



TURNING POINTS OF
POSITIVE
& **LASTING**
CHANGE

IMPACT REPORT 2021





CREATING **DEFINING MOMENTS** THAT LAST A LIFETIME

The powerful transformations that occurred in the lives of Waymakers clients in 2021 weren't carved out of luck or happenstance. These changes resulted from **DEDICATED AND MINDFUL COLLABORATIONS** between our clients, the Waymakers team and our community partners. They happened because of a **SERIES OF TURNING POINTS** guided by capable professionals and by clients who were **WHOLLY INVESTED IN STARTING NEW JOURNEYS**. We are honored to share the moments of healing our clients have experienced as they accessed services and support through Waymakers shelters, victims assistance, family counseling, education and training or conflict resolution. The brave paths our clients took this year inspire us to continue to create defining moments of hope and opportunity in 2022 and beyond.



“ Thank you, Waymakers! You helped me see the person I could really be. When I arrived, you opened your hearts and let me in and even though I tried not to let you in you found a way around my wall. You saw through me and you helped me become a little more trustworthy. And even though it was a rocky ride, you didn't mind being by my side. Now that I'm gone, I really see the impact you had on me. You saved my life and that's a fact. You helped my see the good things in life. And now I'm happy to be alive, because now I know that I will never have to be alone because I found my home. ”

—WAYMAKERS CLIENT



FORGING A **SAFER, STRONGER TOMORROW**

Witnessing the positive transformation of someone's life is why we are passionate about our mission. Our clients come to us in crisis, but with the guidance of our effective services and compassionate staff, they find a way to truly thrive in life. Overcoming the complications of COVID-19 during the past year, Waymakers was able to provide lasting change in Orange County by helping 67,573 people find stability and safety in their lives. The following statistics reflect not only the commitment that our staff and volunteers put into our clients' lives to help them dream bigger, but they also reflect the dedication and resourcefulness of our clients to make their dreams a reality.

A COMMUNITY OF CHANGEMAKERS

At Waymakers, we believe a low point in someone's life is an opportunity for a turning point. During pivotal moments, we show our clients we care about their well-being and their future. That compassion instills in them an understanding that positive change can be just around the corner.

The following stories reflect the **HEALING OUR CLIENTS EXPERIENCE WHEN THEY TURN TO WAYMAKERS** for support and guidance.

Note: Client names have been changed and photos do not show clients out of respect for their privacy



SHELTERING CHILDREN

From Low Self-Esteem to Achieving Dreams

Due to repeated suicide attempts, fourteen-year-old "Annalise" had been hospitalized three times, spending over 40 days away from her family. She suffered from extreme depression and anxiety, which was only exacerbated by the feeling that the world around her was on constant high alert due to the pandemic. Annalise had a lot to deal with for someone so young. Her father had been laid off from his job and was too sick to get another one while he was under treatment for cancer. Then her mother's business suddenly closed due to a COVID-related slowdown, placing the family in a position where they had no income. Fortunately, Annalise was referred to a Waymakers shelter. While in the safety of the shelter, Annalise was provided all of the support needed to help her recover and find hope for her future. Her parents were provided family counseling and referrals for resources to get them through the tough time they were facing. Annalise learned ways to stay calm and actually helped her family by asking them to join her in practicing her newly acquired coping skills. At the end of her three-week stay with Waymakers, Annalise was sent off with "air high fives" and well wishes from the Waymakers staff and other residents. As her grateful parents took her into their arms, she exuded a new sense of confidence and all three of their faces glowed with hope for a brighter future.

1,337
youth and family
members served

94%
youth successfully reunified
with their families

COUNSELING FAMILIES

With the Right Support, Families Thrive

“Manuel” was referred to Waymakers because he hadn’t attended school for over a year. His struggle with depression led him to isolate at home. He could only find the energy to play video games or sleep. He lives with his father and older sister; his mother has not been a part of his life for several years. During the pandemic, Manuel, his dad and his sister became ill with COVID-19. As a result, his dad’s work hours were cut and they were being evicted from their home. Waymakers was able to provide financial support to help secure housing and provide basic needs for the family. The Waymakers team also offered Manuel support with tutoring services, driving lessons, employment readiness and other needed community resources. Manuel, now 18 years old, has his driver’s permit, a supportive network of friends and is graduating this month! With the assistance of Waymakers, Manuel has transformed his life for the better.

10,587

youth and family members served

5,543

counseling hours provided to youth & family members



SUPPORTING VICTIMS

Helping the Voiceless Regain Their Power

“Karina” was sexually assaulted from age 11 to 13 by her mom’s ex-boyfriend and his brothers. As a young girl, she did not understand what was happening. Over a decade later, Karina found the courage to report the sexual abuse and her courage helped others to find their voices. Her ongoing assault by these perpetrators was not isolated to Karina. The Deputy District Attorney handling her case encouraged Karina to work with Waymakers. Karina was determined to attend every court hearing possible. Her advocate remembers meeting her for the first hearing, noting, “She was shaking, anxious and emotional.” It was exceptionally difficult for her to see those who had hurt her so badly. Waymakers helped Karina access therapy, a Waymakers support group and other workshops, in addition to providing ongoing accompaniment for each court proceeding. Through these therapeutic and empowering experiences, Karina regained her power. Today she shares her story as a survivor in a voice that is confident and strong.

17,373

crime victims served

\$343,203

financial restitution secured for victims

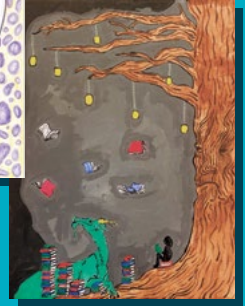


RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Mediation Paves the Way for Peace

When Waymakers board member and trained mediator Joe McCarthy met roommates “Courtney” and “Rebecca,” their relationship was tumultuous. The women were at odds, finding no common ground and getting verbally abusive with one another, each trying to get a restraining order on the other. Joe, a mediator with Waymakers, was there to help facilitate an agreement as an alternative to participation in small claims court. With patience and an unbiased approach, he was able to help the roommates discuss ways to accommodate one another. The judge agreed to their terms, and the roommates hugged each other in front of the judge. Joe said, “Through our mediation service and conflict resolution training, we bring people together in an unbiased way and let them simply talk to each other. Waymakers helps people work through their issues, come up with an agreement and then allows them to move forward with their lives. When you do that, you feel really good about the process.”

1,449 disputing parties
63% of cases successfully resolved



EDUCATING COMMUNITIES

Sparking Joy for Isolated Students

Necessity often breeds creativity. Waymakers adopted an inventive approach when they could no longer conduct their research-based, in-person workshops to educate students on the harmful effects of drugs and tobacco due to the pandemic. The team immediately adapted and conducted their workshops over Zoom and added their offerings to include simple enriching classes, like cooking, to help students stay connected. They also did multiple outreaches throughout school districts, including a partnership with Newport-Mesa Unified School District to encourage students to participate in their first-ever *Mental Health Awareness Month Art Contest*. This inspired students to design original art pieces centered on the theme, “What Sparks Joy?”. Nearly 200 students creatively expressed what makes them happy and how they relieve stress in a healthy way. Director of Student Services, Dr. Phil D’Agostino said, “We are grateful for our strong partnership with Waymakers in supporting us with our wellness initiatives, including sponsoring this amazing art contest, and I congratulate all of our art contest winners.”

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P: 949.250.0488 | **F:** 714.540.1908
Info@WaymakersOC.org

1221 East Dyer Road, Suite 120
Santa Ana, CA 92705-5364

Tax ID #95-3167866
WaymakersOC.org



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