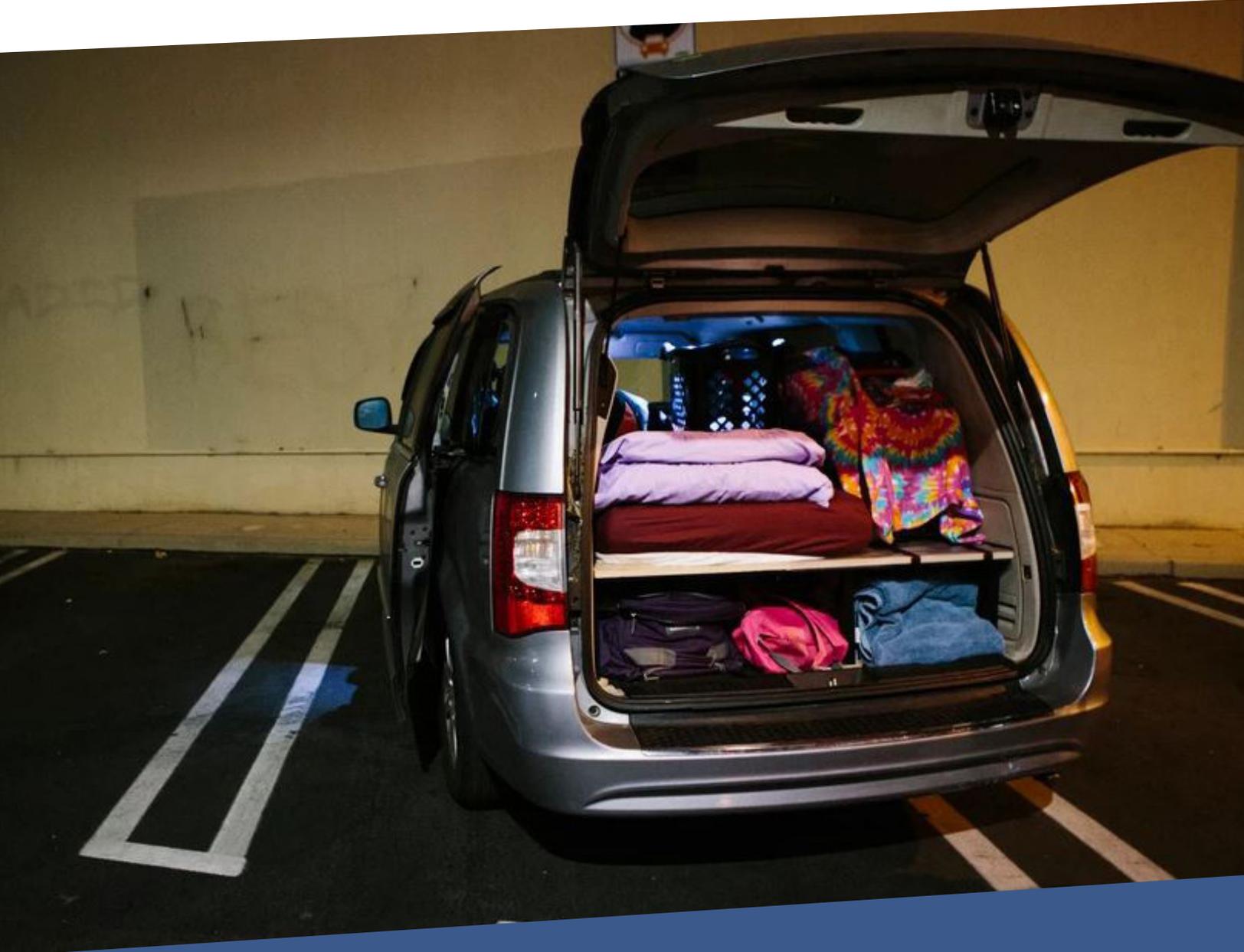


SANTA BARBARA
FOUNDATION
COUNTY CONNECTIONS

DEFINING SAFETY IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

**THIS REPORT CONTAINS SENSITIVE CONTENT*



In this Issue: Safe Parking Program, Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, & More

A photograph of four people (three women and one man) smiling and standing outdoors in front of a wooden fence and trees. The man on the far left is wearing a grey suit and tie. The woman next to him is wearing a black blazer. The woman in the center is wearing a teal top. The man on the far right is wearing a blue blazer and sunglasses.

A MESSAGE FROM RONALD V. GALLO, Ed.D. PRESIDENT & CEO

This report shares hard truths about our county and sensitive content that is at times difficult to read. I encourage you to take the time to learn about the challenges facing our community and neighbors.

This issue is devoted to safety in our county. Based on our recent experience, one might assume this refers to awareness, preparation, and rebuilding after a natural disaster. Certainly, the heroic, empathetic and generous first responders, and the nonprofit organizations that stretched themselves – sometimes at great financial risk – to serve our affected communities and populations, are devoted to our safety.

Natural disasters, however, are not the focus of these pages. Instead, we highlight a different set of issues that compromise both the physical and psychological safety of our residents. In the seeming paradise of Santa Barbara County are individuals and families living with unacceptable levels of fear and stress. Too many have no place to live, suffer from chronic hunger, are living with or running from domestic violence, or simply don't know where to go to seek help for themselves or their families.

Large numbers of people living with constant uncertainty is deleterious not only to their health and their psyche,

but it is also a terrible kind of compromise for us all. Empathetic and resilient communities know that, and understand as well that community strength comes from most of its residents having their basic human needs in a state of equilibrium, from their feeling connected, having hope, and thus in a position to fulfill their own potential and contribute to their communities. There is plenty of evidence that Santa Barbara County has long been and continues to be made up of empathetic communities. Our robust nonprofit sector and those who support its organizations show that we respond well to crisis, that we have a well ingrained instinct to help those less fortunate, and that there is a deep understanding that the arts are essential to our humanity. But is that enough? Today the trend lines on many indicators of safety are not going in the right direction.

Homelessness is on the rise, affordable housing is scant, suicide (especially among young adults) occurs at alarming rates, access to healthcare is still an unsolvable puzzle for many, and there seems to be an undeniable increase in all quarters of anger, violence, and distrust.

All of these things are threats to safety, and should be recognized as important warning signs that something is amiss. But if there is a place that has the capacity and will to recognize what is wrong and go about finding innovative and creative solutions to seemingly intractable problems, it is Santa Barbara County. Our communities have confronted daunting problems before and have emerged stronger. Surely we can do that again. In fact, we here at the Santa Barbara Foundation are fortunate to see and support those kind of efforts on nearly a daily basis.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron".

SB ACT SPEARHEADS COALITION TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Sam Waterstone

In 2015, Kyli Larson, a Westmont student and intern for SB ACT (then known as Uffizi Order), started asking about efforts to address human trafficking in Santa Barbara County. What she found through her research was that human trafficking was much more prevalent in our county than most people realized. She also discovered that while there were groups working to prevent trafficking, support and house survivors, and educate the public about this very real issue, these groups were isolated and disconnected.

This discovery provided a natural opportunity for SB ACT to get involved in the fight against human trafficking. SB ACT (which stands for the Santa Barbara Alliance for Community Transformation) is a “backbone organization” that uses the Collective Impact Model to eliminate disorder and confusion among like-minded organizations in order to align ideas, goals and actions behind a common cause. In this case, they partnered with the Human Trafficking Task Force, which was initiated by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney’s (DA) Office in 2013, to make a greater collective impact in regards to human trafficking.

The first stage of the collaboration was to collect reliable data. As part of Kyli’s internship with SB ACT, she worked with partners from UCSB’s Gevirtz School of Graduate Education and the DA’s Office to help create a Needs Assessment of Domestic Child Sex Trafficking in Santa Barbara County. The Needs Assessment project brought together a group of motivated organizations, including the Santa Barbara Foundation, social service providers, and law enforcement, and ultimately revealed several valuable insights.

“The Needs Assessment highlighted where the gaps were within our county for child survivors of human trafficking,” said Rich Sander, Executive Director of SB ACT. “At the time of the Assessment there were 45 confirmed child survivors of domestic sex trafficking and 80 suspected survivors. Now those numbers have risen to about 150 highly suspected or confirmed survivors, including both minors and adults. Those are only the ones in Juvenile Hall or that have become known to Victim Witness or Rape Crisis programs, so in reality the number is much larger.”

The study found that trafficking statistics are chronically underreported, and that the general public lacks even a basic understanding of the issue. As a result, there are a number of pervasive myths that surround human trafficking.

One common misunderstanding involves the relationship between child sex trafficking and prostitution. The media (and by extension the public) tends to view child sex trafficking as an egregious crime and prostitution as a less harmful, if not entirely unrelated, social issue. In reality, many sex workers are victims of child sex trafficking who have since turned 18, but are still trapped in a sex trafficking operation – yet they are often viewed as criminals in the eyes of the law and the community. Similarly, relationship violence and abuse can also lead to trafficking, but might not be identified as such.

“We’re all learning about this as a county, together,” acknowledged Sander. “Like how you identify a survivor – a lot of them aren’t identified as such, because a lot of trafficking happens between couples. People may think, ‘Oh that’s just how my boyfriend treats me,’ and then we have to help them understand that it isn’t a normal thing.”



PHOTO: Members of the SB County DA’s Office Human Trafficking Task Force leading a 2018 ‘Trace the Case’ event at the Faulkner Gallery at the Santa Barbara Public Library.

In 2016, SB ACT partnered with the DA's Office again to form a countywide Collaborative on Human Trafficking that would supplement the work already being done by the Task Force. That group, which is now known as the Santa Barbara Coalition for Freedom, brought about a public face for trafficking.

"The DA's Task Force is the hub for law enforcement, behavioral wellness providers, etc.," said Jeff Shaffer, Director of Initiatives at SB ACT, explaining the dynamics of the relationship. "We developed the SB Coalition for Freedom to come alongside the Task Force and fill in the gaps."

One gap that the Coalition fills involves education: many organizations had been providing human trafficking training to the community, including the DA's Office, SB ACT, the Junior League of Santa Barbara, Standing Together to End Sexual Assault, and others, but it was unclear who these trainings were reaching and if they were effective. The Coalition is currently coordinating a more efficient system for educating the public about what trafficking looks like.

This education initiative now focuses on providing unduplicated training for groups who may be in a position to identify trafficking, such as bars or hotels where suspected trafficking may happen, as well as first responders, probation officers, and domestic violence service providers. It also aims to create a common language about trafficking that is based on compassion and respect.

"We don't use the word victim – we choose to use 'survivor' because it is more empowering language," explained Sander. "We want young women and men to understand that they are not passive victims of something that has happened to them, but rather that they've endured to survive a horrible situation."

The SB Coalition for Freedom is providing a Human Trafficking Training 101 course for the Santa Barbara Foundation staff in August, and we encourage all organizations in the community to take advantage of this service to learn more about this issue.

To learn more about SB ACT, the SB Coalition for Freedom and their work around human trafficking, visit SBACT.org.

"THE FAMILY SHELTER IS ALWAYS FULL."

By Dean Zatkowsky (Contributor)

During a tour of the Good Samaritan Shelter in Santa Maria, Director of Homeless Services Kirsten Cahoon said something that caught our ear: "Right now there are some children in the main shelter, because the family shelter is always full."

Always full?

"Yes. The family shelter is always full. The Safe House (for survivors of human trafficking) is at capacity too."

Is everything full?

"Yes, everything is often full. We've had to turn away people showing up at our door. We've seen an increase in families becoming homeless in our area. Parents are working, but it's not enough to afford a rental in this community. With less than a 2% vacancy rate, we're just seeing more families fall into homelessness."

Homelessness in Santa Barbara County, both chronic and temporary, seems like an intractable problem, but organizations like Good Samaritan Shelter, Doctors Without Walls – Santa Barbara Street Medicine, Transition House, Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People, New Beginnings Counseling Center, and others are working on it anyway.

Good Samaritan Shelter is the largest provider of shelter and services to the homeless and those in recovery along the Central Coast of California, offering a wide range of services, including emergency shelter for adults and families, family shelter, permanent housing, residential detoxification, outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services, residential perinatal treatment, children's after-school programming, clean and sober living homes, supportive services for veteran families, and more.

Because of Good Samaritan's focus on those in recovery, we asked Cahoon which came first, substance abuse or homelessness? "People become homeless for many reasons, but homelessness itself is traumatic and stressful, and many people self-medicate. If you need to sleep outdoors and its cold, being under the influence may be an option for not feeling the cold."

Like others we interviewed about homelessness in Santa Barbara County, Cahoon noted the devastating combination of low-paying jobs and high rents. “Our clients are working, they are clean and sober and doing the things society thinks they should do. And we have lots of jobs in this area, thank goodness, but they’re not high paying jobs. Lots of us are one paycheck away from homelessness. We shelter realtors, teachers, property managers; I’ve seen professionals here, people whose children go to school with mine. These are our neighbors.”

Cahoon adds, “We have an aging population of homeless too, who are trying to make it on \$895 per month in Social Security. Where in Santa Barbara County are you going to find somewhere to live on \$895 per month?”

As Santa Barbara County’s nonprofits address homelessness, new challenges constantly appear. According to Doctors Without Walls – Santa Barbara Street Medicine Medical Director Jason Prystowsky, “The needs are always shifting and we continue to adapt. Fortunately, we are part of an extraordinary network of people and organizations that are consistently looking at innovative ways to address the health needs of our most vulnerable. Sometimes we have to be creative in our methods and approach.”

And the challenges go beyond finding innovative ways to provide services. Concerned that the general public has become blind to homelessness, Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People (PHP) CEO Dean Palius added a Homelessness FAQ to the organization’s website. It opens with this statement:

“Homelessness has proven to be a tough problem to solve. It is difficult to see someone trying to survive on the streets, in their car, in a park, or in the riverbed. Our reactions range from fear and anger to compassion and pity. Very often we choose not to see the person and avoid

eye contact. As hard as it may be to witness the personal difficulties of others, we encourage all Valley residents to exercise empathy. Imagine for yourself what it’s like to have no home and no support network, to be cold or hungry or sick, to have so many in better situations in life walk by you each day as if you were invisible.”

Invisibility is a particular challenge for those who actually get homeless people off the streets. According to Cahoon, “I don’t think the community understands the scale of what we do. We are the biggest provider of substance-abuse treatment. We provide mental health treatment. We provide permanent housing. On any given night, there are 500 people sleeping at our emergency shelters. That is a lot of people off the streets and receiving services. I don’t know if the community can visualize the magnitude, or what it would look like if we weren’t here.”

Good Samaritan Shelter may be the biggest, but new challenges keep reminding Cahoon that they are not big enough. “The bigger nonprofits do have multiple funding streams, and we do get a lot of government grants and support, but we all still rely on private donations to grow our organizations and solve emerging problems. A few years ago we didn’t know we needed a safe house for survivors of human trafficking – now it’s open and at capacity. And these clients have the highest needs of any of our clients.”

She also expressed gratitude to be included in this article, because even though they rely on private donations, “We don’t do a lot of PR or fundraising. We’re putting out fires all day every day with our clients.”

SBF, in partnership with our donors, has awarded grants over the last five years (in total) to the mentioned organizations: Good Samaritan Shelter (\$259,300), Santa Ynez Valley PHP (\$220,810), Transition House (\$797,570), Doctors Without Walls (\$151,350), and New Beginnings Counseling Center (\$157,650).

"Lots of us are one paycheck away from homelessness. We shelter realtors, teachers, property managers; I've seen professionals here, people whose children go to school with mine. These are our neighbors."

- KRISTEN CAHOON

Director of HOMELESS SERVICES, GOOD SAMARITAN SANTA MARIA

NEW BEGINNINGS CELEBRATES 15 YEARS PROVIDING A SAFE PARKING PROGRAM

By Sam Waterstone

Santa Barbara is nationally recognized for its world-class weather, beaches, and restaurants; as a place where famous celebrities live, professional athletes train, and top academics conduct important research. And while it might not be as flashy, Santa Barbara's thriving nonprofit sector is also quite noteworthy, having produced a number of innovative social service programs that provide other agencies around the country with a template for success.

One of these pioneering agencies is New Beginnings Counseling Center, a Santa Barbara-based nonprofit that has supported vulnerable residents for 50 years and is the national leader with their innovative Safe Parking Program[®] (SPP). Safe parking programs are an important part of the effort to reduce homelessness, especially in places like California, where affordable housing in coastal cities is extremely limited.

"During the 2019 Point in Time Count, 42% of the identified unsheltered homeless population in Santa Barbara County were living in their vehicles," said Michael Berton, Development Manager at New Beginnings. "Vehicular homelessness is a kind of hidden homelessness – it's much more prevalent than most people think."

Celebrating its fifteenth year, New Beginnings' SPP was the first of its kind in the United States. The program provides clients with free, monitored overnight parking spaces and case management services, ensuring their safety while also helping them transition into permanent housing. Each night, New Beginnings serves roughly 150 people across 24 lots in Santa Barbara, Goleta and the unincorporated region in between.

In order to qualify for the program, clients must be without housing and have a valid driver's license, registration, and car insurance. The program has evolved to include a Rapid Re-housing component, meaning that program staff help clients secure permanent housing

through time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services. The program is designed to provide temporary shelter and safety for clients while they work with case managers to secure permanent housing and address other pressing needs.

"We have case managers on staff that work with clients individually to increase their income, fill out job applications, and become connected to other community services," Berton explained. "A lot of the time, clients need medical or dental assistance, or their car has broken down, and we've gotten grants from organizations to help us fund these areas."

SPP clients come from all different backgrounds. Some are families or couples struggling to get by; many are elderly individuals in need of support. In 2017, 21% of New Beginnings' SPP clients who received shelter and case management were over the age of 63.

"Everyone has a pretty remarkable story about how they got there," noted Berton, who recently met with several SPP clients. "For example, Safe Parking recently enrolled a woman in her 90s who had been evicted from her home and had nowhere else to go. Another woman was dealing with medical issues and living in her car with her dog. Her husband had been deported to Guatemala, so she was sending money back to him."

Earlier this year, a bill was introduced into the California state legislature that, if passed, would require all cities and counties with a population of 330,000 or more to collaborate with nonprofits to implement safe parking programs by 2022. While this is a promising development, the need for such programs reflects policymakers' inability to adequately address the twin issues of affordable housing and homelessness in California. The Bay Area and Los Angeles represent the most striking examples of this statewide crisis, but smaller destination cities like Santa Barbara are also struggling to agree on important details regarding how and where to build more affordable, single-family dwellings. It is



clear that tackling large-scale economic inequality is the only way to truly solve homelessness, but in the short term, safe parking programs are an effective way to provide immediate shelter and safety for those in need.

Since its inception, New Beginnings' Safe Parking Program has been the subject of news features from prominent national and international media outlets, including VICE News, the LA Times, and Rolling Stone magazine. More importantly, the program has helped many individuals get back on their feet and into permanent housing, and is now assisting other agencies in replicating their model. New Beginnings offers a comprehensive Safe Parking Manual, which is being utilized by agencies throughout North America as a template for how to start their own successful safe parking programs.

"Safe Parking is an innovative program that takes existing community resources – empty parking lots – and repurposes them to meet a critical community need: vehicular homelessness," said Kristine Schwarz, Executive Director of New Beginnings. "We have a long history of

PHOTO: Safe Parking Programs repurpose empty parking lots to allow for vehicular homelessness. Photo courtesy of Vice News.



combining government, nonprofit, for-profit, faith-based and philanthropic resources to end homelessness, and we appreciate the role that the Santa Barbara Foundation has played in furthering these partnerships."

The Santa Barbara Foundation awarded New Beginnings a 2017 Core Support for Basic Needs grant, and is also a sponsor of the agency's Coral Casino Luncheon Series, which educates the public about the most critical social and human service issues in our community. Outside of Safe Parking, New Beginnings also runs a Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program, a Life Skills Parenting and Education Program, and a Community Mental Health Center, serving more than 2,000 people annually.

To learn more about New Beginnings' Safe Parking Program and other community resources, visit sbnbcc.org.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A COMMUNITY PROBLEM, AND THE COMMUNITY IS RESPONDING

By Dean Zatkowsky (Contributor)

What's the most frightened you've ever been? Did you fear for your life, or for the safety of a child? Did the fear continue, unabated, for weeks and months and years, even when you had to go to work every day, even when you had to leave your child with someone you did not trust completely?

It is statistically unlikely that you have known such fear, because 70% of us do not live with domestic violence trauma. For nearly 1/3 of us, though, life is very different. Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley called domestic violence "the most common violent crime we have in Santa Barbara County." She also called domestic violence homicide one of the most predictable and preventable crimes.

There are pages and pages of statistics available, but the statistics do not tell you how domestic violence reverberates into all corners of our community. CALM Executive Director Alana Walczak recently wrote to *The Independent*, "Domestic violence is one of 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that can lead to lifelong health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, suicidality, and cancer. The effects of domestic violence extend far beyond the survivor. The toxic stress ripples to include their children and families, schools and our entire community."

Domestic Violence Solutions Executive Director Jan Campbell offers an illustrative statistic: "The number one cause of women being homeless is domestic violence. At our shelters, we almost always have more children than adults, because victims show up with young children. It's heartbreaking."

Good Samaritan Shelter is the largest provider of shelter and services to the homeless and those in recovery along the Central Coast of California. According to Director of Homeless Services Kirsten Cahoon, "I'd say about 10%

of our clients are fleeing a domestic violence incident, but probably 30-40% of our clients have been victims of domestic violence. People also become homeless because of substance abuse and mental health, and those things also go hand in hand with abuse."

In her letter to *The Independent*, Walczak noted, "Research shows that negative effects (of adverse childhood experiences) can be reversed as a result of early identification, treatment, and support." That's why several local non-profits focus on timely intervention.

"The number one cause of women being homeless is domestic violence."

- JAN CAMPBELL

Executive Director of Domestic Violence Solutions

Dean Palius of Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People (PHP) realized that the need for his organization's emergency shelter services was almost entirely a symptom of domestic violence, and decided to address the cause as well as the symptom. "PHP's domestic violence prevention program, Advocates for Domestic & Child Abuse Prevention (ADCAP), gets people hooked up with services quickly, so it's a combination of immediate intervention at the scene of the crime and ongoing counseling and services. Could be food support, could be emergency shelter. People don't understand why abused women don't leave, but how many of you would voluntarily become homeless? And make your kids homeless?"

Between staff and volunteers, PHP works with the Sheriff's department 24/7 to provide intervention assistance. "We work with Domestic Violence Solutions for training," says Palius. "I have to say that the Sheriff's Deputies are extremely well trained, and they get it. It's not like it was 20 years ago,

20 PEOPLE

PER MINUTE ARE PHYSICALLY ABUSED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THE USA

Source: National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

when an officer might knock on the door where there was a disturbance and yell, 'Knock it off.'"

While Domestic Violence Solutions is primarily a direct services agency, operating shelters for victims, Campbell says, "What we realized over the last few years is that we really have to work as part of an ecosystem that includes law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office, and community partners like People Helping People and Standing Together Against Sexual Assault."

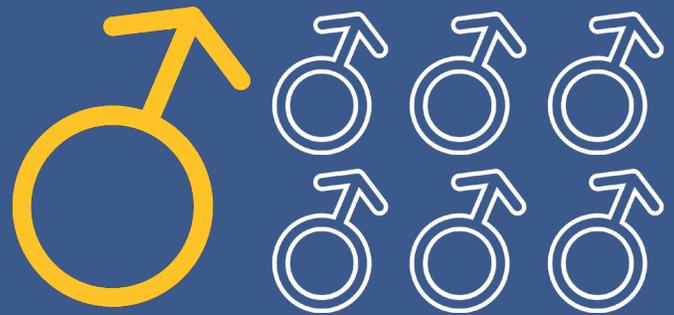
Campbell highly recommends a new book called *No Visible Bruises: What We Don't Know About Domestic Violence Can Kill Us*, by Rachel Louise Snyder. According to a New York Times review, "Far from being a private or isolated act, domestic violence — or "intimate partner terrorism," as Snyder prefers, arguing it more accurately describes the psychological dynamics — has links with mass shootings and is a direct cause of homelessness for more than half of homeless women." Moreover, Snyder explores the horrific psychological dynamic that causes women to stay with abusers and the public to misunderstand domestic violence. "It's shameful," says Campbell, "people hide it. It's a silent epidemic."

The family trauma that accompanies domestic violence is well recognized by local responders. According to Palus, "75% of boys exposed to domestic violence grow up to be perpetrators, and over 50% of women exposed to that become victims later. The immediate intervention is important to us because it can break the cycle of violence. The quicker we can get the kids into counseling, the better."

SBF, in partnership with our donors, has awarded grants over the last five years (in total) to the mentioned organizations: CALM (\$604,500), Domestic Violence Solutions (\$324,560) and Transition House (\$797,570).



ONE IN FOUR WOMEN HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF SEVERE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THEIR LIFETIME



ONE IN SEVEN MEN HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF SEVERE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER IN THEIR LIFETIME

12 MILLION PEOPLE

IN THE UNITED STATES ARE AFFECTED BY INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE EACH YEAR

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

STANDING TOGETHER TO END SEXUAL ASSAULT ADDRESSES SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH COUNTY

By Kara Shoemaker

Sexual violence is a widespread issue that affects people of all genders and is a traumatic experience not limited to any demographic or socioeconomic group. Research states that one in three women and one in four men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetimes. At the forefront of efforts to end sexual violence in Santa Barbara County is Standing Together to End Sexual Assault (STESA), formerly known as the Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center, which has provided critical services to sexual assault survivors and their families for the past 45 years.

While the mission has remained the same since inception, the agency introduced its new name and logo in 2018 to better reflect the diversity of survivors it supports and services offered. One recurring issue that drove the agency to change its name from the Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center was the misconception that the organization only served survivors of rape.

"Sometimes people would call and say 'I wasn't raped but' and then they would go on to describe that they had been sexually violated in some way," said Elsa Granados, who has served as Executive Director of STESA for the past 22 years, and has been involved in the movement to end violence against women and children for over 30 years. "The other is that people also said 'well I am not in crisis, this didn't happen recently – this happened two or three or ten years ago. Is this the right place for me to come?' Absolutely this is the right place!"

In addition, the ethnically and age ambiguous face on the original logo was generally perceived by the public as a woman, and as a result, men and the transgendered community were left wondering if the agency was a place for them to receive help. By rebranding and utilizing more empowering and inclusive language, STESA hopes more survivors will feel encouraged to connect with the agency.

"With all of that, we felt it was time to make a change. The community has been very welcoming of that change." Said Granados, "I think it accomplished what we wanted. Number one, people say it feels so much more inclusive. So now, without having a man or a woman in the logo, people of all gender identities feel more comfortable to access the agency's services."

STESA serves all survivors, especially those from vulnerable populations in our community. The agency has nearly 100 volunteers, half of whom provide direct services to clients. It is also the only agency in southern Santa Barbara County that fulfills State mandates to certify volunteers and staff as Sexual Assault Counselors, as defined in the California penal code.

STESA's intervention programs include in-person response and a 24-hour hotline to offer crisis counseling, medical/legal advocacy and accompaniment, and community referrals. Services are offered in English and Spanish, and are available regardless of ability to pay. The agency also serves human trafficking and domestic violence survivors by providing initial support and counseling services, and working with partner agencies that provide survivors with legal services. STESA aims to prevent sexual violence by promoting public awareness and understanding of sexual assault through education and prevention programs, community events, and self-defense workshops.

STESA was a recipient of a Santa Barbara Foundation 2018 Core Support for Basic Needs Grant, which it has utilized to strengthen its Crisis Intervention and Long-Term Counseling Programs to increase and improve the behavioral health of survivors.

"STESA's critical and timely intervention programs offered to victims of sexual assault focus on an empowerment model that is reflected in their new branding," said Guille Gil-Reynoso, Community Engagement Officer at the Santa Barbara Foundation. "The new brand is more inclusive and better represents their scope of services, while also drawing

in more individuals and organizations to join their efforts."

In recent years, STESA has seen an unprecedented level of awareness at a local, state and national level about the issue of sexual violence. News stories about high profile rape and sexual harassment cases in the entertainment industry, politics, and news media, along with the #MeToo, #WeSaidEnough and #TimesUp movements, have brought broad-based attention to the issue. While this increased awareness and media attention is encouraging and creating some change in public perception and in legislation, it is important to note that there is still much work to be done to end sexual violence and rape culture.

STESA has received \$151,500 in grants from SBF over the past five years. To learn more about STESA and how they help our communities thrive, visit sbstesa.org.



PHOTO: Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People's CEO Dean Palius.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE, PROVIDING BASIC NEEDS SERVICES IN SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

By Dean Zatkowsky (Contributor)

People Helping People (PHP) is the primary provider of human and social services in mid-Santa Barbara County, serving Buellton, Solvang, Santa Ynez, Ballard, Los Olivos, Los Alamos, and the Gaviota Coast. Limited services are provided in the Lompoc Valley.

"We're here to help people in financial or healthcare crisis, and to help people become self-sufficient," said PHP CEO Dean Palius. "It's a 'hand-up' organization."

Founded in 1992, PHP's vision has always prioritized the goal of self-sufficiency, while recognizing that people sometimes need help along the way. As Palius puts it, "Some people cannot pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, because they don't even have boots."

With more than 20% of the area's overall population living at or near Federal poverty levels, PHP offers programs and services in four categories:

- ◆ Basic Needs – Food Distribution, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing, Utility and Transportation assistance, and clothing and housewares vouchers
- ◆ Health Care – Community Healthcare Access, Children's and Adult Dental Funds, Mental Health Wellness and Counseling, and Insurance Enrollment
- ◆ Children and Youth – Youth Coalition (Drug Free Youth), High School Mentoring, Student Life Skills Education (Drug Abuse Prevention)
- ◆ Family & Individual Support – Domestic Violence Prevention, Child Abuse Prevention, Parenting Education, Advocacy, Family and Individual Strengthening, and Christmas Fulfill-A-Wish

PHP food programs serve about 1,150 clients. "It's a basic supplemental food program with multiple distribution sites. We just received a federal grant to remodel the downstairs into a food pantry. We've never had a full pantry before, so now we can help people who miss the weekly deliveries."

The organization also benefits from Albertson's Fresh Rescue program, picking up about-to-expire food for fast distribution to needy families. "We set up tables in our driveway once a week and people who need food can come stand in line and pick some up. One of the reasons to remodel downstairs is to refrigerate and freeze foods. We are always in need of food, and now donors will know they can deliver food here and we can store it longer term."

PHP also serves as a certified enroller for Cal Fresh, but it's harder than you might think to get people to enroll for benefits they need.

"First of all," says Palius, "there's a stigma attached to food stamps, which aren't literally 'stamps' anymore; it's a debit card. People get self-conscious, so that's one thing. Some people don't like dealing with the government; some families are only partially documented, so even though the kids qualify, the adults are afraid to deal with government or government-related programs."

There is also the challenge of communicating with people who are struggling, and sometimes suspicious. "The local papers are great and totally supportive of us, but the people who need us aren't reading them."

Providing emergency shelter is another key component of PHP's mission, along with preventing homelessness.

"We have provided emergency shelter for a long time. But we don't have a shelter here – it's extremely expensive. We have used motels to provide emergency shelter. Most of that is provided to domestic violence victims, mostly women and children. So much, that we came to see the emergency shelter needs as a symptom. Domestic violence is the actual problem, so we developed domestic violence prevention programs.

Recognizing that preventing homelessness is a lot cheaper than remediating homelessness, PHP also maintains a small fund to help people in temporary financial crisis avoid eviction.

"95% or more of our clients are working," says Palius. But like 40% of Americans, they have no savings at all. They are living paycheck to paycheck, one injury or car repair away from disaster.

We asked Palius how the challenges have changed during his 24 years at PHP.

"The overarching challenges haven't changed. Raising money every year – almost from scratch – to keep the programs running: That hasn't changed. The big changes come with periodic recessions. The last recession, and I've been here long enough to have seen several recessions, was exceptionally difficult for this organization."

Palius explained the "double-whammy" that comes with an economic recession: "At least a third of our work is in basic needs; food distribution, shelter, homelessness prevention, domestic violence safety, and domestic violence prevention. During a recession, demand increases while donations are impaired." Palius is grateful that things weren't worse. "Local foundations saw it coming and stepped up – and the Santa Barbara Foundation was a leader – so it slowed the impact for a couple of years, but reductions in funding eventually hit us hard."

"We tightened our belts during the recession and kept them tight. It's caused some staffing issues over time, but we're in a position now where we have some reserves to help us weather a future recession."

Even in better economic times, the area's reliance on tourism and agriculture means that many of Santa Barbara County's workers are employed in five of the eight lowest paying jobs in America, according to the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- ◆ Food preparation (including fast food workers)
- ◆ Dishwashers
- ◆ Cashiers
- ◆ Hosts and Hostesses
- ◆ Farm Workers

In PHP's service area, anything that impacts tourism is equivalent to a recession. "Between one-third and one-half of our clients come from the hospitality industry. And transient occupancy tax is the number one source of revenue in Santa Barbara and Solvang. When there is a tourism decline, it affects both the incomes of the workers and the budgets of the communities."

The combination of low paying jobs and high-priced real estate are the Gordian knot of poverty in Santa Barbara County. "In the last couple of years, it's gotten punishing for renters. Until we have affordable housing, my clients will be very, very poor. You cannot pay two-thirds to three-quarters of your income on housing and get by. So what's left at the end of the month? That's why you need supplemental food, that's why you need a program like we have for healthcare. For seniors, especially."

"People ask, 'How can you know you're helping everyone?' Well, I know that I'm not. We can't help every person who needs help, but we've helped thousands, and I feel good about that."

To learn more about Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People and their important work, visit syvphp.org.



A MESSAGE FROM JACKIE CARRERA CHIEF REVENUE & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Al was all teeth. He greeted everyone he met with a warm smile that was quickly returned in kind. A frequent guest at the soup kitchen where I worked, you would never know from his smile that he was struggling with life's bitter challenges – loss of his job, addiction, and loss of his family. He lived hour-by-hour, mostly without a bath or clean clothes, constantly in search for his next meal, and all while trying to stay safe.

I had the opportunity to get a glimpse of Al's "home life" as a visitor to his milk truck, which he parked along the river. We had conversations about his personal demons, loss of self-respect, lack of motivation, deep desire for purpose and search to once again find life's beauty. During one of our visits while we were watching the river flow, Al insightfully pointed out how much life occurs below the water's surface. "It's all connected - the insects, fish, plants and water. It's beautiful, isn't it?" he mused. I agreed.

We found Al transitional housing and when it was time for me to move on to my next job, Al was on his road to recovery.

It has been three decades since I had those conversations with Al. I think of him often, especially when I see Santa

Barbara's homeless men and women about town. Hearing their stories, I know many homeless folks here battle the same demons, struggle the same struggles and dream the same dreams.

Thankfully, the Santa Barbara Foundation promotes comprehensive services: access to healthy food, safe shelter, behavioral and general healthcare, affordable housing, and employment assistance, including counseling, education, and skills training. As you've read in this edition of our County Connections Report, we support outstanding organizations that foster a culture of compassion.

We invite you to join us in our mission to make sure all of our neighbors have the resources they need not just to survive but to thrive.

As Al observed, there is beauty beneath the river's surface. Show Santa Barbara County's beauty with your gift to the Community Engagement or Strategic Priorities Fund today.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY REAL COST MEASURE

WHAT IS A REAL COST MEASURE?

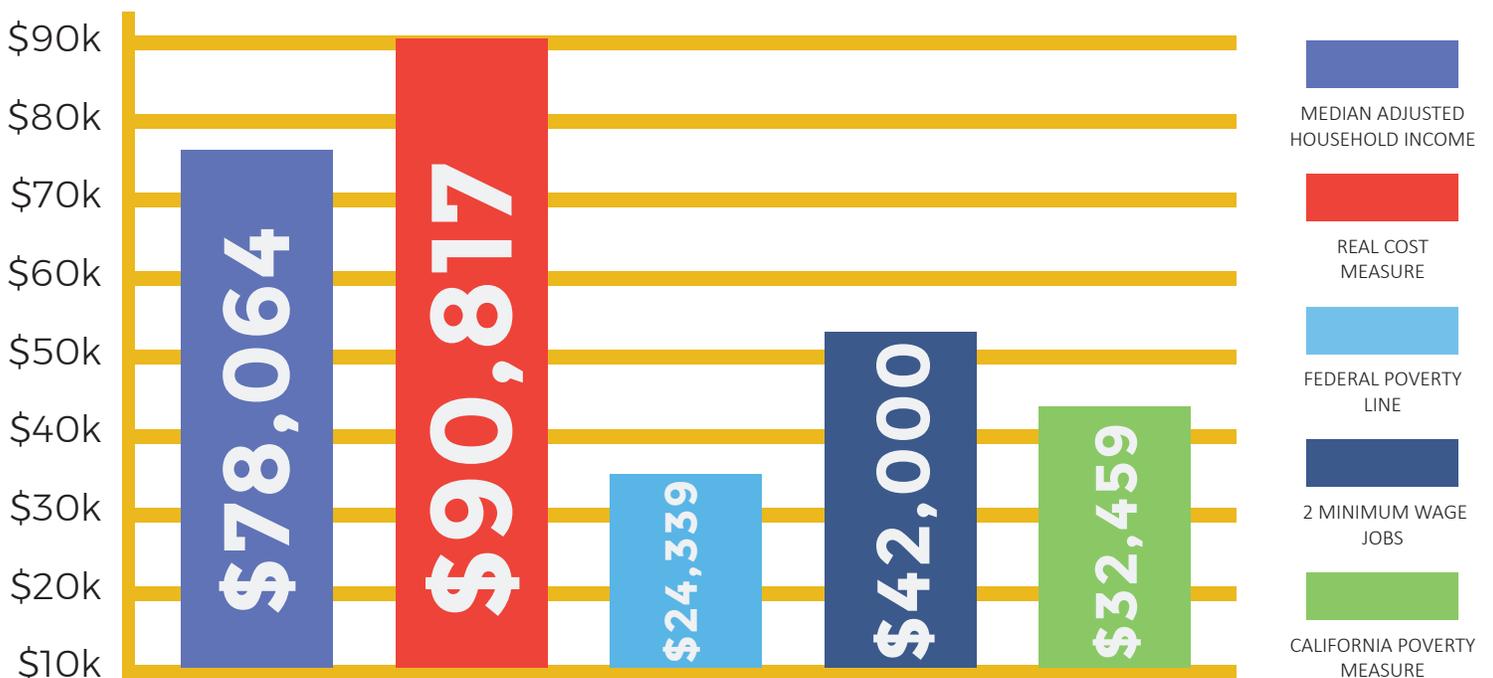
The United Ways of California recently released the Real Cost Measure (RCM) that **measures poverty beyond the official poverty measure** and incorporates the costs of housing, food, health care, child care, transportation and other basic needs to determine **what it really costs to live in California**. This measure helps tell the story of what working families in Santa Barbara County are experiencing.

97%

Percent of Households Below the Real Cost Measure Have at Least One Working Adult

2017 SANTA BARBARA COUNTY INCOME COMPARISON

(based on a household of 2 adults, 1 preschooler, 1 school-age child)



77%

Percent of Single Mothers
are Below Real Cost Measure
in Santa Barbara County

46,463

Number of Households
Below Real Cost Measure
in Santa Barbara County

26,278

Number of Households that
are Latinx out of 46,463
Households Below RCM for
Santa Barbara County



42%

Percent of Households
in Santa Barbara County
Spend More than

30%

of their Income on
Housing

38%

Percent of Households
Below Real Cost Measure
for Santa Barbara County



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MAN & WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Coral Casino, Montecito

Tickets go on sale July 29!

Purchase tickets at:

SBFoundation.org/MWAwards

ON THE COVER:

New Beginnings Counseling Center is a Santa Barbara-based nonprofit that has supported vulnerable residents for over 50 years and is a national leader with their innovative Safe Parking Program® (SPP). Safe parking programs are an important part of the effort to reduce homelessness. Read more on page 5 about their 15 year endeavor to be a solution to the scarce housing issue. The photo on the cover is courtesy of Cassandra Giraldo of VICE News, who ran a short documentary feature on New Beginnings' Safe Parking Program in September 2018.

INSIDE:

We have changed the name of this publication from our *Quarterly Report* to our *County Connections Report*. Don't worry! You will still receive this report at the end of the quarter, but we have organized themes and data points to share pressing issues in our communities throughout Santa Barbara County. Donor acknowledgement and finances for the Foundation for 2019 will now be in our new Annual Report that we will share with the community in 2020. We hope you enjoy!

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