



the center  
*for violence-free relationships*  
education | advocacy | services

2015

# ANNUAL REPORT



**The Center for Violence-Free Relationships is dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual assault and domestic violence through education, advocacy, and services in western El Dorado County.**

**Learn more about our programs and services at**

**[www.TheCenterNow.org](http://www.TheCenterNow.org)**

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*For years, we saw ourselves as a small community organization. But in 2015 we realized that wasn't entirely true. In 2015 we embarked on a journey to build a network of sexual assault/domestic violence organizations across the state. We can now share data and work together to turn promising practices into best practices. We've been piloting innovative programs that we believe have the power to heal families from the inside out and bring about lasting change in our community and beyond.*

*For the first time in our history, we recognize we are no longer that small community organization. Recognized at the state and national level for our ground-breaking approach, we are on the verge of something big! We are confident we will be able to affect great change throughout the field of sexual assault and domestic violence in the years ahead.*

*We hope that you'll come along for the ride... it's going to be amazing!*

## MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR CLIENTS

### INTERVENTION SERVICES – BUILDING HEALTHIER LIVES

#### INTERVENTION OUTCOMES



#### KACIE’S HOUSE - THE CENTER’S SAFE HOUSE

Individual Bed Nights: Kacie’s House reached a new record in 2015 of 5,118 bed nights. Following the renovation and expansion of our capacity, we also hit a record number of 16 children staying at the safe house at one time.

**Nearly 90% of the graduates from the Kacie’s House Program moved into permanent housing.**

“Amy”



“One night, my husband choked me until I passed out in front of our children.” Amy had always thought she’d done a good job of hiding the abuse, but she feared her children would never be the same after that night. She had no family or friends in the area and nowhere for her and her 6 children to go. Fortunately, Amy reached out to The Center and they moved into Kacie’s House.

Fast forward about a year. After receiving comprehensive services at The Center, Amy is now self-sufficient. She has a job and her self-esteem is returning after years of being worn away by abuse. Amy and her children moved into their own affordable home and the kids are happy and settling into their new schools, making friends along the way. Amy is healing and the future looks bright for her and her family. Amy recently said, “I’m so happy to be able to move on with my life.”

NOTE: To protect our clients’ privacy, names, and other identifying facts have been changed & stock photos have been used.

*"Tommy"*



"Tommy" had never thought about going to college. His dad was a union worker and no one in his family had ever attended college. Even though he was a high school junior, he had no sights set on applying to college.

Tommy and his mom were staying at Kacie's House and he began talking to one of the case managers about his hopes and dreams for his future. When asked about his plans for college Tommy replied, "I don't really think college is for me."

A few weeks later the case manager took Tommy and several of the other kids staying at Kacie's House on a tour of Sacramento State University. They spent the day exploring the campus. On the ride home, Tommy exclaimed, "That is a great place and I would like to go there." Unfortunately, Tommy's mother was just getting on her feet and college wasn't going to be affordable for her. After hearing Tommy's story, one of The Center's donors reached out to us and offered to pay for him to attend the college. Tommy and his mother are overwhelmed. They are grateful beyond words and are looking forward to all the future holds for Tommy.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Being the recipient of physical assault itself will cause mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, surviving in an abusive relationship, suffering emotional abuse alone can cause depression and anxiety. Also, pre-existing mental health problems can correlate with choosing unhealthy partners for intimate relationships.

## ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR OUR CLIENTS

The Center is piloting a mental health program to address the mental health problems of both our client victims as well as our client perpetrators, who themselves were often victimized during their childhoods. This program is staffed by licensed and pre-licensed therapists and overseen by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) with nearly ten years of experience providing therapy for mental health problems.

Domestic  
Violence

### Mental Health Issues

- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating Disorders

## LEGAL SERVICES OUTCOMES



## COLLABORATION AND ADVOCACY

Mid-year 2015, The Center began a program in conjunction with the El Dorado County District Attorney’s office and established a Domestic Violence (DV) Prosecution Unit. The Center’s employee provides enhanced services to domestic violence victims in criminal cases. This person now provides immediate services to survivors whose batterers have been arrested. The DV/DA Advocate serves as a liaison between the prosecutor and the victim survivor and provides the victim survivor with emotional support, court accompaniment and case status updates.

*“The Center DV Advocate spent days (many, many days) with the victim in this case - a very disgruntled, fragile victim. In the middle of her cross examination, the victim attempted to run out of the courthouse. The DV Advocate skillfully talked her off the edge, and the victim was able to finish her testimony. Amazing job . . . amazing victim advocate support!” Deputy District Attorney, El Dorado County.*

### “Jennifer’s Story”



Jennifer was the victim in a serious felony domestic violence case. Through an oversight the defendant was allowed to accept an offer to resolve the case and judgment, and sentencing occurred without Jennifer present, thereby denying her right under Marsy’s Law to address the court with a Victim Impact Statement. In addition, the court neglected to enter a 10-year Criminal Protective Order for Jennifer.

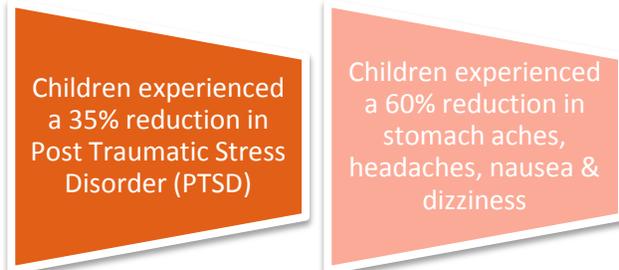
The DV/DA Advocate immediately contacted the deputy district attorney to advocate for Jennifer and to have the case placed back on the court’s calendar. Our client was allowed to make her

victim impact statement and was granted her 10-year criminal protection order! Jennifer was extremely grateful for the assistance she received from the DV/DA Advocate. Jennifer continued as a client of The Center and began counseling with a case manager, obtained emotional support during this process, and participated in a DV Group. She is now getting the support she needs and is finally feeling safe enough to get on with her life.

## SECOND GENERATION PROJECT – HEALING KIDS

Between August 2012 and February 2015, the Second Generation Project has been implemented five times. The curriculum for this program helps kids traumatized by family violence learn to manage stress, heal from problematic memories, and communicate their experiences with a supportive adult. The program takes several standardized assessments at the beginning, middle and end of the program to measure for statistical effectiveness. The following are the aggregate outcomes from the five implementations:

### REDUCTION IN PTSD SCORES:



“The experience of providing the Second Generation Project has been an encouragement to all of us at the Center. The presence in the office of the next generation of potential abusers and/or victims makes the work we do all the more palpable,” stated **The Center’s Client Services Coordinator Matt Williams, LCSW.** “By seeing the successes of these members of the next generation, we begin to see a light at the end of the tunnel for families plagued by intergenerational family violence.”

### YOQ SCORES:

The Youth Outcomes Questionnaire measures healthy coping skills and healthy responses to stress across six subscales. Lower scores correspond to healthier functioning of the child. The total YOQ score is a summation of the six subscales and is the best index to measure global change. The six subscales are Intrapersonal Distress, Somatic, Interpersonal Relations, Critical Items, Social Problems and Behavior Dysfunction. The group saw a 49% decrease in total Youth Outcomes Questionnaire (YOQ) score.

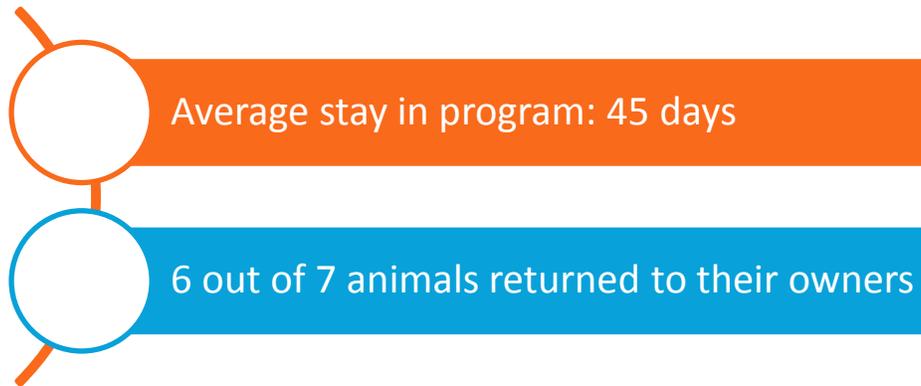
### Parents Share Their Stories



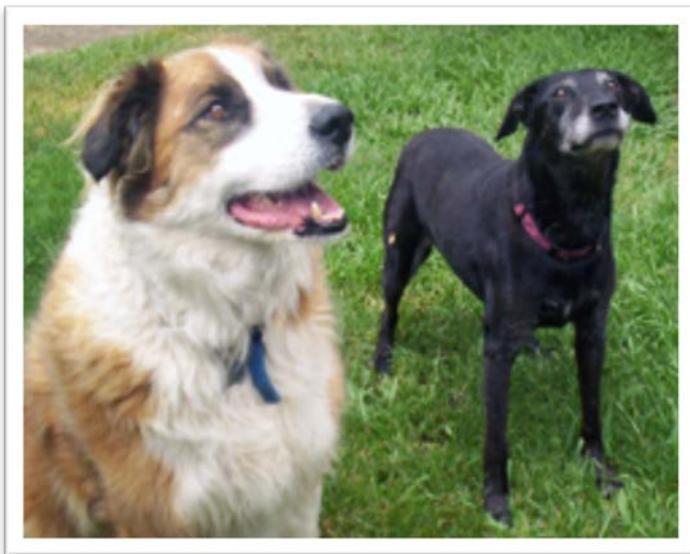
Several parents shared anecdotal stories of how their children have benefited from the program. One mother shared how her son had not hugged her or expressed any affection toward her in 8 months. This mother said that after the 3rd week of the program, he came up to her at home, told her he loved her, and gave her a hug that lasted for several minutes. Another parent shared that her son had been unable to sleep in his own room throughout the night. By the middle of the program he had been able to stay in his room about 3 nights a week, and by the end he was sleeping all night in his room for weeks at a time. Other parents mentioned improvements in school performance as well as peer interactions and cooperation with adults.

SAFE PET PROGRAM – HEALING THE WHOLE FAMILY

SAFE PET PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Species	Total amount	Altered	Vaccinated	Grooming Needed	Nutritional adjustments	Behavior Modification	Other Health
Dog	4		2	3	2	2	
Cat	2				2	1	
Rat	1						1



BUBBA AND SHILOH

In 2015, there were a total of seven animals in the Safe Pet Program. The average length of foster care was 45 days. All animals except one cat went back to their owners.

Of the four dogs, two needed vaccinations. At intake, two dogs needed bathing and one needed brushing. Two dogs needed a change of diet to a grain-free dog food and these same two dogs showed minor behavior characteristics (lack of trust, fear of men) of living with violence. These behaviors were corrected within two weeks.

Both cats were well taken care of and only dietary adjustments were needed. One cat showed an increased level of fear, which is not that unusual with a cat that has been relocated. This cat calmed down and acclimated within ten days.

## PREVENTION SERVICES

### TEACH – TEACHING KIDS

#### HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Our TEACH program for 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students educates kids about:

- Consent
- Coercion
- Red Flags
- Body Image
- Boundaries
- Bullying
- Empathy
- Healthy Relationships



A new and improved version of TEACH was implemented at Gold Trail School located in Placerville, California 4 years ago. According to the Principal at Gold Trail, the entire culture of the school has changed.

*“There is a definite improvement in the environment at our school and it is largely due to TEACH.” Principal, Gold Trail School*

### LETTERS FROM TEACH STUDENTS

*“Another thing to stop bullying is to be assertive. It helped a lot by talking to people in a nice way, not meanly. I liked the idea of standing up for a person, it actually works.”*

*“Thank you Ms. Cathy for teaching me about solving problems. It helps when I know what to do when I see a bully.”*

### LETTER FROM A TEACHER ABOUT TEACH

Dear Mr. Huckabay,

I had the pleasure of having Cathy and Stevie come to my 7/8 class to present the TEACH program during the 2014-2015 school year.

My students were taught weekly about everything from sympathy and empathy to assertiveness and how to deal with bullying plus many other relevant topics.

I started to notice a difference in the way my students treated each other right away. They expressed more positive thoughts, their attitudes improved, and they became less judgmental.

In the words of the students Cathy and Stevie were “nice to them,” they both had “great attitudes,” they were “accepting,” they helped the kids’ with emotions and “taught them to work as a team.” I also heard kids say, “they helped us be OK with speaking up,” and “they let us know it was OK to be ourselves.”

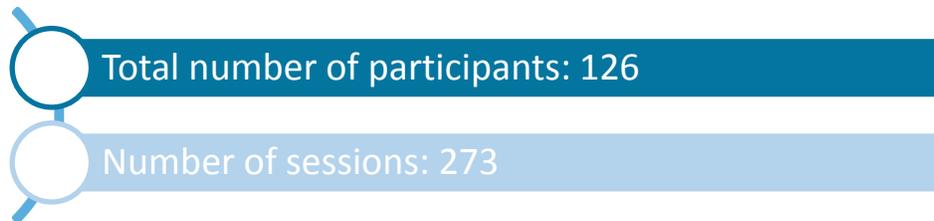
I have worked at EDCOE for 32 years, and this at-risk class has been the best class I’ve ever had. I attribute much of the students’ growth and success to the TEACH Program.

Thank you so much for making this wonderful program available for students.

Sincerely, J D – Herbert Green Middle School

## POSITIVE SOLUTIONS - PROVIDING TOOLS FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

### POSITIVE SOLUTIONS OUTCOMES



We believe it is important to give adults the tools to navigate healthy relationships. We hold 6 classes a week for those seeking to change abusive behavior patterns.

*“Without this program most of these men and women would never learn how to have a healthy relationship, as the vast majority grew up in violent households, so violence is all they know.” Terry, volunteer group facilitator*

*“Charlie”*



Charlie was arrested for felony domestic violence. He made a deal with the District Attorney and received probation which included court-mandated attendance in a 52-week batterer’s intervention program. Charlie contacted The Center and began taking classes through our Positive Solutions Program. Charlie stated, “At first I was very skeptical that I was going to learn anything when I first started attending.”

After attending and graduating from the 52-week program, Charlie remarked, “I have learned to truly listen to another individual with empathy while expressing feelings and needs... I have also learned that a power-over relationship is not positive and will ultimately end up hollow. I find myself slowing down and using the tools presented to me by The Center in order to positively resolve conflict. I am truly thankful for the tools and training I received from The Center. These will be tools that I will teach my son and use for the rest of my life. Thank you.”

FINANCIALS

91% of The Center's income goes directly to intervention and prevention services

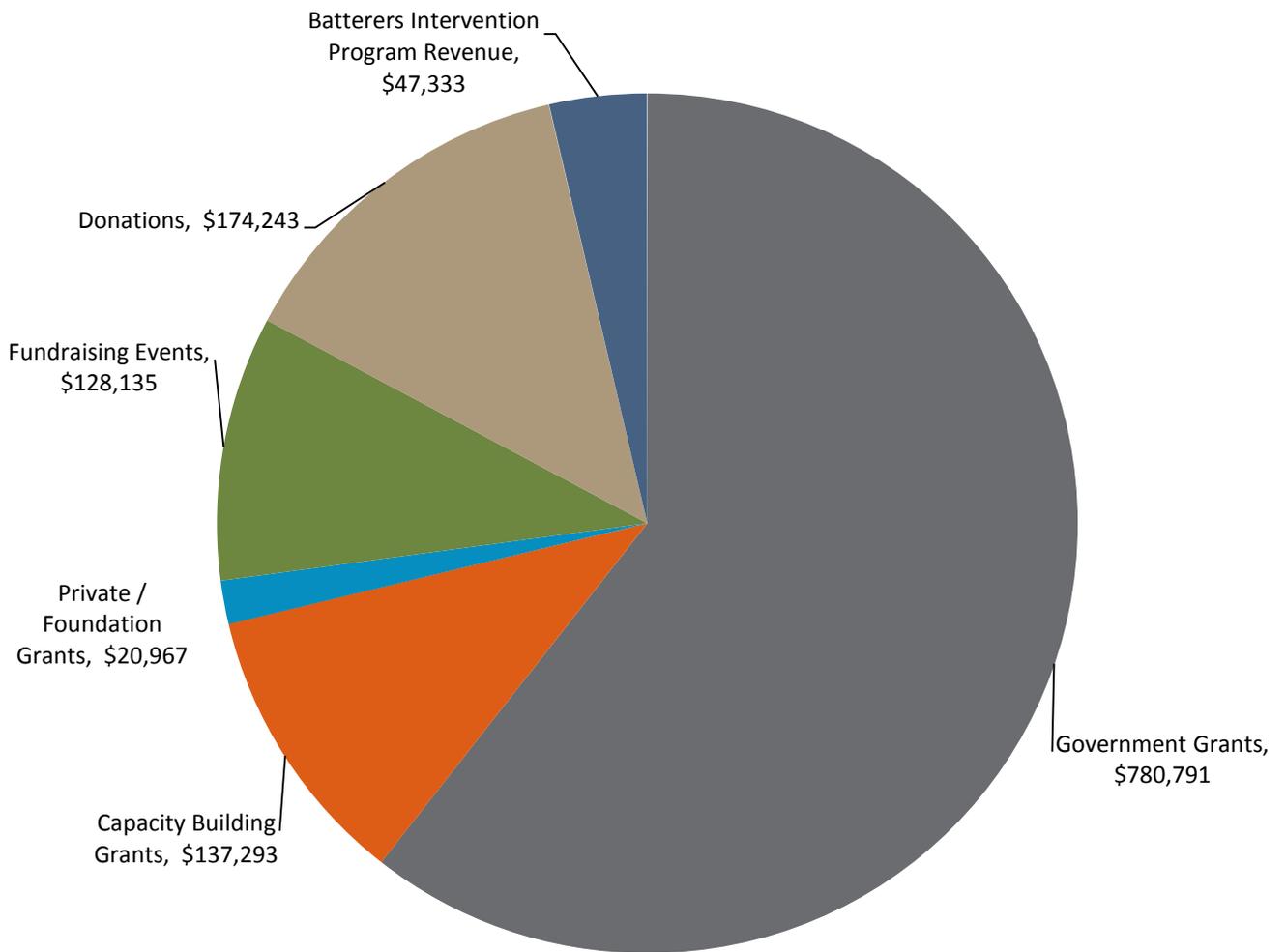


FIGURE 1 DATA FROM AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2014-JUNE 30, 2015

## VOLUNTEERS



**65 volunteers donated 2,210 volunteer hours**

## INNOVATION

### NETWORKING THE FIELD

The Center has created a network of Domestic Violence service providers in California with a grant through the Blue Shield of California Foundation. This network is built upon a shared data collection system called Efforts to Outcomes (ETO). Through this network we can now share promising practices and data collection tools, analyze aggregate data, and reduce administrative costs. In 2015 two organizations were added to The Center's data collection system. The first organization is Tahoe Safe Alliance in North Tahoe, and the second organization is Rainbow Services in San Pedro, CA. Both organizations bring their unique perspectives and expertise. The Center has learned so much working closely with them to improve services for our client and share these lessons learned across the network. In the fall of 2015, The Center received another grant from the Blue Shield of California Foundation to add an additional two organizations to the network, One Safe Place in Redding and WEAVE in Sacramento. This network is proving to be a powerful tool for shared learning and we hope to add more agencies in the upcoming years.



### HOMELESSNESS THEORY OF CHANGE

The Center supports clients helping them to make positive choices for themselves and their children to live a life free from violence. Victims of domestic violence are often faced with loss of employment, medical costs; or find themselves the sole provider for their family after leaving their abuser. The Center seeks financial support to assist with housing relocation and stabilization services as well as rental assistance to help clients develop and maintain independent living.

The Center seeks to expand housing relocation and stabilization services to the general homeless population. As The Center is an important agency for information and referral for residents of the county, our experience providing homelessness prevention services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault provides the infrastructure necessary for the expansion of homeless prevention projects for the general homeless. To that end, The Center began working with El Dorado County Continuum of Care to develop and maintain an effective outreach plan to the general homeless population.



The first year (2014) of the “Opportunity Knocks” homelessness project was formative. We brought the diverse elements of the El Dorado County community together around a common cause through the Theory of Change process and identified a way forward.

Our second year, we created structure for the project by developing teams to gather and analyze data, establish implementation timeframes and create a project plan.

The beginning of our third year finds us at a pivotal point, poised to issue an RFI to identify a partner in launching an Entry Point Administrative Process. This process will serve as a portal for El Dorado County homeless to access services and a platform to provide individual client program management and apply performance management principals in tracking and improving outcomes.

### MOVING FORWARD

The Center for Violence-Free Relationships continues to expand our services with new and innovative programming. We reach for opportunities that will allow us to better serve victims/survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence in our community and beyond. With forward-thinking and passion-driven employees, The Center strives to be a leader in the field focusing on performance-based management, data-driven outcomes, and heart-felt support of families seeking to rebuild their lives.



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