

2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT



**HUMAN
OPTIONS**





DEAR FRIENDS,

As we reflect on the past year, we are humbled by the courage of survivors and their families and grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside them on their journey of healing. We want to thank you for your unwavering commitment. Your support ensures that survivors feel safe and that healing remains at the heart of what we do.

Because of you, Human Options responded to over 6,700 calls to our hotline. We provided safe-haven for nearly 450 adults and children in our emergency and transitional housing programs. We delivered supportive services to over 1,200 survivors through our community-based programs.

Human Options continues to learn directly from survivor experiences, enabling us to design more effective services using a human-centered framework. We place survivors of relationship violence at the heart of innovation and integrate empathy into all aspects of our work. This focus has been essential in fostering deeper understanding, building trust, and driving meaningful outcomes for survivors. Listening to, learning from, and amplifying survivor voices has deepened our understanding of the barriers they face and reaffirmed our commitment to co-creating solutions tailored to survivor-specific challenges, strengths, and needs.

As you read the following pages, you will see the power of a safe place, the impact of centering survivor experiences, and the effect of amplifying their voices. The stories of Sean, Nikki, and Gabby illuminate pathways to healing and inspire actions that discover inner strength and fuel personal transformation.

We remain committed to deploying your generosity to advance our vision of an Orange County where every family can experience healthy relationships and live free from fear. Thank you for partnering with Human Options on this journey.

With appreciation,



Maricela Rios-Faust
MSW, LCSW, CFRE
Chief Executive Officer



Andrew R. Gray
Latham & Watkins, LLP
Board President

BREAKING THE CYCLE

SEAN'S STORY

Sean's is a story of resilience and growth, highlighting his capacity to heal from trauma and build healthy connections with his family and friends in the aftermath of relationship violence.

He grew up as an only child in a household with his mother and father where he witnessed his parents arguing. Over time, those arguments escalated. He loved his parents, but Sean started fearing his father after he became physically abusive toward his mother.

"Thank you for teaching me about my emotions." - Sean, age 8

Sean's mother worried about the example that her husband was setting for Sean. But the tipping point happened when she realized that the abuse was already impacting him, as he started waking up every night in a panic from night terrors. After several sleepless nights, she knew that they had to escape this cycle of violence. Sean and his mother moved from shelter to shelter five times in one year. Until they found refuge at Human Options. When they arrived at our emergency shelter, Sean and his mother began their journey toward healing.

At first, as the nightmares continued, Sean struggled to control his emotions. He acted out at school because he found it difficult to communicate his feelings. His mother's case manager recommended that Sean participate in counseling with one of our therapists to help him understand his emotions. He initially resisted counseling because his feelings made him uncomfortable. But he slowly began opening up and building emotional resilience that once seemed out of reach. He started looking forward to his sessions because he learned effective coping skills that helped him make stressful situations less scary. His mother and his teacher both noticed tremendous progress as Sean started making friends at school and opening up to his mother about his feelings.

Recently, with the help of Human Options' Rapid Rehousing program, Sean and his mother moved out of shelter and into a neighborhood closer to their extended family. Together, they built a new home where it was safe to talk about feelings. Today, Sean enjoys spending time with his cousins, continues making friends at school, and talks about his feelings with his mother. In his last counseling session, Sean expressed his gratitude, saying, "Thank you for teaching me about emotions."

3x

Children of domestic violence are 3 times **more likely to repeat the cycle** in adulthood.

7 to 10

Living with domestic violence **significantly alters a child's DNA**, aging them prematurely 7 to 10 years.

82%

of children in our programs demonstrate an increase in **positive social interactions** with peers and adults.



72%

of survivors never reach out for help due to **stigma and shame**.

80%

of survivors report an increase in their **confidence in advocating** for themselves.

93%

of survivors and their families obtain **safe transitional or permanent housing** upon exiting shelter.



EMPOWERMENT HEALS

NIKKI'S STORY

Nikki was a trained therapist and entrepreneur thriving in her career. After earning her master's degree in social work, she pursued her dream of launching her own business. When she fell in love, she felt that her personal and professional lives were really taking shape. However, she felt this joy slowly dampen and her progress halt when her partner became controlling and abusive.

For years, Nikki struggled to understand how she—an educated and trained therapist working with others to overcome their own abuse—could find herself in an abusive relationship.

“Even in the depths of despair, I learned that regaining my voice was my path to empowerment. It’s not about how educated I am, but about having the courage to seek help and the strength to rise again.” - Nikki, Survivor & Entrepreneur

She felt ashamed, and feared what would happen to her reputation if others found out, and so Nikki hid her pain and abuse. But he became more controlling, and his abusiveness became life-threatening. She feared for her life, and despite the shame, fled her home to find safety.

She knew through her own experience in working with survivors that to regain control of her life and remain safe from violence, she needed shelter. That night, Nikki reached out to several organizations across the state but could not find the support she urgently needed. Then she found Human Options. When she called our hotline, a case manager connected her to our Safety Net program and secured a hotel room for the night so that she could leave her home and her partner immediately. The following day, her case manager helped her transition into our residential programs, where she joined a support group with other survivors.

As she listened to their stories, she began to realize that she wasn't alone. When she shared her own story, other survivors just like her helped her accept that she was not to blame. She began to feel less shame and felt empowered to share more about her own experiences, especially as new residents joined the group.

Since joining the program, Nikki has begun to find herself again and regain her sense of security. “Even in the depths of despair, I learned that regaining my voice was my path to empowerment. It’s not about how educated I am, but about having the courage to seek help and the strength to rise again.” Just last month, she launched her media website, where she uplifts stories of women’s empowerment in communities of color.

HEALING & TRANSFORMATION

GABBY'S STORY

Gabby was a dedicated member of her church community, committed to her education and goals, and embraced by a loving and supportive family. At age 18, she fell in love with a man who was esteemed in their faith community, and soon after, they got engaged. She was happy and hopeful about the future.

Gabby doesn't remember exactly when the abuse started, but her first memory was in the car on their way to her family's house for their engagement party. She was shocked. She saw a side of her fiancé that was so different from the man she had fallen in love with.

"I'm living what I thought was impossible."

- Gabby, Survivor & Mother

However, her faith had taught her that forgiveness should be without limit, and so she remained committed to supporting him with his "struggle." During the first years of her marriage, he became more controlling and abusive, especially after the birth of their twin boys, but Gabby never told anyone.

One day, as they were feeding the boys, she told him that she didn't want to raise her children like this. He replied: "If you leave with the boys, I'm going to have you arrested for kidnapping. Gabby, I will kill you." That was her tipping point. "The fear of staying had become worse than the fear of the unknown of leaving and rebuilding my life."

When he left for work, she called her mother, packed up her things, and escaped with her twin boys to a hotel, checking in under a different name. She called the Santa Ana Police Department, and when they arrived, the police officer gave her a card for Human Options and encouraged her to call our hotline.

Gabby enrolled in Human Options' Personal Empowerment Program, where she learned more about what she had just endured and connected with other survivors who showed her that she wasn't alone. During a difficult court battle with her ex-husband over custody of her children, she continued with an additional year of therapy through Human Options where she restored her sense of safety, renewed her resilience, and learned how to help her sons work through the abuse that they had experienced as a family.

With the support of Human Options, she decided that this was not going to be the end of her story. "This program saved my life and made me a better person and mother," Gabby says. Today, she is a supportive mother and successful working professional providing a safe and happy life for herself and her children. She has become a survivor advocate, joining the Board of Directors at Human Options where she supports other survivors who seek transformative healing by sharing her story and helping us secure resources for our continued and expanding survivor-driven services.

Her advice to other survivors: there is a way out and a life on the other side. "I'm living what I thought was impossible."

91%

of survivors **increased their knowledge** of the signs of an abusive relationship.

89%

of survivors increased their knowledge of **how to access the legal resources** they need.

92%

of survivors increased their knowledge of how to keep themselves and their children safe through our **Personal Empowerment Program**.

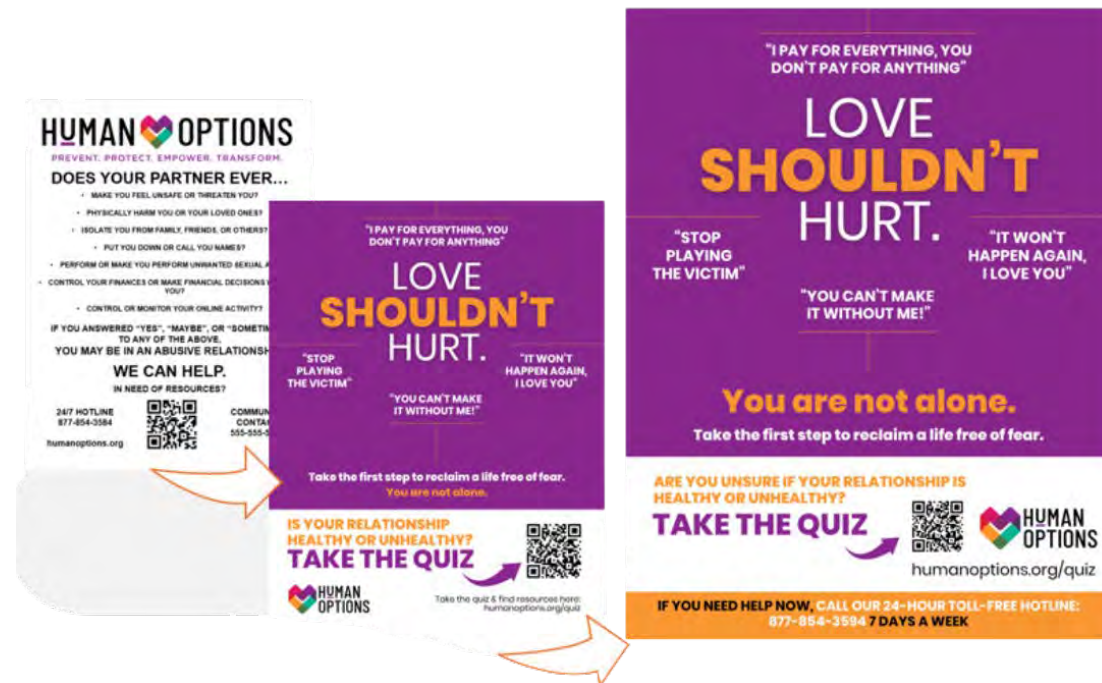
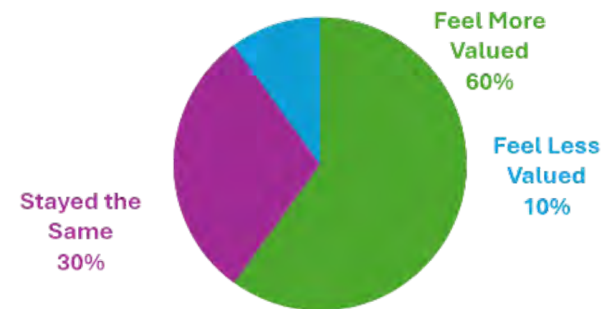


Board Member, Gabriella Blanchard, speaking at Human Options' Annual Fall Luncheon.

“This quiz would have changed my life if I had it earlier in my relationship.”

- Participant, Survivor

Do you feel like your ideas and experiences are valued in helping other survivors?



SURVIVORS DRIVE INNOVATION



At the beginning of the session, I felt anxious. At the end, I felt safe and more relaxed. It gives me confidence to stand in my truth.

-Participant, Survivor

I feel heard, and that is a valuable experience.

-Participant, Survivor

We have used Human-Centered Design to guide innovation in our programs and services, and this has had a profound impact on survivors, their families, and on Human Options. It places survivors of relationship violence at the heart of developing solutions, ensuring that their needs, experiences, and voices guide the process. Grounding ourselves in empathy has been essential to this process. It fosters deeper understanding, builds trust, and drives meaningful, survivor-centered outcomes.

It offers validation and empowerment.

When we listen with empathy, survivors feel heard, and their experiences are validated. “It’s affirmation that I’m not crazy,” one survivor claimed with relief. This breaks the isolation and shame associated with relationship violence. Survivors often hear that no one will ever believe them, and so simply listening with empathy fosters empowerment, transforming their stories into tools for awareness and change.

It fosters healing and growth.

Sharing their stories allows survivors to move from victimization to empowerment, reclaiming control over their narratives and transforming their pain into purpose. As one survivor shared, “It gives me confidence to stand in my truth.” It validates their journey and reinforces that their voice matters, which is critical for rebuilding self-esteem and confidence. Survivors who share their experiences have discovered an inner strength and resilience that fuels their personal transformation.

It humanizes our process. Empathy uplifts survivors as valued individuals with unique stories, aspirations, and contributions to their own healing. Solutions rooted in empathy and survivor input are more sustainable because they resonate deeply with the community we serve. Upon seeing a prototype for a new outreach strategy driven by survivor input, one survivor noted, “This would have changed my life.” Empathy-driven processes create ongoing dialogue, allowing solutions to evolve alongside survivors’ changing needs.

It improves our services.

Human Options is learning directly from survivor experiences, enabling us to design more effective, survivor-centered tools and services. By uplifting survivor voices, we affirm that agencies respect and value their input, fostering trust and encouraging our partners to engage empathetically. “I feel heard, and that is a valuable experience,” shared one survivor. By centering survivor voices, we can tailor services to address underlying barriers rather than focus on symptoms.

A year of listening with empathy has reinforced our belief that survivor stories have the power to shape innovative responses to their needs. We are steadfast in our commitment to listen to survivors, learn from their experiences, and uplift their journeys so that our services are more accessible and transformative. Survivors are empowered to use their stories and experiences as tools that can transform the futures of survivors everywhere.

We will continue to integrate Human-Centered Design as a way of inspiring collective empowerment. Because when we listen to survivors, it inspires a ripple effect of empowerment, encouraging others to speak up, act, and contribute to Orange County’s transformation.

OUR EVENTS

FALL LUNCHEON 2023

Featuring keynote speaker, William Kellibrew IV, global advocate, author, and survivor. Guests heard William share his empowering and courageous story. Held on October 6th at the Lido House Newport Beach, the event raised \$245,000 to help sustain Human Options' programs in Orange County.

1. Celina Doka, Abdo Khoury, 2. Clay Richardson, Liza Eshilian-Oates, MD, Maricela Rios-Faust, William Kellibrew IV 3. William Kellibrew IV



ANNUAL MEETING 2023

Each year, Human Options hosts our Annual Meeting, which celebrates the impact made possible by our donors, board of directors, and community partners. Held on December 9th at the Newport Beach Country Club, nearly 100 guests gathered to celebrate the impact Human Options made in 2024.

1. Andrew R. Gray, Maricela Rios-Faust

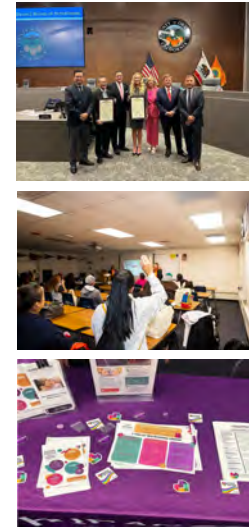


SERIOUS FUN 2024

Human Options was honored to celebrate DOVE honorees Michael Morris, Steven Hittelman, and Latham & Watkins at the Serious Fun Gala, "Under the Tuscan Sun," held at the Balboa Bay Resort on May 18th. Guests enjoyed a Tuscan-inspired evening with live entertainment, raising over \$500,000 to benefit Human Options' life-saving programs.

1. George and Terry Schreyer, Suki McCardle, Gregory Robertson
2. Susan Heller, Celina Doka 3. Chandinie Francis, Diane W. Biagianti
4. Michael Morris, Maricela Rios-Faust, Diane W. Biagianti, Steven Hittelman, Andrew Gray

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



At Human Options, we envision a world where everyone lives free from fear and violence. There are pivotal months that allow us to amplify our message, educate our communities, and inspire transformative change.

In February, we led the #HEALTHYLOVE Campaign during Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, igniting conversations about healthy relationships and empowering future generations to break the cycle of violence. Our 9th Annual Love Shouldn't Hurt event reminded us of the importance of educating both parents and teens, helping them build strong, supportive connections that last a lifetime.

In October, during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we educated our community on Gun Violence Restraining Orders by going purple—lighting up landmarks, raising our voices, and showing unwavering support for those affected by relationship violence. Together with local leaders, we #SHINETHELIGHT on this critical issue and renew our collective commitment to end the cycle of abuse.



These months offer us the chance to unite, reflect, and take action. Every day, we advocate for a world where healthy love and safety are the foundations of every relationship.

SHINETHELIGHT

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we were deeply moved by the display of unity and hope at our second annual #ShineTheLight Walking Vigil in Costa Mesa, and at the inaugural event in the City of Irvine.

This powerful collaboration reminded us all that facing this issue is not just the responsibility of one—it's a shared mission that unites us as a community. Attendees were invited to reflect on the poignant survivor stories displayed by Human Options' clients.



These real-life narratives offered a window into the profound impact of relationship violence, as well as the incredible strength of those who've overcome unimaginable hardships. Through these stories, we were reminded of the critical role community support plays in healing and empowerment.

“I think this event is critical. It's really a good reminder, especially for all of us leaders of the community that have come together and acknowledge the importance of a partner like Human Options.”

- Chief Michael Kent, Irvine Police Department

The evening was not only a call to action, but a celebration of the resilience of those who have been affected by relationship violence and a collective promise to continue to advocate for safety and dignity for all.

“That is why having events like this, where we talk about and give people resources, is really important.”

- Council member Kathleen Treseder, City of Irvine

City officials, law enforcement, and community leaders came together in solidarity, walking side by side to demonstrate the collective effort needed to address and end relationship violence.

THANK YOU

TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

LUMINARY \$100,000+

Quicksilver Fund
Ueberroth Family Foundation

Linda and Tod White Charitable Fund

AMBASSADOR \$50,000-\$99,999

Barney & Barney Foundation
Pat and Paula Donahue
Handel Sunrise Foundation,
Nancy Handel

Hoag Memorial Hospital
Presbyterian
Jaffe Family Foundation

KCC Class Action Services
Women's Foundation California

CHAMPION \$25,000-\$49,999

Decorative Arts Society
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The Healthcare Foundation for
Orange County
Susan L. Heller
Michele I. and Abdo Khoury
Latham & Watkins, LLP
Schoellerman Foundation

George and Terry Shreyer
The Honorable Sheila Sonenshine
and Ygal Sonenshine
Richard and Elizabeth Steele
Endowment Fund
U.S. Bank Foundation
Wingstop Charities

REBUILDER \$10,000-\$24,999

Bonnie and Tom Abate
Allen Family Fund
Austin Allen
Gavin Allen
Ginger and Tony Allen
Scott Allen
Tracy and Steve Friedmann

Anonymous
Apriem Advisors
Ali Bartholomew
Bayside Covenant Church, Inc.

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Belwood Investments
Sabrina and Mark Callin
Frome Family Foundation
Chandine and Doug Francis
The Green Foundation
Green Family Fund
Sharon and Terry Hartshorn
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Insurance Industry Charitable
Foundation

KPMG, LLP
Knobbe Martens
Lon V. Smith Foundation
Kristen Monson and Brad Horner
Mara and Keith Murray
Suki McCardle
Margaret E. Oser Fund for Women
Katie and Fred Nuñez
Orange County Social Justice Fund
Orange County United Way -
Women's Philanthropy Fund

REBUILDER \$10,000-\$24,999 (CONT'D.)

The Orange County Food Bank
Pacific Premier Bank
Maricela Rios-Faust and Gary Faust
Barbara U. Roberts

Kelly and Todd Roberts
Linda and Clay Richardson,
Digital FastForward, Inc.
Sunwest Bank

Kea Simon-Crut
SCAN Health Plan
Schilling Law Group, PC
Aimee Weisner and Tom Saeman

LEADER \$5,000-\$9,999

Anonymous
Angela and Kamran Ahmad
Aecom Technology Corporation
Katherine C. Bland Charitable Trust
Anouchka and Tim Balog
Jennifer Bonk
The Capital Group Companies
Charitable Foundation
Crevier Family Foundation
Victoria and David Collins Family
Foundation
Celina Doka
Dr. Liza Eshilian-Oates and
Mike Oates
Joe and Noelle Ferrentino
Fermol, Inc.

Glaukos Charitable Foundation
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Hilton Grand Vacations Club
Hi-Times Wine Cellars
Hittelman Family Law Group, APC
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David Jacobson
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Gaurav Kapoor
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Caroline and Todd Marchant
Minyard Morris, LLP
Meathead Movers

Nordstrom, Inc.
The W. O'Neil Foundation, Inc.
O'Melveny & Myers, LLP
Orange County Bar Association
fi: 3DF34-71 G@6
Wendy and Dale Peterson
Douglas Pasquale
Resilience Insurance Analytics
Wohl Family Fund
Whittier Trust
Warne Family Charitable
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Zonta Club of Newport Beach

SUSTAINER \$2,500-\$4,999

Anonymous
Helen F. Adams and Alan E. Adams
Charitable Trust
Carolyn and William Beaver
City of Mission Viejo
Vivian Clecak, The John Prizc and
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Eve Chauvel
Drew Capurro
John and Marcia Cashion
CTR Partners LLC
Mary Ann Spague-Denison and
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Everett Maas
Christine McCauley
Edward and Patricia McFarland
Nicholas Mosich
MBK Senior Living
Newmeyer & Dillion, LLP
Monica Nguyen
Emily Rose Noriega and
Danton Noriega
National Charity League
(Vista Irvine Chapter)
Orange County Food Bank
Orange County Women Lawyers
Association
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Williamson
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Sheree and Rich Aronson
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B.P.O. Elks Lodge 1767
Newport Harbor
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and Tom Motherway April
Morris and Gregg Gibbons
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Mary Jo Mursa
Rick Martin
Terry McCardle
TL. Montgomery
John Meserve
Roberta and Peter Muhleman
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Miss Tustin Scholarship
Association
National Charity League
(Newport Beach Chapter)
Debra and Thomas Nichols
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Orange County Trial Lawyers'
Charities
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Los Angeles
Emily Vogler and Daniel Flynn
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James N. and Letha
Waterhouse
Lauren Wright
Larry and Tracy Wood
Jinhy Yoon

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Joe and Noelle Ferrentino
Artyn and Max Gardner
Shirley and Glen Gellatly
Charitable Trust

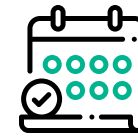
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Susan Vavak
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Jean and Tim Weiss
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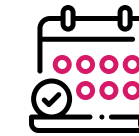
SAVE THE DATE

Visit humanoptions.org/events for more information

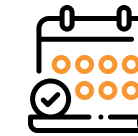
As we look toward the new year, we hope you'll continue to join us in igniting social change. Funds raised at our annual signature events support our life-saving work to create a future in which every person and family in Orange County experiences safe, healthy relationships and lives free from fear.



Love Shouldn't Hurt
Teen Conference 2025
February 10



Serious Fun 2025
May 17



Fall Luncheon 2025
October



Shine the Light
Walking Vigils 2025
October



OUR BOARD

LEADERSHIP

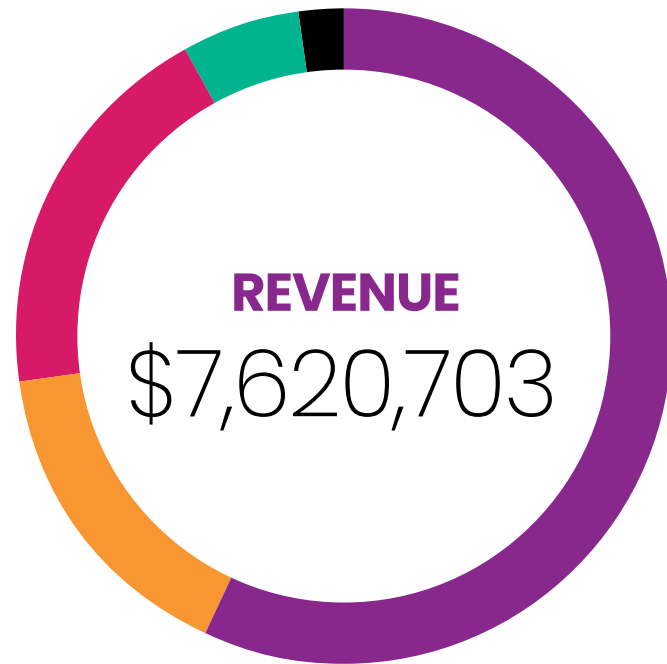
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OUR FINANCIALS

AS OF FISCAL YEAR END JUNE 30, 2024

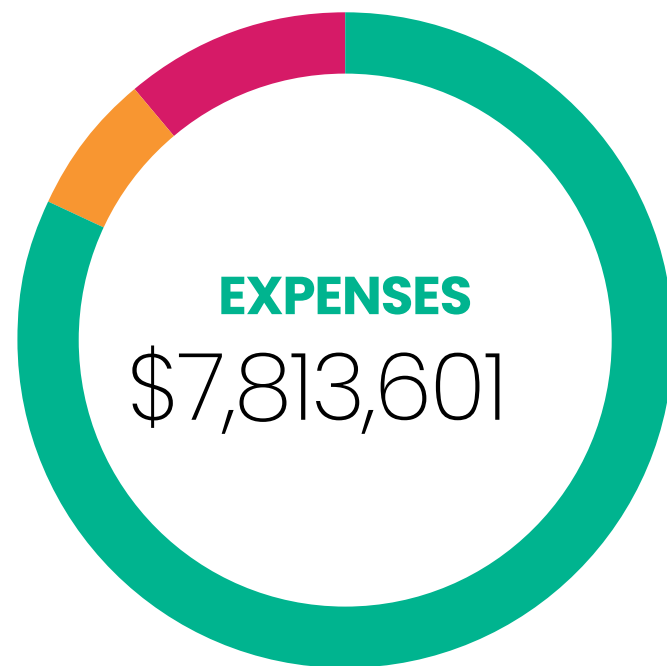


REVENUE SOURCES

- Government: **62%**
- Individual: **13%**
- Private Grants/Found: **10%**
- Benefit Events: **7%** Earned
- Revenue: **8%**

EXPENSES SOURCES

- Program Services: **83%**
- Fundraising: **4%**
- G&A: **13%**



*The revenue shortfall of \$192,898 was covered by release of restricted revenue from prior years.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

FROM 7/1/23 – 6/30/24

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

- CDBG Tustin
- CDBG Santa Ana

Families and Communities Together (FaCT)

- FaCT Corbin FRC
- FaCT Newport Mesa FRC
- FaCT Magnolia Park FRC
- FaCT Minnie Street FRC
- FaCT Oakview FRC
- FaCT Westminster FRC
- FaCT South Orange County FRC
- FaCT CHEC FRC

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

- CalOES Domestic Violence Assistance Program
- CalOES County Victim Services Program

County of Orange

- OC Community Resources
- OC Health Care Agency
- (Strong Families, Strong Children) - BHS
- OC Emergency Housing
- Vouchers Program

Office on Violence Against Women

- Improving Criminal Justice Responses
- Legal Assistance for Victims
- Transitional Housing Assistance

Housing and Urban Development

- Domestic Violence Bonus Project- Housing

Gun Violence Restraining Order- CPEDV

Irvine Recovery Plan



OUR MISSION

To ignite social change by educating Orange County to recognize relationship violence as an issue that threatens everyone, advocating for those affected by abuse, extending a safe place for victims, and empowering survivors on their journey of healing.

OUR VISION

We are committed to a future in which every person and family in Orange County experiences safe, healthy relationships and lives free from fear.

OUR VALUES

Diversity

We embrace different perspectives and the lived experiences of others.

Respect

We recognize dignity as a basic human right.

Curiosity

We cultivate an appetite for knowledge and understanding.

Ingenuity

We actively work to create original and inventive solutions to further our mission.

Individuality

We call on the unique gifts of others for igniting social change.

HUMAN OPTIONS

PREVENT. PROTECT. EMPOWER. TRANSFORM.



949.737.5242

P.O. Box 53745 | Irvine, CA 92619 | humanoptions.org

24-HOUR HOTLINE: 877.854.3594