



STAR VISTA

Helping All Ages and Stages  
Through Life's Challenges

**FY 2018** Annual Report



For more than 50 years, StarVista has helped people throughout San Mateo County navigate life's challenges. Our counseling, crisis prevention, youth housing, and early childhood programs help tens of thousands of people in our community each year.



# LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Every year, StarVista evolves to meet the changing needs of our community. As I reflect on where we have been this past year and what we have accomplished, I am humbled and inspired. I witness compassion at work everyday. I see how the passion of our employees drives action, resulting in more clients of every age and stage of life overcoming obstacles and realizing their best futures. I am honored that StarVista has been recognized as the premier thought leader and service provider addressing mental health, youth homelessness, recovery services, and suicide and crisis prevention within San Mateo County, and am proud that our updated brand identity reflects this expertise and innovation. Above all, I am grateful to the many community members, partners, donors, volunteers, and staff who make StarVista's success possible each and every day.

Many life-changing moments have marked this year. We expanded our school-based counseling services and are now on 40 school campuses. We reimaged our OnYourMind.net teen chat services to become mobile-responsive so that teens and young adults have easy access to support. We expanded our Differential Response partnership to serve families in the entire

county, and we celebrated another year of pride at our county's first LGBTQ+ center. I am proud of our staff, as they continue to meet clients where they are, without judgment, and provide the best services possible.

StarVista has a new look this year, but we remain the same, impassioned agency, wholeheartedly committed to representing, serving, and advocating for the diverse populations of our community.

Thank you to all of you – our supporters, collaborators, funders, donors, and allies – for making StarVista into what it is today. I am pleased to share this year's annual report with you in gratitude and recognition of your essential role in our success.

Warm regards,



Sara Larios Mitchell, Ph.D., MACP



Sara Larios Mitchell, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

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# THE FATHERS GROUP

In a small room in the Fair Oaks Community Center, fathers sit proudly with their children around a table of food. Kids eat pizza, then leave the table to draw pictures and play games. Fathers laugh back and forth, joking both in English and Spanish. This is the scene of a Fathers Group Graduation, an important piece of StarVista's Healthy Homes program, which serves families with children ages 0-5. **For 8 weeks, these fathers have met in this same room, sharing stories and discussing what it means to be a father.** The rules they follow: no judging others' opinions, speak only for yourself, have a good sense of humor, and always show respect. For StarVista staff member, Moises Lopez, this professional scene was inspired by a personal one.

The oldest of three, Moises immigrated with his parents at a young age from Mexico to Redwood City, California. For the Lopez family, Redwood City was a culture shock. Not many Latinos lived in the community at that time, and it lacked the diversity the family was accustomed to in Mexico. The change was a struggle, particularly, Moises remembers, for his father. Over time, the stresses weighed more and more on his dad, and he turned increasingly to alcohol as a means of escape. Over the next 15 years, Moises' father was in and out of the home. Moises yearned for a close relationship with his dad and didn't understand why he wasn't around.

It wasn't until Moises began working as a Family Partner in StarVista's Healthy Homes program that he began to understand the many challenges his dad had faced as a bicultural Latino in the Bay Area. Building a new life for his children in the United States had meant trying to retain the family's Mexican culture, values, and heritage, despite the many external factors that had interfered. Motivated by his own family story, Moises now works everyday to provide an opportunity for fathers and kids to develop the deep connection he had craved as a child.

Building deep relationships between fathers and their children was the shared goal when First 5 San Mateo

awarded StarVista funding for fatherhood engagement in 2017. "Most community services out there are geared towards moms or kids," Moises explains. "There's a huge lack of services to support fathers and an immense need." When Moises and his colleague, Mario Costello, first put the word out to their StarVista colleagues about the new Fathers Group, they were looking for any dad who wanted support, but they also had a keen eye out for fathers who were disengaged in the home or who were a repeated source of stress or fear for their spouses and children. Moises and Mario also inquired about children who were expressing behavioral issues, as this is often a sign of an absentee father. "We were looking for dads who had never been taught how to be dads, how to be husbands, spouses, or partners," Moises explains. "I would call them and invite them to be part of our Fathers Group."

It was an uphill battle to start: 5 out of every 6 fathers declined Moises's invitation. Still, over time, the Fathers Group grew and within a year, the group swelled from just one dad to 12, the program maximum. **To best serve the communities they were recruiting from, Moises and Mario decided to hold the first group in Spanish, the native language of most of their clients.**

They put together an eight-week curriculum focusing on fatherhood in all its forms. "We would ask, 'What are the challenges of being a new dad, a single dad, an immigrant dad, a divorced dad?' And we would ask our participants what they were struggling with, what barriers they faced, and then make space to discuss those barriers and issues."

"I've seen firsthand how so many factors are influencing our dads, including immigration stresses and a lack of resources to support fathers. All of these things led to alcoholism in my dad, and it doesn't have to be like that. We can connect these families to resources like food distribution, employment, and education." Having services available for free, taught in a client's primary

**“I never had a dad to tell me how to father,” one dad shares, “now I’m learning all these things: how to speak to my child, how to care for them, how to be a loving father...”** - Father’s Group Participant

language, and easily accessible within the community, reduces barriers for families to get help.

The group recently took on the topic of domestic violence. The dads watched a video that portrayed a fight between husband and wife while their baby sat in his crib nearby. The video flashed forward: the baby was now a teenager and was the family member most affected by the unstable home life he had experienced as an infant. He was experiencing frequent tantrums, breakdowns, and problems in school. When the video ended, one dad began crying. “This is what happened when I grew up and what I’m trying to prevent in my home,” he said, “but I’m doing the same thing.” **Allowing dads a safe space to reflect on their own experiences gives them a better picture of how they want to raise their own children, and how they can become the dads they want to be.** It also provides them access to counselors to address immediate needs and crises, like the ones this father was experiencing in his home.

The link between how a father grew up and how he parents his child, is strongly related to home life and culture. “It’s culturally not acceptable for a Latino boy to cry, show feelings, or speak back about how they were hurt. They’re supposed to be quiet, speak formally to parents, to be submissive,” Moises says, “In this group, fathers are able to be vulnerable enough to say, ‘Ok, that’s how I was raised, but if I want my child to feel he is loved, he has to be able to share his emotions with me,’ and that’s a big step for a lot of our dads.”

“I never had a dad to tell me how to father,” one dad shares, “now I’m learning all these things: how to speak to my child, how to care for them, how to be a loving father, how by playing with my child, I’m teaching them.”

“As family partners, we’re a voice for underserved families,” says Moises. **“These fathers don’t have any other space that asks them, ‘Hey, what’s going on in your life right now?’ That’s what we provide.”**

At the end of the 8 week curriculum, the fathers return to the Fair Oaks Community Center with their families. Each father stands up in turn to shake Moises’ hand and proudly accept his Healthy Homes Fathers Group diploma. Excited children take a picture with their dad and his new degree. **The smiling faces of fathers, partners, and children show, more than words the deep, rewarding impact this program has on families.**

One day, with additional funding, Moises hopes to provide dinner and childcare for his fathers, and rewards and incentives for their completion of the program. He hopes to expand the Fathers Group geographically, delving into the pressing concerns of dads all over San Mateo County. For now, Moises and Mario continue to support the dads currently enrolled in the program and are also actively recruiting new dads to the program.

**To learn more about Healthy Homes and the Fathers Group, visit [www.star-vista.org/programs](http://www.star-vista.org/programs) or call (650) 591-9623.**



**Healthy Homes** is a program of StarVista that serves families with children ages 0-5. It strives to prevent child abuse and neglect, enhance the parent-child relationship, and reduce the impact of risk factors such as domestic violence, trauma, poverty, immigration, food insecurity, substance abuse, mental illness, and language barriers, among others. The program provides services free of charge to families in English or Spanish, including home-based family partner support services, mental health services for children and their caregivers, parent support groups, and parent-child activity groups.





# SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES

## An Individualized Approach

**Every year, StarVista provides on-campus counseling, crisis intervention, and support services to more than a thousand students throughout San Mateo County.**

We spoke with Program Director, Dr. Hazel Benigno about the incredible growth of our School-Based program and what it means for local school communities. Read on to learn more.

**Q. Tell me a little bit about the School-Based Counseling program?**

**A.** StarVista provides mental health services for students in 40 elementary, middle, and high schools throughout San Mateo County. Services include assessment, crisis intervention, individual and group therapy, family therapy, and consultation with parents, teachers, and other school staff. The goal of this program is to help students improve aspects of their lives, leading to enhanced school performance and increased engagement in learning.

**Q. How has StarVista's School-Based Counseling program grown over time?**

**A.** In 2013, we were in 12 schools. Now we're in 40! Program funding has grown from just under \$400K in 2013 to \$1.3M, as schools have realized the importance of counseling and support programs and are requesting StarVista's services more and more. In the past, schools only wanted group and individual counseling for general education students, but that's changed too. Now we provide counseling, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) services, prevention services funded through probation, and educationally-related mental health services for Special Education students.

**Q. What is Social-Emotional Learning?**

**A.** According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), one of the leading organizations researching and implementing social-emotional learning programs in schools, SEL lessons focus on helping students and teachers manage emotions, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. The impact is beyond social and emotional growth, as improving these skills has been proven to also help students improve in academics, behaviors, attitudes, and their general ability to learn.

**Q. What are some of the innovations that have helped our School-Based Program expand in this way? What is unique about our approach to School-Based Counseling?**

**A.** Our team has always been very forward-thinking and flexible in our work. No two kids and no two schools are the same, so we have made it a priority to adapt our school-based services to whatever each school community needs. We work with the school staff to create an individualized model for what our program will look like in that particular school, which can include group therapy, family therapy, classroom presentations, SEL and Special Ed services. This has really become our strength at StarVista: our ability to customize services for each unique school and its students so that no two School-Based programs look the same.

**Q. Can you give us an example of what an individualized approach looks like at a particular school?**

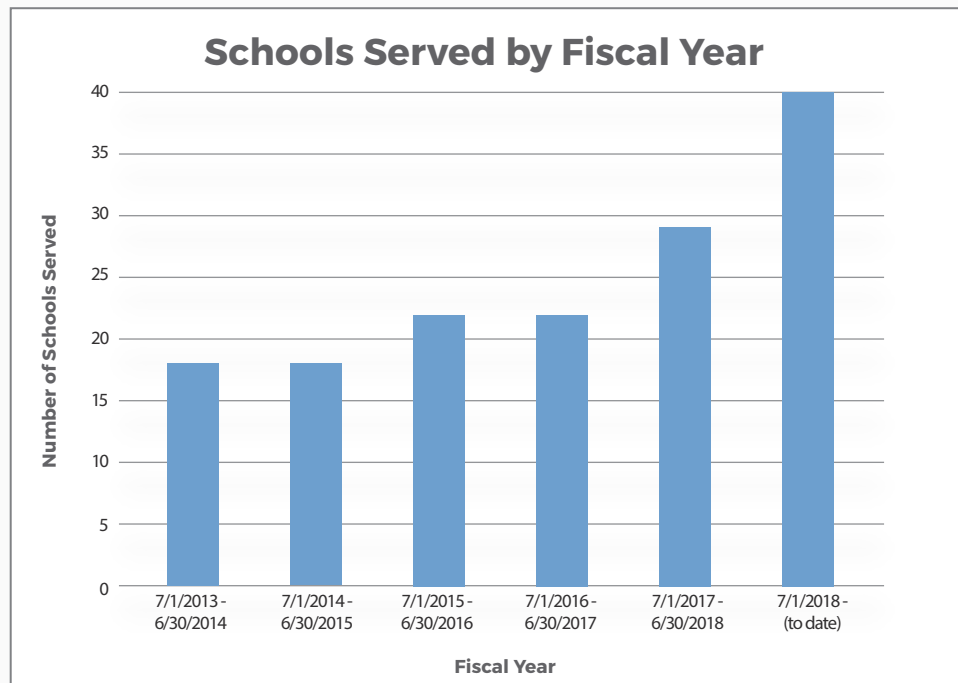
**A.** Sure – a good example would be at one of our high schools, there we have two clinicians on campus, five days a week. They provide individual and group counseling, but for the most part are available for students to just drop in and talk about whatever is on their mind that particular day. They also provide crisis intervention if a student appears to be in distress or is expressing thoughts around depression, self-injury, or suicide.

Meanwhile at one elementary school, our program looks entirely different. We have one clinician on site for three days a week, providing an integrated model of Social-Emotional Learning classes and individual and group counseling to students.

At all our schools, we train our staff to see mental health as a job beyond the traditional 1:1 counseling model. Our clinicians enlist the help of parents and school staff, consulting and working with them to broaden their understanding of what mental health can be so that together we can best support our young people. We really see ourselves as clinicians, consultants, and advocates for our students, always with an equity-focused lens.

**Q. How does StarVista’s approach align with larger trends in the school-based mental health field?**

**A.** StarVista is really leading the curve as more and more schools are diving into SEL. There’s a huge movement in education to dismiss the traditional “one-size-fits-all” approach to both academic learning and mental health support and to treat each student as an individual. And that same mentality has really shifted the focus for many to educational equity, which takes to heart the idea that not all students start in the same place academically, emotionally, or socially. Not everyone has the same background, the same means or privileges, but everyone should be given the opportunity to succeed and the tools needed to get there. Our clinicians conduct community-based research to assess the needs of a particular community’s students and how our clinicians can best serve those students. Often times that means putting SEL interventions in place, providing crisis intervention supports, as well as advocating for additional academic support services for students who may be behind their peers in the classroom.



**Q. Tell me more about the students you serve. What are some of the most common challenges and issues affecting middle and high schoolers in this county?**

**A.** One common theme we hear from our students is the immense need they feel to be the best. All our students – elementary, middle, and high schoolers – constantly feel the pressure to succeed, which is difficult to address because so often these stresses and thoughts are being driven by challenging external circumstances, such as the climate in Silicon Valley, pressures from caregivers and family, and the relative ease of social comparison. Students are constantly measuring themselves against each other and public figures on social media. They’re comparing themselves to what they consider to be the “best” and are inevitably falling short. It can be a lot for our youth, on top of their regular academic stresses.

Our students also express issues related to identity and self-understanding, and more and more, we’re hearing growing concerns about the current sociopolitical climate. Students are impacted by what they see and hear in current events and politics, and the threat of gun violence has become a huge stressor for our youth. They take part in Active Shooter drills at school, just as they do earthquake and fire drills. It’s a very real topic on our students’ minds.

Changes in immigration reform policy are also weighing heavily on these youth. Many San Mateo County families have been directly impacted by changes at the national level. We have an unprecedented number of students and families sharing fears about family separation and deportation. We’ve never experienced this level of stress around the topic of immigration before with our school-aged youth.

**This year, our amazing team of 36 clinicians and case managers includes:**

- 17 bilingual team members
- 22 bicultural team members
- 11 students earning a Master's or Doctorate degree
- 22 Masters/Doctoral Level Clinicians



Because many of these issues are rooted in a student's particular identity, it's important for our staff to be diverse so that we can relate to and support the needs of every community across this county. Our team members are an intentional reflection of the communities we're working in, and we're very proud of this diversity.

**Q. What role does hiring have in the success of your program?**

**A.** Hiring is everything when it comes to the success of our program. Clinicians are the face of StarVista at each school we partner with, and hiring is really about finding the right fit for the program, as well as the school community. When I'm looking for staff, I keep close to heart the motto "hire character, train skill." We bring onboard smart individuals of the utmost integrity and guide them through our trainings, supervision, and support. We have been really lucky year-over-year in assembling our School-Based team from an extraordinary pool of candidates, and I'm really proud of the expertise, diversity, and integrity that these team members hold.

**Q. This program accomplishes so much. At the end of the day, why is StarVista's School-Based Counseling program important?**

**A.** So many parents have no idea counseling is available on their child's campus and don't know to ask for it. Years ago, academic counseling was the only resource available to students, so parents and caregivers aren't always aware of other kinds of support. I've heard from so many parents who were concerned about their child and frustrated about not being able to find a convenient, affordable therapist, when all along, StarVista's program had been right on that student's campus. We want students, parents, and community members to know these services exist so that they can access them.

For StarVista, it's about meeting clients where they are at, physically, emotionally, and mentally. If we can reduce barriers to an individual accessing services, we're that much closer to helping the individual in need find their path and get the help they deserve.



"Our community is such that we can only successfully teach our children if we can meet all of their needs- emotional, psychological and intellectual. Without critical services such as those offered by StarVista, we would be unable to have many of our children meet with success. StarVista is a major component of our community school."

- Teacher, Kennedy Middle School in  
Redwood City School District

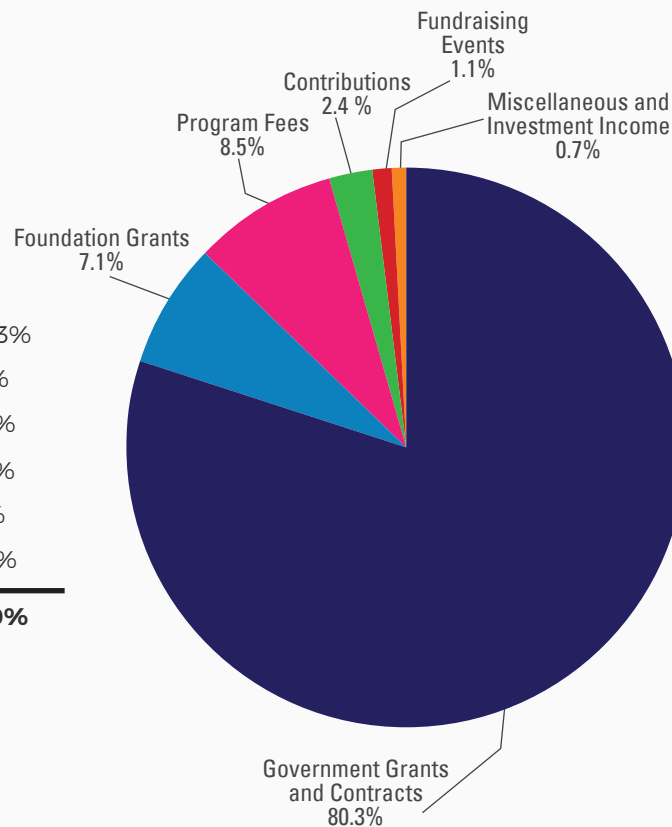


# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

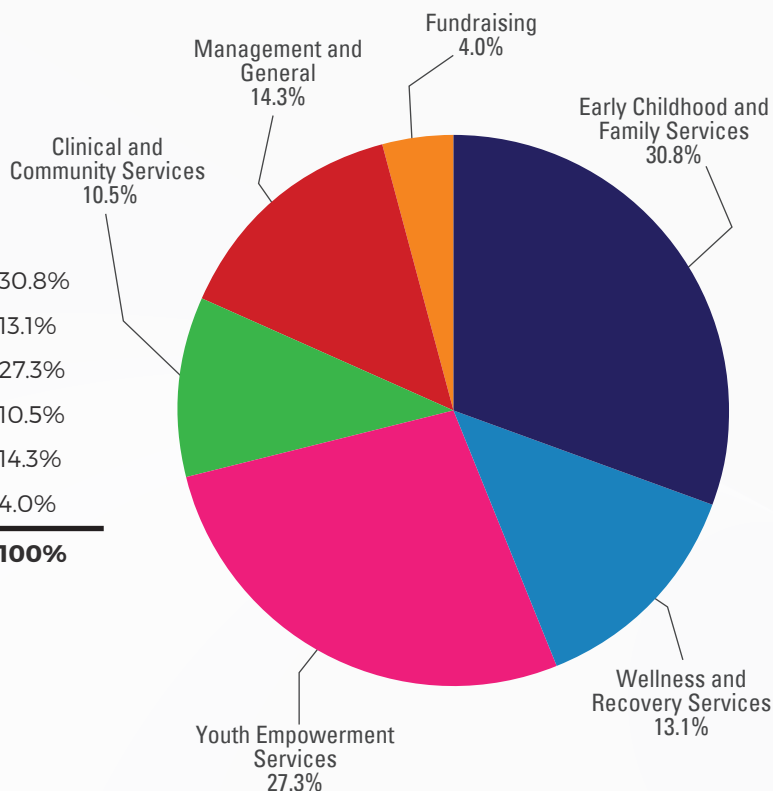
## REVENUE

Government Grants and Contracts	\$10,981,729	80.3%
Foundation Grants	\$977,500	7.1%
Program Fees	\$1,159,104	8.5%
Contributions	\$322,495	2.4%
Fundraising Events	\$149,625	1.1%
Miscellaneous and Investment Income	\$92,314	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,682,767</b>	<b>100%</b>



## EXPENSES

Early Childhood and Family Services	\$4,205,611	30.8%
Wellness and Recovery Services	\$1,789,878	13.1%
Youth Empowerment Services	\$3,721,463	27.3%
Clinical and Community Services	\$1,435,956	10.5%
Management and General	\$1,948,954	14.3%
Fundraising	\$538,927	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,640,789</b>	<b>100%</b>



# OUR IMPACT



StarVista provided services to over **40,000** individuals in San Mateo County.



The San Mateo County Pride Center offered training services to over **2,000** participants.



Our 24hr Crisis Hotline Staff and Volunteers answered over **11,000** phone calls.



Our Residential programs provided services to over **500** youth.



Our Early Childhood programs served over **4,800** children across the county.



# THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful to our donors who contributed time, energy and financial support that enabled us to transform the lives of children, young adults, and families.

## **\$100,000+**

Bella Vista Foundation  
The Grove Foundation

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Donna Jones  
Marge Jones  
Debbi Jones-Thomas  
Natalie Jordan

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Harvey and Gay Kaplan  
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Akemi Weddington  
Bernadette White  
Blaise Winterhalter  
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Erika Zemann

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Karen and Ellis Alden  
All Spice  
All Ways Balloons  
Anonymous  
Vinney Arora  
B Street & Vine  
B. Stow Boutique Gifting Studio  
Kian Badiei  
Barre3 San Mateo  
Laura Barsocchini  
Robert Bartoli  
BATS Improv  
Bay Area Discovery Museum  
Bella Luce Skin Care and Healing Center  
Berkeley Repertory Theatre  
Deborah and Peter Blackmore  
Clarise Blanchard  
Carlos and Kim Bolanos  
Danielle Brewer  
Sarah Burdge  
Burlingame Police Department  
Byington Vineyard & Winery  
California Shakespeare Theater  
Children's Creativity Museum  
Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose  
Children's Fairyland  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
Cuisinett  
Elaine and Burt Cummings  
DataSafe  
Devil's Canyon Brewing Co.  
Narges and Zac Dillon  
Disneyland Resort  
Duckhorn Vineyards  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco  
Flying Suitcase  
Sarah Freeman

Gallo Wines  
 Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park  
 Melissa Guariglia  
 Hallmark  
 Jessica Harders  
 Lauren Heminez  
 Gloria Heminez and Zia Oboodiyat  
 Hobee's Restaurant  
 Honey Bear Trees  
 Julie Ichikawa  
 IMG  
 Ivania Angel Design  
 Jesus Jimenez  
 Jira Couture Salon  
 Pyar Khatri  
 King Chuan  
 Konica Minolta Business Solutions  
 Krazy Zexy Photography  
 La Petite Baleen  
 Alina and Kevin Lloyd  
 Nancy and Philip Mancini  
 Mayfair Community Center San Jose  
 McKahn Family Cellars  
 Mid-Peninsula High School  
 Rebekah Miramontes  
 Drs. Sara Larios Mitchell and Robert Mitchell  
 Moriana, Designer  
 Kara Murano  
 Denise Newman  
 Doriel Nishidoa  
 Noelanis  
 Oakland East Bay Symphony  
 Old County Cellars  
 Will Ovando  
 Ken Pessio  
 Portraits to the People  
 Kristen Proctor  
 Pump It Up Belmont  
 Reach and Teach  
 The Riddler SF  
 Robin Rudikoff and Ronnen Miller  
 Russian Ridge Winery  
 Alfred Saenz  
 Safari Run  
 Sam's Chowder House  
 San Francisco Zoo  
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 Roger and Betty Toguchi  
 Alex Tsai  
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 Dianette Washer  
 Linda Watanabe  
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 What the Mesh Wreaths  
 Rebecca Williamson and Spenser Tangman  
 Winchester Mystery House  
 Eric and Debbie Wollman  
 Ally Wright  
 Paul Wright  
 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts  
 Erick Young and Thu Pham  
 Lisa Young  
 Zola

## IN HONOR OF

In honor of 11 Wonderful Years  
*Denise Alvarez*  
 In honor of James Bohm  
*Patricia Bohm*  
 In honor of Crisis Center Volunteers  
*Susan Jerome*  
 In honor of Katerina Demeti  
*David Rosenbaum*  
 In honor of Michael Garb  
*Vinney Arora*  
*Linda Mann*  
*Drs. Sara Larios-Mitchell and Robert Mitchell*  
*Mindy and Jeff Shelton*



In honor of Islam Hassanein  
*Denis and Cheryl Fama*  
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*Val Vandervort*  
 In honor of Ken Jew  
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*Jessica Kaplan*  
 In honor of Christina Lansdown  
*Reena Patton*  
 In honor of Lesley Martin  
*Susan Bird*  
 In honor of her friendship with Lynn Schuette and her wife Tamora Horen  
*Carelle Karimimanes*  
 In honor of Sue Somrak  
*Kathy Leroux*  
 In honor of Teresa Wace  
*Anonymous*  
 In honor of William F. Wollman  
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 In honor of Randy Yano  
*Elaine and Burt Cummings*

## IN MEMORY OF

In Memory of Kathy Beavers  
*Nancy Minnig*  
 In Memory of Robin Black  
*Todd Black*  
 In Memory of Lupe Camacho  
*Emiliana Behrmann*  
*Myrna Bell*  
*Carelle Karimimanes*  
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*Stephanie Sanford*  
*Paula Watt*  
 In Memory of Priscilla Chiu  
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 In Memory of Jim DeWitt  
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\*Includes gifts made through Donor-Advised Funds at Benevity Community Impact Fund, Bright Funds Foundation, Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, Franklin Templeton Investments, Marin Community Foundation, Morgan Stanley Global Impact Fund Trust, Inc., Network for Good, Philanthropic Ventures Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, Schwab Charitable Fund, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Wells Fargo Advisors, YourCause, or other entity.

Every effort was made to include all gifts made by private individuals and organizations during the July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 fiscal year. Please accept our apologies for any omissions or errors. Please note that government contracts and grants are not included in this listing.

If you have any concerns, please contact us at 650-591-9623, ext. 106.



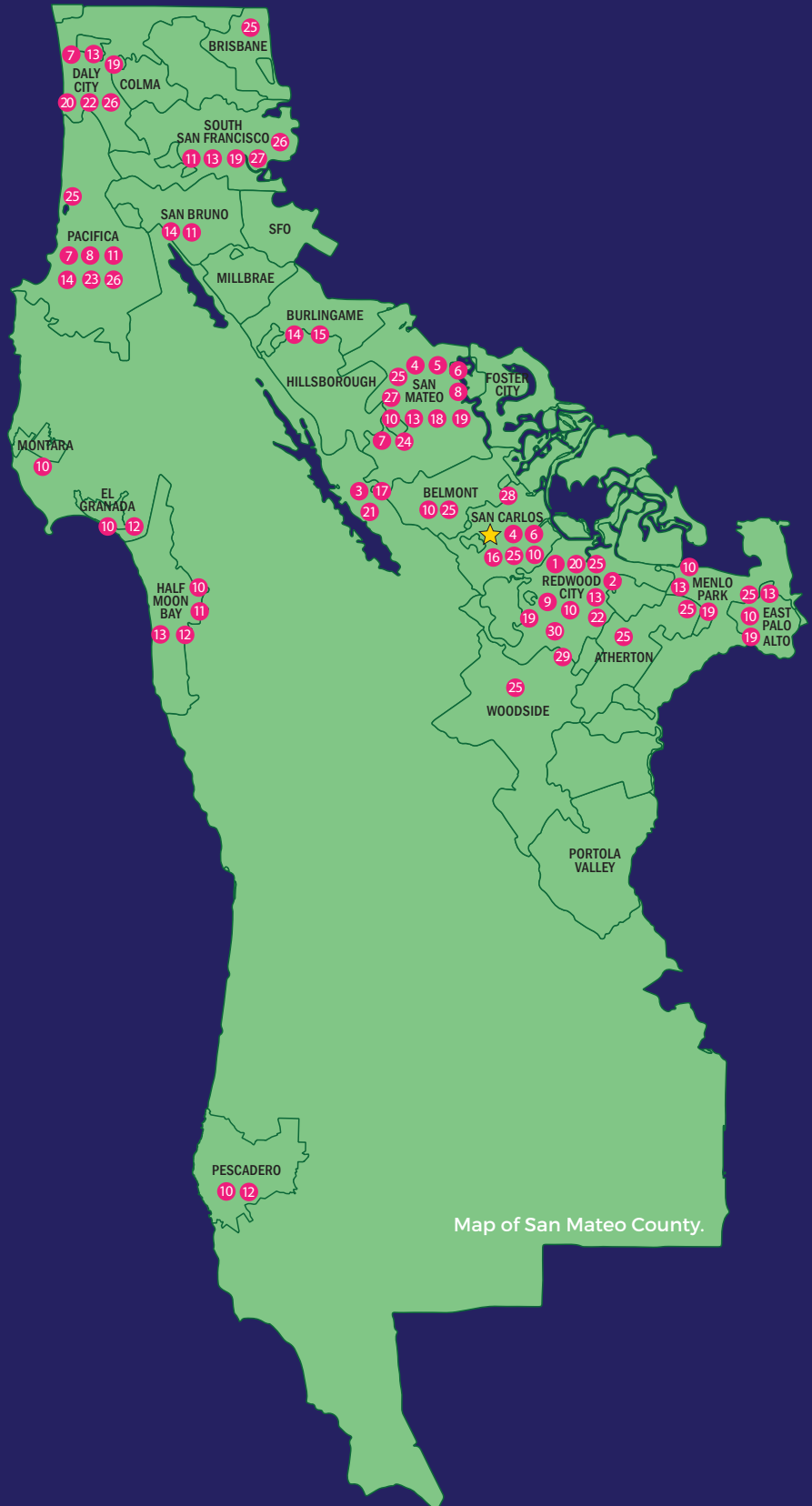


# STAR VISTA

## Our Program Locations

1. Archway
2. Bridges
3. Camp Glenwood
4. Child and Family Resource Center (CFRC)
5. Child and Parent Services
6. Children's Place
7. Counseling Center
8. Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Center
9. Daybreak
10. Differential Response
11. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Services
12. Early Childhood Community Team
13. Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
14. First Chance Outpatient Services
15. First Chance Sobering Station
16. Foster Youth Education Enrichment Services
17. G.I.R.L.S./CAMP KEMP
18. Health Ambassador Program-Youth (HAP-Y)
19. Healthy Homes
20. Insights
21. Institutions
22. Mindfulness-Based Treatment
23. North County Outreach Collaborative (NCOC)
24. San Mateo County Pride Center
25. School-Based Services
26. Strengthen Our Youth Programs (SOY)
27. Transitional Youth Services
28. Women's Enrichment Center
29. Your House South
30. Youth Development Initiative

★ **ADMINISTRATION** - Main Office





STAR VISTA

**OUR MISSION:**

We deliver high impact services through counseling, skill development, and crisis prevention to children, youth, adults, and families.



**24-HOUR CRISIS HOTLINE**  
**650-579-0350**

**Our phone and web services  
are available all day, every day.**

Crisis Hotline

650-579-0350

800-273-8255

Teen Website

[www.OnYourMind.net](http://www.OnYourMind.net)

610 Elm Street, Suite 212  
San Carlos, CA 94070

650-591-9623

Connect with StarVista:



[www.star-vista.org](http://www.star-vista.org)