

The Story of NEWS

FY 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT &
40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



40 Years of Nurturing Empowerment Worth & Safety

40
YEARS
NEWS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES

Chapter 1: LET'S CELEBRATE! 40 years of Nurturing Empowerment Worth & Safety



As I think about what it means to be an agency that is thriving after 40 years, so many images flash through my mind. Images of stories that made the national news, and images of the Story of NEWS.

I think about the women and men, who began working in the late 70's to found the first safe house in Napa County. I ponder how they might have felt in October of 1981, when that first family slept safely in the home they created for survivors.

Over the past four decades, there has not been even one day that we did not answer a call from someone needing help.

Join us as we walk through the story of the past 40 years, and compare it to our past year here at NEWS.

We would like our story to have a happy ending. We would like to see a day when domestic violence is a thing of the past. We believe we can get there.

Connie Battisti, one of NEWS' past Executive Directors said it best, "Domestic violence is not just a women's issue, it is an everybody issue."

Together we can create a happy ending for families.

Tracy Lamb,
NEWS Executive Director
2005 to Present



Where it all began...



There once was a group of local residents who were concerned that there was no safe place in all of Napa County for women and children escaping abusive relationships. The year was 1981.

These volunteers took women and children into their own homes to protect them. However, this was not a permanent, nor sustainable solution.

It was out of this realization that Napa Emergency Women's Services (NEWS) was born. Thirty-five years later, the name changed to NEWS Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Services. The name change was important as NEWS truly supports a growing and diverse community that includes women, children, men, and LGBTQ+.

In 1981, NEWS opened its first shelter home and started providing services to victims of domestic violence. The proposed operating budget that year hovered around \$100,000 and included funding for a director, four shelter managers, a part-time bookkeeper, and a part-time fundraiser. Today, NEWS employs 29 staff members and has an annual operating budget of nearly \$3 million.



Chapter 2: CHANGING LIVES! Bringing hope to families in crisis

“Before we had a shelter, I remember packing women and children into my car and driving them to the homes of volunteers who would take them in and keep them safe.”

Gayle O’Kelley, 1981 Chairperson, NEWS Board of Directors

“Tracy Lamb asked me to be the liaison between NEWS and Napa Police Department (NPD) around 2005. Since then I have provided training for new NEWS Volunteers and coordinated trainings for NPD Officers, and community members regarding domestic violence, strangulation, and the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study. In 2012 Tracy requested statistics for a grant proposal that she was writing for Cal OES regarding children exposed to domestic violence (CEDV). NPD was awarded the CEDV Grant in 2013. I was assigned to work on the Program with a NEWS Advocate. That grant lasted four years, but luckily I had found a Law Enforcement Specialized Units Grant in 2017 which we were awarded. The grant pays for a full time Domestic Violence Detective and a full time Domestic Violence Counselor. To my knowledge, prior to that grant there has never been a dedicated ‘Domestic Violence Detective’ at NPD or at any agency in Napa County.”

Bill Hernandez, NPD Domestic Violence Detective



“An argument at a Napa home escalated into something more serious Thursday evening...”

Napa Valley Register 1981



In FY20-21
NEWS responded
to **82** DVRTs.
56 of those
were in the first
half of 2021.

**That is a 28%
increase from
the previous
year!**

“I want to give a shoutout to our Help Line staff for putting up with the the crazy change in numbers in the last few months in regard to Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) calls. Protocol for NPD changed in January 2021 and it has resulted in a much higher number of requests.”

Ana Soto, NEWS-NPD Domestic Violence Liaison, 2021

The Domestic Violence Response Team are trained volunteers who respond immediately to victims at the request of law enforcement. During the pandemic, most responses have been over the phone. The counselors provide emotional support, information, safety planning, and resources.



Chapter 3: SERVING ALL! Welcoming men and LGBTQ+ persons

12%
of NEWS clients
identify as male

76%
of NEWS clients
identify as
female

60%
of NEWS clients
are Latinx

*Over the years I must have ridden
With our police better than
50 times
Close to 30 times
The ride along ends
In a 10pm call
A young woman
Hopefully at a friend's house
Several kids
Hysterically run around
A hallow eyed young lady
Sits at a table with the friend
(If she is lucky)
She tells the officer
Her story
That's one way into NEWS*

*NEWS has been there
40 years
With the band aids
With shelter, counseling
Love and support
Supporting violence free families
It is truly
Nurturing Empowerment Worth & Safety*

A poem by Brad Wagenknecht,
Napa City Councilmember 1984-1999, Napa County
Board of Supervisors 1999-Present,
and NEWS Honorary Board Member



Miner House

“I’ve been with NEWS for 20 years now and have seen a lot of changes over the years. One of the changes I’m most proud of is the addition of the Miner House, a modular unit that was built on the shelter property. This came about to create additional shelter space and also make sure we had a comfortable and inviting space for male and LGBTQ+ victims of domestic violence.

“Our first Miner House client, a father with two young children, had initially been apprehensive to reach out for services because he was a man. He was so grateful that we were there to help him and provide him and his kids with a safe and supportive place to stay. He accessed all of the NEWS services and ultimately the family ended up successfully housed in a home of their own.”

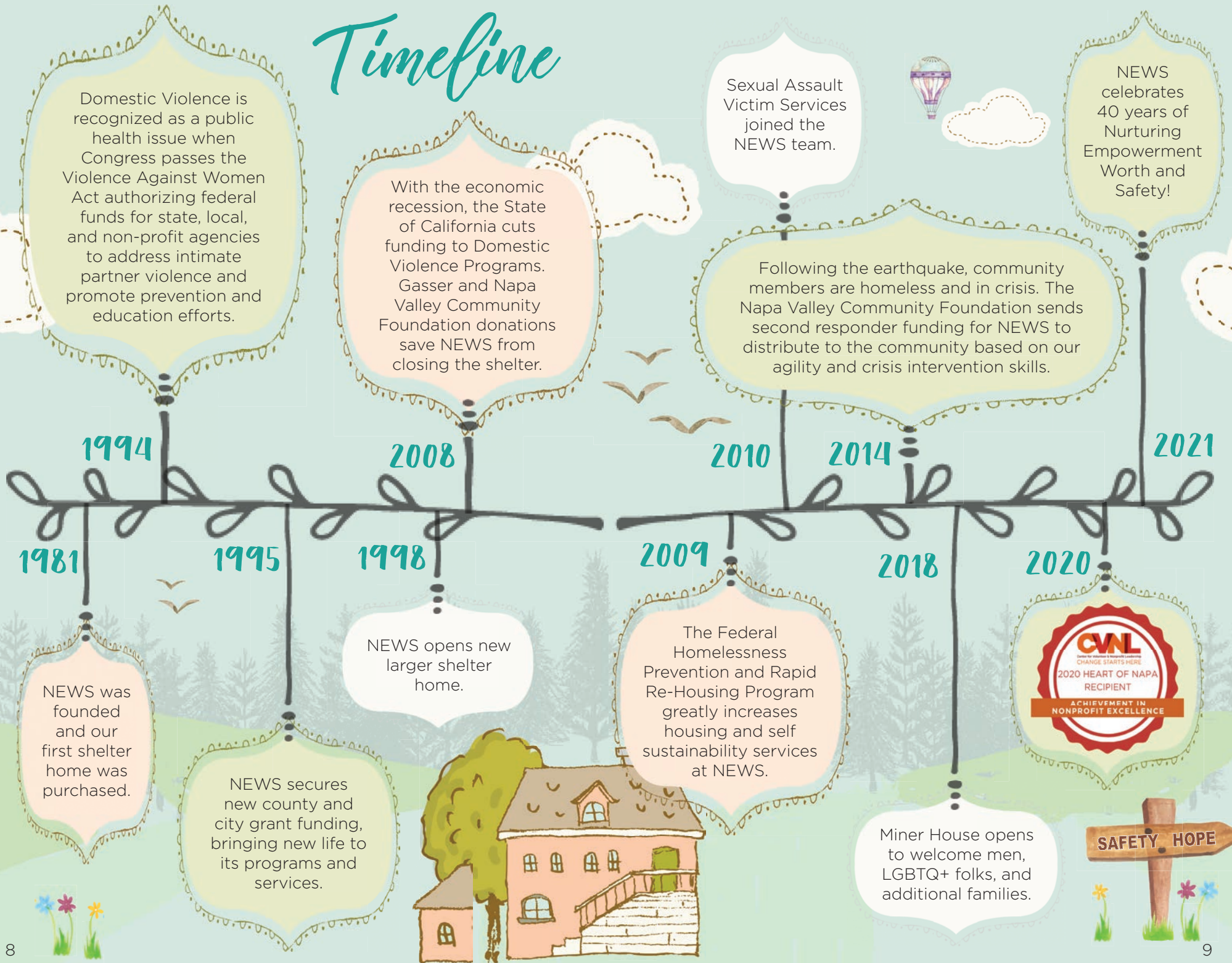
Sarah Engle, NEWS Shelter Manager since 2001

“So much time was spent meeting contractors and helping staff and board understand the process, but it was very rewarding. I think back and am amazed at the amount of time I spent putting this effort together, and helping it come to fruition, and was most appreciative of the opportunity to help.”

Myles Davis, NEWS Board member and Miner House Project Manager



Timeline



Chapter 4: HELPING KIDS HEAL! Fostering wellness in children exposed to trauma

Since 2011, Kids Exposed to Domestic Violence (KEDS) continues to provide support, connections, referrals, and advocacy to strengthen the social and emotional confidence of children and their parents.

Intergenerational Change

"They say there is a blessing behind every challenge and I feel like my teenage experience with the NEWS family and living at the NEWS Shelter was my blessing. Sometimes life takes you in a direction you never saw yourself going, but it turns out to be the best road. And although in the beginning it felt like a bitter situation, it taught me about compassion. It wasn't easy having to deal with domestic violence in my home. There were days where I felt afraid, and things changed in ways I never really expected. However, fast forward 10 years later and NEWS became my family again. I now work for NEWS as an Advocate. Now I strive to give back to our clients with compassion."

Yunuel Perez, 2011 Teen Shelter Client,
2021 NEWS Support Services Advocate

For Back to School, **100 backpacks were given to children exposed to trauma in 2021.** The program started in 2016 with 86 backpacks and a few school supplies. Now, the backpacks have grade appropriate school supplies, information on warning signs of abuse, and gift cards for new clothes, giving our children the confidence boost they need!



"One in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence. Children exposed to domestic violence are at risk of developing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and/or poor mental health. The KEDS program is designed to promote wellness, foster health, and prevent suffering that can result from untreated mental illness. I started working for NEWS in 2016 and that year, KEDS served 49 children. Throughout the years, I have worked to ensure our community knows about the impact on children who are exposed to DV. Prior to the pandemic, KEDS was serving more than 300 children per year. That is almost one child a day!"

Elizabeth Alfaro, NEWS
KEDS Program Manager,
since 2016

217
children
received
services during
the FY20-21
pandemic



Chapter 5: **OVERCOMING STIGMA!** **Fighting victim shaming and blaming**

In Fiscal Year 2020-2021

201 victims of sexual abuse received services.

79 gained court accompaniment support.

17 were assisted while in the hospital during Sexual Assault exams.

“When SAVS joined NEWS in 2010, it was just me and Judy Durham, former SAVS program manager. Now we have three advocates and a program manager. Our clients get access to better services now, because I can refer them to my co-workers to get help with their domestic violence case, or get services for their children through our Kids Exposed to Domestic Violence program. It has been really good to be here under NEWS because all the services are here for them to take advantage of in one stop. A lot of the services we have go hand-in-hand most of the time. Where there is sexual abuse, there is usually other forms of abuse.”

Araceli Vargas, SAVS Bilingual Advocate since 2000



“I looked at long-time board member Doug Ernst and could see he felt the same way I did. He understood how important NEWS was and how this would provide the same services for other people who needed our skills and our compassion. I looked around and saw that everyone felt the same way. I never felt quite so proud to be involved in anything!!”

Sandy Re Sims, 2021 NEWS Board President, reflecting on the vote to merge Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) with NEWS in 2010

“The work of sexual violence prevention educators is so important because of the way it challenges pervasive myths and educates people about the root causes of sexual violence in order to promote culture change. They also help create environments where victims feel comfortable accessing resources and help without judgement and blame.”

Coach Bailie, SAVS Program Manager since 2018



Chapter 6: **BREAKING THE CYCLE!** Teaching prevention through outreach and coaching



“As we continue to fight through the challenges of COVID-19, our social and emotional development continues to be a top priority. With rises in emotional distress, anxiety, depression and feelings of powerlessness, especially in youth, our presence is important.”

Carla Andrade-Maston,
NEWS Youth Prevention Services
Manager, since 2015

50
middle and high school students received one-on-one crisis support in FY20-21

Engaging Students

“The flexibility and student/family centered support from NEWS allowed our Wellness Centers to be creative in how we support students. Our case manager, Carla, implemented different ways of engaging our students that range from workshops to direct individual and/or group support.

During distance learning, Carla, adapted her support and found ways of engaging with students virtually despite the challenges presented with this format. I am very grateful for NEWS as they have always responded to change and new environments with a willingness to adapt and be responsive to the needs of our community.”

Roxana Plancarte, School Social Worker,
Wellness Program, NVUSD

The NEWS Prevention, Education & Outreach Program started in 2013 with a Rape Prevention Education grant from CalOES. It has evolved into a robust program that includes educating thousands of students each year about healthy relationships, especially during February’s Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

In 2021, the NEWS Prevention team won the Napa County Office of Education Prevention Champion Award!



“Unhealthy relationships impact the mental health of a student and this ultimately reflects in their ability to thrive in different areas of their lives.”

Roxana Plancarte, School Social Worker,
Wellness Program, NVUSD



Chapter 7: **ADVOCATING FOR EMPOWERMENT!** Navigating the road to independence

80%
of NEWS clients either have lost or are at risk of losing their housing

“As a law enforcement officer, I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for NEWS. NEWS Staff and Volunteers have consistently come through for me during tough calls including domestic violence and rape. Recently, I found myself facing a case involving a newly homeless family due to a traumatic event. My heart went out to the family as they dealt with all the chaos. Fortunately, we were able to connect them with NEWS. I saw the family a few weeks after and was able to speak with the victim. They stated NEWS provided them stability, shelter, support, and consistency. In this case, and every case I have reached out to NEWS, the level of care and love that is shown to the victim(s) moves me. NEWS allows me to focus on the fact collecting, report writing, and case preparation because I know the victims are being well taken care of.”

Officer Melissa Brown #30,
Patrol Officer/School Resource Officer,
St. Helena Police Department

“Housing a family was so much easier when I first started; there was more availability and Napa was more affordable. The housing market has dramatically changed over the years and has become extremely challenging to find affordable housing for our families. I have been at NEWS now for 16 years, and for many of those years, I was a team of one. Our housing team has grown in the past two years to a team of four.”

Helen Rodriguez, Housing Program Manager, since 2006

In FY20-21 the NEWS housing team helped

97

families find new housing.

The NEWS housing team houses 3-4 families a month and provides rental assistance to many more families.

“The most meaningful thing you can do for a struggling family is help them stabilize their housing. It’s hard for a family to work or take care of children or pay their rent when they don’t have stable housing.”

Michelle Sanchez,
Housing Assistant
Program Manager,
since 2016

98% of NEWS households are low-to-moderate income

Directors

Executive Committee

President: Sandra Sims
Vice President: Danis Kreimeier
Treasurer: Mark Freund
Secretary: Danielle Schmitz
Executive Director: Tracy Lamb

Board Members

Brian Campagna
Myles Davis
Amy Herold
Rosanna Mairena
Mary Makowski
Marilyn O'Connell
Oscar Ortiz
Heather Piazza
June Ressler
Lance Spears

Honorary Board

Congressman Mike Thompson
Joan D'Angelo
Doug Ernst, in Memoriam
Ambassador Kathryn Hall
Rick Jones, Jones Family Vineyards
Allison Haley, District Attorney
Barbara Nemko, Napa County Superintendent of Schools
Andrea Phelps
Lee Schwab
Kass Simon
Brad Wagenknecht, Napa County Board of Supervisors



Legendary Leadership

Twenty-four years ago, Connie Battisti agreed to step off the Napa Emergency Women's Services Board and into the role of Interim Executive Director. This came at a time when the organization had fallen on hard times. What was supposed to be three weeks for Connie, turned into three years. Connie believed and insisted that men should be part of the solution to end domestic violence. That year, she extended an invitation to Doug Ernst, the first male to join the Board of Directors. Doug served for the next 23 years until his passing in 2018.

Connie holds this organization near and dear to her heart. We are forever grateful for her passion and her accomplishments in bringing NEWS back to life.



Staff

Executive Team

Tracy Lamb, Executive Director
Shea E. Hunter, Program Director
Mandy DeBord, Finance Director
Andi Grote, Development Director
Karen Calhoun, Marketing & Communications Director

Management Team

Nicole Solorio, Administrative Office Manager
Sarah Engle, Shelter Manager
Coach Bailie, SAVS Program Manager
Carla Andrade-Maston*, Youth Prevention Services Program Manager
Alejandra Mendieta-Bedolla*, Crisis Intervention Services Program Manager
Helen Rodriguez*, Self Sufficiency & Housing Program Manager

Advocates

Elizabeth Alfaro*, KEDS Program Manager
Liliana Estrada*, KEDS Shelter Advocate
Selina Farmer, Shelter Advocate
Christina Gomez*, SAVS Program Advocate
Nancy Gonzalez*, Court Advocate
Maria Hernandez*, Shelter Advocate
Maria Hurtado*, Housing Advocate
Ixell Jimenez*, Intake Advocate
Cytllali Munoz*, KEDS Shelter Advocate
Emily Odily Perez*, Court Advocate
Mariela Perez*, Self Sufficiency & Housing Advocate
Yunuel Perez*, Support Services/Intake Advocate
Andrea Ramirez*, Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator
Stephanie Ramirez*, SAVS Advocate
Michelle Sanchez, Housing Assistant Program Manager
Ana Soto*, NPD LESU Advocate
Araceli Vargas*, SAVS Advocate
Dallas Vasquez*, Shelter Advocate

*Bilingual



Chapter 8: **OUR COMMUNITY!** Working hard to make a difference

“We trust NEWS completely to use our donation dollars honestly, compassionately, and skillfully. They’ve proven themselves over the years to be consistently courageous and resilient, and truly helpful.”

Sherry Fournier & Michael Wolf
Donors since 2002

Since NEWS launched in 1981, our services and budget have grown exponentially. Since 2005, our budget has increased more than 350%. This growth has given us the funding we need to serve more domestic violence and sexual abuse survivors in Napa County. This funding has also allowed us to take a giant leap forward into launching programs aimed at domestic violence and sexual abuse prevention.

NEWS’ success would not be possible without the help and support of our donors, partners, volunteers, and community.

Every single one of you are a part of our story.

Your contributions provide financial assistance to survivors. Your volunteer time provides a caring advocate to answer emergency calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your expertise provides guidance to our operations and governance.

THANK YOU for being a part of our NEWS family. You make it possible for NEWS to serve our most vulnerable community members.



Our Supporters

Government Partners

California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
| City of Napa | City of Napa Police Department |
Napa County | Mental Health Services Act in Napa
County | United Way Bay Area

Foundations

Drysdale Community Foundation | Delong-Sweet
Family Foundation | First Dollar Foundation |
Golden Rule Family Foundation | HCA Foundation |
Kaiser Permanente | Napa Valley Community
Foundation | The Peter A. & Vernice H. Gasser
Foundation | Pinpoint Foundation | Phelps
Foundation | Syar Foundation | Winiarski
Foundation | Women’s Foundation California

Community and Corporate Partners

Community Projects, Inc. | Kaiser Permanente |
Major League Baseball/MLB Players Association
| Napa Valley’s CanDo Give!Guide | Napa Valley
Vintners | Providence Queen of the Valley Medical
Center | Redwood Credit Union |
Sorooptimist International

About NEWS

NEWS is honored to provide domestic violence and sexual abuse advocacy services throughout Napa County. Recognized as a distinguished and well respected nonprofit organization, NEWS believes that the pathways out of violence can be as individual as the people we serve. Our innovative programs and services reflect that belief.

Our organization was formed in 1981 to provide immediate safety assistance to people escaping violence. Over its 40 years, NEWS has grown and expanded its services to include resources to address the whole person and offers the resources they need to sustain lives free from violence.

Our team is grounded in the values of dignity and respect, both for those we serve and for ourselves. We are committed to continually working toward reducing domestic violence and sexual abuse, promoting healthy relationships and to building a violence free community for all.

www.NapaNEWS.org

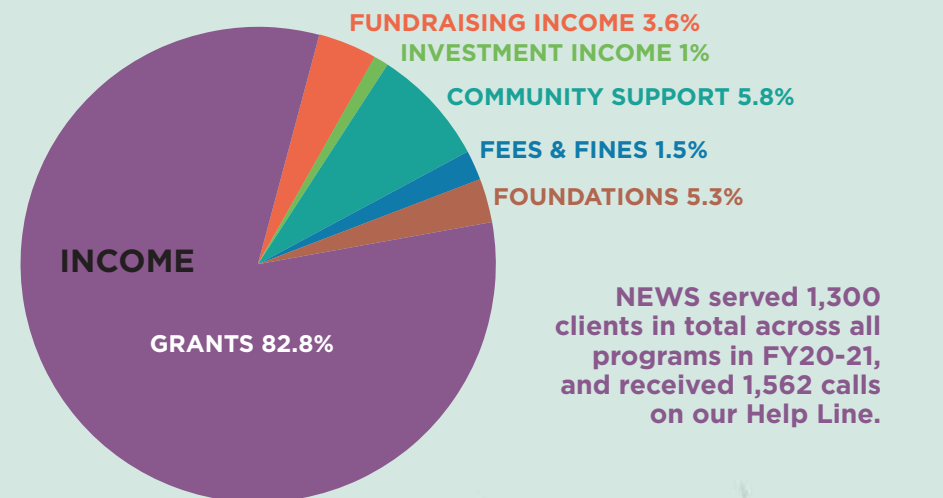
OBJECTIVE STATEMENT 1981: To aid and provide support and refuge for victims of domestic violence; to provide community education regarding domestic violence.

MISSION STATEMENT 2021: NEWS is dedicated to providing safety, hope, healing and empowerment for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. Equally, NEWS is committed to promoting safe communities and social change through prevention, intervention, education, and advocacy.

Financials

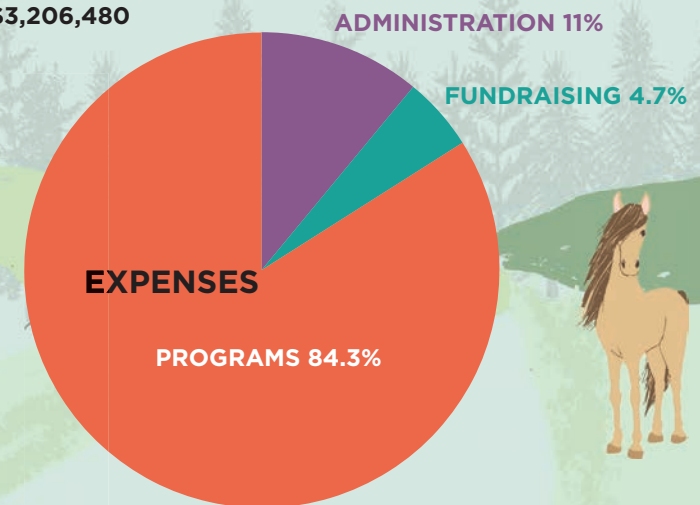
“We have seen a dramatic shift in need towards long term, sustainable housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Our Housing, Crisis Intervention, and Sexual Abuse teams rose to that challenge and provided 650 adults and 240 children with services in FY20-21, nearly 70% of all NEWS clients served this year. Total dollars of direct client assistance were close to \$400K this year, providing the support survivors needed to start on a safe and healthy new path.”

Mandy DeBoard, Finance Director, since 2017



NEWS served 1,300 clients in total across all programs in FY20-21, and received 1,562 calls on our Help Line.

TOTAL \$3,206,480



TOTAL \$2,800,044



NEWS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ABUSE SERVICES

NURTURING EMPOWERMENT WORTH SAFETY

In accordance with the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (426 U.S.C. 10401 et seq.), NEWS does not mandate participation in supportive services as a condition of shelter residency or emergency services. Therefore, NEWS services are completely voluntary and require the consent of an individual in order to provide services.



NEWS does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.



Show NEWS your support
during our 40th Anniversary
and pledge a factor of
\$40 for 40 Years!

24 HOUR HELP LINE
707.255.NEWS (6397)

California Relay Service

English: 866.660.4288

Español: 866.288.1311

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