



COMPASS Programs
— at David & Margaret —

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

VOL. 3 ISSUE 1 SPRING 2021



David & Margaret
YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES



Support Youth Aging Out of Foster Care:

MAKE A DONATION

Donate needed items or funds to support youth and young adults aging out of foster care and the programs that serve them!

<http://bit.ly/DM21Donate>

HOST AN INTERNSHIP

David & Margaret works with community partners to host internships for young adults to gain hands-on work experience to build their future.

**COMPASS@
davidandmargaret.org**

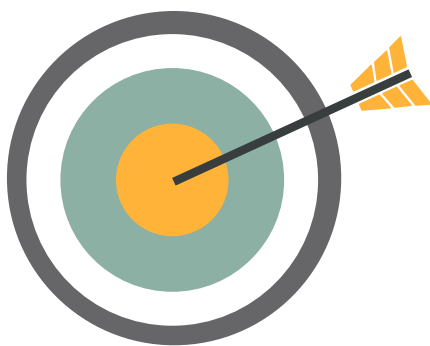
SHARE INDUSTRY INSIGHT

Do you have unique insight in a local industry? Share your knowledge and help expand the horizon for these young adults.

**COMPASS@
davidandmargaret.org**

RAISE AWARENESS

Not many people are aware of the challenges these youth face, you can help change that. Share what you've learned in this issue with your family and friends.



OUR PURPOSE

The Purpose of COMPASS Programs is to increase resources and opportunities for youth facing diverse obstacles as they transition into adulthood through a comprehensive and holistic approach to wellness.

STAY IN TOUCH!

If you'd like to learn more, visit our website!

www.davidandmargaret.org

Become a member of the David & Margaret community by signing up for our mailing list and e-newsletter! There you will find insights into the programs, behind the scenes, stay connected with the needs of the community we serve and more!

<http://bit.ly/DMupdates>

If you'd like to get in touch with someone regarding COMPASS Programs please contact
Marissa Scholefield, COMPASS Director

COMPASS@davidandmargaret.org
909-596-5921 x3625

COMPASS Programs at David & Margaret are dedicated to supporting youth and young adults transitioning out of the foster care system. Every program is designed to meet the individual needs of each youth to prepare for independence.

Permanent Supportive Housing Program (PSHP)

The PSHP provides affordable, furnished, permanent housing in peaceful neighborhoods to young adults facing a variety of obstacles. Like with the THP, these youth receive mental health support, case management, individual mentoring, and employment & educational readiness training. This program is for young adults who have the life- skills needed to be independent but still need a little extra support.



COMPASS Point Drop-in Center

Youth with a history of foster care are unique and face many obstacles, COMPASS Point provides a space to meet all of their needs - whatever they may be. On-site you can find a full kitchen stocked with food, showers, restrooms, laundry units, storage, a safe relaxing space, and a computer lab. Services offered include a trauma-informed team to assist with life-skills and employment readiness, peer-led groups, tutors, community resources, and more.



Transitional Housing Program (THP)

The THP provides temporary, furnished housing in safe communities to young adults who have aged out of foster care.

Participants are required to continue their education or obtain employment while in this program and have full access to employment and educational specialists to help accomplish these goals.

They also receive financial and mental health support, life-skills training, case management, community resources, and more.

This is D&M's most hands-on housing program, the goal of this program is to provide practical, financial, and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care enabling them to lead self-sufficient, independent adult lives.

Workforce Training Program (WTP)

The WTP takes an individualized approach to support the educational and employment needs of the participants to become successful, independent members of society.

These young adults receive paid-internships in the community, one-on-one training with an educational/employment specialist, community resources, and employment readiness workshops focusing on resumes, tax forms, how to dress for an interview, skills to keep a job, and more.

Facts about Transitional Age Youth IN FOSTER CARE

These facts are why COMPASS Programs exist. We are committed to offering supportive services that create meaningful change for Transitional Age Youth. While the statistics are daunting, we are committed to making a difference and supporting young adults in our community. Everyday we are here to support positive change.

23,000

young adults in the United States age out of the foster care system each year without ever finding a forever family

< 3%

of young adults who age out of the foster care system will earn a college degree.

< 1/2

of the youth who age out will find employment by the age of 24.

72%

of the overall youth homeless population accounts for transitional age youth in Los Angeles County. 4,763 unaccompanied youth reported experiencing homelessness, in 2020 which was a 19% increase from 2019.

4,000

youth age out of care in California every year and

65%

leave foster care at age 18 with no place to call home.

\$13,989

is the average income earned at age 26 for a youth who has aged out of the foster care system compared to \$32,312 for youth in the general population.

12-14 years

is the average age of a juvenile human trafficking victim in California as stated by California officials, and 70 percent of victims come from the foster care system.

7 out of 10

girls who age out of foster care become pregnant before the age of 21.

50%

of those who age out of foster care will become homeless or incarcerated within 2 years of leaving the foster care system.

These negative outcomes are experienced to a greater degree by youth of color.

Sources: KTLA, Walden Family Services, National Conference of State Legislators, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, Annie E. Casey Foundation





MARISSA SCHOLEFIELD

Director of COMPASS Programs

Marissa Scholefield, Director of COMPASS Programs, has been serving at risk youth and young adults for 13 years. She is a leader with a vision of what can be for the young adults she serves. She is focused, upbeat and persistent with a dose of magical thinking when needed. This and her dedication make her the right person to lead COMPASS Programs at David & Margaret.

Marissa grew up in the heart of East LA, in a humble neighborhood, with her mother, father, and three brothers. Her parents immigrated to the United States to provide her and her siblings a chance at a better life. Growing up, Marissa wanted to work with animals. It was not until high school, when she took a psychology class, that her career trajectory changed. Marissa ended up getting her undergraduate degree in Psychology and her graduate degree in Leadership and Management with minors in both Multicultural Leadership and Quantitative Research. She often refers to herself as a unicorn, because everyone she works with has MSW's or MFT's. She is able to bring a unique skillset and perspective to her work with Transitional Aged Youth. Marissa credits some of the books she read during graduate school like "Discovering Your True North" and "Strengths Finder," which walk you through a path of self-discovery, as helping her learn and understand who she was at the core and how that authentic self manifests itself in your ability to lead. She is delighted that she can now share those insights and processes with others.

Marissa first started working with minors in a residential group home. She often wondered why the children would come back to the group home upset after being with their families. When she switched roles and started working in wrap-around services she was able to work with the biological and foster families providing her with a better understanding of the larger environment the children were experiencing. She started to understand the complexities and trauma the children and families faced. Marissa learned how to make incremental changes for the children (and families) she worked with. She learned to help them navigate the many challenges they faced and to support them in accomplishing their goals. Marissa's commitment to working with children in the foster care system caused her to wonder what happens after they grow up. This curiosity led Marissa to work at David and Margaret back when the Transitional Housing Program was just starting.

Marissa shared when COMPASS Programs first started, the idea of Transitional Age Youth (TAY) housing for non minor dependents was brand new. There was no standardization, the contract was new, and the program was in a position of creating its own standards-based off of need. After years of working with young adults, she has realized there are multiple avenues of growth, exploration, and possibilities for them. Each TAY is unique in their strengths, and at COMPASS Programs those strengths are fostered and celebrated. Each TAY enrolled in COMPASS Programs has a plan unique to them, that helps them accomplish their unique goals. Marissa appreciates working with this population because she is able to communicate in a more authentic and multi-layered manner with young adults than when working with younger children. One challenge she shares working with TAY is how this population wants to be

independent and is reluctant to ask for help, which often leads to setbacks. However, Marissa stated, "Failure brings success."

Throughout the years, COMPASS Programs have continued to change and grow. Marissa shares that her proudest moments are watching people grow. As the programs have grown the staff and young people the program serves grow with it. She says that the process of seeing that 'AH-HA' moment, where it starts to click, seeing that process unfold right in front of her eyes brings her motivation. Marissa shares, "People perform at their best when they feel like they are of value. COMPASS is a physical representation of the village mentality whereby people don't belong to certain people- it's like you are part of a larger family even though you aren't family - where it is like the community is seen as a family member, not just a community member. Compass Point makes it their responsibility to be involved with whatever the community needs."

Being able to impact change on the community level is a driving force for Marissa. She shares, "If my biggest impact only happened at the local level, then that would have been my greatest achievement because it meant that I created change that has the potential to affect the masses." Marissa is a big believer in paying it forward. "If I can be a part of that ripple effect that impacts others, I have reached the highest achievement possible. In a lot of ways, the work I have done at David & Margaret has given me this. Establishing new programming whether through housing programs, workforce training, or the creation of a drop-in center. My hope is that this programming will only be the start and that legacy will surely be my highest achievement."

Advice that Marissa shared about working with TAY is being aware of the trauma that these young adults have experienced. "There is a delicate balance that exists in working with young adults. This balance consists of allowing the young person to feel like they are finally able to make decisions for themselves, something they have often felt they haven't had growing up. The other is knowing that they haven't had the opportunity to develop a foundation of life skills, so expecting them to do things the average adult should know to do, is simply wrong." Marissa shares that working with TAY means helping young adults grow by focusing on their unique expectations and goals. She says, "Each young adult has their own set of starting points. Knowing where to start allows you to know where you are going in that journey with them." These steps are the foundation to a fulfilling future for the young adults who choose to better themselves by participating in the COMPASS Programs.

When Marissa isn't working, she is chauffeuring her elementary-school-age daughters, (pre-covid) to dance, swimming and theater. In these pandemic times, she and her husband and daughters enjoy family nights at home, and taking their newest addition to the family, a Great Dane named Duke, out for walks.

COMPASS Point *Team*



In 2020, David and Margaret Youth and Family Services welcomed four AmeriCorps VISTAs into COMPASS Point Drop-In Center team to help build the program. The goal of an AmeriCorps VISTA member is to work alongside community members to meet challenges and advance local solutions. AmeriCorps VISTA members serve at an organization full-time for one year, during which they are given specific projects to build capacity for non-profit and public agencies through community engagement, funding, and develop programmatic infrastructure. While the launch of the COMPASS Drop-In Center did not go as expected because of COVID-19, all four VISTAs have been working diligently behind the scenes to ensure programming is still happening and participants are receiving the resources they need. The four positions the VISTAs are serving in are: Policy & Program Associate, Community Outreach Associate, Social Media & PR Member, and Grant Writer.

Top row: Emily Martinez, Marissa Scholefield, Katy Holland. Bottom Row: Aden Jordan, Emily McCool

The Policy & Program Associate is **Katy Holland**, who has volunteered with D&M since September 2019 while also attending graduate school online at Arizona State for Social Work. Katy's familiarity with the COMPASS Point program is a huge advantage to the team, who have all appreciated the knowledge and help she has provided. As the Policy & Program Associate, Katy is responsible for all things programmatic, including resource fairs, arranging life-skills classes, and coordinating all the events for COMPASS Point. Katy also played a critical role in transitioning the Food Bank to a contactless drive-thru to comply with CDC guidelines due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Her contributions to the COMPASS Point team are invaluable and we are excited to she chose David & Margaret as part of her journey to become a social worker.

Emily Martinez, the newest Community Outreach Associate, also has a history of volunteering at COMPASS Point before transitioning to her role as a VISTA volunteer. She was introduced to the program through a mentor and immediately began volunteering her time while going to school full-time at the University of La Verne. She earned her degree in Business Administration at the beginning of 2021 and began her VISTA service right after. Her role at COMPASS Point is to find new community partners who are interested in offering services and

resources to the youth and young adults served at David & Margaret. She also organizes events and workshops alongside Katy, including resources and trainings for staff as well as participants.

Aden Jordan and **Emily McCool** joined the COMPASS Point team in December as the Grant Writer and Social Media & Public Relations Member, respectively. Although they graduated a decade apart, Aden and Emily both completed their undergraduate degrees at the University of San Francisco. Aden went on to earn two Master's Degrees in Cinema and English before obtaining a Grant Writing Certificate from San Diego State in 2020. Aden began grant writing for nonprofits before the pandemic, leading him to find opportunities through AmeriCorps. In his role, he researches and applies for new sources of funding and as well as renewing existing grants to continue to serve the community. Emily McCool runs the COMPASS Point social media pages, including Instagram and Facebook, where event reminders, program updates, and additional community resources are posted and easily accessible to the young adults who access COMPASS Programs. She graduated with a degree in Sociology in the winter of 2019 and most of her experience comes from working directly with youth, making her a good fit as the COMPASS Point storyteller.

The team of VISTAs are all passionate about the work COMPASS Point was created to do, and their impact is obvious through the success of the program. These VISTAs have a unique opportunity to build COMPASS Point in to a vital resource for the community. Collectively they are using their combined knowledge, skills and experiences to design a program that creates real and lasting impact on young adults in our community.

Meet Mark!

For Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), aging out of the foster care system is daunting. Most youth are not prepared for independence and lack access to basics like food, housing, education, and jobs. Over the past decade, there has been a focus on providing these resources to TAY to assist their transition to adulthood and independence. COMPASS Programs is a new groups of programs created by David and Margret Youth and Family Services to address the unique challenges that TAY face.

Mark came to COMPASS Programs in 2016 after aging out of his group home, his social worker referred him to David & Margaret's Transitional Housing Program. He was placed in transitional housing (housing that is paid for by the county Department of Children and Family Services and usually lasts about two years). Mark started engaging in services provided by COMPASS, like life skills training and building a savings account. He began going to college and is currently pursuing a degree in Communications and Business, which he hopes will translate into a stable career path. He also obtained a job working a front desk at his school. Although the office he works in is closed due to COVID-19, he has been able to retain steady employment throughout his time at COMPASS.



On the services he has received from the program, Mark says, “[COMPASS] made it easier because I had to work to live through early adulthood.” He cited housing as the greatest resource provided by the program because he was able to save money while working and going to school and did not have worry about being able to pay rent and risk losing his housing.

Like many other TAY, Mark struggles with anxiety and has been working with his COMPASS Program support team to develop coping skills to address it. Mark says that he uses “self-talk” to help keep his anxiety levels low. Mark’s case manager has been very impressed by his growth during his time in the program and says, “he is a very kind and driven person ... an honest person who will tell me if a certain coping skill isn’t working ... that has helped him progress.” Because of Mark’s hard work, and with a little support from COMPASS Programs he is on track to graduate from college and begin a stable career. All of us at COMPASS Programs are so proud of Mark’s growth and look forward to seeing what he accomplishes.



Virtual Resources Fairs TO BRING US TOGETHER



As a result of the pandemic Compass Point Drop-in Center for Transitional Age Youth has had to find creative ways to facilitate connecting the young adults with the resources they need. One way that has occurred is by transitioning planned community resource fairs to a virtual platform.

These virtual (for now) resource fairs are a quarterly event that targets specific areas of wellness. The aspects of wellness that are covered during the year are physical, psychological, social, and intellectual. The first virtual resource fair was held in the third quarter of 2020 and focused on social wellness with presentations from the San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Center, SHARE, Tri-City, Sol Flower, Citrus College, and Mt. SAC community college. Each organization was able to present the social wellness opportunities that they offer. It was an informational time, geared specifically to the Transitional Aged Youth to show them not only what resources are available to them, but also how to access them.

The second virtual resource fair was in December of 2020 and had a focus on Mental Wellness. This resource fair was especially relevant for Transitional Age Youth who, on top of the pandemic, are already navigating many challenges such as aging out of foster care, limited housing, limited career options, and lack of community to name a few. This virtual session focused on highlighting what resources are available to young adults in our community as well as focusing on what steps they need to take to access these resources. The hour was full of organizations providing emotional wellness resources including; NAMI, Tri-City, Pomona Unified School District, Citrus College, Volunteers of America, and Change Your Algorithm.

About 15 - 20 participants attended each session and spent an hour learning about resources and asking questions. One thing that each presenter stressed was that there are and multiple ways for the young adults to access services and to get the support they need. COMPASS Point staff were on hand to make sure all the young adults in attendance at each session left knowing how to access the services they were interested in directly and/or who to reach out to to get more information. In March COMPASS Point will host a third resource fair that focuses on physical wellness.

When it is safe to do so COMPASS Point will offer these quarterly community resource fairs in person. Until then we will continue to find creative ways to make sure the young adults we serve have opportunities to connect with and learn from our community.

COMPASS PROGRAMS' COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

A Community of Friends
Accelerate - Achieve Your Future
America's Christian Credit Union
America's Job Center of California
Azusa City Library
Boys Republic - School for Boys
Bridges Rehab
ChapCare
Citrus College
City of La Verne
City of Pasadena
Comerica Bank
Department of Children and Family Services
Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health
East San Gabriel Valley Coalition for the Homeless
Family & Employment Services
Five Keys Schools and Programs
Hathaway Sycamore
Health Services Los Angeles County
Hillsides
Hug in a Box
Inland Valley Hope Partners
Just Us 4 Youth
La Verne Schools
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
Los Angeles County Library
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles County Probation Department
Mt. San Antonio College
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
New Abbey Church
National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI)
Pacific Clinics
Pasadena City College
Permanency Policy Bureau - State of California
Planned Parenthood
Prototypes
Renaissance Unlimited Homes, Inc.
Rose City Coffee
Rowland School
S.T.A.R. Academy Education and Recruitment Coordinator
San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Center,
St. Anne's
Tobacco Free Partnership
The Community College Foundation
Tri City Mental Health Services
Tri City Wellness Center
Union Station
University of La Verne
Volunteers of America
Walden
Wings Foundation
Women on the Move Network
Your Life Sober Living

Food for Change

COMPASS Program's staff run a Bi-Monthly Food Bank Distribution for the community on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month from 11 am-3 pm! All qualifying families and individuals are encouraged to attend. Simply drive up to the designated parking area in the COMPASS Point parking lot, shared with Dave and Maggie's Center, and pop your trunk. COMPASS staff will place your items in your vehicle, ensuring a safe and contactless transition.

When the pandemic hit in early 2020, it was unclear if and how the distribution could continue to operate without risking the spread of COVID-19. It was currently functioning as a walk-up, choose your own items type of distribution, lead by a wonderful team of volunteers. Neither of which would be feasible for the foreseeable future- at this time all distribution centers were scrambling to find a safe alternative.

But COMPASS knew how imperative it was to continue offering this service to the community. They knew it would be a challenge to convert the food bank to contactless but they also knew families were scared and struggling and they wanted to ensure everyone had access to the supplies they needed.

During the first few weeks of the pandemic, before the drive-up option had been approved by the health department, they made personal deliveries to youth and families in David & Margaret's programs. Dropping off boxes of food and personal protective equipment at their doorstep, ensuring they had access to the food and safety items they needed to get through such an unusual and scary time.

Soon after, the Food Bank was approved as a drive-up distribution and COMPASS made all the necessary changes to make it work. The distribution is currently a three-day process for the staff, in addition to the work they do supporting youth aging out of foster care- from arranging dozens of boxes of goods, to finalizing shifts, organizing the public pick-up area, and operating the distribution.

This effort does not go without reward- they each feel this work is meaningful and feel good knowing this program provides food to hundreds of families each month. If you are interested in supporting the food bank there are some covid-safe volunteer opportunities. Please reach out to COMPASS@davidandmargaret.org for more information.



Food Bank Distribution

March 11 & March 25, 2021 | April 8 & April 22, 2021 | May 13 & May 27, 2021

For more information please visit bit.ly/DMFoodBank



COMPASS Point Drop-In Center Programming at a Glance

Compass Point Drop-In Center serves a range of participants under the COMPASS Program umbrella. Compass Point's biggest focus is social wellness, making sure to provide opportunities for group interactions and social-emotional well being. Compass Point staff took COVID-19 safety procedures very seriously and were able to create alternative programming and very limited use of the space while maintaining health and safety guidelines. The center installed a temperature wall unit, hand sanitizing stations, and clear plastic dividers to better protect our participants and staff. Whenever anyone enters the center they are required to take their temperature, use hand sanitizer, and wear a mask at all times. (If a participant did not have a mask, one was provided.)

COMPASS Program participants participated in social, housing, workforce training, and life skills events that were hosted either in-person or virtually through COMPASS Point Drop-In Center programming. The health and safety of participants and staff was paramount and stringent safety protocols were adhered to at all times. Here is a quick look at how COMPASS Point was of service to the community during the pandemic:

OCTOBER 2020

- 19 participants enjoyed a socially distant *Dia de los Muertos and Halloween Celebration*.
- Several clients participated in an *American Lung Association presentation*, and
- 50%+ of all COMPASS Clients attended a *housing support program*.

NOVEMBER 2020

- 19 participants enjoyed a socially distant *Thanksgiving party*,
- 32% participated in a *housing support program*,
- several attended a *workforce training program*, and
- 6 individuals attended a *Bare Necessities shopping event*.

DECEMBER 2020

all events went virtual due to increasing COVID-19 cases. Programs offered included an *emotional wellness resource fair*, an *opioid crisis presentation*, and monthly *Raise Your Voice Youth Advisory meeting*. Christmas week consisted of staff going to participants' apartments distributing Christmas goodie bags and gifts while following all COVID-19 safety protocols.

JANUARY 2021

All events remained virtual due to the pandemic. We celebrated *Martin Luther King's legacy* with video programming. We all offered virtual *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion programming* with a series of videos and surveys. *Life skills programming* was offered every Friday as was our *Raise your Voice programming*.

FEBRUARY 2021

While remaining virtual we have offered ongoing *DEI programming*, a focus on *Black History Month*, and are *hosting the LA Board of Education* for a four part event called *Prepare to Launch*.

Since Compass Point's soft opening in October of 2020, over 70% of COMPASS Program participants have participated in at least some of the programs being offered. In the past five months, there were 3-6 events offered monthly for a total of 24 events (both in-person and virtual). We look forward to what 2021 has in store.

NELSON'S

Bright Future



Nelson was living in a group home, at risk of aging out of the foster care system without a safety net or the necessary resources to transition into adulthood safely. He was referred to COMPASS Programs at David & Margaret, where he would receive housing, financial assistance, like-skills training and access to employment/educational support and more.

Nelson is currently in COMPASS's Workforce Training Program, a program designed to meet youth at their skill level and give them the tools needed to continue with their education or gain employment. In the program Nelson received a paid internship in the Maintenance Department at David & Margaret where he was able to get hands on work experience. He also participates in weekly workshops where he learns a variety of skills like how to dress for an interview, file taxes, and even tips for being a good employee.

As part of the program he was asked what path he would like to take towards his future; gaining employment, continuing his education, or obtaining certifications in desired fields. Upon learning more about professional certifications, Nelson took an interest in underwater welding and opted to take courses, funded by COMPASS, to obtain a Welding Certificate. A path that will provide Nelson with many job opportunities and financial stability in his future.

Throughout his time in the COMPASS Programs, Nelson had his basic needs met which allowed him to focus on his future. He was able to gain the skills and knowledge needed to become a self-sufficient adult and has the confidence to apply what he has learned in the real world.

We are excited for the path ahead of Nelson and proud of how much he has accomplished.



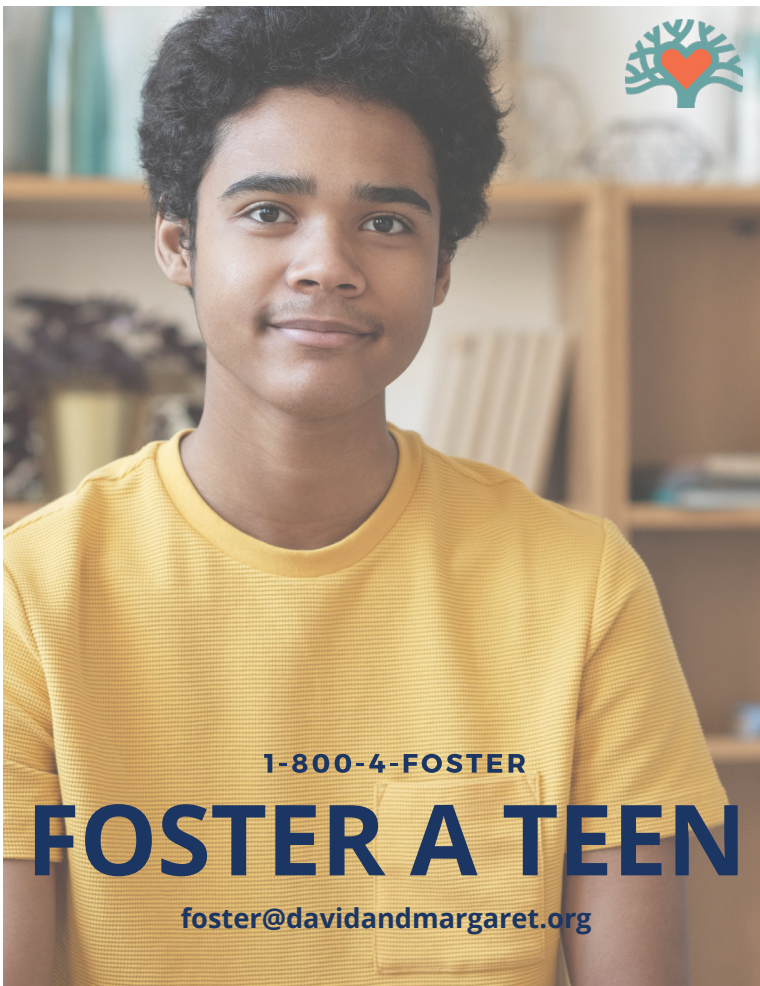


David & Margaret

YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

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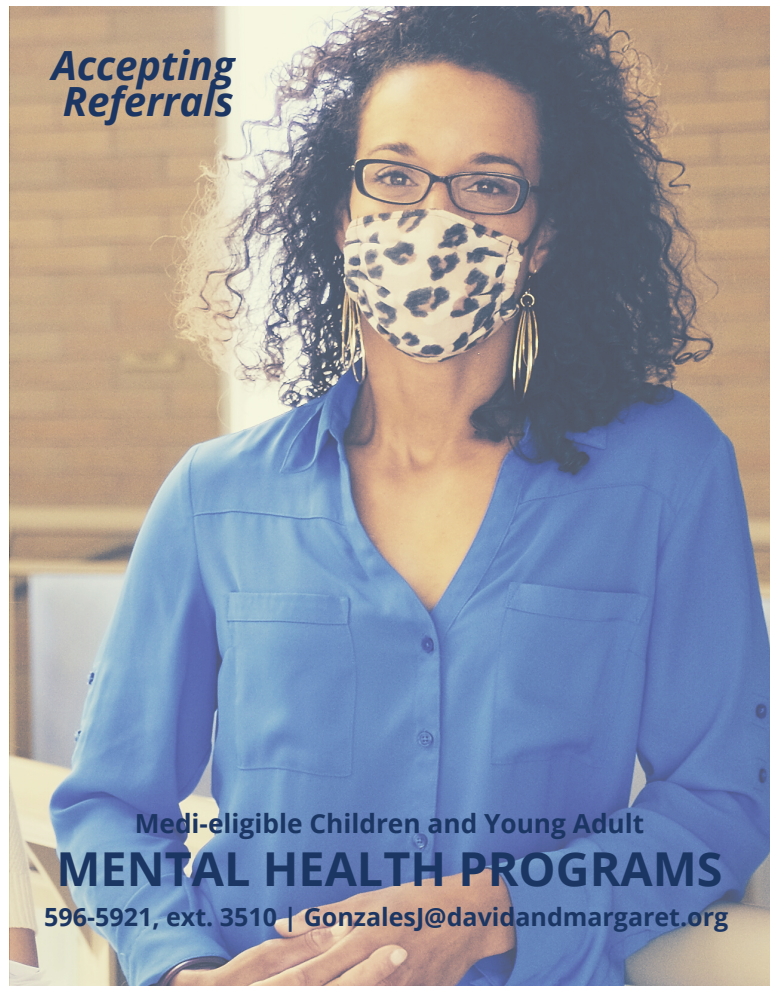
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Accepting Referrals

Medi-eligible Children and Young Adult

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

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