

Our Stories Our Impact

2022

communityworks



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AN EMPOWERED SURVIVOR

Guadalupe's Story

One afternoon a Community Works Staff member was at the store and noticed a cashier with bruises on her face. "When I asked if she was okay, she was hesitant and hostile. I told her that I worked with survivors of domestic violence and asked if she needed help. She insisted that she fell, but I know the difference. I left her my card and always spoke to her when I visited that store."



Two months later, Guadalupe reached out - she was fleeing her abuser and afraid to call the police because of her immigration status.

She enrolled in CW's Survivor Empowerment Program (SEP) and we helped get her placement in a domestic violence shelter, apply for a U-visa, get a drivers license and enroll in ESL classes.

In the last 5 years, Guadalupe received her US citizenship, bought her first home, and is striving towards her next goal - to obtain a job with the City and County of San Francisco.

"Guadalupe is truly an inspiration to other women, especially survivors of domestic violence." - SEP Case Manager

Our **Survivor Empowerment Program** is designed to restore the harm caused by violence through empowering survivors and supporting them as activists to promote education and mobilization on issues pertaining to violence. This 12-week program addresses women's physical, mental, and spiritual health by focusing on the following topics:

- self esteem
- legal rights
- job readiness
- healthy relationships
- self defense
- substance use
- financial stability
- parenting

FAMILY REUNITED



159

Parents received therapy, completed parenting classes, and had in person contact visits with their children

"The visit makes me so happy; after the visit I am always in a good mood. I go back to my cell and reflect on the visit and smile" - One Family Client

Shayla's Story

When Shayla was arrested, her son was removed from her home and placed in foster care. While incarcerated, Shayla inquired about resources to regain custody of her son. After returning home, Shayla proactively reached out to One Family to enroll in our parenting classes. Four months later, Shayla successfully regained custody of her son, both are now thriving.

"Her determination to get her son back was evident and inspiring from day one." recalls One Family Parenting Program Facilitator, Cassandra Hopes, "One of things I hear most commonly from women who lose their children is that they sink into a depression. She [Shayla] refused to let the depression get to her, regardless of any barriers she was facing, she stepped up and went above and beyond to get her son back."

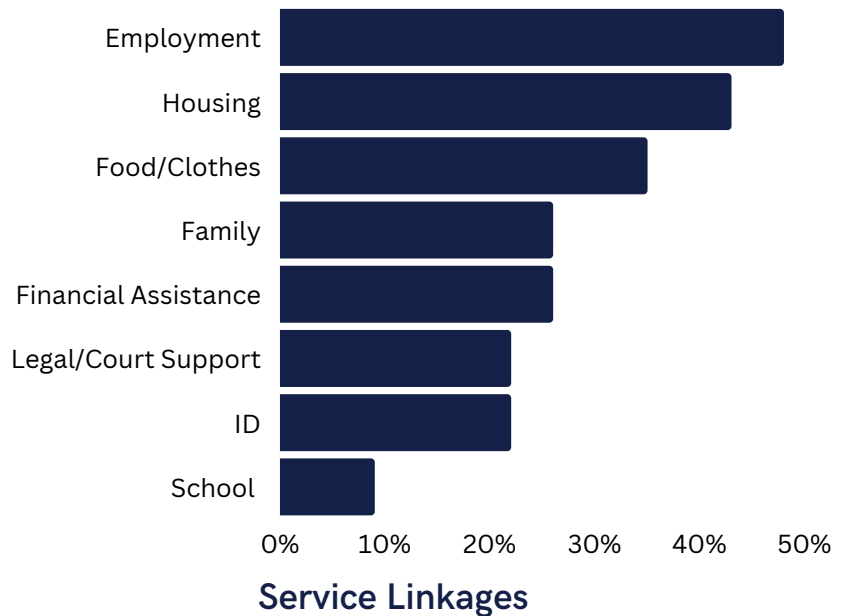


RETURNING HOME

Our **Restorative Reentry Programs** support people ages 18+ after incarceration. Our case managers work with clients to create a reentry plan, linkage to services, and provide encouragement and mentoring towards client's successful transition home.



Non-Recidivism rate of RISE (reentry) clients



Laura's Story

I've been in jail, but not a lot. This last time I went to jail for a DUI, my children were removed, even though I was only detained for 72 hours, and they didn't even file charges.

My kids have been through a lot. My son was close to his cousin, who died in an accident. The two used to play all the time. Now my son won't even run to the corner. Also, my youngest daughter is now afraid of the police because of my arrest. She says, "Mommy, is the police going to kidnap you again?"

With all of the support I received from RISE staff, I now have my own apartment, and I got my kids back. In addition, through the support from family maintenance at CPS, I got my kids enrolled in a UCSF Clinic to see a counselor.

With everything I've needed help with, having that network of support, knowing that [RISE staff] has been through life themselves, means everything. Being a woman, a single mom who has to try to do it all, having [RISE staff] be a part of my journey, I am so thankful that I have them.

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

Restorative Reentry Fund

In 2021 CW launched our **Restorative Reentry Fund**, with seed funding provided by Remy Fund for Racial and Environmental Justice + COVID-19: A Just East Bay Fund at East Bay Community Foundation. **15** formerly incarcerated Black and Brown people were provided with direct cash payments of **\$6,000** over 12 months.

This year, we expanded our program by **153%**! Thanks to a partnership with UpTogether and funding from the Crankstart Foundation, we are providing **38** returned citizens with **\$15,000** over 18 months.

What We Are Seeing

- **Reduction** in participants living below the poverty line and housing instability
- **Increases** in ability to pay for emergency expenses, pay off debts, and sense of financial security



What We're Looking For

- **Improvements** in mental health, wellbeing, and feelings of stability and self-efficacy
- **Increases** in full time employment and savings
- **Reduction** in recidivism

"I have been given many resources from my case manager and have had help from her navigating the system to find hopeful avenues to possibly to finding a new home. Without [CW case manager] Maria Rios and the stipend I would be homeless. The Bay Area is a challenging place to live even when you don't struggle with mental illness."

- Cohort 1 RRF Recipient

SECOND CHANCES YOUTH DIVERSION



Persons harmed were **satisfied** with the process and would refer it to a friend



A 10 year randomized control study found that our participants had a **46% reduction in recidivism** compared to the control group

Make It Right is a **Restorative Community Conferencing (RCC)** program that diverts youth out of the traditional juvenile justice system. Our Restorative Justice Model offers an alternative to traditional prosecution by focusing on accountability and healing rather than retribution and punishment.

Chris's Story

After being referred to RCC, both Chris and the person harmed spent 8 weeks prepping for the conference. This included, processing what happened, contemplating what repairing the harm caused could look like, and preparing to come face to face with each other.

During Chris's conference, he heard from the person harmed, his mother, and a community representative about how his harmful action had impacted them, and what they would like him to do in order to repair that harm.

Together, all participants created a restorative plan that consisted of violence prevention classes, maintaining chores, passing all of his classes, connecting with staff for programs supporting children of incarcerated parents, connecting with a youth center, and interviewing people in his field of interest, culinary arts.

Chris was able to follow through and complete his restorative plan and the case was closed with no charges filed.

“As we hear cries around the nation to ‘defund the police’ we have to ask ourselves whether every role we play in prosecution is appropriate and necessary. If there is a better actor in the community or elsewhere, we need to step back and allow them the space to work.”

- Chesa Boudin, Former San Francisco District Attorney

HONORING OUR ROOTS

In 1994 **Community Works** was founded to organize art programs in jails throughout the SF Bay Area. While we have expanded our services over the last two decades, we continue to integrate arts within our programs:



CW hosts ongoing **Restorative Arts Circles** with community members at the Richmond Success Center.



This summer, women in CW's **Rising Voices** theater group performed for *The Healing Project*, a six-month exhibition presented by **Samora Pinderhughes** at the **Yerba Buena Arts Center**.



With funding from the **California Arts Council**, our **Project WHAT!** Youth are working with Bay Area Artists to create visual and written pieces which will be performed Spring 2023.



Through another award from the **California Arts Council**, we are partnering with **KALW Public Media** to provide storytelling workshops to formerly incarcerated people. Participants will learn the technical skills involved in podcast development and CW will host a Community Showcase in May 2023.

Art making can provide a space for expressing difficult emotions and give individuals a renewed sense of agency, discovery and hope.”

— Dee Morizono, Restorative Arts Facilitator & Artist

WHAT'S NEXT

Community Works seeks to transform justice through programs and policies rooted in humanity and healing

Where do we go from here?



01

Expand Transition Support Services

Community Works was recently awarded funding to expand our reentry services. For the first time, we will have a dedicated Housing and Outreach Coordinator to support finding transitional and temporary housing solutions for clients being released from prison or jail.



02

Launch Economic Wellness Initiative

We are actively fundraising to support the pilot of an Economic Wellness initiative designed to empower justice-impacted individuals through financial education and job readiness.



03

Advocacy

In 2023, we plan to continue translating the learned lessons from our programs into meaningful shifts within systems by co-sponsoring two pieces of legislation that: (1) address challenges for people returning home from prison or jail; and (2) support maintenance of familial connection between an incarcerated parent and their child(ren).



04

Advocacy

We will be expanding our model of collective advocacy, which the Project WHAT! program has practiced since 2006, by increasing the capacity, skill, and confidence amongst our staff and clients to engage in advocacy efforts.

LEADERSHIP

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We would also like to express our gratitude for our donors, foundation, and system partners.

**WE THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN
OUR PROGRAMS**