



**ANNUAL REPORT  
10/01/2015 - 9/30/2016**

**OVERVIEW**

During the 2015-2016 fiscal year Marjaree Mason Center (MMC) experienced an 2% increase in clients served. An overwhelming number of the domestic violence referrals we receive reflect increased physically violent behaviors that often accompany both illicit and prescriptive drug misuse. Also, we specifically note a significant increase in younger women overall; and also young women accessing the Safe House, trying to escape violent relations with active gang members. Many of these young relationships are extremely complex, and have often resulted in the “survivor” requiring hospitalization or extensive medical attention. The violence we see is always compounded with the overwhelming number of individuals who have mental illnesses and homeless issues. Many of these families are also in the Child Protective Services system, due to the dysfunction that occurs in these families. MMC has continued to enhance its services through the use of trauma-informed care, which promotes active client involvement to craft an individual plan for both client and her children. This process maximizes their ability to eliminate or lessen their exposure to violence and other risk factors, as they feel in control of the process and seem to better understand

what steps they need to take to lead to a “safe life” for themselves and their children. The Marjaree Mason Center is proud of its multiple children-oriented programs offered both onsite in the emergency Fresno shelter, and also in the other two satellite programs in the suburban and rural areas of Fresno. The Children’s Enrichment Centers at each residential site is a therapeutic/coordinated effort aimed at assisting the more than 500 children that enter our shelter, in overcoming the severe developmental impacts that family violence can cause. In addition, we facilitate parent educational and life skills services to enable families to live independently and free of violence.

Some of the year’s highlights include:

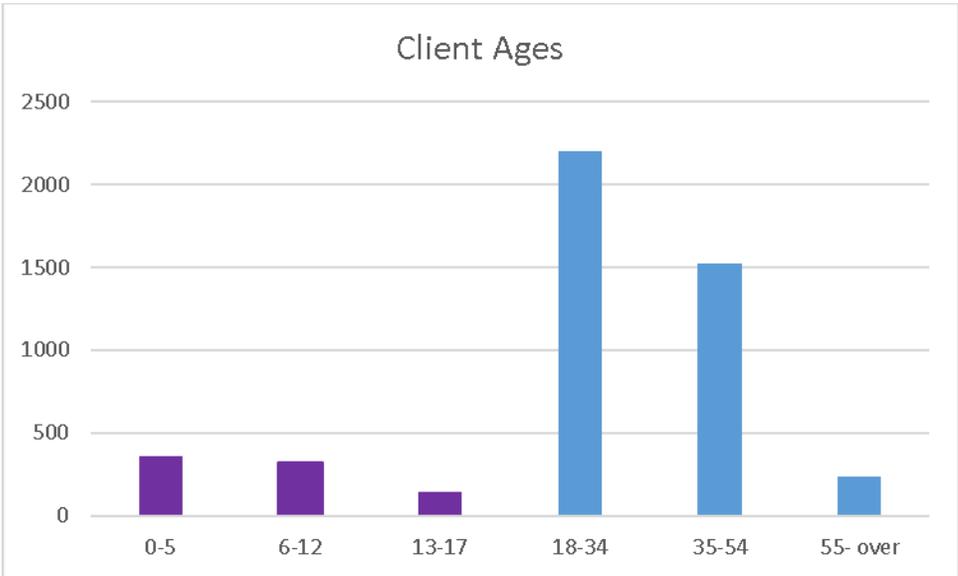
- In September 2016, the Marjaree Mason Center’s Board of Directors announced that Nicole Dibuduo Linder as the Executive Director. Nicole was the Senior Development Officer at Valley Children’s Healthcare Foundation. Nicole is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the agency including the administration of programs and activities.
- The Marjaree Mason Center Safe Houses had a total of 41,743 nights of shelter for victims of domestic violence.
- During the 2014/2015 fiscal year, the Family Stabilization (FSP) Program began with the County of Fresno. CalWORKs recipients who were or are affected by domestic violence are allowed to participate in FSP. The clients received case management, individual and group counseling and childcare provided in MMC’s enrichment center so they can overcome the barriers of domestic violence. 293 individuals received services through FSP. Services included:
  - 1,164 individual counseling sessions
  - 1,101 group counseling sessions
  - 600 Parenting sessions
  - 1,162 case management sessions.
  - 116 children in the enrichment center with a total of 772 duplicated sessions

Over the past fiscal year, MMC remained dedicated to its core services, including shelter, counseling, legal assistance, and crisis support programs. Within these core service categories, MMC provides comprehensive assistance for victims: shelter programs offer assistance with food, clothing, case management, childcare, life skills classes, and enrichment activities for adults and children; MMC counseling services include individual and group therapy for adults and children, support groups, and clinical assessments; MMC Legal assistance includes a free weekly legal-options class, court accompaniment, and one-on-one assistance with restraining orders, divorce, child support, child custody, and full legal representation; and crisis support includes a 24-hour crisis hotline, crisis intake, safety planning, and referrals to supportive services.

**Total Agency Clients**

Over the past fiscal year (2015-2016), MMC provided services to **5,245** unduplicated individuals.

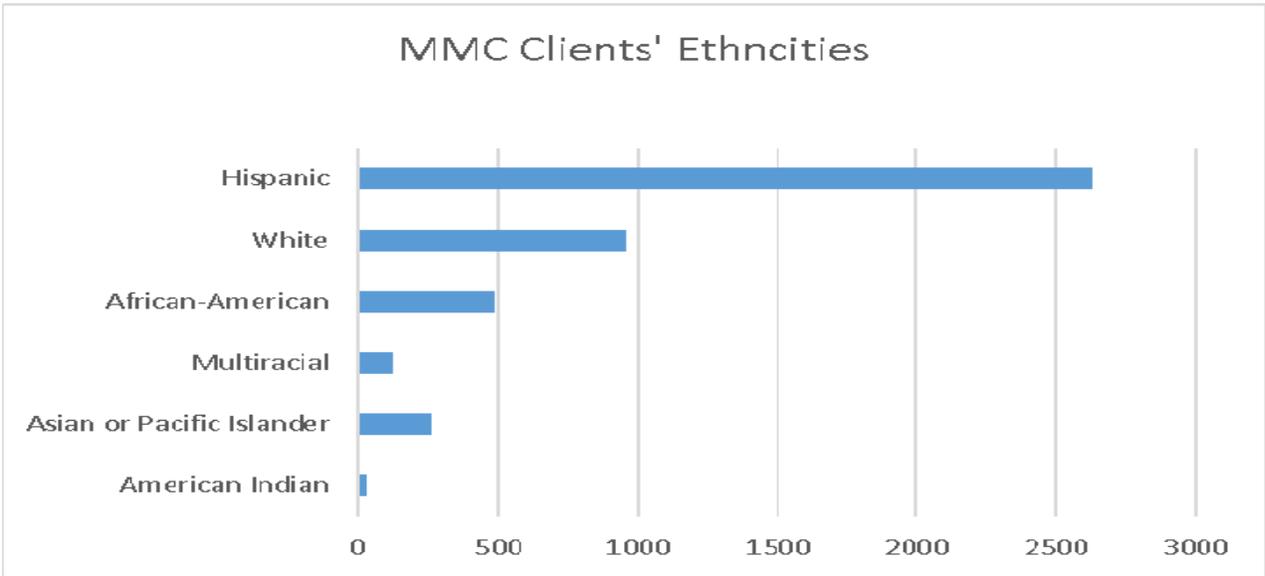
**Client Ages**



Agency-wide, for all victim services, a vast majority (more than 75%) of clients were between the ages of 18 and 54 years of age, while over 16% of clients were children. Most of those **817 children** resided within one of the three MMC shelters or received essential counseling services.

**Client Ethnicity**

MMC clients reflect the ethnic makeup of Fresno County:



**Client Income**

Domestic violence abusers often control the family purse strings. This control is reflected in MMC statistics:

- 1,519 of MMC clients earn less than \$15,000 per year;
- 22% earn less than \$9,000 a year;
- And only 3.21% earn more than \$25,000.

**Client Geographic Origin**

Approximately 11% of all clients served came from the rural areas of Fresno County.

**West Fresno County**

Kerman:	41
Firebaugh:	19
Caruthers:	14
Coalinga:	18
Mendota:	21
Riverdale:	10
San Joaquin:	11
Laton:	2
Five Points:	0
Raisin City:	1
Tranquility:	0
Biola:	4
<u>Cantua Creek:</u>	<u>2</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>143</b>

**Fresno County Foothills**

Tollhouse:	2
<u>Friant:</u>	<u>5</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>7</b>

**South and East Fresno County**

Reedley:	132
Sanger:	79
Selma:	105
Parlier:	46
Orange Cove:	33
Fowler:	19
Kingsburg:	23
<u>Del Rey:</u>	<u>8</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>445</b>

**Fresno/Clovis Metro Area**

Fresno:	2,618
<u>Clovis:</u>	<u>263</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,881</b>

## SAFE HOUSE SHELTER

MMC Safe House shelter services include emergency food and clothing, case management, childcare assistance, life-skills classes, and easy access to MMC's vast menu of supportive services and referrals. This assistance was rendered to all residents in MMC's Fresno County domestic-violence programs within our three shelter sites. The programs offered at these three sites include: The Emergency and Crisis Intake (93 beds), Reedley (18 beds), Downtown Transitional (16 beds), Next Step programs (8 beds), and Clovis Transitional (18 beds). At the end of the 2014/2015 fiscal year, MMC closed down the Reedley Safe House due to loss of funding and low utilization. MMC continues to stay in the Reedley area and is expected to have more services in East Fresno County beginning in January 2017.

The Marjaree Mason Center Safe House emergency shelter offers 24-hour hotline and crisis intake. The shelter is staffed 24 hours a day for clients who may be in crisis and need immediate escape from a potentially life-threatening situation. The other shelter programs are transitional, offering victims a longer length of stay so they may gain education in self sufficiency and job skills, seek employment and learn other skills necessary to transition to an independent lifestyle, free from financial and emotional control of an abuser.

**Number of unduplicated people sheltered: 1,177**

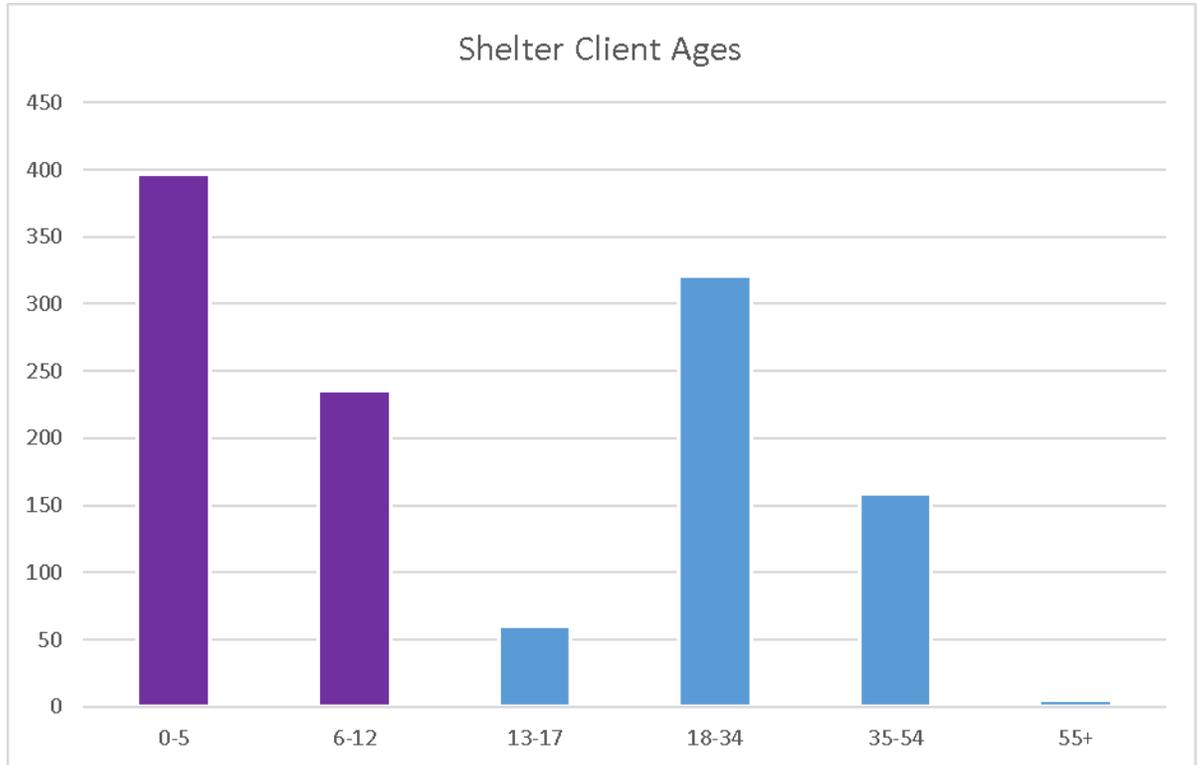
**Total number of nights of shelter provided: 41,743**

### **Average Length of Stay**

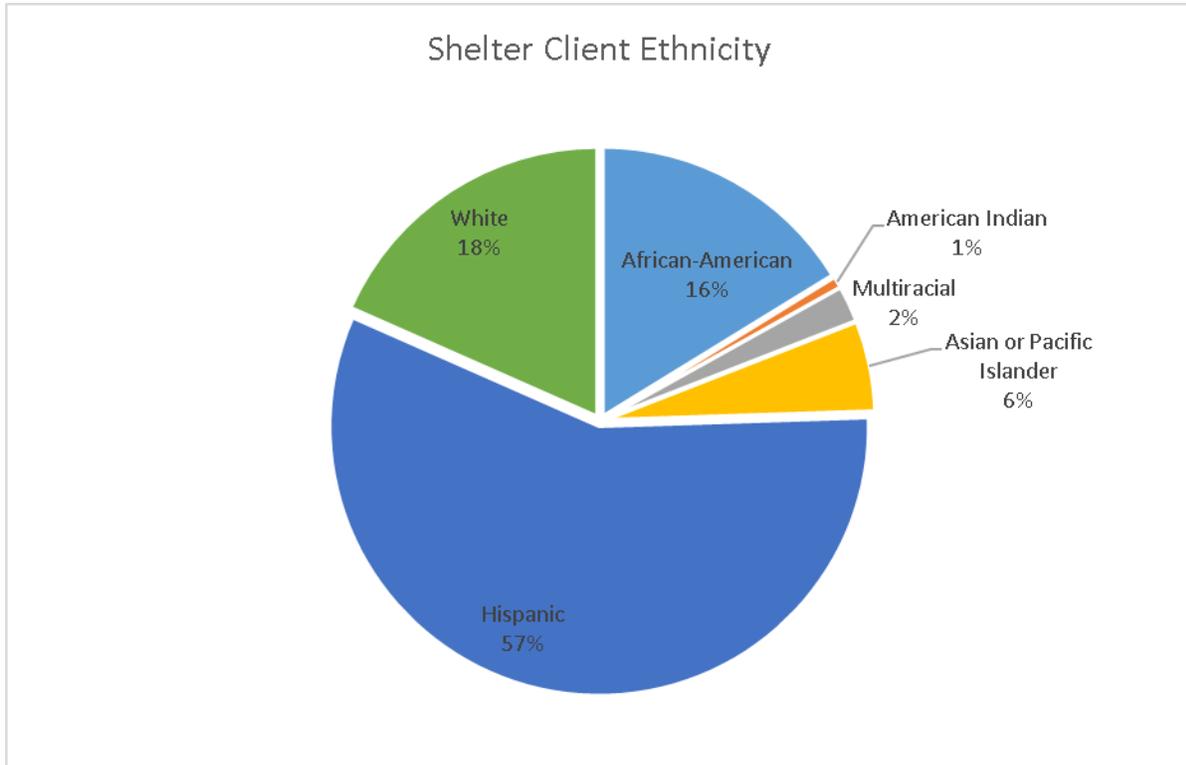
Emergency Shelter:	34 days
Transitional Shelter Programs:	125 days

### **Safe House Shelter Client Demographics**

As opposed to MMC's overall service population, 60% of MMC sheltered clients are children, and of those children served, 397 were 0-5 years old.



**Safe House Shelter Client Ethnicity:** The ethnicity of the shelter client population mirrors the makeup of the county. However, we serve a high proportion of African American families:



**Shelter Client Income:** 60% of the clients residing in a Marjaree Mason Center Safe House shelter had less than \$9,000 income when they entered the program.

Shelter Client Income

### **COUNSELING**

MMC counseling services include individual and group therapy for adults and children. Last fiscal year, MMC provided **8,021 individual and group counseling sessions (a 30% increase over 2014/2015)**. The Family Stabilization program had 869 individual adult sessions and 295 individual children sessions during the 2015/2016 fiscal year.

### **LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

For victims of domestic violence, MMC provides comprehensive legal assistance, including assistance with restraining orders, child support, child custody, divorce, and

court accompaniment. MMC legal advocates also host a free weekly class to help victims learn about their legal options.

Last fiscal year, **1,987 unduplicated clients** received legal assistance from MMC. It is MMC's most utilized service area, and is broken down into several different services provided by a variety of staff members including victim advocates who are co-located at the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, Fresno Police Department, and rural areas of Fresno County. Our staff attorney and paralegal are available for the more complex cases.

### **CRISIS SERVICES**

MMC crisis-services include the county's only 24-hour domestic violence hotline and crisis drop-in assistance, safety planning, and referrals to an abundance of other assistance. MMC crisis services focus on providing life-saving assistance, even during a time of great danger. If a victim does not require or desire shelter services, MMC still provides the full spectrum of services for them. The most important of those services is safety planning.

Over the last fiscal year, MMC provided life-saving assistance to **2,474 hotline callers**.

### **CONCLUSION**

Throughout the major part of the past fiscal year, domestic violence remained a major problem in Fresno County. Our economic forecast continues to place more people at risk of domestic violence and government budget shortfalls hinder our ability to hold batterers accountable and insure victims and their children can live in safe homes.

MMC is grateful to the Fresno County Board of Supervisors and your expert staff for having confidence in the important services that Marjaree Mason Center provides in our County. Marriage License Fees plays a very important role as the only unrestricted funding source that allows the Safe House to be available to so many in our community in need of a shelter from the storm of violence in their homes. We greatly appreciate

the ongoing support of the community and Fresno County's Board of Supervisors.  
Thank you!