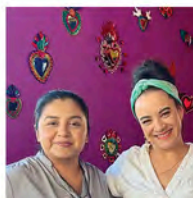


Clackamas Women's Services

# 2023

## Impact Report



# From Our Executive Director

The past year has been a time of unprecedented growth for CWS—programmatically, operationally, and strategically. Thank you for making it possible for CWS to help survivors tap into their strengths, access opportunities that align with their personal goals, and connect with a caring community. As you read this 2023 Impact Report, I hope you remember that our impact is also your impact, and that change is possible when we all work together to disrupt the isolation of domestic and sexual violence.

Our most exciting endeavor of the past year was the completion of a new multi-year strategic plan. The diverse perspectives and lived experiences of survivors, partners, community members, CWS staff, and our Board of Directors contributed to a plan that reflects our commitment to racial and gender equity, is responsive to the needs of our community, and continues to strengthen our organization.

Through this process, we were reminded of the depth and breadth of our current work. CWS has nearly tripled our capacity to provide services, in addition to adding more diversity and lived experience to our leadership and direct service teams across the agency. The plan also reinforces the spectrum of care we offer—from intervention through prevention—and challenges us to take the lead in areas that will broaden our impact.

For example, we are developing a new program focused on improving Clackamas County’s emergency response to sexual assault. In partnership with Providence Health & Services, we piloted a first-of-its-kind collaboration that embedded CWS Confidential Advocates within a hospital setting where they could immediately support and advocate for survivors. This model builds on our work in partnering with Sandy Health Center to co-locate advocacy in the health care setting.

We are also deeply committed to the prevention of interpersonal violence and the encouragement of healthy relationships. In addition to our growing Violence Prevention program in K-12 schools, we recently completed our second successful year of co-locating Confidential Youth Advocates in School-Based Health Centers. Currently, we are engaged with three school districts, including North Clackamas School District, the largest in the county.

CWS continues to prioritize our DEI journey with ongoing support from Leadership Training Institute, which provides us with regular training and leadership coaching. In line with our goal to become an agency of belonging, we have expanded our staff affinity groups and now support BIPOC, White, and LGBTQIA+ groups.

In 1985, CWS opened Clackamas County’s first emergency shelter with the goal to help women and children escaping violence find safety. Today, we are connecting hundreds of survivors and their families with shelter and housing each year, while also providing trauma-informed, survivor-centered, wrap-around support. As you’ll see in this report, our multi-faceted, culturally responsive programming is having an impact on our community, and so are you.

We look forward to sharing more milestones with you as we celebrate our 40th anniversary in 2025!

With my deepest gratitude,



Melissa Erlbaum  
Executive Director

# A Safe Place Family Justice Center Celebrated its 10th Year!



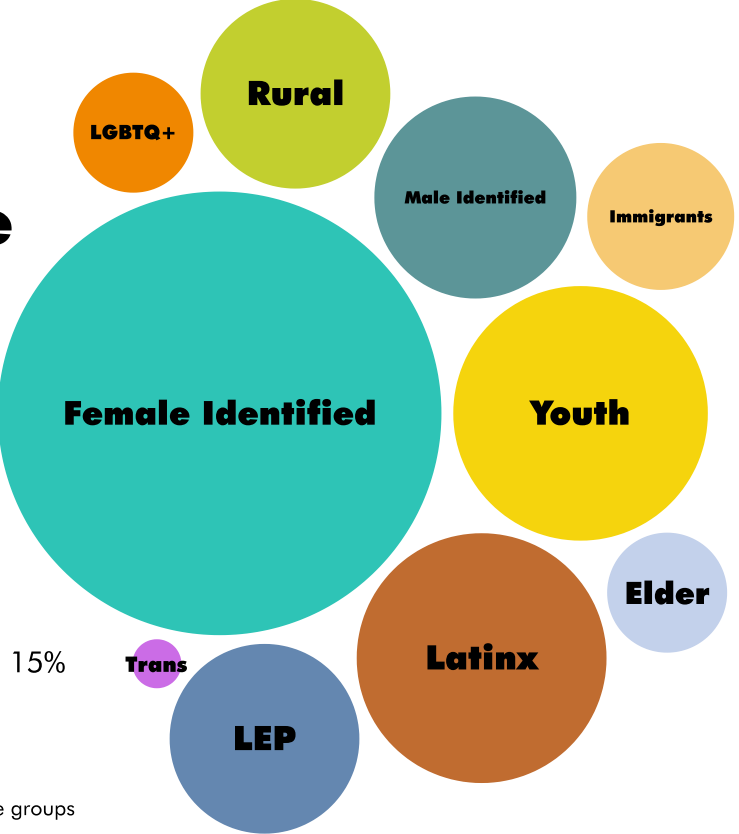
A Safe Place Family Justice Center is a place of hope for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. For 10 years it has served as a place survivors can go to access a wide range of services, including safety planning, counseling, support groups, restraining orders, and more. A Safe Place provides survivors navigating abuse with one place where they can connect with a range of providers like the Clackamas County Sherriff’s Office, the District Attorney’s Office, Department of Human Services, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Safety Compass, and others. Clackamas Women’s Services Executive Director Melissa Erlbaum, was instrumental in the formation of A Safe Place with former Sherriff Craig Roberts. Erlbaum said, “We have deep gratitude for the survivors who bravely share their experiences with us, who trust us with their stories, who trust us in vulnerable moments, and who share with us their resiliency and strength.”

Since opening in 2013, A Safe Place has provided support and advocacy to 6,352 survivors seeking services at the center for the first time and had over 32,000 visits for services. Additionally, over 4,000 survivors have received individual assistance in applying for protective orders through A Safe Place’s Video Court Program. In 2023, A Safe Place assisted with 56% percent of protective orders filed in Clackamas County.



## Who We Serve

- Rural - 15%
- Latinx - 26%
- Youth - 27%
- Elder (60+) - 6%
- Female-identified - 82%
- Male-identified - 17%
- Trans/non-binary - 1%
- LGBTQIA+ - 6%
- Immigrants - 9%
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) - 15%



\*Many of our participants identify across multiple groups

# I am a survivor — and this is my story

For many years, I was in denial about the abuse that was occurring in my relationship. The denial was its own obstacle. Add in the shock, embarrassment, guilt, shame, and safety concerns, and it begins to paint the picture of why it's so hard to come forward. I was afraid that I wouldn't be taken seriously because I was one of those women who kept going back...and I felt ashamed that my sons were being subjected to the same life of instability, substance use, and psychological trauma from witnessing domestic violence that I had grown up in. I never wanted that for them.

I had all the usual reasons you might hear: I wanted to be a family. Our son needs both his parents. Marriage is supposed to be forever. The substance use is the cause of it. Things will eventually change and go back to how it was in the beginning. I'm afraid I can't make it on my own.

By the time I reached out to CWS in 2014, I was at rock bottom in all areas of my life. I had been in a 15-year marriage that was so toxic that it left me with deep psychological scars and complex PTSD. I was physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually bankrupt. I was in such despair that I was seriously contemplating suicide. I felt useless and hopeless. I didn't think I had the strength to clean up this massive trail of wreckage that was my life.

After a few sessions at CWS, I saw a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel where there was once only darkness. I was provided a safe place to share my experience in confidence and without judgment. I felt supported and heard.

There was a huge benefit to coming to one location to access multiple services. I could choose what services felt safest for me to access and never felt pressured. The services I received were many: counseling, including safety planning and EMDR therapy to process traumatic memories, access to housing assistance, assistance paying utilities, food, an IDA account that helped me save enough money to buy a car, domestic violence advocate training was also available, and the Women's Independence Study Program scholarship allowed me to go to college and obtain a degree.

Going to school and getting an education was a critical turning point that put me on a career path. It took five years to complete my degree, but I now have a job that provides me financial independence. I felt empowered and took charge of my own life. I no longer depend on someone who was unreliable for support.

I found a spark of hope because of CWS and A Safe Place Family Justice Center. Enough hope to keep me coming back. Feeling trapped in the cycle of violence takes away one's ability to choose. In breaking the cycle and healing from trauma, I was free to become my authentic self. The woman and mother God intended me to be.

What I'd like you to remember is that the services I received from CWS and A Safe Place were exactly what I needed. The services helped me to break the intergenerational cycle of domestic violence and bring about lasting change in my life—and in my son's life. And I am just one of many—just one example of how walking through those doors changed my life completely.

For that, I am eternally grateful. Thank you.

# A Teacher's Perspective

It's often hard to talk about dating and sexual violence, what to do if you witness violence, and how to support someone who has experienced violence. For youth, this is especially challenging since high school is a time of immense learning, including about oneself and one's relationships with others.

Jenny Brauckmiller, a Molalla High School teacher, shared that students want to have healthy relationships. She said it's helpful for them to learn healthy behaviors within a relationship and recognize signs of an unhealthy relationship. Sometimes they don't know that a behavior in a relationship isn't normal because they may have seen it in a friend's relationship or at home. Learning about what's healthy and unhealthy is valuable and important for students.

For more than 10 years, Jenny has incorporated our Violence Prevention program into her health classes and found that students appreciate being able to talk about topics that are important to them. Jenny shared, "I appreciate the interactive curriculum that allows students to process for themselves, while working with their peers and educators." She also values that the violence prevention educators work to build trust and create a safe environment with students.

A couple years ago, a dad reached out to the school to say thank you for having CWS in the classrooms and being a resource for his daughter. She was struggling, and he didn't know what was going on. Through the daughter's connection with CWS and the skills she learned to have these conversations at home, they realized that she was in an abusive relationship. With help, his daughter was able to leave the relationship. The dad was so appreciative of CWS and the Violence Prevention Program.

Jenny Brauckmiller teaches Upper Class Health, College Health, and Yoga for Molalla High School. She has been teaching for 25 years and is a wife and mom of two boys.

Thank you for teaching me that the bad things that have happened to me aren't my fault.

**STUDENT AT MOLALLA HIGH SCHOOL**



# Programs and Services

Alongside survivors, community partners, donors, students, volunteers, faith communities, and many others we're building a community that honors survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, elder abuse, and trafficking. Our programs and services are free and confidential. We support people of all backgrounds, gender identifications, sexual orientations, ages, or immigration status to ensure anyone escaping interpersonal violence can access the resources they deserve. We honor the depth and diversity of lived experiences across our community.

Our mission is to break the isolation of domestic and sexual violence. Here's how we're doing it:

## COMMUNITY-BASED ADVOCACY

Individualized case management and support that includes safety planning, access to community resources, help navigating public systems, and assistance with protective orders. Services are accessible at A Safe Place Family Justice Center, DHS Offices, County Health Centers, and county-wide through our mobile advocates.

### 1,125 survivors accessed our community-based services.

- We provided flexible client assistance and urgent basic needs support to survivors with things such as food, clothing, diapers, and transportation.
- We distributed more than 60 safety phones and hundreds of Ring cameras to survivors.
- We provided mobile advocacy to hospitals and police departments to support survivors with crisis intervention.
- We referred over 500 legal consultations to Legal Aid Services of Oregon.
- CWS Advocates assisted with 723 restraining orders at A Safe Place Family Justice Center.



I like that the people that work here truly care about my well-being.

I just feel like everyone that I encounter there has mine and my children's best interest at heart.

I am so grateful for the practical and emotional care and support I received. Everyone I interacted with has been kind, knowledgeable, and thorough. Thank you so so much for the work that is being done here!

### FEEDBACK FROM SURVIVORS

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Training for the community about how to prevent domestic and sexual violence, including school-based domestic violence prevention programming for K-12 grade public school students.

### 8,219 elementary, middle, and high school students received violence prevention education in the 2023-2024 school year.

Through 1,638 school-based K-12 presentations at 29 schools in Clackamas County, we reached:

- 3,515 high school students
- 3,392 middle school students
- 1,312 elementary school students



### 1,290 people received community education in 57 training sessions.

- 1,113 staff members from agencies such as DHS, Army Reserves, UNICA, Clackamas ESD, Clackamas Community College, and others were trained.
- 177 social service providers, caseworkers, college students, law enforcement, and members of the greater community across Oregon participated in our Community Education & Prevention Series.

Thank you very much for your very good, informative, quality, helpful trainings. Your trainings have helped facilitate my ability to want to continue to work in DV for the unending future!

### TRAINING PARTICIPANT



## LATINX SERVICES

Culturally-specific services for survivors in Latinx communities, along with opportunities for leadership development for Latinx staff and survivors.

### 1,300 people were reached through outreach efforts at community events.

- 11 new Promotoras graduated our groundbreaking training to connect Latinx survivors to local services in their communities to break the isolation of domestic and sexual violence.
- 20 adults and 33 children attended 20 weeks of our Latinx support groups. Participants gained knowledge about the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence, healthy boundaries, self-esteem, self-care activities, empowerment, and more.
- We participated in 11 outreach events, providing information to over 1,300 people at the Mexican Consulate, Latino Festival at Clackamas Community College, Hispanic Interagency Networking Team, and more.

## Latinx Provider Chat

CWS hosts the Latinx Provider Chat to support a network of exchange, provide a cultural space for providers, and support the Latinx community. In 2023, 14-19 Latinx providers met each month.



Soy una sobreviviente de violencia, llegue rota, con dificultades y realmente sin esperanza de que mi situación podría cambiar. Pero en este grupo conocí oportunidades, gente, y recursos que muy pronto mejoraron mis esperanzas y sentimientos todavía tengo dificultades problemas y cosas que solucionar pero definitivamente me siento mucho, mucho mejor que antes. Gracias a todos en Clackamas Women's Services por todo el apoyo, paciencia y trabajo que hicieron con migo, se que es un trabajo pero se ve el amor que ponen para nosotras. Gracias.

### LATINX SUPPORT GROUP PARTICIPANT

# Programs and Services

## EMERGENCY SHELTER AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SERVICES

Connecting survivors with the space to rebuild their lives in a supportive community.

**436 adults and 495 kids were safely housed across our continuum of resources, an increase of 238% from 2022.**

- 227 adults and 299 kids received short-term housing assistance—one-time rapid rehousing or homelessness prevention.
- 146 adults and 188 kids received medium-term housing assistance—rent and utility assistance for 6-24 months.
- 148 adults and 106 kids received long-term housing assistance—long-term rent and utility assistance through federal HUD programs and the Metro Supportive Housing Services program.
- 64 households received culturally specific housing assistance for immigrant—or—trafficking survivors, a 42% increase from 2022.

**11,168 nights of shelter were provided to survivors escaping domestic and sexual violence.**

- Nearly half of our housing participants identified as BIPOC
- 50% identified as having a disability
- 18% had Limited English Proficiency
- 14% identified as an immigrant/refugee
- 15% were from our rural community

**82% of households continued to have safe, stable housing at exit from housing assistance.**

Gracias por la oportunidad, este programa cambio mi vida.

**HOUSING PARTICIPANT**

If it wasn't for CWS I would be living back with my abuser. They gave me a fresh start to a new life I've only been able to dream about. I'm so grateful for everyone I want to cry. I'm over the moon with joy and feel it's too good to be true. I still can't believe this is happening. I love you all.

**SHELTER PARTICIPANT**

## COUNSELING AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Counseling and a range of support groups that include youth and family counseling.

**1,305 counseling sessions were provided to adults and youth, of those 128 were provided by our Latinx Counselor.**

Counseling services were provided to:

- 83 adults
- 15 youth
- 9 families

Additionally, 78 adults and 123 youth attended at least one of our support groups.

It feels immediately inviting and supportive and there are so many resources that helped me through this time that I was connected to because of the safe place that kept me and my kids safe.

**COUNSELING PARTICIPANT**

## 24-HOUR CRISIS AND SUPPORT LINE

Emotional support and safety planning for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and family violence. Consultation and support are also available for service providers and those who want to support a friend or loved one.

**We received 1,851 calls on our 24-hour Crisis and Support Line.**

- 664 text/chat conversations were received on our confidential Text and Chat Line, a 56% increase from 2022.

### We Are Here for You

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or sexual violence, call our 24-hour Crisis and Support Line at (503) 654-2288. Help is free and confidential.

Confidential Text and Chat Line  
rc.chat/cws or (503) 461-2888  
Available Monday-Friday 9:30am - 4pm



## YOUTH SERVICES

Confidential advocacy, support groups, and family support for young people who've experienced family violence, sexual violence, or dating violence.

**147 adults and youth participated in six Pathways to HOPE community-building events in 2023.**

- 58% of participants identified as Latinx.
- 28 parent/caregivers attended parenting classes.
- 22 parent/caregivers attended monthly Charlas de Cafe groups facilitated in Spanish.
- 156 healing art sessions—A Window Between Worlds (AWBW)—were offered for youth ages 7-17.
- Our Youth Services team gave 14 presentations to schools and community partners, sharing knowledge and tools for how to support youth impacted by violence.

**642 youth were served in our Youth Services program.**

- CWS had confidential youth advocates co-located at six schools in three school districts providing services for over 15 schools throughout Clackamas County.

**Camp HOPE Oregon returned to in-person camp in 2023!**

- 58 youth who have experienced family violence attended across the two weeks of camp.

This is amazing! I thought it would be so hard that I couldn't do it. In the future when I have to do hard things, I'm going to look back on this moment and remember that if I can finish this climb, I can do it.

**CAMP HOPE OREGON PARTICIPANT**





# 2024-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

BREAKING THE ISOLATION OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE



## The Planning Process

Over the course of 2022-2023, we worked to fully engage the ideas, perspectives, and passions of our dedicated staff and community to inform our new strategic plan. The opportunities and challenges we face—and how we will address them—were revealed through a thoughtful process that brought in community and survivor voices, and the active engagement of staff at all levels. The resulting plan centers the needs of the community we serve and incorporates feedback we received directly from survivors. We are excited to put this plan into action in the years ahead.



## Words from Our Community

“After I worked with you, I got my self-confidence back and I learned how to love myself.” -Participant

“CWS has a deep belief in collaboration and commits to strengthening partnerships to the benefit of participants.” -Partner



# Strategic Plan Goals



### Raise Awareness of Our Mission and Services

Promote a broader and deeper understanding of CWS and our services through community engagement, outreach, communications, and internal strategies.



### Improve Access to Services

Ensure our services are accessible, culturally and linguistically responsive and specific, and easy to navigate for historically underserved populations.



### Expand Community Prevention

Provide prevention and education across the lifespan (adult, family and youth) through training, outreach, and partnerships.



### Develop Sexual Assault Services

Address the need for specialized services to scale our sexual assault work to more effectively reach sexual assault survivors and provide the structural, programmatic, and staff capacity to meet the needs of sexual assault survivors.



### Create Beloved Community

Create opportunities for connections that bolster wellness, healing, and develop skills to break isolation and nurture joy.



### Enhance Staff Support and Wellness

Develop a holistic approach to staff wellness by fostering a community of care, connection, and belonging while leading with transparency, supporting the continued growth and development of staff, and building supportive structures and practices.

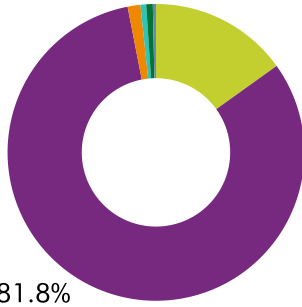


### Expand and Enhance Our Spaces to Serve Our Community

Cultivate our spaces in a way that is designed for survivors, meets program and workspace needs, creates more connection across programs, and supports staff.

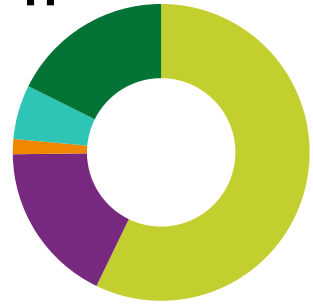
# Financial Report

## Core Operating Resources (Revenue)



- Contributions - 15.1%
- Government Grants - 81.8%
- Donated Facilities - 1.4%
- Special Events - 0.6%
- Other Income - 0.7%
- Interest Income - 0.3%

## Core Mission Support (Expenses)



- Program & Services - 56%
- Client Assistance - 17.2%
- Pass-through to Nonprofit Partners & Subcontractors - 3.7%
- Development - 5.8%
- Operations & Management - 17.2%

## Get Involved

It takes the compassionate actions of our entire community to support survivors, and we're truly grateful for the generous support that helps us provide survivor-centered programs and services.

Donations may be made online, or you can mail checks payable to Clackamas Women's Services at 256 Warner Milne Rd, Oregon City, OR 97045. For questions, contact our Development team at [development@cwsor.org](mailto:development@cwsor.org) or 503-557-5830.

### Donate Items

You, your company, school, church, or community group can organize a donation drive to gather items.

### Special Events & Sponsorship

Businesses, faith communities, social and civic associations are leaders in preventing domestic and sexual violence. We're happy to build a partnership with your organization.

### Volunteer

Volunteering is a great way to become involved. Visit our website to learn about current opportunities.

## Join the Clackamas Women's Services Board of Directors

We have openings on our Board of Directors, and we are seeking Board members who reflect our community. The most important qualifications are a desire for social change, an eagerness for heart-centered leadership, a commitment to healthy collaborative work, and enthusiasm for supporting our staff to do our best work.

Learn more at [www.cwsor.org/our-board/](http://www.cwsor.org/our-board/)



Based at A Safe Place Family Justice Center: 256 Warner Milne Rd, Oregon City, OR 97045

Phone: (503) 655-8600 • Website: [www.cwsor.org](http://www.cwsor.org) • Email: [info@cwsor.org](mailto:info@cwsor.org)

24-hour Crisis and Support Line: (503) 654-2288

Confidential Chat: [rc.chat/cws](https://rc.chat/cws) (available Monday-Friday from 9:30am-4pm)



@CWSOR

