



Monarch Services

Vision and Action Plan

2020-2022

Preventing and Breaking Cycles of Violence

Healing from Trauma

Ensuring Gender and Racial Equity

Radical thinking, advocacy, and risk-taking from a gender, racial, and equity lens.

Adopted February 12, 2020

Updated April 1, 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the needs of survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and/or human trafficking seemingly become more complex with issues around substance abuse, a lack of mental health resources, repercussions from childhood trauma, poverty, housing shortages, rape culture and systemic oppression we find ourselves at a momentous time in which we have the opportunity to take a step back and ask how we as service providers can deliberately and successfully serve our clients. This action plan outlines bold strategies and goals to think and act differently, listen intentionally to voices of survivors and their families, bring their voices from the margins to the center of our work, and explore possibilities outside the confines of traditional programming. Monarch is proud to be a convener, partner, risk-taker and connector that is committed to try new approaches that eradicate sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking from communities.

The plan outlines the following goals:

- **Provide space for families to share their voices and be seen.** Families that are struggling with the weight of multiple pressures and layers of oppression are *seen* and are given resources and opportunities to have a voice at the table and systemic changes are made to shift the historical oppression so that families can thrive
- **Keeping families together** when that is the desire of the parties involved. Supporting efforts in helping find effective solutions that increase safety, promote healthy relationships while providing space and tools for healing
- **Healing the root cause of abuse and violence.** People that have historically used abuse to maintain power and control have an opportunity to receive compassionate help to change their behavior
- Expand efforts around **rapid rehousing and supportive services to promote long-term stable housing and engage in systems advocacy for affordable housing.** Monarch serves on various housing task forces and collaboratives.
- **Provide an integrated approach to serve our clients in a holistic manner** that produces long-lasting positive changes. This requires providing comprehensive case management and advocacy to address all barriers to living a healthful and thriving life. Additionally, the plan calls for other priorities including the construction of a new playground at the Mariposa Shelter, developing a North County marketing plan, strengthening Monarch's fund development efforts, and strengthening partnerships with other agencies.

The Plan was approved by the Board of Directors on February 12, 2020.



ABOUT MONARCH SERVICES (FORMERLY WOMEN'S CRISIS SUPPORT ~ DEFENSA de MUJERES)

Historical Timeline

- 1977 Women's Crisis Support and Shelter Services incorporate as a private, non-profit Agency. City of Santa Cruz awarded Women's Crisis Support a grant toward purchase of Mariposa House, a shelter to replace the volunteers' "safe homes" for battered women.
- 1981 Women's Crisis Support opens satellite office in Watsonville.
- 1985 Women's Crisis Support rented office in downtown Santa Cruz and clients of Wingspread which treated women dealing with substance abuse.
- 1987 Women's Crisis Support (WCS) becomes one of California's first funded rape crisis centers. WCS is instrumental in the creation of the nation's first Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), now a recognized model being replicated internationally. WCS has 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, children's program, crisis intervention department, legal department, sexual assault department and volunteer program.
- 1988 Women's Crisis Support Board of Directors closes Watsonville office and maintains services through Fenix Services, a subcontractor, until 1990. The new program is called Defensa de Mujeres.
- 1991 Defensa de Mujeres (Defensa) incorporates as a non-profit with a focus on services to Latinas, which had historically been underserved by service providers in the county. Defensa has a 24-hour crisis line, crisis and legal departments, emergency shelter and volunteer program. Defensa receives a grant from the Department of Health Services for comprehensive prevention activities. The office is located in Watsonville. The shelter is located at 220 East Lake Avenue.
- 1997 Women's Crisis Support and Defensa's Board of Directors meet to discuss a possible merger of the organizations.
- 1998 Women's Crisis Support and Defensa begin operations under a consolidated administration and merge name to Women's Crisis Support ~ Defensa de Mujeres (WCS-DdM)
- 2005 Women's Crisis Support ~ Defensa de Mujeres merger completed.
- 2008 WCS-DdM is green certified as the second non-profit in the County to received certification
- 2009 Governor Schwarzenegger eliminates all State domestic violence funding causing layoffs, service reductions, and shelter closures throughout California. As a result, WCS-DdM loses approximately 35% of its state funding and causes layoffs. This state funding is the agency's largest funder.
- 2013 WCS-DdM sells its building at 220 East Lake Avenue (which was once the Defensa de Mujeres Shelter) and consolidates into one building in Watsonville.



- 2013 WCS-DdM engages in a strategic planning process that includes changing its name to Monarch Services to respond to emerging needs in the community and expand its reach to males and youth affected by sexual and/or partner violence.
- 2017 Monarch Services accepts male-identified adult survivors of violence to be housed at the Mariposa Shelter for the first time.
- 2018 Monarch begins providing services to female incarcerated survivors in local jail.
- 2018 Monarch receives first time *Housing First* funding for rapid rehousing services.
- 2020 Monarch begins *Positive Solutions* program to serve those who have harmed.



MISSION

Lives free from violence & abuse.

VISION

Empowering individuals, families and our communities to take action against violence & abuse.

CULTURAL HUMILITY

Monarch Services embraces the spirit of cultural humility by understanding and dismantling systemic oppression through a lifelong commitment to self-reflection and self-critique of one's own power and privilege in society.

CORE VALUES & PHILOSOPHY

- ★ All members of society have a right to be free from violence.
- ★ Survivors' voices, needs, concerns and decisions drive this work, and we support their healing, access to justice and right to safety.
- ★ Every person who seeks help from Monarch Services has the right to receive compassionate, culturally relevant, linguistically relevant and accessible services with dignity, privacy and respect.
- ★ Doing effective, survivor-centered work requires that we are aware of personal privilege(s), personal biases and how they affect personal expectations and behavior.
- ★ Everyone has a role and a responsibility in ending violence, and the healing of survivors cannot be separated from the healing of society.
- ★ Committed to serving whole families in a holistic manner that helps them heal and thrive.
- ★ Radical thinking, advocacy, and risk-taking from a gender, racial, and equity lens shapes Monarch's work.
- ★ Monarch Staff are empowered, well-trained, and supported to provide high quality services.
- ★ The Monarch team, across all levels of the organization, reflects the cultural and racial diversity of those served.
- ★ Oppression is a root cause of violence, and we are committed to ending it in all of its forms.
- ★ Eliminate the conditions that cause and perpetuate violence is critical work in preventing gender-based violence.
- ★ Honor our grassroots, feminist and civil rights history.
- ★ Build collaborative alliances in solidarity with all who are committed to preventing and ending violence.

SERVICES

Monarch Services offers an array of bilingual services that provide options and tools to survivors of violence and are aimed to empower and help transform their lives. Additionally, some services are focused on prevention and changing the social norms, attitudes, and behaviors that condone violence. The following is a partial list of the services:

- 24-hour bilingual support line
- Emergency housing at the confidential Mariposa House
- Danger assessment and safety planning
- 24-hour response for rape crisis support
- Accompaniment to forensic exams
- Counseling for adults, youth, and children



- Support groups for women and children
- Legal assistance with restraining orders
- Support and accompaniment to court hearings
- Comprehensive housing placement services
- Teen support groups in local high schools
- Presentations and trainings to community groups
- Community outreach
- Information and referrals to other community resources
- Prevention education with a special focus on youth and the farm worker community

CLIENTELE

Throughout the agency's history most of the clients have been, and continue to be, those who identify as female and their children. However, the agency has experienced an increase in male-identified survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault and has seen an increase in youth needing support. Below is a snapshot of those served by Monarch in 2018.

Client Demographics:

- 1,623 Clients served
- 86% Female, 10% Male, 3% Trans
- 51% Latinx, 19% White
- 26% Under 18 years of age
- 21% were from North County (includes Santa Cruz and San Lorenzo Valley communities), 46% were from South County (includes La Selva, Watsonville, Salinas, and surrounding areas), 6% were from Mid-County (including Aptos and Capitola), and 27% were from out of county
- 62% of clients served were Domestic Violence Survivors, 30% of clients served were Sexual Assault Survivors, 2% of clients served were Human Trafficking Survivors, and the remaining 6% were support persons or individuals seeking information
- 96% of Crisis Intervention Clients surveyed reported satisfaction with the services received at Monarch.

FACILITIES

The Agency currently operates out of three facilities:

- 233 East Lake Avenue, Watsonville: south county service center and administrative offices
- 1509 Seabright Avenue, Santa Cruz; north county service center
- Mariposa Shelter – confidential location

The organization owns both the Watsonville building and Mariposa facility while the Santa Cruz office is leased.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Board of Directors

Currently there are eight Board members with the bylaws allowing up to 13. The Board meets six times per year and comprised of leaders from various sectors of the community including behavioral health, medicine, nonprofit, and banking bringing many skills, talents, and perspectives to the organization. The Board of Directors serve as leaders and decision-makers of the organization as well as ambassadors of violence prevention. 88% of the Board is comprised of women and 38% are people of color, including the current Board President.



Staff

The organization currently has 37 staff paid positions. This includes 28 staff members, six management positions, and three executive leadership positions. Seventy percent of Monarch's employees are Latinx, 79% of the staff are bilingual in English and Spanish, and most grew up in this community. The majority of the leadership team are bilingual women of color, including the Executive Director.

About half of the staff have been with the agency for more than 5 years, the other half vary between 3 months to 4 years. The longest tenured employee has been with the agency for 22 years. The majority of the leadership team has been with the agency for more than 9 years. Staff ages range from 19 to 67 years of age and the average age is 33.

Compensation

Monarch has one of the highest compensation packages of all community-based organizations (CBO) in Santa Cruz County. Compensation planning work was done in 2015 to address the high cost of living in the county and retain staff. Currently all employees receive a living wage along with fully paid health, life, dental, and vision insurance plans. Monarch adopted a retirement plan in 2016 with an agency matching policy. Monarch offers a generous paid time off policy, medical leave, and more holidays off than the average CBO. Additional benefits include one-day-per-month office closures, retreats, off-site teambuilding adventures, discounted gym memberships, tuition reimbursement, counseling, coaching, mentoring, and other professional development opportunities.

Monarch promotes professional and personal growth while incorporating self-care that includes reduced work schedules. Additionally, the organization is proud to be family-friendly workplace that supports working parents, or those serving as caretakers, and has received numerous awards for fostering an environment and practices to support employees.

Volunteers

Apart from the Board, the organization has an average of 20 volunteers per year who are integrated into the delivery of core programs and infrastructure. This includes support and contribution to our 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, 24-hour response program, accompaniments, Sexual Assault Response Team, assist with support groups for women and children. Additionally, volunteers provide support to the administrative team and the prevention program with community outreach and tabling events. The use of volunteers has shown to be an excellent investment for our agency in supporting our mission and increase productivity and it creates sustainability and efficiency among the programs and services. For each dollar invested on the volunteer program there is a return of \$2.10 for each volunteer.

GREEN MONARCHS

Monarch is committed to environmental justice and as such has in place numerous green policies and practices to protect our environment. Monarch Services was the first CBO in Watsonville and the second in Santa Cruz County to be certified Green in 2008 by the Monterey Bay Green Business Program. Green practices and policies include telecommuting, required carpooling to meetings, video meetings to reduce pollution caused by transportation, composting, eliminating plasticware, and numerous other practices that reduce our destructive impact on the environment.



FUNDING

Fund Development Steering Committee

The Board's fund development steering committee sets financial goals for each fiscal year. The goal of the committee is to create financial sustainability using community resources lessening the Agency's dependency on government grants and create greater community awareness through fundraising events and outreach.

Grant Funding Sources

- California Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- California Department of Social Services
- California Office of Emergency Services
- Cities of Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Capitola, and Scotts Valley
- Community Foundation Santa Cruz County
- County of Santa Cruz
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Dignity Health Foundation
- Kaiser Foundation
- Monterey Peninsula Foundation
- Pinpoint Foundation
- Rockefeller Foundation
- Sunlight Foundation
- University of California Santa Cruz
- Community member donations

Corporate Partners

- Bay Federal Credit Union
- California Giant Berry Farms
- Caroline's Nonprofit Thrift Shop
- Fox, Wang and Morgan, LLC
- Lakeside Organic Gardens
- Palo Alto Medical Foundation
- Santa Cruz County Bank



STRATEGIC GOALS

During 2017-19, Monarch Services undertook a process to create a bold strategic/action plan to guide the organization in its commitment to end domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in Santa Cruz County and support those individuals and families affected by violence. We recognize the need to get the right people in the room together to see the issues of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking through a broader community landscape where strengths and collaborative solutions are revealed. As such, Monarch engaged Board members, direct service staff, leadership team members, community partners, and survivors leaned in on research to develop this action plan. Focus groups, community vision workshops, and data collection have all been part of this process. This has included collecting data from a variety of sources and Monarch clients on the internal strengths and weaknesses of Monarch Services, as well as the external opportunities and threats that are present and anticipated.

An important opportunity that has been identified is the shifting of the previous lens to include a broader view and create a stronger vision and voice for violence prevention across Santa Cruz County. There are opportunities for multi-disciplinary allies to think creatively, take risks and try new approaches. Future-focused approaches invite us to be imaginative in our pursuit of social change. A focus on the future is imperative for problem-solving, innovation, and equity. This action plan will help advance Monarch's mission to create a community free from violence & abuse.

KEY FINDINGS

- Voices of survivors need to move from the margins to the center to inform program design and future planning;
- Communities are questioning the domestic violence movement status quo, seeing the need for shifts and innovations that break from long-held movement traditions;
- Systems need to respond to the evolving needs of survivors, families, and communities;
- Move from a fragmented field working in silos to an interconnected movement that has exponentially greater impact;
- Move from a primary focus on meeting the immediate needs of people impacted by violence to a comprehensive and integrated approach that combines services and social change;
- Holistic client care that includes comprehensive support services for individuals and families, a two-generation approach;
- Build staff capacity from a cultural humility and equity lens;
- Ensure job training, retention, and compensation equity for staff;
- Expand programming to include persons who have done harm;
- The need for primary prevention work in schools;
- Provide quality programming and advocacy for youth;
- Drastic policy reform and support services are needed for incarcerated female survivors;
- Lack of affordable housing is the single greatest common issue for clients and staff alike;
- Lack of intervention services for children and youth who have experienced domestic violence
- Move to changing the culture of violence rather than fixing a system; and
- Increasing number of clients coming from out of county.



KEY GOALS

The following goals will guide Monarch Services during the next two years:

Goal #1 - Expand primary prevention work focused on youth

Our Prevention team will be partnering with local high schools each year, providing comprehensive primary prevention programs to the entire school community including students, staff, faculty, parents, and caregivers. Additionally, we will focus part of our outreach and education on teen boys contingent on funding.

Goal #2 - Provide holistic services for families.

The violence prevention system needs to move from a system that interrupts violence and focuses on the immediate needs of individuals to an integrated approach that changes the culture of violence, addresses co-occurring issues, and focuses on families and communities. Mental health, substance abuse, poverty, immigration status, and other issues put families at risk for further victimization and providing resources and support for co-occurring issues will help families thrive.

Goal #3 - Actively participate in the transformative justice movement and provide services for persons who have done harm to stop cyclical family violence.

California's violence prevention movement, that includes Monarch as a key leader, is transforming the way in which families are supported and developing alternatives to accountability that include survivors, those who harm, and the community as a whole. Voices of survivors have been key in this shift from punishing those who harm towards working with the entire family compassionately with the intent to heal trauma and support healthy relationships.

Goal #4 - Actively participate in affordable workforce housing and wage equity policy-making.

Affordable housing and compensation for staff go hand in hand when addressing staff retention and quality of life in the second least affordable community in the nation. Monarch is actively engaged in many county and regional efforts to advocate for affordable housing.

Goal #5 - Engage in long term policy changes related to equity in South County

Serve as key leader in the Pajaro Valley collective to ensure equitable resources for those most impacted by Covid. Help shape policies to eliminate health disparities, develop outreach and messaging strategies to reach the most vulnerable and hard to reach populations, develop response teams, and secure equitable funding.

Goal #6 - Invest in leadership development and employee well being

A healthy and effective workforce is imperative to produce effective outcomes for those served by Monarch Services. This will include comprehensive professional development, coaching, and mentoring for staff.



Other Priority Areas:

- ★ Build a **strategic planning culture** to be more responsive to emerging trends and emergencies;
- ★ Increase awareness and **focus on marketing in north Santa Cruz County**;
- ★ **Strengthen collaboration and partnerships** with other agencies to think innovatively, leverage resources that will create greater impact;
- ★ Work with partners on **whole family care** that includes mental health needs, childcare, distance learning supports, housing, etc.
- ★ Ensure **strong, but flexible, agency infrastructure** to respond to pandemics, crises, etc
- ★ Continue **fund development focus** to help sustain the agency and have less reliance on government funding; and
- ★ Evaluate the best utilization for the **Watsonville facility**.

Strategies for each goal will be developed internally as part of ongoing strategy development. All staff and Board members will be invited to participate as strategy partners who will help form strategies that will advance the mission of Monarch. Together with the volunteers, staff, donors, community partners and other allies, Monarch Services will be more effective than ever in providing life-saving services and stop the cycle of violence so that families and community can thrive in safe and healing spaces.

This action plan will serve as the framework for Monarch's work ahead but will remain flexible and fluid so that the organization can respond to emerging trends and needs of the community. 🌀

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Adopted by the Board of Directors on February 12, 2020

