

Help us provide HOPE and SUPPORT during this economic crisis.

Dear Friends,

In times of economic hardship, the women and children of our community are at increased risk of domestic violence, physical and emotional abuse, and sexual assault. Job loss, unpaid bills, loss of a home, caring for the children, and the fear of not knowing where the next meal will come from puts added stress on already fragile lives and threatens to unravel the fabric of *thousands of families* in our community.

To whom will they turn for hope and support in these times of crisis? The YWCA of Silicon Valley. The same place that their grandmother turned to in the Great Depression. The same place that their mother turned to in the recession of the 70's. The YWCA.

Hundreds, even thousands, more women will reach out for the counseling, rape support and parent coping services provided by the YWCA – joining the over 20,000 women and families already served each year. Our services are in demand more than ever. We **MUST** have the resources to welcome every woman, child and family that needs help. We **MUST** have the capacity to serve everyone. We **CANNOT** turn anyone away!

Your local YWCA is committed to the women and families of our community – perhaps even your hairdresser that is coping with a troubled teen, your colleague who was raped in a dark parking lot or the soccer mom down the street who stresses the moment the car door slams as her husband returns from his daily job-seeking.

Your financial support to the YWCA today will give hope and support in **THIS** time of crisis to the women, children and families of our community. Your contribution, large or small, will allow your YWCA to do what we do best – have an open door to those in crisis.

“We met “Sally” at Valley Medical Center in the middle of the night. This beautiful young teenager had no physical evidence of the violent crime that she had experienced just hours ago but her eyes told the real story. Months earlier “Sally” had met someone on the internet. She believed him to be a boy close to her age sharing many of her interests. But once they met, things were not as they seemed. At the hospital, she was undergoing a forensic exam with police, nurses and our advocates there to support her. That night, we were able to give her new clothing and cleansing products after her exam which helped restore a measure of her dignity. And we took comfort in knowing that in the following days the counseling and advocacy of our center would begin to ease some of the shock, shame, and anger she was feeling.”---
YWCA Rape Crisis Center advocate.

“Maria” is a single mother of two (a 6 year-old and 10 year-old) and has her children enrolled in after-school care at one of our sites. She recently was laid-off from her job and was given very little severance. She came to the Child Care director and expressed how fearful she was that her kids might have to stay at home alone between the hours of 3pm-6pm while she looked for a job. Our Child Care director decided to utilize grant funds to keep her kids at the site while “Maria” looked feverishly for new employment. After six weeks, “Maria” found a job and was not longer in need of our grant funds. Thankfully, her kids remained safe and cared-for during the process. But due to the high demand for these emergency funds, we have exhausted our resources and are no longer able to help these families. What will happen to them if we can’t help?

“Gina” came to the YWCA for counseling shortly after leaving a physically and emotionally abusive partner. We serve approximately 1,000 counseling clients each year, 75% of whom are from households earning less than \$40,000 per year. “Gina” was ready to break the cycle of violence but recognized she could not do it alone. Her YWCA counselor listened to her, supported her, gave her tools, and through the skilled and tedious process, helped her move beyond her painful past so she could believe in herself again.

We have definitely seen the impact of the economic downturn on our clients and the increased need for our services. Because of this, we find ourselves needing *additional financial support* so that we can continue to provide women and their families with the tools necessary to build the life they want...and deserve. Your gift of financial support will have a *profound* affect on our ability not to turn anyone away.

Please make a contribution today to help women and children like “Sally”, “Maria” and “Gina”. We **can and will** help our less-fortunate neighbors survive these tough times so that our community as a whole remains a strong, vibrant and compassionate place for all of us to live and work.

Thank you in advance for your generous support.

Sincerely,



Keri Procnier McLain, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

P.S. Women and families *are* in crisis in our community, but with your financial contribution, large or small, the YWCA will provide them hope and support...and help them thrive. ***Please give today!***