



JOYCE L. SOBEL
**Family
Resource
Center**
CHANGING LIVES



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

A Letter From Our Director

When the phone rings at the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center, there are usually two reasons why. A community member either needs help meeting their basic needs or is interested in joining one of our ongoing enrichment programs. Our goal at the Family Resource Center is to respond to both-meeting islanders where they're at today and tomorrow.



Three major programs that blossomed at the Family Resource Center in 2023 echo this dual focus. The San Juan Island Childcare Cooperative and the New Day Recovery Café offer education and training for adults as well as a dedicated space for each. Because of a generous grant in 2023, the Latinx healthcare access program is expanding across San Juan County to build health equity and empower marginalized community members to have a strong collective voice. All three programs depend on peers - trusted and respected islanders who live and work beside the neighbors they're helping.

A special thanks to our volunteers, donors, and staff who make our programs and services possible. Our impact in the community is because of you. A sincere thanks also to the people who have turned to the Family Resource Center in their time of need. We are here for you.

This annual report offers an overview of the programs and aid we offer. For more details, please visit our new website that launched in 2024 or stop by the Family Resource Center to say hello. We welcome your voice and input anytime.

With gratitude,

Jennifer Armstrong

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gay Graham, *President*
Tillie Sherman, *Vice President*
Lorraine Littlewood, *Treasurer*
Carol Maas, *Secretary*
Marty Huleatte, *Chair Emeritus*
Kathy Briar-Lawson
Beth Helstien
Karol McLuen
Jim Richardson
Dave Zeretzke

FUNDRAISING CHAIRS

Maureen See
Traci Wilson

JLSFRC STAFF

Jennifer Armstrong, *Executive Director*
Heather Belt, *Administrative Support*
Mary Blevins, *Energy Assistance Specialist*
Tammy Borland, *Youth Services Coordinator*
Colleen Clancy, *Island Neighbors Coordinator*
Steph Coffey, *Finance Manager*
Jen DeShon, *Parent-to-Parent Coordinator*
Adriana Gonzalez, *Community Health Worker*
Lupe Guerrero, *Office Assistant*
Melissa Hope, *Services Director*
Gail Leschine-Seitz, *Housing Support Specialist*
Sophia Lyles, *Youth Programs Coordinator*
Haley Olmos, *Assistant Teacher SJICC*
Carmen Orozco, *Office Manager*
Petra Ramos, *Parent-to-Parent Bilingual Support*
Jamie Rice, *Kindergarten Transitions Coordinator*
Yubi Schollmeyer, *Case Manager/Community Health*
Ashley Strutz, *0-5 Programs Coordinator*
Mary Uri, *Peer Support Specialist*
Wendy Waxman Kern, *Director of Programs*



Mission

The Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center provides resources, advocacy, help and education for all islanders to be healthy, safe and productive.

Vision

We are a welcoming community where respect for human dignity means needs are met, and all have opportunities to contribute, thrive and reach their true potential.

Snapshot of our work

Since Joyce L. Sobel held her first parent-child playgroup in 1998, the Family Resource Center has greatly expanded who we serve and how we help. Enrichment continues to be a main focus of the education and training programs we provide, while helping islanders meet their basic needs is the focus of our concrete aid and behavioral health services.

As the needs of islanders have evolved, so has the Family Resource Center. Services are offered in English and Spanish to islanders of all ages, from birth through their elder years. We encourage peer support and community partnerships to connect islanders to the support they need. Through it all, our goal has remained the same: to empower islanders and help build a healthier tomorrow.



Table of Contents

Enrichment programs	3-4
Services to meet basic needs	5-6
Financials	7

Enrichment programs

At the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center, enrichment means adding to the resources islanders already have. It means encouraging hands-on learning and social connections. And it means nurturing positive relationships—between families and youth, between youth and their peers, and between families and other families.

Below is a snapshot of the enrichment programs we offer and some of their shining moments in 2023.

DREAMING BIG



"It's been a privilege to be part of Dream Big and see the amazing work happening."

You're never too young to express yourself in a healthy way. And healthy expression always starts the same, at least in the Dream Big mentoring program.



At the doors of the elementary school, a Family Resource Center staff person greets kindergarteners through fifth graders that are part of the program and tasks them with their first challenge. Which route do they want to walk today? A decision is reached together.

Back in the playroom at the Family Resource Center, new challenges arise. Who wants to help with the snack menu? Whose turn is it to read to Ferdie the Reading Dog? The mentoring program is full of fun—singing in Spanish, jumping rope, and exploring new books. But learning rules and patience is an important part of the fun. So is learning to name an emotion and how to express it.



Soon it's time to say goodbye. Soon it's time to plan another day of fun, another activity that changes as kids change to help them grow and thrive.



35

Big dreamers practicing their emotions with the Dream Big mentoring program



58

Home visits for incoming kindergarteners in summer 2023



10

One-on-one mentor pairs learning and growing together

“Children are more likely to thrive when their families have the support they need.”

A strong community starts with strong families. Many of our enrichment programs focus on building strong families and helping little ones launch into their early years by putting their best little foot forward. Other programs teach valuable life skills and foster a sense of belonging for youth.



DEVELOP

Infants and toddlers are at the center of Rain or Shine playgroups, Toddler Teatime, and Baby and Toddler Storytime. Through these programs, they build friendships and develop valuable social and emotional skills. Home visits and play therapy help children and their families nurture healthy habits and transition into preschool and kindergarten.

The San Juan Island Childcare Cooperative fills a much-needed gap in affordable local childcare. Parents and teachers provide high-quality preschool readiness for infants and toddlers, and parents earn tuition-free college credit in child development. The cooperative is run in partnership with the Skagit Valley College Cooperative Preschool Program.

SUPPORT

Strengthening Families is all about learning. Parents and caregivers learn to set limits with love. Youth ages 10–14 learn to express their feelings in healthy ways. Together, families learn to decrease conflict and build a network of resilience and support with other families.

Personal support from parents by parents is a valuable resource. Our Grandparents Support Group, Parent-to-Parent support group, and Virtual Mom Village connect caregivers who face similar challenges to share knowledge and a sense of understanding.



ACHIEVE

Building leadership skills and disability advocacy are at the heart of YAAS!, a lively group of islanders with disabilities, ages 17 and older. A nationally accredited disability mentoring group, YAAS! is out in the community, teaching, learning, and celebrating with their neighbors.

The transition from high school to college can be especially challenging for students who are the first in their family to pursue higher education. The first-generation mentoring program guides these students through each step, from selecting a college and preparing for scholarship interviews and applications, to scheduling classes, and creating a budget.



Many programs we offer didn't fit in the short space of this annual report, but we value each and every youth and caregiver who participates in them. The Young Women's group, the island-wide Screen-free Week, and mentoring for middle schoolers are three programs that help us support important members of our community—and they help us have fun! We encourage you to visit our website or stop by the Family Resource Center to learn more.

Services to meet basic needs

It's rare that someone comes into the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center looking for one type of help and doesn't leave with much more. That's because our staff look at many aspects of a person to understand where their challenges lie and how best to offer help. Over weeks and months, we work closely with many partners to help islanders meet their basic needs and thrive.

CHALLENGE, PARTNERSHIP, SUCCESS STORY

It took nine professionals and eleven months to secure a stable living environment for a longtime islander in 2023. Here's how it happened.

When an islander learned that her landlord would not be renewing her lease after nearly a decade, she came to the Family Resource Center. Her stress was high since she'd also been recently laid off from her job in town.

Staff at the Family Resource Center helped her get on the waitlist for a local income-based apartment, then helped coordinate with off-island connections to set up temporary housing and medical and mental health support in Skagit County. For five months, staff checked in regularly with her and her off-island caseworker to make sure she felt supported.

When the manager from one of the island's income-based apartments called, the islander and the Family Resource Center were ready for her to transition back home. Her return was a success due to the client's diligence and the multifaceted collaboration between key partners locally and off-island along the way.



140

Islanders who received up to 14 sessions of free counseling with local licensed therapists

128

Islanders who received financial aid for housing

77

Islanders committed to a healthy future as members or guests of the New Day Recovery Café

280

Transportation vouchers for ferry tickets and taxi service through Island Rides and San Juan Taxi



"There's not one system that provides for all people . . . So we come together. It's truly a community effort."

JLSFRC Team member

The Family Resource Center provides financial aid and enrollment in assistance programs to help islanders meet their basic needs for housing, medical care, mental health, and more. We build a network of support for each islander we work with.

Below is a snapshot of the services and aid we offer.

HOUSING

The Family Resource Center offers financial aid and services to help islanders stay in their homes or secure housing. For income-eligible islanders, financial aid is available for first-month's and last-month's rent, temporary rental assistance, and utilities' reductions. Weatherization assessments and improvements as well as household essentials such as cleaning supplies and hygiene items are available for free.

COUNSELING

Through our Community Wellness Program, an islander can receive up to fourteen counseling sessions, with an income-based co-pay, provided by a local licensed therapist. We make thoughtful pairings, taking into account islanders' needs and therapists' specialties. Therapists we coordinate with specialize in areas such as youth, adults, seniors, grief, and trauma. We also connect islanders to other Family Resource Center services they may benefit from.



FOOD AND NUTRITION

There are a variety of local and federal food services we connect islanders with so they have stable access to food. These include: weekly vouchers to buy fruit and vegetables at the co-op and farmer's market, weekend and summer food kits for kids via the Thirty-six Weeks program, Meals on Wheels, enrollment in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and emergency food vouchers.



MEDICAL CARE

The Family Resource Center offers limited financial aid for medical and dental bills and prescription costs to qualified islanders. We also help islanders enroll in medical insurance and connect them with eligible providers.

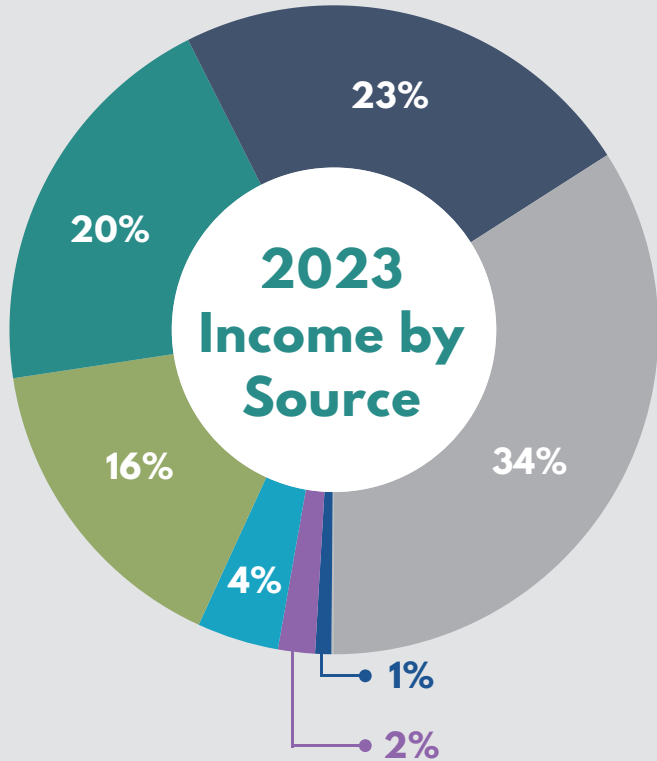
COMMUNITY

The New Day Recovery Café is a nurturing space for people with a desire to heal and grow from life's difficulties. Free coffee and dinner are offered Tuesday through Friday. Additionally, NDRC has hosted classes in financial health, cooking, and journaling as well as a weekly walking group. It also offers a peer-run circle to discuss struggles in a trusting and respectful environment.



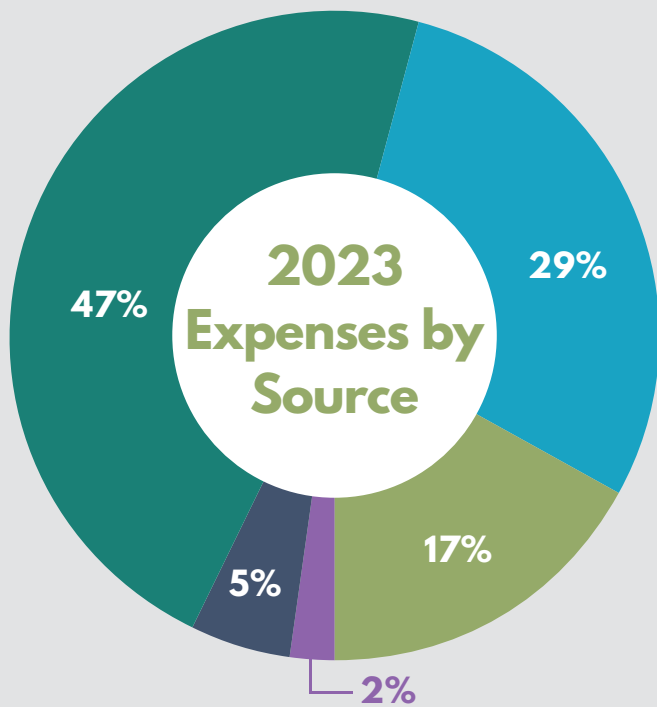
JLSFRC Financials

To federal and county officials, to community organizations near and far, to individual donors and granters, to our dedicated staff and volunteers, the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center thanks you. Our achievements are because of you.



- Direct public support
- Foundation grants
- Government grants
- United Way
- Program income
- Service contracts
- Investments

Total Income \$1,803,298



- Services to meet basic needs
- Programs for children and families
- Programs for health and wellness
- Administration
- Fundraising

Total Expenses \$1,806,571