



## Nonprofit Village Impact Award Case Study

**Safe Shores – the DC Children’s Advocacy Center** was the recipient of Nonprofit Village’s 2020 Impact Award for large nonprofits in 2020. It is a direct service nonprofit that focuses its services on child victims of sexual and physical abuse in the District of Columbia, with an equity-based, child-centered, and child youth development approach.

### *Serving Children Without Doing Further Damage*

Safe Shores works with over 1,700 children and families every year

Safe Shores offers unique services to its clients to reduce their trauma and promote healing by bringing all the necessary services that children might need in these circumstances under one single roof. Replicating a nationally renowned model, this multi-agency, multi-disciplinary, child-centric collaboration ensures a safe environment for children to share their story and experiences just one time without having to fear triggering retellings to different service providers.

In FY19, 89% of caregivers said they knew what to expect with the situation facing them and their child after their initial visit to the center.

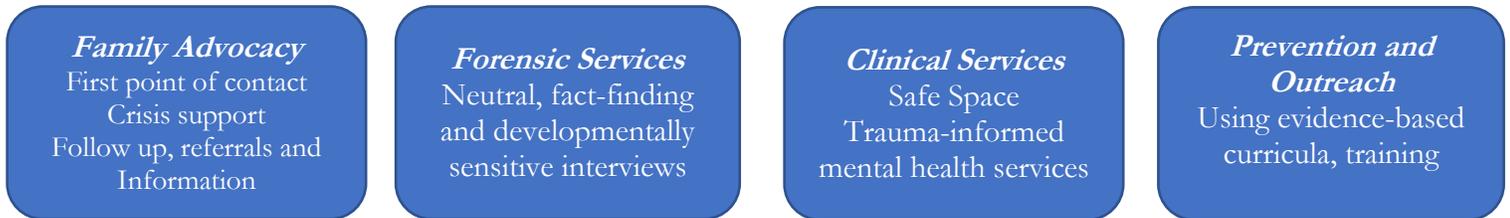
### *Multi-disciplinary Team*

Under just one roof, Safe Shores coordinates its work with the efforts of several agencies including: Child and Family Services, Children’s National Medical Center, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Office of the Attorney General, the US Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia. This safeguards children and their healing by delivering wide-ranging and child-friendly services to their clients.

In FY19, 97% of caregivers said they believed their child was safe at the center after their initial visit.

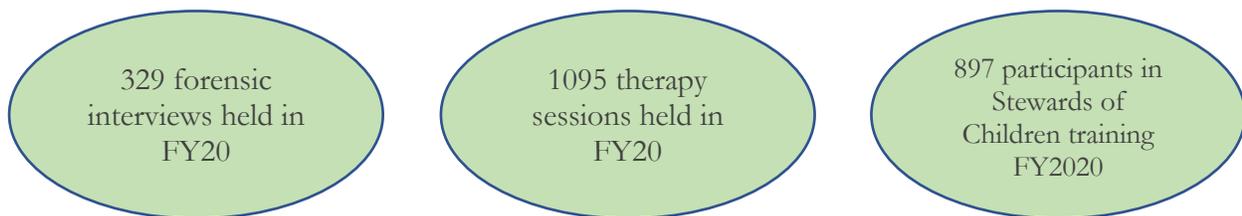
*“Together, we investigate alleged abuse, conduct forensic interviews, provide family advocacy, reduce trauma, and identify resources so that children and families may begin the healing process.” (Safe Shores)*

## Services



Safe Shores collaborates with hundreds of other nonprofit organizations, for example, by providing specialized training on child sexual abuse prevention – the *Stewards of Children* training – in Spanish to service-providers who work with Latinx communities, for example at the De Colores Learning Center. Through this collaboration, Safe Shores is building connections and trust within different communities to increase their reach and impact.

Another partner organization is the DC Rape Crisis Center, where therapy clients are referred to. Safe Shores is collaborating on a new project with the Rape Crisis Center to provide advocates to youth sexual assault victims between the ages of 13 and 18. It also partners with local businesses such as All-Purpose Pizzeria and Buttercream Bakeshop to reach specific goals including backpack drives and completing children’s wish lists around the holidays.



## *Equity, Cultural Competence and Adaptation*

Equity is a central component of Safe Shores’ mission and organizational everyday life. Organizational resources and measures are intentionally steered towards ensuring greater equity among staff to account for different circumstances. Internally, the organization is undergoing a period of self-reflection on equity, creating a safe space for all staff to share through an equity workgroup.

Safe Shores carefully considers how their services can uplift their clients, giving them an opportunity for agency wherever appropriate. Part of the work around equity involves making sure the organization is responsive to community and cultural needs. Based on

client feedback, it has increased its organizational capacity to serve Spanish-speaking communities while simultaneously working to build trust with them. As part of its strategic planning, Safe Shores continues to reflect on equity needs among its clientele and beyond in the community.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Safe Shores quickly and adeptly pivoted to remote work for the safety of employees and clients. Within just a few weeks, all programs were virtual and they were able to resume services using innovative ways, informed by experts on appropriate methodologies for specialized services like teleforensic interviews, to meet the needs of clients despite the conditions imposed by lockdowns and the needs to socially distance.