



COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS' GILROY INNOVATORS COMMUNITY-BASED PREVENTION

A PROJECT FUNDED BY THE SANTA CLARA COUNTY OFFICE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION



PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE GILROY INNOVATORS IS A TEAM OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS DEDICATED TO CREATING A SAFER GILROY. THE INNOVATORS USED THE CLOSE TO HOME APPROACH TO DESIGN COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES AND SOLUTIONS TO PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE FROM HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY. ALL GENDERS; FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS; PROFESSIONALS AND POLITICIANS ALL COMBINE THEIR VOICE AND EFFORTS TO CREATE CHANGE TOGETHER.

The Close to Home Approach



OVERVIEW OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

36 ACTIVE YOUTH AND ADULT LEADERS THAT VOLUNTEERED 2,268 HOURS TO CREATE CHANGE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED OF THE CITY OF GILROY WITH 425 SURVEYS COLLECTED FROM GILROY RESIDENTS

126 ONE-ON-ONE AND 6 COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS WITH GILROY COMMUNITY MEMBERS

LAUNCH OF 2023 PREVENTION CAMPAIGN, "WITH COMMUNICATION THERE IS MORE CONNECTION" AT FAMILY FUN NIGHT WITH 692 ATTENDEES.

Findings from 2022 Gilroy Community Assessment

425 SURVEYS COLLECTED

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT WAS DEVELOPED, DISTRIBUTED, AND COLLECTED BY THE GILROY INNOVATORS YOUNG ADULT AND ADULT GROUPS. THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT IS TO UNDERSTAND OUR COMMUNITY'S PERSPECTIVES ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE. IN TOTAL WE HAD 425 ENGLISH AND SPANISH SURVEYS THAT WERE COLLECTED IN OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2022. THE MAJORITY OF THE RESPONDENTS IN THE SURVEY WERE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15-19 (31.8%) AND (26.8%) BETWEEN THE AGES OF 20-30. ADDITIONALLY, 63.7% OF THE RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS FEMALE. THE MAJORITY OF THE RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS HETEROSEXUAL (76.2%) AND WE HAD 23.8% OF INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED WITH OTHER ORIENTATIONS SUCH AS GAY, LESBIAN, PAN, ASEXUAL, BISEXUAL, ETC. THE MAJORITY OF THE RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS LATINX (79.6%), 8.5% AS WHITE, 4% ASIAN, 3.2% MULTIPLE RACES, 4.7% PREFERRED TO NOT RESPOND.

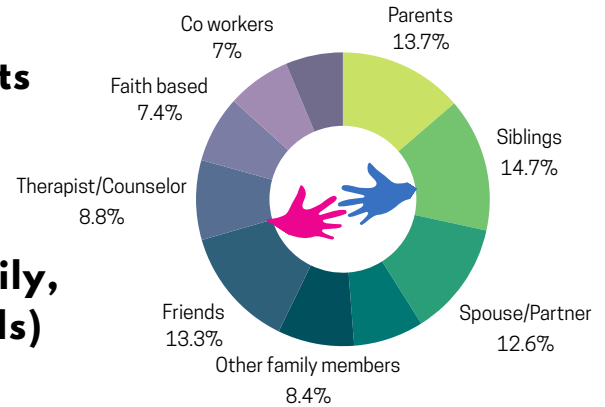


54%

of survey respondents believe domestic violence and sexual abuse happens a lot in their community

SEEKING SUPPORT

Survey respondents were asked "When I have challenges in my relationships (family, partners, or friends) I can talk to"



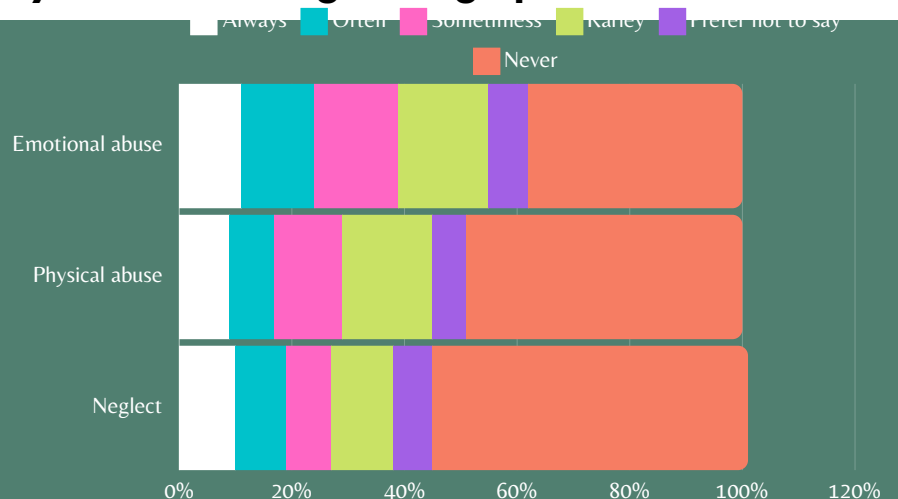
39% of respondents do feel comfortable reporting dv to police.

16% of respondents do not feel comfortable reporting DV to the police.

29%



of survey respondents experienced physical violence growing up.



We asked respondents, if they have ever experienced any of the following types of abuse?

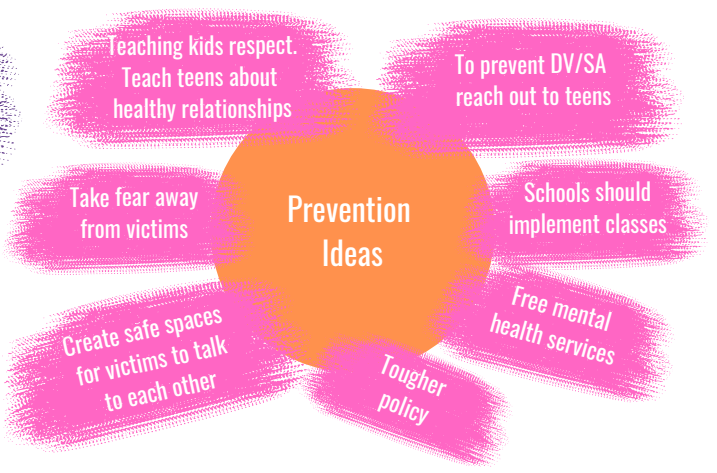
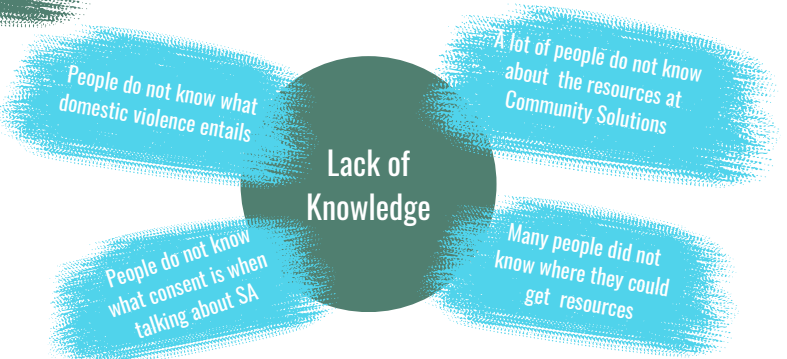
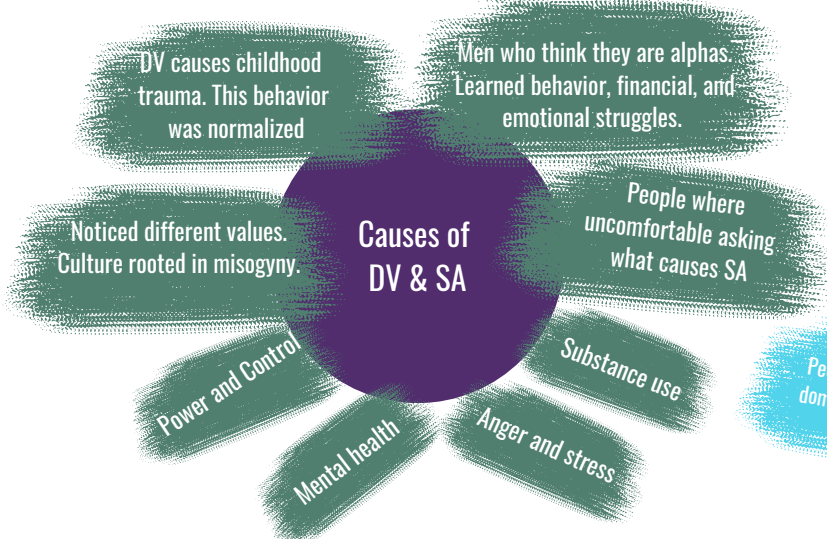
Voices from Gilroy's Community Conversations

6 COMMUNITY AND 126 ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS

THE GILROY INNOVATORS RECRUITED, PLANNED, AND HOSTED 6 CONVERSATIONS TO SHARE THE RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENTS, COLLECT INPUT FROM PARTICIPANTS ON THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE SURVEY RESULTS, AND COLLECT COMMUNITY IDEAS ON HOW TO PREVENT THESE ISSUES. YOUTH AND ADULT LEADERS DEVELOPED STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION USING ART OR COOKING TO RECRUIT COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONVERSATION. IN TOTAL THE INNOVATORS HOSTED 6 CONVERSATIONS REACHING 43 INDIVIDUALS.

ADDITIONALLY, EACH INNOVATOR IDENTIFIED MEMBERS OF THE GILROY COMMUNITY TO TALK WITH ONE-ON-ONE TO COLLECT INPUT FROM PARTICIPANTS ON THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE SURVEY RESULTS, AND COLLECT COMMUNITY IDEAS ON HOW TO PREVENT THESE ISSUES. THE INNOVATORS COMPLETED 126 ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS.

BELOW ARE CONCEPTS AND THEMES COLLECTED FROM ALL OF THE CONVERSATIONS AND 1:1'S:



DV causes childhood trauma. This behavior was normalized

Men who think they are alphas. Learned behavior, financial, and emotional struggles.

Noticed different values. Culture rooted in misogyny.

A lot of people do not know about the resources at Community Solutions

Many people have not witnessed DV/SA

Multiple people would not report it to police because it is time consuming and police won't take it seriously

People have different ideas of what abuse can be. This impacts the action they take.

FEAR: many people are afraid to talk about these issues, including victims

Teaching kids respect. Teach teens about healthy relationships

To prevent DV/SA reach out to teens

Take fear away from victims

Schools should implement classes

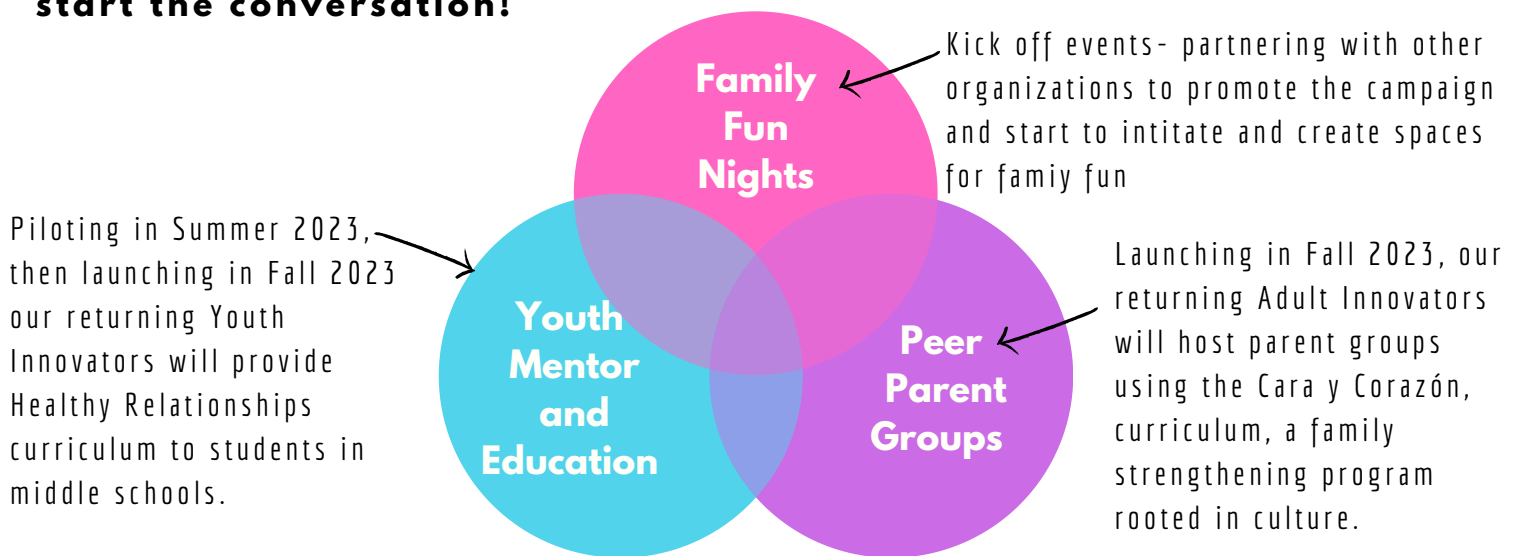
Create safe spaces for victims to talk to each other

Tougher policy

Free mental health services

#With Communication, there's more Connection!

We all have had different experiences in our lives which shape the way we interact with one another. Many of our community members have shared that talking about relationships can be hard because they may feel embarrassed, scared, or unsure how others may respond. But, we also know that most of our community members seek their friends and family first to get support or advice. Feeling connected to family, schools, and community can help reduce violence and improve mental health. With communication, there's more connection. Let's start the conversation!



Action Steps to Increase Your Communication!

- 1. Create time together:** Have family fun nights where you connect with one another by talking, playing games, and spending quality time. Disconnect from social media and connect with your family
- 2. Invest in learning:** Connect with other parents and youth to talk about relationships. There are amazing educational groups, workshops, and resources within the community. Lean in to learn new perspectives and skills that can open up new dialogues within your family.
- 3. Create a safe space to express emotions:** Violence can leave an impact on the family as a whole. Create safe spaces to express emotions as a family, listen without judgement, and develop positive healthy solutions together.
- 4. Lead with strengths:** Lift your friends and family up by reminding them of what makes them amazing, strong, and wonderful. Remind them of their worth and build up their self-image.

Successes of the Gilroy Innovators



92%

of Innovators felt that they have overcome the stigma around talking about sexual violence, and feel more comfortable talking to their community members about intimate partner abuse.

of Innovators have increased their skills in community organizing, increased connections with adults and other youth, and are more likely to take upstander actions against violence.

83%

87%

of Innovators have an increase to their knowledge that domestic violence is preventable.

Spotlighting the Programs Impact



26-year-old Carmen* had only been in the U.S. for a week and she was feeling “unstable, alone and a little confused.” She was struggling with not knowing how to communicate with people due to language barriers and cultural differences. Her aunt, who is a Promotora at Community Solutions, suggested she look into joining our Gilroy Innovators, a STV volunteer program.

At first, Carmen was very shy, quiet and always kept to herself. But as she attended the group’s weekly meetings, staff noticed that she began interacting with others, creating close friendships and feeling comfortable around the rest of the community members. Through the weekly meetings, participating in community assessments, holding community events, and attending workshops, Carmen has found a sense of community in the Gilroy Innovators, and even a second family. She now steps up to lead conversations and has even started attending college.

Carmen shares about her experience in the program: “After being involved in the program I see victims differently I do not judge them, I actually understand them on why victims do not leave due to fear and insecurity. I learned a lot of things; that domestic violence happens more often than we think and that until this day we have an issue on how to better and help how to decrease domestic violence. The amount of information I have learned and all the resources I have learned about can be helpful. Most importantly I found a family away from home. This program is a type of support to me because it helped me feel included in a community and culture, since I was new to the U.S. and this community. It has helped me be a part of the group, feel welcome, I found a family and no longer feel alone. I feel very content and comfortable to be a part of this group. There is no judgment and they always celebrate your virtues.”

*Note name changed to protect

Note from staff: “This conversation was conducted in Spanish and translated to English. Carmen is an immigrant from Venezuela and wants this story to be shared in order to help people who are undocumented feel included and know that even though we leave our whole family behind in our countries there are agencies like Community Solutions that welcome you. Not only is she creating change in her community but she also found a place with people to call family.”