



# CHANGING LIVES

*The newsletter for the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center*



Working in tiny quarters during construction hasn't cramped the style of the Resource Center team as they swiftly adapt to the changing needs of the community.

## INNOVATIVE STAFF CREATES BIG IDEAS IN SMALL SPACES

When construction began on the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center last September, staff moved from a 1,600-square-foot building to one small room and a 1969 Shasta camp trailer. A few power outages, lack of privacy and an emerging health crisis taught them to be flexible and value teamwork, said Executive Director Jennifer Armstrong. "Many thanks to our staff for going above and beyond in mobilizing quickly to get islanders the help they need in the safest way possible," she said.

Staff and volunteers have proven to be resilient as they continue to devise new ways to serve the community, and are working closely with the San Juan County COVID-19 task force to coordinate efforts. In accordance with recommended health protocols, clients are not allowed inside the makeshift spaces, and appointments are handled remotely. Phone outreach has expanded, and website and social media content is updated regularly.

"We still have much more to do in the coming months as we work to support our community's stability, health and emotional well-being in the face of unprecedented challenge," said Jennifer. "We are grateful to every one of you who are helping to make that happen."

**Good news:** Construction of the newly expanded facility is on track for summer occupancy.



# SERVICES CHANGE TO MEET NEW NEEDS

To meet growing community needs during the COVID-19 crisis, the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center has created new programs or adapted existing services. Here are a few offerings:



## Home delivery system

The Resource Center set up a safe, responsive delivery system for highly vulnerable islanders without family or social support networks. San Juan Island School District provides buses and drivers to help staff deliver food bank items, household cleaning and hygiene supplies, prescription medications, groceries, children's books and educational enrichment activities.



## Emergency financial assistance

To meet growing financial needs, disbursements began in March to help islanders pay rent and utilities. This was made possible through Resource Center funds and partnerships with San Juan County, San Juan Island Community Foundation, OPALCO and the Town of Friday Harbor.



## Emotional needs

The Resource Center sponsored a series of webinars for frontline health workers and emergency responders as well as the community at large. These online seminars covered ways to cope in high stress situations.



## 36 Weekends program

This program, which supplies food for children on weekends, was in place when the crisis began to evolve. When needs doubled, the San Juan Island Rotary Club and private donors stepped up with funds for ongoing support. Weekly deliveries are going out to 49 children.



## Counseling services

People can still participate in the income-based counseling program from the safety of their homes through video and phone conferencing. SafeCare Home Visiting, which provides parenting support for families with young children, is also accessible from home.

If you would like to support these ongoing programs, please:



<https://www.sjfrc.org/donate>

# HOME DELIVERY COMES IN HANDY

San Juan islanders Simeon LaRiviere (pictured at right) and Mollie Heath have been setting a great example by staying home to keep themselves and the community healthy. To make that possible, they have been receiving deliveries of critical supplies via the Resource Center's new home delivery service (see above). "We look forward to this bag every week," said Simeon. "It really helps us get by since we didn't stockpile items. I think the way we're going to get through this is to remember how important it is to share."



## MEET DELPHINA



Welcome to our newest staff member, Delphina Liles (pictured above in the bunny ears)! She is heading up the San Juan Island Youth Mentor Program for elementary and middle school students, and launching the First Generation Mentoring Program, which will pair high school juniors with mentors who will support them through their first year of post-secondary education.

Delphina connects and supports mentors and mentees, plans quarterly events both for fun and to give back to the community and is developing workshops on topics such as finances and cooking to teach life skills not covered in school. She is also bilingual. With a strong background in youth programs, nutrition, garden education and social work, her first love is all about helping young people.

“These kids are so lovely,” she said. “I want to make sure they know what’s out there for them, and that they get the affirmation they need to go after it.”

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, Delphina has been quick to adapt her programs to include texting, video conferencing and phone calls. But she also saw another opportunity. “People are turning more to technology out of necessity, and we wanted to embrace other healthy ways of communicating,” she said. “We recently launched a “Snail Mail” campaign. A mentor drops an art package on their mentee’s front porch, and youths make postcards to begin a mail exchange with their mentors. It has been a lot of fun!”

*New mentors are needed. For more information about Zoom mentoring groups, activity ideas and helpful hints for staying healthy at home, go to [sjifrc.org](http://sjifrc.org), call 360-378-5246 or call Delphina Liles directly at 360-252-0621.*

### STAFF

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## ISLANDERS SHARE SKILLS ONLINE

A new program called *Friday Harbor LIVE* allows islanders to show what they know via Facebook Live. The idea, created by Val Curtis with funding and support from the Family Resource Center and San Juan Island Community Foundation, was to create a space where islanders can share their skills, talents and stories with kids of all ages.

After the school day is over, caregivers can enjoy some downtime while the kids learn something new,” said Val. “It’s also a way for islanders who are feeling isolated due to the quarantine to reach out, and to build a bridge between community members and youth.”

Here are a few programs to date: Trish Lehman taught watercolor. Julie Duke led a tour of Island Haven Animal Sanctuary, and Rene Beachem taught kids how to make their own granola bars.

Anyone can join. Go to [facebook.com/fridayharborlive](https://facebook.com/fridayharborlive) to watch the latest videos live, weekdays at 3:30 PM. Want to volunteer or have ideas? Fill out a sign up form at [bit.ly/fridayharborlive](https://bit.ly/fridayharborlive).

# STAY SAFE AT HOME

## Services can be delivered online and to your door

The staff at the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center is dedicated to providing new and adapted services so that you can remain safely in your own home. For more information, see inside.

### Home delivery system

Food and supplies are delivered to vulnerable people.

### 36 Weekends program

Food for children is delivered on weekends.

### Counseling services

Counseling and parenting support is available through live, remote sessions.

### Emotional needs

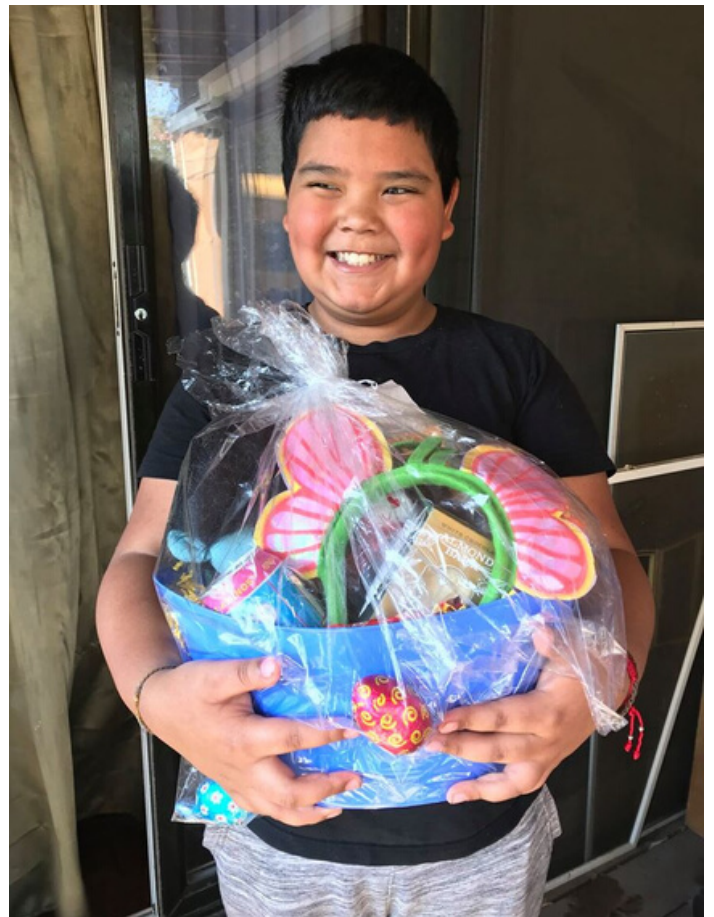
Webinars offer ways to cope during a stressful time.

### Emergency financial assistance

Islanders receive help covering rent and utilities.

### NEW: Friday Harbor Live

Islanders share skills and stories with local children via live videos.



Special thanks to Peace Island Medical Center volunteers for helping the Resource Center bring some Easter happiness to our local kids.



## How Can I Help Today?

The following items are needed:

- New books for children ages 1-14
- Household cleaning and hygiene supplies
- Grocery store and gasoline gift cards
- Kings receipts!



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<https://www.sjifrc.org/donate>