



HOUSEWORK

news from transition house • santa barbara, california • fall 2020

School is in Session!

Shelter children have a place to learn and grow



Over the summer it became apparent to us that Transition House youth would be at an even greater disadvantage when it came to distance learning unless we lent a hand. Moms and Dads in the shelter who were employed full-time would be unable to take time away from work to oversee their children's education. Doing so would limit their chances to find affordable housing and move out of the shelter. And so, without supervision and access to technology, including the Internet, many of these youngsters would ultimately miss school and fail their classes.

The new distance learning program at Transition House is giving children

living in our shelter the best possible chance at school success.

By utilizing the shelter parking lot and the Family Support Center classrooms where we normally hold evening classes for adults, we were able to set up safe environments to bring up to ten children together to engage in distance learning.

The program is filled with children who live in our emergency shelter. They may be in different grades or attend different schools, but all are willing and ready to learn. Spaces in the program are prioritized for families with working parents. Parents who are unemployed and stay in the shelter during the day to facilitate their children's learning also

have Internet access and staff support available to them.

A Typical Day for Distance Learning Students

Morning check in, 8:30AM

After morning health screenings and temperature taking, the shelter children meet up at distance learning site by 8:30AM and set up their iPads and laptops in their own learning station. Each child attends class remotely while staff stand by, ready to help with technology issues or with school supplies like paper and crayons if a teacher assigns an on-the-spot task such as coloring a picture.

During the school day, staff limit interaction with children except to give them supplies. The students all have headphones and their attention is directed towards their teacher. The classes are largely lecture based. Periodically, a child will be talking or answering a question in their class, but the distance between learning stations keeps them from disturbing their neighbors. Student Emiliano says, "I like having a quiet place to learn on Zoom."

Breaktime, 10:30AM

At 10:30AM, there is a morning break. Toys and games are on hand for the younger kids, who can check out an item that is theirs alone to play with throughout the day. Unfortunately, sharing is not allowed. Toys are sanitized each evening. Books and art supplies are also available.

Volunteer Picnic Goes Virtual *By Claire Frandsen, Volunteer Coordinator.*

In a year of challenges, one ray of light came this July as we were able to host a Virtual Volunteer Picnic in place of our usual in-person gathering. This allowed us to see everyone's smiling faces, give out well-deserved volunteer awards, and even play the annual raffle and counting game. We hope everyone had as much fun as we did! We cannot emphasize enough how thankful we are to all of our volunteers who stay engaged and patiently wait for a triumphant return. We look forward to it as much as you do, so keep taking good care of yourselves!

Please join us in congratulating our 2019-2020 Transition House Volunteer Award Winners. ⬆

Ferd Rapp Award: "Spreading the Spirit of Service"

Jessica Yacoub

Sally Rausch Award:

Susie Niven (In Memoriam) of Susie's Closet at Network Medical

Grace Lutheran Award:

Clark Stirling

Outstanding Service

Organization:

Trinity Episcopal Church

Most Dedicated Shelter Operations Volunteer:

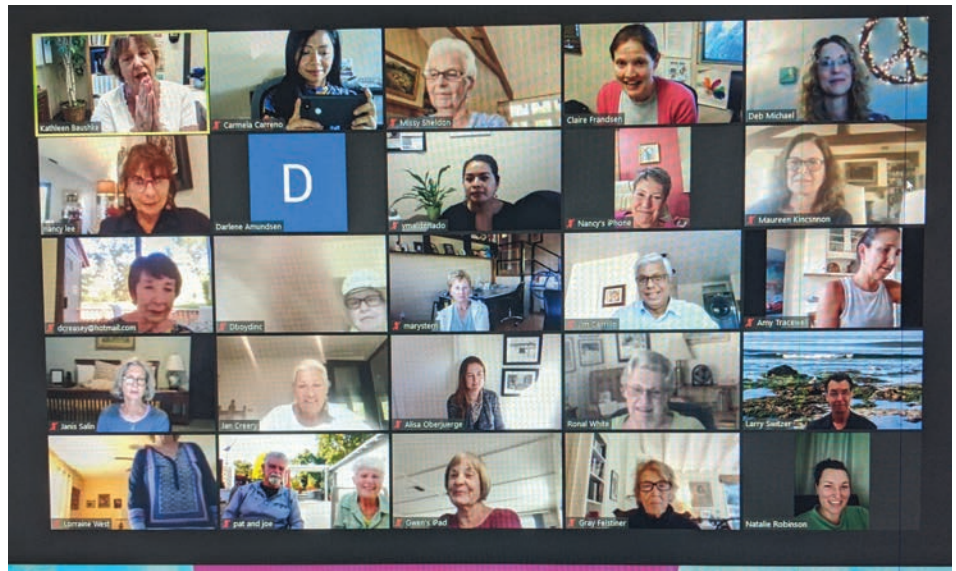
Marisa Grimes

Best Client Screener of the Year:

Yesenia Maldonado

Most Helpful Client Support Volunteer:

Eden Ettinger - School on Wheels



Transition House volunteers joined together for the virtual volunteer picnic.

Most Joyful Children's Program

Volunteer:

Mariah Woods

FSC Childcare Volunteer:

Luz Zapian

Most Caring Infant Care Volunteer:

Elise Fields

Kids Helping Kids:

Evie and Lars Ohlgren

Board Support to Staff Award:

Mary Stern

Dedication to T-House

Auxiliary:

Carolyn Creasey

Transition House Children's Angels:

Jill Link and Nancy Lee

Best New Volunteer Group:

Giving Back SB



Volunteer Coordinator Claire Frandsen encourages our volunteers to stay committed and stay the course as we will need them more than ever next year when they can finally return to help.

School is in Session! continued from page 1

Lunch followed by recess

Learning continues until lunchtime. Each child is given a healthy sack lunch which they eat at their station. There's always plenty of water provided throughout the day.

When they are done eating, staff take the children outside and make them run. That's right. Run! They do various running races in the parking lot and the closed alleyway behind the shelter and the distance learning center. The running is a way for kids who have been sitting in one spot all morning to work off excess energy. "My favorite thing is running after lunch!" says Carter, our resident recess race champion (Emiliano is currently training to beat him).

They also participate in other stimulating physical activities such as "Simon Says," another favorite lunchtime game.

After lunch they return to their learning stations and continue with school work until about 2:30PM.

Afternoon enrichment for continued childcare

Because many parents are working full-time, we provide afternoon activities for the children. They can read books, play with toys, watch kid programming on individual tablets using Pluto TV, or do homework. They go to the outdoor area at the shelter for crafts and other activities. The children actually thrive in creating artwork; in fact they have created over 100 paintings in the last month! Melissa explains, "Zoom is boring but I love when we paint and draw!"

Transition House plans to continue its distance learning center for as long as it is necessary. We want to support parents while they work and save money for housing. We want to be sure that children living in the shelter have the same opportunities to succeed that their housed classmates have. 🏠



Each child has their own learning area with plenty of support from staff.



Outdoor learning area and place for afterschool activities.



Melissa finds that sometimes, schoolwork is easier to do with a pillow and her favorite stuffed animal.

Transition House Institutes Changes to Keep Us All Safe

Note: *The following is an update on our agency's work that I have been providing funders and the Public Health Department. I thought newsletter readers like you would be interested in this information.*

-Kathleen Baushke, Executive Director

Homeless shelters are deemed essential services and must continue providing service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When the pandemic forced California's governor to declare a "stay at home" order, Transition House continued to operate its emergency shelter for families, located at 434 E. Ortega St. We cared for existing residents at the time but did not allow new families to enter the shelter, at the suggestion of guidelines from the federal government to reduce or minimize population mingling. As other shelter resources were not available to homeless families, Transition House began accepting new families again on June 15.

When the "stay at home" order commenced, we opened our shelter—which used to close Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 5:00PM—during the

day because of business closures and distance learning needs. This has resulted in additional staffing costs. We were unsure at that time if we would experience food shortages, so we stocked up on a fourteen-day supply of food in the event that we had an outbreak of COVID-19 in the shelter and the entire population would need to shelter-in-place. We are keeping those stockpiles.

Because our facility is a group-home style environment, the shelter is highly vulnerable to virus transmission. Since our founding in 1984, dinner and lunch services have been provided exclusively by volunteer groups. However, these groups—many with older members—can no longer come into the shelter due to health and safety concerns.

As a result, we have incurred additional costs because we can no longer utilize these community groups that have always provided free meal service to us. They used to purchase the food, prepare it, and served it. These actions represented an in-kind (donated service) contribution valued at over \$300,000 each year. We now utilize a local restaurant (Arnoldi's Café) to

prepare a healthy, child friendly menu each day. Our staff members pick up meals each afternoon and serve them to our residents in their rooms so they do not have to mingle in the dining area.


During the time period between mid-March, at the start of the "stay at home" order, until June 15, the shelter population dropped by half. The families that left were able to find housing.

In order to fill the shelter again safely when we re-opened our waitlist in June, we hired additional staff to deep clean the shelter at least three times a day and to enforce social distancing and safe health practices. We also recently increased staffing to help children with distance learning.

We are able to operate the shelter safely for a population of about 55 people by keeping all families essentially self-isolated in their individual sleeping rooms, cleaning bathrooms multiple times a day, serving breakfast in shifts, and bringing lunch and dinner to each family's sleeping room.

In order to facilitate safe client/case manager meetings, we revamped our administrative office and classrooms. Our conference room and two classrooms have been stripped bare, except for a large table with a sneeze guard, chairs, and a wall mounted computer monitor and printer. Clients and staff meet in these rooms, which are sanitized after each meeting.

We also built a new reception area in the office, including a wall and window that the receptionist sits behind. Visitors must call from the front door to gain entrance to the building.

Every staff member, every shelter resident and all infant care clients take their temperatures and answer a health questionnaire each day. Everyone wears masks and PPE. Our operating mantra is "Safe Families; Safe Selves." 



Case manager/client meeting room.

Christmas and Thanksgiving Cheer is Near; Here is How You Can Safely Help From Home

If you've ever been involved in Transition House's seasonal preparations to make the holidays special for families, you know what a huge volunteer undertaking it is. For many folks in the community, it might be the only time of the year they can volunteer for Transition House. We are accustomed to having many volunteers adopt individual children or families and go out to shop for gifts. Others come to our offices to wrap presents. Some, who are in dinner provider groups, cook and serve traditional feasts in the shelter kitchen.

Through the pandemic we have guided the agency with the mantra "Safe Families, Safe Selves." We must be dedicated to, and are obligated to, minimize our interactions with others. In keeping with that approach, we need our volunteers to be Safe Distance Secret Santas this holiday season. We are reaching out to all our new and veteran Santas out there looking to end 2020 on a high note. Most importantly, our elves on staff want to help keep you as safe as possible this year, but we are also anticipating shipping challenges with our usual Amazon Wish List. For these reasons, we are asking this year for cash and gift card donations that will be expressly designated for fulfilling children's wish lists. Staff will do the shopping. It is the safest solution for both Secret Santas and our elves on staff to keep Christmas special for Transition House families. We thank you for your flexibility and cheer!



Here's how Christmas will work this year:

- Children will fill out wish lists
- Safe Distance Secret Santas can support us with donations expressly designated for children's gifts
- Transition House staff elves will purchase several wish list gifts for each child
- Shelter parents will receive gift cards
- A select few key volunteers and staff will wrap all gifts
- Clients with alternative holiday traditions will be individually supported and encouraged to celebrate them
- Arnoldi's Café will prepare special holiday meals for our residents

Join us as a Safe Distance Secret Santa!

With a cash donation, you'll help us buy gifts—you will still be a secret Santa, but from a safe distance.

We are grateful for your understanding and support. We hope that you and your family will find new and safe ways to celebrate the holiday season. We look forward to seeing you next year! 🏠

YEAR ROUND WE NEED THESE:

**pillows • towels
twin sheets • blankets (no wool)**

Gently used items can be donated to our administrative offices at 425 E. Cota Street Mon.-Fri. 9AM to 4PM. Please call ahead to make a drop off appointment. Unfortunately, we cannot accept clothing, toys or furnishings, at this time, but our friends at Catholic Charities at 609 E.

Haley can on Mon., Wed. and Sat. from 10:30AM to 3PM.

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU ALL for a Wonderful No-Ball!

Santa Barbara displays amazing support for this year's *Help-a-Kid* No-Ball *By Carmela Carreno, Development Manager*

Thanks to the dedication of volunteers, donors, and sponsors, Transition House raised \$135,000 for this year's Help-a-Kid No-Ball. The outpouring of generosity for the children and families at Transition House is unprecedented.

The Annual Help-a-Kid No-Ball, or "No-Ball" for short, is a non-event fundraiser for children in our emergency shelter. For the past 15 years, we continue to save our "guests" and our agency time and money by skipping the work of hosting an extravagant gala event. Instead, the children at Transition House play dress up while our "guests" are asked to stay home—very appropriate during a pandemic! This year, the kids stayed in, stayed safe and dressed down in their pajamas for a fun campout in the shelter playground.

Our frontline staff—as well as support staff behind the scenes—continue to work tirelessly alongside our Board to care for residents and safely adapt as we move families towards their goals for income stability and housing. We are inspired every day by your words of encouragement and your commitment to our mission. On behalf of families and staff at Transition House, thank you for your support!

All No-Ball proceeds go towards helping children at Transition House. 🏠

Photo above right: "I have so many things I love to do! I love gymnastics, dance, and taking pictures." Devora, 6, also offered her set direction suggestions for the No-Ball photoshoot!



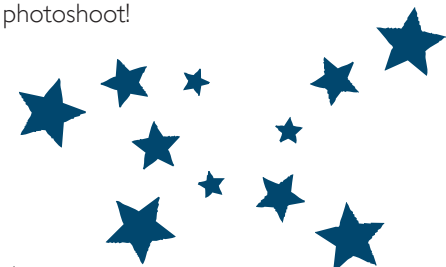
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Santa Barbara Home Improvement Center
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Volentine Family Foundation



Transition House Auxiliary Raises Much Needed Funds

Our dedicated volunteer group donates \$55,000 despite Mad Hatter Luncheon cancellation *By Carmela Carreno, Development Manager*

As with many nonprofit events, Transition House Auxiliary's annual Mad Hatter Luncheon—a key fundraiser for Transition House—was postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 public health crisis. More than 200 guests were expected to fill the ballroom at the Rosewood Miramar. While the event had to be cancelled, the need for the funds did not go away. However, donors continued to show their support, and \$55,000 was raised for Transition House Children's Programs.

"We were, of course, disappointed we could not hold the Mad Hatter, but we completely agreed with the decision," said Auxiliary President **Carolyn**

Creasey. "However, our members believe so strongly in Transition House, we all rallied—virtually, of course—to make the best of it."

Auxiliary members were especially pleased to see so many event sponsors continue their support, even without the chance to have lunch together. In addition, dozens of people who had bought tickets to the event said they'd be happy just to have that money donated to Transition House.

In a time when so many people and nonprofits are struggling, this amazing effort by Transition House Auxiliary showed just how generous our community can be. We truly appreciate it! 🏠

Learn More About Our Auxiliary

Ever since its founding in 1993, Transition House Auxiliary has played an integral role in helping to sustain the great legacy of Transition House. Led by the Executive Board, the Auxiliary raises funds and community awareness through service projects and its signature Mad Hatter Luncheon.

The needs of infants and children are of particular interest to Auxiliary members and inspire their outreach. Funding is provided for special needs at the Infant Care Center, as well as teen counseling and camp scholarships. Each fall, the Auxiliary provides school-aged children at the shelter with backpacks and essential school supplies. This year, they instead purchased materials that students needed for virtual learning.

In addition to their efforts on behalf of our Children's Programs, the Auxiliary provides direct assistance to parents through scholarships for study and career development. The Auxiliary also donates move-in gift certificates for families transitioning from the shelter into more stable housing so that they may purchase basic household items.

Transition House Auxiliary members continue to support fundraising events, assist with special projects at the shelter, and heighten community awareness of the needs of families in crisis. They make a real difference in the futures of local children and families by helping them find their way home!

Interested in membership? If you would like more information concerning the Auxiliary, please contact Carolyn Creasey, Auxiliary President, at dcreasey@hotmail.com. To learn more about the Transition House Auxiliary visit www.transitionhouseauxiliary.com. 🏠

23rd Annual Mad Hatter Luncheon

A Benefit for Transition House's Programs for Children

We are grateful for all the sponsors and donors who generously maintained their support despite the luncheon's cancellation. Our deepest thanks to our dedicated Transition House Auxiliary who worked hard to plan the event to raise money to benefit children experiencing homelessness.

\$5,000 – MAD HATTER

Becky & Pete Adams • Lynda Fairly • Kathy & Garth Nobis
S&S Seeds • Missy & Chuck Sheldon

\$2,500 – KING OF HEARTS

DailyOM • Montecito Bank & Trust • The Towbes Group

\$1,000 – QUEEN OF HEARTS

William & Kathy Borgers
James & Patricia Buckley
Bunnin Chevrolet Cadillac
Marisa & Brett Grimes
Elizabeth Leddy

Jane Macedo de Veer and Karel de Veer
Northern Trust
Thomas & Charmaine Rogers
Rudi Schulte Family Foundation
Santa Barbara Home Improvement Center

State Farm Companies Fdn.
Sunni Thomas
Diane and Ron White
Anna and Don Ylvisaker
Yoga Soup

\$500 – CHESHIRE CAT

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American Riviera Bank
Kat Hosey
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Lens Floor Covering of Santa Barbara
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THE WAY HOME
Transition House

425 E Cota Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 966-9668
www.transitionhouse.com

Join Transition House's **Home Maintenance Crew**

12 gifts in **12** months can make a difference in the lives of homeless families all year long.



If you would like to join our crew of faithful and consistent monthly donors, whom we affectionately refer to as our *Home Maintenance Crew*, you can visit us online at **www.transitionhouse.com** and click on **Donate**. Choose the monthly frequency option and your desired contribution amount.

Or, contact Carmela Carreno, Development Manager, at 805.966.9668 ext.120.

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