



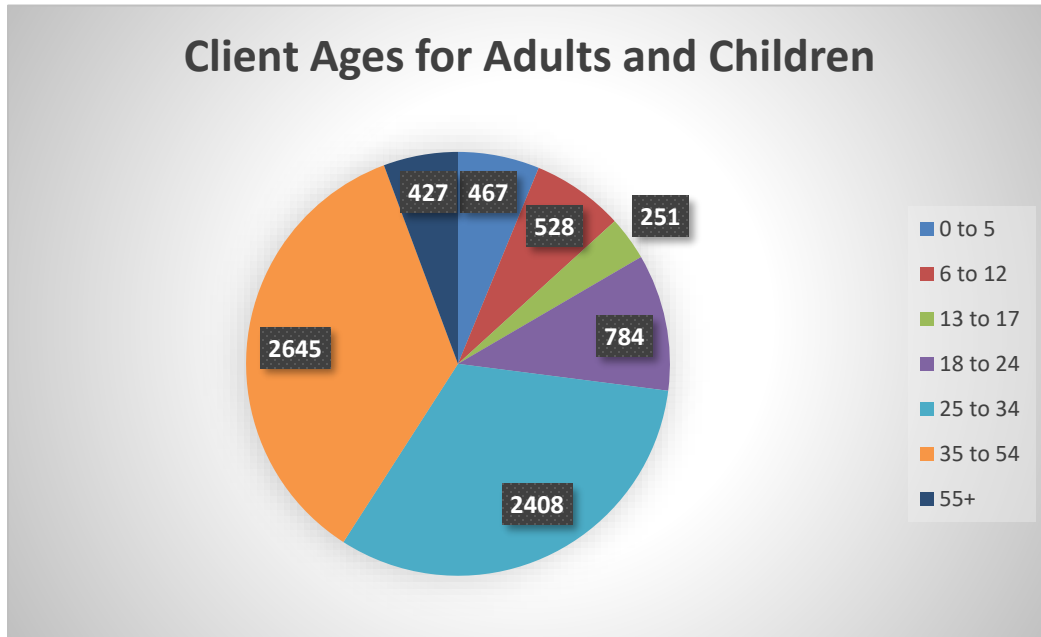
ANNUAL REPORT
10/1/2020 - 9/30/2021
OVERVIEW

Marjaree Mason Center's (MMC) mission is to support and empower adults and their children affected by domestic violence while striving to prevent and end the cycle of abuse through education and advocacy. The Marjaree Mason Center was founded in 1979 following the brutal kidnapping and murder of Marjaree Mason by her ex-boyfriend, local Sheriff Deputy Robert Tillman. Her death gained national attention, shining a spotlight on domestic violence and galvanizing the Fresno community into taking action to ensure that no one would suffer the same sad fate. That year, with support from the community, the YWCA-Fresno founded the Marjaree Mason Center and became a safe haven for victims of domestic violence. Over 40 years later, MMC continues to honor this legacy by providing a wide variety of diverse and comprehensive support services designed to meet the complex needs of all individuals affected by domestic violence, regardless of race, religion, sexuality, gender, age or socio-economic status. These services include 24/7 hotline and crisis response, safety planning, risk assessment, food, clothing, shelter, case management, individual and group counseling, legal advocacy, children's services, education and outreach.

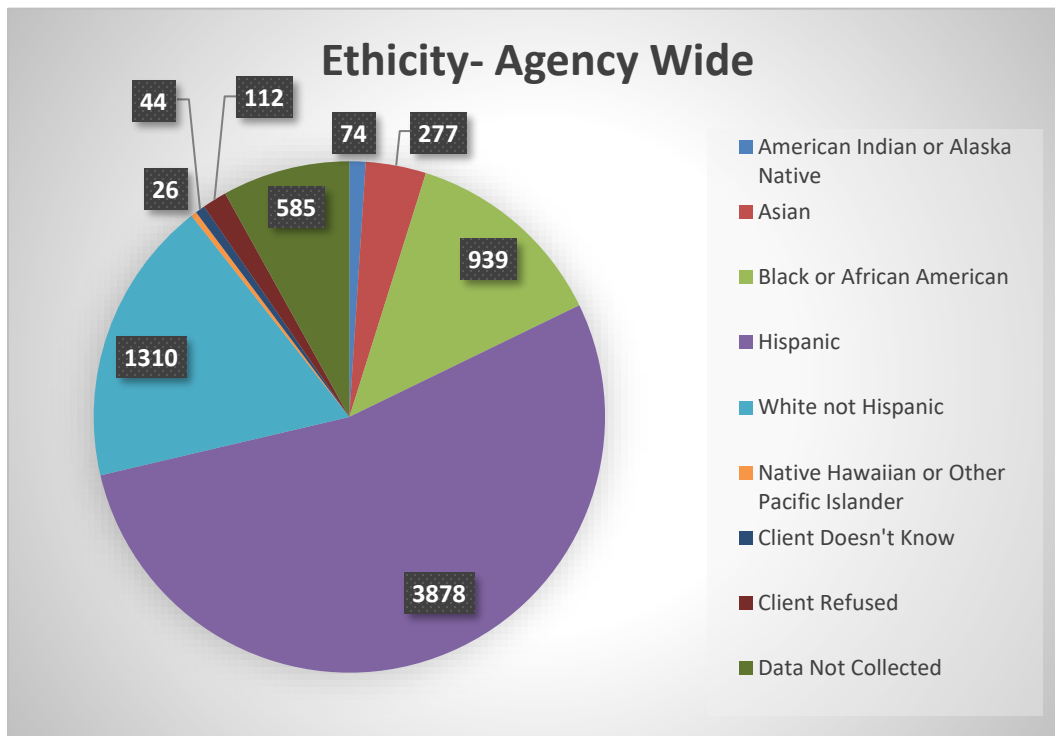
Unfortunately, agency services, staff and clients continue to be critically impacted by the global pandemic COVID-19. Federal and State health mandates and the need to maintain social distancing best practices continue to present significant challenges in providing services, and adaptations to in-person services remain in effect in order to protect the health and safety of clients and staff. These adaptations include limiting in-person contact, housing clients off-site in alternative safe housing, limiting activities to individuals or families rather than groups, and providing services using remote platforms. Though there has been a shift in the method for providing services, domestic violence has remained prevalent, and MMC has remained steadfast in its commitment to ensuring access to vital services that support individuals impacted by violence. The cumulative impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt agency wide.

Fresno County continues to have the highest rates per capita of reported domestic violence to law enforcement in the state. In fact, law enforcement officers and victim advocates are reporting a significant increase in the presence of severe physical violence (use of a weapon, strangulation) when responding to calls. Over the last year, Marjaree Mason Center provided supportive services to 7,757 individuals including 7,238 adults and 1,324 children and 91,402 nights of emergency and longer-term safe shelter.

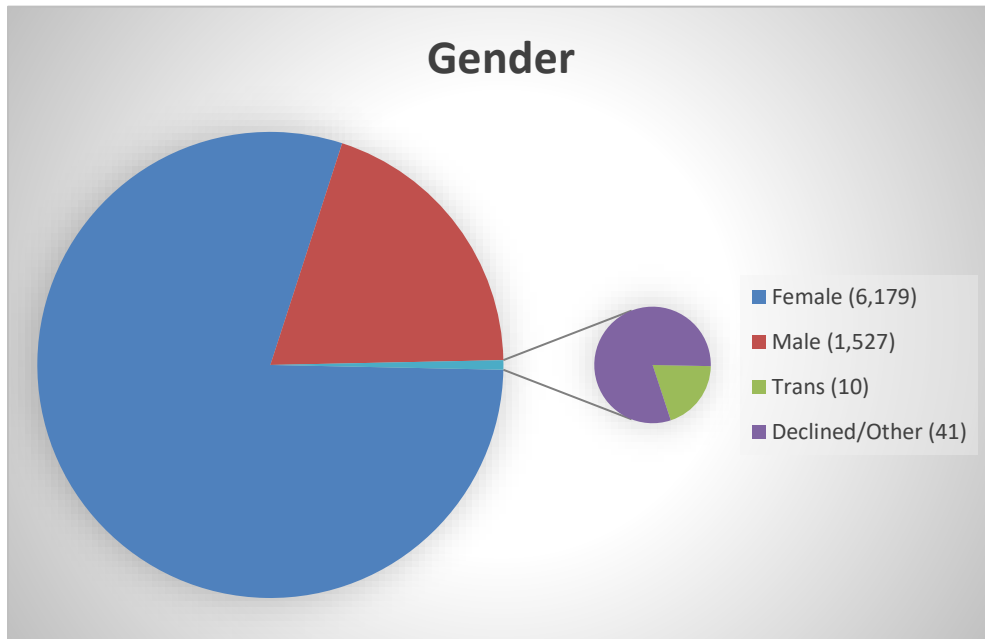
Client Ages: Agency wide, 83% (6,264) of clients were adults and 17% (1,246) were children between the ages of 0 to 17.



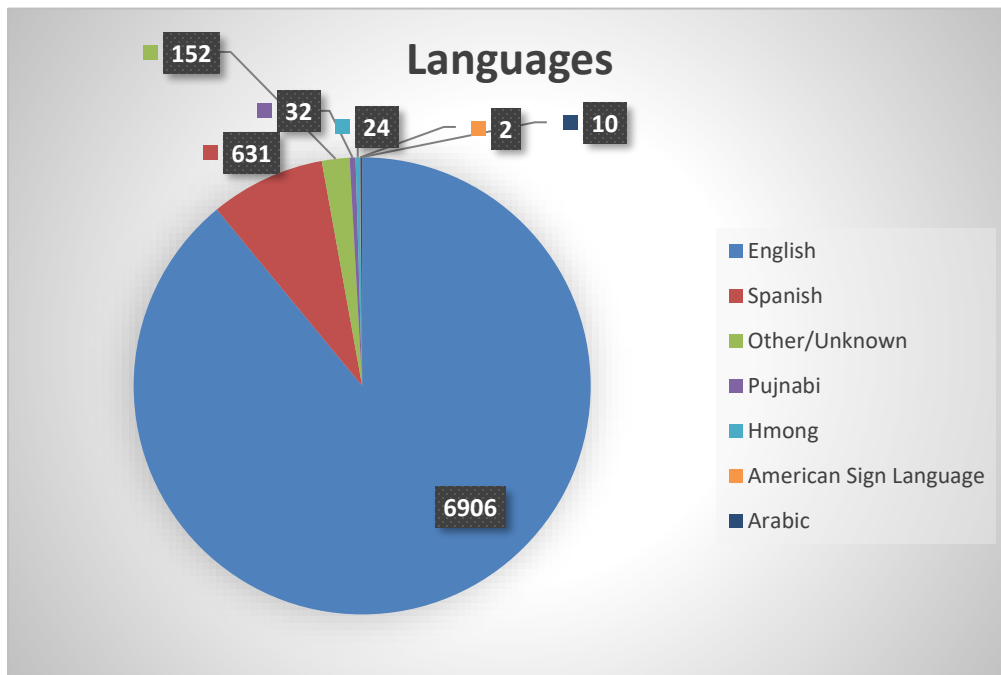
Client Ethnicity: The majority of clients served were either Hispanic (53%), Caucasian (18%) or African American (13%). *this data does not include LTP or Outreach Programs.



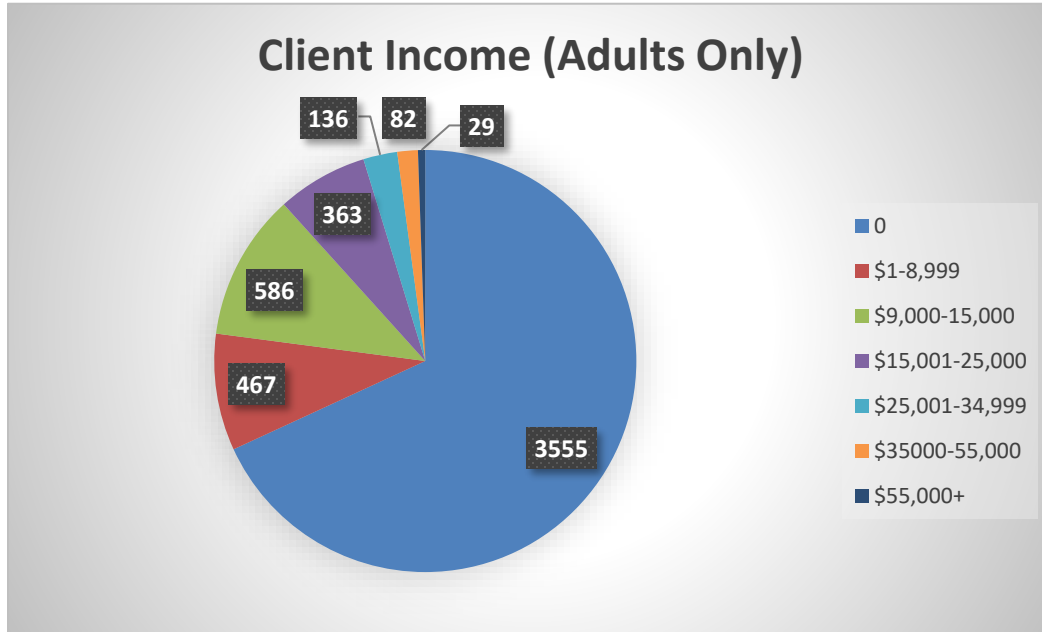
Client Gender: The majority of clients 80% (including adults and children) who received services and participated in supportive programs agency wide last year were female.



Client Languages: While the majority of clients speak either English (89%) or Spanish (8%), MMC provides services to clients speaking many other languages including but not limited to: Punjabi, Hmong, American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Laotian and many others.



Client Income: 68% of clients served last year reported earning no income of their own. Of the households that did report an income (1,668 adults), 63% reported making less than \$15,000 per year. This means that 97% of all MMC households were considered low-moderate income and lived below the poverty line.



Marjaree Mason Center continues to be the only dedicated provider of safe and confidential emergency shelter and comprehensive domestic violence supportive services in Fresno County. Unfortunately, Fresno County has the highest rates per capita of reported domestic violence in California and those figures continue to rise. In fact, in the last five years, Marjaree Mason Center has seen a 36% increase in the total number of individuals provided with support services. Last year, MMC provided comprehensive domestic violence services to 7,757 adults and their children and 91,402 nights of emergency shelter. In order to meet Fresno's growing needs, and increase access to vital support programs, MMC operates 7 sites located strategically throughout the County, and maintains extensive partnerships with other community organizations. This reduces the duplication of support services and ensures that equitable and inclusive programs are accessible to everyone who needs them.

Further, MMC is the only local agency in Fresno County that meets the 14 Core Standards for Domestic Violence Support Services as outlined in the Funding for Domestic Violence California Penal Code (sections 13823.15-13823.16). The 14 core standards are as follows:

1) Business Centers

Marjaree Mason Center's primary administrative office and business center is located at 1600 M Street in downtown Fresno. For administrative purposes the office maintains regular business hours Monday-Friday from 8-5, alternately, the Crisis Response Team is stationed at this site and services (hotline, emergency intake, shelter, etc.) are available 24/7.

2) Twenty-four Hour Crisis Hotline

Marjaree Mason Center operates a domestic violence crisis hotline which is available 24-hours per day, 7-days per week. This 24/7 hotline, staffed by MMC’s dedicated Crisis Response Team (CRT), provides immediate crisis intervention services including: risk assessments, safety planning, emergency shelter, transportation, food and referrals for additional services and/or organizations.

3) Transportation

Marjaree Mason Center provides a variety of transportation solutions for survivors and their children; many of which, face significant barriers to accessing supportive services. Barriers may include but are not limited to physical distance from services, lack of vehicle, lack of finances, and physical disability. In response to this, Marjaree Mason Center provides bus tokens, train vouchers and Lyft rides. Clients in need of non-emergent services may also be transported by staff members in one of the Marjaree Mason Center’s authorized vehicles. Residential clients in need of emergency services are transported by ambulance.

4) Emergency Food and Clothing

The act of fleeing domestic violence can often mean leaving everything behind at a moment's notice, consequently when clients arrive at Marjaree Mason Center for help, they frequently possess little more than the clothes on their backs. MMC recognizes the importance of ensuring clients most basic needs, such as food, clothing and shelter, are met first. Through private donations and collaborative partnerships with several local organizations, MMC is able to ensure all clients are provided with daily meals, clothing, diapers, blankets and basic hygiene items.

Due to enhanced collaboration with law enforcement, increased outreach efforts, presentations with community agencies and linkages through coordinated entry system, over the last year, MMC saw an increase in the number individual crisis drop-ins seeking services.

Crisis Response/Emergency Services	Number of Services*
Hotline Calls	4,010
Crisis Drop In	1,862
Safety Plans	3,558
Transportation	148
Referrals to Community Agencies	3,934
Risk Assessment	1,397

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During the intake process, victims seeking services undergo a risk assessment. This assessment, comprised of 15 questions used to measure the level of physical danger and lethality (i.e. risk of death) in their abusive situation. A score above 5 is considered severely high risk for lethality and over the last year, MMC’s clients collectively scored an average of 10.6.

5) Emergency Shelter for Survivors and Their Children

Through the agency’s safe house program, MMC ensures that victims of domestic violence, are provided with a safe place to reside while their traumatic situation is addressed and they receive the support they need to return to the community safely. Marjaree Mason Center operates two confidentially located safe houses in Fresno County that operate 24/7. Both Safe Houses feature private rooms for each family, large communal kitchens and play areas for children. Families often arrive with little more than the clothes on their backs and as such are provided with personal items such as linens, pillows, and toys as well as food and clothing. When necessary, due to capacity limits, Marjaree Mason Center houses client’s offsite at alternate locations. These locations are also confidential.

During the last year, MMC saw an increase in the number of individuals seeking emergency shelter due to domestic violence. Due to this increase and the need to house individuals and families in alternative off-site safe housing, and capacity limits, the average number of nights of shelter per person last year decreased somewhat.

Emergency Housing	Nights of Shelter	# of Adults	# of Adults*	# of Children	# of Children*	Total Individuals (Duplicated)	Avg. length of stay (nights)
Emergency Housing	33,262	536	629	558	662	1,291	30
Housing First - Emergency	1,107	26	30	25	30	60	22
Total	34,733	562	659	583	692	1,351	52

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6) Household Establishment Assistance

Marjaree Mason Center operates several housing programs that provide critical, safe and confidential shelter and ongoing support services to victims and their children recovering from violence. In addition to the emergency shelter, MMC’s housing programs also include facility based longer-term transitional housing and off-site short-term rental assistance for permanent housing (for a period of between 12 and 24 months depending on individual need) which aims to assist clients in seeking housing/supportive services while they move toward self-sufficiency and sustainability. The rental assistance program is an ideal choice for domestic violence victims seeking housing support when physical safety is no longer a concern.

Last year, MMC saw a significant increase in the total number of individuals participating in permanent housing programs due to larger households/family sizes.

Longer-Term Housing	Nights of Shelter	# of Adults	# of Adults*	# of Children	# of Children*	Total Individuals (Duplicated)	Avg. length of stay (nights)
Transitional	14,125	49	51	87	91	142	99
Permanent	42,544	161	174	264	282	456	93
Total	56,669	210	225	351	373	598	192

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7) Counseling (Individual and Peer Group)

Marjaree Mason Center provides individual and group counseling services for adults and children affected by domestic violence. Typically, individual clinical services are provided at Marjaree Mason Center’s Van Ness office located in downtown Fresno, or by referral through the 24-Hour Crisis Hotline [559\) 233-HELP \(4357\)](tel:559-233-HELP). In addition to individual clinical services MMC also offers S.A.F.E Group. S.A.F.E stands for Survivors of Abuse: Free and Empowered, and is open group course provided over 12-weeks which covers domestic violence topics including (but not limited to) defining domestic violence, understanding healthy relationships and the effects of domestic violence on children. Clinical services are provided both in person and via telehealth using remote technology.

8) Counseling for Children

The Children’s Program at MMC provides support through the Children’s Enrichment Center for children residing in the safe house, a community based Home Visitation Program and through collaboration with multiple agencies throughout Fresno to offer assistance and resources to children. Support is provided through schools, mental health programs, and assessments for other needs the children may have. In addition to being a positive and safe place where children can learn, grow and play, the Enrichment Center contains books, puzzles, games, and fun activities for children of all ages. Child supervision is provided while moms attend onsite counseling, legal classes, or groups. Marjaree Mason Center operates enrichment centers and clinical offices at 5 out of 7 facilities for children to interact and receive necessary therapeutic services. Children’s services are provided by knowledgeable professionals who are trained to work with children in crisis and/or Marriage and Family Therapists.

Last year, the number of clients who participated in clinical services significantly increased. This increase is a direct result of MMC’s implementation of remote telehealth clinical services which resulted in a decline in no shows and cancelations. Additionally, the ongoing effects of the pandemic coupled with the increase in the severity of physical abuse has led to increased victims reported symptomology, self-harm, depression and anxiety.

Counseling	Number of Services*
Individual Counseling Session (Adult)	2,032
Individual Counseling Session (Child)	430

Group Counseling Attendees	1,845
Total	4,307

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9) Medical Advocacy and Emergency Response to Survivors in Hospital Emergency Rooms, Medical Clinics, and/or Medical Offices.

MMC Client Navigators provide emergency response services to victims in emergency rooms, medical centers and/or offices through collaborative agreements with several local medical facilities including Saint Agnes Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente and Community Regional Medical Center. Client Navigators are mobile advocates that can directly respond to clients located in the community places such as emergency rooms, medical clinics and offices. Typically, social workers working out of medical facilities will contact Client Navigators, who will then conduct assessments and provide support and information about available services and options. Upon request, Navigators can also transport victims to Marjaree Mason Center for additional support and shelter.

10) Emergency Response to Calls from Law Enforcement

Marjaree Mason Center operates using a “no wrong door” philosophy. This means that individuals impacted by domestic violence are eligible to receive supportive services regardless of their first point of contact. In addition to providing telephone response to law enforcement, Marjaree Mason Center also employs victim advocates stationed at the Fresno Sheriff’s Office and the Fresno Police Department. Through this collaboration, MMC advocates are able to work alongside officers responding to reports of domestic violence and connect with victims to provide crisis intervention, support, education on the criminal justice system, safety planning and additional linkages to appropriate community resources when necessary.

Law Enforcement	Number of Services*
Referrals to MMC from Law Enforcement	3,245
Advocates Response Alongside Law Enforcement	64

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11) Legal Advocacy/Assistance with Temporary Restraining Orders/Other Protective Orders and Custody Disputes

Marjaree Mason Center provides a variety of legal support services including legal advocacy, court accompaniment, education and other services to victims of domestic violence. Free Legal Options classes are facilitated weekly and open to all community members. The first portion of the class is informational and provides an overview of various types of restraining orders, the criminal justice system, safety planning and types of services available. The second section of the class walks clients through filling out a request for a Temporary Domestic Violence Restraining Order. Clients seeking restraining orders with more complicated legal issues may be referred to Project First Step. Project First Step is a collaborative program where pro-bono attorneys represent clients at their restraining order hearings. This service is provided in partnership with Central California Legal Services, Inc.

12) Court Accompaniment

In collaboration with Fresno County Family Court, MMC advocates attend regular restraining order hearings to provide assistance and information to court participants for the purpose of answering questions, providing information about the court process and what to expect, offering emotional support and informing them of available Marjaree Mason Center services. The court process can be overwhelming for those seeking a restraining order. For many victims, their abusers control the purse strings and are able to obtain formal legal representation. Advocates create a more level playing field by providing support and keeping victims informed of their legal options.

Legal	Number of Services*
Legal Advocacy	1,770
Restraining Orders (engagement/advocacy)	1,269
Restraining Order Completed/In Progress	231
Court Accompaniment	132

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13) Criminal Justice and Social Service Advocacy

Marjaree Mason Center works with local social service agencies such as Child Protective Services (CPS) and Department of Social Services (DSS) CalWORKS program to provide supportive services to victims of domestic violence. These collaborative efforts focus on providing victims with the support necessary to overcoming the long-term traumatic effects of domestic violence. Clients engaged in CalWORKS programs and who have experienced incidents of domestic violence can enroll in the Family Stabilization Program (FSP). Services provided through this program include case management, counseling, domestic violence education, and children’s enrichment center services and support as well as parenting classes. MMC works directly with CPS to assist clients facing custody issues which can include participating in monthly “team decision meetings” and interventions to develop support plans for preventing loss of custody and/or regaining custody.

Due to effects related to the pandemic, including staffing issues, agency site closures and Welfare to Work program enrollment holds, MMC saw a reduction in the number of referrals from the Department of Social Services to the Family Stabilization Program.

Family Stabilization Program Clients and Services	Number of Services
Households	71
Adult Clients	71
Children Clients	166
Case Management Sessions Adult	882*
Case Management Sessions Children	208*
Counseling Adults	536*

Counseling Children	66*
Children’s Enrichment Center	71*

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14) Establish, Maintain, and Participate in the Local Community Service Network to Ensure Appropriate Response to Survivors’ Needs

Marjaree Mason Center maintains and regularly updates a list of local referral resources utilized for the purpose of providing relevant information to community members, alternate agencies and client’s seeking information about community programs. When appropriate, the administrative assistant or 24/7 hotline staff will provide individuals with contact information to suitable community programs for services provided outside Marjaree Mason Center’s scope of work. These collaborative relationships ensure that all individuals seeking services are connected to agencies most appropriate to meeting their specific needs. MMMC’s referral list consists of contact information for local agencies such as Adult Protective Services, Alcoholics Anonymous, Central Valley Suicide Prevention Hotline, Divorce Care, Emergency Psychiatric Services, Fresno CA Drug Rehab, Help Me Grow, National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Runaway Safeline, Rape Counseling Services and many, many more. Additionally, Marjaree Mason Center participates in local collaborative efforts including the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care, Rural Domestic Violence Collaborative, Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Response Team (SART), Valley Crisis Center, Fresno Housing Authority and the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV).

Clients Referred to MMC by	Total Number of Individuals
Self/Family/Friend	1,464
Child Protective Services (CPS)	67
Medical Facility/Clinic	88
Crime Victim Assistance Center (CVAC)	28
National DV Hotline	37
Internet	123
Community Organization	76
Other Local Shelter	57
Department of Social Services (DSS)	192
Court	95

Clients Referred by MMC to	Total Number of Individuals
Crime Victim Assistance Center (CVAC)	673
Alcohol and Drug Intervention	25
Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU)	14
Employment Agency	34
First 5 Fresno	2

FUSD Project Access	54
Legal Assistance Referral	703
Multi-Agency Access Program (MAP)	125
Public Health Nurse	4
Other Homeless Shelter	958
Other Local Social Service Agency	1,296
Centro La Familia	0
Rape Crisis Services (RCS)	46
Rescue the Children	0

In addition to physical distance from social services, clients residing in small rural communities can face a variety of additional barriers when accessing support. These barriers often include: limited access to transportation, language barriers, school/work conflicts, social stigma and privacy issues. Marjaree Mason Center recognizes the importance of ensuring rural residents have access to supportive services and as such operates 7 separate sites located strategically throughout Fresno County as well as satellite locations for remote services through other partner agencies.

Clients Geographical Origin

Below is a table with Fresno County cities/towns that reflect the majority of MMC client’s geographical origin. There were a total of 7,691 recorded zip codes (347 unknown zip codes), of those 7,018 came from Fresno County residents. The majority of the remaining zip codes (673) represent clients from neighboring counties including, but not limited to, Madera, Kings and Tulare.

	City/Town	Count
West Fresno County	Kerman	38
	Firebaugh	19
	Caruthers	14
	Coalinga	40
	Mendota	85
	Riverdale	21
	San Joaquin	19
	Laton	5
	Raisin City	5
	Biola	6
Fresno County Foothills	Auberry	10
	Tollhouse	9
	Friant	6
South and East Fresno County	Reedley	122
	Squaw Valley	11
	Sanger	123

	Selma	166
	Parlier	48
	Orange Cove	36
	Fowler	19
	Kingsburg	45
	Del Rey	5
Fresno /Clovis Metro	Fresno	5,851
	Clovis	315

Marjaree Mason Center’s Vision is a community free from domestic violence. This vision continues to drive MMC programs and services. Marjaree Mason Center recognizes that in order to end the cycle of violence it is critical not only to provide supportive services to victims but also through community outreach, education programs for youth and intervention services that support offenders of domestic violence.

Education and Outreach Programs

Marjaree Mason Center recognizes that domestic violence prevention, education and awareness programs are crucial to breaking the cycle of abuse. Annually, MMC facilitates hundreds of community training presentations that cover information about recognizing domestic violence, red flags, what to do if you suspect someone you know is a victim and MMC services. For over 20 years MMC has partnered with local high schools to provide the kNOW MORE program. The SAFE Dates program, a grant funded program through the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and designed for intermediate aged students is in its fifth year. Both programs contain curriculum designed to provide teens, advisors, teachers and parents with domestic violence education, awareness and prevention strategies and intervention techniques. Due to COVID-19 (school closures in March and social distance mandates) all of these program have been significantly impacted.

Education and Outreach Services	Total
School Districts	5
School Sites	31
High Schools with the kNOW MORE Program	20
Intermediate Schools with the SAFE Dates Program	11
Community Presentations	73
Number of Events Tabled	24

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Life Transitions Program

Services for offenders of domestic violence are provided at MMC’s Life Transitions Program (LTP) site located in central Fresno. In coordination with Probation, AB109 and CPS services offered at the LTP site include a 52-week Batterer’s Intervention Program (BIP), Anger

Management and Parenting Classes, ACE’s evaluations and child abuse intervention program. Further, the LTP offices provide education and training for individuals post-conviction of domestic violence or by referral from another agency. During the last year, LTP provided services to 480 unduplicated clients.

Life Transitions Program	Total Clients
Clients	480
Batterer’s Intervention Program	264*
Anger Management	53*
Child Abuse	67*
Parenting Class	25*
Successfully Completed Program	180

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Future Plans

In May 2021, Marjaree Mason Center began transitioning clients back to the Fresno safe house at a reduced capacity, due to COVID-1. This ensures that we are able to maintain social distance guidelines that protect the health and safety of staff and clients. A variety of safeguards have been established to this end, including:

- Housing no more than 20 families into MMC’s Fresno Safe House at a time. This number will not be exceeded due to the communal nature of the facility and for the health and safety of our staff and clients, as COVID-19 continues to be pervasive. All members of the household will be required to be symptom free for 14 days prior to relocation.
- All NEW clients will continue to be placed in a motel for 14 days. If the entire household remains symptom free for 14 days, they will be moved to the Fresno Safe House (space permitting).
- Anything above 20 families will be housed in off-site alternative safe shelter (funding permitted).
- MMC will continue to identify referral partners to provide shelter for survivors. However, with hundreds of beds coming offline, we anticipate other agency capacity will also be limited.

Client Story

Angela (name changed for confidentiality) was referred to the Marjaree Mason Center by a therapist she was seeing. She arrived at our safe house with a black eye after fleeing the violent temper of her abusive husband and reported being subjected to “all types of abuse” including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, isolation, verbal and spiritual; she also shared that she had sought medical attention more than once. As is common in abusive relationships, Angela told staff that her relationship began with “adoration” and moved on to isolation which ultimately lead to physical abuse.

Angela said that the first time she called the 24-hour hotline she was afraid to talk about her situation but she soon learned about our services and was able to explore her options for

getting help. During that initial call, Angela stated that she was not ready to leave abuser but she did receive help making a safety plan which gave her a sense of comfort in knowing that she had a safe place to go when she was ready.

The final straw came when Angela's husband contacted her at work and threatened her life. This frightened her so much that she decided to drop into the Center after work to seek services. Angela knew that if she wanted to be safe, she had to strive for change and get help. When she entered our emergency safe house, she was provided with clothing, food and additional resources. During her time in our program Angela has taken advantage of the many programs and supportive services offered by our agency. Ultimately, Angela lost her job due to safety concerns. However, her case manager helped her work through her issues and process her negative life experiences while encouraging her to explore her options and identify new life goals. With help, Angela was able to identify the types of barriers she was facing make a plan to move toward overcoming them; this is an important step on the road to building a healthier way of life. Angela continued to participate in counseling and classes and is now able to identify the characteristics of a healthy relationship, versus an abusive relationship. Her stay at the safe house has allowed her to focus herself and work on her mental health and substance abuse issues.

Angela's most significant barrier was safety. With the assistance of our legal department she was able to obtain a 5-year restraining order and is in the process of filing for divorce. Angela was determined to make a better life and reach her goals and has made significant progress. Today, she has completed her CPR certificate and fulfilled all of the requirements for certification as a Phlebotomy Technician I, as well as secured employment and obtained her own housing. Angela continues pursuing her education and is actively participating in her recovery.