

# PATHWAYS TO HOPE

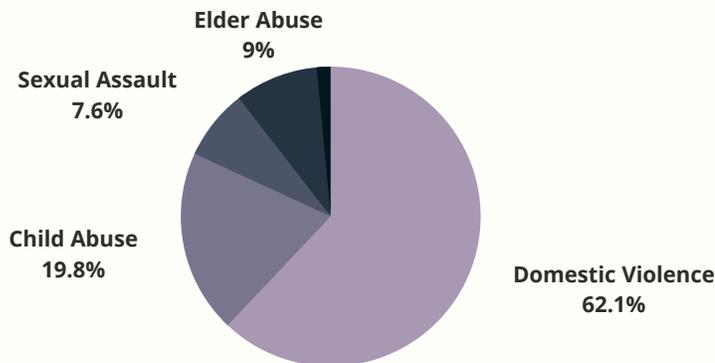
The Ventura County Family Justice Center and Foundation Newsletter



## 2021 in Review

It is hard to believe we have completed the second full year of operations. We are proud and thankful for the staff at our Family Justice Center for continually providing quality services to those in need while ensuring public health guidelines are followed and implementing numerous changes in practices and procedures to protect the public and each other.

More than 2,100 victims and survivors of many forms of interpersonal violence were served at the Center in 2021. More than 62 percent are survivors of domestic violence.



More than 85 percent of those served were female. Nearly 55 percent were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

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DV AWARENESS - #EVERY1KNOWSSOME1

WELCOME FOREVER FOUND

HONORING VICTIMS OF MASS VIOLENCE

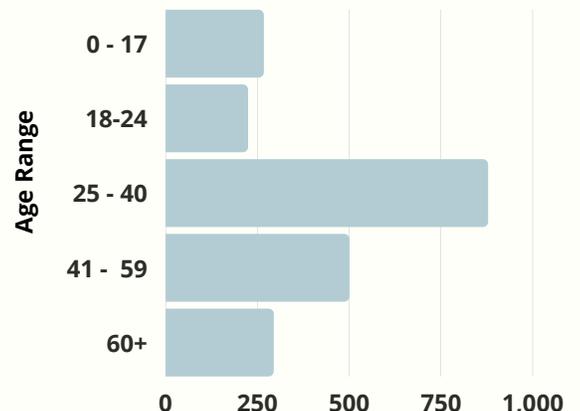
TOY DRIVE AND YOUTH HOLIDAY EVENT

THANK YOU KAREN SIMPSON

WELCOME TREVOR ZIERHUT

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

More than 40 percent of those served at the Family Justice Center are between the ages of 25-40 years of age.



## #Every1KnowsSome1 - Domestic Violence Awareness Month



In October in recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we joined the #Every1KnowsSome1 campaign with survivors, supporters, advocates, prosecutors, and law enforcement agencies across the nation to promote a conversation about domestic violence.

Domestic violence affects everyone everywhere, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual identity or orientation, socio-economic status, or religion. Domestic violence is often thought of as physical violence, but controlling behavior and other abusive tactics often begin long before any physical violence occurs and can include emotional, financial, verbal, psychological, sexual abuse, stalking, and harassment.

Domestic violence victims are our family members, neighbors, coworkers, and friends. In Ventura County, more than 6,000 calls for domestic violence assistance were made to local law enforcement agencies. National studies find that one in four women and one in seven men will experience domestic violence in their lifetimes.

Domestic violence thrives in silence. To support victims and survivors and help prevent future violence, we all need to normalize talking openly about it and understanding why just leaving isn't so simple for survivors.

Due to a myriad of factors, fear and stigma often prevent victims from seeking help. Barriers victims may face when attempting to recover and heal from trauma include:

- Fear of the unknown
- Shame
- Physical limitations
- Fear of the abuser
- Physical and social isolation
- Mental health (PTSD, depression)
- Lack of childcare resources
- Difficulty accessing medical care
- Inability to afford housing
- Emotional dependency
- Love for the abuser and desire to preserve the family unit
- Lack of financial resources to support themselves and their children
- Language barriers
- Immigration issues
- Lack of transportation
- Cultural and religious constraints

But help, hope, and support is available. The Ventura County Family Justice Center provides services and many resources free of charge for those experiencing domestic violence -- whether or not they choose to report their abuse to the police.



We thank the Simi Valley Police Department for collecting essential supplies from supporters in their community for our clients.



## Forever Found Now Providing On-Site Services

In September, we welcomed Crystal Milligan and Jen Gabriel from Forever Found who will now have office hours at the Family Justice Center. Forever Found is a nonprofit formed to combat human trafficking and child exploitation. The local program primarily serves youth ages 12-25 and focuses on trafficking prevention, victim recovery, survivor restoration, training and awareness, and community collaboration. Learn more at [www.foreverfound.org](http://www.foreverfound.org)

## Toy Drive and Holiday Event



Thank you to the Ventura County Spark of Love program and to everyone who participated in our toy drive. We collected many great gifts for our Camp HOPE kids and their siblings, and for our clients and their children who visited over the holiday season.

## Honoring Victims of Mass Violence

October 1, 2021, marked the fourth anniversary of the Las Vegas Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting. Approximately 65 percent of the more than 24,000 attendees were from California, with the majority residing in Southern California. Give An Hour®, in partnership with the District Attorney's Office, Family Justice Center, and funded by the California Victims Compensation Board, offers long-term support to Southern California survivors and loved ones of the Route 91 Festival. Visit the website [giveanhour.org/route91](http://giveanhour.org/route91) to learn more.

November 7, 2021, was the third anniversary of the Borderline Bar and Grill Shooting, where 12 lives were taken: Sean Adler, 48; Cody Coffman, 22; Blake Dingman, 21; Jake Dunham, 21; Alaina Housley, 18; Daniel Manrique, 33; Justin Meek, 23; Mark Meza, 20; Kristina Morisette, 20; Telemachus Orfanos, 27; Noel Sparks, 21; and Ventura County Sheriff's Sgt. Ron Helus, 54.

An interfaith celebration of life was held to honor the lives lost, survivors, and first responders and to remember all who have been affected by this tragedy. The program was hosted by the Conejo Valley Interfaith Association in collaboration with the City of Thousand Oaks, the Borderline Strong Foundation, and Give an Hour®.



We also appreciate the parents, family members, and volunteers for making the gift distribution event possible for many of the youth in the Camp HOPE program and their siblings.



See more photos from the event at  
[www.vcfjcfoundation.org/events](http://www.vcfjcfoundation.org/events)

## Thank You and Congratulations!

We wish to thank and congratulate FJC Youth Programs & Operations Manager Karen Simpson for her 25-year career with the District Attorney's Office and her dedicated service to justice and the people of Ventura County.



Karen co-founded the Camp HOPE America - Ventura County and Pathways to Promise programs and leaves a legacy that will be the foundation for our programs to continue to grow and help the children and teens who participate dream of bright futures and find pathways to hope and healing. Thank you for being a HOPE giver, Karen. We look forward to your return as a volunteer with the Camp HOPE and Pathways programs!

## Welcome VCFJC Foundation Board Member

Trevor Zierhut joined the VCFJC Foundation Board in November. He is a principal consultant with The Zierhut Group, specializing in government relations and communications.



## Community Support

Many thanks to Ventura Downtown Lions President Ed Rogeff and Jeff Roundy for visiting and for the clubs' generous support of the Ventura County Family Justice Center.



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- Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney
- Michael Jump, Executive Director
- Rachael Watkins, Victim Services Manager
- Joyce Donehue, Development & Outreach Manager
- Karen Simpson, Youth Programs & Operations



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