

OUR VOICE

FALL 2023



**A Refuge.
An Advocate.
A Strong Voice
Against Domestic
Violence.**

SHINING A LIGHT

California has historically grappled with domestic violence issues, and it remains a significant concern in the state. These statistics encompass cases of physical violence, emotional abuse, and other forms of coercive control within intimate relationships – and they show the pervasive nature of the issue.

Domestic Violence in California

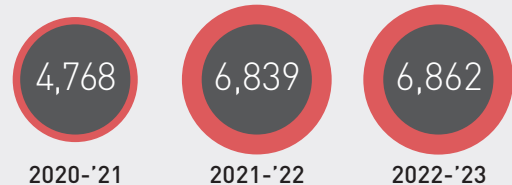
- Approximately one-third of all women and one-quarter of all men have experienced physical violence inflicted on them by another partner in some way, shape, or form.
- On average, a local domestic violence hotline receives approximately 19,000 phone calls.
- Domestic violence accounts for roughly 20% of all violent crimes in California.
- Abusers with access to firearms increase the likelihood of intimate partner violence approximately five-fold.
- At the end of 2019, California had submitted about 12,500 misdemeanor convictions for domestic violence cases.
- A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that intimate partner homicides occur in 1 out of 5 domestic violence victims.

At La Casa specifically, by the end of FY 2022/2023, texts increased from an average of 27 per month to 51 per month. Telephone calls inched up from 350 per month to 392. By the end of 2021, however, our confidential hotlines were ringing 537 times each month. La Casa hotline calls also grew to 572 calls per month - 19 per day - in FY 22/23, when La Casa answered 6,862 hotline calls and 789 texts. In what appears to be a new normal, we're fielding 50% more calls and texts for help compared to pre-pandemic levels.



La Casa provides round the clock crisis support to survivors of abuse, connecting them with resources to build bridges towards a violence free future.

HOTLINE Calls Answered



Domestic Violence – A Study Across 11 Cities

Domestic violence consists primarily of aggravated and so-called simple assaults committed against domestic partners or family members. The monthly domestic violence rate, displayed in the figure below, exhibited a cyclical pattern and a small downward trend that persisted through the end of 2022. Across a sample of 11 cities, domestic violence decreased by 3.9% from 2021 to 2022. Domestic violence offenses were 5% lower in 2022 compared to 2019. The number of domestic violence offenses during the first half of 2023 was 0.3% higher, on average, than during the same period in 2022, representing 148 more domestic violence

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LETTER FROM LUSERO

Dear Friends of La Casa de las Madres,

As we step into the fourth quarter of this transformative year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we have embarked upon in 2023. It has been a year of profound growth, unwavering resilience, and positive transformation. With the unfading spirit and dedication of our team, I am proud to announce that La Casa de las Madres remains strong, and as an organization we are reaching and surpassing our pre-pandemic service levels.

The circumstances of the last few years have shed light on the escalating need for domestic violence support services. Our mission has never been more paramount. Even amidst the challenges of ensuring safety and preserving our capacity, we have relentlessly served up to 36 survivors every single day at our confidentially located emergency shelter. Furthermore, our Drop-In Center has been a beacon of hope and support, having reached 768 survivors and their children this year.

This July, the San Francisco Department of Public Health made a groundbreaking declaration, recognizing Domestic Violence as a Public Health crisis. This is not just a challenge in our city but a statewide public health concern that has been silently affecting many across various age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. The figures released by the San Francisco Public Health Department are sobering. However, they reinforce our commitment to act, support, and be an unwavering pillar for those affected.

In acknowledgment of the commitment of our staff, I am elated to share some of the positive policy changes we have set in motion. We hosted our first Employee Appreciation Day, which was a heartfelt celebration of the endless hours and invaluable dedication of our team. We also launched a 9/80 work schedule, another stride towards supporting our staff's well-being, granting them a more harmonious work-life balance without compromising our commitment to serve.

Transitioning towards a special note of thanks, I must extol the cohesive support and guidance showered by our



esteemed Board of Directors during this transition phase. Their profound involvement and invaluable perspectives have been a guiding light. Their deep involvement and perspective were invaluable. I want to extend a special warm welcome to Sonia Melara, a co-founder of La Casa de las Madres, whose rich history and visionary ideals further strengthen our board. A sincere congratulations is also in order for Carmen Sanchez, whose decade-long commitment to our cause culminated in her assuming the role of Board President.

In conclusion, as we venture into the upcoming months, our commitment remains unyielding. La Casa de las Madres stands robust and resolute. Together, as a united front, we will continue to expand our reach, magnify our impact, and extend our educational and outreach efforts within our community.

With gratitude and determination,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lusero Arias'.

Lusero Arias
Executive Director, La Casa de las Madres

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Crisis Response


7,651 crisis line calls and text messages answered

5,512 victims received confidential victim advocacy and outreach following a police response to their abuse

8,282 days and nights of confidentially-located shelter

290 women and children protected and empowered

Support & Intervention

 survivors of all ages accessed La Casa's suite of community based and residential programming to address safety, emotional, financial, housing, and health needs.


2,304

Prevention Education

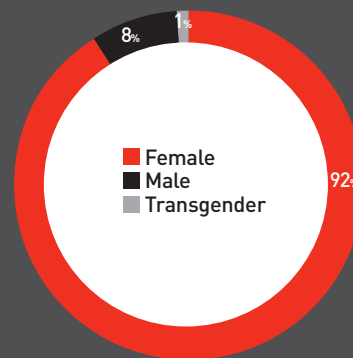
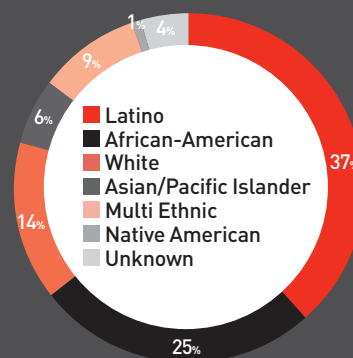
 community members learned about seeing and stopping domestic violence through workshops and events.

2,847

Breaking the Cycle of Violence

 Survivors come to us with needs and priorities as diverse as they are. We give them the tools to transform their lives—to be safe, empowered, connected, and supported.

La Casa empowered **13,000+** Bay Area community members to see and stop abuse.



Who We Serve

30% are immigrants

23% are limited-English proficient

16% self-identify a mental or physical disability

7% are lesbian, gay, bisexual or other

21% come to us homeless or unstably housed

40 HR DV COUNSELOR TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

Three times a year, La Casa de las Madres hosts a '40 Hr Domestic Violence Counselor Training' Program. Half of the material is California state mandated, and the other half is curated with material specific to La Casa and other San Francisco community-organizations. This program is the prerequisite to participate in direct volunteer service at La Casa. Direct service entails working with survivors of domestic violence whether that be on our Crisis Line, at the Drop in Center, at our Emergency Shelter, or at community tabling events. The following quotes and interview are from volunteers who took our 40-Hr Training in 2023.

What is your relationship to La Casa?

Amy Johnson, Summer '23 40-Hr: Indirect service volunteer since June 2023, completed 40-hour training July 2023, soon-to-be direct service volunteer.

What inspired you to want to work with La Casa? What made you want to do the 40 Hour training?

I've known about La Casa since the 1990s. I worked at Wells Fargo for many years and we used to always make corporate donations at holiday and other times to La Casa. I've long been inspired by its mission, and long track record.

What has been most meaningful to you about completing the 40 Hour Training?

Taking and completing the 40-hour training allowed me to discover even more about La Casa and its amazing staff. I learned much about DV and the services La Casa offers, as well as all the different outside agencies where it may refer survivors. Also, I developed a real camaraderie with the other people with whom I took the training, knowing that we were on this journey together.

How has your perspective about domestic abuse changed since doing the 40 Hour Training?

My perspective about DV has deepened as a result of the training. I have come to understand the rippling, downstream, widespread effects that DV can have on survivors, family members, communities. I also learned about many resources/programs available to DV survivors that I did not know about before.



“Just knowing I am well equipped to support victims is the most rewarding thing after completing the 40 hour training.”

- Raina Ng, Winter '23 40-Hr

Is there anything you wish people knew more about regarding domestic violence?

I wish that people knew that DV can and does happen everywhere and to all people, regardless of race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, geography, gender and gender identity, etc.

What do you wish to tell a new volunteer or someone considering doing the 40 Hour Training Program?

I would encourage new La Casa volunteers to take the 40-hour training. It is a big undertaking, but well worth it. The La Casa staff and outside speakers do an amazing job with the training. You learn so much, you form bonds with the other training attendees, and you emerge wanting to help do whatever small part you can to support La Casa's mission.

Are there any more thoughts/feelings you want to share?

I am honored and grateful to have been part of La Casa's 40-hour training in summer 2023, and I look forward to beginning my journey of direct service volunteering!



“It was eye opening, ‘violence is a choice’. I didn’t know that—it has changed the way I see life, the way I interact with others, the way I let people treat me. It changed my life”

—La Casa Volunteer

Opposite Page: Every La Casa volunteer undergoes a 40 hour domestic violence training, ensuring volunteers have to tools necessary to support survivors.

Top: La Casa de las Madres’ volunteers are essential to every part of our work, their time, energy, and dedication help our programs thrive.

Above Left: Educating the public about healthy relationships and redefining public perceptions of abuse is core pillar of our mission in ending domestic violence.

Above Right: Volunteers help us spread the word about domestic violence and its impact in the community.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Teen dating violence is a pressing issue affecting countless teenagers in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. It involves abusive behaviors, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, within teenage romantic relationships. Understanding the prevalence and signs of teen dating violence is crucial in order to prevent its harmful consequences. According to recent studies, around 1 in 3 teenagers in the United States has experienced some form of abuse in a dating relationship. In the Bay Area, the numbers are similar, with a notable percentage of adolescents reporting abusive behavior in their relationships. However, it's essential to acknowledge that many cases go unreported due to fear, shame, or lack of awareness. The wheel of power and control is a great tool for understanding the signs of teen dating violence.

The Wheel of Power and Control: Understanding the dynamics of teen dating violence is essential for prevention. The Wheel of Power and Control, a model developed by domestic violence experts, illustrates various tactics abusers use to maintain control over their partners. These tactics can include isolation, emotional manipulation, intimidation, threats, and physical violence. By recognizing these warning signs, teenagers and those around them can take proactive steps to address and prevent abusive behavior.

Preventing Teen Dating Violence: Preventing teen dating violence requires a collective effort from parents, educators, and community members. Here are some strategies to combat this issue:

Education and Awareness: Schools and community organizations should provide comprehensive education on healthy relationships and the warning signs of abuse. Open dialogues should be encouraged, allowing teenagers to discuss their concerns without fear of judgment.

Supportive Environments: Create safe spaces where teens feel comfortable seeking help if they are in an abusive relationship or suspect someone they know is. Schools and organizations should have resources available for those in need.



Empowerment: Teach teenagers to recognize their self-worth and boundaries. Encourage them to trust their instincts and seek help if they ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Role Modeling: Positive role models in the community can demonstrate healthy relationship dynamics, helping teenagers understand what respectful partnerships look like.



Getting Help: Peer Counseling

Peer counseling can play a vital role in helping victims of domestic violence break free from the cycle of abuse and heal both emotionally and psychologically. Survivors of domestic violence often endure profound trauma, ranging from physical injuries to emotional scars that can last a lifetime. Peer counseling can be a safe and confidential space for survivors to process their experiences, regain their sense of self-worth, and rebuild their lives.

One of the primary objectives of peer counseling for domestic violence survivors is to help them understand that they are not to blame for the abuse they have suffered. Peer counselors work to empower survivors by validating their feelings, encouraging self-compassion, and helping them recognize the unhealthy dynamics that perpetuated the abuse. Through peer counseling, survivors can begin to untangle the complex emotions and confusion that often accompany domestic violence, gaining clarity about their own boundaries and desires.

Peer counselors are often individuals who have experienced abusive relationships themselves. As such, they can create an empathetic environment free of shame and judgment for other survivors. They often share tools that have helped them and others to manage the anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress that frequently result from abusive relationships. Peer counselors can assist survivors in regaining control over their lives, and rebuild their self-esteem, in a setting where people meet each other at eye level. The dynamics of peer counseling groups stand at the opposite pole of what survivors have experienced in their abusive relationships; they are relationships of equality, support, and safety that provide an opportunity to heal and repair wounds.

At La Casa we strive to provide support to survivors in multiple ways; by providing emergency housing, a confidential hotline, and non-emergency text support line. We run our peer counseling groups from an understanding that being in an abusive relationship can leave lasting mental and emotional scars. We hope to provide survivors with the experience of being seen and understood: we hope to show them that there are others who have suffered as they have, that there are others who have persevered and survived, and those others will stand by them every step of the way – united against violence.

Through the support provided at La Casa, survivors can find a path towards healing, resilience, and a life free from the shadow of abuse.

“...domestic violence is often a silent issue, and we should all be more concerned with starting conversations about it and lifting that silence so we can help people recover and move forward.”

—La Casa Volunteer

Intervention and Resources: Ensure that teenagers know where to access help if they or someone they know is experiencing dating violence. Local organizations and helplines can provide support and guidance.

In conclusion, addressing teen dating violence in the San Francisco Bay Area requires a multi-faceted approach that includes education, awareness, and a commitment to fostering healthy relationships. By raising awareness and promoting respect and equality, we can empower teenagers to build safe and loving connections, reducing the prevalence of teen dating violence in our community.

LA CASA DE LAS MADRES DONOR LIST

The Board of Directors would like to thank all of our generous contributors for making La Casa's work possible. The following list reflects pledges made and gifts received between **January 1, 2023** and **June 30, 2023**. Please excuse any inadvertent errors or omissions. We welcome your comments and corrections. For contributions through a corporate campaign or third party processor, please note that external processing time may delay our receipt and recognition of funds by several months, but your support is vital and appreciated! **Together, we are building pathways to an abuse-free future.**

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Thank you to our Community Partners for their support!

In September 2023 La Casa de las Madres was selected as a beneficiary for BlackRock Giving Days! Blackrock’s partnership is instrumental in our work to provide a continuum of services to domestic violence survivors in the community.

In partnership with the Giants Community Fund, La Casa celebrated the 20th Annual Strike Out Violence day benefitting La Casa! Not only did the Giants win, but the 50/50 Raffle raised \$33,175, with half of the proceeds going to La Casa. We are so grateful for the Giants and their over 20-year partnership to support La Casa’s mission to end violence in our homes and communities.



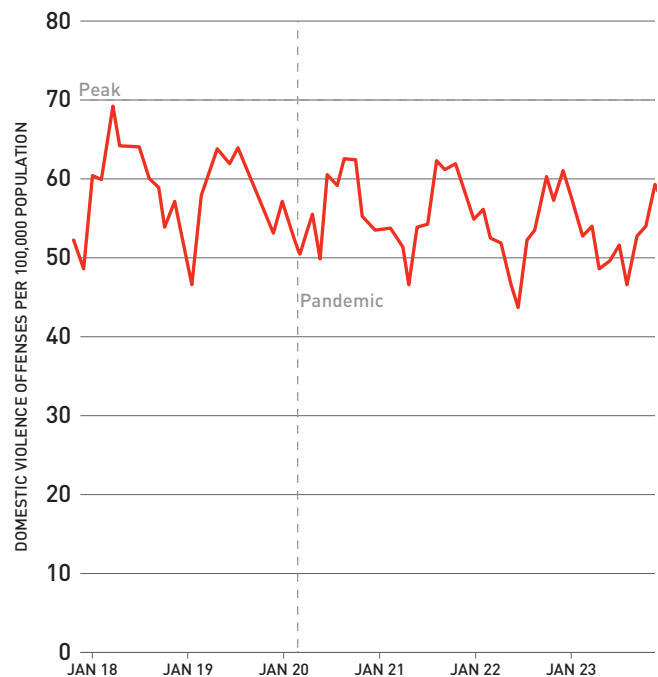
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incidents in the cities that reported data. The domestic violence rate from January to June 2023 remained 4.8% lower than in the first half of 2019.

While these trends across cities show a drop in domestic violence rates, there is still an alarming rate of abuse within relationships. Societal stigmas and shameful practices often lead people to blame individual women for remaining within abusive relationships – but being abused is an experience no one should be subjected to. It is our community responsibility to pour resources into education, support, and safety initiatives to aid survivors. It is our community responsibility to ensure that people’s experience of love is one made of safety and equality, instead of power, abuse, and control.

La Casa de las Madres is dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic violence in the San Francisco Bay Area and has been instrumental in providing shelter, counseling, and resources to those affected by this issue. Our organization strives to raise awareness, offer support, and advocate for policies to combat domestic violence. We hope that the women we have helped can serve as a beacon of hope for those seeking safety and assistance in the face of domestic violence.

Average Monthly Domestic Violence Rate
January 2018-June 2023





**A Refuge.
An Advocate.
A Strong Voice
Against Domestic
Violence.**



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San Francisco, CA 94103

Tel: (415) 503-0500
Fax: (415) 503-0301
Crisis Line: 1-877-503-1850
Teen Line: 1-877-923-0700
www.lacasa.org

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
—Eleanor Roosevelt

La Casa de las Madres

A Refuge. An Advocate. A Strong Voice Against Domestic Violence.

The mission of La Casa de las Madres is to respond to calls for help from domestic violence victims, of all ages, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We give survivors the tools to transform their lives. We seek to prevent future violence by educating the community and by redefining public perceptions about domestic violence.

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La Casa de las Madres

Un Refugio. Un Consejero. Una Voz Fuerte en Contra de la Violencia Doméstica.

La Casa de las Madres ofrece amparo a mujeres que han sido víctimas de la violencia doméstica, y a sus hijos e hijas. Nosotros nos esforzamos en ayudar tanto a las mujeres como a los niños a descubrir su fuerza interior, manejar los riesgos que se les presentan y tener más control sobre sus propias vidas. Nuestro objetivo es restaurar la dignidad de nuestras clientes, fomentar su esperanza, evocar su valor y ayudarles a desarrollar su mayor potencial.

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