



## Santa Cruz County Community Corrections Partnership Shared Safety Workgroup Summary of Activities 2017-2024

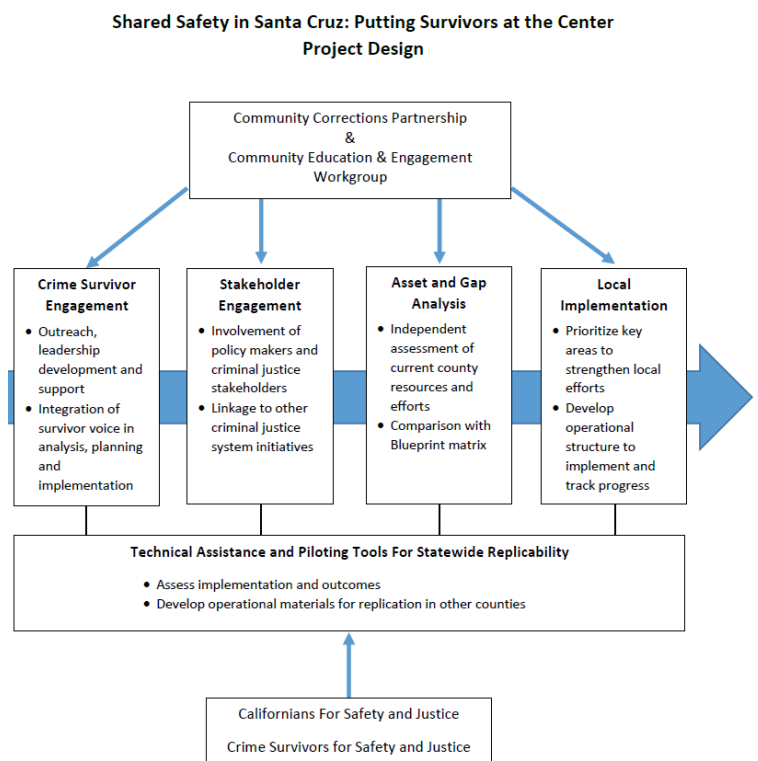
### Background

In November of 2017, the Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee voted to support the Santa Cruz County Blueprint for Shared Safety Project. The Committee determined that the first phase of the project would include an Asset and Gap Analysis of SCC's alignment with the five Shared Safety principles and a simultaneous multi-faceted process to meaningfully engage crime survivors in this effort (which is consistent with one of the Shared Safety principles).



Early 2018, the Community Corrections Partnership Community Education & Engagement Workgroup began the Shared Safety effort. Santa Cruz County sought to be one of the first counties in California to operationalize the [Blueprint for Shared Safety](#), developed by [Californians for Safety and Justice](#) (CSJ) to advance a cultural shift in the way local communities understand, invest in, evaluate, and achieve community safety.

Building upon a strong partnership between government and community organizations, Santa Cruz County prepared to launch an honest assessment of the county's alignment with the Shared Safety framework. Recognizing that crime survivors were not currently at the center of Santa Cruz County's efforts, the county and its partners were determined to develop strategies to meaningfully engage crime survivors from the outset of this project and to put their authentic voice at the center of Shared Safety in Santa Cruz Co. In addition to its value in Santa Cruz Co., this project created an important opportunity for Californians for Safety and Justice to support and document the implementation of Shared Safety in a community where there is not a pre-existing organized presence of crime survivors, making it a replicable model for counties across California.



From January 2018 to October 2019, utilizing [Californians for Safety and Justice's Blueprint for Shared Safety](#) framework, SCC Community Corrections Partnership Community Education and Engagement Workgroup (CEEW) conducted a strategic planning process. Because the Blueprint for Shared Safety model is quite extensive, the CEEW recognized early on that it needed to prioritize a focus area for the gap analysis and later prioritized recommendations. In early 2018, the CEEW decided to focus on the Crime Survivors at the Center pillar for the first phase of the Blueprint Project.

In 2020 the Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee voted to approve the [Santa Cruz County Shared Safety: Survivors at the Center Report](#).

**Santa Cruz County Shared Safety Goals:**

1. Prioritize Healing & Restoration for Crime Survivors
2. Ensure Access to Trauma Recovery Services
3. Engage Crime Survivors to Prioritize & Elevate their Voices
4. Strengthen Trust & Confidence in the Criminal Justice System
5. Recognize Who is Most Vulnerable

**Current Shared Safety Workgroup agencies include:**

- CASA
- Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County
- Conflict Resolution Center of Santa Cruz County District
- County of Santa Cruz County Administrative Office
- County of Santa Cruz District Attorney's Office
- County of Santa Cruz Probation Department
- County of Santa Cruz Public Defender's Office
- County of Santa Cruz Sheriff's Office
- Encompass Community Services
- Mayeda Consulting
- Monarch Services
- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance
- Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos
- Santa Cruz County United for Safety and Inclusive Communities (SCCUSIC)
- United Way of Santa Cruz County
- Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center



## Turning the Shared Safety Survivors at the Center Report into Action

## Restorative Justice

On November 1, 2018, in partnership with Smart on Crime, the CEEW Forum on Restorative Justice. This forum brought some of the nation's foremost experts on restorative justice to SCC to raise awareness about the advantages of this approach to criminal justice decision-making and to stimulate discussion about whether and how to implement restorative justice practices at the local level. Over 175 community members attended the event, with over 50 community leaders representing community, education, government, health, and justice sectors attending the pre-event reception.

*November 1st  
Community Forum on  
Restorative Justice*

Results from a post-event survey conducted among forum attendees included the following:

- 100% of survey respondents indicated that they either agree or strongly agree that restorative justice can serve victims better than traditional models.
- 96% of respondents indicated that they either agree or strongly agree that restorative justice can promote accountability.
- 93% of respondents indicated that they either agree or strongly agree that restorative justice can be effective at reducing recidivism and preserving public safety.

Media coverage can be found at the following sites:

- Santa Cruz Sentinel:  
<https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2018/10/30/expert-panel-explores-restorative-justice-for-santa-cruz/>
- City on the Hill: <http://www.cityonahillpress.com/2018/11/09/restoring-justice>
- Univision:  
<https://noticiasya.com/monterey-salinas/2018/11/01/video-programa-de-justicia-restaurativa-esta-dando-resultados/>

As a result of the Forum, representatives from the District Attorney's and County Administrative Offices conducted a site visit to the San Francisco Neighborhood Courts program. The site visit prompted them to include the Neighborhood Courts model in a funding application under the State's Proposition 47 Grant Program for which SCC was awarded almost six million dollars over a four and a half year period.

## Santa Cruz County Neighborhood Courts

Neighborhood Courts program started in December 2020, and since then, over 200 participants have been part of this restorative initiative to address the harms within our community. We've trained 66 volunteers from the community in communication skills, restorative justice principles, and other relevant topics. Currently, we host three conferences every week, supported by an active team of 54 dedicated volunteers. Our capacity has consistently expanded, evolving from

handling 12 types of offenses to addressing a diverse range of 56 offenses, which now includes minor felonies. We are continuing this program with another 3 year period grant that started 2023.



**Santa Cruz County Strategic Plan:** At the same time as the CEEW had been working on the SCC Shared Safety project, the County was undergoing a strategic planning process. The CEEW's collaborative work with the County Administrative Office, the Probation Dept. and the District Attorney's Office led to the inclusion of shared safety and survivor services in the plan goals and the SCC Strategic Operational Plan, under the area of Comprehensive Health & Safety.

#### County of Santa Cruz - Operational Plan Objectives

Operational Plan Year	Objective #	Description	Completion Status
2019-21	157	Crime Survivors- By June 2021, the District Attorney will create an outreach program to educate the community and law enforcement about the effects of criminal activity and prosecution on crime survivors.	Completed December 2021
2019-21	158	Neighborhood Courts- By June 2020, the District Attorney will complete a feasibility study for operating a neighborhood court to use restorative justice principles to resolve low level criminal offenses.	Completed December 2020
2019-21	162	Survivor Services- By June 2021, Probation will establish three standard practices or protocols that will increase the level of support provided for survivors of crime.	Completed June 2021
2023-25	380	Neighborhood Court - By December 2023, the District Attorney Neighborhood Court Program will implement a pilot program in collaboration with Watsonville Police Department and the Public Defender to focus more on South County, increasing the number of Spanish speaking conferences by 10 percent and holding conferences in the geographic locations where incidents occurred.	In Progress
2023-25	385	Survivor Services - By June 2024, the District Attorney will reduce the time between a crime	In Progress

		incident and outreach to survivors by 10 percent to ensure access to services, including exploration of a Family Justice/Survivor Center model.	
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**2018-2020 Informal Service Provider Feedback Convenings:** As perspectives shifted about the value and importance of elevating survivor voices, several CEEW members conducted small internal convenings with current and former clients to learn more about what worked and what didn't in terms of the service delivery of their organizations.

**2018-2020 Culture Shifts and Working Together Differently:** Though hard to measure, CEEW members reported small shifts they have made since participating in the SCC Blueprint for Shared Safety Project. For example, every organization has indicated that they have changed language from "victim" to "survivor" and have increased the normalization of asking survivors what they need to heal. Organizations have also mentioned an increase in overall mindfulness of client needs and sensitivity to crime survivors. New partnerships have stemmed out of the CEEW, both in terms of partnering on collaborative grants as well as resource referrals. More and more, we are hearing about an increase in support for restorative justice practices from judges, district attorneys and service providers.

**Templates for Other Counties:** Californians for Safety and Justice worked with Santa Cruz County to identify ways to support communities who want to meaningfully engage crime survivors with the goal of developing some common practices and tools that can be replicated and shared. There are two documents that were developed as a part of the SCC Shared Safety asset-gap analysis process: 1) a [template for conducting focus groups/listening/community engagement sessions with local crime survivors](#) and 2) [an overview of key considerations for engaging crime survivors in a meaningful and trauma-informed manner](#). While these templates can be helpful to other communities, particularly those where there is not a pre-existing grassroots network of crime survivors, some of the take-aways with respect to replicating what was done in Santa Cruz County include: there is not (and should not be) a one-size fits-all way to meaningfully engage crime survivors; a commitment to being trauma-focused is critical; outreach requires one-on-one engagement as well as safe places for peers to convene; differing opinions about how to engage survivors who have also caused harm must be addressed; and this work must be done as part of a broader commitment to racial equity. Santa Cruz County was deeply committed to addressing each of these areas and still the work was slow and challenging.

**[Santa Cruz County Victims' Service Utilization Data 18/19:](#)** In 2020 CEEW attempted to collect existing victims service data. By collectively analyzing Santa Cruz County victims' utilization data, there is potential to: establish baseline data as we move forward the Shared Safety Report: Survivors at the Center (2020); allow us 1) ask better questions and improve data-driven decision-making; 2) increase resources/revenue; and 3) identify who is and is not accessing services. One thing to note, over 50% of survey respondents indicated that they



serve victims, but do not collect data on victim service utilization. This tells us that we need to explore the barriers for organizations in collecting data.

**Trauma Informed Leadership Training: Better Meeting the Needs of Survivors of Crime training:** Based on the recommendations outlined in the Santa Cruz County Blueprint for Shared Safety: Survivors at the Center Phase 1 report (2020), United Way of Santa Cruz County reached out to the Office for Victims of Crime to request support in delivering a 1-day training on trauma-informed leadership and trauma-informed organizations on September 25, 2020. The goal was to have approximately 50 participants in supervisory or leadership roles from law enforcement, probation, prosecution, public defenders, community-based advocates, and system-based advocates are expected to attend.

- [report](#)
- recording: <https://ovcttac.adobeconnect.com/pwhw5uf2d90n>
- some actions that stemmed from training:
  - Superior Courts Trauma-Informed Systems memo/plan
  - District Attorney's Office Trauma-Informed Care/Vicarious Trauma training

## YOUTH WELL-BEING & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Due to the recent events of violence in South County and a call to action from the Watsonville Police Department, United Way of Santa Cruz County convened a group of community leaders to collectively check in with youth. They checked-in with youth about their well-being, resources they might need, and their ideas about creating community safety.

*"Data was collected through self-reporting qualitative interviews between program coordinators and youth and/or families. The questions were posed as open-ended where United Way Staff then themed and coded the responses."*

Report: [Winter 2021 Watsonville Youth/Family Wellness/ Safety Check-ins](#)

**February 3, 2021 Shared Safety Community Forum:** In a commitment to engaging the broader community with the Shared Safety efforts, the CEEW hosted a virtual community forum. The objectives identified by the CEEW were to:

1. engage the broader community with the Shared Safety Framework;
  2. create a space for community members to see their role in Shared Safety;
  3. create a sense of energy and excitement in the community around Shared Safety;
  4. elevate the voices of those with lived-experience; put survivors at the center; and
  5. highlight what has been done so far, where the Shared Safety work is going, and ways to get involved.
- [report](#)
  - recording: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_zgJs8mZAs&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_zgJs8mZAs&feature=youtu.be)

### **Strengthening trust between Survivors and Law Enforcement**

#### **April 2021 Watsonville Shared Safety Community Dialogues:**

The CEEW, Santa Cruz County Youth Action Network, United Way's United 4 Youth, and others partnered with COPA to host two April Watsonville Shared Safety Community Dialogues (or as COPA refers to them, House Meetings).

Information gathered was shared with the [Watsonville Ad Hoc Committee on Policing & Social Equity](#). For more information, see the [report](#).

Other Watsonville Police Department efforts that were impacted by the collective Shared Safety efforts:

- [Watsonville's Multi-Disciplinary Team](#)
- Why'd you stop me? Training

**Victim Financial Restitution:** Since December of 2020, representatives from the District Attorney's Office, Probation, Public Defender's Office, the Courts, Volunteer Center, and Conflict Resolution Center have been meeting on an ad hoc basis to grapple with gaps and barriers in the victim's restitution process. The purpose of the ad hoc committee is to: 1) strategize on ways to streamline court ordered restitution process; 2) reduce barriers & gaps for survivors; increase access to financial restitution for victims; and 3) increase clarity on who is doing what.

During the course of the discussions, it has been reported that communications between the District Attorney's Office (DAO) and Probation have "increased exponentially". The DAO and Probation have conducted multiple in-service trainings and are exploring embedding restitution in-services into the training curriculum for new staff. Additionally, representatives from the ad hoc committee presented to the criminal judges. The judges have requested reminders about restitution review hearings.

**Name change from Community Education and Engagement Workgroup to Shared Safety Workgroup:** In 2021 the CEEW decided to change the name of the workgroup to better reflect the focus of the collaborative. The workgroup chose the name Shared Safety Workgroup (SSW).

### **Shared Safety Round Table with California Attorney General Rob Bonta**

The California Attorney General's Office of Community Awareness, Response, and Engagement reached out to organize a special session with Attorney General Rob Bonta and Shared Safety Workgroup representatives that work specifically on issues impacting young survivors. 12 Shared Safety Workgroup representatives attended, including Walnut Ave., Family & Women's Center, Conflict Resolution Center, DAO, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Monarch Service, Encompass, CASA, Community Action Board, Public Defender's Office, Probation, Children's Behavioral Health, Barrios Unidos and United Way.



SSW members answered the questions: What is a critical issue impacting young survivors you serve and what is your organization doing to address it? Themes included:

- intersectionality of victimization, connection between child welfare system & juvenile justice system;
- the relationship between victimization & committing harm;
- impacts of trauma & the need for mental health providers;
- struggles around poverty & housing;
- disturbing trends on increasing rates of sexual assault;
- challenges of parental consent needed for restraining orders; and
- barriers the complexity of the system presents & mistrust of that system

### **System Navigation**

As the SSW engaged survivors of crime, Workgroup members frequently heard how challenging and complex navigating the survivor-serving system is. 2022-2023 the Shared Safety Workgroup (SSW) partnered with the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) to conduct a system mapping process for Santa Cruz County's survivor serving system. This process built off of the data that had already been collected through the [Survivors at the Center report \(2020\)](#) development process and the recent Survivor System Mapping Workshops (Feb. & Mar. 2022).

The goals of the System Mapping Project included:

- Short-term: Increase provider and survivor knowledge of resources available and how to navigate the survivor serving system (justice & non-justice)
- Intermediate: Increase utilization of survivor resources
- Long-term: increase survivor wellbeing & community safety

The SSW hoped to develop a visual *system map* and *flowchart* that reflected how individuals move through the local survivor-serving system, including various entry points within that system. SSW planned to explore ways to map out resources and navigation processes related to: criminal justice, legal services, education, health, psychosocial supports, child welfare/family & children's services, shelter, financial resources, various non-profits, as well as alternatives to the traditional criminal justice system (e.g. restorative justice).

SSW also wanted to include components of the resources and processes, such as: referrals, eligibility criteria, costs, waitlists, language and geographic access, availability of transportation and childcare, as well as the types of crimes and ages that the resources address.

The SSW learned that not only had survivor of crime system mapping never taken place in Santa Cruz County, but through extensive outreach efforts through state and national-level survivor and justice organizations, it appeared that there is no knowledge of another community successfully mapping out a local survivor-serving system.

The SSW and the OVC TTAC consultant attempted various working sessions to map out the survivor-system. Major take-aways included:



- The following occurred during the system mapping process:

- [illegible]

1. What happens when you call 911 ([ENG/ESP](#))
2. Court Processes: ([ENG/ESP](#))
3. [Restorative Justice](#)

Additionally, the SSW decided to explore a client-facing interactive tool that sorts and presents resources and pathways from a database of local survivor-serving system resources. The 211survivorsofcrime.org webpage is connected on the back end to <https://www.211santacruzcounty.org/>. The goal of the webpage is to ensure the survivor and service providers have access to detailed and comprehensive information for referrals and available resources handpicked for the individual in need of support.



Trauma Recovery Centers (TRC) are one-stop shops that provide victims of crime wide-ranging support through their recovery process. TRCs were developed to address the needs of underserved crime survivors (street violence, low income, younger victims, people who are homeless, LGBTQ+ victims, communities of color, members of migrant & refugee groups, chronically mentally ill, minors who have contact with juvenile dependency or justice system).

Trauma Recovery Centers reduce barriers to services and have the ability to serve victims impacted by multiple crimes, who have various needs. TRCs also support navigating the process of healing from trauma by providing therapy, trauma informed flexible care, care coordination, advocacy, and psychiatry. In addition, they assist survivors in navigating the criminal justice system more effectively. This includes filling out paperwork, connecting them to legal services, explaining court proceedings, and more. These services are more likely to prevent revictimization and break the cycles of crime.

The SSW has explored the TRC model in the following ways:

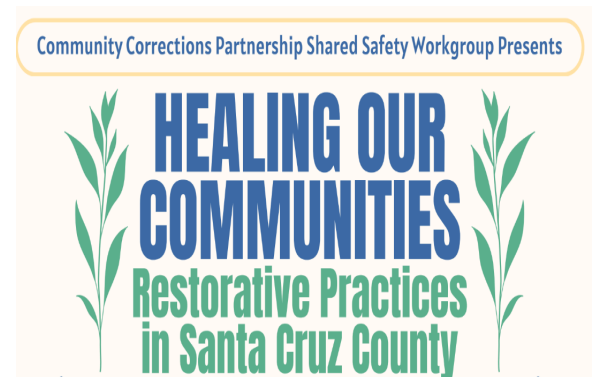
- attended virtual and in-person presentations
- met with representatives from the [National Alliance for Trauma Recovery Centers](#)
- conducted virtual site visits to learn about the various TRC Models:
  - September 14, 2023 - Alameda County Family Justice Center
  - October 11, 2022 - Citilookout, Ohio
  - October 18, 2022 - The HUBB, New Jersey

Recently a subcommittee has been formed to explore readiness for a TRC and will develop and present recommendations to the SSW Spring 2024.

### **Restorative Practices**

April 25, 2024, the SSW hosted *Healing our Communities Restorative Practices in Santa Cruz County*. It was a transformational event. Over 80 community members and system leaders attended, ranging from policy makers to grassroots community. The objectives of the forum were to:

1) clarify the distinction between restorative justice programs and restorative practices, emphasizing their significance; 2) showcase existing restorative justice and practice models; 3) provide a platform for lived experience experts to share their experiences with restorative justice; and 4) foster community dialogues about opportunities to enhance restorative justice in the community. The forum included spoken word & poetry, a land acknowledgement, overviews on restorative practices and justice, a legislative overview of AB60, a panel of those that have been harmed and participated in restorative justice processes, community table conversations, and a resource fair.



- [ppt from the event](#)
- Restorative Practices: [Transcript](#) from Ben Alamillo's presentation on Restorative Practices
- Community Table Conversations: [transcribed notes](#)
- Sentinel Article: [Summit Unveils Restorative Justice in Santa Cruz County](#)

Of the post-event survey responses:



- 92% indicated that the forum increased their understanding of the distinction between restorative practices and restorative justice, where 8% indicated they were already familiar with the distinction.
- 87.5% indicated that because of the forum, they are more familiar with existing restorative practice programs and approaches in Santa Cruz County, where 12.5% indicated they were already familiar with existing practices.

## **NEXT STEPS**

**System Navigation:** Outreach campaign for [211survivorsofcrime.org](https://211survivorsofcrime.org) and infographics: distribute physical infographics & [211survivorsofcrime.org](https://211survivorsofcrime.org) to service providers, share with various collaboratives, share through newsletters and upload on websites

**Trauma Recovery Center:** A summary of the outcomes from the TRC Subcommittee will be presented to the Shared Safety Workgroup in May 2024.

**Victim Restitution:** the Ad Hoc Committee will continue to meet to focus on key areas of system improvement. Sasha Morgan, Executive Director of the Superior Courts will take over meeting facilitation.