Southwest Youth & Family Services partners with youth and families to transform futures.

Our Objectives

Children, youth and families in Southwest King County are able to overcome barriers to their success and sustainability caused by systemic and economic inequities through:

An equitable and inclusive community across all programs at SWYFS that promotes connection, community, and networking

Support to build on existing assets of:
Knowledge and skills – to develop and achieve personal goals around education, mental health, wellbeing and behavior, parenting, and self-sustainability

Hope – the perseverance and resilience to continue, despite challenges and barriers

Voice – a sense of agency to use their voice, and opportunities to be heard

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On behalf of all Southwest Youth & Family Services and those we are honored to partner with, thank you for your support.

The response of our community during difficult times this year has been encouraging. As fears rise and political forces create instability for our community, your support has responded with hope and connection, creating a safer and more inclusive environment within the walls of SWYFS. For nearly 40 years Southwest Youth and Family Services (SWYFS) has been providing critical services in under-resourced communities of Southwest King County, including Southwest Seattle, White Center, South Park, Burien, Tukwila, and SeaTac.

The growing divide of politics in 2017 deepened the oppression of our already vulnerable youth and families. Families in fear of separation, growing hatred on the streets, policy changes putting futures in jeopardy, all contributing to an existing structure of inequities that create barriers to success. In response, we have continued to grow and adapt to the changing landscape of the region while remaining dedicated to offering education, behavioral health, youth and family development services within a safe and culturally competent environment, and this past year has put us to the test.

As systemic racial and economic inequities continue to create significant barriers to communities of color across the nation, SWYFS remains committed to seeing our diverse community of South King County thrive. Increasing living costs across greater Seattle and the subsequent gentrification of historically diverse neighborhoods are driving low-income families and people of color to the suburbs of South King County.

Through your support, SWYFS has become a leading resource for low-income and vulnerable children, youth and families, supporting more than 2,465 individuals in 2017 with holistic, wrap-around services in the areas of education, youth development, behavioral health, and family advocacy.

Despite significant barriers and inequities, participants in SWYFS programs have tremendous assets and see great success. We are proud of the accomplishments of our youth and families and we ask you to join us in the celebration of these achievements.

In 2017
- 356 families received individual support and advocacy through our family resource center, including support around immigration issues and employment.
- 246 youth participated in violence prevention programs engaging in activities promoting a path of non-violence, including serving the greater community through food drives and clean-up projects.
- 244 toddlers and their parents gained skills preparing them for kindergarten through our Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP).
- 198 students found the support they needed to succeed in school through our year-long New Futures out-of-school time programs in three public housing complexes.
- 85 youth achieved goals for improving their mental health, with significant work around trauma-informed care through our Counseling Center.
- 12 students graduated with a diploma or GED, with another 114 achieving significant progress toward that goal through the Education Center.

We all should be proud of the barriers broken this year, but there is much more work to be done. Your dedication to this community is vital and we hope you’ll join our movement forward. Our communities have come so far, despite the barriers in place, it’s time we help them knock down those barriers for the next generation.

Thank you for your support and your commitment to a better, more equitable community for all.

Steve Daschle
Executive Director, SWYFS
WHO WE SERVE

In 2017, SWYFS served over 2,465 youth and families in Southwest King County. Participants in SWYFS programs are 61% children and youth, 92% people of color, 95% low-income (89% very low-income), and over 50% refugees and immigrants.

We believe when we all commit to equity and expanding knowledge, we can build a community of acceptance, belonging and hope where all families thrive.
We know students are more successful when their basic needs are met and they have a safe place to learn.

The Education Center provides supportive, culturally responsive alternative education programs for youth struggling to complete their education in the mainline education system. We have two classrooms in White Center, Delridge, and one GED classroom. The need is great with 21% of students in the Highline School District not graduating on time, and increasing for students of color with 24% of black students, 25% of Hispanic/Latino and 41% of English language learners not graduating on time.

In 2017, 12 students graduated with a diploma or GED, with another 114 achieving significant progress toward that goal. These students work with case managers to identify both academic needs and any additional services they may need, such as mental health services, violence prevention programs, and family support all available through SWYFS robust wrap-around programs.

Overcoming Challenges
by Edwin G., 2017 Summer Writers Workshop
How am I going to do this?
How should I do this?
What if I fail?
What should I do?
What can I do?
Is there a second chance?
Can I overcome these Challenges?
There is no other choice,
I have to and I will.
I will work hard to overcome these challenges.
I will have no fear.
I will succeed.
I am Success.
When I succeed, many people will be proud of me.
I will have things I could never get for myself.
I will do things for myself.
I will do things for myself and for the ones who helped me overcome these challenges.
I will be somebody.
Happiness will arrive.
Nothing will stop me.
**FAMILY ADVOCACY**

Despite increasingly unjust systems, our families stayed strong.

Our Family Advocates provide case management, act as cultural advocates, provide transportation and translation for school meetings to help parents maintain personal cultural identity, engage with youth and school administration, and navigate mainstream systems. SWYFS offers support and advocacy for families of all backgrounds, including those of Cambodian, Iraqi, Latino, and Somali descent. Additionally, the Family Resource Center has one advocate dedicated to supporting young parents ages 15-23.

Many families in King County are struggling to survive as the price of living is steadily increasing. The stresses of this are increased for the young parents who have yet to establish their place in society, for immigrants and refugee families who are navigating new and complicated systems or may be undocumented, or for vulnerable senior populations.

Every individual who walks through our doors receives information and connections to community services to help guide them on their path to success. This includes full access to SWYFS wrap-around programs, basic needs support, parenting classes, and more.

**Partner Profile**

As a recent immigrant and single mother, Dominga became a partner of Southwest through our Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP). Not long after joining the program, she was diagnosed with her third brain tumor. The PCHP staff and SWYFS Latinx advocate worked together to create an online page to raise money, connected her to Univision television network and the national Parent-Child Home Program shared her story at their conference in May 2018. Together they raised $380.00 for her family. Dominga continues to be a familiar face in our Family Resource Center. Her family regularly participates in Community Bingo to connect and access the resources provided. She continues her journey hopeful, forward-thinking, and thriving.
Trauma-informed care is at the forefront of our work.

The Counseling Center is a hub for behavioral health and youth violence prevention services in South King County. With the growing understanding that behavioral health services are as important to overall health care as physical health services, along with the recognition of the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), SWYFS integrates behavioral health services in their work with at-risk children, youth and families. The Counseling Center is staffed by child and family therapists, case managers and project specialists for the Seattle and King County Youth Violence Prevention programs.

Counselors use approaches that include art and drama therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, behavior modification and Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and violence prevention programs. Services are available in English and Spanish.

In 2017, 85 youth achieved goals for improving their mental health, with significant work around trauma-informed care.

Below is an excerpt from The Love For My Family by Jaliane M., a 2017 participant in our Summer Young Writers Workshop (The Boot) that includes group counseling support from SWYFS counselors to promote self-awareness and healing through writing:

"I love my brothers like a twin, when we are against the world, we will always win... Some of us didn’t have our fathers around to hold us. Is that a shame now that I see what life is like, it’s no game. We don’t get treated the same, so I guess we are gonna have to man up as a group and deal with that pain. I love u brothers."
What happens when youth take action and use their voice.

Through case management, quality out-of-school time programming, our summer writing workshop, and community field trips, participants have the opportunity to explore their world and their place in it. Our programs primarily engage youth of color in educational and socially enriching programs from a culturally responsive lens to develop confidence to navigate home and school cultures and promote academic success while supporting a strong racial ethnic cultural identity. There are significant academic disparities and barriers for youth of color, specifically low-income, Black and Latinx youth.

To help close this achievement gap for students of color, SWYFS New Futures programs provide the programs that revolve around resiliency, altruism, and potential:

**Resiliency:** A strong racial-ethnic and cultural identity is key to youths’ ability to overcome hardships and obstacles. Programs are designed to help youth be proud of their home culture and develop skills to thrive in the dominant American culture.

**Altruism:** Year-long leadership projects to develop youth voice and civic engagement

*Leadership Projects:* Youth-led projects centered on community organizing, fundraising, and cultural events. This year included, “Break the Bars” panel consisting of formerly incarcerated individuals and May Day March for immigrant families.

**Potential:** Academic and skill development

*Academic Support:* Year-long academic enrichment programs including individual tutoring/mentoring, intensive literacy/math support, field trips, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Art and Math) activities that take place within the KCHA complexes where students live. Instructors are from the community, understand the barriers students of color face and are trained in trauma-informed care.

246 youth engaged in activities promoting a path of non-violence, including serving the greater community through food drives and clean-up projects.
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Thank you to all our community supporters! Please inform and forgive us for any mistakes or omissions.
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