

Letter from the CEO

Hello to everyone,
I cannot believe it has already been a year and a half since I began my time here at Family Service Agency of the Central Coast. We are excited to be sending out our first newsletter, highlighting some of our program highlights. As our programming grows, so does our community of clients, volunteers, and staff as we connect with more community members, helping more people in need than we ever have before. Thank you to everyone who supports the tremendous work that we do!

Bill McCabe, CEO



Counseling | Suicide Prevention | Survivors Healing Center | I-You Venture
Senior Outreach | WomenCARE | Mobile Crisis

The CareCorps: Overcoming Suicidality

A new intensive outpatient counseling program

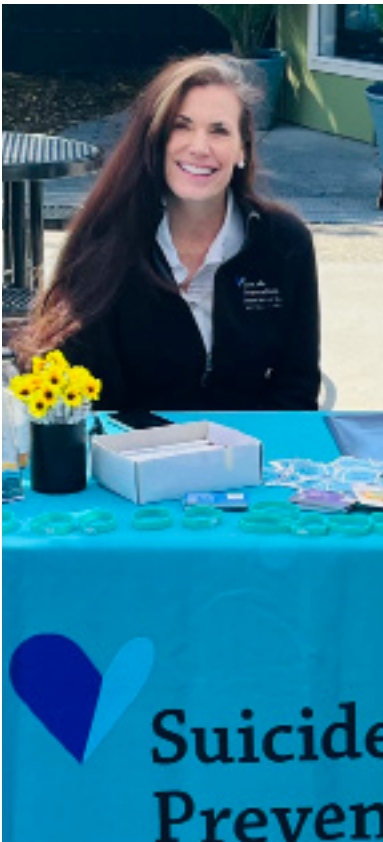
Family Service Agency is proud to offer a new program dedicated to helping individuals experiencing suicidal ideation by offering collaborative care, monitoring, and support through their healing journey. Each individual receives two to three counseling sessions per week, in our Santa Cruz office or via telehealth. In session, they will receive training in mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and other evidence-based techniques proven to be effective in managing suicidal ideation.

We develop personalized treatment plans through collaborative care and client-centered assessment. Post-program support ensures continued progress and assistance, offering a compassionate hand towards healing for a brighter tomorrow. We are dedicated to ensuring that anyone who needs our services is able to afford them, and we accept Medi-CAL while also offering sliding scale fee options.



988 School Outreach

Talking with youth about suicide - Laura Walther



Interested in volunteering with Suicide Prevention Services or 988?

We are grateful for our volunteers' dedication and hard work to help our community members. We are always looking for more volunteers, and currently have a need for 988 responders who speak Spanish. If you'd like to join our team, contact us at sps24hr@fsa-cc.org or (831) 423-9444.

I have had the honor of meeting with hundreds of students as a member of Suicide Prevention Services Central Coast's Education and Outreach team. Our goal is to visit every single middle school and high school within Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties - to make sure that every student learns more about mental health and suicide prevention, how to keep themselves and friends safe, knowing where to find available resources and that they can dial or text 988 ANYTIME of the day or night, to talk to someone ANONYMOUSLY and CONFIDENTIALLY about ANYTHING.

We are spreading the word that 988 may be called or texted ANYTIME, from ANYWHERE, to talk about ANYTHING. Kids, youth and adults can call or themselves or for someone else they are concerned about. In addition to my role as an educator and trainer, I am a trained

Responder on our 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. I am mindful of the importance that anonymity and confidentiality have to our callers (often a caller will confirm these issues before speaking). Preserving the anonymity and confidentiality of our callers provides the foundation of trust a caller may need when contemplating calling 988, and allows them to speak openly and honestly without worrying about judgment, consequences or repercussions. **(The only time confidentiality may be breached is if the responder believes that the caller is in imminent risk of harming themselves or someone else).* I have had callers on the Lifeline who admit that they were able to speak about things that they were never able to say out loud before... the relief in their voices was palpable.

"I learned how to ask a friend if they are ok, if they are really ok."

- 10th Grade Student
Soquel High School

"I learned that I don't have to be suicidal to dial 988, I can call to talk even if I am just upset."

- 9th Grade Student
Salinas High School

Since the increase in our school outreach program efforts, we have noticed an uptick in calls from this age group- confirming how important it is to make sure that all our students learn about 988. In reviewing the written comments of students who have attended these educational presentations, we have learned that many students have already grappled with issues of depression, anxiety and self-harm. 988 not only saves lives, but also provides a means for people (in this case, students) to manage difficult emotions before they become dangerous.

Laura Walther

Trainer & Educator, Suicide Prevention Education & Outreach
Responder, 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
Suicide Prevention Services



New! Mobile Crisis Response Team

A new collaboration for crisis intervention

The Mobile Emergency Response Team (MERT), a joint initiative between the Family Service Agency and Santa Cruz Behavioral Health, plays a crucial role in addressing mental health, substance abuse crises, and psychiatric emergencies throughout Santa Cruz County. This collaboration brings together the expertise and resources of both organizations to deliver a responsive and comprehensive service to community members in need.

As a collaborative endeavor of the Family Service Agency and Santa Cruz Behavioral Health, it stands as a testament to the power of partnership in providing effective crisis intervention and support.

Key Functions:

- » Quickly de-escalate and stabilize situations on-site
- » Perform an assessment of the immediate and ongoing needs of those in crisis to guide our approach to care and support
- » Connect individuals with suitable local services and support networks
- » Engage in comprehensive safety planning with individuals, to safeguard their future well-being and prevent further crises
- » Provide appropriate support with basic needs where those needs are unmet
- » Present alternatives to law enforcement involvement and hospitalization



WomenCARE

New Salinas support group

WomenCARE offers cancer support groups led by licensed therapists to address every stage of a client's cancer journey and provide comprehensive coping strategies. Our current support groups cater to newly diagnosed women, those with advanced, recurring, or metastatic cancer, as well as those who are post-treatment.

We have a new branch in Salinas, with a group which offers support for Spanish speaking women. This group meets once per month.

Contact us at (831) 457-2273

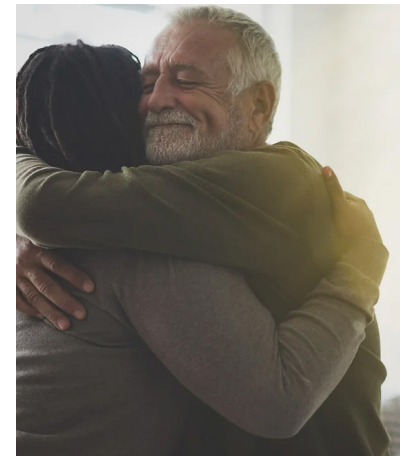
Survivors Healing

Current program offerings

Our services include support groups for women (in person and via Zoom), a Somatic Healing group, an all-gender group, an equine healing group, a group for mothers of survivors, and a group for men.

We host workshops throughout the year to provide resources to survivors, allies, practitioners and community members. We also offer outreach into the community, partnering with community programs, offering resources and education to stop child sexual abuse in our community.

Contact us at (831) 423-7601



Caring for seniors with I-You Venture

I-You Venture serves seniors in our local care facilities. Studies have shown over 55% of seniors in care facilities don't receive visitors from past friends and family members and suffer from isolation and loneliness. Our programs help to let seniors know someone from the community cares and they are not forgotten.

- » Our Holiday Helper program collects gifts and cards for the holiday and brightens their holiday.
- » Our Thinking of You program collects cards and other gift items and puts a smile on their face!

We would like to thank everyone who participated in these programs and made in a difference in so many seniors lives. We delivered cards and gifts to over 1,000 residents in 15 facilities this past year and brightened many seniors' lives!!



More Updates

- » Senior Outreach has welcomed a group of new counselors, and completed training for additional peer-counselors. They will resume groups again soon for the first time since the pandemic.
- » After 23 years of care and dedication, LaVerne Coleman has retired from her position as Director of Client & Volunteer Services at WomenCARE. We are grateful for your great service to our community, LaVerne! Thank you for your work!

Upcoming Events & Trainings

- » Suicide Prevention Service hosts several 2-day **ASIST training programs** throughout the year. Upcoming dates are **April 16th & 17th**, and **June 6th and 7th**. Contact sps24hr@fsa-cc.org for more information.
- » From **April 15 - July 15**, Friends of WomenCARE will host a virtual fundraising challenge called **Reno to the Redwoods**, where participants log up to 300 miles and support women with cancer. Find more information and register [here](#).
- » During the months of April through August, Survivors Healing Center will host the annual **Caring 4 Kids Events** in collaboration with the City of Watsonville and the City of Santa Cruz. This includes participation in Kids Day on May 4th in downtown Santa Cruz and National Night Out on **August 6th** in Watsonville.
- » Join WomenCARE for their **annual Bowl-a-thon** that raises much needed funding and provides the opportunity to also have some much-needed FUN. Traditionally scheduled for the **fourth Saturday of October**, this year will commemorate the 28th Strike Out Against Cancer bowl-a-thon!

Donate Today!

Donate on our website with PayPal via [this link](#) or the QR code below.



Donate by card through Network for Good via [this link](#) or the QR code below.



Donate by check by mailing to:
Family Service Agency
Donations,
104 Walnut Ave., Ste. 208,
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

FAMILY EST. 1957
SERVICES
SERVING THE CENTRAL COAST
SIRVIENDO LA COSTA CENTRAL

Contact Us

104 Walnut Ave. Ste 208
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(831) 423-9444

2901 Park Ave. Ste A3
Soquel, CA 95073

www.fsa-cc.org