



SAFETY & WELLNESS

IRC SAN DIEGO 2021

Fiscal Year 2021 (October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021)

OUR IMPACT

The IRC San Diego's Safety and Wellness (S&W) Department, launched in 2018, provides culturally humble, trauma-informed, and client-centered services to address the dynamic needs of newcomers to the U.S. experiencing barriers to safety, wellbeing, and power.



GENDER EQUITY FOCUS



SURVIVOR-CENTERED



TRAUMA-INFORMED



CULTURALLY HUMBLE APPROACH



INCLUSIVE OF ALL IDENTITIES

Numbers alone do not reflect the full impact Safety & Wellness Programs have had on the lives of clients. We are humbled to have been a part of their respective journeys in improving their health, safety, and power to choose how they live.



ASYLUM SEEKING FAMILIES

VISION: Families fleeing harm are able to claim their rights, and reach a place of safety and wellbeing

"We are super grateful for the beautiful details that you all had with my family, enthusiasm and learning with emotional moments... that in difficult moments like in this pandemic there are people with a huge heart who support and shelter the needs of those of us who need a little light."

-Asylum seeker enrolled in case management services



WOMEN'S RESILIENCE CENTER

VISION: Women have safe spaces where they can achieve holistic wellbeing

"[It] is amazing and helpful supportive like a family. 😊😊"

-WRC member

"When I'm with the group, I'm not thinking about anything else..."

-WRC member



SURVIVOR ADVOCACY SERVICES

VISION: Survivors are able to claim their rights, reach safety and freely choose how to live

"[T]hank you so much for all your support, cooperation, understanding and awareness you provided me and my children during the tough sad times I was going through with my abusive husband. Through conversation with you, and the information and resources you offered and provided to me and my kids, I was able to rescue/save myself and my kids and start new safe life."

-Survivor enrolled in advocacy services

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ASYLUM SEEKING FAMILIES

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INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

Providing personalized, trauma-informed, long-term case management for vulnerable families and individuals seeking safety and appropriate immigration status. Guiding resource and systems navigation and honoring dignity and self-determination in the midst of challenging barriers.



3 CASE WORKERS

4781 INTERNSHIP HOURS
Across all Safety and Wellness programs

151 PEOPLE SERVED

45 FAMILY & INDIVIDUAL CASES

17 REPRESENTED COUNTRIES

TOP 10 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

- Russia: 26%
- Honduras: 17%
- Mexico: 10%
- Guatemala: 8%
- Uzbekistan: 6%
- Tajikistan: 5%
- China: 5%
- Kazakhstan: 4%
- El Salvador: 3%
- Togo: 3%



17 LANGUAGES

82 CHILDREN

67% lead case members identify as women

22% cases include LGBTQI+ individuals

No knowledge of resources to meet basic needs. Limited safety net eligibility.



100% clients provided personalized support connecting to resources

36+ school-aged children supported in school navigation

No connection to US community. No legal eligibility to work. No cash assistance eligibility.



38+ families assisted in accessing safe housing

19+ adults connected to ESL resources

Survivor of physical and mental trauma. No insurance. No knowledge of health resources.



87% families received support connecting with mental and/or physical health services

18+ families received digital literacy support and a Chromebook

Potential deportation to danger. Need to complete complex legal process. No funds to pay lawyer.



25+ families connected to pro bono legal consultation

24+ families supported with housing through our formal housing partners (check out one of them [here](#))

Language barriers. No transportation. No knowledge of US systems. Limited digital knowledge or access.



\$78,000+ total emergency funds distributed to families to cover basic needs such as rent, food, transportation, immigration fees, clothing, driving lessons, phone bills

BARRIERS OUR CLIENTS CAN FACE

OUR IMPACT

WOMEN'S RESILIENCE CENTER

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Providing a safe, responsive, creative place where the diverse needs of women and girls are respected and where they have opportunities for expression, enhanced wellbeing, and community connectedness.

33 WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

8 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS COMPLETED
in an effort to make the WRC a more inclusive space for the LGBTQI+ community

≈1300 INTERNSHIP HOURS

42 ACTIVE MEMBERS

"Women networking is very important these days"
WRC NEEDS ASSESSMENT PARTICIPANT

72 NON-MEMBER ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS

SEWING SISTERS

A group to share skills and learn together, including participant chosen projects like mask making, knitting, and embroidery

WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

90 minutes workshops in collaboration with community partners (topics such as Coping with Stress, Dialogue with a Doctor)

36 WELLNESS WORKSHOPS

CHAIR YOGA

Weekly accessible, trauma-informed yoga

WRC GARDEN

A plot in the El Cajon Fresh Farms Community Garden where members grow plants and vegetables

76 CONNECTIONS TO NEEDED SERVICES

BUSINESS WOMEN IN ACTION

10-session program designed to support women who would like to start or expand their own business



WELLNESS CALLS

Personal outreach to all WRC members to maintain connection and check-in about needs during the pandemic

\$7000+ EMERGENCY FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CAFE

Weekly offerings to practice English in a relaxed, welcoming space

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

A group for caregivers to expand their understanding of child development and the effects of stress, as well as ways to strengthen child-parent bonding

18 SEWING MACHINES DISTRIBUTED

MOVEMENT

Weekly, mindful movement and dancing set to music

"Before, it was hard for me to deal with my children when they could not speak but now I can understand what they need even if they are not speaking. My biggest take away is how to have a relationship with my children and how to understand them."

REFUGEE PARTICIPANT FROM THE DRC

5 COHORTS 10 sessions each

22 PARTICIPANTS each received a tablet

5 LANGUAGES: Arabic, Dari, Spanish, Swahili, Russian

OUR IMPACT

SURVIVOR ADVOCACY SERVICES

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Providing long-term survivor-centered, trauma-informed case management and advocacy to survivors of crime. Focusing on serving survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in the immigrant community.

56

SURVIVORS SERVED

37

NEW INDIVIDUAL CASES

4781 **INTERNSHIP HOURS**
Across all Safety and Wellness programs

128

TIMES ASSISTED WITH SAFETY PLANS / CRISIS INTERVENTION

54

1:1 INFO SESSIONS ABOUT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESS

77

1:1 INFO SESSIONS ABOUT RIGHTS & PROCESS FOR PURSUING REMEDIES / RESTITUTION FOR RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

124

INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATED IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WORKSHOPS

237

SUCCESSFUL CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

42

BRIDGE 2 SAFETY SCREENERS COMPLETED

\$44,000+

TOTAL EMERGENCY FUNDS DISTRIBUTED including basic needs support, COVID relief funds, transportation, rent support, security deposits, cell phone payments, legal fees, behind the wheel lessons

The UN has noted a global intensification in violence against women and girls since the outbreak of COVID-19 - calling it the **"SHADOW PANDEMIC"** (UN Women, n.d.)

"IMMIGRANT WOMEN often feel trapped in abusive relationships because of immigration laws, language barriers, social isolation, and lack of financial resources" (Futures Without Violence, n.d.)

1 IN 4 women and **1 IN 10** men experience sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime (Smith et al., 2018)



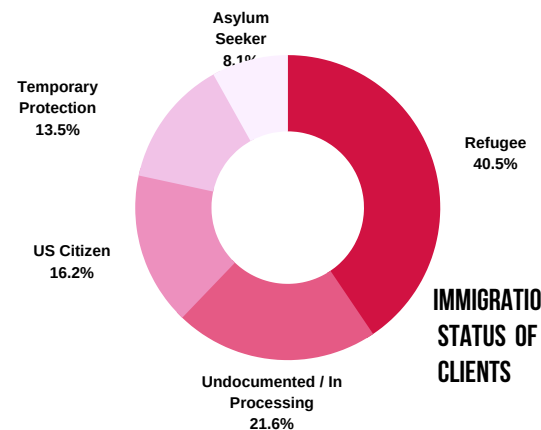
35 WOMEN **2** MEN

Other Crimes
13.5%



Domestic Violence
86.5%

TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION OF OUR CLIENTS



IMMIGRATION STATUS OF OUR CLIENTS



THANK YOU [REDACTED] you have no idea how much I appreciate you and appreciate the support you have still giving me in this difficult situation. I truly appreciate you ❤️❤️❤️ and very thankful 🙏🙏🙏❤️❤️

Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., Chen, J. (2018). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/2015data-brief508.pdf>

Futures Without Violence. (n.d.). *The facts on immigrant women*. <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/the-facts-on-immigrant-women/>

UN Women. (n.d.). *The shadow pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19>

OUR CLIENTS' STORIES

Each of our clients are unique, with their challenges, their vulnerabilities, their strengths and their resilience. It is an honor to work with each of them.



The **IVANOVs*** are a family of six, consisting of two parents and four children ranging from 9 years old to high school-age. The family fled Russia due to the persecution of their respective cultural group, including the torture of the family's father. When ASF staff began working with the Ivanovs, the family had only recently been allowed to enter the U.S. by immigration authorities to complete the asylum application process. The Ivanovs had no connections in the San Diego community. They faced a range of dynamic needs, including securing housing and food resources for a family of six, enrolling their children in school, obtaining legal assistance to support their asylum process, and finding a community to practice their religion. The adults in the family faced barriers in obtaining eligibility to legally work in the U.S. and experienced serious food insecurity challenges navigating the high cost of living in the San Diego region. In response, IRC's ASF staff provided food resources and emergency funds to ensure they could meet their most basic needs. Through the help of community partners like Safe Harbor Network, ASF staff connected the Ivanovs with a series of temporary living spaces until the family could land in an apartment of their own, which required a security deposit and the first month of rent covered by the ASF Program. The IRC connected the family to the San Diego Islamic Center to help them locate a local religious community that matched their beliefs where they could practice safely without fear of persecution. The ASF caseworker also provided direct support in enrolling the children in school in addition to ongoing support navigating the U.S. school system, which the COVID-19 pandemic further compounded. The ASF caseworker provided multiple referrals for the family to finally receive essential pro bono legal help for their asylum application. An ASF Master's of Social Work intern provided social-emotional support, and the family's father was connected to specialized mental health-based support for the torture he had experienced. Additionally, the family was assisted in enrolling in Medi-Cal and getting their children their immunizations required by the school system. ASF staff were able to help set up the family for future success by connecting them to adult English classes, assisting the mother in getting her driver's license, and referring the family to IRC services to increase knowledge in financial literacy and business development. While the Ivanov family's asylum case is still in its arduously long process, their family has been able to reach a place of more stability where they have the knowledge and tools to meet many of their needs and have grown their circle of community support.



The idea for the **"SEWING SISTERS"** group came out of a needs assessment we did in December of 2020. In asking women for ideas for additional ways to support women's wellbeing, sewing was a consistent response. We started the first group in Arabic with nine women, providing materials and acquiring donated sewing machine for each participant. The group began meeting weekly on Zoom, and from sewing masks and aprons to embroidering pillowcases and knitting scarves, the group decided on each project they wanted to do together. Some projects were led by one of the women, while other projects were tackled together with the advice and assistance of the members with most advanced skill. We were able to launch a second group in Dari, providing nine sewing machines as well as gift cards for each participant to purchase their own materials. The popularity of the course has spread and we now have a waitlist and hope to continue expanding sessions into the next year.



MARIA,* a survivor of domestic violence from Mexico who fled from her abusive husband for the safety of herself and her children, enrolled in Survivor Advocacy services in April 2021. Maria is a mother of 5, and she was recently diagnosed with cervical cancer. Because she does not have permanent immigration status, she does not have full medical insurance coverage. At the time of her enrollment, Maria was in urgent need of assistance navigating various health and social services, and in need of permanent housing for herself and her children. A social work intern worked with Maria to navigate medical resources and services. The Survivor Advocate worked with Maria to refer her to a legal organization that helped her begin the process of applying for a U-visa. IRC provided Maria with emergency fund assistance to help cover rent expenses, monthly bus passes to address transportation barriers, financial assistance for doctor visits, and other expenses as needed. Through one of IRC's official housing partners, Maria and her children were connected to transitional housing. Maria also was connected to IRC's Center for Financial Opportunity and a Women's Economic Empowerment Specialist to support her with financial coaching and budgeting to support her on her journey to reaching financial goals.

*Names changed to protect client privacy