

2021

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

SPOKANE

QUARTERLY REPORT: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

STANDING UP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE | HELPING FAMILIES | STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES



YWCA Spokane, 930 N Monroe St, Spokane, WA 99201
ywcaspokane.org | Front Desk: 509.326.1190 | @ywcaspokane
24hr Domestic Violence Helpline Services:
call 509-326-2255 / text 509-220-3725 / email help@ywcaspokane.org

**YWCA
IS ON A
MISSION**

YWCA IS ON A MISSION



WHO IS YWCA SPOKANE?

Since 1903 YWCA has been helping domestic violence survivors in Spokane.

Today, our areas of focus are supporting victims of intimate partner domestic violence (IPDV), promoting early childhood education for low income families, and confronting racial and social justice issues that negatively impact our community.

Lead by our recently confirmed CEO Jeanette Hauck, CPA, alongside a board of 24 local women leaders, with 90+ employees providing vital services to women, children, and families everyday, and powered by the invaluable support of hundreds of individuals and businesses in our community; YWCA Spokane is a dynamic, powerful organization working to eliminate racism and empower women throughout Eastern Washington.

OUR MISSION

YWCA Spokane is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, standing up for social justice, helping families, strengthening communities, and promoting peace, justice, dignity, and freedom for all.



OUR VISION

YWCA Spokane believes in a community where all survivors have a safe place to live. A place where all people have the opportunity to earn a livable wage and families can live free from violence, in peace, and with dignity.

Our long-term goal is to empower survivors, families, and communities through a combination of domestic violence (DV) prevention and response work, disrupting long standing patterns of trauma by working at the intersections of inequality, poverty, and domestic violence.

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OUR PROGRAMS

We embrace this vision through both crisis response and prevention work, establishing a 24-hour Helpline and safe shelter program, a counseling center, child care and early learning services, and civil legal aid. Additionally, we provide community education for youth and adults and DV prevention tools at the individual, relationship and community levels to help spur systemic change.

We focus our work in 3 main areas:

- 1 Domestic violence survivor services**, including safety planning, counseling, DV prevention and community education, housing, and legal services.
- 2 Economic advancement** through skill-building, financial education, job readiness, employment support, and clothing resources.
- 3 Children's services** including early education; outreach, and trauma support services for children and youth.

In 2020, the following outcomes were reported across our programs.



5,012

victims of intimate partner violence received emergency support via our 24hr confidential helpline.



628

women and children escaping abusive relationships found a safe place to stay through our shelter and housing services.



4,998

survivors found counseling, legal assistance, education, and community through our free and confidential services.



3,675

children impacted by family violence received trauma-informed services interrupting cycles of poverty and violence for years to come.



1,033

women gained new skills, tools, and resources needed for success in life, including job and school readiness, financial education, professional clothing, and necessities.



1,353

children and their families engaged in early care and pre-school programs focused on preparing children for success with elementary school and beyond.



Each year, YWCA Spokane serves approximately 17,000 survivors and families who are impacted by intimate partner domestic violence, homelessness, and unemployment through our free, trauma-informed, confidential programs and services.

OUR COMMUNITY

YWCA Spokane works primarily in Spokane County, Northeastern Washington (occasionally Stevens, Ferry and Pend Oreille counties), and Kootenai County in Northern Idaho.

While we serve people from any geographic area and often serve clients in our shelter program from other states traveling to escape from abusive partners, Spokane County, the fourth most populous county in Washington State, is our primary service area.



The county is a complex mixture of urban, suburban, and rural landscapes, with seven Native American tribes, ten smaller towns and cities, and a rapidly growing population of racial and ethnic diversity. Geographical barriers, such as the Cascade Mountain Range, combined with economic and political differences isolate Spokane and Eastern Washington from the populated urban areas of Seattle and King County. In the past 2 years, rapidly increasing rents and housing prices have made the previously affordable MSA increasingly out of reach for lower-income renters and first-time home buyers, who are many of our clients. Additionally, we provide legal aid in other rural and semi-rural counties in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho that are severely under-served by domestic violence services.

In Spokane County, DV affects nearly one-third of women and is the most common 911 call received by local law enforcement.

DV in Spokane is both prevalent and severe. Spokane County consistently experiences much higher rates of DV compared with the Washington State average, and we experienced a pronounced increase in DV in recent years which has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHANGING STATISTICS REQUIRES CHANGING SYSTEMS

YWCA Spokane follows recommendations of state and national leaders in our field for systems change. The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence publishes fatality review reports for the state, including stories from in-depth reviews of domestic violence homicides and suicides; key findings based on reviews; and specific recommendations for law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, child welfare workers, employers, health care and mental health providers, economic services, chemical dependency and domestic violence advocates.

YWCA Spokane is following several recommendations from the Domestic Violence Fatalities in Washington State (2016) report, the latest edition available, including:

- Offering comprehensive, survivor-centered advocacy at every point at which survivors seek help;
- Increase knowledge about teen dating violence and young people's access to appropriate services and interventions;
- Build capacity of friends, family members, neighbors, employers and coworkers to support DV survivors and respond to abusers
- Improve the ability of family courts to identify DV and appropriately address survivors/childrens' safety and well-being
- Maximize the use of existing legal means to restrict abusers' access to firearms
- Increase survivors' options for economic and housing stability
- Develop state and local strategies to promote healthy relationships and prevent dating and domestic violence

We are currently working to implement and/or actively practice these recommendations in our DV work and partnerships in the community.

We know these cannot be accomplished alone and regularly partner with other organizations such as the courts, law enforcement, housing and homelessness advocacy groups, racial justice organizations and many others to help accomplish these goals.

OUR PARTNERS

HOUSING/SHELTER: YWCA has a long history of partnership with other organizations and individuals, including local landlords, which allows us to place survivors in stable housing in the community. We serve a unique population that often does not have rental or employment history in their own name due to DV. We can serve people referred to us by our partners, work together with them to provide services our populations need, and refer our own clients to them for services we cannot provide in-house.

YWCA's main shelter is a satellite site for Spokane's Coordinated Assessment program, and we partner with Spokane Housing Authority to provide affordable housing vouchers. As a subrecipient of Transitions' OVW Transitional Housing grant, YWCA advocates provide comprehensive support services to DV victims through this agreement, as well as annual DV training for Transitions' staff. YWCA began a 2-year project partnership in 2020 with the MiA Project, a domestic violence organization organized to reach Spokane's Latinx community with advocacy and housing resources.

LEGAL AID/LAW ENFORCEMENT: To reduce DV-related homicides in Spokane County, we partner with City and County law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement officers, detectives, prosecutors, and YWCA legal advocates are co-located at the Spokane County Family Justice Center where they provide our legal advocates with DV call reports from the previous night using the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) questionnaire. YWCA advocates make follow-up attempts to offer survivors assistance. Many LAP-identified survivors who initially refuse support from law enforcement accept assistance when advocates call the following day. Our LAP work is also expanding beyond law enforcement. Providence and the YWCA are piloting a similar project in the health care setting to better screen and provide DV services for patients. MultiCare also piloted a similar program in its local hospitals.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: YWCA Spokane's Women's Opportunity Center partners with WorkSource Spokane as a certified WorkSource Connection Site. We partner with DSHS to better serve survivors who are transitioning out of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In addition, we partner with the Community Colleges of Spokane, Transitions, SNAP, Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery, United Gospel Mission, Mission Outreach and GoodWill. Career Path Services is another partner and refers survivors to our program. We also solicit and receive internal referrals such as our domestic violence shelter and housing services and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).

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Finally, we are an active member of Spokane's Domestic Violence Coalition. The Coalition helps us achieve our long-term goals as an agency by working with people at all levels of involvement, including education and prevention. The Coalition, formed in the early 1990s, aims to prevent and eliminate DV through collaboration, community education efforts, including campaigns in schools and businesses, and partnership with community agencies including law enforcement, government officials, victim advocacy groups, treatment providers, school representatives, and family and child-serving organizations.



RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Women, women of color, LGBTQ+ survivors and other marginalized populations experience disproportionate incidents of intimate partner and gender-based violence, and increased barriers in seeking help. YWCA Spokane works to better serve the marginalized populations most impacted by these inequities and overcome these barriers with the oversight of our Racial and Social Justice Committee, which is composed of agency leaders, programmatic staff, board members, and community volunteers. We partner with community organizations leading equity and inclusion work to facilitate ongoing assessments and training opportunities for staff in support of culturally competent services.

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on both YWCA clients and on our organization. The pandemic has compounded the challenges faced by marginalized survivors in our community. Increased rates of domestic violence, often called 'a pandemic within a pandemic' are startling.

Since January 2020, we have experienced a 50% spike in calls to our 24-hr domestic violence helpline as the stressors of COVID-19, long-term isolation, and economic struggle continue.

Studies across the national have shown sharp increases in rates of domestic violence in 2020 as victims are kept at home with abusive partners, often with added stress of job loss and lack of childcare.

Restrictions from the pandemic forced our team to adapt in order to keep critical support lines open. While many programs adjusted to offering virtual appointments, our 24-hr helpline and domestic violence safe shelter remained fully operational. Our early childhood education programs quickly adapted to offering a combination of remote and in-person services.

YWCA's counseling, legal, and jobs programs adjusted to provide online and phone based services. In many instances, clients have let us know these remote communication options are easier for them to use than attending services in person, because they live in rural areas, have challenges obtaining childcare, or their work schedules conflict with regular operating hours. In the future we plan to use a combination of remote and in-person services to accommodate the widest variety of needs.

The transition to digital service has not been easy for everyone. Many YWCA clients have low incomes and are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. They are less likely to have high-quality internet connections compared to their more affluent peers. Some still reside with their abusers, which makes meeting with an advocate online almost impossible. Remote communication is also a challenge for younger children who access our child therapy program. It is simply more difficult for therapists to keep children engaged when therapy is delivered through a telehealth model instead of in-person.



INCREASING COSTS, DECREASING FUNDS

The costs of supporting clients in this new climate is expensive and is experienced at a time when program revenue has decreased, and the need for our services has increased. Further, the pandemic has made it impossible to conduct our usual fundraising activities. Flexible dollars raised through events is normally our go-to revenue stream to support the unfunded costs of programming. However, COVID has made in-person fundraising costly and impractical causing us to make the decision to put our regular fundraising events on hold until 2022.

A critical housing grant expires this June that will not be renewed due to the reduced availability of flexible funding. The loss of this support cuts YWCA Spokane's ability to provide vital housing intervention and financial services in half. These funds allow YWCA Spokane to help survivors who are fleeing intimate partner domestic violence with rehousing, homeless prevention, safety planning, rental assistance, and resource brokering.

Flexible funding is essential to our work at YWCA Spokane. There are no textbook domestic violence situations. In order to effectively provide services to survivors it is incredibly important that we address each unique situation with a response that addresses each specific need for safety.

We're working to bridge these gaps in our funding by requesting additional support from sources across our community, and we're so grateful for all the support we've received. When you gift unrestricted funding support, it provides our team at YWCA Spokane the ability to meet the specific needs of our community. Your contributions create space for innovation, provide security, and allow us to address urgent and emerging issues. Your support allows us to focus on responding to the shifting needs of clients who are faced with addressing critical issues such as domestic violence, job loss, and homelessness, all while experiencing a pandemic.



“I can look back on my two and a half months living in the shelter as a life changing and affirming experience.”

- Teresa, Survivor & YWCA Staff Member

Read more of Teresa's story at ywcaspokane.org/a-survivor-story-teresa

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YWCA Spokane relies on funding from businesses and individuals in the community to continue providing these vital services to women, children, families, and all survivors in our community.

Thank you to all who have already joined us as partners this year!

MISSION PARTNERS



FREEDOM PARTNERS



INNOVATION PARTNERS

Itron

McAloon Law PLLC

EQUITY PARTNER

Moss Adams

Stone Group of Companies

COLLABORATION PARTNER

Horizon Credit Union

If you or your organization would like to learn more about becoming a Partner to YWCA Spokane, please contact Briana Berner at 509-953-5992 or email brianab@ywcaspokane.org. ***Thank you!***

LEARN MORE AT YWCASPOKANE.ORG/CORPORATE-PARTNER