



free from homelessness and family violence

2021-2022 Annual Report

From Homeless to Housed: Melsha's Story

Here in Alameda County, the high cost of living can mean that even families with employment cannot afford housing. No one knows this better than mother of two and former San Leandro Shelter resident, Melsha. "We went through foreclosure and lost our house," she remembers. "Amazingly, we fit into my Toyota Camry and slept in it." Melsha lived in her car with her two sons—one adult and one, school-age—for nearly five months. No place to call home meant a daily search for a safe place to park, and for running water and bathrooms.

Melsha blamed herself for being homeless. Yet it's due to her diligence that the family stayed safe. "Homeless or not, I kept my job," she says. Because Melsha's older son was with them, they knew some security. "And my younger son, Jaye, he never



Melsha and her son, Jaye

complained." Fortunately, Melsha found Building Futures through our Family Front Door program. For Melsha and Jaye, it was their first time in a shelter. During their stay at the San Leandro Shelter, Melsha received support to help find housing and overcome her feelings of self-judgement, in an accepting community. Building Futures' services proved life-changing for the family.

Melsha's case manager, Sonya, told Melsha, "We're here to support you being successful." Melsha was helped with her credit and connected with housing and support through Oakland's OPRI program. Today, Melsha and Jaye are stably housed. Melsha is working steadily, and Jaye is in school and an honor roll student. "It's indescribable, the joy I feel," Melsha says. "Building Futures has been a blessing to our family."

OUR EXPANDED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES TEAM



In 2021-22, Building Futures expanded our Domestic Violence Services! Building Futures now serves more survivors and their children, with an added emphasis on safe and stable housing. Our Domestic Violence Team continues to provide a range of services to survivors at Sister Me Home domestic violence safe house and at the San Leandro and Midway shelters. They also serve as advocates and educators in the community. Further, the team provides technical assistance and trainings in the community, particularly to partner agencies that serve homeless individuals and families that are experiencing domestic violence.

Last year, Building Futures collaborated with various community-based organizations and successfully advocated for Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) for survivors who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, or fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. Building Futures coordinated this effort by providing technical assistance and training with partner agencies. We created a county-wide referral process and established partnerships with housing authorities. The existing coordinated entry system is limited in providing housing access for these survivors. The EHV project establishes a separate coordinated entry process that addresses survivors' safety concerns. We're proud to play a part in this progress toward systems change and housing access.

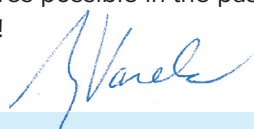
There's more! The Domestic Violence Services Team is creating more workshops to prepare survivors for housing, safety planning and housing independence. We're offering homeless providers technical assistance and training to support clients through their experience with domestic violence issues. Finally, the team is strategizing to build more relationships with law enforcement, mental health providers, and medical facilities. We're proud to reach more survivors and help them re-build their lives free from violence.

GREETINGS FROM BUILDING FUTURES!

I hope you enjoy seeing highlights of 2021-22 success in this report. Sometimes it feels that so much is happening at once. I'm glad for the chance to pause and reflect on successes: from individual stories like Melsha's to organizational ones like the expansion of Building Futures' Domestic Violence Services.

After well over two years, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spur safety and health protocols at our sites. Layers of protections and extra supplies mean higher expenses. Inflation and rising costs and wages impact the communities we serve—and our staffing and overall operational costs. Two years ago, when the pandemic began, new funding sources provided help with these increased costs. Some were renewed in 2021, but only one continued in 2022. Building Futures is re-doubling our efforts to garner funding to keep our services whole. Please know that each and every gift to support our services is deeply appreciated—and much needed.

Looking ahead, we're opening the doors of our new Family Front Door and Resource Center, a one-stop housing hub for families in Oakland. We're overjoyed at our ability to serve more families by dramatically expanding housing services in this way. Building Futures' 35th anniversary is approaching fast. I hope you share my pride that strong community support made better futures possible in the past year—and every year since our founding in 1988. Happy reading!



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GENEROUS YOUTH SHOW SELFLESS SERVICE

When young people come together to improve the world, it's beautiful to see! Jiya Patil, a high school senior, founded the nonprofit Gold Bear Foundation to support those in need through donations of items and service. What a blessing the group has been during the past year! They cook for the San Leandro Shelter at least once a month, and donate items such as shampoos, conditioners, deodorant for shelter residents. **Want to serve as a volunteer dinner donor? Visit bfwc.org/dinner-donors.**

In February, 16-year-old Alameda Eagle Scout Sanjay Cordova donated 12 full Move-In Kits, five partial kits, and other gifts totaling more than 1,100 items! As part of his Eagle Scout Project, the Alameda resident organized a major collection of new items for newly-housed families. With the help of his troop, he organized the supplies and assembled the kits. **To donate toward Building Futures' Move-In Kit Campaign, visit givedirect.org/buildingfutures/move-in-kit/**

[move-in-kit/](https://givedirect.org/buildingfutures/move-in-kit/)

On behalf of the families and individuals whose lives have been touched by Jiya and Sanjay and their networks,
THANK YOU!



Hover your
phone's
camera here.

STREET TEAM REACHES MORE THAN 500

In San Leandro and Alameda, Building Futures' street outreach provides access to care for unsheltered people in the community. Building Futures' street outreach is an integral aspect of our work. We're proud to have engaged 527 people last year.



virtual Jazz it Up!

JAZZ IT UP RAISES OVER \$135,000 TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

On May 7th, we gathered virtually to celebrate mothers—spotlighting three special moms served by Building Futures and thriving today in their own housing. We also honored longtime volunteer Ginny Krutilek and the late Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan.

The online event raised over \$135,000 for programs and services that change lives. Building Futures is grateful to every attendee and sponsor. Community support means the world! We're already planning our next Jazz it Up event, which will mark our 35 years of service to individuals and families in our community! Want a pick-me-up? View the seven-minute "highlight reel" of the event at <https://bit.ly/successstories2022>.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 JAZZ IT UP! SPONSORS

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Nellie Mae Smith

A LONGTIME SUPPORTER MAKES BUILDING FUTURES PART OF HER LEGACY

“I have loved every minute of my life and wish the same for you.” We are happy to share the words of Nellie Mae Smith. Nellie was a booster of Building Futures' work over three decades. She was also a member of the ADK (Alpha Chapter) service club. Nellie made modest monetary gifts to support our programs. She also organized ADK holiday gift drives. When Nellie passed away in November 2021, we learned she had included Building Futures in her estate plans with a generous bequest. Nellie's obituary calls her a “spitfire” who always supported



the Women's Movement and female political candidates. After stints in the federal government and in the U.S. Navy, she relocated to San Leandro in 1955, for a job at the Naval Supply Center in Oakland. She worked there until her retirement. We are grateful for your friendship and support, Nellie!

Your will or living trust is a powerful statement of your beliefs. With a bequest or other planned gifts, you are stating your belief that everyone deserves a safe place to call home. To learn more, visit www.bfwc.org/give-support/planned-giving. Consult an estate planning professional about the many ways your estate plan can bolster the charities you care about. Want to speak with Building Futures about making a planned gift? Contact Ana Maria Mahiri at 510-357-0205 x204 or amahiri@bfwc.org.

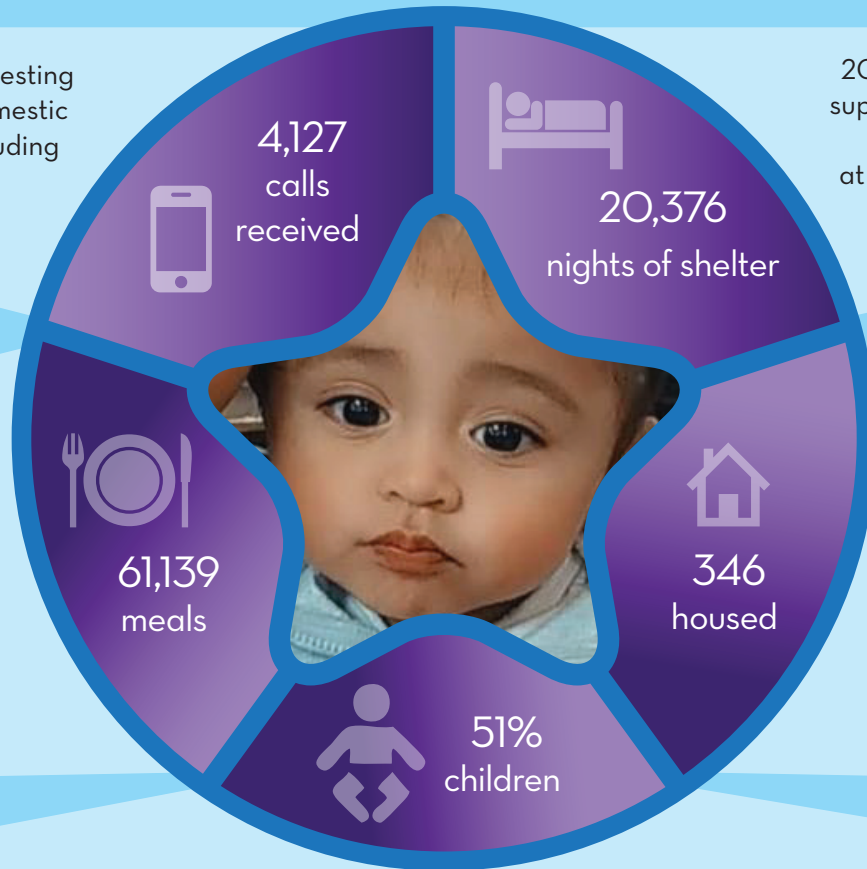
IMPACT by the NUMBERS

During a year of great tumult and extra safety-related protocols mandated by the CDC, Building Futures expanded and increased services for our clients. Building Futures is proud to share the numbers behind the individuals and families we helped between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022. Every single person served is a story of resilience and courage.

4,127 calls received requesting shelter, housing, and domestic violence assistance, including individual counseling.

20,376 nights of shelter and support services provided for 205 women and children at the Midway, San Leandro, Sister Me Home shelters

A total of 61,139 meals for program participants of all ages.



346 homeless adults and children housed—nearly one a day! Overall, 5 of every 10 people housed were children.

51% of shelter residents are children at Midway, San Leandro, and Sister Me Home domestic violence safe house. During 2021-22, 23% were toddlers or infants.

• FINANCIALS •

HOMELESS SERVICES Emergency help for unhoused Alameda County residents. At our shelters, women and children receive shelter, meals and support in securing housing. Our coordinated entry offices in Oakland, Alameda, and San Leandro provide assessments and other services for unsheltered people, including those reached through street outreach. Rapid re-housing connects families experiencing homelessness with housing, rental assistance, and support.

HOUSING SERVICES Permanent supportive housing—which combines housing with case management and supportive services—is a proven solution to homelessness for the most vulnerable chronically homeless people. Building Futures provides these services at two housing sites, and in scattered site housing.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES Building Futures provides shelter and support services to families and individuals fleeing an abuser, at Sister Me Home safe house. Our domestic violence services include a 24-hour help line, community outreach/education, individual/group counseling, and referrals for legal and other services, for survivors of all gender identities.

