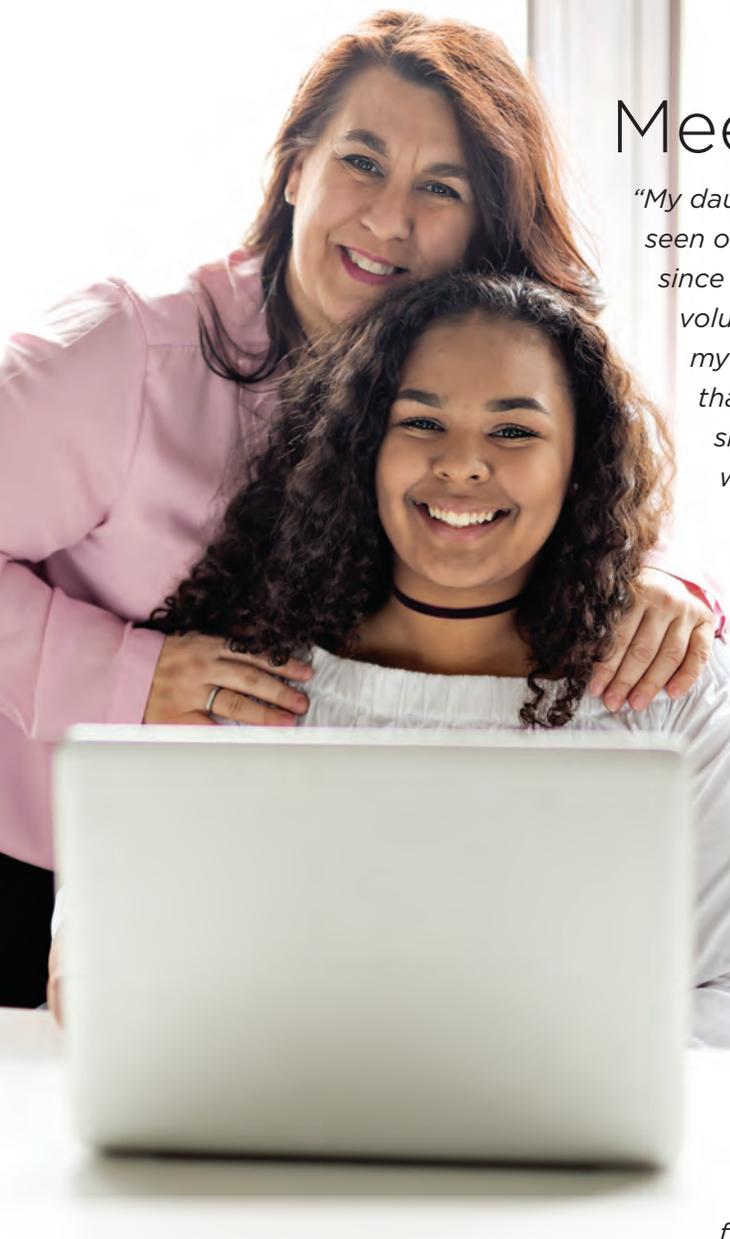


TOTAL \$2,381,177

OUR PARTNERS



- HCA Foundation
- Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in Napa County
- Drysdale Community Foundation
- Redwood Credit Union
- Syar Foundation
- United Way Bay Area
- Kaiser Permanente
- Community Projects, Inc.
- The Doctors Company



Meet Jeanna

"My daughter grew up witnessing the abuse in our home. She has seen over the years how we as a family have healed and grown since removing ourselves from the situation. Now, since I am a volunteer for NEWS trained to work with victims of violence, my now high school aged daughter also sees the difference that my training makes in the lives of others. I do my best to share what I know with her. That is why it was quite a surprise when I found out that she had entered into her first intimate relationship with an abusive partner. As I am keenly aware of the warning signs, I tried to express my concern. In typical teenage fashion, she thwarted my attempts with excuses and separation. I knew we needed help before the situation got out of hand.

I reached out to the school to see if she could see the advocate from NEWS that does relationship coaching. Carla met with her the next week. My daughter didn't share much about their meeting, but she did bring home a little bookmark that had the traits of healthy, unhealthy, and abusive relationships all mapped out. She showed me and then taped it to the wall in her room. Over the course of the next couple weeks, she confronted the abuser and subsequently ended the relationship. It was a difficult time, but I was so proud of her for finding the courage and listening to advice, utilizing the skills that Carla taught her. Since that time, she has had the opportunity to counsel friends in similar predicaments and she always falls back on the relationship spectrum bookmark as her guide. Carla does

amazing work with teens. The best part is the work is perpetual. The seed she has planted in my daughter is growing and spreading. Nothing can stop it now."

Jeanna is a mother of four and a former client of NEWS, who is now a trained volunteer. (Stock photo)

NEWS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES

NURTURING EMPOWERMENT WORTH SAFETY



NEWS does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

24 HOUR HELP LINE
707.255.NEWS (6397)

California Relay Service
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