



FAMILY
JUSTICE CENTER
Sonoma County
Foundation

Winter 2022 Newsletter



Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Each year, in October, advocates, survivors, and supporters recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). The goal of DVAM is to start a coordinated national conversation about domestic violence and how we can all contribute to changing the narrative on this overshadowed, but fundamental topic. This year we were able to do exactly that with survivor-led writing workshops, an extensive social media campaign, an emergency veterinary clinic to fleeing families with

Ruthless Kindness and a collaborative effort with local healthcare agencies to provide safety information for survivors during Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day.

3 Ways of Thanksgiving

The FJCSC wrapped up our 3 WAYS of Thanksgiving Care Drive on November 22nd. We were able to support FJC families with grocery items for their Thanksgiving meal, and assistance with their energy bill for the Thanksgiving holiday. Not only were we able to assist families during Thanksgiving, we were also able to provide winter wear to keep our families cozy and warm this winter. Thank you to all who supported this effort.



Friendsgiving

As fall kicked off the holiday season, we held our first annual Friendsgiving for our Camp Hope Campers and Counselors. This special holiday meal with all the fixings included games, gifts, and prizes! Special thanks to our incoming DA Carla Rodriguez and Board member Karen Fies for their handy work at the buffet table. We look forward to hosting again next year as we give thanks for all the young lives positively impacted by Camp Hope.



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After a 35-year career and her third term as the Sonoma County District Attorney, Jill Ravitch is retiring from office. Jill was the first woman to serve as District Attorney in Sonoma County and during her tenure DA Ravitch has continued to increase public safety while navigating county-wide wildfires, floods, power outages, a global pandemic, and a recall. During Ms. Ravitch's first term she opened the Family Justice Center, dedicated to providing wraparound services to victims of family violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and child abuse. Since the inception of the Family Justice Center, we have served over 17,000 survivors in just over a decade. She has helped to build a strong history of collaboration for the FJCSC, including its six founding partners who continue to be central to the Center's work. This collaboration has expanded over the past decade to include more than twenty partners. Additionally, we have increased our number of bilingual staff, added therapy, support groups, onsite workshops, holistic services, and added numerous onsite partners in her time leading the charge.

With Jill's support, the FJCSC began offering Camp HOPE in 2014. Camp HOPE is our evidence-based camp and mentorship program for youth who have experienced family violence, domestic violence, or sexual assault, and since its beginning, we have had 104 life-changing camp experiences. At Camp Hope, we are focused on creating pathways to hope and healing for youth by teaching them to believe in themselves, in others, and in their dreams.

Jill's dedication to the FJCSC and her tireless efforts to increase resources in 2022 alone provided 140 families with groceries, 88 tanks of gas to fleeing families, and countless clothing, hygiene, and self-care items as families rebuild their lives. Jill's kindness, tenacity and compassion have built a solid foundation for the important work of the FJC to continue. Her legacy energizes all of us to dedicate ourselves to fulfilling the mission of the FJCSC to restore hope to survivors throughout Sonoma County. To DA Ravitch--THANK YOU!



Your FJCSC Family

Marsha's Musings

There is an old proverb of unknown origin that speaks of a man who has fallen in a hole and sees no way out. He hollers for help, and eventually a rugged man walks by and, upon hearing the man's plea and seeing his predicament, tells the man that he needs to pick himself up by the bootstraps and find a way out on his own before going on his way.

A holy man walks by and hears the man's desperate cry. He tells him that he will say a prayer for him that he will find his way out and then scurries off.

Finally, an ordinary man walks by the hole and sees the man and his situation. He listens to the man's plea for help. Then, without warning, the ordinary man jumps down into the hole with the first man. "Why did you do that?" the first man asks. The ordinary man replies, "Because I have been in this hole before, and I know the way out."

At the FJCSC, we seek to be that ordinary man for survivors: one who fully understands what they are going through and one who knows the way out.

So, if you feel as though you have fallen in a hole, suffering through some trial to which you see no way out, take heart that there is a place interceding on your behalf who knows exactly what you're going through.

You are not alone!



Partner Spotlight: Ruthless Kindness



Ruthless Kindness (RK) was founded by two veterinarians, Dr. Sarah Reidenbach and Dr. Kate Kuzminski, who have both worked extensively in underserved communities. Recognizing that up to 48% of victims will delay or not leave a dangerous environment if they can't bring their pet with them, RK felt compelled to fill gaps in services which cause unnecessary trauma by offering free mobile veterinary care and vaccines for the pets of victims of domestic violence and other at-risk community members in crisis. Their services remove an obstacle for victims, children, and pets escaping harm as up-to-date vaccines are required for pets of victims to enter pet-friendly safe houses, domestic violence shelters, apartments, and pet boarding facilities. The FJCSC is proud to share that Ruthless Kindness is now an onsite partner and continues to offer quarterly veterinary clinics for FJCSC families.

Volunteer Spotlight



Maureen Middlebrook moved from Oakland to Sonoma County in 1970. She was a single mom who raised two children and now has four grandchildren, whom she adores. Maureen has an MA in Political Science from SSU and a TESOL Certificate from UC Davis. Maureen started volunteering at the FJCSC in the spring of 2016 and is loved by staff, partners, and other volunteers.

When the FJCSC opened its doors after nearly 2 years of remote service, Maureen did not hesitate to return to the Center to serve. She has been instrumental in helping to prevent any disruption in service with her willingness to jump in when needed. *"We are incredibly grateful to have someone as compassionate as Maureen as a part of our FJCSC family."*

– Marsha Lucien, FJCSC Executive Director

Donors and Do-Gooders

The FJCSC is grateful to our community of dedicated supporters like you and we wanted to celebrate and say thank you for your impact! Well, with the help of Do-gooders like Bill Osterland , Lori Darling , and Scott Bartley the FJC was able to host the ...

Thanks-for-Giving

DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT

On November 10th, the FJCSC said thank to all of our supporters, donors and do-gooders who help us to do our work. Your gifts have allowed us to provide free services to all clients, regardless of income, for as long as they need assistance.

Thanks to your donations, we are able to provide survivors with more than just services; they enable us to create a space where clients feel safe, comfortable, and empowered. Without your support, we could not serve at such a high standard of care.

Thank you!



Adopt-a -Family



Operation Santa's Workshop

As you know, Santa is pretty busy this time of year...creating lasting memories that bring joy and the true magic of the holiday. Along with Santa, some of our elves showed off their wrapping skills preparing gifts for 14 FJC families in need of a boost. The holidays can be a particularly stressful time for those we serve. Together with our partners, we were able to bring joy, happy memories, and well-wrapped presents to some lucky FJC families this year.



Amazon Smile

If you are interested in donating, one easy way is to utilize AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support the Family Justice Center Sonoma County every time you shop, at no cost to you. When using AmazonSmile, 0.5% of your purchase price is donated to the FJC by Amazon.



Volunteers wanted

Hundreds of individuals, passionate about helping survivors, make it possible for us to serve more than 2,000 families each year, and we are grateful for their dedication and assistance.

Volunteers are essential members of our team here at the FJCSC and if you're interested in becoming a volunteer, or learning more about our volunteer program, we encourage you to [Inquire Here](#).



Take a tour of the FJC!!!

We'd love to host you at the FJCSC to check out our facilities and learn more about the work we do at the Center. To schedule your tour, contact

Stephanie Olsen at
Stephanie.Olsen@Sonoma-county.org