



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

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# A Letter From Our Director

At the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center, we welcome all visitors with one simple but profound goal: to help. Whether someone is reaching out for support with basic needs or seeking opportunities for personal growth through our enrichment programs, we're here to meet them where they are.

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In 2024, JLSFRC continued to deliver essential safety net services to our island community while creating accessible programs that empower people of all backgrounds to learn, connect, and support one another. Our key priorities included rental assistance for those grappling with San Juan Island's affordable housing crisis, income-based behavioral health services, and a diverse range of youth and family programs aimed at supporting healthy development. Peer support remains at the heart of many of our programs—connecting individuals seeking help with fellow islanders who have firsthand experience navigating challenges and emerging with wisdom and resilience. This model fosters empathy and has consistently shown positive results.

We are deeply grateful to the volunteers, donors, and staff whose unwavering commitment makes these programs possible. Your support is what enables us to continue our work and expand our impact. And to those who have turned to us for help, we want to express our heartfelt thanks. It is an honor to serve you.

Our annual report provides a snapshot of the work we're doing, and we invite you to learn more by visiting our website or stopping by in person at the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center. We're always happy to connect and hear your thoughts.

With gratitude,

*Jennifer Armstrong*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Maureen See



# MISSION & VISION

## Mission

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

## Snapshot of 2024

In 2024, the Joyce L. Sobel Family Resource Center continued its mission to be a steady, responsive presence for San Juan Islanders. As programs evolved and community needs shifted, we remained grounded in providing timely local solutions and resources for islanders of all demographics. We tested short-term offerings like a Saturday drop-in playgroup and Virtual Mom Village, while celebrating big steps forward-like New Day Recovery Café's move to a welcoming new location in town, where recovery circles and shared meals now reach more community members than ever. Our work this year touched every age and stage, from early learning and parenting support to housing assistance, counseling referrals, and youth mentoring. As always, our commitment stayed rooted in one simple goal: making sure every islander finds what they are looking for whether it is a place to volunteer, a program to enrich family life, activities to connect with our community or emergency resources during a time of need.

## 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.



# CHILD & FAMILY PROGRAMS



In 2024, JLSFRC continued to provide hands-on, heart-forward support for island families. Through a blend of early learning, parenting support, and peer connection, our programs for children and caregivers built strong foundations during the most important years of life. From weekly playgroups and parent meetups to 1:1 guidance and mental health resources, our goal remained simple: to meet families where they are and walk with them as they grow. We also deepened community partnerships to strengthen the network of care around families. As needs changed, we adapted with flexible support so no one felt alone. Parents gained practical tools and confidence through shared learning and gentle encouragement. Children benefited from safe, nurturing spaces that sparked curiosity and routine.

## 0-5 Programs

Our 0-5 programs continue to offer connection, play, and support for families with young children across San Juan Island. The Rain or Shine Outdoor Playgroup welcomed 760 participants, while Toddler Teatime and Library Storytime engaged 256 and 640 attendees respectively. We also celebrated key community events including Trick or Book, Kindergarten Kickoff, and the Children’s Festival. Behind the scenes, parents and caregivers found individualized support through 1:1 parent meetings and perinatal mental health resources—ensuring that families with children ages 0–5 had access to both joyful connection and critical care.

## Events

This year was filled with joyful community moments that brought families together across generations. From the colorful costumes of *Trick or Book* to the energy of *Island Games with YAAS!* And *P2P*, our events created safe, welcoming spaces for play, connection, and celebration. The Community Reading Nights and Kindergarten Kickoff offered new beginnings, while seasonal craft events brought creativity and calm. Behind each gathering was a dedicated team working to make sure every child and family felt like they belonged and left with smiles, support, and lasting memories.



# CHILD & FAMILY PROGRAMS

## Screen Free Week



In May, JLSFRC hosted our annual Screen-Free Week, inviting families across the island to unplug and reconnect through a week of free, in-person events. From nature walks and LEGO play to trivia night, crafts and trying echolocation demos, the week offered something for everyone - kids and parents alike! Special events like a Bug Safari in the lilacs at the LandBank and a potluck in the park with YAAS!

## First Gen

Our First Generation Mentoring Program continued to empower and guide students who are the first in their families to pursue college or vocational school. Focused on high school juniors and seniors, the program provided coaching throughout the year including support with college and technical school applications, FAFSA completion, scholarship essays and applications and school tours. This year, six young islanders received scholarships to help launch their next chapter with confidence.



## P2P



Our Parent to Parent (P2P) program brought together nearly 200 families spanning San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez Islands to create meaningful connections and shared experiences. Participants gathered to craft holiday and seasonal projects—such as our Halloween, Winter, Holiday, and Spring craft events—bowedled together in April, and joined fun island-wide activities like Park Days, Island Games, and the Children’s Festival. We also hosted virtual Parent Nights for Orcas caregivers, participated in the “Give So We Can Grow” multicultural fundraiser, and took part in beloved community traditions including Trick or Book and Kindergarten Kickoff. Throughout, P2P remained committed to offering emotional support, resource referrals, and peer mentorship through our network of trained Helping Parents, ensuring that no parent walks their journey alone.

## Mentoring

JLSFRC’s San Juan Island Childcare Cooperative (SJICC) continued to grow and thrive, providing high quality, income-based childcare for local families with infants and toddlers. Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, SJICC was able to hire a Co-op Director, Abby Howard to guide SJICC’s operations and expansion. Working alongside SJICC’s two Lead Teachers Haley Olmos and Emily Shultz and the co-op’s dedicated Parent Advisory Board and classroom helpers, the program provided 192 days of childcare and preschool readiness education for our youngest islanders. SJICC’s key partner - Skagit Valley College - provided ongoing parent education and guidance around best practices for cooperative preschool practices.

# BASIC NEEDS



## Utilities

With the cost of utilities constantly increasing, JLSFRC works hard to help islanders on tight budget to keep their lights on and their homes adequately heated. Through a combination of three different utility assistance programs, the center was able to help over 135 local households. Services included emergency payments to avoid electricity shut-offs, help with water bills, heating assistance during the winter months and even deliveries of free firewood to local homes.



## Transportation

Without public transportation in San Juan County, travel is often a barrier to care for low-income residents. In 2024, JLSFRC helped 160 islanders obtain SJ County Transportation Voucher Program vouchers to access essential local and mainland services. An additional 34 people received support for off-island medical travel, including long-distance logistics and vetted drivers to bring post-surgery patients safely home to the islands.



## Housing

Our rental assistance program serves households who are at 80% of AMI or below, with priority given to households at 50% of AMI and below.

We primarily offer assistance with the cost of a portion of one month's rent, and in rare cases, up to one full month of rent assistance. Clients meet with a case manager to do intake paperwork, and provide proof of income (pay stubs, bank statement, or Social Security award letter), as well as proof of occupancy (lease, or other landlord verification). In our best efforts to be equitable after assessing this information, we allocate assistance based on actual need. We do not offer the same amount to everyone. Once approved, payment is made directly to the landlord (never to a client/tenant). Information from applications is stored in the HMIS database, as well as FRC records.



## Household Essentials

Toilet paper, diapers, toothbrushes and soap are just a few of the essential items available to qualifying islanders through our Household Essentials program. Thanks to a successful drive in November and the year-round generosity of our community, we were able to provide basic hygiene and household products to approximately 100 families, including seniors.



## Emergency Flex

Sometimes emergency needs arise that “fall between the cracks” of conventional social services funding. JLSFRC’s Emergency Flex and LightHouse Funds provided one-time support to 46 households for urgent costs like off-island medical lodging, emergency insurance payments, and short-term childcare, helping families stabilize quickly before problems grew even larger.

121

Households received housing assistance

281

Individuals received housing assistance

100

Families received basic hygiene and household products

160

Islanders received transportation vouchers

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Behavioral Health Support

### Community Wellness

Supporting mental health at all ages remains a key priority for JLSFRC. Through a longstanding partnership with San Juan County Health & Community Services, the Resource Center helps ensure mental health care is low-barrier and affordable for islanders. Our Community Wellness Program works with ten experienced behavioral health providers to offer income-based counseling tailored to community needs. Over the past year, 177 community members received support through 914 counseling sessions, along with ongoing case management. Services included 66 sessions in Spanish, 150 focused on seniors, and 15 in-home visits for homebound clients.

### New Day Recovery Café

In its second year, New Day Recovery Café (NDRC) provided critical recovery support to more than 35 islanders navigating behavioral health challenges. The café offered a welcoming space with nourishing dinners four times a week, peer-facilitated Recovery Circles, life-skills and vocational education, and access to preventative healthcare services. Coordinated case management helped participants connect to counseling, substance use treatment, and housing assistance. Partnerships with the San Juan Island Library, Compass Health, and San Juan County Health & Community Services strengthened a collaborative network supporting long-term recovery.

## Aging and Disability

### Island Neighbors

In 2024, Island Neighbors continued to offer volunteer-based outreach for older and disabled islanders, helping them stay connected and supported. Volunteers provided rides to medical appointments, delivered groceries, and made regular check-in calls—supporting over 30 vulnerable, homebound neighbors. The program also offered more intensive care coordination through the Island Neighbors Coordinator, and a dedicated team of volunteers delivered firewood to over 20 low-income households. Through quick responses and consistent check-ins, Island Neighbors helped reduce isolation and ensure neighbors had the support they needed. These efforts reflect the program's core belief: even small acts of care can make a big difference.



### YAAS

Providing leadership training, mentoring, facilitated social gatherings and resource navigation, the YAAS program helped 22 young adults with disabilities to enjoy better quality of life. Key themes of the YAAS program were peer support, continued learning and community activism. YAAS members continued to train as community mentors and helped conduct educational outreach about disability access and inclusion to three other local nonprofits.

## Preventative

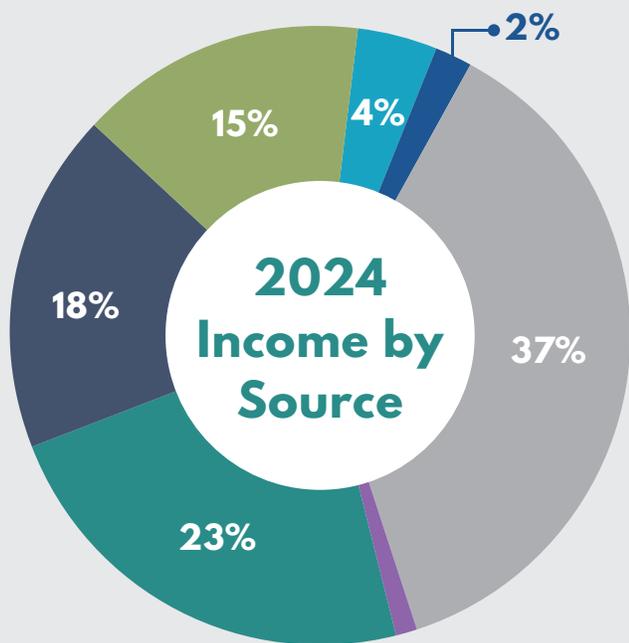
### Community Health Workers

In 2024, JLSFRC's Community Health Worker program expanded its impact across the islands. We partnered with the Orcas Community Resource Center and Lopez Island Family Resource Center to help launch their CHW programs. On San Juan Island, our three trained CHWs provided over 1,600 hours of care coordination, interpretation, health education, and youth prevention. Pop-up clinics served more than 110 islanders with services like vaccines, screenings, behavioral health referrals, and physicals—building health equity.

### SHIBA

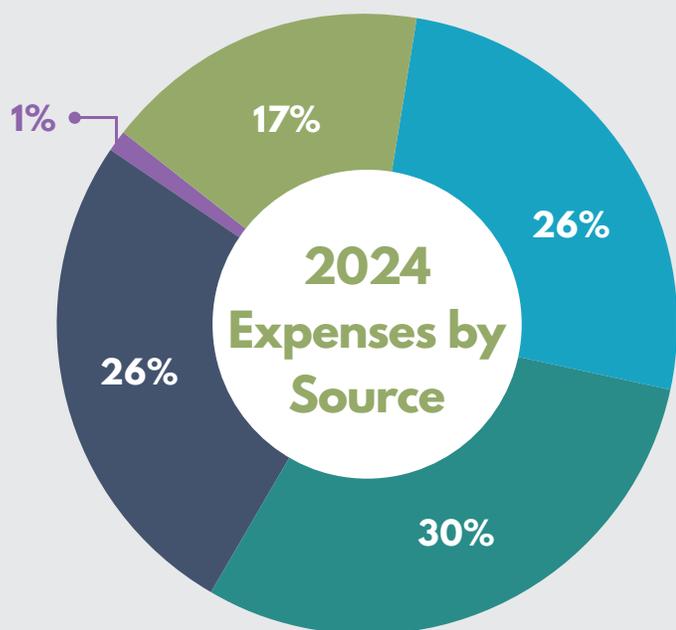
JLSFRC is proud to partner with San Juan County's State Health Insurance Benefits Advisor (SHIBA) program. Our Resource Center provides free office space for trained volunteer advisors who help more than 720 islanders each year navigate Medicare enrollment, optimize benefits, and resolve coverage issues. Their knowledgeable and welcoming presence plays a vital role in ensuring that senior islanders receive trusted guidance and support when navigating healthcare coverage.

# JLSFRC FINANCIALS



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

**Total Income \$1,794,463**



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

**Total Expenses \$1,802,781**

## Islanders helping Islanders

When we help people find a safe place to live, benefit from educational opportunities, engage in gainful employment and access health supports that promote healing and well-being, we nurture the foundation for a safe, healthy and equitable community.

**Join us in providing islanders with the opportunity to thrive.**

